

THE
DOCTOR WHO
PROJECT

**THE LEGEND OF THE
GREEN MAN**



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Chapter One – Old London Town

Fred Mason walked his beat along the Strand, each step trod with pride. He had only recently become a policeman, one of the Peelers as they were normally called by the people of London, and he took pride in the duty that he performed. This pride manifested itself in the way that he lovingly took care of his uniform and the way that he carried himself.

It was approaching midday and consequently the time designated for his customary stop at Mrs Maple's Tea Shop for refreshment. It was part of his daily routine now, and Mrs Maple always ensured that he was taken care of. A sandwich and a cup of tea would be waiting for him on the stroke of noon, hopefully accompanied by the ever lovely company of Betty Maple herself.

As Fred entered the tea shop, a strange oscillating wheezing sound started to come from one of the side streets. As quickly as it started it had finished, and instead of the side street being empty as before, there was now a large blue box. The door to the box opened and a man emerged dressed in a black jacket, grey trousers and with a black top hat placed on his short black hair. In his hand he carried a walking stick, which seemed more for affectation than actual use. Whilst the blue box looked completely out of place in its surroundings, the gentleman seemed to blend in perfectly.

The distant sound of Big Ben announced the arrival of the hour. Whilst taking in his surroundings, the gentleman looked at his pocket watch and then turned back to the blue box.

"Are you ready yet, Silver?" the Doctor enquired rather impatiently.

"Ready Doctor," she said, stepping out of the TARDIS wearing a blue and white blouse with a white full length skirt, with her normally long jet black hair bunched up in a matching bonnet.

"You look wonderful, Silver – the picture of a perfect Regency lady," said the Doctor, admiring his companion's outfit.

"I look like a doll, more like it: all trussed up like a turkey before Thanksgiving."

"That is beside the point, Silver, and you know it. We are in Regency London and it is important that we do not stand out."

"If you say so, Doctor."

After quickly ensuring that the TARDIS door was locked, the Doctor offered Silver his elbow and they exited the side street.

"Now Silver, I am going to go and visit my friend John Martin and then I will be dining at my club. I should be back here by 11 o'clock at the latest. Have you got your key in case you want to get into the TARDIS?"

"Yes, Doctor," she said, indicating the silver chain around her neck.

"Excellent. Now, I would recommend that you start your trip with Covent Garden Market, which is just over there, and then decide where you want to go from there. You have your money?"

"Yes, Doctor. I wish you would stop fussing like a mother hen and trust me."

"Just making sure, Silver. Right, see you at eleven o'clock then," said the Doctor striding off up the Strand to find himself a Hackney cab and leaving Silver standing alone in a strange town, hundred of years before she was born.

After seeing the Doctor disappear in his cab, Silver took in her immediate surroundings. She had seen a lot since she had first joined the Doctor in the TARDIS, but this was the first time that he had ever left her solely to her own devices. He must have had faith in her, she reasoned, that she could cope and take care of herself. She was determined not to prove the Doctor wrong in his faith.

Having composed herself and brought her anxieties under control, Silver set off on her journey into London and the unknown.

* * *

It was not long before the Doctor arrived in Mayfair. He paid the cabbie and arranged to be collected later on that evening, before setting up the stairs to the main door. Announcing his arrival with the bell, he looked around the tree-lined residential square whilst waiting for the door to be answered, and, as if to prove that it was indeed a well-run house, he did not have to wait long until it was opened to reveal the presence of a person who could only be Martin's manservant.

"Can I help you, sir?"

"You're not Jenkins!" exclaimed the Doctor, who had evidently been expecting a completely different person.

"I am Stevens, sir. I am Mr Martin's new valet."

"That would explain it then," said the Doctor, proffering his card "I would be grateful if you would announce me to your master."

"Doctor Smith," replied Stevens after quickly glancing at the card. "If you could come in and wait in the library, I shall inform the Master of your arrival."

Following Stevens into the house, the Doctor examined the decor. It had been a couple of years since he had last visited his friend, Earth time, although it had been rather longer for him. The Doctor surrendered his coat, hat, and cane to Stevens, before being escorted into the library.

The Doctor had always thought that, for an artist, John Martin had an extensive library. But the Doctor knew that John was not only an accomplished painter but also one of the sharpest thinkers of his time, even if he kept it well hidden from those around him.

Studying the shelves for recent additions to the book collection, the Doctor did not hear the library doors open and his host enter.

"Doctor, how good to..." John started to say before stopping mid-sentence as his guest turned to face him. "Again?"

"I am afraid so: several times, actually."

"Very distinguished, Doctor," said John after giving the Doctor the once over, "but I am forgetting my manners. Please have a seat and I will get Stevens to prepare us a light lunch"

John indicated a seat which the Doctor took, while signalling via the bell cord that they would be requiring refreshments. Taking a seat opposite his old friend, he contemplated how different he looked compared to when they had last met. But the difference was not just physical; it was also in his manner. The Doctor seemed more relaxed and at ease with himself. No longer looking like he had the cares of the universe on his shoulders, the Doctor seemed to have discovered an inner peace.

"So, Doctor: how as the universe been treating you?" enquired John, knowing that he had an afternoon of entertainment and bewilderment ahead of him.

* * *

The horse and trap moved slowly through the Royal Park, whilst Rachael Silverstein looked absently at the passing scenery. The young lady was more preoccupied with her own problems to take in anything that surrounded her. Her main concern was her father, and how different he had become since her mother died over a year ago. He had always been a

loving and attentive father, ensuring that the family came first. But that had been then, and the young lady attempted to keep back her emotions as she thought of happier times.

Now, she was lucky if she saw her father at all. Yes, business at Westminster kept him busy as it always had. However, instead of coming home he now spent his time at his club. At first she had stayed up until he came in, usually too drunk to be able to get himself to bed. Then he stopped coming home at all. Days would go by without there being any sign of him, and when he did finally appear there would be no excuse or apologies for the concern caused. Instead, he would lock himself in his study until it was time to leave the house again.

Then, last night, she had broken into her father's study. After what she had seen and read, she knew that her world would never be the same again. The truth behind what had been keeping her father occupied was now revealed to her, and there was no way that the knowledge she now had could ever be put back into the box. She would always have this knowledge, and all she could hope for was that she could find a way to deal with it.

* * *

Silver had bored quickly of Covent Garden. She usually enjoyed wandering around markets and getting lost within them. This was how she had spent her free time back home in Connecticut. Unfortunately, Covent Garden was not like the markets that she had known; it was too alien to her. Wandering through the stalls had only served to remind her that she was a long way from home, separated by time and space from the familiarity of the things she knew.

Considering the itinerary that she had worked on with the Doctor prior to their arrival, she decided that she would pay a visit to St James' Park sooner than originally planned. Walking through the park, she knew that she had made the right decision. The flora and fauna assaulted her senses and she allowed herself to relax and rebalance her psyche, becoming attuned to nature and letting her issues drift away from her. Lost in nature, she walked along the banks of the lake oblivious to everything that was going on around her, a tranquil calm enveloping her.

Unfortunately, a large bang shattered this calm. Turning to see where it had come from, she faced a driverless horse and trap bearing down upon her. With only seconds to spare, Silver threw herself out of harm's way and the horse and trap sped past her.

