

BARNS ARE RED BECAUSE ALL STARS DIE

Written by

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INT. XANDER'S CAR - MORNING

XANDER DAVIS, 37, beard stubble and hair that hasn't seen a comb, drives his car. He glances at the file folder and half empty whiskey bottle on the passenger seat.

LAWYER (V.O.)

It's all yours, Mister Davis. I would have rather done this at the funeral, but since you opted not to attend, I am sending you the paperwork and key to your parents' land and home.

EXT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Xander stands in front of the door. He reaches inside the file folder and pulls out a key.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - ENTRY WAY - MOMENTS LATER

Xander stands in the entry way. He closes the door behind him, then takes a step forward, taking in the room.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Leather furniture, several full bookcases, and fine works of art adorn the room. An impressive chandelier hangs from the vaulted ceiling.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - ENTRY WAY - CONTINUOUS

Xander takes a deep breath and a swig from a flask, then walks into the room.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Xander holds a landline phone receiver to his ear in an immaculate kitchen. Every inch is clean and designed as if it could be used to facilitate large banquets.

XANDER

It's archaic, I know. My cell is useless out here.

(beat)

I'll get it to you before the deadline.

Xander pours whiskey over ice cubes in a highball glass. He takes a long sip.

XANDER (CONT'D)
What's that? It's water. It's my
fifth water. It keeps the demon at
bay.
(beat)
Screw you, Brent. Goodbye.

Xander hangs up the receiver.

XANDER (CONT'D)
Sorry for your loss. What an
asshole.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - OFFICE - NIGHT

A door opens into the dark office. Xander stands in the doorway. He flips a switch on the wall. The room stays dark.

XANDER
Damn.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - UTILITY CLOSET - NIGHT

Xander looks over an electric breaker box.

XANDER
I'm sure it's one of these.

Xander flips random breakers. Xander stops, then perks his head up, listening. He steps to another box mounted on the wall. He opens the box, revealing a single breaker.

XANDER (CONT'D)
Probably not a good idea.

Xander flips the single breaker twice. A HUM of electricity fills the room. Xander smiles. A slight flash of red shines in his eyes.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - OFFICE - NIGHT

Xander sits at the desk, typing on his laptop. He sips from a glass of whiskey.

A word document with a Seattle Newspaper logo in the header fills the screen. Xander types: "Seattle Thunderbirds Look to Make Playoff Run."

Xander takes another sip.

XANDER
That's some damn fine writing,
Xander.

Xander reaches for a liquor bottle, fumbling and knocking it over. The remainder of the alcohol spills onto the desk and drips onto the carpet.

XANDER (CONT'D)
Oops. Out of writing juice.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Xander steps into the hallway. He glances over the banister that looks down onto the living room. A WOMAN, 20's, naked and bloody, runs into the room, screaming.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Xander looks at the empty bottle in his hand, then back down to the living room. The room is empty. Xander walks down the steps into the living room. He nervously looks around.

XANDER
Hello?

A SCRAPING SOUND draws his attention to the corner. The girl huddles in the corner. She burrows her face between her knees and hugs herself into a small ball.

XANDER (CONT'D)
Are you okay, miss?

The woman looks up, then hides her face again. Xander puts his bottle down on an end table, then grabs a blanket from the couch. He approaches the woman.

XANDER (CONT'D)
Look, this really isn't my skill set. Take this, and I'm going to call for help.

Xander holds the blanket out to her. She recedes further into the corner. Xander places the blanket over her, then steps back. The woman sits still, completely covered by the blanket.

XANDER (CONT'D)
Just stay there I guess.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Xander picks up the phone receiver, hits the switchhook a few times, then slams the receiver down on the base. He pulls his phone from his pocket, looks at the screen, then shoves it back in his pocket.

XANDER

Great.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Xander walks through the living room, then pauses a few steps away from the girl under the blanket.

XANDER

Look, I totally get you being scared, but I'm going to need some help from you. The phones are dead. Can we start with a name?

The woman pulls the blanket from her head, then stares for a moment at Xander.

WOMAN

Alexis.

XANDER

All right, Alexis. Nice to meet you. My name is Xander. I'm going to need to get you to the hospital, but I've made some bad choices tonight. Can you drive?

Alexis shakes her head.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Maybe I can get us to the top of the hill and get some cell reception. Are you hurt?

ALEXIS

I don't think so.

XANDER

Whose blood is that?

