

TBB
BOOKS



TORCHWOOD

Walking with the Ghost
Weaselett



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Walking with the Ghost

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Torchwood | PG-13 | gen, some Jack/Ianto | 22,000 words | some bad language and violence

Team Torchwood struggle to hunt down an usual serial killer, who may turn out to be one of their own.

Many thanks to my lovely Beta and cheerleader who managed to keep me going and resist the urge to hit the delete button too often.

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The dream is always the same.

He's in a white room, laid out on a gurney, all of the restraints clinched tight, preventing any movement.

The only thing he can hear is his own heartbeat and panicked breathing.

Something bad is going to happen, his dream self knows that just as well as his conscious self. The problem is, only his conscious self knows what the bad thing is; his dream self doesn't, no matter how much he wishes he could.

There's no window in the room, just the faint outline of a door, but he can't get to it, the restraints are too tight and no matter how much he struggles he can't get free. There's blood on the sheets now, running down his arms and legs, pain throbbing in time with his heartbeat.

He screams, endlessly, but no one hears, or if they do they don't care.

There's writing on the wall to his left, but he can't read it. The text is pale grey, barely visible against the white of the wall. He thinks he should know what it says, but he doesn't and it's hard to think.

He stops screaming when he starts to choke, tears running down the side of his face and into his hair, a mix of frustration and desperation.

It seems like its been hours since he stopped screaming when the door opens, a frantic looking woman stumbling across to him and tugging at the bindings holding him to the bed until they come loose. She's shaking and muttering the same thing under her breath over and over again.

It takes what seems to be an eternity but finally she manages to release his arms and chest, allowing him to reach his legs to remove those restraints even as she manages to focus enough to give him a set of instructions. There's a thump against one of the walls and she's back to muttering, tears running down her cheeks.

His clothes are waiting for him on the other side of the door, so he dresses quickly, not really noticing as the woman flees the room, leaving him alone; not seeming to care whether or not he had heard what she had told him.

He's so relieved to be free of the nightmare, free from the restraints and the white room, only, when he walks out into the corridor, he finds himself stepping from one nightmare to another.

It doesn't take long for the screaming to start again.

He comes awake suddenly, still screaming in the darkness of his own room. He's used to it now though, so he gets up, takes a shower and heads out.

There's no point in trying to go back to sleep.

And besides, he has work to do.

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“Another animal attack.” Jack commented, motioning towards the newspaper with his toast, ignoring the disapproving look lanto aimed at him for talking with his mouth full. “The third this month.”

Three days had passed since Gwen had officially terminated her investigation into the relationship between Cardiff’s missing persons and the negative rifts spikes, during which the rift had been relatively quiet, with just a few harmless pieces of technology turning up at random spots throughout the city. What that meant was that Jack was getting restless, which almost always lead to lanto bearing the brunt of his frustration; one way or another.

The only problem was, lanto hadn’t been getting all that much sleep recently, which meant that he wasn’t anywhere near prepared to be combating Jack’s frustrations as well as he usually would have.

“Weevils do you think?”

“No, we’d have noticed if they were getting more active and there would have had more sightings.” Jack replied, pausing in his reading to examine lanto for a long moment, eyes narrowing. He clearly wasn’t impressed with what he was seeing. “You’ve been spending too many nights here you know.”

lanto raised an eyebrow, looking up from tidying Jack’s desk, “You haven’t exactly been complaining.”

Jack grinned, “No, you’re right I haven’t.” He paused for a moment, pretending that he was reviewing their activities in his head, before he pressed on, refusing to be distracted form his point. “That’s not my point though, you need to get out more, go home - make sure it’s still there. Sleep in your own bed.” He treated lanto to his patented ‘I’m you boss, I know best’ look, which as ever, failed to come anywhere close to what was needed to actually have an impact.

“Maybe,” lanto allowed, knowing better than to refuse outright. All of his bills were set on direct debits so he didn’t have to worry about that and he rarely had time to do any shopping, so even if he did go home, there wouldn’t be anything for him to eat anyway. Though, he had to admit, his own bed would probably be just a bit more comfortable than Jack’s bunk and its ancient mattress; but the truth was it wouldn’t solve his real issue.

If he went home and slept in his own bed, he would only get at most an hour’s sleep before the dreams started up again, which ultimately meant a sleepless night. When he stayed with Jack the other man’s proximity seemed to stave off the dreams, allowing him some amount of undisturbed sleep.

He could tell Jack about the dreams, but he didn’t really want to. They weren’t something he really wanted to talk about, he’d much rather just work around them as best as possible and hope they would retreat again soon.

Jack gave him a suspicious look before giving in and turning back to his newspaper as lanto headed to the coffee machine, the others would be in soon and they’d be expecting coffee if they were going to get though the morning’s meetings.

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Three nights later Jack finally decided to take matters into his own hands, driving Ianto home and escorting him into his flat. Less because he doesn't trust Ianto and more because he'd found Ianto asleep on his desk in the archives two hours after the others had left for home.

Ianto didn't bother to argue, he knew better than attempt a fight when he clearly had no leg to stand on. He was exhausted and stiff, a result of a mixture of too little sleep and the positions he'd been in while sleeping, or at least that was the reason according to Jack's running commentary. It was nice though, in a strange way, having Jack scold him like his mother used to.

It wasn't something he ever wanted Owen to witness; he had enough material as it was.

"You have no food." Jack reappeared in the bedroom doorway, five minutes after he ordered Ianto to strip and get into bed, clearly baffled that Ianto had no food in the house.

"I haven't been home in a while." Ianto pointed out, though his voice was somewhat muffled by the pillow he had buried his face in.

Jack sighed dramatically, crossing the room to perch on the edge of the bed, "You want me to get some supplies for you?"

Ianto rolled over to face Jack, shaking his head, "No, I'll pick up breakfast on my way into work, there's no point in getting anything, I'd probably just have to throw it out when I get home after the next rift emergency to find it making a bid to become sentient."

"Or you could actually come home at night." Jack suggested in his most reasonable tone, shifting so that he could lie on his back on top of the covers.

Ianto watched him a long moment, "I could." He agreed, because it was easier and he was too tired to form any kind of coherent argument. "I'm gonna sleep now." He mumbled, shifting to get more comfortable, ignoring Jack's soft laughter. He'd talk to Jack in the morning.

Maybe.

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Ianto jerked awake, breathing heavily. Opening his eyes, he frowned. The ceiling was further away than it was meant to be, he was sure. The bed was a lot less comfortable than he remembered as well.

He rolled onto his side, seeking a more comfortable position and came face to face with the bottom of his bed. That, he thought somewhat fuzzily, explained a lot.

He lay there for a while, waiting for his breathing to settle and the dull ache to recede somewhat before he made a move to start getting ready for work. It felt like his body was just one big bruise, but then considering the fact that he had hardwood flooring in his bedroom, which he rolled off his bed onto, it wasn't all that big a surprise.

lanto showered quickly, shaving without really looking in the mirror, before stumbling back out into his bedroom, finally thinking to check the clock. If he was dressed and ready to leave the flat in the next ten minutes, he would only be slightly late, not that anyone else would notice. He was always in at least an hour before the others; so that he could get the morning rounds done before the real workday began.

The phone in the Tourist Office started to ring as he stepped through the door, which was never a good thing. "Hello...." His typical greeting was cut off by the now familiar voice of Cathy Swanson, one of the few Cardiff detectives who didn't want to shove Jack off the next building she saw him stood on the roof of; though that had more to do with the fact that Jack owed her than anything else.

"We've got a body here that I think is more up you lot's street than it is ours." She didn't waste any time with pleasantries, "We'll keep the scene for you, it's on Blackweir Terrace you can't miss it, just get here as soon as you can."

She hung up without waiting for an answer, leaving lanto to glare at the handset for a moment before dialling the extension for Jack's office, "Jack, Detective Swanson called, she thinks she's got a case for us." Jack picked up after three rings, which meant he was probably sat at his desk attempting to stare down his inbox.

"What sort of a case?"

"They've got a body, on Blackweir Terrace that's all the details she gave." lanto provided, reaching into his pocket for his mobile, it would be easier to just sent a text to the others.

"Ok, I'll get the SUV and pick up the others on my way, let them know I'm coming. See what you can find in the police files and send anything relevant on to us."

"Will do." lanto hung up as he hit send on his mobile, shutting the office up as he made his way through into the hidden passage. It didn't look like he was going to get much of a chance to open up to the tourists today.

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Something was killing people; something was ripping people to shreds and then dumping the bodies in places where some unsuspecting member of the public was bound to stumble across the remains.

And whatever was responsible, there was no doubt in Jack's mind that it wasn't human. Which meant that it was his team's job to hunt it down and stop it. For good.

"Oh God," Gwen winced, covering her mouth with one hand and turning away from the gruesome sight, swallowing hard against her raising nausea. "That's horrible."

Tosh gave the other woman a mildly sympathetic look before returning her attention to her scanner, frowning at the results that it was showing.

“Yeah,” Owen agreed idly as he crouched down beside the remains and using a stick to prod them, turning a few of the pieces over, inspecting the wounds. He frowned, lowering his hand, “Under different circumstances I’d say a Weevil did this, only last I checked they weren’t exactly the exhibitionist type.”

“Maybe they’re learning.” Jack commented darkly, watching the growing crowd of people gathering by the police tape though the tent entrance.

“Just what we need,” Owen muttered, “Weevils learning to behave like human serial killers.”

Gwen jerked back around to face Owen, eyes wide, “But this is the first isn’t it? You said serial killer.”

Owen shook his head, “This is the first that we’ve been let in on, according to the police files that Ianto managed to dig up, there have been three others just like this in the last month. Only up until now, they haven’t been quite as clearly staged, so they were put down as animal attacks.”

“And you think the same,” Gwen stopped, searching for the right word, “...person, is reasonable for all of them?”

Owen shrugged, “Maybe, can’t be sure until I take a proper look.”

“There’s no sign of any rift activity here and I can’t find any traces of anything alien. Not that it rules anything out, I mean I didn’t get any readings with Beth either.” Tosh shrugged helplessly, “I’ll go back to the SUV, see if I can find any sign of rift activity in relation to any of the other killings.” She left the tent quickly, unwilling to stay in such close proximity to the body for any longer than she needed to.

“I’ll send Ianto to pick up the other bodies from the morgue.” Jack added, his attention still fixed on the crowd of onlookers.

Gwen frowned at him, moving so that she could follow his gaze, “Jack?”

“It’s possible one of them did this, it wouldn’t be the first time a serial killing alien turned up at the scene of it’s crime while we were there.”

Gwen winced, exchanging a look with Owen, “Yeah but there’s no way we could tell.”

Jack grinned, “Oh but there is.”

Owen gave the other man a dirty look when he didn’t elaborate, before turning his attention to Gwen, “I’m going to need help getting this mess into a bag then into the SUV and I doubt Captain Mysterious here is going to be much help.”

Gwen winced, eyes flicking unintentionally in the direction of the body. She closed her eyes, taking a deep breath before she nodded, turning to head out of the tent, “I’ll just go get you a body bag shall I?”

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"It looks worse than the others." Tosh hung over the rails in the autopsy room, eyeing the remains laid out on the gurney, nose wrinkling as the smell reached her, mentally comparing what she was seeing to the crime scene photos she had been poring over for the past hour. She hadn't really looked at the body while they'd been at the scene, the small enclosed space making the smell of blood far too strong. She'd needed to escape the running debate between Gwen and Jack. Gwen seemed sure that these deaths weren't something that they ought to be investigating; she, like most of her old colleagues in the police, didn't think there was anything in it beyond an animal attack; the setting was just a fluke. There had also been mention of Jack's obvious restlessness over the past week or so, which in Tosh's opinion was a low blow and rather feeble argument. Jack rarely felt the need to create cases for them just to occupy his self.

"Nah, it's just fresher." Owen looked up at her from his position lent over the gurney measuring and photographing the wounds, "You find anything else out while we were gone?"

"Nothing concrete."

He straightened, eyebrows raised, "Nothing concrete."

Tosh hesitated, glancing back at the main area of the hub where Jack and Gwen were still arguing in hushed tones, before answering Owen, "I think there may have been two more victims, one three months ago, the other two months before that, but there's no way to be sure, the families had the bodies cremated."

Owen sighed, "Of course they did."

"Anything new?" Jack appeared in the doorway, arms crossed over his chest, Gwen just a few steps behind, her expression closed. She'd clearly lost this round of the argument, but had every intention of winning the next.

"Well, I can tell you that there's no way a Weevil did this, the bite marks are the wrong shape, more like a dog bite, but still not quite right. The claw marks are different as well, so we can rule out a Weevil causing any of these injuries. Nothing humanoid either, or at least nothing I know of." Owen supplied, "Other than that, I can't tell you much else, I'll check out the other bodies when Ianto gets back with them, take casts of the wounds, see if the same beastie's responsible for all the deaths."

