Obsessed Need of you by Shawna

Summary: Couple: **Wesley/Angel, Spike/Xander, Gunn/Faith, Doyle/Kate ##Wesley/Angel, Wesley/Liliah, Gunn/Fred, Angel/Cordelia (some of these are hints and hints of others)
Summary: In an AU reality, Angel loses the most important person to him. His lover Wesley. His friends come up with a plan and what will the other Angel think of this plan? Will he even find out, care? Will the other Wesley end up going with the Angel that wants him to live in his reality? So many questions! Read and find out, cos this summery is getting us no where!
Rating: Adult Only Slash, FRAO, will have Aghast, happy, Aghast, happy, oh, lets just say I'm going to play with your heart like a yoyo, I'm evil in that way.
Distribution: If I said yes to anyone wanting my stories and they want it, have it. Others. Just let me know you're taking it, I'll say yes then faint.
Disclaimer: Everything belongs to the great Joss Whedon and anyone else who say it's theirs. None of the characters belong to me...All I own is a 12 year old car, a cat that thinks it owns me, college debt, dirty dishes, more bills and a computer that stays in the past no matter what I do! Heck, the clock even goes backwards sometimes!. All I’m doing is playing with someone else’ characters to keep myself sane or should I say insane?
Feedback: Please! Pretty please...
Rating: FRAO - Adult
Fandoms: slash fiction
Characters: Angel, Angel/Wesley, Cordelia/Angel, Faith, Faith/Gunn, Fred, Fred/Gunn, Spike, Wesley, Xander, Xander/Spike, Wes/Lilah, Doyle/Kate
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Notes: These marks ** means totally AU reality. These marks ## means the reality you the reader are familiar with. Now the reality, ## will take place close/during to the 4th season ep. 'Deep Down' but even that I play with a little. Also, the Angel in ** is a little different, for he is at peace with his demon, so at times he will even sound a little like Angelus. A good horny possessive as hell Angelus. A huge thank you to theawesome Nikki for willing to be my beta, I mean, wow, didn't have to blackmail her or anything! Oh, and I'd like to dedicate this story to Cat, cos ya rock and I felt ya deserved a prizze for being naughty...

Part 1

**

"Oh, God, you're not dead! You hear me, Wes! You're not! Damn it, you're not...Not dead...You're not...You're not..." Angel kept repeating in a horse broken tone. Red tears rained down his sorrow filled face, as his body shook in uncontrollable sobs. Angel tightened his arms around his lover, who stared back through unseeing dead eyes. The smell of blood and death filled the night air, as grief and agony made itself at home.

"Damn you! No! You can't die on me! You can't you bastard! You can't leave me alone! I love you, oh, please...Please, Wes, come back to me. I need you...D-Damn you...Damn...Oh, God..."

Spike slowly walked over and silently placed a hand upon his Grandsire's shoulder. Red tears flowed down his own eyes as well, going unnoticed by him. "Let him rest, Sire. He deserves to rest."

Angel shook his head in denial and held onto the dead body even tighter than before. "No! No..." He then noticed Spike's lover, standing alone.

Sorrow and grief for his fallen friend and allie, upon his face. Tears were not running down his cheeks, but given time they would flow. Maybe later in the night, wrapped safely in the arms of his Spike, would he weep. Maybe then...

"Xander, please...Please find a way to bring my lover back. PLEASE! I have to have him back--"

"Angel, I'm sorry." Xander whispered with now tightly closed eyes and clenched fists. Trying not to cry. Still knowing that later he would, only then...Only then. But it was hard. He had just lost another dear, beloved friend. Another one! Damn it all! It had only been one year since he had lost his Willow...Yet, once again...A friend was dead. Fighting the good fight could be hell at times. Living with out said friend could be worse than hell.

Now...Another friend fallen, taken by death's hand. Not right. Not fair.

Angel had lost more then a friend tonight. He had lost a precious lover. He was hurting worse than they were. For Angel had wanted Wesley to be more then a beloved lover, for the first time in his long existence he had wanted a mate. A bonded mate. The only one that could be, *had* to be was Wesley. If Wesley had been willing, had let Angel do the ritual. But Wes had reasons that only his lover knew, for some reason,
Wes had wanted time to think about it. Had thought about it for three years. Now time had run out. Now Angel was left with nothing but a dead lover and memories.

"Damn it, Harris! You're a powerful male wicca! You have the power and knowledge to bring him back to me! Do it now! Bring him back!"

Xander opened his sad, hurt filled eyes that seemed to hold an ancient wisdom. "No, Angel, I can't. I won't. That would be wrong in so many ways."

Angel's eyes flashed with yellow and shouted, "It's wrong for me to be without him!"

"Angel! Think. Don't you realize how tempting it is to bring back Willow? My dear Will? Every damn day that has gone by sense her death. I would in a heartbeat. Within half a second. I'd bring her back, Big A, you know I would. But I won't. Hell, I know I can do it. I got the power, but I'm not going to rip her from heaven. Like I'm not going to rip Wesley from the same place. Tonight Wes, saved me and my bonded mate. Willow and Wes fought and died for what's good and they were warriors in their own way. I'm *not* going to take away their well deserved peace. Don't be selfish. They deserve heaven."

"I'm his heaven and he's mine! I need him back, Xander! I *need* him!...I do...Spike, oh my grandchilde and beloved one of Angelus, please tell your bonded mate to bring back my Wesley. Please...Spike, he'll listen to you. Please...I have to have my Wesley...I love him, he...he...Don't you see that I need him? Please, Spike, please." Angel started to sob once more. No one had ever seen the vampire so broken.

"My Xan's right. I'm sorry, Sire. My mate is right." Spike spoke in barely a whisper.

Xander walked a few paces and knelt down, with one hand he closed the former Watcher's eyes.

"It's going to be alright, Angel. It's going to be alright." Xander told Angel as he hugged him. His voice full of raw emotion. He felt Spike try to hug them both...As Xander repeated himself to Angel. He didn't really believe those words he said. He was sure that nothing would ever be alright again.

For their Wesley was dead.

(end of part 1)
Part 2

A month later...

Angel focused on what he was drawing. The image of his lover became clear. His pencil outlined Wesley's thin yet full lips. The vampire slowly blinked as he realized he had drawn Wes at the Bronze. Years ago, when he met him for the first time.

~*~FLASHBACK~*~

Entering the Bronze, Angel had just one thought. The normal train of thought that being Angel and everything. Find the Slayer. Tell her what was going down and see if he could help. Then stand in the shadows looking all tall, dangerous, broody, dark and mysterious. Angel was sure the leather jacket and extra hair gel helped with this image.

Then he found what he was seeking. The Slayer. Getting a double _mocha chocolate with extra whipped cream_. Angel rolled his eyes at her order. Hadn't she learned. With her own special personality and then Slayer energy. She'll be bouncing off the walls and babbling for days.

The vampire sighed then decided to reveal his presence. Which being a Slayer she should have known instantly he was there. Maybe she did. She always could surprise him.

"Hi, Willow."

The red haired Slayer turned and looked at him with a smile. "Angel! Hey! Thought I felt ya a brooding in a corner somewhere. Going to tell me something is happening in a really, really bad way? 'Cos if ya are, I already know about it. Well, if it's the something I already know. But hey, you could surprise me. Are you going to surprise me, Angel?"

Angel raised his eyebrows and studied her. Then he asked seriously, "Will, how many of those coffee's have you had?"

"None. That was my first one in weeks and I haven't even got it yet!"

Then someone over the counter handed her the drink. With a happy smile she said, "Thanks!"

Angel winced as he watched her take a deep sip. Oh, she was going to be on a killing demons energy high tonight. Those things should be outlawed for their Willow. Then he did remember Xander saying they would have to make sure she cut back. *Way* back on them. Maybe he could find a way to get her to not drink it all. For he remembered what happened last week when she had one. Lots of demons dead, which was good, but then she called all the members of the Scooby Gang to the library for a important meeting. At 3:43 A.M. in the damn morning. When vampires should be going into hiding and resting. What was the important meeting, Willow telling them all about the demons she'd killed and babbling about all kinds of weird stuff. Stayed there for hours. So late that the sun was out and Spike and himself had been stuck in Giles' office all through the school hours.

After Willow's long sip, she whipped her sleeve impatiently across her mouth, that had at one time been covered in whip cream. "So, the big?"

"You're right as always. I'm here to tell you something bad is happening."
Willow gave him a 'I'm always right and I knew that was why you came here tonight, and I'm proud that I knew it' look.

Angel then continued, "There's this bad ass demon. Really bad."

"Always is." She replied cheerfully.

"Who is looking for a certain tablet that this demon can't be allowed to get."

"Have it."

Angel looked at her in complete surprise and wide-eyed wonder. Damn, she amazed him at every turn. "You do?"

"Well," Willow answered with a shrug, "Not exactly *me*.

"Then *who*, exactly?"

"Miss Rosenburg?" A British 'I'm better then you' voice spoke behind Angel. He swung around and froze.

For before him stood one of the most handsome men he'd ever seen. Dark hair, beautiful blue eyes behind gold wired frames he wore an outfit that screamed, 'I'm a Watcher, look at me and be impressed'...In those eyes there was also a innocence that Angel knew that after awhile of fighting the good fight would slowly disappear if not protected. Yet the innocence cried out to his demon, making him beg to be released. Begging to own and take the man before him. Wanting to taste that innocence and help destroy it, corrupt it, even protect some of it, yet also make it all his own.

Angel's eyes never moved from the man as he asked Willow, "New Watcher?"

He smirked as excitement filled his cold veins, watching the Watcher look at him with an open mouth and even wider innocent eyes. "How did--Ms. Rosenburg does everyone know who you are!!?"

"Only those, *I* want to know. And Angel, do ya remember the question you asked me? Well, he has it." Willow said pointing at the Watcher.

'Question?' Angel thought as he studied the man, hungrily. 'What question? There was no question, the Watcher would be his! Oh, she meant...

"He has the tablet?" Angel asked the Slayer.

"He knows about *that* too!" The British man spoke in an offended tone.

"Oh, yeah and you might as well give it to Angel for safe-keeping."

"I'll have you know, Miss Rosenburg, that it *is* safe. I hid it very well." The Watcher said in a smug tone.

Willow set her drink down and reached out her hand to find the tablet and remove it from the Watcher. Yet, with supernatural speed, Angel caught her hand. Knowing she could kick his ass, didn't stop him from preventing her touching what was his. And the Watcher was indeed, *his*. He just didn't know it yet, but he soon would.

"I'll get it, Willow. Aren't you meeting with Faith?"
Willow nodded slowly, understanding instantly what Angel was telling her. She looked at the new Watcher with bewilderment, trying to see what her friend saw. Then shrugged, knowing it must be a vampire thing. For the look on Angel's face was the same Spike had when he first saw Xander. Oh, yeah, definitely a vamp thing. If Angel wanted some 'alone' time with Wesley, then 'alone' time he would get. She removed her hand easily from his tight grasp.

"Yeah, me and Faith. Got a bad ugly ass demon to find not that I'm going to be looking at said ass mind you...Well...Right...I feel like I'm starting to babble, but I'm not...See, this is so not me babbling. Gotta go for I'm Slayer gotta slay! Okay? Right, Bye!"

"Make sure you keep me updated! I *am* your Watcher, do remember that young lady!" The Watcher shouted at her, watching as she got lost quickly in the crowd. When he realized that he had shouted that in a crowd, he blushed and looked as if he was ashamed of himself. Then he turned his face a little and found Angel there invading his personal space. The Watcher took a nervous step back. Angel smirked and followed the step and made another. Becoming even closer.

"So, Watcher, what's your name?"


"Nice name, Wes."

"Um, I'd much prefer you to call me Wyndam-Pryce or even Wesley, not...What you just called me."

"So, *Wes*, going to give me the tablet?"

Angel fought the urge to kiss the hell out of his Wes, as those blue eyes filled with icy determination.

"It's hidden and safe." Wesley said coldly.

"Really?" Suddenly, Angel had his hands on Wesley. One hand on the man's thin shoulder, holding him still, while the other took liberties.

"Sir! Stop that right now! How dare you!?!"

Angel found and pocketed the tablet in a single move, but then went right back to touching the British man's stuff white dress shirt and pants. Rubbing lightly, wishing it was naked skin under his fingertips. He breathed in the human's scent. The man was aroused and scared. He breathed once more. Deeper then before. He wanted to capture the Watcher's scent, to keep it, to know it anywhere. To be able to find this man, anywhere.

"S-Sir, please do stop whatever you are doing. Um, please..."

"I'd rather be doing you, Wes." Angel whispered in to the blushing man's ear.

"Well, you will never be doing me!" Wesley yelled, trying to push Angel away. But like a brick wall, he didn't bulge.

"I'm not your enemy, Wes. I'm your new friend."

"Don't need any new friends, thank you."
Angel found himself smiling. "Fine, I need a new friend. A *special* friend. See you later, hmm?" With a quick light kiss upon Wesley's lips, he left. Going back into the shadows once more.

Wesley stood there with a trembling hand upon his lips, with vampire hearing, Angel could hear him saying softly, "Bloody hell...Wait...What, he took my tablet!...And he-he kissed me...Damn, I'm screwed."

(end of part 2)
Chapter 3: Page 3

Part 3

Putting aside the picture of Wesley at the Bronze, he started another picture. Starting with the hair...His lover's hair. At the time, Wesley had tried so hard to be perfect and the boss of everyone and everything. He wanted to fit in somewhere. Anywhere...

~*~FLASHBACK~*~

They had killed the demon. Electrocuting it and damn did it smell gross! While everyone around Angel left, he followed only one person.

About a block away from the warehouse, Wesley stopped, sighing heavily, he looked behind him. "Why are you following me?"

Angel was surprised that he had been caught, yet oddly proud that the young Watcher had known he was being followed. He stepped out of the shadows, saying softly, "Wanted too."

Wesley sighed once more and rolled his eyes. "And if I asked you *not* too?"

"Still would." Angel said not even trying to hide his smirk.

"I know what you are."

Angel shrugged. "Yeah, so do I. Been this way for two hundred and plus some years. Won't tell ya the exact 'some'. Kinda sensitive about my age, but seeing that you are a Watcher you probably already know my age. Probably have a big ol' file with the name Angelus on it. Bet after the light kiss I gave you, you went and got it. Reread it. All the while thinking about my hands all over that hot little body of yours. I'm really hoping that you'll tell me about it. Maybe even show me so I know right way what you like, but then what would be the challenge in that?"

Wesley looked dumbfounded, then said the first thing that came to mind. "I have a stake!"

Angel laughed. "Shows how smart you are and personally, I'm not afraid of long, hard and pointy objects. Kinda like them, I do. Want me to show you mine?...Wanta see my big manly stake, Wes?"

Wesley looked at him in stunned disbelief and a slight blush. "Stop that!"

"What?" Angel asked innocently, "We're talking about our...*Stakes*, right? Mine's very big. The offer's still open if ya want to see it."

He watched as Wesley moved his slackened jaw...

"You--you...Wanker! I'm going home! Leave me be." He started to leave to have Angel by his side, instantly with his hand upon Wesley's arm.

"Have ya eaten?"

"W-What?"

"Simple question. Have. You. Eaten. Come to my mansion and I'll order you a Pizza..."
"Um...I really should be go--"

"You're coming to my place for pizza, Wes."

Without another word, Angel walked him aka dragged the Watcher to his place.

After placing an order for a medium veggie pizza, Angel started a fire in his fireplace and glanced over to his guest. Who watched him with wide blue eyes. He sat on the sofa, sitting straight and tall, looking as if any moment he would escape given the chance.

Angel took off his leather jacket and slid next to Wesley. To take delight in noticing the nervous swallowing and the wonderful scent of arousal. Angel placed his hand on Wesley's knee. The British man gave a small jump. "Angel!"

"First time you ever called me by my name. I like that, Wes, I like that a lot."

"Can you get anymore creeper?"

"Um, yeah, if that turns you on. Let's see...Hmm, okay, for example, if you ever decide to take that handsome head out of your ass and start to miss it, I'll be happy to replace it with something we'll both enjoy."

Wesley blinked at him, then, Angel saw rage start to burn like fire from his eyes.

"Sir, you are a crude and...And an evil vampire! I was stupid to come here with you! I should have waved my cross in your face the moment I recognized who you were!"

"It tells me something, that you didn't. I'm not evil, Wes. Got a soul. I'm comfortable with my demon. I'm just Angel. I wouldn't mind being *your* Angel. Though, Wes, my demon wouldn't mind being yours either."

He reached out and touched Wesley's silky soft cheek tenderly.

"Angel..." Wesley said softly, staring at the vampire's lips that were slowly moving closer to his.

"Yeah, I know." With that Angel captured Wesley's lips. His demon growled, yelling at him to possess this man. Now! Claim him. For he was theirs!

The kiss was hungry and passionate. Wild intense sensation sliced through them both. The kiss almost primitive in nature.

Angel ended the kiss, he looked at the breathless and dazed Watcher.

Angel could feel that he was wearing his game face, yet didn't care.

"Don't you hate him?"

Wesley still looking dazed now looked confused as well. "Huh?"

Angel smiled shifting back into his human face. "The Pizza Delivery Man."

"Huh?" Wesley repeated still in a daze as if that was the only word left in his brain that he knew.
"He's at the door." Angel got up and gave Wes another quick kiss on the lips. "Be right back. Remember where we left off, okay?"

Angel paid the delivery guy and with food in hand, he turned around to find Wesley gone. The side door leading to the court yard still opened. Angel sighed, knowing that next time his Wesley wouldn't be allowed to escape. The only reason he was letting him run right now was because he had something important to do...

**A little later, still in flashback**

"Bloody hell, ya silly girly Poof! There's something called knocking! You're over two hundred years old, you should have learned to practice it, by now!" Spike growled, covering up Xander with the sheet at the end of their bed. Not caring that he himself was left uncovered in his naked glory.

All Xander noticed was the pizza box. He held out his hands as if he was a little excited child, crying, "Ooo, Gimme! Gimme!"

Angel gave Xander the box, watching as the boy hungrily ate the now cold pizza.

Spike lifted an eyebrow. "Sodding wanker, I'm sure you're not here to give my mate food. Which is kind and makes my Xan happy so I won't kick your fat lumpy ass for not knocking."

Angel glared at his grandchilde. "My ass is *not* fat and lumpy. I came in hopes that Xander will do something for me."

"Wha?" Xander said, with a huge bite of veggie pizza in his mouth.

"About my curse. Jenny once told us to be careful, something about a strange clause. Can we get rid of it?"

Xander nodded as he swallowed then said, "All ready looked into it. It's possible to make that soul of yours all permanent like. Oh, wait! Does this mean you found someone you want too--"

"Yeah, I think, definately thinking along the lines of perfect happiness with this one."

"Stop that!" Spike shifted into game face, as he growled threateningly at the other vampire.

"What?" Angel asked stunned.

"You had a silly smile on your stupid face. You're supposed to be all broody and non-smilely, remember, Peaches?"

"Who is she or he?" Xander cut in quickly.

"The new Watcher."

Xander stared at him in total shock, "You are one strange vampy, Big-A."

Any trace of a smile was gone from Angel's face, "Don't call me that, Harris."

"Okay. Whatever you say Deadboy, or should I say, A-man."
Angel rolled his eyes as he sighed.

Spike shifted back into his human face and stared at him. "You're interested in a sodding happy meal with legs? Interesting. Freaky as hell, but interesting. I shouldn't really talk seeing me mate's human."

Angel nodded. "It's weird. Like both my demon and soul are in agreement. They both want him. Have to have him. That's *never* has happened to me before in all my years."

Spike nodded then pointed at him with his index finger. "Be careful. Not sure why the bloody hell, I'm telling you this, but loving a human is hard. Very hard and emotional. But damn it, if it isn't worth it. I never thought I'd fall in love with one. Need and want one like I do with my Xanpet here. Hell, if ya had told me a few years ago that I'd be getting the best shagging of me unlife, by a *human*. Then staking me own Sire, my beautiful princess, 'cos she tried to kill my yummy treat, then ended up getting bonded with said human. And because of the sodding bonding ritual, ending up with half a human soul, caring and loving what my Xand does. Which means not trying to kill the Slayer *and* wanting to fight the good fight, I'd have finger painted with your guts!"

"Sure, glad you're on our side, Spike." Angel said with a chuckle.

Spike waved his hand angrily. "I'm on whatever fucking side my Xanlove is. If he wanted to do evil, I'd be right there with him! Enjoying myself in the bloodshed. If he wants to be a sodding white hat, I'll go and steal one and wear it proudly beside him."

Xander looked over at his mate with pure and devoted love pouring from his eyes.

Angel couldn't help but wish that one day he'd see that look in Wesley's intense blue eyes. One day...Maybe...But first he would have to show him who he belonged too...

Angel couldn't help but smile at that thought...

(end of part 3)
Part 4

Angel looked at the finished picture. His Wes was gone. Not fair. He should have bonded Wesley to him whether his lover had wanted to or not.

But no, he'd given his Wesley time. Time to get over his fear. Time to die and leave him alone. Damn it!

Yes, being bonded to a vampire would have been hard, but he knew his beloved had been strong enough. Knew his Wes could handle his memories.

Would have accepted all he'd done and loved him even more for rising above it. Or at least Wesley would have helped him rise above it all.

His darling boy had already given up so much already. Because Wes had loved him, he lost things that at one time had been important. But later had gotten more. He had told the Council that he wasn't going to kill Angel. He was his lover, and he just wasn't going to kill Angel even if the man in question was a bloody vampire. That had been the main reason that Wes had been fired. Another reason was because he hadn't told the all important, full of themselves, Watcher Council about the accident.

The sad accident that had Willow killing the Assistant to the Mayor. Willow hadn't meant to do it, afterward she had nearly gone off the deep end in guilt. Only Xander and Faith kept her from falling completely into the darkness and trying to kill herself.

Thank heaven, that Faith fought Willow one dark night. Talked to her. Yelled at her. Punched at her. All the while trying to help her first real friend she had ever had. They were Slayers. Sisters in the fight 'til the end. Afterward Angel found Faith leaning against a tree in the cemetery. Her eyes full of the emotions that she was dealing with.

"You did good, tonight. Saved Willow. She's weeping in Xander's arms right now, but she'll be okay."
Angel could remember telling the dark haired Slayer.

Faith's brown eyes met his, "What Willow did? It could have been me. That night...It could have so easily been *me* that killed that man. One day it still *could* be me. I could have blood on my damn hands and telling myself that I don't give a crap."

Angel shook his head, "No, Faith, never happening."

"Nice to know you can see into the freaking future, VampBoy."

Angel shook the old memory from his mind. Too bad he hadn't seen into the future, if he had, his Wesley would still be alive. His Wesley. He shouldn't have died. Damn it! They should have been bonded. Hell, Wes gave up being a official Watcher for him! He had even been disowned by is freaking family! Why? Because Wesley loved him! A vampire with a soul.

But Wes hadn't wanted to be bonded just yet...

After a year and a half together, Angel had told him, "I want us to be bonded."

He could still remember how Wesley looked up from the ancient text he'd been studying, and sighed, "Angel..."
Angel, all in a moment took away Wes’ text, tossing it upon the table, and lifted his chin with a single finger.

"Did you hear me, Wes?"

"How could I not?"

"So..."

Wesley moved his chin away from his lover’s fingers. "Not right now."

"Why not?" Angel asked putting his hands into his pockets, afraid if he didn’t he’d start to shake Wesley or throw him on the desk and screw him senseless...Well, the throwing Wesley on the desk and having his wicked way with him, really wasn’t a bad idea. Angel could rip those tan slacks off in seconds!

Wesley looked at his lover. "Because I'm not ready."

"Is it because when you become bonded with me, you'll share my memories? My joy as Angelus?"

"God no." Wesley whispered. "It's not that."

Angel watched as Wesley moved to pick up the text once more.

"Then why? Tell me, 'cos I sure as hell won't give you time, without knowing why, Wes!"

"Damn it, Angel!" Wesley threw down the text as he ran a hand through his dark hair. "Because! Why in the bloody hell do you have to push! I don't feel worthy and I feel scared when I think about it! There happy! I'm a wimp, alright. Don't you get it, you thick headed moron?! The bond works *both* ways! You'll end up sharing *my* memories. My feelings! But most of all my memories, don't you understand? You'll relive everything my Father...The things I'm not ready to share. The things that I am still deeply ashamed of. I'm not ready to see the look upon your face when you see...I'm just not ready. I'm sorry...Really, but God, Angel. I'm not ready. Please just give me time. That's all I ask. Please understand, that's all I need. Time. I watch Xander and Spike and know that being bonded is a thing of beauty and respect. But you know what being bonded means. A part of you would always be in my mind. I would be in yours and damn it, I love you. With all my heart, I do. I would die for you. Live for you. Kill for *you*. But...I need time. Please, give that to me. Please..."

Angel moved and wrapped his arms around his favorite ex-Watcher.

"Okay, Wes, but I'm going to keep asking."

Wesley nodded slowly, then he reached for Angel's lips. After a light kiss, he whispered, "Thank you..."

"You're welcome." Then Angel slammed his lips onto Wesley's. The time for talking had passed...

*~*~*~*

Angel blinked as he realized someone was knocking on his door. He growled in aggravation wondering what dumbass would be bothering him. He then sighed as he remembered how he could so easily turn on his Wes with a simple growl.

Angel watched as his door was opened and Xander walked in. He stopped, shoving his hands into his pockets as he looked at the vampire.
"You know for a place as evil as Sunnydale, pretty much all my friends never lock their doors. Weird, don't ya think?"

Angel looked down at his drawing of his dead lover. His pencil hovered over the drawing. After a moment, Angel asked, "What do you want, Xander? I have a feelin' you're not here to talk about why no one living over a damn Hellmouth believes in locks."

Xander rocked on his hells, pressing his lips together. He waited for Angel to look at him. Instead, Angel calmly started yet another picture.

As if Angel drew enough of them it would bring Wesley back.

Xander took a deep breath and released it slowly. His friend was hurting. He got that. He understood that, but it was time to start living again. Okay, 'living' might not be the best word when applied to a vampire.

"Our investigation agency is busy as always. Being the only investigation agency in Sunnydale will always keep one busy. Plus, being an agency that deals with the supernatural and demons and such. Wow! Busy, let me tell ya. But then you know this. I mean, come on, we're the only agency that has a Slayer, a Seer, ex-cop, three vamps and a handsome, sexy as hell, male witch who happens to be bonded to one of the three vamps." Xander said with a half smile upon his face. He wanted to kick himself when he saw a small wince cross Angel's face at his word, 'bonded'.

Maybe he shouldn't have babbled as he just did. He knew Angel had wanted Wes to be his bonded mate. Longed for it as much as he longed for Wesley now.

He took his hands out of his pockets and moved a little closer to the vampire.

He looked at the dozen pictures around him upon the floor. All baring the face of his dead allie and close friend. He watched as Angel started to draw the familiar looking eyes...

"Angel..." Xander said softly, shaking his head, yet knowing he had to continue. "Wesley would hate what you're doing to yourself."

At that Angel looked up, braking the yellow wooden pencil, as he growled, "Don't you dare--"

"What? Speak the damn truth? Damn it, you are part of the team. Part of the family. The pack. Spike, Faith, Gunn, Doyle and Kate. Remember them? Do you remember that we fight the good fight? That we help people? Every damn day and night, we make a deference. Make things better. We are the guardians to the Hellmouth! Any of this ringing a bell in that big head of yours?"

"Get out!" Angel threw the papers out of his lap as he went into game face. "Get the hell out, Harris!"

But instead of that, Xander moved in placing his hands upon Angel's chair. Trapping him, as he leaned forward, nose to nose with the hurting vampire.

"That's one of the things, Wesley loved about you! The fact that you cared and helped others! Look at yourself, Angel. You're sitting here on your dead ass drawing pictures of your *dead* lover! Everything in this room is how *he* left it! Other than the thousands of pictures everywhere. I know that if I check your bedroom the sheets on the bed would be the same before that night, that we all lost him. Hell, his laundry is still in the damn basket waiting to be washed! He's gone, Angel! He's dead! Let go, damn it! You know, he'd want you to continue the good fight. He wouldn't want you to be doing this to yourself."
Angel looked at Xander with pure hatred and rage. With a violent push he shoved Xander away from him. He stood up with clenched fists, as he took a step toward the man laying on the ground. All Xander did was look up at him and wait. The sound of crunching paper stopped the vampire. Looking down he saw his foot was on the most resent drawing of Wesley, smiling.

He quickly removed his foot. His face reverted back to human.

Looking at the pictures around him, the vampire whispered, "I'm sorry..." Xander wasn't sure if he was apologizing to him or to the pictures of Wesley. The powerful witch swallowed hard and moved to slowly stand up.

"I want him back, Xan. I need him. He...I never knew what love was before him. I loved him, Xander. He was mine, and he was the first and only human I ever loved. Hell, I didn't even love *anything* like I loved him."

"I know." Xander replied softly, coming closer to his friend. "Damn it, I know. Brood about it, Big Guy, you know how to do that pretty well, just keep fighting the good fight. The Powers made you a Guardian. A protector of helpless and innocent people. Do what you are called, chosen, to do."

Angel turned away and spoke what had been on his mind full time lately.

"We should have been bonded. That way he'd have had some of my vampire strength and--"

"Or he might have still died and we would have lost you both."

Angel looked up at Xander, his eyes dead, face expressionless. But Xander heard the unspoken words.

"Oh." He couldn't help but whisper softly. His heart breaking into tiny jagged pieces at Angel's calm words...

"Would you stake me? If I asked you too, Harris, would you? I...I can't do this without him. There isn't a day that goes by that I don't think about going into the sun. So would you? Stake me...Please..."

(end of part 4)
Faith took a deep breath and shook her head, "He actually asked you that? Angel asked you to stake him?"

"Yeah." Xander replied, trying to hold Spike even closer to him. He was sitting on his vampire's lap. Cuddling as close as he could, not caring what his friends thought. For he was enjoying the closeness and comfort of his mate. Spike lovingly ran his fingers through his Xan's hair as his other hand rubbed his back.

"Times like this a man could use a drink, ya know." Doyle told them, getting an 'I dare you too' lifted eyebrow from his beautiful blonde wife.

"Bloody Poof! Obsessed he is. Yeah, Wes was his boy. Lusted after him, loved him and needed him, and everything else. All he's thinking about is the fact that Watcher boy is dead. Sodding hell, I'd try to find someone he didn't like and torture them, if it would make him feel better! Don't like seeing Peaches hurting, not unless I'm doing it!" Spike complained.

"Plus, if you torture someone, it would be fun for you." Xander said with a knowing look.

"It would make me happy, so yeah." Spike said with a smirk.

"At least, Xander got Angel to go patrolling with you guys last night." Kate said before taking a sip of her diet soda.

"Yeah, fun for us all." Gunn spoke up, sitting on the desk by his girl, polishing his special and favorite axe. "Acted like he hoped a demon would kill him. Which being a demon and with this damn crappy chip the way it is, I could do it if he really wanted me too!"

Faith kicked him hard and he looked over at her, in full vampire face, "Oooo, Slayer, told ya about foreplay in the office."

"Later, lover." She smirked at him.

"Guys, Angel's going over the edge. How do we stop him from falling." Xander asked, concern in his voice.

"Maybe we can't." Kate said softly.

Doyle sighed heavily, reaching over to give her hand a gentle squeeze.

"Hell no! We'll keep him from falling!" Faith said, swinging out of his chair. She cupped a fist in her hand as she paced before the group. "As the Slayer, I've seen impossible situations, each time I thought we were screwed raw in the backside we'd jump right back. We've saved people. Helped them. Um, yeah, sometimes we didn't save them in time and failed, like with that skin eater we fought that killed ten of our clients, but that's not the damn point that I'm trying to make!"

"The point is, even if it seems impossible, we'll still help our friend." Doyle said with a smile at the tight black leather wearing Slayer.

Faith smiled back. "Yeah. That's the fucking point I'm talking about."

"Yeah." Xander said with a far away look in his eyes. "Remember Willow? My bestest friend since
kindergarten. Then being our sophomore year in High School, hell the summer before it, I started to notice a change in Will's attitude. Yeah, she normally spent time in the library but she was different. Weight of the world upon her shoulders different. Sharpening wooden stakes in a corner by herself at lunch time different. Keeping secrets from Jesse and me, different. Then the day came that I hear her yelling at Giles, saying she didn't give a damn about being the Chosen One, anymore. The world be damned she told him. She didn't care, for she had just staked her best friend the night before. Willow blamed herself you see, for not saving our pal Jesse. First time she had ever staked someone that she loved and cared for. At the time I didn't even know about Slayers and vampires. I just knew that my Willow was in pain. I remember stepping out behind those stacks of books and saying her name. She turned and saw me, she fell apart right there. Falling to the floor and sobbing like the world had ended. She babbled ya know, saying she shouldn't be a Slayer 'cos she was a failure at it, she couldn't save Jesse and one day she wouldn't be able to save me. I put my arms around her and I told her that it would be alright. That I believed that she'd be able to save me one day, for she was Willow...And whatever a Slayer was, I'd right there beside her. Helping her, I'd be her cheerleader, but I wasn't going to wear the cute little skirt that went with the outfit.

Xander looked up at Faith, blinking away his tears. "At the time things looked impossible but it really wasn't."

Faith looked at him seriously and gave his shoulder a light squeeze. "Xan, your point is so much stronger then mine. Stop showing me up or I'll have to beat the crap out of you."

Xander laughed knowing she didn't mean it, and the Slayer's laughter a few seconds later confirmed it.

"Okay, impossible. Make it not impossible. So, how?" Doyle asked.

Everyone shrugged and looked away.

"Wait a minute, I have a thought."

Everyone looked at Gunn expectantly.

"We take him to Vegas."

Faith kicked him, then went and whacked him across his shiny bold head. "Damn, I love it when ya do that. Get's me all horny, girl, you know I like that."

"Vegas? Interesting thought Gunn, but no." Xander told him matter of factly.

"The only thing that could pull my sodding GrandSire back from the bloody edge would be Wesley."

"I'm not bringing him back from the dead, Spike." Xander said with icy determination in his voice.

"Check my heart. Check my mind, Xanlove. Ya got a sodding invite into my mind, use it! You'll know at once that I never thought ya should."

After a moment, Xander said softly, "I know, Spike, but I've been thinking it. No matter how many times I say 'No'. I hurt for Angel. I hurt for you 'cos your hurting for your GrandSire. We all hurt and...and damn it! I miss Wesley too! He was my friend, then he gave his life for the both of us! Even before that he was there. Once you had his friendship he was loyal and steadfast to you. I miss him thinking that drinking tea makes things better. How his eyes would light up if on movie night someone would say, 'Let's watch John Wayne'. I simply miss him. I wish Wes wasn't dead, but he is. Hell, I'd bring him back in seconds, screw the consequences."
"But ya won't and no one in this room is asking ya too, Xan." Spike told him tenderly. His hands slowly stroking up and down Xander's arms. Trying his best to comfort his bonded mate.

"You're right. We all hurt. I lost my Watcher." Faith looked away, so no one could see how hard it was to talk about this. "So far, I've had two Watcher's die on me. Two! A Slayer isn't suppose to out live her Watcher, ya know? Even if to the world and to the dickless Council, Wes was an ex-Watcher. To me, he was...Crap it all!"

"Too bad there isn't another Wesley in this world. Be so much simpler." Kate added carelessly. Taking another deep drink of her soda.

Xander shot out of Spike's arms and grabbed Kate, not caring that her soda went everywhere, including on themselves. His eyes wild and wide as he lightly shook her. "What did you just say?"

(End of part 5)
"I said it would be simpler if there was another Wesley in the world."

"In *this* world there wouldn't be but in another..." Xander said slowly, thoughtfully as the hamster wheel in his mind started to spin.

He let Kate go, not noticing that the soda from earlier was all over her white T-shirt, clinging and showing off her cleavage. Her husband noticed and smiled happily at the view he was getting.

Spike stood up. "I'm seeing what ya thinking..."

Doyle never looked away from Kate as he asked his friends, "What are you two thinking, which is the first and hopefully *only* time, I'll be askin' that. Mostly 'cos you two make me want to drink."

"Doyle, honey, anything would make you want a drink." Kate quickly told her husband.

"Yeah, good point." He looked away bashfully, then he slipped off his brown leather jacket and handed it to his wife.

She smiled as she slipped it on.

Faith nodded, "Is this about the time we met the vampire Xander from that crazy alternate reality?"

Spike jammed his hands into the pockets of his tight black jeans, smirking as he remembered, "I sure do remember that time. All that leather. Fangs...The shagging...Hmmm, fun it was."

Xander looked over at his lover. "Yeah, I know, I was there remember? The sex was intense..."

"What!?! There was a threesome with...Oh, God...I *so* need to wash my mind out with soap right now!" Doyle told them with a grimace.

"Want me to tell ya where I hid your bottle?" Kate asked with the same look of displeasure at the thought of vamp Xan, Spike and Xander getting it on together.

"Yeah, that VampXan, did incredible things with that tongue of his." Faith said, taking her stake out to twirl it with her fingers.

"Didn't Willow bang him too?" Spike asked, trying to remember.

"Hell yeah! I was there! It was a wild threesome...It was...Damn, it was something!" Faith said with a dazzling smile.

"Okay, can we please get back on the subject of why this VampXan from another place means crap to us?" Gunn cut in, not liking the thought of another vamp moving on his girl, even if it was in the past and all. Nor did it matter that he too was a vampire. Any vamp wanting a piece of his girl was getting staked. Any human, well, because of the stupid chip in his head he'd just pay some one to kill them slowly and video tape it so he could watch it over and over again. Gunn smiled evilly at that happy thought.

"Alternate reality. The vampire me was from an alternate reality." Xander excitingly paced, rubbing his sweaty palms onto his baggie blue jeans.
"Alternate Reality? Still not sure what that is, so what is it?" Kate asked, wondering what was going on.

"A what if world." Doyle said with bright hopeful eyes. Knowing in his heart what Xander was talking about. Bringing back one of his dearest friends. Wonderful dart and poker player. Always willing to buy him a drink or two. Instantly at his side with a note pad and a bottle of beautiful amber liquid after a painful vision. His pal, Wesley. Yeah the man was British, but then no one was perfect now were they? "What if I had never been a Seer? There's another Doyle out there in an Alternate universe somewhere that has never had a mind blowing vision, lucky bastard."

"There are billions of alternate worlds. To an outsider *we* are an alternate, but to us, they are the weirdo's." Xander also helped to explain.

"So somewhere there's *other* Wesleys...Oh! We go and get us one! Makes sense." Kate told them as she found a rag from somewhere to clean up some of the mess from earlier. Though she was tempted to throw the rag to Xander. Seeing he was the one to make the mess in the first place.

"Well, actually we'd send Angel, if he's willing. He goes and woes him, talk him into coming and making *this* reality his new home."

"Oh, you bet your sweet nummy yummy arse, Peaches will be willing, the moment you say another Wesley is out there! May not be *our* Wes, but he'll smell and *be* Wesley! And to Mr I-secretly-want-to-be-a-poofy-girly-man, that's all that bloody matters!"

"But isn't it dangerous?" Doyle asked. "There are so many alternates, how do we find one where Wes is alive, knows about demons and vampires...There are so many things that can go wrong with this idea! Wesley could already be in love with the other Angel... Or...Or hate his guts and try to stake him on sight!"

"If Wes hates him, be more of a challenge for our dark vampy then wouldn't it?" Faith told them with a twinkle in her eyes.

"We do a spell that will find a good, interesting reality, a spell that will also work in bringing Angel back home and a willing Wes."

"What if Wes isn't willing?" Kate asked with concern deep in her tone.

"Then the Poof will have a chance to say goodbye. Tell him, even if it is a sodding lie that Wesley *has* to be willing. If forced or kidnapped it wouldn't work and he'd come back instantly without him." Spike told the group.

Xander nodded at his bonded mate. "Angel will just have to romance him and woo him to come here. I think I know a spell that...Well, I *will* find a spell that will work. Then, we'll welcome our new Wesley home. All in favor?"

"Aye!" Everyone said loudly and as one.

It was unanimous. They were going to let Angel bring another Wesley home.

(end of part 6)
Part 7

It was quiet in the lobby of Guardians Inventions. Everyone stood still and looking around them in awe.

Xander sat in the middle of the spacious lobby, with his shirt off. His palms were facing upwards. Yet, in his right hand he held a blue glowing stone. Fire danced from the three tall white candles around him. The fire made Xander's eyes seem even darker and dangerous with all the magic flowing through him.

Yet, what held everyone in suspended awe was not Xander, but the tiny white glowing stones flying around them. They seemed to be dancing to their own special song.

Xander slowly rose, as if he was a king about to speak to his nation. In a cold commanding tone he said, "Reveal only the realities that have one Mr. Wesley Wyndam-Pryce alive and human."

Thousands of little lights disappeared, yet still millions remained.

"Reveal only those that know about vampires and fights the good fight." Xander said, watching more lights go out. Only then did he look over at Angel, who stood off in a corner, alone.

"Sounds good? Anything else you want added?"

"It's good, Xan." Angel said looking at all the small lights before him.

"Now what?"

Suddenly, near where Faith was standing a glowing light exploded.

"I didn't do anything!" Faith said quickly, hiding her burnt finger behind her back.

"Touching it wouldn't matter any, Faith. That world must have lost an apocalypse."

"Cool!" Spike and Faith said together.

"I mean in a cool, yet very sad way." Spike said hastily after the look his lover threw his way. "Is that a good answer? 'Cos I'm really in the mood to shag like crazy tonight!"

"Luckily, I'm in the mood for sex later, too, Fangboy. So, Angel, remember what I told ya. Any reality you go to won't be exactly like this one, in fact it could be a very different reality. You could go to a world with no shrimp, chocolate, or even no Spike! Which if I went to the world with no shrimp, it wouldn't be no big thing, but the other two--Hellish, nightmarish realities. Get my meaning?"

"Yeah, Xander, I get it. I get that there will be another Wesley there, that is all that matters."

Xander sighed, watching his broody friend. "Angel, there's a chance that in any of these realities, Wesley will not exactly *act* like the Wesley we knew and loved. Experiences makes, brakes and shapes us, Big-A. His experiences could and may be totally different from ours...Get what I'm saying?"

During the speech, Angel touched some of the white glowing pebbles. They all seemed to say something. There was emotion in each different one.

Angel's eyes widened when he realized that these feelings were some of the things the Wesley in that reality
was feeling...

The twelfth one he touched screamed at him. He winced, there was an almost longing and loneliness to the feeling, mixed with pain, despair, hate, darkness and love...This was Wesley...

Angel would hate to admit that he was ever in awe of something, yet in all honestly he was. He knew that this was Wesley, even through the heartbreaking pain. Angel understood pain, understood darkness, understood loneliness...Plus, he longed for his friend and lover...

The small stones that floated around him showed him Wesley's emotions, revealed to him something about the world he would be going to...The other stones didn't move him like this one. Maybe 'cos it had more emotion screaming from it. Maybe 'cos if Angel had bonded Wes to him, he'd have been able to feel Wesley's emotions as strongly as he could feel it now...


Angel swallowed hard and palmed the floating stone. Curling his fist around it, and closing his eyes letting the emotion ride over him. Flood him. He breathed in deep, making his lungs work for a second, first time in years. He could swear that he felt dust moving around in those lungs of his. Not that it mattered of course. The only thing that mattered was Wesley.

The Wesley in the reality he held, needed *him*. Angel. There was a Wes out there alone and hurting, that wasn't right. Not right at all. That Wes needed something or someone to soothe the hurt. Take away the pain. Replace it with something good. He needed a champion. A hero, that would do everything in his power to protect and cherish that beating heart in Wesley's chest. That Wesley needed *him*!

In game face, Angel snapped open his bright amber eyes and growled in a deep low voice, "This one! I want this one!"

"Are ya sure Angel? There's still a lot of other wacko worlds that ya haven't touched yet." Doyle spoke softly and kindly behind him.

Angel nodded. "I'm sure, this one." He released it from his fist and calmly circled it with his fingertips.

Xander reached over and with his left hand grabbed the stone from Angel. Immediately the powerful witch winced. "This Wesley is hurting. I feel great pain and sorrow. Loneliness, betrayal, worse of all abandonment when he needed friends the most. This one is sitting on the edge of great darkness, Angel. Maybe...Just maybe, it would be wise to pick another--"

"This one!" Angel said, with a dangerous edge to the bonded human. He had to go and save that Wesley. Didn't Xander understand that? He had to help him. Wesley needed him! He needed someone to reach out and grab his hand and say, 'It's alright.' Needed to save him from the darkness that was eating away at him. Angel could help him and embrace him. Show him hope. Show him love. Remind him that there was someone that cared. Walk with him in the light, and if he wanted to walk in darkness, then by the Powers there would be someone right beside him, holding his hand. He'd try to help. Try to take away that Wesley's pain and replace it with all of *his* love! Show that Wesley, that if his favorite demon hunter was willing, he'd belong to him! Wesley could be his once more!

With the glowing blue stone, in Xander's right hand, he took the white stone in his left and cupped his hands together. Xander spoke ancient words, calling upon the great goddess Hero.

Xander's eyes became a solid white as a beautiful bluish white light wrapped itself around the witch. The gang could sense that Xander was no longer there that the great goddess herself was about to speak. Silence
was heard loud and clear As Faith, Doyle and Angel fell to their knees, and said together, "We welcome you and thank you. We are your faithful servants."

"Stand, faithful ones. The Powers and I am pleased with your works." A powerful female voice spoke out of Xander. "Angel, the vampire with a soul, I understand you wish for my blessing and the power to bring another to this reality."

Angel kept his head bowed. "Yes, goddess, I beg this of you."

"You need not beg. You love this mortal much do you not?"

Angel looked at the possessed Xander, "Yes, goddess, I do."

"I will bless this. There are millions of warriors of darkness out there and we need as many good warriors for our side. Plus, the one known as Wesley..." The goddess fell silent as if searching for the right words, finally she continued, "This reality could use him. The Powers are pleased that you did not try to bring him back from the dead. They agree to this. I hope you will show this other Wesley much love. That you will make him want to came back with you. You have *one* week to convince the other Wesley to come here. Your friends were worried that you would try to force the other Wesley's will, but I know better. For you will not dare, for I, the goddess Hero, forbid it. He will come of his own free will. Understand this, at exactly midnight after the week is up, if your hand and his hand are cupped upon this stone that I will give to you, you both shall return. If his hand isn't on the stone then only you will return. This is a one time only deal. I will not allow you to go to another reality to try this again. *Never* will this be allowed again. Understand?"

"I understand goddess and thank you. You have my heart and praise."

"Keep your heart for your Wesley, foolish one, but I will accept your praise. Come to my temple after this is over. If this works the way you long for it too, then come to my temple--"

"Of course I will, goddess! I'll worship, praise, bring flowers and a gift basket. Do you like fruit?"

Xander's eyes narrowed dangerously. "Angel, you test me. I have *not* finished speaking."

"Sorry." Angel said, looking down right sheepish.

"If this works come to my temple. Bring the one you have chosen. The one you love. Then later if he wishes to one day be bonded to you, I will even bless it. Now come before me and stretch out your hand."

Angel quickly did as the goddess Hero commanded him to do. As he did, the goddess disappeared and Xander was the one to look at Angel with normal eyes. He blinked slowly while opening his hand to reveal not two stones but a single blood red stone.

"This stone will take you to him." Xander said placing the stone in Angel's hand. The second the stone touched the vampire's hand, he disappeared from sight.

"Good luck." Xander whispered, the others in the room, softly echo it back.

(end of part 7)

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Part 8

Angel slowly blinked as he found himself in a strange hallway, in front of a door. He quickly pocketed the red stone as he wondered briefly if he was still in Sunnydale, but then realized that it didn't matter. For he recognized a familiar, wonderful long lost scent...

Wesley.

The door lead him to Wesley. Behind that door was his home, it just had to be. The smell was too permanent to be anything otherwise.

Angel reached out with a shaking hand and caressed the hard cold painted white door, gently, almost as if standing before him wasn't the door at all but his lover.

How different was this Wesley? Could Wesley really be romanced into going back with him in only a week? Hell, what did Angel know about romance? Nothing! Fuck, once as Angelus he hurt a cute puppy for Darla in the name of romance. It had been Valentine's day. She had thought it had been one of the most romantic jests ever. But he didn't think this Wesley would be swept off his feet with seeing the torturous death of a small canine.

Maybe if he went and got flowers real quick? Or cologne? A box of chocolates? Fruit basket? Give him midnight blow job?

In honesty, he hadn't even romanced his Wesley. He had simply told Wes, that he belonged to him and that was all there was to that. Yes, Wes had tried to ignore him. Telling him at every chance to get away from him. Hell, soon the gang had started to place bets with how long Wesley would last, before he finally accepted the fact he was Angel's. Their Willow had won, down to the exact day. Yet, it hadn't been that hard to get his Wes. Heated kisses and blow jobs in the middle of cemeteries and the old High School library, made it hard for the Watcher to ignore the attraction. Plus, Angel could tell he had loved the attention. Having the big powerful vampire, wanting only him.

After awhile he had Wesley admitting that he was indeed the vampire's and that his beating heart as well as his sexy as hell buns of steel ass belonged to him.

But it took longer then a week to do all that! A week! Damn, he respected and loved the great goddess Hero, but really the centuries old goddess must have lost her mind ages ago! A whole fucking week? Could he really romance this Wesley in only a week?

He had picked this one because this Wes was in pain. Was the damn pain something the Angel from this reality caused? If not, why wasn't the other Angel taking care of the human that belonged to him? Did this reality even have the vampire with a soul? What if this world didn't have a Angel but an Angelus? Oh, crap! Not that he didn't accept and love his demon, but really Angelus would *not* have even let Wesley leave the bed chamber, if he ever met him.

There had been many times when he had agreed whole heartily with his demon, a naked Wes, chained to the bed...Was a very intoxicating thought.

Now, there was a chance that he could have a new Wesley, for the first time he had doubts. Worries, that he couldn't do it. What if this Wesley loved this reality despite the pain the world had given him? What if he loved another? Suddenly, pictures of a human taking his Wesley's body with their own hit him. Angel growled, eyes flashing with pure hate filled yellow. No, damn it! Wesley was his! Always would be, even if
this reality was different. Wesley was still Wesley. That sexy skinny body of his was owned by him! Angel and Angelus had claimed him a long time ago.

No one was allowed to touch what was theirs without getting a damn painful broken neck as a reward!

With that thought he pounded on the door with his fist.

Seconds later, the door opened and the man behind it froze with surprise flashing across a darkly handsome face before being quickly hidden behind a mask of cold indifference.

Angel was stunned. Truly stunned. His face slid back into his human side as he swallowed hard. That before him was a pure dark manly vision of his Wes. A vision that he never even thought had been possible. His face was unshaven, hard and beautiful. Blue eyes held true dark and exciting mysteries that were not hidden behind wire frames. It was Wesley, yet not. Different. So very different from his Wes, yet...It was Wesley nevertheless.

Wesley stared at him pushing the door open a little wider as he crossed his arms, looking like a displeased lord of the manor and Angel was a dirty servant boy who had done great wrong.

"Found away to escape from the bottom of the ocean, did you?" He asked in a low icy tone.

Angel not knowing what this Wes was talking about, eyed him up and down hungrily. Liking how those tight faded blue jeans fitted him, while wishing Wesley would turn around so he could give him a look see. Then he'd rip those tight ass jeans off with his teeth! Though that ugly dark blue T-shirt would be the first to go.

Thinking Angel's hesitance was something else all together, Wesley added, "I made Justine tell me. Surprised that you aren't a weak drowned rat, and it looks like that glob of hair gel of yours still works wonders even in water."

Only as Wesley had tilted his head a little to the side, did Angel noticed a jagged, painful looking scar upon his neck. Someone dared to mark what was his. Tired to kill Wesley.

Angel felt compelled to reach out and touch it, but his fingers never made contact for Wesley jerked away with a glare.

"Tell me what you want Angel, then get the hell out!"

"Not even *in* Wes. Not yet, would really like to be though." Angel told him, testing the invite barrier. Finding that he could enter, knowing that it meant the other Angel had once been invited, he came in, pushing Wesley to the side. Then slamming the door with the heel of his black boot.

Suddenly, not caring if Wes would stake him later, he did something he had wanted to do the moment he'd found this Wesley. He reached over and hugged him tight.
Wesley stiffened, trying to pull away, but found he couldn't. Slowly, he closed his eyes and sighed. This felt nice. Too nice...He should be hating this moment, shouldn't he? Why wasn't he? Was it because he was weak when it came to this man that he hated yet loved. He shouldn't be giving a shit about Angel! Yet, here he was, embracing the powers champion right back...

It shouldn't feel right...Yet, it did.

Maybe it really wasn't right. Maybe this was another damn game the vampire thought up, to hurt him. Maybe this was a new punishment. Wesley had to wonder where Angel was going with this. What was his former friend's game? Break his neck when the damn hug was over. Surprise him with yet another sodding pillow over his face? Maybe Wesley should pull out the weapon that he had hidden on his person, show Angel he wasn't going to take his crap. Not anymore.

His eyes snapped open in shock as he felt a hand rub over his ass, before he was released from Angel's arms. Something was off. Definately off...

Okay, maybe Angel had changed a lot over the summer, while he had been watching the fish swim around him. Or...This wasn't Angel. Anyway, the Angel he knew never looked at him the way he was looking at him now.

Yet, he felt in his heart that it was Angel. He smelled like Angel normally did. Wore the same supposedly non-scented hair gel, old leather and a small hint of dust and ancient texts. Damn, he had missed that smell. Also, missed that low tone of the vampire's while he talked to him. Bloody hell, he simply missed Angel all together! Though he would never admit that out loud. Nor did he want to miss him. For he knew that if push come to shove, Angel wouldn't miss him. Hell, he'd forget about him easily. Wouldn't care if he died tomorrow...

Damn. One day he wouldn't care, Wesley promised himself. Wouldn't care how Angel felt about him...

Wesley studied the man before him. There was a hungry look to the vampire. More then just the hunger for blood, but something more. Deeper. Something, Wes, used to stupidly long for. Still, he knew instantly that this was Angel...

Wasn't he? Unless someone stole his body *again*. But Wes didn't think so. Well, might as well just get everything out in the open.

"Who are you? You're not the Angel, I know."

The man with Angel's face smiled.

"No matter how different the reality, you're still Wesley. Always smart. Must be the Watcher in you. Are you still a Watcher, Wes?"

Wesley felt his jaw drop. Nope, this wasn't his Angel, as if Angel could have been his anyway. That wasn't the point right now, was it? This Angel said 'different reality', didn't he? I should know something about that, but what? Wait, did he once meet a vampire Willow who was from an alternate reality?...Wesley suddenly remembered with awe.

"You're from an alternate reality." Wesley stated with certainty.
"Yeah. Might as well get that out in the open first."

"You want me to help you go back." Wesley found himself saying matter of factly. Knowing it wasn't a question. Guess some realities aren't all that different. 'Who's going to help you when you fuck up? Go to Wesley's. That's a good place to start.' He couldn't help but think bitterly.

Angel gave him an 'okay, now your being an stupid idiot' look.

"No." The vampire said with a shake of his head, putting his hands into his pockets. "I go back in one week. Here on business. Important personal business. I'm here to take away someone's pain. Help him."

For the first time in months Wesley's eyes came to life. He rubbed his hands together with excitement and quickly gestured to the sofa.

"Personal business, you say? Helping someone? Well, I'll be happy to help, by the way, want tea?"

Angel chuckled and went to sit down. "Sounds nice."

Wesley quickly left Angel were he sat, going towards his small hidden kitchen. He then filled the kettle and placed it on the stove. Inside his living room he heard Angel ask, "So are you?"

"Am I what?"

"A Watcher."

"No."

"Were you fired? My Wes was fired." Angel's voice was still heard from the living room...

"Wonderful." Wesley mumbled to himself. "I'm a failure even in alternate realities."

"No, you're not."

Wesley jumped and gave a small "eep!" as he swung around to face the vampire who had spoken. Angel was there leaning against the door jam as if he had always been there. Damn, supernatural vamp speed! Angel was calmly watching him.

Suddenly, the tiny kitchen felt even smaller.

"Not a failure, anyway. *Never* a failure. Not my Wes. He simply got fired for being in love."

"With his Slayer?" Wesley asked a little confused.

"With a vampire." Angel said with a loving smile.

"Oh, the Council wouldn't have liked that at all." Wesley said with a slight knowing nod. "So, yeah, that would get a Watcher fired quicker then turning off a Brittany Spears song playing on the radio."

"Ain't that the truth! The Council wanted you to kill the vampire. Wes wouldn't. He told them to piss off. Then they fired him, but Faith turned around and told Quentin Travers that the Council were the one's out of the job, cos they just lost an active Slayer. She told them that they were filthy shit and she wasn't going to be working for worthless shit. Then Willow, came up right beside her and said the same thing, without calling
them shit, of course. Called them mean jerky heads and told them that the Slayer's had just graduated. I found that scene very light hearted and gave me as Will would have said, 'warm fuzzies'."

"Willow? In your world *she* is the Slayer? Fascinating!"

For a single moment, Angel looked sad and down right broody. 'Must have loved her', Wesley thought to himself. 'Always loves and forgives the *girls* the little prick.' He couldn't help but continue that last line of thought with overwhelming bitterness.

"Was a Slayer. She *was*.

"Oh...Dead then."

Angel nodded, still watching him. "So's my Wes."

"Died together?"

"A year apart. Willow died first, saving the world--"

"And let me guess my fate, I tripped and fell upon my own sword."

"No, by saving two of your best friends. Demons with guns did my Wes in."

"Ouch." Wesley winced as he unconsciously rubbed at an old scar hidden under his dark blue T-shirt. He remembered very well how it felt to be shot...

Angel saw this movement and slowly moved away from the door jam, to get closer to the ex-Watcher. He pointed to the spot Wesley was rubbing.

"Got shot once?"

"For a friend." Wesley said softly. His blue eyes full of all kinds of emotions. "A *former* friend."

"Former or current, you're always faithful and loyal."

Wesley stared at him even as the whistle from the kettle sounded to say the water was now ready. He didn't jump or even look at it as with a flick of his fingers he had the stove off.

"You really don't know me then. The other Angel would disagree with you in a matter of seconds. For in this crazy reality, I'm a betrayer." Wesley said emotionless, moving toward the sink.

"And you've been looking for a vampire who's been trapped in the ocean for sometime, who you believe hates you, yet because he was your friend, you'll save him. *AND* that's not called being loyal and faithful? Huh, realities sure give a different vision of things, 'cos in my world, what you're doing is called faithful and loyal."

"How did you--I never once said I was looking for him!"

"But you are, aren't you Wes." Angel told him with firm certainty.

Wesley shrugged, forgetting all about the tea, going to the fridge and getting himself a bottle of beer. He handed one to Angel. Opening his own, he took a huge swig.
Angel reopened the fridge and looked in. Opening a container, he sniffed.

"Fresh pigs blood, tell me any other vamps in this reality that you hang out with?"

"No. That's for when I find Angel."

Angel smiled, shutting the refrigerator door. "I love being right."

"Piss off." Wesley told him with an icy cold glare.

"Can't piss, I'm a vampire remember? He's going to need more then pigs blood you know."

"I know." Wesley told him softly. "That's why I'm also taking a knife."

Angel sat down the unopened beer that Wes had handed him earlier, yet his hand remained curled around it as he leaned in close toward the ex-Watcher. With his other hand he reached out and lightly, and oh so gently, touched the wicked scar upon the other man's neck with his fingertips.

"Just don't let him take it all, Wes." Angel whispered.

Wesley placed his beer down next to Angel's, then he held on to the counter behind him, leaning on the edge. He closed his eyes, hating the gentle almost loving caress, yet yearning for it at the same time. He wanted to lean into the touch and beg for more. But Wesley was no longer the begging kind, he was going to make others do that. Not him. Never again.

"I won't, but if he wants it all, he can have it. I really don't care any more." Wesley whispered back in a raw husky voice.

"You love him, a lot don't you?" Angel said in an almost sad, broody tone. As he realized that he may not be able to get this Wesley to come back home with him. Maybe his lover was gone forever. Maybe this Wesley couldn't be his, maybe his heart would always belong to the other Angel. Damn, him.

At that Wesley opened his almost dead like eyes and stared at him for a long moment before saying, "To be honest, I don't know what I feel for him any more. I idolized him. He was everything I ever wanted to be and everything I ever wanted in someone to love. There was a time that I would have done anything for his approval. For his love. I'd die for him. I'd do whatever was and is necessary for *him*. Damn him to hell once more!"

"He don't love you?" Angel asked in obvious confusion.

"No, never has. Always finds another to love. Never me. Perhaps because I don't have nicely shaped female breasts."

"How in the hell is that possible, Wes?"

"I'm a man, having female breasts would be a challenge, don't you think?"

"No! Smart ass, I mean...How can he not love you?"

"Because, I'm me. He don't...I don't...I'm not very lovable I guess. Or I'm not worthy of love, maybe...I never get what I want. Never...Angel, will you stop that."

"What stop touching you? Do you really want me too?"
Wesley said nothing as he turned his head away. Making Angel lean forward to replace his fingers with his lips...

(end of part 9)
Chapter 10: Page 10

Part 10

Wesley moaned as Angel ran his cold lips upon his hot skin. Wesley reached up with one hand, to capture Angel's head. He held it in place.

Closing his eyes and moaning again as the vampire gently nipped at the scar with his teeth, not breaking the skin, just leaving little red marks, then soothing it with his tongue.

Wesley's fingers flexed in Angel's hair, this time making the vampire moan in pleasure. He pressed his body up against Angel's.

Angel sneaked a hand between them and cupped a little roughly, Wesley's jean clad erection.

"Oh! Damn, Angel..." Wesley said, passionately between clenched teeth as pleasure raced through them both.

With expert hands Angel rubbed and teased the hardness begging to be released from the rough blue jeans. Angel continued to kiss Wesley's throat and jaw. Breathing in the intoxicating scent that Angel had missed for so long! Loving the sounds of the fast beating heart and the taste of warm almost salty yet so damn familiar skin.

This was Wesley! Not his, but given time he would be...With that thought beating a drum dance in his head, he slammed his lips upon Wesley's.

Wesley's mouth opened willingly, letting their tongues dance and at times they seemed to wrestle for dominance. It was a powerful kiss. Full of emotions and desire. Wesley allowed his tongue to scrape a long a sharp fang.

Angel moaned in ecstasy as he tasted Wesley's life giving blood. So sweet. So hot. So powerful. Angel tried to suck on the bleeding tongue, yet Wesley would tease him with removing it back into his mouth. Their tongues continued to dance, as it became something slower, almost like their mouths were making love. A special private, beautiful love making.

Angel could sense that Wesley was starting to need air. Letting go of the wondrous lips, Wesley gasped to fill his hungry lungs with much needed oxygen.

Angel pressed his body close to Wes'. "Do you love her?" Angel growled, eyes flashing yellow.

Wesley opened his eyes and said nothing.

"The woman I smell all over you. She wears a lot of Chanel." Angel asked caressing Wesley's throat while making sure the ex-Watcher could feel his arousal. Pressing his clothed hardness that was begging to be let out to play against Wesley's thigh.

Wesley closed his blue eyes and tried to control his fast beating heart, then he opened them once more before stating, "Lilah isn't someone a man loves. I use her, she uses me. That's how it is. How it will always be."

"Lilah, huh? Classy name."

"Don't know her in your reality?"
Angel shook his head at the question. "Nope." He then started to kiss the other side of Wesley's neck. "Glad you don't love her...Real glad." He mumbled between kisses.

With one hand, Wesley caressed the cool smooth black leather upon Angel's back. His eyes had a far away look to them, as he felt those icy cold lips of Angel's leave trails of hot moist fire upon his skin. The Watcher in him wondered how that was even possible, yet another part said, 'who gives a damn! Just stop thinking and enjoy it!'

"It was you, wasn't it? You were the vampire the other Wesley loved."

Angel stopped and leaned back to look at him. "Yeah, I loved him, he was mine." The vampire reached out and touched Wesley's face with one of his fingers. Tracing his jaw and cheek bones. "You're a little bit different from my Wes. Just a little bit, but I know that given time I could love you. I want to love you. Wesley, I want *you* to be *mine*!"

Wesley breathed in a shaking breath, as he closed his eyes. Then he reopened them, a furious blue stared at Angel as with a violent shove, Wesley pushed the vampire back.

Surprised, Angel hit the refrigerator hard with his back. Making it shake, a roll of paper towels fell from the top of the fridge. Hitting Angel upside his head as his ass hit the hard tile floor.

Before him stood an sexy as hell, pissed off ex-Watcher. Wesley took slow steps toward him, as if he was a deadly jungle cat.

"I'm *not* yours, Angel! I'll never be yours!" Wesley said through tightly clenched teeth. "I was never Angel's in this reality and I'm sure in the hell will never be yours in your reality! Either one, get it!"

Suddenly, Wesley was on him, straddling Angel's thighs. A hand bared into Angel's hair as he savagely yanked the vampire's head back to make him look into those icy blue eyes of his.

"Do you understand what I'm saying, Angel, do you?" If a dangerous jungle cat could purr out words it would have sounded just like Wesley at the moment...

Angel found himself truly stunned by the sudden turn of events.

"I understand, Wes..." Angel said softly, then with a smile that was pure Angelus, he added for the English man, "That you're MINE!"

Wesley growled a wild almost animal like sound as he twisted his hand in the dark vampire's hair, yanking even harder.

Angel moaned in pleasure, wildly turned on by what his demon considered to be foreplay.

With his Wesley, he had tried to be gentle, almost sweet. Trying not to scare, hurt or harm him in any way. Many times he had to fight his demon from getting *too* rough. Too carried away. With Wes he had to stay in control at all times. For it would have killed him to place a signal bruise upon that beautiful white silky flesh. In his years with him he never bit him. Not even once. Though he had wanted too...As much as he had longed for Wes to be his bonded mate...

But this Wesley...Oh, goddess Hero, something told him that he wanted things rough, wanted bites, and bruises. Yet would be happy to have the gentle, sweet times as well. If and when *Wesley* wanted it that way. Otherwise...
This Wes wanted control. Longed for control. Wanted not to be owned but to be the owner. That was something Angel understood. Understood that quite well as a matter of fact.

"You *d*on't* own me!" Wesley repeated coldly, with a rough hard edge.

"You're mine, just as I'm yours, Wes, I'm yours!"

Wesley looked dumbfounded for a moment, as he slowly removed his hand from Angel's hair. Yet he still remained on top of him.

"You're mine?" Wes asked softly, rage seemed to leave him as quickly as it had flooded through him. For a second, Wesley looked uncertain, almost hopeful. He reminded Angel of his Wesley, the one he fell so madly in love with all those years ago.

"Hell yeah, I swear to the great goddess Hero, if ya want me to be yours. I'm yours." Angel said taking a unneeded breath. Wesley watched Angel, then...

Surprisingly, Wes slammed Angel's head hard against the fridge. "I'll think about it." He whispered, harshly, slowly getting off the dazed vampire. "Oh, stay here in the kitchen, don't come out. Lilah's here."

Only then did Angel notice the knocking that came from the front door.

"I don't want her to think you're the Angel everyone in this reality knows. They're looking for him also. Don't want to play that card. Stay here, be very quiet, understand?"

Angel nodded...Noticing that Wesley left the kitchen without waiting for his response. Never even looked back to see the nod.

"Damn, my new Wes is different." Angel said softly, sitting up and rubbing the back of his head. Feeling the huge bump there.

His Wes was different and unique, no doubt about that...

Yet he was *still* Wesley. HIS Wesley...All mine...

Still sitting upon the cold tile floor, looking at the doorway that Wesley just walked through, Angel grinned.

(end of part 10)
Chapter 11: Page 11

Part 11

Wesley wiped his sweaty palms upon his clothed stomach. He breathed in deeply to calm himself. Mentally, he counted to ten in an old Zebeerbe demon language. Then in yet another ancient dead demon language. See, old, rarely used languages *still* have their purposes.

Then he threw open his door and glared at the lady on the other side of the door. "If I don't answer the door the first, second or third damn times you bloody knock, I'm either not here or I just don't want to see you. So, seeing that I am here, Lilah..."

Lilah smiled as she sashayed into his apartment, making sure he got a damn good view of her ass in that tight black business skirt of hers.

"Oh, come on, Wes. You can't fool me. I know you want to see me even if it is to screw me."

"Don't need to see you to do that." Wesley stated by the opened door, crossing his arms.

Lilah laughed, slowly taking off her jacket. "But you do like what you *do* see. Don't ya, Wesley?"

Wesley shrugged. He wanted so badly to look back toward his kitchen doorway. Wanted to go back and see Angel. Maybe offer him an aspirin, seeing he did give him a hard head banging. And damn it, if he hadn't enjoyed doing that. But he didn't look over. He kept his eyes upon Lilah.

He was slightly nervous that Angel would do something. Make a noise, come into the living room. Something that Wesley did not want.

He didn't want Lilah to meet the other Angel. Didn't want Wolfram and Hart to try something with the alternate Angel and whatever they would try, Wes, knew it wouldn't be good. He wasn't going to let anything happen to Angel. Nothing!

'Always trying to protect the ones I love'. Wesley thought with a slight wince. He didn't love the alternate Angel, of course, but he had a feeling that he could so easily fall for him. For this Angel actually seemed to want him. For now anyway. Wesley had learned a long time ago that no one ever wanted him for long.

Lilah came over to him. Her blood red nails slowly trailed themselves down his dark blue T-shirt.

"Going to shut the door, lover?"

"Only after you leave."

"I'm not planning on leaving anytime soon. I'm on my lunch break, gotta have my meal. Being evil makes me...Well, me." With every word she had been smiling. She placed her hand upon his unshaven cheek, enjoying the slight roughness under her fingers. On her tip toes, her lips tried to met his. After a moment he bent his head to kiss her. It wasn't very long before Wesley was sure he heard a low, soft growl coming from his kitchen.

His eyes snapped opened and his lips quickly left hers. He licked his suddenly dry lips as he gently moved her to the side. She didn't seem to have noticed the soft growl. Which was good. Very good.

"I'm not in the mood, Lilah."
Lilah lifted her eyebrow and gave him a very non-innocent look, "Not what I felt pressed against me just a few seconds ago."

Wesley rolled his eyes. "You know I get this way very easily. Anyone or thing can do it. Surprisingly, even you. Though this time it wasn't you that got me this way, but an ancient text and a good cup of tea!"

Hell, yes that was a lie. He sure wasn't going to tell her that it was another Angel that did this. With a simple touch and kiss. Okay, it wasn't really a simple kiss. Be like saying chocolate, was just a fad, given a few years no one would know what that substance was.

Tell Lilah that it wasn't just another Angel, but a horny as hell Angel. Bloody Hell! He better asked if that soul of his is permanent. Not that it mattered, mind you. Because he wasn't going to let a horny Angel screw him...

Right? Yes, right! Then Wesley thought about that steamy kiss.

Still...

Be smart to double check things. Just in case. They sure didn't need an alternate horny as hell Angelus running around. Well, that could be just another thing that Gunn could hate him for!

"Well, you are no longer reading an ancient text or even drinking tea. I'm here now and what I have planned, we'll both enjoy it. Something that involves broken furniture...Maybe even handcuffs..." She told him going behind him and shutting the door. She leaned her back against it. Her fingers slowly started to unbutton her cream colored silk blouse.

"Lilah..." Wesley said as he stared at her with clenched fists. "Really *not* in the mood." He knew he had to be breathing hard. But strangely it wasn't because of that almost see through Victoria's Secrets lace that covered Lilah's breasts, as he watched her reveal even more of it with each button that became undone. He was breathing hard for he just now accepted the fact that he, Wesley Wyndam-Pryce was a damn pervert. He was turned on by the fact that there was a vampire with the face of a former friend hiding in his kitchen. Hearing every word. Knowing it wasn't his Angel in there, but...It was an Angel. Just a little different...

But it was still, screwing the enemy. While the one you really wouldn't mind screwing was...

Damn it! He really needed to get her out of here! Wesley sighed and said the only thing that he could think of.

"Alright! I'll be honest. I've got a headache."

Lilah stopped instantly. Her blouse off, hands behind her back, about to unsnap the lacy bra.

"What?" She looked truly flabbergasted.

"I've got a headache." Wesley mumbled. "A- A real bad one. I think I'm coming down with a cold or something. It feels like it. Got a tickle in the throat, my head hurts and my nose feels all stuffy. I feel as if a demon has sucked out all my energy and...Well, that was why it took me so long to answer my door...I...I may be able to do some foreplay if you really want."

"No! No, that's alright--"
He tried not to smile as he watched Lilah slip her blouse back on.

"Maybe a quickie. I might be able to do a quickie. Though doubtful that we'll brake the table again, but we can try. Then we can do something different. Like you can heat me up a good can of chicken noodle soup. I...I would like that. I have a little chill and if you also have a little chill we can both have some soup...So, how does that sound?"

Lilah buttoned up her blouse, "No, that's okay, Wes. Why don't you go lie down and rest. Take some aspirin. Um, I was kinda hoping that one of the reasons you took so long answering your door was because you were on the phone to an old friend...Or someone like Angel perhaps..."

Wesley rolled his eyes and wondered if he should fake a couple of coughs to hurry the process of the Queen Lawyer Bitch's leaving.

Instead, he cleared his throat, faking a wince and putting a hand upon his neck as if it hurt. Lilah caught this and was quickly putting on her jacket.

"First off, Lilah, I don't have any 'old' friends. Don't even have 'new' friends! Secondly, I don't know where the fuck Angel is nor do I *care*. He can be in a jar somewhere in Utah for all I know or care really. Plus, do you think Angel would talk to me on the phone, or even talk to me in general?"

She shrugged. "He could always stop by and threaten you. Not that his threatening means a damn thing. Or you never know, he could try to smother you with another pillow, that would be fun right? Maybe he'll stop by and say, 'I should have killed you by breaking your neck, instead of trying to suffocate you. Because of you I lost my son!' You never know with Mr. Drama what he'll say or do next. Hell, he could come to your door asking for your friendship once more."

"I'd just slam the door in his face if he did." Wesley stated coldly.

Lilah looked at him as she opened the front door. "Keep telling yourself that, Wes, and maybe it'll happen. Won't mind being there when it does. *If* it does. Do you really think you could? Turn the great champion, the great redeemer away from you? He always seems to help only those who he wants to help. Funny, isn't it? The one time you really need help and understanding, he turns away from you. Right before trying to smother you with that pillow, while you lay helpless in a hospital bed. Wolfram and Hart has reports that he shouted at you. Said ugly things...Gee, I know I'd turn him away from my door. But mostly 'cos I'm evil. Evil people turn away from white hats or kill 'em. It's our speciality. But you, Wes...You're growing darker and darker everyday. But no matter how dark you get, Angel won't give a crap. *Never* will. He only thinks of himself anyway. He'll never try to help you redeem yourself. 'Cos to him, you'll always be a betrayer. A nothing to be stepped upon. Nothing more, nothing less. I doubt he ever considered you a true friend. Furniture, maybe. Or a reference book when things got tough, perhaps..."

"Lilah, you're not helping my headache." Wesley said, feeling dead inside. Knowing that every damn word she spoke, he had already thought about.

Already suspected that to be true.

A soft look crossed her face for a split second before hiding behind a cold mask. She went up and touched her fingertips to his lips. "Take some medicine and kick that cold's ass. I've some wondrous plans for that sexy body of yours."

Wesley nodded slowly, then after she removed her fingertips he whispered huskily, "I guess this means I
won't get any chicken noodle soup?"

Lilah chuckled and left closing the door quietly behind her. He stood there listening to the sound of high heels walking way and the words of her speech still echoing in his head...

(end of part 11)
Wes continued to stand there facing his front door. The words Lilah had spoken still waltzing around in his head. He ran a hand down his face as he sighed.

Then sounds of movement coming from his kitchen make him remember. Angel. He was here, he had heard every damn word that had been spoken. Bloody Hell! He had forgotten for a moment why he had wanted Lilah to leave in the first place.

Banging sounds of cupboards being opened and closed continued as Wesley quickly moved toward his kitchen. He came to a sudden stand still, his hand braced itself on the door jam as the other hand moved to his hip...

Wesley watched Angel for a long minute before saying, "Angel, what the bloody hell are you doing?"

Angel smiled at him before he turned back to raid Wesley's pantry.

"Alright! Found it!" Angel turned back to look at Wesley showing off the can of condensed soup as if it was a golden reward of some kind. He threw it high in the air before catching it behind his back.

"Big show off." Wesley thought to himself, before saying out loud, "What? That can supposed to mean something?"

Angel looked at him in surprise before starting to look through drawers to find his can opener. "You wanted chicken noodle soup, so I thought, hey give my lo--um best pal what he wants."

"You're going to make *me* chicken noodle soup?"

Angel shrugged still looking for the can opener. Starting to make a mess out of his perfectly neat and orderly drawer. Wesley rolled his eyes as he jerked open a drawer Angel had opened seconds earlier to reveal a can opener.

"That thing wasn't in there when *I* looked!" Angel grumbled, grabbing the can opener out of Wesley's hand. "Plus, ya know a man gotta eat. When was the last time you ate, Wes?"

Wesley stood there and thought about it. "Sometime yesterday morning or perhaps that was the day before."

Angel dropped the can opener in shock. "Damn Wes! No wonder you are all skin and bones! You need more then soup...Unless, you really aren't feeling well...Are you?"

"Ang--"

Angel set the can down as he reached over and placed his hand upon Wes' forehead. "You are a little warm."

"Angel, with you being a vampire and all, of course I'd be feeling warm...Now--"

The vampire was focused on one thing. Take care of Wes, not listen to him. In a single move he had the other man cradled in his arms.

"ANGEL!" Wesley shouted, "What the bloody hell are you--"
In moments the vampire found Wesley's bedroom, pulling back the covers with one hand, he placed Wes gently upon the bed as if the demon hunter was a small helpless child. Pissing off the British man royally.

"Damn it, you wanker! Have you lost what little of your mind that you had?!? And whatever are you doing...Stop it at once!" Wesley demanded fiercely.

Angel ignored him as he took off Wesley's shoes and threw them into a corner of the room. He was surprised to find a hand gun attached to one ankle and a wicked looking knife on the other. He quickly set those aside as well.

Then Wesley shouted Angel's name once more as Angel made quick work of his jeans, tearing them off in seconds. Leaning the Watcher in only his T-shirt and white socks. For he hadn't been wearing boxers or even briefs. But was in all natural...

Angel smirked, damn this Wesley was hot...

Angel did lift his eyebrow as he had finished ripping off those pants as a stake came flying out of them. Angel wasn't sure where that thing had been hidden...But damn he would have to be more careful... Wesley was a walking weapons cabinet. Just think this was what he was wearing in the privacy of his own home, he was sure to carry more when he went out to fight the good fight. Angel had to bite his lip hard to keep from moaning in pleasure at that picture...

Calmly, Angel made sure all the weapons had been removed from Wesley's person before he placed the covers and blanket over him, tucking the ex-Watcher in.

"Comfy, love?" Angel asked with an innocent and loving smile.

Wesley glared as he growled, "Angel..."

"Rest, Wes, just rest. I'll bring you something to fill that empty stomach of yours. Dinner in bed. Or breakfast food in bed. Then we will talk. Our worlds are so different, be interesting to talk about stuff don't ya think?"

"Angel--"

"Shh..." Angel pressed two fingers against Wesley's lips. "I want to take care of you. Protect you. Be your friend, wouldn't even mind being your lover. But for now I want to make you food. It don't have to be soup. The other Wes loved my fluffy eggs, crispy bacon and buttery toast. So can I, Wes? Make ya something? Anything?" Angel slowly removed his fingers looking into Wesley's stunning blue eyes.

"I...I've missed your eggs." Wesley said softly. "Been years it seems. Last time I had them...I think was a few days before you--I mean the other Angel fired...It has been over a year then...Though that's another long boring tale waiting to *never* be told."

Angel again made sure Wesley was still tucked in, before caressing Wesley's rough unshaven cheek.

"I'm sure I won't find it boring. Love to hear about it. Want to hear how my Wesley went up against Darla? My sire? She came to Sunnydale to resurrect the Master and Dru...She also wanted me back. Hell, I'll even tell ya about before my Wes showed up, there are some pretty wild stories. Like Spike staking Dru 'cos she tried to kill someone he loved, who is human. A human who is a white hat no less, making Spike decide to fight the good fight beside his mate."
"How did that come about?" Wesley asked curiously.

"I'll tell ya when after you've eaten. Stay here and rest. I'll bring you the food." Angel said softly, then lightly kissing Wesley's lips.

He then left Wesley's side to stop in the doorway. Angel took a long look at the bedroom closet before glancing at Wesley. The ex-Watcher swallowed hard, for he knew that this Angel knew...

"Do you know there's a human woman in your closet?" Angel asked as if he was discussing the weather.

"I gave her a bucket and...and she's alive, chained but alive...She seems okay to me." He mumbled, looking away. Angel looked at the closet then back at Wes.

"You put a woman in your closet? In my world that would be so wrong on so many damn levels. Xander was right, each alternate reality is different and as Doyle said, all the worlds are wacky as hell. Not that he has ever been to any other worlds mind you."

"Xander and Doyle, huh? Well, there is a reason behind it, the woman in the closet helped put Angel in the ocean. I'm forcing her to help me find... him. When I find him, I'll let her go. Anyway, I don't get any pleasure in it...Okay, that's a lie, she slit my throat, so yeah, I'm getting some yaya's. But not much. Just little yaya's. Really tiny ones at that."

Angel growled and death stared the closet door as if it was the enemy waiting to be violently killed.

"She's the one who tried to kill you and she's *still* alive?"

"She's human, Angel." Wesley stated quietly. As if he himself needed to be reminded. Not Angel.

"So are you. You're more important then she is. She tried to kill you...Has she killed others?"

"Holtz." Wesley admitted.

"You say that as if I'm suppose to know him."

Wesley looked surprised before it was hidden behind his mask of indifference. Keeping his gaze upon the locked closet door.

"The other Angel knows him. He was a time traveler. Angelus killed his family, he longed for revenge. It was all he lived for. You never met him, killed a family named Holtz?"

Angel shook his head. "Nope, never. Met a Henry Loltzcan once. But Angelus didn't kill his family. Thought it was better to let him live. To live was his own hell. He had a wife and fifteen children...Two mistress, each with three brats by him so guess what Angelus did?"

"My guess would be killed everyone of them and laughed about it but go ahead and tell me."

"Had the women meet and Angelus watched all the while laughing as the women beat the crap out of the cheating bastard. Darla said that it wasn't funny and that I should have killed...Should have killed the whole family. But really, it's a funny tale without the killing if ya think about it. Did kill the man's servants and nanny, now that I think about it...Scared some of the little ones. So yeah, funny all around...But I do feel bad about the killing of the servants and scaring the little ones seeing that I have a soul now and I shouldn't laugh
about it. Spike tells me that I should for it's heathy for my demon....So...Wes, later can I play with her a little.
I won't kill her just play with her."

Wesley looked truly stunned at Angel's question then smiled evilly.

"Didn't you promise me eggs?"

Angel nodded as he smiled evilly in return.

Both men noticed that Wesley hadn't said 'yes' or 'no' to the idea of Angel playing with the woman who had slit his throat.

(End of part 12)
Part 13

In the dark Wesley lay flat on his back, leaning against the pillows on his bed. The top part of the covers gathered around his stomach.

Angel lay atop of the blankets on his stomach, his socked feet up in the air. He was looking at Wesley. Watching him. Wanting him...But knowing he couldn't make his move just yet...But he would. For now he wanted Wesley to feel comfortable with him. Later, he'd kiss Wes senseless...

But for now...

Some hours ago, Angel had cooked for him. Fluffy eggs, crispy bacon, and buttery toast just as he had promised. With two small glasses of orange juice and milk. He had also quickly drawn Wes a rose placing it beside the plate for the ex-Watcher to see. Hoping that it would be seen as romantic in it's own sweet way.

'Cos really Angel didn't want to show Wesley his demon's idea of romance. Angelus' check list would be, chains, no lame ass lube, kill cute looking puppy in front of person, make sure person you wanted to romance was wearing said chains while completely naked and of course kill everyone that the person didn't like or loved more then him... Then, screw the person until there was no doubt who he belonged too. Later person would thank the big bad master vampire for the wonderful romance by romancing him in return. With lots of screwing and blowjobs any time, any place....

Now that was Angelus' version of romance...

'And it's really not all that bad when ya think about it, my souled friend.' The demon whispered, with an evil smirk.

Angel shook that thought away...For Angel wasn't going to romance his new Wesley that way...He would try the slow nice 'I want to be your friend and hopefully your lover' approach. Nice and slow. For maybe a day or two, then it would be...'Hey, Wes, you need a blowjob? I'll be happy to give that to ya. Let me show you just how good vampires are at sucking...And I've got a lot of experience!' Hell, he *only* had a week.

Okay, tomorrow he'd make sure they talked about blowjobs and sex whenever possible...Then the third day, he would make sure he 'accidently' came upon Wesley in the shower or something and...Still not jump him, but make a reference and make sure Wes saw him naked also...Oh, damn this planning Wesley's romance was getting him hard. Painfully hard. Damn...

Angel wanted to whimper softly in the night. He was so close to Wesley that he could touch him! Smell him. And he knew that all Wesley had on under those covers were socks and that blue T-shirt of his. But that one part that he wanted to caress and watch grow hard in his hands was naked...Under those damn teasing covers...It was hiding a wondrous gift...A treasure and it was *his*....His Wesley...

He wondered if this Wesley made the same noises that his Wesley used to make. Those hard pants...Those low whimpers...The moans that made his name seem almost holy and god like...The begging that the love making be harder or faster...Sometimes both...The look in his Wes' eyes when he reached orgasm...Those intense gorgeous blue eyes would reveal all the love and the passion they shared...Yet, his lover had always wanted to please him first...Have him reach orgasm first before letting go...

Damn, it was so tempting to pull down those covers and see...How this Wesley would react to his touch...So fucking tempting! And *DAMN*, he was hurting! He had a feeling his dick would have the imprint of his zipper when and if he removed them later...
Okay, he needed to think of something other then sex with Wesley...Think of something that would turn his thoughts away from 'I want to suck on Wes' dick and if he was a lucky vampire, Wes would suck his own maybe even let him stick it some where that the sun don't shine'.

Um, Spike and Doyle playing kitty poker?..Yeah, he would think about that... Then think about them coming to Angel to borrow some kittens...Oh, yeah, he remembered one time about a year ago, he had gotten so pissed at Doyle and Spike for playing kitty poker with kittens they didn't have, that his Wes had taken him aside relaxed him with one hell of a great blowjob and had lovingly, innocently told him that it was okay, that Doyle and Spike wasn't in nearly as much trouble as *he* was and hoped he could find fifteen kittens by next Friday...Of course with Angel's help Wes did, which he didn't complain at all for he had gotten all kinds of fun sex adventures out of the deal...

Okay, that thought did *not* help!

Oh, well...He'd just keep thinking of stories that Wesley might find interesting...

Wesley seemed to want to know so much about his reality...Yet, Wes didn't really talk much about his, except to tell him how different it was from his reality...

He'd just have to think of another story to tell...Hmmm...The story of Kate and Doyle is kinda romantic...

~(now Wesley's POV)~

They had been talking for quite awhile. Him and Angel...They had spoken about all kinds of things, but mostly sharing stories of their adventures...Okay, to be honest, Wesley hadn't talked much about his adventures...Weren't as fascinating as this Angel's adventures...And he yearned to know everything about this reality that Angel came from...He wasn't sure why exactly...Just felt he needed to know...

Wesley felt relaxed for the first time in months. Even if he felt a little sad. Sad 'cos he had never felt this special closeness with his Angel as he felt with this one.

At one time, Angel had been his friend. They had been good close friends, just not as close and as comfortable this Angel was making Wesley feel.

His Angel had never shared his thoughts as this Angel was. He seemed more carefree and not as broody as he shared his adventures. He wasn't afraid to be honest about some of the shameful things he had done in the past or looking silly...He was honest and open. Wesley found it refreshing.

Then, he would do something the other Angel never had done. He'd ask about Wesley's thoughts on things and seemed to honestly want his honest opinion and would ask him to share *his* adventures....

This Angel seemed to want to know everything there was to know about him. To his childhood to any books that he found fascinating...He also asked about his dreams...Though to be completely honest, Wesley found it hard...Very hard to tell Angel what he wanted to know...

A part of himself was screaming not to let this Angel get too close. That it would only cause him pain and heartache when Angel leaves...Giving him just a taste of how things could have been...Maybe even *should* have been...

Then Angel would leave...
Then Wesley would be alone once more...With no one to give a crap about him.

Angel's world sounded strange, yet right some how.

Wes had learned that Spike and Xander were bonded mates, made guardians over the Hellmouth by the Powers. They tried to live by the goddess Hero's mission statement. 'Help people, care for the hopeless, and fight for good.'

Then, he heard stories about Willow, then about Faith. Angel swore she fought for good and that she was also a guardian over the Hellmouth and protector of those that needed protecting. She was also a worshiper of the goddess Hero...

As Angel had mentioned Doyle was still alive and was a Seer. He was their group's link to the Powers, he was also a worshiper of the goddess Hero, and husband to an ex-cop named Kate...

Wesley didn't tell him that his Kate sounded a lot like the ex-cop he had met a long time ago. But it didn't matter, he listened in awe as Angel told the story of how the two had met.

Kate had gone to Sunnydale in search of the vampires who had killed her father. For they had left L.A. and moved their business to Sunnydale. She had followed. Hungry for revenge, she quit the force, to follow their trail. She hated the force for refusing to believe what she had seen...Vampires killing her father...She had shot them full of bullet's as they left, laughing. One vampire had hit her saying they were going to let her live with the fact that she couldn't save her old man...Later with hate in her heart she went after them...

Doyle had a vision when Kate found the vampires. She was about to be killed. Angel and Spike stopped it, going to the warehouse, killing the vampires and saving an unconscious and bleeding Kate. Taking her to the offices of Guardian Investigations, they had laid her gently on a sofa. To have Doyle push them aside and take care of her. With gentle movements and a soft wash cloth he washed her face, wiping away her blood. She opened her blue eyes to see Doyle's kind face.

"You're okay, Princess, ya going to be just fine." He told her softly.

"Not a princess," Kate said weakly, letting him smooth away the hurt and clean the sores. "And you're from Ireland?"

"I don't sound like this to try to pick up women, ya know..."

"Shame, draws attention away from the clothes. Plus, sounds nice, almost sexy even."

Doyle smiled, "Thanks, Princess...And ya know the clothes, give 'em time, you might end up liking 'em, yeah?"

Kate looked at him for a long moment, "Names Kate, not Princess."

"Whatever you say, Beautiful One."

Only then did Kate smile back...

##

"I'm telling ya, Wes, she was hooked. I'm sure she fell for him at that moment. Though there were some rocky times. Like when she realized Spike and I were vampires. Took awhile to accept us. But she slowly
did. She even ended up liking Gunn when he showed up. Kate ended up working for us, and she's one hell of an investigator. Plus, being an ex-cop and all. Do ya know she even made friends with some Sunnydale cops, which is a big help. But most of all she loves helping the hopeless and helpless, ya know? The day she married Doyle she told us that she had a true mission in life, more then just trying to make her father proud of her as a cop. But something more."

"I've known her in this reality. She was kind of bitchy. In this reality Angel once bit her."

Angel winced, "Really? Damn, if I tried to do something like that, Doyle would hurt me real bad and then he wouldn't give me my favorite Irish whiskey, that he gives me every Christmas. Come to depend on that gift."

"You ended up saving her, because of that bite."

"Still in my world, I wouldn't get *any* Irish whiskey if I bit Kate. I like that gift. *Really* like that gift...Just like my Wesley loved the presents Doyle would give him. Ancient Baxeric Demon Texts, in prefect condition, two different volumes a year."

"Wh--Really? Those texts in my world are rare and--and---"

"So in our--my reality. That's why the other Wes loved them so much. Doyle has contacts and can get nearly anything."

Wesley looked at Angel before saying softly. "Here, I never met Doyle. He...He died saving Angel, Cordy and his clan of half humans, half demons. After his death I showed up."

"Cordy? Never met a Cordy and Doyle tells me that the great goddess Hero saved his people. She's saved many in her time as goddess."

"Goddess Hero? You speak of her a lot..."

"Of course I would, she is Hero, great goddess and protector of our world. Never heard of her?" Angel asked him in complete surprise.

"No, never. There is no goddess Hero here, not one I've ever heard of anyway. There is a Hera a Greek myth goddess..."

Angel chuckled, "No, that sure isn't Hero. If she was in this world you would have known about her...She...Everyone whoever has lost hope at one time, remembers her story and hope is renewed."

"Tell me. Wesley replied softly, huskily. For he had lost hope a long time ago. Maybe when the sharp blade crossed his throat. Maybe when everyone threw him away like yesterday's garbage. Or when he started having sex with the enemy. He wasn't sure when he had lost hope but he knew he had lost it. Not sure exactly when...But maybe...Just maybe he would find it once more.

The question was, would this Angel help him find it...

(end of part 13)
Part 14

Angel continued to stare at Wesley in the darkness. He loved watching him, this new Wesley. He intrigued him...Then the vampire began to speak in a soft loving awe filled voice as he started to tell the story of his goddess...

