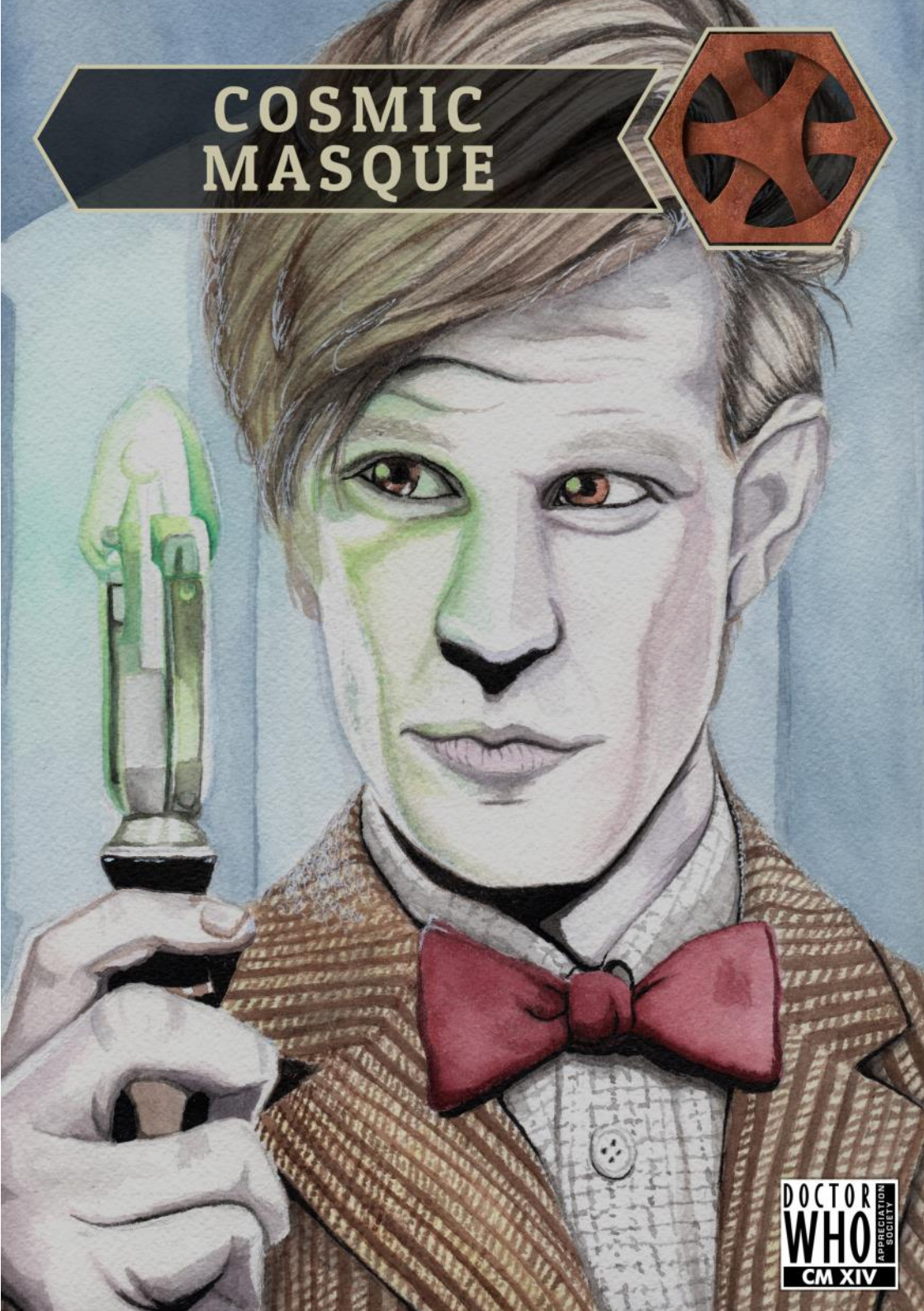


COSMIC MASQUE



DOCTOR
WHO
APPRECIATION
SOCIETY
CM XIV

EDITORIAL

By Nick Smith

I'm in the middle of rural Tennessee, filming a TV show. The star wants a bottle of Tito's vodka and I've got time to kill before a production meeting, so I drive past barns and rusty tractors looking for booze. It's a beautiful part of the country, all pleasant green rolling hills. But there's no sign of alcohol in them thar valleys.

I'm about to give up and turn around when I see a strip of shops with a liquor store. They have Tito's. They also have a neighbouring store called [Heroes Wanted](#). I still have a little time so, what the heck, I pop in for a browse.

Inside is a considerable collection of comics. As if by magic, the shopkeeper appears and asks me if I'm looking for anything in particular. I take a leap and ask him if he has Doctor Who Comic number 4, an issue I can't find in my LCS. He smiles and it's then that I notice his door behind the counter. It's decorated like the doors to the TARDIS and, yes, he has that missing issue.

Turns out the guy runs the store with his dad, who is a big comic book fan. He talks about the comics he wished he'd picked up, specifically some rare spinoffs.

Spinoffs, which usually feature a peripheral element from a main run, are fascinating if not essential to a collector. They can expand a character's background, making them more three-dimensional than one comic or TV adventure allows. Or, as in the case of Abslom Daak – Dalek Killer or Kroton the cyberman with a soul, bring a new twist to a situation.

Beyond the comic book field, Doctor Who has spawned its own offshoots, which we take a look at in this issue. It's also inspired audio adventures and stage plays that focus on enemies and companions who finally get to shine on their own.

Cutaway Comics is taking the spinoff strip idea a step further, expanding the exploits of Orcini, Lytton and even the rezzies of Paradise Towers. We talk to the Cutaway team and get a glimpse of their excellent artwork, which hearkens back to the back-up strips of Doctor Who Weekly.

You can also read Jordan Shortman's review of the first Doctor Who Comic miniseries, collected as the graphic novel "Alternating Current," and the final issue of Titan's Missy. We get a behind-the-scenes hint of what it was like to be a stone-cold nun in The Sarah Jane Adventures, courtesy of actress Elesia Marie and learn about the Big Finish's first Christopher Eccleston-starring audio in a review by Paul Winter.

Over in the Land of Fiction, Stephen Hatcher presents three excellent prose stories and part one of a highly imaginative script by Paul Ebbs.



Back in Tennessee, the Comic Book Guy explains to me that the store is a family affair; his father has passed his passion down to his sons – his own spinoffs, so to speak. His legacy continues to grow, passed on

to the people who visit the store, even when it's by accident.

The TV star gets his Tito's and I get my comic. Since that happy time and place, I have been looking out for more TARDIS doorways and I'm surprised how many I've found across



Editor and companion in Sacramento

the United States, from a tattoo parlour in Portland, Oregon to a toy store in Old Sacramento, California. I would love to hear about the TARDIS doors you've found, and where they spun off to...

Nick

COSMIC MASQUE XIV

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If you are interested in contributing to Cosmic Masque [please contact us here](#)



By Ruthann Stubblefield

10 THINGS I LIKE ABOUT WHO

By Dana Birlingmair

10 characters, moments, relationships and remarkable things that sum up what makes Doctor Who special.

The Doctor/Donna

Donna Noble and the Tenth Doctor's emotional connection raises the stakes and always makes the companion's departure hard to watch. Luckily, even though she has to forget him, he does not forget her and has a chance to bid her farewell from a distance in *The End of Time*.

Wilf's Jig

Echoing Binro's joy at learning Ribos is a planet orbiting a star, Donna's granddad Wilfred Mott gazes at the night sky through his telescope, hoping there's more out there than common knowledge allows. Thanks to Bernard Cribbins' performance, the excitement is palpable when Wilf finds out that what he yearns for actually exists – and he dances a jig.

TARDIS shower curtains

I'd just started watching the show in 2015 when I visited my friend Jeddie and noticed her TARDIS shower curtain. I realized there was as a whole universe – or Whoniverse – out there I didn't know about, and I was



not alone in being captivated by the Doctor's travels.

Eleven's Childlike Joy

Scoring in a football match. Fixing up a house for fatherless children. Appreciating hats. Matt Smith's childish moments balance with the solemn aspects of his 'cosmic old man' portrayal of the Doctor. His silly, fezz-loving scenes make his sad moments (for example, in *The Snowmen*) all the more poignant.



Sarah Jane's Continuity

Sarah Jane Smith is one of only a few characters who carried over from

Classic to New Who, and she did it effortlessly.

K9

Even though he's a machine he has a heart, he's loyal like a real pet and he makes me want to have my own Girl's Best Friend.

The Messy Charm of Two

One collar in, one out; scruffy hair; a big honkin' fur coat; this scruffy monochrome marvel is kind and instantly appealing.

River Song

River is unique in the complete Whoniverse, since she actually had a



relationship with the Doctor and knows his name. She is a child of time even though she's not a Time Lord. Best of all, she's a bad girl turned good... but not too good.

Seven's Accent

When I think of Sylvester McCoy's Doctor, I hear his rolling Rs and picture his question mark umbrella. He is fun! I always enjoy the light-heartedness of his era.

Tom Baker in The Day of the Doctor

With that grin of his, Tom Baker had such charm as the Fourth Doctor that you always wanted to follow him and find out what he was doing. He was THE Doctor. To see him again as the Curator gave all the feels, and to see him with the Eleventh Doctor was extra special. His joy was infectious.



The Other Worlds of Doctor Who

BEST IN CLASS

By Nick Smith

There's an art to writing an original Doctor Who novel. The Doctor and companions have to be recognizable and make choices that fit their characters as established on TV. Yet they need to have enough freedom of movement to make the story engaging and unpredictable. Some authors are more successful at this than others but if the protagonists are well-defined in the show, they're easier to recognise on paper.

The Class crew doesn't just exist on TV and Big Finish audio. They've also had three prose adventures, fitting since their creator Patrick Ness is known for YA novels like *The Rest of Us Just Live Here* and *A Monster Calls*. Although the spin-off Class novels, published in 2016, are written by three different authors, they all rise to the challenge of fleshing out the world of Cole Hill Academy without making any ground-breaking changes to that world.

The books are set during Class' first and only season so there's no grand progression and no payoff after the startling cliffhanger ending of the TV series. The books are true to the show and capture the characters in an authentic manner. The intended readership is skewed a little younger

than the series; there are no saucy bedroom scenes or bad language worth crying to Mary Whitehouse about. Instead, the focus is on pace, atmosphere and solid storytelling, making each book in the collection worth reading.

Joyride by Guy Adams is the most traditional story in the series. Kids at Cole Hill are possessed. One steals a car and drives it through a shop window. Another sets fire to his house with his family inside. When the headstrong athlete Ram Singh's body is taken over, his friends Charlie, Tanya, April and Mateusz have to help him. There are aliens involved, which is no surprise to Charlie, last Prince of the Planet Rhodia, or his long-suffering guardian Miss Quill.



Joyride happens soon after Charlie and Miss Quill have arrived on Earth, courtesy of the Twelfth Doctor. Quill is still begrudgingly coming to grips with human food and customs. Ram is adapting to a new prosthetic leg and mourning the murder of his girlfriend Rachel; both his leg and his squeeze were lost in *For Tonight We Might Die*, the pilot episode of Class. It's intriguing to read more about the

burgeoning relationship between the main characters, even though they can't be developed too much. The story moves quickly with some commentary on entrepreneurs and the money-hungry values of society. While Joyride is told in a straightforward manner, A. K. Benedict's *The Stone House* has a more varied structure. At first blush it's about an old house haunted by a child; the book switches from the child's view back to the main narrative. Tanya is this story's central protagonist, taking an interest in the house and encouraging her pals to investigate. Tanya is not the most interesting or likeable character in *Class*, *The Stone House* shines a rare spotlight on the young computer geek.

What She Does Next will Astound You, by prolific *Who* writer James Goss, has similarities to *Doctor Who* novels *Toy Soldiers* and *Winner Takes All* as well as the *Season One Sarah Jane Adventure*, *Warriors of Kudlak*. In that romp, game-playing kids are kidnapped to fight an alien war by a bad, literally bug-eyed creature. In this book the abductors have a different motive and mode of picking their targets.

Goss' story puts the heroes in action-heavy, violent situations that make them question their morals and humanity. The best element of the book, however, is its pastiches of internet personalities, memes and ice bucket-style challenges – essentially, the dangers of kneejerk social

media and crowd mentality. Even the chapter headings are written like clickbait:

After You Read This You'll Want a Shower

This Girl Wanted an Adventure Holiday. You Won't Believe Where She Ended Up.

You Are Being Lied to About Dogs

And my personal favourite, because it's so wonderfully out-of-place:

How Toast is Like Lady Gaga

The internet riffs are loads of fun and the author makes the conceit work without being condescending, tough in even the most pedestrian Young Adult novels. *What She Does Next* has just enough twists and memorable moments to make it the best book in the series. Also worth celebrating – or at least noting – is that in the US edition, Coal Hill Academy's name has been changed back to what it always should be, Coal Hill School.



The three books really show the different directions *Class* can take, from spooky Scooby mystery to bodysnatching thriller to fringe

space opera. As in the show, Miss Quill is a stand-out; trapped in a role she despises, cynically kicking ass with a slew of sour, hilarious comments. Schoolmates April, Tanya and Ram are also well depicted and the writers have fun with Charlie's fish-out-of-water cluelessness. His boyfriend Mateusz get shortest shrift, as if the authors aren't sure what to do with him other than use him as Charlie's foil and guide to being human.

On TV, *Class* didn't quite capture the authentic teen viewpoint it aimed for, although it was a welcome addition to the expanded Doctor Who oeuvre. The novels are a solid continuation of Ness' vision, thanks to some enthralling writing, wild ideas and heroics worthy of our favourite Time Lord.



BETAMAX MEMORIES

By Nick Smith

Up until the mid-'80s, there were only two ways for most fans to watch Doctor Who – on transmission or during a repeat run like Doctor Who and the Monsters. For me that changed in 1987, when I got into an exciting new routine thanks to my Uncle Robin.

Robin was and always will be a gentle soul, a homebody who wore thick glasses and Swiss cheese cardigans. Occasionally he used contact lenses, which he called “putting his eyes in.” He played piano like a maestro. But our main bond was our love of movies – he introduced me to my first modern horror film, *The Return of the Living Dead*, which we watched with the aid of a magnificent silver machine called a Betamax Player.

The new routine went like this: on Mondays after school, I walked to Grandma's house at 274 Wells Road. It was an old house, Victorian style, with a lobby area where I hung my duffel coat. After saying hello to Grandma, I made a beeline for a spare room on the ground floor that served as a second sitting room, with a love seat and a small box TV.

Beside the TV in all its chunky top-loading glory was the Betamax videotape recorder. It was the only one



I'd ever seen and its potential amazed me. For the first time ever, I could watch my favourite show whenever I wanted, as many times as I wanted. Thanks Uncle Robin!

With great anticipation, I took a large cassette from my school bag, put it into the top loader and gently pushed it down, listening to a satisfying clunk and whir. I turned on the TV and – just in time! – Doctor Who would soon begin. I started this ritual with a special episode with a new Doctor, new opening credits and a new story. It was hard not to get enthusiastic about Time and the Rani.

I worried that I was being antisocial, shutting myself in a room alone, with family so close by. But they knew where to find me and I'd only be sequestered for 25 minutes.

As the credits of Wogan rolled, the skin on my arms goose-bumped and I hit record on the Beta. Robin had always been an iconoclast; while everyone else was rushing out buying a VHS machine, he preferred the superior quality and underdog rep of Betamax. Although Sony was putting its marketing might behind the less popular format, initially pitching it as

a “time-shift machine,” VHS often had more room on a tape (originally, 120 minutes compared to 60) and its machines were cheaper.

1987's home video releases included Star Trek IV, Flight of the Navigator, Labyrinth and Top Gun, with a definite focus on blockbusters rather than classics (The Red Shoes being a notable exception). But it was the recordability of the tapes that really grabbed me at the time. As Time and the Rani marched on, I recognized its flaws – the writing lacked flair or complexity, the companion squealed her way across a dull landscape, the aliens were goofy and the Doctor didn't make an impression in the first episode. Since I was able to rewatch the story, though, I was able to appreciate details and quirks in a brand new way.



The show was fast-paced for its day, brash and fun. Like my viewing habits, Doctor Who was changing, and when Sylvester McCoy did wake up he was instantly likeable. Through no fault of the actor, after Colin Baker's cranky characterization, calling McCoy a breath of fresh air

was a huge understatement.

It was hard not to get caught up in the hoo-ha of a new Doctor, from his photo appearing on the cover of Doctor Who Magazine to the flashy new logo and tabloid tales of McCoy's ferret-wrangling past. I'd already taken a shine to McCoy since his goofball appearances in the BBC kids' show, Eureka. So I watched and enjoyed his inaugural Doctor Who adventure, returning every Monday to tape the rest of the season. It was hardly a big commitment, since there were only 14 episodes to catch.

But then there was the re-viewing, which took me into 1988 and another exciting year for Doctor Who watchers and tapers – it was, after all, the show's 25th anniversary and the Doctor's air of mystery was thankfully renewed.

As I watched the tapes over and over, I was able to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of stories like Remembrance of the Daleks, which remains a go-to of mine to this day. At the time, Keff McCulloch's music and the relationship between the Doctor and Ace kept me coming back for self-scheduled repeats. Ace herself seemed to acknowledge the new era of video playback when she mentioned that the Doctor's final gambit in Silver Nemesis was the same as that of Remembrance... a reiteration that was more noticeable on a second or third

viewing. You could catch that wholesale destruction in your very own reruns, folks!

By 1989 it was very obvious who had won the videotape war and even Uncle Robin was eyeing up a VHS recorder. Sony decided to add VHS to its line of VCRs. The last Beta unit was made in 2002, although amazingly, blank tapes were still being made until 2016.

As a teenager, the only way for me to watch Seasons 24 to 26, though, was on that clunky old Beta machine. I kept visiting Grandma and Robin, revelling in the complexities of stories like Ghost Light.

I moved away and lost touch with Robin, the man who liked lame duck formats and wanted to be different, too. The Betamax memories faded until I caught Survival on Twitch. When Ace turned to the camera, her eyes weird and feline, I was hit by a tidal wave of nostalgia. Those hours spent watching, analysing and hoping for more, bookended by family visits, were still there ready to be rewound and enjoyed all over again.



BIRTHDAY BOY

By Brad Filippone

While watching Doctor Who, it's always fun to recognize the familiar face of a supporting actor. Novia Scotian Brad Filippone has spent years celebrating those faces - and the behind-the-scenes faces we don't see, too - with birthday-themed memes, using images and quotes from the stories they worked on.

Brad told Cosmic Masque how he got involved in this important endeavour, and why it's so important to acknowledge the show's cast and crew.

Several years back I noticed a Facebook friend posting picture montages of Star Trek actors posting daily to some Star Trek groups. After thinking about it for a while I decided I could do the same with the long history of Doctor Who. My main source for the birthdays was imdb.com, though it's not always accurate and I've had to make a few corrections to my birthday list over the years.

I started posting them in 2014, in fact, we've just passed the anniversary of my beginning - the first birthday I posted was Colin Baker's (his was not on the Missing Episodes group of course). I used Microsoft Paint on the advice of my Star Trek friend. Often that first year I waited

too long before putting the birthday posts together each day and sometimes I discovered just before I turned in for the night that I had as many as five or six to make, and went scrambling for my DVDs (most of the images are screen captures from the DVDs, though in the case of missing episodes I had to find other sources). Also, that first year I would consult one of the admins on the Missing Episodes Discussion Group as to what non-Who roles a given actor was famous for, since I live in Canada and I don't know their careers outside of our favourite show.

When the first year was done, it got much easier, since I could simply re-use the ones from the year before. Occasionally, I have to update the posts, such as when the subject of the post passes away, or appears in a second story. Also, there are many actors on the show that I don't have posts for simply because I have never been able to find any online source that has their birthdays.

I occasionally do new searches for them to see if their birthdays have become known in the past year and occasionally, I'm able to add a new post. As well, every time a new series airs, I have new posts to make although I'm sometimes slow at getting them made - I still haven't got birthdays for Series Twelve completed. After a couple of years, I started making birthday posts for the New-Who people.

I currently post them to twelve

groups, some specialized, such as the Missing Episodes group, another group that specializes in 1980s Who and a couple of groups that are specifically about the women who worked on and appeared on the show.

I do it because it's fun and because of all the positive responses I've got-

ten in the various groups over the years. It does seem to be very appreciated.

A special thank you to Brad Filippone for helping to untangle the knotty web of Doctor Who production history - keep up the good memes!



THE REVOLUTION WILL BE COLOURISED— AN INTERVIEW WITH DAVID MAY

By Nick Smith

Cosmic Masque: Why are you interested in Doctor Who in general? What got you hooked on Who?

David May: Well I'm a fan who can never answer the question 'Which was the first episode you ever saw?' because I was already watching it from as far back as I can remember. I was born when Doctor Who And The Silurians was enjoying its original broadcast and was already a regular viewer by the time Season 11 came along, so that's remembering back a long way!

I usually say that Doctor Who is the show I grew up with but never grew out of. Quite why it's held my interest for so long, I'm not sure... I suppose it's the ultimate fantasy, isn't it? Who wouldn't want to have their own TARDIS and be able to travel anywhere in time and space? Who wouldn't want to be able to outwit any opponent, be virtually immortal and have a succession of pretty girls along for the ride?

CM: *Why are you interested in colourisation specifically?*



David May and friend

DM: Whilst there's no doubting that black and white images can have a certain mystique to them, ultimately we live in a world of colour and that's how things are and should be. Doctor Who was never made in black and white for artistic reasons, it was a compromise because of costs and available technology at the time. Television programmes and films have been made almost exclusively in colour for the past forty or fifty years, because that's what people want and expect. The very few exceptions, such as Young Frankenstein, The Artist, or the opening few seconds of The Two Doctors, are usually to invoke the feeling of a bygone era. That's what black and white is regarded as now, something from the past.

I remember as an eleven-year-old watching *The Five Faces of Doctor Who*, and there was *The Krotons*, which was all of 12 years old at the time, and because it was in black and white it seemed like a piece of ancient history, much more so than the full-colour *The Carnival of Monsters* which followed it. Now I'll happily watch black and white material, but then I even watch a lot of films from the silent era, yet I know many people who insist they can't enjoy silent films and you rarely get silent films showing on television. And it's becoming the same with black and white material, each new generation finds it more and more of a turn-off. Prime-time television won't touch black and white... Other than the one-off repeat of the third episode of *Planet of the Daleks* in 1993, I don't think BBC1 here in the UK has aired a complete black and white programme in a prime-time evening slot since a repeat run of old Tony Hancock shows back in the mid-1980s. So as well as my own desire to see monochrome images presented in a 'real life' way, I think there's potential for the addition of colour to bring things to the attention of new audiences that they might otherwise resist.

CM: *How do you colour pics, choose your subjects?*

DM: There are many different ways to colourise pictures and if any readers are interested in trying their hand at it but aren't sure how to do



it, I'd recommend searching on YouTube where there are lots of instructional videos.

For me, I'm still using the same tool I was using back in 2005 – namely a



very old version of Photoshop! But I've changed my technique several times over the years. The first thing you need to produce a good colourisation is your starting image, which should have a good resolution and a nice tonal range of greys between the black and the white. If you start with a substandard photo where, for example, an individual's face is over-exposed and just shows as a big area of white, then you're not going to get your colour to 'stick' to anything. And the more individual 'elements' there are in a photograph, the more individual things you'll have to colour and the longer it will take. A crowd scene is going to take you much longer to work on than a head-and-shoulders portrait. A simple picture might only take me half an hour to do, a complicated one could take me half a day, or more. So I'll frequently opt for the former!

One of the big giveaways to me when I see a lot of colourised images is how 'flat' they look. It's a trap even a lot of experienced colourisers fall into – they do a sort of 'painting by numbers' job on an image, so if you have a wall in the background



they will apply the exact same shade of the same colour to the whole of that wall, and assume that the light and dark areas showing through from the underlying monochrome image will be sufficient to express the shadows and highlights. This works to a point, but in reality you have light (and therefore colour) reflecting off all manner of objects and so your background wall would show lots of subtle changes of colour. So for me, nowadays, it's never a simple job of just applying a colour to each item in the image and then considering it finished, it's a process of adding numerous layers and building colours up and up whilst thinking about the effects of direct and ambient light hitting objects, and how reflective those objects are.

There are some people out there who fully understand these principles and produce exceptional work such as Stuart Humphryes [BabelColour] and Clayton Hickman in the Doctor Who fold, and there's a lady named Olga Shirnina who uploads stuff to places like Deviant Art and Tumblr under the name of Klimbim, she mainly tackles histori-



cal photos but her colourisations are stunningly realistic and an inspiration to us all.

CM: *What was the first pic or piece of footage you coloured?*

DM: Thinking about it now, I can remember dabbling in colourisation back around 1990, applying some colour to some screencaps on my old Atari ST computer. But that didn't allow for a very varied colour palette so those weren't really serious attempts.

My interest really started back in April 2005. At that time there was a lively discussion thread on the old Outpost Gallifrey forum dedicated to colourisation of photos. Some individuals were uploading images which looked quite impressive, for the time at least, and among them was Stuart Humphryes who was producing some fantastic stuff and giving lots of advice as to how he created them. (Stuart went on to create the colour for the restored *The Mind of Evil* episode 1 on the 2013 DVD release).

I think I was just inspired to have a go myself and was spurred on because there was lots of interest from others at the time, plenty of people were having a go and having fun with it, and exchanging feedback. As far as I recall, my first one was a still of Susan and Barbara from *The Reign of Terror*, which I probably chose because it was a good resolution dig-





ital image I already had to hand and which was a fairly simple one to tackle in that it didn't have lots of fiddly details to attend to. I was pretty pleased with how it turned out at the time, but it looks rather ropey now!

CM: *What is your favourite image or clip?*

DM: Unlike some fans, who I salute for their hard work, I've not yet invested the required time and effort in producing a colourised clip, I've only done still images, but I keep saying I'll try it one day.

As for the colourised pictures I'm most proud of having produced, on the Doctor Who front I'd say either one of Jamie and Victoria outside the TARDIS in *The Abominable Snowmen* or a lovely 1960s photo of two Daleks squabbling over a cauliflower in a London market, which took an age to do because there was so much detail in it. I've tackled plenty of non-Doctor Who images also. It is sometimes the case that you spend ages working on something only for the end result to turn out

looking less than satisfactory, so when you slave away at something which has lots of detail, and it turns out well, that gives you the most satisfaction.

