

Dead in Time

By

Dr Who

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

A side-light shines on ELLIE MIET (95), a deeply wrinkled face, and long brown hair that still has a luster to it.

She turns her head...

MADDY

Wasn't supposed to end like  
this, now was it?

...and looks at HOWARD LAVERT (35), Harvard good looks, and a shock of dark scraggly hair.

INT. LARGE OFFICE - DAY

COLIN VINCE (45), knocks, and timidly opens the door. He smiles gingerly at MORGAN PULSE (40). Pulse is sat behind a sleek modern desk. He gestures toward Colin.

MORGAN

Take a seat.

COLIN

We have, a problem.

MORGAN

Colin's theme tune.

INT. SMALL OFFICE - NIGHT

ELLIE MIET (32), rifles manically through papers and documents, flinging them left and right.

ELLIE

What time do I die?

Howard moves forward, looking though the mess of papers.

HOWARD

Fourteen hundred, if my memory  
serves me right.

INT. LARGE OFFICE - DAY

Colin slides apologetically into a chair.

MORGAN

We're moth-balling your operations.

COLIN

You're--

MORGAN

It's the costs. Don't say--

COLIN

Do you understand the applications  
this has?

MORGAN

Without a doubt. We just didn't  
guess that time-travel would cost  
more than putting a man on Mars.

COLIN

We're half-way through.

MORGAN

Not to mention the man-power. We  
put NASA to shame, the amount of  
people we need.

INT. SMALL OFFICE - NIGHT

Ellie stops shuffling papers.

ELLIE

What am I going to do?

Ellie looks at one of her hands, and holds it toward the  
light, cocking her head toward it.

Howard places and arm on Ellie's shoulder.

HOWARD

We're going to find a solution.

INT. LARGE OFFICE - DAY

A KNOCK on the door, gets ignored.

MORGAN

What was the rough guide? Energy  
equivalent of ten nuclear heads,  
just to send--

The door opens and Howard walks in.

HOWARD  
Colin?

MORGAN  
Hey Howie. You good?

HOWARD  
We have a problem.

MORGAN  
You too? What, you guys getting a club together or something?

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Howard and Colin exit the office.

HOWARD  
It's Ellie. And it's serious.

They begin to walk the corridor.

COLIN  
They're closing shop on us.

HOWARD  
What? Now?

COLIN  
Whole operation. Closing us down.

Howard looks away.

COLIN  
What was it about Ellie?

INT. REST-ROOM - DAY

Ellie stares at her reflection in a mirror. Small wrinkles are now etched in her face, aging her.

She checks her hand, and begins to peel skin from it.

Behind her, Colin and Howard walk in. She checks them in the mirror.

ELLIE  
Gals only guys.

She holds a strip of skin up in front of the mirror.

COLIN  
What's going on Ellie?

ELLIE  
It went wrong. I'm dying.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Miles of harsh, unforgiving sand stretch into the horizon, the view only broken by stark, rocky hills.

Off someway - a structure. Something like a extra-large space shuttle landing pod.

A PULSE of LIGHT for a fraction of a second lights it up from the inside.

INT. ALPHA-POD ZERO - DAY

Inside the pod, it's like a NASA control center, except everything surrounds a central sphere-like structure.

OPERATIVES of all races and gender focus on computer screens, or scurry about.

Another pulse of LIGHT - this time clearly emanating from the central sphere.

OPERATIVE #1  
We're good, now let's turn it up  
some, and get this going.

Another PULSE, coming in quicker and faster--

A cacophony of noise, as instructions are barked and excitement rises.

The PULSES quicken until they merge into one before one huge blinding bolt of light hits home.

Complete stillness.

The Operative raises his hand. Everyone focuses on the sphere, which now contains a SHAPE. The shape stands.

OPERATIVE #1  
Let's go people, we got a live one!

A small army of people scuttle into the sphere...

INT. ALPHA-POD ZERO SPHERE - DAY

The shape is now a CHRONONAUT, same get-up as a astronaut.

Operatives gather round the Chrononaut, and unscrew, unzip, and dismantle anything they can. A steel band on the helmet is uncoupled -- and a stream of steam is unleashed.

OPERATIVE #1

Easy does it guys.

The helmet's lifted off, revealing Ellie.

ELLIE

Hey guys!

OPERATIVE #1

Hey kid! Good trip?

ELLIE

Acid sharp, my friend.

OPERATIVE #1

You're off to Med to get you checked up, okay?

INT. ALPHA-POD ZERO MED ROOM - DAY

Ellie's sat on a medical bed, being checked over.

Howard enters. He's wearing figure hugging clothing worn under a Chrononaut suit.

ELLIE

Hey Howie.

HOWARD

You good?

ELLIE

Better when I've finished being a lab-rat. Your trip?

HOWARD

Sailed it. Your ready for this?

ELLIE

I'm as good as I'll ever be.

HOWARD

I can do it if you want?

ELLIE

It was my bag, Howard. I'm going to see it through.

HOWARD

You trust those boys?