"There are many legends and tales that are told about her. Told between old men or told to small children...There is one story that has the feeling of truth behind it. Though there are few that doubt it, but to the ones in search of redemption or have ever been in a hopeless place in their lives believe..." Angel stopped and stared at Wesley.

The former Watcher lifted an eyebrow saying impatiently, "Go on, don't stop there. Tell before I swing a cross to hit you upside your big fat head."

"Damn, Wes, impatient boy aren't you? Can't even let a vampire get a breath in, to start the tale." Angel found himself saying with a chuckle.

He felt Wesley move slightly as he rolled over to open a drawer beside his bed. Remembering Wesley's threat Angel growled and laid Wesley flat once more.

"Alright!" Then Angel laughed as Wesley smirked at him.

Angel couldn't help but think how much he liked this Wesley. He felt that this Wes would always keep him in line and on his toes and hopefully even on his back...Maybe even on his stomach too, taking the time to show his favorite vampire how manly a demon hunter could be...Damn, he loved thoughts like that one...Then Angel remembered that he needed to get on with the storytelling.

"She was once a very powerful, very evil hell god."

At this Wes shot up a little straighter in his bed as he moved in close to Angel. "And you and the others *worship* her?!?! Bloody hell, Angel! Are you people insane?"

"Wes, love, not done telling about Hero, now am I? Don't make me see if ya have some old Watcher ties laying around some place. For if I find them I'd tie ya up all spread eagle then I would...Fuck, I'd forget the reason for tieing you up in the first place and have my wicked way with you instead of telling you a great tale from my reality."

"Spread eagle? You would...No, you wouldn't, Angel, if anyone around here is going to be spread eagle--"

"It would be me right? Oh, please let it be me!"

Wesley started to truly laugh. He couldn't help it. This Angel was so different from his Angel. At times broody, but not too broody, caring and funny. He was so cute! The other Angel could at times be cute. Like the time he was made to wear that silly pink helmet. But this Angel was just...Cuter...More loveable. Was it because this Angel was at peace with his demon? Or the fact this Angel seemed to actually *care* about him and others.

Damn, if he wasn't careful he'd try to find away to keep this Angel here with him. Wesley stopped laughing, saying softly, "So, hell god."

Angel didn't mind the sudden change, he just went with it.
"Not just your average hell god. A world destroying hell god. Wanted to make the world her kingdom. *Her* world and rule over it. It would have been hellish. A world of total darkness, rivers of blood and rotting decay. Any humans left would be her slaves as well as vampires and demons. She was evil, true and pure. Some say she had so much power that she defeated even The First. The first true pure form of evil to become its master. Its owner. Demons of all sizes and even the Powers feared the hell goddess.

The legend tells that at one time, she had even been a Warrior for the Powers that Be. She had been good, a light in the darkness to see by. But time had changed her slowly. Some even claimed that she had been a Heavenly Being. An angel like Satan once, rebelling and being cast down to earth. They say before that, in the higher realms she had slowly lost her focus of good. For centuries she was up there and waited for her time. Slowly gaining incredible power, she became corrupt. She no longer cared. She was cold, truly dead inside."

"And because of that she went dark?" Wesley replied softly, looking straight ahead not really seeing anything.

"My guess is that she had no friends in that higher realm or anyone to love her. My guess is that thinking you aren't cared for, aren't loved why should you care in return. So with time she didn't."

"So then what happened?"

"In the heavenly realm she lived in time moves differently. Thousands of years went by until she felt it was time to send the world into hell. So she went to earth. Created chaos and loved it. Right as she was destroying the world to create her own throne, a great warrior for the Powers stood before her. He was the last one standing. All the others had died and fallen. The hell goddess had destroyed them all. Legend tells that he was the last one because out of all the Warriors he was the true champion for the Powers. The greatest one of them all.

For it is said that his heart was always searching to do what was right no matter what. His heart was pure and good no matter how his actions hurt him and others.

They say he looked around at the remains of the people he had fought so hard to save and protect. Yet failed. He then looked at the hell goddess as she laughed at him, asking if he really thought he could have ever really stop her. She was power you see. Everything else was nothing. Like he was really nothing...

The Warrior simply stared at her, searching her face for something...Anything familiar...Before he spoke, "There was a time when you didn't think that. A time when we were on the same side. Remember?"

The hell god looked at him coldly and with true malice and hatred. Her smile could have turned a man into stone as her hard smirking eyes told the Warrior that she didn't give a rat's ass about that time in her past of doing good. She gave a low haughty laugh, that would have sent shivers of fear down anyone's spine had they heard it.

"Remember? Yes, I remember. So what? Want a hug before I savagely kill you?"

"Sure, why not? But only if I can kill you in return." The Warrior shot back at her in anger.

"Gee, glad we had this little talk, which makes me wonder why the hell I'm even wasting my time with you. A failure is what you are, you couldn't even save the ones you cared about. Those you loved. Those you would have died for. You couldn't save anyone could you. Not your lover, not even the world. Not even yourself."
"Not even you." The Warrior stated sadly. Almost as if his heart were breaking and he didn't want to show it.

"There's nothing to save." She told him with an expressionless cold face.

The man tilted his head and looked at her unafraid. "Isn't there?"

There it was, a slight flicker of something in the hell god's eyes before it disappeared into nothingness. "That part of me is dead just as you will be dead soon."

"Why am I still alive then?"

"You will die this night." She stated coldly. "By my hand or... You could join me. I had chosen another Warrior to rule at my right hand. But now the one I had chosen is dead, well... Can't see why I can't choose you."

"Thanks for the offer, but no."

The hell god simply smiled, "Good could never stand you anyway."

"Shame. Before you kill me, I just want you to know something..."

"And that would be..."

"At one time, you were my best friend. I trusted you with my life. So it's ironic that you should be the one to take it from me. But when you do, remember... Out of everyone you were my champion. My hero. The one I looked too..."

Lighting swirled around them both as the hell god was suddenly before him, hitting him violently, savagely across his face. The power of the blow sent him flying backwards in the air. He hit what was left of a brick wall, hard.

"Don't you dare lie!" She hissed madly.

The Warrior looked at her with hard eyes. He was bleeding and a little dazed from the hit she had given him. And to be honest he was very pissed, furious...

"LIE!! What damn *lie*?!! After everything that we went through together, you doubt what I say! We were friends damn it! Though thick and thin. No matter what we were there for each other. Until the Powers blessed you for being a fucking champion. I was happy for you! Thinking out of everyone, you deserved that high honor. It wasn't *me* that forgot about our friendship. It wasn't *me* that grew away from what we had. Closer than any brother and sister could have ever been. We knew everything about each other. We cared about each other. I *never* forgot that. Never, damn you! I never forgot about you! About our friendship, but you... You willingly forgot about me! I always held on to the belief that no matter what we were friends. I thought about you. With compassion, with love and a smile as I would think on that friendship we had. Even in my darkest hour, I never forgot you! But you... You forgot about me, forgot about our friendship. So fine! Go back and forget about me once more! There were three people I trusted with my life. With my heart. With everything. The other two, they've hurt me, kicked me, forsok me when I needed them most. But you... *You* were the true Warrior out of us all! The true Powers champion! The true hero! *My* hero!" The Warrior of good whispered the last part sadly. Brokenly.

"And? There's gotta be an 'and'." She asked softly, bending over she took a sword from a corpse's hand. Then she stood before him.
He simply laid there, looking up at her before saying..."And, I forgive you. I really do forgive you. For making me think we had ever really been friends. I forgive you for lying to me and making me think that you could ever be my fucking hero! I forgive you for making me care about you! You're simply nothing but a worthless piece of crap that should have been flushed down the toilet years ago!"

He then whispered her name, as the sword sliced through him like creamy warm butter, killing him instantly. The hell god was shocked to find tears were flowing down her cheeks. She started to shake, as his words echoed through her head. She stared at the now dead Warrior. Who's eyes stared back in a death. Seeing nothing, showing nothing...

The last Warrior for Powers, for the good fight was dead...

She fell to her knees and right there wept before her one time friend...

Angel fell silent from the tale for a moment before saying.

"Some say that at the moment she killed the man, she was hit with overwhelming humanity. She felt. Actually felt for the first time in centuries and she wept. The hell god no longer wanted to be evil but good once more. Yet. It was to late. With her former friend's death she remembered why she had started on the side of good in the first place. She cared once more. But now she stood alone in the middle of all she had slain. Out of the innocent human faces she had joyfully killed in pleasure and power. Out of all the darkness and chaos she continued to sob, begging for forgiveness, but there was none to hear her heartfelt pleas. For all her hard earned power she couldn't correct or take back what she had done. No one was left you see...No one except the Powers."

"They forgave her?" Wesley asked so quietly that even with Angel's vampire hearing, he had to strain to hear it.

"No, but they said they would let her work for them once more. Redeem herself. They would allow her to be a goddess, with all her powers, but under their tight control. She would do good works, help the helpless, the hopeless. Protect the innocent. They would restart everything from the beginning. From when the reality had been born centuries ago. It would all start anew and she had to be the keeper of it. Watch and guard over that which she had so ruthlessly destroyed. She had to help make the world a better place. Watch over it. Care for it. Then, maybe one day she will have that redemption she had sobbed for. Until the redemption and forgiveness she seeks is given she will continue to do good works for all eternity."

"So she basically got a fresh start once more. That...That must be nice."

Angel smiled. "Yeah. Many believe that centuries ago in that other time, she had even been human before becoming a hellish creature. I don't believe that. But anyway, you got to understand why so many respect her. She is still trying to redeem herself for destroying the world in the first place. She did something very bad, yet she was given another chance to redeem herself. Thousands, hell millions would tell ya that she didn't deserve that chance, but the goddess shows people like us...like me...How blessed we all are for that chance. For the reality I've been living in, tells me that I should be thankful."

"Yes, they...You're lucky."

"Wes, I don't know what happened between the other Angel and you. I'm still trying to figure out all that I over heard with you and that bitch Lilah. But if *I*, who did all that hellish crap as Angelus, get a second chance. Fuck, even as Angel, I've done some bad things...I out of all the bad things I've done, get a chance to redeem myself...Then, Wes, you'll get that chance too."
"Will I? Doubtful, Angel, really doubtful."

"The other Angel may not give a crap about you, Wes, but *I* sure in the hell do."

"Really? What happens when you leave?" Wesley asked bitterly. For he only saw a future of pain and loneliness.

"Hoping you'll come with me." Angel answered him softly...

(End of Part 14)
Stunned silence was Wesley's only reply.

Angel then continued, "No pushing, Wes. Just think about it alright? The goddess blessed your homecoming, if you decide to come with me."

Angel knew he had stunned the other man. Shocked his Wes to the bone.

"I thought you had come to help someone..." Wesley asked a little confused.

"You, Wes. I came to help and find you. I want to love you. Need to show you how things could be outside of pain and heartache and loneliness. How things could be for you and me. Damn it all, Wes, I *need* you. My world needs you. My family needs you but most of all *I* need you. I...You're my world, Wes. My everything, I can't function without you. You're more important than blood. I've got a week to convince you to...Well, this day is nearly over, but..."

"Angel...You came in this world for...Me?"

"Yeah, Wesley, for you."

"Oh."

"So...What do you think about that?" Angel asked moving to lie closer to Wesley's warmth. Loving the heat that rolled off of him. Longing to reach out and touch him...

"I...I don't know. This...This is my reality, Angel and...Plus, I've got to find the other Angel. I mean my Angel. I need to help him. I can't just leave him trapped somewhere on the bottom of the ocean."

"I'll help you find him, but Wes, do you really want this to be your world. Don't you feel--"


"Don't understand any of that. In my world there is no Connor and how in the hell is it possible that the other me had a son, anyway? Hello, aren't we both vampires? Did I miss something while I was busy trying to think of ways to make love to you?"

Wesley sighed and rolled his eyes. He turned his head and found himself nose to nose with Angel. Seeing kindness, caring and damn it all, love in those dark eyes. All for him. Even in his darkened bedroom he could see it. Feel it. Though a part of him refused to believe it. Was to scared to...

"Angel *is* a vampire with a soul, you wanker. You see, Darla came back and he...They...um...he..."

"Fucked her?"

"To put it that way is simply too classy."

"Did ya get jealous?" Angel asked, wanting to know.

"Never had anything with him to get jealous about. Well, anyway, it was a miracle birth. A child born of
two vampires. Darla staked herself, then later...Later I found this damn prophecy about Connor and Angel. Saying that the Father would kill the son. It was false, but I didn't know that. I researched everything. Looked for loop holes. Did *everything* to disprove it. I didn't tell anyone about my findings, about my fears. Everyone was busy wrapped up in their own world to notice that I...Gunn and Fred were obsessed with each other. Fred is a girl by the way. Cordelia, well she was away in Mexico with Groo. Angel was obsessed with having a son. And I was becoming obsessed with the damn prophecy. Knowing I had to find some way to disprove it or keep it from happening. Even went to the Gateway of Truth, who is a giant hamburger, who told me that the Father *would* indeed kill the son. That there was nothing to stop it from coming to pass. There would even be three signs, an earthquake, fire, and rain of blood. Then it all seemed to happen and Angel told me the baby smelled like food. Said if he had been trapped at least he would have had something to snack on. Then he smirked at me and I knew...At that moment, I knew I was going to protect both Angel and Connor. So I kidnapped him. Got my throat cut by Holtz's girl, Justine, then she left me for dead in the park outside my home. The child was then in the hands of Angel's enemy, then I became the enemy in return for what I did."

"Wow. You don't do things half-assed do you?" Then Angel chuckled, bringing Wesley out of his own personal brooding time.

"What's so funny?"

"That if something like that happened in my reality. A vampire with a soul having a baby...You do realize that in my world that would have been a true miracle 'cos the vampire who would have been pregnant would have been me!"

Wesley smiled in spite of himself, picturing the vampire with a big belly complaining about his feet being swollen. "Angel would have gotten another female pregnant!"

"Yeah, I'm just glad men aren't made for babies. 'Cos it wouldn't be fun. And Wes, the only lover I've had in more years then I'd like to think about has been a human male..." Angel said reaching out to touch Wesley's face, only to be stopped by the ex-Watcher's hand.

"Angel, I can't replace your dead lover. I refuse to be only a damn replacement!" Wesley said softly. Coldly.

"Wes..."

"I'm not *him*. He is dead, Angel. I'm not going to be your fucking carbon copy, if that's what you wanted-"

Angel removed his hand from Wesley's.

"I'm not--" Angel said softly. "I don't want a carbon copy. I just...I just want to feel alive. Is that something stupid for a vampire like me to say? God, Wes, I want to feel that there's more to the good fight then saving strangers that may or may not say thank you. My Wesley was the only one to do that. Make me feel anything. Make me feel as if I really had a purpose. I felt alive in his arms. No one else could do that. Only Wesley. Only you."

Wes sighed then said huskily, "Damn, Angel...Don't know how to respond to that."

"You're different from my lover." This time Angel's hand wasn't stopped, as he caressed Wesley's face tenderly. Lovingly. "But, Wes, my heart even dead can love you so easily. Don't want a damn carbon copy, I just want someone to love and someone who will love me back with the same intensity in return. Can you, Wes? Love me? If you tell me now that you can't, I'll go into your living room and sleep on your sofa. Then I'll spend the week here trying to help you find your Angel and stop hoping that with time you might return
with me to my reality. Tell me, truthfully, Wes, can you love me? Do you think you can?"

Then there was silence...

Angel waited...

And waited...

The silence continued as the man he was softly touching rolled over on his side.

"Yes, Angel, I can." Wesley whispered before yawning. He got comfortable and his breathing became slowed. Seeming to have fallen asleep quickly. But Angel knew better. Wesley was still wide awake. Thinking about everything Angel had said.

Angel smiled in the darkness. Still laying on top of Wesley's blankets, he moved closer to the human he would die for given a chance. The vampire couldn't help but whisper in Wes' ear. "I loved my Wesley. He was my everything. First time I saw him, I wanted him. Longed for him. Needed to make him *mine*. I know that right now, I no longer *think* I can love you, but I do love you. The moment I saw you looking all rogue and tough, I knew. I wanted. I longed to be *yours*." 

Angel still got no response. But it didn't matter. Placing an arm around Wesley's waist, he snuggled even closer, spooning him. He mumbled a goodnight and for the first time in over a month...He and his demon remembered what peace felt like...

And it felt like Wesley.

(end part 15)
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Part 16

"Don't know why I can't go with you." Angel said with a slight pout.

Wesley simply rolled his eyes and ate another small bite of french toast that Angel had kindly made for him. Before saying, "I told you why, Angel. With the other Angel in the ocean, a lot of people are on the look out for him. They don't know what I know. And some of the lovely wonderful people that are looking for him happen to be Wolfram and Hart, Angel's arch-enemy. I don't need them looking for him, too. If they find him in a weakened state...I don't even want to think what torments they would put him through. Plus, Angel would owe them something for rescuing him."

"All I'm hearing you say is that I'm now a prisoner in your apartment and can't even help you kill some demons."

"Yes, you listen so very well. And you're not really a prisoner, Angel. The girl chained up in my closet, now *she* is a prisoner. Anyway, it would just be in everyone's best interest if you stayed inside, hidden in my apartment for the duration of your stay."

Angel looked over at him from the other end of the table. His hand toyed with his glass of blood.

"I wouldn't mind hiding away in your apartment if you stayed with me. You did tell Lilah you were ill, don't ya think that she might find it suspicious that you are well enough to go out and fight demons--"

"Angel..."

"You can always let you employees deal with it. Stay here with me, we can do stuff. Talk. Play games. My favorite has always been naked Twister or even naked Scrabble. Or hell, we can just get naked all together! Now that would be fun." Angel said with amusement in his voice and a lusty, mischievous twinkle in his dark brown eyes.

"Naked Scrabble?" Wesley looked surprised as his mind started to picture such an invent.

"It's fun." Angel said with a smile, "The winner with the most points gets a blow--"

"Don't you dare finish that sentence." Wesley cut in quickly.

"What?" Angel replied innocently. A little too innocently. "Blow jobs bother you? They sure in the hell don't bother me. As a matter of fact--"

"I'm fine with blow jobs! Hell, I love them!" Wesley then realized what he had just said and his hands were suddenly hiding his slightly reddened face.

"You're driving me crazy!" Wesley's voice sounded weak, muffled, by his hands upon his face and covering his mouth.

"You'll feel better after you finish your french toast and you haven't even touched your milk. I heard that there's a study going on at Boston University seeing if milk can keep people from going crazy." Angel told him in all seriousness.

Wesley removed his hands from his face with a sigh, reaching for his milk. "I can drink a gallon of this stuff and I'm still not sure of my sanity with you around."
"Do you think me giving you a blow job might help?"

Wesley sat his glass of milk down with a thud. "Angel, can we please get off--"

"Be happy too!" Angel threw back his chair as he stood up to go to Wes.

The ex-Watcher glared.

"Sit. Down." Wesley demanded automatically, seriously losing his patience with the horny vampire.

Angel stared at him for a moment. Wesley gave him a look that screamed, 'Don't mess with me or I'll hit you with something heavy'. Angel then shrugged, as he righted his chair before sitting back down with a pout that had Wesley shaking his head in disbelief at his new friend's behavior. The rogue demon hunter's phone rang at that moment, looking away from the vampire he answered it on the second ring.

"Pryce, here...Yes...I know...Right, yes...Let Cage and Hawkins deal with it...I'm busy today...Right...Yes...Let me know how everything goes down then remember to file it away...Uh, uh...Right...If it gets too dangerous, that is when you should call me...Exactly...Right, bye."

Wesley then hung up, looking over at Angel, who was now smiling happily.

"You're staying." Angel said earnestly. As if it was a fantastic idea, and he couldn't believe his luck.

"Yes, I am." He answered back as if it was being dragged from him. "But later tonight, I'm taking Justine and just me and her are going on a boat ride."

"But..." Angel said flatly, faintly. Clearly not liking that idea.

"Just me and her, Angel." Wesley repeated firmly, slowly as if he were talking to a small child. Angel could tell by the tone and look on his face that Wes was very serious about this matter.

The ensouled vampire nodded hesitantly, before taking a sip of his lukewarm blood.

Deciding to go to another subject, Wes asked curiously, "Have you ever met a Charles Gunn, in your reality?"

Surprise flickered across Angel's face, this time it was the vampire sitting down his glass with a thud. "He's in this reality too?"

Wesley looked at him in bewilderment. "Yeah."

"Street smart? Rough? Bald, black, from L.A? Beat ya up if anyone tries to make fun of his name? That the one you speak of?"

"Yes and we're in L.A. now, actually."

"We are? Huh, interesting. Well, like I was telling you, me and the gang live in good ol', always an adventure, Sunnydale. Or as Spike, lovingly calls the place, our own Sunnyhell. Our investigation agency is doing good. Better then good, seeing that we are the only one in town. That fact alone, gives us a heads up. Gunn works for us and with us. He's part of the gang. Part of our family. Took us a while to accept him and for him to accept us."
"Really?"

"Well, yeah. He has one hot headed temper. Plus, when he first came to town, wanting to kill us all, hard to befriend someone wanting you dead and all. Not just any dead mind you, but a violent blood bath of pain and real slow like painful dead."

"Because you and Spike are vampires." Wesley said with certainty.

"No. Because *he* is a vampire. Came to Sunnydale because he heard tales of there being two legendary Slayers here...Um, there...Anyway, he wanted to fight 'em. Kill 'em. Like he ever had a chance at killing Willow and Faith. Yet, you've got to give him credit for trying. He is a scary bad ass vamp. The Slayers were a challenge to him, ya see. And to be honest, he was a bit of a challenge to them as well. Then a month or two of playing his game with the girls something happened that changed him and us forever. There were some government guys that caught him and his sister. Who just so happens to be his Sire. She fought 'em and killed one of the boys by snapping his neck before they could shoot her with their fancy ass weapons. In a murderous fury, a friend of that solder staked her instantly. Right in front of Gunn. Right at the moment he had been stunned by the weapons they held, he watched his beloved sister and Sire turn to dust, unable to do anything. He was so furious, yet he was helpless. His sister was the only thing that ever truly mattered to him...Well he couldn't fight back. The solders took Gunn to the Initiative, giving him a special barbaric gift. A damn chip in his head. Unable to feed, hurt or kill any human. He escaped luckily and after trying to survive out on his own...And finding he really couldn't without help. He came to us, his sworn enemies. Walking into the Guardian Investigation Agency like he owned the place, and saying that he needed help. Later he fell hard for Faith. And she fell hard in return. She keeps him in line. Gunn won't admit it but I think he likes us. Cares for us. He once told us that he fought the good fight back when he had been human. So now he feels it's all coming back full circle. He does what he can and I get the strong feeling that he enjoys killing bad ass demons. Being a bad ass demon himself, makes him a true rebel, or something along those lines."

"Gunn is a vampire. With a chip in his head." Wesley stated softly, full of awe. "In this world he is completely human."

"Really?" Angel's eyes were wide with wonder at that thought. "Human? Not a bad ass vampire, with a chip in his head? Oh, I can't wait to tell that to him. He'll hate the thought of it! When we return, I'll have to share this with the guys, it's going to be so fun teasing his crazy ass..."

If Wesley noticed Angel saying, 'when *we* return' he didn't seem to show it, as he chuckled. "And the human would *hate* the thought of a vamp Gunn."

"There is no going half way with them. They either love ya or hate ya."

Wesley's eyes darkened. "I know." He said hoarsely.

"He don't like you?" Angel as truly puzzled.

"Not anymore, no."

"But he used to be your friend..."

Wesley just looked at Angel before the vampire continued, "This reality is really fucked up. Did you know my Wesley had a hard time with Gunn? Felt that one day the chip would stop working and we'd all end up dead. Then he stopped complaining when Gunn saved his life."
"Really." Wes stated flatly.

"Yeah, they even became friends of sorts after that. Though Gunn still says that saving 'English' was a total accident, but the gang had a hard time believing that, hell, *I* have a hard time believing that."

Wesley finished his milk with a mumbled, "$Oh." Then he studied Angel before asking, "Is your soul permanent?"

Angel smiled joyously. "You're just *now* asking that? Yes, Wes, it's *very* permanent. Wanna test it out?"

"No!! A-And I-I've been meaning to ask."

"Huh-uh. Mostly 'cos you're hot for my sexy bod. Which I totally understand. Want more french toast, my handsome love?" Angel asked all the while smirking.

"I'm full, thank you."

"You can be full of something else, if ya want..."

Wesley looked at him with a slack jaw before glaring coldly at him. "Are you normally like this in your world?"

Angel nodded, "Hang out with Spike and Xander and see if you're not talking about what's on your mind."

"Like blow jobs."

"I don't see anything wrong with 'em. I talk about blow jobs, Xander and Spike like discussing anything involving the ass."

"That thought is disturbing on so many levels."

"Depends on who the blow job and ass stuff is happening too." Angel replied deliberately, innocently seeking Wes' reaction and loving what he got.

Laughter filled those beautiful blue eyes. "You, Angel, are a wanker. A complete and total wanker. Seeing that we are both spending the day in my apartment, want to play a fun game of 'Risk'?"

"Can we play naked?"

"No."

"Party Pooper."

"Yes, I know. Party Pooper is my manly as hell middle name, but we can listen to a Barry Manilow CD while we play." Wesley said, hoping that this Angel liked Barry as much as the other one did. The CD had been a planned future gift that he had been meaning to give to his Angel, but things had happened. Like stealing Angel's son for example.

Hmm, he felt the strong need to start brooding once more...

"Does it include the song Mandy?" Angel said with eyes lit up with almost childlike excitement. Making Wes snap out of the broody mode of thinking...
"Of course! I made sure of that when I bought it." Wesley replied with a sweet boyish smile.

(end of part 16)
"He's going to drive me batty. Completely and totally batty." Wesley whispered to himself as he stood looking at the stars laying beautifully and peacefully against the black velvet sky. Letting the sea air swirl around him as the gentle waves rocked against the old white boat making a relaxing lapping sound.

He had spent the whole day with Angel. Laughing and enjoying the day as if they were long time friends. It had felt nice. More then nice. Wonderful really.

Though, through out it all, Angel had made a lot of sexual references. Wes would glare, of course. But to be honest, he had enjoyed every damn moment of it. He had laughed, truly laughed for the first time in months. He had felt alive and bloody hell, he felt happy. And everyone would tell you, that Wesley Wyndam-Pryce, also known as Judas to some, did *not* deserve to be even remotely happy...

Yet there Wes was, enjoying himself. Truly happy. Laughing as if he had no damn bloody problems! Then he even had the gall to join in making sexual replies himself. Loving the power he felt at Angel's shock and then look of pure joyous lust that lit his face...

Damn, he loved that look. The look of pure desire. Mixed with love? Was it really love?

This Angel was so different from the other one, yet almost the same. He wasn't as broody. At times, Angel would get quiet and sad almost, then, it would disappear when Angel looked over at him. Why was it so easy to enjoy himself with this Angel? To laugh with him? To relax? Angel could tell jokes that could make hardened sailors and warriors blush...

That was very different from the Angel he knew and cared about.

But what really was different. What really bothered Wes was those damn looks he didn't deserve. Those looks that said Wes was his everything.

That still stunned and scared the hell out of him. There were also the light quick touches that Angel gave him, as if he couldn't help but to touch him. As if making sure Wes was really there...

Making Wesley afraid.

Afraid it was a dream or something would happen to change Angel's opinion of him. This Angel didn't see him for what he really was. A goddamned failure. Broken. He was like the beautiful vase that he had broken by accident as a small child. Except for being beautiful, priceless and centuries old. He had been scared then too. Using up two bottles of glue in the hope of fixing it, so he wouldn't be punished.

So he wouldn't be yelled at by an angry mum, wouldn't be locked in a dark scary cupboard under the stairs by a furious father who thought his son was worthless. No matter how hard he tried to fix the shattered vase, it had still remained broken. No matter how sorry he had been. No matter the tears he had wept begging that he be forgiven. No matter how the jagged sharp edges he tried to piece together broke the skin upon his small delicate fingers making him bleed drops of his own ruby red life giving blood...

That vase had remained broken. All the glue in the world wouldn't have fixed it to its prior glory. Just like nothing could piece him back together. Not even Angel's love. For even with that love he would still fail him at some point. Maybe this Angel wouldn't press a damn pillow on his face, forcing his mind to go back to being in a small dark, hot cupboard feeling as if the darkness were suffocating him...
He was what he was, a man who fought his own demons in a darkness that would always continue to suffocate him. A darkness that tried to swallow him whole. No matter what good he tried to do. A man who was trying to glue himself back together again, yet knowing it was pointless. Hopeless. He would continue to survive with a bleeding throat and blooded fingers.

Accepting that he would always lose everything he valued and loved. He'd always be fired, abandoned and cast out. He was only left with one thing. What he would always be left with, when it was all said and done...Himself.

But damn, his beating heart was yearning for what Angel was offering.

Could he accept it? The love? Angel? Could he do it? Turn and walk away from his own reality to go with Angel to his? Would the people there accept him or would it be just another fucking Sunnydale and L.A.? Thinking for a moment that he had found his place. Found a home with a family and dear beloved friends...

To find himself abandoned once more by the people he would try to protect and love. And if he did make Angel's world his reality, then that is something he'd do...Try to do. Protect. Love. Care...

Even if he didn't want to do those things in fear of being hurt, he'd be willing to hurt them, betray them. To protect those he cared for. Even if he didn't know them all that well the people Angel talked about with such love and affection. Not the versions he knew in Angel's reality anyway...

But Wesley knew...

With time, Angel's beloved family would become his own...Or would they? Fuck! He didn't know! He wasn't sure what was what anymore! All he knew for sure was that he had to rescue this realities Angel...Then he'd wonder what to do about his Angel...His...

"Angel..." Wesley whispered under his breath. Letting the sea air capture the word...His Angel...He was already thinking of the other Angel as his?

But he wasn't his, right? Angel was back at his apartment waiting for him to come back home...

Again that felt right...Knowing his Angel was there. Waiting...For him... He heard splashing from the side of the boat. A little later he watched Justine come out of the dark, inky water and slowly climb aboard.

Wesley shoved his hands into his pockets to keep himself from hitting the damn girl. Knowing the news would not be what he wanted to hear. A cold wind swirled around him, but the icy dead feeling in his heart was colder than the Arctic wind could ever have been.

"Well, Justine?" He asked in a emotionless tone, yet the words were laden with pure hard dark steel. Still raw with emotions he was feeling at the moment. Hating what he would hear. Knowing that once again...He failed.

Another damn night of not finding Angel...Always a failure, his father must be so proud to know he was right...His damn father was always right.

She threw down the oxygen tank and her mask. Yanking off her goggles to glare at him.

"There's nothing down there but a shopping cart, a metal hammer, and what looks like a rusted car door. What the hell a car door is doing down there, I have no fucking idea."

"Interesting..."
"You want to know what I find interesting, Wes?"

"No, not really."

"I find it interesting that night after night you go after someone, no make that some *thing*, that hates you. He'll never forgive you, or care a fuck about you. You're nothing to him...He will *always* hate you!"

"Right, tomorrow my dear, we'll start this night all over again. It'll be fun, don't you think? But first I'll take you back to my place and let you fill up that pretty bucket of yours." Wesley told her dryly.

"You're a fucking ass hole." She said, finding the dry clean towel he had set aside for her.

All Wesley did in reply was smile coldly at his slave...

(end part 17)
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Part 18

The minute Wesley finished chaining and locking Justine back in her small dark closet, Angel stepped out of hiding.

He had hid on Wesley's request. Wesley had said that it was best if *no one* knew that the vampire with the soul from another reality was here in this world.

Angel agreed with that logic, but he did mind the sorrow he saw expressed in those hard blue eyes. As Wes leaned against the wooden closet door and looked at Angel.

The vampire said nothing as he placed a hand into his pants pocket and watched Wes in return. After a moment of intense silence, Wesley broke the silence with a husky, almost lost child like tone, "Once again...Another damn night and I didn't find him...Didn't find Angel..."

"You will...You *will* find him, Wes..." Angel said softly. With his other hand he caressed Wesley's unshaven cheek. Wes leaned into the cool soothing touch. That hand held so much power, yet at a time like this it could be remarkably gentle. Tender. Loving.

Wesley closed his eyes as he sighed. "I don't know, Angel. What if...I fail at saving him as I failed at so many other things?"

Angel leaned in close, removing his hand from his pocket to cup the other side of Wesley's face. Then his cold lips fell upon the former Watcher's. Wesley's lips moved under the vampire's, inviting him to take the kiss deeper.

Without a second thought that is exactly what Angel did. Pressing his hard body up against Wesley's. As their tongues danced; mated. The men moaned together as the kiss got hotter. More intense. Taking away for a moment, any self doubt and just leaving the overwhelming need for each other.

Angel's lips moved reluctantly, from Wesley's hot moist mouth.

Wes opened his blue eyes as a one of his trembling hands reached out and traced the vampire's smooth jaw.

"You'll find him." Angel repeated softly, all his desire for Wesley in his voice and in his eyes. He spoke with certainty, as if he knew for a fact that what he spoke was true. That Wesley really would find the other Angel.

"Maybe." Wesley said a little doubtfully. As he watched his fingertips continue to caress Angel's wonderfully cool skin. "Hopefully before it's too late. The risk of him losing his higher brain functions and becoming insane while down there in that cold watery grave, starving...*I* have to find him...I have too, Angel, God, I just have too..."

Angel continued to watch the beautiful man before him. Watched as his mind suddenly shifted gear and those blue eyes darken with desire as Wesley's fingers now traced the vampire's lower lip. Then Wes moved and replaced his fingers with his lips.

The mouth upon Angel's was hot. Hard. Hungry...

All of Wesley's frustrations, pain and loneliness in the past months, was in his kiss. Angel felt it all. Felt Wes' need and answered it with his own. The hunger, the need for each other was intensely strong and so
damn overwhelming.

One of Wesley's hands sunk deeply into Angel's hair, holding him steadfast. Angel willingly gave up his mouth to the sheer furious domination of his...

Angel wondered if such boundless heat from such an intense kiss could burn him to ash. For it felt as if he was kissing a live volcano. Hard fiery heat and savage fire flowed. Yet the vampire didn't care if the wondrous kiss turned him to ash at that moment. For Wesley was the fire he longed to be heated by. He wanted his cold skin to burn under Wes' touch. Need to burn. Longed for the burn. The feel of Wesley...

That was Wesley...

Wesley moved slightly, but not away. No never away from Angel. The vampire allowed himself to be turned so now it was his back that was against the closed locked closet door...The kiss continued...

Angel moaned, letting his hands wonder along Wes' back. One hand went lower to grab Wesley's firm tight jeans enclosed ass. Making Wesley moan in response, moving even closer. Trapping Angel with his body. Then Wes ended the kiss gasping for air.

"Angel..." He said in a soft, passionate tone. Felt almost like silk upon the skin. Angel continued to lean against the door holding the former Watcher tight.

Angel came forward a little to kiss Wesley's forehead. As his hand moved to run his fingers lovingly through hair. An arm was still around Wes' waist.

The former Watcher closed his eyes then leaned his head upon Angel's shoulder.

"This feels nice..." Wesley mumbled.

"More then nice." Angel answered back gently, with a great deal of tenderness in his voice.

"Shouldn't this..." Then Wesley sighed, allowing Angel to continue to hold him. He did nothing but lean on the vampire. Loving the caress. Smelling the familiar scent that was all Angel and loving every moment.

"What?"

"Nmphke..." Wesley said pressing his face into Angel's neck, giving him a small butterfly kiss at the side of his throat.

Angel looked down right confused as he said the only thing a two hundred and some vampire could think of, "Huh?"

"Nothing." Wesley repeated, this time more clearly.

"Wes?"

"Hmmm?"

"Everything you feel, everything you do, means something to me. 'Cos you're Wesley, my everything."

"Meaning?" Wes said in an quiet whisper.

"When it comes to you, it always means *something*. 'Nothing' is a word I ignore when it comes to you, so
tell me what's on your mind. What did that 'nothing' mean?"

"I keep wondering why this feels so damn right."

"This? Me and you?"

Angel felt Wesley nod against his shoulder. "Maybe, Wes, 'cos it is just that, right."

"Maybe." Wesley answered back, a far away look in his eyes. "But you are from another reality..."

"Yeah, so are you. Your point?"

"Things change...What if...Tonight, while on the boat I thought...This shouldn't feel right. Be right. I'm afraid Angel, so damn afraid. Afraid that I won't find the other Angel. I'm afraid of the damn unknown...What if I do decide to go back with you, then what?...Maybe later there comes a day, were you don't want me any more..."

"Wes, you have an incredibly smart, sexy brain inside that handsome head of yours, but you can think some strange stupid ass shit."

"No one has ever called my brain sexy before." The British man said with a small chuckle.

Angel shrugged, caressing Wes' back. "I like being unique. I may never understand why you think the way you do, but I think that brain as well as that body is very sexy indeed."

Suddenly out of no where came the words...

"Will you fuck me?"

Stunned silence was Wesley's only reply. Until Angel's brain could start to work once more.

"What?"

"Fuck me, here. Now."

"Wes..."

"Just fuck the hell out of me." Wesley told him emotionlessly. Reaching up to grab for Angel's lips with his own.

The vampire moved his head away slightly. "Why? In hopes that for a minute you can forget all the pain and heartache this world has given you? No, Wes, we aren't playing that game."

"Since showing up you've made it a point to tell me you want me, so...Here I am, Angel. Let's fuck. That *is* what you want right? To fuck me."

Angel did the unexpected, he gave a small laugh. then he looked at the beautiful scarred human, scarred emotionally and physically, that he lovingly held, before saying seriously, "Um, no, Wes. I love you, don't want to fuck you. I want to love you there is a difference ya know? See, I have this plan, romance you, love you no matter what and the first time we do 'fuck' it'll be love making all the way. Neither party is going to be trying to use the other in hopes to make the pain go away. Or because we're afraid that none of this is real or it won't work out. Then the second time we do it, we can fuck until the Portexk demon's come home. Day and night if ya want, I'm all for it. But Wes, we aren't going to be using each other. I'm not going to take
advantage of your heart. I love you, Wes. Fine have a hard as hell time believing it, but I'm going to still be loving you. And Wes, you've been busy fucking the enemy lately, haven't you noticed by now how that screwing doesn't heal a hurting, lonely heart?"

"I've noticed you damn noble wanker." Wesley said right before adding softly, "Thank you."

"Now if ya want a quick blow job or even give me one that's a different loop hole all together." Angel said in a half joking manner, giving Wes a hot 'I so wouldn't mind that at all' look.

"Wanker." Wesley gave a small laugh. "Noble fucking wanker is exactly what you are."

"But I'm *your* noble fucking wanker."

"Maybe, one day you will be." Wesley said, reluctantly moving out of Angel's sweet loving embrace. But not before quickly coppering a feel. Much to Angel's delight. "I'm going to go take a shower."

"Need any help with that?" Angel asked in an innocent sounding tone.

"Maybe tomorrow..." Wes remarked heading toward the bathroom.

"Tease."

Wesley gave a small smile over his shoulder before shutting the door. Angel moved toward the bed and sat down. He looked at the closed bathroom door as he slowly took off his shoes and socks.

He wiggled his toes as he wondered if just now had been a test. A small test, but still a test. To see if he was honest. Real. His new Wes was hurting, fear and doubt that true love could ever be his. Plus the other Angel and this reality really fucked him up.

But Angel was just the vampire to prove to the former Watcher that love was indeed his. That the love was real. So very real. Wes just needed to realize this in the next few days. Now that was the challenge. Why couldn't the challenge be save the world in under an hour, he could definately do that!

"Oh, goddess..." Angel spoke softly with all his heart, as he unbuttoned his shirt with slow fingers, preoccupied in his thoughts of Wesley. "I need him, Hero, I need him so damn much...Oh, sorry for using the word 'damn' while speaking to you. Hope you can hear me even in another reality. If you can, please, Hero I beg of you, help me not screw this up. I screw up so many things, don't let me screw up. Please...I love him, just help me not fail at proving my love for him...Help me, get him to believe in my love for him, Hero. I know you already honored me with this chance at finding this Wes and bringing him home, but don't let me be a dumb ass in this. Thank you...Um, hope you aren't offended by me using the word 'ass' in my prayer to you...If you are, forgive me...I worship you, Hero, always and forever..."

He threw the shirt on top of the dresser, before crawling into Wesley's bed and pulling the covers to his chin. Closing his eyes, he waited.

A short time later, Wesley entered the bedroom. With his hair still slightly damp, and wearing only baggy gray pajama bottoms, he stopped and eyed the resting vampire.

He quietly and carefully got on his side of the bed. Then he leaned over and turned out the light. Pulling the covers over him, he looked at Angel once more, making out his shape in the darkness.

For some inexplicable reason, he leaned forward and gave Angel a light kiss upon his cheek. Too fast for Wes' reflexes to get out of his way, as an arm was suddenly around him, holding him close.
"Good night, my love." Angel said sleepily.

Wesley blinked and continued to watch the vampire. After a moment, Wesley echoed the words back. Slowly. Softly. Timidly, almost hesitantly. Before wrapping an arm around Angel's waist and laying his head upon the vampire's naked chest.

Together, holding each other tight throughout the night, they slept.

(end of part 18)
Part 19

The next morning, Wesley placed a mug of fresh pig's blood into the microwave. He could feel the vampire watching him, a second later, at the sound of the ding, Angel was there behind Wes, nipping upon the human ear lobe.

"A-Angel. Your blood's ready."

"I'd rather nibble on you..." Angel said with a purr. Continuing to play with Wes' ear, then he started to kiss the side of Wesley's neck.

"A-Angel..."

"Love how you say my name like that and I love how tasty you are." The vampire simply told him, still purring, still kissing. Lightly nipping, then licking away any sting he may have created.

"That...That is starting to tickle, Angel..."

"Hmm..."

"Your blood is going to become cold if you continue to do that..."

At that Angel pressed himself even closer behind Wes. Letting him feel that if anything his blood was warming up. "Mmm, I don't know, Wes, kissing you, touching you is starting to heat things up...Or get something of mine up, which is always up when you are around..."

"Yes, I happen to feel it and each time you move your hips like that...Angel! Stop it!"

Angel chuckled as he wiggled suggestively once more behind Wesley. Then he stepped away opening the microwave's door to get his mug of pig's blood.

"So what would you like me to make for you this morning?" Angel asked.

Wesley looked at him, deep in thought, then he looked as if he had decided something. Right at that moment he quickly looked away as he mumbled, "Not really hungry this morning, actually."

Angel couldn't help but become serious and he calmly set down his mug that he had been about to take a sip from. "You need to eat, Wes. You haven't been eating right for the longest time, you're skin and bones. Nice looking skin and bones, but still skin and bones."

"Not hungry this morning, Angel." Wesley grumbled.

"Okay, so, want me to make grilled cheese sandwiches and tomato soup, for lunch?"

"Maybe. Doubt I'll be hungry then too." Wesley said shamelessly.

Angel's expression hardened, as he realized this was more then a food issue, yet he kept his tone gentle, "Want me to make dinner, then? I make one hell of a good homemade chicken pot pie, or at least my human friends tell me that I do."

Wesley turned away as he shrugged. "I don't know, I wouldn't go to any trouble really."
"Wesley..." His voice was no longer gentle. "I want to cook my beloved something. Seeing that you are my beloved and all, that means that I *will* be cooking you something. You then *will* eat that something, even if I have to force the food down your throat."

Something flashed in Wesley's eyes as he glared at the vampire. "There it is. I knew that I'd be seeing your true colors at some point."

"True colors? What the fuck are you talking about?"

"Nothing! Not a damn bloody thing!" He turned away and leaned on to the counter's edge.

"Is this about last night's test? What did I not pass?" Angel told him as anger started to burn inside him like someone just lit a candle.

"Test? There was no test, Angel."

"Really, what was it then?" Angel's voice simply rose a little in octave, faking very badly at a British accent, "Fuck me, Angel, here and now...Oh, by the way, thank you, for not taking me up on the offer."

Wesley swung around to face the vampire before him. The ex-Watcher's eyes seemed to now be blazing a hard murderous blue. "Don't you dare mock me, Angel."

"I'm not, Wes! Damn it all, I'm not! I *love* you! I want you to believe in that love, but you and I both know you doubted my love for you last night. You still do. You fucking tested me, Wesley, so don't you *dare* lie to me now!"

"Okay, so I just sodding well lied to you! So what, Angel? You're right, I don't believe in your so called love, you want to know why? Because you're Angel! I know the type of person you can be! The type you really are! An apple in my world is still probably a bloody apple in yours!"

"Yeah, an apple is still very much an apple. So what? Every apple is slightly different in some way. I'm sure in the hell not going to attack while you are weak in a hospital bed with a pillow in my hands. I'm Angel, yeah, but I'm not this realities Angel. This Angel who is standing before you, loves you. Would die for you. I'm *not* this realities Angel, Wes."

"You can be! That's the whole bloody point, you fucking wanker! You *can* be! Don't you see, you can hurt me just like my Angel has..." Then Wesley looked away, his voice fading to a whisper as his anger dissolved into nothingness. "Except you can hurt me a thousand times more the moment I believe we can work. That you really love me. That you *can* love me. You could then destroy me a thousand times more than this realities Angel ever could. Because with him, I've always known he'd never care about me the way I did...or do...Or whatever..."

"I scare you." Angel simply stated.

"My feelings scare me more than you ever will. Don't you understand that? I've always cared about the great mighty champion that is Angel. A damn vampire! The hero that helps and cares about people. The council and my father never understood why I cared. Hell, I'm not even sure I knew why I cared! Fuck, I simply did. I cared. I believed in his mission. I believed in him more than I ever believed in myself and now that fucking damn champion that I would have given my damn worthless life for, hates *me*. I would still give up my life for him and he tried to kill me. Or maybe he simply was showing me that he wished I was dead. Telling me that to him I was nothing. Not even worthy of a quick snap of a neck. Telling me with a pillow, what my father had been telling me through out all of my childhood. He refused to grant me forgiveness,
even before I had a chance to ask for it. Now all I know is that you both are vampires with souls. Both supposedly have the mission. But I have a hard time believing that you love me. I want to believe Angel, I really do, but...I can't believe because you are *still* Angel, even if you are a little different."

Angel sighed before answering honestly. "I don't know why the hell the other Angel and I are so different. I just know we are. I'm shocked as hell to know that he doesn't love you. Don't understand why he doesn't, all I know is *I* love you. Xander's right, experiences make us who we are, so the other Angel's experiences are different from mine. Still he should know how valuable, how wonderful you are. He should love you. Wes, the last time I looked in a mirror I didn't see myself because I'm a vampire. I can't change that, just like I can't change the fact that I love you. To be honest, I *never* want to change that. The other Angel is a blind idiot. I know I can be one too; but when it comes to you I'm not blind. Nor an idiot, no matter what Spike may say. How do I prove to you that I love you, Wes? Tell me and I'll do it."

"I don't know." Wesley said softly, running a hand through his hair. "I really don't know."

The human swallowed hard as Angel took his hand in his. Angel brought it up to his face, planting a tender kiss on to his palm, before letting go. Wesley simply looked at the vampire.

"You want to believe in my love for you, don't ya, Wes?" Angel asked as he peered deeply into those beautiful blue eyes.

"God, yes." Wesley whispered. "I do..."

"If...If I told you that I want to be bonded to you, would you finally believe?"

"Bonded?" Wesley's dark brows drew together in a puzzled frown.

Angel gave a small smile. "It's a rare and special bond. It's only between a vampire and its human mate. Xander and Spike are such bonded mates. Meaning they share *everything*. Know everything about their mate so they can keep each other happy. They never feel alone. They in many ways are one. Two different beings with the bond making them one. Whole. They share memories. Emotions. Spike shares his vampire strength and supernatural healing, as well as his vampire senses. Xander can share his magic with him and shares his soul, his humanity, his joy and laughter. With a bonded mate they can look inside one's head, with permission and know what they are thinking. Plan out a battle in their minds. Talk to each other, while no one else can hear. Once Xander even used Spike's eyes to see what his mate was seeing. They complete each other. Once one becomes bonded the bond is eternal. It can't be destroyed. They both live as one. They die as one."

"Angel..."

"A bonded mate can *never* be lied too! They share everything, even the love they have for one another. Because of that the love between mates grows stronger every moment that passes. It's a beautiful and powerful bond. One to be respected. Valued. Treasured. Don't you see, Wes, I want to share my *everything* with you 'cos you *are* my everything! You'll believe it to be true then, through the bond. For the bond makes one know the truth about each other. You'd feel and know my love every single moment."

"You said bonded mates live and die together?"

"What? That was the only part you heard? You...You would live forever, like I would. You know unless I was staked, head chopped off, ya know the normal kill off a vamp way. The same with you, someone chops your head off, gets ya in the heart or some kind of unhealing wound. You die, I turn to dust. I die, you die."

"I die, you're dust? You would give me, a human that kind of power over you?"
"Quicker than it would take for a second to pass. Damn, Wes, I'll say it again, I love you. I need you. Also you'd know my demon. You'd feel it, you'd be able to use its strength to fight."

"What is the down side to this?"

"Down side?"

"Yes, what is bad about the bond, other than the whole dying together thing. Can't be as perfect as you make it sound."

"You'd have to drink some of my blood once a month. About a pint." Angel said quickly. "Or you'd hurt. But that is the only down side. Well, yeah, you know, we'd share everything. Memories. No secrets between bonded mates. You'd know everything that I'm ashamed off. You'd see and know every mistake I've ever made. I'd see yours. And I know that I will continue to love and accept you even knowing all your secrets and fears. Just like I hope you will accept mine."

"I would."

"Then there is the orgasms."

"Wh--"

"Spike loves to brag to me about it, saying, 'I get to feel what my Xanpet feels when I touch him. Know exactly what he wants. I feel what he wants me to do and it turns me on knowing that the feeling I feel he's feeling as well.' Then he goes on and on about how the orgasms seem more intense, powerful and longer because of the bond. Something to think about. I know I do. You and me, lots of orgasms. Hell, even with out the bond, you know the sex is gonna be fantastic."

"Right." Wesley nodded then moved away from Angel, leaving the kitchen. Angel turning and following a few feet behind.

"And I'm not bragging. You know the sex is going to be fantastic. More then fantastic, really. Oh, Wes, love making between us will be beautiful and sweaty, as well as long, 'cos you know what they say about vampire stamina is very true. You'd have a hard time walking the next day without grinning."

"Right...Of course you're not bragging. " Wesley stated, trying to keep a smile from forming.

"Nope, I'm not. Stating a hard core fact. Want me to show you...Right now..." Angel said the last part huskily.

Wesley looked back at him. "Angel?"

"Yeah?"

"I really need to think on a lot of things."

"Your problem is that you think too much."

"Maybe I do, Angel."

Angel watched Wesley open his living room closet. Taking out a big full weapon's bag. Wes set it up on the table. He then watched him look and find his keys.
"I'm going out for awhile." Wesley said not looking at him. Double checking everything he had.

"I can see that. Coming back?"

"Of course, where else would I go. This is my apartment." Wesley stated dryly.

Angel put his hands into his pockets to keep from grabbing the former Watcher and forcing him to stay with him. "So you got to think away from me? Going to tell me to stay here?"

"I want you too. I wish you would." Wesley looked over and finally made eye contact. "But I've learned over the years that the other Angel will do whatever the hell he wants to do. Screw what others want or what is best."

"I'll tell ya what I choose. I choose to love you. One day, you'll believe that. Hopefully soon, 'cos the clock is ticking, Wes."

Wesley smiled a little. "Yeah, I know. But I do believe things will work out, no matter how confused I am at the moment."

"I'll be here when you get back."

"Thank you."

"It's hard staying here knowing you're out there."

"But I'll return."

"Yeah, 'cos this is your apartment. Where else would you go?" Angel said flatly, throwing back Wesley's words from earlier.

"But I'll come back sooner because you are here." Wesley said honestly.

Only then did Angel smile. "Be careful fighting those demons, kill some for me."

"You got it." Wesley smiled happily back, then he was quickly before the vampire, meeting Angel's surprised lips. They kissed, then Wes pulled away. "So you said you made one hell of a good chicken pot pie, yes?"

"I'll have things ready by five o'clock, Wes, be here on time or I'll go hunting for you."

"Right." Wesley agreed, quickly giving Angel another kiss before moving away. This time he gathered his stuff once more. Walking out of his apartment.

Angel sighed looking at the closed door. He longed to follow. Knowing that even if it wasn't the sun outside trapping him in, he wouldn't leave the apartment no matter what, because the man he loved wanted him to stay inside. No matter how much Angel wanted to follow, he wouldn't because of that fact. He went back into the kitchen and found his long forgotten mug of pig's blood. It would now probably taste a little funny but that was okay. It was still blood. So he sipped upon the now lukewarm blood. Going back into the living room and going through Wesley's books. He found some fascinating demon texts, ancient poetry and old classics.

Finding one that had a lot of fond memories about it he picked out an leather bonded copyrighted 1878 book
of poems. Opening it he could remember another time when Spike would read to him and Dru. He knew he could repeat them word for word, but there was still something special about reading it himself. It took him back...

He wondered if, when he and Wes went home, he could get Spike to read to him like he once did so long ago. For even now reading them he smiled as he heard Spike's voice saying the words in his head. Then explaining them. Mostly for Dru's sake, but still, the memories made him smile. It meant even more when he had gone over the deep end with guilt and Spike had taken him in. Taking out the book he once read for Angelus, and placing those comforting strong arms around his grandsire. He'd read. The poems having new meaning...

He could still remember how Spike had tried to make Angel kill humans. Make him be what he once had been, then after two months he was throwing up his arms and saying, "Oi, fuck it! You don't want to kill, don't. But don't expect me to become like you, Peaches. I care for ya, I still respect you. But unlike you I'm still an evil killer! Even if I think you are now more bonkers than Dru. We're family. I told ya I'd take care of ya, so I will. No matter if Darla said ya should be staked. It's mostly her fault for giving ya that damn Gipsy girl anyway. Glad that bitch left. Dru says I should stake ya too, 'cos you having a soul isn't right. Screw that! Angelus gave his word to protect me, be there for me, no matter how pissed off at me he may be, years ago. And Spike, William the Bloody, makes that promise to you Angelus...We're family, soul or not!"

"Read to me, William...Please just read to me. When you read the pain, the guilt goes away...The people's screams fade away..." Angel had whimpered, going and cuddling up to his grandchild's chest. Seeking comfort.

"Bugger it all." Spike said with a heavy sigh. He got comfortable, as comfortable as he could with a heavy ass vampire upon him, and reached for the old book of poetry. Opening it to no certain page. With Angel still holding on to the other vampire. Spike mumbled, "You're as cute as my dark princess, you are...When you come to accept the fact you're now a demon with a bloody soul, and you are no longer nuts, I'm sooo going to remind you of this, Sire. But you're cute poof, you are..."

He then started to pat Angel's back, as he started to read...

Angel now sitting in one of Wesley's over stuffed chairs, with a lamp on, he read with a smile. Mostly because of the memories that he hadn't thought about in years. This book was indeed the book he remembered...

He got swept away by the memories and the poetry. Hours had passed, his mind focused, until sounds from the front door drew his attention away from the old words upon the yellow page. He watched the door open, to see an unknown visitor come to a sudden stop. Gasping for a moment in surprise, before it disappeared behind an indifferent mask.

Angel smirked. "Well, if it isn't...Lilah...So did ya miss me?"

The evil lawyer lifted an eyebrow. "Only in the sense of, never will."

She was then smirking back like a cat who had just swallowed the canary. She walked into Wes' apartment and closed the door behind her.

(end of part 19)
Chapter 20: Page 20

Part 20

In a beautiful cold marble stone temple, there sat a goddess on a hard uncomfortable throne. There had been a time when she would have complained about it being uncomfortable or made it comfortable in a blink of an eye. But she cared not about complaining or comfort at this time.

So she simply sat upon the hard stone throne. Alone. Always alone.

Her eyes opened as she heard a heart touching prayer. Or at least it touched her heart and that was a great feat.

One of her loyal followers had spoken it. A champion for good...

Angel...

In another reality, trying so hard to prove his love. It took time for the prayer to reach her in this reality but reach her it did. The vampire with the soul spoke to her...

"Oh, goddess...I need him, Hero, I need him so damn much...Oh, sorry for using the word 'damn' while speaking to you. Hope you can hear me even in another reality. If you can, please, Hero I beg of you, help me not screw this up. I screw up so many things, don't let me screw up. Please...I love him, just help me not fail at proving my love for him...Help me, get him to believe in my love for him, Hero. I know you already honored me with this chance at finding this Wes and bringing him home, but don't let me be a dumb ass in this. Thank you...Um, hope you aren't offended by me using the word 'ass' in my prayer to you...If you are, forgive me...I worship you, Hero, always and forever..."

It played in her mind like a tape recording. She even chuckled as she heard Angel say he hoped she wasn't offended by his use of 'damn' and 'ass'. Of course *she* wasn't offended! She had once used worse language then that!

The amusement was destroyed by the words...

"We're worried."

The familiar accented words was heard from a dark corner. The goddess did not look at the one who spoke.

"Worrying is for fools." Hero stated dryly with a slight cold edge.

A familiar form stepped out from the dark shadows. But that was all it was...A form. It wasn't her ex-friend. It wasn't the man she had savagely killed. The warrior who made her give a damn about this world. The one who made her long for redemption. The one who believed that she could still be good. Still be saved, even as she took his life with her own hand. It was just a form, a Power had chosen to remind her of another time. Another place.

"Calling one of the Powers a fool, goddess?"

"Does human blood run red?" Only then did she look over to him.

"You tell me, for you have more experience with cutting people open, then I do." He said coldly, moving towards her slowly.
"Don't you dare speak to me in that way, Power!" The goddess said with dark venom in her eyes.

"Why not? Would not the last great warrior have spoken as such?"

The whole earth gave a rumble, a small shake, as Hero's eyes turned a pure unholy white.

"You do not *know* him! I do! As you aren't him, you have no right to take his form! You *never* have!"

"The true dead, goddess, care not for their rights. Care not if their form is used, for evil or for good."

Her eyes returned to normal as she slowly stood. The Power instantly took a step back. A cold, cruel smile edged her hard, beautiful, elegant face.

"Then it would not grieve me in the slightest if I destroyed you in the form you've chosen to take. Remember, Power, I allow you to watch me. I *allow* you to think you have some control over what I can and can't do. That is my choice, but I can always choose to change that. Decide to kill you. Kill all the Powers That Damn Well Be, and there wouldn't be anything you could do about it."

"I chose this form to remind you, goddess Hero, of your humanity that is buried deep in your heart."

She elegantly took a step away from her throne. "Okay, Power, I'm reminded and tell the others not to worry."

"But maybe *five* days were a little hasty. For already two have passed! Wesley Wyndam-Pryce has always been surprisingly stubborn in one way or another. Here or in any other reality! All of us Powers agree that this world *needs* him...His death in this world took us by surprise..."

"It shouldn't have, you dumb ass! Wesley will always put others before himself, even when it puts his own life at risk. Spike and Xander's life was going to be taken. Wesley stopped that from happening with his own death. But, yes, this world does indeed need him as does the other reality. The question is, Power, which reality needs him more? You know that the champion, Angel *needs* him...His death in this world took us by surprise..."

"And the new Wesley will?!?"

In a surprising move the goddess was before the Power. Slapping him hard in the face. "Not new! You more then anyone knows that! The Wesley in that reality is--He's not new!" She said this through gritted teeth. For a single second she felt a stirring of guilt. For the face she had slapped looked like the treasured Warrior of her past. But only for a second before it was gone. For it wasn't the Warrior before her. Only a simple Power wearing the Warrior's face. This thing before her could not renew her humanity. Her feelings that were slowly disappearing. Each day it was getting harder and harder, to remember...

She turned away from the Power in disgust.

A hand to his face the Power moved his jaw a little. Finding it interesting to feel something that must be called pain. The slap had hurt! He couldn't help but be fascinated, and scared...For he had a feeling the goddess could make sure each and every Power hurt even worse than the sting she had just given him. Pain would be the last thing they felt before Hero gave them death...
"What if the chosen Wesley decides not to come? For his mind and heart are at war with each other. And as you said this world needs him! We can't help but worry!"

"You Powers never seemed to worry with all those apocalypses that have been going on before. Close encounters with the end of the world!" She said with a cold laugh that seemed to echo and bounce off the walls. Causing the Power to shiver.

"Because you know it never really ends! If one world ends another simply starts again for there must be balance, but..."

"I have the power to destroy it *all*. NO more continuing. No more anything. Not even you would continue. Not evil. Not good. Nothing. Gee, scary much? Well, not for me anyway. For I'm starting not to care any more. The Powers and I are both starting to see the truth in this fact."

The Power swallowed hard. "Goddess, maybe you should allow the champion more time to get his love."

"We all agreed. The five days was your idea, remember? I agreed to it. I gave my blessing to it. My power went into it. I change it, I change my blessing. My word. I don't do that. Things will work out. You don't know, Wesley like I do. Yes, his heart and mind are indeed at war but in the end, he always chooses the side his heart takes. He always has, always will. This Wesley will choose the right thing. In this case it's love."

"You take a huge chance, Hero. A chance we the Powers are worried about!"

She looked at him, as she walked up and gently caressed the cheek that a few seconds ago had been slapped brutally.

"You believe in destiny, right?"

The Power winced, expecting another sharp blow at any moment. Not really realizing that the form he had chosen was protecting him for this moment.

"Yes, goddess, you know us Powers do."

"Then you know that destiny is *never* by chance. It's by *choice*! Destiny isn't a flip of a damn coin! Destiny never comes to you, you must choose to go to it!" She then removed her hand. "Now, leave my temple, Power and I grow tired of the form you always seem to use when you visit me. Change it."

The Power nodded hurrying to leaving her by stepping into the shadows to disappear.

The goddess stared at the spot. She sighed, tightening her fists, then she whispered..."Don't let me down, Wes. For the fate of all the known realities are in your hands. Including this reality which I protect."

She slowly went back to her throne and sat down. As still as a statue, she stayed in place. Not even blinking, as she wondered, for the first time in her long existence, who in the hell does an all powerful, slightly worried goddess pray too?

(end of part 20)
Chapter 21: Page 21

Part 21

Angel quietly, if not quickly closed the old book of poems. Never once taking his eyes off Wesley's ex-lover; ex because she *was* Wes' ex, the moment Angel come into this reality. At least that was the way he saw it. Wesley was his. Always would be. Didn't matter what fucked up reality his Wes came from or was in, all Angel knew was what was his would *always* remain his.

The cold smirk seemed to grow as Lilah crossed her arms and stared right back before saying, "Well, here Wolfram and Hart was been looking everywhere for you and here you are...In Wesley's apartment no less."

"Surprised?" Angel set the book down onto a coffee table as he lifted his dark brows in question. Slowly standing up. With an enemy he had learned that one should never be seated...Easier to attack that way. Easier to kill if the need arises.

"That you are here, yes. So, tell me, are you waiting for Wes so you can attack him? Hurt him?"

Angel knew that Lilah thought she knew him. Thought he was the Angel of her world. He knew he needed her to continue to think that way, but it was going to be hard. He would never hurt his Wesley. Never. But the other self was an ass. Complete and total ass. An ass that couldn't see what a treasure Wesley was. Maybe 'cos the other Angel had his head somewhere that was physically impossible...For that Angel had hurt and discarded the man he loved...So Angel had to think quick, hoping he could pull off being an ass in front of an enemy he really didn't know.

"Depends, Lilah, is that why you're here?"

That didn't sound very assy, oh well, he'd just act like himself...

"I'd *never* kill him with a pillow, Angel, for that is just too passe and not to mention boring as hell. Come on, you were once the great Angelus! I would have thought you'd be more imaginative if not just a little bit bloody."

Okay, this Lilah Morgan was a bitch. Well, bitches he could handle. Angel slowly tilted his head to the side and gave a deadly grin. "Once, Lilah? Haven't you learned anything about me? Just because I have a soul doesn't mean that I've ever stopped being Angelus...I simply decide if I want to make someone hurt or not. Should I feel guilty or not? I simply *choose* whether this soul makes a difference or not."

The vampire took a slight slow step towards her, eyes flashing a golden amber for a brief second. Lilah moved, uncrossing her arms, taking a very small step back. Then she looked mad at herself, for being afraid. She was Lilah Morgan, damn it! He was Angel. Nothing to be afraid of, if anything he should be afraid of her! With that thought in mind she straightened to full height and stared coldly at him...

"Angel, I've *never* cared to learn anything about you. Besides our law firm knows everything there is to know about you. We have files, cabinets full of things. I love working for an evil law firm, where everyone is big know it alls."

"Cabinets? How many?" Angel asked with childlike curiously.

"About thirty or forty." She said with a slight shrug.

Angel looked down right devastated as he pouted. "Only that many? Damn, I was hoping you'd say I had a whole wing or a large room devoted to my adventures. But only thirty or forty filing cabinets? That's just
lame and sad. Shows I should've done more with my life."

Lilah felt like giggling at that, and she was *not* the giggling type!

She wondered what game Angel was now playing...

"So what are you doing here, Angel?"

"I'm here for Wesley." Angel told the woman calmly and honestly.

Lilah blinked, if possible her cold _expression hardened even more. "To kill? To hurt? To smother with a pillow? Oh, wait, I know! You're here to ask Wesley to put all the awful crap you and your friends put him through behind him. Want to use good 'ol Wesley, once more! Afraid of the enemy swooping down and stealing him? Or save him from the evil darkness that you left him to when he needed you the most."

"None of those things, Lilah."

"Then what the hell are you doing here?"

"What are *you* doing here?" Angel shot back, starting to feel like a young child fighting over a sandbox.

"Well, with this key that I had made without Wes' knowledge, I can come and go any time I like. But he never complains when he finds me here. So unlike you I guess I'm welcome." She said giving him a cat like grin.

"Whose to say I'm not?"

"Well, I *am* his lover so unless you are..." Lilah said this to surprise him. Shock him, but she was the one to be astonished.

"I will be." Angel said softly.

"W-What..."

Angel moved in close. He could smell a faint hint of sex and Wesley. It wasn't fresh and was starting to fade, letting him know that it was an old scent. From a few nights ago...Before he had showed up. He knew his demon shouldn't get jealous. Shouldn't get furious. But his demon was.

"You heard me, Lilah. Wesley is now *mine*, you no longer have the right to touch him. As of now you're his ex." There was a cold edge to Angel's tone as he said this.

"How dare--I'm Wesley's lover, Angel! If he's anyone's he's mine!"

Before Lilah had a chance to blink, Angel's large strong hand was around her throat, lifting her effortlessly off the ground, slamming her violently against the hard blue wall. He now stared up at her his demon looking back in full glory.

"MINE! You where stupid to mess with what is mine to begin with, you worthless bitch! Wesley's mine! I'll forgive you for messing with him this time around, Lilah. But from this exact moment, we start anew. With a new set of rules. *My* rules. One of them is a simple hard core fact, Wesley is mine. Second rule, you even touch what is mine, and those pretty painted fingernails will be ripped out, then I'll bite off your fingers one by one; licking your blood up like a puppy. Rule three, Wesley is *not* yours. To have sex with. To play with. To use. Or anything. He will *never* be yours. Rule four. I'm his. Always will be. My heart, my
Deliberately, coldly Angel tightened his grip on her throat, letting Lilah feel the agony of strangulation. Lilah tried to gasp for breath and desperately clawed at his hand. Angel didn't even feel the fingernails scratching him as he watched the lawyer's face with hard cold eyes.

Waiting for a moment, a single moment, which felt like an eternity in Lilah's point of view, before relaxing his grip letting her breathe once more. Then he released her totally. She fell to the floor as if she was nothing more than a dead weight, her own hand instantly at her sore tender throat, gasping for precious air. He stood over her like a warrior of old. Legs apart. His fists upon his hips. Staring at the woman before him as if she was nothing but an ugly poisonous spider about to be stomped.

"So Lilah, tell me, what are the new rules?"

She looked up at him with venomous hate in her face. Angel could tell she wanted to tell him to go fuck off, but they both knew the consequences for saying such a thing. It would be both deadly and bloody. A part of the lawyer in Lilah wondered if this really was Angel she was dealing with. For the Angel she knew always threatened but never carried the threat out. You knew he would never kill a human, but the vampire standing before her...Something told her that he would. He could. For the first time she could actually read her painful death in those golden eyes...

Strange that, once when she had messed with Cordy he had scared for a moment. He had been pissed. Angry. He had wanted to hurt her, but she hadn't seen her death like she could now...

Wherever Angel had gone for vacation he came back an even deadlier vampire. A vampire that was standing before her silently, waiting...

She felt like a coward. Weak, as she swallowed hard, wincing at the pain it caused. She hated feeling weak more than the pain. The pain she could handle.

Angel growled and purposely flashed his fangs. "I'm waiting Lilah, for you to repeat the rules or do you want me to repeat them again? 'Cos I will."

Lilah shook her head. "Don't...Don't ever touch Wesley. The rules...Don't touch him..."

He knelt down to where she was on the floor as he tsk'ed at her. Still staring deeply into her eyes. He reached out and touched her cheek with his hand. It was light. She winced for she knew he wasn't touching her in tenderness, but letting her know where he was planning to leave the next bruise upon her flesh. She didn't know how she knew this, but instinct was screaming out at her that was what was going to happen. Telling her that Angel was hard core serious.

She heard him whisper mockingly, "That was simply one of the rules and not even in the right order--"

Finally she had enough and snapped, "Fuck the rules, you bastard!"

He leaned in close to her face. He then tilted her head back in an unnatural and painful way. "Please, repeat what you just said, 'cos I really want to hurt you...A lot."

"No...I...Rule one..." She gasped in a stunned, painful whisper, "Wesley is yours. R-Rule t-two, I don't touch what is yours, I leave him alone, or you'll pull off my fingernails then bite my fingers off one by one...Rule...Ow...Bastard that hurts!..Ow! Rule three. Wes isn't mine, never will be. Ow. Rule f-four, you're his."
Angel's face shifted back to human as he smiled happily. "Good girl, now that wasn't so hard now was it..."

"You're slowly breaking my neck..." She whimpered.

"I know." He told her with great joy. Sending overwhelming fear through out her body. "Why do it sharp and quick when you can take your time, I've always believed. Plus fun for both parties. Okay, fun for me, anyway."

"You're Angelus..." Lilah gasped out in true agony, the pain getting worse and worse, as her eyes got big and rolled high in their sockets.

"At times. Like I said before, the soul only matters because I want it too. I was Angelus long before I was souled, sweetie, ya shouldn't ever have forgotten that. When it comes to you, I care not whether I have a soul, 'cos honestly I think you are a threat to my Wes and any threats to him I destroy."

"P-Please...Stop."

The horrible pain stopped thankfully as Angel stepped away from her. Lilah hugged her head, refusing to look at him. She felt rage, yet knew if she tried to fight him she wouldn't win. Her Wesley wasn't her's any longer. Sadly she doubted that he ever truly was, hers...But for the first time in a long time she wouldn't have minded. She liked Wes, but in reality that was a weakness. A weakness she could do without. Though she would miss him...And the second Angel did something stupid, and she knew he would she would be there...

"You best get out Lilah and remember the rules."

Only then did she lift her eyes and look at him. Face emotionless, eyes hard cold steel. Sluggishly, she moved from the floor to stand.

"I'll remember." Lilah's voice came out in a dry sore whisper. Throat still painful from the near strangulation from earlier. "And remember this Angel, you'll regret the moment you messed with me."

"Oh, yeah, I'm *real* scared, Lilah. See look, I'm shaking in my boots! I'm going to run and hide!" He said this all in a dry tone, with a boyish grin, placing his hands into his pockets.

She glared hotly at him before turning to leave. Throwing open the apartment door to gasp in shock. For she wasn't expecting there to be someone already on the other side. But if she was in shock the person opposite her was even more so.

Wesley's mouth hung open and his keys simply dangled from his hand. Wes looked over Lilah's shoulder to see Angel wave at him and smile back innocently. He had to drag his eyes away from Angel to look at the woman before him.

"Lilah."

"Wesley." She smirked then turned back to look at the vampire. "As you can see you've got a visitor and you'd never guess what he said..."

"Really? After hearing him talk hours upon hours about the joy of blow jobs, it's now very hard to guess what he has come up with to say now."

Wesley told her with a shrug, after he got over the shock of seeing her.
He was still standing before her as he pocketed the keys. If anything she looked even more bewildered and dazed. "W-What!?!"

"Okay, I take it Angel didn't talk endlessly about sex. It is his favorite topic these days."

"No! Though he did say he was going to be your lover and that I was your ex...Wes, he...He attacked me! Said you were his!"

"Hey, don't forget the other thing!" Angel cut in. "You know, about me belonging to Wes. Really get over it, Lilah. He's not your lover anymore. Why have you when he can have me? I mean, damn, I'm hot. I got the perfect hair, black leather jacket, I like killing demons, enjoy reading old texts, love giving blow jobs. Plus, I'm also a vampire, I can really do the sucking thing real well. Bet you can't take him to the root, suck and purr as well as hum and growl while working throat muscles all at the same damn time...And I love him like crazy, he's my everything...Oh, and I'm sexier than you too."

"What! No, you're not sexier than me! And...And see!" Lilah turned back to look at Wesley. "He's crazy! I'm not even sure this *is* Angel!"

"Why?" Wesley asked quietly, "Because he wants me? Loves me?"

She shook her head in disbelief. "My God, Wes. You pathetic fool! You've always wanted him, haven't you? You idiot! Don't you see, Angel is simply using you! He's always uses you! He'd throw you way once he's done with you or you do something wrong. Don't you understand that?"

"I understand, something very well Lilah. While I was off today, fighting demons and running my business, I realized something. I came to understand something." Wesley then looked over at Angel. "I understand that he's mine and that is all that matters." He then looked down at her, looking deeply into his ex-lover's eyes. "And I believe that...I think that I'm his as well...No, I know that I'm his too."

He then eyed the dark redness that was turning into an ugly bruise upon her throat.

"Wes--" Lilah whispered sadly. Almost brokenly.

His eyes looked back into hers. They were cold and determined. He stepped over to the side, letting her know she could now leave. She then huffed and stepped out ready to storm off. Wesley had other plans as he grabbed her shoulder. Holding her still. She continued to look straight ahead as he spoke into her ear.

"I'm sorry that I used you, Lilah...Strangely I feel that given time I might have started to...Care about you in a small way. I wish you the best, I really do but if you try to hurt my Angel in any way, whatever he tried to do in my apartment just now will be a thousand times worse when it's *my* hands around your throat. Get me?"

She did the only thing she could do. She nodded. She felt Wesley move away and step into his apartment. She turned to see Angel smirking behind Wesley as he told her goodbye with chilling smile before closing the door right in front of her face.

(end of part 21)
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Part 22

**((Flashback))**

Angel walked into Willy's Bar to quickly stop and look around the dim and smokey bar. His eyes fell upon the figure that he was looking for instantly. Then he was on the bar stool next to the man a second later.

Piercing blue eyes met his.

"You okay?" Angel asked him quietly. Gently. Kindness and understanding shining from his eyes.

"That's why you came looking for me? To ask a stupid poncey arse question like that? 'Am I okay?' Damn, Peaches, I sure in the hell wonder about you sometimes!" Spike shook his head sadly before throwing back his head to drink his last shot of whiskey from the small shot glass in his hand.

"Can I buy you another drink?"

"Ah! Now *that* is a smart question, you fat arse Poof! There for a second I truly doubted your intelligence."

"Don't ya always?" Angel said with a small smile thrown Spike's way.

Waving to Willy to place his order for a good bottle of whiskey. He then leaned his elbows on the bar, waiting for Spike's answer. The other vampire played with the empty shot glass before setting it down with a thud.

"Yeah, I do." Spike whispered not returning Angel's smile. Not even giving him the familiar smirk that Angel was so used to seeing. Angel's dorky grin faded, before whispering, "Sorry."

Spike shrugged. "Don't be. Ya have nothing to be sorry about, I'm the one feeling guilty. Not because I staked Dru tonight, but because I don't feel...The loss. Bloody hell! She was me Sire! My dark princess. I cared for her...Crap, I'm a sodding ponce, aren't I?"

"No, Spike, I understand, I really do. You loved her."

"Once. Not now. Don't think I have in a long arse time to be honest with ya. But once? Hell yes!"

The bartender finally came and set the bottle down with two clean shot glasses. Not bothering with them, Spike twisted off the lid and took a deep swallow before pushing it into Angel's hands. Having no choice, Angel took the bottle, to look at it as if it was a foreign object, before shrugging and taking a deep swallow.

Watching this, Spike then continued speaking, "Drusilla was important to me. She may have been crazy as a loon but she sired me. Hell, for a short time you were crazy too. With that new soul and everything. Even then she was crazier. Once she made me have tea with Miss Edith! You remember that don't ya? Crazy woman! I cared. I loved, no doubt about that. Some would say I worshiped her. They wouldn't be nuts to say that. But my Xan? He's the one who showed me what real love is. He *is* love. I feel bad 'cos I'd stake Dru again and again if my lover was in danger. Or if Xander asked I'd do it again. Him or her, I'd choose my Xanlove, over and over. Every damn time, I'd choose him."

Spike then grabbed the bottle from Angel's startled hands, to quickly down half the whisky. Angel sighed, putting his elbow on to the bar counter and lean into his hand. "Then why aren't you with Harris, instead of getting drunk? The minute you staked Dru, you looked over at your chained and bleeding lover, asked him..."
if he was alright, then when he said 'Only because you saved me.' Then he tells ya that he loves you and what do you do? You turn to Willow and ask her to take care of your boy 'cos ya had something important to do. And if that something is getting drunk then I think you have gone crazier then Dru!"

Spike set down the bottle with a loud thud. So loud that Angel winced, surprised that the other vamp hadn't broken the damn bottle. Angel grabbed it, to take a small sip, then held it close. It was good whiskey, damn it! Whiskey *he* bought and really there was no need to punish the bottle!

"Because! I...I decided to do something that...That's sodding crazy!"

"What?" Angel asked softly, curious, then a second later a thought hit him making him yell out in the crowded bar. "Christ, Spike tell me you aren't leaving the boy!"

The bar became deadly quiet. Demons, vampires and a few odd humans looked over at the two vampires. Even Willy cleaning a glass with a white bar towel was silently watching.

Spike didn't notice them or the sudden silence as he glared over at Angel too unexpectedly pull back his fist and smash it right onto Angel's nose.

"Ow!" Angel let go of the bottle he held to cradle his sore hurting nose. Spike grabbed the bottle before it could shatter on the ground. After saving the precious liquid, he took another deep swallow, all the while still glaring at his Grandsire. He even gave a quick glare around the bar, which had the patrons going back to what they had been doing before. He took the bottle and set it on the bar's counter.

"Oi! You have the IQ of cow dung! Wait, sorry, no, I'm insulting the dung's intelligence by saying that!"

"Damn, it Spike!" Angel yelled still cradling his sore nose. "You broke my nose you, English bastard!"

"Yeah, I feel real *bad* about it." Spike told him as he rolled his eyes, "It'll heal ya twit."

Angel glared as he removed his hands from his hurt nose, Spike hitched his scarred eyebrow before adding, "Hmm, would ya look at that, it does look broken. Shame that it will heal, adds character to your pansy arse face, if ya ask me."

"Didn't ask you, *William*!" Angel growled out the other vampire's name, grabbing for the bottle of whiskey before it could make another journey toward Spike's mouth. He then tipped the bottle towards his own lips.

Spike watched and picked that moment to whisper, "Tonight I've decided to ask Xander to be my bonded mate."

Angel choked and sputtered, spitting a little whiskey upon Spike.

"Hey! Watch it, ya idiot!" Spike grumbled as he tried to wipe the mess Angel had made upon his favorite black jacket. He then lifted the infamous scarred eyebrow once again as Angel stopped looking like he was a fish out of water to suddenly laugh.

"You-You're asking, Harris, to be your bonded mate?!?!"

Spike glared at his Grandsire murderously. "That nose is about to be broken a second time!"

Angel grinned happily, "Haven't healed totally yet...So, ya are actually going to do 'it'...Be bonded...That...That's beautiful, Spike, so damn beautiful." The last part of the sentence was spoken in
whispered awe.

Spike slowly nodded. "Yeah."

"But..." Angel said leaning in close to the other vampire. "You'll share the boy's soul."

Spike nodded again, before taking the bottle away from Angel to take another sip. "Yeah, told ya that I was doing something crazy. But I want to 'cos I love him. I want to be with him forever. He's got a beautiful soul, Sire, very beautiful. Don't deserve to even touch it or think of making it my own."

"But ya will." Angel whispered softly. Respect shining from his brown eyes as he stared at his long time friend.

Spike snorted, "Hell, yeah I will! Bollocks, I always thought you were the crazy arse one." Spike then sighed. "But I'm serious. Even went to the temple--"

"*The* temple?"

Spike rolled his eyes. "Do ya know of any other temple I'd have willingly gone too? So yeah, went to Hero's temple, the great goddess. I stood outside the temple and asked if I could be let in, surprised the crap out of me when a door revealed itself. So in I went and made my request. Tried to make it sound like an order but I don't think she was too impressed."

"So ya saw her?" Angel asked in complete and total awe.

"No, but I heard her voice. I stood in her marble lobby and she blessed me and Xan's bond. She said...That I'd make some fine champion and rot like that. Told her point blank that I didn't want to be a champion, I simply wanted my Xanlov. Then she went on about love and destiny, just like a girl, always yakking. Then in passing she said she hated you--"

"WHAT!??! W-why? What did I do? I've been serving her faithfully and--"

Spike laughed, "I'm joking with ya! Got ya good! Ya silly, she said she was proud of you. Wished you the greatest happiest. Not perfect happiness, mind you, but she said she was working on that."

"What does that mean?"

"Does it matter? Though she did say that you and Xander should go talk to Jenny. Don't ask me why."

Angel shrugged, wearing a huge smile upon his face. The great goddess was *proud* of him! Hero knew his works for the Powers and for her. She was proud! Like a child, he longed to dance a little jig, he was so happy. He then placed his hand on Spike's shoulder, grinning like a fool all the while, to squeeze lightly before taking his hand away.

"I'm happy for you and the boy."

Spike nodded once more, choosing to stay silent as he took another drink as Angel continued to speak.

"Envious as hell though."

This time it was Spike who squeezed Angel's shoulder, this time the hand wasn't removed. Kindness shone from those beautiful blue eyes. "It'll happen, Angel. You'll find some idiot that will love you for who you are or at least one who is willing to have sex with ya without expecting money out of it."
Angel snorted shooting him a glare. "The first part of your sentence was real nice, until you called my unknown partner an idiot and I've never...Never mind."

"Yeah, I can see your unknown partner now. A blond with no thought in that pretty selfish, little head. She or he will enjoy carrying a stake with your name on it..."

Angel gave a deep laugh. "Oh, sure Spike! Whatever you say! Like that would happen. I will admit to liking blonds at times but I also like dark hair. Maybe the person will have pretty eyes like you and be a smart poet, even--"

Spike choked and laughed a little. "You're a crazy arse, ya know that?"

"You've been telling me that for decades. Though my mate will be better at poetry then you 'cos your damn stuff isn't even worthy to wipe away shit from an ass--"

"Hey, now! I'll have you know my Xander, likes it!"

"You've shown him your stuff and he knows about--"

"Yeah. He asked what I enjoyed when I was human and it slipped out. He then asked me to read him some or to at least write him one..."

"And you did? I'm surprised."

"Xander has special talents that make me do what ever he wills me to do."

Understanding lit Angel's eyes. "Sex."

"Exactly, not just any sex, but *fantastic* sex." Spike was quiet for the moment then went back to the subject at hand. "You'll find a mate, Angel. It'll happen to ya. Maybe ya won't fall madly in love with a slutty blond that I was teasing ya about earlier. But you'll find happiness, love and all that fucking rot, but trust me, one day it'll come and bite you hard on that big lump ya call an arse. So, know this Angel, when that day happens, that shovel talk that Willow discussed with me, your mate better watch out. For if they ever hurt you, I'll do more then what the Slayer threatened me with."

Angel smiled a little. He tried to picture that. "Willow gave you a shovel talk?"

Spike laughed, his demon flashing out for a moment in merriment. "Yeah, picture it, here I am the Big Bad and the Slayer comes up and makes with me real nice like. Asked me how I was and if I had any awesome kills lately. Nice talk ya know?"

That surprised the hell out of me. I had just started making the moves on my boy. Romancing him. It was still in the early stages of our relationship. The 'I want to go out with ya', 'I gotta stay home and wash my hair', 'Okay, I'll be over around seven and help ya wash then' kinda thing.

So, anyway here I was making my moves on my Xanpet, when this cute shy red haired girl starts asking if we could talk some where. I thought she meant with stakes and such seeing that she is the Slayer. So it would make sense that when she says, talk, it means I'm kicking your sexy arse and my stake is going be saying all my words that I need to be sayin.' I stand up, and shrug like 'okay, I'm for being staked by you and I don't care if ya stake me.' I then plan my surprise move, and start a punching.

She simply giggled and there was laughter in her eyes as she started to show off some impressive moves.
While fighting with the chit, I had this feelin' that she isn't even trying! Which pissed me off. I mean damn, she should at least be scared, I killed two Slayer's in my time! I'm evil damn it! Well, as we fight, she's talking. Sayin' that Xander told her about how he was having feelings for me! I was stunned and dazed even before she hit me hard with a chair. There I was laying on the ground, amazed that Xander loved me back and the silly boy didn't even tell *me* first! He told *her*!

She smiled shyly and brushed back a strand of long red hair as if she was nervous and excited at the same time. She then said that Xander would do *me* good. Show me how to be a good vampire like you. Stupid bint. She even said that I better treat her best friend like a treasure. Something precious. No turning, no breaking his heart, no hurting, 'cos if I did any of those things she'd beat me with a shovel, then soak the wooden handle with holy water and then stick it where the moon don't shine. Then she apologized for being so rough with me during the fight but she'd been hoping to train a little before going to bed."

"Sounds like Willow..."

"Yeah, cute, isn't it? Even with me being evil and all still I gotta say she's cute."

"So...Spike, what if Harris says no to the whole bonding thing? 'Cos drinking your blood once a month might make him have second thoughts."

Spike's eyes got big and wide as if he hadn't thought of that. Hadn't thought it possible that the love of his unlife would dare say 'no'. "Oi! I didn't even think of that! Fucking, sodding hell! I better to talk to my boy, make him say yes!"

He got up and away from the bar with a slight stagger. He was mumbling about getting chains and a six pack of lube when before he got to the door he heard Angel whisper, "Thank you, Spike."

Spike looked at Angel as if he was the dumbest vampire on earth.

"Why say that, Angelus?"

"'Cos you're my best friend and I wanted you to know that I'm thankful for you being my friend all these long crazy years. I wanted you to know that before you share Harris' soul. I'm proud of ya. I love ya like a brother. A brother that I've wanted to torture and maim a few times. More then a few times actually. I wanted you to know...That you're right, we're family. Soul or no soul. Or in your case half of one. I'll always be your family and I wouldn't want it any other way."

Spike looked down right touched. He looked at the dirty bar room floor as he sniffed and blinked his eyes rapidly. Angel watched Spike take a deep breath before looking back at him with a smirk upon his face. He then flipped his grandsire the famous 'you're number one' finger, just to show Angel that he was still the Big Bad. With that he was out the door, his long leather coat tails swirled around like an elegant cape...Angel wondered if his leather jacket did the same thing 'cos that was so damn cool.

Angel took the long forgotten bottle and drank down what was left.

Spike had been with him for decades. He had been his best friend. Helped him accept his demon and his soul. Spike had always been there. By his side. His willing anchor when needed.

Angel knew that some of the big problems that Spike had with Drusilla had been his fault. For Dru had agreed with Darla, Angel was the outsider, he needed to either be staked or leave never to return. Spike didn't believe that. Saying that if they wanted Angel to go then he'd go with him, if they wanted to stake
Angel then they better get ready for a fight to the death 'cos they weren't touching his Angelus...

He was still stunned, by the loyalty, kindness and love that Spike an evil vampire had shown him.

Dru had left so many times to force her hand. To try to have her will done. But it never worked. Spike stood steadfast beside him. Helping him accept who he was. A demon with a soul. Spike had told him countless times, "You may have a soul now, but it doesn't make you less of a demon. No matter what other vampires are saying. What the hell do they know? Stupid gits all of 'em. So ya have a silly soul, doesn't make ya human. Doesn't make ya a man. That soul just makes ya want to be one.

That's why Darla and Dru want ya dusted. They feel wanting to be human is disgusting. Unnatural. So here ya are with the need to act with bleeding humanity. The need to be around people yet the demon fighting saying people aren't meant for nothing other then food. So ya don't wish to kill people. Then don't. Leaves more for me, I'm thinking. But remember, Angelus, your demon is sharing your soul. Your soul's sharing ya demon. You are now a fucking broody vampire arse with a soul. Get use to it. Accept it. You're still a vampire and that soul don't matter unless ya want it matter! So the question is Peaches, do ya want that soul to matter? Does it really make adifference? Does it make ya want to be something special, something unique, something different? Then do something about it, other than brood all the damn time! Brooding can't return those lives you've taken. But maybe ya can help others, crap, don't believe that I'm saying that, but then I've always seen myself as a rebel..."

Angel cupped his hands, bowed his head not caring that he was in a crowded bar he whispered, "Thank you, Goddess for Spike. Oh, and if ya have time I wouldn't mind someone I can love and perhaps be bonded too...Or ya know...Well, any way I thank you. Continue to bless Spike and that Harris boy."

He felt peace for a second flood over him. He grinned to himself, he was sure that Hero had heard him...

Now all he had to do was wait and hope that he would one day be blessed with a mate of his own...

###(end of flashback)###

As the door shut in Lilah's face, Angel met Wesley's beautiful blue eyes.

And he knew with certainty that this man would become his bonded mate.

"You said you decided to be mine? That you're mine? Angel asked this quietly, his tone full of longing and hope. "I heard you right...Right."

Wesley gave a tender smile as he looked at him. "Yes, Angel, you heard right. I've decided that I want to love you and I want you to love me. Even if I'm slightly scared...But I still have to rescue the Angel of this reality." His smile faded and his eyes held no life. " I-I refuse to leave Angel in that watery grave. If I don't find him in time to go back with you then I'm not going. I can't leave him down there. Even if it means forsaking my chance of happiness with you. No matter how hard it would be. No matter if I'm falling in love with you--*am* in love with you...I have to save Angel...I *have* too."

(End of part 22)
Once again, Wesley was back on the old dirty white boat. Breathing in the salty sea air, listening to the gentle waves, feeling the heated hateful glare upon his back coming from his unfavorite red haired hostage.

He smiled sightly as he remembered the shock on Justine's face when he opened his closet door and she saw Angel smirking beside him. Wesley told her coldly that they were all going on a boat ride. Angel said something about how the ride would be fun especially seeing how they were going shark hunting with her as bait. The look of horrific fear on Justine's face was priceless and...and he had taken pleasure in that look. Damn him. He hated to admit that, but it was true. He then softened just a little to tell her that they *weren't* going shark hunting not yet anyway. They were still looking for Angel, the Angel beside him was not the one she and Connor had placed in the ocean. This Angel was special. This Angel was his friend. This Angel was from another reality. This Angel was *his*. He had told her that she was still helping with the search...

Which is why he was now watching a colorful screen, seeing blues, greens, some yellows and some dots of red. But never seeing what he wanted to see. A huge hunk of red upon the screen. Revealing that there was something metal down there. Something containing a metal coffin holding a drenched starving weak vampire. A starving, slowly going out of what little mind he had left...Angel...He had to find him. He just had too!

A sigh escaped his lips. He then heard a slight movement, felt the hand upon his back start slow circular motions then he heard Angel whisper sweetly in his ear, "If the glares coming from the handcuffed and gagged bitch over in that corner are bothering ya, my handsome love, I can always pop out her eyes. It'll be real quick. Trust me, it wont hurt me any! It'll be like popping grapes, I know this to be fact."

Wesley blinked and looked over his shoulder slightly to glance at Justine, then to look at Angel before saying flatly. "She isn't bothering me."

"Who is?"

"This realities, Angel."

"Oh..."

Wesley leaned back a little to rest slightly upon a muscled shoulder. A lot had happened today. A small talk which could be described as an argument. An argument that he had started this morning. Then leaving Angel to fight some demons and think about what Angel was offering. He had even sneaked into the hotel some time later in the day. He had gone to 'borrow' some of this realities Angel's clothing. What? It wasn't like the one in the ocean was using them! Plus, the daft man had a lot of clothes. Angel's closet rivalled a woman's closet.

So there Wesley was feeling like a thief, sneaking into his old place of business. Feeling so bloody lucky that Gunn, Fred and Lorne weren't there. He had been foolish scared, then afterwards satisfied. So proud of himself and he had come away with a pillow case, taken from Angel's own bed, full of shirts, trousers, and socks. They had been much needed. For his Angel hadn't been smart enough to think of packing a bag and bringing it here with him. Hello! He was in another reality for five days! Silly foolish beautifully handsome vampire...Angel had probably had his mind so full of sex and what he was going to do when he found his future lover...Wesley smiled...He was Angel's future lover...Wait, he'd sneaked into a hotel, into another Angel's room to steal wait no that was 'borrow' some much needed clothing...But if Angel was Wes' future lover wasn't the goal to find ways to stay *out* of clothes? Hmmm...Oh, bloody hell! Angel wasn't the only horny twit around these parts!
Wes could remember that first morning with Angel. That was the morning when Wes knew that clothes were very important, for they would keep himself from trying to jump on Angel. For that first morning Angel had stepped out of the bathroom, fresh from a hot shower, wearing a white towel that didn't really cover much. Hell, Angel had two corners pinched between his fingers and Wes knew he must have blushed a little at the thought that all Angel had to do was let that fluffy towel go and the vampire would be standing there in outstanding beautiful nakedness. Angel the horny twit looked at him in fake boy like innocence. Telling him politely that his clothes were in the bathroom needing to be washed, for he couldn't obviously wear dirty clothes now that he was clean and all.

