



COSMIC

MASQUE

# EDITORIAL

Rik Moran

## Feature THE ROSE AND FELL OF A FRUSTRATED AUTHOR

David Rolls

Greetings faithful reader and welcome once again to Cosmic Masque.

We've got some great stuff for you in this issue including Neil Davies story 'Devil Woman' which concludes what began in 'Reunion of The Rani' last issue.

There are features on Colourisation and 3D as well as the second part of my feature on the Twitch marathon this time covering the Second Doctor.

We've also got an interview with The Greatest Show In The Galaxy's Flower Girl and our usual plethora of reviews for you to devour.

So sit back, put your feet up and delve into this issue.

Enjoy!

Rik

### Cosmic Masque Issue VIII

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DOCTOR  
WHO  
APPRECIATION  
SOCIETY  
CM VIII

A couple of decades ago, whilst still a student, I wrote an unsolicited submission of a third Doctor novel for the BBC Past Doctor range. Expecting a swift rejection, I was delighted to receive a two page response clearly showing that my book had been read and analysed at length.

Encouraged, I reworked the idea as a sixth Doctor script for the then nascent Big Finish range (at a time when they considered unsolicited manuscripts). Again, I received positive comments, but it was felt that the story was unworkable due to various considerations including the number of characters.

Sadly, real life took over and post-degree I had to concentrate on working Dickensian hours and gaining my accountancy qualifications. The career took over and life became the mundanity of work and sleep and eating chips. Writing was put on hold indefinitely as mortgages and family took hold.

Then Russell T. Davies gave Doctor Who back to the masses, enthraling the UK (and beyond) including my twin children. My son in particular was a reluctant reader but then became a voracious consumer of my old Target books despite access to every DVD of the classic series. I was continually surprised at the lack of novelisations of new Who. I firmly believed that despite this day and age of endless satellite repeats, readily available DVDs and omnipresent internet streaming, there is still a market for novelisations.

I therefore set about writing my own novelisation of "Doctor Who – Rose",

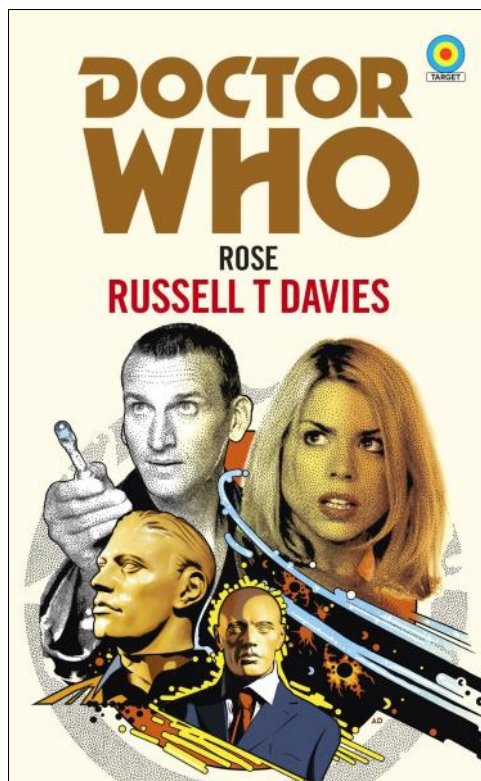
initially to encourage my 10 year old son to read.

My biased, undiscerning son egged me on to submit it to BBC Books. This time, I did get the standard rejection letter stating that I should use a Writers' Agency and submit to various publishers, completely missing the point that I was working with their copyrighted materials.

Subsequently, I added to the manuscript after Russell T. Davies revealed additional scenes in Doctor Who Magazine's Fact of Fiction article on "Rose". I sent the amended book to DWM for possible serialisation but received no response – in truth, fiction was never a good fit with DWM, so the silence was not unexpected.

My version of "Rose" had one final life when Candy Jar Books had an open submissions period for their Lethbridge-Stewart range and requested a finished sample of work. I was delighted to receive a glowing reply from range editor, Andy Frankham-Allen, describing the book as "well written". The novel had clearly been read as I received some very useful feedback around dialogue and the action identifying the speaker. Excitingly, I also received writer's guidelines for the Lethbridge-Stewart range. However, sadly my subsequent storyline did not receive a response, although I suspect Candy Jar were inundated with submissions.

And then came the news that Target Books were to relaunch. Not surprisingly, "Rose" was chosen as one of the initial titles. I immediately sent my version to Russell T. Davies via his agent in the vain hope that anything of my hack attempt would be of interest (gratis natch). The agency stated that they would pass on my comments where I had thanked Russell for giving "Doctor Who" back to my children, but



that they could not pass on the manuscript for copyright reasons – apparently, there were legal concerns that my work based on his work could result in plagiarism! The World is quite clearly mad.

Once the official version of "Rose" was published, I attended the signing event at Forbidden Planet in Shaftesbury Avenue intending to thank Russell personally. Working in Kent, I arrived half an hour after the signing session had started only to be told by staff that they had been surprised by numbers of attendees and I was refused entry. I gave the rather baffled member of staff a copy of my manuscript and covering letter for Russell, which quite possibly was consigned to the nearest 'round file'.

I later purchased the new Target books from Amazon. Not unexpectedly, Rus-

sell's genius shines through his prose, and his renowned characterisation is expanded as he makes the reader privy to characters' innermost thoughts. However, I was pleased to see a reference to a certain New Year encounter with the tenth Doctor (which was the basis for my entire prologue) and an expanded scene in Clive's shed.

Russell T. Davies stated in DWM that he barely referred to the television serial whilst writing the book. I suspect that he knocked it out over a short period although you cannot tell from the brilliance of the end product. I am absolutely certain that he did not agonise over every word over a two year gestation period as was the wont of this hack author.

I am proud of my version of "Rose" which will never see the light of day other than in my son's bedroom. Noone will see my cheeky reference to the Moment, nor my inclusion of the "Do you wanna come with me?" fireball trailer from the Nestene lair. I attach below a couple of excerpts giving my version of Clive's shed scene and an epilogue showing the Doctor's pursuit of Rose. Additionally, I was very happy with my fan-pleasing chapter structure:

- Prologue: Full Circle – Rose's encounter with the 10th Doctor on New Year's Eve
- Chapter 1: The Invisible Enemy – The Nestene Consciousness hanging in space
- Chapter 2: An Earthly Child – Introduction to Rose up to her initial encounter: "Run"
- Chapter 3: Inferno – Blowing up Henrik's
- Chapter 4: The Hand of Fear – The autonomous Auton arm
- Chapter 5: Doctor Who? – Clive's shed
- Chapter 6: Inside the Spaceship

– 1st trip in the TARDIS

- Chapter 7: The Wheel of Fortune – The London Eye
- Chapter 8: The Creature from the Pit – Below the Eye: the Nestene Lair
- Chapter 9: Terror of the Autons – Mannequin mayhem
- Epilogue: The Human Factor – The Doctor's pursuit of Rose

#### Excerpts from My Novelisation: Clive's Shed

At the bottom of a small, tidy garden stood the shed. The plot had a little patch of lawn with a path running down one side. The grass was littered with a blue mini seesaw, a skateboard and a yellow spacehopper. Flowerbeds ran alongside the bordering fences, lush with greenery, the occasional spring bloom giving the odd splash of colour.

The path terminated at a metal door into a small but impressive, pebble-dashed outhouse. Clive's garage had long since lost the ability to house a car; it was now taken over completely by his obsession.

The only concession to its former use was a bicycle hanging down from the corrugated ceiling. A naked lightbulb illuminated cluttered surfaces around the edges and worktops in the middle covered with books and folders. One wall was hidden by metal shelving racks housing countless files and additional folders.

Clive made his way over to the shelving with Rose trailing in his wake. 'A lot of this stuff's quite sensitive,' he said earnestly. 'I couldn't just send it to you. People might intercept. If you know what I mean,' he added conspiratorially.

'How do you know I'm not one of those "people"?' she asked mischievously. 'You say you've seen him,' Clive replied. 'The Doctor, and the blue box. Was he carrying anything, a device, or...?' He left the question hanging.

'He's got this sort of metal tube thing,' confirmed Rose. 'It sort of...chirps.' Clive closed his eyes and exhaled, blissful at the affirmation. 'Did I pass the test?' she asked.

'Absolutely,' grinned Clive. He riffled through

the shelving pulling down cardboard folders from between box files and A4 ring binders. He played the contents across the central worktops for Rose to peruse. 'You see, if you dig deep enough,' Clive continued, 'and keep a lively mind, then this "Doctor" keeps cropping up, all over the place. He's in political diaries, conspiracy theories, even ghost stories.' Clive's enthusiasm for his subject dropped in volume as he adopted a more hushed, reverential tone. 'No first name, no last name, just "the Doctor", always "the Doctor". And the title seems to be passed down, from father to son. It appears to be an inheritance. Initially, we thought the Doctor was some kind of code name for a scientific advisor to the military,' postulated Clive. 'You mean like Q in James Bond?' asked Rose referring to MI6's fictional, gadget producing Q-branch.

'Exactly,' enthused Clive, frantically shuffling through photographs on his worktop. He pulled out a selection of stills featuring a flamboyantly dressed man wearing a frilly shirt and a selection of different coloured velvet smoking jackets and flowing capes. The man had a mane of white hair, but young eyes stared out authoritatively from above a mighty nose. He had a commanding presence in every photograph.

Rose glanced indifferently at the pictures. 'Who is this?'

'It's the Doctor.'

'No it isn't,' countered Rose, a little sharply, her disappointment evident.

Nonetheless, Clive beamed indulgently at his unexpected guest. The pretty girl did not match his usual stereotype of anorak wearing contacts from the conspiracy theorist underworld. 'It may not be your Doctor,' he stressed, warming to his subject, 'but I can assure you, it is a Doctor.' He spread the photographs out in front of her. 'This version appears the most through our history. He appears to have been a significant player advising the United Nations.' Informative signs in the background of the images identified the figure to have visited locations as diverse as Wenley Moor Research Centre and Stangmoor Prison. Rose feigned interest, enquiring, 'How did you get these photos?' 'Oh, I have various contacts in the internet

community. There are different forums all interested in similar areas – conspiracy theorists, government and military cover ups – that sort of thing. Most of the photographs are security stills taken from CCTV cameras. I found one very useful contact – although I couldn't help thinking she was holding out on me for some reason – anyway, she unearthed loads of these in the archives of 'Metropolitan' magazine. Apparently, the editor ran shy of running the articles, setting up a fiction strand as the stories were considered too outlandish.' Clive barely paused for breath.

Rose shifted uncomfortably from foot to foot, now seriously concerned that she was trapped in a garden shed with a grade-A nutcase. She was very relieved that Mickey was waiting in the car outside the house.

Clive picked up on her unease, aware that he was losing his audience. He swiftly moved on to another selection of photographs. 'This was the next incumbent in the role. Another Doctor.' Clive smiled what he hoped was a comforting smile, encouraging Rose to take a look at the pictures.

Despite herself, Rose examined the documents. A middle-aged man with manic eyes stared back from the images. In most of the photographs, he wore a broad brimmed felt hat, sitting atop a mop of unruly, curly hair, above a broad, toothy grin, and a ridiculously long multi-coloured scarf.

Clive selected one particular photograph showing the gentleman in the grounds of a country home. 'This is the Doctor at Think Tank shortly before the closure of this government funded scientific elite. I'm sure that was the Doctor's doing.'

'Look this is all very impressive,' started Rose exasperatedly. She reined herself back, tempering her tone, acutely aware that she was stuck in a garden shed with man of unknown mental capacity.

Gentle laughter emanating from Clive's house reminded Rose of the nearby presence of his family, and helped quell some of her darker thoughts. 'I'm sorry,' Rose continued in a more placatory fashion, 'but this still isn't my Doctor.' 'Oh, it is your Doctor. He's just wearing a different face.'

'What?!' Rose exclaimed incredulously, now utterly convinced of Clive's insanity. She had satisfied herself that he was amiable enough, but that didn't stop him being unhinged.

Frantically, Clive played his final gambit. 'The Doctor isn't just a code name to the United Nations. We were wrong. The Doctor features throughout history, helping us in times of crisis.' He threw a photograph down on the desk immediately in front of Rose. An old man with a craggy face and white hair swept back from a high forehead, wearing a cape affixed at the neck over an Edwardian jacket and checked trousers, was accompanied by a rotund gentleman in a pinstripe business suit. 'This Doctor helped the civil service during the evacuation of London at the time of the opening of the Post Office Tower in 1966.'

'He can't be the same man,' said Rose, slowly backing away from the worktop.

'But the imperious air, the eccentric dress sense – it all fits with the title.' Desperate to convince, he produced another photograph of a diminutive man wearing a straw hat and a light jacket over an appalling tank top adorned with question marks. 'Another Doctor, even earlier. This one helped set up the Countermeasures military taskforce in the early sixties.'

Rose stole a quick glance at the picture, noting the umbrella with the extraordinary, red question mark handle that completed his ensemble. 'His dress sense is hardly subtle,' said Rose conversationally, still backing away.

'Ah, if you want subtle, look at this Doctor.' Clive produced a picture of a rotund, blond, curly haired man, wearing a knee length jacket sporting a hideous combination of colours on a predominantly orange background. His bright yellow trousers terminated in boots covered with bright orange spats.

Clive showed another image of the same man, this time sporting a multi-coloured waistcoat instead of the garish frock coat. Rose noted the question mark motif on his collar, her interest mildly piqued. His companion in the photograph was no less extraordinarily dressed; he had a Beatle mop-top of greying black hair, and was wearing a large black frock coat and baggy trousers despite the evident bright sunlight. Clive pointed at the multi-coloured Doctor. 'This one's wanted for impersonating an Inter-

pol Officer in Seville.'

'Oh, he's multinational is he?' asked Rose, keeping up the pretence.

'Oh, yes. I believe he's some kind of trouble-shooter who'll save the whole planet wherever there's danger.' As Clive looked down at his collection of documents, Rose allowed a smirk to creep across her face, now utterly convinced of Clive's credentials as an amiable nutter. He selected another image portraying a younger man with chestnut curls also wearing a frock coat, this time in velvet green. 'This Doctor saved San Francisco at the turn of the millennium.'

The outhouse door was almost within reach. Rose's apprehension lifted and she prepared to make her excuses.

As if anticipating Rose's impending exit, Clive indicated the website photo on his p.c. which had now loaded. 'This one's your Doctor, isn't it?'

'Yeah,' confirmed Rose hesitantly.

Clive seized his moment and threw his remaining photos across the worktop. Rose ignored the young man in the fawn frockcoat and cricket sweater, because her attention was captured by the many pictures of the leather-jacketed man with intense, compelling eyes staring out from a shaven head with outsized ears.

Rose was drawn magnetically away from the comfort of the exit, pulled back towards the worktop. 'Oh my God,' she whispered. 'That's him. That's my Doctor!'

Clive drew her attention back to the internet photograph. 'I tracked it down to the Washington Public Archive, just last year.' He paused, flicking through more photographs, momentarily distracted. 'The online photo's enhanced, but, err, if we look at the original...' He rippled through a set of photos, each shot showing a widening angle of a very famous scene. As the photographs pulled out, the leather-jacketed man appeared in the large crowd lining the road several rows deep. Rose's eyes widened in disbelief as she recognised the open topped car that was the focus of the Presidential motorcade in Dallas.

'November the 22nd, 1963, the assassination of President Kennedy,' Clive stated somewhat redundantly. 'And there he is.' He pointed at a zoomed in photograph of the crowd that picked

out a head shot which had been annotated with a red pen circle, a head topped with a crew cut and straddled by large ears.

Rose squinted at the image. 'Must be his father,' she muttered unconvincingly. Agitated, her hand worried at her neck.

Clive whipped around like a whirling dervish, sifting through files. 'Going further back...' His hands alighted on another photograph, a black and white image of the familiar man, now dressed in formal wear of top hat and tails. 'April 1912. This is a photograph of the Daniels family of Southampton, and friend.' He pointed at Rose's Doctor. She shook her head in disbelief. The features were identical, not just a strong gene pool through the generations, but absolutely identical. 'This was taken the day before they were due to sail for the New World. On the "Titanic",' informed Clive. 'But for some unknown reason, they cancelled the trip, and survived.' A further rustling, produced a pencil line drawing on thin paper. 'And here we are – 1883, another Doctor.' But he didn't mean another man with the same title. He was pursuing his theory that it was a title passed down through the generations. 'Look,' Clive proffered the drawing in Rose's direction, 'the same lineage. He's identical.'

Depicted in the charcoal drawing was the same, recognisable silhouette – the ears, the same three-quarter length leather jacket with the wide lapels. It was impossible for the jacket to have even been manufactured in this era. Clive took back the drawing. 'This one,' he shook the paper, 'washed up on the coast of Sumatra, on the very night that Krakatoa exploded.'

Like a fish on a hook, Rose was left hanging on Clive's every word, completely wrapped up in the myth that he was constructing. 'The Doctor is a legend, woven throughout history. When disaster comes, he is there. He brings the storm in his wake, and has one constant companion.'

'Who's that?' enquired Rose, lost in his words. 'Death.' The frank revelation jolted Rose back to reality. Pensively, she curled her lips and frowned.

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## Epilogue

'Right then,' said the Doctor. 'I'll be off. Unless. I dunno...' He shrugged his shoulders, feigning nonchalance. 'You could come with me. This box isn't just a London hopper y'know, it goes anywhere in the universe. Free of charge.'