Jack nodded, "Sounds good. Tosh?"

"Another two possible cases, but nothing that we could confirm, as I was telling Owen, the bodies were cremated, but if we assume that we're looking at the same killer, it's been here at least six months."

"There's nothing to connect the victims," Gwen added, "so it seems like it picks it's victims at random. That and whoever this is seems to be killing them somewhere else and then dumping them in selected spots."

"What about CCTV? Did anything get caught on camera?" Jack prompted, looking at Tosh.

She shook her head, “Nothing, whoever, whatever is doing this seems to know where the cameras are and manages to avoid them. All of the bodies are dumped in places that aren’t covered by CCTV. I can try a broader search, but considering how close together the sites are, there could be a lot of people who were caught on camera at all of the locations.”

“At least it’ll give us somewhere to start.” Jack commented and Tosh nodded her head in understanding.

“It’ll take me a few hours, but I should be able to get you images of everyone who was in the vicinity of all of the locations around the time’s that the police think the bodies may have been dumped.”

“Thanks.” Jack offered her a grateful smile as she brushed past him to get back to her workstation.

“Owen, Ianto should be back with those other bodies soon. Let me know as soon as you can confirm which of them were killed by the same thing as this guy. Gwen, check the police’s findings, if there’s a connection between these people, be it the last place they were seen or a favourite coffee shop, I want to know about it.”

They both nodded their understanding, turning to go back to work just as the alarms sounded, alerted them to Ianto’s return. “Perfect timing as ever Ianto, I’m in need of some of your coffee magic.”

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Once everyone who had requested a drink had been thus supplied, Ianto made his way down to the autopsy bay to offer his services to Owen.

“Anything I can do to help?” Ianto questioned as he stepped through the doorway, leaning against the railing, peering down at the body. The wounds stood out starkly against the pale flesh of the woman’s torso, the bite wounds clearly distinguishable from the claw marks.

There was something oddly familiar about those marks, tugging at some half remembered memory. He’d seen marks like that before, either on one of the many nature documentaries that he had found himself watching on his rare days off, or in one of the files in the archives. He frowned, idly running a list of animalistic aliens through his head and ticking off the defining characteristics of each. None of them fit, at least not from what he could remember, he’d have to set up a search, just to be sure.

After a moment, Owen looked up from his examination of the body, dumping the used scalpel into the sharps bin.

“I need to take moulds of all of the wounds, see if I can figure out how many killers we’re looking at and whether all of our possible victims were killed by the same people.”

Ianto mentally calculated the amount of time that would take, eyeing the wounds in question critically, “Or,” He made his way down the stairs to stand on the other side of the gurney from Owen, “I could use one of the scanners to digitally map the wounds and we could compare them that way, it would probably be quicker.” It would also make it easier to search for similar records on the archives, but Owen wouldn’t care about that, it wasn’t his job after all.

Owen stopped, staring at Ianto for a moment before he nodded, motioning with the scalpel, "Less mess too I'd guess and as you're so keen, you can just get on with that then. I'll finish up checking the coroner's findings and then I'll help you with it."

Ianto nodded before heading off to fetch the necessary equipment. Between the two of them they would probably manage to get it done a lot quicker than either of them would alone.

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"So, what've we got?" Jack looked around the table expectantly.

"There are about forty people who turned up on the CCTV at all of the locations close to the time that the police think the bodies were dumped," Tosh provided, "and no chance of cutting that number down. I'm also not too sure that any of them is actually the killer, but it's all I've got."

"Forty is a lot less people than we started with, even if they're only people of interest." Jack pointed out, understanding Tosh's frustration, before turning to Gwen, the second source of possible help, "Gwen, have you found any commonalities between the victims?"

"None, or at least nothing that applies to all of the victims. Three of them used the same café regularly, but the others didn't, two had the same hairdresser, the list goes on." Gwen waved a hand helplessly at the sheets of paper in front of her, "I haven't found anything that we could use."

"Okay, it was worth a shot." Jack reached out to squeeze her hand gently before looking to Owen.

"Same killer for all of the victims," Owen answered without preamble, bringing up the results of his and Ianto's work on the screen, "and it looks like we're looking for just the one beastie. All of the bite marks match the one set of teeth, four sets of claws though, judging from those wounds, so it could be two killers, but I'm leaning towards one killer, four sets of claws. So either something with four arms, which you'd think someone would have noticed sulking about; or something like a dog, with four legs. From the evidence on the bodies two sets of claws were used more than the others, which supports that better than four arms. There's nothing in the archives that matches the wounds either, or at least, not that either of us could find."

"So, we're looking for a dog?" Gwen ventured, frowning at the screen, her tone making it clear that she was starting to seriously question why they were even investigating the case. Ianto winced faintly, glancing towards Jack, before settling his gaze on a point towards the centre of the table. He wasn't about to get involved in this, Gwen could manage on her own this time.

"That kills its victims then carries them elsewhere to dump them were people are sure to find the bodies, without leaving a trail." Jack pointed out, giving her a warning look. They'd clearly already had this conversation, at least partially, going by the speed that Jack returned and Tosh's slightly fixed stare.

“But still, Owen’s findings back up the police’s animal attack theory.” Gwen continued, ignoring Jack, as she was wont to do in these situations, “I mean, this could just be a series of animal attacks, but with someone finding the bodies and deciding to use them for some sick joke.”

Tosh and Ianto exchanged a look, both bracing themselves for the argument they could sense coming, the tension building to the point that Ianto was sorely tempted to go fetch a knife. The argument really could go either way, considering the distant lack of evidence which would suggest one theory over the other.

“She’s got a point you know.” Owen jumped in, backing Gwen up, just as aware of the tension as the others, “Hell, it could be some sick fuck who’s using their dog to kill people for kicks and then dumping the bodies, playing with the police.”

“Yeah, maybe.” Jack allowed, the edge to his voice making it clear just how likely he considered either possibility, “But until we find some evidence to support that we are going to keep investigating, though right now, I’m not sure there’s much more we can do with what we have.”

“So, we just wait?” Tosh spoke up, concerned.

Jack sighed, his shoulders sagging slightly, “We wait and hope that either the police catch whoever’s doing this, or that they stop. If not, we hope that the next victim can give us something that leads us to the killer.”

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Ianto jolted awake, fighting against the pressure on his chest for a moment before his head cleared enough for him to realise where he was. He stilled, panting, closing his eyes as he lent back against Jack’s chest, letting the other man’s voice sooth his rattled nerves.

“Bad dream?” Jack questioned softly once Ianto had his breathing under control, shifting so that his chin was resting on Ianto’s shoulder. Ianto shuddered faintly, all too aware of the sensation of Jack breathing so close to his neck.

He nodded slightly after a moment, “Yeah.”

“Want to talk about?” Jack pressed when Ianto didn’t elaborate.

“Not really,” Ianto replied, keeping his eyes closed. All he wanted was to go back to sleep, it wasn’t like he could even really remember what the dream had been about; he just knew that it hadn’t been exactly pleasant.

“It might help.”

Ianto sighed heavily, pulling free of Jack’s arms and ignoring Jack’s slightly wounded expression. He knew that Jack was just trying to help and normally he would have either admitted what was bothering

him or simply gone back to sleep after awarding the other man a noncommittal grunt as a reply, but he just didn't feel up to it right now.

He'd hoped that Jack's presence would continue to stave off the nightmares that seemed to have taken to haunting his nights of recent, but apparently he couldn't even expect that much relief anymore and if he was only going to get a few hours sleep before the nightmares returned, he would rather do so in his own bed, where he wouldn't wake to concerned questions that he didn't have the energy to answer.

He pulled on his discarded clothes and hauled himself up out of Jack's quarters, all too aware of the weight of Jack's gaze. "Sorry Jack, I just, I want to sleep in my own bed." It was the best he could give him at the moment, though he wished it wasn't. He would like very much to be able to give Jack an answer to his questions, but he just didn't have any to give.

Not even to himself.

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He made a point of coming in early the next morning, selection of pastries in hand his best effort to make up for his behaviour the night before. Jack, infuriatingly understanding as ever, greeting him with a kiss and a string of what he considered fascinating new headlines from whatever celebrity rag he was taking refuge in that particular morning.

Ianto couldn't help but marvel at the things that Jack found fascinating, then again, he still had no idea what the time Jack came from was actually like, besides that they had a much open view on sexuality and relations than society at large did in Ianto's own.

The phone in Jack's office starting ringing just as Ianto was crossing to the coffee machine, the distinctive ring informing them that it was a redirected call from the Tourist Office. Ianto exchanged a look with Jack, dread in the pit of his stomach, there was only one reason anyone could be calling so early in the morning.

Jack ducked back into his office to pick it up, the conversation only lasting a few short moments before Jack reappeared in the doorway, pulling on his greatcoat. "That was Detective Swanson. They've found another body."

Ianto nodded his understanding, "I'll let the others know you're on the way." He hesitated for a moment before asking the obvious question, "Where is it this time?"

"On the lawn in front of the Castle."

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"Still no sign of any rift activity, or any trace of anything alien." Tosh kept her gaze fixed on her scanner, standing as far away from the body as she could in the small tent.

“And whoever this is, they’ve been moved here from the actual scene of the crime. Just like the other victims.” Jack added, waving a hand at the pristine area surrounding the body, his attention fixed on Gwen. “I think we’re beyond someone’s idea of a joke now, don’t you?”

Gwen flinched, throwing Jack an annoyed look, “This isn’t the place.”

“No, you’re right Gwen it’s not, but that doesn’t make my point any less valid.” Jack stared her down, “I need you working with me Gwen, not questioning me at every turn. I understand you’re still annoyed with me about Jonah, but you shouldn’t let that get in the way of what we’re doing now.”

Gwen stared back at him for a long moment before she nodded, gaze flickering between Tosh and Owen before dropping to fix on a point on the ground. “Sorry, I was wrong; it just seemed so different from what we normally deal with.”

Jack shrugged, his cold attitude disappearing as he grinned, “Everything we deal with is different Gwen.”

Owen glanced up at them from his position next to the body, his gloved hands hovering a scant few inches above what remained of the torso, “If you two are done,” he waited a moment before he continued, “I think it’s safe to say we’re looking at an escalation of violence here. Typical serial killer thing, doubt anyone could recreate this kind of damage with their pet, unless they starved it half to death first.”

“There aren’t all that many human serial killers who could do this either.” Jack agreed, eying the body for a long moment. “The killings are getting closer together as well. It’s been what, four days since the last one was killed?”

Gwen nodded, doing her best to inspect the scene while avoiding looking at the body, “Whoever,” she stopped, turning to meet Jack’s gaze, “whatever it is doing this, we need to find them and soon.”

Jack kept their gazes locked for a long moment before he nodded, “We need to get back to the Hub, see if this body can tell us anything the others couldn’t. Oh and Owen, run those wounds through the database again, see if they turn up any possible suspects. Tosh, I’ll need you to do your magic with the CCTV, compare those forty faces you’ve got with those of the people who show up around here during the timeframe we have for the body dump. Gwen, once Owen gets you an ID, see what you can find out about our latest victim and compare it to the others. Get Ianto to go through the CCTV, see if he can find a last known location for each of the victims. There has got to be something that connects these people, even if it’s just the last place they were seen.”

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“Ianto, we’ve got an ID on the latest victim. According to the DNA and dental records, she’s Maeve Evans, an office worker who was reported missing about six hours ago. I’m sending you her details now.” Gwen called across the Hub and seconds later the new file popped up on his screen.

“I’ve got it, thanks Gwen.” She threw him a weak smile over the top of her screen before she ducked back down, already focused on her own investigation.

Ianto eyed the details for a long moment, staring at the picture, the woman in it like a number of the other victims, looked vaguely familiar from somewhere, but he couldn’t quite remember from where. Then again, for all he knew he could have past her in the street at some point, or had a conversation with her while waiting in line somewhere.

He shook his head, dismissing the half formed sense of déjà vu, focusing instead on the task at hand.

He loaded the new photo into the programme he already had open, before setting it to work, searching the CCTV with facial recognition software for the most recent pieces of footage with those people in. It would take a few hours before it finished, during which time he could do a search of his own, using the information from Gwen’s background checks and the police interviews with the victim’s families and friends. It wouldn’t be as quick as the programme, but it gave him something to do and it helped with his own issues with the programme.

It might be the fastest way to do the task he had been set, but it wasn’t one hundred percent reliable. That plus the fact very few of the CCTV cameras had the quality required for it to work as intended made him wary of trusting the programme on its own. At least half of the results he got back would be too fuzzy to be certain of who it was in the photo, though using the information about what the victims had been wearing when last seen, he would be able to hazard a guess at which footage was relevant.

