

## Love Is Begun By Time

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# Love Is Begun By Time

by [RiversOfMars](#)

## Summary

Liv Chenka and Helen Sinclair find themselves split up from the Doctor and imprisoned in the Tower of London where they encounter an old acquaintance: Professor River Song and with her, a future version of the Doctor! It turns out they're all after the same thing: A jewel that is actually an alien artefact and currently in possession of Queen Elizabeth I. They join forces and break out of the Tower to go after the jewel. Seeing River comfortable and happy with her wife, Liv finally faces up to her romantic feelings towards Helen.

## Notes

Hello all! I've taken a break from my current WIP to bring you a oneshot that turned out waaaaay longer than intended. But what can I say, I just finished listening to Ravenous and I am WEAK for Helen and Liv. And I just love the idea of them meeting Thirteen and see River and Thirteen together, happy, giving them a push in the right direction.

Basically, this is my contribution to Pride Month, yay! I thought it would be quite fun to write two completely different wlw couples: one so very comfortable, bantering, flirting, and one just starting out, coming to terms with their feelings, particularly considering Helen's upbringing and overcoming the prejudice of her time...

Anyway, I had a brilliant time writing it and hope you enjoy it too. There is too little Helen/Liv fic out there so let's give these girls some love (And listen to Doom Coalition and Ravenous if you haven't yet!)

## Love Is Begun By Time

“Any bright ideas?” Helen Sinclair shifted her weight, trying to get comfortable but no matter how she tried, she didn’t seem to be able to. The heavy iron chains that kept her fixed to the wall left her with little wiggle room.

“Nothing springs to mind...” Liv Chenka looked around the dirty dungeon cell. The stone wall behind her was cold and hard against her back, the ground was wet and grimy; the straw did little in the way of cushioning. The metal of the chains had started digging into her wrists and were rubbing her skin red and raw. She’d just about had it with being locked up. “This is usually when the Doctor turns up to save the day...” She groaned, annoyed at the situation they found themselves in. Liv had always been partial to trips to her ancestral home-world but since getting locked up in the Tower of London pending execution, she had quickly fallen out of love with Elizabethan England.

They had lost track of how long they had been imprisoned for as there was very little natural light. All Liv knew for sure was that she was getting hungry. As she considered the hopelessness of their situation, she glanced to Helen in the twilight. She was huffing and puffing, trying to get comfortable and Liv smiled a little, despite it all. She was glad that she wasn’t alone. If she was to choose someone to be locked up with, it would be Helen Sinclair. Liv’s thoughts on how lovely her best friend looked in period dress were interrupted when she heard distant voices.

“Can you hear that?” The med-tech looked up and listened out. The walls of the dungeon were thick but she was sure someone was heading their way.

“Voices?” Helen listened up as well. “Maybe someone is coming to get us, maybe it’s the Doctor! Hello?!” She called out but there was no response. There were, however, voices in the corridor and they were getting close enough to make out.

“You just *had* to do that, didn’t you, you just couldn’t keep your hands to yourself!” The first voice was female, distinctly Northern and obviously deeply annoyed.

“Well, how is one to keep one’s hands at one’s sides when one is pressed to one’s wife in a broom closet.” The other voice - also female and oddly familiar - seemed to be taking the whole thing far less seriously.

“That voice...” Helen had noticed it too and they exchanged confused glances. It was incredibly familiar but neither of them could quite place it, not yet anyway.

“We were hiding!” The Northern woman snapped, still getting closer, and the response came promptly:

“You needn’t have squeaked like that!”

“You could have given me some heads up before jumping right in.”

“What can I say, sometimes foreplay seems like wasted effort.” The exchange was quick, witty and effortless. Whoever they were, they knew each other very well and knew how to press each other’s buttons.

Liv raised her eyebrows at the statement, trying not to chuckle. She spotted the expression on Helen’s face, noticing a faint blush at the impropriety the words insinuated, *and in Elizabethan times no less!*

“We’ve been married for thousands of years, you still need warning?” The familiar voice teased.

“Well, this body is different...” The heavy wooden door opened and a blonde woman came into view. Her hair fell in a short bob, her clothes were a colourful ensemble that did not match the local trends of fashion and her bright eyes were firmly fixed on the woman beside her who smirked:

“Yes, I have noticed.”

Liv and Helen gasped in surprise as they recognised none other than Professor River Song, time travelling archeologist and wife to their best friend! She was lead into the cell alongside the blonde and appeared to be teasing her with great enthusiasm.

“Shut up, the two of you!” The guard that was accompanying them snapped. He had clearly heard enough of their bickering along the way. “Get in there.” He gave them both a shove.

“Alright, alright, no need to be like that.” The blonde rolled her eyes.

