### The Crystal Cave

**by** RatchetFangirls

#### Summary

Originally posted on fanfiction.net.
When the Knights of the Round Table, Gwen, and Gaius leave for the Crystal Caves, leaving Merlin in the stocks, they come across a mysterious blue box and a man called the Doctor. The Doctor easily crafts up a lie saying that he was sent to show them their friends future reincarnations and one who is not a reincarnation, but immortal. Watching Doctor Who with Merlin characters!

#### Notes

Originally posted on fanfiction.net. We own nothing, and sorry if anyone is out of character.
The Crystal Cave

Merlin was in the stocks...again. Arthur had been mad at him, for he had 'spent too many days in the tavern'.

He really had to tell Gaius to come up with a new excuse.

The worst part was the fact that just as Merlin was put in the stocks, Arthur left on his horse, laughing at his expense. He had been telling Merlin about going on a dangerous quest to find a mysterious sorcerer in a blue box near the Crystal Caves, as Gaius decided to name it.

Arthur had made a point to explain just how dangerous it could be, making Merlin feel the urge to go and protect him. Then, the king had switched topics to Merlin's 'alcoholic problems' and put him in the stocks for it.

Then, he left. Merlin knew that he would be needed if it turned out to be as dangerous as Arthur made it sound. He even brought Gaius and Guinevere. The Knights of the Round Table went as well after holding another moment of silence for Lancelot.

All in all, Emrys felt extremely left out.

The king rode along with his queen at his side and the physician and knights behind him. He felt a brief stab of guilt for not letting Merlin go, but Gaius told him that it would not be wise to let him come on this particular quest.

He hoped his loyal servant would understand.

After a lot of riding, they finally arrived at the legendary Crystal Caves, with a blue box outside.

"Police Call Box..." Arthur frowned. "What does that mean?"

"I don't know..." Gaius forehead wrinkled with thought.

"I think it is okay as long as it is a tavern!" Gwaine took a swig from his water skin, which was undoubtedly full of ale.

Carefully, they continued on their quest until they came across a man dressed in weird clothes.

"Sorcerer!" Arthur drew his sword.

The man, surprisingly, put his hands up. "I am no sorcerer."

"He's right, sire." Gaius spoke up

"How can you be sure?" the king asked.

"Wouldn't he have attacked already if he was a sorcerer?"

Arthur slowly lowered his sword. "We'll keep an eye on you."

"I'm sure." he grinned, "I'm the Doctor. There is something I was told to show you. Please follow, it might help you understand magic and your friends a little bit more."

"Can we?" Gwaine questioned, looking excited.
He was definitely drunk.

"All right, but only so we can find this sorcerer." Arthur urged his horse to follow the Doctor.

"So, you are a man of medicine?" Gaius looked generally interested in the Doctor. "What's your name?"

"Just the Doctor...and I could be a man of medicine. Sometimes I am. Others, I am not."

They continued on in silence.

Eventually, they reached where they were destined to go.

"I've been told that one of the most pure forms of magic is also the one that can never be destroyed." the Doctor started.

"Which is this?" Arthur gripped his sword.

"Reincarnation. I have been told to show you the reincarnations of some of your friends and even one that was not a reincarnation by the blue box over there. It really can mess with your head." he made a good excuse.

"What do you mean one that is not a reincarnation?" Gaius looked kind of nervous.

"There is someone you are all familiar with who has several names. One of those is Emrys." he paused as he noticed Gaius's face become guarded. "But I will not tell you who Emrys is, even though I know. Emrys in the language of the Old Religion means immortal, or so I've been told." he skillfully crafted his lie. "He will live on until magic dies, because that person is magic in flesh. I was sent by the box to show you moments from some reincarnations and one of Emrys in two thousand years. In two thousand years, he looks exactly the same as he does now."

The Doctor watched as the expressions of the knights became stony.

"So, one of the people close to us is magic in the flesh?" Arthur asked, grip tightening on his sword.

Gaius swallowed.

"He means you no harm. It is his destiny to protect you Arthur, his mission, as you are the Once and Future King." even the Doctor was testing his memory at this point.

"The Once and Future King?" the king raised an eyebrow.

"The one destined to be the greatest king who ever lived and ever will." the Gallifreyan continued.

Arthur suddenly felt a lot of pressure on him as he went silent.

"I will show you those clips now if you could come into the caves with me." the Doctor turned into the caves.

The blue box technically didn't send him, but he hoped it was a good enough lie for now.

Arthur, Guinevere, Gaius, Gwaine, Percival, Leon, and Elyan quickly came into the caves, hoping to not only learn about their friends' reincarnations but also who Emrys was.

The Doctor swallowed as he willed the crystals with his Gallifreyan touch-telepathic skills to show the reincarnations of them and Merlin's future self, since Emrys would not die for a while yet.
They were all quiet as the show began.
They watch Uther Pendragon's episode.

"So," Arthur began, a little bit awkwardly. "Who are we going to see the reincarnation of first?"

The Doctor looked into one of the crystals. "By the looks of it, King Arthur...your father."

Arthur looked up in surprise and hope.

"Don't get your hopes up, though." the Gallifreyan warned.

"And why should I not?"

"...You'll see."

Arthur looked like he was about to take his sword out and behead the Doctor right then and there.

[Outside the Headmaster's office]

(A man comes down the stairs of Deffry Vale High School and walks to the Headmaster's office. A girl is sitting on a chair nearby.)

"That's Father!" Arthur realized, before looking confused. "What is he wearing?"

"This is in the future, Arthur." Leon reminded.

"Yes," the Doctor continued. "Let's refrain from asking questions as it is all in the future."

FINCH: What do you want?

Gwaine raised an amused eyebrow, "He seems nice,"

Arthur looked at him in a threatening fashion.

Gwaine opened his mouth, but then closed it due to the looks he was getting from the other knights.

NINA: The nurse sent me, sir. I was in English and I got a headache.

"Aw," Gwen said looking at the little girl.
FINCH: Then don't bother me, go home.

NINA: I can't.

FINCH: Why, is your mother at work?

NINA: I live in Ambrose Hall. The children's home.

"What does that mean?" Percival asked looking around at the Doctor for answers.

The Doctor quietly sighed before looking up, "It's another meaning for an orphanage, it's where children can go and be supported once their parents die,"

"I believe we have one of those in Camelot," Arthur said, "It's not very big though,"

"May I suggest expanding it then sire?" Leon replied, "To make sure children don't starve once their parents die,"

"Or if their parents abandoned them," Gwaine continued.

FINCH: No parents. No one to miss you. I see why the nurse sent you. You poor child. Poor thin, child. Come inside.

"The 'no one will miss you part' was too much," Gwen stated.

"Why did he mention how thin the girl was?" Gaius raised the 'Eyebrow of Doom'.

The Doctor sighed and watched Arthur's reaction to all this very carefully.

(He opens the door and the girl walks through.)

FINCH: It's nearly time for lunch.

"Something's amiss here," Arthur furrowed his eyebrows in confusion at his father's actions.

(The door closes behind them. There is a screech and flapping of wings, and a scream.)

"Oh my god," Arthur leapt into a standing position, "My father is a-a-a-a thing! That just killed a girl,"

The Doctor looked up, "Arthur please sit down, that technically is the reincarnation of your father," he pause, "Sort of, he is an alien that takes forms from other creatures he encounters,"

"So my father didn't really kill that girl?" Arthur was seriously confused.

"Arthur," Gwen looked up, "That is still the reincarnation of your father, but in alien form,"

[Physics laboratory]

(Up on the first floor, there is a change of class. The teacher enters, wearing a brown suit and white sneakers.)

"I feel suspicious about him now," Gwaine leaned over, drunkenly.

"You're not the only one." Arthur looked towards the Doctor, who was busy looking at a 'cute,
furry, defenseless' animal, as Merlin had named it.

DOCTOR: Good morning, class. Are we sitting comfortably?

(The Doctor writes on the board.)

DOCTOR: So, physics. Physics, eh? Physics. Physics. Physics! Physics. Physics, physics, physics, physics, physics, physics, physics. I hope one of you is getting all this down. Okay let's see what you know. Two identical strips of nylon are charged with static electricity and hung from a string so they can swing freely. What would happen if they were brought near each other?

Everyone raised their eyebrows in confusion.

"What?" Elyan looked confused.

Surprisingly, Gaius did not know the answer. "I am not sure..."

"It's just some stuff that men of science figure out in the future. It then becomes a standard of physics knowledge." the Doctor explained.

"Physics?" the Once and Future King asked.

"Physics is a branch of science that includes energy stuff and nature stuff." he answered shortly. "There will be a lot you don't understand, but please try to limit the questions."

(A young boy with spectacles puts his hand up.)

DOCTOR: Yes, er, what's your name?

MILO: Milo.

DOCTOR: Milo! Off you go.

MILO: They'd repel each other because they have the same charge.

"They'd repel because they have the same charge?" Gaius looked interested. He would have to remember this for later.

DOCTOR: Correctamundo! A word I have never used before and hopefully never will again. Question two. I coil up a thin piece of microwire and place it in a glass of water. Then I turn on the electricity and measure to see if the water's temperature is affected. My question is this. How do I measure the electrical power going into the coil?

(Just one hand goes up. Everyone else looks totally bored.)

"Milo seems to be the only one who knows the answer to anything." Gwen stated. "Does that have something to do with...you know..." she did not mention Arthur's father, and for that, he was thankful.

"You'll see. This will explain everything."

DOCTOR: Someone else. No? Okay, Milo, go for it.
MILO: Measure the current and PDs in an ammeter and a voltmeter.

DOCTOR: Two to Milo. Right then, Milo, tell me this. True or false. The greater the dampening of the system, the quicker it loses energy to its surroundings.

"Now, you are focusing only on Milo." Percival noticed.

Leon nodded in agreement. "Why?"

"I was just as confused as you are now."

Everyone's eyebrows raised.

"Okay, so I wasn't as confused as you, but I was still pretty confused." the Doctor admitted.

MILO: False.

DOCTOR: What is non-coding DNA?

MILO: DNA that doesn't code for a protein.

DOCTOR: Sixty five thousand nine hundred and eighty three times five?

MILO: Three hundred and twenty nine thousand nine hundred and fifteen.

DOCTOR: How do you travel faster than light?

MILO: By opening a quantum tunnel with an FTL factor of thirty six point seven recurring.

(The Doctor's jaw drops.)

"He seems...knowledgeable." Gwen looked on in shock.

"Sure, of course he was." the Doctor agreed, thinking Gwen would have made an excellent companion if she wasn't part of several fixed points in time.

[Canteen]

(Chips are still on the menu here. A young blonde slops mash into the Doctor's tray. He walks away with a grin. A little later she goes over to wipe his table.)

ROSE: Two days.

"Who's this?" Arthur looked confused.

"Rose." the Doctor's voice was pained, as if she was gone and he'd never be able to get to her again.

They decided to not press the topic anymore.

DOCTOR: Sorry, could you just? There's a bit of gravy. No, no, just, just there.

ROSE: Two days, we've been here.

DOCTOR: Blame your boyfriend. He's the one who put us onto this. And he was right. Boy in class this morning, got a knowledge way beyond planet Earth.
"Way beyond planet Earth?" everyone raised their eyebrows.

"Another thing you discover in the future. Far in the future." the Doctor decided that that would be his answer to everything.

**ROSE:** You eating those chips?

**DOCTOR:** Yeah, they're a bit different.

"Different...how so?" Gaius looked interested.

"They didn't taste like the were supposed to. It could have just been a different recipe, but to me, it was very suspicious." the Doctor answered.

"Do you mean someone was slipping the children a draught?"

The Doctor blinked. He was good at this, too. "Something like that."

**ROSE:** I think they're gorgeous. Wish I had school dinners like this.

**DOCTOR:** It's very well behaved, this place.

"What are other places like, then?" Leon questioned.

"Other schools have a lot of kids who don't want to be there and basically start fights and stuff." the Doctor answered.

The others nodded.

"School?" Gwen asked in confusion.

"A school is a place to educate children."

"Camelot should have one of those..." Arthur decided, not noticing everyone else's smiles.

**ROSE:** Mmm.

**DOCTOR:** I thought there'd be happy slapping hoodies. Happy slapping hoodies with ASBOs. Happy slapping hoodies with ASBOs and ringtones. Huh? Huh? Oh, yeah. Don't tell me I don't fit in.

(The head dinner lady comes over.)

**JACKSON:** You are not permitted to leave your station during a sitting.

"She seems...strict." Gwaine decided that that would be a suitable word.

**ROSE:** I was just talking to this teacher.

**DOCTOR:** Hello.

**ROSE:** He doesn't like the chips.

**JACKSON:** The menu has been specifically designed by the headmaster to improve concentration and performance. Now, get back to work.
"So, the reincarnation has a plan to improve concentration and performance to above-Earth standards. What is he planning?" Gaius thought over.

The Doctor's jaw almost dropped. He was way smarter than the Doctor had originally assumed in the legends.

**ROSE:** See? This is me. Dinner lady.

**DOCTOR:** I'll have the crumble.

**ROSE:** I'm so going to kill you.

(A dark teacher walks over to a girl with a pony tail.)

**WAGNER:** Melissa. You'll be joining my class for the next period. Milo's failed me, so it's time we moved you up to the top class. Kenny, not eating the chips?

"Milo's failed?" Gwen swallowed.

"Does that mean that he met the same fate as the girl in the beginning?" Arthur asked.

"I never really found out, but I would assume that he did." the Doctor's eyes flashed with a brief amount of guilt.

(Tubby Kenny is eating a home prepared lunch from a Tupperware box.)

**KENNY:** I'm not allowed.


(Luke and Melissa follow Mister Wagner out. Headmaster Finch stands on a balcony overlooking the canteen and watches it all.)

Arthur shuddered, but Gwen was there to put her arm around his shoulders.

"He's being creepy..." Gwaine decided.

[**Kitchen**]

(Rose is drying up when other dinner ladies wheel a large cooking oil drum through. It has lots of strange symbols on the side. They are wearing breathing masks and heavy duty protective gauntlets.)

"Why are they wearing all of those things?" Leon asked.

"What they are wearing protects them from what is inside. What is inside is the 'draught' they are feeding the children." the Doctor answered.

Everyone looked slightly sick.


(Rose's phone rings.)
JACKSON: Right. Second barrel. Quickly now!

ROSE: What you got?

MICKEY [OC]: Confirmation.

"Who's this?" Percival inquired.

"R-Mickey."

[Library]

(Mickey is using the internet somewhere with books in the background.)

MICKEY: I just got into army records. Three months ago, massive UFO activity.

"UFO?" Arthur asked.

"Unidentified Flying Object." the Doctor answered. "You've probably seen a few, haven't you?"

"Yeah...but those were caused by magic."

"Not everything was magic."

Everyone shuddered at that thought.

[Library]

MICKEY [OC]: They logged over forty sightings. Lights in the sky, all of that.

[Library]

MICKEY: I can't get any photos, because then it gets all classified and secret. Keeps locking me out.

(With the message - Torchwood Access Denied)

ROSE [OC]: Tell you what, though.

[Kitchen]

ROSE: Three months ago, turns out all the kitchen staff were replaced. And this lot are weird.

"Why would they replace everyone just like that?" Elyan questioned.

"To make sure that everyone was on there side. They didn't want anyone telling the outside world what was going on." the Doctor answered.

"Is my father really going to do that?"

"Your father was a great man, Arthur." the Gallifreyan started. "He is not the same person as the guy who is doing all of this. He may look the same, but he doesn't have the same morals."

[Library]
MICKEY: See? There's definitely something going on.

[Kitchen]

MICKEY [OC]: I was right to call you home.

ROSE: I thought maybe you called me home just, well, just to call me home.

MICKEY: Do you think I'd just invent an emergency?

"Yes," the Doctor groaned.

[Kitchen]

ROSE: You could've done.

MICKEY [OC]: That's the last thing I'd do.

JACKSON: Watch it!

[Library]

MICKEY: Because every time I see you

[Kitchen]

MICKEY [OC]: An emergency just gets in the way.

(The next barrel of oil topples over. One of the women gets splashed and starts screaming.)

Everyone's eyes widen.

"What just happened?" Leon inquired.

"Now mate," Gwaine put his arm around him. "It is pretty obvious what just happened. Why it happened, is the question."

The Doctor almost groaned. They'd all be such good companions.

ROSE: I've got to go.

JACKSON: Get her up, get her up!

[Library]

MICKEY: Rose, what is it?

[Kitchen]

(The injured woman is hustled into the office and the blinds are pulled down. Rose redials.)

"What is she doing?" Arthur sighed.

"The thing in her hand is a future way of communication, as you just saw with Mickey."
JACKSON: What're you doing?

ROSE: Calling an ambulance.

"Ambulance?" Gwen questioned.

The Doctor smiled, they were asking all the right questions. "An ambulance is a way to get injured or sick people to a place they can heal quickly."

"We could probably make one of those too...with a horse and a cart..." Arthur added another onto his growing list.

Everyone smiled once more.

JACKSON: No need. She's quite all right.

(There is a whumph! like a sudden fire, and a scream.)

JACKSON: It's fine. She does that.

"What a woman she must be." Gwaine sighed.

He received many disgusted glares.

(The woman goes back into the smoke filled office. Rose sees that the spilt oil has eaten through metal.)

"What does it do to the children's stomachs, then?" Gaius looked sick.

Everyone looked away, not wanting to really know the answer, even if it wasn't bad.

[IT classroom]

WAGNER: I'd like you all to put your headphones on now, please. Now, children, the things you will see.

(Symbols and equations scroll down on the slaved computers and the children start typing faster and faster.)

"What are they doing?" Elyan inquired.

"What they are using is a future way of writing letters. It is much quicker. The children's fingers are pressing buttons, which is what they use instead of a quill. On that device, one can send letters and such across all the kingdoms instantaneously." the Doctor explained.

Everyone's jaw dropped in amazement.

[Staircase]

(Finch is talking to a not quite so young woman investigative reporter, who hasn't changed her hairstyle in thirty years.)

FINCH: Our work here. My improvements aren't confined to the classroom. Oh, no, no, no, no, no. We've introduced a new policy. School dinners are absolutely free, but compulsory. Do
try the chips.

Arthur looked away, not necessarily wanting to see what his father would be doing.

SARAH: Oh, I'd love to. Thank you. And it's got to be said, the transformation you've brought about is amazing. I mean, maybe you're working the children a little bit too hard now and then, but I think good results, they're more important than anything.

FINCH: Exactly. You're a woman of vision, Miss Smith.

SARAH: Oh, I can see everything, Mister Finch. Quite clearly.

"Is she hinting that she thinks something is up at that school?" Percival inquired.

The Doctor blinked, before nodding. "I believe so."

[Staff room]

PARSONS: Yesterday, I had a twelve year old girl give me the exact height of the Walls of Troy in cubits.

DOCTOR: And, it's ever since the new headmaster arrived?

PARSONS: Finch arrived three months ago. Next day, half the staff got flu. Finch replaced them with that lot, except for the teacher you replaced, and that was just plain weird, her winning the lottery like that.

"Lottery?" Leon inquired.

"Just a game of luck." the Doctor decided to use the KISS method. (AN: My math teacher uses the KISS method. It stands for Keep It Simple, Stupid.)

DOCTOR: How's that weird?

PARSONS: She never played. Said the ticket was posted through her door at midnight.

"Did you have something to do with that?" Gwen looked amused.

The Doctor just smiled.

DOCTOR: Hmm. The world is very strange.

(The Headmaster enters.)

FINCH: Excuse me, colleagues. A moment of your time. May I introduce Miss Sarah Jane Smith. Miss Smith is a journalist who's writing a profile about me for the Sunday Times. I thought it might be useful for her to get a view from the trenches, so to speak. Don't spare my blushes.

(Finch leaves.)

SARAH: Hello.

DOCTOR: Oh, I should think so.
"Do you know her?" Leon inquired.

"Yes, she used to help me, kind of like Rose and Mickey."

SARAH: And, you are?


SARAH: John Smith. I used to have a friend who sometimes went by that name.

"See?" the Doctor put his hands out.

The others nodded in understanding.

DOCTOR: Well, it's a very common name.

SARAH: He was a very uncommon man. Nice to meet you.


SARAH: Er, so, er, have you worked here long?

DOCTOR: No. Er, it's only my second day.

"You already seem familiar with everything..." Gaius stated.

The Doctor nodded.

SARAH: Oh, you're new, then. So, what do you think of the school? I mean, this new curriculum? So many children getting ill. Doesn't that strike you as odd?

"YES!" Gwaine stood up and shouted.

DOCTOR: You don't sound like someone just doing a profile.

SARAH: Well, no harm in a little investigation while I'm here.

DOCTOR: No. Good for you.

(Sarah moves away from the scary grinning Doctor.)

"I think you creeped her out." Gwaine grinned cheerfully.

"It does seem that way, Doctor." Leon added.

DOCTOR: Good for you. Oh, good for you, Sarah Jane Smith.

[IT classroom]

(The end of day bell rings. Kenny walks into the now dark room to investigate a strange sort of eating sound. A nasty large set of teeth snap at him from behind a row of computer screens, then the teacher stands up.)

"Woah." Percival said simply.
WAGNER: This isn't your classroom, Kenny. Now run along.

"He's one of them too?" Gwen looked like she might faint.

"I suppose that all the ones that were the replacements are like that." Leon assumed.

[Corridor]

(After dark, Sarah Jane Smith breaks into the school.)

ROSE: Oh, it's weird seeing school at night. It just feels wrong. When I was a kid, I used to think all the teachers slept in school.

"Why would someone believe that?" Arthur frowned.

"Well, Princess," Gwaine looked at him. "Children usually have imagination. Imagination proves that they have a brain."

The Once and Future King glared at him.

DOCTOR: All right, team. Oh, I hate people who say team. Er, gang. Er, comrades. Anyway, Rose, go to the kitchen. Get a sample of that oil. Mickey, the new staff are all Maths teachers. Go and check out the Maths department. I'm going to look in Finch's office. Be back here in ten minutes.

"Why are they all math teachers?" Percival questioned.

"Probably to keep all of them to one department so they can...do whatever they do." Gwen suggested.

(The Doctor leaves.)

ROSE: You going to be all right?

MICKEY: Me? Please. Infiltration and investigation? I'm an expert at this.

(Mickey leaves, then comes back.)

MICKEY: Where's the Maths department?

ROSE: Down there, turn left, through the fire doors, on the right.

MICKEY: Thank you.

Gaius laughed, briefly reminded of the time when Merlin first came to Camelot.

(Sarah Jane chases something flying in an upper corridor. Rose gets the oil sample as instructed, then looks up as something screeches overhead.)

"More of them?" Leon gaped.

[Corridor]

(Sarah Jane opens a storeroom door to discover the Tardis parked inside.)
"It's that box!" Arthur realized. "How long have you been with it?"

The Doctor's eyes darted up. "I don't really remember how long..." it wasn't a lie.

**DOCTOR:** Hello, Sarah Jane.

**SARAH:** It's you. Oh, Doctor Oh, my God, it's you, isn't it. You've regenerated.

"Regenerated?" everyone's eyes snapped to the Doctor in confusion.

"Er...it's a condition that has run in my family for as long as I can remember. It speeds up reincarnation so that it is almost instantaneous." the Doctor lied smoothly.

The humans nodded slowly, trying to understand what he just said.

"Like sorcery?" Arthur inquired.

"It's not sorcery, but sorcery isn't all bad."

The Once and Future King decided not to argue at that moment.

**DOCTOR:** Yeah. Half a dozen times since we last met.

**SARAH:** You look incredible.

**DOCTOR:** So do you.

**SARAH:** Huh. I got old. What are you doing here?

**DOCTOR:** Well, UFO sighting, school gets record results. I couldn't resist. What about you?

**SARAH:** The same. I thought you'd died. I waited for you and you didn't come back, and I thought you must have died.

**DOCTOR:** I lived. Everyone else died.

"Who is 'everyone'?" Gwen asked.

"Family and friends." the Doctor started to think about all of the people he knew on Gallifrey.

**SARAH:** What do you mean?

**DOCTOR:** Everyone died, Sarah.

**SARAH:** I can't believe it's you.

(Mickey screams.)

**SARAH:** Okay, now I can!

"Is that a common occurrence with you?" Leon questioned.

"It depends on where I am."

(Rose runs up.)
ROSE: Did you hear that? Who's she?

DOCTOR: Rose, Sarah Jane. Sarah Jane, Rose.

SARAH: Hi. Nice to meet you. You can tell you're getting older. Your assistants are getting younger.

ROSE: I'm not his assistant.

SARAH: No? Get you, tiger.

Everyone looked at Sarah like she was from outer space.

[Classroom]

MICKEY: Sorry! Sorry, it was only me. You told me to investigate, so I started looking through some of these cupboards and all of these fell on me.


"Ew..." Gwen looked disgusted at the thoughts of rats. "They store those? For what?"

"They are stored to help the children understand anatomy and such." the Doctor waved his hand dismissively. "It's not that important."

"Vacuum?" Arthur added on.

"A vacuum sucks air into it. It can make things easier to store or to clean things up."

"Merlin would love one of those." the Once and Future King thought idly.

Everyone laughed at that.

DOCTOR: And you decided to scream.

MICKEY: It took me by surprise!

DOCTOR: Like a little girl?

MICKEY: It was dark! I was covered in rats!

DOCTOR: Nine, maybe ten years old. I'm seeing pigtails, frilly skirt.

"Do you often make fun of people?" Percival inquired.

"It depends on who they are."

Everyone nodded in understanding.

ROSE: Hello, can we focus? Does anyone notice anything strange about this? Rats in school?

SARAH: Well, obviously they use them in Biology lessons. They dissect them. Or maybe you haven't reached that bit yet. How old are you?

ROSE: Excuse me, no one dissects rats in school anymore. They haven't done that for years.
Where are you from, the dark ages?

"The Dark Ages? When were they?" Gwaine questioned.

"Historians, people who study history, date it as being from the year 500 to the year 1500." the Doctor almost cracked a smile at what he knew would happen next.

Everyone looked mildly horrified.

"We live in the Dark Ages?" Gwen's eyes said it all.

" Seriously?" Gwaine complained. "It doesn't look that dark."

"So only this Emrys person will outlive the Dark Ages." Arthur said immediately.

"It seems so." Gaius agreed.

Percival remained stoic. Leon looked mildly offended, but decided to not say anything.

The Doctor ignored all of their comments for now.

DOCTOR: Anyway, moving on. Everything started when Mister Finch arrived. We should go and check his office.

[Corridor]

ROSE: I don't mean to be rude or anything, but who exactly are you?

SARAH: Sarah Jane Smith. I used to travel with the Doctor.

ROSE: Oh. Well, he's never mentioned you.

DOCTOR: Oh, I must've done. Sarah Jane. Mention her all the time.

"I can see that you are being backed into a corner." Gwen smiled a bit.


SARAH: What, not even once? He didn't mention me even once?

MICKEY: Ho, ho, mate. The missus and the ex. Welcome to every man's worst nightmare.

[Outside the Headmaster's office]

(The Doctor uses the sonic screwdriver on the lock.)

DOCTOR: Maybe those rats were food.

"Ew..." the humans groaned once more.

Arthur thought of the time when Merlin had tried to get him to eat rat with disgust written all over his face.

ROSE: Food for what?
[Headmaster's office]

DOCTOR: Rose, you know you used to think all the teachers slept in the school? Well, they do.

(Giant bats are hanging from the ceiling.)

"That is a lot of them." Leon observed coolly.

MICKEY: No way!

(Mickey runs. The others follow more sedately. One wakes when the Doctor shuts the door.)

Everyone flinched at the sudden surprise.

[School yard]

MICKEY: I am not going back in there. No way.

ROSE: Those were teachers.

DOCTOR: When Finch arrived, he brought with him seven new teachers, four dinner ladies and a nurse. Thirteen. Thirteen big bat people. Come on.

MICKEY: Come on? You've got to be kidding!

DOCTOR: I need the Tardis. I've got to analyse that oil from the kitchen.

SARAH: I might be able to help you there. I've got something to show you.

The humans decided to be silent, since the memory seemed to go faster when they were quiet.

[Car park]

(In the boot of Sarah's car is - )

DOCTOR: K9! Rose Tyler, Mickey Smith, allow me to introduce K9. well, K9 Mark Three to be precise.

"What is that?" Percival spoke up surprisingly.

"It is a futuristic dog." the Doctor answered. "Not important."

The humans looked amazed.

ROSE: Why does he look so disco?

"Disco?" Gaius asked.

"Not important."

DOCTOR: Oi! Listen, in the year five thousand, this was cutting edge. What's happened to him?

SARAH: Oh, one day, he just, nothing.
DOCTOR: Well, didn't you try and get him repaired?

SARAH: Well, it's not like getting parts for a Mini Metro, Beside, the technology inside him could rewrite human science. I couldn't show him to anyone.

DOCTOR: Ooh, what's the nasty lady done to you, eh?

(K9 is getting rusty round the edges. Something is watching them from midair.)

ROSE: Look, no offence, but could you two just stop petting for a minute? Never mind the tin dog. We're busy.

(A giant alien bat creature flies across the face of the full moon.)

They all shuddered.

[Coffee shop]

(Rose and Mickey are at the counter while the Doctor and Sarah Jane have put the defunct K9 on a table. The music is Love will tear us apart by Joy Division.)

MICKEY: You see, what's impressive is that it's been nearly an hour since we met her and I still haven't said I told you so.

ROSE: I'm not listening to this.

MICKEY: Although, I have prepared a little I was right dance that I can show you later.

WOMAN: Two quid, love.

(Rose pays for a portion of chips.)

MICKEY: All this time you've been giving it, he's different, when the truth is, he's just like any other bloke.

ROSE: You don't know what you're talking about.

MICKEY: Maybe not. But if I were you I'd go easy on the chips.

[Street]

(Finch is standing on the roof of the building opposite the coffee shop, watching the Doctor working on K9.)

Arthur looked away.

FINCH: Come to me. Come to me.

(A giant bat flies over to him.)

[Coffee shop]

SARAH: I thought of you on Christmas Day. This Christmas just gone? Great big spaceship overhead. I thought, oh yeah, bet he's up there.
DOCTOR: Right on top of it, yeah.

SARAH: And Rose?

DOCTOR: She was there too.

SARAH: Did I do something wrong, because you never came back for me. You just dumped me.

"Do you do that often?" Elyan spoke up.

"I try not to, but sometimes it is necessary."

DOCTOR: I told you. I was called back home and in those days humans weren't allowed.

All of the humans looked to him.

"What was that?" Arthur asked. "Aren't you human?"

"It was a slip of the tongue." the Doctor lied. "My family didn't like to talk to anyone who wasn't their kin."

SARAH: I waited for you. I missed you.

DOCTOR: Oh, you didn't need me. You were getting on with your life.

