

Driver Restrainedman

By Eric Multherin



DRIVER RESTRAINED MAN

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A handwritten signature in dark brown ink, consisting of several fluid, overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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Chapter 1:

A RUDE AWAKENING

knock knock... knock knock...

"Anybody home?!"

"Go away," you call from your bed.

knock knock

You realize that whoever is knocking can't hear you. You have a short argument with yourself about what to do. Get up and answer the door, or let them think that think that nobody's home?

You get up grudgingly (already displeased at the person knocking), slowly walk down your wooden steps, and head to your front door. You open it and more hatred grows immediately towards the person that had been knocking. This is because the person in front of your house is Merlin Oaks. You try to think of all the reasons why you dislike this guy, but there's not enough time and another reason will probably appear after this conversation.

"Good evening, Mr. Driver," says Merlin.

"When was 6AM ever in the evening?" you ask.

"Touché... well, before I say what I've been sent here to say, I wanted to apologize," he says while faking a smile. "I know we've had some arguments in the past, but with a new struggle at hand we should settle our differences. Though... either way... I'm the leader of the King's Royal Guard. That means you have to foll-"

"No," you interrupt.

"What?" Merlin seems shocked.

"Whatever you were about to ask of me, my answer to it... is no,"

"Alright, well at least let me tell you something," Merlin seemed hesitant.

"You have sixty seconds," you respond.

"What? Driver, this is really important,"

"Fifty-two seconds,"

"Okay... fine, whatever. Driver, your-" Merlin starts.

"Call me by my full name, Merlin. Be polite,"

"...Driver Frank Restrainedman... despite our disagreements, I-"

"I was thinking more along the lines of 'Driver Hates Merlin Restrainedman', but that works too I guess... Oh! Thirteen seconds by the way,"

"Driver this is serious!" Merlin chides. "Your mother has passed... She was on her way home from the local market, and one of the farmer's rabid giraffes snuck up behind her and ate her," he looks legitimately concerned as he finishes.

"Well... At least she passed the way she wanted to. My grandma always said you'd have good luck for the rest of your life if you get killed by a giraffe," you inform him.

"That actually makes no sense... anyway, I'm glad to see you're all torn up about it," He says hesitantly.

"I'm happy honestly," you respond. "Food will cost less,"

"Yes... well," Merlin begins. "The King has requested your presence,"

"Ugh... you know I don't like him!"

"Doesn't matter. You have to be there to sign the papers agreeing to put the farmer on the guillotine," he replies.

"Sounds fun enough,"

"Then let us go," he finishes.

"Let me shower first," you tell him.

"Driver... you are literally a peasant. You don't have a shower," Merlin tries to crush your dreams.

"Never said I did, but I do have a very large sink" you inform him.

You go back into your cabin and take a "shower", then walk back out and are disappointed to see Merlin still there, expecting you to follow.

Merlin calls for you. "Driver! We really have to go!"

"Patience, Merlin" you reply with unneeded sarcasm.

"By the way... " Merlin calls to you once again. "I really like what you've done with the place. The cabin's looking nice, and you even put fresh dirt on your property! It feels nice through my sandals!"

"That's manure, Merlin" you correct him.

"I hate you," Merlin responds.

"Alright... Let us head off!" you call.

"Finally,"

Chapter 2:

MR. KINGY

Together you start walking to the edge of your property.

"It's up to you..." Merlin says. "Do you want to walk or take a horse?"

"Um... Why not take a horse? You should always try something different, I guess," you decide.

"Now you're speaking my language! Maybe we aren't so different after all," Merlin suggested.

"Oh no... Oh no no no no no. Stop talking," you plead. "I change my mind, I wanna walk now,"

"No, luckily the Royal Guard is almost here with our rides," Merlin says.

"Well, that's just fine and dandy," you say.

The Royal Guard arrives in front of your cabin. You and Merlin hop onto horses and start riding towards the castle.

"Is 'horse sick' a thing?" you ask jokingly. "'Cause if it is, that's what I'm feeling right now,"

"Thankfully, no... no it's not," Merlin answers. "Driver, if you throw up I swear-"

A knight of the Royal Guard interrupts "Uh, Merlin? Do you have manure on your sandals?"

"Yes... we're not going to talk about it," Merlin answers.

"Why aren't we talking about it?" you ask. "I hear it feels good,"

"Can someone shut him up?" Merlin pleads.

"I would, but it looks like we're here, sir," replies a knight.

The two of you head into the throne room and meet the King.

