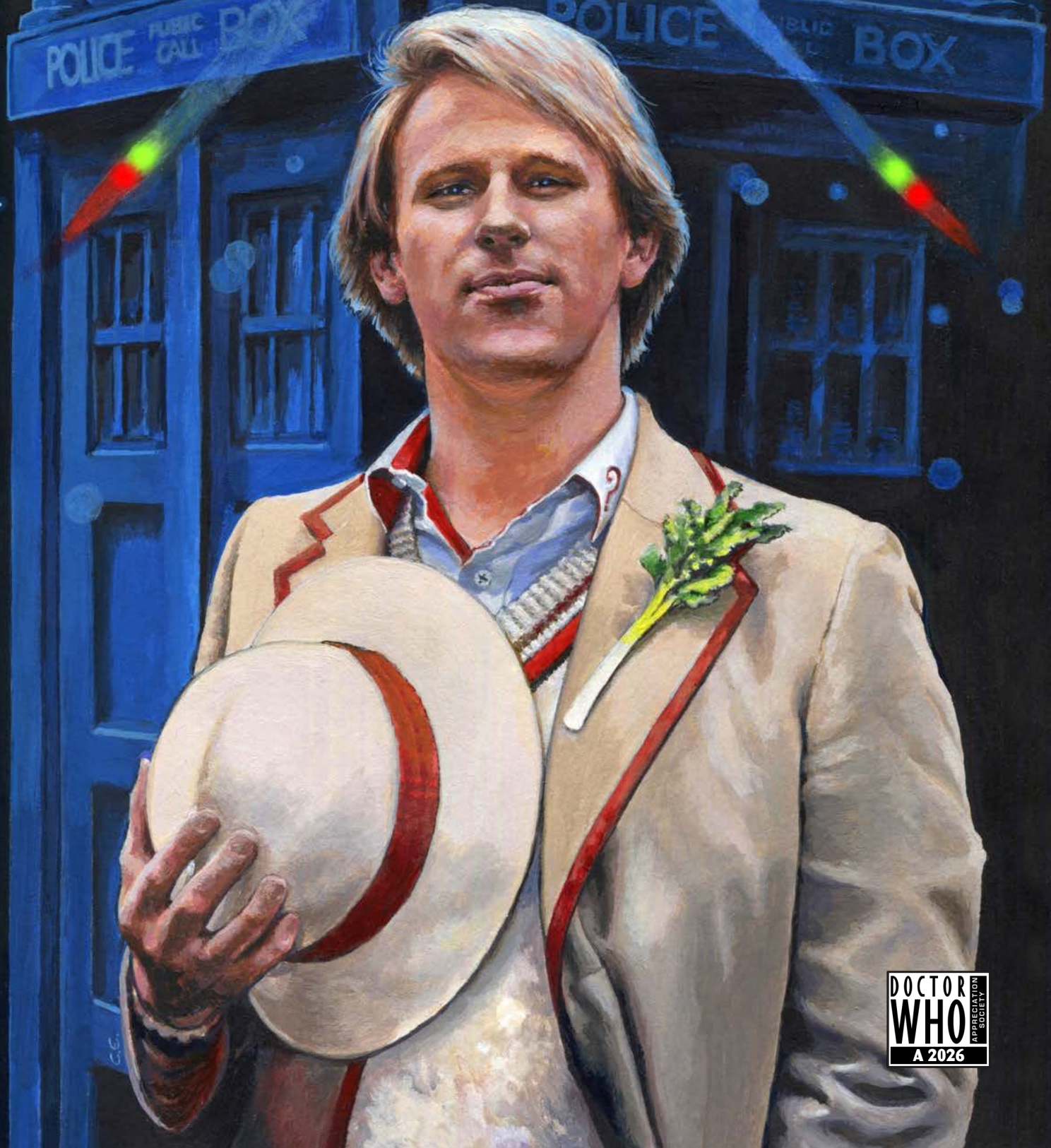


THE CELESTIAL TOYROOM

ANNUAL 2026



THE CELESTIAL TOYROOM ANNUAL 2026

Published by **THE DOCTOR WHO APPRECIATION SOCIETY**
dwasonline.co.uk

EDITOR Bruce Nicholson

DESIGN & PRODUCTION Paul MC Smith wonderfulbooks.co.uk

FRONT COVER ARTWORK Carolyn Edwards

FICTION EDITING Stephen Hatcher

CROSSWORD COMPILED BY Simon Fox crypticwho.com

WRITERS

Sean Alexander, Paul Burns, John Collier, Hamish Crawford, Michael Crouch, Oliver Dallas, Alan Darlington, Philip Hunter Gilfus, Steve Grace, Jackie Green, Tony Green, Jamie Hailstone, Stephen Hatcher, Matthew Kilburn, Don Klees, Steve Maggs, Chris McAuley, Bruce Nicholson, Andrew Orton, Paul Scoones, Dale Smith, Nick Smith, Alex Storer, Owen Taylor, Ian Wheeler

ARTISTS

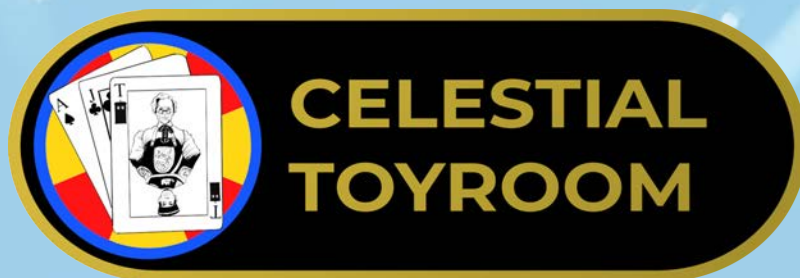
Connor Adkins, Tony Green, Colin Howard¹, Richard Jones, Andy Lambert, Artfully Liam, Andrew Orton, Owen Ruthven, Elbert Smith, Paul MC Smith, Andrew Skilleter², Rafe Wallbank

¹ Artwork copyrighted and used by kind permission – colinhowardart.com

² Artwork copyrighted and used by kind permission – andrewskilleter.com

All written content is © The Doctor Who Appreciation Society/respective author
Doctor Who Magazine comic strip material © Panini Publishing Ltd

The annual is provided on the basis that it is for personal use only
and may not be redistributed in any format



This annual has been produced on a non-profit-making basis and is not endorsed by the BBC

A WELL-PREPARED MEAL

Welcome to the tenth *Celestial Toyroom Annual*. For this 2026 edition we have continued the tradition of looking at the era of one particular Doctor and this time round the focus is on the Fifth Doctor.

Looking back at the time of the Fifth Doctor, it's hard to believe we only saw him on screen for a period of a little more than two years. His first appearance was on 4 January 1982 (if we conveniently skip over the end of *Logopolis*) and his last was on 16 March 1984. During that time, *Doctor Who* fans were treated to three full seasons and a 20th anniversary special, during which we encountered five companions (six if you count Kamelion), the return of the Brigadier, the further return(s) of the Master, the death of Adric, the apparent destruction of the TARDIS, battles against Cybermen, Daleks, Omega, misbehaving Time Lords, disguised Time Lords, Sea Devils, Silurians, the Mara, Terileptils and the Black Guardian, and finally the face of the Sixth Doctor.

That we're still talking about these stories all these years later is testament to the enduring appeal of the era. This Annual includes reviews of all the televised stories, features on aspects of the era, a look at the much-revered comic strips of the Fifth Doctor from *Doctor Who Magazine*, an interview with Maurice Roëves from a 2011 convention appearance, and a Fifth Doctor story. We hope that you enjoy the Annual.

I would like to thank everyone who has made a written and visual content contribution to the Annual. It's wonderful that even after all these years, new opinions and topics of discussion can still be found from stories that are well over 40 years old. Thanks to you all for your creative contributions and enthusiasm.

I would like to extend my special thanks to the following people:

PAUL MC SMITH at Wonderful Books, who has designed and produced the Annual. It has been a wonderful experience working with Paul, who has been generous both with his time and creative input into the Annual. It's fairly easy to come up with ideas for content but converting these ideas visually is something else. Superb work.

JASON QUINN, editor of *Doctor Who Magazine*, who was extremely helpful with the sourcing of comic strip panels from the Fifth Doctor comics. To be able even to have something just from *The Tides of Time* has been a thrill.



Artwork by Dave Gibbons from *Stars Fell on Stockbridge* part two by Steve Parkhouse (*Doctor Who Monthly* 69, October 1982). Colours by Paul MC Smith after Andy Yanchus

COLIN HOWARD and **ANDREW SKILLETER** for their patience with me and for allowing use of their beautiful Fifth Doctor artwork.

MATTHEW KILBURN for his feature on Barbara Clegg (see page 96). A tour-de-force of research and beautifully written.

ANDY LAMBERT for all of his visual contributions. I'm especially enamoured of his artwork for *Warriors of the Deep* (see page 131), my favourite Fifth Doctor story.

If you have any comments, or would like to contribute to next year's Annual, do please get in touch at bruce.nicholson@dwasonline.co.uk

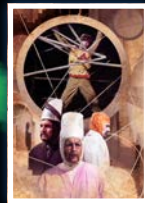
BRUCE NICHOLSON

THE CELESTIAL TOYROOM ANNUAL 2026

SURVIVING TOM BAKER'S DEPARTURE

by Jamie Hailstone and Steve Maggs,
art by Artfully Liam

6



SEASON 19

Art by Owen Ruthven

11

STORY REVIEWS

CASTROVALVA

12

by Michael Crouch, art by Andy Lambert
and Elbert Smith

FOUR TO DOOMSDAY

16

by Hamish Crawford and Paul Burns,
art by Paul MC Smith

KINDA

28

by Steve Maggs, art by Andy Lambert

THE VISITATION

32

by Jamie Hailstone, art by Andy Lambert

BLACK ORCHID

40

by Dale Smith, art by Elbert Smith

EARTHSHOCK

44

by Ian Wheeler, art by Elbert Smith

TIME-FLIGHT

50

by Philip Hunter Gilfus, art by Colin Howard

FEATURES / ART / FICTION

FIFTH DOCTOR COMIC STRIPS part 1

20

by Paul Scoones, art by Tony Green

THE TIDES OF TIME: AN APPRECIATION

24

by Nick Smith

NO MORE SONIC SCREWDRIVER

36

by Dale Smith

THE DAVISON YEARS part 1

48

art by Connor Adkins

CREW DATA: ADRIC

49

THE FIFTH DOCTOR: AN APPRECIATION

54

by Michael Crouch, art by Andy Lambert

FIFTH DOCTOR CROSSWORD

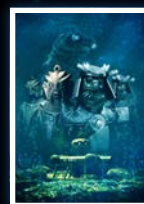
59

by Cryptic Who

FICTION: TIME HEALS

60

by Paul Burns, illustrations by Richard Jones



SEASON 20 Art by Owen Ruthven 65

STORY REVIEWS

ARC OF INFINITY	66
by Owen Taylor, art by Andy Lambert	
SNAKEDANCE	70
by Steve Maggs, art by Andy Lambert	
MAWDRYN UNDEAD	78
by Alex Storer, art by Andy Lambert	
TERMINUS	82
by Tony Green, art by Andrew Skilleter	
ENLIGHTENMENT	92
by Jackie Green, art by Andy Lambert	
THE KING'S DEMONS	102
by Don Klees, art by Colin Howard	

FEATURES / ART

THE MARA	74
by Nick Smith, art by Andy Lambert	
THE BLACK GUARDIAN TRILOGY	77
art by Rafe Wallbank	
CREW DATA: NYSSA	85
MARY RIDGE	86
by Oliver Dallas, set layouts by Andrew Orton	
THE DAVISON YEARS part 2	91
art by Connor Adkins	
BARBARA CLEGG	96
by Matthew Kilburn	
RADIO 2 AT LONGLEAT	106
by John Collier, illustration by Paul MC Smith	
FIFTH DOCTOR COMIC STRIPS part 2	109
by Paul Scoones	

20TH ANNIVERSARY

Art by Andrew Skilleter	113
THE FIVE DOCTORS	114
by Philip Hunter Gilfus, art by Andy Lambert	

RADIO TIMES ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL	118
by Nick Smith	
JOHN NATHAN-TURNER	122
by Sean Alexander	

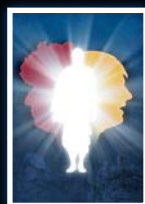
SEASON 21 Art by Owen Ruthven 129

STORY REVIEWS

WARRIORS OF THE DEEP	130
by Owen Taylor, art by Andy Lambert	
THE AWAKENING	134
by Alan Darlington, art by Andy Lambert	
FRONTIOS	142
by Michael Crouch, art by Andy Lambert	
RESURRECTION OF THE DALEKS	146
by Tony Green, art by Andy Lambert	
PLANET OF FIRE	150
by Steve Grace, art by Andrew Skilleter	
THE CAVES OF ANDROZANI	158
by Sean Alexander and Chris McAuley, art by Elbert Smith	

FEATURES / ART

ELECTRONIC MUSIC	138
by Alex Storer	
THE DAVISON YEARS part 3	145
art by Connor Adkins	
CREW DATA: TEGAN JOVANKA	149
CREW DATA: VISLOR TURLOUGH	153
THE AINLEY MASTER	154
by Owen Taylor, art by Andy Lambert	
INTERVIEW WITH MAURICE ROËVES	164
by Stephen Hatcher & Robert Dick	
CREW DATA: PERPUGILLIAM BROWN	167
FIFTH DOCTOR COMIC STRIPS part 3	168
by Paul Scoones	



MONSTERS AND THE MONSTROUS	170
by Hamish Crawford, art by Andy Lambert	
WHO WAS THE WATCHER?	174
by Philip Gilfus, art by Paul MC Smith	
EVENT SYNTHESIZER'S NEW GUARDIAN	178
art by Elbert Smith	



Artwork by
Artfully Liam

A HARD ACT TO FOLLOW

Tom Baker was the only Doctor a generation of children knew, so when he left they feared this Davison guy may not be up to the task

If there is one thing *Doctor Who* fans love to do it's have a light-hearted argument about their favourite aspects of the show. Who was the greatest villain? What was the best story?

Which companion should never have been allowed to set foot in the TARDIS? And most importantly of all, which was the most important regeneration in the programme's illustrious 62-year history?

The obvious answer to that last question is to say, "Why, the one from William Hartnell to Patrick Troughton, of course." After all, you never forget your first. If this transition from the first to the second incarnation had failed then *Doctor Who* would never have become the show it is today.

Personally, I would say every regeneration is important. They each represent a key moment in the series' history, with truck loads of existential angst for fans who lived through those events in real time. If you were there in the trenches, the struggle was real. And it certainly was a shock to the system when Tom Baker appeared on the BBC programme *Nationwide* on 24 October 1980 to announce he was leaving the show after seven years.

"It's quite hard to leave something when one is very happy in it," Baker told presenter Sue Cook. "We've now reached 100 million viewers round the world in about 37 countries and I've done the best I can with it, and I don't really think that I can do any more with it, which is a good enough reason to leave and give someone else a chance to nudge it on a bit, as I hope I nudged it on when I took over."

After a record-breaking stint of 172 episodes, Baker was hanging up his scarf and moving on to pastures new. But he would be leaving behind a legacy that would be treasured for decades to come. There are numerous reasons why for many viewers, Tom Baker was the definitive classic Doctor.

Firstly, he had the good fortune to inherit the mantle when the show was in rude health. The Third Doctor era starring Jon Pertwee was an out and out ratings smash. An impressive 8.9 million people tuned in to watch him regenerate in the final episode of *Planet of*

Baker appeared on BBC 1's evening news programme *Nationwide* on 24 October 1980 following a press conference that afternoon about his departure



the Spiders. These viewers stuck around too. The Fourth Doctor's proper debut in the first episode of *Robot* was watched by 10.8 million viewers and the programme would enjoy equally healthy viewing figures for many years to come.

The Fourth Doctor's era also benefited from the collective genius of producer Philip Hinchcliffe and script editor Robert Holmes, who took the series to wondrous new heights over Baker's first three seasons. There's a reason why so many fans revere these years and that's because it contains so many classic *Doctor Who* stories. From *Genesis of the Daleks* to *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*, from *Pyramids of Mars* to *The Seeds of Doom*, the era was an embarrassment of riches, and fans couldn't get enough of this Gothic horror take on the show.

After Hinchcliffe was moved on from the programme, Graham Williams took over as producer for three years. While he might not be held aloft in the same manner as his predecessor, he was still responsible for some of the most enduring stories in the history of the programme, including *Horror of Fang Rock*, *Destiny of the Daleks* and the Key to Time season. Williams also brought in a young and upcoming writer called Douglas Adams, without whom we would never have had the masterpiece that is *City of Death*.

It was no wonder that Baker would forever be associated with the role and replacing him was no easy task. Davison might not have been an obvious choice but he brought something different

Ultimately there was the Baker's swansong season, helmed by producer John Nathan-Turner, which dragged the show, kicking and screaming into the decade taste forgot: the 1980s. No other incarnation of the Doctor had three such distinct eras, but no matter what was going on behind the scenes, Baker remained constant throughout.

He was also in place when the beast that is fandom started to rear its strange and mysterious head. In America, conventions for programmes like *Star Trek* had become a regular occurrence since the

early 1970s. On this side of the pond, fans were starting to take shows like *Doctor Who* seriously as well. Fanzines were sprouting up everywhere and in May 1976 the Doctor Who Appreciation Society (DWAS) was established. It held its first *Doctor Who* convention at Broomwood Church Hall in August 1977 [*and here we are still going strong to this very day – ed*] with Tom in attendance.

Baker's later years also benefited from a global resurgence of interest in science-fiction, in large part thanks to a certain George Lucas and his surprise smash movie *Star Wars*. From this distance, it's almost impossible to convey how revolutionary this was. The film's runaway success prompted viewers to think again about this often-overlooked genre. Suddenly science-fiction was everywhere. Studios were fast-tracking *Flash Gordon*, *Battlestar Galactica* and the first *Star Trek* movie. *Doctor Who* could never compete with such lavish productions, but it was right there in the zeitgeist nonetheless.

Lastly, there was Baker himself. If ever there was an actor born to play the part of the Doctor, it was Tom Baker. With that booming voice and mesmerising stare, it didn't take much convincing to accept he was an alien from another planet. He could also turn his performance on a sixpence. One minute he would be larking about, tripping over the furniture, the next he was deadly serious. When the Fourth Doctor said that he walked in eternity or the Earth was facing the greatest threat in its history, you totally believed him.

He was also a little known actor before taking the role, so the audience had no preconceptions, and crucially in real life Baker was as eccentric as the character he played. He often made public appearances in costume and would disarm the fans with a cheeky grin and the offer of a jelly baby. It was impossible to tell where the Fourth Doctor ended and Tom Baker started, and we fans loved that anarchic charm of his.

It was no wonder that Baker would forever be associated with the role and replacing him was no easy task. *Doctor Who* fans weren't kept waiting long to find out who was taking on the mantle of the Fifth Doctor. On 5 November, just 12 days after Baker announced he was hanging up his scarf, Peter Davison was revealed as his successor. At the time he was best known for his role as Tristan Farnon in *All Creatures Great and Small* (1978-80), the BBC's adaptation of the bestselling books by James Herriot. Davison might not have been an obvious choice for the Fifth Doctor, but he would certainly bring something different to the role.

When the first episode of the Fourth Doctor's final adventure, *Logopolis*, was broadcast in

HOW IT FELT TO HAVE YOUR IDOL BECOME A NEW MAN

Tom Baker had been the Doctor for as long as I could remember. I was six years old when he materialised on the UNIT laboratory floor at the end of *Planet of the Spiders* in 1974. With his electric wide eyes, toothy grin and bohemian charm, Baker became a father figure for a generation. As he travelled through time and space with his best friends Sarah and Harry, then Leela and K9, and then Romana, he was the protector of the universe, keeping it safe under a parental wing with a trusted sonic screwdriver and a reassuring handful of jelly babies. He had the gravitas and authority of a father, but he was an alien outsider too, someone prepared to shake things up and help make the non-conventional feel safe – just what this boy needed.

So, when it was announced that Peter Davison would take on the role of the Time Lord I thought, ‘What was this? How could youthful Tristan Farnon be Doctor Who?’ This man didn’t have the authority of a parent, an uncle or a grandfather. He was the boy next door, blond and exciting and just too good looking. The girls all liked him, I liked him. This man couldn’t be the Doctor.

I’d had just a couple of months to get used to the idea of Tom Baker being replaced by the handsome vet before that moment on 21 March 1981 when he was sitting upright and beaming a captivating smile at us, accompanied by three iconic musical notes from the *Doctor Who* theme tune – oooo eee ooooooooo! Wow!

With his youthful appearance, fair hair and soft-spoken demeanour, Davison’s Fifth Doctor stood in contrast to his predecessor. He exuded a quiet, understated vulnerability and an attractive charm. Clad in his Edwardian cricket outfit, complete with a



decorative vegetable stuck to his lapel, he was a mix of boyish enthusiasm and old-soul wisdom.

Like the Buddhist concept of reincarnation or the Christian promise of resurrection, regeneration carries with it a profound hope: that in death a new life can emerge. For the Doctor, it was a new face too. For me, it was the beginning of a more complex, more questioning self. A boy slowly stepping into adulthood. It marked a quiet rite of passage. A shift from the comforting certainties of childhood into the uncertain but exciting shifting terrain of adolescence. Because in order to find something new, something old must die.

No regeneration for me has ever quite carried the same emotional and symbolic weight as the end of the Fourth Doctor’s reign. Each time the Doctor changed, I remained captivated, perched on the edge of my seat, awaiting the strange, beautiful magic of renewal. But nothing ever quite matches the thrill of your first one.

STEVE MAGGS

February 1981, viewers knew the end was in sight. Anyone expecting a celebratory lap of honour was going to be disappointed. The Third Doctor’s swansong felt like the last day of term, with lots of fun surprises. *Logopolis* is more like the last day on Earth, with everything pointing to a calamitous denouement. As has been pointed out in the past, Baker seems to be deliberately avoiding the eyeline of his fellow cast members, adding to the sense of foreboding. It’s hard to tell if he just wants to get it over and done with or whether he’s trying to convey the angst of a beloved character who knows there’s no escape and time is running out.

Logopolis can feel like a downbeat end to an incredible run. Did the Fourth Doctor deserve better than block transfer computations? What truly elevates it to greatness, though, is the final scene, with the Fourth Doctor lying fatally injured on the ground and beckoning the Watcher. Whatever you think of writer Christopher H Bidmead’s penchant

for scientific technobabble, there’s no denying that “It’s the end, but the moment has been prepared for...” is a killer final line.

The Fourth Doctor might have been a force of nature, capable of saving the universe with nothing more than a scarf, a sonic screwdriver and a bag of jelly babies, but he accepts his fate as only a true hero would. For an entire generation of fans, Tom Baker *was* the Doctor. He was the one constant in all our lives. Whatever was going on, we knew he would be there on Saturday evening to make everything right. But *Doctor Who* is a programme that also thrives on change. We were about to get a different type of hero. The Fifth Doctor was less mercurial and altogether more fallible. There were plenty of people who thought the series couldn’t survive without Tom Baker but they were wrong. The adventure was only just beginning. It was proof – were it ever needed – that *Doctor Who* is truly the most indomitable of species, wouldn’t you say? ☸

SEASON 19

starring

**PETER DAVISON
JANET FIELDING
SARAH SUTTON
MATTHEW WATERHOUSE**

with guest stars

ANTHONY AINLEY

**plus MICHAEL SHEARD, DEREK WARING,
FRANK WYLIE, STRATFORD JOHNS, ANNIE
LAMBERT, PHILIP LOCKE, PAUL SHELLEY,
BURT KWOUK, NERYS HUGHES, MARY MORRIS,
SIMON ROUSE, RICHARD TODD, MICHAEL MELIA,
MICHAEL ROBBINS, MICHAEL COCHRANE,
BARBARA MURRAY, MORAY WATSON, DAVID BANKS,
JUNE BLAND, CLARE CLIFFORD, BERYL REID,
JAMES WARWICK, MICHAEL CASHMAN, KEITH
DRINKEL, RICHARD EASTON and NIGEL STOCK**

Script editing by

ANTONY ROOT and ERIC SAWARD

Produced by

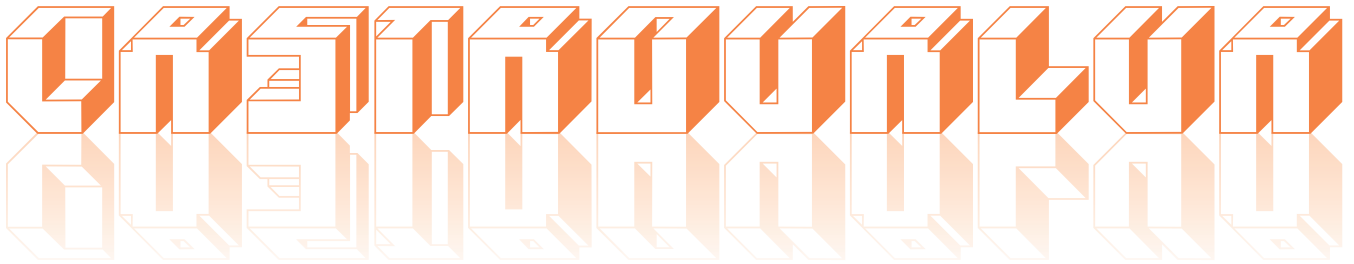
JOHN NATHAN-TURNER



Artwork by Owen Ruthven
owenruthven.myportfolio.com



Artwork by
Andy Lambert



Something is wrong with the city of Castrovalva but its people cannot perceive the problem

WRITTEN BY **CHRISTOPHER H BIDMEAD** • DIRECTED BY **FIONA CUMMING**
 AIRDATES **4, 5, 11, 12 JANUARY 1982** • RATINGS **9.1m, 8.6m, 10.2m, 10.4m**
 NOVELISATION BY **CHRISTOPHER H BIDMEAD** • PUBLISHED **17 MARCH 1983**

Castrovalva was designed as a new era for *Doctor Who*. A new Doctor, a relatively new crew, a new production team, everything about it screamed new. I and my friends couldn't wait to see the first story of the new season, but when it came, something changed. My friends began drifting away from the show. They found it slow, incomprehensible, a bit weird. Their love for it melted away, while mine became set in stone.

I absolutely love *Castrovalva*, then and now. Sure, as an introduction to a new Doctor it takes its time. There's little action, with what there is driven not by the Doctor but his companions. Instead of tales of derring-do we get a philosophical, abstract story that focuses on introspection, identity and

perception. It's light years away from the universe-saving antics of *Logopolis* that came before it, and as we watch the new Doctor gradually unravelling his predecessor's preposterously long scarf so we see the past being undone, replaced gradually by a new spirit of adventure, youth and optimism.