Looking up from the muddy patch of the lakeside embankment, Silver saw a young lady screaming from the back of the runaway trap and knew instantly what she needed to do. Getting quickly to her feet, she set off after the trap, thankful that she had not injured herself. Putting all the knowledge that she had gained from gym class back in high school, it was not long before she caught up with the trap. She threw herself into the driver's seat, grabbing hold of the loose reins and pulling hard on them. Thankfully, the horse responded to her control and the horse came to a halt.

She turned to comfort the still screaming woman and saw the prone figure of the dead driver sprawled across the floor of the trap. It was no wonder that the lady was screaming considering the state of the body. Silver averted her eyes quickly from the body and looked on the face of the young lady. She could not believe what she saw before her, shock replacing the initial recognition. The lady was her aunt.

* * *

The Doctor had forgotten how long it had been since he had been able to relax and unwind in the company of an old friend. He had spent the last hour or so regaling John with his most recent adventures – his encounter with the librarian of Serapea, and his life or death game with the Sidhe. John was always the most attentive listener, but he was more than aware of where John’s interests lay and the extra attention he paid during the account of the Sidhe affair. He may well have been an artist and one of the greatest minds of his generation, but he was also an occultist.

“So, the Sidhe are now banished from our plane of existence then, Doctor?”

“For now... until they find another way to breach the barrier between our existence and theirs.”

“Thank the Lords that the Angels have you on their side,” John almost chanted whilst carrying out a small ritual of thanks.

“Which brings us to the real reason why I am here, does it not?”

“It would be correct to say that my use of the contact device that you left me last time was not purely for social reasons”

“As I thought when I received the telegram. So, what is the problem?”

John stood up and made his way across to the bookcase, and brought a selection of papers to the main table. He spread out a map of the world, securing the edges with metal objects that were scattered around. The remaining papers were fanned out so that the contents could be easily scanned. John gestured for the Doctor to come over and join him.

The Doctor studied the map in detail, noting the location of the shaded areas and cross-referencing with the key that had been written in the bottom right corner. Every now and again he picked up one of the pieces of papers, studied the contents, and then referred back to the map. After a couple of minutes the Doctor turned to John, the playful look in his eyes was replaced with steely concern.

“You are sure this is correct?” the Doctor asked, gesturing to the papers on the table.

“I have referenced the information against several sources where possible. I think that my conclusions are as accurate as they can be at the present moment of time.”

“Then we have a problem and you were right to contact me.”

* * *

Chapter Two – Relative Dimension

A crowd quickly formed round the trap. Some of them came to offer assistance but most of them came simply to gawp. Rachael was becoming more and more agitated due to the enclosed atmosphere that the crowd was creating and Silver knew that her “aunt” would never calm down in this environment. Turning to the crowd, she shocked several of the genteel men by barking orders. Whilst one of them was sent off to get the police, and another to get some alternative transport, a third gentleman helped her to get Rachael away from the crowd.

She looked up at the gentleman who had assisted her with moving Rachael, and tried her best to give him the reassuring smile that the Doctor would have given in this sort of situation.

“Thank you Sir. Could you keep the crowd away so that we can give her some air?”

“Considering it done, my lady,” he replied, moving away to disperse the people who were milling around.

Satisfied that everything was under control, she turned to the lady, who reminded her of her “aunt”. Keeping eye contact, she took the lady’s hand in hers and slowly started to stroke it.

“Hi, my name’s Silver. Are you okay?”

“The... The... The...”

“It’s okay. Just concentrate on my voice and try to put everything else out of your mind.” She continued to keep the lady’s focus and maintained a soft but determined voice. She had seen the Doctor do this thing many times in the past and she only hoped that she was doing it correctly.

Stroking the lady’s hand, she studied her face. Closer inspection made it obvious that the lady in front of her was not her aunt, but the overall impression was still the same. It was easy to see how she could have thought that she was her aunt. After all, the eyes and bone structure was just too close.

After a few minutes the lady had noticeably relaxed and had gained some form of composure. Her breathing was more under control and the hysteria that had totally gripped her seemed to be easing.

“What’s your name?” enquired Silver, hoping that she would now be able to get some answers.

“Ms Rachael Silverstein of Kensington,” she replied, obviously still shocked but more calm than before.

The name struck Silver at the core of her very being. “Silverstein?”

“Yes, Silverstein. Is there a problem?”

Silver’s mind raced. Whilst her knowledge of her heritage was limited she did know that her family had come from England. She looked deep into Rachael Silverstein’s eyes and she knew instantly that what she thought was true: she was in the presence of one of her relatives.

* * *

Less than an hour after the incident in the park, the two ladies had arrived at the Silverstein town house. Rachael escorted Silver to the guest bedroom, and arranged for a bath to be drawn. Leaving her to soak and clean herself, Rachael ensured some replacement clothes were laid out and that a light lunch would be ready for them.

Relaxing in the bath, Silver reflected on what had just happened to her. Whilst she did not have any concrete proof, she was certain that Rachael was somehow related to her. It was not just the physical features but also the way that she carried herself. Letting her mind drift she could almost see Rachael as her aunt.

If correct she knew she would have to watch what she did and said. The Doctor had been very emphatic when he delivered what she had come to call the TARDIS 101 lectures; the web of time was fragile and you had to be careful not to change history.

“But have I done so already?” she mused, as she walked into the bedroom to get dressed. The events in the park troubled her and she was left with more questions than answers. Hopefully Rachael would be able to provide her with some of the answers. She also hoped that the web of time had not already become damaged by her becoming involved in Rachael’s life.

She changed into the new clothes left for her and looked in the mirror. The skirt and blouse were of a similar design and pattern to the clothes that she had picked out of the TARDIS wardrobe earlier that day, even down to the colouring. She smiled and turned to the door. Obviously the Doctor and Rachael must shop at the same stores.

* * *

Leaving the second floor bedroom, she became aware of raised voices in the main hallway. Quietly moving towards the banister, she overheard Rachael pleading.

“Please stay,” she said to someone out of Silver’s view. “I need you.”

“Don’t be silly girl,” a rather well-spoken yet irritated male voice replied. “You are more than safe here and I have important business to take care of in the city.”

The man moved past where Rachael was standing and left the house, slamming the front door behind him. She could hear Rachael’s quiet sobs and started to make her way as fast as she safely could down the stairs. She arrived in the hallway to find Rachael slumped on an ornate sofa, her head in her hands.

She moved over to where Rachael was and sat down beside her, putting her arm around Rachael’s shoulder.

“Who was that man?” she asked, trying to keep her voice firm yet soft.

“That was my father,” sobbed Rachael whilst slowly looking up at her new friend.

“Is everything okay?”

“Yes... no. I’m not sure anymore.”

Looking deep into Rachael’s eyes she sensed that there was something that Rachael really wanted to get off her chest. What she knew for certain was that the hallway was not the best place to get the information out of her.

“Let’s get you near a fire and have that bite to eat,” she said as she helped Rachael to her feet.

Rachael led her into the first room off the main hallway, which was very much everything that she imagined a Regency living room to be; the red floral wallpaper with matching sofas, and mahogany cabinets and tables. She remembered something that the Doctor had said to her very early on in their travels. Travelling through time means that you can touch and feel history to the extent that it comes alive. Taking the seat that was offered to her, she realised that she now appreciated what he had meant.