Setting the documents that he would need to the printer, he headed across the coffee machine, taking the opportunity to supply the others with the caffeine that they would doubtless be in need of, he’d make sure Owen didn’t see him though. He still felt guilty whenever he had to give the others food or drink when the other man was around. It seemed cruel to keep reminding him of the things he could no longer do.

Owen seemed to be used to it now, acting as though he didn’t notice or care, but Ianto was almost certain that it did bother him, he was just getting better at hiding it. Ianto doubted it would ever stop bothering Owen, though in the end he supposed it would just be a background, absent minded thought, when the years of being dead got to outnumber the number he’d been alive.

The rounds done and Owen still occupied with the body, Ianto returned to his computer with his own mug of tea, ignoring the strange look Jack was giving him. Gathering the small mass of papers from the printing pile Ianto shifted through them, sorting them until he had seven piles, one for each of the victims, ordered so that the details he would need for his search were on top.

He started with the first victim and then worked through each of the subsequent victims, ignoring his building headache. None of the victims were near any of their favourite haunts close enough to the time they’d been reported missing for that to have where they were taken from. They weren’t close to their homes either.

lanto frowned, tapping a finger against his desk idly, frustrated despite the fact that none of this was really a surprise to him. They'd pretty much already reached that conclusion. He also really wanted a coffee. He sighed, rubbing his temple with one hand before glancing at the clock and realising that it had been almost two hours since he'd taken the last round of drinks around. That, he thought, would explain that.

Checking the programme, which reported back to him told him it should be done within the next fifteen minutes, lanto headed back to the coffee machine, automatically making the others their preferred drinks. He frowned, eying the tray he had prepared, staring at Owen's old mug for a long moment before sighed and poring the drink down the sink. Almost three months now and he still found himself forgetting.

On a whim he grabbed a bag of biscuits from the cupboard, dumping them onto a plate and adding them to the tray before he made his way around the desks again, making sure not to stray towards the autopsy bay. Tosh offered him a strained smile and a nod of thanks as she took her drink and placing it on her desk before claiming three of the biscuits, barely taking her eyes from the screen.

Gwen snagged her coffee off the tray on her way back from the autopsy bay, studiously ignoring the offered biscuits and lanto headed across to Jack's office, which was suspiciously empty of it's owner. Frowning lanto cleared a space on the desk for the mug and plate of biscuits, before turning and heading back to his work station. He frowned, suddenly aware that he was being watched but before he could turn to find out by whom, his computer beeped, alerting him to the fact that the programme had finished, a list of the results popping up in the middle of his screen.

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Jack summoned them all to the boardroom an hour later, where he was waiting, a collection of folders on the table in front of him. "Okay, what have you got, or should I say, does anyone have anything new? Or better yet, does anyone have anything helpful?"

They all exchanged looks, none of them really wanting to go first. It was all too clear that none of them had turned up anything that added anything significant to what they already knew. Not that they didn't all understand how Jack was feeling. Someone was killing people, brutally and they needed to be stopped.

However, to do that, they needed a way to find said person, that and considering how obviously dangerous a person they seemed to be dealing with, they needed information that would mean that they could stop them without losing their own lives in the process.

"Well, I can confirm that it's the same killer and the database doesn't have any ideas besides 'animal', which the MO behind these killings seems to argue against." Owen threw out when the silence started to get uncomfortable, shrugging helplessly when Jack glared at him. "What, you wanted something new and that's all I've got."

"I managed to cut the number of possible suspects from the CCTV down to twenty with this last location, but that's the best I could do." Tosh supplied, motioning towards the small stack of printed photos that she'd brought with her.

"That," Jack smiled at her, "is helpful."

"There's nothing to say that any of them is the killer though." Tosh continued, "None of them are carrying anything big enough to have been holding any of the bodies and none of them have associated cars. I doubt any of them is actually the killer. Whoever it is killing these people, they know where all of the CCTV cameras are and they've been avoiding them when picking the locations for dumping the bodies, it makes sense that they'd do the same when killing and transporting them too. I'm sorry Jack; I know that's not what you wanted to hear."

Jack sighed, shaking his head, "It's ok Tosh, I was expecting as much. So far, whoever it is doing the killing, isn't letting anything slip. I do have another task for you though." He slid his own stack of folders towards her. "Those are photos of all of the people who have been at both of the crime scenes after the bodies were found."

Gwen's eyes widened, "How did you get those?"

Jack grinned, leaning back in his chair, "I have my ways."

Ianto rolled his eyes at the same time as Owen snorted. Jack Harkness was incorrigible. He was also annoying, especially when he felt the need to show the world how mysterious he could be. Not that Ianto was normally complaining.

"You mean you got the police to set up a hidden camera at each location." Ianto prompted.

Jack mock pouted playfully, but it didn't quite reach his eyes, "You just have to spoil my fun."

"Yup." Ianto replied, unmoved. "My search turned up about the same results as Tosh got, as far as I can tell, each of the victims were taken from somewhere that isn't covered by CCTV. I can give you an approximate time for when each of the victims vanished prior to turning up dead though." He slid a copy of his findings to each of the others. "Slightly more positive, all of the victims disappeared from one of three locations, so not entirely random, though if there's a pattern to it, I can't say."

"It's something though," Jack replied as he scanned the list, "and more importantly, it's somewhere for us to start."

"So what, one of us at each location tonight?" Owen questioned.

Jack nodded, "Unless anyone has a better idea?" He waited for a long moment, "No? Okay then, it's decided, Gwen, you might want to let Rhys know you aren't going to be home until late. None of the victims have vanished after two am, so we keep watch until then." He glanced at Gwen. "I'm guessing you still haven't found anything else that might connect the victims?"

She shook her head, “No, there’s nothing. Whoever it is, they’re selecting the victims at random, though,” she held up Ianto’s results, “these suggest that they’re picking people from a given set of locations.”

“Alright, Tosh and Ianto, you take the first location, Gwen and Owen the second is all yours and number three is all mine. Take a break, go eat something, I expect you all at your stations by eight tonight and don’t forget to stay in contact.”

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The first night was uneventful and Ianto was silently grateful that they had chosen his car over Tosh’s, allowing for adequate leg room throughout the six hour stakeout. He and Tosh shared a selection of take out and discussed a number of the projects that Tosh had been working on, doing their best to ignore Owen’s commentary. If they didn’t know better they might have thought that the other pair had forgotten to turn off their radios.

They failed to spot anything interesting or even vaguely suspicious, though Ianto was pretty sure that they witnessed at least one drug deal go down on the corner.

The next night was slightly more interesting; with Owen and Gwen having a number of false calls, including one especially embarrassing incident that Gwen had promised to tell them about in greater detail the next day. It had involved, or so she claimed, two men who had vanished down an alleyway with a young woman. Jack of course had started whooping and making lewd suggestions over the radio until they’d had to shut their radios off just to silence him in order to focus on the job at hand.

He and Tosh discussed the case, running over what they knew and what they needed if they were ever going to catch whoever, whatever, it was that was responsible. Tosh, as it turned out, had been reading up on serial killers and listed off the characteristics that she thought their killer was displaying, though she admitted that some of the ideas in the books she’d read didn’t quite make sense to her.

Ianto admitted that he was sure there was something familiar about the wounds, but that he had yet to find anything in the archives that matched it. She then pointed out that it might have been something from the London archives that he was remembering, reminding him that they had only managed to save a fraction of it after London fell and the majority of that was the computerised information, which was far from complete.

By the end of the six hours however, none of them saw any sign of the killer though, leaving them no closer to catching them than before. So again they called it a night and Ianto dropped Tosh off at home before heading out again himself, on foot this time, leaving his car parked up outside his flat. There was no way that he was going to be able to get any sleep, not with so many questions running round in his head.

At least this way he might find some answers, or better yet, the killer, though if he did that he doubted he would be coming out of the meeting in one piece.

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If his suspicions were correct, this could easily be the stupidest thing he'd ever done, no matter how noble his reasoning might be. Not to mention the amount of righteous anger Jack would be directing at him when he found out.

'I did it to protect you' didn't sit especially well with a man who couldn't die and seemed to be blind to the fact that 'protect' had several meanings, including a number that didn't relate to a person's physical condition.

Ianto sighed faintly, rubbing wearily at his temple. He'd been searching for what felt like hours, looking for something, some sign that he was going insane. That the half remembered glimpses he'd been getting since he'd seen that first body meant something.

There was nothing though. He'd failed to find anything that the combined work of the police and the rest of the Torchwood team had missed. Nothing to prove or disprove the half formed ideas in his head, nothing to help him figure out just what was happening to him.

He paused, leaning against a nearby wall, tilting his head back to look at the sky. The city lights prevented him from seeing the stars with any kind of clarity, but he knew they were there, just hidden. He had needed to find something so badly, but there was nothing to find, leaving him just as lost as before, if not more so.

He had so many questions and absolutely no answers.

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Early morning the next day and already Gwen and Owen were out, investigating an anomalous reading out near Bute Park, leaving Tosh to continue her work on her project while Ianto filled out the month's required paperwork, following the typical discussions with Jack as to whether they really needed that much bleach or whether they could find a cheaper way to feed their resident Weevils.

"There's been another body found." Tosh appeared in the door to Jack's office, where he and Ianto were deep in discussion over the small collection of paperwork that constituted the month's budget, her eyes wide with worry. "According to the police, it looks like our killer has struck again."

Jack straightened, expression grim, "Where did they find the body this time?"

"On the back steps of the central library." Tosh provided, "One of the staff stumbled across it first thing this morning."

"Yup, sounds like our new friend." Jack confirmed, his tone leaving no doubt as to how he felt about this latest development and making Ianto flinch faintly. "Call Gwen and Owen, get them to meet us there. This guy is really starting to get on my nerves."

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“So, what we’re saying is, we’ve got eight victims, with a killer who is not only getting more daring when it comes to dumping the bodies, but who is also getting more violent with every kill. But we have no way of tracking down and stopping them from killing again.” Jack summarised, arms crossed over his chest as he eyed his team, lined up as they were on the other side of his desk.

“That’s pretty much it, yeah.” Owen agreed, “Though, I think it should be pointed out that isn’t exactly our fault, this guy isn’t leaving us a single thing to work with.”

“If we could find the place were he’s killing, we might stand more of a chance.” Tosh reasoned. They had done everything they could with the evidence they had, all they could really do otherwise was start taking stabs in the dark.

“How do you suggest we go about doing that?” Jack questioned, without anger.

“We could take the locations of the body dumps and work out a range and search any empty buildings in the area. We might not find anything, but it would be something.” She shrugged helplessly.

Jack glanced at each of them in turn before nodding, straightening, “Ok, so we do that, hope we find something. I’ll call Detective Swanson, see if she knows anything we don’t. Ianto, take another look at the CCTV around the areas we were watching, make sure we didn’t miss anything. Get on it.”

Gwen hung back, waiting until the others had left the room before speaking, “Jack, there’s something else.”

Jack frowned, “Something you don’t want the others to know?”

Gwen sighed nodding, shoulders slumping slightly, “It might be better if they don’t know, yes.”

Jack raised an eyebrow, considering her a long moment before he nodded, “Okay.”

“This new victim, Amy Markham? She was last seen at two thirty am by her friends.”

Jack stiffened, “They’re certain?”

Gwen nodded, eyes wide, “They have CCTV outside their flat.”

Jack released a long breath, gaze drifting to where the other three were, gathered around Tosh’s work station. “Which means she was taken after we finished surveillance.”

Gwen nodded, chewing on her bottom lip, “I’m not suggesting that one of us did it, it’s just...”

“Somehow, the killer knows that we’re running surveillance until a certain point, based upon what we could find out about the last victims. Which means it’s either one of us, or whoever this is knows a hell of a lot more about us than they have any right to.” Jack finished for her, almost absently, staring off into space for a while before focusing his attention on her, “Ok, we keep that information between just the two of us. I want you to do a search of the CCTV in the areas we’ve been watching, see if Amy was

near any of them at around the time she disappeared. Tell Ianto that I want him focusing on the people who have been seen at the crime scenes instead.”

She nodded her understanding, starting to leave the room only for him to pull her up short, a hand on her arm.

“We’re going to figure this out Gwen, preferably before anyone else dies, I promise.” His tone left no room for doubt.

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Ianto groaned, curling in on himself a little as he returned to consciousness, wincing as his muscles complained at the movement, the ever present ache of the last few weeks increasing in intensity. He squeezed his eyes shut tighter against the pain, breathing heavily as he waited for it to fade a little. The last thing he remembered was getting back to his flat after the night’s stake out and more or less collapsing into bed.

A long few minutes later the pain finally receded enough for him to risk uncurling, rolling onto his back and opening his eyes, looking around to gauge just how much trouble he was in. From the smell alone he knew it wasn’t good.