There was a long pause, Rose smiling, holding the Doctor's gaze.

'Don't.' Mickey pointed a finger demonstrably at the Doctor from his seated position on the tarmac. 'He's an alien. He's a thing!' Mickey concluded, wide-eyed with fear.

'He's not invited,' said the Doctor pointedly. 'What do you think?'

Rose opened her mouth, sorely tempted. But nothing came out.

'You could stay here,' continued the Doctor. 'Fill your life with work and food and sleep, or you could go anywhere.'

'Is it always this dangerous?' asked Rose keenly. 'Yeah.' The Doctor nodded enthusiastically.

Concerned by the direction of the conversation, Mickey grabbed Rose around the waist. Rose rested an awkward hand on Mickey's back. 'Yeah I can't,' she concluded half-heartedly. 'I've got to go and find my Mum. And someone's got to look after this stupid lump.' She slapped Mickey on the back with feeling.

The Doctor noticed her resentment, but did not wish to make her decision any more difficult. He viewed her with watering eyes. He covered swiftly. 'Okay,' he said. Rose continued her goldfish impression, hesitant. The Doctor paused hopefully, but nothing was forthcoming. 'See you around,' he concluded with a heavy heart. He pursed his lips and stepped back into the control room. He held Rose's gaze for a brief moment, then closed the Police Box door. Rose looked longingly at the TARDIS as it faded from view with its usual wheezing, groaning sound. The great engines whipped up a wind that rippled Rose's long, blonde hair. Mickey clung on to her for dear life.

Rose squinted against the dust. And when she opened her eyes, the TARDIS was gone.

The man strode purposefully across the barren wasteland, the battlefield now eerily quiet apart from the whistling breeze. He hunched his shoulders against the biting wind, holding the collar of his leather jacket closed at the

neckline.

His eye smarted, the wind causing a tear to be released unbidden, trickling down his sharp cheekbone. At least... he could blame the wind. But with no independent observer, he was only fooling himself. Doubt reared its ugly head, so he redoubled his efforts, trudging through the thick mud, concentrating on the blue rectangular object on the horizon.

He maintained his focus for the rest of his short journey, trying to block out the dark thoughts that were threatening to overwhelm him. Finally, he arrived at his destination. He didn't look back.

The Doctor removed the Yale Key, inserted it swiftly into the lock of the Police Box and flung open the TARDIS's doors. He marched up the ramp to the central hexagonal console, locked the doors and frantically worked levers and buttons throwing the machine into the time/space vortex. There was no particular journey in mind, he just had to get away as quickly as possible.

A wheezing, groaning sound erupted across the empty battlefield, the noise of the great time engines drowning out the whistling air currents as the Police Box faded from existence, departing with undignified haste. A deep, square impression was left in the sticky mud, an indelible mark betraying the Doctor's recent visit. The TARDIS may have departed but the memory lingered longer.

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The Doctor stared up at the cavernous ceiling of the console room, past the coral buttresses supporting the vast central column, allowing his eyes to defocus as he tried to find his inner still point. The soft green lighting emanating from the surrounding wall roundels failed to provide their usual calming influence.

Doubt continued to gnaw at his conscience, a wave of angst threatening to cripple him with indecision. Finally, he was unable to hold the recent memories at bay any longer and his mind was assailed with unwanted images.

He and his allies had given warnings, possibly too many warnings, endangering themselves. But there was no reasoning with the opponent.



Reluctantly, he had deployed the weapon of his own design, and watched his enemies' DNA unravel before his eyes.

There should have been another way.

In the past, his own people may have intervened. For a race who prided themselves on a policy of non-interference, there was a remarkably high level of involvement, particularly when their precious timelines were threatened. However, there had been nobody around to stop him this time. And with great freedom, came massive responsibility.

It was not the first time that he had reflected that there should have been another way. However, it was extremely rare for the Doctor ever to suffer from even a modicum of self-doubt.

He realised he needed a second opinion.

A wise, old friend had once said to him that all he needed was someone to pass him a test tube and tell him how brilliant he was. The Doctor smiled as he recollected the Brigadier's sage advice; the statement had seemed harsh at the time, but the Doctor now realised that there was more than a kernel of truth.

He needed a companion, an assistant, someone to bounce ideas off, someone to whom to show off. He may even listen to their thoughts. He needed a control, someone to reassure him, to reaffirm his actions or, at the very least, not be reviled by them.

He had been tamed before by an Earth woman. A long time ago, when his explorations had begun in earnest, he had been accompanied by a couple of reluctant travellers, one of whom had been a history teacher from Earth – 1960s London, England, to be precise. He smiled as he remembered Miss Wright with her immaculately coiffured hair and selection of sensible sweaters; Barbara had taught him compassion,

values and a basic humanity.

The Doctor had so much that he longed to forget, a dark past that he wished to well and truly bury. A distraction, a reminder of the best in humanity would serve him well.

The Doctor remembered the Earth girl who had made such an impression on him in such a short space of time during the Auton incident. He had a soft spot for humans having spent two extended periods on their planet in exile, one voluntary, one less so. Sooner or later, most of his peregrinations ended with the TARDIS returning him to Earth. The humans that he had befriended had always shown him loyalty, and he felt that he had an enjoyable duty to be the planet's protector.

Rose summed up everything that the Doctor admired in the human race. The blonde teenager had been feisty and brave, standing up for that which is right. She was curious, questioning and courageous. Inspirational. Loyal to her uninspiring boyfriend. Intelligent, if uneducated. 'Yes,' thought the Doctor – he could see himself working well with her.

The Doctor's mood turned on a sixpence. He was determined to keep busy, to occupy his mind to drown out any dark thoughts. With a flurry of activity, he was a whirlwind of positive actions, rushing around the hexagonal console, punching buttons and pulling levers. He turned a cogwheel anticlockwise, spinning the coordinate programmer back through pre-logged journeys. He was certain of safe arrival at the exact location at the exact point in time for maximum impact. Because it was a journey that he had made before.

He was going back for Rose.

To an independent onlooker, his single-minded pursuit of his goal may have appeared sinister. The alien Doctor would not have understood that viewpoint, utterly certain of the benefits to both parties.

The vertical lights within the central column seemed to glow brighter, as they separated before meshing together again in a repeated rhythmic pattern, sensing the Doctor's new found optimism.

A quiet hush seemed to descend upon the control room as the Doctor paused momentarily, briefly concerned as to which shirt he had been wearing when he last saw Rose. Dismissing

such detail as a trifling concern that only a few humans would notice, he grabbed the scanner tracing his path, eager for the journey to end, totally confident that he was taking the right course of action.

The ambient hum of the control room resumed its positive tone.

Rose cradled Mickey's head in her lap. His mind had fled in terror, running screaming for the hills due to his recent trauma at the hands (tentacles) of the Nestene Consciousness and its Auton foot soldiers. Slowly, his eyes began to focus once more, a flicker of recognition behind his vacant stare. His ragged, shallow breathing began to settle into slower, deeper breaths.

Rose smiled at his soppy face as he looked up at her with puppy dog eyes and returned a weak grin. Instantly, relief swept over her. However, she found herself thinking about the incredible Police Box and its charismatic pilot. She glanced down at Mickey from her kneeling position. She expected to feel guilt at her disloyal thoughts, but was disturbed to experience a mild resentment at her lost opportunity. Litter skittered along the alleyway, carried by the winds generated by the recently departed TARDIS. Rose gazed wistfully at the empty space where the Police Box had stood, imagining the vague blue outline through which she could now see the colourful graffiti tagging the corrugated metal of the alley walls. The revealed lamppost was meant to be a triple light, but only one mournful bulb provided illumination for the passageway.

Despite herself, Rose found that she was regretting turning down the trip of a lifetime. The Doctor may have forgotten the detail, such as her fearful boyfriend Mickey, but he had just saved the Earth. She had the distinct impression that he saved worlds on a regular basis. She found herself strangely drawn to the mysterious Doctor, even though minutes earlier she had felt an indignant rage at his treatment of Mickey.

It did not matter anyway. Rose's chance had gone. She felt sad, almost bereft. Rose pulled herself together, resolute. 'Come on. Let's go,' she said to Mickey. She helped

him to his feet and, with an arm around his shoulders guided him away in the opposite direction from the now empty space. Mickey rubbed the pins and needles out of his lower back as he limped along beside her.

The echo of the departed TARDIS seemed to taunt Rose with its prolonged wheezing, groaning sound, the wind of its slipstream tangling her long blonde hair around her face. The trumpeting sound effect seemed to peak in volume. Immediately, Rose whirled around. Before her astonished eyes, the blue Police Box outline solidified, lantern flashing on top, as the TARDIS rematerialized on the exact same spot with a resounding thud in front of her.

Rose felt her heart thumping against her ribcage, her pulse racing with excitement. Mickey fearfully followed her gaze.

The TARDIS doors opened revealing a beaming Doctor. He straightened his leather jacket and smiled his most disarming smile. He folded his arms and leant nonchalantly against the door jamb, before delivering his killer line.

'By the way, did I mention? It also travels in time?' he asked innocently. The Doctor smiled hopefully.

Rose returned the smile. She could not believe her luck. The Doctor had returned for her, given her the second chance that she had so desired.

The Doctor stepped back inside the TARDIS, leaving the doorway open.

Rose turned to face Mickey who was still slack-jawed and fearful. It was no contest. 'Thanks,' she said.

'Thanks for what?' asked a querulous Mickey. 'Exactly.' She leant in and gave him a brief peck on the cheek before unceremoniously disentangling herself. 'I'm sorry,' she whispered, half sincerely to her shocked boyfriend.

Beaming, Rose turned away from Mickey and raced towards the open doors of the time machine with indecent haste.

The moment seemed to stretch forever as the adrenaline pumped through Rose's veins. Time stood still. It seemed to take Rose an age to run the short distance to the TARDIS, but eventually she acquired her target. She was not going to miss out on a second chance. The Doctor's smile broke into a broad grin. It genuinely hadn't even occurred to him that she

might have said no again. The Doctor's self-confidence was restored, and with Rose at his side, he was ready to take on the evils of the universe with renewed vigour.

The blue, Police Box door slammed behind Rose. The lantern atop the stacked roof starting flashing once more, as the TARDIS dematerialised with its accustomed rising and falling fanfare.

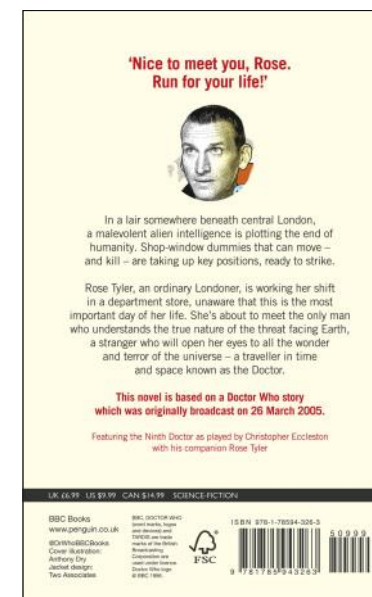
Rose's trip of a lifetime was underway.

If my submission in anyway prompted somebody somewhere to relaunch Target Books by greater authors than I, I can dream of a job well done.

Once again, thank you, Russell, for giving 'Doctor Who' back to another generation including my children. And to Steven, another writing genius, for the continuation – just wait until you read his novelisation of "Day of the Doctor".

Please support the Target books range.

[To buy 'Doctor Who: Rose' by Russell T Davies from Amazon UK click here](#)



# Review 13TH DOCTOR Rik Moran

I loved this issue of Titan's ongoing series of Thirteenth Doctor comics. Issue 4 in fact.

I have all of the Titan Doctor Who comics. Like many of the Big Finish audio dramas and numerous novels that have spanned the decades, much thought has clearly gone into the story, while making sure it fits into the established canon. It feels like an adventure that didn't quite make it to screen.

Again, Rachel Stott's depiction of the characters stood out for me. The Doctor continues to shine on the page. Stott captures well the downright hilarious facial expressions that Jodie uses, expressions that have had me creasing with laughter.

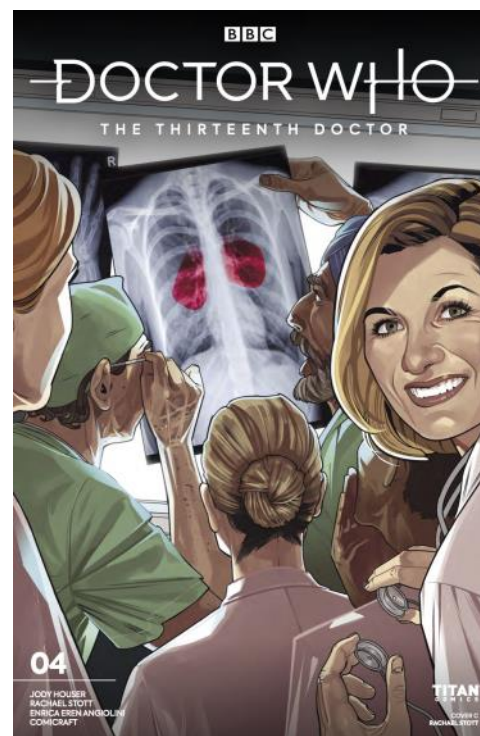
The companions too are recreated perfectly, with Graham the grumpy granddad complaining away, Yaz the faithful companion filled with wonder at every new sight and Ryan the hands-on lad ready for action, and with a heart of gold. This, along with the wonderfully drawn backdrops make for an easy transition from viewer to reader, with the orange/gold glow of the Tardis radiating its warmth through the page with clearly inked outlines and shading blurring into each other in a rainbow of colours.

Much like the current series this comic breathes new life into the story and characters while still maintaining the feel of both classic and new Who stories. As the Doctor would say herself, 'Brilliant!'

There are 3 covers to choose from for

this issue. My personal favourite is Will Brooks's TARDIS in space with Red Crystals, it's just glorious.

The Thirteenth Doctor comics range has got off to a fine start. Long may they continue.



[To visit Titan Comics and see the Doctor Who range click here](#)

## Review SERIES 11 DVD/BLU-RAY Rik Moran

You know, I am not especially impressed by this Series 11 Blu-Ray release.

The steel-book artwork is lovely in itself. The image has some kind of metallic paint applied so that the sunset looks reflective, and the effect is great. Other than this, there really isn't much I'm liking.

The set is poor value for money, especially as the New Year special 'Resolution' is not included. The Series 9 Blu-Ray at least was bookended by the preceding and following Specials, which let's be honest, could easily have been done here.

The real disappointment though is the lack of the special features we have become so used to on Doctor Who releases. There is nothing new - everything is already available on the Doctor Who YouTube and social media pages, although there are some nice art cards included. But then, you can get art cards free with copies of Celestial Toyroom if you are a DWAS member!

The best new features are the commentaries - four of them. That's right they don't even give us a commentary for each episode. Those favoured are:

- The Woman Who Fell To Earth - Jodie Whittaker and Jamie Childs (Director)
- Rosa - Mandip Gill, Malorie Blackman (Writer) and Alex Mercer (Producer)
- The Tsuranga Conundrum - Mandip Gill, Suzanne Packer (General Eve Cicero), Ben Bailey Smith (Durkas Cicero) and Nikki Wilson (Producer)
- Demons Of The Punjab - Mandip Gill, Shane Zaza (Prem), Vinay Patel (Writer) and Alex Mercer (Producer)

Maybe this series will get a better value re-issue in the future. As it stands though, the set is hardly a 'must have'.



[To view the blu-ray or DVD at Amazon UK click here](#)

[To view the exclusive Steel Book at Amazon UK click here](#)

## Review MYTH MAKERS #140 BONNIE LANGFORD Rik Moran

I've always loved the Myth Makers series of interviews, especially the insider stories that you get to hear on them. Originally I collected the range on VHS in the 90's. At the time I was working in a video store and whilst there I made the store stock the range, partly to make sure the store had a decent sci-fi section, but mainly so I could make sure I got each new release as it came out.

Anyway, I collected the whole range up to the point DVD arrived in the early 2000s when I made the change. And now with Myth Makers 140, I made my first purchase on download media. I went Digital with Big Finish a while ago, so I guess it was just a matter of time for others like Reeltime to follow suit. The formats may have changed over the years but the content remains absolutely quality.

This interview with Bonnie Langford is a specially extended 80 minute version of that found on 'The Doctors' DVD from Koch Media and is hosted by Sophie Aldred. I've not yet had the opportunity to see Bonnie at a convention myself so came into this programme not knowing much about her life and career aside from Doctor Who and Buggy Malone. I found this thoroughly interesting, as practically everything Bonnie said I was hearing for the first time.

Sophie does an excellent job leading the interview and it's lovely to see the rapport that she and Bonnie clearly share. Sophie had definitely put some thought into the questions being asked and gets a great deal of information

from Bonnie on her whole career not just Doctor Who, though of course that is talked about, including a bit on Big Finish. One of the things I particularly enjoy with the newer Myth Makers titles, is that they can cover the Big Finish releases, and more, whereas back when the range started, it was just the TV show to talk about.

Sophie's uniquely personal perspective does introduce a fresh angle into the equation and as with her previous Myth Makers interviews, this is a wonderful watch. I for one certainly look forward to her next Myth Makers assignment.

Myth Makers 140 – Bonnie Langford is an excellent addition to the range and I'm sure will be the first of many digital purchases for me. Speaking of which, the digital media allows you to download and/or stream the titles worldwide, so whereas the previous DVD/VHS releases were hard to come by outside of the UK this new media opens the titles to a whole new market.