Unlike previous incarnations, this body starts out unusually fragile

Written by former script editor Christopher H Bidmead, *Castrovalva* is an ambitious and cerebral adventure, a post-regeneration story centred on the Doctor's struggle to stabilise his identity. Unlike previous incarnations, though, this body starts out unusually fragile. With his new personality in flux we get to see aspects of his previous selves being conjured up by Peter Davison as he slowly reveals his own gentler, more grounded take on the Time Lord. His trauma is more than a plot device, being the central drama of the first two episodes, echoing the same concepts of entropy and decay that we saw explored in *Logopolis*. Bidmead uses the Fifth Doctor's disorientation to weave a narrative about constructed realities and psychological manipulation.



Davison gives a confident, thoughtful portrayal of the Time Lord coming to terms with his new identity, one who listens, questions and doubts – qualities we don't associate with the more brash Fourth Doctor – so he feels immediately different, even if the chaos around him remains very much typical of the series.

Castrovalva is almost like watching a pair of two-parters. The first has Nyssa and Tegan trying to steer the TARDIS away from Event One, the creation of

the universe and “the biggest explosion in history”. Adric, in contrast, is largely sidelined while we snatch glimpses of the new Doctor struggling to stabilise his jumbled persona.

It's the second half of *Castrovalva* that I have really come to adore. The dwelling atop a rock was inspired by the impossible art, inverse architecture and looping staircases of the artist MC Escher, the name ‘Castrovalva’ coming directly from the title of one of his

works. It's quite a tall order for a programme on a tight budget, using the limited video effects available at the time to conjure up the ideas and visual puzzles of the story, but Bidmead plays with the visual concepts to create a three-dimensional paradox to both confuse and entrap. Fiona Cumming in her directorial debut for *Doctor Who* does an amazing job of transferring these concepts to the small screen and makes full use of the abstract and internal visuals. The set is clearly not vast but it's utilised cleverly, with great creative ingenuity to echo the recursion and Escher-like aesthetics that the story demands: an example of the programme making full use of its limitations.

The other aspect of *Castrovalva* that I love is the world-building. Small though the city is, it contains a Renaissance-style population of hunters, cleaners, apothecaries, a librarian, the Portreeve, all of whom come across as fully realised from the outset, giving us the illusion of a fully functioning and populous world. It feels as if it could be real. This is aided in no small part by the strong cast of actors who bring genuine warmth, intelligence and empathy to their roles, whose characters behave independently, oblivious to the paradox they're a part of.

All too often the worlds of early *Doctor Who* are sketched in briefly, providing the merest representations

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

Of all the ‘regeneration’ stories in *Doctor Who*, *Castrovalva* is unusual in that the plot actually centres on the fact the Doctor is regenerating. In *Power of the Daleks*, the regeneration ‘crisis’ takes place in the first half of the first episode, after which it no longer affects the story in any way. The ‘crisis’ takes longer in *Spearhead from Space*, yet by episode 2, after which he has recovered from the bullet wound to his head, the Doctor behaves completely normally. In *Robot*, the erratic behaviour lasts quite a while, but the plot of the story centres on the relationship between Sarah-Jane and the Robot in order to allow the audience time to get used to the new Doctor.

The whole of *Castrovalva*, however, centres on the fact that the Doctor is undergoing a regeneration and his vulnerability while it is taking place. He does not completely recover until the final episode and throughout the story there is some doubt as to whether he will eventually do so. This is most evident in the first episode, where he keeps reverting to previous lives as though the regenerative process is having trouble stabilising and he does not get to rest straight away, something which has been important in at least two other cases. The curious thing is that *Castrovalva*, which the Master has devised to disrupt the Doctor's regeneration, does in the end provide the rest he needs.

Rosemary Fowler, *The Doctor Who Appreciation Society Yearbook*, 1982

that may serve the story but don't necessarily give a strong sense of the world they exist in beyond what we see. In *Castrovalva* we have an example of world-building which, although limited in scale, nevertheless feels real and functional, as if it all worked and had an operational community before the TARDIS crew arrived. Of course, it all turns out to be an illusion conjured up by Adric and the Master, but that just adds another layer to this story of perception and identity.

The disorienting geography becomes a metaphor for the Doctor's fragmented mind and the Master's manipulative power. When the Doctor realises the city is folding in on itself – characters returning to places they've already left, stairs leading nowhere, a history that is fabricated – it's both a literal and psychological prison. The story's

Bidmead plays with the visual concepts to create a 3D paradox to both confuse and entrap

slow unravelling of this illusion is perhaps its most satisfying element, culminating in a surreal confrontation where the Doctor uses logic and self-awareness to expose the trap.

Anthony Ainley returns as the Master, still attempting to destroy the Doctor, this time with misdirection and psychological warfare. The plot picks up from the one that went before it,

essentially to make *Castrovalva* a direct sequel to *Logopolis*. Ainley's turn as the Portreeve was a well-placed disguise and one of Ainley's more convincing alter egos, and his reveal and comeuppance are well-timed.

In the end, *Castrovalva* is less about a battle with the Master than it is about the Doctor reclaiming himself – an inward journey through illusion and

confusion towards clarity. When the story closes with the new Doctor putting his crew through their jogging paces, he brings with him his now-clear sense of self: youthful, enthusiastic and eager to explore. It's a vigour and optimism we rarely see again until the modern series in 2005. It may not have had the budget, the appreciation or kudos it deserved, but I for one love every minute of it. ▬



FOUR TO DOOMSDAY

Is the approach to Earth of a gigantic spaceship
as benevolent as its occupants assert?

WRITTEN BY **TERENCE DUDLEY** • DIRECTED BY **JOHN BLACK**
AIRDATES **18, 19, 25, 26 JANUARY 1982** • RATINGS **8.4m, 8.8m, 8.9m, 9.4m**
NOVELISATION BY **TERRANCE DICKS** • PUBLISHED **14 APRIL 1983**

Doctor Who's nineteenth season occupies a strange void in my nostalgic affection. Peter Davison was always my favourite Doctor as a nipper, but my fond childhood memories of his era begin around *Black Orchid*. I must have seen the first 16 episodes of the Fifth Doctor but I deleted them from my innocent precognitive brain. So I really only absorbed them as a teenager, when they were rerun on PBS, in 'the dying days of the twentieth century' (to use a piquant Parkin phrase).

As you might expect, encountering them at that brittle age, in that chapter of *Doctor Who's* Wilderness Years, did this blameless run of episodes few favours and *Four to Doomsday* fewest of all. I was startled by how wrong so

much of it seemed: the space helmets; Tegan's hair and sideburns, so curly they resembled the bonce of the recently departed Tom Baker; the idiotic oddity of the TARDIS theft and Doctor spacewalk subplot in Part Four; the

Four to Doomsday
deserves some
slack for being
Davison's first
crack at the part

mere presence of Adric. Worst of all, my favourite Doctor was an imposter: Peter Davison gabbling through reams of inane dialogue (all together now: "Pass the sodium chloride."), his palpable lack of authority even more pronounced when his voice broke in the heat of some exchanges. Having failed to furnish his ostensible protagonist with any motivation or personality, scriptwriter Terence Dudley instead has the Doctor tediously name-dropping Time Lords and Gallifrey, exclaiming "The devils!" in a way neither writer nor actor can tell if it should be sarcastic, and cracking a heinously racist joke to poor undeserving Lin Futu – not just offensive but canonically wrong. Why should a 900-year-old Gallifreyan who encounters a universe of tongue-twisting





cultural abductions have an eerie mysticism to them, enhanced by Monarch's pretensions to godhood.

It also boasts one of *Doctor Who*'s most distinguished casts ever: Stratford Johns, Annie Lambert, Burt Kwouk, Philip Locke and Paul Shelley. Their talent shines through their uniformly paper-thin characters. Johns sneers through many banal lines with tongue-in-cheek relish, miles ahead of what Anthony Ainley was bringing to the Master. Locke and Kwouk give their robotic characters touching moments of soulfulness while, as Enlightenment and Persuasion, Lambert and Shelley offer a startlingly adult frisson: she has the slink and sensuality of a femme fatale, while he has his own brand of villainous aplomb, and the line "You may keep the pencil" after he confiscates Nyssa's sonic screwdriver is laugh-out-loud funny.

The production design, too, has mood and space left over from Season 18, which all but vanishes in the very next (miles better, I grant you) story when we land on Deva Loka's poky, cement-floored alien jungle. The early scenes, with those Monopticons prowling the circuit-dense corridors as the Doctor and company blithely stroll around, have a powerful menace.

But look around and every moment of quality is swallowed by a larger sequence of bathos. The absent Earth is only there so the story might remotely interest its audience (the Urbankans were never going to visit Vortis, after all). Every interesting guest star plays second fiddle to the personality-free TARDIS crew. Those Earth cultures and societies never connect with anything and serve no greater purpose than to people the story with exotic extras whose rituals (barely) bulk up the incident-light scripts to 25 minutes. All the lush spaceship designs fade from memory next to the rough CSO spacewalk that's a weird showreel for the episode. The weighty themes and ideas that dance around the fringes of the story come off as pretentious and shallow in the roughly directed, pace-less hundred-minute wander.

Worse *Doctor Who* stories exist. In *Doctor Who Magazine*'s last proper poll

nomenclatures, and who's accompanied by a woman called Tegan Jovanka, find 'Lin Futu' so bewildering? The brooding, Byronic alienness (and impish ad libs) that had defined the character for seven towering seasons evaporates in a trice, leaving an unsavoury feeling of chinless, upper-class-twittishness – a time-travelling Lord Peter Wimsey.

As any *Doctor Who* guidebook will tell you – and as I was not in the mood to hear when I experienced this aged 14 – *Four to Doomsday* deserves some slack for being Davison's first crack at the part, *Castrovalva* being delayed due to scripting problems and so the actor could find his feet. I'm not sure, on the evidence, that his feet were located by Part Four, as the strongest impression is lingering horror when Dudley's magnum opus hit his doormat. The actor's reservations about playing the Time Lord are well known and I'm sure they doubled in the face of the general disbelief that anyone could succeed Tom Baker. This probably hit closer to home

when he met his co-stars, for Davison has also amusingly recounted that Matthew Waterhouse had become an astonishing proto-Alan Partridge, considering himself the elder statesman of the cast and telling the poor incumbent at every opportunity how his scarfed predecessor would have done a particular scene or delivered a given line. This same breathtaking hubris most hilariously reared its head during *Kinda*'s production, when he offered some acting tips to British cinema legend Richard Todd. Perhaps any actor might give a compromised performance with a Waterhouse clinging like a monkey to their back. One senses, if Davison had any say, the Doctor might have helped the Cybermen ram that space freighter into prehistoric Earth.

The sad thing is there's considerable merit to *Four to Doomsday*. It's a not-uninventive way of refreshing the tired 'aliens invade Earth' story, as we have an invasion where Earth is never seen, like a planetary Godot. The multi-

in 2013 there were 23 stories featuring eight of Davison's fellow Doctors all rating lower in the eyes of fans (and from this era *Arc of Infinity*, *Warriors of the Deep*, *The King's Demons* and *Time-Flight*). But I wonder if there wasn't a more critically bad story, in scripting, execution and timing, than *Four to Doomsday*. By the time of *Time and the Rani* (1987) or *The Rings of Akhaten* (2013) the tide had turned, or was turning, against the show. *Four to Doomsday* unspooled at a time of optimism and potential. A new Doctor and a new twice-weekly timeslot had given the series a boost of interest and improved ratings. How many of the unfair brickbats the whole series subsequently endured, about slow pacing, naff monsters, flat regular characters and pompous dialogue, were fomented

Stratford Johns sneers through many banal lines with tongue-in-cheek relish

among the nine million open-minded viewers who tuned in between the 18th and 26th of January 1982? One can see Victoria Wood, Lenny Henry and French & Saunders sharpening their pencils in delight.

In the short term, two million of those viewers didn't come back the next year, beginning a rot that would lead to cancellations in 1985 and 1989. Worse, a

talented, dynamic actor who might have shepherded the show through those future rocky patches was looking to quit at the first opportunity. This ingrained the perception that, in the words of Kim Newman in 2005, "Subsequent Doctors have been overshadowed... and arguably no actor since Tom Baker has truly succeeded."

But let's not end there. Because even in this dark corner of the Doctor's adventures there is a ray of light. For concurrently with Season 19, the Fifth Doctor was enjoying a run of uplifting, mind-expanding horizons under the guidance of a writer and artist who seized the untapped potential of his character and jettisoned the on-screen flotsam. *Doctor Who Monthly* ran one of the greatest *Doctor Who* stories ever, *The Tides of Time* written by Steve Parkhouse and drawn by Dave Gibbons, from February to August 1982. It followed this triumph with a quietly marvellous two-parter, *Stars Fell on Stockbridge*. In it, the Doctor and one-off companion Max Edison – whose quirks and personality facets make him more interesting than Tegan, Nyssa and Adric put together – poke around a gloomy, possibly haunted spacecraft. At every level this supposed 'spin-off' outclasses the show that inspired it. So if now the show is once again heading to doomsday, perhaps it's possible to see other directions and talents who can spin it off and revitalise it any way their imaginations see fit. **HC**

Inheriting three troublesome companions from your former self is never easy. Then when you land on a spaceship with billions of lifeforms stored on computer chips, ruled over by three frogs who are easily pleased by endless dancing... Well, let's just say things with the Doctor are never straightforward. It's quite telling the Doctor refers to his companions as children. Chief problem child is Adric.

Not only do the female occupants of the TARDIS have to contend with him being an insufferable chauvinist, the little squirt then aligns his loyalty to Monarch, simply because he believes that he's cleverer than the Doctor. This viewer's patience with Adric evaporates far more swiftly than the Doctor's, who finally shakes him out of his reverie by reminding him Monarch is less a brainy God and more a scaly genocidal lunatic.

Then there's Tegan whining about Heathrow and potentially losing her job, spending a large chunk of an episode angrily flicking switches, trying to work out how to fly the TARDIS after the Doctor foolishly gives her a key. You get the feeling he would have been more than happy travelling with compliant, brainy and unproblematic Nyssa alone. All she wants out of life is a pencil. That is, before she dramatically faints.

But why all the dancing? *Four to Doomsday* challenges *The Devil's Chord* for most unnecessary footwork in a *Doctor Who* episode ever. **PB** ☐



FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

One of the nice things about this story was the interplay between the three companions...with Tegan getting the lioness' share of the lines. She seems to go from strength to strength.

The beauty of the production must not be forgotten. The sets were some of the best we have seen for some time, with Tony Burroughs capturing a feeling of tremendous size and depth. I especially liked the

similarity in construction between the sets; a real spaceship would be divided into compartments of similar size and design, and the redressing of sets to produce the library, mobiliary or recreation hall heightened the realism. And it is quite amazing how such mundane items as milk crates can be used as cleverly camouflaged elements of spaceship interiors.

David Auger, *Doctor Who Appreciation Society Yearbook*, 1982



Artwork by Tony Green

The February 1982 edition of *Doctor Who Monthly* (issue 61) was notable for many reasons. The first is the notoriously incorrect spelling error on the cover: 'Peter Davidson is the Doctor'. The second is that it was the first edition of the magazine to be given this title – previously it had been branded as *Doctor Who: A Marvel Monthly*.

Thirdly, it was the first edition that gave a credit to John Nathan-Turner as 'Advisor', as the producer cast a careful eye over all merchandise relating to the series. Fourthly, it was the first under the tenure of the incoming Fifth Doctor, with *Castrovalva* airing around about the date of publication (its last episode was broadcast on 12 January 1982, two days before issue 61 was on newsstands).

Fifthly, and finally, this issue was perhaps most notable for being the first to showcase the Fifth Doctor in its comic strip. Between issue 61 and issue 87 (cover date April 1984), *Doctor Who Monthly* (or *Magazine* from issue 85) ran a series of Fifth Doctor strips that are fondly remembered and, for many, are as significant as his television stories.

Paul Scoones revisits these comic strips (and those featuring the Fifth Doctor that appeared in *DWM* beyond his initial run), tracing their events and how they built on or branched out from what was being shown on TV.

THE TIDES OF TIME



Issues *Doctor Who Monthly* 61-67
(February-August 1982)

Script Steve Parkhouse
Art Dave Gibbons
Editor Alan McKenzie



NOTES Involves **Rassilon** (depicted with a bushy white beard and wearing a cowed robe – some fans were disappointed when he didn't look like this in *The Five Doctors*), the **Celestial Intervention Agency** and the **Matrix**. The city on **Gallifrey** has towering buildings housed within a transparent dome, a design later adopted by the television series. Reappearance of **Merlin** and **Catavolcus** (from *The Neutron Knights*, issue 60), the Millennium Wars (from *The Deal*, issue 53), and the as-yet-unnamed village of **Stockbridge** (from *The Iron Legion*, issues 1-8). Introduces the Time Lords' agent **Shayde**.

FANTASTIC FACT Part six opens with a full-colour centre spread (above right) in an otherwise black-and-white strip. This helped to precipitate artist Dave Gibbons' departure, as he showed the recently finished artwork when meeting with DC Comics and was hired. Consequently, he soon after stopped working for Marvel on the *Doctor Who* strip.

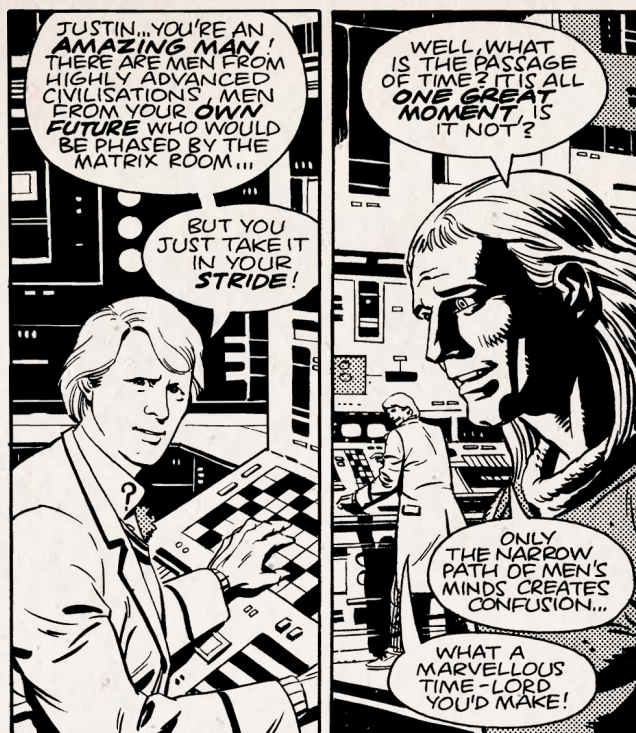


Comic panels courtesy of and copyright Panini Publishing Ltd



REVIEW *The Tides of Time* launches the Fifth Doctor's comic strip exploits in grand style. The sprawling epic encompasses events on a vast scale involving alternate timelines, other dimensions, cosmic engineering and meditations on the fundamental nature of determinism. Book-ended with bucolic scenes of a village cricket match, we are treated to visits to Gallifrey's towering spires, the Matrix, a nightmarish dreamscape, a vast structure made up of connected planets encircling a white hole, and a climactic battle in the ruins of an alternative Earth.

The story was written before Peter Davison's first season aired (although Gibbons references several photos from *Four to Doomsday* to get his likeness). The writer's understandable unfamiliarity with this new incarnation is apparent from the Doctor's under-developed character. He's an unusually passive, often uncertain and bewildered observer of events, and it falls to his allies Sir Justin and Shayde to take the initiative and fight his battles. Notably it's these two, and not the Doctor, who are ultimately responsible for defeating the demon Melanicus.



The Doctor's residency in the English village of Stockbridge (the first of three consecutive stories set here) recalls the 1970s stories from *Countdown*, *TV Action* and *TV Comic*, in which the Third and Fourth Doctors spend time living in an English country cottage. The strip immediately embraces the Doctor's passion for cricket, seeing him playing in a match weeks before *Black Orchid* screened.

STARS FELL ON STOCKBRIDGE



Issues *Doctor Who Monthly* 68-69
(September-October 1982)

Script Steve Parkhouse **Art** Dave Gibbons
Editor Alan McKenzie

NOTES Introduces **Maxwell Edison** and **Stockbridge** is finally named ('Maxwell Stockbridge' was a pseudonym used by McKenzie before the names appeared in the strip).

FANTASTIC FACT Several scenes from this story were dramatised in *The Eternal Summer* (Big Finish, 2009), faithfully reproducing dialogue from the script with Mark Williams playing the part of Max opposite Peter Davison.

REVIEW In contrast with the preceding epic, this is a small-scale tale with just two characters, the Doctor and Max, who team up to investigate a derelict spacecraft that has drifted near Earth. Edison is relatable as a nerdy loner who doesn't cope when confronted with the reality of something alien, even though this is the very thing he's been looking for.

The Doctor is noticeably a stronger character and better aligned with his on-screen persona. In this respect the story undoubtedly benefits from having been written after the Fifth Doctor had been seen in action on television.

The Doctor and Max's exploration of the creepy derelict hulk is heavy with

anticipation of something terrible lurking in the darkness. What's not apparent here is that there's a lurking menace and that this sets up the events of the following story. The gloomy shadowy confines of the spaceship's claustrophobic setting are superbly illustrated by Gibbons, making his final contribution as the strip's regular illustrator.



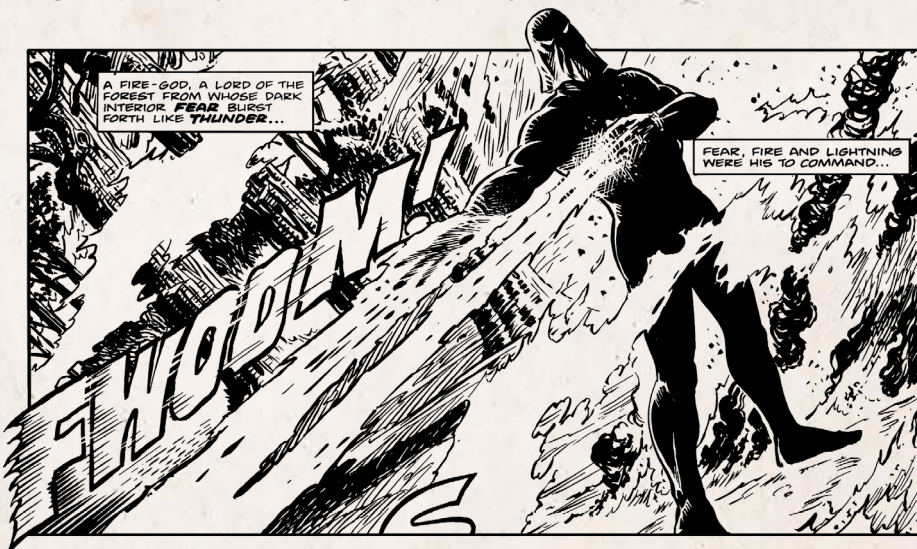
THE STOCKBRIDGE HORROR

Issues *Doctor Who Monthly* 70-75 (November 1982-April 1983)

Script Steve Parkhouse **Pencils** Steve Parkhouse (1-3), Mick Austin (4-6) **Inks** Paul Neary (1,2,4,5), Steve Parkhouse (3), Mick Austin (6) **Editor** Alan McKenzie

NOTES Last of three consecutive stories set in **Stockbridge**. The alien entity that invades the TARDIS is from the spacecraft in *Stars Fell on Stockbridge*. **Gallifrey**, the **Time Lords**, **Rassilon** and **Shayde** return. First appearance of the **SAG3** team.

FANTASTIC FACT John Ridgway, who would draw the entire run of Sixth Doctor comic strips, assisted with the artwork on this story uncredited. It's uncertain which bits are his but the last two pages of part two (issue 71, pages 13-14) closely resemble his style.



With the return of characters and locations from previous stories, this marks a move to an interwoven narrative, linking each of the Fifth Doctor's strip adventures. Indeed, every story from the 1982-84 run involves a location, character or event established in the preceding adventure. This was an innovation for the strip as previous stories had been standalone tales.

The story's overall impact isn't helped by its inconsistent visuals, caused by a changing roster of artists in the wake of Dave Gibbons' departure. Steve Parkhouse's illustrations for the first half are solid, but Mick Austin's line work is sketchier, if more textured and dynamic. His characters have weirdly exaggerated, almost caricatured features and the Doctor is occasionally depicted with odd proportions.

REVIEW Another epic involving the Time Lords and their agent Shayde, as the Doctor contends with a powerful and dangerous creature that has infiltrated the TARDIS. A large part of the story revolves around the Doctor's craft, including a detour into the TARDIS computer as Shayde embarks on a journey through a surreal realm to hunt down the entity. *Arc of Infinity* aired mid-way through this story's publication; in both adventures the Doctor is apprehended and subjected to an inquiry by the Time Lords.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 109

TIDAL FORCES

The Fifth Doctor's comic debut, *The Tides of Time*, was one of the most epic tales in any medium and set the strip on a new trajectory



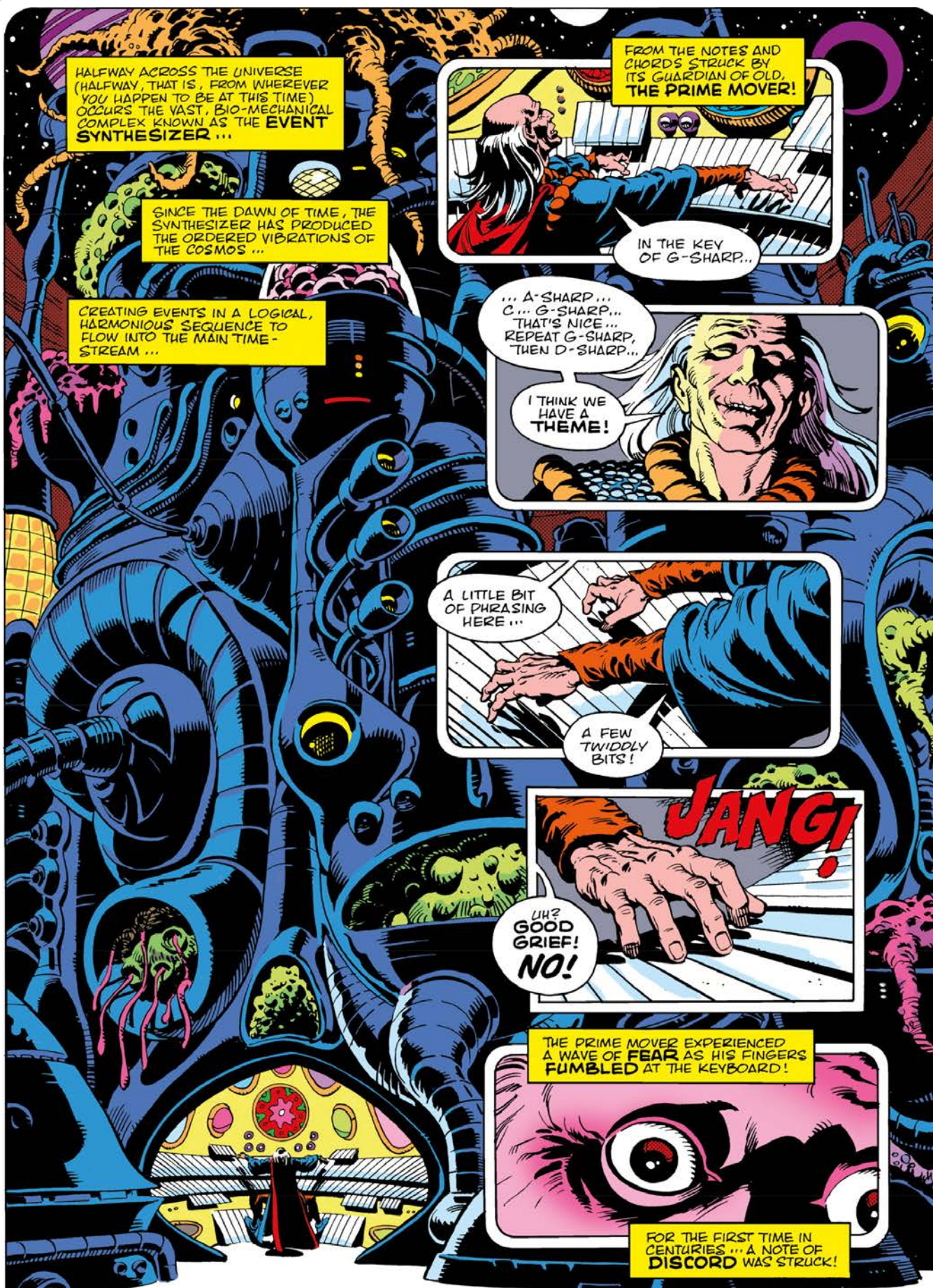
Growing up in Bristol in the 1980s, life was straightforward. Go to school, keep your head down, follow the rules and you'd be okay. The adults all seemed to see things in black and white, satisfied with their dull rat-race routine. Only those who made TV shows and comics were willing and able to use their imaginations, being paid to play like children. This creativity resonated with me and I was thrilled by the science-fiction ideas advocated by script editor Christopher H Bidmead on *Doctor Who*. I could escape the drab confines of south-west England and join the Doctor on adventures imbued with cosmic significance, involving the Big Bang, chronic hystereses, tachyons, entropy...

