The Wolf-Reyes Connection

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/1901115.

Rating: <u>General Audiences</u>

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Category: <u>Gen</u>

Fandoms: Teen Wolf (TV), Doctor Who (2005)

Characters: <u>Erica Reyes, Vernon Boyd, Eleventh Doctor, The Alpha Pack (Teen</u>

Wolf), The Doctor's TARDIS

Additional Tags: <u>Crack Crossover, Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence, screw you</u>

boring alpha pack

Language: English

Stats: Published: 2014-07-05 Words: 2,749 Chapters: 1/1

The Wolf-Reyes Connection

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Summary

Oh, this was just great, Erica thought. She and Boyd were about to get torn apart by these alpha freaks, and here was some kind of mad alien with two hearts. A mad alien with an ancient phone box and a sentient plant.

Notes

Don't mind me, just sending the cavalry to rescue Erica and Boyd from the clumsy clutches of bad canon :p Set right after the Teen Wolf season 2 finale (not remotely s3-compatible, obvs); in the Doctor's timeline, not too long after *The Angels Take Manhattan*.

Thanks to Alsha for diligent typo-catching.

The strange pack had come upon them out of nowhere, terrifyingly fast. One moment, it had only been her and Boyd, running hard, trying to put as much distance between them and the town as they could. The next, the night was full of low-timbre growls and the bright *snik* of claws extending.

They stumbled back, clinging to each other, as the ones who stalked them moved out from the trees, dark silhouettes against the moon-streaked night.

The woman at the head of the pack smiled as she slunk closer, a flash of teeth in the darkness. Her eyes glowed red. "Would you look at that," she said, in a soft, throaty voice. "Did the new stud in town send a snack to meet us?" She took another step closer and the moonlight caught her flexing claws. "How thoughtful."

"We're not..." Boyd started and Erica dragged him back with her, against the flimsy comfort of a tree.

"Stay away from us," she warned, trying to make her voice sound menacing and failing abysmally. A wave of amusement rippled through the pack as they stalked closer, unhurried, certain of their prey. Erica felt Boyd's hand tighten on her arm.

"Erica," he breathed, "their eyes."

She'd already seen it. Their eyes were red. All of them. She swallowed the whimper trying to rise in her throat, and bared her teeth instead. There were five of them – the woman, a massive brute hulking at her side, and a pair of smaller males who looked oddly identical. The fifth hung back, an ominous presence in the trees. The scent of death rolled off them in waves, rank and sickly sweet.

Erica felt the growl stuttering to a halt in her throat, even as Boyd flexed and threatened beside her. It was only posing, and they all knew it.

"Pretty new, aren't you?" the red-eyed woman crooned. "You have that almost-human stink. A pair of lost puppies in the woods." She snorted derisively, dragging the point of a clawed toe through the dirt. "Adorable."

This wasn't the way it was supposed to go. Not the way she was supposed to end. Derek had promised her such great things. He was supposed to be here, helping them. Protecting them. He wasn't supposed to make them and then drop them like a failed crafts project.

Thinking of their alpha lit the spark of fury Erica had been missing; it sizzled through the fear, gathering heat. Perhaps she no longer had an alpha, but she was not alone, and she was not going to give in easily. She straightened, drawing in air for a roar. Feeling the change in her, Boyd leaned slightly forward, snarling. They would charge together, and do what damage they could.

The pack closed in, five sets of red eyes gleaming. Erica snarled, lips pulling back from her teeth, relishing the familiar burn of the animal noise as it passed her throat.

Just then, a new sound claimed the air – a strained, mechanical wheezing, like a large set of lungs slowly contracting and expanding. For a moment Erica feared they'd somehow attracted something bigger, something worse. Perhaps it took a monster to lead a pack of alphas.

But nothing prepared her for the thing that appeared right next to the tree they were backed against – only a shimmering outline at first, displacing the night air with a vague, square shape that seemed to flicker laboriously in and out of existence in time with the rhythmic wheezing noises. Eventually it solidified into a clunky, upright container that looked a bit like the old red British phone boxes Erica had occasionally seen on TV, only it wasn't red, and she was pretty sure old British phone boxes didn't have a habit of flying.

Then the door of the weird contraption opened. A lanky guy in a tweed suit and a ridiculous bowtie peered out, hanging onto the doorframe with one hand as he leaned out at an angle. His other arm cradled a flowerpot with some sort of large, purple-leafed plant in it. The plant was twitching slightly.

"Hello," the man in the bowtie said, blinking first at Boyd and Erica, then at the circling pack. "Oh dear," he added to no one in particular. "Sometimes this whole Bad Wolf scenario just takes itself far too literally."

He hopped out of the strange blue box and shoved his flowerpot into Boyd's arms without ceremony. "Here, hold this for a moment, would you? Careful, though – she tends to snap when she's distressed."

Boyd automatically clutched the pot, looking dumbfounded. The fleshy dark leaves made a soft hissing noise.

Erica shook her head, wondering if fear or rage had actually driven her mad. If so, it must affect them all; the alpha pack stood staring just as dumbly as Boyd and she. "What... who are you?"

