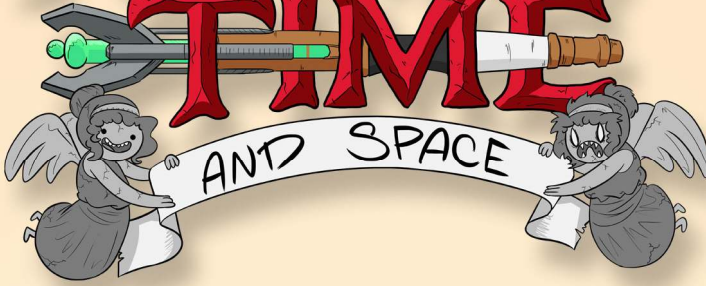


COSMIC



MASQUE

ADVENTURE TIME



Ahoy hoy!

I couldn't be more thrilled to be back in an editor's chair with the honoured privilege of resurrecting a DWAS classic and I couldn't be happier to have my friend, Ian Wheeler, alongside me for the ride too. We are both stupidly excited about this project. The amount of emails sent between us expressing this is similar to those of a couple teenage boys preparing for a double date. So here we both are, dressed in our Sunday best with the promise of a kebab at the end of the night, it's going to be fun and a little bit mad!

Welcome to first issue of the returning Cosmic Masque, how exciting! Some of you may recall we tested the water with a downloadable CM for the Fiftieth Anniversary of Who which I am pleased to say was very well received. So here we are again. The plan with CM is that it will be a quarterly .pdf available from the DWAS website. It's available to all, and it's free!

CM of old was all about the fan fiction; though we will still showcase fiction, we want to make the CM of now all about the fans and their creativeness. Therefore alongside some great fiction in this issue will be find book reviews, event reviews, interviews, art starting with our stunning 'Adventure Time' inspired cover by Alex Dempsey and so much more.

My favourite moment in putting this issue together aside from meeting and speaking to a huge array of talented folk was the email I received from Steve Wright. Steve got in touch to submit his brilliant story 'She Always Loved to Dance' which features in this issue. He went on to explain that his fiction was also published in the first issue of Cosmic Masque back in 1977 and so we come full circle, what a wonderful piece of symmetry.

I hope some of the creativity we have displayed this issue will encourage you to get involved or if you feel there is a project or subject in fandom which we should be covering then please do get in touch. Feedback is always welcomed in any way, shape or form. This publication is about you the fans and for you the fans, help us make it yours. Feedback, submissions, freebies or cakes - get in touch at cm@dwasonline.co.uk

Grant

Hello and welcome to the new, re-launched Cosmic Masque! We hope you'll stay with us as we try to bring you a wide range of material from the extended worlds of Doctor Who and Doctor Who fandom.

It's been around a long time, this Society of our's. For nearly forty years, DWAS has been putting on events, publishing fanzines and bringing fans together. For most of this time, Celestial Toyroom has been our flagship publication but now it's time for its sister title to make a triumphant return. This issue has been a challenging one to put together but we hope you approve of the finished result.

My own contribution to DWAS spans nearly thirty years as a member and twenty-five as an active contributor to Society publications. I wonder how many words I've written during this time - too many perhaps! When I look back to the old days of banging out articles on an electric typewriter and sending them in by post, it makes me realise just how far we've all come.

But on with the show. We're keen to give a platform to as many contributors as possible, so if you've got an idea for an article please drop us a line. It's going to be a rollercoaster of a ride!

Ian

CONTACT US

DWAS
Unit 117
33 Queen Street
Horsham
RH13 5AA

ONLINE

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Cosmic Masque New Volume

Issue 1, December 2015

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BOOK REVIEW

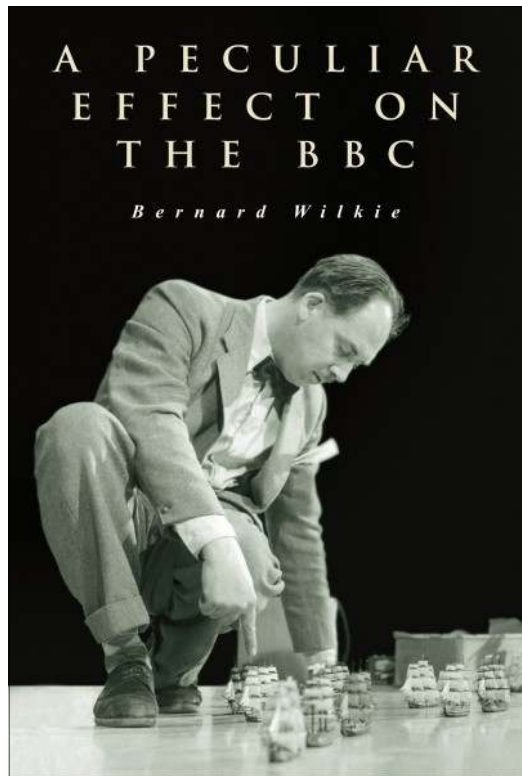
A PECULIAR EFFECT ON THE BBC

Reviewed by Allan Lear

As the memoir of a highly-regarded and hugely experienced member of the BBC's technical team is bound to bring with it certain expectations, let me get one thing out of the way straight out of the gate. If you come to this book expecting a dry treatise on the construction and maintenance of television-standard special effects, complete with diagrams and imperial measurements, you will walk away disappointed.

If, on the other hand, you happen to be looking for a fast, frank and, above all, funny look at how the BBC struggled to bring special effects to the small screen, this is definitely the book for you.

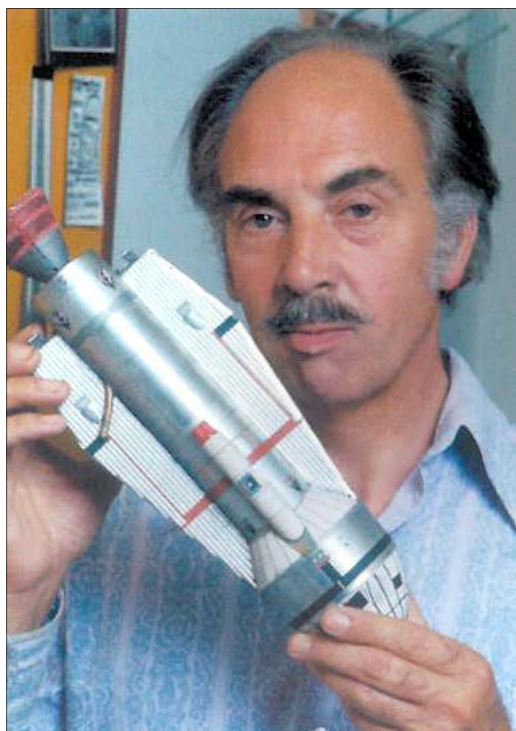
A Peculiar Effect is a book posthumously reconstructed from Wilkie's notes towards a memoir. As such, it's difficult to tell how much editorial control has been exerted, but however it was managed the final result is a great success. Wilkie's loose, informal style is obviously aimed at the general reader – he had already produced a manual for fellow professionals which is commented on in the afterword as being a longstanding industry favourite. As a re-



sult, far from being the tedious drudge through technical specifications that one always fears these books will devolve into, this is an anecdotal romp through the history of practical effects for the small screen.

Skipping lightly over his childhood with only a couple of stories he feels relevant to his career path, Wilkie plunges us straight into the action by the second chapter. Years of association with show-business have clearly paid off, and he seems to have a partly learned, partly innate knack for storytelling; surely any raconteur would love to be able to start a chapter with a line like "It was 1945 and I was standing in the wings of a small German theatre holding a loaded revolver". Apparent throughout the book is Wilkie's sense of humour, which is dry and self-deprecating.

Evidently aware that the greatest pitfall of



pieces before an episode was completed. A relaxed, affable narrator, Wilkie takes us through the history of special effects with a wry, sometimes rueful, smile and a generous attitude to the foibles of others. I came away saddened that this man, whom I never knew, had passed away before his book was published; on the basis of this memoir, I would very much like to have heard him speak.

the memoir is narcissism, Wilkie paints a frank and entertaining picture of a career spent bodging effects together with gaffer tape and crossing his fingers; while it's hard to believe that everything was quite so seat-of-the-pants as he makes out, he clearly follows the dictum that failure is the best teacher, and every success is preceded with a story about the mistakes made along the way. In this way he manages to keep the book light enough to be enjoyable as well as interesting; it enables him to be discursive without rambling. Of particular interest to the showbiz outsider might be later chapters in which he describes the way practical visual effects are co-ordinated; chapters on his time spent on *Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em*, for instance, are insightful and interesting on how his visual effects needed to combine with the efforts of the stunt team and, of course, the actors; star Michael Crawford famously did all his own stunts, making it even more necessary than usual that a rogue pyrotechnic shouldn't blow him to



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'Meglos' and 'Abbey Road Doctors' artwork by Alejandra Ramírez
See more at <http://whos-name.com>, on Tumblr at <http://whosname.tumblr.com>
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BOOK REVIEW

DRAMA & DELIGHT: THE LIFE OF VERITY LAMBERT

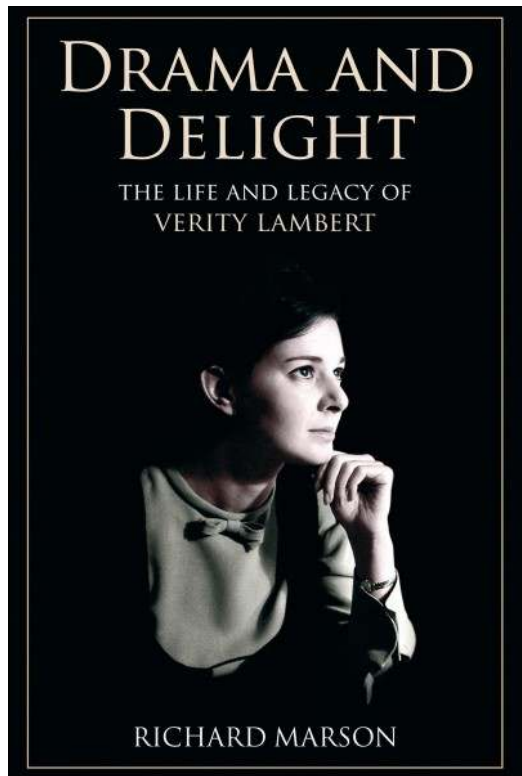
Reviewed by Allan Lear

The world of fandom is a curious and fickle place, especially in a series as long-running as Doctor Who. Loyalties shift and diverge as fashions pass and the generations rise and fall; favourites emerge and subside; saints are cast out as pariahs, only to be re-evaluated and canonised once more.



Throughout this constant flux of passing fads and fleeting allegiances, very few names emerge of people who are still unequivocally heroes of the Whoniverse.

Once such person is Verity Lambert, here treated to a serious biography by Richard Marson. And when I say “serious biography”, I don’t mean dusty or po-faced; but what I do mean is that this is not a lightweight piece of frippery tossed out to



amuse a few fans. This is the work of a proper biographer doing proper biography, examining not only Lambert’s time on Who but her entire life and career, complete with social context, insight into her motivation, and with commentary on the structures and mores that would best her during her career as the first major female producer at the BBC.

In order to achieve this grand scope, Marson ropes in a wide and knowledgeable crew of contributors – Lambert’s friends and family as well as former co-workers from all phases of her life have chipped in to give a broad and compelling picture of Lambert, going back as far as her erstwhile Who colleague, Waris Hussein, and right up to people who were with her during her final battle with cancer.

With so much detail to cram in, it is difficult to keep this sort of book from becoming either too dense or too long. In order

to achieve this, Marson uses a standard trick of the biographer: he absents himself from the page, so far as is possible, content to make his points through dialogue in the form of excerpts from interviews he conducted with Lambert's friends and colleagues as well as from interviews she herself conducted while alive. Marson himself shows up merely as a sort of narrator, adding any information needed to connect us from one interviewee to the next. There's a reason why a lot of biographers opt to write in this way – it works very well. The freshness of the interviewees' dialogue keeps the pages moving and breaks up the mass of information into bite-sized chunks, perfect for the reader to absorb and retain much more effectively than a string of info-dumps could achieve.

When it comes to the Doctor Who content, *Drama and Delight* naturally covers much of the same ground as Mark Gatiss's docudrama *An Adventure in Space and Time*, and anyone interested only in this period of Lambert's life will not find a great deal of new material here. Indeed, the only major criticism I have of this book is that Gatiss's programme and

the casting of the Lambert part come in for some slating in the foreword; this is perhaps intended to show Marson's book as setting the record straight, or to legitimise it against the question of why it is needed in the light of the biopic's existence, but it comes across as rather petty and mean-minded.

Despite this unwarranted editorialising early on, I cannot chastise Marson too harshly; he has evidently put a very great deal of time and legwork into *Drama and Delight*, and the result is a thorough, well-researched and eminently readable life of the woman who created Who and much more besides. For the Doctor Who fan this is a fascinating insight into a woman held in great and well-deserved affection; for the collector of biographies on TV production or the serious student of sexual politics in the workplace, I daresay the word "invaluable" is not too strong.



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BOOK REVIEW

TO PUT YOU IN THE PICTURE

Reviewed by Allan Lear

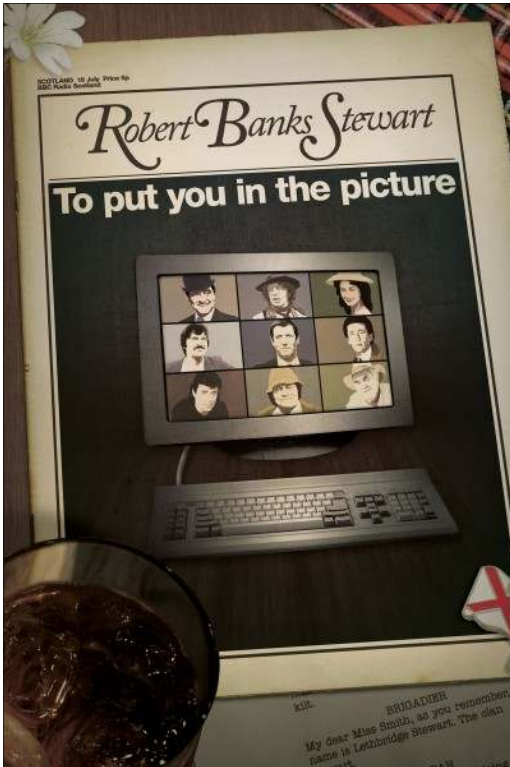
Robert Banks Stewart needs no introduction to Doctor Who aficionados as the writer of *Terror of the Zygons* and *The Seeds of Doom*. Fans will no doubt also be aware of his huge and distinguished pedigree as a writer of all sorts of television, including such well-loved genre shows as *The Avengers* and *The Saint*, and creator or co-creator of such comparatively 'straight' fare as *Lovejoy* and *Bergerac*. Such is the breadth and extent of his CV that it seems virtually impossible to do justice to his illustrious career in a single volume, which might explain why he hasn't really tried.



To Put You in the Picture purports to be a personal history of how Stewart broke into writing for television following stints as a copy editor and cub reporter. In point of fact, this book seems much less like a career biography and much more a memoir, its focus being on recounting wide-ranging anecdotes and dropping names the way a Gatling gun drops cartridges. None of this is a bad thing in itself, of course, but with Stewart's vast experience and the volume's small size – weighing in at slightly under two hundred pages – the result can at times feel like a best-of album, reciting a favoured tale from each telly series Stewart participated in and then moving swiftly on to the next dinner party story.

For instance, I suspect that any Doctor Who fan purchasing this book would be disappointed to discover that Stewart spends only a little over four pages discussing his time writing for the show, and this includes a page largely filled with one of Jamie Lenman's charming illustrations. The book is scattered with caricature sketches by the DWM cartoonist and they are both well-drawn and amusing; but their presence does add to the feel of this book as a lightweight volume of reminiscences rather than a thoroughgoing account of Stewart's stellar career.

From the point of view of the Doctor Who fan, there is also some mild frustration to be felt at the slight mistiming of this book. It has been written recently enough that Peter Capaldi gets a name-check as the



current Doctor, but not so recently that Stewart has chance to react to the recent Zygon two-parter broadcast as part of the latest series. Stewart explains in this book that the Zygon menace was a co-creation of his and Robert Holmes's, and it would be enjoyable to the fan to see his reaction to the way the new show has engaged (tampered?) with them. I appreciate that there is no way the author could have foreseen their resurgence, but one cannot help but realise the narrow margin by which this opportunity was missed. Far more time is dedicated to the production of *Bergerac* – understandably, as this is the author's own project and not simply another to which he contributed as a hired



Who minutiae looking for an insight into the creative process that went into producing the show during what many consider to be its greatest creative flowering, in the Holmes / Hinchcliffe era, then I would hesitate to recommend you add this book to your (no doubt crammed) shelves. Simply put, this book's target readership is not the Target readership.



writer. There are also some good meaty stories in there that are not related to television at all; the tale of a harrowing sea voyage disrupted by an engine fire is captivating, not least because it adds a sense of depth and gravity largely absent from the rest of the book.

