On The Benefits of Eating Odd Fungi

by TypewriterLove

Summary

In Merlin's defense, it's not like he'd \textit{planned} on actually eating the mushroom. And honestly, it's not as if Merlin could've possibly known the thing was bloody psychotropic. Isn't it funny how these sort of things happen?

(Prompt fill, Merlin gets a little doo-lally, imagines royal nats and admits that his death is, quite probably, going to come at the hands of a certain pair of leather training breeches.

Arthur just wants him to stop saying the word "hard" and looking up beneath his lashes like that, lest the Prince go into a psychotic break.

Gaius is just too old for this shit.)

Notes

So I wrote this entire godforsaken thing at 1 in the morning or something (there are way too many italics in this sorry) and not only is it A, my first Merlin fic, I have also B, never watched the show.

Sorry. I did my best u v u;;

In Merlin's defense, it's not like he'd planned on actually \textit{eating} the mushroom. All he'd known is that
while on a herb-gathering run for Gaius, he'd seen a type of fungi he'd never seen before and decided to bring one back to ask the Court Physician about. He took the uttermost safety precautions as well! Using gloves to pick it off it's spot on a moldering log, holding his breath as he dropped it into his basket. Merlin had covered it with a scrap of cloth and continued on his merry way, planning nothing more than to drop it off at Gaius' and ask as to what it was- he'd only ever seen that shade of purple in some of the richer tapestries adorning the castle's halls.

And honestly, it's not as if Merlin could've possibly known the mushroom was bloody psychotropic. Who would have? After the whole affair was over, Gaius had confessed to had never seen the stupid thing before. The only medical text about it was an extremely obscure spell book that Gaius wasn't supposed to own, god forbid consult.

(See? Clearly, totally, and utterly not his fault.)

And, well, yes- Merlin might've been a bit careless when he'd gotten hungry on the walk back to the castle and reached for a sweet root from his basket without even looking- when his fingers accidentally plucked the purple fungi and he bit into it without a care in the world - well, even then he had no real reason to worry. It wasn't until he'd popped the whole thing into his mouth, swallowed, and brushed his lips only to find indigo power on his fingers that he began to panic because oh god Merlin had just eaten an unknown mushroom and was going to die.

While his inner voice (which sounded an awful lot like Arthur, oddly enough) berated him for being so incredibly stupid, the tiny, logical part of his brain just sort of shrugged. So what? The mushroom had been tasty and if anything was wrong, Merlin could always count on Gaius or his own powers to fix up his health. Surely there wasn't a fungi in the world that could stand against Gaius and Merlin's powers combined. So he calmed down, readjusted his neckerchief and continued the long walk to the castle.

And if his vision got a little glittery and his thoughts a little loopy- well, Merlin didn't really have the forethought to notice.

By the time Merlin was informed that Arthur needed to see him, now, Merlin was more than little off. He was downright flying off a cliff with a smile on his lips and he didn't give a damn because Arthur wanted to see him. Arthur! He slung the basket over his arm, smiled at the mildly-disturbed looking servant who'd come to tell him, and ambled off into the halls towards Arthur's chambers.

Opening the grand oak door, Merlin put the basket to the side of the door and skipped - seriously, he bloody skipped - into the main bed chamber, where he knew Arthur would be. Merlin grinned when he saw the back of a blonde head, angled down and reading a letter, as Merlin stood to the side and linked his arms behind his back. "You called for me, sire?" he asked, trying (and failing) to snort back his laughter. "There you are- where have you been Mer-li -" Arthur cut off suddenly as he turned, taking in Merlin's flushed cheeks, wide grin and fidgeting legs. "What the hell's wrong with you?" he asked, abruptly crossing the room and scanning Merlin's face.

Merlin just giggled delightedly and made a vague gesture towards the basket of herbs in the other chamber. "I ate a mushroom. Shroom. Sha-room." Merlin paused, pursing his lips and sounding out the word. "Shroom. Boom. Doom. Doom Shroom. I ate a shroom of doom." he announced, looking
pleased at his alliteration.

