

## Ten Paces by LilFerret

**Fandom:** Torchwood

**Summary:** "Wild Wild West, Jim West, desperado, rough rider. No you don't want nada..."  
(Sequel to Time After Time.)

**Rated:** PG13/Teen

**Categories:** Adventure, Western

**Characters/Ship:** Jack Harkness/Ianto Jones

**Spoilers:** None

**Warnings:** Slight Swearing, Mild Violence

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**Author Notes:** This Pay it Forward fic is for <lj user="nightchild78">, who gave the prompt: "Jack and Ianto are sent through the Rift in the Wild West and have to face a bunch of bad guys threatening a small town until the team find a way to bring them back."

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### Chapter 1

Ianto blinked, trying to pretend he wasn't seeing what he saw in front of him. He rubbed his eyes, but to no avail. No, he was not here. Not so soon after their other little jaunt to the past. What had he possibly done in another life to deserve this?

"I said, put 'em up!"

Ianto saw Jack's hand moving slowly towards his Webley. "Jack..."

"They're pointing guns at us, Ianto!" Jack whispered harshly.

"I can see that, Jack. Which is exactly why you shouldn't be going for yours!"

"What's all this yammering about? Put 'em up or we'll fill you full of lead. Don't be thinking we won't!"

Ianto swallowed hard. This was certainly new. These men looked - and apparently sounded - exactly like some poorly-written western movie Ianto had seen as a child. There were five of them, the leader obviously the one doing the talking, and they all looked as mean as they were dirty. Ianto briefly wondered if they could take them, but since these guys could easily be quick draws and they were outnumbered, he figured it was best to see what they wanted rather than aggravate them. Jack, of course, thought otherwise.

"Put your hands up, Jack," Ianto said as he slowly raised his arms.

"Ianto, we can handle them."

"God, Jack, just...put your hands up before we both get killed!"

Jack shot him a look of irritation mixed with amusement but moved his hand away from his gun and raised his arms as well. "This is a very bad idea."

"It's the best one I've got at the moment!"

"Alright, boys, get them guns off them."

Four of the men started forward and soon surrounded them, two pointing rather large guns towards their chests and the others removing their weapons. Ianto felt naked without his gun in the field, but he was more worried about what would happen next.

"I ain't never seen one like this before, boss." It was the scrawnier of the two men who had taken their guns. "I don't rightly know what it is."

"Bring it here, boy," their leader said, holding out one of his hands.

The scrawny man took the Webley and headed over to his leader, handing him the handgun in exchange for the leader's shotgun. The older man turned it over in his hands.

"Well this one don't look too different, just made funny." He looked up at Jack. "Where'd you get this gun?"

"You wouldn't believe me if I told you," Jack replied, smiling.

"I asked you a question, boy. I expect an answer."

Ianto tensed next to Jack. This was not going to end well for either one of them. Especially not if Jack decided to use his sarcasm and wit instead of his charm and patience. And from the look in his eyes, Ianto wasn't counting on a miracle. Sure, Jack would bounce back after being pelted full of real lead bullets, but he wouldn't be so lucky.

"It was given to me," Jack stated simply. Ianto breathed a sigh of relief when nothing followed his answer.

"This one ain't nothing like the other one," said the not-so-scrawny man with Ianto's gun.

They exchanged guns and the leader furrowed his eyebrows. "And just how does this thing work?" he asked, looking up at Ianto.

Even though he was sure nothing good could come of telling him the truth, he answered, "You just pull back the top part there, point, and shoot. But be careful. It kicks a bit."

The man's eyes narrowed. "You playin' with me boy?"

"No sir," Ianto replied, licking his lips. For a moment he was convinced the man would point the gun in his direction to test it, but to his surprise he turned around and shot at a tree. The

bullet pierced the bark on one side and shot clean out the other, landing somewhere in the dirt in the distance. The tree never had a chance.

"Hot DAMN, boss! That there's a weapon straight from God!" It was one of the armed men. Apparently he was as religious as he was large.

"Knock em out, boys," the leader said, drawing the gun closer so he could sniff the end of the barrel. "These two are comin' with us!"

Ianto and Jack exchanged a look and then Ianto hung his head. This was not going to feel very good.

<center>tw tw tw tw tw</center>

Ianto groaned as he came to, rolling onto his side and spitting out what he assumed was dirt. He opened his eyes, letting them adjust to the dingy light around him. He was inside some sort of building. A barn, perhaps. As the sounds of snuffling and whinnying met his ears he sighed. Yup. A barn.