CM: *The Facebook Group Doctor Who Colourisations has 1.7K members and growing – why do you think there is such a fascination with this topic?*

DM: I can only assume it's for similar reasons to those I outlined for my own interest in colourisation. The addition of colour adds a new dimension and brings a new lease of life to old material.



CM: *Do group members challenge each other, or is there a sense of competition to find the best photo or do the best colourisation?*

DM: There have been some friendly 'challenges', both in the Facebook group and even going back to the old discussion thread from Outpost Gallifrey that I mentioned, that is where a particular monochrome image is chosen and any willing participants have a week of whatever to



colourise it and upload their version. On the one hand it's good because it's always interesting to see other people's takes on a particular image and it can sometimes highlight one's own shortcomings and help you improve. But I also have to admit that 'fun and friendly' competition has turned sour on occasions with accusations of using other people's work and so forth. And some people uploaded pieces as 'their own work' when what they'd actually done was use an online app to automatically colour the image for them. So it's something I tend to shy away from now, sadly.

CM: *Is there controversy from die-hard fans who believe the black and white era should be left un-regenerated?*

DM: To say there is would be putting it mildly! And it's not restricted to Doctor Who fans either, as the technology is improving I'm seeing more and more colourisations of old photos and films appearing on social media and with each one inevitably

comes the online equivalent of an angry mob brandishing flaming torches intent on seeing that the culprit pays for their sacrilege! It really does stir up strong feelings in some people.

Let me say this categorically – I am not for one moment advocating colourisation as a replacement for the original black and white material, it is merely the creation of a new alternative version. A new option which a great many people enjoy, if feedback left on sites such as YouTube is anything to go by, which is why I think it is downright selfish of those people who say it should not be done. I fully respect an individual's choice to have no interest in colourisation, but no one's depriving them of their black and white versions so they shouldn't be hell-bent on denying others their pleasures. And in any case their protestations are somewhat pointless since it's clear that advancing technology means that colourisation is never going to go away now.

Here are some of the oft-cited arguments I see against the concept of colourisation, and my take on them:

"I saw the Laurel and Hardy films colourised and they looked awful." Bad example to choose. Those films were colourised over 30 years ago and technology has moved on since then. Furthermore, the process was applied by first transferring the film images to 525-line videotape, which



resulted in a significant drop in picture quality even before the colour was added.

I agree that there's a lot of bad colourisation out there, and sadly it's increasing because of all the tools which use intelligent algorithms to apply colour which still produce very unsatisfactory results in my opinion. But there are good examples too. The addition of colour to the first season of *Bewitched*, for example, was highly praised.

"I will only watch something in the way it was originally intended to be seen." Really? 1960s *Doctor Who* episodes were intended to be watched just once, at the rate of one per week, on a television screen no bigger than 20 inches. I'll bet your principles don't apply to those rules!

"Old television programmes like *Doctor Who* episodes were designed and lit for black and white, not colour, and so that's how they should be watched." I've actually discussed this with some industry professionals, and it's a myth, for the

most part. There's no difference in light sensitivity between monochrome and colour cameras, the only difference that might come into play with regards to lighting would be if you were a director who, being restricted to monochrome images, would use expressive lighting effects to try and exploit the limitations of that medium to best effect. Think film noir, with characters shrouded in shadows. And that would take a lot of planning for individual shots to realise the director's vision. On a hastily-produced weekly TV series like *Doctor Who*? No chance.

It's highly unlikely any lighting decision was ever made on the basis of whether the episode would be seen in colour or black and white. For other considerations yes, but not for that. They didn't apply special lighting for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth in 1953 or the World Cup Final at Wembley Stadium in 1966 on the basis that people would be watching on black and white television. Similarly, throughout the 1970s, *Doctor Who* was being broadcast in colour but a significant proportion of its audience was still watching those episodes on black and white TV sets, even into the 1980s, which demonstrates how the two formats operate on the same level.

In respect of design, there was more of a consideration when moving to colour, because certain colours could become indistinguishable on a

monochrome screen where they appeared to be the exact same shade of grey. As colour on-set photos, particularly from stories such as *Marco Polo* and *The Celestial Toymaker* show, the fact that these episodes were going out in black and white did not mean that the design of sets and costumes was compromised.

CM: *Doctor Who is a creative and imaginative show that, at its best, can explore new ideas and imagery. Are you ever concerned about recycling the past rather than creating new material?*

DM: No, I'm not worried at all. There are so many talented and creative Doctor Who fans out there that things will always be moving in all directions. I myself have been busily working on a new annual for the First Doctor, but that's another story!

CM: *What software developments are you excited about? How do you feel about Metahuman [an Unreal Engine app to build photorealistic digital humans] and other advances?*

DM: It's mind-boggling, isn't it? You just wonder what's going to appear next. I think Metahuman and similar technology definitely represents exciting possibilities regarding recreating missing episodes or even producing brand new adventures for the earlier Doctors. And colourisation algorithms will hopefully get better

and better, so that we start seeing improvements in their results.

The downside of all this, of course, is for technology such as Metahuman to be misused, and naturally there's an argument as to whether it's morally right or wrong to be recreating deceased actors in this way.

CM: *And finally - What are your hopes, expectations for the future of classic Who and colourisations?*

DM: Quite simply the ultimate dream is to be able to watch the entire 1960s era of Doctor Who in pristine colour – and let's include all the missing episodes in that, too! More realistically over the shorter term, perhaps a complete story apiece from the Hartnell and Troughton eras available on DVD in decent colour copies – but even that's some way off, I feel.

Thank you David.



David's colourised picture of Peter Cushing as Sherlock Holmes

FROM THE LAND OF FICTION EDITORIAL

By Stephen Hatcher

Welcome again to another Cosmic Masque Fiction Section, in which I am proud to present four more previously unpublished Doctor Who stories, written by our members and readers.

The Great Plague of 2020/21 is still very much with us and although here in the UK, the success of the vaccination programme is offering us hope for a way out of these dark days, the threat posed by new variants of the virus still hangs over us. However, Lockdown has ended, the summer has arrived, and people are once more beginning to plan for events. Speaking personally, I am very hopeful that the Whooverville convention, which I organise, will be able to go ahead, as planned, in September; and after that we can begin to look forward to the return of The Doctor Who Appreciation Society's own event, The Capitol, next summer.

Meanwhile, our writers continue to delight with their imagination and originality, with the quality of their output and with their generosity in allowing us to use their stories in

Cosmic Masque. I am delighted that this issue's selection very much lives up to the high standard of previous issues.

Alan Darlington's *Flying with the Stones* is his first story for CM. It features Doctor Elizabeth Shaw and Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart and is set after Liz has left UNIT. With the Doctor away, it is left to Liz and the Brig to investigate a spate of deaths, which may be connected to a mysterious research establishment and some strange stones. This is a lovely example of how to write a Doctor Who story without the Doctor; and Alan has captured both the Brig and Liz beautifully.

Robert John Cumming is one of our regular writers (with more to come) and seems to get better with every story of his we publish. *Passage of Time* is a lovely little piece (although one that I suspect may be controversial with some of our readers), which allows us a glimpse into the future of one of the Doctor's nearest and dearest companions. I hope you will love it as much as I do.

Katherine Ioffe is one of our youngest, and certainly most talented contributors. In her little gem of a story, *Truly Nothing in the Dark*, the Doctor must face very much his ultimate foe – the one from whom he can never escape.

Paul Ebbs is a professional writer and is well-known in Doctor Who

circles for his work for BBV and Big Finish and for his 2002 BBC Eighth Doctor novel *The Book of the Still*. Beyond our corner of the universe, Paul is a prolific screenwriter and novelist, having written books for children and adults in many genres and contributed scripts to *Casualty*, *The Bill* and *Doctors*. In his new podcast *#SLEDGEHAMMER*, (available on all the usual platforms and [directly here](#)). Paul is joined by a range of distinguished contributors to discuss the writing of specific Doctor Who episodes. Katherine Ioffe and I, together with another of our regular CM writers, Trinah Eke, were delighted to join him recently to record an upcoming episode, focussing on Fan Fiction.

As a part of his work as a freelance writer, Paul routinely produces 'calling card' scripts, which his agent circulates to TV producers, to showcase his skills. One such script is *For-*

mation, a two-part Doctor Who story written some years ago and featuring the Twelfth Doctor and Clara. Paul recently retired the script from his 'calling card' pile and has been kind enough to allow us to include it in *Cosmic Masque*. Part One is presented here with Part Two to follow in CM XV.

So, once more we have an eclectic selection of stories from some talented writers. I do hope you will enjoy them as much as I have.

With the annual Big Finish Paul Spragg Memorial New Writers competition now in full swing, many of you will be putting together your own entries. Remember, if you are unlucky in the competition, that doesn't have to be the end for your story. Get in touch and you could see your work in a future issue of *Cosmic Masque*.

Stephen



FLYING WITH THE STONES

By Alan Darlington

Liz Shaw glanced at her watch as she left the station. Plenty of time, she decided and walked past the taxi rank. It was a while since she had last seen Brigit and she was looking forward to her visit. Hoping that she could remember the route to the pub where they were due to meet, she set off. Fulchester was a mid-sized market town with little to single it out other than the Hetherington Research Institute, the small but influential establishment that Dr Brigit Marlowe worked at.

As Liz walked along the main street, she recalled some of the things that she and Brigit had got up to during their student days – nothing outrageous, but good memories. She was roused from her reverie by a hubbub of noise from a side street. A small crowd was starting to gather outside a department store's side entrance. Curious, she moved to investigate.

"Mikey! Mikey! Come down luv!" a woman in her forties was calling. Liz followed her gaze to where a youth was standing on the roof of the three-storey building.

"Yes, yes, I'll come down," the youth replied. The crowd heaved a collective sigh of relief until he added, "I'll fly down to you."

"No Mikey!" the woman said quickly. "The firemen are coming – they'll get

you down."

"I can fly down - fly through the stars - fly round and round and round."

Liz looked around. There was no sign of police or fire brigade. A fire escape ran down the side of the store and she hurried towards the rusty iron steps.

"Mikey! No!" his mother pleaded.

"Drugs, I bet!" a man in the crowd commented to his wife. "Serve him right if he cops it if you ask me."

"My Mikey doesn't do drugs! He's a good boy!" the woman snapped indignantly.

Panting, Liz had reached the top of the fire escape and clambered onto the roof, edging towards Mikey. She suddenly realised that she had no idea what she was going to do. She was so used to taking action that she had just reacted instinctively. Now, she could hear a distant siren. She wondered whether she should leave it to them, but then, Mikey took another step towards the edge.

"Red and orange and yellow, twisting, spiralling, in and out - I'm flying - flying like a stone," he panted.

"Er, hello, Mikey is it?" Liz asked hesitatingly.

"Round and round. Faster. Faster. Green. Blue ... Faster. Lines speeding ... speeding through the stars."

Liz frowned. Mikey's words seemed to remind her of something, but she

couldn't quite work out what. She spoke softly, "Mikey. Listen to me. Listen to me carefully. You're confused. Focus. Focus on me. Concentrate."

"Purple. Darker. Darker. Faster. Faster. Violet! Ultra-violet!"

"That sounds beautiful Mikey, why don't you tell me more."

"Flying! Flying with the stones!"

That didn't sound good. Liz spoke quickly, "Tell me more inside Mikey." Then, she realised what was familiar about his words. A few months before she left UNIT, a Kovanian spaceship had landed in Sherwood Forest. The pilot's form of communication was to describe experiences and she had described travelling through hyperspace in words very similar to Mikey's.

"Flying's good Mikey – but not here. Come back from the edge with me and I'll tell you about how the Kovanians fly between worlds."

"Kovanians?" Mikey murmured. "Fly. Yes. Fly."

"And I'll tell you about the Dominators and their spaceships – or the Grand Moxans."

"Fly! Fly with the stones!" Mikey said. He spread out his arms and shouted; "Kioptra!"

"Mikey!" his mother screamed from below.

Liz knew at once that she had only

one chance. She lunged forward as Mikey lifted a foot to walk from the edge of the building. Liz's momentum, combined with the fact that Mikey was not fully balanced, enabled her to push him back onto the roof. She fell on top of him. He lay still, muttering again and again, "Fly. Fly. Fly." Liz froze where she was, all too aware that if she moved from Mikey then he could easily push himself from the building. She doubted that she would be able to manhandle him away from the edge. However, if he started to struggle, they could both go over. For the moment, Mikey seemed docile, so she waited exactly how she was. A couple of minutes later, she heard the rattle of the fire escape and a pair of firemen arrived, carefully easing them both to safety.

With Liz' visit to Brigit somewhat disrupted by the statements that she had to make to the police, they had planned another reunion a few weeks later, this time for a weekend. Finally, they were sharing a drink and a catch up.

At a quick glance, Liz and Brigit could have been sisters. They were about the same height and build. They both wore fashionable but sensible clothing and carried themselves with a confident air. The main difference was that Brigit's hair was long, blonde and tied back.

"Enough of me," Liz said after she had related a highly redacted version of her work with UNIT and

since she had returned to Cambridge. "What are you getting up to?"

"I'm afraid I can't tell you much. Hetherington's got the whole institute working on a new project – all very hush hush."

Liz smiled inwardly – for quite a time her life had been all hush hush – if Brigit only knew!

"All our own research is on the back burner. Can't even talk to other researchers about what they are doing without permission."

Suddenly, a bleeping sounded from her handbag. She grimaced. "Sorry Liz, that'll be Keith, my assistant. We've been waiting for some computer time. I told him to page me when we were nearly ready for access. I'm going to have to go. Let yourself into the cottage and make yourself at home. I'll see you to-night."

Liz didn't go straight to Brigit's. She had arranged to visit Mikey to see how he was getting on.

"Thanks for coming luv," his mum said as she showed Liz into the front room. "Mikey's out at the minute. Doctors said the fresh air would do him some good."

"Have they said anything that'll help Mrs Newsom?"

"It wasn't drugs!" the reply came quickly. Mrs Newsom had clearly heard that allegation more than

once. "They checked his blood. I knew it wasn't, but they said they had to check."

"Is he depressed or worried about anything?" Liz asked. "I know some people he could talk to..."

"No, luv, that's just it. He's absolutely fine now. Top of the world. He's been referred to a psychiatrist, but he says that Mikey appears to be perfectly normal and well adjusted. Only thing is, he seems fixated on that stone he found."

"Stone?"

"Yes. It was a nice-looking thing, about the size of your hand, shiny, lovely orange colour. He found it at the edge of Hansop Woods. I reckon that's where he goes for his walks, trying to find more. He reckons it could be worth a pretty penny. Never lets it out of his sight."

"Well, I'm glad he's feeling better."

"He is, luv, thanks to you. I'm not sure how long he'll be but you're welcome to stay for some tea."

"No, that's fine thank you Mrs Newsom. I've staying with a friend, and I thought I'd whip up something special for her when she gets in from work."

"That's nice. Just you be careful – young lady out by herself with all these murders."

"Murders?"

"Yes. First one was the week after

Mikey's turn. I'm glad he was still in hospital 'cos it was Mrs Fordyke and she lives near the woods. You know what people would say."

Keith Hardaker looked like a stereotypical Seventies student with long hair and denim jacket. This was hardly surprising as that was exactly what he had been until he started work at the Hetherington Institute six months previously. He handed Brigit the computer printout. Her eyes lit up. "Excellent! Just what we predicted. We can move onto phase three."

"Don't forget you said I could go early – I'm off into Wensham for that gig."

"Of course, just help me set up the equipment and then get off. I've got Liz staying so I don't want to be late either."

It took the best part of an hour to connect up and calibrate the complex sensor array that occupied a couple of benches in Brigit's lab.

"All systems check!" Keith proclaimed.

Brigit nodded and stepped back. "Okay, off you go. I'll do the first run before I go, and we can analyse it in the morning while the second run is passing through. Don't drink too much – I need you with a clear head in the morning."

Consulting her clipboard, Brigit set the apparatus and activated the scanner. Satisfied she stepped back

and perched on her stool, making some more notes. The apparatus hummed and whined and ran its tests, occasionally chattering out ticker tape. She glanced at her watch – just five minutes to go and then she would be off for her proper reunion with Liz. A whine started from the equipment, quiet at first but growing more insistent, like a distant scream. She rubbed her eyes. The scream seemed to be getting right into her head. She checked some of the settings and decided that she would need to get Keith to check his wiring before the next run. She decided that she could put up with the noise until the test was over and returned to her clipboard. She frowned as she saw what she had just written: 'Kioptra'. What on Earth? Then, she heard something else. She turned and gasped as a heavy clamp stand flew at her. She fell from her stool, blood running from her scalp. The whine of the machine rose to a crescendo. Then, the test run automatically ended. The scream continued for a few seconds and then faded.

"Thanks for coming," Liz said as she joined Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart in the bar of the pub where she was staying, the same pub where she had shared her reunion drink with Brigit. The plan had been to stay at Brigit's cottage but, somehow, that didn't seem right. "The police won't say anything, and Hetherington won't let me into the Institute."

"I'm not sure that I'll do much bet-

ter,” the Brigadier replied. “I tried to do a bit of research into the place before I came down, left Yates doing some more poking around. Everything seems highly classified. I’ll probably be able to bluff our way in by saying that the Ministry sent us but, if Hetherington starts checking up on our credentials, he’ll soon find we have no right to be there.”

Liz nodded. “Understood.”

She paused, desperate to ask something but not wanting to offend the Brigadier. He guessed what she was deciding whether or not to mention. “The Doctor’s off on one of his jaunts too, so I’m afraid you’re stuck with just me. Yates will appraise him of the situation if he reappears.”

Liz nodded. Much as she appreciated the help of her former CO, she really would have liked the Doctor’s input. “We’d better be off.”

The Brigadier’s bluff did manage to get them into the office of Gerald Hetherington. The thin-faced Scot was not pleased to see them. “The police are handling the matter – that should be enough!”

“You must admit that the, er, special nature of your work does mean that things need to be handled very carefully,” the Brigadier replied, wishing that he knew what the ‘special nature’ actually was.

“Indeed,” Hetherington replied, “my own security people are liaising directly with the police. I see no need

for your unit or platoon or whatever it is to be involved.”

“And I hope that I will agree, once I’ve had a chance to make my report. Of course, if I decide that they cannot cope, I can call down a battalion of my men to help out.” He glanced at Liz, “We could have them down by noon tomorrow, couldn’t we Dr Shaw?”

“Or even sooner – if you deemed it necessary.”

Hetherington glared, recognising the threat if not the fact that the Brigadier may not have been able to back it up. “Very well. I will give you both limited access to my facilities until either you or I can convince the Minister that it is not needed.” He reached for the intercom on his desk. “Miss Dinwoody, please have Mr Hardaker come to see me immediately.”

Keith Hardaker stood nervously over Liz as she peered at Brigit’s equipment.

“This is obviously set up to run a PTK investigation into something,” Liz observed. “Into what?”

“Sorry, I’d be out on my ear if I told you,” Keith replied, “I don’t even know whether the people down the corridor know what we’re doing and they’re working on the same project.”

“We do have Ministry clearance,” the Brigadier put in.

“Sorry – unless Hetherington okays it, I’m not saying anything.”

“But we’re trying to find out who is responsible for Brigit’s death – surely that matters to you!” Liz insisted.

“And keeping this job matters too – if Hetherington sacks me, I may as well wave goodbye to any career in research.”

They met with similar obstinacy wherever they went. Liz managed to see a few experimental set-ups but could not work out what the project was as a whole. They had followed a fruitless visit to the Institute with an equally fruitless one to the police. All that they picked up was what Mrs Newsom had said: that there had been a number of other killings in the area. The Superintendent did reveal that the only linking factor was geography and they had not uncovered any forensic evidence anywhere.

The Brigadier nursed his pint thoughtfully and came to a decision. “We’re not going to get anything officially. I’m going to have to break in tonight and see if I can find anything.”

“You’re crazy!” Liz protested.

“I think if we carry on poking our noses in tomorrow, Hetherington will contact the Ministry and we’ll be kicked out. Tonight’s our only chance, otherwise I’d get Yates or Benton down to lend a hand. You’ve still got the key to Brigit’s cottage –

do you think she’s got any wire cutters?”

Liz drove the Brigadier’s car and dropped him off at the edge of the Institute’s grounds before moving a safe distance away. Dressed in black clothes hastily bought from the high street, he edged through the bushes to the mesh fence. He waited until a security guard had passed by and quickly cut through the wire. He paused until the next patrol had passed by and then pushed his way through, scurrying to the main building, heading for a delivery area. There was a large set of double doors to accommodate a truck and a side door. Liz had been allowed to collect Brigit’s personal effects which included a bunch of keys. They had eliminated a number as belonging to doors at the cottage but there were still several to try before he managed to unlock the side door. He ducked inside seconds before the security guard turned the corner.

The Brigadier paused inside, getting his bearings and recalling the layout of the building. He wished he had planned this earlier so that he could have taken more notice of where things were. The corridors were gloomy but illuminated by night lighting. His first port of call was Brigit’s lab, hoping to find some notes; but everything was locked away. He was about to leave when he spotted a waste bin. He quickly retrieved a couple of screwed up pieces of paper. One was a memo

reminding everyone that they were not to reveal anything about the projects. The second was a printout headed "PROJECT KIOPTRA SECTION 4" and a list of numbers. Hoping that it would mean something to Liz, he pocketed it and hurried out.

The keys included a couple more that were similar to the one that unlocked Brigit's lab, so he moved along, trying them hopefully in each door he came to. One unlocked nothing more exciting than a stationery cupboard but the other opened another lab. The Brigadier's torchlight showed a board on the door with Brigit's name crossed out and a Dr T McKenna added. The equipment in Brigit's former lab meant nothing more to the Brigadier than in the other one. He had asked Liz what a PTK test was and, half an hour later, was none the wiser. He regretted not having brought Liz with him tonight but the risk of them both getting caught was too great.

The main bench held a tower of equipment with a circle of small cone-shaped devices focussing on a plinth. To the side of the plinth was a smooth, semi-translucent blue stone. Curiously, the Brigadier picked it up, peered at it and then put it down on the plinth. He had just started to move away to look for paperwork when there was a faint whining noise. He turned and a large shape loomed at him from the shadows. He gave a cry of shock – how had it crept up on him so quietly? He backed off and clattered into a stool.

The shape continued to advance.

"Keep back. I am an officer of Her Majesty's Armed Forces!" The Brigadier moved his torch into his other hand and reached for his gun. The shape advanced. At first, the Brigadier couldn't make out what it was. Then, as it moved, to his shock, he saw that it was a Yeti. It blocked his route to the door, so he tried to back around the lab towards the window, sending a rack of equipment flying. As the Yeti lunged forward, the Brigadier opened fire, realising how futile his actions would be.

From a road half a mile from the Institute, Liz kept watch. She tensed as she saw lights flare and an alarm sound.

The lights in McKenna's lab came on. The Brigadier blinked and the Yeti was gone. Instead, a security man was aiming a rifle at him. "Drop it!" the guard ordered, indicating the Brigadier's gun. The Brigadier sighed and raised his hands.

The Brigadier stood before a furious Hetherington feeling rather like a naughty schoolboy. Remembering the rants of his superiors when he was at Sandhurst, he kept his eyes down and remained silent. In doing so, he noticed a smooth stone on the desk, similar to the one in the lab, but green. At last, Hetherington paused, and the Brigadier took his opportunity; "Under Section 17 of the Peace Time..."

"Damn Section 17!" Hetherington

shouted. "I have direct authority from the Ministry of Defence to conduct my research without let or hindrance. Their support runs to the offer of a full security detachment. I assure you that I will be calling them in first thing in the morning and evoking their full powers – including shoot to kill against anyone threatening the project! The Minister will be in touch with your superiors to confirm this. I don't think I need to warn you further about the consequences of any interference from you or Dr Shaw!"

Back at the cottage, Liz looked at the piece of paper that the Brigadier had found. The numbers meant nothing without a context but the word – Kioptra – where had she heard that?

"I'm sorry, Liz, but I won't be able to go against direct orders," the Brigadier said. "If we can't come up with anything by first thing in the morning then we have to pull out."

Sadly, Liz nodded. "I have one last thing to try but it'll have to wait until the morning."

Keith groggily hit his alarm clock and heaved himself out of bed. He had just dressed and popped some bread in the toaster when the phone rang.

"Hello, Keith, sorry to disturb you at home," Liz's voice said. "I'm heading home today and just wanted to thank you for carrying on Brigit's work with Kioptra."

"What – oh – yes, that's fine," he re-

sponded. "So, Hetherington's told you about it?"

"As much as he can. Just wondered if there was any equipment, I could try to rustle up for you?"

"We've been really well sourced, thanks," Keith replied, "unless you could get hold of one of those psionic resonators that the Yanks are developing – still on the Top Secret list but Brigit had picked up rumours from a friend at MIT."

"Probably beyond my people," Liz replied. "How would you use it exactly – perhaps I can find an alternative on our own Top-Secret list?"

"Well, Brigit wanted to feed impulses from a human brain into one of the stones," Keith replied. He paused. "Hetherington has OK'd this conversation, hasn't he?"

"How else would I know about Kioptra?" Liz asked. She decided not to play her bluff further. "Anyway, I ought to be going. I'll see what I can do."

"A psionic resonator," Liz muttered thoughtfully, "for the stones."

"There was one in the lab – just before I saw the Yeti – and one on Hetherington's desk. Smooth and clear."

"And Mikey Newsom found one!" Liz exclaimed. "And it was him who used the word Kioptra. He talked about flying with the stones! I think we have someone to visit before going

home!”

Mrs Newsom cheerily showed Liz and the Brigadier into Mikey’s room. The youth welcomed them in a little nervously.

“Your mum says you’re doing fine,” Liz said.

“Yes, I don’t know what came over me – thanks for what you did.”

The small talk continued for a few minutes, interrupted by Mrs Newsom arriving with tea and biscuits. The Brigadier was aware of how tight time was and butted in. “Your mother said that you had a special stone.”

Mikey tensed. “It’s mine. I found it.”

“Indeed,” Liz smiled, “but I wondered if I could have a look at it – please. It might be valuable and ...”

“I don’t want to sell it,” Mikey said quickly.

“Of course not – but if it is valuable you might want to insure it,” Liz said.

Uncertainly, Mikey pulled a shoe box out from under his bed and showed them the orange stone nestling in it on screwed up pages from a pop magazine. The Brigadier recognised it as being the same as the two he had seen the night before.