ELLIE

I was one of them remember.

INT. ALPHA-POD ZERO INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

A desk, two chairs, and Ellie on one of the chairs.

INT. ALPHA-POD ZERO CORRIDOR - DAY

Outside the interview room - there are two large one-way glass windows either side of the door.

Howard studies Ellie through the glass.

HOWARD

You still sure you want to do this?

ELLIE (O.S.)

Don't worry. I know what I'm doing. And anyway. I trust the physics.

HOWARD

Read physics. Learn physics.

Howard opens the door to the interview room.

HOWARD

But never, ever, trust physics.

And steps aside, as he lets-- Ellie, walk into the room.

Ellie (Past) sits and studies Ellie (Future).

ELLIE PAST

Dr Miet. A pleasure to meet you.

ELLIE FUTURE

You've always wanted to say that.

ELLIE PAST

Please. Take a seat.

Ellie takes a seat.

ELLIE FUTURE  
This is...

ELLIE PAST  
Quintessentially odd.

ELLIE FUTURE  
Now, I know you were going to say  
that.

ELLIE PAST  
So in fact, I'm at a distinct  
disadvantage here.

ELLIE FUTURE  
But of course you'll have the  
advantage--

ELLIE PAST  
--given time.

The two Ellie's smile at each other, then look away.

ELLIE FUTURE  
Strange thing is, I still want to  
ask so many questions.

ELLIE PAST  
But you've been here before.

ELLIE FUTURE  
But I was you then, not me.

ELLIE PAST  
But I'm only me, so I should really  
be asking the questions.

ELLIE FUTURE  
Good point. Fire away.

ELLIE PAST  
Of course, you know what I'll ask,  
won't you?

ELLIE FUTURE  
It's the only question you could  
ask. The only one you should.

ELLIE PAST  
Go on.

ELLIE FUTURE  
Are you sure about this?

Ellie Past smiles, and nods her head.

ELLIE PAST  
Yes. I am.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Colin knocks firmly on a door, and pushes it open.

INT. APZ INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Three operatives enter the interview room.

The two Ellies stand.

Ellie Past moves her chair. One of the Operative is carrying tarpaulin. He place it where Ellie's chair was, and Ellie Past put her chair back, onto the tarpaulin.

INT. LARGE OFFICE - DAY

Morgan's at his desk, and Colin's stood in front of him.

MORGAN  
Have you any idea of the cost  
involved here?

COLIN  
Morgan. She is going to die unless  
we do something.

MORGAN  
And I have the greatest sympathy,  
but we're not going to launch the  
equivalent of a lunar mission to  
save one life.

COLIN  
So you're just going to stand by  
and let her--

MORGAN  
If there was anything I could do  
within our cost parameters--

COLIN

Dam your costs!!! She's one of the  
best and I--

Colin raised his fist ready to slam it on the desk.

Morgan looks impassioned.

MORGAN

What are you going to do?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Ellie stands by her bed, and looks into a mirror. Her face  
has deeper wrinkles now - her eye-lids are heavy.

She looks at her hands, and takes hold of a finger-nail, and  
pulls it off with ease.

ELLIE

Didn't even hurt.

INT. ALPHA-POD ZERO INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

The two Ellie's stand and face each other. The Operatives  
exit the room.

ELLIE FUTURE

You went and put the chair back  
where it was.

Ellie Past looks at the chair on the tarpaulin.

ELLIE PAST

Silly me.

She moves the chair aside.

Howard enters, and places something onto the table, and  
makes makes toward the exit.

He looks at his watch, studies it for a moment, and then  
looks at Ellie Future.

HOWARD

You go easy on her, okay?

Howard closes the door behind him.

Ellie Future looks down at the desk, and breathes in deeply.

ELLIE PAST  
Let's hope we got it right.

ELLIE FUTURE  
Smile, kid.

Ellie Past smiles.

Ellie Future takes the object on the desk and raises the gun toward Ellie Past.

ELLIE PAST  
I mean it's got work right? You're here, so that's proof. Proof that it works.

ELLIE FUTURE  
Right. Dead right.

They get the pun, and giggle. BAM! Ellie Past slumps backward, and lands with a thump.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Ellie lies prone in bed. Howard sits next to her.

ELLIE  
Dam physicists. What did I ever listen to them for?

Ellie smiles to herself.

HOWARD  
(hesitant)  
We got the results from the other experiments.

ELLIE  
Yeah? How'd they go?

HOWARD  
All good, believe it or not.

ELLIE  
So just this went wrong, huh? Cold comfort I guess.

HOWARD  
I so wish--

ELLIE

Don't.

Ellie looks at Howard.

ELLIE

You asked me, didn't you? How many  
times was it? I think I lost count.  
"You sure?"

Howard nods.

ELLIE

Yeah. I said. I'm sure. Confident  
as ever. Don't you blame yourself.

Ellie looks up to the ceiling.

A beat.

She looks back to Howard.

ELLIE

But don't hold back on them dam  
physicists...

Howard smiles, and kisses her hand.

FADE OUT: