

# Even Uther knows

## Arthur/Merlin

Von Wolkenfee

Arthur really had no explanation for this. He had just seen Gwen kiss Lancelot and it didn't bother him at all. Well, in fact there was an explanation, but Arthur refused to think about it, because if he had, he would have thought about wonderful blue eyes, beautiful cheekbones and those absolutely kissable-looking lips. So of course, he absolutely did not think about that.

"You're staring!" Morgana interrupted his thoughts cheerfully and Arthur frowned. "I'm not!"

"Oh come on! You can admit it! Just tell him! I mean, everyone can see how besotted the boy is with you!" she chimed and Arthur could only gape at her for a moment before he replied rather unintelligently: "I'm not... he's not... What?"

Morgana only smiled and the prince sighed. "Even if he would return my feelings..." And really, was he just talking about his *feelings*? With Morgana? At a banquet? "...there's no way Uther would ever approve." It was their private joke to call his father that ever since they had been little and Morgana grinned, because he hadn't used the name in quite a while.

"Well, he doesn't have to know, does he?" she replied sweetly and wandered off to talk to some knight and Arthur felt the urgent need to bang his head against the wall repeatedly.

Of course, Merlin chose this very moment to come over to him. "Are you all right, Sire?"

"Yes, Merlin, I'm fine. Splendid." There was only one way to explain his mood to Merlin, because it was out of the question to ever tell him what this was really about. "I've seen Gwen kiss Lancelot."

Merlin's face fell and he patted Arthur's shoulder sympathetically and rather awkwardly. "Oh Arthur, I'm sorry!" he whispered and the prince groaned. Of course, he was sorry. It really was his own fault that Merlin was trying to comfort him now, because he himself didn't even know for certain what kind of reaction he had hoped for. "I'm just going to get drunk or something!"

About an hour later, he was blissfully wasted and stumbling across the corridor to his chambers with an arm around Merlin's shoulders.

"Y'know, Merlin, your eyes really are beautiful" he drawled and unfortunately, Merlin didn't react in a way he would have liked. In fact, he didn't really react at all. "You're drunk, Sire. You really need to go to bed and sleep this off."

"Bed." Arthur smiled. "Good idea. Will you join me?" Of course, he would never have

said such things sober, but obviously, he wasn't and Merlin was so *near* and the alcohol gave him courage and really, it was *the* opportunity! So he just stopped thinking about anything and shoved Merlin against a wall and pressed his lips to his. For about a second, Arthur felt like he was in heaven, but then Merlin shoved him off and looked at him with an expression of utter shock, before he ran off.

The next morning, Arthur didn't remember how he had gotten into his bed. What he did remember was seeing Gwen kiss Lancelot, getting drunk and kissing Merlin. Oh God! Arthur sat up straight in his bed and even his terrible headache wasn't very important right now. He had kissed Merlin! And Merlin hadn't liked it. Which he could have anticipated if he hadn't been completely wasted.

So when his manservant arrived with his breakfast, he was fully dressed, but before Merlin could express his surprise, Arthur had already started: "Merlin, I'm sorry! I was drunk and I..."

"It's okay" Merlin interrupted, eyes downcast. "I understand. You were upset about Gwen and I was there and like you said, you were drunk. There's no need to apologize!"

"Yes, there is!" Arthur insisted and had he not been completely occupied with his own feelings, he would have noticed that Merlin refused to look at him and seemed to be rather uncomfortable overall. "Despite everything I say..." Arthur sighed. "... you *are* my friend. I should never have done such a thing, drunk or not. Therefore, I apologize." Merlin smiled weakly. "It's okay, really. Let's just forget it."

Arthur nodded and tried not to feel completely heartbroken. Even if Merlin wrote it off as some drunk-being-upset-whatever-thing, how could *he* ever forget the feeling of Merlin against him, even if it had been for mere seconds?

So when later that day Morgana entered his chamber, he had been staring at a document he was supposed to read without having the slightest clue what it might be about.

"Arthur, how are you?" Morgana was smiling very brightly and Arthur sighed. "Do you want anything specific, or did you just come here to get on my nerves?"

Morgana's face grew more serious and she looked at him inquiringly. "Well, I thought..."

"Yeah, you thought wrong." He sighed again and because she was his sister – somehow at least – and he eventually told her everything, he went on: "I took your advice. Well, not really. But I kissed him."

"Oh? Then why are you not happy?" Morgana didn't seem to understand and Arthur shook his head. "It wasn't well received."

"It wasn't? But I was so sure... Oh Arthur, I'm sorry!" She came over to him and hugged him fiercely and he hugged her back, which he allowed himself very rarely and which made Morgana grasp the seriousness of the situation even more. "Are you going to do anything?" she asked gently and the prince shook his head. "I apologized and he told me to forget it." He laughed humourlessly. "As if I ever could."