"You know, I actually dated a guy once who lived in worse conditions," Jack's voice said from somewhere in the vicinity of Ianto's head.

The Welshman rolled his eyes. "Why does that not surprise me?"

"You get used to the smell."

"Forgive me if I don't much fancy the idea of roughing it with the livestock."

"Are you fellas gonna get us outta here?"

Ianto rolled the other direction, coming to face a rather decent sized group of people who were watching them with wide eyes. There were two men, two women, and three children, two of which were small boys and the other a teenage girl. Ianto assumed they were a couple of families. It was one of the women who had spoken.

"I don't see why not," Jack said before Ianto could open his mouth. "If we get out of here we'll make sure you do too."

"They sure are handsome, mama," the girl whispered, just loud enough for Ianto to hear.

"Hush, child," the mother replied.

Ianto could feel his face burning, and cursed himself for his tendency to blush. "That's very kind of you," he offered, scrunching up until he could get into a seated position. Jack did the same and sat by his side. Their hands were tied behind their backs and their ankles were bound, but luckily they hadn't been hogtied. It appeared the others had been secured in the same fashion.

"What happened to you?" Jack asked them, even though Ianto was pretty sure he already knew the answer.

"It was Robert Devlin and his boys," one of the men said, shaking his head. "I knew they was trouble the minute they rode into town. Ain't never seen the likes of them before, but they got a reputation, you see."

"What kind of reputation?" Ianto asked.

"The kind that makes a man right yeller," the other man replied. "He and his boys been known to take what they like, and that ain't limited to gold and supplies, neither!"

"When did they take you?" asked Jack.

"'Bout two days ago, now," the first man answered.

"Been stuck in here ever since." The second man again.

"I don't suppose they've said what they want from you?" Ianto ventured, raising his eyebrows hopefully.

"They took all they could from us," one of them women said sadly, looking down at the two boys. "Not sure what else they want."

Jack sighed beside him. "Did they hurt you?"

"Not too bad," the dark-haired man replied. "Broke down our door, stole my brother's horses, and knocked us clean out before they took all our money. Set us up in here and ain't been back 'cept to bring us bread and water."

"A gang of thugs and thieves," Jack mused, snorting softly.

"Jack, we have to do something."

"Got any ideas, Ianto?"

"Not yet, no."

"I'm Jack and this is Ianto," Jack addressed the families. "What are your names?"

"My name is Benjamin, this is my wife Elizabeth, and our two boys Edward and Henry. That there is my brother Simon, his wife Lesley Anne, and my niece Rebecca."

"It's lovely to meet you all," Ianto told them, smiling. "Though it would be better under different circumstances."

"Mama, he talks funny!" Edward said, giggling.

"You mind your tongue," Elizabeth scolded, frowning down at him. "These are nice folk, come to rescue us."

Ianto wanted to protest, since he had absolutely no idea why the rift had chosen to spit them out in the middle of the wild, wild west, but he stopped short. They were the only chance these people had of getting out of this situation, and possibly getting their possessions back. Besides, Jack had already promised them as much.

When the door slammed open, Ianto jumped, his heart racing. Two of the more brawny men from the gang appeared, smirks on their faces. "Get on your feet," one of them said, nodding at Jack and Ianto. "The boss wants to talk to you."

Before either of them could do as they were told the two men had grabbed their arms and practically dragged them to their feet instead. Ianto winced as the rope cut into his wrists and let himself be pulled up, hopping alongside his captor as they left the barn. When they got outside Ianto could see the sun was setting. And somehow, he knew they were in for a long night.

## Chapter 2

Ianto watched as the man known as Robert Devlin spoke with his men, then turned to face them. "You're gonna tell me how you got here, son," the man said, addressing Ianto.

"I'm not sure I understand what you mean," Ianto replied.

"Don't mess with me, boy," Devlin told him, stepping closer. "You and him...you showed up out of nowhere, and you're gonna tell me how you did it."

Ianto figured it really couldn't hurt to bend the truth, since he wasn't positive on the details himself. He had an idea, but that was all. Glancing at Jack he found his smile and nod encouraging. "I've actually no idea."