“May I?” Liz asked, reaching for it. Mikey nodded hesitantly.

As the Brigadier watched Liz take the stone, he felt a headache form-

ing. His vision hazed over, and his concentration lapsed. He looked out of the window and saw something turn into the road outside - a Dalek. Alarmed, he jumped up.

“Brigadier!” Liz gasped, dropping the stone into the box.

Suddenly, the Brigadier’s head was clear, and the Dalek gone. “I... I... When you picked the stone up...”

He tried to explain what he had experienced.

“You try picking it up,” Liz encouraged.

Hesitantly, the Brigadier reached for the stone, suddenly more anxious than if he had been facing an army of hostile aliens. Liz leant over and took his other hand. The Brigadier took a deep breath and picked up the stone. He gasped and tensed. Suddenly, he was shooting up and away from the room, over the house, high above the town. He swept around, over the woods and the Institute and up into the sky, higher and higher, out of the atmosphere and into space. The Brigadier let out a gasp and dropped the stone. He fell back panting. “I... I was flying, flying with the stones.”

“Yeh, that’s what they showed me,” Mikey said as the Brigadier took a gulp of tea.

“The stones are somehow projecting images into minds. Sometimes they give an exciting high, sometimes a terror, sometimes powerful enough

to cause physical manifestations and drive people to their deaths.”

“That’s not what they want,” Mikey said. “It made me sort of scared, but I genuinely thought I’d been flying. The fear was different, though, not my own in some way – the stones’.”

“And a psionic resonator could be used to trigger those feelings, maybe even direct them,” Liz mused.

“Which is why the MoD are funding the research,” The Brigadier realised. “Imagine being able to transmit fear into your enemy’s mind – or make the soldiers want to kill themselves. It made me see a Yeti and a Dalek – what if soldiers were made to see their friends as enemy soldiers?”

Part of the Brigadier saw the great value – with a weapon like that an army need never lose any more of its own soldiers. The other part saw what a terrible weapon it was. What if a Hitler got hold of it? He was sure that the argument would be that a Hitler could never rise up in England so the United Kingdom needed the weapon – but how many people in 1930s Germany would have said the same? When she spoke, he realised that similar thoughts had been going through Liz’s mind.

“We’ve got to destroy the stones – we can’t let this go on,” she said.

Suddenly, the stone seemed to flare with light. Indescribable horrors filled the room. Liz screamed and the

Brigadier gasped in horror. Mikey grabbed the stone and dashed for the door, running off. Downstairs, Mrs Newsom called after him.

A moment later, she hurried into the bedroom; “What have you been doing to him?! If he hurts himself...”

She trailed off as she saw the horrified looks on the faces of Liz and the Brigadier. Both were hugging themselves and shaking, repeating over and over, “Kioptra, Kioptra ...”

Clutching the stone, Mikey threw himself down at the base of a tree in Hansop Woods. He stared at the stone. The woods blurred and he was looking down on the Earth from space. The planet was a barely recognisable disc, but it got closer. There was a flash, and a scream filled Mikey’s mind. When the blaze and noise cleared, it was as if he was speeding down towards the Earth, through the atmosphere in a flare of intense heat. Then, as he homed in on Fulchester, the area around him was filled with glowing multicoloured stones. They spread apart and he saw the trees approaching. With a thump, he was back in reality. He looked up and gasped two words, “Help! Kioptra!”

It took a while for the Brigadier and Liz to recover, the former relieved that none of his men had seen the whimpering wreck he had temporarily turned into. Mrs Newsom tended to them, despite her anger and concern for her son.

"Right, now you're better, you get out of my house and let me go and look for Mikey before he does something stupid..."

"It's okay Mum. I'm here. Give us a few minutes, will you?"

Hesitantly, Mrs Newsom left as Mikey entered. "You scared them. You shouldn't have said you were going to destroy them."

"Of course!" Liz realised. "They attacked - fought back."

"I think I've worked it out," Mikey said. "They showed me what happened."

After Mikey described his vision, the Brigadier struggled to understand; "Are you saying that these stones are alien beings?"

"I surely don't need to remind you that all life doesn't have to look like us," Liz commented,

"I'm not sure what was the actual happening, and what was just my interpretation of it," Mikey said. "I think the Kioptra were travelling through space when something went wrong, and they crashed on Earth. The images, the deaths, have been them defending themselves against beings they can't comprehend or communicate with. All they really want is our help."

"Help to do what?" the Brigadier asked.

"To go home," Mikey replied.

Suddenly, they all felt a strange, relaxed peace and tranquillity. The Brigadier glanced at the stone that seemed to be glowing faintly.

"How on Earth do we do that?" he asked.

"I think we just need to get them all together and they'll do the rest," Mikey said. "I'm not certain but that idea came into my head when I was in the woods. It somehow feels like the right thing to do."

"But Hetherington has them all under lock and key and he's calling in special security forces," Liz noted.

The Brigadier smiled, "Which means the army."

"So?" Liz asked.

"It could mean my court-martialing, but I reckon that I can get Yates and a squad from UNIT here first if I act fast enough. Do you have a phone I can use Mikey?"

Yates reviewed his orders as the two truckloads of men sped towards the Hetherington Institute. He was to report to the director saying simply that the MoD has sent him. Under no circumstances, were he or his men to reveal that they were part of UNIT and no insignia were to be displayed on their uniforms. They were then to place the Institute on full secure lockdown. All experimentation ("into what?", he wondered) was to cease immediately and the Kioptra were to be gathered into his care. When this was done, he was to

wait.

Hetherington's look changed from triumph at seeing the arrival of his troops to fury at the orders. "I called for support from the Ministry to deal with likes of that Lethbridge-Stewart not to have myself shut down."

Yates was a little taken aback by the mention of his CO, but he was used to bluffing. "Sorry, sir, orders are orders. I guess the MoD wants to get everything nice and secure then you'll be able to get back to normal, snug as bugs in a rug."

Scowling, Hetherington had Miss Dinwoody relay the instruction. All the scientists were to bring him the stones that they were working on and then head home for the day.

The Brigadier pocketed his radio having received Yates' report of his arrival. Liz looked up from the

phone, "Corporal Bell says that the Minister's apparently been trying to get hold of you for the last hour. Troops are on their way hear under a Colonel Bream."

Technically, the Brigadier would outrank Bream but the Colonel's orders had come from higher up so he doubted any amount of bluster would pay off. "Alright, let's get moving. Come on Mikey."

Having relieved Hetherington's security team of their arms, Yates stood nervously in the director's office as a glistening hoard of stones was accumulated in a box. Hetherington watched as each scientist signed in his or her charge and filed out. He checked a clipboard. "All in, Captain. What now?"

Yates hesitated, not quite sure. He was saved by the arrival of the Brigadier, Liz and Mikey.



"How the dickens did you get in?" Hetherington fumed. "Captain, arrest this man."

"At ease," the Brigadier told Yates. "Knowing that you were calling in security forces, I decided to help out and draft my men in to assist and get things sorted – more efficient, you know."

"But you and your men are precisely the people I want protecting against!" Hetherington raged.

"Are all the stones here?" Liz asked Yates.

"Yes ma'am," he replied, a little surprised by the sight of his former colleague.

Liz stepped forward and picked up the box, heading towards the door with Mikey.

"Stop that!" Hetherington shouted.

The Brigadier smiled, "Nearly forgot one."

He collected the Kioptra from Hetherington's desk and added it to the box.

"Wait 'til I've spoken to the Minister about this!" Hetherington reached for the phone.

"Feel free. At the moment I have no official orders from the correct chain of command against my course of action. I simply act in the interests of national security."

It was a technicality and he doubted

it would stand up in a court martial if he persisted for too long, but it might buy him enough time.

The phone rang. It was Miss Dinwoody; "Message from the gate, sir, a Colonel Bream has arrived with his men."

Hetherington looked puzzled and pleased at once.

"I think you can stand down Captain Yates," the Brigadier said. "Gather your men and leave the premises. I'll deal with the handover."

Yates was obviously confused but saluted and left. The Brigadier watched him go, desperately hoping that Ann, Mikey and the Kioptra would have time to do what they needed.

Liz and Mikey exited the building using the Brigadier's route from the night before. Liz put down the box.

"What now?" Mikey asked.

"I've no idea," Liz replied, "I was hoping that they would have communicated something to you."

A faint rattling began from the box. They looked down and saw the stones starting to shift and stir. They began to move and arrange themselves into a spherical formation. Light began to glow and fill up the gaps. Liz and Mikey heard a faint ethereal voice in their heads, neither male nor female. "We are recovered. We are one. Kioptra. Thank you. Kioptra sorry for mistakes. Fly with

us.”

“No thanks, nearly tried that once,” Mikey said.

“God’s speed,” Liz responded.

“You help Kioptra. We help you.”

Before either of them could question the remark, the glowing sphere revolved and shot up into the air.

Colonel Bream strode into Hetherington’s office and saluted the director before spotting the Brigadier and looking a little taken aback.

“Ah, Colonel, this man needs ...” He hesitated as if he had seen something in the distance. “This man needs taking to the canteen and being served a hearty breakfast. See to it.”

“Sir?” Bream asked.

The Brigadier was equally bemused.

“He has helped the Kioptra fly,” Hetherington replied. “Do it man!”

Liz returned to Fulchester a fortnight later for Brigit’s funeral. She stood looking down at the fresh grave and rubbed her eyes. Her mind went back to the race to free the Kioptra. There were still questions, so many questions. Should she have helped them, or should she have sought retribution for Brigit and the others? Were the Kioptra really benign? Had they influenced her but in a different way to the Brigadier, Brigit and the others? Should she have destroyed the stones? Had she done the right thing for the world? for Brigit? for the other victims? What was the right thing?

She dropped a rose onto the fresh stony soil and turned away.



FORMATION, EPISODE 1

By Paul Ebbs

INT. TARDIS WARDROBE. IN-FLIGHT - DAY

The TARDIS wardrobe is vast, filled with clothes on racks from every conceivable time and fashion. Think Double-Harrods, but just clothes.

CLARA is moving among the racks, looking at dresses, uniforms. She stops by a rack with clothes on it we might recognise - a brown cardboard tag hangs from a string on the end of the rack. "ROSE" is scrawled on it in biro.

CLARA has heard the name ROSE before... she moves on, looking at other racks, looking at tags for "MARTHA", "DONNA"... more clothes we might recognise.

The next racks are AMY'S - CLARA moves along picking up the brown cardboard tags. Pauses by the sexy Policewoman's Outfit. Perplexed and amused. Then on to new racks AMY, AMY, AMY, AMY on and on. Faster and faster until we look back on about twelvty-three racks for AMY.

CLARA is amused. Moves on.

Then suddenly she isn't amused at all.

There's an empty rack. Nothing on it at all, no clothes just hundreds of empty metal hangers clumped together and tied up with white string.

There's a brown cardboard tag. Hastily scrawled in biro, like the others. One word.

CLARA.

Oh.

Right.

Until...

THE DOCTOR rushes in. Panicked.

THE DOCTOR: What was that noise?

CLARA: What noise?

Suddenly there's a BOOM and the room shakes, racks falling over.

THE DOCTOR: That noise.

CLARA: But...

THE DOCTOR holds up his hand to shhh CLARA and SONIC-SUNGLASSES the ceiling.

An emergency mini upside-down console springs down, narrowly missing CLARA who ends up bashing into her own empty clothes rack.

CLARA: What's that?

THE DOCTOR: Emergency console!

THE DOCTOR starts working feverishly.

CLARA: Why—

THE DOCTOR (interrupting): We're having an emergency!

CLARA: No, you idiot. Let me at least finish a sentence before you display frankly Olympian levels of condescension. As, I might add, usual. Why-- is this happening?

THE DOCTOR: Sometimes I experience things in the wrong order. Time Lord. The clue's in the name.

CLARA: The wrong order?

THE DOCTOR: Don't get me started on food poisoning.

Clara: Doctor-- these clothes racks. Rose, Donna, Amy-- they're people who travelled with you right?

THE DOCTOR thumps the console. There's an explosion. Arcs of sparks fly down from the opposite side of the console.

CLARA is blown off her feet.

THE DOCTOR: Move back there's going to be an explosion!

CLARA: Thanks for that. (getting up) The clothes-- are you like-- already prepared for when-- when-- I—

THE DOCTOR: Do I look busy

CLARA: I dunno. But you've been busy getting ready for the next rack of clothes to be stored in here. Anything you want to share with me? Should I not start reading any long books, what?

THE DOCTOR: Is this really the time and place for this conversation?

CLARA (looking about and then at the empty rack): Pretty much. Yeah.

THE DOCTOR (working at the controls): I'm two thousand years old. You lot live for what? Thirty seconds? You like to move on, plant babies, get garden-ant, achieve stuff. I'm left with a room full of jumble and an inconceivable number of nail files. And that funny soap stuff with sharp bits in. What's that about? Do you take self-harming showers? I have to put the clothes somewhere. (beat) Have I been insensitive?

CLARA: Little bit.

THE DOCTOR: Kind of stressed right now. (listens) There's that noise again.

CLARA: What noise?

BOOM! The room trembles.

FX SHOT. SPACE.

Gulfs of stars. We twist through the heavens and find a beautiful blue-green world, all seas, and clouds.

CAPTION: PARADISE.

From the dark side of this planet (which could be Earth's sister it's so pretty) comes a raging space dogfight!

Two sleek and highly manoeuvrable craft are spinning around each other spitting laser bolts, scoring hits, and misses. But neither do enough damage to bring the other down.

The craft WHIZZ past us, zapping bolts and bombs.

For a moment, everything fades to silence, and it's just us and the planet.

Then WHAM! The ships are heading back towards the planet, right past us again!

INT. TARDIS WARDROBE. IN FLIGHT. - DAY

THE DOCTOR thumps the side of his head.

THE DOCTOR: To you, Déjà vu is just something East End kids can't spell. To me, it's a very bad day at the office.

CLARA: You've never worked in an office.

THE DOCTOR: I could. I could work in an office. (thinks) I couldn't work in an office. (grabs hold of the console for dear life.) WATCH OUT CLARA!!!!

CLARA throws herself at the console and grabs on.

They wait.

And wait.

And wait.

THE DOCTOR looks at his watch.

They wait some more.

CLARA: Are you sure?

THE DOCTOR: Yes. (thinks) No. (thinks) Yes. (thinks) No. (thinks) Yes. (thinks) No. (thinks) Hit me! I'm stuck in a loop!

CLARA thumps him on the side of the head.

The DOCTOR: Thanks.

A beat.

CLARA: About these clothes...

The console explodes. They're both thrown away in a tangle of limbs.

INT. STAR-FIGHTER BRIDGE - NIGHT

Sparks shower from the ceiling.

One lumpy-bodied ALIEN is slumped very dead over a console, a massive wound on the side of its head.

In the command couch next to it, is another ALIEN, lumpy and ugly.

The ALIEN works at the controls with desperation. Stabbing buttons and twisting control columns.

A blast lights up the room - this is terminal.

Alarms. Extinguishers.

RADIO VOICE (Radio FX): Surrender your ship and prepare to be boarded!

ALIEN: Never!

RADIO VOICE (Radio FX): You are in direct contravention of the Silvelta Compact.

ALIEN: Prove it!

The ALIEN pulls back a cover on the console.

Three red buttons that look like they're the "*Press in the last resort*" kind of buttons are revealed.

RADIO VOICE: We have scans of your bomb bay! Those weapons are war crimes!

ALIEN: What weapons?

The ALIEN stabs the buttons.

INT. TARDIS WARDROBE. IN FLIGHT. - DAY

THE DOCTOR and CLARA pick themselves up. THE DOCTOR heads back to the console.

CLARA: What the hell is going on?

THE DOCTOR: In here with the clothes or outside the TARDIS?

CLARA: Both!

THE DOCTOR: They're both futures I'm being forced to contemplate before I want to! Does that answer your question?

CLARA: No!

THE DOCTOR crawls back to the console. Starts checking readings. The screens rush with complex mathematical gibberish.

THE DOCTOR: Every time I steer away the TARDIS steers us back to the original heading!

THE DOCTOR wags his finger at the console.

The DOCTOR: What are you up to? Are you still annoyed about the Diesel/Petrol/Dwarf Star Alloy mix-up?

CLARA: What?

THE DOCTOR: Sometime next week I think. (thumps the side of his head) It's never been this bad before. There's something very wrong going on outside the TARDIS.

CLARA: You should try experiencing life inside it.

BOOM! The TARDIS has another teeth-rattling shake-fest.

THE DOCTOR: Yes. It's playing havoc with my perception of local time. And the TARDIS's. She's all over the place! (his eyes blaze.) Can you as tight as on Hold!

CLARA: You're talking backwards!

THE DOCTOR: Not! Am I NO!

BOOM!

CLARA: What are we going to do?

Suddenly everything is calm and quiet. THE DOCTOR is standing by the console looking calm and cool, straightening his jacket.

THE DOCTOR

Do? I did it ages ago. Where were you?

Then...

TIME flows the wrong way. THE DOCTOR rolls backward onto his knees with impossible slowness, back underneath the console. His long arms reaching up. Explosions run backward - sparks leaping from the air back into the console. THE DOCTOR clicking off switches.

THE DOCTOR
Materialization Emergency!

Explosions. Chaos. THE DOCTOR and CLARA being thrown about like dice in a cup.

FX SHOT. SPACE.

We're skimming the high atmosphere of the planet.

WHAM!

One of the ships detonates. A shower of debris is blasted into the lower atmosphere of the planet.

We follow a couple of glowing lumps of wreckage for a few moments before-
BANG!

The surviving ship is badly damaged.

The RADIO VOICE screams in agony as the ship cartwheels away from the planet, leaving it behind.

We follow the ship as it turns and burns. Then-
SMASH!

The ship crashes into the surface of a small airless moon.

The explosion dies away, and the moon is left cold and silent.

We track back from the moon, across the starry gulf.

CAPTION: Seventy Eight Years Later.

Where we expect to see the blue-green planet is a HORROR.

A boiling lava-covered ball.

Come in closer: volcanoes blasting into the upper atmosphere, hydrocarbon plumes billowing upwards.

CAPTION: HELL.

INT. TARDIS WARDROBE. IN-FLIGHT - DAY

The room is destroyed, clothes smoulder, all the racks are overturned.

CLARA uncovers herself from a pile of AMY'S clothes. The policewoman's hat is on her head. CLARA feels for it, takes it off, looks at it, and throws it wildly.

The hat bounces off THE DOCTOR'S face as he appears from under another

pile of clothes. ROSE'S Union-Jack T-Shirt features prominently. He rubs his nose on the T-Shirt. He starts to get up -
THE DOCTOR looks intently at the palm of his hand, takes a small plastic ruler from his pocket, and measures the lifeline on his palm.

THE DOCTOR: We're about 78 years in the future.

CLARA: Which future?

THE DOCTOR: That's a very good point.

CLARA (getting up): Have we stopped?

THE DOCTOR (looking at the console): We're coming into land.

CLARA: On what?

THE DOCTOR (reading the screens): Hell. Apparently.

CLARA: No change there then.

THE DOCTOR and CLARA head towards the door.

INT. FORMATION COURT - DAY

(N.B. Background combustion engine noise is a constant in all the scenes in The Formation.)

A cramped dingy metal ribbed tunnel. Four metres wide and perhaps thirty metres long. It's lit with emergency lighting, and most of the floor space has been covered with wooden crates, scrap metal, and baskets of salvaged stuff. The overwhelming feeling is that we're on a world with a 1940's level of technology, but it's not Earth.

A space has been cleared in the middle of the tunnel and a crude trial is taking place.

There are perhaps twenty people in the room, dressed in a mishmash of clothes that have constantly needed to be repaired.

There is a faintly militaristic air to the assembled crowd, but no uniformity. The clothes are too old for that.

A sweating young man, SEZAN (late teens, wiry, clever, insolent) is on his knees before a small raised platform.

He is being held in arm-locks by two HEFTY GUARDS.

On the platform are the PRIME PILOT (70's, leader, scarred, powerful, angry) and FLEET (40's, female, scientist, capable, inquisitive, but Machiavellian.)

PRIME PILOT: Cadet Sezan. You have been found guilty by a jury of your peers of the heinous crime of theft and deception. Do you have anything to say before the sentence of this court is carried out?

SEZAN: Would it make any difference?

A look from FLEET. She knows it wouldn't.

PRIME PILOT: You have the right to speak before sentence. We are not barbarians.

SEZAN: No? What do you call this then?

PRIME PILOT: Justice.

The PRIME PILOT places a leather flying cap on his head and pulls the goggles down over his eyes.

PRIME PILOT: As Prime Pilot, I order the sentence of this court is death. To be carried out immediately.

CRASH!

A cargo door at the end of the tunnel is opened by GUARDS, hissing down on old hydraulics.

Suddenly the engine noise increases and wind whips into the tunnel. Through the door, we can see clouds and sky.

We're in an aeroplane!

Below us are endless seas of lava stretching from horizon to horizon!

SEZAN (terrified): I stole a bottle of water!

PRIME PILOT: I don't think that'll slake the thirst where you're going.

GUARDS begin dragging SEZAN towards the cargo door. He screams and screams.

Then:-

The TARDIS begins to materialise on the cargo decking!

The GUARDS stop dragging SEZAN, they look back to The PRIME PILOT. Not sure what to do.

FLEET is amazed.

Some of the crowd are scared, pushing back away from the TARDIS.

We focus on two - JUSTIN CROSSHAIR, Formation CO-PILOT late 20s, square-jawed hero, aviators, and Brylcreemed hair and his wife AVERY CROSSHAIR, late 20s, beautiful, heavily pregnant. JUSTIN tenses as the TARDIS door opens.

AVERY clutches JUSTIN'S hand.

THE DOCTOR appears with his most disarming smile. CLARA is not far behind.

CLARA: Oh. Right. When you were being Doctor Backwards. You meant

emergency materialization.

THE DOCTOR: Yes. While we're getting your ears fixed we'll do your eyes at the same time. They look the wrong way up. (addresses everyone) Hello! Bit windy.

THE DOCTOR surveys the deck. His eyes fix on AVERY, he goes over.

THE DOCTOR: Should you be sitting in this draft?

AVERY: Pregnancy is not an illness.

THE DOCTOR: No. But being sucked but into the sky is fairly terminal. (pointing at JUSTIN) He yours?

AVERY nods.

THE DOCTOR: He looks quite solid. Anchored. Hang on to him.

THE DOCTOR looks up at the GUARDS, SEZAN, The open doors, and the PRIME PILOT.

THE DOCTOR: Nice hat. Look, umm-- You're not about to throw this young man out of that door are you?

PRIME PILOT: The sentence of this court is death.

THE DOCTOR (stepping away from AVERY): Yes?

PRIME PILOT: Yes.

THE DOCTOR: I'd like to appeal.

PRIME PILOT: On what grounds?

THE DOCTOR: Well, there aren't any grounds. It's all lava by the looks of it. (his joke is not appreciated) Can't we just shake hands, a quick smack on the back of the legs, waggle a finger in his face and say, naughty boy? I mean, he's not much more than a kid.

PRIME PILOT: Throw them all out!

The crowd, emboldened, rush forward.

JUSTIN stands to go with them, but AVERY pulls him back.

AVERY: No!

They back away. Someone smashes into AVERY in their rush to carry out the PRIME PILOT'S orders. AVERY goes spinning and falls clutching her stomach in agony.

JUSTIN: Medic! Medic!

But JUSTIN'S voice is lost in the noise.

THE DOCTOR: Help that woman!

CLARA: And then help us!

GUARDS drag SEZAN to the edge and toss him out of the plane.

THE DOCTOR and CLARA are propelled towards the doors too, screaming.

THE DOCTOR: You can't execute me! I'm a tourist!

CLARA: That never works!

A large portion of the CROWD pushes the TARDIS back towards the CARGO DOOR. It topples backward and out of the plane!

CLARA'S head smashes against the bulkhead and she is knocked unconscious.

THE DOCTOR makes a desperate grab for something. Anything. But he is dragged towards the open door!

CLARA and THE DOCTOR are thrown from the plane.

PRIME PILOT: Close the doors! Medics! Take Avery to the Maternity Plane!

The cargo doors begin to close. MEDICS pick themselves out of the crowd and rush to help AVERY.

PRIME PILOT: Let that be a lesson to you all!

The MEDICS have produced a canvas stretcher and are carrying AVERY away. JUSTIN looks like he's going to go with her, still clutching her hand.

PRIME PILOT: CO-PILOT!

JUSTIN halts, AVERY doesn't want to let go of his hand, but he snaps it clear... Their eyes meet in mutual powerlessness.

PRIME PILOT: Return to your cockpit at once Co-Pilot. We have a plume to harvest!

The PRIME PILOT turning on his heel and regretfully JUSTIN follows.

FLEET looks back towards the cargo doors... perplexed and engaged by what she's just seen.

EXT. FORMATION - DAY

The sky is dark with prop-engined planes.
Perhaps 50,000 of them, all flying in a myriad of formations - diamond shapes, squares, circles, cubes, pyramids--
Some wing-tips are near enough to touch, some seem to be doing just that.
The aeroplanes are all different shapes and sizes, from small fighters to huge Spruce-Goose-a-like flying boats.
The sound of their propellers is deafening.
THE DOCTOR.
Falling.
Less than thirty seconds from fiery death but amazed at what he can see.

THE DOCTOR: Wow.

Ext. formation - day

The TARDIS is falling back towards the ocean of lava with its doors towards the sky, swinging open.
SEZAN thrown out first is below the TARDIS, then the unconscious CLARA and then THE DOCTOR.
THE DOCTOR is still looking up to the thousands of aircraft, agog.
Then he seems to realise where he is.
He flips himself over and gawks at the horizon to horizon lava.
This is as almost an amazing sight as The Formation.
THE DOCTOR shakes his head and goes into a VERTICAL DIVE, he puts on his SONIC SUNGLASSES as he falls.
He looks directly at the TARDIS and SONICKS it.
He goes past CLARA at increasing speed.
The LAVA is getting nearer.

THE DOCTOR (to CLARA): Clara!

But CLARA is still unconscious.

THE DOCTOR: What have I told you about beauty sleep? It's NOT working!

THE DOCTOR falls faster. He whizzes past us.
THE TARDIS falls.
THE DOCTOR is almost there!
He begins to SONIC through the open doors!

INT. THE TARDIS - CONTINUOUS.

POV from over the CONSOLE.