* * *

The Doctor left the papers on the table and returned to the chair, resting his chin on the top of the pyramid that his fingers made. He was having trouble reconciling the information that he had taken in. If it was correct then the threat was obvious. If it was correct then he would have to re-evaluate everything that he believed to be true.

“This is very interesting, John, very interesting indeed.”

“So you will do something about it?”

“That is the most interesting part of it, and what is troubling me the most.”

“I do not understand.”

“It is very simple really. I have just seen conclusive evidence that there is a rise in occultism across the globe, and that this force is poised to take over the world. However, as far as history goes, this never happens – or if it does, it fails and no one knew about it.”

“So you must have stopped it then!”

“Not necessarily: someone else could intervene.”

“But no one else has seen the information that I have seen.”

“I thought that might be the case. So, either I am meant to save the day or there is someone out there who is as well informed as we are.”

“So, what are you going to do Doctor?”

“Have another cup of tea of course,” he replied whilst reaching for the tea pot.

“And that’s it?” a shaken John questioned.

“Why, of course! It is time for high tea after all.”

John could feel the anger rising within him. He could not believe how blasé the Doctor was about the impending threat, a threat that he was well aware was about to engulf the world. He had contacted the Doctor because he knew he was the man to help him to stop it. He jumped out of his chair and paced over to the fire. Using the mantel to steady himself, he turned to face the Doctor.

“So, that’s it then, Doctor? I let you know of ‘a significant threat to the new world order’ as Mr Canning called it, and you choose inaction and levity.”

The Doctor’s gaze hardened and seemed to pierce John’s soul. He had seen the Doctor playful and serious, but this had been the first time he had seen him so angered. It was almost as though he had hit a raw nerve.

“Mr Martin, I think that you will find that my record speaks for itself. I have toppled corrupt regimes and stood against the forces of evil whilst your race was having tea and crumpets. Do not presume for one minute to understand what goes on beyond the exterior that you see.”

The Doctor stood up and faced John square on, his steely gaze looking directly into his hosts eyes. The gaze transfixed John, unable to break the connection.

“You fail to understand the consequences of living out of time. You enjoy a linear life, cause and effect working in perfect union. I do not have that luxury.”

“I’m sorry Doctor,” John interjected, his voice still shaking, “but I do not understand what you mean.”

“It is simple really. You are not aware of the consequences of your actions, right? You can discern what led you to take the action but you do not know for certain what effect it may have.”

“That is correct. It is the condition that faces us all. Even you cannot know the outcome of your actions.”

“True, but that does not stop me from knowing what history says and in this instance, I know that what we know is going to happen is not going to succeed. The only thing I do not know is whether this is through my actions or the actions of others, and it is here where we hit the entire fragile Web of Time.”

He turned away from John and retook his seat, indicating that John should do the same. The mood had definitely become lighter than it had been before, even though the Doctor was no longer in the jovial mood in which he had been. Looking at him seated in the chair, John got the impression of the Doctor he had known before; the great teacher.

“Let’s say, purely for the sake of argument, that I am not meant to stop the present crisis. Let’s say that it is supposed to be someone else who will, as a result of their actions, go on to bigger things and then makes a real difference to the world. Now let’s say that I interfere and instead of the person who was supposed to stop the crisis doing so, I stop it. The result is potentially a major upset in the Web of Time.”

“I see what you mean now. So, how are you going to decide what you are going to do?”

“Well, if it is okay with you, I think that I will have that cup of tea,” the Doctor said, smiling that disarming smile “One thing that I have learnt is that it is the only thing that helps me think.”

* * *

She was not sure whether it was the warmth from the fire or the sweet tea and crumpets that they had consumed, but Silver was glad to see that Rachael was becoming more relaxed. Putting her plate to one side, she looked her in the eye.

“Are you feeling better, Rachael?”

“Yes, thank you Silver. You have been my guardian angel today.”

“My pleasure,” she replied, resisting the urge to let slip that they might be related.

“So, what was wrong earlier?”

“It’s my father. I’m worried about him Silver.”

Rachael had become noticeably more nervous, glancing around her as though to ensure that there was no one around. Confident that there were no prying ears, she leant forward.

“Can I take you into my confidence, Silver?”

“Of course you can. After all, we have been through the events of today.”

“I am so glad to hear that,” Rachael signed with relief. “I need to tell someone about what I found out last night but I have had no one to turn to.”

She took Rachael’s hand as though to demonstrate the bond between them. “Take your time Rachael.”

“It’s not been the same since my mother died. Father was always a busy man but he always had time for the family – he ensured that he was home for meal time. Then he changed: he started to spend more and more time at his club until eventually he would stop coming home altogether I would go days without seeing him. When he finally did come home he spent all his time in his study before going back out again.”

Silver remembered what it had been like after her parents had divorced; her father’s initial distance so that he could deal with his issues. Rachael’s story struck a chord with her and she realised that she was beginning to miss her father, wishing that she had not acted so badly towards him.

“Last night was just the same. I was eating alone as normal when Father left to go about his business. I had thought about finding out what he was up to in his study before but I had never acted upon them Until last night.”

Rachael stood up and moved over to the fireplace and started to stoke the fire. With her back to Silver she continued.

“I had found where the master set of keys was kept purely by accident one day. I cannot remember what I had been looking for in the first place. Anyway, when Father left I got the keys and made my way into the study. The servants were occupied with readying the house for the night and so I was unlikely to have been disturbed.”

“What did you find?” Silver asked in an attempt to get Rachael to cut to the chase.

“The first thing that I found was a list of names and places, from across the globe. Some of the names were familiar to me... the influential members of London society. Then I came across Father’s more personal papers. I had no idea what he had become involved in.”

Rachael’s breathing had started to become more and more erratic. Moving to her side, Silver squeezed her hand gently and tried to flash a reassuring smile to indicate that everything would be fine

“Would it help if you showed me instead?”

“I suppose it would,” she said rather timidly. “Just let me get the key.”

Rachael left the room, leaving Silver alone with her thoughts. From what she had learnt so far, she was starting to feel for Rachael; she was someone who had clearly gone through a lot of emotional torment since her mother’s death. The pattern of distance was similar to what she had seen with her own father, but that had only been temporary. She could only have imagined what it would have been like if the same had happened to her.

On the flip side, she could not deny that she was also intrigued by what her distant relative had gotten himself involved in. From the small amount of information that she had been given, the indication was that whatever it was, it was big; something that may have international ramifications. But what was contained in those papers that had caused Rachael so much distress?

Rachael quickly returned with the master keys and they both stole upstairs to the locked study. Ensuring that no one was watching her, Rachael quickly unlocked the door and ushered Silver inside.

The first thing that Silver noticed was the state that the study was in. Papers were spread all over the place, and piles of books were toppled over. It did not take much to deduce that this was not the study of an orderly mind.

“Is your Dad always this disorganised?”

“No: in fact, Father always used to pride himself on order in his affairs,” replied Rachael with a hint of sadness in her voice. “But that was before Mother’s death.”

Reaching forward, she gently touched Rachael’s arm. Even though they had only known each other for a short time, she really felt for Rachael and what she had gone through. She had always had empathy with people, something that she had become more aware of as she had grown up. The more she thought about it, the more she knew that she had to do something to help her; to try to make that difference to Rachael’s life.