That wasn't exactly true. Ianto knew there had been no artifact nearby when he and Jack had been sent here. They were returning from an anonymous police call regarding a disturbance, which had turned out to be nothing more than a domestic. They were on foot since it was local. There'd been a giant flash of light and then they'd been dropped right in the middle of this mess. Ianto could only assume that this time around the Rift was to blame. The truth of the matter was they just had no way to get back home. They were at the mercy of the Rift.

Devlin didn't seem to like that answer, his eyes narrowing. "You tryin' to to get me angry?" He stepped even closer, his face barely a whisper from Ianto's. "I don't think you quite understand what's at stake here."

"Oh, he understands," Jack put in, "but he's telling the truth."

Devlin spun on his heel and turned towards Jack. Ianto closed his eyes for a moment, breathing in the fresh air once the other man had moved away. If there was anything he knew for sure, it was that hygiene wasn't very important to Robert Devlin and his crew.

“You think you're real big, don't you boy?” asked Devlin, now getting right up into Jack's face.

“Well, I've certainly never never heard any complaints.”

Ianto bit back a smirk. Now wasn't the time for dirty humor, but leave it to Jack to decide otherwise.

“You sassing me now?”

“That depends,” Jack replied.

“On what?” the man ground out between his teeth.

“On whether or not you find it endearing.”

Ianto knew then that they were in trouble. It was one thing to make an ill-timed joke or two, but Jack was now starting to flirt, and these were not the men to flirt with. Especially not when such behavior was likely to get them both killed.

“Are you some sort of sodomite, boy?” Devlin growled, jamming a gun up into Jack's chin. “You know what we do with your kind around these parts?”

“Humor me.”

“Boys, I think you need to find me some more rope,” Devlin said, not removing the gun from its position under Jack's chin. One of his men hurried off, presumably in search of the aforementioned rope.

“Oh, so you do like me.”

“Jack...” Ianto hissed.

“Ianto...”

He knew he didn't need to tell Jack what Devlin meant to do with that rope. At this time in history, both British and American, homosexuality was punishable by death. Jack had to know that. The man was incorrigible, but he wasn't an idiot.

“What are you doing?” asked Ianto, not taking his eyes off the gun.

“Just getting to know our friend better,” Jack responded, smiling.

“Maybe you're both that way?” Devlin asked, turning to face Ianto. “You a sinner too, boy?”

Ianto sighed, shaking his head. He didn't consider himself a sinner. He wasn't even religious. As far as he was concerned, what he and Jack got up to in private was exactly that, private. The thought that he had once been ashamed of his attraction to Jack was pushed to the back of his mind. He loved Jack, and Jack loved him. Nothing else mattered.

“Got it, boss,” Devlin's man called, heading back toward them. He was grinning ear to ear, as if truly relishing what was going to happen.

Devlin took the rope and shook it in Jack's face. “I would love to use this, son,” he said, glaring, “but there's something you have that I want.”

“I'm not usually big on audiences, but I suppose I could make an exception.”

Ianto saw the flicker of hate in Devlin's eyes only a split second before his hand moved, slapping Jack across the face with the rope. Jack's head snapped to the side and then he straightened it, flexing his jaw. The red marks on his cheek would be there a while.

“You got a big mouth, boy,” growled Devlin, shaking the rope again. “I wanna know where you came from and how you got here. Those are some fancy clothes you're wearin', and fancy guns too. I'm bettin' there's more like that where you came from, and I want 'em.”

Jack smirked. “So it sounds like you need me alive.”

“I reckon I do,” the man replied, pulling the gun away from Jack's face. He walked over to Ianto and placed it under his chin instead. “Not sure I need him, though.”

Ianto swallowed, breathing out of his nose. It wasn't the first time they'd pointed a gun in his direction, but it certainly was a lot more intimate with the cold metal against his skin. His eyes flicked to Jack's, sending him a look that said not to do anything stupid. He hoped Jack would interpret it correctly.

“There's no reason to hurt him,” Jack stated. “I'm sure we can work something out.”

“If you care about this one's life you'll do as I say,” Devlin told him, nudging the barrel of the gun deeper into Ianto's flesh.

Ianto's mind began playing over the events of the last few months. When they'd returned from their last trip to the past Jack had made an obvious effort to change. There had been far less flirting with Gwen, several dates, and often they'd just spent the night on the couch, watching a movie. Where before there had been nights filled with passionate sex and words of lust, there were now nights filled with passionate sex and words of love.