Arthur, meanwhile, was equal measures amused and concerned for his completely idiotic manservant. "You ate a mushroom?" he asked cautiously, trying to make sense of Merlin's nonsense. Merlin's eyes lit up even more, his grin stretched, and he nodded enthusiastically before suddenly clapping a head to his forehead and looking panicked. Darting his eyes over to Arthur, he gave an exaggerated sigh. "My head almost fell off." he whispered sheepishly.

By this point, Arthur was failing spectacularly at keeping his own grin in check. "Yes well, I'm not very surprised. I don't think it's been attached since you born." he announced, turning to grab his shoes as he realized letting Merlin bear the aftereffects of a mysterious mushroom is probably not a good idea. Merlin just scoffed and teetered on his legs. "You're mean." he accused, pointing at Arthur's back. "Meaaaaannn. Mean. You're all princely and stupid and. . . and. . . and mean." he finished, trying to cross his arms before Merlin realized how his elbows worked. Now it was Arthur's turn to snort as he straightened his boots, grabbed Merlin's wrist and led them towards the door of his chambers. "Merlin, grab your basket while you tell me how I could possibly be mean. I'm the nicest person you know." Arthur declared, looking imperious for a moment- before Merlin fell into a fit of giggles, as if the concept of Arthur being nice was the funniest thing he'd ever heard.

"Oh shut up." Arthur groused, flinging open the door and stomping off as Merlin scrambled in his wake.


Arthur, swallowing very hard, turned around and grabbed Merlin's arm to steady him as he tried to lean onto Arthur's chest. "I am very nice. I'm taking you to see Gaius. How is that being a prat?" Arthur asked, grabbing Merlin's arm and literally dragging him through the halls, the manservant's shoes trailing and scuffing on the stones. Merlin made a sound of protest. "Nooooo, you're a prat because you're nice. Because you're nice and you don't careeee." Merlin explained emphatically, his head flopping as he tried to make accompanying hand gestures only to find one arm in the grip of a Prince. He seemed shocked, before he poked Arthur with his free hand and wiggled his arm in Arthur's grip. "Sееее? It's all bloody fine and normal to you, and that's why you're a prat. You're nice but it doesn't matter to you. Absolutely zero matters. Empty-duck-pond-matters. Smatter matters. No matters." Merlin sing-songed, sounding for all the world like a 2 year old just learning how to speak.

"Why don't you care?" Merlin suddenly asked, planting his feet and forcing Arthur to stop his brisk pace. And they were almost to Gaius' too! Arthur really didn't have the time to play word games with his doo-lally manservant while said manservant's insides could be rotting. Huffing a sigh, Arthur
turned to face Merlin and tried to gingerly coax him forward. "Of course I care, Mer-lin. That's why I'm taking you to Gaius to get better. If I didn't care, why would I be taking you to get better?"

Arthur wasn't typically one much for soothing tones, but he tried his best nonetheless- imitating the one stable boys used on spooked horses.

But Merlin stood firm and leveled a glare at him. "No, Ar-thur," he mocked. "It's not the same. I've tried pretending but it's not enough and it's too hard. Hard hard hard." Merlin babbled, and for the love of God that is really not a word Merlin needs to be adding to his repertoire right now. As Arthur tried his best to forget the precise lengths of Merlin's eyelashes and the hue of his eyes and instead think of a naked Gaius, Merlin shuffled forward and thumped his head onto Arthur's shoulder, his breath warming the prince's collarbone.

"S'not fair. Stupid good-looking nice prat." Merlin muttered against Arthur's shoulder as the prince stood, frozen, before Merlin angled his head and pressed his lips against tendons of Arthur's neck. Merlin stayed there for a moment, lips pressed closed to Arthur's skin as he took deep breaths and made tiny pleased noises, before his eyelids flickered open again and he blinked before skipping back, laughing sheepishly. "Oops. That was supposed to be a secret. Cret. Ca-rettttt. Seca-rettt." Merlin laughed, his grin wide and his eyes glittering, as Arthur stared at him with flushed cheeks and the urgent need to picture Gaius naked dammit.

Squeezing his eyes shut, Arthur tried his best to imagine every detail of wrinkled old skin and, as such, his heart almost shot out of his chest when he opened his eyes to find Merlin 2 inches away, looking up at him from under those stupidly long lashes. "Heyyyy. You won't tell Arthur, right? Issa secret. Secrett. If he knew he'd get mad." Merlin pouted again, his eyebrows furrowing in a way that made him look utterly endearing pathetic. Gulping, Arthur raised a brow and turned to start walking again, hoping Merlin would just follow him as usual because really could not grab Merlin’s wrist again, not now. "Why shouldn't I tell him?" He asked, a minute quiver threading through his voice.

