

## Reminders

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# Reminders

by [crystalsoulslayer](#)

## Summary

"I forgot how rough you were," the Doctor groaned, standing on his tiptoes as the Master wrenched an arm upwards.

"Then, my dear Doctor, I shall take care to remind you."

## Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

The trouble with time travel is that, after a while, you're almost always in two places at once. Or three. Or four. Or, on that one notable occasion, seventeen, with a pickle stapled to your tie and three different haircuts to keep track of.

The Doctor had been to this particular David Bowie concert twice: once when he was stuck on Earth in his UNIT days, 1973, and once in his eighth regeneration. As a rule, he didn't visit a place more than twice, so he declared that Amy and Rory should have the night to themselves while he scoured the city for a tachyon filter for his TARDIS. The old girl's plasma vents were in an atrocious state.

He scanned for alien tech--very Spock, he thought, with a smile--and found a likely candidate in a mint tin in Peckham, a district of southern London. There were a few others, but all were either guarded or in the immediate vicinity of his past selves. A mint tin. Strange place for a tachyon filter. He supposed whoever it was must have picked it up off the street and thought it a pretty little bauble. Humans were always doing things like that. He'd lost count of how many active bombs he'd found on pendants.

He checked to make sure he had his sonic and his psychic paper, then strode off down the street. He did enjoy a walk, and the block of flats in which the tachyon filter had found itself wasn't more than a twenty-minute stroll away. It was a shabby little place, probably nice at one time, but it hadn't been cared for in the decade or so since it had been built. He did a quick scan with the sonic. Downstairs, corner flat. He knocked at the door, psychic paper in hand and an official-sounding title on his tongue. There was a moment's pause, then the door swung open. "Hallo there, I'm Doctor Smith, from the Miscellaneous Lost Items Division of the Regional Crime--"

He stopped. He put his psychic paper away; there's no way it would work on this particular gentleman. "Hello," he said quietly.

"My dear Doctor." The richness of the Master's voice in this regeneration sent a familiar shiver down the Doctor's spine. He'd forgotten how short the Master used to be, and that jacket he used to wear. A Nehru jacket, he thought it was called. He hadn't forgotten the beard, though, longer than in the body he'd stolen from Tremas later. "How lovely of you to stop by. Please, do come in."

The Doctor took a quarter-step toward the threshold, but froze. "I really don't think that would be a good idea."

"Oh, dear me. We've not had another little tiff, have we? What have I done this time? Did I threaten one of your pretty friends?" His smirk had even more smugness than Saxon's. Somehow. He hadn't thought it possible, but he was remembering all kinds of things today. Things about swordfighting and Bessie and TARDIS detectors and a hovercraft.

"Not for a while now, no," the Doctor managed, clearing his throat. "I'm... ah..."

The Master looked him up and down; a wave of heat followed in the wake of his gaze, and not just from the feedback of having his timeline examined. Damn him. "Oh, I see. You have

aged well, Doctor, if you don't mind my saying."

"Oh. Uhm. Thank you." He'd forgotten they used to compliment one another, to each other's faces. They were so... courteous. It was a little disconcerting now. "Nice jacket. Very cool," he offered. "Wonder if it would look that good on me."

"I could get one for you," the Master said. "You could wear it by my side as we ruled over the universe. Together."

The Doctor had to smile at that. "Matching outfits? That's a little gimmicky, don't you think?"

The Master chuckled. "I was expecting more protest against the idea of universal domination."

"Oh, we'll have time to discuss it later, I'm sure."

"Why not now? Is something important to the timeline about to happen to the pair of us?"

"I don't know, do I? I wasn't here."

"You were now."

