

*We're all stories, in the end.* ~ The Doctor

Kitty Eden presents...

## The Storyteller

"I'm bored," declared Ella, flopping back onto the thin mattress of the camp bed.

"I second that," added Phoebe, falling over too. "It's 8 pm at night, and none of the teachers can be bothered to find us something to do."

"Practice for the talent show?" Monet offered. A loud, resounding, 'NO' came from the other three girls in the room. "Fine. Fine. It was just an idea."

"Sure, just not a very good one," Charli grunted.

"Eh." Phoebe pressed her face into her lumpy pillow. "I guess we'll just lie here, doing nothing."

A long silence passed.

"I'm bored," said Ella again.

"We went through this already," muttered Charli.

"Tell a story?" suggested Anouk, leaning against the doorframe. The door itself was more of a curtain than anything else.

"As long as it's not Click-Click-Slide," Janecca said darkly. She had entered the conversation without warning, like she usually did. Hasty little echoes of agreement rebounded across the room.

"Unfortunately for story-cravers, I'm all out," Monet said, throwing her feet up onto the edge of the bed frame. A grunt and some stomping of feet signified another girl's arrival. "You're all having a party without me?" Sarah exclaimed, climbing onto a shelf inset into the wall and settling herself down with a huff.

"Well, technically, we're not all here," Monet pointed out, still leaning her feet against the bed.

"Momo and Darnelle aren't here."

"Still!" Sarah complained. "So. What have I missed? I always miss something."

Phoebe shrugged into her pillow, half-heartedly. "Not much."

"Us being bored out of our skulls," Charli said.

"Considering telling stories," added Monet. "But not having any ideas."

"Stories?" Sarah rubbed at her ear. "Have you thought of telling a fairy tale?"

Anouk snorted. "What, you mean, Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Cinderella, Snow White? I think we had enough of that in Year 1."

"Make one up, then," Sarah retorted.

"Why don't you do it yourself?" Charli demanded.

"Because... because... because... because I don't have any ideas! What exactly *is* a fairy tale, anyway?"

"Well, you need a hero," said Ella.

"A princess," Janecca said.

"Monsters," Monet added.

"Adventure!" cried Phoebe.

"Exciting places," mused Charli.

“And a happily ever after,” concluded Anouk.  
Sarah considered for a moment. “I think I can do that.”  
“Include us too,” requested Anouk.  
“Right. Give me a second.”  
There was a long pause, like the breath before a storm.  
And Sarah began to tell her tale.

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Once upon a time. I think that’s how fairy tales usually begin, right? Yeah, I thought so. Once upon a time, but not that far from here and now, there was a rose. I like that beginning. Let’s stick with it. Once upon a time, there was a Rose, and she was an amazing girl. She had long brown hair, that she had dyed blonde when she was twelve, and a modern British cockney accent. Not the rhyming cockney kind, though. Someone had made that mistake, or they will make that mistake, and it turned out/will turn out very bad for them.  
But enough of that.

Once upon a time, there was a Rose, and she had been a shopgirl, but not anymore. Now, she was doing better things with her life, like saving the world.

What? Not all fairy tales have to be set in medieval times. We can have a modern fairy tale that’s just as good as any sort of old fashioned one. I’ll prove it to you.

Anyway, Rose (Rose Tyler, she was called) is our Princess, although if you ever called her that, she’d clobber you. She’s a feisty one, our Rose is. When this story takes place, she’s just about 17 years old. Which is older than anyone here is. And yes, I can tell a story about people that are older than me. Be quiet, and let me talk.

Hm. I’ve got a princess. I need... a Hero. Heroes in fairy tales are usually Prince Charmings in shining armour that ride white horses and talk in proper, noble speak. Since the Princess is a feisty British shopgirl, I can afford to make my Hero different, right?

My Hero will be tall, dressed in leather, and have piercing blue eyes, just like sea glass. And, for variety, he has a Northern accent. And he doesn’t have a horse, not even a dusty brown one.

Now, our Princess and Hero already know each other, due to a little incident involving a plastic hand, a liquid monster in a vat, and some long-forgotten gymnastics skills. But that’s a completely different story that I think BBC can tell better than I can.

No, I’m not telling you what I mean.

All you really need to know here is that Rose Tyler and the Doctor (that’s our Hero’s name) have been travelling together for a very long time, and are very good friends.

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“You’re actually pretty good at this,” remarked Ella.

“Thank you.” Sarah swung her legs from where she was coiled like a cat on the top shelf. “Now please shut up and let me get on with the story before I lose my inspiration.”

“Go on, then,” Charli invited.

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I’ve got my Hero and Princess, and the adventure bit’s coming up really soon. And monsters... well, let’s just say I have a vague idea of what’s going to go there. Now, I believe that ‘exciting places’ were a part of this?