[To buy this release from Reeltime Picture click here.](#)

[To view the whole range click here.](#)

## Review RESOLUTION DVD/ BLU-RAY Paul Winter

Much has already been said about the fact this episode was missing from series 11 box set and there have been many complaints about fans feeling 'ripped off' by being forced to buy this or that. Doubtless someone from the BBC put them into an armlock and marched them down to the DVD shop. Yawn! I am not going to discuss that. Nor am I going to discuss the episode because, really, that has been done to death hasn't it? All I shall say is that whilst I have not been the biggest fan of the last series, feeling that a good portion of it was not well written and that the main characters, in particular the Doctor have not been given the opportunity to develop, this particular episode was a good one. I did not see the apparent 'anti Brexit bias' in the UNIT operations bit, nor did I find the section with Ryan and his Dad Aaron to be 'convoluted', or 'laboured'. I think that those complaints, like many others about the last series, are from people who are determined to find fault with every little thing they see, right down to the crew location photos that appear on the internet. I very much hope that series 12 can maintain this standard and not drop off in quality in the way that series 11 did after the first few episodes.

So, moving on to the DVD/Blu ray – what do we all buy these for? Yes, it's the extras. That has always been the case hasn't it? I do not think I have ever sat through all six episodes of The Keys of Marinus in in one go since buying the DVD of it. Back in the 'Dan Hall' days I think we were spoiled with the wealth of extra content the classic era DVDs came with and as such, new series releases will always be held to those high standards. Now, 'Resolution' is just one episode, so it is less likely to get a suite of additional material. Nonetheless what we have here is a little disappointing. It is all very self-congratulatory. The series 11 overview is nice to watch but I found it hard to link the SF Extravaganza of 'Games of Thrones' proportions described in the programme with what I actually saw on TV. The same goes for the feature about the making of the episode itself. Some of this is

very good, such as the section on the car chase and the part about the Dalek mutant, which was not for the most part CGI. Very interesting. But most of the programme falls into typical 'Doctor Who Confidential' territory in that it has a high element of self-promotion and does not really engage the viewer (or did not engage me anyway). Even the feature on the creation of the Dalek machine contains very little on... well creation of the Dalek machine!

There is nothing fundamentally wrong with this DVD and it is better value than some releases about other programmes I have bought. It is just that the extra content is very predictable and contains little new for more serious fans – though I am sure the more casual Who-watching audience will love it. The transfer of the picture to disc is very good and it contains a Dolby 5.1 soundtrack option. In fact, this whole series has benefitted from the higher production values that the latest kit has brought.

The menus are supported with Segun Akinola's quite marvellous rendition of the theme – I like this new version. It is a real departure from more recent offerings and pays great homage to the Derbyshire arrangements whilst still bringing something new. I was surprised the opening titles and theme were omitted from the special – I guess this may have been for timing reasons.

In summary, this DVD is a valid addition to your collection, has a number of extra features to watch, but ultimately will tell you very little you did not already know.



[To buy the DVD from Amazon UK click here](#)  
[and for the Blu-ray click here](#)

## Review THE WAR MASTER VOLUME 2 John Lane

*Minor plot spoilers follow...*

I love Big Finish. The quantity of quality Doctor Who drama they produce is astounding. For a long time, I only really listened to the stories that actually featured the Doctor, but bit by bit I started to buy the spin-offs, like Gallifrey and the Bernice Summerfield series, and, wow, they really do add so much to this universe we all love so much.

One of the best things Big Finish does is give us more of characters we only ever really catch a tantalizing glimpse of on television. The prime example of this, of course, is the Eighth Doctor, but since December 2017 we've also been presented with stories featuring Derek Jacobi's thrillingly sinister incarnation of the Master, aka the War Master, in his own excellent series, as well as appearances in the Gallifrey and UNIT ranges.

December 2018 saw the much-anticipated release of Vol 2 of the War Master range: The Master of Callous. Unlike Vol 1, which featured four essentially separate stories, Callous is one complete story divided into four hefty chapters.

Set seemingly far from the Time War on a struggling, isolated mining colony called Callous, ruled by a corrupt and greedy governor, this is a story that builds slowly, allowing for an oppressive sort of tension that really pays off in its brilliant climax.

In the first chapter, Call for the Dead by James Goss, we are introduced to the miserable world of Callous, frustrated mine owner Elliot King (Simon Ludders) and his nemesis, the calculating, self-serving Governor Teremon (played with deliciously offhand and dispassionate cruelty by Pippa Haywood), making King's life a misery as she imposes punitive taxes on an already fraught business and abuses her power of planetary defence to set up what is essentially a blockade between Callous and the system at large. That business is the mining of sueño ore (sueño is Spanish for 'dream'), a valuable commodity useful for interstellar travel. Unfortunately, the properties of sueño mean that prolonged exposure to it drives people insane.

For the most part, the Master is nowhere to be seen. His influence however is indicated through the presence of the servile, exploitable and ever-easily-manipulated Ood race and their creepy choral exclamations of "He is... He is... And you will obey..." (and we all know who they mean). There is one Ood in particular – and this is one of my favourite things about this volume – who roams the forests of Callous carrying of all things an old telephone. For those on the receiving end, a familiar voice offers only difficult truths and, ultimately, death.

When King's daughter Cassandra (Maeve Bluebell Wells) turns up later, accompanied by her wife Martine (Samantha Beart) and an army of trained Ood, to turn the mine's fortunes around, she soon discovers that something sinister is at work on Callous.

Really what lies at the heart of this opener, and pretty much across the whole story, is flawed humanity. Teremon's greed and abuse of power. King's single-minded obsession with his mine at the expense of his own

family. His daughter's anger and failure to understand or forgive, and her desire to prove herself her father's superior. The perfect fodder for the Master's particular brand of manipulation.

The second chapter, The Glittering Prize, also by James Goss, takes place a year or so later. By this time, Cassandra – Cassie – has full control of the sueño mine and the profits are coming in. Using biodampers to protect them from the sueño's mind-altering composition, the Ood have become integral to the fortunes of Callous. With offworlders also using the colony now, the greed of Teremon has also increased and she is ruthless in her exploitation of the colony's new wealth and potential.

But what of the Master? Enter Mr Oremán, another new guise for Jacobi's Master. Avuncular, personable, and extremely helpful, Oremán has been the one helping with the Ood and the colonists. Of course, what's so wonderful is that we all know who Oremán really is. We know that although it seems Teremon is the real villain of the piece, her brand of evil is nothing compared to what the Master is capable of, and though he might appear to be doing all he can to keep the sueño out of her grasping hands, he has an ulterior motive for it that has nothing to do with the wellbeing of the Callous colonists.

There's such a thrill listening to Jacobi's chuckling, smooth-talking friendly old gent and waiting for the worm to turn. It also helps that we can picture his, let's face it, cuddly little face and imagine how the colonists would react to it. Delgado was also capable of this open and conversational approach yet somehow his face always seemed to be 'mwah-ha-ha-ing' even if was just commenting on the weather.

As the action moves forward, the Mas-

ter involves Martine in his plans, which seem to be just getting his hands on a whole pile of sueño, though for what reason we do not know yet. However, things don't go quite according to plan for our Time Lord renegade.

The third chapter in this story, Guy Adams' The Persistence of Dreams, is a very different sort of piece, a psychological trip (and trip is the word) that centres on Martine, who sits alone guarding a haul of sueño on an asteroid, waiting for Oremán to come get her and basically losing her mind. Though you could argue Persistence does very little plot-wise to move the story as a whole along, that doesn't take anything away from its dramatic power.

Alone, except for a particularly peculiar Ood, Martine journeys through her own mind and memories on either a journey of self-discovery or a journey of self-delusion. What Persistence does, and very effectively, is emphasise the fallibility of the human condition, which, knowing that the Master is no doubt behind everything taking place on Callous, only further stresses what little stock he places in the suffering of others in pursuit of his goals.

The story finishes with Adams' Sins of the Father and a powerfully disturbing



showdown between Teremon and the Master, who is about to reveal his true nature to the people of this world. Opening on a brutal but blackly comical torture scene (and one you just can't wait to see the tables turn), the chapter only continues to crank up the conflict and despair that the Master leaves in his wake as the society of Callous crumbles around everyone. We finally discover the Master's purpose for involving himself in the affairs of Callous, what he has to gain and from whom he hopes to gain it – and it is both a pleasant and an unpleasant surprise, as you will find out for yourselves.

What's most interesting about The Master of Callous as a whole is how it shows the patience the Master has to play the long game. The events on the mining colony do not occur over a couple of weeks but rather over a number of years. This is proper evil genius at work, cold and considered.

But it is also a great story for what seems to be the Jacobi Master persona – a beloved old schoolmaster who also happens to dissect living people in the basement; a man who'd happily share a joke with you before stabbing you in the liver with a wry apology.

The Master of Callous is a great follow up and ensures my interest in the range as it moves forward. It adds to the lore of the War Master and the Time War, while also managing to feel distinct in form and flavour from Volume 1.

And, hoo boy, that theme tune!

[To listen to the trailer for this product at Big Finish, click here](#)

[To buy from Big Finish, click here](#)

[To buy from Amazon UK, click here](#)

## Review TIME OF THE DALEK'S GAME Jessica Boyd

This is not a game for the faint of heart... or the quick to play. Time of the Daleks is a serious gamer's board game that takes serious time. Or at least it does when you have no clue what you are doing, like me. I cannot tell if this is on purpose or just a bi-product of the mechanics necessary to have the Doctor go on the proper adventures they need to so it will feel like the television show.

I got this game almost as soon as it came out. However, it sat on my pop culture bookshelf in our living room until this past month. The reason- there are A LOT of rules, pieces and things to know in order to play. Part dice game, part card game and all sorts of pieces to manage, it's not for the timid.

I mean: JUST LOOK AT IT! This is a small set up of the game. This is over half my dining room table. Once you start revealing Time Anomalies, or have multiple locations open and available, and little Daleks (who reduce your available dice count) across the board, you'll feel as if your table is drowning in pieces.

These all sound like huge complaints. However, once you get into the play, you see how it all works together. First, you go through your hand of "Timey Wimey" cards (2 added per turn and no more than 4 allowed to stay in your hand by end of turn) and Sonic Screwdriver tokens (2 added per turn) to see if you can add Companions, Equipment or other helpful cards. Next, you role a Tardis die. It lets you know if you get to pick your location or if the TARDIS picks for you. It's the first clue that the designers are true fans of the show.

Companions are not a guarantee. If



you fail the challenge presented to you (matching dice rolls, kind of like Yahtzee) your temporary companions are discarded. Succeed and you can choose if they become permanent TARDIS travelers. There are additional rules such as "Linked" companions that help you search for specific people to add to your crew. Each companion helps you add or change dice in your dice pool so that you can hopefully get the specific matching roles you are looking for in order to succeed in the adventure mission.

Also, the companions that you draw from are dependent on where you are adventuring. If you are on an Earth location (three time periods found on the main board: past, present and future—each of which allow you different times of rewards) then you can draw an Earth bound companion. If you are on an al-



ien planet (which has two time zones of past or future) then you have to draw an alien companion.

The first time I played this game was with my very begrudging husband. We made SO many mistakes. We raced through the first half of the game not understanding how it was challenging... then he lost his first adventure challenge. When that happens a Dalek shows up on that planet. You also have to follow any directions the dilemma provides you for failure. In our case it brought up a Time Anomaly, which stole all our red dice. It would take us most of the rest of the game to dig ourselves out of the hole we created. We also had trouble understanding why you'd never want to just rush through the turns... until we realized the Dalek ship was about to trigger a second Time Anomaly while we hadn't solved our first. Any thoughts we had of playing this game in a competitive fashion flew out of minds and we immediately began working together.

That's the other fun part of this game, you can play it competitively, trying to be the first to reach Gallifrey, or you can play it cooperatively to just outrun the Daleks. You can only lose 7 adventure challenges. Once you do the "Time

of the Daleks" has arrived and you lose. The other way you can lose is if the Dalek ship arrives at Gallifrey before you. The figures in the game are made of plastic. Sometimes the details can be nice, such as on this Davros figure (he is the final Dalek figure available when you fail an adventure.)

Other times the figures feel like the mold just gave out, such as on this figure of the first Doctor. The game comes with the First, Fourth, Eleventh and Twelfth Doctors. Expansion packs were announced for 2018. I've been digging around and haven't found any that are available to be shipped right now. All the gaming websites I've found list them as either "out of stock" or available for "pre-order" with no consistent dates on when they would ship, and sometimes with no date. The original game had delay issues, so I assume this is the same problem with the expansion packs.

Each expansion seems to run in the range of \$20 and includes the figures, equipment, locations and companions for two Doctors. My goal is to get the Second/Sixth Doctor expansion when it becomes available. Seeing as their two of my favourite classic Doctors I was thrilled when I saw that they would be available in one package together. At this time, I have not seen anything that shows the Thirteenth Doctor being available for this game.

What do you think about this board game? Is it just too much or just right to make it feel like a Doctor Who adventure. Leave your comments so we can have a discussion, or you can follow me on Twitter @DailyDoseofWho.

*This article was originally posted on [dailydoseofdoctorwho.com](http://dailydoseofdoctorwho.com)*

[Buy 'Time of the Daleks' at Amazon UK by clicking here](#)

## Review WARLOCKS CROSS James Bojaciuk

*Minor plot spoilers follow...*

As we approach Big Finish's anniversary year, it's a pleasure to revisit one of their best original characters, Elizabeth Klein. Introduced all the way back in Big Finish's twenty-fifth *Doctor Who* audio, *Colditz* (2001), Klein has stood out. Both for the quality and complexity of the character, and of Tracey Childs' performance.



What is it that makes Klein special? Perhaps it's best to ask Childs. "What's not to love about a megalomaniacal time-travelling Nazi whose been turned around for the good? ... And she steals things, so she's not completely good. She still pilfers the odd bit technology here and there. And she still hasn't quite gotten the hang of being truly compassionate. I love her, I love her to bits. She's just someone who doesn't know who she is, which makes her incredibly human even when she's trying to act like a robot."

*Warlock's Cross* finds Klein in the 1990s as the world changes around her. UNIT is becoming increasingly bureaucratic and decreasingly capable, as fewer of its recruits find themselves up to the standards of old. Undeterred by signs insisting UNIT is top secret, word has begun to slip out. The advocate group Open Skies protests their actions against aliens. Amid the chaos, a plot brews. UNIT's hospital holds one very important prisoner, Daniel Hopkins, traitor. He'd turned on earth for the Cybermen's panacea of indifference. Now partially converted, still playacting at being deadened, he has his purposes. Soon the Doctor, Klein, UNIT, and the protestors find themselves drawn into the plans of an ancient being, and a tragedy nearly a decade old.

To effectively talk about *Warlock's Cross*, we'll need to discuss the two sides of the story separately. First, the political thriller portion of the audio, then, the psychological horror portion.

We live in a time of great turmoil and upheaval, with protests erupting at all times around us. But not every protest is an informed protest. The higher the motive, the more information becomes endangered. It's easy to give into pre-formed narratives, and all the easier when public records are incomplete, or there's a TOP SECRET stamped on every relevant document.

In this audio we are confronted with Open Skies. Their motives are pure. They want to end senseless violence against aliens, and open diplomacy with them, greeting visitors with arms as open as their skies. They have found the suspicious UNIT-shaped gaps in the official records, and heard

the stories at second or third hand. They have put together a semblance of the truth, aware of Silurians being sealed in the earth and Martians fought, but missed the substance. As Greg tells the Doctor, upon discovering he's an alien, "I am so, so sorry....for the human race. For everything we've done to your people. For UNIT. They put you in a cage....I've heard such stories, such terrible stories."

However, as the Doctor responds. "You can't trust stories. Stories alter with every new telling." And indeed, they could not trust their own stories. Greg is not murdered by something evil, proof that the stars contain horrors. Greg meets his end at the hands of an alien he tried to save, who was not evil, but only insane. A victim meeting his end at the hands of a victim he tried to protect. There's no great evil at the center of *Warlock's Cross*' web, only victims of circumstance. This flaw in Open Skies' information is amplified by the Doctor. "Human vs alien" is a poor argument, in light of the Doctor's role, and in light of the invasions rebuffed.

It's Klein who makes this the clearest, when she tells Greg, in anger, "You think you know everything, don't you, Greg? You hear a few rumours and knit them into a secret plot. You have no idea—no idea at all—what's out there, what UNIT has been protecting you from since you were in nappies. Colonel McKenna is trying to protect you now. Listen to him. You might actually learn something."

Refreshingly, the psychological horror aspect of *Warlock's Cross* takes after John Carpenter's *The Thing* (1982). "Refreshingly" because this is, so far as I'm aware, the first time anything asso-

ciated with the show has taken after that seminal work of horror (with the possible exception of "Midnight" (2008)). Instead, the franchise has shown an enduring fascination with—and seeming desire to top—Ridley Scott's *Alien* (1979) and James Cameron's *Aliens* (1986). *Aliens* in particular stirred the show to action. *Dragonfire* (1987) in a seemingly accidental self-reference, as a xenomorph designer worked on the dragon. But it has not proven so accidental across stories such as "The Grief" (1992), *Last Christmas* (2014), and *Twice Upon a Time* (2018), among others.

What makes *The Thing* a unique touchstone? While it and *Alien/Aliens* have a significant focus on isolation, *The Thing* focuses on a blend of self-doubt and team-doubt. You cannot trust yourself. You cannot trust your team. But you're forced to trust yourself. But you're forced to trust your team. You cannot survive if you don't trust them, even while, for defense, you're forced to rely ever more on yourself. If even you yourself can still be trusted.