The Master was strong back then, too. He seized the Doctor by his lapel and pulled him inside, slamming the door shut and shoving the Doctor against it, somehow insinuating his thigh between the Doctor's in the process. Even when they were separated by centuries, they had an immediate understanding of one another, and there was a hesitation of only a moment as they felt the timelines settle before the Master's hand was on the Doctor's arse, lips and teeth working against the Doctor's bared throat. It was simply instinct, like running from the Time Vortex or feeling a wonky timestream. So, too, was his immediate urge to fight, to struggle, not so much to get away, just for dominance. He clawed at the Master's wrist, ineffectively, as he was wearing those damnable gloves of his, drove a knee up into the Master's gut. It glanced off a rib, making the Master snarl his displeasure.

His feet left the ground for a moment, booted toes scrabbling against the cheap flooring as he was spun around, slammed unceremoniously into the wall. Ow. He kicked uncoordinatedly behind himself, trying to find a knee or a shin, and got the Master's fist in the small of his back for his trouble. His knees nearly went out from under him, but the Master was there to hold him up, one arm around his waist as he bent him over and yanked his jacket off with a few short, sharp pulls. "Up," the Master said impatiently; the Doctor flailed an arm behind himself and succeeded only in getting his wrist caught and his arm twisted up his back.

And back against the wall again. The Master grabbed a handful of shirt and pulled, not bothering with buttons, which popped off their threads in short order. His shirt and braces were pulled off his shoulders in the same motion, right, then left, his collar sticking on his bow tie. The Master yanked it free, leaving the tie on, grasping it at the bow and pulling. Realizing he was being choked, the Doctor tried his luck with a kick again, and got a foot, a shin, a knee. The Master growled a vehement "Fuck" in Gallifreyan and let go of him; the Doctor spun around with a wild right hook, a glancing blow to the Master's jaw. The Master didn't give him time for another swing before he was spun around against the wall, both

hands pinned behind his back this time. "You've gone soft, Doctor. You'll need to do better than that."

"I forgot how rough you were," the Doctor groaned, standing on his tiptoes as the Master wrenched an arm upwards.

"Then, my dear Doctor, I shall take care to remind you."

The Master's hand was decidedly not gentle when he yanked the Doctor's head to one side by his hair and resumed mouthing at the Doctor's neck, as though their scuffle had never occurred. He wasn't even breathing hard. He spent a little time there, making the Doctor sure he'd have a mark or six, then spun him once more, back to the wall. His dark eyes took in the Doctor's blown pupils, his parted, moistened lips; there was something else, too, something in the angle of his shoulders and the arch in his lower back. He didn't need to say a word. The Master read it as clearly as if he'd been begging on his knees.

Need.

Leather made contact with skin at high speed; the Doctor's head snapped to the side, his cheek already flushing dark. "Did no one ever tell you it's rude to stare?" the Master asked. The Doctor was too stunned to reply. His braces caught the Master's eye, bright red and dangling from his waist. The Master pulled at them thoughtfully, testing the tensile strength. Yes, they'd do. "If I let you go, do you intend to fight me?"

"Obviously."

"In that case, I'll have to disable you."

The Master yanked the Doctor away from the wall, bent him double, and drove his knee onto the Doctor's solar plexus. He forgot how to breathe, collapsed to the floor, heedless as the Master unclipped his braces from the hem of his trousers and wrapped one around his ankles, tying them tightly. The other, to the Doctor's surprise, was tied not around his wrists, but his throat. A leash. The Master had him on a bloody leash. He tried to fight, he really did, but with his ankles tied and his breath still not having returned, he couldn't get any leverage, couldn't get his feet under him. All he could do was scramble to keep up as the Master dragged him deeper into the flat, down a short hallway, into a bedroom. Then he was lifted bodily and thrown onto the bed. The Master undid the Doctor's trousers, yanked them down, undid the knot in the braces keeping his ankles tied together to get them all the way off. The Doctor tried for a token kick or two, but there was really no purpose at this point. His efforts were halfhearted at best, and it was the work of a moment for the Master to tie his ankles again, roll him onto his stomach. He opened a drawer and rummaged around a bit. "Where... ah. Eureka, as they say." His hand reemerged holding a rattan cane, which whistled slightly as the Master flicked it through the air a few times. With a smile, he looked down at his willing captive, who was returning his gaze with a mixture of lust and awe and defiance, and just a hint of trepidation. He never did like the cane.