Alexis shrugs.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Awesome. Where did you come from anyway?

Alexis points toward the kitchen.

XANDER (CONT'D)
The kitchen?

Alexis shakes her head.

ALEXIS
The wall.

Alexis stands, then approaches the wall. She pushes against the wall, causing a hidden door to slide open.

XANDER
So there are absolutely zero things
that are normal about you and
tonight then? I really don't know
how to prioritize here.

Alexis shivers.

XANDER (CONT'D)
Right. Let's get you a shower and
some clothes.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Xander sits on the bed. Steam rolls through the cracked bathroom door as the shower FLOWS.

XANDER
Are you all right in there?

ALEXIS
Yes.

XANDER
I'm going to go outside and see if
I can get a signal. Help yourself
to anything in the closet, okay?

ALEXIS
Don't go.

XANDER
I'll be right back.

EXT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - NIGHT

Xander exits the house and stares at the open hood on his car.

XANDER

What now?

Xander rushes to the car. Several wires are cut. Xander looks around at the fields and trees that surround the house.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Hello?

The sound of SHATTERED GLASS and a SCREAM comes from the house. Xander runs back in.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Xander bursts into the room. Alexis peeks out from under the bed, then points at the window. Broken glass peppers the floor beneath the shattered window.

XANDER

What happened?

ALEXIS

A man came through the window and tried to grab me. I pushed him.

Xander runs to the window and looks out. A ladder lays on the grass.

XANDER

I don't see anyone. I'm going to go check. Stay there.

EXT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - NIGHT

Xander shines a flashlight around the outside of the house. A figure runs from behind a group of trees and rushes across the field.

XANDER

Mister Ott?

Xander chases after the man.

EXT. DAVIS ESTATE WOODS - MOMENTS LATER

Xander walks through the trees and thick bush, shining his flashlight around. A CRACK of a limb startles him.

XANDER

Anyone there?

The woods become thicker as Xander travels further in. He stares into the dark.

EXT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - BARN

Xander steps into a clearing. A large red barn fills the land. Broken shutters hang from the windows, creaking as they move in the wind.

Xander steps toward the barn, then falls to his knees. A pair of legs appear next to Xander. Black shoes step into scattered hay.

SPENCER

You're not supposed to be here,
son.

SPENCER, 40's, looks down at his son. Xander stands up, and faces Spencer. Xander, confused, looks up and down at his deceased father, now standing in front of him just as he last saw him.

XANDER

What are you doing here? You're
dead.

SPENCER

Do we need to revisit what happens
when you decide to play around the
barn?

Xander flinches.

XANDER

There is someone out here.

SPENCER

Always with the excuses.

Xander looks around his father at the barn. A horsefly lands on Xander's neck. He slaps it with his hand.

XANDER

What's in there?

SPENCER

It's not your place to know,
Xander.

XANDER

Even now? After all these years?

Xander takes another step toward the barn, then collapses again, grasping his head in pain. Sweat forms on his face.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

Xander as a child of ten chases after a frisbee. The frisbee bounces off the side of the barn. He picks up the frisbee, then peers through the crack of the barn's large double-door.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Dad?

Through the crack, Xander sees his father inserting a strange object into a cow that is on its side with its side cut open. Spencer turns and sees his son.

SPENCER

Xander, is that you?

Xander backs away from the barn. The door opens, revealing Spencer in a bloody smock, holding a knife.

XANDER

What were you doing?

SPENCER

You aren't supposed to be here.
Pick a hand.

XANDER

No, please. I'm sorry.

SPENCER

Pick a hand, Xander.

Xander stretches out his left hand.

SPENCER (CONT'D)

Give me your right.

Xander cries, stretching out his right hand. Spencer smiles at his son.

XANDER

Please don't, dad.

Spencer slices a deep cut into Xander's palm. Xander falls, clutching his bloody hand. Spencer looks down at his son, a smug smile forming.

SPENCER

Worse will happen every time you
come here.

END FLASHBACK.

Back in the present, Xander looks at his right and left palms, both bearing deep scars.

SPENCER (CONT'D)

How many times did I have to punish you? How many times did I have to cut you, whip you, touch you?

XANDER

I was only a child. I liked spending time in my room alone, reading or drawing. I was a good kid.

SPENCER

A petulant child who needed to learn. You still haven't learned. Tell me, Xander, what should we do about this?

XANDER

I don't answer to you anymore.