Of course, they still had their moments of raging need, with one or the other of them bent over Jack's desk or up against a filing cabinet in the archives, but Jack had made it clear he was willing to take things to the next level. They were a proper couple now. Unfortunately, that could be detrimental to the situation in which they now found themselves.

“Whatever I can do, I will,” Jack said. “If it's within my control.”

“I do believe you'll find a way,” replied Devlin, snickering. “Lots of things could happen to your pretty boy if you don't. I'm bettin' you don't want to see this one roughed up a bit. Johnny over there would be more than willing to try anything once.”

Johnny, or so Ianto had to assume, winked at him and licked his lips. Ianto felt a bit nauseous. Devlin already assumed he and Jack were gay lovers, and Ianto didn't want to find out if this newest threat meant what he presumed it did.

“There's only one problem,” Jack stated.

“What's that?”

“In order to get what you want, one of use would have to get back home, and we really don't know if that's possible.”

“So we're back to that, are we?” Devlin shook his head and turned to his men. “What do you think, boys? Should we show these two what it means to cross Robert Devlin?”

There was a loud and rowdy consensus, a couple of the men clapping their hands and grinning maniacally. Ianto's brow furrowed as he caught Johnny's eyes. The man was looking him up and down. Oh God.

“Listen to me,” Jack pleaded, though his voice was only slightly raised. “There's a rift in time and space that runs through Cardiff, Wales. That's where we're from, only we live in the twenty-first century. On occasion this rift picks up things or beings from one place and deposits them somewhere else. That's what has likely happened to us. That's how we got here.”

“This here is eighteen twenty-three,” Devlin replied, looking between the both of them and scowling. “You tryin' to tell me you two are aliens who travel through time?”

Jack looked amused. “Aliens?” He looked at Ianto and Ianto shook his head minutely. “No. No, we're not aliens, and actually, we don't normally travel through time. This just happened. We were as surprised as you.”

Well, Jack didn't travel through time now, anyway. Ianto also didn't think Devlin needed Jack to try to explain his human birth and upbringing on the Boeshane Peninsula, either. It was complicated at the best of times. Better to keep it simple.

“And I'm just supposed to believe you, am I?”

“They do have fancy clothes and guns, boss,” one of the men said.

“Yeah,” added another. “I ain't never seen no one with britches like them.”

He was pointing at Ianto, and Ianto looked down at himself, since the gun was no longer pointed at his chin. He was wearing one of Jack's favorite combinations: a charcoal jacket with black pinstripes over matching trousers, charcoal waistcoat, red shirt, and a gray and red striped tie. He looked good. Good enough to eat, if he believed what Jack had told him when he'd arrived at the Hub wearing it.

“Fancy clothes or no fancy clothes, ain't nobody come through no rift type thing from the future,” Devlin proclaimed. He waved the gun in his hand in their general direction. “Get 'em



back in with the others. Maybe they'll tell the truth once they spend the night with no food or water.”

Ianto breathed a sigh of relief as one of Devlin's men grabbed him by the wrists and pushed him back toward the barn. While he didn't cherish the idea of no food or drink – his stomach was already starting to growl as they'd not yet had lunch before they were transported – it meant they'd be alive for the foreseeable future. They'd come a bit too close to a hanging for his piece of mind.

As the door slammed shut and was secured behind them, Ianto let his eyes adjust to the dark and settled onto the dirty floor. Jack took a seat beside him.

“That didn't go so bad,” he said, giving Ianto a grin.

“For you, perhaps,” Ianto argued quietly. “You weren't the one threatened with rape.”

“Are you two alright?” It was Elizabeth, and she was watching them with concerned eyes. “We was a bit afraid you'd been taken out for a beatin'.”

“They got a little rough,” Jack told her, still smiling. “Nothing we couldn't handle.”

“You still gonna save us?” asked Henry, eyes wide.

“We're going to try our best,” Ianto replied.

He hoped they hadn't given the families a false sense of security. In order to get free Ianto and Jack needed to obtain control, and at the moment they had anything but. He had no idea how they were going to get out of this situation. They needed a miracle. One in the shape of Toshiko Sato.

### **Chapter 3**

Ianto awoke with his face buried in Jack's neck. He didn't remember falling asleep that way. In fact, he was pretty sure they'd been lying a couple of feet apart. He wasn't going to complain, however, as the man's pheromones and heat were a lovely combination, and from what he could already tell, it was going to be a chilly morning.