He liked it tonight. The first strike made him scream into the pillow, and the Master didn't wait for the mark to rise before giving him another. And another. And another. The Doctor buried his face in his arms, trying unsuccessfully to keep his whole body from jumping at each strike. The effort, on the whole, was a miserable failure. Twenty minutes later, his back

had changed colors, he was trembling slightly, and his erection had started to leak on the Master's sheets.

The Master moved down, at last, to the Doctor's thighs. Should he treat the Doctor to a bit of a spank? He considered. A beautiful arse, to be sure. Flawless, in fact. He could leave it as it was. Or he could change its color, too. Deciding in favor of the latter, the Master made a quick series of rising parallel welts over the sensitive flesh, each one making the Doctor whimper and hump the mattress. There. Beautiful. The Master removed his gloves and tossed them aside, ran them all the way down the Doctor's spine, over his arse, to one ankle and then the other. The Doctor shivered and groaned, then shrieked when the Master clapped a hand to those parallel marks on his arse.

"Bugger," he said, when he'd recovered his capacity for speech.

"If you insist," the Master quipped. "Only, however, if you've not allowed anyone else the privilege."

The Doctor paused for a moment, collecting his thoughts from all the nooks and crannies they'd scattered into while the Master caned him. "No one," he said eventually.

"You're quite sure? You've never accepted a third partner into our little dance?" A firm squeeze.

"Ah-ah-aaaahhhhhnoMaster, I never let anyone else... do... this."

"You're being coy? How delightful. Put a name to it, Doctor, what is it that I do to you?"

"I don't... I don't let anyone else have my arse, Master. You know that."

"Have any of my future selves had the pleasure with this regeneration?"

"No, Master."

"Then I have a suitable plan."

The Doctor was too deeply buried in the mattress to look up, but he knew the sounds of what the Master was doing. A fly opening, the click of the lube bottle's cap opening, the slick sounds of it being worked over the Master's cock. In liberal measure. The Doctor's hearts pounded in his ears. The Master's "health drink" in his fifth regeneration had taught him a valuable lesson about accepting suspicious concoctions from strangers. The Master had decided that the Doctor's freshly-regenerated body should learn the ropes as soon as possible, and as such, the very first thing to enter the Doctor had been the Master. The Doctor imagined he had a similar plan now.

The lube was cold on his arse, but not for long. There was some discomfort as the Master spread his arse with his thumbs, but not nearly as much as when he pushed the head of his cock past the stunningly tight ring of muscle at the Doctor's entrance.

For a moment, it was a just strange and full sensation. For a moment, the Doctor could moan in pleasure.

The next moment, he screamed, really screamed, screamed so loudly that the Master was compelled to clap a hand over his mouth to silence him. "Relax, Doctor. Relax."

"Can'tohgodithurtsohpleaseMasterpleasepleasepleaseithurtsfuckfuckMasterohgodfuck..." A deep breath. Another scream, and his body instinctively tried to escape. He was held fast by the Master, naturally.

"I'm deeply sorry, my dear Doctor. Do try to relax. It will become more bearable by the moment, I promise you." The Master had decided not to finger the Doctor first; he strongly felt that the Doctor, in this body, at least, ought to lose his virginity to the Master's rock-hard cock and not a more merciful finger. For quite some time, the Doctor writhed and struggled and bit, drawing blood from the Master's palm, his eyes opening, rolling, squeezing shut again, pained noises synchronized with the desperate efforts of his muscles to force the intruder out.

"MasterIcan'tpleasepleasepleaseMasterpleaseohgodhelpmepleasehelpmeyouhavetohelppleasepleaseplease..."