The man in the bowtie had been rummaging about his pockets; now he made a triumphant noise as he pulled something from his inside jacket pocket. It looked like a flashlight of some kind, the tip glowing green.

"I'm the Doctor," he said, smiling at her in a friendly but distracted way as he waved the flashlight at her. It gave off a humming noise that was far too loud for Erica's transformation-heightened ears. She growled reflexively, at which the man who called himself the Doctor beamed as if she'd just given him a present.

"And you're werewolves!" he exclaimed, sounding thoroughly thrilled. He scanned Boyd as well. "Teenage werewolves! Brilliant! Utterly brilliant! This world just never stops being fun, does it?" He was up in her face by this point, staring at her teeth with manic glee. "Genuine lycanthropes! Look at the canines! Oh, this *is* wonderful!"

Erica gawked at his strange, friendly, angular face. He was close enough that she could sense the blood pulsing through him, propelled by the unfamiliar echoing sound of a dual heartbeat.

Oh, this was just great, Erica thought. She and Boyd were about to get torn apart by these alpha freaks, and here was some kind of mad alien with two hearts. A mad alien with an ancient phone box and a sentient plant.

Still – he didn't *look* mad. Well, he did. Mad, but not insane. She stared back at him as he stared at her, and then she cautiously sniffed. He did not *smell* insane, either. His face was kind and his eyes shone with genuine delight, but underneath it all, he smelled like the saddest person ever to crash from the sky into a circle of werewolves.

"It's not very polite to smell people," he told her, but he did not sound too upset and she paid no mind, distracted. There was something else she could smell on him.

Power.

"Help us," Erica said, not really knowing why she said it. There wasn't anyone who could help. One of the few things Derek had tried to teach them was that you didn't rely on anyone except your pack, but he hadn't covered what to do when your pack was broken, when your leader was no better than you at knitting it back together, when he had better things to do.

The Doctor was still smiling, inspecting one of her clawed hands now. "Marvellous. Retractable! Help you do what?"

"Live," she said, and that's when the pack charged. They roared as one, muscles bunching, and Erica flinched. Beside her, Boyd made an alarmed noise and raised the flower pot, causing the purple plant to writhe in agitation.

"Don't do that," the Doctor warned him. "She's had a really rough day. Oh!" He froze when he saw the pack advancing, then waved his weird little scanner thing again. "Oh. Oh dear. This isn't actually all that good, is it."

He shook the little flashlight crazily as if he expected it to spit out a magic spell. Nothing happened, except the pack came on, five blurry bursts of speed and murder. Erica raised her claws.

"Oh, for the love of... fine, then, have it your way!" the Doctor exclaimed exasperatedly. He took a deep breath. What next came out of his mouth was more than a warning growl. It was a rumbling detonation of a roar, rolling across the grass, echoing off the trees and seeming to shake the ground itself. Erica and Boyd cowered, clapping their hands over their ears. The alpha pack shrank back as if blocked by an invisible wall; the woman scrambled backwards and the two slighter werewolves whimpered on the ground like puppies.

The Doctor turned back to Erica and Boyd, wincing a little himself and rubbing one ear. "Sorry about that. I speak Werewolf but I don't like to use it – it has remarkably few nuances as a language. So much room for misunderstandings! Now, you two." He gripped both of them by a shoulder and manoeuvred them around, facing the blue phone box. "I think under the circumstances, I had best introduce you to my favourite word in *this* language. A simple,

lovely, ever-so-helpful word, I've found." He leaned forward, so his mouth was between her ear and Boyd's. "Run."

They didn't need the little shove he gave them. Behind them, the alphas were rallying, snarling their fury at being thwarted. Erica got to the blue box first; she yanked open its door and stumbled inside, ready to squeeze against the wall to make room for the three of them and hope against hope that the contraption would be strong enough to withstand the alphas' combined assault.

Instead of up against a wall, she stumbled forwards into a cosily lit cavernous room, dominated by a central, brightly glowing column on a raised glass-floor platform. Some kind of control panel surrounded it, positively brimming with buttons and levers. Behind her, Boyd gasped. "What the..."

The door slammed shut and the Doctor bustled past them in a near-run, dashing up a metal bridge to the central console. Despite the incredible sight before her, Erica still flinched when she heard the snarl and crash of the pack slamming into the locked door behind her.

The Doctor was racing around the console like a madman, pushing buttons and typing sequences with one hand while he waved the other at them in a vaguely introductory gesture. "Bit busy or I'd do the spiel, but she really doesn't like the energy alignment of this place! Anyway, yes, this is the TARDIS, Time And Relative Dimension In Space, bigger on the inside et cetera, goes any place, any time (with some caveats), builds a mean library, cheats at chess. AHA!" He triumphantly yanked at a lever and the central column's ethereal glow intensified as it started to pulse up and down. The wheezing noises from before filled the air, and then Erica clung to the bridge's metal railing as her stomach told her that they were being yanked skywards. The snarls of the alpha pack fell away abruptly.