Wesley just knew that he had to be drooling, because Angel's innocent expression slowly turned into an evil Angelus 'I've got you now' smirk as he winked, "Or, I can go around naked, trust me, Wes, I've got nothing to be ashamed of."

The British man cleared his throat, "R-Right, I-I know you have nothing to be...um, right. I've got some of my own laundry that could use a good wash. So, I'll go and...and get it..." He headed for the bathroom like a shot, then went into his room, coming back a few minutes later holding a dark green laundry basket full of dirty dark clothes on top were Angel's dark cotton shirt from last night, a pair of black trousers and black socks. "Um, Angel? I didn't find any...Um..."

Wesley came to a complete stop to stare at the vampire before him. Angel was now lounging on Wes' sofa. One leg flat upon the couch, the other bent with his foot upon the floor. The towel lay across his lap, but with his legs opened like they were, it wasn't covering a bloody thing. He had one hand under his head and he gave Wes a gentle teasing smile as if Wes was slightly slow witted but cute as hell.

"I don't wear 'em."

"W-What?"

"What you didn't find, can't find 'em 'cos I don't wear 'em. Never was one for boxers or briefs."

Wesley's hands tightened on the handles of the laundry basket, holding it against his body like a shield. His eyes were big and blue..."B-But..."

Angel's grin deepened and his chocolate eyes danced with laughter. "But the other Angel doesn't go 'au naturel'?"

"Well, how in the bloody hell would I know!?! Though Cordy has always bought him boxers every Christmas. Don't know if he actually wears them."

"Why does she buy him boxers?"

"She says that it's hard as hell to buy gifts for vampires who have two hundred years on them and boxers is something traditional and something he can use."

"Well, now you don't have to worry about that, Wes. You now know that you won't ever have to buy me underwear for Christmas or any other time. Boxers or briefs will never come between us, but if ya ever do have a hard time coming up with a gift...Let's say that I will be willing to accept sex as a gift, but only from you..."

Wesley did his best to ignore that, "I'll be right back, going to go to the basement where the machines are. When I come back, I'll look for a pair of sweats that have enough elastic stretched out on them that they won't be too uncomfortable to wear and you won't be wearing them for too long anyway."
"Promise?" Angel asked hopefully.

"Angel!" Wesley gave him a glare.

Angel shrugged with a big pout, then smiled as an idea hit him. "I'll make ya a big breakfast."

"No need."

"Yes, there is definately a need, Wes, I have a strong need for you and you have a need for food. You haven't been eating much, I can tell. I'm cooking ya a good hot fatening breakfast the question is, am I going to be wearing sweats, my own clothes or simply cooking naked. It's dangerous to do that but I've always been one to live on the edge."

Wesley didn't answer, he simply left the apartment with the basket of dirty clothes. He heard Angel chuckle as he left. He knew the vampire had smelled his arousal at that kinky thought. That kinky wonderful thought of Angel standing naked in his kitchen with a pan and spatula. He also knew that he would never think of his kitchen the same way again.

"Gee, I hope you're thinking of me."

Angel's husky voice jerked Wesley back to the present.

"'Cos whatever you are thinking about is effecting me. I scent your desire. Your need. Damn, you smell so good."

Angel moved slightly from behind Wes, tightening his arms. He started to kiss the side of Wesley's throat. The former Watcher groaned. "Angel."

Angel rocked his hips slightly letting Wes know he was hard with desire, filled with need, for him.

"What were you thinking about Wes?" Angel asked once more, yet this time with a growl.

Wesley moved his hips back, rocking slightly with Angel's movements. He pressed himself harder into the vampire's movements. Wanting to feel Angel's arousal. A growl escaped from Wesley's throat, making Angel even harder...

"Who else would I be thinking about you dim wit!"

"So you were thinking of me." Angel stated this as a hard core unbreakable fact.

"Yes!" Wesley hissed, closing his eyes as one of Angel's hands traveled down his front to stop and press against his clothed hard on...

"Tell me about it..." Angel demanded in a deep husky whisper, as he nipped lightly upon an earlobe. Wesley jerked as the hand cupped him, tugged then rubbed...

"That first morning...You...um...towel...thoughts of...of...damn...thoughts of what lay behind the towel, you possibly cooking naked...um...Angel..."

Wesley hadn't thought it was possible but he felt Angel press himself even closer. A piece of paper couldn't even slip between them. Angel's hand continued to move, to torment, to pleasure...Making Wesley moan once more.
"Hmm, I'm so glad that my 'make him notice me and think about my naked sexy as hell body' worked. The moment I came to your world I knew I would have to seduce ya. So tell me, Wes, are ya seduced? Have ya been seduced or do you need more?"

"Angel..." Wesley gasped out weakly. He threw his head back upon Angel's shoulder with his head slightly turned, "I think you need more," With that said, Angel captured his mouth.

The kiss was intense. Demandng. Overwhelming. Both men in throbbing need for each other. A surging emotion for each other that ran deeper than any ocean. Wesley felt himself melt, happy and thankful that he was leaning back against the vampire for his strength was instantly gone. He wanted Angel, that was no lie. With every beat his heart danced too. With every breath he took. He needed Angel. He moaned again in a plea for more of Angel's dark yet loving embrace. The embrace spoke of so much. Spoke of protection. Longing. Love. Safety. Wanting. All for him.

They were consumed with need for each other. Angel's mouth demanded Wesley's surrender and he willingly gave himself over to this vampire who yearned to be his lover, his keeper, his protector, his savior, his everything...

Angel's mouth was hard, possessive, yet at the same time loving and so wonderfully tender. It was truly perfect. The kiss created a fire in them both that blazed almost totally out of control. It devoured them both. Neither minded. They both knew that they would never get enough of each other. The kiss deepened as they moaned together.

Wesley didn't want the kiss to end but he knew he should watch the screen for signs of large amount of metal... But Angel was one hell of a kisser. The things his tongue was doing inside of his mouth...Out of this world...Then there was the rubbing and kneading the vampire was doing to his clothed cock that was simply too much...He wanted to be naked so Angel would really show him some awesome fantastic moves...

It was all too much...Way too much... He wanted Angel's touch. Longed for it. Needed it...He was so hard, the thought of what Angel could do if the jeans weren't in the way...That pale cool hand wrapped around his hardened over sensitive flesh...

He heard as well as felt his zipper being unzipped. His wish was about to become reality...OH, Yes! Yes, that's it...Joy...Oh wait...He jerked his lips away...

"Angel, no!" His hand jerking away the wondrous torment that had felt him up. Freed him...He wanted Angel's touch damn it, but...Damn he hated 'but's!

Angel stopped instantly but he continued to hold Wesley against him. Holding him tight, never wanting to ever let him go. Wesley's cheeks burned bright red as his hands grabbed the boat's controls. His eyes looking out into the darkness. There was a silent question in the air, which Wes felt compelled to answer.

"Justine is behind us and we need to stay focused on finding Angel. We can make out at any time, but now isn't the time."

Angel nuzzled his smooth cheek against Wesley's rough unshaven one.

"Okay, Wes, I get that. We'll find him. I promise you that."

"I really want to find him before the time is up. Damn it, I want to be with *you*! I don't want to lose you! You just recently came into my life! Crazy isn't it? A few days ago, I didn't even know I could love someone as much as I love you nor did I believe someone as wonderful as you could possibly love me.
Time is running out on us all! The other Angel, you and me. Bloody hell, I'm--"

"Paranoid? Worried? Some things don't ever change no matter what reality. It's nice to know you're still a sexy paranoid man!"

"I'm *not* paranoid!" Wesley yelled, truly offended.

Angel simply stared back at him until Wesley looked away abashed and slowly nodded. "Okay, maybe I'm a little paranoid. But just a little bit!"

Angel smiled tenderly before kissing the side of Wesley's neck, to find and feel a fast moving pulse. To settle his lips there and suck lovingly for a moment. Then he let his tongue travel up Wes' neck to stop at the earlobe, to whisper..."We'll find him and if not in the allotted time then...Well, who is to say I *have* to return home?"

Wesley swung around. Angel allowed the former Watcher to do so, enjoying the look upon his handsome face. The stunned look of awe. Simply too cute and Angel couldn't resist giving the tip of Wes' nose a quick light kiss.

"You-You would stay here? B-But you hate it here! Plus, your family and friends! Also, keep in mind that then there would be *two* Champions to the Powers running around the same reality, there would be consequences! Bad ones I'm sure!"

"But if it meant being here with you in this reality or being without you in mine. I'd pick you, Wes. Always you. Plus, my family would bother the great goddess and do something crazy, like come here or get her to make us both come home. They're a stubborn bunch, trust me."

"But you *have* to go back, your goddess said! Um, right? Something about that stone in your pocket, you can't ever lose it and...and..."

"Wes, I'd find a way to stay if I had too! Hell, for you I'd find a way to move heaven and hell. Rotate the world backwards, turn the sky a pretty blood red, I would do all this if it meant being at your side. 'Cos Wes, my family aren't the only stubborn ones."

"You'd really do that? For me?" Wesley whispered in breathless wonder.

"Yes, Wes, for you. I swear for you, anything!" Angel said, before giving him a quick tender kiss. Gently cupping Wesley's cheek. "I love *you*. Nothing can make me stop loving you, *nothing*!"

He kissed Wesley once more. The ex-Watcher's arms wrapping around the handsome vampire. Angel's hard frame seemed to imprint itself onto his. Angel was everywhere. Surrounding him in extreme overwhelming love. Enveloping him, almost as if they were already one. One body. One soul. One mind. One love. It was pure in every way. Beautiful. Breathtaking.

Wesley felt as if the world had suddenly gone hazy, totally dreamlike, but the strange thing was that Wesley knew it was not dream. It was too real. Too emotional. Too passionate not to be. Angel moved his lips away from Wes'. To move them in butterfly movements brushing Wesley's cheeks, his forehead, even his eyelids. Showing such tenderness from a vampire, even if he had a soul. This Angel was so different from what Wesley knew...And he loved this Angel, *his* new Angel even more because of it.

Angel then stopped, lifted his face to look at the colorful screen. "Hey, Wes what do ya say to throwing Justine over the side to see if that red thing on the screen is anything?"
Wesley slowly opened his eyes turning slightly to eye the screen.

"Actually, Angel it's not very big, I doubt it's Angel."

Angel smiled, "True, but I really want to throw Justine overboard. I mean look at her, she's been glaring and I haven't even tried to torture her or anything...Yet, mind you. The night is still young."

Wesley wondered if he was joking, maybe he was or...He didn't even try to stop the soft smile that curled his lips as he nodded. "Sure, why not. But we do have more of the ocean to look over tonight. We will be throwing her overboard many more times, I'm sure."

Angel reluctantly released Wesley to stalk over to Justine like the deadly predator he was. As he got close to her he looked over at Wes. "Um, love, you're at half mast."

Wesley instantly looked down at himself, as if he wanted proof, then he gave a smirk before turning away. "Well, I'll use someone's quote and make it my own. I too have nothing to be ashamed of."

Angel laughed. "I know, Wes, I really do know, you damn tease. Only one of a million reasons why I love you."

(end of part 23)
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Part 24

Three hours later they were still sailing upon the vast dark endless ocean in the same old dirty white boat. In that time Angel and Wes had as the vampire had so bluntly put it 'thrown' Justine overboard. Repeatedly, in fact. She had cursed loudly and fervently at them both which only made Angel's smile widen each and every time. He seemed to get a kick out of tormenting her and Wes had to admit it was fun to watch.

They were soon going to have to call it a night, but they had another hour to go and Wes wasn't going to waste a second of it. The former Watcher gave a side ways glance over at Angel. The vampire caught the look and smiled before mouthing the words, 'I love you'.

Wesley smiled back and slipped his hand into Angel's, interlocking their fingers, giving him a loving tender squeeze.

"You're both sick."

The two men looked over at Justine. She leaned against a far corner of the boat, still soaking wet, yet with a towel upon her shoulders. This time she wasn't handcuffed and gagged, much to the men's disappointment. Angel growled and gave her a hateful glare, but asked Wesley, "Can I punch the hell out of the bitch, Wes, please?"

"If you don't I'm sorely tempted too." Wesley said dryly, looking at the colorful screen. Angel continued to glare at Justine. Never blinking, not even once as thoughts of murder and mayhem danced around in his head. It was pure Angelus that looked at their hostage.

Of course it was Justine who broke the glaring contest, looking away while swallowing hard. Rubbing her hands up and down her chilled skin. She wasn't going to admit that it was the damn vampire before her that chilled her to the bone and not because she had taken a forced midnight dive.

Unseen by Justine, Wesley squeezed Angel's hand once more. Angel's face softened with loving tenderness as he looked over at Wesley. The tender sweet moment was theirs once more. With his free hand he gently cupped Wesley's cheek, turning the former Watcher's head towards him and capturing his lips with his in a sweet, very hot kiss. Angel couldn't help himself, he had to taste Wesley once more. He would *always* need to taste those wonderful lips. Every day, every second, without question...

The kiss was short but still held emotion. It still spoke something special. Telling Wesley in a simple loving kiss that he was Angel's world. His everything.

Then Angel draped an arm over Wesley's shoulder's, both looking forward. One eyeing the screen and the other staring at the dark ocean.

"When will I stop being a damn slave?" Justine broke the silence, asking this question coldly behind them.

Neither man even bothered to look at her. It was as if she wasn't even there or worth the effort, but after a moment, Wesley answered her, "As I've told you countless times, when we find Angel, only then will you stop being my damn slave."

"And if we never find him?"

"Then get use to filling that pretty bucket of yours." Wesley stated this coldly. Not really thrilled with the idea of keeping her in his closet for years to come. Not because of any moral reason but because he couldn't
He heard Justine move from the corner and move toward a desk that had some important layouts and maps, showing where they had been. In his mind's eye he could picture her looking at the papers in distaste.

"You are such a bastard. You both are."

Angel chuckled at her comment. "Why thank you and I'd much rather be a bastard than an ugly rabid dog like you."

Justine was silent for a moment. "He deserved it. For being a filthy vampire he deserved what he got. Angel is nothing but a fucking damn monster! He really should have been staked but Connor wanted him to live in eternal torment watching the fishes swim around his head. Which I guess is just as good. So what if I'm now your slave. Angel deserved what he got and I'm sure that the vamp here will get his too!"

At that Wesley's lips tightened, thined out in anger, but only for a second, he gave her a quick glance. "Like Holtz deserved to die? Like a Father losing his son?"

"Holtz death had a purpose. A noble one at that!" She said this softly, remembering his death at her hands.

"Right. It's noble to turn a son against his father..."

"The plan worked. You can't deny that. I mean it's all so funny how you helped by kidnapping the brat in the first place. Gotta admit that cutting your throat was hilarious too!"

"Yes, a slashed throat is indeed a classic comedy advent."

Justine snorted, "Like anybody cared! It's also funny how the good and righteous Wesley Wyndam-Pryce now keeps a slave girl locked in his closet and is lovers with another damn Angel, a vampire, who will turn on you like everyone else in the end."

"You've always been a slave Justine, you simply never noticed that fact. So what if now you are a slave chained up in my closet? You were once Holtz's slave as well. You are a slave to that rage you have too. Only you can set yourself free."

"Wow, great words of wisdom, I have some words of wisdom that are all of my own, 'Fuck you'."

"Those aren't words of wisdom." Angel mumbled in Wesley's ear.

"No, but what do you expect from an ugly rabid dog?" Wesley replied.

"Very true." Angel nodded in agreement.

"Fuck off!" Justine shouted at the men, as her eyes fell on a wrench that Wesley had left out earlier. He had strangely used it as a paper weight but she wanted to use it as a weapon. A weapon that would smash their skulls in, breaking their heads wide open...Making them bleed. Making Pryce bleed once more at her hand. But she didn't touch it. Not yet but she wanted too...

"Tell me something, Justine." Wesley's tone was quiet as he eyed the dark endless ocean.

"What?" She asked still fixated upon the wrench. Still picturing the hurt she could so easily inflict.

"Was it worth it? Helping and killing Holtz?" Wesley's tone was questioning as if he really was curious.
"Do you think your sister would have been impressed with everything you've done? Tell me, were you a cold blooded murderer *before* your sister's death or did she already know about your murderous tendencies? You know that rage you feel at your sister's death, I thought it was because vampires killed her, but I've often wondered if it wasn't something darker than that...Maybe you were upset because *you* weren't the one to do her in."

Cold murderous rage gripped her and instantly the wrench was in her hands, she didn't even remember rushing at Wesley, all she knew was she wanted him dead or hurt. Both would be good. Real good. The heavy wrench never made it even close to her goal. For in supernatural speed, quicker then any bullet fired from a gun, Angel was in front of her punching her hard in the face. The force of the punch flung her like a rag doll against the far bulkhead. She went down like a rock. The wrench made weapon lay at Angel's feet and he savagely kicked it under the desk. It was doubtful that the tool would ever be found again. And if it was it would be found permanently buried in the wooden wall.

Wesley looked over his shoulder at Angel, who was looking ready to kill his slave and his hostage was semi-conscious with a now darkening black eye and a bleeding lip from where she had bit down on her lip as she went to attack him.

"Maybe I should take away her bucket." Wesley said slightly amused. Before looking at something that caught his attention upon the screen. "Um, Angel?"

"Yeah?" He growled, watching and hoping that Justine would do something really stupid, like breathe wrong, or move in any threatening way 'cos then he could hit the bitch again. Maybe Wes would let Angelus play and his demon yearned to do exactly that. For the bitch had dared to try and hurt his beloved...And no one *ever* did that, no one!

"Is she alright?"

"I hope not, but I don't mind hitting her again if she is."

"Don't hit her yet...Found something...Large amount of metal...I say we find out what it is." Wesley grabbed Justine's diving goggles and threw them over his shoulder in their direction. Angel caught them definitely single handily. "Let's get her ready to be thrown over the side of the boat, shall we?"

Justine moaned as Angel roughly stood her up, dragged her out of the room and got her ready for a dive. She was still affected by the punch but Angel figured the cold water would shock her back into her bitchy self in no time. It took about fifteen to twenty minutes before she was ready and with great glee Angel pushed her overboard. Wesley couldn't help but smile, for he could so easily picture Angel at that moment a deadly pirate captain of old.

With that Angelus' smirk, hands upon his hips, the slight breeze lifting and twisting the ends of his leather jacket, and those tight black pants that left nothing to the imagination. The vampire was breathlessly handsome and sexy as hell and to think that vampire loved *him*...

Wesley moved up close behind Angel to wrap his arms around him. He rested his cheek upon a smooth cool leather shoulder. Angel grabbed the arms lovingly keeping them in place. Wesley blinked when he heard a low purring sound, he chuckled softly before saying, "I love you, Angel."

The purr got louder and Wesley snuggled even closer toward him. Angel stared out at the ocean. So vas, beautiful and big...The men listened to the gentle over lapping sound that uniquely belonged to the ocean. Angel took a slow unneeded breath simply to breathe in the salty air and Wesley’s comforting scent...

A part of himself wondered how the other Angel would take to Wesley saving him and then going to live in
another reality or if they didn't find him in the time frame they had, how would the other Angel take to having another champion around?

He seriously didn't think the other Angel would be a problem but he still wondered, even if Wesley was his now. He was never going to let his new Wesley go. Never.

He wanted to hit the other Angel for neglecting his beloved, for not seeing what he saw when he looked at Wes. Someone who was loyal and breathtakingly beautiful. Well, if he had any breath that could be taken, he knew Wesley would be the one to steal it away from him. Plus, those blue eyes...They spoke of a willingness and a longing to love him with the same intense love that he himself had for Wes...

Wesley was loyal and steadfast to the other vampire, and Angel knew that Wesley would be exactly that to him... But something nagged at him...

It was the fact that the other Angel hadn't killed Wesley. His love had told him that Angel hated him and tried to kill him. But if the other Angel had wanted him dead there would have been no 'trying' involved....But the other Angel didn't kill Wes and that said a lot.

Angel didn't think that it was the soul that stopped the other Angel. He believed it was something more...

Angel understood rage. Hurt. Betrayal. He understood what the other Angel must have felt when Wes tried to save the vampire's child. He had to admit to understanding it but he didn't agree with how the other Angel reacted. Wesley was in a hospital bed, weak and helpless!

Angel sighed, staring into the night, taking comfort in the fact that his beloved had his arms wrapped around him... He tried to put it in perspective, really he did, but he couldn't see himself getting so mad that he tried to stake himself, and killing Wesley even in a rage would be exactly like that. Staking himself. For Wesley was his world. His happiness. His everything. Wesley made him feel alive. Feel whole. Made him feel like a hero, a champion...The reason he helped others...The reason he cared...

When he first started to help others and fight the good fight it was because he thought that would be the 'right' thing to do. That it sounded right, and he should try to *do* right. Not because he was good or anything it was just he was a vampire with a soul. He was different, he should do different. Spike had even told him that if he thought himself different from everyone else then act different. Then...Both Wesleys made him really believe that he was doing right because it was right. Because he was a good vampire, a good man who could do right because he was good.

Soul doesn't matter unless you want it to matter.

Spike had told him that, thousands of times but it was Wesley who made him want that soul of his to matter. Wesley had a soul too, a hurting slightly darkened almost broken soul, but it still mattered. He still did good. Still fought the good fight even if he fought alone. Angel admired that. He couldn't ever picture fighting alone. If he had done something, tried to save his friends, his family and his friends then saw it as betrayal. Didn't care that he had his throat cut and then abandoned him.

Angel wasn't sure he could honestly say he would still help people. Still fight the good fight. Still care. He doubted that he would help them. If their lives where in danger, he'd walk away with out looking back. He couldn't say he would still 'save' someone who had abandoned him to the darkness in the first place and yet, Wes...

His beautiful handsome warrior...Still fighting. Still caring, even if he didn't want to care...He was caring about them no matter how hurt or bitter he was...And he was still saving...Saving someone who months ago tried to smoother him with a fucking pillow. Someone Wes believed hated him...But for the last three
months he had looked for a former friend to save, even if that former friend didn't give a crap about him...

That was his Wesley.

It made him want to be a better champion. A better warrior. A better vampire. A better man...Made him want to be simply worthy for such a wonderful dear one such as Wesley...His Wesley was the true champion, so what if he had no supernatural strengths, it was his loyal steadfast heart that made him the good warrior that Angel knew his was. And to think Wesley was *his*! Yeah, he was possessive as hell and what remained his was and would always remain his! That was simply a fact.

It didn't matter what the other Angel thought or did. Not any more. 'Cos in the end he'd be with the man he needed, wanted and loved...His beloved Wesley...

"Um, Angel?"

He opened his eyes and smiled. "Yes, Wes?"

"Um...I want to do more then hold you tonight."

Angel's smile widened, "Really?" He sounded like an hopeful, excited boy told he could choose a puppy to take home.

He felt Wesley's head nod upon his shoulder, "Hmm-mmm, you've been bragging since we've met and it's time to see if you're as good as you say."

"Oh, with you, I'm better than good, Wes."

Wesley chuckled before he began to kiss the side of Angel's throat making him moan, his purr got louder and when Wes found a spot he wanted to suck upon his silky throat, Angel moaned once more, closing his eyes and enjoying the sensation...Wesley stopped.

Angel quickly opened his eyes, wondering what was wrong. "What?"

Wesley chuckled nervously. "Sorry, you surprised me, you're busy purring and then you moaned..."

Angel chuckled. "I'm a souled vampire with many special talents. All for making love to *you*. Some of these special talents I'll show off tonight...If ya still want?"

"Oh, I still want, I definitely still want."

Angel slipped out of Wesley's arms for a second to turn around to face him, they were both instantly holding each other once more. Wesley moved his lips over Angel's throat as Angel rubbed his hands down Wes' back. To move lower to cup the former Watcher's 'buns of steel' ass. Wesley moaned as he found Angel's adam's apple to give it a few gentle licks, moving his own hands to mimic Angel's. Angel was certain that he was in paradise.

True blissful paradise.

They heard some splashing sounds by the boat and Wesley stopped momentarily as he leaned slightly to look over the edge. Trying to see in the darkness. He saw Justine's flashlight, directed at him as a loud annoying voice was heard, "Get me the fucking pulley, I've found your goddamn vampire!"

Wesley smiled joyously at Angel.
Angel smiled back giving him a light peck upon those sexy lips. "You found him, Wes, I knew you would."

Wesley shook his head, "No, *we* found him! Together we found him!" With that said he swung his arms around Angel's neck and kissed him deeply, passionately and oh, so lovingly. When the kiss ended Wesley pulled away grabbing Angel's welcoming hand.

"I love you, Wes." Angel whispered happily. They had found the other Angel, that meant together they would go home...No matter what...

"I know. For the first time in the longest time I can honestly believe in that love and I love you right back."

"Of course you would, I'm very sexy and I know how to use my well endowedness as well as my mouth and hands...Really, how could you not love me?" Angel said with a smirk, his dark eyes dancing in the moonlight.

Wesley laughed and gently hit Angel's arm, then together, they moved as one to get the other vampire with the soul off the ocean floor...

(end of part 24)
They had retrieved the huge metal crate from the ocean floor and onto the boat. Justine stood off to the side and watched as Angel and Wesley hurriedly took the lid off the crate. Wesley using a blow torch as Angel used his vampire strength to help open it.

Justine wondered if she should point out how pointless it all as. But she stayed blissfully silent for she was sure if she had spoken they would have simply told her to shut up anyway.

Angel tossed the lid when Wes had broken the seals. The former Watcher then bent down to get something to break the chains that were around the unmoving vampire inside the metal crate. Wes broke the chains easily, before tossing the tool to the ground. He leaned forward looking over his former friend.

"Angel?" Wesley asked softly, gently, almost carefully.

Suddenly, totally unexpectedly, a hand shot out and grabbed him by the throat. Angel, the one standing by ready to help at any moment was there at Wesley's side instantly. But Wesley was already pulling the cold pale hand easily from his throat, showing them both just how weak the souled vampire really was at that moment.

"He's weak." Wesley stated the obvious fact as Angel looked at his beloved's throat. Searching for bruising. For any redness. He couldn't find any, still he worried, he simply couldn't help it. He loved this determined hunk of manhood and he was *his*.

"Your throat okay?" He reached out and tenderly caressed Wes' neck.

Wesley nodded looking at the unmoving vampire in the open metal coffin.

He leaned into his Angel's tender loving touch. He didn't even flinch when Angel started to trace the scar upon his throat with his fingertips. Lovingly. As if Wes was his world and the scar was something beautiful because it was permanently a part of Wesley.

Wesley slowly nodded, still looking at the unmoving vampire. Leaning even more into Angel's wonderful loving touch. He stared into the eyes of the other vampire. His dark eyes had a dazed lost look as if he was in another world. Another place that he wasn't sure even had meaning. It was as if he wasn't even really there. Staring at nothing, seeing nothing.

"Angel..." The former Watcher repeated himself.

Unexpectedly, the eyes came alive. Recognition in them.

"Wesley?" He whispered in a hoarse almost broken tone that made Wes' heart bleed for him. The ex-Watcher watched as the dark eyes glazed back over and a second later the eyes closed as if he was sleeping peacefully.

Wesley then jerked his glance away from one Angel to look at another. To the one who loved him. The hand traveled from his throat to cup his cheek. His Angel leaned forward and gave him a light kiss. When it ended, Angel looked down at the other Angel. He then reached in and picked him up as if the other vamp was as light as a feather pillow. "Where do you want him?"

Wesley started to move, with Angel a few steps behind. Wes then grabbed Justine by the elbow, making her
follow with a loud, "Hey!"

They went below. Wesley pointed to a long table, taking the time to handcuff his prisoner to a railing. She pulled upon it, knowing it was pointless. "I'm getting fucking tired of this shit!" Justine spat out in fury.

"So am I, but soon it'll be over with." Wesley told her, turning away to go over to both Angels.

Angel had laid his other self upon the table, seeing a blue blanket that Wesley had been saving for when he finally found the other Angel, he draped it on to the wet body from feet to chest. He then got down on his knees to unzip Wes' big black bag.

Wesley was there beside him instantly. Angel handed him a jar of pigs blood, opening it before handing it to him. Wesley took the jar and stared at him. He smiled and whispered. "Thank you."

Angel smiled back. Wesley stared at him, feeling as if he could drown in those trusting loving brown eyes. There was something so damn sexy about a powerful vampire on his knees in front of him. Almost erotic. It effectved him, turned him on as the thoughts that could happen to them both in that position. His dick was definitely on high alert. He licked his dry lips...His thoughts on the vampire before him...

"You're welcome." Angel answered back. He watched as his favorite Watcher moistened his lips with the tip of that cute dark pink tongue. He took an unneeded breath. Breathing the familiar wonderful scent he recognized instantly that his beloved was aroused. Deeply aroused by him, kneeling upon the floor in front of him...

Angel's smile grew as a mischievous light entered his dark brown eyes. "I'm not sure if while I'm down here if I should ask for your hand or ask if I can give ya one hell of a blow job...Or hell, even both..."

Wesley's eyes darkened, his hands tightened around the open jar of pigs blood. "Angel?"

"Yeah, Wes?"

"I would have to be pursued and perhaps even romanced a little before you can have my hand." Wesley teased back, giving a mischievous wink at his future lover.

"Ah, I noticed you didn't say I had to romance or pursue you for a blow job."

Wesley shrugged. "I'm easy. Guess that makes me a slut..."

Angel reached out with both hands and gripped a loop from each side upon Wes' blue well worn jeans. He pulled playfully, while saying, "No. Not you, never a slut. Your mine now. Just like I'm yours. We can only slut ourselves out to each other...I'm a Wes slut...A kinky must please my lover, Wes slut...And if ya think about it, the same goes for you so that makes ya an Angel slut..."

Wesley laughed out loud. Gleefully. His eyes actually dancing in laughter. The laughter took away the hardened painful shadows that had held him so tightly. He looked carefree. Years younger. Like a playful kitten instead of a battle hardened tiger...Angel swore that he would make this man laugh more. Make this man love life. Be carefree...To protect this man from more pain and replace it with love from him.

"Really?" Wesley asked when his laughter and giggles faded. Eyes still sparkling, dancing...

"Really." Angel promised, knowing that Wes didn't know just what he had promised. He knew he'd keep the promise. The vampire continued to stare up at him, not afraid to let Wesley see the great unbreakable love he had for him shining in his eyes.
"You're so damn beautiful, Wes." Angel stated softly.

Wesley blinked slowly at those tender spoken words. One hand left the jar to cup Angel's cheek.


"I speak the truth." Angel spoke honestly.

A moment of tender silence as the future lovers gazed into each others eyes. Revealing intense need. Raw unspeakable hunger. Love so strong, it would have made poets write, singers sing and the loveless long for that same love. The moment was broken however as the shivering hallucinating vampire upon the table began to moan in torturous agony.

Wesley looked away from one Angel to look at another. He moved towards the table. With one hand he gently lifted Angel's head to bring the jar up to the pale shivering lips. The other Angel stood up slowly, but not before taking another jar of blood out of the bag. He watched fascinated as the man he loved fed another. Another Angel no less. The Angel, Wes knew. Had been friends with all these years. A mixture of emotions hit him hard. His unbeating heart was touched by the gentleness and urgency to help his favorite little Warrior helping this broken champion.

Wesley fed him hurriedly, yet lovingly, gently, calmly. Stopping, every so often to make sue the vampire didn't choke or vomit the much needed blood he swallowed. When one jar was emptied Angel handed him another.

Never saying a word. Silently watching, supporting what Wesley was so desperately trying to do. Save the other Angel. Now that he had been pulled from the watery depths there still was that horrifying fear that Angel had lost higher brain functions. He could now end up a useless shell. Spend eternity in a private unknown eternal hell. Full of torment and despair.

"You're going to be just fine, Angel." Wesley cooed tenderly. Softly.

When Angel finished the last jar, he was still weak looking. Fragile. Almost corpse like. He didn't seem to even recognize what was going on all around him. Weak as a sick baby. Wesley smoothed back salty sea dampened hair.

"I was right pig's blood isn't going to really help him much." Wesley said in a know it all tone. Raw with emotion. "I was hoping I would be wrong..."

"You won't reawaken his blood lust, if that is what you fear." Angel moved in close, bringing up his hands to rub them comfortably up and down his upper arms. Wesley leaned forward putting his forehead down upon Angel's shoulder. "He's a vampire, Wes, the lust for human blood will always be there. Can't pretend it's not there. You can't reawaken something already awake. It's a part of his demon. Part of who he is. He's strong to ignore it all these years, if that is indeed what he has done. He'll deal, Wes, you more than anyone knows this. He'll come out of this stronger not weaker. This experience hasn't broken him. Won't 'cos he had you to save him. Free him."

"Damn, I love you." Wesley whispered, head still buried in Angel's shoulder.

"I know, my love, I know and damn if I don't love you right back."

"He needs blood." Wesley said lifting his head. "Human blood."
Angel pointedly looked over at Justine. "Got more than a pint over there in that corner. Then I'll throw her overboard. You know if after one drains the victim if you puncture or remove the lungs they sink straight to the bottom like a dead weight. It's kinda cool to watch."

Wesley looked over at Justine with a lifted eyebrow, as if seriously considering.

She stared slack jawed and wide eyed, on hearing what Angel had said before she started to pointlessly yank on her handcuffs trying to get free. "Oh, no you don't! You're not feeding me to that thing! You fuckers go fuck off!"

Wesley moved away from Angel to go around the other side of the table. Removing some papers to the side he found what he was looking for, he revealed a sharp deadly looking knife, making sure she could see it.

"Good idea, Angel...Except I don't think her blood is good enough to be in Angel's veins. Her blood is too thin, it would probably make him vomit."

Angel leaned over the other vampire to cup Wesley cheek, making him look away from Justine and to meet his own eyes. "No," he whispered. "She isn't good enough for him. Her blood won't heal like your precious blood would." With that said he leaned over even more and gave him a tender kiss.

After the kiss, Wesley looked at him and then the knife he held. He brought up his arm, readying it against the sharp blade to become still. As if he had thought of something else. Something important. He looked back up at Angel. The Angel who loved him. Made him feel loved and accepted. He trusted this beautiful creature of the night. Trusted him with his heart, with his soul, with his body and with his life giving blood.

He swallowed around a tight emotional knot as he slowly calmly set down the knife. His uncut, pale smooth skin then was held out to Angel. His Angel. The one who loved him. He allowed his blue eyes to reveal the trust and love. The love shining from Wesley's depths made Angel the one to swallow hard this time.

In silence, Wesley waited. Not fearful. Totally unafraid. Having no doubt about what he was doing. His Angel nodded, understanding as his face shifted in full vamp glory. He revealed his fangs. Grabbing Wes' steady arm as he gave it a light kiss, moistening the skin with his tongue.

Tasting the unique flavor that was Wesley before sinking his fangs into the perfect smooth skin. The former Watcher didn't even flinch as the flesh was torn. Sweet coppery life giving blood flowed beautifully. Angel only took a few sips. Just enough to get the blood to come out freely on its own. Instantly he wanted to close the wound upon his mate but knew he could not. Letting Wesley remove his wrist from his grip to give it to the other Angel.

"Don't let him take it all." Angel told him huskily, his face shifting back to human. His mouth still coated with the goodness that was his Wesley.

It took only a second of holding out his bleeding arm to the other Angel before the weak vampire grabbed a hold of it and began to suck greedily...Wesley looked down at the weak vampire then he looked up to the healthy vampire. He felt like he was drowning in his future lover's eyes.

Time seemed to stand still. Fade until there seemed to be only the two of them in the room.

Wesley blinked as he felt suddenly dizzy. Angel was there gently removing his future lover's wrist from the other Angel's mouth. Removing the now strong grip the slowly healing vampire had on his Wesley. The former Watcher blinked innocently trying to remove the little black dots that danced before his eyes.
"You okay?" Angel asked tenderly, watching in concern.

Wesley slowly nodded. Speechless as Angel raised the still slowly bleeding wrist. He then eroticly licked the wound closed. He continued to lick even as the wound stopped it's ruby flow. He then gave the wound faint delicate kisses. After a moment Angel asked again, "Are you okay, my love?"

Wesley smiled. "Yes, oddly enough it felt like donating to the blood bank except with teeth...At least it was your teeth, he hasn't brushed his in three months."

"Eew." Angel wrinkled his nose at that thought before he smiled, giving the wrist he held another kiss. "So, wanta cookie and some juice, then?"

"Later, my dear."

"Well, later I'm hoping to give you more then a cookie and juice. I've got a big ol' package to deliver your way, make you feel a thousand times better." Angel's smile turned into a smirk raising his eyebrows up and down in a teasing suggestive manner.

"I'm sure." Wesley stated right back. His tone light and oddly carefree.

As Angel let Wesley take back his wrist the happy mischievous look faded. Dark shadows filled his eyes as he looked down at the other vampire. The weak vampire's eyes were still dazed and lost looking. As if he didn't understand. As if he wasn't sure this wasn't another hallucination. "Wesley?" He choked out hopefully, voice still so very weak.

Wesley sighed and looked up at the other Angel. "I need to make a phone call. Away from...I simply can't make the call with him laying here like this, I just can't...I fear I'll either kill Justine or break down and cry...Or both."

"I understand." Angel told him honestly.

"I'm going to tell Gunn what's been going on. Tell him what Connor did. Tell him that...Angel's been found. That he's going to be okay. That he'll be just fine. A little water logged but he'll be just fine...He will right? I...I won't be lying...Right?" Wesley's said in a shaky whisper. A mixture of hope and despair.

Angel reached over the big vampire laying between them to cup Wesley's cheek. "He's strong. He's going to be okay. You're not going to be lying to Gunn. You'll be stating nothing but the truth. Angel's going to be fine because he had you to help him and save him. You've done all you can and it's going to turn out just hunky dory. I promise. Go make the call and I'll watch over him."

Wesley nodded lightly touching Angel's hand in tenderness before turning away. Taking his cell phone out of his pocket and moving towards the stairs. Justine rattled her handcuffs making a frantic clinking noise as she caught the deadly 'I'm going to get you now, Angelus' smirk Angel sent her way. "Wait! Don't leave me down here with the two of them especially that one!"

Wesley ignored her as he disappeared up the stairs. Angel slowly slid into game face to tell her softly and calmly. "I'd really shut up if I were you, little girl. I would hate to have any accident befall you."

"Accident?" Justine huffed hotly. "What you want to do to me is murder plain and simple!"

Angel chuckled darkly edging closer as if he was a wild animal and she was his prey. "Oh, please, murder? Call it what it really is shall we? A well timed, thought out painful way to get rid of this world's garbage performed by another party. It's not the parties fault if the knife went too deep...Or that it was fatal.
"Accidents happen all the time."  

It was then she noticed that at some point he had picked up Wesley's discarded knife. He then placed the deadly sharp blade against her throat. Not cutting the skin just resting it, toying with her, letting her feel the cold sharpness of the weapon. Justine seemed to stop breathing, eyes wide with fear.  

"What did it feel like when you slit my beloved's throat? Did it give you a dark orgasmic thrill?" Angel asked coldly, eyeing the knife in an uncaring fashion as it lay against her silky smooth pale throat. "Did you enjoy thinking you killed him? You know, if you had tried that in my reality, my family would have brought you to me, gagged and tied. Wearing a pretty red bow then they would have watched gleefully as I tortured you and I know how to torture someone been doing it for centuries. As Angelus and as Angel. I'd have kept you alive for a few weeks of course until I slash your throat but I never would have at any time tasted your orthless blood. Would never violate my body with such filth even if you were the last blood suck on the planet! My family would have then begged me to let them play with you in your last days of course, my human and vampire family. Then I'd...Well, just be glad that a worthless bitch as yourself isn't in my reality. But know that if you ever mess with what is mine again..." The sharp point of the knife drew a small dot of ruby red. "I will make you beg for my mercy as well as death. Understand?"

Justine gave a high squeal as she felt the knife start to pierce her neck. Giving her a small not at all deadly scratch.  

"Understand?" Angel repeated with hard steel underlying his deadly tone.  

"Yes...I understand." She said shaking. Wondering if the cold blade was about to sink in further.  

Angel's game face faded as he smiled coldly at her. "Now tell me, who does Wesley belong too?"

She flinched as she felt the knife move in to give her slightly deeper scratch. "Y-You..." she whimpered, watching him with eyes still wide with unspeakable terror.  

Angel nodded pleased with her answer then he encouraged, "And?"

"A-and..." Not sure what else he spoke of.  

"What else."

"Don't mess with what is yours?" Hoping desperately that was the answer he wanted.  

Angel took the knife away from her throat. "Good answer, now, you simply have to remember that and it would also help if you remember to shut the hell up when you are in my presence, you annoy me."

She quickly nodded. Shaking she tried to curl up and hide from this dark powerful master vampire. But the handcuffs sadly kept her in place.  

Angel moved away and went to the table that had the other him laying there. The vampire was mumbling. Hallucinating he was sure. Angel reached out and caressed the pale washed out face. He hadn't seen his refection in hundreds of years. It was odd seeing himself, even if all he saw was something that had been trapped down on the ocean floor. "You better be okay, for my Wesley's sake, you better be okay."

"Wesley?" The vampire mumbled weakly. Then he started to repeat the name over and over until the name got stronger and stronger, all the while Angel silently stood guard over him.
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After the phone call, Wesley walked back down to where both Angel's were. One Angel stood over the other. The one watching the weak one looked over at him as he came down the stairs.

"How is he?" Wesley asked, trying not to sound concerned yet knowing that he was failing.

Angel gave him a compassionate, affectionate, loving smile. "He's been hallucinating like mad. Talking to someone called Lorne. Repeating your name every once in a while and a few seconds ago he gave me a horrifying rendition of Mandy." He then shivered, before he gave a truly heartbroken look. "I'll never see my most beloved favorite song the same way again. EVER. No wonder on those rare occasions where I'm drunk on my manly Irish arse and sing a nice jig, Spike always, without fail, tries to knock me unconscious. Now I know why he always states that it's for the better good."

Wesley couldn't help it, he giggled.

Angel lifted an eyebrow, giving him a certain look before shaking his head. Sighing with a pout. Before his eyes brightened with an idea. "Well, maybe, *I* don't sound as bad as this Angel does. Maybe I'm the exception. Maybe I don't have a singing voice that sounds like a cat in heat trying to get it on with a crappy car engine! Maybe, just maybe, I should sing for my beloved and you'll tell me how beautiful my singing voice really is..."

Wesley's eyes got big, looking at the vampire in pure horrified terror.

"Oh, God, please don't!"

"But, my love, I swear...My singing *is* better..." Angel said teasingly, move a little closer.

Wesley swallowed hard, "Don't you dare."

"Ever heard of the Irish folk song about the lass with a hundred toes? It was very popular in my day. The cool thing about it was it had a different chorus for each and every toe and I still remember *all* the words! One of the reasons my demon Angelus was so hateful and evil that song would play repeatedly in his head at the oddest moments. Imagine if you had 'It's a Small World After All' playing in your head at the oddest moment's and see if that don't make you evil! A Scourge of Europe!"

Wesley looked around desperately as if trying to find something to knock his boyfriend out, or at least think of some damn good excuse not to hear Angel sing. It would be worse than any torture that Angelus could come up with! Then he thought of something, it was a small something but at least it was something! "I really must go and...steer this boat!"

"The anchor is down, sweetie." Angel stated matter of factly, totally deadpanned except for the mischief sparkling in his dark brown eyes.

"Well...Um...Right, but it won't always be! Should really head back, actually, to shore..." Wesley answered with a slightly nervous smile.

Angel pouted. "But...I really want to prove that I'm talented. That I don't sound like *him*..."

"You are talented! I swear you are! You don't have to sing to prove it! I swear on anything you want me to swear on that you don't have to sing!"
But those words didn't stop Angel belting out, loud and obnoxiously, horribly tone deaf an ol' Irish folk song, "There's a fair lass wit a hundred pretty toes, I jest ye not! Me lover has a hund--"

Wesley insanely lunged at Angel, cupping his face with both of his palms, mouth slamming down hard upon the vampire's singing lips. Slipping his tongue into the cold mouth, warming it with his own. Angel forgot all about singing or about the weird lass with a hundred damn toes, as he wrapped his arms around his wondrous Wes.

The former Watcher moaned as the vampire kissed him passionately back.

The kiss was wildly overwhelming. Hot and intense. Slightly rough yet oddly tender. Loving. It was a kiss of pure rapturous devotion...

Wesley moved his hands to run them through Angel's hair, as their tongues danced erotically excitedly together. They were still in each other's arms and when the kiss slowly ended. Angel leaned and gave Wes a light delicate kiss to then whisper huskily, "If that's going to be your reaction to my wonderful singing, I'll have to do that more often!"

The former Watcher actually growled darkly, deeply from his throat, rubbing his lower body against the hardened aroused vampire. Kissing Angel once more, making the Dark Avenger moan with longing and desire.

Letting passion swirl around them both and loving it. Wes stopped the kiss to come up for some precious air momentarily. "Don't...You.." Wesley whispered as he gently, lightly nibbled on Angel's bottom lip with his teeth making then vampire groan in intense pleasure as the nips and kisses became harder. "Ever..." Wesley kissed him a little deeper, letting his lips linger before licking the vampire's lips, before finishing his sentence, "Do that sodding crap you call singing again! You came close to making my ears bleed!"

Angel actually pouted, as his arms tightened around Wes. "But, I do have a good singing voice!"

Wesley silenced him with another deep kiss before answering Angel breathlessly, "NO, you don't!"

"Yeah, but..."

Wes gave him a light kiss. "No buts, simply accept the fact that you are a much better kisser than singer."

Angel laughed loudly with glee, reaching down and cupping Wes' buns of steel arse bringing him even closer against him. "Okay, I can deal with that!" Then Angel was the one to slam his mouth down upon Wes'. Tasting, sinking into the moist welcoming warmth.

Neither was sure who ended the kiss, but both could hear the other Angel start his loud brokenly weak voice, saying one word, one name, over and over again.

"Wesley...Wesley...Wesley..."

The one in question looked worriedly over at the other vampire, still holding Angel tight, he slowly moved out of his future lover's arms, yet grabbing on to his hand tightly. Almost as if it were a life line. An anchor. Together they moved toward the vampire who was calling out Wesley's name.

"Angel?" The former Watcher answered clearly. Tenderly. "Angel, you're out of the ocean, do you understand? You're safe now, we're going to be taking you home soon."
"Home?" The vampire answered dazzled. So weak it was almost impossible to hear him. "Home...Wesley...Home..."

"Yes, Angel, home." Wesley answered kindly. Softly. Squeezing the hand of his Angel, the one he knew loved him. The one who was standing beside him, silently watching and listening.

"Singing! Lorne's singing...He's singing a lullaby...Singing..."

"Oh, Angel...I wouldn't call what my Angel tried to do as singing, nor does he look anything like Lorne." Wesley informed him dryly, glancing at the other vampire who held his hand so lovingly and tenderly, to whisper worriedly. "He's still hallucinating."

"Yeah, but he's obviously, if not slowly, coming out of it and he doesn't look as pale as he had before. He recognizes you when you speak to him. He *knows* you, my love, that tells me that he's going to be just fine."

Wesley lightly nibbled on his bottom lip with his upper teeth. Both Angel's seemed to watch the innocent act intensely. The one who held his hand leaned over and whispered huskily, "Do you realize just how fuckable you are?"

Wesley dragged his eyes from the dark dazed brown to darkened passion filled eyes. He stopped his nibbling to quickly lick his reddened bottom lip. He peered though his long eyelashes to answer innocently. Totally carefree. "No, I don't know how fuckable I am. Never wanted to fuck myself, tell me am I really fuckable..."

Angel growled deep in his throat, eyes flashing yellow with longing. "You know you are, my beautiful lovable cock tease."

"Why Angel, your language is so shocking!" Wesley mocked in aghast horror. As if Angel's language was total taboo...

"Just wait till later, I have a real potty mouth during sex! You'll be shocked. But don't worry, afterwards I'll be saying things that will make a sailor blush, in intense fucking pleasure I'm sure."

Wesley couldn't help it, he laughed leaning over he kissed Angel's lips. "I have a secret I'll tell you right now, I don't need to learn your sailor language, I talk dirty during sex too...Words like 'dirt, mud, and the really horrible one, dust!'..." He answered jokingly, huskily. Giving the vampire's lips another light delicate kiss as the Angel chuckled. "So tell me, Angel, how will you be talking dirty to me if your mouth is wonderfully busy...I'm hoping it will be busy, anyway..."

"It will be, but first I plan to bathe you with my tongue, worship your body with my fingers and love you forever with my heart and my cock."

Wesley groaned, "And *you* say *I'm* a cock tease!"

Angel chuckled darkly, "Guess we both are, but you're the one rubbing me with your other hand--" He then was the one to groan as Wesley rubbed just a little harder. A little more rougher. His cock tenting even more in his pants, begging to be released. It hurt, yet felt so good, even if the hardness threatened to break his damn zipper. The hand then gave it a light, teasing pat, ending the frustrating yet wondrous rubbing. Angel actually panted for unneeded breath. "Cock tease, my damn lovable cock tease!"

Wesley smirked, before he whispered teasingly in his ear, "We already established that fact." The whisper and the smirk had made Angel surprisingly even harder. Making him want to take him right then and
there...Right on the hard wooden boat deck...Not caring about the other Angel or Justine in the same damn room. He simply needed the one his soul and heart called out for. The only one who could ever truly satisfy...

"Should...Should have...I should have...Should have...I should have..."

Wesley and Angel then returned their attention to the other much weaker Angel who had just spoken. Wesley slowly moved out of Angel's embrace, still holding his hand. With his other hand, slightly shaking, he reached out and touched his icy cold brow, wincing slightly at the feel of the cold clammy skin. The skin felt so harshly cold. The weak frozen vampire shivered, even as if he tried to lean into the touch. Wesley watched fascinated and slightly horrified at the same time.

"Should have what, Angel? What should you have done?" Wesley asked softly. Carefully. Scared yet needing to hear. Wanting Angel to be alright. Needing Angel to be alright.

"Should have..." His dark eyes looked right at him, he squinted for a moment as if trying to see the man looking at him. His eyes narrowed with furious hate, before he answered calmly, coldly, and clearly, "I should have killed you when I had the chance."

Shock and strong hurt raced through Wesley. He straightened sharply as if he had been punched and quickly looked away. Hating himself, but even more he hated the damnable tears that started to dance uncontrollably in his eyes. He blinked fervently, wishing them away as the tears still flooded his eyes. There was a loud strong angry hiss beside him as his hand was squeezed lovingly, tenderly. But he didn't dare look at either Angel, especially the one who seemed to love him despite his faults. He quickly did turn to look at him when a loud sharp violent slap filled the air.

"ANGEL!" Wesley shouted angrily as he saw the man he loved slap the hell out of the weaker Angel. Slapping each side of his face, hard, fast and brutally.

"He's hallucinating." He stated coldly, darkly. Not looking at his emotionally wounded Wesley. Furious that this Angel hurt his beloved with such hateful words. "It's time that he stops this crap! Plus, Spike has often told me that there are times I should just slap myself really hard, mankind would feel better for it. Don't know about mankind, but I'm starting to feel better already!"

Wesley tried to jerk his hand out of the hand that held him so tightly yet lovingly as the other hand slapped viciously the other helpless vampire. Loud and sharp, the sound seemed to echo. Leaving the cold cheeks a brilliant violent red, so unnatural for vampires. The Watcher started to try to push Angel away. To stop the slaps some how. But he couldn't, the vampire was determined. Was immovable. Too strong.

"Stop it! Damn, it stop!"

"No." Angel stated calmly as if he wasn't slapping his other self. He then leaned close to the other vampire to shout in it's face, "Who do you wish you had killed! Who! Was it Wesley? Or someone else! Tell me, you asshole, who!" He still continued to slap him with his free opened hand.

"Stop it!" Wesley shouted at the top of his lungs. Throat raw with the shout, like a mad man possessed. He finally was able to free his hand.

Angel stopped his slapping and leaned away from the other Angel as Wesley started to punch at him. The hits didn't hurt. Didn't even bruise. They were so wild, but had no real deadly force behind them. "Stop it! Just stop it! Can you just stop it! Just stop it, Angel..." He then broke down and started to sob. Words crazy with old and still sharp anguished pain.
Angel simply wrapped his arms around him. Even though his body was shaking violently with the sobs he still screamed hoarsely, emotionally. "He meant me! Damn it, he meant me! Don't you understand? Don't you get it, I do! He wished me dead months ago and he'll always wish me dead! He'll always want my death and damn it all if he doesn't deserve it! He deserves it!"

Angel still simply held him. Tight and close. As the punches stopped and the hands clenched at his leather jacket labels. He was still silent as Wesley's voice softened but the tears still flowed. "H-he meant me! It was me he was talking too, he wasn't hallucinating! He was simply being honest with me! He hates me! He wished I had died, still wishes it! And I accept that, I accept it! For I deserve it! Should have...Should have died..."

Wes then wept onto Angel's shoulder. Uncontrollably. Angel gently reached up and ran a hand smoothly and comfortingly down the back of his head.

"Shhh...Shhh, my love, please...Shhh..." Angel whispered, "He doesn't, wasn't speaking about you my little warrior. My beautiful beloved warrior. The world is a better place 'cos you live. You make me better, 'cos you live."

He then held Wesley against him as he started to run out of tears,

Sniffling, he whispered, "Sorry, gods, I'm so sorry..."

"Shhh...Nothing to be sorry about...Nothing...Shhh..."

"Yes! Should have died...Should have, sorry...So sorry, always fail, always. Failed even in dying..." Wes brokenly whimpered, clenching his Angel, as if begging never to be released.

"No, my beloved, never! Goddess, never!" Angel answered his voice choking on emotion as if he too had been crying or was about to.

"Connor." A weak voice answered from the table.

Angel stared at him. Watching those brown eyes watching them intensely. Wesley slowly turned his head weakly upon Angel's shoulder to look at the other Angel. His face a brilliant red and wet with tears. Still clenching at his new Angel. His beloved.

"I meant Connor, not you. Thought he was here...Thought he was standing here. He should have died by my hand a long time ago...Should have...Killed him many times in my head. At least I think they were in my head. Snapped his neck. Tortured him at times. Killed him many ways. I think it was in my head. I think. Here. I think he was standing here. Thought he was standing here, but he isn't. Isn't here. Wesley's here...Connor not. Wesley is here...Good. Wesley is here, I think. Maybe, Wesley is here."

They both watched as his voice started to fade out and he slowly closed his eyes. A small smile upon his lips. "Wesley's here..." The vampire took a deep unneeded breath and slowly released it. The smile died as his eyes snapped opened once more, his face quickly clouded with confusion, "Wesley...Why is another me holding you?"

(end of part 26)
Part 27

Wesley blinked. He quickly wiped away his tears with the back of his hand. "Um, This is Angel, he's from an Alternate Reality." Wes looked kinda nervous as he moved his hand in a sweeping gesture. "Angel met Angel!"

The Angel who still had his arms wrapped around Wesley gave a sharp nod to the other vampire. Who laid so still, almost corpse like. He looked so weak, so helpless. "Hey, Angel. Nice to met ya, I hope ya didn't mind me bitch slapping ya."

The weaker vampire narrowed his eyes challengingly, almost deadly. "You "bitch slapped" me?" His voice was hoarse from disuse.

"Yeah, and I enjoyed it!" Angel challenged right back, keeping a tight loving hold upon *his* Wesley.

"Angel!" Wesley hissed, swatting at his forearm as if to make certain his future lover knew his displeasure right off the bat. In response Angel's face took on a totally innocent _expression. "What, my love?" He asked looking as if he was the holiest saint in all of sainthood to walk upon the earth.

Wesley's eyes were now glued upon Angel's face, his emotional beautiful eyes were narrowed. "Be-have."

"Aren't I? How should I behave and the most important question of all will it make you horny?"

"Remember my love, just because I'm sodding horny doesn't mean I'd have sex with you."

Angel pouted. "But you already said you would..." Then he looked if a thought struck him. "Hey! I know! Maybe...Just maybe a blow job will change your mind...I mean if you ever wanted to change *my* mind about anything that would be the way to do it!"

Wesley looked at him as if he was seriously trying real hard not to smile or laugh. "You're...So easy it's sad and really, Angel, we are not supposed to be talking about that right now."

The British man turned in Angel's arms to look at a puzzled, bewildered and slightly disbelieving Angel. The former Watcher and friend was instantly concerned. "Now, Angel I know you've been through so damn much, but things are okay now. Well...As okay as things normally are. I have much to tell you, but first you need to know that you've been under the sea for three months now. Do you understand what I'm saying?"

Angel blinked and said softly, weakly, "Yes."

Wesley looked away. "I'm sorry that I didn't get to you much sooner...I really tried to get you sooner, really I did."

"I...I know...Thanks...My head hurts and my lungs do to, which is odd seeing that I never use them...Wesley?" The weak vampire questioned in a soft tone.

"Yes, Angel?"

Angel studied him for a long second before looking at his other self. "You never answered my first question."

Wesley looked puzzled and turned his head to look at his future lover to ask curiously. "Do you know what
he's talking about? Do you think he's hallucinating once more?"

Angel shrugged, still holding him but laying his chin upon Wesley's shoulder. In response Wes gave him a tender loving smile and for a few moments they were in their own little special peaceful world, but only for a few moments.

"I'm not hallucinating!" The other vampire croaked sounding like a highly insulted Kermit The Frog on steroids. "My question was why is another Angel holding you!!"

"Um...Well, he's my boyfriend." Wesley answered honestly. Then he looked over at Angel, his Angel, and said again this time in complete and total awe. "He's *my* boyfriend!"

Angel smiled back at him, like a kid finding a treasure- chest full of candy. "Yeah, I am and you're mine."

"I am." Wes gave the vampire's lips a quick kiss. "And you're mine."

"I know my love, even before I laid eyes on you I was yours."

"Maybe I *am* hallucinating...That makes more sense than what I'm seeing and hearing..." The vampire on the table said to himself, looking away to gaze dazedly at the ceiling. "Maybe I'm still in the ocean and this is some twisted nightmare...Or this isn't my world...Yeah...That might be it. Though the nightmare theory sounds better or maybe this hallucination will get better...Who knows, I sure in the hell don't know..."

Wesley jerked his eyes to the other Angel. "What the bloody hell are you talking about? This *is* your reality and you aren't hallucinating! Also, you're not having a nightmare...Don't know why you would think that..."

"He's just being silly, plus he's been in the ocean for months my beloved. He's still very much in shock. Seeing another me...I mean damn, like looking into a mirror and for a vampire who hasn't seen his image for centuries...It's weird and a little awe inspiring. I mean he probably hasn't seen anyone this gorgeous before..."

Wesley lifted an eyebrow at him. Deciding not to tell his Angel about the time the other vampire had seen himself in a mirror in Pylea...Or any other time that Angel had perhaps seen himself. Then his Angel looked sheepish, thinking the eyebrow meant something else. "Other than yourself of course! I mean, da-a-amn! You're hotter than hot you are! Ice melting in fact...I know you melted my heart the instant I saw ya. Actually, I could have sworn my heart had started to beat when you opened your door and I saw you...You looked so shocked to see me, you looked so damn sexy...So cold..." Angel's eyes suddenly took a far-away, dreamy, look. "Wanted to rip your clothes off right then and there...Rip them off with my teeth and then toss you on the sofa...Or press you up against the wall...Then we could have tried to break your kitchen table. I can see it all now. You beautifully naked. Me, of course, naked...Warm flesh meeting cold flesh. Your heat warming my flesh..."

"Angel..." Wesley said in a passionate whisper. His breathing becoming short and deep, eyeing him with desperate eyes. His arousal filling the air. Making the vampire in question, eyes' flash in magnificent golden amber in want...In need.

"That's exactly what I wanted to do when I saw you, Wes, I felt so alive. Felt so hard. Felt as if my blood wasn't standing still within my body. It was so hard not to take you right then and there. Still hard, my love, so very hard...It always will be, even when my body is finally taking yours. It will still be wanting more of you. For all eternity...Always."

"You...Damn, you are amazing do you realize this?"
Angel smiled. "Yeah, I know. Just being totally honest and you think I'm amazing now...Just wait until we're having sex, then you'll really understand the definition of amazing."

Wesley simply laughed.

The other Angel watched them. Listened to them. No expression upon his handsome face, except his eyes seemed darker than normal. One of his pale hands tightened into a hard fist. Wesley never noticed the move, but the other Angel did. He smiled at the other souled vampire good naturedly before kissing Wesley once more. Then the ex-Watcher looked over at Angel.

"I'll tell you what you will need to know. Probably, the best time will be as Angel and I take you back home. I called Gunn and told him about what Connor did and that I found you. He and Fred said they'd tie up your son so you can have a little chat with him and if I missed anything...While telling you what's been happening, I'm sure they'll catch you up to speed...Or maybe...Um, love do you know anything about boats?" He said looking at the vampire who held him so lovingly.

Angel blinked. "Um, no, not much...Been on them a lot...The time I came to the U.S...That was a bitch, let me tell you. So yeah, been on many in my day, I just never had to sail it to shore."

"So you never sailed a boat?"

"Nope, but I'm willing to try...Does this thing have pedals or an auto pilot?"

Wesley smiled gently, looking as if he was trying hard not to roll his eyes. "No. I need to get us back to dock, so can you..." He slid his eyes over to the other Angel.

"Watch him? Take care of him?" He questioned gently. Understanding instantly what Wes was asking for. Wesley answered by nodding slowly.

"You got it." Angel whispered cupping his little Warrior's cheek.

The smile he gave him was more than thanks enough. "There should be one more jar of pig's blood in the bag, if you believe he needs it don't hesitate to give it to him."

This time Angel was the one to nod.

"I'm right here, you could simply ask me." They both ignored the vampire on the table who had spoken so dryly. The vampire also attempted to give a weak wave as if to say, 'Hello, I'm right here.' Wesley stepped out of Angel's arms, he patted the ocean soaked vampire's tight fist in a friendly caring gesture. "My Angel will watch over you. You're okay now, promise." He gave him a smile before turning away.

"Wes?" A weak hoarse voice halted Wesley in his tracks. He threw a questioning look over his shoulder. The vampire pleading look wanted him to understand something. To know something. "Thanks...You know for saving me."

"Don't have to thank me, Angel, that's what friends are--" Unexpectedly, all expression was removed from Wesley's face. As if a door was slammed shut. His face now a hardened mask. Eyes cold as a blue stone. Voice edged with deadly steel. "You don't ever have to thank me. I saved you because I had nothing better to do with my time."

With that he was quickly gone. Both Angel's staring after him. The Angel that was standing smiled then said to himself, "Isn't my little Warrior the cutest thing? Damn, he's hot!" He then looked at the other Angel.
Clapping his hands and rubbing them together he asked. "So do ya want more blood?"

The other Angel still studied the stairs that Wesley had ascended. He ignored the question the other Angel asked much like they had ignored him when he tried to remind them he was in the damn fucking room. Then a flash of red hair caught the corner of his eye, he narrowed his dark brown eyes, then asked quietly, "What's Justine doing here?"

Angel smirked and looked at the red head in question. Justine whimpered at the savage deadly, 'I so want your death to be by my hand' look he gave her. The whimper made him smirk even more. Not knowing that the other vampire was wondering if that was how Angelus looked right before he killed his victims...The weaker vampire shivered wondering why he was freaked out by that.

"Aw, yes, sweet bitchful Justine." Angel purred. "Let's say that she volunteered her services on helping to find you...Though I think Wesley locking her up in a closet for a few months helped her realize how important volunteer work really is...Or was it the bucket Wes gave you, my dear...Or the times he put a chain around your neck like the ugly dog you are? Or the times he hit you..."

"The fucking bastard only hit me once!" She shouted before looking regretful at speaking to him without his permission. This was one vampire she honestly didn't ever want to piss off. The eyes and body language spoke volumes on that subject.

"Did I say you could talk?" He asked softly, oh so deadly. Moving a few elegant steps towards her, showing off his demon face. "And did you just call my beloved a 'fucking bastard' or did I mishear you ...Surely I misheard ...Answer me, tell me what I heard was wrong. Come on I dare you, sweetie..."

She swallowed hard scared of what those eyes promised. She quickly looked away, ashamed that the vampire scared her so. "Sorry...I didn't mean...You're beloved isn't a fucking bastard...I-I am...I am."

Angel stopped before her, leaning in close. He titled his head looking thoughtful. "Huh, well that's true enough...So Justine, how does it feel..."

She blinked, not sure what he was asking. Not sure if she should even answer. She allowed her eyes to question him, trying to show she wasn't challenging him in anyway. He finally answered, tracing a cold fingertip along her jaw line, meeting her eyes with a look that would have made death itself run for the hills. "Oh, you know, how does it feel to save your own life with the truth of your words. But you Justine are more than a fucking bastard...So much more, and all the words that describe you are from the pit of hell itself."

He let go of her chin as she looked away. "I-It isn't much but I-I hope my life has indeed been saved..."

His face shifted back to human once more. "For now it has, but you better watch it you damn ugly bitch and watch how you speak of my Wes. Just think soon Wesley will set you free. So I'd be careful 'cos accidents have been known to happen. Just 'cos I've been the one known to make them happen doesn't mean a damn thing!"

Justine nodded still not looking at him.

"So..." The ocean drenched Angel spoke, drawing the attention of the other Angel. "Why are you here in this reality?"

"I picked it out of countless others. 'Cos I felt my beloved's pain. It tore at me like savage wolves over a weakened prey. My goddess, the great Hero, let me come and get my Wesley. My own Wesley died in my reality. I need him. I have to have him to be complete. To be whole."
The other Angel showed no expression, but his eyes held a violent storm. "Oh...And what? You come here and what?...Woo Wes. Make this reality yours..."

"If Wesley wished it, yes, but we will return to my reality. *Our* reality soon. Real soon."

"Soon, huh?" Angel asked in a raw whisper. "And you honestly think he'd agree? You think he'd leave this reality, his reality when he's needed here?"

The stronger Angel smiled. "I honestly believe he's needed in my world as well. He's important to me, my family, and the world. So yes, I honestly think he'd leave this reality 'cos he's already agreed to it and you know Wes, once he gives his word, he's loyal to it."

If possible the other vampire became even paler and now both fists were clenched. "You're lying! *This* world needs him!"

"Maybe...Maybe not, who honestly knows? Plus don't ya mean *you* need him?"

"I...I don't." He said softly, looking away.

Angel nodded before laughing mockingly. "Keep saying that old timer and maybe you'll actually start believing it! Though you could keep saying it for the next hundred years and it don't mean crap. But one day, you'll look back on things you have done and should have done to find that life ain't really the bitch you think it is. You'll find you're the bitch and you constantly keep kicking yourself in the mouth...So tell me, Angel, do you want the last jar of blood?"

[end of part 27]

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Part 28

They were now in Wesley's SUV. One Angel in the passenger's seat. Safely belted in, a soft blue blanket still wrapped around him. The other Angel was half sitting half laying in the back seat. Wesley had tried to get him to wear his seat belt but the vampire stubbornly refused. Had countless reasons why he didn't want to. One of them simply being he didn't want to. Almost to the point of childishness.

Simple as that and Wes wondered if this was something he had picked up with spending over a hundred years with William the Bloody. Wes didn't care to argue about it.

Before that he simply handcuffed Justine to a large create he had found while Angel carried and set the other Angel in the front seat. He then noticed that it had been a long time since Justine had said a single word. He noticed that she continued to give the stronger Angel a fearful glance every once in a while. Wesley looked at the red head before saying softly, "You've made a lot of wrong decisions, bad choices in your life. Done bad things but know only you can change, if you want to. You can have a new life. Help others instead of hurting others because you hurt. Only you can put an end to the evil you've done. Stop being a damn slave to evil. Live a life worthy of your sister. Live it as she would have, unless she was a cold bitch just like you, then you might as well put a gun to your head and help make this world better for everyone."

She glared hotly at him. "Fuck you, Pryce."

The sound of a car door being slammed hard was heard. They both looked over to see Angel staring hard and murderously at Justine making the redhead swallow hard and whisper..."Sorry..." She looked nervously over at Wesley, her voice still held a slight hateful edge to it. "I thought after all this went down you were letting me go."

"I am." Wesley answered walking away from her, Angel opened the driver's door for him and shut it calmly, before Angel opened another door, climbed in behind Wes and shut the door giving Justine a cheerful wave.

She suddenly yelled into the night, "This doesn't look to me as if you're letting me go! You have me fucking *chained* to a create in the middle of a dangerous dock in the dead of night! I'm sure vampires and demons are around so damn it *free* me! NOW!"

Wesley turned on the SUV's engine, he then looked at her through his open window before saying coldly, "You're as free as you allow yourself to be."

"You goddamned fucker! You can't leave me here handcuffed! If I die, it's your fault! You hear me, Pryce, you'll be a murderer!"

He eyed her coldly, lifting an eyebrow. "Just like you? Never fear all you need is to find the key." He then lifted his fingers revealing the small key to the handcuffs. Her handcuffs. With elegant grace he threw it her way, it fell loudly against the concrete. With that he took the car out of park and drove off. Never hearing the redhead's loud curses.

Then he slowly and calmly told Angel, the one he saved from the dark cold ocean what he thought Angel should know. About Fred and Gunn struggling to keep the business going, he didn't tell him that he helped take a lot of the customers away with opening his own investigation agency. He told the vampire about Fred and Gunn taking care of Connor, believing that the boy was looking for his father, hoping to find him. He then talked about how Cordelia disappeared the exact same night. No one's been able to find her.

Wesley suddenly became quiet. "Um, Angel? While you're there sitting comfortably in the back...With no
seat beat, mind you..." He stated dryly, letting the vampire know he still was slightly pissed about that. "Can you make yourself useful and look for a file named 'Cordelia'?"

"You did your own investigation?" The weak vampire asked beside him.

Wesley nodded before looking his way for a brief second. "What can I say? I've been *very* bored this summer!" He said with no trace of emotion.

He listened to his wonderful Angel move around looking for what he had been asked to find. The vampire started to mumble under his breath. Papers and weapons started to fly around in the back seat. Wesley sighed, before asking, "Need me to pull over and help?"

More noise was heard. Cursing and even a soft, "Oops" was heard. Suddenly, Angel was there hands on the back of Wesley's and the other Angel's headrests, his head wedged between them. The vampire looked slightly pissed and irritated. "Wes..." He snarled, "You are a perfectionist, I know it and you damn well know it, so why in the fucking hell is the back of this SUV trashed? You've got fast food bags, empty liquor bottles, condoms and enough weapons back here to start quite a war...And lots of papers, note pads and even books are back here, but I'm not seeing any file saying, 'Cordelia' on it! Why in the hell is this car like something I'd expect Spike to have? The front is all clean but the back is something a pig wouldn't even want to rest in, hell Spike wouldn't even think this is cool!"

Wesley rolled his eyes and because they were on a street that never had much traffic on it, mostly because it was a street frequented by vampires.

Mostly because of the abandoned warehouses where some teens would always throw rave parties. He pulled over, looking around casually, knowing that just because he didn't see vampires didn't mean they weren't there. Turning off the vehicle's engine, he then turned his head to find his face was inches away from Angel's. He licked his lips before asking, "Did you see a small metal suitcase?"

Angel gave him a sharp look, before growling, "Ya didn't say to look for a metal suitcase, you *said* to look for a file with 'Cordelia' on it!"

"Really, Angel, the file is in the suitcase." Wesley told him matter of factly as if that was the first place Angel should have instantly looked.

Angel quickly captured Wesley's lips as if he couldn't help himself. Making the kiss hot and deep. Wesley moaned from deep within his throat as Angel pulled away. "Okay, metal suitcase coming right up! Though something of mine has *been* up for some time!" He then went back to searching leaving Wesley smiling. Unaware of the other Angel watching him.

Wesley watched as fast food bags, weapons and other odd things that went flying by. His eyes widened in surprise as a lacy bra flew through the air hitting him square in the face. Why was there a bra back there--

Oh...He then suddenly remembered as he watched a matching pair of ripped panties fly by. One night about two months ago...It involved Lilah...Damn, he really had let the back part of the car turn into a garbage play ground. His smile faded.

"So..." Angel asked while looking for the all important metal suitcase which held an all important file, which Wes wanted now instead of waiting until they got the other Angel home. "Why is the back so trashed?"

Wesley continued to watch Angel digging threw his things. He shrugged. "I'm not really sure. Maybe I decided to be lazy, perhaps..."

Angel stopped, tilting his head and looking at him. "Lazy, huh? Don't sound like you, hell even my Wesley
Angel sat up and faced him. "Gee, is this your way of letting me know we need to have an important talk? Listen, I know my Wes wasn't in any way perfect and after meeting you I realized that I..." He looked away, as if he was deeply ashamed of something as he studied the dark warehouses from the car window. His voice low. "I know I wasn't perfect either, which I knew...But...Damn it!"

He then looked back at Wesley, leaning forward to look him even more square in the eye. Looking deadly serious. "You're a warrior. I love you and I loved my Wesley there is no doubt about that. I have been lucky enough to love both...But I'm ashamed to admit...Um, you gotta understand something, my wonderful little warrior, love hit me hard the very first time I saw you and him. You both are so unique. Both special. Beautiful. A true treasure. My Wesley had a special innocence to him and I did my damndest to protect that. Protect him. He tried to act all snobbish and better than everyone and the new boss of Sunnydale when he first showed up, but I knew the truth. He was afraid. He already believed himself a failure. He wanted others to believe he was actually good at something. He didn't believe much in himself. He had tons of book knowledge but fighting knowledge, no. No field knowledge. Fighting out in the darkness, willing to get hurt and even killed. Hell, at first he'd complain if he got a bruise and if he saw his own blood...He was sure to faint. He was cute...My Wesley...Was...

He made me yearn to protect him. Wrap him in layers of blankets and never let him out of our bedroom. Yet he wanted to fight. He wanted to become a better fighter. He wanted to grow, feel confident. And I wanted him...To only need me. I wanted him to trust me to protect him. I wanted to be his everything. His only thing that mattered. Yes, he had two legendary Slayers, yes he had a calling, yes he was Bookman, yes he believed in helping people, the mission. But I felt that I should come first, all else could be in second place. He didn't need to protect himself, he had me. He didn't need to fight with his fists, 'cos I was his fists...He didn't need to handle a weapon, I was his weapon.

I believed very strongly that he didn't need to go out fighting demons night after night or go on patrol, for he had me. He even had a strong family that could help me protect him. I could have and should have let him grow, instead of wanting to lock him away, but I didn't. I didn't step back and let him grow. Let him fight like he needed to.

When I look at you, I see someone so different from my Wes...You are strong, you believe in yourself. You have confidence in your fighting skill. You are a warrior. An equal. You're my little warrior, my Wes...

I can't believe how wrong I was with the first Wesley I loved. You see, I'd find ways to keep him out of the really big battles. I never even allowed him to go out on his own to fight! I was such an arse, really I was. I'd make him go with Willow, Faith, Xander, Spike, hell even later Gunn or me. Never alone. I even told the gang, protect my beloved, no matter what...Protect my beloved, 'cos I need him to live and always be okay. I was always afraid something would happen to him. Sometimes I'd even have nightmares, and they would make me even more protective. Insanely protective...Almost to the point of being obsessed.

Our biggest arguments would be him going out and actually fighting the good fight...The night he died...Damn me the night he died you yelled at me, full of rage, telling me to trust him. To trust in his fighting ability. He didn't need a babysitter, he didn't need to stay in the back and not do anything but hold a book...He yelled at me that he was a grown man not a little boy. He reminded me that he was a Watcher. Been trained to train Slayers and he had two not one but *two* legendary famous Slayers...What to know what I said, what stupid jerk of a thing to say, but I said it anyway. Knowing it would cut him to the quick. I reminded him that *other* Watchers had trained the girls first. Trained them long before he ever got to them which was a good thing or they would already be dead by now...
I...I didn't even tell him that I was sorry for saying it...'Cos I honestly believed what I said. I still shouldn't have said that, even if...Shouldn't have said that...It hurt him, my stupid words hurt him. I couldn't take the words back 'cos they had already been said. I still remember those eyes full of pain as he said softly, his tone alone spoke his pain, he asked me why I didn't believe in him to do the right thing. In his ability to fight. I told him the truth. I couldn't lose him. If he ever died I'd lose it, I'd want to die with him. I told him I loved him and tried to hold him and kiss him...Try to make him understand...Make things better.

He jerked away from me and told me if I really loved him, I'd treat him like an equal instead of a child in need of protection! He said he could fight, he could be an equal if I just gave him the chance to prove it. To me and himself...

So that fateful night he fought beside me, but I was watching him like a hawk. My mind on him not the fight...I have to say he amazed me. Surprised me, he actually fought well then some demons showed up the bad guy's unexpected back up...They had guns...I still have a hard time understanding what happened next...I remember the sound and I felt as if I couldn't move fast enough...Spike suddenly screamed a raw sound that I had never heard before, Xander was in danger...Two demons swung their guns his way, Harris didn't even have time to use his magic. Wesley was just suddenly there. Making sure Xander wasn't hit with all those bullets...He shielded Xander's body with his own...Willingly giving his life...He saved Xander and Spike that night...He saved them both...I spent years doing my best to protect Wes, cos he was my everything, and I still couldn't protect him from death..." Angel's voice had grown hoarse and raw at the retelling of that horrible night. His eyes glistened with blood red tears. "So yeah, I know Wes, you're not perfect. I get that, accept it too. Just know that I'm not perfect either! I never will be but I know with you by my side I'll be a little better. A little closer to perfect because you love me and I love you. Your love makes me want to be a better man...Or vampire...Or whatever the hell I am...Whatever that is, I know you make me better, just a little perfect, than I am without you."

"You're Angel..." Wesley said softly, his voice heavy and thick with emotion. "That's who you are...Angel."

"And you're Wesley." Angel answered back without hesitation, "Never doubt my love for you. Never. Don't compare yourself with the other Wesley. Both of you are and were unique. Special and both will always be loved no matter what."

Wesley nodded. "I know." He whispered quietly. Honestly. "I'm not used to this...This love that I feel. It really does scare me, Angel. I feel like I've loved you for an eternity and I've not even lived that long but my heart is telling me that I'll love you longer than an eternity could even last. Before you, I have *always* felt like a part was broken, shattered...When I first met this worlds Angel I felt this hope that maybe I wouldn't feel broken...Of course that never happened, until I met you. I wasn't whole until you showed up at my door and then you amazingly fixed me. Might sound stupid but Angel you seriously made me whole. I don't deserve that. I don't deserve you but with every breath I take I'm grateful that you want me. That you love me, because I sure in the hell love you."

Angel smiled lovingly. Truly happy. He reached out with his hand and tenderly, lightly touched Wesley's face with his fingertips. "I feel *exactly* the same way...Except I can't breathe, of course, but if I did...No doubt it would be for you. Because of you I feel human. Manly. You make me feel as if my heart were beating and it's all because you're you...Oh..." Angel leaned away from Wes and then picked something up that his feet had been resting on to move it upon his lap. "Is this the metal suitcase you spoke of, my beloved?"

"Yes." Wesley said still speaking in a low voice.

Angel snapped open the suitcase and started to rummage through it. "You know this search would be so
much more fun if you had thrown in some gay porn pictures into this mess. File, file, naked hot people in erotic positions another file...It wouldn't be so boring! O-Okay! Found the file entitled, 'Cordelia'."

Wesley smiled, "Good give it to me when we get to the Hyperion." He then quickly turned forward and restarted the car.

"Huh...You just *had* to have me look for it right away..."

"Well...Yes." He pulled the car away from the curb and back into the street. "Thanks."

"Why in the hell..." Angel started to say until he was struck with a stunning thought. "Oh."

"Oh?" Wesley asked looking into the rear view mirror, knowing full well that he wouldn't see Angel reflected in it but he looked anyway. "Why the oh?"

"You wanted me to find it so you'd be sure to give this file to the other Angel."

"Well, yes, doesn't take a genius to figure that one out."

Angel laughed. "Damn, I love that wicked mind of yours! It's sexy as well as diabolical!"

Wesley gave a light laugh, not sure of what Angel was talking about. "Why thank you, I still find it amazing that you find my brain sexy...But really, diabolical...Hardly, Angel."

"You were never going to give Angel the file the night you saved him." He said eyeing the back of Wes' head. "Originally. You're giving it now 'cos you need too. Have too. For soon you'll be having the best sex you've ever gotten and then when the time comes you'll be coming home with me. But before I showed up, you weren't planning to give it to him until he came asking for it. Asking personally for your help in finding this Cordelia chick."

It seemed to take a few minutes of dead silence. Complete and total.

Both Angel's were looking at Wes. One from the back one from the side. The Angel that was still ocean soaked finally cut in the eerie silence. "He's right, isn't he?"

Wesley shrugged.

"I can see it, you know?" Angel said in the back with certainty. "The original plan. I even get it. You would tell Angel just enough when you save him then leave him alone, like he did you. Never once saying anything about your own investigation into this Cordelia gal. You would wait a day or two make sure you've schedule is full of demon hunting and killing. Let certain informants know if a vampire in a long leather jacket comes looking for you to give him a huge arse run around. Maybe even give you the heads up by cell phone. Then you give them the okay. Angel finds you kicking some large demon's arse, maybe you even have some of your own paid men helping you so you don't look like an idiot, but you would look like a leader. A warrior. The big boss man. Totally in control and you would have been. Maybe Angel even says something stupid, like saying, 'Need help?' in an uncertain way. You being the snob and extremely bitter I'm pissed as hell but I'm trying to pretend that I'm not' maybe you say something like, 'No thanks.' Then the big demon dies by your hand. You wave the others away. Order them to do stuff. You know do the boss thing, even telling one of them to get your metal suitcase out of your car...Then you would have stared coldly at Angel. Leaving him to talk first, giving him room to say anything that he wants to. But no matter what you'd be cold indifferent then you'll give him what you believe he wants. Knows he wants. Info on Cordelia, but really what you've giving is an olive branch. You tell him what's in the file. Who he must talk to in case...Or you give him the hardest one to talk to, making him read the file if he wanted the easiest way.
But you would have given him the hardest one...Because you are still hurting, but you know he'd be alright. Then you would have left him with the file, ignoring him. Thinking he has what he came for and you got a little of your own back and revealing at least to yourself that you weren't as worthless as you thought you were..."

"But that didn't happen..." Wesley said staring straight ahead.

"No, it didn't. Never will happen...Now. But that was what you had planned...What you wanted to happen..." Angel answered softly from behind.

"Maybe...Just maybe that's what I had in mind. I had thought about doing something like that. Show Angel I didn't need him but he sure needed me...Damn, I'm a childish prick aren't I?"

"No, you're human." This was said softly by the Angel in the passenger seat. Wes gave him a side way glance before parking the car.

"Well, we're here. You're home, sweet home..." Wes answered dryly. Quickly unbuckling his seat belt opening his door and climbed out never noticing the weaker Angel had reached out his hand to touch his shoulder...

But there was no shoulder. No Wesley, for he was already gone.

(end of part 28)
Both Angel and Wesley got the slightly weak Angel out of the car. Both took a side and helped the vampire
get to the courtyard and to the doors of the Hyperion. Deciding not to have Angel carry the other vampire
like he had been earlier.

Wesley had taken the time to wrap the blue blanket around the other Angel's shoulders.

Angel from the alternate world opened to door for them all. They stepped in letting the door slam behind
them. The next instant Wesley watched coldly as Fred and Gunn left what used to be his office, now
Angel's of course.

The Texan and the vampire hunter came to a complete stand still and looked with huge wide eyes at there
being *two* Angels.

Wesley caught his Angel's eyes and jerked his head towards the round gray love seat in the center of the
room. The strong Angel knew instantly what Wes wanted and helped him move the weak vampire to the
item in question and gently sat him down. Angel also made sure to rest the important 'Cordelia' file in the
other Angel's lap...

"There's two Angels?" Fred asked slowly wanting to rush to the side of the weak Angel. Figuring the one
that was wet and shivering was her Angel but not sure about what was going on with the other Angel right
beside Wesley. "W-When did this happen?" She asked nervously.

"This Angel's from an alternate world." Wesley told her reaching out and finding comfort in holding the
strong vampire's hand.

"Oh." Fred answered only then going quickly to the wet Angel. "Are you alright, Angel?"

The Angel in question nodded weakly. "Yeah, I'm...I'm doing better 'cos Wes rescued me."

"We tried to find you." Gunn told him going over to his boss and girlfriend.

"I know. Wes told me and you didn't know..."

"Where's Connor?" Wes asked for Angel's benefit.

"Tied up in Angel's office." Fred stated looking over from one Angel to another. Not getting over the fact
there were two Angels. "The resemblance is really remarkable."

"That's because they are both Angel." Wesley told Fred dryly. "So of course they'd resemble each other,
they are each other. Expect they both have different experiences and this one comes from an alternate
world."

"And I'm sexier and my hair looks better." The alternate Angel cut in with a charming smile at Fred,
tightening his hand within Wesley's.

Wesley giggled making his Angel look at him in fake offensiveness and a small pout. "But my hair does
look better!"
"Only because this world's Angel has been in the ocean for three months!" Wes reminded him.

Angel quickly pressed his lips upon Wes, only for a moment, "Bet I look better naked, my love."

Wesley smiled happily. "Of course, it's what you do *while* naked that matters!"

"Of course, beloved, of course." Angel smiled back.

"What the crap! Tell me that you two are..." Gunn shouted in total shock.

"Together?" Wes said looking over at him. "Yes, we are."

"But you're not gay! You've been wanting my girl..."

"I'm bi." Wesley cut in quickly. "Not that anyone ever asked and I had a small crush on Fred, true. She was sweet and I think I loved the idea of her, what I thought her to be. Not the real her which you love. I've always had a big thing for Angel, this realities Angel, but he never wanted me or showed interest. Which I gave out hints, small yes, but hints never the less. Then in my darkest hour an Angel from another reality does everything he can to romance me, which he has done beautifully. I love him, he loves me. Things are the way they were meant to be."

"What about his soul? You two can't ever have..." Gunn shook his head as if the thought of two guys naked was disgusting.

"It's permanent." The strong Angel told him. "I can have lots of happy sex, which I'd only want with Wesley...Oh, me and him, happy sex 24/7 though I should give him a few hours to sleep and eat, but we just have to wait and see." He said with a dorky grin. "Hey, hon, Spike and Xander once gave me a sex swing, never tested it but do you think that maybe..."

Wesley's eyes darkened with desire as he licked his suddenly dry lips. "S-Sex swing? Oh, I love those!"

Then from Angel's office there was a sound of a chair breaking.

"Connor!" Fred shouted, suddenly remembering who was in the other room, she stood up looking as if she was about to rush over to the office. With no weapon of course just brave stupidity. But instead she saw a black leather blur speed towards the office. A sound of a fight could instantly be heard.

Next thing they saw was Connor being flung high in the air out of the office. The alternate Angel wore a no nonsense _expression upon his face. Cold. He looked down at the kid who hit the floor with a groan.

"So...Let me take a guess...You're Angel's brat, right? A brat that put his own father in the ocean...Huh...You know I honestly thought any son of another me would have better hair and style. Anyway, instead of beating you up, do ya want to talk? Tell me, do you know the words to Mandy? *Love* that song!"

"Shut up! Don't want to talk!...He deserved it, you know, he deserved it and so much more!"

"He deserves a lot of things, boy and one of them is respect!"

Connor slowly stood up, looking as if he was ready to do some serious battle stuff against this vampire who looked like his real father. "He deserves nothing but hatred! He's a monster like you! He killed Holtz the man I called father and loved like a real father for eighteen years of my life! He deserves nothing but my hatred and I'll hate him forever!"
"He didn't kill Holtz you stupid hateful brat! That bitch Justine did, she carried out a plan Holtz came up with so you would always hate your real father, he wanted to kill him! I'm not sure he wanted you to put him in the fucking ocean but I can tell you that he sounded like a bitter lonely old man with a stake up his arse and had a peanut for a heart as well as for a brain! Don't you feel anything for what you did! You put your real father who just wants to love you into the fucking ocean! Do you realize just what salt water does to leather and hair, never mind the skin! He also probably had small fish visit parts of him that should never be visited, unless it's a form of kinky sex!"

"Even if..." Connor blinked, "Wait there's a form of kinky sex involving fish?"

Angel nodded. "Sure, not that I've ever tried it of course. Heard about it...In my world there are a form of demons named Elnotich and they're normally land demons and they can only have sex in bodies of water that have certain fish and many times those fish were forced to...Well you get the picture, right? Anyway, the Wes of my world was writing a thesis which he questioned whether the fish were being violated in any way or if even it was rape...Though surely it would traumatize the fish..."

"Um, did he ever finish the paper because I'd really like to read it..." Wesley questioned then seeing the looks Fred, Gunn and the weak Angel gave him he shrugged. "What? It does sound fascinating, plus would love to hear more on the Elnotich, that species doesn't live in this world, heard of them for their cousin's Epictich once, excepting they mated with the help of lobsters. Those demons became extinct in the late 1600's. Well, anyway, it don't matter how kinky we get Angel, we won't be having sex with fish nor lobsters. Eating them cooked is fine but not for sex."

"Agreed." Angel told him before looking at Connor. "You've been through a lot in your life. You didn't ask for any of it, you didn't even ask to be born. Didn't even ask to be born of two vampires but you were. Ya have to deal, Connor. You simply have to deal with the fact you're not normal. That you were raised in hell, that Holtz used you for revenge against the vampire who killed his family and no matter how many times he called ya son, you were reminded that you really weren't. I think he probably reminded you repeatedly that your real father killed his true family..."

"SHUT UP!" Connor growled angrily as he leaped at him as if he was going to beat him up. Angel instantly grabbed him by the throat and dangled him in the air. Shook him lightly before continuing.

"You Connor have to deal. No one can give you back your childhood. It was lost forever. No one can help you unless you want to be helped and even then it's never easy! Trust me on that! No one can love you unless you want that and sometimes even if you want that love you don't want it from the one who's willing to give it. Like your father. Yes, he's done some bad things. He's killed, tortured and raped. There's a demon inside of him. Every damn day, every second that passes. And he has to deal with that demon, but just 'cos he's a demon doesn't mean he can't love! I should know. I love Wesley. I love my Grandchilde, Spike. I love everyone that I call family back home. I don't have a son, but I do have a family that I would die for. Kill for. Live for. Faith, Gunn, Doyle, Kate, hell even Xander...I love them all. And let me tell ya something, my dear friend and Grandchilde, Spike is loaded with humanity! He has a special goodness and a sweet heart, even in his most evil moments his heart always revealed itself. He loves, he's loyal to those he calls family, way before he ended up sharing a soul with Harris. Connor, you have a family, ya may not like it, may not love it or want it...Yeah, your Dad is a fucking vampire! He's got a soul, accept it, deal with it or your life is simply going to be even more fucked up than it already is."

Angel slowly set Connor down and let go of the youth's throat. There was a violent confused storm in those powerful blue eyes as Connor studied the vampire. Even if this vampire was right..."Maybe you are right...But I still hate the fucker!"

Unexpectedly, Angel hit him hard in the chin. So hard it knocked Connor out even before he landed upon
the tiled floor. He looked over to the other Angel.

"Sorry, I tried to help. Maybe when he wakes up you might try to tell him how the world turns."

The weak Angel smiled sadly at the other vampire before looking at his now knocked out son. "Thanks for trying."

Angel shrugged moving towards Wesley. He took the former Watcher's hand and lead him to the door.

"Wait!" Fred told them, looking surprised that they were simply going to leave. "You're really just going to leave? Just like that? No other word...Or...Or anything!" She looked at Wesley in sick disbelief as if he was a roach playing a violin in a totally crappy way. "With out...With out even...You really don't care anymore, do you? About us?"

Wesley stopped at the door as Angel opened it for him, he looked back at them. "I tried to care but I got tired of having my teeth kicked in. Ask the champion over there if I've cared enough. Soon I'm leaving this bloody reality for a new one. Oh and you might want to give Angel more blood, I'm running a little low at the moment." As Wes stated this he rubbed his hand upon the bite mark that alternate Angel gave him on his wrist and with that he turned back went through the opened door saying loudly, "Angel, lets get the fuck out of here and go home!"

Angel looked back at the others, his face expressionless. He then turned and followed his beloved, letting the door shut quietly behind them.

(end of part 29)
Wesley could swear on a hundred old church hymnals and a few Holy Bibles that he never felt so sluggish or so sodding satisfied. He stretched his legs languidly and winced. Damn! His body was deliciously sore. Angel had been right. The vampire was indeed one incredible lover. A happy contented smile crossed his lips.

A cool heavy body was wrapped around him. Wes laid on his stomach, the covers had long ago been kicked off. Only one pillow had been left upon the bed and he had it and he knew Angel was using his slender back as a pillow, he could feel Angel's dark head upon his lower back. Damn, he was a snuggler.