Taking pity on him, the Master moved his hand from the Doctor's mouth to the side of his face, made mental contact, letting the Doctor show him where to go. He flew past memories and thoughts and emotions, found the Doctor's motor cortex, and ordered it to let go. It couldn't work immediately--it never did, as muscles needed more convincing than the brain--but, after a few minutes, the Doctor was infinitely more relaxed than before. The Master poured out some more lube and inched in a little further, which drew the first pleasurable sound from the Doctor he'd heard since he'd started fucking. "Better?"

"YesMasterthankyou," the Doctor groaned out in a single breath. "Please, god, don't stop..."

"You don't have to call me God, Doctor, although it is flattering," the Master replied. The Doctor huffed out a little laugh, whimpered as the Master moved steadily further.

"Ohyes morepleaseMaster..."

It was so needy. The Master froze in place, both to prompt the Doctor to beg some more and to relax those stubborn muscles. It also gave him a lovely opportunity to examine the Doctor's future regeneration. Such a nice body, slim, a swimmer's physique, and that arse. Freckles, unnoticed before, made themselves known on his back. His legs went on forever.

"Master... please..."

Determined to see the Doctor's front, but also determined not to waste time getting the Doctor prepared for a nice hard fuck, the Master set about the arduous process of turning him over without pulling out. The Doctor was little help, too busy twitching and trying to entice the Master deeper to worry about logistics. But, with quite a bit of coaxing and maneuvering, he got the Doctor onto his back, his still-tied ankles on the Master's shoulder. His front was quite as pleasing as his back, not least because of the hard and dripping erection resting on his stomach, the hot, round balls tucked between his thighs. The Master tested their weight, squeezing and rolling, and the Doctor squirmed and thrust into the air, making a series of obscene noises as he did. "If I untie you, will you fight me?"

"No, of course I won't, don't be an idiot, fuck..."

The Master chuckled and untied the knots once more, tossed the overstretched and twisted braces aside carelessly. He parted the Doctor's thighs, took a moment to enjoy the sight of himself in the Doctor's arse, before he was interrupted. The Doctor had remembered how to breathe, and pulled himself up, straddling the Master's lap, bringing his lips to the Master's. The Master was somewhat bemused at the sudden streak of independence, but couldn't argue with the turn the Doctor had decided to take, so he returned the kiss, deeply and thoroughly. Tongues became involved in short order, the Doctor determined to taste every possible corner of the Master's mouth, and not because of the hints of curried chicken. He couldn't have the Master forever. He couldn't have anyone forever. But, for now, he had this, and he wanted to enjoy it. He wanted to remember it. He wanted to remember the way his back ached with every slight motion as his bruised and welted skin was pulled and moved, wanted to remember the way his trembling thighs couldn't hold his weight off the Master's cock and made him sit just a bit faster than was comfortable, wanted to remember the burn of the muscles as they adjusted themselves to the intrusion.

To his surprise, the Master took pity on him and held him up, slowing the descent along his length. He'd forgotten, after all that time with Saxon's slim, almost delicate body, how sturdy the Master had been. Strong and solid and easily capable of taking the Doctor's weight, easing him down at a positively glacial pace. Good multitasker, too, as he met the Doctor's desperate kisses with equal fervor, if not quite as much emotional baggage. The fabric of the Master's jacket was getting damp with the Doctor's precome, and the friction was delicious, prompting the Doctor to hump him lightly now and then as he slid ever lower.