*Warlock's Cross* capitalizes on the same physical and mental isolation by drawing from the same well. As the Doctor tells the UNIT team, "We need to focus. Don't allow our minds to wander. Question everything we think we see or hear or feel. Ask ourselves, in every case, is it real—or only a shadow?"

Through this, *Warlock's Cross* forces the Doctor to the brink. Under the influence of an alien intelligence, the Doctor is compelled to go back in time and nearly interfere. Compelled to drop not a pebble into the time stream, but a rock, and destroy the Earth in the pro-

cess. He is tempted with visions of saving everyone, foregoing the laws of time to make the best possible universe, but unlike the Tenth Doctor in *Waters of Mars* (2009), this Doctor had the strength to resist both his own impulses and (making this all the more of a feat) the alien intelligence in his head.

This is what *Warlock's Cross* does best. The portion of the audio that takes after *The Thing* is one of the best, and most engaging, portions of any 2018 Main Range story.

Ever since *The Aztecs*, *Doctor Who* has operated under one all-encompassing rule of time: "But you can't rewrite history! Not one line! ...What you are trying to do is utterly impossible. I know, believe me, I know."

*Red Planets* (2018) examined the ramifications of changing time for what one thinks are the best of intentions. It exposed the cost of violating "not one line"—genocide on an unimaginable scale, blotting out generations in a blink. Saving one person, or group, or civilization from tragedy reduces others to victims. As the Doctor tells Klein, "I brought you here—to the past—because you remind me....That, when you drop a pebble into the time stream, each of the ripples you cause affects a real life, a real person."

I love this angle for the Doctor's morality, especially as its being explored in further depth.

There is, however, one thing holding *Warlock's Cross* back from being outstanding. It is the same flaw that held *Thor: Ragnarok* back. It is two excel-

lent movies—one a road trip comedy across space and the other a heart-breaking story of the apocalypse. Each side of the movie holds the other back. The weight of Ragnorok cannot rest the characters', or our, shoulders amid all the levity. The humor cannot land amid the dour circumstances. *Warlock's Cross*' issue is less extreme, but cut from the same cloth.

Half of *Warlock's Cross* is about the seeming fall of UNIT. A political thriller about institutions falling into decay, well-meaning protestors manipulated into following an agenda, and the limits of knowledge gleaned from public sources. The other half is outright horror, a psychological horror film inspired by John Carpenter's *The Thing*. The necessities of each strand of the story weaken each other. Leaving the political thriller for two episodes breaks its flow, and means there's less room to explore the political ramifications of events.

The psychological horror portion of the audio is interrupted by the late-game return to political thriller, before resuming in the final moments. While it is never a miss, and it is certainly never bad, it's impossible to shake the feeling that there are two solid-gold audios in *Warlock's Cross*, both weakened into silver by their proximity. Instead of a stand-alone, I wish Lyons had written the first two parts of a new Klein trilogy. The political thriller is done well, with interesting ideas, and the psychological horror portion of the story is one of the strongest things present in 2018's Main Range stories.

*Warlock's Cross*' production meets the high standard that the 2018 stories have set. Jamie Anderson continues to

excel at directing. His style brings out the best in his actors, and it's great to see him become one of Big Finish's central directors. Childs fully inhabits her character, and seems to have found new depths in Klein even after playing her for so long. Genevieve Gaunt captures the multiple dimensions her role demands of her. Given the excellence of her performance, I found her explanation in the bonus features to be illuminating. "Because it's just audio you can completely focus on bringing so much to just your voice. Your fear, your excitement, your trepidation, all these kinds of things they have to be just in your voice. When you're working with other people, you have to give each other so much because you can't rely on your face or any of those things or any set."



Richard Gibson gives his character more depth than could reasonably be expected. I hope to see Blake Harrison's Daniel Hopkins return. His performances in this trilogy have been engaging. Now that the character has reached his final form as an unwillingly-emotional partly-converted traitor to the Cybermen gives him an excellent foundation to return as a villain in the future. *Warlock's Cross* is a refreshing return to one of Big Finish's great characters, advancing her story and place in the world. If you've been following Eliza-

beth Klein, or the 2018 New UNIT trilogy, this is an essential listen. I think the best note to end this review on is the words of Tracey Childs. "Well, there's a wonderful moment at the end, of course, when he goes, 'are you thinking of retiring, Elizabeth?' and I just want to go, 'No, no, no I'm not thinking of retiring at all. I'm thinking of stealing your TARDIS again and having a whole new spin-off series of my own! Who needs a Doctor?'"

[For a preview of Warlock's Cross at Big Finish please click here](#)

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### Vortex Magazine

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## Feature COLOURISATION Kieran Highman

For this fan, the process of colourisation is always a long one that requires a lot of dedication to complete Colourisation is often a very repetitive task, masking and tracing areas of a moving image in software such as Adobe After Effects. That is the method I use although some people choose the painting of colour on each individual frame by hand. That was the way I did things back when I first began creating fan-colourisations back in late 2012, having been inspired by similar work on the You Tube 'BabelColour' and 'farfrombeingallover' channels.

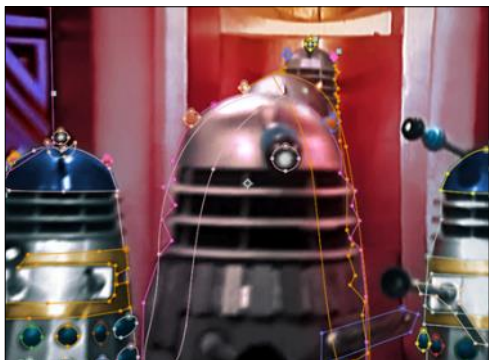


The most recent colourisation video I've released is a tribute to The First Doctor, William Hartnell (as I write this on his 110th birthday). This 134 second video is something I had worked on (along with other projects) throughout all of 2017. Because I had edited the tribute together before thinking to colourise it, I hadn't considered the difficulty of working with the particular clips that I had chosen. Intrinsically, some types of shots are simpler to put colour to than others. My favourite types of shot to do are static shots, where the camera is locked off and



nothing moves. This means that I can take a single frame to Photoshop, colour it by hand, and lay that colour over the whole shot regardless of how long it is.

The more problematic are those that include a great deal of movement particularly where the actor moves as well as the camera. The greater the movement, the greater the difficulty. It muddies the task of keeping track of each individual element. When something in shot moves it creates motion blur, so adding colour to it means that the blurriness of the mask needs to be correctly adjusted for each frame as appropriate. And considering that 1960s Doctor



Who footage doesn't exist in the best of quality, it can even be tricky just to differentiate one grainy element from another. For example, William Hartnell's waistcoat is the same tone as his shirt, the join between which is often ob-

scured by his tie. This causes a little confusion as to exactly where to draw the line between yellow and white. "Is that the playing dice or Dodo's thumb?", "Is that Katerina's hair or her dress?", "Is that Michael Craze or a milk crate?" are all important questions I must know the answer to in regard to colour.

It is also important to make sure the colours I have chosen for a shot are appropriate for the tone of the story. For instance, I chose a pretty groovy palette for a shot in the Dalek Time Machine from The Chase. This is because I consider The Chase a pretty groovy story. If I were doing The Daleks' Master Plan, it would be different. Bringing these scenes to a new life in colour isn't quick or easy, but it's fun if you have the enthusiasm and an eye for detail. And since I enjoy doing it, I plan to continue doing so. A four-man project is underway to colourise an entire First Doctor episode (featuring the dreaded Daleks). At time of writing, we are already at the halfway point to completion. Looking forward, it is my hope that one day we will all be able to enjoy the entire 60s era in living colour!

[You can view some of Kieran's work at YouTube by clicking here](#)



[You can visit Kieran's 'WhoSpheres' website here.](#)

## Feature DOCTOR WHO AND 3D Sam Geden

I've known Matt Umney for years, firstly through Doctor Who conventions, then as his work became involved with 3D animation and model work. A very talented 3D artist who can examine a photograph and work out exactly how it would work as a detailed 3 dimensional model and with the capability to 3D print and finish the works himself, he has recently produced this magnificent physical model for me that I need to use for some artwork, in the absence of anything really high quality photo material of the Gods of Ragnarok.

Matt has worked on many projects, including some 3D work for films and video games, and had already produced a number of recreated 3D virtual models for me to use on the recent Colin Baker Sixth Doctor Calendar - the sort of elements that were either too tricky for me to paint (as I would do normally) or have actual photographs of that weren't BBC material.

His models are printed in good solid plastic, and this one stands at 21cm high and as I think you'll see from the photographs when I lit it, can be made to look much more dramatic than anything taken of the actual props, this meant I could get different angles, eye-lines, lighting conditions for the design. Matt has also produced a number of other items that I need for photography, including a lightweight, but completely accurate, full scale Earthshock Cybergun, classic 1960's Cyber chest units, which include flashing lights and a stunning version of the Kroton. Yes, no longer do they have an old tarpaulin wrapped around them, but they grow from a glowing bed of crystal that would hover and revolve to propel them...

really can't wait to get me hands on these, photograph them and get some new designs done for Wendy Padbury which she will be signing later in the year at events. The remarkable thing is...



when Matt has created the item, instead of 'making do' I can have it exactly the angle and lighting to match me artwork - as you can see from a couple of the Colin Baker calendar designs...the thing is....could you tell what is real and what isn't...that's the fun bit.

Although very busy, Matt is very approachable and loves and knows his subject, so anybody wanting something very specific in this large model scale can easily drop him a message through twitter or instagram... I'm going to keep building up this large-scale classic WHO collection of models.... I think what would look great, would be a seated Sutekh.....

[Click here to visit Matt's etsy shop.](#)



## Feature **RILEY'S DOCTOR WHO ADVENTURE** Riley Chambers

Well, it's hard to believe it has been over a year since my daughter and I visited the Doctor Who Experience in Cardiff. For those "Who" are unaware, it was an interactive exhibition showcasing Doctor Who with various costumes and props from the show. It started with a short film starring Peter Capaldi, recorded for the Experience. A guide took you through a 30 minute-ish adventure following the Doctor's instructions to the Tardis console and other sets including awaking Daleks. Your goal, obviously, save the planet and save the Tardis. Once the day was saved, a door opened to the museum and you could roam the costumes, props, etc from just about every Doctor, companion, and villain. There was also (as always) a gift shop (You have a little shop. I love a little shop. ) offering a variety of Doctor Who souvenirs you can purchase. Since the day my daughter and I attended was the last day it was open, souvenirs were slim pickings. I was able to buy an official companion guide (programme) and an autographed print of Camille Coduri (aka Jackie Tyler).

There were a multitude of costumed people walking around the inside as well of outside of the Experience, making it even more interactive. It was really cool to see live Cybermen, Whisper Men, and even one of Mrs. Rossiter's Peg Dolls (And it was actually Nathalie Cuzner in the costume) at the exhibit. Since the last day was sold out, the Experience asked to limit your time within to only 2.5 hours, so my daughter and I made sure we had

seen everything in triplicate. A good friend of mine (who actually bought our tickets to the DWE) messaged me saying that there was someone I had to meet before I left - Jamie Hill. I knew that Jamie played the Foretold in the Doctor Who episode Mummy on the Orient Express, and the Monk in Extremis, The Pyramid at the End of the World and The Lie of the Land. To my surprise Jamie was also a manager at the Experience. When we found Jamie he was actually giving an interview with Christel Dee for the Doctor Who Fan Show. He was a really cool guy. He took a couple pictures with me and signed a photo. Later we stopped and had a snack in The Blue Box Café and saw Christel in the lobby downstairs. We chatted for a couple minutes (just an extremely nice lady) and we took a couple photos together.

This was just an all-around great Experience. From the actual Doctor Who Experience to the BBC Studios across the street to the sights and everything in Cardiff Bay. I am so glad I was able to spend the time and share the "experience" with my awesome daughter Sydnie. Though it's been over a year since we've been there, it still seems like yesterday. I'm sure the memories will stay like that forever.



## Feature **SPRING LONDON FILM & COMIC CON** Rik Moran

I've not been to a Showmasters event for a few years now, the last I believe was the final event they held at Earls Court, and when I was there that was packed solid. So I headed to the Olympia expecting much the same. I was pleasantly surprised to find that whilst still very busy, it didn't feel anywhere near as cramped as Earls Court had.

The event catered to cosplayers with a cosplay zone and special cosplay guests, who had their own small booths to show off their props, weapons and more to those who were curious about how to create their own. I know there's often grumbings about how conventions have been 'taken over' by cosplay these days, but honestly, I don't see the harm in it. People have been cos-tuming since comic cons have been around, it just has a bigger culture these days. Cosplayers add an extra layer of fun and it's especially charming when you see little kids getting excited to meet their favourite heroes dressed as those characters. I spent a bit of time seeking out those in Doctor Who costumes to grab some photos. Alas I'm not the best photographer so only a small selection are included with this piece

Anyway, I couldn't resist getting a photo with the TARDIS of my youth, and then a couple with my two childhood Doctors, Colin Baker and Sylvester McCoy. I was given the physical copies of these rather quickly. That's certainly changed, you used to have to wait for hours. Remember that? On the leaflet that comes with the photo, there are

instructions on how to get a digital copy of the photo for use on social media etc. What it doesn't tell you, is that it costs £5 for the download, and that it's only valid for ten days. For me if I were to paying extra for a digital copy of a photo I've already just paid for, I'd expect more time than that. This is something I think Showmasters could improve upon.

Anyway back to the event...

Sylvester took a few moments during his signing session to say a few words for the DWAS social media, and seemed in good spirit. I gave him one of the new DWAS logo badges as a prezzie and it was nice to have a quick chat as I'd not seen him myself for a good number of years since he did a signing at The Who Shop I don't know how long ago.

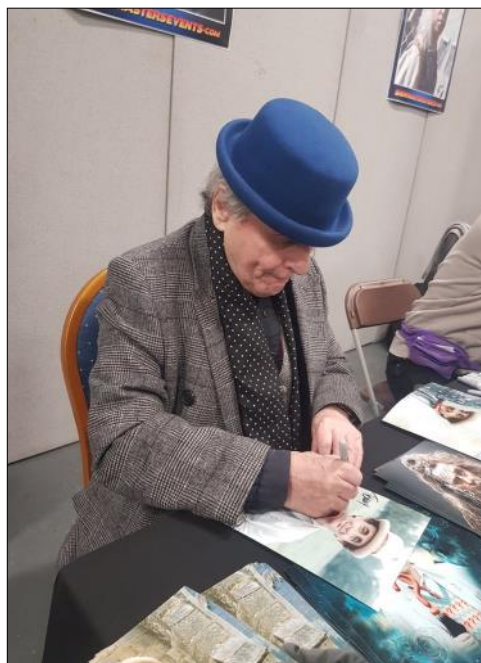
Sadly I didn't get a chance to chat to Colin, aside from the photo, although I did pass on a DWAS badge to him as well.

It was great to see William Russell still being such a popular guest, just like at The Capitol last year, his queue for both signings and photos was huge!

I'm told that Tom Baker and John Simm were exceptionally busy on the Saturday as well (I could only go Sunday as I inconveniently had my little sister's wedding on the Saturday) The downside with these big guests and them being so much in demand that it's becoming very hard to actually acquire an autograph. I suspect the only way to get some autographs now is with a Diamond Pass and this will become a regular thing at future events. Unfortunately this does price out a lot of people, myself included. I think Showmasters need to keep an eye on numbers here to avoid events becoming too elitist. I did try to get a quick chat with the or-

ganisers but they were far too busy, which is completely understandable, I'll certainly try to catch them another time.

This Spring London Comic Con was billed as a taster to the big event in the summer and if what I've experience today is anything to go by, those attending in the summer are in for a treat.



## Feature Scratchman Signing Tim Keep

Tom Baker holds a special place in the pantheon of Doctors for many fans, an almost mythical creature, so when one of his few personal appearances every year is announced, for many fans there is no length they will not go to show their devotion.

On Thursday 24th January 2019 Forbidden Planet in London gave very short notice of his appearance there to sign his new book 'Scratchman'. It was to take place on the following Saturday morning. OK, I thought no problem. It is limited to 100 people? Fine, I'll get there early. You need a wristband. OK, how do I get that? On the Friday. Right.....

Scratchman has been a long time coming, nearly forty years. Originally conceived in the 70s as a big screen outing for the fourth Doctor co-written by Ian Marter and Tom Baker himself the story was largely forgotten about after failing to get funding. Aside from the odd article in various magazines over the years, it was nearly lost to the ages, until recently.

Anyway, back to the signing, and sat at my work desk, the decision took all of 30 seconds, consequences be damned. The holiday form for the next day was submitted and (somewhat reluctantly) approved. Now all that was left was to make sure I was one of those 100 lucky people first in line.

The Friday being a working day ruled out a visit for many, but for me this was no longer an obstacle. Now, timing would be everything. After all, where Tom appears a big crowd follows. Wristbands were being distribut-

ed when the store opened at 10am, and having previously attended the Target book signings there I knew that being two hours early wouldn't be enough...

Still dark, I leave my home in South London just after 5am to make the bus and tube journey necessary to get there, bleary eyed through lack of sleep, I was determined not to miss my chance. At 6.20am I turn the corner and Forbidden Planet comes into view. I am fully expecting to see a fedora, scarf wearing horde waiting.

I was the only person there. I would be that number 1 of a hundred.