Wes tried to move a little and his contented smile turned into a little frown when he felt that the bed sheets were still a little damp in places. From semen and from water...Definitely from a lot of water. For Wes had tried to take a shower when they had gotten to his apartment after taking the other Angel home. Then his lover had charmed himself into so called, 'saving water', though he had promised to wash Wes' back and make sure he didn't slip. Which made the battle hardened Rogue Demon Hunter giggle like a teenaged girl when Angel slipped while kissing him deeply. The vampire nearly knocked him down like a bowling pin, at first waves of shock, concern then humorous laughter quickly followed...As did desire when the vampire swore he meant to slip because it put him up close and personal to an area that he'd been longing for...

So of course their first sexual encounter took place in the shower. The companion of steam, extremely wonderfully hot water and the feel, smell of Zest soup...Burning kisses, loving hunger filled touches made the experience intense. Memorable. Wonderful.

In all honestly, it was a true wild firestorm of awesome sensations of intense pleasure that nearly drowned them both.

Afterwards, Angel had been insistent that he needed to carry Wes to bed all between sweet kisses.

"Angel, we really must dry off first..." Wesley had tried to tell him and Angel responded that he wanted to lick him dry. The Watcher wondered if that was really possible but the vampire was determined to show him that yes, one could be licked dry. Still Wesley had dared the vampire to prove it, which Angel was happy to prove when they both reached the bed.

But before they reached the bed, Angel had slipped and fell hard on his arse with Wesley in his lap which had him laughing and mocking the powerful champion about his grace.

"Hey, *wet* naked vamp here and bathroom tile...It's really the tile's fault, I'm sure it's demon possessed!" Angel told him with laughter filled eyes. Getting up, slowly, though it took a couple of tries, for he was determined to continue to hold Wesley in his arms. "Seriously, love, things weren't in my favor from the get go! Stupid demony tile!...I'll fight with it later!"

"Gee, aren't you romantic! You'll only fight demon tile later...You are so smart!"

"I'm smart enough to fall in love with you." Angel said before capturing Wesley's mouth with his kiss all the way to the bed.

Wes had never realized that one could laugh so much during lovemaking. They had teased each other tenderly, almost sweetly. The vampire swore there wasn't a ticklish spot anywhere upon his manly body, but Wes had found them. He even made Angel pout good naturedly when he had teased him about having love handles.
So throughout the night they had made love in so many wonderful interesting ways. Giggled with glee, moaned in passion and within each other's arms found a peaceful grand paradise. A wondrous heaven all their own.

Wesley slowly came out of his thoughts on last night as Angel revealed that he was awake. Having lifted his head to slowly trail moist kisses along Wesley's back. Hands softly running along his hips and thighs.

"Angel?" Wesley mumbled almost sleepily.

The vampire chuckled, the former Watcher moaned at feeling Angel's hard cock pressed against his butt cheeks. "Oh, my beloved that sounded like a question...Who else would it be?"

"Well..." Wesley said as if deep in thought, but really he was being mischievous. "This strange fellow named Dracula stops over every once in a while..."

Again Angel chuckled sadly stopping his kisses and sweet hot touches to help turn Wes over so they could face each other. Angel smirked, "Huh, really? I know the guy he's a terrible lover. Very selfish, it's all about him getting the pleasure, plus he sleeps in a coffin full of dirt. Gives us vampires a bad press so he does...Plus have you ever noticed how he smells of rotting onions?"

He leaned forward to kiss Wesley passionately. After the tender deep kiss, Wesley leaned away. His fingertips tracing his lover's face. "Have you really met him? The legendary Dracula?"

Angel rolled his eyes. "That legendary *liar*? Yeah, he still owes Spike fifty pounds and me a horse. Doubt we'll ever see it. He does indeed smell like rotting onions and he's so damn pale! That bastard is always starving himself 'cos he thinks that makes him look hot. Idiot. He got pissed when the vamp sisters wanted to do me and Spike together. Spike was for it and maybe me a little but we refused to let Dracula join in with us. I remember even telling him, 'Dude'...Okay, that word didn't exist back then but if it had I would have used it. Anyway, I said, 'No way! You smell like rotting onions! Like me or Spike would ever touch that little prick of yours willingly! Plus, the chicks here told us about you! Oh, yeah they said you never satisfied them and you were selfish as hell when it comes to love making.' The girls then chanted that he was indeed and he swore he had never been more insulted, which I highly doubt 'cos I heard he has a tiny manhood that is an insult to vampire's everywhere. Even the Master said he had seen the dick and was insulted and I heard that my grandsire's dick was all wrinkled and bone and just gross ya know? And *he* was insulted! Anyway, me and Spike were kicked out of his castle. Which didn't bother me none, but Spike, well he was pissed off about the fifty pounds he never got. Had a chip on his shoulder about it for years afterward. Had to listen to him go on and on about it. He's only just got to the point now where he can talk about it without throwing things in a temper tantrum. Also just between us, I think he cheated while playing poker, I didn't of course...I swear it! Well, maybe I kept a card or two up my sleeve but that was only for good luck!"

Wesley smiled, "For luck huh? Other than that have you ever cheated at poker?"

"Hell, yeah, part of the fun of the game! Though now demon poker has gotten lame, now instead of horses, money or the occasional virgin they play for kittens. Which is sad and unlike Spike I'm not going to waste my time playing or finding better ways to cheat if I can't win something cool like a horse or a virgin! Not that I would use or eat the virgin I got a soul and all. I'd set the virgin free, cos I'm such a nice guy. Plus, cheating for kittens? Lame! I may be a vampire but I do have standards!"

Wesley laughed loudly before kissing Angel's neck, getting a deep lustful moan from the vampire.

"Angel?" Wes mumbled between kisses ever slowly going lower down to his shoulders, caressing his back. "Can I ask something very personal?"
The vampire chuckled, rolling onto his back, taking Wes with him. Except now the former Watcher was the one on top of him.

"Well, " Angel said with a knowing smirk upon his face. "We've been getting *very* personal and I don't see anything wrong with it. So ask away!"

Wesley's straddled him, sitting upon his chest running his fingers down the smooth muscled pale chest, he still kissed his throat and shoulders, "Why do you have a tattoo on your big..." He reached down to fondle the item in question, receiving an encouraging moan..."Thingie?"

Angel nearly choked upon his laughter, he then smiled even as he tried to be a little insulted, "Thingie? My cock is a thingie, now? Can we try to call it something manly? Call it cock, dick, my big meat, or my personal favorite, your one true special god but thingie? Gee, Wes, now you should know it's not a thingie. A thingie sounds like something one easily forgets and my cock is unforgettable, baby!"

Wesley stopped kissing and sat up slowly with a lifted eyebrow. "My one true special god, you say?"

Angel shrugged innocently, giving a pure sheepish smile. "It was a suggestion of course. I mean those times you shouted when you cum...Wasn't just my magic fingers doing the touching that made you shout," Angel suddenly threw back his head to shout loudly, in a badly fake high British accent, "Oh, God, Angel! YES, Yes...Harder, yes...Angel, my god..."

Wes continued to stare down at him, his left eyebrow twitching uncontrollably. "Done, now?" He asked calmly.

"What? I'm not mocking you, Wes, honest! But...Really my cock does bring you happiness and I love making you happy! It makes me glad and horny knowing...And I love your cock too, now that's my god that I worship, 'cos damn! Oh...Wait a minute..." Angel smiled understandingly, "Here I was talking about my cock..." He reached out and with his fingers started to worship every inch of Wes' now hardened cock. Rubbing, touching, caressing, jerking him off...

Wesley closed his blue eyes in pleasure as he moaned, Angel continued with what he had been saying, "And here I neglected to tell you how wonderful I find your cock. Silly me! I think you need to punish your vampire, my beloved, for not telling you how I yearn to worship your 'thingie' day and night. Really love your cock. The feel be it in my mouth or in my arse..."

"Angel..." Wesley panted.

"I love what we have. Love this. Love you. Love your cock, your arse, love it all...It's all mine, isn't it? You're mine and I'm yours. That is what makes things so perfect. Belonging to each other. You like that too, don't ya? Knowing my cock and arse are all yours..."

"Angel, you continue to do that and...and..."

"You're going to get another orgasm, yeah I know and I haven't even told you what else I love about your cock...The taste. Your cum my love is the richest and finest dessert..."


Afterwards Wes curved his body against Angel's holding him as if he never wanted to let go. Angel held him right back, kissing the top of Wes' head with a satisfied purr.
Ever determined Wesley blinked sleepily remembering something he had wanted to know. "Angel? You never answered my question about why there's a tattoo on 'my one true special god'."

"It's permanent, like my soul. The spell Jenny, Rupert and Xander did years ago to make my soul permanent, after the spell that strange tattoo was there, on me. Not sure why, or why it looks like a strange black broad band on my dick. Or what the symbols within it mean. Xander says he knows but refuses to tell me, instead he mocks me, much to Spike's delight."

"Oh..." Wes sighed, closing his eyes. "Wondered..." He mumbled the rest of the sentence so sleepily it was close to impossible to catch but luckily his lover was a vampire, "The Angel in this reality doesn't have a tattoo on his dick, should have realized that the tattoo had something to do with your permanent soul..."

"Yeah..." Angel mumbled back, his lazy contentment instantly faded, as he tensed slightly. "Wait, Wes I thought you said you and he weren't ever together as lovers."

"We weren't." Wes mumbled into Angel's shoulder. His mind quiet, trying to lull him to sleep.

Angel frowned. "Then how did you ever see his dick?"

"Long ago, Cordy had a vision...Gunn was in trouble, she called me to wake up Angel, get him to save the day so I went...Woke him..." Wesley's voice started to fade off, sleepiness winning the fight.

"And?...Wes..." Angel said softly, caressing his lover's spine.

Wes took a deep breath, reopening his eyes with a struggle, he was finding it impossible to keep them open...Why didn't Angel let him sleep, that was all he wanted. Needed for now. Wondrous sleep, but Angel wanted something, and when he wanted something he could be a determined wanker. So might as well..."And...And...During that time Darla had come back from the dead, gave him a sleeping drug to invade his dreams..."

"And...There is more to the story Wes..." Angel cut in when it seemed like Wes had fallen asleep.

Wes mumbled something incoherent before saying clearly even if it was in a faraway sleep filled voice. His own British accent thick and deep. "So he's in bed, naked as a jaybird, though why do silly people say naked as a jaybird? Jaybirds are covered with feathers, hardly naked at all would say..." He yawned big and wide, before continuing. "Anyway...What was I saying, oh, right, anyway I show up. Knock loudly at his door, calling his name, finally I simply go in and shake him a wake. Next thing I know he's growling something about making 'her' go away and I have a naked, very hard horny vampire on top of me choking me..."

"Um, Wes, you say you've never did it with him, but if he puts his cock in your mouth choking you...I'd say that ya did it at one time."

"NO!...No...Silly..." He then giggled, still struggling to stay awake. "You're silly...His *hands* were choking me. Later he let me go and...and I asked him about his naked thing and I also made him wear a pink helmet...Which was so funny...It was funny. I laughed and laughed. That...That was the only time I saw his naked thingie...Angel...I love your naked thing, really I do. I love you so much. My wonderful Angel...Love youoo..." Finally Wesley's voice faded and he started to snore softly in Angel's ear.

The vampire smiled lovingly at his lover, arms tightening. "I love you too, Wes, I love you too."

(end of part 30)
Some hours later Angel heard a knocking on Wes' apartment door. Wes didn't even flinch or move even a little bit, snoring in the vampire's ear. Which Angel thought was more cute than annoying.

"Wes, love?" Angel said softly, moving a little bit to look at him. "Someone's knocking..."

Still his favorite little Warrior slept. Which made sense seeing how many times they had made passionate love. Angel slid out from beneath him. He smiled fondly as Wes' body and hands instantly searched for him, but ended up being content to wrap his arms around the big pillow that Angel's head had laid upon.

The knocking continued, whoever it was obviously wasn't giving up, which was a shame 'cos Angel could so easily come up with some ways to wake Wesley. He calmly placed a blanket upon his lover, brushing his lips across Wes' ear before taking the sheet from the floor and wrapping himself in it toga style.

Within minutes Angel was at the door saying loudly, "What do ya want, damn it!" as he opened the door, then he smiled lazily, "Hey! How are you? Have any trouble getting the sea crabs out of your arse?"

The other Angel simply lifted an eyebrow, slight anger was reflected in his deep chocolate browns. "Didn't have sea crabs in any area of my anatomy."

"But you had fun checkin' right? I would! Mostly 'cos I like fondling myself when I'm naked. I normally look for any excuse, surprised you don't."

"You're weird that's all I have to say." He looked over Angel's shoulder as if trying to see into the living room. "Is Wes around?"

Angel narrowed his eyes slightly before he said good naturally, "He sure is, last I checked he was naked in my arms sleeping until some dick head wouldn't stop knocking on the sodding door! He's still naked and sleeping. I'd be doing the same with my arms wrapped around him...Hey, did I tell you about some dick head that came a knocking?"

"Yeah, you might have said something..." The other Angel seemed to be studying him as if he was a ugly germ under a microscope. "You just said 'sodding'..."

Angel gave him a 'you're so stupid I'm ashamed that you're wearing my face' look. "Yeah, I guess I did....So why are you here?"

"To see Wes, can I come in?" He asked, looking broody and determined as hell.

"He's asleep." Angel reminded the other vampire, stated as a matter of fact. Arms crossing over his huge chest.

"So ya said." the other Angel moved a little forward, standing nose to nose with his other self. "Let me in."

Angel didn't even blink as he repeated once more, slowly and coldly. "He's asleep."
"I don't doubt that." He said just as slowly and coldly. More determined than ever. "I want to see Wesley and I'm not leaving until I do."

"Why?" Angel asked.

The other vampire shrugged. "To say thank you perhaps..."

"Perhaps, huh? I can't believe that you're me in this world! Nor can I believe I'm as stupid as you, or could be as stupid as you! Plus, you already said thanks, remember?"

The other Angel growled low in his throat, stepping closer, though this move didn't intimidate at all. Angel simply lifted his eyebrow higher and chuckled. "You're stupid." He repeated before chuckling once more.

"Maybe." The vampire said softly, looking away to glance down to the floor putting his hands into his leather coat pockets. "Tell Wes I stopped by." He then turned to walk away.

"I thought you wanted to come in..." Angel told him, throwing open the door and walking way from it as if he had no care in the world.

The other Angel looked stunned and then a little uncertain about entering but he slowly did, closing the door behind him. He looked around surprised that the other vampire had already left the room to reappear moments later holding two beer bottles handing one to the other.

"Thanks." The other Angel mumbled.

Both Angels sat down in complete and total silence. Opening their beers as one and taking a deep swig.

The other Angel then studied him thoughtfully, eyeing the toga before breaking the silence. "You're very different from me aren't you?"

"Our world's are very different, which makes us different I suppose. But we both help people. Care. Love. So I guess that's all that matters."

"Yeah, I guess." Other Angel mused taking a sip of his beer. "I...I hallucinated a lot these last three months."

Angel nodded studying one of Wes' blue walls taking another deep swallow of his beer before answering. "No blood to drink and salt water would do it to the best of us."

"Do...Do you really love...Him?"

Only then did Angel look his way. "With all my heart, mind, body and soul, yes I do."

"In this world...I don't swing that way."

"Shame, it's fun!" Angel said with a friendly smile and a happy twinkle in his eyes, the twinkle slowly faded as he studied the other vampire. "You must have been well liked and loved by Father then...You were lucky. Me? At fifteen Father caught me getting me first kiss. Pure and sweet it was. It was from the stable lad can't remember the other boy's name, but I do remember me Father's beating. And from that day forward he hated me with a passion. No matter what I did, no satisfying that bastard. I was something filthy under his boots. I had tried to be better, do better, failing of course. What else could I do but turn to liquor and whores...Not sure if it was the liquor that helped me bed the bitches in heat, if ya know what I'm sayin'?" Angel took another sip, shaking his head trying to rid his mind of those ancient memories. "Damn! It's amazing but I can remember every act I did as Angelus and every stupid thing I've ever done in my crazy
unlife but I can't remember that innocent sweet boy's name, 'cos even if I got a serious beating that kiss had been worth all the broken bones and bruises that took weeks to heal...I tell ya it had been worth it!"

"Shayne, the lad's name was Shayne..." The other Angel said this so softly it was almost impossible to hear. His eyes had glazed over as if he was remembering something in his past.

Angel looked over at him surprised, snapping his fingers. "Yeah! His name was Shayne! That's right! Surprised that I forgot such a name!...So...You once kissed the stable lad too, huh, thought you said you didn't swing that way..."

"I don't." He said, the faraway look gone from his face as he shrugged, looking seriously detached from everything.

"Father caught ya like me didn't he?" Angel asked gently. Knowing instantly that the other Angel never told anyone about his years as a human, especially that time as an uncertain fifteen year old, but because he was Angel, another Angel...That helped. There was already a layer of deep understanding that no one could fake nor break.

The other Angel refused to look at him as he nodded and winced slightly.

Angel studied him thoughtfully. "So, what, ya didn't think the kiss was worth the beating?"

The other Angel shifted in the sofa as if he was trying to make himself small. Unseen. "Tell me, did...Did Father beat ya with a long wooden broom handle...And do anything else with that handle? Rap--Um, *hurt* you seriously with it?"

Angel looked away. Wanting to kill their bastard of a Father all over again, this time with a little torture that he had learned over the years. He looked back at the other vampire. "Only his fists...Father broke me arm, a few ribs and made me a walking bruise...Couldn't even see out of my eyes they were so swollen, for about a week or more. Even lost one of my back teeth..."

The other vampire laughed bitterly, before tightening his hand dangerously almost breaking the beer bottle he held. "Then you were a luckier bastard than I...What Father...What he did with that broom handle...No fucking kiss was worth that!"

"Fuck. Don't know what to say to that. Not sure there are words to say actually...Tell me, later when you became Angelus, did ya eat him?"

The other Angel shrugged. "Whatever. Got over it a long time ago."

"I'm glad you ate him. Killed him. You should never feel guilty for killing him. Your Mother and sister, if you killed them too, then ya you should feel guilty. Their screams should always haunt your nightmares, 'cos you're a good man...But he, Father Dearest, doesn't even deserve pity or sorrow." Angel told him honestly, feeling something to an 'almost' bonding moment happening between them at that exact time and place. "He had no fucking right to do that to ya, hurt ya like that, just 'cos ya liked guys...Still nothing wrong with that ya know? Liking guys."

The other Angel shrugged. "Whatever. Got over it a long time ago."

"Really? Huh..."

"What does that 'huh' mean?" The other vampire said with a heated glare. Their bonding moment now
"Nothing." Angel said quickly, almost too innocently.

"Sounded like something."

"Okay, it is something! You say you got over it yet you don't swing that way! So ya are saying that ya got over your wanting guys, mostly 'cos that fucking broom handle showed ya the sodding fucking up light! You know what I think, don't matter if ya don't want to know my thoughts on this I'll tell it to ya anyway! You're afraid! Afraid to have a man touch ya 'cos of what happened with that broom handle plus ya have control issues. Can tell ya that right now, plain as the nose we both share. You think you would have no control if ya got interested with a guy. It's not about if your cock goes in someone's arse or if that lover would one day want to stick it to ya. It's about trust. Complete and total trust, and you're afraid to give that to man or even a woman if ya want the truth. A woman you can be in complete and total control, I bet you are always on top aren't ya? Anyway, you're afraid. Deathly afraid, well let me tell ya something. You are already dead! So live a little! Be willing to trust, be willing to be fucked. Hell if ya don't ever want to sleep with guys fine, you're missing out on a lot, I dare you that the next time you have sex with a woman let her tie you up and let her be on top. Trust someone other then yourself to be in control!"

"How dare--I'm not afraid!" The other Angel growled darkly. Throwing him a pure look of hostility. "Plus, no control issues, well maybe a little...Or a lot actually, but I'm not afraid!"

"Did ya ever once think of what it would be like to have sex with Wesley?"

The other Angel slammed down the beer bottle upon the end table. Standing up, he pointed a finger at him. "You don't *know* me! You come to *MY* fucking world and...and fuck with things you have no right to fuck with! And you have no right to judge me or take my things away from me! To...To...You simply have no damn right!"

"First off, Wes isn't a thing or yours! Second, I swear I didn't know I was judging ya laddie, sorry if ya saw it that way."

"SHUT UP! Just shut up!" The other vampire shouted, "And really what gives you the right coming to this world and taking Wesley? Huh? What right?"

"I love him and Hero blessed me with him and he loves me right back." Angel stated calmly. Almost quietly.

The other Angel sighed, looking away. "Well, aren't you the lucky bastard. You get a permanent soul and Wesley...He's really going with you, isn't he?"

"Yeah, He really is." Angel said with a nod.

The other Angel looked at him, a sad defeated look taking over his features for a second before he hid it behind an emotionless mask. But anyone could have caught it, especially an alternate Angel.

"So...When? When do you both...You know, leave?"

Angel shrugged then looked over at the clock upon Wesley's living room wall. "About three hours, it looks like."

"Oh...He's really going...He's really chosen *you* hasn't he? An Angel that is better than me."
"Yeah, he has."

The other Angel looked kicked in the gut before saying purposely. "You take care of him then, or I'll rip your heart out."

"Right..." Angel slowly stood up. "I'd rip my own heart out if I even thought I was hurting him or not taking care of him the way I should...My Goddess...Crap you love him too, don't you?"

Angel violently shook his head. "No...I loved Buffy and Cordy. Not...Him. I don't ever love men. I simply can't. Wes is special and wonderful, yes, no doubt and if he had been a woman I'd...I couldn't have helped but love him...Listen, I've never told anyone about my Father and the broom, and I know you and Wes are together now...Just don't tell him. You know about the broom handle...I still feel ashamed and dirty...Funny, huh? All these years, centuries, and I still feel...I just don't want Wes to know about that. Don't ever let him know what we talked about, alright?"

"I...I can't promise that...I'm sorry but...I'll try never too, but if he happens to one day become my bonded mate that I hope one day he will...He'll know. I can, perhaps make the memory a little blurry or hard to understand...Perhaps..." Angel added trying to comforted the other vampire in some way even though there was no way to make things blurry. The day Wesley became his bonded mate he'd know all...There would never be any secrets between them. "I'll do my hardest to *try* to keep what you told me between us, if you are completely honest with me right now at this very moment. Just be honest with yourself and me, did you ever want Wesley?"

"Yes! Alright happy now?" Other Angel whispered hoarsely as if something pained him deeply. "Really are you happy now? I've always had strong feelings for him but I knew they didn't matter! I can't ever be with a man or be happy with anyone! Male. Female. Hell, every damn time I think of touching a guy sexually, the minute I start to enjoy it, I have flashes of being sodomized! I relive it! I'm over 200 years old and I still remember the pain, the agony...And feeling as if I'd never be clean again...That I'd never have control over anything again...Feeling ashamed and wanting to hide somewhere safe...I can't okay! I just can't 'cos honestly it's not worth it. Wes is not worth it. No man is."

"I'm sorry." Angel said softly. "Don't know want else to tell ya man..."

"There's nothing to say is there? I wish I could have been able to love Wesley. I really wish I could have. I wish I could have been different, more like you. If good wishes could really be granted huh? I'd wish things had been different between us. Me and Wes. I wish *I* had been different really I do, but I'm not. I wasn't. You know, the strange thing is in the ocean some of those hallucinations were kinda nice. A lot of them were real good. We were friends once more, even one where we kissed and...And it was nice. Real nice actually...I had countless hallucinations where I savagely and brutally killed everyone. Connor. Cordy. Fred. Gunn, even some of the ol' Scooby Gang, even Buffy didn't escape...Except one. I never once killed Wesley in those hallucinations. Not even sure if I had hurt him, even though I've always hurt him in some way in reality...Part of me is glad he's going, for if he stayed I know I'd hurt him again...Over and over again...Anyway, just take care of him."

"I will, I promise."

The other Angel nodded, he looked almost longingly at Wes' bedroom door. "You do that." He looked back at the vampire. "You're a lucky man and...and I envy you...and I want to hate you with a fierce passion. I so want to hate you."

"I understand, really I do."

The other Angel closed his eyes. "I honestly don't think you do. I know you must have thought me a selfish..."
idiotic fool, hell, I've called myself that countless times. I know, Wes is someone special, no doubt about that. He can be loyal friend, who tries too hard...We've both done some things that we aren't proud of. Wes isn't perfect, I'm not either. I also know I can be a self righteous hypocrite. A true cold bastard. You...You're different in many ways from me. I can tell. Wes...He deserves different, deserves better than...Well, me. In the ocean when ever I'd come to myself out of some crazy hallucination, I'd think if I was ever saved I'd hope I could be better, ya know? I even started to see things from Wes' side and I had hoped to fix so many things if I got out of my prison. Maybe, even be a family again. I regret that our family fell apart, I never wanted that. I wanted to make the hurt between us go away, forget all the crap and pain and just be family again...Now...It's never going to happen, and I regret that."

"Can I say something, Angel?" The other vampire cut in quietly.

"Yeah?"

"Learn to accept that you *are* a demon, not a man and not that fifteen year old boy getting brutally hurt with a fucking broom handle! If it wasn't for that demon that you seem to hate so damn much you'd be nothing but a long forgotten pile of bones, if even that! I don't really know all that much about you, but from what I've heard and all...You have a hard time accepting the fact that you're Angelus 24/7!"

"I'm *not* Angelus! He's a monster, which you should know!" The other Angel said quickly looking pissed off. Eyes dark deadly fire. Mouth tight with displeasure. A disused vein trying to reveal itself on the side of his thick neck. Fists tight and hard like iron.

Angel didn't care, he was going to give this Angel some much needed facts. He didn't care how dangerous or deadly the wind blew, he would still shout at it. Fight it head on. Never caring about bodily harm, he'd heal. He was a champion. He fought for truth and the saving of souls. Saving of the innocent and helpless. The man before him was way beyond innocent but he was helpless. Would always be, if he didn't face some home truths. How could this champion save others and help them if he was to busy denying that he too was helpless and didn't fight the battle within. Win the fight. Slay the dragons that kept him imprisoned. He could fight, but he first had to really want to...

So Angel stood facing him. Nose to nose. Face to face. Wanting this vampire to understand what had taken years with Spike's help to accept. To understand. Maybe just maybe...Angel could help this vampire that Wesley had fallen for years ago. Had become loyal to. Fought by. Served. Willing to help, do anything to help even give his own precious lifeblood. Wes was still maybe a little angry and bitter toward this man but he still cared. Still loved. Angel could do no more than do the same, help this man who wore his face. Wore his name. Was another him. This man could have been him...

"You are! You're Angelus with a soul! Damn it man, don't you know that by now? See that? You're a monster, a demon with a soul! You aren't Liam with a demon! Liam died back in Ireland, in a dirty old alley! Angelus was born, took Liam's memories, feelings, personality and made it his own. Brought to life all the darkness from within. Then Angelus got a soul, you got a soul the thing is, the way it sounds to me, you try to keep the soul and the demon separate. No wonder you keep making regretful decisions! One of the reasons you never completely healed from what Daddy Dickhead did. Why you have such a hard time, why you have a hard time laughing and enjoying life."

"What is there to enjoy!? Hell, every moment I enjoy something it gets ripped away from me! What the fuck do you know, huh, what?!!"

"A lot, *Angelus*. Start listening to that demon of yours and stop being so fucking scared of what it might have to say or do. You're driving it batty! You're going to destroy yourself and others if you don't! Open your eyes! Just open them and see around you. You try to help people you try to save them, heal them, but many times the most important saving, healing, and helping you can do is within yourself first. Start with
your own home, then you can really help others the way they need to be helped. You've got so many fucking issues and I hope one day...Things will be better for ya. You're a demon first, Angel, that soul matters only if you want it to matter. I'm sorry that you have feelings for Wes and was too damn afraid to ever act upon them. You've got forever live with that. Start listening to that demon of yours. Trust it, to accept the soul. Stop always trying to make them war with each other. And Angel if you ever hear your demon tell you, 'that's the one, our true mate, our true beloved' for goddess sake, grab on tight and never let go! Fight! Romance! Let yourself be happy!"

"I can't ever be happy you idiot! I can *never* be happy! Unlike you if I ever have a moment of perfect happiness I love my soul!"

Angel slowly shock his head. "Yeah, I heard about that. Question, have you ever tried to find a way to make it permanent?"

The broody vampire looked honestly surprised at that unexpected question. "Um...No."

"So you use that whole 'I can never be even remotely happy 'cos I could lose my soul' as an excuse."

"Excuse?! It's a fact, I'd lose it and go evil. People would die."

"They die every damn day, the difference is they don't die at your hands...Or maybe they do when you are so busy running in circles blaming yourself and others...Hell, you've never looked for any way to make that soul of yours permanent maybe so you can force yourself to always feel guilty! And also so you can punish yourself. Kinda like a self harmer who cuts themselves so they can 'feel' alive. Except you think being cursed with a soul you must always 'feel' guilt and no other emotion, 'cos other emotions are bad and dirty! Also, last point, self hatred is a very powerful emotion. You want to hate yourself and be miserable 'cos you think you deserve it!"

"That's...That's not true..." The other Angel looked stunned, uncertain. "Not true at all.."

Angel was quiet, watching him with serious eyes before lifting an eyebrow. "I was once where you are at, Angel. You know what I just said is true."

"No...I...Oh, God...I...You're wrong..."

Angel shrugged, picking up his beer and giving a mocking solute with it. "Believe what ya want. The truth is always a bitch!"

"I. HATE. YOU."

Angel placed a hand over his unbeating heart. "Aww, I'm so sad, really I am, and here I was going to confess my love." He then chuckled, before taking a deep swallow of beer.

The other Angel sat down at the other end of Wes' sofa. He sighed, looking as if the universe was on his shoulders. He ran a hand down his face. "I *so* fucking hate you."

"Hate me 'cos I'm right, or 'cos I end up with being happy with Wesley? Or 'cos I'm a sexy son of a bitch?"

The other Angel nearly came close to smiling at that last part. Almost. He cupped his hands and leaned forward. "All three and you're right you are a son of a bitch."

"So are you."
At that they both actually shared a small true smile, even if it faded for the other Angel quickly.

"If you could stop Wes, would ya?" Angel asked softly. Seriously.

The other Angel shook his head slowly. "He...He deserves to be happy...I don't know how to do that. I've screwed this up so damn much. It would be impossible to...Anyway, I can't ever do that. He deserves better than...Me."

Angel sighed. "I know that...I mean, he deserves better than me also but I believe with everything that I am that I can make him happy. You know, I really do hope things start going better for you. Hope one day your son will call you Dad and actually mean it as a term of respect and love. Might never happen but then you never know."

"Thanks, one can hope I guess."

"And I also hope that one day you'll find the love that will give you peace, joy and all the fantastic sex to go with it. And that one day you'll actually believe that you deserve happiness and can make someone happy. Perfectly happy.

The other Angel eyed him sadly. "Sounds nice but I know that will never happen."

"One day you'll be given another chance at grabbing the brass ring and you won't be afraid to fight for it or believe in it. I know this for a fact, know how I know? 'Cos we're champions. We're special us champions for good always get rewarded with another chance. Hell, I did, I ended up loving *two* Wesleys and one of them I'm certain will become my bonded mate."

"But that is just it, I'm not you."

"True but you are still Angel. You help the helpless, the hopeless. The way I see it you too can be a lucky bastard. You become one, just like me." Angel smiled warmly as he slowly reached his hand out and patted the other vampire's shoulder in a friendly manner.

The other Angel grinned back. "Would be nice." The grin faded, before he sluggishly stood up as if he were ancient. "Will you tell Wes...I wish him the best and I'll miss him."

"He doesn't have to tell me." A soft voice was heard from the doorway of Wes' bedroom. The former Watcher stepped out of the shadows and studied the vampire in question. He was wrapped in a warm fuzzy blanket. The other Angel studied him with a sadness and a certain hunger that disappeared as if it had never been there, hiding behind brooding intense eyes.

"Hey, Wes."

"Hey."

"Um...I came to..." Angel said shifting uncomfortably.

"I know. I heard."

Angel swallowed hard. "How...How much did ya hear?"

Wes gave him a tender look. Any coldness that he had shown Angel on the boat, car or at the hotel was gone as if it never existed. "Enough. Some I'm certain you didn't want me to hear."
"Um...This Angel is a smart guy.Knows a good thing when he sees it."

"Thing? I'm a thing now, when did that happen?" Wes said teasingly. With a charming smile that lit up his handsome face.

Angel looked horrified and if he was human he was sure to have been blushing right then. "No! You're not a thing! I didn't mean...You're, you know, you're Wesley." He looked at the other vampire. "You know what I'm talking about don't you?"

"I do." He said with a friendly smile. "I also know Wes is teasing you."

"Oh...Um, Right. I knew that." Angel nodded looking down right bashful. He then looked around before looking back at Wesley. "Um... Are your things going with you? You know when you leave."

"Only me."

"Oh...Right, um, if you want I'll be happy to pack you're stuff and put it in storage for ya. I know you might not be coming back but..."

Wes nodded. "Right, good idea. Though some of it can be thrown out, given to Goodwill. I honestly hadn't thought about my things. Keep any of it that you want. Do what ever you want with it all. Don't really have to put it in storage. I know the books here will be helpful and I have a lot of weapons and guns..Pawn shops would perhaps give you some money if you ever need it. A lot of it can be thrown out I'm sure."

Angel sighed, putting his hands into his pockets giving him a certain look that surprisingly spoke volumes. "I won't throw any of it out."

"Do what ever you want Angel."

Angel gave a sour bitter laugh. "Yeah, what *I* want."

Wesley ignored that. "Oh and when you go through my books, you'll find one that I had borrowed from you a few years back. Before your old place blew up with me in it...I must tell you I really meant to return it. Really, I did. It was an old book of poetry that I forgot to tell you I had borrowed."

"Oh." Angel said softly, giving him a slightly teasing smile. "As long as you were planning to return it to me, *one day*."

"One day, sure. I-It was a wonderful book, really enjoyed it."

"So...In three hours you'll be in a whole new world...I...I wish you the best of luck." Angel then slowly moved to the door, he watched the other him move off the sofa to go to Wesley. He placed an arm around the Englishman's shoulder. The Angel of this world felt as if he had been shattered into a zillion pieces, but there wasn't much he could do about it. This was Wesley's chance at happiness...With a better Angel and in a better world.

Wesley watched him go to the door, leaning into Angel's touch, he opened his mouth and tried to say, "Goodby--"

"DON'T!" Angel cut him off, glaring at them both. "I know it's goodbye! I accept it a little, just don't rub my face in it, okay! I can't say 'goodbye' and I refuse to say that word! I refuse! I don't even want to hear that ugly word. I can't hear it...Angel, you take care of Wes and always remember I *HATE* you and Wes I wish..." He placed his hand on the door knob and turned it. He eyes looked weird, glistening with blood, a
glimpse of gold mixed in. His voice now raw sounding. "I wish..." He repeated, looking away, with a shake of his head. "Not that it matters. It don't matter, just...Be happy, Wes, be happy."

With those words spoken the door was opened and he was instantly gone, as if he had never been there. The door slamming in the silent room was the only thing that stated that he had been there.

The two lovers stared at the door for a long time. Wes sighed, wrapping his arms tightly around Angel. He put his head upon the vampire's shoulder. "Damn." He stated under his breath.

"Yeah, just what you said. Damn...Wes...I seriously wanted to hate that bastard. For hurting you, for never seeing how special you are..."

"And we now know he did see, he just...Damn his father, damn his issues...Damn everything."

"Yeah, that Angel has serious issues..."

"Do you honestly think he'll get a chance at being happy? A chance at getting a brass ring? A chance at being as happy with his demon as you are? Or even being happy in general?"

"Yeah." Angel kissed the top of Wesley's sleep mussed head. "I honestly do, but he'll have to decide if it's worth it. Whether he'll fight for it are not."

"And he will...I know he will." Wes whispered, wanting to believe that one day this realities Angel would be happy.

"Because he's Angel." Angel stated calmly with certainty.

"Exactly. Because he's Angel." Wesley said, before moving his head and capturing his Angel's lips.
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Part 32

Xander smiled as he held the ladder his lover was on. He licked his lips eyeing Spike's sexy as hell ass as he watched the pale leanly muscled vampire stretched up high to string up the big red and black 'Welcome Home' banner.

He was getting hard just thinking about all those things he could do that nice wonderful firm ass. Some of the things he had done just that morning...

"Oi! Harris, lov! Glad you love me sexy arse but those pictures you're sending straight to me noggin ain't helping me get this sucker tacked up!"

Xander simply smirked an evil smile he'd learned from his lover, quickly sending his bonded life mate a picture of Spike on top and Xander begging for more. He pointed up at him and the banner, "Ya need to move the banner a little more up to your left, sweetie." Sending another heated picture this one a naughty one with him leaning over begging Spike to take him. To touch him. To make love to him.

"Bloody Hell! Ya keep that up, me beloved brat and I'm going to shag ya senseless in a bit! Over on that sofa!"

Xander laughed. "And to think you never became a famous poet. Tell me, sweetie, have you ever thought about doing erotic poetry?"

The bell over the door leading into the lobby of Guardian's Investigations rang loud and clear as Faith, Kate and Doyle entered carrying countless bags. Faith walked quickly over to the counter with a large cake decorated with the words 'Welcome Home, Angel & Wes', around her wrists were numerous colorful ribbons that held various balloons floating in the air like a parade was about to start any moment.

"Sorry, Spike, we couldn't find any vampire balloons or smiley faces with fangs and blood on them. Damn, fucking lame ass party store! You'd think in a town like Sunnydale with demons and vamps there would be some cool balloons and such. Damn, wimps, they said they never heard of such things! But hopefully these balloons are good enough, if not I'm taking them back to the store and shoving each one of these balloons so far up their ass, that they'd float to China." Faith told them looking over at Xander and Spike. "Hey, Blondi, the banner needs to be moved a little more to the right."

"Slayer, I'm tempted to show you where I'd like to move this banner, right up your--!" Spike growled good naturally as he moved the banner more to the right.

"Spike, Be-have!" Xander admonished, playfully. "Those balloons look good, I think they will work. You did great and thanks for getting 'em Faithbuster." Xander told her with a charming smile

"Um, I got some flowers as well." Kate said reaching into one of the bags and pulling them out. "I thought I'd use those old small vases we got down in the basement. Hopefully they won't have too much dust on them or bugs in them. Guys...What if this is wrong?" Kate asked quietly, stating her worst fear, worry filled eyes scanned the room looking for her friends response.

"Wrong?" Spike and Xander asked at the same time. The vampire was slowly starting to come down the ladder. Deciding that the banner was now fine.

"I think what my princess means is, what if Angel comes back alone?" Doyle answered. Setting down the stuff he carried, giving his wife a sweet tender understanding look. "Angel will be hurting something bad
and seeing that we have party favors all set up...

Everyone was deathly quiet. "Angel won't be alone." Xander finally answered. "We *have* to believe that! And he have party favors 'cos we are having a coming home party. This Wes, we don't know him, his experiences are different from ours, but I know I will accept him as family. As pack and I know each one of you will to simply because I know each one of your hearts. If Angel is alone. We'll be here for him. We'll comfort him. Love him, 'cos that's what we do. We're there for one another. We're family and if...No, not if, we have to believe in when...When Angel shows up here with Wesley by his side, we'll love them both. Accept them both."

"Cos we're fucking family!" Faith stated loud and clear."Yeah, Harris, I'm sure we all get that. We love, accept, blah, blah, fuckin' more blah. We already know the new Wes is family. No matter what. I'm excited let me tell ya. Get a Watcher once more but what I think is the most important matter before us. What I have to know right now is...Do I really gotta wear a lame ass glittery pointy party hat?"

**Three Hours Later**

The lobby was now colorfully decorated. Everything close to as perfect as it was going to get. Though Faith was still certain the banner could be straightened a tad more. Kate thought they could have more flowers around. Doyle thought they should have had another bottle of whiskey ready. Spike would have liked to have had his way with Xander in the storage closet. Xander was perfectly content. Gunn didn't really much care, as long as they didn't scratch up the music CD's he had brought along or make him wear a lame ass party hat.

As of now everyone was waiting by the counter looking at an empty spot in the middle of the lobby.

"Are ya sure that spot is where they will show up?" Gunn asked, trying to look as if he didn't care, but the hand tightening nervously in his girlfriend's hand revealed that he, Mr. Big Bad the world is my problem chipped vampire really did care. Cared a lot.

Faith smiled a beautiful smile that made her face almost glow with happiness, she reached over and kissed his smooth cold cheek. "You're such a cutie. An evil cutie but still a cutie."

"Yeah, we all agree you're a cutie, Gunn." Xander answered with a mischievous smirk. His dark eyes never leaving the *spot*. "And to answer your question, yeah that's the spot Angel left to go into that other world so that's the place he'll...They'll come back in."

Kate bounced slightly in her white high heels, she looked over at her husband, nibbling her full bottom lip with her front teeth before asking, "Honey, what time is it?"

Doyle gave a side way glance at the clock on the opposite wall. "A full minute has past since the last time ya asked princess."

"Oh." She said softly, she nibbled some more on her lip, her eyes never leaving 'the spot'. "So...Doyle, sweetie what time is it now?"

"Time for a drink I'm thinking." Doyle mumbled running a hand through his dark hair, he too eyeing 'the spot'.

"I agree!" Spike said glaring at 'the spot' impatiently. Wanting his Grandsire to return. Damn it, he missed the great Poof. His Poof. 'Sodding hell! Has time stopped or something! It should be happening right now!
Oh, come on!" Spike glared all the more hotly at 'the spot' as he stomped his foot as if that would make things go faster. "Fucking hell! Come on already! Don't tell me time froze! Xander, do a bloody spell won't you? Make time go fast or something? Please...It's not hurrying like it should be, I think time has gotten stuck...I want me Sire back! Bring him back!"

Xander smiled lovingly at his bonded mate. "It's only been seven days, baby. And no I won't use magic to make time fly. You know I only use it with a great deal of respect. I refuse to use it for my own gratification or to make others happy. Magicks have to be respected, sweetheart, and you know this. There always has to be a balance. Always. When I became a guardian I also had to be a balancer. So easy to be corrupted and yeah, I'm impatient too but soon, I promise they'll be here and the wait will have been worth it. They're coming home."

"Home." Faith repeated softly with a tender smile, looking younger than her years. Not at all the battle hardened soldier, warrior and Slayer that she really was. Even if she looked uncomfortable in her cute glittery lameass party hat. "They are coming home."

"I wonder if they'll be naked..." Xander stated with a goofy look that made the others laugh.

"I wouldn't be surprised at all if they are, but if they are they're buying me a good bottle of fine Irish Whiskey! For making me wish my pretty manly blue eyes were blind!" Doyle said with a wrinkled up nose and a humorous glint in his eyes.

Again laughter filled the room, right at that moment there was a brilliant flash. Then intense silence filled the room.

"Wow...Really wow..." Kate and Doyle said together as one, with lose jaws.

"Da-a-ann" Gunn stated softly.

They were stunned at the hard battle warn looking Wesley that stood there before them, holding tightly to a gleefully happy vampire's hand. Angel looked at everyone with a wide happy smile that would have looked dorky on anyone else.

"Hey guys, we're home."

"Welcome home." Xander stated softly. Tears of happiness and overwhelming emotion danced in his eyes. Suddenly he was there quickly hugging Big-A. "I'm so happy for you." He whispered, his lips almost brushing against the vamp's left ear. Xander pulled back and looked over at a nervous Wesley.

Xander gave a true friendly smile, dark eyes were welcoming. "Hey, Wes...I know you're new to this world but here we hug." He then grabbed the skinny British man into a huge bear hug. Closing his eyes and simply hugged him as a missed friend of old would have. "I'm so glad you're here. Welcome home, Wes, welcome home."

At first Wes was extremely tense in Xander's embrace, never having been the young man's friend in Sunnydale, but he slowly relaxed to return the hug.

"Hey, don't be hogging him! I want a hug too!" Kate said joyously hand on Xander's shoulder.

Around the room were exclaimed the same thing as Spike gave a nod and smile to Angel before giving sharp pat on the back. "Didn't even notice you were gone, Peaches." Angel smiled knowing that his friend was lying and in his own way was saying he was loved and missed. Angel then reached over giving his Grandchild a hug, he felt at peace, now that he and his future mate were home...
Where they belonged.

***

Outside of Guardians Investigations, unseen by the world in general stood a lone figure. Even though she knew she couldn't be seen the Goddess Hero stayed in the cold dark shadows.

For the first time in centuries, eons actually, she felt all the more alone. Detached from everything and everyone.

She knew demons, Powers and other beings that considered humans as lower and lesser than they, but Hero knew better. She reached out and felt the cool clear glass eyeing the champions inside. Laughter could be heard as they welcomed the new Wes into this reality. Everyone looked so happy, so care free.

Her heart seemed to twist and yearn for something she couldn't remember ever really yearning for. She was Hero, damn it! The protector of this reality. She helped those that needed it. She honestly didn't know why she felt so helpless when she knew she was anything but that. She was powerful. She was a goddess.

A goddess with no friends. No family. With nothing but herself.

No goddess ever cried, couldn't she was sure. The last time she had truly cried, wept had been after she had slain the last true Warrior. Her last true friend. There were times she wanted to cry once more. Especially when she knew no one would wrap her into their arms and say it was alright even if she did cry and fall apart.

And didn't she deserve that? To always be alone. Always feel barren, her soul always being a wasteland for nothing but sorrow and emptiness. She helped this world, no doubt. For redemption or more than that. Wanting to help even though she knew what she had done the first time around could never be forgiven. Salvation and redemption could never truly be hers. Not really. But now she could hope just a little that she didn't have to feel so dead and so barren. So damn empty.

For Wesley was here.

Things would now be okay. She knew there needed to be a balance for both worlds and the Powers knew how important the Watcher was. The other Wesley's soul rested peacefully in heaven. Happy. At rest. Complete.

The heaven to both realities where the other Wes had once been was now opened. Now joined together which was okay, for there had to be a balance. Things were okay, would be okay. Angel's destiny could now be complete, he would now have a bonded mate. A love to last for all eternity. He would fight the good fight with joy in his heart. He would be happy. He deserved to be happy as did Wesley.

Hero smiled a little before sighing. Listening to the loud laughter inside the beautiful decorated lobby.

"Let's get this fucking party started!" Faith said enthusiastically. She turned on some loud rock music.

Hero closed her eyes. It was some cool fast rock music. Nice cool beat. Fun. But the words were what she liked the best. The singer was singing something about falling hard and fast, feeling as if no one could or would catch him when he hit the ground. It's never the fall that hurts, it's the sudden stop when you hit the hard cold ground...

"I...Guys I really don't dance."
Hero's eyes opened at the sound of Wesley's voice.

"Oi! Trust me, we won't laugh at *you*, we'll laugh at Peaches here! His dancing is as bad as his singing! Though I much prefer watching Poofy dance than listen to the crap he calls singing!"

"Hey! Neither is bad!" Angel told Spike smacking the blond vampire upside the back of his head in a strange brotherly fashion.

"Both are pretty bad, Big Guy." Hero whispered, a soft smile curved the corner of her beautiful bowed lips.

"If his dancing is *anything* like his singing then I'm scared!" Wesley said laughing, yet being honest.

The goddess' smile faded as she wrapped her arms around herself. Grief overwhelming her. Inside was something she could never have. Something she didn't deserve. For she had failed too many times. Destroyed too much.

Murdered countless people, even her best friends.

She was a goddess who had destroyed the first reality so long ago. No one remembered that world except the Powers, herself and a few dark beings. Her hands were still covered in the blood of the countless lives she had taken, no matter how much good she did now her hands remained stained forever.

This was her personal hell. Saving humanity yet never being apart of it. Yearning for humanity to be human once more. To try to be friends with those champions she watched over and cared for. Funny really. She had so much power and yet...No friends. No sharing and laughing or crying together. Being apart of something that was bigger than her. There was nothing bigger or more powerful than her and to think at one time she wanted that. Power. To be what she now hated.

For she was nothing really. Had nothing. Yeah, she was Hero, the great goddess. She even had a temple to remind her and others that she was a goddess. She was to be respected. Worshiped. Feared. Always feared like a monster ready to kill and destroy at any second like she had done before.

A monster meant to be alone. Always alone.

Hero leaned in closer to the glass, trying to feel the warmth from within. Looking inside. Longing to be in there. Laughing. Crying. Teasing. Hugging. To call those people friends. Family. To simply be a part of them and the mission that bonded them together instead of apart from them.

"Welcome home, Wes, I'm so glad you're home." She said softly, looking right at him. She then turned away, not wishing to look anymore upon something she could never have. What she had no right to have. Never noticing the cold darkness that seemed to swallow her up as she disappeared into the night. Not that anyone noticed or cared...

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Wesley followed the souled vampire down a flight of stone steps. Angel's arms as well as his were loaded with shopping bags. The ex-Watcher smiled as he wondered about his vampire's sanity.

"So the Goddess Hero's temple is under the Sunnydale shopping mall..." Wesley stated in light disbelief behind Angel.

The vampire looked over his shoulder for a second to look at his precious lover, before continuing down the winding gray stone steps. "Yeah, which is smart, seeing that these gifts we got for her were bought up there first. Hope she likes the jewelry and clothes...Got shoes, even though I have no idea of her size but she is a goddess, she can make them the right size, right? Anyway, I simply got the stuff I thought were beautiful, seeing that she's the great and wonderful Hero, ya know? No one has ever really *seen* her before. Heard her voice yes, but seen her face, never. It's a really nice temple too. Gold, all kinds of beautiful smooth marble. It's rich and elegant looking. It honestly looks like a huge palace made for a queen. A beautiful, powerful queen."

They came to a stop, to Wesley it looked like nothing but a dead end. But that didn't stop Angel from saying loud and clear with respect embedded in his tone. "Oh, great Goddess Hero, it is I, Angel. Vampire with a soul and your faithful loyal servant. I worship you. Adore you, as you are worthy of my respect and worship. I bring gifts and praise all for you. For I come with my lover, Wesley Wyndam-Pryce. Whom, because of your great kindness I now belong once more. I can never thank you enough for such a great gift. I am now complete. Whole, because of him and your goodness and overwhelming kindness. I wish to thank you and praise you as you asked when you blessed me."

A flash of bright brilliant colorful light appeared in a shape of a large open door.

"That's an interesting way of knocking." Wesley said under his breath, following Angel. When they both entered the door instantly vanished behind them.

Wes looked around the massive elegant room it did indeed look like something a rich, powerful beloved queen would have. Cold expensive black marble dusted with real gold was the floor. It was so smooth and polished one could almost see ones reflection in it. The bottom half of the lower wall was a beautiful black-gray marble. Set halfway up the wall was a dado rail of pure gold. It looked real. Had to be real. The rest of the above this the upper wall and ceiling were white marble. Place on marble plinths around the huge lobby were beautiful crystal vases filled with beautiful fresh cut flowers of all shapes, sizes and colors.

"People from everywhere come here?" Wes asked quietly.

Angel nodded. "Around the world they come to worship the goddess, when they can, for this is her holy temple. Everywhere there is a shopping mall they can go and end up here at her temple. If she allows them entrance of course. Why one has to...As you called it, 'knock'...While we her people call it, 'asking to be allowed entrance'...Which now that I think about it...It is pretty much the same thing, isn't it?"

Wesley gave him a smile as he continued to look around the huge beautiful lobby. There were tables groaning with countless gifts upon them from around the world. Something felt off about the temple until he realized, "Why are there no statues of the goddess, of herself, most temples if they have a god or goddess to worship have some form of symbol to worship..."

"Why worship a statue when you can worship her?" Angel told him calmly. "Anyway, isn't this place beautiful? She lives like a queen, as a goddess, should. For she is the great Hero." The vampire whispered to
him softly. Though the big tomb like room made it sound as if he wasn't whispering at all. Angel carefully started to take out the gifts he had brought. Each time thanking the goddess Hero under his breath.

Wesley shifted upon his feet, honestly wondering what he should do. He set down the presents and noticed an open doorway. Suddenly, he felt compelled to go through it, yet decided to stand still and gently elbow Angel in his ribs.

"Yeah?" Angel looked over at his beloved.

"What's through that door?" Wesley asked gesturing, figuring that Angel would know where that lead seeing that he had been to the goddess Hero's temple before.

The vampire looked totally shocked his eyes wide as he looked sharply around. "What door?"

Wesley gave him a 'you're a loveable idiot, but you're my loveable idiot' look. "That door, Angel, over there." He pointed once more at the clearly opened doorway.

"The Goddess herself..." Angel answered in complete awe. "She wishes for you to enter to talk to you personally. I don't see the doorway, my beloved. But if you do, she is inviting *you* in. If I see the door, only then may I enter. Go Wes, the goddess wishes for you to enter..."

Wesley gave it an 'I'm not sure about this' glance before giving Angel a long look, slowly going over to the doorway and stepping through it.

Angel watched his lover disappear, before continuing to unpack Hero's gifts, all the while humming 'Mandy'. He trusted the goddess. She wouldn't hurt Wesley for she had blessed his coming. He couldn't help but feel curious and just a little envious that his lover was about to meet a true legend. But at the same time he felt proud and joyful for him. He just better give him *every* damn detail about meeting the goddess.

The moment Wesley stepped though the doorway, the door behind him disappeared, leaving him alone in a strange blue and white marble room. It was elegant yet cold. Chilly to the bone. Unfeeling and unlike the lobby, not at all welcoming. This room held no flowers. It was just a simple cold elegant room with dark paintings of death and mayhem. Of true horrors that never should have been painted. They should have been left in long forgotten nightmares...Maybe he should rethink about this room being simple...With paintings like those one could never call this room simple.

Wesley stared at some of the paintings. Long and hard, wondering why he felt there was something oddly familiar about them. Something that told him not to look away. Shouted at him, to remember something long ago forgotten. He forced himself to look away...

He stepped slowly further into the room. In the middle of the room stood a beautiful blue and gold throne made of hard stone. It was only then that he felt a presence behind him and he swung around to freeze instantly in shock. Waves of disbelief washed through him. He radiated shock.

For before him stood the great legendary and extremely powerful goddess Hero. She stood tall and straight, her dark silky brown hair was in an elegant bun. Laced with gold and diamond chains. She wore a white silk gown with golden dressy sandals upon her delicate feet. Her face was emotionless and cold, except for her eyes. They danced with mischief, a touch of sadness and ancient mysteries that only she knew the answers to. Her face may have held no emotion but her eyes spoke volumes, they were so alive. So happy. So excited...At seeing him.

Hero was a classic beauty. Hand clasped in front of her and she gave him a huge smile. Then she said gently, in a lady like, old fashioned famous movie star way, "Hi Wesley."
Only then was he able to speak, in a soft whisper that for some reason seemed to make the world stand still for a minute. Everything came to a stop. What he had said had been one word. One familiar name, which in this reality had never been spoken until now. One name lost and forgotten until this very moment. Right at that very moment. It echoed in the room...Loud and clear...One true name belonging to one person. One goddess.

"Cordelia..."

(end of part 33)
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Part 34

Cordelia's or rather the one known as Hero's, smile deepened as she looked him over. After a moment she said carefully, nervously, "Surprised, Wes?"

"A hell of a lot, yes." Wesley admitted, still truly stunned. "You look like...Someone I know...But...How..."

"This someone..." Hero gave him a questioning look, moving closer towards him elegantly. Full of majestic grace, as she tilted her head her eyes became cold, smile faded. "Went by Cordelia Chase, right? That was her human name, known by close friends as Cordy. Seer, later she would become half demon yet she would be a link to the Powers. She would help the champion Angel. She would then become a Higher Being...Then even a Hellgod, until one day she becomes the great goddess Hero, keeper and protector of this reality. Is that who you speak of, Wesley? Who you are speaking to now? If you think the answer is yes, then you would indeed be right!"

"How...Cordy..." Wesley shook his head in disbelief before covering his mouth with his hand to make sure it wasn't on the floor before removing his hand.

Hero turned away and slowly walked over to one of the horrific oil paintings upon the walls. Suddenly the oil paintings seemed to come to life. Sounds of people screaming as they died a horrible death. Even smells of blood and death filled the room they were standing in.

"Cordelia." Wesley stated firmly, he wanted answers damn it, and he wanted them now and she had the answers he wanted. She turned, tilting her head once more, lifting an eyebrow. The painting became just a horrifying painting once more. Silent. Still.

"Do you realize that I haven't been called that in...Forever. Literally. From the beginning of when this world began. Millions upon millions of years ago...The last one to speak that name to me, died by my hand. Did Angel tell you that story? Humans and demons love that story. Angel loves that damn story."

"Yes, I heard it. You...You killed the last great warrior to the Powers That Be..."

Hero nodded. "Before I did, he renamed me. I wanted to be that Hero he thought I once was before I became a monster...That story Angel told you has a lot of truth in it. But the real truth is that *this* reality once was a lot like yours before I destroyed it. The Powers That Be Crap have a crazy as hell sense of humor. They restarted everything yet gave me the alternate that was also new. Different. A little more beautiful. Almost a thousand times better yet still fucking crazy..."

"So that means..."

"Your reality is screwed up, Wes, big time, that is what that means! Except your Cordelia won't be allowed to get as powerful as me. She's not even really...Herself at this time. In time she will die, as it is the only way to make things right. I will tell you a huge ass secret about the universe, Wes. Something no one would or could imagine. It *never* really ends. Gets destroyed. Apocalypse happens, but it will just start once more. Begin again, get a second chance that no one remembers getting. Like when you finish a book, a good novel, you simply start another one. Sometimes from the same author or different author but a lover of stories will always start another one. The book may be different, different characters, different plot but it's still just another book. To be read. Many times hundreds of 'books' aka realities come from that one world, one book. Different but still a world all of it's own. That is why there are so many different realities...They are like books..."
"Things can be easily repeated then..." Wesley said softly.

Hero shrugged. "Perhaps. Repeated yet different always different. I can't tell you all the secrets of the universe but I know them all. At least I believe I know them all. I do know enough of them that nothing surprises me anymore. Sometimes I don't even feel...Anything." Hero admitted softly leaning towards him. Close as she took one of his elbows and waved a hand towards her throne. "Enough about silly beautiful gorgeous me! Want to sit down? Can I get you anything? A snack or tea maybe?"

"Um, no I'm...good." Wesley shook his head still in wonder. "You're a goddess. Cordelia Chase is a goddess..."

"Duh! Yes, Wes, I'm a goddess now. Yes my real name was Cordelia Chase."

Wesley sat down absentmindedly on the edge of her stone throne. First being...First human to ever sit upon her throne. First anything other than herself and she didn't mind that he sat there. For she did offer. She smiled sadly. Wesley looked up at her. "You are still very beautiful."

"Well, yeah, no doubt about that! It's one of the perks of being a powerful goddess, ya know? Older than even the first century began and never once do I look like a old hag or need plastic surgery...I think it's because I moisturize daily."

Wesley chuckled before looking at her seriously. "What happened to the Cordy of my world, what *will* happen to the Cordy of my world?"

Hero sighed and looked away. She moved away from the throne to look once more at her paintings. She almost willed them to scream loudly once more but she didn't. She looked back and slowly knelt before him. Placing a gentle delicate feminine hand upon his knee in a comforting gesture.

"She's not a goddess, Wes, she never will be."

"Hellgod then?"

Her eyes flickered slightly looking straight into his blue eyes. "Like I once was? No, she's...You remember how she nearly died? Her brain couldn't handle the visions...Do you remember what she agreed to...What she thought she had allowed the Powers to do?"

"I remember she agreed to become half demon...Wait, did you just say, she *thought* the Powers allowed?"

Hero nodded. "You were always quick." She then took a deep breath giving him a intense look. "She was tricked. Are you sure you want to know, Wes? Nothing can be done about what is happening. What will happen."

Wesley reached out and placed his hand on top of hers, almost as if strangely enough comforting her. "Yes. Cordelia was a beloved friend even if...I...I cared for her even when she hurt me. Just like I know inside my heart I care the same for you. Don't know you all that well, yet but I feel it. I know it. You're Hero and you're Cordelia. That's the part that makes Hero a legend. What makes you special. For the Cordy I loved as a dear friend and cared for was...is special. Should have known you'd be a goddess or something close to that one day. What else could you have become other than a valued friend?"

She bowed her head, still kneeling at his feet, she shook slightly. "Oh, God, Wes...I..." She looked upon him as tears started to flow down her cheeks. "You...You don't know what I've done! If...If you did, you wouldn't say those things! The things I did were horrible! Are horrible! I *killed* my friends. Savagely. I hurt and killed *you*! I've done to many unforgivable things! Things I can never make right no matter how
"No one's perfect, Cordelia." Wesley whispered rawly. Kindness shining from his eyes. He tenderly took her hand off his knee and lifted it to his throat. Pressing her palm to the jagged scar that lay there. A loud yet silent witness of what he was saying. "No one's perfect." He repeated. "Not even a perfect goddess like yourself. All we can do is try in all our imperfect ways to make life a little bit better for others but even then...We can never be perfect and you want to know something? It's okay. That is what makes us unique. The fact that it's okay not being perfect even though one lives all their life trying to be."

Tears from Hero's eyes rolled uncontrollably. She hiccupped then instantly her head fell into Wesley's lap. Sobbing heartbreaking sobs. Her whole body shook. It was excruciatingly painful.

"Shh...Please, Cordelia...Shh, it's alright, it's going to be alright." Wesley whispered to her. Trying to comfort her. He caressed her hair, not caring that he might mess it up, he doubted that she even cared. It may not have lasted for a long time but if felt as if it had.

Hero looked up at him, her eyes and face red. She looked so damn tired, yet almost at peace within herself. She swallowed hard almost painfully. "I'm sorry. So sorry. For countless...Things and mostly for making your lap wet."

Wesley shrugged and gave a gentle smile before saying teasingly. "Actually, I'm sure you meant to cry all over my trousers, in an evil dastardly plot, for surely you didn't like them." He lifted an eyebrow teasingly, "Or you really wanted me out of them...You naughty girl, you."

She gave a watery weak laugh with a loud sniffle. "Please, like I'd want to see you with your pants off, I'd need therapy for sure, plus Angel would simply give you his...Then I'd have to leave the room, for I'd even need more therapy than before." She then looked at his pants and rubbed at his knee with her index finger. "To be honest, I'd go with the first guess, 'cos damn these pants make you look kinda girly. They are so lame, I'm surprised that Angel let you wear them." She gave him a teasing smile before she added. "I do help mankind, ya know. Might as well help mankind by making sure I ruin your lame girly pants."

"I'm pretty sure you don't have to focus on ruining my trousers, Angel, I'm sure can do that. If he could have his way he'd destroy all my clothes so I'd always be naked."

"Yeah..." Hero laughed, it was still slightly shaky as if tears still held her tightly in their gasp. "I'm sure that is true. Wes, I'm sure glad you are here, so very glad. This world needs you. I need you but most of all Angel needs you. You're his happiness. You make him complete. Whole. Almost like what I'm actually feeling right now. Which is different from what I'm used to feeling. I've gotta tell you..." She cupped his face with her hands never looking away from his handsome blue eyes. "Ask Angel about becoming bonded. It's an important mating ritual and...I'd like you and him to do that one day...Soon. You both deserve to be happy. Really happy.

"Angel told me about it. He wants to one day do it."

"You're his reward, Wes. Love and you are his reward. He doesn't get a Shansu in this world he gets you. The greatest reward of all."

"Really...I know he longs to be bonded and I've been thinking about it since he's told me about it. I...I want to do it. I love him."

Hero smiled. "I know and I'm glad he deserves you. He loves you so much. Now the bonding thing, you know once you both do it you can't undo it right? You both will share, *everything*. Memories, emotions, thoughts. You'll share his demon and his soul as he will share your soul. And once in a while blood will be
need to be shared. Which yeah, big eeew, but it will be worth it, I swear it will be."

"I know and I'm willing. You said I complete Angel but he also completes me. I feel as if I never existed until he came into my life." Wesley told her seriously. Honestly.

Hero leaned forward and kissed his forehead. "You two shall be blessed. So this bonding ritual...How do you feel about doing it in a few weeks?"

Wesley blinked, then slowly nodded. "I normally need time to consider and research which I will no doubt do but...In a few weeks we can become bonded. Everything seems to be going so fast. I need to talk to Angel, to see if he agrees with it..."

"Pfft! Please, as if he wouldn't! That would be like him turning down a blow job from ya, so not going to happen! Speaking of which did you notice how vocal this Angel is about those? Our Angel was never like that."

Wes laughed. He moved over and made room upon her throne as he helped her sit close to him. His laughter faded and he gave her a serious look. "Now...I believe you were telling me about yourself and the other Cordy from my former world."

Hero took a deep breath and told him everything. Leaving nothing out and she had never felt more at peace and happy in her entire existence and she had Wesley to thank for that.

(end of part 34)
At some point, Hero had transformed the temple, making it look like her former living room of her old apartment. Instead of a marble throne they both sat relaxing on a big comfy purple sofa. She had forgotten how much she had loved her old living room. Her first home and former life. The one thing missing from the illusion was Dennis...She hadn't thought about her beloved ghost in...Forever.

Hero's feet were now bare and in Wes' lap, a wine glass in her hand and her long hair flowed freely down her back. Wearing old faded blue jeans and a colorful blouse that Wesley was sure he'd seen on his own Cordelia in his world.

He too had taken off his shoes yet wasn't barefoot, for that would simply be rude plus his white socks kept his feet warm. For even though this living room was an illusion, in reality the floors were marble. Elegant, yes but still cold as ice.

They had been talking for hours and Wesley was enjoying himself, he just hoped Angel wasn't worried or disappointed that he hadn't been invited.

"He's not worried or even disappointed." Hero stated as if she had read his mind and with her being a goddess, he mused, that was a strong possibility. "Angel trusts you to take care of yourself. You being a fighter and all...And I'm the *great* goddess, remember? A part of him, I'm sure, thinks I can do no wrong. But then he doesn't really know me. Not really...Not anymore."

"He could...Know you." Wesley told her gently, very seriously. Rubbing her delicate foot.

Hero studied him sadly. "No, he couldn't...I...Wes, to him I'm a powerful wonderful goddess, a goddess to look up to, to praise and worship. I'm not friend material. He has friends, family and you. I'm a protector of this reality. I can be nothing else."

"But you're more than that, Cordelia."

Hero gave a deep sigh, slipping her foot gently from his hands. She stood Gracefully then began to pace agitatedly.

"More than a goddess? A goddess who has committed countless horrors! It's a nice fantasy, to have friends, actually earn forgiveness and maybe actually receive a little redemption but I don't deserve fantasy! I deserve hell itself! Even having you as my friend questions what I deserve! I deserve nothing better than to be an outcast, friendless and alone in a hell truly worthy of a monster like me!"

"And I thought Angel at his broodiest was bad but you take it to a whole new level..."

"This isn't a fucking joke Wesley!"

"No, I agree but there is no question or doubt that I'm your friend, I don't give a fuck what you think you deserve, I'm your friend, whether you want me or not! I can tell you need a friend and you've been torturing yourself way to long! Get over it, Hero, things have changed now or didn't you get that memo?"

Hero stopped her pacing to simply look at him, her face for a moment stunned then her lip curled up in a half-smile. "Hero, huh? First time you called me that...So great Warrior, do I really deserve that name?"

"Yes, you really do, you've done a lot of good things. You have even brought me and Angel together."
Wes could still feel the shock that ran through his veins when she had told him that the first time around it had been Wesley the legend spoke of. That Wesley had been the last true Warrior for the Powers That Be. Human yes, but still a champion. It was his last words he had spoken that had given Cordelia her new name.

"Not sure *I* really had anything...Well, yeah, I opened a way into your reality but...Okay, maybe I did have a huge part in getting the two of you together!"

"Thank you, Hero...Cordy...What do you wish for me to call you?"

"Friend would be nice...As for my name...Cordelia. Hero. I will answer to any which one. I know I've said it but I'm glad you and Angel are together, as you both should be.” She sat back down and took his hand. She couldn't seem to stop touching him. Making sure this was real and not some fucked up dream. Plus, he was the first real person to talk to her in...Well, forever. Centuries upon countless centuries. Other than the Power who visited, wearing his face. No one truly talked and shared with her. Worshiped and asked for things, yes, but never talked and shared. It was nice. This was nice. Pretending for a moment that she wasn't a goddess but a person. Not a powerful monster, but someone of value simply because they were important to that person.

"The first Wes, even the second one loved Angel. They were so different yet had the same beautiful heart. The first Wes was so much like you..." Hero told him lost in her own thoughts. Lost in the past.

"Maybe 'cos our worlds were so much alike it was scary. Almost exact. You were part of the gang. The family. You took a bullet for Gunn. You and Angel saved me countless times. There was even Fred. Everything was so Mirror-like. Your world. My world. They for the most part were the same. There was Connor and you tried to save him and had your throat slashed and everyone abandoned you because of it. Even I abandoned you, stood by Angel, while you stood alone. An outcast. I honestly don't have an excuse for what I did. How I acted. How I pretended that you didn't matter. How I pretended that you died the night you got your throat slashed. The only thing I had was power and I wanted more of it. The Powers actually *made* me a Higher Being! Me! Cordelia-so-not-a-fucking-saint-Chase! I was there in the higher realms for centuries. Alone. About two thousand years yet in the real world a few months had gone by. I had become this hardened uncaring monster. Finding the world sick. Humanity was sick and twisted. I decided to be judge and executer. To make my own world, not some lesser one that everyone lived in now...Then. I wanted to make my own world, my own beautiful hell and rule it with an iron-hard, blood covered fist. I became a Hellgod. I started to drain power from true ancients and make their power my own. I even consumed The First."

She brushed back some of her hair that had fallen into her face. "I came back into reality Hell bent on owning everything and destroying the rest. I found a way to become a goddess, nothing would stop me from that goal. I was evil, a true evil bitch. Wesley, I was so evil that...I even enjoyed it. The killing. The destroying. It made me feel alive. I felt something more than the shell that I blamed the Powers for making me. I'd been living in a prison that the Powers said was greater than even love itself. For two thousand fucking years. I felt for sure being a Hellgod would be better than that. Then I wanted, needed even more...A goddess. To be a goddess and be even more powerful than the Powers themselves...I actually slept with Connor to screw with Angel's mind. I then took his soul away and destroyed it. Consumed it within the fires of hell, but not before showing Angel exactly what I had planned. I laughed as I gave him vision upon painful horrible vision. Who's a Seer now, I mocked. I still remember his screams. Those blood tears as he shook uncontrollably before me. He even begged, pleaded with me not to do it. Not to do what I showed him...I remember caressing his face and 'shhing' him. I promised him that things would never be okay, couldn't be because it was a whole new world...My world."

Hero moved slightly away from Wesley, swallowing hard, folding her hands in her lap. "It was then that I...I ripped that soul right out of him. Had it consumed, first step in becoming a goddess. Just in case you ever
want to know how to do it, that's one of the steps...Then Angelus was before me and he would be my
doorway into becoming a goddess. Never had I seen such evil or respect upon his face. For he knew the
visions had foretold truth and...He knew his soul was lost forever-I had destroyed it. He swore to be my
faithful servant. My right hand. It was to be a beautiful deadly partnership. Me and him became lovers that
night...Then together we killed and slaughtered. If Angelus was the doorway to becoming a goddess what
do you think was the key to it all?"

Wesley didn't bother to answer, knowing she wasn't expecting a reply. She continued. Calmly. Looking
wretched, knowing she was responsible for countless lives.

"A sacrifice given in my name, something never sacrificed before. Something unique. Could be thought of
as miracle. A sacrifice unlike any ever given before. Wesley figured it out. Realizing why I needed Angelus
on my side, needed him to sacrifice something in my name that had never been sacrificed before. With a
powerful ancient holy dagger...Wesley knew, and he tried to stop it. He was so determined to stop it. To
stop Angelus and me...Even breaking Faith out of prison. Calling in Buffy and her gang...All to protect
Connor, as if Angel's son was Wesley's last link to sanity. He was obsessed with the need to protect the one
thing Angel loved and would have killed and died for...You see, Connor was the sacrifice giving willingly
by his father. A boy born of two vampires, how unique was that? And now that the boy's father was
Angelus, who was now my faithful servant. Who would rule beside me...I shouldn't have done what I did. I
had no excuse. I was simply a bitch removed from any path of righteousness. Wes failed. He didn't save
Connor and yet he had tried so hard. So damn hard. He even tried to save me...I swear he tried, he really
did. But no one could save Connor or me. Not even Wes...Funny thing was even though I was an evil bitch
from hell he didn't even want to give up on me. He'd kill me if he had to, but he wanted...Me to be...worthy
of salvation...And I wasn't, until it was much to late."

**flashback**

Wes moaned softly, opening his eyes. Not really caring about the jolt of pain it brought him. His face was
black with dirt and blood, his eyes even more of a clear bright blue. Some of the blood on his body and face
wasn't his own. There was a heavy body on top of him. Open unseeing familiar brown eyes looked back at
him. Gunn...

He moved him gently to the side, hands shaking and his stomach twisting. The vampire hunter was dead.
Forever gone.

He felt vomit rise to his throat when a blond head caught the corner of his eye. A head violently severed
from it's body. Buffy...Another fallen Warrior. 'May the fighters, the champions who gave their lives this
night rest in peace' With that thought he raised a hand with two broken fingers to his mouth. They where
shaking with brute force. Everyone was now dead. People he knew and didn't know. Buffy had been the
last of the Scooby Gang to survive. Wesley had tried to save Spike, Xander and Willow. The witch had died
in his arms, Buffy crying, holding her hand. As Willow died, she whispered something about she wouldn't
be mad at Buffy if she ripped her out of heaven, for what were friends for...Then the weak light faded
forever. Tears flowed down Buffy's cheeks, her blue eyes hard as granite as she looked at Wesley. "The
fucking bitch pays..."

Buffy had then fought a mighty battle imbued with the power of the Slayers before her. She had fought with
fierce skill and athletic strength. It looked like she was winning. She felt as though she was winning. Wesley
had no doubt of the battles outcome but then he saw Angelus from the corner move in behind Buffy. He
saw the sword swing in a silver arc, he moved in but was a second too late. If only he had been a second
quicker... If only...
Fred had been the first one to die all those months ago when Cordy and Angelus let themselves be known. The things they had done to Fred drove Gunn to the point of insanity. Yet Gunn still fought, determined to kill the ones he had called friends...Family...

Now Wesley was alone. Then suddenly he remembered. Connor! He couldn't let them do what they planned to do! At first his body was sluggish, refusing to move with such overwhelming pain, but move he did. Not giving a royal fuck about how much his body protested. Moving to the stairs and 'running' to get the top of the building. Knowing that was where they had placed the Altar.

He got there kicking open the door, just in time to see a sharp ritual dagger come up and then slam into Connor's heart.

"NO!" Wesley screamed. "Damn, it no!" Not Angel's son...Not the baby he had vowed to always protect, even if Angel hadn't liked his braid of protecting...He never felt the tears running down his face. One thought was agonizing him, the father will kill the son. He heard those words echo repeatedly, like rolling thunder inside his brain.

Angelus looked at him with an evil knowing smirk.

Everything that ever mattered was now truly gone...Angel...Everyone...Everything.

Cordelia ignored the stunned British man as she looked around furious. "That's it! No light show? No power? I thought this sacrifice meant something! A child born of two vampires! The father killing him willingly in my name! Killed with the special ancient dagger, what the fuck! I should be a powerful goddess right--" Her words were cut off with a loud painful agonizing cry. The ritual dagger glowed a violent red as a white light flowed out of Connor's ripped dead heart and into Cordelia's body. The former Seer fell to the ground. Shaking. It sounded as if her bones were breaking. Kneading together, cracking within to make something new. To be something new.

Then the light was gone. Silence. The night now still. Cordelia lay upon the ground in a daze. Smoke rose around her.

Angelus looked slowly over at Wesley. With one of his fingertips he took a small amount of his son's blood bringing it to his mouth, sucking the finger clean before taking it out of his mouth with a moan of sick enjoyment. He stalked over close to the former Watcher. Eyeing him as if he was new found prey. "Guess you were right, Wes ol' boy...The father would indeed kill his prick of a son. Imagine that, you, actually being right about something."

Wesley glared coldly at the vampire.

"Aren't you surprised?"

"You're a fucking monster, Angelus, so no I'm not surprised."

"No...Not about me being a monster or killing Connor. Those things are never a surprise. We all knew it would happen. Didn't need a made up prophecy to tell us that truth." Angelus said softly, with a cruel edge to his voice, moving ever closer to the ex-Watcher. "Are you not surprised that you are still alive? After everything you are still alive...Doesn't that just cry out 'SURPRISE' to ya?"

Wesley's wet icy cold eyes flickered for a moment, "You're simply playing with me, that's the only reason, but I know my death is coming. I accept it, but it doesn't mean that I'll go running into the night or beg you for mercy...I care not how a piece of filth like yourself kills me, just know I will fight. My death will not come easy."
Angelus chuckled as he reached out and tried to touch Wesley's rough dirt and blood covered cheek, Wesley jerked his face away. If anything there was even more intense hatred than before in his blue eyes. "I do love challenges, Wes, but again I think I'll surprise you...Angel loved you and he knew you loved him right back." Angelus stated calmly and with a great deal of certainty and faith in what he was saying.

Wes looked as if he had been savagely kicked in the gut, truly stunned. "W-What? You...You lie!"

"No, actually I'm not." Angelus told him smoothly. Voice like pure expensive dark silk. Moving a little closer, oh, so close. "He was just...Afraid, but inside he knew...You were the *one*, the odd thing is I knew it too. Remember years ago, that infamous happy pill insanity thing that happened? Remember how I didn't kill you right off, I could have you know...Snapped your neck. Instead I knocked you out to 'play' with you later...Not really play with you more like I *wanted* you. You were already mine and the need we both felt for you...Me and Angel...It went deep. The emotions you gave me...Me and Angel! I'm not sure what I felt for you is love. Don't really believe in it. But I do know, I want you, I have to have you and that's no lie. You live 'cos I wanted you to live. Cordelia is now a powerful goddess, we can both share this wonderful hellish world that she will create! Think of it! It's going to be wonderful! I've seen it, she's shown me things...Unbelievable things...So horrific, it's a thing of beauty, Wes. I'll be at her side and you'll be at mine. The way things were always meant to be. We'll be a happy hellish family, Wes. I'll be your Sire and you'll be mine for all eternity. Mine and mine alone."

Angelus reached over and grabbed him. His mouth slamming down upon his. There was no softness or gentleness in the brutally passionate kiss. The kiss was full of overpowering need. There was no allowances for resistance. Wesley had no choice but to let the kiss happen. To consume him. Overwhelm him. Then Wes gave the kiss back angrily. Furious with himself and with Angelus. Mostly mad because it was Angelus kissing him and not his Angel. Never his Angel...

Oddly enough the kiss changed from ownership and savageness, to something more. Something erotic. Desire that couldn't not be withheld. Wesley knew he could lose himself in Angelus' arms if he had not already lost it all...

It was then that Wesley pulled sharply back. Even if his knees shook or he had a hard on...Even if Angelus had the face of the one he had secretly loved for years...Even if...He could never and would never take what Angelus was offering. Never that!

He gasped for breath before saying sharply. "I loved Angel! Not you Angelus, never you! I accepted that you were within him. I even cared about you, but it was the soul I valued for it made Angel, who he was! A good vampire who wanted to one day be a man! Who was always willing to try! A champion! A hero, even when he failed at times he was always Angel. Always had a heart and a mind that I...I loved. I loved him, and now he's no more...He'll never be returned and I wept nightly over that, but I could never love you, Angelus, even though you care not for love. My Angel did. That's what matters, not you but him."

"I was a part of him, Wes." Angelus said softly, hunger and lust glowed hotly from his dark amber eyes. "I was his demon. I told you that I didn't believe in love but I must tell you, you make me want to believe in it. I can love you, so easily if I wanted too and maybe I do. I can never be Angel, but I can be so much more than that if you allow me to be. Let me show you a different world. Let me set you free from humanity. Allow yourself to love the darkness. Let me show you how to take delight in things that you never realized could be delightful. Let me be your Sire. Your god. Your everything...Let me make you into something beautiful...Let me show you a different side of love. Of passion...You and me, Wes, we can enjoy this new hellish world together. Always together..." Angelus leaned forward and gave Wes' lips another kiss before tilting Wesley's neck sharply to the side and teasing his smooth neck with sharp vampire teeth.

Wesley closed his eyes in agony. All the emotions he was feeling making him weep..."You're not Angel and
my heart belongs to him. Even if he never wanted it, my heart belonged to him. I loved him, always him.
Always...” He whispered softly. Feeling broken inside.

"When your heart has stopped beating, you'll see things differently, my dear boy, I promise you. You'll even like it.” Angelus purred before sinking his fangs deeply into Wesley's throat.

Wes didn't even flinch. Didn't moan. Even though the pain was hellish. He didn't do anything other than flick his wrist, making a stake fly out and pierce Angelus' heart. "Not even then, Angelus.” Wesley promised as the vampire exploded into dust.

"Huh..." Cordelia said, standing slowly up, looking at him. "I didn't know that...That you loved Angel. That he loved you even...Looking back though I can see it now. How odd. Sick, yet odd."

Wesley looked at her. Glaring at her, then the glare turned into heart wrenching sadness as he really looked at her...Seeing what she had become. What she had allowed herself to become...In his mind he heard words of old from his past...

* 

"She has a soul.” Angel had told him years ago...

"She's an animal. A monster, she can't be saved!"

"She has a soul, she can be helped. Can be saved, she at least deserves a chance..." Angel told him with ancient broody eyes.

"Some are too far gone, Angel..." Wesley had told him angrily...

"There are times when I think the same thing Wes, about myself. But there is always that hope that maybe, just maybe...I'm not to much of a worthless monster..."

"But you're not a worthless monster." Wesley told him honestly.

"And neither is she."

"Says the vampire who wasn't brutally tortured by an insane Slayer!” Wes answered dryly. Before nodding, "Okay, fine, try to save Faith's soul if you can, I seriously doubt it, but do you have to give her donuts? Can't you at least gag her and chain her from the ceiling?"

"Um, can I quickly agree and say I'm so for that idea! I know where there is a gag and where we keep the chains!” Cordelia had cut in from where she was standing by the desk.

* 

She has a soul...She still has a soul, that was her one weakness. One link to humanity. Wesley studied her. Somewhere was the girl he once knew. Somewhere inside that hard cold shell. Angel wouldn't have given up on Cordelia. He would never have given up. For she still had that soul. The part of her that made her special...Angel would have still held on to the hope that the soul was stronger than anything dark and evil...Wesley had learned a lot from his friend and sometimes enemy...

"I always loved him, Cordelia as I loved you like a sister. Somewhere inside yourself you have to know what you've done is wrong. Let me help you. This isn't you. Not the real you...You don't really want to do this. Live like this. You'll cry later for what you've done. This isn't you! Not the Cordelia Chase I knew and
loved and would die for! Please, remember everything we've gone through together! I'm still your best friend, Cordy, now your only friend...But...But it may look as if it's too late for redemption but I'm sure it's not at least together we...We can try. It can't be too late, I'm not giving up on you! You may want me to, but I'm not, you know me better than that. Cordy please, don't let it be to late. You are now the one thing I have left, stop destroying the memory I have of you as something more than this...This monster you are becoming. This monster that you are now. Please, let me help you remember who you really are. Let me help you care once more. Redemption can be yours...

Cordelia smirked and 'tsked' at him. "You're nothing but a fool. I don't want redemption, Wes, I want to be a god."

Well he had tried...

She never saw his quick move of drawing out his pistol and shooting her right between the eyes. She slowly winced and lifted her hand to feel the unbleeding hole there that he had made. Slowly the bullet floated of her head like magic. The hole closed up as if it had never been there in the first place. Suddenly the bullet was flying back at him, hitting his arm.

The hand that held the gun let go in shock and stinging pain. He gripped his wound. Cordelia smirked even more than before. Coldly. Heartlessly.

"You know, Wes, you really should go to the hospital and get that fixed up, while I still allow it to stand, of course...But it won't be standing for long...Welcome to the new world, my new world. You may not enjoy it, but I sure in the hell will!"

Then she moved away going over to the ledge, giving him a gleeful mocking look as she leaped off the high building. Her joyous cold laughter could be heard, loud and clear, making the night seem merciless, colder and darker than ever before...

**end of flashback**

"Cordy...Hero..." Wesley asked gently, looking at the quiet, still goddess. He waved a hand in front of her face. She quickly blinked, the past quickly fading before her. She actually looked ancient. Old and fragile. An old hag. Her eyelashes trapped her tears before they could fall. "God, Wes, you don't realize how much of a bitch I was...Am...I...I'm a true horrible wicked bitch!"

"You can be, no doubt." Wesley told her honestly. Understandably. "But that's not all you are. You ended up with a fresh new start. Reality started once more so you could help others. Make things better. Save countless lives and none of them even remember what you remember the first time around. You even made sure Doyle never had to die and many other things I don't know about. Lives have been lived better because of you. That's not a small thing...That's not horrible in fact, it's good...You've done good."

"But it doesn't out weigh the bad." Hero said softly before she suddenly wrapped her arms tightly around her one true friend. "Thank you. Did I tell ya that I'm glad you're here?"

"You may have said something to that effect." Wes told her hugging her back before letting her go.

"Do you think...I'll ever have redemption, what ever that means, I know I don't deserve it. Shouldn't even hope for it but..." She couldn't finish the sentence as she looked at him nervously. Waiting for his thoughts, her much deserved damnation...

"I honestly don't know, Cordy, I guess..." Wesley told her with a shrug, "We'll both find out together. If you want..."
"I want, I seriously want that. You by my side, that would be so nice, even if I don't get redemption it would still be nice. Thank you." She said with a gentle warm smile that lit up the room.

Wes stood up. "Maybe, I'll stop by tomorrow or something..."

"Or something, actually, tomorrow is kinda packed up tight. These red and green German fairies are being a big sharp pain in the ass. They have recently started on eating human baby flesh. So I'm destroying them, which will make the Russian yellow fairies angry and instead of accepting that I killed the red and green German fairies off they will blame the British royal blue fairies and declare war...And...Well, I'm going to be having fun with those winged sharp tooth fairies tomorrow let me tell you! Maybe I should destroy them all but they make such beautiful music and heal trees and help make flowers grow. Plus, even with the sharp teeth they are cute little fairies, all glittery and colorful...So what if some of them are insane. They are cute. Violent, but cute...Anyhoo, I then need to take care of some starving children in Africa even though my mind will be on the British and Russian fairy war. Hate the thought of them biting each other and throwing their own poisonous crap at each other plus the smell never pleasant, but then what crap is?

Also, this vamp is trying to send my world into hell, like it couldn't come up with a better idea! Sheesh, idiot! Why can't demons come up with a unique idea? Send the world to one of the weird heavens or something, the demon world enjoys the thought of tormenting the world with fire how about tormenting the world with harps no one knows how to play, white shiny robes that make anyone look fat no matter what and a Moses who will make you wish for death after the hundredth time he shares the walking in a dessert for forty years tale! And! AND mansions with hundreds upon hundreds of bedrooms you can't have sex in! You can't have sex anywhere, and you look at the bedrooms wondering...I think I'm really in hell. Horny all the time and no sex at all! Plus, like anyone would want to have sex with a shiny white robe wearing fattie who is a tone deaf playing harp freak *and* lets not forget the dorky halo...

Though I may let Xander know about the Vamp and let him take care of things...So sadly I'm booked, but the next day, it's a date for sure! Stop by and we can go over the bonding ritual plans. I'm tingling with excitement."

"Right." Wes said only half listening to what she had said, still looking around finally he scratched his head as he tilted it looking at her questioningly. "Say, Cordy, what in the bloody hell did you do with my shoes..."

Hero's eyes got big and then looked bashful as she gave him a soft, "Oops..."

(end of part 35)
"So then Hero said that Skip, so called Cordelia's guide was fired because Angel had broken out Billy. Now he was a right bastard, that Billy. Real nasty fellow. One time, I foolishly touched Billy's blood and tried to kill Fred with an axe...I...I hated myself for the longest time after that. But she forgave me, even if I didn't deserve it she forgave me." Wesley told Angel softly.

They were back at Angel's, no actually it was theirs, mansion. Laying in bed, both naked and the only illumination was firelight from the huge fireplace. Angel's eyes seemed to worship his lover. Touching him and then following the caress with a light kiss. Their bare skin gleaming in the firelight as shadows danced silently around them.

The vampire brushed the contours of Wes' body. Angel leaned over and placed a gentle kiss into the hollow of his lover's back.

"So..." Wes sighed happily. Enjoying Angel's touch and kisses. Moving slightly closer, his body silently begging for more of Angel's touch. Yearning for more. Needing more. "What w-was I-I saying?"

Angel smiled against Wes' warm skin. Kissing at certain spots, letting his fingers wander, enjoying the moan he received before he answered. "I'm still shocked about what you said about Hero being the one you once knew as Cordelia...Or something to that effect...And what you were sayin' my love was that Skip had been fired..."

"Oh! Yes, right! Right..." Wes answered with a nod, trying to concentrate but finding it nearly impossible especially where Angel's fingers were at...Damn, his fingers and mouth should be outlawed! "So Skip was fired from the Powers and this Dark One, one step above the Senior Partners in my world, they want Angel on their side so they made a deal with Skip. He could work for them and they'd give him a mate if he helped them trick Cordelia. They...They thought if they had Angel's Seer under their control they could then also control Angel. So one day Cordy has a vision and the Dark One made sure that it was extra violent on her. She nearly dies, Skip tricks her and she asks him to make her half demon, though she's not turned into half demon, she's possessed by a Dark One...Cordelia had played right into their hands. They secretly laughed at the Powers because they rehired Skip and then stole Angel's link. But the Powers had their own surprise...Their own game plan and play..."

"Speaking of playing..." Angel coo'd against Wesley's spine, before leisurely licking up his back making Wes tingle with want and excitement.

"Um...Right...God, Angel! Do that again!"

Angel chuckled against his flesh. "Go on, Wes, tell me more."

"Tell you...How can I when you do what you are doing?"

"Finish and you'll be rewarded."

"Re-Rewarded?"

"Mmm-hmmm...You'll like it, I swear you'll like it a lot my sweet beloved."

"I...I'm sure I will...Especially if it involves where one of your fingers just went..."
"Maybe, you'll like it even more when you get more than a finger..." Angel whispered with a warm inviting promise.

"So...So Skip tricks Cordelia. The demon that was put inside her is a Dark One...Did I already tell you that? It slowly took control of her body. Hero said it is as if the Dark One is raping her from inside. It's in the driver's seat and Cordelia is helpless. It is enjoying tormenting her, telling her what it has in store. What it plans to do wearing her face. Cordelia is imprisoned, inside she cries and begs for Angel or the Powers, anyone to help her. Finally, the Powers hear her cry but don't really help her. What they do is call in Screwy, Skip's identical twin brother..."

"Skip has a twin brother named Screwy?"

"Yes."

"And I thought Liam was bad, but Screwy is just so damn screwy!"

"Well, yes, I agree. Anyway, Screwy tricks the Dark One who is pretending to be Cordelia, that the Powers thinks she's worthy to become a Higher Being. Promising power beyond anything it could conceive. The Dark One says okay, then finds out that the Powers tricked it by putting it in prison. The Dark One is planning to break out. It will break out. Hero said that had I stayed in my former world that there was a strong chance that I would have been the one chosen by the Powers to kill the Dark One/Cordelia by chopping off her head in a big 'must save the world' death battle..."

Angel stopped his kissing and started to rub Wes' back in a comforting fashion. "You would have done what had to be done. It would have been hard, painful, heartbreaking for you but you would have done it."

"Yes and now it's up to Angel to do that...Because I left he will now have to..." Wesley spoke softly. Sadly. "So not fair that Angel has to go through that. He's already lost so much and been through so much! Not fair damn it! Not fair at all..."

"Do you want to go back? Kill Cordelia? Kill the Dark One?" Angel asked so very quietly. Resting his chin on Wes' bare shoulder.

Wesley was quiet for a long time, very still, finally he moved, rolling onto his back to look at Angel. He reached out and lightly caressed his cheek. "No." He said honestly, letting the truth be easily seen within his eyes. "This is my world now, you're my world now."

Wes captured Angel's lips. A sound came from deep within the vampire's throat. A sound of raw intense need. It was a growl of almost feral hunger Fierce in it's need. Almost deadly. Wes replied with a yearning growl all of his own. Fingers digging into the vampire's back. Then his hands grabbed Angel's shoulders pushing them, trying to direct them back and onto the bed, which Angel complied. Wesley atop Angel. Both were full of wonderful wild abandon, burning with need. Writhing against each other's hard bodies.

"I love you, Angel." Wesley said with swollen lips. Touching the vampire's body, then wherever Wesley's hands touched, his mouth was determined to follow. Angel couldn't help but groan Wesley's name. Wesley's mouth was like sweet moist heat, unlike anything Angel had experienced before, Wes' lips sending unspeakable waves of intense pleasure throughout his undying flesh...

They were both burning with undeniable fierce need and preferred it that way.

end of part 36
(three weeks later)

In a beautiful temple, under the Sunnydale shopping mall, a gorgeous goddess sat upon her throne, secretly taking credit for what was about to happen.