Fifteen minutes later, the Master eased his grip on the Doctor's thighs, let the older-but-younger-looking Time Lord sit fully on him. They stayed, the Doctor adjusting, the Master watching, for a few minutes, and when the Doctor's little rolls of his hips outnumbered his sudden periods of pained stillness, the Master leaned forward, settling the Doctor on his back again. The Master pulled out, lubed himself up once more, gave the Doctor a fresh coating (with fingers this time, watching him shiver and whimper with pleasure). His reentry was a patient one, watching the Doctor's expressions change as he moved ever deeper inside. First, he was patient, aroused, but in control. The Master passed over the prostate, and his brows arched, hips thrust, lips parted. Deeper still. His eyes fluttered shut, one hand fisting in the sheets above his head, the other leaving a long streak of four parallel lines over the Master's chest in the wake of blunt fingernails. The Master took it by the wrist and pinned it next to its fellow, taking them both in one large hand as he pressed deeper, drawing a shiver and a long, low moan from his Doctor. By the time the Master was in him to the hilt, he was muttering obscenities and nonsense, thrusting lightly, his legs around the Master's waist, all pale flesh against black clothes and black sheets. He leaned over the Doctor, waited for him to quiet, and when those lips were still, the Master kissed them. The Doctor had felt this kiss before. It wasn't a gesture of affection so much as it was a mark of ownership, not forceful, just firm. The Doctor's answering kiss was gentler, sweeter, tempered by centuries of listening to this bodily dialogue of theirs--

**You're mine.**

*I know.*



--and when the kiss was over, the Doctor could stand it no longer, and he whimpered, "Please. Fuck me."

The Master obliged.

Over the next few days, he'd have to fend off a number of neighborly complaints. He'd also have to fix his cracked headboard and hire a handyman to repair the drywall behind it. Each thrust was delivered with a kiss to the Doctor's skin. The Master felt compelled. It was a counterpoint to his roughness, which he felt would snap this new, lanky, vulnerable-seeming Doctor in half if it weren't softened with a little affection. He didn't seem to mind being broken, though; his hands, when freed, clawed and grasped at the Master's face, his shoulders, even slapping or striking a few times. The Doctor's fist glanced off his jaw, and the Master snarled a Gallifreyan swear word that roughly translated to "sodomized fucking cum slut." Except for the arch in his back, keeping himself in perfect position to receive the Master's attentions, the Doctor was completely relaxed, even when the Master rolled his hips over and down in such a way that the Doctor slid four inches up the mattress and the box spring gave out. He couldn't remember the last time he'd felt so perfect. He felt even more perfect when the Master wrapped a hand around his throat and squeezed, not enough to stop his breathing entirely, but certainly enough to hinder it, enough to reinforce his thus-far-untouched cock's hardness.

The Master stopped, pulled out, lifted him bodily off the mattress and turned him over, slammed him back down. The broken box spring's complaints went entirely ignored by both of them, one of the Master's hands pushing him into the mattress, determined to imprint this Doctor's silhouette upon it forever, the other's fingernails leaving crescent-shaped cuts in his arse.

The Master's orgasm arrived in force, and sent him down, latched his teeth around the Doctor's shoulder. He rode the Doctor hard through it, letting the tight slick heat milk out every drop of come his balls could produce, before he collapsed bonelessly over the Doctor, covering the smaller, trembling form with his entire body. When he could move, he turned the Doctor over one last time. The Doctor's still hard, flushed and heavy, leaking onto his own stomach, eyes hazy with lust. One hand wandered over his thigh, his hip. He wanted to pleasure himself. Well, that wouldn't do at all. The Master knocked the hand away impatiently and bent to work with his mouth once more, the head of the Doctor's cock swollen and sweet on his tongue. It wouldn't do to bring him too much pleasure without pain, so the Master added just a hint of teeth now and then, drinking in the Doctor's sweet sounds each time he did. He was trying desperately not to come, trying not to scream, trying not to thrust into the Master's mouth. When the Master had worked his way all the way to the base, and he could feel the Doctor in his throat, the teeth made a triumphant reappearance, two bright red streaks all the way up to just under the head, top and bottom. The Doctor really did scream then, and the Master loved the sound so much he repeated the procedure--lips and tongue soothing all the way to the base, then teeth on the way back up. The scream was quieter then, and at the third iteration, it had dwindled to a series of half-moans, punctuated by desperate, gasping breaths. By the fifth, he could do nothing but hiss and groan quietly, fists tangled in the sheets, pale skin almost glowing in the darkness of the room, luminescent against all the black in the room. He'd gone soft slightly, not that he wasn't enjoying himself--the moans betrayed him--just his body rebelling at such treatment. The Master put the teeth