Merlin just sighed exasperatedly, as if this was utterly obvious and Arthur was the one being an idiot here. "Because he'll get mad if I tell him he smells really good. Or that his hair's shiny. He'll probably get reeeeally mad at the shiny one. But s'true! And I think he's trying to kill me." Merlin added in a controversial whisper.

Arthur, trying his best to ignore Merlin's comments lest he go into a psychotic break, decided instead to focus on the lesser of the evils. "Why on Earth do you think the Prince of Camelot is trying to kill you?" Arthur asked incredulously, looking over his shoulder. Merlin was scuffing behind him, looking miserable. His eyes still trained to the floor, Merlin moaned "He's been wearing these training breeches recently. The leather ones. Leather." Merlin emphasized, looking up at Arthur pleadingly. "And then he comes in all sweaty and sticky and mussed and he wants me to peel the bloody things off. Have you seen his thighs? They're like boulders. Warm, golden boulders. He's evil." Merlin announced, an admiring, hopeless tone in his voice while Arthur choked and spluttered.

Merlin, apparently, took Arthur's beet-red face as a signal to continue. "And then the stupid-nice prat wants me to draw his bath. And wash him. And it takes a bloody hour and then another half of drying him off and then I have to go get his bloody dinner and take care of that and I don't get a minute to myself until it's time to sleep, and by then it hurts, but I have to keep quiet because some stupid cook sleeps in the next room over and complained about the noise once and that was just a bad night for everyone." Merlin shook his head gravely, looking mortified and depressed all at once.
Meanwhile, Arthur's brain had thrown in the towel and divided itself into 3 provinces. The first was in favor of sinking into the cobblestones and letting his brain dribble out of his ears because what. The second was still torn between slapping Merlin upside the head or pinning him up against the tapestries and doing highly un-princely things. And the 3rd, which Arthur was very not proud of, was reciting on loop I should really get some more of those leather breeches.

Thankfully, this was the exact moment Gaius came out of his office and stared at Merlin- who, during the midst of Arthur's mental breakdown, had begun belting an impromptu rendition of an old minstrel's ballad- very badly, and whilst improvising nearly all the lyrics. Gaius simply looked him up and down before pinching the bridge of his nose and sighing. "Help bring him in?" Gaius pleaded, looking relieved when Arthur switched his mind to auto-pilot, grabbed Merlin's arms and lead him into the office.

After a while Arthur was shooed from the room, Gaius claiming that he needed to administer some particular tricky remedies (he was, of course, consulting the definitely non-existent book that Merlin knows nothing about nope) for which Arthur was thankful. He really, really needed to get out of that room. He wandered in a dazed sort of way down to his chambers, closed the door, sat on the edge of his bed and stared at the far wall.


Before calling for the court seamstress and asking for 5 new pairs of the leather training breeches.

Merlin woke up with a pounding headache, a dry throat and a dead, shriveled speck of pride.

Oh god.

What had he done? What had he said? Oh god he was doing to die. Merlin was going to be executed, no two ways about it. Sure, he'd escaped some of Arthur's princely wrath before, but that was only because Merlin amused the prince. Or so he liked to think.

Oh god, Merlin had referred to Arthur's thighs as "warm, golden boulders".

Merlin wondered if he could off himself with his magic alone. Make it look like an unfortunate side effect of the mushroom. It'd certainly be better than being hung in front of the whole of Camelot- or worse, beheaded.

Merlin shuddered and tried to sit up, glancing about in the dark. Gaius had left a candle on the side of his work table, but it must've blown out. He was about to attempt to stand up and find a decent place to kill himself - which might not've gone so well, seeing as to how his legs felt like wax - when something straddled his chest and pressed him into the cot.
Groggily, Merlin poked it.

Leather.

"And where do you think you're going, Mer-lin?"

Any questions he might've asked were swallowed by a pair of lips.

Huh.

Maybe Merlin should eat odd mushrooms more often.

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