“Now, really that’s no way to treat a lady.” River feigned outrage. She straightened out the era appropriate dress she was wearing - much like Liv and Helen themselves. *She looks fantastic in a corset.* The unbidden thought struck Liv like a punch in the gut. She forced her eyes away and focused on the other woman instead. Her long coat, rainbow t-shirt and odd three-quarter length trousers were certainly not of the time; the only logical deduction was that she was a time traveller, too. Perhaps they had just found their way out of their awkward situation.

“You will hang in the morning for attempting to steal the Queen’s jewel.” The guard snapped, glaring at the two women who seemed remarkably unfazed at the prospect of their impending execution.

“Not to mention the indecent behaviour, right?” River called after him but he didn’t respond, he just threw the door shut.

“River?” Helen spoke up first and the two new arrivals looked around, surprised. They had been too caught up in their conversation to notice the two women chained to the wall.

“Liv? Helen?” It was the blonde that spoke first and they looked at her in surprise. *How does she know our names?* Liv wondered. Had they, perhaps, come to save them? Or maybe she was someone from their future? Maybe they just hadn’t met yet. She didn’t have an opportunity to continue the thought process as River demanded their attention:

“Hello girls!” A wide grin spread across the professor’s face. “Fancy seeing you here!” She turned to the woman at her side: “Don’t tell me you’ve done this before.”

“I don’t remember it.” The other woman shook her head slowly. “But of course, must be because of the time lines crossing.” She exclaimed, as if the penny dropped. “Come here you two!” She skipped over and threw herself at them for tight hugs that they couldn’t evade in their tied up state.

“Do we... know you?” Liv frowned pulling away as much as she could manage. It wasn’t that she disliked a hug from a pretty girl, she just usually preferred introductions first.

“Oh right, the body, uh...” The blonde straightened herself up, confused for a moment, she looked to River for help who started laughing.

“This is the Doctor.” River gestured to the blonde who gave a sheepish grin.

“No...” Helen’s eyes widened in shock.

“Really?” Liv was just as dumbfounded.

“What can I say, regeneration *is* a lottery.” The Doctor grinned and took a little twirl that was so very much like the Doctor they knew.

“And you hit the jackpot this time around.” River smirked as she regarded her wife’s backside while the Doctor faced her friends again.

“I’ll say...” Liv found herself saying before she could think better of it.

“So you two are still...” Helen looked to River, seemingly confused.

“Thirteenth honeymoon, if you will.” River grinned.

“Right...” The language scholar managed a smile that wasn’t *quite* comfortable and it made Liv’s heart sink. Of course. Helen, despite all the wonderful adventures they had been on and all the extraordinary things they had seen, was still a woman of her time, Liv realised. Born 1933. It wasn’t usually noticeable. She took scientific advancement and alien life in her stride but every now and then, a little bit of her upbringing, the time she was raised in, shone through.

Liv rarely thought about their different backgrounds, in most things they were so very much alike; but still occasionally, the awareness of it painfully push itself to the forefront of Liv’s mind. Usually when she considered how the light reflected in Helen’s bright, intelligent eyes or how much she missed her when she wasn’t right there by her side. The awareness remained like a wall, in insurmountable obstacle, that Liv never dared approach. It was what always kept her hand firmly by her side, rather than slipping into the one well within reach.

“Thirteenth?” Liv forced herself out of her painful thoughts and instead marvelled at how different that Doctor was to the one they were travelling with. She had seen them change before and learned how one person could wear different faces, but that was quite a change indeed.

“Long time into my future - your future - however you want to look at it.” The Doctor seemed to appreciate that it was a lot to take in.

“I’m going to need some time to process this...” Helen laughed lightly, seemingly over the initial shock.

“Maybe you could get us out of these chains in the meantime?” Liv suggested as her right hand was falling asleep and her wrists stung.

“Well, Ms. Chenka, in my experience there is a lot of fun to be had with restraints.” River gave her a wink and Liv rolled her eyes. Did River Song have any other *modi operandi* apart from witty seductress and deadly assassin?

“Very funny.” The med-tech huffed, hoping the little bit of pink that snuck onto her cheeks didn’t show in the dark of the cell. She wasn’t even necessarily attracted to River, but there probably wasn’t a person alive in this universe - no matter their race, gender or sexual orientation - that was immune to River Song’s charm. She hoped Helen hadn’t noticed.

“Yes chains, right, then we find a way out of here. Not really in the mood for a hanging.” The Doctor ignored the little exchanged, clearly not phased by her wife’s flirting, and pulled her sonic screwdriver from her coat.

“Oh you know, some executions can be quite entertaining or even enjoyable affairs, there is this little planet just off the Orion belt where...” River started but for once, the Doctor dared to interrupt her.

“I don’t think they care right now, River.” She crouched down and sonic-ed the restraints until they fell away. “There you go.” She smiled satisfied as Liv and Helen shook off the rest of the chains.

“Much better, thanks.” Helen smiled, rubbing her aching joints.

“So what did you two do to get banged up in here? Were you having a bit too much fun in the broom closet as well?” River smirked as they clambered to their feet and brushed off the dirt.