“Do not worry, Rachael. We will find a way to help your Dad and bring him back to you.”

* * *

Silver was not sure how much time had passed, but from what she had read in the study she had a distinct idea of what Sir Charles Silverstein had got himself into. Her occult knowledge had been self-taught, and part of her research had been into the history of the occult. What she had read in the papers did not come as too much of a surprise to her.

Her research had revealed that there had been a rise in occultism during the early nineteenth century. Some people had put it down to a reaction to the rise of the scientific method and the age of Enlightenment, and a desire to recapture the myth and mystery that had become lost to them. It would seem that Sir Charles had become involved with an occult group known as the Order of Altimira.

Within the papers there were names of members, times and dates for the meetings, and the locations of the various meeting houses across the world. The Order was indeed an impressive organisation.

Whilst she had been working through the numerous papers, Rachael had busied herself with starting to organise and tidy the books and papers not being worked upon. She knew that it was important for Rachael to keep herself busy to ensure that she did not dwell on recent events.

Looking up from the set of papers that she had been studying – a list of houses that had been used by the London chapter of the Order of Altimira – she turned to face Rachael.

“Do you know where your father will be tonight?”

“He will have gone to his club after leaving the house, but I am not sure where he will have gone to from there.”

“It’s just turned six now,” she said, looking up at the grandfather clock that stood in the corner of the room. “There is a meeting scheduled for nine o’clock tonight. Care for a little stake out?”

“I do not understand what you mean.”

“Some reconnaissance on your Dad,” Silver explained. “We go to his club and wait outside until we see him leave, and then follow him to see where it goes.”

“Do you think that we should?”

“It is the only way that we are going to find out what is happening with your father.”

Rachael seemed to stiffen at this idea, almost as though she was reminded of the knowledge that she had discovered the previous night. Then she looked Silver straight in the eye.

“Let’s do it.”

* * *

The Doctor had spent the remainder of his afternoon talking about anything other than what he had discovered earlier on. He knew that his sub-conscious mind was still working on the problem to hand, so he felt no issue with letting his conscious mind become preoccupied with triviality.

It was during an interesting debate on the implications of the decline of pantheism on the body politic that Stevens interrupted them to announce that the carriage that the Doctor had booked had arrived. Making his apologies for an abrupt end to the day, the Doctor left Mayfair in favour of a night in the city.

The journey into the centre of London turned out to be rather uneventful and before he knew it he had disembarked at the ornate entrance to the Travellers Club of Pall Mall, his club of choice. Taking in the sight in front of him, his mind was taken back to that night in 1819 when the club had first open. It had been several lifetimes ago but he remembered it vividly. Jo had just left him for Professor Jones and he had made the decision to lose himself in history, which he had managed to do for a few years before returning to UNIT HQ. He remembered rubbing shoulders with the rich and famous and the more enlightened aspects of English society, along with the influential international members of the Court circuit. The alcohol had flowed, music had played, and there had been a liberal amount of dancing as well.

His reminiscing was cut short and he was brought back to the present by an unnerving feeling, as though he was being watched. He turned round but saw nothing out of the ordinary: a policeman walking his beat, couples in love walking hand in hand, a young looking lady seated in a carriage across the road. Everything looked as it should. Shaking his head as though to try to dislodge the feeling, he bounded up the steps and through the main doors.

Walking across the marble floor towards the main reception desk, he took in the ambience of the lobby area. The lobby was a large open space that was dominated by the central staircase that led to the private bedrooms and meeting rooms. He took a quick look into both the bar and the main dining room to check whether there were any familiar faces about.

Arriving at the main reception desk he quickly signed in, left his membership card as per procedure, and then proceeded to book a table for dinner. Thankfully, the dining room was not that busy tonight and he managed to get himself the table that he usually had, a single table in the corner overlooking the entire room. No matter how much he would deny it, he was forced to accept that he was an avid people watcher; intrigued by the normal lives of the people around him.

With his business at the reception taken care of, the Doctor slowly walked over to the bar to sit back and relax until it was time to eat. Like the dining room, the bar was not too busy and it was easy for him to find a nice spot close, but not too close, to the open fire

that dominated the main wall. A waiter, who must have been new to the club – well, new since his last visit – took his order and served him a fine malt whisky. Taking small sips from his drink he surveyed the room.

* * *

Chapter 3 – A Night on the Town

The hackney carriage had been parked across from the Travellers Club for nearly two hours and the occupants were becoming distracted from the task at hand. The idea was a simple one: stake out the club until their quarry appeared and then follow him. What they had failed to realise was how boring it was.

There had been some excitement early on when Rachael thought that she had been spotted by a stranger, but he quickly bounded up the stairs and into the Club before Silver could check him out. Unfortunately, the flurry of excitement quickly subsided and tedium set in.

They had seen the early evening dusk turn to the darkness of night, and the street was now lit by the flickering light of the gas lamps.

“How much more of this do we have to endure?” Rachael sighed.

“Hopefully it will not be too much longer,” said Silver, trying to reassure Rachael. “After all, we know when the meeting is due to start. We just need to hope that your father is still in there.”

“I would hate to think that we have wasted all this time for nothing.”

“You need to have faith, Rachael. Faith in the fact that things will work out as they should and what was meant to come to pass will.”

Rachael was about to question Silver about the insightfulness that her words betrayed when her attention was captured by a man barking directions to a hackney driver.

“That’s him, Silver. That’s my father.”

“You are sure? You are confident?”

“I am confident that I can recognise the voice of my own father,” an almost wounded Rachael shot back.

“Then the chase is afoot,” Silver exclaimed.

Attracting the attention of the driver of their carriage, Silver instructed him to follow the carriage that had just departed. Smugly satisfied that things were starting to happen, she turned to where Rachael sat and smiled a reassuring smile to indicate that her plan was beginning to come together.

* * *

Stopping their carriage at the end of a street, Silver and Rachael watched as Sir Charles exited his and crossed over the road to a rather well-lit town house. The town house blended in with its neighbours and did not look like what Silver thought an occult meeting room might look like. Paying the driver, the two intrepid detectives casually started to walk up the street on the opposite side of the road.

“Seems a rather quiet neighbourhood,” Silver observed “Not the sort of area that you would expect really.”

Rachael had been quiet since they had started to follow Sir Charles from the Travellers Club. Taking Rachael’s hand in hers, Silver reminded her that she was not alone.

“It will be okay, Rachael. Faith, remember?”

“I’m sorry, Silver. It’s just all so real now.”

“I understand. Look on the bright side though. We will soon be able to talk with your dad and get him to come back home where he belongs.”

Rachael turned to look directly at her. “You are a true friend, Silver. Thank you for all you have done for me today.”

“It is nothing at all. It’s just what I do,” Silver said proudly and wondered how much she was sounding like the Doctor.

Arriving opposite the house that Sir Charles had entered they gave it a quick once over. Silver tried to get a read of what may have lain behind the various windows.

“What do you know about this type of house?” she enquired “Layout and such”

“Well, if it is anything like mine then there will be two reception rooms, a kitchen, and a dining room on the ground floor, with the living areas taking up the other two floors.”

“What about below? Do you think it will have a cellar?”

“I’m sorry, but I am not sure if it would. If there was then we would be able to see it from the garden at the back.”