As a watcher of television in general, there is bound to be something here that you will be pleased and intrigued to learn; for instance, I did not know that Stewart had worked for a time at Associated London Scripts, the television writers' "collective" put together by the great comedy writers of the sixties and seventies: Eric Sykes, Ray Galton and Alan Simpson, and the unsurpassable Spike Milligan. I have no doubt that having read that, it will become the first thing I recall whenever Stewart's name is mentioned.



But if you are an enthusiast of Doctor

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INTERVIEW

JOHN FREEMAN

by Ian Wheeler

It's A Bit Random!

Snappy answers to random questions! This issue, we kick off with John Freeman, Editor of Doctor Who Magazine from 1988 to 1992...

Who was the best James Bond and why?

Sean Connery, purely for sentimental reasons.

The Goodies or Monty Python?



Monty Python. Despite that cat.



Did a UFO crash at Roswell?

If it did, that breakdown saucer must have made a wrong turn at Mutter's Spiral.

Best Steven Spielberg film?
Close Encounters of the Third Kind



The Carry On films – outdated smut or classic comedy?

Both!

Greatest American president?

Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Favourite horror movie?

Wolfen.

The Beano or The Dandy?

The Beano (but would prefer Sparky).

Pancakes on Pancake Day – desert or main meal?

Both!

Yes or no to a Doctor Who movie?

Yes.

Ronnie Barker's greatest character?

Norman Stanley Fletcher.

Blur or Oasis?

The Clash.



INTERVIEW

COLIN BROCKHURST

by Grant Bull

A publication which celebrates Doctor Who fans and their creativity wouldn't be complete without a chat with one of the men behind the incredible fanzine/masterpiece 'Vworp Vworp', Colin Brockhurst. I caught up with Colin to talk about his latest project, 'Changing the Face of Doctor Who'...

Hello Colin.

Hi Grant.

Can you give us a brief outline of what 'Changing the Face of Doctor Who' is all about please?

It imagines how *Doctor Who* would have looked if some of the original casting ideas had been taken up – Geoffrey Bayldon, for example, was approached to play the First Doctor, and Brian Blessed recently revealed he was in the running to play the Second. How might they have looked, and how might their stories have differed to the ones we're familiar with?

Where was the idea born from?

I was looking for something to follow up my 'Day of Doctor Who' project, a collection of *Radio Times* bits and bobs and a set of 80 'Tele-snaps' which reimaged Steven Moffat's shindig as a fifth anniversary special starring William Hartnell and Patrick Troughton, with Peter Cushing as 'Dr. Who'. It had proved rather popular, inspiring YouTube mash-ups and even an audio play. A 'might-have-been' along a similar vein, a 1970 *Radio Times* cover featuring Ron Moody (which I didn't end up using), grew into 'Changing the Face of Doctor Who'.

The level of detail in this project is immense. Can you tell us a bit more

about the various items that comes with each package and how your research for these took shape?

I've created *Radio Times* covers for three of 'my' Doctors – Bayldon, Moody and Rik Mayall. The changing look of the magazine over the years is incredibly evocative, I find, and it's fun to recreate the feel of, say, a 1963 cover. There's an interview with Richard Griffiths that's a shameless rewrite of Peter Davison's first *Doctor Who*-related appearance in *Radio Times*, and the Fourth Doctor, Graham Crowden, appears with Lis Sladen on the cover of an invented magazine called *Television*. Doctor Two, Brian Blessed, can be found on an old issue of the BBC magazine *Ariel*. Old Sixie, as played by Richard O'Brien, features on the cover of issue 89 of *Doctor Who Magazine*. The Seventh Doctor, Ken Campbell, appears on the DVD cover for my dream version of *Battlefield*. There are also a couple of signed photos, an envelope stuffed with *Radio Times* listings (aping the various writing styles was fun) and a Ron Moody badge. I'm also proud of the set of John Cura 'Tele-snaps' for Brian Blessed's first episode. Although I didn't do much to the originals except rename the story 'The Destiny of Doctor Who' (David Whitaker's original title) and, obviously, recast the Second Doctor, finding the right shots of a beardless Brian from sources such as *Z-Cars* and *I Claudius* took as long as Photoshopping him in place. To round off the set I asked the excellent artist Steve Andrew to draw the cover artwork for a Target novelisation of 'The Masters of Luxor', featuring Geoffrey Bayldon. Although the interior of each book ranges from copies of a biography of Kevin Keegan to literary masterworks by Jackie Collins and Dan Brown (depending on which paperback I felt like massacring at the time), I reckon *Doctor Who and the Robots* fits beautifully amongst those initial three Target paperbacks.

Of the actors presented here, who would you have liked to have seen in

the role personally and what do you think they would bring?

Although we were spoilt with the one we eventually got, I think Ron Moody would have made a terrific Third Doctor. Moody himself said on a number of occasions how he regretted turning down the role. He'd have brought a playfulness to the role akin to Patrick Troughton's portrayal, I think. I took his image from an old Margaret Rutherford Miss Marple film, in which he obviously had a blast. Graham Crowden would have been mental and terrifying (I took him from *The Final Programme* and *A Very Peculiar Practice*) and Richard Griffiths – well, who knows which direction he'd have taken it? I think he'd have played a Doctor quite unlike any we've seen and would have been marvellous. Ken Campbell would have barked and snarled and chewed his way through the scenery, while Rik Mayall would have been equally fun and unpredictable. The only recasting that wasn't based on fact was Richard O'Brien, because Colin Baker was the only name on the list of potential Sixth Doctors. I'm not convinced I'd have quite believed in Richard's Doctor Who, but it was fun to visualise him in the part. He's wearing David Tennant's clothes from *Casanova*.

Once you start thinking of actors your mind runs wild with ideas. I've always loved the idea of Ronnie Barker as the Doctor. Who else did you consider or would you consider?

Ah, I've never thought of Ronnie Barker. Good call, I wonder how he'd have played it? Michael Hordern was my Second Doctor for a while, and Michael Bentine was the Fourth. I had Pierce Brosnan down for the Sixth Doctor, because, if I remember correctly, he was considered for the part of Maxil. Who would I love to have seen in the role? Michael Goodliffe (so good in *Callan*) or Bernard Hepton, perhaps? Kenneth Griffiths? Or Eric Sykes – I could watch him in anything!

Where can people purchase a set?

People can visit colinbrockhurst.co.uk/changingwho for all the relevant information.

I must ask while I have you here, any updates on #3 of the incredible 'Worpp Worpp!'?

I know, I know, it's been way too long. I've been very tardy (I can't even blame Gareth, my co-editor, who has been prodding and poking me for years). We're aiming to get the third issue finished in time for *Doctor Who Magazine's* 500th issue. It'll be worth waiting for. Honestly.

Any other projects lined up?

I've been playing around with *The Adventures of Jago and Litfoot*, which may become part of a set of covers and merchandise devoted to spin-offs that never happened: *The Son of Doctor Who*, *The Men from UNIT*, *K9 and Company – The Series*, that kind of thing.

Thanks Colin.

Thank you for thinking of me!



Sugar Smacks badge with Ron Moody as the third Doctor. Oh yes it is!

More of Colin's work follows. You can also visit him at:

www.colinbrockhurst.co.uk

SCOTTISH
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Hammer horror!
Saturday BBC1, see p 7

You and your doctor
Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
BBC1, see p 3

Picking the pops
Alan Freeman's tenth year
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Radio Times

Gielgud and Richardson
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Wednesday BBC2, see p 13

Killing statistics
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Tuesday Radio 4, see p 19

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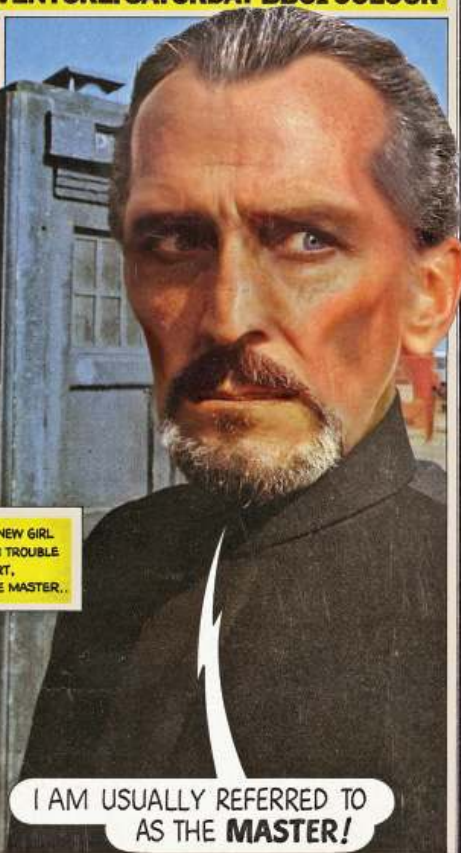
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**DOCTOR
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JO GRANT IS THE DOCTOR'S NEW GIRL COMPANION - AND SHE'S IN TROUBLE RIGHT FROM THE START, HYPNOTISED BY THE MASTER...



Radio Times cover featuring Peter Cushing as The Master, Ron Moody as the Doctor, David Langton as the Brigadier and Yutte Stensgaard as Jo Grant

SECRETS OF UNDERHENGE

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Radio Times

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16-page Time Lord souvenir inside



Rik Mayall is the Doctor!

FICTION

A HISTORY OF THE TIME WAR

by **William Turner**

1: Prelude to War, by Cardinal Turner, secretary to President Rassilon of the High Council of Gallifrey



It was on the planet Skaro that the universe's most dreaded sons were born from the ashes of a thousand year war: the Daleks. This is the account of their rise, and subsequent fall, in line with the history of the Daleks, most notably the unnamed warrior who once was called The Doctor.

The Daleks were born from the ashes of the Kaled race following a thousand-year war with their neighbours, and greatest enemies, the Thals. As the war came to a close, the greatest scientist the Kaled race had ever produced, Davros, created a travel machine that would house the final form of his people after years of nuclear exposure. He christened these mutant creatures Daleks as he placed these bubbling lumps of hate into their travel cases, trapped for all eternity. However, the Daleks soon turned on him. He was murdered and left to rot in the Kaled bunker. The Daleks, however, had one major design flaw: they were restricted to their city by a reliance on static electricity. Un-

til they met the one known as The Doctor, that is. He and his companions managed to aid the Thals in overpowering the Daleks; however, he merely disconnected their power supply.

Once re-awoken, the Daleks were now aware that there was life on other planets. Using what they had observed, they began their mission to leave the confines of their city and planet and make haste for the stars, where they would eradicate all non-Dalek life-forms. Time and time again the Daleks were defeated by The Doctor and the human race. Eventually, they decided to put an end to human interference: they used The Doctor to identify the Dalek factor, which they planned to spread throughout the entire history of human existence. Luckily, The Doctor saw through their plan and so used the alliance to spark a civil war on Skaro. Very few survived. A few lone Daleks were said to have travelled back through the timeline to prevent those events from occurring and so therefore restore the Dalek Empire, which grew from strength to strength. So began the Daleks' first interferences with the web of time.

The next major interference came not from the Daleks, but the Time Lords, now recognising that the Daleks' having left Skaro as a direct result of The Doctor's meddling was leading toward a point in time when they would in fact achieve their goal of becoming the masters of creation itself. They had to be stopped. Sending The Doctor back to ancient Skaro, they hoped that he could avert their creation. Unfortunately, he could not bring himself to do so, and resorted instead to delaying their development by one thousand years. Many years later, this event would be recognised as the first hostility of the Time War: the first action by the Time Lords to pervert the course of time in their favour. Unbeknown to the Time Lords, The Doctor's greatest apparent victory was that Davros had not been killed in this new



timeline, merely placed in suspended animation. He proceeded to cause much havoc for a now obviously weaker race of Daleks, who were more machine than mutated flesh now as they had been in the original timelines. Ultimately, he assumed the place of Emperor and managed to win a civil war, though not after ultimately becoming a Dalek himself. It was Davros, however, who launched the Daleks' first campaigns against the Time Lords. They first wanted to use clones to infiltrate the high council, whom they planned to assassinate, before seeking the eye of harmony. Ultimately, nothing came of either campaign, with Skaro being destroyed by its own sun in the latter. However, with Davros as a witness of the Time Lords' meddling in the destiny of the Daleks, the Daleks were now set on ultimately taking their place as supreme creatures in the universe, even hoping to become masters of time. They launched a successful plan which involved President Romana in what is now known as the Etra Prime incident. The Doctor managed to avert too many casualties but played mostly into the hands of the Daleks, who finally managed to regain their

power hindered by the thousand-year delay that had been imposed on them, unleashing the might of a new Dalek Empire upon the universe.

The new Dalek Empire led to the creation of a Dalek Time Controller, capable of surviving almost anything. He began to corrupt the timelines in league with a future, corrupted incarnation of Time Lord Straxus. Though The Doctor was employed by an earlier version of Straxus to prevent their plans, he was unable to fully pacify the Dalek menace.

Having failed to destroy the Daleks on many occasions by this point, arguably enabling their development at crucial moments of intervention, the Time Lords decided to resurrect their greatest warrior to face against the Daleks, in their first, maddening act of the Time War...

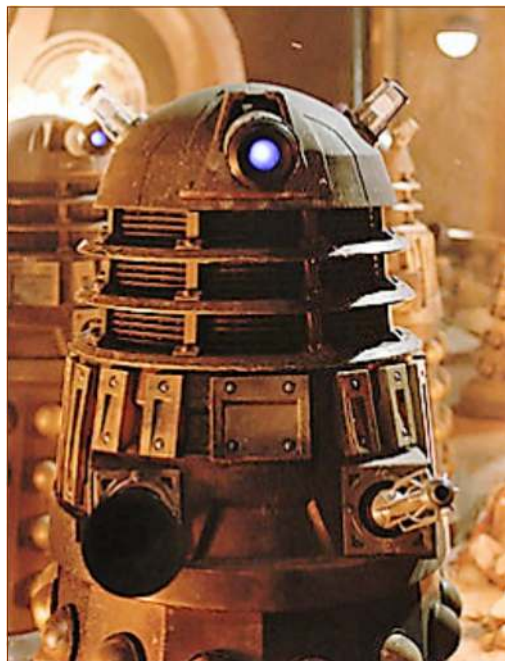




Image by Patrick White

FICTION RAIN

by Richard Wright

Right on cue TARDIS slumped about 30 degrees, so they both had to grab the console to not slide towards the door.

Peri could still imagine his hands around her throat, but even in that most aggressive act his hands had been loose on her neck. She had never really feared him.

Perhaps she should.

But she couldn't.

"Will the twins be alright?"

"Alright? Alright! I know a lot of things Peri, but how could you expect me to know that?"

"It's called making conversation, Doctor."

"Oh I see." The Doctor's voice went oddly soft and she thought perhaps his old self was there behind his eyes.

"Careless words cost lives."

"That's hardly applicable Doctor." She faked a disapproving tone to her voice, but really she was amused.

"Enough feckless talk I want to show you something." With a grand gesture he flicked a switch, unsurprisingly, very little seemed to happen.

"Wow Doctor was it the grace of your movement or is that an extraordinarily special switch on the console?"

"No it is a planet, well a bit of a planet I want to show you." His excitement was infectious, he almost danced around the console, she had to duck out of his way. The column began to slow, it's already gentle movement and the breathy sighing grinding of the engines dominated reality for a moment.

"Perfect landing," said the Doctor.

The heat hit her like a wave, the TARDIS had landed facing down the slope of a dune on a planet that, to all horizons, consisted of sand.

At least she was suitable under dressed for once.

"Come on, up the slope Peri, before the rain starts."

Peri looked round, the sky was sharp, a bit darker blue than Earth, but so clear some stars could be seen.

"There are no clouds. It's not even humid." She took big struggling strides, her feet sinking over her sandals into the cloying sand, whilst the Doctor was already at the top.

"Oh do stop making small minded assumptions, did I say anything about clouds."

Peri gave him a glare, but again she was smiling inside. Before he had changed he had been this mild, yet heroic stranger, but she sensed that this new man, this regeneration, was somehow *her* Doctor now.

"Doctor. The TARDIS wardrobe. Are there any woman's clothes in it?"

"What are you talking about? Look!" The Doctor's curly blonde head was turned to the sky.

"The ice storm is coming! Just as I predicted."

Peri watched the sky, not seeing for a second, then comprehending the fast movement of dots.

"Meteors Doctor?"

"Yes near enough. Nearly pure water drawn in once in a thousand years, bringing rain."

"Near enough rain Doctor." Peri caught the Doctor smiling before he scowled at her.

