

# The Problem of Ashildr/Me

*The Dromeian Archive, Part the First*

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THIS IS ESSENTIALLY A ‘FAN THEORIES TO MAKE SENSE OF PLOT HOLES’ ARTICLE, possibly even the first in a series, where I try and post-rationalise some slightly confusing decisions made by scriptwriters and showrunners in **Doctor Who**. In this first article, I’m going to look at Me/Ashildr, and how on earth (or on Gallifrey or any other planet) she actually lives as long as she does.

The central problem of Me is her exceptional longevity – she is a being who appears to be able to outlive practically every other species in the universe, appearing towards the close of *Hell Bent* on Gallifrey at the end of time having originated on Earth in a vaguely Viking-era northern Europe. How and why could she have ended up, alive and well, on Gallifrey even after the loss or demise of, among other things, the Time Lords, a race with access to stores of regenerative energy that can multiply their already exceptional lifespans?

There are two obvious parts to the story. One is that there’s no reason to assume she got there by the straight road: in a universe with time travel (and numerous sources and possibilities thereof), it’s entirely plausible that at some point she hopped from earth to late-universe Gallifrey without having to last the billions of years between the two. However, that’s certainly not the whole story; why does she end up on Gallifrey, and why

Image includes elements from a portrait of Maisie Williams as Arya Stark by Falcon, and MSS images from public domain photographs and the editor’s collection.

is she there after all the Time Lords have gone? What, indeed, makes her variant of immortality special?

There is, I think, a plausible answer to these questions. The Doctor had ‘sonicked’ the mire med-patch. The med-patch, whilst high tech, should not be assumed in itself to be the key here; the Mire are a tough bunch of fighters, but there’s no reason to assume they are more so than, say, the Daleks or any one of a number of other battle-hardy galactic species. Instead, it’s that application of the sonic screwdriver that’s key. Assume for a minute that the sonic realises that the med-patch doesn’t have the ‘oomph’ to do what the anguished, enraged Doctor wants. The tech in the patch needs more power.

‘Ah,’ thinks the programming of the sonic screwdriver. ‘Power. I know where to get that.’

Of course it does – the sonic being inextricably linked to a certain blue box parked a certain distance away. Power source, sorted. And the blue box?

It’s powered by the Eye of Harmony.

A Mire medikit is presumably there for fixing pretty big wounds. A Mire medikit powered by a suspended, permanently collapsing star radiating artron energy to every point in the space-time continuum? Much more like it, and much, much, much more powerful. So this is the theory: Me is essentially TARDIS-powered, in a way different but not entirely dissimilar to Jack as another basically-immortal being.

Precisely how Me got to Gallifrey we may never know – but this theory would at least explain why she ends up there, at the end of time. It makes poetic, and perhaps even (dare I use the word) logical sense for her to end up sat with the energy source that powers her strange, curse-long lifetime, perhaps waiting for the clock to finally run out on the universe itself.

And then of course she goes and runs off in a TARDIS shaped like a Midwestern diner with someone who should definitely be dead. Perhaps some things can’t be explained logically after all...

Radio Times put this image together following the transmission of *Hell Bent*, when there was a wave of fan interest in Me and Clara having their own series. The Doctor, meanwhile, would be getting his coat if it wasn’t far too hot in the desert. Will the programme be able to fit in a revisit to these two before Peter Capaldi and Steven Moffat leave, or are they best left to their own devices? More importantly, do Maisie and Jenna have any time in their diaries? —MK

