

# THE CELESTIAL TOYROOM ANNUAL 2020



DOCTOR  
WHO  
APPRECIATION  
SOCIETY  
A 2020

## Editorial by Paul Winter

Welcome to the 2020 Celestial Toyroom Annual. This time round, we concentrate on the Pertwee era of the show, covering all televised stories as well as the two BBC radio serials. For those new to our annuals, we deliberately choose not to cover other output such as novels and Big Finish audios, not because we do not appreciate them, but because the output would otherwise be so vast that the annual, if we ever finished it, would be enormous.

For those of my generation, Jon Pertwee was *the* Doctor. When I was an impressionable five-year-old I worshipped the man. He may as well have been the Doctor in real life - for me there was no difference. When I had the fortune to meet him a few years after he left the programme, at the Heathfield Show in East Sussex, on reaching the front of the queue with my postcard for him to sign, I couldn't even bring myself to speak. The only other times I can remember being like that were meeting Tom Baker many, many years later at one of JNT's 'Evening with...' events and even more recently, when I queued to get my 'War of the Worlds' DVD signed by Jeff Wayne. The latter two examples are more embarrassing as I was a grown adult by this point.

I have never quite worked out what my first story was but following many well spent hours looking at Wikipedia I have settled on 'Day of the Daleks' which surprisingly was also the first Target book I bought. I also have a strong memory of a scene from 'The Sea Devils' which sadly does not

seem to actually exist. It must be one of those amalgamations that your memory does when you are a child; a bit like all the snowy Christmases I remember that never actually happened either.

But enough of this..... It only falls to me to thank all those who contributed this time round. Once again, I am pleased that alongside many of our ever reliable contributors we have some new names. Remember, everyone is welcome to make a contribution to DWAS. If you have never written before, we have plenty of people here to help you along.

Paul

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# Foreword

by Katy Manning



As a very myopic little Manning, before the wonders of television and my pebble glasses that helped me see it, the voices of 'the wireless' were my friends. One of the comedies that really used to make me giggle, and still does, was the 'The Navy Lark.'

Little did I know that years later the flamboyant cloaked Adventurer I would be running across freezing cold wet windy terrains, and fleeing from Aliens with, was part of one of my strongest childhood memories. I learned every single day from this marvellous man: Jon was a mesmerising raconteur, a singer, a guitarist, a deep-sea diver and all round man of action.

Along with the Havoc team he showed me how to do most of my own stunts and how to be a really good motorbike pillion! I would soon discover that Jon had a somewhat mischievous sense of humour, which I learned more about when my then Boyfriend Rod and I were holidaying with the Pertwee family in Ibiza, plotting some fiendishly cleverly devised pranks which were played on unsuspecting house guests!

His life experiences were a constant source of admiration and laughter, and his passion, dedication and constant care for Doctor Who never wavered. Jon inspired me and encouraged me with my silly voices, creating characters together from quirky village names as we drove to and from locations.

I could not have asked for a more wonderful leading man and mentor in my chosen profession and life, but most of all a very much loved friend.

Katy



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# The Era

## By Jeremy Bentham

Was I a good fan? In this self-same feature last year my good friend and DWAS luminary Ian McLachlan closed his overview of the Hartnell era by reiterating many a fan's childhood hope that, '...one day someone would discover how to construct a real-life TARDIS'. It's a fantasy that still resonates with part of me too, but tempered by knowledge that, if ever such a device did exist, I'd be immediately using it to break The First Law of Time and start crossing my own time stream in search of answers.

In particular I'd like to know from my younger selves if I was as passionate a fan at the point Jon Pertwee was being announced as the third Doctor as I was eight years later when the great man himself stepped onto the stage of the first Doctor Who Convention in Battersea to thunderous applause from that first wave of assembled DWAS members. It has bothered me for a while that my answer might be no.

It's common knowledge now that Doctor Who almost came to its own final end with the closing of the Troughton period in 1969. The regular cast was all keen to move on, most of its production team were being allocated to other projects, and among senior management

there was a sense the show had had a good innings and something new should replace it in the forthcoming era of colour on BBC1.

Average ratings of just over six million for Troughton's final year were significantly down against all previous seasons, rampant inflation was eating into its production budgets, and those still loyal to the show were all too aware that one of its core staples – the monsters – had been conspicuously absent from the programme for over a quarter of a year by the time episode 10 of 'The War Games' aired in July.

Was I that bothered though? I still watched every episode, I still cut out and saved every Doctor Who article and listings page from the Radio Times, and I even stuck with buying TV Comic, even though I regarded it a poor relation to my growing collection of Marvel Comics and magazines such as Forrest Ackerman's 'Famous Monsters of Filmland', that were more appropriate to my senior school age bracket.

It wasn't that I'd fallen out of love with Doctor Who. It just seemed there were better new drama series appearing on TV, and more exciting films in the cinema; 'Moon Zero Two', 'Marooned' and Gerry Anderson's 'Doppelganger' rode the wave of interest in all things space on the big screen, while 'The Gold Robbers', 'Strange Report' and 'Randall

& Hopkirk (Deceased)' were but three enticing new offerings from ITV.

The BBC famously chose the week of the actual Apollo 11 moon mission in July to commandeer Doctor Who's traditional Saturday evening slot to launch season one of the long-awaited American sci-fi series 'Star Trek'. Was it true then that the acknowledged quality of that first series caused me to doubt if further temporal meanderings by a homeless Time Lord, played by a recog-

nised radio and film comedy actor, and presumably accompanied again by two juvenile cipher companions, would make the grade on colour TV?

And 1969 proved to be somewhat of a fallow year for tele-fantasy when compared against the schedule of new material being prepared for 1970. Long before Dave Edmunds grabbed the Christmas number one spot with 'I Hear You Knocking', ITV had been knocking out hit after hit with 'Ace of Wands',



'UFO', 'Catweazle' and 'Timeslip' while Auntie Beeb had captured many a newspaper headline commenting about its new speculative fiction series 'Doomwatch'.

All in all then, I don't think Jeremy the younger greeted the dawn of Jon Pertwee's era with a highly positive mindset. Even his own diaries reveal a moan that the 3rd-9th January 1970 Radio Times edition, which had Pertwee's Doctor prominently on the cover, did not then include a feature article inside introducing 'Spearhead from Space'. It all seemed rather low-key... So, what ultimately did shine light into that dark place?

Put simply, 'Spearhead from Space' proved an awesome opener for this new era. It was slick, pacey, well-edited and, thanks to it being shot entirely on colour film and on location, it felt every bit as stylish as the best ITC primetime series. The Autons were new monsters and yes, they were scary. Banished too were companions unfairly shoehorned as gung-ho teenagers. Dr Liz Shaw came across as confident, mature and intelligent, while Nicholas Courtney's return as Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart cemented that harder edge, real world look to the programme that had been successfully piloted in 'The Web of Fear' and 'The Invasion'.

As for Jon Pertwee, he surely must have confounded the Producer who

initially cast him, precisely by not being the rubbery-faced, guitar-playing man of a thousand funny voices which is how Peter Bryant had initially thought he might play the role. Humour was still present in the character, principally observed during his escapes from the cottage hospital, but there was far more Professor Quatermass and Adam Adamant present in this new, flamboyant, dapper man-of-mystery.

The allusions to Quatermass were not confined to just the Doctor in this primarily Derrick Sherwin-influenced season. His new earth-bound home came across as a cold, almost Orwellian 20-minutes into the future world where nuclear power, space-research and heavy industry projects fell under the administrative purview of zealous civil servants, stern military officers and self-obsessed scientists. The three other serials of season seven proved just as compelling as Pertwee's debut. The monsters were powerful and capable of killing without mercy, action sequences gritty and brutal, confrontation scenes, even between the regulars, could be acrimonious and bitter, and for every sympathetic character one could root for there would be others happy to shoot them down, physically or metaphorically. Sherwin's vision was of a chilling, oppressive but utterly addictive world.

Diary entries for 1971 show Ben-tham Junior exhibiting far more pos-

itive vibes towards Pertwee's second year. David Driver's inspired 'Terror of the Autons' cover layout for Radio Times (which did include an accompanying article...) was seized upon with boundless enthusiasm, igniting a passion for the work of this talented Art Director that remains undiminished to this day. How wonderful then, just over a month later, to find another publication shining out from the shelves of the Hendon Central WH Smiths. Issue one of 'Countdown': at last a comic for older children and teenagers, and a rival to the excellent 'Look In' magazine which itself had only launched a month earlier.

'Countdown' continued the comic strip adventures of the third Doctor, but a universe away from those whimsical 1970 storylines present-

ed in 'TV Comic'. Those, it could be argued, extolled the comedic Peter Bryant vision of Doctor Who, whereas Harry Lindfield's artwork and Pertwee's attire hailed from Sherwin's world.

On TV though, it was Producer Barry Letts' revised house-style that 'Terror of the Autons' piloted. A brighter, more colourful landscape, warmer in tone and far more human-centric. Villains as well as heroes were relatable personalities, expressing human failings and emotions rather than aloof, Orwellian fanaticism. Even that newest of foes, the Master, could dispense charm and concern alongside ambition and ruthlessness.

At first though, I did not welcome the disappearance of Liz Shaw, and



the arrival of Jo Grant and Captain Yates as incoming sidekicks. At gut level it felt like a step backwards to the overtly youthful companion duo line-ups of the 1960s. But how wrong was I?

Katy Manning's 'ham-fisted bun vendor' turned out to be a complete joy, adopting a keen but kooky, brave but sometimes foolhardy persona that brought out the best in the third Doctor's confident but always caring and protective nature. In fact, so strong was the evident chemistry between Manning and Pertwee/Jo and the Doctor that Captain Yates was soon side-lined, seemingly condemned to occasional solo man-of-action scenes until somebody devised the laudable three-part brainwashing/betrayal/redemption story arc that wrote his character out, albeit disappointingly without a formal farewell.

Something that absolutely did not disappoint was the Doctor's first proper use of the TARDIS to visit an alien world since 1969. Indeed, so momentous was this event in April 1971 that it triggered another work of genius by David Driver at Radio Times: a commission to comics legend Frank Bellamy to produce two and a half pages of artwork summarising the opening events of 'Colony in Space' that preceding episode one's broadcast on 10th April.

It was the beginning of a beautiful relationship between Bellamy, Ra-

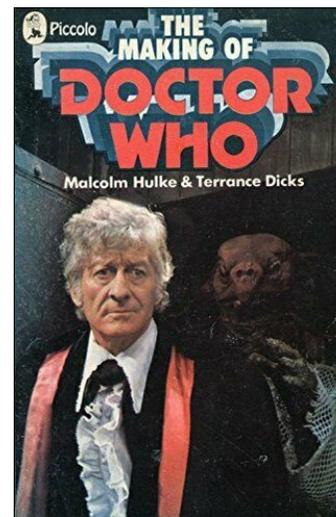
dio Times and Doctor Who. Not long afterwards Driver began the tradition of appending postage-stamp sized illustrations – predominantly by Bellamy – to the Doctor Who listings entry in almost every issue, further fuelling the good Doctor's return to prominence in the public eye.

Achieving public eye recognition was crucial. I might have been a convalescing fan, well on the road to recovery by 1972, but fans alone were not generating the kind of eight million plus audience figures the show was attracting by the time power blackouts and three-day working weeks were encouraging more people to value any programmes they were able to see uninterrupted.

The consistent quality that Barry Letts and Script Editor Terrance Dicks were bringing to their stories also prompted merchandisers to sit up and take notice of Doctor Who again. And 1972 was when it all started happening big time. Pop down to your local record shop and there were flyers promoting Jon Pertwee's single 'Who is the Doctor'. Go next door to Woolworths and you'd spot four new jigsaws featuring images primarily from 'Day of the Daleks'. And if you called in for some groceries there'd be Jon Pertwee again, beaming at you from packets of 'Sugar Smacks' along the cereal aisle.

But the biggest turning point happened in April when, almost without fanfare, a paperback appeared that would become a touchstone for all those discovering or rediscovering their Doctor Who mojo. Published by Piccolo, the children's division of Pan Books, Terrance Dicks and Malcolm Hulke's 'The Making of Doctor Who' arrived just weeks after 'The Sea Devils' first transmission, offering facts and information about its production. More than that, it also offered those who had grown up with Doctor Who pathways connecting its past to its present via lists, synopses and character biographies stretching from 1963 to 1972. A small step for Pan, but a giant leap for fan-kind.

How many others, I wonder, devoured that book with the almost religious fervour that I did? Was it a coincidence that so many other fires that warmed and grew the seeds of fandom were sparked during the latter half of Pertwee's era?



1973's season 10 fed the flames with six months of glorious celebrations of the programme's ten years on air, a hugely confident season almost bookended by reappearances of the first two Doctors at the beginning, and the return of Terry Nation writing 'Planet of the Daleks', which delivered a nostalgic melange of all those Dalek set pieces that had worked so well throughout the Sixties. Even the show's first three companions, Barbara, Ian and Susan, received an honourable namecheck in part one.

Nor was namechecking the past as rare as it had been in 1969. 'TV Action', the successor to 'Countdown' from 1972 augmented its well-received Doctor Who comic strip, drawn by Gerry Haylock, with two dedicated Doctor Who summer specials in 1973 and 74. Both of these featured a welter of photographs from the show's past at a time when any printing of BBC photographs from the Sixties was scarce. Not to be outdone, though, Radio Times surely supplied the icing atop the cake when David Driver delivered his lavish, full colour Doctor Who Tenth Anniversary Special in November 1973. As well as summarising every Doctor Who that had aired to date, this 68-page special broke with tradition by presenting brief synopses of the serials due to be transmitted in 1974.

By season 11 Doctor Who was undoubtedly riding the waves of a new

high tide in its fortunes. Changes to the acting line-up were major stories for Fleet Street, with the Press call announcing Jon Pertwee's departure from the series in February 1974 meriting front page headlines across many papers. Doctor Who news was clearly deemed 'of public interest' as well as a source of fascination to those happy now to self-identify as fans, albeit fans with insatiable appetites that needed feeding.

And feeders there were. Supported by the Doctor Who production office, the Celtic Combo of Keith Miller and Brian Smith (occasionally aided by a certain Peter Capaldi) were, by mid-74, running the Doctor Who Fan Club to a growing membership as advertisements began appearing in magazines such as

'World of Horror'. I myself spotted one of these ads and duly received my first newsletter and DWFC badge shortly before Jon Pertwee's features changed to those of Tom Baker in early June.

Over the course of five years this little clockwork orange had been well and truly wound up and set back on the path to robust health by the consistent quality, polish and sheer joy of the Pertwee period. In less than two years I'd be part of the Sassenach Seven, launching this very society out into the world during an even greater period of public adulation for the good Doctor's adventures.

Oh yes, little brothers, I was cured all right!

## Spearhead from Space Reviewed by Tina Marie DeLucia

In a year somewhere between 1970 or perhaps 1980, strange meteorites have fallen to Earth. No one can seem to work out what they are or why they fell in the first place. No sooner have these pieces of space debris have landed, a freshly regenerated Doctor also crashes to his favourite little blue planet. Both extra-terrestrials are taken in by the newly christened United Nations Intelligence Taskforce or UNIT. Such is the start of the Pertwee era of Doctor Who. Such is the beginning of Spearhead from Space.

The jump from 1969 to 1970 was such a large one for Doctor Who. Not only did the series receive a new Doctor in Jon Pertwee, but the black and white spacetime world had suddenly warped to technicolor. Of course, there's also the new dynamic of UNIT and the familiar faces that inhabit its ranks; or even the fact that the TARDIS is stuck on Earth unable to be used as the transport that audiences had grown so accustomed to. In a time where the world was changing just as drastically, Doctor Who decided to change right along with it. There's a lot one could say about the Britain of 1970, the state of the BBC or even the landscape of television at the time. But at the heart of Spearhead From Space there is the im-

peccable, intelligent, and integral Dr. Elizabeth Shaw. She is the woman companion who spearheaded the dawn of a new decade.

In an episode trying to introduce us and resettle us into a now colourful and different Doctor Who, Liz Shaw is a force from the very first moment she's on screen. A sharp tongue and an even sharper wit, she gets right to the point. Not mincing words with the imposing Brigadier, after discovering he's the one who brought her to UNIT as a special request. This summoning, we learn, is due to her accolades and reputation at Cambridge. While the Brigadier fails to mention all of her achievements, but the few he does say like medicine and physics are terribly impressive. If the Brigadier is seeking her out, surely, she lives up to expectations.

These impressive praises and degrees are put into action almost immediately. As the crisis begins to grow, Liz Shaw is put right to work into trying to solve the strange meteorite's mystery. Minutes later, Liz is able to figure out a lot without the Doctor even being there. Luckily, the audience is spared a scene where she has to fight with personal or argue over her scientific prowess. It's all shown in her actions. Liz doesn't need to prove her worth or justify her place in UNIT, because the episode so clearly and brilliantly shows the type of intelligent person she is.

It is Liz who is able to figure out that the meteorite isn't space debris at all, but manufactured polyhedron.



She does this quickly, with a lab thrown together at the last minute, and all while the Doctor is still very much incapacitated. It is a clear sign of her resourcefulness and intelligence and as the Brigadier very pointedly points out to Major General Soon-To-Be-Plastic Scobie and us, the audience: 'She's not just a pretty face'. She's a true scientist first and foremost who certainly isn't interested in any sort of alien nonsense.

So often the science part of science fiction is stretched or pushed to the side in favour of grand creative ideas. In the moments of her examining the plastic meteorites, Liz puts the science—the real science, back into Doctor Who. This is cemented with perhaps the most ironic and telling lines of Doctor Who 'I deal with facts. Not science fiction ideas'.

And even in a world of living plastic and little blue men with three heads, Liz continues to deal with facts in this new reality opened up to her. It is Liz who entices the Doctor to become interested in the plastic meteorites when he is keen on just popping into the TARDIS and ignoring the Brigadier's demands for help. She is able to nonchalantly mention enough about the mysterious meteorite to get his scientific curiosity buzzing. If he is the sort of person the Brigadier says he is, then certainly he wouldn't be able to resist. It's a gamble that pays off, more than likely because Liz herself knows that, as a scientist, she could not resist either. It is Liz who is able to bounce off of the Doctor as they examine the aftermaths of attacks. Rather than talking to himself and getting 'I don't know's as a response, Liz offers forward possible solutions and other observations

that help forward their investigation. It is also Liz who explains that the plastic bits are a collective intelligence that has no physical form to a clueless Brigadier and by extension a questioning audience. She is able to take the Doctor's ideas; such as the plastic being some sort of shell, run with it and end up being correct. And at the end of the episode it is Liz who fixes the ECT contraption set on taking down the Nestene Consciousness when the frequencies and wires become jammed. This saves the Doctor's life before he is strangled to death. At the end of the serial, it is not Liz but the Doctor who is handed the position of scientific advisor by the Brigadier, with Liz becoming the ASSISTANT, because the Doctor wants her there. The Doctor needs someone just as intelligent as him if he is going to survive stranded in a

world of military men and legalities. Someone who can know exactly what he is talking about when he rants about things seemingly beyond comprehension. Someone who can do more than pass him test tubes and tell him how brilliant he is. Liz passes the test, in every way. Why else would the Doctor demand she stays on working with him if he is to stay at UNIT?

Really, Liz IS the Scientific Advisor. Even if the Doctor took the title, she has the role in all but name and will continue to have it from Spearhead from Space until Inferno.

Spearhead did something wonderful introducing a powerful scientist able to rival the Doctor in banter, intelligence, and capability. And we, along with the Doctor, were all the luckier in being able to have her.



# Doctor Who and the Silurians

## Reviewed by Ian Bresman

Any ideas that brisk opener, 'Spearhead from Space' had set the pace for Season seven vanished with Episode One of Malcolm Hulke's atmospheric 'Doctor Who and the Silurians'. With seven weeks chiefly underground ahead of us, there was plenty of time for plot to unfold and for us to see how this new Doctor was going to work.

And work very well he does too. Although Pertwee's Doctor has always had a breath-taking aura, he never seemed to steal scenes away from the other characters or indeed from the story being told. This is evident very early on in his tenure and to a considerable extent in The Silurians. There is a large cast of UNIT soldiers, research centre technicians, Silurians and of course his new regular cohorts he has to interact with. He strikes a commanding figure amongst them as the conflict and conundrums of the subterranean creatures becomes apparent, but he is not pivotal to every scene. Of course, as the hero of the piece he is one of the few still standing at the end, but that is a given, isn't it?

In his first real job as UNIT's scientific adviser, the Doctor finds himself and Liz Shaw summoned by the Brigadier to Wenley Moor Research Station. Reluctant and disin-

terested at the thought of mysterious power losses, he is soon coaxed by Liz to take his new car on a test run up to the power station. It seems amongst her powers; Liz already knows how to work the Doctor. She already calls many of the shots in their relationship, although always knows when to back down.

The Doctor's new car, an Edwardian roadster he calls Bessie, is as much an iconic element of this era as the TARDIS. In fact, he uses it more than the TARDIS to get around in seasons seven through to nine. She has good screen time in her debut here, with a delightful drive through Godalming High Street and surrounding countryside before arriving in a fictional moorland location. From memory it was actually somewhere off the Hogs Back in Guildford, Surrey. It looked the part anyway and Bessie's gleaming yellow paintwork is as vibrant against the backdrop as she is depicted in the Target novels.

Once at the station, both the Doctor and Liz get into the thick of the action. Liz makes short work of uncovering a problem with staff absences, whilst the Doctor deduces the answer lies in a network of caves which run close to the centre. He is also pretty sure that the shifty Doctor Quinn (Fulton Mackay) is involved and doggedly pursues him until he starts to get some answers. Meanwhile the Brigadier is fighting battles of his own with the bureaucracy of the centre manager, Doctor Lawrence (Peter Miles) and the security arrangements of Major Baker

(Norman Jones). And with our first glimpse of a Silurian, we start to get a feel for what lies ahead over the next few weeks.

The best way to enjoy 'Doctor Who and the Silurians' today, is to watch it over a period of seven weeks (preferably Saturday tea time!) and avoid a binge-watch marathon. It is difficult, because there are six cracking cliff-hangers, but steal yourself and look forward to another sitting the following week. This is how it was made to be watched and is all the more enthralling for it.

Doctor Who has a history of attracting amazing performers to appear in the show. The Silurians is no exception. Aside from the regulars, we are treated to Geoffrey Palmer, Peter Miles, Norman Jones, Paul Darrow and, of course, Fulton Mackay. Mackay's brief turn as Doctor Quinn is one of the highlights of the first two episodes. The character of Quinn is the vital link with the Silurians which takes the Doctor through to the next stage of the mystery. Which unfortunately means that Quinn become dispensable for the rest of the tale and meets an untimely end at the hands of his house guest. Even so, we have a number of enjoyable sparring sessions between the Doctor and Quinn to enjoy. There is a sparkle and a chemistry between them which crackles particularly in the scene at Quinn's cottage. Pertwee charming and cunning, Mackay equally cunning but on the backfoot like a trapped animal. Two great actors at the height of their game. Lovely.

In terms of the regulars, Caroline John and Nicholas Courtney are as superb as ever. In this story, the Brigadier is brisk but tolerant throughout. He has a lot on his plate having to contend with Doctor Lawrence and later on a Civil Servant called Masters (Geoffrey Palmer), but his final agenda in the last episode pits him against the Doctor. It makes for an uncomfortable end, but we never see (in this or future episodes) the confrontation the pair must have had afterwards. Our imagination paints the picture nicely and leaves us wondering what is to become of the relationship further down the road.

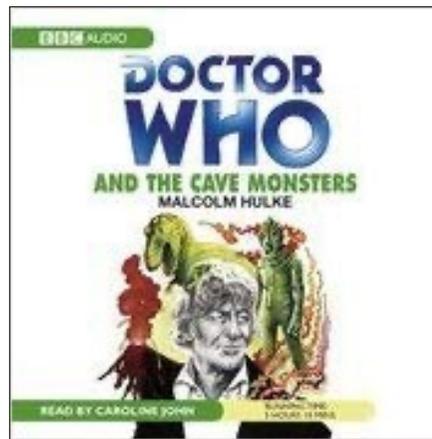
Liz Shaw is a terrific Doctor Who companion. Much as it seemed a shame she did not appear in more than one season, her four stories are all classics and she is on fine



form in The Silurians, with some great scenes. The attack in the barn, through the eyes of a Silurian, is one of the season's best cliff hangers and she plays a key role in making sure the antidote gets through to London. Best of all, she has a great relationship with the Doctor - it is more respect than anything else – and they play off each other very nicely.

It is great to see both Caroline John and Jon Pertwee were so adept with props. The Doctor flamboyantly shuts down one of the reactors in episode one very convincingly, whilst his sketching skills in the sickbay are both amusing and strangely compelling. Late-on in the serial, in one of the many lab sequences, the Doctor and Liz work their way through a massive pile of drug samples in their search for an antidote to the Silurian virus. In crisp white lab coats, Miss Shaw juggles phials of drugs alongside a stack of papers on a clipboard, whilst the Doctor does something unfathomable with slides, pipettes and a microscope ..... you absolutely believe what they are doing.