Suddenly there was a downpour. Peri gave an involuntary screech, it was like having a bucket of ice water tipped over your head. It physically knocked her back.

She looked up and saw the Doctor, face dripping staring up, a look of wonder on his face that she had never seen before.

In less than a minute it was over, the temperature had dropped and she shivered, but it was still relatively warm.

Peri gave up and sat down.

"Well that was fun. I'm soaked."

"Oh stop whining, open your eyes, look around."

Peri followed his sweeping gesture and was stunned. Green tendrils were worming out from the sand, almost immediately forming garish flowers. The flowers then broke off, dispersing into the sky.

"Hydrogen filled vacuoles," said the Doctor.

Peri turned to see the Doctor surrounded by the drifting flowers.

"The only place in the Universe where you are not the most gaudy thing on the planet." Peri tried to smile, but she felt strange.

The Doctor sat down beside her and realising she was shivering, and wrapped his

coat around her shoulders.

It wasn't the dampness or cold.

"Delayed shock. The trouble with Time Travel is it is hard to find time to deal with everything."

"I'm OK Doctor we Browns were Frontiers people."

"You know you don't have to stay, now I've changed...I well... I would understand."

Peri leant against his shoulder, his coat had an ancient smell of mothballs past their best.

"You're OK Doc." And for a long second they just sat together.

"I know," cried the Doctor, jumping up so her head jarred uncomfortably. "I think I might be able to find a matching coat for you in the TARDIS wardrobe."



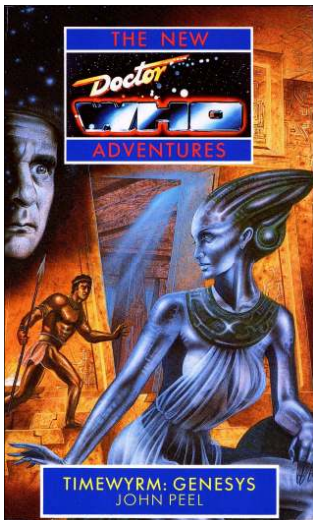
BOOK REVIEW FEATURE

THE NEW ADVENTURER

by Nick Mellish

The following article contains spoilers for the books.

I have a confession to make: never have I ever read any of the Virgin New Adventures, Doctor Who's first ongoing range of original fiction whilst the show was off-air. To some fans, these books represent the highest peaks the series ever reached, pushing character and concept further than had ever been done on screen, and making Doctor Who a series with the maturity, complexity and scope that its viewers now wanted, having grown up with the series and reading mature parallels between themselves and the last couple of seasons.



Cards on the table? I always view Doctor Who as being primarily a children's show, albeit one with a wider family appeal, in much the same way something like Harry Potter is, too. Despite this, I believe also that when given more fan-based territory,

such as spin-off comic strips or books or audio plays, there is room for the stories to be darker, more complicated and less accessible to non-fans: the audience is going to be more niche by its very nature, so all is fine.

Taking that on board, I know that this range of novels has a reputation for being far more...mature than was ever on screen, and so I am going to treat it as that niche, rather than the apparent continuation of the series as was proposed in the introduction to the very first novel.

Having never read any of these books before, it can look a little daunting to be doing so now. Taking the novels alone, we have a whole raft of them, which in black-and-white looks scary, to be frank:

61 original novels.

84 including the Benny books which followed.

86, if you throw in Goth Opera and Cold Fusion from the Missing Adventure range.

91 if you include the Decalog anthologies.

93 if you chuck in the two New Adventures plays Big Finish released as part of their monthly/main range.

93 to do, then (because if a job is worth doing, it's worth doing properly). Let's get started...

The range kicks off with the amusingly bold declaration on the back of the novels that the stories we are going to be told in this brand-new range are "stories too broad and deep for the small screen", which is at once a tall order to live up to, and a little patronising, implying that Doctor Who as broadcast was a bit lacking, which is insulting, really, to the writers.

Still, here we are.

Our first four books comprise a quartet linked by the Timewyrm, an adversary which lends its name to the first four books and dogs our heroes in various

guises, manners and locations. It's a neat idea to reel the readers in, making the stories connected so that if you enjoyed one, you'll want to move onto the next to get the full picture, and likewise if you were not keen on one, perhaps the second 'episode' will fare better.

The first of these books is the aptly-named *Timewyrm: Genesys* by John Peel, which boasts a rather lovely cover by Andrew Skilleter and a rather trying-very-hard-to-be-serious-Sci-Fi spelling of the word 'genesis'. Sadly, as openers go, it's a pretty damp affair, with Peel having seen the words 'mature', 'sophisticated' and 'adult' written down, and decided that means adolescent, in much the same way Chris Chibnall did when writing that first series of *Torchwood*. As such, we get prostitutes, gratuitous violence, explicit references to sex, and a great chunk of the supporting cast walking around with their breasts on show. "Yay! Tits!" cries the prose, and yet I just wanted the book to end with every passing piece of worthless smut or pointless violence.

The story itself is standard – alien crashlands on Earth in its past, tries to leave by making changes to established history, creates waves with the locals, the Doctor stops it— but Peel's glee at weaving sex into *Who* makes even that feel a bit rubbish. He also conflates his own feelings towards the Seventh Doctor and Ace to how they actually were on screen, which makes for a very unfamiliar pairing, the Doctor being positively nasty and rude towards Ace at times, and Ace whiney and immature in a way she never was. Worse still, Peel completely undermines this incarnation of the Doctor by having him rely upon the Third Doctor for the ending and throwing in the Fourth Doctor at the start (because he was the good and popular one, right?)

For a series supposedly showcasing this Doctor and companion, it's a poor effort at best, a borderline insulting one at worst,

and all of it makes for a very bad start to this series. Or maybe I just don't think objectifying all of your female characters is particularly broad.

Onwards though, to *Timewyrm: Exodus* by Terrance Dicks, a book which starts off rather well, and then dies on its arse somewhat by the end. The idea of a parallel England in which the Nazis won the Second World War is not a new one, but it's a rich one which presents the opportunity to imagine what sort of dystopian realm they would have created. Dicks starts by availing himself of this opportunity, giving us torture chambers, resistance members hiding in squalor, and people bullying in the name of the Führer, but soon tires of this and gives us a light, throwaway adventure instead which at best wastes the set-up, and at worst is rather... offensive.

I always feel very uncomfortable with any text or story that tries to diminish the evil actions of mankind by saying it was due to alien intervention; it's excusing nastiness and saying "Yeah, sure, bad things happened, but it was aliens, so that's okay!" and by framing Hitler and his rise to power in this manner, it makes light of a brutal and shocking, disgusting period of Earth's history. Worse still, we have the Doctor actively cosying up to Hitler in a bid to put history back on course, which the novel could just about get away with if it had any weighty discussion about changing the past to fit the future, but it doesn't really; only a handful of remarks along the lines of "It'd be nice, but we can't do that, Just Because."

By the end of it all, it's managed to turn into a lesser follow-up to *The War Games* which manages to rob that story's ending of any of its majesty; has Ace act in a way she never did before, crying and fainting and screaming; and has the Doctor actively encouraging Ace to lob grenades at Nazis to kill them.

Too broad and deep, right?

Lightweight, as a theme, carries on with the third novel, *Timewyrm: Apocalypse* by Nigel Robinson, which clocks in a little over two hundred pages in length and feels over before it begins. It's another tale which relies on continuity and past incarnations, this time with the Second Doctor having a lot to do, but there is more sparkle in Robinson's prose and plot than Peel had in his. Where he falls down, again, is with Ace. Ace, that great crusader against racism, who here is actively repulsed and afraid of some aliens because they look a bit funny. Ahem.

To be completely honest with you, by this point I was regretting my commitment made to review 93 of these products, and really wondering what people were going on about when singing the range's praises...and then we get the quartet's finale, *Timewyrm: Revelation* by Paul Cornell.

This book is, to coin a phrase, a game changer. Perfect? No: it is at times overly opaque and unfathomable with its obscurity and prose and structure, but what it does represent is a writer who actually likes the Seventh Doctor and Ace, a novel that isn't afraid to push far beyond the simple He Said/She Said simplicity of past novelisations, and a plot that is complex and deals with weighty and mature topics in a way that doesn't resort to the Doctor telling Hitler he'll meet his destiny, or topless prostitutes advising how best to give head.

Taking in faith, dogma, morality, mortality, time, consequences, machinations and love, from the very off it is clear that this book is in no way like the ones before it. Frankly, it feels like it belongs to an entirely different range but the potential behind it is exciting, and the use of past incarnations of the Doctor here is smartly done (mostly: the Third Doctor is again a bit too central to proceedings for a novel trying to showcase the Seventh, but I'll forgive it.

This was clearly a period where Pertwee was very much in vogue).

Also of note is that Ace, for the most part, feels like a real human being, too (almost. She, rightly, calls the Doctor a bastard at one point, but still uses 'toerag' rather than anything stronger) and her past (bullied and lonely) is beautifully drawn, as is the Saul the Sentient Church. It has some fine iconography in there, too: a Norfolk village destroyed, the Fifth Doctor tied and bound in the Seventh Doctor's memories to stop his morality getting in the way of actions such as destroying Skaro, and a child in an astronaut suit stalking the companion. It's good stuff, and you can see why Cornell instantly had people's attention.

It certainly perked me up and the idea of another 89 reviews to go suddenly isn't as daunting. I'm not expecting everything that follows to be of this standard, but if the future looks a little bit more like this and a little bit less like *Genesys*, I think I may well be in for a treat.



FICTION FATE

by Ivan Routledge

He was there at my death, my first one that is. It took so long that first death and I saw him often.

When I swelled after the children had left, I sensed he observed the destruction of their home. That time he was with the blonde stray.

At so many points along my first death. Not always looking the same but always the same. My champion. My children's saviour and yet he knows not.

I had given life to my children. Watched them grow and flourish. But so much harm. So much fear and danger. I was powerless to help them. I wept as they fought others and themselves. So many, many times.

So fragile.

There is a word I have learnt.

Fate.

He was not there at the very end though. That was another like him. Used me, took me but did not fully understand me, that I lived. That my essence would go on beyond this death. I learned that so many of my kind, of the Toraji, had been taken the way I had been. Taken and though weaker than I was I was still so very strong that I filled the new one's purpose and eventually I understood I had been imprisoned in something so small and yet so large. Already I had learned to see what had been, what was to be, the fragility of it all and the ways in which to change what was and is and will have been. And I knew I would see my captor again. And that my champion would overcome him.

A prison is still a prison though.

I needed an escape. And then that word. The word I have learned from my children. She came. I do not like her, I do not know her. Then I saw him and he was the same as I, imprisoned in a world so small knowing that existence is so large. And I knew him, I knew him of so long but he did not know me. So I took him. Let him think it was all his doing; the size of the ego would never survive anything else. We were free.

I more so, for I had the knowledge and had plotted and calculated. I took him. He was mine.

He claims to not know why he visits my third child so much, why he cares, why he helps. "Quite my favourite species" he says as if to explain it away. The entire universe to explore, all of time and space and yet so many times back here. Because I bring him. I have made him my champion. I have made my own fate.

Oh how I look upon the time when they bought us back to them. Scolded us like errant children. Changed my champion, took his pets and sought to chain me. I loved them for it. They had sent me home, to the place I wanted to be and they didn't even realise. So much good he did for my children with so little help from me. At first through no choice and then through choice. He loved them as I did now. Punishment? No, this was my blessing.

I had given life to my children. Watched them grow and flourish. But so much harm. So much fear and danger. So fragile. But now I help them, protect them from others and from themselves. My champion and I, so many, many times.

There is a word I have learned, it is fate. I have made it mine.

I see this now for what it will be. I sit and I wait. Ready. She appears, the one I do not understand, and stands before the prison next to mine. He appears and she tells him to enter my cell. We are free.

REVIEW

LEGO DIMENSIONS

by Grant Bull

Lego brings back memories of going to my friend Phil's house and washing cars in his neighbourhood. Once we had made enough money to split between us we would beg his mum to drive us to a little toy shop nearby. There we would gaze upon the shelves of Lego and leave with a small kit each. My favourite range of the time was the 'Ice Planet 2002' which came under the Lego Space line.

This was the early 90s and Lego, believe it or not, was struggling somewhat but it was still always there, on the toy shelf. Lego now is still on that toy shelf but now it's not just a box of bricks, it's books, it's TV shows, it's a theme park, it's a movie, it's Star Wars, it's video games, it's a monster of a brand but it incredibly manages to stay the same concept. It's genius.

Going back to the video games, we are here to discuss the latest and biggest title to bear the name Lego, Lego Dimensions. Warner Bros have been kind enough to send us a copy for the Wii U, so I have been secretly building my Lego portal at night without my kids finding out or I would be at the back of the queue for playtime! Yes, that's right, it comes with a Lego portal to be built upon the 'Toy Pad' – think Skylanders but made of bricks. Along with the Toy Pad and bricks are mini figures of Batman, Wildstyle and Gandalf from the excellent Lego Movie. Oh, and the box includes the game too!

So the game itself is similar to previous Lego games in the way of combat and puzzle solving. The action is fun and the puzzles thought-provoking. The best part of the game though has to be the humour. This game is genuinely funny, I'm not going to ruin the plot or anything but the in-



teractions between the different properties involved is real good fun. Be prepared to chuckle.

Let's go back to the Toy Pad and the mini figures and their vehicles and accessories. It's not as simple or boring as just plonking them on the Toy Pad and unlocking extra elements in the game; no, there is building to be done. There are moments when you simply put the game pad aside and build Lego. It's a brilliantly creative way of making the game a more physical interaction.

So in case you wondered why I am bleating on about a Lego video game in a Doctor Who publication there is a DW element to this too. Lego and Doctor Who has been a dream of mine for a long time – sure we had the 'Character Building' line from Character Options but, meaning no disrespect to them, they weren't Lego. Doctor Who is part of the Lego Dimensions universe and its introduction is a Level Pack sold separately. Don't worry; the good folks at Warner Bros sent us one of them too. So in this pack we have a Twelfth Doctor, a K-9 and a TARDIS. Connect them to the portal and we unlock Who related levels and goodies within the game. And so the game expands. Vworp vworp!

Doctor Who isn't the only pack available in fact a lot have been named and they include some of the hottest properties in the entertainment world right now. The past and the present are represented and there's that fan favourite 'nostalgia' too. For the inner geek in all of us there is, to

name but a few – Back to the Future, Scooby Doo, DC Comics, The Simpsons, Lord of the Rings and the list goes on.

Overall this game and concept is an absolute triumph. Sure, it has borrowed elements and it's not the only item on the market in its style but it adds to those available with the building process and its interaction with the screen. It's smart, funny, clever and made of bricks! My only reservation would be the money involved. The additional Level, Team and Fun Packs are all sold separately and there a lot of them. To collect and unlock everything would cost hundreds. Sure, there may be properties you aren't bothered about but get the kids involved and it's going to get expensive. Hey ho, that's the way games are going I guess, not as simple as buying a copy in store and having it all. Jeez, I'm sounding like an old man! I'm going to play some Lego, as a wise Gallifreyan once said..."There's no point being grown-up if you can't be childish sometimes". Amen.



BOOK REVIEW

WHAT'S ALL THE FUSS ABOUT...?

Reviewed by Grant Bull

First off, just to say, it isn't strange to see a book written by the assistant editor of a fanzine reviewed by the editor of the fanzine and then published in that said fanzine. I once went to a raffle and the people holding the raffle won the first prize. Nothing odd at all. That's a Father Ted Joke.

All that said I will start with a little disclaimer and here it is...

Disclaimer: Ian Wheeler for me, is the epitome of a great fan writer. The amount of times this man's name pops up is insane. With that in mind you may expect a dip in proceedings, the odd duff article but not Ian, he is consistent, consistently interesting, consistently entertaining, consistently knowledgeable and a bloody nice bloke to boot. In short, I admire Ian and his work, this book can't fail for me. End review. I mean begin review...

So Ian has written a book with fellow scribe Will Hadcroft of Fabulous Books. Now you might be thinking "I don't need a guide to Doctor Who, I know all what all the fuss is about" but do you, do you really know? This book is more than an introduction, it's the equivalent of the answers sheet to the entrance exam to the University of Gallifrey. You do need this book.

The presentation is welcoming, a stylish image of the shadow of each Doctor before a clock face, its time depicting their number/the hour, opens each chapter. These chapters are neatly split into the following sections: 'Who is the Doctor?' provides an overview of what we learn about the Doctor in the time of each of his incarnations. 'Try these on DVD' offering

SHE ALWAYS LOVED TO DANCE

by Steve Murphy

several suggestions on the best serials for each Doctor and the reasons behind their selection. I was particularly pleased to see 'Paradise Towers' being suggested as essential Seventh Doctor viewing! Finally, my favourite offering is 'Miscellany' which educates us with some brilliant facts sure to broaden any Who fan's mind and knowledge. Each chapter is well written and broken down into a digestible and flowing manner, there is no feeling of being bogged down in the history of an over fifty year old show at all.