“Hello there,” Jack murmured, winking as Ianto shuffled back a bit.

“Good morning, Jack,” he replied. He cleared his throat; it was suddenly a bit dry. He blamed it on the dust and dirt. It wasn't the nearness to Jack.

“Sleep okay?”

“Yup. Well, as good as could be expected, considering.”

“Hey! I make a good pillow.”

“I meant our captivity, Jack.”

“Of course.”

Ianto pushed himself up into a sitting position. It was incredibly awkward, the ropes tied the way they were. He'd hoped at some point their captors would remove the bindings, but they'd been left bound instead. He couldn't blame them, really. A couple of men, obviously from “out of town.” Hell, he wouldn't trust them either.

Glancing over at the families he sighed. They were still sleeping, one or two of them even snoring. It must be pretty early yet. The light was shining through the slats of the barn but it didn't seem bright enough for the sun to be fully risen.

“Do you think we'll get breakfast?” he asked the man beside him. Devlin had been true to his word, only granting bread to the families. One of the men had stood watch, while another physically fed them all. No one's ropes were coming off. Jack and Ianto hadn't been fed, but they were at least given sips of water.

“I hope so, Ianto. I could really go for a full English.”

Ianto rolled his eyes. “I believe it's bread or nothing, Jack.”

“Damn.” Jack shuffled into a seated position. “And I need the toilet.”

“What toilet?”

Jack groaned.

It took another thirty minutes – or so Ianto guessed – for the families to start to come around. First up were the boys, followed by Rebecca and her parents, and then Elizabeth and Benjamin. They all sat exchanging pleasantries until the barn door opened.

In walked Devlin, smiling. “Well then, sun's up. New day. Who's gonna be the first to talk today, hmm boys?”

Ianto was mildly surprised Devlin was the first one in. From what he'd gathered the man usually liked to send in his lackeys, preferring not to get his already dirty hands dirtier. Apparently even a gang leader like Robert Devlin liked to change things up every now and again. Perhaps he was trying to keep them on their toes.

“Actually, I'd like to take a piss first, if you don't mind,” Jack replied.

Ianto knew that if the man's arms had been free they'd now been crossed over his chest in defiance. He was even doing the stubborn chin lifting thing that Ianto found ridiculously endearing. He had it bad. Pathetic, really.

“I ain't stoppin' ya,” Devlin shot back.

“You gonna hold it for me?”

The look on the gangster's face made Ianto wince. Devlin moved well into Jack's personal space, leaning over and saying, "You can piss your britches far as I'm concerned, boy."

"Well, that's not very friendly," Jack scoffed.

"Do I look like I'm your friend, son?" the man replied, pulling out his gun and once more pressing it to Jack's chin. "You got a hell of a lip on you."

Before Jack could snap back a sarcastic reply Ianto gave him a look, shaking his head. Jack caught his eye, nodded minutely, then drew his eyes back to the man in his face.

"I'm just asking to use the restroom."

Devlin stepped back, laughing and holstering his weapon. "Fancy words, fancy clothes... I think you're just a might too fancy there, boy. How'd ya like to go without breakfast, too?"

Ianto's stomach took that opportunity to announce its complete disapproval. Luckily Devlin either didn't hear it – it was unnervingly loud, actually – or chose to ignore the sound. Ianto swallowed down the slight burn that clawed its way up from his stomach. Wonderful. He was stuck in the wild, wild west, with all of its dangers, and his tombstone was going to read, "Here lies Ianto Jones. He died of heartburn."

"In fact," Devlin continued a moment later, "how 'bout all of you go without breakfast? I reckon that might tighten your lip 'bout things I don't need to hear, and loosen it 'bout things I do."

There was a general murmur from those across from them and Ianto frowned. Damn. They were going to get those poor people killed if they didn't think of something soon. As much as Ianto hated him and Jack being stuck where they were, he was even more concerned with the others. Ianto knew he and Jack could fend for themselves, but these families – actually one extended family, really – had no one to fight for them.

"We've already told you as much as we know," Jack replied. "And that was probably more than we should have."

Devlin sneered. "I say when it's enough."

"Look, there is a time line to protect," Jack began, but Devlin slapped him across the face. "Okay, ow!"