Miraculously, Marvel's comic version of *Doctor Who* kept up with, and at times surpassed, the show with its evocative concepts and characters. Writer Steve Parkhouse knew the strip could add a cosmic quality to the Doctor's travels that a BBC budget could never match. He also appreciated that his stories needed momentum, action set-pieces, and a Britishness that would appeal to its readers and help

them to relate to the narrative. No story exemplifies these elements better than the Fifth Doctor's first appearance in sequential art, *The Tides of Time*.

Tides ran from issues 61 to 67 of *Doctor Who Monthly*, edited by Alan McKenzie with art by Dave Gibbons. The length of the story and its multiple locations help to give it an epic quality. It has been printed on multiple occasions, with appearances in graphic novels, *Doctor Who Classic Comics*, Marvel's US *Doctor Who* reissue series and IDW's reprint series. But what's so special about this strip? What makes *Tides* stand the test of time?

From its first page depicting a detailed, monolithic alien device called the Event Synthesizer (right), *The Tides of Time* is extraordinary. The Synthesizer is a blend of artificial and organic shapes, configured to maintain the harmony of the universe. The demonic Melanicus gets his paws on the Synth and starts a time war. Cue gloriously anachronistic battles between a knight and a police constable, Mongols charging tanks, and the Doctor versus a vampire.



HALFWAY ACROSS THE UNIVERSE (HALFWAY, THAT IS, FROM WHEREVER YOU HAPPEN TO BE AT THIS TIME) OCCURS THE VAST, BIO-MECHANICAL COMPLEX KNOWN AS THE **EVENT SYNTHESIZER** ...

SINCE THE DAWN OF TIME, THE SYNTHESIZER HAS PRODUCED THE ORDERED VIBRATIONS OF THE COSMOS ...

CREATING EVENTS IN A LOGICAL, HARMONIOUS SEQUENCE TO FLOW INTO THE MAIN TIME-STREAM ...

FROM THE NOTES AND CHORDS STRUCK BY ITS GUARDIAN OF OLD, THE **PRIME MOVER**!



IN THE KEY OF G-SHARP...

... A-SHARP ... C ... G-SHARP ... THAT'S NICE ... REPEAT G-SHARP, THEN D-SHARP ...

I THINK WE HAVE A **THEME!**

A LITTLE BIT OF PHRASING HERE ...

A FEW TWIDDLY BITS!

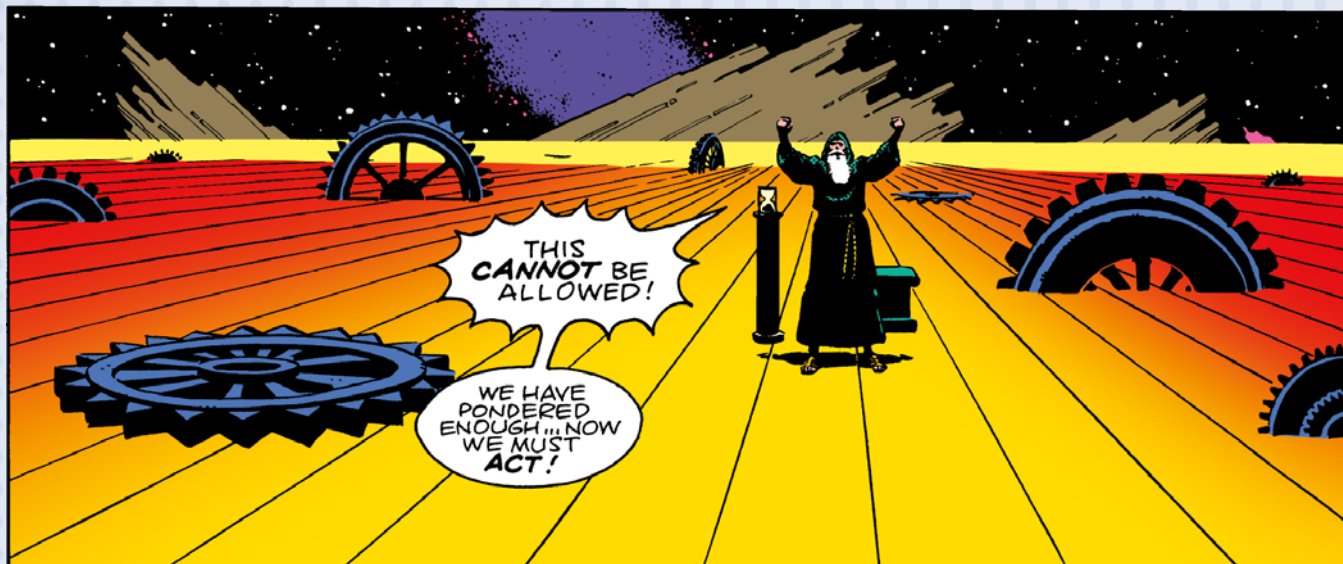


UH? GOOD GRIEF! **NO!**

THE PRIME MOVER EXPERIENCED A WAVE OF **FEAR** AS HIS FINGERS FUMBLLED AT THE KEYBOARD!



FOR THE FIRST TIME IN CENTURIES ... A NOTE OF **DISCORD** WAS STRUCK!



Rassilon now exists within "the mental landscape of the great Matrix Data Bank" where he and other advanced minds monitor cosmic events



Marvel US's 1986 reprints were in colour (reproduced here) and featured new cover artwork by Dave Gibbons

Shayde is a mental construct sent by the Matrix Lords to assist the Doctor

The Doctor teams up with the time-displaced knight Sir Justin, a staunch Christian who sees the battle against Melanicus as a crusade. He misses home and the Doctor sympathises. Strong character development turns what could have been a gimmick companion into someone the readers care about.

Together they head to Gallifrey where the Doctor still holds the mantle of president. Rassilon awaits in the Matrix – you know things are bad when he pops up – along with high-evolutionary aliens and Britain's very own Merlin, who explains to the Doctor that the fate of the universe is threatened by Melanicus. They send the Doctor and Sir Justin on a quest to find the demon and fix the Synth.

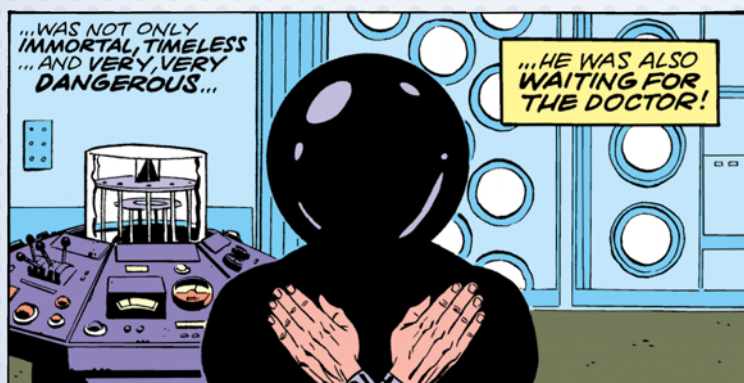
The landscapes of Gallifrey, the Matrix, and Melanicus's domain are drawn with tremendous verve and ingenuity. The world of the Time Lords has breathtaking architecture, which includes skyscrapers like giant chess pieces and lower levels reminiscent of the Krell machine in *Forbidden Planet*. Melanicus's reality twists recognizable settings into death traps: a rollercoaster to hell, a hall of mirrors, a Gothic mansion where the vampire resides. Readers are kept on their toes, not sure what to expect next; despite the newness of the Fifth Doctor's character, his vulnerability and inclination to talk first, fight later (and play cricket) are on display here. "Can't

we talk this over? Apply a little reason?" he asks the vampire count, who just hisses at him.

The final battle with Melanicus is as weird and wonderful as the rest of the tale. Thanks to the *Millennium Wars*, Earth lies in ruins with only a few vestiges of humanity remaining – a wrecked car, an open book, a child's teddy bear. In a crumbling church, Melanicus plays the Synth, climbs the outside wall like some kind of cumbersome King Kong, and sets a zombie on the Doctor. A noble sacrifice must be made to beat the demon.

Sir Justin and the Doctor are aided by the enigmatic Shayde. He's one of *Tides'* most blatant comic-book elements and one of its most intriguing. Dressed in black with a detachable crystal ball for a noggin, Shayde saves the Doctor's bacon on more than one occasion, blasting bad guys with his pistol. Initially he works in the shadows and is later revealed as an agent of the Matrix-bound Time Lords. He appears in several action sequences, including an invasion of the TARDIS by an alien assassin and rescuing the Doctor from an infernal ghost train. Shayde is highly memorable and would return in later stories such as *The Stockbridge Horror* (DWM 70-75, 1982-83) and *Wormwood* (DWM 266-271, 1998).

Rassilon is in cahoots with Merlin in this story. Along with Sir Justin, they lend an Arthurian aspect to *Tides*. Merlin met the Fourth Doctor in a prequel strip, *The Neutron Knights* (DWM 60, 1982); British comicbook readers had met him in *Captain Britain*, where he gave the superhero his powers. Here, Merlin is shrouded in mystique and introduces magic to the technological world of *Doctor Who* long before our era of singing goblins and wishing babies. When the Doctor asks why he's involved, Merlin replies, "The very fact of my presence... without the support of sophisticated gadgetry,

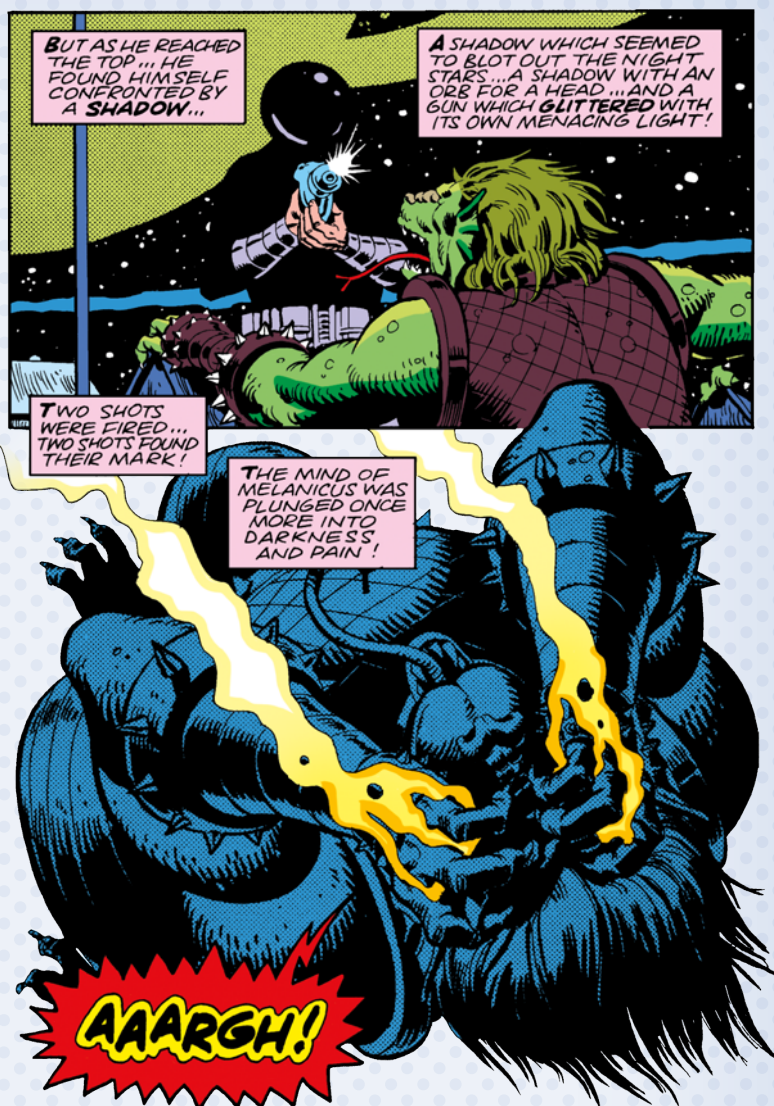
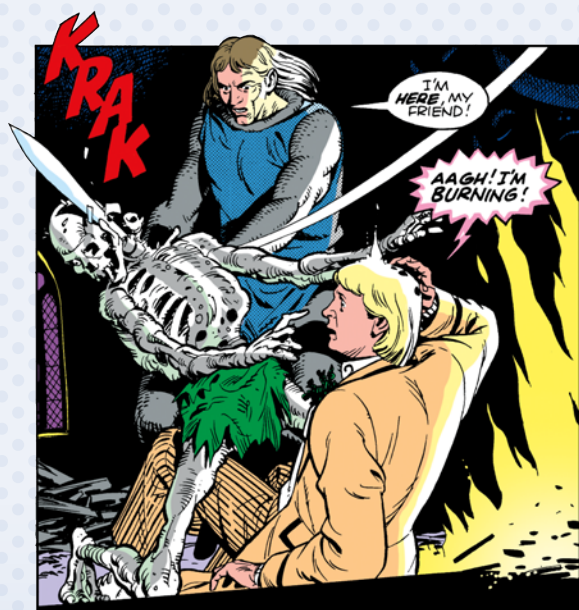


should be justification enough,” before a comment that’s the equivalent of, “I’ll explain later.”

The Rassilon of *Tides* is confined to the Matrix and wears monastic robes. He’s not the ruthless war veteran we see in modern *Doctor Who*, but he does like a good scrap. There’s a sense that he’s resurrected in times of great peril, just as King Arthur is rumoured to take back his rightful crown when he’s most needed. Rassilon pushes his fellow Matrix Time Lords to take action against Melanicus, arguing against patience and caution. “We have an agent who is willing to go beyond the boundaries of time and space,” he says of the Doctor, “as long as his free will is maintained.”

Melanicus is not a fan of free will. He loves conflict and destruction, assailing the solar system of Althrace and, later, Earth. Melanicus matches his perniciousness with a wicked sense of humour, bedevilling the Doctor and his companions with his fiendish fairground. He has the head of a lion with a long, forked tongue, a rotund torso and clawed feet – an amazing Gibbons creation to match the Star Beast or the Free-Fall Warriors’ Machine Head.

Gibbons is better at drawing the demon than depicting Peter Davison, at least in the first part of *Tides*. Since the Fifth Doctor was new, the artist didn’t have much to go on. “I had the most tremendous difficulty getting the likeness,” he told *Doctor Who Classic Comics* in 1993. “He was like a blanchmange – blond hair, light skin and no eyebrows! The trouble was that there was very little reference available.” At the time, Gibbons only had a few publicity shots to use. “His agent wanted to stop the first episode being printed because he felt it made his client look ugly!” Gibbons and McKenzie subsequently took photos of Davison on set and



Melanicus climbs the church tower only to find Shayde waiting for him

used these as a basis for future art. The improvement between parts one and two is clear.

Otherwise, Gibbons’ work is impeccable. Melanicus looks suitable ghastly, the Doctor’s alien allies are strange but kindly, Merlin and Rassilon are wrinkly, and the page layouts are as creative as the alien worlds they frame. The lettering jumps from the page, showing Gibbons was a master of his craft. “Steve fancied the idea of doing something ... that really roamed the cosmos,” Gibbons stated, “with all sorts of different strands ... it was something I really could get my teeth into.”

It was a story for readers like me to devour – especially part six. Imagine 10-year-old Nick flipping through the monochrome pages of his first *Doctor Who Monthly*, coming across a full-colour spread of a solar system bolted together in the centre of a white hole. Talk about a cosmic experience!

There are numerous ideas in *The Tides of Time*, all working together like those tethered planets. Bidmead had set the standard for a tantalising blend of science and magical thinking; Parkhouse and Gibbons ran with it and this adventure has been a benchmark for *Doctor Who* comics ever since.



Sir Justin saves the Doctor from being throttled by a grisly reanimated corpse



Artwork by
Andy Lambert

KINDA

The arrival of outsiders among the peaceful Kinda lets the Mara break free of its dream dimension

WRITTEN BY **CHRISTOPHER BAILEY** • DIRECTED BY **PETER GRIMWADE**
 AIRDATES **1, 2, 8, 9 FEBRUARY 1982** • RATINGS **8.4m, 9.4m, 8.5m, 8.9m**
 NOVELISATION BY **TERRANCE DICKS** • PUBLISHED **8 DECEMBER 1983**

I'm writing this on 24 May 2025. The wheel of life may have turned further by the time this Annual is published, but as Season Two of Ncuti Gatwa's *Doctor Who* reaches its climax, fans once again find themselves holding their breath, uncertain of the show's future. Is the wheel turning towards another hiatus? We've all been here before. Is it the past or the future? No, it's both. Cue radiophonic wails from the Mara amidst painful memories of "somewhere else the tea's getting cold" from long ago in December 1989.

The wheel turns. *Doctor Who* rises, it captivates the public's imagination. The spotlight fades, popularity dips, the Mara turns the wheel again, it turns as it has always done, fan whispers of

cancellation grow. Is that a snake I see tattooed on Mickey Mouse's right arm?

But let's step off the wheel and look back at a particular chapter in *Doctor Who*'s history – a moment when the wheel was turning to rise. In 1982, *Doctor Who* was regaining momentum. Peter Davison's fresh-faced Fifth Doctor

**Beneath *Kinda*'s
conventional
framework lies
something more
profound**

led ratings to climb. Yet *Kinda* was not initially embraced. It ranked low in *Doctor Who Monthly*'s poll for Season 19. Over time, however, the story has been re-evaluated and is now praised for its characters and its depth.

On the surface, *Kinda* follows the contours of a traditional *Doctor Who* tale: a group of colonists have established an exploratory base on the seemingly primitive planet of Deva Loka ('heavenly realm' in Sanskrit), but find themselves under siege from an invisible threat. Members of the team have gone missing and an unseen menace lurks deep within the jungle. The Doctor is met with suspicion, and as he bonds with scientist Todd and investigates, Tegan falls asleep and under the influence of the Mara in 'the place of



dreaming’ – an eerie echo of Sarah Jane’s possession in *Planet of the Spiders*.

But beneath this conventional framework lies something more profound. *Kinda* is one of the most layered and psychologically complex stories in the show’s original 26 year run. Christopher Bailey’s script weaves a rich tapestry of Buddhist and Judeo-Christian allegorical symbolism and Jungian shadow work. It’s a story that doesn’t just entertain, it invites us to step off our wheel and face reality with fresh eyes. As the colonists one by one achieve transformation through opening the Box of Jhana, viewers are led towards a similar awakening simply by turning their television sets to BBC1.

In the Buddhist tradition, the Mara is the demon who tempted the Buddha beneath the Bodhi tree. In *Doctor Who*, the Mara is the scary ‘monster of the week’, but also the manifestation of the unconscious shadow, the dark forces of the inside. Its presence first emerges in a series of psychologically horrific, surreal dream sequences inside Tegan’s mind.

As the story unfolds, the Mara takes physical form through its possession of Tegan, exploiting her vulnerability as she finds herself isolated on an alien world light years from Heathrow Airport. It then seduces Aris (Adrian Mills), making use of the anger he feels against the colonists who have taken his brother captive. Both actors deliver intense, unsettling performances, complete with red-stained teeth to emphasise their demonic possession. It’s the kind of story that captivates a young mind. As a twelve-year-old, I remember being thrilled when my dentist gave me plaque-revealing tablets giving my teeth a rather Mara-esque appearance before brushing. I remember, too, proudly showing up to school with a snake inked in blue biro on my right arm. By episode four, the Mara is finally revealed in its full form: a towering, bright pink serpent. Unfortunately, even dark forces of the inside are still subject to the limitations of 1980s BBC special effects.

The *Kinda* people’s approach is one of quiet wisdom and connection to

something greater than themselves (could we call it God?). Their technology is developed not to build interstellar spaceships to colonise other planets with, but rather to benefit others – the chimes bring about healing through shared dreaming and the Box of Jhana brings awakening to a troubled mind.

‘Jhāna’ in Buddhism refers to meditative states of profound absorption. When opened, the Box of Jhana appears to contain nothing and yet its emptiness becomes transformative. It acts as a weapon of peace, an empty container that triggers the dissolution of ego. The box is empty in the Buddhist sense of ‘sunyata’ – the insight that all phenomena are empty of inherent existence and that clinging to identity, possession or status leads only to suffering (or ‘dukkha’).

In contrast, Hindle and Sanders exemplify the ego-driven self, each unravelling in their own way under the pressure of the unknown. Sanders, played by Richard Todd – a celebrated figure in 1950s British cinema, but apparently given TV acting lessons from Matthew Waterhouse – is a narcissistic bully, masking vulnerability with bravado. Hindle, by contrast, is a mess of anxiety and paranoia, spiralling into psychosis. Simon Rouse delivers a standout performance as the deeply wounded Hindle. His portrayal of a mind unravelling into psychotic, delusional chaos is both harrowing and compelling, and unique in the original run of *Doctor Who*. Yet both characters undergo profound transformation through the Box of Jhana. For Sanders, it initially regresses him to a childlike state, but ultimately initiates healing.

Hindle’s addiction to grandiosity, control and fear is healed by the box and he finds serenity. By the story’s end, the two men are witnesses to their own evolution. They’re able to laugh at the pomposity of their former obsessions with the rules of the colonial manual.

Peter Davison famously approached the part wanting to portray the Doctor with more vulnerability than we had seen in recent incarnations. The Doctor is quieter here, he is ‘Bodhisattva’, more sage than saviour (“‘An apple a day



Hindle and Sanders exemplify the ego-driven self

keeps the...er. No, never mind"). He observes, learns and only intervenes decisively at the end with the realisation that the Mara can be defeated by facing itself through a circle of mirrors.

The companion setup in *Kinda* is unique in that Nyssa is asleep in the delta wave augments for all four episodes. With Tegan possessed by the Mara, the Doctor teams up with Todd, played by Nerys Hughes, who shares a natural chemistry with Davison's Doctor (she asks a lot of questions, it's her training, she's a scientist). She is remembered as a companion who could have been. When Sanders wanders off into the forest at the conclusion, it's a shame that Todd doesn't opt to jump aboard the TARDIS and join the crew.

While Tegan is often remembered as brash and outspoken, in *Kinda* Janet Fielding's performance has more depth and is hauntingly seductive. Mara-possessed Tegan, sitting in a tree mischievously dropping apples on Aris's head, cheekily evokes the Garden of

Eden and humanity's fall from innocence after eating from the tree of knowledge.

Renowned for her intense screen presence and her portrayals of mystical authoritarians, Mary Morris brings weight to the role of sage Panna. Despite being blind, Panna sees more clearly than anyone. The *Kinda* society appears matriarchal, only women having the gift of voice, symbolising wisdom. Jeffrey Stewart delivers a memorable performance as the dream Mara. Anna Wing (later of *EastEnders* fame) plays a chess-playing existentialist questioning the nature of reality and the validity of her companion's perceptions ("I can

only assume it is you who have invented her as a means of putting me off my game!"). While the forest set designs might look a bit stagy, director Peter Grimwade brings his usual visual flair and atmospheric tension to the story. Newly developed Quantel video effects are used effectively to depict Tegan's descent into a psychic dreamscape, realised through a transition that takes the viewer through her eye and into the depths of her subconscious.

Kinda is a spiritual riddle disguised as science-fiction and on first viewing is quite difficult to grasp. It draws on Buddhist and Christian imagery: the snake, the garden, the tree of knowledge. But even for those with a purely secular view, there is meaning that evil cannot survive self-awareness.

The 1980s can keep its Urbankans, Terileptils and upgraded Cybermen. I'd prefer to step off the wheel, wander into the forest, to the place of dreaming, and savour this classic story forever. The thrill of drawing a snake in biro on my right arm for school turned out to be my own personal Box of Jhana. It opened my awareness to something greater than myself and led to a lifelong fascination with the spiritual, from New Age to Buddhism, Mystic Christianity and on to Non-Duality. Paradise may be a little too green for the Doctor and Todd, but for me *Kinda*'s lush vegetation and ripe fruit was just the beginning. ☸

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

K*inda*, if nothing else, had to be the most daring story for years. The idea of basing a story around a religious belief has rarely worked so well, so subtly and as succinctly. [In *Hindle*] how refreshing it was to have a paranoid megalomaniac who didn't want to rule the world or universe. Sanders was intriguing – you get the feeling that throughout the story he really likes *Hindle* [and] wants to do the best for "the boy".

The snake unfortunately is where the production fell down...firstly, it stretches credibility a little to ask the viewers to accept that this terrible creature could be defeated just by getting it to look at its reflection. Secondly, the snake grew so large that it could quite happily see over the mirrors and therefore it only had to bend down and gobble up a few people to keep it happy. But I suspect Maras don't gobble up people...