“That sounds like a plan to me,” said Silver as they rounded the corner. “Shall we?”

* * *

The comfy chair, the fine malt, and the open fire had had the desired effect upon the Doctor; who had very quickly reached the relaxation zone. It had been so long since he had last felt like this, truly contented and at peace with himself. He had not felt like this since he had left Gallifrey; there was something about the familiarity of routine and regiment that appealed to him in his present incarnation. Then he remembered the reasons why he had left: the constant backbiting and politicking that had gone on, along with the desire to live life to the full and to stand up to the bullies of the universe.

The Doctor had always thought of himself as his own man, in charge of his actions and destiny. That was until he had been presented with the enigma that afternoon. Could his future already be established history? He could hear dear old Borusa droning on back at the Academy about the reasons why Time Lords should observe but not interfere in the lives of the lesser races. It was only now that he really appreciated what Borusa had meant. The beginning of the end was due to start tonight, yet he knew that it would not come to past.

He could not remember when his love affair with Sol 3 had started. It might have been back at the Academy but he was not sure. The one thing he was certain of was his knowledge of Earth history. Unfortunately, nothing he had learnt had prepared him for this. Then again, an Academy education was not meant to prepare a Time Lord for lifetimes of interference.

“So,” the Doctor pondered. “What shall I do?”

“May I suggest dinner, Sir?” said the waiter, whom the Doctor had not seen standing next to his chair. “Your table is now ready.”

Not showing any sign of shock or surprise, the Doctor leapt out of his chair and turned to the waiter.

“What a fabulous idea,” he replied before setting off to the dining room.

* * *

It became immediately clear to Silver that the town houses had a passageway that ran along the back of them. After ensuring that no one was around, the two of them quietly set off down the passageway, trying to stay within the shadows formed by the walls, until they were level with the back of the house that Sir Charles had entered earlier.

Indicating to Rachael to stay put, she made her way over to the doorway that led into the backyard. She listened to the gate before tentatively turning the latch handle and allowing the gate slowly to open so that she could check out the back garden.

The soft light from what she assumed was the kitchen area illuminated the garden. She could make out an outhouse in the corner of the garden and the path that led to the back door. Pushing open the gate further, she put her head around to get a fuller view and there she saw the window that Rachael had mentioned earlier. Satisfied that there was no one in the garden, she waved Rachael over and made her way in. Keeping to the shadows again, the pair made their way over to the small window and squatted down in front of it. Looking through the window, they gazed upon the cellar.

The walls of the cellar were covered with what looked like ruffled red satin drapes. The floor was of a stone construction, and looked like it had been cleaned recently. In the corners stood four large marble statues of someone Silver instantly recognised from her research into the Wicca tradition, the Green Man.

In the centre of the cellar there was a circle of twelve people, dressed in red hooded robes. Through the glass they could hear the low murmur of a chant, but were unable to make out exactly what was being said. As they watched, the figure closest to them turned and moved towards the altar that was behind him, creating a gap in the circle to reveal a young lady who was chained, within a pentagram, to the floor.

Silver heard Rachael suck in air as the shock on the scene hit her; a scene that had all the hallmarks of ritual sacrifice. Rachael's shock became even more noticeable when the figure reached the altar and removed the hood.

"Your father?" Silver whispered.

"Yes," the obviously shaken Rachael said.

They watched as Sir Charles picked up the gold crown that rested on the altar and put it on his head. What happened next chilled both of them to the bone, sending a shiver down their spines. The chanting was becoming louder as Sir Charles put the crown on, increasing more and more as Sir Charles stood there with his arms outstretched.

At first it was not immediately noticeable. There was a hint that something was happening but nothing either of them could put a finger on. Then, without warning, the hint became manifest and what was happening became obvious. Sir Charles was changing, becoming taller and his skin was taking a green tint to it.

His body doubled over in pain and then, without warning, his body snapped back until he stood erect and gave out a loud guttural scream. However, the scream did not come from the warm face of Sir Charles; it came from a mottled green face with a horn protruding from the forehead.

Rachael screamed, causing the horned creature to look straight at her. Grabbing hold of her, Silver tried to drag her away from the window before they were discovered. Unfortunately the back door was open before she could get both of them to their feet. Two burly gentlemen started down the stairs towards them. She knew the odds were against Rachael and her and that there was only one option open to them.

Throwing herself towards the two men she shouted to Rachael to run and find the Doctor on the Strand. She collided with the two men, sending all three of them to the ground. Out of the corner of her eye she saw Rachael disappear out of the yard and hopefully to safety. She tried to get up in order to make her escape but a hand grabbed her

firmly on the ankle. Silver tried to kick out and break free from her assailants but to no avail, she could not shake free the iron grip that enveloped her ankle.

The other man dragged her to her feet so that she stood face to face with him, a rather gruff and unpleasant looking gentleman. He looked her in the eyes and reached out to touch her face, seemingly to stroke it. Recoiling from the prospect of his touch she recoiled and lashed out with her leg, catching him in the groin. Whilst he doubled over the man behind kept a vice like hold of her. No matter how hard she struggled she could not escape. The man in front of her regained his composure and stood back up, looking her in the eyes with a hateful gaze. Without warning, he hit Silver straight across the face and she fell into unconsciousness.

* * *

The Doctor took his time over the fare that was presented for his consumption. When it came to dinner at this club, he was a bit of a creature of habit: soup, followed by the mixed grill, finished off with a fine brandy. When he had first joined, he had worked his way through the menu until he knew what he liked and stuck to it, visit after visit.

Other than the odd nod and smiles from fellow diners he was left virtually alone, which he was thankful for. He had weightier matters on his mind than the latest gossip doing the rounds of London society.

In the past his attitude would have been one of jumping in feet first at the hint of adventure and the consequences be damned. However, he was no longer the man he used to be. Caution and relaxation were the words that summed him up these days. This did not mean that he would turn his back on situations; it just meant that he was more careful than before.

Was this the issue?

Was he being careful or hesitant?

Why was he reluctant to get involved?

Then it hit him – the reason was clear. It was not about the fragility of the Web of Time; after all, he had only ever paid lip service to that in the past. No, it was the preordained nature of it all. History had already written that the plans would fail and the occult forces would not take over the world. He had seen the future and he knew what was to come.

He had always known he had an aversion to being manipulated by forces beyond his control, and the situation facing him was no different. He would not have his free will curtailed and limited. He was a free agent and would remain so, choosing what he wanted to do and when he wanted to do it.

After checking the time on his fob watch, he swilled his glass and finished off the last of the brandy. He had made his decision. He would go and meet Silver at the rendezvous and they would then leave this time and place. He would get as far away as possible and let the Web of Time sort itself out.

Collecting his membership card from reception, the Doctor set out onto the streets of London. The invigorating night air made him feel more energetic than he had felt all day, as though it had blown away all the woes that had been weighing him down. Cane in hand and hat on head, the Doctor turned towards St James's Park and set off to where he had left the TARDIS earlier that day.

* * *

Rachael ran as fast as her feet could carry her, determined to put as much distance between her and that thing. She had known he was into something bad but she never imagined that it would be anything like this, her father a monster. She could not get the sight out of her head of his distorted mottled green face howling at her. It would be an image that would stay with her for the rest of her life.