The action of 'Doctor Who and the Silurians' is punctuated by the most extraordinary incidental music, composed by Carey Blyton. Its dominance throughout ensures that we are never in doubt that this is not just mood-heightening background, this composition is part of the cast. If slightly jarring in places, consider the decade in which it was produced, how television was made at the time and enjoy the flavour it brings to the production for what it is.



To appreciate the music to its fullest, seek out the audio release of the serial, narrated superbly by Caroline John. Listening on a long night car journey, with just the narration to prompt your imagination, you realise that Blyton's work paints a frightening landscape in your mind.

The narrated soundtrack aside, Caroline John also picked up narration duties on the reading of Malcolm Hulke's Target novelisation. The audiobook, with its own sound design and effects, is a joy but in a different way to the original book.

There are some of us Doctor Who fans who fondly remember the days when all we had of the early stories was the Target Doctor Who novels. Much has been written about these in various publications, but suffice to say Hulke's Doctor Who and the Cave Monsters (with its iconic front cover illustration by Chris Achilleos) is one of the stand out classics of the range. Even in such a slim volume, based as it was on a long television serial, the author finds time to expand and add personality to the Silurians - giving them names

and back story. Magical, and certainly well-thumbed and battered on my bookshelf.

The end of The Silurians is somewhat downbeat. The Doctor is convinced that there is a way the Silurians can share the earth with humans and live in peace. This fleeting taste of a 'happily ever after' is soon snatched away by the Brigadier's actions. It is a sombre but fitting conclusion to the tale and, in hindsight, we can be heartened by the knowledge The Doctor gets a chance to put this right in a couple of seasons time when he meets The Sea Devils. For now though, he will not be chalking it up as one of his finest hours.

With the closing titles of Pertwee's eleventh episode rolling, are we closer to knowing who this new Doctor is? Definitely! This is a Doctor of style, action and a new intensity. Even so, shades of his previous incarnations are in there - he

can be short tempered like Hartnell's Doctor, but then instantly switch to the sweet, innocent charm of the Troughton version. Think again of the meeting with Doctor Quinn in his cottage - he tries everything in his bank to convince Quinn to let him help. Facets of all three Doctors come out in those few moments.

With his exile to earth the Third Doctor is alien enough, but somehow more human than either of his predecessors, so can blend in a little better than either of them would. In the case of The Silurians, we have a fine example of a story which starts to experiment with the new style and direction the programme is heading, feeling the way with its characters and situations. Whilst not everything works the first time you try it, this classic from the Pertwee era shows the new team meant business and that the Third Doctor will be around for some time.



# The Ambassadors of Death

Reviewed by  
Tim Gambrell

Malcolm Hulke famously told Terrence Dicks that Bryant and Sherwin's plan for Season 7 left him, as script editor, with two story options: mad scientist and alien invasion. That covers 'Inferno' and 'Spearhead from Space'. Hulke had obviously put some thought into what he was going to pitch to break that mould, because he gives us a fun twist in his story, 'Doctor Who and The Silurians', where the 'aliens' have been here all along. So, how does 'The Ambassadors of Death' push the format's apparent limitations? It gets the Doctor off the Earth, briefly, for a start. But its main achievement is that it's simultaneously both a mad scientist and an alien invasion story. This is, perhaps, why the story is less highly considered than others of the season, but it's actually working much harder than the other stories and is bursting at the seams with plot potential.

In fairness, it's a misguided scientist (and military) and a misrepresented or abused alien story. That makes it far more interesting; there are no characters which are strictly, morally, black or white, this or that. They are all shaded, with depths and motivations giving them a firm and engaging *raison d'être*. Dramatic opportunities, intrigue, plots and subplots abound, and it is fun working

out who is working for who, and why, and if anyone is double-crossing anyone else, and why. It all ties together in the end, but there is so much going on that the seven episodes can barely contain it all. The least well-rounded character, arguably, is Ralph Cornish, but he's so wonderfully steadfast and dependable, and Ronald Allen is so infinitely watchable in the role (in fairness to him as a consummate actor, he was the previous year in *The Dominators*, too, but for different reasons.) Any detail the character may lack is totally overlooked by the audience's complete sympathy for Cornish and the difficult position in which he has been placed. He's the straight man of the piece. He doesn't create any drama, but he has to respond to pretty much everyone else.

Jon Pertwee is fully in the swing of his Doctor by now. The pomposity that I find so off-putting during Season 8 is there already, but it's tempered better by knowing winks and smiles, like it's a shared joke between him and the Brigadier, or Liz Shaw. 'The Ambassadors of Death' is Liz Shaw's finest story of her run. She is strong, proactive and drives her own narrative, being abducted for her abilities, and forced to put them to use. Caroline John clearly handles the opportunity and the material very well. Liz really shows her mettle in her scenes with Reegan and the cowardly Lennox.

Reegan and Lennox: two characters with shady pasts, and a morally ambiguous stance in the story. There was a lot more that could

have been explored with these characters given the time, but at seven episodes the story is probably long enough. Also, Doctor Talian, Sir James Quinlan, General Carrington – the list goes on. Carrington even describes his actions as his 'moral duty', right through to his breakdown. All these characters have their own journeys within the narrative, and where, at times, they may be thought of as villains there are other instances where they exhibit sympathetic tendencies or even a more pleasant side. This is not pantomime, or melodrama. The story has an uncomfortable ring of truth and reality about it. It's kitchen sink drama in a sci-fi setting. I'm not sure the viewers had seen that since 'Quatermass' in the 1950s. They wouldn't again until 'The Omega Factor', at the end of the 1970s.

Only so much of the dramatic effect is in the writing and directing, though. 'The Ambassadors of Death' was very skilfully cast. William Dysart, as Reegan, is coolly in control the whole time; the perfect gangster. You could transfer him as is into any hard-hitting police show of the period. Cyril Shaps had a specialism all of his own at portraying put-upon experts who feel that life owes them something. And John Abineri was stolid and dependable in everything he worked on. He gives Carrington just the right amount of self-importance. It's underplayed to perfection, where it could have easily tipped over into bluster and bombast.

Lennox and Quinlan get rather

gruesome comeuppances, but General Carrington's psychological breakdown in episode seven is quite the most shocking, to me. For a character the audience has learned to hate over recent weeks, it's difficult not to feel sympathy for him at the end. In the space of, perhaps, a minute he becomes vulnerable, childlike. His mantra about his 'moral duty' is all he's left with. It's a perfect example of how this season didn't shy away from the realities of personal dramas and psychoses (see also Doctor Lawrence's breakdown and death in 'Doctor Who and The Silurians').

Season 7 is often referred to as gritty and uncompromising. That's certainly true of 'The Ambassadors of Death'. Pertwee has the odd moment of charm and humour (magnetising Carrington to Bessie being one such piece of nonsense) but generally the story is very bleak and dour. The integrity of the action sequences adds to the grittiness. Director Michael Ferguson famously gulled newbie producer Barry Letts into upping the level and quality of some of the action and fight sequences, but the final product is something of a masterclass. Ferguson was a quality director, and his work on Doctor Who is, perhaps, a little less celebrated than it might be. 'The Ambassadors of Death' is very tightly directed, pacy without being rushed and simultaneously action-packed and able to focus on smaller, character matters.

Then there are the cliff hangers. Classic Doctor Who was always about cliff hangers, the hook to drag

you back again the next week. You could argue that they really start to pack a bigger punch in 'The Ambassadors of Death', especially when they get reprised as a mini cliff hanger at the beginning of the following week's episode. Presumably the production team didn't think the reprise worked very well, so it was quickly dropped (although a slight vestige of it cropped up again two years later in Day of The Daleks). It's another aspect of the story that gives 'The Ambassadors of Death' a feeling of uniqueness – certainly until the series was revived in 2005 and they introduced the 'prologue' cliff hanger. The BBC Radiophonic Workshop adding the sting, or scream, to lead into the closing theme was, perhaps, a work of absolute pant-wetting genius. Certainly, as a very small boy, watching Season 14 onwards, that scream into the theme sent as much of a shiver up my spine as any of the images did.

I love dramatic highpoint 'talkie' cliff hangers, when delivered with absolute integrity. On paper, episode two's 'Right, cut it open!' may look ordinary. But Ferguson builds the tension immaculately and Ronald Allen's steadfast calmness against Pertwee's increasing energy and concern make it one of the very best dramatic moments the programme has delivered, let alone one of the best cliff hangers. I'll pass over episode one's standard 'whip out your gun' effort (repeated ad nauseum over the years) but the cliff hangers to episodes two through to six are, to quote the vernacular, 'bangers'. Even episode

six, which is another 'whip out your gun' effort – because it does it differently and thoughtfully and continues to crank up the tension until the titles kick in.

If 'The Ambassadors of Death' was made for television now, it would fit perfectly into the kind of twenty-four-part box set series of hour-long episodes that Netflix or HBO do so well. The story is bursting at the seams with plot, intrigue, ideas and personal narratives – many of them either left untapped or only slightly tapped. There's far more potential there than the seven episodes can hold, which is probably why the story ends, as it does, halfway through a scene, with the Doctor walking out and leaving the rest of the characters to sort things out for themselves. It may be the end of the Doctor's involvement, but it's not the end of the story that viewers have invested in for the past seven weeks – where do I raise a petition to get an eighth episode made?! Leave 'em wanting just a bit more: always a good plan.



## Inferno Reviewed by Fiona Moore and Alan Stevens

'Inferno' is one of those Doctor Who adventures which never seems to go out of style. While some of its contemporaries find themselves quietly dropped from the roster of classics due to ropery effects, poor direction or downright silly plots, and others find themselves by turns reviled and lauded as the reputation of some director or leading actor waxes and wanes, 'Inferno' continually remains on most people's Desert Island list. It is worth considering what has made 'Inferno' such an enduring classic in the face of the vagaries of fashion.

As stories go, 'Inferno' has a good deal to recommend it. To start with, it gets through seven episodes without really letting up the pace (although Episode 6 involves a bit of filler material, it is miniscule in comparison to other six or seven-parters). The location direction, by Douglas Camfield, is excellent, and the studio direction, the bulk of which was undertaken by Barry Letts, is at least competent, with occasional flashes of creativity. The one element which lets the story down, the Primord makeup, is more than compensated for by the performances of the actors — on film they are particularly well choreographed, and even on video they manage to avoid seeming totally ludicrous.

The adventure also incorporates elements from all the other stories of the season. The presence of duplicates and the Doctor falling into an inexplicable coma (and turning up in an alien world where nobody knows him) recall the events of 'Spearhead from Space'; 'Doctor Who and the Silurians' contributes a rapidly-spreading plague, a menace coming from the Earth itself rather than outer space, and the Doctor powerless to prevent UNIT (or equivalent) from committing genocide; blue-skinned aliens with a fatal touch, a top-secret project and a mystery surrounding a scientist all come from 'The Ambassadors of Death'. As well as having its own themes, then, 'Inferno' also cleverly alludes back to the more powerful elements of earlier serials.

Equally, 'Inferno' had an impact on the Jon Pertwee stories which would follow it. Coming as it does immediately before what is generally thought of as the 'Letts Era' (as, although Letts had been producer on the series since 'Doctor Who and the Silurians', Peter Bryant and Derrick Sherwin's conception of how the show should be produced still dominated), it foreshadows many of the ongoing themes which Letts would later incorporate into Season 8, but without the contrived feel they would subsequently acquire. The Brigadier, for instance, is more good-humoured here than in earlier adventures, and is teased by the Doctor, but he is far from the buffoon he would become, and visibly resents the Doctor taking liberties.

Similarly, the Doctor briefly mentions having seen the eruption of Krakatoa in 1883, prefiguring his later habit of gratuitously telling all and sundry about his encounters with historical figures and events (which, as *The Completely Useless Encyclopaedia* points out, means that anyone who knows he is a time-traveller will not be impressed and everyone else will think he is a lunatic). Here, however, he is doing it in a way which makes sense within the story's context, to illustrate a point, and also speaking in confidence to someone who doesn't need impressing. A busybody civil servant also figures strongly during 'Inferno', but Sir Keith Gold is actually a genuinely helpful, intelligent sort, rather than one of the blustering halfwits that grace such later stories as 'The Claws of Axos'. While all of these elements would later become formulaic, dulled by repetition and mishandled by lesser writers, here they come across as fresh and intelligently used.

As well as this, 'Inferno' does a number of clever things which are not seen in any other Pertwee serial. For instance, Houghton's script plays with the characters, making the people in the fascist universe more or less the same in personality as those who appear in 'our' universe. Stahlman is still an obstreperous egomaniac, but is accorded more respect in the fascist universe than in the democratic one; Petra is the type who follows orders in either universe, whereas Greg Sutton appears as a rebel in both. Where slight changes in personality do exist, they are always a consequence of the different options available in each society; the fascist Liz Shaw is brassier and more confrontational than the one we are used to, but then again the former Liz has trained for the military rather than doing a doctorate. The Brigade Leader is a bully, but he is a commandant of a "scientific labour camp", rather than a top member of an international organisation, and

as such has not learned diplomacy.

Furthermore, in the two cases in which most viewers claim to see a difference — the Brigadier and Sergeant Benton — this change is mainly an illusion. We have encountered these two mainly when they are dealing with friends and colleagues; the Benton from the fascist universe is simply the same man seen from the perspective of his enemies and underlings. The Doctor is accorded respect by the UNIT soldiers because they know him; if the Brigadier had found an unknown eccentric wandering around a top-secret facility, he would deal with him in harsh terms, much as he orders Benton to use physical force on Stahlman. The characters are basically the same; it is simply that the viewer is seeing them from a different standpoint.

This theme of duplicates is also foreshadowed in the early scenes with the Primords. Slocum first appears whistling merrily as he walks down the road, but is not long after seen beating his friend to death. The efficient and disciplined UNIT private later turns into a maniacal, anarchic killer. In both cases the original knowledge and personality endure; Slocum, a technician, knows how to operate the reactor controls, but does it in a malicious and self-serving way, seeking to raise the temperature rather than carry out the project, and with no thought for the consequences of his actions. He kills his friend with a wrench, again using one of the tools of his trade for destruction. The soldier still knows to use his

rifle as a weapon; rather than firing it, however, he swings it like a club. The Primords, like the fascist universe duplicates, have the same personalities as their originals, but in a distorted fashion.

Lastly, we may observe that the respective outcomes of the two *Inferno* projects stem more from the personalities and choices available in the different universes. In the fascist society, even the people who realise that Stahlman is insane cannot do anything to prevent his plan from going ahead. In the democratic world, by contrast, the issue could have been resolved happily even if the Doctor hadn't been there, if Sir Keith, Greg Sutton and the Brigadier had acted to get the project shut down after the first few deaths. It is not that the presence of the Doctor is unimportant, but it is worth noting that in the fascist universe the Doctor fails because other people won't act. All of this ultimately goes to demonstrate Houghton's main theme, which is that the outcome of events is determined by the individuals involved and the choices which they make.

Houghton also raises some interesting points with regard to whether our universe really is the 'best one'. This can be particularly seen in the position of women in the story (which was, interestingly, made in 1970, around the time that the feminist movement began to gather strength). The women of the fascist universe are in a much better position than they are in the democratic one. Petra Williams is



a top scientist and Assistant Director of the Inferno Project in the fascist society; in the other, she is a personal assistant. In the democratic universe, Liz Shaw is also not given much respect; although she is a scientist, she is reduced to a supporting role alongside the Doctor, with even the Brigadier calling her 'Miss' rather than 'Doctor Shaw'. In the fascist universe she is second in command to the Brigade Leader (although, confusingly, her rank is "Section Leader", which implies that she is a junior non-commissioned officer), who does not patronise her in the slightest.

It is easy, at this point, to assume that Houghton is claiming either that fascism is a good thing, or that higher status for women is bad. However, this does not appear to be the point of the exercise. In the initial encounter between Petra and Greg, she is confrontational and uptight about his lack of respect for her rank. In the fascist world, by contrast, everyone, not only women, shows a similar tension and de-

fensiveness; this is because they are all oppressed. Furthermore, there is also no sense that Petra and Liz's oppression in our world is somehow justifiable. The point here appears to be that both universes have good points and bad points with regard to freedom and individual action.

Yet, it is worth noting that this is not a matter of ambiguity or moral grey areas. The fascist universe is undeniably a bad place in which to live; but, it is not portrayed as unambiguously so. Similarly, the democratic universe is not necessarily portrayed as the 'good one'; it may be a happier place than the fascist world, but it also incorporates graft, prejudice, the abuse of authority, and so forth. It is interesting to note that the scenario opposing Stahlman and Sir Keith reverses the usual stereotype of the intelligent scientist and the unfeeling politician; just as some people are happier and/or more successful under a fascist regime than under a democracy, so a politician can be in-

telligent and a scientist a petty, self-serving dictator. Again, it is not a matter of apologising for fascism or portraying authority as a good thing, but of questioning the significance of the individual versus the group.

This leads into the final and most important theme of the narrative, which is revealed in the Doctor's remark upon returning from the fascist universe: "so free will is not an illusion after all." This statement works on several levels. Firstly, it relates to the Nietzschean worldview embodied by the fascist universe itself. Most of the people in the fascist world, operating in a totalitarian system, do not seem to feel they have a choice in their actions. The Brigade Leader refuses to believe that the crew will be abandoned to their deaths, asserting almost to the last that his superiors will save them. Liz is more pragmatic, but even then she does not leave her post. Around them, meanwhile, we see the reversion to the primitive of the project's technicians, which flies in the face of the Nazi ideology of upward progress while at the same time embodying Nazi principles thoroughly; in the end, Nietzschean philosophy just comes down to brutality and the survival of the strongest and most vicious.

It is also worth noting that the fascism we find here is of a particular sort. It is not the ideology of Germany or the totalitarianism of Stalinist Russia, which were both triumphant and triumphalist. The England we find is a defeated country and, as in the Weimar Republic, its people are defensive, upset and disillusioned;

if Britain fell in 1943, most of the people whom we see would have been children or teenagers at the time. This again reflects the Nietzschean nature of this universe; the idea that they had no choice in the matter justifies their submission to foreign conquest.

The quote about free will also links into the continuous rethinking in Doctor Who on the subject of rewriting history. In 'The Aztecs', the Doctor asserts that it is impossible for Barbara to change it; which could mean that her attempts to eliminate human sacrifice will ultimately come to naught against the tide of Aztec society. Later, this contention is firmed-up into a literal lack of change: by 'The Reign of Terror', writer Dennis Spooner is asserting that it is physically impossible to remodel time (somewhat ironically, given that the actions of the Doctor

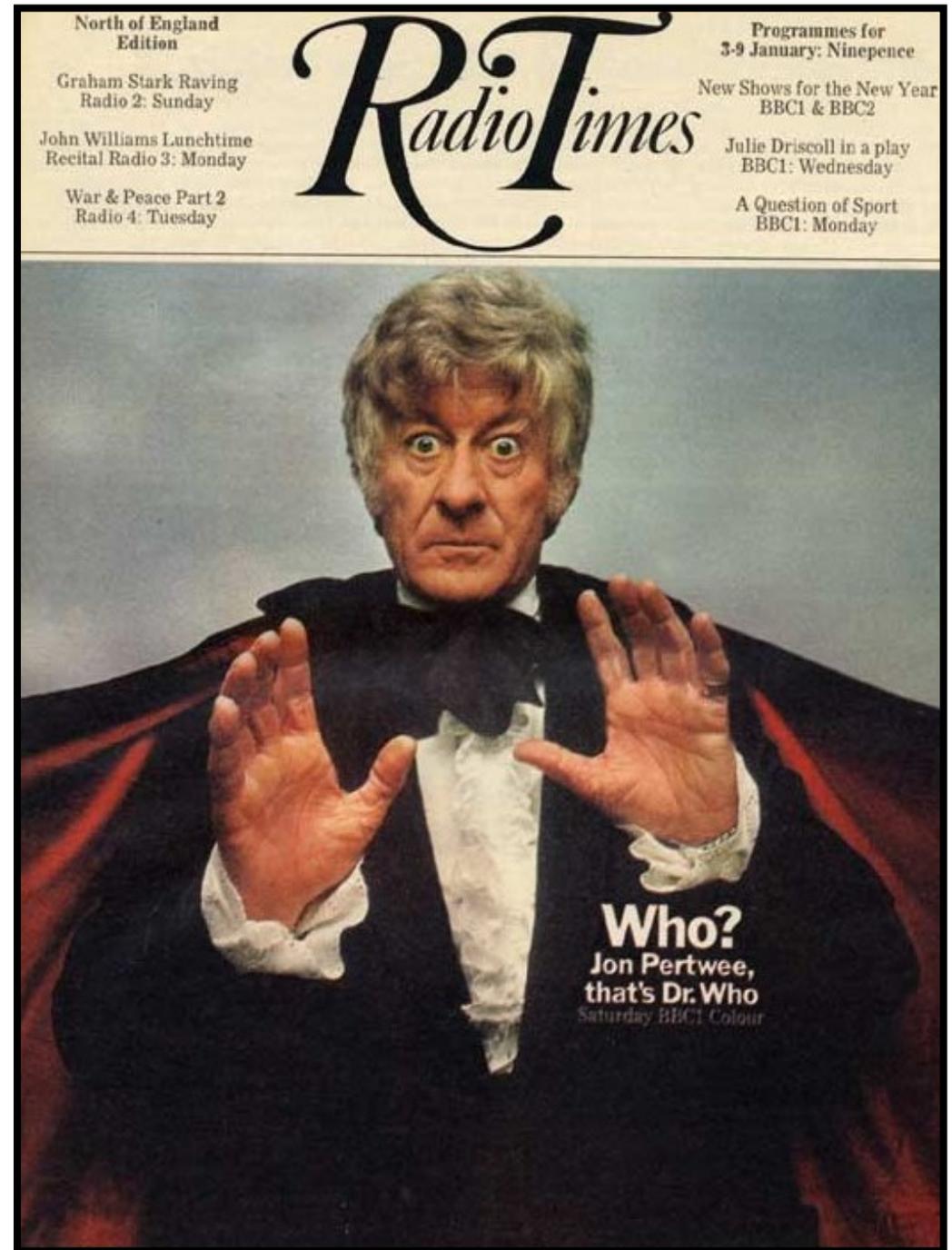


and companions have had an impact on events in all the historicals). Nevertheless, by 'The Time Meddler' Spooner is stating that history can be interfered with, and that the Doctor, in not doing so, is just following a golden rule. The Doctor's reason for following this rule is later stated in 'The Massacre' when he says that he "dare not change the course of history", because "we're all too small to realise its final pattern." As it is, 'Inferno' puts forth the idea that there are infinite futures, each hinging on actions and decisions taken; time is therefore not fixed, and so the impact of the Doctor's forays into the past can be accounted for without violating the idea of history having unfolded as the viewer knows it.

Finally, the quotation refers to the Doctor himself. He was seemingly powerless to thwart the conclusion of the Inferno Project in the fascist universe. Consequently, although he asserts to the Brigade Leader that by returning to the other uni-

verse he may be able to prevent the same events from occurring, the thought must have crossed his mind that perhaps he couldn't. The fact that the project has evidently been proceeding along a different timeline in his absence reveals to him that the events are not predetermined, and therefore that his intervention can help stop the project. Yet, by seeing the outcome of the Inferno Project in the fascist universe and by having the authority to act upon his knowledge, the Doctor has rendered the chain of cause and effect in our universe meaningless, creating a temporal paradox through introducing information from the project's future into its present.

'Inferno' has long been acclaimed for its stunning characterisation and intelligent portrayal of an alternative fascist society. It is also worth praising, however, for its philosophical depth and clever reflections on other aspects of the Doctor Who mythos.



# Terror of the Autons

## Reviewed by Bedwyr Gullidge

One of the central devices that Doctor Who has utilised to capture the imagination, to generate drama and to create peril for our heroes has been the ability to make everyday things absolutely terrifying. The new era of 1970's Doctor Who fronted by Jon Pertwee was the brainchild of Producer Derrick Sherwin. He wanted to make it 'like Quatermass', bringing the show back down to Earth. This planted the programme and its stories in the real world that viewers saw outside their window. As a byproduct of this plan there was an opportunity to make some of the sights the viewer might encounter in their everyday life scary.

During the Patrick Troughton era 'The Web of Fear' had made a trip on the London Underground unnerving. 'The Invasion' saw Cybermen stomping around the capital, much like the Daleks had done in 1964's 'The Dalek Invasion of Earth'. Suddenly, familiar locations could become places where the monstrous could be encountered. This concept was then extended even further. There was the possibility that everyday items, not just specific locations, could become terrifying.

In 'Spearhead from Space' the terror came from shop window man-

nequins or those in Madame Tussauds. Blank faced bipedal humanoids, positioned to showcase the latest fashions, became killers. They suddenly jerked into life and were a deadly threat, murdering policemen, cyclists, shoppers and those who were just stood at a bus stop. 'Terror of the Autons' took the notion to more extreme lengths, further developing the items that the Nestene Consciousness could animate.