From the opening scene with Sanders and *Hindle* through to the Doctor's rejection of paradise at the end, *Kinda* was a triumphant success; it deserves better recognition and...its brilliance will not be recognised until much later. *Tony Dexter, The Doctor Who Appreciation Society Yearbook, 1982*

REVIEWED BY JAMIE HAILSTONE

THE VISITATION

The Doctor discovers Terileptil convicts hiding in 1660s London are close to wiping out mankind

WRITTEN BY **ERIC SAWARD** • DIRECTED BY **PETER MOFFATT**
AIRDATES **15, 16, 22, 23 FEBRUARY 1982** • RATINGS **9.1m, 9.3m, 9.9m, 10.1m**
NOVELISATION BY **ERIC SAWARD** • PUBLISHED **19 AUGUST 1982**

If you were going to draw up a list of your favourite Fifth Doctor stories, chances are *The Visitation* might not be in your top three, or even top five. It's often dismissed as run-of-the-mill *Doctor Who*, with little to commend itself. After all, it's up against fan favourites like *Kinda* and *Earthshock* in Season 19, and the so-bad-it's-almost watchable *Time-Flight*. This four-part story could have just as easily been a Third or Fourth Doctor adventure, but that's not necessarily a bad thing, is it? It has aliens, drama and a raging fire at the end. What more could you want? It's classic *Doctor Who* to its very core.

This seventeenth century historical romp in which the Doctor uncovers a sinister plot by the alien Terileptils deserves your attention and its place in

the *Doctor Who* history books. After all, it's the last story in the 1980s to feature the sonic screwdriver, which had been a fan favourite from its first appearance in *Fury from the Deep* and a staple of the Time Lord's adventures ever since. Producer John Nathan-Turner might not have been a fan of the device, but

**It has aliens,
drama and a
raging fire at the
end. What more
could you want?**

millions of young fans thought it was the best thing since sliced bread, or the large wooden spoon which you nicked from the kitchen and held aloft whenever you were pretending to be the Doctor. If you were into such things.

But JNT had decided the sonic screwdriver must go. We all watched on in horror as the Terileptil destroyed the device and broke both of the Fifth Doctor's beating hearts.

"I feel like you've just killed an old friend," the Doctor lamented. Dear reader, we cried almost as much as we did when Adric died, but that's another story for another day...

All of which conveniently brings us to the writer of *The Visitation*, Eric Saward. If you were to draw up a list of the most influential writers from the classic era of



POLICE PUBLIC CALL BOX

Artwork by
Andy Lambert

Doctor Who, would you include Saward? Possibly not. Does he really rank alongside the likes of David Whitaker, Terrance Dicks, Terry Nation and Robert Holmes? And yet as a script editor and writer, he's the man responsible for a large part of both the Fifth and Sixth Doctors' eras.

His influence on 1980s *Doctor Who* is undeniable. Much of the criticism aimed at Saward revolves around the violence and bleakness of stories like *Revelation of the Daleks* and *Attack of the Cybermen*. *Resurrection of the Daleks* proved to be highly controversial at the time of transmission, particularly after it was

claimed the Fifth Doctor story had a higher body count than the first *Terminator* movie.

But unlike much of his later work, *The Visitation* isn't drenched in violence or black comedy. It doesn't hint at what's to come – although Robert Holmes' first story, *The Krotons*, could hardly be described as similar to his later work either. You could also make a similar case for Malcolm Hulke and *The Faceless Ones*. We all have to start somewhere.

It's also no secret that Eric Saward and JNT frequently clashed over what is often euphemistically referred to in the media as "creative differences". One

such issue was over JNT's penchant for casting actors best known for light entertainment and musicals in dramatic roles. The most notorious examples are Beryl Reid as a gritty spaceship captain in *Earthshock*, and Ken Dodd and Stubby Kaye in *Delta and the Bannerman*. It's therefore quite ironic that *The Visitation* features none other than Michael Robbins in the role of thespian and 'gentleman of the road' Richard Mace.

Younger viewers may see Robbins as merely another performer, delivering a fruity performance while London burns, but those of you with longer memories may remember he was once one of the





main stars on the bafflingly popular ITV sitcom *On The Buses*.

The Guardian journalist David Stubbs once referred to *On The Buses* as “a byword for 70s sitcom mediocrity”, which is putting it mildly, particularly when you bear in mind how much sensibilities have changed over the passing decades. But *On The Buses* ran for seven series and spawned no fewer than three feature films and a stage version, and viewers in 1982 would have instantly recognised Robbins.

Lovers of over-acting will also appreciate John Savident’s brief appearance in the opening scene of *The Visitation*. The much-missed *Coronation Street* actor could give Paul Darrow a run for his money in the scenery-chewing stakes, and he certainly did in the memorable *Blake’s 7* episode *Orbit*, but this is a rare chance to see him in

almost restrained form. Some might argue it’s a waste of a fine actor, but a little Savident goes a long way.

Readers of a certain age may also remember that the story was the subject of a 1982 book called *The Making of a Television Series* by Alan Road. These days we have a vast array of reference books, Blu-ray boxsets and podcasts cataloguing our favourite programme but back then it was a very different story and books like this were to be treasured. I vividly remember, as a young lad, saving up for a copy of the book and spending hours devouring every single page when it arrived.

Having said all that, I will concede there are plenty of aspects of *The*

Visitation you could pick holes in. The fight scene in episode one was never going to give *The Professionals* or *Starsky & Hutch* any sleepless nights. The Android appears to have stumbled off the set of a Spandau Ballet video and stolen a pair of disco cricket gloves into the bargain. Can that robot *be* any more 1980s? And the Terileptils are clearly never going to take over the universe with such limited arm movement.

But in a way, *The Visitation’s* failings only add to its charm. It might not be the greatest *Doctor Who* story ever made, but you get the impression it was never meant to be. The dramatic twists and turns are predictable, but it remains an enjoyable tea-time romp. ☺

**The Terileptils
are clearly never
going to take
over the universe
with such limited
arm movement**

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

The *Visitation* was a fast-moving, well produced and directed story, well deserving its second place in the season poll. The Terileptils are the best alien creatures to come out of *Doctor Who* since the Zygons... Peter Davison’s performance was an absolute delight... Janet Fielding and Sarah Sutton gave good supporting performances... It must be said that Eric Saward did seem to go out of his way to make Adric look like a fool...

When talking about the history of *Doctor Who*, *The Visitation* will be mentioned for one reason above all others: that is the destruction of the sonic screwdriver. The sonic screwdriver has been...looked on by many as just a writer’s cop out. Surely if it was destroyed, the Doctor would simply make himself another one. It would be better if the writers found reasons for the Doctor not to be able to use the sonic screwdriver, rather than getting rid of the problem altogether.

Harry Royal, The Doctor Who Appreciation Society Yearbook, 1982

SONIC 'BOOM'!

In 1982 the Doctor went hands-free. But did losing the sonic screwdriver boost ingenuity or just waste time?



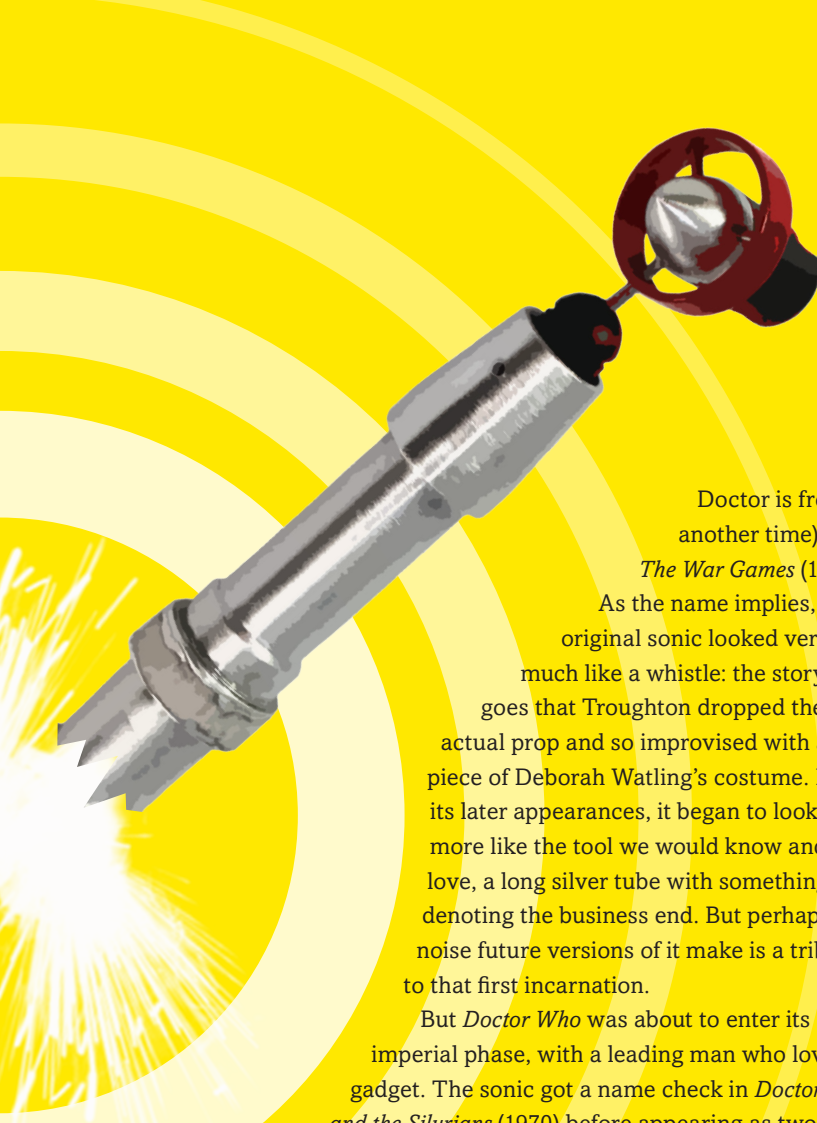
One of the most famous moments of Peter Davison's tenure as the Doctor happens during episode three of Eric Saward's *The Visitation* (1982). You're probably already picturing it in your mind just from me mentioning the story: the Terileptil leader ordering the Doctor to "drop the sonic device" in a voice muffled by an inch of latex, the futuristic weapon firing a green bolt of pixels at the sonic screwdriver, which jumps up and bursts into flames. The Doctor saddened, saying, "I feel as though you've just killed an old friend." and the story quietly moving on, as one of the few aspects of the show that had remained since 1968 disappeared, not to be seen again while *Doctor Who* was produced by John Nathan-Turner.

As we know, the sonic first appeared in *Fury from the Deep* (1968) as a more interesting way than a traditional screwdriver to get access to a gas pipe. The original script hinted that there might be something different about the Doctor's screwdriver. Apparently the answer to Captain Jack's question of

"Who looks at a screwdriver and thinks, ooh, this could be a little more sonic?" is "production assistant Michael Bryant, that's who", as he is credited with the suggestion. It crops up a couple more times in the Troughton era, usually as a piece of kit we know the Doctor has that can perform some kind of plot function which otherwise would need more explanation: a cutting tool in *The Dominators* (1968) and weakening a wall (and proving the



Releasing a chunky screw with the first oddly whistle-like sonic screwdriver in *Fury from the Deep*



Doctor is from another time) in *The War Games* (1969). As the name implies, the original sonic looked very much like a whistle: the story goes that Troughton dropped the actual prop and so improvised with a piece of Deborah Watling's costume. For its later appearances, it began to look more like the tool we would know and love, a long silver tube with something denoting the business end. But perhaps the noise future versions of it make is a tribute to that first incarnation.

But *Doctor Who* was about to enter its imperial phase, with a leading man who loved a gadget. The sonic got a name check in *Doctor Who and the Silurians* (1970) before appearing as two new props in *Inferno* (1970) – one for Liz and one for the Doctor. In every case, the sonic performed the same basic function, in plot terms: allowing the Doctor to do something that would otherwise take time to explain. That something could be anything – exploding landmines, cutting through various substances, scanning for booby-traps – because the sonic was the Doctor's magic wand. No one knew exactly what it could do, so no one could argue it didn't do that. It was the perfect plot device for excising pointless exposition and, as such, it feels to me like the kind of straightforward approach to scriptwriting advocated by one man. Terrance Dicks didn't write *Fury from the Deep* and history doesn't record he had any involvement in the sonic's

initial development from screwdriver to magic whistle, but he had joined the *Doctor Who* production team as assistant script editor for the previous story, *The Web of Fear* (1968), and often stated that he had much more involvement in those early stories than the prefix of his job title might suggest. When he was promoted to script editor and a writer needed a MacGuffin to keep the plot moving, it feels probable to me that Dicks might be the one who thought back to Troughton waving that whistle around.

The sonic screwdriver was the perfect plot device for excising pointless exposition

Pertwee was for a generation *the* Doctor and the image that stuck in their minds – if the clip's frequent reuse is anything to go by – is of him holding his sonic screwdriver aloft as mines explode around the poor confused Sea Devils. It became his number one gadget, cropping up more often than Bessie and the Whomobile combined, and more times than he ever reversed the polarity of the neutron flow. No wonder, then, that when Pertwee eventually left and Terrance Dicks had the task of reassuring the audience that this wild-eyed lunatic with legs and scarves both several sizes too long was still the Doctor, one of the ways he chose to do so was to show him still using the gadgets of the last: riding in Bessie, detonating mines and melting locks with his trusty sonic screwdriver.

The image was so successful that the sonic appeared in every one of Baker's stories all the way up to *The Brain of Morbius* (1976), when the Doctor announces he left it in the TARDIS – presumably having a well-earned recharge. In fact, there are only thirteen stories in Baker's run that don't use or

With a little addition the sonic is used as a laser cutter in *The Dominators*, and to demonstrate the Doctor's honesty in *The War Games*





Once adopted by the Third Doctor, the sonic became a perennial feature of the show for the next ten years

mention the sonic and it quickly became one of the touchstones of his era that forged the public perception of what *Doctor Who* was. The 1996 TV Movie made sure to include floppy hair, jelly babies and sonic screwdrivers in the things it gave Paul McGann's new Doctor, to make sure viewers knew exactly who he was, even though by that point the sonic hadn't appeared on screen in 14 years.

Which brings us back to where we started and the sonic bursting into flames, shot by the Terileptil leader's weapon. An inglorious end for a wonderful invention that had only ever done the job that was asked of it: keeping the story moving along.

We all know the story of why the sonic was marked for death. Producer John Nathan-Turner declared that – like K9 before it – the sonic screwdriver offered writers too easy a resolution and had become a lazy get-out-of-jail-free card. He had a keen supporter in Peter Davison, who reportedly preferred the idea of his Doctor

becoming a sort of proto MacGyver, who pulled everyday objects from his pockets and created something bespoke to get himself out of trouble. The way they talk about it, the main issue with the sonic was its ability to get the Doctors out of the cells they habitually find themselves in: certainly in

The sonic screwdriver is at heart a labour-saving device. It's rarely used as the resolution of a story and the things it does are only things that the Doctor would have to find another gadget to do

Kinda (1982) – filmed after the sonic's fiery demise, but broadcast before – the Doctor embeds the sonic in the delta waveform generator seemingly only so he can remain locked in a cell later in the story. This is the recurring argument against the sonic screwdriver, but it does rather ignore the key facts that no audience member is going to question a guard emptying the Doctor's pockets before putting them in a cell and that once they are locked up the writer still needs to find some other way for the Doctor to escape. More likely than not, that alternative method is going to need setting up, meaning you end up spending more time on one of *Doctor Who*'s least exciting set pieces.

The sonic screwdriver is at heart a labour-saving device, a washing machine to replace a washboard and soap. Even though its association with the show has been so long, it's rarely used as the resolution of a story and the things it does – as varied and interesting as its functions became as it moved into the twenty-first century – are only things that the Doctor would have to find another gadget to do, be it a lock-pick, a scanner or a universal remote control. Like the psychic paper, all it really does in story terms is cut out something that must logically happen but isn't worth televising. John Nathan-Turner was not a writer and relied much more

heavily on his script editors to manage the story side of *Doctor Who* than any of his predecessors – or indeed his successors. It's possible he just didn't realise he was condemning the sonic for an issue that simply didn't come up that often. But I think it more likely he was doing something else.

John Nathan-Turner was *Doctor Who*'s own PT Barnum: deeply problematic but with an undeniable ability for promotion. He arrived at the point when Tom Baker had become so unruly that his main job was to push the actor out of the nearest exit, despite most people inside and outside the BBC thinking he was so synonymous with the show after seven years that it probably wouldn't survive without its star. So when JNT succeeded, he set his mind to removing the connections in the mind of the public at large between Tom Baker and *Doctor Who*. His regeneration was something of a pivot for the programme: despite David Whittaker having some fun and games in *The Power of the Daleks* (1966) around the Doctor's identity, before Baker the show had always taken pains to – eventually – reassure the audience that this was still the Doctor and they were still watching the same show. With Baker's regeneration and all the others in the JNT era, that changed. For various reasons, the show now tried to put distance between its latest and previous incarnations.

K9 had already gone (quite possibly not for the same reason given he was more trouble than he was worth to a TV show that was always short of studio time) and Peter Davison was an actor with enough of a public profile for the audience to know he was an odd hire if you were looking for a Tom Baker impersonator. The teeth and curls were gone, in one bold step. In his first story broadcast, Davison's Doctor wanders through the TARDIS slowly unravelling Tom Baker's scarf, something that had become so iconic that any scarf of sufficient length made the wearer "Doctor 'Oo" in the eyes of the man on the street. It was a calculated message to anybody lured back to see what the show was like without Baker that things had changed. The sonic screwdriver was just one more of the icons that had to be toppled. But that still left a gap for the function that the sonic performed.

Perhaps the biggest indicator of this was that JNT himself was talking about bringing it back as early as 1984, although this ultimately never happened in his era. Probably this was another example of his ability to conjure up an easy headline for Fleet Street, alongside his switch and bait declaration that the TARDIS was about to lose its familiar Police Box shell, or hints there was no reason why the Doctor couldn't be a woman this



time, why not? Perhaps, given time, he might have brought the sonic back. Certainly the connection between the Doctor and his trusty tool was never quite broken: it was Terrance Dicks, in his first Virgin New Adventure, *Exodus* (1991), who planted the seed that the Seventh Doctor might be missing what the sonic could do for him, and the character eventually regained it in both *The Pit* (1993) and the TV Movie. Since then, no Doctor has been without it. Russell T Davies realised the immense benefit of the tool to both Doctor and writer. Big Finish have even retrospectively given the First Doctor his own version so that no Doctor can be said to have been without this essential tool.

What this means is that, like the TARDIS, the sonic is one of the few universal format points of *Doctor Who* itself. And that brief period when it disappeared on screen, heralded by Davison's pained expression, can be considered as much an aberration as the Hiatus, or the Wilderness Years.

The sonic screwdriver is dead! Long live the sonic screwdriver! ☰

The sonic is kept out the way in *Kinda* (just when the Doctor could do with it for getting out of jail) but included as part of the heritage in the TV Movie

LE DOCTEUR QUI

Artwork by
Elbert Smith

L'ORCHIDÉE NOIRE



BEC

REVIEWED BY DALE SMITH

BLACK ORCHID

The Cranleighs invite the Doctor to a ball,
where a masked killer hides in plain sight

WRITTEN BY **TERENCE DUDLEY** • DIRECTED BY **RON JONES**
AIRDATES **1, 2 MARCH 1982** • RATINGS **9.9m, 10.1m**
NOVELISATION BY **TERENCE DUDLEY** • PUBLISHED **11 SEPTEMBER 1986**

There's an oddity buried in the middle of Peter Davison's first season: the first two-part story since *The Sontaran Experiment* (1975); the first pure historical since *The Highlanders* (1967). But *Black Orchid* also has another unexpected kink in its DNA, a suitably prescient one for a show about someone who can travel in time.

The story seems to reach forward to Marc Platt's *Ghost Light* (1989). There are superficial connections; nothing more than coincidences. Both stories were repurposed from other ideas: Terrance Dudley reworked a murder-mystery pitch he had developed for another show; Marc Platt reworked his original pitch for *Lungbarrow* to remove the Gallifreyan setting. Both stories had similar working titles – *Black Orchid*

began as 'The Beast', while *Ghost Light* was 'The Bestiary' – they each had a companion take centre-stage, both feature Michael Cochrane in the cast and they both, of course, were produced by John Nathan-Turner.

But there are more connections, harder to dismiss as coincidental, if you

Black Orchid
seems to reach
forward to Marc
Platt's *Ghost*
Light (1989)

look deeper. Colonialism is at the heart of both stories, harking back to science-fiction's origins as an offshoot of Empire adventure stories like *King Solomon's Mines*, only where the natives came from further afield than Africa. In *Ghost Light* the rigid colonial hierarchy is critiqued through the Victorian understanding of evolution that it underpinned, and the opposing poles of Light's belief that a society can be fixed in the moment of perfection while Josiah's is that he can evolve to be the head of the British Empire. But in *Black Orchid* colonialism isn't investigated, merely represented. From the cricket game that forms the backbone of both the first episode and the Empire, to the social order of Cranleigh Hall and its faithful native servant (later reincarnated as Nimrod),

to George's dual role as explorer and Mad Woman in the Attic. This last trope usually exists to symbolise the hidden darkness behind the myth of benevolent colonialism, but here it seems to be included simply because it was the kind of thing that happened in the stories Terrance Dudley – a television polymath who had joined the BBC at the end of the 1950s – was evoking.



this means we're halfway before any actual plot starts to happen. We get extended scenes of Davison having a fun day at work playing cricket, Waterhouse avoiding learning the choreography by stuffing his face, and Sutton and Fielding getting to play dress-up, prefiguring the way Aldred does the same in *Ghost Light*. It's light entertainment of the old-school type



That relationship is inverted, however, when it comes to the flavour of Christie the two serials have. *Ghost Light* only features a dash of detective stories – a policeman arriving to investigate the murder of the patriarch of the family and quickly being turned into the first course. In *Black Orchid* the detective story is the main event, although it's one that takes a curiously long time to get going. Being a multi-episode murder mystery, the killing itself is the obvious choice for the first cliffhanger, and things do come nicely to a head as the Doctor loses one body just as another falls to the floor. But as a two-part story,

and, again, makes an interesting contrast with a similar story that's apparently so crammed with ideas and incident as to baffle some viewers. It also leads to a somewhat rushed conclusion, as the entire plot happens pretty much in that second episode, including a final dash of *King Kong*.

What *Black Orchid* has instead to get us to the start of the story is the doppelgänger sub-plot, something JNT apparently liked because it rounded out a trilogy of stories where each companion got more focus than usual, after Tegan in *Kinda* and ahead of Adric in *Earthshock* – and indeed, similar to

Cartmel's later decision that Ace should have an equal focus in his era of the show. Sarah Sutton does succeed in making her two characters distinct from each other, but not so much that the viewer can be as certain as Tegan that they know which is which once they're dressed in identical costumes. This is actually something of a unique occurrence in *Doctor Who*, where ringers for the main cast tend to have more villainous intent than convincing their fiancé they might be in for the night of their lives. In the end, this dual role doesn't have any great bearing on the story, except to explain why it's Nyssa who's put in danger at the climax and not Ann, and hopefully get the audience a little more invested in that threat.

No, the main thrust of the story is just about enjoying the opportunity to put the TARDIS down in an Empire-era melodrama. The glitz and glamour of the costume ball, the incongruity of the native servant and his disfigured charge, and the titular bloom, brought home as a trophy from adventures abroad but bringing with it black consequence. This is where most of the pleasure is in this story for a modern audience, not actually a murder mystery – since the audience, and indeed most of the Cranleighs, already know who the culprit is – but a boy's own adventure about dark secrets being uncovered.

George's mutilation is perhaps a distancing note now, as we're more aware of the stigma this puts on real people with disfigurements. So too is the uncritical playing out of the colonial tropes. In truth, though, this may have been felt by contemporary audiences, as the problems of colonialism had been investigated thoroughly in drama since the nineteenth century, and certainly in *Doctor Who* stories of the twentieth.

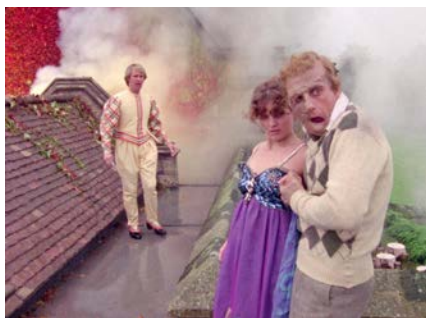
But probably the biggest stumbling block for modern audiences is the role of the Doctor in the story. Or, more accurately, the lack of a role. Coming off a run of two previous Doctors who had placed themselves very firmly at the centre of the show – and in Baker's case made working conditions on the series almost impossible – JNT had gone with a younger, subtler and more generous

actor as a contrast. Davison was never afraid of letting other actors have their moment in the spotlight and his Doctor frequently ended up on the edges of his stories. This led to criticism from some quarters that the Doctor was now played by the “wet vet”, that he watched stories happen around him and had very little impact on their resolutions. That impression could well have been formed around stories like *Black Orchid*, where the Doctor only ever reacts to events and spends most of the story pleading with the other characters to tell the truth about what they know. Even at the climax, although the story has contrived to put Nyssa in mortal peril, it's not the

It represents a period of the show that has asked itself the same questions Cartmel did years later

Doctor who saves her but Charles, as the Doctor watches on.

Then again, how different is that from *Ghost Light*, *Black Orchid*'s future and more beloved twin? The Doctor's role in that story is to hold back, to hide at the edges and encourage other people to reveal their secrets. At the end, the story is resolved because Light defeats himself, metaphorically falling from the roof of Cranleigh Hall because the truth of his life scares him too much. It's part and parcel of the decision to bring the companion forward, to let the mystery around the Doctor grow, that he must therefore dominate the stories less. The reason why it works in *Ghost Light* is because the production team reintroduced the idea – considered Troughton-esque but in truth really only because of a few scenes in the folk memory of *Power of the Daleks* (1966)



and *The Tomb of the Cybermen* (1967) – that the Doctor was not merely watching from the shadows but manipulating. In practical terms, that one tweak makes no real difference: the Doctor is still standing back as the supporting cast do the bulk of the work. But having him steer events turns him from passive to active, makes him always visible in the stories in a way that Davison sometimes wasn't.

For me, this is why I keep coming back to *Black Orchid*, a story that succeeds on its own terms but has undeniable problems, particularly when taken as part of an era. It represents a period of the show that has asked itself all the same questions Cartmel did years later and very nearly came up with the same answers. It leans on the BBC's ability to do period drama cheaply and effectively, on pushing the Doctor to the edges to widen the range of stories you can put him in, on giving the companions their own threads rather than just having them react to the Doctor's. It gives a template for making *Doctor Who* under the disinterested eye of the BBC while still making stories that look and feel deserving of the audience's attention. But it's a false start



and the show quickly forgets the answers it came up with here, instead moving away to embrace the dark nihilism of Eighties Hollywood science-fiction without the budget to properly compete. It contrasts JNT's two script editors – the one that fan mythos says saved *Doctor Who* and the one it says nearly destroyed it forever – and shows how close they were to making the same version of the show.

And it suggests the interesting alternative of a Davison era where the Doctor was taken to the edges not by a lack of agency but by making him more of a grandmaster, steering the stories from the shadows. That version of the Fifth Doctor would certainly have been the same contrast to Baker's, but would it have been an idea come too soon? Would Davison still be so fondly regarded as the spirit of *Doctor Who*'s innocence and essential goodness, or would such a remarkable actor have relished having more to get his teeth into and given us a Doctor to eclipse Baker in the national consciousness?