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"Barcelona!" yelled Janecca.

Everyone blinked.

"Why Barcelona?" asked Anouk. Janecca shrugged.

"Just because."

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Right, Barcelona, then. I don't know much about Barcelona, so bear with me, okay? And correct me if I say something that doesn't work.

"Barcelona!" exclaimed the Doctor, our Hero, as he stepped out into the busy atmosphere of the energetic, colorful city. "Barcelona, the city, not the planet!"

Rose Tyler, our Princess, fell into step next to him, grinning widely as she took in the sights.

"s amazing," she breathed. "What year?"

Now, the thing about our Hero and Princess is that they never quite know where in the world (or beyond) they're going to go. So, for them, they could've as easily been in 1765 as in 3120.

"2014, not too far from your time, actually," the Doctor told her. Yeah, the only reason I'm using that year is so I actually know what's going on in the world. You know I'm horrible at history, and I'm basically making this up as I go.

Rose grabbed the Doctor's arm to keep him from being trampled by an oncoming mob of tourists, closely followed by a gaggle of teenage girls who looked like they were on a school tour or something.

"Any reason we're here?" asked Rose. Her friend with the Northern accent just laughed, and started walking towards the center of the city.

"Why would there be a reason?" he said. Rose nudged him with a crooked elbow.

"There's always a reason with you."

Well, the Doctor claimed that the only things that they'd do in the beautiful city of Barcelona was walk around, look at things, and get some coffee from an excellent shop he said he knew was there. "It'll be just like a holiday," he said. "A break from running for our lives."

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"Waitwaitwait," said Phoebe, holding up her index finger quickly. "I thought you said we were in this story."

Sarah sighed dramatically. "You *are*. Just give it a minute."

"Sure. Oh, and Sarah?"

"Yes, Phoebe?"

"Give me a water gun."

"Okay."

"And make it have sparkly water."

"Uh... yeah."

"And make the water freeze when it touches someone's body."

"Is that all?"

"For now, yes."

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And now, back to the story. In another part of Barcelona, at the same point in time, a class of Year 7 girls were on a school trip. See? I told you I'd get us in there somehow. One of the girls (who happened to be named Phoebe) had a water gun that was filled with COMPLETELY

ORDINARY water. Shut up, Phoebe. I'll get your magical sparkly water in there at some point. Just wait. Have a little patience.

The rest of the girls were named Ella, Charli (short for Charlize), Darnelle, Janecca, Monet, Momo, Anouk, and, of course, Sarah. Their teacher had wandered off for a moment or two, and in that short space of time, the girls had given their teacher the slip. They were currently giggling over this little fact.

"So what do we do now?" asked Momo after she calmed down.

"We do something fun," said Ella. "and when we get back to the hotel, we pretend we got lost."

Of course we all thought this was a great plan (although I had my doubts) and we sat about trying to think of something that classified as 'interesting'. It was you, Monet, who got the idea for our little... adventure.

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"Me?" Monet asked. Sarah just smiled.

"Yep, you. Because from what I know, Barcelona has architecture that's actually pretty medieval. And very high roofs. And in this story..."

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"We all have mobile phones, right?" you asked. We all nodded in agreement and pulled them out of our pockets to hold them next to each other. For some strange reason, all the phones were different colors. There were nine of us, and the phones were red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, black, white and pink, in no particular order. If we held them up in the right way, it made a complete rainbow. I'm sure this might be important to the plot somehow, so pay attention. Then again, it might not be.

"Everyone dial my number," Monet instructed, and once we did, we had... well, let's call it a purely audio-based version of Skype. We could all hear each other over the phones.

"Harry Styles to Girl Genius, do you read me? Over," said Darnelle over the phone to me. I grinned at her.

"Loud and clear, over," I replied, and turned to Monet. "What's this about?"

You, Monet, had an evil look on your face that would have made a Dalek tremble in fear. What's a Dalek? I'll tell you later. Maybe. "All I can say is..."

She darted suddenly forward and tapped Charli on the arm. "Tag, you're it!"

She ran over to a place where a tall roof met the street and dashed nimbly up it. You're a gymnast, aren't you, Monet? Yeah, I thought so. Monet paused at the top and waved her orange phone at us. "Keep in touch!" she yelled.

And then she was off, dashing across the rooftops like a rabid emu. Actually, that's a bad simile. Forget it, okay? We all looked at each other, screamed sort of girlishly, and ran away from Charli as fast as we could. Momo wasn't quite fast enough, and got caught.

"Gang up chasie!" she yelled, and it was on.

I guess we spent about an hour and a half chasing each other around the rooftops of Barcelona before all of us got caught.