THE DOCTOR through the doors, still falling towards the TARDIS, SONIC SUNGLASSES buzzing.

A control on the CONSOLE flicks as a direct result of the SONICKING.

A vast rope safety device, like a huge Lacrosse Net, springs up between the console and the open doors.

THE DOCTOR falls through the doors at terminal velocity and bounces into the net.

THE DOCTOR expertly dismounts the net like a Trapeze Artiste and throws himself at the CONSOLE.

THE DOCTOR: Thank you Billy Smart!

On THE DOCTOR maniacally using the TARDIS controls--

EXT. FALLING TOWARDS LAVA - CONTINUOUS.

The TARDIS flies below SEZAN and he plops through the doors, just before hitting the lava.

INT. TARDIS - CONTINUOUS.

THE DOCTOR at the controls. SEZAN bouncing around in the net. Screaming.

THE DOCTOR: Oh for goodness' sake, open your eyes!

SEZAN opens his eyes. Stops screaming. Sees the TARDIS in all its glory and starts screaming again.

THE DOCTOR: Yes. Of course. That would be the reaction.

THE DOCTOR whirls some more controls.

EXT. FALLING TOWARDS LAVA - CONTINUOUS.

The TARDIS moves again, and CLARA drops through the doors.
Plop.

Pan Up to the Formation, as it turns as one, with impossible precision, and heads towards a distant Hydrocarbon Plume on the horizon.

The Hydrocarbon Plume is a geyser of gases and oily liquids being ejected into

the air by mighty tectonic forces below the surface.

The Formation heads towards it, leaving the TARDIS to skim above the waves of lava.

INT. BREATH OF FIRE. MATERNITY PLANE - DAY

VERY is on a bed, FLEET is listening to her pregnant tummy through a metal listening horn. A blue-uniformed NURSE stands by.

VERY: Has it started?

FLEET: No just pre-labour false contractions. A twinge.

VERY: That wasn't a twinge, that was a broken prop-shaft.

FLEET: You're fine.

VERY: I'm not fine! Get my husband!

FLEET: He's in the cockpit. The Prime Pilot needs him for harvest.

VERY: What about what I need?

FLEET: What you need is to keep still and keep calm. This is the first Formation Child to go full term in two years. It's more important than all of us.

FLEET covers VERY up and turns briskly away. But she stops, turns.

FLEET: Avery... the man in the blue box. He spoke to you. What did you make of him?

VERY: I didn't really get a chance to form an opinion seeing as you threw him off the aircraft.

VERY turns on the bed and puts her back squarely to FLEET. FLEET tosses the Listening horn to a NURSE.

FLEET: Keep her here. I don't want her disturbing the Co-Pilot. Call me if the contractions start to become progressive.

The NURSE nods, and FLEET goes.

On VERY - terrified, holding her bulge, looking tiny on the huge bed, clouds going by in the portholes - the horizons shifting.

INT. TARDIS CONSOLE ROOM - DAY

THE DOCTOR is rolling up the net, arm over arm like a fisherman. SEZAN stands amazed.

CLARA lies on the floor by the console beginning to stir.

THE DOCTOR: Yes, it's bigger on the blah blah than it is on the blah blah blah.

SEZAN: I can see that.

THE DOCTOR: Then why all the screaming?

SEZAN looks wide-eyed at the console.

SEZAN: Metal!

THE DOCTOR: Interesting phobia.

THE DOCTOR clicks up a floor plate and stows the net in there.

CLARA sits up holding her head.

CLARA: Ouch.

CLARA'S fingers come away smeared with blood.

THE DOCTOR: Here let me.

THE DOCTOR kneels and examines CLARA'S head.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a small tube with "OINTMENT" written on the side.

CLARA: Ow!

THE DOCTOR: Stop whinging, you're worse than Flyboy over there. He's scared of metal.

SEZAN: Not scared. Shocked. I just haven't seen this much metal since we salvaged the Stirling Goose.

THE DOCTOR: Yes. Well. Eyes off. This isn't salvage. It's mine. Clear?

SEZAN nods and steps back.

THE DOCTOR rubs OINTMENT on CLARA'S head wound.

CLARA: Double ow!

THE DOCTOR: Double stop whinging, you humans are all the same, Rose, "no clean T-shirt?" Whinge. Martha, "Does my bum look big in this?" Whinge. - Donna? Queen of the whinge. Amy, "will you please stop killing my husband!" Whinge, whinge, whingetty whinge.

CLARA is not at all impressed at this.

THE DOCTOR: It'll be alright in a minute. Right. You!

SEZAN: Me?

THE DOCTOR: Yes, you. Bean spilling time. Why were they going to execute you?

Murder? Treason? What?

SEZAN: I stole a bottle of water from the stores on the 'Spirit of Barnaby'.

CLARA: Was it like a very big bottle of water? I mean *Execution* sized?

SEZAN: All theft is punishable by death.

THE DOCTOR: Nice. What do they do if your library books are back late?

Break your legs?

SEZAN: All crime has to be dealt with harshly in The Formation. It's the only way to keep order.

THE DOCTOR: You didn't look like you approved when we arrived.

SEZAN: I needed the water for... doesn't matter.

CLARA: Couldn't you have waited until you got to duty-free?

This means nothing to SEZAN.

THE DOCTOR: When you land.

SEZAN: There is no land.

On THE DOCTOR and CLARA looking at each other in a "did he just say what we thought he said?" way...

INT. COCKPIT OF THE SPIRIT OF BARNABY - DAY

The cockpit is big enough to walk around behind the two pilots' chairs.

It's very much the feel of a huge WWII Bomber.

No computers. No tech.

The pilot's seat is empty.

JUSTIN, in the CO-PILOT'S chair, is turning the flight controller. He is sweaty, nervous. His mind on other things...

Through the window, the horizon banks and we can see the Hydrocarbon Plume hove into view. A huge plume of oil and gas.

JUSTIN affixes his mask to the side of his leather flying helmet and activates his radio.

JUSTIN: Co-Pilot to Formation, Co-Pilot to Formation. Plume bearing four zero seven.

The PRIME PILOT enters the cockpit and claps JUSTIN on the shoulder.

PRIME PILOT: This is what we live for eh, Justin? The Plume?

JUSTIN unhooks his mask.

JUSTIN: Big one sir.

PRIME PILOT: We need it, Tally Ho Co-Pilot, let's make your soon to be born son proud.

JUSTIN: Tally Ho, Sir. (in his mask) Plume Flight Away!

EXT. FORMATION - DAY

Three huge Bombers, one of them the SPIRIT OF BARNABY lower their cargo bay doors and small fixed-wing BI-PLANES fall out, their props beginning to spin and their engines firing up.

When all twelve of the PLUME FLIGHT are ready and in formation, they head towards the Hydrocarbon Plume.

INT. TARDIS CONSOLE ROOM. - DAY

THE DOCTOR is watching the Formation on the scanner. He is completely beside himself.

THE DOCTOR: No! No! No! No land? That's impossible? How did you get here? How did you-- you know-- land?

SEZAN: We've been flying for over 70 years. Since the coming of Hell.

CLARA: The lava?

SEZAN nods.

CLARA: What was it like before?

SEZAN: Before we had to take to the skies? I've only seen photographs. There were things called seas, which were all water. There was land. Vast tracts of land as far as the eye could see.

THE DOCTOR is watching the bi-planes heading for the plume.

CLARA: You've only seen pictures?

SEZAN: And I've had dreams.

CLARA: Go on—

SEZAN (dreamily): Ever since I was a baby I've dreamt I could land. (a beat) Everyone has dreams about being able to land, don't they?

CLARA: Well-- I—

THE DOCTOR: But this is-- impossible!

CLARA: It sounds impossible-- but--

THE DOCTOR is operating the controls with renewed gusto.

THE DOCTOR: What's the one thing you can guarantee about the impossible,

Clara Oswin Oswald?

CLARA: That you'll try to land on it?

THE DOCTOR puts on his sunglasses and flicks the final demat control.

THE DOCTOR: Got it in *one* baby!

On THE DOCTOR'S maniacal smile we--

INT. BREATH OF FIRE. MATERNITY PLANE. - NIGHT/DAY

Darkness.

Constant engine noise.

The TARDIS door opening sending a wedge of light, illuminating empty hospital beds awaiting patients. Each has a cot at the end. 1940s style incubators sit empty in the middle of the deck.

THE DOCTOR, SEZAN and CLARA leave the TARDIS. They begin to explore.

THE DOCTOR: Is this the maternity... wing?

CLARA: What did I tell you about puns?

THE DOCTOR: Puns are banned.

CLARA: Puns are banned.

SEZAN: This is the Breath of fire, one of the hospital planes. Back there is surgery, here and up there is maternity.

THE DOCTOR: Not many babies being born it would seem.

SEZAN: No.

THE DOCTOR: Why?

SEZAN: There used to be many pregnancies, but in recent years the rate has dropped off. There hasn't been one for two years-- until now.

CLARA: Does anyone know why?

SEZAN: Fleet thinks it's the pollution from the hydrocarbon harvesting we do to keep airborne. She's doing experiments.

They move along the ranks of beds.

CLARA (OOV): See the thing I don't get-- well there's not just one thing I don't get-- well I don't get any of it really.

They reach a porthole closed with a shutter.

CLARA: Anyway. You've been airborne for over seventy years?

SEZAN: Yes. Seventy-Eight.

THE DOCTOR runs his finger around the port-hole.
He SONICS it.

A lock pops with a blue flash and a shutter skitters up with a crash revealing a round window in the side of the fuselage.
The whole empty maternity ward is lit up.

THE DOCTOR: I suppose the question is-- why? No. That's not the question.
The question is--

EXT. BREATH OF FIRE. MATERNITY PLANE - CONTINUOUS.

THE DOCTOR'S face pressed up against the porthole.

THE DOCTOR: --How?

Leaving the porthole behind we see the Formation, up close and personal.
A vast carpet of aeroplanes.
Lit orange by the lava, cutting through a smoky, hellish sky.

INT. CARGO HOLD. BREATH OF FIRE - DAY

THE DOCTOR turns from the porthole and CLARA takes his place at it.

THE DOCTOR: Because this isn't just amazing and impossible. It's-- (looks at CLARA) Azimazeapossimpoppaling?

CLARA: Yeah. That. But be careful. I'll be checking for puns. (to SEZAN)
Those planes are all using combustion engines - for a start, where do you get all the fuel?

SEZAN (are you stupid or something?): Hydrocarbon Plume Harvesting.

THE DOCTOR: Well, that explains everything.

SEZAN: Hydrocarbon Plumes, thrown up from the lava as the deep geology is ripped apart. We fly into them, collect the gasses and liquids. Refine it into fuels and oils to run the engines.

CLARA: You refine it?

SEZAN: Yes. On the Refinery Craft. We have nearly a hundred of them. Each with its own plume flight.

CLARA: Time to make up some new new NEW words Doctor.

THE DOCTOR: Time to rip up the Dictionary and start again.

THE DOCTOR starts rummaging around in a medical cupboard by a bulhead.

CLARA (to SEZAN): So stuck on one aeroplane since you were born, with the

same people around you day in and' day out-- it'd drive me nuts.

SEZAN: It's not like that.

CLARA: No, I wasn't suggesting that you were nuts--- I was just—

SEZAN: No. It's not like that. Stuck on one plane. We can move about.

THE DOCTOR: (suddenly very interested) Really? How?

SEZAN: We walk.

A stunned pause.

THE DOCTOR: Show me.

SEZAN: We'll need to go through the bulkhead. But-- there may be people on the other side.

THE DOCTOR: I'm very good with people.

CLARA: Doctor.

THE DOCTOR: I'm not very good with people. That's why I have Clara. But first...

THE DOCTOR pickpockets CLARA'S TARDIS key and plops it in her hand.

THE DOCTOR: Lock her up and don't dawdle.

CLARA huffs but she does as she's told, and goes back to the TARDIS.

CLARA locks the TARDIS door.

CLARA: I don't dawdle.

THE DOCTOR: You all dawdle. Whinge, dawdling, and getting into scrapes. That's what humans do, isn't it? It's like... your mission statement.

CLARA: Love you too!

THE DOCTOR: I know. I'm that kinda lovable.

CLARA fumes as she returns.

SEZAN opens the Bulkhead door and they step through. THE DOCTOR pushes CLARA through first.

THE DOCTOR: Go and do people.

On SEZAN'S quick look back at CLARA...

INT. COCKPIT OF THE SPIRIT OF BARNABY - DAY

Through the window, we can see the Formation is approaching the plume. We can hear the roar of it above the engines.

The Plume Flight is buzzing towards it like Bi-Planes heading towards King Kong.

JUSTIN works at the controls.

The PRIME PILOT is checking charts at a small table.

FLEET enters; waits for PRIME.

PRIME PILOT: We haven't been out to this sector for twelve years. Never any plumes. But as soon as we've harvested, we can begin quartering. If there's land, we'll find it! Fleet, you're hovering. What have I told you about hovering?

FLEET: Apologies Prime Pilot.

JUSTIN: How is Avery? Have you seen her?

FLEET nods. PRIME rolls his eyes.

FLEET: As well as can be expected.

This doesn't entirely reduce JUSTIN's anxieties.

PRIME PILOT: Enough! Spit it out!

FLEET (looks nervously towards JUSTIN): Sir-- I wanted--

PRIME PILOT: You can speak freely in front of the Co-Pilot, Fleet! Come on!

FLEET: I wanted to discuss what happened at the trial--

PRIME PILOT: You have an issue with the sentence? Scientists. No backbone the Intellectual Classes.

FLEET: No. Yes-- I mean no. I wanted to discuss the Blue Box.

PRIME PILOT: Burnt to a cinder by now.

FLEET: But it materialized out of thin air-- that level of technology could-- well it could save us. PRIME PILOT: We don't need to be saved!

FLEET: If I could take a plane back and search. See if there was something to salvage--

PRIME PILOT: No. Out of the question. Not enough fuel.

FLEET: But it just-- appeared!

The PRIME PILOT goes back to his charts. He doesn't want to talk about this.

PRIME PILOT: I saw exactly what you saw Fleet. I saw no salvation. Just a wooden box. Now concern yourself with ensuring the refinery craft are in condition to defractionate fuel. That is after all your job around here.

FLEET: Yes, Prime Pilot. Of course.

FLEET withdraws.

PRIME PILOT: The lava will recede. (under his breath) It has to.

EXT. THE PLUME - DAY

The Plume Flight heads straight into the Hydrocarbon Plume.

It is joined by lots and lots of other Plume Flights, streaming down from the Formation.

Lines of portals down the flanks of their fuselages open and begin sucking in GASES and LIQUIDS.

PRIME PILOT (OOV RADIO): That's it, boys. Bring it home!

On the Bi-Planes sucking the fuel from the air.

INT. BREATH OF FIRE. MATERNITY WARD - DAY

AVERY alone on the bed, the NURSE not in sight, as CLARA, SEZAN, and THE DOCTOR approach between the long rows of beds.

THE DOCTOR: Probably best if we--

AVERY turns and sees them. She screams.

THE DOCTOR: --don't shock her by being surprisingly alive. (beat) That went well.

AVERY sits up and SEZAN goes to her, hugging her.

AVERY: You're alive!

SEZAN: They saved me. In the flying box.

AVERY: But—

SEZAN: It's really me.

AVERY: I'm sorry I didn't-- didn't say anything when—

SEZAN: It's ok. I understand. You couldn't. The same way I couldn't tell them—

AVERY: Who are you?

THE DOCTOR: That's a very complex and frighteningly existential question-- suffice it to say--

CLARA holds up her hand.

CLARA: Friends.

THE DOCTOR: That.

AVERY: Good.

THE DOCTOR is impatient not to be caught—

THE DOCTOR: Ok. Sezan. How are we getting off this thing?

SEZAN: This way.

SEZAN leads the DOCTOR to a big metal door in the fuselage. CLARA goes to AVERY.

There is a metal cupboard next to the door, which SEZAN opens. Inside are what look like parachute harnesses without the parachutes. He being handing them around to CLARA and THE DOCTOR.

SEZAN: Put these on.

CLARA: When are you due?

AVERY: This week. Any time.

CLARA: Is Sezan the---

AVERY: No. He's my brother.

CLARA: Awkward. (ploughs on) And you let them throw him off the plane?

AVERY: I couldn't say anything! The baby-- they're already in two minds about letting me keep it. If they thought I was a seditionist-- I'd never see it again.

CLARA: Sezan—

SEZAN: That baby is more important than all of us. It's the future.

CLARA: So what happened. Why the free-fall?

SEZAN: Avery wanted some extra water--

AVERY: I'm so thirsty. All the time, but they monitor everything I do, say, eat, and drink. Fleet is obsessed with my child's health and doesn't want her experiments tainted by "random data". Clara: Random data? Water? You're kidding, right?

SEZAN: No. I stole the water-- I'm not a very good thief-- I couldn't tell them it was for her or-- Well once the baby was born I wouldn't be the only one heading down into the lava. And you two wouldn't be there to save Avery. Would you?

THE DOCTOR: I'm more concerned about being saved now---

THE DOCTOR, harness on, starts working on opening the door.

CLARA looks towards the nurses' station. A mug of tea steams, a pen rolls gently across a report as the plane adjusts its flight—

CLARA: Where's the Nurse?

AVERY: She will be back soon. She has to check on me every fifteen cycles.

THE DOCTOR: How long has she been gone?

AVERY: About fifteen cycles.

CLARA (coming over): Doctor—

THE DOCTOR: The nick of time? That's my home turf.

SEZAN (to AVERY): We'll be back for you. I promise.

THE DOCTOR: Less of the "we" fly-boy.

The door clanks open and suddenly the fuselage is open to the elements.

EXT. WING-DOOR. BREATH OF FIRE - DAY

SEZAN and CLARA in the doorway. Wind whipping their hair and clothes.

CLARA: Okay. Different.

There is a *Light Signal Device* (much like a war-time Navy signal device used to signal other ships) on the side by the door, and SEZAN operates it with one hand while pulling himself on to the wing with the other.

The wing has a line of thin but sturdy poles along its length with a safety wire strung between.

CLARA eyes them with more than a little trepidation.

SEZAN: It's quite safe.

CLARA: I was with you up until quite. "Quite" isn't exactly "Totally" is it? Only one letter the same.

SEZAN: It's safe. I've been doing it my whole life.

CLARA begins putting on a harness, SEZAN already has one on. THE DOCTOR appears in the DOORWAY and the CLARA hands him a harness too.

CLARA: He says it's safe.

THE DOCTOR: Doesn't look too bad.

CLARA: Thank you for your support.

SEZAN locks a wire from his harness onto the safety wire and begins to walk. THE DOCTOR follows suit.

At the wingtip, another, equally impressive plane THE MARQUIS OF SHADOW has come alongside.

The wings of both planes touch.

There is an automatic hydraulic mechanism that locks the wings together.

CLARA: Normally I find myself hanging on for dear life by accident. You know,

it's probably sneaked up on me, caught me unawares. I very rarely do it on purpose. Usually, I need to be-- you know-- chased.

It's like Wing Walking in a Flying Circus.

THE DOCTOR: Would you like me to hold your hand? Or are you whinging solo?

They need to hold on tightly to the poles and wire to stop them from being blown off.

CLARA: No. (beat) Possibly.

INT. COCKPIT OF THE SPIRIT OF BARNABY - DAY

The PRIME PILOT is still poring over his charts.

JUSTIN in the chair, nervously tapping his fingers on the control stick.

PRIME PILOT: Set a holding pattern around the plume at five miles. This is the best strike for months. I want those refineries working overtime on this one.

JUSTIN: Wilco Prime.

PRIME PILOT: I want every tank brimmed. Not one wasted drop.

As JUSTIN nods, there's a buzz from the RADIO indicating someone trying to get through.

JUSTIN operates the control.

JUSTIN: Go ahead six zero.

The PRIME PILOT goes back to the chart, unconcerned. He begins drawing areas and marking them "LAND SEARCH SCHEDULE".

JUSTIN: What? Repeat that!

The PRIME PILOT looks up.

PRIME PILOT: What is it?

JUSTIN: It's cadet Sezan Sir-- he's alive.

PRIME PILOT: Impossible!

JUSTIN: He's just been spotted with the other two we threw out-- crossing from the Breath of Fire to the Marquis of Shadow!

PRIME PILOT: If Cadet Bryan has been handing 'round his stinking homebrew

again--

JUSTIN strains up in his seat and cranes his neck to look through the cockpit window.

JUSTIN: No. There they are. Look!

The PRIME PILOT looks.

JUSTIN (getting up): Avery is in there!

PRIME pushes him roughly back into the seat.

PRIME PILOT: Sit down! DO YOUR JOB!

EXT. WING. MARQUIS OF SHADOW. - DAY

We're high above.

The Figures of THE DOCTOR, CLARA, and SEZAN are almost at the wing-door on the next plane.

PRIME PILOT (OOV, without irony): Well, don't just sit there!

Int. CoCKPIT OF THE SPIRIT OF BARNABY - continuous.

The PRIME PILOT thumps the bulkhead.

PRIME PILOT: Order them to be arrested!

On JUSTIN reaching for the RADIO...

EXT. WING DOOR. MARQUIS OF SHADOW. - DAY

THE DOCTOR and SEZAN are at the door.

THE DOCTOR sets about opening it.

The wings of the two planes suddenly detach and the party fall against each other as the MARQUIS of SHADOW makes a jerky manoeuvre.

We see, but no-one else does, SEZAN taking his opportunity to pickpocket the TARDIS key from CLARA as she falls into him with a yell.

SEZAN makes a show of steadying CLARA.

CLARA: Thank you.

SEZAN: No problem.

THE DOCTOR swings the DOOR open.

THE DOCTOR: Come on. Inside!

But THREE GUARDS are stuffed in the doorway - Pointing crossbows at them!

THE DOCTOR (hopeful): And tonight Matthew--

INT. FUSELAGE OF THE MARQUIS OF SHADOW. - DAY

The Marquis of Shadow is an accommodation plane.

The fuselage is stuffed with rows and rows of empty bunk-beds.

The guards are slamming the door shut and pushing THE DOCTOR, SEZAN & CLARA to their knees.

THE DOCTOR: Why is it always knees, never chairs?

The GUARDS are not the chatty type. But they do look sweaty and trigger happy.

CLARA: So. Are you going to shoot or wait?

The GUARDS really don't seem so sure themselves.

An internal door crashes open.

In come the PRIME PILOT and FLEET.

THE DOCTOR: Hello again. Didn't really get time for introductions earlier, I'm the Doctor, this is Clara my pal, and these men with Crossbows are hopefully getting much calmer.

PRIME PILOT: How did you survive?

THE DOCTOR: Generally or specifically?

PRIME PILOT: Kill the girl.

The GUARDS raise their Crossbows!

THE DOCTOR: Wait! Wait! I have terminal mouth trap. It's run in my family for aeons. Literally. Sorry. My aircraft. I got in and-- umm-- saved us.

FLEET: That Blue Box?

THE DOCTOR: Yeah. Bit of a crate. (winces) But does the business. You know.

PRIME PILOT (to FLEET): Be quiet! No more talk of Blue Boxes!

FLEET looks at the floor. Ashamed at her own cowardice.

PRIME PILOT: The sentence of the court still stands.

THE DOCTOR: Oh, come on! Statute of limitations? Constitutional Aberrations? Luck of the Scottish?

PRIME PILOT: And that sentence will be carried out.

The PRIME PILOT raises his hand.

THEN--

Alarms start-up, WWII air-raid type sirens. Loud and insistent.

The Crossbows are pointed away.

THE DOCTOR: That's a relief.

FLEET: The Dragons are attacking!

CLARA (at THE DOCTOR): Yeah? I don't feel that relieved.

THE DOCTOR makes "Yap. Yap. Yap." hand signals at CLARA.

Everyone is thrown off their feet as the MARQUIS OF SHADOW goes into a steep dive -

EXT. SKY - FORMATION - DAY

Coming out of the sun on huge wings are two DRAGONS.

Each at least fifty feet across. They glide on pterodactyl wings and they breathe fire.

Yes. This is getting crazy.

A small MESSERSCHMITT type fighter attacks with all guns blazing.

It is easily burnt up and explodes.

INT. FUSELAGE OF THE MARQUIS OF SHADOW - DAY

The flash of the exploding MESSERSCHMITT flares through the windows.

The MARQUIS OF SHADOW is taking emergency avoidance action and everything not tied down is tumbling about.

THE DOCTOR crashes into FLEET.

THE DOCTOR: Dragons?

FLEET nods.

THE DOCTOR: You're kidding me! Dragons? I love dragons. Other than the

fact they're entirely mythical they're my favourite things to turn up out of the blue like this.

CLARA: We're being attacked by mythical creatures?

THE DOCTOR: Well, it's Wednesday. That's when that happens.

PRIME PILOT: Guards. Secure them! Fleet, to the cockpit!

But THE DOCTOR throws himself at the PRIME PILOT, the GUARDS, regaining their feet, raise their crossbows.

PRIME PILOT: Not at me you idiots!

THE DOCTOR: Or me! I can help.

PRIME PILOT: Help? What?

THE DOCTOR: You. I can help with the dragons!

PRIME PILOT: How?

THE DOCTOR: I haven't really thought that far ahead.

FLEET: He saved them with his machine, maybe he can help—

THE DOCTOR (pointing at FLEET): What she said.

PRIME PILOT: (thinks for only a moment) The girl stays here with Cadet Sezan. Under guard. Kill them if they so much as breathe in the wrong direction.

THE DOCTOR sniffs his breath in his cupped hand and gives the thumbs up to the guards.

The GUARDS nod and point their crossbows at CLARA and SEZAN.

THE DOCTOR makes an apologetic face at CLARA but follows FLEET and the PRIME PILOT out, followed by one GUARD, crossbow raised.

EXT. FORMATION - DAY

The DRAGONS are coming in again.

One lands on the back of a Large Flying Boat.

It rips a hole in the fuselage and breathes FIRE inside.

All we hear are the SCREAMS as the plane goes down.

INT. COCKPIT OF THE SPIRIT OF BARNABY - DAY

Through the window, THE DOCTOR watches in awe as the DRAGON disengages from the Flying Boat and flaps away.

The Flying Boat EXPLODES!

The DRAGONS begin to circle into their own formation, readying for another attack.

The GUARD with the crossbow is still covering THE DOCTOR.

THE DOCTOR: They really are Dragons.

PRIME PILOT: This is helping?

THE DOCTOR: I'm thinking.

PRIME PILOT: And while you're thinking our people are dying!

