

If It's Green, It Must Be Evil

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If It's Green, It Must Be Evil

by [GreySunshine](#)

Summary

Merlin and Arthur, four and five respectfully, aren't exactly happy about Uncle Gaius trying to feed them vegetables.

Notes

I'm in the process of rewatching season five of Merlin, since I'm trying to catch my best friend up (and have her finish the series, something that still makes me want to curl up into a ball and cry) and while watching "The Death Song of Uther Pendragon, I got this idea. Maybe you can all guess which scene in the episode inspired it.

Now, enjoy reading, and I hope that you adore wee Merthur as much as I do.

Also, unbetad, so any mistakes are my own.

“No,” Arthur grumbled, crossing his pudgy arms over his chest and kicking his legs out. Merlin, who was sitting across from him, narrowed his eyes and kicked him back when Arthur’s leg connected with his own.

Gaius tried to suppress a sigh as the boys, Merlin four and Arthur five, though he was only older by a few months, and most of the time Merlin insisted it didn’t count, because they were the same age nine months out of twelve, began kicking each other with fierce scolds on their faces.

It really shouldn’t have been as adorable as it was.

Though that didn’t mean that it didn’t need to stop.

“Enough,” Gaius finally ordered, glaring at Arthur first, because he was older, even if it wasn’t by much, and should know better. He turned the same look onto Merlin, and the boy ducked his head, chubby cheeks reddening in what the older man could only guess was shame. “Now, I want you both to eat your vegetables, or neither of you will get an ounce of the pudding I made for dessert.”

“But Uncle Guy!” Merlin protested, pouting up at his uncle as he kicked his tiny legs out this time, before he giggled and stuck his tongue out at Arthur when the toe of his trainers collided with the legs of the blonde boy’s chair.

Gaius barely refrained from rolling his eyes. And only just, because it wouldn’t do for the two boys, toddlers, really, especially with the way they acted in each other’s presence, giggling and cuddling together one minute, and looking ready to claw at each other the next, to learn how to do the same.

“It looks disgusting,” Arthur protested, picking up his fork and pushing the broccoli and cauliflower mix around on his plate.

“Does not!” Merlin protested, sending his friend an outraged look from across the table, like he couldn’t believe that the other boy would say something so horrible about his uncle’s cooking. “They look like tiny trees!”

Arthur scoffed as he poked at one of the broccoli florets. “Yeah, disgusting trees.”

“They are not!” Merlin shouted, his little voice carrying across the dining room as he banged on little fist against the wooden table top. He sat up in his booster chair, trying to make himself look bigger. “Uncle Guy’s cooking is never yucky,” he told Arthur, the pale skin of his face flushed with anger.

“Then why don’t you eat them,” Arthur challenged, raising one pale gold eyebrow at his younger friend, an expression he had picked up after seeing his father turn the same look on countless business associates. He had mimicked the look in his older sister’s, Morgana, mirror for what felt like hours before he finally got it right.

Gaius stifled a laugh behind one large, wrinkled hand. He really needed to start carrying a camera around with him at all times when the young Pendragon hire came to visit.

Merlin, on the other hand, began to sputter, his chubby cheeks puffing out like a little chipmunk's as he tried to come up with a reasonable excuse that wouldn't leave Arthur calling him a giant girl. "B-because," he exclaimed, fidgeting slightly in his seat. "They're so tiny!" he turned beseeching eyes onto his older uncle. "Uncle Guy! The trees are so little! And these ones aren't even green! You can't make us eat them! They still need time to grow big and strong and really, really green! It would be cr-cru... mean to eat them!"

Gaius raised his eyebrows at his young nephew, a look that fit on his craggy face much better than it fit on Arthur's chubby one. "And why would it be mean," he asked, sitting back in his own seat, sans a booster seat, thank the gods, as he waited for the young boy's answer. Arthur leaned forward in his own booster seat, his bottom practically slipping out of it as he listened attentively so that he could leap on the first opportunity that presented itself to tease the other boy.

Merlin took a deep breath before diving into his, rather short, really, especially for what a big breath seemed to promise, explanation. "Because you told me trees give us ox... oxy... air!" he cried out, finally giving up on the bigger word. "And we need air to live, but won't have any if you make us eat all the tiny trees."

Arthur gaped at him as Gaius tried again to stifle his laughter. By the gods, these boys could be absolutely precious at times. "That was actually kind of smart," Arthur marveled, sounding as if admitting so made him physically ill.

"Or it would have been, if they were in fact tiny trees," Gaius cut in, sounding amused despite his best attempts to hide it. He corrected himself when he noticed Merlin's wounded look. "That's not what I meant at all duckie. You're very wise." He leveled a look at Arthur to stop his snickering. "They are not, however, trees. They are vegetables that you two must eat so that you can both get lots of iron and grow big and strong."

"Merlin is never going to be strong," Arthur scoffed, pursing his lips in disbelief.