SARAH: You were my life. You know what the most difficult thing was? Coping with what happens next, or with what doesn't happen next. You took me to the furthest reaches of the galaxy, you showed me supernovas, intergalactic battles, and then you just dropped me back on Earth. How could anything compare to that?

DOCTOR: All those things you saw, do you want me to apologise for that?

SARAH: No, but we get a taste of that splendour and then we have to go back.

DOCTOR: Look at you, you're investigating. You found that school. You're doing what we always did.

"True," the Doctor agreed with himself.

SARAH: You could have come back.

DOCTOR: I couldn't.

SARAH: Why not?

(The Doctor keeps working on K9.)

SARAH: It wasn't Croydon. Where you dropped me off, that wasn't Croydon.

"Croydon?" Arthur's eyebrows knit together. "Isn't that a small town a long way away?" (AN: I'm not actually sure about that, but please just go with it.)

DOCTOR: Where was it?
SARAH: Aberdeen.

DOCTOR: Right. That's next to Croydon, isn't it?

"No." Arthur shook his head. "It is a very long ride away."

(K9 comes back to life.)

DOCTOR: Oh, hey. Now we're in business.

K9: Master.

DOCTOR: He recognises me.

K9: Affirmative.

DOCTOR: Rose, give us the oil.

ROSE: I wouldn't touch it, though. That dinner lady got all scorched.

"Yeah, what would happen if you touched it?" Gwaine seemed to be getting out of his drunken stupor.

DOCTOR: I'm no dinner lady. And I don't often say that.

(The Doctor smears a sample on to K9's probe.)

DOCTOR: Here we go. Come on, boy. Here we go.

K9: Oil. Ex ex ex extract. Ana ana analyzing.

MICKEY: Listen to him, man. That's a voice.

SARAH: Careful. That's my dog.

K9: Confirmation of analysis. Substance is Krillitane Oil.

"What's Krillitane Oil?" Gaius inquired, intrigued by this substance.

"Something that doesn't belong on Earth."

DOCTOR: They're Krillitanes.

"Is that a species or a family?" Leon questioned.

"Species."

ROSE: Is that bad?

DOCTOR: Very. Think of how bad things could possibly be, and add another suitcase full of bad.

SARAH: And what are Krillitanes?

DOCTOR: They're a composite race. Just like your culture is a mixture of traditions from all
sorts of countries, people you've invaded or have been invaded by. You've got bits of Viking, bits of France, bits of whatever. The Krillitanes are the same. An amalgam of the races they've conquered. But they take physical aspects as well. They cherry pick the best bits from the people they destroy. That's why I didn't recognise them. The last time I saw Krillitanes, they looked just like us except they had really long necks.

Everyone wrinkled their noses.

ROSE: What're they doing here?

DOCTOR: It's the children. They're doing something to the children.

"Save the children!" Gwaine stood up and punched the air.

Everyone around him slowly scooted away.

"I wish Merlin was here. He would act like a real friend!"

[Outside the coffee shop]

(They put K9 back in the boot of Sarah's car.)

MICKEY: So what's the deal with the tin dog?

SARAH: The Doctor likes travelling with an entourage. Sometimes they're humans, sometimes they're aliens, and sometimes they're tin dogs. What about you? Where do you fit in the picture?

MICKEY: Me? I'm their Man in Havana. I'm the technical support. I'm. Oh, my God. I'm the tin dog.

Everyone laughed at the comparison.

"I do feel kind of bad for him." Gwen frowned.

[Street]

FINCH: On my command.

Arthur looked away, thinking about how his father always had to be in command.

(Rose and the Doctor come out of the coffee shop.)

ROSE: How many of us have there been travelling with you?

DOCTOR: Does it matter?

ROSE: Yeah, it does, if I'm just the latest in a long line.

"That is kind of hurtful." Gwen sighed.


Everyone laughed at the comparison, knowing that there was truth to that.
DOCTOR: As opposed to what?

ROSE: I thought you and me were. I obviously got it wrong. I've been to the year five billion, right, but this? Now this is really seeing the future. You just leave us behind. Is that what you're going to do to me?

DOCTOR: No. Not to you.

ROSE: But Sarah Jane? You were that close to her once, and now you never even mention her. Why not?

DOCTOR: I don't age. I regenerate. But humans decay. You wither and you die. Imagine watching that happen to someone who you

ROSE: What, Doctor?

DOCTOR: You can spend the rest of your life with me, but I can't spend the rest of mine with you. I have to live on. Alone. That's the curse of the Time Lords.

"Time Lords? Are they the people controlled by the box?" Arthur gestured to the box a distance away.

"Yes," the Doctor decided to go with Arthur rather than craft up another lie himself.

FINCH: Time Lord.

Arthur quickly looked away.

(The Doctor looks up. The giant bat swoops down. They all duck and it flies off.)

SARAH: Was that a Krillitane?

ROSE: But it didn't even touch her. It just flew off. What did it do that for?

[School yard]

(Next morning, the pupils are arriving at the school.)

DOCTOR: Rose and Sarah, you go to the Maths room. Crack open those computers, I need to see the hardware inside. Here, you might need this.

(Rose holds out her hand, but the Doctor gives the screwdriver to Sarah.)

DOCTOR: Mickey, surveillance. I want you outside.

"You're making him seem less important," Gwen mentioned.

"Kind of like archers." Elyan realized. "Archers are very skilled and important, but they stand away from all of the action."

MICKEY: Just stand outside?

SARAH: Here, take these you can keep K9 company.
"That's going to make him feel bad too."

(Sarah throws Mickey her car keys.)

DOCTOR: Don't forget to leave the window open a crack.

MICKEY: But he's metal!

DOCTOR: I didn't mean for him.

ROSE: What're you going to do?

DOCTOR: It's time I had a word with Mister Finch.

[Swimming pool]

(They stand at opposite ends of the pool.)

DOCTOR: Who are you?

FINCH: My name is Brother Lassa. And you?

"Why was he using an alias?" Arthur inquired.

"Names go out of style in the future, and new ones go into style. The name Arthur is still used, but, for example, it is extremely rare for you to every meet someone named Merlin. Only a select few ever meet one."

That was when it started.

"What about my name?" Gwaine inquired.

The Doctor decided to ignore them for now.

DOCTOR: The Doctor. Since when did Krillitanes have wings?

FINCH: It's been our form for nearly ten generations now. Our ancestors invaded Bessan. The people there had some rather lovely wings. They made a million widows in one day. Just imagine.

Everyone looked sick.

DOCTOR: And now you're shaped human.

FINCH: A personal favourite, that's all.

DOCTOR: And the others?

FINCH: My brothers remain bat form. What you see is a simple morphic illusion. Scratch the surface and the true Krillitane lies beneath. And what of the Time Lords? I always thought of you as such a pompous race. Ancient, dusty senators, so frightened of change and chaos. And of course, they're all but extinct. Only you. The last.

DOCTOR: This plan of yours. What is it?
"That's going to work so well," Gwaine stated, a little bit annoyed that he didn't know if his name was going to be in style or not in the future years. "Ask the enemy what their plan is."

FINCH: You don't know.

DOCTOR: That's why I'm asking.

FINCH: Well, show me how clever you are. Work it out.

DOCTOR: If I don't like it, then it will stop.

"How are you going to stop them?" Elyan inquired.

"You'll see."

FINCH: Fascinating. Your people were peaceful to the point of indolence. You seem to be something new. Would you declare war on us, Doctor?

DOCTOR: I'm so old now. I used to have so much mercy. You get one warning. That was it.

FINCH: But we're not even enemies. Soon you will embrace us. The next time we meet, you will join with me. I promise you.

[Sarah's car]

MICKEY: Surveillance. If you ask me, it's just another way of saying go sit at the back of the class with the safety scissors and glitter. That'd be me talking to a metal dog, then.

Everyone grimaced a bit at his situation.

[IT classroom]

(Sarah isn't making progress with the school computers.)

SARAH: It's not working.

ROSE: Give it to me.

SARAH: Used to work first time in my day.

ROSE: Well, things were a lot simpler back then.

"Is that supposed to be an insult?" Gwen questioned.

"I suppose so."

SARAH: Rose, can I give you a bit of advice?

ROSE: I've got a feeling you're about to.

SARAH: I know how intense a relationship with the Doctor can be, and I don't want you to feel I'm intruding.

ROSE: I don't feel threatened by you, if that's what you mean.
SARAH: Right. Good. Because I'm not interested in picking up where we left off.

"Does that mean no more fighting?" Percival asked hopefully. He didn't like seeing people fight.

ROSE: No? With the big sad eyes and the robot dog? What else were you doing last night?

SARAH: I was just saying how hard it was adjusting to life back on Earth.

ROSE: The thing is, when you two met they'd only just got rid of rationing. No wonder all that space stuff was a bit too much for you.

SARAH: I had no problem with space stuff. I saw things you wouldn't believe.

"We probably won't believe it either then." Arthur assumed.

"That's probably correct." the Doctor responded.

ROSE: Try me.

SARAH: Mummies.

Some of their jaws dropped.

ROSE: I've met ghosts.

More jaws dropped.

SARAH: Robots. Lots of robots.

"It's not really surprising if we don't know what it is." Leon shrugged.

ROSE: Slitheen, in Downing Street.

Everyone looked confused.

SARAH: Daleks!

The confused looks were directed at the Doctor, but he appeared not to notice.

ROSE: Met the Emperor.

SARAH: Anti-matter monsters.

ROSE: Gas masked zombies.

SARAH: Real living dinosaurs.

ROSE: Real living werewolf.

SARAH: The Loch Ness Monster!

"That's the last argument, right?" Gwen almost pleaded.

"Yes," the Doctor groaned, thinking of what was going to happen next.
ROSE: Seriously? Listen to us. It's like me and my mate Shireen. The only time we fell out was over a man, and we're arguing over the Doctor. With you, did he do that thing where he'd explain something at like, ninety miles per hour, and you'd go, what? and he'd look at you like you'd just dribbled on your shirt?

"I don't do that." the Doctor scowled.

SARAH: All the time. Does he still stroke bits of the Tardis?

ROSE: Yeah! Yeah, he does. I'm like, do you two want to be alone?

"Excuse me?" the Doctor was mildly surprised, since he didn't experience this part. He was kind of offended, too.

But that wasn't important.

(The sisters have bonded and laugh. The Doctor enters.)

DOCTOR: How's it going?

(They keep laughing.)

DOCTOR: What? Listen, I need to find out what's programmed inside these.

(Hysteria is setting in.)

DOCTOR: What? Stop it!

"You seem to be frustrated." Gaius noticed.

The Doctor nodded.

[Headmaster's office]

(Finch opens the door on the dinner ladies and teachers.)

FINCH: Brothers, we must initiate the final phase. Get the children inside and seal the school. Our time has come, my brothers. Today we shall become Gods.

[School yard]

(Games of football and netball are interrupted by a klaxon.)

TANNOY: All pupils to class immediately. And would all members of staff congregate in the staff room.

"How did the voice get all the way over there?" Arthur inquired.

"It's not important."

The Once and Future King looked rather annoyed.

MELISSA: Breaktime's finished early. Isn't that fantastic?
(Kenny is the last to go inside.)

[IT classroom]

(Rose turns children away at the door.)

ROSE: No, no. This classroom's out of bounds. You've all got to go to the South Hall. Off you go. South Hall!

[Staff room]

PARSONS: What is it now, Mister Finch?

FINCH: A slight change in the timetable. We're having an early lunch.

(Wagner shuts the door on us. Flaps and screams come from inside.)

"So, the staff members that weren't part of his crew were eaten?" Gwen looked sick.

At least Arthur managed not to look away; he seemed to be understanding that the reincarnations won't be the same person as the original.

[IT classroom]

(The Doctor does his old trick of looping wires around his neck and shoulders as he tries to get inside the CPU.)

DOCTOR: I can't shift it.

SARAH: I thought the sonic screwdriver could open anything!

DOCTOR: Anything except a deadlock seal. There's got to be something inside here. What're they teaching those kids?

(Kenny doesn't go into a classroom.)

[Headmaster's office]

FINCH: Close the school.

(Alien symbols come up on his computer screen, then Security Override. He burps. The external doors all slam shut. In another computer room, the children are typing quickly again.)

"Not again." Leon groaned.

They didn't want to believe that children could be used like that.

[IT classroom]

(The symbols are all on these screens too.)

SARAH: You wanted the programme? There it is.
DOCTOR: Some sort of code.

(It starts to resolve itself. Kenny runs along the corridors, looking into the classrooms. All the children are working at computers. He runs downstairs to the main entrance, and tries to open the doors. Mickey spots him.)

"Is Kenny the only one with common sense?" Gwaine smirked.

"I think he just didn't want to go back to class." Elyan responded.

DOCTOR: No. No, that can't be.

[Main entrance]

KENNY: They've taken them all!

MICKEY: What?

KENNY: They've taken all the children!

"Why did he assume that? They could have been peacefully having class." Arthur reasoned.

"He didn't see it that way, Princess."

[Sarah's car]

(Mickey pushes the buttons on K9's back.)

MICKEY: Come on, I need some help.

(He hits K9's head, and it starts up.)

K9: System restarting. All primary drives functioning.

They decided to ignore the gibberish the tin dog was speaking.

MICKEY: You're working! Okay, no time to explain. we need to get inside the school. Do you have like, I don't know, a lock picking device?

K9: We are in a car.

MICKEY: Maybe a drill attachment?

K9: We are in a car.

MICKEY: Fat lot of good you are.

K9: We are in a car.

MICKEY: Wait a second. We're in a car. (to Kenny) Get back!

"That took a while for him to figure out." Gwen stated dryly.

[IT classroom]
DOCTOR: The Skasis Paradigm. They're trying to crack the Skasis Paradigm.

They all looked confused again.

SARAH: The Skasis what?

DOCTOR: The God maker. The universal theory. Crack that equation and you've got control of the building blocks of the universe. Time and space and matter, yours to control.

ROSE: What, and the kids are like a giant computer?

DOCTOR: Yes. And their learning power is being accelerated by the oil. That oil from the kitchens, it works as a, as a conducting agent. Makes the kids cleverer.

ROSE: But that oil's on the chips. I've been eating them.

DOCTOR: What's fifty nine times thirty five?

ROSE: Two thousand and sixty five. Oh, my God.

"So she can use her big brain to stop it now, right?" Gwaine predicted.

SARAH: But why use children? Can't they use adults?

DOCTOR: No, it's got to be children. The God maker needs imagination to crack it. They're not just using the children's brains to break the code, they're using their souls.

They looked sick at the thought of using their souls.

"Now that has to be sorcery."

"To an extent, it is."

"So this is proof that all magic is evil." Arthur decided.

All the other humans frowned at that.

"You will see in other moments that magic can be used both for good and evil. Like a sword." the Doctor explained, regretting agreeing that it was magic.

(The Headmaster has entered the room.)

FINCH: Let the lesson begin. Think of it, Doctor. With the Paradigm solved, reality becomes clay in our hands. We can shape the universe and improve it.

DOCTOR: Oh yeah? The whole of creation with the face of Mister Finch? Call me old fashioned, but I like things as they are.

FINCH: You act like such a radical, and yet all you want to do is preserve the old order? Think of the changes that could be made if this power was used for good.

"It would be a big improvement, but I still don't think it is right." Gwen frowned.

DOCTOR: What, by someone like you?

SARAH: Doctor, don't listen to him.

"Yeah, Doctor, don't listen!" Gwaine punched the air once more.

FINCH: And you could be with him throughout eternity. Young, fresh, never wither, never age, never die. Their lives are so fleeting. So many goodbyes. How lonely you must be, Doctor. Join us.

DOCTOR: I could save everyone.

FINCH: Yes.

DOCTOR: I could stop the war.

SARAH: No. The universe has to move forward. Pain and loss, they define us as much as happiness or love. Whether it's a world, or a relationship, everything has its time. And everything ends.

"And that is why it shouldn't be cracked." Gwen stated.

All the other humans agreed. It would cause more harm than good.

(The Doctor throws a chair at the big screen, smashing it.)

DOCTOR: Out!

[School entrance]

(Mickey drives Sarah's car through the glass doors.)

MICKEY: Come on!

[Staircase]

(Finch summons his brother. They throw off their disguises in the corridors and fly to him. Mickey and Kenny meet the Doctor, Sarah Jane and Rose at the bottom of the staircase.)

MICKEY: What is going on?

(The Krillitanes are coming.)

They all shuddered once more.

[Canteen]

(Finch walks in followed by the bats.)

KENNY: Are they my teachers?

DOCTOR: Yeah. Sorry.
Gwen felt a pang of sadness for the boy.

FINCH: We need the Doctor alive. As for the others? You can feast.

They all looked sick once more, and Arthur winced. Some things would never change.

(The Krillitanes swoop. They hide under the tables. Suddenly a laser beam fells one of the bats. Finch is furious.)

SARAH: K9!

K9: Suggest you engage running mode, mistress.

DOCTOR: Come on!

(Everyone runs.)

DOCTOR: K9, hold them back!


(The Doctor seals the doors.)

K9: Power supply failing.

FINCH: Forget the shooty dog thing.

K9: Power supply failing.

"Is that sorcery?" Arthur asked.

"No, it is futuristic weapons."

[Physics laboratory]

DOCTOR: It's the oil. Krillitane life forms can't handle the oil. That's it! They've changed their physiology so often, even their own oil is toxic to them. How much was there in the kitchens?

"So that is why the lady was screaming." Leon nodded in understanding.

ROSE: Barrels of it.

(The Krillitanes are battering at the door.)

DOCTOR: Okay, we need to get to the kitchens. Mickey.

MICKEY: What now, hold the coats?

DOCTOR: Get all the children unplugged and out of the school. Now then, bats, bats, bats. How do we fight bats?

(Kenny sets off the fire alarm. The noise hurts the Krillitane's ears. The humans escape.)
"What is that?" all the humans clamped their hands over their ears.

"It is basically a device that warns them of a fire." the Doctor explained.

The humans nodded and slowly removed their hands from their ears.

[Corridor]

(Finch manages to punch through the wall and pull out the alarm wires. The noise stops.)

FINCH: Get after them.

[Outside the canteen]

K9: Master.

DOCTOR: Come on, boy. Good boy.

[Classroom]

MICKEY: Okay, listen everyone. We've got to get out of here.

(The children don't hear him, or notice when he waves his hand in front of their face.)

They looked sick again, and Gwaine actually threw up behind him.

They weren't sure if it was from what they were watching or alcohol.

[Kitchen]

(The Doctor tries his sonic screwdriver on the barrels of oil.)

DOCTOR: They've been deadlock sealed. Finch must've done that. I can't open them.

K9: The vats would not withstand a direct hit from my laser, but my batteries are failing.

DOCTOR: Right. Everyone out the back door. K9, stay with me.

[Classroom]

(Mickey follows the computer power leads back to - a single wall switch. Click, fizz, and the screens go blank.)

"At least he found a way to stop it." Gwen looked relieved.

MICKEY: Everyone get out. Now!

(The children get up.)

MICKEY: Come on, move! Let's go! Let's go!

(The Krillitanes pause to disguise themselves as humans again.)

[Kitchen]
(The Doctor lines up the oil barrels for K9 to shoot at.)

K9: Capacity for only one shot, Master. For maximum impact, I must be stationed directly beside the vat.

DOCTOR: But you'll be trapped inside.

"No!" Gwaine fake-sobbed dramatically. The others continued to scoot away from him.

"Where is Merlin when you need him?" the knight sighed.

K9: That is correct.

DOCTOR: I can't let you do that.

K9: No alternative possible, Master.

DOCTOR: Goodbye, old friend.

K9: Goodbye, Master.

DOCTOR: You good dog.

The Doctor smiled fondly at the memory.

K9: Affirmative.

[Outside the kitchen]

(The Doctor seals the door.)

SARAH: Where's K9?

DOCTOR: We need to run.

SARAH: Where is he? What have you done!

"Yeah." Gwaine stated. "Don't take a dog away from a woman." he instructed. "It will make her really mad at you."

"And you know this because?" Arthur inquired.

"No reason."

[Kitchen]

FINCH: When you find him, eat him if you must, but bring me his brain.

(They find K9.)

FINCH: The little dog with a nasty bite. Not so powerful now, are you?

(K9 fires a sustained burst at the nearest barrel. The Krillitanes get splattered with their own oil.)
"Go...K9!" there was a pause as Elyan tried to remember the dog's name.

[School yard]

MICKEY: Come on, guys! Let's go, let's go! Run!

[Kitchen]

JACKSON: Burning!

FINCH: You bad dog.

K9: Affirmative.

"Didn't he agree that he was a good dog only moments before this?" Gaius questioned.

Everyone laughed at the memory.

[Outside the school]

(The school goes KaBOOM! The children rejoice as paper rains down on them.)

KENNY: Yes!

MELISSA: Did you have something to do with it?

KENNY: Yeah, I did.

MELISSA: Oh my God. Kenny blew up the school! It was Kenny!

"They seemed happy that the school exploded and happy that they got to go inside the school early..." Leon looked a bit confused.

CHILDREN: Yay! Kenny! Kenny! Kenny! Kenny! Kenny!

"It's the same with them." Arthur agreed.

DOCTOR: I'm sorry.

SARAH: It's all right. He was just a daft metal dog. It's fine, really.

(Sarah bursts into tears. The Doctor tries to comfort her.)

"And that is why I will never understand women. One moment they say it is fine, the next they are crying." Elyan shrugged.

"Kind of reminds you of Merlin." Arthur added on.

They all laughed.

[Outside the Tardis]

(Which has relocated itself from the destroyed school to Belle Vue Park. Sarah Jane walks up and the Doctor steps out.)
DOCTOR: Cup of tea?

[Tardis]

SARAH: You've redecorated.

DOCTOR: Do you like it?

SARAH: Oh, I, I do. Yeah. I preferred it as it was, but er, yeah. It'll do.

The Doctor grinned a bit.

ROSE: I love it.

SARAH: Hey, you what's forty seven times three hundred and sixty nine?

ROSE: No idea. It's gone now. The oil's faded.

SARAH: But you're still clever. More than a match for him.

ROSE: You and me both. Doctor?

DOCTOR: Er, we're about to head off, but you could come with us.

"Yeah! Go with him!" Gwaine grinned.

SARAH: No. I can't do this anymore. Besides, I've got a much bigger adventure ahead. Time I stopped waiting for you and found a life of my own.

"No!" the same knight groaned.

MICKEY: Can I come? No, not with you, I mean with you. Because I'm not the tin dog, and I want to see what's out there.

SARAH: Oh, go on, Doctor. Sarah Jane Smith, a Mickey Smith. You need a Smith on board.

DOCTOR: Okay then, I could do with a laugh.

MICKEY: Rose, is that okay?

ROSE: (lying) No, great. Why not?

"Is she lying?" Percival inquired.

"Yeah, she was." the Doctor agreed.

"She likes you." Gwaine said dully.

Gaius laughed at that, reminded of the time when Merlin had said the exact same thing.

SARAH: Well, I'd better go.

ROSE: What do I do? Do I stay with him?

SARAH: Yes. Some things are worth getting your heart broken for. Find me, if you need to,
one day. Find me.

[Outside the Tardis]

SARAH: It's daft, but I haven't ever thanked you for that time. And like I said, I wouldn't have missed it for the world.

DOCTOR: Something to tell the grandkids.

SARAH: Oh, I think it'll be someone else's grandkids now.

They sighed in relief, knowing the first moment was almost over.

DOCTOR: Right. Yes, sorry. I didn't get a chance to ask. You haven't? There hasn't been anyone? You know.

SARAH: Well, there was this one guy. I travelled with him for a while, but he was a tough act to follow. Goodbye, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Oh, it's not goodbye.

SARAH: Do say it. Please. This time. Say it.

DOCTOR: Goodbye, my Sarah Jane.

"Do you often not say goodbye?" Arthur asked.

"I don't like goodbyes." the Doctor idly stated.

(He lifts her off her feet in a big hug, then goes back inside the Tardis. Sarah Jane turns her back and walks away as the Tardis starts to dematerialise. At the last moment, she turns back to see -)

SARAH: K9!

"Yes!" Gwaine punched the air once more.

K9: Mistress.

SARAH: But you were blown up.

K9: The Master rebuilt me. My systems are much improved with new undetectable hyperlink facilities.

The humans decided to continue ignoring the gibberish.

SARAH: Oh, he replaced you with a brand new model.

K9: Affirmative.

SARAH: Yeah, he does that. Come on, you. Home. We've got work to do.

K9: Affirmative.
"And that is it for this moment." the Doctor concluded.

"Who's next?" Arthur inquired.

"I don't know, it's random." the Gallifreyan answered. "But we might as well get this done as quickly as possible."

They all turned back to the crystals.
Midnight

Chapter Summary

They watch Merlin's episode.

Chapter Notes

I own nothing! Sorry if anyone is out of character. I altered the script slightly to fit magic and a couple more moments into the episode.

"You say it is random." Gaius observed. "Does that mean Emrys could be any one of these? Not necessarily last or anything?"

The others' attention was brought to the Doctor. They had all assumed that Emrys would be last.

"As I said, it is random. It could be anyone." the Doctor shrugged.

[Spa]

(On a glittering alien world, an attendant brings a telephone to Donna. She is lounging by the pool, wearing a bathrobe.)

The Doctor looked away in sadness.

"Who's that?" Gwaine looked her up and down. "And what is she doing?"

"That's Donna," the Doctor stated without looking. "She is currently at a spa, a place in the future where people go to relax."

The others nodded in understanding before deciding that they would ask the Doctor what everything was at a later time so they don't interrupt the crystals.

DONNA: I said, no.

[Public telephone]

DOCTOR: Sapphire waterfall. It's a waterfall made of sapphires.

"What?" they all looked puzzled.

"Where are you?" Arthur asked.

"A planet called Midnight." the Doctor said casually.

They nodded.
DOCTOR [OC]: This enormous jewel, the size of a glacier

Reaches the Cliffs of Oblivion, and then shatters into sapphires at the edge. They fall a hundred thousand feet into a crystal ravine.

DONNA: I bet you say that to all the girls.

Gwaine burst out laughing.

"I do not!" the Doctor informed him.

"But still...I really like her!" he chuckled.

DOCTOR: Oh, come on. They're boarding now. It's no fun if I see it on me own. Four hours, that's all it takes.

DONNA [OC]: No, that's four hours there and four hours back. That's like a school trip.

DONNA: I'd rather go sunbathing.

DOCTOR [OC]: You be careful, that's Xtonic sunlight.

DONNA: Oh, I'm safe. It says in the brochure this glass is fifteen feet thick.

DOCTOR [OC]: All right, I give up.

"Fifteen feet thick glass? Most people would be lucky to have a piece of it!" Gwen gasped.

"It is a different time as well. This is nearly 2000 years in the future. Glass becomes much more abundant." the Doctor assured.

"Oh," she nodded.

DOCTOR: I'll be back for dinner. We'll try that anti-gravity restaurant. With bibs.

DONNA [OC]: That's a date.

"Anti-gravity?" Arthur questioned.

None of them had ever heard of this before.

"It is something that will come to light in due time." the Doctor stated.

DONNA: Well, not a date. Oh, you know what I mean. Oh, get off.
DOCTOR: See you later.
DONNA [OC]: Oi.

"What's the fun if you're being careful?" Gwaine snickered.

DOCTOR: Taking a big space truck with a bunch of strangers across a diamond planet called Midnight? What could possibly go wrong?
He hangs the phone up.

(The Doctor has taken his seat in the passenger compartment of the bus cum aeroplane. Other passengers are still boarding.)
HOSTESS: Complimentary juice pack and complimentary peanuts.
SKY: Just the headphones, please.
HOSTESS: There you go.
(The hostess leaves the woman in the blue suit and goes to the Doctor.)
HOSTESS: That's the headphones for channels one to thirty six. Modem link for 3D vidgames. Complimentary earplugs. Complimentary slippers. Complimentary juice pack and complimentary peanuts. I must warn you some products may contain nuts.

"What is she supposed to be?" Elyan inquired.

"She is the hostess of the ride. Basically, she makes sure everyone is safe and content throughout the duration of the trip." the Doctor was paying close attention now, trying to figure out what her name was.

"That is a lot of complimentary things." Leon noticed. "And peanuts do contain nuts...isn't it obvious?"

"I think it meant in general." Percival observed.

DOCTOR: That'll be the peanuts.
HOSTESS: Enjoy your trip.
DOCTOR: Oh, I can't wait. Allons-y.

"What does that mean?" Gwen asked.

The Doctor grinned in reply, knowing the answer was coming.
HOSTESS: I'm sorry?
DOCTOR: It's French, for let's go.

"How many languages do you know?" Leon asked, interested.

The Doctor grinned secretively. "Let's just say a lot."

HOSTESS: Fascinating.

(The Second Doctor's son, David Troughton, and his petite Indian assistant have taken the seats behind the Doctor.)

HOSTESS: Headphones for channels one to thirty six.

Everyone except the Doctor looked confused once more, but they decided not to comment on it.

HOBBS: Oh no, thank you, not for us.

DEE DEE: Earplugs, please.

HOSTESS: There you go.

HOBBS: They call it the Sapphire Waterfall, but it's no such thing. Sapphire's an aluminium oxide, but the glacier is just compound silica with iron pigmentation.

They all looked confused once more.

The Doctor decided to explain this time. "Science advances greatly in the future. Also, the society of the future advances so far that people of any class have access to a good education. Hobbes was not a nobleman or anything, but he still had the ability to gain knowledge. It really helps the kingdoms and nations go farther and succeed more."

The all looked at him in amazement.

(The hostess moves on to a couple, man and woman.)

HOSTESS: Complimentary juice pack and complimentary peanuts.

VAL: Thank you.

HOBBS: Have you got that pillow for my neck?

DEE DEE: Yes, sir.

HOBBS: And the pills?

DEE DEE: Yes, all measured out for you. There you go.

"She sounds kind of like his servant..." Arthur stated.

"Dee Dee is more like his assistant, but I suppose it may be similar." the Doctor corrected.

(Hobbes leans over to meet the Doctor.)


DOCTOR: I'm the Doctor. Hello.

HOBBS: It's my fourteenth time.

DOCTOR: Oh. My first.

"How could he have gone fourteen times?" Gwen raised an eyebrow.

"Well, he's a professor..." the Doctor trailed off, unsure where to go next.

"He would go so many times to study the planet, am I correct?" Gaius finished.

The Doctor nodded.

DEE DEE: And I'm Dee Dee, Dee Dee Blasco.

HOBBS: Don't bother the man. Where's my water bottle?

HOSTESS: Complimentary slippers, complimentary juice pack, and complimentary peanuts. I must warn you some products may contain nuts.
"Is that Merlin?" Gwen gasped.

Gaius's eyes widened as he glanced nervously at Arthur. This was it. Emrys. But, perhaps he wouldn't get it until later...

"That boy goes by the name Jethro, but yes, that is Merlin." the Doctor explained.