THE DOCTOR: They'd be dying anyway. I've just increased your chances of survival by one Time Lord.

EXT. FORMATION. - CONTINUOUS

Two DRAGONS break off an attack and their heads snap around to look at the cockpit of the Spirit of Barnaby.

THE DOCTOR (repeated dreamily and FXed with echo): I've just increased your chances of survival by one Time Lord.

The DRAGONS look at each other.

INT. COCKPIT OF THE SPIRIT OF BARNABY. - CONTINUOUS

The PRIME PILOT raises his hand towards the GUARD.

THE DOCTOR: Is that all you know how to do? Kill things? That's a sign of fear, not leadership. Go on. Put a bolt between my eyes. How much nearer to NOT dying will you be then?

The PRIME PILOT lowers his hand.

THE DOCTOR: Better. That's leadership. Now. Fleet. White Coat. Does that mean you're a scientist or missing an ice-cream van?

FLEET: Scientist.

THE DOCTOR: Good. Now, looking around here, I reckon your radio technology is valve based yes?

FLEET nods.

THE DOCTOR: Right, I need a transmitter. Prime Pilot, order your fighter pilots to engage the Dragons and to try to draw them towards the hydrocarbon plume. Yes?

PRIME PILOT: I do not take orders.

THE DOCTOR: Then you're all dead.

PRIME PILOT (knows he's painted into a corner): Co-Pilot. Do what he says.

JUSTIN nods and puts on his radio mask.

THE DOCTOR (to FLEET): Transmitter now.

FLEET: This way.

On THE DOCTOR and FLEET heading out and the PRIME PILOT grinding his teeth.

EXT. FORMATION - DAY

A dozen or so FIGHTERS are buzzing around the DRAGONS, firing at them ineffectually.

The DRAGONS break off their attacks on the larger aeroplanes and try to burn the fighters, but the pilots have got wise and manage to avoid the sprays of fire.

They start to draw the DRAGONS towards the plume.

INT. TRANSMITTER ROOM. SPIRIT OF BARNABY - DAY

THE DOCTOR is dismantling the guts of the transmitter.

Wires thrown around his shoulders.

SONIC SUNGLASSES between his teeth.

FLEET: You can't! That's our only means of contacting the Formation!

THE DOCTOR (spitting out the SONIC SUNGLASSES): There won't be a Formation if this doesn't work.

THE DOCTOR puts the glasses on and SONICKS some wires and valves.

THE DOCTOR: How long have the Dragons been attacking?

FLEET: Since the lava came. They came from the deeps when the planet split.

THE DOCTOR: You're a scientist?

FLEET: Yes.

THE DOCTOR: Well try and sound like one. Did you have dragons on this-- what is this planet called?

FLEET: It used to be Paradise. Now we call it Hell.

THE DOCTOR: Sack your writers. Right. Put your finger there.

FLEET puts her finger in the mess of wires. Gets an electric shock.

FLEET: Ow!

THE DOCTOR: Right, that one's still live then.

FLEET: What did you do that for?!

THE DOCTOR: Wondered if you just followed orders blindly, or if you actually have an inquisitive scientific brain. Do you believe everything you're told?

FLEET: No! Of course not.

THE DOCTOR: Dragons? From the deeps? Does my head look hollow?! If you didn't have dragons on Paradise before the lava erupted, why should you have them after? Hmm?

FLEET considers this.

FLEET: I was born here. In the air. All I know is what I'm told.

THE DOCTOR: Rubbish. All you know is what you look at with your own eyes! Now, put your finger here.

FLEET goes to comply and then stops herself. Her finger hovering.

THE DOCTOR: That's more like it! We'll make a scientist of you yet. Now, go and tell the Prime Munster to order the fighters into the plume.

FLEET: Into?

THE DOCTOR: Yes. The transmitter will work for you, and it'll also work for me. Go!

On FLEET nodding and going we--

EXT. FORMATION - DAY

The plume huge in our vision.

The FIGHTERS flying into it, followed by the DRAGONS breathing fire.

INT. TRANSMITTER ROOM. SPIRIT OF BARNABY - DAY

FLEET appears in the doorway.

FLEET: They're in!

THE DOCTOR: Here goes nothing!

THE DOCTOR thrusts and arm of his SONIC SUNGLASSES into the guts of the reformatted transmitter and turns it on.

BLUE SPARKS fly around THE DOCTOR'S hand and he screams.

But he holds the SONIC SUNGLASSES stubbornly in place as they buck in his hand.

On FLEET impressed.

EXT. FORMATION - DAY

The TRANSMITTER ARRAY on the Spirit of Barnaby. BLUE SPARKS play around it and then--
WHUMP!

A WAVE of BLUE RIPPLES run out across the air.

We follow the RIPPLES as they pass through the FORMATION, causing some of the lighter planes to buck and drop before the pilots regain control.

The air SHIMMERS.

EXT. PLUME - DAY

The DRAGONS are just going into the plume. The FIGHTERS are coming out on the other side.

The ripples reach the plume.

WHUMP!

WHUMP!

WHUMP!

The plume comes alive with blossoming blue explosions.

The plume dissipates in an instant, falling as blue sparkly rain.

The DRAGONS fall with it, screaming, disorientated but alive.

They manage to regain control of their wings just before hitting the lava.

One dragon, the FIRST DRAGON, huge and scaly, flies back towards the Formation focussed on the SPIRIT OF BARNABY.

As she glides on a thermal, she closes her eyes, and we hear her speak for the first time—

FIRST DRAGON: Tiiiiiime Loooooooooord?

The FIRST DRAGON'S eyes snap open.

INT. COCKPIT OF THE SPIRIT OF BARNABY - DAY

THE DOCTOR, pocketing his SONIC SUNGLASSES, is coming back to the cockpit with FLEET.

FIRST DRAGON (VO): Doctor? Tiiiiiime Loooooooooord?

THE DOCTOR stops in his tracks, shaking his head.

FLEET: What?

THE DOCTOR: Nothing. Just I-- no, nothing.

The PRIME PILOT ignores THE DOCTOR'S entrance.

THE DOCTOR: No need for thanks, all part of the service.

PRIME PILOT: What did you do?

THE DOCTOR: Saved you.

PRIME PILOT: But the plume! It's gone!

THE DOCTOR looks out of the cockpit window.

THE DOCTOR: Yes. And so have the dragons. Swings and-- you don't have roundabouts do you? Thought not.

PRIME PILOT: That was our fuel! How will we search this area now?

THE DOCTOR: As I said, I didn't think that far ahead. When you get to know me better you'll find that's a bit of a pattern actually.

PRIME PILOT: Co-Pilot! Set a course back to the last plume we harvested. We need to be there by nightfall.

JUSTIN: Wilco Prime.

THE DOCTOR: Those dragons. Why are they attacking you?

FLEET: We don't know.

THE DOCTOR: But if you've been up here all these years, they could have wiped you out by now. Easy.

FLEET: If we see them first, we turn the Formation to another course, avoid them when we can.

THE DOCTOR: But sometimes they find you and attack?

FLEET: Yes.

THE DOCTOR: They're herding you.

FLEET: What?

THE DOCTOR: If they wanted you dead, they could just kill you. They don't. They want you to go somewhere specific. Why?

FLEET: I don't know.

PRIME PILOT (to The Doctor): Enough!-- (to the guard) Take him to Parliament!

The GUARD claps his hand on THE DOCTOR'S shoulder.

THE DOCTOR shrugs it off and goes nose to nose with the PRIME PILOT.

THE DOCTOR (intensely angry): What are you scared of?

The PRIME PILOT is rattled but says nothing.

FLEET is astonished.

THE DOCTOR allows the GUARD to take him away.
On the PRIME PILOT wiping sweat from his top lip we:-

INT. PARLIAMENT PLANE - DAY

The Parliament plane is a hollowed-out hold of a FLYING BOAT.
Rows of benches either side, on which sit the various AVIATOR MINISTERS and MP's.

THE DOCTOR is brought in with the GUARD.
FLEET and PRIME follow.

Three metal chairs have been set up opposite the crude dispatch box.
CLARA and SEZAN are already sat on them, being covered by CROSSBOWS.
THE DOCTOR is pushed into the chair.

THE DOCTOR: Well, this is an improvement on knees. You okay?

CLARA nods.

The PRIME PILOT takes his place at the Dispatch Box.

PRIME PILOT: Honourable Aviators, I have called this extraordinary sitting of Parliament to report on the emergency situation.

The AVIATORS show their approval by waving flight order papers.

PRIME PILOT: And to ask your approval to re-execute Cadet Sezan and these Interlopers.

THE DOCTOR: Hang on! One: I thought we'd got past the execution thing, you know leadership and stuff, and two: re-execute? You're having an etymological emergency far more threatening to your society than mythical Dragons!

PRIME PILOT: You are absolutely right Doctor, I am showing leadership. I don't want to kill you because I'm angry. That would be poor leadership.

THE DOCTOR: Exactly.

THE DOCTOR takes CLARA'S and SEZAN'S hands to comfort them.
Smiles.

He's saved them again—

PRIME PILOT: I want to kill you democratically.

THE DOCTOR (wincing): Oooh.

On the AVIATORS agreeing and madly waving their flight order papers.

On SEZAN. Terrified. Shifting in his seat.

THE DOCTOR (aside to SEZAN): Don't worry. I've got an--

But it's too late. SEZAN is up!

THE DOCTOR: Sezan don't run! They'll shoot you!

But SEZAN isn't running. He's standing up with his handheld up out in front of him.

SEZAN: Wait!

THE DOCTOR and CLARA see what SEZAN is holding.
The TARDIS KEY!

INT. SPIRIT OF BARNABY. MATERNITY PLANE. - DAY

In on AVERY'S screaming mouth. She's going into labour!
NURSES at the business end. Hot water and towels.

AVERY: Get my husband!

On the NURSE holding her hand we:-

INT. CARGO HOLD. BREATH OF FIRE - DAY

The TARDIS. Vulnerable.

THE DOCTOR and CLARA dragged in by GUARDS.

SEZAN walks in with the PRIME PILOT, FLEET, and AVIATOR MINISTERS.

CLARA: I didn't drop it!

THE DOCTOR: You had it! Was there more important whinging that you had to do? Humans. All. The. Same.

CLARA: Blaming me isn't going to get it back, is it? And I wouldn't have had it if you hadn't given it to me!

THE DOCTOR: Fair point. Well made. Look out knees!

THE DOCTOR and CLARA are thrown to their knees again.

THE DOCTOR: Knee pads. I'm going to wear knee pads from now on. Do you guys have Hockey up here? Skateboarding? I'm having a mid-life crisis, help

me out here, take me to your Hipsters.

SEZAN reaches the TARDIS door.
The PRIME PILOT has the key.

SEZAN: It's amazing Prime Pilot. You won't believe the amount of metal in there. We could build engines for the whole formation with it.

PRIME PILOT: If you're lying—

SEZAN: I'm not. It's incredible.

The PRIME PILOT puts the key in the lock.

He pauses.

Takes it out.

PRIME PILOT: Fleet!

FLEET comes over.

PRIME PILOT: You do it. Might be booby-trapped.

THE DOCTOR: Now that's what I call leading from the front!

FLEET gingerly takes the key and puts it into the lock.

FLEET closes her eyes, expecting the worst.

Turns the key.

The TARDIS door swings open.

INT. TARDIS CONSOLE ROOM - DAY

POV of FLEET'S incredulous face.

The PRIME PILOT pushes FLEET out of the way and strides in.

THE DOCTOR: Don't touch anything! You have no idea what you're doing!

PRIME PILOT (to FLEET): How is this possible?

FLEET: I have absolutely no idea.

PRIME PILOT: I don't like it. I don't-- trust it. (pointing at the Doctor and CLARA) Bring them.

The PRIME PILOT goes gingerly into the TARDIS.

SEZAN not sure what to do now that he's not the focus of attention, walks in behind the PRIME.

THE DOCTOR and CLARA are brought in by GUARDS.

THE DOCTOR: This is a delicate and temperamental piece of dimensional en-

gineering, I'm the only person who can operate it. Please. Please be careful.

The PRIME PILOT reaches the console.
He caresses the various metals.

PRIME PILOT: But I don't want to operate it. (turning to his retinue.) Break it for spares!

THE DOCTOR (struggling against his captors): No!

INT. SPIRIT OF BARNABY. MATERNITY PLANE. - DAY

A baby screaming, freshly born, being handed to AVERY by the NURSE.

AVERY: My son.

The NURSE nods and smiles.

AVERY: Thank you. Thank you. He's beautiful.

As the NURSE turns, her smile shrinks to nothing. She goes to a wall-mounted radio. Puts an ear-phone to her head and speaks into the microphone.

NURSE (cold): It's a boy.

In the distance... can we hear the CLOISTER BELL?

INT. TARDIS CONSOLE ROOM. - DAY

Later. The CLOISTER BELL is ringing. As the scene progresses and the TARDIS is dismantled more it increases in pitch and speed.

Twenty or thirty WORKERS with saws, bolt cutters, and jemmies are working at dismantling various bits of the TARDIS.

FLEET winces as a large piece of metal crashes down from the ceiling.

We see a man up on stepladders wearing dark goggles in a shower of sparks as he begins cutting at another piece of machinery with an acetylene torch.

THE DOCTOR is struggling in the arms of two GUARDS, trying to get towards the PRIME.

THE DOCTOR: Stop this! You don't know what you're doing!

PRIME PILOT: Yes, we do.

FLEET is looking decidedly uncomfortable.

PRIME PILOT: We're cutting bits off. What more is there to know?

CLARA sits disconsolately on the floor. She is being watched by two guards. JUSTIN appears in the doorway. Waits for PRIME to see him and nod for him to come over.

PRIME PILOT: Congratulations Justin. A fine new pilot for the formation.

JUSTIN: Thank you Prime pilot. I came to ask. May I visit my wife on the Breath of Fire?

PRIME PILOT: No, Co-Pilot. I need you here. Women's work is for the women. You're needed to assess the salvage.

JUSTIN nods but he's not at all happy.

CLARA: Prime Pilot, I have the 14th century on the telephone, they'd like their gender politics back.

Another CRASH and a girder crashes down.

THE DOCTOR howls. The CLOISTER BELL is ringing incessantly in the distance—

THE DOCTOR: Fleet! Fleet! Tell him. Tell him what would happen if you started dismantling an engine while it was keeping a plane in the air! Tell him—

FLEET: Well—

PRIME PILOT: Your machine isn't in the air Doctor.

Fleet: Well, the dimensional anomaly, Prime Pilot-- there must be some, umm-- forces we don't—

THE DOCTOR: Yes-- Yes-- you're getting it—

FLEET: Well-- I imagine, that the power needed to keep this machine stable would--

The PRIME PILOT is not looking impressed.

Fleet: I just think that—

PRIME PILOT: Yes, Fleet?

FLEET: We should be-- careful.

THE DOCTOR: Careful? Careful? Fleet! Is that the best you can do?

PRIME PILOT: Well, I suppose you may have a point--

The WORKERS all stop, awaiting the next command.

THE DOCTOR: Brilliant Fleet! Brilliant!

PRIME PILOT: Cut it up. Carefully!

THE DOCTOR (to FLEET): Not so much. (pause, thinks.) Pilot, listen to me. This machine travels in Time as well as Space - it's big enough to transport your entire population anywhere. I can do that for you. Let me go and bring your people here. I can save you all.

PRIME PILOT: You expect me to believe such an obvious bluff?

THE DOCTOR: It's the truth I swear.

PRIME PILOT: You have the bearing of a consummate liar Doctor, you would say anything to gain your freedom, you expect me to give over the safety of my entire race to a man in a box?

THE DOCTOR: It's a big box—

PRIME PILOT: Enough. The work will continue.

THE DOCTOR: Like all dictators, you lack the basic imagination to think outside your fear and paranoia.

PRIME PILOT: Imagination? Imagination! This planet, Doctor, turned from Paradise to Hell in a matter of months. Can you imagine ten thousand volcanoes erupting at once? Imagine a thousand earthquakes a day? To survive we didn't have the luxury of not having an imagination. Our survival is made of IMAGINATION! To get this fleet in the air as the lava advanced and destroyed everything we cared for and loved took the greatest feat of spirit and faith and thought ever attempted-- ever accomplished. We don't have the luxury of stopping; for us, there is not the breathing space of landing. We have to fly. Fly! All there is for us is the sky or the promise of fiery death. To stay alive we must soar above mere imagination because the rewards are nothing less than the difference between life and death. The metal and resources contained within this box will sustain us for years. There can be no other way.

THE DOCTOR: It's your funeral.

PRIME PILOT: I live with that prospect every second Doctor, it doesn't scare me. Take him away.

THE DOCTOR locks eyes with the PRIME PILOT but doesn't say a word as he is dragged away.

CLARA gets up to follow, but the PRIME PILOT strides forwards and viciously pushes her back to the floor. JUSTIN looks at CLARA apologetically.

THE DOCTOR dragged out and two GUARDS on the TARDIS doors, slamming them shut.

On SEZAN realising the enormity of what he has done.

INT. PARLIAMENT PLANE. - DAY

THE DOCTOR is tied to a chair.

The PRIME PILOT is looking over navigation charts with his retinue out of

THE DOCTOR'S earshot.

FLEET makes her way into the parliament, she is grubby and dirty from working on the TARDIS. Her face streaked with sweat and grease.

The PRIME PILOT pays her no heed as she approaches THE DOCTOR.

THE DOCTOR: Enjoying yourself?

FLEET: I need some information.

THE DOCTOR: This particular turkey will not be voting for Christmas this year.

FLEET: Doctor-- as a fellow scientist—

THE DOCTOR: I just about acknowledge your sentience Fleet, other than that we share nothing. FLEET: Doctor, I am caught between fear and obedience, you have to see that—

THE DOCTOR: I do?

FLEET: Please—

THE DOCTOR: Do not try appealing to my better nature Fleet-- won't work—

FLEET: Don't make me threaten the life of your companion—

THE DOCTOR: True colours at last.

FLEET: I have no choice! I'm trying to dismantle your machine without destroying my people. I believe you when you say how dangerous it can be-- I've been getting the crew to concentrate on the obviously unimportant-- but there's only so long I can keep that up-- you know that. Soon we are going to be cutting into power systems, live engineering. The Prime Pilot will make us go through with this whatever I advise. Doctor, please help me to do this safely.

THE DOCTOR says nothing.

FLEET: We've had one child born, today in the last two years! Half my people have died in the last seventy years as we have circled looking for land. Half! I do not have to tell you that is unsustainable!

THE DOCTOR just stares at her with anger hotter than the lava.

FLEET: I do not believe you are the kind of man to let the other half die because of your own stubbornness.

THE DOCTOR: You'd be surprised.

FLEET: That's just the point I'm making Doctor. I would.

On THE DOCTOR, looking at the PRIME PILOT, and then back at FLEET as she takes out a note pad and pen from her pocket.

FLEET looks expectantly at him.

On THE DOCTOR - the enormity of the choice he has been presented with sinking in.

INT. TARDIS CONSOLE ROOM - DAY

The doors to the TARDIS are closed and guarded.

CLARA is still on the floor as the work goes on around her.

SEZAN seems to have been left to his own devices. He's looking at the console and marvelling at the construction.

CLARA: I hope you're happy with yourself.

SEZAN: I'm sorry.

CLARA: Well, that makes everything okay. Shall we have cakes now?

SEZAN: I didn't know—

CLARA: Oh, you thought letting them in here would lead to a pat on the head, a round of "Good Boy" and the job of polishing all the metal until it was time for the Pilot to let us go?

SEZAN: No-- I—

CLARA: I don't want to hear it. This is the Doctor's home. This is where he lives. When he's not surfing my sofa and stealing the milk from my fridge.

You've let this lot in here to destroy it—SEZAN: I had no choice. They were going to throw me off. You saw it when you got here.

CLARA: If I'd known what you were going to do, I'd have thrown you off myself.

The dismantling goes on.

A wall panel is removed with an angle grinder and there is a small explosion, which shoots a fountain of sparks across the console.

SEZAN dives for cover knocking CLARA over.

CLARA yells and before the guards can react, SEZAN manages to whisper in her ear—

SEZAN: I can get you out of here.

CLARA: What--? Are you like the Double-crosser's double-crosser or something?

Before SEZAN can answer he is hauled off by GUARDS.

SEZAN: I fell! I just fell!

On CLARA looking at SEZAN as he is dragged away from her.

INT. PARLIAMENT PLANE. - DAY

As before THE DOCTOR is still tied to the chair.
FLEET snaps shut her notebook and stands.

FLEET: Thank you.

THE DOCTOR: Just be careful.

FLEET: I will.

FLEET goes briskly with renewed purpose.
The PRIME PILOT is still pouring over the charts.

THE DOCTOR: Hello? Hello? Hat Man. Big Fella. Over here.

THE DOCTOR is soundly ignored.

But we see that THE DOCTOR is working methodically at the bonds tying his hands behind him.

THE DOCTOR: You've got my TARDIS, you've got my friend. If the Dragons attack again, you're going to have to let me go so that I can fight them off for you, so why not let me go now anyway? Makes sense. (aside) Sort of.

PRIME PILOT: If you don't shut up, I'll gag you as well.

THE DOCTOR: Hardly fair is it? I co-operated with Fleet - told her the best way to dismantle my TARDIS. What more do you want?

PRIME PILOT: A way to kill you that still means we can protect ourselves against the Dragons? THE DOCTOR: Your candour does you enormous credit.

(pause) Why are you so scared of me? PRIME PILOT: I'm not.

THE DOCTOR: If you're not scared of me why all this?

PRIME PILOT: I want you where I can see you.

THE DOCTOR: How about I promise not to become invisible? Scouts honour.

PRIME PILOT: Be quiet!

THE DOCTOR: Dib dib—

PRIME PILOT: I'm warning you!

THE DOCTOR: --Dob?

The PRIME PILOT strides towards THE DOCTOR ready to strike him with a vicious backhander.

THE DOCTOR: Real fear. Proper fear. The kind of fear that freezes your guts and stops you in your tracks makes you angry and--

The PRIME PILOT holds before he strikes.

THE DOCTOR: --uncontrolled. I've seen it so many times before. You're not

special, Pilot. You're not a worthy adversary. You're a little man in big shoes. That's all.

The PRIME PILOT draws back his arm, ready to strike.

THE DOCTOR just stares at him.

The PRIME PILOT brings his arm swinging down.

Stops at the last moment, his eyes wide, sweat on his forehead-- breathing hard.

The back of the PRIME PILOT'S hand stokes THE DOCTOR'S cheek with extreme gentleness.

PRIME PILOT: You think you can provoke me?

THE DOCTOR: Just seeing what it takes—

PRIME PILOT: You think you know me? What makes me what I am?

THE DOCTOR: I have a pretty fair idea—

PRIME PILOT: You know nothing Doctor. All I care about are my people—

THE DOCTOR: Then let me save them.

The PRIME PILOT hesitates, just for a moment.

THE DOCTOR is encouraged.

THE DOCTOR: Your civilisation is hanging on by the skin of its teeth, I'm offering you salvation, a way out-- don't refuse it out of fear—

PRIME PILOT: It's not fear.

THE DOCTOR: Then what is it?

With a roar out of nowhere, the PRIME PILOT brings back his hand and belts THE DOCTOR across the face with awesome viciousness.

THE DOCTOR and his chair spin away, topple over, and crash to the floor.

PRIME PILOT: It's because you made me hesitate.

THE PRIME PILOT spins away, goes back to the charts.

PRIME PILOT: And if I hesitate. Just for one moment-- my people die.

INT. BREATH OF FIRE. MATERNITY WARD. - DAY

AVERY and her baby boy, sitting up in a chair, wrapped in a blanket - the new life bathed in the red glow from the port-holes as the flight circles around.

A breeze ruffles AVERY'S hair. Where has it come from? She looks about.

The NURSE sits at the nurses' station writing her reports. She hasn't noticed

the breeze moving through the ward. A curtain moves, AVERY watches this, another curtain, nearer moves...
The CLOISTER BELL tolls forlornly.
This time AVERY hears it. She's scared. Clutches the baby to her breast.

INT. TARDIS CONSOLE ROOM. - DAY

FLEET is coming back into the control room, pouring over the notes that she made with THE DOCTOR.

FLEET heads towards the console, near to where SEZAN and CLARA are being watched.

SEZAN looks at CLARA. He gives the smallest of nods.

CLARA gives the smallest of nods back.

A GUARD has seen the nod and marches over.

SEZAN: Perfect.

CLARA braces herself, as SEZAN launches himself up and head butts the GUARD in the stomach.

The GUARD goes down in a heap.

SEZAN barges JUSTIN out of the way and runs towards the TARDIS door.

JUSTIN spins into the TARDIS console, his hand falls into the telepathic channel and sticks there.

The TIME ROTOR starts to rise and fall.

JUSTIN screams as his hand is locked into the console.

WHAM!!!

JUSTIN is hurled from the console and smashes into the wall with a long arc of electrical energy sparking behind him!

GUARDS swing around and loose their crossbows in SEZAN'S general direction.

THOK!

THOK!

THOK!

Three bolts quiver in the door above SEZAN'S head, stopping him in his tracks.

SEZAN puts up his hands.

SEZAN: Alright! Alright!

STOMACH GUARD yanks SEZAN'S head back by the hair and viciously punches him in the kidneys.

SEZAN goes down like a sack of spuds.

As he falls, he turns, looking back to where CLARA should be.
But she's gone.
The GUARDS cotton on.
So does FLEET.

FLEET: Where is the girl?

The other GUARDS mill about looking, but CLARA is nowhere.
As the GUARDS reach the back of the console room they hear the echo of a door slamming far away...

FLEET: The Doctor says there are engines down there that if dismantled in the wrong sequence could destroy the formation. That's what she might try to do! Find her!

The GUARDS enter the corridor at a flat run--
On FLEET looking with increasing terror at the rising and falling TIME ROTOR and reacting to the strange grinding noises that seem to be emanating from within--

INT. BREATH OF FIRE. MATERNITY PLANE. - DAY

The CLOISTER BELL tolls, we hear the breeze ruffling the curtains again. The NURSE looks up from the desk.
The NURSE can't believe what she's seeing. She stands up too quickly knocking over her mug of tea.
We hear the CLOISTER BELL and the TARDIS demat sound.
We see the bed and chair next to it. Instead of AVERY and the BABY, there is an empty chair and the blanket, momentarily shaped like it was around AVERY'S shoulders falls to the floor.
AVERY and the child are gone. On the NURSE running to the radio--

INT. TARDIS HANGAR - DAY

A metal door, not unlike the one you might find on a WWII Submarine crashes open and CLARA is barrelling through at a full pelt.
She too can hear the TARDIS demat sound-- where is it coming from?
She slams the door shut behind her, breathing hard.
She stops in her tracks. Wind whips her hair.
We pull back to reveal that CLARA is in an enormous aircraft hangar. It is high and arch ceilinged.
There are TARDIS-like roundels on the wall, and a slick concrete floor stretch-

es away.