Then there was Silver, her new friend who had put herself in danger to allow her to escape. She could still hear her screaming at her to find the Doctor. She had mentioned him throughout the day, little asides giving her insights into the person he was. It was obvious that he meant a lot to her and he had had a major impact on her life. Hopefully he would be able to help them now.

Turning into the Strand at speed, she kept her eye out for someone who could be him. Eyes darting everyway, she was conscious that she did not know exactly what he actually looked like.

Without warning she collided with a gentleman who had come out of nowhere, and she was knocked to the ground. She looked up at the gentleman who was now bending down to help pick her up, his piercing blue eyes looking back at her playfully.

“Are you okay, Miss?” he asked as he offered his hand.

“I am so sorry, Sir,” she replied apologetically, “I was not watching where I was going.”

“That is okay, Miss. No damage done.”

“Thank you, Sir,” Rachael managed to get out before bursting into tears.

The stranger put his arm round her and brought her in close. Normally she would have recoiled at such intimacy from a stranger, but all she felt was comfort and security.

“Come now, Miss, it cannot be that bad.”

“If you only knew,” she managed to get out in between the tears. “If you only knew what I have been through.”

The stranger gently touched her chin and lifted her head so that she was looking directly into his eyes again.

“If there is anything I can do, Miss... you know, I do not even know your name.”

“Silverstein, Miss Rachael Silverstein.”

The stranger smiled a smile that lit up his entire face.

“As I thought,” he replied with a sudden coldness that sent a shivers down her spine.

Pushing Rachael against the wall, he pushed his hand against her mouth before she would utter a sound. Drawing a knife from the inside of his coat he leant in close to her, so his mouth was next to her ear.

“One false move and you are dead.”

* * *

Chapter Four – The Night of the Green Man

The Doctor walked down the Strand with a slight spring in his step. The night air was indeed invigorating and he was glad that he had chosen to walk rather than hailing a carriage. The slight breeze greeted him as he had walked, seemingly blowing away his cares. After checking his fob watch, he looked to see whether Silver was waiting for him. Unfortunately, the only people near the entrance where the TARDIS was located were a young couple who seemed to be enjoying themselves.

He only hoped that she was on time, or even early and waiting for him in the Control Room, ideally with a nice cup of tea waiting for him in the pot. Just the thought of a cup of tea made him feel warm inside.

It was then he noticed the glint of metal in the young man's hand, the gaslight catching the blade of the knife positioned threateningly towards the woman's neck. Keeping his pace constant and showing no reaction on his face, he continued to walk towards the couple with his cane beating out every step. He hoped that the noise would attract the young man's attention, and was rewarded when he turned his head to look at him.

"Good evening," acknowledged the Doctor whilst lifting his hat with his right hand.

The young man grunted in reply and then turned back to the lady, giving the Doctor the opening that he wanted. Without any further warning he brought the head of his cane crashing down on the back of the man's neck, causing him to crumple to the ground.

"Are you okay, Madam?" the Doctor asked, lifting his hat, and flashing the disarming smile that he had nurtured over the centuries.

Obviously distressed by what had happened to her, the lady was unable to answer his question. Taking her by the hand, he slowly walked her away from the unconscious man who had assaulted her.

"It is okay now," the Doctor reassured her. "He will not be able to hurt you anymore."

Looking into her eyes he could tell that she was gone to the world. There was nothing that he could do for her here in the street. She needed warmth and a hot cup of tea, the two things that they would not be able to find on the streets of London at this time of night. There was only one option available to the Doctor; he just hoped that Silver had the kettle on.

* * *

The Doctor helped the lady across the threshold and into the TARDIS control room. He would normally be more cautious about bringing someone inside the TARDIS but this was a desperate time and he was confident that the lady was so far gone she would not know where she was.

He laid her down on the sedan seat located to the right of the main doors before moving over to the central console and did a brief check over the controls; what could be described as a pre-flight check. Confident that everything was in working order, the Doctor went over to the doorway that led into the bowels of the TARDIS and called out for Silver.

As the Doctor shouted down the corridor, the young lady shot upright and gave out a loud, uncontrolled scream. He immediately turned to face the lady, only to be greeted by the sound of the TARDIS dematerialising and the time rotor rising and falling.

"There is nothing to worry about!" he shouted over to the lady as he ran towards the console. "Everything is okay. I'm sure there is a very good reason for the old girl to set off like this."

Throwing a glance to the lady it was obvious that she had entered the bewilderment stage of waking up in the TARDIS. The Doctor hoped that she would stay like this for long enough for him to work out why the TARDIS would take off like this. He was also rather thankful that she had also stopped screaming.

Looking over the controls he noticed that the co-ordinates had subtly and slightly changed from when he had checked the instruments minutes earlier. The TARDIS was obviously moving somewhere. What he could not understand was why she was moving at all.

As he glided round the console checking the other systems he came across a light that should not have been on, the light that indicated that HADS had been activated. Every TARDIS was fitted with a hostile action displacement system as a means by which it could attempt to protect itself from attack. Whilst he had only seen it in operation a couple of times before, he was concerned because it was only supposed to function if there was no one around to protect it.

Just as he finished the circuit of the console, the familiar sound of materialisation filled the room and the time rotor came to a halt. He started to move towards the scanner switch when the young lady started to murmur. Curtailing his movement he made his way over to where she sat upright, her eyes wide open and looking decidedly scarred. Kneeling down next to her, he took her hands in his and looked deep into her eyes.

“It’s okay,” the Doctor told her calmly. “You are safe now.”

“Where... What... Who...”

“In no particular order: you were attacked, this is the TARDIS, and I am the Doctor.”

“Doctor?” she queried.

“Well, not of medicine you understand but yes, people do call me the Doctor.”

“Silver’s Doctor?” she asked cautiously.

The Doctor’s rather chipper and playful mood drained completely at the mention of Silver.

“You know Silver,” he asked cautiously, keeping his eye on the young lady.

“Yes, we met earlier today. It’s been a bit of a rollercoaster ride.”

“Where is she now?” he asked, trying not to betray his concern. He was starting to get a terrible feeling about all of this.

“I am not sure. I hope that she was able to get away from the men that attacked her whilst we were spying on my father.”

“Your father?” the Doctor exclaimed, “Why were you spying on your father?”

“My father had started to act strangely after my mother’s death, and his behaviour became stranger over time. It turned out that my father was involved in a cult and we had gone to try to save him from himself. Silver talked about an intervention.”

The Doctor stood up and walked slowly over to the console, keeping his back to where the young lady sat.

“A cult, you say,” the Doctor said with a rather resigned tone, “your father would not be called Sir Charles Silverstein, by any chance?”

“Yes, he is,” said the lady, standing up. “How did you know?”

He flung his fist down onto the console, rage enveloping his face. The lady fell back into the sedan seat almost as though his rage had literally slammed into her. He turned to face her.

“The reason why, Ms Rachael Silverstein – I am presuming that you are Rachael – is that only this afternoon I was advised of what your father was planning; and I turned my back on it. It would seem that certain *people* decided that I would become involved after all.”

“I do not understand – you knew about my Father?”

“I knew of him. Basically, Ms Silverstein, you are a pawn in someone else’s machinations, with the sole purpose of getting my companion involved in your father’s plans and therefore putting herself in danger, so that I would not be able to walk away as I initially planned.”