Davison was my first Doctor while McCoy was *my* Doctor. What fascinates me about *Black Orchid* is how close they were to being the same. ☸

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

The locations helped give this story the 1920s feel: the station, the house, the cricket pitch, etc. The interior studio work, as well, matched up to the excellent exteriors, and the sets designed by Tony Burrough were well researched. A word should also be given to costume designer Rosalind Ebbutt, for the 20s costumes and fancy dress outfits.

It seems that Terence Dudley has conquered the art of writing a two-part story (along with *K9 & Company*), that is to say he has the action well-paced, the plot isn't too complicated, and everything he puts in is relevant and ties up loose ends. The production values of the Pertwee years have finally returned and that can only be a good thing for all concerned. Gordon Roxburgh, *The Doctor Who Appreciation Society Yearbook*, 1982

EARTHSHOCK

The Cybermen are on the march again and the only way to stop them comes at a tragic cost

WRITTEN BY **ERIC SAWARD** • DIRECTED BY **PETER GRIMWADE**
AIR DATES **8, 9, 15, 16 MARCH 1982** • RATINGS **9.1m, 8.8m, 9.8m, 9.6m**
NOVELISATION BY **IAN MARTER** • PUBLISHED **19 MAY 1983**

Timing is everything. And the original broadcast of *Earthshock* was timed perfectly from my point of view. I was nine years old. If I'd been younger, say three or four, I would have been too young to fully appreciate or even remember it. If I'd been older, a teenager or a young adult, I would probably have watched it with the greater critical eye (and indeed cynicism) we all tend to pick up as we advance in years. But to watch this story when I was nine, to have the sense of wonder and excitement unique to a child of younger years – boy, I was lucky.

I first reviewed *Earthshock* in *Celestial Toyroom* in 1992, when the story was released on video. Looking back at my review (issue 188, if you're interested), I remarked that "the term 'classic' is

grossly overused within *Doctor Who* fandom...but *Earthshock* deserves this label as much as any other *Doctor Who* adventure." Over 30 years later, I'm prepared to stand by my view. Is it a classic? Well, there are certainly other stories that might be better written and better directed. *The Caves of Androzani* (1984) could certainly claim to be a better story, but it's arguably one for

To watch this story when I was nine – boy, I was lucky

adults, with its subject matter of drug running and characters including cynical politicians and gun-toting mercenaries. *Earthshock* doesn't forget that *Doctor Who* is a family show and I'd argue it does a better job of providing a satisfying piece of entertainment for adults and children alike.

When *Earthshock* was first shown, I had never seen the Cybermen on television, Tom Baker's *Revenge of the Cybermen* (1975) having been shown just a bit too early in my life for me to have watched it. But in those pre-internet days, knowledge of past *Doctor Who* stories seeped into a young viewer's conscience via other means. I had read about the Cybermen in the Target novelisations and heard tales about them from my parents. So I was more



than ready to be absolutely knocked for six when they made their dramatic reappearance in *that* cliffhanger.

But let's not get ahead of ourselves – we should begin at the beginning. On the whole, I'm not a fan of stories which open in the TARDIS with the Doctor and his companions. It's better to begin with characters we don't know in a situation with which we're unfamiliar – set up an environment, a world, into which the TARDIS crew can then be dropped. The opening scenes with Lieutenant Scott and his troops work very well and it helps that these scenes are shot on film. There's relatively little footage on film in *Earthshock*, but using it at the beginning of the story, putting the money up front as it were, gives the story a slick and impressive start.

I have often pondered why *Earthshock* is so good and one of the reasons, in my view, is that it's effectively a UNIT story set in the future. Scott and his military colleagues serve the same purpose in the story as the Brigadier and his

taskforce did in the 1970s, offering reliable military backup for the Doctor and his companions. Indeed, it's not hard to imagine Scott and co being a future version of UNIT. It doesn't seem unreasonable to assume that the outfit

One reason why *Earthshock* is so good is that it's effectively a UNIT story set in the future

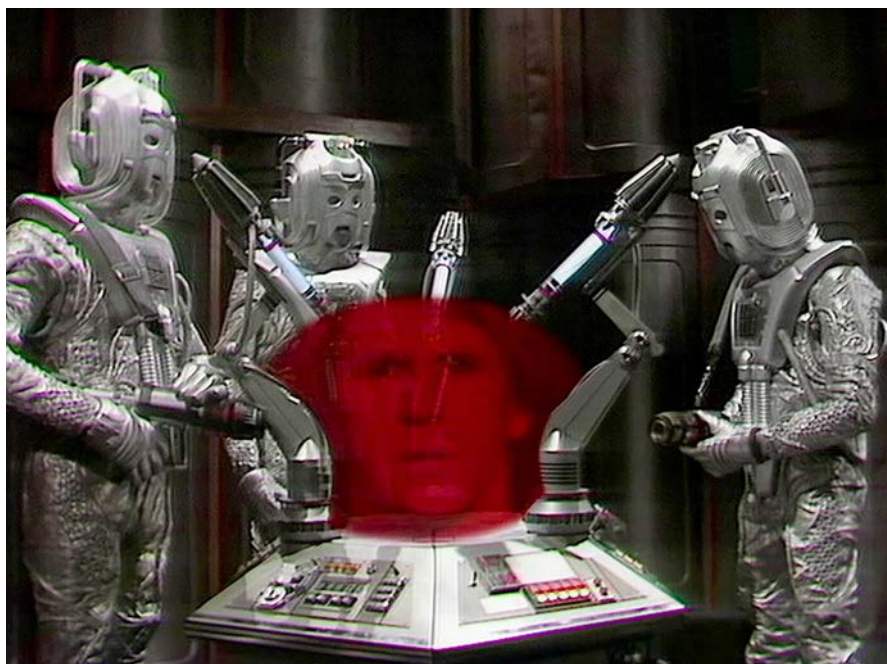
would continue to exist in the far future, and their helmets and uniforms aren't dissimilar to those worn by UNIT troops in some of Ncuti Gatwa's episodes. It's also worth noting that the relationship

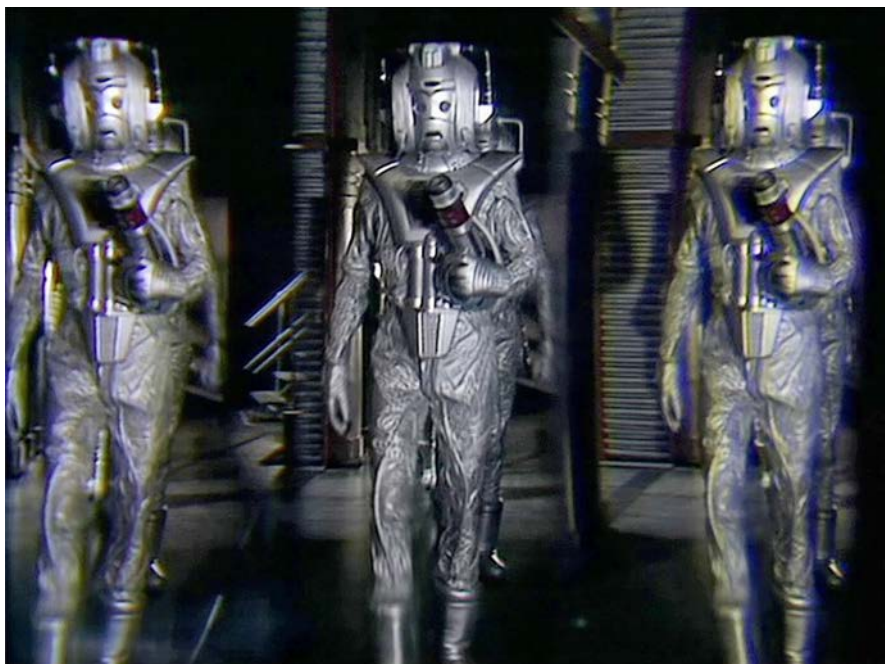
between Scott and the Doctor follows a similar path to that of the Doctor and Alister Lethbridge-Stewart, with initial mutual suspicion giving way to more in the way of respect and cooperation.

Turning to the TARDIS crew, the relationship between the Doctor and Adric is rightly focused on early in the story, with Adric thoroughly fed up and seemingly ready to return home. He feels that the Doctor doesn't have time for him, and the tetchiness between the two characters is beautifully played by Davison and Waterhouse. This early scene-setting means the story will ultimately avoid the mistake made by many before it of having a sudden departure for a companion that seems bolted on at the last minute. It does mean the Doctor's relationships with Tegan and Nyssa get less focus than in other stories, but this is episodic television and not every character can be in the limelight all the time.

The cave setting of the early scenes is very effective – *Doctor Who* often does caves well – and lends the story a creepy atmosphere. The androids are wonderfully sinister and their gory means of destroying an enemy, reducing them to a pile of green slime, make them seem all the more threatening. In a sense, they're not really needed for the story. The Cybermen could easily have guarded the caves themselves. But using the androids means the presence of the Cybermen is kept under wraps until the conclusion of part one.

Yes, that cliffhanger. Thanks to producer John Nathan-Turner turning down valuable *Radio Times* coverage and the story having a cryptic title that doesn't mention its main antagonists, the nation was treated to one of the most jaw-dropping cliffhangers in *Doctor Who*'s history. For my money, only *Remembrance of the Daleks* part one (1988) comes close. And those new Cybermen – instantly recognisable as the enemies of old but with a sleek new design for the 1980s. It's the extra ridges on the face plates that really set these Cybermen apart – a simple design modification that gives them a striking new look. And kudos to David Banks for making such an imposing new Cyber





Leader. We're also treated to that terrific flashback where grainy images of Hartnell, Troughton and Baker appear on the Cybermen's monitoring device. For a young viewer who had only seen a few early stories via the *Five Faces of Doctor Who* repeats the previous year, this was manna from heaven.

A good way to freshen up a *Doctor Who* story is to introduce a new location in the second or third episode, and this story ups the ante by moving the action to the space freighter. Like the caves, the freighter sets are effectively realised, Bernard Lloyd-Jones and Fred Wright deserving credit for their set and lighting designs, which give director Peter Grimwade an excellent environment in which to set the story. This is a serial that *looks* good, not something every 1980s *Doctor Who* adventure can claim.

The crew of the freighter are well drawn in Eric Saward's script and well played by the actors concerned. June Bland plays the reliable stalwart Berger with aplomb, and Alec Sabin makes Ringway suitably sneaky and conniving. Beryl Reid as Briggs looks nowhere near as lost or out of her comfort zone as some reviewers have suggested and the captain's contempt for Ringway is great fun. Between the three of them, they make the freighter seem like a real working environment.

It is, however, Peter Davison who turns in the most memorable

performance in the story and quite rightly so. Here is a Doctor who's clearly coming into his own. The scene in which he discusses emotions with the Cyber Leader is a highlight not only of the story, but of 1980s *Doctor Who*. It's scenes like these that set the Doctor apart from other fictional heroes. Davison's reactions make the Cybermen seem like a real threat and remind us that they really are one of the monsters that the Doctor fears most.

The conclusion of the story, when it comes, is both dramatic and heart-

breaking, and in 1982 it etched into the minds of young viewers memories that would last for decades. It's tragic that the Doctor and Adric reach a level of mutual understanding only for the boy to make the ultimate sacrifice and lose his life. Matthew Waterhouse plays his final scenes brilliantly and leaves a stunned audience mourning the death of Adric in shocked silence. The mute credits and image of Adric's broken badge remain, for this fan at least, one of the most memorable images of early 1980s television. ≡

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

To put it simply, *Earthshock* was a classic to rival any of those earlier Cybermen classics of the Hartnell and Troughton eras. Indeed, Eric Saward's script had all the hallmarks of a traditional Cyberman story, containing many elements from previous stories... There were many parallels of varying degrees of subtlety, even down to minor points of dialogue...the traitorous human agent, the plan to destroy a planet by crashing a spaceship into it and the Cybermen's susceptibility to gold.

There was a care and attention to detail in both scripting and direction which can only be described as meticulous... A word of praise must go to Malcolm Clarke (last credited on *The Sea Devils*) for his exciting and strikingly unusual incidental music.

I suppose it is rather clichéd now to talk about the 'Doctor Who magic', but if any story can be said to have possessed it, *Earthshock* can. Surely then, the undeniable and resounding success of this story must point the way forward for *Doctor Who*. Certainly, if this is any way an indication of what we can expect from forthcoming seasons, I for one look forward to them with great anticipation.

Stephen James Walker, The Doctor Who Appreciation Society Yearbook, 1982



TARDIS

Information system

CREW DATA - ADRIC

ADRIC was a companion of the **Fourth** and **Fifth DOCTORS**. Born on the **E-SPACE** planet of **ALZARIUS**, he had a **brother VARSH** who was killed when the **MARSHMEN** invaded the **STARLINER**. It is thought that his **parents Morell** and **Talisa** died in a forest fire when Adric was very young and, along with his brother, he was raised by friends of their parents on the **Starliner**. **Adric** was awarded the **STAR OF MATHEMATICAL EXCELLENCE** and was ranked as an **Elite** in the **Starliner** hierarchy.

Following the **Marshmen** incident, **Adric** stowed away on the **TARDIS**. The **Doctor**, on discovering this, wanted to return **Adric** to **Alzarius**, but following events at the **GATEWAY**, **Adric** left **E-space** for **N-SPACE**. **Adric** was one of the companions of the **Doctor** who witnessed his **REGENERATION** from his fourth to fifth incarnation.

Data suggests that **Adric's relationship** with the **Doctor** was tricky at best and he often found himself in situations that required the **Doctor's** assistance: seemingly aligning himself with **VAMPIRES** in **E-space**; being captured by the **MASTER** and creating **CASTROVALVA**; joining **MONARCH**; using a **Total Survival Suit** on **DEVA LOKA**; and eating a huge quantity of **sandwiches** instead of dancing at **CRANLEIGH HALL**.

Adric could be **petulant**, **immature**, **impatient**, **argumentative** and didn't always think before speaking. But he genuinely wanted **recognition** and **respect**, especially from the **Doctor**. These characteristics came to the surface when he argued with the **Doctor** about wanting to go to the planet **TERRADON** in **E-space**, where it is thought the **Starliner** was heading following its departure from **Alzarius**. Both the **Doctor** and **Adric** realised that he did not really want to leave the **TARDIS**, but shortly after this they were caught up in the **CYBERMEN's** attempt to ram the planet **EARTH** with a **space freighter**. The **Doctor** was able to kill the **CYBER LEADER** using the **GOLD** on the edges of **Adric's** **Star for Mathematical Excellence badge**. **Adric** was unable to stop the freighter from crashing into **Earth**, although he was able to send it back in time, with the **collision** wiping out the **DINOSAURS**.

Although **Adric** was stubborn, immature and overconfident, ultimately he was **loved** and **mourned** by the members of the **TARDIS** crew.

Text by
Bruce Nicholson

Artwork by
Tony Green

Unused BBC video cover artwork by
Colin Howard – colinhowardart.com





Trapped in prehistory, the Xeraphin's mental powers are being used to dire effect in the twentieth century

WRITTEN BY **PETER GRIMWADE** • DIRECTED BY **RON JONES**
 AIRDATES **22, 23, 29, 30 MARCH 1982** • RATINGS **10m, 8.5m, 8.9m, 8.1m**
 NOVELISATION BY **PETER GRIMWADE** • PUBLISHED **20 JANUARY 1983**

aking a journey can mean many things. Whether going by train, aeroplane or bus, passengers may either close their eyes and wait until they reach their destination, gaze at the landscape outside the window, or engage with the people around them. The same options exist with this serial. One can engage deeply with it, pay it only a bit of attention while checking your phone, or just talk with other people during the whole thing. Although, when it comes to *Time-Flight*, there's a bit of me that wishes I had gotten off two stops earlier.

There's little point in declaring any *Who* story 'the worst' since there will always be some Whovians who might consider it to be their favourite, which makes fandom a wonderful, diverse and

marvellous thing. However, it wouldn't be a wild leap to state that this last story of Season 19 consistently rates near the bottom of fan lists. Is it just a confusing plot, riddled with regrettable special effects and costumes that are best

It wouldn't be a wild leap to state that this story consistently rates near the bottom of fan lists

forgotten? Or does this provide some enjoyable moments and celebrate the best of the Fifth Doctor? Or should one just skip to the next episode altogether?

The story begins with the TARDIS team in mourning after the sudden death of Adric. As Tegan pleads with the Doctor to use his Time Lord knowledge to rescue Adric, the Doctor explains that things don't work that way. I can't help but recall the same tone from when the Ninth Doctor rebukes Rose, begging him to save her dead father, when he exclaims, "My entire planet died. My whole family. Do you think it never occurred to me to go back and save them?" Even in the Classic era, the Doctor must stick to the rules of time travel and fixed points. Death can't always be avoided; the day can't always



be saved. A hard truth, to be sure, but even the usually cheery-faced, happy-go-lucky Fifth Doctor must explain this to his companions.

Even this tiny moment encapsulates what is simultaneously attractive and challenging about the Fifth Doctor era. People die. The Doctor fails to save everyone. Sometimes he loses (we even get the melodramatic episode three closing line, “It means the Master has finally defeated me.”). In modern *Who* there’s a tendency for the Doctor to play a god-like figure who can change Fate with a snap of their fingers or save the dead with a flick of a sonic screwdriver. But this Doctor, whom I usually see reflected most in the Thirteenth, is on the back foot throughout *Time-Flight*.

There’s another notable moment in the beginning. In numerous stories, especially in the Classic era before psychic paper, the Doctor and his companions would have spent all of episode one explaining to the local authorities why they should be listened to. Instead, the Doctor immediately calls up his UNIT credentials, name-drops the Brigadier and everyone moves on to solving the mystery of a disappearing Concorde. It makes one wonder why this doesn’t happen more often whenever he visits Earth.

But *Time-Flight* is more than just its first episode (perhaps I’m trying to delay focusing on the rest). I confess that I

didn’t remember the story when I was watching. So much so that, as episode two was winding down, I began to think, “Well, that got wrapped up much quicker than usual. A bit unusual, but nothing wrong with a shorter story every now and then. Villain defeated, day saved, although a bit confusing in

With some slight editing and ignoring the last three minutes, this could have just been a nice two-episode jaunt



parts. Oh well, not bad.” I honestly believe, with some slight editing and ignoring the last three minutes, this could have just been a nice two-episode jaunt (although one must invent in their mind how everyone got home safely). However, what actually happens is that the oddly made-up (and potentially offensive) villain Kalid takes off their disguise to reveal – the Master!

The groan I made when I realised this was a Master story was audible to say the least. Now, I’m sure that some fans find Anthony Ainley’s Master one of the definitive portrayals of the evil Time Lord and look forward to every time he pops up. However, I just did a quick online check and found a YouTube video (hardly a definitive source, I concede) that tabulated all Master appearances by runtime and the Fifth Doctor ranked second, only behind the Third Doctor. In my opinion, there’s far too much Ainley-Master in the Davison era and so I automatically roll my eyes whenever he appears, because I want the Fifth Doctor and his companions to face something original, not the same old pantomime villain.

The Master’s storyline – where he needs to power up his TARDIS by (takes a deep breath) stealing the sarcophagus of the Xeraphin, a race who have abandoned their radiation-riddled home planet, combined into one physical being, crashed on ancient Earth and,



before they could regenerate themselves into their old forms, were attacked by the Master and ended up splitting into one good and one evil manifestation of their people (exhales) – is neither the most compelling nor original (Mad Monk, anyone?). I would argue there's lots of potential in the story: what is this split of good and evil all about? The Doctor and Master, despite the usual back and forth, do end up making a handshake agreement to further both of their interests – what does this say about their relationship? What if Nyssa had been possessed by the 'good' Xeraphin and Tegan the 'bad' one to better epitomise the struggle the species was having? What hallucinations or lies can we all try to avoid by concentrating on what is the most real to ourselves?

Instead, the story just turns into a continual back and forth of people either trying to break into a room (or TARDIS) or break out of a room (or TARDIS). If one chooses to have a bit of a cheeky drinking game with this story (please drink responsibly), just look out for every "I'll explain later...", just like the running joke in 1999's parody *Doctor Who and the Curse of Fatal Death*. Be careful, though, one may find oneself in a sorry state afterwards.

However, there are some intriguing parts when it comes to the companions. I was surprised to see one last appearance of Adric, albeit briefly and

as a hallucination. Nyssa and Tegan do get their own mini-stories. Nyssa has a 'possessed by the good spirits' storyline, allowing her to stretch a little beyond her usual role. Tegan mostly lives in the bookend portions of this story, where she acts as the voice of outrage about Adric's death in the beginning. She then gets to enjoy arriving home at Heathrow, where her story started. Then, in the last few minutes, she's left behind when the Doctor and Nyssa must make a quick exit. If this had been her last appearance, there are certainly worse companion exits (an off-screen

Dodo leaving a note for the Doctor that she's staying on Earth comes to mind). But, were I a contemporary viewer, I would probably be quite upset on Tegan's behalf at being forgotten and discarded so easily. Yes, she's back to where she ostensibly belongs, but Tegan still wanted to travel with the Doctor. I suppose the counter-argument is that this may be a better exit for her personally, instead of when she abruptly abandons the Doctor in *Resurrection of the Daleks*, tired and weary of it all.

In the end, it would be hard to say that offers a lot to the viewer. Certainly, the supporting characters of the Concorde pilots and crew serve as mini-companions, attempting to assist the Doctor and fly the TARDIS. There are even some humorous moments between the Doctor and Professor Hayter (who may still be out there). The special effects lie somewhere between dodgy and cringey. Roger Limb's incidental music was a bit different from usual – I enjoyed the change but others may not. One does learn a little bit of aeroplane engineering in the last episode. Like many a *Doctor Who* episode, the ending is a bit hand-wavy (the Doctor did 'a thing', the Master got stranded and the Xeraphin safely returned to their home planet).

Is *Time-Flight* worth the journey? One's mileage may vary. ☺

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

With the nostalgic after-taste of the brilliant *Earthshock*, I, along with countless other *Who* fans no doubt, sat down to watch *Time-Flight* with mixed feelings. Its appeal eluded me mainly due to the mixture of good and bad that dogged each episode. Too much was attempted within the four-part storyline ... One criticism above all others should be levelled at the script and the anonymity of many of the supporting characters. Not until the end of the yarn did I begin to feel that necessary familiarity with the cast. The one memorable character that does spring to mind...is the esteemed Professor Hayter, portrayed by the equally esteemed Nigel Stock. It is unfortunate that, having created such a character, he should be terminated (at the end of episode three) ... The Xeraphin, naturally, were heavily involved in defeating the Master. There was a day when the Doctor would have handled the situation quite competently on his own, but now with the added demise of the sonic screwdriver, more realism appears to have crept in to the scripts. Things ain't what they used to be and in many ways the Doctor has become less of a hero than he used to be.

Chris Dunk, The Doctor Who Appreciation Society Yearbook, 1982

5-STAR HERO

Peter Davison brought a freshness and sense of vigour to the role of the Fifth Doctor that has been influential ever since

As a TV series *Doctor Who* was already more than 18 years old when the Fourth Doctor played by Tom Baker departed the lead role. His performance had been a tour de force, the actor's personality coming to dominate the series over seven years that saw the programme receive some of its highest ever ratings.

Consider that for a moment. These were the days of just three terrestrial channels, with the launch of Channel 4 two years away. No streaming services, no catch-up, no videos or DVDs – if you missed a show, that was your chance gone. Yet back in those tech-deprived days, *City of Death* (1979), for example, was watched by more than 14 million viewers in a single night. Broadcasters can only dream of attracting such numbers today.

Tom Baker cast a large shadow over the series and left a big pair of shoes to fill. It came as some surprise, then, when it was announced that the succeeding Doctor

would be played by a relative newcomer, Peter Davison, then known for his role as country veterinarian Tristan Farnon in the BBC's popular

drama *All Creatures Great and Small*. He was about as far from the bombastic and dominating Baker as you could get. Not only that, but Davison was the youngest actor to take the role at that time, a mere 29. Just as today, there were the naysayers who said, "No, never, he's too young for the part."

It's difficult to comprehend now what a nerve-wracking cultural behemoth the role must have been for Peter Davison to take on. The fact he did so with a quiet and breezy enthusiasm and played it with great success for three years is testament to his character and his acting instincts. Right from the get-go, Davison brought a more human and vulnerable dimension to the Doctor characterised by his empathy, enthusiasm, a practical nature and a degree of whimsy. Unlike previous incarnations, this one was prone to uncertainty and self-doubt, and



Peter Davison is announced as the Doctor-to-be by Kenneth Kendall on the *BBC Nine O'Clock News*, and interviewed by Sue Lawley on *Nationwide*, 5 November 1980



Artwork by
Andy Lambert



The Fifth Doctor may have started out all smiles but soon found himself wrangling with both Tegan and Adric

threw about less authority, a departure from the detached demeanour of his predecessors.

We can't appreciate the size of the change without looking back to Tom Baker's final season. John Nathan-Turner had come in as producer of the show, and with him script editor Christopher H Bidmead, who wanted to move the series away from comedy and steer it towards a weightier drama with a strong scientific focus. Despite fresh title graphics and a thumping theme tune arrangement announcing the onset of change, the show carried with it a rather world-weary, brooding Fourth Doctor who seemed to sense the end was coming. Adric arrived, Romana and K9 left, and then we had the Doctor's confrontation with a newly regenerated Master.

"It's the end...but the moment has been prepared for," uttered the Doctor as his body merged with the mysterious Watcher. As his moribund features faded from view, the Doctor's face lit up and morphed into that of a beaming younger man. The smile alone was a significant change from what had gone before.

The largest crew since the series began brought with it a rather tumultuous set of relationships

Of course, we had to wait almost a year to pick up where *Logopolis* left off, but for the first time since Season 7 we had a new production team and a new TARDIS crew kicking off a new era for a new Doctor. The team consisted of the Doctor, Adric, Nyssa and Tegan Jovanka. Davison's first full episode also saw the series' first ever pre-credits



sequence, replaying the regeneration. *Doctor Who* was reborn once more and we couldn't wait to see what this new era would bring us.

We learn much about the new Doctor via his interactions with his companions. The largest crew since the series began brought with it a rather tumultuous set of relationships.

Tegan complained a lot and seemed less than awestruck by the miracle of time travel, voicing a desire to get back to her job at Heathrow. She did eventually calm down and after *Arc of Infinity* began to embrace the adventure, forming a closer bond of friendship with the Doctor, something that has been explored and developed in the Big Finish range of audio adventures. "Brave heart, Tegan," became a catchphrase for the Doctor as he gradually warmed to her sometimes abrasive nature.

Adric was the young Alzarian boy going through his difficult teenage years. It was easy to forget he was just a boy given his mathematical genius and headstrong opinions, but he viewed the Doctor as a father figure, always willing to learn from and keen to impress him. Adric's stated desire to return to E-space in the story *Earthshock* brought out a petulant, almost infantile side to the Doctor's personality, yet by the end of that story we felt the weight of grief and loss the Time Lord experiences at the death of his companion.