Plastic was commonplace in everyday life during the 1970's and now our overuse of the material is being heavily scrutinised. During the Pertwee era it had begun to infiltrate everyone's homelife. Plastic had begun to rival ceramics with Tupperware for instance quickly becoming the food storage equipment of preference. Whilst it was becoming more common, the artificial element still remained. Few understood how it had even come into being. As with most new products plastic was also approached with caution. But few could imagine that a chair, a plastic flower or even the telephone cord could actually harm someone. 'Terror of the Autons' would challenge those perceptions. In one of the more extraordinary scenes in the history of Doctor Who, a plastic chair suffocates plastics factory production manager McDermott. Following a click of the Master's fingers the chair inflates and takes shape, seemingly coming to life. With McDermott encouraged to sit in the chair, the plastic back forces itself over his face, suffocating him. It isn't entirely effective because actor Harry Towb has

to pull down the back of the chair down upon himself but the visual of lifeless legs protruding from the bottom is a stark image. The camera lingers as the life is seemingly squeezed out of the poor man. This is about as horrific as Doctor Who gets. Nowadays a scene of a man being suffocated, even if it is by a plastic chair, in a programme watched by children would be unlikely to escape complaints to Ofcom. Similarly, a murderous doll would also receive substantial criticism.

It would be not until towards the end of the following decade that the killer doll genre would go fully mainstream with 'Child's Play' (1988) introducing the world to the homicidal Chucky. However, the concept of murderous toys had already been around for nearly 40 years by the time of 'Terror of the Autons'. The novel 'Burn Witch Burn' was published in 1932 by Abraham Merritt and would be adapted to become the movie 'The Devil Doll' released four years later. Toys coming to life when you are not looking has been a popular theme in children's literature for decades. The Disney Pixar franchise 'Toy Story' provides no better evidence of that fact. So, although the concept is not entirely original, 'Terror of the Autons' would've been one of the first times that malevolent toys had been introduced to younger viewers in particular.

During 'Spearhead from Space' the previous season some might argue that the shots of dolls being manufactured also verged on the disturb-

ing. Glassy eyes being punched into plastic faces. Hair being stitched to that plastic brow. Unlike those dolls, a deliberate decision was made by the production team to make the troll doll seen in 'Terror of the Autons' unlike anything on the market. It was deliberately grotesque. Not a cute and cuddly toy. The attempt to appease the parents did not work. Across the country children refused to take their most beloved toys to bed, just in case they came to life during the night and strangled them. In that context the use of a killer toy was certainly effective.

Another deadly plastic item is the cord attached to your telephone. It is even used as the cliff-hanger to Episode Three as the Master attempts to bump off the Doctor. Again, the sequence is possibly not the most convincing with Pertwee's gurning, but it added another potential device for murder. Plastic flowers were another. On being presented with a plastic daffodil The Brigadier states, 'They give these things away with soap.' He was correct. Soap company Persil instigated a promotion where shoppers would receive a free plastic daffodil with a purchase. The 1960's had been a period where plastic flowers were a craze. So, making that particular product deadly in a Doctor Who story made perfect sense.

The distribution of these daffodils in the episode is by Autons in oversized carnival heads. The false faces and the fact that they were given out as freebies are equally terrifying. There's something particularly

malevolent about giving something out for free as part of an evil plan. The thrill of getting something for nothing only for it to be a deadly weapon provides the proverbial rollercoaster of emotions. Perhaps the only thing worse than that would be to actually charge people for it!

Unfortunately, the production team probably went a step too far when they made Policemen scary. Pulling away a fake face to reveal an Auton underneath at the climax of episode two quite rightly came in for criticism. Children and other viewers must not fear the police as they should be the individuals they run towards if they are frightened, not away from. However, the format of the story penned by Robert Holmes is clear; make the everyday terrifying. This is what makes 'Terror of the Autons' one of the most memorable Doctor Who stories.

When Russell T Davies brought

Doctor Who back to BBC One in 2005, the villain he chose to launch the new series was the Autons. This decision allowed for the scenes where a trip to the shops could cost you your life. Suddenly, Doctor Who, in the first episode of the new series, had established that it could be a scary programme. One of the best exponents of making the everyday a threat, and someone who has publicly acknowledged the influence of the Pertwee era, is Steven Moffat. The former lead writer and Executive Producer has made statues, snowmen and the dust in sunlight frightening for younger viewers. In the latest series of Doctor Who to be televised even bubble wrap could kill you.

Whilst viewers enjoy the fantastical elements presented in Doctor Who, sometimes it is the reality of everyday sights and objects where more primal terror can be found.



## The Mind of Evil Reviewed by Rik Moran

I first saw 'The Mind of Evil' as a rerun on UK Gold in the 1990's and it was in black and white. In those days the idea of being able to watch old Who on a weekly basis was new and exciting. By this point, UK Gold was screening Doctor Who at about 9am on a Sunday morning and set the pattern for viewing for the rest of the day – if you had Sky TV of course. You could start with Doctor Who and then later on in the afternoon progress to 'Danger Mouse' also on UK Gold switching to Sky One for 'The Simpsons' at 6pm, something like 'Beverly Hills 90210' at 7pm and then, the jewel of the day's viewing, brand new episodes of 'Star Trek' (TNG or DS9) at 8pm. However, amongst all of this, Doctor Who at 9am was still the real highlight for me.

Times have changed of course and not only do we not need to be seated in front of the TV at 9am to watch 'The Mind of Evil' – we can do that at any time – but we can also watch it in colour. As episodes previously lost were recovered from around the world, a colour version of an episode previously only existing as a black and white tele-recording would often be amongst them. But 'The Mind of Evil' was not to be one of these. The story remained in the archive, and in our homes whether on TV or VHS in monochrome. Well, until 2013 that is, when it was announced that the BBC had the story in colour all the time. They just didn't know it. The

process for recovering colour from the 'chromadots' on black and white film was now understood and all six episodes could be, and were restored (although part one presented some problems all of its own). The version of the story we have now has been beautifully restored by the BBC 'restoration team'.

But what of the story itself? It starts really well with an intriguing and gritty opening episode, and although it fades a little bit by the end it is still overall very enjoyable. I'm often critical of the six-part stories, agreeing with JNT that they are often over-length, but the pacing here is very good, there's plenty of content, some great characters, and a true sense of horror.

The story involves The Master who has developed a machine which extracts evil from criminals' minds. Well, obviously there is more to it than that, and the revelation of the 'machine' actually being organic is a classic 'Who moment. 'The Mind of Evil' also features a prison takeover, a world peace conference and an attempt to steal a powerful missile. Now some of these elements are slightly muddled padding to fill out the six parts. Following on from a tight four-parter it is likely that if this one was similarly pared down it would be nearer to the top of the tree for Pertwee era Who, rather than sitting in the middle. But with six parts to fill, there is a rather complex and not fully credible plot around the peace conference and a very convoluted plan hatched by The Master which is very reliant on everything going exactly to plan and schedule. However the acting, char-

acterisation, action, scary 'monster' (the Keller Machine) and political intrigue and all of a high standard and help in glossing over these relatively minor plot concerns. You have to hand it to whoever it was that designed the Keller machine, (and to the writing of Don Houghton), they truly did manage to make that box of living hate come to life, it posed a real threat. The CSO (still in its early stages in 1971) does detract from a number of the effects but I am sure the audience of the day did not mind.

The script by Don Houghton is in an espionage thriller vein. There are still delicate issues to be solved over the Peace Conference, there is betrayal and a sequence where a group of prisoners take control of a prison for a second time. They are armed and they shoot and kill several apparently expendable prison officers, which seems out of place in a family show like Doctor Who.

The Master (Roger Delgado) makes for a superb adversary again despite his occasional indecisive ways and Mailer (William Marlowe) is a well-acted and convincing henchman, although how he ever got to the rank of Major I will never know. Jo Grant (Katy Manning) is a stronger character in this than in 'Terror of the Autons' and this establishes her much better. The Brigadier (Nicholas Courtney) and UNIT are good additional support as ever and there is a gritty prison setting plus exciting military and political elements. I am not generally a fan of the music and sounds created by Dudley Simpson but accept that at the time they were fresh and innovative and while the incessant noise of the prison disturbance is very annoying, it is certainly more realistic than a quiet riot!

This is an enjoyable, action-packed and well made serial. I guess it could have been better, but then again, couldn't they all?



## The Claws of Axos

### Reviewed by Mark Donaldson

When the DWAS High Council exiled me to write 1,000 words about 'The Claws of Axos', I'll admit I was nervous. What can one say about a 38 year old piece of television that has been written about by better writers than I? A serial that has been discussed in numerous podcasts, DVD commentaries, convention panels and pub conversations? A middle of the road serial that some find a bit unoriginal?

Given that passive-aggressive contrarianism and hot-takes are the order of the day in 2019, maybe I could write about how 'The Claws of Axos' is very good, actually, and you're a moron for thinking otherwise.

Or perhaps, in light of protests by Extinction Rebellion about the current climate emergency, I could discuss Baker and Martin's scepticism over nuclear power and the utopian, renewable, attractiveness of the Axons' gift. That said, nothing in 'The Claws of Axos' comes close to exploring the devastating power of a nuclear disaster like Glyn Houston's haunting portrayal of Professor Watson in their later, superior story 'The Hand of Fear'.

As I sat down at my keyboard to start writing something, a 1981 corporate video for white goods manu-

facturer Zanussi popped up on Twitter. In it, Jon Pertwee, dressed as the Doctor, talks through a new 5 year guarantee scheme with the aid of a shouting robot, Mickey Pearce from Only Fools and Horses and Rene from 'Allo 'Allo. It's a bit of fairly dry corporate tedium to be trotted out at conferences and conventions up and down the country. That is, until Pertwee gives a very 'of its time' answer to a question from his female co-star.

And that was when it hit me. I knew exactly what I was going to write.

Jon Pertwee's Top 10 Mucky Moments!

Of course not, I've successfully pitched that to the Radio Times website. (SPOILER ALERT: Number 1 is when that ceiling fan fell on his unmentionables in 'Adventures of a Private Eye'.)

But the answer to the Planet Zanussi question provided the solution to my Axos dilemma. It is hard to write something new about the story because it too is 'of its time'. For entirely different reasons, of course. So let's look at what 'The Claws of Axos' represents in the 1970s, rather than what slightly sniffy fan critiques assert it is now.

Many of these retrospective complaints focus on the fact that it's Pertwee by numbers; Aliens land in the home counties, the Doctor butts heads with pompous officialdom and the Master has a scheme that goes badly wrong. And yet, it's only Delgado's third story, were viewers at the time already tired of the char-

acter and his extraordinary lack of foresight? It's not as if Delgado doesn't add new layers to the character, portraying a simultaneously desperate and conniving Master held in the claws of the Axons. His later scenes with Jon Pertwee as the Doctor add further layers to the friendship/antagonism between the two Time Lords. The novelty of the Master turning up in every story may have worn thin after years of regretful convention anecdotes by Barry Letts but Axos at least finds an imaginative way to introduce him.

Imagination is another positive element of the serial; we've rarely had an alien menace as complex and outright weird as the Axons. The design work by Kenneth Sharp combined with Barbara Lane's costum-

ing provide us with one of Doctor Who's most 'alien' species since the Zarbi. Beautiful golden gods and goddesses that hide their true, multi-tentacled form and nefarious parasitic intentions. The design of the ship hints at this early on, the organic fronds and phallic surveillance equipment at odds with the sleek polish of the Axon men and women's facades. We can all be thankful to Bob Baker and Dave Martin that they conceived of the aliens before they settled on the rather uninspired working title of 'The Vampire From Space'. A title which can only bring to mind Ed Wood's notorious 1950s B-Movie disaster-piece 'Plan 9 From Outer Space'.

As a freshman entry in the Baker and Martin canon, many of their de-



fining characteristics are on display here. No tin dogs, sure, but the high concept science fiction is there to see in the form (or lack thereof) of Axos. There's a clear influence of mythology too; the whole story is a high concept sci-fi exercise in restating the warning about Greeks bearing gifts for the nuclear age. UNIT and repulsive civil servant Chinn's caution and distrust of the Axons appals the Doctor, who chastises them for attacking the ship before establishing a dialogue. Those opening scenes come from the same moral position as the condemnation of sealing the Silurians underground and the exposure of General Carrington's manipulation of his alien prisoners. That UNIT and Chinn turn out to have been right all along is less in keeping with the right-on social attitude of this era. It leaves the overall story wanting, just what has it all been about? It's odd, in retrospect (sorry, I know I said we'd keep it in context) that 'Claws of Axos' tells the audience to be wary of those offering clean energy and abundant food sources when in a few years time, it'll champion all of that in 'The Green Death'.

And yet, couldn't you point to 'The Claws of Axos' as the moment where the house style for the remainder of the Pertwee era is established? For all the talk of 'Terror of the Autons' representing the proper start of the 'UNIT family', it's a direct sequel to 'Spearhead from Space' and the Doctor doesn't seem to like Jo Grant for large parts of it. And speaking of Jo, she could have very easily been replaced by Liz Shaw in 'The Mind of Evil'. It's only here that

we begin to grasp what their relationship will be throughout the next few years. The paternal Pertwee is softening, presumably having set the record straight about his 'straighter' acting capabilities in the previous series. The heated scenes with Chinn shows that the angrier, less patient Third Doctor is still there bubbling under the bouffant but his scenes with Jo highlight his softer, more caring side. Even if that requires him to bark sums at her to focus her mind.

The 'UNIT family' is fairly well established now too, and everyone has settled into their groove. Arguably, Bill Filer makes Mike Yates rather redundant here, but to discuss the fumbled characterisation of Captain Yates is to write a different essay entirely.

'The Claws of Axos' may well be a middle of the road Pertwee adventure; it has a familiar style, an unclear message, freak weather conditions and a comedy tramp. However, it also represents the first contribution by the always imaginative Bob Baker and Dave Martin and marks the final stage of the transition from the harsh Season 7 Doctor to the more cuddly Season 8 one.

So... if this the middle of the road, maybe 'Axos' represents pulling into a service station for petrol and a pasty. An opportunity to refuel (pun intended) and set off in the direction of some of the finest Doctor Who ever produced.

# Colony in Space

## Reviewed by Tony Jones

### A Collection of Minor Milestones?

Malcolm Hulke's Colony in Space probably doesn't feature high on many lists of favourite Doctor Who stories, even if that list is just kept to Jon Pertwee stories. Even cutting the list down to third Doctor / Master / Jo Grant tales still doesn't give it time to shine – all this is not to say it doesn't have some merits. If not the best of stories, it's far from awful but does show its age both in production and storytelling. It's also home to a few milestones.

### A Quick Reprise

I'll do a lightning-fast tour of the story. Time Lords want the Doctor to stop the Master get a DoomsDay Weapon (it feels like it needs lots of capitalisation). They take him and Jo Grant to the all-but barren planet Uxarieus in the year 2472, then for a few episodes it's the tale of struggling farmers vs greedy mining corporation, with treachery, deception, boxy robots and under-used local Primitives. It's solid enough then all pivots when an Adjudicator (more capitals) arrives to settle the dispute. It's now episode four and the adjudicator is the Master.

Meantime Jo has been taken by the Primitives to their secret underground city, the Doctor arrives, and they meet the wizened Guardian (an ancient alien forebear) who lets them go. We learn the Master is

here to seek out a lost super-weapon contained in the city and that is why he is here. The Doctor needs to stop the Master and save the colonists from the corporation and perhaps defuse the weapon and make the Uxarieus fertile again. Almost, but not quite, enough for four or five episodes but a struggle for six.

### A Foreign Country

As LP Hartley said at the start of the much-quoted 1953 novel *The Go-Between*:

*'The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there.'*

Watching Colony in Space is a real reminder of how both production and audience consumption have radically changed in the 48 years since I first watched this in 1971.

Technically the BBC did very well with resources at hand. Yes, the robots are poor but at least not men in suits; the model work is about the same as Gerry Anderson was doing for his various animation; it's a quarry but actually works well for a change, as it's dressed with various buildings and other props. The music is pretty strong and channels *Forbidden Planet* whenever action moves to the secret city of the Primitives. Props wise the colonists and mining men tend to use various rifles / guns, which, if not terribly futuristic actually match the approach taken sometimes in more recent Doctor Who such as *Planet of the Ood*.

It's a more mixed tale with some of the other set dressing. The colony

base (wobbly stair-rails aside) looks convincing enough but everywhere we would now expect computers the vision from 1971 was lots of paper, magnetic tape and filing cabinets. It's the most incongruous part by far though we get to the Master some of his props are quite futuristic.

More dated though is the format of six episodes covering the best part of 150 minutes. We are used to longer more contained stories with different beats. The cliff-hangers are mostly poor (the robot turns out to be friendly, two bits of Venusian aikido, colonists interrupt the Master about to kill the Doctor and Jo being dragged into the Primitive city) and the story is stretched to fit the number of episodes. Is quite possible were the Master / Time Lord sequence lost, the story could still have been a solid 'Doctor resolves

two sides of a human conflict and deals with alien mystery adventure'.

Back in 1971 we had a week between instalments. No chance to see episodes in a binge, no recording and no bootlegging. I suspect (I was younger) most of the audience didn't mind poor cliff-hangers and a bit of drag between episodes. It's only when we can slip on a CD and watch the whole story we realise how it fails to grab the attention.

It's an opportunity missed. The first three episodes work well, but the early Time Lord speech spoils the surprise return of the Master, it takes two episodes of to and fro between colonists and miners to get the Master to his endgame and then a strong exchange between him and the Doctor about power, motivation and being a Time Lord. As we see



the Master's greed is more than a match for the miners just on a different level.

It's also interesting to look back and compare notes with both Remembrance of the Daleks and Day of the Doctor. The superweapon of the Primitives (OK technically the ancestor race) is an early form of the remote stellar manipulator and Time Lords stealing superweapons is something we would see again. From refusing to get involved to triggering the Moment to end the Time War the Doctor has taken quite a journey.

### Milestones

Many stories are interesting for some first or other and Colony in Space does better than most. We see inside the TARDIS for the first time and Jo gets her first trip off-world and in time. Sadly the TARDIS interior is rather dull and a contrast to the Master's own ship, which we get to see far more of.

I also note (from reading The Complete History) this is the story where we find out the TARDIS is 'bigger inside than out' for the first time, a description that has stayed with us since.

### The Protagonists

Criticism aside, Jon Pertwee's Doctor is well-defined. Some martial arts, some disguise, helping and criticising and all the while looking for the best in everyone. The third Doctor is by now well-established and it's a good a performance as any. I do wish he had better control over his respiratory bypass – scenes of being gassed seem unconvincing.

Roger Delgado's Master is (weak plotting apart) immaculate. His Adjudicator is compelling, measured and complete. The Master doesn't just pop in and pretend, he arrives and is. Maybe the Adjudicator isn't a million miles away from his core nature, but he exudes authority and

gets his way without mind-control or other gadgetry.

Katy Manning has too little to do. Jo is overawed by her first trip in the TARDIS so much so her instinct is to rush back to Earth and ignore the situation on Uxarieus. She gets taken prisoner, manages her own escape then when the aliens capture her, she loses all agency, gives her only scream when she sees the Guardian. From that point on she is a relatively minor player, a pity as the Jo Grant we saw in most of episodes two and three is a very much a strong person finding their way in circumstances most of us would struggle with.

### The Other Cast

Some very good performances as is often the way, with direction by Michael E Briant getting credit here. In

the interests of space I'll just praise a few:

Helen Worth – later to be a mainstay of Coronation Street Helen as Mary Ahse has plenty to do and does it well, with conviction and emotion.

Captain Dent of the mining ship is played with icy greed by Morris Perry and counterpoints his chief mining specialist Caldwell (Bernard Kay) the baddie with a conscience.

### Final Thoughts

All the above aside, Colony in Space isn't bad and even if it's presented as decent farming colonists vs evil mining corporation it's really about greed and evil, with a little bit of future history thrown in for context.



# The Dæmons

Reviewed by  
Martin Spellacey

Thunder rumbled ominously, fitful lightning mocked the darkness of the green with a sudden day. A few threatening drops of rain splashed heavily on the cobbled road...

Words. Just words. But to a ten-year-old boy curled up in the back seat of his dad's Ford Capri on a rainy holiday in Tenby, these words were alchemy. These words were going to change his life in ways he couldn't possibly then imagine. You see I have a confession to make. I was that boy and like a lot of ten year olds in 1974, I used to watch Doctor Who but I wouldn't particularly class myself as a fan. Doctor Who was just another TV show that we would watch at the weekend and recreate in the school playground on the following Monday. That was about the extent of my interest in the show.

Until that is, a family holiday in Tenby, when it rained and it rained. It rained so hard we were all stuck in our tiny caravan and I was getting restless. To appease me, my mother agreed to buy me a book from the local market and the book we chose was 'The Daemons' by Barry Letts. 'That'll shut him up' I imagine she thought, and indeed it did. If you look at that book from a child's perspective you'll see that it contains just the right amount of character, thrills and scares to spark a child's imagination. No easy feat to write a Dennis Wheatley tale for kids. So as

the light faded that evening I was decanted into the caravan and, resisting the temptation of pop and family scrabble, I continued to read the book in mum and dad's room by the light of a torch. I recall heavy raindrops did indeed pitter patter on the metal roof of the van creating the necessary ambiance as I read, and I'd like to think there was an ominous rumble of thunder too as I pressed on.

It's catnip for kids, that book is. Look again at the illustrations and imagine what excitement they convey to a young imagination. Sure, The Master appears to have lost one of his legs in the illustration on page 40 but the frozen look of horror that appears on the faces of the congregation of the coven that are dwarfed by his presence is palpable. The image on page 55 showing the cloven hooves of Azal menacing a cowering Garvin are far more terrifying than anything that was shown on the telly.

So that was it, 'The Daemons' was instantly my favourite book ever. Better even than 'Mr Meddles Muddles' or 'The Owl who was afraid of the Dark'. To my delight I looked into the pages of the inside front cover to learn to my interminable joy that there were other books to read about the Doctor's adventures. Doctor Who and the Cybermen (who were the Cybermen?, I'd forgotten). Doctor Who and the Sea Devils (I remembered them) and Doctor Who and the Crusaders (That sounded good, probably some

strange aliens from the planet Crusade).

I nagged and nagged my poor parents to take me back to the market stall to acquire further books that holiday which I readily consumed. 'it's stopped raining Martin, go out and play with your sister'. 'No thanks mum, I'm gonna stay in and go to the moon instead' So then and indeed there it was that I transformed like a caterpillar into a butterfly and became a Doctor Who FAN. I was able to prove it when we returned to school that autumn. We had to do a presentation on what we'd done on our holidays and I spoke to my classmates about it all. 'Here', I opined proudly, 'I have six whole Doctor Who books that I have brought into class. SIX whole books!' What other credentials were ever needed to evidence a deep love for the show unrivalled by anyone else in the world. I was a bona-fida Doctor Who all because of The Daemons.

And then something magical and truly wonderful happened. 3 years

later my father got himself a job in London. We were then living in a tiny Welsh village and Dad needed to move the family somewhere equidistant from Wales and his work as the commute was becoming intolerable for him. 'We need to move' my parents told us. 'Not me. Never. I'm never going to leave my friends EVER. 'We've found a lovely village you'd like' Don't Care! I'll live at number 13 with Aunty Rita' 'They filmed Doctor Who there Martin!' 'Well I suppose it wouldn't harm to take a look!' And so at 13 I suddenly found myself living in the quaint village of Devil's End. Well Aldbourne, cut off from my own people. Exiled. 13 is a difficult age to fit in, especially amongst the close community of Wiltshire villagers. I was a lonely boy and one oft to take solace in the grounds of St Michael's church, where I would read my coveted Doctor Who books; The Daemons especially.

There I learned to appreciate the story even more, the back story of Mrs Bates' hens not laying, the concerns about Stan Joining the coven



and the plight of young Manders and his governor's bakers van. Every year at Beltane, I'd sit in the churchyard and religiously (if that is an appropriate word) read the novel. I started to wonder about the story, things I'd never considered as a child of ten. Why wasn't the village inundated with members of Her Majesty's press that night? After all a well-loved TV professor had just been killed live on the telly at midnight. How come Mike Yates was able to fly a helicopter into a public space when he's clearly been up all-night drinking and watching the rugby? Had the Master merely hypnotized everyone into believing that he was the new vicar, or had he spent some time in a seminary as a novice learning the ropes as a vicar. Are there marriages and christenings that must be annulled because the local vicar wasn't ordained – hells teeth, he wasn't even human! How long had he been in situ anyway? Could the Doctor's arch nemesis be seen a week earlier judging the local cake bake or organising the village bring and buy. Was he even sorting out the service for Josh Wilkin's funeral? A bit hypocritical as it was his actions that indirectly lead to Josh's demise in the first place.

And so, dear erudite readers, as I didn't have a great many friends close by I turned to writing to pen pals instead. I'd just learned about this exciting new fan club called DWAS where I could buy things called fanzines which contained news about my favourite show. Soon lunch money was diverted into postal orders and as I became a regular visitor to the post office on the green, word soon spread about

my interest in Who, (that's village life for you.) And people really cared about the time the good Doctor visited so they were keen to share stories. The vicar let me climb the church tower to see at close hand Quiquaequod's magical weather vane, Ray, the landlord of the Blue Boar regaled me with stories of the shoot. (some of them too bawdy for reprint here). School friends who'd been visited at school by Jon Pertwee and Roger Delgado shared anecdotes about the visit and even a few autographs came my way. Even in DWAS, news that a member of the club lived in Aldbourne spread. Fans themselves soon came to stay. Amazing people like Jeremy, Mark and Linda visited, stayed and have since become lifelong friends, and slowly but surely my life changed as a result.