“Sorry?” Helen looked over to her, visibly confused.

“River.” The Doctor gave her wife’s arm a little slap.

“What?” River looked back to the Doctor, confused, apparently wondering what she had done wrong. She then looked back to Liv and Helen, sizing them up. Liv averted her eyes while Helen just looked utterly confused. “You don’t mean to tell me, after all this time, you still haven’t...”

“I think that’s quite enough of that, River, dear.” The Doctor grabbed River’s hand and pulled her along to the door. “Let’s see if we can’t get us all out of here before past me turns up and this gets really complicated, hm?”

“Now there is a fun idea, you had such luscious hair back then too...” River reminisced, brushing her hand through her blonde bob while the Doctor attempted to sonic the door.

“Wood, damn it.” The Doctor groaned in annoyance.

“You would have thought after all this time, it would do wood.” River sighed theatrically.

“Wise arse...” The Doctor huffed as she crouched down to examine the lock more closely.

“So what were you up to, my favourite girls?” River turned back to the other two women who were watching their interactions with fascination. They knew River was the Doctor’s wife, she had told them as much, but she had also told them that their Doctor couldn’t know about it yet. Therefore, they had never actually seen them interact as lovers might. Looking at River with that version of the Doctor, they could picture it. The Doctor really hadn’t changed all that much.

“We were searching for an artefact...” Helen started and looked to Liv to help her out.

“Alien technology that has been given to Queen Elizabeth as a gift and it’s been influencing her, she’s been commissioning these towers that the Doctor reckons the aliens will use to create a... oh God knows what, the Doctor will have to explain.” Liv shrugged. They had been detained rather early on in their attempt to sneak into the palace, so they had very little to go on.

“Yes, that’s what we’ve been looking for, too.” The Doctor exclaimed excitedly.

“We were having a lovely honeymoon, actually.” River interjected. “The theatre, you know. Shakespeare? Live? You just *had to* check this out.”

“Well, I didn’t remember that it was all in hand already, did I.” The Doctor retorted.

“So do you know where the artefact is?” Liv asked, hoping there would be an easy solution to the whole mess.

“We would have had it by now if someone could have held their nerve.” River pursed her lips.

“You couldn’t keep your hands to yourself.” The Doctor glared at her wife.

“Can you honestly blame me?” River smirked giving a little shrug.

“I can’t... blame you, I mean.” Liv found herself saying, looking the Doctor up and down.

“Thank you very much.” River gave the med-tech a winning smile and proceeded to stick her tongue out at her wife who just rolled her eyes.

“Liv?” Helen raised her eyebrows questioningly at her friend who was still in a world of her own when the Doctor bent over again and continued to examine the lock.

“Hm? What?” Liv blinked, looking back to Helen who seemed rather incredulous.

“That’s the Doctor!” She pointed out, her voice somewhere between amusement and concern.

“Yeah but... not really... I mean...” Liv began to stutter. “Past him, good God no, but... I mean...”

“Right...” Helen’s eyes widened in surprise and Liv silently scolded herself.

That went very badly for so many reasons, Liv realised. She didn’t mean to look like she was checking out their best friend, just because they had changed bodies. She didn’t mean to make Helen uncomfortable by flaunting interest in a pretty girl. And most importantly, she didn’t want Helen thinking she was interested in the Doctor or anyone else for that matter. Anyone else except for Helen herself, of course; but *that* she couldn’t say.

River, apparently, could tell that Liv was getting very uncomfortable, so she decided to move things along.

“Anyway, where were we.. trying to break out? Step aside dear.” She gently pushed her wife aside so she could have a look at the lock herself. She pulled something that looked an awful lot like a swiss army knife from somewhere within her dress.

“You okay, Helen?” The Doctor noticed that Helen had gone rather quiet and contemplative.

“Yeah fine, I...” The language scholar managed a smile.

“There we are.” River announced triumphantly and gave the door a gentle nudge, swinging it open.

“You really are *good*, aren’t you.” Liv chuckled, shaking her head in disbelief.

“I’m not sure *good* is the right word.” Helen laughed a little as well.

“Better not be.” River smirked and hid the knife somewhere around the edges of her cleavage. “Come along, girls.” She stuck her head out the door to make sure the coast was clear. The corridor was indeed empty and confidently, River and the Doctor lead the way. Liv and Helen followed slightly more cautiously.

“So... the Doctor...” Helen said after walking in silence for a few minutes.

“What?” Liv looked around to her, confused.

“You said you couldn’t blame River...” Helen observed, mulling over what she had said.

“Helen...” Liv felt her throat close up. Of course she had got the wrong end of the stick, but how to explain without making the situation worse?

“No, I mean, I uh...” Helen seemingly was struggling to find the right words as well, so Liv hastily tried to justify herself:

“I didn’t mean I wanted to... I mean, she’s the Doctor. Plus, she’s with the Professor, so...” She gave a dismissive wave of her hand. She hadn’t meant it like *that* at all.



