

Fury of the King

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Fury of the King

by [orphan_account](#)

Summary

After Gwen and Merlin have been returned, Arthur deals with the man who kidnapped them.

It had been dark in the dungeon, the only illumination coming from the guard's table, streaking through the bars. It had cast Gwen's face into deep shadows, making her tear-stained cheeks even more haunting. Merlin had done his best to comfort her, but there was little he could do.

Merlin stands now in the council chambers, leaning on a crutch to take the pressure off of his wounded leg. He stands not in the shadows like a servant, but at the side of the king and queen, because he is a part of this.

Gwen stands with her arm in a sling, her stoic face held high, unashamed of the bruises that decorate her eyes and jaw.

Between Merlin and Gwen stands Arthur, shoulders stiff and hand on the hilt of his sword, his nostrils flaring as he stares at the cowering man who has just been thrown at his feet.

Everyone in the room, including Merlin, watches Arthur warily. The man on the floor is looking up, the chains around his wrists tinkling with the twisting of his hands.

"Leave us," says Arthur, his voice impossibly low. The lords of the court are quick to exit the room before the fury begins.

When the room is empty and the doors have clanged shut, Arthur speaks. His voice, clear and authoritative, resounds through the room.

"What is your name?"

"Lyman."

"You are in my court, and you will address me as 'sire' or 'my lord.' Tell me again, what is your name?"

The man scowls. "Lyman, sire."

Arthur's stare is cold. From where he is standing, Merlin can almost feel the anger coming from Arthur in waves.

"You are the one who kidnapped my wife and my servant?"

Lyman regards Arthur, his beetle-black eyes glittering, then nods.

"You confess to conspiring against the crown, for your own personal gain?"

"I did it for revenge," Lyman says with hate, "I wanted you to feel the pain--"

"Enough!"

Lyman falls silent, blackened teeth disappearing behind cracked lips.

“You have committed a crime beyond anything seen before,” Arthur seeths, “By the ancient laws of Camelot, you will be put to death. However, it is by my judgment that this will not do justice, and as king it is my duty to ensure that justice is served to those who are deserving.” He pauses. Merlin subtly shifts his weight to ease off of his injured foot, leaning more heavily on his crutch. He casts his eyes to Gwen, who is looking at her husband with apprehension. A bruise surrounds her eye like a storm cloud eclipsing the moon.

Arthur’s hand goes to the hilt of his sword. “Stand up.”

Lyman does nothing, at first.

“I said, stand up!” Arthur’s voice grows sharp with his command, the last word ringing and echoing through the stone walls of the council room. Lyman gets to his feet, keeping his eyes on Arthur the whole time.

Standing, Lyman is more than a head shorter than Arthur, his shoulders hunched and disfigured. He and Arthur eye each other in equal distaste.

Arthur deliberates for a moment, his fingers curling and uncurling around the hilt of his sword. Finally Arthur moves his hands, leaving his sword at his hip.

The crack of Lyman’s jaw startles Merlin into jumping, hissing as he accidentally puts pressure on his foot.

Lyman stumbles back, but before he can fall Arthur has landed another fist into the center of his face, spraying blood in an arc on the floor as Lyman’s nose breaks.

Merlin sees Gwen’s breath hitch in her throat, but her face doesn’t change. She remains cold, eyes tracking her husband’s fists with care.

Arthur lands a third punch to Lyman’s throat, sending Lyman sprawling to the floor, gasping for air.

Arthur doesn’t stop. He becomes a blur, his limbs flying with terrifying grace and precision. He attacks Lyman with everything he has, all the skill and strength he’s accumulated over the years, made ten times more awesome by his rage.

He completely ignores his sword, favoring the tough leather of his boots to strike again and again and again at Lyman’s flesh. Idly, Merlin wonders whether he’ll need to replace the toes by the time Arthur is finished here. Lyman whimpers on the ground.

Arthur’s face goes taut, jaw clenched and skin stretched tight. His every tooth is bared, resembling a wolf, and spit flies from his mouth with every grunt.

“Never,” Arthur spits, “Has anyone ever dared to hurt my family in this way--”

He lands a kick to Lyman’s ribs, making the man howl.

“This is what happens,” Arthur grits out, punctuating each word with a blow, “When someone hurts the people I love!”

He says the last word with a roar and a final kick to Lyman's groin. The word 'love' hangs in the air, filling Merlin's head in the sudden silence.