“Oh God.” Ianto breathed, shooting upright, ignorant to the pain as he tried to process exactly what it was that he was seeing.

The wall closest to him was covered in blood, some of it still fresh, dripping down the wall and onto the floor, which was saturated in red. The blood pool was a good few millimetres deep, its surface slightly tacky, suggesting that it had been a while since it had been formed.

A few meters away lay the remains of a person, or rather two people Ianto corrected himself as he counted three arms, or at least that was what they resembled the most, a fourth laying a small distance away, splatter on the wall telling him more than he wanted to know.

He swallowed thickly, squeezing his eyes shut and focusing on breathing through his mouth, only to gag as he realised that he could taste the blood. He turned away from the macabre scene, stumbling across the rough concrete floor, blanking out the awareness of the dampness beneath his feet, until he reached the opposite wall and leaning against it heavily, pressing his forehead against the cool surface. Throwing up was not an option.

Finally managing to get the nausea under control, he stepped back from the wall, careful to keep his back to the bodies, taking stock of his own situation. He was shirtless, the sight of the dried blood smeared across his chest raising bile to the back of his throat again, but he forced himself to focus on the task that he’d set himself. He was not going to think about whom the blood belonged to.

He wasn't injured, or at least not that he could see. He was still wearing his jeans, which he vaguely remembered changing into the night before, after he'd gotten back to his flat. His mobile, wallet and keys however, were suspiciously absent, as were his shoes and socks.

He glanced over his shoulder hesitantly, spotting the neat line of footprints leading from the pool of blood to where he now stood. He shuddered, turning quickly back around to face the wall. He needed to get out of here, find help. Which meant calling Jack, because he was fairly sure what assumptions the police would jump to if they found him in his current state.

He froze, brain suddenly making the connection that he had been trying to avoid ever since he'd caught his first glimpse of those bodies. They bore far too much resemblance to the bodies that Owen had been examining just a few days ago for it to be a coincidence.

lanto turned slowly, staring at the bodies for a long moment, desperately trying to remember how he'd gotten here, but the last thing he remembered was stumbling into his bedroom in the early hours of the morning. He didn't kill these people, he couldn't have.

He wouldn't have.

He sagged against the wall, remembering the sense of déjà vu he had been suffering over the photographs of the crime scenes and when he'd been helping Owen scan the wounds, dread building in his stomach. He should be able to remember doing something like this.

He closed his eyes, lowering his head, taking deep breaths to fight back the panic, getting it under control before straightening and starting his search for a way out, all thoughts of contacting Jack having fled his mind.

If he couldn't be sure himself that he wasn't the one doing this, then there was no way he'd be able to convince the others. His instincts were screaming for him to just run and keep running until he was as far away from this place as he could get.

Maybe then he would be able to think and figure out just what was happening to him.

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Jack stood in the middle of the warehouse, taking it all in, brain struggling to equate what he was seeing, what he had already seen, with what the police had told him. Owen and Tosh were working on confirming those findings while Gwen talked to the witnesses.

Almost the whole of one wall of the warehouse was coated in blood, blood that according to Owen's tests was the blood of all the victims of their killer, all mixed together. It wasn't just the wall though, the floor on that side was absolutely saturated with blood, the blood from the most recent victims was tacky; a sign of how much time had passed since their deaths.

The bodies had already been moved, Owen taking them back to the Hub with him, leaving Jack behind to examine the scene himself, trying to find something, anything, that the police had missed. He could

still see were they had lain though, the tell tale blood pools reminding him that this had been the most brutal killing yet, the bodies torn to shreds, to the point that they still weren't sure exactly how many victims there now were.

That wasn't what was bothering him though.

It was the bloody footprints, that lead across the room and then out of the door, down and down the street before the person who had left them had vanished into the sewers.

There was just the one set, from around the time that these most recent killings occurred. When the other victims had been killed, they'd been more careful, though the voids in the blood splatter proved that not even this killer could hid every trace of themselves.

The only problem was, according to the nearby CCTV cameras, cameras that had been avoided every other time that the killer had struck, had captured with startling clarity, just who it was that had left those footprints.

lanto.

Jack closed his eyes, turning his back on the blood and reaching up to rub at his eyes wearily. He'd known that lanto had been acting strangely recently, but he had never thought that it would lead to this. For as long as he'd known the man he'd had nightmares, something that wasn't surprising when you considered what he seen, what he'd lived through. He'd thought it was just those same old nightmares rearing their heads again, he hadn't considered that maybe it was something else.

He'd never thought that it could be this.

lanto wasn't a killer, he'd killed yes, but only when he'd had to, when he'd had no other choice.

Or maybe he had, but Jack just hadn't realised, it wouldn't be the first time he'd failed to notice something like this either. lanto had already proved himself to be a damn good con artist, managing to sneak a Cyberwoman into their midst without any of them noticing. Hell, he'd been looking after her for over three months by the time they found out that she even existed.

Jack sighed, starting towards the door. He hoped, he sincerely, truly wished, that there was an explanation for this other than the one he was currently being presented with.

lanto Jones was the killer that they had been having so much difficulty catching.

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"Jack, did you find anything?" Tosh was on her feet as soon as she heard the cog door opening, crossing to meet Jack as he came up the stairs, her expression hopeful.

Jack sighed, shaking his head, "I wish I had."

Gwen and Owen joined them from the autopsy bay as they moved towards Jack's office, with Gwen unable to meet anyone's gaze. It felt almost like she's brought this on them with her comments the other day. She couldn't believe that Ianto was responsible for the killings, as brutal and cruel as they had all been.

Or at least, she found it hard to believe that the whole time, while they'd been hunting for the killer, coming up empty, time after time, Ianto hadn't come clean. Hadn't even given them a clue.

Only, he had, hadn't he? It was Ianto who had worked out that all of the victims had been taken from one of three locations. She swallowed hard, horrified by the thought.

If he really had killed all those people, if what the evidence suggested was true, then he must have been laughing at them. Watching as over and over again they failed to come up with anything that could help them catch him. While he just kept on killing.

"Owen?" Jack's voice broke her out of her thoughts and she had to struggle not to run out of the room. She was not going to let this get to her, not yet, not until they knew for certain.

"Blood matches for all of the victims, including the earliest two." Owen confirmed, "But none of the blood in the sample is Ianto's, I checked. There's blood from another female donor though, either another victim we haven't found or the killer, though from the amount suggested, I'm leaning towards victim, even though it has some rather unusual proteins in it. Not alien though, at least I don't think so. There's no matching DNA on record anywhere though, so I can't ID her, whoever she is"

"So we might have another victim, that or we have an extremely resilient female killer." Jack threw back, eyebrows raised.

Owen nodded. "That sounds about right. You might also been interested to know that there was tracing of bleach, like someone had cleaned up something, possibly the killer cleaning up any traces of their presence, but leaving the remnants of their victims."

"Makes sense, they've been avoiding the CCTV so it's not a surprise that they cleaned up any evidence connecting them to the crime scene as well." Jack provided, clearly thinking out loud.

Gwen shifted her weight, uneasily, wondering if it was better to keep quiet or whether she should just say what she was thinking. Looking at Jack, she thought he would know what she was thinking even if she didn't say it out loud, so she might as well just get it over with. "What about Ianto?"

They all feel silent for a moment before Tosh spoke, "I looked at the CCTV, it's definitely Ianto in the footage, but there's none of him arriving, or of the any of the victims. Just him leaving." She pre-empted each of the obvious questions, "The footage is real, there's none of the hallmarks of it having been faked. Prior to those frames of film, the last time that Ianto was caught on camera was at half two this morning, getting home after our stake out. I couldn't find any footage of him leaving though and his car is still in his parking space."

“Is there any of him since he left the warehouse?” Jack prompted.

Tosh shook her head, “Not that I’ve found yet, but the programme will alert me as soon as it find any.”

“Okay.” Jack stopped, obviously considering what their next move should be, “We need to find him, the sooner the better. Until then, we are not going to make any assumptions.”

Gwen bit her lip, stopping herself from pointing out that Ianto was their only subject so far. There was no one else for them to track down, no other leads. They had nothing else to work from except that assumption. People only tended to flee crime scenes for one reason.

Jack held up a hand to stem any arguments, “I know what it looks like and I have to agree, all of the evidence we have is saying that Ianto is the killer. There’s only one problem. The wounds on the bodies were caused by something with claws and teeth that aren’t even vaguely human.” He paused for a moment to allow that to sink in, “Now, to me personally, that suggests that either Ianto isn’t working alone or he under the influence of something. The quickest way I can think of to find out which of those is the right one is to catch Ianto. Unless one of you has a better idea?”

They remained silent, none of them having any other suggestions.

“I thought so. Tosh, stay here, keep looking for any that might help and let us know when you find something. Gwen, Owen, we’re going into the sewers, we’ll see if we can track Ianto from the point we know he entered.”

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Ianto stumbled to a halt somewhere in Splott, breathing heavily.

Somewhere along the way he’d managed to liberate a jumper from someone’s clothes line, covering the blood smears. He’d been too busy trying to avoid any and all CCTV cameras to risk using any of the public toilets that he passed to wash off the incriminating marks.

His feet hurt; he hadn’t managed to find anything resembling shoes to cover them, so he’d been forced to continue barefoot. He was surprised that he wasn’t leaving a continuous trail of bloody footprints, but he guessed years of running around in dress shoes that really weren’t made for such strenuous activity had toughened the soles of his feet.

He closed his eyes, leaning back against the nearby wall, fighting back the urge to keep running.

He needed to work out just where he was and come up with a more rationale plan than ‘keep running until I can’t run anymore or I’ve found a good place to hide’.

He was also badly in need of food, unfortunately the lack of his wallet meant that was something he was just going to have to live without for the time being.

Ianto frowned, opening his eyes, mentally running through the past twenty four hours, trying to come up with an explanation for what had been happening.

He could remember the stake out clearly, with Tosh admitting that she and Owen were still trying to work out where they stood with each other in the face of Owen's dead status. He in turn had admitted that he wasn't completely certain how to describe his and Jack's relationship.

Afterwards he'd dropped her off at home as was becoming the routine before heading home himself. He'd parked then gone inside, stripping off the top he had been wearing, having decided when they started the stake outs that wearing a suit would make him and Tosh that little bit more conspicuous. He'd made himself a coffee from the meagre supplies he'd brought the day before when it had started to look like he would be spending more nights at home.

He'd then gone into his bedroom and that was where things started to get a little fuzzy. Something that he's previously dismissed as being because he had dropped off to sleep, now though, he examined the memory more critically. Either he'd blacked out and left his house and gone on a killing spree, which the state and situation he woke up to suggested, or, equally as likely, there had been someone else in there.

After a few minutes he gave up, unable to figure it out either way, plus he was becoming increasingly aware of how exposed his current position was. He straightened, starting to jog again, only to come up against solid resistance as he stepped out into the residential street.

"Fuck."

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"This is getting us bloody nowhere." Owen announced as they found themselves in yet another dead end sewer tunnel, "We are never going to find him this way Jack."

Jack grunted noncommittally, turning to try back to try the other fork.

"Oi, you even listening to me?" Owen yelled, ignoring Gwen's warning look. She didn't have sole rights on yelling at the boss. "This is a waste of time that we don't have."

Jack stopped abruptly, his back to Owen, silent. Gwen winced, fully capable of reading Jack's feelings.

"Come on Jack, even you have got to admit that this is getting us nowhere. We've been looking for two hours, following a non-existent trail. For all we know he could be in Bristol by now."

Jack turned, fixing Owen with a glare, "What exactly do you suggest we do then Owen? Give up?"

"Quite frankly yes, that is exactly what I think we should do." Owen answered, unperturbed by Jack's mood. "We need to head back to the Hub and consider an alternate course of action. Figure out how exactly lanto might be able to kill all those girls like that." Owen paused, lowering his voice before he continued, "We need to know what we're dealing with Jack. I for one don't like the idea of going in blind."

Jack locked gazes with Owen for a long moment before finally folding, nodding wearily as he rubbed at his temple idly; shoulders slumping. He'd been so focused on finding lanto that he hadn't fully considered what they might be walking into. "Okay."

"Okay?" Gwen echoed softly, startled, she'd been expecting more of a fight.

"Owen's right." Jack replied, motioning for her to go ahead, aiming for the last ladder that they had passed. "We need a better plan."

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Tosh joined them in the board room after they'd changed out of their sewerage splattered clothes, Jack leaving his greatcoat on the back of the chair in his office, not seeming to care that it was dripping goop.

"No new sightings, I passed on your request to the police though and they've put out the word. If someone sees him, we'll know." She lowered herself into a chair, sliding a cardboard tray of takeaway coffee onto the table. "We're going to need this if we're going to keep going."