It was another hour before more bodies started to arrive and after the initial awkward silence the line camaraderie starts to kick in. The anticipation of meeting one of our idols leads into the trading of old war stories - which conventions we've been to, who we've met, the merchandise bought.

Eventually the staff arrived to start their day and we were issued with numbered tickets to assure our place in the queue - but nobody was going to move! Eventually I obtained that all-important wristband, number 1, and it was guaranteed that I was going to meet the great man himself tomorrow. I return home happy, keeping my band safe in my wallet like Charlie Bucket with his golden ticket.

Saturday arrives and a brand-new day brings a fresh challenge; how early is too early...? Not wanting to repeat my mistake of yesterday I don two pairs of socks so not to lose feeling in my feet from the cold. I head out and arrive just after 10am at the appointed queuing area at the back of the shop. And once again, I am the only person there.

Slowly but surely some of the familiar faces from yesterday start to appear accompanied by new ones, clutching those all-important bands. Tom Baker had already been announced to appear earlier that morning on Graham Norton's Radio 2 show so in anticipation of his arrival we huddled around a phone to listen to another great interview littered with stories told in that inimitable style –he could read the phone book and it would still be mesmerising. As Graham thanked Tom, we all knew it would only be a short matter of time until the moment we had been waiting for arrived, and it had been prepared for.

A little later, ten minutes earlier than expected, the door was opened and the first of us were ushered in. So, I grab my copy of the book and look up to see sat behind a signing table that familiar face I had waited so long to see. Sure there are a few more wrinkles than the 70's but there is that beaming smile and same rich, golden voice "Good Morning! "as he offers his hand to shake mine. It is at this moment my mind goes blank, you'd have thought in all that time I would have thought of something to say. I hesitate for a second before the brain finally decides to kick in with the realisation that this is Tom Baker, and silence is not an option.

"Good Morning I've been waiting a long time to see you and I've brought 99 other people with me who all have very good taste in books!". A second passes followed by "I do hope so!" and the booming belly laugh that has endeared generations to his tenure of a role that we all hold so dear. He reads my name or rather my nickname by which I'm better known and looks up puzzled. "Beef?" and I explain the story behind it much to his amusement as he signs the title page. I shall not trouble you with it here though.

As he passes the book back to me, I present him with a bottle of wine by means of a belated birthday present in a colour scheme that matches the gothic black, red and white of the cover. Looking at the two together he agrees and thanks me before asking if we should take a photo. A book, autograph and photo, you don't need to ask me twice! I dart around the table and drop to one knee as if to be knighted and beam at the camera happy that I've achieved all that I set out to do 2 days ago followed by expressing my thanks and saying goodbye as the next person files in behind me.



On the way out I see James Goss and get my copy signed by him too along with the obligatory selfie. Then I am recognised by the BBC Book PR as 'the guy who showed up so early', and was thanked, but it wasn't needed. They had me at Tom Baker –no wait is too long, no distance too far.

As testament to how magic he is; I see people recording video afterwards proudly holding up the Jelly Baby he has offered them as they are instantly transported back to that first time they saw him on screen.

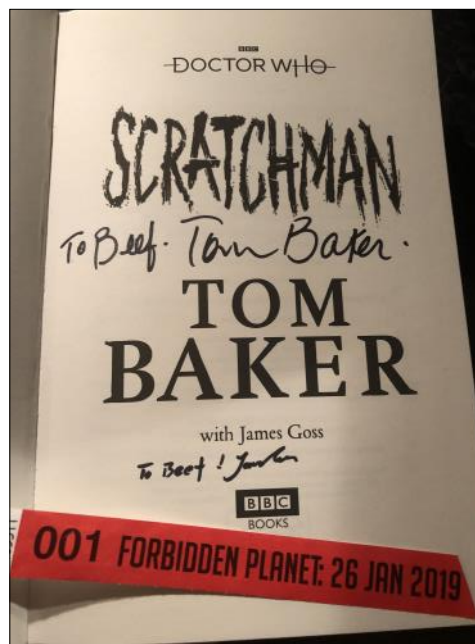
Everything was relaxed and well organised, Tom is at ease and always the consummate professional, none of the people attending are rushed through as sometimes you can feel at

conventions. By 12.30 he has already signed for the initial 100 people allocated, and so for the next twenty minutes some extra wristbands were distributed to a few very, very lucky people in the right place at the right time.

Leaving the store happy with my copy I realise I still have that No1 wristband which now resides as a memento of a Saturday well spent.

Until the next time Doctor...

'Doctor Who - Scratchman' is available



from a number of retailers in a number of formats including e-book and audio. Some links are below:

[Amazon UK](#)  
[Waterstones UK](#)  
[The Who Shop, London](#)

## Interview IN CONVERSATION WITH DEE SADLER Rik Moran

*In 1988 Dee Sadler played the role of 'Flowerchild' in 'The Greatest Show in the Galaxy' Recently Dee was very gracious to spend some time answering some questions about her life and of course her time on Doctor Who.*

**RM:** Take us back to 1988, how did you get the part of 'Flowerchild'?

**DS:** John Nathan-Turner had been watching a sit-com I was in at the time (No Place Like Home) and asked me in for an interview at TV centre. I think I must've read a bit and we mainly chatted, he was great fun and I liked him hugely. The director Alan Wareing was there too, but he didn't say much. I think I was offered it the same day.

**RM:** What is the scariest part of an audition?

**DS:** The scariest part of any audition (for me) is the walk to the door. After that, it gets a bit easier.

**RM:** Was 'Doctor Who' amongst the first tv shows you did?

**DS:** The first TV show I did was a children's TV show called "Wuffer", I think (BBC) it was about a dog, if memory serves. Doctor Who was my third job for them.

**RM:** If I remember correctly, *The Greatest Show in the Galaxy* was shot in a car park (or something like that) because of an asbestos problem in the studio planned for the shoot. What are your memories of that?

**DS:** My time on Doctor Who was spent on location in the quarry in Weymouth, which really did look like another planet and it was freakishly hot too, for so ear-



ly on in the year...anyway, I never had to go into the studio at all, so missed out on all the adventures in the car park and only heard about it a long time after the event.

*RM: Who was the naughtiest member of the cast?*

DS: I don't know who the naughtiest member of the cast was as I only knew them for a few days on location and we were working really hard and up against it time wise, but John Nathan Turner told me the filthiest joke on the first day of filming.

*RM: We will have to save that for a convention! What is something that you know now that you wish you knew when you were first starting out as an actor?*

DS: Sleep more, relax more and get out in the fresh air. Oh and never smoke, is what I wish I had known starting out as a young actor. That and don't eat junk food. Self care, really.

*RM: So - let's say you are a new addition to the crayon box. What colour would you be and why?*

DS: When I was young, I had a paint box with a shade called 'Burnt Sienna' in it. The colour was a sludge brown and I never used it. So I would be a lovely pinky/blue lilac and still be called 'Burnt Sienna' and it would be the most used colour in the paint box.

*RM: That's a fantastic answer! What inspires you?*

DS: Being by the sea inspires me, whatever the weather. It makes me feel that anything is possible, somehow.

*RM: What is the funniest thing that has happened to you recently?*

DS: Last week I thought I had thrown my iphone in with the laundry and was crouched by the washing machine ringing my mobile number with the landline. I laughed like a drain afterwards.

*RM: What's the most interesting thing about you that we wouldn't learn from your resume alone?*

DS: I once had to turn down the part of a stalker in Brookside, that I really wanted to do but couldn't for various reasons, and I'm also Viking. I had my DNA analysed.

*RM: Why do you think so many aspiring actors end up giving up on their dream?*



DS: Possibly because they realise that it's a chuffin' daft job for a grown up or they find something that satisfies them more (hopefully).

*RM: Do you think you really understood what you were in for when you decided you wanted to become an actor?*

DS: I think unless you have grown up in an acting family or close to one, no, not at all, you can only guess at what you're in store for.

*RM: You have been on the other side of the table at an audition (watching, instead of auditioning). What did you learn from that?*

DS: I have co-produced and cast shows in the past and found it's best to listen to gut instinct, despite the evidence in front of you.

*RM: Tell me something I don't know ?*

DS: I've thought and thought about this one and come up with this (which you may know already) the look and style of Bellboy and Flowerchild were based on Jim Morrison and his girlfriend.

*RM: I didn't know that, haha always learning. What role would you love to play that you haven't yet?*

DS: There are lots of roles I would love to play, then I remember how old I am. So, the answer is, a stalker...since I had to turn such that part down, once.

*RM: Do you prefer acting for film or for the theatre?*

I prefer the theatre. I love the process and the result. It's great fun rehearsing and being part of a company and the energy and connection you get from a live audience is very rewarding.

*RM: Have you ever forgotten your lines, or a prop, or choreography during a performance?*

DS: I've forgotten props before (once) had to then give an actress totally the wrong object and apologise under my breath.

*RM: What would you say is your best memory from working on Doctor Who?*

DS: My best memory of working on Doctor Who is kissing Chris Guard over and over again, JNT directed that scene and made us do many takes saying he didn't think it looked real enough. He smirked throughout. John, not Chris, that is.

*RM: Dee Sadler, Thank you very much, you've been a great sport.*



# Fiction **BACKFIRE** Trinah Eke

*"Hello Sweetie. Just borrowing the orb, I'll need it on Parrius Minor. I knew you wouldn't mind. River xxx."*

The Doctor dropped the box that used to house the orb. "River!" he strode to the console, "Knew I wouldn't mind..." he muttered while typing into the TARDIS Databank, "'Parrius Minor, where is Parrius Minor anyway? Why do you want to go there?'" The Doctor's eyes widened as he read the screen, he bounded around the console inputting co-ordinates, the TARDIS dematerialised.

## Parrius Minor

River dodged around rocks trying to evade the automated sentries pursuing her. "Come on, how long does it take to hack an operating system?" she complained at her hand held device. "Finally...input mode...not hostile..." she commanded while scanning herself with the device, "do not engage." Taking a deep breath she peered around a rock at the sentries, when they didn't respond she moved out into the open. "Access data files, security storage." she studied the screen as it accessed plans of the compound. "There you are." River oriented herself with the plans, "It should be right around here..." She glanced around her, looked at the screen again and then looked down and stamped a foot on the ground, there was a dull metallic thud. "Buried treasure."

A short time later River was standing inside a metal vault lined along all walls with metal storage boxes. She pulled a

small orb from her utility belt, "Now how do you work?" The dull metallic orb started to vibrate violently, River struggled to retain her grasp around it. "What are you doing?" she said through gritted teeth. A low rumbling sound fill the vault, River looked around but saw only the metal storage boxes, she moved closer to one wall. The storage boxes started to vibrate as the rumbling sound grew in intensity. She quickly backed up to the middle of the vault but the rumbling sound continued to grow making all the boxes vibrate. River returned the orb to her utility belt and engaged her vortex manipulator just as the vault exploded.

"Why aren't we landing?" The Doctor moved to the view screen, adjusted the frequency and watched the screen in horror. What had once been Parrius Minor was now an asteroid field. "River." he whispered. "OK...vortex manipulator emergency transport... where did you go?" he muttered whilst pressing buttons on the console, "How to track you...energy signature! Ah there you are...what are you doing there?" He set co-ordinates.

## The Dooley Club 1943, New York

Bettina re-arranged her dress carefully ensuring the secret pockets were easily accessible. She had decided tonight was her last night at The Dooley Club; people were starting to ask difficult questions. She took a deep breath and walked out to the stage area. Bettina made an entrance, even before she started to sing, the attention of the audience was on her. Her gaze swept the room as she approached the microphone, she had noticed him instantly. It was as though he wanted to be noticed, and yet no-one seemed to pay him any attention. He wore knitwear with red question marks all over it, check trousers, a faun jacket, a cream

panama hat with paisley hatband. He sat with his left hand resting on the pillar box red question mark shaped handle of an otherwise black umbrella. When she sang "That Old Black Magic" the audience was transfixed as usual except for the one person. The man took out a long, thin, metallic device and angled it towards her. She could see him muttering to himself whilst studying the device. When he returned his gaze to Bettina she quickly averted hers. Her gaze swept the room carefully avoiding his penetrating eyes. Bettina caught a glimpse of the strange man disappearing through the door to the backstage area, she knew he was waiting for her, she needed a plan. Her mind worked quickly as she continued singing, what she needed was cover while she collected her belongings from the dressing room. She paid greater attention to the audience, mentally picking out a few good candidates.

A short time later Bettina made her way to her dressing room with a group of large men. When she arrived at the door she ushered the men inside. As she was about to enter Bettina heard a calm, quiet male voice, but she couldn't hear what he was saying. Before she could make her way inside the men streamed out. Hesitantly she entered the room; the strange man was standing in its centre, his eyes boring into hers. She looked away.

"Who are you, what are you doing here?" he asked irascibly.

"This is my dressing room, who are you?" Bettina replied while casually moving around the room rearranging items of clothing.

The man moved in front of her blocking her path, "Who are you?" he repeated in the same tone.

Bettina stepped forward meeting his gaze, in a flirtatious tone she said "Whoever you want me to be." whilst simultaneously adjusting his collar and picking his pockets.

"Where did you get this?" he asked accusingly holding up a small orb. Bettina patted the secret pocket in which she had earlier secreted the orb, it was empty. "You picked my pocket, that's so rude." She tried to snatch the orb from his hand but he clamped his fingers firmly around it and put his hand in his pocket.

The Doctor glanced at his scanner; the readings indicated River was in a room at the end of the corridor. He walked briskly to the door, dropped the scanner into his pocket, adjusted his bow tie and entered. River was standing with her back to him, "River."

"River? What river?" she replied without moving.

"I just came from Parrius Minor...well what's left of Parrius Minor. You blew it up!" the Doctor moved to confront River but there was someone else in the room. "Oh. Hello, I'm...Oh. River what are you up to?" River still didn't move. "River?" He gently took hold of her arm and pulled her around until she was facing him. There was no recognition in her face. "River?" he repeated.

"I don't know who this River is but I'm not her." she replied. She tried to take a step towards the door, but the Doctor blocked her path.

"River, I know you don't remember, but you do trust me."

The man who had remained silent since the Doctor had entered the room finally spoke "Who are you two?" He asked. "Why are you here?"

"Scan me." The Doctor replied holding his arms out to the sides.

The man watched the Doctor suspiciously whilst reaching into a pocket. He then tried another pocket and another before shifting his gaze to River. The Doctor's gaze also shifted to River. "About 9 inches long...silver...red bit at the top?" he said.

River glared at him defiantly, reached into her pocket and pulled out the device which was instantly snatched out

of her hand. "So rude!" she said to the man who ignored her and scanned the Doctor with the device. He examined the readings.

"You shouldn't be here." he said "Crossing your own time..."

The Doctor put a finger to his mouth, made a shushing sound and said "Spoilers." The man's intense eyes fixed on him. "Wibbly wobbly, timey wimey?" he said hopefully. The man glared at him "I'll explain later..." the Doctor said hesitantly. The man pondered for a moment and then gave a slight nod. The Doctor turned his attention to River. "What's the last thing you remember?"

"I..." she paused unsure whether to answer. "I woke up in a storage room." "When?"

"5 days ago."

"Do you remember anything from before...snippets, is there anything that seems familiar?"

She thought for a moment, "A fez, I keep seeing a red fez."

"A fez, a red fez." He said excitedly, reached into a pocket, pulled out a red fez and placed it on his head. "It's still in there, the experiences, the adventures, the... We can get it all back but you have to trust me." She stared at the fez on his head.

"You expect me to trust you, wearing that!"

"OK fine, I'll lose the fez." he frowned and reluctantly removed the fez and returned it to his pocket.

"Is this the future, a child, travelling around the universe wearing silly hats?" the man asked. "This woman is dangerous, she used an alien device to hypnotise the audience."

The Doctor smiled. "You're not seeing her at her best...what alien device?"

The man pulled the small orb from his pocket.

"That's not alien...well it is alien...that's not how she hypnotized the audience. She read a book on advanced hypnosis that she found in the library; yours I

believe?" The Doctor pulled a box from his pocket, inside was an insert moulded in the dimensions of the orb. He held it out to the man, who reluctantly placed the orb inside. River began gradually easing away from the men.

"What is that device?" the man asked whilst watching the Doctor return the box to his pocket. "The energy readings..."

"Even if I could tell you there wouldn't be any point, you won't remember this."

"You don't know what it is and yet you allow this woman loose with it?"

"I don't allow...she borrowed it."

"She stole it! Interesting company you keep."

"It's complicated. That won't work River." The man glanced at River who avoided his gaze.

"How did you know...?"

"You were planning to incapacitate him in some way or another. It's not that easy to do and we need him conscious." River looked at the man and then at the Doctor.

"Why do you need him?"

"We need him to get your memories back."

"I won't help you." the man stated.

"You said it yourself; she is dangerous, with or without her memories. She has shaky morals; the only thing that keeps her in check is her memories of consequences."

"Have you considered a prison?" the man quipped. The Doctor smiled.

"Please return her memories."

"Why do you need me, you could do it yourself?" the man asked. The Doctor looked uncomfortable for a split second, the man noticed. "You can't?"

"It's...complicated."

The man sighed, looked at River and nodded.

"I don't need my memories back, I'm fine." she said, making for the door.

The Doctor blocked her path. "River, please trust me." she looked at him. "I know you're scared. I promise you, you'll be fine, you'll be better than fine."

River looked at the man and then back to the Doctor. "Will it hurt?"