My interest in Doctor Who widened in line with my circle of friends, I joined a local DWAS group and we started doing conventions. Visits to Longleat spawned friendships with people who worked on the show and soon I was visiting the studios or OB locations to watch the series being filmed and each time when someone enquired what my favourite story was, well there was never any doubt. It was and indeed still is of course, the Daemons. It's a popular story with those people who were there in 1970 when the filming took place and everyone involved has an anecdote. I recall having lunch with Katy Manning one afternoon where we were both soon crying with laughter as she recalled how Jon Pertwee kept being thrown in studio by the bulge on Stanley Mason's crotch or the time Barry

Letts was called down to an evening's recording session because the landlord of the Blue Boar (who was on a set visit) had rigged up the pump on set to a real barrel of Wadworth's Six X and the techies were getting far too raucous.

Eventually the family moved from the village but I was never very far away and spiritually, in many ways I like to think, I'm still there. Barely a year went by without a return to Devil's End, sometimes to meet old friends, sometimes for family reunions and sometimes with fans just for the heck of it. You see, because of The Daemons I'm a lifelong Doctor Who fan. There's no going back now and sometimes whenever my mother complained that my obsession with the show was getting out of hand, I would remind her that it was, after all, her actions that started it all off in the first place.

Earlier this year I returned to Aldbourne once again, this time to help out at an event that my friend Martin Parsons had organised in the

village. My husband Gary and I offered to pick up our friend Damaris Hayman who played Olive Hawthorne in the story and bring her down to the event to meet the fans. There was a moment, just a moment, on the green as we set up the group photo shoot. Martin had organised a UNIT jeep and a replica of Bessie to be parked in front of the church. Katy, Richard, Damaris and John posed for photos with adoring fans and I suddenly thought about that lonely 13 year old boy again back in the village in the seventies, this time surrounded by friends and cast and I wondered how he would have reacted seeing what his future self was doing.

As we left the village Damaris looked at us both and happily sighed. 'You know, it really was the best part I ever had' she said. Here was Olive Hawthorne herself telling me that The Daemons was one of the best parts of her life and I suddenly realised, The Daemons, in whatever format, was also one of the best parts of my life too.



# The Day of the Daleks

## Reviewed by Ken Shinn

*The Doctor looked round the circle of horror-struck faces. 'Don't you see? You want to change history. But you can't. You're part of it, trapped in a temporal paradox. Styles didn't kill all those world leaders. He didn't start the wars that led to the Dalek conquest. You did. You did it all yourselves!'*

Cue stinging screech: cue end credits. Or that's how it should have been. But Time was re-written again.

Christmas 1974 has my siblings and myself receive white anaglypta wall-paper stockings, presumably to evoke snowy North Pole-style

wastes and sturdy enough to hold their considerable contents. Among those in mine are two stocking-fillers which go on to become some of my favourites of all the presents I receive that year – Malcolm Hulke's Doctor Who And The Sea Devils and Terrance Dicks' Doctor Who And The Day Of The Daleks. The former I know well – the television omnibus version on Boxing Day a couple of years ago was my introduction into the Worlds Of Doctor Who, although a throwaway reference to events in the story's past being set in 1977 does throw me for a bit: but that's nothing compared to what awaits me in the largely unknown latter. For that, I have only a brief synopsis in the Radio Times 10th Anniversary Special, and that doesn't exactly give much away.

I've only really started reading 'proper' science fiction in a big way recently, going through the likes of

The War Of The Worlds and S Is For Space with increasing enthusiasm. I'm unaware that SF in general has a long tradition of Time-paradox tales at this point. And then along comes Uncle Terrance (a title that he gains in the Future – Time shifts once more), and proceeds in the parlance of the day to blow my little mind. He sketches in the harshness of the Dalek regime with deft little touches – Moni's muddled remembrance of pyjamas, Anat's wonder at the soft feel of velvet curtains, the Controller's pride in his leather boots – 'none of your plastic!' – in a way that gives genuine depth and character to his story's world. And then, with the climax of the tale fast approaching, he throws in the quote that begins this piece. Everything that I thought I knew about this narrative is tipped on its head at one fell swoop. It's an exciting, alarming, yet absolutely logical moment, and it ensures that I've got to finish reading this book. I'm already well aware of the idea of thrilling adventures in Time and Space, but very few of the Who yarns that I know back then seem to have anything to do with Time at all, other than being set in the Future or the equally concrete Past. That it can be tampered with is a revelation to 10-year-old me. The story is also suitably epic in scale, the final assault on Auderly House involving a vast force of Ogrons and Daleks sweeping triumphantly up to their inevitable, Time-correcting doom at the business end of Shura and his Dalekenium bomb. And the television version?

I don't catch up with that one for about another 18 years, give or

take. Time folds once more onto a whole new perspective. As joint head of the Norwich Science Fiction Group, I often hold discussions of what to do next meeting with my friend and fellow boss Paul Curtis. He's big on cutting-edge home entertainment stuff, and, after we've sorted out the next meeting, we sit down with coffee and booze and reward ourselves with some choice viewing on his widescreen TV. And one week, he's picked up the recently released VHS of Day Of The Daleks. To say that I'm excited to see the original of the story that so enraptured me as a child is putting things mildly.

And yet – on first viewing – I feel oddly disappointed. What makes it so much more awkward is that I can't really pinpoint why, at first. It's the same basic story, with the same characters. And yet it feels somehow lacklustre. Eventually, I figure out the reason.

I can make allowances for the vast invasion force of the climax being cut down to a handful of Ogrons and a mere three Daleks. I'm old enough to understand things like budgeting restrictions now. No, the real problem with the telly version is that it lacks the small but telling details of situation and character that Terrance deployed so carefully in his written re-telling. That may not have been Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four, but it was reaching for that sort of level, and made the story that much more convincing. The TV version is Stock Future Dystopia, Number Seventeen. It's an unpleasant Future that was a real world on paper,



reduced to the level of a pantomime.

Luckily, age also gives me tolerance. Another, subtler Time-shift.

Because the heart of the story remains the same. That same, marvelous head-spinning moment of revelation is still there. I don't care that the tale was originally written without the Daleks, who were crow-barred into it as a last-minute ratings booster. I watch again and find the odd mix of concrete brutality and near-Glam in the locations and sets oddly winning. I see how Anat and her allies smoke the box of cigars that they find with genuine greedy relish, enjoying a simple pleasure denied them by invasion. I even adore the

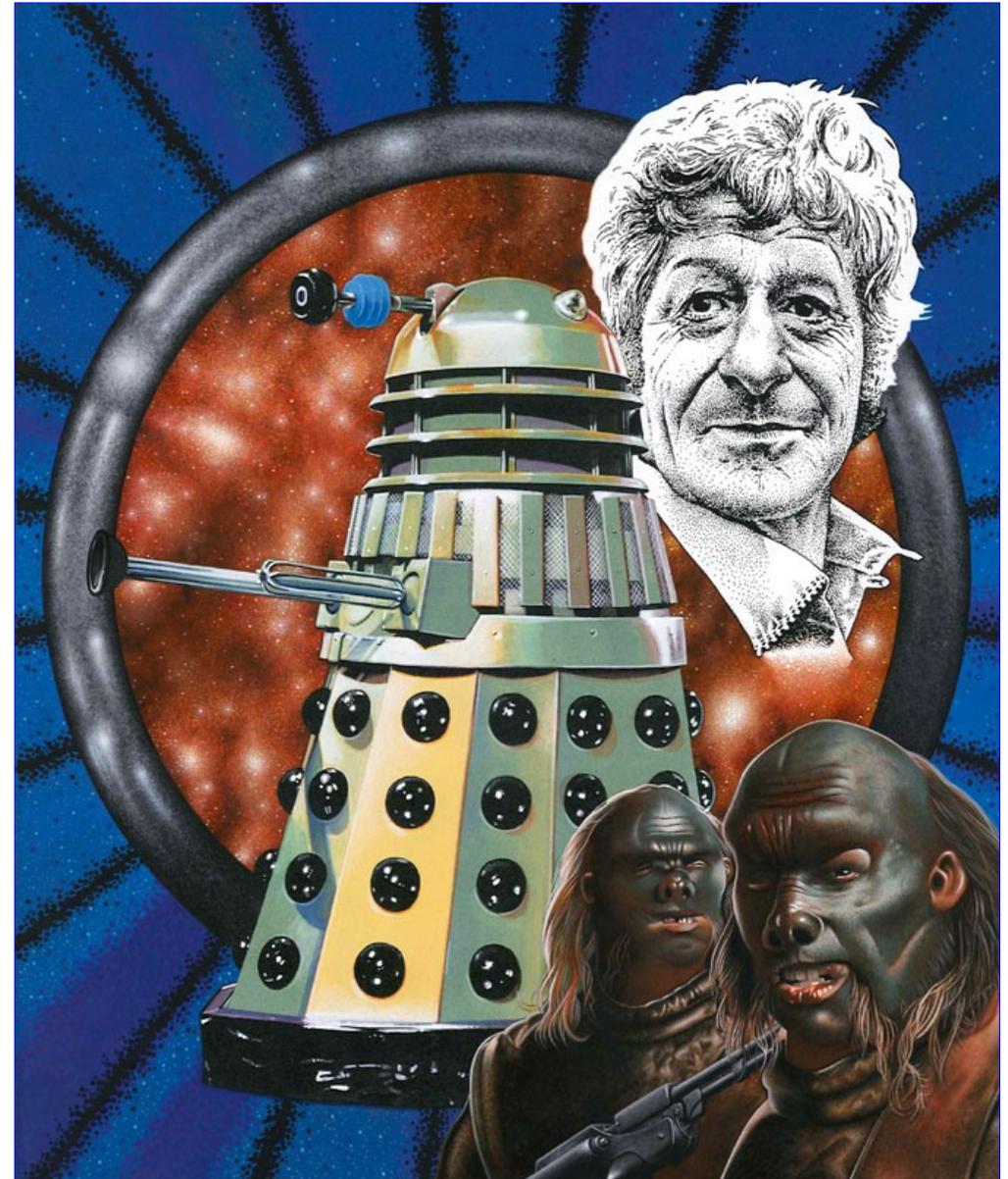
sheer cheesy coolness of Pertwee's Doctor holding off Boaz with one hand while holding his glass of wine carefully in the other. I find myself falling further in love with UNIT and the ditzy-yet-courageous Jo Grant, still one of my favourite companions ever.

It's a story that I've returned to often since, in both forms. In that eternal question, 'what story would you show to a non-fan to demonstrate how good the programme can be?'

I wouldn't give it as a good answer. But, if that non-fan decided that they did like whatever they saw, and wanted to see more, then I'd be quick to recommend it. As a story that tells a good, honest yarn of Good versus Evil, throws in some interesting shades of grey (the Controller is one of my favourite incidental characters in the programme's whole history), and plays genuinely intriguing games with Time, and how easy it actually is to change it, and how shocking and unpredictable the results can be.

It's never going to be regarded as a stone-cold classic. But it's a tale with a thoughtful, imaginative core. A tale with genuine regard for the human spirit, and how it can survive in even the most oppressive of all possible worlds. A tale with mystery and adventure. And, to this day, however much Time slips and slides on its unknown course,

I love it.



This painting was produced by Alister Pearson for the DWAS launch of 'Day of the Daleks Special Edition' on DVD in 2011.

Image © Alister Pearson, not to be reproduced

# The Curse of Peladon

Reviewed by  
Chris Stone

Brexit – yes, that’s where I’m going to dare to start. Surprisingly with the first sentence I’m not going to get into leave and remain and I can hear you all sigh with relief.

Imagine if Barry Letts and Terrance Dicks were in charge of Doctor Who in 2016 and Bryan Hayles had been available to write. We would, in all likelihood have had another Peladon story based on the said planet leaving the Galactic Federation. But what relevance has this

got to do with my thoughts “The Curse of Peladon”?

The other day I was talking with someone in the Twittersphere and they were trying to convince me that the first time Doctor Who had ever been political was in Series 11 with ‘Rosa’. This was someone who had been a long-time fan of the show (apparently) and seemed convinced this was the case. I didn’t even know where to begin to dispute the point as clearly Doctor Who has always been political. From the Very first story – The Daleks have been an allegory of the Nazis. Other stories have focused on taxation (The Sun Makers), ecological issues (The Green Death) and even exploitation (Colony in Space) – however no stories have been

more prescient on current political events than the two Peladon stories and The Curse of Peladon in particular.

Diverging slightly, I got into Doctor Who at University where I watched the early VHS releases and then started collecting the Target books. One of the earlier books I read was The Curse of Peladon. At this point I hadn’t heard of the Ice Warriors and I didn’t know who they were. Consequently, when I read the novel I was bemused by the Doctor’s reaction to the creatures and why he was treating them as hostile and it didn’t make a lot of sense as they seemed so friendly and honourable.

When, many years later, I first watched the story it was clearer that the Ice Warriors were lined up to be the fall guys for some other malevolent force. Unusually for the show,

the Doctor is more foolish than the companion in this one – his attitude mirroring that of the Fifth Doctor in Snakedance, but with projected bias and without the justification.

Before I wrote this, I watched the story again and I was surprised how relevant it still is and how it can be seen as a template for what is happening in Brexit today. Pertwee performance is rather brilliant in this one, yet once someone mentions it, in some bizarre foreshadowing of reality, he is channelling Boris Johnson. Don’t believe me? Watch it with that in mind and tell me it isn’t so!

There are other characters who also seem to be plucked from the current political situation and apart from Hepesh clearly being a bearded Nigel Farage, I’ll leave you to figure out the others for yourself.



# The Sea Devils

## Reviewed by Stephen Hatcher

There is sometimes a bit of a misunderstanding about us British, one that we even like to share ourselves – we are the Island Race, the intrepid, sea-faring explorers as much at home on small boats pottering about picturesque harbours and small creeks as we are manning fearsome galleons, bravely facing down indigenous people around the world with our rather large cannons. ‘Rule Britannia! Britannia rule the waves!’ Well, it was never really like that for me. I was brought up just about as far from the sea as it is possible to get on our rather small island. As a child, holidays to the coast were a rarity and seaside day-trips non-existent. Money was scarce and expenses high, so my parents used to save up, with the idea of going away every other year, if we were lucky. So it was that by the time I was fourteen, I had visited the seaside just six times. The coast was a leisure paradise, a magical place, full of strange corners to explore; while the sea itself was unimaginably vast and powerfully impressive, hiding many secrets in its depths, including who knew what creatures.

My father had had a similar land-bound start to his life, with the added complication that the Second World War had made seaside holidays all but impossible. When he was a very young man however,

seized by a desire to see the world, he had given up his apprenticeship in a printer’s shop and volunteered to join the Royal Navy. Over three years he saw service around the world, including in the Mediterranean and the Far East during the Korean War. As children, my brother and I were always thrilled and intrigued to hear our father’s navy stories, which did so much to instil in me a deep love for the “big blue wavy thing, that mermaids live in”. I was fascinated by all things maritime and could not get enough of the sound of the crashing waves, the smell of ozone or the feel of the salty water drying on my skin, during those rare holidays.

From 1968 to 1973, I was very much taken by the Southern Television children’s adventure series ‘Freewheelers’, which over the course of eight series, each one a self-contained serial, presented a changing cast of plucky teenagers (including our very own Wendy Padbury), in boats, assisting heroic secret service officer Colonel Buchan (Ronald Leigh-Hunt), in thwarting the dastardly plans of neo-Nazis, saboteurs, spies and super villains. This largely water-borne life of adventure was exactly what I aspired to. How fabulous to be able to spend one’s time messing about in boats, mixing it with secret agents and defeating baddies – junior James Bond on the water.

Sorry? What’s that? Yes, I know I haven’t mentioned Doctor Who yet. So where am I going with all this rambling, you may well be asking. Well, I’ve written more than once

about how and why it was that I hardly ever watched Doctor Who in the 60s, so relax, I won’t go over it all again. By 1972, the only complete Doctor Who stories that I had seen were the two Peter Cushing Dalek movies (at the cinema), but like most British people of my age, although I wasn’t a viewer, Who was part of my culture. I was aware that William Hartnell had become Patrick Troughton and that he in turn had become Jon Pertwee, whom I knew mostly from one of my favourite radio comedies, ‘The Navy Lark’. I had even met him, in 1971, when he opened a fête at the local posh preparatory school. I had also read the comic strips in ‘TV Comic’, ‘TV Century 21’ and ‘Countdown’. I knew who the Doctor was and what he did and was familiar with his assistant Jo Grant and his boss the Brigadier, but apart from that, the specific details of the Pertwee era had evaded me. I had no idea about the Master or any of the other regular villains and monsters beyond the Daleks and the Cybermen. Specifically, I should say, I had never heard of a Silurian.

1972, during which I turned fourteen, had been a good year. It was the year during which I absolutely fell in love with cricket – England retained The Ashes and my team, Warwickshire were County Champions. We hadn’t managed to get to the seaside, although we had enjoyed a long weekend in London; but it had been a year of great TV and especially radio discoveries. 1972 was the Fiftieth Anniversary of the BBC. Viewers and listeners had been treated to a treasure trove of

archive repeats, with the newly recorded ‘The Last Goon Show of All’, crowning the celebrations. It had been a good Christmas too, with the first ‘Goon Show Scripts’ book to savour among other delights.

We had a tradition in our family. Although we all lived close-by, Christmas was always spent together in one house – my grandparents’ rather small terraced one – with (that year) nine of us, plus a baby, sleeping on sofas, camp beds or mattresses on the floor. It was cramped but fun. We would all arrive on Christmas Eve and rarely venture outside before leaving again the day after Boxing Day. As I said, it had been a good Christmas and although I suspect that my Mum and Dad were more than happy to go home, I was rather sad on 27th December, when it was all over. There was to be a cheering coda to the festivities though. No sooner had we got into the house, settled down and turned the television on (first move), than we were treated to something rather special – the omnibus repeat of one of the Doctor Who stories that I had missed earlier in the year, ‘The Sea Devils’.

Remember, this was my first complete TV Who story. Of course, I absolutely loved it. I didn’t know enough to miss UNIT or the Brigadier; or to compare the story unfavourably to ‘The Silurians’, the story to which I had no idea it was a sequel, (which many have done – they’re all wrong). Yes, this new (to me) Pertwee Doctor was very different to what I had seen of Hartnell, Troughton or Cushing, but he was

magnificently different. He was dashing, heroic, commanding and wise – very much like Colonel Buchan from 'Freewheelers', in fact. What a great assistant he had in Jo too – brave, loyal, self-reliant and rather pretty too. Then there were the monsters – those strange, string vest wearing whispering lizards, the Sea Devils. How very creepy were they! I was sold from that very first scene, when they attack the sea fort. There was the Navy too – Captain Hart and his men. I could easily imagine my Dad's younger self among their ranks. Above all there was the sea itself – as much an important cast member as Jon Pertwee, Katy Manning and the rest: so powerful, so unknowable, so... blue. This story is just so blue.

You may have noticed something. Although this story had a profound



impact upon me, so much so that I could remember almost every detail when I next saw it, twenty years later when it was repeated in its original episodic form in 1992; there was one important element of 'The Sea Devils' that I had forgotten altogether. Incredibly, I had no memory whatsoever of Roger Delgado's wonderful performance as the Master. I couldn't have told you that he had been in the story at all. Isn't that odd? Of course, seeing it again, possibly the greatest joy of 'The Sea Devils' comes in the interplay between Pertwee and Delgado; but from that first viewing, it made no impact on me at all.

From that Christmas onwards, I managed to find a way to watch (almost) every subsequent episode of Doctor Who, apart from a two-year period in 1979-80, when I was studying abroad. 'The Sea Devils' marked the start of a special journey for me, which has taken me in all sorts of unimagined directions.

As I write, on the last day of July 2019, I am sitting on the edge of a beach, overlooking France's Atlantic coast on a glorious blue sunny evening. The sea is still imbedded in my soul, although I never joined the Navy, have never lived by the coast, never owned the boat or learned how to 'drive' one. On our journey here last week, we passed No Man's Land sea fort as our ferry left Portsmouth Harbour. I thought of the Doctor, of Jo and Captain Hart and I looked out for Sea Devils. I always do.

## The Mutants Reviewed by Fiona Moore

'The Mutants' is one of those stories generally regarded as the nadir of the Pertwee era. Surprisingly, however, viewing it again reveals that its main problems are an excess of padding and some unimaginative direction. While it may not be one of the best Doctor Who adventures of all time, it undoubtedly makes for interesting viewing.

Ironically, some of the negative points could easily have been the story's greatest strengths. Tristram Cary's music, for example, justifiably praised in the 1960s Doctor Who serials, is much less memorable in this one. Similarly, director Christopher Barry, another 1960s legend,

proves to be more variable in the 1970s: while 'The Daemons' is attractively lit, the lighting of Skybase and the caves on Solos ranges from unimaginative to off-putting, making it difficult to watch, and the pace is plodding. Some of the effects are also ropey, mainly the scenes involving CSO (in which everybody has a clear yellow 'halo effect'), and the mutant warrior whose backbone is a bit too obviously attached to his cloak rather than his body, although admittedly the passage of time is seldom kind to special effects (and it also has to be said that the effects are better elsewhere in the serial, for instance the mutant costumes, and the mutant backbone on the old man at the start of Episode One).

The acting is, by and large, rather good, with the main exception being Rick James. He is undoubtedly nice to look at, and his performance



does improve as time goes on, but he has an unfortunate tendency to sound like he's reading off a cue-card. Garrick Hagon, despite giving a good performance otherwise as the naïve and idealistic Ky, sounds rather wooden when delivering his first speech. There is some unintentionally comedic over-the-top acting from the Overlord guards (who also engage in a bit of Dad's Army-style out-of-step drilling), and the scenes of the shuttle refuelling have vaguely sexual connotations. The title of the story apparently stems from an unused 1966 Doctor Who submission by Barry Letts, entitled 'The Mutant' (according to Shannon P. Sullivan's Doctor Who: A Brief History of Time (Travel) website, this was also the source of the idea of the Solonians evolving in stages). This is a shame, as both working titles ('Independence' and 'The Emergents') were more interesting, and as the present title is inclined to cause it to be confused with the original overall title of the serial which became known as 'The Daleks'. Curiously, as well as the Barry and Cary connection to both stories, the sound effect for the surface of Solos is the same as that for Skaro.

By contrast, while Bob Baker and Dave Martin are not terribly well regarded in some quarters of late, the script is basically fine, even if the scene where Varan is sucked out into space makes one wonder how a space station could function with such thin walls. The serial's premise has strong parallels with Brian Aldiss' Helliconia trilogy (set on a planet which undergoes a

thousand-year-long seasonal cycle which brings about changes in the flora and fauna as well as in the phenotypical make-up of the human inhabitants themselves), although, as the first book in that series was written in 1982, it's possible that this might be a case of Doctor Who influencing classic sci-fi rather than the other way around. There is also a nice bit of psychology in the Time Lords' decision to choose the Doctor to deliver the message, as they know that he will hang about and investigate rather than simply handing it over. The Marshal gets some wonderfully pointed lines, such as, when condemning his prisoners, 'Stubbs, treason, Cotton, treason, Ky, conspiracy, sabotage, terrorism, and you, Miss Grant — such a pity', and his exchange with the Doctor: 'you're insane.' 'Only if I lose, Doctor, only if I lose' (in an echo of Hitler's assertion that only if he lost the war would his name become reviled throughout the world). The presence of some obvious padding around the middle does suggest that it might have made a better four-parter than six-parter, but there is little to complain about in the story itself.

'The Mutants' most obvious strength lies in its postcolonial satire elements. A lot of the problems which the former British Empire had experienced over the preceding twenty or thirty years were worked in, particularly, as the inspiration for the serial was Martin's concerns about the Apartheid system, with regard to the fate of the African colonies. For instance, the idea of subjugating a native population such

that it cannot function without colonial assistance, then cutting them loose and blaming the natives' 'inability to govern' for subsequent failures echoes many real-life events on the African continent. According to various sources, the original derogatory term for the mutants, 'munts', was removed due to it being an actual epithet for Black South Africans (although almost certainly its resemblance to a certain four-letter English obscenity much beloved of Johnny Rotten also played a role). The sequence where Ky uses the Solonian transport cubicle to go down to Solos to evade his pursuers even though the Overlord cubicle is closer to him also recalls the petty segregation practiced under the Apartheid system, albeit it is slightly marred later, when we see a guard taking the Solonian cubicle up from the surface seemingly without hesitation. The story thus, for the most part, does a good job of sending up the aftermath of decolonisation in

Africa, coming across as knowledgeable and ironic rather than merely socially aware.

Other ideas in the serial are less specific to Africa, but still rather apt. The impetuses for colonialism are, as in the nineteenth century, economic exploitation and the attempt to relieve overcrowding, which recalls India and North America as much as it does Africa (this may be at least partly down to Terrance Dicks, who was quite keen on the idea behind 'The Mutants', wanting to do an adventure about nineteenth century British colonialism himself). In a nice production touch, the Investigator's guards have helmets vaguely resembling solar topees. Even the humans being unable to visit Solos during the hours of daylight without an oxymask echoes the case of the British in India having problems with the local heat and insects. The fact that the Solonians are incapable of reading their own an-



cient written language, having to turn to a human anthropologist for assistance, also highlights the ironies of colonial situations (as well as bringing home the fact that loss of knowledge, however useless it may seem, means losing the ability to understand and cope with crises). As comments on colonialism go, 'The Mutants' is at least one of the most detailed and well-thought-out.