In the distance, five Grumman "AVENGER" aeroplanes sit silently on the concrete, lit by spotlights high up in the roof.

CLARA hears a door slam off in the distance. The guards are following!

CLARA looks for a method to lock the submarine door, but the WHEEL is too stiff for her to turn.

She yells with frustration and heads towards the planes.

The TARDIS demat sound ceases abruptly.

And then we hear a baby crying...

INT. TARDIS CORRIDOR - DAY

The GUARDS running towards the submarine door.

A GUARD pushes it open.

LIGHT. Amazement.

INT. TARDIS HANGAR - CONTINUOUS

The door is swinging open. GUARDS framed in the doorway, covering their eyes.

Between the wheel struts of an AVENGER, CLARA hunkers down.

Somewhere off we can still hear the baby crying. This confuses both the GUARDS and CLARA.

The GUARDS step into the HANGAR.

There is nowhere obvious for CLARA to be hiding other than near the planes.

STOMACH GUARD points at the floor.

At the right angle, we can see a line of lone footprints heading out towards the planes, confirming the hiding place.

The GUARDS march purposefully towards the aeroplanes, crossbows at the ready.

On CLARA looking ever so exposed. The from behind another of the planes

CLARA sees AVERY holding her baby, desperately trying to get him to stop crying!

The GUARDS will be there in moments!

INT. TARDIS CONTROL ROOM. - DAY

The TIME ROTOR grinds to a halt-- FLEET approaches. Wary. Whatever it was doing seems to have stopped.

FLEET looks at the notebook. She studies it. Looks at the console.

Where should she start? Is it safe? She touches the TIME ROTOR. The light within it gentle fades to nothing.

Flicks over a few pages. Rubs her hair. This is going to be tricky.

FLEET: Now or never.

FLEET goes down on her knees and referring to the notebook, pulls away a panel.

Behind it are a set of twelve Red stopcock valves.

FLEET begins to turn the first one.

It's stiff, but with a bit of effort, she gets it moving.

On FLEET's face, deep in concentration...

INT. TARDIS HANGAR - DAY

The trail of footprints is leading the GUARDS on.

CLARA looks about.

AVERY has managed to calm the BABY. It coos contentedly.

There's no way CLARA can move from the planes without being seen.

She's desperate.

She reaches up to the side of the plane. Feeling for a door handle, but it's out of her reach!

The shiny footprints show the GUARDS exactly which plane to approach.

Crossbows are cocked.

CLARA and AVERY lock eyes.

What the hell are they going to do? What the HELL is going on?

INT. TARDIS CONTROL ROOM. - DAY

FLEET finishes turning the first STOPCOCK.

Looks about. Face confused. This isn't going smoothly already.

Reads the notebook.

Light-bulb moment.

FLEET reaches around the STOPCOCK and we see her fingers rested on an old fashioned conical light switch.

Her fingers flick it down.

The TARDIS Console room background noise winds down with a growl and stops completely.

The console room is in silence.

Everyone looks about, a little perturbed.

Only we see a line of lights flickering on the console above the panel where FLEET works-- A small control turns of its own accord.

INT. TARDIS HANGAR - DAY

The GUARDS reach the plane where CLARA is hiding, raise their crossbows, take aim.
Move forward.
The footprints stop.
CLARA is nowhere to be seen.
They look down closely at the floor.
There's a hardly visible trapdoor!
STOMACH GUARD bends down and opens it onto a black gloomy, bewebbed stone staircase.

Stomach GUARD: Down there!

We see by AVERY'S plane, a similar trapdoor opened on another staircase...
On the GUARDS beginning to descend we--

INT. TARDIS CONTROL ROOM. - DAY

FLEET is turning the next valve.
Lights begin to flicker.
FZZZT!
There is an explosion.
A shower of sparks spins a TECHNICIAN away from the wall and he crashes into a HATSTAND.
FLEET looks as nervous as someone trying to disarm a bomb.
She rubs her fingers.
Goes to reach behind the valve for the light-switch and stops.

FLEET: Radio!

On a TECHNICIAN running towards FLEET with an ANCIENT 1940's looking Radio Set we...

EXT. SKY. THE BREATH OF FIRE. - DAY

Pull back from the plane. We see it's on the very edge of the Formation.
Its wings are locked with another plane, and we can see THE DOCTOR, tiny on the wing, is being brought over by GUARDS.
Pull back even further, through clouds from the lava below.
We're suddenly looking at the BREATH OF FIRE over the back of the LEAD DRAGON.
It banks, flaps and it's clear it's making straight of the BREATH OF FIRE.

INT. TARDIS CONTROL ROOM - DAY

THE DOCTOR is being brought into the control room by GUARDS.

THE DOCTOR: Don't like what you've done with the place.

FLEET gets up from the console.

FLEET: How do I know you haven't tricked me?

THE DOCTOR: You wouldn't, that's the beauty of a trick.

A GUARD pushes THE DOCTOR to his knees.

FLEET: How do I know you haven't given me the instructions to self-destruct your machine?

THE DOCTOR: You don't.

FLEET: So that's why I've brought you here. Insurance.

THE DOCTOR: Couldn't you have just gone to one of those price comparison thingies? The one with the cute little weasel-bears?

FLEET (to the GUARDS): Bring him.

EXT. SKY. THE BREATH OF FIRE. - DAY

The LEAD DRAGON is closing the BREATH OF FIRE.

INT. TARDIS CONTROL ROOM. - DAY

The GUARDS bring THE DOCTOR closer to the Console.

FLEET kneels back down to the open hatch and begins by flicking the switch. The lights dim.

THE DOCTOR is looking around.

He notices SEZAN in the corner of THE TARDIS, he is unconscious and has been beaten. A GUARD stands by him.

FLEET is continuing to turn wheels.

FLEET: You wouldn't risk your life by being here, so I'm sure I can continue with impunity.

THE DOCTOR is becoming concerned.

He looks about wildly, trying to Shrug off a GUARD as he turns to look behind him.

THE DOCTOR: Where's Clara?

FLEET (consulting her notes): Next valve-- this one.

THE DOCTOR: Fleet! Where is Clara?

EXT. SKY. THE BREATH OF FIRE. - DAY

We look through the COCKPIT GLASS at the AVIATOR flying the BREATH OF FIRE.

His eyes are wide. His mouth open.

Pull back. The LEAD DRAGON is almost upon them, coming out of the clouds!

INT. TARDIS CONTROL ROOM. - DAY

The GUARDS force THE DOCTOR to his knees. He winces.

THE DOCTOR: I asked you a question! Where is Clara?

FLEET's engrossed in what she's doing.

The TARDIS obviously is fascinating her.

FLEET: I have absolutely no idea.

FLEET continues turning valves with more purpose now.

A huge Grinding noise fills the control room.

THE DOCTOR: What?

FLEET (pointing to the back of the control room): She went that way. She won't be long, the guards will bring her back I'm sure.

THE DOCTOR is in a panic now.

The GRINDING reaches a crescendo and is almost shaking the room, then it dies.

THE DOCTOR: Fleet, if Clara and your men are inside the TARDIS, anywhere except the control room, you have to stop. You have to stop right now!

FLEET hesitates, her concentration broken.

PRIME PILOT (He's in the Doorway!): Fleet continue. If it kills the girl, no matter. One less execution to arrange.

The PRIME PILOT strides fully into the control room.

PRIME PILOT: Continue!

FLEET turns one more stopcock and flicks another switch.
The TARDIS shakes like it's being hit by an earthquake!
The Console pretty much explodes and from within the TARDIS, we hear a huge doomy rolling explosion.

PRIME PILOT: What was that?

THE DOCTOR: The sound of you killing Clara.

INT. TARDIS GREENHOUSE - DAY

A HUGE VICTORIAN GREENHOUSE on a bright summer's day.
CLARA is haring down a SPIRAL STAIRCASE as fast as she dares, AVERY is following, desperately clinging to the BABY.

Clara: How did you get into the TARDIS? And why did you bring a Baby?!?!
AVERY: I didn't get any choice. One moment I was there, and now I'm here!

AVERY looks about. Concerned.

Avery: Where is here? It doesn't make sense! How did we go from up there to down here? CLARA: I have about as much idea as you what's going on! But those guards have crossbows and I don't want to be a kebab! Come on!

The spiral staircase extends up into a dark hole that seems to hang in mid-air, surrounded by blue sky and fluffy clouds.
Suddenly CROSSBOW BOLTS ping against the metal stairs in front of CLARA. She unexpectedly halts. AVERY almost smashes into her.
CLARA looks back up the stairs. The GUARDS are almost upon them, they're reloading, and raising their crossbows. Pointing them with precision at CLARA and AVERY'S hearts.

EXT. SKY. THE BREATH OF FIRE. - DAY

THE BREATH OF FIRE taking emergency action to avoid a huge plume of fire from the LEAD DRAGON, rolling over and dropping away from the Formation.

We hear the screams from inside!

INT. TARDIS CONTROL ROOM. - DAY

Everyone being thrown from their feet and hurled around the control room.

Dragon Alarms sounding through the TARDIS doors from outside.

FLEET: Dragons! Dragon Attack!

THE DOCTOR hanging onto the console for dear life, reaching for the STOP-COCK with desperate fingers!

INT. TARDIS GREENHOUSE - DAY

The world shifts as an enormous earthquaky BOOM reverberates around the TARDIS--

As the outside world shudders and is thrown off its axis by the Dragon attack, CLARA'S thrown sideways, making a desperate grab for the stair rail...

The GUARDS yell as without warning metal extensions, all Victorian and curli-cued grow with vivid ferocity out of the stairs and railings, pushing their CROSSBOWS completely away from CLARA and AVERY!

To CLARA'S horror, the rail she's holding disappears and CLARA falls through into an airy void.

The stairs under AVERY also vanish into thin air and she falls screaming, clutching the baby to her breast.

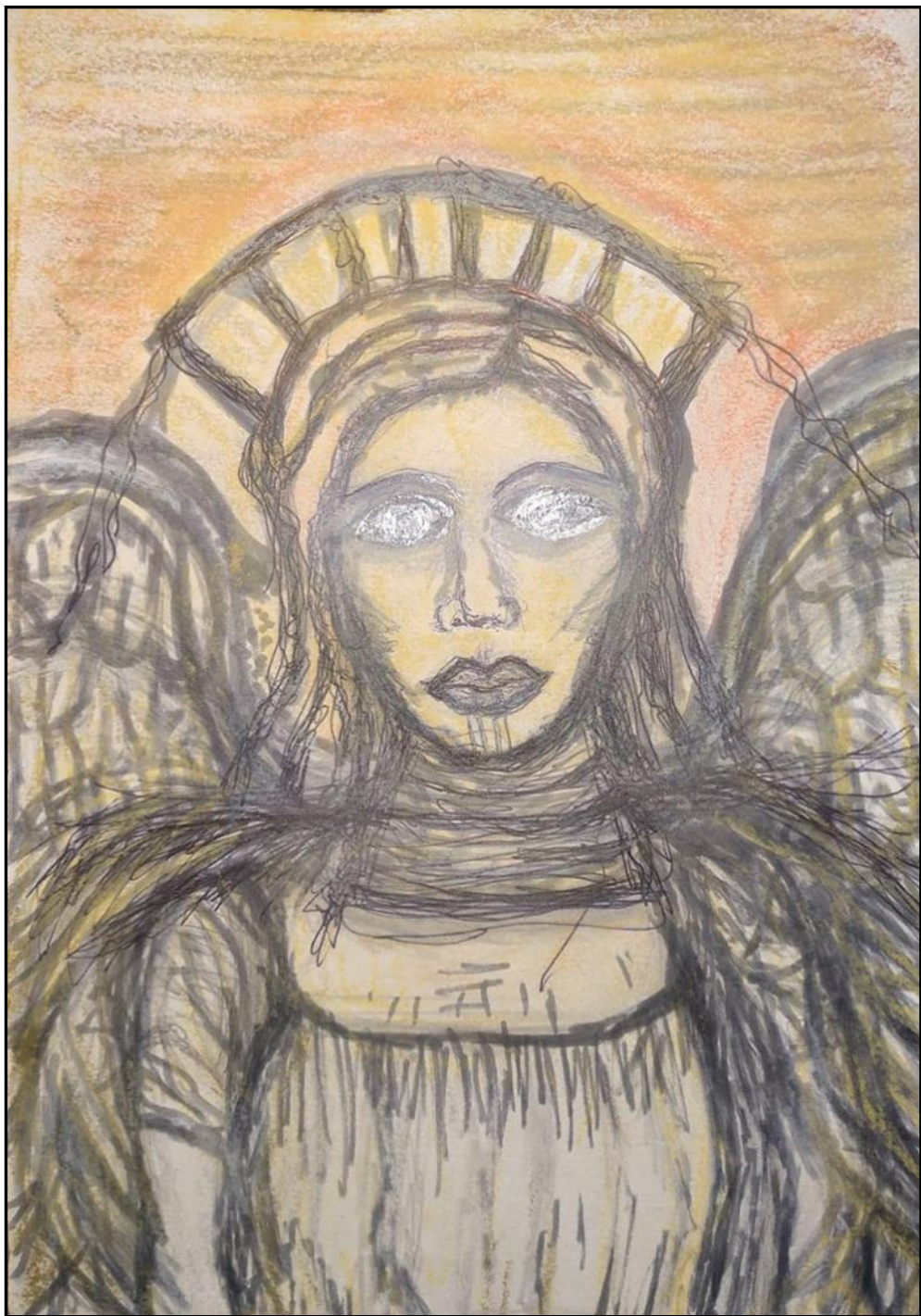
We watch the three, CLARA, AVERY, and the BABY-- falling to their certain death.

EXT. SKY. THE BREATH OF FIRE - DAY

The LEAD DRAGON, flying at incredible speed towards us out of the orange fume-filled sky, a billow of intense breath igniting and rushing towards us-- we are BURNING in the CENTRE OF THE FIRE!

END OF EPISODE.





By Ruthann Stubblefield

PASSAGE OF TIME

By Robert John Cumming

The old woman sat looking out of her patio window as the cool summer breeze came and went at regular intervals. As she sat, she sipped on her warm cup of tea, wondering what her life would have been like if he hadn't left her. She understood it was not a choice that could have been controlled or taken lightly, his fleeting life ending like that leaving her to look after the children. Alex was a grown young man now, one who had fought the Daleks with a passion that she had only ever seen once before while her adopted children, Ian and Barbara, were lost to her, the pair fleeing the nest to find their real parents.

All she had left were her memories of a happy life with the man she loved, David, and the man who left her, her grandfather, the man who called himself the Doctor. As she dozed off into a dream, she found herself remembering her adventures with her grandfather and her teachers, travelling into prehistory; battling the Daleks for the first time; meeting Marco Polo; fighting the Voord; being taken to be guillotined in 18th century Paris; all before leaving, or rather being left, to marry the man she loved, simultaneously a kindness and a betrayal.

She had, over the years, come to

miss her grandfather and that metallic wheezing of the TARDIS; and as she slept, she came to believe that she was hearing it in her dreams. But a dream could not cause the brush of air against her shoulder, like a ship emerging from the Time Vortex. Wakening, she turned over, rubbing her eyes as she saw the familiar box, still blue but changed, with new windows.

Standing up, her hand clutching her walking stick, she approached the door. The door unlocked as the TARDIS recognized her and allowed her to enter. The ship was not how she remembered it, the round things were gone or rather they were fewer in number and the console itself looked even more futuristic. She staggered around it, her eyes filling with joy. She called out wearily, "Grandfather," but there was no reply.

Turning, she saw the woman. She was dressed in blue high-waisted culottes with yellow braces; a navy-blue t-shirt with a rainbow stripe; a lilac blue hooded trench coat; brown lace up boots; blue socks and piercings in her ear. She stood there and smiled. "Hello Susan." Susan looked at the woman curiously, wondering who she was and why she was in her grandfather's TARDIS but then, she understood. "Grandfather?" she asked, correcting herself by adding "Grandmother?"

"Yes Susan" the woman declared

with a sweet smile as she walked down and approached her, "Long time no see."

"You have regenerated."

"Yeah, maybe five times since we last saw each other." The Doctor's smile changed to an air of melancholy, "I'm sorry I didn't attend David's funeral."

"I understand, you had things to do," Susan replied only half seriously. "Where are your companions? Are you travelling alone?"

"The fam? They are in Sheffield resting before we set off again. You would like them," the woman replied.

Susan nodded and then tears began running down her face. The Doctor ran to her, stopped, then hesitantly hugged her granddaughter. "What is the matter Susan?"

"You came back, I never thought you would."

"I promised I would come back one day. I checked in on you from time to time, I was so proud of you, I still am," the Doctor told her.

Susan looked up and smiled. Then the Doctor's face became one of sorrow once more. "You know why I'm here Susan, it's been too long. You're wearing a bit thin."

Susan nodded in compliance and turned, slowly releasing her stick and letting it fall to the floor. As her hands began to glow with the yellow light of regenerative energy, she looked at her grandmoth-

er. "Will it hurt?" she asked.

"Yes," the Doctor told her, "but not for long."

"Good," Susan said then let go.

When she awoke, she was back in her house, her grandmother had gone. She looked at her hands, young once more. She looked in the mirror and saw her youthful face, her smooth complexion. She looked down at the picture of her husband, stroked it with her finger and kissed



it once.

She felt inside her pockets and pulled out a key, noticing the locked box on the table where her cup of tea still sat, now cold. She opened it with caution and took out the contents - a single photograph and a leather wrist strap, with a metallic box fixed to it. It was a vortex manipulator, a cheap and nasty time travel device. The photo was that of a young man. She stared at it for a moment. Although she was sure that she did not know him, the man looked familiar. Then it came to her, "Of course," she exclaimed. The young man looked a lot like her old teacher Ian Chesterton.

Turning the photo over, she read her grandmother's message. "Susan, the man in the photograph is Steven David Chesterton, he is the son of Ian and Barbara. He died at the age of eighteen, alone and in the cold. Break the rules just this once and save him, the coordinates are already set. Be happy all over again. Goodbye, Susan. Goodbye, my dear." A single tear ran down her face and she nodded. Buckling the vortex manipulator onto her wrist, she pressed 'enter' and instantly felt herself disappear.

The photo fell to the floor. As it landed the image changed to show Steven and Susan Chesterton, holding hands, happy once more.



TRULY NOTHING IN THE DARK

By Katherine Ioffe

"I refuse to believe that you are Death!" shouted the Doctor to the grey suited apparition opposite. Somewhere there is a void. It is the colour of pitch, and while there is no light one can see as clear as day. This void is empty, except for two chairs, an occasional visitor, and a man. This man, if we may indeed call him such, calls himself "Death". He looks to be of slender build, wrapped in a double-breasted grey suit and top hat to match. For if you saw his skin (if indeed, it may be called skin), then you would notice its colour... perfect silver; its perfect smoothness; its perfect reflectiveness; an arrogant departure from the archaic cloak and scythe. But somehow, the new look fits perfectly. Death leaned back nonchalantly in his chair, his boots up on the table, his arms knit behind his mirror of a head.

He vaguely studied his newest visitor. From the opposite end of the table glared a pair of grey eyes from beneath dark brows. Hawkish features and curly white hair. Wearing a velvet coat, and a callous, stern demeanour on his sleeve. The Doctor. Now, Death had many visitors, and it was difficult to keep track of them all. But there was one visitor who was always particularly difficult. The

Time Lord with a thousand faces.

Whenever a Time Lord regenerates, there is a part that stays with the next face and a part that departs to this place. For the body itself is physical and lost to the currents of time. And naturally, that was where Death came in.

"That's what they all say," the man whistled cheerily.

"They?" the Doctor inquired dubiously.

"Oh, all your past faces," Death drawled, tapping the table absently, "They all pass through here, you know."

"No," the Doctor replied, "I don't. And I find it hard to believe that Death is a creature. It's impossible!" Death blinked, "Why, my dear Doctor, nothing, nothing, is impossible. You, of all people, ought to know that. I've been through this before, of course, with all the past faces. Always so stubborn, so reluctant to believe, but here's the truth, Doctor... we are both impossible creatures. And do you know why you're here?" The Doctor crossed his arms and harrumphed in defiance. "Because you're dead, Doctor," said Death. "There's another you, walking away, wandering through time, with all your memories and all that you ever were. And then there's you. You are caught in limbo. You have passed beyond what was your universe and yet refuse to pass on onto the next one."

"I take it," snarled the Doctor, "That

this is not the first time this has happened?"

"Naturally," said Death, "After all, you're a very stubborn fellow. I believe your third incarnation tried to, oh, what was it? Ah! He tried to practice his Venusian aikido on me."

"Yes," mused the Doctor with the slightest smile, "He did have a flair for the dramatic."

"I convinced them all to come with me," said Death, and there was something dangerous communicated in his stare as he leaned forward, "I'll convince you too."

"Okay," said the Doctor, "So let us say, for the sake of argument, that I believe you. That I believe that you

are Death."

"I'm so glad that we could come to an understanding," said Death.

"Then there are certainly words you and I need to have," said the Doctor.

"Naturally," agreed Death, nodding sympathetically, "What would you like to know?"

"Well, for one thing," began the Doctor, "Why are you so cruel to me? To those around me? You come swiftly, often, and often early, and you make no distinction in those you take."

"Cruel, my dear Doctor?" asked Death, sounding almost wounded, "Why, nothing could be farther from the truth!"

"You are the thing that every creature fears," accused the Doctor. "When we wake, in the middle of the night, and fear to go back to sleep, it is because we are afraid that if we do, you shall come for us."

"Is that why you sleep so little, Doctor?" asked Death, turning his head inquisitively, "Are you afraid of me?"

The Doctor inhaled a shaky, difficult breath, "Every time I close my eyes, I



see the faces of everyone I've ever lost and everyone I've ever loved. And every time I close my eyes, I fear that you shall come again. And then you do," the Doctor blinked back tears upon seeing himself in the reflective surface of Death's face. He adjusted his coat and composure, "So would you please just kindly stop?"

Death kept silent for a moment. Then another moment. And then another. And at last he spoke, "I cannot do what you ask."

"Why?" snapped back the Doctor.

"It is the nature of the thing, I am afraid" said Death, "But I am not cruel, nor capricious, Doctor."

"In what manner?" asked the Doctor.

"Doctor," began Death, "To understand, we must first define what it is that you do. You seek to heal the universe. To save it from disease, war, and hurt. But you cannot heal an entire universe. You cannot save everyone from pain. You must accept that. You must."

"I seek to save it from you!" shouted the Doctor, shooting up from his chair.

"No, no!" cried Death, "You've got it all wrong! You've really got it all wrong! Don't you understand?!" The Doctor quirked an eyebrow. "I do not cause the universe's suffering," said Death, "I save the living from it!"

"How?" asked the Doctor.

"They say that time heals all wounds," said Death, "But time causes as many wounds as it heals. And for the wounds it does not heal, it

will never heal. Imagine a life of eternal, unending suffering - that is not life! Imagine aging, but never dying. Tithonus, granted eternal life but not eternal youth. I am the healer of those who cannot be healed. I walk where you walk because you and I are the same. We are the balance to the universe, to time itself, and that is not cruelty. That is life."

The Doctor stared. Just stared at this creature whose face held his own reflection. And then he bowed his head, at last understanding, "I believe you."

Death gently took the Doctor's hand in his, "Come with me, Doctor. You don't need to be afraid. Walk with me and you shall see that there is truly nothing in the dark."

CUTAWAY COMICS: AN INTERVIEW WITH GARETH KAVANAGH

By Nick Smith

Gareth Kavanagh is the publisher of Cutaway Comics. The company's first, crowd-funded Doctor Who spinoff, Lytton, was released in September 2020. Gareth is a man of many talents and was kind enough to talk to Cosmic Masque about his ambitions with Cutaway and beyond.

Cosmic Masque: *You're very talented. How did that happen? What's your origin story?*

Gareth Kavanagh: It's not an obvious route to the comics, I confess. I've variously been employed in every job you can think of in hotels and restaurants, had my own pub for 9 years and worked in management consultancy for several years. But every job taught me something, whether it's about working in a team, the strength that comes from shared accomplishments or an appreciation of real teamwork. Add into that, my life-long Doctor Who love, valuable time spent on fanzines and ten years producing fringe theatre, promoting events and the contacts you develop as a result – not least by publishing something huge

like Vworp Vworp! – the mega fanzine I work on with the brilliant Colin Brockhurst, and you realise that it's probably been 20 years' work to get Cutaway Comics off the ground. Everything you do leads to something, whether or not you realise it at the time and if you can create a reputation as someone who does good work and delivers, it's sometimes all you really need.

I also strongly believe the secret to delivering great work is by finding people who are more talented than you in key areas, then channelling them into a project that brings all the strengths and skills to bear. I've been lucky enough to lead some great teams, and I think the critical skill perhaps lies in the assembling and picking. I have a clear idea of what I want to achieve and I think that putting the right people on the right job always makes for great work, no matter what the setting or industry. So that's my origin story and it follows that if I was a super hero, I'd probably be Nick Fury in that I've no single great superpower, but I'm surrounded by people who do. I know a thing or two about building super-teams.

Bottom line. Nobody achieves anything alone.

CM: *The Cutaway website mentions that the Doctor Who Weekly back-up strips are an inspiration. Any faves? Can you remember how it felt to read them for the first time?*

GK: Do I ever! I was 7 when Doctor Who Weekly launched, so in many ways the perfect age for that incredible publication. It's difficult to imagine just how limited our access to thrilling stuff like this really was at the time in our world of so much content coming at you 24/7. Doctor Who existed in the library (Dicks, T) and the TV. But TV was limited and ephemeral. Doctor Who was on air for half the year and those precious 23 minutes were often all there was to punctuate the gloom in a televisual landscape that seemed to consist of the Money Programme, Snooker, the News and the Wombles. So along came this wonderful comic with 3-4 pages tucked away in the back where grubby little tales from a Doctorless Universe played out, week after week. Cybermen with souls, Dalek Killers, Ice Warriors v Cybermen. Mini epics that rarely had happy endings (just read Alan Moore's brilliant Black Legacy for the best example of this), but always made you feel something was at stake. It's the Marvel style extended universe RTD was wishing for, delivered with panache and style in the back pages of a weekly comic by talents that went on to dominate British and American comics for the decades that followed. I think they must have had a huge influence on me looking back, and without these little slices of death and doom there would have never been a Cutaway Universe.