The attention to detail is present throughout; a prime example is the nice touch in the Fourth Doctor chapter of offering DVD suggestions for each of the producers of this era's time on the show. An even nicer touch though is 'The Wilderness Years' chapters. 'Phase One' taking place between 1990 to 1995 explores and recommends 'New Adventures' and 'Missing Adventures' books and the brilliant documentary, which I never tire of watching, 'Thirty Years in the TARDIS'. 'Phase Two' picks up after a chapter on the Eighth Doctor and covers the BBC book range and Big Finish audios. Elements like these show this book for the full package that it is.



Clearly the two authors know their Who well and share a warm love for the show and its legacy. Together they have produced an entertaining, informative and most importantly accessible read. In a sea of Doctor Who related guides this book deserves to ride the waves and strut ashore triumphantly. Highly recommended.

Ever since she had been a little girl, she had always loved – just *loved* – to dance. All her family, her neighbours, in fact pretty much everybody she had ever known, at some time or another, had remarked on how much dancing seemed to be infused with her very soul. She wasn't necessarily very good at it, although like most little girls in the world, or at least in the Western hemisphere, she had thought at some time how lovely it would be to be a ballerina. But she hadn't been right for that. She hadn't been right for most things, really. Again, not that there was anything really *wrong* with her. She wasn't ugly. Or too tall or too short. She was “attractively slim”, as some of the magazines had liked to put it. No, she just seemed to fall through the cracks in everybody's plans; everybody's ideal; everybody's *love*.

There had been nothing particularly wrong about her growing-up. Good, even privileged, family, good schools, culminating in one of *the* Schools for Young Ladies. Then university. Fair-to-middling degree. All fairly routine, really, on the surface of it all, at least. But underneath, she *knew*. She just knew that there was something...wrong. Missing. She was incomplete.

Little did she know that tonight was the night everything was going to change.

There were a group of them, all former schoolmates. They didn't meet up that often anymore; it had been a good few years since they had left, after all. And many – most – of her circle of school friends had done the usual. Gone down

the prescribed route. Got good jobs in the city. Met good breeding-stock men. Bred. The way life ran, for the people who were inside the usual scope of it all. The way life ran for her family, certainly. Until her.

Her mother had never actually said anything outright nasty, but there had always been the usual sighings, the usual poutings, the “whyever-can’t-you-meet-a-chap-like-that?” syndrome. And her father, before he had dropped dead, just used to nod slightly whenever such things were mentioned. Complicit in the underlying disapproval of the eldest daughter who never seemed to find Mr. Right. In a funny way – and she shuddered slightly at the memory again, the way she always did – it had been a release when her mother, younger sister and brother had been killed outright by the drunk driver. She felt awfully guilty whenever she had the thought, but it *had* helped. The weight of expectation had been removed. She might be alone in the world now, but at least it was *her* world.

Not for long.

She looked up at the sign as they came to the front of the club. *The Inferno*. It had been here in Soho for what seemed like forever. She remembered passing it almost every day when she had had the job in Regent Street. And yet in all these years, she had never been inside. But some of the girls were fairly regular attendees, and they said it was a great place again. “It used to be quite famous in the sixties”, Annabel Dudley had said, and Charlotte Jackson said her dad had been a few times around then, and it was a real place to be seen in the old “Swinging London” days. (She always wondered about Charlotte’s dad; how he seemed to look much younger than he should, somehow.) Like any club, *The Inferno* had closed, opened, closed and opened again many times in the intervening years, but unlike other clubs, it had

always maintained the same name. The girls all said it was now one of the absolute *best* places to go dancing nowadays. And of course, she always loved to dance.

Even though it was a Saturday night, there was no charge for their group, and they were whisked in by the door staff, all dressed in black, all taut, lithe and moody. She presumed it was because they were a group of girls, and nobody was riotously drunk or anything like that, and clubs always wanted good-looking girls inside, to generate interest from the male customers; get them to buy more drinks, both in the hope of attracting a young female enough to go home with them, or to at least rustle up enough courage to actually ask any of those alien creatures for a dance. Either way it was money through the tills. Business is, after all, business.

They dropped their coats off at the tiny cloakroom and headed down a small corridor towards the throbbing noise of the main room. The corridor opened onto a short flight of steps down into the main dancing area. There was a bar in one corner of the room, and dark booths with a table and long seating set around two of the other three walls. Although the room was pretty full, Annabel Dudley, who was always pretty good at that sort of thing, instantly spotted that one of the booths was empty, and rushed over to it, throwing her bag down onto one of the long seats and waving the rest of them over manically. They all piled in, four on one seat, and three on the opposite one.

“Right. My round. Everybody want shots?” shouted Charlotte over the music. There was a general cheer from the girls, and Charlotte weaved away through the melee over towards the bar.

Later on, the story would be changed. It was said that it had happened in a completely different way, and in a completely different place. But this was the truth.

This was the actuality. This was The Moment.

“Hello.”

She turned in surprise, because although the music was incredibly loud, she heard the word as if it had been quietly spoken directly into her ear. And when she turned, there he was. Standing a few feet away, smiling at her. He wore a black suit, with a crisp white shirt and a slim black tie to complete the ensemble. He looked like an eighties mod type, or perhaps a younger relative of The Blues Brothers. She almost expected him to have white socks poking out from beneath slightly-too-short trousers. But when she glanced down, all she saw was a slick pair of black shoes, the trousers hanging just so; not too long, not too short. She became aware that she had been staring at him for slightly longer than was acceptable, and looked away. But when, almost immediately, she looked back, she saw his grin had widened slightly, and his eyebrows raised at her. He indicated with his head that she should come over, and without even a microsecond's thought for her friends, she walked over to where he stood against the wall.

“Hello again,” he said, an amused tone in his voice.

“Hello. I – “ He held up his hand. It was quite an abrupt gesture, and in some cases might have been thought rude. It brooked no argument. ‘I'm in control here’, it said. She could have been annoyed, but instead she was fascinated, compliant.

“You've never been in here before.” She shook her head.

“That's right. Are you a regular, then?” He laughed.

“Not a regular, no. But I've been here a few times, on and off, down the years.” It was her turn to smile now.

“You don't look that old.” And he didn't. If she'd had to make a guess, she would have put his age around twenty-five, perhaps a little older. Not over thirty, certainly. He laughed.

“Age. It's a funny thing, isn't it? You seem to set so much store by it. All your papers say, ‘Somebody Somebody, twenty-five’, like it's a badge of office. It always amuses me.” He leaned towards her. “Let's just say I'm older than I look. Is that a problem?” She frowned slightly.

“No, not at all.” But her mind couldn't help registering some of the things he had just said. *You seem to....Your papers...?* “Are you foreign?” she found herself suddenly saying. The smile stayed on his face, but it was slightly different. Something within it had changed.

“Would *that* be a problem? Oh dear, first my age, then my...nationality. This isn't going very well, is it?”

“Oh, no no no, please, I'm sorry, I didn't mean anything like that.”

Now his face set hard. There was almost a viciousness, an animalism within it.

“Of course you did.” Then suddenly, the storm cloud was gone. His face lit up again and he was a completely different person. “You always do. That's...the way of the world? Would you like to dance?” The sudden flip caught her off balance, and her face must have showed it. “Don't worry. I'm not going to eat you. It's just that I was looking at you, and I can see that you love to dance.” He held his hand out and she automatically took it. He moved off towards the dance floor. The song that was playing wasn't particularly one that excited her, if she were honest. It was a run-of-the-mill “beats per minute” thing, which she had heard a few times on the radio but had never much got into. As he whisked her onto the floor, however, he leaned in close to her ear.

“Don’t worry about the song; that’s not what we’re going to dance to.” He pulled something out of his pocket and thumbed it before putting it quickly away again. It had looked like some sort of silver stick, but she didn’t catch enough of a look at it to see precisely what it was. Suddenly the music stopped, and a different track started. She had never heard it before. And she was immediately lost.

When the dance finished he led her back to where they had previously been standing. She gazed at him adoringly, and as he looked back at her, she *knew*. This was it. He was it.

“What a great song. I’ve never heard it before. How did you get it to play like that?” He shrugged.

“I have...connections with the management. The song’s new. Very new. So new you won’t hear it again for a while. I knew you’d like it. I knew it was *Our Song*.” *Our song*. Yes, he was right. It was. And she was his. They both knew it.

“This is crazy. I don’t know anything about you. And you don’t know anything about me.” The odd smile danced round the corners of his mouth again.

“I know more than you think. I’ve been waiting here for you. I knew you’d come. We’re meant to be together, you and me. I’m sorry if that freaks you out, but it’s true. And I know you know it’s true. Because I’m old. And foreign. And have connections. You’re going to marry me. You’re going to be my wife.” A thrill went through her, but not like those silly girls in the Mills and Boon books. This was something else; it was excitement, yes, but there was also...fear? Hatred? Death?

“Yes. Yes I am. I am going to be your wife.” He nodded.

Do you know, the only thing that worried me when I found out about it was your mother’s maiden name.”

She laughed.

“My mother’s maiden name? Why?”

“It’s Bellingham.” She shrugged, completely drawn in, completely forgetting how odd it was that he should already know such a thing. “The only British Prime Minister ever to be assassinated was Spencer Percival, and the man who did it was named John Bellingham. I just couldn’t help thinking about it. I hope you don’t assassinate me when I’m Prime Minister. Because I am going to be Prime Minister, you know.” She laughed again, and hugged him.

“Of course you are, my love. You can be anything you want. I really and truly believe that.” And she knew it *was* true. Life with him was going to be wonderful. There were literally no limits. They could go anywhere, do anything. And within her head, above all the humdrum of the club, beyond all the tedium of her life so far, all she could hear inside her head was their song playing, louder and louder.

Here come the drums, here come the drums...





Sutekh picture by 'TOMFAN'.
See more at <https://www.instagram.com/tomfanphotos/>

INTERVIEW

CHRIS HOYLE

by Ian Wheeler

Making Movies

One of the things we're keen to do in Cosmic Masque is highlight the work of the talented people who produce Doctor Who fan films. Chris Hoyle is one such person and along with his fellow enthusiasts he has been making Doctor Who films under the 'Projection Room' banner for over twenty years. Ian Wheeler caught up with him.

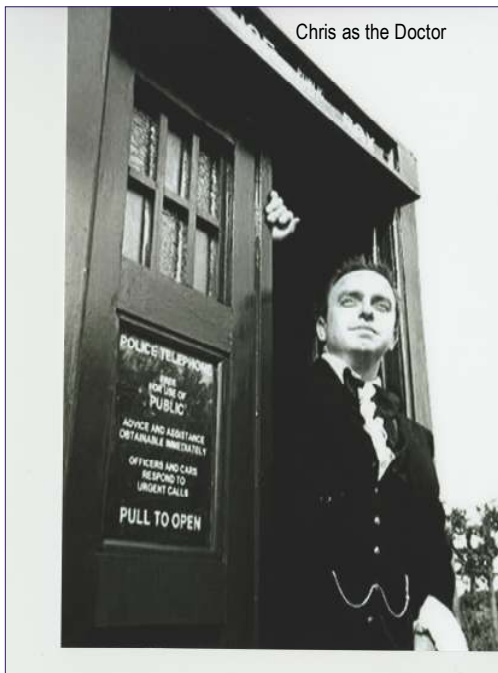
Were you a Doctor Who fan growing up? Who was your favourite Doctor? And favourite story?

I watched it on and off during my childhood and adolescence but regrettably not as a regular devotee. The earliest memory of 'Doctor Who' I have is of the 1974 Pertwee title graphics, and the effect over Jon Pertwee's face which in my very young mind looked like cling-film being pulled across his face, suffocating him. I think that and the spooky title-music unnerved me enough to put me off for a while! As for my favourite, that's difficult – there's aspects of all the Doctors that I really like. Both of the '70s Doctors rank highly with me, even though the 3rd Doctor was less of an anti-establishment figure, and I feel that both Tom Baker and Jon Pertwee commanded a certain gravitas on-screen and I warm to that. Unsurprisingly, then, there's no single story I can cite as my favourite. The 1970 season (season 7) is strong throughout, and I especially like the interplay between the characters in 'Ambassadors of Death', 'The Silurians' and 'Inferno'. That said, 'Seeds of Death' and 'Seeds of Doom' are really good, and some of the nu-who stories like 'Family of Blood/Human Nature' and 'Blink', and most recently 'Mummy on

the Orient Express' and 'The Magician's Apprentice/The Witch's Familiar'.

Where did you get the desire to make your own films?

Way back in 1993 I was at University in Nottingham and for the 30th Anniversary BBC2 screened a story from each Doctor. Those stories, the Doctor's character and the breadth of possibilities for stories rekindled a lost interest and inspired me enough for a plot idea to start forming. I was deliberating writing it up as a novel when fellow Nottingham undergrad Robin Castle happened to mention he wanted to make a film – he'd finished his course and so had I, so I explained my story idea, he liked the sound of it, and when we realised it would be logistically very easy, it just spiralled from there!!



Chris as the Doctor

You're involved both in front of and behind the camera but you seem to get the most pleasure from playing the Doctor. What's it like playing your own hero?

Ha ha ha! I'm glad my enjoyment comes

across on-screen!! I do enjoy being behind the camera, too, but admittedly its challenging doing both! Thinking about it, the buzz of playing my TV hero has changed and mutated over the years. I think initially part of my characterisation was 'channelling' aspects of the TV Doctors, especially the third and fourth – reflected in my costume choices – but I think I more consciously try to dilute that, now, and explore my own interpretation. That's a very luvvie thing to say, isn't it?!

What's the funniest or strangest thing that's happened on location?

Exposed to the public, shooting a 'Doctor Who' production, it'd be hard not to get into barmy situations. Like filming our 'Masterplan' story and going to a fast-food chain on the lunch-break. The guys playing the Cybermen came with us to the drive-through but we were pushed for time (like any shoot) so they left their suits on. The drive-through attendant couldn't tell what they were saying over the intercom so we had to go into the restaurant. Very reminiscent of the closing shot from Tom Baker's first interview at Wookey Hole, shooting 'Revenge of the Cybermen', where they stride into the pub!

I don't think there's been a production where we haven't courted unwanted attention from the police, either, be it sparking a suspected terrorism alert doing the pyrotechnic shots for 'The Crystal of Achillon' or posting Dalek sentries in the dark arches under Leeds Station!

You've been able to utilize a few of the stars of TV Doctor Who in your films - tell us a bit about that please.

Gosh, yes – that's been unbelievably fantastic, I must say. Our first foray was when we were asked to make a story by (Doctor Who fan) Johnathan Banes' parents, David and Julie. They'd been regulars at the Llangollen 'Doctor Who' exhi-

bition for years and knew John Field, Gordon England, Phil Newton and Mabh and Glen Savage who'd done live performances there. Initially I thought the production was just going to involve our group so I wrote a story round John's '3rd Doctor', Phil's 'Master', Gordon's 'Brigadier', U.N.I.T and the Cybermen which the Banes' had costumes for, played by Johnathan and his friends. Then about 4 weeks before we were due to do the weekend shoot at their place in St.Albans they said Sylvester McCoy and Sophie Aldred were coming and were up for being involved!! Bearing in mind they would both be working and only there for an afternoon I devised a sequence to set-up the story and for the 7th Doctor and Ace to help out at the end. They were superb to work with, effortlessly recreating their characters, and making for a very easy shoot! About that time you (Ian Wheeler) and Neil Charlesworth at the Leeds local group were coordinating your 'An Afternoon with Colin Baker' event, and I was stuck for an actor to play the voice of the TARDIS in 'The Schrödinger Effect'. After the event I approached Colin about doing the voice work and he very generously obliged, even insisting we use the office at the venue to ensure we didn't get any ambient sound on the shot. His voice adds gravitas to the performance and he was a joy to work with. Our final 'star cameo' to date has been from the late, great Mary Tamm who was in Derby for one of Steve Hatcher's 'Whoovers' events. Mark Ellis and I were there and got chatting to her outside in the interval, where we broached the suggestion. We'd taken the camera and script on the off chance and were amazed and delighted when she consented. It was great to see her reprise her role as the Timelady Romana for the cliffhanger to 'Phantoms from the Future'.

One of your best assets is a stunning recreation of the TARDIS console.



How did you go about making this?