Unfortunately, Episode One seems to have been rewritten to make the situation simpler and more child-friendly. It would make much more sense in plot terms, as well as fit in with what we see from the paranoid and clever Marshal later, if the Marshal knew that independence was imminent, and was plotting from the very first to assassinate the Administrator. As it stands here, it just looks as if the Marshal, otherwise fairly on top of things, has made a mistake, and yet comes up with an opportunistic plan to take over on the spur of the moment. As the rest of the story is well-done, with the Marshal cunningly lying to various parties and playing them off against each other, it is a pity that it should have such a rough start.

The message of the serial, however, and what truly sets it apart from many others of the time, is a savage indictment of authority in all its forms. The very premise is that the Earth has been poisoned through mismanagement by greedy, unscrupulous authority figures, who then spread out to other areas of the galaxy to do the same. Within the story itself, no authority figure

comes out of it at all well; not only is the Marshal power-mad and unscrupulous, but the Investigator from Earth is inclined to believe the Marshal over the locals, despite the former's unhinged and erratic behaviour, only becoming concerned when the Marshal starts threatening him personally. Even the benign-seeming Administrator, at the start of the serial, is giving the Solonians independence simply because the Earth is finished as a colonial power, and he remarks that he doesn't much care what happens to them after the handover takes place. More to the writers' credit, the Third Doctor's usual pro-authority stance also takes a rubbing, as he sucks up to the Investigator only to have him decide in favour of the Marshal, and as he is forced to play along with the Marshal to save Jo's life.

While 'The Mutants' has the usual Pertwee-era references to environmental crises, furthermore, this adventure breaks from the normal pattern in that there is never really any talk of resolving these. Earth is more or less given up as a bad job, and the apparent central conceit of the plot — the Solonians becoming mutants as a result of the colonists' activities — turns out to be a McGuffin as, while the mutation has been brought on early as a consequence of Jaeger's experiments, it is a natural process which is meant to happen. Rather than giving us the obvious trope of having all the scientists be intelligent and ultimately inclined to see the Doctor's point of view, Jaeger is a distinctly unsympathetic figure: in

spite of the Doctor casting a number of aspersions upon his title of "Professor", he is not stupid, but is completely unwilling to stand up to authority, or to try and resolve his own problems rather than depending on the Doctor for help. 'The Mutants' thus goes against the normal pattern for Pertwee stories in interesting ways.

The Solonians throughout are ambiguously portrayed, rather than being cardboard noble savages. Ky, on Solos, is not above stealing a mask from a guard to protect Jo; although he reassures her that the man will be all right if he "takes it easy", he doesn't mention that things could go wrong and the rescue party might not get to him in time. As Jo is an attractive woman whom he knows has access to potentially valuable information, furthermore, he is most likely not saving her entirely out of the goodness of his own heart. When Varan declares the Marshal his enemy and Ky suggests they band together, Varan rejects the offer, saying that he will fight him on his own, effectively stealing Ky's political clothes. Ky himself is dumbfounded, which suggests that he wouldn't actually be that great as a leader. Varan, also, supports the conquerors for selfish rather than ideological or pragmatic reasons; his "rebellion", is not particularly honourable, as it stems not from recognising the Marshal's evil nature, but from the fact that once the Administrator has been assassinated, the Marshal (having declared martial law), no longer has any need for Varan, and acts accordingly. At the end of the

serial, the mutated Ky, rather than achieving a higher consciousness, kills the Marshal in cold blood — understandable in light of the circumstances, perhaps, but clearly demonstrating that, while he has changed physically, his moral development still needs some work.

The multiculturalism of the story is also a nice touch. Sondergaard and Jaeger are obviously Danish and German, but not ostentatiously so, although perhaps having the German be the one who goes about obeying orders he knows to be morally wrong, condoning genocide and indiscriminately firing off rockets may be a cheap shot. Cotton aside, there is at least one more Black, and one Asian, guard on the station. Whatever the unfortunate naming of a West Indian character Cotton, he does at least wind up unquestionably in charge at the end of the adventure. This indicates that prejudice is not just a simple matter of one group versus another group, but something which transcends social and ethnic boundaries. Similarly, when Varan starts to mutate, he forgets his earlier prejudice against mutants, and instead rallies his troops — all mutants — against a new enemy, the Marshal. In this way, the story also points out the ambiguities of discrimination.

The subplot involving Stubbs and Cotton further points up the situational nature of human behaviour in such cases. The pair are rather like the German soldiers in World War II who, once they realised the

game was up, collaborated with the Allies, or the soldiers in Vietnam who assisted the anti-war movement; they are willing to put up with things to a certain point, but are now well beyond that stage. They are not particularly natural idealists or politicians; we see amusing scenes of the pair cheerfully ignoring malfunctions simply because they can't be bothered to get up and investigate, and more or less blatantly revealing to the Marshal that, whatever they say, they are in fact collaborating with the Doctor (it also becomes obvious that they don't realise that the Marshal is not above having them killed). Cotton and Stubbs, as much as the Marshal, symbolise an empire in decline gradually falling into factionalism and internecine conflict. The

guards are reluctant to shoot Stubbs and Cotton, and vice versa; again, 'insurgent elements' are easier to attack if they are faceless natives rather than one's colleagues. As with the Solonians, the guards are portrayed as reacting to the moment rather than as representing ideological positions.

Whilst it is far from the deepest Doctor Who adventure, 'The Mutants' is also far from the most superficial. The effects and lighting might not have stood the test of time, and the first episode is hampered by some clumsy plotting, but the overall story is a watchable, and sometimes clever, allegory of decolonisation, which also slyly points up some of the clichés of the Pertwee era.



## The Time Monster Reviewed by George Oakes

Don't laugh. No really, don't. Don't mock, don't wince, don't scowl – because I see a few brave, cultured souls in this audience (right at the back, in the broom cupboard – under the trap door). Oh yes, there are a few enlightened erudites here who know a certain, but largely unspoken truth – 'The Time Monster' is brilliant, and I'm here to make sure that our voices are heard.

For my money, the ninth season of Doctor Who is a beast all unto its own. Whilst Pertwee's first year sets out a grounded but inspired set of restraints, his sophomore season moves us back towards the far-flung wildness that we can always expect after a certain amount of time. Season Eight wrestles between a modernist, grounded gristle and the more flamboyant markings of later years: the stalking horror of moving shop dummies is realised instead through strangulating daffodils and hellish plastic babies; invaders from the stars no longer look like astronauts but instead turn out to be hideous, hulking red beasts and figments from occult ceremonies. None of this, of course, is to say that the show loses its political bite, far from it, but one could say that the program allows itself a more open embrace of images that only Doctor Who can provide. And, by the time we've reached Pertwee's third-year, and 'The Time Monster' – it's evident that there's almost nothing that the show won't do.

Oh yes. After trips to the future, tangles with outer-space civilisations and encounters with creatures of the sea (all familiar concepts in the show), Barry Letts and Robert Sloman pen a tale so outlandish, so utterly ramshackle and extraordinary in taste that I cannot help but be on board. We're bringing Atlantis back into the fray, sure, but this time we're taking a fearsome Chronovore along to wreak havoc at the Master's behest. And yes, the Master's back – but this time he'll tackle scientists, kings and marriage before playing tango with our heroes.

So be gone, accusations of dullness! 'The Time Monster' brings it all: a TARDIS within a TARDIS, Bessie running on light speed, Nicholas Courtney feigning slow-motion and a time-flow device crafted from a bottle and a mug. That's just naming a few! There's the (suggestively-designed) 'TARDIS sniffer-outer', an angry Minotaur on the loose and a UNIT convoy playing chicken with a knight. And what child in 1972, I ask you, couldn't have found Kronos, who looks rather like unwashed bed-sheets tumbling down a levitating hill, ten times more petrifying than Daleks and Sea Devils? Any of these images could happily occupy a single serial, and perhaps lay the groundwork to something of a deeper meaning – here, they're all offered to us in one go, without the slightest hint of regret.

And I like that. Doctor Who, if nothing else, should never be bland, and though you could rail any number of criticisms about pacing, production values or basic common sense at

'The Time Monster', there's an unabashed absurdity flowing deep through its cortex that's really quite admirable. Ideally, it could have been admirable in less than six-episodes, but that's not my hill to die on.

What's nice, too, is that Letts and Sloman are clearly writing with a solid affinity for the era that they helped create. Call me blasphemous, but I sometimes find the treatment of Jo a little disheartening – I often find even serials by the late, great Malcolm Hulke leave her to the wayside, and keep me cold to the relationship that the Doctor has with his supposed best friend. In 'The Time Monster', though, I truly buy into their antics as they speed towards Wootton and try to keep up with the Master's plot (as best as anyone can). There's a wonderfully-frightening cliffhanger where Jo is cast away with the TARDIS, with the resolution left

squarely in her hands. What's more is that the Doctor, flung into the space-time wilderness, can only communicate with her through a cacophony of his own whispering insecurities. The entire story is sprung from one of his nightmares; in an era that often musters military thinking and broad stoicism, Letts and Sloman dig deep into the psyche - unafraid to tackle the character's insecurities and, to Jon Pertwee's credit - he totally runs with it. There's also a moment where we believe that dear Yates might've had his day, and the story is bold enough to play that as a cliff-hanger! You don't always get that sort of confidence bestowed on a supporting cast, do you? I find it triumphant.

And who could discuss this serial without mention of the brilliant late Roger Delgado? Truly – this is his show. He's practically the protagonist – we follow his every move as

he sidesteps buffoons and hypnotises anyone who dares challenge him. And yes, you end up wondering why he didn't just hypnotise everyone in the first place, but it's ultimately all part of the fun. The Master seems to go through about fifteen different tactics here in a desperate grasp at power and, honestly, I'm not sure if we've ever seen him appear this ludicrous. But Delgado sells it, wholeheartedly and thoroughly – making every scene a pleasure. Just watch him at loggerheads with John Wyse's Percival, or any of his scenes with Donald Eccles' Krasis. I promise you won't be disappointed.

And that's the thing, really: taken at face value, it's very easy to discard 'The Time Monster' as an unfortunate road bump in an otherwise-solid era. At the same time, an abundance of daring, incongruous ideas and a good-enough leading cast offer something well worth a second look. The Doctor's 'blackest day of my life' speech is just one

small moment that's ostensibly filler, but it's also a beautifully scripted little monologue and standout moment for even the harshest of critics. The story treats this line-up of characters as a makeshift family, and leaves room for empathy and the value of laying our insecurities bare. And yes, this is all played to the tune of Kronos, Atlantis in ruins and an absurd runtime, but that doesn't mean that it isn't there – it doesn't mean that we should ignore it. You wouldn't find this sort of medley in another show; warts and all, this is unbridled, uncontained Doctor Who and maybe, just maybe - that makes it worth protecting.

So there's my bit, for all of us who enjoy it. Hang about – where've you all gone? Not even the broom cupboard? I swear that the trap door was locked. Oh well, perhaps someone's gone to watch 'The Time Monster'. That'd be nice. For the moment, I suppose I'll enjoy myself a stiff drink from the bottom of my Time Flow Analogue.





## The Three Doctors Reviewed by Derrick Smith

Jon Pertwee's Doctor was a curious mix of arrogance and charm. His arrogance was at its height in his early seasons, when it's plain that the Doctor is clearly more than a little miffed that the Time Lords have exiled him to Earth. So, he decides to take it out on pretty much every human he meets. Not even poor Jo escapes his snappy nature and thoughtlessness (the sandwiches scene in 'The Sea Devils' is possibly designed to be humorous but it just makes the Doctor appear self-centered and insensitive).

By 'The Three Doctors' he was clearly mellowing, although even at this late stage he can't resist aiming a few jibes at the Brigadier. An interesting example of the Doctor's lingering autocratic nature occurs in episode one, when he and Jo return to UNIT HQ after investigating the mysterious disappearance of Mr Ollis.

As the Doctor enters the lab, he shrugs off his cloak without a backward glance – no doubt fully confident that Jo would be there to take it off him and hang it up. It's the briefest of non-verbal moments, but it's something that speaks volumes about the relationship between the Doctor and Jo. It's hard to imagine some of the Doctor's

other companions being quite so pliant and biddable!

But somehow Katy Manning manages to make it all work as her humour (and undeniable sexiness) helps to prevent Jo from being a cardboard cipher. However, whilst Jo's in pretty good form during this story, what's happened to the Brigadier? 'The Time Monster' was the first example of the Brig's dumbing down, a process that's continued here.

Luckily, it's only a short-term thing as he's back to his normal self by 'The Green Death', but the Brig's at his most pompous and blinkered in this story. When this works (his sublime double-take after he spots Troughton's Doctor for the first time or his reaction to the inside of the TARDIS) it's brilliant, but there are times when the script seems to be treating him as little more than a figure of fun, which is a far cry from the efficient soldier of season seven.

But in one way it's easy to see why this was so. The highly professional Brig of S7 would have stuck out like a sore thumb in this adventure. Therefore, goofy Brig has to step forward ...

The Gell Guards are highly amusing but aren't in the least threatening and this means that the brief battle between them and the UNIT soldiers ('holy moses') isn't exactly one of UNIT's finest moments. But the always reliable Pat Gorman is lurking about, so that's some small consolation.

As the Time Lords are facing the same crisis as the Doctor (an energy drain from a mysterious black hole) there's little they can do to help the stricken exile on Earth. But wait, there's just enough energy to lift the second Doctor from his timestream. Hurrah! The return of Troughton's Doctor is a joyful moment and even if his Doctor has deliberately been written down at times to make Pertwee's Doctor the dominant force ('what's a bridge for?') he's still a highly entertaining force of nature.

Troughton's Doctor is possibly at his best in episode two, after the Third Doctor and Jo have crossed over to the black hole. This leaves the Second Doctor back at UNIT HQ with the Brig and Benton for company. To be honest, this entire episode is little more than padding, but the run-around nature of this

instalment isn't really an issue for me as it's all such fun.

There's the Brig's shock at seeing the old Doctor back, but even better is the working relationship between Troughton's Doctor and Benton. Originally it seems that Jamie was also scripted to appear, so possibly he would have performed Benton's role here. But luckily for John Levene that didn't happen, enabling Benton to get a decent share of the action. Mind you, Levene does seem to be on the verge of corpsing several times and has to pull the most extraordinary faces in order to prevent this.

The brief appearances of the First Doctor are the icing on this birthday cake, even if the joy at seeing him again is tempered by how frail William Hartnell looks. Although he wasn't that old, illness had taken a

heavy toll, leaving him unable to learn even the simplest of lines. His balance wasn't terribly good either, so several stage-hands had to prop him up in the capsule (to prevent him from toppling out). But with the aid of cue-cards held off camera he still managed to capture the authoritative spirit of the original Doctor and, ill as he was, there's a little touch of magic about these scenes.

If you wanted loud then you booked Stephen Thorne. He was loud as Azal in 'The Daemons' and he was even louder in his (mercifully brief) appearance as Eldrad in 'The Hand of Fear'. As Omega, he starts fairly quietly but then works himself up into a frenzy by episode four. No doubt we're supposed to feel sorrow for the tragic Omega, but by the end I'm reaching for the remote control to turn him down. Thorne could also do subtle (he was a gifted audiobook reader and didn't

tend to rant and rave on those) so it's a pity he wasn't encouraged to be a little more restrained here.

Once everybody makes the trip to Omega's domain the story becomes something of a run-around – highlighted by Dr Tyler's (Rex Robinson) totally pointless escape attempt. But Pertwee's Doctor does have a decent fight scene – battling the demons from Omega's mind in a slow-motion dreamscape – and the bickering between the Second and Third Doctors never fails to raise a smile.

So, although 'The Three Doctors' could never be called the best Third Doctor story and nor is it the strongest showcase for Pertwee's talents, it's undeniably good fun from beginning to end. It's long been one of those stories I reach for when I need a Who pick-me-up as it never fails to entertain.



# Carnival of Monsters

Reviewed by  
William J. Martin

Carnival of Monsters is an anomaly in Doctor Who's tenth season. Lacking the celebratory flair of the serials that surround it, it is the only story of the year that could be described as 'standard'. As such, it forms a perfect example of what that standard label means during the show's anniversary. With endlessly reused sets, limited effects, it initially seems to be little more than filler before the show's second ever effective twelve parter. However, as the story progresses, it quickly becomes clear there's more to this show than meets the eye.

Political unrest riddles the distant planet of Inter Minor. Its authoritarian upper class, the Officials, believe that maintaining an insular society is the key to maintaining control of the unspeaking Functionaries. The arrival of an interplanetary travelling show puts that belief to the test. The bizarre Vorg, and his glamorous assistant, Shirna, present the carnival of monsters! A rare device called a miniscope, which contains various living aliens taken from their homeworlds and placed in exact, portable replicas. As discussion begins as to whether the carnival may remain on the planet, the Doctor and Jo arrive within the scope itself. While working to escape, they meet the

scope's inhabitants: The SS Bernice, a passenger ship from 1910s Earth which is menaced by a Plesiosaur; and a collection of ravenous, unstoppable predators known as the Drashigs. Back on Inter Minor, two Officials sabotage the miniscope, releasing the monsters within to throw fear and suspicion on the offworlders. Leaving the scope, the Doctor press-gangs Vorg into freeing his collection. The escaped Drashigs rampage through the city, consuming the very Officials who helped free them. Vorg repairs a broken Inter Minorian weapon, destroying the Drashigs and proving the value of offworlders. The time travellers once more emerge from the inoperable, empty miniscope and bid farewell to the travelling showmen. Much is written about the serial's metafictional aspects. The miniscope is television as a whole. Its contents—the "Monster Show"—is Doctor Who itself. Behind the screen hides a myriad of alien worlds and historical periods, which the Doctor visits throughout the adventure. It is no surprise that this concept gets the attention it does. Few serials are as blatant with regard to their themes. The Officials are initially dismissive of Vorg and his carnival, fearing it will feed the growing unrest. These fears are quickly dissuaded through insistence that the miniscope is "simply to amuse. Nothing serious. Nothing political." The Doctor's arrival shatters this supposed neutrality. His movements cause the Drashigs to break free. Jo's continued presence on the Bernice utterly confounds its passengers, with one

almost coming to understand her captivity. The travellers act as a proverbial wrench in the machine. Their very presence incites drama, and forces a positive change on the people and places they discover. One of those people is Vorg himself. Just as the miniscope is likened to Doctor Who, so its owner is compared to its central character. Vorg is an eccentric traveller with a distinctive dress sense, who carries a rare machine which promises adventures from across the universe. Even he notes the similarity, once the Doctor escapes the scope. The key difference between the two men lies in their respective machines. The TARDIS does what the Miniscope promises. Vorg's collection does not depict reality as he believes. His supposed 'adventures' are controlled, repeated cycles of behaviour. Should he so choose, he can even directly affect the narrative he projects. Yet, rather than change things organically as the Doctor does, he forcibly enters the narrative, physically moving the

pieces around from on high. This physical effect is even conveyed to the viewers. Vorg reaching inside the scope causes the first cliffhanger, and resolves the second. Despite this, he is never truly malicious. He genuinely does seek to entertain. As much as he prizes the Drashigs as the jewel of his collection, he does not hesitate to destroy them when lives are at stake. The Doctor does not so much inspire him to change for the better, but brings out the heroism that he is capable of.

And here we see the fundamental truth that fuels the Pertwee era: a better world is always within reach, it needs only to be reached for. Inter Minor itself is the epitome of stagnation (the serial still blatant with its themes). Everything within is a dull grey; Vorg and Shirna stand out in a blaze of colour. Vorg is correct in claiming to be apolitical. He instead represents a philosophical position. Inter Minorian culture proves lacking before he



even utters a word. The carnival provides light and life to an oppressed population. With the planet already on the brink of rejecting its bygone days of supremacy, the carnival conveys a solid reason why. At first, it seems puzzling that the Doctor ignores the planet's glaring troubles. Vast swathes of the population are subservient to a dismissive upper class, and yet the Doctor sees no need to oppose this. In this case, it is because he is unneeded. The alien showmen have already pushed Inter Minor down the road toward self-betterment. It can be roused from its apathy, just as Vorg is. When the planet chooses to accept Vorg and Shirna's right to enter, it allows its world to flourish with all the dan-

gers and wonders of the wider universe.

If Carnival of Monsters is standard Doctor Who in the Pertwee years, then it only reveals the heights that such a show can manage. Standard Doctor Who may seem kitsch, or cheap, yet it reaches far beyond its limits. Standard Doctor Who tells a layered and philosophical story, effortlessly examining itself and its place in the world. Standard Doctor Who is endearing, thoughtful, and confident in the goodness the world can achieve. And, most importantly, it manages all this while cutting the budget down, so they can do something with giant maggots in a few weeks.



## Frontier in Space Reviewed by Jaime Carroll

Tension is high. Political empires are at war. Peace treaties violated, fear-mongering is on the agenda. Friends and work colleagues shimmer into enemies before one's eyes. No, this isn't a reflection on Brexit or the current state of our politically-fragile globalised world. This is the 26th Century. And Earth is on the brink of war.

My earliest memory of 'Frontier In Space' was thanks to a Target novelisation I unearthed in the school library: 'Doctor Who and the Space War' by Malcolm Hulke. This was 1995 but such is the prescient nature of Doctor Who, stories such as 1973's Frontier in Space continue to be relatable for future audiences.

The year is 2540 and cargo ship C982 is gliding through hyperspace on a standard fetch-and-carry job. The ship's two pilots, Stewart and Hardy, are working at the controls and dreaming of better times. This opening scene effectively hints at a class-based and politically-charged 26th Century which is perceived through fears, social anxieties and the personal ambitions of Stewart and Hardy. They are shrewdly written as individualised characters who are firmly under the umbrella of a much grander social and political upheaval just out of their reach. The universe is going on around them – whether a chance of a promotion to a more eloquent ship or

fears of an approaching war - they deal with their isolated lives going unfulfilled in the blackness of space. 'They steal a few of our cargos, we steal a few of theirs. It'll all blow over', qualms one of the pilots just before their cargo ship nearly crashes into a mysterious blue box hurtling towards them. Said blue box has now materialised in the cargo bay, and the Doctor and Jo unbeknownst to them, step into the middle of a cold war between Earth and Draconia.

As they nose around the cargo ship, Jo suddenly hears a mysterious piercing noise and as she glances out of the window, she sees another spaceship momentarily shimmer and change shape. Stewart and Hardy also hear the noise and witness the shimmer but for them the change seems to be prolonged as the approaching ship morphs into a Draconian Galaxy-class battlecruiser. Seemingly unaffected by this temporary hallucination, when they meet the pilots the Doctor's 'How do you do?' sees him transform into a Draconian before Hardy's eyes. As for Jo, the same pilot morphs into a Drashig. One's personal fear is projected onto the other.

Meanwhile on Earth, the President and the Draconian ambassador accuse one another of attacking each other's cargo ships and raiding them of their contents, in direct breach of a treaty previously forged between the two galactic empires. The President reads out the distress call of cargo ship C982 from a futuristic piece of A4 paper whilst in

the background, a man silently stares out of a window. General Williams removes himself from the window and directs his anger towards the 'Dragon'. As in classic Who tradition, he seems to determined to play the part of war-monger, thus building upon the narrative's conflict.

On cargo ship C982, the Doctor and Jo are imprisoned in a holding cell. They will spend an awful lot of time in this story being imprisoned then escaping then being imprisoned again then escaping again. Whilst I've read a fair amount of criticism directed towards what is yet another classic Who tradition in this story, the Doctor and Jo – like Stewart and Hardy before them – find themselves disempowered and marginalised throughout the narrative, a consequence of the political and social unrest that appears to be a defining characteristic of 26th Century life on Earth. Back to the action now, and to Stewart and Hardy's dismay, they are under attack. The 'Dragons' are burning through the airlock. But when the enemy burst through the melted



doors, the Draconians are none other than the brutish Ogrons. They stun the Doctor and the two pilots, tie up Jo, then steal away with the ship's cargo (and the TARDIS – eeeek!).

Help arrives but it is too late. With the sonic hypnosis having warped Stewart and Hardy's memories, the Doctor and Jo are accused of being Draconian spies. They are locked up for the second time in cargo ship C982's holding cell as it returns home.

On Earth, the Doctor and Jo deny being Draconian agents and try to convince the President that there are sinister plans by an unknown third party to plunge Earth and Draconia into war. However, General Williams laments having his time staring out of windows being interrupted and orders the Doctor and Jo to be imprisoned for further questioning. But this time, the Time Lord and his companion become embroiled in an intergalactic tug-of-war as they find themselves ambushed by a Draconian squad who want the Doctor as their prisoner. Jo seeks help from human security guards but she is arrested and imprisoned by them (again). In Frontier in Space drinking game fashion, the Doctor manages to escape from the clutches of the Draconians but is subsequently captured by the human security guards and imprisoned (again) with Jo.