"Afternoon, Gentlemen," he says.

"Your highness," you both say in unison and bow.

"I know why you have come, Driver. Though you came all this way, I have to say I can't give you the papers," the King starts.

"Excuse me?" you question in disbelief.

"Wait... you made me go all the way to Driver's house for nothing?!" exclaims Merlin.

"Sadly... yes," responded the King. "As it turns out, the farmer is Johnny Appleseed's great grandson. This makes it illegal to have him executed on the guillotine,"

"Well, that's great. I guess I'll be going home now," you say.

"Mr. Restrainedman... wait," calls the King. "I could still use your help with something. You see, I'm incredibly sorry for your loss, but now that that's happened... you have nothing else to live for,"

"Where are you going with this?" you ask.

The King answers quickly. "Well you see, there is a dragon not far from the kingdom. This is very dangerous. I need a team to go up into its cave and slay it. Now that you have no family, you have no one to live for... simply put... you're expendable,"

"Sir, I'm flattered... Not really, that's sarcasm. I'm going home now," you say.

"Driver, respect your king!" Merlin shouts.

"Thank you, Merlin..." the king starts again. "As I was saying, you are expendable. If you choose to go through with this... and you slay the dragon... you will be so rich it'll be like you're living in my castle. Your partner on this quest would be Merlin Oaks,"

"WHAT?!" both you and Merlin exclaim.

Merlin continues... "Sir, I will not go on a quest with the likes of him! He is a peasant!"
"I'm the leader of the Royal Guard! I will no-"

"Oaks, I understand your concern, but hear me out. As you know, I'm getting old and tired from years of leading this kingdom. So... If you and Driver come back to me, with the dragon slain, then you will be the new king. Besides... With the leader of the Royal Guard and Driver the... uh... leader of the peasants?... The king of the poor?... uh... Listen! The point is you two will have no trouble completing this task,"

"Alright, sir! Even though I don't want to... I'll do it!" Merlin proclaimed.

"That's it, my lad!" shouted the king. "Driver, What say you?! Will you accept the quest or decline?"

"I accept the quest, my king!" you say.

"Good choice, young fellow! I assumed you would," responds the King.

"Wow... that's funny,"

"What?" asks the king.

"You thought I was serious," you reply. "I mean, I'm perfectly fine living the way I am right now... Why would I risk that to follow your orders?"

Merlin joins in. "I recommend you change your mind, Driver..."

"I'm not one to listen to recommendations, Oaks. Good day, gentlemen..." you say as you escort yourself out. "Oh... I almost forgot, your highness,"

"What is it, Mr. Driver?" the King replies.

"You should stop assuming. Everyone knows what that does," you finish.

You exit the castle, and Merlin chases behind you. Not long after you hit the dirt road in the middle of town, Merlin catches up.

"Well, congratulations..." he starts.

"For saving my life?" you ask.

"For becoming the King's most hated peasant... you know you could be killed with a snap of his fingers, right?"

"Didn't he lose both his thumbs in a war?... Kind of hard to snap then, don'tcha think?" you say with a laugh.

"Driver, stop trying to be funny, that was your big shot. He was offering you the ability to live like a king! I mean, what are you living for anyway? What's motivating you to go back home and live the same way you've lived for ages?"

You hesitate for a second. "My bed... you woke me up early, remember?"

Merlin starts again. "Driver, this could completely change your life for the better... I'm going to ask you again... will you follow the king's orders and protect your kingdom?"

In your head you're thinking "no means no", but he brings a good point.

"Ugh!... fine," you decide. "Fine... I'll go back. In some magical way you've made me change sides. Sure you're not a wizard?"

"Different Merlin. I'm glad you came around, Driver. Hopefully the King will forgive you and we can go forth,"

"Let's get on with it, then. I have dragons to kill, and coins to obtain!" you shout happily.

The two of you turn around and head back to where you came from. When you arrive, the knights let you back in and the King is still sitting on his throne.

"We meet again, my king," Merlin greets.

"Has Mr. Driver had a change of mind?" asks the King.

"It seems so," Merlin answers.

"Driver... Is that true?" he looks at you.

"..." you notice a servant on the ground cleaning, and can't help but stare.

The King notices and apologizes. "Oh, yes. I'm sorry we have to talk in front of my servant, but there were tracts of manure on my polished floor. I don't know how that appeared... my guests are always dressed in their best,"

You follow up quickly. "You should step in it if you have the chance. I hear it feels good through your sa-"

"Let it go, Driver. That bit is overdone," whispers Merlin harshly.