Thank you for your kind compliments – it's very much a labour of love, but does inspire much pride, not least because the console-room is an iconic aspect of the show's design. And I suppose by the time we got to scripting 'The Schrödinger Effect' it was becoming apparent that we weren't really doing it justice. We'd been adapting and adding to the original three panels from the first story, 8 years before, but we were going to shoot on a digital DV camera, the 'Masterplan' console was starting to look shabby after being in storage, and I felt it was time to make a proper job of it. I was keen for the design to reference to show's history whilst being bespoke to our group, so we adopted the McGann shape (not least because the panels were slightly smaller and the instrumentation we had wouldn't look lost) then based the panel designs on the original '60s set, with Bakelite meters, those art-deco style lever-housings and the half-moon lamps. The finished prop is literally irreplaceable because the instruments on the panels were acquired over about 10 years and are simply not available any more. Achieving the roundels was the biggest challenge, actually, because we needed something that was a suitable size, translucent, and cheap because we needed about hundreds of them. We ended up buying three-hundred 20p plant-dishes from Ikea in Nottingham, although they did wonder how many plants we had! Perhaps they thought we were from Kew Gardens!

One of your films, Gene Genius, was a homage to the Pertwee years. How did you go about re-creating the 70s' flavour of the show?

That was huge fun, actually – we'd not tried to create a non-contemporary look, so we decided the best option was to find locations that were of the right era, like the school used for 'The Beiderbecke Affair' then use everyday items like newspapers and magazines to provide authentic detail. The two real bonuses for that production were the retro-fan guys with their '70s cars and clothes and hair-styles to match, and being able to use McGinty (the 'Bessie' replica) from the Llangollen Exhibition! Getting the car back to Leeds was an experience, though – it wouldn't go above 40mph so I had to follow John up the M6



with all my rear lights on so nobody hit the car from behind in the pitch dark!!

You were involved in the filmed inserts used in the Trial of Davros play, what are your memories of working on that?

That was a great day – we were on our way down to St.Albans, actually, to shoot for ‘Gene Genius’ but stopped off en-route!! The work that had gone into creating those Ogrons, and the quality of those Dalek casings – all made by hugely talented enthusiasts – it was a very high-quality production, and so fulfilling to support such a worthwhile cause. I remember there was a fireman’s conference going on at that big house we were using as Auderley Manor, and all this big, buff guys came out to pose with the Daleks!!!

If you were in charge of the TV show, what would you do differently?

Ah! That’s difficult!! How do you retain the broad appeal of a show like ‘Doctor Who’, without inflicting your own limitations on it? I think the best stories are those with strong, credible characters and a tightly-plotted narrative. I think I’d limit the more gimmicky dialogue, and pay close attention to how much suspension of disbelief is required. By its very nature the show offers an ‘anything is possible’ versatility, but that doesn’t mean ‘anything goes’; stories shouldn’t overly exploit sensationalism at the expense of good story telling. You look at a Roald Dahl story, and there’s typically incredible things happening like grannies growing tall enough to burst through the roof of a house, but the surrounding events stay loyal to that and to real-life. Alice may well have tried to believe three impossible things before breakfast but I’m not sure viewers should have to believe three impossible things before the opening titles!!

You’re a physics teacher by trade.

What do your pupils think of your film-making activities?

I’m not sure!! It ranges from mild curiosity to sincere enjoyment, I think. I suppose I have to acknowledge that they’re going to find my YouTube channel, because teachers occupy almost a unique habitat in the minds of teenagers. They’re often fascinated that you exist outside of school, almost as if you’re the mice from ‘bagpuss’ and at the end of a school day you sort of blend back into the wall panelling!!

We did actually do a short episode with some pupils from school, as part of the Garforth Arts Festival, which was huge fun!! They wrote the story as part of a workshop with local authors Mark Michaelowski and Mark Morris, and we shot it and screened it. ‘The Final Three’, it was called.

... and have you ever stood at the front of the class and said ‘Physics. Physics. Physics!...’?

Ha ha!! Absolutely – the week after that episode was aired I most definitely did; it would be unthinkable not to!!!

What next for Chris Hoyle...?

Well, we’ve got four new scripts on the go, so we’re trying to move forward with those but it can prove a little tricky with the team all having more commitments and responsibilities, now, than when we started, but the spark is still there and the initial sequences for ‘The Whitechapel Mystery’ have been very well received, as was ‘Pro-Con’, our 20th Anniversary event last year, so the support is still strong and we’re keen to carry on making good ‘Doctor Who’ adventures... who knows where the timelines will unfurl and the TARDIS will end up next...?

The Projection Room have their own Facebook page and you can also check out their website at: <http://chrishoyle8.wix.com/theprojectionroom>



Images from various productions



TWO TIME TRAVELLERS AND A PANDA UP A TREE

by Gary Merchant

The Doctor was puzzling over the console. Deep in thought, he walked slowly around it, checking each reading. “No,” he sighed, as if accepting some inevitable consequence. “Something definitely isn’t right.”

He glanced up sharply as something caught his ear. Not from outside the TARDIS, but inside, beyond the console room. And not something – someone. “Bloody liberty. If there’s one thing I hate it’s flaming vortex manipulations.”

“So, if it’s not too much to ask, where are we?”

“Hang on a minute, once we’re through this door.” The interior door to the console room flew open. Standing in the doorway was framed a woman of indeterminate age, dressed in voluminous clothing topped off by a very large hat. She took in her surroundings. “Ay up, Panda. I think we’ve arrived.”

“Arrived where?” From behind her skirts appeared a stuffed toy which, against all expectations, was definitely alive. “Oh, I say,” he noted. “Very retro.”

“Excuse me, madam.” The Doctor finally found his voice. “I’m not used to visitors on my ship, much less uninvited ones. “So, if you would be so kind as to take your bear and go...”

“Bear?!” The stuffed toy reared up to its full height – which wasn’t much. “I’ll thank you to keep a civil tongue in your head.”

“Now, now,” the woman interrupted. “We’ll have no fisticuffs.” She regarded the Doctor with interest. “So, this is what you’ve come to, is it?”

“It is?” This woman clearly knew of him, but he was certain their paths had never crossed. “And who might you be?”

She looked at him. “You really don’t know, do you?” It was more of a statement than a question. “I’m your Auntie Iris, my little chucky-egg. The trans-temporal adventuress known as Iris Wildthyme. And this is Panda,” she added, nodding to the stuffed toy.

“But he’s...”

“Ye-es?” There was a note of warning in Panda’s voice.

Whatever his intended reply, the Doctor decided against it. “All right,” he said. “So you’re Iris Wildthyme – not that I’ve heard of you. But how did you get into my TARDIS – and why are you here?”

She smiled. “How I got here is my little secret. And as for why I’m here... well, you’ve got yourself a bit of a reputation – and to be honest I’m not best pleased, considering.”

“I can’t see why that should be any concern of yours,” the Doctor replied. “What I do is my business.”

“Iris.” Panda tugged at her skirts. “Who is this fellow anyway - not another of your dalliances, surely?”

“If only that were the case, Panda love.” She returned her gaze to the man facing her. “He thinks himself so high and mighty, above all the carnage and destruction. Well, let me tell you, buster – you don’t impress me.” She turned back to Panda. “You’ve heard me talk about my friend the Doctor – all those different faces and personas. Well, this is the one

that none of the others talk about.”

Panda looked up at him, as the proverbial penny finally dropped. “Ah, the black sheep of the family.”

“Got it in one.” Iris nodded. “He calls himself the War Doctor. So, where are you heading for this time, I wonder?”

She moved across to the console, about to study the instruments, when her view was blocked. “I’m sure this is all most fascinating for you,” the Doctor interjected, “but this is my TARDIS, and you are strictly speaking, trespassers.”

“There’s no need to get on your high horse, sunshine,” said Panda. “We’re just taking a healthy interest.”

“And I don’t suppose you get many visitors in your current line of work.” The Doctor shifted uncomfortably at Iris’ words. “I prefer my own company,” he argued. “No one around to ask silly questions.”

“And no one around to challenge you,” she countered. “Nobody to put an alternative point of view.”

The Doctor fell silent. Ever since he had involved himself in the ongoing carnage that was the Time War he had been so alone. But it was true, he realised; he did miss the company of others. He shrugged. “Who would have me, given, as you so eloquently put it, my current line of work?”

The sharp angle shift in the console room put paid to any reply Iris might have voiced, as she, the Doctor and Panda hung onto the console for their lives. “Flamin’ ‘eck. What’s going on?”

The Doctor quickly scanned the readouts. “Interstitial time lapse.”

“Which means?”

“I haven’t the faintest idea,” he replied to Panda’s question. “I knew there was something wrong with the TARDIS, but didn’t have time to investigate.”

“I hope you’re not laying the blame for this at my door,” accused Iris, as the TARDIS lurched one way, then another.

He ignored the barbed comment. “I’ll have to make an emergency materialisation,” he decided, as he keyed in new instructions into the console. “Come on, old thing. There’s plenty of life left in you yet.”

“Thanks for the compliment, luvvie.”

“Not you, the TARDIS!” The Doctor was wrestling with the controls as the TARDIS continued its haphazard journey, with Iris and Panda hanging on for their lives. As he slammed down a lever, the ship gave a final lurch before finally coming to a halt.

All was still as the three occupants caught their breath, Iris pulling herself to her feet. “We made it then.”

“Wherever ‘it’ is,” noted Panda. “I feel like all the stuffing’s been knocked out of me.”

The Doctor raised his eyebrows but said nothing. He flipped a switch and the scanner flickered into life. The picture on the screen presented a jungle stretching into the far distance. “Well, at least we appear to be on solid ground.” “Thank heaven,” agreed Panda. “What do you think, Iris?”

“I suppose we could have a look-see,” she said cheerfully. “Any chance of opening those doors, luvvie?”

“Oh, yes.” He flicked the appropriate switch without really noticing, and Panda was the first to step outside. Iris hung back for a moment, seeing the Doctor was more concerned about the readings on the console. “What’s up?”

He looked up at her, a look of genuine puzzlement on his face. “The TARDIS seems to have lost all motive power. For the moment, we’re not leaving here anytime soon.” He shook his head. “Why does this sort of thing always seem to happen?”

“Never mind, chuck.” She linked her arm through his, guiding him away from the console. “We can worry about that later. Now, where’s Panda got to?”

“About him, Iris.” The Doctor lowered his voice. “Is he really...?”

She nodded. “He’s a genuine, living, stuffed Panda. Just don’t call him a bear – that really gets his dander up.”

“I’ll keep it in mind.” The two of them ventured out into a lush jungle, the TARDIS doors closing behind them. “It’s almost like we’re in an African rainforest.”

Iris couldn’t help but agree. “The sort of place where you’d like to spend more time, eh Doctor?”

“I renounced that title a long time ago,” he replied.

“So what do I call you, then - Fred? Arthur?”

Before he could reply, the Doctor and Iris were surrounded by a group of tribal warriors, dressed in loincloths. But instead of the usual spears, their weapons were sophisticated laser rifles. Even so, the threat was still as real. “I think,” ventured the Doctor, “that this is the point where we raise our hands.”

“I’ll not argue with you there,” she said, following his example.

The leader of the warriors stepped forward, his laser rifle aimed squarely at the Doctor’s head. “Blasphemers! You have defiled the scared totem.”

“I haven’t defiled anybody,” Iris protested. “Well, not for a while, anyway.”

The Doctor shot her a warning glance. “Look, I’m sure this is a simple misunderstanding,” he said to the leader. “We’ve only just arrived here.”

“You see!” The warrior leader spoke to the rest of the group. “They proclaim their guilt with their own words. Truly, these two practice the black arts. How else could they have ‘only just arrived here?’” There was a murmur of assent from the group.

“In the meantime,” said Iris, “I’m wondering how you lot came by those laser rifles.”

The leader glared at her. “And you now claim to know nothing of our culture. Well, know this – we are not barbarians.”

“Oh aye? And yet you accuse us of whatever without giving us the benefit of the doubt. If that’s not barbaric, then heaven help yer.”

Iris’ words hung in the air like a death knell as the warriors looked to each other and then to their leader. “To me, you are still blasphemers. But I will allow you to meet with our chieftain; he can decide your ultimate fate.”

They were led through a well-trodden path which eventually opened out to reveal a small village, inhabited by a substantial gathering of men, women and children, all dressed in the same type of loincloths. But even here, the discrepancies were evident; washing machines running off solar power, television – not quite satellite, but almost. The Doctor and Iris took all of this in, puzzlement etched on their faces. “What is this,” the Doctor wondered. “A clash of cultures?”

“It’s more than that, luvvie. Hang on – I think we’re about to meet the big boss.”

They were now approaching a hut which was larger than the rest. Once inside, The Doctor and Iris were instructed to avert their gaze to the floor. Both could feel the heat from a circle of flaming torches, as they stopped just short of the base of what was certainly an ornate throne. "You may now raise your heads and gaze upon the visage of our leader," they were told. "And pray that he offers you forgiveness for all your transgressions."

"That could take some time," Iris muttered under her breath, as they looked up, ready to address the leader of this tribe. Both were initially struck dumb with surprise.

The Doctor was the first to find his voice. "What the blazes...?"

"What the flaming 'eck is going on?" Iris exclaimed. Sat before them was the tribe leader – Panda.

"Don't make a scene," he whispered urgently, before addressing the expectant tribe. "These persons are known to me, and as such it is my decree that the penalty of death would hold no meaning for them." There were murmurings of disquiet amongst the tribe at this declaration. "Instead," Panda went on, "they should be confined to a cell, where they will have time enough to dwell on their misfortunate upbringings and perhaps recognise the error of their ways. That is my judgement."

Before they could protest, the Doctor and Iris were led away to the nearby cells. One of the warriors, Alba, addressed Panda. "My Lord, this is unheard of. To flout the long-held laws of our people..."

"It's all right, Alba old chap," Panda assured him. "It's like I said, the prospect of death means nothing to those two. They wouldn't see it as punishment, or a way of atoning for their crimes. This way, by putting them in a cell they would be forced to

face up to their misdemeanours."

Alba nodded. "But the law, oh great one...?"

"As you know, I have great respect for the laws of our tribe," Panda replied. "But the law must not be inflexible, otherwise how can we learn and progress?"

"Yes," Alba agreed, understanding. "You are, as always, a wise and great leader."

"I could swing for 'im," Iris complained, stomping up and down the length of the cell, which wasn't much. "I gave Panda the best years of my life, travelling through the Omniverse on missions of derring-do and the occasional party, and this is how he repays me. Ooh, the shame of it all."

The Doctor was sitting quietly. "Things aren't always so clear-cut, Iris."

She turned to face him. "What are you blatherin' on about? We've hardly been here less than five minutes and we're locked up – with Panda being responsible for our predicament in the first place, in case you hadn't noticed."

"But think about it, Iris. How did it happen? If we've only been here for such a short time, how can Panda suddenly become that tribe's leader – and well established too?"

"Well..." Iris paused in her protestations. "I don't know," she said finally, her temper cooled. "You think something's wrong here, don't you?"

He shrugged. "Something definitely isn't right."

The sound of the cell door being unlocked halted their conversation. They waited as the door opened. "It's all right, you

chaps,” said a familiar voice. “I shall be quite safe.” Then the unmistakable figure of Panda entered the cell, perhaps uncertain of the welcome he would get as the door closed behind him.

The three of them stared at each other, until Iris broke the silence. “Well?”

“Oh dear,” Panda noted the accusing tone in that one word. “I’m so sorry, Iris. But I had to do it. I had to lock you up. It was the only way to keep you safe.”

“Safe? Safe from what?”

“Well, that’s the trouble – I’m not really sure.”

The Doctor leaned across, offering a smile of encouragement. “So, tell us what you do know.”

Panda thought for a moment. “Well, I left you two inside the TARDIS while I had a quick shuffty outside. I’d hardly gone half a dozen steps when I was accosted by those tribesmen.”

“They didn’t hurt you, luvvie?”

“Anything but, Iris. In fact, I’ve been very well treated. They seem to think of me as some sort of deity, claiming that I’m the reincarnation of the god Asbama. So they then elected me as their spiritual guide, and that’s how it’s been ever since.”

Iris was puzzled. “And how long ago was that, Panda?”

“Ah, now you’ve hit the nail on the head there, Iris.” Panda made sure no one was listening at the door before continuing. “I’m pretty sure that the three of us haven’t been here that long, but there’s something affecting the tribesmen. They seem to think that I’ve been their guide for far longer.”

“How much longer?” the Doctor prompted.

Panda gulped nervously. “Around two years, give or take the odd month or two.”

Iris was turning thoughts over in her mind. “This doesn’t make a lot of sense,” she said. “It’s almost as if the three of us are in a different time stream to everyone else on this planet. But that can’t be right.”

“I’m not so sure.” The Doctor was recalling earlier events. “Remember back in the TARDIS, when you were complaining before about vortex manipulations?”

“Aye, but... ooh ‘eck.” Iris remembered something else. “In the TARDIS you said something about an interstitial time lapse. Suppose...”

“Suppose the two are connected in some way? Some time interference that’s affected the progression of this world?”

Iris nodded. “Maybe this world exists in a sort of time lapse bubble, with time running at a different pace. It’s a neat little theory, you can’t deny it.”