Kate, Faith, Doyle, Xander, Gunn and Spike were in awe of having the legendary goddess in the their presence. They were in a beautifully decorated lobby. Countless vases of fresh flowers were everywhere. Everyone was dressed up, looking their best.

Hero stood up as Angel and Wesley walked into the marble lobby, hand and hand. She waited patiently as they strolled slowly towards her. Everyone was smiling, they couldn't help it. The great Goddess Hero looked down on them from a high dais. Hero raised her hands to each man's shoulder.

"Today..." Her feminine voice echoed in the lobby, her smile wide and happy. "We will be witnesses to a holy and beautiful sight. We will see two lovers become one. One in heart. One in soul. One in mind. Memories will be shared and new ones will be lived together. As they shall be together, now for all eternity. They will become inseparable. Unbreakable. Even in death they can never part, for if one dies the other follows instantly. Heaven shall be shared. Their union will have a balance. Both will share a soul, a mind, a demon, as intimately as they share their bodies. I, Goddess Hero, bless this union, as do the Powers That Be. Now let the ritual begin..." She removed her hands to pick up an empty goblet of pure gold and held it out. "Who wishes to speak first?"

"Me. I wish to speak." Spike said, stepping forward. The goddess nodded as she handed him the goblet. She moved a little to the side, allowing the vampire to step up to where the goddess had stood. The blond vampire looked down upon Wesley and Angel thoughtful.

"Ya know, me Grandsire Poofy here was the first to speak at me and Xander's life mating shindig. He took the longest sodding time! Yakked, yakked and yakked some more he did. I was like 'will you hurry the hell up! I just want to get bonded and get fucked for the rest of my unlife! But did he hurry? Hell, no! I just wanted to be with my beloved. My sexy boy...And now...Now, it's my turn to say crap and make him wait. And wait. I've never been good at sayin' stuff unless there was hard core sex involved and here I was once a bloody poet!

Though lets not get into that. Not here to talk about me, though it is a fascinating subject. No doubt. Anyway, I'm here to talk to Angel and Wes. Give me silly blessing, like they need me to bless them! Angel...me and you...We've been together for over a hundred years. I choose to stand by you when you got that silly soul of yours. 'Cos I felt you'd have gone insane without my being there to beat the smarts into ya. You needed someone and I was lucky enough to be that someone. You needed family and I was that family. For the worst thing I think would have been was being alone. Alone with your guilt. Your...Girly lonely hearted self. We've been friends forever. When you were Angelus, we were sort of friends. Family most of all, but when you became Angel. We stayed family but our friendship grew into something...Beautiful. Almost brothers we were. Hear this now, Angelus, my Angel, for you will never hear me say this again. One time only thing I'll deny it later even if there are witnesses and it's this...

I love you. To me you are me Sire. Me Yoda. Me dearest pillock of a friend even if you are the soddingest poofer I've ever known. Now...Wes. You're new to this world, but I already respect ya. Care for you. Take care of me Sire. Protect him. I've been doing those things for years now and I now pass the bloody Bollicking torch to ya. Good luck my dear friends. I wish thee good will. Happiness, peace and all the sex ya can stand and even more when you don't have the energy. Plus, if any of you hurt the other in any
way...Well, lets just say that the shovel Willow gave me when I got bonded to Xander as a bonding pressie will be used on you. I have now spoken!” Spike then kissed the empty gold goblet before passing it to Xander. Who now stood where his lover had been standing.

He cleared his throat nervously and rocked on his heels. "Gee, after the speech Spike gave what could I say, except, sorry and I will be making sure my lips will be on his lips to keep him quiet for the rest of...Um, I was going to say until the bonding ceremony is over, but it might be best if my lips stay on his for a whole century or more.”

Chuckles filled the air and then as if by magic Xander no longer looked nervous. He no longer rocked on his heels like a wired child with a sugar rush. He looked confident, he looked serious as he eyed Wes and Angel.

"I'm happy that you get another chance at happiness, Big-A. You deserve it, both of you deserve to be happy. Angel, we've been through a lot with each other. We've become friends. Family and I've never regretted a single second of it. Well..." Xander then gave a goofy smile, continuing... "Except for the time when you got drunk and decided to sing an old Irish Folk song about a lass with a hundred toes. I regret that I hadn't been a deaf man and that I knew you...You actually made my ears bleed that night."

"Oi! But later I kissed it all better didn't I, Harris...I even sucked something of yours that took your mind off your bleeding ears!"

Xander blushed, glaring at his bonded mate as he hissed, "Spike! I'm speaking here!"

"Just helping to keep your speech as interesting as mine, don't want anyone to nod off! You're doing good, so go on!” Spike waved him on. Encouraging him.

Xander rolled his eyes, before he cleared his throat once more then he sighed. "My own family isn't the best. It's like living with monsters and it was never pleasant. Now a days I rarely if at all go and see them. The ones in this room have been my true family. It hasn't always been pleasant when life happens but we've always gotten through it together. Deadboy, I stand here today to give my blessing. I wish nothing but happiness and when crap happens we'll all be helping you stand strong. Giving you love and sometimes a much needed smack upside the head. I know that as we stand encouraging ya, the two of you will be strong within each other. Wes, I'm still getting to know you, but I can tell ya right now that I already respect you and you are like a beloved brother to me...As was the first Wesley. He touched our lives and you do the same. We may not always agree but we are now family...And that means something.

The first Wesley was family too. I miss him deeply. Loved him, when he died we all felt...Felt this big huge hole inside ourselves. Angel was in worst shape then us which is understandable. Just know that Wes, the now not so nerdy bookman, I thank you for filling that huge hole back up. Thanks for making Big-A whole again. Giving him meaning and giving us the same. I give my blessing, may you both be forever blessed!”

Xander pressed his lips to the golden cup, passing it to Doyle and stepping down next to his own bonded mate, his lover. His Spike. They shared a special look as one slim pale hand took a much bigger and rougher tanned hand. Warm and cold. Different yet perfect together.

Then together they watched Doyle begin his blessing of Wesley and Angel's bonding. The Irishman looked down at the golden goblet that Xander had handed him. He weighed it in his hands. Carefully. Reverently. "This here is a thing of beauty.” He lifted his gentle warm friendly blue eyes. He eyed Wes and Angel with a look of wisdom way beyond his years. "Just like you two. For you both got the greatest thing in this world. Love.

Ain't there a song that says 'All ya need is love'? It's true, ya know. I also believe one needs money, good whiskey, a good woman, and a bottle of pain killers for those times the Powers want to melt my brain with a
ugly vision. I'm happy for you both. You are indeed family, no matter what I say when I'm drunk or when I try to gamble away items that's not mine to gamble...Or sell stuff on E-bay. Love E-bay as much as I love kitty poker. Oh, and Angel sorry about losing your shirt, I honestly thought I had a good thing going, I didn't think it was possible to lose. Sorry man, really. Anyway, there's an old Gaelic blessing that says something about 'May the roads rise with you, and the wind always be at your back...'. Not sure what that exactly means but I figured with how old Angel is, he'd have some idea. The point I'm trying to make is this, may ya both be happy traveling that road ya both are on. May ya never trip but if ya do be blessed in the knowledge that ya have someone to help ya stand back up and take your hand, no matter which way the wind blows or how rough and rocky that road gets. The one standing next to you will help you travel on. May not even know where the bloody hell you are going, but take comfort in knowing when ya get there, you'll get there together. Be blessed my friends, be blessed." Doyle quickly kissed the cup before handing it to his wife.

Kate smiled shyly, a hand nervously fingering a blond curl. "I...I don't know what to say exactly I wish I could talk with the elegance that my husband revealed. He doesn't show off his great wisdom all that often, mind you, but once in a while my Doyle says something that reminds me why I fell in love with him and I realize that I love him even more than when I first knew him." She sighed.

"Damn...I'm so not good at this. Angel, Wes, simply pretend that I repeated what Doyle said, except it sounds more American. I do however wish blessing, great blessing on you both. May you have a long life and love with every step you take." With that Kate kissed the cup. Kate handed the goblet to Faith with a smile. The leather wearing Slayer was now in front of the vampire and Watcher. She carelessly stared to toss the goblet from one hand to another.

"Okay, it's now my turn. First I'd like to say, I'm glad to have a Watcher once more and damn you got game, let me tell ya. I'm also glad you two are getting together. It feels right. Ang, I'm happy you are happy." She stopped tossing the cup to look down on it. "Ya know...Last night I was looking through some old ass pictures. People I've cared for, people I didn't. Most of all the pictures were of Sunnydale. I'm not sure why I was looking at pictures of the past. Of my past, I've always felt the past don't matter...But maybe I'm wrong about that. Could be, doubt it but I could be. There were pictures of the first Wes. Our Wes with Angel. With me...Of...You know people of our past and present. Now we get to take new pictures. We don't know what they will be, but they will be something. Angel and Wes. Together. Those pictures ain't always going to look pretty to the eye. They won't be sweet and tender. We're warriors. Guardians of the Hellmouth. We are fighters who fight 'cos we got a freaking damn mission. We fight so crazy people out there can live a little safer, a little better every damn night! I may be talking like big and broody here, but actually the one who taught me that was...Willow, my Red. She taught me that. She taught me to see the fight as more than about me and *my* power. It was more than want, take and have. We're warriors. Guardians of the Hellmouth. We fight for a damn mission. We fight so crazy people out there can live a little safer, a little better every damn night! I may be talking like big and broody here, but actually the one who taught me that was...Willow, my Red. She taught me that. She taught me to see the fight as more than about me and *my* power. It was more than want, take and have. It was about giving and helping...Crap like that."

Faith looked up with a smirk. "But it didn't mean I couldn't have my fun time. That I couldn't want, take and have, it didn't mean that at all. Being a Slayer is a gift. A calling that I choose how to take the fucking call..." The smirk faded she eyed Wes and Angel seriously. "I've been listening to Blondie, Xan, Irish and Princess...They might be late at times but what they've been sayin' is true. Though I kept thinking while listening to them...What would Red have said? Guess we'll never know. I do know that she would have said something about all of us being family. About us being together. Caring. Fighting. Living. We love. We fight. We're willing do die 'cos we believe in something like the something that Angel and Wes got. This here Slayer blesses you both...Oh, and may your cocks never go soft!" Faith kissed the cold gold goblet before tossing it to Gunn. He caught it with one hand and held it tight to him as she stepped down and he was stepping up.

"Now that's a sodding good blessing!"

"Spike!" The others hissed at the vampire.
He looked innocently around. "Wot?!? I'm just sayin' that the Slayer knows how to give a great blessing! Though she could have skip all that other talk and gone right to 'I bless ya both may your cocks never go soft'...I wish she had been at me and my pet's ritual...She's bloody brilliant she is!"

"Thanks, Blondi." Faith whispered with a twinkle in her brown eyes, she punched him hard in the arm, sure to leave a bruise and he flashed his fangs at her. Both smiled.

"Damn, right my girl is brilliant but more than that she's sexy as hell!" Gunn stated proudly before looking at the Watcher and vampire. "If it wasn't for this fucking chip in my handsome head...I'd...Oh, hell...To be honest, I'd still end up liking you both. I'd hate myself of course. I'd end up liking everyone. Turn some of you if I could. I wish I could say I dream of bathing in your blood night after night. 'Cos hell I am a vampire, ya know and it would be expected for me to say that stuff. I'm a super bad ass got an image to protect, ya understand dog? Anyway, other than that you people are my gang. My family. Not going to say I love you morons but I do care...A little. I'll still laugh at you all if you fall and hurt yourselves but I'll feel really bad about it. Anyway, English and Bossman, glad you both are together. May you both be so fucking blessed may your dicks turn purple." Gunn kissed the cup, making a raspberry sound against it. He then handed the cup to the goddess with a flippant, "Here ya go, Barbie!"

Hero's eyes narrowed dangerously on Gunn. "Thank you, Charles, and don't call me Barbie."

"Sure thing, Toys-R-Us!" The chipped vampire told her with an easy smirk.

Hero looked over at Wes, she lifted an elegant eyebrow. "How would you like if for your bonding gift I make Gunn here into a woman. I have the power to do that."

"Um, I didn't mean anything, goddess..." Gunn quickly whined, before saying with a wince. "I'm sorry great goddess Hero, I'll behave. Really I will."

Hero nodded coldly, giving him a warning glare saying loudly that he better. She then smiled at the couple before her. "Be blessed." She said warmly. Softly. Kissing the cup she held it out before her, offering the cup to them. "As one, you each take hold of the cup with your right hand."

They did as she requested, she let go of the golden goblet and they held it together. "Now Angel...Speak to the one you've chosen as your bonded mate..."

Angel looked at Wesley. All his love revealed within his eyes. "I vow to always love you, Wesley. To protect you but most of all I will live to love you. I will live to show you my love daily. Wesley Wyndam-Pryce, I willingly bond my body, my mind, my soul, my heart and my demon to you."

With Angel's left hand he touched an engraved symbol upon the goblet. Surprisingly a small sharp blade thrust out. Looking deadly. With a quick slice the vampire's wrist was bleeding oh, so slowly. He raised his left wrist above the cup, allowing some drops of thick blood to drop into the cup. "If thou accept me as thy mate, thou will belong to me as I will belong to thee. My life and death shall be thine. My allegiance and loyalty shall be thine as my heart, soul, demon, blood and body will be thine for eternity."

There was an overwhelming amount of power felt in the lobby. Angel held out his bleeding wrist to Wesley as he asked, "Dost thou accept, my love?"

"Yes, I do." Wesley leaned over, making a slight face before licking the wound closed. He knew he would have to get used to his lover's blood and he would with time. "I accept willingly. I love you with my entire mind, body, heart and soul. I willingly accept your demon, which is now mine. I vow to always love you. To live to love only you. to always be at your side. My life and death as well as every breath I take will be yours. Liam, Angelus, Angel. Three names, but one love. My love. I accept you as my mate willingly."
Wesley then sliced his wrist upon the same blade Angel had used. Raising it over the cup to let his blood run into the cup. He then held it out to Angel. Love in his blue eyes as he whispered, not caring if he repeated himself. "I accept."

The vampire quickly licked the wound closed, and then Wesley continued softly. Gently. "I belong to thee as thou shall belong to me. My loyalty and my allegiance are thine forever. As my body, heart, mind, blood and soul are thine for all eternity."

Their hands still on the cup which now glowed with an almost holy burning hot brilliance, Angel lifted it to his lips. Before he took a sip the vampire whispered, "We are now one. We are bonded." He swallowed and passed the glowing cup Wesley's lips.

"We are now one. We are bonded." Wesley whispered his reply taking his sip.

Suddenly, the light from the cup entwined the two lovers; wind and bright brilliant lights danced around them. The cup seemed to melt, separate into two becoming smaller and smaller. Equally tiny. Hot molten gold quickly sought out the lovers' hands as strong winds and colorful lights still danced around them. The hot gold captured their left hands, wrapping around their ring fingers. It circled and formed, beautiful solid gold rings. Never to be removed. The lover's gasped loudly. As they felt their soul's intertwine and become one. Felt whole. Felt as if they were one which they were.

Angel and Wesley held each other close as their minds opened. They were instantly flooded with memories. It overwhelmed them both. They nearly fell to the floor, but surprisingly they didn't fall.

The wind and lights disappeared. The rings upon their fingers seemed to hum for a moment, the glowing stopped. The hum faded. Silence. Peace.

"My God, Angel..." Wesley stated in wonder, tears running down his face. Knowing everything about his lover now and loving him even more because of it. There could never be any secrets between them.

"My Goddess, Wes..." Angel said in total wonder, he too was crying. Though instead of clear salty water like his mate, his tears were a clear bright red. "You're amazing...To have done all that you've done. All the things that have been done to you...To survive all that and to still be a wonderful as you are...You've amazing my love, simply amazing."

"Angel..." Wes whispered rawly. "I love you."

"I love you too, Wes, I always will love you." Angel told him, cupping the Watcher's face before kissing him deeply. Wes couldn't help but kiss him right back.

"That's the way it should be. The way it should have always been." Hero said softly. A gentle smile upon her lips. Eyes yearning for what they had yet so happy that they were now together. Always together.

The witnesses couldn't help but agree as they all said as one. "They are now one. Long live the bonded mates, may they be forever one."

The ritual was now complete. As were Angel and Wesley. Truly complete and whole.

(end of 37)
Part 38

#Dear readers, this is the 'rescued from ocean, Angel' universe#

(two months later)

Angel roared as he swung his sword savagely through the once living Lumbrick demon, reducing its height from over ten feet, to a chopped up mass of severed limbs and putrid flesh.

"Angel!" Gunn shouted once more, insistently. Trying to get the vampire's attention, but all Angel did was ignore him as he growled and continued to chop at the ugly Lumbrick demon in total mindless fury and brutality.

In the furthest corners of Gunn's mind he wondered if Angel was going to go dark once more, like he did when Darla came back and he went crazy...Was Angel back on board the loony train? Was the vampire about to let Angelus out...He wasn't sure, all he knew was that Angel was trying to pretend he wasn't hurting and anyone could see that he was.

Angel inside was as torn up as that dead demon at his feet.

Fred watched clenching the handle of her weapon, as her throat tried to work dryly around a painful lump that had formed there. She simply watched with eyes brimming with sadness, her handsome man...Her warrior was hurting and there wasn't anything she could do or say to help the hero that had saved her. It took a moment before she whispered, a raw, hoarse, "Angel, please stop...Please."

Unexpectedly, empty golden amber eyes looked her way. His sword, its shine dimmed by the orange slime of demon blood halted mid-chop through another demon part. Silence was suddenly thick and intense. Angel looked dangerous. A warrior of old, primal in every way. The vampire studied Fred for a long moment, before Angel's eyes slowly turned brown as his demon face faded. He carelessly swung the sword behind him, its tip trailing sparks along the ground.

Angel regarded the demon remains coldly before looking at both Fred and Gunn.

"Take what is left of this monster to the demon graveyard, maybe the one down on Taylor street. Bury it, make sure you cover the ground with rosemary and maple syrup...It's the only way to make sure a Lumbrick demon doesn't arise 'cos if it does rise again it's going to be pissed off and even more of a bastard to fight a second time around." Angel stated emotionlessly.

"Would it be about to arise seeing it's chopped into little pieces like it is now?" Fred asked.

Angel shrugged. "Wes, once told me that if you buried a Lumbrick in a demon graveyard and put rosemary and maple syrup on its grave it wouldn't rise. So just do it. Then you can both go home to the hotel for the night. You deserve some rest...By the way, great job on helping me fight that nasty bastard."

"Is that where you're going? To the hotel?" Gunn asked quietly looking at the vampire's stiff back.

The vampire didn't even turn his head to look at him. "No, I'm not."

"You're going back to...Wesley's old place again aren't you?" Fred said already knowing the answer.

"He's not using it and the rents paid so why not?" Angel stated not caring if that sounded slightly crazy. He
still refused to look at them. He was going to do what he wanted and that was go to Wesley's apartment. Wesley's old apartment.

"Don't get why you paid the rent on the place, you didn't do that for Cordelia's place. Don't know why you haven't yet moved Wes' junk to the hote--" Gunn's sentence was brought to an abrupt halt. As he was grabbed with supernatural speed by a pissed vampire who glared hotly at him.

"Wesley's stuff is not junk and you will not call it junk." Angel's grip tightened. Gunn struggled, gasping for much needed air.

"ANGEL! Let him go! Angel, stop it! You're hurting him!" Fred shouted, truly scared, running to her boyfriend's side.

"It's not junk. Never junk, understand?" Angel said with a long hateful growl.

Gunn nodded or tried to. Angel let go of the young vampire hunter. Gunn glared at him. Angel really didn't care.

"Sorry, Gunn." Angel told him watching as Gunn rubbed his own throat. He coughed roughly. Angel may have said 'sorry' but he didn't sound or look like he meant it. Angel looked over at Fred. "Hope you'll forgive me, lately things have been...You know...No excuse I know. We've all been through a lot as late...Just...Just take care of this demon like I asked, without any questions. I don't need questions right now. Yes, I'm going to the apartment, I'll see you both sometime tomorrow. If you happen to need me before hand call my cell, I'll answer...Maybe."

With that the souled vampire turned and left, this time never once stopping. Gunn and Fred watched as he disappeared into the darkness.

Absentmindedly, Fred ran her hand in a comforting motion upon her boyfriend's arm.

"You okay?" She whispered softly, finally looking at him with wide beautiful caring brown eyes.

Gunn rubbed at his throat with a slight wince, feeling the bruises Angel left behind. Still eyeing up the empty space that the vampire had left behind. "Yeah, sweets, I'm good." He lied.

Fred looked to where Gunn was looking. A sad lost _expression upon her face. "Do you think Angel will ever be all right again?"

She was worried, they both were. Her question, spoken softly, seemed so loud...

Only a sad, 'your guess is as good as mine', silence was Fred's answer...

( end of part 38)
Angel held his keys tightly in his right hand. He could feel the jagged roughness of the countless keys cutting into his palm. Yet his expression gave no sign of discomfort as he walked down the familiar hallway leading to what used to be Wesley's apartment.

What used to be...

Only then at that thought did Angel's expression break slightly. With a heavy sigh he found the key he needed when he got to the door. Opening it, he stood quietly looking into the dark interior. It was so dark. So still. So damn empty even with Wesley's items within. There seemed to be a echo of loneliness within the apartment. Or maybe the loneliness was within himself.

Angel entered the apartment sluggishly feeling like a thousand year old man, closing the door behind him quietly. Shutting himself up in the surrounding darkness. He breathed in deeply, even though he didn't need to breathe. His demon seemed to be looking for, searching longingly for a familiar scent but the scent was now long gone. Faded away with time.

The scent of life. The scent of Wesley was gone as if he had never existed in the first place.

Angel walked to an overstuffed armchair in the corner of the living room. He sat down out of habit, it was a habit acquired since Wesley left. Sitting alone. In the darkness. In the still quietness half expecting at any moment...For some sign that the former Watcher wasn't really gone. Oddly the stillness reminded him of the tombs and temples he'd visited.... He did what he did best in times like this.

Brood.

With the help of Wesley's file on his investigation of Cordelia he found out what had happened to her. The file was well conceived with pages of text, illustrations and photographs. There were pictures of Cordelia's car and...Well, there had been one picture that stunned him, it was a picture of himself and Cordelia it struck him as familiar but something strange, something missing from it, or actually *someone* missing from it. There was no Wesley and when the picture had been taken it had just been the three of them. Angel on the left, Cordy in the middle and Wesley on the right.

He could still remember the night when they had the picture taken...

#Flashback#

After saving a mother and her young children from becoming a ritual sacrifice, hey had gone to their favorite Chinese restaurant to celebrate.

Sitting at their usual table, Cordelia remembered that she had a camera in her bag and asked the waiter to take a photo or two.

"But instead of telling us to say, 'cheese'. Like extreme dorks, have us say our favorite things." Cordy explained to the waiter. "Oh, and you press this here round button, 'kay?" Handing the camera to the man in question.

Cordelia quickly slipped into her place, in the middle. "Come in closer, guys." She told them, her hands
coming to rest on the small of their backs.

"Your favorite thing!" The waiter said in a thick accent.

From the corner of his eye, Angel met Wesley's quick look, sharing a smile they both said at the same time, with wide friendly smiles, "Friendship!"

As Cordy said loud and clear, "Money!"

The flash went off and the Seer gave a quick shrug and her movie star smile became softer, welcoming, more real as she said gently, "Well, yeah, that too."

Wes and Angel chuckled light-heartedly as the 'flash' popped once more.

#end of flashback#

They had ended up with copies of both pictures, but it was the second one that they all seemed to hold dear. It was the one Cordelia framed. The one Wes had put so lovingly in his wallet and later losing it in Pylea he had two more copies made having one framed, keeping it on his dresser and putting the other one in his new wallet. Angel secretly put that same picture he had been given into his own wallet and also had another framed and put into his special drawer; keepsakes of his past and present. There were drawings and pictures of Buffy.

A few sketches of Darla, some of William. Some pictures of his sister and mother. A random few of Wes and Cordy. Even a precious picture of Doyle and a drawing of Doyle, that he had made to give to Cordelia, but found himself unable to do so. Later that same drawer would hold countless pictures of Connor as a baby.

Anyway, he had been shocked to find *the* important valued picture in the file with Wesley cut out. Something tore at his heart and he wasn't even sure why but it hurt that Wesley had so coldly cut himself out of that valued picture...And then just put it into a case file as if it were about people he didn't really know. As if they were strangers to him. And just maybe at the time, Wes had thought that...

It bothered him, no doubt about that. It made him want to scream, made him want to rip in to something. Or someone. Made him want to rant. Have a childish temper tantrum. Hell, he could have accepted Wes removing him from the picture, but Wesley cutting himself out? It made the picture seem offensive somehow. What gave the bastard the right? Cutting himself out...

Maybe Wes had been drunk when he did it, but with how straight the cut was it was highly improbable. Maybe bitterness with everything, with everyone abandoning him, Wes might have figured if they cut him out of their lives then he would literally cut himself out as well. The night he had found the picture, Angel went a little crazy. He started to search Wes' apartment, rummaging his drawers and things looking for pictures of Wesley. He knew they had to exist...

What Angel had found made him sad and angry. He even had wild thoughts of going to the alternate reality Wes was in and beating him black and blue and then hold him tight and never let go. For what he had found was that Wes had taken every picture he had and cut himself out of them. Even the famous framed picture of the three of them was torn from the frame, that Cordy had bought him and unlike all the others this one had been ripped across by a careless hand.

Wesley's hand.
No picture of the ex-Watcher could be found even the pictures Angel knew at one time had existed.

Feeling slightly depressed, he reached up and rubbed the bridge of his nose. There wasn't anything he could do about that. He couldn't sit down and talk to Wesley about why or anything now. Couldn't even take more pictures...For Wes was with another Angel. A better Angel. Living another life, away from him. Leaving him alone maybe he deserved just that. For he was a fool, wasn't he?

He was an idiot. A heartless jerk. He always would be. He knew this, accepted this. Angel sighed once more laying back his head. Wesley was gone. Forever. Just like Cordelia. His best friend and his Seer.

She too went some place better. To be Happier, away from him. He was sure it would only be a matter of time before Fred and Gunn left him too. Hell even Lorne had realized what a better life he could have without him in his life.

His Seer. His Cordy left to become a Higher Being. She was doing great and wondrous things in a heavenly realm. Angel thinks back to Wesley's file. His notes.

Wes had suggested that Cordy may not even be in this reality but a higher one. On a much higher plane. He had been right, for once. Okay, see here he was being a jerk again! Sheesh! Angel groaned.

Anyway, Wes had suggested that Angel go talk to this weird goddess of the dead, he wrote that only the dead could talk to her. See her. He talked long and dryly about her. Wes had also underlined in yellow highlighter the fact that she could not in anyway be trusted and also he wrote close to three pages about how she talked in riddles.

Page after page as his eyes grew weary and he almost nodded off... After forty neatly typed pages, why he had continued reading he'd never know, after reading about this goddess, looking at pictures of this creature of the lost...Only then did Wes write, 'But only go to her as a last resort! The best bet as well as easiest would be...' That little fucker!

The very last part of the report, it was a simple paragraph! A paragraph that told him to go down town, turn right on Turner Ave, stop when you come to the old rundown museum. Go behind back to the ally, you'll come to a dead end with a dumpster against the brick wall. Then you will simply talk to the dumpster and say the one known as Wesley sent you...

Angel nearly swallowed his own tongue when he read that he would then find a rare fairy species that knew everything supernatural. They would demand a rare gift and what greater gift then Angel's own blood, they wouldn't take much. 'A few tiny sips not so much as a mosquito bite.' Yeah, Wes is a real funny bastard. Mosquito bite, sure, and sharks aren't attracted to the scent of blood.

Angel went to the fairies, they were so tiny. Doll-like with glittery wings as small as a U.S. quarter. They were so cute until they smiled or giggled. The giggles were high pitched and totally insane sounding. Almost eerie and their smile...Wide white razer sharp teeth. Deadly. Truly evil looking.

They were excited to meet him and Angel decided that those fairies were the creepiest things he had ever met! And that's sayin' a lot! He hadn't even known that fairies were real nor did he know that the brand of fairies he was dealing with actually lived on vampire blood and as well as vampire flesh though they also enjoyed human carrion even zombie. To them vampire's flesh was a true feast their favorite. The older the better. Their cute wide eyes seemed to sparkle with mirth as they told him this, giving him actual shivers, 'cos he knew, his demon knew they spoke nothing but the truth.

They had even shared the fact that their own crap was poisonous, not that he cared, but they seemed to think that should comfort him after telling him that they loved vampire flesh as well as blood! He actually
swallowed hard, felt like he was breaking into a cold sweat and wanted to go off screaming into the night, thinking it would be best to talk to the goddess of lost things. For that hungry look, yearning for more than just a nibble, was very apparent in those bright wide eyes.

Then they told him that the only thing that had keep Angel alive and so called living in L.A. had been Wesley. The one known as Wesley. He asked why to hear how another fairy clan, the Royal Purples, honored Wesley with the 'Teskinde'. For when Wes was a young lad he had accidently saved the princess and queen of that clan. Which meant they and other ally as well as enemy clans would give him respect and he could make any request as right of 'Teskinde' and they would have to honor it. They could not however tell him any supernatural secrets. They could not reveal the truth as they knew it to him, unless Wes himself became a royal purple fairy and be king of the clan...

Wes refused to become a fairy but agreed to Teskinde, finding a huge loophole with what they had said. They had said they couldn't and wouldn't tell *him* but if he requested that they tell his trusted and beloved *friend*.

They told him how years ago the fairies that lived behind the dumpster here in L.A., the Mighty Bloody Reds Clan, had started to stalk the vampire with a soul. Longing for a taste. Wanting to eat and feast upon the vampire who was over two hundred years and had a soul. They wondered if he tasted different because of that soul...And they had lusted at the thought of him as their prey. One night, Wes who hadn't been in L.A. all that long quickly noticed them, stalking Angel. He knew right away what they wanted, what they hungered for. Angel's flesh and blood...To eat him and even suck upon its ashes...

"He told us, no!" A bright colorful red fairy said with a big pout. "He said as his right of 'Teskinde' he requested that we leave you alone. Never to rip your flesh from your bones...That was a sad, sad day!"

"Sad, oh, so sad!" The other fairies chimed in, flying around his shoulders and head. Making him slightly sick.

Then again they explained, like he was an idiot or something, how the deal with Wesley was they couldn't and wouldn't give any supernatural truths to Wes, they were bonded by their words but they could tell *him* with Wes' permission. So he asked about Cordelia. And they told him, after of course he offered them a sip of his blood. Just a sip mind you. But fuck! If those fairy bites didn't itch like big bug bites for a whole week! And he even had a rash all over his body from which he assumed he must be allergic to their bite.

Anyway, he heard the words that the Powers That Be made her a Higher Being. She's in a heavenly realm. Joy and happiness swirling around her, embracing her. For some reason he then asked about Wesley. How he was doing in the alternate reality.

"Happy." They answered as one. "Bonded and very happy, he's now home."

Home.

That was *home* now.

Cordelia and Wes, two different places but where they were now was home to them.

Angel reached over and turned on the lamp by the chair, chasing away the darkness. On the table was a pad full of sketches. Pure smooth white paper. There were also five finely sharp number two pencils.

Reaching over, he sat the huge pad in his lap. Flipping over countless drawings, only one of them of Cordy the rest of Wesley. He finally got to a page he hadn't drawn on yet and studied it...
Thinking this time he'd draw another one of Cordelia. He wanted to draw Cordelia, instead his hand mindlessly started with yet another picture of Wesley. Thoughts of Cordelia faded as in his minds eye he slowly developed a picture of the last and final day he had laid eyes on Wesley.

##

Standing there in this very living room, wrapped in only a blanket. Knowing the former Watcher was naked underneath. He radiated with the fact that he'd been having nothing but hot wild wondrous sex. His hair looked as if hands had pulled and ruffled through it and it was simply all over the place. His eyes sparkled with warmth and happiness and an overwhelming love for the other Angel. He looked so handsome and beautiful. There was so much love reflected in those blue eyes for the other vampire it seriously hurt to look at him, for he knew that love wasn't for him. Never for him. He honestly didn't deserve it. The other Angel had the balls to woo Wes and win. He put that odd happy loving look on Wesley's face.

Then there was the fact that Wesley's mouth looked swollen from heated kisses and giving countless blow jobs. He fucking hated that other Angel, no doubt about that. He continued to draw even as he growled. He totally and honestly hated the other Angel. Fucking hated him with an overwhelming passion. That lucky bastard!

About an hour later he was done with the drawing. He simply stared intensely at the loved filled eyes promising loyalty and devotion. Lips swollen begging to be kissed. He lightly traced the lips he had drawn from memory, not that he had ever touched Wesley's real lips or made them swollen, but it didn't mean he hadn't wanted to. He just couldn't do...He never could have done that.

It was only as he studied the picture that he finally admitted something he had refused to accept. He loved Wesley. He loved a man, a guy. Still loved him in fact, and didn't that thought just kick him savagely in the balls!

Not that his loving Wes mattered, nothing really mattered. For his Wes was gone. Forever and all he had left were regrets and what could have been if he hadn't been so stupid and scared.

###

Gavin swallowed hard as he looked at his new boss. A boss he hated with a passion as well as feared.

Ms. Lilah Morgan. Queen Bitch he privately called her. And sometimes not so privately. She had killed Linwood right in front of him, taking away his own cold calculating smirk that he had upon his face that day. She had killed Linwood at the Senior Partner's command for she had talked directly to a Senior Partner face to face. She had outlined a plan that they thought was brilliant, more so even. They didn't like the fact that Linwood didn't even seem to be trying that he didn't see the big picture and she did.

Gavin gazed languorously into the two-way mirror. They could see into the room but the one in it couldn't see them. The eyes looking back at them spoke volumes. Saying loud and clear that the person knew he was being watched. There was intelligence in those eyes. He knew the mirror wasn't what it seemed on his side, knew there were people on the other side. Watching him. Studying him like an animal in a cage.

Gavin easily admits to be and is proud even to be an evil weasel but this...Was so very wrong.

"So Gavin got the legal papers that the Senior Partners and I want ready yet?" Lilah smirked coldly at him, crossing her arms.

"Need one more day. Making sure there's absolutely no loopholes. We have to make the contract unbreakable. That is what the Senior Partners want right?" He answered quickly yet calmly.
"Well, yeah, of course they do or the Senior Partners will be doing so many things to your ass we'll be hearing your screams and whimpers in countless realities."

Gavin winced. Knowing that wasn't a threat but a promise. Looking through the window. "Are you sure this will work? Will Angel sign away everything and become Wolfram and Hart's property? Sounds really great in theory, he becomes our willing puppet, we become the strings and master but this...Ms. Morgan this is crazy! What if he doesn't?"

"Sometimes one has to do crazy to get what they want." Lilah said in a strange almost gentle tone. For a second there was almost a look of regret upon her normally cold business like face. Gavin was sure it was a trick of the light coming from the two way mirror.

"But didn't Angel hate--"

"No." She said sharply, with deep certainty, she then looked over at him. "He'll sell his soul, Gavin if he has to. He'll give up his freedom, his rights. His everything. Know why? 'Cos somewhere inside is a heart that cares. Wants to make the world better for others but doesn't know how. He wants to save others, be the hero. He tries to help the helpless and the hopeless...'Cos he stupidly thinks it's the right thing to do, even at times when he himself is totally helpless and hopeless. It's about the people, Gavin! And some people matter a lot to him! This isn't going to be like Darla. We totally screwed that up big time, but we've learned from our little mishaps. This time we're going to do things right. We're going to totally give Angel what he *really* wants. We're not going to play with him or drive him crazy or even dark. 'Fuck the whole world let him get in touch with his dark side!' None of that crap. No playing worthless head games, no seeing how far we can push him like we have been doing. We simply go to him with the contract and what's behind door number one and a pen full of his own blood. He signs said contract. Senior Partners are happy and he'll be a slave to Wolfram and Hart, we'll own him and he'll get what is behind the door and he'll have a little happiness knowing that he saved someone."

"Yeah, but...But this! Like the person behind this glass really matters to--"

"You're an idiot, Gavin. He matters so damn much it goes beyond understanding. The minute we reveal our hand...When we show him what we will willingly give him for his freedom. He'll sign in a heartbeat! The moment he looks into those surprisingly stunning innocent scared eyes, he'll be ours for eternity. Even long before we explain to him that the reality Mr. Wyndam-Pryce went to...That oddly enough there was a strange shift that happened. Two different heavens became one. That reality and this realities...And really Gavin think about it, instead of thinking about how to save your dick, as if you really have one! What do you think will happen...Really happen? We've had reports of how Angel's been acting since Wes and his Seer left for better parts unknown. Away from him. What happens when we tell him we purposely ripped a familiar face right out of heaven for him? That this same someone wakes up in a strange world that isn't even his own? Wesley of this world couldn't even stand this hellish world and was even wooed by his lover back to his world. This Wesley is worldless, all alone and helpless...Hopeless. Just the kind of people Angel *loves* to help. This new Wes needs a strong hero to save him and take care of him. Protect him and I'm certain as are the Senior Partners that Angel will sign way his own freedom to be there and help...Well...The helpless." Lilah finished with a sexualized evil smirk.

Gavin studied the resurrected Wesley Wyndam-Pryce of another reality. The same reality the Wes from this world went to. He swallowed hard and nervousy, as the skinny pale man walked up close to the mirror and glared hatefully. There was a weird innocence and delicateness to him, but there was also a something almost primal, dangerous with in those blue depths.

Gavin knew this plan could indeed work. The reports on how Angel had been acting after being trapped in the ocean and since the other Wes left. All pointed to a man on the edge of grief. It was almost like Angel
had lost his everything and he didn't know what to do. He didn't even seem to want to try. He had no Seer. No Watcher.

But something told him that this plan of theirs could also kick them savagely in the ass.

His palms became sweaty as those steel like blue eyes seemed to look right at him. Those eyes promised pain and death. Gavin silently told himself that the man couldn't possible see him, but still a shiver went down his spine. for damn it, those eyes seemed so focused...As if he could see.

Then Wesley smirked darkly at Gavin making the lawyer realize suddenly that he better pray for the ass kicking. For there were a thousand things worse then a simple black and blue ass kicking...

(end of part 39)
Chapter 40: Page 40

Part 40

Lilah opened the door and carefully stepped into the expensive Wolfram and Hart Penthouse that gave comfort or tried to give half-assed comfort to many special prisoners. A beautiful gilded cage, Lilah had always silently called it. But still a cage none the less.

After she stepped in the door shut and locked itself behind her without her saying or doing anything. The only way she would be able to leave was by speaking into the special code box beside the steel door. That gave the impression of an elevator, but that was just a lie. She would also have to type in the number code that changed daily into the lock. Also outside the door was a huge muscled demon that standing guard...

Lilah smiled to herself. This penthouse was only for the real special ones, there was also a shield of strong magic to keep anyone in and other things out. Wes should feel happy with this 'special' treatment. Wolfram and Hart didn't do this for just anyone.

She tilted her head as she set down some files and books she had thought he might be interested in upon a clean coffee table. Her smile softened before saying gently, "You know, we do have a cleaning staff paid to do that...And really how many times can you clean around here? You're our guest not our slave."

Wes ignored her as he viciously sprayed more Pledge upon an already polished wooden bookshelf and took the old rag in his other hand and scrubbed furiously.

"I'm thinking that maybe I should let you clean my place. Cause, WOW, were you a housekeeper in your former reality?"

Only then did Wesley shoot her a deadly hateful glare that spoke volumes before turning his stiff ramrod back her way and continued to polish.

Lilah walked over to the leather sofa, smoothing her dark business suit's skirt before sitting down on the edge with a sigh. Her smile now gone as she watched him quietly for some time before saying softly, "I wish I could say I'm sorry and mean it. People like me don't have that in our vocabulary. Plus, if I said it, the word coming from my lips would be nothing but a lie. I know it must feel weird and scary being taken from heaven and placed into this reality which is hugely different from your own..."

The Watcher stopped polishing but didn't look at the lawyer. That was a sure sign that he was listening to her. She continued, "I wonder, did you ever meet the me in your reality? I doubt that you did but one never knows. I know so little about your world. Wolfram and Hart have files on countless realities, but your former one...We ended up with a very short file, that's like a paragraph long, for there is a powerful goddess protecting that world...A goddess who seems to have a strong dislike for Wolfram and Hart."

"I can see why." Wes said in a low tone, turning and looking at her. Leaving the rag upon the shelf but still holding the spray bottle. His blue eyes full of sadness and pain. Something flashed within his blue depths before saying in a raw emotional harsh tone. "Why?"

Lilah looked away. "As I've already explained, your Angel came and took this realities Wesley."

"NO!" He cut in sharply, making Lilah look at him, then he said softly, gently. "I understand that, oddly enough, I understand. I just want to know *why* you *people* ripped me out of heaven and why you want to use me as a bloody pawn in a sodding game that...That I never wanted to be involved with in the first place! Just tell me WHY! Explain it to me!"
Lilah studied him disbelievingly. "You understand? Your lover came into this reality and--"

Wes rolled his eyes, turning away and going over to the huge mirror upon the wall. Looking deeply into it as if trying to see if he was still being studied like a fucking bug under some glass or a mouse in a twisted maze being watched by scientists in bright white lab coats for their own amusement.

"You have to know my beloved to understand and I understand. You don't know my Angel, like I do. *I* was his *everything*. His very soul and demon cried out for me. Hell, there was a time I didn't really understand that but I do now. My death had to have ripped him apart. No, I'm sure it did. He loved me so damn much, should I really hate the fact that he came to this reality to find another me? Another Wesley, instead of ripping me out of my resting place? I can't hate him or hate the fact that he came and got this realities Wesley so he could continue to love. Continue to live as a champion and a warrior...I could never hate him, never. Angel's heart and love are so pure and overwhelming...The other Wesley deserves to feel that kind of love. To know that kind of love. I had it. Lived it. So another has it, all I can do is accept that fact. Even if it hurts--I accept it."

Lilah never saw the eyes flash coldly as Wesley continued to look into the mirror, his voice was now hard as granite. "What I don't understand is why? Rip me out of heaven and use me as a sodding pawn? I don't know about this realities Wes, but I damn sure don't like being fucking used!"

Lilah stood up, smoothing her skirt once more. "He didn't either. Wolfram and Hart are simply tired of waiting for Angel to turn dark or to join our ranks willingly. With Wesley gone and also his Seer, he'd realize just what he's lost. He's missing Wesley more and more. Even more than Ms. Chase. We believe he'd do anything to help you. You have never been through a lot of things that the other Wes has gone through. Be almost like a fresh new start."

"I've never met a Ms. Chase and my lover's Seer is Doyle..."

"Was. In this world, Doyle died giving Ms. Chase the visions. Like I said this world is different from your own."

Wes looked over his shoulder at her as she moved towards him. "Yes, this world is indeed different, in so many ways I'm sure. So different, yet you people plan to use me as a pawn in a game I don't fully understand. Never have I played this game though I do know already that I don't like it. For it's evil. Truly wicked."

She smiled as if very pleased by what he said. "Mm-mm, yes, wicked indeed. Especially evil...My most favorite words. They really turn me on." She said seductively, almost purring, moving almost like a cat in heat.

He narrowed his eyes at her thoughtfully, before asking almost quietly. "Did you know the other Wesley?"

If possible, Lilah's smile grew. Eyes sparkling with a knowledgeable mysterious look. Two fingers playing with a button upon her blouse. "Yes, very, very well in fact." Her voice now even more husky than before. One beautiful, finely manicured, hand reached out and caress his shoulder.

Wesley jerked away from her touch as if he had been burned. "Don't do that!" He hissed loudly. "Never touch me! You creep me out big time and now I have a strong desire to vomit!"

For a moment she looked deeply hurt but only for a moment. She quickly cupped her hands behind her back saying in a normal voice. "Sorry...I'm..." Lilah took a deep breath. "I didn't mean to...You're very different from my...From Wesley. He didn't trust me but...He knew how the game was played...I'm not going to do anything to hurt you."
"I think you've done enough to hurt me." Wes stated bitterly. "You are fucking using me to get to this world's Angel! Is this Angel so different from mine that you would do what you've already done! My Angel would not have allowed you to live for daring to even *breathe* near me!"

"This world's Angel isn't like your Angel but I met your Angel once. Just didn't know it at the time..." She whispered, yearning to put her hand protectively upon her neck as she remembered the other Angel grabbing her and the deadly promise in his dark eyes that had glittered with amber. "They're different. *Very* different."

Wesley turned all the way to face her, his head titled. "But they are still champions. Guardians of good are they not?"

"Sometimes." She said softly, honestly.

Wesley smirked. "Sometimes, huh? So this world's Angel can be deadly. Dangerous and you still want to play with him? Is that really wise, Ms. Morgan? Pulling on a savage jungle cat's tail?"

"He has a soul, but his threats are just that threats nothing more than that."

"Aww, but you must remember he's a demon. A powerful hungry demanding savage demon rattling the cage, waiting for any moment of weakness before he strikes. One day you'll find all those threats are actually promises and if you are lucky you'll die quick, so quick you won't feel any pain. If you're lucky of course and after meeting you. I already know that's a really big 'if'."

Lilah was surprised to feel an icy chill run down her spine, she swallowed hard before saying calmly, "You don't know the Angel of this world, Wes, he's different. As different as our reality is from yours..."

Wes looked down at the Pledge spray bottle in his hand, with a shrug he said carelessly, "Different yes, but still goes by the name 'Angel'. He's still a vampire with a soul. He willingly fights the good fight so that means..." Wesley looked over at Lilah, daring her to deny it..."That means I trust him to do right and that...in some way, never even meeting him, a part of me knows him. Knows the way he can be. Could be and then I simply accept him the way he is. That in itself says a lot. *Is* a lot." Wes finished softly. Looking back at the mirror.

Lilah moved to stand beside him, she too was looking into the mirror. "There's worse things than being a pawn, Wes."

"Really?" He answered back softly, before asking. "Have you ever been a pawn?"

Her brown eyes willingly met his in the mirror. "More times than I'd like to count...Until I learned the game and became more than just another pawn."

"What exactly *is* the game? I know I'm the pawn, no doubt about that and I know it involves Angel..."

"The Senior Partners of Wolfram and Hart have been watching Angel for a long time. They have big plans for him, so do the Powers. You see both sides want him on their team and Angel knows this."

"He'll never be on yours. He's too good for that."

"That's not written in stone, Angel is quite literally like the wind, never sure when or where it will blow."

"Really? Tell me, how are you forcing his hand?"
Lilah tsked and rolled her eyes. "You're smart Wes, and you already know you're the pawn so I think your big brain has figured it out...But if you want to hear the words, fine. We give Angel, you for his enslavement to the Senior Partners."

"That's barbaric." Wes told her finally looking her way. "But you honestly think it will work? I thought you told me, the other Wes and him weren't exactly *together* as me and my Angel were."

"You two were never lovers, but were friends. At times at least and he does care about the other Wes, like I said he misses him at least that is what all the sources say..."

"Well, yes...As he should, he is Angel after all..." He titled his head slightly, still studying her. Both hands tightening upon the bright yellow Pledge bottle. "Can I ask something else?"

"Go ahead, not sure if I'll answer it...But for you I'm tempted."

"In my world Xander Harris was and is the strongest magical being outside of the Goddess Hero of course. He's a powerful balancer. He can also feel if magic users are...abusing magics and can stop it instantly. He's a true Guardian over the Hellmouth...When I asked the first time, you said you didn't know much about him. You researched for me and said that he is a nothing in this world except a friend to a Slayer and Witch...He has no power...You also tell me that you knew the Wesley of this world. In some ways he's like me, knows countless languages and researches, very smart and you've hinted at...At a..." Wesley wrinkled his nose in true disgust. "Relationship of sorts...Tell me, Lilah, is Wesley of this world...Was he a Neptee? Is there such a thing in this world?"

Lilah's forehead wrinkled in confusion. "Neptee? I've never heard of that before...Doubt there is such a thing...What in your world was that your cute little club name or something?"

"Or something..." Wesley shrugged. "Not important really. Neptee is a odd ancient dangerous power. It's kind of like alcohol to an alcoholic. The power, plus...They have no control over that power, the power controls them. Unless of course they've trained themselves to deny themselves the use of it...They accept that it's apart of themselves even while hating it. For it can destroy so much, people they love, care for. Destroy themselves, even the world...If they are not super careful...I'll tell you a secret Lilah, a secret I did my damndest to keep from my lover...I'm one of those 'they'. I'm Neptee! There are certain things I'm not allowed to do...Like go out and fight demons on my own according to my Angel! Neptee actually means 'powerful addict'. Like a drug, deadly drug. I never do certain things like use the Neptee power I was born with or it could end up bad. Really bad."

"I don't believe Neptee exist in this world so it's very likely that when we resurrected you that it..."

"Didn't come with me?" Wesley sighed. "Not so simple, could never be taken from me...I just really wish my Xander was around to make sure I don't lose it, don't suddenly go insane or something bad...I'm always afraid of losing control. Did you know that Xander and Spike were the only one's in Sunnydale who knew that secret? They kept telling me to talk to *him* about it..." Wesley laughed bitterly. "Yeah, right at times I didn't want to even talk to *them* about it! I knew Angel would understand and still love me, I knew that but...But if I told him about my being Neptee then I'd have to tell him other stuff that I couldn't...I wasn't ready to do that. I was never as strong emotionally like he was, plus, Angel always thought important talk had to involve sex or comfort sex. Not that there is anything wrong with that but how could I tell him...He wanted to be bonded to a Neptee! That in itself is never good!"

"Wesley..." Lilah asked, unexpectedly taking a tiny step back. She quickly took another one as her heart started to kick in over time. Beating violently against her chest. For looking at her weren't beautiful blue
clear eyes but solid black with a small hint of red in the center that got brighter with each passing second.

"NEPTEE..." Wesley snarled. "That is only one of my fucking problems, you now being one of them, you sodding stupid bitch! Since you ripped me out of heaven I've been feeling it clawing at me! Driving me close to batty! I'm here in a world that isn't even close to being mine and again I must mention you ripped me out of a peaceful heaven into this...This HELL! I'm...I'm scared and you want me to be scared! I'm not even sure if anyone needs me in this world, other to be some buggered pawn for Wolfram and fucking Hart's silly stupid goddamn game!"

The bottle of Pledge suddenly exploded into a little fire ball, it disappeared as he waved his hand and she went flying against the far wall. He slowly walked across the room. Watching her lay in a tossed rag doll lump upon the floor. She groaned as horrid pain swept through her. She shook as it unexpectedly faded. She sat up, lower body still on the floor, arms keeping her up. Brown eyes met his desperately.

"Angel needs you...This world's Angel needs you, you're more than a pawn that's why...That's why I told Wolfram and Hart that you were the only one to entrap him. Because *you* matter to him! He has fallen apart since the other Wesley left. It's more than just losing his Seer! He's just now realizing what and who he lost. Someone he loves!" Lilah spoke honestly. Looking at him, scared for her life, knowing it was in danger. Hoping that telling the truth about Angel's need for him would keep her alive...

The harsh scary red in the blackness faded as Wesley stared at her, his eyes slowly faded to normal. "I imagine he does but Lilah, I'm not going to be used by you. The other Wesley may have...I don't know what you two had, don't really want to know but I'm not him. Never am I going to be used by you or Wolfram and Hart." He moved in closer, going to her and kneeling down to meet her face to face. "I'm not a fucking pawn..." His eyes turned black once more, the small red haze swirled within their depths. Savagely. Dangerously.

Surprisingly, the ground shook violently. The lights went out and all Lilah could see was the eerie red coming from Wesley's eyes. "I can so easily destroy you. Wolfram and Hart and the Senior Partners you speak off, just with my thoughts alone!"

The ground stopped shaking, the lights flashed back on and Wesley's eyes returned to his regular blue once more. He smiled sadly, almost regretfully. "One should always be careful of what one pulls out of heaven or be it hell. There is always a price to be paid, Lilah. You sold your very soul so long ago that you can't even see the cost anymore. You think it doesn't matter but it does and one day hopefully you'll realize this. Your soul isn't as black and dark as you believe it to be. There still is a small light, your heart is holding tightly to." He cupped the lawyer's face. Eyes looking into eyes. Windows to the soul they say. Those brown normally cold eyes widened. "I see it. The part you deny. That your mind pushes away. I see it now. Neptee's see things. See the soul...One day you'll see it too. The light. The beautiful breathtaking light. You'll find it I'm sure. I'm going to go now and find this world's Angel and you're going to tell the Senior Partners that I'm not a pawn and they better not play with me..."

Wesley slowly let go of her face. She franticly reached out to him, truly panic stricken.

"Wait! Wh-What did you do!?! I can't see!...I can't...Oh, God..."

"And you never will again. Unless you decide to embrace that light within yourself...Doubtful, but you never know. Hopefully without your sight you'll come to see...Maybe even change or something. I wish I could say I'm sorry. But you changed my world and being Neptee...A change for a change, plus I'm using the power to escape. For my own selfish needs according to the power I hold it demanded...It will forever hold your sight captive. Nothing will set it free until 'it' chooses and it never lets go of what it sees as its own, including you...Sorry." He said gently, almost regretfully before willing himself with the dangerous magic out of the penthouse and off Wolfram and Hart's property.
"No! Please! Wesley! I can't be blind, I just can't...Please...Don't leave me blind, I...I can't be blind...It's dark, I can't...Please...I can't be blind...I can't..." She hung her head as she started to weep.

But she was blind, a prisoner of darkness, and Wesley was already long gone.

end of part 40
Part 41

Wesley took huge deep breaths. His eyes wild and wide. His hands were already shaking and sweat beaded upon his pale forehead. He was afraid. Truly panicked and there wasn't a damn thing he could do about it.

He really shouldn't have done that. Used magic to escape, not that he had wanted to stay prisoner...But...What he did, allowed to happen just now...Damn it! He refused to be used by those sodding morons or let them make a slave out of this world's Angel...

Everything was so different. He had simply teleported out of the law firm after finding out what their evil plan and game was. Now he found himself lost in a big huge unfamiliar city. With no one he could call. No one from his world and say, "Hi, this is your Wesley, guess what happened to me?" There was no one. He was alone...In a new world. Unknown reality. In the wildness of LA.

In his world he had heard stories about LA

He just hoped none of the stories were true in this world! And also odd he had just flashed himself here upon a busy street corner and no one noticed!

There were so many people. So much noise. Too much noise, even the sun burned at his eyes it seemed too bright. To harsh. This was surly hell.

Wesley wrapped his arms around himself as two collage age men with backpacks nearly knocked him down on his arse. They didn't even say 'sorry' as they walked by as if he didn't exist. Maybe it was his fault, he shouldn't have been standing in the middle of what looked to be a busy sidewalk. Full of strangers...Reminding him that he was alone and didn't fit in...He was an outsider. Didn't belong...This world was theirs not his...Never his...

This time a large woman holding a small dog nearly ran him over and with a single fluid leap he was pressing himself against a hard side street's business wall. He was scared. So damn afraid and he hated the feeling. Hated feeling so vulnerable. So out of place.

Damn Wolfram and Hart! Damn them to the worst hell possible! Ripped out of heaven to come here! HERE! To this hell! He felt violated. Out of place, out of touch. As if he had been brutally raped out of everything!

Wes was some what surprised to find his vision blurry with tears..He needed to find Angel. He knew he wouldn't be *his* Angel, but at least he'd be safe. Protected. Maybe...Hopefully.

He was alive again and he needed hope. Needed Angel...He needed to feel safe once more...

Wouldn't you just know it. The one thing he had secretly hated and took for granted he now wanted desperately. Angel's protection. To feel safe once more. Feel loved.

He spotted a few pay phones across the street, hopefully he'd be able to find Angel in the phone book or even see if there was a Guardian Investigations...

As he ran across, car horns honked loudly offensively as they nearly ran him over. When he finally got over there with a much to fast beating heart, he cursed loudly when he found that none of the pay phones had public phone books and many of the phones were damaged in some way. There was even one the had used chewed bubble gum on the ear piece to which Wes made a face of disgust mumbling, "Oh, lovely..."
He then remembered he carried no change. Had no money what so ever. Nothing...

'Why not use it again?' A voice whispered silkily in his mind. 'Use the power to find this world's Angel. You didn't lose control with Lilah now did you? You didn't even destroy the world or yourself. You have the power why not use it?'

Wesley shook his head violently. "NO!" He said rawly. Horse with emotion.

'You like it. The rush. The power. You wanted to destroy more than that bitch's sight. You have every right to destroy you know, to use the power that is yours. They are trying to destroy you. Maybe they already have...Took you way from heaven didn't they? Make them pay, use it...'

"Stop...Stop it..." Wesley moaned closing his eyes tight.

'Haven't used the power in years, now it's awake once more. The evil ones awoke it. You think you have the strength to keep pretending, like you used to? It's no longer sleeping, Wes. The power that has always been apart of you...Go on...Use it. Make this world pay for what it's doing to you...Making you feel less than what you are...Making you feel like a victim. Helpless. Raped...Do you honestly think this world's Angel can help you? Help yourself, use the power..."'

Wesley suddenly punched the metal pay phone violently. The dark voice now suddenly quiet as he hurt his fist. Bruising his knuckles. He hit it a few more times with a raw angry frightened frustrated scream. Cutting his knuckles, making them bleed. He stopped hitting the pay phone taking in a painful shallow shaking breath, he tried to stop the tears. So hard he tried but they started to fall. Now instead of hitting the pay phone he was trying to hug it to his body.

"My God...Wesley...Is that you?" He turned his head to look at the total stranger before him. He blinked his watery eyes as he swallowed painfully. She looked tiny and delicate. She had a sweet southern voice that could melt anyone into a puddle of goo. Was that a surprise and concern in her gentle brown eyes?

Wesley sniffled and looked passed her to see a familiar face behind her. He blinked in stunned wonder, unsure he could believe what he was seeing.

Gunn standing in direct sunlight.

"You're...You're not a vampire..." Wes said softly in stunned wonder before leaping and grabbing him. Uncaring that he may have pushed the concerned stranger who had spoken to him first away. Not caring that she landed on her bottom with an 'Oof' upon the hard sidewalk.

Gunn stiffened, looking helplessly at his girlfriend, who was slow at standing back up, as Wesley tightened his arms around big black man's upper body and trying to bury his face into Charles muscled bright orange T-shirt, clad chest.

"Help me, please Charles, help me..."

Was all they could understand but those words were enough.
"I'm seriously weirded out by this." Gunn stated watching Wesley look around the Hyperion with awe and lost wonder upon his face.

Fred looked her boyfriend up and down, hands upon narrow small hips. "You mean you weren't already weirded out when Wesley grabbed you into a hug and refused to let go? On an extremely busy street corner, no less? Or during our ride over here he kept feelin' ya up and asking if you were a special species of vampire that he's never heard of. Then he rested his head on your shoulder and started to babble about all kinds of things. Only *now* after all that, you're WEIRDED out?!?"

Gunn crossed his arms and gave Fred a lifted eyebrow, "Yeah, okay, you might have a point and hell yeah, I was weirded out before but now...Anyway, he's from a different reality and it's..."

"It's just hitting him." Wes cut in, explaining. "For this is all very strange. A strange world with strange people. A strange *me*. As it's all hitting me and Gunn is just now realizing...He's being slapped silly." Wes stated still looking around. He gave them a sharp look picking up a business card before looking at them. "Angel Investigations? He actually has the business named after himself...Was that the name voted upon? Silly don't you think? Named after himself...And what is a crab doing on the business card?"

"Um, actually the crab is really an angel." Fred explained.

Wes lifted an elegant dark eyebrow. "Does this really look like an angel to you?" Showing her the business card like she had never seen it before, pointing at the picture in question.

"Well, actually, no it doesn't but...But I was told it was an angel by Cordelia so it has to be an angel that is all there is to that."

"Because you were *told* it was..." Wesley said softly, studying her closely, as if wondering if she was nothing more than a mindless minion.

"Well...Yes." She replied gently. Cupping her hands in front of her.

"Well, *I* think it looks like a deformed crab."

Fred smiled, "Yeah, it does but everyone else calls it an angel and I've never cared to argue."

Wesley smiled back before glancing at a now silent Gunn. "So, what do you think it is, crab or angel?"

"A bird." Gunn stated matter of factly. Then gave them an intense look as if daring for a fight. "That's what I always thought it was."

Wesley flipped the card over and looked at it, then shrugged. "Yeah, that's another strong possibility." He then tossed the card down on the counter top. It now lay there forgotten. "So, were would Angel be?"

"I'll...I'll go check to see if he's in his room." Fred said quickly moving towards the stairs. "If not we'll call him like Charles said while we drove here."

Gunn nodded, watching Fred disappear. Both men were quiet for a long time. Wesley wandered around. Looking at things, feeling like a stranger. Which he was, a stranger...He felt even more detached. Feeling so out of place.
"So..." Gunn moved to the counter, leaning against it. His attention now focused on Wesley. "I know you're from an alternate reality but why are you here?"

Wesley ran his hand across some old texts he'd found, wondering if they had once belonged to the other Wesley or if they belonged to Angel. In his world there was never any question, Wes' books were Angel's, Angel's were his...

He gave Gunn a side way glance before answering softly and uncertain of what his response should be. He knew he had to be honest but he wasn't sure just how honest he should be. If he opened up would he be mocked or pitied, right now he could honestly handle neither.

"Why? Because they wanted me to be their pawn. I didn't come here willingly. Never willingly." Wesley swallowed hard as he studied the book titles. Some familiar, some not. The titles and the books were actually becoming blurry as his eyes watered..."I was dead. Complete. Whole. At rest...My chapter in life was finished. I never knew such happiness and peace could exist, but then *they* the evil bastards ripped me out, violated me, why? Good question, it's the answer I loath. It was so I could be a bloody pawn in their sodding game and then it's not even enough that I was taken from heaven itself but I find that I'm not even in my own world. I'm in another and that the reality that used to be mine can never be mine again for another me is there. Living. Being happy. Which is good, I guess. Someone needs to be. We all, I guess have to go to hell for a taste of heaven just for me it was the other way around."

"Who the hell are *they*?" Gunn said coldly, dangerously as if something or someone had pissed him off and Wes had a feeling that wasn't him that made him so mad.

"Wolfram and Hart, ever heard of them?" Wes asked looking at him quickly from beneath his long lashes.

Gunn nodded. "Yeah, they're assholes, pure assholes."

"Yes, they are." Wesley quickly agreed.

Suddenly Gunn's eyes narrowed suspiciously, "After they brung your skinny white ass back they just let you walk right out their door?"

"Well, no...I escaped using magic. Powerful magic." Magic he shouldn't have used. Wes finished that damning thought quietly to himself.

"Oh...Kind of hard to picture that."

"I told Ms. Morgan to tell the Senior Partners to leave Angel and me alone before I escaped. I'm sorry that I didn't tell her to leave you alone as well. You and your girlfriend....Was that tiny skinny yet beautiful Texan your girlfriend?"

"Yeah, she's *my* girlfriend." He answered possessively.

Wesley moved away from the counter and leaned forward to whisper. "Have you always had a thing for well shaped brunettes? Tell me, is she, Fred, a Slayer?"

"Slayer? Wha--No and why would you think..."

"The other Gunn, my Gunn, he's with Faith, who's a Slayer and brunette. Your girl's name is Fred and is also brunette and hell even both names start with 'F'. It's really remarkable if one thinks about it...Would make sense if this Fred was a Slayer, would it not? Dating you and working here?"
"Sorry, but no she isn't a Slayer and actually her first name is Winifred." Gunn told him "...and yeah I guess I've always liked brunettes."

"Me too, I find them very sexy." Wesley said with a fond smile.

Gunn's eyes narrowed dangerously. "Fred's *my* girl."

Wesley snorted. "Well, no doubt! Really, Charles, Fred is lovely but you obliviously don't realize that I'm very much gay. I love men, I find brunette *men* sexy. Like I stated Fred is indeed lovely, no doubt but seeing as she is a woman nor does she have a penis you don't need to worry. I won't be eyeing up your girl. You maybe, sure. Even though you're not brunette you are still a sexy man. Well muscled, that shaved head is very attractive. Fred's a lucky woman. Faith once told me her man had a huge...Really shouldn't talk about such things, being British and all...Sorry, it's just a few days ago. I mean a few days before I died Faith was showing me this picture of...Now what did she say you called it? Oh, yes...Sweet Pea...She showed me a picture of Sweet Pea...Now that was sexy...You wouldn't happen to be related to a huge bull or stallion would you?"

Gunn's eyes nearly popped out of his skull. "S-Sweet Pea? You know about...But..."

"That you call your meat, your dingdong, 'Sweet Pea'? So you call it that to, not just my world's Charles? Interesting, really...You do realize that not many manly men such as yourself would have named their cock and balls, 'Sweet Pea'. I called Angel's 'The King of Kings' and Spike told me that Xander called his own 'Mighty Viking'...So I was real surprised by 'Sweet Pea'. I mean hell, a big bad vampire calling it 'Sweet Pea' doesn't send waves a fear down anyone's spine. Hell, even as a human vampire hunter, such as you are, one would never think to say, 'So, Charles, hows your Sweet Pea hanging?'

Gunn honestly looked as if he had swallowed his tongue whole, it seemed to take him a moment before he could say anything at all, desperately he said, "Please, man, don't tell anyone about that! Please...Not even my girl knows I call it Sweet Pea, she thinks it's a nickname for her in bed...I got a reputation, ya dig? Don't. Tell. Anyone....Please, English, I don't like to beg but I will if I have too, especially about this!"

"Don't worry, I won't let anyone know, it'll be our little secret, I promise, Charles."

"Thank you." Gunn looked relieved.

"You're very welcome...Sweet Pea..." Wesley said with a teasing smile, Gunn glared for a moment before he slowly smiled back.

Wes had a feeling he now had a friend in this world. Which was good. For this world was so different and such a scary place. He needed a friend right now. Really needed a friend.

Wesley suddenly turned serious. "Wolfram and Hart were going to use me as a pawn. To make Angel their slave. At least that is what I found out. Ms. Morgan said that they would have given me to Angel if he signed away his free will and became their puppet...Would he have done that? For me? Do you think their crazy plan would have worked?"

Gunn looked at him in surprise. "You're asking me?"

Wes blinked in stunned wonder at the young Vampire Hunter's surprise. "Well...Yes. You're a smart man and I value any of your thoughts on this matter as well as others, of course."

"What? I...You think I'm smart?"
"Why, yes. The Gunn in my world had at times had the most evil, insane ideas but they were surprisingly brilliant ideas. You may not be a chipped vampire but when I look at you I see the same intelligent spark in your eyes. The Gunn I knew was scary. He was strong but his mind was stronger and sharper than any I've ever known. He may not have known demon languages or was a whiz at math, or Word Puzzle 3D, but he'd notice things we'd miss or over look. It took me a long time to even come close to trusting him. Mostly, because he was a vampire who had tried to kill us many times. A chipped vampire which if that chip ever stopped working we'd all be dead but I slowly realized there was more to this street smart punk with attitude. He was a powerful brilliantly *smart* vampire who I could tell had been smart as a human. You two are very much the same...Well, except with him being dead and living on blood. He may never had a high school diploma but when he spoke his mind one better listen for something brilliant and possibly world saving was about to come out of his mouth. So honestly, talk to me. Tell me what you are thinking. Would what Wolfram and Hart had planned really have worked?"

Gunn went over to a chair and flopped down cupping his hands in front of himself. Leaning forward, elbows on his thighs. "There would have been a time I'd have said, 'Hell, no.' But...Lately, Angel's gone down hill, pretty damn fast and dangerously. Hell, if they had tried that stuff with Darla it might have even worked back then...But then again...Maybe not. Back then anyway, but that's then. This is now. And I know this much, Fred may have gone up stairs to look for Angel but he's not going to be up there. I'll tell ya where he is. He's at Wesley's old place, brooding. Missing Cordy and Wesley...Really missing Wesley. He's sitting there in that apartment refusing to leave...The only time he leaves that place is if he needs to fight. We get a case, he's on it. He'll do what needs to be done and then...Go back to Wes' to brood. Fred is probably calling Angel's cell right now from his room. See why I brought you here instead of there is the first place is to get him out of that fucking apartment. Needs to get out of that fucking bat cave or tomb he's put himself in. We don't need to worry about whether Wolfram and Hart's plan would have worked or not. You escaped. So we'll never know what would have happened. What we should worry about is what will be Wolfram and Hart's next move and trust me they will make another move."

Wesley suddenly studied his nails as he said in a small voice almost in a lost child like matter. "But I told Ms. Morgan to tell them to leave us alone."

Gunn lifted an eyebrow. "Yeah and I could walk right into their offices and tell them to bite themselves hard on their own Sweet Pea and I doubt, unless there was a spell involved, that would be happening."

Wesley moved over and sat down next to Gunn. "You're right. Though it would be funny to see them bite themselves down there..."

Gunn chuckled. "Yeah, man, it would...Hey, Wes?"

"Yes?"

"Thanks, man."

This time Wesley blinked at Gunn in surprise. "For what, Charles?"

"For making me feel smart if only for a moment."

Wesley's brow knotted in confusion. "But you are smart, didn't I tell you that?"

"Those are nice words, man, but they are just words. Don't feel smart, never felt smart."
"You know, a wise man once said, 'Ya don't have to feel it to know it to be true. A fool can call a smart man a dumb ass, but it takes a smart man to know whether that be truth or not and that fool just might be the smart man. Feelin's lie, even the smartest fool, like you, knows that.' End of quote."

Gunn turned his head and studied him, lifting an eyebrow, nodding before saying, "Wow, that's cool. Out of all the lame ass quotes out there that actually sounded real and true. Now that right there, you know was said by a wise and smart man..."

"He was...I'm sure he still is. In my reality his name is Charles Gunn." Wesley said looking him straight in the eye before saying carelessly, "So, tell me is there any alcohol around here? For I could really use a drink!"

(end of 42)
Angel had literally rushed through the doors of the hotel. If he hadn't been a vampire he would have surly been out of breath and wheezing by now.

Fred had called him. Told him something unbelievable. An alternate Wesley was here. She said that he seemed so lost, told him that they, she and Gunn, had found him crying on a busy street corner...

There was another Wesley in this world...Crying, lost, but in this world. Wait...Just a minute. Listen...That doesn't sound like crying but it sounded familiar. Very familiar. It was laughter. Wesley's laughter...

Gunn's voice was then heard and what ever he said must have been amusing for Wesley laughed once more. Angel now slowly, almost uncertainly walked over to his office to then stand and stare in complete wonder at the sight before him.

Wes and Gunn talking like old friends. Gunn looked so big and strong next to the extremely slender almost delicate looking Wesley...

Angel blinked. Delicate? What the hell? That word never was the word he had ever thought of with his Wesley, but upon seeing this Wesley.

Yeah, delicate was the word. Almost breakable. His hands were even trembling slightly. Shock, maybe?

He felt a strong need to rush over to him and hold him tight. Find a way to protect him. He yearned to reach out and touch him but he couldn't. Wouldn't. Didn't dare such a thing. Even if he longed to.

They hadn't noticed him as yet. Standing in the doorway watching them. Watching *Wesley* actually. He was staring truly entranced. Angel then watched Wesley's back stiffen slightly. His gaze never wandered from Wesley's face. Even his demon was completely still within him.

Wesley too seemed frozen, at that moment it was as if only the two of them existed in the world. Fascinated Wesley watched Angel inhale sharply, pointedly, very obviously drinking in the Watcher's scent from the distance. Knowing it. Recognizing the long missed scent that was Wesley...

Strangely this made Wesley feel safe, made him feel as if he wasn't so alone in this strange new world. It was a move he was used to from his own Angel. It was as familiar as breathing air was to him. Only one vampire ever did that simple move...

"Angel..." Wesley whispered softly, yearning to run and grab hold of him. Make Angel hold him tight. Wanting Angel to tell him things would be okay, even if that would be a bald faced lie. He could handle a lie as long as those arms were around him.

"Wes..." Angel stated with no _expression. Admitting to only himself how bleak and empty he had been feeling. Mourning both Cordy and Wesley as if they had died, yet knowing that they hadn't. They simply left him for something better. In his Wesley's case a better him.

He ignored the demon with in who rattled the steel cage. Roaring with something fierce, deadly and primitive. 'Wesley is here, he's the one, he's here! You're getting another chance you stupid prick! Jesus, Mary, and Joseph! Grab him, let him know right away, without any doubt who he belongs too!"

'Shut up, Angelus.'
'You know, you fucker...' The demon snarled hatefully. 'You've been comparing yourself to the other Angel ever since you met him! Every since you knew he was taking *our* Wesley away! He took him and without even a bloody fight! If it had been me, one of us wouldn't have stopped fighting until we've had our guts ripped out and even then I'd still be kicking! You arse, you! He was right, you know...Things would be better if you accepted me. Listened, to me every once in a while! So listen now, you shit for brains, take what belongs to ya! He's yours damn it, stop being afraid!'

'Gee, interesting point, now listen to my point...SHUT THE FUCK UP, YOU WORTHLESS IRISH ARSE!'

Angelus became surprisingly quiet but only for a second, 'Oh, very nice...Here I thought we were having a bonding moment. Sharing, opening up, but never mind, one can never talk reasonably to a fucking girly boy! And a selfish one at that! For can't you see the boy wants you to hold him, or are ye to proud for such a sodding thing?'

'You, Angelus, are evil! Don't you dare try to tell me that you want to do such a disgusting thing such as hug!...Do you?' Angel told his demon softly, even though he had questioned his demon there was still a strong hint of menace in his tone.

'Well, yes, too evil for hugging no doubt! But it's Wesley. He's a loophole. Can still be evil and hug with a loophole such as Wesley. My boy...Our boy. Damn, look at him, he needs a strong protector, a strong Master Vampire protector! I'd train that boy any day. It would be sweet torture and I like torture. I'd hold him tight, I would...' Then he replied defensively. 'Fine, whatever! Do what ya want you'll only fuck it all up anyway! Which I'll laugh myself silly when you do!'

With that his demon went back to ignoring him which suited Angel just fine. Finally he tried to smile happily and tenderly at Wes, even as he spread his arms wide to repeat, "Wes..."

In that instant Wes was off the sofa away from Gunn and in Angel's arms where he had wanted to be the moment he had been ripped from heaven. At once the earth shifted. Things would be forever different. Angel held him close. Tight.

'And here I thought you weren't going to hug him?' Angelus whispered in true astounding shock. Feeling something he had never felt before. The demon wasn't even sure what the feeling was. Wasn't sure if it terrified him or not, but the feeling was indeed different...Was this peace? Contentment? That the one he secretly yearned for was back where he belonged? The thought of claiming his boy--Angelus' own private thoughts came to an end as Angel told him...

'I never said that I wouldn't hug him! I simply told you to shut the fuck up. So do just that.'

To Angel's great surprise his demon did just that...For his demon needed to analyze that weird feeling he felt...

Wesley buried his head into Angel's shoulder. He closed his eyes and tried to pretend things would be okay. Pretend that this Angel was his, that this powerful vampire would never unwrap his strong safe arms from around him.

'But he's not your Angel or your world's Angel.' Wesley heard a voice whisper in his head. Despair hit him like waves. His eyes still closed tight he took what comfort he could get.

This was longer than a hug. This was turning into a lifeline for the both of them. Both men knew terrible sorrow. Both knew and accepted grief and pain but there was more in the world than just that.
Wesley opened his eyes and leaned back to look into beautiful dark brown eyes, the British man smiled tenderly at the shocked emotional vampire.

Wesley also knew there was such a thing as second chances and he was brought back for a reason. Maybe a stupid law firm believed the reason was to be a pawn in their evil game but maybe...Just maybe it went deeper than that.

Sorrow. Grief. Pain. Out of those could make for beautiful second chances. To live again. To hope. To laugh. To help make the world better. To even perhaps...Love. And maybe he could help give all those things to this Angel. He wondered if this vampire believed in second chances. Surly he did, didn't he? A vampire with a soul, he helped give people second chances all the time...Gave them hope...Didn't he?

Well...That don't matter right now. What mattered was there was a souled vampire who needed him if those dark eyes were to be believed.

Angel let him go as he swallowed hard as he watched Wesley get a determined glint in his beautiful clear blue eyes. His lips curved into a know it all smirk. "Thank you, Angel, your arms felt real nice, and well muscled, tell me do you work out?"

The vampire took a slight step back, surprised by the flirting Wes, and if a vampire could blush he honestly would have! "I...I do work out...Quite a lot actually."

Wesley looked him up and down lustfully, "I sure can tell."

"I...I'm not gay." Angel stated quickly. Way to quickly.

Wesley's smile got bigger and the lustful glint turned to laughter. Knowing that vampires were Bi in pretty much all dimensions. "Oh, don't worry I am, Big Boy, very much gay...I'm happy too if you can believe it!"

With that Angel squawked like a little girl when Wes reached around him and pinched his fine Irish arse.

The Watcher then went back to the sofa as if nothing happened to face Gunn once more. "Sorry, dear chap, hope you didn't find me stopping your amusing tale to hug Angel. So as you were saying 'there was a huge ass scary monster in the sewer that shot fire out of *both* ends...'

Angel blinked. wondering what he should do. He wanted to hold Wesley some more and why the hell did he find Wesley pinching his arse a turn on? Hell he didn't like anyone touching his arse much less pinching it!

"Wes?"

Wesley tilted his head to look over at him. "Yes, Angel?"

"We are going to have to talk."

Wes nodded. "Well, yes, no doubt. But for right now could you spare some of your Irish whiskey that Gunn swears you hide somewhere in this old building. Come and sit down with us. As Doyle always says..."

Wesley suddenly became quiet, hanging his head, his hand tightening into a fist.

Another friend he'll never see. Another thing he's lost. Another time, another place. He turned lifted angry wet blue eyes to the vampire. "He always said that alcohol helps with the talking and helps with so much more...I...I need the so much more. I need help, Angel, I need help."
"My whiskey won't be helping ya, Wes, but *I* will be, I do promise."

Wesley reached out and took Angel's pale cold hand, he pressed his warm lips to it giving it a light kiss in gratitude. "Thank you, Angel, thank you so much." Wesley let go of his hand. "Now be a friendly lad and go get the bottle, won't you please?"

Angel went to get the much needed bottle. His hand still tingling and feeling warm for the first time in years.

(end of part 43)
Angel moved slowly down the hall. Fred had ordered Chinese as everyone sat and talked with Wesley. He was so different from what Angel knew but then so were everyone Wes knew. He knew Wesley was still in shock and scared, who wouldn't be?

When the food arrived, Fred had told him that she had also ordered some food for Connor as well. His son should be in his room. 'Should' being the key word of course.

Angel had been so tempted to kick the little bastard, his dear son, out of his home but decided against that. Keep him close. Angel may not trust Connor but keep him close anyway. Keep an eye on him.

Maybe, in his wildest hopes, show Connor that he wasn't the bad guy. Show him that he had to work for his Dad's trust once more. Though he had a feeling that his son didn't give a flying fuck about forgiveness or trust. Even though Angel hadn't been around him all that much...He still cared for his boy. He just wanted to knock him around and throw him through the damn windows and send him flying. And that desire scared the old vampire more than he wanted to admit. He'd look at his son, still feel love for him but hated who he was. He wanted to punch him, yell at him, hold him tight. The desire to hurt his son was more powerful than the yearning to hold his boy and that was one of the reasons he stayed away. For he was dangerous right now...

At least then...Losing both Cordy and Wesley. Knowing he'd already lost his son so long ago...That relationship was long ago destroyed. He wasn't sure how to fix it. If it could be fixed.

He wanted to be a good father, really he did. He wanted to be better than his own, he just wasn't sure how to go about it. How to be that wonderful Father he wished he could be. The kind of Father he himself had wanted. The Father he'd promised his own son he'd be as he held close his beloved son as an infant.

He loved his son, but was love enough? Didn't seem so. He knew he loved him, he just wasn't sure he liked him all that much.

Part of him wished he'd killed Holtz like Connor had believed. The bitter bastard had taken his son and destroyed him. Destroyed any goodness his son could have had. Would have had.

He helped people all the time, but those people had wanted it. Needed it. His son, didn't want it, especially from a vampire. A vampire who was his father...

##

"Connor? Who's Connor?" Wesley's innocent question still seemed to echo in Angel's head.

"Angel's son." Fred told Wesley with a warm grin.

"SON!! Angel has a *son*? H-How? What--Don't tell me vampires in this world can have babies!"

"Hell, no dog! It was a miracle birth and all. Darla came back courtesy of Wolfram and Hart. She and Angel did the big 'it'. Then she staked herself in an alley giving birth to Connor. Later Holtz, bad guy shows up, takes Angel's son who is a baby, to a hell dimension where Connor then grows up hating vampires and Angel. Comes back to this world real crazy, an eighteen year old who is seriously psycho. Serious issues, man, I'm telling ya. Whatever you do don't trust him, he'll hurt you the moment you get comfortable." Gunn told him, eyes serious, mouth a thin hard line.
Wesley blinked slowly as if coming out of a daydream.

"Oh...Um...That's...Interesting." He looked over at Angel. "There's more to that cliff notes version than Gunn told me isn't there? So, you actually have a son? A human son?"

"Yes." Angel said softly. Wondering why he felt like he had cheated on Wesley. Which he hadn't but still, he felt guilty. "He once was a beautiful sweet baby...Now Connor is a hateful, full of anger and rage and he's a teenager. He's going to turn my hair grey, I'm sure of it." He finished the sentence with a half hearted grin.

"Lilah said your soul wasn't permanent something about not having sex."

"Can't have perfect happiness..." Angel stated calmly. Wesley had explained about Wolfram and Hart ripping him out of heaven and some of his escape.

Wesley studied him, "But you can have sex...Bet you have to now wear a condom if you sleep with another female...Or a male. Still no more bare backing for you."

Fred and Gunn eyed the Watcher strangely. Even Angel looked at him wide eyed. Stunned. They weren't used to Wesley talking so freely about sex. Wesley looked at them not understanding the strange looks on their faces.

"What? I'm just saying, I know it was a miracle supposedly and all but still...Angel, you might still...you might think about wearing a condom the next time. Just because you're a vampire doesn't mean you should continue to go bare backing anytime soon."

"Wes..." Angel tried to cut in even though he felt like his tongue was glued to the top of his dry mouth. This Wes was talking about sex without stuttering or blushing like their Wes would have done. Before the knife cut into his throat before everything went horribly wrong. As he and life made Wesley cold and hard. Bitter. Trying to turn the man's heart and blood into ice. Knowing the mind was a steel trap and knew the thoughts within that head were deadly and dangerous. Angel had once tried to punish that Wesley, for not being perfect. For being human...

This Wes was different. He laughed freely even in pain and fear. He talked about sex as if it was natural and to them that wasn't natural.

"Might not have even been a true miracle, like you thought. There are some demon species who's blood could have made it possible for Darla to get pregnant, even some demon's claws have been known to have certain drug like aspects. Certain things have been known to make the impossible, well, possible. Or even cursed jewelry. The night you had sex before or during with Darla were any of you wearing any forms of powerful mystic jewelry? A ring, broach, or necklace perhaps?" Wesley asked, mind working out theories, yearning to understand this new strange world. Make some sense of it.

Angle studied him as he blinked slowly. "Um...I, um...Hmmm...Don't remember much about...Wasn't wearing jewelry...During..."

Wesley grabbed on to the 'During' like a shark on a wounded fish.

"Before?"

"Well...There was a ring, but it had nothing to do with--"
"Do you know if this ring was mystical?"

Angel quickly eyeballed the room, shifting upon his heels, hands on his hips. He had a strong need to hit himself hard on his forehead. A knot in his stomach, he never really thought much about *that* night...Never thought about why Darla came to him, what he had, what he gave her before he had his wicked way. What he had indeed been wearing and even touching as he threw it at her feet. What she had taken before leaving after he threw her out...He knew as he threw it at her feet she reached for it, but did she touch it? She did indeed touch it afterward for she took it with her...

No, that was impossible...'Certain things have been known to make the impossible, well, possible'

"Yeah, but that ring...Couldn't..."

"What were you told about this ring's purpose?" Wesley shot at him quickly, daring him to be honest.

"It was supposed to send me to hell, that was all it was supposed to do!"

"Well, I never knew about the ring, man, but I think it did what it was supposed to do. All you have to do is look at Connor." Gunn said dryly.

Wesley looked sick and down right pale. Shock radiated upon his face. "You...You said you wore the ring...You wanted to go to hell, but...Why?"

Angel couldn't look at Wes. Not with those pain filled knowledgeable eyes studying him. Angel shrugged as if he didn't give a damn...'Yeah, well, it's not like I haven't been there before."

Only then did Wesley look away from him and Angel looked at him. He hadn't believed it was possible but Wes looked even paler. Sicker. "You've been there before? Actual hell?" Wesley looked back at him, eyes glistening with tears, he was crying for him. Angel flinched, sucker-punched. When people heard about him being in hell, he never got that reaction.

"Yeah." Angel stated softly. "I have, I guess your Angel...He never?"

Wesley violently shook his head. "No, never!"

Angel tightened his jaw before rubbing the back of his neck with his hand, mumbling darkly, "I fucking *hate* that Bastard."

Wesley looked confused at that for a second before he got back to the subject at hand, "You were willing to go *back* to hell, in the great goddess Hero's name why?"

"To fight. To kill everything before it killed me or killed someone else. To kill even that thing from hell that made me the demon I am. The demon I can be. It made sense at the time! Going to the 'Home Office' in hell itself. But all it did was put me in an elevator with a dead guy, who gave me a long speech about how hell was in the heart of all men and women. All of mankind had hell itself in their heart..."

"True." Wes said thoughtfully, with a slight nod.

The vampire looked sharply at him. All the Watcher did was give him a long look that said so many things before Wes continued, "Hell is indeed in every human heart but so is heaven. There is a balance. People choose which part they want or need to follow. Hell or heaven. Sometimes we get lost or lose focus but hell and heaven, good and evil are there. We decide the road, the path even if someone forces us upon it, we choose to walk or stand still. To forgive or not to forgive. To kill or have mercy. Though being in an
elevator with a talking dead guy could have indeed been hell itself."

Angel gave half a smile at Wes' attempt to add a little humor. "At least the elevator wasn't playing church music, like 'The Old Wooden Cross' for example."

Wesley smiled "Could have been much worse, the elevator could have been playing Brittny Spears and the dead guy could have been Hitler talking nonstop about his glory days."

Angel laughed for the first time in months, he actually laughed. "True! And the dead guy could have been poking me with hot sharp pokers telling me about his sex life!"

Wesley gave a happy grin before it slowly faded. "So after that you took off the ring and had sex with Darla..."

Angel sighed, knowing that Wesley wasn't going to let things go until he knew and understood everything. "I took the ring home with me, Darla showed up. She wanted the ring, I gave it to her. I knew the ring wasn't what she *really* wanted, so I gave that to her as well. We sucked but I don't think she wore it."

"But she touched it? Before or after the sex?"

Angel started to pace, hands shoved into his pants pockets, looking at the floor. Had the ring really...But it had been a miracle from the Powers, hadn't it? Or was it really because of a mystical ring? Not destiny but something else altogether.

"She took it with her when I threw her arse out, but surly the ring wouldn't have..."

"It was mystic in origin. Meant for hell or something very powerful and dangerous. Meant to make the impossible possible. Both of you wanted that ring. Both may have worn it, did indeed touch the ring. I'm certain the ring had something to do in helping create your *human* son."

"Damn, that makes sense!" Gunn told them reminding Angel and Wes that he and Fred were still in the room. "Didn't know about the ring and I guess we never really tried to figure out the 'how'. Wes was busy with the 'why' side of Connor. Busy with prophecies and such, trying to figure out Angel's and Connor's future."

Wes blinked. "Prophecies, you say? What are--Oh! I've heard of rumors about countless worlds having those, never thought I'd ever go to one, must say this is fascinating...You actually try to understand those?"

"You're reality has no prophecies?" Fred asked dumbfoundly.

"We have Goddess Hero to give us guidance."

"Goddess Hero?" They all questioned at the same time.

Wesley closed his eyes. Suddenly, looking anguished...Sad. Lonely. Heartbroken. "This world is so different. To different...I'm not sure I like it all that much..."

##

Angel understood, sometimes he didn't like this world all that much either.

His hands curled around Connor's still warm dinner. He stopped at his son's door. He knocked softly.
"Connor?" Angel called out. "Got your dinner."

The door swung open, his dark haired son glared at him before taking the food from his hands and slamming the door hard in front of his face. Angel glared at the door murderously. He wanted to throw open that door and...

And...Hurt him as much as he had hurt him...

For not loving him as he loved him...For rejecting him when he kept trying to accept him...

"You should learn to say 'thank you' every once in a while!" Angel told the door calmly. Having a feeling that Connor could hear him even with the door between them.

Which he knew was right on the money when he heard his darling sweet boy shout, "Fine! You want a thank you? Here's one, Thanks you asshole for not even ordering me an egg roll to go with this crap!"

Angel tightened his fists, to a bony hard white. Fists of deadly steel. He really should have kicked the little bastard out after he got out of the ocean. He should have put him over his knee and spanked the hell out of him. He could still do those things...If his own Father could be a heartless bastard then why the hell couldn't he?

Disown him, after beating the crap out of him. Breaking a few bones...

He gave one last glare at the door before the glare turned sad. The thing was he wasn't like his Father. He wasn't a heartless bastard...

He turned upon his heel and left. Quietly, his leather-shod step was even, soundless and smooth...

Yeah, he could think about disowning his son. Could think about hating him. Could think about beating him up until Connor was unrecognizable. Could think about hurting him, but he wouldn't.

He and Wes were in the same fucking boat, he didn't like this world either.

(end of part 44)
"So Wolfram and Hart were planning to use you as a pawn?" Angel questioned, knowing that Wes had already explained but simply wanted to find something to say as he walked beside him.

The British man nodded slightly, "Might still try." Following along side him, coming to a stop when Angel opened the door to the other Wesley's apartment.

Angel stepped back after turning on the light to give Wes room to enter which he did uncertainly, unsure of this unknown territory.

Angel shut the door and tossed the keys upon a small table. He put his hands on his hips and looked at Wesley. Who looked around but seemed rooted to one spot. He looked nervously over to Angel as if looking for guidance.

"This...Is it?" Wesley asked in a low soft voice.

"Not a grand mansion, but it's nice and it...he-Wes lived here. Called it home."

"Right, he called it home." He said swallowing hard, his hands shook badly as he cupped them behind his back. "But it's unfamiliar to me. I've never called this home."

"Right, sorry." Angel said gently. Moving further into the living room.

"Don't be." Wesley nervously pushed up his eyeglasses. At that moment he noticed something and went over to a sketch pad as if he couldn't help himself. Angel was there in a second, grabbing it and holding it to his chest so he couldn't get a good look at it.

Wesley simply studied him, "Is that the only thing of yours here?"

Angel slowly set it back down, feeling slightly foolish, yet making sure it was closed. "Yeah...Everything else..."

"Belongs to him." Wes quickly finished for him.

Angel eyed him quietly before saying, "Well, except for a book of poetry he borrowed years back from me. A book I didn't even notice was gone to be honest."

"Oh, well...I'm sure he was planning to return it one day..."

Angel chuckled, "Yeah, no doubt, one day."

The vampire watched closely as Wes looked around once more, this time lightly touching things. He touched table tops, books and even a few picture frames. They were all normal things yet Wes touched them as if they were all fragile and breakable. Not at all normal. Wes progressed slowly to the bedroom. There was a long silence as Angel waited, for what...he wasn't sure.

Angel followed slowly in Wesley's footsteps. The room was dark but one could still see the light cast from the living room. It made things a grey rather than truly black. Angel simply continued to stare at Wesley, though what he was seeing wasn't all that bad. He shook his head but then shrugged and continued to stare.
Wes was kneeling on the floor leaning down to get an idea of what was under the bed. He wondered why Wes was trying to feel under the bed, but the thought was fleeting as Angel looked at the British man's arse. It looked firm and sexy, Angel knew he'd be damning himself later for that thought but it was true, damn it! It was nice and round, almost heart shaped, he could bounce a quarter off it. He could bounce something else of his off him, too. He really had to admit to liking the sight before him. He really should be feeling ashamed and dirty for liking such a fine arse...For getting a hard-on for thinking about all the things he could do to that arse...If of course he allowed himself to be gay...

But that arse, would turn anyone gay, he was sure of it!

"Bloody HELL!" Wes shouted in disgust and stinging pain.

Angel was instantly turning on the lamp beside the bed and was at his side instantly, smelling the scent of blood in the air. Familiar blood. Wesley's blood.

"You alright?" Angel stupidly asked as Wesley brought out his bleeding hand.

Wes cradled his wounded hand with his other as he glanced up into Angel's face. Wesley looked sickly pale.

"Do I look alright?" He replied waspishly!

"Come on..." Angel gently helped the Watcher up, leading him to the bathroom. "There should be a first aid kit in here, somewhere."

He turned on the light then the cold water faucet. He put Wes' hand under the slow flowing water as Wesley hissed in pain. Blue eyes studied Angel as the vampire examined the cut. "It doesn't look all that deep, so it should be okay." Angel knelt down, opening the cabinet under the sink. He rummaged around and finally stood, holding a large, rectangular, white 'Red Cross' first aid kit.

"Are those the other Wesley's fingerprints?" Wes asked softly, nodding over at the countless 'dried blood' fingerprints against the smooth white metal.

Angel caressed some of the dry fingerprints in question. "Yeah, they are."