“But if she wasn’t, you’d...” Helen looked ahead to where the Doctor and River were standing to either side of a door and glancing into the next corridor; a perfect team, so in tune with each other.

“Why are we talking about this?” Liv asked gently. She so badly wanted to reach for her arm or her shoulder, create some physical contact, but she didn’t.

“No, I mean... I just didn’t realise you had these feelings...” Helen huffed, her tone incredibly difficult to pick apart.

“I don’t! Not for the Doctor.” Liv grabbed Helen’s arm and stopped her. She couldn’t leave her in that belief.

“But you said...” Helen didn’t look at her, she averted her eyes, looking up ahead to make sure they didn’t lose track of River and the Doctor.

“She’s pretty, that’s all. That was all I was saying, nothing else. I don’t want to and never would and... this is the Doctor we’re talking about!” Liv insisted firmly, she would have shouted for emphasis if they weren’t currently on the run, breaking out of prison. Her tone must have been a lot sharper than she realised, as Helen stared at her shocked. Quickly, Liv let go of her arm. “Besides, it’s not just about that, is it.” She mumbled, somewhat apologetical about her outburst. “To be... interested... in someone like that, there has to be an awful lot there. Like trust. Mutual interests. Shared values. *Time*... spending time with that person, getting to know them, making memories together and experiences and...” She broke off. “I just mean, a pretty face isn’t everything.” She shrugged and started walking again, partly because she reasoned that they should keep up with the others, partly because she wanted to put an end to the conversation.

“But you’d... *like* a pretty pace? More than, say, someone like our Doctor...?” Helen asked after a few moments of silence between them.

“You mean a man?” Liv retorted without looking at her. She closed her eyes for a moment and took a deep breath.

“Uhh... yeah... I guess that’s what I mean...” Helen mumbled, not looking to her either.

“I really don’t care, Helen.” Liv sighed, defeated. She actually laughed a little at how absurd the conversation was from her point of view. Humanity had moved past that a long long time ago and she couldn’t believe that her beautiful, clever friend hadn’t come to the same realisation yet. “When you like someone it’s not for their gender, you like the person, wouldn’t you say?” Liv asked, looking over to her at last.

“I’d never... really thought about it, I guess...” Helen replied, her voice soft.

“That’s just your time, the way you were raised, it’s... you can’t help it...” Liv shook her head, she couldn’t even blame her. She was born in a different world and it would take time to unlearn what society had drummed into her for most of her life. Far flung adventures in impossible worlds just weren’t enough. It would take time, like all things. *Love is begun by time*... Liv thought, Shakespeare making an unbidden appearance in her troubled mind. *Love*

*is begun by time and time qualifies the spark and fire of it.* She wondered if that spark would ever be allowed to turn to a blaze. A steady, hungry fire had been burning inside her for so long already; and perhaps Helen would douse it in cold water at last.

“Seems so silly now, looking back...” Helen spoke to herself more than anything else but took Liv by surprise nonetheless. “After everything I’ve seen, the places we’ve been too, the futures we’ve experienced...” She shook her head to herself. “I guess I still haven’t quite caught up with everything yet...”

“It does seem silly...” Liv didn’t know what else to say but she felt a sense of relief at Helen’s thought process on the matter. Her friend was intelligent, inquisitive and considerate. She reflected on things and didn’t just take them for granted. She questioned and prodded, more than able to make up her own mind. Maybe she just had never had reason to reevaluate her feelings on the matter and Liv felt a sting for knowing she herself hadn’t been reason enough to do just that. But then, perhaps, she had never dared to give her a proper reason to, either.

“Shush, you two, or we will be back in the tower in a minute...” River pressed her finger’s to Liv’s lips as they came to an abrupt halt and she nearly bumped into her.

“Guards?” Helen whispered as Liv was too dumbfounded to utter anything with River Song’s slender finger pressed to her lips.

“I’m going to create a distraction, you guys go ahead and I’ll meet you by the exit.” The Doctor spoke quietly. She glanced around the corner. There were four guards heading their way. “Where did I say I went? Where was I when you were detained?” She turned back to her former companions.

“You were taken to the Queen, apparently she had been looking for you everywhere.” Liv answered slowly, recalling the series of events that had brought them there.

“Ahh, yes... Lizzie...” The Doctor couldn’t help a little smirk.

“Virgin Queen no longer, naughty naughty, good job I’m not the jealous type.” River wagged her finger at her wife who gave an innocent shrug and sheepish grin. “She’s not the jealous type, either, just for the record.” River gave Helen a wink who had no idea what to do with that. River Song’s constant flirting and innuendo was a lot to handle. She flushed a little, a fact that didn’t go unnoticed by Liv who felt a wave of jealousy knocking her slightly. She had no right to be jealous, did she? River just had that effect on people.