Jack managed a weak smile of thanks, taking the offered coffee, ignoring Owen's forced sigh. He refused to feel guilty for bringing Owen back solely due to the other man's inability to digest anything. "We need a plan."

Tosh glanced at the others, feeling a little out of the loop, "A plan to do what exactly?"

Jack sighed, "A plan of action. What are we going to do when we find lanto, what possible threats might we be facing, that kind of thing." He expanded upon his earlier statement, before taking a sip of his coffee.

"Well," Gwen broached, "we haven't been able to find anything in the archives that might have caused the kinds of wounds we've been finding on the bodies, so doesn't that suggest that we're dealing with something we haven't encountered before."

"Or," Owen corrected, "something that our searches didn't turn up because we were searching for records of similar wounds, rather than creatures native to Earth that could cause the kinds of wounds we've been dealing with." He waited for the others to catch up with his line of thought, "Come on, isn't it obvious?"

He was bouncing in his chair, impatient and close to exasperated as the others remained blank, "Seriously, no one? The archives kept telling us that they were the kind of wounds cause by wolves, so logically...." He motioned with his hands, eyebrows raised.

"Wait." Jack lent forwards, staring at Owen, "are you suggesting that lanto's a werewolf?"

Owen grinned, snapping his fingers and pointing at Jack, "And finally someone catches on. That is exactly what I'm saying, well, not exactly, there's still the possibility that the killer isn't teaboy."

“But,” Gwen spoke up, spotting a rather large flaw in Owen’s concept, “none of the killings occurred around a full moon, or at least, I don’t think any of them did?”

Tosh stood, grabbing one of the laptops off the side and powering it up, “I can check that now, though surely, if it’s a werewolf, all of the killings would have had to have taken place around a full moon?”

Jack was frowning, clearly deep in thought, tapping the table in front of him idly as he considered what Owen was proposing, “Not necessarily, if we’re dealing with what is traditionally considered to be a werewolf, which by the way, is something that Torchwood has previously encountered, yes, it would depend on the full moons. On the other hand, we could be dealing with another type of shape shifter, one that isn’t reliant on moonlight or anything like that.”

“Like the Nostrovites.” Owen prompted, motioning vaguely at Gwen who glared at him, not needing the reminder, “Only a bit different, ‘cos clearly, these killings haven’t been about food or reproduction.”

The laptop in front of Tosh beeped as it returned the answer to her query and she turned the screen to show the results to the others, “The first three killing occurred during a full moon, the rest didn’t, so not a traditional werewolf.”

“Right, an almost werewolf then.” Owen amended, without losing any of his smugness. It wasn’t often that he thought of something like this before Jack, who claimed to know more about aliens than was strictly decent. “Which leads into, if Ianto is the killer he might not actually have known.”

The other three stared at him blankly for a moment, before Jack realized what Owen was getting at, “You mean it’s possible he only remembers what he does when he’s Ianto? Like split personality disorder, but with more hair?”

Owen nodded, “Though, considering the clear level of rationale thought displayed in the body dumping, it seems unlikely. I mean, you wouldn’t think the animal form would even consider doing something like that. Everything about these killings screams ‘psychotic’.”

“What are you saying?” Tosh questioned, not quite sure that she wanted to know the answer.

“I’m saying that whoever the killer is, they’re very aware of what they’re doing. It’s all thought out and planned and everything. I’m saying that I don’t honestly believe that, unless he’s a truly brilliant actor, Ianto is the killer. Someone this psychotic? We’d have noticed.” Owen replied and Tosh relaxed slightly, relieved that Owen wasn’t saying that he thought Ianto was the killer, he was saying that he didn’t think Ianto was the killer.

“There are a lot of serial killers that people have said close to the same thing about.” Gwen pointed out, knowing that none of the others would even consider playing devil’s advocate. Not with Owen being the one to outright admit that he didn’t think Ianto was capable of the level of cold calculated violence that they had seen.

“Most serial killers don’t change into animals to kill their victims.” Jack pointed out, “Though there are people who argue with me on that point.” He hesitated, considering for a moment before he continued, “Owen, you remember that blood that you couldn’t identify, with the weird proteins, how likely do you think it is that that blood belongs to a shape shifter like we’re talking about?”

Owen considered for a long moment, running the idea through in his head, before he nodded, “It’s possible and if that’s the case, if Ianto’s one of them too, I should be able to find the same proteins in his blood. The only problem left then though, is if we’re right, how exactly do we kill these things? Silver bullet to the heart?”

Jack frowned, leaning back in his seat. “The first werewolf, well it wasn’t exactly a werewolf, it was killed with an over load of moonlight, or at least, that’s what the reports I read seemed to suggest, but we’re dealing with something different here. I know that the other werewolves, the ones closer to the traditional idea of them, that Torchwood have dealt with have had a certain weakness where silver was concerned. In this case though, I don’t think we can be certain, it’s an idea though.”

“What if silver doesn’t work?” Tosh pressed, brow furrowed with concern, they couldn’t afford to go in without an alternate idea of attack.

“Everything has a limit to how much damage it can take.” Jack replied, smiling in that way that always made Gwen feel uneasy, his gaze drifting away from them, he was clearly remembering something, exactly what she didn’t really want to know. “If silver doesn’t work, we hit it with all we’ve got, aim for the head. Very few things, especially humanoid things, can survive without their head.”

“Sounds like a plan.” Owen commented, “I’ll just go run those tests, see what Ianto’s blood can tell me. Though, if it turns out he is an almost werewolf, it’s not my fault that I missed it ok? None of the records I’ve seen in the medial database suggested anything like this.”

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Part of him was fairly certain that he should be more than slightly embarrassed that he’d been over powered by someone almost a full foot shorter and a whole lot less lighter than himself, but he couldn’t seem to find the energy at that particular moment in time. It was probably even more embarrassing in the face of the fact that his assailant looked to be about twenty and was distinctly blonde.

Not that he had anything against blondes.

He allowed himself to be guided towards the waiting car, preferring the continued use of his arm over an idea of escape. She wasn’t a police officer; that much he could guess, but other than that he was coming up empty. She was strong, stronger than her slight frame suggested and she hadn’t spoken to him yet, just made her intentions clear via a series of shoves.

Ianto slid obediently into the passenger seat of the car, narrowly avoiding banging his head against the roof, relieved when she released his arm, slamming the door closed behind him before rounding the car to the driver’s side.

She remained silent until they were a few streets away from where she had accosted him, turning to eye him critically before she spoke. "I'm Meaghan."

lanto blinked, thrown, he was expecting something more like a threat of serious harm or injury if he attempted to leave the car at any point. "lanto." He replied in kind, received an odd quirk of her lips in return.

"lanto Jones, I know."

lanto frowned, staring at her, dread building in the pit of his stomach, what were the odds that this girl was the killer? Then again, seen as all of the past victims were girls, his being the next victim would be a bit of a leap, "How do you know who I am?"

She glanced sideways at him, offering him what seemed to be a reassuring smile, "I've been following your exploits for a little while now."

lanto's eyes narrowed, "You have."

She nodded, her gaze remaining fixed on the road in front of her as she negotiated a roundabout, "Yup."

lanto's frown deepened, "May I ask why?"

She shook her head faintly, "I'll explain soon, I promise, but I'd rather have that conversation somewhere a little more sensible than a moving car."

lanto sighed, recognised the statement for what it was, turning his attention to the road, "Where exactly are we going?"

"I've got a house that I've been renting, it's not far. You can eat and then I'll explain everything, but I want you do to one thing for me first," she paused, thinking, "well, two things really."

lanto raised an eyebrow, not caring that the effect would be lost on her, "What?"

"Firstly, I want you to promise you'll listen, no matter how insane what I am going to tell you might sound. Secondly, I want you to promise that you'll help me once I'm done explaining."

lanto took a moment, considering what she was asking of him before he nodded, "I'll listen, but what is it exactly that you want me to help you with? I'd like some idea before I go promising something like that."

She smiled, "I thought you might say that." She looked oddly smug about it too, which made him slightly uncomfortable. "I want you to promise that you'll help me catch the killer that you and yours have been trying to catch."

lanto froze, staring at her numbly, "What?"

Her smile widened, "You heard me."

“How do you know about that?”

“I just know these things.” She replied, seemingly unmoved by his reaction. Under different circumstances, Ianto thinks he might have liked her, but just now he’s too busy being worried, what with the possibility that one of them was a serial killer.

Ianto swallowed hard. Whoever Meaghan was, she knew a lot more than she had any right to know, but that wasn’t what worried him. What worried him was the fact that she seemed to be certain that she knew who the killer was.

Somehow, she knew what no one else did.

“Okay,” Ianto answered, after a moment, “I promise I’ll help you.”

“Good.”

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It was another ten extremely tense minutes before they reached the place that Meaghan told him she was renting and two more before she was willing to even consider starting in on her explanation. She refused to be rushed, reminding him of his grandmother. There was something about her that just screamed age, despite the fact she looked younger than Ianto himself by a good few years.

She slid a plate onto the table in front of him in the small kitchenette, the pile of sandwiches swaying. Ianto raised an eyebrow, “I’m not sure I’m going to be able to eat all of that.”

Meaghan shrugged, lowering herself into the chair opposite him sliding a mug of tea across to him before crossing her arms over her stomach. “Well, I’m not going to start talking until you do.”

Ianto sighed, giving her one last exasperated look before starting in on his pile, suddenly aware of just how hungry he was. When he looked up at her again, she was looking more than a little smug.

“And yet, you just did.” She commented, eying the empty plate, laughing softly when he glared at her.

“No offence, Meaghan, but I’d really like to hear that explanation now, please.”

She nodded, straightening in her seat, the smug expression fading, “Okay.” She considering him for a long moment, chewing on her lower lip, “You’ll have to forgive me, I’m not used to this, everyone I’ve ever known has been aware of these things since they were children. It’s not something that normally needs explaining.

“I suppose the place to start would be explaining why I’m here and how I know so much about you.”

Ianto nodded, remaining silent, not wanting to interrupt her just as she was getting going.

“I was sent here, from London, by the leaders of my pack...”

“Pack?” lanto jumped on the word, flushing when he realised that he had interrupted her mid sentence, “Sorry.”

Meaghan laughed, shaking her head, “It’s fine, I expected you to have something of that kind of reaction. Yes, my pack. I’m what you would call a werewolf, only not quite. It’s complicated and not particularly important right now.” She waved off his next question, “I was sent to track down another werewolf, who lived with my pack for a time, before he left us. Not something easily done. The problem is, this werewolf isn’t like me and my kin, he wasn’t born one of us; he was made into one of us. Against his will.”

lanto’s eyes widened as he took in the implications of what she was saying, “Someone made a werewolf?”

Meaghan nodded, “Yes, don’t ask me how it was done, just trust me when I say that it was.”

lanto frowned, making the connection between what she was saying and what she had asked him to promise her, “Are you telling me that the killer is this werewolf?”

Meaghan smiled faintly, nodding, gaze solemn, “Yes. He has become what my people call a Warg, a werewolf that kills without need and, more disturbingly, one that is killing ordinary humans just because he can.”

lanto shuddered, remembering what he had seen in the warehouse, wondering how exactly he was meant to be able to help her against that, “I don’t understand, how exactly can I help you?”

Meaghan sighed looking away, hesitating for a moment before reaching out to grip his hands in her own and meeting his gaze steadily. Just the fact that she felt the need to do so made it clear that whatever it was she was about to say, he probably wouldn’t like it, “This may be difficult for you to believe lanto, but I have reason to believe that you are like the man that I was sent to hunt.”

lanto stared at her, frozen for a moment as his brain stumbled through what she had just said. Maybe she was lying about having been sent to hunt another werewolf, maybe she had really been sent to hunt him, maybe he was the killer and didn’t know it. Maybe she was humouring him before she did whatever it was she was sent to do. lanto swallowed hard, fighting back the panic that had risen and shaking his head, pulling away from her, “I don’t...”

She squeezed his hands, subtly preventing him from pulling back and silencing him with a look, “It is more complicated than I have time to explain right now, but you and he have a great deal in common, more even than I know. My elders seemed certain that you suffered a similar fate to his. What matters is that you and you alone can help me stop him.”

lanto shook his head, freeing his hands from hers and standing, pacing the length of the small kitchen, “You can call your pack, ask for someone to come and help you. I don’t know how I can help you, I don’t even know if I believe you.” He replayed the last few weeks over in his head, the dreams, the bodies, the aches and pains, waking in the warehouse, the killer never seeming to slip up until then. Adding in what

Meaghan had told him, if she was telling the truth and he had a feeling that she was, at least partially, it looked more and more like he was the killer. Who else could have done what this killer had been doing and remain out of reach for so long? How hadn't this other man, this Warg, slipped up?