CM: *Any other comic book influences?*

GK: Doctor Who largely ended up as the comic constant due to DWM being a must purchase representing an amazing treasury of strips. Some of the best Doctor Who ever made in any medium, arguably. 2000AD, by comparison used to come and go for me. I was never a regular reader, but the summer specials and Dez Skinn's Quality Comics reprints of things like Halo Jones, Time Twisters and Dredd were the perfect affordable way to experience these incredible comics in some semblance of order. I'm from a little seaside resort called Llandudno and although it's the most beautiful place to live I can think of, with no comic shops to speak of there was no real way to experience the big DC and Marvel comics of the time in any coherent way. We used to get odd issues of unsolds bundled together in the newsagents for tourists to read on rainy days, but they were utterly maddening things to read. You'd get a random selection of Superman, Batman and Green Lantern comics all bundled together in one polybag. Although I adored the art and grasped at the storyline, more often than not, it was impossible to follow the story on the basis of a random episode with no context. It's a shame, as I can imagine there were some epic tales in the late '70s and early '80s I know I'd have loved given half the chance.

In recent years, I became hugely addicted to the Walking Dead comics, which I found an incredible experi-

ence. I'd dip into larger series like New Krypton, things that had a great hook and I love movie tie-ins like Aliens, Battlestar Galactica and occasionally Star Wars. Dark Horse also undoubtedly had a huge influence on me, as during the 80s and 90s I was far more a movie fan than a comics fan and those clever people managed to fuse my obsessions in one place. Things like the sequels to John Carpenter's Thing, the first Aliens series and the Bond comics were beyond thrilling discoveries when I moved to Manchester and discovered their comic shops in 1992. And while they didn't always

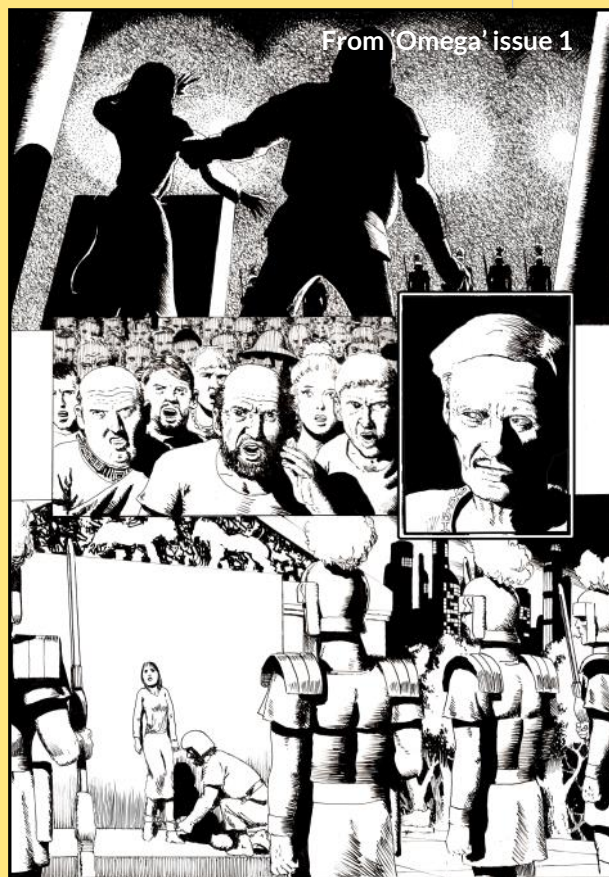
hit the spot, I nonetheless appreciated it when someone has a go at taking the material to the next level. So yes; Dark Horse also had a lot of influence in a roundabout way on Cutaway Comics.

CM: *Omega has a tragic backstory, which in the right hands resonates with anyone who has been treated unfairly. Why did Cutaway decide to devote a comic to him?*

GK: Poor Omega. When I think how hard the last year has been for so many people, it's amazing he's as reasonable and lucid as he actually is

when we first meet him in the show! But overall, I think he's one of these characters with so much left to explore. For starters, Omega is one of the last big mythical characters who remains relatively under-explored. Two appearances in the original run, with the second really just re-treading much of the same ground as the original and nothing in the new show struck me as odd. He's also arguably, more sinned against than sinner. He's the very real cost of Time Lord supremacy, isolated for all eternity and a fantastic creation by that Bristol Powerhouse, Bob Baker and Dave Martin.

My first instinct was to put Omega up against the War Lords, another of those bril-



liant creations that's both under-explored and sits nicely in the same part of the Venn diagram as the Time Lords. The idea was for the War Lords to mount a rescue mission for Omega, break him out of the Black Hole as a weapon in their quest for universal domination and a coming war with the Time Lords. And, of course Omega was less than happy with the prospect. I described it as Stalin being rescued by the Nazis. Everything goes wrong and the War Lords suffer terrible losses as they expel him back to the black hole. It was huge and epic but permission was not forthcoming to use the War Lords. So that was that. The next idea, which we went with was to look at Minyos from Underworld and its collapse into war and violence that the Time Lords were blamed for. Putting Omega at the heart of this violence and chaos, a dark God toying with a world felt very apt for our times and Mark has done a remarkable job making so much feel at stake. We know Minyos must fall, but the how and the why is proving a compelling story with a strong emotional core we're honoured to be telling.

With Omega, there's also lots to play with dramatically. Anger, loneliness, desperation. So much effort expended to really, do little more than touch someone on the cheek, feel the sun on his bones. I think the need to bend reality to his will only comes from that realisation that he's locked out of reality and the Universe likes

it that way. So if he can't live in it, he'll burn it to the ground and warm himself sitting by the embers of our reality. I was also very much of the opinion that we needed to find something new to do with him. Mark's keen to explore the builder in him, the engineer and that's something we see later in Omega. There also has to be something more noble inside him, as opposed to just ranting, raving and wailing. That's something I'm very keen for us to explore in a follow-up coming early next year, all being well. Stay tuned!

CM: *John Ridgway. Wow. What's it been like to work with him?*

GK: An amazing experience. There's arguably three great artists who have been the engine of the Doctor Who Magazine strips over the past four decades. Dave Gibbons, John Ridgway and Martin Geraghty. So to feature two of those artists in one title (Martin is artist on the backup strip in Omega, Demons of Eden) has been a palpable thrill! Just as thrilling has been that John's reverted to working with pen, ink and board for us with Omega and the results speak for themselves. Fine detailed linework, bold inks and imaginative world building. All there and better than ever. He's 80 years young, enjoying working with us and delivering three brilliant pages a week like clockwork. What a lucky publisher I am!

CM: *Stephen Wyatt seems to have*



From 'Paradise Towers' issue 1

been rediscovered recently, with Greatest Show/psychic circus audios and your new Paradise Towers comic. How did your spin-off come to be? Is the Wyatt Renaissance just a matter of time being kind to his imaginative work, viewers of the time being old enough to have a say in what gets made these days, or another factor?

GK: I think with Stephen being a successful writer in his own right, Doctor Who is part of his backstory but only part of it. Stephen's a successful novelist and hugely sought-after writer for radio and the theatre and is constantly busy. He's not been, as far as I can tell, a regular fixture at conventions so perhaps wasn't around to be asked to do, say

a Big Finish or a comic. In fact, it's telling that all this work with Titan and Big Finish arguably comes after his appearance at Gallifrey One.

That said, his Doctor Who is brilliant, sophisticated and imaginative - like all those similarly brilliant highlights of Andrew Cartmel's era. I rate his two stories highly. I had Paradise Towers on my radar right from the very beginning as being exactly what we should be aiming to deliver. If you ignore Richard Briers' odd performance, Paradise Towers is a fantastic scenario, well drawn, beautifully considered with packed with great visual possibilities. It's also surprisingly modern for a 1987 piece of BBC TV, with girl gangs, urban decay and a real consideration of the tensions that were appearing between the lofty aspirations of designers Le Corbusier and their high-rise communities and the realities of living in them utilisation that were making these big housing schemes of the 60s and 70s unliveable. I remember seeing areas like Hulme in Manchester when I first moved there in 1992 and it was clear that the problems were huge and mounting up. So Stephen was definitely on to something, all that was a little awry was some aspects of the casting and direction at the time, two things completely under our control with comics.

With all this in mind, I dropped Stephen a line asking to talk comics and we met for a drink at the BFI in Lon-

don. Stephen was on his way to the premiere of one of his plays in Waterloo, but was intrigued enough to talk comics. I pitched him two ideas; Paradise Towers 25 years on and the Greatest Convention in the Galaxy, an idea based around the Psychic Circus being reunited on the galactic convention circuit 25 years on. He liked them both, but with a prequel to Greatest Show in the works with Big Finish we both agreed that it made more sense to focus on Paradise Towers. And I have to admit, I was thrilled this emerged the winner. Although you always need to go with a couple of ideas in your pocket to pitches, it really pleased me no end that Stephen was drawn to Paradise Towers. It felt ripe for exploration and, as I say - just perfect for comics. I offered Stephen the scripting gig and although he declined, he's had a huge influence over the strip's development and scripting. He's been invaluable to Sean Mason, the writer, providing notes and acting as a great sounding board. He's also the last word on this world, giving us a great provenance that few other spin-offs ever achieve. We call him the Great Architect (in the nicest possible way) and sign off all our emails with Build High for Happiness. We're having great fun and making a very special comic.

CM: *Please tell us about the Lytton project.*

GK: Lytton is the very first Cutaway Comic. A four part mini series featur-

ing art by Barry Renshaw, and Eric Saward writing for his iconic anti-hero from Resurrection of the Daleks and Attack of the Cybermen, played with style by the late, great Maurice Colbourne. From an idea, to a chance meeting with Eric in a green room and many years of effort, it finally hit the shelves with #1 in September 2020.

CM: *Part of Lytton's appeal was the mystery of his origins. How do you develop a storyline without spoiling his mystique?*

GK: That's very astute. We know comparatively little about Lytton going on his TV appearances, although Attack of the Cybermen fills in some of the blanks and Eric's novelisation a few more, but it's incomplete and occasionally vague, which was part of the appeal in exploring the character further with Eric. Not that we solve everything, far from it. For instance, we still don't know if the Lytton we meet in Resurrection is a duplicate or the original. Every now and again, debate erupts and there's compelling evidence to promote both viewpoints. Personally, I think he's a duplicate going on Resurrection (I wonder what happened to the real you, the Doctor muses to Stein), which to my mind explains the slight softening of the character of the character when we next meet him, but Eric always keeps his cards close on these matters.

CM: *Lytton's a dark character. Is this a*

better time to feature him than, say, the 80s? Have comic books changed much (other than digital distribution) since then?

GK: Yes and no. When Eric told me he wanted to write Lytton himself but admitted he didn't know the medium that well, I quickly put together a bundle of great graphic novels for him to read and soak up the ambience. I wanted him to see that this artform is near limitless and sophisticated, offering a rich playground for a writer willing to grasp it where the only filter between his vision and the reader is the artist. The ones I sent to him were overwhelmingly those game changing titles from the 80s and a lot of Alan Moore, by default. The Killing Joke, V for Vendetta, The Dark Knight Returns, Watchmen and so on. All stories that I could imagine a character like Lytton fitting right in. I think V for Vendetta was his favourite out of the care package, which is perhaps not that surprising as Eric's a huge film noir man. To Eric's credit he devoured all the books I sent him and it gave him a confidence in the medium and a sense of what he could achieve. Those influences are all up there on the page in one way or another, with a dash of Gangsters and The Long Good Friday.

CM: *Orcini is a character who left me crying out for more info about his background and adventures. What do you plan to do with him?*

GK: I love Orcini and Bostock, they are a huge part of the endless pleasure that is Revelation of the Daleks. The disgraced knight and his squire are staples of adventure fiction and these two never disappoint. They came about largely because the Lytton Kickstarter performed way above expectation and we needed a stretch goal that would thrill. I had a chat with Eric and we agreed those characters would be great fun to explore, although we did agree a rain check for the great Richard Mace, a character rich with comic possibilities.

The Orcini and Bostock we meet in Revelation are at the very end of their life, looking for that last honourable kill and like Omega, looking for a way back into paradise. Eric's come up with a story which was completely unexpected and has a suitably epic scope. He's working hand in glove with art genius Adrian Salmon, and the results are something else. We're in for a treat this June when the one-shot issue launches.

CM: *What's the main thing you learned from using Kickstarter?*

GK: Kickstarter has been the game changer for comics publishers like us. I've no doubt if those platforms had been in existence 20 years back, then series like Faction Paradox and Miranda would have just run and run, as opposed to running into the



sand and cancelling after a few issues.

And yet, I almost completely overlooked this incredible hyperspace portal to success. Back in 2020 we were gearing up for a July launch to coincide with that issue of DWM, who were running an 8-page feature on us. That felt like a big deal and so it was. The problem was, a week out from DWM launching, it became apparent the new website wasn't going to be quite ready. This was a huge setback as I really needed people to be able to read the issue then pop over, read more and order DWM. So we needed a portal to order, and fast. That portal ended up being Kickstarter.

There were a couple of lucky strokes that drew me to Kickstarter. The first was a feature I read on LinkedIn by John Freeman about Kickstarter and how a comic's creator was using it to connect with fans in the absence of conventions and comic cons. That made perfect sense. Then I was talking to Paul Hanley about his cover for Lytton, and he said, 'and of course you're Kickstartering this, aren't you?' 'No,' said I. 'Idiot,' says Paul. He pointed out how Kickstarter was packed with people who want to back new comics and that we had a great story with Lytton and Eric. And he was so right.

I launched hoping we'd sell a few extra comics and within a couple of hours, we'd hit our targets. It just

kept going up and up. It was a steep learning curve and Kickstarter is a fairly terrible platform as a promoter, but my word did it deliver. We made mistakes, and we continue to do so, but we learn and we refine the offer. We came back for Omega, this time learning more about stretch goals and add-ons.

Kickstarter's no magic wand of course. Kickstarter takes a lot of work and management, especially in the opening and closing 24 hours. And you have to have something that people want to buy and be a part of. But it's an incredible tool and a real game changer for Cutaway Comics that's accelerated our plans for the range and made us bold and daring in what we want to do.

CM: *There's competition from other Who comics, including Titan and (sometimes) Panini. Why should fans seek out your stories?*

GK: I guess you could consider Titan and Panini competition, in that fans have finite money to spend, but really I see us as complimentary to their offer. Much like those backup strips in the early Doctor Who Weekly worked with the main strip. Both those publishers have bigger toys to play with, but I think we have by the very nature of doing smaller, more focused tales around a single IP makes us different. And our endings don't have to be happy ones.

One thing we've piloted with this

range is the extras DVD that comes with every issue of the comic, exploring the creators and process in greater depth as well as contextualising the creators and IP with new commentaries on classic Doctor Who stories and interviews, both archive and new. That's something nobody else is doing as far as I can see and I hope it helps us both stand out and deliver outstanding value for money to our readers. You can either buy the comic and get a free DVD or buy the DVD and get a free comic. Either way, it's phenomenal value for money with other companies charging in excess of a tenner for new commentaries alone. With us, you get one for free every month!

CM: *Paradise Towers established a world beyond what we saw on the screen and other Who stories have done the same. Any other spin-offs you'd like to do?*

GK: Loads. We have ideas nearly every day! Doctor Who is unique in that creator ownership is strong and virtually every story has at least something you could make a fantastic comic or backup strip out of. I think only *The Highlanders*, *Reign of Terror* and the *Crusades* are barren ground for us, although someone will prove me

wrong now and pitch a thrilling adventure with the gaoler. All the rest have something we could use, be it a character, a race or a setting and I think that's extraordinary.

That said, we're currently deep into planning for what comes after *Paradise Towers*. We have a couple of one-shots, a four part and a six part series well in the planning phase and best of all, a fantastic series called *Gods and Monsters* which will comprise a feature length two-parter from an original series writer, five



linked one-shots and a six part story that builds on it in an incredibly satisfying way. All told, we'll be around for a while.

CM: *What are your long-term goals with Cutaway (and beyond)?*

GK: You know, I'm literally thinking just one wave at a time at present. That said, opportunities do continue to present themselves with alarming regularity. For now, I think it's likely that we'll be staying in the Doctor Who related universe, but there are other spinoff properties we're thinking about. Before we sadly lost Philip Martin to Leukaemia at Christmas, we spent many a cuppa and lemon meringue pie plotting a comics return for Gangsters which got as far as an outline, and that's just one of plenty of properties with possibilities. And, of course originals from some of the brilliant writers we work with. That's going to happen before too long I imagine, all backed up by Kickstarter.

But really speaking, if we can keep the lights on, entertain you guys, reward our license holders who have shown such faith in us and help keep brilliant creatives gainfully employed then, you know what – in this pestilent age, that's a win.

CM: How can readers find and support your publications?

GK: We've got a webstore where you can order direct and it's the only

way to get hold of those elusive and wonderful DVDs with each issue, crammed with extras and commentaries. At no extra charge! We're also in the Diamond catalogue so you can order through your local comic shop, and we appreciate a lot of our customers want to support their shops this way.

For all the news, the best way is probably via our Twitter, Facebook group and Instagram accounts,



You can visit the [Cutaway Comic Store by clicking here.](#)

More information is also at their [Facebook](#) and [Instagram pages](#) and [Twitter feed.](#)

ALTERNATING CURRENT

Review by Jordan Shortman

Titan Comics has gotten a little hard to keep up with, even for a seasoned comic-book collector like myself. As a result, I'd dropped away from their Who-related output. However, I made a conscious effort to pick up the new line, Doctor Who Comic, which promised an exciting adventure with the Thirteenth and Tenth Doctors.

This story follows on from the previous collected edition, *A Little Help From My Friends* and I will admit, not having read that title, I was a little confused as to why on returning from 1969, The Doctor, Graham, Ryan and Yaz arrived in a dystopian alternate universe. However, even if you haven't read the previous titles, a lot of the excitement from the first issue comes in the appearance of the Sea Devils.

I'll be honest and say I think the Sea Devils are a creature that need to return to the modern series, I think a story like last year's *Praxeus* would have benefited from a creature like the Sea Devils appearing there. But it's nice that we've got them here, and artist Roberta Ingranata has brilliantly merged their two on-screen appearances into her design for them. They've got their Jon Pertwee faces with clothes that look like their design from *Warriors of*

the Deep. It's the sort of appearance they should have had in that Peter Davison adventure and one that would still suit a modern audience.

Another hook that writer Jodie Houser throws in is the reappearance of Rose Tyler, albeit an alternate universe version of her. I was never a fan of her with the Tenth Doctor and I think Rose worked better with the Ninth Doctor. I wasn't a fan of the love story that developed between the pair of them; for me, companions shouldn't fall in love with the Doctor, not in the least because it ruins the next companion. Martha, who featured in *A Little Help From My Friends*, suffered in the television series because the Doctor was still pining over Rose. Luckily, Houser manages to avoid that aspect of their time together, especially as Rose is sporting a massive gun for much of the story and we all know where the Doctor stands on people carrying guns, though he does allow her on the TARDIS rather quickly.

What's nice though is that for all the guerrilla warfare and gun-toting, this is still the Rose we know from the TV series. Houser has been brilliant at capturing the essence of various characters during her time at Titan and I'm looking forward to seeing that continue, especially with the ending of this book promising more from the Thirteenth Doctor and her companions (I still refuse to call them her 'Fam'). Here, Houser shows us Rose doing the wrong thing for the

right reasons but also, in the same way the book *Blood Heat* did all those years ago, makes the characters believable because they've never known anything else.

Also a nice inclusion is Jackie and Pete Tyler and they play a large part in Rose's plot, with her trying to reconnect with her long-lost family. In the first two issues it's fun to see the Thirteenth Doctor meeting them, though I can't help but think Houser missed a little beat by not having Rose meeting them again at the end, only to lose them when time corrects itself. But perhaps that might have been a little too cruel. I did like how this version of Rose goes off to fight other wars across space, but

giving how it goes against what the Doctor stands for, I was a little surprised how quickly the Tenth Doctor agrees to take her to another warzone. I'm hoping this isn't going to lead to another set of adventures of the Tenth Doctor and Rose falling in love again, I don't think I could handle that. But it does open up a new avenue of adventures, should Titan Comics choose to do so.

Alongside the Sea Devils, the Thirteenth Doctor's villains the Skithra make a return, though these Skithra are a little different and not necessarily evil, protecting the humans encountered by the Doctor. They look a little different too, and as the Doctor explains, time will do that a



person or a species and they don't look as formidable as they once did. Of course, this leads the Doctors to arrive in 1903 and once again meet Nikola Tesla and Thomas Edison and it's fun to see how time changed from that moment.

The likenesses of the various characters are as excellent as we've come to expect, even those of Tesla and Edison, and as always with these comics, Ingranata does a brilliant job of incorporating original poses for characters as well as using reference images from various episodes and it's always fun to see if you can guess which episodes those images and poses come from. And I continue to be impressed by the Thirteenth Doctor's TARDIS interior in comic book form. Unlike its television counterpart, it doesn't look tacky or smaller on the inside, and colourist, Enrica Eren Angiolini brings the TARDIS to vivid life. Her colours match the different time zones the characters find themselves in perfectly too.

Over the years, Jodie Houser, Roberta Ingranata and Enrica Eren Angiolini have proved themselves to be something of a dream team. And that continues here, with a good story, great artwork and great colours. All of these add up to make a terrific read, even if the story does run the risk of

rerunning old ground, especially with Nikola Tesla and the Skithra. The inclusion of the Sea Devils allows for a brand-new story to be told, even if they feel more like a cameo than anything else. And with the book promising more adventures for the Thirteenth Doctor, it'll be a lot of fun to see where Titan Comics takes this series in the near future!

[Visit Titan and view the title here](#)

[View and buy 'Alternating Current' from Amazon UK](#)



The Other Worlds of Doctor Who

TIN SOLDIER: K9

By Nick Smith

Since their original appearances in 1977, K9 and R2-D2 have been winning hearts with their courage, loyalty and pint-sized stubbornness. But did George Lucas' astromech ever star in his own live action show set in a future London full of Aussies, or have a solo movie outing touted on a high-annual basis? That's a big metal negative, Master.

Bristol is known for its inventive natives – Tricky, Banksy, Isambard Kingdom Brunel – and native writers Bob Baker and Dave Martin were truly inspired when they combined a dog with a robot. The mutt's nominal monikers, Pluto and FIDO, were not as inspired. K9 is shorter, snappier and more computery.



Despite technical difficulties with their radio-unfriendly prop, the production team persevered. The microchipped mutt helped the Doctor

for a whopping four years before being unleashed in his own spin-off, K9 and Company – more of a Sarah Jane investigation than a K9 romp. As pilots go A Girl's Best Friend is not the most memorable but the team-up was as heart-warming as a little robot singing a Christmas carol and an official annual helped to develop the cosy, witch-hunting setup of the show.



Long after K9 Mark III wished us a Merry Christmas, his original model landed in the mid-21st Century in his own TV series.

Future London is a strange new world policed by an authoritarian regime called The Department. Blade Runneresque billboards brighten the dark skies. Professor Gryffen is a gadget-crazy Doctor

replacement with kids Starkey and Jorjie as companions, like a cyber-punk John and Gillian. On occasions, K9 also serves as an alternative to the Doctor, talking the lead when necessary and making references to alien customs, echoing Jon Pertwee's incarnation.

These tight 25 minutes tales deal with themes such as fear, nightmares, trust and ego. The characters all get developed over the course of the series. Care goes into the characterizations and situations and loose ends are tied in the last couple of episodes. K9 seems at home in this children's guide to a dystopian future.

According to that ever-reliable source of Who news The Mirror, back in 2019 a brand new K9 series was being bid on by two production companies and that the kid's show would be made in the UK. It would see a re-designed (again), battle-scarred K9, taking part in a space war. According to The Mirror's source, 'he's going to look more industrial and be covered in rivets.'

More recently, Bob Baker produced an anthology called K9 Megabytes. The four-wheeled friend encounters Drax, the Mandrels and the Axons, as well as other, original aliens. In November an audio annual will be released, bringing fiction from the pages of K9 Annual and Doctor Who Annual to a new audience.



K9 wouldn't be so special without the participation of actor John Leeson. As synonymous with the robot dog as Anthony Daniels is with C-3PO, Leeson's untiring willingness to voice K9 with passion and care has been a long-term treat for viewers.

Whether K9 reappears in a movie (Timequake), comic book or original audio form, the rumours themselves don't matter –the remarkable fact is that more than 40 years after his creation, K9 is cemented in the British zeitgeist. With Captain Jack back in Doctor Who recently, the time is ripe for K9 to make a cameo in the O.G. show – with Bob Baker's blessing, of course. There's always something delightful about seeing that never-aging, indomitable little tin dog appear that makes it worth wheeling him out again.

[You can visit K9's Official website here](#)

MISSY ISSUE 4

Review by Jordan Shortman

Even from just the cover for issue 4, which pays homage to the Joker and Harley Quinn, the final issue in the Missy mini-series is a great read. As Titan Comics wrap up their celebration of the Master who is enjoying his fiftieth anniversary in the Doctor Who universe, writer Jodie Houser nails every beat.

This adventure kicks off at a UNIT facility in the early days of the Third Doctor's time, given the uniforms the UNIT characters are wearing. Right off the bat, Houser nails the character of Missy. Of course, Houser has a great handle on all the Doctor Who characters she's ever written for, so this shouldn't come as a surprise, but it seems that so far, there isn't a character that she hasn't done justice too.

What I also liked, just in these opening pages, was how it was obviously an effort for Missy to not kill anyone, despite really wanting too. She lets one UNIT guard live because he is brainer than, 'the other grunts,' but it also shows just how much Missy has changed and is trying to change. Houser really shows us this when the Delgado Master tries his hardest to get Missy to turn towards the end and use the Key to Time to dominate the galaxy. You can see she is clearly tempted in the writing but Missy,

who sides with the Doctor, declines the offer. It was, for me at least, this conflict in her character that made her such an excellent inclusion in the Peter Capaldi era and I'm glad to see that that conflict in her mind is continued here.