"Did he get hurt a lot?"

"Sometimes, not all the time...He was a good fighter."

Wesley's blue eyes were full of wonder. "You...actually *allowed* him to fight, he didn't just research and carry books into battle?"

Angel turned the water off, grabbing a towel and lightly patting at the cut then he opened the brown bottle of Peroxide. "There wasn't much *allowing* going on. He simply did it. He researched, no doubt, and the research he did had saved countless lives. Saved us. He also had a knowledge of weapons and skill that he simply had to practice all of it in the real world, instead of keeping it all in his head. Plus, he was down right deadly with a gun and crossbow. Gunn and I learned long ago never to play darts with him, he never took it as a game. It was an art to him. Could hit a bulls eye a mile away I'm sure. Only time he ever missed would be on purpose."

Wesley hissed as Angel poured on the Peroxide. It bubbled for a moment before Wes said softly, "Angel...My Angel never liked me to fight. Said he was afraid something would happen to me. That I would...and I guess I did die..." Wesley studied his injured palm. "I wasn't allowed. We'd always argue about my fighting, he said since he had supernatural strength I should let him do the fighting. He wanted to be my fists, my sword. Everyone around me was more than human. Willow, Faith, Xander, Spike even
Doyle had half a demon he could use for strength if he had too. Willow and Faith they were Slayers...And Xander was very powerful Mage. Later, Kate, Doyle's wife became a member, she is totally human, but Angel would make me so mad! For he'd treat her more of an equal than me. Maybe he was right, I mean hell I did die...Can't argue that point anymore."

Angel was silent as he rubbed a healing herb into his wound. Before slowly wrapping it up in a white bandage.

Before he said, "You died sure but you ended up saving Spike and Xander...And to be honest, that tells me what a great warrior you are. Sure I personally don't like Spike and Xander but...But if you want to fight beside me, I'd be honored...Also you're kinda cute covered in demon slime."

Wesley jerked in surprise. Angel meet his gaze before explaining gently, "Your Angel when he was here talked about you and that battle to my...To Wesley. I was at the time weak and they had just saved me from my watery grave. They talked and I couldn't help but listen. He talked about how much he missed you and how proud he was of you. You even surprised him with how well you fought. He even spoke of regret about how you two argued about fighting. About how he didn't trust you to grow, didn't let you grow into the Warrior you could have been. The warrior you can be. Your Angel said he regretted not treating you as an equal."

"Really? He...He said those things and...And Spike and Xander lived, I didn't fail in protecting them both? I...When I woke up and remembered, I thought...I thought I was sent to hell for failing to help save them..."

"They lived and yes you saved them...And yes, the other Angel said those things. I...I could tell he spoke nothing but the truth."

"So, I guess, Angel would never tell that Wesley he wasn't allowed to fight, couldn't fight..."

"I honestly doubt it. For this world's Wes would kick his arse so hard and fast. Those who are smart don't mess with him."

"Have you ever messed with him, pissed him off?"

"I never once claimed that I was smart." Angel said with a dorky yet charming smile.

Wes gave a weak grin in return even though it quickly faded. "Did he seem happy?"

"My Wesley or your Angel?"

"Angel."

"I guess so," Angel shrugged, "When we talked he seemed...Other than being a fucking bastard, he seemed down right joyful, gleeful almost at peace 'cos he had Wesley; he seemed pleased that things were working out. No offence or anything but I really HATE him."

"Oh, why would Wes keep weapons under his bed?"

"There are weapons under his bed, that's what cut you? Huh...well, to be honest I think there might be weapons *everywhere*. Be careful rummaging though things Wes has a shit load of guns, swords and all kinds of weapons, hell he was even a walking weapon's cabinet himself those last few months...I've heard rumors around this city that...Well, all the other demon's left him well enough alone." Angel chuckled, "In fact, Angel, when he was here called him his little warrior countless times when I was in hearing range."
Wes flinched. Looking heartbroken. "Little warrior? How...sweet..."

Angel suddenly looked worried. "Did I...I didn't mean to hurt you..."

Wes turned away going back into the bedroom. "Thanks for binding my silly cut, I've always been a little too clumsy for my own good..."

"Wes..." Angel called out following him. "I'm sorry..."

"Don't be, I'm...I'm the one who should be apologizing."

"No, you shouldn't, you've done nothing to be sorry for." Angel said desperately trying to make things alright once more.

"Neither have you."

"Yes, I have...Shouldn't have opened my big mouth, you don't want to hear what the other Angel said to Wesley...You shouldn't have to hear that stuff...I never meant to hurt you."

"Angel..."

"I said I was sorry, accept it and don't you dare apologize right back at me."

Wesley opened his mouth, nothing coming out as Angel shook his finger at him glaring. "I said don't!"

Wesley slowly nodded. "Right, okay...Still I'm sorry."

Angel threw up his hands. "You are so damn aggravating!"

"True, no doubt, I've never once denied that." Wesley said with a small smile. Angle smiled back. Then the Watcher went back to the bed and knelt down once more. Angel went to the other side, kneeling and looking.

"So, Wes, what exactly are you looking for?" He could no longer keep his curiosity from revealing itself.

"An invisible box. One can't see it, but one can feel it." Wes told him.

"An invisible box, huh? I'm not sure if Wesley would have that and what is it for anyway?"

"You put important things in it. Personal journals, bank statement, ancient fake treasure maps. Rare diamonds, or something dangerous that you don't want anyone to accidently touch, certain stones that in the wrong hands could destroy the world, open the Hellmouth. The invisible boxes are very expensive but worth the cost. They can only be made by blind voodoo Wizards, don't ask me why."

Angel sat up interested, putting his hands upon the bed, trying to see Wesley on the other side. "Really?"

"Yes, for I have no bloody idea why they have the power to--"

"No, I mean...You put stuff in it and it hides it from the world..."

"Yes...That's a way to look at it. I had one back in my world, I mostly put my personal journal in it. Angel
always keeps the bank statements and weird obviously fake treasure maps no matter what he clams, and gold and diamonds and the rare stone was given to the Goddess Hero." Wes stated slowly and carefully pulling out some stakes and a few crucifixes. Leaving them in a pile on the floor.

"Well, yeah, but I'm not sure if Wesley would have an invisible box...Plus, he normally keeps his journals out..."

"Well, yes, all Watchers do, but the most important journal is the personal one. We have countless journals that we know will be studied and ridiculed, heaven forbid we actually tell how we feel about something...Saying 'I hope my Slayer doesn't get hurt tonight for she questioned me about death and feared her time was about to end' would have the Council say he cared to much and he didn't have faith in his Slayer's ability and that he should only give the facts and nothing more. Which is absurd! Well, anyway, we Watchers, keep Watcher Journals, something like I said we know before hand will be studied and copied and passed around like a soiled towel. Then I kept a Business Journal which had all the cases and studies I ever did at Guardian Investigations. Another journal for spells and study of spells, kind of like cliff notes or something. The spell journal is also a address book for magic doers and anything else that...Well, the spell journal was Xander's but he never wrote in it except to remind himself of things and...He'd ask me to help him research then something would happen and I ended up finding it and writing it down for him and giving him everything he needed to know...Then there would be the most important journal...My private personal one. Where I'd write my own dreams and thoughts. Write my own fears and...And tell my own heartache and shame at some of my failures. Like when Willow died, I had a hard time writing that in the Watcher Journal...I stared at that white page for hours, yet I couldn't...

But my own private one, still have my tear stains...It's almost impossible to read, but...If anyone read it they would know. I felt. I wept. I feel apart. I wondered if some how I was to blame, I even wrote my anger at the Higher Powers, and the Goddess for letting such a brilliant caring woman die, they let my friend, my Slayer, die to save an ungrateful world, the only ones that cared where the one's that knew the truth of who she was. What she was. Those that cared were there that day, fighting beside her. They didn't weep over a Slayer, they wept over a beloved friend...I wept. The Council wouldn't want that. Didn't want that, any Watcher that had wrote something like that in the journal had that page ripped out and burned. for to those Pillock's a Slayer's a weapon, not a young woman..." Wesley sighed.

"The private journal is more important than the Watcher Journals, why they were always left laying about in the open for anyone or anything to steal and read. But every Watcher is taught a spell to hide their own *private* journal...Or told how to hide so no one could ever find it...So I'm sure, the other Wesley had some kind of private journal...I'm just taking a shot in the dark that he might have an invisible box, but it doesn't hurt to look...You know if you don't cut yourself on a weapon while looking for it...Though he might also have a well placed hidey hole."

Angel still tried to look over at him from his place by the bed. "So, let me guess here, you put your private journal in a invisible box under your bed?"

Wesley sat up still kneeling looking at Angel from across the bed. He placed a claymore upon the sheets. He blinked at him before saying clearly, "Well, yes, wouldn't you?"

Angel shrugged, "Never had one so I guess I would, perhaps..." He reached over and took the small weapon, Wes had placed upon the bed. Studying it. "This claymore is what you hurt yourself on...I smell your blood on it and it's fresh..."

"Nice talent you have there, and I assumed as much, that dastardly thing was in the area I had sliced my hand."

Angel gently reverently touched the blade. "I had forgotten about this. First weapon I ever gave Wes. I
remember that look he gave this. How he held it in his hands, his eyes worshiped it in wonder." A smile touched his lips as he remembered. "He kept thanking me for months. I teased him said something about how my giving him an ancient claymore made up for not giving him dental or heath insurance."

Wesley clenched his fists tightly in the bedding, looking at the weapon with pure envy. "You said that was the first weapon you ever gave him, you gave him more?"

"Lot more. I'd always try to find the rarest and...Well, something to guarantee that look. That look of complete total wonder. Like an innocent boy finding presents for him under a Christmas tree."

"It's odd that you'd give him a claymore as something rare."

"It's old. There was even a myth attached to it you see the two edged sword supposedly belonged to a powerful magical Scottish Highlander. Can you see this inscribed words engraved in the steel? That is what makes this weapon so unique, plus the story goes that the Highlander fought another powerful Highlander, this Highlander ended up trapped in his very own claymore. Wes spent months trying to prove whether that story was real or not. Wanting to free the spirit perhaps, give the old Warrior rest or something..."

"There isn't a soul or spirit trapped in this weapon there never was..." Wesley stated quietly, in deep thought looking at the Claymore in question.

Angel gave him an odd look that Wes missed for he was looking too deeply at the Claymore in the vampire's hands. "Well, yeah, Wes proved that about five months after I gave it to him, only after that did he go out to kill demons with it...So how did you know it's never had a spirit stuck in it?"

"Um, what?" Wesley asked surprised.

"How did you know about the Claymore never having a spirit or a soul in it?" Angel spoke slowly as if making sure he heard every word.

"Would you believe I already researched it?" Wesley said quickly, looking away.

"No."

Wesley shook his head. "I...I prefer not to tell you..."

Angel sighed. "Well, to be honest I'm hoping you never find Wesley's personal journal."

Wesley looked at him in complete astonishment. "Why not?"

Angel's eyes were slightly cold and hid away any emotion. As he used the exact same words Wesley had spoken to him. "I prefer not to tell you."

"Angel!" He said in scandalized outrage.

"Wesley!" Angel replied quickly, total calm in his voice. "You prefer not to tell me things such as how you knew *instantly* there had never been anything in the Claymore and I prefer not to tell you why I don't want you to find his journal. I guess we're both stuck facing a dead end."

Wesley looked down at his hands in shame before admitting softly. "Because the same magic that helped me escape whispered it to me. I have this magic that isn't always good, actually it's not good. It's dark and wild, impossible to control and yet it's forever a part of me. Ripping at me as if it was nothing more than a savage animal...That's why I knew, because it informed me, told me when it cut me, I knew..."
"If you find that journal, then you'll simply read it and then...There are things in there I'm ashamed of. Things I can't take back. Things that hurt him, angered him, yet wounded him deeply. I've hurt him deeply. I helped make him into the hardened warrior that he is now. I'm ashamed, hell, scared even if ya want to know the truth, that you'll read his words and hate me."

Wesley studied him, intensely before saying gently, honestly. "I could never, ever, hate you. Not sure I can."

"Never say never, Wes." Angel said sadly. Open and honest, for the first time in a long time. "I always make the ones who care even a little bit for me...Hate me. I always have. It's like I can't help it. I'm going to hurt you, no matter how much I don't want to, I will. I'm going to make you despise me. I don't want to, but it always works out that way..."

(end of part 45)
He hasn't found it, hasn't even come close to finding it.

Yet, Wesley wanted to find it. Hoping to find something that could make sense of this weird crazy world. Help understand it, make it more real perhaps, instead of some dreadful nightmare.

Didn't help that he knew in his heart that this world was real as was the Angel that was helping him. This was indeed happening and he had a strong feeling that this world's Angel need him.

Wes didn't doubt at all that the journal existed, he was sure it did. The other Wesley may have been different but not so different as to not write down his thoughts, feelings and experiences. The other Wesley simply hid it well.

Angel was helping to look for it but Wes knew he had meant what he had said. He didn't want him to find it.

They looked quietly. Silently. Rummaging through the other Wesley's items.

It felt so unreal...

All the weapons, books, even unfamiliar clothes. It was as if this was another person, yet there were other items that yes, looked exactly like those he had at home...Or what used to be his home. It was simply odd...Speaking of odd...

"Why does the closet have a lock?" Wesley asked finally breaking the silence. Giving a side nod to the bedroom's closet. The big dead bolt looking odd and mysterious upon the closet door...

Angel looked up at it as he opened a dresser drawer, burying his hands into the cotton socks. He was silent for a long moment as he gave a half hearted shrug. "With Wes there had to be a reason..."

"To keep someone out, I suppose..." Wesley mused aloud.

"Or someone *in*." Angel finally admitted looking back down on his hands as he rummaged Wes' sock drawer, yet his attention wasn't on the socks.

Wesley eyed him questionably, setting down a black address book up on the nightstand that he had been thumbing through. "Are you joking?"

"Well, she isn't in there right now! If that matters..." Angel said almost muttering too softly for Wesley to hear.

Though the sentence had been hard to understand Wes did indeed hear it. No matter how mumbled. A talent he had learned well with his own Angel when his Angel wanted to keep something from him, and later say, 'I told you'. Yes, he told him in a barely audible mumble. But he learned.

"She?" Wesley asked standing up and walking over to Angel.

The vampire became still as he looked over at the closet. "A...A lot of crap has happened in this world." He swung his face towards Wesley's. Their noses almost touching. "Did you love your Angel?"

Wes blinked at that unexpected question, he leaned back a little. "Of course! He is...Was my everything..."
Angel nodded. His fists tightening on the defenseless socks. "I think... My Wes cared about me too in that way, but... I couldn't... Anyway, that closet isn't a closet anymore. He turned it into something else. A prison. You unlock the dead bolt with that key on the nightstand. When you open it you'll see cell bars and padding and chains, a gag, an empty bucket. I've looked in there only once after Wesley left and I don't ever want to see inside that closet ever again..."

"He kept... A woman in there?" Wes asked gently, confused. Trying to understand but finding it close to impossible to do so. He, himself, couldn't picture doing such a thing.

"Yes." Angel said softly, looking down at the socks as if he'd never saw them before.

"But why?"

"For me, because of me."

Wesley simply looked at him. Even though Angel was refusing to look back at Wes. He felt those blue eyes that were desperately seeking answers. The vampire sighed.

"I was trapped in the ocean for three months, Wes was determined to find me and save me... Which he did... Because the girl, well... She..."

"Put you there." He finished softly, it wasn't a question but a statement, as if a part of himself finally understood. If it had been his beloved Angel taken from him and put into the ocean, what would he have done? There was a strong chance that he would have come close to insanity with worry and fear. Hoping with everything he had that his Angel would return safely and whole... He would have done a lot more than lock the girl, that had put his love in the ocean, in a closet. That's for damn sure.

"Yeah, she and my son put me in a watery grave. Like I said, Wes saved me, the other Angel helped but from what I could understand he kept Justine in that small prison forcing her to look for me."

"Making her pay for her part in such a... Your own son put you in the ocean?"

"Yeah, both Connor and Justine, though she had also slit Wes' throat, so I guess you can say he didn't care how he treated her, as long as she helped to find me."

"That..." Wesley studied Angel, flabbergasted. "This world is so screwed up!"

Wesley throw up his hands before ranting, "Gunn warns me off his girl until I get him to accept the fact that I'm very much a gay man! And Gunn is also human, and Doyle is dead! Spike and Xander aren't around and this world is so screwy that they probably aren't even together in this world! Faith isn't around either and I'm starting to wonder if she even exists!"

"She does, she's in prison for murder... Also, she once tortured Wesley... Though this is probably the bad time to say anything about that..."

Wesley shot him a glare. "You think? This sodding place is fucking mad! You even have a son! A son that you had with your own Sire..."

"And Grandchilde... She was both, Sire first then Dru came to town and turned her once more..."

Wesley shook his head, "Just shut up, you moron! You are *not* helping, do you realize how crazy all this is? Do you? You tell me that *Faith* a wild girl but a girl I respect, once tortured her own
Watcher...Connor, your son hates you and puts you in the ocean for laughs! This world's Wes got his own throat slit by some crazy female named Justine, who he made a cell for out of his own closet! Then...THEN, my world's Angel comes and romances this world's Wes into going back with him, which he gets to fight beside him as a bloody equal! Where unlike me, he didn't want me to fight! And this world has an evil law firm that likes to raise people and other things from the dead!"

"All strong points, you're right no doubt about it, this world is fucked up." Angel admitted softly unsure of what he should say or do...

"Oh, SHUT UP!" Wesley yelled eyes wild as he began to pace the room angrily. "There isn't even a goddess Hero to guide or protect us..." He stopped and took a sudden deep shaky breath, jerking off his glasses to run a trembling hand down his face. "I've got no one to protect or guide *me*..."

Angel turned away from the sock drawer focusing his attention on him. "That's not true."

Wes' blue eyes pierced his where he stood, before saying calmly. "I don't know if what I said is true, but it *feels* like it's true. You say you'll help me but you haven't told me why or how...Maybe you don't even know why or how! I know I don't! I feel so out of place, more so than...Than in my own world."

"You...You felt out of place in your world?" Angel asked gently, concern for Wes in his eyes as well as a yearning to understand this man before him...

"Always...I don't know why...I just felt like I was pretending that I belonged, if that makes any sense..."

Angel took a few steps forward, stopping looking intrigued. "I understand, it's just...Your world sounds so wonderful, so good...It's hard to picture you feeling out of place..."

"My world is 'wonderful', no doubt." Wes looked pointedly around. "It's better than this but a part of me always felt detached. I've just always accepted that feeling like I've always accepted everything that came my way. Not that it matters, not now." Wes sat down heavily on the end of the bed. "Not that it matters at all, now..." He repeated quietly before trailing off into silence.

Angel moved silently like a black panther, dark eyes focused intensely on Wesley. He then sat gently on the bed beside him. He stretched out his pale hand and captured Wesley's warm hand. Letting the warmth sink into his cold skin. Wes looked at him. It was as if prey had been caught and held in a powerful merciless gaze, dark eyes holding blue eyes captive.

They were both still for a moment. Lost in their own private world until Angel said gently in a low silky tone. "It matters. Deep in your heart you know it does matter."

Wesley simply continued to stare at him thoughtfully before replying. "And you know my heart?"

Angel sighed, looking away, he loosened his hand but Wesley held on strong. Angel looked back. "I think I do and if I don't...Oddly enough, Wes, I want to know it. Your a good man, I can see your soul and all sorts of emotions when I gaze into your eyes. Things that...I really believe that I know that heart of yours. May not have always understood it, but I believe I know it and if I don't then I hope too."

"I'm sure you will if you really want to..." Wesley said in a soft whisper.

"I..." Angel studied him, with his free hand, one finger came close to Wesley's face. The Watcher sat still wondering what he was about to do. Ever so gently, the finger came to the nose piece of his gold frames and slide them up to the bridge from were they had slipped to the tip of his nose. Angel smiled. Removing slowly his hand from the British man's face. "I want to."
Wesley slowly grinned back. "I want to know your heart too."

Angel's smile faded, he even gently removed his hand from within Wesley's before he stated honestly. "Its not always good. *I'm* not always good."

"Then we both have something in common." Wesley looked away, rubbing his hands against his knees. "One thing we don't have in common..." He admitted softly, unsteadily. "I'm afraid, so very afraid of this world...Of...of the unknown, I'm feeling like I'm such a coward, for I'm scared, Angel, so very scared."

"Oh, we have that in common too, Wes, trust me. I'm scared too."

Wesley shot him a highly sceptical look.

"It's true!" Angel said quickly. "Very true, I swear! I get scared all the time. I just don't say it or show it...But I understand your fears and Wes, I'm here beside you. All I can do is try to be your friend and help you whenever you need help and be here for ya..."

"Thank you." Wesley told him. His eyes spoke volumes, saying loudly that he meant those two powerful worlds.

Angel shifted as if slightly uncomfortable. He stood up still facing Wesley. "This..Um..." Angel stuttered unnaturally, a little before clearing his throat. "Um, tonight it might be best to stay here. Spend the night here and try to get some rest. I'll...I'll come get you in the morning and...And we'll do stuff. You'll get to know everyone and me..." Angel moved away walking to the dresser. His back to Wes. Hand on the hard wood surface. "Might even be best if tomorrow we had a moving day. Move your stuff, 'cos now it's yours, to the hotel that way...It...It would be safer. With Wolfram and Hart losing you, they won't be happy and they're not going to stop their game at driving me crazy or pissing me off. They are stubborn bastards. Tonight you should be okay though...Or just to be on the safe side. I...I could take the sofa. Not that I don't think you can take care of yourself for the night, you can...But maybe..."

"I'd like that..." Wesley said softly.

"Just in case, if it's okay, I'll take the sofa. Not that I think Wolfram and Hart would be stupid enough to bring someone here and break down the door..." Angel still went on.

"I would really like you to stay with me, Angel, I'd feel safer." Wesley stated in a normal tone of voice.

"Plus, you're in a new reality and the shock of it all can be a bitch! I won't do anything but sleep, except if something comes and attacks then I'll fight of course. I don't even snore so that shouldn't bother you any...Plus, I could order you some take out, Pizza perhaps..."

"Alright..." Wesley nodded. "I agree with what you said, you're very logical, please stay."

Then Angel turned and looked at him. Almost as if he was in an agreement. As if he hadn't heard a word Wes had said. "My Wesley could be the most stubborn person I'd ever known and I'm sure you are no different, so I'm just going to tell you, I'm staying on the sofa, you're going to rest in that there bed your sitting on and I'm going to order you a pizza and there will be no arguments! Okay?"

"Right."

Angel pointed a finger at him. "Don't you argue!:}
The British man rolled his eyes; he nearly hurt himself rolling them so hard. "Didn't realize that I was." He stated dryly.

That brought Angel up short, he looked down right bashful when he realized that Wes had agreed with everything right from the start. "Oh, right...Sorry got carried away..."

"Don't worry about it." Wesley stood up and stretched his legs.

"Well, I'll go order that pizza."

"I'm not sure I'm all that hungry really, but I guess I could eat maybe a slice or two if it had extra mushrooms..."

"You got it." Angel nodded then went silent for a long moment, "Um, Wes, do you really want to find that journal?"

He blinked up at him. "Well, yes...Though I have been thinking. It might be more logical to look at all sides of the picture. This world is different but maybe I should learn from others about his world than from another me. For I can be one sided sometimes, but I've learned that if you only look at one part of the picture lets say I see an elbow and you see the leg of that same picture...We'd both describe the picture very differently because of our views and who we are. Sometimes we both have to stand back to see the beautiful nude male picture to get the full effect..."

"Yeah...Um...Get your point." Angel said before looking at the sock drawer. He reached in and pulled out...Nothing..."But still I think I found your invisible box." Angel then handed it to him.

Wesley held the invisible box carefully, he swallowed hard before whispering an ancient demon word. The box faded away until needed once more. In its place was a huge well worn journal.

"I was going to not tell you that I had found it, like I said, there are things I'm sure he's written about that are..."

"Take it." Wes held the leather journal out to him cutting off his words and thoughts.

Angel was sure his jaw dropped and bruised itself on the floor. "W-What?"

Wes smiled. "Take it and read it, and when I'm really ready to know what is within this journal then I'll read it too. But first you read it. You may find out things you never knew before. You may even find out that everyone can be a stranger even in their own world."

"But...I...This was Wesley's and you are Wesley and you were looking for it, if anything you should be the one..."

"When Wesley left did he tell you that you could keep anything or everything...Did he mention a certain book to you."

"Yeah, he said I could keep all the books, but I still don't think..."

"Listen, Angel, was there a certain book he enjoyed the most out of all his collection and did he mention that book to you..."

"Um..." Angel wondered where all this was going but he had a strong feeling that it would leave him stunned. Everything lately had been leaving him stunned. "He did mention that a book of poetry he'd
borrowed from me...The one I told you about."

Wesley nodded. "I bet you anything, he left a note in that book telling about the invisible box and key word for you. There's not many people I'd trust my personal journal to and yet he trusted you because you're good, Angel. Even if he was angry at you at times, he knew the truth. *I* know the truth. He valued you, one of the reasons he locked up a female to save your arse. Read it, Angel and you'll see the truth of my words..."

Only then did Angel take the book. Suddenly, in a unnatural flash he was out of the bedroom.

Wesley looked at he opened doorway. Confusion upon his face before murmering to himself, "No matter what world all Angel's *must* be strange!"

Just as quickly Angel was back, handing Wes his sketchpad. "Here. But please know that a lot of it was simply imagination..."

"That's good to know." Wesley moved in close to the vampire. "No matter what world all Angel's *must* be strange!"

"That's good to know." Wesley moved in close to the vampire. "Thank you and you don't have to order a pizza I'm not really hungry. So..." He reached over and pressed his lips against Angel's before parting, with a loving smile. "Goodnight."

Angel's eyes were wide. "N-Night."

He slowly backed out of the room, but not before almost knocking over a nightstand luckily he saved the lamp before it crashed to the floor.

Wes gave a finger wave. "Sleep well, Angel, oh, and if you want to sleep naked, for I know my Angel simply loved to sleep naked, had a hard time sleeping otherwise. Please feel free to do so, for I'll be naked too. In here of course, you out there...I also think I saw some linens in the hall closet that you can use."

"R-Right." Angel stopped in the doorway, looking Wes over as if picturing him already naked. "Y-You'll be naked?"

"What can I say?" Wes shrugged innocently. Blue eyes sparkling with mischief. "My Angel corrupted me."

"Oh...Um, makes sense. G'night." Angel left but not before closing the bedroom door.

'Not gay, r-r-ri-i-ght!' Wes thought with a smirk looking at the closed door. 'That would be like saying my Angel could have been a famous singer!'

Angel leaned against the closed door. He brought a slightly trembling finger up to his lips. Wesley had kissed him! He could still feel the warmth...He slowly moistened his bottom lip with the tip of his dark pink tongue. He could even taste him...

Angel couldn't help but think he was screwed and he also couldn't help but notice that at that thought he didn't feel that pang of sharp fear and dread.

"I'm screwed." He whispered out loud. Still oddly no fear. Very strange for him and Wesley was going to be sleeping naked tonight...

He closed his eyes and groaned...

He wouldn't be getting any sleep tonight, not because he was afraid but because he had a hard-on that could cut granite. Things were getting interesting and Angel wasn't sure how he felt about that...
Oh, yeah, he was so screwed, and for once he didn't mind it...

(end of part 46)
Chapter 47: Page 47

Part 47

Wes lay stretched out on an unfamiliar Queen size bed. Alone. Naked but most of all alone in the dark. He didn't even bother with the covers as he lay staring into the darkness.

This city seemed more noisy and much more different from Sunnydale. The place for four to five years of his life, he considered home. Part of him wanted to run to Sunnydale in hopes he'd find *something* that shouted, 'you're home' to him. But his real home was in a reality that had moved on with life, with out him.

And to be honest, one of the most important aspects of what made Sunnydale home was because of a souled vampire named Angel. His Angel.

Wesley sighed, and to think there was a time when he had denied his growing feelings for the determined horny vampire. In the beginning...

He had even ran out on Angel, running as if the devil was after him. When Angel had gone to get the pizza after they had shared their first kiss...Wes didn't walk but ran. But as always when his beloved Angel wanted something he went after it with a Warrior's determination and a Horny Poet's heart.

After a time, heated kisses, being told that he was loved and valued. Seeing something in those dark brown eyes he had never seen in anyone's eyes before...Especially eyes that were focused totally on *him*. He had to quickly admit he had needed that love. Craved it, yearned for it. Angel gave it to him. His Angel had made him feel things he had never experienced before. Wes sniffed slightly, accepting the fact his Angel was forever lost to him...

He gripped a second pillow and wrapped his arms around it. Holding it tightly against his body. As memories flooded over him...

**

"You smell so good." Angel stated leaning in close to Wesley.

This was during the early beginning of their relationship, during Angel's 'you're mine so accept it' campaign.

The young inexperienced Watcher swallowed hard. His knuckles turned white as he gripped the research book so hard it actually hurt.

"Go away...Please." He whispered.

"Why? I'm not doing anything except hanging out in the library ready and willing to 'do' anything that happens to come up...And speaking of things that come up..."

"Y-You!" Wes stuttered, "You, s-sir, are a crude, crude man!"

Angel yanked the old big book from Wesley's hands. Flinging it carelessly upon the long table as he slowly backed the Watcher up against the steel metal cage that had it's unique place in the High School's Library.

Angel smirked as if he, the predator had captured his prey. The smirk faded slowly staring into scared blue eyes. He leaned forward and placed a soft chaste kiss upon firmly pressed lips. One hand came up to caress Wesley's brown hair. "You're beautiful." Angel mused. "So beautiful. Should have known you would be...Been waiting for ya, wondering if one day I'd be lucky enough to find you. My Wesley. My reason. My
very heart and I've found you...I praise the great goddess Hero for such a treasure...To think that such a
treasure is mine...All mine!”

At that the Watcher stiffened. "NO! I'm not you're treasure, I'm not even yours! I'm not your anything! Be
gone from me, demon!” He put two fingers together making the cross and jabbing them in front of the
vampire's face.

Angel smiled and laughed, before once more moving close and capturing Wes' mouth. This time determined
to take the kiss deep. The Watcher seemed also determined to keep his mouth, his warmth closed from him.
But it was a battle quickly lost as Angel's hands gently yet firmly cupped him between his legs, making him
gasp aloud. Opening his mouth, which was what Angel had wanted in the first place and Angel's tongue
entered as if he was a conqueror who had won a great battle.

Wes relaxed and let himself experience the odd pleasure of such a heated kiss. Angel kissed him in away
he'd never experienced before as if he needed him with such an intensity that was almost painful as if Wes
was his only salvation. Only need. Only chance at happiness.

Slowly, Angel finished the kiss, not before nibbling on Wesley's now swollen bottom lip. Wesley panted
and Angel tenderly pressed his forehead to his. Before saying gently, softly, "One day soon my love, you'll
be accepting the fact that you're mine. You'll need me as much as I need you, oh, and what I said about you
smelling good, I meant it...But you'll smell even better with my scent all over you and I think you know that
too."

And with that Angel let Wesley go, before smiling at him and turning on his heel. Leaving Wesley alone,
watching the vampire walk out knowing Angel was right, he did know it and if filled him with a desperate
need that scared the fuck out of him.

Wes blinked as a thought came to him. He had been so scared, afraid to love the vampire but once he had
accepted the love Angel had for him and allowed himself to love Angel right back. It had been the closest
thing to paradise he had experienced.

Of course they had their share of problems. One being that he kept a lot of things from his Angel. Being
Neptee for example. Sadly it wasn't the *only* example. Like not being totally honest about why he hadn't
been ready to become bonded. He kept telling to give him time but...Secretly, he had doubted that the time
would ever come. He had always dragged his feet and told Angel he was still thinking about it, needed more
time...He simply had never told him *why*...

He never told him why he had been so afraid at first to be with Angel. Why he never spoke of his own
father, nor talked to him. Never told him why his Father had hated him and found it so easy to disown him.
So easy to throw him away. It had been more than doing the forbidden, falling in love with a vampire.
Which had pissed off the Council right along with his father, and what pissed them off even more was that
he had refused to kill his lover...

He had been fired of course, but he could still remember his father's last words to him..."So you are actually
choosing that *thing* are you? I've always been ashamed of you but a part of me always knew...That you
were a no good nothing. A monster. Monsters should stick with other monsters, they have no place in the
Council...Or as any son of mine!"

He had been a Neptee. His father hated him because of it, even though he had no control over that fact. His
father saw nothing more than a monster...
How could he explain to Angel that he, understood why his father would have nothing to do with him. How could he explain that he had felt free from shame and guilt when he realized that he no longer had any excuse to talk to that cold intimidating man he called 'Father'. That he agreed with his father, he was a thing, a monster. He was a Neptee.

He had once told his Angel. "There are things I'm ashamed of, that I'm not ready to share with you yet." Things he had hoped to never share actually.

He knew his Angel wanted *all* of him not a little but everything. Also, one of their biggest problems had been the fact Angel didn't want him to fight. Even if he was a trained Watcher. Knew weapons and fighting moves. He had the skill if he could just practice it!

He trained two Slayers! Legendary Slayers at that!

**

"And must I remind you that *other* Watchers had trained Willow and Faith long before *you* came along! Which is a damn good thing for if you had've gotten to them they'd be dead by now."

##

Wes squeezed his eyes closed yet still a single tear escaped falling down his pale cheek. Angel's words had cut to the quick and pierced his heart. He sniffed and held the pillow even tighter.

That had been the last argument they had ever had and part of him wondered if Angel had been right. He wasn't a fighter. He should have stayed home with the books like his lover had wanted. And yet with this world's Wes...

##

"In fact the other Angel called him his Little Warrior countless times when I was in hearing range..."

##

Yet his lover never called him that. Never allowed him to be an equal and fight beside him in the 'good fight'.

Instead he acted like the big bad protector. Keep him naked and in bed was Angel's main goal with him!

**

"Damn it, Angel! Can't you just trust me? Just trust me not to mess up! Trust me enough to fight beside you! With you! I can you know! I'm a sodding Watcher not an infant! I've trained Slayers for goddess’ sake! I don't need or want a baby sitter, I can't just stay in the back ground holding a book or playing with my glasses while you lot fight the good fight!"

"You don't have to play with your glasses, Wes, unless you want to. You just don't need to fight is all. I don't want you to fight." Angel told him though clenched teeth, his temper rising.

"You don't...Damn it to hell, Angel! I'm a grown man not a little boy! To hell with what *you* want! Tonight's a big battle and I'm fighting in it!"

Angel's eyes were cold, glittering with amber. Jaw tight before answering. "No, you're not. Stay home.
Read or clean the house, cook a big meal, have the first aid kit ready for when we come back. We're going to need it, you however won't."

"You arrogant dead bastard! How many fucking times must I remind you that I'm a *Watcher*! I've trained not just one legendary Slayer but *two*!"

"And must I remind you that *other* Watchers had trained Willow and Faith long before *you* came along! Which is a damn good thing for if you'd have gotten to them they'd be dead by now."

The rage Wesley had been feeling was now replaced with hurt. Strong, powerful agonizing hurt. "How...You don't really mean that, do you?" Wes whispered the last part softly.

"Yes, I do." Angel answered back with arms crossed. The glitter of amber faded from his eyes. Sad but honest, painfully honest.

Wesley stepped away, shoulders slumped. "Why?" He whispered in despair and agony. "Why can't you just for once believe in me, in my ability to fight to do the right thing in a heated battle? For once, just once, I wish you'd believe in me. Trust me enough to fight beside you. I know I can be good enough if you allow me the chance. That's all I want Angel, is a chance."

Angel uncrossed his arms before shaking his head. "And what about what I want, Wes? Huh? The most important person in the world is you. I want, *need* to protect you. Keep you safe. I can't do that on the battle field knowing you could get hurt or killed at any second! Don't you see, don't you understand? I can't lose you. I simply can't! If you got seriously hurt or goddess forbid killed during battle I'd lose my mind, not to mention my everything! You're my everything Wes, I couldn't go on if...Wes, I love you, always will but I have to protect you, your too important for me to lose. So stay home, where you are safe."

Angel stepped forward reaching out his arms to hold Wesley tightly to him. Wesley jerked away fast and hard, tears clouding his eyes making them shine brightly.

"I don't bloody need protection, don't you get that! You...You stupid Pillock! Don't you understand? If you really love me, if I'm truly your everything, you'd let me fight, you'd treat me as an equal instead of some dimwit or a village idiot. Show me you really love me by treating me with respect instead of like treating me like a sodding clumsy child and making me feel that way! For once let me fight beside you, with you...Please, Angel, let me be who I am, who I know I can be. Let me prove to you that I can be your equal when it matters. Let me prove it to you as well as myself."

Angel studied him. Hands tightened into hard pale fists. He looked away with a sigh. "Go choose your weapon, the battle will start soon."

Wesley stood frozen. He would have never thought it, but Angel was giving him a chance.

"Thank you." Wes whispered, he leaned over and lightly kissed his lover's lips. Wes then turned to head towards the weapon cabinet in the other room.

"I'm still going to do everything in my power to protect you."

Wesley stopped and looked at Angel over his shoulder. He knew that to be the truth and gave Angel a knowing nod before leaving the room. He could feel Angel's eyes upon him. Even following him into the room, never once letting him out of his sight.

##
Yet in the end. He had died. His poor wonderful Angel, had been right he wasn't a fighter. He wasn't good enough to fight beside him. Wesley never heard the soft knock upon his door before it opened.

"Wes..." Angel said softly.

At that Wes looked at him just now realizing he had been sobbing hard into his pillow. He didn't say anything. What could he say? He placed his face back into the pillow he held and continued to cry into it as if it was a life line.

A moment later strong comforting arms were wrapped around him. Holding him tight whispering soothing words in his ear.

At some point the tears ceased and a deep sleep took the tears place. And never once did Angel stop holding Wesley tight.

(end of part 47)
Chapter 48: Page 48

Part 48

Wesley could feel himself slowly waking up. Surfacing through a deep peaceful layer of sleep. He groaned softly, peeking out though his long lashes before closing his eyes once more. Slowly being lulled back into a relaxing calm nap.

This felt wonderful. Felt so wonderfully familiar being held in Angel's arms.

Everything came flooding back, Wesley opened his eyes slowly. At some point as he slept he had lost the pillow and turned within Angel's arms to hold him tightly back. He studied Angel's peaceful face, marveling at the beauty before him.

Though his body needed the bathroom, his heart, mind and soul never wanted to leave these strong loving arms.

Angel's arms.

This felt nice, almost reminding him of heaven. Wesley's hand drifted sluggishly down Angel's back then...His eyebrows shot up when he felt...No...was what he was feeling boxers? Wesley slowly moved his head to look down. He blinked. Why yes they were boxers. Pale blue with little red hearts to be exact.

Angel a champion amongst champions, powerful master vampire, was actually wearing little red hearts.

Wes couldn't help it he started to giggle like mad, The giggles slowly insanely turned into deep belly rolls of laughter.

Angel was startled awake by laughter. He jerked his arms slipping away from Wesley. He blinked sleepily at the laughing Watcher.

Wes rolled and slipped from the bed as the laughter faded but the laughter sparkling in his beautiful blues continued to dance.

"Pardon me, I have to go to the loo."

Angel rolled upon his back. "Do you always wake up laughing when you have to go to the bathroom?" He asked the retreating back. Another giggle was heard as Wesley reached the bathrooms threshold.

"No, of course not." Wesley quickly replied.

Angel waited patiently as Wes did his business. After a minute or two Wes strolled back into the bedroom still naked as the day he was born, except of course now he was all grown up.

Angel's sleepiness faded as he watched the handsome man walk over to him without a hint of nerves or shyness. It was as if Wesley was totally comfortable in Angel's presence.

As much as he loved looking at the beautiful pale, lightly muscled body, his chest lightly dusted with hair, a dark river leading down to a glory field around an impressive cock and balls, moving with the fluid grace of a predator and sitting down next to him. Even though Angel's cock stirred with heated desire. Even though as always he had to say something stupid. "Hey, Wes, you know you're naked?"

Wesley smiled knowingly. Leaning in a little close to him, "Do you know you're *not*? Cute by the way.
Would have never taken you as the boxer type, especially the boxer type to wear little red hearts."

"Well...Um, you see, my Seer, Cordy bought them for me and told me that I was to wear them."

Wesley chuckled, before teasing. "Gee, Angel, you really are a big manly man-pire in this world, aren't you?"

Angel stiffened. "I am and I kept these boxers on last night so you'd be more comfortable."

Wes sighed, standing up. "I was teasing just now Angel...I told you that you could sleep naked, honestly it doesn't bother me."

"It bothers me! I...I mean..."

Wesley purposely looked down at the blue tiny hearts boxers that were now tenting out. "I see it bothers you and there's nothing to be ashamed of, I personally get 'bothered' all the time."

"Wes...I'm not..." Angel tried to think of the right words to say, but with a naked Wes in front of him all brain activity had rushed down towards his needy dick.

"Don't!" Wes cut in sharply. "You and I have issues, don't let lying be one of them! I'm tired of telling lies, and I'm in no sodding mood to start hearing them! So don't be telling me you don't swing that way, you wouldn't be having a piece of meat that could cut through granite right now if you weren't interested at seeing me naked." Wes tilted his head suddenly thoughtful, "Or maybe you've not interested. Some men, even vampires for some odd reason, get morning erections, especially horny buggers like you, or at least my Angel did."

Wes quickly turned away, going to the dresser drawers and gathering up some clothes to change into. White ordinary socks, faded well worn jeans and a slightly big light blue cotton shirt.

"I...I am interested in you, Wes. I wasn't going to lie about it, I just wasn't sure what I had been about to say...All this is new and it scares me."

Wes looked back at him saying softly, "Yes, it is. I understand that...This. Let's not worry about it, okay? I'm going to go take a quick shower, I'll hurry in case you want some hot water too..."

"Thank...Um, Wes?"

"Yes?" He asked heading back towards the bathroom.

"I'm tired of telling lies to." Angel said softly, watching the British man stop at the bathroom doorway, he didn't turn to look at him, but he stopped and listened. "I'm tired of telling myself lies. Tired of saying I never needed *him*. Regretting that I lied to myself all those years...All those times I could have...Done something. The way we could have been. Might have been. I see you and I want you, I just don't have any fucking idea what to do next!"

Wesley looked at him. "It might surprise you, but I understand that. I...My Angel, scared me so much, I told myself I couldn't want him. Didn't want him, but that was just lies, I did want him. Angel, you don't need to worry about what will happen next. No one knows, so just let fate do it's thing, but that doesn't mean we can't follow what our hearts tell us to do. I want you, you want me. I accept that...Once you do, things just might be better for everyone."

With that said Wes was in the bathroom shutting the door behind him.
Chapter 49: Page 49

Part 49

Time it seems, goes by so fast. A whole month had gone by so far.

So for a month, Wesley had been learning about this reality. Trying to exist in it. Trying to live. To survive.
To understand this strange world, to find that, much like his world, he could understand neither at times.

At times he still felt out of place, out of touch. But there were other times, when he felt almost comfortable in
this dangerous unexpected world.

He learned that this world is different... so very different yet Angel is still a hero. A champion. A sometimes
shattered champion who struggles to be better. Wesley watched him get angry over evil always seeming to
win. Sometimes acting like the good fight doesn't really matter, it's only when Wesley really studies him that
he sees it, looking into those dark stormy brooding brown eyes...he sees the truth. The pain of it. Angel does
care.

Angel needs his compassion to be stronger than his demon. Wants to do right. Be right.

And Wesley found himself deeply in love with this confused yet determined vampire. This Angel doesn't
have the other Angel's light hearted attitude, but that heart...May not beat but you could see it was there.

They hadn't kissed since the time Wes had kissed him good night. Haven't seen each other naked. Well, that
time Angel had seen him naked that first morning. Yet they had shared heated looks full of promise. Promise
of what, exactly hadn't been revealed.

Wes couldn't help but be hopeful. He knew Angel wanted him, but could he love him as his lover once did?
Should he even hope that Angel could? Wes wanted that. Needed that. He just wasn't sure how to get that
and he wanted more than sex, a good hard fuck...He wanted a love he could believe in. Trust in.

Angel told him that he couldn't have sex, couldn't trust himself with Wes, he could lose his soul, it wasn't
permanent.

What Wesley didn't tell him, was he knew a way...Though because this world was different and there wasn't
a gypsy of the clan that had cursed him around to give the ritual blessing like it was once done in his world
before he knew his Angel...He wasn't sure the ritual could be done without a powerful as hell Xander, Mr.
Giles and the dark gypsy, Ms. Jenny...In his world he knew those people, called them friends, called Xander
family...This one?

He once asked Angel if he ever met a Ms. Jenny and a Watcher named Rupert

Giles. Angel became deathly quiet. "I know Giles, he's Buffy's Watcher...And Jenny, if you speak of Jenny
Calendar who was once a gypsy..."

"Once?" Wes asked quietly.

Was that a hint of pain in Angel's eyes?

"She died...I...Angelus killed her."

"Oh..." Wes hadn't known what to say at that point, so decided to move on to something else. But that was
sad. In his world Rupert Giles was Willow's first and he knew in her heart he was her *only* true Watcher.
She loved him as a father. And it hurt her when Giles had to leave for England, but she was the one to tell him to go. After his new wife of a year and half, pregnant with his son, Ms. Jenny nearly died a horrible death on the Hellmouth. Demons had kidnapped her and...She had been brutally tortured, Giles had come so close to losing his beloved wife as well as his treasured son...

Wesley could still remember the man's murderous rage as he went after those demons, the man's rage scared all of them, Angel, Faith, Xander, Spike, including himself. Never had he seen such, from that day forward Spike never called him Rupes, but respectfully called him Ripper. Willow had to beg Giles to calm down and help think up a plan. But the man simply looked at her with hard green eyes and told her to fuck off. She punched him, he punched back...Afterwards, after the real battle, in the hospital

Willow came to him...

**

"I'm sorry." She said looking at her Watcher, before looking into the glass window at his wife. Her pale body darkly bruised and cut. Giles said nothing.

"I'm going to miss you." She said softly.

Giles shot her a look. Willow gave him a sad look, tears in her eyes. "I'm smart, ya know...I should be childish and scream that you were my Watcher first, *are* my Watcher. But you are now a husband and soon to be father. You have a destiny..." She looked away. "As do I. I have to be here, I have to help make this world better, you taught me that. But now...Your destiny is to protect your family. Not me. Teach your son or daughter to be like you, and I know that no matter what this world will be better for it..."

He placed his hand on her shoulder. "You are part of my family."

Willow touched the hand, squeezing it, tears in her voice. "Always. I'm proud to be, hell, Xan and I had been talking just the other day, about how it would have been if we had you as our father...Though we mocked the tweed diapers...I don't know my father, Rupert, he's around but never around me. Would he even notice if I died? I want your child to know you. You're a good man and a good Watcher, but it's time..."

"Willow..."

"Don't make me fire you..." She gave a shaky smile, she looked over her shoulder at the group that was trying to pretend they weren't listening. "Faith...Said I could borrow Wes, he's going to be Watcher to both of us now. See the Council for once gets what they want..."

"I can't just..."

Willow looked back at him, taking a step closer. "I know you...Rupert."

Giles looked surprised at her use of his first name, for it was the first time she used it. She continued. "I know you miss England. I've heard some of the stories you've told Jenny about it. About maybe getting a cottage in Bath...Teaching your child and her to ride horses in some of the beautiful British fields. Buying a Book Store and...You have all these dreams, you always start with saying, 'One day'...Today is that day. Your wife and child will be safer and happier in England...And just 'cos you leave doesn't mean we can't write and call each other...Doesn't mean we've stopped caring for each other. Doesn't mean I can't expect you to help me when I need it. Doesn't mean you can't come back and visit or we all can't come and visit you...You taught me. You've trained me to always know when to do something right, to trust what your heart tells ya. Seeing that ya taught me, that means you've already learned it. Trust your heart, Rupert,
Giles studied her, before pulling her into his arms holding her tight. She hugged him right back, later both denied that they had been crying.

**

But in this world none of that happened. He couldn't ring up Mr. Giles and Ms. Jenny in England and ask that they help in a ritual, but he could use his Neptee magic. It would be dangerous. Could even kill him, but then it wasn't like he hasn't been dead before. And wouldn't it be worth it, for Angel to know he could pursue happiness and not fear that he'll go evil and try to suck the world into hell once more or kill helpless people.

Though to make the soul permanent it would really take some doing. Would also have to include sex, which didn't bother him any. For he was...Well, horny is the word. He was itching for hot mindless sex.

In his world he'd been having sex at all times of the day and night with his 'always ready and horny loving vampire'...Now, it was like he was on a forced fast or...or...Bloody Hell! All he knew was he was ready to go out and find a fuck buddy, a one nighter if necessary, for his 'Hand of Love' just wasn't all that great not after his Angel. No one could be him, especially his own hand, even if he could pretend it was Angel instead of his hand it wouldn't be the same.

He wanted this world's Angel to take him as a lover. He really wanted Angel. Needed him. Would this Angel get possessive? It would be fascinating to see if Angel got possessive at the idea of him going to someone else. In his world he never tested it, he simply knew.

His Angel would have broken necks of any poor sod that even tempted to woo him for a quick fuck or a long term relationship. A suggestive touch from someone other than the souled vampire would warrant a death glare and a few broken fingers, but then that had been his world, this world was different.

This world he knew Angel wanted him but something was holding him back. Wes could feel it, see it. There had been times, quiet moments where Angel would captive his eyes and he simply knew. This Angel *needed* him, he was just scared of something.

Wes was starting to think he had to make the first move and here he thought the kiss that day in the other Wes' old bedroom had been the racing pistol going off. But had it, he wasn't sure.

Right now, they walked in the thick darkness, an eerie glow from a light tower from somewhere behind them. Their shoes sinking into the soft beach sand as they walked side by side.

The ocean made a peaceful tranquil, romantic sound as it beat against its sandy shore. The waves came in crashing and foaming almost angrily a dark black meeting a dark gray. It was beautiful. Wonderful but not as wonderful as Angel's hand every once in a while 'accidentally' bumping into his hand.

A warm, gentle, Californian breeze caressed his face as he glanced sideways at Angel. Did he have to be the 'butch' in this relationship? Hell, did they even *have* a relationship!??!

Without a second thought Wesley grabbed Angel's hand within his. Angel seemed slightly surprised but yet childishly pleased by this move, if the happy cute smile was anything to go by.

They walked along the shore together for awhile in complete silence. Enjoying simply being with each other.
Finally, Wes whispered, looking down trying to see the grains of sand in the darkness. "Thank you."

Angel quickly looked at him. "You're welcome?" He questioned back just as softly into the night as Wesley had. It was as if they were afraid to speak in normal tones. Afraid of disturbing the calmness, peacefulness of the night around them. "So why are you thanking me and why did I say you're welcome?"

Wes wrinkled his brow, lightly kicking the sand up. "Because it would be rude otherwise?"

"Wes..."

"Because..." Wes whispered, stopping, trying to look at the ocean's dark horizon. The moon tried to peek out from some inky dark clouds, adding an erotic softness to the ever moving current. "Because, I really meant it. Thank you, you've been...Letting me live in your hotel. A room close to your own. Actually letting me fight and train with you even though I'm not good at it--"

"You are a good fighter." Angel cut in. "One of the best and mean I that."

"But just last night I tripped during a battle and got my sword stuck in the wall!"

Angel smiled, "Do you think I'd hand you a sword and let you stand beside me fighting those nest of Demorick demons if I didn't believe that you could fight...Plus, you remind me of...When Wes was first here in L.A. He fell a lot and...And other stuff but he learned. He made it through just as you will."

"I...This world is so different, I'm still in shock I guess. I like that you let me fight in battles and...Well, you've been really wonderful to me. Even that time those henchmen of Wolfram and Hart came and tried to get me. It was amazing watching you fight like that...For me."

"I want to fight for you and fight with you at my side."

Wes leaned close, facing the vampire. "Again, I must say, thank you. It means a lot to know...By the way, Gunn has told me a lot, not as much as Connor. He doesn't' like you much and for that I'm sorry...He doesn't' seem to like anyone, actually."

Angel's expression became isolated. Totally closed off. "You don't have anything to be sorry for."

"No, but..."

"No buts." Angel answered back coldly.

Wesley looked down at the slightly tightened hand holding his.

"No?" Wes questioned.

"No...So you say Gunn talked to you?"

"Yes, like a parrot, well, he didn't ask for a cracker. Um...That wasn't...I was trying to be clever, really, you know, wanted something like 'he sang like a bird' but wanted it to involve talking and a parrot is a talking bird, sadly that wasn't at all clever..."

Angel's laughter held warm deep genuine amusement. His coldness fading as if it had never been there. "Actually, that is clever. I must remember to use it some time. You know, one night I'll go to someone I need information out of and say, 'I'm going to make you talk like a parrot!'"
Wesley laughed along with Angel. Their amusement filling the peaceful night. "Maybe, you should take crackers just in case they beg for one!" Wes said between happy giggles.

"Who would have ever thought a Claymore would be one day replaced by crackers...I tell ya it's not right." Angel said with a sad mock shake of his head. Then with a tender smile he lifted their held hands and placed a soft kiss to the inside of Wesley's wrist.

"Angel? Do we have a relationship?" Wes asked going serious once more.

"I...I think so."

"You only *think*?" Wes asked gently. Wondering if he should be aggravated, pissed or just go batty. Perhaps all three? Angel reminded him of a damn yoyo. Angel should be real thankful that as a small boy he found yoyo's fascinating or he'd pop him hard in the nose.

"It's...Complicated."

"Right, complicated. You've been wanting me, I'm been wanting you. Well, yes, I can see where it's all complicated." Wes answered as dryly as possible. Starting to move once more. Still holding onto Angel's hand as if it was a steadfast life line. The vampire held the Watcher's hand in the same way. Walking beside him.

"Ha. Ha." Angel stated sarcastically. "You know what I mean."

Wesley tilted his head, giving him a look. "Actually, I'm honestly not sure I do."

"Oh...Sorry."

"Don't be."

They walked. Not really going anywhere. Just enjoying being in each others company.

"So..." Angel said looking at the dark ocean. "You said you talked to Gunn?"

"Yes. He told me, about the false prophecy. Wes kidnapping Connor. Told me about you hating him and how Gunn had also been furious with him. Hating him too for a while, because he felt Wesley didn't trust him. Didn't need him as a friend or confidant. He felt Wes, out of everyone would have and should have talked to him."

"Wait, Gunn actually used the word 'confidant'?"

"Angel, Gunn is a very smart man and no he didn't use the word confidant but I understood what he was saying! And you better stop acting like he's the dumb hired muscle! I'm getting sick of it, Angel. You're a grown man, you know better, or at least you should! Talk to him as a friend. Ask him his thoughts on issues. Act as if you care! Maybe teach him how to play chess, he loves games and is a heavy competitor. He works his mind hard on the best method to win. And you're really old, you probably know a lot of card games you could teach him. Go out hunting demons then have a beer with him afterwards and talk like old buds. It's all very simple, Angel, you've been around for centuries you should know how to talk and treat someone as a friend!"

"Will you stop talking like I'm ancient! Geez...And I'm not used to doing that and I do care. I do see him as a friend...And I don't treat him like the dumb hired muscle..."
Wesley gave him a hard cold look. "Angelus would have treated his minions better than how you treat him and it's going to stop now."

Angel almost tripped over his own big feet. "Okay, I'll do better, I promise. Tomorrow, I'll ask him if he would like to learn chess, so I can have a...good, fun game, I'll also offer him a beer and we'll talk about stuff...Happy, now?"

"I'll be happy when you actually do it."

"Okay! I will, gee, did you give your Angel such a hard time?"

"Actually, there was always sex involved. If I really wanted him to do something for me all I'd have to do is kneel before him and open his trousers. Putting my mouth right on...Or offer my arse and afterwards while he is happy and relaxed from his orgasm he'd ask me if I wanted or needed anything. I'd always say I needed him, which was true, anyway we'd have more sex then I'd say, 'you know...I've been thinking or I've been meaning to tell you...' And if it didn't put me in danger he'd move heaven and hell to do it."

Angel came to a dead stop, yanking Wes to a stand still. The Watcher looked at the vampire, as the demon gave a low throaty growl.

Wes looked around startled, before giving a low whisper. "What is it? Are we about to be attacked?"

"I hate that bastard, I really do!"

Wesley smiled, now realizing. "Would you like a blow job, Angel? Or do you want to bugger my nice, firm, hot arse? Hell, we could do both if you like..."

Angel let go of Wesley's hand. "Sounds nice more than nice actually but no."

"Tease. There are places in hell for cock teasers, you know."

"I'm not the one who started to talk about sex and giving me a fucking hard on! Or made me want to knock you into the sand and take what is mine! I...I mean..."

"I know what you mean and at least I now know, been wondering if you saw me as yours. I like that."

Angel sighed, turning away from the British man. Suddenly as if changing the subject he said, "Gunn was wrong. I didn't hate Wes. I was furious at him. I was hurt and wanted to hate him and hurt him right back. Really wanted to hate him, but I couldn't and I hated myself for it...For a while anyway."

"Because you loved him." Wes stated softly.

Angel looked over his shoulder. "Yeah, and it took me a long time to accept that. Me *loving* him. I wanted to be straight. I wanted to be in control. Around him...I never felt those things and sometimes I'd blame him for it, never myself. Around him I was feeling things I've never experienced before and it scared me. I knew he was trying to protect me and my son. I knew why he kidnapped Connor. I knew he loved me, but I didn't hate him to love me. I didn't want to love him. He made me feel weak and small. I just didn't want it or him. Yet, strangely I didn't realize that I had been lying to myself for years, until I was trapped in the fucking ocean. Only then did I admit to myself that maybe it was okay to love him. To be in love with him, it was okay that he loved me in return."

"Maybe we were meant to be. We were right together. Maybe I should get over my fears. Maybe he'd help me with that. I knew he'd rescue me, my demon, heart, soul and mind knew that to be true. Was what kept
me *sane* down there, kept me holding on to the hope I felt..." Angel slowly sat down on a sandune, before continuing...

"And he did save me, but it was too damn late. Another Angel from another fucking world got to him first and hope died for me right then and there.

Seeing another Angel hold him tight, seeing that look of invincible steadfast love on Wes' face. That love was supposed to be mine, damn it! Not his, but mine...Seeing that, realizing that made me almost wish that Wes had just left me in the goddamn ocean, because then I could have believed we'd one day get a second chance. That maybe one day things would be alright...We'd have each other...One day."

Wesley slowly sat down next to him. Both now silent, listening to the ocean. The darkness around them.

"A second chance isn't too late, not now. Not with me here." Wes admitted softly, hopefully.

"Yeah, and I'm trying to grab on to this second chance, I really am...I just..."

"I understand." Wes studied the ocean. His fingers playing in the sand between them. "What I wish to understand is *why*; why are you so afraid of something so natural as you and me?"

"You tell me why you never became bonded to your Angel, you tell me every lie and every secret you kept from him and I'll tell you everything, anything you want me too, at any time."

"That's crazy..."

"Is it?" Angel said giving him a sharp look before looking back at the ocean. "You tell me *everything* and I'll share everything as well."

Wesley sighed. "So you do know that Angel, my Angel, wanted to be bonded to me, right?"

"He said something to Wes while taking me home, plus some freaking ass fairies, I hope never to see again, told me that they were bonded now."

Wes nodded. "In many ways you are like him. You want everything."

"Yeah, I do." Angel told him seriously. Not at all ashamed.

"He wanted everything, wanted all of me, but to be bonded...He would have known everything without even asking. Without even talking like we're doing now. He never knew, one of the things he never knew was that I am a Neptee. They are addicted to the most powerful of magicks. They are dangerous. I'm an addict and there is always a price for using it and the pull, the need to use it is so strong. I couldn't give Angel that. For if we had become bonded we'd be one and he'd feel the magic. Hear it and he'd know the pull. I wouldn't be able to protect him from the pull, the lust...Plus, he'd know things. You see not just anyone can be a Neptee. It's passed by family. First born of the Wyndam line. My grandfather was a Neptee, as was my mother and others before that. Neptees are very rare. At one time the Watcher Council tried to use the magic of the Neptee for their own as well as other organizations, but Neptee if you use it, there has to be a balance, has to be a price. The price can be painful." Wes' voice faded, staring off into the distance. Lost in his thoughts, it was a moment before saying softly.

"When I was eight years of age, I got deathly sick. Went to doctors, had countless tests and I continued to get sicker and weaker. It was found that I had cancer. It had been spreading fast. The cancer was eating me. The doctors told my parents that it was hopeless. It was inoperable and incurable. I had maybe two months to live and those months would be spent in the hospital. Mum, she...I...One night she stood over me. I
remember it so well, even oddly, how the lights from the hallway spilling into the cold dim room. I remember the tears she cried as she told me how much she loved me. She even kissed my forehead and cheeks. I still close my eyes and try to remember how her soft hand felt gripping mine. I remember wondering if she was trying to brake mine for she held my hand so tight. She told me that I had so much to live for, to do... That I had a powerful beautiful destiny but most of all I was her beloved son. I can still hear her sobs even as a grown man they still affect me. I couldn't understand all that she said but I knew. I could feel it. She was about to do something... Even as a small boy I knew. 'Mum' I pleaded, 'Don't!' I started to cry with her. Once more she told me she loved me, her eyes turned black with a small glow of red...

Wes swallowed hard, coming to a stop. Only then did he feel the tears falling down from his cheeks. He drew in a sharp breath, his voice hoarse. "Raw with remembered pain. Pain he never shared with anyone until now. "Next thing I know, I'm feeling heathy once more and I look over the side of my hospital bed, over the railing. I could see Mum on the floor. She... She wasn't moving looking up at me with empty blue eyes and I knew even as I started to scream for her, I knew. She was dead. I killed her. I killed my own mother and I didn't... Didn't mean too, I swear I didn't."

Wes felt arms pull him close. Soothing hands ran up and down his back. Wes sobbed in Angel's shoulder. "Shh... Please, Wes... Shh, you didn't kill her, love."

"I did! I know I did! Father even said I did, he said I... I was a worthless murderer and if anyone should have died it should have been me..."

"Your father is an idiot, hell, if I ever met him I'd bite him for you and I know what murder is, Wes. I've done it for years... Fuck, I killed my own mother. What you told me, had *nothing* to do with murder! Do you want me to tell you how I killed my own Mum?"

Wes had slowly stopped sobbing but was still weakly sniffing leaning heavily, tiredly against Angel. "Um, no, thanks for the offer though."

"Anything for you, Wes."

"Yes, well, telling me how you killed your own mother won't comfort me."

"To each their own."

Wes sniffled. "I hate crying and ever since I came here I feel like I'm falling apart."

"Really?"

"You helped."

Angel was confused as he asked in a hurt tone. "I helped with you falling apart?"

"No! You big silly vampire lack wit, no. You helped give me hope. That it is okay to fall apart because you'll be here."

"That's true, I will. So you never told your Angel about being Neptee or your Mum?"

"He knew she died not that I killed her."

"Wes, I told you, okay, that's it. I'm going to tell you in detail how I killed my own Mum, maybe even draw
some pictures for you. I might even cry, so better get a hankie ready."

"You are such a drama Queen!" Wesley said loudly into the night, whacking him into the stomach.

"Me?! And by the way, 'Ow'!" Angel rubbed at his stomach, before putting the arm back around Wesley.

Wesley's masculine laughter filled the night. He shifted in Angel's arms, getting comfortable. "Right, like me slapping you hurt. You vampire, me human, remember?"

"I remember, but I thought I'd help you feel manly or something...Okay, and maybe you slapping me in the stomach didn't hurt but it did tingle." Angel replied back teasingly.

"You do make me feel manly and something." Wes quietly admitted.

"You do the same for me. So tell me what else you never told him."

Wesley looked up at him, tilting his head comfortably upon a broad strong shoulder. "Who says I have anymore secrets to tell?"

Angel lifted an eyebrow in his direction as he looked down at him.

"I didn't keep many!" Wes snapped indignantly.

Angel still said nothing, waiting.

"Just about being a Neptee and my Mum and...The sodding fact that I wanted my mind to be mine! Was that so selfish? He had everything! Every bloody thing, my heart, my soul, my body...Yet he still wanted more! He wanted all of my memories, wanted to be my other half and I...I wanted there to be a part of me that was still *me*, still mine. That wasn't owned, or possessed, I was alright with sharing my memories, but...Why experience them when he could simply ask and I *choose* whether or not to share. Okay? Happy, now? That's it tell me why you fear--"

"Wesley, are you sure that is all?"

"What are you the lie police? Going to arrest me? Handcuff me to your wrist and have your wicked way with me?"

"Wes..."

"You can you know...Have your wicked way with me, though handcuffs aren't necessary, but they are fun!"

"Wes..."

"I once told Angel that buying those purple leather trousers didn't at all make his hips look wide that right there was a huge lie. I also lied when I swore I actually *liked* the red rhinestone tacky belt he bought me off the net, please, like I ever wore it. Tried to give it away in every kitty poker game I played in and still no one wanted the sodding thing! And...And one memory I had that I never wanted to share with my Angel...I once had a Professor that I respected and...I trusted him, thought he was so fucking wonderful. Knew so much. Was so respected. Everything I thought I'd one day want to be...Then one day that changed...He...I...Something happened that changed that. I said no, but he still...He said no one would believe me, if I said anything. That they would make fun of me and call me a liar. I never quite got over that until I met my Angel. I felt so dirty and Angel made me feel clean for the first time since that happened. Silly, isn't it? He helped me and I couldn't ever tell him. Each time I thought about it, I was so ashamed...I
feared he’d see me differently; I couldn't share that with him. My shame, the dirtiness...I simply couldn't...

"My Father caught me kissing a sweet lad and he beat me, raped me and shoved a broom handle right up my arse. Told me, I deserved it and that I was filthy slut. I believed him. I was filthy and dirty." Angel stated flatly, as if he was discussing the weather.

Both were silent for the longest time. Wesley could only find one thing to say. "Oh."

"Yeah." Angel stated bluntly.

Wes then said in a slightly shaking voice. "I scrubbed myself for hours trying to get clean, under scalding hot water. Months, years later I couldn't feel clean. I'm sorry that you have felt that way...Experienced what..."

"What we both have experienced." Angel was now running his hands up and down Wesley's arms pulling him even tighter against his masculine hard chest. Anguish reflected in his dark enormous eyes. Eyes that sparkled like black ice with a hint of amber. Crushed jewels they were.

Wes swallowed hard. Feeling slightly sick to his stomach. The sickness the nausea was familiar. He always felt it when that particular door of his past started to crack open and Wes was sure, Angel felt that same nasty painful sickness each time that horrible door in his own past cracked opened.

A strange bond had been forged by a terrible horrific trauma they both shared. May have been a different place and time. The rapist may have even worn a different face, at one time a trusted face, but they were survivors, even though at one time or another they had wanted to forget about it. Hide away from the world from people. Never letting anyone know. Never speaking about it. Build a wall to protect themselves. They had learned that there was always hope. The hope that one day they wouldn't feel like victims but feel like survivors. To be survivors.

His Angel had taught him that and this Angel was teaching him to accept to share the battle scars and not be afraid or ashamed. Their rapists were the ones who should have been ashamed and afraid.

"Wes?" Angel asked softly into his ear. "Out of everything you told me, this has helped *me*. In more way than you could ever understand. You and me, we're no longer rape victims, are we?"

"No, we're no longer victims, Angel, we're survivors." Knowing it to be true.

"Yes, we are indeed."

Then Angel moved in and captured Wesley's lips with his own.

(end of part 49)

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want more?  

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Obsessed Need of You 50
by Shawna

Notes: These marks ** means totally AU reality. These marks ## means the reality you the reader are familiar with. Now the reality, ## will take place close/during to the 4th season ep. 'Deep Down' but even that I play with a little. Also, the Angel in ** is a little different, for he is at peace with his demon, so at times he will even sound a little like Angelus. A good horny possessive as hell Angelus. A huge thank you to the awesome Nikki for willing to be my beta, I mean, wow, didn't have to blackmail her or anything! Oh, and I'd like to dedicate this story to Cat, cos ya rock and I felt ya deserved a prezzie for being naughty...

Lilah cursed an ugly foul word under her breath. The glass of single malt scotch she had reached out for she'd clumsily missed, it was now a broken wet mess upon her beautiful wooden floor.

She fucking hated this! She was blind! That fucking bastard made her blind and no one and nothing could help her. Not even the powerful Wolfram and Hart that she had given her loyal service to. Nothing could help her to see again. Nothing!

The firm had simply let her go, saying they regretted doing so.

She had even gone to the Partners and begged. She Lilah 'The Proud Bitch' Morgan had begged! Even threatened. She had even promised that she could and would do better. Be better at being evil. She was their faithful servant after all. But that didn't seem to matter, nothing seemed to matter.

They informed her that her services were no longer needed and to stop embarrassing herself...And would she like help to the door? Bastards! They could do nothing for her, they informed her for she no longer belonged to them. Her soul that at one time did belong to them, now belonged to something else. It was a captive forever prisoner to whatever power Wyndam-Pryce had used to free himself. The Neptee. He was free, she was not. Now a prisoner of darkness and not even to the darkness she enjoyed and willingly worked for.

She now belonged to something other than Wolfram and Hart.

'And you're just now coming to understand that, gee, Lilah, and here I thought you were smart.'

Lilah jumped slightly, wrapping her arms around herself. "Go away!" She told the ever dark silky male voice inside her head out loud. "Go away, damn you!"

'Poor girl, upset that Wolfram and Hart doesn't even own your soul anymore.'

Lilah sat still frozen. "Give it back to them, you don't need it."

'Why? You should be happy you don't belong to them, they would have sent you to hell when they were done with you. Belonging to what is Neptee could redeem you, free you for something better then hell.'

'I deserve hell, I've worked for it! Don't want fucking redemption! Let me go!" Lilah shouted. Frustrated. Angry. "Just let me go, you bastard!" She grabbed a sofa pillow and threw it. Not caring that she must have hit one of her tables with some picture frames on it for she heard a violent crash as they hit the floor.
'Only when you can see, can the power holding you, free you. Only when you see...' The voice faded away leaving her alone.

"Damn you, I'm blind! I can't see anything!" She shouted, before curling into a tight ball and sobbing.

##

The kiss was driving them both mad with desire. With intense need and overwhelming lust.

There was something so right about the kiss Wesley and Angel shared. Angel now accepted the hard true fact. He needed and loved this man within his arms. Oddly enough he had gotten a second chance.

Angel craved, yearned desperately for Wesley's heart and body. His mouth revealed that as it took Wesley's own mouth in an erotic sexy mating ritual. Tongues dancing to a hungry primitive beat.

Wes returned the kiss, not caring that Angel's mouth was now full of sharp deadly fangs, for the vampire's face had shifted in it's passion. the Watcher was used to it, so it didn't disgust or dampen his passion, in fact it ever more intensified it.

Wesley arched his body back towards Angel, feeling and loving the hardness he felt. His body felt alive as it demanded more, needing more. Needing Angel.

The vampire gave a low ominous harmless growl as it escaped from his throat. His demon was wracked with overwhelming pleasure as it held and kissed its mate. Wonderful happiness filled...Angel stopped the kiss with a sudden jerk. "No!" He shouted with a growl.

Wesley looked at him dizzily. Passion, lust and a painful needy hard on held him suspended in stunned torment. Wes looked at him with wide eyes filled of lust, need and pure hunger.

"No, I'm sorry but no..." Angel moving away, slowly standing up.

Wes blinked and shook his head, looking up at him. "What scared you, Angel?"

"Not anymore...I just...I could lose my soul. I feel it, I know it. With you, the acceptance and love that I feel, I know I could and would...And I can't let Angelus out, Wes, I just can't."

Wesley snorted, shaking his head. "You're an idiot."

"Wes, I'm sorry." "You're sorry..." Wes mumbled darkly with disgust and great disappointment. "Don't you get it?!? You're Angelus with a soul not Angel with a sodding demon!" Wes staggered into a standing position. "Plus, I could help with that, you know, make that soul permanent."

"How?"

"There is a way." Wes stated hesitantly. "B-but I can do it..."

"Is it dangerous?"

"Angel...I do know a way. I can do it right now. We'll both be happy and you'll never have to worry about
"Damn it, Wes, answer the question! Is it dangerous?" Angel asked angry, wanting the truth and seeing the signs that Wes didn't want to answer the question. After everything that had happened tonight...

"Yes. Very." Wesley answered honestly.

"Then no."

"You selfish, Prick! Stop being so fucking hot and cold! I can fix it, permanently! You can have both me and a permanent soul!"

"Wes..."

"It involves sex." He said hoping that will help change his mind, for sex does wonders.

"Wes, listen the answer is no." He tried to sound sad and strangely kind.

Wesley looked at him, hurt radiating from his face. "Don't you want me?" He whispered.

"God, yes, I do...But..."

"No, buts! I want a relationship, Angel, I want everything you can give me..."

"Maybe I'm not good enough for you, ever think of that, Wes? I want a relationship too, but lets go slowly, okay? Take things one day at a time."

"Damn it, it's already been a month! I'm already living down the hall from you in your hotel! I'm already in your life! I told you things that I've never...Damn it, Angel..."

Wesley turned away from the ocean and started to walk past the vampire. "You're over two hundred years old! You need to accept the fact that life is hard, it's full of choices, but sometimes one shouldn't stand still as life rushes by! You should grab things before they run past you and you lose one of the choices you wish you had made."

Angel grabbed him, forcing him to a stop. "I am choosing you and I'm grabbing on, it's just..."

"Just nothing! You big Pilot!" Wes jerked away from him and stormed off.

"Wesley! Damn it, don't act all pissed off." Angel said quickly following him.

"I'm acting pissed off because I am pissed off! Surprise, I don't pretend that I have no emotions unlike some vampires that I know!" Wesley said loudly, still marching up the beach, heading towards the place they had left Angel's car.

"Damn it, I have emotions! That kiss we just shared showed that I have emotions! This rod of steel in my pants tell me I have emotions! So don't you dare tell me I don't have them! And fuck it, Wesley, stop walking away from me!"

"Or what, Angel? You'll show me you actually have an emotion or two...Shock upon shock, if you ask me! How about you bite yourself hard on the arse? Maybe then you wouldn't be such a sodding lackwit!"

**
In the other reality Hero threw one of her horrific, ugly paintings from the beautiful marble stone wall. She yelled and stomped her delicate feet.

"Fuck it, Fuck it, FUCK IT!"

The words echoed in spited fury. The earth shook. Lightening flashed upon the earth in jagged lines. The world felt her rage.

"One of you Powers get your 'know it all' asses in here, *NOW*!"

A small beautiful, familiar kind redhead appeared. "You shouted, great Goddess?" She gave a slight bow, in mocking respect.

Hero blinked and growled darkly. "Did I not tell you never to take that form?"

The redhead blinked innocently at her as she tilted her head. "Actually, no, it was the form of the last great Warrior that you killed by your own hand that you said never to take the form of...And you think we don't listen when the mighty goddess speaks...But if you wish I can change into the form of the Slayer you once knew as Buffy, instead of what this world knew as the great Slayer Willow."

"God, no, anything but Buffy Summers!"

"So this form is okay?" Willow said in amusement. A amused sparkle in her green eyes. She wore black leather pants and a cute hot pink sweater. Upon her ears dangled Scooby Doo, a gift from Xander. A stake was noticeable in her back pocket as well as the wicked Boone knife she had attached to her belt. That was the outfit the original Willow had died in, the one she wore saving the world.

Hero blinked, still feeling thrown off balance at seeing Willow. She could swear that she could see that life, the soul, that special spark that made Willow the outstanding person and friend she had once been before her death...Both times. The first world Hero had destroyed as well as this new one...

She looked away before saying with sharp ice in her tone, "Shut up. I just found out that Wesley was ripped out of heaven! *Heaven*! He was at rest, at peace! He was happy! And now I find out he was ripped right out of heaven a fucking month after the fact!"

"Yes, we knew that."

Hero looked over at the Power with a mighty glare. "*I* did not know this. My Wesley, was ripped out of heaven! After everything, he deserved heaven and it was taken from him! Right under my watch! How am I to help the innocent, if I never know something horrific will happen before it happens!"

"You're a goddess, things happen. You know that not even all your power can make the world right for everyone. There is always an unexpected surprise in this thing that humans and demons call a life. If everyone expected the surprise it wouldn't be unexpected now would it. And really is the fact that the other Wesley was ripped out of heaven so shocking to you? You knew that world has no respect for the natural order of things. Just look at how many people have died and brought back. Buffy. Darla. Hell, a group tried to resurrect the Master at one time. Dawn even tried to bring her mother back from the grave a girl who was not supposed to exist at all and now Wesley...It has happened all one can do now is accept it."

"Accept it my ass! What are you ass holes going to do about it?"

Willow walked around the goddess, slowly, studying her, as the Slayer would have done in life with an
enemy. Her moves elegant and powerful, that of a Warrior. A Slayer.

"What can we do, goddess?" She stated calmly and coldly.

Hero reached out and grabbed the Willow impersonate by the throat. Bruising it. Making it hurt. A soft deadly inhuman growl rumbled within her throat.

"Fix it." Hero said coldly. Hard almost demonic fire in her eyes. "Fix it, Power, now."

"No." The Power said weakly but yet determined. "We can't and we won't."

Hero flung the Power away making the red haired Slayer hit the wall violently.

"The other Wesley has been there for a month! Does not the other Angel deserve some happiness, seeing that you always want to take special care of old friends..." Willow said reasonably, standing back up as if the collision didn't affect her at all. She wasn't the least bit bothered by Hero's show of temper.

"But what about this world's Angel?"

"He made his choice. That world also made a choice. All one can do is accept it."

"But..." Hero's shoulder's slumped, head hung low as anger left her. "But Wes was so happy after everything he's been through in both lives...He was finally at peace..." She slowly looked at the Power, whispering almost brokenly. "My Wesley was at peace. My own special hero, my little Warrior...He was at peace, at rest."

"And life goes on. Perhaps he will find happiness in the new world..." Willow said gently. "Cordy..."

Hero blinked and straightened slightly. Still staring at the Power in Willow's beautiful form. Again the goddess could almost believe it was really Willow looking back at her.

"It all goes on." She said softly, tenderly, to the goddess, knowing she had her full attention. "You know this to be true. You will still be about to help both Wesley's if only he asks for it..."

"But he never asks anything of me...He never has."

"He will, he will be needing your help soon...Not right now, but soon. You'll know what to do. You will choose as we all choose at times."

"I-I don't understand, Power..."

"You will."

"This can't turn out good." Hero said softly. "You do know that right?"

The Power smiled mysteriously. "You just might be surprised. But then that is what life is about...Surprises."

Hero glared once more. "I know you're up to something and I don't like it...Tell me, why did it take me a whole month to find out?"

"Because. Surprisingly, you've been enjoying life as of late. Spending time with the Wesley of another reality. A Wesley that cared and loved Cordelia Chase. There's nothing wrong with that. One should live and enjoy life but it sometimes takes awhile before one notices anything different or off."
"I haven't been living. I'm a goddess, I can't enjoy life. I have no right to such...Tell me Power, how is he? My...The other Wesley?"

"He's been living. Day by day. Learning to live in the new world. Falling in love that world's Angel." The Power told her simply before disappearing.

The goddess moved tiredly to her throne and gave a heavy sigh as she slumped down into her seat. Her thoughts running a thousand miles a minute. Wondering and fearing what would happen next.

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Silence. Think empty silence. The only sound was the key turning and shutting off of the car's engine.

Angel sighed. "Damn it, Wes, will you at least talk to me now?"

Wesley glared as he yanked his seat belt off and opened the door and got out.

"Can't ignore me forever, Wes. You're mad." Angel simply jumped out smoothly and elegantly. It was cool having a convertible and simply hoping out, instead of opening the door. "I get that. You should be mad at me. I can't help it if at times I'm an idiot."

"*At times*? You make it sound as if you're not an idiot *all* the time!" Wes sniped. Not really sure if he was as angry as he had first started out, as he walked towards the Hyperion's courtyard.

"You drive me crazy! You really do! Since you came into my life, I'm starting to think that maybe *Dru* is saner than me!"

Wes stopped to look back at him. "How do you think *I* feel?! All your fault that I'm sodding batty!"

Angel moved in close. "I'm sorry." He whispered those words saying so much more.

"So am I." Wes whispered back.

"It wasn't you, Wes, never doubt that." Angel reached out and lightly caressed his cheek with a big hand. "This is just all so new to me."

Wes nodded. "I know, it's new for me too. I've fallen for another Angel. I live in a different strange world. I get that it's new...Everything is so new. It's almost scary. *Is* scary."

"I really like this thing we have, Wes." Angel stated looking hungrily at Wesley's mouth.

"Um, y-yes...You and Me...A thing..." Wes said in a soft daze, waiting, wondering, knowing those wonderful lips were going to touch his soon. Real soon. Wesley eagerly tilted his head opening his lips slightly, offering himself sweetly to Angel.

Angel, one who always had a liking of the sweet, zeroed in. Pressed in close, there was a thrill of pure hot excitement leaping in the vampire's still tideless blood. Already knowing that the kiss would be primitive. Wild. Full of desire and need. They would end up exploding together.

"Oh, come on and kiss already!"

Angel and Wes froze, they both slowly turned their faces towards the familiar sweet southern female voice that had spoken.

Fred blushed a pretty pink, looking down right bashfully. "Oops, well gee, did I really say that out loud?"

Wes and Angel continued to stare at her giving her a short nod.

"So..." She made a jerking movement with her hand, watching them. "You two were about to kiss right?"
She asked with a nervous and hopeful smile.

Again both men nodded at her silently.

"Well, good!" She said happily looking absurdly pleased. "I've been wondering if you two would ever...Well, you know, get together. You two can go on and kiss, don't mind little ol' me. Just pretend that I'm not even here...Watching...If you want I can even pretend that I'm not watching if that makes ya comfortable, even though I will be watching. So go on! Get on with the kissage!" She then waved her hands at them giving them permission to go ahead.

"Um..." Wesley nervously pushed up his glasses, sharing a look with Angel who shrugged. "Maybe later?" Wes suggested after a moment.

Fred honestly looked devastated, her lips even formed a sad pout. "But--But the kiss..."

Wesley sighed, turned and pressed his lips upon Angel's before stepping back and ending the contact. "Happy now, Fred? See we've kissed."

Angel chuckled before sounding amused, "That's not a kiss, Wes, now this is a kiss." With one hand he grabbed Wesley and pressed Wes to him.

He moved his mouth upon him. Once more the kiss was erotic. It was pure ecstasy. Made Angel feel invincible. It was a kiss a hungry starving predator would do. Devouring Wesley's mouth. Hard. Possessive. Sweeping into the hot sweetness. Savoring the taste that was Wesley.

Wesley's moving lips were soft wondrous satin beneath his.

Angel wanted him. Needed him and God if it didn't' show itself in those passionate kisses. One after another, never stopping. Burning with need.

'Angel has the perfect mouth' Wes thought before all thought ended and simply enjoyed the feel and passion of it all. A whirling kaleidoscope of passion. Angel was the pure mixture of domination and tenderness.

Angel slowly stopped, pulling back he said huskily, "Now that's a kiss."

Wes looked weakly at him, the kiss draining everything out of him, he was grateful that Angel was still holding him or he'd fall over like one of those ridiculous girly heroines in an old fashioned novel, damn it if his legs didn't feel like rubber.

"Yes, that is indeed a kiss." Wes agreed with a quick nod.

"Oh, yeah." Fred agreed. "And wow...That looked really, really hot. Wow, I...I think I need to hurry over to Gunn, who happens to be inside right now...He's getting action tonight." She mumbled the last line under her breath before she moved towards them and then past them. Opening the door leading into the hotel lobby. She then looked at them with a wide friendly smile, white teeth flashing. "And to answer your question, Wes, yeah, *now* I'm happy!" She then walked in keeping the door open with her hand. Waving them in.

"Show off." Wes told Angel, moving now that he had strength back in his legs.

All Angel could do was laugh. It stopped suddenly as he nearly fell over a unmoving Texan and British man. He looked at what they were looking at. A bright white glow when the glow faded there was a familiar figure at least to Fred and Angel, now stood in the lobby.
"Cordelia!" Fred gasped in wonder and surprise. "Is that really you?"

"I...I think so. Not sure. Sounds familiar, but I'm not sure..." The Dark One lied hesitantly in Cordelia's body. Making sure it's features were one full of uncertainty, confusion and hesitant fear. "Why am I not sure?"

Angel moved slightly away from Wes and Fred. Stepping a little close to his former Seer. Trying to look safe as if he wouldn't hurt her and she had nothing to fear. "You are Cordelia Chase...Why are you...What?"

Angel stuttered slightly, unsure of what to say and do.

"Are you from an alternate reality? Wesley, here is but now this reality is his. Long story, but it looks like something is coming out of it. Used to think you and Angel were meant to be but now I see him and Wes...There is something special there, ya know?" Fred babbled wanting to run up to Cordy and hug her tight.

Dark eyes looked at Fred, emotion oddly masked. "Name Wesley sounds vasty familiar too."

"But you don't remember?" Angel question softly.

"No...I...I only know I should but I don't." Cordy moved elegantly around. Looking at everything, as if trying to understand why it was all familiar yet unfamiliar at the same time.

"Angel? Didn't you say Cordelia left to become a Higher Being and she was in a higher majestic place?"

Wes asked him.

Angel nodded.

"That's probably why then." Wes mused to himself.

"What do you mean?" Cordelia asked sharply.

"Higher Being. Mystic place. Coming down to earth probably effected your brain or something. Might remember with time but the Goddess...I mean, um, the Powers...For this world doesn't have an all powerful goddess like my world does. You may have learned great secrets and ancient wisdoms that the Powers wish you not to share."

Angel nodded, "Makes sense. I ever tell you that I like the fact that you're so smart?" He asked Wes, taking his hand.

"Yeah, that does make a lot of sense!" Fred shouted with an excited bounce, before rushing up to Cordy and hugging her tight. "Gosh, I've missed you and things will be okay, you're home now! We're all one big happy family again! We'll help you remember, Cordy, we will, and we'll also make new memories as well!"

Cordy returned the hug stiffly, eyeing the men's joined hands coldly. The hug ended and she moved towards them. "Why does seeing you holding hands bother me so?" The Seer asked.

Angel shrugged carelessly. "Well, you and me almost had a small thing, but it was the wrong kind of thing. We're great friends. Terrific friends. We're almost brother and sister in our closeness and brothers and sisters should never force a permanent relationship."

"Wait!" Wesley cut in. "You almost had a relationship with this woman?"
"Well, I'm not having a relationship with her now! I'm having one with you! I mean, I think you're my boyfriend."

"You...You only think!! You don't know if I'm your boyfriend or not after all those issues and talks we've shared, you only *think* you're my boyfriend!?” Wesley hissed angry. Yanking at the hand trapped within the vampire's hand. Trying to jar it loose. "Let me go, you flea for brains!"

Angel rolled his eyes before sighing, "I liked it better when you called me a 'lackwit'."

"I'm going to bite you if you don't let me go!"

"Always knew you were kinky Wes and I want you to know that I like it."

"What the HELL!"

The four in the middle of the lobby looked up, to see Angel's angry bitter son glaring hotly down on them from the top of the staircase balcony. Gunn was surprisingly beside him.

"What it's not bad enough that my real father is a fucking good for nothing *vampire* but he is also a hell bound fag too!?!" Connor spit out hatefully. Blue eyes full of ugly hate and outrage.

"Connor." Angel looked right back, completely unashamed.

"Don't you dare talk to your father in that way, young man!" Wesley shouted right back, no longer trying to yank his hand out of Angel's instead held it tight.

"Look, Charles, Cordy is here! She's back!” Fred shouted to Gunn, pointing to Cordy as if he couldn't see her and acting as if nothing else was going on around them.

"Yo, Cordy, good to see ya, girl! Missed ya!" He answered down with a friendly warm smile. Cordy gave a half smile back.

"I can talk to him any way I damn well please!" Connor snapped back, not focusing on Fred, Gunn or Cordelia. "You both are fucking fags! You'll both spend eternity in hell, father told me what happens to evil dirty sinners like you two!"

"First off, Holtz was *not* your father!” Angel growled up at him. "Secondly, you know nothing, if me and Wes are going to hell, then at least we'll go there together! And thirdly, you better start being respectfull to me and others around you or you can get the hell out of *my* house, you hateful little brat!"

"You think I want to live here? I'm just staying here 'cos...'Cos I want too, that's why! Also, 'cos I know it pisses you off!"

"And I should be grateful for that?!" Angel shouted up angrily. A vein almost popping out from his thick neck.

"Fuck you! Or better yet, Dad, fuck your own personal sex toy for that's the only thing that British guy is good for!" With that Connor stormed off, heading towards his own room.

Angel let go of Wesley's hand already flying towards the stairs in his true demon face, "Okay, that's it! You just broke the camel's fucking back! I'm going to beat you to a bloody mess, you hear me, Connor! I'm going to show you just what a vampire can do!"
"Angel! Wait! Calm down!" Wesley shouted breathlessly, rushing after him. "You'll do something you'll regret!"

"I won't regret beating him black and blue and seeing a little blood too! The other Angel got to beat him up, I deserve the same pleasure!"

They did stop halfway up the stairs though, coming to a stop because the lobby doors had been thrown open violently.

"WESLEY!! You bastard, where are you! Wesley!"

"Oh, no, not now..." The Watcher whispered, knowing that bad things always seemed to come at once.

An obvious drunk woman with a white long cane and a gun staggered into the lobby.

"You damn rotten bastard! Where is he...Wesley!"

"Lilah Morgan..." Fred whispered in stunned disbelief. "What is she doing here?"

"Where is he, tell me damn it!" She shouted, coming close to Fred, dangerously waving the gun almost in the Texan's stunned face. Angel leaped from the stairs in a single movement, like a dangerous powerful cat. Grasping the gun before she could hurt anyone, hurt Fred.

"What are you doing here, Lilah?" Angel growled furiously, coldly, still in his demonic face.

"Didn't you hear me? I'm here for Wesley! To make him give me back my sight! I need it, I can't live like this! Do you hear me, you BASTARD! Give me back MY SIGHT!" Her head swinging back and forth violently, wildly as if trying to seek something that wasn't there.

"What?" Angel said disbelievingly before savagely knocking off her dark shades, to see empty, sightless eyes.

Lilah hit at his chest. "Make him give me back my sight! I need it, can't you understand that? I need it! I'll do anything, I swear anything, whatever Wes wants me to do, I'll do it...Just please...Please give me back my sight...I'll do anything... *Anything*!" She finally whispered desperately. Meaning every word.

"Nothing can be done. It belongs to the Neptee. I'm sorry, Ms. Morgan, really but nothing can be done." Wesley stated softly. Looking away from Lilah and Angel.

Cordelia was flabbergasted at all that she had just witnessed. She turned to Fred, "Is this place always like a circus?"

Winifred snorted, waving her hand in a 'this is nothing' motion. "Gosh, no! A circus is normal and calm compared to this place!"

(end of part 51)
Hero walked beside Wesley. Outside in the autumn sunshine. In a beautiful park, trees changing into beautiful yellows, golds, reds with a light mixture of green. The sky a pure blue with only a few long streaks of clouds. The sunshine gleamed off of the man-made lake. Small children with parents watching closely as they tried to feed the ducks and two swans that laid claim to the lake's gentle calm water. There were other children and adults who laughed and played. Looked as if there was even a few teenagers having a picnic under a tall oak. Giggling and enjoying the warmth of the day while it lasted. A couple sitting on a bench holding hands. A jogger jogged. A friendly looking woman smiled at Wesley as she strolled by with her cute little poodle.

Though none paid attention to the powerful goddess walking beside the Watcher. It was as if she didn't exist. Wasn't even there. Nor did anyone even blink or do a double take at the fact the slim British man carried a huge sword right out in the open. Only in Sunnydale...Well, perhaps in L.A too.

"So, You like?" Hero said smiling at him.

Wes looked down at it, weighing it in his hand. "It's beautiful, thank you, Cordelia, my Hero."

"It's made of the rarest metals. Some not even from this world. That sword can go through granite and steel itself, without even braking or chipping. You can kill anything with it, Wes...Even me." She said softly as if it was an after thought.

Wes shot her a startled look that turned into a glare. "Cordelia..."

She shrugged ignoring the glare, her steps becoming quicker. "I'm...I'm just sayin' it's powerful enough to kill a god or a extremely beautiful goddess like myself. Anyway, did you read the inscription?"

"To Wesley, my very own hero, yes I read, it's touching really. I don't think it's really meant for me, but I'm touched."

"You are my hero you know. May not lived it or remember it, but you have that spirit, the soul...That makes you special. Makes you Wesley. Makes you better than I could ever be."

"Hero..." Wesley stopped. The goddess kept on walking.

"You are so very special. So important. You make this world and Angel better."

"Cordelia!"

Hero stopped, turned around to face him. A small young carefree laugh rang out from somewhere behind her.

"This is not a gift." Wesley told her with certainty. "I want it to be, but I know it's not."

"No, it's not." Hero said steadily. "There might come a day, when...You know...I don't think I'll turn evil again, God, I hope not, really I do, but..." She walked back to him. Shoulders slumped in defeat, head hanging low. She sighed before whispering, "I'm tired, Wes, so very tired."
"You're not a quitter."