"What was that, Merlin?" asks the King.

"Nothing, sir..." he replies

"Alright then, back to the subject at hand," starts the King. "Driver Restrainedman... did you change your mind?"

"Yes, sir. I think I did," you answer.

"Good... based on our last conversation I'd say that the last name 'Restrainedman' doesn't fit you, but I'll give you another chance. Some words of advice... talk less," instructs the king.

"Don't know if I can follow that order, Mr. Kingy," you admit.

"Never call me that again, young fellow... do you, Driver Restrainedman and Merlin Oaks, accept the quest?"

"..."

"Well? What is your decision?" asks the King impatiently.

You begin. "It's obviously yes, sir. I was just thinking of a cool, heroic way to say it... couldn't think of one,"

"... Okay then. Well, I'm glad to hear that you're going through with it after all! This is a very important issue, so you and Merlin will be leaving right now!"

"Excuse me?" Merlin asks.

"Oh yes," answers the King quickly. "A dragon is no laughing matter, it could be flying over right now ready to attack! We must reach it before that happens!"

You chime in. "We get that, sir... but... right now? As in... *right now* right now?... We haven't even had breakfast yet! Have a heart,"

The King seems to be getting annoyed. "I do have a heart... for my kingdom... and if you had a heart too, Mr. Driver, you would realize how important this is,"

"Alright, your highness... we're on our way, now," Merlin says before you can respond.

"I wish you two good luck, and may you bring long life to this kingdom," the King finishes.

Chapter 3:

MYSTERIOUS GUY IN THE SHACK

You and Merlin exit the castle, go through the town's marketplace, and take the dirt road to the fields beyond the kingdom. You take a mental note that this is the farthest you've been from home. You don't want Merlin to think anything of it, so you continue to trudge behind him in the grass that's up to your knees.

He stops and points far in the distance. "That's where we're headed. That cave all the way over there,"

"Looks like fun," you reply.

Both of you walk a bit further, then Merlin stops you again. "Look over there."

"I see grass," you note aloud.

"No, the shack to the left. There's someone in there that can help us."

"Yeah, you know... I love a good 'mysterious guy in the shack' as much as anyone else, but that doesn't mean I go in the shack. That being said, I have a feeling that breaking into his shack is for the best," you say. "Let's go in"

You reach the door and knock, but no one answers. Merlin insists that it's okay for you to go in. Merlin goes through the door first, and then you.

"Well, we are quite literally crossing the threshold," you say with a smirk.

"Shhh," Merlin insists... "Merlin?!" he calls. "You home?!"

"You should stop talking to yourself," you say.

"Not me... Merlin Ambrosius,"

"As in the wizard?" you ask.

An unknown voice answers. "Yes, as in the wizard,"

Both you and Merlin look towards the left side of the shack at an old man in a rocking chair.

"What can I do for you, gentlemen?" the old man asks.

"Good morning, sir," Oaks answers. "We have come here today to ask for your assistance on our quest. We are going out to sl-"

"Speak no more, my son," the wizard interrupts. "I know why you've come. I foresaw this moment at breakfast this morning,"

"Wow," you start. "Usually I foresee an empty bowl of cereal at breakfast, but maybe if I would've had time for a meal this morning I would've seen something cooler this time..."

"I didn't know you brought the King's jester with you today, Oaks" the wizard says, ignoring you.

The Merlin that isn't a stranger to you replies immediately. "I'm sorry sir... actually the King's jester would be more helpful. This is Dr-"

"Driver," Merlin the wizard replies. "I know,"

You start talking excitedly. "You know who I am? Really? I'm a big fan, sir! That's crazy! Can I be your assistant in a magic trick?! Can you sign my sandals?!"

"Mr. Driver," the old man responds. "If it's all the same to you, I'd rather keep you two from dying on your quest. Before we get off topic... again... I have gifts for both of you. These will help you on your journey. For you Merlin, I have new armor. It can hold up a hit from almost anything, and is extremely comfortable! Which may or may not mean it's what I've worn instead of pajamas this past week,"

The old man hands the armor to Oaks. "Thank you, gracious sorcerer," he replies.

The wizard looks at you. "...and for you, Driver... I have invisibility potions. One sip of these and you will vanish from everyone's sight,"

"Cool! Usually I'd drink only because I *wish* to disappear!"