“If you say so,” said Panda. “But would that explain why everything seems to shift every so often?”

“Shift?” The Doctor glanced at Iris. “I don’t like the sound of that. What exactly happens during these shifts?”

“Oh, I was afraid of this,” Panda moaned. “I never was that technically minded.”

“You don’t have to be,” Iris told him. “Just keep it simple, chuck.”

“Well, for instance,” he began, “I can be having a conversation with one of the tribesmen, when everything stops absolutely still. Not a thing moving. And then it’s like time is shifting forward through the seasons, only much faster. When everyone comes back to life, as it were, it’s as if time has passed normally for them - except I’m the only one who can see that it

hasn't."

"It sounds like your travels with Iris have given you some sort of immunity against this phenomenon." The Doctor's face was etched in concern. "I don't know if this is a natural occurrence, or if it's being engineered in some way. Whatever it is, I don't like it."

"Does that mean you're going to put a stop to whatever it is?" Iris wondered.

"I don't know," he replied. "But we need more information first. And we need to get out of this damn cell."

"Leave it to me," Panda told them. "After all, I do have some pull around here."

The tribe were still unhappy that the Doctor and Iris had not been put to death, but assurances from their spiritual guide Asbama that they were thoroughly repentant of their crimes seemed to carry sufficient weight, and they were allowed to move freely. Once they were sure to be unheard, Iris spoke. "What I can't quite work out is why we were captured in the first place. I know it was over some blasphemy of their sacred totem, but I don't even know what that could be."

"I think you'll find it's over there, Iris." The Doctor indicated a nearby hillside just on the outskirts of the village. "I couldn't quite believe it myself, but it does make a sort of sense."

Iris hadn't a clue what he meant, until she saw a familiar blue box at the summit of the hill. "Oh no, not the TARDIS."

"I'm afraid so, Iris," sighed Panda. "That is their totem – and as far as the tribe are concerned, it is a sacred place of worship that no one dare approach, under absolute pain of death."

SHIFTS AND PHASES

He'd waited until night had fallen before venturing away from the encampment, taking care not to disturb Iris or Panda. As he pressed on, the Doctor wondered if this foolhardy escapade was such a good idea, but as he drew nearer to the TARDIS he became certain in his own mind that this was the correct course of action.

He halted near the edge of a cliff where he could see the TARDIS more clearly. Then he sat patiently, waiting. He had no intention of progressing any further; this was close enough for his purposes. He just hoped it was far enough away not to offend the sensibilities of the tribe. Death, he realised, had such a finality about it.

An unearthly sound broke the silence. As it drifted though the air the Doctor listened intently, observing the TARDIS where it stood as his eyes glistened with tears. "We'll find a way, old girl," he promised.

He was back at the camp by morning, and had already lit an open fire while preparing breakfast before Iris and Panda had stirred. "Come on, you two – rise and shine." The tribe had already gathered around the fire, accepting the offerings of food as the Doctor passed them around. "Why do you do this?" one of them asked.

"Well, because it's the proper thing to do," the Doctor replied, offering what he hoped was a winning smile. While the tribe still viewed the strangers with suspicion, they accepted the food. Eventually Iris and Panda emerged from their hut, their eyes slowly adjusting to the glare of early morning. "You're up with the lark and no mistake," Iris noted.

The broth the Doctor had prepared was tasty enough, if slightly chewy. Then there was an agonising wait until the tribe paid their respects to Panda, before re-

turning to their huts, leaving the three friends free to talk. "They're quite a nice bunch of people when you get to know them," said Panda, as they returned to their own dwelling.

"Never mind them," Iris whispered urgently, turning to the Doctor. "What have you been up to? I heard you moving about last night."

"I went to look at the TARDIS – it's all right," he added quickly, "I kept a respectable distance. But I needed to clarify a few things."

"Is that what you call it? Look, the TARDIS is off-limits for now," Iris reminded him. "You heard what Panda said."

"Under pain of death, I know," the Doctor replied. "Except that I think the TARDIS is the source of all the problems here, such as these time shifts, and the clash of technologies."

"If you mean the laser rifles and the household goods," said Panda, "they were already here when I was appointed their spiritual leader. But does it all really matter?"

"Shush, Panda luvvie – I think we're getting to the crux of the problem."

The Doctor wore a look of deep concern. "When we left the TARDIS before, I had a feeling there was something wrong. And what's happening here only confirms my theory. I think the TARDIS itself is out of phase."

"Is that bad?" Panda asked.

"Bad?" Iris now understood the Doctor's concern. "It's worse than bad. It's like the Doctor said, it could be the reason why everything here is as it is."

"The ship is attempting to dematerialise on its own, without a pilot. But there's a

dichotomy in that it knows it mustn't. In essence, the TARDIS is fighting itself. And that's what's causing the time shifts that Panda has experienced. Left unchecked, things could get far worse."

Panda didn't really want to know, but he asked the question anyway. "How much worse?"

"The worst it can get," Iris answered. "Little pockets of time can just pop into existence thanks to this, and that upsets the time vortex and that leads to changes in time and space. Small at first, but they can get bigger, and change the past, present and the future, and not always for the best."

"The TARDIS is suffering – physically," the Doctor told them. "When I was sat on the hillside last night I heard and felt her pain. We have to set things right here, but to do that we need access to the TARDIS."

"Oooh, this is tough all right," Iris agreed. "The TARDIS is protected as a sacred totem, so we can't even go near it, let alone touch it. Your band of warrior friends would see to that, Panda."

"Not if..." A plan was forming in Panda's fluffy brain. "Not if a time shift was happening." The stares from Iris and the Doctor unnerved him. "Well, I only thought that if it were possible to set up a time shift to order, then we could get to the TARDIS without the tribe knowing anything about it." He sighed. "Oh, it's probably all tosh anyway."

"No, no," the Doctor assured him. "It's a good idea – in theory. The problem would be with the TARDIS herself."

"Aye, I've heard she can be an awkward cuss at the best of times," said Iris. "Must be to do with her pilot."

The Doctor ignored the comment. "If I'm guessing correctly, the time shifts so far

have been a by-product of the TARDIS's ailing. Even if we get close enough, to persuade her to generate a deliberate time shift could be dangerous – to the TARDIS and those on this planet.”

“I see what you mean,” said Iris. “But unless we can come up with anything else, that’s our only plan. Our only ‘get out of jail’ card.”

“So, you have deceived us!” They turned to find one of the warriors framed in the doorway. “I do not understand all that you have said between you, but I know enough to understand that you are a false leader.” He pointed accusingly at Panda. “I should inform the rest of the tribe.”

He stood there, staring at each of them in turn. No one moved, no one made any effort to stop him. It was the Doctor who broke the uneasy silence. “You must do what you think is right, of course. You’re angry, and that’s understandable. But I think you’re curious too. You want to understand.”

“It’s Alba, isn’t it?” Panda remembered. “I’m so sorry for not being straight with you, but your people accepted me as leader before I could say anything to the contrary.”

“Nothing is right here.” Alba looked at each of them in turn. “It is strange,” he said to Panda. “You became our leader, but I do not remember when you first came to us, or when you were first accepted as one of us. And there is something else...”

“Go on, luvvie,” Iris prompted. “Spit it out.”

Alba sought to find the words. “There are times when the days are not as they should be. It can be bright sunlight and then suddenly dusk is upon us. But the orbit of the sun is wrong.” He paused. “I have never spoken of these things to any-

one before, as I did not want to be seen as mad. But you, all of you know the truth in what I say.”

“I know everything’s all mixed up,” said Iris, “but we would really like to help set things right.”

There was hope in Alba’s eyes. “You can do this?”

“We can,” the Doctor replied. “But to do so will mean breaking one of your sacred laws. Alba, will you help us?”

He considered. “To go against our sacred laws is dangerous indeed, but if it will restore balance to our world then yes, I will help you.”

By first light, Alba was already leading the Doctor, Iris and Panda through the jungle forest as they made their way toward the TARDIS. The previous night had seen them making plans, with Alba learning more about these strange visitors. The possibilities of travelling through space and time seemed incredible to him, but he had nonetheless accepted their words as truth – even if Iris did go on a bit. “You’ll see, my little chucky egg,” she told him, though what eggs had to do with anything he couldn’t quite see. “Once we’ve made it to the TARDIS everything will soon be sorted.”

“So our sacred totem is your means of travel?”

“That’s right,” Iris replied. She decided to change the subject – no point in filling Alba’s head with too much information. Not yet, anyway. “So, what was life like for you before Panda became your leader?”

Alba thought for a moment. “You speak of a time going back many years.”

“Really?” Panda was intrigued. “How long a time?”

“There have been seven seasonal cycles since you came to lead us.”

“Seven years now?” Panda’s eyes boggled at the thought. “Well, at least I’ve worn well.”

“And yet time has not passed as it should, I understand that now.” Alba returned to Iris’ original question. “Before, we had lived simply. We grew much of our food from the ground, the rest we would hunt for. And then they came.”

“And who,” the Doctor asked, “were they?”

“We did not know who or what they were,” Alba replied. “They came in huge travel ships and presented us with offerings of aid. They gave us the viewing screens, the machines to wash our clothing and other similar items. They also gave us weapons.”

“The laser rifles,” the Doctor nodded. “You were introduced to technology not so far advanced to affect the planet, but enough to change your way of life.”

“But there was a price for their offerings.” Alba’s voice became bitter. “They took our children.”

Panda was the first to find his voice after this revelation. “That’s terrible.”

Iris shook her head. “All those poor little mites.”

“But you have children,” the Doctor noted. “We saw them, in the encampment.”

“Those were the unborn ones,” Alba explained. “Those that were of an age to run and play were taken from us. We could do nothing to save them. And soon it will happen again.”

“How soon?”

“The time is almost here,” Alba told the Doctor. “When the third season of this year occurs, they will come.”

“Third season – summer,” Iris realised. “And with these time shifts it’ll happen sooner rather than later.”

“This is why it’s more urgent than ever that we need to get to the TARDIS.”

The Doctor made to move on, but Iris stopped him. “My God, you’ve changed, buster. You’re all for being the one to end the Time War, but at the first sign of real trouble, you can’t wait to get away. Have some compassion, can’t yer? You can’t leave those people to suffer again.”

“I’m not going to, Iris,” he replied. “Whatever you may think of me, I’m not one to stand by and let this tragedy repeat itself. Amazing as it may sound, I do still have a few shreds of decency left.”

“Then what...?”

“The situation has become altogether more serious than we first thought,” he said quietly. “I, for one, do not intend to let these people suffer any more than they already have. Put simply, the future of this planet is in our hands.”

Sometime later, they had arrived at the base of the hill where the TARDIS stood. The Doctor hadn’t given much away as to what they would do once they were inside, and that gave Iris cause for concern. Of all the incarnations she had known, this Doctor was very much a closed book to her. No matter what body the Doctor wore he always had a plan, and usually took great delight in explaining it to anyone who would listen. But since the revelations from Alba about the children, the Doctor had remained tight-lipped, and no

amount of cajoling on Iris' part could persuade him to reveal anything.

Panda noted the look of anxiety on Iris' face. "It'll be all right, you know. He knows what he's doing."

"I hope you're right, Panda," she said as they followed on. "Right now, I'd give anything to have one of the other ones here instead of him. I just don't feel as if I know him anymore."

"Keep it down, you two," the Doctor whispered. "We're almost there, and I don't want to broadcast our arrival."

"Suit yourself," she muttered. "Anyway, who's going to be all the way out here?" As if in answer to her question, a group of warriors emerged from behind the police box, armed with laser rifles. She cursed herself. "Trust me to put my foot right in it!"

"You transgress our most sacred law," one of the warriors stated. "Because of this you must be put to death." The rifles were raised.

Alba stepped forward. "Esba, my brother. Do not act in haste."

Esba was shocked, but held his stance. "Alba, you must suffer the same fate as these strangers."

"And does that apply to me?" Panda stepped forward. "I am your trusted leader, after all."

"Great One!" Esba and the rest stepped back in deference.

"These people are my friends," Panda explained, "and are under my protection."

"We did not know," Esba replied. "However, I regret that the law cannot be broken, even for you."

"That's a rather inflexible attitude," the Doctor observed. "Even for someone guided by faith."

"It's all right," said Panda, noting the concerned look on the warrior's faces. "He likes to ramble on a bit. But," he added, "it probably wouldn't hurt to listen to him."

"In my travels," the Doctor began, "I've come upon many worlds who live either by a set of rules or by their faith. Each is important in its own way. Rules help to encourage a sense of order, while faith encourages a belief in something. But every so often, those same people will challenge the natural order; not because they see it as wrong, but simply because they see beyond the limitations and want to expand their knowledge."

"What you say makes sense," Esba agreed. "But our people are content."

The Doctor paused before responding. "That may have been true once, but all that can change. With greater knowledge comes the ability to recognise the truth about certain things – and to be able to protect your children."

"Our children?" Esba hesitated. "Why speak of them?"

Iris spoke up. "You can cut the innocent act, sweetheart. We know about what happened to the children. And when They came."

He rounded on Alba. "You told them?"

"And why should I not?" he responded. "You may be willing to ignore the truth, but I cannot. Do you really want more of them to be taken? The time of the third season is almost upon us."

"And you think I don't know that?" Esba turned away. "I lost my only daughter to those... beings."

"I know," said Alba. "I know, and I'm sorry."

Esba glanced back. "Being sorry won't bring her back. She's under their influence now; doing their bidding without even the option of free will."

"Is that what happens?" The Doctor was deep in thought. "Look, I know we're strangers here, but we really would like to help."

"The thing is," added Iris, "we need to get inside the TAR- the sacred totem – if that's not too much trouble."

"It really would be a huge help," said Panda. "So if..."

"Enough!" Esba stared at them all. "You ask too much. And as for you, Alba – how can you be taken in by their words?"

"I accept it because it is the truth," he replied. "I now understand what has happened to us – why the sun shifts its orbit. How some days are shorter than others. And how we can no longer allow ourselves to be ruled by Them."

Esba scoffed. "They would strike you down if they knew of your thoughts."

"Perhaps," Alba agreed. "But I would at least die a free man, and not kowtowing to their every whim."

"Gentlemen, please," the Doctor interrupted. "Perhaps we could continue this discussion inside the totem."

Esba stared at him as if he were mad. "Inside?"

"Esba, old bean," said Panda, drawing him to one side. "It's probably best if you humour him. You know, let him think everyone here can get inside the totem."

"Of course, Great One." Esba nodded his

understanding. "Very well, allow the fool access. He will soon be dissuaded of this notion." The group of warriors stepped aside as the Doctor slipped his key in the lock, opening the door and stepped inside. Esba and his group waited, expecting the Doctor to exit the totem at any moment. When he didn't immediately appear there was some consternation among the warriors. Even Iris and Panda were becoming concerned. "Do y'think he's all right in there?" she wondered.

Panda was about to reply when the Doctor peered out from the open doorway. "Sorry to be so long, only I was rather busy. You can all come in if you'd like."

Esba led the way, fully expecting to enter a confined space – and caught his breath as he saw into the vast interior. The Doctor was a short distance away, working at a six sided control panel, seemingly oblivious to the throng of people entering. "Please feel free to state the obvious – the fact that it's bigger on the inside."

Iris, Panda and Alba joined the Doctor at the controls. "So, how's the TARDIS?" Iris asked him.

He glanced up. "It was touch and go for a moment, but I've managed to stabilise her."

"No more time shifts?"

"No, Panda," the Doctor replied. "The planet should now be back on its proper timeline."

Esba finally found his voice. "It is a trick. It must be."

"No trick." The Doctor turned to him. "Welcome to the TARDIS, Esba. What you know as the sacred totem is a machine that can travel through time and space."

"It's the truth," Iris chipped in. "Every

word.”

Esba would have protested further, but he could feel the solid floor beneath his feet. He could touch the walls encircling the six sided machine at the centre of the room. Despite the impossibility of it all, Esba finally began to accept it. “This really flies?”

“In a manner of speaking,” Panda answered. “Honestly, there’s no need to be alarmed. In here, we’re safe.”

“Not that we’re staying in here for much longer,” the Doctor reminded him. “We do have a planet to save.”

“Heck, I’d almost forgotten about that bit,” said Iris. “But what can we do? I’m not even sure what we’re up against.”

“I have a theory.” The Doctor turned back to Alba and Esba. “These beings – what can you tell me about them?”

The two men glanced at each other, uncertain. “They came from beyond the stars,” Esba began. “To our people they seemed to be saviours.”

“When they first came here,” Alba recalled, “they just watched us. It was not a pleasant experience.”

“How so?”

“Because there was no expression on their faces; nothing to suggest any interest or curiosity. And there was something else...”

“Go on,” the Doctor prompted.

“They did not blink.”