Meaghan shook her head, expression grim, "I realize that this is difficult for you and that you have doubts, about the truth of what I am saying and your own innocence. This situation has gone on for long enough and there is no one who can come to my aid. Prior to coming here this Warg severely injured a number of my kin, that is why I was forced to come alone."

Ianto frowned, pausing in his pacing, eyeing her critically. "They sent you, alone, after someone that dangerous?"

Meaghan smiled grimly, "Appearances can be deceptive."

"I dreamed about the killings." He blurted it out without really thinking, responding to some subconscious urging. He hadn't been able to even mention his dreams to Jack and here he was, outright admitting everything to a woman he'd only just met, who could be planning anything.

Meaghan's expression softened and she nodded sympathetically, "As have I."

Ianto froze staring at her, "I don't understand."

Meaghan sighed, shifting in her seat, "There is much more to what I am, to what you now are, than people think. They hear the word werewolf and they think of horror films and fantasy novels, where our kind are most often evil, under some manner of curse or at war. The stories speak of uncontrollable beasts, moon controlled shape-shifts, all manner of things that have little basis in reality.

We do not call ourselves werewolves, we call ourselves Lycanthropes, though we have called our kind by many names over the centuries. Most are born Lycanthropes, rarely there are those who become Lycanthropes, but until recently that had not happened for decades. We are all raised to understand and control our dual nature and the gifts that it brings us."

Ianto nodded faintly, lowering himself into his chair, focusing on Meaghan, needing to understand.

"All Lycanthropes are to an extent empathetic and telepathic. Our telepathy only extends to other Lycanthropes and even then only to a limited degree when we are in our human form, while our empathy extends beyond our kin. We learn from childhood to shield ourselves from others, it is one of the first lessons a Lycanthrope child is taught, before they have even shifted for the first time."

The importance of what she was saying struck Ianto as she spoke and he sagged in his chair, staring at the table in front of him, dimly aware of Meaghan standing and rounding the table to touch his arm, "The dreams, they're from him, he isn't shielding, so when I was asleep, I was seeing what he was?"

"Yes." Meaghan confirmed softly, crouching down next to him, "Initially he was projecting unconsciously making the images fragmented, but he has been learning. Now he is going out of his way to make sure that I see everything he has done, as he does it."

lanto frowned, breaking from his reverie to look at Meaghan, "Why?"

Meaghan closed her eyes for a moment, lowering her head and lanto was suddenly all too aware of the sense that had been nagging at the edge of his consciousness for months now. He reached out to it purposely, squeezing his eyes shut as a deep all encompassing feeling of regret flooded over him for a moment before it was deliberately blocked off.

"I have tried to stop him, so many times, but I have failed on every occasion." Meaghan admitted, though lanto was suddenly all the more aware of the things that she wasn't saying. "I barely escaped from him with my life when I last confronted him. He is so much stronger than me now."

"I still don't know how I can help, even if I am like you now, I haven't..." lanto shook his head helplessly even as he stumbled over the word, still in denial, "I don't know how."

Meaghan squeezed his arm, "When the time comes, you'll know."

lanto laughed despite himself, "That line is hardly original and not even vaguely helpful."

Meaghan grinned, "Neither of those facts makes it any less true. Trust me, lanto Jones, there is a part of you that knows and given the right circumstances, that part of you will take over."

"If you say so," lanto allowed, doubtfully before falling silent, trying to process everything that she had told him.

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"The tests confirm it, lanto's an almost werewolf." Owen motioned towards the screens behind him, where the graphical representations of his findings were being displayed, "Weird proteins present, though they're a little different from the ones in the girl's blood."

"How different is a little different?" Jack questioned, ignoring the screens in favour of Owen.

Owen shrugged, considering his answer for a long moment before he spoke, "Closest comparison I can think of? It's like lanto's got a different strain of the same thing this girl has."

"Meaning?" Jack pressed.

"Not all that much really, could mean that Teaboy's a slightly different type of whatever she is, or that he was infected from a separate source, but I don't know enough about what I'm looking at to say either way." Owen supplied, toying with the controller in his hands, his frustration clear.

"So, what do we do?" Tosh questioned, unsure of how exactly they were going to use this new information to help them.

Jack sighed, shaking his head, ignoring Gwen's pointed look, "We've got no way to track lanto down," Jack paused, glancing at Owen for confirmation of this before he continued, "or to even know if he's

involved in the killings without more solid evidence. Right now, besides the ongoing CCTV searches, we're going to have to do this the old fashioned way."

"The old fashioned way?" Gwen pressed, frowning, not sure if she liked what he seemed to be suggesting.

"Yup." Jack agreed, waiting for a moment before answering her fully, "We go out in the SUV, cruise around looking for any sign of Ianto or this girl or our possible third person, listen out for anything on the police scanners, route the CCTV search results through to the inbuilt computer."

"So, basically, just carry on doing what we were doing before." Gwen summarised.

Jack nodded, "It sucks, but it's all we can do."

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Stepping out of the house, Ianto waited patiently for Meaghan to lock up, shifting from foot to foot idly, he was feeling restless again and that was just so wrong on so many levels.

He'd been running for hours, with nothing on his feet and nothing in his stomach. His legs should be killing him, screaming their discontent at being used again so soon, but they weren't. It felt like he had energy to spare, something in the back of his mind urging to run, no, not run, something else...

Ianto reacted instinctively as a grey blur shot past him, aimed at Meaghan, striking out at her would be assailant. Blood spurted into the air, even as he followed his punch through with a sharp kick, aiming for the creature's stomach, barely having to think about it.

What could only be a howl rent the air, echoing faintly, as the beast turned towards Ianto, abandoning its intended target and focusing on what it clearly perceived to be the more immediate threat. Ianto dropped back automatically, rolling to one side, shielding his throat with one arm.

Ianto flinched as a weight landed heavily on his stomach, bringing his legs up to kick up, trying to dislodge his attacker even as the jaws drew perilously close to his shoulder, just drawing blood.

A blow from the side threw his attacker clear and Ianto rolled in the opposite direction, hauling himself upright, wary of a renewed attack, but none came.

Ianto frowned, swaying searching the front garden and surrounding street for any sign of their attacker as Meaghan limped back to him from the pavement, blood running down the left side of her face, her gaze fixed on his right hand.

Ianto's frown deepened and he looked down, stilling as he saw what had drawn Meaghan's attention. His hand wasn't a hand anymore, so much as a paw, blood from their attacker colouring the claws. Ianto watched numbly, as his hand became a hand again, his awareness seeming to encourage the return to the form he was familiar with. He flexed his hand idly, cradling it in his left hand as he looked up at Meaghan, heart beating hard in his chest.

“Believe me now?” Meaghan questioned, lips quirking.

Ianto swallowed hard, nodding faintly. “Can’t not can I?”

Meaghan shrugged, “You’d be stretching the reasonable amount of denial a bit far, but you wouldn’t be the first.”

Ianto laughed sharply, shaking his head, rubbing his hand idly, “Was that him then?”

Meaghan nodded, turning serious, “That was him. He must have been following you. Only problem is, now that we’ve driven him off, he’ll be off planning something much worse.”

And Ianto could guess exactly what that would involve.

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“There’s nothing here.” Owen slammed his door shut, glowering at the empty street. There was no sign that anything untoward had happened here ever, let alone in the recent past, the street as empty and abandoned as the buildings lining it.

Tosh moved around the SUV to stand beside him, attention focused on the screen of her hand held as she scanned the area and called up CCTV footage.

“It doesn’t make sense.” Gwen shook her head, turning to look back the way they’d come, searching for any sign of the horror that had been reported to them by the police, but there wasn’t any. No telltale blood pools, no body slumped on the pavement, no one fleeing the scene guiltily. There was nothing.

Jack moved away from them, further down the street, Gwen trailing along behind, her fingers tapped the edge of her gun idly as she scanned the street and the few remaining un-boarded windows.

Just as they reached the mid point of the street, several feet away from the SUV and the others, a figure stepped out from a doorway, his face barely visible in the dim light given off by the closest two lampposts. There was no doubt that it wasn’t Ianto, the figure was short and stocky and moving with a slight limp.

Jack moved closer, slowing as it became clear that the figure was a man, olive skin oddly pallid in the strange half light of the street lamps. Jack stopped a few yards away from the man, offering him his most charming smile, “Hey there, I don’t suppose you could help us out?” Jack paused for a second before continuing, unconcerned at the man’s lack of response. “There was a report of an incident you see and we were sent out to investigate, you wouldn’t know anything about that would you?”

The man smiled, seemingly entertained by what Jack had said, shaking his head faintly as he looked over Jack’s shoulder at Tosh and Owen for a long moment before returning his attention to Jack, smile still in place.

He smelt strange, Gwen realised, in those moments waiting for the man to say something, as the light breeze blew the smell towards her; like damp and alleyways and blood. Gwen gasped as recognition

flooded through her, eyes widening as she stumbled back, away, fumbling for her gun even as the man lunged forwards, his shape blurring for a moment before his bulk hit Jack in the chest.

Gwen flinched as warm blood hit her cheek, stumbling backwards, keeping her attention on the shape moving towards her. He looked like one of those movie werewolves, not a man anymore but not a wolf either, though he seemed to be edging closer to the animal even as she watched. Amber eyes glared up at her, full of such anger that her breath caught in her throat for a moment, the bitter awareness of just how little help her gun was likely to be against that rushing to the forefront of her mind.

She brought her gun up anyway, remembering what Jack had said before and aiming for the head, keeping her aim steady through sheer force of will. She kept moving back, putting distance between her and it, firing into its head as she goes and breaking into a run as her gun clicks empty and the beast launching itself at her, snarling and unmoved by the damage wrought by her bullets.

Arms wrap around her legs bringing her down. She screams, kicking out at it as the claws dig into her legs, fighting desperately to get free even as the weight suddenly vanishes, leaving her free to haul herself upright and run, not looking back until she reaches the SUV and Owen's hand is on her shoulder as he hands her another clip for her gun.

Snarls and grunts eminent from a shifting mass of fur a few dozen metres away, the grey furred wolf fighting viciously and somewhat desperately against the larger bulk of a big black cat, the occasional gout of blood spraying out across the tarmac as one of the adversaries caught a blow from the other.

Gwen, Tosh and Owen watched, guns lowered, awed by the strength and ferocity of the blows being exchanged. The wolf attempted to savage its attacker but too often was unable to get close enough to the cat to cause any real damage. The cat on the other hand while avoiding the wolf's teeth with some ease, was using its longer legs to get effect, claws raking across the wolf's flanks.

Behind the fighting beasts Jack stumbled to his feet, one hand rubbing his neck as he watched the fight, making the conscious decision not to attempt to edge past the combatants and to his team.

The wolf eventually folded, giving in to the numerous injuries he had sustained, collapsing into a heap on the tarmac, the leopard looming over it, daring it to try to run.

Jack raised his gun, as Owen and Gwen did the same, aiming at the leopard, unsure of what was to come. While the leopard had attacked the wolf, there was no way to know if the leopard was actually on their side or not. Tosh was in the meantime hunting in the SUV for any sedatives or other means of containment that they might have that would work on either of the two beasts.

"Wait!" A young woman jogged out into the road, holding her hands up in the air, making it clear that she was unarmed, though under the circumstances, that seemed to be a relative statement.

Gwen's gun wavered, but neither of the men made any move to lower their guns, instead shifting their stances slightly to give them a clear sight of all possible threats.

“Why?” Gwen questioned, eyeing the woman suspiciously, remembering the unknown female blood sample that Owen had used to compare to Ianto’s.

“He isn’t a threat to you, neither am I.” The woman replied, edging closer so that she was between Jack and the Leopard, blocking his shot.

Jack glared at the woman, making a point of shifting his aim so as to hit the centre of her chest, “Why should we trust you?”

The woman shrugged, seemingly unbothered by his threat, “I doubt that there is anything I can say to that which would actually convince you to trust me, I can however, be of help to you.”

Jack raised an eyebrow, “Can you now.”

“I can explain what has been happening and I can help you deal with your prisoner.”

“Prisoners.” Owen corrected.

The woman shrugged, “As you say. It would best to move quickly, he will not be incapacitated long. We will accompany you willingly.” She motioned to herself and the Leopard, which nodded slightly, clearly in agreement.

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It took both Jack and Owen to carry the unconscious wolf from the SUV to the cells, the leopard following willingly, Gwen trailing a few feet behind, gun trained on the big cat’s head. Once both creatures were shored away in the cells to either side of Janet, they headed back upstairs to where Tosh was waiting for them in the board room with their new guest, live footage from the cells already up on the screens.

Jack rounded the table, squaring off against the short blonde woman, “Okay, spill.”