It startles Merlin, that word. He knew, of course, that Arthur cared for him far deeper than a master normally would for a servant, even considered him a friend. But Merlin had never considered that the word 'love' would apply between them, it had never even crossed his mind. It's ridiculous that he didn't, he thinks, now that it has been said and is ringing in his ears.

Lyman lies on the floor, curling around the worst of his injuries. Already bruises are forming around his face and blood gushes from his broken nose. Merlin looks to Gwen; She still has not moved, though her expression seems to have broken a little. There is no sympathy in her gaze as she regards Lyman, and Merlin finds he cannot blame her. Even with the blood, the pain Lyman had laid on Gwen was the same as what Arthur was doing now.

Arthur stands with his shoulders hunched and tense, trembling with the rage that Merlin knows is still thrumming through his veins. For now, though, watching Lyman whimper on the ground, Arthur may be satisfied.

"Guards!" Arthur calls, and at once a pair of them appear through the doors. "Take him to the dungeons."

"By the ancient laws of Camelot," Arthur says as the guards each seize an arm and hoist Lyman to his feet, "I, king Arthur Pendragon, hereby sentence you to death. You are to be executed in the morning."

Merlin, Arthur, and Gwen stand still as stone as Lyman is dragged from the room, limp from his injuries. Finally, as the doors clang shut, Arthur relaxes and turns around.

He faces Guinevere first. They meet each others eyes, and without a word fall into each other's embrace, burying their faces in the other's neck.

They cling to each other, careful of Gwen's injured hand, as Merlin looks on.

"I thought I'd never see you again," Merlin hears Arthur whisper into Gwen's ear, a hoarse, desperate sound so different to the fury that came from his mouth moments earlier.

"I'm here," Gwen replies into his shoulder, "I'm here, Arthur. I'll always be here."

Arthur heaves a great sigh, and after another long moment he steps away, still holding Gwen's hands in a tender but desperate grip.

"You should go to Gaius," Arthur murmurs, lifting a hand to Gwen's cheek. She smiles, placing a kiss on the fingertip that gently traces the worst of her bruises.

"I will," She says, "And you need to get some rest."

They kiss, once, before Gwen smiles softly at Arthur and leaves the room, not before sending a nod in Merlin's direction.

When Gwen is gone, Arthur turns to Merlin.

“Should I get a bath drawn up, sire?” Merlin says.

“You should rest your foot,” Arthur says. “Knowing you you’d kill yourself lugging buckets up stairs on with a crutch.”

“I’m more capable than I look,” Merlin jokes. Arthur quirks an eyebrow.

“Capable enough to get yourself kidnapped?”

Merlin smiles sheepishly. “Well, yeah, there’s that too.”

It’s then that he notices the way Arthur is standing, hands clenched into fists at his sides, shaking so slightly he’s nearly vibrating. The anger that had been in Arthur’s eyes as he’d beaten Lyman has been replaced by something different, more tender and fearful.

“Thank you,” Merlin says, “For saving my life.”

“Thought I might as well, since I was saving Guinevere,” Arthur says, waving a hand, but Merlin doesn’t miss the shake to his voice. He smiles.

“Admit it, you’d be devastated if I died.”

Arthur is silent for a moment. “I would,” He admits. “What I said to Lyman, about him hurting my family...”

Merlin bites his lips to stop from grinning, unwilling to ruin what he knows is coming.

“...I didn’t just mean Guinevere,” Arthur says. “It goes for you too. I know you’re just my manservant, but you’re also family. So.”

He coughs, suddenly awkward, and he looks so pitiful that Merlin wants to burst out laughing, or reach out and hug him.

“I get it,” He says instead, “I heard the whole thing about love and such.”

Arthur groans. “I didn’t mean it like that!”

“I love you too, sire,” Merlin says cheekily, his grin so wide his face might crack.

“I swear if you ever bring that up again--”

“The stocks, I know.”

Arthur smiles then. “Good to know you know your place.”

“Hard not to, around here.”

Arthur reaches out and ruffles Merlin’s hair, and Merlin’s attempts to bat him away are somewhat thwarted by his hand gripping his crutch.

“Hey! No abusing the cripple!”

“Come on,” Arthur says instead of a reply, “Let’s get something to eat.”

Arthur leads the way, slowly to allow Merlin time to limp along on his crutch. With smiles on their faces and immense relief in their hearts, they make their way to the kitchens.

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