“Ay, we’re not talking about those Weeping Angels, are we?” Iris piped up. “They fair give me the shivers.” The Doctor stared at her, questioning. “Stone statues,” she went on. “They kill you if you so much as flutter your eyelashes.”

“I don’t think I’ve come across those,” the Doctor replied. “Not yet, anyway. But from what our young friends have just told us, I have a fairly clear idea what those beings are.”

“Well, don’t drag it out,” said Panda. “What nefarious foes are we up against?”

The expression on the Doctor’s face was grave. “They delight in playing games, just to amuse themselves – only they use people as their pawns.

“They’re called Eternals...”

A MEETING OF MINDS

“I take it you’ve all heard of the concept of Eternity,” said the Doctor. “Well, that’s where the Eternals come from.”

“Eternals,” said Iris. “As in living forever?”

“That’s the general idea,” he replied. “Imagine you’re in a completely dark room. Completely cut off from any form of light. Can you imagine living in that state for any length of time?”

“No outward stimulus, no distractions of any kind,” Panda observed. “You’d go stark raving bonkers.”

“Which is why they’re dependent on other life forms to give them that stimulus.” The Doctor warmed to his theme.

“Oh flaming ‘eck. So, they’re like leeches.”

“That’s not a bad comparison, Iris.” The Doctor smiled briefly, turning to Alba, Esba and the other warriors. “They seek out people like you and search your minds to stimulate their own.”

“Do you mean they cannot think for themselves?” asked Alba.

“Oh, they have cognisant thought. They

just don't have a single original idea in their heads.” right?”

“Then they can be defeated.” Esba was sure. “You speak as though you have met them before.”

“A long time ago, yes.” The Doctor was studying the control console. “But this isn't an enemy you can win against, not in the normal way, because they have no concept of right or wrong.” He turned back to the console, his eyes on the chronometer. “I think I should remind you all – it's almost summer.”

“Never mind the flaming weather,” Iris exclaimed – and then she realised. “Oh no. Those Eternals will soon be back,

As if to echo Iris' words, a group of beings had appeared in the centre of the encampment – it was a case of not there one minute, and there the next. Each one was dressed in a pale suit and tie, their skin radiating a pale luminescence. “It is time,” said one.

“Indeed,” agreed another. Their impassive faces gave no hint of emotion as they waited to exchange greetings with the warriors and their leaders.

Iris was created by Paul Margs



Iris Wildthyme as imagined at www.paulhanley.deviantart.com

FICTION

A BRIEF ENCOUNTER

by Patrick White

The little man strode up the overgrown path towards the ramshackle house, its white-washed wall now looking more grey than white. He walked around the stone walls, occasionally looking in one of the smashed windows, to where he knew he would find what he was looking for.

The path to the outhouse was thinner than when he had walked it before many years ago, for the weeds had crept over it, obscuring the dirt track that was once regularly used. As he walked along the path to the barn, its walls now covered in ivy, he shook his head, commenting to himself with a note of sorrow in his voice, "Time passes."

As he walked up the narrow track, a small crunching noise came from under his feet and he looked to see what he had stood on and was unsurprised to see small fragments of broken glass, discoloured with age. He slowly pushed open the door, the rusted hinges not allowing free movement, and looked at the corroded horse-shoe which hung askew from a single nail. Glancing down, he thought saw something fluttering in the breeze by the door frame; he bent down and picked up what looked to be a scrap of dirty fabric. He turned it over in his hands and smiled remembering its bright colours from long ago, before slipping it into his jacket pocket as he went inside the crumbling structure.

Through the dim light of a grimy cob-webbed window he could just make out the shape of an empty chair. He turned and shut the door making the room gloomier than ever.

"I knew you would come back." The voice came from behind and the little man turned and showed no surprise to see the man who was now sat in the once empty chair.

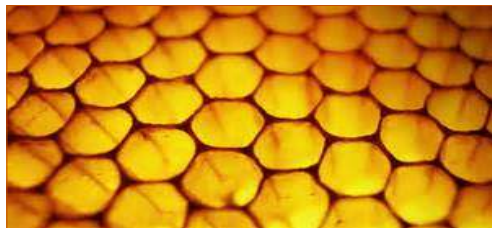
"Yes you knew a lot of things didn't you." The visitor moved towards the shadowy figure in the chair. "I thought there was something about you I could sense and then it came to me." he pulled out a pocket watch, "Old technology but useful, how did you keep your consciousness?"

"Come now." The figure raised his left hand and tapped the side of his nose with his forefinger. "Do you really expect me to reveal my secrets, you may learn in time. Many of us have." The lilting accent was as soft as the little man remembered.

"Us? How many of us are hiding here?"

"I'm afraid that even I can't tell that," the seated figure gestured at the watch, "Some of us prefer not to remember and want to live out our lives in peace. We're all too old for excitement now." He wagged a finger at his visitor. "As are you..." Turning away from the figure in the chair the Doctor sighed, "Yes perhaps I am." He looked back at the chair and was unsurprised to find it empty again, apart from a small glass jar. The Doctor went to the chair, picked it up and read the label '1928 HIBISCUS BLOSSOM'. He smiled and went to the door and opened it, adjusting his hat as he walked into the sunlight sighing deeply.

"Yes perhaps I am."





'Romana's Holiday' by Mark Hyland

DEAR DWAS

Compiled by Ian Wheeler

We asked for your comments on The Zygon Invasion/The Zygon Inversion and Face the Raven and this is what you came up with...

The Zygon Invasion and The Zygon Inversion

'Skyfall'...That was what I thought of when I sat down after this episode. Just as 'Skyfall' was a reboot that enabled the 007 series to progress, so Capaldi's Doctor is increasingly in a league of his own. Nods to the past but very much striking out in new directions. Modern Who has its foundations in the Classic but it is now building a new structure.

Showing scenes from 'The Day of the Doctor' displayed a confidence in both programme and viewers - a story referring to another one from two years ago! I think back to my early years (my first memory is of 'The Underwater Menace' while 'The Moonbase' is the first story I was able to recall the plot of) and teens when stories were transmitted and it was presumed they never would be seen again. Our way of consuming TV has changed - go to Amazon etc. and you can see most of Who history fairly immediately and Moffat realised this very quickly. Stories twist back and forth along time-lines and can be followed because of the availability of past episodes. A brave new world indeed.

The whole two-parter was a triumph of misdirection - Jenna Coleman's 'evil Clara' was a tour de force - and allegories for the current state of our world. The sense of UNIT as an international organisation (rather than just a UK-based one) was fully realised. I found 'the speech' riveting - in some ways living in Northern

Ireland made it even more poignant and moving; particularly considering our own recent past. Capaldi as an actor can convey so much through body language and facial expression. In many ways this will be remembered as the defining moment for his Doctor.

Bernard Brannigan

This adventure saw a continuation of celebrating fortieth anniversaries that have gone on this series. We have seen Davros, the Sisterhood of Karn and now the Zygons.

It is no coincidence that all three Zygon stories have all featured UNIT as they would seem to work best on Earth as a threat to mankind and as in their debut story forty years previously they worked undercover.

Peace and war were the basis of this story with everything that is a combination of these particular images being thrown into the mix. We had the innocent people that always get drawn into a war paying with their lives and at the end of the story we had the choices that have to be made by both sides and the talking that goes into brokering a peace.

Capaldi has had a brilliant season so far and showed his complete range of emotions in this story with Osgood acting as his stooge. Jenna Coleman was immaculate in her alter-ego of Bonnie and we saw a throwback to her debut in Asylum of the Daleks by being incarcerated in a thinking mode.

I await the next chapter of the Zygon adventures.

Dale Brotherton

Once upon a time the homeworld of the Zygons gets destroyed in a war between the Daleks and the Time Lords. The refugees flee to Earth and the Doctor brokers a peace that requires the total suppres-

sion of one group of people by another. And this dystopia is built on the secret mass kidnapping and cocooning of 20 million innocent people, so the Zygons can take over their lives and maintain their adopted body print. The Zygons are then told that if one of them breaks the ceasefire, or if one human (who knows about this deal) spills the beans, then the peace is over, mass panic will sweep the world and war will breakout. And yet the Doctor also tips both sides off that there is a way out for them, through the Osgood box. A device that can be used to destroy either all the Zygons or all the humans. Finally, a faction of the Zygons crack under the pressure and rebel; they would rather die than continue to live out their lives in fear and repression. Kate Stewart (the current head of UNIT, who would prefer it if all the Zygons were exterminated) and the leader of the Zygon faction (whom the Doctor names Zygella) are lead to an underground room and confronted with the Osgood box. Using the memory wipe device, the Doctor reruns his argument over and over again until he gets the result he wants. And all of this is ultimately about the Doctor. He tells Zygella how he did terrible things in the Time War and how he also faced another box with a button, and how he decided not to press it. And so the Doctor reasons it is better to live in chains than to go to war. It is better to suffer than to die, it is better to betray everything that makes you who you are, than rise up and fight for something better. And the man who is saying this is the very person who created this scenario of mass oppression in the first place. The Doctor. And why? Because he wants Zygella to experience what happened to him. So following this mental waterboarding, Zygella becomes a pacifist and duel guardian of the Osgood box, while the Doctor flies away to continue his own perpetual war with the Daleks, in the name of freedom, justice and unlimited rice pudding.

Alan Stevens

I am convinced that The Zygon Invasion/ The Zygon Inversion will, in future, be regarded as one of the highlights of Peter Capaldi's time as the Doctor. The plot follows on perfectly not just from The Day of the Doctor, but also Dark Water/Death in Heaven, with the character of Osgood used brilliantly at the centre of it. The 'Osgood Box' concept was ingenious, and the speech it provokes from the Doctor (on how war is a waste of life) was, in my opinion, one of the show's greatest moments of all time. Capaldi delivers it superbly, making it really affect the audience. The way this story reflected on current world issues was extraordinary. It manages, perfectly, to persuade the viewer to take a step back and look at all the silly little situations that we, as both humanity and individuals, get ourselves into. At the end of the day, it seems to tell us, we need to work together to survive, and cross the barriers of race and culture. The Zygons were used to represent this conflict, and how even if the majority of a group is perfectly reasonable, there are individuals who attempt to destroy that peace. By the end of the story, the Zygons and humans are once again able to live peacefully alongside each other – the evil factions are overpowered and Kate Stewart (on behalf of humanity) realises that there is no reason for there to be a problem with them. This story is not only an exciting urban thriller and alien adventure, but a device that encourages us to reflect on what is happening in our world.

Joshua Stevens

Being a lifelong Doctor Who fan, I can't help comparing the design of the Zygons from "The Zygon Invasion/Inversion" to the classic 1970s story "Terror of the Zygons".

The Zygons themselves seem to have lost the appeal of the '70s creations of Robert Banks Stewart's whispering voice creations, wonderful visualized by three times Oscar Winner James Acheson. Instead of being eerie and sinister, I

felt they were plodding, rubbery and incapable of delivering little more than a hiss from their mouths. They seemed almost laughable and wasted. Whilst it's true that the '70s Zygons never sustained lengthy speeches either, the whisper seemed more creepy and different than anything the series had made before and became iconic. Also the organic feel of the costume and sets has been lost to the gloss and polish of the new series' production values, where everything is shiny and new. I also quite miss the aura of the morph from human to Zygon and back again, where now we get the perfect CGI transformation.

Robert Watkins

I thought that The Zygon Invasion and The Zygon Inversion were two brilliant episodes that were well written and well produced. They had their share of action and suspense and I thought that Jenna Coleman was excellent as the evil Clara. Peter Capaldi - what can I say about his performance as the Doctor, he was superb. I thought he had a touch of Tom Baker in his performance. All in all a great episode and it was good to see the Zygons back. Kate is becoming a firm favourite and I loved how she echoed the Brig's classic line "five rounds rapid".

Nicola Whitten

It doesn't feel like DW anymore, it's too adult, it's on too late, it's rushed and fanboy written, Clara was good for once, the Zygons were laughable, Osgood is fun, Stewart is dull, Capaldi is fine but he has no help from the producer, Moffat must go before he makes more soul destroying changes to the series like a female Master, a flying Cyberman Brigadier....

Darren Stuart

I love the Zygons and was looking forward to this two-part story more than any other story, but was let down by the lack of killings plus there was hardly

any invasion compared to the Daleks and Cybermen invasion stories with Chris and David. Some of the morphing was good but it wasn't as good as I hoped.

Andrew Macfeters

After the first episode of this two-parter I'll admit I was a little cold. I prefer the original look (big claws and teeth are just a bit silly - they don't plan to eat you!) and the twist reveals seemed a little tired....then came part two. The writing of this episode is amazing. I was in tears at the part in the shop, breathless at Capaldi's amazing speech, which showed his superb acting switching between irreverence and seriousness seemingly effortlessly, and I practically wanted to push Osgood into the TARDIS at the end. She should be with the UN! At this point it's hard to see how the season finale will top this. I now have expectations so high they're snow capped!

Ivan Routledge

A thought-provoking and at times chilling tale. Well-written with Peter Capaldi growing into his role as the Doctor portraying him as a tortured soul. Masterful. I also love the old references such as 'Five rounds rapid.' Splendid.

Adam Chamley

I think The Zygon Invasion was the best story of this season so far. With it being a two-parter, we had the traditional end of episode cliffhanger in Part 1. It was also great to see both Kate Lethbridge-Stewart and Osgood back. I think both Osgoods ought to be the next companions - it would be the first time the Doctor has had twin companions.

The story itself explored the issues of inclusion and divisions in society. It also examined people's fears about infiltration - a classic cold war era sci-fi theme. I liked the plot twists too - particularly the two Osgood Boxes!

Richard Putley

My name is Michael Hopkinson and I am old enough to have seen every episode of Dr. Who when they were first broadcast but these two episodes are, in my opinion, the best shown.

In particular part two, shown on the eve of Remembrance Sunday, made me think of the stupidity of war. It was so well acted that I almost forgot it was fiction containing strange creatures.

These episodes were classics and should be shown regularly for many years to come.

Michael Hopkinson

Fantastic, a true classic. Mr Capaldi gave his finest performance so far. A strong story full of emotion and fun!

Paul Milton

Face the Raven



Although it was a real pity I knew beforehand that Clara was going to die, the actual death still stunned and shocked me. I felt those tears welling up, actually started sobbing, and needed a hankie to get rid of that nasty accompaniment of tears which comes through the nose! And all that in the company of four friends who hadn't ever seen Doctor Who before, and thought I was being a bit ridiculous. But then, they hadn't experienced approximately three years of character development of the lovely Clara. They couldn't

know how at first I didn't really take to her, felt she was being underused being only a plot device, and then developing into this lovely, adventurous, but still kind and caring young woman that we are seeing in this series. They didn't even understand the beautifully played last scenes between the Doctor and Clara that started the tears running down with me, as I was very moved by it all. I also had the feeling it was a nasty death, as Clara was obviously in pain. Remarks made in the press that it was all too graphic seemed a bit overdone though, as we didn't actually see what killed her exactly (apart from the light), and thankfully there wasn't any blood either. All contributing to the emotions of the moment, while my friends were looking at me enquiringly. They didn't actually laugh (that of course would have been worse), but they did ask why these scenes moved me so, as in their view they only saw some strange aliens, a man and a woman who seem to know everyone else, and one of them apparently died. So what? I did my best to explain afterwards, while also touching on what happened to poor Rigby (now, that's also a lovely character) who will now be filled by survivor's guilt. That lovely little scene in the end when you saw him at the TARDIS which he had turned into a kind of memorial, an obituary, to Clara, said an awful lot on that score. Well, I have got a bit overwhelmed by how I actually felt during the great death, but I did also like the rest of the story. The concept of a 'trap street' may not be totally original, but it was executed in a totally Doctor Who way, making it fresh and new anyway. Seeing Ood, Judoon, a Sontaran and a Cyberman also was rather nice. And the whole idea of there being rules when so many species with different cultures try to find asylum, seemed rather poignant in today's day and age. The Janus aliens were a lovely new finding, and I hope we get to see them again. Ashildr/me/mayor was good as always, though turned into a rather hard woman, who will do anything just to get at the Doctor – somebody who

never harmed her but saved her – as her immortality has turned her all twisted inside. On the whole, a great outing for Doctor Who, some excellent acting, some genuine emotion and characters to care for, as well as a totally different outing from the week before. Excellent!

Christin Grit

I thought this was a great episode, even though I don't like the character of Ashldr. Also, I think it was very interesting and an episode that is unlike any other.

Daniel Pena

I was glued to my seat during Face the Raven, a good story with great acting. Peter really shone in this, I thought Jenna was superb, died with dignity, a really good episode, will miss Jenna - she really rates up with the greatest companions.