away again, enjoying the sensation of the Doctor's pulse beating through the vein along the underside, the faint taste of metal from the abused skin. And the doctor's hands released the sheets, skimmed downward, resting on the back of the master's head; that would've earned him a beating on the Valiant, but this Master didn't mind, just huffed a quiet chuckle of amusement at the Doctor's need, then pulled his mouth off with an audible pop and a smirk of exceptional smugness.

"How long do you have here?"

"Few... hours. Concert."

"Yes, good."

The dildo pushed deep inside, vibrating all the way; the Doctor seemed to feel it all the way through himself. It was the trembling of his limbs, cuffed by wrists and ankles to the bedposts, and the buzz around his balls and the base of his cock, where the Master had fastened a leather ring to keep his orgasm in check. Before he'd gone to the kitchen, the Master had retrieved the Doctor's boxers from the floor, tore them in half, stuffed one half in his mouth to gag him.

The Doctor could hear him in the kitchen, putting the kettle on, pouring himself a glass of something or other. There had been a knock at the door, which the Master had answered.

"No, sir, nothing of the kind. I was simply experimenting with larger speakers for my new television. Much louder than I thought they'd be, you know. My most sincere apologies, it will certainly not happen again."

The kettle was whistling. The Doctor arched and moaned, tried to slip a hand free, to no avail. The Master returned to the kitchen, puttered around a bit more, heedless of the Doctor's plaintive whimpers. The television came on; a weight settled on the couch. Clinking silver and china, the muted sound of a late night educational programme humming along under the audible beating of the Doctor's hearts. He could only wait, pulling weakly against the cuffs, whimpering and grunting, unsuccessful attempts to make himself heard.

The Master wasn't coming.

He stilled, quieted, contented himself with a small ululation of his hips every so often, the quiet drone of the vibrator louder now than his hearts had been, just slightly audible under the television.

Then, unexpectedly, the television shut off. The Master reappeared, plucked the gag from his mouth and tossed it aside.

"Please." Even though his tongue felt too big and his mouth was sandpaper and his throat a desert.

The restraints came off, and the Master pulled a leg up, fucked him a few times with the dildo as he pulled it out, just watch him squirm. The cockring came off, and the Doctor groaned as the blood rushed back, a blend of relief and pain. The bed shifted as the Master settled himself between the Doctor's legs, took each one by the foot and pulled it up, over his shoulders. When he thrust home once more, he was so deep and it hurt but the hurt was wonderful it was home it was safe and the Doctor cried out, couldn't stop, couldn't help it, his throat hurt from every sound the Master had drawn out of him, but he simply couldn't stop. The Master began to fuck again, slow and steady and relentless, knowing the Doctor was sore enough that he needn't go to any effort at all to pain him the way he wanted. The unspoken understanding hung between them, that the Doctor couldn't come, mustn't come, until the Master ordered it. The Master pulled him up more, tilted him further back, rolling his hips now with each thrust, and each time, the head of his cock hit precisely there, and each time, a bead of come just slipped from the tip of his cock, streaking on his belly. He shivered and clenched and arched when he realized the Master was milking him with his fucking cock. It ached and hurt but was so good at the same time, so perfect, and he couldn't hold off anymore...

"Master," he said urgently. The Master's reply was an unconcerned sort of noise. "I can't..."

"Can't what?"

"I can't... it's too much, I..."

The Master chuckled, pushed harder, faster. The Doctor whimpered again, once more, a further time, but the Master wasn't stopping, wasn't even slowing down. He couldn't help himself, and he wailed out a plaintive "Sorry!" as he came.

The Master pulled out while he was still shivering with aftershocks, straddled the Doctor's chest, over his face. "Did I tell you to come?"