Finally there was Nyssa, the quiet aristocratic scientist, grieving for the death of her father at the

hands of the Master. She was the one always trying to broker peace between the others. She brought a certain calm to proceedings and was probably the one the Doctor could most empathise with. It would have been a team dynamic to challenge any of the Doctors, but the Fifth largely took it in his stride.

Turlough was even more enigmatic when he joined in the middle of Davison's second series. Portrayed initially as an English public schoolboy, we quickly saw there was something strange and unworldly about him, helped in no small part by the shifty, awkward manner that Mark Strickson brought to the character. The Doctor seemed to understand from the outset that Turlough was hiding something, that perhaps there was a duplicity about him, yet he rarely brought it up or confronted the boy with it directly, allowing Turlough time to demonstrate his motives and values, always allowing him the benefit of the doubt. It was a drawn-out development for a companion that eventually paid off the following season in *Planet of Fire* when we learned the truth and, like the Doctor, found a new respect for the young man. Given the difficulties and moral dilemmas the Doctor had with Turlough, it's not easy to see any of his previous personalities having put up with him for so long.

Having met Peri Brown in the same story, by the following adventure, *The Caves of Androzani*, it seemed clear the two had been travelling for a while, given the ease of their conversation and casual jibes. This is the first and last time we saw the Fifth Doctor with a single companion and it's a shame this pairing didn't last longer. Peri seemed to bring out the best in this Doctor, a return to the smiling, optimistic and breezy character we saw at the end of *Castrovalva*. It was clear they enjoyed each other's company and the close friendship was clearly demonstrated in the way they went to their expected deaths at the hands of an execution squad. Peri here is a far more relaxed, open and amenable companion than the tetchy screamer she

later became with the Sixth Doctor. Under Robert Holmes' penmanship, plus great direction from Graeme Harper, and with the acting skills of Peter Davison, we got to see the Fifth Doctor at his very best, the Time Lord not laying his life down to save the universe but simply the life of his friend.

The character of the Fifth Doctor can be interpreted through his own words.

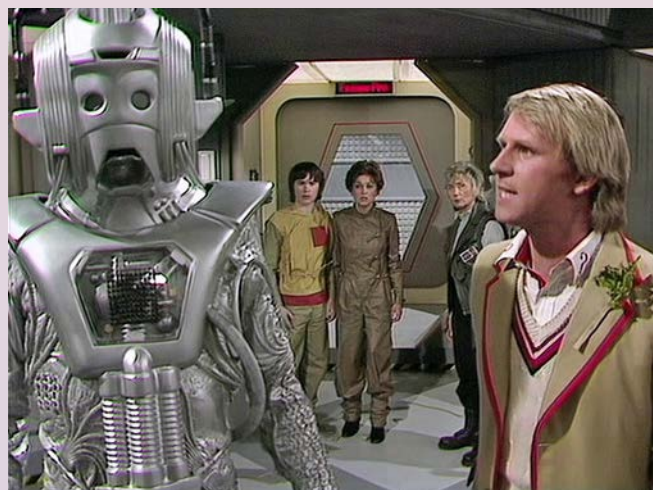
Confronting the Cyber Leader, the Doctor tells him, "For some people, small, beautiful events are what life is all about." Of his love for exploring, he says, "There's always something to look for if you open your eyes." He can be whimsical, for example: "An apple a day keeps the...er. No, never mind." And he gets his own timey-wimey turn with, "You know how it is, you put things off for a day, the next thing you know it's a hundred years later."

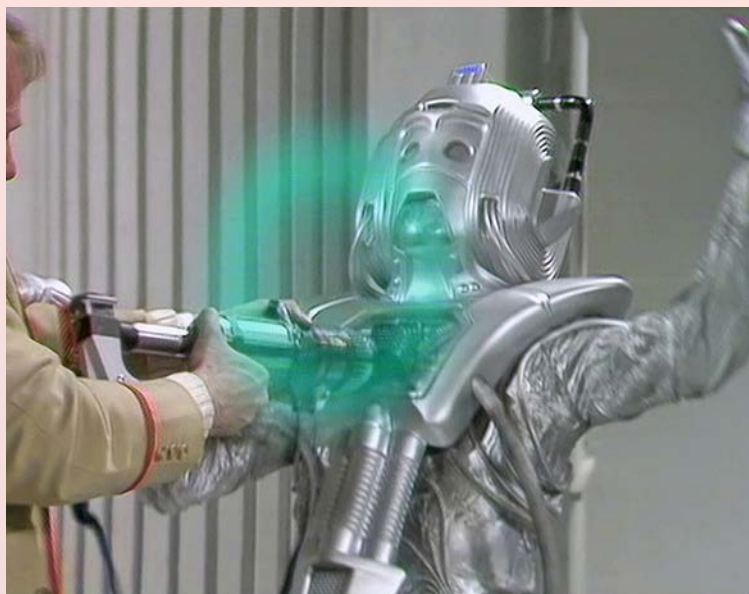
“Quite often he’ll land in a certain situation and the common sense thing to do would be simply to leave”

Back in 1982, in the pages of the Marvel's *Doctor Who Summer Special*, Peter Davison gave a candid interview at the end of his first season in which he was asked to surmise his own take on the character of the Fifth Doctor. This is what he had to say:

“I think he has a certain amount of tunnel vision! He's not always the wisest of men. Maybe when he sits back and ruminates on the way things have gone he *is* wise, but I think that he's headstrong and he makes more of a mess of things in the short run until he's sorted out his

Always trying to encourage the emotionally limited that life is there to be embraced





When direct action was required the Fifth Doctor didn't hold back

own problems. He doesn't always act for the best. Quite often he'll land in a certain situation and, obviously, the common sense thing to do would be simply to leave – to get out of there because it's dangerous to everyone. But he doesn't get out, he wants to find out what's going on, he's got to explore...and thus he gets embroiled in the story."

The Fifth Doctor loved to explore and we see this headstrong desire to rush into things again and again, from the mysterious empty house of *The Visitation* to the fossil-rich caves of *Earthshock* and the obsolete industrial warehouses of London in *Resurrection of the Daleks*. But we also get to see another side in which the Doctor can be headstrong for opposite reasons: not wanting to ease the eternal agonies of people who bought it upon themselves in *Mawdryn Undead* or his strong reluctance to intervene in the affairs of Frontios. But he's still the

same Doctor that we've always known, and he always gets involved and does the right thing, whether by choice or force of circumstance.

The Fifth Doctor did have a darker side to him than his youthful appearance might suggest. We saw him shoot Cybermen in *Earthshock*, display his continued ability to sword fight in *The King's Demons*, and pick up a gun with the expressed intention of executing Davros in *Resurrection of the Daleks*, something he thankfully declines to do. He wasn't the first Doctor to take up arms or enact

The Fifth Doctor loved to explore and we see this headstrong desire to rush into things again and again

violence, and he certainly wouldn't be the last, but as Seasons 19 to 21 progressed, we began to see the casualty rate becoming higher, culminating in Tegan's reason for leaving the Doctor:

Tegan: "A lot of good people have died today. I think I'm sick of it."

The Doctor: "You think I wanted it this way?"

Tegan: "No. It's just I don't think I can go on."

As far as the making of the series went, the 1982-84 seasons faced the usual budgetary restrictions and sometimes difficult story development. Peter Davison was not too impressed with *Time-Flight* and expressed feelings about the series during his tenure, noting that some stories were "suspect" and possibly written by authors not familiar with the tropes of science-fiction. Despite these challenges, Davison's portrayal remained consistent throughout the series, the actor always giving it 100%. He never flagged, not even in the face of the risible Myrka, and stuck to his decision to stay in the role for no more than three years, one he almost regretted on the last day of filming when he had cause to wonder, "What have I done?"

During his tenure the series as well as the character were regenerated, emphasising one of the programme's underlying themes: the constant need for renewal. In doing so, the Fifth Doctor brought a vigour, optimism and youthful dynamism to the show, something we've seen repeated across the modern series. It's a strategy that works, but the Fifth Doctor did it first. ☸

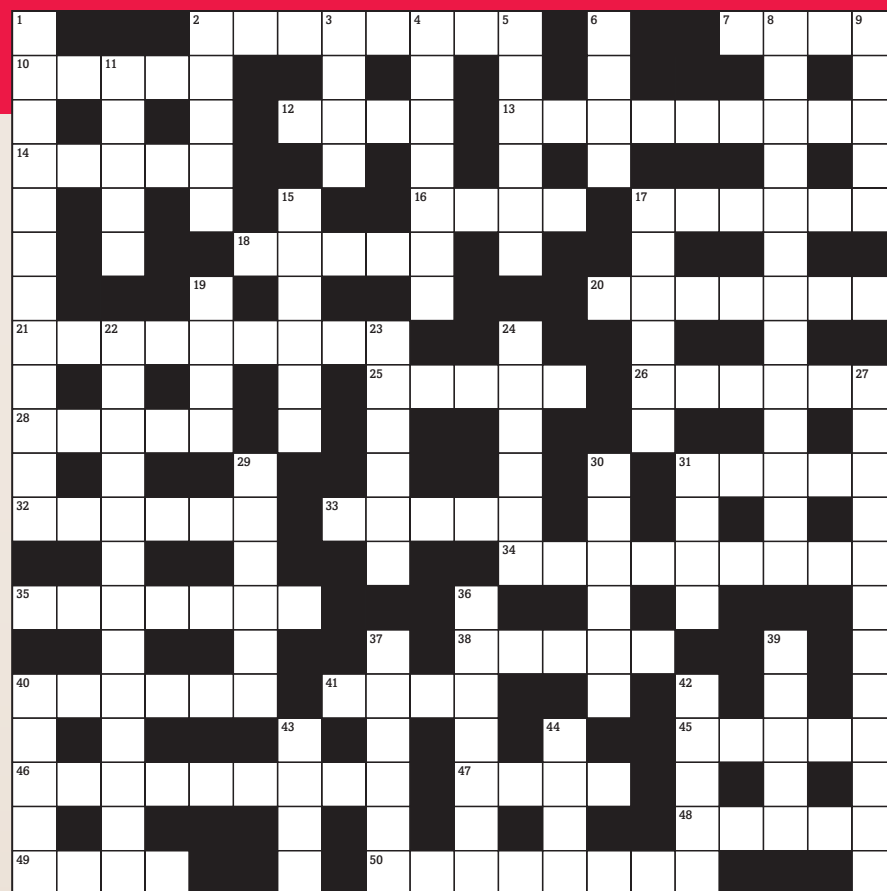


The Fifth Doctor loves a cryptic crossword, especially when it's about his encounters!

SET BY CRYPTIC WHO crypticwho.com

ACROSS

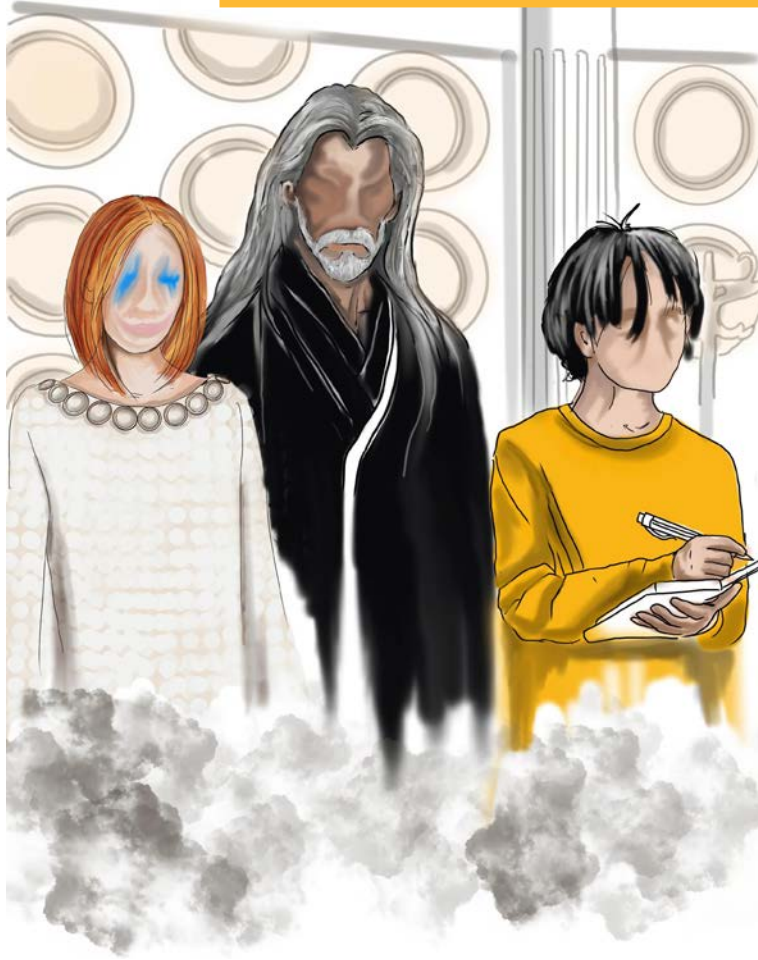
- 2 Baltic Beelzebub? (3,5)
 7 To grope – something which Cybermen can't do! (4)
 10 Companion arc I'd write (5)
 12 Peter is odd, but Colin is... (4)
 13 Pine for the Index File, perhaps, recording travels (6,3)
 14 She's Lon's mum, rather than a confused woman (5)
 16 Flaky weather in *Time-Flight* (4)
 17 Grebe and Richard, initially, circle crewmember in *Earthshock* (6)
 18 Mauls around a big face in a wall (5)
 20 Captain Wrack's pastry prices, we hear, in *Enlightenment* (7)
 21 Mad Master about city in arc (9)
 25 To stop in Sea Base Four? (5)
 26 Alf's stone in Tegan's tiara, perhaps? (6)
 28 Thin surface layer, we hear, on Terminus employees (5)
 31 *Enlightenment* writer Barbara in *Last of the Summer Wine*? (5)
 32 Icthar actor Comer – from 1066? (6)
 33 To combine, such as Omega with the Doctor (5)
 34 The lifeblood is heavy in *Time-Flight* (9)
 35 *Doctor Who* summer screenings in a time loop, perhaps? (7)
 38 Ecstasy with man, we hear – sending messages in the future? (5)
 40 Vehicle, we hear, and actress Stubbs for Kinda girl (6)
 41 Ringway, for sure, gets beat up (4)
 45 Play game with nothing for old Time Lord (5)
 46 Musical tomes used by Adric and Nyssa to record experiments? (9)
 47 A Sir upsets Kinda man (4)
 48 Pitch Guardian's colour (5)
 49 See a returning nemesis, initially, on the Planet of Fire (4)
 50 Sailors forever? (8)



Answers page 163

DOWN

- 1 Person from a fake place with Fidel and Valerie in a vehicle (12)
 2 Craps out Kamelion's metal after his death in *Planet of Fire*? (5)
 3 (&43D) Koala Dev orbits planet (4,4)
 4 Saves NA, turning it over for small relative (7)
 5 Tony upsets the time-line, initially, for mercenary (6)
 6 Companion on the edge (4)
 8 A revealing story (13)
 9 Richard, initially, in gaol break for fake god (5)
 11 Frontios man on the spectrum (5)
 15 Star I'd orbit in time machine (6)
 17 Freighter captain in ship's prisons, we hear (6)
 19 Partially cook Manussan fortune teller, we hear (4)
 22 Arson upsets technician who sees Concorde disappear (5,8)
 23 Upstream Time Lord (6)
 24 Lying about Nyssa during *Kinda* (6)
 27 Companion has beverage with *Blake's 7* crewmember and another companion on two vehicles (5,7)
 29 Manifestation of the Mara having a chat, we hear (6)
 30 Time Lady has a bit of a taste for muddled AI (6)
 31 Gay humour like the Kinda's settlement, perhaps? (4)
 36 Four at the bottom of the ocean (3,4)
 37 Short Elizabeth, say, in car (6)
 39 Guevara in American city for Ambri's assistant (5)
 40 Monarch possessive of demons (5)
 42 Tom with BS where Rassilon and Cybermen set up (5)
 43 see 3 Down
 44 Indication that Dalek agent ditched tea, we hear, for mixed gins (4)



Time Heals

The TARDIS was eerily silent.

Tegan frowned: her fingers impatiently tapped the console. Nyssa sipped a cup of tea and the Doctor, as ever, was actively ignoring the tense atmosphere, busying himself under the console, mending the latest technical calamity to befall the TARDIS shields.

The occupants of the TARDIS felt a sudden, palpable change in the air, as three figures shimmered into view. The Doctor emerged from underneath the console and leapt up, instinctively putting himself in front of Tegan and Nyssa. When he focused, the figures were clearly in front of him, but he noticed they seemed to disappear on the periphery of his vision. He surveyed the trio. One was a bearded man in his fifties, with grey hair flowing into his black clothing. He had a haunted, haughty countenance. A woman, slightly younger, had auburn hair framing her pale face, and partially covering her piercing blue eyes. She wore white, her clothes almost blending in with the TARDIS. The final figure, a teenager dressed in burnt yellow, had black hair hanging limply over his furrowed brow. He was sullen and engrossed in a notebook, agitatedly scribbling away. The Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa felt destabilised by their presence.

"How do you do," greeted the Doctor, focusing his vision. He proffered a hand to the male figure, to no response. "I'm the Doctor, this is Tegan and Nyssa. May I ask who you are

and how you got here?" The three figures said nothing, but stood stoically.

Nyssa looked to the Doctor for reassurance, "Doctor, it's freezing in here. I can see my breath. Are they responsible?" The Doctor moved closer to the figures and went to reach into his pocket, before realising that was a futile gesture. "I really need to get a new sonic screwdriver, such an effective shorthand tool," he sighed.

He looked at the man. "I really must insist you tell me who you are and what you want." The man said nothing and stared impassively at the Doctor, who returned to the console.

"They're not attacking us, that's something," said Tegan.

"Well, I trust the TARDIS enough to know the old girl would have expunged them had that been the case," replied the quizzical Time Lord, tapping the console affectionately. He then swept his hands dramatically over the controls, flicking switches and pushing buttons, whilst fixing his gaze on the figures. "That said," he said pointedly, "there is a possibility that the TARDIS actually invited them in."

Tegan rolled her eyes: "Well, can't you ask 'the old girl'? It's not as if you don't talk to your ship all the time."

The Doctor glared at her, "It's always nice to be polite in front of strangers, Tegan, even cryptically silent ones."

"They may not understand us," offered Nyssa.

"Well, I've just reversed the polarity on the TARDIS

translator,” replied the Doctor, running his hand through his hair. “We’re actually speaking around six trillion different alien languages all at once, but the TARDIS will make sure our new friends are attuned to the one they can understand.”

“You may have missed one,” whispered Nyssa.

The Doctor looked over his spectacles at the figures. “Well, I’ve made sure I’ve accounted for the main humanoid languages. May have missed the odd vegetable sound here and there, but they don’t look as if they’re sprouting anything.” The Doctor surveyed the three figures who stared back coldly.

“Right,” he exclaimed, frustratingly acknowledging the strangers. “If this silence is going to persist, I have another solution.”



The White Room in the TARDIS was a new experience for the two companions. The Doctor had explained it was a noise-cancelling safe space, a thought chamber to enable him to focus his psychic powers. He now sat motionless in front of the strangers, who had silently acquiesced to his invitation into the room. In the absence of the sonic screwdriver and a mute trio, it was the only way to resolve the mystery. Tegan and Nyssa watched as the Doctor furrowed his brow in concentration as his inquisitiveness and analytical mind was met with complete silence. He was getting nothing. Each member of the group was a tabula rasa. A blank space.

“Strewth, this is creepy, how long has it been now?” Tegan whispered, glancing at Nyssa, who sat beside her on a row of chairs behind the Doctor.

“Five minutes after you last asked,” she curtly replied.

“Right!” The Doctor exclaimed, standing bolt upright from his chair in front of the strangers. “I’m stumped!”

“It’s always about cricket, isn’t it?” sneered Tegan, as the Doctor opened the door of the White Room, returning to the TARDIS console.

“Hang on,” shouted Tegan at the preoccupied Time Lord. She looked at Nyssa with raised eyebrows. “Did he just leave us in here, with them?”

The Doctor flicked some switches on the console, expecting Tegan and Nyssa to have followed him. He looked behind and saw the door to the White Room had disappeared. The Doctor suddenly felt pinpricks of intense heat at his temples and he staggered, leaning on the console. Steadying himself he blinked blearily. “Oh, yes,” he said to himself. “Now I know exactly what’s going on.”



In the White Room, Tegan ran her hands over the blank, featureless wall, where the door had been seconds before.

“No need to panic,” reassured Nyssa. “We’re still in the TARDIS, we’re quite safe.”

Tegan wasn’t so certain, “They’re still in here with us.” She nodded towards the figures, still sitting motionless in their



chairs. The room suddenly flickered and grew darker.

As Tegan searched for a way out of the room, the woman who had been sitting in her chair seconds before appeared directly behind her. She touched Tegan’s shoulder and the Australian gasped at the icy touch. The woman smiled and spoke, “No need to be frightened, love. Just want to ask a question. Where am I?”

Tegan nervously replied, “Well, this may be a shock, but you’re in a spaceship.”

She realised just how silly it sounded admitting that to what she assumed was another human being. To her surprise, the woman laughed. “Not again! If I had a dollar for every time I was scooped up by one of those...”

Nyssa watched as the bearded man smiled, then joined in the woman’s amusement. “Happened again, has it, my dear?”

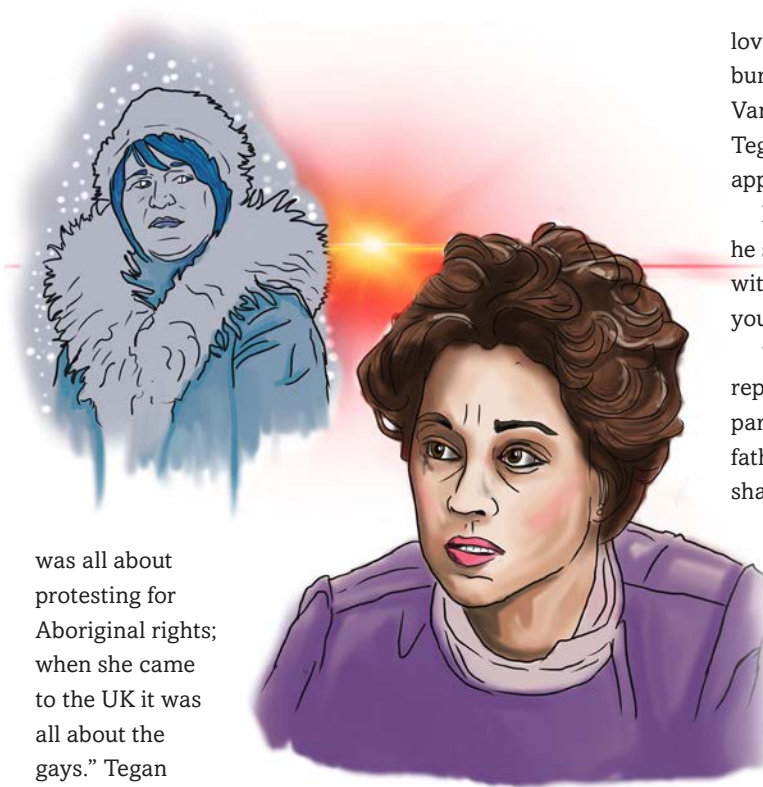
The teenager rolled his eyes. “I could have told you this was a spaceship from the minute we arrived,” he sneered. “It’s hardly rocket science.” The man and woman burst into laughter at the teenager’s unintentional pun. He merely shrugged and carried on scribbling on his notepad.

Tegan tentatively glanced at Nyssa, “Are they going mad, or are we?”

“We’ll do you a deal,” the woman said, returning to her chair. “Tell us one story about your past and we’ll tell you who we are.”

Tegan looked at Nyssa, who, seeing no alternative, nodded her agreement at her friend. Tegan paused and then trepidatiously spoke. “Alright, it doesn’t seem like we have much of a choice.”

Tegan sat down on the Doctor’s chair in front of the woman. “I never really got on with my parents, always having blues with them. Aunt Vanessa, though, she was a diamond. Always fighting, always sticking up for people. Back in Oz she



was all about protesting for Aboriginal rights; when she came to the UK it was all about the gays." Tegan smiled and the woman returned her warmth.

"One night, when I was staying with her, there was a vigil, well more of a party really. A young man she worked with was harassed and killed outside a pub. All of his friends were there at the vigil." Tegan looked down as she visualised the scene. "I remember how angry Aunt Vanessa was. Boiling with fury and rage at the injustice. Everyone was silent as she launched into this supportive speech about tolerance, kindness. It was a bit like the stuff the Doctor comes out with now. Only difference is he doesn't swear like a docker." Tegan looked at the woman tenderly. "When she had finished everyone went in for a group hug. I couldn't see her under the rugby scrum of them all!" She laughed at the memory. A heartbeat later, her countenance darkened. "All that fire, that compassion, that

love. All snuffed out in an instant by the Master." Tegan buried her face in her hands, her torment and pain at Vanessa's loss overwhelming her. The woman gently brushed Tegan's hair, and glanced knowingly at the man, who approached Nyssa.

Nyssa was surprised she felt calm in the man's presence as he stood beside her. An unusual thing to feel for a stranger with no idea of his motives. He smiled beatifically at her. "And you, my dear? What is your story?"

"I had few stories to tell until I met the Doctor," Nyssa replied sadly. "Traken was a peaceful planet. For the most part I was content, happy. But I remember the night I told my father..." She looked away from the man, embarrassed at sharing the memory with a stranger. "We were in the Grove.

Such a beautiful place. The peach trees in full bloom and the air rich with the smell of the blossom. I could hear the Night Hawks begin to screech as the suns set. I was...confused."

The man smiled and touched her hand. She recoiled slightly at its iciness, but this was offset by the warmth of his understanding gaze. "I had these feelings," she said hesitantly, "and they scared me.

They had nothing to do with what was familiar to me, with science or the order of things. I told my father what was in my soul and he simply hugged me. I laid my head on his chest, listening to his heartbeat. I always felt safe with him and I knew as long as I was in his arms, I would be safe forever." Her face crumpled with anguish. "I cannot believe I will never see him again." The man outstretched his arms and Nyssa felt herself fall into them willingly.

"He is still very proud of you," he said as she wept. She didn't notice as she lay her head on the stranger's chest that there was no heartbeat.

The teenager tutted dismissively at the companions and observed coldly, "Feelings are overrated, They have no place on your endless journey through the Vortex. It would be far more practical to sort out the mathematical equation of the cyber-propulsive bio-geometric transducer. That will stabilise the TARDIS landing instead of the juddering materialisation.

Girls crying won't help with that."