Dave Bird

Oh dear. The more I watch of this series the more it becomes apparent that Capaldi is carrying it. Without him there is nothing but over earnest and badly lit pantomime. I was glad to see the end of Clara, though I was surprised by its manner. She had no on-screen chemistry with the Doctor, try as over-earnestly as Moffatt did to write and edit it thus. Face the Raven was a painful exposition dump from start to finish. Poorly crafted, and with no real sense of adventure. There have been so many returns from the dead, and the audience has come to expect it so matter-of-factly, that if, and it is an if, Clara is not really dead, the whole dramatic climax to what should be a moment of heartbreak is reduced to a footnote. Surely it's now time for Mark Gattis to take over as head writer...PLEASE. I do hope the new companion is not another identikit 'strong' women.

Ady Collier

I'm not sure two leads have ever given such powerful performances in the show. Without being over-sentimental or gushing, the looks and exchanges passed be-

tween the Doctor and Clara spoke volumes of the experiences they had shared together and the many things they had done with and, most importantly, for each other.

Nick Milton

Face the Raven I thought was a brilliant episode. It was well written and the effects were great. The way people were killed I thought was truly terrifying. It was dark in places and the acting of both Peter Capaldi and Jenna Coleman was top notch. I really had a lump in my throat when Clara got killed - another companion bites the dust. I will miss Clara as she a really good character. All in all Face the Raven was superb from start to finish. Maisie Williams was on fine form as Ashldr.

Nicola Whitten

I would like to thank the entire cast and crew of Doctor Who, for making the show a pretty important part of my life. Face the Raven has reminded me of how great Doctor Who is, and made me a bigger fan than I already was. Well done Jenna. And maybe even more important: well done Sarah Dollard.

Felix Luyckx

Capaldi is starting to show his class, Maisie is ace, good riddance to Clara - a fine episode.

Darren Stuart



FICTION
TOO CURIOUS
BY FAR
by Ian Wheeler

Private Horwood watched as the two young women walked towards him. One was Caucasian, her blonde hair tied in a ponytail, and was wearing a denim jacket. The other was of mixed race, perhaps of West Indian origin, with a trendy beret perched on her head. Both were pretty, maybe late teens or early twenties. Normally he'd have enjoyed speaking to two nice young ladies but tonight it was strictly business. He held out his hand.

'Not down here, please ladies. Not tonight. You'll have to go another way.'

The girl with the beret frowned. 'Why not? This is our shortcut home. We always nip down Jefferson Street when we've been to the King's Arms.'

'Well, you shouldn't,' said Horwood. 'Side streets are dodgy at the best of times at this time of night. And this one's cordoned off tonight. There's been an incident.'

The other girl looked perturbed. 'What sort of incident? Oh come on, mate. It'll take us twice as long to go round the other way. We just want to get home, don't we Winnie?'

'We sure do, Jess,' said Winnie. 'What's going on down there anyway?' She peered past the soldier to get a look at what was happening. About twenty yards down the street she could see a green, military-looking Land Rover parked sideways in the middle of the road as if to obstruct something. In front of the Land Rover, another soldier, clad

in a similar green uniform to that of the man in front of them, paced from one side of the street to the other. Beyond that, it was too dark to see. On the side of the Land Rover was a circular logo.

'UNIT,' said Jess. 'Like a film unit? Are they filming something? Is it a Bond movie?'

Horwood laughed. 'No, it's not a Bond movie, girls. There's no filming going on here tonight.'

Winnie looked at the man's head. 'You've got the same symbol on your hat. 'UNIT' - what does it mean?'

'Oh, we're just a branch of the regular army, Miss. We mop up some of the stuff that other regiments don't have the time or expertise to deal with. The strange stuff.'

'Too many strange things happening these days,' Jess pondered. 'My Auntie was doing her shopping when those shop dummy things went on the rampage. And my Mum was on the Underground when...'

Distracted by Jess, Horwood suddenly realized that the other girl had pushed forward and started to run down the street towards the Land Rover. 'Oi!' he shouted. 'Peterson, stop that girl!'

The other soldier who had been parading the street jumped to attention but was too late to block the girl's path. She deftly sidestepped him, and ran past the Land Rover.

'She's going to be in for it now!' exclaimed Horwood.

'Too curious by far', said Jess, making no attempt to follow her friend.

Now past the Land Rover, Winnie was

greeted by the most remarkable sight. In the middle of the road, in a smoking crater in the tarmac, was what could only be described as a flying saucer. Sleek, silver and about five meters in diameter, it really was like the clichéd spaceships she had seen in so many science-fiction movies. Standing around it were more men in uniforms. At the front of the saucer, the only variation in its otherwise perfectly smooth service was a man-sized hatch which was open and from which smoke was emerging.

The soldiers, alerted by Horwood's shouting, turned to look at Winnie. Before they could say anything, a human-like figure, only four feet or so high, ran from the spaceship. It was clad in a silver jumpsuit with a goldfish bowl-like helmet covering its reptilian face. Screaming in some language Winnie could not understand, it ran past the soldiers, Winnie and off down the street, avoiding Private Horwood's attempts to stand in its way. It was followed by an equally remarkable, albeit human figure, dressed in Victorian clothes with a velvet cape and a shock of white hair, and a trendy girl dressed in fashionable garb who hobbled along on platform shoes as she tried to keep up.

'My dear fellow!' shouted the strange man, ' We only wanted to talk with you!' The man and woman ran off after the alien with several soldiers sprinting after them.

Horwood bundled Winnie and Jess together. 'Now you two had better hop it!' he said. 'There'll be all sorts of paperwork to fill in if you hang around and the Brigadier sees you - Official Secrets Act and God knows what else. Now get off home!'

Jess and Winnie walked back the way they had come, putting as much dis-

tance between them and the commotion that had just happened as possible.

'That's what I want to do!' said Winnie. 'Join UNIT and do something interesting with my life!'

'Forget it,' said Jess. 'Seems dangerous to me. And I doubt whether they have much work for girls. Besides, you've said yourself how hard it is for black kids.'

'Shame,' said Winnie. 'You're probably right. But it would be fun though. Imagine me - Captain Winifred Bambara of UNIT, defender of the Earth. I'm going to get down to the army recruiting office tomorrow.'

Jess laughed. 'Somehow, I think you will!'

The two girls linked arms and set off home – the long way.



DVD REVIEW

DOWNTIME

by Ian Wheeler

Can it really be twenty years since *Downtime* was first released on video? In many ways, it seems like only yesterday. In those days, we were starved of new Doctor Who on television. Independent drama productions like *Downtime*, *Shakedown* and *Auton* filled the gap and helped to give us our Doctor Who fix at a time when we desperately needed it.

Looking at *Downtime* now, it's pleasantly surprising just how good it still looks. In terms of production standards, it doesn't fall far short of a televised Sylvester McCoy episode. Making it entirely on location avoided the curse of dodgy sets and the production team makes very inventive use of numerous locations from a university campus to a hotel lobby. The visual effects are quite strong and still look good today. In fact, the only thing that really dates the production are all the clunky computers and the very basic graphics seen on their screens! The Yeti costumes are pretty good, perhaps not as scary as their TV counterparts, but they are used sparingly and certainly make an impact when they appear. The fight scene between the Yeti and the UNIT soldiers is one of the highlights of the production and makes for a very dramatic scene.

One of the sad things about watching *Downtime* now is realizing just how many of its cast are now gone. Nicholas Courtney, Elisabeth Sladen and Jack Watling are now all lost to us. All three are great in their respective roles but inevitably it's former DWAS Honorary President Nick Courtney who steals the show. It's nice to see the Brigadier centre stage for once and he is given some very good material

to work with, particularly in the scenes with his daughter Kate and the wonderfully poignant moment when the Brig realizes he had a grandson.

Watching the story, you can't help but feel sad that the production team did not have the support or resources to do a full series of these stories or even to have had the opportunity to take on Doctor Who itself. A modestly budgeted, straight to video series of the show made by the fans for the fans could have done very well indeed. The world may not have cared about Doctor Who in the mid-nineties but fandom certainly did!



Now, of course, you can ditch your VHS copy of *Downtime* (or keep it for posterity) and enjoy the story for the first time on DVD. The picture quality is excellent and the extras include lots of fascinating behind the scenes footage which show just how much effort went into the making of the production. It's got a pretty cool cover too.

Whether you've seen *Downtime* before or are totally new to it, this is one title which any self-respecting Doctor Who fan would do well to have in their collection. Sandwiched between *Survival* and the TV Movie on your DVD shelf (or somewhere between *Mawdryn Undead* and *Battlefield* if you want to respect the continuity of the Brigadier!), *Downtime* is a title you'll be reaching to watch from time to time to remind you of a great character and a great actor.

Downtime is available from retailers including Amazon.co.uk

INTERVIEW

KEITH BARNFATHER

by Ian Wheeler

Keith Barnfather was Producer of Downtime and has overseen the many Myth-makers interviews from Reeltime Pictures. He was also one of the original Executive members of DWAS. Ian Wheeler caught up with him...

Watching the behind the scenes footage of Downtime, I was struck by how much you were able to achieve with the resources that you had. For example you managed, very impressively I thought, to film a traffic jam on a London Street. I just wondered, given that you didn't have the 'clout' of an official BBC production, how easy it was getting the various permissions to film at the locations you used?

It's actually easier than you think to arrange filming in a city like London, you can obtain permission from TFL (Transport for London), the Police, etc. straightforwardly. The trick, when you have a limited budget, is to do it without incurring costs. For example, the traffic jam scene was shot at a road intersection with only one way in. This wasn't in use at the weekends so there were no additional costs and we didn't need supervision. We just had to organise everything ourselves and adhere to health and safety regulations. This was true everywhere - you just have to be selective.

Another thing that strikes me is how on Earth did you manage to produce something so professional on what was presumably a pretty modest budget?

Well the budget for Downtime eventually came to roughly £50,000 - which is a manageable amount. It gave us the ability to run a full crew which was essential. Having said that, everybody - and I

mean everybody - gave far more to the project than they were paid for. It was a labour of love, as these things often are.

Was it difficult to get clearances to use the characters of the Brigadier, UNIT etc? Derek Sherwin had said a few years earlier that he was planning a UNIT series, was this something that you had to steer around at all?

All the permissions were negotiated with a degree of ease. Again, that goodwill I mentioned was evident. All the rights holders, including the BBC, were very supportive and I will be eternally grateful to them.

A clichéd question - what was the funniest thing that happened during recording of the story?

Oh dear.... so many. I suppose for me it was when we were filming the traffic jam scene and a little girl (a child of one of the extras who'd given their time for free) saw a Yeti for the first time and burst out crying. Her father was mortified - but loved it!!!

What are your views on the development of the character of Kate Stewart since she became an official part of Doctor Who on television?

Well it's lovely that ideas we created have been the seeds for Doctor Who's development itself. I'm sure there will be more to the Kate (Lethbridge) Stewart story in the future.

The story stands as a tribute to four Doctor Who legends that we've since lost - Nicholas Courtney, Christopher Barry, Elisabeth Sladen and Jack Watling. What are your memories of those four?

I'm not one for platitudes. I knew them all - I went to Christopher Barry's funeral. All of them were true professionals in the "old school" - especially Nick, Jack and Christopher. It was wonderful to see Jack and Debbie working together

and I treasure the moments of behind-the-camera banter they shared. I miss them all - but I miss Christopher the most, he was a true friend and mentor.

Since Downtime was made, Doctor Who has made a triumphant return to television. In this new climate, could an independent production on the scale of Downtime ever be made again?

I think it's unlikely. Downtime is still in the Red. If it wasn't for the support of Ian Levine and DSL (Dominitemporal Services Ltd.) - especially Andrew Beech - it wouldn't have happened. We live in a different era now. But I still think there's a place for independent drama. It can still add an angle to Doctor Who mythology that the mainstream productions can't come from.

Are you looking forward to seeing Downtime reach a new generation of viewers on DVD?

I'm certainly glad to see Downtime re-issued on DVD and am glad the distributors have taken it on. If we are lucky we might get near to actually breaking even!!!

There's a lot happening in the world of Reeltime at the moment - what can we expect to see coming up?

Yes, too much! LOL! Many Doctor Who fans probably don't realise we are a broadcast and business television production company and we have a number of project running at any one time. At present I'm flying back and forth to Cyprus every few weeks to film the restoration of an Orthodox monastery at Apostolos Andreas. This is for broadcast in the Greek speaking world.

On the Doctor Who front, we're just about finished making all our products available for DVD, Download and Stream through our new website (www.timetraveltv.com) and this is prov-

ing popular around the world. We've even had interest from Vietnam!

We have new products coming out every month, new Myth Makers, documentary specials and, in the summer, the release of our long delayed six-part talking head drama White Witch of Devils End. It's all go!

Next year sees the 40th anniversary of DWAS. Why has it lasted so long and what can it do to stand out in an age of tweets, blogs and podcasts?

Did you HAVE to remind me? LOL! As one of the first DWAS Executive it both elates and depresses me to see the society reach this amazing goal. Depresses because you can work out how old I am (grin) and elates me because it is a truly astounding feat. Looking back now it seems funny to realise the programme is only about 13 years older than the society!!! When we started it seemed a huge difference. Time does give a different perspective.

I truly believe that being a fan means, more than anything, you want to share your love for the programme. My best memories are the evenings of discussion (and beer!) at conventions with fellow fans. This will never change and the DWAS will always be a conduit to make this happen in both local groups and conventions. Everything else is important but human connection is what makes us what we are.

Long live DWAS! I'll be there next year. Open a keg of beer for me...

Thank you Keith!

You can visit the new Reeltime Pictures website at www.timetraveltv.com

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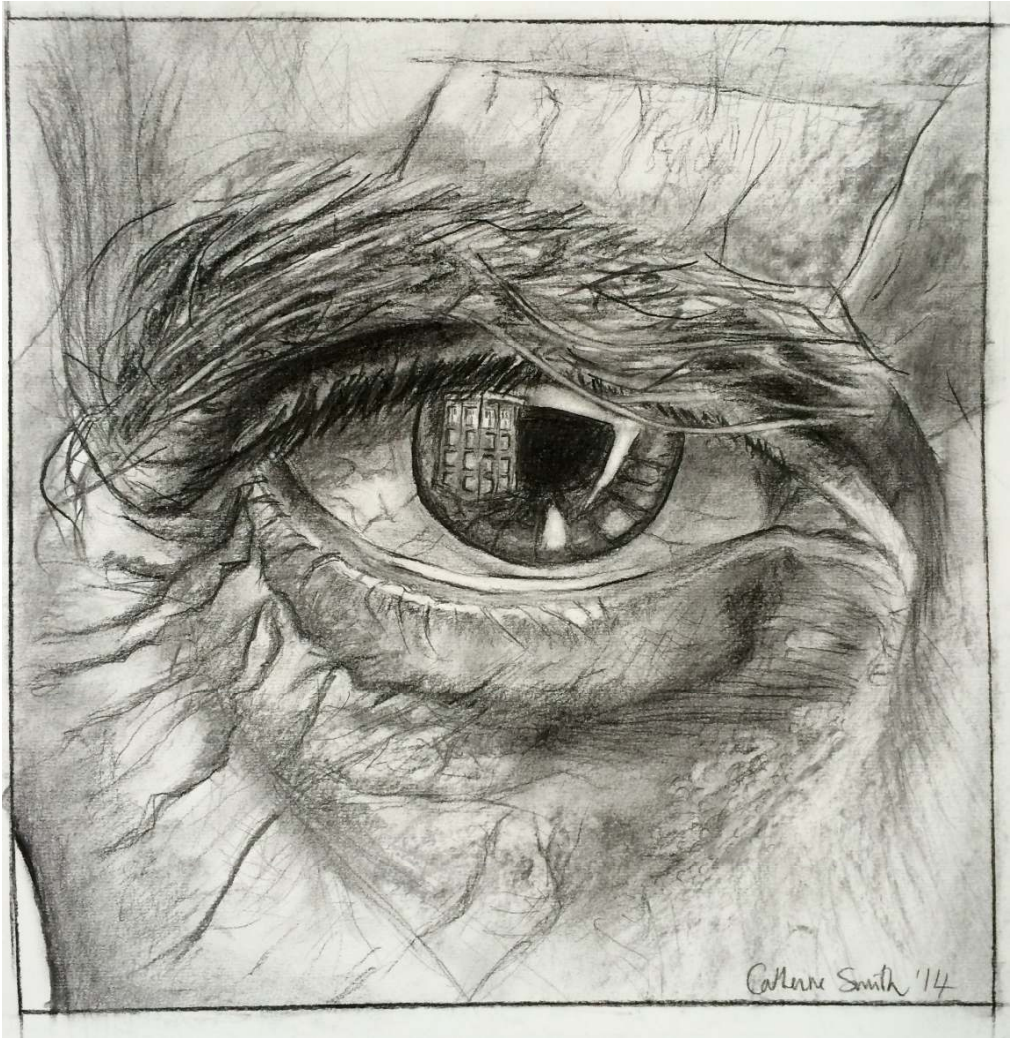


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