"It shouldn't, if you don't fight it." the Doctor replied.

"You aren't filling me with confidence. Why do I trust you?" she asked.

"Spoilers." the Doctor replied, smiling

"What are spoilers?" she asked

The Doctor smiled again, "Something you've forgotten."

River sighed. "What do I have to do?"

"You just have to relax... do you want to sit down for this?" River glared. "Or you could stand... standing is fine. It's a kind of psychic Tetris...do you remember Tetris...?"

"Can we hurry this up, Duke Ellington is playing tonight?" the man interjected.

"OK, OK...are you ready, River?"

River nodded. "Close your eyes." the man said as he placed his fingers at her temples, River sighed and closed her eyes. The Doctor watched anxiously as the man muttered under his breath. After a minute he abruptly stopped muttering, at the same River started smiling. Another minute passed and the man's hands dropped from River's temples, he looked around confused, "Where am I?"

The Doctor turned to River, "Hello Sweetie." she said.

"What did you do?" the Doctor asked.

"I wiped his memories of me."

The Doctor looked at the man and then back at River. "What else did you do?"

"It's temporary." she replied.

"What's temporary?" the Doctor asked.

"Confusion. We had better get him back to his TARDIS before it wears off."

"You wiped his memory; I don't remember where his TARDIS is!"

"I do. My vortex manipulator was set for the TARDIS..."

"The storeroom." the Doctor interrupted.

"The storeroom." River repeated.

### The 7th Doctor's TARDIS.

The man was slumped in a chair in the

console room, fast asleep.

The Doctor moved close to River. "What are you doing?" she asked.

"Picking your pockets." the Doctor replied.

"You used to be much better at this." River said nodding towards the man slumped in the chair. "Why are you attempting to pick my pockets?"

"I... I mean he, carries certain items in his pockets."

"Such as?"

The Doctor looked at the man, "Gold pocket-watch" River reached into her pocket, rummaged around a little, pulled out a gold pocket-watch and placed it on the console. "Swiss army knife." River produced the Swiss army knife. "Abacus, drawstring purse, sling-shot..." River placed the items on the console. "You aren't going to help are you?"

"Where's the fun in that?" she replied.

"River." the Doctor said with a pained expression. River reached into her pockets and retrieved a pen with a chain attached and some party favours. "Anything else?"

"You lost your marbles." she replied carefully placing marbles on the console.

The Doctor looked at the marbles for a moment, then picked them up and put them in his pocket. "Back to our TARDIS. Come on." He said walking to the door.

"Our TARDIS, so it's half mine?"

The Doctor sighed.

A short time later River and the Doctor were standing at the TARDIS console.

"Where are we going?" River asked.

"Consequences." the Doctor replied.

"Never heard of it."

The TARDIS landed, the Doctor flicked a switch and an image appeared on the view screen.

"It doesn't look like much." said River watching asteroids colliding.

"It used to be Parrius Minor." replied the Doctor.

River was shocked. "Did I do that?" The Doctor took the box containing the orb out of his pocket. "This orb, the energy, it's complicated."

"You said it was an energy key."

"It is, but it's a specific key."

"To what?"

"River," he said as a warning and then changed his tone. "Why were you on Parrius Minor?"

"I overheard some people talking about something buried on Parrius Minor. How could I resist?"

"And was there something buried on Parrius Minor?"

"Yes, there was. It's a shame it blew up before I found out what it was."

"That explosion could have killed you; the energy wave must have been immense."

"Is that why I lost my memory?" asked River.

The Doctor took out his sonic screwdriver and scanned her, "You were lucky, no permanent damage." He pocketed the sonic, set the coordinates and set the ship in motion. "Ready for an adventure? There's a moon that phases out of existence and back in again in the..." River moved very close to the Doctor, "What are you doing?" he asked.

"I have a present for you." she took hold of his hand into which she placed two spoons.



## Fiction Requiem Among the Stars Cameron Holt

### PART ONE

The sparkling water lapped gently over Yasmin's feet, sending her further and further into her own little world. For once, she felt as if she had nothing to worry about. She was sitting beside a pool in the middle of a star ship that could take her anywhere. Absolutely anywhere. The Evergreen Fields of Elysia? Done. The Shimmering Caverns of New Mondas? Got the T-shirt. Literally. Anywhere and everywhere was open to endless adventures and, occasionally, heart-pounding chases from irritated locals.

This really was a dream come true.

What could be better? Having a lolly on a sun-baked beach? A trip to the Bahamas? Nice, but no dice. Everything she knew was so pedestrian compared to the tranquillity of floating gently across the stars. She felt light and feathery, like she could float away into true bliss at any moment.

Even the memory of a childhood friend, now on bad terms, could not shatter the peace. They had always talked about going on their own adventures, just the two of them, exploring every inch of the world before they grew too old. Then they turned into teenagers, real life happened and everything disintegrated. Now Yasmin was fulfilling those dreams, but her friend was not by her side.

She had new friends now. Perhaps that was why those familiar anxiety butterflies that so often plagued her were now absent. All of those arguments

they used to have didn't matter anymore. She hadn't truly realised it before, but as the sapphire water massaged her ankles, she knew that, finally, she had moved on.

And with that realisation, she pushed herself up, took a deep breath, and stretched her body in preparation for a swim.

Front crawl to start, she thought. Maybe the breast stroke as a change of pace? She supposed it didn't really matter as long as –

A pipe on the ceiling burst, bellowing out a torrent of hot steam. Typical.

"Sorry," said a voice over the intercom. "Wait, hold on... Graham, where's that wrench? No, the –"

It cut off. Yasmin could recognise that voice anywhere. The Doctor had a way of speaking that was hard to forget; it was different to anyone else she'd met, filled with both comfort and excitement, and a promise of safety even in the direst situations. Most of the time. Suddenly, the intercom came back online with screeching static.

"Ah, there we are," said the Doctor, sounding very proud of herself. "Attention crew. If you're feeling woozy, or having an out-of-body experience, I would just like to let you know that we've been losing oxygen very, very slowly for about half an hour now. In fact, we almost died! But no worries, it's all fixed now. So, uh... yeah, you might be feeling really weird. That's normal. Should stop in about ten minutes. I hope. Doctor out."

Yasmin felt the heat from the steam building up around her. She took a deep breath and walked towards the back of the room, picking up her pale

blue shirt from the floor. Already she could feel the bliss evaporating from her mind and a harsher reality setting in. It had been nice while it lasted.

"Graham O'Brien, if you don't give me that wrench right now, very bad things are going to happen to you!"

The Doctor held tightly onto the metallic panel that was holding back hundreds of deadly, sparking wires. Another malfunction. Was it her repairs? That didn't make any sense! She had made all the calculations and considered every possible outcome. This should not have happened.

Graham frantically searched high and low around the main control console, sweat dripping down his neck.

"I swear, I put it right here!"

The Doctor's arms faltered, causing the panel to slip. Her two hearts began to beat faster.

"In a minute, this whole room's going to catch fire and send us into the nearest supernova!"

A light bulb switched on in Graham's head.

"I gave it to you," he said, pointing accusingly at the Doctor. "You used it to fix the intercom!"

"Then where is it?" she shouted.

A million possibilities ran through her mind, but to no avail. Graham ran over and knelt beside her, shoving a hand into her left coat pocket. He pulled out the wrench and quickly tightened the panel back into place.

Slowly, the Doctor let go. "Right," she said hesitantly. "Good. Well done."

Graham leant against the wall and slid down to the floor.

"You're worse than me," he said. "How old did you say you were?"

The Doctor ignored his rude question and flew towards the nearest viewscreen. Her memory wasn't fading with age. Don't be silly. She was just pre-occupied. She tapped her fingers on the console's glossy surface and searched for answers, looking at every measuring system the TARDIS had available.

None of this was her fault. Something was playing with her head. For a while now, she'd been seeing snapshots of a long-lost memory that wouldn't disappear. Images that made her hearts ache. She'd kept quiet about it, for the most part, save for some squeamish dreams. They had guided her here, to this section of space, yet she couldn't figure out why. It was driving her mad.

Yasmin entered through the nearby doorway and frowned at Graham. "You alright down there?"

Graham nodded. "Just about," he said. "Enjoy your swim?"

Before Yasmin could respond, the Doctor raised her eyes. "Yaz, get Ryan down here. We need to talk."

The Doctor paced back and forth in front of her captive audience. Ryan could hardly keep his eyes open – he had been in the middle of a power nap. Yasmin and Graham seemed more alert, although Graham's hair was a bit of a mess after recent events.

"Something's been tampering with the TARDIS," said the Doctor, placing one hand in her coat pocket. "Ever since we started drifting through this sector, bits

of equipment have malfunctioned and our life support nearly failed. Obviously, this is not a coincidence."

"So, let's leave," Ryan said, yawning. "Just get us out of here."

The Doctor pushed the mobile viewscreen on the control console around so everyone could see. It was currently showing a brown, unremarkable planet with what looked to be a sandstorm covering most of the surface.

The Time Lord fixed a fiery gaze on Ryan. "I found that the TARDIS has been receiving a communication of some kind from Sirius IV. A sort of pulsing wave, like a beating heart. Trouble is, I can't figure out what it's saying – and Sirius IV has been dead for over ten thousand years." She stepped closer to Ryan.

"I don't know what's down there, but if something or someone is calling to us, we cannot ignore it. And that is not up for discussion."

Ryan nodded.

"Hold on," said Yasmin. "What if that something has bad intentions and the TARDIS... I don't know... breaks permanently?"

Graham crossed his arms. "Yeah, I want to keep all my essentials, thank you."

A strange rhythmic beeping came from the control console. The Doctor smiled. "This old girl's never let me down before!" she said, rubbing her hands together. "If there's something dangerous down there, we'll stop it. If it's friendly, we'll help it. Simple. We've done this sort of thing before. You know the drill."

No one had anything more to say, so she took that as unanimous agreement and grabbed hold of a large lever. Before she could pull it, however, the TARDIS lurched to the side, almost throwing everyone to the floor. The Doctor regained her balance and looked around, perplexed. "That wasn't me, I swear."

The lights flickered as they all felt a rumbling vibration, gradually growing more violent. Ryan grabbed hold of Yasmin and Graham by the arms. The Doctor knew what was coming next – a total emergency shutdown. "Hold on tight," she said, turning to face her friends. "I hope you like drop rides."

Yasmin shook her head. "No, no, no. Don't do this to –"

The TARDIS fell sharply into the planet's atmosphere and landed with a loud boom. It toppled slightly, but managed to stay upright. After a few minutes of haunting silence, the door creaked open. The long, grey coat and multi-coloured shirt of the Doctor appeared; a stark contrast to the deep browns around her.

She knelt down and scraped up some sand, letting it flow through her fingers. Interesting composition – finer than she was used to. Ryan emerged from behind with a black woollen coat, followed by Yasmin and Graham with yellow and orange raincoats. Graham walked to the front and basked in the view; a bleak, empty horizon of sand and flat plains. The Doctor raised her head and laughed. "Oh, don't you look dapper!"

Graham turned around. "Oil!" he said. "This is your wardrobe, remember?"

The Doctor made a silly face and stood up, rubbing the remaining sand on her coat.

"Doctor, look." Yasmin's voice was unusually quiet. The Doctor and Graham turned around to see her and Ryan looking out towards the east side of the TARDIS. Not far off, a magnificent crumbling ruin stood alone amongst the dusty sea, the only visible sign of civilisation.

"Hey, Doctor," said Ryan, starting to shiver. "You figured out why it's so cold yet?"

"No, I haven't," said the Doctor, stepping closer. "Give it some time, would you?" She noticed the frown on Yasmin's face. Curious. "What's on your mind, Yaz?"

Yasmin opened her mouth to say something, but turned away from the ruin first. "I don't know," she said cautiously. "Does anyone else feel like their chest is tingling?"

The Doctor and Ryan looked at each other with concern. Ryan shrugged.

"No, can't say that I do," said the Doctor, looking back into Yasmin's eyes. "What kind of tingling are we talking about here?"

Graham walked towards Ryan and tripped over a particularly large rock, letting out a frustrated yelp. Yasmin sighed. "I don't know. Maybe it's just nerves. Actually, you know what, forget about it."

The Doctor raised her vision to the ruin in the distance. Time Lord senses were far greater than a human's, but even she couldn't feel anything unusual from here. But she could see. This ruin had a design she recognised from her trav-

els many times before, bringing with it a tide of uncertainty, dread, and most of all excitement.

The walls had crumbled so much from centuries of merciless erosion, but it was easy to tell that they were all slanted towards each other, never quite reaching a central point yet clearly wanting to. It was a design that had been used on so many planets over the course of history, one that could withstand earthquakes and inspire people for generations. A beacon of boundless potential and progress.

A pyramid.

The Doctor felt a tingling sensation of her own. She rubbed her hands together. "Right, team," she said, stepping past Yasmin. "We can't stand here all day. There's a sandstorm covering most of the planet and I don't want to be here when it gets back. Let's get to that ruin, find out what sent the signal and rush back to the TARDIS. Hopefully she'll be in working order by then." She turned around and pointed at the blue box. "You hear me? You're our one lifeline! Don't let me down!"

"It's a machine," said Graham. "You're talking to a machine."

The Doctor glared at him and began trudging across the sandy sea. Then she stopped. An uneasy feeling began to take over. "Graham," she said, eyes fixed on the ruin. "Bring me that rock."

He looked at the one he'd tripped over a minute ago. "Why?"

"Just do it," she said. "Come on! Hurry up!"

Graham sighed and picked up the heavy object with both hands, groaning under its weight. The Doctor laid her

arms out expectantly. When the rough stone fell into her palms, she examined it up and down as carefully as she could, joining the indents and crevices together in her mind. What was once faded started to appear in perfect clarity as all the pieces fell into place.

She dropped the rock with a muffled thud. There was an eerie moment of silence.

Ryan stood by her side and waved a hand in front of her face. "Hello? You alright there, Doc? What's going on?"

The Doctor snapped her head towards him like a possessed doll, making him jump. "Everything's fine," she said quietly. "Let's move".

The trip across the desert was mostly uneventful, taking about ten minutes to get to the ruin's entrance. Ryan should have been used to the alien atmosphere of a distant world by now, but he still found himself buckling under the reality of it all every now and then. Here, standing by an ancient doorway that seemed ten times bigger up close, that feeling was worse than ever.

The Doctor hadn't made things any easier. She was unusually silent; more than he ever thought possible. Something about that rock had set her on edge. He didn't know why she wouldn't come clean – what was the point of keeping up a false pretence if no one believed it? Then again, stubbornness was part of her charm.

Ryan tried to button up his coat further than it would actually go. "Doctor," he said, muscles twitching. "The cold's getting to me now. You figured out an answer yet?"

The Doctor walked up a short staircase and stood before a massive square

archway, decorated with what Ryan thought were old Egyptian drawings. Hieroglyphs, if he remembered correctly. But they couldn't be – this was Sirius IV.

"We can always huddle for warmth," said a smiling Yasmin, standing by his side.

He looked at her and smiled back. Sometimes it was her presence over anyone else that put him at ease. Why was that? Did she remind him of home, back when home was worthwhile? Or perhaps there was something else bubbling under the surface. Yasmin put an arm around his waist, no doubt sensing his anxiety. For a few brief moments, he felt his worries drift away. And then Graham appeared, throwing his arms around them both.

"Great idea, Yaz," he said. "I love a group hug."

Yasmin threw his arm off.

"On second thought, maybe not."

Ryan did the same and gave Graham a playful punch. He looked towards Yasmin, but she had already positioned herself in front of a stone pillar, closely examining the markings. Ryan sighed and walked up the cracked, dusty stairs, hoping to reach the Doctor before she did something rash and unpredictable.

A sandy breeze whistled through leaning columns and half-broken stone blocks, sending a shiver up his neck. Something about this place felt wrong, even by alien standards.

The Doctor turned around and held out her palm. "Not yet, Ryan," she said. "I don't know if it's safe. Just stay there for a bit, okay?"

Ryan did as she said. He knew better than to question her judgment. The Doctor turned back to the surface of the archway and ran her fingers along the left side, for a purpose only she understood. After a minute, she stopped abruptly, put her hands in her pockets and turned towards him.

"Alright, come on up. I think it's fine."

Ryan made sure the other two were following, then jogged to the Doctor's side. "Hey, what are we actually dealing with here?" he asked, keeping a low voice.

The Doctor stared blankly. "I don't know," she said. "We'll probably find out once we're inside."

Ryan laughed. "Oh, come on," he said. "I'm not a moron. I know that my brain's like a peanut compared to yours, but I think I deserve a bit more respect. And so do they."

The Doctor's expression faltered slightly. "I told you, we'll find the answers inside."

Right on cue, Graham and Yasmin reached their position. The Doctor turned her back and gestured for everyone to follow. For a brief second, Ryan thought he had seen a spark of terror in her eyes. Graham caught his attention and pointed towards the Time Lord with a frown. Ryan just shrugged.

Through the massive, stone archway was a short corridor about the same size, filled with more faded hieroglyphs and torches that were somehow still lit. Of all the things he'd seen so far, that was the most unnerving. At the end of the corridor was another archway, similar to the first, and through it, a glimpse of a larger chamber.

The Doctor kept walking, never looking back, clearly determined to find whatever had brought them here. But Ryan couldn't shake the image of fear in her eyes. He hadn't imagined it. The Doctor was afraid of something, and if even she was scared, they were in for a bumpy ride. She usually had more confidence in herself, powering through any situation without buckling under pressure.