"I will too!" Merlin protested, turning his big blue eyes on Arthur now as he glared at him, tiny fists clenched on the table top. "I'll be as strong as... as strong as my daddy one day, and then I'll show you! I'll be so strong that I'll pick up a really big tree, with just one hand. No, with only two fingers, like this!" he declared, picking up a piece of broccoli between his index finger and thumb. "And it'll feel like it'd weigh nothing, because I'd be so strong!"

"Ha," Arthur muttered, looking ready to laugh. "Ha, ha, ha. Well, I'd pick up two trees with just two fingers, like this," he said, demonstrating this by grasping one piece of cauliflower and one piece of broccoli between his index and middle fingers, clutching to them tightly so as not to drop them and have Merlin decide that he won. Not that they were competing or anything. Really.

"Yeah, well I'd..." Merlin began, puffing out his chest to make himself look bigger as he got ready to make an even larger statement. Gaius cut him off before he could issue another

challenge, however. He already had enough of a mess to clean up without having to clean up the vegetables that these two were sure to dump all over the floor.

They were supposed to be eating the vegetables, after all, not playing with them.

He told them as much a second later, raising the eyebrows of doom, as Merlin and Arthur had thus titled the shrewd expression. “Boys, enough bickering. Please, eat your vegetables so that I can clean up.”

Merlin opened his mouth to protest yet again, Arthur in full agreement with his friend for once as he went to do the same, but both boys’ clamped their mouths shut when they saw the expression on the older man’s face.

“Are you sure we won’t die?” Arthur asked, spearing a broccoli floret with his fork.

“Because green is usually evil,” Merlin stated, spearing his own floret, though he held it as far away from himself as his short arms would allow.

“Like Slytherin are!” Arthur agreed, and Gaius really wished their parents hadn’t allowed them to begin watching the Harry Potter series. Not that the movies, and the books more so, weren’t wonderful pieces of art, but now the boys were beginning to find ways to use far too many related topics in any given argument.

“Even so,” Gaius said, praying for patience, “neither the broccoli nor the cauliflower is poisonous. The cauliflower isn’t even green. So please, eat your vegetables.”

“Fiiinnneee,” both boys grumbled, holding their forks closer to their mouths. They looked at each other across the table, stormy blue eyes meeting sky blue, before Arthur raised his eyebrows again, obviously waiting.

Merlin shut his eyes, a grimace already present on his face from the smell of the broccoli alone, before opening them again, his dark eyebrows furrowing when he noticed that Arthur was just sitting there, watching him, instead of eating his own vegetables. “What are you waiting for,” he asked, narrowing his eyes at him in an expression so adorable that it looked as if its rightful place would be on a fluffy little kitten, rather than a tiny four year old.

Arthur scoffed, as if Merlin was being dim. “Making sure it really isn’t poisonous,” he told him, like this should be obvious.

Merlin gave him an outraged look when he understood what Arthur was getting at, before turning the same outraged look onto Gaius, his blue eyes big and watery as he looked up at the older man, as if to say, ‘do you see how mean he is to me?’”

Gaius sighed, pushing each of their plates closer to them. “For the last time, eat,” he commanded, though he made sure not to snap at either of them, not wanting to make Merlin cry and have Arthur’s protective wrath on him. It had happened once before, and the mark from the resulting bite still hadn’t faded from his arm.

Merlin wrinkled his nose, grumbling all the while, before shoving the floret into his mouth. It was clear from the way his cheeks puffed out and his throat constricted that he tried to swallow it whole, and Arthur snickered, trying not to laugh.

Merlin twisted his lips into yet another grimace once he had finally managed to swallow the lone vegetable, and then he nodded to Arthur, a clear command for him to eat his own piece of broccoli now.

Arthur gave the broccoli floret on the tip of his fork a wary look, before he looked up at Merlin, the other boy's face still twisted up in a grimace. He took a moment to brace himself before bringing the piece of broccoli up to his mouth and biting into it viciously, his tiny white teeth chewing rapidly in an attempt to get the torture over with as fast as he could.

He shot Merlin a glare a moment later, kicking him under the table as the younger boy burst out into hearty giggles. "That wasn't so horrible!" he cried, kicking Merlin again. "The look on your face made it look like you were dying!"

"Oww!" Merlin shouted, kicking Arthur back. He giggled again after a moment, and used his tiny fingers to grasp at another piece of broccoli and pop it into his mouth, eating it properly this time. "I didn't have any look on my face. I was just eating!"

"Liar," Arthur told him, before sticking his tongue out at Merlin after the boy had done the same to him.

"Bet I can eat all my vegetables before you can," he challenged, grinning a gapped tooth smile now.

"Cannot!" Merlin protested, and picked up his fork to set to beating his friend.

Gaius did roll his eyes when he was sure neither of the children were looking his way, looking unnecessarily fond as he began clearing away the other dishes on the table, secure in the knowledge that both boys would finish their vegetables now.

Maybe next time he should have them try brussel sprouts.

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