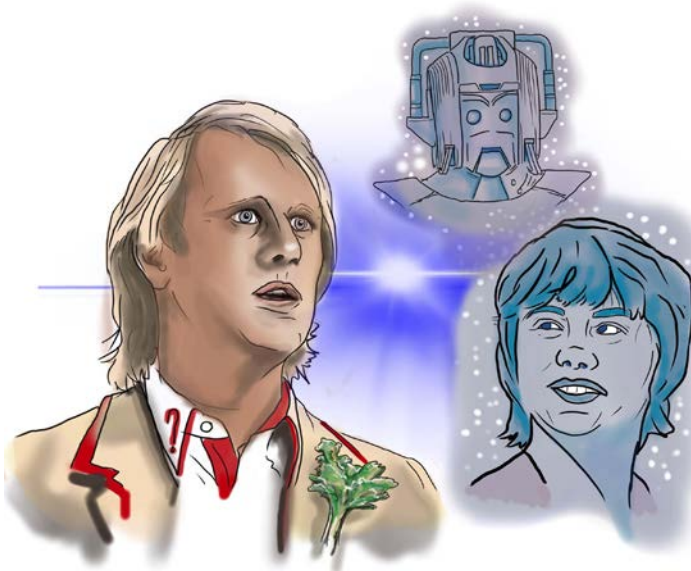
The Doctor angrily emerged from the console room through the newly materialised White Room door.

"Feelings are never overrated! It looks like you found your voice just in time to spout claptrap! It's not all about science, gears and motors. That's not what binds us together, what unifies the universe. There's kindness, hope, love..." The Doctor realised he was shouting at no one except for Tegan and Nyssa, comforting each other. The three figures had disappeared.

He approached his companions, held out his hand. In his palm were tiny flecks of moving matter. "Simulkra," he said. "Tiny alien parasites.

They feed on emotion, particularly grief. Must have blown in when the TARDIS shields were down." He looked compassionately at Tegan and Nyssa, "Those three





strangers were, well, I suppose you could call them TARDIS antibodies. Engineered to help you confront your pain before the Simulkra could feast on it.” The Doctor closed his palm tightly. “I knew you were both sad, but I hadn’t realised the depth of your grief. Human emotions, you see, I’m not overly in tune with them. The TARDIS is a clever old thing, creating those three strangers, to get you two to talk about Aunt Vanessa, Tremas and...Adric.”

“So...it was therapy?” asked Tegan.

“Of a kind,” the Doctor replied. “None of us has really dealt with our losses. Not our fault really, we never have the chance to talk, whizzing through time and space helping others, never having the time to help each other. Until now. If we’re to live and carry on, we have to honour and treasure the memories of those we have lost...keep them alive in our thoughts without fear of the pain. Otherwise, their unwilling sacrifices will mean nothing.” The Doctor lowered his head, suddenly unable to make eye contact with his companions. “You both lost people because of the Master...because of me. It’s time I said sorry...the TARDIS helped me do that.”

“Well, Doctor,” said Tegan “Sounds like you know more about human emotions than you think you do.”



Hours later, with the Simulkra expunged into the Vortex, the Doctor knocked gently on Nyssa’s door. She sat on her bed, hugging her knees. “Just checking you’re alright,” he said. “That was quite a marathon chat with Tegan.”

Nyssa nodded solemnly. “I had been keeping in so much. It was good to let it go.”

“It must be hard for you, the Master still having your father’s face. Difficult to grieve for someone seemingly still alive. I promise you, one day he will pay for that.”

The Doctor turned to leave, but Nyssa spoke. “It must be so easy for you, to use your ship to visit people you’ve lost.”

He paused. “Death affects me exactly the same as it does you, Nyssa. It isn’t always possible to go back.”

Nyssa sat up sharply. “But you could, couldn’t you? Take me to see my father, one last time?”

The Doctor shook his head. “I wouldn’t put you through that pain. It would be the height of cruelty to give you the temptation of telling Tremas what was to come, knowing that would change the course of time. Your actions could potentially destroy the universe. I would never let you have that on your conscience.” He moved towards the door of Nyssa’s room, stopping to say sadly, “I’m sorry.”



Tegan stood before the TARDIS viewscreen. She hurriedly wiped away a tear as the Doctor joined her. “How is she?”

“Early days,” the Doctor replied. “She needs to process not only the loss of her father, but her entire planet. That may take some time.”

“And you didn’t know what the TARDIS was up to?” asked Tegan.

“Well,” replied the Doctor, “I put two and two together when I felt the Simulkra start nibbling away in my mind. Pesky things found out there’s quite a lift shaft down to my emotions.” He gently patted the console. “Still, it’s good to know the old girl can yet surprise me.”

“Are you sure they’re all gone?” asked Tegan, suddenly feeling itchy.

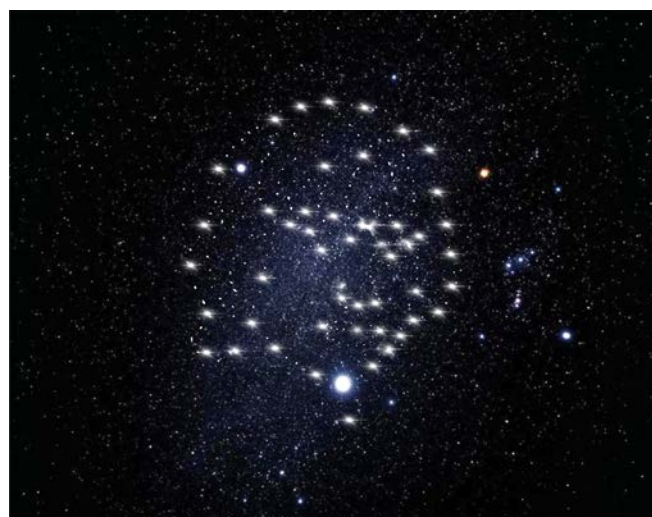
“Oh yes, the TARDIS protected you two and then debugged itself. My friends are always the priority.” The Doctor fixed his gaze on the viewscreen. “I knew a splendid chap,” he said, wistfully, “Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, amazing poet. He said, ‘There is no grief like the grief that does not speak.’ That’s what the TARDIS did, got you...us... to speak.”

Tegan followed the Doctor’s gaze to the viewscreen. “Well, if we’re trading poems, I once saw on a headstone: ‘Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, love leaves a memory no one can steal.’”

The Doctor smiled approvingly. “Look, that star,” he told Tegan, pointing, “top left, glowing slightly brighter than the others. I’ve officially named it. That, Tegan, is the Adric star.”

Tegan smiled, “Well, he was all about stars.”

The Doctor nodded. “Excellence,” he sighed, “pure excellence.” ☐



SEASON 20

starring

**PETER DAVISON
JANET FIELDING
MARK STRICKSON
SARAH SUTTON**

with guest stars

**ANTHONY AINLEY, NICHOLAS COURTNEY
and VALENTINE DYALL**

**plus COLIN BAKER, MICHAEL GOUGH, PAUL
JERRICHO, LEONARD SACHS, JOHN CARSON,
MARTIN CLUNES, PRESTON LOCKWOOD, BRIAN
MILLER, JONATHON MORRIS, COLETTE O'NEIL,
DAVID COLLINGS, ANDREW BURT, LIZA GODDARD,
DOMINIC GUARD, LYNDIA BARON, KEITH BARRON,
TONY CAUNTER, LEE JOHN, CYRIL LUCKHAM,
ISLA BLAIR, GERALD FLOOD, CHRISTOPHER
VILLIERS and FRANK WINDSOR**

**Script editing by
ERIC SAWARD**

**Produced by
JOHN NATHAN-TURNER**



Artwork by Owen Ruthven
owenruthven.myportfolio.com

Arc of Infinity

Legendary Time Lord Omega hijacks the Doctor's body to recreate his own, but becomes a living anti-matter bomb

WRITTEN BY **JOHNNY BYRNE** • DIRECTED BY **RON JONES**
 AIRDATES **3, 5, 11, 12 JANUARY 1983** • RATINGS **7.2m, 7.3m, 6.9m, 7.2m**
 NOVELISATION BY **TERRANCE DICKS** • PUBLISHED **21 JULY 1983**

Anniversaries are a funny thing. In the modern age we expect everything and the kitchen sink for each one, with overlapping storylines and end-of-creation stakes. The 1980s were really no different in many respects, but for the twentieth anniversary producer John Nathan-Turner decided to have a whole season as celebration. Thus Season 20 opens with a full-on tour de force of nostalgia as we get not just another trip to Gallifrey with politics and conspiracy, but a sequel to the tenth anniversary story with the return of Omega. There are also continuity references galore and a foreign location shoot. All this makes for a fast-moving story that delivers all you might want for the start of such a season, at least on the surface.

The story is, however, fraught with inconsistencies, due in the main from the initial scripting through to the forced inclusion of the foreign location filming and its need to reintroduce Tegan. It is, however, possibly the last real look at Gallifrey without a more cynical feel in the classic series. It also gives a glimpse

Visually Arc of Infinity is great. The issue is when you stop and look at the story

of a TARDIS team that won't be given a chance to develop, as the Doctor and Nyssa are travelling alone until the final episode. Visually the serial is great, with TARDIS corridors, more looks at Gallifreyan life and a romp around Amsterdam. The issue is when you stop and look at the story.

Unfortunately what we get for much of the plot is a remake of *The Deadly Assassin* (1976) as a mortal threat leads to the Doctor being forcibly recalled to Gallifrey after an outside attack on him. Meanwhile, a Time Lord colludes in the shadows, ultimately revealed to be a member of the High Council. We even get the Matrix being taken over and the only solution is to kill the Doctor.

It's a great shame that over the course of the 1980s the Time Lords go

Artwork by
Andy Lambert



from powerful beings as seen in *The War Games* (1969) and through the Pertwee years, to a political parody of corrupt officials who are constantly betraying high office for personal gain. This theme will repeat in *The Five Doctors* before being ramped up within *The Trial of a Time Lord* (1986). This, then, is a final real look at Gallifrey itself and it loses some of its majesty here as, like *The Invasion of Time* (1978) before it, it seems to mainly consist of bland corridors with the occasional comfy sofa or a random wine bar for characters to loiter in. Meanwhile, a coterie of the High Council sits and debates in their high collars while Chancellery guards drop like flies to a trigger-happy Nyssa.

It's ironic that throughout the story no one can guess what the force grabbing control of the Matrix could be. If only they'd encountered a creature of anti-matter bent on taking control of Gallifrey by using the Doctor before...

This is because although JNT wanted a returning villain he didn't see the need

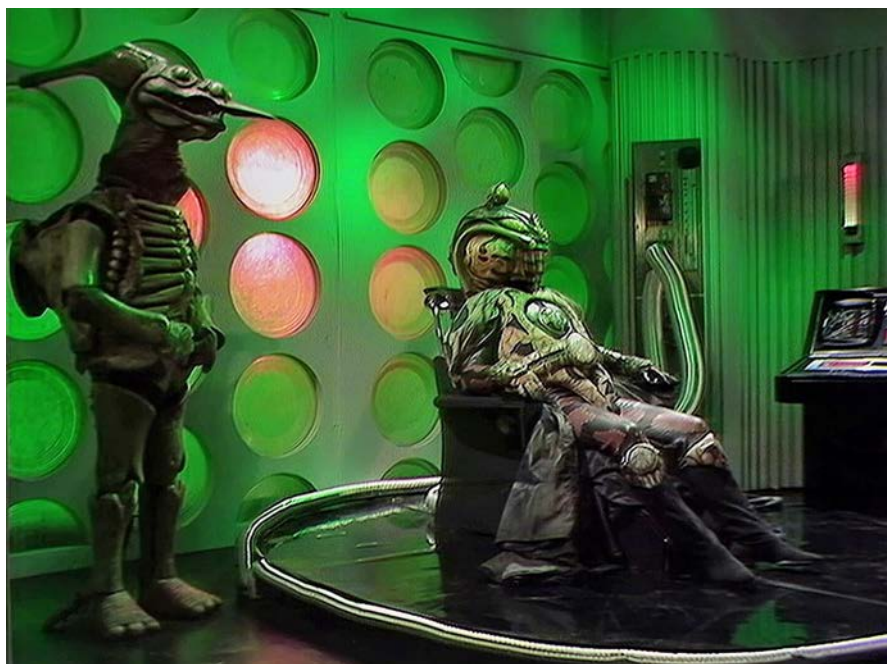
to revisit his previous story or have a direct link to it. Here instead we get a look at Omega without, at the start at least, a need for revenge. Gone is the ranting of *The Three Doctors* (1972-73) to be replaced by a more reasoned approach. He talks of it being time for him to return and help build a better world. Councillor Hedin is helping him not for personal power but because he sees him as the hero of Gallifrey and one who needs rescuing no matter the cost. Indeed this seems to be mutual respect and it's the news of Hedin's death that turns Omega to real anger. There was more of this relationship in the original script but it was later cut.

Borusa too is somewhat different from his previous appearances. The cold calculating politician behind the scenes is now a more enfeebled persona who seems to be going through regenerations faster than the Doctor. He doesn't lead and is almost a background character throughout. The real stars of Gallifrey are the Castellan (who will be the only

cast member to return in *The Five Doctors*) and his number two Commander Maxil, played by Colin Baker giving a standout performance. These two seem to be the only proactive members of the council, even when getting things wrong. Maxil is single-minded to a point but his forthright, almost hostile nature is a complete opposite to the compassion of this incarnation of the Doctor and perhaps that's why his face will be chosen come the Doctor's next regeneration.

The Doctor's return home is also full of continuity opportunities. When he's repairing the TARDIS at the start we get comments on the console damage from *Earthshock* and the failure of the supposed state of grace mentioned in *The Hand of Fear* (1976). This is followed by references to the TARDIS recall circuit both by Damon on Gallifrey and by the Doctor, declaring, "It's only been used twice before in our history," presumably in *The War Games* and *The Deadly Assassin*. It's odd we have all these references and even the Doctor asking after Leela, but the need to reference *The Three Doctors* and Omega is kept to a minimum. It's also entertaining how many friends the Doctor has back home considering both his leaving and subsequent exile. Damon, Hedin, even Chancellor Thalia are all seemingly old acquaintances.

Nyssa is given plenty of opportunity to show her skills, putting her scientific knowledge to use alongside mounting a passionate defence of the Doctor and avoiding punishment despite gunning down guards repeatedly. Meanwhile, Tegan is there to justify the Amsterdam setting for the finale, as apparently it's the only place in the universe below sea level as needed to power the fusion converter Omega is using. This rather contrived plot point is a consequence of the decision to have Tegan leave at the end of Season 19. This does at least help her overall character development – she no longer has the incessant need to get to Heathrow having lost her job so wants to travel with the Doctor again. She can also finally change her clothes from her attendant outfit. The story continues to show you don't want to be





related to her, however, as cousin Colin takes the brunt of Omega's menial tasks.

As for Omega's plan, it makes no sense whatsoever. Having supposedly dissipated after the matter/anti-matter explosion in *The Three Doctors*, he's now able to cross into our universe via an area of space known as the Arc of Infinity where an exploded Q-star shields anti-matter. His transfer is unstable, however, and on reaching Earth Omega's body begins to decay. Then there's the bonding. Omega can return if he bonds molecularly with another Time Lord and takes their form. This fundamentally fails but Omega says he can deal with it, with no further explanation. But it's fine because he has

a TARDIS, which can't be made of anti-matter or it would explode. In order to enter Omega's TARDIS, his creation the Ergon must shoot you with a matter converter. But you can just leave the TARDIS without being converted back. One has to just go with it at this point.

Omega's transformation into the Doctor is brilliantly done and Davison plays it well, albeit with the gravelly tones of Ian Collier. The chase scene is an excuse to run around Amsterdam as Omega's form decays, with Davison covered in rice krispies. It's a shame we don't get more verbal sparring between the two. The cut back to Gallifrey as the chase continues, to tell us that the anti-matter explosion is coming, diminishes

the feel of Gallifrey as the High Council crowd into the control office like a panto troupe. The resolution also gives us no real satisfaction as, after a slow building of the matter converter, the Doctor simply uses it to send Omega back to his anti-matter domain, then we're off to the TARDIS ready for Tegan to rejoin.

Arc of Infinity is full of so much promise and on a single watch is an enjoyable romp. But it seethes with so much missed opportunity, mostly due to the various enforced story changes and needless self-referencing. Omega is wasted, caught much like his character between reinvention and continuation, and ultimately this story is more anti-matter than mattering. ☐

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

Although I liked this story, especially because of the continuity of Omega and Gallifrey, I felt deep down that there were many errors in it. Such as, if the weapon used on Omega in episode four was a 'matter converter', why didn't Tegan, Colin and Robin have to be converted back, since they were all shot with it? Also, I felt that the odds were totally against Omega hiding on Earth (there must be millions of planets out there), not to mention yards away from Tegan's cousin. The effects were very good, though, especially the 'concave lens' design of the Arc of Infinity itself and the superimposing of Omega and the Doctor together in the termination scene and the bonding in episode one. Brilliant stuff!

Trevor Phillippo, TARDIS, Volume 8, Number 1, March 1983

Although most of the costumes were splendid, with the Ergon we were treated to one of the most absurd sights seen in the programme. He was really quite indescribable... Thankfully the show was saved by some good moments. One of the most chilling scenes was of Colin's mindless expression after he emerges from the crypt in episode three, marred slightly by the incidental music which didn't help to create the right atmosphere... My favourite scene was in episode four as Omega seems drawn to a mass of people gathered around an organ playing a little tune. This scene conveys such a sense of peace that is brutally shattered moments later as we see Omega's body beginning to corrode.

David Atkins, TARDIS, Volume 8, Number 1, March 1983

Artwork by
Andy Lambert



Snakedance

Five hundred years after being exiled, the Mara is returning to dominate the planet Manussa – and Tegan is its conduit

WRITTEN BY **CHRISTOPHER BAILEY** • DIRECTED BY **FIONA CUMMING**
 AIRDATES **18, 19, 25, 26 JANUARY 1983** • RATINGS **6.7m, 7.7m, 6.6m, 7.4m**
 NOVELISATION BY **TERRANCE DICKS** • PUBLISHED **12 JANUARY 1984**

S*naledance* deepens and expands the philosophical and spiritual themes introduced in its predecessor *Kinda*. While that explored an enlightened but seemingly primitive society confronted by the manifestation of its own inner demons, *Snakedance* shifts the focus to a civilisation that has forgotten. The Mara, once a feared psychic force, has been reduced to folklore, its symbols absorbed into culture and now the subject of carnival, academic trinkets, profit and superficiality.

In contrast to *Kinda*, which ranked at the bottom of the *Doctor Who Monthly* poll that year, *Snakedance* claimed the number-one spot for Season 20. Many fans now regard the former as superior, but this, a more accessible story, helped

viewers better understand the complex themes introduced in its prequel.

In *Snakedance*, the Mara has become commodified. Snake ornaments decorate festival stalls and puppet shows turn the serpent into comic relief. Even the fortune teller, once a symbol of spiritual insight, admits to Tegan that

**The Mara, once
a feared psychic
force, has been
reduced to
folklore**

her readings are fake, a hollow make-believe. The story shows how easily profound truths can be trivialised when they're no longer understood.

Brian Miller (Elisabeth Sladen's husband and a familiar face and voice in the Whoniverse) plays Dugdale, a showman who embodies the story's key theme of illusion. "I was a humble student of life's mysteries. A treader of the secret pathways," he proclaims. "All rubbish, of course. At the end of the day, there's always somebody standing there with their hand out, waiting to be paid. I decided long ago that person might as well be me." With this cynical admission, Dugdale rejects the spiritual optimism of his youth in favour of the default low-level consciousness of his decadent society's culture.



Janet Fielding once again delivers a standout performance as the Mara-possessed Tegan. Unlike in *Kinda*, where her time as the Mara's vessel was brief but still incredibly memorable, *Snakedance* takes more time to delve deeper into her lingering psychological scars. The Doctor's earlier dismissal of her pain at the end of *Kinda* ("But it's gone now, Tegan.") shows the same emotional detachment he presented to his companions following Adric's death in *Earthshock* (offering a "treat to cheer ourselves up" at the start of *Time-Flight*). He quickly brushed aside their loss, just as he brushed aside the pain of Tegan's possession. Back in the early 1980s we were taught to just carry on and forget, as demonstrated again in the opening scenes of *The Visitation* when Nyssa suggests to Tegan that she just "forget this unpleasantness". Effectively, bury it deep. It's telling that only in the more trauma-aware twenty-first century do the Fifth Doctor and Tegan get to share a long overdue moment of therapeutic



reflection in their *Tales of the TARDIS*.

A youthful Martin Clunes makes his television debut as Lon, a bored and moody prince whose simmering resentment towards his parents and what he sees as his superficial royal responsibilities eventually curdles into cruelty under the Mara's influence. The dynamic between mother (Lady Tanha, played by Colette O'Neil) and son is one of emotional enmeshment. Lon resents his mother's control but lacks the maturity or self-awareness to break free. His petulance and sarcasm are signs of rebellion, but they're shallow as he's yet to develop a strong identity of his own. Oh, how the Mara will enjoy manipulating that. Tanha regards the ceremonial duties of her role with a thinly veiled boredom but her subtle mockery hints at a sense of passive-aggressive superiority. She participates out of duty, upholding tradition more from obligation than belief, even stifling a yawn at one point. And yet at the climax, when her possessed son begins

the ritual that will bring the Mara back into physical form, Tanha gains a moment of clarity and courage, overriding Lon's authority and permitting the Doctor to speak.

Ambril (John Carson) and Dojjen (Preston Lockwood) embody opposing world views on Manussa. Ambril, the fiercely rationalist Director of Historical Research, clings rigidly to academic orthodoxy, dismissing any hint of spiritual significance. He scoffs at a ceremonial mask representing the Six Faces of Delusion, unable to see any meaning beyond its appearance or financial value. The mask shows only five faces, the sixth being the wearer's own, a metaphor for self-deception that Ambril, ironically, cannot see. In stark contrast, his predecessor Dojjen, now a tranquil spiritual hermit, embraces a deeper understanding of the Mara as not a myth but a real psychic force. Through inner awareness, he teaches the Doctor that the path to defeating the Mara lies not in intellect or force, but in finding power in the still point of the mind.

Chela (Jonathon Morris) mirrors the role of Todd in *Kinda*, serving as an open-minded ally to the Doctor and a quiet counterweight to the dismissive authority figures that dominate their respective societies. Both characters embody the central theme of open-mindedness versus institutional rigidity, acting as subtle but pivotal catalysts for change. Chela becomes the Doctor's conduit to deeper understanding. Unlike Ambril, whose dogmatic scepticism blinds him to the truth, Chela is curious, interested in the meaning behind tradition and quietly perceptive. His willingness to question the official narrative leads the Doctor to a crucial meeting with Dojjen, whose mystical insight proves essential in confronting and defeating the Mara.

Fiona Cumming's direction is marked by a deliberate restraint in contrast to Peter Grimwade's more dynamic style on *Kinda*. In an era of *Doctor Who* often driven by action and spectacle, Cumming's work distinguishes itself through its contemplation on character. As in *Castrovalva* and *Enlightenment*, she permits key scenes to breathe, allowing

the viewer to reflect and discover meaning in both dialogue and silence.

The world-building of Manussa is realised not only through a powerful script and strong performances, but also via a distinct visual flair. Costume and set design contribute to bring Manussan society to life. The costumes, with their soft pastels, flowing fabrics and delicate ornamentation (including a new outfit for Nyssa), have a fairy-tale quality, reminding me of some performances of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. This aesthetic contrasts sharply with the story's darker psychological themes, emphasising how light and naive this civilisation has become.

The physical materialisation of the snake Mara in part four is a marked improvement over the clumsier version seen in *Kinda*, although both were later replaced and CGI enhanced in the Blu-ray special editions. Peter Howell's score reintroduces the haunting 'radiophonic scream' Mara motif he first developed in *Kinda* to chilling effect.

So, was this really the end for the Mara? While it has since uncoiled in various audio dramas and prose, for me its true essence has never quite been recaptured. Christopher Bailey, a practicing Buddhist (but reluctant screenwriter), gave us two scripts reflecting his personal and philosophical beliefs. If the Mara were to return to our TV screens, I'd like it to be portrayed not as the rather superficial 'God of Beasts' namedropped in *The Legend of Ruby Sunday* (2024) but as intended by its author: Bailey's vision brought the Mara to life not just as a monster but as a mirror to the human psyche.

What might a third Mara story look like? Perhaps it would bring it down to Earth, into a world fractured by identity politics, dominated by narcissistic leaders, and obsessed with social media and image over substance. In such a world, the Mara would thrive, feeding on our fears, our polarised politics, our cancel culture and our egos. A final chapter could show us how the harsh rationalism of the 2020s, while having advanced our civilisation and brought about increased equality and human rights (though not for all), has dulled our

intuition and spiritual awareness. I can imagine a 12-foot snake towering above the Houses of Parliament, bloated politicians inside partying on cheese and wine while the public remain trapped in fear and delusion. Because as Dojjen teaches us, fear is the only poison.

Some might know philosopher John Vervaeke's recent series of lectures on

Bailey's vision is of the Mara as a mirror to the human psyche

YouTube exploring 'The Meaning Crisis'. He explains how, just as on Manussa, our modern society has lost touch with the practices and wisdom that once helped people find purpose, leaving many vulnerable to inner confusion and despair. Maybe a third story with the Mara would help audiences look into their mirrors and face the truth of that.

One of the Buddha's most powerful teachings comes from his encounters with the Mara. Rather than fighting or suppressing him, the Buddha would simply say, "I see you, Mara," and then

calmly invite him to tea, treating him with compassion and awareness. After a traumatised Tegan walked out on the Doctor at the end of *Resurrection of the Daleks*, we didn't meet her on TV again until 2022's *The Power of the Doctor*. How far has she healed? She's still triggered by memories of Adric's death and the Cybermen. But perhaps this experience reconnecting with the Doctor and their therapy on board the memory TARDIS might have finally allowed Tegan to invite the Mara to tea.

In the Season 20 boxset trailer, Tegan does indeed encounter the Mara again. She reminisces with Nyssa, confessing she wished she'd appreciated how lucky she'd been travelling with the Doctor back in the 1980s. Then, in a surreal sequence inspired by the dreams of *Kinda*, she encounters her nemesis once more. The Mara will grant Tegan a reunion with Nyssa and the Doctor if only she will submit. The sequence is left open but I like to think perhaps Tegan did defeat her inner Mara, not by fighting it as her younger self did but by finding her own still point, facing it fully and earning herself some closure.

Because it's not by fighting the Mara that we bring about its destruction. It's by accepting it, submitting, finding a still point. Only then are we free of it. Only then can the Mara truly be destroyed. ☸

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

I didn't like *Kinda* one iota – all plastic jungles, inflatable air-beds and the like – so when I heard about *Snakedance* I could hardly suppress a yawn. How wrong I was. *Snakedance* turned out to be grade one strike. A rich vein of ideas and imagination netted together...and an atmosphere steeped in mysticism, mystery and intrigue.