The four adventurers walked through the second archway into a much bigger room, circular in shape. As Ryan looked up, he saw the four sides of the ruined building converging towards the sky, reminding him of the pyramids in Egypt. Interesting. There was a sense of uncanny familiarity here, coupled with the surreal. Maybe aliens did build the pyramids on Earth. Maybe those crazy-haired people on TV were right.

Yasmin poked his shoulder. "Hey, Ryan. You're looking a bit out of it right now."

He rubbed his eyes and yawned. He'd actually forgotten how tired he was. "Yeah," he said. "There's something about this place that's blowing my mind. Hard to comprehend, you know?"

Yasmin smiled, watching Graham run over to the Doctor. The Time Lord was currently examining everything with her hawkish eyesight.

"I know how you feel," said Yasmin. "Seems a bit too close to home."

"It's not just that," said Ryan. "It's her."

"What do you mean?"

"Haven't you noticed? She's scared. Nothing scares the Doctor. So, what does that mean for us?"

Yasmin slid her fingers between his. "Ryan, there have been so many times in the past I thought we were going to die. So, so many. But she always came through. Always. I don't know how, but even when it seemed pretty certain we were done for, she found a way to get us out alive. She's like a magician. Trust me, this time will be no different."

Ryan looked deep into her eyes. "Do you really believe that?"

Yasmin smiled gently. "Yes. And so should you."

Graham reached the Doctor, holding tight onto his new discovery; a single flower, reddish purple in colour, reflecting the light coming down from the sky. "Doctor, look at this!" he said, louder than he expected. "An actual, living flower!"

The Doctor stared curiously at it, and then at him. "You mean, it *was* living," she said. "It's dead now, isn't it? Where did you find it?"

"It was just growing out of one of the cracks in the floor, all by itself."

The Doctor carefully plucked it from his hand and sniffed. "Well, it's not poisonous, so that's good."

Graham rubbed his hands on his coat. "Yeah," he said. "I probably should have thought about that."

The Doctor nodded. "I agree. Show me exactly where you found it."

Graham led her over to a part of the ground that was more cracked than others. He wasn't a professional gardener by any stretch, but simple reasoning led him to believe that there was soil underneath. But soil and sunlight were only two ingredients for a

flower to grow, and water was nowhere to be seen.

The Doctor bent down and examined the cracks up close. She rubbed her index finger on one of them and licked the residue. "Yep," she said, spitting it out. "There's definitely soil under there. Interesting."

Graham noticed that Yasmin and Ryan had wandered off nearby. He gestured for them to come over, like he would have done to a couple of toddlers. Those two had become so close recently, and so very much alike, that they always seemed to drift into their own universe. It was nice to see, but it also made him feel a bit out of place – did Ryan really need his granddad treading on his toes?

The Doctor ran her fingers through her blonde hair and stood up, looking as if her mind was working out a thousand sums at once. In fact, it probably was. Suddenly, her eyes widened. "We need to get down there," she said quietly. "Graham, help me examine the centre of the room."

Mysterious as always. They walked to a large, circular tile on the floor, perfectly situated in the middle of the chamber, and the Doctor bent down once again. Yasmin and Ryan joined them.

"Have you found something?" asked Ryan.

"Yes," said the Doctor, dusting away as much sand as she could from the tile's surface. "And I think it's time I told you what we're really dealing with here."

She stood up and sighed. Graham crossed his arms – he didn't like where this was going.

"Go on," said Yasmin, forcing a smile. "We can handle it."

The Doctor gave a gentle smile of her own. "I love your optimism, Yaz; I always have. But I'm not sure that's going to be enough this time."

Yasmin's smile disintegrated. "Why?"

"This is the tomb of an Osiran," said the Doctor, fidgeting with her hands. "A highly advanced, extremely powerful species, now extinct, that influenced countless civilisations across the universe. Including yours."

"The crazy-haired people were right," said Ryan, dumbfounded.

"Oh my god," said Graham, remembering those baffling TV shows. "It was all true!"

The Doctor moved closer to them with a scowl. "You think this is funny?" she shouted. "This is serious! We're in a situation more volatile than anything you've ever experienced! If we don't tread carefully, not only will we be vaporised, but possibly the entire solar system! Maybe even the galaxy! How many people will die? How many lives will go un-lived?"

"So, let's leave!" said Yasmin, the tension in her voice increasing. "We can wait by the TARDIS until it repairs itself and go somewhere else! Let this place go untouched!"

"It's too late for that!" said the Doctor, rubbing her face. "The signal we received on the TARDIS wasn't a signal at all; it was an extension of the Osiran's being; reaching out from its resting place. I should have realised earlier. That's why it was damaging the TARDIS. Osirans are creatures of immense psychic power, and if left un-

checked, they can cause disasters beyond your imagination. I can't let that happen."

Graham tried to understand what he was hearing, but only one thing stood out. "Does that mean it's still alive?" As soon as he asked, he knew he would regret hearing the answer.

"In a way, yes," said the Doctor. "I don't know how, I don't know why, but the Osiran in this tomb is still functioning."

Graham felt a primal fear surge into his veins. Memories of old horror films started flooding into his mind. If there was one thing he never wanted to see, it was a mummy. And especially not a psychic mummy that could vaporise him within seconds.

Yasmin took a deep breath and stepped forward. "What do we do, then?"

The Doctor took her hand and grabbed hold of Graham's, then gestured for them both to hold Ryan's. The Time Lord made sure they all had her attention. "Simple. On my mark, we jump. Understand?"

They all nodded. Graham took a deep breath.

"Good. Ready... and... jump!"

**To be continued...**



## Fiction

# DEVIL WOMAN

### Neil Davies

Anxiously Smith inserted his key into the lock of the small flat he rented, eyes darting left and right to see if he was being watched. He rarely was but old habits die hard and Smith knew better than most how complacency can get you killed.

The flat was unremarkable, some bland photos although none of him, small pieces of memorabilia, tatty chairs and a very small television. The only thing that stood out was the dusty sphere on top of the TV, that glowed a soft sky blue. Drawn to this Smith frowned, his early warning system was telling him that a particular type of time craft had arrived flown by a specific occupant.

Hurrying over with a frown he rested a palm on the sphere and the spectrum became brighter, a mix of purple shot through with red, as he connected to the homing device he'd secreted some time ago. Once he knew how long the ship had been in the Meta Zone he realised he had to act immediately.

"I need to see you right away," Smith spoke hurriedly into the ring on his right index finger. "No it can't wait, a time craft has entered the Zone. Yes of course I'm sure. Do you imagine I of all people wouldn't be aware of such an incursion? I need a time and a location" Smith waited, then a soft thank you escaped his lungs.

Tanith didn't look up as he approached her desk in the library, he knew the rules. If she had history books strewn around her he was to keep away, but if she was reading a newspaper it was fine to approach.

Sitting down facing the blue skinned, corn haired girl he rested his elbows on the fake wood of the desk, they seemed to be alone in the vast library but of course they weren't. Tanith activated a sound barrier just to be on the safe side.

"My scanner has been active for two hours," Smith tried to keep the agitation out of his voice; he didn't do panic but there was no hiding the fact that he was rattled, "...which means the time ship has been here at least that long."

Still not looking up the raven haired woman blinked her hazel eyes, "What makes you think the hunter is after you, I mean you aren't the only fugitive here?"

"My scanner can only pick up one particular type of time ship, a TARDIS."

Tanith would know what a TARDIS was, she knew most types of time ship and her gaze was questioning.

"Then you need to move on don't you, where is your own craft parked?"

Smith was too shrewd to tell her that, "Close by," his voice was ironic and guarded; this was one secret he would never reveal.

"What's wrong Smithy, don't you trust me?"

His smile told her that he wasn't a fool and not to treat him like one while his voice softly purred, "of course I do," without any sincerity.

"So go, I won't try to stop you."

"The instant I take off I'll create a temporal trace that the hunter will be able to follow," he said, "I'll be no better off in the long term."

A shrewd operator who knew everything about the zone, Tanith speared him with a probing glance, "So what do you need me for?"

"I'm sure you can guess," he threw back hating these games she played.

"Ah yes you need my help to provide a distraction, something spectacular and violent; all right Mr Independent I can do that – for a price."

Yes he'd expected no less. Tanith, like most here, was a mercenary amongst other things.

Contriving to look humble he sat back, "I don't have any money."

The high cheekbones rose higher in a smile, "Oh come off it Smithy I wasn't born yesteryear, you own a TARDIS, it must be crammed full of valuable stuff – antiques, rare books, jewels even gold." Tanith emphasized this last word.

"Maybe," he hedged knowing he had little choice here but to barter for his freedom.

"Don't be coy with me it doesn't suit you," The woman hissed, "I want a billion in gold – dust, coins or bullion I don't much care but that's the price and it's payable immediately."

A small flat white pad, no bigger than a saucer was pushed towards him with a hand-shaped screen on the top. With a sigh Smith turned his right hand over and touched the pad with his ring; at once both ring and pad glowed cherry red and crackled. Tanith eyed her wrist watch and nodded,

"Transmat completed. Very good," she purred sitting back with a contented smile.

"Well?" Smith didn't try to hide his impatience; he couldn't hang around here for much longer.

"Well, what?" Tanith threw back at him?

"Aren't you going to do something, make a call, organise an explosion; do a time-jack?"

The laugh was rich and mocking, "Stop under-estimating me Smithy I know what I'm doing, do you imagine I haven't got something already in place? Now trot along to your ship and await my signal."

In considerable pain the Rani knew the amputation of her arm hadn't worked, the arm had regrown almost immediately and appeared normal but the DNA destroying virus was still in her system she hadn't removed it; merely its point of entry. She still required a new infusion of genes from one of two Time Lords, all she'd done was buy herself some time; it was time she would put to good use.

Her ship had penetrated a rift in time, one that led to a pocket dimension known as a Meta Zone. There were many of these and the only way to reach them was via a time craft of advanced design. Each zone was customized – some were ecclesiastical in nature, others were scholarly or sporting, a few were gambling dens, but all attracted outcasts and renegades on the run from someone or something. Typical thought The Rani that 'he' would be in a place like this. Her sensors had already scanned the residency permit database of the zone and come up with the name Smith. The delicious irony didn't fail to put a smile on her pale features, what a creature of habit he was; how predictable.

The Rani rose from her sofa and went over to the external viewer. She could see that she had materialised inside some large building that might be a church with its pillars, colourful windows and shrine-like centre. She scanned for weapons – none, force fields – none, guards – none. But there was a red flag on her system, oh good a trap she liked traps especially those she set herself.

Grabbing a weapon of her own she headed for her ship's door, the weapon

had an inbuilt sensor calibrated to Smith. Good grief, couldn't he think of something more original than that?

"Let the games begin," she sighed stepping over the threshold of her craft. The attack seemed to come from everywhere. The air around her boiled and seethed with colour and sound, a fierce radiation of reds, blues and greens out of which shapes emerged big and hostile. Some were like huge silver spiders; others were just flashing zigzags of angry burning light.

She didn't open fire on them - why waste ammunition! She squeezed the ring on her right index finger as they lunged at her. Their metal and plastic claws and teeth told her they were cyberforms, artificially transmuted killing machines vicious and deadly but ultimately crude and in this case ineffectual.

Their bites and slashes hit only thin air, their target having vanished without trace, melting away like a witch of legend.

Smith hadn't reached his TARDIS. He didn't trust Tanith and thought she might be following him or at least scanning him so he'd taken a circuitous route doubling back on himself a few times and keeping a lookout for a tail.

The gold he'd given her could be easily retrieved, that didn't concern Smith; what did was that Tanith's distraction might fail; his hunter was no fool she was almost as cunning and resourceful as he was much as it pained him to admit it.

Tanith was clever and ruthless but she was also crude and obvious; she lacked the sophisticated subtlety of a Gallifreyan.

Smith's TARDIS was on the far side of a quad bordered by trees and statues of heroes. Standing by one of the latter he surveyed the terrain with a small

device in his left hand – it was throbbing softly, another source of agitation. He thumbed on the device's weapon-software, this might be a trap and he didn't plan to get caught now.

Moving out into view with short, hurried steps he made his way towards the third tree on the left, his ship was behind it and not visible even from the balconies which overlooked the quad.

The air ahead seethed and twisted, warping out of shape to disgorge a female figure. Not Tanith, oh no this apparition was far worse. The tall raven haired beauty, majestic in her arrogance had eyes that flashed with an inner fire.

Smith raised his weapon in warning only to have it kicked from his hand. Gripped by the throat he was slammed back against a statue and pinned there with incredible strength.

The Rani's features twisted into a cruel rictus of triumph, "Got you," she cried.

"Why don't you just leave me alone," he choked?

"Sorry I can't do that." She hiked up a sleeve to reveal a tracery of scar-like tissue worming under her flesh; genetic decay and pretty advanced too. In her free hand was a small grey cube, "Oh I found your homing beacon in my TARDIS and just the sort of crass stupidity I've come to expect."

"Oh very clever," he spat.

"More than I can say for you," she snarled, "Thanks for the reception committee by the way, pity you didn't do your homework."

"I thought you'd be too smart for that, but I assumed I would have more wriggle room."

The Rani's laugh was sharp and mocking but soon broke up into a hacking cough, "Damn this disease," she clutched at her own chest.

"You're dying," Smith said softly and not unkindly like it saddened him.

"Not now I have you." Righting herself with an effort she kept her blaster fixed on him, "Your blood contains the cure I need."

How much would she take – some of it, half of it; surely not all of it?

"I could help you," he offered, "We could work on this together."

The look scoured him with its contempt. "All the preliminary research has been done, all I require now is...."

He finished for her, "A test subject," the words were thick with disapproval.

"Yes one willing to make a sacrifice in the name of science."

Smith recalled this woman at the academy how reckless and arrogant she'd been then, disdainful of safety protocols and the sanctity of life; results were all she cared about no matter who got hurt.

"Tutor Vardek always said you were callous."

"That fool, he was a snivelling coward like all of them back then but I'm not here to go over the past; well not that part of it."

A voice cut into the cruel diatribe and emerging from behind one of the taller statues with a raised blaster of her own, Tanith gave a triumphant smile.

"I don't think so," she said. "The reception was designed to bring you here where we could deal with you more discreetly. I take it you know this woman Smithy?"

"Oh yes," said the little man, "I know her all right she's called the Rani and she comes from my home planet."

"*Smithy* is that what you're calling yourself?" She turned to Tanith, "Butu has he told you his real name? I suspect

not, so let me introduce him," she took a step back, "he used to be known as the Doctor."

Smith saw the change come over Tanith. So, she knew the name. It meant something to her. Had their paths crossed in the past?

Her face twisting with disgust the girl reared back. "Is this true," the voice was brittle. "You're the Doctor?"

He managed to appear almost contrite. "What if I am?"

"The terrorist; the man who incites rebellion and insurrection; who causes utter chaos?"

"That's a rather negative spin on things; I prefer to think of myself as someone who facilitates positive change."

"My world ended up in flames because of the Doctor. He came to Jodra out of nowhere and sided with the minor gold resistance movement, helping them to undermine and overthrow the silver hegemony."

Smith recalled Jodra, a world torn by ethnic cleansing - silver on gold, torture, imprisonment and massacres.

"I ended 500 years of oppression," he said flatly.

"You condemned my world to perpetual civil war. Order collapsed, the economy was destroyed and my family lost everything we ended up on the streets scrambling to survive. In the end I had to flee the gold death squads and come here."

The Rani looked triumphant enjoying this little falling out amongst friends.

"I'm sorry," said Smith. "I had no idea, I acted with the best intentions; I always try to improve things."

"Improve things," Tanith exploded, "I lost everyone I loved, everybody I cared about," and then she shot him, at

point blank range in the stomach. The pain was intense, searing, he felt as though his insides were being cooked in their own juices and with a piercing scream he fell clutching himself legs twitching.

"Impressive," voice dripping with pleasure the Rani stood over him, "But I need him alive so don't do that again." The brilliant but cold eyes regarded Smith, entirely devoid of sympathy. He could see that to her he was just a resource a means to an end.

"I don't intend to kill him so quickly," Tanith responded, "He hasn't suffered enough yet, and believe me he's going to. I'm going to inflict on him all the pain, misery and indignity that I can think of."

Even the Rani seemed impressed and few cruelties eclipsed her own, she was without doubt utterly atavistic and amoral.

"Later perhaps," she said, "I need to take him to my ship."

"Then I'm coming with you," Tanith insisted, grinding her high heel into Smith's wound. Giving a high-pitched, drawn out scream Smith almost fainted, squirming uselessly.

Pushing the other woman aside the Rani placed a small adhesive pack on Smith's chest. At once he felt gravity lost all control over him and he levitated into the air, to a height of about six feet.

Satisfied she turned and marched in the direction of her TARDIS. As Smith floated behind her he felt his gunshot wound begin to heal. Non-fatal wounds always regenerated quickly - it was a Time Lord gift. Tanith followed, her gun holstered, her features losing much of their malicious heat.

Disguised as a coniferous tree the Rani's ship enveloped Smith turning from leaf and bark to a darkly tinted but

smoothly contoured room over 60 feet square with a humming central column made up of softly rotating horizontal rings.

Coming to rest on a flat grey couch Smith felt himself gripped tightly as the anti-grav pack was removed, he couldn't move a muscle below his neck. Deftly his ring was removed and placed on the console, and then his wound was inspected.

"Good," The Rani drawled, "Instant tissue regeneration," she showed no further interest in his healing abilities. Instead plunging a needle painfully into his throat just barely missing his windpipe, several c.c.'s of pink cloudy fluid were removed and studied.