In the next weeks, Arthur noticed changes in Merlin's behaviour. It weren't big changes, but for him, they were significant. For example, Merlin stopped touching him almost altogether, which was quite remarkable given the fact that he was the one to dress him. He was quiet and rarely ever offered his opinion on anything. He just did his duties and vanished. In fact, he behaved like any good servant should have. And Arthur could hardly believe it himself, but he honestly didn't want a good servant, he

wanted *Merlin*.

One day, he just couldn't stand the quiet anymore. "Merlin, what's bothering you?"

"Nothing, Sire, I'm fine!" Merlin smiled, but it wasn't his brilliant smile Arthur had gotten so used to, it was dull and somehow wrong.

"Clearly, you're not. I haven't heard your ramblings or opinions or anything from you lately. You're perfectly on time, you perform your duties and that's it!" This wasn't what he had meant to say, but it was the truth nonetheless.

"But that's what you want, isn't it? A good servant?" Merlin asked carefully and Arthur shook his head vehemently. "No. I want *you*."

Merlin's face went white at that and he started at Arthur wide-eyed and the prince realised how his words could be interpreted.

"You want Gwen" Merlin replied after a while and Arthur sighed. "I don't want Gwen" he answered lowly, almost to himself, then looked at Merlin again. "However, is this about the kiss? You said we should forget it!" It pained him to say this, but really, he would have said or done anything if it meant getting Merlin back like he had been.

"But I can't! God, Arthur, I really can't!" Merlin burst out suddenly and the prince was shocked to see tears filling his eyes. He hadn't realized that his thoughtless actions had shaken his manservant so completely. Horrified, he tried to say anything to make amends. "Merlin, I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to..."

"I know you didn't! That's just it! God, I... I've been wishing for it for so long, and then you suddenly kiss me, because you're drunk, and don't mean anything by it and I... God, Arthur, I'm sorry!" He was sobbing in earnest now, and it hurt Arthur nearly physically to see him like that, while he was desperately trying to make sense of what he had said. Slowly, he walked over to his shaking manservant and put his hand on his shoulder, because he didn't dare to do more. "Merlin, what are you trying to say?"

Merlin shook his head slowly. "Arthur, I'm sorry, I'm so sorry, I just... I wanted you for such a long time, and now... and I... can I go now?" He wanted to turn away, but Arthur grabbed his arm and tried to say the right thing, which wasn't that easy because his brain was singing *He wants me, He wants me, He wants me* at him, and it was hard to grab a coherent thought through that. Finally, he managed a rather gently: "Look at me, Merlin, please" and his manservant for once obeyed and reluctantly looked up. The prince was shocked to see fear and despair in Merlin's eyes and asked carefully: "Did you mean that? Do you really want me?" He didn't want to get his hopes up just yet. Merlin closed his eyes and swallowed, then he seemed to let go and nodded. At this moment, Arthur felt like dancing with joy, which he of course wouldn't have done even if this situation hadn't been so serious. "But I know you don't want me, how could you? And I'm sorry I bothered you with this and could you please let me go now?" Merlin went on and Arthur could only stare at him disbelievingly for a second before he shook his head. "Merlin, you really are stupid, aren't you?" he asked incredulously and Merlin's eyes flew open in shock and fear, but before he could say anything, Arthur went on. "I kissed you because I wanted to. I wanted to kiss *you*. It wasn't just because you were there – well, in a way, it was, but it was because it was you, it couldn't have been anyone else. And I wasn't upset about Gwen, I was..." He couldn't believe he was about to say this, but since he was fairly certain he wasn't going to be rejected, he went on. "I was staring at you and Morgana teased me about it, okay?" It wasn't easy to admit, but here he was, heart pounding in his chest, hoping he hadn't gotten everything completely wrong after all.

Merlin only stared at him with an expression Arthur couldn't quite place and after a while, he got nervous. "Uhm, say something?" Merlin blinked and then a truly glorious,

brilliant smile broke out on his face. "You really mean this?" Finally, Arthur could smile himself and finally, he could touch Merlin the way he wanted, and stroked his cheek before he pulled him in for a kiss. And this time, Merlin didn't run away, but reciprocated rather enthusiastically and Arthur doubted he had ever felt this good in his entire life.

The next days passed in a blissful haze. Whenever they could, they tried to steal time together, which wasn't that difficult after all, because no one would suspect anything when Arthur and Merlin were in the prince's chambers alone.

Of course, Morgana noticed the changes in his mood and took him aside one day, looking at him questioningly. Arthur nodded, grinning, and Morgana wanted to congratulate him, but stopped herself and frowned. "You're still not completely happy", she observed and Arthur sighed. Of course he wasn't able to keep that from her. "Well, it's... it's because it's just sex, okay? And knowing that he doesn't feel the same, well, it hurts", he explained quietly, pulling a pained face because he couldn't believe he had just said that. Morgana looked contemplatively. "But do you know? That he doesn't feel the same, I mean?"