"I know, Wes, I know." She watched as a breeze made the leaves dance majestically. Leaves even fell, falling with grace and a natural beauty that artist wished they could capture yet never could no matter how hard they tried. She watched the wind touch Wesley. His clothes moved with the movement as did some of his hair. He shivered slightly, he instantly without thought pulled his light jacket closer to him. She tilted her head, her eyes sad.

"What did that feel like, Wes? The wind?"

Wes gave her a questioning look. She then looked out onto the lake. "I'm a goddess, I can make the wind blow at my command but I can never feel it. If I stand in the rain, I never get wet. I can change my clothes with a single thought but no matter how hard I try I can't remember what my actual size is. I can't even remember what my favorite food was as a human or what my favorite dessert used to be. I have no desire for chocolate or even sex. I don't even need to breathe air and I'm tired of being this thing, this monster, this...This fucking goddess that I am! I'm tired Wesley, so fucking tired!"

Wes gave her a hard look. "You chose that for yourself, remember?..." He looked away. "Sorry, I...Thank you for the sword, but I won't use it on you, unless I have too and I will tell you right now that I'm not going to use the sword because you are simply tired."

"Well, gee, I didn't mean that you use the sword today, I'm sure I got a few hundred years left in me." She said with a fake smile, trying to break the tension.

"Good." Wes said with a nod, slowly starting to walk once more, Hero was stepping right along side him. He then continued to speak, "Though to be honest, I'm not sure a few hundred years is enough."

This time the smile she gave him wasn't fake. "With you and Angel in the world, I'm not sure it's enough time either. Speaking of you and Angel...Giving you the sword wasn't the only reason I asked you to take a walk with me."

"And, gee, here I thought you wanted to spend time with me, because I'm a charming handsome devil, I'm really heartbroken really I am."

Hero thumbed him lightly in the arm. "You're a moron...Actually, what I have to tell you is important." Suddenly she turned serious. "It's some news about your world. Wolfram and Hart ripped this world's Wesley out of heaven. Angel has been helping him and it looks like they may be getting together as in 'together' together. The Dark One has shown up in Cordelia's body and it's going to be causing a lot of trouble soon and well...Wesley will be making Angel's soul permanent, but it's very dangerous to do so...See..." Hero quickly started to babble as Wes froze in complete shock. "This world's Wes was a Neptee. Neptee magick is very powerful and dangerous. Wes never told this world's Angel about being a Neptee, actually he kept a lot of things from him. Wes loved him but he felt he didn't need to bother him with certain things...Surprisingly he told Angel of your world and in return Angel told him about being raped...Did I ever tell you that I gave this world's Angel's father syphilis the first time that man hit him? Or that I shrunk one of Wesley's Professor's dick to the size of a germ? Anyway, I was told I can't help that world's Wesley unless he asks me for it." She clapped her hands together. "And that is what's been happening in your former world!"

"Wesley is alive?" He said with wonder, then, "You gave Angel's father syphilis? And what the hell did that Professor do to piss you off?"

"And had them both reincarnated as monkeys. I hated those bastards, and let me tell you, Angel's father? Can so see why Angelus wanted to kill him quick!" She told him truthfully, "Wes, this is your world now,
nothing can change that. Your former world can change but you belong to this world and this Angel
*nothing* can ever change that."

"I know...For I'm bonded and Angel loves me, I will never doubt that." Wes said softly. He then wiped his face with his free hand. "And the Dark One is now there, possessing Cordelia."

"Yes." She answered gravely.

"You once said Angel or I were destined to kill her..."

"Yes." She repeated but she looked to be nothing but a statue.

"That can't be the only possible way!"

She didn't answer him. Couldn't answer him.

"It can't be the only way!" Wesley repeated strongly. "There has to be some other way!"

"It would be a merciful killing." Hero said coldly. "It's the way things *have* to be. She and the Dark One have to go to hell together. They both will die, *including* Cordelia Chase, there are no loopholes. It's destined to be."

"Fuck that!" Wesley said with a hard edge in his voice.

"Wesley..."

"I know that I belong to this world now and the other Wes now belongs to that other world. My former world, but Cordelia wasn't just some girl I knew! She meant a lot to me, I even called her my friend. I cared even when I was angry with her or she hurt me. I loved her. I cared, I still do in fact. She's you in so many ways. She deserves a chance at life! A chance to live! Letting her die would be like killing you right here and now, for no sodding reason!"

"I haven't been that girl in centuries, Wes."

"That's a shame, I liked that girl, she always fought for what she believed was right no matter what how tired she might be, or if there was a good sale going on of course. Anyway, mercy doesn't always involve death, sometimes it involves life."

With that he turned and walked away.

"Wesley!"

He continued on his way.

"What are you going to tell Angel?"

At that he stopped and turned to loudly state, "I don't have to tell him anything, remember, we're bonded. He was listening to everything and he wants me to tell you that the moment the other Wes asks for your help, you're sending us. Angel, me and perhaps even Spike and Xander to help him. You're sending us in Cordelia that is all you need to focus on."

Without waiting for a response he left Hero watching with a great sadness before she vanished and went back to the cold lonely temple that she called home.
Wesley sighed, sitting in the now quiet office in the early morning hours. He sat behind Angel's desk. Books
around him, he hadn't gotten any sleep last night and sadly it wasn't because he was having sex.

The lobby was dark, still, silent, and only the office light pierced the empty darkness. Sometimes Wes would
glance out the window that lead out to the lobby and try to see into the darkness. Knowing he wouldn't see
anything but was looking anyway.

Earlier Angel had been so shocked to find out that Lilah was blind because of his magick...Wes thought
Angel handled that fact rather well. He was surprisingly calm even. He had asked Wes why and how and if
she could be helped. All Wes could say was, 'I need try to turn back time and let Wolfram and Hart keep me
prisoner and you could give them your soul if you want too.'

"I don't." He looked darkly at Lilah, which had no affect because, hello, she was blind. "You should have
known better." He told her with no emotion in his voice. "Go home, Lilah, I can't help you."

"What you mean is you *won't*, you fucking bastard!" Lilah had screamed madly. But oddly enough she
had left, walked away with her head held high and proudly even with her lips pale and trembling, she had
one fist tight at her side and her knuckles white and bony holding her 'seeing' white cane out before her. Her
eyes unseeing, empty held traces of salty tears of despair and agony.

Wes sighed.

"Has the Bossman been teaching ya his brooding skills? 'Cos damn, dog, ya got it down real tight, you do!"
Gunn's voice drifted in from the doorway where he leaned against the door jamb, looking as if he had been
there for awhile, studying him. His arms were crossed, wearing baggy blue jeans that dared gravity to do it's
thing and a well worn dark blue and gray sweatshirt that dared one to 'Get Funky, Get Freaky' in dark bold
letters upon his chest.

Wesley looked up at him in shock not seeing him until he had spoken. "Gunn! You startled me!"

"Could tell by the jump and high pitch girly squeal you gave." Gunn stated with a smile.

"I...I do not squeal!"

Gunn lifted an eyebrow.

Wes shrugged looking bashful, admitting, "Well, maybe I did give a *little* squeal."

Gunn's grin got bigger, he straightened and came into the office and sat down in front of the desk. Wesley
cupped his hands and leaned forward a little bit, "So it's real early to be up."

Gunn tilted his head giving him a odd look. "I was thinking the same about you, though you look as if
you've gotten no sleep what so ever and you're also wearing the same clothes from yesterday...It's four
A.M., Wes, why the fuck aren't you in bed?"

"I...I couldn't sleep." Wesley mumbled.

"Did ya try?" Gunn asked, yet the look he was giving the Watcher said he already guessed that the answer
was no.
"I did, honestly for awhile. Laid there on my lonely bed, thinking lonely thoughts."

Gunn nodded as if he understood. "I've done that before. To answer your question, I'm a morning person, even with me staying up all night...And my girl she'll be waking up around 5:30 'cos she's a morning person too. I just have to decide if I'm going to surprise my sweet girl with breakfast in bed or a flower and a cup of coffee...I'll have you know I make damn good coffee."

"I know, I've had some before."

"Give ya a friendly heads up, don't try Cordy's, she'll melt your insides...Or you'll wish you're insides had been melted before you took a sip...So..." Gunn drawled out slowly, leaning back into the comfortable overstuffed chair.

"So?" Wesley repeated. Resting his own chin on his fist as if in thought.

"It surprised me that you blinded Lilah, though I honestly think it couldn't have happened to a better person."

"It was the Neptee, not me, Charles, that blinded her. Plus, what you just said was very mean. She is a human being, she has a soul, has emotions."

"She's tried to kill us all the time, or hurt us in some way. She's evil, Wes, pure evil."

"Surprisingly, even an evil being can be redeemed. This blindness has given her a chance." Wes said gently. Thinking of the infamous legends about the powerful goddess Hero of his world. Though she'd never been blind, she had been evil and now she was trying to do good. Redeem herself, though if all the things she had done were true, it was highly doubtful that redemption could really be hers. But as he always believed, the impossible can indeed be possible.

Gunn shrugged his big wide shoulders. "If it happens then it happens. I can't see into the future..." He drifted his sentence off, staring at Wesley. His eyes serious and a hint of worry? The Watcher could see he had more than Lilah on his mind. Finally Gunn said with a faint edge of weariness, "You and Angel, I'm happy about you two. But I don't want Angel getting too damn happy, 'cos I don't want to have to deal with Angelus."

"You won't have to." Wesley admitted honestly and quietly.

Gunn lifted an eyebrow, "Huh, does being a Neptee make you see the future?"

"No." Wes said taken a back. "But I can make the soul permanent."

Now Gunn looked shocked. "Then why don't you?"

Wes looked down upon the smooth wooden desk's service. Finding the desk top suddenly very interesting.

"Angel said no. He thought it might be to dangerous."

"Is it?"

Wesley looked over at him, lying, "It would be like getting a paper cut."

"Damn! I hate those things! They hurt like a bitch from hell itself!" Then Gunn managed evenly, seriously, "So it's going to hurt a little."
"Some, but there will also be pleasure, for it involves sex."

"And using magic you don't like." Gunn told Wes deliberately letting him know that he felt he knew this Wes.

"Well, yes, but it would be worth it for Angel to be happy and he'll never have to worry. Have that wretched possibility that he could lose it. That he'd go on a murderous killing rampage. And he wouldn't care who got hurt."

Gunn nodded. "I don't want to see that either. I don't want to have to stake him, but I will do so if necessary."

"I...I know. I even respect that." Wes said softly. "I don't think I could do that. Dust him. It would hurt me more driving a stake into his heart then it would for him to experience it."

"Yeah...Love can be a bitch."

"Well, yes, that's always the case." Wesley smiled weakly at him.

The young vampire hunter smiled back good naturally, rubbing his hands together, as if getting down to business. "So, you want to make the Bossman's soul permanent, he doesn't want to in fear of you getting a paper cut, even though it involves sex..."

"Pretty much, yes." Wes mumbled darkly, he sighed heavily. "Damn it! I need him! I want him, yes I also need him as a friend...And yes I want him as my boyfriend...But I also need him as a lover. I need him to touch me intimately! Don't want to sound sex starved but...Bloody hell, Charles, I'm used to sex all the time! Now, it's like I'm being forced to diet or fast or something maddening! I want sex all the time but I can't because heaven forbid I break my diet, a diet I never wanted to be on!"

Gunn chuckled.

"It's not funny, Charles!" The Watcher hissed furiously.

"Sorry, man, but this is California and out of all the diets I've heard of the 'No Sex' diet I've never heard of and you wouldn't make any money off of it 'cos no one would sign up. Unless they be nuns or something."

Wes chuckled softly as he thought about Gunn's words then he said quietly, "I...I've really have been trying to understand this world, trying to live in it. You, Fred and Angel have helped me in so many ways...Especially you, you're a good friend, Charles, thank you."

Gunn shrugged, _expression closed, but his eyes said how much those words meant to him. They meant a lot.

"Can I tell you something?" Wesley questioned him.

"You know it, English."

Wes was quiet for a long moment, "Angel is so different from my Angel yet like him at times it's...It gets so confusing at times. I love both yet..." Wes sighed, "Never mind."

"You love one yet miss the other."
"Yes...Is it bad? Loving one Angel yet loving another one as well?"

"The other Angel did the same, Wes, loved you and loved this world's Wesley."

"I know I love them both, Charles, though I just might love this world's Angel a little more than..." Wes faded off, full of guilt, looking away ashamed.

Gunn fell into silence with him for some time before he said thoughtfully, "Love is love, dog. No matter how ya look at it, it's still love. Ya love two Angel's, ya might always will. And that's not a bad thing. There is nothing to be ashamed of, loving the both of them. Loving one more, yet still loving the memory of the other one."

"But...They are different...Shouldn't I have loved the first Angel more?"

"You're different from this world's Wes, does that mean Angel of this world should love ya less? Even though they had never got together? And ya ever thought one of the reasons ya love this Angel so much is because you and he are so different yet so alike?"

Wes looked a little surprised, he lightly nibbled his bottom lip, he gave a light slight nod. "You have a point."

"Yep, I know."

"Charles, I have to tell you, I really, really want to be intimate and secure his soul."

"Then do so, dog, fuck what the Bossman says. He's not always right, no matter how many times he says that he is."

"I'm trying! I've seriously been trying to woo him, I tell him how I'm willing to...To do things...Sexual things and the other day, I actually asked out on the beach...Even said we could do it with handcuffs if he wanted, or not as long as we had sex. I talked suggestively and I told him I wished he'd touch me and I wanted to touch him...Could I have been anymore of a slut...Well, maybe...I guess I could have taken off all my clothes then and there while I wanked...Anyway, last night we shared so much and we kissed! I've been letting him know I want him, Charles, over and over again! I never had to work this hard with my Angel. He showed me he wanted me dally, I didn't have to work as hard as I'm working now. Back in my world, all I had to do was give him a look, or lick my lips and my clothes would suddenly be off my body and I'd be having lots of sex! I'm telling you, if the other Angel were here, he'd be buggering my arse by now! You know, if he wasn't in love and bonded to the other Wesley. I want this world's Angel to want me damn it! Is that to much to ask?! I want to be under him being turned into a tired well satisfied mass of goo!"

Gunn gave him a 'I really wish you wouldn't talk about sex, don't want to think of you and Angel nekkid' look. "Okay, but at least Angel's officially your boyfriend. Now, maybe you should talk about it with him."

"I've tried, but he's an imbecile! Plus, he keeps using words like, 'I *think* you're my boyfriend', like he's unsure if he even wants me! Like I'm a movie he's rented for the evening and isn't sure I'm worth buying. Or keeping..." Wesley said sadly. Confusion and fear of not really being wanted within his blue depths.

"Can you call him an imbecile again? I found that to be funny! Especially, the way you just said it!"

"Charles, please! I'm being quite serious!"

"So am I." He mumbled. Before saying clearly and very seriously. "Okay, man, maybe...Just maybe, ya should pull out the big gun."
Wes gave him an honest look of confusion. "I should pull out the...Charles, are you offering me the use of your Sweet Pea? Nice offer but Fred nor Angel might like that idea much--"

Gunn looked stunned. "NO! No, man, pull out the big *gun*! G-U-N! Gun. One, 'n' bro not two! Sheesh! Damn, you are a kinky bastard...I'm sayin' that maybe you should make *him* show *you* that he wants you. You've already let him know you want him. You should let him show you that you without any doubt are his boyfriend. Let him do the work for once. Let him give ya no fucking doubt and with how naturally possessive he is, he'd show you without doubt in a heart beat if he had one of course."

Wes leaned forward, truly intrigued. "How do I do that?"

Gunn smiled as he told him, Wes gasped, eyes wide with wonder and hope. Truly flabbergasted. That idea, that plan was crazy. Completely insane. Totally batty!

It would work brilliantly!

With that thought in mind, Wes smiled brightly right back at Gunn.

(end of part 53)
The Dark One in possession of Cordelia softly knocked on the door, after some moments the door swung open to reveal Connor looking at her. Cordelia tried to smile shyly and gave a nervous finger wave. "Hi!"

Connor nodded, shoving his hands into his jeans pockets stepping back to let her come into his room if she wished to do so. "Hey." He replied softly, carelessly back.

Cordy caught the glimpse he gave the top of her breasts that looked as if they might fall out of her bra and velvet blouse any second. She pretended that she didn't notice that move, but she did and inside the Dark One smiled gleefully.

She adopted her most warm and slumberous expression.

"So..." Connor shifted on his feet. "How are you?"

"Feeling out of place, how about you?" She walked into his room as if she owned it and made herself comfortable upon his bed, sitting on the edge. She made sure her short dark purple skirt rose up high to show off a lot of thigh. His eyes looked at her thighs as he licked his suddenly dry lips.

"I...Um, know that feeling...The feeling that you are out of place." He admitted honestly. Saying this softly as if sharing a great priceless secret.

Cordelia blinked up at him innocently. "Do you? Really?"

"Feel it all the time."

She patted at a spot beside her. "Come sit down. It's strange how..." She stopped, as if trying to find the right words to say.

He sat down nervously, thinking that this woman was one of the most beautiful women in the world. A living breathing beautiful goddess and she was looking at him in a way that no one had ever looked at him before, and he liked that. That look made him feel something he'd never felt before either. Special. Almost as if he was loved. She tenderly reached out and placed her hand on his arm, smiling a gentle sweet smile.

"I must tell you, Connor, my memories are blurry. It's so hard, understanding any of the things I do remember. Hard to know what's real, but you...My memories are sharp and clear...Out of everything, everyone, *you* are the one I most trust...That I know...I knew you as a baby and I know you as the young man you are..."

With a hesitant and shaking hand Connor reached over and placed his hand on top of hers. "You are right, Cordelia, you can trust me...Always."

"Thank you for being my one true friend. I have to share something with you that no one else can know."

Connor nodded looking determined. "I'd never tell anyone something you wished not to be told, even upon a painful death and I have to be honest with you Cordelia, I'm so glad you are back."

"So am I." The Dark One said with a happy cheerful smile, teeth gleaming white. "And my secret, dear Connor, is I came back because of you. For you."
Wes wondered if this crazy idea of Gunn's would work. It almost made sense, almost.

Wes looked in the full length mirror. To turn to the side and suck in his stomach, as if he wasn't skinny enough, placing a hand on the dark blue silk dress shirt. He turned his head this way and that. Never taking his eyes off his own image.

"So, tell me do I look shagable?" He asked himself, eyeing the dress shirt and tight black leather pants. He ran a hand down a cold smooth side of his leather covered thigh. He eyed the leather trousers with a doubtful eye, still gazing into the mirror.

"I do hope I don't chaff any important parts while wearing these trousers..." He mumbled to himself wondering if he could or should change into some nice black cotton dress trousers instead.

A knock sounded and seconds later Gunn's clean shaven head appeared. "Are ya ready? Damn, look at you, now that shouts out 'ready for some action!'"

"I'm no longer sure about this." Wesley admitted to his friend, with a light flush to his cheeks.

Gunn opened the door wider and strolled in. "It'll work, English, the way you're dressed...Mission, give our boy permanent soul will indeed happen!"

"Actually, I'm personally calling the mission, 'have Angel fuck me into next week'."

Gunn quickly held up his hands in a 'no, no' gesture. "Too much info, Wes, way too much information!"

"Yes, right. This coming from a man who calls his cock Sweet Pea." He stated dryly, a spark of humor in his eyes.

"Don't go there man. Hey, listen, if you don't want to do this thing, you don't have to."

"I...I want to. It's just...I'm not...I'm not good at this! Advertising that, I want sex. Trying to look like I want sex."

"Wes, dude, you are already advertising! Angel knows you're advertising, hell even in those clothes they say, 'hell yeah', you're advertising! If I were a gay man, Angel would have to lock you away to keep me from going after you."

Wesley blushed. "Thanks, Charles."

Gunn nodded.

"You're going to get hit on and there will be many offers..."

"Really?" Wesley asked hopefully. Wanting this plan to work.

"Hell yeah."

The plan, have Angel actually *show* Wesley that he considered him his. His boyfriend. His guy. Make Angel give no doubt who the hell he belongs too. Who he loves and needs. So off to a gay bar like a lonely horny man, which he really was, in need of some serious loving. He really did need some hard core sex.
But would this make Angel so mad that he threw caution into the wind and claim him? Wesley nibbled on his bottom lip. He wondered if this could really work. Earlier when Gunn had suggested this plan there had been no doubt at all, but now...

What if it didn't work? What if Angel didn't care that Wes wanted to have sex with someone else, or at least thought that Wes would have sex with someone else. Not that he would, he wanted Angel, damn it! What if this made Angel decide he didn't want him as a boyfriend after all? What if Angel actually believed Wes would slut himself out, what if this exploded in his face?

"Gee, man, I can hear those rusty wheels in your head spin! I'm sure this will work. I'll drive you to the club now don't drink anything but soda and don't you sip anything a stranger gives you away from the bar, there's a lot of crap out there that they could slip into your drink."

"Yes, Dad." Wesley said with a laugh.

Gunn glared. "I'm serious, Wes, this world is dangerous, lot of jerks out there who would love to hurt you."

"And here they don't even know me and already they want to hurt me."

"Stop being a smartass! Know you'll have about an hour or two. Enjoy yourself. Dance with anyone who asks, hell even if they don't ask. Angel walking in seeing you dancing up a heavy sweat...He'll probably end up taking you right there on the dance floor in front of everyone!"

Wesley said nothing, yet his eyes became a darker blue as his eyes darkened with desire as he fantasized.

"You be careful." Gunn reached over and put his hands one the English man's shoulders, like a nervous Father, watching his little girl go on her first date, before he warned, "I mean it, Wes, be careful."

Wes nodded.

In response, Gunn said, "Good, okay..." He dug deep into his baggy denim jeans pocket coming up with his truck key. "Ready to roll and get this funky show on the road?"

Wes took a deep breath before releasing it slowly. He gave a sharp nod. "I'm as ready as I'll ever be."

##

The Dark One was now in its room. Soon it would have Connor's loyalty, she could feel it. Part of her was sure she already *had* it.

One thing she hadn't counted on when she escaped her heavenly prison cell was the fact there would now be a Neptee in this world. She would have to keep away from Wesley's touch and hope that soon the one known as Wesley would end up dead. She would simply have to make sure that his death happens.

'What was once dead should stay dead.' The Dark One thought furiously.

An evil smile formed as it realized that maybe she could use Connor to kill him. He was already full of so much wonderful hatred, the fact that his father loved another man, could snap the boy into the evil monster that she knew was inside of him.

Oh, she could so use that hatred. Twist it towards her pleasure and goals. Turn him into the perfect dark warrior, the perfect dark prince.
The true rulers will inherit the earth, will walk upon it and rule once more. All Hellmouths will open. Darkness will forever fall upon the land. No more sun, it would be their world the way it should have been in the beginning of things. The unholy trinity, the three true rulers. The kingdom was at hand! The Wolf, the Ram, and the Heart. Power forever. Evil, undoubtedly. It was time...

The First is the force driving wonderfully violent battering fighting Ram. The Dark One is the evil Heart. It kept the focus, the beat. The personality of true evil. Much like the First, the center from which it came to be was pure hell, chaos, true unreleased evil. It kept the memory of what the kingdom could and would be.

And the third, when The First and The Dark One rose, it stood there proudly with them. Knowing. Accepting that he was more than a demon of mixed lower blood. He was the new power. A beginning of the sacred kingdom, he was the Wolf...

Though many had forgotten that he had been the Wolf, for he had also gone by other names as did the First and The Dark One. But all three remembered, even as lower filth called him The Master, called them The First and The Dark they called him Wolf.

Heinrich Joseph Nest, Order of Aurelius...

 Foolish beings forgot that Aurelius meant Wolf...He was the Master, the first of the clan, of the order of the Wolf...

##

One day in a special meeting, in one of their favorite spots in hell itself, they spoke of the day that would come, as they always did...

"My beloveds in the wretched beautiful coming kingdom..." The Master had spoke with pride. "I have decided who will one day sit at my right hand when the kingdom is finally born!"

"It took you how long to decide this?" The First had sneered, "Anyway who says you need a right hand to rule at your side in the coming day? We are powerful enough as it is."

The Master shrugged. "I believe in family, as you both are my family...But I have picked a prince...Who will sit at my side, he'll not be as powerful as me of course, but one should always have an heir...Just in case. One who will rule as you would have, if something..."

"Stupid should befall you?" The Dark One asked. "Silly Wolf, you speak nonsense! Nothing can happen to us! We are the Ram, the Wolf and the Heart! True evil can never die!"

"I can." The Master said softly. "Hard to believe but I can. We all can."

The Dark One and the First snorted, not taking his words at all seriously. The First rolled its eyes. "Okay, tell us who is your heir?"

"Darla, right?" The Dark One told him with a know it all gleam...

"I said, prince, not bitch. My girl is lovely, but she can never sit beside me, rule as I would like my kingdom to be ruled. She doesn't plan ahead. She makes me proud, but sometimes I want to slam her head into a wall and spank her until her arse bleeds!"

"What did I tell you, Wolf, I do not ever want to know your sex life!" The Dark One, The Heart, told him
"Get to the point and tell us!" The First, The Ram, commanded.

The Master smiled a true smile of mirth. "Angelus, he is my heir to the great Kingdom..."

The First and The Dark One were silent for a moment.

"I've heard many great tales about Angelus." The First said softly.

"He's rather young, don't you think?" The Dark One asked.

"He is a young stallion," The Master agreed with a nod, "But just think what that stallion will be like when he's older."

The Dark One smiled. "A champion. A prize..."

"He is a *perfect* prince for the great Kingdom." The First said with a smile.

The master smiled with them, fangs flashing. "I know...Why I choose him."

"We agree with this choice. We bless it!" The both stated.

"I knew you both would." The Master said with a laugh. "So back to the meeting...How are the Senior Partners doing with our business?"

"They are doing well, they are such cute *minions*!" The First said loudly. This making all three of them laugh wildly. Their dark laughter echoing within the depths of hell.

##

The Dark One blinked as the memory faded. Angelus had been blessed as the Wolf heir. The vampire had known that The Master had favored him to sit at the right hand side of his throne, knew if something ever happened to the Master he would take the throne. Angelus at one time been proud that The Master called him heir to the throne. But then one day, Angelus had become Angel, a souled vampire. Angelus had once been the mighty Scourge of Europe, turned suddenly into the mighty broody pants of L.A. And he didn't even realize, he was still the heir to a mighty coming kingdom!

For once the Master had said those words, called Angelus, his prince, his heir, nothing could change that.

The First and the Dark One had told the Senior Partners long ago, when Angel had made trouble for them, 'do whatever necessary to turn him dark. We need him.' So they had. Happy to do whatever their masters had commanded them to do...

But now it also helped that Angel, himself had a heir. A little prince...Angel's own son. That boy wasn't called The Destroyer for nothing...

Yes, if Angelus wasn't going to take the throne, the next in line could...

His own son.

How perfect...
Angel wondered what was going on. Earlier in the day he had threatened Connor, which honestly seemed to be a dally thing, and sent him to his room...The thing was Connor was already standing in his room when Angel was yelling at him. So all he could do after he said that, with his son giving him a 'you're more stupid then I thought you were' look was walk out of Connor's room and slam the door. For the rest of the morning he had felt like a total and complete moron.

He then went and visited Cordy. The thing was...Something was off. Maybe it was the fact she didn't have any memories and was dealing with things real well...But...Something was telling him it was more than that.

Damn it, something was off! He knew there was, he just didn't know what! She smelled like Cordelia. Looked like Cordelia, would say things that seemed so Cordelia like...But those dark eyes of hers, seemed to be hiding something...Something bad, so not of the good.

Then there was Gunn giving him these secret knowing smiles and turning laughing dancing eyes his way. As if he knew something, something Angel didn't know and he was proud of that fact.

Angel had taken Wesley's advice and convinced Gunn that he felt like playing chess and wanted to teach him. So he taught the young vampire hunter even though Gunn called it a 'boring white man's game' at first. Gunn seemed to catch on real quick to the game and Angel had a feeling that Gunn enjoyed himself. He would be a dangerous opponent given time, Angel was sure of it; he just knew playing chess with Gunn would keep him always on his toes as time went on and Gunn got better. Angel knew Gunn would one day be kicking his ass in chess and no one had beaten him in centuries...Well, okay, once in Italy, but Angelus had later chained and tortured the man for a few months...

Plus, more weirdness, in the fact his Wesley kept acting as if he was nervous about something. He told Angel that he simply had to go shopping and would be gone all day. Angel had told him that he'd be happy to tag along. Even though malls made him cringe. He hated them, the noisy never ending crowds...All the different stores and just everything there was about malls, he hated them. But because of Wes he was willing to go. Wesley gently turned him down saying he wanted some alone time for awhile. Angel couldn't fathom how Wes could get alone time at one of many L.A. shopping malls. It would have made more sense if Wes had told him he wanted to go to the public library and spend some 'alone' time, that he could understand! But *malls*?

So Wesley had gone on his shopping trip, while Angel ended up teaching Gunn chess which he had to admit to enjoying and regret that he hadn't done that sooner.

Now the day had ended and night had fallen, now Wesley should be about somewhere and he could take him out to dinner or something...A romantic dinner and he could even take him to a movie. Hopefully, it would be a fun action film and not a boring French one like the last one they saw together.

He entered the office and looked around, eyes falling onto Fred. She was sitting comfortably in a chair, feet up on a foot stool. She seemed to sense him even before he had a chance to say anything.

"Angel! Hi!" She gave a quick finger wave before looking back down at her Science Today magazine.

"Hey, Fred." He leaned his back against a wall, crossing his arms. "So...Have you seen Wes?"

"Huh-uh, sure have!" She said absentmindedly, turning the glossy page, continuing to read an obviously fascinating article.
Angel stared at her waiting quietly for her to continue but when it became obvious that she wasn't he said, "So is he around?"

"Nope. Left."

"Left?" He questioned. "Where?"

"He left with Charles." She looked up at him, "Those two have become very close friends...Which is good, but...They're *real* close, do ya think I should worry?"

Angel blinked before saying, "No, you know Gunn loves you."

"Just the other day I heard Wes tell Gunn he had a fine ass."

"Well he does! He should wear tighter jeans to show it off." Angel said without thinking and then looked away embarrassed at the look she gave him. Angel cleared his throat. "You have nothing to worry about. Anyway I'm with Wes, he's mine..."

"Really? 'Cos just last night you kept telling him you simply 'thought' he 'might' be your boyfriend."

"Things are complicated."

"How are things complicated? Either you are together or you're not! Sheesh! No wonder Wes feels your driving him insane! You are!" Fred stated with a shake of her head, mumbling about stupid vampires before diving right back into her magazine. "Plus, you're right I have nothing to worry about especially after...Oh, wait, never mind."

"What?"

"What, what?"

"What, 'never mind'?"

"Okay."

Angel sighed, wondering if he was in a bad comedy on the silly Fox or WB station, he was tempted to start banging himself upon the forehead with a heavy object. "No, you were about to finish the sentence but you didn't and I was wondering what your 'never mind' was."

"Oh! R-R-Right, Well, I said never mind so that means, never you--"

"I know what it means, Fred!"

"Gee, no need to yell, Angel." Fred told him softly.

"I'm not yelling!" He yelled.

"Okay...Whatever you say, Angel...But accept what I said..."

"You haven't really said anything!"

"Exactly. So accept it Angel, and move on."
An awkward silence settled in the room before Angel shook his head and saying impatiently. "Do you know where Gunn and Wes went?"

"Yep, sure do."

"Fred..."

"Gunn will be back real soon."

"Good...Wait, what about Wesley?"

"He won't be with Charles."

"Why?" Angel asked.

Fred shrugged, flipping another page of her magazine. "'Cos."

"Fred..."

"Can't tell ya, Angel. Sorry." She didn't sound sorry at all.

"Why, can't you tell me?"

"Because I was told not to."

"Why?"

She looked up at him, tilted her head as if she was seeing something new with scientific intelligent eyes that sees way to much. Understood to much. "Is that you're new favorite word, Angel? Though if it is, it's totally understandable, 'why' being a favorite word. In all languages, human and demon, that word exists. *Why* is a word that causes thoughts and purpose. It exists in all worlds and dimensions. It expresses so much yet explains so little."

"Fred, please, just tell me what's going on."

Fred sighed, looking at him with big brown soft eyes. "Wes wants you to show him that he belongs to you. He wants you to allow him to make your soul permanent like and...Well, you know..."

"No, I don't know, tell me..."

"He wants you to want him, geez, Angel get a clue!"

"I do *want* him and he knows that!"

"Well, he doubts it! Ya big silly vampire, he needs to know that you want him, that you need him, that's why..." She stopped short of what she had been about to say, about to reveal.

Angel's eyes flashed yellow. "Finish what you were about to say."

"No." She whispered, looking away. She swallowed hard before making a show of looking at her watch and throwing down her magazine. "Hey, gee, look at that, my favorite show is starting! Can't miss CSI, this week I think they find a body in a vending machine, can't wait to see how that happened!"
"It can wait, Fred." Angel growled darkly, hating that his favorite little Texan was keeping things from him, like where his Wesley was!

"This coming from someone who has never seen CSI! If you had, you would instantly know that it's a show one *can't* miss! Gotta watch Grissom and Warrick...And Nick and...Greg...Those sexy smart men can't wait! They can *never* wait! Plus, right this moment the Vegas CSI team could be showing the home viewer a gruesome mangled body and I'd hate to miss that! 'Cos that is always so cool!"

"You've seen enough gruesome mangled bodies in your time, Fred." Angel stepped up close saying each word slowly, "What. Is. Wesley. Planning? Where. Is. He?"

She swallowed hard, looking deathly pale. "I...I honestly forget...Maybe after CSI, I'll remember..."

Angel sighed deciding that it was time to play hard ball. "Huh, okay, right. Right after CSI...It's just I thought after everything we'd been through that we are good friends. We could tell each other *anything*..."

"And we can! We are good friends, Angel, we are!"

"Are we?" It would be mean cruel but...Fred, would tell him what he wanted to know *now*. "I thought after becoming your handsome man who saved you from the monsters you'd never keep secrets from me, we'd always be close friends...Was I wrong, Fred? You are keeping something important from me..."

"Angel..." She reached out and laid her soft warm hand on his arm. "We're good friends, for always nothing will ever change that. You're my handsome man, my hero, you'll always save me. Be there for me...But I'm not telling you so deal!" With that she turned and started to run from the room.

Angel glared before he asked calmly, almost innocently. "Tell me what?"

"That Wes has gone to a gay bar..." Fred told him out of the room having heard his question to her retreating back. Then she yelled, "Oh, fuck!" Starting to run at a breakneck speed as she realized what she had said, racing towards the safety of her bedroom.

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Chapter 56: Page 56

Gunn didn't know what to expect when he pulled up to the Hyperion. Not that he expected anything really. Wasn't like he saw someone suspicious about. He did get a surprise though, the passenger door to his truck, his sweet 'I once sold my soul for this ride,' was thrown open when he stopped along the curb. He hadn't even shut off the engine. He swung in bewilderment as Angel was instantly there sliding into the seat beside him.

The vampire glared darkly at Gunn as he growled, "Take me to him, now!"

"Wha--"

"NOW!"

Gunn blinked and then glared right back at him. "I'm not your fucking errand boy! Nor do I know what you're talking about!"

"Oh, you know exactly what I'm talking about, take me to Wesley, now!"

"No." Gunn said coldly, calmly.

Angel growled, eyes now a dangerous amber. Fangs long and sharp...

"No means no, so don't go all vamp on me, man! We're not going to play that!" Gunn said sharply. Looking like the strong street vampire hunter punk that Angel met so long ago.

"I'm going vamp, 'cos surprise, I am a vamp! Now we're not playin'...Take me to Wesley, now." Angel stated impatiently.

"Why?" Gunn asked calmly, in no rush to take him to Wesley...

"Because he's mine! And how *dare* you take him to a gay bar when you know he belongs to me and it would piss me off! Still got a death wish, Charles 'cos the way I'm feelin' right now, I can help you with that wish!"

Gunn gave Angel a look of strong displeasure. "No, man, I ain't got no death wish, but you might if you keep talking to me in that way..." Then Gunn tried to move onto safe ground. "So, Fred actually told ya, huh? Didn't think she would."

"Yeah, she told, but it was hard as hell to get her to tell me...I should punch you. I want to punch you..."

"Why?"

"Because you took *my* Wesley to a gay bar to let any moron get his hands on him...Or anything else if he's stupid enough to try...He's *mine*, damn it!"

"He doesn't feel like he's yours..." Gunn stated quietly, getting to the heart of the matter.

Angel's face shifted back into human, but his eyes were full of cold determination. "After tonight he won't ever doubt it again."
"Good." Gunn told him with a serious nod. Hands on the steering wheel even though he wasn't going anywhere. The truck still stopped, engine purring loudly. "He needs that, Angel, it's more than just sex, ya know?"

The vampire looked at the vampire hunter carefully, silently asking what he meant. Gunn sighed, looking out into the busy L.A. night. "He's from another reality that is so very different from his own. He has been forced to accept this one as his own now...He wants to belong to this world, belong to you. He needs you to show him that! Hell, man, he can even make your soul permanent! So do it, damn it! For yourself and all the other people out there that should never have the chance to meet Angelus...'Cos you and I both now, if he ever gets lose...More innocent blood on your monstrous hands..."

Then the two sat in utter silence for what had to be two whole minutes before Angel said softly, "Take me to him, Charles, please..."

Gunn nodded and took the truck out of park, "You're going to surprise him, told him he'd have an hour or two before I told you..."

Angel gave him a sideways glance. "So you were going to tell me?"

Gunn snorted, "Hell, yeah! Ya think me suicidal or something!?! Plus, Wes doesn't need to be at a gay bar for long, don't know or want to know what kind of jerks there are at that kinda place, plus I know he talks about sex freely but he doesn't need to get beat up and raped...Or even die a slow painful death of some sort. Seen a lot of freaky shit in my day, ya know? But then he could just meet a great wonderful guy, Wes will end up dumping you on to the curb like last weeks garbage!"

"You were suicidal the moment you took him to a gay bar!" Angel growled, eyes flashing a golden amber once more. His fists tightening into hard white granite. "I still want to hit you!"

"Get over it." Gunn said with a could care less air as he cut off a driver and the car behind him honked sharply.

It took about ten minutes to get to the MerryLee Club, Gunn parked in the parking lot, looking at Angel expectedly, "Alright we're here, ya go on in. I'll keep the engine running."

Angel shot him a glare. "No, we're going in together."

Gunn shook his head, "No, way dog, I'm not going into a 'gay' bar...No way in hell.

Angel's eyes narrowed. "I can show you hell, Charles. Now you brought Wesley here, you can help me look for him." The vampire then leaned over to Gunn's side turned the engine off and pocketed the keys in one quick supernatural motion that could have rivaled the speed of light.

"Hey! Don't be...Give me back my keys!"

"Make me." Angel got out of the truck slamming the door hard.

Gunn glared murderous daggers at his back, before getting out of the driver's side to follow him. "You're an ass hole, ya know this right?"

"Yeah, I know, and you can simply 'get over it.'" Angel told him flippantly. Continuing to walk towards the noisy club. "By the way, word of advice don't bend over while you're here, some 'bear' of a man might think you're a 'cub' flirting with him."
Gunn flipped him the universal 'You're a number one fucker' sign with his middle finger. Noise was even louder and more obnoxious as they entered the club. Different colored lights swirled around the dark room.

Gunn actually looked around in wide eyed wonder as if he was a little kid looking at animals trapped in cages. Instantly he saw in the corner two men kissing. He blinked, one of the guys was a part of the gang he once was a part of. He didn't know Jon Mark was gay! Hell, the man once dated his sister! He actually liked him dating his sister and he very rarely approved of the guys she had gone out with...Wait a minute...Huh...Maybe that was one of the reasons he didn't mind that Jon took her out.

"Gunn, you look over there..." Angel told him pointing to the area with the stairs leading to the tables and people on the balcony. "You see him, get him and find me immediately. I'll be looking where you're not looking."

With that Angel was fading into the crowd, leather black jacket swirling around him elegantly...Making Gunn wonder if he shouldn't get one of those, he quickly shook his head, as he went to look where the vampire had told him to go. His survival instinct was telling him that now was not the time to push or test Angel. Best do as he says, for now...

On the other far side of the semi dark, different lights still flashed wildly, as heavy rock music blasted around...

Wesley looked nervously at the dance floor, he knew he should do as Gunn said and simply start dancing, start enjoying himself, but to simply relax and dance in a place full of strangers? No friends what so ever for support? Just him and countless strangers...He wasn't sure he could...

Wes looked back down at his own outfit and he still wondered if the black tight leather was the right thing to wear...And who said he could pull off a silk shirt? Was this outfit really sexy? On him, maybe not so much...

He knew Gunn told him he looked good, but he could have told him that just to be nice. Friends were nice to each other all the time right?

"Hey! Ya want to dance, sweet thing?"

Wesley jerked and looked around. He looked at a well muscled tall man, he had such nice eyes. "Are..." At first the word was too soft, to shyly spoken to be heard over the loud music. So he spoke a little more loudly to be heard. "Are you...Speaking to me?"

The cute guy seemed to be looking at him, but Wes knew he could be wrong.

Handsome cute guys didn't look at him like that...Not unless they were named Angel.

The man gave a belly laugh. It was deep and rich. Big like the man...Though Wesley once more focused on the man's face. Studying the hard narrow jaw, a Roman nose that looked as if it had been broken a time or two...But those eyes, that was what one noticed. Green eyes that said they had seen a lot of crap in his time, been through hell and survived it. Yet though the hardness there was something there. An odd kindness?

"Yes, you...Come on, dance with me!"

The man grabbed Wesley's hand, it was a warm hand and had many calluses, he lead Wes to the dance floor. The Watcher gave the man a shy, bashful smile, not realizing how innocent he looked just then. Well, Gunn had told him to dance...So, dance he did...

Fast at first, then slow. A guy he had never seen or met before. Didn't even know the guy's name. Wes
closed his eyes and let the music take him somewhere else. He moved his body and could feel the other man rub his hands across his chest and moments later grab his ass and oddly enough he didn't mind...

For behind his closed lids, those big hands were Angel's. It felt nice, pretending that the hands rubbing him were his beloved's. That his beloved wanted him. Needed him. He missed the closeness. The touching. Those special sexy touches that said he was loved, that he was needed and wanted. That he belonged.

The big muscled hard guy danced closer and closer than any stranger should. Behind him, pressing up close. Making Wesley moan. He could feel an urgent hard on pressed against him. Felt as if this man was nicely endowed.

The stranger's hand moved from Wes' chest to stomach, gee, the guy wasn't shy at all. He felt his silk shirt left, a warm hand touching a flat stomach, teasing lower...

Oh...This really isn't so bad...If only this man's hand was cold to the touch, like Angel's...

Wesley's eyes suddenly were thrown open as he heard a low familiar growl right before being savagely yanked from the guy's arms. "Angel!"

Then he watched stunned as Angel punched the other guy hard in the face knocking him cold upon the crowded dance floor. Someone screamed but Angel paid none of the strangers any mind. He was focused on only one thing. Wesley's arm was grabbed in a hand of tight steel.

Angel looked like a dark deadly Warrior of old. The crowd parted like he was Moses and they were the red sea. Wisely staying out of his way. As he dragged a stunned Wes along with him; Angel's dark eyes glistened with amber. Jaw tight.

"A-Angel..." Wes said nervously. For the first time in his existence he was scared...Of his beloved. Of his Angel.

"Never." His voice hard as he reprimanded him. "Do this again...And you do not, ever let anyone but me touch you!"

He continued to walk Wes to the door as he spoke some more. "You're mine, no one else touches you! You do not go out to a gay bar looking for a fun time! You do *not* let some moron touch you! Or dance with...Hell, that wasn't dancing that was fucking with clothes on, and if his hand had gone any lower, I would have ripped him apart with my bare hands, instead of punching him! Damn it, Wes, you are MINE, get that through your head!" Even with the loud music in the club, Wes could hear the wealth of menace in his voice.

They made it to the door and outside before Wes said with a little worry in his voice. No longer scared. "I wasn't expecting you so soon."

Angel growled, his face a handsome twisted mask of fury, eyes blazing with rage, before turning and grabbing him. Quickly, he fastened his mouth to Wesley's. It was a kiss sizzling, snapping with hunger, the rage calming a little bit even though it was still there, burning flames. Dangerous. Murderous.

He held Wesley close, the Watcher, kissed him back desperately, moving against the vampire restlessly. Angel slowly ended the kiss, cupping his face. "Never seek in others what only *I* can give you...You're mine!"

"Am I? For I really want to be, Angel, I want to be yours. Only yours..."
"You are, no more doubts!" Angel kissed him again before lifting him into his arms, not caring if some drunks in the parking lot giving a cheer said, 'Someone's getting lucky tonight'. He hurried them both to Gunn's truck.

"So, tonight, no more waiting? We'll be lovers? That is what you mean, right? I'll really be yours in every way...Right?" Wesley said hopefully, eyes happy with joy at finally belonging to Angel totally.

"Can you really make my soul permanent?" Angel asked setting him down to open the passenger door to Gunn's blue old truck. Helping him in and even going as far as putting the seat belt on him.

"Yes, and it really does involve sex. But I will and can make it permanent tonight."

Angel nodded kissing him again before shutting the door and then quickly going around and jumping in the driver's seat. Starting the truck, Wes turned his head to look out the side window as he heard a shout.

"Um, Angel?"

"Yeah?" Angel started to drive out of his parked spot, before heading out of the lot.

"Gunn's running up to us, looks like he's trying to catch up...Guess in the heat of the moment you forgot about him..."

Angel looked into the rear view mirror and grinned happily. "I could never forget Gunn...Gee, look at him run...He's kinda cute when he panics..."

Right as Gunn got close enough, Angel burned rubber and sped out into the night and away from Gunn and the gay bar.

Wes looked at him as if he never hand seen him before. He was stunned and shocked. "Angel!"

The vampire gave him a innocent look before looking back on to the road. Eyes full of mirth. "Don't worry, Wes, my love, I'm sure Gunn will get a lot of offers from a lot of nice gentlemen who would *love* to give him a ride!"

End of Part 56

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Part 57

It didn't take them long to get back to the hotel or to take Wesley to Angel's room.

"You'll *never* pull that stunt again." The vampire repeated once more.

Wes nodded once again. "Yes, of course. I was just being silly, never again, I swear... after tonight I'll never have a reason to."

"Even with a reason, You'd better never do it again!" Angel purred darkly before kissing Wes' neck.

"Um, yes...Quite right..." He answered back breathlessly.


Angel's pants felt unbearably tight against his hard pulsing flesh. His body was raging at him to take. To conquer, to make Wesley his own. To release all that he felt into him. The need. The love. The wanting. All these overwhelming emotions. All for Wesley.

Angel's hands as well as his lips caressed, teased, against Wesley's warm skin as the Watcher mindlessly tore at Angel's dark dress shirt, trying to get at his cool skin to kiss it. Taste it. He had missed this...The taste, the feel of Angel.

Angel laughed deeply, his mouth hovering inches from Wesley's perfect cute ear, "Impatient aren't you?"

"Oh, like you don't hunger for this...Need this..." Wes pressed his body close, rubbing his clothed hard on against Angel's. Making the vampire moan.

"After this there is no going back, I will never let you go, you'll be completely mine, Wes..." Angel warned, breathed against Wes' lips...Even though he didn't need to breathe...

"Good! Make me yours!"

Their lips met again and again. They wanted to taste each other. Hold each other, possess completely.

They both felt like they were being consumed by desire, by the need for each other. Totally on fire. It was a wonder neither went up in flames.

Both were filled with excitement, Wes wanting to be possessed by this man, this vampire with a soul, the one he loved with everything within him. Angel too felt this. Wanting the man he loved, to make him his completely. Totally. Once he had Wes as a lover he'd never let him go. Never. Nothing on this earth, not even from heaven or hell, cold make him let his Wesley go from him.

Even during such heated desire they took each other's clothes off slowly, as if teasing each other, making their need rise to more unbelievable heights. Overwhelming. Wanting to savor this. Any doubts, any fears seemed to melt away in the heated passion of this loving moment.

Combination of hoarse need and raw want, now naked skin touching naked skin. The feeling was like nothing neither had ever experienced before. Even for Wesley who had known another Angel's touch. Loved another Angel.
This time was different, this time the tables were turned and Wes had been the one to try to woo. He’d waited for so damn long. He needed this like he needed air to breathe. Each other's skin felt like soft silk. Almost satin, nothing to compare it to but pure smooth satin. Wesley had missed this so much.

His teeth scraped then quickly soothed it with his lips, mouth moving over Angel's throat, smiling as he got a low purr. The vampire guided him to the bed, helping him get on it, grabbing at the lube that just happened to be sitting there, oh so innocently, on the night stand.

"Well, aren't you the Boy Scott." Wesley laughed good naturally.

"It was a step leading into acceptance for me." Angel said with a deadpan expression but his eyes danced with humor and of course lust. A deep hunger, a hunger for him!

"Well, I just hope you know what to do with it." Wesley teased.

Angel kissed him, pinning his body with his. "Don't you worry." He whispered. "Been thinking of this moment for a while now..."

It was slow going for some reason. Wanting to tease. To play with the love and passion they have found. Angel kissed and rubbed at Wes' hard now tight nipples, sucking hard at one before pulling it lightly with his teeth, getting a lust filled moan as a reward. A deep rumble of primitive satisfaction.

His mouth moved over Wes' skin devouring every inch as he made love to this wonderful man. Consuming them both in breathtaking love...

Angel worshiped the warm salty manly skin, then Angel moved lower, trailing kisses down a flat stomach. He stops, hesitates for a moment...Deathly still.

Wes caresses tenderly Angel's face, making him look at him. Understanding and pure love upon his face. "Don't do anything *you* don't want to do, if you wish not to touch me with your mouth, then don't...Everything will be okay."

"I want to make love to you. That's what I want." He looked back down at Wes' cock. "I was just thinkin' that's all...I was thinking you're beautiful...So beautiful..."

He lightly, experimentally kissed the piss slit, before licking and kissing up and down the hard cock before him.

Wes bit his lip, closing his eyes, enjoying the feeling yet wanting more.

Anticipating what would happen next. Angel moans as he takes him into his mouth. Worships the cock with his mouth, with nervous movements trying not to scrap his teeth on such oversensitive skin.

He slowly removes his mouth; "I want you to cum with me inside you..."

"Oh, goddess, yes!"

Angel clumsily prepares Wes, before he pushes a big iron hard dick level with his arsehole. Wes pushes forward, demanding what he knew was about to head his way. Angel grunted as the head of his steel rod forced its way into Wes' tight opening. Sliding slowly forward.

Angel took a deep unneeded breath. "You okay?" He breathed out in concern. Needing to know that his
lover was okay and that he wasn't bringing him any pain. Watching intensely as he slowly buried himself completely inside his Wes. Deep inside.

In response Wesley grabbed at Angel's face, kissing him, before pulling back with a groan. "I'm fine! Get on with it, just move you wonderful lackwit! Start moving...Please...You damn lackwit!"

Angel smiled, as he didn't need any more encouragement as he started to thrust his hips back and forth. Invading his Wesley. Taking possession of him as if he had every right to him. Moving in a long slow rhythm. Hands still caressing, grabbing in passion. One of Wesley’s hands nearly tore the bed linen as he grabbed a small amount into a tight knot, unknowingly...

Thrusting so deeply within him, Wes had a feeling Angel would never leave. Not that he wanted Angel too or to ever stop. He hungrily accepted

Angel's possessive strokes. Hell, he demanded even more!

Angel definitely didn't want to stop. Sinking back and forth into the hot tight arse. He continued to surge powerfully into the warm tight flesh. It was pure warmth and Angel loved every second. Filling Wesley. Stretching him to fit only him. Angel's body claimed Wesley's with deep, sure, loving and possessive strokes.

Angel moved harder deeper...To hear Wesley babble his name begging for more. Wesley's fingers now dug into Angel's shoulders as he continued to bury his body into him. The vampire was aggressive now, hands lifting lustfully at the small firm hips. Wanting to go even deeper than before. Hips moving aggressively. Passion, lust and overwhelming love swirled together until they were completely one. One heart. One body.

One true desperate need.

This was truly wonderful. Wes was so tight and hot he shuddered knowing that this was beyond sex.

    Beyond pleasure. He found an erotic heaven and a peaceful hell and it was all his.

Wes moaned, rippling with passion, accepting Angel's long hard possessive strokes.

Harder and deeper, flesh hitting flesh. This moment was hot with life. Whirlwind of emotions. Of passions. There was so much pleasure, wave upon overwhelming passionate wave that Wes honestly thought he couldn't take anymore.

    Angel felt his body ripple in intense pleasure, tightening. He felt it so intense the orgasm. Intense overwhelming happiness. Then it felt as if his heart somersaulted within his chest.

"WES!" He tried to warn his beloved. Alarm was spreading across his face.

Suddenly he was flipped onto his back. Wes now was on top. Still impaled upon Angel's thick big cock, that was shooting cum into his arse. Angel gasped, eyes a golden yellow as his hands were suddenly grasped tightly over his head.

"Shhh, Angel...My love, now you have to trust me." Wesley said hoarsely. His own eyes a solid black with a bright swirl of red. "It's now time, your soul will beg for your demon and your demon will beg for your soul. It's not going to feel or look pretty...But I do promise it's going to be something we'll both remember...Enough talk, Angelus, let me show you what I mean, hmmm?"

    His body shook as his demon and soul screamed out loud in true agonizing horror...

(End of part 57)
In the morning, Wes was truly drowsy as he moved out of Angel's bed. Tired and sore. Angel was laying stretched out like a pagan sacrifice, like a beautiful offering of old. Asleep in a peaceful relaxed way. There was a soft glow of happiness and contentment upon his handsome face and a slight smile...Plus, a tattoo on his dick telling Wesley that what he did last night worked and he better hurry and escape to his room so Angel wouldn't wake up and witness...

Sodding hell! He could feel it...The Neptee swirled. Demanding to be heard. His heart and mind was now in chaos.

Angel's soul was now permanent in all rights he should now no longer be souled, but because of something an ancestor of his did in the 1700's, using Neptee magick to make sure future Neptees of his line never lost their souls upon a natural death, meaning if he was ever turned his demon would wake with his soul, so his soul was as permanent as Angel's, thank the great goddess, Hero. But now it was a personal battle. Because he used the Neptee to make Angel's soul and demon accept each other and make peace...

Wes whimpered, moving fast towards his room, not caring he rushed out into the hall naked. He now had to be forced to accept the one thing he hated about himself. The fact he was a Neptee. He had always hated that fact. Because of the Neptee inside him, he was a freak, a monster in a cage. A thing...

He felt a wetness leaking from his eyes and nose, he put his hand up, when he removed his hand he saw his own blood. Bright red...Sickness rose within him...

The Neptee whispered then shouted...

"I'll never accept you as anything but a monster! You hear me! An ugly bloody monster!" Wesley whispered in grunted pain. "NEVER! You murderer, you piece of shit that never leaves me the hell alone!"

When he got into his bedroom, he quickly did a spell making sure no one, human or demon could enter his room. Nothing could now get in, not even Superman or a hellgod...

He screamed as an agonizing shot went through his body, next thing he knew his body was being lifted and slammed into the ceiling.

A cry of pain and fear seemed to echo harshly in his head, he was sure something was being torn from his very soul. Pain was vibrating within. Tormenting. Deep. Reverberating to his very essence. Hating the Neptee. Hating himself. It truly hurt like a bitch. His heart was beating too fast, laboring. Dark solid eyes full of his own blood, mixed with his own salty tears.

He slammed back to the floor. Twisting in agony. Wes started to sweat heavily, swearing in panted words both in human and demon languages. Fighting with the Neptee on the inside, knowing he was losing but still determined to fight and not give up.

He shook, teeth rattling. He slowly grew quiet. Whimpering. Somewhere he thought he could hear shouting. Angel demanding to be let in, the door shaking but the spell holding it fast in its iron grasp. Minutes of fighting with the door, turned to begging...Wrenched at Wes' heart to hear such a strong powerful vampire, his champion beg...But he would not, could not release the spell. Angel didn't need to witness this fight. Didn't need to see him like this.

Wes moistened his lips, his blue eyes were cloudy with shock, his
mind and body rigid, contorted in a seizure that caused intense pain. Feeling the magick's released rage. Letting itself truly be known. It too knew agony, the pain of never being accepted for what it was. Never being loved or valued. Feared as a monster, a thing...A creature.

It wasn't a thing. It was powerful. Ancient. Rare. It had come out of something meant for good! Meant to be used for good. To keep the balance. To keep the peace. To keep things from going into chaos! It was *not* a monster! Not to be feared except by those who wished to do evil, for those who did not use power wisely. To unbalance nature. To use for one's own selfish desires. To unbalance the world.

It was something so much more than Wes believed the Neptee to be. So much more. It wasn't something to be afraid of. Something to pretend to ignore or use only when one needed to and even then hate. It was forever apart of him. A part of his soul! A part of *him*. It wasn't evil because Wes wasn't evil...They were one.

And blaming the Neptee for taking his mother's life...His mother saw a way to give her son life, she *choose* to give her life. Not because she was a Neptee and the power told her to, but because she wanted to. She wanted her boy to live and if her death helped that to happen...She did what she did out of love. Not hate. She didn't fear her power. She never once hated the fact she was a Neptee, she hated people and the Council trying to control her. To use her as a weapon. She died with peace in her heart, joy in knowing her boy would live.

Why hate the Neptee? Why hate himself?

Why...Damn it, why!

The pain slowly, very slowly, went away to be replaced with peace. Desperately seeking its place within him.

The Neptee whispered...Warmed him. Soothed him.

His breathing slowly became better, blood wet tears etched paths down Wes' deathly pale face. Not realizing how awful he looked. So pale. So bloody. At some point his sweat had even turned into blood. He felt so weak. He couldn't move. Didn't want to.

"Okay...I get it...Okay." He whispered back to the Neptee, to himself. He then closed his eyes allowing the gathering darkness to come and float him away.

It took hours before he had the strength to wake up once more. But he was surprised as hell to find himself in his bed and a cool wet wash cloth washing his face. Gently. Tenderly. Wonderfully soothingly.

Wes blinked confused. For he knew the simple spell to keep anyone and anything out worked in this reality and yet someone was in the room with him. Caring for him.

He opened his mouth to ask the other man how, to only be 'shh'ed kindly, as the wash cloth soothed. Wiping at the blood. But those brown eyes were speaking loud and clear that he was pissed off, and Wes could tell it when he spoke, "This damn sure doesn't look like a paper cut."

Wes looked away, remembering the lie he had told the man, feeling ashamed he mumbled, "I'm sorry, Charles."

"You lied to me." Gunn said coldly. "You fucking *lied* to me!"
"Angel's soul is indeed permanent. Didn't lie about that." Wes answered weakly, slowly looking at him. "I'm sorry, not about his soul but that I didn't tell you that making it so was indeed dangerous...More dangerous than a paper cut...But what I did, hurt...Really hurt. And I'm sorry for lying to you."

Surprisingly, a softness entered into his brown eyes, "Just don't keep things from me, English. The other Wes did the same damn thing and I didn't like it then and I damn sure don't like it now. Don't keep things from me or sugar coat things...Don't play the suffering hero, it ends up pissing everyone off, including me!"

Wes nodded, looking at him with begging eyes. "Forgive me, Charles, please."

Gunn finished wiping Wes' face before shrugging. "Yeah, we're good, but you don't be keepin' things from me, if ya do, I'm going to do something real nasty."

"Really?" Wes was curious. "What would you do?"

"Kick your ass or put itching powder inside all your clothes, or do both."

Wes gave a half-hearted smile. "As long as I don't lose your friendship, I accept your threat...I promise never to do that again..."

Gunn nodded.

"Um," Wes said looking at the closed door and room. Knowing the spell should have kept *everyone* and *everything*. "Can you tell me *how* you got in?"

Gunn suddenly looked very smug. "Hard as hell to get in, Angel is even trying to figure it out. Threatened me too, but I told him it was a little pay back for leaving my ass at the bar...I know he's listening outside that door and once I tell ya, he'll do it too. Then nothing will keep ya away from him. By the way, he's very worried and extremely pissed."

Wes winced. "No doubt so...So how did you..."

Gunn shrugged once more, "Simple really. I remember what you said once about your reality."

"Like that helps me, I've told you a lot of things about my former world."

"Yeah." Gunn smiled happily. "You sure have and that helped me do what I did."

"Charles, stop teasing me and simply tell me!"

Gunn stood up, tossing the wash cloth over his shoulder, not giving a shit about where it landed. "Obviously, your goddess cares about you."

"My..." Wes blinked in surprise, not at expecting those words.

"Hero, is her name right? Hope it was 'cos I prayed, wondering if she could even hear me. I was honest, told her I was concerned about you and wanted to be let into your bedroom but something powerful was keeping me out and I needed her help and if she ever cared about you...She'd let me in...And I was surprised as hell when that door opened and I was able to step through it."

"So she..." Tears filled his blue eyes. "My great goddess still cares, even if I now belong to this reality."

Suddenly Wes' bedroom door was thrown completely off its hinges. An enraged Angel stepped into the
"Damn sure looks like." Gunn said side-stepping away from Angel moving slowly through what was left of the door, knowing and trusting his boss with his friend. "She cares. She seems special...But Wes; she's not as special as you."

Then he was gone. Leaving him with a pissed off vampire, who wanted answers. Wanted to know what the hell happened. Why he could smell drying blood. Why Wes had left him alone in the bed...

   Why...

   Why...

   So...

"Wes, what the fuck happened?"

Wesley swallowed hard and wondered if maybe he should pray to the great goddess also...

(End of part 58)

(important note: I simply must thank Shakatany for helping me. Really wonderful, Thanks dear for giving me a name, 'Beljoxa's Eye and that it comes from 7.11 ep. 'Showtime'. Also should to warn reader about hints of child abuse)
Chapter 59: Page 59

Part 59

Connor walked with out any fear as he strolled down the dark alley like he owned it. He stopped and
sighed.

"Why are you following me?" He asked, before turning around to look at the one who had followed him
from the hotel.

"Because, I care enough to go after you." Cordelia stepped from the shadows, knowing her words would
affect him greatly, a gentle smile upon her face, it faded slowly. "I worry about you, Connor, always...You
and me were talking and then you simply ran out, with out telling me why...How could I not follow you?
Was it something *I* did or said?"

"No." He whispered, face softening. looking down on the dirty ground. "Sorry, didn't mean to run like I
did." He mumbled, hair falling in front of his eyes. Making him look like a little child in trouble.

Cordelia stepped in closer, reaching out and putting her hand upon his cheek. "No, you don't ever need to
tell me you're sorry. It was just you left so quickly, that made me follow you to ask if I soul be saying 'sorry'
to you."

He looked up started. "I said you did nothing wrong, and you didn't! You must believe me, you did nothing
wrong!"

"So, tell me why you left, you know your company is the only one I truly enjoy."

He looked touched and blushed slightly, before he lifted his hand and cupped hers. Lifting it reluctantly
away from him but still held the hand within his, before his face hardened slightly. "It wasn't you, Cordy...It
was *them*. I heard them..."

Cordelia lifted an elegant eyebrow. "Them?"

"Yes, Father and...And...They are both filthy fags, they both will rot in hell and I hope they do!"

"Wes and Angel, they had sex tonight...Is that what you are saying? And you heard them? Oh, you poor
baby..." Cordelia said before saying with disgust. "No wonder you left."

Connor nodded. "Holtz, he taught me." Connor told her as if he was sharing a big secret. "He taught me to
survive. To be strong. He taught me right and wrong. What my real father is, is wrong! A vampire and a
fag! I mean being a vampire is bad enough but a dirty fag too!"

Cordelia studied him. "You loved Holtz very much didn't you?"

Connor shrugged. "Everyone says I should hate him or pretend he didn't exist. They think what he did and
who he was; was evil. He called me, Steven. I called him, Father, but he always reminded me that I really
wasn't his 'real' son. I wasn't 'his', never his. I was a thing to use and to be used. He'd call me 'son' but I
wasn't family. Wasn't a part of a family. I was a part of nothing! He'd tell me stories about his real family.
Tell me about what it was like before my parents murdered them in cold blood. Killed by my 'real' father and
'real' mother, my 'real' family...Holtz was all I had and even that wasn't 'real'. Never real. I'm not sure what it
really was, but it wasn't real. It wasn't love. On my side I think it was, but his..."

She reached up with her other hand and brushed his hair away from his blue eyes. He continued softly.
"He used me, in more ways than one. He'd hurt me. He made me who I am. I can't hate him for that, he'd tell me that I was his boy, that was the only time I felt he really cared...He'd touch me and tell me that any pain I went through would make me a better warrior. He was right."

"Yes, you are a good Warrior, Connor. Much better than Holtz and a thousand times better than Angel."

"Really? You think?" Connor asked hopefully.

Cordelia smiled. "Yes, really." She reached up and lightly pressed a kiss to his lips. "You are a brave wonderful Warrior. They once called you 'The Destroyer' with fear and respect, they need to call you that once more. It will be hard but I know, I see the real you, Connor. What I see is 'real' my Mek Nek. I see you...I know you."

"Mek Nek...You know that word? In the hell dimension I come from it means..." Connor looked at her with great wonder and awe. "Do...Do you really mean that?"

"Yes, I wouldn't say it if I didn't mean it." She whispered kindly, caressing his cheek once more, this time he rubbed about her palm like a happy cat. "You are a Mek Nek, a great treasure, a prince greater than any other prince, something so wonderful words can't describe its beauty...You are a treasure that will change this world, Connor, help bring in a great coming kingdom...I know you will, my Mek Nek. This world will bow to your greatness, to your awesome power."

He pulled back slightly, face now hard. "You're more than Cordelia Chase, aren't you?"

The Dark One smiled a cruel smile. "You are so smart, yes, my Mek Nek, my wonderful prince, I am. I am so much more, as are you."

Connor looked at her, looked deeply into its eyes, before surprising the Dark One and kneeling down at its feet, totally submissive. "Please let me serve you, allow me the honor of being your warrior."

The Dark One lifted Connor's chin to make him look at her. "It should be I that is bowed at your feet and it is I that is honored, my dear Mek Nek. But are you certain? The First and I have plans to purify this world, make it clean and make it so very different. Make it even better than your home land. And, of course, I demand total loyalty."

"I would give you nothing less."

"Good, my beautiful Mek Nek, come, I wish to see just how loyal my powerful Warrior Prince is."

A few hours later a piercing blood curdling scream was heard and a female voice was heard begging for her life. The Dark One watched as Connor swung the knife over and over again. The woman's screams faded to a soft whimper as death overcame her...

Connor looked over at the Dark One covered in the murdered woman's blood. To her he looked brilliant and deadly. Wonderful like a dark prince should look. "Are you okay, Mek Nek?"

Connor looked down at the body soaked in its own blood. "I once knew this woman."

"Yes, I would imagine you once did."

"She helped me put my real father into the ocean and bury Holtz after cutting off his head."
"Mmm, yes, she was the one to kill Holtz. Life for a life but Connor, you didn't answer my question, how are you? The truth now..."

He looked at the blood covered knife as well as his own red hands, even with his soul oddly in torment, he answered. "A little hungry, but otherwise, I'm feeling good. Surprisingly I feel better than I've ever felt before."

The Dark One nodded, happy with that answer. He was perfect! She laughed, a loud. "You're always hungry! Come, Mek Nek, I'll take you to a pizza place and I'll treat, my precious."

He didn't look down at the body anymore laying at his feet as he passed it, going over to the Dark One. Together they walked in silence before Connor broke it with, "Who will be my next kill?"

The Dark One walked, lips pressed as in thought, "It might be too hard for you, I'm not sure if you're ready..."

Connor gave a heated glare. "I swear it will not be hard for me! You call me a Warrior, so let me hunt and kill. I'm ready, let me serve you."

The Dark One stopped. "Wesley is the next one that has to be killed, it simply has to be your father's lover. He has to die, and if Angel gets in the way, so must he. I fear that would be asking too much from you. You don't have to do it, I can get someone else, but all I know for sure is that Wesley must die. The coming kingdom cannot be stopped and he would foolishly try. We have to clean, purify this world, make it our own. Its time, Mek Nek, for the new kingdom. And you...Oh, you will be the greatest Warrior in this kingdom. The greatest prince..."

Connor's eyes were bright, with a slight wicked smile gracing his face. "Please, I'd like to purify this world, help the coming kingdom...Killing Wes, sounds like fun and if there are others you'd like me to kill, I'm willing to do that too."

The Dark One laughed, smiling happily, "Well, okay, if you really want to by all means be the one to kill Wesley..."

##

In Sunnydale, Buffy sighed looking around at the chaos around her. This was awful. Her home, her life. Mostly it was the fact there were twenty teenagers in her house, more on the way, and only one bathroom. She cringed when she heard something break, another of her drinking glasses would never be used again...

The First was scaring the other girls who could one day be the next Chosen One, it was also scaring her friends and most of all her and it wasn't easy to get her scared.

She didn't know how to fight this thing. Her fist went right through it. It mocked everything she did and mocked *her*...It even dared to judge her but she damn sure wasn't going to let that thing win!

The door opened and Buffy stood up expectantly from her sofa, seeing Anya and Giles walk in.

"So..." She said impatiently, with a little edge of hope in her voice.

"So..." Giles repeated with a sigh, closing the door and moving further into Buffy's house. "As you know, we went to see the Beljoxa's Eye..."

"And? Come on, get on with the 'and', Giles!" The Slayer told him looking agitated that he didn't hurry up
and tell her what she wanted to know. Needed to know. How does one defeat this thing. She had to get rid
of The First.

"The balance is off, because we raised you from the dead, it's our fault that this is happening. The First has
been waiting for the perfect moment, to bring about a great kingdom, be to do so things had to be
unbalanced...And we helped, unbalance the world. Instead of saving it, we're destroying it...Yay, us." Anya
stated sadly. "That's what the Beljoxa's Eye told us. It said *nothing* could be done, except...

"Except...There's an except, well that's good, right?" Buffy asked hopefully.

Giles let out another sigh, shaking his head as he sat down and taking off his eyeglasses. "It said that only
the Neptee knew the great secret to completely destroying The First."

"*Completely* destroying? Well, lets find this Neptee!"

"Not that easy, they don't exist in this world." Anya said in a far away tone, as if she was thinking about
something else. "Plus, they are powerful and not something one should mess with nor do they like being
used...With them there is always a price, a balance that has to take place...We've already screwed up the
balance by raising you from the dead, it could decide to balance us, by destroying us *and* The First."

"But that eye thingy didn't say anything about destroying us, right? You said it knew the secret to destroying
The First...And I know you said that Neptee thing doesn't exist in this world, but why mention it, why tease
us if there is no Neptee in this world?..." Buffy looked thoughtful, "Anya, You better than anyone knows
there are alternate worlds out there, maybe we can get one from another would...Much like that time that
Willow Vamp came here...Maybe we can get one."

"Or a Neptee from another reality is already in this reality." Willow said coming down the stairs having
heard the conversation but this being the first time she made herself known. "I've been hearing things...On
my on line Wicca group, they've heard rumors about a powerful being that is now in this world...I could find
out, do a spell to see if a Neptee is indeed in this world, then if it is do a location spell to see where it would
be. Would be a few days though to do this, but it can be done."

Buffy looked over at her. "You sure? Don't want you to suddenly become a magic junkie or something if
you find this thing using magick."

Willow winced.

That was when Buffy realized how she sounded, looking away. "Sorry, I didn't mean..." She sighed looking
at her, "You can do it, I do trust you. I believe in you...Okay?"

The red head slowly nodded, "Yeah, um, I won't let you down, Buffy, I promise." Willow said with a
determined glint in her eyes.

Mutely, Anya shook her head.

"Anya?" Giles asked, he could tell something was bothering her, "Are you okay?"

"A Neptee is more powerful than even Willow could ever be, hell more powerful than she could dream to
be! There would be no forcing it to tell us, if it didn't want to. If it doesn't want to be found, it won't be."

Giles leaned over and touched her hand. "Maybe it will help us and maybe its not hiding so it can be found."

Anya said nothing lost in her own thoughts. In all her demon years she had only met a Neptee once. In an
Alternate world she had visited once. She had gone to do a vengeance act. Those black eyes with the swirl of red warned her off...It had scared her, it had taken away her powers for a whole minute, grabbing her by the throat...The young woman told her to get the hell out of her world, and never come back. She didn't. She ran out of that world and she had nightmares for years afterwards...Always warning her...Daring her to come face death once more...It was as if the Neptee had marked her...Knew always what she was doing...

What her friends didn't realize was that Neptees were scarier than bunnies, or anything they had ever faced before...

(End of part 59)
"Angel..." Wes whispered, before trying again in a normal tone. "Angel, will you please talk to me? I don't like this silent treatment you're giving me."

He was sure it had been over twenty minutes since Angel had spoken, "Wes, what the fuck happened?"

And all Wesley could come up with was the words, "We had sex, and with me being a Neptee I made your soul permanent...And I love you, more than words could ever express..."

Then silence...Long...Quiet still silence...

Endless minutes past, still no word, Angel looked at him expressionlessly.

Before reaching over and picking him up, blankets and all.

"Angel!" Wes yelled, being cradled in the vampire's strong arms as Angel carried him from Wes' room to his own bedroom. He dumped him carelessly onto the king size bed before turning towards the bathroom.

"Don't fucking move." Angel told him, without so much as looking back at him.

"Gee, I sure can feel the love right now." Wesley said dryly, glaring towards the bathroom where the vampire had gone.

"Oh, I love you." He heard Angel say before hearing a loud click and water turning on. Then Angel was there leaning on the doorjamb, arms crossed. Water still running. "I love you a lot actually. I now get what the other Angel spoke of...About how you could make him feel as if his heart was beating." Then he looked confused. "All that matters is I love you; you make me feel alive. Whole. I need you as I've never needed anything else in my life, or rather, unlife."

"I feel the same...Except about the unlife bit." Wes replied softly.

Angel nodded, before turning and going into the bathroom once more. He heard some light noises and after a time the water stopped. Angel came back, yanked the covers away revealing a naked Watcher and he quickly picked Wes up again.

Infuriating him, "Damn it, Angel! I'm not a sodding invalid!"

"Shut up." Angel told him, taking him into the bathroom, where there was a bathtub full of steaming water. Angel kicked the door closed with his heel. Wes' eyes were wide.

"Angel!"

The vampire in question set about gently lowering his lover into the tub. When Wes' toe hit the water, he jerked and tried to struggle out of Angel's arms. "Like hell! No way, stop, you stupid lackwit, the water is too damn hot!"

"It's hot but not too hot that it burns and there is green tea bath salts in the water, to soothe away aches and pains, also helps for a natural soft healthy glow. At least, that is what the stupid box says." With that he slid Wes into the tub, it took a moment for him to relax.
"Oh, goddess..." Wes leaned back with a contented bliss filled sigh, resting his neck on the back of the tub.

"Feels good." Angel stated knowing it wasn't a question.

"Yes...Thank you, yes..."

"Knew it would." Angel knelt down beside the tub looking at him. "I'm pissed at you."

Wes opened his eyes slowly, looking back at him. "So now you want to talk...Should of known giving me a bath says loud and clear, 'I want to drown you, Wes."

"No, giving you a bath, means I'm going to wash your back and chest and any other parts you want me to wash...Now...First off..."

"No more gay bars, we already went over that..."

"Right, which was why I *wasn't* going to say anything about that! But I will say don't ever test me again and leave it at that. Now back to the 'First off', you told me you could make my soul permanent and you did just that but what you did not tell me was that it would hurt you like it did...Nor did you tell me I'd end up with a tattoo on my dick!"

"But it's a really cute tattoo, Angel."

Angel gave Wes a look, before the British man said bashfully, quickly, "A really *manly* cute tattoo."

"It looks like symbols with the Muppets on them!"

"That's why it's cute." Wes said weakly, with a boyish grin. Looking innocent.

Angel wasn't fooled, giving him a dark look. "And there are words close to the base of my dick...Words that look like an ancient demon language that means...Tell me it doesn't mean what I think it means..." He quickly dared.

Wes swallowed hard before saying quickly, in a high nervous pitch. "No! Heavens, it's not bad at all! I'm sure you didn't read them right. It...It calls you a warrior!" He then took a deep breath and put his whole head under water.

Angel waited, calmly. Wes' head came up once more, but the vampire grabbed him before he could sink back down again. "Yeah, a warrior...But I'm sure I didn't misread it for those words on *my* penis which states, 'Girly Man Warrior who is Slut.'"

"R-Really? I...I had no idea! I think you must have read it wrong! In my former world, it means something else altogether!"

Angel lifted an eyebrow disbelieving. "Really, what?"

"Um...Um, well, it means champion...Warrior..."

"Girly Man Champion Warrior who is Slut?" Angel guessed.

"Exactly! Um...I-I mean, no...No, of course not!" Wes quickly lied.

"The other Angel has the same tattoo, doesn't he?"
"Yes." Wes willingly admitted.

"Any other surprises for me? Will this thing glow in the dark?"

Wes smiled and gave a little giggle at the thought of Angel's dick actually glowing in the dark. "No, of course not, and you're being very silly."

"Silly? You don't have a tattoo ring on your dick of the Muppets calling you 'A girly Warrior man who is slut' on it!"

"Quite true." Wes nodded, "But it's still manly, no one needs to know what the symbols say. You're beautiful, Angel, that tattoo doesn't take your handsome beauty away...It makes you more irresistible."

Angel said not a word to that before grabbing the soap and getting his hands wet, rubbing them into a thick soapy lather, before asking seriously, "Why did you leave our bed? Why run and why were you hurt so bad...You were in pain...Bleeding."

"Our bed?" Wes asked softly in wonder, before blinking up at him. "Careful, I might think we are in a serious relationship if you start throwing words like that around."

"We are in a serious relationship." Angel stated now running his soapy hand along Wes' chest and stomach. "You're also moving into our room..."

"Gee, you don't even ask, just state it like a fact! You're possessive as hell you arrogant lackwit."

"And you like that."

Wes gave a gentle smile. "Yes, to be honest, I do." His smile faded. "I ran because I didn't want you to see me in pain. To get your demon and soul to make peace with each other through my Neptee power...I also had to accept the fact that being a Neptee doesn't make me a monster. A freak. I didn't want to accept it, I fought it because I felt it made me a thing instead of human. I ended up hurting myself because I fought against it."

Angel grabbed a wash cloth and lovingly washed the soap away. "Trust me enough not to run when you are in pain. Do you want me to drain the water and put new in?" He gestured down at the blood-tinted water.

Wes looked down in surprise, not having realized how much dried blood had been on him. He nodded and Angel instantly hit the drain and turned on the tap to replace the water. Then Angel finished washing Wes' back. Wes moaned before saying, "That feels wonderful, thank you."

"You're welcome...You know, that Goddess of yours is amazing, having heard us in this reality...Gunn and me, simply said a quick prayer and she answered...I was surprised."

"Me too." Wes admitted softly.

Angel gave him a look. You've called her the Great Goddess Hero a lot since I've known you, would never have thought you'd have any doubts about the one you believe in."

"I'm not sure one would call it doubt really. I believe in Hero. I know she has done great and wonderful things but...You see, there is a legend in my world about how millions of years before the world we know as ours, she used to be a human-half demon or something...Anyway, it was certain that she had a human soul. Then one day she was given a great honor, she became a Higher Power. Helping in the heavenly realms but
they say she went crazy there after a few thousand years. Came back to earth, power hungry. She became a
Hellgod, killed and destroyed countless of innocent people. Even those she had once claimed to love. Those
she had once sworn to protect and fight for. Then one night she killed her one last friend who for some crazy
reason refused to give up on her.

The legend calls him, The Last Great Warrior. After she killed him she finally felt remorse. Felt pain and
guilt for what she had done. Feeling sorrow, she begged for forgiveness. Knowing she never could be
forgiven. The world started over again. She now fights for redemption, hoping that one day she'll be
forgiven..." Wes said softly looking at him. "My Goddess is good now, no doubt about that. She's
wonderful, really...Angel, my other Angel, loved her greatly, with everything he had. Everyone loved and
respected her. Worshipped her. Praised her holy name...Yet...

I was mocked when I did a thesis on how one could fight against her if she ever turned evil once more.
There were times I'd even blame her for the fact I am Neptee. Even cursing her, once, after I was raped, I
went to her temple and raged at her. Called her a bitch and how everyone thought she was so wonderful yet
I knew the truth! I knew what she really was, a piece of shit that made herself a goddess. She only cared for
herself, I raged in pain and shame. Yelled so much my throat hurt, tears fell. I fell apart. Sobbed, I'm not
even sure she understood me...At one point I vaguely remember feeling as if she was in the room with me,
reaching out to put her arms around me...But I jerked away. Still cried, still screaming...Asked if she was so
powerful why did such bad and evil things happen to people...I told her I didn't want anything to do with a
goddess that allowed such things to happen...

But I...I don't know if I meant everything I told her. She's a good goddess, really she is. Maybe there is
something wrong with *me*, not her. Even as a small lad I had a hard time praying to her, worshiping her,
leaving her gifts at her temple. Once I had a friend ask me why I never carried gifts into the temple to give
the great goddess, I told him, 'she already has everything. This here is what she had yearned for, power.
What she is; is enough of a gift. She doesn't care what we give her. I care not to give her gifts when she'll
forget them the second I place them upon the table.' Plus, I'd always wonder about the Last Great True
Warrior. Fighting for his world and her at the same time. They say he loved her like a beloved treasured
sister. His last words were full of anger, yet oddly love. Yearning to reach out to her, to touch the last of her
humanity. He still cared, still loved even when she murdered him. After she killed so many people. Took
lives of those he loved and cared about. Who at one time *they* both cared about! The people of my world
tell the legend with awe and wonder...They remember the goddess and speak of her as if she had been the
champion of the tale! No one remembers that poor sods name. No one, but they know Hero's. Speak of her
as...As if she hadn't been a monster. An evil hellgod...

I'm sorry for the rant...I normally don't...I've learned to keep my mouth shut about my mixed feelings for her.
I should love her like everyone does. I should see her the way they do...One of the reasons I've always
felt...Out of place in that world, I couldn't see her the way they did, I tried, really I did but...

"Do you think your goddess Hero has forgotten the Last Warrior's name?" Angel asked softly, encouraging
him to continue.

"Sometimes I wonder. I'm sure she remembers..." Wes stated just as softly, he smiled a little. "Maybe some
of my issues come from when I was little I’d have these weird crazy dreams about goddess Hero in which
she'd kill me with this huge sword and wear this wicked smile..."

"Some parents shouldn't tell little ones bed time stories where the true hero of the story is killed by an evil
hellgod/goddess."

"How did--Oh, well, yes you are right about that...My father also used to tell me about what Defee demons
liked eating first from their human prey...I was six at the time...That night I had actually looked forward to
my 'the great goddess murders me' dream!"
Angel snorted, and kissed his cheek, before saying seriously, "Do you think she'll ever have redemption?"

"Anything's possible, Angel."

"Do you hope she gets it, I mean you seem to love and hate her at the same time."

"Not hate her, fear her and don't really trust her, there's a difference I also don't understand her; she's much like life in that way. But yes, I hope one day she does get it. The day she does get her redemption, I hope it's not because she's earned it or worked for it but because everyone should get a second chance at times and if they screw up that second chance they have no one to blame but themselves. Now I better get out before I turn into a white wrinkled raisin."

Wes leaned over and hit the knob to drain the water from the tub. He slowly and carefully stood, stretched languidly, a lazy, catlike quality in his movement as Angel stood and handed him a towel.

end of part 60
Chapter 61: Page 61

(note to me: remember to add note about child abuse...Warning child abuse issues.)

Part 61

Connor stood still and silent as hot water from the shower head beat down on him. He watched as a stream of blood ran down and circled the drain.

It wasn't his blood.

It had been that woman, Justine's blood. A woman, *he* killed.

Shouldn't he feel something? Anything except for a cold numbness? He wrinkled his nose before lifting his face to meet the fierce warm water shooting out at him.

She was using him. The thing in Cordelia. He knew that. Accepted that. He wanted to have something that was totally his. And the thing promised him a part of the coming kingdom, whatever the hell that meant! Like he really cared about some great coming kingdom! He wanted something...Needed something, yet he wasn't sure what that something was...

He wanted to be something more than he was. A stupid tool to be used. He wanted to actually make a choice and not allow someone else to choose for him. There was something crying out for there to be something different in his life...But he didn't know what he wanted different...

He never asked for any of this! He had never asked to be born, wasn't allowed even that choice! He never had a choice in anything! This life he lead, he felt as if it really wasn't his. He wasn't even supposed to be born! He existed; he fought...And for what? And why?

He grabbed at his hair, savagely, yanking hard. So hard he knew he had to be pulling out handfuls of hair, which oddly enough would be healed come morning...Healing came easy for him, thinks to his *real* vampire parents. Feeling pain from the savage brutal hair pulling, he calmed some. Pain was truth. Pain was real, and helped bring in focus.

Better than the numb, dull confusion within him. This confusion and numbness seemed bigger, but it had always been within him, long before he killed Justine.

The woman who had killed the man he called Father. The one who played the role Holtz had wanted her to play. Everyone had marched to his Father's drum, now didn't they? Connor could still remember his Father talking about the red head. The imaginary life Holtz would swear he had planned. The red headed woman and Utah. What a life...

A fake life. Nothing is ever what it really is. Everyone uses him.

Holtz, Justine and now Cordelia...Stupid Justine, had tried to use him to kill Angel, his real father. Why did she use him, 'cos Holtz told her to. Holtz promised her the allotment revenge. And Father, Holtz used him too. In more ways than one.

He could remember Holtz tying him to a tree when he was a little boy.

He did that a lot actually. Even as small as four. Leaving him alone in a hellish wasteland and making him hunt for the man he called Father. A father who reminded him daily that he wasn't really his child. Reminded him that his 'real' father was a monster. A filthy vampire, and in some ways that made him dirty
Holtz had told him that Angelus hadn't really even wanted him, if he really had wouldn't he have fought for him? Wouldn't he have rather killed him than let him go? To hell of all places? With another...

Maybe he didn't know the full story, didn't care to, but he damn sure knew the result! A part of him would always love Holtz, another part would always hate him. But he hated Angel even more.

'He's a monster, your real father. He's a filthy demon, be always careful boy. When the day comes and we escape this madness, you must always remember that a demon can't love. Will never love. He can't, it's not in his nature. He never loved you, Steven, why else did he let me take you?' Holtz's words from the past whispered into his mind...

'Not in his nature, boy...He never loved you...Never...Never....'

Connor squeezed his eyes shut before yelling and savagely hitting the shower's tile. Breaking them, jagged tile and pieces of wall, crumbling at his feet. Angel should have killed him! As a baby, he should have done something other than...Let him go...Why couldn't he have cared at least a little bit to do that much!

He had let him go with a mad man!

Connor continued to punch the wall, not caring that his fists were now cut and bleeding...

Holtz had been a ...His Father...A mad insane man who used him, like everyone else! Used him as one would use a pawn in a deadly revenge game....And those other times, rare times when he thought Holtz was showing him actual love! All lies, not real! What Holtz did wasn't love, it was sick and twisted child abuse!

Connor slid to the floor, tears running down his face, his body shaking, and his palms pressed themselves against his eyes. The loud sobs slowly faded, as he stayed crouched upon the shower floor. Now staring off into space. The water grown cold.

The thing inside of Cordy was going to use him and he was going to allow it to do so. So what if it did, he didn't give a fuck, really he didn't. Nothing mattered. Nothing.

Now lets see if dear ol' Dad can really love as he kept trying to convince him early in their relationship. Before he had tricked him and thrown his sorry ass into the ocean.

Connor was going to kill Wesley. He couldn't wait to see what the vampire in *love* would do. Would be willing to do.

Save his lover? Try to save his lover or try to save a son who had nothing to lose. Had nothing to live for. Connor was already sure he had lost his dark hell bound murderous soul a long time ago, if not in the past then when he took Justine's life and enjoyed it...

So what if he was hell bound, he had spent all his life there.

##

Lilah laid alone in the middle of her unkempt queen sized bed. Various silk pillows around her. She clinched the silk sheets to her body. She could feel the ocean breeze drift into her open window, she could imagine her classy long forest green drapes lifting and slightly twisting in the air. She used to love watching that at night, it would relax her and lull her off to sleep. But now she could only imagine it.
'It wasn't always like this.' She thought with a faintly haughty air.

She had once been *the* Lilah Morgan! She had her sight. Had been a powerful woman. Deadly and let's not forget beautiful! A lawyer with a steel trap for a mind. She won every case no matter what. Could out anyone or anything. Won more cases then lost...

A slight grin crossed her face. As a matter of fact Wolfram and Hart had offered her a job when she had kicked their ass in court.

The grin died a quick death. There had been a time when she had become a lawyer for all the *right* reasons. Not for power. Not for the beautiful things she had come to love. Never for grandeur or to be the biggest and baddest bitch in L.A.

Lilah snorted. She had once been a white hat of sorts. A goody two shoes in comfortable sneakers, not that anyone who had never met her past self would believe it. But she had allowed time to change her, to change things and her ideal of a better world for others. She couldn't turn back time, and to be honest she wasn't sure she would, and go back to being Delilah Ruth Morgan. The young girl, young woman she used to be...

Yet one of the reasons she'd been drawn like a moth to a wicked flame by this world's Wesley was because oddly enough she recognized a part of him that she tried to kill a long time ago. She felt for him. To be abandoned and forgotten. She had wanted to soothe the broken dreams she had seen in his gaze. She understood the bitterness and the dark determination to protect himself from further hurt and disappointment and damn it all, she understood that all so very well...She had lived it. Survived it and she had wanted in some small way to help. Help build a wall. Help show him he could survive without...Angel and fang gang...

Maybe just maybe they could survive together. Two people far away from broken dreams.

She hadn't been raised to be evil. She had a somewhat normal life when she was young. Her wonderful father had been a police officer. She could remember him so well. His kind smile and brown eyes that said they had seen way too much. Knew too much. The tiredness he'd reveal coming home from a hard day, but he'd always reach for her, pull her into his arms and tell her that he loved his princess. That he was protecting and helping people for her. For her sister and mother. A day never went by when he didn't say, "I love you, precious Dee." He had been the only one to ever call her Dee...

Then one day on her was eleventh birthday, her hero was shot and killed. She could still remember the party fixings around her. Her and her friends wearing pointy party hats. Loud music. Her mother getting her birthday cake ready and promising that they would cut it when her father came home...

Then the sound of the phone ringing and a knock at the door. All at the same time...

Hearing her mother scream in denial and falling to the ground...

It felt as if she had been suddenly placed in a far away place. She couldn't understand anything. But she came to accept and mourn the fact she would no longer hear the man she treasured call her, Dee. A guy robbing a convenience store had killed him. The man stole a pack of Camels and sixty dollars and took her father's life. Ripping a part of her that she was still sure wasn't healed. All she knew was that man destroyed something special. Her father.

And her mother who always had depression issues went even deeper into her depression. She totally with drew herself from the world in her overwhelming sorrow. That left Delilah's older sister of fifteen to take care of her for a time. Though in reality she had always taken care of her. Becoming both Mother and older Sister, and always her protector...
Her sister, Sarah, sweet wonderful Sarah. She was the one everyone called 'smart, brilliant'. The girl, who had all the friends, was the most popular. Everyone loved her and people swore she could have been a model. While Lilah, herself at the time had been very plain. A very shy and quiet girl. A bookworm.

Sarah had dreams of being a veterinarian and of marrying her High School sweetheart Patrick Ross who was dreaming of being the Pastor of a big church like his own father and grandfather before him. She always brought home an array of animals to help. Her mother used to say she thought Sarah would make a fine and wonderful teacher. Everyone loved Sarah's gentle, sweet spirit and smile. Everyone believed she would do well in whatever she'd do...

No one ever said that about her...She simply was, Sarah's sister. The plain one. The one no one noticed or cared about. The only ones that seemed to care were her sister and father. But after her father was killed that left only Sarah. Outside of Sarah, it was always 'Why can't you be like your older sister?'

Lilah had loved her older sister but she had been dead now for so long. Not that she ever forgot her or was allowed to.

Just calling her mother at the elderly home would bring things crashing back. The doctors swore it was the Alzheimer's that always made her mother mistake her for her dead sister, Sarah.

'Sarah, is that you?' She would hear her mother say each time she would answer the phone. Lilah, of course would wince and hold the phone a little tighter. 'No, Mom, it's me, Lilah. You know...Delilah, your daughter.' Your other daughter. The daughter who is still alive.

It had been her sister's death that made Lilah decide that she was going to be a lawyer. She had honestly thought to change the world. Make it better. She thought she could, in her sister's name, she thought she could make things better. The system better, the world...But instead...She joined the system.

Her sister of twenty had gone to a fraternity party at the university she attended and a guy she thought of as a friend raped her.

Lilah had watched spellbound as a teen, as the court tried to make her sister feel and look as if she was in the wrong for daring to tell the truth. Just because the guy was Mr. Richboy and his father gave close to ten million dollars to the university and his lawyers...

The wonderful spark that was in Sarah seemed to fade as the court tried to say she deserved it. The way she was dressed and had other lovers, that had been a lie. But the Rich boy's lawyers were paid well and didn't care if they lied. They had even said Sarah was hoping for money, which she hadn't been. She just wanted to see justice be served. Lilah watched helplessly as her sister slipped into depression much like the depression their Mother struggled with.