"This should be enough," she mused, "If it isn't I can always take more."

All he could do was croak in response, his throat on fire.

"Extract all you want," Tanith didn't sound all that concerned, "then he's mine."

Eyebrows arched and mouth curled into a lopsided grin the Time Lady shook her head, "I'm taking this to my lab to be processed. You stay here and try not to kill him just yet, I won't be too long. If you get bored feel free to begin torturing him but don't kill him without me being present. I've been looking forward to that for a long time."

Smith frowned his voice a little stronger, "Why have you extracted fluid from my thyroid gland?" he asked.

"It will help shore up my own genetic resources and cleanse me of this accursed virus."

"A virus of your own creation - no doubt also inflicted on countless other unwilling victims."

"That Doctor, is none of your concern," she threw back.

"Why me and not the Master? Surely he's a perfect genotype too. Couldn't you find him? Has he eluded you?"

Features tight with fury the tall woman gave a shuddering sigh, "You were easier to find, Smith. Indeed, you couldn't have been more obvious. But I'll catch up with your nemesis in due course. His death is also long overdue."

"You're in the grip of a regeneration crisis, aren't you?" The words held mockery, "After all you are getting on a bit?"

The Rani's features blanched but she didn't rise to the bait; she clearly had more pressing business. She looked pale to Smith, tired and run down with a hint of dark under both eyes.

Speeding away she didn't even offer a parting shot, it was most unlike her to let anyone get the last word in.

He blinked up at Tanith, "I can't move," he said.

"I know." The cool eyes betrayed no emotion. She picked up his ring from the console, studied it for any financial value, then clearly having decided it didn't have any, she put it back on his finger. The ring glowed softly giving off a barely perceptible sigh.

He felt the magna-couch lose power and sat up, feeling a twinge from his wound as he did, but it was nothing serious.

"Thanks for shooting me." His tone was dry.

"I had to make it look convincing."

"Oh you did. For a moment I thought you were really going to torture me."

"It did cross my mind," Tanith did not seem to be joking. "How do you want to play this?"

Smith had gone over the options, but only one made any sense.

"We need to take control of this ship. You go to terminal five and initiate the synchronic relay matrix."

He was impressed when she didn't ask him what this was. Finding the terminal with ease she pressed all the right buttons.

"Are you really him; the Doctor I mean?"

"Does it matter?" Smith didn't stand up. He knew he needed to gather his strength.

"Yes, as a matter of fact it does. I wasn't lying about all the bad stuff he did."

"Actually you were."

Head jerking up she frowned, "What do you mean?"

"All that stuff about Jodra, all very emotionally gut wrenching and full of pathos."

"It happens to be true," she snarled.

"It happens to be a programme which I fed into you, soon after I arrived here - one of several ideas I implanted."

Hands falling away from the console she straightened, looking at him in confusion and resentment, "Implanted?"

"Oh yes, dear Tanith. It was essential that you saw yourself as a renegade like me, a terrorist hiding out in the Zone."

"I am in hiding. You know that," she cried, thinking about shooting him again, he could tell.

"Alas, I'm afraid not," he chuckled remembering how useful she'd been to him, how she'd kept the drones and gangsters off his back.

"I don't understand what you're saying; I have vivid memories of my life and history."

"Convenient fictions that I made up for you; convincing at first glance but ultimately bogus. You are not what you think, Tanith. Would you like me to prove it, for there to be honesty between us at last?" He walked over to the console and made to operate the controls. He could see the rage in her shocked expression. He could tell she felt betrayed and used - and with good reason.

"Tell me what's going on Doctor, or I'll shoot you again - this time fatally."

"Oh, I'm not the Doctor," he grinned twisting a black dial.

At once the whole console erupted into violent movement, seeming to come alive like some monstrous creature roused from a deep sleep. Pincers burst from its surface on long concertina-like arms, vicious sharp edged metal talons that grabbed Tanith by the arms and torso.

One of her arms was severed at the shoulder, cut clean through but there was no scream, no blood. The arm was electronic a prosthesis, the exposed shoulder was also full of circuitry.

"What the hell," she cried, "My arm is robotic."

"Your entire body is, I'm afraid. You see Tanith, you're a security drone. You were the guard who escorted me into the Zone, my first watcher - and a difficult conversion. It took a lot of tinkering to re-programme you, to convince you that you were another renegade; a biological entity; a real woman.

"No," the shriek was heartfelt almost human. "That's not true."

"I'm afraid it is," Smith was grinning now, enjoying himself. "You've been most helpful to me Tanith a real asset."

"Help me damn you!"

"Throw me your weapon."

"I can't, it's got my arms."

Smith made no move to approach Tanith. He went to one of the roundels on the wall, prized it open and fumbled inside.

"Smith," Tanith cried, as a talon closed around her neck.

"I'm going as fast as I can."

"Unlike you I can't regenerate," Tanith cried with most un-machine-like hysteria.

No answer was forthcoming, then the murderous pincers fell slack, releasing Tanith and began to recede back into the console. She grabbed her amputated limb and held onto it tightly.

"Thank you."

Smith smiled back, she was welcome.

"I didn't expect her to have upgraded the console so extensively," he said. "It should be safe now. I've also locked her in her own medical bay for the time being."

Making his way gingerly over to the console he reached out slowly and caressed it.

"Help me reattach my arm," Tanith was struggling.

"Later, first I need to ensure that the Rani never returns to this zone or tracks me down so easily again. I've been wondering how she found me in the first place and....ah here it is," Smith felt indignant, "She's got my Data Extract from Gallifrey, DEs are supposed to be sacrosanct."

If Tanith was interested in this it didn't show on her face, "And the stuff she took from you?"

"Thyroxin, an essential part of our regenerative and recuperative powers; there must be something wrong with her at the DNA level - some form of decay. Time Lords can degenerate as

well as..." he paused and frowned, "I didn't expect this. It complicates matters. The Rani has prisoners aboard her TARDIS - her test subjects."

Tanith didn't seem surprised or interested, "She rules a planet of primitive humanoids, whom she uses in her experiments."

Smith took a step back to rub his chin thoughtfully, he had intended to trap the Rani in the Vortex for a century or two. She wouldn't age or die but her prisoners would; assuming that she didn't kill them by some other means.

"What's wrong Smith? You're surely not intending to free these creatures?"

"They might be useful to me, I may just pay a visit to this planet of hers to see what I can learn."

He pointed at a screen, the test subjects would be in the medical bay with the Rani. If he freed them he'd be freeing her; it was a dilemma.

"Step back," Tanith barked, "Or I'll shoot you again."

Smith paused, regarding her calmly. When he spoke, it was barely above a whisper. "I saved your life Tanith."

"You stole my life; tricked me; altered my sense of self - step away from those controls."

Complying, Smith folded his arms. "The Rani could be held prisoner here in this zone, there are containment pockets, fissures of nul-time," he explained.

"I don't want her living here, even in stasis. She's a bigger menace than you are."

"I could take you with me. There's no reason why you should remain in the Zone - not now," he purred, thinking how useful she could be to him; how deadly she was with a blaster. He had never travelled with a companion, it might be fun.

Smith chuckled, removing his hands from the telepathic circuits, "There, it's done," he sighed.

"What is?" Tanith barked, "What have you done?"

"What I had to." His tone carried a hint of menace. "What was necessary – under the circumstances?"

The Rani couldn't believe her eyes, what she was seeing didn't make any sense.

#### TISSUE REJECTION DNA INFUSION UNSUITABLE

A low moan escaped her lips, this couldn't be happening. The Doctor was an ideal donor. All the data suggested it. He had a 98% match with her, whereas that fool the Master only had a 55% match. Damn the man, had he in some way altered his DNA or added something to it that was anomalous to her?

She dragged herself over to the medical centre door; it refused to open.

#### ACCESS CODE ALTERED.

Smith, it had to be; that cyborg Tanith didn't have the technical skill. Very clever she thought but not clever enough and going over to a new addition to her TARDIS that stood in one corner she entered the narrow cubicle and worked a touch pad.

Tanith jabbed her gun into Smith's neck leaving him in no doubt as to her resolve; there would be no more games. Their alliance was at an end unless he did as she instructed. "Send this time capsule into the vortex and make sure it stays there," she snapped.

"I don't take orders off a security drone," he said softly, his eyes glacially hard. "An artificial tool with a pro-

gramme for a personality. Really Tanith, you disappoint me"

So that was all he thought about her, she was a tool; a robot; not a real person.

"The Rani is a danger to us all surely you can see that." He could hear her efforts to sound reasonable. "She would try to take over the zone, either that or destroy it; she's a monster."

"There are all kinds of monsters," he responded, "some more pernicious than others. If you only knew the things I've done."

"Perhaps you should tell me."

He smiled. It would take too long and he was in a hurry. Maybe he should dispose of Tanith after all Perhaps she had she outlived her usefulness. The idea of having a companion had been an attractive one, but probably foolish.

Around them the ship hummed and vibrated with more vigour, its lights dimmed then brightened, the time rotor revolved.

"We're on the move," Tanith declared, "You fool, you're taking us away from the Zone."

"Oh, it's not remotely foolish." Smith gazed over to his left, where a ghostly column of light was resolving itself into a solid shape fizzing with anger. So an internal transmat; he'd been after one of those for centuries. It was said to be a feature only of the type 80 capsule but clearly the Rani had adapted her craft brilliantly.

"Who are you?" The Rani's voice crackled with fury.

"I thought you'd already worked that out," Smith's tone was deceptively mild.

"I thought so too but clearly not. I think it's time to reveal yourself."

She was right of course. He took out the pendant from where he kept it hidden under his collar and depressed the blazing red gem at its heart. At once his hair grew darker and longer; his features darker; his eyes became a deeper shade of green like those of a reptile. He gained a good four inches in height and broadened out. The transformation completed, he gave a low, familiar chuckle.

"You," she rasped, shock mixing with anger, "I might have known."

He had thought she'd work it out sooner. Maybe her age or her genetic illness had slowed her down "I see my genes weren't to your taste. How sad." he mocked.

"Where is the Doctor?" an obvious demand - only his DNA could save her now.

"Why don't we hunt him down together," he offered?

She seemed to consider his offer for a moment. "A truce?" she spat with contempt.

"An alliance; he is after all a mutual enemy." The idea of having this witch as his ally amused him.

"And what would you get out of it? Oh of course, you need my TARDIS. You're trapped here, aren't you. What's wrong with your TARDIS? Doesn't it work?"

"The Doctor scrambled my dematerialisation matrix," it left a bitter taste in the mouth to admit he'd been outwitted again, outplayed and marooned here with no way to escape other than by stealing another TARDIS.

The Rani's expression slipped into scorn, "Ha, he's too good for you."

Inwardly seething Smith gripped the edge of a console, his mind coming up with punishments to mete out to his greatest enemy.

"But not for the two of us," he snarled.

"How do I know I can trust you?"

"You need me; we need each other."

Before she could deny it but Tanith spoke, "Where are we going – and who are you anyway?" Her weapon veered between the two of them.

The Master and the Rani both ignored her questions.

"Must we keep this glorified talking dummy?" The Rani was withering.

"She may be useful to us, if nothing else, she's a good shot."

"Where do we begin looking for the Doctor, anyway? His time trace has eluded me."

"I am quite certain that I know where to find him. Miasma Gorla, your adopted home. He's gone there to free your poor slaves while you're away. It's typical of his bleeding hearts."

The Time Lady stood there, hands on hips, a picture of incandescent rage. "That do-gooding pest! How dare he! Oh I see. It was the Doctor who bugged my TARDIS not you, you just piggy backed onto his technology."

The shrug was noncommittal, did it really matter now?

"He bugged you but I bugged him," Smith revealed, "That's how I know where he's gone."

"You bugged the Doctor's TARDIS?"

"He never knew." Smith boasted proud of his foresight, but his hubris was cut short by the sound of a familiar voice, coming from Tanith.

"Oh hello, you're both there. That's handy. I don't want to spoil your fun, but I'm afraid I found your little device quite a long time ago. You weren't quite clever enough Master. Anyway, sorry to butt in but I hope you don't



mind, I secreted a little relay device on Tanith. That's how I am able to talk to you now."

"Doctor...!" the Rani interjected, "I need your help. I'm ill."

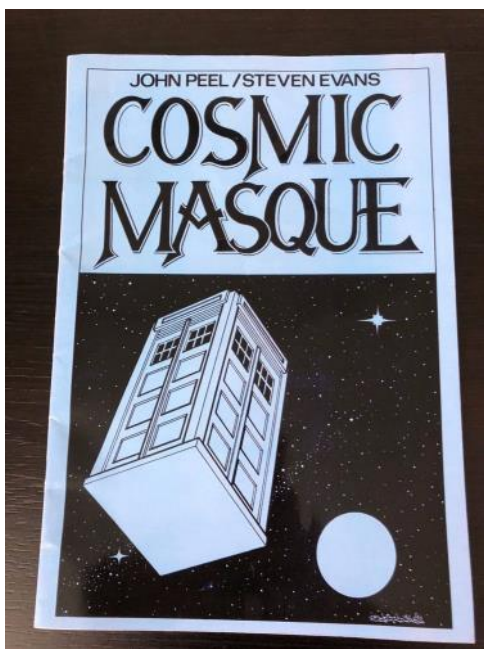
"Yes, yes... I know." The tone was not unsympathetic. "I'm transmitting the formula for a temporary cure that will alleviate your symptoms."

"Temporary? What do you mean temporary? How temporary? I need a transfusion of Time Lord blood, and his," she cocked a thumb at the Master, "Is no good at all."

The ship lurched violently. The Master clung to the console fighting for control. "We're veering off course." he barked, "shifting back through space and time, but I don't recognise these coordinates."

"It's the planet Karn," said the Doctor almost sadly. "With any luck the Sisterhood will give you some of their elixir, provided you ask nicely. I need all of my blood."

"Damn you, Doctor." stamping her foot, the Rani looked to be on the verge of a tantrum. She turned angrily to the Master, "And damn you too". But he could only chuckle; then the chuckle turned into a loud guffaw. For all that he hated his life-long adversary, he knew that he would always rather admire the Doctor. You had to see the irony in it, the skill of the Doctor's machinations. They were he thought quite masterful.



## COSMIC MASQUE 1 1977

The first ever edition of Cosmic Masque, and possibly the first fan fiction magazine, was published by DWAS in 1977. Edited by John Peel and Steven Evans, it contained new stories for all four (yes all four of them) Doctors.

Our facsimile largely replicates the style and layout of the original magazine and can be bought from our eBay site—[click here to view](#)

## Feature 2nd Doctor on Twitch Rik Moran

The Twitch online viewing marathon continues, and due to the number of missing episodes, we jump straight to season 5 and Tomb of the Cybermen. This is a traditional Doctor Who story and I think it is marvellous. It pleased me greatly that the Twitch crowd thought so too. There was much love shown in the online comments, for both Victoria and The Doctor, but the character that everyone seems to have really taken to is Jamie.

We move on. For some reason The Ice Warriors is dropped and instead we go straight to Enemy of the World which again, people seem to like.

There was some question as to how The Web of Fear was going to be shown. When episode 3 arrived, it was the reconstruction that was used. This confused a few people with questions such as "Is anyone else experiencing lag?" being asked! Once it had been explained what a reconstruction was the comments changed to "POWERPOINT 1965", "TELESNAPS ARE BETTER THAN NOTHING", "META SLIDESHOW", "MORE MISSING EPISODES PLEASE". I'm not sure about that last one. Once we got onto episode 4 comments included "I miss the slides", "It moves!" and "RIP tele snaps". As with pretty much everything so far, it is all taken in good fun and I find it positive that there were over 8000 watching a recon!!

I think the high point of the second Doctor's run on Twitch was The Mind Robber. This was received extremely well and at one point Frazer Hines himself turned up in the Twitch chat, which I thought was a great thing for

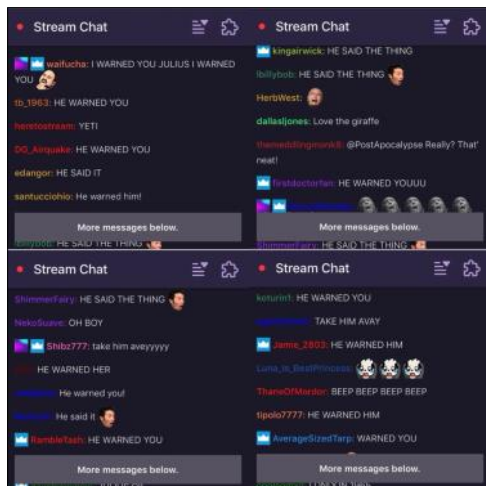
him to do. Frazer later posted on twitter – "I loved the chat, people who have never seen Patrick's Doctor! Great! "

Wendy Padbury was recently asked at the Utopia event what she thought of the Twitch marathon to which she replied "You mean people love Zoe in Doctor Who on Twitch? They all sound lovely!"

For the most part the people in the Twitch chat have indeed been lovely, however the last couple of stories have seen some spoilers posted, ruining things for this new group of viewers. I hope this doesn't continue as it's been a joy watching folks experience these adventures for the first time.

I was very surprised to see the notable drop in viewing numbers for The Second Doctor. The figures were on average between 10,000 – 12,000 for Hartnell and yet for Troughton they were down to 6,000 – 8,000. If anything, I had expected the figures to go up. I'll be keeping an eye on them as the marathon continues.





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