"Not for certain. But... how could I ever ask? This is already more than I could ever hope for and I can't expect more of him. No, I rather have him like this than not at all." Arthur was talking to the floor, so he missed Morgana rolling her eyes. "You really are a bit stupid, aren't you?" she sighed and hugged him, then went away, leaving Arthur a little confused.

The next morning, they went out for a hunt, and as usual, things didn't go quite according to plan and they were attacked by bandits.

Arthur had just finished off one of them and turned round to face the next when he saw Merlin's eyes flash golden and the bandit flying away and hitting a tree.

Shocked at his stupidity, he stared at his manservant and Merlin stared back, fear and guilt written plainly on his face.

Before Arthur could say or do anything, he heard one of the knights call: "Sire, is everything alright?" and Merlin seemed to look even more frightened at that.

"Fine! We best head back to Camelot, though!" Arthur called back and dragged Merlin to the horses, muttering "Don't say a word!", but he was sure Merlin was too scared at the moment to do that anyway.

Back in the prince's chambers, he started: "Merlin, I really am disappointed!" and his manservant flinched and looked like he wanted to say something, but Arthur didn't let him. "How could you be so stupid? What if one of the knights had seen? How could I have defended you against my father then?"

Merlin looked more confused the more Arthur said and finally settled for a: "I don't understand. You... you won't tell the king, then?" He still looked unsure and frightened and it hurt Arthur to see him doubt him. "Do you think I want to see you executed?"

"I... no, but... he is your father, and it's your duty to tell him, isn't it?" Merlin asked lowly and Arthur shook his head. "Well, I haven't told him yet and I'm certainly not planning to. If that was what I wanted, I could have done it months ago" the prince stated matter-of-factly and Merlin nearly fell off his chair at that. "You... you knew?" he stuttered and Arthur grinned. "Of course, I knew. I'm not stupid, Merlin, and sometimes, you really are careless. So I suspected it for some time, but I got proof in the last days. You see, your eyes glow when you orgasm."

Merlin went bright red at that and his mouth fell open. "Wha-what?"

Arthur was grinning even broader now. "*I said*, your eyes glow when you orgasm. Well, I guess it's a rather magical moment after all." He was clearly enjoying this, while Merlin grew more uncomfortable with the second. "But why didn't you say something?"

"Well, I was hoping you would trust me enough to tell me yourself." He sighed and Merlin looked at the floor guiltily. "I'm sorry. I trust you, I really do! I just... I couldn't. I wanted to, but... Arthur, I'm sorry!"

The prince nodded. "I understand, I think."

"I think I don't. I mean, why didn't you tell your father if you knew? Sorcery is evil after all" Merlin asked and Arthur would have laughed if this hadn't been so serious. Instead, he went over to Merlin and pulled him from his chair, taking his hands into his own. Looking straight into his eyes, he explained seriously: "You are not evil, Merlin. Not you of all people. Even if you hadn't saved my life countless times – which you have, haven't you?" he added and Merlin nodded, grinning reluctantly. "I could never believe you meant harm to me or Camelot. You could have killed me in my sleep or poisoned my food or whatever, if you wanted me dead, even if you weren't a sorcerer."

Merlin was looking at him with something akin to awe in his eyes now and he was smiling. "Thank you, Arthur. But still, it is the law..."

Arthur nodded. "Yes. But it is wrong. I trust you, Merlin, with everything I have. Gods, do you really not see? I love you."

When Merlin's face went white with shock, Arthur belatedly realised what he just had said. Gods, he had ruined everything again. "I'm sorry!" Letting go of Merlin's hands, he turned round and took a deep breath. Now, Merlin would leave and everything he had hoped for was lost. But instead of hearing the door, he felt a gentle touch in his shoulder. "Arthur? Really? Do... do you mean that? I mean, in a not-just-friends way?"

Arthur cringed at that, but nodded nonetheless. He stood by his word, no matter the consequences. The next thing he knew was Merlin in his arms. "Oh my God, Arthur! I never even dared hope for this. But, oh my God! This is... wow!" Merlin seemed a little confused and overwhelmed and Arthur wasn't sure what to make of this. It didn't sound like a rejection, but he didn't want to get his hopes up just yet. Slowly, he disentangled himself from Merlin and looked at him questioningly. "What are you trying to say?"

Merlin blinked. "You really don't know? Arthur, I love you too. Have for a long time, really!"

At that, it was Arthur's turn to be a little overwhelmed, but when he finally grasped that this was indeed real, he smiled brilliantly and pulled Merlin in for a passionate kiss.

Below Camelot, the great dragon was growling in his cave. "This is not what I meant!" he grumbled, but he would have to get used to the thought because really, you can't stop the course of destiny.