Meaghan smiled, pushing her chair back away from the table and turning to face Jack, watching as his team gathered at his back. “My name is Meaghan, I was sent by the leaders of my pack to track your murderer,” Meaghan motioned towards the footage of the werewolf’s cell. “He was affiliated with my pack for a time, we attempted to aid his transition.”

“Transition?” Jack prompted, crossing his arms over his stomach.

Meaghan nodded, “He wasn’t born one of us, he became one of us through no fault of his own.”

“One of us,” Owen echoed, scowling down at her as he shifted closer, leaning on the table, “you’re a werewolf.”

Meaghan smiled, clearly amused by Owen’s attitude, “I had thought that much was obvious.”

Owen’s jaw clenched, “So why exactly should we trust you?”

Meaghan shrugged, unmoved, "It is your choice whether you trust me or not, however, you should be aware, that if I wished, I could walk right out of here and there would be nothing that you could do to stop me." She watched them for a long moment, before adding, "That was not meant as a threat, merely a statement of fact."

"I believe you." Jack supplied before Owen could react, meeting her gaze steadily. "I'm guessing your boy there didn't take the news that he's a monster now so well."

Meaghan's eyebrow twitched but she showed no other sign of being bothered by Jack's accusation, "It is not a situation we have ever come across before and like you he was biased towards believing us to be monsters."

"So he couldn't deal and went crazy?" Gwen questioned, uncertain.

Meaghan shook her head, "He seemed to come to terms with his situation for a time, but then as we learned more about how he had become like us, he began to act strangely."

"Meaning?" Owen pressed, obviously finding it hard to see what kind of behaviour a werewolf would see as 'strange'.

Meaghan hesitated for a moment, before focusing her attention on Jack, clearly identifying him as their leader, "Ben worked for the Torchwood Institute in London, he was one of the few to survive the slaughter at Canary Wharf. We, my kin and I, have come to believe that something was done to him, by your people while he worked there and that is how he came to become one of us. Or at least, something close to us."

"Torchwood did this?" Gwen's focus shifted instantly to Jack, while Tosh and Owen exchanged a look, each remembering the list of dubious actions carried out by Torchwood One. It wasn't so much of a stretch for them to believe that they might have done something like this; Gwen, on the other hand, hadn't ever had to deal with One.

"It's possible." Jack allowed, not meeting her gaze, his attention still fixed on Meaghan, "You seem to know a lot about us."

Meaghan shrugged, "It has been a matter of survival for us Captain. There was a time when Torchwood would have exterminated us without a second thought. Anything that they didn't understand as a threat and therefore needed to be destroyed, no questions asked, no regrets."

Jack's eyebrows rose, "And yet here you are."

Meaghan smiled, real emotional warmth stealing into her eyes, "You aren't London."

Jack smiled, understanding perfectly what she wasn't saying. He snagged a chair with one hand, sitting down directly in front of Meaghan, "No, we aren't."

Meaghan nodded, reaching into a pocket in her jacket and pulling out a memory stick, holding it out to Tosh, "This is all of the information we were able to recover from London's systems, prior to its fall."

Tosh took the device and silently collected one of the laptops that were deliberately kept outside of the Torchwood network.

Owen shook his head, thrown by the sudden change in her demeanour, "Why share it with us?"

Meaghan's smile widened a touch as she shrugged vaguely, "There seems to be a need for it."

"Ianto." Jack supplied when she failed to explain further, making Meaghan laugh.

"Yes." Meaghan agreed, "Ianto." Her gaze drifted to the monitors displaying the two prisoners, nodding to the one to the left, "I think he would appreciate some clothing."

Gwen glanced at the monitor, turning pink, awkward and unsure of just how to react. Jack stared at the screen for a long moment before smiling fondly despite himself, recognising Ianto's discomfort. He stood after a moment ignoring the look that Owen threw him

"I think you may be right. I'll be back with Ianto in a few minutes. Keep an eye on our guest."

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Ianto dressed all too aware of Jack's gaze following his every move and how ungainly his own body felt to him.

It was weird how he had been so comfortable in his alternate form, as Meaghan had referred to it when talking him through the change, but be so uncomfortable now that he was himself again. It took him at least twice the time to dress that it normally would have done, but Jack waited patiently, remaining silent until Ianto was done.

During the walk up to the boardroom Ianto found himself thinking of everything he stood to lose, or rather, everything he might have already lost. He'd made more than one mistake during the course of the last week, but running from the warehouse had probably been the biggest. The one he was most likely to pay for.

As he preceded Jack into the room Ianto took in the room. Gwen was sat on the far side of the table, as far from Meaghan as she could get while still keeping the other woman in view. It was all too clear that Gwen wasn't sure if she could trust Meaghan and the look she gave Ianto was wary. Owen seemed to be mentally planning the tests he wanted to run on his new patient, while Tosh was focused on the laptop on the table in front her, eyes wide as she read the screen.

Ianto took the seat next to Meaghan, trying to ignore the weight of his colleagues' gazes but all too aware that he would deserve whatever he got.

Jack rounded the table, settling himself carefully into the chair directly opposite Ianto, staring at him for a long moment before he spoke, "You lied to us."

Ianto shook his head, "No, I didn't, I had no idea, about any of this."

Owen looked doubtful, "You didn't know you were a Lycanthrope."

Ianto winced, "Technically, I think being a Leopard makes me something else." Jack snorted and Ianto blushes faintly, "I honestly had no idea."

"I know you're a fast learner Ianto, but not even you're a fast enough learner to manage what you did tonight." Jack said, warningly.

Ianto shrugged somewhat helplessly, "I was acting on instinct, its pure luck I didn't come out of the fight worse off."

"Actually," Tosh spoke up, looking up from the computer screen, "Ianto may be telling the truth."

Jack glanced at Meaghan before turning to Tosh, "What have you found?"

Tosh glanced at Ianto, offering him a quick smile, before answering Jack, "There isn't much, just some research notes from someone at Torchwood One, there's no name attached to them. It seems they did some tests, which suggested that all, Lycanthropes, can instinctively shift, provided they're under some form of emotional duress."

"We weren't able to retrieve much." Meaghan agreed, "From what we could tell much of the research wasn't completely approved."

Jack nodded thoughtfully, "It was probably more of a case of plausible deniability and the less information they kept on the network the better. This project, if it was intended to do what I think it was, is exactly the type of project that Yvonne would have approved."

Meaghan's expression turned sour and she nodded, "She was a dangerous woman, for many reasons, not least her arrogance."

Gwen spoke up, "This doesn't help us figure out who killed those women." She glanced at Ianto offering him a weakly apologetic smile before turning to Jack, expression set, "That's the more important question right now I think."

Jack hesitated for a moment before nodding, "You're right, we can figure out everything else once we're sure there aren't going to be anymore killings."

"Ben," Meaghan nodded towards CCTV feed still being displayed on the screen, "is the one you have been searching for."

"And we should just believe you on that should we?" Gwen demanded, eyes narrowed, "When we recovered some of your blood from the scene."

Meaghan eyed Gwen for a moment before she replied, gauging what the other woman's reaction might be, "I was injured attempting to stop him. I confronted him in his den, the place where he took those girls to kill them."

"You failed." Jack observed.

Meaghan nodded grimly, "Yes and I will bear the guilt of that for much of my life."

"No offence love," Owen joined the conversation, "but your word doesn't exactly count as solid evidence of your innocence."

"No, it doesn't." Meaghan agreed, "But it is all I have to give."

"We haven't ruled Ianto out either." Gwen added, without looking at Ianto, "We know he was at the crime scene as well."

Ianto flinched, gaze dropping to the table, "I didn't kill those women."

"If that's true, why did you run?" Gwen demanded.

Ianto swallowed hard, raised his head to meet her gaze, "Because I didn't know for certain that I didn't kill them. Because I knew what it would look like if anyone found me there."

Gwen's eyes widened and she looked away, blushing. Silence fell for a moment before Jack spoke.

"What changed?"

Ianto shook his head, "Nothing, I just, I couldn't have done that."

Jack's expression hardened, "Couldn't you?"

Ianto flinched, eyes widening with shock even though he knew that Jack was playing with him, testing him, it still hurt. "I *wouldn't tend it*." Ianto hesitated for a moment before pressing on, "But if you don't believe me, why don't you use the mind probe on me."

"Ianto!" Tosh gasped, eyes wide, even as Gwen and Owen both flinched. None of them had especially good memories of that particular piece of technology, even if it had never been used on them personally.

"It wouldn't kill me." Ianto made it a statement, ignoring the part of his brain that was screaming at him, reminding him that he had no way to know that.

Jack hesitated for a moment before nodding sharply, "Okay, if that's what you want."

~*~*~*~*~*~

Ianto hesitated for a moment before sitting down in the chair, wincing as he remembered what he'd done the last time. It was different, in an odd way, being in the same position as Beth had been, but

lacking any real defenders. He watched silently as Owen fastened the restraints, before settling the head piece of the mind probe onto Ianto's head.

This time they had all decided that this was the best option and Meaghan seemed certain enough that there wouldn't be any lasting damage. Ianto closed his eyes for a moment, gathering himself, before opening them again and meeting Jack's gaze, nodding to signal that he was ready. He wasn't too sure if he could trust his voice not to betray him.

Meaghan, squeezed his hand gently before stepping away and taking the chair that Jack had pointed her to. It was in clear view of everyone in the room and left her with only one easy exit.

Jack looked to Tosh and Owen, silently prompting them. They both nodded, turning to focus on the screens in front of them, as Gwen moved to stand in front of Ianto, offering a weak version of her most reassuring smile.

"Alright, this is going to hurt a little." Jack warned and Ianto laughed faintly despite himself.

"A little bit."

Jack's expression remained unchanged, a fact that Ianto found oddly reassuring. "Just focus on answering the questions."

Ianto nodded unnecessarily, swallowing hard, "Right."

Jack nodded to Tosh and she started up the probe. Ianto flinched, the pain just a little stronger than he had expected, but not unbearable. Yet.

"Ianto, what happened to Ruth Morgan?"

Ianto shook his head, "I don't know."

Tosh typed something, the pain increased.

"Ruth Morgan, twenty five years old, red hair, brown eyes, she was in the warehouse." Jack elaborated, "What happened to her Ianto?"

"I don't know."

"Ruth Morgan, you killed her."

Ianto had a flash of a red haired girl, screaming, blood on her neck and... "Stop, God stop."

"You killed her."

"No!" Ianto yelled even as he saw her die in the fragmented film that was running through his head, "I didn't kill her."

"We know you killed her."

lanto shook his head, tugging on the restraints as the pain intensified, “No, he killed her.”

“You killed her lanto, no one else.”

lanto shook his head, “He showed me, it was him. I wasn’t there.”

“So how did he show you?”

“I was asleep, I saw it happen, in my dreams.” lanto shuddered, drawing in a shuddering breath as another series of images, all from his dreams, came to vividly to life. “All of them, I saw them dying in my dreams.”

“How did you see them in your dreams lanto?”

lanto heard a woman’s voice in his head, one that was strangely familiar, giving a report. “He showed me.”

“How did he show you?”

The subjects all show signs of telepathy, though it only seems to extend to each other. They don’t seem to be able to hear any of our thoughts. It explains how the Lycanthropes we captured were able to communicate with one another while in their alternate forms. lanto shuddered, suddenly able to picture the woman’s face. “Doctor Hamilton, she did this to us.”

We’ve only lost two this time, which is a distinct improvement on last time. Initially there doesn’t seem to be any difference in reactions to the various strains, they are all displaying the same behaviour and new abilities, though some of them seem to be coping better than others. lanto flinched, fighting harder against the restraints, “Oh God.”

“lanto, who’s Doctor Hamilton?”

lanto shook his head, panting as the pain increased, echoing the memories flooding his mind, “Director Hartman’s head of research.” He somehow managed to force out the answer, against the flood of memories.

“Torchwood London?”

lanto gripped the arms of the chair, faintly aware that something wasn’t quite right, “God, it hurts. They were experimenting with DNA, they wanted to find a way to make people better. Please, stop, I don’t...” lanto trailed off, gasping as the pain spiked to intolerable levels, unable to process anything for a long moment before he blacked out.

~*~*~*~*~

“Jesus.” Owen deserted his desk as soon as Tosh shut off the probe, hurrying across the short distance between himself and lanto, removing the head piece and restraints quickly before easing lanto out of the chair and onto the floor. He rolled lanto onto his side and into the recovery position.

“Is he ok?” Gwen questioned, hovering a few feet away, eyes wide with shock.

“He’s alive.” Owen replied, his tone of voice making it clear that wasn’t quite sure if that qualified as alright. Jack reappeared from the Medical Bay with a handful of glaze and a bowl of water, which he handed to the doctor before turning to Meaghan.

“What was that?”

She shook her head, “He was in pain, his body reacted to defend itself.”