And the Great Escape doesn't stop there. Jo hears the same piercing sound she heard on the cargo ship, and in the eyes of the humans, the

Ogrons are transformed into Draconians as they embark on a rescue mission to free the Doctor and Jo from captivity for their own sinister purposes (or whoever they work for...). Yet the tug-of-war intensifies and the Doctor is recaptured (again) by General Williams' men! After the Doctor is placed under a mind probe (no, not THAT mind probe!) and it becomes clear he is telling the truth, the stubborn General Williams refuses to listen and sentences the Time Lord to a life of incarceration to the Lunar Penal Colony anyway. But lo and behold, the grand schemer is soon revealed to be Master who has arrived on Earth in the disguise of an interplanetary diplomat.

Upon the moon prison, the Doctor soon implements his means to escape (again) but his plans are thwarted (again) only to be saved by his arch-nemesis, the Master. The Doctor is then imprisoned with Jo (again) in a cell in the Master's ship. But the Doctor hatches a plan to escape (again) by donning a spacesuit and embarking on a spacewalk around the exterior of the ship. But the Doctor's escape is thwarted (again) by the Master (again) who threatens to eject Jo into space if the Doctor doesn't re-enter the spaceship. Meanwhile, a Draconian ship approaches and imprisons all three of them, deciding to take the hostages to Draconia where they are attacked by Ogrons disguised as humans thanks to the sweet piercing melody of the hypnosound. The Master manages to flee (taking Jo with him (again)) but a single Ogron is left

behind after suffering the HAIIIIK of the Doctor, and once the effects of the hypnosis fade, the unconscious Ogron is finally revealed in its true form and the Doctor has all the proof he needs to end the cold war.

Sadly, this was to be Roger Delgado's final appearance as the Master due to his unexpected death in a car accident in Cyprus three months prior to transmission. Although this episode wasn't intended to be the Master's swansong, it's a such a shame how the Master fell from great political heights as a diplomat to becoming lowly fugitives alongside the Doctor and Jo. There was much more potential and it was unfortunate it wasn't executed effectively to give Delgado's Master the send-off he deserved, especially when it is revealed the true puppet-masters are actually the Daleks, which further weakens the Master's involvement. The Daleks plan was simple: to pit the two empires of Earth and Draconia together in order to weaken both sides so the pepper-pots from Skaro could launch their own assault on the two weakened armies. Such a shame for the Master to be serving the Daleks masterplan than grand-scheming in his own right, having been overshadowed as the main antagonist.

Putting their differences aside, the Doctor helps to unite the Draconians and Earth-people against a common enemy: far-right, authoritarian ultra-nationalism characterised by dictatorial power. Sound familiar, 21st Century readers?

# Planet of the Daleks

Reviewed by  
Jon Nathan Dory

Cards on the table straight away: 'Planet' is my favourite 1970's Dalek story. I'm fully aware that this goes against perceived fan wisdom and much more besides but, hey, it's what I believe and after 47 years I'm not changing my mind!

The Second Dalek Masterplan, as 'Frontier in Space' and 'Planet of the Daleks' should really be known, saw Terry Nation at his recycling pinnacle - but in all honesty what was wrong with that? I know he didn't write 'Frontier', but then again, he only wrote half of 'DMP'!

Let's have the Daleks planning galactic conquest, let's have an over-

gown planet with deadly plant life but incredibly smooth decking, let's have the return of the Thals, let's have a hero placed inside a defunct Dalek casing complete with a discarded Kaled mutant, let's have an exploding ice-cano - and, best of all, let's have Prentis Hancock giving it his all as Vaber.

The opening episode, with The Doctor unconscious for much of, gives Jo a welcome chance to get centre stage: why she even gets to use Marc Cory's recycled portable log. The concept of Invisible Daleks is a corker, it's a shame this wasn't used inside their HQ.; or perhaps it was, we'll never know.

The dramatic conclusion to episode two, with the crash of the landing Thal spaceship beautifully envisaged off screen, followed by newly arrived Rebec telling us there are 10,000 Daleks is great fun. As indeed is the chase down through Dalek City and the subsequent

escape via the improvised hot air balloon. See also 'The Daleks'!

Prentis Hancock's magnum opus comes to a tragic end in episode five, where his glorious sacrifice enables the lily livered Taron and Codal to escape with the bombs that will ultimately bring about the destruction of the Dalek army.

The arrival of the Supreme Dalek, complete with torch for an eye-stalk, for the finale is brilliant as is his dismissal of the original mission commander. 'The actions of the aliens has caused considerable disruption of operations on this planet..... your orders were to exterminate them..... the responsibility was yours, you have failed:

the Supreme Council does not accept failure.' Daleks have a unique way in handing out P45s.

The Supreme's parting words after the plan has gone tits up are actually Terry Nation's reminder to Barry Letts and Terrance Dicks that he's waiting to get that story commission for the following season. 'We have been delayed not defeated, the Daleks are never defeated.' Shame it ended up being 'Death to the Daleks'.

If I seem somewhat light hearted then do forgive me, but 'Planet' is great fun, and delivers just about everything I could want from a Dalek story. Here's to fungal spores and the plain of stones!



# The Green Death

## Reviewed by Paul Driscoll & Kara Dennison

Part One of The Green Death is a tour de force in scripting Doctor Who. The moral compass of the story is set up from the outset, but with great economy Robert Sloman does not skirt around the complexities of the perennial conflict between tradition and progress. In his brief interview on the DVD release, the writer says that progress per se isn't bad, but that it needs to be 'investigated and thought about.' It isn't clear from the opening scene that Professor Clifford Jones and his protesters are on the right side, or that the profit-obsessed executives of Global Chemicals are the big baddies. As one of the miners says, 'it's alright for you, you can afford to live how you want to. We need better jobs.'

The protesters are portrayed as well-to-do academics and their concern for the environment apparently trumps any thought about the living conditions of the working class. These grey areas are where a show like Doctor Who excels, because they are situations in which the Doctor excels. Where human (or non-human) players see two opposing groups as Good vs. Bad, the Doctor insists on hunting down the core of the matter for the sake of both groups. It's a philosophy the Time Lords aren't always on board with, but that lends this serial a sort

of heart and human awareness that many other environmentally-based works of fiction gloss over.

The modern desire to know the hero and villain of a piece on sight in the real world is nothing new, but real conflicts are rarely that simple. Even in what might seem to be the most cut-and-dried cases of right and wrong, there are multiple pieces in play from the bottom to the top, even (and especially) in fields assumed to be entirely rotten. The Green Death takes this on with a highly literal version of corporate brainwashing and blackmail: stifling those near the top who know the whole nasty story but, for one reason or another, are made incapable of escaping, making a change, or spilling the truth. The failed reprogramming and subsequent death of Fell are a gorier (and more permanent) depiction of the fate of employees whose consciences catch up to them.

The first episode neatly foreshadows the departure of Jo Grant, an event that is given great prominence in contrast to other companion send-offs (especially that of her immediate predecessor Liz Shaw, who just gets a passing mention). The Doctor muses that the fledgling is about to fly the nest. There are some lovely affectionate scenes between Jo and the Doctor, and later the Brigadier, and we are left in no doubt that she is about to set off on her own adventure without them. From being asked to make the tea in her first meeting with the Doctor, to boldly declaring that she

is willing to defy orders to fight for the cause of the environmentalists, Jo Grant has become no push-over. Even the offer of a trip to Metebelis 3 isn't enticing enough to deter her, and the news of what she missed elicits what amounts to a 'That's nice' in reply.

There is a nice little bit of symbolism in the foregrounding of the half-eaten apple Jo Grant leaves behind as she heads off to pack her bags. It's a sign that, though she is moving on, she still respects the Doctor, that his words still matter and his advice worth heeding (he has told her that the apple won't give her enough protein for a healthy breakfast, also foreshadowing Professor Jones' primary quest to find effective meat replacements).

Unfortunately, the high quality of the first episode isn't matched as the rest of the series unfolds, at least, not until the beautifully pitched final scene of the Doctor driving away, alone, as the sun sets. The subtlety is replaced by a reliance on lazy stereotypes, with the Welsh taking the worst of it. Jo's headstrong feistiness is cast aside by the fear she displays in the mineshaft, especially when she asks Bert to jump out of the lift shaft first. There is more symbolism to come, but Jo Grant's bright green gloves lack the nuance of the discarded apple. The Doctor's trip to Metebelis 3, initially set up as a selfish act of defiance, and a good example of how he needs companions in his life, turns out to have become the means for acquiring the Chekhov's gun of the blue crys-



tal, undermining the significance of him passing it to Jo as something blue for her wedding. With it also featuring some of the least convincing uses of CSO and some blatant continuity errors, The Green Death does not quite live up to its ambitious aims.

Thankfully, those niggles aside, there is enough quality in the script to make The Green Death one of the better stories of the Pertwee era, and it's rather unfortunate it has become labelled as the 'one with the giant maggots'. There is a lot more to it than that. The call-backs to Terror of the Autons are particularly welcome, with Professor Jones cast in the role of the Doctor in Jo's affections. This parallel specifically does a good job of short-handing the pair's burgeoning relationship. We've seen this play out once before, so we know where this is going... perhaps even before the cast themselves do.

Jo's clumsiness irritated the Doctor when she became his assistant, for example, and the same happens with Cliff. She has a habit of making things worse and ruining months of work. Once again, she is assumed to be the tea-maker and it seems that misogyny even exists in a commune. She almost seems to revert for a time, her bright eagerness devolving into the early Jo who made the Doctor wither 'Oh, no' at the realization he was stuck with her. The intent is understood: she's been given a version of the Doctor she can marry, and the groundwork is being laid for the idea that Jo and Cliff will become

as close as Jo and the Doctor. It brings with it a sense of 'trading up for a newer model,' which is an unfortunate side effect, but also (somewhat awkwardly) not an entirely inaccurate one.

There is repeated mention of the Doctor's age which is no coincidence given that Jo sees Cliff as a younger version of her old friend. The scene when the Doctor becomes the milkman's Dad is especially telling when he says in a faux Welsh accent 'there's life in the old dog, yet.' The Doctor veers between being an over-protective father and a scorned lover as he struggles to come to terms with Jo's rejection. He has literally offered her all of time and space and she has turned him down. That neediness of the Doctor, implicit here, would become the benchmark of Steven Moffat's characterisation of the 11th Doctor.

This neediness, combined with Jo's slow-burn move from the Doctor to Clifford, drives home the irony of life aboard the TARDIS: leaving the Doctor is the essential final stage of traveling with the Doctor. The Doctor knows when it's time for a companion to move on, no matter how difficult it may be. Acceptance of that knowledge (or lack thereof) runs the gamut from the forceful push away the 1st Doctor gives his own granddaughter to the 12th Doctor's frightened, reality-shattering grip on Clara Oswald. After all, the Doctor can be not only needy, but greedy. It's the curse of the near-immortal that all companions will one day leave simply by

virtue of mortality. Watching them choose to do so can only be bitter-sweet: there's joy in their exit, but also the knowledge that the Doctor has been 'outgrown.'

New technology always gives the human race the jitters. When the telephone was invented, some feared that the device might be a means of communicating with the dead. Today, it is advances in virtual reality, robotics, smartphones, and wearable technology that generate alarmist headlines. We fear they are a risk to our health, but on a more existential level, we also worry that our identity is being diminished in some way. Does virtual reality take away human interaction, are robots making us redundant and replacing our jobs and skills, are smartphones creating a generation

of lazy and socially withdrawn narcissists, and what's to stop wearable technology from turning the user into the interface?

The Green Death was written during the microprocessor revolution of the early seventies when, unsurprisingly, computers were a source of great anxiety. 1973 was a year filled with significant and lasting innovations in the field. Forerunners to the PC were made available to buy in kit form, the LCD was developed, an international bar coding and scanning system introduced, and the Ethernet was invented. A few years ago, a map of the internet from 1973 surfaced. The network, based exclusively in the US, could be drawn on a single sheet of paper and consisted of 42 computers connected to 36 nodes. But by the end



of the year, the first overseas connection was made, heralding the beginning of the internet as we know it today. Computer phobia didn't really hit its peak until the microcomputer became readily available in the early 1980s. Mainframe computers that filled entire rooms were still how most people pictured the mostly inaccessible technology, just like the one seen in the offices of Global Chemicals.

BOSS's plan to take over all the mainframes of the world and give Global Chemicals the monopoly of the fuel industry, his connection to Stevens (through the not-so-portable wearable technology of a headset), and his reduction of humans to slaves, all tap into long held fears about our increasing dependency on computers. They are just as relevant now as they were in 1973, but like the science-fiction thriller 'Colossus: The Forbin Project' (1970), 'The Green Death' is a product of a pre-internet fear of global connectivity. As the means by which governments and multinational corporations manipulate the masses, the internet can be a particularly pernicious form of mass media.

BOSS is one of the most delightful villains in Doctor Who's long history, and it's a delight to see the computer struggle with his obsession with efficiency and go slightly mad in the process. But it is not only the Doctor's intellect that causes a near break-down (when the Doctor sets the computer an impossible question to answer). Flawed and naturally rebellious humans repeat-

edly thwart him, and his inability to understand emotion, from sentimentality to anger, is brilliantly conveyed. When he loses his hold over Stevens, seconds before Global Chemicals blows up, there is an element of pathos in the supercomputer's final words. The man he called superman was his 'friend'.

Yes, 'The Green Death' is a commentary on the state of the planet, a debunking of global corporations, and a stark reminder of the need to find sustainable energy sources. But the heart of the message is the importance of friendships: their value even at their most difficult, their deceptive endings, and how we grow from them even when those friends are no longer with us. It is a lesson the Doctor will repeatedly have to learn again — and indeed he does, with the introduction of a certain young reporter just one episode later.



## The Time Warrior Reviewed by Jaspreet Singh

'The Time Warrior'! What a corker of a story to kick off Jon Pertwee's final season!

Not only does this story give a brand-new lease of life to Doctor Who's already phenomenal era by introducing fan favourite companion Sarah Jane Smith (as beautifully portrayed by the ever so wonderful Elizabeth Sladen), the famous 'slit scan' title sequence as created by Bernard Lodge but also introduce fans to a race of belligerent and militaristic clones known as the Sontarans.

But if we look at the story in its entirety, 'The Time Warrior' also establishes what I believe to be a key fundamental aspect in terms of 'Doctor Who' lore. We have Dot

Branning in 'Doctor Who'. The only confirmation we needed in terms of finally canonizing 'Dimensions in Time' as well as that hilarious Doctor Who sketch from the 2011 National Television Awards entitled 'Dermot and the Doctor'.

I jest of course. While it was fantastic to see June Brown's brilliant portrayal of Lady Eleanor in 'The Time Warrior', the one scene that I believe to be fundamental in terms of 'Doctor Who' lore is that of the Doctor's first confrontation with Commander Lynx (portrayed phenomenally by Kevin Lindsay).

Not only do we learn about the 'the perpetual war between the Sontarans and the Rutans' but also the name of the Doctor's home planet for the very first time. Gallifrey (and not Jewel which for some reason was debated to be the home world of the Time Lords according to the 1975 comic 'Return of the Daleks')! Now, I can't imagine how exciting it



must have been for fans to have watched this story for the very first time back in 1973 and be giddy with joy at the mention of Gallifrey but I imagine it to be something very similar to when I first fell in love with Pertwee's era back in 2006.

When I look at 'The Time Warrior' from a production aspect, it was quite a ballsy yet inevitable move to re-introduce the concept of historical based stories back into Doctor Who and this story manages to execute this beautifully. The sets and costumes are fantastic to say the least, which is a credit to the designer Keith Cheetham. The costume design of Commander Lynx still holds up to be one of my favourite designs for a Sontaran throughout the tenure of the show which itself is a testament to the

creativity of the team working on Doctor Who despite the restricted budget given to the show).

Robert Holmes graces us once again with a script that not only is exciting and fun but also creates a world filled with characters that are believable and real. One fine example of this is of course Sarah Jane Smith which in combination with Elizabeth Sladen's skill as an actress manages to create a character which I do believe stands the test of time. Even from a 21st century point of view, I can strongly argue that Sarah Jane Smith within this episode especially wouldn't feel out of place if she were to have landed in 2019 instead of the Middle Ages. She's a very modern companion and a strong candidate for the position of a timeless role model for fans.



The chemistry between both the Third Doctor and Sarah Jane Smith is beautiful and I love how Robert Holmes allowed Sarah Jane to develop as a character on her own throughout this story without needing to rely on the Doctor at all. For the first two complete episodes of 'The Time Warrior' we get to see Sarah Jane trying to make sense of the idea of time travel and even going as far as to believe that she must have accidentally ended up in a medieval tourist reconstruction attraction complete with 'with jolly banquets and buxom serving wenches.' This is just one example of the witty dialogue which Robert Holmes has penned for this story.

The story is very cleverly written, and it makes use of time travel in a way in which it doesn't complicate the story and make it easy to follow for any viewer watching it. I found the idea in which Lynx was kidnapping contemporary scientists from the future to assist in the repairs to his ship during the Middle Ages quite ingenious as it serves as a reminder that while this story is indeed a historical, it is also science fiction and keeping that balance is ideal for a show like 'Doctor Who' as you want to constantly engage the viewers' attention.

I, being in my mid-twenties was introduced to 'Doctor Who' in the same way as many other fans of my generation. The very first 'Doctor Who' episode I saw was 'Rose' back in 2005 but it was during a repeat of 'Spearhead from Space' which really fixed my love for the show. I can vividly recall one scene

in which the Doctor tricks Liz into stealing the TARDIS key back off from the Brigadier so that he could escape. What followed next was possibly one the most beautiful sounds in existence in which we hear the TARDIS trying to take off with a variation of that famous wheezing groan of ancient machinery as she struggled to do so.

When I look back at the Pertwee era, I can't but always feel excited even though I have seen this era for a millionth time. I have always felt a certain affinity to Doctor Who during the 70s and I think one of the main reasons is purely due to the relationship of the cast and crew behind the scenes. It is often described by everyone who had worked on 'Doctor Who' during this era that the family attitude behind the scenes is what made the relationships shown on the screen to be real. Everyone bounces off one another and it shows, and I can completely understand why this era of 'Doctor Who' is known as the 'golden age' (no, Mike not that sort of golden age.)

Overall a fantastic story and a great first story to introduce such a beloved companion for our favourite Gallifreyan buccaneer. Filled with magic (despite what the Doctor says), sword fighting action and of course trouble from a scheming alien menace which truly does sum up classic Doctor Who in a nutshell.

Now, if you don't mind, I am off to create my variation of the rhodium sensor to detect delta particles of my own.

# Invasion of the Dinosaurs

## Epilogue by Oliver Dallas

The Doctor had only reached the bunker in the nick of time, stopping the final realisation of 'Operation Golden Age'. By reversing the field of Professor Whitaker's timescoop he had successfully prevented the Professor and Sir Charles Grover from rolling back time, wiping out established human history in place of something new. He had also inadvertently granted the two men their wish, sending both on an exclusive one-way ticket to a version of Earth they craved, where they could live their new lives out in peace, and not at the expense of innocents.

'Where's Whitaker?' asked a dazed and confused Brigadier as he stared at the now empty corner where the scientist and his infernal machine had stood only seconds ago.

'I imagine he and Sir Charles have returned to their Golden Age,' replied the Doctor 'Perhaps they'll be happier there'

\*

Despite the Doctor's enthusiasm they were both far from happy in their Golden Age, especially Whitaker who was jumping up and down in a mad fury, Grover wisely keeping his distance.

'You bloody fool Grover!' he fumed, clenching his fists 'I told you not to touch those controls, he'd reversed their polarities'

'What does that even mean?!' Grover stressed

'SOMETHING CLEVER!' he snapped 'I warned you not to underestimate him; we should've killed him when we had the chance' 'If we killed him then we'd no better than the people we left behind' Grover said gravely, whilst conveniently overlooking the fact that he'd helped in planning a mass genocide. 'Besides he had a brilliant mind, one that could've been of great use to us'

'I could think of many uses for that man, but none of them pleasant' Whitaker huffed as he returned to tending his machine.

'Could say the same about this weather' Grover groaned as he mopped the sweat from his brow for the tenth time in two minutes. He looked hopefully towards Whitaker and his machine 'If all he did was reverse the controls of that thing, then couldn't you just reverse them back?'

'I just have' Whitaker said bluntly, offended that he was even asked 'Well what are we waiting for then? Let's go back and try again'

All Whitaker could do was stare at Grover in astonishment, he knew this man was an idiot but this revelation now proved that he was stupider than a Brontosaurus.

'I'm not sure whether you're fully aware Grover but this machine runs on nuclear power, and we are currently standing in the primordial slime of a civilisation that is yet to crawl out from it!'

'So, I should take that as a no then?' Grover asked innocently

Whitaker just rolled his eyes and turned back to stare at the dead controls of his time machine.

Grover also resigned to himself, and began assessing what could be his new home. After spending approximately thirty seconds looking at nothing but endless vistas of grey mountains interspersed with loud, hungry dinosaurs, he soon realised that, maybe, they should have rebooted humanity in an era with a bit more variety. And air conditioning.

As he looked up at the unfamiliar orange skies Grover spotted some-

thing even more unfamiliar. It was big, grey and approaching at rapid speed.

'Good grief, what is that?!' he exclaimed, pointing excitedly at his discovery.

Whitaker didn't even bother to look up.

'Probably just a meteorite' he muttered 'hundreds of them were passing the solar system at this time'

'Damn odd shape for one if it is, I've never heard of a rectangular one before'

Whitaker's interest was now engaged.

'That's no meteorite'

'You don't mean?'

'I do mean, how many meteorites do you know that have a propulsion



drive and landing armaments?’

‘You don’t think it’s ours?’ he suggested hopefully ‘perhaps the Doctor wasn’t quite as thorough with his sabotage as you thought’

‘Grover, the ship we constructed was of a cheap timber that couldn’t survive a draft let alone the stress of atmospheric re-entry’

‘Well our spaceship or not it must on some form of power, one that we could possibly harness’

Whitaker beamed for what felt to Grover like the first time in decades.

Grover chuckled with arrogant delight as he looked up at the rapidly descending majesty of his saviours. The Doctor had merely delayed the inevitable; with the help of their new allies - whoever they may be -

Operation Golden Age would succeed!

Then he suddenly stopped smiling and considered the rapidly approaching object again, but this time with dread.

‘Whitaker, I’m no rocket scientist but I’m pretty certain that that ship is not landing...’

Whitaker stopped and stared upwards at the rapidly descending bringer of their extinction.

‘You know Charles, for once I think you may be right’

As the ship hit, the anti-matter pods powering the warp drive split open, causing a tremendous explosion. In the blink of an eye dreams of a Golden Age were no more. And the same went for the dinosaurs.



## Death to the Daleks

Reviewed by  
Christine Grit

One of the things I really like about the third Doctor is not so much his action hero antics and his love of extraordinary vehicles, but his appreciation of, let us say a more cultured bit of life. You will find him appreciating a good wine in one story, enjoying a work of art in another, while his love of velvet jackets and frilled shirts is an obvious indicator of his love of (a certain) style. Not for this Doctor a pair of sneakers and jeans, a multi-coloured coat or a badly fitting pair of trousers. Oh no, he is always dressed meticulously (even if sometimes lightly frayed during the course of a story due to the action hero antics). At the beginning of *Death to the Daleks* Sarah might be dressed up to go sun bathing, but the Doctor is wearing his usual gear, even though he is expecting to go to a nice warm place where sunny spells can be enjoyed. Of course, soon enough they arrive somewhere completely different, the planet Exxilon. Does he get changed into something comfortable and warm? Nope. He continues to wear his usual stuff. However, clothing aside, I found the Doctor acting very much out of character in this particular story at times.

You see, the Jon Pertwee Doctor, is a bit like Jon himself - the ‘mother hen’ as he often referred to the

character. This was especially so with Jo, where he was a very caring friend, the analogy of a motherly figure who protects those who are less strong. Now obviously Elisabeth Sladen plays a very different kind of character. From the get-go she was a rather independent woman never waiting for some man to take care of her. She is perfectly able to take care of herself, thank you very much. Having said that, it still is rather odd that when his companion asks him to wait for her (to get changed into something warm) he just doesn’t. I totally understand the two need to get separated to get the story going along, but is it really necessary to say you will wait and then with no pause at all, immediately turn tail? I felt this part to be very odd and totally contrary to how this particular Doctor normally acts. When you arrive at an unexpected place that is rather creepy, is it not just plain common sense to stick together? Not as a dependency, but sheer force of numbers might help when something nasty happens? Even when there are only two of you, it is better than acting on one’s own. Nastiness and danger always happen when you are travelling with the Doctor and the one person who knows that best is the Doctor himself.

Thankfully, the Doctor does turn true to form during the course of the story. He is the first to become protective of his newly met Marine Space Corps companions when the Daleks suddenly turn up. Although Jon the actor was not known for his love of the Daleks,

as the Doctor he handles them very well. He never shows his fear (this Doctor would never have acknowledged being afraid, even though he was very aware that going past your fear is a courageous act), and he is willing to negotiate with them despite them having tried to kill him beforehand, and is not that surprised when they break their alliance upon re-acquiring functioning weaponry.