Only Gaius understood the "goes by" reference.

"He looks very...dark." Gwaine observed.

"Jethro was just in a bad time. He had been depressed for a while, and so incredibly lonely." the Doctor made eye contact with the physician.

Gaius nodded. There had to be some way to help. Anyone would get like that if they lived past the lives of everyone they cared about.

Arthur's eyebrow raised. Why was Merlin acting like this? He's usually happy and joyful, and Uther seemed to act similar, albeit different in a way. What had happened? Not that he'd ever admit it, but worry was starting to grow inside of him.

Similar feelings were growing inside everyone else as well.

**VAL:** Don't be silly. Come and sit with us. Look, we get slippers.

**BIFF:** Jethro. Do what your mother says.

"Those are his parents?" Arthur looked confused. "They look nothing like him."

Gaius also looked confused. Merlin wouldn't have parents living since he was an immortal.

"They weren't actually his parents." the Doctor sighed. "Merlin is sort of a traveller, and these two adults decided that someone as young as he," He paused, looking at Gaius, "shouldn't be travelling by themselves. It becomes a lot clearer later: they have none of the parental instincts they would have if they were actually his parents."

**JETHRO:** I'm sitting here.

**BIFF:** Oh, he's ashamed of us, but he doesn't mind us paying, does he?

**VAL:** Oh, don't you two start. Should I save the juice pack or have it now? Look, peach and clementine.

(Boarding is complete.)

**HOSTESS:** Ladies and gentlemen, and variations thereupon, welcome on board the Crusader Fifty. If you would fasten your seatbelts, we'll be leaving any moment. Doors.

(The doors close.)

"The doors close without people pushing them?" Leon inquired.

"People created contraptions to do it for them." The Doctor looked amused. "Not magic, but still."

**HOSTESS:** Shields down.

(The windows are shielded.)

**HOSTESS:** I'm afraid the view is shielded until we reach the Waterfall Palace. Also, a reminder. Midnight has no air, so please don't touch the exterior door seals. Fire exit at the rear, and should we need to use it, you first. Now I will hand you over to Driver Joe.

**JOE [OC]:** Driver Joe at the wheel. There's been a diamondfall at the Winter Witch Canyon,
so we'll be taking a slight detour, as you'll see on the map. The journey covers five hundred kliks to the Multifaceted Coast. Duration is estimated at four hours. Thank you for travelling with us, and as they used to say in the olden days, wagons roll.

The knights looked utterly amazed at the new technology.
(The shuttle shakes a bit.)
HOSTESS: For your entertainment, we have the Music Channel playing retrovids of Earth classics.
(Dropdown screens show a pop video of some woman.)

"Who?" Elyan was cut off.

Gwaine had put one of his arms around the other man's shoulders and said "Future...." in a serious way.
HOSTESS: Also, the latest artistic installation from Ludovico Klein.
(Something holographic.)

"That is getting a bit chaotic," Gwen frowned.

The others, including the Doctor, nodded in agreement.
HOSTESS: Plus, for the youngsters, a rare treat. The Animation Archives.
(A projection of Betty Boop onto a screen in front of the drivers cabin door.)

Arthur groaned as if he had been stabbed. "Now, I don't want the future to happen..."
HOSTESS: Four hours of fun time. Enjoy.

"Not exactly what I'd call fun..." Elyan commented.
(That is why she hands out earplugs. Sky looks up from her book, very unhappy. The Doctor powers up his sonic screwdriver and suddenly it goes quiet. The screens return to their docks.)
HOBBES: Well, that's a mercy.

"Aye!" Gwaine cheered and took a swig of alcohol.

"I agree with this Hobbes person." Arthur concurred.
HOSTESS: I do apologise, ladies and gentlemen, and variations thereupon. We seem to had a failure of the Entertainment System.
DOCTOR: Oh.
VAL: But what do we do?

"Anything else?" Percival suggested as if it was the most obvious answer in existence.

"In the future, people become more dependent on stimulus. They lose the ability to entertain themselves. The people rely on that technology to keep them occupied." the Doctor explained.

"That sounds remarkably like a bad idea." Gwen frowned.

"Some say it is."
BIFF: We've got four hours of this? Four hours of just sitting here?
DOCTOR: Tell you what. We'll have to talk to each other instead.

"The horror!" Gwaine mocked.

[98 kliks later...]
The idea has caught on. Everyone is listening to Val and Biff's stories.

VAL: So Biff said, I'm going swimming.

BIFF: Oh, I was all ready. Trunks and everything. Nose plug.

"People prepare special things to go swimming?" Arthur inquired.

"Yup. In the future, people don't go swimming in normal clothes or nude." the Doctor shrugged. "Not very important."

VAL: He had this little nose plug. You should have seen him.

BIFF: And I went marching up to the lifeguard. And he was a Shamboni. You know, those big foreheads?

VAL: Great big forehead.

BIFF: And I said, where's the pool? And he said

BIFF + VAL: The pool is abstract.

"So it didn't exist?" Gwaine looked confused. "What's the point of that?"

The others were at a loss.

(Jethro is bored to tears.)

The knights chuckled slightly.

"I'm guessing Merlin has heard this many times." Gwen sighed. She wondered why this reincarnation acted so differently than normal Merlin. Uther had still had some of his core traits throughout both lives. Why hadn't Merlin retained his?

VAL: It wasn't a real pool.

BIFF: It was a concept.

DOCTOR: And you were wearing a nose plug.

BIFF: I was like this. Ooo, where's the pool?

[150 kliks later...]

(The Doctor and Dee Dee are in the galley, getting drinks from a thermos jug.)

DEE DEE: I'm just a second-year student, but I wrote a paper on the Lost Moon of Poosh, Professor Hobbes read it, liked it, took me on as researcher, just for the holidays. Well, I say researcher. Most of the time he's got me fetching and carrying. But it's all good experience.

"Anyone really can be educated." Leon looked amazed. "I didn't think it to be possible."

DOCTOR: And did they ever find it?

DEE DEE: Find what?

DOCTOR: The Lost Moon of Poosh.

DEE DEE: Oh, no. Not yet.

DOCTOR: Well. Maybe that'll be your great discovery, one day. Here's to Poosh.

DEE DEE: Poosh.

The knights, Gwen, and Gaius were simply to lost here to even ask for assistance.

[209 kliks later...]

(The Doctor is sitting with Sky as they unwrap their meals.)

DOCTOR: No, no, I'm with this friend of mine, Donna. She stayed behind in the Leisure
Palace. You?

"Donna is that lady from earlier, right?" Gwaine asked.

The Doctor nodded in confirmation.

"I liked her."

"I'm sure you did."

SKY: No, it's just me.

DOCTOR: Oh, I've done plenty of that. Travelling on my own. I love it. Do what you want, go anywhere.

SKY: No, I'm still getting used to it. I've found myself single rather recently, not by choice.

"Ouch." Gwaine knew all too well what that felt like.

DOCTOR: What happened?

SKY: Oh, the usual. She needed her own space, as they say. A different galaxy, in fact. I reckon that's enough space, don't you?

DOCTOR: Yeah. I had a friend who went to a different universe.

SKY: Oh, what's this, chicken or beef?

DOCTOR: I think it's both.

"How can it be both?" Arthur looked confused. "It is simply one or the other."

"Some things get combined in the future." The Doctor responded.

"Damn," Gwaine whispered. "Sometimes, I want to go to the future. Others, not so much,"

[251 kliks later...]

(Professor Hobbes is giving an illustrated lecture. Even Jethro is interested.)

"This must be interesting if Merlin is paying attention." Arthur emphasized the first part of his name like he usually does.

HOBBES: So, this is Midnight, do you see, bombarded by the sun. Xtonic rays, raw galvanic radiation. Dee Dee, next slide. It's my pet project. Actually, I'm the first person to research this. Because, you see, the history is fascinating. Because there is no history. There's no life in this entire system. There couldn't be. Before the Leisure Palace Company moved in, no one had come here in all eternity. No living thing.

JETHRO: But how do you know? I mean, if no one can go outside.

"He was the cleverest on board." the Doctor stated.

"Really? Then, the future must be doomed." Arthur groaned.

"Now that I look back on it, it is almost like he knew what was going to happen. Something bad will happen in this, and every time he said something, it seemed to be hinting to something that is going to happen." the Doctor realized.

Gaius nervously looked over the others. Knowing the future like what the Doctor is describing would be similar to a seer. He knew Merlin wasn't a seer now, but it is possible for it to have developed later on. He hoped no one else realized this; it could end badly.

VAL: Oh, his imagination. Here we go.
"His imagination." Arthur groaned. "I guess something won't change."

DOCTOR: He's got a point, though.

HOBBS: Exactly. We look upon this world through glass, safe inside our metal box. Even the Leisure Palace was lowered down from orbit. And here we are now, crossing Midnight, but never touching it.
(Crunch, rattle, grind.)

"Kind of precise timing, don't you think?" Leon winced.

"Yeah," the Doctor suddenly announced. "This is where stuff starts going wrong, by the way."

VAL: We've stopped. Have we stopped?

BIFF: Are we there?

DEE DEE: We can't be, it's too soon.

HOBBS: They don't stop. Crusader vehicles never stop.

HOSTESS: If you could just return to your seats. It's just a small delay.
(The hostess goes to the intercom phone.)

BIFF: Maybe just a pit stop.

"Didn't Hobbes just say that they never stop?" Gwen couldn't see their logic.

"They weren't the most...open-minded of people. Stubborn. They didn't really like to listen to anyone." the Doctor explained.

HOSTESS: What's going on?

HOBBS: There's no pit to stop in. I've been on this expedition fourteen times. They never stop.

SKY: Well, evidently we have stopped, so there's no point in denying it.

JETHRO: We've broken down.

VAL: Thanks, Jethro.

JETHRO: In the middle of nowhere.

The knights laughed at that.

"He is baiting them." Elyan realized.

BIFF: That's enough. Now stop it.

HOSTESS: Ladies and gentlemen, and variations thereupon. We're just experiencing a short delay. The driver needs to stabilise the engine feeds. It's perfectly routine, so if you could just stay in your seats.

"I get the feeling that she is not telling the truth." Gaius voiced.

"It was part of her job to keep the passengers calm. Yes, she was lying, but everyone would have panicked had she done so." The Doctor patiently explained.

(The Doctor walks towards the driver's door.)

HOSTESS: No, I'm sorry, sir. I. Could you please?

(The Doctor flashes his psychic paper.)

DOCTOR: There you go. Engine expert. Two ticks.

(The Doctor opens the driver's door.)

HOSTESS: I'm sorry, sir. if you could just sit down. You're not supposed to be in there.

[Cockpit]
(There are two men in the compartment.)

JOE: Sorry. If you could return to your seat, sir.

"I don't think that will happen." Percival looked amused.

DOCTOR: Company insurance. Let's see if we can get an early assessment. So, what's the problem, Driver Joe?

JOE: We're stabilising the engine feeds. Won't take long.

DOCTOR: Er, no, because that's the engine feed, that line there, and it's fine. And it's a micropetrol engine, so stabilising doesn't really make sense, does it? Sorry. I'm the Doctor, I'm very clever. So, what's wrong?

"You are." Gwen complimented, and the Doctor beamed at her.

"I did not understand a word of what you just said." Gwaine laughed good-naturedly.

CLAUDE: We just stopped. Look, all systems fine, everything's working, but we're not moving.

(The Doctor scans with his screwdriver.)

DOCTOR: Yeah, you're right. No faults. And who are you?

CLAUDE: Claude. I'm the mechanic. Trainee.

The Doctor winced. They were all capable of doing such wondrous things, and Claude was just a trainee!

DOCTOR: Nice to meet you.

JOE: I've sent a distress signal. They should dispatch a rescue truck, top speed.

DOCTOR: How long till they get here?

JOE: About an hour.

"That is quick." Arthur's eyes widened.

"In the future, they know exactly where the people are. They don't have to send out search parties; they just go directly to the place." the Doctor smiled at their curiosity.

He loved humans.

DOCTOR: Well, since we're waiting, shall we take a look outside? Just lift the screens a bit?

JOE: It's a hundred percent Xtonic out there. We'd be vaporised.

DOCTOR: Nah. Those windows are Finitoglass. They'd give you a couple of minutes. Go on, live a little.

JOE: Well.

(He raises the front screen.)

They all gasped.

"Woah....future...." Gwaine drank some ale.

JOE: Wow.

DOCTOR: Oh, that is beautiful.

CLAUDE: Look at all those diamonds. Poisoned by the sun. No-one can ever touch them.

DOCTOR: Joe, you said we took a detour?

JOE: Just about forty kliks to the west.

DOCTOR: Is that a recognised path?

JOE: No, it's a new one. The computer worked it out on automatic.
"So, anything could be there." Elyan commented.

"I thought that there was no life there." Percival mentioned.

"Perhaps they were wrong."
DOCTOR: So we're the first. This piece of ground. No one's ever been here before. Not in the whole of recorded history.
CLAUDE: Did you just? No, sorry, it's nothing.
DOCTOR: What did you see?
CLAUDE: Just there. That ridge. Like, like a shadow. Just, just for a second.

Elyan nodded. "So there is life."

The knights looked at the screen warily.
DOCTOR: What sort of shadow?
(Beep, beep, beep)
JOE: Xtonic rising. Shields down.
CLAUDE: Look, look. There it is, there it is. Look, there.
DOCTOR: Where? What was it?
(The shields close.)

The Doctor thought that over a bit. Was it possible that by opening the shield, the creatures were alerted to their presence in the vehicle? Would they have ignored them if he hadn't made them open it? That would mean that their deaths were his fault.

Great, more faults to add to his emotions.
CLAUDE: Like just something shifting. Something sort of dark, like it was running.
DOCTOR: Running which way?
CLAUDE: Towards us.

They glanced at each other nervously.

"Merlin will be okay at the end, right?" Arthur demanded. He was starting to get worried for his manservant.

"Fit as a fiddle." the Doctor promised.

The Once and Future King breathed a sigh of relief.
JOE: Right, Doctor, back to your seat. And, er, not a word. Rescue's on its way. If you could close the door. Thank you.

[Shuttle]

(Sky is waiting by the door as the Doctor comes out.)
SKY: What did they say? Did they tell you? What is it? What's wrong?
DOCTOR: Oh, just stabilising. Happens all the time.
SKY: I don't need this. I'm on a schedule. This is completely unnecessary.

"Schedules are boring." Gwaine frowned.

"But there for a reason." Arthur reminded.
HOSTESS: Back to your seats, thank you.
(The hostess goes into the cockpit.)

DEE DEE: Excuse me, Doctor, but they're micropetrol engines, aren't they?

"Micropetrol?" Gwen looked confused.

"More future stuff." the Doctor waved it off. "It would not bode well if you lot knew too much about the future; it could change drastically if you did."

The knights nodded. They supposed that made sense.

HOBBS: Now, don't bother the man.

DEE DEE: My father was a mechanic. Micropetrol doesn’t stabilise. What does stabilise mean?

DOCTOR: Well. Bit of flim-flam. Don't worry, they're sorting it out.

HOBBS: So it's not the engines?

DOCTOR: It's just a little pause, that's all.

HOBBS: How much air have we got?

"What do they mean?" Leon inquired.

"We were crossing a planet with no air suitable for humans, and all that was separating us between it was the transport." the Doctor vaguely explained. "Only a certain amount of air can take up that space, and there is nowhere to get any extra from."

"So they could suffocate without ever having someone strangle them?" Gaius looked interested. "There are some disease that can cause suffocation due to an excess amount of fluid in the lungs."

The Doctor nodded. These humans were so, so brilliant. "They had a sort of filter, though."

DOCTOR: Professor, it's fine.

VAL: What did he say?

DOCTOR: Nothing.

VAL: Are we running out of air?

"Merlin's fake parents have to be the most annoying people I've ever met." Elyan groaned.

"How did he put up with them?" Gwaine asked.

"I don't think he had very much of a choice." he responded.

(The hostess reenters the compartment.)

HOBBS: I was just speculating.

BIFF: Is that right, miss? Are we running out of air?

"Dear God, it is almost like they have hysteria." Gaius gave the image his famous eyebrow.

VAL: Is that what the Captain said?

HOSTESS: If you could all just remain calm.

VAL: How much air have we got?

JETHRO: Just stop it.

"I never thought I'd say this," Arthur winced. "But Merlin is being the voice of reason for once."

The Doctor grinned. "I told you that he was the most intelligent and open-minded person onboard."

"Well, now I can believe that." he agreed. "It must just be the reincarnation, thought. Our Merlin isn't anything like that."
Gaius and the Doctor met each other's gaze. Both of them knew the truth. Merlin was Emrys. But how would they respond to it?

"So, what are we going to do when we find this Emrys?" Gwaine seemed to know what they were thinking about.

"It depends on his intentions." the king announced. "I have learned that not all magic users are evil, like the druids. If this Emrys is a druid or peaceful, then we will allow him to remain. If he is as powerful as everyone says, we cannot let him fall into Morgana's clutches, and if we were to try to defeat him, we would be crushed immediately." Arthur let his pride take a blow for this subject.

"Emrys is a druid." Gaius informed him. "He was originally a druidic prophecy, but if he is here, then he would be a druid. The King of the Druids, actually. If you were to kill him, the druids wouldn't be so peaceful anymore."

The king nodded at the advice. "So, we're going to hear him out."

HOSTESS: I assure you, everything is under control.

BIFF: Well, doesn't look like it to me.

VAL: Well, he said it.

DEE DEE: It's fine. The air is on a circular filter.

VAL: He started it

(General hubbub.)

DOCTOR: Everyone! Quiet! Thank you. Now, if you'd care to listen to my good friend Dee Dee.

"You just met her and you are already good friends?" Arthur asked incredulously. "Merlin would say the exact same thing."

"It's called being friendly, Princess." Gwaine drank some ale.

DEE DEE: Oh. Er, it's just that, well, the air's on a circular filter, so we could stay breathing for ten years.

DOCTOR: There you go. And I've spoken to the Captain. I can guarantee you everything's fine.

(Thump, thump.)

"Why is everything so perfectly timed to go against your reassurances?" Percival winced at his bad luck.

"It certainly seems like that." the Doctor sighed.

VAL: What was that?

HOBBS: It must be the metal. We're cooling down. It's just settling.

DEE DEE: Rocks. It could be rocks falling.

BIFF: What I want to know is, how long do we have to sit here.

"I really don't like Biff or Val." Elyan commented. "I don't know how Merlin is standing them."

"Ignoring them, probably." Gwen suggested.

(Thump, thump, on another part of the hull.)

SKY: What is that?

VAL: There's someone out there.

HOBBS: Now, don't be ridiculous.
DEE DEE: Like I said, it could be rocks.
HOSTESS: We're out in the open. Nothing could fall against the sides.

"Then, something must be out there." Leon looked intrigued.
(Thump, thump.)
DOCTOR: Knock, knock.
JETHRO: Who's there?

The knights laughed.

"Trust Merlin to make a joke at an inappropriate time." Gwaine grinned.
SKY: Is there something out there? Well? Anyone?
(Thump, thump).
SKY: What the hell is making that noise?
HOBBS: I'm sorry, but the light out there is Xtonic. That means it would destroy any living thing in a split second. It is impossible for someone to be outside.

"Maybe something is protecting them." Gaius proposed. "A hard shell or some enchantment."

"Are you saying that this attack could be magical?" Arthur asked.

"Hypothetically. But remember that magic is only a tool." he advised.

Leon nodded. "I was once healed by magic. I had been attacked, stabbed through the chest. Probably should have killed me. But I woke up in a druid camp, my chest healed and magic being used to grow crops, among other things."

The king nodded. He was starting to get it. Magic was just like a sword or arrow.
(Thump, thump.)
SKY: Well, what the hell is that, then?
HOSTESS: Sir, you really should get back to your seat.
(The Doctor uses his stethoscope on the hull.)
DOCTOR: Hello?
(Thump, thump. Quicker now.)
JETHRO: It's moving.

"Is it going to attack?" Gwen looked away.
(The emergency exit rattles.)
VAL: It's trying the door.
HOBBS: There is no it. There's nothing out there. Can't be.
(More trying of the emergency exit, then two thumps on the roof, and two more on the entrance door.)

"This thing is clever....whatever it is." Arthur noted.

"Why are you making these observations if there is no way you will ever meet one?" Gwen looked curious.

"Well, Merlin is. Therefore, I need to do this."

They all smiled. Despite what he may say, Merlin was very important to Arthur.
VAL: That's the entrance. Can it get in?
DEE DEE: No. That door's on two hundred weight hydraulics.
HOBBS: Stop it. Don't encourage them.
DEE DEE: What do you think it is?
VAL: Biff, don't.
DOCTOR: Mister Cane. Better not.
BIFF: Nah, it's cast iron, that door.
(Biff knocks three times, and gets three thumps in reply.)

"Well," Percival sighed. "If it didn't already know there were people in there, it does now."
"Biff really doesn't think these things through, does he?" Elyan frowned.
"I suppose, but it is not really his fault. He was never trained." he responded.
VAL: Three times. Did you hear that? It did it three times.
JETHRO: It answered.
VAL: It did it three times!
The knights all winced at the obnoxious lady.

"Yes, three times, we get it."
DOCTOR: All right, all right, all right. Everyone calm down.
SKY: No, but it answered. It answered. Don't tell me that thing's not alive. It answered him.

"Now Sky is paranoid!" Gwen groaned. "How come both reincarnations we've seen so far have been involved in an attack of sorts?"

"That is just where they appear. Reincarnations are generally drawn to things that are similar to their past life, and you lot get attacked a lot." the Doctor explained.

Arthur frowned. His father's reincarnation was the one attacking people. Did that come from this life too?
(Thump, thump, thump.)
HOSTESS: I really must insist you get back to your seats.
SKY: No, don't just stand there telling us the rules. You're the hostess. You're supposed to do something.
(The Doctor knocks on the door four times. There is a long pause before he gets the four thumps in reply.)

"Now you are scaring the poor lady!" Gwen sighed.
The Doctor winced. "I had to try to do something, even if it frightened her. I wasn't going to risk the lives of everyone on board."
SKY: What is it? What the hell's making that noise? She said she'd get me. Stop it. Make it stop. Somebody make it stop. Don't just stand there looking at me. It's not my fault. He started it with his stories.
(The hostess gets on the intercom.)
DEE DEE: Calm down!

"I do know a remedy that might be useful to this poor girl, but I'm afraid it wouldn't help her very much." Gaius solemnly stated.
The Doctor nodded. "People generally don't rely on remedies such as yours anymore."
SKY: And he made it worse!
VAL: You're not helping.
SKY: Why didn't you leave it alone? Stop staring at me. Just tell me what the hell it is.
DEE DEE: Calm down!
(The thumping starts again.)
SKY: It's coming for me. Oh, it's coming for me. It's coming for me. It's coming for me. It's coming for me.

"Is it?" Gwen winced.
"Unfortunately, yes," the Doctor answered. "She was the weakest on board, the most easiest to get inside of."

"So, this creature," Arthur waved his hand vaguely at the picture. "Controls people? Like possession or an enchantment?"

"Sort of." the Time Lord allowed. "But it is different in some ways. You'll see."

(Sky backs up to the driver's door and screams.)
DOCTOR: Get out of there!
(Boom! The whole shuttle rocks from side to side and sparks fly. The entertainment system comes back online as the lights go out.)
BIFF: You all right? Okay.
DOCTOR: Arms, legs, neck, head, nose. I'm fine. Everyone else? How are we?
(The pop singer on the screen behind the Doctor is replaced by an image of Rose mouthing Doctor, Doctor, before it goes blank again.)

"Who's that?" Percival inquired. "She's mouthing your name, title, whatever."

The Doctor looked sad. "That's Rose. She's a friend, sort of like how Donna is, but she got trapped somewhere. We'll never be able to see each other again."

"Oh...I'm sorry." the generally silent knight voiced.

He only waved the apology off. "Nonsense. You don't have to apologize; it was in no way your fault."

DOCTOR: How are we? Everyone all right?
HOBSES: Earthquake. Must be.
DEE DEE: But that's impossible. The ground is fixed. It's solid.

The knights, Gaius, and Gwen just let this fly over their heads as the Doctor didn't look like he'd appreciate being questioned at that point in time. His mind was obviously still on that Rose girl.

HOSTESS: We've got torches. Everyone take a torch. They're in the back of the seats.

"They've got torches?" Leon couldn't help it. "I don't see any, and there were none on the backs of the seats."

"Not your type of torches." the Doctor explained hastily. "The improved immensely; they don't use fire anymore. It's sort of like a machine whose sole purpose is to emit light. Fire wouldn't be good. Even with the filter in the air, it would more likely kill everyone on board or go out itself than be of any use."

VAL: Oh, Jethro. Sweetheart, come here.
JETHRO: Never mind me. what about her?
"Just like Merlin." Gwen smiled sadly. "He is always so much more concerned with the people around him than himself."

Everyone, even Arthur, though he would deny it, nodded in agreement.

"That has gotten him into some trouble, though." Gaius gravely mentioned.

"What do you mean?" Arthur looked slightly protective.

"When Merlin was still at Ealdor, I would get frantic letters from Hunith every now and then begging for me to come heal the boy. Sometimes he would stay up for nights on end just helping his village, sometimes he refused to eat when food was scarce. Sometimes he even would get beaten up by other villagers or travelers for breaking up fights."

The others gaped, except the Doctor, who already knew this.

"Should we put him on some sort of timetable or something?" Gwaine suggested, worried about his friend.

"That would probably be wise." the physician responded.

(Sky is sitting amongst the remains of the front row.)

VAL: What happened to the seats?

BIFF: Who did that?

DOCTOR: It's all right, it's all right, it's all right. It's over. We're still alive. Look, the wall's still intact. Do you see?

(Intact but dented inwards.)

"How can you fight a creature you can't see or smell or anything besides hearing thumps once in a while?" Arthur inquired.

He received no response, however, much to his annoyance.

HOSTESS: Joe? Claude?

DOCTOR: We're safe.

HOSTESS: Driver Joe, can you hear me? I'm not getting any response. The intercom must be down.

(The hostess opens the driver's door and bright light floods the cabin. An alarm sounds until she manages to close it again.)

They all winced at the sudden light.

"That's not the cabin..." Leon commented.

"Where did it go?" Gwen inquired, looking fearful for the lives of Claude and Joe.

The Doctor sighed. "I assume it was ripped off or something. Both of the occupants are gone now." He looked incredibly guilty.

VAL: What happened? What was that?

BIFF: Is it the driver? Have we lost the driver?

HOSTESS: The cabin's gone.

HOBBES: Don't be ridiculous. It can't be gone. How can it be gone?

DEE DEE: Well, well, you saw it.

HOSTESS: There was nothing there, like it was ripped away.
"Why could the creature rip the cabin away but not break through the wall?" Arthur inquired.

"The cabin was made of a weaker material, I believe. Plus there was some glass, and no matter how think it was, it would be easier to break than metal." the Doctor answered.

**BIFF:** What are you doing?

(Biff aims his torchlight at the panel the Doctor is working on.)

**DOCTOR:** Ah, that's better. Little bit of light. Thank you. Molto bene.

**VAL:** Do you know what you're doing?

**BIFF:** The cabin's gone. You'd better leave that wall alone.

"What does he know?" Gwaine still looked annoyed at them. "I mean, I can understand his reasoning, but still."

**HOBBS:** The cabin can't be gone.

**DOCTOR:** No, it's safe. Any rupture would automatically seal itself.

(The Doctor removes the panel and looks at the wiring.)

**DOCTOR:** But something sliced it off. You're right, the cabin's gone.

**HOSTESS:** But if it gets separated?

**DOCTOR:** It loses integrity. I'm sorry, they've been reduced to dust. The driver and the mechanic. But they sent a distress signal. Help is on its way. They saved our lives. We are going to get out of here, I promise. We're still alive, and they are going to find us.

"Reduced to dust?" Gwen looked sick.

"That has got to be some sort of sorcery!" Elyan managed.

"Some things give the illusion of magic when it really isn't there. It's all about the atmosphere or different frequencies in the air. From my calculations, only one type of magic would work on that planet." the Doctor said.

"What type is that?" Gaius looked nervous as he knew Merlin would start to die if he couldn't do magic. A long, agonizing, painful death.

"Healing magic." the Time Lord responded. "Magic that heals and keeps a person alive."

They relaxed. "So, there would be no magical attacks on that planet?" Arthur inquired.

"That is correct."

**JETHRO:** Doctor, look at her.

(Sky hasn't moved.)

**DOCTOR:** Right. Yes. Sorry. Have we got a medical kit?

**JETHRO:** Why won't she turn around?

The Doctor smiled sadly. Merlin hadn't known of any creatures there, so he would have assumed it was magic. He would frankly have been terrified that there could be harmful magic in a place where that shouldn't work.

**DOCTOR:** What's her name?

**HOSTESS:** Silvestry. Mrs Sky Silvestry.


**JETHRO:** That noise from outside. It's stopped.

"How come he was the one to notice that?" Arthur looked cross. "He never notices anything useful when we go on hunts."
"He is a lot more observant than you give him credit for, Princess." Gwaine answered gleefully.
VAL: Well, thank God for that.
JETHRO: But what if it's not outside anymore? What if it's inside?

"Dear God." Arthur looked frustrated. "Why?"

The others laughed at the King's frustrated face.
VAL: Inside? Where?
JETHRO: It was heading for her.
DOCTOR: Sky? It's all right, Sky. I just want you to turn around, face me.
(Sky turns slowly and stares into the torchlight.)
DOCTOR: Sky?
SKY: Sky?
DOCTOR: Are you all right?
SKY: Are you all right?

"She's repeating." Gwen realized. "Why is she doing that?"

"The creature got inside her head. It isn't magic; that's just what it does."
DOCTOR: Are you hurt?
SKY: Are you hurt?
DOCTOR: You don't have to talk.
SKY: You don't have to talk.
DOCTOR: I'm trying to help.
SKY: I'm trying to help.

"That's so creepy." even Percival shivered.
DOCTOR: My name's the Doctor.
SKY: My name's the Doctor.
DOCTOR: Okay, can you stop?
SKY: Okay, can you stop?
DOCTOR: I'd like you to stop.
SKY: I'd like you to stop.
HOBES: Why's she doing that?
SKY: Why's she doing that?
BIFF: She's gone mad.
SKY: She's gone mad.

"No she didn't." Gwaine looked frustrated at Biff's statement.
VAL: Stop it.
SKY: Stop it.
VAL: I said stop it.
SKY: I said stop it.
DEE DEE: I don't think she can.
SKY: I don't think she can.
HOBES: All right now, stop it. This isn't funny.
SKY: All right now, stop it. This isn't funny.
DOCTOR: Shush, shush, shush, all of you.
SKY: Shush, shush, shush, all of you.
JETHRO: My name's Jethro.
SKY: My name's Jethro.

"Why's Merlin enjoying this so much?" Leon inquired.