“Tried to you mean.” Owen corrected as he wiped red from Ianto’s face and arms, frowning as his ministrations revealed perfect unmarked skin, “Bloody hell.”

“We heal fast.” Meaghan provided, receiving a dirty look for her trouble.

“But, Ianto’s been injured before, he never healed this fast.” Tosh argued, kneeling down next to Owen to press a finger to Ianto’s wrist were there should have been a deep wound from struggling against the restraints.

“We heal fast once we have shifted completely for the first time.” Meaghan elaborated, sounding uncharacteristically startled.

“You thought he’d shifted before.” Jack ventured and Meaghan nodded, gaze fixed on Ianto’s still form.

“But he healed just as slowly as the rest of us, well, most of us.” Owen agreed, throwing Jack a look at the last. “Which means until a few hours ago, Teaboy really had no idea what those bastards at Torchwood One did to him.”

“Not anymore.” Jack pointed out solemnly, his expression pained as he looked down at Ianto’s still body.

~*~*~*~*~

It was three hours before Ianto woke, groggy and with the mother of all headaches, but he insisted on joining the others in the boardroom and telling them what he had remembered. Owen folded after Meaghan calmly pointed out, for the fifth time, that Ianto would recover quickly; whether he rested or not.

Ianto winced, rubbing his forehead, shaking his head faintly, “Every so often, people used to go missing. We were always told that they had been reassigned, or that they had retired, but most people knew that they were just feeding us a line.”

Gwen stared at Ianto, horrified, “You never checked up on them?”

Ianto sighed, looking up at her wearily, “Anyone who looked into it tended to be the next to go.”

Gwen flinched, looking away, catching on to what Ianto hadn’t said.

“Some of them came back.” Ianto continued, dropping his gaze back to his hands, “Most were a little distant, or had new habits that they didn’t before, but they seemed fine, for the most part and it didn’t seem...” he trailed off for a moment, considering his next words, “*wiseendital* to ask too many questions, especially after what happened to Alison.”

“Alison?” Jack’s eyebrows rose and he lent closer to Ianto.

Ianto nodded, “She had the desk across from me, she went missing for a few months, on holiday, or at least that’s what our boss told us. When she came back she seemed fine, a bit distracted, but fine.” Ianto hesitated, swallowing hard and closing his eyes for a moment before he continued, “Until Daisy started asking her questions about the holiday. She was fine to start with, she’d answer most of them and the answers made sense, but the more Daisy pressed...” Ianto shook his head, hands clenching into fists, “She just broke.”

Silence reigned for a long moment, as they others waited for Ianto to elaborate, but he didn’t. He just sat there, staring at his hands, jaw clenched.

“So you all stopped asking.” Tosh’s voice was soft as she reached out to clasp Ianto’s hands gently, understanding.

Ianto nodded, looking up to offer Tosh a faint smile of gratitude, squeezing her hand, “Torchwood London was a completely different world, there were whole departments that didn’t even know what Torchwood really did and not everyone who did know could deal with it. More people left through mental breakdowns than ever went missing.

“That’s how we rationalised what we did. We said that what happened to Alison was just her not being able to cope with the reality of Torchwood anymore. We knew that we were lying to ourselves, but we didn’t have any other choice.” Ianto stopped, looking up at Jack, “No one leaves Torchwood in one piece and we all knew what would happen if we even thought about questioning how things were done.” Ianto could still remember how it had felt, walking past an old work colleague in the street who didn’t even recognise him; who he had barely recognised himself. Torchwood One hadn’t had Retcon, but they hadn’t needed it.

The others remained silent for a moment, each lost in their own thoughts, before Jack broached the question that they had been avoiding since Ianto had regained consciousness. “Do you remember what happened to you?”

“I always have, really.” Ianto replied, pulling away from Tosh, “I’ve seen bits and pieces in my dreams ever since, but I thought it was just a nightmare.”

“Can’t say I blame you mate.” Owen commented, remembering what Ianto had told them while they’d been using the mind probe on him.

“Ianto.” Jack prompted, ignoring Gwen’s frown of disapproval. They needed more information.

lanto met Jack's gaze for a long moment before nodding and looking away, focusing on a point on the table in front of him, "I've been dreaming about it on and off since Lisa...died.

"I got a summons, a few weeks before the battle, telling me that I was needed in one of the lower floor conference rooms. There were seven of us, I remember seeing Ben, he worked in the same section of Lisa, once we were all in the room the doors sealed and they piped some kind of sedative in.

"After that everything's vague, I remember being in pain, hearing voices discussing experiments and results. They must have captured some Lycanthropes at some point, because they seemed to know how we should have been reacting. Director Hartman was there a few times, but mostly it was Doctor Hamilton and her assistants. I saw her a few times, but I wasn't conscious very often, I think they must have kept us sedated.

"The next clear thing I remember is waking up, tied to a gurney, alone in a room. It was midway through the battle, they sent one of the nurses to release me. I think they wanted to see if we could do something that they couldn't, or maybe they just decided it would be the best way to make sure no one found out about what they'd done to us."

lanto stopped, rubbing his thumbs together idly, mentally bracing himself before continuing, "I think I died, or at least I should have died, about six times before I finally found Lisa. It was all so impossible and Lisa needed me..." He shook his head, not knowing what else to say.

"You lost three weeks of your life and you just...dismissed it?" Gwen breathed eyes wide.

"Lots of people do it." Owen interrupted, "They live through something stressful and they lock the memories away somewhere in their heads and get on with their lives as though nothing ever happened." He stopped after a moment, head tilted to one side, "It almost comes back to haunt them in the end though." He admitted.

"Yeah." lanto agreed, ruefully, ignoring the look Gwen threw him. He wasn't about to talk to open up to her anymore than he already had.

"So Ben and the others all got released at the same time as you, though only the pair of you survived the battle in the end, or at least, that we know of. There were twenty seven survivors." Jack concluded.

"From what my kin could determine, of the survivors only lanto and Ben were part of the experiments." Meaghan provided, "We tracked Ben down within a few days, but lanto had left London before we could catch him." She offered him an apologetic look. "We rarely venture outside of our territory and we weren't able to find out where you had gone."

lanto smiled weakly back, "Sorry."

Meaghan laughed, shaking her head, "You had other things on your mind I believe." She turned solemn after a moment, "I think you may be better off for not having been found, we did not do very well with Ben."

Ianto shook his head, "You can't blame yourself for what happened, now that I remember more about what happened to us, I think he's been headed down this road for a while. They weren't especially gentle."

Tosh reached out, squeezing Ianto's hand gently, reassuring him. Ianto turned, offering her a weak smile, grateful for her silent support. It was nice to know that things weren't as bad as he had dreaded they would be.

"So what do we do with him?" Owen asked.

"You don't do anything." Meaghan's tone left little room for argument, "My kin will deal with him."

Jack frowned, "Torchwood made him what he is, it's our responsibility to make sure he never does anything like this again."

Meaghan shook her head, "Yvonne Hartman's Torchwood set him on the path to becoming what he is and my Kin failed him to an even greater degree. You bear no responsibility for his actions. I will take him."

Jack straightened in his chair, eyes narrowed, "We have the facilities to make sure he never gets loose again, if we let you take him, how can we be sure that he won't get out again?"

"Your facilities would not hold him for long Captain, not once he is fully recovered from the beatings the young one served him." Meaghan pointed out; ignoring the face Ianto made at the nickname she had chosen for him, "Now that we know better, we will be able to keep him contained for as long as necessary."

"Until he dies you mean." Ianto met Meaghan's gaze. She nodded and Ianto could feel how much it pained her to admit the truth. "I'm sorry Meaghan."

She smiled fondly at him, shaking her head, "Don't be young one."

~*~*~*~*~

Ianto stood a short distance away from the entrance to the Tourist Information Centre façade, staring out at the bay, taking a moment to enjoy the fresh air and to process recent revelations, before he would have to join the others to see Meaghan and her prisoner off.

Initially, he'd been too busy with Lisa, getting her to safety, finding a way into Torchwood Three, secreting Lisa and the equipment needed to keep her alive into the Hub. There hadn't really been any time to think about anything but her. He'd just about managed to do the jobs expected of him by Jack and the others, careful not to make them suspicious, while retaining his focus on Lisa and what she needed.

Those months straight after the Battle of Canary Wharf had been all about Lisa and making sure she survived it. He'd never considered himself, or the events he remembered, or thought he did.

He hadn't even questioned the two weeks missing from his memory.

After Lisa, or rather, the thing that had once been Lisa, died, he'd turned his focus to dealing with how he felt about that. He'd grieved and done his best to move on, to continue to function. It'd been months before he'd actually managed that though, living in a haze and doing his job to the best of his ability because it was the only thing he had left.

Once he'd been actually living again, he'd gone out of way to not think about what had happened. Avoiding anything to do with the Battle, pushing those memories to the back of his mind. The one time he'd thought about those odd glimpses of something, he'd dismissed them as something his mind had created to help him deal with what he had seen and experienced.

It had made sense at the time, or at least, that was what he told himself.

Apparently he found it far easier to lie to himself than deal with the truth.

lanto sighed, rubbing his face warily. It had been a long few days, what with all the work that had been required by their investigation into the murders, followed by waking up in the warehouse and everything that had followed that. Discovering that he'd been missing a whole part of himself being the most wearying of all.

He had so much to deal with, so much to try and process. He also badly needed to learn how to live with and control his new 'gifts' as Meaghan referred to them and then there was everyone else.

Jack would be the easiest and the hardest to determine, whereas Tosh and Owen would probably both just take it their stride, once they'd run out of questions and tests to run. Gwen on the other hand would probably be spending a lot of time watching him when she didn't think he was looking, searching for anything new, different or strange, then, eventually, she'd calm down and relax. It would always be there between them, just as Jack's immortality sat between him and almost everyone else, but she'd be happy, comfortable with it and that was what mattered most.

~*~*~*~*~

"lanto Jones," Meaghan smiled up at him, dark eyes meeting pale, "I should thank you for helping me."

lanto raised an eyebrow, "Should?"

Meaghan's smile widened, showing teeth, "You have my thanks." She glanced sideways, clearly amused by Jack's disgruntled looming, "I hope we meet again, under better circumstances."

lanto smiled, "I hope so too." He hesitated for a moment, before asking the question that had been in the forefront of his mind since she had announced her intention to leave as soon as possible, "Will someone be coming to help me...get used to my situation?"

Meaghan shook her head regretfully, "My kin would not be of much aid to you, there are many differences between my kind and yours and any help we gave you would only hinder you in ways that

you have yet to discover. You still have much to learn, not only about your new...situation," she smiled as she said it, eyes glittering with amusement, "but also about the society of those who are now your kin. For one thing, Leopards and Wolves do not typically socialise."

Ianto winced, ignoring the amused look that he received from Jack, "I'll try and remember that, though I don't suppose you know of any Leopards nearby who would be able to help me?"

Meaghan shook her head again, apologetically, "I have heard rumours, but I don't know anything for certain. It has been a long time since our kind have been able to advertise our presence, even to one another. If there are any close by, they will find you, just as my pack found Ben, hopefully they will do a much better job with you than we did with him."

"Ianto isn't going to be another Ben." Jack made it a statement, reaching out to grip Ianto's shoulder, squeezing gently, reassuring.

Meaghan smiled, looking from one to the other of them, "No, he isn't." She agreed, nodding to Jack.

Ianto blushed faintly, Meaghan's approval of his and Jack's relationship clear, even without her projecting it, "Hopefully they'll find me soon."

Meaghan laughed faintly, ignoring the baffled looks she received from Gwen and Owen, "They should, recent events should have made you very visible to them." The last seemed more of an after thought than it should have been.

Meaghan glanced back at her car and the still figure in the rear, before turned back to the team, "I had best get going."

Jack nodded, holding out a hand, "It's been a pleasure."

Meaghan smiled lazily, shaking his hand, "It has been interesting."

Jack laughed, grinning, "You're welcome to visit anything, just call first next time."

Meaghan nodded, mock contritely, before stepping forward to hug Ianto, standing on tiptoe to kiss his cheek, ignoring his surprise, "Good luck little one."

She stepping back she nodded to the others before rounding the car and climbing into the driver's seat.

Something was killing people; something was ripping people to shreds and then dumping the bodies in places where some unsuspecting member of the public was bound to stumble across the remains.

And whatever was responsible, there was no doubt in Jack's mind that it wasn't human. Which meant that it was his team's job to hunt it down and stop it. For good.

Even if the killer turns out to be one of their own.

Featuring Captain Jack Harkness as played by John Barrowman with Gwen Cooper, Owen Harper, Toshiko Sato and Ianto Jones as played by Eve Myles, Burn Gorman, Naoki Mori and Gareth David-Lloyd, in the hit series created by Russell T Davies for BBC Television

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