What I particularly like about the Daleks in this story is that they do some sneaky and remarkable things. They shoot at small Tardis models, think of an alternative reason for being present on the planet at all, that is just close enough to the truth to sound plausible, and they solve puzzles when they gain entry to the city. I must admit that I rather like these scenes in the city which whilst not scary are quite a bit of fun. You see what happens to

the Doctor and Bellal first, and then to the Daleks. If it were not for those scenes with the Doctor and the lovely Bellal the whole walk-through could almost be considered slightly slapstick with the Daleks' antics. I must not forget the Dalek dying because of a nervous breakdown. When will we ever see that again? Nothing sneaky or remarkable about it, but the whole issue of Daleks getting breakdowns, is really out of this world. It is one of my favourite Dalek scenes, and to my knowledge has never been repeated since.

The Doctor's friendship with Bellal is of course part of why this set of episodes is so charming. Of course, it is only for the course of the adventure as such, but Bellal makes all that is good in the Jon Pertwee Doctor stand out very clearly. Bellal is such a lovely, slightly timid, and enchanting crea-



ture. So many people would have liked to see him joining the Doctor and Sarah in the Tardis. This never happened but it is nice to see them together and also the Doctor being his active, likeable self during those scenes in the city. He's just so smart all the time (as this particular Doctor usually is) and he remains himself throughout, being both an Action Hero and a caring friend for the sweet Bellal.

The Doctor is also appreciative of the city itself, the ingenuity of the inside and its architecture on the outside. He could have just got the information from an encyclopedia of course, the knowledge that this city is one of the wonders of the Universe, but I don't think so. I began my essay with noting how I liked the way this Doctor likes the good things of life, including works of art. Architectural gems are also works of art, though on a bigger scale than a painting or a sculpture, especially if one applies it to a whole city. The Doctor really admires the whole structure, including the traps to prevent people from coming in, (although his comparison with a temple in South America to me was just a little bit too much). The admiration and appreciation appear to be genuine. It is a real shame the city breaks down and gets destroyed. The Doctor's sadness about that seems to be real.

It is necessary to find a resolution to the story – otherwise no one would have been able to leave the planet. As in many early Doctor Who stories it is left to the imagination of the viewer as to what happens next on

the planet Exxilon. The common theme of the Doctor (and his companions) of solving a problematic situation or even causing a revolution and him leaving once his work on that score is done, can also be seen here. Although we know what the remaining people from the Marine Space Corps will do, we do not know what happens to the Exxilons. Will they now build up a new civilisation? Will Bellal and his friends also hiding in the caves and underground be able to come together with their savage counterparts or will they have to stay where they are? It will remain a mystery. I have always felt it to be a bit of a shortcoming in these stories. However, the Doctor can hardly be blamed for that. At least the writers made him appreciative of the good life and admiring of art and architecture. The characteristics I like in this Doctor!



# The Monster of Peladon

## Reviewed by Matt Rabjohns

I was about 10 years old. I had been a fan of 'Doctor Who' for just over three years, thrilled by a new 'Doctor Who' I had recently discovered, called Jon Pertwee. I had recently watched Death to the Daleks on my wonderful old video player and truly loved what I saw in this new (to me) Doctor - a man of action; a role model; a hero with the flair of a James Bond.

The next story that I acquired was 'The Monster of Peladon', a rather impressive double video set. I didn't know at the time that this story

was the one that immediately followed Death to the Daleks, but I had every hope of being even more pleased with this new, longer story. Little did I know that awaiting me within this story was a scene which would strike me with infinite long-lasting horror.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. Firstly I began to watch the story. I was instantly wowed by this medieval castle setting; extremely impressed by the alien races assembled on Peladon; immediately a lifelong fan of the hermaphrodite hexapod Alpha Centauri, with its wonderful huge single eye and adorable voice supplied by Ysanne Churchman. I was really enjoying too the performance of Nina Thomas as the sweetly naive Queen Thalira.

But then the Ice Warriors arrived. I

was unsettled by the creepy bass drum score that I had heard in The Seeds of Death, which had helped cement my fear of these Martian Lords. Alan Bennion and Sonny Caldinez were dependably nasty villains. But then suddenly came my moment of horrendous shock.

The mad miner Ettis had already stabbed one of his own men, and I was becoming truly afraid of this character, played by Ralph Watson, who was set to give me some super coloured nightmares. But things were looking up as along came my strong dependable hero the Doctor. He confronted Ettis, although he sympathised with his anger at the way his planet was being exploited. A sword fight ensued. I was already getting nervous, but then it happened - Ettis barrelled into the Doctor's stomach, then threw him gasping into a cave wall, viciously punching him to unconsciousness.

I was absolutely horrified, sweating. How could such a harsh and brutal beating happen to my wonderful TV Hero? I was filled with instant loathing for Ettis, which wasn't assuaged even when episode ended with his being atomised. But it was more than that; the palpating heart within me was screaming that this was not fair. I was cursing the writer of this story for causing my Doctor to be hurt so badly. I couldn't help myself. I somehow managed to watch the remaining two episodes, and yet the memory of that beating was driven like a nail into my brain, to the point that every time I have watched the story since, I still feel that little quivering in my heart. It's

not as bad as that first time, but it's still there.

A 10 year-old is remarkably impressionable. Years later, well into my teenage years, whenever this scene was about to come on I would always pretend to need a drink or find some other excuse to leave the room - anything to avoid watching this scene again. I can find it funny now, but at the time it just struck me dumb. The truth is, I've seen far worse TV and film violence since, with no problem at all, but put on Part Four of 'The Monster of Peladon' and for years I turned into a cringing worm who would rather not witness this horrible Ettis person, actually decking the Doctor.

Looking back, I can say that my reaction was because I had never seen this kind of treatment meted out to the Doctor before. There would be more fisticuffs in the future - some far more extreme; the Doctor's fight with the Master in the Matrix in 'The Deadly Assassin' being a prime example, but never again would I be as deeply troubled by a scene from 'Doctor Who'.

Now of course I will tell you that 'The Monster of Peladon' is one of my favourite Jon Pertwee stories. For me it is better paced and has better action than 'The Curse of Peladon,' which for me was a dull talkathon of nothing much. I love the brilliant characters; and the medieval setting still impresses me.

So how do I feel now about that oh so classic few seconds of Terry



Walsh doubling for Jon in the fight and getting his lights beaten out? I am not ashamed to tell you that watching it still causes me to feel a slight stirring of the pulse. I wonder what this says about me.

Oh, and I do love the Doctor pulling Sarah by the ear into the TARDIS at the climax of the story, and how he can still manage to grin at the camera before he leaves. I am so glad my hero wasn't too badly hurt by that hot headed radical Ettis. Of course now I can see just how superbly well Ralph Watson portrays the troubled miner, conveying perfectly his descent into madness.

On one more serious note, this story focuses on miners striking for better treatment by the Galactic

Federation, a storyline which echoed the real life miners' strikes which were happening in Britain at the time. Our miners did dangerous - often deadly work for comparatively little reward. I think they deserve to be honoured. How many men struggled or even died in fetid and stifling mines, to put food on their tables? How many real life miners shared the mind set of Ettis? As someone who wasn't born at the time, it is hard for me to comment. But one thing I am sure of, we must never forget those men and women who risk their lives in dangerous jobs. They deserve to be remembered and applauded.



## Planet of the Spiders Reviewed by Ian McLachlan

'Doctor Who' had first entered my life when I saw the repeat of the very first episode on the 30th of November 1963. It soon became a big part of my life. When I was growing up, my Primary School was not a particularly pleasant place for me, with fear being one of the strongest emotions that I felt when I was there. Television was therefore a great escape especially when it meant that I could experience the adventures that the original four TARDIS travellers had. I used to dream that one day I might find a real TARDIS and have exciting adventures in time and space.

Back then I used to arrange my life around making sure that I was by a television set whenever the BBC chose to broadcast Doctor Who. However I was not always successful in this endeavour and I missed seven episodes in total from the first season. Since then I have seen all these episodes apart from 'Assassin at Peking' (the seventh and final episode of 'Marco Polo').

Thankfully my secondary school was much better and I really enjoyed my time there but I still faithfully watched every episode of 'Doctor Who' that was broadcast. For a time I was somewhat wary of the second Doctor. However Patrick Troughton had been a favourite

actor of mine since he had played Paul of Tarsus and Quilp so, while I still missed William Hartnell, I stuck with the programme. I am glad that I did and I would have to say that Zoe and Polly became in time my two favourite companions.

I have to say that to begin with the second Doctor was too comedic for my tastes but gradually I felt that he became less so and I ended

But then around summer of 1969 I learned that big changes were to take place to the programme. There would be fewer episodes each year and the leading man was to be someone who was known principally for comedy. I wanted less humour in Doctor Who not more! I remembered when one of my favourite shows - 'Orlando' - which had started out fairly seriously, ended up being played more for laughs in its final season. I felt that it was not as good as it went on because I preferred it when it took itself more seriously. And another favourite - 'Lost in Space' - also went down the same comedy road in its latter episodes. By and large my favourite episodes were from the first season. Both shows were ultimately cancelled. Would the casting of this comic actor also result in my favourite show suffering the same fate?

After a six-month break 'Doctor Who' returned. For some reason I thought that this meant that the episodes would be 50 minutes long like most drama of the time. I was wrong. But I was pleased when 'Spearhead from Space' started and it was all on film! I noticed at once

that it was no longer being broadcast in the mixture of film and video tape that it had usually been transmitted on. I was disappointed though when I noticed that the second story, 'The Silurians', was not all made on film. But I was delighted to see Jon Pertwee playing the Doctor in a serious manner after all! At times he reminded me of 'Adam Adamant' - another favourite programme of mine which had ended too soon!

I enjoyed the Pertwee stories and while by the time of his third season I was now at university, I kept faith with the Doctor. At the time I was the only person in my student residence who had a monochrome television in his room so I could ensure that I never missed one of my favourite programmes. I invested in a cassette recorder and from 'Day of the Daleks' onwards I used to set the recorder in my room and then dash to the Common Room to watch 'Doctor Who' in colour! Thankfully 'Doctor Who' was a programme that attracted a huge audience along with 'Star Trek' and 'Top of the Pops!' Thankfully nobody suggested watching a different channel!

I managed to see all the Pertwee episodes as they were transmitted which was very fortunate because some stories were shown during the miners' strike of 1973 which meant that there were frequent power cuts across the UK. Luckily for me none of them took place during the screening of 'Doctor Who' in my area!

For the last Pertwee season I noticed that it was being shown in Wales on a Sunday rather than a Saturday and I was prepared to go from Scotland to Wales overnight if for some reason I managed to miss one of the episodes screened on Saturday! Luckily for my wallet I did not ever have to do that.

I really enjoyed watching Pertwee's fifth season. There was a good new title sequence and Sarah Jane Smith became a favourite companion. I liked the fact that the season had opened with a story set in an historical period. Personally I would have preferred a historical adventure without aliens but I thought that the Sontarans were an interesting alien race. By this time also the TARDIS had begun to work again, which meant that there was more chance of it visiting alien planets as it used to do in its earlier days. And while I liked the Brigadier and UNIT I felt that they somewhat restricted the 'Doctor Who'



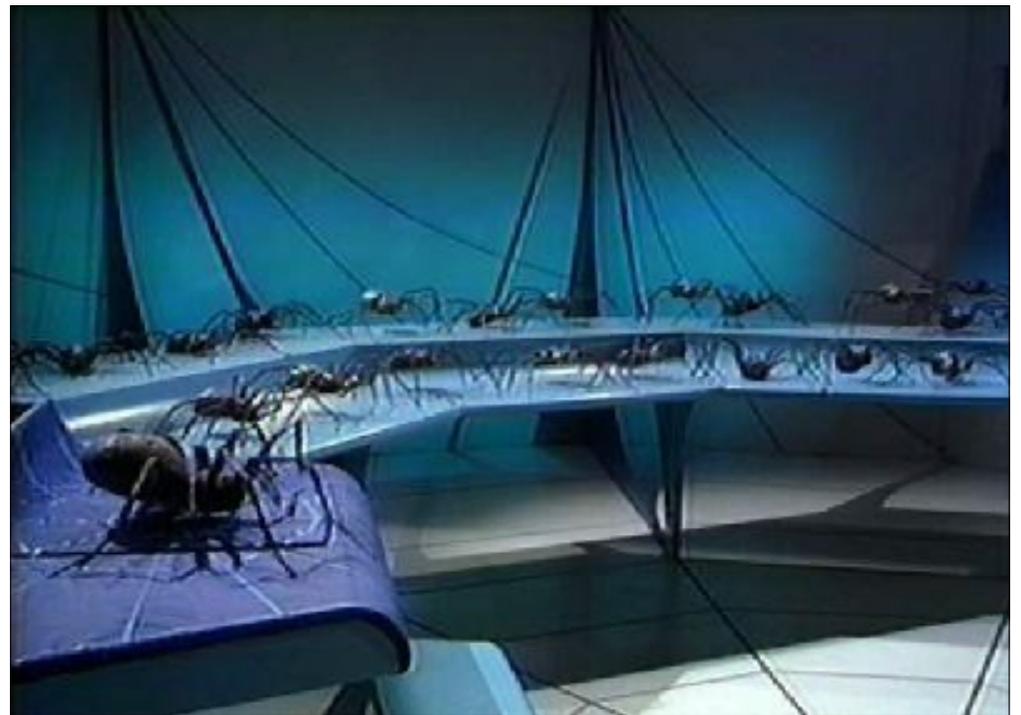
format. However I would have been quite happy if the powers that be had made the Brigadier a permanent travelling companion. But it was not to be.

Whereas the early days of 'Doctor Who' had seen in general a series of adventures that followed on from each other, in the Pertwee era there seemed to be more gaps between most of the adventures. This meant of course that it was easier to rescreen adventures as one-off specials which became something to look forward at a time when the show stopped being shown all the year round apart from a six to eight week break. 'Planet of the Spiders' was one such story.

By the time Planet of the Spiders appeared I knew that Jon Pertwee was leaving the role of the Doctor.

Unlike his two predecessors he had stayed for five years. Like lots of people I wondered who would take over from him. I had liked the first three Doctors. Would I like the fourth? How different would he be to the first three? At that time it would have been unthinkable if he had not been a he!

Before he left Jon had one more adventure to have and that was on the 'Planet of the Spiders'. I was interested to learn that it was going to be directed by the producer, Barry Letts and that it was to be written by Robert Sloman who had previously had his name attached to 'The Time Monster' and 'The Green Death' - two very different stories. While 'The Green Death' had been set in the future on Earth, 'The Time Monster' had been also set in Atlantis. I had always particularly



enjoyed stories which had not stayed in the same location for their duration, hence some of my favourites had been 'The Keys of Marinus', 'The Chase' and 'The Dalek Master Plan'.

I was delighted to find that 'Planet of the Spiders' harked back to the second ever Doctor Who adventure. In both stories there were two groups who were against each other. In one it was the Daleks and the Thals and in the other it was the humans and the Spiders. One group treated the other badly and in the end the good group triumphed as a result of the help that the Doctor gave them. The Spiders and the Daleks were similar in that they were both mutants.

Of course down through the years there were other Doctor Who stories that featured this theme - like 'The Savages' and 'The Macra Terror'. In such stories there were always casualties and the humans on Metebelis 3 did not gain their freedom without sacrifices - one of them being the third incarnation of the Doctor.

I had been disappointed when Captain Mike Yates had been in only three episodes of Jon Pertwee's fourth season. Worse was to come for Mike when he turned traitor in 'Invasion of the Dinosaurs'. I thought that he might have ended up back in time at the end of that adventure but instead it was reported that he was allowed to resign from UNIT quietly. That was that, as far as I was concerned. So I was rather surprised to see Richard Franklin back in the cast list. He

had quite a prominent part to play in the story and redeemed himself by the sacrifice that he was willing to make in the last episode. As a result I feel that Mike Yates had one of the most interesting character arcs in classic Doctor Who. And what is more, he ended up still alive at the end of it.

As well as 'Planet of the Spiders' being linked to 'Invasion of the Dinosaurs' viewers also got a chance of meeting the hermit that the third Doctor had said was his 'guru' in 'The Time Monster'. We also for the first time got an opportunity of seeing a future incarnation of a Time Lord before he took that form in Cho-Je which was one of the interesting twists in the story and must have influenced the idea of The Watcher in 'Logopolis' - which was the last adventure that the fourth Doctor had.

'Planet of the Spiders' is remembered by some as the story where many of Barry Letts' favourite performers from previous seasons get an opportunity of playing new roles. In addition it is the story that allowed Jon Pertwee the opportunity of indulging his love of various vehicles in the chase sequence in episode two. Some critics might say that the chase sequences are needless padding - because why doesn't Lupton and his spider simply dematerialise and arrive back at the meditation centre as soon as they have secured the blue crystal? However, for me the chase is enjoyable and produced as a result, a rather unique episode. To me there are other questions to ask about the serial such as - what

persuaded the men in the meditation centre to do what Lupton wanted? And how did the spiders make contact with Lupton in the first place?

In 'The Green Death' the scenes on Metebelis 3 were all on film while in 'Planet of the Spiders' there were on videotape. Sadly for me they are not that convincing as was some of the acting from the humans on that planet too.

While the idea of talking spiders was one of the more difficult ideas that the programme had asked me to accept, the way that the spiders jumped on the backs of the humans was definitely creepy. An idea that was also in the most recent Doctor Who episode, 'Resolution', which featured a Dalek mutant being on a human's back and controlling her. In the Tom Baker era there were some stories that dealt with human possession by aliens too like 'Pyramid of Mars', 'The Seeds of Doom' and 'The Ark in Space'.

The voices of the spiders were excellent and greatly added to the strangeness of the show. And John Dearth - who had previously been in 'The Green Death' as the voice of BOSS definitely made his presence felt in this story.

With this story the era of the third Doctor came to an end. I like the fact that the story implied that what the Doctor had done in the past sometimes affects the future for people. The Doctor's actions in 'The Ark' resulted in changes in the years that followed his first visit. In

a sense because of the Doctor bringing Dodo to the Ark, the Monoids had become more intelligent and mutated just like the spiders did. However the spiders' mutation was not a direct result of the Doctor's actions. But would The Great One have perished earlier if the Doctor had not stolen the missing crystal? 'The Face of Evil' was another story about the impact of the Doctor's actions in the future for a group of humans.

In an interview, the much-missed Terrance Dicks said that he did not see the Doctor as this character who admitted in this story that he recognised his big fault was being someone who was 'greedy for knowledge.' Perhaps in his original incarnation the Doctor could be partly described in this way, but by his third incarnation he was much more the defender of the weak and the oppressed. This version of the Time Lord was very much the hero and heroes have often to make sacrifices. If the Doctor had not made the sacrifice by 'facing his fear' the humans on Metebelis 3 would probably have continued to be under the control of the eight legs.



# The Five Doctors

## Reviewed by Nick Smith

There's no doubt that Jon Pertwee was a consummate entertainer, a kind-hearted raconteur and the hardest working man in Whobusiness. His third incarnation of the Doctor was a character you could depend on to amaze while saving the day, as adept at magic tricks as he was at Venusian aikido. In his previous encounter with his past lives, 'The Three Doctors', he'd ruled the roost as the incumbent. Ten years later, he was new to many young fans – especially those who hadn't caught 1981's 'Five Faces of Doctor Who' reruns. Let's imagine, for a moment, that the Third Doctor is new to us as he

appears in his quaint yellow car in his initial Five Doctors scene. Like his first incarnation, he is alone without a specified destination. His licence plate reads 'WHO 1,' as brash as a question mark collar. This gentleman is no wallflower. He does know how to handle his car, dodging a time cone until it overtakes him. Then he's on a cold, strange planet, taking the pit stop in his stride.

When he sees a lady in distress – Sarah Jane Smith tumbling down a hill – he's level-headed and quick to act, throwing her a rope and hauling her to safety. He's the kind of guy you'd be pleased to see if you broke down in the middle of nowhere, despite his outlandish getup; a tow truck time lord who's delighted to see his companion even if she's expecting someone

else (the Fourth Doctor).

Pertwee's dashing version of the Doctor seems to see life in black and white. He tends to speak gently, unlike the crabby First or cheeky Second Doctor, as they are portrayed in this story. When Sarah Jane asks him what they can do against the enormous power of the Dark Tower, he simply replies, 'What I've always done, Sarah Jane. Improve.' This is the Doctor as cliffhanging adventurer, exploring an ancient keep and making it up as he goes along. All he's missing is a hat and a bullwhip. Another exchange captures his outlook and his need for speed: Sarah Jane asks if there's an easier way to enter the tower than from its lofty peak. 'No,' the Third Doctor replies, 'it would take far too long.' When he finally meets up with his other selves, Three is humble but

never fades into the background. He is an essential part of a lineage, an ornate cog in a cosmic wheel. He is the Doctor.

Of course, many viewers back in 1983 were familiar with and fond of Pertwee's Doctor. The same went for the creative team behind the 20th anniversary tale. Terrance Dicks, the script editor of his era and writer of 'The Five Doctors', effortlessly recaptures the character and his avuncular relationship with Sarah Jane. Dicks is also able to bring other contextual elements into the mix: original UNIT assistant Liz Shaw, Captain Mike Yates, the Master and (via the Second Doctor) Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart. One wonders how the Third Doctor would have been depicted if paired with the Brig (who he often belittled while exiled on Earth) or his granddaughter Susan (probably evoking



a similar protective relationship to the one he has with Sarah Jane). Instead the casting gods decreed that Miss Smith would share his adventure and develop her climbing skills.

Meanwhile, Anthony Ainley is the Master of ducking thunderbolts, both in the open air and in the Dark Tower. The Third Doctor stubbornly refuses to trust this black-clad cad and it's unsurprising considering the Master's track record. In 'Colony in Space', the renegade revels in forging an adjudicator's ID. In the same story, he's audacious enough to steal the plans for a Doomsday Weapon from the Time Lords. To the suspicious Third Doctor, a theft of the High Council seal must seem like small beer in comparison. So the Master doesn't get a ride in Bessie, left eating Death Zone dust instead.

In truth, the Master has been sent to 'rescue' the Doctor. This is not out of character for Three's nemesis, whose zeal for conquest is tempered only by his personal history with the Doctor. 'Believe it or not,' the Master tells the First Doctor, 'we were at the Academy together.' Old school acquaintances? Three calls him 'my best enemy,' a compliment and a warning in one frill swoop.

While the Master is less kind to the Doctor (describing him as stupid), Sarah Jane has a much higher opinion of him. She follows him into great danger, a Sancho Panza in purple with her cohort tilting at tombs. She is out of her depth

here, away from the humdrum of South Croydon. Ironically, she's finally on Gallifrey – the very place the Fourth Doctor dumped her for in 'The Hand of Fear'. She bears no grudge.

The Third Doctor, like Pertwee himself, is no back-seat driver but he doesn't steal the show from the reigning star, Peter Davison. Approached as a Third Doctor story, 'The Five Doctors' has parallels to the tenth anniversary story 'The Three Doctors', overseen by Dicks – characters yanked from Earth to a desolate planet by a mad Time Lord in an adventure rich with Gallifreyan lore and banter between different Doctors.

'The Three Doctors' is fun and magical; 'The Five Doctors' is weightier with another decade of continuity on its shoulders, a much larger cast and a darker edge (see Borusa's downfall and horrible fate). The Third Doctor has faced greater odds before but the scale of this game is epic. He doesn't even pause for breath as he ziplines to the Dark Tower, faces old ghosts and turns down immortality.

Whether he's a known quantity or not, this Doctor cuts a dashing swathe through '80s Who, never seeming stilted or out of place, never just along for the ride. In fact the adventure, so full of interstellar spectacle and derring-do, would be all wrong without him.

## The Paradise of Death Reviewed by Ed Brady

Jon Pertwee had always been the Doctor to me. I'd only seen him playing the role in a couple of repeat stories in the early eighties; but somehow I'd known he was the third version of the Doctor. I remember one afternoon, my parents bringing home my brother and I a VHS tape each. My brother was given 'The Goonies' movie and I received the feature length 'Spearhead from Space' tape; that turned out to be my first 'Doctor Who' video. Prior to this, my broth-

er and I had both met Jon Pertwee dressed in his Doctor's costume, as we wandered through the studio sets marquee at the Longleat 20th Anniversary Celebrations in 1983. It would have been a busy schedule during that chaotic weekend, but Jon had taken time out to allow my brother to stand beside him and have me take a picture of them both. Ten years later, I was a face in the crowd as flashbulbs fizzed away when he made his grand entrance to the stage in Bessie; during the Saturday of the 30th Anniversary Celebrations. You could tell he was adored by that large surge of people and he is still adored and fondly remembered to this day. He would return again in 'The Five Doctors' special, 'The Ultimate Ad-



venture' stage show and later to the radio where I realised for 1993 at least; he was the current 'Doctor Who'.

It was during the early nineties that Jon had been working with radio producer Dirk Maggs on a radio serial of 'Superman' and conversation had taken place at some point between the two of them, that they should both work on a version of 'Doctor Who' for radio as the television incarnation seemed at that point to be over with. The project got paused for a while as Maggs became unavailable to produce it. However, sometime later another radio producer named Phil Clarke became involved in the idea that would eventually bring the third Doctor back to the radio. As plans progressed, Barry Letts had been asked to write a story; knowing that he knew the third Doctor's era very well and so was an ideal choice for it. It was while visiting Pertwee to see his friend appear in an adaptation of 'A Christmas Carol' playing the part of Marley's ghost, that Nicholas Courtney recalled that he had been told by Jon about the plans for a five-part radio Who. Recording for the new radio serial took place at Maida Vale studios 6 & 7 between the 21st and 27th May 1993. Both Pertwee and Courtney were reunited with Elisabeth Sladen who was back again to play Sarah Jane Smith in a story that would be set between the season eleven stories 'The Time Warrior' and 'Invasion of the Dinosaurs'.