"Your friend here's real mouthy," Devlin said to Ianto, putting a fist in his hair and yanking backwards. Ianto hissed. The gun was drawn again and Ianto felt cool metal at his throat. "Maybe he needs a reason to tell me what I wanna know."

"Well, now, that's not nice, is it?"

"Doctor!?" Jack gasped, shifting on the ground and making scuffling noises.

Ianto's eyes widened, but he dare not move his head. Doctor? Jack's Doctor? He knew he should probably be pleased a rescue had been mounted, but a part of him still held the notion Jack might leave again. His heart began to thump wildly in his chest.

Devlin released Ianto and spun around, pointing his gun at the intruder. "Who the hell are you?"

"Me? Oh, why...I'm the Doctor!"

Ianto lowered his head and got his first good look at the Time Lord. *That* was the Doctor? He was a tall, skinny man in a brown pin-striped suit, sporting a camel-colored long coat. His hair was a complete mess, he was wearing glasses, and...were those trainers? Who wore trainers with a suit?

"Doctor, how'd you get here?" Jack asked. His eyes were bright and there was a huge grin on his face. Ianto scowled. "I didn't hear you."

"Now wait a damned minute here..."

"Well, that's because I put the old girl on silent," the Doctor replied, interrupting and ignoring Devlin. He had shoved his hands in his pockets and was literally bouncing on his feet.

"She has a silent mode?"

"Of course she does, Jack," answered the Time Lord, grinning from ear to ear. He turned and seemed to notice the families for the first time. "Oh, and who do we have here? Hello!"

"Hello!" It was a bright and cheerful greeting from Edward. "Are you here to rescue us, sir?"

"There will be no damned rescuing of nobody," Devlin snapped, waving his gun from person to person. "Where the hell are my men?"

"You mean those gentlemen outside?" the Doctor asked, lifting a hand and tilting a thumb back in the direction of the door. "They're a bit tied up at the moment. Did you need them? I could bring you to see them. No, but you'll be seeing them in just a moment anyway, won't you? No need to rush into anything. Oh, and look at you! You're a lovely young thing!"

The Doctor was now addressing Rebecca, whose face blushed considerably at the praise. Ianto watched as she practically batter her eyelashes at him. In a way it reminded him of Gwen. Rebecca, however, was just a child. Ianto forced himself not to make any further comparisons.

Devlin stormed towards the barn door and swung the door wide. Ianto cringed when it slammed into the wall. "Where are they, boy? Where the hell did you put my men?"

"They're just inside the TARDIS."

"The what?"

“TARDIS,” the Doctor replied. “Time and relative dimension in space. Surely you've heard of it? No? Well then of course you've heard of me. I'm a Time Lord. Last of my kind.”

“What you tryin' to pull, son?” Devlin asked, voice low and dangerous as he pointed his gun at the Doctor. “I could pump you fulla lead right now.”

“No, you really couldn't.”

“I sure as hell could!”

“Actually no, I'm afraid not.”

Devlin stiffened his posture, finger on the trigger. The Doctor pulled something out of his pocket that lit up, emitted a piercing, high whistle, and a bluish white stream of some sort of energy knocked the gun right out of Devlin's hand. Devlin jumped backward.

“He tried to tell you,” Jack said. He was smirking.

“I think you'll find that weapon's a bit useless now,” the Doctor said, returning his hand to his pocket. The smile was no longer on his face and Ianto swallowed, seeing the intense frown that replaced it. “Silly things, guns. So violent. No real purpose.”

“Who the hell do you think you are?”

“I told you. I'm the Doctor. And that's my friend Jack. And you must be Ianto Jones,” the Time Lord said, addressing Ianto.

Ianto licked his lips. “H-hello, Doctor.”

“I've not yet met these fine people,” the Doctor said, voice rising to a cheerful lilt again as the grin returned to his face.

Ianto watched and listened as introductions were made. The Doctor untied Jack and Jack then tied up Robert Devlin. Ianto was next to be unbound, and then they both joined the Time Lord in untying the families.

It seemed ages later when the families had hugged and shaken hands with the Doctor, Jack and Ianto, and then set out on their way to their homes. The Doctor had then reunited Devlin with his gang, gave them all a huge tongue-lashing, and sent them out into the morning without their weapons. He threatened if they returned he'd know about it, and be back to deal with them each in turn. Ianto had never seen a group of men look so scared.