"Probably Val and Biff." the Doctor shrugged. "But, as I said earlier, he was depressed at the time. People don't act like they usually do then. It tears them apart."

The knights looked sad.
DOCTOR: Jethro, leave it. Just shut up.
SKY: Jethro, leave it. Just shut up.
DOCTOR: Why are you repeating?
SKY: Why are you repeating?
DOCTOR: What is that, learning?
SKY: What is that, learning?
DOCTOR: Copying?
SKY: Copying?
DOCTOR: Absorbing?
SKY: Absorbing?

"Which one would be the best?" Gwaine stroked his chin, looking contemplative.

"Probably copying," Gwen responded.
DOCTOR: The square root of pi is 1.772453850905516027298167483341. Wow.
SKY: (overlapping) The square root of pi is 1.772453850905516027298167483341. Wow.

"She's sped up her repetition time." Arthur commented.

"Yes," the Doctor responded gravely.
HOBBS: But that's impossible.
SKY: But that's impossible.
DEE DEE: She couldn't repeat all that.
SKY: She couldn't repeat all that.
VAL: Tell her to stop.
SKY: Tell her to stop.
VAL: She's driving me mad.
SKY: She's driving me mad.
VAL: Just make her stop!
SKY: Just make her stop!

"But how?" Gwaine inquired.
(People start talking over each other, with Sky still repeating their words.)
VAL: Stop her staring at me. Shut her up.
SKY: Stop her staring at me. Shut her up.
HOSTESS: It's got to be a trick.
SKY: It's got to be a trick.
DEE DEE: That's impossible.
SKY: That's impossible.
BIFF: I'm telling you, whatever your name is.
SKY: I'm telling you, whatever your name is.
DOCTOR: Now, just stop it, all of you.
SKY: Now, just stop it all of you.
HOBBES: Her eyes. What's wrong with her eyes?
SKY: Her eyes. What's wrong with her eyes?
JETHRO: She can copy anything.
SKY: She can copy anything.

JETHRO: If you would just- (he moves closer to Sky)

Gaius and the Doctor realized it at the same time. He was trying to use the only magic he had access to, his healing magic, to help her. They weren't sure if it would have worked.

"Why's he doing that?" Arthur was going into mega-protective mode. "He could get hurt or something."

SKY: If you would just-

DOCTOR: Stay back, Jethro.

"Thank you," the King looked relieved.

SKY: Stay back, Jethro.
VAL: Biff, don't just stand there, do something. Make her stop.
SKY: Biff, don't just stand there, do something. Make her stop
BIFF: You're scaring my wife.
SKY: You're scaring my wife.
HOSTESS: Mrs Silvestry.
SKY: Mrs Silvestry.
JETHRO: Six, six, six.
SKY: Six, six, six.

The knights looked frustrated.

"Seriously?" Leon looked shocked.

"He's not acting like he normally does, remember?" the Doctor quickly explained.

"But what if he's gone to far by the time he has healed himself?" Leon inquired.

The Doctor sighed. "He could repent, I suppose," he respected the beliefs of the Camelotians.
"That's about all he can do."

VAL: She's different. She's something else. Do something. Make her stop.
SKY: Make her stop.
(The lights come back on, shutting everyone up.)
HOSTESS: That's the back up system.
BIFF: Well, that's a bit better.

"It stopped copying them." Gwen realized.

VAL: What about the rescue? How long's it going to take?
HOSTESS: About sixty minutes, that's all.
HOBBES: Then I suggest we all calm down. This panic isn't helping. That poor woman is evidently in a state of
HOBBES + SKY: Self induced hysteria. We should leave her alone.
JETHRO: Doctor.
DOCTOR: I know.

"I liked Jethro." the Doctor remembered the brilliant kid. Well, he wasn't exactly a kid, now, was he?

HOBBS + SKY: Doctor, now step back. I think you should leave her. Alone. What's she doing?

VAL + SKY: How can she do that? She's talking with you. And with me. Oh, my God. Biff, what's she doing?

"Is it going inside their heads now?" Leon inquired.

"It might be." Elyan responded.

JETHRO + SKY: She's repeating, at exactly the same time.

"Who's the one repeating if they are doing it at the same time?" Arthur inquired.

DEE DEE + SKY: That's impossible.

HOBBS + SKY: There's not even a delay.

JETHRO + SKY: Oh man, that is weird.

DOCTOR + SKY: I think you should all be very, very quiet. Have you got that?

VAL + SKY: How's she doing it?

"Of course she's not listening." Gwaine didn't like them very much. Merlin was fine until he was with them. Then, he was suddenly in black and acting all weird. That only left two people to be at fault, right?

DOCTOR + SKY: Mrs Cane, please be quiet.

VAL + SKY: How can she do that? She's got my voice! She's got my words!

BIFF + SKY: Come on, be quiet. Hush, now. Hush. She's doing it to me.


DEE DEE + SKY: Next stage of what?

JETHRO + SKY: That's not her, is it. That's not Mrs Silvestry any more.

"I don't think so either." Arthur agreed. "If any of you tell Merlin-"

"We get it," Gwen laughed at Arthur.

DOCTOR + SKY: I don't think so, no. I think the more we talk, the more she learns. Now, I'm all for education, but in this case, maybe not. Let's just move back. Come on. Come with me. Everyone, get back. All of you, as far as you can.

VAL + SKY: Doctor, make her stop.

"That's what he's trying to do..." the knights groaned in unison before looking up.

"We all said that at the same time." Elyan realized.

"It's in us!" Gwaine drowned his sorrows in ale.
The Doctor laughed. "It's not in you. You just all had the same thought at the same time. You've separated your words now, you see?"

The others laughed as they realized that they had overreacted.

**DOCTOR + SKY:** Val, come with me. Come to the back. Stop looking at her. Come on, Jethro. You too. Everyone, come on. Fifty minutes, that's all we need. Fifty minutes till the rescue arrives. And she's not exactly strong. Look at her. All she's got is our voices.

**VAL + SKY:** I can't, I can't look at her. It's those eyes.

**DEE DEE + SKY:** We must not look at goblin men.

**BIFF + SKY:** What's that supposed to mean?

**DOCTOR + SKY:** It's a poem. Christina Rossetti.

**DEE DEE + SKY:** We must not look at goblin men. We must not buy their fruits. Who knows upon what soil they fed Their hungry, thirsty roots?

**DOCTOR + SKY:** Actually, I don't think that's helping.

"I don't think it is either." Gaius added on.

**HOBBS + SKY:** She's not a goblin, or a monster. She's just a very sick woman.

"He doesn't seem like the type of guy to believe in anything supernatural." Percival noticed.

"He didn't. If he couldn't see it in front of his eyes, he didn't believe in it. He just thought Sky was ill." the Doctor explained.

**JETHRO + SKY:** Maybe that's why it went for her.

**HOBBS + SKY:** There is no it.

The others nodded, understanding the Doctor's words.

**JETHRO + SKY:** Think about it though. That knocking went all the way round the bus until it found her. And she was the most scared out of all of us. Maybe that's what it needed. That's how it got in.

**HOBBS + SKY:** For the last time. Nothing can live on the surface of Midnight.

"Except whatever that is." Leon allowed.

"Do you guys see why Merlin was the most intelligent and open-minded one there?" the Doctor inquired.

"Yeah," they admitted in unison. Even Arthur did.

**DOCTOR + SKY:** Professor, I'm glad you've got an absolute definition of life in the universe, but perhaps the universe has got ideas of its own, hmm? Now trust me, I've got previous. I think there might well be some consciousness inside Mrs Silvestry, but maybe she's still in there. And it's our job to help her.

**BIFF + SKY:** Well, you can help her. I'm not going near.

**DOCTOR + SKY:** No, I've got to stay back, because if she's copying us, then maybe the final stage is becoming us. I don't want her becoming me, or things could get a whole lot worse.

**VAL + SKY:** Oh, like you’re so special.

"It would become a whole lot worse if it became anyone." Gwen looked cross.

None of them really appreciated Biff and Val, and with good reason too.

**DOCTOR + SKY:** As it happens, yes, I am. So that's decided. We stay back, and we wait. When the rescue ship comes, we can get her to hospital.
HOSTESS + SKY: We should throw her out.

"Is everyone there a creep?" Gwaine looked amazed. "They'd rather kill her than heal her?"

HOBBES + SKY: I beg your pardon?

VAL + SKY: Can we do that?

"Of course she's thinking about it." Gwaine added on to his original comment.

DOCTOR + SKY: Don't be ridiculous.

HOSTESS + SKY: That thing, whatever it is, killed the driver, and the mechanic, and I don't think she's finished yet.

DOCTOR + SKY: She can't even move.

HOSTESS + SKY: Look at her. Look at her eyes. She killed Joe, and she killed Claude, and we're next.

"If it really is learning from them and it wasn't originally, it certainly is now." Gaius stated.

BIFF + SKY: She's still doing it. Just stop it. Stop talking. Stop it!

VAL + SKY: Biff, don't, sweetheart.

BIFF + SKY: But she won't stop. We can't throw her out, though. We can't even open the doors.

DOCTOR + SKY: No one is getting thrown out.

"Thank you, Doctor." Arthur sighed with relief.

The Doctor grinned in acknowledgement.

DEE DEE + SKY: Yes, we can. Because there's an air pressure seal. Like when you opened the cabin door, you weren't pulled out. You had a couple of seconds, because it takes the pressure wall about six seconds to collapse. Well, six seconds exactly. That's enough time to throw someone out.

"They totally needed that information." Elyan looked angry.

DOCTOR + SKY: Thanks, Dee Dee. Just what we needed.

VAL: Would it kill her outside?

DEE DEE + SKY: I don't know. But she's got a body now. It would certainly kill the physical form.

DOCTOR + SKY: No one is killing anyone.

"Isn't that common sense?" Arthur inquired.

"Common sense isn't too common in the future." the Doctor groaned. "It's much simpler here. People didn't do anything without reason."

HOSTESS + SKY: I wouldn't risk the cabin door twice, but we've got that one. All we need to do is grab hold of her and throw her out.

DOCTOR + SKY: Now, listen, all of you. For all we know that's a brand new life form over there. And if it's come inside to discover us, than what's it found? This little bunch of humans. What do you amount to, murder? Because this is where you decide. You decide who you are. Could you actually murder her? Any of you? Really? Or are you better than that?

"Good speech, but I don't think it would help very much." Gwen commented.

The Doctor shook his head. "Sadly, it didn't."

HOSTESS + SKY: I'd do it.
"Deco De was decent for a while." the Doctor sighed. "Jethro was the only one I'd trust with anything."

"I'm sorry, but you said it yourself, Doctor. She is growing in strength."

"That's not what I said."

"I want to go home. I'm sorry. I want to be safe."

"You'll be safe any minute now. The rescue truck is on its way."

"But what happens then, Doctor? If it takes that thing back to the Leisure Palace, if that thing reaches civilisation. What if it spreads?"

"While that is a good point, surely there must be some quarantine measures?" Leon inquired.

"Of course." The Doctor responded. "I think that they were all at least slightly hysterical, though."

"No, because when we get back to the base, I'll be there to contain it."

"You haven't done much so far."

"You're just standing in the back with the rest of us."

"All this talking is just teaching it more and more." Gwen commented.

"If only they would stop arguing..." Elyan replied.

"She's dangerous. It's my job to see that this vessel is safe, and we should get rid of her."

"She's a guardian of the transport?" Percival inquired.

"Naturally." the Doctor answered. "Women are empowered in the future. They are given more rights, and they get stronger."

"Now, hang on. I think perhaps we're all going a little bit too far."

"At last. Thank you."

"Two people are dead."

"Don't make it a third. Jethro, what do you say?"

"I'm not killing anyone."

"And Merlin is once again the only person making sense." Gwaine announced.

"What about the Doctor?" Gwen asked, amused.

"He's saying so many weird terms; it is like he is speaking in a different language." he replied confidently after a moment of silence.

"Thank you."

"He's just a boy."

"He still knows that it is wrong to kill people!" Leon argued. "More qualified than the older people, too."

"What, so I don't get a vote?"
DOCTOR + SKY: There isn't a vote. It's not happening. Ever. If you try to throw her out that door, you'll have to get past me first.

"I don't think that would be a problem for them. You aren't exactly popular, are you?" Arthur stated.

The Doctor winced, but he nodded anyway. "Yeah, but I wasn't about to let them kill Sky. Something had to be done, and that was my only option at the time."

HOSTESS + SKY: Okay.

BIFF + SKY: Fine by me.

DOCTOR + SKY: Oh, now you're being stupid. Just think about it. Could you actually take hold of someone and throw them out of that door?

"They probably could." Percival glared at the crystals.

"They might just be so scared that their mind is messing with them." Gaius suggested. "That does not mean I condone their behavior, though."

BIFF + SKY: Calling me a coward?

VAL + SKY: Who put you in charge, anyway?

HOBBES + SKY: I'm sorry, but you're a Doctor of what, exactly?

HOSTESS + SKY: He wasn't even booked in. The rest of you, tickets in advance. He just turned up out of the blue.

The Doctor smirked at the Hostess. Out of the blue, all right. Out of his sleek, elegant, blue TARDIS. How right she had been without even knowing it.

VAL + SKY: Where from?

DOCTOR + SKY: I'm just travelling. I'm a traveller, that's all.

VAL + SKY: Like an immigrant?

HOSTESS + SKY: Who were you talking to? Before you got on board, you were talking to someone. Who was that?

"Donna." Gwaine grinned. "Who, by the way, I still think is fabulous."

"I bet you do." Elyan said dryly.

"Am I not allowed to admire her fiery personality?"

"Not in the way you show admiration, no."

DOCTOR + SKY: Just Donna. Just my friend.

BIFF + SKY: And what were you saying to her?

VAL + SKY: He hasn't even told us his name.

DEE DEE + SKY: The thing is though, Doctor, you've been loving this.

"She was one of the good ones!" Arthur looked frustrated.

"She was still good," the Doctor corrected. "Frightened, but good."

DOCTOR + SKY: Oh, Dee Dee, not you.

DEE DEE+ SKY: No, but ever since all the trouble started, you've been loving it.

HOBBES + SKY: It has to be said, you do seem to have a certain glee.

"Merlin did too." Gwen observed. "Not that I am saying he should be blamed, but why are they targeting you?"
The Doctor shrugged. "I wasn't a kid. I don't look like one either." he glanced at Gaius again.

Gaius looked grave; it was not long from now until the secret was blown.

**DOCTOR + SKY:** All right, I'm interested. Yes, I can't help it. Because whatever's inside her, it's brand new, and that's fascinating.

**VAL + SKY:** What, you wanted this to happen?

**DOCTOR + SKY:** No.

**BIFF + SKY:** And you were talking to her, all on your own, before all the trouble. Right at the front, you were talking to that Sky woman, the two of you together. I saw you.

"They are getting evidence and stringing it together logically now?" Percival was shaking with anger. "But they can't bother noticing that they are making the person they are dragging along miserable."

**VAL + SKY:** We all did.

**HOSTESS + SKY:** And you went into the cabin.

**BIFF + SKY:** What were you saying to her?

**DOCTOR:** I was just talking.

**BIFF + SKY:** Saying what?

**DEE DEE+ SKY:** You called us humans like you're not one of us.

**VAL + SKY:** He did. That's what he said.

**DEE DEE + SKY:** And the wiring. He went into that panel and opened up the wiring.

"They are building a pretty strong case against you." Arthur noticed. "Although, the accused usually can defend himself."

"Not all the times." Gaius wisely informed him.

The King thought this over for a moment. "I guess....my father may have been a bit blind to reason when magic was mentioned."

**DOCTOR + SKY:** That was after.

**BIFF + SKY:** But how did you know what to do?

**DOCTOR + SKY:** Because I'm clever!

**HOBBES + SKY:** I see. Well, that makes things clear.

**BIFF + SKY:** And what are we, then? Idiots?

"Yes," Gwaine snorted. He really didn't like these people. He had certainly tried to in the beginning, but he found it impossible.

**DOCTOR + SKY:** That's not what I meant.

**DEE DEE + SKY:** If you're clever, then what are we?

**VAL + SKY:** You've been looking down on us from the moment we walked in.

**HOSTESS + SKY:** Even if he goes, he's practically volunteered.

**DOCTOR + SKY:** Oh come on, just listen to yourself, please.

**BIFF + SKY:** Do you mean we throw him out as well?

**HOSTESS + SKY:** If we have to.

"You were literally right there." Gwen frowned. "And they are talking about killing you."

"They outnumbered me. Jethro probably would have helped if the situation did escalate so far, but there were still many of them there, acting like gods." the Doctor groaned as he remembered this.

**DOCTOR + SKY:** Look, just. Right, sorry, yes, hold on, just. I know you're scared, and so am I. Look at me, I am. But we have all got to calm down and cool off and think.
HOBBES + SKY: Perhaps you could tell us your name.
DOCTOR + SKY: What does it matter?
HOSTESS + SKY: Then tell us.
DOCTOR + SKY: John Smith.
HOBBES + SKY: Your real name.

"That could have been your real name." Leon frowned.

"At the time, John Smith was an alias used by everyone." he explained. "They would never have believed that that was my actual name."

"Then why did you use it?" Percival inquired.

"It is so common that it was the first one to pop into my head." the Doctor shrugged.
BIFF + SKY: He's lying. Look at his face.
VAL + SKY: His eyes are the same as hers.
HOBBES + SKY: Why won't you tell us?
DEE DEE + SKY: It's a simple enough question.

"Why don't you just tell them?" Elyan questioned.

The Doctor answered. "Names hold power. Not always the name given to a person by their parents at birth, but everyone has an especially powerful name. One of great importance. Like Emrys and the Once and Future King. Those two are very powerful names, so they go by different ones. It is similar for myself."

VAL + SKY: He's been lying to us right from the start.
HOSTESS + SKY: What's your name?
BIFF + SKY: No one's called John Smith. Come off it.
DOCTOR + SKY: Now listen to me. Listen to me right now, because you need me, all of you. If we are going to get out of this, then you need me.
HOBBES: So you keep saying. You've been repeating yourself more than her.
VAL: If anyone's in charge, it should be the Professor. He's the expert.
JETHRO: Mum, stop. Just look.
BIFF: You keep out of this, Jethro.
JETHRO: Look at her!

"They don't even pay attention to him." Gwaine growled. He was very protective of his friend, in case you haven't noticed.
DEE DEE: She's stopped.
DOCTOR + SKY: When did she? No, she hasn't. She's still doing it.

"Only to you." Gaius commented. "I assume that it has latched onto you?"

"Kind of. I think it was trying to find a way to ensure it didn't get kicked off." the Doctor replied.
VAL: She looks the same to me. No, she's stopped. Look, I'm talking, and she's not.
BIFF: What about me, is she? Look. Look at that. She's not doing me. She's let me go.

"She never had him...." Percival muttered.

"I think he was just talking about his voice." Leon kept a level head.
HOSTESS: Mrs Silvestry? Nor me. Nothing.
DOCTOR + SKY: Sky, what are you doing?
DEE DEE: She's still doing him.
HOBBS: Doctor, it's you. She's only copying you.
DOCTOR + SKY: Why me? Why are you doing this?
DEE DEE: She won't leave him alone.
VAL: Do you see? I said so. She's with him.
BIFF: They're together.

"If this is what people will be like in the future...." Arthur groaned.

"There were many misconceptions made there," the Doctor started, "But I doubt everyone is like that. They were panicking."

Leon groaned. "These tenses are really confusing me..."

The others nodded in agreement.

HOBBS: How do you explain it, Doctor, if you're so clever?
DOCTOR + SKY: I don't know. Sky, stop it. I said stop it. Just stop it.
VAL: Look at the two of them.
DOCTOR + SKY: Mrs Silvestry, I'm trying to understand. You've captured my speech. What for? What do you need? You need my voice in particular. The cleverest voice in the room. Why? Because I'm the only one who can help? Oh, I'd love that to be true, but your eyes, they're saying something else. Listen to me. Whatever you want, if it's life, or form, or consciousness, or voice, you don't have to steal it. You can find it without hurting anyone. And I'll help you. That's a promise. So, what do you think?

"How is it possible for disembodied creatures to gain forms, consciousnesses, and voices?" Arthur inquired.

The Doctor waved it off naturally. "There are ways to create bodies in the future. Not from dead ones, like some people in your time use."

"Is it sorcery?" the King continued.


Gaius gave one of his legendary eyebrows. How would that be possible?

Meanwhile, the others were nodding, now understanding what the Doctor was telling them to an extent.

SKY: Do we have a deal?
DOCTOR: Do we have a deal?

"She spoke first..." Elyan mentioned. "Does that mean that you are copying her now?"

"Technically, but it was still in Sky." the Doctor answered. "I don't actually know how it did that; I've never seen that species except on that one occasion. And on that occasion, you can probably tell that I didn't get to observe it very much."

"You keep on calling the species and 'it?" Gwen asked.

"Yes, I don't know what its gender is, if it has one." he shrugged. "I could call them they, but I don't know if they have a conscious or a soul or anything yet."

DEE DEE: Hold on, did she?
JETHRO: She spoke first.

"Thank God, Merlin noticed. They'd be doomed if he didn't." Gwaine groaned.
VAL: She can't have.
HOBBES: She did.
JETHRO: She spoke first.
SKY: Oh, look at that. I'm ahead of you.
DOCTOR: Oh, look at that. I'm ahead of you.

"It is still obvious that it is her....Are they going to say it is in you now?" Leon questioned nervously.

"Unfortunately, yes," the Doctor sighed. "Everyone but Jethro tried to throw me out."

"Ouch," Gwen winced.
HOBBES: Did you see? She spoke before he did. Definitely.
JETHRO: He's copying her.
HOBBES: Doctor, what's happening?
SKY: I think it's moved.
DOCTOR: I think it's moved.
SKY: I think it's letting me go.
DOCTOR: I think it's letting me go.

"She is still the creepy one." Percival noted. "The actual Sky wasn't that bad, despite future-y stuff, but this species is just disturbing."
DEE DEE: What do you mean? Letting you go from what?
BIFF: But he's repeating now. He's the one doing it. It's him.
JETHRO: They're separating.
HOBBES: Mrs Silvestry, is that you?
SKY: Yes. Yes, it's me.
DOCTOR: Yes. Yes, it's me.
SKY: I'm coming back. Listen.
DOCTOR: I'm coming back
SKY: It's me.
DOCTOR: Listen. It's me.
JETHRO: Like it's passed into the Doctor. It's transferred. Whatever it is, it's gone inside him.

"So, he was wrong about some things." Arthur looked triumphant. "It was still in Sky."

"It did somehow have control over me." the Doctor argued. "Therefore, I believe your servant was correct in some ways."
DEE DEE: No, that's not what happened.
VAL: But look at her.
SKY: Look at me, I can move.
DOCTOR: Look at me.
SKY: I can feel again.
DOCTOR: I can move. I can feel again.
SKY: I'm coming back to life.
DOCTOR: I'm coming back to life.

The knights fell into a strange silence, watching the scene with something on their faces akin to
horror. What were they going to do to the Doctor? They hadn't known him for that long, and it did look like he had used magic. But he said he was enchanted or something, so for some reason, they felt like they trusted him.

SKY: And look at him. He can't move.
DOCTOR: And look at him. He can't move.
SKY: Help me.
DOCTOR: Help me.
SKY: Professor?
DOCTOR: Professor?
SKY: Get me away from him.
DOCTOR: Get me away from him.
SKY: Please.
DOCTOR: Please.
(Hobbes takes Sky's hands and helps her up.)
SKY: Oh, thank you.
DOCTOR: Oh, thank you.
JETHRO: They've completely separated.

"That is a bit inaccurate," the Doctor relented.

Arthur looked victorious.

"You have to admit, though. Merlin was one of the smarter ones on board." the Time Lord reasoned.

"I never said that I didn't. Obviously, something happens between his two lifes to change that," the King answered.

Gaius spoke up. "He is very bright, sire. Much smarter than other people of his status."

"I know that much," Arthur replied. "He can read and write. Other peasants can't do that."

BIFF: It's in him. Do you see? I said it was him all the time.
VAL: She's free. She's been saved.
SKY: Oh, it was so cold.
DOCTOR: Oh, it was so cold.
SKY: I couldn't breathe.
DOCTOR: I couldn't breathe.
SKY: I'm sorry.
DOCTOR: I'm sorry.
SKY: I must have scared you so much.
DOCTOR: I must have scared you so much.

"She still sounds so unreal..." Elyan groaned.

"They probably just assumed she was recovering from having the thing inside of her." Gwen reasoned with her brother. "I don't think people act quite the same after being possessed by magic for a while, so shouldn't it be the same for a situation like that?"

"I suppose," he smiled.
VAL: No, no, it's all right. I've got you. Ooo, there you are, my love. It's gone. Everything's all right now.
"She's treating her better than her 'adopted son!'" Percival growled, only just managing to get it out.

The others looked incredibly angry as they realized this as well.

**DEE DEE: I wouldn't touch her.**

**BIFF: But it's gone. She's clean. It passed into him.**

**DEE DEE: That's not what happened.**

**HOBBES: Thank you for your opinion, Dee, but clearly Mrs Silvestry has been released.**

"And that, Princess, is why I think that nobles should pay more attention to what their servants have to say." Gwaine shared his opinion.

"Yes," Arthur agreed. "Dee Dee certainly was correct, and Hobbes was wrong. I do pay attention to them, right?" he turned to the others.

"Not in the beginning, but I think Merlin changed you. You value his opinion in just about everything." Gwen looked amused. "Except on things like hunting, of course."

The King looked relieved.

"Other nobles don't, though." the alcoholic knight continued. "Some that are under your power, technically. I know you can't fix every servant's situation, some aren't in your kingdom, but some are."

Arthur nodded. "I'll look into it."

**DEE DEE: No.**

**VAL: Just leave her alone. She's safe, isn't she? Jethro, it's let her go, hasn't it?**

"So, she suddenly values his opinion when she thinks it will back hers!" Leon noticed.

"It certainly seems that way." Gaius looked at Val in a frustrated way. He thought of Merlin as a son, and that was certainly not the way to treat him!

**JETHRO: You can't be so sure. It could be a simple trick; I've seen enough of those before.**

"What does he mean by that?" Gwen looked curious.

The Doctor and Gaius met each other's gazes. They knew he was talking about magic.

"I'm not so sure." the Doctor lied, "I wasn't around him for a very long time, remember?"

The others accepted that as the truth, and they moved on.

**HOBBES: I'd say, from observation, the Doctor can't move. And when she was possessed, she couldn't move, so-**

**BIFF: Well, there we are then. Now the only problem we've got is this Doctor.**

**SKY: It's inside his head.**

**DOCTOR: It's inside his head.**

**SKY: It killed the driver.**

**DOCTOR: It killed the driver.**

**SKY: And the mechanic.**

**DOCTOR: And the mechanic.**

**SKY: And now it wants us.**

**DOCTOR: And now it wants us.**

**VAL: I said so.**
"NO ONE CARES!" Gwaine let out his pent up frustration.
SKY: He's waited so long.
DOCTOR: He's waited so long.
SKY: In the dark.
DOCTOR: In the dark.
SKY: And the cold.
DOCTOR: And the cold.
SKY: And the diamonds.
DOCTOR: And the diamonds.
SKY: Until you came.
DOCTOR: Until you came.
SKY: Bodies so hot.
DOCTOR: Bodies so hot.
SKY: With blood.
DOCTOR: With blood.
SKY: And pain.
DOCTOR: And pain.

"So, it was attracted through different senses? Sensing heat and such?" Gaius inquired.

"It certainly seems so," the Doctor nodded. "Perhaps this species doesn't have very good sight, so it made up for it with unusually strong senses in different areas. Would make sense, considering the sun on Midnight."
DEE DEE: But she's saying it.
VAL: And you can shut up.

"There it is again." Arthur winced. "They really don't care about Merlin's or Dee Dee's opinions, do they?"

"I think they see them as lower somehow." Leon suggested. "Like, lower class."

"Why?" Gwen inquired.

The knight hesitated as he thought this over. "It might be due to their physical age."
DEE DEE: But it's not him, it's her. He's just repeating.
BIFF: But that's what the thing does, it repeats.
HOSTESS: Just let her talk.
BIFF: What do you know? Fat lot of good you've been.
HOSTESS: Just let her explain.
DEE DEE: I think. I mean, from what I've seen, it repeats, then it synchronises, then it goes on to the next stage and that's exactly what the Doctor said would happen.

"Risky move, aligning herself with you." Elyan commented.

"It was risky," the Doctor agreed. "But I think she was trying to get the truth out. Understanding what had just happened."

"It was amazing how you accurately guessed what it would do." Gaius complimented.

"Thanks."
BIFF: What, and you're on his side?
DEE DEE: No.
JETHRO: The voice is the thing.

"So, Merlin was on your side too!" Gwen happily sighed.

"He was one of the more logical beings on board." the Doctor reminisced. "He could handle himself in different situations while the others would be doomed."
DEE DEE: And she's the voice. She stole it. Look at her. It's not possessing him, it's draining him.
HOSTESS: She's got his voice.
VAL: But that's not true, because it can't. Because I saw it pass into him. I saw it with my own eyes.

"And Lady Stubbornness is back again." Gwaine snarled.

"I'm certain no one would grant her a royal title." Arthur contradicted him.

"Then, Stubbornness is back again." the knight amended.
BIFF: So did I.
DEE DEE: You didn't.
VAL: It went from her, to him. You saw it, didn't you?
JETHRO: I don't know.

"Good," Gwaine grinned. "Probably won't go over well with his 'mum,' though."

"Probably not," Elyan agreed.
VAL: Oh, don't be stupid, Jethro. Of course you did.
JETHRO: I suppose he was right next to her, but I think it could be more-

"And, they are shutting him out again." Percival rolled his eyes. "What amazing parenting." he sarcastically stated.

The others looked at him in surprise. He was almost never sarcastic; although, he was almost always silent.
DEE DEE: You didn't. You're just making it up. I know what I saw, and I saw her stealing his voice.
VAL: She's as bad as him. Someone shut her up.

"So, anyone with a differing opinion is less than her?" Gwen looked infuriated.

"At least that is her opinion." Arthur added on.
HOBBES: I think you should be quiet, Dee.
DEE DEE: Well, I'm only saying
HOBBES: And that's an order! You're making a fool of yourself, pretending you're an expert in mechanics and hydraulics, when I can tell you, you are nothing more than average at best. Now shut up.

"Hobbes also isn't on my good list." Gwaine made a fist. If he ever met any of these people at a tavern, he'd give them the bar fight of their lives. He wasn't going to, but it was a comforting thought.
SKY: That's how he does it.
DOCTOR: That's how he does it.
SKY: He makes you fight.
DOCTOR: He makes you fight.
SKY: Creeps into your head.
DOCTOR: Creeps into your head.
SKY: And whispers.
DOCTOR: And whispers.
SKY: Listen.
DOCTOR: Listen.
SKY: Just listen.
DOCTOR: Just listen.
SKY: That's him.
DOCTOR: That's him.
SKY: Inside.
DOCTOR: Inside.