He looked down at Rachael, his piercing eyes burning deep into her. Holding out his hand, he motioned her to come to him. Rachael stayed where she was, too scared to move.

“Now, Rachael. Come here now,” the Doctor commanded in a tone that reminded her of her own father.

Unable to resist the authoritarian tone, Rachael stood up and slowly made her way to where the Doctor was standing. Without warning, he grabbed her hand and placed her palm so that it was in contact with the telepathic circuit.

“Do not move,” he commanded, ensuring that his left hand was on the other connection to the telepathic circuit. “Contact.”

As he uttered the word contact, Rachael’s minded opened up to him. The previous times that he had made telepathic contact with someone, there had always been a level of resistance. This was missing from Rachael’s untrained mind, and without warning he fell deep into her memories. Arresting the fall, he started to shift through the memories that presented themselves to him. He saw her mother pass away and the way that her father had reacted. He saw the events of that afternoon in the park. He saw the study and the stakeout. He even saw himself looking at Rachael earlier that evening and the subsequent trail of Sir Charles. Then he hit a rush of memories, the events of the past hour. Then he saw Silver shouting out at him, no her, and the contact was broken. Rachael collapsed and he leapt forward to catch her. The stress had obviously been too much for her. He carried her over to the sedan and laid her down again.

After first disappearing into the bowels of the TARDIS, he returned to the control room and walked over to the console, solemnly checking over the coordinates that the TARDIS had materialised at before checking them against the space-time visualizer. It was as he thought; the TARDIS had brought them to where Silver had last been seen.

He flicked the switch that operated the scanner and looked at where they were. The scanner showed a dimly lit room, with assorted boxes and dusty furniture left in an almost chaotic fashion. The scanner continued its 360-degree turn until he was satisfied that there was no one in the room.

Quickly checking to make sure that Rachael was comfortable, the Doctor released the main door and exited the TARDIS into what looked like the attic of a house.

* * *

Silver came round to find that chains bound her arms above her head. Trying not to make a sound she gently tested to see how much movement she had, which was unfortunately not a lot.

Letting her ears “see” for her, she tried to work out her surroundings. She could make out the sound of shuffling feet, and a low chanting sound coming from in front of her. There was also a guttural sound coming from further away, and a scuffing sound. It was hard to make out the exactly where the scuffing sound was coming from because of the chanting almost masking it.

Then a smell that she could not identify assaulted her nose, causing her to gasp and her eyes to water.

“I see our guest is awake,” said a guttural voice.

It took a few seconds before her vision was clear enough for her to make out who had spoken to her.

“Sir Charles, I presume,” she replied, trying to sound more confident than she actually was.

“Pitiful human,” the horned Green Man replied, pulling himself to his full height, making her have to crane her neck. “Sir Charles no longer exists in anything other than the history books on the shelf. I am S’Larche of the Silsteen, but you can call me Master.”

S'Larche slowly caressed the side of her face, causing her to try to recoil from the touch. He smiled, bearing his jagged set of teeth at her.

"You fear me. That is good."

"I do not fear you," Silver shot back with false bravado.

"Stupid girl – you reek of fear," S'Larche replied mockingly. "It flows off you and tells me how much you fear me."

Turning his back to her, S'Larche strode into the centre of the chanting occultists before turning back to face her. The Green Man's stare seem to burn deep into her very being, almost as though he was looking for something or had found something but needed to understand it.

"She has been tested?" S'Larche asked the nearest occultist.

"No, Master," he replied in deferential tones.

"Why?"

"I do not know Master. I... we... I thought that you would just want to kill her."

"IDIOT!" S'Larche bellowed as he brought his clawed hand crashing down onto his neck. The force of the blow caused a cracking sound and the occultist crumpled to the ground. S'Larche indicated for the dead man to be removed from his sight.

"There are times, my dear," he said to Silver, walking towards the altar that stood against the far wall, "that it pays to rely on no-one but yourself."

Picking up two objects from the altar, he made his way back to where she was bound.

"Do you know what these are?" he asked as he showed the objects to her.

"Well, they look like cheap bracelets to be honest."

"Cheap, indeed!" he exclaimed. "These are not the sort of thing that you would find on the Tottenham Court Road."

"What are they then?"

"These are Silsteen warrior bands. If worn by a genetically pure Silsteen, the wearer would get amazing powers."

"And you are telling me this because?" Silver asked as defiantly as possible, in an attempt to buy time and get as much information as possible. As the Doctor was always telling her, knowledge is power; and power is a head start to winning.

"I am telling you this because I want you to know what is about to happen to you," he replied quickly as he clasped one of the bracelets round her left wrist. "If you carry the DNA of the Silsteen race within you then you will have a reaction to the bracelet, and the conversion process will start, making you one of us. Of course, if there is no reaction then your only use to us will be on the sacrificial altar."

S'Larche examined the skin around the area where the bracelet had rested and smiled a broad open smile of satisfaction.

"The genetic inheritance is strong in you, child. You must be descended from the prime family. You will indeed be a great addition to our cause."

S'Larche kept on talking but Silver had stopped listening. She was having a little trouble accepting what she had just been told. This could not be correct. She had been born in Connecticut. She was not the descendent of an alien race. Then she glanced up at where the bracelet rested on her wrist and she saw where the greenness was slowly creeping up her arm. She had become aware at an early age that she had an allergic reaction to gold, hence the reason why she had always worn silver. She had thought that it was one of those things. Now it seemed that the reason for her humble allergy had a more alien reason.

"... and you will be my Queen."

"Excuse me?" Silver exclaimed as S'Larche's words hit her.

“You will be my Queen. We shall rule this planet and recreate the heaven that was Silsteen here on Earth.”

Just as she was just about to advise S’Larche exactly where he could stick his proposition she heard a voice that she had thought she would never hear again.

“Really, S’Larche,” the Doctor said as he walked down the stairway, “the hope of your entire race is resting on your shoulders, and you fumble the wedding proposal.”

The Doctor flashed a concerned look to Silver to ensure that she was okay before turning back to where S’Larche stood.

“You know,” he said in his usual relaxed manner, “I thought that your entire race had been wiped out during your war with the Dargona. Apparently, it would seem I was wrong in that assumption.”

“You seem to know a lot about us, whoever you are.”

“Sorry, totally forgot. I’m the Doctor and I am here to stop you and your diabolical plans.”

“Your confidence seems rather misplaced, Doctor. You are one and we are many.”

S’Larche indicated the chanting occultists who had now turned to face the Doctor. As one, they slowly raised their hands and pushed back their cowls to reveal various stages of the conversion process. Some still maintained elements of humanity within their faces, whilst others had the almost distinctive scowl that seemed to be a trait of the Silsteen race.

“Drones, I presume,” said the Doctor. “Incapable of independent thought and under your mental control?”

“Very impressive, Doctor; you seem to have done your homework.”

“Well-read and well-travelled, thank you,” the Doctor said with an arrogant pride. “However, this will not, as the humans would say, put the baby to bed.”

“Meaning...”

The Doctor seemed to have become distracted as he looked off into the mid-distance

“Well, the fates have contrived to bring me here to stop you, so I presume that we should get on with it.” The Doctor reached into his waistcoat pocket and flipped out his fob watch, checking the time.