It would have been easy to make Missy completely evil, setting this story during the time before her forced imprisonment in Series 10. However, Houser gives a lot of the completely evil talk to the Delgado Master, who we saw Missy help escape in the opening issues. Houser also captures him brilliantly. Even for all his talk of universal domination and destruction, there is something utterly charming about him. He seems to be a harder character to pin down; there have been many books written which feature his Master that have gotten him wrong (such as David A. McIntee's *Missing Adventure*, *The Dark Path*). Houser once again proves how much homework she must have done by nailing his character, even if he isn't really in this issue much until the end.

Also a delight is the continuation of some nice cameos. Over the previous three issues, we've seen characters from the Third Doctor to River Song and here it was nice to see a little appearance from The Brigadier. The Master has a long association with the Lethbridge Stewart and it was enjoyable to see the Delgado Master finally getting the upper hand before Missy bats the Tis-

sue Compression Eliminator away, even if looks a little more like a cigar rather than an alien device. Whether that was a design choice or not I'm not sure, it just took a me a little time to work out what the Master was holding!

As usual, Jodie Houser is once again joined by artist Roberta Ingranata, who captures the characters brilliantly. Instantly you can tell who each character is, not something every artist can do, but it did seem to me that there was a little lack of imagination in the artwork this time

around. I'm willing to say I think it's because much of the action takes place in UNIT corridors and offices and that doesn't allow for many imaginative illustrations, but these scenes, for the all the cool cameos and great character work, felt a little flat.

Ingranata does however draw an excellent Twelfth Doctor TARDIS interior. I've really loved her take on the Thirteenth Doctor's TARDIS, it comes to something that that particular interior looks better on paper than it does on television, so I'm glad

to see that other TARDISes are clearly in safe hands with her. Despite just giving that credit, the Twelfth Doctor's TARDIS was a little darker than the Thirteenth's and as a result, the colours didn't pop quite as much as they have done in the past. Perhaps these panels could have benefited from the console having some brighter lights and different lighting in various parts. That's a minor quibble but it did show. However, given how great the previous work has been on this series and those that Jodie Houser, Roberta Ingranata and colourist Enrica Eren Angiolini has been, it's easily forgivable!

It sounds like I've bashed everything about this issue, but I did really enjoy it, and things did work in its favour. Even



though I had a bit of a problem with the colours this time around, I did appreciate that everything set in the 1970s had a dull brown tint, giving it a more authentic to the era feel.

There was a little worry for me too that in issue #1, including the Delgado Master might take away from Missy. However I was pleased to find that it didn't do that all, instead allowing us to see how much Missy had changed in a way that perhaps the television series couldn't until the very end of Series 10.

As a celebration of The Master, which the BBC proper seems to have neglected a little, it's a good job that Titan Comics, Big Finish and BBC Books have stepped in. In fact, reading this issue right after finishing the recent release, The Wonderful Doctor of Oz, might be in order, just to see how far Missy came from being out-and-out evil, to someone willing to stand with the Doctor. All the releases for this fiftieth anniversary have worked brilliantly well together to ex-

plore this fantastic character and The Missy mini-series has been an excellent addition to these celebrations. And with the inclusion of what is to come next with the Eighth Doctor, I'm really looking forward to seeing what's coming soon from Titan!

[Visit Missy at Titan here](#)

[Buy Missy Issue 4 at Amazon UK](#)



The Other Worlds of Doctor Who

SERVING THE GORGON: THE SARAH JANE ADVENTURES

BY Elesia Marie

I'm a military brat, my home is nowhere, my friends are everywhere, as the saying goes. In 2006, I was living in Fairford, England, where I got my start in the acting world, mostly working as a background actor and featured extra. I appeared in *Casualty*, *The Doctors*, *Bonekickers*, and a commercial for the *Daily Mail*. I got my first speaking role in a movie starring Burt Reynolds called *A Bunch of Amateurs*. It was probably one of the best days of my life, as I got picked up by a car, and even though I was just Cinema Girl #1 with two lines, I had my own trailer! One of my favourite background opportunities was when I got hired to play an evil nun in the *Sarah Jane Adventures* in a two-part episode called *Eye of the Gorgon*. I travelled from Fairford to Cardiff and was given a tour of the studio. I got to see *K9* and the inside of the *TARDIS*, and as a big *Doctor Who* fan, I can tell you it was super fricking awesome!!! Then we were bussed to the filming location.

I was one of the Gorgon nuns. I had no lines, but I was featured due to the fact that I got some good

facetime restraining Clyde, one of the main characters, during the climax of the first episode. I have a lot of memories of that shoot, one being how cold it was inside the castle. Even with my long-sleeved nun's costume on it was still pretty chilly, but I guess that's to be expected inside a stone building.

The kids (Tommy Knight played Luke Smith, Yasmin Paige - Maria Jackson and Daniel Anthony - Clyde Langer) were really great. They must have thought I was the same age as them as they didn't call me ma'am like the other ladies onset and joked around with me like they did with each other. One thing I found very interesting was that they weren't allowed to go out into the sun for extended periods of time, and their onset chaperone made sure they were in the shade all the time. I was told that it was because they didn't want the actors'



skin to get darker in between takes. It's Continuity and all that.

On many sets, the background

actors are told not to talk to or interact with the stars of the show unless it's part of the scene. That wasn't the case here, and it was a nice surprise when Sarah Jane herself, Elisabeth Sladen, came out and talked to us. She was so sweet and easy-going. She sat outside the castle (St. Agnes Abbey) with us and we chatted for a long time.

Elisabeth passed away a few years later. It was really sad because she was so nice and treated everyone the same, regardless of the role they were playing. She didn't act like a big, entitled star and I knew that I wanted to take a page from her book, treating everyone with kindness.

I had a great experience on The Sarah Jane Adventures, but I was really hoping to get on Doctor Who. I was offered a featured part on Torchwood but I was told I'd have to cut and dye my hair, which I wasn't particularly interested in doing, so I said, 'no thank you.' Of course now I wish



I'd done it but hindsight is always 20/20.

I did get my first ever autograph request as a result of being on The Sarah Jane Adventures. In 2007, I got an agent. She received a letter from a fan who wanted my autograph as part of his memorabilia. The agent thought he had the wrong person but I said, 'no that's me.' To this day I don't know how he got that information!

Experiences like that prove how important Doctor Who and Sarah Jane are to so many people. That doesn't surprise me because Elisabeth Sladen made such an impression on me and there was a special atmosphere on set. They were good times.

Elesia Marie has appeared in the films One Month Out and The Verso Verdict. She is now producing and directing her own projects.

The Other Worlds of Doctor Who

DALEKS!

By Nick Smith

Daleks!, released on [YouTube](#) at the tail-end of 2020, is a series of five short episodes featuring the scoundrels from Skaro in their very own cartoon.

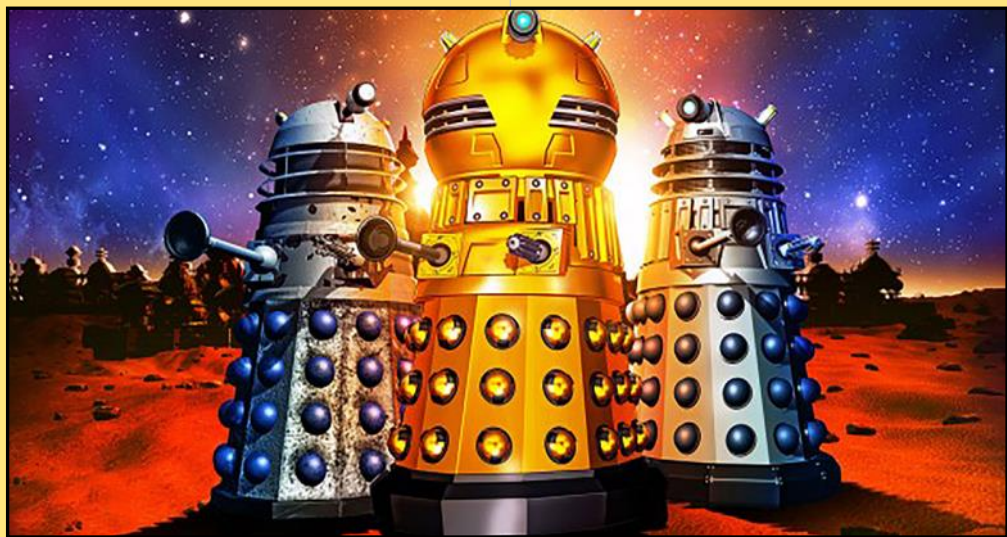
With its nods to the Century 21 Dalek strip, the newest Doctor Who spin-off successfully takes 1960s sci-fi designs and tailors them for a modern audience. Although the new show is tentatively tied to Who via the [Time Lord Victorious](#) arc, the Doctor doesn't even get mentioned. There's no need – the Daleks are the stars, no introduction needed.

After seeing them get their metal butts kicked in so many Whos, we finally see them get the upper plunger. In Episode 01: The Archive of

Islos, their evil legion lays waste to the eponymous planet. The Daleks are established as manipulative bullies, telling the Archivist guardians that they both care about knowledge in an attempt to make allies with them, only to exterminate the Archivists when that ploy doesn't work. But the inhabitants of Islos unleash a blobby green Entity on the Daleks, setting the series arc plot in motion.

Although it's hard to relate to these fiends, we get to know characters like the proud Emperor, the Executioner who wants to exterminate first, ask questions never, and the Prime Strategist who sounds eerily like Davros. Humor is left to the Chief Archivist, who asks the Daleks if they'd like a library card, and the eccentric Sentinel of the Fifth Galaxy.

There's a danger of having a blob, or as Captain Kirk would call it, a



“thing” as an antagonist. The Entity has no voice or teeth, yet it does have the power to control minds and stay one castor ahead of the Daleks. So the Emperor calls upon an old enemy – the Mechonoids. These clunky constructions are a highlight of the

show, mixing English language with their computer code from The Chase. Despite being robots, they appreciate beauty in a way the Daleks cannot. Nevertheless, this series is set in a bleak universe where only the most ruthless survive.



While this web-premiered show did not spark another wave of Dalekmania, it added another welcome layer to the Whoniverse.

There's beauty to be found in the digital animation, James Goss' simple, appealing writing, and Nick Briggs' vocal versatility.

Hopefully it won't take another multi-platform crossover to bring this show back.

[Visit the Daleks on YouTube here](#)

BBV VIDEO: JNT UNCUT

Review by Paul Winter

Back in 1993, Bill Baggs of BBV Productions released a VHS documentary called 'The Doctors'. It was based on the Boxtree book of the same title and coincided with the 30th Anniversary of the show. The programme featured interviews with a number of people connected with the first 30 years of Doctor Who and quite captured fandom's interest at the time. Some of the interviewees were more open than they had been previously – Jon Pertwee and Peter Davison being two cases in point. Another interviewee more forthcoming here than he had been previously was John Nathan-Turner.

Whilst he continued to maintain a diplomatic approach to some of the more controversial aspects of his career he did delve further into areas of interest to the audience.

'The Doctors' was released on DVD some years later with extended footage and now,

BBV has released the entirety of the JNT interview for the first time. This is 'JNT Uncut' and is presented quite literally 'warts and all'. By this, I mean that recording breaks, fluffs and background noise are left in. I cannot help but think a small amount of editing might have been appropriate. The interview is in a seafront café near Brighton and I am not convinced that keeping in the sequence where the cappuccino maker drowned out John's answer was of great value. Some of the recording breaks – possibly for tape changes – are left in too. Another surprise is the complete lack of context that the DVD box and finished programme give to the interview. I knew exactly how the interview came to be, but others may not and I really do think the product would have benefitted from a few sleeve notes and/or an introduction. It does hint at an ele-



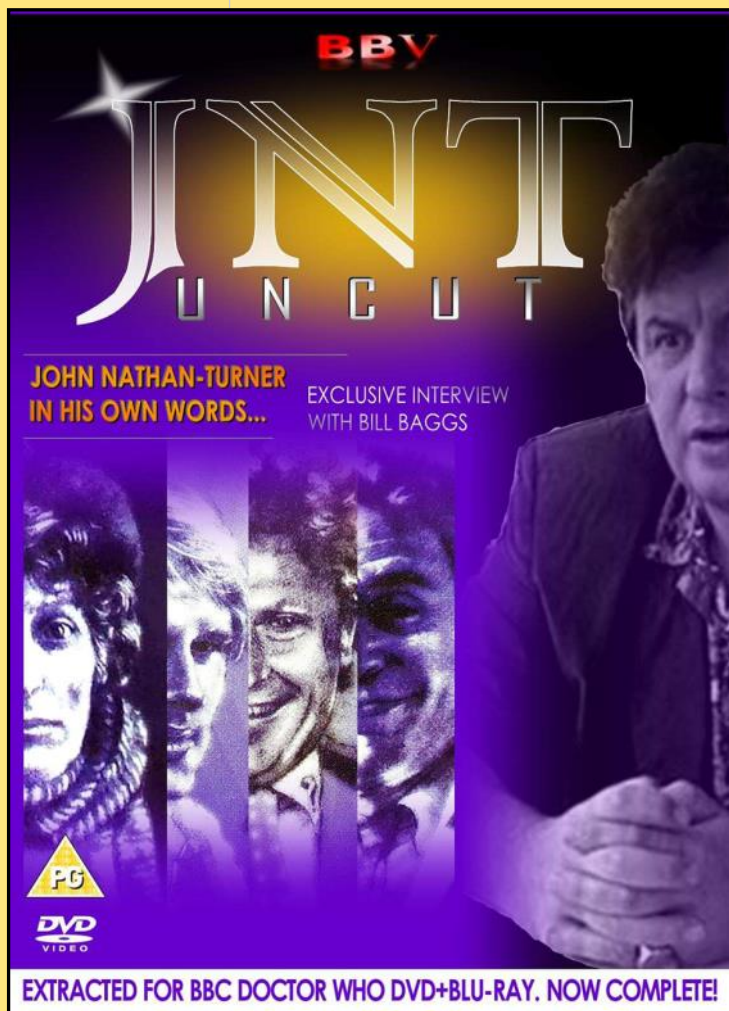
ment of 'not bothering too much' which is a shame, especially given that the BBV online store gives just the context that the sleeve lacks.

The content itself though is great, and if you have any interest in the making of the classic era show, especially the 1980s then you will find it worthwhile regardless of whether you have already seen 'The Doctors'. John talks a lot about the cast, companions, his dealings with BBC managers in the early days of his producer-ship and later on. He discusses at more length than we have seen previously his realisation that the show was not coming back after season 26. We also get closer to 'JNT the man' and how he felt personally when his programme was pulled with no warning and with the next series in pre-production, when he was promised a move to another show and did not get it, and what it was like having to go into the studio immediately after reading about the highly critical interview that Eric Saward and Ian Lev-

ine gave to Starburst Magazine (and to DWB) about him.

This programme could have been a little more polished but is nonetheless well worth buying and I believe most fans of the classic era will enjoy spending a little more time with JNT.

You can buy 'JNT Uncut' on DVD from www.bbvproductions.co.uk



The Ninth Doctor Adventures: Ravagers

Review by Paul Winter

This three-story release from Big Finish is probably one of the most anticipated of the year. It is also one that BF had to get right, as whilst there is probably a small part of the market that will buy any Doctor Who release regardless, with an ever-expanding range becoming available, most fans will have limits on what they can afford to buy.

In launching this new series, Big Finish has, wisely, chosen to go back beyond the events of Rose, to a time when the ninth Doctor had become a solitary traveller, believing himself to be alone in the universe. This gives the writers the chance to explore opportunities for the main character that may not be possible within the confines that the 2005 TV series may otherwise impose (although I guess it also means no daleks).

Christopher Eccleston slips back into the part of the Doctor immediately and for me, there was no doubt from the very outset that this was the ninth Doctor I knew from TV. The way the part has been written for Christopher (by Big Finish stalwart and Executive Producer Nick Briggs) evolves over the three stories, and I noted a marked improve-

ment as the adventures went on. Initially I got the impression that in re-establishing the character for the audio audience we were hearing 'typical ninth Doctor lines delivered in a typical ninth Doctor way', whereas later on the writing style, and Christopher's interpretation and delivery, became more relaxed and confident. This may have been deliberate, or it may just be the way I heard things, but either way, this is *the Doctor*. It starts well and gets better.

The story itself unfolds over three linked adventures and is a time travel story, about... well, time travel. When you take a premise like Doctor Who which principally uses time and space travel to get from one adventure to the next, and then make it about that concept itself you run the risk of becoming very convoluted and overly complex. This does not happen here but listener, be warned. This is not a simple ninth Doctor adventure akin to Aliens of London but





a complex tale involving time eddies, back and forth time travel and people meeting each other in the wrong order (a bit of a new series trope with the later introduction of River Song). So, if you want to get the best from these adventures, listen carefully. Do not have them on in the background whilst you do something else. There is a nice twist at the end involving one of the main protagonists which does require the listener to pay attention in order to get the benefit.

We are also introduced to Camilla Beeput as the Doctor's companion 'Nova'. She is quite a feisty character and I look forward to seeing how she develops in the coming months.

This first set of adventures are very much in the mould of a typical Big Finish Doctor Who Adventure, revolving around time and space travel, the TARDIS and lots of temporal anomalies. In the style of early series 1 adventures, they are not. You

need to invest your time to listen properly and if you do, you will be rewarded with a very solid introduction to the Ninth Doctor on audio.

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

The trailer from Big Finish can be heard by [clicking here](#)

Big Finish publishes a free-to-download magazine called 'Vortex' which covers the entire range.

[Click here to read and download 'Vortex' from the Big Finish website](#)





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BIG WE LOVE
FINISH STORIES

The Black Archive: The Curse of Fenric

Review by Nick Smith

There's a lot to admire about *The Curse of Fenric*. While BBC bosses fretted over viewing figures, the team behind *Fenric* worked their socks off to bring us a classic, from Ian Briggs writing his heart out to Sophie Aldred showing a wide range of emotions as the tormented Ace.

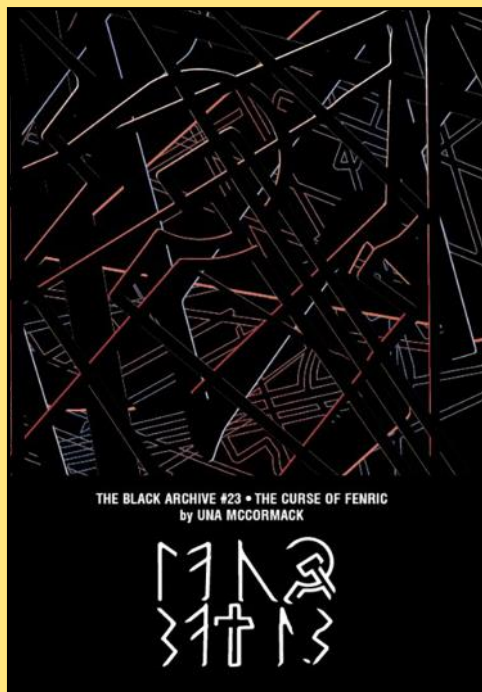
This base-under-siege story could have been derivative. Instead, it is chock full of memorable moments and figurative twists. In this story, faith means more than merely wielding a cross; vampires are orphans from a soiled future earth; and the Doctor is prepared to disillusion his

companion in order to win.

Now, almost 30 years after the story aired, *Fenric* and the Seventh Doctor are reconsidered in this *Obverse Book* about the making and impact of it. It's a great volume in the *Black Archive* series, full of thought-provoking examinations of the story.

Writer Una McCormack sets the scene by comparing the wolf-eat-wolf capitalism of Margaret Thatcher's Tory government with the solidarity of the soldiers in *Fenric*. "There is No Alternative" was a Conservative slogan; the British and Russian soldiers find an alternative, banding together and refusing to follow their superiors' orders. McCormack also makes it clear that this era of *Doctor Who* is one of playfulness and quirkiness rather than proselytizing. She calls *Fenric*,





‘fresh, complex, satisfying, and defiant,’ skewing notions of canonicity, with multiple versions of the story, from the expanded novelization to the original broadcast, extended editions and a mooted fifth episode.

The Curse of Fenric benefits greatly from its period setting. With its credible costumes and set design, it draws viewers into a bygone world of and shifting alliances and an uncertain future. We can look back at World War Two as a *fait accompli* where good inevitably defeated evil. But back in 1943, nothing was certain. Such uncertainty has unending dramatic potential.

We suspend our knowledge that Ace and the Doctor will survive and good will conquer evil, so that we can be

entertained. But as in *The Aztecs* and *The Massacre of St. Bartholomew’s Eve*, the weight of history creates great tension and conflict among the supporting characters. Throw in some vampires and you’ve got a fantastic story.

The name ‘Fenric’ is a play on Fenrir (‘fen-dweller’), the giant wolf and son of Loki from Norse mythology, destined to kill Odin during Ragnarok. We’d already met the gods of Ragnarok during *The Greatest Show in the Galaxy*, forcing humans to perform for their amusement. Now it’s the turn of Fenric, the original Bad Wolf. His story ties two years of clues together long before arc plots were a thing.

His pawn-turned-queen is Ace AKA Dorothy, who like *The Wizard of Oz’s* heroine is whisked away by a storm to a strange land. As McCormack points out, Ace represents a renaissance in character development for the Doctor’s companions and a more realistic depiction of girls and women than mere ‘maidens in distress.’

McCormack describes this *Black Archive* as a long essay but it’s got a book’s worth of insight and context to enjoy. Like the story it explores, the book is enjoyable, multifaceted and constantly fascinating.

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BBV: SUMMONED BY SHADOWS

Review by Nick Smith

Could [Summoned by Shadows](#) be the best Sixth Doctor story never told? While BBV's follow-ups, featuring a mysterious traveller labelled as The Stranger, have intriguing plots, world-building on a budget culminating in a different origin for the character, 1991's *Summoned* keeps things simple, establishing the main character and his companion, Ms. Brown.

When BBV first appeared, it seemed like an offshoot from the BBC – This was, after all, a co-production with the BBC Film Club. It was later said that BBV stood for Bill and Ben Video. Bill Baggs is producer and director, and Ben his wife's nickname.

Summoned by Shadows is Bill Baggs' directorial debut, although you wouldn't know it. He does a good job, particularly with the actors. Colin Baker is in his element as a disillusioned man who, '...misunderstood the nature of the universe.' Baker's Stranger has decided to become a hermit, isolating himself from a galaxy of terrors.

Another standout is John Wadmore, whose character Dane is unable to speak and relies on gestures and mime to get his points across. His performance is always sincere and believable, within the confines of a film about an evil entity that can control human minds and split itself into an unholy trinity. One of this threesome hangs

out with Felliniesque party people who delight in hunting the local peasantry; Miss Brown joins them, spurning the advances of the party host (Michael Wisher). Like her American-accented namesake, she is apparently a hit with the bad guys. Beyond that, Nicola Bryant doesn't have a lot to do in this half-hour adventure, but still manages to bring weightiness, poise and sophistication to the role.

'Summoned' shares similarities with Reeltime's UNIT spinoff *Wartime*, released four years earlier. Both short videos have a slim plot, giving room to develop a familiar character. Both play with the perception of reality and best of all, they both feature the one and only Michael Wisher, adding gravitas to these sci-fi nightmares.

At 34 minutes, the quarry-based *Summoned by Shadows* has low-key special effects and a low budget to match. Shot on videotape, it's reminiscent of Season 26's shoestring look. Late '80s *Who* surpassed its shortcomings with great ideas and erstwhile acting. This is cut from the same cloth.

Despite his quest for solitude, The Stranger was embraced by Doctor Who fans at a time when producers like Baggs could let their imaginations run wild without all the rigidly official restrictions in place today, taking cues from throwaway moments in *Who* (in this case, the Doctor's hankering to become a hermit in *The Twin Dilemma*). Despite its meagre resources, *Summoned by Shadows* is an entertaining milestone and a hint of the show we have today.

INTERVIEW: THE SLYTHER

by Nick Smith

*The Slyther appeared in the 1964 classic, **The Dalek Invasion of Earth** alongside William Russell and Graham Rigby. We caught up with the slimy beast.*

COSMIC MASQUE: *How did you get started in acting?*

THE SLYTHER: I was just lurking near Riverside Studios on a Saturday teatime when Richard Martin spotted me and invited me for some screen tests. He said I had a look. I was an X the Unknown back then. And I was so green. I was glob-smacked that he picked me out of all the RSC trained thespian creatures in Shepherd's Bush at the time. In fact, I think I was up against Shepherd's Bush.

CM: *What was going through your mind in your first scene?*

TS: The basics. Don't forget my lines, don't miss my cues, don't trip over anything or fall down a hole.

CM: *You've never been invited to a convention. Does it bother you that you don't get the same attention as, say, Peter Capaldi?*

TS: You'd be surprised to hear this but I'm shy. Actually, a lot of actors are. I suffer from agoraphobia and sudden mood swings so I probably wouldn't make the best convention guest, even if I was invited. Nevertheless, one can hope.

CM: *What have you been up to since your big gig?*

TS: Security mainly. I auditioned for the Creature from the Pit but they wanted a younger, more attractive





monster. It's a hazard of the industry, unfortunately. One has a shelf life.

CM: *Anywhere else we can see your work?*

TS: I'm in the background of the alleyway scene in the 1988 remake of *The Blob* but blink and you'll miss me.

CM: *What's your favourite line of dialogue from that story?*

TS: Mine? I would say glurg or may-be glakurg, I was really able to put some emotion into that one.

CM: *The cliffhanger ending of Part Four, The End of Tomorrow, really made viewers worry about the heroes*

Ian and Larry and is still exciting to watch. How does it feel to be responsible for that edge-of-the-seat memory?

TS: I could have been a contender. The next big thing after the Daleks. I sat by the phone, waited for it to ring. Then the mire beast came along and... forget it.

CM: *You weren't invited back for the movie. Is it safe to say you were disappointed?*

TS: It just wasn't the same without me or Bill Hartnell there to scare the children.

CM: *Your character made an appearance in the graphic novel 'The Only Good Dalek.' Have you seen it and if so, do you think it was a good likeness?*

TS: I didn't hate it. They drew my good side. I'm still waiting for my complimentary copy, though.

CM: *What's next for you?*

TS: I've been semi-retired for almost 60 years now and it's time for me to get back in the saddle, so to speak. I've been going to the gym. Westerns are experiencing something of a resurgence so I'm trying out for stunt work in a couple of those. Fingers crossed, if I had any!

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