"It's obviously her, Doctor." Gaius commented. "I don't know how they didn't notice. Surely they must have had some version of medicine on board?"

"They did," the Doctor said flatly, "In the cabin."

"Oh," he winced.

BIFF: Throw him out.
VAL: Get him out of my head.
BIFF: Yeah, we should throw him out.
VAL: Don't just talk about it, just. You're useless. Do something.
BIFF: I will. You watch me. I'm going to throw him out.

JETHRO: What the hell? You're talking about killing him!

Gaius started looking nervous. Merlin rarely cursed, but when he did, the magic started coming out. It was rarely healing magic, though, so the environment he was in gave him some comfort.

"Did Merlin just curse?" Gwen gasped.

"Observe his clothing again. He doesn't exactly act as he used to." Elyan commented.

Gwen sighed. "I know, and I wish I could do something to help him."

"So do I." the knight mentioned.

The others started repeating that to show their support.

BIFF: He's not 'him' anymore.
SKY: Yes.
DOCTOR: Yes.
SKY: Throw him out.
DOCTOR: Throw him out.
SKY: Get rid of him.
DOCTOR: Get rid of him.
SKY: Now.
DOCTOR: Now.
(Biff takes hold of the Doctor from behind.)

The watchers all stiffened.
DEE DEE: Don't!
VAL: It'll be you next.

"Now, she's just talking about murder!" Arthur looked furious. "If she were a citizen of Camelot, she would be in the dungeons!"

"Because those dungeons work so well." Gwaine rolled his eyes. "Face it, Princess. You don't need magic to escape those."

The King looked annoyed at his nick name.

JETHRO: What the fuck are you on about?

They winced. Another curse word. Gaius was looking increasingly nervous; sometimes, Merlin was rather impulsive...

HOSTESS: Don't think we should do this.
BIFF: It was your idea. Professor, help me.
HOBBES: I can't. I'm not.
BIFF: What sort of a man are you? Come on.

"You don't kill someone just to prove that you are a man!" Percival looked furious. "It is all about chivalry and respect."

The others nodded solemnly.

"I think he is trying to prove that nothing affects him. That he can do anything and have no consequences." Gaius observed.

VAL: Throw him out.
BIFF: Come on.
VAL: Just do it. Throw him out.
BIFF: Help. Professor, help me.
(The Doctor manages to hook his foot onto a seat.)

"How did you do that?" Gwen inquired. "I thought you couldn't move."

"I had a small amount of control since it wasn't actually inside of me," the Doctor explained. "It was just draining me."

VAL: Get him out.
BIFF: Grab hold of him. Not like that. Are you stupid?
SKY: Cast him out.
DOCTOR: Cast him out.
SKY: Into the sun.
DOCTOR: Into the sun.

They winced at the repetition once more. It was so creepy...

VAL: I want him out.
SKY: And the night.
DOCTOR: And the night.
VAL: Get him out.
BIFF: Come on. Don't just stand there. Do something.
VAL: Get him out.

"She seems to be the type to order people around." Gwaine noticed.

"Perhaps in her past life she was some abusive lady or something." Elyan suggested.

The knight nodded. "It's likely."

SKY: Do it.
DOCTOR: Do it.
SKY: Do it now.
DOCTOR: Do it now.
SKY: Faster.
DOCTOR: Faster.
VAL: Just do it!
SKY: That's the way.
DOCTOR: That's the way.
SKY: You can do it.
DOCTOR: You can do it.
SKY: Molto bene.
VAL: Throw him out.
DOCTOR: Molto bene.
VAL: Get him out.
SKY: Allons-y.
DOCTOR: Allons-y.

"They have to at least get that. It is so obviously not her and you!" Percival muttered.

JETHRO: That's his voice. Don't you see?

SKY: The starlight waits.
HOSTESS: She's taken his voice.
DOCTOR: The starlight waits.
SKY: The emptiness.
DOCTOR: The emptiness.
VAL: Get him out.
SKY: The Midnight sky.
DOCTOR: The Midnight sky.
HOSTESS: It's her.

JETHRO: You're about to kill someone innocent!
VAL: Shush, Jethro. Let the adults do the talking. Throw him out.

The knights looked annoyed again.

"Let the adults do the talking?" Gwen looked annoyed. "Let the adolescents rule the world in the future if that is how adults behave."

The others agreed.

HOSTESS: She's taken his voice!
"JETHRO: I won't live to see you do this."

The knights stilled.

"What does that mean?" Gwaine inquired.

"He made a sacrifice." the Doctor simply answered. "You'll see soon."

(Jethro suddenly grabs Sky and rushes her towards the entrance door. He presses the button and everyone screams as the bright light floods)

"You said he would be fine!" Arthur looked horrified.

"He was. Merlin wouldn't let him and Sky die so easily," the Doctor made more eye contact with Gaius.

"That is so much like Merlin, though. Always sacrificing himself for others." Gwen looked as if she was about to cry.

"JETHRO: One, two, three, four, five, six."

(The pressure wall collapses. Jethro and Sky are sucked out and the door closes. The men drop the Doctor.)

The knights winced, looking away. Even if Merlin lived, it must have hurt quite a lot for him.

"How did he live, anyway?" the King inquired.

The Doctor winced. "Merlin has a secret. He hasn't told anyone, but Gaius eventually found out one day. He wanted to tell you so much, but it would make you choose between him and someone else you care about. Merlin didn't want to put you, his friend, in that situation. He didn't tell anyone else to prevent them from choosing between him and you, Arthur. It was something he was born with, something he can't control having. It's not his fault, so please don't hate him."

Arthur thought this over for a moment. "He has magic, doesn't he?" he didn't look mad or betrayed. He looked defeated if nothing else.

The Doctor nodded solemnly, and the others gasped. "He only ever used it to save people. He did not delve into dark magic; Gaius can tell you that much."

Gaius nodded. "He only used it to save people; he's saved you all more than either he or I can remember."

The others sat there in shock for a bit.

"So, if he has...magic." Elyan struggled over the word. "Does that mean he's also Emrys?"

All of their attention spans were suddenly on the Doctor.

"Yes, he is. Emrys, Merlin, and the Once and Future King, Arthur, are destined to bring magic back to Albion and achieve peace among other things." he waved it off. "We'll continue to watch these after Merlin's though. Some other people have reincarnations too, and I want to show you more of Merlin."

"So, he will never die?" Percival looked sad.
"No. He will never die; he got depression because everyone he cared about left him. Everyone he will meet will die while he lives on." the Doctor explained.

They were silent for a while longer.

"Is there a way to ensure that he won't be alone?" Arthur decided that he would forgive Merlin.

"Technically," the Doctor answered, and he gained their attentions. "There is a way to bond people's souls, so they can be together and share basically everything. In Merlin's case, that would include immortality."

"Then, we must do that." the King decided. "I don't want to see Merlin become that way when I'm dead."

The others nodded.

DOCTOR: It's gone. It's gone. It's gone, it's gone, it's gone. It's gone. It's gone. It's gone, it's gone, it's gone. It's gone, it's gone, it's gone. It's gone, it's gone, it's gone. It's gone, it's gone, it's gone.

VAL: I said it was her.

DOCTOR: (gasping) Aren't you upset about your son?

"Here comes some of Merlin's quick magic." the Doctor grinned, glad they accepted Merlin. "He healed their minds from the paradox he technically is."

VAL: What son?

DOCTOR: Jethro. Jethro Cane.

HOSTESS: From what I know, there was never a Jethro Cane on board

"And Jethro Cane from all of history." he continued.

The others gaped.

"It's possible to do that?" Gwen inquired.

"Basically anything is possible if you have magic; although, it does have some limitations." the Doctor responded.

[20 minutes later...]

(Everyone is sitting quietly.)

VOICE [OC]: Repeat. Crusader Fifty rescue vehicle coming alongside in three minutes. Door seals set to automatic. Prepare for boarding. Repeat. Prepare for boarding.

DOCTOR: (testing them) Who pushed Sky out?

HOBSES: I don't know.

"This is just pitiful." Elyan snorted. "And hilarious!"

"Merlin must have felt good after that." Gwaine laughed as well. The amnesia wasn't that funny, but the people on board were mean to Merlin. That means that anything is fair game.

[Spa]
(Donna greets the Doctor with a hug.)
DONNA: What do you think it was?

"There she is!" Gwaine grinned.

DOCTOR: No idea.

DONNA: Do you think it's still out there? (silence) Well, you'd better tell them. This lot.

DOCTOR: Yeah. They can build a Leisure Palace somewhere else. Let this planet keep on turning round an Xtonic star, in silence.

DONNA: Can't imagine you without a voice.

DOCTOR: Molto bene.

DONNA: Molto bene.

DOCTOR: No, don't do that. Don't. Don't.

"Were you traumatized?" Gaius looked concerned.

"It was only short term." the Doctor reassured.

[The Doctor appears in a room without Donna. Jethro is there, seemingly having waited for him]

The knights looked relieved.

DOCTOR: Cheated death to save those who do not really care about you?

JETHRO: Don't get used to it.

"Merlin seems...different." Gwen said lightly.

"He was depressed at the time, remember? People change, too. Perhaps the loneliness got too much for our Merlin." Gwaine looked sad.

DOCTOR: You don't belong here. You-you are wrong.

JETHRO: Oh, yeah? You don't belong here either, but here we are.

"He sounds very...sagacious, I think an appropriate word would be." Arthur looked confused.

"At that time, he was millennia old." the Doctor smirked. "He was quite wise at the time."

The others nodded, finally understanding it fully.

DOCTOR: Your name isn't actually Jethro Cane.

JETHRO: Yeah. Those two strangers who insist on dragging me around wherever they go just randomly started calling me that one day.

"Must have been annoying." Percival nodded.

DOCTOR: They aren't your actual parents. There were no parental instincts in either of them in the face of danger.

JETHRO: Correct.

DOCTOR: Then, where you came from.....
JETHRO: A long way from here.

Gwen laughed. "That is an understatement."

"A major one." Elyan added onto his sister's statement.

DOCTOR: Me too. But that still doesn't answer my question.

JETHRO: You never asked one.

The knights all laughed.

"That's why Merlin is awesome." Gwaine grinned.

DOCTOR: (hesitant) Oh, you're good. I like you.

JETHRO: (dryly) Wonderful. I have spent my entire life trying to gain your approval.
(sarcasm) Here's Sky, by the way. (he shows Sky to him. She is unconscious.)

"He healed her as well." Leon looked awestruck.

"It's not like Merlin to just leave her their to die." Arthur reminded. He knew his servant very well.

DOCTOR: How did you-

JETHRO: (he looks incredibly sad) The only magic that works here is healing magic. She hasn't woken up yet.

DOCTOR: Don't worry, I'll make sure she does. Now, my question-

JETHRO: Your non-existent one.

"He continues." Gwaine stated in a mysterious voice.

DOCTOR: Whatever. How did you make everyone forget you were there?

JETHRO: It's not that hard to erase yourself from existence. All that had to be done was heal their minds from the paradox.

DOCTOR: It should be. You must have gone into their minds, their memories, hard-drives, records, everything in a split second.

JETHRO: You could say it was magic.

Arthur groaned. "He's really good at telling the truth and make no one believe it."

Gwen nodded. "He's done it so many times too."

DOCTOR: (laughs) I suppose. Now, what is your name?

JETHRO: You already know it. Jethro.

"That wasn't what I meant." the Doctor sighed, covering his face with his hand.

DOCTOR: Not that one. Those two people gave that one to you. What were you before that?
JETHRO: Many different things. Your friend gave me many of them.

DOCTOR: My friend? You've never met a friend of mine.

"He could have." Gaius informed. "You never know."

JETHRO: Don't judge a book by it's cover, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Then, which one gave you many-a-name?

JETHRO: (smirks) Captain Jack Harkness.

"Who's Captain Jack Harkness?" Percival inquired.

"He's a human who was in an accident that made him immortal. He and Merlin would meet up every once and a while; I think it was to keep themselves as sane as possible." the Doctor winced.

"How many other immortals are there?" Arthur looked amazed.

"No more that I know of." the Doctor answered. "Although, if you lot go through with what you are saying you will, there would be more. It wouldn't have a tremendous impact on the timeline."

DOCTOR: (obviously surprised) I guess it is possible for him to have met you-

JETHRO: It was in the late 1800s, I believe. He was having a blast by the 21st century.

DOCTOR: What? You can't possibly be that-(realizing) Oh. There is something wrong about you.

"Not wrong," the Doctor corrected. "Different. Special."

The knights nodded, looking proud for their friend.

JETHRO: (sarcastically) Thanks. That's just what a guy wants to hear about himself.

"He's really very sensitive about that." Gaius winced. "Called himself a monster one of his first days with me."

The knights winced.

"Why?" Gwen asked, looking desperate.

"Due to the laws of Camelot, he was supposed to die. People treated people like him as monsters, so what was he supposed to believe as a young child?" the physician explained gently.

Arthur looked guilty. "Those laws will be repealed."

"Thank you," Gaius smiled. "Sire."

DOCTOR: I didn't-

JETHRO: See. No one did. No one ever does, and no one ever will.

DOCTOR: But what exactly did I not see?
JETHRO: Where's the fun in just telling you?

"Well, there isn't really any fun in keeping it a secret either." Gwaine pouted.

DOCTOR: (pauses) You are an anomaly, Insert-name-here. (he grinned)

JETHRO: Take a guess. Go into my head. Do whatever you want. It is quite a lot of fun, you know.

DOCTOR: (pauses a moment before going in. He comes out a bit later) Fascinating.

"You went into his head?" Leon raised an eyebrow.

"Yeah, I prefer not to, though. Only with permission." the Doctor explained. "It is a severe invasion of privacy to do so without consent."

JETHRO: Find anything?

DOCTOR: Not much...no one has ever hidden that much from me before.

JETHRO: What did you find?

DOCTOR: A last name and another part.

JETHRO: (freezes temporarily) And they were?

"He didn't expect you to find that much." Gwen laughed.

DOCTOR: (looks down before meeting his gaze with realization on his expression) Last name Ambrosius. Another part Myrrdin.

Arthur groaned, remembering the time he had forced Merlin's entire name out of him. "His name is way too long and difficult."

"He was the last descendant of the Ambrossius chain. They were quite well known. You wouldn't know this, but technically, the Ambrossiuses are lords." Gaius explained, causing their jaws to drop, suddenly slack. "Everyone wanted to put their two bits into naming him; I even got to help since Hunith is my sister."

"Which part did you give him?" Gwen asked, getting past her shock.

"Myrrdin. The Doctor just said it." Gaius smiled.

JETHRO: Two incomplete pieces.

DOCTOR: Yet I know who you are.

JETHRO: (surprised) You're cleverer than you look.

"He only spent the entire time telling people that." Elyan muttered to Gwaine, who burst out laughing.

DOCTOR: (sarcastically) You're older than you look.

"Nice comeback." Leon commented.
JETHRO: (sighs) Alas, I must go. Do not share what you have learned thus far. (he leaves quickly, closing the door)

DOCTOR: (looking at the closed door) I won't....Merlin.

"Is that the end of this one?" Arthur inquired.

"Yes," the Doctor responded. "We will be moving to the next one in a moment."

The King brought out a sheet of paper and started to write something.

"What are you doing?" Gwen inquired.

"Writing a law to get rid of the bans on magic." he replied.

The knights, for the first time in a while, shared a brilliant smile. It had been a difficult episode.
The Eleventh Hour

Chapter Summary

They watch the Eleventh Hour.

Chapter Notes

Hey guys, seeing how popular Merlin's chapter was, I'm adding more of him. I'm editing the script so that instead of Amy, there is Merlin. This would change certain plot points eventually, but I have confidence that I'll successfully change the story. I own nothing! In this Merlin switches forms for a little bit, I hope it's not confusing and tell me if you like it. Also, the name Merlinus is what I'm using as Merlin's full name. I just like the affect the Doctor had when he called Amy Amelia and wanted to replicate it. After this chapter, I'll be going back and doing Gaius's episode. Before I did that, I wanted them to talk about Captain Jack Harkness more. I will be trying to keep a common timeline from here on out, so it'll take me a day to figure out how I'll keep it in chronological order.

The air surrounding the area where they sat was tense with the heaviness of the last episode. None of them had any bigoted thoughts or ideas against Merlin, though. The young manservant had wormed his way into their hearts almost as soon as he got to Camelot. Arthur set the paper he was writing on down seriously, "We should mail this to Camelot,"

"But Sire," Leon warned, "The lands between here and Camelot are fraught with bandits, it would surely be intercepted for sure,"

"Besides," Gwaine said with an unusual air of seriousness, "There's no one in line for execution; it'd be stupid to rush this and make a mistake."

Arthur nodded, and placed the paper on the ground next to him, he would never admit that his hand was shaking slightly. Merlin deserved better; this had to be done perfectly.

"Well then," the Doctor broke the atmosphere, grinning ear to ear at the display he had just witnessed, "We've still got some more, and wait a second," the Doctor's eyes scanned the opening picture on the screen, "I haven't lived this yet,"

"What do you mean?" Gwen furrowed her eyebrows, "I thought you'd lived through all of these,"

"Not this one," the Doctor shook his head, "Looks like we're going to be seeing my next regeneration as well. The only difference between it is that I will look like a completely different person,"

"How's that possible?" Gwaine asked.

"Remember how I said my family has a way to speed up reincarnation?" the Doctor didn't wait for
their nods, "We actually refer to it as regeneration, and instead of coming back to life in the future, we take up a new body."

"Do you take someone else's body," Gaius paused, giving his eyebrow of doom, "Or do you spontaneously create one of your own,"

"I create my own," the Doctor tried not to get excited at the inquisitiveness of those around him, "I can make it in the image of someone existing though,"

"Interesting," Gaius nodded slowly, and they all turned their attention to the screen.

[Tardis]

(The Tardis is tumbling out of control and going Bang! inside. It flies over the Millennium Dome with the Doctor dangling from the threshold, sonic screwdriver between his teeth and trying to pull himself back inside. They are heading straight for the Parliament Clock Tower, so the Doctor sonics the controls and changes course just in time. He climbs back inside and shuts the doors behind him, exhausted, as the Tardis careers on its way.)

Everyone looked between the box shown flying around on screen and the one standing nearby astonished. They'd known of it reappearing some places, but not flying!

"I take it that's what I'll look like," the Doctor made a face, rubbing his hands up and down his sideburns, "I don't like it."

"Rough bit of luck, mate," Gwaine laughed in his jolly way, "I bet that's you,"

"Are you crashing?" Percival asked.

"It'd appear so," the Doctor admitted, and the rest leaned forward in anxiety to see what'll happen.

[Bedroom]

(Night time. A pinwheel rattles in the overgrown garden of an old house. A dark hair man is saying his prayers.)

"That's Merlin!" they all yelled, pointing excitedly to the screen.

"Hmm," the Doctor made a confused face, "So I guess he knew me on the planet Midnight,"

"Let me get this right," Gaius put his hands up in the universal 'slow down' gesture, "At this point, you would've met Merlin before, but he wouldn't have met you?"

"Yeah," the Doctor said slowly, taking in their reactions.

"That's......" Arthur fixed him with a look, "Confusing, but let's see what stupidity Merlin will get up to now."

Gwen leaned forward, smiling at the screen, "He's not wearing all black," she pointed out.

Everyone's eyes widened as they noticed it as well.

"I guess he hasn't gotten to that stage of his life yet," Percival said wisely, causing the joy they had to see him not wearing black to fade away very quickly.
MERLIN: Hey God, if you're still listening to me. I haven't spoken to you in a while, but I need your help.

"That's a big change from the 'six-six-six' line from last time," Gwaine commented.

Arthur shook his head, "That's not what I'm worried about right now. What would someone with magic like Merlin's need help with?"

Everyone sat, contemplating this for a while.

"You're worried about him," Gwen teased.

There's a crack in my wall. My mate Sharon says it's just an ordinary crack, but I know it's not, because at night there's voices, and my magic isn't doing anything to stop it, it's useless against it.

"His magic is useless against it?" Gaius's eyebrows flew to his hairline.

"I suspect some form of shielding," the Doctor spoke up, gathering all of their attentions, "In the future, there are so many different beings with so many different abilities that there's basic shielding against almost everything. This shielding is only found around prisons, though,"

"That can't be right because Merlin's not in a prison," Gwaine pointed out.

"It could be the crack," Leon added.

Arthur shifted in his seat, uncomfortable; he didn't like the feeling he got when Merlin said that his magic was useless against the crack. Were the voices real or just in his head? If this....friend of his, Sharon, didn't hear anything, who knew what it really was.

So can you come? Or you could send a policeman. Or a (He hears the Tardis materialising outside, then a crash.)

MERLIN: Back in a moment.

(He grabs a torch and looks outside. The Tardis has crash-landed on its side, on the garden shed.)

MERLIN: I didn't mean a policeman literally but thanks anyway.

They all snorted out laughter at Merlin's snarky comment.

"Most prayers I have aren't...this interesting," Leon admitted, causing more waves of chuckles.

(He rushes downstairs.)

[Garden]

(For only the second time ever, the Tardis doors open outwards - they are facing the sky - and a grappling hook is thrown out. A soaking wet Doctor clambers out.)

Everyone leaned back with wide eyes full of alarm at the sight of the Doctor. The Doctor himself covered his eyes, unprepared for his new self since he really did love the way his body looked now.

DOCTOR: Could I have an apple? All I can think about. Apples. I love apples. Maybe I'm having a craving? That's new. Never had cravings before.
"Are you ill?" Gaius asked, furrowing his eyebrows as he identified the signs of his delirium.

"A little confused," the Doctor replied, "I always take time getting used to a new body."

Everyone shook their heads, still not fully believing what they were hearing, how was this their lives now? They only just discovered reincarnation, but now they need to learn about regeneration as well?

(He sits on the edge of the Tardis and looks inside.)

DOCTOR: Whoa. Look at that.

MERLIN: Hey, are you okay?

DOCTOR: Just had a fall. All the way down there, right to the library. Hell of a climb back up.

MERLIN: You're soaking wet.

DOCTOR: I was in the swimming pool.

"What's a pool?" Leon asked, furrowing his eyebrows.

"It's like a huge area, dug into the ground usually, but there are some freestanding, that holds water."
The Doctor said, "People can relax in their or use it for entertainment,"

"So it's like a bath," Arthur stated.

"Only on a much larger scale," the Doctor made an expanding gesture with his hands.

MERLIN: You said you were in the library.

"He's caught you now," Gwaine smiled, taking a swig from a flask he had brought.

Arthur blinked a couple times, "He processed that information very quickly,"

"Merlin's not dumb, Arthur," Gwen defended her friend, "He can read and write, something many people from Ealdor didn't have the privilege to learn,"

"No, no," Arthur raised his hands in a calming gesture, "I've always known that Merlin wasn't a complete idiot, but he can be a bit of a bumbling mess at times, especially when lying,"

"Sire," Gaius spoke wisely, "He is hundreds of years older in this 'memory'; he's bound to change in some ways,"

Everyone silenced themselves at the reminder that their friend will live on forever, alone.

DOCTOR: So was the swimming pool. Do I know you?

"Don't you recognize him from the previous memory?" Percival asked.

"Probably," the Doctor shrugged, "Though I'd have a new head, I wouldn't remember everything clearly right away,"

(He looks long and hard at Merlin.)

MERLIN: No. Are you a policeman?

DOCTOR: Why? Did you call a policeman?

MERLIN: Well, I was asking about the crack in my wall.

DOCTOR: What crack? Argh!
(He falls to the ground.)

Everyone leaned forward anxiously, worried about their friend's safety.

MERLIN: Are you all right, man?

"He still cares a lot," Gwen commented, causing them to smile.

DOCTOR: No, I'm fine. It's okay. This is all perfectly norm
(A breath of golden energy comes from his mouth.)

They all had been leaning forward, but now they scrambled back, mistaking it for sorcery. However, they all immediately calmed down and even looked quite ashamed about the horrible assumption about magic they had just made.

MERLIN: Do you have magic? Who are you?

"No," the Doctor smiled, "I definitely don't have magic."

DOCTOR: I don't know yet. I'm still cooking. Does it scare you?
MERLIN: No, I've gotten used to magic.

"Obviously he would've," Gwaine leaned back, resting on his elbows, "He has magic himself!"

"I wouldn't be so sure about that," Gaius shook his head, only stopping once he saw the worried, questioning looks the others were giving him, "I remember that when I was visiting Hunith a little more than a decade ago that he was just a little boy terrified of what he could do. He seemed sure that one day, a knight in red would swoop in, kidnap him, and burn him at the stake. Hunith and I had wondered where he had heard of Camelot's executions, eventually we decided that it must've been his own magic telling him,"

Arthur stilled, feeling extremely guilty. A decade ago he wasn't hiding from knights in red like Merlin; he had been one of them! He remembered when he was a young teenager and how thrilled he had been to be allowed to carry the honor of being a knight under his father. However, hearing Merlin's story made it seem less than honorable. How many children today still lived in fear of the knights of Camelot?

"His magic did what?" the Doctor asked, "Told him about the Purge?"

"Maybe," Gaius looked unsure, "Neither of us wanted to really believe that, although we did. Whenever we asked Merlin where he learned that, he grew afraid. He told us that some boys from around the village told him, but we could tell he was lying,"

DOCTOR: No, no, no. And it's not magic. The crack in your wall. Does it scare you?
MERLIN: Yes.

Everyone tilted their heads suspiciously, their interest growing. What is this crack if it could scare Merlin? Sure, they teased him about being cowardly all the time, but he was still one of the bravest people they knew.

DOCTOR: Well then, no time to lose. I'm the Doctor. Do everything I tell you, don't ask stupid questions, and don't wander off.

"He doesn't do well with any of those things," Arthur chuckled.
"He does things he tells you to, that's his job," Gwaine reminded.

Gwen narrowed her eyes, "I guess he does do some of those things,"

(The Doctor walks straight into a tree.)
MERLIN: Are you all right?
DOCTOR: Early days. Steering's a bit off.

MERLIN: Yeah...

"He thinks your crazy...." Gwaine left that hanging in the air.

[Kitchen]
MERLIN: If you're a doctor, why does your box say Police?

"You see," Gwen bit back her previous words, "That's not a stupid question,"

"Why does it say police?" Leon asked.

The Doctor glanced over his beloved box, "I like the police box," he grumbled a bit, "It's supposed to be a disguise,"

"Really." Arthur deadpanned.

"The circuitry that makes it work is a little bit broken," he blew it off.

(The Doctor bites into an apple, then spits it out.)
DOCTOR: That's disgusting. What is that?

"That's an apple," Gwaine looked over the screen, wishing he had an apple himself right then.

MERLIN: An apple.
DOCTOR: Apple's rubbish. I hate apples.
MERLIN: You said you loved them.

"You're just confusing him now," Gwen laughed a bit.

"I didn't know what I liked then," the Doctor defended his future self's actions, "Remember, new body,"

They all rolled their eyes, laughing a little at the excuse.

(Merlin gets him a pot from the fridge. He pours it in his mouth and then spits it out.)
DOCTOR: I hate yoghurt. It's just stuff with bits in.
MERLIN: You said it was your favourite.

"If Merlin was here," Gwaine said, "He'd say something about how princess over here is still more difficult,"

Arthur's face morphed into an insulted expression while the rest of them burst into a fit of giggles.

wrong. Argh!

(The Doctor twitches violently.)

MERLIN: What is it? What's wrong with you?

DOCTOR: Wrong with me? It's not my fault. Why can't you give me any decent food? You're Irish. Fry something.

"He's not from over there," Elyan spoke up for the first time in awhile, referring to the island across the Irish Sea, "He's from here, Albion,"

"Well, yeah," the Doctor admitted, "But he travelled around a lot, I must've lived in Ireland at some point, because in this, he has a hint of an Irish accent."

They all paused a minute, listening to their friends voice.

"That sounds rather weird," Gwen immediately said, "I'm not trying to be mean! It's just...strange,"

"Now, it's even harder to understand what that blabbering mouth of his says," Arthur teased his friend.

(So Merlin gets the frying pay out while the Doctor dries his hair with a towel.)

DOCTOR: Ah, bacon!

(That gets spat out, too.)

DOCTOR: Bacon. That's bacon. Are you trying to poison me?

"Now be honest," Gwaine joked, "Was it the bacon, or was it his cooking?"

"I don't know," the Doctor chuckled slightly, "This hasn't happened yet!"

(A saucepan of baked beans gets heated up.)

DOCTOR: Ah, you see? Beans.

(Until he gets them in his mouth, that is.)


[Front door]

(The Doctor throws the plate of bread and butter out, hitting a cat.)

DOCTOR: And stay out!

"You just don't like anything," Gwen said, shocked by how much food the man before her was wasting.

[Kitchen]

MERLIN: We've got some carrots.


"What?" they all looked at the screen disgusted.

"Fish don't have fingers," Elyan said.

"Well, in the future," the Doctor struggled to come up with the right word.
"They get fingers?" Gwen looked horrified at the thought of this.

"No, no," the Doctor shook his head, "It's just a food with fish in it, and custard is like a sweet sauce,"

"That sounds disgusted," Arthur's lips were frozen in a disgusted sneer towards the screen.

"Yes," the Doctor continued to eye the screen warily, "Yes, it does,"

(The Doctor contentedly dips the fish fingers into a bowl of custard and eats, while Merlin has ice cream.
MERLIN: Funny.

"That's a warped sense of humor their, mate," Gwaine chuckled into his flask.

DOCTOR: Am I? Good. Funny's good. Wasn't your name Jethro?

Everyone froze, the mood dampened by the reminder of the last memory and the emotional stress that had come with it.

MERLIN: No, I've never met you before, and my name's Merlinus Ambrossius.

"I remember that name," Arthur recalled when he had forced Merlin's full name from the servant.

"Wait," Leon furrowed his eyebrows, "Merlin is just a nickname?"

"Apparently, mate," Gwaine smirked, "Though I'm never gonna call him that again."

The Doctor pondered this a minute, "He likely interchanged his many names with his usual one to prevent people from realizing he's living forever. He might also wear a Shimmer,"

"A Shimmer?" Gwen asked.

"A way to change appearance," the Doctor answered, "Though, I suppose that he could've used his magic for that,"

"I remember learning about the Ambrossius family," Arthur recalled, stunned that he never knew where his manservant had descended from.

"If only we knew that when your father was king," Gwen treaded around the subject of Arthur's father carefully, "Probably wouldn't've been your servant,"

"He quite likes being my servant," Arthur stated, smirking a little.

DOCTOR: Oh, that's a brilliant name. Merlinus Ambrossius. Like a name in a fairy tale.

The Doctor chuckled when he heard his own future words. A name like a fairy tale, how right he had been.