“Expecting reinforcements, Doctor?” S’Larche sneered.

“Kind of,” he replied with a smile, “although you could say that the reinforcements are already here.”

S’Larche checked the shadows to ensure that there was no threat that he had not noticed and was relieved to see that there was nothing. He turned back to face the Doctor. It was then that he heard the growl, deep with a sinister guttural tone. Before he could turn to confirm what he knew to be true, masonry hit the side of his face as Silver broke her chains and attacked him. The two green figures rolled across the floor, scattering the other occultists who were standing around, unsure what to do.

As S’Larche and Silver both attempted to gain advantage in their tussle the Doctor took advantage of the confusion and dashed over to where the altar was located. He knew that he only had a limited amount of time before Silver’s transformation became permanent. Unfortunately, he did not know exactly how long that was.

Reaching the altar, he dug deep into his pockets and drew out a small metallic object with buttons dotted along the side of it. His fingers moved in a precise pattern across the buttons before placing it on the altar. Standing back, the device emitted a dim orange beam of concentrated Chronom Particals. Breaking down the dimensional fabric of the universe, a multi-coloured vortex started to form, quite literally spatial rip in the space-time continuum. Now all he had to do was to get S’Larche through it without Silver following.

Whilst he had been setting up the dimensional rip, S'Larche had gained the upper hand and Silver was starting to falter under the continuous battery from S'Larche's fists. Hit after hit had forced Silver to her knees, before she finally slumped to the ground. S'Larche raised his fists to deliver the final killer blow.

"She's no threat to you now," shouted the Doctor grabbing S'Larche's attention.

The Doctor drew himself to his full height and stared down S'Larche, knowing that he did not have long left to save Silver from her own DNA.

"Well? What are you waiting for?" the Doctor goaded.

Seeing S'Larche tense his muscles, he waited for the Green Man to leap towards him. He looked S'Larche directly in his eye and to tense his own muscles, becoming like a coiled spring waiting to unleash its energy. Seconds passed like minutes, almost as though time itself was being stretched out.

"What are you scared of, S'Larche? Are you only used to picking on little girls?"

The Doctor almost missed the sudden release of the tension in muscles before S'Larche launched himself at him. The Doctor started to fling himself to one side but the slight delay meant that instead of S'Larche flying straight down the dimensional rip as he had originally planned their shoulders collided.

S'Larche grabbed hold of the Doctor and they both fell to the ground and started to roll away from the rip. Slightly winded by the landing, the Doctor struggled to regain his breath whilst trying to stop S'Larche getting the upper hand. S'Larche lashed out at the Doctor, who was forced to twist his body left then right to try to avoid the strong arms of the Silsteen as they came towards him, resulting in the stone floor taking the pummelling instead.

S'Larche's hands dripped with blood from where they connected with the floor, pain radiating up his arm. If anything, this served only to make him angrier and more determined to cause the Doctor maximum damage. S'Larche brought both his blooded hands together above his head, ready to smash the Doctor where he lay on the ground.

Just before S'Larche unleashed himself he heard a faint croaking noise. Looking up he saw that it had come from the prone form of the Silsteen that had been Silver. Momentarily distracted, the Doctor took advantage to launch himself into S'Larche's chest, knocking him backwards and allowing the Doctor to get to his feet.

He stood between the dimensional rip and the Silsteen that was starting to get back to his feet. He could feel the rip pulling at him, trying to suck him into it. He had to hold firm or else all would be lost.

As soon as S'Larche had got to his feet he lunged towards the Doctor with all his force. The Doctor dropped to the ground, causing S'Larche to miss grabbing him whilst at the same time ensuring that he tripped over his outstretched leg.

Grabbing hold of the altar, the Doctor tried to anchor himself whilst S'Larche, unable to steady himself, flew down the centre of the dimensional rip, a long inhuman scream trailing behind him.

Ensuring that he was fully secured, the Doctor reached up to where the device lay on the altar. He quickly manipulated some buttons and the dim light started to fade away, causing the rip to become smaller and smaller until it finally disappeared. Happy that he was safe, he let go of the altar and slowly got to his feet.

Looking round he saw that all the occultists lay motionless on the floor, no sign of life existing in their bodies. He checked the body closest to him to confirm his suspicion that they were dead before moving over to where the Silsteen that had been Silver lay. Quickly undoing the bracelet and removing it from her arm, he picked her up and started to make

his way out of the basement towards where he had left the TARDIS. He only hoped he was not too late.

* * *

Epilogue

Four days passed before Silver regained consciousness, during which time the Doctor had tried to keep himself busy. He had arranged for John Martin to have the house cleansed of any sign of what had actually taken place. He had removed all of Sir Charles' personal papers to ensure that they did not fall into the wrong hands, whilst also ensuring that Rachael Silverstein was taken care of. An exchange of telegrams had resulted in Rachael's emigration to America to stay with her brother and his family, hoping that distance would aid Rachael's recovery from the mental trauma that she had gone through.

When he was not sorting out the fallout from recent events, he was keeping vigil at Silver's bedside. His greatest fear was that she had been in contact with the bracelets for too long and the transformation would be permanent. He would never have been able to forgive himself if that had been the case, and his relief was visible when the first sign of the reversal process started to show. It took days before the process was complete and he had been able to confirm that Silver's DNA was again dominant.

During the transformation back, the bodily injuries that Silver had suffered also healed, leaving her scratch-free by the end of the process. It was almost as though the injuries inflicted on her Silsteen form faded away as her human genes reasserted over her alien ones. There were still a lot of questions that the Doctor wanted answering, about the Silsteen and how far their genetic blueprint had spread.

Silver's eyes slowly opened to the slight of his wide and reassuring smile. She started to speak and her voice betrayed how weak she was. He hushed her to be silent.

"Everything is okay, Silver. We have all the time in the universe to talk about what went on. Right now you need more rest."

"Sir Charles?" she enquired feebly.

"... will not be causing any more problems," he answered. "Well, not here at least."

"Rachael?"

"She will be fine. Off to start a new life with her brother in America"

"And me?" she asked, scared of the answer.

"All clear and back to normal."

"Is what Sir Charles said true?"

"I am afraid so, but do not worry," he said, trying to reassure her. "You will be fine I am sure that there will be a cure out there."

The Doctor rearranged her pillows and made sure that she was securely tucked into the bed. "You rest and I will get you something to eat and drink."

Silver smiled weakly and closed her eyes again and started to drift back into unconsciousness, safe in the knowledge that she had the Doctor by her side.

THE
DOCTOR WHO
PROJECT

THE LEGEND OF THE GREEN MAN

ALEX WILSON-FLETCHER



London, England.

The Regent sits on the throne, the Doctor visits a friend, and Silver takes a walk in the park

But something sinister lurks beneath London society - something evil, something ancient.

Time is not on the Doctors side as he tries to enjoy a relaxing day in Regency London, and Silver finally realises that everything is relative.

From Townhouses to Gentlemen's Clubs, the Doctor and Silver must come to terms with what they find out and try and save the day.

But who is the Green Man, what does he want, and what will the Doctor have for Dinner at the Traveler's club?



This is another in a series of original fan authored
Doctor Who fiction published by The Doctor Who Project
featuring the ninth Doctor as played by Anton Robbins