Finally they were aboard – it was bigger on the inside - the Time Lord's TARDIS, and settled around a table with cups of tea and delicious scones. Jack and Ianto had also both made trips to the toilet as soon as possible.

“But how did you know where to find us, Doctor?”

“Oh, that was simple, Jack,” he replied, nodding toward Jack's wrist.

“My wrist strap? But it doesn't work anymore.”

“Well no, you can't go gallivanting off into time and space,” the Doctor said, shrugging, “but the TARDIS can track it, track you. She's brilliant, aren't you girl?”

Ianto shook his head. It all seemed so surreal. This was the second, and hopefully last, time they traveled into the past, and he really couldn't enjoy either one. Maybe if they'd been given a choice, but they were victims of an artifact and the Rift. Hell, still wasn't even sure the Rift had the ability to dump them off in America. It certainly didn't extend that far.

No matter how they'd gotten there, he was looking forward to getting home to Cardiff in their own time and taking the hottest shower he could. He felt filthy, even though they'd not even been in the wild west for even twenty-four hours.

“You're awfully quiet,” Jack said, nudging his shoulder.

The Doctor had gotten up and wandered off, without Ianto realizing it. He put down his cup on its saucer, rubbing his left thumb over his right hand. “Just taking it all in, I suppose.”

“You okay?”

“I will be, Jack,” he replied, offering a small smile.

Jack leaned in and planted a kiss on his nose. “You held your own out there. I'm proud of you.”

Ianto blushed. “I didn't really do anything.”

“Sure you did. A lesser man might have cowered at Devlin and his gang. But not my Ianto.”

“Seriously, Jack, stop.”

Jack winked, grabbing their soiled dishes and getting up to place them in the sink. Ianto followed him back into the control room where they found the Doctor, hopping around the machine before them like his feet were on fire.

“All ready to head back to Cardiff, I presume?” he asked them, suddenly stopping all his movements and shoving his hands into his pockets once more.

“Ready when you are, Doc,” Jack replied, smiling at Ianto.

“Very well then.” With another flurry of motion the Time Lord began turning knobs, pulling levers, and flipping switches.

“Better hold on,” Jack told Ianto, reaching for any part of the ship he could get his hands on.

Ianto did as was suggested, barely establishing a hold on the console when the TARDIS began twisting and jerking around. By the time they'd landed and the Doctor announced they were

back in the proper time in Cardiff Bay, Ianto thought he'd have to do a thorough search along the floor for the stomach he'd lost.

There was what seemed to be an obligatory offer of a trip to the stars for the both of them, at which time Jack's eyes lit up, but Ianto's frantic look at Jack seemed to be what made the final decision.

"That's alright, Doctor," Jack told the Time Lord, "I think we'll be just fine right here." He seemed to think for a moment. "Doctor, where's Martha?"

The Doctor's smile fell. "Home."

Jack nodded, putting a hand on the Time Lord's shoulder as if in understanding. Ianto wasn't sure what their silent communication meant, but he figured it was personal.

"Right then," the Doctor said, smile returning. Ianto wondered if he might be bipolar. "Off you go. Shoo shoo. Things to do, and all that."

Jack broke into a smile and Ianto couldn't help but join him. The Time Lord might be a bit off, but there was no escaping being swept up in his enthusiasm.

"Thank you, Doctor," Jack said, opening the door and holding it for Ianto.

"Yes, thank you very much," Ianto agreed.

"Oh, it was nothing," the Doctor replied.

Jack shook his head and took Ianto's hand. Their fingers entwined, Ianto followed behind him as they stepped onto the Plass. With one last wave at the man in the little blue box, they turned towards the water tower. There was a grinding and whirring noise and Ianto turned to watch the TARDIS slowly disappear.

"I thought he had it on silent?" he asked.

Jack chuckled. "Apparently it's no longer necessary."

They began walking and suddenly Ianto stopped. "Oh God, Jack!"

"What, Ianto? What's wrong?"

"Your Webley. We left it behind!"

Jack's face crumbled for a moment before he regained his composure and smiled. "It's alright, Ianto. I have a feeling the Doctor would have destroyed that too, if it was with Devlin's men."

Ianto frowned. "First your coat, now your gun. Time travel is for the birds, Jack!"

Jack shook his head, swinging Ianto's hand as they started walking again. "They can be replaced, Ianto. I'm just glad we both made it back in one piece. You, especially."

“Love you, Jack.”

“Love you, too.”