Are we in Ireland, Merlinus?
MERLIN: No. I used to live there. We had to move to England. It's rubbish.
DOCTOR: So what about your mum and dad, then? Are they upstairs? Thought we'd have woken them by now.

"I did not just assume that he lived with his parents, did I?" the Doctor covered his face with his
hands at his future self.

"People live together for generations," Gwen stated, confused.

The Doctor cleared up the immediate confusion, "People in the future have more space. They can afford moving away from each other."

MERLIN: I don't have a mum and dad living here. Just a friend.

"What friend is this?" Arthur crossed his arms.

"A bad one," Gwaine gestured, flask still in hand, "She's not even there right now."

They all quietened, saddened by the lonely life Merlin will lead.

DOCTOR: I don't even have that.
MERLIN: You're lucky.

All thoughts of giving this friend a chance vanished. Merlin seemed to want this friend gone just as much as they did.

"Why does he not like his friend?" Elyan asked, "If he didn't like them, then they wouldn't be his friend,"

"Whenever I even hear about Merlin," the Doctor reminded them how secluded the warlock was, "He's always disconnected from society. When he does try to connect, he builds weak relationships that never last long. Nothing so far compared to what you all have here,"

DOCTOR: I know. So, your friend, where is she?
MERLIN: She's out.
DOCTOR: And she left you all alone?
MERLIN: I'm not two. And I'm not scared.

"Why are you babying him?" Gaius asked.

The Doctor shrugged, "I haven't lived this far yet. That might be my new personality. I might be careful with him because I remember Midnight, or it could be because that crack in his wall,"

DOCTOR: Course, you're not. You're not scared of anything. Box falls out of the sky, man falls out of a box, man eats fish custard, and look at you, just sitting there. So you know what I think?
MERLIN: What?
DOCTOR: Must be a hell of a scary crack in your wall.

"Seriously," Arthur groaned, "What is with this crack? Will he be alright in the end?" he bombarded the Doctor with a question.

"Wish I could tell you," the Doctor winced, "I can't say. I haven't gotten this far,"

[Bedroom]

(The crack is about three to four feet long, and slightly w shaped.)

" Doesn't seem that scary," Gwen commented.
DOCTOR: You've had some cowboys in here. Not actual cowboys, though that can happen.
MERLIN: I used to hate apples, so a guardian of mine used put faces on them.

(Merlin gives the Doctor an apple with a smiley face cut into it.)

"Aw..." they all smiled at Merlin's adorably loveable behavior.

"He said guardian, not parent..." Percival let that hang in the air.

"It was me," Gaius smile, staring up at the screen, "I had this tiny knife that I rarely used for medicine making, eventually I just gave it to Hunith or her to make him eat apples. That was one of the only things they had around Ealdor."

DOCTOR: They sounds good, this guardian of yours.

"This guardian's the best," Arthur grinned in agreement.

I'll keep it for later. This wall is solid and the crack doesn't go all the way through it. So here's a thing. Where's the draught coming from?

"That doesn't make any sense," Gwen furrowed her eyebrows, everyone else was just as stumped as her.

"This is creepy," Elyan stated, everyone agreed with him.

(He scans it with the sonic screwdriver.)
DOCTOR: Wibbly-wobbly timey-wimey. You know what the crack is?
MERLIN: What?
DOCTOR: It's a crack. But I'll tell you something funny. If you knocked this wall down, the crack would stay put, because the crack isn't in the wall.

Everyone's faces became distorted, questioning what was really going on. Even the Doctor seemed not to be keeping up with his future self.

"Where's the crack, then?" Gwen asked, greatly confused.

MERLIN: Where is it then?

"Great minds think alike," Gwen smirked despite the danger in Merlin's situation.

DOCTOR: Everywhere. In everything. It's a split in the skin of the world. Two parts of space and time that should never have touched, pressed together right here in the wall of your bedroom.

Arthur's position became tense, a hand instinctively going towards his sword, "That sounds dangerous,"

The Doctor nodded along, also in shock of what was going on, "This could be incredibly dangerous," he trailed off before breaking into a grin.

"What then, you get off on his fear?" Elyan's expression became insulted as he surged to defend his friend. The others quickly trailed behind.

The Doctor, seeing the situation, quickly corrected his ways, "I'm merely excited for the adventure."
Trust me on this, I would never purposefully do something that I'd know harm another,

They eased themselves, bodies becoming less tense. They redirected their attention back to the screen.

*Sometimes, can you hear?*

**MERLIN:** A voice. Yes.

"Voices?" Gwen echoed, feeling an inkling of fear in her chest.

"Are you sure he's not facing some affliction?" Gaius's hands shook a little, worried, "If the crack as a draught, who knows what it could be bringing to Merlin,"

(There is a vague growling from somewhere. The Doctor empties Merlin's nighttime glass of water and uses it to listen to the crack.)

Everyone who had doubted the voices before now sprang back, eyes blown wide and lips parted in fear and awe.

"What is that?" Gwaine had put down the flask and pointed shakily towards the screen, "It doesn't sound friendly,"

**ATRAXI [OC]:** Prisoner Zero has escaped.

"So it is a prison." the Doctor tapped his chin thoughtfully.

Arthur's eyebrows quirked up in disbelief, "So Merlin lives in a house with a crack in the whole world, hearing the voice of an escaped prisoner?"

They all leaned forward, worried. They had not realized the harshness of the situation.

**DOCTOR:** Prisoner Zero?

**MERLIN:** Prisoner Zero has escaped. That's what I heard. What does it mean?

**ATRAXI [OC]:** Prisoner Zero has escaped.

**DOCTOR:** It means that on the other side of this wall, there's a prison and they've lost a prisoner. And you know what that means?

**MERLIN:** What?

**DOCTOR:** You need a better wall. The only way to close the breach is to open it all the way. The forces will invert and it'll snap itself shut. Or

"You're making no sense," Leon's hand had been on his sword for quite some time now, the harsh force of the worry he felt for the young manservant making him wary.

"The only way to close it is to open it," Gaius pondered this, "It's rather poetic,"

**MERLIN:** What?

**DOCTOR:** You know when people tell you everything's going to be fine and you think they're probably lying to make you feel better?

**MERLIN:** Yes.

**DOCTOR:** Everything's going to be fine.

"Why're you keeping him there, then?" Gwaine shot up with worry, "If you think he'll be hurt, what's the point of endangering him?"
The Doctor cocked an eyebrow, "I think you're forgetting that your manservant is not completely defenseless. He's the most powerful warlock to ever walk this Earth. He might've not known me then, but I knew that if things got out of hand, Merlin might've been Earth's only option for salvation."

"He has no clue what he's up against," Gaius folded his hands anxiously.

(The Doctor takes Merlin's hand and aims the sonic screwdriver at the crack. It widens, flooding the bedroom with bright light.)

**ATRAXI [OC]: Prisoner Zero has escaped. Prisoner Zero has escaped.**

**DOCTOR: Hello? Hello?**

(A giant blue eye looks at them through the crack.)

"What is that!" Arthur stood from where he was seated. Eyes wide as he took a look at the screen, and his knees were bent, as if he was ready to lunge.

"Is it some form of magical beast?" Gaius asked.

"Not everything that's abnormal is magic," the Doctor stated, "I don't see you calling a rabbit magic; this being is probably perfectly normal for where it came from,"

The all looked around guiltily for a bit.

"You think it peeked at Merlin while he was sleeping?" Gwaine brought a new elephant into the room.

Gwen's mouth fell open with disgust and horror, "It would be watching him this whole time. And the times before the Doctor arrived!"

"So it knows exactly what he can do," Percival solemnly stated, they all fell into silence as they stared at the screen.

**MERLIN: What's that?**

"That's what we all want to know, mate," Gwaine answered the screen.

(A bolt of light goes to the Doctor, and he doubles over, then the crack closes again.)

**DOCTOR: There, you see? Told you it would close. Good as new.**

**MERLIN: What's that thing? Was that Prisoner Zero?**

**DOCTOR: No. I think that was Prisoner Zero's guard. Whatever it was, it sent me a message. Psychic paper. Takes a lovely little message. (reads) Prisoner Zero has escaped. But why tell us? Unless.**

**MERLIN: Unless what?**

**DOCTOR: Unless Prisoner Zero escaped through here. But he couldn't have. We'd know.**

"Be careful," Gaius forewarned, the Doctor nodding as he saw the expressions of worry plastered over all of their faces.

"Is this normal for you?" Gwen asked, "Do you always beat the bad guy?"

"I have a pretty good track record," the Doctor comforted, and the tension dissolved from around the room, though Arthur remained vigilant has ever with worry for his friend.

[Corridor]
(The stairs go up. There is a door across the way and two at the far end where the staircase goes down again.)

DOCTOR: It's difficult. Brand new me. Nothing works yet. But there's something I'm missing. In the corner of my eye.

They all leaned forward, eager to know what the Doctor is seeing.

(The Tardis Cloister Bell tolls.)

DOCTOR: No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no!

"I take it that is an alarm of some sort?" Leon asked. The Doctor nodded, not looking happy that his beloved TARDIS was also in danger now.

[Garden]

DOCTOR: I've got to get back in there. The engines are phasing. It's going to burn!
MERLIN: But it's just a box. How can a box have engines?

"For someone usually so open to ideas, this one is taking a while to sink in," Elyan laughed.

"What's an engine?" Gwen directed this towards the time traveler.

"A machine that uses power to make motion," the Doctor shrugged, "Any sort really, there're lots of them."

DOCTOR: It's not a box. It's a time machine.

They all gazed in wonder at the machine in question. None of them finding their words yet.

MERLIN: Okay, that sounds crazy, but that's the story of my life. You've got a real time machine?
DOCTOR: Not for much longer if I can't get her stabilised. Five minute hop into the future should do it.
MERLIN: Can I come with you?

They all stilled, thinking over this statement.

"I guess he's really not happy where he is," Gwen muttered miserably. They all looked ashamed at forgetting how lonely Merlin would be.

The Doctor paused before running his hands through his hair, "I know why he wants to come," he sighed, "I think he'd probably want to get around to seeing you guys,"

They all looked bashful at the love Merlin always gave them. They were only a few people he had known through the lifetimes he's lasted, yet he would want to see them in particular.

"And I'd never be able to take him to you," the Doctor finished, after seeing the angry looks, he defended himself, "He'd never be able to fix what happens in your future without messing up his and everyone else's. I might take him to listen from afar, but he can never interact with you again."

They all held their breath, many looking like they wanted to cry.

"I'm sorry," the Doctor ended.
DOCTOR: Not safe in here. Not yet. Five minutes. Give me five minutes, I'll be right back.

"But Prisoner Zero is still there," Percival pointed out.

"I said I'd be right back, time machine, remember?" the Doctor argued.

MERLIN: People always say that.

"Does he get abandoned often?" Gwen wondered, wiping tears off of her face with her sleeve.

"You saw Midnight," the Doctor said solemnly, "His 'parents' forgot he even existed. He also is known for moving around often, and his magic would readily make him an outcast to society,"

"Not anymore," Arthur stated, "I've signed these papers, harm shall never befall another person solely for their magic again,"

The Doctor smiled at his optimism, "I wish," he sighed, "People get worse, that last magic user to be executed was killed in 1727 on these islands," he continued after seeing their horrified stares, they had really thought things would get better, "Merlin does help create a safe space for magic users though, he separated them from the rest of society. They have their own place where they can never be harmed. That's why you don't see any in the future,"

DOCTOR: Am I people? Do I even look like people? Trust me. I'm the Doctor.
(He jumps down into the Tardis.)
DOCTOR [OC]: Geronimo!
(Splash! The door close and the Tardis dematerializes. Merlin runs back to his room, gets a suitcase from underneath his bed and packs. The door across from his is the bathroom. He doesn't notice that one of the doors at the end is now open. Dressed in duffel coat and wooly hat, Merlin sits on his suitcase in the garden and waits.)

They all watched with smiles how young he looked with his newfound eagerness. He'd always appeared young, but the old age had fallen from his eyes.

(When the Tardis finally materialises, steaming, it is day and Merlin is not there. The Doctor stumbles out.)
DOCTOR: Merlinus! Merlinus, I worked out what it was. I know what I was missing! You've got to get out of there!

They immediately sprung up.

"Is he in danger?" Arthur worried.

"I have no way of knowing," the Doctor ran a hand through his hair.

"I had forgotten that his name was Merlinus," Gwaine commented, still uncomfortable with the dangerous situation his lovable friend has found himself in.

[Hallway]

DOCTOR: Merlinus? Merlinus, are you all right? Are you there?
(He runs up to his bedroom door.)
DOCTOR: Prisoner Zero's here. Prisoner Zero is here! Prisoner Zero is here! Do you understand me? Prisoner Zero is
"Prisoner Zero is there?" Leon asked, scanning the hallway pictured on the screen, "Is he using some type of cloaking magic?"

"It's probably not magic," the Doctor thought over his answer, "It's probably some type of device,"

"So, in the future," Gwen said, "People can make machines that replicate magic?"

The Doctor slowly nodded, "That sounds like a good enough explanation."

(A floorboard creaks behind him. He turns and gets thrown across the room by a hand that doesn't touch him.)

Their eyes widened, not expecting a powerful display. They didn't see who cast the spell either.

The Doctor furrowed his eyebrows, confused, "Why would he attack me?" he wondered aloud.

"How do you even know it's him?" Gwaine asked, fiddling with his flask again, "We didn't see who cast the spell, so there's a possibility it wasn't Merlin,"

"That's powerful," Arthur thought over it long and hard. He knew that something similar to what just happened to the Doctor onscreen had also happened to Leon, and that was when he was facing Morgana. He had always thought that she was one of the most powerful magic users, but here was someone who they assumed to be Merlin casting the same spell.

[Coma ward]

"Is this some kind of medical ward?" Gaius asked, having kept quiet during the magic display, "I've never seen one besides ones in battlefields to hold so many people,"

"It's called a hospital," the Doctor stated, "It's much more advanced than anything you lot have now. They have improved so much that they can accept hundreds of patients on a normal day; whether their injuries are small or large,"

(At the Royal Leadworth Hospital, a lady doctor and a male nurse march into the ward.)

RAMSDEN: So. They all called out at once, that's what you're saying? All of them. All the coma patients. You do understand that these people are all comatose, don't you? They can't speak.

RORY: Yes, Doctor Ramsden.

RAMSDEN: Then why are you wasting my time?

RORY: Because they called for you.

RAMSDEN: Me.

BARNEY [OC]: Doctor.

"They sound like they're under some type of spell," Arthur said, "Maybe not a magic one, I've seen hypnotists come through and do the exact same thing."

"Do you think it's Prisoner Zero?" Gwen asked.

"Or that guard," the Doctor added, "It's definitely one of them,"

"Are they calling for the hospital doctor," Gwaine gestured with his flask hand, "Or you?"

The Doctor shrugged, keeping it in his head that it was probably him who was being called.
(The male coma patient behind them is speaking.)
BARNEY: Doctor. Doctor.
WOMAN PATIENT: Doctor. Doctor

[Corridor]

(The Doctor revives with the tweeting of birds to see a young dark-haired lady in a micro-
skirted police uniform using her radio.)

"That's not Merlin," Arthur said, taking a second to be scandalized by the woman's outfit.

Gwen furrowed her eyebrows, "Do they not have clothes in the future? She's only wearing
her undergarments,"

The Doctor laughed, "Fashion changes,"

"Thank God," Gwaine admired the screen.

"Besides that," Elyan shook his head at his friend's antics, "That's not Merlin, who is that?"

"The police," the Doctor tilted his head to the side, "Though, I don't remember that outfit being
uniform,"

MERLIN (in female form): White male, mid twenties, breaking and entering. Send me some
DOCTOR: Who are you? And what threw me across the room?

"Do you think she's the sorcerer who attacked you?" Gwen asked, trying to rid herself of any fear
she had against magic users until she knew more. She could have been defending herself for all she
knew!

MERLIN (in female form): You were breaking and entering.
(The Doctor is handcuffed to the radiator.)

DOCTOR: Well, that's much better. Brand new me. Whack on the head, just what I needed.
MERLIN (in female form): Do you want to shut up now? I've got back up on the way.
DOCTOR: Hang on, no, wait. You're a policewoman.

The Doctor looked pained as he looked at his future self, "I'm so slow,"

"You said her outfit wasn't uniform," Elyan shrugged, "Maybe you just didn't notice because it was
different,"

MERLIN (in female form): And you're breaking and entering. You see how this works?

"Oh," Gwaine smile his 100 watt smile, "She's feisty."

"Very," the Doctor furrowed his eyebrows, seeming to notice that something was up.

"She seems familiar," Arthur tapped his chin, "Her attitude and her looks. Her eyes look very
familiar,"

Gwaine leaned over to tease the King, "You think she's someone whose eyes you gaze into often
then, Princess?"
"I do not gaze into people's eyes!" Arthur defended himself.

"Yeah, you do," Gwaine decided.

**DOCTOR:** But what are you doing here? Where's Merlinus?

**MERLIN (in female form):** Merlinus Ambrossius?

"She knows him?" Gaius asked.

"Maybe she's that friend that Merlin was talking about earlier," Gwen put forth her theory.

Everyone nodded, that seemed like a good theory. Though, Merlin had shown genuine dislike for the friend who lived with him, but it seemed like he and this woman would've clicked well.

**DOCTOR:** Yeah, Merlinus. Dark-haired Irish boy. Where is he? I promised him five minutes but the engines were phasing. I suppose I must have gone a bit far. Has something happened to him?

**MERLIN (in female form):** Merlinus Ambrossius hasn't lived here in a long time.

They all paused to take that in. Many couldn't form words at the sudden surprise.

"No," the Doctor whispered, wondering if something had happened to the immortal warlock while he had foolishly left him their by himself against one of the most dangerous prisoners in the universe.

"What happened to him?" Gwaine demanded, a protective harshness replacing the usual kindness in his eyes.

"We won't know until we watch this," Gaius's wise voice reigned supreme over all of theirs, "We know he survives until Midnight, and Merlin has always been able to take care of himself,"

**DOCTOR:** How long?

**MERLIN (in female form):** Six months.

"He was waiting for you," Gwen whispered, causing another pang of sadness and betrayal to circle the room.

"So you're just another person who abandoned him, then?" Arthur crossed his arms, not at all happy with the Doctor's mistake.

**DOCTOR:** No. No. No. No, I can't be six months late. I said five minutes. I promised. What happened to him? What happened to Merlinus Ambrossius?

All angry thoughts towards the man disappeared as they saw the actual panic and worry in his eyes.

**MERLIN (in female form):** (into radio) Sarge, it's me again. Hurry it up. This guy knows something about Merlinus Ambrossius.

"That doesn't sound good," Percival shook his head.

"Do you think he's gone missing?" Gwen shook, "Or maybe Prisoner Zero got to him. Why did you leave him, Doctor?" there were tears shining in everyone's eyes. It did not look good for the young Ambrossius.

"I don't know," the Doctor ran nervous hands through his hair over and over again. Merlin obviously
survives, seeing as he must go on to Midnight and to meet Captain Jack, but who knows what could've happened to him in the time frame in between those events. Something bad had obviously happened to Merlin prior to Midnight, yet he had simply put it aside as loneliness, but could it have been something more?

[Coma ward]

RAMSDEN: I don't think they were even conscious.
RORY: Doctor Ramsden, there is another sort of, er, funny thing.

"Is he seeing things, too?" Gwen asked, "He's the one who noticed the voices, and now he's bringing something else up,"

RAMSDEN: Yes, I know. Doctor Carver told me about your conversation. We've been very patient with you, Rory. You're a good enough nurse, but for God's sake.
RORY: I've seen them.
RAMSDEN: These patients are under twenty four hour supervision. We know if their blood pressure changes. There is no possibility that you could have seen them wandering about the village. Why are you giving me your phone?
RORY: It's a camera too.

Everyone looked confused again, not knowing the terms that they were using.

"A phone is a communications device that eventually becomes multi-purpose," the Doctor yet again explained, "A camera is a device that can immediately snap an image and save it. Kind of like a super accurate and instant painting."

"The future sounds amazing," Leon said simply, many not knowing how to react to it.

"It is," the Doctor confirm, "You lot come a long way,"

(Doctor Ramsden's bleeper goes off.)
RAMSDEN: You need to take some time off, Rory. A lot of time off. Start now. Now.

[Corridor]

DOCTOR: I need to speak to whoever lives in this house right now.
MERLIN (still in female form): I live here.

"So she is his friend," Gwen scrunched her face up in distaste, wondering why Merlin hadn't liked her.

"Maybe not," the Doctor smirked a little, starting to catch onto the actual identity of the policewoman, "Maybe she's just moved in, or maybe she's someone else?"

"Who else would she be?" Gwaine asked, "There's not many gorgeous woman we know about living there,"

The Doctor held in a chuckle, wondering how they were going to react when they discovered who it actually was.

DOCTOR: But you're the police.
MERLIN (in female form): Yes, and this is where I live. Have you got a problem with that?
DOCTOR: How many rooms?
MERLIN (in female form): I'm sorry, what?
DOCTOR: On this floor. How many rooms on this floor? Count them for me now.

"Why does this matter?" Elyan asked, "Wouldn't the prisoner cloak itself? You should be looking for the prisoner, not how many doors there are."

"The prisoner's cloaking device is more advanced than any magic you've ever faced," the Doctor shrugged, "Who knows where it is,"

MERLIN (in female form): Why?
DOCTOR: Because it will change your life.
MERLIN (in female form): Five. One, two, three, four, five.

"No," Percival interrupted them all before they could say something, "What about that one!" he pointed towards a door directly behind the strange policewoman.

"Six," Arthur breathed, "Is that where Merlin went?" he worried.

"That's where something went," the Doctor gazed at the door darkly. He was not happy that Merlin was MIA; he'd have to fix this.

DOCTOR: Six.
MERLIN (in female form): Six?
DOCTOR: Look.
MERLIN (in female form): Look where?
DOCTOR: Exactly where you don't want to look. Where you never want to look. The corner of your eye. Look behind you.

They all shivered, something about the Doctor's words had set a scary and ominous atmosphere. They hated to think about what happened to Merlin now. The Doctor wondered if he should tell them about his suspicions of the policewoman, but he decided against it. The screen would've revealed it immediately if it had wanted them to know.

MERLIN (in female form): That's, that is not possible. How's that possible?
DOCTOR: There's a perception filter all round the door. Sensed it the last time I was here. Should've seen it.

"Is this perception filter the cloaking device you spoke of earlier?" Leon questioned, and the Doctor nodded in return.

MERLIN (in female form): But that's a whole room. That's a whole room I've never even noticed.
DOCTOR: The filter stops you noticing. Something came a while ago to hide. It's still hiding, and you need to uncuff me now.
MERLIN (in female form): I don't have the key. I lost it.

"She seems kind of clumsy then," Gwaine commented, everyone else had a small smile on their face at that. Only Gaius's eyes widened, recognized his young charge.

DOCTOR: How can you have lost it? Stay away from that door! Do not touch that door! Listen to me, do not open that. Why does no-one ever listen to me? Do I just have a face that
nobody listens to?

They all leaned back, wondering if something horrible was going to happen to her, but if something happened to her, then it might clue them in on what happened to their favorite warlock.

The Doctor meanwhile raised an unimpressed eyebrow. He knew that was Merlin, and one of the first things his future self had told the warlock was to listen to everything he said and not to wander off. The warlock was obviously not listening now. He had an inkling that it might've been more than six months.

(Merlin goes inside the mystery room.)

"No, you imbecile!" Arthur all but yelled at Merlin, though he didn't realize the identity of the policewoman, "Are you trying to get yourself killed?"

The Doctor laughed, "Arthur, I think she'll be fine,"

"What makes you say that?"

The Doctor simply gestured towards the screen.

DOCTOR: Again. My screwdriver, where is it?

The Doctor's expression morphed into one of sadness as he realized that he had lost his screwdriver.

[Room]

(Dirty, boarded up window, packing boxes.)

DOCTOR [OC]: Silver thing, blue at the end. Where did it go?
MERLIN (in female form): There's nothing here.
DOCTOR: Whatever's there stopped you seeing the room.

"So it could be hiding right in front of her, and she'd never know," Percival stated solemnly.

Everyone felt a rush of horror that made them shiver. This monster was definitely more creepier than anything they have around Camelot. Except maybe the Dorocha, those had been very frightening. The only one not entirely fearful was the Doctor. He, of course, was worried for Merlin's safety, but he'd faced worse and knew that Merlin could take care of him or herself.

[Corridor]

DOCTOR: What makes you think you could see it?

[Room]

DOCTOR [OC]: Now please, just get out.
MERLIN (in female form): Silver, blue at the end?
DOCTOR [OC]: My screwdriver, yeah.

"Thank God she found it," the Doctor quickly patted for it in his trench coat just to make sure he still had it on him. At the other's questioning looks, he defended, "What? I like my screwdriver!"

MERLIN (in female form): It's here.
DOCTOR: Must have rolled under the door.

"Get it and get out of there!" Gwen said, somehow hoping her words would translate to the woman's escape.

"We haven't even learned her name yet," Elyan stated, "If she was important, then we would know who she was by now, right? Maybe something bad will happen to her..."

The rest of the room was saddened by this news. Only the Doctor and Gaius knew that the woman was more important than anyone there could imagine.

MERLIN (in female form): Yeah. Must have. And then it must have jumped up on the table.

Those who still believed that the policewoman would have an untimely fate gasped. They were certain that Prisoner Zero was there and would attack her. By putting the screwdriver on the table it had toyed with her, and they didn't want to see the feisty woman die.

The Doctor and Gaius, who both knew the identity of the policewoman, were just as worried. The sudden change had hit them like a wave as they realized that Merlin was not alone.

DOCTOR: Get out of there.

DOCTOR [OC]: Get out of there! Get out!
(Merlin picks up the screwdriver, which is nearly stuck to the table with gunk.)

The Doctor grimaced at seeing the condition of his favorite screwdriver.

"What is that?" Gaius squinted at the screen, unfortunately lacking his glasses, "Some form of mucus or slime?"

The Doctor's grimace turned into an expression of horror, "I have no idea," he looked sick knowing what had been done to his sonic.

DOCTOR: Get out of there!

(Something snake-like with very long sharp teeth slithers down behind Merlin.)

"What is that?" Gwen gasped, a lingering finger pointing at the screen.

All of the knights had been grasping there swords, Leon spoke up, "I presume that that must be Prisoner Zero,"

"She's going to die, Doctor, can't you get out of that restraining device she put on you!" Gwaine
quickly glanced from the screen to the Doctor with worry.

"They're called handcuffs, and no, I can't presume that I can't get out. If I could, I would've stopped her from even going in," the Doctor sniped, worried for Merlin. Even though he knew that Merlin's magic could easily protect him, seeing Merlin completely unaware of its presence caught him off guard.

DOCTOR [OC]: What is it? What are you doing?
MERLIN (in female form): There's nothing here, but

[Corridor]

DOCTOR: Corner of your eye.

[Room]

MERLIN (in female form): What is it?
DOCTOR [OC]: Don't try to see it. If it knows you've seen it, it will kill you. Don't look at it. Do not look.

"If you didn't want her to look at it, why did you tell her about the corner of her eye?" Elyan raised an unimpressed eyebrow.

(Merlin turns and finally stares it in the face. She screams.)

Everyone held their breath or let out a quiet yelp when she finally turned around. They all seemed certain that she was going to die.

"If she was the sorcerer that knocked you out," Percival wisely stated, keeping calm in the tense situation, "Then why isn't she defending herself?"

Through panicked stares, Arthur straightened up, "We don't know if she's the sorcerer yet, and if she was, she might be caught off guard,"

Meanwhile, the Doctor and Gaius, who had been certain that Merlin would be fine, were now unsure of themselves. Merlin's magic had always been uncontrollable, often times responding to his emotions. So why was there no flash of magic? Merlin genuinely seemed surprised, and it didn't look like she was about to be attacking soon, more like running away.

[Corridor]

DOCTOR: Get out!
(Merlin runs to the Doctor.)

Everyone released the breath they were holding; at least the policewoman wasn't in the same room anymore.

DOCTOR: Give me that.
(The Doctor grabs the sonic screwdriver and locks the door, then tries to free himself.)

"Is that some sort of magical device?" Gaius asked, curious about the technology.

"Not magic," the Doctor shook his head, "Just really advanced technology,"
DOCTOR: Come on. What's the bad alien done to you?
MERLIN (in female form): Will that door hold it?
DOCTOR: Oh, yeah, yeah, of course. It's an interdimensional multiform from outer space. They're all terrified of wood.

Despite themselves, many snorted at this, except for Arthur, who for some reason felt particularly worried over the familiar policewoman, "Are you sure this is the time to be making a joke?"

(There is a bright light in the room.)
MERLIN (in female form): What's that? What's it doing?

Everyone calmed down again, cursing themselves for getting angry with the Doctor. He said he'd help the policewoman, yet they were always so quick to jump to conclusions against him.

MERLIN (in female form): There is no back up.

"But she called for back up, when you were just waking up!" Gwen furrowed her eyebrows, confused, "Was that device of hers broken somehow?"

"You said that her uniform wasn't regulation," Leon quickly answered her, "Is it a possibility that she's faking? She has magic, sire," he directed this towards Arthur, "She could probably come up with a disguise like this quicker than the Doctor could realize that she was someone else,"

The Doctor felt the urge to defend himself from that statement before he realized that that was exactly what had happened.

"If she was faking," Gwaine tilted his head, "What was she going to do to you? Her only plan seemed to be waiting for backup; was she just going to leave you tied there?"

Arthur crossed his arms. He was abnormally worried over this sorceress, more so than he'd ever admit for anyone, and she was in trouble, "She doesn't seem to be able to plan well, does she?" he said, putting on his normal snarky front.

DOCTOR: I heard you on the radio. You called for back up.
MERLIN (in female form): I was pretending. It's a pretend radio.

"Pretend?" Elyan questioned.

"So I assume it's like a costume," Gwaine quickly followed Elyan up.

The Doctor slowly nodded, "That seems about right."

"So she's an actor of some kind," Percival stated. They all were unused to this concept; all actors in their time period were male.

Seeing all of their expectant looks pointing at him to confirm what Percival said, the Doctor shrugged, "She could be many things; I don't have enough context right now,"

DOCTOR: You're a policewoman.
MERLIN (in female form): I'm a kissogram!

"Ah," the Doctor deadpanned.
Gaius's eyes widened, unnoticed to anybody else. The way the policewoman stated this proved that she wasn't lying. There was too much frustration in her tone, but he knew that this was Merlin. Taking clues from the title, 'kissogram', meant that it involved making money off of the act of kissing, yet the Merlin he knew wouldn't do that. He valued love and kisses as rare as they may be for him at a high standard. He would never give them away for money.

The rest were unaware of his contemplation, but also wondering what a kissogram was. The knight who asked was, of course, Gwaine, "So, what's a kissogram?"