"No, Master. Sorry, I couldn't stop, I couldn't..."

"Of course you could, my dear Doctor. You know that you mustn't come until you're told, you have the self-control to prevent it, and you know there are consequences for failing to obey."

The Doctor nodded, his cheeks coloring.

"And yet you did it anyway. You disobeyed."

He nodded again, a breathy "yes" passing between his swollen lips.

"Which, naturally, leads me to the inevitable and obvious conclusion that you disobeyed in anticipation of being punished."

"I'm sorry, master, couldn't help it..."

He was begging now, lots of pleases and sorrys. The Master was having none of that. He backed up, dragged the Doctor further down the bed, straddled him once more, hooking each knee over his shoulders this time. He was really, properly over his face now.

"Open your mouth, Doctor."

The Doctor did. Throats are not designed to receive intruders at that angle, but the Doctor did his best, coughing and choking and making soft, pained noises now and then, his legs kicking, toes twitching, until the Master pulled his cock from the Doctor's mouth, and then come was hot-wet-sticky-thick on the Doctor's face. The Master left him as he was, knowing there was no need for any restraint to keep the Doctor exactly where he wanted him, and took up the cane from earlier. Not an inch of the Doctor's body was spared. Bruises were everywhere the bright red welts were not; lines of come were slashed here and there from where the cane had picked up his mess from earlier. It had even splattered the ceiling, like blood droplets cast off a murder weapon.

The Doctor, by this point, was limp, half-conscious, throat too hoarse to make a sound, too exhausted even to tremble. The Master leaned over him, watching him, drinking in his ill-used body for a few minutes, wrung out and bruised and broken, just for his Master. There were, however, timelines to be kept intact.

"Doctor."

The Doctor said nothing.

"Do I clean you up afterward?"

Still, no reply.

"Doctor, you realize I'm trying to avoid paradoxes. Are you listening?"

The Master took the Doctor's chin in his hand, turned his head. The Doctor said nothing, didn't even stir; the Master was unpleasantly reminded of the way the Doctor's heart stopped in the Keller machine, of his more recent impression that the Doctor would snap if treated too roughly. The Master leaned down, pressing his ear to the Doctor's chest--two hearts, working overtime, and he was breathing. He was simply, it seemed, unconscious. The Master looked down at him, at the marks everywhere, at the come still dripping slowly from his gaping arse, fingerprints and ligature marks everywhere, and came to a decision. He lifted him up, awkward gangly limbs everywhere, and took him to the bathroom, settling him in the tub. The Doctor slept through nearly everything, but just as he was rinsing the last traces of come from the Doctor's wild, sweaty curls of hair, he heard a sleepily murmured and rather hoarse,

"What are you doing?"

"You seem to have lost some of your powers of observation, dear Doctor."

"I know what you're doing, I mean... what are you doing?" He stirred lightly, not even enough to raise a splash in the water, cloudy with soap. "You never clean me up, just throw me out and watch me stumble off."

"Nonsense. When next I see him, I shall have some very stern words with my future self."

The Doctor smiled weakly, letting the Master wash him, closing his eyes and relaxing as much as his mistreated muscles would allow. When the Master finished, he simply let the

Doctor soak in the tub awhile, letting tension leak out of his body.

He wasn't quite as relaxed as he'd like when the Master returned.

"I've brought your clothes. Your pets will be missing you."

"Right."

He didn't need to say that he'd rather stay here, rather be broken and repaired over and over and over, ceaseless and wonderful, but he stood, slow, so sore he could barely move. The Master helped him out of the tub, towed him off, helped him step into his trousers. He retrieved the Doctor's ruined braces from the floor and tucked them in his pocket, steadying him when he swayed alarmingly. Silently, he pulled the buttonless shirt over the Doctor's shoulders, then his tweed coat. The Doctor insisted he could put his shoes on by himself, and was found to be greatly mistaken when he overbalanced and collapsed to the floor.