“So what would the Queen want with the Doctor?” Liv tried to focus her mind on something else.

“I may have married her... previous me... future me, from your point of view...” The Doctor waved it off as unimportant.

“Seriously?” Helen exclaimed and all of them shushed her.

“Anyway, that will keep the Queen preoccupied, won’t it. Plenty of time for us to steal into the palace and get the artefact.” The Doctor whispered with some urgency. The guards would be getting close. “Let’s get out of here, my TARDIS is parked just at either side of the Houses of Parliament.” There were nods all round. “So about that distraction...” She turned back, reached for her sonic and realised that River had suddenly disappeared. Then there were muffled cries, groans, sounds of something knocking into the wall, and the thud of bodies hitting the floor.

“Let’s get going, dear, we haven’t got all day.” River called to them, signalling that the coast was clear.

“Why do our honeymoons always end like this?” The Doctor huffed as they stepped out onto the corridor where River had struck down four fully grown men without so much as ruffling a hair on her impressive head of curls.

“Because you really like it when I strut my stuff, Sweetie.” River winked at her wife who did seem a little tighter wound than a moment before. “You know I can have you on your back even quicker than that.”

“Promises, promises.” The Doctor mumbled but the pink on her cheeks betrayed her feelings on the matter.

“Does the flirting ever stop?” Liv felt a little hot under the collar as well. There certainly was something incredibly attractive about a woman that could handle herself like that.

“Not as long as it makes her blush like that.” River smirked proud of the effect she had on her wife.

“Is this what you two are usually like?” Helen asked. She seemed intrigued to know how River would have been with their Doctor, given half a chance.

“Your Doctor didn’t know who I was yet and couldn’t know, so you can’t really compare it. Doesn’t mean I love him any less.” River answered, seemingly knowing full well where she was going with it.

“Maybe a little bit less?” The Doctor interjected and River shook her head, laughing:

“I love all my spouses equally.” She slipped her hand into the Doctor’s before she could start sulking. “Now come along, we haven’t got all day!”

“Wow...” Was all Helen and Liv could manage as they stepped into the Doctor’s TARDIS.

“You redecorated.” Helen observed and the Doctor grinned:

“You like it?” She asked as she marched up to the console and set coordinates. “Just a quick hop...” She pushed down a lever. “And we’re in the gardens of Richmond Palace.”

“You seem to have gotten better at flying her.” Liv commented as they stepped outside and were exactly where she had intended for them to go.

“Don’t let appearances fool you, Ms. Chenka.” River hummed in amusement.

“Right, where are we going?” Helen asked before the Doctor could launch into a defence of her flying.

“I’m keeping the Queen busy so we just need to evade the guards and find the artefact, destroy it, and be on our way, easy, no?” The Doctor put her hands on her hips, looking around for confirmation.

“If we knew where the artefact was and what it looked like.” Liv sighed. They had gotten as far as that last time, with their Doctor.

“Way ahead of you.” River smiled and pulled a scanner from somewhere in her dress. *What else does she keep in there*, Liv wondered. “Looks like it’s in the private vault... at least that’s not the private chambers.” River mused, holding out the scanner for everyone to see. There was a red dot pulsating not too far away from them.

“Now, that would be awkward...” The Doctor admitted.

“You guys better stay here.” River turned to Liv and Helen

“What? You’re leaving us behind?” Helen protested, incredulous.

“I’d leave her behind too but she gets offended.” River nodded towards her wife.

“River!” The Doctor huffed.

“Oh, alright then, all come along, just don’t moan if we end up back in the tower again cause you got us caught.” River sighed, giving in.

River was quick to find a window on the ground floor that was easily opened with the help of her sonic trowel - another item she just *happened* to have on her person - and they climbed inside. The corridor was empty and there were no alarm systems to consider in Elizabethan times.

“This way...” River indicated, following her scanner.

They snuck through corridors and glamorous rooms, each sitting room more luscious than the next, until finally, they came to a room full of display cases.

“There it is.” The Doctor whispered and pointed to the far end of the room. A large jewel sat upon a red cushion, guards stood either side of it.

“Allow me...” River was about to make a dash for it when suddenly a large tentacle shot out of the darkness and knocked all of them over, like bowling pins. Despite the racket, the

guards in the room up ahead didn't even blink, they seemed to be under the influence of the jewel.

"Bloody hell..." Liv groaned, dazed for a moment after hitting her head.

"Are you okay, you knocked your head pretty badly..." Helen seemed to have fared better, she was quick to lean over her and brush her hair back. Liv's struggle to think clearly was not due to head injury but rather the way Helen pulled her up and held her close.

"I thought I was the med-tech around here..." She managed a half-hearted joke but got lost in Helen's bright eyes. The concern she found there made her heart beat a little faster.