SPENCER

Drop your pants.

Xander stands, defiantly staring at his father. Xander grips his shirt, then releases it.

XANDER

You are dead.

Xander's eyes briefly glow red.

SPENCER

You can't be here.

Xander wraps his hands around his father's throat.

XANDER

I only wanted your love. I just wanted to be a kid.

SPENCER

Being a kid is a waste of time.

XANDER

I hate you. You wanted me to be strong. You wanted me to be something I'm not. Please, just go away.

Spencer vanishes. Xander takes a deep breath, then approaches the barn. Xander removes a flask from his pocket, then takes a long drink from it. He closes it, then pockets it.

Xander struggles to move his legs. He takes small steps toward the barn, covering his nose with his shirt collar as he walks around piles of manure.

Xander looks at the barn door, then back at the house. He looks at his scarred palms, then turns and heads back toward the main house.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alexis steps out of the bathroom, wearing a simple dress. Her wet hair falls down her back. Xander, sitting on the bed, looks at her.

XANDER

I think the man that you saw was the neighbor a few miles to the east. I didn't know he was still alive. He was such a weird guy when I was a kid.

ALEXIS

Will he come back?

XANDER

I don't know. He cut the lines on my car and my parents' cars. I'm not really hero material. I don't know how to save the day here.

ALEXIS

There are tunnels below.

XANDER

Below what?

ALEXIS

Where I was. There are tunnels that lead out.

XANDER

Out where?

ALEXIS

I don't know. I was never allowed.

XANDER
What the hell did they do to you?
They were always weird about their
work.

ALEXIS
Your parents were trying to cure
me.

XANDER
Cure you of what?

ALEXIS
The ills of humanity.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE - HIDDEN LABORATORY - ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Xander and Alexis walk through the hidden door. It shuts behind them. Sterile walls and floors stretch out. The entire lab is akin to a hospital. Fluorescent lights BUZZ.

ALEXIS
The power went off, then on, and it
let me out.

XANDER
Out of what?

ALEXIS
I'll show you.

XANDER
Can't wait.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE - HIDDEN LABORATORY - SPECIMEN ROOM - NIGHT

Xander and Alexis stand in the small room. A small bed sits in one corner, and a metal toilet sits in the other. A crack in the floor separates the cell from a monitoring area made up of desks.

XANDER
How long were you here?

ALEXIS
I don't remember a time when I
wasn't.

XANDER
How old are you?

ALEXIS
Twenty-eight I think.

XANDER
That means you were here when I was
still a boy.

ALEXIS
Yes. I heard you play upstairs
sometimes. I tried calling to you
when I thought the doctors wouldn't
hear me.

XANDER
You were my ghost. I need to know
what they were up to.

Xander steps to one of the desks, then flips through some papers on its top. A CLICK sounds out, then a thick glass barricade slides up from the crack in the floor, separating Xander and Alexis. Xander runs to the glass.

XANDER (CONT'D)
What happened?

ALEXIS
Something triggered the locks.

XANDER
How do I get you out?

ALEXIS
There should be a control room
somewhere.

Xander searches the room, and finds a large map in a desk drawer.

XANDER
I've seen this in my office's IT
room. This is a networking map. It
looks like lines are running to a
room down the hall. I'll be back.

ALEXIS
Please hurry.

MISTER OTT, 60's, solid build, wearing hunting clothes, steps into the room with a rifle raised.

MISTER OTT
Not so fast, Xander.

XANDER

Whoa, what's with the gun?

MISTER OTT

It's not for you. At least, I don't think it is. That thing there killed my boy.

XANDER

Steve? What do you mean? She's been locked down here.

MISTER OTT

She was until your folks died. Your parents were fools. I shouldn't have taken their money. Nothing can pay for the harm my silence has wrought.

XANDER

This is ridiculous.

MISTER OTT

Do you not know what she is? Do you not understand what your parents were doing down here? They designed a killing machine. It is evil.

ALEXIS

Don't listen to him. He's the one that came after me.

XANDER

Alexis, whose blood were you covered in?

Alexis loses her innocent appearance and stands straighter, looking into Xander's eyes.

ALEXIS

You were their favorite. You were their little boy.

The glass barrier slides down. Mister Ott swivels, pointing his gun at Alexis. In a blur, Alexis is on top of Mister Ott, ripping his throat out with her teeth. She stands, wipes the blood from her mouth and steps toward Xander.