"... Thanks for sharing that..." Merlin the wizard starts. "Now off you two go! You have no time to waste,"

You and Merlin Oaks leave the shack and head back out towards the cave.

Chapter 4:

FOREST THIEF

The two of you head deeper into the fields and eventually run into a forest. There's a fork in it's entrance. You and Merlin have an argument about which way to go, left or right.

Merlin starts. "C'mon Driver, we should go to the right. It's safer."

You counter with "But Merlin, the left is waaaay shorter!"

"Seriously, Driver! We're going to the right!"

"Seriously, Merlin! We're going to the left!"

Merlin gives up. "Fine, let's just go. We'll get nowhere just arguing about it,"

"I knew you would come around," you say.

You turn to go left but hear a loud hiss followed by someone screaming in that direction.

You look at Merlin and say "You know... I always love a good 'path on the right'. Let's go that way,"

"Good choice," Merlin states approvingly.

You start to head right but get called back by Merlin. "Driver! We gotta gear up first," he hands you a satchel. "Here... put the potions in it, I have a feeling we'll need them," He puts his new armor on and follows behind you as you head into the longer, yet safer of the two paths.

Halfway through the forest, you both start to hear movement behind you. You hear the snap of a string and see something fly between you and Merlin. It hits a tree in front of you and sticks in its bark.

"It's an arrow..." Merlin starts. "I forgot about this guy,"

"You forgot about what guy?" you ask. "I don't see a guy,"

"Read his name yourself, it's probably engraved on the arrow,"

You walk over to the arrow and see a name carved in cursive on it. You're not great at reading cursive, so you try to just play it off.

"Oh, yeah. I hate this guy," you say. "Man, do I hate Robby Good,"

"Who?" Merlin asks.

"Robin Hood," A voice from behind corrects you.

"Did a tree just correct me?" you ask.

"No, but Robby Good did," Merlin replies.

You hear a string stretch and then snap. Another arrow flies out of the trees. This time right at Merlin. Luckily the armor protected him from the blow. The arrow bounced off him and hit the ground. Merlin picked it up and snapped it in half.

"Show yourself, Robin,"

"As you wish," the voice called back.

A young man jumped down off a tree branch. "Nice armor you got there... I'm sure that could sell for a pretty penny, don'tcha think?"

Merlin replies. "I'm sure it would, but I'm not here to bargain. We're on a bit of a quest to sl-

"To slay a dragon and save your kingdom..." Robin interrupts. "I know. I've been following you two since you were at the wizard's shack,"

"Wow," you say, shocked.

"What?" Robin snarks.

"Well I was just gonna say, Mr. Hood... can I call you that? Mr. Hood?" you ask.

"Absolutely not," Robin answers.

"Okay, sorry... I just wanted to say I thought you were cuter as a fox. Movie magic, I guess,"

"Why are you still talking?" Robin asks. "Just let the big boys speak before you get an arrow between the eyes,"

"Yep, sir... I was just about to do that," you reply.

"Alright..." begins Merlin. "Robin Hood, please just let us pass in peace,"

"Okay," says Robin. "I'll let you pass if I can have a third of the treasure the king gives you for slaying the dragon,"

"Okay," Merlin says. "If that's what you want, I can make that happen,"

Merlin and Robin Hood shake on it, and he lets you pass.

"Have a nice day!" you exclaim as you part ways.

"You as well," Robin responds.

"What a nice guy," you turn to Merlin. "He's just misunderstood,"

You and Merlin walk through the rest of the forest with no problem, besides dealing with a couple of small forest creatures here and there. Soon enough you reach the end of the forest. You both want to take a break but continue to move on because you see the cave of the dragon directly in front of you. Merlin stops right before you enter the cave.

"This is it... The end of the journey." Merlin begins. "You ready to do this?"

"No..." you answer. "But I miss my bed and I want money so let's go,"

Merlin takes a while to respond. "I guess that's a good enough reason. Let's go then,"

Chapter 5:

TO SLAY A DRAGON

You and Merlin head in the cave, and Merlin starts talking. "Driver, before we go too far in... There's a section of this cave that's particularly dangerous,"

"You mean the section with the dragon in it?" you ask.

"Besides that. There's a section in the cave that will tempt your brain. It will mess with your head and you can't stop it. It'll make you want to give up, make you think that nothing is worth living for,"

"Well... Is there anything that won't try to hurt us in the cave?" you ask.

"Nope,"

"Let's go then,"

"Sounds good," Merlin says.