"You're not from around here..." A deep voice hummed demanding their attention. A creature the size of a small van stepped from the shadows. *Stepped* was probably the wrong word for it. It *slid*, as it resembled a slug. A slug that had been crossed with an octopus, as long tentacles hung at its sides. It accessed the group with beady, black eyes while they clambered to their feet.

"And neither are you." The Doctor squared her jaw, holding her sonic out like a weapon. Protectively, she stepped in front of her friends. "You do realise this is a level five planet, don't you?"

"This planet is not important." The creature declared with a guttural sound that resembled a laugh.

"Oh, I beg to differ and you have made a very big mistake by choosing it." The Doctor retorted firmly.

"The one that's made a mistake is you, by coming here. This world will soon be ours." The alien seemed unimpressed by her declaration and slid forward. Behind it, guards appeared and advanced towards them as well. The Doctor and River exchanged glances, as did Helen and Liv, weighing their options.

"No, it won't. Not once we've destroyed the jewel you're using to exert control over these people." The Doctor stated but retreated a little as the guards came closer. Their eyes were blank, they looked into nothingness but moved ahead regardless.

"Their minds are weak." The alien laughed again.

"And you're ugly but I wasn't gonna mention it." The Doctor snapped. "Now, you have a choice. You either leave this planet and spare yourself the humiliation of us kicking you out, or we make you." She did her best to sound threatening.

"You and what army?" The creature tilted its barely distinguishable head.

"I don't need an army, I'm the Doctor." The Doctor declared and she halted her retreat. Time to stand tall and firm.

"You're the Doctor?" The alien echoed.

“Heard of me then? Good! That should give you reason to run.” The Doctor grinned.

“Doctor who?” The alien asked and the Doctor’s face fell with annoyance.

“Well, that’s a bit disappointing, never mind, but that means you probably won’t know my lovely wife either. Professor River Song, top-notch archeologist, great hair and one hell of a marksman... woman... Anyway, I digress, point is, she’s a great shot, and while you’ve been listening to me singing her praises, she’d taken aim at your jewel and any second now, she’ll...”

A shot rang out and the sound of splintering glass was ear piercingly sharp.

“NO!” The alien wailed as the guards collapsed where they were marching. Gone was their puppet master’s influence and it left them spent and unconscious.

“Never give her the opportunity to talk.” River pointed her gun at the alien. Another thing she just *happened* to have pulled out of her dress. *Or was it from under it?* Liv found herself swallowing hard at the thought of River having strapped a gun holster to her thigh... Either way, she had shot the jewel at a great distance, through two windows and an open door. And it had only taken her one attempt.

“You will pay for this!” The creature screeched and lashed out with its tentacles that suddenly grew sharp thorns.

“Oh no, you don’t!” The Doctor sonic-ed a chandelier above its head that came crashing down while River delivered three quick shorts, two at tentacles, the third right in the head. It was, however, Liv that reacted the quickest.

“Helen!” She pulled her friend around, out of the way of the one tentacle that made it past River. She knocked her to the ground just in time and River quickly shoot the tentacle for good measure, even after the creature lay motionless.

“Let’s get out of here before actual guards arrive, come on!” The Doctor didn’t give them time to recover, she pulled her friends up and pushed them along the corridor as voices approached.

“You saved me.” Helen seemed thoroughly out of breath when they finally reached the safety of the shore of the Thames. She looked to Liv who was just as exhausted and leaned against the balustrade to catch her breath.

“Well, couldn’t just let it get you, could I, not after all that time the Doctor and I have spent on getting you back...” Liv huffed, trying to downplay how terrifying the thought of losing Helen really was. She had been in that situation, not knowing whether she was dead or alive, if she would ever see her again, and she couldn’t risk losing her again.

“Right... he probably wouldn’t have been best pleased if he’d have to find an antidote to some weird disease or God knows what that thing would have done...” Helen mumbled.

“Exactly...” Liv brushed her hair back awkwardly.

“You know, you two are really painful to watch!” River interrupted, her voice full of frustration.

“What?” The two of them looked up simultaneously to find River scowling at them, placing her hands on her hips, seemingly about to give a lecture.

“Right, I’m not telling you what to do but come on!” The professor exclaimed exasperated.  
“Liv! Just take the plunge, okay?”

Liv blushed deeply. Was she that easy to read? To River Song, apparently so.

“I think I’ve had enough of London for the time being.” The Doctor interrupted, deliberately intervening to give her friends an out should they need it. They didn’t look ready to have that conversation. “We can catch Shakespeare another time. Tropical beach next?” She looked to River who rolled her eyes at her interruption.

“Wait, what about the Doctor, our Doctor?” Helen suddenly realised.

“He’ll get himself out of that situation.” The Doctor waved off her concern. “Might just take a little while. Maybe don’t wait up...” She winked.

“So you do remember it! You said you didn’t!” River exclaimed somewhere between affronted and amused.

“Only vaguely, time lines and all...” The Doctor tried to play it off but her wife wasn’t having it:

“You just didn’t want to tell me what the sex was like!” River retorted.