Having revisited 'Paradise' again, recently what do I think of it now? Well, there is no doubt about it, that

this is a good epic story from Barry Letts, that to be fair doesn't really fit in with feel of the era as well as it might have. Sadly, there is no Mike Yates or Sergeant Benton to be heard here. However, from the opening scenes at the theme park of Spaceworld on Hampstead Heath to the outer space planetary visits to Parakon it proves to be great solid audio entertainment. The plot draws on quite modern subjects that are still relevant today that include virtual reality and crop harvesting. The rapine seed which the aliens are exploiting, once harvested can be utilised to produce anything from food to solid everyday objects at a terrible cost of turning healthy worlds into dead ones. This story idea proves to be a very interesting one from Barry Letts. Peter Howell provides the incidental score which is terrific when it does appear; although his version of the theme arrangement which I've always loved sits wrong against this recreation of a past era.

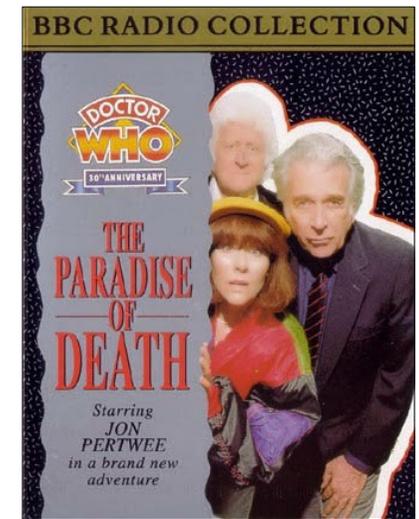
Soundscape wise the play is good, although not up to the standards of what Big Finish are doing now with their audios; but this BBC adventure does have many terrific things going for it. First and foremost we have Jon Pertwee playing the Doctor again. This in itself should be treasured and so should the perfect character recreations of Sarah and the Brigadier from both Sladen and Courtney. All the cast are great, not just those I've mentioned. There is fine dialogue written for villains Tragan and Freeth and are delivered with enthusiasm from Peter Miles

and Harold Innocent; but there are also few dialogue blips in the form of the repetitive comparison phrases used to explain things away. Overall though, 'Paradise' remains an entertaining five episodes and is a very good audio version of 'Doctor Who'.

I remember being there ready to listen in, when the scheduled broadcast aired on BBC Radio 5 between 27th August and the 24th September 1993. It wasn't until sometime afterwards when listening back to my bought stereo cassette release; that I realised that the original mono broadcast did not do the serial any justice at all. In fact, the BBC would later broadcast the story on Radio 2 this time in full stereo. The only slight glitch in this being that episode four was repeated twice in the repeat run. 'The Paradise of Death' was deemed successful enough to have a sequel commissioned and there were indications that there may have been even more to follow; but sadly it was not to be. We can only imagine at what it would have been like if Big Finish had been producing new 'Doctor Who' audio adventures before 1996? Imagine also what the third Doctor stories would have sounded like if Jon had been given the chance to take his Doctor into further brand-new adventures written in the style of his era. I guess we all know he would have loved doing them and they would have been wonderful to listen to with Liz, Jo or Sarah Jane by his side; backed up as always by the Brig's army. These stories would have transported us

back to home counties earth and occasional intergalactic adventures.

With the shortage of genuine third Doctor audio adventures available we should be thankful that these BBC radio dramas were written and produced for us to enjoy many years later; particularly in the year that we remember the great Jon Pertwee and celebrate his centenary. I shall be watching some of his television stories and also listening again to this sound adventure.



# The Ghosts of N-Space

## Reviewed by Paul Simpson

It's a very long time since I last listened to 'The Ghosts of N-Space' – in fact, I strongly suspect I've not heard it this century – and the last experience I had with it was a re-read of Barry Letts' novelisation for Virgin's Missing Adventures range over 15 years ago. Prior to that, its key importance to me personally was that my interview with its director/producer Phil Clarke was the very first that I ever carried out as editor of DreamWatch. So, in many ways digging the off-air-recorded CDs out (and discovering they weren't working any more so investing a massive £5 on iTunes) was rather like discovering a long lost Pertwee adventure.

And to my surprise, listened to in one stretch on a car drive, it held up much better than I expected it to. Sure, Sandra Dickinson's Maggie is still annoying, Maurice Denham's Uncle Mario is a quantum leap beyond annoying and the idea of the Brig being part Italian still feels wrong, but it's got Jon Pertwee and Lis Sladen, Nick Courtney and Stephen Thorne, all now sadly departed, back in familiar roles. (I have to admit a shiver went up my spine hearing Thorne casting spells in that haunting tone.) But the fact that it is listenable does not make it good, and you

realise that Letts has done some clever lamp-shading early on to permit so many coincidences to be put together masquerading as a plot!

Then there is Jeremy Fitzoliver. Unfortunately. Barry Letts had some very good ideas during his time producing Doctor Who – it's the era I grew up with, and for all its faults, it's the one I go back to more than any other – but Jeremy Fitzoliver was not up there in the companion creation stakes with Jo Grant or Sarah Jane Smith. Maybe it's the lack of a sounding board in Terrance Dicks that made the big difference (you have to suspect that Terrance wouldn't have let his mate Barry get away with some of the dialogue that Lis Sladen is saddled with, for a start), but, to be fair, Jeremy is used better here than in *The Paradise of Death*. Which I appreciate isn't saying an awful lot, and to be fair to Richard Pearce, he does his best with some truly undeliverable dialogue. It was probably good preparation for voicing Budgie the Little Helicopter.

'Ghosts' is probably best remembered now for the coach and horses it drives through established Doctor Who continuity. N-Space – up until then – was our universe, the opposite of E-Space, the pocket dimension from which Adric hailed. Nope, according to 'Ghosts', it's a sort of mirror of ours, and that's the reason we have ghosts. (We'll forget about the Doctor's description of ghosts from the past and ghosts from the future in 'Day of the Daleks' and indeed his usual

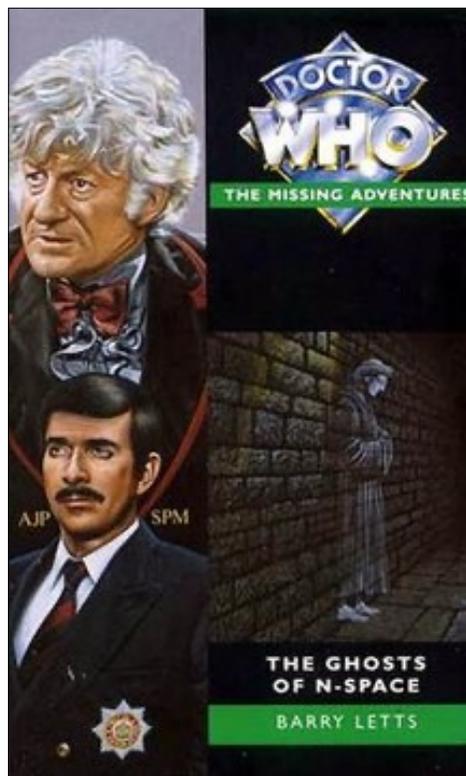
pontification about there being no such thing.) It doesn't even tie up completely with the previous Radio 2 adventure for this team – Jeremy wants desperately to travel in the TARDIS, but he did so in 'Paradise of Death' – and we also have the rather weird moment where the Doctor has to explain the sonic screwdriver to Sarah. We'll set aside the oddity of the Brigadier taking his Easter break in mid-May – in 1975, Easter Sunday was March 30th – and note in passing that no-one seems to take this very definite statement of the year it's set as key evidence in the ongoing UNIT dating debate.

For all the nostalgia value in hearing Pertwee back for one last time

(complete with reminiscence about the Doctor's early life on Gallifrey), I'm very relieved this wasn't Lis Sladen's farewell to Sarah Jane. She's written here worse than in 'K9 and Company' and I'm pleased Letts got the chance to correct course in his Sarah Jane Smith audio for Big Finish half a dozen or so years later. There are more than a few occasions where she acts completely out of character, and you have to wonder if Sladen herself had anything to say on the subject at the time. Nick Courtney gets off better: the moments where he's getting his makeshift army together to defend the castello are reminiscent of his efforts in Omega's domain back in 'The Three Doctors'.

Don't go into this expecting the polish or style of a Big Finish adventure – although it would be interesting to hear a variant of its plot written to their template. There's far too much time with characters talking to themselves in order to bring the listener up to speed on the action, and what might charitably be described as rapid edits between the scenes that really don't give the listener a chance to catch their breath. Which, in a plot that has the Doctor with pinpoint control of the TARDIS and able to bounce around between different time zones as if the console is on a yo-yo, is disconcerting to say the least.

It also, for reasons that are lost to the mists of time, tries to be 'adult'. By which I mean there are references to whorehouses, characters say 'cowshit' and other naughty words, and there is even a bedroom



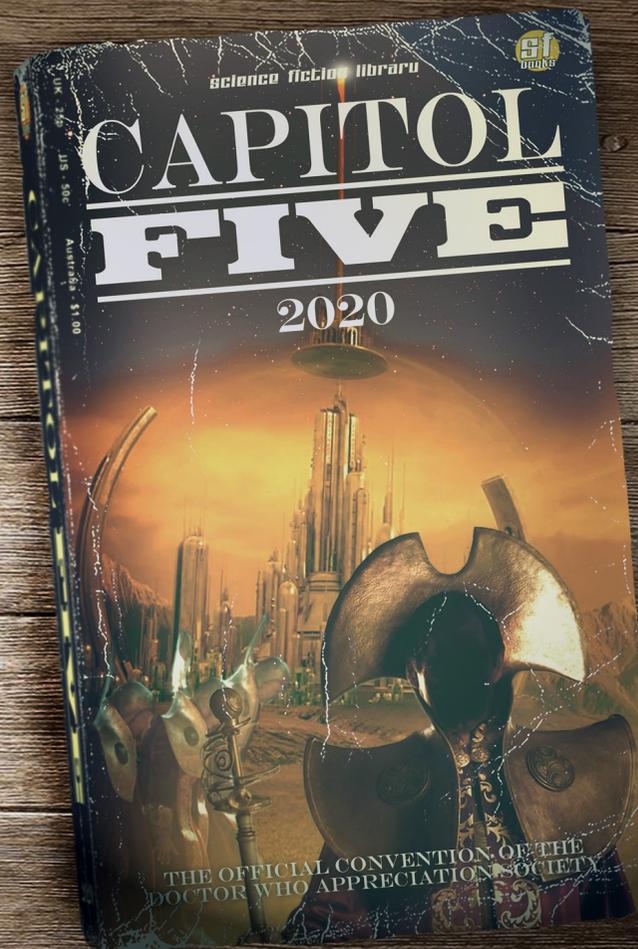


scene between Sandra Dickinson and Stephen Thorne. Dickinson's character seems to suffer a death by orgasm (not in that bedroom scene, I hasten to add) – possibly the most unusual demise ever in the Doctor Who universe. It's a common misconception that such elements make a story more appealing to an older generation; certainly, in this case, it leads to jejune writing that just feels wrong (rather like a certain video featuring Pertwee that has recently resurfaced from a corporate ad he did for Zanussi). Once the plot gets underway and the various convolutions start to need attention, such elements disappear, and they're not missed. (OK, the "wimp, wally and other words beginning with w" line does raise a laugh – the first time.)

Would I have listened to this again if I had not offered to write this piece for the annual? Chances are, quite probably not. The Pertwee era may officially end with this story, but it's continued in fine form with Tim Treloar's performance as

the Third Doctor in the Big Finish adventures. 'The Ghosts of N-Space' is an oddity – like the book series into which it was novelised, it is a Missing Adventure, and like rather too many of that series, its potential wasn't fully realised. But it is still three more hours of Jon Pertwee as the Doctor... and it's worth the fiver!

*Paul Simpson is the Managing Editor of Sci-Fi Bulletin, and works on the editorial team for BBC Books' Doctor Who range.*  
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# Dimensions in Time

Reviewed by Paul Winter

It is 1993 and Doctor Who has been off the air for four years. By this point, some fans are beginning to suspect that perhaps, just maybe, the show is not coming back. Well, actually, I think we were all pretty sure of it. The BBC had managed to cancel Doctor Who without anyone realising. There was talk of 'rest periods', of US co-productions and of a co-production with BBC Worldwide for the 30th anniversary (Lost in the Dark Dimension) that had recently been scuppered. Yes, Doctor Who had, for the moment, finished.

So, with the 30th Anniversary upon the unsuspecting and to a large degree uncaring world (we true fans notwithstanding of course) what could we expect beyond a big push on the merchandise front (and we certainly got that)? Well, John Nathan-Turner and David Roden (who had previously produced The Ultimate Adventure stage play) were not going to let the event pass unmarked on TV if at all possible and with 'Children in Need' making its annual November-time appearance, a two-part mini adventure was put into production – in 3-D no less.

This was not a canonical Doctor Who adventure, nor was it ever in-

tended to be a vision of the show's future as JNT saw it, despite what some malicious fanzine reporting of the time suggested. It was always a piece of C-I-N style fun, bringing Doctor Who to Albert Square allowing both EastEnders and Doctor Who to flit between different eras, with different Doctors meeting the Square's stalwarts in the 1970s, 1990s and in the far future of the 2010s too. There is a phone-in to decide who from EastEnders helps the Doctor resolve the cliff-hanger between the two parts which raised £101,000 for the appeal.

So, what of 'Dimensions in Time' itself? The first Doctor Who on BBC1 for four years? Well, I shall not beat about the bush. Whilst it has some moments (such as the Brigadier finally meeting the sixth Doctor and Frank Butcher (portrayed by Mike Read) making a great joke about seeing someone getting dragged *into* the pub, I really hate this, and wish they had never made it. There, I have said it. You can do Doctor Who as a kind of comedy pastiche without sending it up, as Steven Moffat and Comic Relief demonstrated a few years later with 'The Curse of Fatal Death'. However, 'Dimensions in Time' is not that. To my mind, it does not work on any level. It does not work as a mini-Doctor Who adventure in that what story there is, is banal in the extreme and almost impossible to follow. It does not work as a celebration of Doctor Who as it is confusing, makes little sense and succeeds only in sending up the show. It does not work as 'comedy DW' or 'comedy

EastEnders' because it is not funny. I do not really know what it was trying to be, but I am fairly sure that whatever it was, it failed. Back in the day, many people remembered Doctor Who, quite unfairly, as a good SF show from the 1970s that had later on lost its way and become a joke. This was more of a myth than a truth and it did not help that the BBC itself, or certainly people within it, helped in both creating and perpetrating that myth. However, 'Dimensions in Time' then managed to add more truth to the lie.

Nobody can fault JNT for trying, and he certainly turned out the cast – Tom Baker is even there although he does not share the limelight with any other Doctors – but from the moment those awful speeded up opening titles appeared I remember a feeling of despair welling up inside of me, which just grew. We had a

handful of by now tatty-ish monsters (and the costumes were getting on even at this stage) lumbering through the EastEnders set adding to the sense of a once great SF show descending into farce. Even the 'Mandy helping the Doctor' bit (as opposed to Big Ron helping him) following the phone in vote was meaningless – and she didn't really help him at all!

Jon Pertwee is marvellous in that brief moment when he rings the doorbell at Crinkly Bottom, and peers at Noel Edmonds declaring 'I've never gone this far back in time before'. We also had a very welcome Radio Times cover for Doctor Who, the first since 'The Five Doctors' ten years earlier. It is what comes afterwards that I do not like. I have watched and re-watched it but no matter how hard I try I just cannot like any of it. Sorry.



# The Ultimate Adventure

## Reviewed by Tim Gambrell

There's something a little special about the Bristol Hippodrome. It was the first proper theatre I ever went to. We saw 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat' there, in the early 1980s, with my primary school. Until then, my experience of theatre had been limited to local halls. I performed on the Hippodrome stage myself, in April and May 1987, in a local amateur dramatics show that had gone big. The last night was my 13th birthday. Then, exactly two years later, I was back there, this time in the front row of the audience, to watch the most amazing live event my teenage self had ever witnessed: 'Doctor Who: The Ultimate Adventure', starring Jon Pertwee. And David Banks – I was keen to point out to my family that Banks was a 'name', having played the Cyberleader on TV four times. I didn't blame him for not wanting to be hidden inside a Cyberman costume on stage, though.

The evening was a bit of a whirlwind, but a lot of it has stayed starkly clear in my memory. I remember that Pertwee was on fine form. Having seen a few of the other Doctor actors in theatre productions over the years, I think it's clear that he was the perfect candidate for that job. It needed an en-

tertainer, and his energy and personality filled the stage and played the audience in equal measure. It's no wonder it made him ill, actually. It was quickly established that this was an audience experience. It was a show not a play; Brecht not Ibsen. This was a 'Doctor Who' adventure that was very much aware of its own theatricality. The show played up to this, giving the audience a knowing wink from time to time, as well as using the techniques of the theatre to great effect to wow us. As an awkward, lonely fan without any friends in whom to confide (my family tolerated my fandom but that was it) it took me a while to relax into this show and appreciate that it was all right to be openly a fan and to cheer at some of the lines, such as 'reverse the polarity of the neutron flow' - as a huge section of the stalls behind me did.

The visuals – particularly the laser and lighting effects - were amazing, beyond anything I'd ever seen before. And the TARDIS landing sent a real shiver up my spine. I remember thinking the TARDIS console looked a little small and spartan, and the Daleks were taller and thinner than they looked on TV, but then this was theatre and I knew from my am-dram experiences that there would need to be some stagecraft and artistic licence involved in making sure they could do what they needed to do within the confines of the stage. Knowing how hot it could get on stage, under the lights, I felt huge empathy for the Cybermen and Zog.

I also recall wondering which of the cast would be using the dressing room that I had used two years previously, and if they all got made up together as us junior male chorus had done. It's amazing that I ever managed to stop thinking about how the show was being done and allowed myself to get lost in the action, in all honesty!

We were sat in the front row, right up close to the action. Actually, I suspected at the time that we'd have got a better overall view if we'd have been about halfway back in the stalls, instead. Curse my parents and their eager booking!

I was completely taken aback when the first song started. I think this was a general revulsion to the idea of Doctor Who and musicals combining. But this was a ridiculous reaction. The songs were in context and it was another example of it being a show, not a TV drama being performed on stage. I wasn't immersed in the world of musical theatre. I'd done am-dram pantomimes where songs tended to be chorus numbers at the ends of scenes, or intimate moments between principal boy and girl, rather than used as devices to tell the story, set the scene or move the action along. I wasn't bowled over by the songs, but they were certainly well delivered. And this was hardly 'Who School Musical', anyway.

At the end of the day, it didn't matter whether the actual story 'The Ultimate Adventure' was telling was challenging or engaging; it was all about the spectacle, the event. The

show was already all those things and more. In the same way that the stories in the old Doctor Who Annuals intrinsically differ from those told on television, this yarn was something that had been tailored perfectly to its new medium. I think that's why, for me, the Big Finish audio version doesn't quite work. However, I can imagine enjoying the show again if it had been filmed from the back of the audience, on an old VHS camcorder. I'd been involved for a few years with some local am dram groups in and around my village, and I was by now used to seeing the fruits of our labours captured forever on blotchy home video, when someone's dad had brought along their fancy camcorder and filmed the matinee show and then sold copies to the cast. Those recordings didn't just capture the performance for posterity, they got the audience reaction and interaction too. I think if I was going to revisit The Ultimate Adventure experience, that's how I'd like to see it, audience and all. Because that's where Jon Pertwee, and the show as a whole, shone the most, in pleasing its fan audience.

There was another Tim, who was sitting next to me. He was a little older than me, and claimed he was 'high up' in local fandom. We started chatting before the performance started, bonding over a shared name. The show may not have been filmed, but this guy had a Dictaphone and was unofficially recording it. He offered to send me a recording, but my mum wouldn't let me give him our address. I think I'd probably be the same with my boys,

now, in fairness. He said he was hoping to interview Jon Pertwee later. I've never seen or heard of him since, but I hope he arranged another date to chat with the star. A load of us rushed around to the stage door after the curtain to try to get an autograph. Pertwee emerged to a great cheer and promptly announced that he was very sorry, but he couldn't sign any autographs as he was late for a dinner engagement, although he would shake hands with us if we so wished. There were a lot of grumbles, and my father was particularly unimpressed. It's his enduring memory of the evening to this very day. I shook Pertwee's hand and recall seeing the other Tim frantically holding out his Dictaphone, but as quickly as JP could he headed for his black Ford Sierra XR4i, parked opposite, and speeded

away. I bet his prawn cocktail was already cold.

The evening ended on a more positive note, though. Back at the front of the theatre, was David Banks. He was generously giving lots of time to fans and general audience members, chatting and signing autographs. That was lovely.

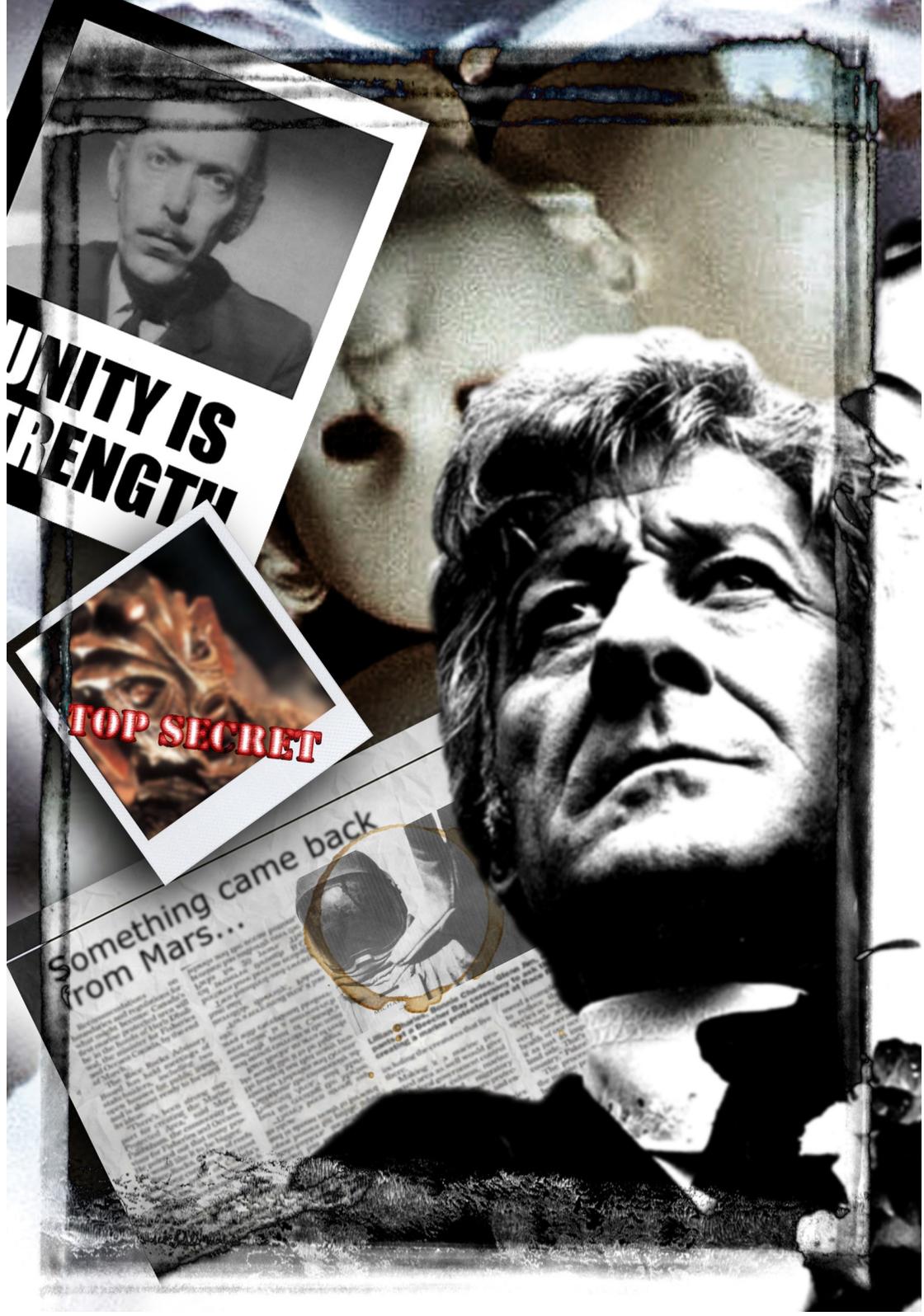
Considering how few of the trappings of a standard Third Doctor story there were in 'The Ultimate Adventure', it feels a bit odd including it under his 'era'. However, I'd argue that this was less of a Third Doctor adventure and more of a Jon Pertwee adventure: a showman doing what he did best – entertaining an audience and making people happy. At the end of the day, it seems churlish to ask for anything else.



## **Terrance Dicks**

**14 April 1935 - 29 August 2019**

**Doctor Who Script Editor 1968–1974**



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