You and Merlin head continue through the cave, in hopes to end your journey and return home. The first couple minutes of venturing through the cave appear to come with no dangers. Then comes "The Section".

"Merlin," you say.

"Hmm?" asks Merlin, intrigued.

"I think we should leave," you start. "Nothing will come of this, there's probably not even a dragon. We're probably just wasting our time,"

"Driver, you don't mean that, it's the cave... It's messing with you,"

"No Merlin, you're messing with me! We went through so much for nothing! We went through too much for nothing! There's probably not even money in it for me! You just brought me here to help you become king! I'm leaving, have fun alone,"

Merlin stops you. "Driver, snap out of it! This is the cave! Not you! Stay here!"

"I'm done with these trials that result in no reward! I'm leaving!"

You start to walk away, then laugh.

"Are you laughing?" asks Merlin.

You turn around and smile. "I'm kidding!"

"Wait, so you were never corrupted?" Merlin asks, concerned.

"Nope,"

"I can't believe you. Well, let's continue... we have a dragon to kill," Merlin says.

You continue through the cave and make it to the deepest part. Here is a giant room. This room is filled with treasure from the floor to the ceiling. Under the mountain of gold is a giant, sleeping black dragon. You can only see parts of it underneath all the coins. Directly around you are the skeletons of people who were on the same quest you're on now.

You pat Merlin on the shoulder and point to a group of bones, whispering "I see dead people,"

"Very funny," says Merlin. "Let's go,"

You walk slowly into the room that's holding the dragon. You both walk around the outside of the room, concerned to go too close to the middle. Just walking on the same surface that a mile long dragon is sleeping under is enough to make you need new pants.

Merlin starts talking again. "Driver, look!" he points on the ground in the middle of the room. "There's its head! If we can get over there without waking it up and cut its head off we can end this with no trouble at all!"

"Let's go, then!" you reply.

"Alright, get two potions out just in case,"

You and Merlin make your way to the middle of the room. You get there without much of a problem and are ready for the next step... killing it. Merlin pulls out his knife and is about to cut the dragon at the throat when it opens his eyes.

It was at that moment you knew... you messed up.

The dragon, without a doubt, saw both of you. You and Merlin run to the opposite end of the room. The dragon starts moving, making the ground wavy.

"Who dares interrupt my slumber?!" the monster booms from the middle of the room. "You can't hide from me forever! I've dealt with many of your kind before! This will end no differently!"

"Driver! Merlin yells. "The potions!"

You pull out two potions and toss one to him. You both take a sip and vanish. As you're invisible, you try to come up with a plan. Nothing comes to mind. You pick up a piece of gold and throw it to the other end of the room. The dragon immediately breathes fire in that direction, melting a lot of valuable items in the process.

"Hey, Merlin," you say. "I have a plan,"

"What is it?" Merlin asks.

"I'll go in front of him and distract him, while you climb up his back and chop off his head. Trust me, it'll work."

"Alright, Driver. I don't have a better idea, so might as well give it a shot,"

"Cool, Hopefully we don't die and stuff," you say as you run off.

You make it in front of the dragon, and he still doesn't see you. You make a note in your head that that's a good sign. You see coins move around behind the dragon and hope that it's Merlin about to climb up. It's time to be the distraction.

"Hey!" you yell at the dragon. "Down here!"

The dragon breathes fire in your direction, and you roll out of the way. "Where are you?!" It booms. "You can't hide forever, human,"

You are scared to death, but the show must go on.

"Over here!" you shout.

Another wave of fire to dodge.

"Do it again! You won't!"

Another wave.

"STOP IT, FOOL! YOU'RE ONLY DELAYING YOUR DEATH!" the dragon yells.

At that moment his head fell off. You and Merlin come back together as the potion wears off.

"Thank you for finishing the job!" you start. "All that heat was reminding me of my rap career,"

"Very funny... WE DID IT!" Merlin rejoices.

"That we did!" you reply.

Shortly after, the Royal Guard picks you up outside of the cave and you go back to the kingdom.

At the kingdom, the King congratulates both you and Merlin. He then makes Merlin king, just like he said. As for you... you are now the third richest man in the kingdom. Right behind Merlin and the king before him.

You use your money to give to the poor. To give to the needy, your old friends, your family. Just kidding, you have no family. You go find the giraffe that killed your mother and tell him you forgive him. You still have loads of money left over for yourself, so you live close to the castle. Close enough that you see Merlin in his castle every now and then. Most importantly, the entire third class now respects the name... Driver Restrainedman.