"I'll walk you to your TARDIS, shall I?" the Master said, opening the door for him.

The Doctor shook his head. "Amy and Rory will be back by now, they mustn't see you. I can get there, it's not far."

He took a step, wobbled. Took another, wobbled again. On the third step, his knees gave up, and he hit pavement.

"Come back inside. You should rest."

The Doctor chuckled wryly, "We both know rest is the last thing on your mind."

The Master made a noise of dignified offense. "Come now, Doctor, what do I become? Some sort of mindless animal? You can't go anywhere like this."

"I take that as a personal challenge, you know."

"It isn't meant to be one."

"Too bad." He staggered to his feet, limping a bit further down the road, and fell again.

The Master was at his side inside of a second, helping him up, pulling him close, warmth and softness and the promise of something more than struggling back to the TARDIS to find his companions, first irritable and then panicked. He'd have to make something up, something to explain his injuries. Muggers, maybe. Or he could stay here, timelines be damned, if only for a little while, the two of them together, warmth and care and not being so bloody lonely; the Doctor and the Master embracing, and the universe falling apart around them. It was far more tempting than it should have been. The Master started to lead him gently back to the flat, but the Doctor planted his feet.

"I can't." Amy and Rory deserved to have a universe, even if the Doctor didn't.

The Master heaved a long-suffering sigh, rummaged in his coat pocket, and pressed a few coins into the Doctor's hand. "Well, if you're going to be a fool, do so intelligently. There's a

phone at the end of the lane. Call your pets so they can get you. If you die, I shall kill you."

The Doctor only got all the way to the phone booth by entertaining mad thoughts about it really being the Master's TARDIS, that a contemporary Master would remember, would be waiting for him. He opened the door, collapsed inside, dialed Amy and Rory and read them the street signs through blurry eyes. Damn. Just a phone booth.

Amy and Rory found him half-conscious on the floor of the box, and tried to wake him, to no avail. They carried him between them all the way to his TARDIS, who sang a song of confusion and worry to his mind. He patted her console on the way by to soothe her; slightly mollified, she summoned up a stretcher to ease the way for Amy and Rory. The last thing he remembered was a sharp pain upon lying down on his back.

When he woke, he told them it was a bad neighborhood, that it should be avoided at all costs. Muggers, he said, unhappy when they found his idea of money was a collection of triangular chips of plastic. Rory's lips pressed together in a way to suggest he didn't entirely believe that, but they accepted the explanation and left him to rest, bringing him tea and biscuits and ice cream whenever he woke up. He didn't think they knew about the sex, and he didn't ask. He spent a pleasant few days curled up in the top bunk in their room, sleeping and eating and being tended to by a very solicitous Rory, who was a bit awkward about touching him at first, but soon got into his nurse mode and was very professional about it. Even though he knew muggers didn't tend to leave bite marks.

"Appalapachia!" said the Doctor, spinning round the console with his usual energy.

"Say it again?"

"Appalapachia," the Doctor repeated.

"Appalapa--"

"Chia!"

"Appalapachia."

"Appalapachia!"

"Appalapachia. What a beautiful word."

"Beautiful word. Beautiful world. Appalapachia. Voted number two planet in the top ten greatest destinations for the discerning intergalactic traveler."

"Why couldn't we go to number one?"

"It's hideous! Everyone goes to number one. Planet of the Coffee Shops."

And there it was, back to normal again. Everything fine. No more visits from the past, no more cosmic angst. Just sunsets, spires, soaring silver colonnades, doors, minotaurs, marriage,

stuff blowing up. The perfect distraction. But sometimes, when it was dark and cold and lonely, he would visit the console room, look at the tachyon converter the Master had slipped into his pocket as he left, and smile.

## End Notes

Has an illustration here:

<http://crystalsoulslayer.tumblr.com/post/17744333407/reminders-eleventy-delgado-master-nc17>

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