XANDER

Jesus Christ!

ALEXIS

He has nothing to do with this.

XANDER
You killed him!

Xander steps back from Alexis. He searches the room for an exit.

XANDER (CONT'D)
Stop. I don't know what my parents did to you, but I'm sorry. They were insane. I had nothing to do with it. Why do you think I've been gone since I left for college?

ALEXIS
Don't talk about your parents like that? They were geniuses. They gave birth to a God.

Alexis opens her mouth and SCREAMS. The noise is deafening. Xander clutches at his ears, then takes off down the hallway leading away from the secret door.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE - HIDDEN LABORATORY - TUNNELS - NIGHT

Xander looks around at the unfamiliar surroundings and doubles back. Alexis stands in front of him. Xander turns back around and runs.

Xander passes several closed doors with small windows in the center. He takes a moment to peer through one of the panes of glass.

A small boy, 12, writhes in agony on a bed. Large spiraling horns protrude from his forehead.

Xander recoils in horror. Alexis finds him.

ALEXIS
Failed experiments. They are only fuel for me now. Ott's boy was a treat. Pure blood for once. I've had enough livestock and half-demon blood for a lifetime.

Alexis lunges at Xander. Xander dodges, catches himself, then runs down the tunnels. Alexis gives chase.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)
Show me, little boy. Show me what made you their golden child.

XANDER

They hated me. I was a disappointment.

ALEXIS

No, you were to be their titan. They hated me. They hated the perfection they created. They hated that they would be forced to grovel at my feet.

Another HELLISH SCREAM fills the tunnels.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE - HIDDEN LABORATORY - TUNNELS - NIGHT

The fluorescent lights inserted into the ceiling flicker violently. Slanted shadows of a demonic Alexis loom across the walls.

XANDER

What are you?

ALEXIS

I am your potential made real. You have run from your destiny for far too long, Xander.

Alexis lunges toward Xander. He runs through the maze of tunnels. He stops at the end of a long hallway, doors stretching down both walls. Xander picks a door near the end, runs in, then shuts the door behind him.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE - HIDDEN LABORATORY - ALEXIS' OLD ROOM - NIGHT

ALEXIS (O.S.)

Are you hiding now, little boy?

Xander takes in his surroundings. A small mattress sits on a rusty bed frame. A pile of clothes sit in a corner. A collection of random toys lays in the middle of the room.

Xander approaches the toys, then kneels down to look at them. He picks up a plastic green army-man toy and examines it.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. DAVIS ESTATE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Young Xander lays on his stomach, positioning green army-men in an imaginary battle. He mimics gunfire from one, then flicks the toy soldier getting shot.

The toy flies into the air conditioning vent along the floorboard. The toy RATTLES down the vents.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE - HIDDEN LABORATORY - ALEXIS' OLD ROOM - NIGHT

A door SLAMS SHUT in the hall. Xander perks up, then scurries against the wall by the door. He crouches down and plants his ear against the door frame.

ALEXIS (O.S.)

Is this fun for you? I must admit, it is kind of fun for me. How long I dreamed of playing hide and seek with you. I listened to your little feet running along the floors above me. The vents were my speakers to the music of your adolescence. Laughter, pain, sorrow.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE - HIDDEN LABORATORY - TUNNELS - NIGHT

Alexis walks up to a door, peers through the small window in the middle of the door, then steps to the door opposite of that one, and repeats the steps down the hall.

ALEXIS

Sometimes in my dreams we would marry, you and I. Of course, I had no idea what you looked like. You were much handsomer in my mind's eye. Are you in here, lover?

Alexis kicks a door open, revealing an empty room.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE - HIDDEN LABORATORY - ALEXIS' OLD ROOM - NIGHT

Xander listens at the door. Alexis' face fills the window in the door. The door slowly opens. Xander charges out, tackling Alexis in the process. Xander falls on top of Alexis in the hall.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE - HIDDEN LABORATORY - TUNNELS - NIGHT

ALEXIS

There you are.

Xander scrambles away on his hands and feet. Alexis reaches out and grabs his calf. Her long nails, now resembling claws, tear through his pants and into his skin. Xander SCREAMS in pain. He picks himself up and runs down the hall.

XANDER

Stay away from me.

Alexis stands up, smiles, then dashes after him.

ALEXIS

Don't play coy with me. I know this gets your blood boiling.