The Doctor tapped his chin, wondering how he should phrase the next statement, "A kissogram is someone who sells other people their kisses at social events,"

Arthur quickly furrowed his eyebrows, "So like a.....kissing prostitute?"

"No, no, no, no," the Doctor almost yelled, "Well kind of, but it's not something super serious. People do it because the costumes can make it a bit ridiculous,"

"If that's a costume, then she didn't make it out of magic," Arthur quickly changed from the awkward subject, "So she may not be the sorcerer?"

"Sire," Leon said, "She's the only one there, and we know that it wasn't Prisoner Zero because the sorcerer is human."

(She takes off her cap and her long dark hair falls down. The door falls down to reveal a workman in overalls and toolbelt, with a black dog, He looks just like Barney the coma patient.)

Gaius's mouth formed a small 'o', "The walking coma patients," this caused everyone else to be reminded of the small, seemingly unimportant scenes.

MERLIN (in female form): But it's just
DOCTOR: No, it isn't. Look at the faces.
(The man barks.)

Everyone leaned back, surprised.

MERLIN (in female form): What? I'm sorry, but what?
DOCTOR: It's all one creature. One creature disguised as two. Clever old multi-form. A bit of a rush job, though. Got the voice a bit muddled, did you? Mind you, where did you get the pattern from? You'd need a psychic link, a live feed. How did you fix that?
(The coma patient has a photograph of a black dog by his bed, just to confirm the identification. The man in the corridor opens his mouth to reveal the long needle-like teeth.)

Everyone's expressions went from those of surprise, to panic and horror. They scrambled back now, seeing that the teeth were too big for its mouth.


"Yeah," the Doctor confirmed, this definitely isn't good news.

DOCTOR: Stay, boy! Her and me, we're safe. Want to know why? She sent for back up.
MERLIN (in female form): I didn't send for back-up!
DOCTOR : I know. That was a clever lie to save our lives. Okay, yeah, no back up. And that's
why we're safe. Alone, we're not a threat to you. If we had back up, you'd have to kill us.

Despite the severity of the situation, everyone snorted a little, seeing the Doctor's changing story. The only one who didn't do this was the Doctor, who was unhappy with his future regeneration.


MERLIN (in female form): What's that?

DOCTOR: Well, that would be back up. Okay, one more time. We do have back up and that's definitely why we're safe.

ATRAXI [OC]: Prisoner Zero will vacate the human residence or the human residence will be incinerated.

DOCTOR: Well, safe apart from, you know, incineration.

"Isn't incineration another word for spontaneous combustion?" Gaius asked, worried yet again. If he wasn't already grey haired, he would be by the end of these videos.

"Is that what happened to Merlin?" Gwen asked, causing more waves of guilt throughout the rest of the knights. In worry for the policewoman who might've attacked the Doctor, they had ignored the fact that in the future their friend is missing. Seeing how guilty the rest were, the Doctor and Gaius thought about revealing Merlin's identity, but they decided not to, knowing that when Merlin does reveal himself, he'd have a better explanation than anything the two could come up with.

ATRAXI [OC]: Prisoner Zero will vacate the human residence or the human residence will be incinerated.

Arthur was horrified by the Atraxi's actions, they reminded him a little too much of his father's. The phrase 'One bad egg spoils the whole bunch' came to his mind. The Atraxi was threatening incineration because of one prisoner who didn't want to be turned in. His father began the Purge because he hadn't heeded the warning a witch gave him about his birth. This only fortified his mind against people like that; he decided that he would never do anything like that, no matter what.

(The Doctor struggles with the sonic screwdriver.)

DOCTOR: Come on, work, work, work, come on.

ATRAXI [OC]: Prisoner Zero will vacate the human residence or the human residence will be incinerated.

(Merlin grabs the Doctor's sonic screwdriver from him. It starts working, glowing gold at the end instead of blue. The Doctor looks surprised.)

"So she was the sorcerer," Elyan stated what they all already knew.

"Yeah," the Doctor hinted, wanting their intuitive minds to figure out her identity all on their own, "She's a really good one too, probably one of the best. Combining her magic with my screwdriver to connect circuits to make it work, genius," The Doctor actually was seriously impressed with the work of the warlock; everything he or she does seemed to rouse excitement in him.

They all still looked confused. They didn't look afraid at the fact that the sorcerer was powerful, which the Doctor was happy about, but none of them seemed to get any clues to her identity.

DOCTOR: Run! Run!

ATRAXI [OC]: Prisoner Zero will vacate the human residence or the human residence will be incinerated.
GARDEN

DOCTOR: Kissogram?
MERLIN (in female form): Yes, a kissogram. Work through it.
DOCTOR: Why'd you pretend to be a policewoman?
MERLIN (in female form): You broke into my house. It was this or a French maid. What's going on? Tell me. Tell me!
DOCTOR: An alien convict is hiding in your spare room disguised as a man and a dog, and some other aliens are about to incinerate your house. Any questions?

MERLIN (in female form): Yes.
DOCTOR: Me too. No, no, no, no! Don't do that, not now! It's still rebuilding. Not letting us in.
"It can rebuild itself?" Gaius asked, taking a break from the emotional tax of seeing the boy he thought of as his son hiding who he was.
"Well, it's not an it, it's a she," the Doctor informed, cocking an eyebrow with slight offense at the term used for his beautiful and sexy box, "She can rebuild herself, send telepathic messages to me, and is endlessly big inside,"
"That's......amazing," Gwen paused, in awe at the seemingly innocent box besides them.

ATRAXI [OC]: Prisoner Zero will vacate the human residence or the human residence will be incinerated.
MERLIN (in female form): Come on.
DOCTOR: No, wait, hang on. Wait, wait, wait, wait. The shed. I destroyed that shed last time I was here. Smashed it to pieces.
MERLIN (in female form): So there's a new one. Let's go.
DOCTOR: Yeah, but the new one's got old. It's ten years old at least. Twelve years. I'm not six months late, I'm twelve years late.

Everyone's awe of the big blue box came to a halt at the realization of how much time had truly gone by. If Merlin had been left alone with Prisoner Zero, who knows what could've happened. Those still ignorant to the policewoman's identity wondered if Merlin had been dead or missing for years at this rate. They vanquished this thought, knowing that the policewoman said that Merlin had moved out six months prior to the Doctor being there. Still, his sudden disappearance was worrying for them.

This, however, caused a certain pang of emotion to run through Gaius and the Doctor. While the other's were worried about the location of Merlin, believing that this Prisoner might've killed or kidnapped him, they knew that he was in fact the policewoman standing in front on the screen. While normally this would've of calmed them as living proof that Merlin is safe, they felt horrified at the idea that the Doctor had yet again abandoned him. Merlin had had obvious abandonment issues at the beginning of the memory, and the Doctor had promised to return within five minutes. That was just another lie told to him as someone yet again left the warlock behind.

MERLIN (in female form): He's coming.
DOCTOR: You said six months. Why did you say six months?
"Maybe Merlin really had lived their until six months ago," Elyan interrupted, uncomfortable with
the interrogation shown on the screen, "Sure, he was unhappy at the beginning, but he didn't seem like he was going to move on from this village unless it was with you, the time traveler,"

The rest noted the fact that the Doctor suspiciously gave no reply to this, making them wonder that perhaps he knew something they didn't.

**MERLIN (in female form):** We've got to go.
**DOCTOR:** This matters. This is important. Why did you say six months?
**MERLIN (in female form):** Why did you say five minutes!

Everyone, sans Gaius and the Doctor, furrowed their eyebrows and tilted their heads.

"What?" Gwen barely whispered, holding her breath at the scene to come.

**DOCTOR:** What?
**MERLIN (in female form):** Come on.

(Merlin sheds his disguise and is now in his usual male form and changed the policewoman outfit into that of a policeman.)

They all choked on their breath, not expecting the reveal.

"But he liked you," Arthur stated after a long couple of seconds, "Merlin's not the type I know to attack friends, and he knocked you out and cuffed you!" This did explain why the King had felt a certain connection to the policewoman, despite not knowing her, but the reveal left a knot of guilt in his chest. He had thoroughly believed that he'd always be able to recognize his friend, but apparently not.

"Princess," Gwaine interrupted, his voice graver than normal, "You're right, Merlin doesn't attack friends, but once you add on centuries of constant abandonment......The Doctor left him Arthur. Alone and in the dark, promising to come back."

Many had already known this, but this is when they turned their accusing stares upon the Time Lord. The Doctor knew that his future self hadn't meant to leave the brilliant warlock behind, but accidents happen. And this is probably going to be the worst one for a long time.

They all anxiously shifted, not knowing what to say now that they've seen the Doctor's expression. That was, until Gwaine piped up, this time with a much lighter attitude, "What if Merlin hadn't changed that policewoman outfit, though?" he looked over his friends, gauging their reactions.

Their eyes widened as they imagined their favorite manservant in that small and sexy uniform, many of them, such as Gaius, banishing the image from their minds immediately. Arthur, however, thought about this image. For a long time.

**DOCTOR:** What?
**MERLIN (in regular form):** Come on!
**DOCTOR:** What?
**ATRAXI [OC]:** Prisoner Zero will vacate the human residence or the human residence will be incinerated.

[Village lane]

**DOCTOR:** You're Merlinus.
MERLIN: And you're late.

DOCTOR: Merlinus Ambrossius, you're him.
MERLIN: I'm Merlinus and you're late.
DOCTOR: What happened?
MERLIN: Twelve years.
DOCTOR: You flung me across the room with magic.

"I think he has a perfectly good reason for doing that," Gwaine couldn't help but glare at the Time Lord as he crossed his arms.

The Doctor, deciding not to argue, simply nodded at seeing all of the angry faces around him.

FERLINS: Twelve years.
DOCTOR: Magic.
FERLINS: Twelve years and four psychiatrists.

"What's a psychiatrist?" Arthur asked, not like what it meant from what he deduced from their Latin roots.

"They're doctors who work with mental illnesses, emotional disturbances, and abnormal behaviors," the Doctor said, saddened by what Merlin was saying.

"And he's been through four?" Gwen asked, upset by how the future Merlin was doing.

DOCTOR: Four?
MERLIN: I kept biting them.

Everyone's mouths fell even further. They couldn't see the manservant who they had, admittedly, taken advantage of before biting people.

DOCTOR: Why?
MERLIN: They said you weren't real.

"That's what changes in the future," the Doctor gravely stated, "Things such as magic and falling men from the sky go from being forbidden to not existing at all. The Purge continues to such an extent that magic fades into myth because all magic users have been separated from the rest of society. Since Merlin is practically made of magic, it would begin to feel as if people denied his existence. And they do really. In the future, Merlin is just a fairy tale, a legend,"

"That's not fair," Arthur stated, having held back tears. Sometimes he really takes Merlin for granted, but hearing this made him realize that without Merlin, his life would lose meaning. He reached up one of the hands that had been supporting himself to wipe away a tear before it fell. No one commented on this, seeing as they were all crying too.

ATRAXI [OC]: Prisoner Zero will vacate the human residence or the human residence will be incinerated. Repeat.
(It is coming from the Ice cream van speakers.)
MERLIN: No, no, no, come on. What? We're being staked out by an ice-cream van.
ATRAXI [OC]: Prisoner Zero will vacate the human residence or the human residence will be incinerated.
DOCTOR: What's that? Why are you playing that?
ICE CREAM MAN: It's supposed to be Claire De Lune.
(It is also on the radio.)
ATRAXI [OC]: Prisoner Zero will vacate the human residence or the human residence will be incinerated. Repeat. Prisoner Zero will vacate the human residence or the human residence will be incinerated.
(It is also on a jogger's iPod and a woman's mobile phone.)
MERLIN: Doctor, what's happening?
ATRAXI [OC]: Repeat, Prisoner Zero will vacate the human residence or the human residence will be incinerated.
"It's everywhere," Elyan said.
"A message played around the world on everything at the exact same time," the Doctor cocked his head, "I'm impressed,"

[Mrs Angelo's home]
(The big eyeball is on every channel on the television. An elderly lady keeps jabbing at the remote control.)
ATRAXI [on TV]: Repeat, Prisoner Zero will vacate the human residence or the human residence will be incinerated.
DOCTOR: Hello! Sorry to burst in. We're doing a special on television faults in this area. Also crimes. Let's have a look.
MRS ANGELO: I was just about to phone. It's on every channel. Oh, hello, Merlin dear. Are you a policeman now?
"I take it that this is not the first time Merlin has shown up dressed in a costume?" Gwaine grinned, wondering what other things his friend had dressed up as.

(Merlin looks down, having forgotten that he was still dressed as a policeman)
MERLIN: Well, sometimes.
MRS ANGELO: I thought you were a nurse.
MERLIN: I can be a nurse.
MRS ANGELO: Or somehow a priest?
MERLIN: I dabble.

Everyone couldn't help themselves, the burst into peels of gut-busting laughter, tears of mirth trickling down their faces.
"He kissed people..." Gwaine struggled to control his laughter, "Dressed as a p-priest?"
"Apparently," Gwen gave a huge smile towards the screen.

MRS ANGELO: Merlin, who is your friend?
DOCTOR: Who's Merlin? You were Merlinus.
MERLIN: Yeah? Now I'm Merlin.
"He's always been Merlin," Arthur furrowed his eyebrows, "I don't see how that's a big deal,"
The Doctor shrugged, "He has a great name! And he always tries to keep his name constant while he's in the same place, it makes it easier for him to not be ousted as an immortal. He was Merlinus in Leadsworth just like he was Jethro on Midnight. He would never change his name without a reason;
it would break consistency."

DOCTOR: Merlinus Ambrossius. That was a great name.
MERLIN: Bit fairy tale.

All confusion immediately evaporated. They all knew why he had stopped going by Merlinus; it was because he associated the name with the Doctor. It saddened all of them to see that the Doctor's abandonment of him held this much control over his life.

MRS ANGELO: I know you, don't I? I've seen you somewhere before.
DOCTOR: Not me. Brand new face First time on. And what sort of job's a kissogram?
MERLIN: I go to parties in different forms and I kiss people. With outfits. It's a laugh.
DOCTOR: You were different five minutes ago.

"Five minutes ago for you," Leon reminded, "Twelve years for him."

MERLIN: You're worse than my friend Sharon.

"So I take it this Sharon does not approve of what he's doing with himself in this future," Gaius stated, already knowing the answer.

"It does appear to be that way," the Doctor nodded.

(The Doctor speaks to Mrs Angelo rather than Merlin.)
DOCTOR: I'm the Doctor. I'm worse than everybody's friend. And that is not how I'm introducing myself.
ATRAXI [on radio]: Repetez. Le Prisonnier. Zero wird der menschliche.
DOCTOR: Okay, so it's everywhere, in every language. They're broadcasting to the whole world.
(The Doctor looks out of the window.)
MERLIN: What's up there? What are you looking for?
DOCTOR: Okay. Planet this size, two poles, your basic molten core? They're going to need a forty percent fission blast.
(A young man (Percival) comes in and the Doctor speaks to him.)

"That's me!" Percival broke out of his quiet self and jumped up and pointed, surprised, "Was there more than one reincarnation we should've known about?"

"Apparently," the Doctor said, "Or perhaps this was your reincarnation video, but Merlin sort of crashed it. Who knows,"

"Merlin doesn't seem to be reacting to me," Percival narrowed his eyes, bringing this to the attention of the rest of them, "Obviously he's met me before, and by the way Mrs. Angelo is talking, he comes around often."

"That might be what he's devoted his life too," Gaius said, "Once he figured out that reincarnation exists, he probably would search out those reincarnated and integrate himself into their lives. Considering how long he's been there, I think it's safe to assume that he changed his appearance to that of a child to befriend your future self. Then, he'd grow up with you,"

"And then, when we die, he'll lose us again," Arthur grimly stated.

DOCTOR: But they'll have to power up first, won't they? So assuming a medium sized
starship, that's 20 minutes. What do you think, twenty minutes? Yeah, twenty minutes. We've got twenty minutes.

MERLIN: Twenty minutes to what?
JEFF: Are you the Doctor?

"Apparently you know me," the Doctor pulled a face.

"Do you think I remember this?" Percival asked, "If I remembered watching this, I'd be able to recognize you,"

"No," the Doctor shook his head, "Uther's reincarnation remembered nothing, you're more likely to have learned about me from Merlin."

MRS ANGELO: He is, isn't he? He's the Doctor! The Raggedy Doctor. All those cartoons you did when you were little. The Raggedy Doctor. It's him.

"Well, that confirms it," Gwaine grinned, "They drew cartoons of you when you were little," he teased.

Everyone from Camelot had a good laugh at this because it seemed like such a childish thing for them to do.

MERLIN: (sotto) Shut up.
DOCTOR: Cartoons? When you were little?
JEFF: Gran, it's him, isn't it? It's really him!
MERLIN: Jeff, shut up. Twenty minutes to what?

ATRAXI [on TV]: The human residence will be incinerated. Repeat.
DOCTOR: The human residence. They're not talking about your house, they're talking about the planet. Somewhere up there, there's a spaceship, and it's going to incinerate the planet.

"The planet?" Gwen's eyes widened, "I don't quite know what that means, but I take it that it means everyone in existence,"

"You all haven't discovered planets yet, have you?" the Doctor smiled, "The ground below us is the planet, and that's basically a big giant ball of cosmic dirt. When they say they're incinerating the planet, they're going to not only kill everyone, but destroy everything."

Everyone took a second to take that all in.

ATRAXI [on TV]: will be incinerated. Repeat, Prisoner Zero will vacate the human residence or the human residence will be incinerated.
DOCTOR: Twenty minutes to the end of the world.
ATRAXI [on TV]: Repeat, Prisoner Zero will vacate 'the human residence, or the human residence will be incinerated.

[Space]

(The eyeball is one of may snowflake cum icicle type spaceships above the Earth.)
ATRAXI: Repeat. Prisoner Zero will vacate the human residence or the human residence will be incinerated.

[Leadworth]
(The Doctor and Merlin walk down the middle of the road.)

DOCTOR: What is this place? Where am I?

MERLIN: Leadworth.

"Never heard of it," Gwaine commented offhandedly.

DOCTOR: Where's the rest of it?
MERLIN: This is it.
DOCTOR: Is there an airport?
MERLIN: No.
DOCTOR: A nuclear power station?
MERLIN: No.
DOCTOR: Even a little one?
MERLIN: No.
DOCTOR: Nearest city?
MERLIN: Gloucester. Half an hour by car.
DOCTOR: We don't have half an hour. Do we have a car?
MERLIN: No.

"It sounds like you don't have the equipment necessary to stop the incineration," Gaius said.

"No," the Doctor shook his head, frowning. This situation didn't look good, and the Doctor hadn't even lived it yet! It must be prevented, however, since Merlin was around on planet Midnight. His immortality might allow him to survive if the planet blew up, though. If he failed to stop the incineration in the future, the entire universe wouldn't be the same, "But I'm the Doctor, I'll think of something."

They all nodded their heads dubiously, not quite believing him.

DOCTOR: Well, that's good. Fantastic, that is. Twenty minutes to save the world and I've got a post office. And it's shut. What is that?

"You have to have more than a post office," Gwen quickly scanned the screen with her eyes.

MERLIN: It's a duck pond.

DOCTOR: Why aren't there any ducks?
MERLIN: I don't know. There's never any ducks.

DOCTOR: Then how do you know it's a duck pond?

"Weird, though, how there are no ducks," Gwaine said.

"Maybe they just don't have ducks in their area," Gwen responded.

Gwaine gave her a confused expression, "Then why do they have a duck pond?"

MERLIN: It just is. Is it important, the duck pond?

(The Doctor clutches his chest.)

DOCTOR: I don't know. Why would I know? This is too soon. I'm not ready, I'm not done yet.

MERLIN: What's happening? Why's it going dark?

(A black disc covers the sun, like a total eclipse.)
Arthur scrambled back with alarm, "The Sun! My father always told me that that was a sign of bad magic," Everyone else seemed to be thinking something along those lines.

"No," the Doctor shook his head, "An eclipse is totally natural, but that, that's something else. It must be the Atraxi,"

MERLIN: So what's wrong with the sun?
DOCTOR: Nothing. You're looking at it through a forcefield. They've sealed off your upper atmosphere. Now they're getting ready to boil the planet. Oh, and here they come. The human race. The end comes, as it was always going to, down a video phone.
MERLIN: This isn't real, is it? This is some kind of big wind up.

The Doctor's face fell at the realization that the brilliant young wizard didn't trust him.

DOCTOR: Why would I wind you up?
MERLIN: You told me you had a time machine.

"But you have to," Leon said, shaking his head as if he didn't believe his own words, "Otherwise how would you be able to travel to these places?"

"Yes, but he doesn't know that." the Doctor paused for a second, "He sees the world through a magical perspective, and to him, time travel is impossible. He most likely believed me because he saw me as odd; he thought I had some form of magic he'd never seen before. And my twelve year disappearing act destroyed any beliefs he had in me," he guiltily bowed his head

DOCTOR: And you believed me.
MERLIN: I did believe you, but some things are to good to be true. I grew up.

"To good to be true?" Elyan echoed.

"He wants to change his past," Gwen said decisively, "Whatever happens in our future must be so terrible and devastating that he wants to stop it; he definitely wants to travel in time for a reason,"

DOCTOR: Oh, you never want to do that. And you were a man when we last met, not a little boy.

MERLIN: I had adjusted my appearance so everyone else thought I was aging along with them.

"That must've been strange," Gwaine leaned backwards, relaxing, "To be a fully grown man and purposefully changing your appearance to a child,"

"That sounds infuriating," Arthur grumbled, not being able to imagine adapting the weaknesses of a child.


(People all over the village green taking photographs of the sun, except duplicate Barney and his dog, and Rory photographing the people. The time is 11:30)

DOCTOR: Twenty minutes. I can do it. Twenty minutes, the planet burns. Run to your loved ones and say goodbye, or stay and help me.
MERLIN: No.
"He's refusing to save the world?" Gwen gasped, not believing that a world exists where her friend would leave someone to die.

"This isn't right," Arthur shook his head, "Merlin would never; he's too good of a person," he admitted.

The Doctor held up a finger as a signal to tell them to wait.

**DOCTOR:** I'm sorry?

**MERLIN:** No!

**DOCTOR:** Merlin, no, no, what are you doing?

(Merlin drags the Doctor to a car that has just pulled up and slams his tie in the door, then takes the keys from the driver and locks it.)

They all flinched at the reminder that the person on the screen and the person they left behind in Camelot were two very different people.

**DOCTOR:** Are you out of your mind?

**MERLIN:** Who are you?

**DOCTOR:** You know who I am.

**MERLIN:** No, really. Who are you?

**DOCTOR:** Look at the sky. End of the world, twenty minutes.

**MERLIN:** Well, better talk quickly, then.

**HENDERSON:** Merlin, I am going to need my car back.

**MERLIN:** Yes, in a bit. Now go and have coffee.

They all shook their head, too bewildered to even speak.

**HENDERSON:** Right, yes.

(Mister Henderson does as he is told.)

**DOCTOR:** Catch.

(He tosses her the apple with the face carved in it. It is still fresh.)

**DOCTOR:** I'm the Doctor. I'm a time traveller. Everything I told you twelve years ago is true. I'm real. What's happening in the sky is real, and if you don't let me go right now, everything you've ever known is over.

**MERLIN:** I don't believe you.

"Well, he's got some pretty undeniable proof right there, mate," Gwaine cocked his head.

"He probably wouldn't want to believe that you'd leave him for that long of a time," Gaius said to the Doctor.

The Doctor shook his head; he seemed to mess up anyone he came into contact with. It appeared as if Merlin is just going to be another one of them.

**DOCTOR:** Just twenty minutes. Just believe me for twenty minutes. Look at it. Fresh as the day you gave it to me. And you know it's the same one. Merlin, believe for twenty minutes.

(Merlin unlocks Mister Henderson's car.)

Everyone released the tension and breath they had been unknowingly holding.

**MERLIN:** What do we do?
DOCTOR: Stop that nurse.  
(He runs onto the village green and grabs Rory's phone.)

"It's that nurse, from the hospital wing," Elyan pointed out.

DOCTOR: The sun's going out, and you're photographing a man and a dog. Why?  
RORY: Merlin.

"Oh, they know each other," Leon commented offhandedly, not paying much attention to the unassuming nurse.

MERLIN: Hi! Oh, this is Rory, he's a friend.  
RORY: Boyfriend.

Everyone except for Gaius bore a shocked expression upon their face.

"They know each other....well," Gwen finally said, looking anxious to break the silence that was now focused on one of her best friends.

Seeing that everyone still had confused faces on, Gaius spoke up, even though it didn't look like he wanted to talk about his ward's sex life, "Merlin has gotten intimate with both men and women, but that is not wrong or bad. He falls in love based on a person's personality and mind rather than their gender and looks. Some of you have met one of Merlin's previous suitors, who was Will from Ealdor. Unfortunately, some sentiments recently promoted throughout Albion and the rest of the world has......muffled his preferences. He's not as comfortable being himself now that two men being together and in love is seen as sinful."

"Just another thing that's made him insecure," Arthur said, feeling depressed at the realization of how little he truly knew his friend, "This kingdom makes him hide his magic and romantic preferences. We'll fix this," he nodded, his voice gaining much more confidence, "There's no reason why two people cannot love each other."

Voices of agreement rang throughout the solemn crowd. They all felt as if they had really failed their friend. This made the Doctor smile, seeing the crowd of people immediately accept the idea of labeling love as sinful was wrong, something that the whole of humanity would continue to fail at for centuries.

MERLIN: Kind of boyfriend.

"What does that mean?" Gwen shot an incredulous look at her friend on the screen.

Percival said, "Maybe he didn't want to get too attached because someday the nurse will die,"

"Or perhaps my being there causes him to doubt his love?" the Doctor shrugged, "He'd probably been so hooked on the idea of time travel and returning to this time that he had trouble moving on. Then I come as soon as he has moved on and rehook him onto the idea..."

RORY: Merlin.

DOCTOR: Man and dog. Why?  
RORY: Oh my God, it's him.

"When he disguised himself as a child, he probably used me as an imaginary friend to strengthen the lie," the Doctor said, "The more people who have evidence of him doing childish things are less likely to see that something's wrong with him."
MERLIN: Just answer his question, please.
RORY: It's him, though. The Doctor. The Raggedy Doctor.
MERLIN: Yeah, he came back.
RORY: But he was a story. He was a game.
DOCTOR: Man and dog. Why? Tell me now.
RORY: Sorry. Because he can't be there. Because he's
RORY + DOCTOR: In a hospital, in a coma.
RORY: Yeah.
DOCTOR: Knew it. Multiform, you see? Disguise itself as anything, but it needs a life feed. A psychic link with a living but dormant mind.

"Some form of telepathy?" Gaius questioned, thinking about the confusing sentence spoken on the screen.

"Sort of," the Doctor said, "The other person wouldn't be too aware of the intrusion, but this multiform is focusing on those in a coma, so they wouldn't be aware anyway,"

(The man barks at them.)
DOCTOR: Prisoner Zero.
RORY: What? There's a Prisoner Zero too?

"He just spoke about everything to everyone," Arthur smiled, happy that one thing remained constant about his friend, that blabbermouth of his.

MERLIN: Yes.
(One of the pretty eyeball spaceships comes down.)

"Oh. My. God." they all whispered, watching in awe and fear at the huge spaceship descending from the sky.

"And they use no magic?" Percival breathed.

"No, their science is just that advanced," the Doctor smiled at the curiosity.

DOCTOR: See, that ship up there is scanning this area for non-terrestrial technology. And nothing says non-terrestrial like a sonic screwdriver.
(The Doctor makes all the streetlights explode, the car alarms go off and a poor woman's mobility scooter zoom off down the road. A fire engine goes past on its own, two tone blaring.)

"You're attracting it's attention," Leon looked confused and slightly outraged, "They've got less than twenty minutes to find this prisoner, and you're distracting the patrol!"

"Yes, yes," the Doctor shook his head quickly as a way of brushing off the concern, "But if I can attract it's attention to me and I can find the prisoner, then the planet won't be roasted. The patrol won't be too vigorous in their search because they know that they can simply incinerate the planet and move on; to prevent that, I'd have to find it myself."

FIREMEN: Oi, come back here! Come back!
DOCTOR: I think someone's going to notice, don't you?
(He blows up a red telephone box, then the screwdriver explodes.)
DOCTOR: No, no! No, don't do that!
"Can't Merlin just fix it again," Arthur asked, pointing at the screen.

"Unlikely that he'd do it in public," the Doctor shook his head. "Magic is unheard of in that time period; he'd never do a display in front of everyone,"

RORY: Look, it's going.
DOCTOR: No, come back. He's here! Come back! He's here. Prisoner Zero is here. Come back, he's here! Prisoner Zero is
(Prisoner Zero goes squidgy and disappears down a drain cover.)

Gwen briefly gagged in surprise, causing a similar reaction in her brother.

MERLIN: Doctor! The drain. It just sort of melted and went down the drain.
DOCTOR: Well, of course it did.
MERLIN: What do we do now?
DOCTOR: It's hiding in human form. We need to drive it into the open. No Tardis, no screwdriver, seventeen minutes. Come on, think. Think!

[Coma ward]

(Patient Barney is shaking.)
(The multiform slithers through an air vent above Barney's bed.)

[Leadworth]

MERLIN: So that thing, that hid in my house for twelve years?
DOCTOR: Multiforms can live for millennia. Twelve years is a pit-stop.

"Much like how those twelve years would've been like for Merlin," the Doctor spoke wisely and from experience, "Once you've lived long enough, a day means less than it originally did and a year becomes a blink. The only difference is that while the multiform is using this pit spot to hid from his crimes, Merlin is using his to reconnect with a reincarnated friend," he pointed vaguely towards Percival.

"Is there a way to......stop his immortality?" Arthur struggled with the wording, still not believing that it was true.

"No," the Doctor shook his head, "His immortality has been written since before time in the Druid prophecies. Like where I come from, names have power. His druid name, Emrys, literally means immortal. His whole name was given to him with meaning: his last name, Ambrossius, means divine. Those two combined is why the Druids look at him with great respect."

"But what about the meaning of the name Merlin?" Gwaine asked, mood considerably lightened from what it had been a minute ago, "Or that one Gaius said he gave to him..." he snapped his fingers, trying to remember.

"Myrddin?" Gaius supplied.

"Thank you," Gwaine pointed out the elderly man.

"Those are a little harder to come up with answers because different cultures view the names differently," the Doctor explained, "Merlin can mean Falcon in some cultures, and Myrddin means
hawk sometimes. Merlin can also mean sea fortress, so it's hard to keep consistency."

Everyone nodded, digesting this information and wondering if their names meant anything in Druidic Prophecy.

**MERLIN:** So how come you show up again on the same day that lot do? The same minute!
**DOCTOR:** They're looking for him, but they followed me. They saw me through the crack, got a fix, they're only late because I am.