The Doctor clapped his hands together in satisfaction. "Right, sorry about the abrupt departure but I thought it might be best, under the circumstances. Now, Ponds-"

He had raised a beaming face to them, but now he froze, as if he'd swallowed a word the wrong way. A shadow crossed his face. "Right," he murmured to himself, sounding suddenly tired. "Right."

Beside her, Boyd cleared his throat. His eyes were wide as saucers. "Man, I don't understand any of what you just said or did and what this crazy shit is all about – but thanks. You showed up just in time."

The Doctor grimaced. "Sometimes I do that."

"Did..." Boyd's eyes flickered to Erica's, then back to the Doctor. "Is there any chance that... I mean, did Derek send you?"

"Derek?"

"Our alpha," Erica threw in. She took a step closer to Boyd. He was still holding the squirming plant.

The Doctor shook his head, extinguishing any hope Boyd might have still held that there was some sort of semi-reasonable explanation for this. "Afraid not. This was purely by coincidence."

"Then why *are* you here?" Boyd asked. He was holding onto the metal railing with one hand and held the flowerpot as far away from his body as possible with the other. "In Beacon Hill, I mean?"

"Got a bit lost," replied the Doctor, sounding a little irked as he dashed around the pulsing column of light, making adjustments to various mechanisms. "It happens a lot, no need to judge, all right? Besides, who names a place "Beacon Hill" if they don't mean to attract innocent passers-by with their... beacon-y beckoning? I was on my way to the Wolf-Rayet planetary nebula in the Lupus constellation but something must've got scrambled... Anyway, stop distracting me. This place is hell to navigate for some reason. Have you werewolves been messing with time and space?"

He was coming down the bridge again – he moved disconcertingly fast, for a non-werewolf – and stopped right in front of them, fixing them with an intent stare.

Erica leaned in close, sniffing him again, only this time when he said, "Don't *do* that, please!", he sounded actually annoyed. Erica ignored him, picking curiously through the smell of tweed and sorrow. His face was smooth and boyish but it was a lie. He smelled very old, and very lonely.

"We haven't messed with anything," Boyd said defensively. He gingerly set the flowerpot down on the floor. "We were running away. First from hunters, and then from... *them*." He shuddered.

"Ah." The Doctor was frowning. "Well, I may have a spot of trouble popping you back into town if that's where you were headed. Like I said, unreliable navigation. Some sort of big energy cluster thingie somewhere in town. Could be important. Usually is. Anyway, I can't fly there right now. I might be able to drop you off somewhere farther away when it's safe..."

"Nowhere is safe," Erica said bitterly. "Why do you think we were running?"

He tilted his head at her, sympathy edging his bright eyes. "Was that your pack you were running from?"

"No. Our pack is..." Boyd hesitated.

"Broken," Erica supplied. She looked at him, took another whiff of his lonely smell. "Like yours."

The Doctor smiled, but it wasn't a happy smile. "I don't do packs. I do friends, sometimes, but that doesn't always go well, either. Comes with the set-up."

"So it's just you on this... ship?" Boyd asked curiously. "'Cause I smell some pretty girly perfume."

The Doctor snorted. "You both really, really need to stop with the smelling thing. Yes, it's just me, for now. And Herself, sometimes, but that's" – he flapped his hands impatiently – "complicated."

"Sounds lonely," Erica said, and when he narrowed his eyes at her, she glared right back. "I didn't smell!"

"Good." His lips twitched. "So. Where can I drop you off?"

She exchanged a glance with Boyd, who looked as clueless as she felt. "I don't know. We were just trying to get away."

"Right, well, not to worry – away you definitely are. We'll sort something out, er... hang on, sorry, terribly rude of me, I never even asked your names."

When Erica told him hers, his eyes flew wide.

"Erica Reyes? Erica *Reyes*? Of *course*!" he blurted, smacking his palm against his temple. "The planetary nebula! Wolf-Rayet stars! The TARDIS must have got her pronunciation channels cross-wired. Wolf-Reyes!"

He'd done a silly little twirl with his epiphany; now he stepped close again, one hand dropping onto her shoulder as he studied her with renewed interest. "Erica Reyes," he repeated musingly. He said her name as if it was a story; a book that he might like to read. "It was you. You brought the TARDIS down from the Lupus constellation. I wonder why."

She shrugged her shoulder under his hand, a bit uncomfortable under the close scrutiny. "Well, it made us not die, so that's good, right?"

The Doctor grinned and stepped back. Speculation twinkled in his eyes as he looked back and forth between her and Boyd.

"So, uhm," Erica said. She exchanged a glance with Boyd, aligning their pack sense. He was with her. He always was. She took a deep breath. "Where's this Wolf-Rayet star thing, then?"

The Doctor's smile grew wide and pleased; the smell of sadness on him thinned and dispersed a bit. "Would you like to see?"

Boyd's fingers closed around hers, his claws just barely out. They nodded together, and whooped when the TARDIS surged beneath their feet, rushing them up into the stars.

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