Alexis stops where the tunnels branch in two different directions. She examines the blood on her claws. She licks the blood, then closes her eyes, and moans.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

I taste fear, but something else too. Something not unexpected, but still surprising. I can smell you. I know where you are.

Alexis heads through the left tunnel.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE - HIDDEN LABORATORY - TUNNELS - NIGHT

Xander, out of breath, leans against a wall. He looks at his leg. The bottom of his pants are torn to ribbons, blood soaks his calf and foot.

The lights flicker. MANIACAL LAUGHTER echoes through the tunnels. Xander hobbles down the tunnel and around the corner.

Xander reaches a locked door. He punches in a code. The door slides open. He runs through it. The door shuts just in time to stop Alexis.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE - HIDDEN LABORATORY - CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

She bangs on the small window in the center of it. Her face, full of rage, fills the window. The hot air from her breath steams the glass.

ALEXIS

You think this can stop me?

Xander frantically flips through menus on a nearby computer. Light from the monitor glows on his tired face. Frustrated, he grits his teeth.

XANDER

What am I looking for?

Xander navigates through a computer program. He moves the mouse over a menu item, then pauses. He looks at the door standing between Xander and Alexis.

Alexis continues to bang at the window. Xander clicks the mouse button. His action sets off a series of CLICKS and BANGS that echo through the tunnels.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE - HIDDEN LABORATORY - TUNNELS - MOMENTS LATER

The doors to the prisons all open at once. Various DEMONIC FIGURES emerge. Each one looks more horrible than the last. Claws, scales, horns, and fur adorn the tortured patients.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE - HIDDEN LABORATORY - CONTROL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Xander looks through the window in the door at Alexis.

ALEXIS

Did you come to your senses? You can't win this.

Xander taps on the glass and points behind her. A hint of a smile plays at the corner of his lips.

Alexis turns around. The demonic figures approach her. She lunges toward them, disappearing into the fray. Her SCREAM echoes again. Blood splatters on the window.

Xander steps to the window. His eyes glow red. He smiles.

XANDER

They gave birth to a God. Indeed they did.

Xander heaves. He folds in on himself, clutching his stomach. He looks toward the ceiling and unleashes a cry of agony. A caged light shatters above him. Sparks rain down around Xander as he scratches at his face.

The power cycles down and completely dies with a WHIR. Blackness envelops everything.

Two red eyes appear. Emergency generators kick on with a BUZZ. Backup lights FLICK on, revealing a brand new Xander.

Xander stands, his eyes not just glowing red, but seem to have a fire deep inside. His skin is etched obsidian. He rises to his feet with confidence and power.

Xander punches the code into the box beside the door. The door slides open. Xander steps through.

INT. DAVIS ESTATE - HIDDEN LABORATORY - TUNNELS - CONTINUOUS

Upon his arrival, the demonic figures stand. They see Xander, then move to the walls, kneeling and bowing their heads in respect.

Alexis lays on the floor, bloody and broken. She looks up at Xander. Her strength and imposing form has now been reduced to a fragile heap of torn flesh and broken bones.

ALEXIS

You're finally awake, brother.

XANDER

I don't know what I am, but I know I like it.

ALEXIS

The alcohol you turned to kept you dull, kept the real you hidden. That is why I did this. You have to understand. I was only setting you free. Help me.

XANDER

When I was a boy I swore this house was haunted. I heard noises, strange noises. I was so scared.

ALEXIS

It was only me.

XANDER

Yes, it was only you. You were the ghost that I was so afraid of. The noise in the dark of night. The bumps and knocks under the floorboards.

Xander leans down and caresses Alexis' face.

ALEXIS
Will you save me?

XANDER
I cannot be afraid any longer. I
must destroy my ghosts.

ALEXIS
We can be great together. We will
rule, you and I.

XANDER
You would only be a gnat, riding my
coat tails.

Xander puts his mouth to Alexis's ear.

XANDER (CONT'D)
The sad truth that you need to
realize is that you aren't even
worth the bare minimum of effort I
would need to use to destroy you.

Xander stands, then continues down the hall.

XANDER (CONT'D)
Feast.

The demonic figures swarm Alexis. The horrifying SCREAM
echoes once more, then comes to a gurgling halt.

EXT. DAVIS ESTATE - BARN - NIGHT

The red barn burns. Roaring flames engulf every inch of the
structure. The silhouette of Xander watches the barn burn to
ash.

FADE TO BLACK.