Lilah could remember holding her crying sister, telling her things would be okay, would be better.

The next morning she had gone into Sarah's room to find that she had hung herself...Sarah hadn't believed a word that Lilah had told her...

Lilah had been shocked and also angry. Angry with the world, her sister for not fighting, for daring to give up. For abandoning her and leaving her alone. But most of all, she was furious with Mr. Richboy and the system. So with a will of iron and a mind picture of the way she had found her sister that awful morning she had studied. Got the best grades. Graduated from High School early to go right away into a world class University. She kept getting better and better, with a few friends and Professors that warned her of burn out. But still she forged ahead, she refused to party, for her life was for something better. To make sure there
would be no more young women who were beaten and give up. It was as if Law School was in her veins instead of blood. On those rare occasions when she wasn't working on her law degree she was volunteering at a local woman's shelter, rape crisis centers anything to help. Many times when she was helping she could have sworn some of these women reminded her of Sarah and she reached out to every single one...

There had been one woman she had helped, that may have been a little bit of the turning point on the path she would later choose for herself. Lilah had helped this woman get away from an abusive husband. The man came looking for her and found Lilah standing in his way. He drunkenly demanded that she tell him where his wife was. Lilah didn't, she stood her ground. And for her trouble she had gotten two broken ribs, a split lip and countless dark swollen bruises and a eye she couldn't open for weeks afterwards.

One of the reasons Cordelia's words about Billy had affected her so much. One of the reasons she killed Billy so easily.

Anyway, two months later that woman went back to her abusive husband, ’cos she *loved* him and maybe with time he'd come to change. So the beating Lilah had gotten, fighting for this woman had come to *nothing*! A year to the day that woman went back to him, Lilah was taking the son of a bitch to court for murder one.

She wasn't sure when but somewhere along the line she gave up. She's not sure when or why she just did. She had been so fucking tired of fighting a fight she couldn't ever seem to win. Other lawyers had the big bucks, she had at the time a rusted light brown car from 68'. It had to have oil poured into it every half mile. A brief case she had gotten at Goodwill and you didn't even want to know where she had gotten her used business suits. She even had an apartment the size of a closet, her kitchen was in the hallway leading into her small bedroom. Looking back on her apartment she was sure it held a portal to a third world country.

She had been awestruck when Wolfram and Hart came to her, to tell her she'd be a huge assist to them.

She wasn't going to lie, she had known what they were when they offered her a job. They were an evil law firm. But she had given up a long time ago and she wanted things to get better...For herself! And they did. When she signed her life over to them, it gave her a new mission. A new goal. A new life.

Now...She was blind.

So what she was now evil, or had been proud to be apart of something powerful. Evil. So what if she became apart of the team that was winning. She liked being a winner. Liked looking out for herself instead of women who would later go back to their abusive husbands and boyfriends...

She could never go back to being that woman of old. It was to late. Even as a blind woman she didn't think she could go back to being that woman. That woman who was now a stranger...

But there were times... When she wished Sarah were still alive and she could curl up into her sister's comfortable and safe lap like she used to as a small child. Sarah would have held her so lovingly and would swear that things would be alright. And at that sweet wonderful moment, Delilah would believe that her wonderful perfect sister was always right...

End of part 61
Later the next day, Connor slowly came down the stairs and into the lobby. He heard the sounds of light happy laughter. Male laughter. His father, Angel was laughing. Light-heartedly. Truly joyful. It was a sound he couldn't really remember hearing before. True laughter. Joy of life.

Happy in love, kinda laughter. The kind of laughter that could make one sick with envy.

Connor stood still for a moment. The blinds from the window looking in on the office were up so anyone could see within and right now they were revealing Angel and Wesley. Standing close to each other. Comfortable, looking like a loving couple. Angel's arm was on Wes' shoulder as the Watcher held a thick leather bound book in his hands. Wes was looking up at his lover and whispered something meant only for Angel who laughed warmly once more. His dark eyes dancing with what one could only call life if Angel didn't happen to be a corpse.

Connor stared, entranced at the picture of happiness before him. His fists tightened as he jaw grew tight. Hard hateful blue eyes glared murderously at the two of them. If looks alone could kill...

Those damn fags didn't deserve happiness. No one deserved happiness, not really. For he never had a true happy moment in his life. Why did those who didn't even deserve happiness get it?

Well, they wouldn't be happy for long, he'd make damn sure of that. By killing Wesley...

He blinked and inhaled sharply, deciding to get this show on the road. He forced himself to loosen his tight fists. He would do this, there was no turning back, not now.

Purposely Connor walked noisily to the weapons cabinet, swinging the doors with a loud bang. He studied the weapons intensely before lifting out a sharp shiny double edged axe. This would work beautifully. He could already picture the British man's head being sliced right off his body...

"What are you doing?"

Connor swung his head and glared at his father, who had spoken behind him. He stood in the doorway of his office. Wesley behind him, it was as if the vampire was guarding him in some way. Laughter was no longer there upon his father's face, he even had his arms crossed.

"What does it look like I'm doing, Dad?" He said the word 'Dad' in a mocking tone. Each word was actually snarled at him with pure cold hateful menace in his blue eyes. He didn't bother to hide it, he could never hide his hatred...Never.

"Getting an axe from *my* weapon cabinet." Angel stated calmly. A slight edge in his tone, as if he was doing his best not to reach out and violently beat the crap right out of the boy. His boy.

"Gee, you're smarter then I originally thought." Connor said sarcastically. "And here I thought you were dumber than dirt, so you're now one niche up. Yay, for you. You should be proud, Pop, I know I am." Angel narrowed his dark eyes, jaw tight. Connor slammed the cabinet doors, making the weapons cabinet rattle and shake slightly. He then turned away to head towards the basement door. Wondering if his Father would stop him and ask...He walked slowly...

"Where are you going?"
Connor stopped. Gee, look at that, his dumb ass father did stop him and ask...

Connor didn't bother to look at him but down at his weapon, giving a shrug, not turning around. "I'm taking the sewer tunnels 'cos it's quicker to get where I'm going. There's a warehouse down town, I staked it out last night. A lot of big ugly demons, they have some humans in cages chained to the ceiling. Thought I'd surprise them, the demons not the humans...I bet they are already surprised."

Angel looked him over before saying quietly, his tone hinting that he still cared for his son, even if he didn't like him. "How many demons?"

"A lot. Not that it matters; I can kill them or at least die trying. Not that you'd care, right?" Connor looked over his shoulder at him.

"You're wrong, I'd care. I still care..."

Connor snorted disbelieving, "Hello, remember me? Your son? The one who put your sorry ass in the fucking ocean? The son you can't stand to be around?"

"Have you forgotten that you don't want me hanging around you?"

"Yeah, whatever." Connor said looking away once more, before swinging back around to face the vampire. Face full of anger. "I never asked for this fucking life! I never asked to go to hell! I was never even meant to be born! Not that I ever wanted too! You think it's easy being a freak? You think I should care or love you 'cos you *supposedly* care about me? You don't care. You don't love. You can't because you are a vampire."

There was a moment or two before Angel answered. "I do love you, Connor. You might find that hard to believe but it's true."

Connor gave him a bitter smile. "But I bet you don't like me, do ya? You hate me, a part of you hates me 'cos I don't show you respect. Show you love. You think give me time, all I need is time. You're familiar with time, you have a lot of it. Eternity worth. You think one day I'll wake up, I'll realize..." Connor fell silent; he shifted on the balls of his feet. "I heard you and Wesley last night. Heard you two having sex...Could even smell it."

"Connor...You can call me names, you can hate me. You can believe that I'm a monster. You can believe that my loving you is a lie. You can tell me all this no matter how I love you. Believe whatever you want to, you can even yell it all in my face, but what you can not do is talk about something that is none of your damn business."

The teenager nodded, his smile twisted. Making him look slightly insane.

"Okay, I get that. You and Wes, aren't any of my business. I'm just your son, my views don't matter. I'm just curious, do you love him? Really?"

"Yes." Angel told his boy honestly. Seriously. He would never hide his love for Wesley ever again. He would never deny his love, his Wesley. The vampire looked back into his office. Making sure to catch Wesley's eyes, hard possession and intense love burned in the depths of his dark eyes before looking back at his son. "Yes, I do, with all of my heart. All of my mind and soul, I love him."

"Well, I'm not going to tell you that I'm happy for you both."

"I'm glad, I'm tired of your lies."
Connor looked to the ground his hands tightening upon the weapon in a white steel grip. "Do you...You know, wish..." Connor shock his head,

"Never mind. I have to go make a kill right now..."

"Connor..." Angel said softly, "Finish what you were about to say. Do I wish what?"

"It doesn't matter. None of it ever really matters."

"Doesn't it?"

Connor was silent as if deep in thought. "Sometimes I wonder what it would have been like if things had been different, I was wondering if you ever thought the same...Pretty stupid, huh? Just forget about me sayin' something..."

"It's not stupid, Connor, not at all stupid." Angel said sadly, "I wish you had never gone with Holtz. I wish all the time that I'd been the one to raise you. I wouldn't have made the perfect parent but for you I'd have tried to be. Still wish I could be now, with you."

"Yeah, well you can also wish that the cow would actually jump over the moon while it turned into cheese. It would never happen, no matter how much you wished for it." Connor spoke honestly, tone full of emotion. "I'm not the son you want and I'm never going to be. I'm not even sure I ever want to be."

He then turned and walked over to the basement door, opening it he disappeared going down the stairs. With his supernatural ears he heard Wes say gently.

"Go fight those demons with your son. Continue to fight for him, Angel, you know your heart is telling you to do so...So go do it."

It wasn't until Connor hit the tunnels that Angel caught up with him. Sword in hand. Neither said a single word or made even the slightest sound.

##

The Dark One needed to make sure things turned out right. One should always have a back up plan, just in case Connor didn't kill Wesley and she needed to have that damn British man dead. He could so easily destroy everything! And he didn't even realize it! She couldn't let that happen, couldn't let him destroy the coming kingdom, her half of the wondrous kingdom.

She trusted Connor, but he was such an emotional teenager. He could so easily do something foolish and ruin everything. So she needed a back up plan, now. And who else but...

She smiled evilly and coldly.

"Hello, Lilah." She told the woman who was sitting in a chair doing nothing except feel sorry for herself. Wallowing in despair.

Lilah gasped as she jerked toward the sound. "Who's there?...Get the fuck out, you hear me! This is *my* apartment!"

The Dark One cackled. "Really, Lilah you should treat guests with more respect."
"You're no guest! So get the fuck out!...Wait...Your voice..." Her brow crinkled in thought. "I know that voice..." It frustrated Lilah greatly the fact she was sure she knew that voice, and yet...Surely she knew it...

Wait, she did know that voice!

"Cordelia Chase, what the hell do you want?" Lilah tilted her head to one side, towards the area she was sure the other woman was at. She drummed her fingers nervously upon the leather arm of her chair.

The Dark One reached out and touched that hand or tried to before Lilah jerked away as if she had been burned. "You would think I'm Cordelia Chase but I'm something more, Lilah." The Dark One said in the coldest cruellest voice ever heard. "Something that you once worshiped because the Senior Partners told you too. You said you would do anything for your sight to be returned to you, did you mean it?"

Lilah shifted position in the leather chair, getting a rubbery crackle sound that reminded her of thunder. She could actually feel the color drain from her face.

"What and who are you now?"

"I'm what helped make Wolfram and Hart. I'm here to make the power of evil even stronger. I'm here for the kingdom you've heard about. A kingdom of pain, fire, total destruction and rivers of chaos mixed with the blood of countless lives. I'm the relentless one. Totally without mercy. Nothing can stop me, for I'm the Heart!"

Lilah sat back with a startled gasp as if The Dark One had struck her. Terror rising within her. "You're the Dark One. The Great Coming Dark One. The true heart of Darkness. Of evil." She whispered. "I know that the time was coming. That it was close at hand...I just never thought you'd choose to take the body of Angel's Seer."

"At the time, I thought her the perfect shell, the perfect victim...The one worthy of my possession...Of bringing forth the coming kingdom..."

"But now?" Lilah asked gently, softly.

The Dark One shrugged knowing, and not caring that Lilah couldn't see her. "Don't matter now what I thought or planned by taking Cordelia as my own. What matters is the kingdom! I need to make sure something is taken care of first...The one known as Wesley. The one I believe made you blind. " The velvet voice was menacing. "I need him dead, very dead...The type of death that will *keep* him dead! I already have someone in mind that I *hope* will do the job. I have faith in the boy, but I also have faith in his foolishness too. I like to make sure every area is covered. Even for mishaps..."

Lilah blinked at her with unseeing eyes. "You're saying if I kill him, I get my sight back?" She asked quietly. Almost hopefully. The Neptee thing that had her sight captured was silent within her.

'If I plotted against him, would you tell him?' She asked the power that had stolen her sight and refused to set her free.

'It was extremely still. 'I tell nothing, unless I wish it or unless he asks. This will indeed stay between you and that thing. Just don't think its powerful enough to give you what is now mine.' The Neptee told her truthfully. 'Yet this is your choice. Follow the Dark One or seek the light within your soul. Which ever you pick is your decision.'

Lilah sighed softly.
"Well?" The Dark One prompted. Knowing she would do anything for her sight. Lilah would follow her, be a willing slave. She would kill Wesley if she had too...

Lilah had a serious choice to make...

'Neptee? You do tell Wesley things without him asking. You choose what to say...If I asked you to tell Wesley that the Dark One is Cordelia, would you do it?'

'Yes.' The Neptee stated without hesitation.

'But if I choose to follow the Dark One you will not tell him?'

'Correct. And I keep my word.'

Lilah suddenly felt very tired, she rubbed at her pounding forehead before she asked the Neptee seriously wanting to know, 'Is there really still some light in my dark soul?'

'Yes.' It answered truthfully.

'My sister, Sarah, once told me that my light within could burn out easily...I miss her, been thinking about her a lot lately...'

'You're light hasn't burned out, not yet anyway.'

'Sarah, now she had a beautiful light. A beautiful soul. Most beautiful and bright light I've ever known...Tell me, Neptee, if you are so powerful...Tell me why the world had to lose that light? Why did I lose it?'

'You didn't nor did the world. She past the light onto you, her spirit never left you. Not once in all these years you thought yourself alone and forgotten. She is what keeps that small flame alive. It is brilliant and beautiful, just like her...You're beautiful and brilliant because she shines within you as you once shined within her...'

Lilah slowly opened her eyes and tried to look to were she thought the Dark One would be. "Oh, great and mighty Dark One, I have decided...I've decided that I'd rather be fucked by donkeys and pigs than to follow filth like you!" Lilah said in her best winning lawyer voice...

'Tell Wesley!' She told the Neptee as fast as she could...

At that moment she suddenly gave a carefree happy laugh. She could see it! The light! She could actually see the light, it was there within her own soul. Wes and the Neptee power had been right! It was overwhelmingly beautiful...And there was her lovely sister with a huge smile just for her, holding the light. Tears of happiness down her cheeks. It was her sister standing there! Her wonderful sister! It was Sar--

Cordelia, The Dark One, snarled hatefully as she savagely snapped Lilah's neck. The body slid from the chair, onto the floor. An odd truly peaceful smile frozen upon Lilah's face. Eyes wide open. Yet even they held peace...

For Delilah Ruth Morgan had found her light.

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Part 63

Wesley had gone back upstairs for a while, mostly to snack on a nice juicy apple and read a good novel while waiting for Angel to return...

He paused, feeling sad for both Angel and Connor. He hoped that relationship could be mended and one day fixed for the better. He took a huge bite of his Red Delicious Apple, chewing slowly enjoying the taste. Relaxing in his chair, book now opened and ready for his enjoyment upon his lap. But he wasn't reading it quite yet; his mind was still on Angel and Connor. Surely the relationship hadn't gone to the point of no return. Surely one day Connor would see his father as he really was and come to love him.

Connor wasn't an evil lad, just confused...

There was still hope.

He brought the apple to his mouth once more to take another bite, to suddenly freeze. Hand half way to his mouth, which was opened wide. His heart started to speed up in fear as he felt a cold sharp edge of an axe blade press at the side of his throat.

"Did you know that the other Wesley had a slit throat? There was a nice jagged scar, right about here...Where this blade is, in fact. Did you know that Wesley was a pawn, did you know he kidnapped me? Holtz used him. He used Justine to slit that man's throat. Holtz was a user of everyone to get what he wanted. He used me for revenge against the thing that killed his family...Angelus turned his daughter into a monster, did you know that? And in the end he turned me into what I am today...Interesting don't ya think? How everything comes full circle." Connor told him coldly, his lip was drawn back in an ugly snarl.

"Connor...Where's Angel?" Wes asked, not caring right now about his neck becoming detached from his body. He eyed the area round him frantically. Hoping that Angel was alright, and wondering how the hell he would get out of this situation. The question he had asked moved his Adam's Apple slightly, almost cutting itself against the sharp axe's blade.

"He's around. I hit him pretty damn hard with a steel pipe, left him asleep in the sewers about a few miles from here. I got a lot to do before he wakes up...I really wonder if he'll recognize your body after I'm done with it...He'll have nightmares about that very moment for centuries. I'll leave parts all over the place, starting with leaving your head in his bed..."

"Connor, why kill me?"

The boy shrugged. "The Dark One said it was important that you be killed and I thought it would be fun. And a little funny and a little right..."

Wesley suddenly heard the Neptee tell him who the Dark One had possessed. His eyes widened focused on Angel's son who continued to speak.

"You won't be the first person I've killed...I killed Justine too...She bleed a lot...I wonder if you will bleed the same way..."

"Connor..." Wesley heard a horrified familiar voice behind him whisper. "Don't...You don't want to do this...Put the axe down...Please..."

Connor simply pressed the blade closer. He even shook slightly, cutting the skin a little, adding a small hint
of blood into fear scented room. Connor's blue eyes flickered with emotion. "Would you fight me for him? Would you do anything for your lover? Even kill me? You say you *love* him, but all I see is a fucking *vampire*...Yet, since coming into this world I've heard you're a champion. A hero. You help the hopeless and helpless...Tell me, oh, great champion...Did you go to hell for me, Dad? You left me with a mad man! A man who reminded me daily that I wasn't his *real* son, that I wasn't really wanted or loved by you! Or him! You didn't fight for me! You say you care, you say you love but you still let me go...With him!"

Connor said this with lips twisted even more as he spit out his hateful bitter emotions. "You want me to put down the axe...'Cos you don’t want me to kill your whore? Is that why Dad? You say you love him, but I bet you would say that to any good dog that gives you pleasure...But you know what, even good dogs die!"

"Connor..." Angel whispered low, "He's not my whore, not my dog...I do love him...Please, don't do this..."

"This? You should have seen *this* coming! When you let me go with Holtz, you should have known this was coming...You know, I hated every time you told me that you loved me? Yet you still said the words anyway. If you really loved me as your son...You would have killed me, rather than let me be raised by a man you knew hated you!"

"I love you, I do. I forgave you for putting me in the ocean for three months, for hating me. I forgave you for not loving me back...But don't do something unforgivable...Don't make me..."

"Wish I was never born? Don't you realize there isn't a day that goes by that...You lie, you know. You never loved me, just like he never loved me. No matter how hard I tried to make him love and accept me, he never did 'cos I was a child to a monster. A vampire! A thing! Both my parents were things! I will always blame you for letting me go to hell in the first place. And you honestly think you've been in hell, you haven't seen anything yet!" Connor suddenly lifted the axe high to swing it down hard and fast...

Angel roared, yet surprisingly Connor wasn't fast enough to cut off Wesley's head. The vampire hand stopped the axe swing. Keeping Wesley from the death blow. Meanwhile Wesley rolled to the floor, hand clinching his throat as if that would now keep it safe.

Angel punched Connor hard in the face. By all miracles or extreme stupidity Connor kept a firm grip on the axe’s handle even with a broken bloody nose. Angel too now had a firm grip on the handle.

"You honestly think I just *let* Holtz take you!" Angel growled loud and darkly, now in total demon face. "You think I didn't try to open a portal to go to Quor-toth, to go after you? 'Cos I sure in the hell did!"

They slowly started to go around in a circle, each yanking at the axes handle. Both refusing to let go. Both close to each other. Both looking cold and menacing. They both held an eerie look of two harsh, unrelenting enemies and yet sadly they were Father and son.

"I know what you *didn't* do." Connor said in a low furious tone. "You didn't save me from him, from hell itself! You had countless shots at killing him before he ever got me! But because he was human and you had tortured and killed his family...Just because his hatred of you was justified, you didn't do it. Just end his life.

Or end mine. I heard the stories, Dad. You could have reached over and broke his neck with your supernatural speed, or let Wolfram and Hart fire there guns at him. They wouldn't have hurt you. Killed you. Yeah, you might have ended up losing a son, but didn't you anyway? Hell as Angelus you should have killed him back in the day! Even with that soul, Dad, you should have killed him..."

There was a cold fury in Angel's amber eyes as they looked into his son's hateful blue. "You say I should have killed him and yet here I thought you loved him. That to you he was your *real* father..." He said quietly, watching his son's face.

Connor laughed bitterly before he gave a short pause. "Yeah, I did. He was the only thing I had and I was
something he had. I was his Steven. I was his to train. To teach. I was molded to hate you and everything that was you. He *made* me! He made me to use, for him to use..." He tilted his head, blood from his nose running into his mouth making a gruesome sight. "You know, Dad, I think there's a strong chance that I'm really fucked up...How about you blame Holtz and I'll blame you? Maybe it'll work better that way."

Unexpectedly, Connor suddenly kneed his father savagely in the balls. Angel's eyes grew wide with pain and his mouth flew open in a painful silent scream. He let go of the axe handle to instead cover his groin with his hands. A way too late gesture. Dropping to his knees. Connor watched with no _expression upon his face.

"While I'm being all open and honest with you...There are times when I don't know what is up or down...Don't know anything except that you gave me to a monster. He was human but still a monster. Do you care? Don't you care what he made me to be? He'd beat me, starve me, punish me and on rare occasions 'reward' me. When I was old enough he'd...I was like your whore, Dad. In this world they call it rape and child abuse, but you first have to be a child to be abused, right? I was Steven, his boy, his good wonderful boy. Gee, I was so lucky. To have him raise me. To have him teach me to survive a hell dimension. And through it all I still loved him, wanted his approval. He'd call you a monster, he even told me I had the instincts of a monster...And he, Holtz was a monster too...Monsters..." Connor told Angel in quiet menace. Before his head snapped around, eyes blazing with madness he could no longer hide. An insane smile graced his lips he looked at another on the floor, Wesley, having witnessed everything in shock still holding his hand to his throat.

"Every face holds a monster. Sometimes one should be there to save the dog, show some mercy...one day that dog will grow to become a monster himself..." Connor now continued to no one in particular.

Wesley quickly staggered backward, away from the insane boy holding the deadly axe. He was truly horrified and he didn't have any idea what to do. Fear was engulfing him. Nothing was going to stop Connor from murdering his father's lover. Or at least that was what it seemed.

Connor stepped closer to Wesley. "Don't worry, little whore, little puppy, I don't think my killing you will hurt you any. I'm going to make it quick..." His eyes were wild, his smile grew even more insane, truly wicked. "But it should hurt my real father, plenty, then maybe he'll understand... he needs to understand about the monsters! They're everywhere!"

From behind him his father moved abruptly swiftly. Kicking Connor's legs out from under him. He fell to the floor almost sticking the axe into his own chest. Next instant Angel was above him, Connor's back flat against the floor. Now it was Angel that had the weapon to Connor's throat.

His boy acted as if it made little difference. As he rambled madly, "There are monsters, *everywhere*, I tell you! Everywhere, Dad! Don't you see them? Don't you care? You have to understand, about the monsters...You have to know..."

"I already know about monsters, Connor. I know them well and I'm sorry..." Angel told him slowly. Sadly, as his face shifting back to human. "I'm sorry, about the monsters..."

Connor's eyebrows shot up before he inquired with a silky purr. "You know about the monsters, Dad? So, what are you going to do about them now that you know..."

Angel sighed before studying his son's face intensely before saying seriously, almost deathly quiet. "Take away the monsters."

With an unhesitant shove the sharp blade sliced down, killing Connor instantly. Going through the neck clean to the floor. With shaking fingers Angel touched the still warm pale cheek. Blood tears started to fall.
"I still love you, son. I still love you..."

Angel moved off his child, his only son, as he buried his face into his hands, shoulders shaking as sobs racked his body hard.

Wesley watched spellbound and heartbroken for his beloved, his lover. Then he had a sudden thought and with that his eyes turned a solid black with a red swirling haze in their depths...

(End of part 63)

Still reading? Hope you are...hugs...

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Part 64

Then there was silence. So thick. Everything seemed still, silent even with Angel's sobs. Slowly even he became quiet as something powerful reverberated through the room. Angel looked over at Wesley and then his dead son, questioningly.

Connor glowed a bright brilliant red. He lit up the whole room. Angel watched in shock and lets be honest, a little awe as Wesley crawled over to him and removed the axe from the fatal wound. With that action Connor seemed to glow even brighter. The wound closed itself and started to heal. Blood went backwards, back into Connor's dead body. Even his broken nose healed and the blood disappeared as if it had never spilled.

Wesley placed both his palms against Connor's head, his eyes still a dark black with a swirl of red...The bright red that filled the room turned into a magnificent purple.

Angel blinked his blood watered eyes, not sure what was happening. "Wes, what are you doing?" He whispered...

Wesley ignored his lover as he said calmly to Connor, who's soul was still in the room. "You must choose. Life or death. Which path do *you* want? Only you can choose the right balance. There must be balance, Connor, so choose the right one. Come and see what it could be, would be...And choose."

Then it was as if only the Neptee was there. Angel couldn't comprehend what was going on, but only knew something was. Things started to flash brightly, the walls around them shook violently. Then just as quickly as it began, things went still. There was an eye of the storm calm to the room as only the Watcher heard the answer the Neptee needed to right the balance. The glow slowly faded...

Angel heard a strong beating heart and Connor's chest rose sharply as he took a deep breath.

"My God...Wes what did you do?" The vampire said softly in shock and awe. He had just killed his son and now his son was alive once more. He gave Wesley a dumbfounded look when he realized he now had not one but *two* sets of memories. One he knew to be real and one...

To be...

What. The Neptee was quick to comfort him...

"He chose. Things have changed. He chose a balance." Wesley whispered back as if he was weak, looking back at Angel with a determined glint in his eyes. A look that said he did what had to be done. The black eyes were once again a normal beautiful blue. He slowly removed his hands from Connor's head.

The teenager groaned. "Damn, did anyone get that truck's licence plate number?"

Connor slowly opened his eyes; there was something different within those blue depths, what was once cold and hard were warm and caring. He sluggishly grinned up at Angel, "Guess ya didn't get that number, huh? Well, I hope you killed forever what that was..."

Angel was truly dumbfounded, mouth opening and closing like a fish out of water. Connor slowly sat up and shook his head, putting two fingers up against his brow to gently rub. He looked over at Wes. "Dad's not saying much is he? Did the truck run him over too?"
Wes shook his head, 'no'. Connor looked back at Angel, "Well, before whatever it was that attacked, I was coming in to tell ya that I might be late coming in for curfew. I'm going with Nate and the wacky gang. I promise that we aren't going to go looking for trouble, even though trouble usually finds us. Anyway, we're going to have pizza and hang out watching movies, at Marsha's house...And my girlfriend is also going she says she has a surprise for me...Is it perverted of me to hope that means she's not wearing a bra?” Connor then gave a nervous laugh as his father's face became even more stunned.

"Connor..." Angel said weakly, deeply confused and not even trying to hide the fact.

"Don't worry, Dad, I'm not going to ask to borrow the car, Nate's taking us in the van and Marsha's house is about ten miles outside of L.A. so...I might not get home until two in the morning...Thought you should know so you don't get worried and later pissed off at me...By the way, can I have some money?" Connor gave Angel a hopeful look as he held out the palm of his hand in his direction.

Angel's face hardened, becoming fixed and merciless, eyes flashing amber, "What the hell is wrong with you? You just now tried to kill Wesley and now you want money?!"

Connor slowly lowered his hand, his blue eyes moving to look at Wes for a second. "No, I didn't..." He sighed. "Is this about the other day? Look, I'm sorry I blew up. Okay? You have every right to be gay if you want too. I support you, love you. I was just stunned, okay? And surprised, which made me act like a royal jerk, I admit that. I apologize. I like Wes, really. He's family; I'm just in no quick hurry to call him Dad. One is plenty. Maybe one day but not today. I already told him sorry...I just...I just need time to get use to this...You being gay now, thing. But I would not try to kill him, I know that much."

Angel looked to Wesley, the British man shrugged before repeating firmly, "He chose."

Now it was Connor who looked a little confused but slowly nodded, "Yeah, I chose. Listen I have less than an hour before Nate shows up. Wantta watch hockey or something with me?"

"You don't even like hockey." Angel said absentmindedly. He then blinked and deliberately looked over at Wesley as he realized just that every moment, he had two sets of memories. The second set had his taking care of Connor even as a baby. History was different. His history and the gangs...The second set, new memories had Darla getting pregnant sooner, eighteen years sooner, and Angel taking care of Connor on his own. He had raised Connor, knowing he'd stake himself before letting his son get hurt. Connor had been thirteen when he moved them both to Sunnydale to help the Slayer as Whistler suggested. In the new memory Whistler hadn't found Angel living in the streets of New York 'cos he had Connor to focus on. They had been living in a nice apartment in New York and doing his best to give his son a normal life.

But going to Sunnydale had slowly changed that...

Some things in the memories stayed the same yet something didn't. He still fell for Buffy yet his son hated that and tried to keep them apart. Connor had friends in Sunnydale yet his best friends had been a young Dawn, who had a major or crush on him, and Xander and two other boys closer to his age. Then as Angelus, he had hurt his son deeply, so much he had run away from Sunnydale to live out on the streets of L.A. When Angel had come back from hell he tried to make up for the things he had done as Angelus, and tried to find his son. He did, after breaking up with Buffy and going to L.A. He could still remember the shock of finding his son after all that time. Living and helping out at a teen shelter run by Anne. His son had friends once more and later found out his son was trying to survive a drug habit he had fallen into. His son was doing better but Connor admitted that it was still hard. Angel blamed himself, while Connor said a lot of the things he did was his choice...It had taken time for his son to trust him again but they were now close once more.

"Yeah, it is a little too violent for my liking but...Soon, I'm going to be off to collage and, ya know, I'll end
up sitting in a big classroom thinking I'd much rather be in front of the TV with my Dad watching some guy lose his teeth on the ice...Or I'd be thinking I'd much rather be in the back seat of the car with Tammy Miller. Don't feel bad if I lean more towards the second one."

"Sure, we can watch hockey." Angel slowly stood up and stretched out his hand. Connor took it instantly with no hesitation at all and was helped up.

He looked down and offered his hand to Wesley, "So, Wes, want to watch hockey with Dad and me?"

"Dad and I." Angel corrected. Yet still reeling from this Twilight Zone world he had fallen into.

"Whatever." Connor rolled his eyes. Wesley hesitantly took his hand and was helped gently up. Wes then let go of the hand and quickly crossed his arms. He had a sad broken look upon his face. Wes shook his head, looking away. "No, I...Thank you, but no. You two should have time..."

"I was being honest, Wes." Connor said slowly, honestly. "I accept that you're my father's lover and I do like you. Hell, I'm just glad he's not with that Buffy chick I still don't like her...Plus, I think you're good for Dad...And what you did...Making his soul permanent...Thanks, it's nice not having to fear Angelus...Coming out of my nightmares, ya know?"

"I do understand, Connor and, it's not that I don't want to be with you both, I just need some time alone." Wes said hesitantly. "I...I like you too."

Connor blushed, then looked at Wesley in a nervous shy fashion, he whispered, "Is this about...The blurry blob that is in my head?"

"Blurry blob?" Angel asked staring at his son intensely wondering if his son was about to turn into the insane youth psychopath once more. Would he have to kill him once again? There was still an axe by his feet. He started to estimate how fast he could grab it.

Connor shrugged, now looking at the hard face of his Dad behind his bushy bangs. Curiosity flickered and danced in his blue eyes. He watched as his father tried to regain some semblance of self control. Connor didn't understand but he felt sure that his father was a predator waiting for an attack...Or was about to attack. And for some odd reason he understood.

"The blurry blob in my head." Connor said uneasily, "It's like...A weird bad dream that I want no part of. But it's there as if it's hiding something and I don't want anything to do with it. I choose not to have anything to do with it." He looked back at Wesley. "Something happened a little bit ago in this room, something to do with you and...and monsters...Bad monsters." Connor got a far way look in his eyes before whispering. "The monsters are gone now, Dad took away the monsters and you replaced them with something better. Much better."

Angel's son shook his head coming out of his daze. "So...so let's watch hockey for a little while." He said quickly going to the television turning the set on, he picked up the remote control and started to flip through the channels.

Angel looked at Wes. "You changed things." He stated matter of factly.

"He chose." Wes repeated then he looked up with tears flooding his eyes. "I love you." As if that explained everything.

Angel reached over and cupped the Watcher's cheek before kissing him lovingly on the lips. "I love you too."
Wes gave a weak smile. "I know, now go watch hockey with your son."

He turned away walking over to the door and opening it.

"Hey, Wes?" Connor was heard saying.

Wesley stopped and looked over to were Connor was. Blue knowing grateful eyes looked back. He did remember but chose to believe the better memories. This new reality. He did indeed choose and he was thankful for the chance at a new better life. "Thanks."

Wes nodded and left closing the door behind him. Angel stood there. Unmoving, still wondering what the hell happened.

"Dad?" Connor said over the sound of a game starting.

Angel slowly moved to the sofa and sat by Connor. Silent. Deathly still. Rigged straight. Connor reached out a shaking hand and put it on his father's cold unmoving hand.

"Should I say I'm sorry?" Connor asked softly. "Sorry about...everything..."

Angel moved his hand to where he now held his son's warm hand. He was silent for a long while before he said, "The other things never happened. I took away the monsters. I killed them and at the same time killed my boy and I never stopped loving him..."

"Yeah." Connor whispered, before leaning over and kissed a pale soft cheek stained with blood red tears. He smiled a beautiful smile, even with watery eyes. "You sure did and now I will always love you right back."

Neither one said anther word as they both pretended to have interest in the game. Yet knowing they both had a new life made it kinda hard.

(End of 64)
Wesley made quick use of the much needed alone time by doing the famous flight of the bumble bee. Searching and finding an old suitcase he started to throw everything he could think of into it. It took maybe fifteen to twenty minutes. He then found much needed documents and threw in some books he might need. It took some time to find the car keys to this world's Wesley's SUV. He hadn't driven it at all since he had been here in this world but knew Angel kept it in the garage parked in the spot the other Wes used to park and now he was going to use it. To leave...

He wrote a quick note saying he was so sorry but he had to leave. He added a quick P.S. Cordelia is possessed by the Dark One so please be careful.

After he loaded the car, he decided he didn't need to go back for weapons because no matter how God awful dirty the car was, inside and out, damn he'd really have to clean the inside of it! And were those ripped panties in the back seat? Anyway, the inside of the car was actually a weapon's cabinet by the look of things. Wes thanked the other Wes privately, through his tears.

It hurt to do this but he had to. He didn't know where he was going but he had to go somewhere. Anywhere that was away. Yet it felt as if he was slaying himself in the heart. Grief was like a leaden weight within him. He started the SUV, and rolled down the windows for there was an old weird nauseatingly gross smell. He slowly backed up and when he got to the good spot to pull it into drive he froze.

Suddenly there was a very pissed vampire at the Driver's door looking at Wesley with dark eyes burning with fury.

"What the fuck are you doing?" Angel growled.

Wesley swallowed hard before he lied, "Going out to t-to get some milk."

Angel's eyes flashed yellow as he held up a clenched fist holding what must have been Wesley's quickly written note.

"Gee, Connor already went out with his friends? Huh, that was quick..."

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"I...I'm sorry, Angel really but I..." Wesley didn't know what to say but he knew if he didn't find away to leave now he'd never have the strength or will to leave this man he loved so damn much. He suddenly tightened his jaw determinedly and hit the gas. He didn't go very far, for the vampire yanked the door right off the metal hinges. Wes hit the brakes and watched in stunned horror as Angel reached over and turned off the engine. Throwing the keys over his shouder to where the car door had been thrown. Then with a mighty roar Angel yanked out the whole steering wheel along with various long wires that fell into Wesley's lap. He watched wide eyed and open mouthed as the steering wheel was thrown off into the distance. The poor SUV would never go anywhere again unless it was towed. Angel, the great pissed off champion that he was just slain the gold SUV.

Then Angel leaned back to only put his hands against the now open metal frame. He looked strong and ominous, he may have the face of an angel but in the eyes one could clearly see the devil. His eyes gleamed with suppressed rage daring Wesley to try to leave him.

"We, my love, are going to talk. Right here. Right now. The words we share better be nothing but the truth."

Chapter 65: Page 65

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"We, my love, are going to talk. Right here. Right now. The words we share better be nothing but the truth."
Angel's voice was unerringly calm, low, a special blend of hard iron and soft velvet.

Wesley tried to huddle himself away from his angry lover. "I...I'm sorry, Angel, but I...I have to leave. Don't you see? I have to..."

"Why do you think you have to leave? Tell me why..."

Wesley shook his head. "I can't...Don't you see...I can't stay...I can't."

"What you can't do is leave me!" Angel told him softly. The rage lessening but still there, still simmering under the surface.

"It won't tell me the cost! It always tells me the price for what I do, always!...Being Neptee, one knows the cost, the balance. Every action has a reaction! Spells should be used for the common good, never and I mean never for personal gain! I...I messed with countless lives just now, Angel. For you and Connor. So you could both have another chance at happiness. A life together as you two should have had, yet didn't. I messed with peoples memories and it was so easy, so very easy just like breathing and that should be wrong! *I* should be wrong!"

"You should be punished." Angel said in an eerie quiet tone, coming to understand something...

"Yes!" Wesley looked at him with wide eyes, hoping he understood. He had to understand! Simply had too! Angel nodded. "The Neptee within you won't tell you the punishment for what you did, the back lash in doing what you did will have on you, so you put the punishment into your own hands..."

"Yes! See...I have to leave. Leaving you is the worst punishment I could ever...It's a truly horrible punishment but a horrible crime like messing with countless lives and memories deserves the worst punishment ever...But it's worth it for you now have your son back. You both have a beautiful relationship and you both care for each other...Much better than you both trying to kill each other."

"Interesting...But you should know, Wes, that the only way I'll let you leave is with my ashes blowing in the wind." Angel told him seriously. "And you call *me* a lackwit!" He then shook his head in disbelief. "You always run, you get a single thought into the smart arse head of yours and you run with it. You don't sit down and heaven forbid you talk it out with those closest to you or even *try* to talk about it! The other Wes had the same God damn problem!"

Angel then spoke mockingly and a little angrily. "Oooo, look another prophecy. Gee, got to save Angel and Connor. What can I do about this...I know I'll go to Holtz and while I'm at it I'll kidnap Connor! This is all for the fucking better good!"

"But *I* never kidnapped Connor, or saw this Holtz fellow..."

Angel growled in heated anger. "*My* fucking point Wes, is he ran too! He never talked, never fucking even suggested that there might be a serious problem! Even if looking back the signs were there. He simply did what he thought he had to do, in some weird hope that it would make things better. But it fell apart. You love me so to punish yourself, you decide without even talking about it, mind you, to run. To leave me! In hopes that it just might be for the best, which it isn't by the way....Don't you get that you idiot! Don't you think that there might be a reason why the Neptee magick didn't tell you the balance effect it would have on the world was because this world was so fucked up there *wasn't* a balance to begin with! You keep saying that the Neptee is all about balance. If you use the magick, the magick has to balance whatever it has done and it always effects something. To escape, Wolfram and Hart, Lilah's sight was held captive. Your own mother gave up her own life so you could live. Again balance. For my soul to be permanent to accept
my soul and demon, you had to accept that you and the Neptee will always be one and to stop hating it and fighting it. All these things had balance...But Connor...Remember when you told him to make a choice? He wasn't just choosing between a new life or death. He had to choose whether he ever existed in this world. Which to the Neptee within you that meant total death, to be forgotten about completely or have a new life. New memories. A new balance. Let him become a part of the balance. Why memories of countless others where changed as well. This world is way off balance at times Wes. Actually it's been off balance for a hell of a long arse time and you set it right. That's why the punishment you were expecting hasn't happened! For everything balanced itself out when you gave my son, who was never supposed to exist in the first place the choice. You or the Neptee couldn't make the choice, he had too. And he did, creating balance."

Wesley drew a shaking breath, covering his face with his hands..."Oh, goddess...You're right, I'm such a silly fool! I'm so ashamed, it took a lackwit to figure something that was staring me in the face..."

"What you actually thought you were the only smart one around here?" Angel said quietly, yet trying to put a teasing tone into his voice. Though he had a feeling that it fell flat.

"Well, yes." Wes mumbled honestly slowly taking his hands away from his face. "How did you figure all that out when I couldn't even..."

"I'm not really sure. I just knew it in my heart to be true. I understood when you asked Connor to choose. Plus, after you gave Connor the choice...The Neptee touched my mind, my very soul to let me know things would be okay. I know the real you Wes. I know you as a Neptee and I know your good heart. I see the real you. The one that is brave and the one that becomes paranoid. Knowing your touch makes me know the Neptee's touch. You two are one, just like my demon and soul are now one. When the Neptee touched my mind I instantly knew the balance that was taking place even while I was in total and complete shock, while you went into guilt mode for 'messing with countless lives'. Also, did you notice that bringing Connor back to life didn't kill you?"

"I..." Wesley looked sheepish. "No, I didn't notice that."

"I did." Angel told him with strong emotion in his voice. "And don't ever do that again. I can't lose you; you silly fool. I killed Connor to keep him from killing you, then you turn around and give him life, giving the Neptee full right to take your life in return!"

"I'm a fool." Wesley whispered, agreeing with him. Knowing that at this time it was true. "I'm a silly stupid fool. The balance...I had forgotten that Connor was born of two vampires, he was never meant to exist. Which was why my life wasn't taken for his, there would have been no balance in that act..."

"Yeah, and when you don't talk to me, when you try to run when you're in pain or simply running away from me in general, well, you are a fool. One of the reasons you need me. I keep you from total stupidity." Angel said arrogantly. Truthfully.

Wes tried to smile at that but it was weak, for he had a strong feeling Angel believed what he sad and oddly enough so did Wesley.

"I'm sorry for being stupid." Wesley said softly.

Angel nodded. "Yeah, well get out of the car and give me the suitcase."

Wesley quickly did as he said before looking back at the SUV. "Shouldn't we try to put the door back on?"

Angel shrugged, holding Wes' hand with one hand and the suitcase with the other. "I don't think that car's going anywhere..."
"But there are weapons inside..."

"Wes, did you notice the gross smell from the inside of that thing? It was bad *before* I got into it soaking wet straight from the ocean. Afterwards I think a tiny fish or two might have slipped out onto the floorboard from my pants. Trust me, nothing human or demon will go inside of it. I'm surprised as hell that you got into that smelly thing..."

"The first thing I did was roll down the windows..." He admitted.

"Even then, I don't think it would have helped any."

"True. Angel?" Wes said gently. After allowing Angel to lead him back into the hotel and up the stairs.

"Yeah, Wes?"

"I...I don't know if it matters but I don't think I would have gone too far until I would've turned back."

Angel gave the hand he held a loving squeeze as together they walked into their room. "It matters but know this, I would have hunted down your every step."

With that said for the first time in the longest time Angel shut and bolted the door.

(End of 65)
The Next Day...

Angel watches his naked lover slowly wake up, his body pressed against his, Wes looks at him drowsily with a sexy happy smile. Angel smiled a lazy satisfied smile right back, lovingly placing his finger gently upon Wesley's swollen lips. Angel leaned forward and removed his fingers to replace them with his own lips. Purring.

Angel savored the kiss. This love he felt was so very right he knew it from within the deepest part of his heart, to the farthest corners of his soul. He was totally amazed that he had this second chance at true love and happiness. He didn't deserve it but he damn sure treasured this chance. This moment.

Wes made his world perfect just by being himself and loving him back. Angel had been given more than he had ever thought possible or even dreamed. Wes had changed his world, made it right. It was weird, really, feeling this complete. Whole.

He had once *thought* he knew love but now...This that he felt for his Wes was what love really was.

Wesley moved closer, laying his head on Angel's bare pale muscled chest. Willingly arms tightened lovingly around him.

"Thank you..." Wesley said softly.

Angel's smile got bigger. "Yeah, I know I'm a fantastic lover, give me a sec and you'll be moaning with happiness again...."

"No...I mean...Thanks for stopping me and for making me feel safe, loved and complete."

"There is no; no...Only yes...*And* thank you for being such a fantastic lover, you left off that part." Angel reminded him.

Wes giggled.

"Wes..." Angel teasingly warned. "I know where you are ticklish...

"You wouldn't dar--AAhhh!" Wesley started to laugh like a mad man as he tried to escape the torment of Angel's fingers. "Stop!" He slapped at them. "Hee, stop, I say! Heehee! Angel!"

"Never knew you could laugh like a chipmunk...So, lover, tell me...How fantastic I am..." Angel purred. He stopped tickling but kept his fingers well placed to start the tickling once more if necessary.

"Okay!" Wesley gasped, then said dryly, his blue eyes dancing with mischief, "Right, you are a fantastic lover. Thank you for...For rocking my world you're the best lover I've ever had..."

"You're welcome." Angel cut in proudly.

"Since last Friday." Wesley quickly finished.

Angle looked instantly surprised. "You didn't have a lover last Friday."
Wesley smiled back before giving the vampire a light tender sweet kiss. He then winked at his lover, moving his right hand down... "No, I didn't have a lover but I got off. It was good. Real good."

"Really?" Angel looking interested while he asked innocently. "Gee, what did this really good hand do?"

Wes' hand wondered lower, exploring fully and boldly. Angel growled in savagely overwhelming need and passion. Then they both froze as a loud knocking hit the door. "Hey!" Gunn was heard through the door. "You two, enough of the honeymooning! You'll make each other blind!"

Angel mumbled something under his breath. Then they heard Connor laugh and tell Gunn, "Watch out, the next time you and Fred decide on some action, Dad says he plans to interrupt and see how you like it."

"Dude, you seriously creep me out!" Gunn was heard telling Connor.

"Well, I told ya earlier they fell asleep which they desperately needed. But the moment they both woke up the party got started again. Wes was about to show Dad just what the 'good hand' did last Friday night...What? Do you think it's easy hearing every single thing from about two blocks away? I get creeped out all the time, especially now that my own Father is making up for his years as a eunuch! Do you not realize how much therapy I'm going to be needing later in life?"

"What you don't think you need therapy now?" Gunn asked disbelievingly before finishing, "'Cos ya need it, man! Should have begun therapy yesterday!"

"Actually..." Connor trailed the sentence off mysteriously.

Gunn started hitting the door once more. "Ho, Angel! The phone down stairs been ringing like crazy and we've been respecting you're 'special' fun time but..."

"Buffy's called three times, saying she really needed to talk to you. Even Willow called, oh..." Connor now started to sound a little mischievous and happy. "The first time Buffy called I told her you were busy having sex and then I hung up on her. She called right back and I let Fred answer the phone and she told her that you had recently gotten a permanent soul and was with the one you loved. She started to babble, to I have to remind you a total stranger she had never met, telling Buffy that you were gay now. For the first time in the longest time I'd have loved to have been back in Sunnydale to see the look on Fruity the Vampire Cuddler's face. Then Willow called, Angel she says The First has been causing trouble again. This time...It's bad, real bad, Dad. Willow said she did a spell in hopes to find a Neptee. The group was told only the Neptee knew the secret to totally destroying The First. She said the spell says the Neptee is in L.A somewhere but the spell refuses to pinpoint it. I didn't tell her about Wes or him being the Neptee, but she sure was hoping you'd help find him and get him to help. Maybe even go to Sunnydale...Though if you two go, I'm going..."

"And if you two go to Sunnydale, me and Fred won't be going with you. Me and Fred--"

"Fred and I." Connor corrected.

"What?" Gunn glared daggers at the boy.

Connor shrugged not bothered by the daggers at all, he smiled. "Dad's been trying to teach me to be gooder with the speakin'! Just showing that I'm learning."

"Better!" Angel yelled. "Not gooder!" He looked to Wes. "That boy is going to be the death of me, I just know it."

"Poor baby." Wes mocked sadly. "Like you're not already dead."
"Well, anyway." Gunn decided to try to finish what he'd been about to say before so rudely 'corrected' like he needed correcting, especially from a teenager! Next time he played basket ball with the boy, he was going down! "*Me and Fred* are going to visit Las Vegas. See the big lights and free Lorne. It took time but we just now realized Lorne has been held captive and forced to sing at this club. But don't worry I have some friends who used to be part of my old gang. They had moved to Las Vegas awhile back and they're going to help with the shake down. We have a plan and after we save Lorne...I'm so going partying in the town of lights. I'm excited. Going to live it up and I'm also thinking of asking Fred if she wants to tie the knot while we are there...So you never know we might come back as Mr. and Mrs. Gunn."

"Wow, that's nice." Connor told him. "Get the full package with the video to show us, make sure to get the Elvis impersonator, they are so cool looking!" He then lowered his voice to say, "Thank you, thank you very much!"

"Lorne is in trouble and he never did tell us?" Angel asked loudly and a little pissed. Does no one talk around here?!

"Whenever he'd talk to Fred he'd speak in code. The people holding him hostage was listening in and he kept asking how Fluffy was doing. Fred didn't realize he was speaking code she thought he was being kinky and naughty with her. She thought he was being his cute and creepy self. She honestly thought fluffy was something else altogether..."

"Anyone who would name a fake dog Fluffy and when asking a friend how Fluffy was and this friend thought it was kinky naughty talk. Some weird ass phone sex...That friend is the one that is cute and creepy and are you sure you want her to be Mrs. Charles Gunn?"

Gunn crossed his arms and glared. "Hell yes! And she's not creepy she's cute!"

"No, mostly she's creepy."

"You want to throw down with me?" Gunn asked, knowing he might not get a hell of damage in when it came down to fighting Connor, but he'd at least get a punch in.

"Just stating the truth. I love Fred and she is a cute and sweet...In a creepy way, kinda like Dad and Wes. Ya gotta admit they're cute but I could so easily punch this door right in and we'd both be seeing some creepy ass stuff. Right here and right now, we'll see both of them in all their creepy naked glory."

Connor and Gunn looked at the door and shivered.

"Right. Gotta point. After all the creepy shit we've seen that would be the creepiest in a cute sick way." Gunn said with an agreeing nod.

"We're not creepy!" Angel yelled, but had a feeling his son and friend were already walking away from their door. "We're not, I tell you!"

###

After taking a shower and dressing, Angel finally asked, "So...What do you think?"

Wes looked over at him. "I'm not doing anymore magick with my Neptee powers, if I use it to destroy The First it will destroy me as well...As well as another strong power of good...And would throw the world into total chaos."
Angel nodded. "Okay, no using your power, I'll support any decision you make but I guess I better call Buffy and find out what exactly is going on...And try to explain some things as well."

"So you think we'll be going to Sunnydale?" Wes asked softly. Uncertainty imbedded in his soft tone.

"You don't want to go?"

Wes shrugged. "It's...It's going to be weird and...So different from what I know....I mean, there's even a Willow here but she's not anything like my Will. Yet she will be in a strange way and I guess...It's just going to be so hard and so very strange and...and..."

"Sacred." Angel stated. "You saw your Willow die to save the world..."

"Yes." Wes whispered with a nod. "And then there's Xander and Spike. They're not together nor are they my closest and dearest friends...It'll be hard." He sniffled. "I miss them so much."

"I bet they missed you too, just 'cos another Wes is there in your former world doesn't mean they've forgotten you. I bet there are times they look at the other Wes and...And think about the one they lost..."

"Really?" Wes asked hopefully.

Angel smiled tenderly. "Yes, they miss you too, I know they love and accept the other Wes but they loved you first. Yes, if we go to Sunnydale, it'll be hard for you. They'll be strangers with familiar faces that is no doubt but I'll be right there beside you. Loving you."

"And that should be enough." Wes whispered softly. "*Will* be enough. Call Sunnydale and I'll pack our stuff but I don't see how I can be a help to them."

"But you'll try without using Neptee power." Angel finished understandingly.

"Yes, I'll help but like I said I *can't* use the Neptee magick against The First."

"And you won't. We'll figure out something Wes, don't beat yourself up about not using the power within you." Angel promised moving to his side and giving him a sweet kiss.

When the kiss ended, Wes tilted his head. "After we deal with this we need to deal with the Dark One."

Angel sighed looking sad. "Yeah, do you think there is a way to depossess Cordy? Destroy the Dark One without destroying Cordelia?"

Wesley sighed along with him. "Angel...We'll look but...The Dark One is a rare powerful evil being. Truly powerful. An ancient from hell itself. The only way to destroy the Dark One is to destroy what ever host it inhabits. It has to take the soul back to hell leaving an empty dead shell. The only way it can be cast out and sent back to hell is with a treasured human soul. It has to take something, and the host at the time had to be willing for it to take possession. Had to invite it in. I'm thinking Cordelia had been tricked in some way to accept the possession. The Dark One is a known trickster. I'm sorry, Angel, really I am...Maybe what the Neptee said within me is somehow wrong..."

"Do you believe that?"

"No." Wes admitted softly. "I wish I was wrong, but the only way is with her death...I'm sorry....Hopefully it will take centuries before the Dark One will find its next victim."
Angel nodded slowly before looking over at him. A broody almost heartbroken look upon his face. "I killed Connor...It would be...It would rip me apart to kill her, but I will if I have too."

"I know, but still we'll look at every option before killing her..." Wesley told him.

"You know...She's a wonderful woman. A great friend. I once had a little thing for her and the other Wes had one too. Years ago. I miss her, wish you could know the real her."

"She really must have been something, then for us both to love and care about her."

"Yeah, she *was*...She once said if I ever became Angelus she'd stake me dead, I knew she spoke the truth...And I strangely took comfort in that. And now...The table is turned. I...When it comes down to it, I'll do it. It'll hurt like hell and I'll probably cry like a baby when I do take...Her life...To free her. That should be a merciful act shouldn't it? But The Dark One will take her soul to hell...How can that be a merciful act?"

He said this grief stricken and wrenchingly miserable. As if Cordelia was already dead. As if he had already killed her.

Wesley reached out and gently touched his shoulder, trying to give him comfort. While Angel remembered that Connor had said something about how the Dark One wanted his lover dead and nothing would stop it.

So he already knew he would indeed kill her quicker than a heart could beat to save and protect his lover. To save his world, his everything. His Wesley.

##

Sometime later.

Buffy slowly hung up the phone. She released her breath and shook her head before looking at her friends around her by the sofa.

"Well?" Xander asked impatiently.

"Angel said they are indeed coming down here he also said...He's now very much gay and with a permanent soul." Buffy told them in true disbelief. "He's also with Wesley. They are both doing gay stuff together. They're together."

Willow, Xander, Anya and Giles' jaws dropped. It was the 'He's with Wesley' that truly stunned them.

Buffy nodded in agreement, sharing their shock. "Yeah, but that's not all either. He's with an alternate Wesley who is a Neptee. This world's Wesley went with an alternate Angel, who came to this world with the soul purpose of having Wesley as his mate after his own Wesley died a tragic and heroic death. Then an evil law firm brought the Wes of the other world back from the dead, ripping Wes right out of heaven into this world. Into a world that was like nothing of his own." Buffy became quiet for a moment, remembering when she was ripped out of her own warm, happy peaceful heaven, back to her world. What would have happened if she had been ripped into a totally different one? She doubted she would have survived...

Giles slowly reached out and lightly touched her hand Buffy tried to smile gratefully back at him but if fell flat. It didn't at all reach her blue eyes.

"The nerve of some people! Ripping someone right out of heaven..." Xander stated angrily.

Everyone looked at him, a special look, each with lifted eyebrow, before he shrugged and looked sheepish.

"Unless, those wacky people are friends who think their friends are in hell, then it's okay to be ripping
people out of heaven all willy nilly...Oh fuck it! Never mind. Go on..." Xander then waved her on.

Buffy gave him a look, not really used to him cursing. "And now Angel and Wes are coming down to Sunnydale. Together. They are together...." She shook her head, then said in after thought, "Oh, and Cordelia is possessed by the Dark One."

Anya and Giles both became pale.

"Oh, dear Lord." Giles whispered.

"That is Giles speak for we're so screwed as well as this world..." Xander said suddenly.

Willow almost smiled at that. "And I thought we had things bad in Sunnydale."

"And it's just as bad in L.A." Buffy said softly. "I still honestly think ours is worse but I guess bad is still bad."

"True. But even in bad times love was found and that is so romantic." Willow stated with a sweet dreamy look.

"Yeah, even in bad times love was found. Ain't that something?" Buffy whispered, looking down at her cupped hands. Feeling more lonely than she ever had before.

There was no response from the others, each of them felt the same.

Alone.

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Part 67

Two to three hours later Wes, Angel and Connor arrived in Sunnydale.

"So...Does it look like your Sunnydale?" Connor asked Wesley while looking around. His mind filled with new memories of a past here. A life here. Just now they went past the house of James Depree. He could remember playing basketball in his driveway and used to play video games and James' mom made the best homemade lemonade...While he was here he'd have to stop by for a visit, maybe play a game with James, talk and have a tall icy glass of lemonade...

"In some ways, in others...Well, take for example the road we just past called Riverdale Road. We don't have a Riverdale Road, ours is Dale Drive. But the rest, looks like home. My former home."

"Doesn't that bother you, that it's 'former' and everything?" Connor asked curiously.

"At first, yes, a lot. But now...L.A. is home. Where your father is; is home. Gunn, Fred and you are family. Angel's my everything."

"Cool." Connor said softly, from the back seat. Not sure what else to say.

Angel took a moment to glance away from the road to give Wesley beside him a special 'you're my entire world too' look.

"So..Dad, will it be hard for you seeing Buffy? Are you worried about what she'll think about your new life choice? It used to matter what she thought."

"Not anymore," Angel stated honestly without any hesitation. "Buffy and I fight the good fight but we're on different paths. I'll always care for her but...I don't love her anymore. I realized that when she died. It shocked me that I had moved on and I wasn't as devastated as I thought I should have been. I'll always see her as a valued friend just not as a partner. Not as a lover, plus, now looking back on it...My God! She was only fifteen and Connor was...Was...Hell." Angel whispered the last part to himself as he realized full force of the new time line. The new memories.

Connor smirked. "Yeah, Dad, I was *thirteen*. You should have been arrested. Over two hundred years old with a thirteen old kid at your side. Who could see the wrong in that and even told you that a time or two! But did you listen? No! 'Son, trust me, I know what I'm doing.' Yeah, I knew what you were doing going through a vampire mid life crisis! Why you couldn't have pierced your ear and bought a shiny red sports car like other people instead of becoming a paedophile! At least now you're acting your age, for once. Playing smart with Wesley. Yeah, you're gay now but it makes you smarter and you're sense of style should have been a warning...Plus, never a fan of Buffy..."

"You never even meet--Never mind." For their memories said differently.

But Connor caught on to what his Father had meant. What he had been about to say. He managed a wan smile. "Everything's changed now. For the better. Or at least I hope it's for the better." He said softly as they pulled up to Buffy's house.

"It is indeed for the better, Connor. It's much better." Angel and Wes said simultaneously.

"Jinx! Better be careful doing that on the wackly Hellmouth!" Connor told them with a care free laugh.
He was the first to jump out of the car. Angel sat there for a moment, staring after his son. He then looked at Wes. He brought a shaking hand and lovingly stroked his cheek. "Thank you, Wes, thank you for giving me back my son. You have even given me life and hope. A reason. You've given me a life full of second chances that at one time I didn't believe in. You're my happiness and I thank you for that."

Wesley touched the hand that caressed his cheek. "You're my happiness too, Angel, you've always been my happiness."

Angel leaned over to brush a soft kiss across Wes's mouth. They both jumped as a loud bang was heard, as a fist hit the hood of the black car. The top was down on the convertible and Angel looked forward to yell, "Spike! Don't you dare dent my car!"

Spike smirked and hopped up to sit on the side of the smooth hood.

"And don't sit on my car either!" Angel growled as both him and Wes stepped out of the car in question.

"So it's true then..." Spike was saying as Angel cut in with the words...

"That you're an idiot? Yeah."

"No, that you're a bigger poof than I thought...A big fat gay poof...With silly hair."

"I've found pure happiness and fulfilment in loving a wonderful man, if that is what you are asking then yes...And I'm *not* fat!"

Spike lifted a scarred eyebrow.

"Get the hell off my car before I give you a fat lip!" Angel growled moving away from him to move towards Wesley, who was watching all this from the other side.

"Hi, Spike." Wesley said softly, almost shyly, with a sad, lost look in his eyes.

Spike noticed the look as he slowly got off of Angel's hood, not because he had been told too, but because he was starting to find the game boring. He nodded. "Percy..."

"Wes..." Angel asked in concern as those blue eyes watered slightly.

Wesley shook his head. "Allergies...You know, just simple allergies...Sodding hell this will be harder then I thought..."

Angel lightly rubbed soothing circles at the low bottom of Wes's back. "It'll be okay, love, so the other Spike was a good friend?"

He gave a sharp nod and a slightly shaky laugh. "Yes, he'd always try to get me into mischief so Angel could get me out of it...He was funny and so loyal to those he felt were his family...I was real lucky that he considered me family. He was a good outstanding fellow. I respected him and cared deeply for him."

"You must have to die for him and Xander." Angel stated before giving a warning look to Spike who had been so obviously listening in, a look that said you better be nice to my emotional wonderful Wesley.

Spike gave him a quick 'Fuck, off' sign already deciding he'd be nice to the former Watcher. "Sooo, Percy, is the other me as good looking?"
Wesley looked surprised for a moment before smiling wide and saying dryly. "You're both sex gods and know it."

Spike smirked, reaching out and squeezing the human's shoulder. "I like you."

Angel reached over and purposely removed Spike's hand. "You can like all you want, Spike, but you don't need to touch."

The other vampire rolled his eyes.

"Angel!" Wes yelled offended, drawing their attention back to him, fire slowly flaring in his eyes.

Angel simply shrugged. "What?"

Wes tilted his chin, giving him a pointed look prompting Angel to repeat himself. "What? I was just saying..."

"Just!! *Just* what? You're just an idiot, I know that already! Or is the 'just' something else all together? Let me tell you, Angel, nothing is ever as simple as 'just!'"

Angel sighed, shaking his head. "You know I didn't understand a single word you just said, though I think you may have just called me an idiot."

"I did you lackwit!"

"This is better than Passions!" Spike said gleefully. "Call him an idiot and lackwit again! Though this time say something about his stupid hair!"

"Shut up, Spike." Angel told him before turning his attention back to his lover. "Why are you mad?" He questioned.

"Spike was simply giving me a friendly touch, you didn't have to act...Act all..."

"Barbaric? Like a barbaric idiot with silly hair?" Spike slipped in innocently eyeing them both as if he was a little boy and they were giant cookie jars full of goodies.

"Exactly! Thank you, Spike. You're barbaric and idiotic!"

"Barbaric and idiotic?" Angel said stunned. "I'm not, I just don't think he needs to be touching *my* lover in any way not even in a friendly gesture. Plus, you've told me that in your world he's gay and I lost one Wes, damn sure not going to lose you too!"

"WOT!! Sodding hell, NO! I'm not! I'm not gay! I'm no poof like you!" With that Spike lost interest in their talk and turned around and stomped towards Buffy's house.

Anger faded from Wesley as he smiled in silent laughter at Spike's reaction to being gay. Angel smiled back and held out his hand. "So, Wes, are you ready?"

Wesley sighed. Taking Angel's hand. "As ready as I'll ever be." He stated truthfully as they slowly walked side by side.

As they got closer to the porch they could see the Slayer holding the door silently opened, this being her own way of letting Angel know things were okay. She accepted the fact about them two, now together. The
dark vampire gave her a thankful smile as he got closer. Buffy didn't smile back but she did nod. Her blue eyes kind, yet tired and weary. There was understanding in those blue depths. There was something powerful to that moment. Seeing a hardened battle-worn Warrior still respecting the power of love. Even if it wasn't for her.

Angel's respect for her grew.

Wesley and Angel walked inside her home after Wes greeted her and shook her hand.

After they went by her, she stared off after them for a long quiet moment. Still holding the door open wide. Buffy then sluggishly walked into her home, letting the door shut loudly behind her.

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Wesley had met with the Scooby gang feeling pangs when Xander said 'hi' yet didn't interact in the way that he once knew. It hurt in a way, Xander was distant yet he still tried to crack a joke or two.

Wesley also talked to Giles and got the strong feeling Giles and the other Wesley had never been close dear friends. He kept comparing him to the Rupert Giles he knew. This Rupert didn't have the carefree always ready smile that would grace his face, or the laughing green eyes full of joy instead of worry. The man didn't have tons of pictures or stories about what his two little twin boys that always kept him and Jenny's hands full. Nor did this Giles have her always at his side. A part of him wanted to slap Angel when he remembered why she wasn't there, why Giles wasn't in England with his boys and wife. He didn't have them. Angel as Angelus had killed Jenny years ago. He wondered if it would create a big scene if he did simply slap his lover silly right in front of everyone...

Meeting Buffy and Dawn was in every way like meeting total strangers. It was hard to picture that this small woman named Buffy being the Chosen One, but then in his world it had probably been hard to picture the small cute Willow as the powerful determined Slayer that he loved and respected...

Then seeing Willow, this world's Willow, nearly brought him to his knees. At one point he had to excuse himself and sneak off to the bathroom to cry throwing out any other guests of Buffy's that just happened to be in there at the time. Some little nerd with a camera...Why keep a camera in the bathroom, sick little pervert...

When he came back he found that Angel had told them that things in Wes' old reality had been real different and it was a somewhat difficult for him. Angel explained about the other Willow. How she had been the Slayer and how she had died saving the world...

Angel held out his hand and Wesley carefully sat upon his lap, holding his lover's hand.

"I'm sorry that I got so emotional there..." Wesley whispered ashamed he broke the infamous 'stiff upper lip' rule.

"It's okay." Willow said kindly. "We understand. So in your world I was the Slayer, huh?"

"Yes."

"Cool!" She said excitedly. "I bet I really kicked ass, didn't I?"

"Well...yes." Wesley said truthfully with a smile. "My own Willow had been excited about life and learning new things all the time. She also had a curious stick a mile wide. Also everyone tried to keep her away from caffeine, though somehow that always failed. She had been amazing and she had done a lot of amazing things. Her life hadn't been perfect, her life had been down right painful at times, nor had she been perfect. But she had proved to be a survivor. It had been who she was on the inside that made her a hero, a true friend. She once even killed a Feter demon with only a flaming tree branch... She burned her hands so badly it took months to heal even with Slayer healing." He remembered then his smile faded. "She wasn't perfect but she came pretty damn close to it."

"So Willow was a Slayer, huh? Was I there?" Xander asked.

Wesley's smile came back full force. "Yes. He's a very wonderful
talented young man. He's a powerful mage, male Wicca. A Balancer and a loyal Guardian to the Hellmouth. He has power in both Dark and White magick's. Knows all rituals and crafts of the supernatural. He's a feared warrior and a beloved friend. He's a good man, I miss him greatly."

"Wow, all of that is really true?"

Wesley nodded. "Yes. Why lie?"

"Do you know me of in your world?" Anya quickly said leaning forward in her chair.

"No, sorry, never met you."

"Maybe in your world I never became a vengeance demon, or the other me is still a vengeance demon. And if that is true, I'm surprised that the other me never came to Sunnydale. Didn't Xander cheat and break some poor girl's heart? Or leave a girl devastated at the altar?"

"Anya!" Xander snapped at her. "I said I was sorry!"

She shrugged. "What? I'm just asking. Once a jerk always a jerk. I know it doesn't matter but I am curious."

"There was never a girl in Xander's past or future." Wes stated mysteriously and carefully.

"He's a eunuch, then? You know I suspected that the first time we had sex."

"An!"

"Xander is mated, bonded to a powerful vampire who he's faithful too and deeply in love with."

"What I'm with a vampire!?!" Xander shouted in shock.

"Oh, bloody hell!" Spike yelled even louder then Xander, putting two plus two together. "Don't you dare say the whelp and your world's Spike are a couple!"

Wes shrugged casually not really seeing the big deal. "Well, yes."

"No!" Xander said in outrage. Truly horrified.

"Xander's gay?" Anya said carefully before nodding slowly. "That explains so much."

"WHAT!?!" Xander turned censuring brown eyes her way. She simply gave him a cute grin having the audacity to look amused.

"What about Buffy?" Dawn cut in. "Do you know her?"

"I never met her, but just because I never met her doesn't mean she doesn't exist. She's just not and never was a Slayer. She could just be living a normal life, never knowing about the supernatural."

Buffy lifted an eyebrow. "That might be possible but can we get to some important issues? We need to know what you know about The First. How do we fight it, destroy it, Wesley?"

Wes sighed. "How am I supposed to know this information?"

"Giles and Anya went and talked to the Beljoxa's Eye, it said that only the Neptee would know the secret to
destroying the First." Buffy told him calmly. Looking at him with hopeful blue eyes.

"But I don't know any secret!" Wesley answered in confusion. "I'm sorry but if I was told the secret to killing The First, then I must have kept it a secret even from myself!"

"Maybe you weren't told it." Connor spoke up quietly from his corner, where he had been listening to everyone. "But you still know it."

"But...I'm sorry but I honestly don't know..." Wes said not all that certain what to say. He just knew he didn't know the secret to destroying The First. If he did you would think someone would have told him about it.

"Wes?" Angel said gently holding him lovingly. "Just think for a moment...Is there a First in your world?"

"What? Goddess no! There isn't a First in my former world...I mean there are stories about the first time around about The First existing but then the great goddess completely destroyed...Oh."

Everyone stared at him as Wesley realized exactly what he was saying. "Oh! The goddess Hero destroyed The First centuries ago, before time restarted once more."

"That's the secret?" Xander said expectantly. "Some other world's goddess destroys the First? So how did she do it?"

"That doesn't matter." Angel said calmly. "What matters is the goddess Hero."

"Angel..." Wes said nervously.

"No, listen Wes, our first night together...Remember what happened afterwards? You ran and used powerful magicks to keep everyone out and the only way Gunn and I got in was praying to the goddess Hero. The goddess of your world and no matter what world you are in she will always be *your* goddess."

"But Angel..."

"Pray to her, Wes, ask for her help. Ask her to come and destroy The First."

"Are you sure that's a good idea, mate?" An Irish voice had everyone looking to the doorway of the living room. Many in the group saw only a stranger, though Spike remembered him a little bit, but Wes and Angel grew pale.

The First as Doyle smirked. "Got a drink to share with an old friend?"

Angel removed Wes from his lap. Standing up. "You're not a friend." The vampire said angrily and he felt a sharp pang at seeing The First wear the face of a valued friend. A friend he missed greatly. A true hero. A champion. The First had no damn right.

"I'm hurt and here I once saved your arse."

"Doyle saved me, not you, you're nothing but air. Evil air."

"No one has ever called me 'evil air' before." The First laughed evilly, still in Doyle's form. Then it stopped as it realized that Wesley was actually praying...

"Oh, great divine goddess Hero, I seek your help--"
"I wouldn't do that. " The First protested.

"I ask you, Oh, great protector, always my goddess to come help me. Come to this world to destroy The First once more."

"Oh, come on! Do you really think the goddess doesn't have better things to do than come to this world and destroy me? Surely you aren't that dumb?! Now stop that ridiculous praying...

"Help goddess, I beg! Come kick this evil Pillock's sorry arse!"

The First at that moment tried to blink out, deciding it would be wise to leave but to its surprise found itself stuck in thin air. Unable to leave. Right then a brilliant and radiant light flashed. A sound almost inhuman was heard. Wind rose to a frantic pitch, sharp and violent. Making the people in the room try to huddle together. Lighting flashed a vicious hiss then a sharp painful cry from The First.

Then stunned silence. The gang looked around and saw a thick black cloud form and slowly depart leaving four men standing guard in the room. An ugly vapor screamed trying to escape.

"By our own blood and by the power of our great goddess be no more!" As a powerful Wicca thrust his bloody hand into the black sinister vapor.

The First screamed once more. A death cry was heard. The one who spoke the words smiled, feeling the power mix with his own. Becoming a part of him. "T'is done, I give this power to the great goddess Hero!"

He clapped his hands and the wind stopped as did the lights and lightning. He smiled and looked over to Wesley. "Hope you don't mind that the goddess sent us."

"Xander..." Wesley whispered in awe and happiness, tears in his eyes.

Xander, the powerful magick Warrior gathered him quickly into his strong arms. Hugging him close.

Angel watched in stunned wonder, seeing another Xander, Spike, Wes and the other Angel. The Angel who had taken this world's Wes...

The other vampire smiled at him as if they were old pals.

But this world's Angel suddenly snarled, going into game face, before he jumped and attacked him.

(End of Part 68)
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Part 69

Chaos erupted.

"What the hell!" Buffy shouted. "Damn it, I just had that coffee table fixed, now Xander's going to have to fix it all over again!"

"Doubt I can, it now looks like splitters, but hey, look on the bright side I think I can fix the big punch hole one of the Angel's has just left in your wall." Xander was quick to point out.

Still the two Angels fought.

"Why in the hell are you attacking me!" One Angel shouted, moving to the side to miss a stunning blow.

"He's mine! You already have one, you can't have both!" This world's Angel said menacingly, hot fury burning in his dark eyes as he finally punched the other Angel hard in the face.

"Angel!" Both Wes' called simultaneously.

Naturally the other vampire flipped him and slammed his foot on top of Angel's chest. "You idiot! I'm here to *help* him, not take him!"

"He's mine!" He snarled up at him, grabbing at the foot, trying to think of a way to break it.

"Yeah, I know." The other Angel said calmly.

The vampire beneath the heavy foot stilled. Transfixed by the emotion in those brown eyes.

"He's yours now." The other Angel continued gently. "As my beloved is mine. I will always love both but I can only have one. Do you love him?"

"Of course I do!" Angel said quickly. Honestly. "Why else do you think I'd fight you?"

The other Angel nodded removing his foot and holding out a hand to help him up. They both looked over at the two Wesleys. One rugged and wearing no glasses and the other clean shaven and glasses upon his nose. Oddly enough both wore blue jeans and a dark blue cotton shirt with a suede jacket.

The other Angel slowly walked over taking the hand of his bonded mate, he studied the other Wesley.

"Hi." He said almost shyly before saying in a raw emotion filled voice. "I missed you..."

Wesley nodded before whispering. "I know. I'm sorry...For you know, dying on you, guess you had been right."

"No! I...I learned something from my mate. I should have let you grow. I should have let you fight the good fight. I shouldn't have been such a jackass. He...He lets you fight beside him doesn't he?" Angel gave his other self a side glance.

"Yes. It's odd, but I like that he does."

"I bet you're a good Warrior." He said giving him a telling look. Apologizing for the past.
"He says I am." Wesley whispered with a nod, then he spoke hesitantly, "Angel...I..."

"I know." He gave a weak smile before repeating, "I know that you loved me and you love him."

Wes nodded. "And I understand why you came to this world for this world's Wesley...This isn't a pleasant world but it is slowly getting better. You love your mate and I'm happy for you..."

"Yeah." He said in response. "I want you happy. Are you? Happy?"

"Yes." Wes then looked at the rugged image of himself. "Angel's soul is now permanent. I gave it to him." He took a deep breath looking over at his first real love, hoping he'd understand. "I'm a Neptee. I told this world's Angel things I never shared with you...Not because I didn't love you, I did. I was just ashamed and angry for being something I didn't want to be. Looking back I should have told you and I'm sorry for never saying anything. But know you gave me something I didn't think I deserved and I'll always love you for that. Loving the *real* me. Accepting me, even if at the time I wasn't accepting myself..."

Angel reached out and cupped the Watcher's cheek. "I don't doubt that. I've never doubted your love for me, never. I do wish you had told me...But that is in the past."

"It may be in the past but I am sorry for it. I wish I had told you about my being a Neptee and so much more..." He whispered back.

A throat clearing itself purposely was heard beside them as this world's Angel took Wesley's hand. The vampire glared at he hand that touched his lover's cheek. Eyes possessive, something fierce and primitive. The other vampire sluggishly took his hand away with a smile.

"Gee, someone is possessive."

"This Wes is mine now. You already have a mate." He pointed to the other Wesley before smiling and saying, "By the way, hi, it's so good to see you again."

"Oh, so now you notice me." Angel's bonded mate said with an amused smile.

Wesley looked at Angel before saying, "You are such a lackwit."

"You call me that all the time." He looked over to the other Angel and Wes. "Strangely enough each time he says it, I find it endearing. I think it's his way of calling me honey or sweetie."

"Honey? Sweetie? You think my calling you 'lackwit' is the same as if I called you 'honey'?" Wesley asked as he shook his head in wonder. "You're more than a lackwit."

"He's a moron. A sweet moron but still a moron." Wes, Angel's mate, spoke up. He then held out his hand. "Hello, it's a pleasure to finally meet."

"Yes, it is at that." Wesley smiled and shook the offered hand. "Never met another me before. Must say it doesn't happen very often."

"No, must say it doesn't." He agreed.

They then fell into silence for a moment, measuring their options of what else to say. With the tip of Wesley's tongue nervously moistened his full lower lip he looked around before saying, "I'm surprised the
Goddess Hero came though...let you all come instead of...Her just destroying the First with a big poof or something...

"The goddess will always come through for you." Angel's bonded mate, Wes said mysteriously with a serious look upon his face. "She is even here in this very room." He told them looking off into an empty corner. There was no one there.

"She's hiding." The other Angel told them. "Not 'cos she's ashamed or anything but 'cos she just doesn't want to be seen. Xander, Spike, Wes and me, we see her 'cos she allows us to see her. After all this time she has allowed us to see and Wesley...She...She is so very beautiful, as I always knew she would be. She wants me to tell you something. She cares. She always has. She wept at your death. She wept with you when your Mother died and she raged when...She won't tell me what this means but she says you'll understand...A certain old Professor got punished by her."

"Good." The other souled vampire said understanding instantly what he and the goddess spoke of. "Hope she ripped a certain something clean off--"

"Angel, please!" Wes looked into the corner, willing himself to see. Still he saw nothing. "Is she really here? The great goddess herself?" He whispered, in stunned wonder.

Both alternate Angel and other Wes nodded.

With that the Watcher spoke, still looking into the corner. "Thank you, goddess Hero, for everything."

Meanwhile...

The other world's Xander was holding tearfully to this world's Willow. They even shared some words before Anya could talk to Spike and Xander.

"So you two are really gay? Really a couple?" Anya asked curiously.

The bonded Xander and Spike shared a loving look before focusing back on her. "Yes, we are." They both said with pride. The two men held each other's hand. Xander's thumb feathered lightly over the outside of Spike's pale hand which squeezed gently in response.

"How long have you been together?"

"For many years actually, the moment I saw me wonderful pet, I knew Xan was made for me and me alone." Spike told Anya honestly. "I told him he was mine and then wooed him with chocolate, lots of sex and more chocolate. Then one day my silly bit of a Sire tried to take him away from me and I killed her. Knew then I had to have him as my bonded mate. I needed him for eternity. I wanted to share everything even his soul. I seriously don't count the days or the years any more. No reason to. All I need to know is that he's always by my side. Forever mine and I'm forever his."

Xander blushed and gave a goofy smile. "My William the great outstanding poet. He's wonderful, how could I not fall in love with him. My mighty Spike. I knew my heart would always be his before he ever asked for it. But I really knew, when he came and to 'woo' me covered in nothing but chocolate syrup. Even his yummy bits. I couldn't resist him."

Anya smiled a romantic soft look upon her face. She sighed happily at the mental hot sexy picture that was inside her head. "That is so romantic and wonderful! I bet the sex is fantastic..."

"Duh!" Xander said loudly.
"Hell, yeah, better than good, love!" Spike smirked.

"In this world I was Xander's girlfriend. We were going to get married but he dumped me at the alter. I...I don't really hurt anymore. Though at the time it hurt so much. I felt he was my only real friend ya know?" Anya told them. She swallowed hard. "I...I think we're still friends. Sometimes I'm not even sure of that anymore. We can be in the same room and...And I look at him and think I miss Xander. And he's right there in front of me! I miss my best friend. My Xander. I miss the great sex, the sex was out of this world..." Anya drifted off with a faraway look. "Though I must say...I can picture him gay. I mean he likes doing certain stuff. Ass stuff. And he likes his own ass played with."

"Anya!" This world's Xander shouted mortified showing that he had been listening in. Willow giggled loudly.

"Xander likes ass stuff..." The redhead giggled once more.

"Well you do!" Anya snorted at him and shrugged uncaring at him. "You enjoy things that involve the ass! Rimming. A oiled finger..."

"Ass stuff is of the good!" The alternate Xan said with a loud laugh. Taking a liking to this honest girl before him.

Anya looked at the bonded mates with longing and with a lustful eye. Before saying hopefully. "Can we go some where and let me simply 'watch' the two of you..."

Xander and Spike shared a look. Lifted eyebrow before they shrugged. "Sure. Why not?"

"No!" Xander of this world said quickly putting his hands on Anya's shoulders. "You can't 'watch' them! Watching would be wrong! Is of the wrong!"

Anya looked honestly confused. "How is it wrong? It's natural, like those porn tapes you have and besides I'm not joining them simply watching them...As they do it...Hopefully a lot. I don't see why not."

"Why not? WHY NOT?!! Because you don't that's why! Plus they are both men!"

"That's what makes it so damn hot." Anya said starting to pant and drool a little.

The other world's Spike tsked. "Don't fret now, sweets." He reached into a pocket of his long leather jacket and pulled out a black video and handed the tape to Anya as if she was a princess.

Her eyes got big and she started to breath heavily with excitement. "Is this what I hope this is? Oh, please let it be a tape full of hot sexy vampire and Xander loving..."

Spike nodded and winked with an evil smirk.

She squealed and threw her arms around Spike telling Xander's beloved bonded mate just how wonderful and fantastic he was. Both Xanders looked stunned. The one that belonged to a mischievous and loving vampire was grabbing the vampire in question after the hug to say, "You brought *the* tape we did yesterday here into *this* reality?! Are you nuts! Have you been smoking something I should know about? And why didn't you share!"
"Think Beloved! Remember what night it is? It's our movie night with the gang, I was planning to surprise everyone by slipping it in while everyone was about to doze off in boredom. Really wake 'em up! Get their heart started, that kinda thing."

Xander looked at him with a dropped jaw until he started to laugh with joy. "Oh, you are so evil! Man, I can just picture their faces, it would have been priceless!"

"Yeah." Spike laughed with him. "Why I begged for us to make the tape...But don't worry I have copies. We can do it next movie night or...save them and give them as Christmas gifts!"

"Oh! Lets! You come up with some brilliant ideas!" Xander agreed his brown eyes dancing with glee.

At that moment the unexpected happened. A loud roaring was heard as the roof literally was ripped off of the house.

"My house!" Buffy screamed with intense murderous rage. "What the hell?! Don't you know houses are expensive?! They aren't cheep! And how long will it take Xander to build me a new second floor and roof! And fix the hole in the wall as well? You damn..."

Then the walls went crashing down, they simply crumbled at the sides.

"Okay, *now* I'm *really* pissed." Buffy growled.

"Gee, look at the little pigs in the house made of nothing but sticks..." A voice snarled out in the lawn. Watching them with cold harsh eyes. Something glowed in the Dark One's right hand. The one wearing Cordelia's face smirked with pure wickedness. "Surprise!"

She threw the ball down in front of the champions. Who stood frozen unable to move no matter how hard they tried. "Mm, I wonder, what should I do with all these stupid little piggies...Maybe, a barbecue perhaps?" A huge fire ball was formed.

"Or maybe *not*!" A familiar voice was heard as the powerful goddess Hero dropped her invisible shield and let everyone see her, the real her. She held out her hand and the fire ball turned into a huge ball of snow, dropping to the ground, already starting to melt.

She knew the humans of this world were shocked. She could feel it as well as their horror. Their fear. It brought back so many unwanted memories, she had to struggle to stay focused on the Dark One not the past. When all she wanted to do was hide or beg forgiveness...

But none of those things she did, she had to do what was needed. The Dark One had no right to do what it was doing. Or what it hoped to do.

The Dark One studied the goddess with knowing ancient eyes. Unafraid as it took some steps forward, the goddess did the same.

"You!" Hero snarled with hate. "Leave here, leave these people alone, leave this world and go back to hell where you came from! These people, this world is under *my* protection!"

The Dark One tilted its head. "Can't have both worlds goddess. Don't you have something else you should be doing...Like killing everything you 'claim' to love?"

Hero for a moment looked stricken, as if she had taken a mighty hit to the stomach. Before her expression
The Dark One smirked. "Really? Then why are you always afraid that any second you'll destroy once more? Isn't that one of the reasons you let Angel of your world come here for the Wesley of this world? You needed him to make sure you didn't destroy everything once more. You've always known the truth, goddess, about yourself. As I know the truth about myself. You and I, we're monsters and monsters *never* change."

"You bitch!" The Dark One hissed, raising its arms, locking them with Hero's. They kicked at each other's legs until they both fell and started to roll hard upon the ground. It was a good old fashioned cat fight. Winner take all.

Hero threw the dagger over her shoulder. "But Wesley is right that really isn't mercy. She deserves a second chance at life. A chance to live. You tricked her...You stole from her. You don't deserve mercy but *she* does."

The light got brighter. Almost painful to look into. Smoke rose. The Dark One screamed in bloody terror.

The light flashed out. Silence was heard. Deep eerie silence. The gang suddenly found themselves free from what ever was holding their body prisoner. And speaking of a prisoner held captive...

Cordelia gasped, turning away and vomiting right on the curb. She couldn't stop the tears as they fell down.
her face. When she had nothing more to throw up, she wrapped her arms around herself and sobbed. Her whole body shaking violently. "Oh God...Please...God..."

"Cordelia..." Angel said gently, kindly, moving towards her.

"I'm sorry...So sorry...I'm filth...I'm...I'm so dirty...I'm sorry...So sorry. Please forgive me. Please."

"You were possessed. It wasn't you, it was The Dark One."

She looked at him tears still running down her cheeks. "I'm so sorry. Angel, so sorry." She repeated as if she hadn't understood a word he had spoken.

He tenderly wrapped her into his arms. She held on to him tightly, begging for forgiveness. Angel shushed her. His Seer and his friend was back and he'd help her. He'd do what ever he could to make her whole once more. He looked over and saw understanding in Wes' eyes. He knew this girl was family. The real Cordelia would always be family and of course Wesley would be there at her side as well. Helping. Caring.

The other Angel, Wes, Xander and Spike were left with a mixture of disbelief, grief and pride. Their great wonderful goddess was no more. Wes hung his head. His friend, his lovely Hero was dead. Gone. She had actually given her life willingly so that another Cordelia could live. Could have true mercy.

A majestic light suddenly appeared before them. Beautiful. Bright. Full of various colors. It was a thing of intense beauty. When the light went away there lay a naked Hero. She slowly lifted her head to look around not realizing yet that she was naked. Wesley noticed something was very different about her and told his bonded mate to give him his jacket to give to Hero. Rushing over he wrapped the long black leather coat around her. She trembled.

"Wes?" She whispered. "I feel...Shouldn't I be dead? I died I know I did, yet I feel alive. I feel different, Wesley very different..."

"You are." Wesley said with a loving smile. He touched her cheek. "Don't you see, you did it. You finally got it."

Hero looked at him as a confused child would wanting to understand yet not. "Got what?"

The Angel from her world, Wesley's bonded mate answered with awe. Catching on quickly. "Redemption. You got your redemption."

"You're human, Cordelia, totally human." Wes answered happy for her. Proud to call her friend. "You got your Shanshu."

"But...I...I'm...I don't deserve...I've killed and I've done so many bad things and--and..."

"You learned to give life instead of death." Wesley told her, wiping away a tear that fell down her warm soft cheek.

Hero closed her eyes and searched within herself. The power that was always there, wasn't there anymore. She was no longer a goddess, she was simply a human given a second chance to live her life as she pleased. She opened her eyes and smiled giving a joyful laugh. Hugging Wes tightly to her.

"I got it! I got it, Wes! I've been redeemed, I've GOT IT!"

"Yeah, she does at that, she also has nice tits too!" Both Spike's said at he same time, giving each other a
look, then smiling for damn they were really good looking, would make any sex god envious.

The Powerful Xander looked around his friends. "Good thing I have the power to send us all home. Lets say our goodbyes and wish everyone well...Maybe give this Buffy chick her house back, I know a simple spell that could rebuild her house in less then seven minutes...and...So, goddess, um I mean...Hero, now that you are human and have a whole new life ahead of yourself...I was wondering if you would like to still be a part of the good fight. There is always an opening at Guardian Investigations." Xander told her with a sweet smile and kind eyes.

"Really?" Hero asked hopefully. Gratefulness in her voice. "Thank you, Xander, you've always been a good wonderful man."

Xander blushed, looking away. "Yeah, well, don't be thanking me yet. You're first job will be cleaning the bathrooms..."

Hero lifted an elegant cool eyebrow.

He swallowed hard before continuing. "Or maybe not! Cleaning bathrooms is not a good job for a goddess! Even for a former goddess!"

Hero smiled, happy to be alive and totally, completely human. Thankful that there was such a thing as second chances and even more thankful for a beautiful thing called redemption. And it was indeed beautiful.

(End of part 69)
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Part 70

Wesley studied what he had written, before with great care he pressed the pen down once more. Already thinking about what he would reveal next...

Then he wrote...

'The others are now home. Hero, Xander, Spike, Angel and the other me. It was so good seeing them and it's nice knowing that they will continue on as they always have. They will live. Survive. Though before they left Xander did indeed do a magic spell to restore Buffy's house and to her great delight added a second bathroom. For a moment I was sure she was going to worship him or something. Anyway, my former gang has left. I wish them love and happiness. I wish them life. I dare hope for a long, long time.

I also must write that before they left, the two Angel's talked. Mostly to threaten each other. Trying to show that they both were big manly vampires. They told each other many times to take care of me and the other Wes. Then there was an odd moment when they both told each other that they hated the other. Yet the words were spoken without any heat and a look that said they were now and would always be friends. It was like a special understanding had been formed at that moment.

I found that to be odd, but then life is indeed odd in itself. Even when it throws you punches, even when it keeps you on your toes. Life will never be heavenly. I swear one has to have a bit of hell to understand those moments when you touch heaven and be thankful of the fact you touched it for a second. Like when Angel touches me. When he loves me, when I touch him. Those moments are pure heaven and I'm thankful for it.

I know things will not always be perfect or happy. One must remember there will always be sharp thorns upon beautiful roses. Which I'm sure I'll always be certain to remind myself with Angel. My wonderful beloved.

It's amazing really. Having loved one Angel and then falling even more so in love with another slightly different Angel and I do indeed love him with all my heart.

So many people in this world and my former world have been given second chances. I was literally ripped out of heaven to get mine. Should send sodding Wolfram and Hart flowers. Just kidding of course. Dry humor.

But I am being honest when I say that I'm happy and blessed that I get this chance. I also realize how important this chance was for this world's Angel. My beloved Angel needed me, before he even realized it.

He has told me. Showed me how much he values the fact that he was given a second chance at loving me. For being able to truly be in love and not pretend. To actually be at peace with himself.

Second chances are strange and unique. Just look at Cordelia and the great goddess Hero. A woman who was possessed and another who found life once more. Found redemption... In fact, both got second chances. Maybe it's because I'm overwhelmed that makes me become a man of countless words. Though I swear I'm trying to find the words to express the need I have to explain just how I feel.

And how thankful I am. Second chances are really something special. Something wonderful and so unexpected, especially when it's a second chance at love. Ever notice how everyone is obsessed in some way with the need to be loved or accepted?
Which is fine as long as they get that and if the first time they try and fail at love and it takes an unexpected turn, there always seems to be that chance another hopeful chance at finding what one needs.

Love!

Wesley set down the pen and reread what he wrote.

"Wes..." Angel leaned over from behind him and kissed the side of his throat to nibble gently at an earlobe before whispering voice full of loving need and promised passion. "Come to bed, it's late."

Wesley moaned as he slid off his glasses setting them upon the open pages of his journal. He leaned into Angel's touch happily. Willingly. He looked at him with mischievous lustful eyes with a slight pout. "But, Angel, I'm not at all sleepy."

Angel smiled kissing Wesley's lips at the same time helping him out of his chair. Forever the gentleman. "Imagine that, I'm not sleepy either!"

"Whatever shall we do in that big bed if it's not to sleep?" Wes asked innocently. Taking Angel's hand within his as they lead each other to their bedroom.

Angel laughed joyfully. "Oh, my love, just you wait and see...You'll love it, we both will!"

"Oh, I'm sure we will. But first show me exactly what you have planned..."

Angel wrapped his arms around Wesley and gave him a deep passionate overwhelming kiss.

And in another alternate world another Angel and Wesley were doing the exact same thing.

Loving each other. Being obsessed with the need they had for one another and for some reason that made things perfect enough, right enough, for them.

(The End)

Hope you liked!

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