“I thought you weren’t jealous!” The Doctor laughed.

“I’m not jealous, I’m curious! The virgin queen, I mean, there’s a story there, isn’t there!” River insisted with a mischievous grin. “Besides... I’m taking you home tonight and that’s what counts.” She grabbed hold of her chin and placed a firm kiss on her slightly parted lips. The Doctor chuckled and kissed her back. Nothing quite like a kiss from her wife at the end of an adventure, so it seemed. Liv couldn’t deny she quite enjoyed seeing them kiss, though there was a twinge of jealousy as well. It wasn’t directed at either one of them but at the station in itself. She looked to Helen, more longingly than she probably should have, but the language scholar didn’t notice as she just cleared her throat:

“Are you just going to leave us now?” She asked as River and the Doctor pulled apart and looked back to them, somewhat sheepishly, almost as if they had already forgotten they were there.

“We’ll see you guys around, places to go, people to see, marriages to consummate.” River smirked with a little wave of her free hand, the other pulling her wife close to her side. She regarded each of them with an affectionate smile. “Hope to see you again soon.”

“Until next time, my dear friends. I miss going on adventures with you...” The Doctor smiled as well, fondly, in a reminiscent sort of way. “Be good to yourselves.”

“And you, Doctor.” Liv mirrored her warm expression. “Till next time, Professor.”

“Enjoy the rest of your honeymoon.” Helen smiled. “Have fun.”

“You too!” River grinned and pulled something from her corset. *Because why wouldn't she.* “Here, in case the Doctor is a while yet.” She threw something towards them and Liv caught it rather clumsily.

“What’s that?” Helen asked and Liv opened her hand to reveal a key.

“Key’s to the honeymoon suite we were staying in. That lovely pub right across from the Globe, maybe you can go and catch a show and crash there. Won’t be needing it now.” River grinned and turned to leave.

“Liv?” The Doctor demanded her friend’s attention one last time, making River wait a moment longer.

“Yes?” The med-tech looked up from the key.

“I think you’ve both waited long enough. Perspectives do change.” The Doctor smiled encouragingly, waving a final goodbye. Then she took her wife’s hand and they made their way along the shore of the river, taking the long way around back to the TARDIS.

“What did she mean by that?” Helen asked curiously once they were out of earshot. She turned towards her and seemed to assume that she knew exactly what the Doctor meant.

“What she means is... I need to stop being such a coward.” Liv mumbled, taking a deep breath. How to even start? The pressure was unbearable as she considered what she stood to lose if she was wrong, but the thought of what she could gain was ever so tempting. Particularly when Helen reached out, took her hands into hers, gave them a firm, reassuring squeeze.

“You’re one of the bravest people I know!” She insisted, full of determination and Liv could tell that she meant it.

“Not always, not when it comes to this...” Liv sighed, averting her eyes.

“To what?” Helen retorted, puzzled. She wasn’t making any sense to her and Liv couldn’t blame her. She couldn’t get coherent words out. “Liv, you’re scaring me, what’s going on?” Helen raised her hand and pushed it under Liv’s chin, forcing her to meet her eyes.

Liv decided that she couldn't delay any longer. She had to do it. Maybe it was obvious to everyone but Helen who just didn't expect it, didn't know how to read the signs or what to do with them. Maybe it was a stupid idea but the Doctor and River seemed to think it wasn't. Maybe they had foreknowledge they did not. They were from the future after all. Liv decided to trust them, to take the leap of faith and she leaned forward, pressing a soft kiss to her best friend's lips.



It was like a still moment. One of those special spots in space and time that the Doctor might speak of, where everything was fixed, everything was just the way it was supposed to be and always would be. A still point in time. Liv pulled back slowly and searched Helen's eyes, full of surprise and confusion.

"I like you, Helen. More than I think you realise or know what to do with." Liv whispered, unsure how to put an attraction, an affection, an adoration and admiration into words that wouldn't scare her away and bare the heavy burden a declaration of love.

"Oh..." Helen's voice was soft.

"It's uh..." Liv started to panic when she didn't say anything beyond that. No response. Not one way or another, just *Oh*. "I'm sorry." Heat rushed to her cheeks and she quickly let go of Helen's hands. She took a fearful step back. She realised she had messed up. "That was stupid... forget I even, I mean... I don't want to make you uncomfortable, if you're just not... that's fine, you're my friend, I don't want to jeopardise that and..." She started rambling excuses. She wished she could go back to before, her friendship with Helen meant everything to her. If that was all it was ever going to be, she could content herself with that, she could make her peace with it, but she couldn't lose her.

"Liv..." Helen held up her hands trying to calm her. "Liv, stop!" She took a step towards her and grabbed her wildly gesticulating hands again. "Please listen..." Liv stopped, Helen's hands in hers pulling her back to the present, demanding her full attention. She remained quiet for a moment and just looked at Helen who ran her thumbs over the back of her hands, holding them tightly as if she was worried she would run off.