"If that much time has passed, why hasn't Prisoner Zero moved on from Earth?" Leon asked, "It would make much more sense to flee from the scene rather than stay behind,"

"I don't know," the Doctor winced while delivering this, not liking not knowing. He hasn't lived through this yet, and that left a very sour taste in the back of his mouth with every scene.

**RORY:** What's he on about?
**DOCTOR:** Nurse boy, give me your phone.
**RORY:** How can he be real? He was never real.

"Is he all right?" Gwen asked, directing this more towards Gaius than anyone else.

"He's probably in shock," Gaius answered, "To him, the Doctor was nothing more than a fairy tale, and now he learns that everything about the stories were true,"

**DOCTOR:** Phone. Now. Give me.

"Whiny?" the Doctor complained much to the amusement of others, "I don't want to be whiny! I hate being whiny,"

"Well," Gwaine grinned, "You're doing a damn good job at it, mate."

**RORY:** He was just a game. We were kids. You made me dress up as him.
(The Doctor flicks through the images on the iPhone.)
**DOCTOR:** These photos, they're all coma patients?
**RORY:** Yeah.

**DOCTOR:** No, they're all the multiform. Eight comas, eight disguises for Prisoner Zero.
**MERLIN:** He had a dog, though. There's a dog in a coma?
**DOCTOR:** Well, the coma patient dreams he's walking a dog, Prisoner Zero gets a dog.

"What if one of the patients was having a nightmare?" Gwen asked, "Who knows what it could turn into?"

Laptop! Your friend, what was his name? Not him, the good-looking one.
**RORY:** Thanks.

Everyone furrowed their eyebrows and frowned, feeling very sorry for the dopey nurse.

**MERLIN:** Perci-Jeff.

Everyone winced again as Merlin fumbled over the name, making it clear that despite the reincarnation, Merlin still focused on his old friend.

The mood had been very stressful until Gwaine spoke up, "Here that, Percival? Merlin knew you were the good looking one!"
The corner of Percival's mouth twitched, "That's probably because I'm the only other person that he's introduced the Doctor to,"

Gwaine did not relent in his teasing, "Aw, don't worry, Percy! We'll find you someone," he did this while all retaining his reclined position.

RORY: Oh, thanks.
DOCTOR: He had a laptop in his bag. A laptop. Big bag, big laptop. I need Jeff's laptop. You two, get to the hospital. Get everyone out of that ward. Clear the whole floor. Phone me when you're done.

"How are they supposed to clear the ward if all the patients are unconscious?" Gaius questioned, "They'd need many more people to carry the stretchers if they want to get it done quickly,"

"People soon put wheels at the bottom of stretchers," the Doctor explained, "That makes it easier to move them around,"

"That sounds like a great improvement!" Gwen commented, remembering how heavy it was to be lugging stretchers around the last time that Camelot had been attacked.

MERLIN: Your car. Come on.
RORY: But how can he be here? How can the Doctor be here?
(Merlin and Rory get into a proper Mini, not a BMW oversized wannabe.)

[Jeff's bedroom]

(Jeff is lounging on his bed, using his laptop.)
DOCTOR: Hello. Laptop. Give me.
JEFF: No, no, no, no, wait.

"You're sounding attached," Gwaine grinned, "Maybe we won't need to find you anyone; you've already got something!"

Percival shot a meaningless scowl over at his friend.

"In the future, there have been people who've married electronics," the Doctor shook his head, "You humans get too attached to those things,"

DOCTOR: It's fine. Give it here.
JEFF: Hang on!
(The Doctor takes the laptop and sees what Jeff was browsing.)
DOCTOR: Blimey. Get a girlfriend, Jeff.

At this, Percival's eyes widen and his face goes beet red, "I take it whatever I was looking at was not something I should've?"

"Well, there's nothing stopping you from doing it," the Doctor explained, "But it sounds like you were watching adult videos,"

Even though everyone in the area was from the past and therefore did not know much about the futuristic terms used, they could deduce what it was that Percival's incarnation was looking at. Which did nothing to prevent the redness on the knight's face.
(Mrs Angelo enters.)
JEFF: Gran.
MRS ANGELO: What are you doing?
DOCTOR: The sun's gone wibbly, so right now, somewhere out there, there's going to be a big old video conference call. All the experts in the world panicking at once, and do you know what they need? Me.

"You sound a little overconfident," Elyan stated.

"I get that a lot," the Doctor admitted.

Ah, and here they all are. All the big boys. NASA, Jodrell Bank, Tokyo Space Centre, Patrick Moore.
MRS ANGELO: I like Patrick Moore.
DOCTOR: I'll get you his number. But watch him, he's a devil.
JEFF: You can't just hack in on a call like that.

"A call?" Arthur asked, "So it's sort of like intercepting a messenger bird,"

"Sort of, but in real time," the Time Lord continued to explain tirelessly.

DOCTOR: Can't I?
(Six faces come up on the screen, all labelled as above plus ESA and CSIRO. He shows them his psychic paper.)
PATRICK MOORE [on screen]: Who are you?
MAN [OC]: This is a secure call, what are you doing here?
DOCTOR: Hello. Yeah, I know you should switch me off, but before you do, watch this.
PATRICK MOORE [on screen]: It's here too, I'm getting it.
DOCTOR: Fermat's Theorem, the proof. And I mean the real one. Never been seen before. Poor old Fermat, got killed in a duel before he could write it down. My fault. I slept in. Oh, and here's an oldie but a goodie. Why electrons have mass. And a personal favourite of mine, faster than light travel with two diagrams and a joke. Look at your screens. Whoever I am, I'm a genius. Look at the sun. You need all the help you can get. Fellas, pay attention.
(Rory and Merlin run into the hospital.)
NASA [OC]: Sir, what are you doing?
DOCTOR: I'm writing a computer virus. Very clever, super fast, and a tiny bit alive, but don't let on. And why am I writing it on a phone? Never mind, you'll find out. Okay, I'm sending this to all your computers. Get everyone who works for you sending this everywhere. Email, text, Facebook, Bebo, Twitter, radar dish, whatever you've got. Any questions?
PATRICK MOORE [on screen]: Who was your lady friend?
DOCTOR: Patrick, behave.

"I'm sorry; is this not Gwaine in a couple decades?" Percival smirked, happy to get revenge against his friend.

"If I'm lucky," said friend grinned and waggled his eyebrows.

The Doctor stared at them before quickly looking away. He couldn't change the time line, but he couldn't help the pang in his heart that he felt when he realized that the cheerful knight would not be living for much longer.
MAN [OC]: What does this virus do? 
DOCTOR: It's a reset command, that's all. It resets counters. It gets in the wifi and resets every counter it can find. Clocks, calendars, anything with a chip will default at zero at exactly the same time. But yeah, I could be lying, why should you trust me? I'll let my best man explain. (sotto) Jeff, you're my best man.
JEFF: You what?
DOCTOR: Listen to me. In ten minutes, you're going to be a legend. In ten minutes, everyone on that screen is going to be offering you any job you want. But first, you have to be magnificent. You have to make them trust you and get them working. This is it, Jeff, right here, right now. This is when you fly. Today's the day you save the world.

Percival shifted in his seat, sitting somewhat straighter despite the fact that the advice had been given to his onscreen counterpart, "Thanks for that, Doctor,"

"It's just what I do," the Doctor grinned.

JEFF: Why me?
DOCTOR: It's your bedroom. Now go, go, go.
(The Doctor runs out.)
JEFF: Okay, guys, let's do this.
DOCTOR: Oh, and delete your internet history.

Percival's face turned bright red again, but his confident posture remained the same.

[Hospital]
RORY: Something's happened up there. We can't get through.

"They'll find a way," Gwen said without a doubt, and everyone in the circle agreed with her.

MERLIN: Yes, but what's happened?
RORY: I don't know. No one knows. Phone him.
MERLIN: I'm phoning him. Doctor? We're at the hospital, but we can't get through.
RORY: What did he say?
MERLIN: Look in the mirror. Ha ha! Uniform. Are you on your way? You're going to need a car.

[Fire engine]
DOCTOR: Don't worry, I've commandeered a vehicle.

[Hospital corridor]

(Rory and Merlin run up the stairs. The coma ward floor is a mess.)

"Are they too late?" everyone quickly scanned the screen, searching for any signs of the workers or patients.

MERLIN: Oh god.
(A woman with two girls meets them in the corridor.)
MOTHER: Officer.
MERLIN: What happened?
MOTHER: There was a man. A man with a dog. I think Doctor Ramsden's dead. And the nurses.

"Doctor Ramsden and all the nurses?" Gwen gasped, shocked. Whatever this multiform was, it could kill fast.

"If the multiform killed them," Arthur's eyes were slowly widening as he came to his horrifying conclusion, "Then, there's no reason for it to keep these three women alive; it's taken their place."

They all leaned forward in sudden fear for their friend and his lover.

(Merlin makes a phone call.)

[Fire engine]

DOCTOR: Are you in?
MERLIN [OC]: Yep.

[Hospital corridor]

MERLIN: But so's Prisoner Zero.

"Great minds think alike," the Doctor wisely said.

"Me and Merlin," Arthur did a small fake laugh, "No," secretly in his head he knew that his manservant and himself were a lot alike.

"If I may?" Gaius interrupted, "I have said before that the two of you are like two sides of the same coin. You're alike enough to be similar, but different enough to allow the other to grow. Both of you were born to be opposites, yet similar. That's why you two hit it off so well so early."

[Fire engine]

DOCTOR: You need to get out of there.

[Hospital corridor]

MOTHER [OC]: He was so angry. He kept shouting and shouting. And that dog. The size of that dog.
(But it is not the mother who is speaking.)

Everyone shuddered, still finding this particular prisoner exceptionally strange.

CHILD: I swear it was rabid. And he just went mad, attacking everyone.  
(Rory and Merlin back away.)
CHILD: Where did he go, did you see? Has he gone? We hid in the ladies.
MOTHER: Oh, I'm getting it wrong again, aren't I? I'm always doing that. So many mouths.
(She opens her mouth to reveal the needle teeth.)
RORY: Oh, my God!

[Fire engine]

DOCTOR: Merlin? Merlin, what's happening?
"Why would Merlin risk the two of them dying instead of using his magic?" Leon asked, "The two of them are obviously...close, so the nurse must find out someday."

"Merlin's life is run by his fear of rejection," Gaius sighed, "For example, he never told anyone about his magic or sexuality because he was afraid of what you'd do and didn't want to put one of his friends in a difficult position. His magic isn't hated in this future; it's unheard of. There would be a whole new set of fears that he'd have to deal with, including Rory's reaction."

They all knew this for the most part by now, but it still hit them every time. How many times had something they had passed off as nothing caused their friend to shake in his boots? They knew that they'd have to watch what they said around Merlin since none of them really having thought about what might bother their friend before.

**DOCTOR:** Merlin, talk to me!

**[Coma ward]**

**MERLIN:** We're in the coma ward, but it's here. It's getting in.

They all made exasperated sounds, understanding Merlin's reasoning for not using his magic but frustrated by it nonetheless.

"He better not die because of this," Arthur stated, crossing his arms and staring at the screen.

**DOCTOR [OC]:** Which window are you?

**MERLIN:** What, sorry?

**[Fire engine]**

**DOCTOR:** Which window?

**[Coma ward]**

**MERLIN:** First floor, on the left, fourth from the end.

( The broom finally gives up.)

**MOTHER:** Oh, dear little Merlinus Ambrossius. I've watched you grow. Twelve years, and you never even knew I was there. Little Merlinus Ambrossius, waiting for her magic time-travelling Doctor to return. But not this time, Merlinus.

Gwen shuddered violently, horrified by the notion of something watching her throughout her life.

"If he gets hurt," Arthur turned towards the Doctor, vaguely threatening. He held a hand on the hilt of his sword in warning.

The Doctor glanced down at the sword before meeting the King's gaze, "Trust me, Arthur. I wouldn't let him die no matter what regeneration, and if something happens, Merlin would surely protect himself out of pure instinct. I'll promise you all now; if something happens to Merlin or anyone he cares about, I will fix it."

This calmed everyone in the room, and the Doctor guiltily watched the tension flow out of their bodies. Time happens the way it needs to happen, and he can't change that. They haven't learned Rule 1 yet though. The Doctor lies.
(Merlinus gets a text from Rory’s phone. Duck! They do, and the fire engine ladder comes crashing through the window. Enter the Doctor.)

"Entering in style and fashionably late, I see," Gwaine grinned.

DOCTOR: Right! Hello. Am I late? No, three minutes to go. So still time.
MOTHER: Time for what, Time Lord?
DOCTOR: Take the disguise off. They'll find you in a heartbeat. Nobody dies.

"It won't go for that," Arthur said tensely, already knowing what the creature would say.

MOTHER: The Atraxi will kill me this time. If I am to die, let there be fire.
DOCTOR: Okay. You came to this world by opening a crack in space and time. Do it again. Just leave.
MOTHER: I did not open the crack.
DOCTOR; Somebody did.

"But if it wasn't opened by Prisoner Zero, who opened it?" Gwen asked, "And how did they do it?"

The Doctor's brain was going a mile a minute, but he couldn't come up with an answer. He was briefly sidetracked by silently complimenting her on the wonderful questions she thought of, but in the end, he was still left clueless.

MOTHER: The cracks in the skin of the universe, don't you know where they came from? You don't, do you?
(She changes to a little girl's voice.)
MOTHER: The Doctor in the Tardis doesn't know. Doesn't know. Doesn't know!
(And back to the adult voice.)
MOTHER: The universe is cracked. The Pandorica will open. Silence will fall.

"The Pandorica?" the Doctor's eyes widened in confusion, not understanding the connection of the cracks to the fairy tale.

"But what about the other statement," Percival asked, "Silence will fall,"

"Sounds a lot creepier," Gwaine furrowed his brow, "Is it a death metaphor or something?"

They all shook their heads, having no idea.

DOCTOR: And we're off! Look at that. Look at that!
(The clock says 0:00.)
DOCTOR; Yeah, I know, just a clock. Whatever. But do you know what's happening right now? In one little bedroom, my team are working. Jeff and the world. And do you know what they're doing? They're spreading the word all over the world, quantum fast. The word is out. And do you know what the word is? The word is Zero. Now, me, if I was up in the sky in a battleship, monitoring all Earth communications, I'd probably take that as a hint. And if I had a whole battle fleet surrounding the planet, I'd be able track a simple old computer virus to its source in, what, under a minute? The source, by the way, is right here.

"That's genius," Gaius said after pausing for a second. The rest of them was taking a minute to appreciate the plan as well.
"Thanks," the Doctor said in a way that made it clear that he gets that statement a lot.

(There is a bright light outside.)
DOCTOR: Oh! And I think they just found us!
MOTHER: The Atraxi are limited. While I'm in this form, they'll still be unable to detect me. They've tracked a phone, not me.
DOCTOR: Yeah, but this is the good bit. I mean, this is my favourite bit. Do you know what this phone is full of? Pictures of you. Every form you've learned to take, right here. Ooo, and being uploaded about now. And the final score is, no Tardis, no screwdriver, two minutes to spare. Who da man? Oh, I'm never saying that again. Fine.

"What if the Atraxi accidentally goes after one of the coma patients?" Gwen asked, concerned.

"Wouldn't happen," the Doctor shook his head, "They're not in the area."

MOTHER: Then I shall take a new form.
DOCTOR: Oh, stop it. You know you can't. It takes months to form that kind of psychic link.

Everyone let out the breath they'd been holding with that statement. Only a few who'd been paying close attention had wide eyes still.

MOTHER: And I've had years.
(Merlin collapses.)

Gwen gasped, hand flying to her mouth. The rest of the knights looked very angry at the new revelation.

Arthur meanwhile, looked defeated, as if he had been expecting it, "You'll help him, won't you? You gave your word," he was beginning to show signs of distress.

"It's just a telepathic link," the Doctor's voice almost got caught in his throat as he was saying it, "Should be easy to get him to snap out of it."

Everyone in the area had gotten a dawning feeling that it wasn't going to be that simple.

RORY: Doctor.
(Prisoner Zero has transformed into a gangly man with a ripped shirt and floppy hair.)


"Well, as if that wasn't obvious," the Doctor ran a hand through his hair, signs of stress starting to show.

DOCTOR: Well, that's rubbish. Who's that supposed to be?
RORY: It's you.
DOCTOR: Me? Is that what I look like?
RORY: You don't know?
DOCTOR: Busy day. Why me, though? You're linked with her. Why are you copying me?
(A little boy comes from around a curtain and holds the duplicate's hand. The boy is wearing exactly what Merlin was wearing twelve years ago.)
Gaius froze, taking a second to look at the image of the boy who had grown up so many years ago.

"That's Merlin, isn't it?" Elyan stated, already knowing the answer.

"It has to be," the Doctor twitched, looking like he wanted to start moving around, "That must be what he looked like when he tried to fit in around Leadworth."

"He was a cute kid," Gwaine said despite the situation.

**MERLINUS:** I'm not. Poor Merlin Ambrossius. Still such a child inside. Dreaming of the magic Doctor he knows will return to save him. What a disappointment you've been.

Their expressions all hardened at the prisoner's statement. They knew that their friend still had most of his childish naivety despite the hard life he's lived, and they knew how bad his fears of rejection and abandonment was. This creature simply didn't have the right to go inside their friend's head and say those things.

**DOCTOR:** No, he's dreaming about me because he can hear me. Merlin, don't just hear me, listen. You are one of the only people who can overpower the telepathic link.

"You're talking about his magic again, aren't you?" Gwen said, a tick of annoyance at the Doctor in her eyes. She didn't like that he was hinting at her friend's abilities while the person he was trying to keep them from was in the room.

Remember the room, the room in your house you couldn't see. Remember you went inside. I tried to stop, but you did. You went in the room. You went inside. Merlin, dream about what you saw.

**MERLINUS:** No. No. No!

(He transforms.)

**DOCTOR:** Well done, Prisoner Zero. A perfect impersonation of yourself.

This time no one called the Doctor out on his quick thinking; they were all too worried about their friend still.

**ATRAXI [OC]:** Prisoner Zero is located. Prisoner Zero is restrained.

**ZERO:** Silence, Doctor. Silence will fall.

(Prisoner Zero disappears in a rush of wind.)

**RORY:** The sun. It's back to normal, right? That's, that's good, yeah? That means it's over.

They all calmed down, sending a smirk towards the nurse.

"He seems to be all the bit of bumbling idiot Merlin is," Arthur pointed out.

"And Merlin seems to be a lot less bumbling idiot in the future, doesn't he?" Gwen remarked rather sadly.

"Well, we all grow and change," Arthur offered comfort to her, "We just have to hope that it will be for good."

(Merlin wakes up.)

**RORY:** Merlin. Are you okay? Are you with us?

**MERLIN:** What happened?

**RORY:** He did it. The Doctor did it.
DOCTOR: No, I didn't.
RORY: What are you doing?
DOCTOR: Tracking the signal back. Sorry in advance.
RORY: About what?
DOCTOR: The bill.
(The Doctor phones the Atraxi.)
DOCTOR: Oi, I didn't say you could go! Article fifty seven of the Shadow Proclamation. This is a fully established level five planet, and you were going to burn it? What? Did you think no-one was watching? You lot, back here, now. Okay, now I've done it.
RORY: Did he just bring them back? Did he just save the world from aliens and then bring all the aliens back again?

"Why am I not surprised?" Arthur stated, annoyed.

They all sent glances at the Doctor.

"Yeah, I do tend to do stupid things like that a lot, don't I?" the Doctor sheepishly said, rolling his eyes with fondness once he saw all of their vigorous nods.

[Hospital corridor]

MERLIN: Where are you going?
DOCTOR: The roof. No, hang on.

[Doctor's locker room]

MERLIN: What's in here?
DOCTOR: I'm saving the world - I need a decent shirt. To hell with the raggedy. Time to put on a show.
RORY: You just summoned aliens back to Earth. Actual aliens, deadly aliens, aliens of death, and now you're taking your clothes off. Merlin, he's taking his clothes off.

"I think I like him," Gwaine commented, giving his seal of approval to Merlin's boyfriend. From the rest of their expressions, they approved as well.

DOCTOR: Turn your back if it embarrasses you.
RORY: Are you stealing clothes now? Those clothes belong to people, you know. (to Merlin) Are you not going to turn your back?
MERLIN: No.

"Oh my god," Arthur shook his head in silent laughter as he saw the interested look on his best friend's face. He looked over to see similar expressions of mirth in the rest of his friends. Gaius, meanwhile, had a hand covering his face, used to his ward's antics.

"I guess if you have anymore questions about your body," Gwaine smirked, "You could just ask Merlin,"

The Doctor had frozen, thinking hard for a few moments before saying, "When I first met him on Midnight, he had already seen me naked!" he looked slightly concerned for his future regeneration.

[Roof]
THE DOCTOR walks out in a new shirt with several ties draped around his neck. The Atraxi is hovering overhead.

MERLIN: So this was a good idea, was it? They were leaving.

DOCTOR: Leaving is good. Never coming back is better. Come on, then! The Doctor will see you now.

(The eyeball drops onto the roof and scans the Doctor.)

They all flinched slightly at the otherworldly sight.

ATRAXI: You are not of this world.

DOCTOR: No, but I've put a lot of work into it.

(He looks at his selection of ties.)

DOCTOR: Oh, hmm, I don't know. What do you think?

ATRAXI: Is this world important?

DOCTOR: Important? What's that mean, important? Six billion people live here. Is that important? Here's a better question. Is this world a threat to the Atraxi? Well, come on. You're monitoring the whole planet. Is this world a threat?

(There is a projection of the world between them.)

ATRAXI: No.

DOCTOR: Are the peoples of this world guilty of any crime by the laws of the Atraxi?

ATRAXI: No.

"You are calling it out," Elyan laughed.

"Hopefully it works," Gwen said optimistically, "I wouldn't want to deal with it again."

"Right with you on that one," Arthur said.

DOCTOR: Okay. One more. Just one. Is this world protected? Because you're not the first lot to come here. Oh, there have been so many.

(The projection shows the Daleks et al.)

"What is that?" Leon asked, warily staring at the onscreen salt and pepper shakers.

"It'll probably be explained soon," the Doctor waved the question off.

DOCTOR: And what you've got to ask is, what happened to them?

(A run through of all the previous Doctors, then this Doctor steps through the projection with a jacket and bow tie.)


(The eyeball zooms back to its ship and leaves, very fast. There is a brief materialisation sound, then the Doctor takes a glowing TARDIS key out of his new jacket pocket.)

MERLIN: Is that it? Is that them gone for good? Who were they?

(The Doctor is already down the stairs and running out of the hospital.)

"You can't even be bothered to answer the questions of the boy who you'd abandoned!" Gaius's usually calm demeanor broke.

"I don't even know what's going on in my head in the future," the Doctor defended himself, "And either way, whatever message the TARDIS sent me can't be good if I'm running out of there that fast,"
They all continued to shake their head with distain.

[Garden]

(The Tardis is waiting for him.)
DOCTOR: Okay, what have you got for me this time?

[Tardis]

DOCTOR: Look at you. Oh, you sexy thing! Look at you.

"I take it that it's not in any sort of danger," Arthur narrowed his eyes.

The Doctor shifted, it did appear that that's what is happening.

(Merlin and Rory run up just as it dematerialises.

"And you leave him again," Percival brought a hand to his head in attempt to ward off the oncoming headache.

Night time. The sound of the Tardis wakes Merlin up. He runs outside.)
DOCTOR: Sorry about running off earlier. Brand new Tardis. Bit exciting. Just had a quick hop to the moon and back to run her in. She's ready for the big stuff now.

"You ran away because you were excited?" Gwen asked tensely; she very quickly changer her demeanor however, "You know what? You haven't lived this yet, so you're not to blame. But if your future self ever comes to Camelot, he should get put in stocks while Merlin throws food at you,"

The Doctor thought over this for a while, and very quickly realized that his would be fair, "Okay then,"

MERLIN: It's you. You came back.
DOCTOR: Course I came back. I always come back. Something wrong with that?

"You always come back years later," Elyan mumbled.

MERLIN: And you kept the clothes.
DOCTOR: Well, I just saved the world. The whole planet, for about the millionth time, no charge. Yeah, shoot me. I kept the clothes.
MERLIN: Including the bow tie.
DOCTOR: Yeah, it's cool. Bow ties are cool.

"No they're not," Gwaine shook his head quickly.

MERLIN: Do you have magic? Or are you from another planet?
DOCTOR: From another planet.

"Really?" Gaius's eyes peaked with interest.

"So this regeneration thing," Percival said, "It's probably not family, it's for your whole species, right?"

"Yes," the Doctor cocked his head, "You're all taking this extremely well,"

"The Atraxi literally came from the sky at the end. There were cracks in the universe, and you'd
repeatedly told Merlin that you didn't have magic," Gwen started listing.

"Okay, I got it," the Doctor smiled.

MERLIN: Okay.
DOCTOR: So what do you think?
MERLIN: Of what?
DOCTOR: Other planets. Want to check some out?
MERLIN: What does that mean?
DOCTOR: It means. Well, it means come with me.

"I'm not going to leave him that time," the Doctor smiled at this future self's decision.

MERLIN: Where?
DOCTOR: Wherever you like.
MERLIN: All that stuff that happened. The hospital, the spaceships, Prisoner Zero.
DOCTOR: Oh, don't worry, that's just the beginning. There's loads more.
MERLIN: Yeah, but those things, those amazing things, all that stuff. That was two years ago.

"Are you serious right now?" Arthur looked like the Doctor was giving him a migraine.

The Doctor weakly laughed at all the glares he was at the receiving end of, "Oops,"

DOCTOR: Oh.! Oops.
MERLIN: Yeah.
DOCTOR: So that's
MERLIN: Fourteen years! But I've gotten used to waiting.
DOCTOR: Fourteen years since fish custard. Merlin Ambrossius, the boy who waited, you've waited long enough.

"Damn right," Gwaine shifted in his seat.

"Whatever you want to show him," Gwen warned, pointed a finger at the Time Lord, "It better be worth it for him,"

"Oh, I think it will be," the Doctor grinned.

MERLIN: When I was a kid, or at least when everyone else thought I was one, you said there was a swimming pool and a library, and the swimming pool was in the library.
DOCTOR: Yeah. Not sure where it's got to now. It'll turn up. So, coming?
MERLIN: No.

"He's got that boyfriend of his now," Gwaine said, "You wouldn't make him leave that behind?"

The Doctor shrugged.

DOCTOR: You wanted to come fourteen years ago.
MERLIN: I grew up.

"Merlin growing up isn't something I thought would ever happen," Arthur remarked.

DOCTOR: Don't worry. I'll soon fix that.
(He opens the Tardis door and follows Merlin in.)
MERLIN: I'm in my nightie.

"It's a nice nightie too," Gwaine winked at the screen even though he knew that his friend couldn't hear him.

DOCTOR: Oh, don't worry. Plenty of clothes in the wardrobe. And possibly a swimming pool. So, all of time and space, everything that ever happened or ever will Where do you want to start?
MERLIN: You are so sure that I'm coming.
DOCTOR: Yeah, I am.
MERLIN: Why?
DOCTOR: Cause you're the Irish boy in the English village, and I know how that feels.

All comments that had been flying now stopped. Some of them recognizing the possibility that the Doctor and Merlin might also be similar to one another.

MERLIN: Oh, do you?
DOCTOR: All these years living here, most of your life, and you've still got a hint of that accent. Yeah, you're coming.
MERLIN: Can you get me back for tomorrow morning?
DOCTOR: It's a time machine. I can get you back five minutes ago. Why, what's tomorrow?

"It doesn't sound like stuff," Elyan tilted his head in confusion.

"He's probably just visiting a friend or something," Arthur attempted to blow it off. However, he knew his friend very well and knew that whatever must be the next day will be extremely important.

"Are you sure that you couldn't just pick him up after whatever tomorrow is?" Gwen asked nervously, "It sounds awfully important."

DOCTOR: All right, then. Back in time for stuff.

(A sonic screwdriver rises from a slot in the console.)
DOCTOR: Oh! A new one! Lovely. Thanks, dear.
(The Doctor uses an old typewriter wired into the console.)
MERLIN: Why me?
DOCTOR: Why not?
MERLIN: No, seriously. You are asking me to run away with you in the middle of the night. It's a fair question. Why me?
DOCTOR: I don't know. Fun. Do I have to have a reason?
MERLIN: People always have a reason.

They all paused, wondering how many people have gotten close to Merlin before simply because they wanted something out of him. They stopped this train of thought though, seeing no reason to get angry all over again over the amazing scene that was playing before them.

DOCTOR: Do I look like people?
MERLIN: Yes.
"That's fair, I sort of do," the Doctor pulled a face at what he just said.

**DOCTOR:** Been knocking around on my own for a while. My choice, but I've started talking to myself all the time. It's giving me earache.
**MERLIN:** You're lonely. That's it? Just that?
**DOCTOR:** Just that. Promise.
**MERLIN:** Okay.

**DOCTOR:** So, are you okay, then? Because this place, sometimes it can make people feel a bit, you know.
**MERLIN:** I'm fine. It's just, there's a whole world in here, just like you said. It's all true. I thought. Well, I started to think that maybe you were just like a madman with a box.

"Did you just ask if Merlin was okay after seeing something weird?" Gwaine asked.

"Merlin's been able to cast more unusual spells since birth," Gaius commented.

**DOCTOR:** Merlin Ambrossius, there's something you'd better understand about me, because it's important, and one day your life may depend on it. I am definitely a madman with a box. Ha ha! Yeah. Goodbye Leadworth, hello everything.
(He sets the Tardis in flight. We watch it dematerialise in the garden, then we go back to Merlin's bedroom with a white suit hanging up on the back of the door.)

"And what is the significance of this outfit?" Arthur furrowed his eyebrows confused, but left wondering by the Doctor expression.

"I should've waited for the next day," the Doctor ran a hand through his hair.

"Doctor," Gwen offered comfort, "It's okay, he didn't tell you; therefore, it's on him. But what does the suit mean?"

"It's a style in the future," the Doctor began to say, "That's one of many options for people to get married in."

The room was dead silent after this, none of them truly knowing how to respond to this.

"Who's he marrying then," Gwaine said a few seconds after the Doctor's reveal, "That nurse fellow, Rory?"

"Presumably," the Doctor stated.

"Good, I approve," Arthur let that rest in his case.

Gaius couldn't help but feel a rush of happiness and sadness at the same time like most of the occupants of the room. Happiness because Rory was nice and wasn't seeking anything from Merlin but love, and sadness because there's no way even with magic that he'll live as long as would be needed to see his ward get married.

"And there's no way we could be there for him?" Gwen asked.

"I might be able to let you watch from afar, but you wouldn't be allowed to go in," the Doctor stated, actually considering taking them all to see their friend's wedding.

"We'll do that then," Arthur said decisively.
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