"Yes?" Liv asked slowly, her heart hammering in her chest.

"You're quite wonderful, you know?" Helen smiled softly.

"I uh..." Liv didn't know how to respond, it was like her brain had stroked out, which, being a med-tech and all, she knew it *hadn't* but that was what it *felt* like. Helen's words just didn't sink in, not until she let go of one hand to be able to place it on her cheek instead.

"You can kiss me again, if, you know... that's something you want to do..." She said softly, blushing a little and Liv could tell she meant it. Maybe it would take some getting used to, those feelings, and allowing herself to feel them but Liv was determined to help her along. Help her to accept them for the precious thing that they were and allow herself the freedom to find a kind of happiness that she previously hadn't considered for herself.

"Oh I really want to..." Liv's inhibitions fell away in one liberating blast. She took Helen's face in her hands and kissed her. Properly. With all the love and longing she had carried in her heart for so long and Helen didn't pull away, she wasn't scared or overwhelmed, she just leaned into it, kissed her back and held her close.

"You're right, you know..." Helen whispered as she rested her forehead against Liv's.

"About what?" Liv asked softly, running her fingers through Helen's soft blonde hair like she had longed to ever since meeting her.

“With what you said in the Tower about time... and love...” Helen closed her eyes. “Love is begun by time...”

“Shakespeare.” Liv chuckled at the irony of them both thinking of the same quote. For all they knew, Hamlet might be having its world premiere at the Globe right now.

“We’ve been through so much together. Experienced so much. Spend so much time together. Precious *time*. Time doesn’t just bring love... it’s also inhabited by it...” Helen broke off, embarrassed and Liv wouldn’t push her for more. She had already gotten so much more than she had dared hope for. They had so much more *time* yet to come.

“You do have a way with words, Helen Sinclair...” Liv whispered, not trusting her voice not to break were she to speak up.

“Well, that’s sort of my job...” Helen chuckled and Liv laughed, shaking her head to herself. She didn’t have a way with words herself, so she just leaned in and kissed her again, confident she could get her point across another way.

“Liv? Helen? What are you...” A voice called from down the road, footsteps hurrying closer. “Oh... Uh...” The Doctor halted, confused for a moment.

“Doctor! We thought you were still... preoccupied...” Liv let go of Helen who blushed like a teenager caught by their parents while making out with their crush.

“Yes, the artefact, I...” The Doctor started but Liv interrupted him:

“We’ve dealt with it.”

“You have?” His face fell, almost disappointed and the two of them nodded. “Without me?” There was a long pause as they nodded again. “Well, that’s just marvellous, isn’t it. How did you do it?” He exclaimed after brief consideration. Helen and Liv exchanged amused glances, knowing full well he usually preferred to be the one to save the day but they were quite capable in their own right.

“That’s a bit of a complicated story.” Liv chuckled, wondering how to best explain without mentioning his future wife or the fact he would eventually turn into a very pretty blonde.

“I like a good story, let’s get back to the TARDIS then, if I can work out where I parked it...” He looked around slightly disoriented. “I’ll put the kettle on and you can tell me all about it.”

“Maybe another time...” Liv said, closing her hand around Helen’s as they started walking in search of the TARDIS.

“What?” The Doctor looked over his shoulder, confused, watching the two of them following after him. He frowned and they could virtually see the clocks ticking in his brain. He was trying to work out what was different and why they would possibly be turning down a marvellous cup of tea.

“The recounting of the story... maybe that can wait a little while.” Liv explained.

“Why?” He seemed genuinely put out and they almost felt sorry for him.

“It’s just, Liv and I, we have some other stuff we want to talk about...” Helen came to her aid, giving her hand a squeeze and Liv felt her heart soar. She had expected Helen to be more reluctant to hold her hand, particular in a public place in the distant past where it certainly was even less permissible than she had experienced. She could only hope that it didn’t feel as strange as she might have feared but the it felt extremely right.

“Right...” The Doctor huffed, trying his best not to let his disappointment show. “Guess it’s just tea for one then... and you’re sure you don’t want me to tell you how I escaped the chambers of Queen Elizabeth?” He looked back to find them shaking their heads.

“Not right now, no.” Liv gave him an apologetic smile.

“Do you think he knows what’s going on?” Helen whispered to Liv who just shrugged:

“Seems clueless as ever... Maybe he needs a few regenerations to think it over. Another five or so...” Helen laughed a little and the Doctor started rambling again, up ahead of them, as the TARDIS come into view:

“Mind you, I have got this new novel, that’s gonna keep me busy while you do whatever it is you need to do. Came highly recommended. Detective novel, private eye in old town New York, Melody Malone, that sounds like a woman after my own heart.”

“Certainly sounds like it.” Helen grinned and Liv laughed:

“Sounds like she would have a bag of tricks up her sleeve... or dress!”

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