As a sequel to *Kinda* it was only tenable using the concept of the Mara and giving it an origin and place in the culture of Manussa, a planet... shrouded by the legend of the Mara. As the scene was set, an air of quiet desperation set in with Tegan's behaviour and subsequent disappearance. Janet Fielding was fantastic as a possessed Tegan, a melting pot of simmering hatred, nicely tinged with the fears of her real self. The scenes in the fortune teller's tent were gripping and the use of the snake's skull to depict the Mara was an indication that it hadn't yet returned to full form.

The plot wasn't quite as complex as one might have thought (like *Kinda* really) and whilst no doubt people will go on about its inner significance, it worked for me more in the ability to inspire wonderful set pieces. The final manifestation (or becoming) was nothing short of magnificent.

John Connors, *TARDIS*, Volume 8, Number 1, March 1983

From the DARK PLACES of the Inside

The Mara as a force born from and feeding on our own darkest thoughts and desires was an innovative concept for *Doctor Who*

The Mara is one of the most unsettling concepts in the Davison era. It lurks within the mind, biding its time, hiding in the shadows. Its legend spans centuries. It's seemingly unstoppable. Cybermen can be suffocated and Terileptils toasted, but the Mara slithers into our darkest dreams, dripping the venom of temptation and self-doubt.

'Mara' is a Buddhist term that refers to the embodiment of death or personal desire. In *Kinda*, the Mara eschews the harmonious nature of Deva Loka's indigenous people, exploiting their telepathic abilities for the sake of its own destructive cravings. It wants to rule and isn't concerned about the harm it causes in the process. It exploits concerns about strangers (the 'Not-We' as the *Kinda* call them) and anyone who doesn't follow the pack. The Mara represents toxic selfishness and mob mentality; worst of all, it delights in the pain it causes.

The Mara shares certain traits with the Great One, the eight-legged evildoer of *Planet of the Spiders* (1974). In the commentary for the 2011 DVD release of this story, producer Barry Letts explained the

Great One's all-conquering ambition as a Buddhist concept. "She's trying to make the thinking mind all powerful, take over the world," he said, "which is what we try to do all the time. Instead of experiencing the world as it is and just letting life go on, life be as it is, we're all the time trying to make it 'our way'. She's trying to make the whole universe go her way." In *Kinda*, this is particularly evident when the Mara convinces the inhabitants of Deva Loka to follow Aris on a path of devastation, even though it's against their nature.

Kinda cleverly stretches *Doctor Who*'s format. The monster is, for the most part, incorporeal. Mental illness poses more danger than laser blasts or malfunctioning robots. And in this story we are the invaders. Humans like us – technologically savvy, stiff-upper-lipped – threaten a peaceful planet with bombs, exploitation of the population and the unearthing of a force best left in the dark.

Janet Fielding gets to demonstrate her acting chops and add a dimension to her character rarely seen in a companion. Tegan is disturbed by Dukkha, a man she meets in a nightmare. She



Artwork by Andy Lambert

becomes frustrated, then lonely. Back in the real world, she's playful and ultimately relieved. That's quite an arc, even for a flight attendant.

Villains like the Mara were inevitable for *Doctor Who* to sustain suspense. The audience knew the Doctor could defeat a physical alien, but how would he cope with a creature that couldn't be outmanoeuvred and barely outwitted?

The fascistic Daleks had resonated with the post-World War Two generation, but by the time *Kinda* was broadcast children's awareness of war was garnered mainly from their grandparents. These kids' fears were more psychological: the threat of nuclear annihilation and the ecological demise of the planet were potential, if not tangible, threats. The same kids were, on the whole, disciplined with more care and less wallops than their parents. This generation needed interiorised menaces to root against, along with the traditional favourites like the Master and the Cybermen.

Also, there was no way the BBC could compete with the Hollywood movie industry as audience

interest in sci-fi grew and filming techniques continued to develop. Although the *Doctor Who* effects team were resourceful, they couldn't whip up a convincing Death Star or Xenomorph. Better, then, to focus on what could be achieved with the Beeb's best assets. Its actors could lead us to believe they were possessed or enlightened. The soap opera aspects of the show, like the Doctor's relationships with Tegan and Adric, could continue to develop thanks to a season being broadcast over three months. And writers like Christopher Bailey could

Writers like Christopher Bailey could use their creative skills to bring mature themes to a show that had got silly

use their creative skills to bring mature themes to a show that, in recent years, had got purposefully silly to appease watchdogs like Mary Whitehouse.

Bailey was more interested in the esoteric, socio-political side of *Doctor Who* rather than its technology. “The gadgetry school of science-fiction in novels ended 30 years ago – it’s a Fifties thing,” he told John Tulloch and Manuel Alvarado when they interviewed him for their book *Doctor Who: The Unfolding Text*. Bailey didn’t see the Mara as a red-eyed demon, either. The original script for *Kinda* depended on Fielding’s acting rather than video effects to actualise the villain. Tulloch and Alvarado

With a venomous reputation, a serpent is an ideal form for a twisted villain to take

summarised: “The visitors to the paradise world of the *Kinda* were to bring with them their own cultural repressions – aggression in the case of the colonists, sensuality in the case of the beautiful Tegan.” The Mara’s passing from Tegan to Aris would be indicated by the switch in behaviour of the latter, not spelled out with a slithering tattoo.

While Bailey wanted to get away from *Doctor Who*’s typical hero-versus-monster template, the show’s format brimmed with expectations built up over 19 years. These included melodramatic cliffhangers, sci-fi jargon and the visual depiction of an alien menace. Thus it makes sense that the Mara should become a giant snake at the end of the story.

Notwithstanding the purple puppet in *Kinda*, the snake imagery, the creepy sound effects and music, victims’ red eyes and teeth are some of the most memorable aspects of the Mara tales, especially to impressionable young viewers. The most obvious reason to depict the Mara as a snake is its biblical significance, but the serpent doesn’t just feature in the Book of Genesis. The God-like Rainbow Snake is a creator and a destroyer, and a central figure of the world view of the Aborigines named by ethnographers as the Dreaming. In India, the serpentine Ahi swallowed a prehistoric ocean; when Indra zapped its belly with a thunderbolt, life spewed forth. In China, Nuwa – a snake with the head of a woman – made the first human beings. In Greece, Ophion incubated the primordial egg, hatching place of all created things. The Ouroboros

snake of ancient Egypt (and other cultures), which eats its tail, symbolises the circle of life and death.

At a simpler level, snakes represent danger since some are venomous; they strike fear on a primal level since they’re stealthy but can lash out. The most common dreams around the world concern snakes, permeating the sleep of Indians, Brazilians, Egyptians and dozens of other nationalities.

With all this symbolism and a venomous reputation, a serpent is an ideal form for a twisted villain to take. The Mara isn’t a snake in the grass, it’s a snake that slithers up behind you, whispering sour nothings in your ear before it bites you.

Snakedance takes the effects further and is a far more traditional *Doctor Who* adventure with aspects of grand guignol. There are vivid scenes, including Tegan’s taunting of a fortune teller, Martin Clunes’ fantastically bratty Lon and the Doctor tripping on snake venom. We find out more about the monster. Visiting the Mara’s home world of Manussa, the Doctor develops a theory on the creature’s origins: “I suspect that when [the Manussans] built the Great Crystal they overlooked one vital factor: the nature of the mental energy would determine the nature of the matter created. The Great Crystal absorbed what was in their minds – the restlessness, the hatred, the greed – absorbed it, amplified it, reflected it... the Mara was something they themselves had blindly brought into being.”

Once again, Buddhist principles are dramatised, human ignorance and failings creating a critical situation. The Mara isn’t about to get caught in a circle of mirrors again, as it was on Deva Loka; here we meet a more desperate villain with less time to toy with Tegan thanks to an impending ceremony involving the Great Crystal. Fielding exhibits more of her acting abilities and is particularly chilling when she shows the Mara’s perverted sense of fun. The possessed Tegan is delighted to terrorise the fortune teller. “You should have seen her face,” she giggles to Nyssa. “It was so funny. When she screamed you could see right down her throat.” Like a small child, she has no conscience or empathy, making her the most dangerous kind of antagonist.

Although the Doctor thwarts the Mara’s plan, it plagues Tegan throughout her life, according to Pete Tighe’s 2023 mini-episode *The Passenger*. For all that time she holds the Mara back, finding strength in her experiences, just as we curb our own adverse enthusiasms. But the Mara is coiled around our memory, teasing, tricking us when we’re off guard.

So next time that little voice in your head nudges you to run an amber light, take the last doughnut from the office breakroom or tell a white lie to a significant other, don’t listen. Because once you start listening to it you’ve let the darkness in. ☰



Artwork by
Rafe Wallbank

THE BLACK GUARDIAN TRILOGY

A misfit schoolboy is recruited by evil
forces to befriend then betray the Doctor.
But is his promised reward worth the cost?

REVIEWED BY ALEX STORER

MAWDRYN UNDEAD

The Black Guardian seduces shifty schoolboy Turlough to help take his revenge on the Doctor once and for all

WRITTEN BY **PETER GRIMWADE** • DIRECTED BY **PETER MOFFATT**
AIRDATES **1, 2, 8, 9 FEBRUARY 1983** • RATINGS **6.5m, 7.5m, 7.4m, 7.7m**
NOVELISATION BY **PETER GRIMWADE** • PUBLISHED **18 AUGUST 1983**

My earliest memories of watching *Doctor Who* date back to Peter Davison's first two seasons. The show was a regular fixture on our TV at home so there was no escaping it.

Before the arrival of BBC Video and DVD releases, I could only recall flashes of stories like *The Visitation*, *Earthshock* or *Arc of Infinity*. Looking back, I'd clearly seen enough to be captivated by the show, but it was *Mawdryn Undead* that really made an impression on my five-year-old self (episode one went out on my birthday). It's fair to say it was also one of the rare occasions when *Doctor Who* genuinely scared me, thanks largely to the menacing Black Guardian and his grip on the show's creepy new character, Vislor Turlough.

Written by Peter Grimwade, *Mawdryn Undead* is an adventure in time and space in the truest form. The complex plot unfolds across two timeframes – 1977 and 1983 – at an English public school, as well as aboard a spaceship orbiting Earth. It was the first of a trilogy featuring the return of the Black

Guardian, last seen in 1979's *The Armageddon Factor*.

The story begins at the school in 1983, where sneaky, flame-haired teenager Turlough and his timid friend Hippo take a joyride in a 1929 Humber 15/50 Open Tourer, which just happens to belong to Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart, now retired from UNIT and teaching at the school. Despite lacking a licence, Turlough handles the car with suspicious ease, until a near collision in a narrow country lane sends them off the road. He's knocked unconscious and experiences an out-of-body encounter with the Guardian in a glowing green vortex of early-1980s video graphics. The Guardian recruits Turlough to kill the Doctor and arms him with a communicator crystal, through which

One of the rare occasions when *Doctor Who* genuinely scared me

Artwork by
Andy Lambert





he can keep him under his spell. The Black Guardian's decision to enlist a gangly, angsty schoolboy as his assassin was a questionable move, but it works to introduce Turlough as a morally ambiguous figure, and his internal conflict becomes a key thread across the following stories.

Meanwhile, a mysterious signal draws the TARDIS to a seemingly deserted spaceship in a temporal orbit around Earth. The Doctor uses the ship's transmat and materialises at the school in 1983, where he meets the Brigadier who is oddly ignorant of any prior adventures with the Doctor.

From here, the plot splinters into several threads, weaving a narrative that feels more aligned with modern *Doctor Who* than a typical 1980s serial. It's ambitious and occasionally confusing, but plays out engagingly across the four episodes. We're soon introduced to Mawdryn and his fellow scientists, banished aliens blighted by a failed experiment with stolen Time Lord technology. They're trapped in a grotesque perpetual cycle of regeneration; immortal but in unending pain. Mawdryn's arrival in the TARDIS is a shocking moment: half-naked and severely burned, he's mistaken by Tegan and Nyssa for the Doctor. When his mutation progresses – featuring a pulsating, spaghetti-like brain oozing from his open skull – it's one of the

show's more harrowing visuals, especially for the time.

Tegan attempts to get help for the charred 'Doctor' but finds herself in 1977 instead of 1983, encountering a younger Brigadier. Nicholas Courtney shines in one of his finest performances, playing two versions of the Brigadier. The 1977 Brig still sports his moustache and maintains a slight military edge, while the 1983 version is clean-shaven and suffering from amnesia; his character is more subdued, looking more ready for a night in his favourite armchair than adventures with the Doctor. When the Doctor eventually

Mawdryn's arrival in the TARDIS is a shocking moment



realises something is wrong, a nostalgic roll call of old companions and UNIT soldiers triggers a flashback montage, beautifully underscored by Paddy Kingsland's music, finally jolting the Brigadier's fractured memory.

Valentine Dyall's booming, ominous presence as the Black Guardian chilled me to the core as a child – I'd dread seeing that crystal light up, knowing he wasn't far away. While there had often been a pantomime villain element to the Master, the Black Guardian delivers menace on another level, although it would sadly prove to be one of Valentine Dyall's last television appearances.

Mark Strickson makes a strong debut as Turlough, his emotionally fraught performance giving viewers a complex, puzzling character. Although the boy wasn't immediately likeable, the Doctor seemed unbothered by the fact that he had not only snuck aboard the TARDIS but also tried to brain him with a rock. Later mention of Turlough's alien origins and his desire to return to his own people revealed he wasn't human. His character was central to the story and provided a bold introduction to one of the show's most intriguing (and underrated) companions.

Another standout moment of horror occurs when Tegan and Nyssa are rapidly aged and their bodies begin to decay. This unsettling sequence was brought to life by impressive make-up



and prosthetics, courtesy of Sheelagh Wells. Looking back, these disturbing visual effects felt groundbreaking for *Doctor Who* in 1983. And after all, isn't the show at its best when it sends us diving for cover behind the sofa?

As timelines begin to converge, Mawdryn and his afflicted crew beg the Doctor to help them die. The only solution? The Doctor must sacrifice all his remaining regenerations, essentially ending his own life. Just as he's about to do so, the two Brigadiers accidentally come into contact, triggering a paradox that unleashes a powerful energy burst. It's enough to end the scientists' cursed existence without costing the Doctor his regenerations. The shock knocks out the younger Brigadier, causing him to forget the entire incident, which also neatly explains his earlier amnesia.

Strong writing, standout performances and impressive visual effects helped *Mawdryn Undead* make an impact at the time, and they're just as effective today, making it a consistently enjoyable watch. *Doctor Who*'s twentieth anniversary season delivered a range of bold ideas and varied settings, but this arguably stands out as one of the most memorable. That said, the story is best appreciated as part of its full trilogy, alongside *Terminus* and *Enlightenment*, where we continue to see Turlough struggle under the influence of the Black Guardian. And, in classic *Who* fashion,

Nyssa's departure at the end of *Terminus* helps pave the way for Turlough to find his place aboard the TARDIS crew.

For me, *Mawdryn Undead* remains strange comfort viewing, perhaps as a reminder of my early years when watching episodes of *Doctor Who* for the very first time was as exciting and thrilling as things could be. It's without question among my very favourites. The combination of atmospheric music, petrifying villains and gruesome horror may have been a little much for a five-year-old to take in, but it clearly sparked an obsession that would last a lifetime.

As the era I grew up with, I've always felt a special connection to the Peter Davison years. The production, music

and writing are consistently strong, and the stories offer remarkable variety.

Paddy Kingsland's dynamic score for *Mawdryn Undead* underpins the atmosphere with a sense of unease, making it one of the darker and more distinctive stories of both the Davison era and 1980s *Doctor Who* as a whole. The unconventional tonalities of Kingsland's eerie soundtrack amplify the tension and mystery, and it's almost impossible to think of *Mawdryn Undead* without thinking about that music.

While this may be a more cerebral story rather than action packed, it firmly delivers on the fundamental *Doctor Who* brief: misadventures across time and space, straddling science-fiction and horror, with strong characters and moral dilemmas at the core. It's a well-paced and complex story with a coherent conclusion – back when writing and direction didn't resort to rushed endings, sci-fi babble or self-indulgent neologism.

A shake-up in the TARDIS team always signals a new chapter for *Doctor Who* and the arrival of the enigmatic Turlough marked a subtle departure from the show's familiar rhythms. His mysterious background injected a layer of intrigue that unseated the usual dynamics and the remainder of Season 20 reflected this restlessness. As the series approached its twenty-first year, fittingly *Mawdryn Undead* had placed regeneration at its heart, but the story also reaffirmed something deeper: the show's constant need to evolve. ☐

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

M*awdryn Undead* was annoying because so much was left unanswered. Why was Turlough on Earth? What is the full story behind the mutants? I can only assume that all will be revealed later in the series.

It was slick, visually impeccable and a well-acted production. The design was superb, the transmat capsule and regeneration machine being among the most interestingly designed gadgets of recent years. The first two episodes were a joy to watch. The plot was nicely constructed... Grimwade had a firm hand with the dialogue and I was relieved to see that the Brigadier had lost none of his character. The flashback sequence was a treat for me, a hardened fan of the UNIT/Pertwee era.

Nicholas Courtney really made the story for me. Valentine Dyal was also fine as the Guardian, one of the most repulsive villains ever. I have high hopes for Mark Strickson, Turlough looks like being a great character. *Richard Patey, TARDIS, Volume 8, Number 1, March 1983*

BBC video cover artwork
by Andrew Skilleter
andrewskilleter.com



TERMINUS

Sat at the centre of the universe, a disaster on Terminus could well be the end of everything

WRITTEN BY **STEPHEN GALLAGHER** • DIRECTED BY **MARY RIDGE**
 AIRDATES **15, 16, 22, 23 FEBRUARY 1983** • RATINGS **6.8m, 7.5m, 6.5m, 7.4m**
 NOVELISATION BY **JOHN LYDECKER** • PUBLISHED **17 JUNE 1983**

The Peter Davison era is a strange thing. It's a period when the general quality of the series stabilised after three years of decidedly hit-and-miss stories, and with this stability came the real possibility of at least one 'classic' story per season. Moreover, it seemed to be taking a more adult approach with, for me at least, a hero who was far more watchable than the previous star. Thanks at least in part to these revisions, this era was also being watched by people who were becoming increasingly avid. It was the era when many, myself included, changed from casual viewers into fans.

And yet...

Looking at the list of stories on digital TV (and previously on the shelves of my DVD or even VHS collections) there are

strangely few that I might immediately reach for if I had a spare 90 minutes.

As an example, if asked, I would say that Season 19 was one of my favourites.

**The whole
adventure
involves people
doing some
very boring
things in a very
dramatic way**

It's chock full of personal nostalgia and a wonderful mixed bag of creativity and action. But when it comes to actually watching any of it, I rarely go for any stories other than *The Visitation*, *Black Orchid* or *Earthshock*.

This was a surprising realisation, especially when I then noted that once we remove the action adventures and obvious 'monster' stories, there are about two-thirds of my supposedly favourite era that I'm largely ambivalent about. I don't mean the stories are bad, I just can't be bothered to watch them.

Seeking a reason for this, I decided to watch the story that I felt represented this ambivalence the best: *Terminus*. I literally never feel like watching this story. Not in the same way that I never want to watch *Warriors of the Deep* or



something different within the series format. This is commendable, of course, but in doing so these writers often produced a script with little tangible drama – and drama needs to be dramatic. Especially a science-fiction drama aimed at younger people. As a result, directors and actors, seeing the lack of adrenaline in the script, often sought to fill the gap with frantic delivery. Sometimes it worked, in *Terminus* it didn't.

So there it is, *Terminus*, and a number of stories like it, are just okay in that they have a beginning, a middle and an end. In most there's some form of alien and a mysterious ship to explore. But these ingredients on their own do not a *Doctor Who* story make. At least, not one I'm that keen to see more than once.

If you really need in your life the sort of experience that *Terminus* offers, it can easily and more quickly be achieved by programming your washing machine for a 45-degree spin while breathlessly explaining at high volume what you're doing to an eye-rolling 20-something. Then running next door and doing the same for your neighbours. Then coming back and doing it all over again.

If that's your thing then I certainly won't judge you. But in a series like *Doctor Who* there should always be better alternatives. ≡

Time-Flight, it's more that it just doesn't seem to matter enough to try and sit through. Armed with a journalistic intrepidity, I therefore dutifully made myself watch it in an effort to identify the source of the problem.

It quickly became obvious. The whole adventure basically involves a few set-pieces in which people do some very boring things in a very dramatic way. Pulling levers, pressing buttons, crawling through ducting, running up gantries and down staircases, all with a sense of desperate urgency as the production's hand seeks to be quicker than the viewer's eye.

On first viewing, the deception that something interesting was happening might well have worked, but with every subsequent watch it has less and less of a payoff. The cliffhangers in *Terminus* do well to illustrate this. Episode one ends with the viewer having the belief that the zombie-like plague-people are the threat (they aren't). Episode two ends with the clear revelation that it's the people in armour who are the enemy (they aren't), while episode three finally points the finger to the actual crisis at hand and guess what: it's not the plague zombies, space pirates, armoured soldiers, gas-filled corridors or even the giant bear thing. It's the slow movement of a stiff lever...

If there had been more to *Terminus*, the fact that the story ends in a

bloodless coup and the departure of Nyssa might have caused it to be celebrated as a genuinely groundbreaking and a rare *Doctor Who* story where little is as it seems. Instead, as in stories such as *Four to Doomsday*, *Snakedance*, *Mawdryn Undead* and *Planet of Fire*, we see a lot of breathless rushing about with so little actual obvious jeopardy that it's a surprise when the cliffhangers arrive.

Reviews of stories like these tend to give them the benefit of the doubt, applauding the writer for trying to do

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

I seem to be the only person who liked this story. *Terminus* was a fairly original story, or two stories if you look at it as I do: the first being Nyssa's fight for life and the second the fight for the universe's life. The introduction to the Doctor's arrival on *Terminus* itself was probably the most exciting part of the story, but who needs a story that is all action.

For me the best part was the acting, which was of high standard, except for Kari's "Freeeeeeeeze", which was totally unnecessary, and the same's (clench fists now) "What's happening?" (I laughed all through to the end of the credits at that line.) My favourite character (apart from Nyssa) was Bor, although he didn't do very much. In episode four his ramblings brought an unintentional touch of humour to a mostly serious story.

The saddest part of *Terminus* was, of course, the departure of Nyssa. This was one of the most poignant departures that I can remember, while the Doctor was as non-committal as usual; there wasn't the cursory "I'll miss you" but actual tears flowed, giving [Tegan and Nyssa] a real sense of companionship and not just friendship. Overall, an excellent story and one that definitely tops my season poll.

Ian Massey, *TARDIS*, Volume 8, Number 2, June 1983



TARDIS

Information system

CREW DATA - NYSSA

NYSSA of **TRAKEN** joined the **TARDIS** crew after her father, Consul **TREMAS**, was murdered by the **MASTER**, who then took over his body following the **MELKUR** incident. Nyssa was unaware of this until the **WATCHER** took her to **LOGOPOLIS**, where she was reunited with the **Fourth DOCTOR** and **ADRIC** and where she first met **TEGAN JOVANKA**. With them, Nyssa witnessed the Doctor's fourth **REGENERATION** at the **PHAROS PROJECT**. From this point she travelled with the Doctor, Adric and Tegan, and came to hate the Master who now had the face of her father.

Nyssa had been born into Traken **nobility**, was extremely **intelligent** and was considered a **genius** in the science of **BIOELECTRONICS** and **CYBERNETICS**. She had spent little time with people her own age while growing up and perhaps was considered to be shielded from the more unpleasant aspects of society and the wider world.

During her travels with the Doctor, Nyssa met her exact double, **ANN TALBOT**, on **EARTH** in **1925**. She showed her **playful** side by agreeing to dress the same as Ann at a party, thereby confusing the guests as to who was who. This backfired when Nyssa was kidnapped by **GEORGE CRANLEIGH** thinking she was his ex-fiancée.

Nyssa was close friends with Tegan but also got on well with Adric, who was nearer to her age. She suffered a double blow when he was killed in defeating the **CYBERMEN**, then shortly after Tegan left the **TARDIS** crew. Nyssa was very **loyal** to the Doctor, perhaps seeing him as a substitute father, and went to great lengths on **GALLIFREY** to help him when he was accused of colluding with **OMEGA**.

By the time the **TARDIS** arrived at **TERMINUS**, **VISLOR TURLOUGH** had joined the crew. While there, Nyssa became infected with **LAZAR'S DISEASE** but was cured by the **GARM**. Realising she could put her scientific knowledge and skills to good use, having been brought up to help people, Nyssa chose to stay on Terminus to help the Garm and the **VANIR** develop a better cure for the disease and make the space station a hospital.

Nyssa's **final words** to Tegan, who feared her friend would die on Terminus, were: "Not easily, Tegan. Like you, I'm indestructible."

Text by
Bruce Nicholson

Artwork by
Tony Green

TERMINAL VELOCITY

In a steady directing career at the BBC, it was an encounter with *Blake's 7* that brought Mary Ridge into the *Doctor Who* universe

Up to production of *Terminus* in late 1982, only eight *Doctor Who* serials had been directed by women: Paddy Russell helmed *The Massacre* (1966), *Invasion of the Dinosaurs* (1974), *Pyramids of Mars* (1975) and *Horror of Fang Rock* (1977); Julia Smith directed *The Smugglers* (1966) and *The Underwater Menace* (1967); and Fiona Cumming worked on *Castrovalva* (1982) and *Snakedance* (1983), followed shortly after by *Enlightenment* (1983) and *Planet of Fire* (1984).

By the time of Season 20, producer John Nathan-Turner wanted to recruit more women into the series. When Mary Ridge joined production of *Terminus* at Nathan-Turner's invitation, she was freelance after accepting early retirement from the BBC. Ridge is probably most well known to genre fans for her work on *Blake's 7*, for which she directed a total of six episodes including *Terminal* and the never-to-be-forgotten final episode *Blake*.



Eileen Mary Ridge was born in Preston, Lancashire on 23 June 1925. She was raised in Colwyn Bay, Wales by her parents, William W Ridge, a bank manager, and Eileen Dorothy Phillips Hackett. She also had an elder brother, Alan.

Mary was interested in working in the media from an early age and on graduating the Lyndon Preparatory School in 1942 she began to act and direct in repertory theatres across the country. One of her most notable credits during this time was for directing *To Kill a Cat*, a play co-written by Jon Pertwee's father Roland and which gained great critical acclaim ("First class" said a reviewer in a 1955 edition of the *Sevenoaks Chronicles*).

In 1956, Ridge's directorial ambitions turned to television. After spending nearly a decade as an assistant floor manager (AFM) at the BBC, she was finally allowed to direct. Sadly, a lot of her early work no longer exists in the archives, but in 2010 a copy of her sole 1965 contribution to the prestigious anthology series *The Wednesday Play* was found. This was called *The Bond* and starred Hannah



↑ **Block 1, TC6, 11-12 October 1982**
(designer Dick Coles)

Terminus was allocated six studio days but potential strike action curtailed this to five. This posed a challenge for director Mary Ridge. The first two-day session was for scenes on the Liner bridge (above, top right), the large composite corridor set (left), the TARDIS control room (bottom right) and Turlough's room (centre

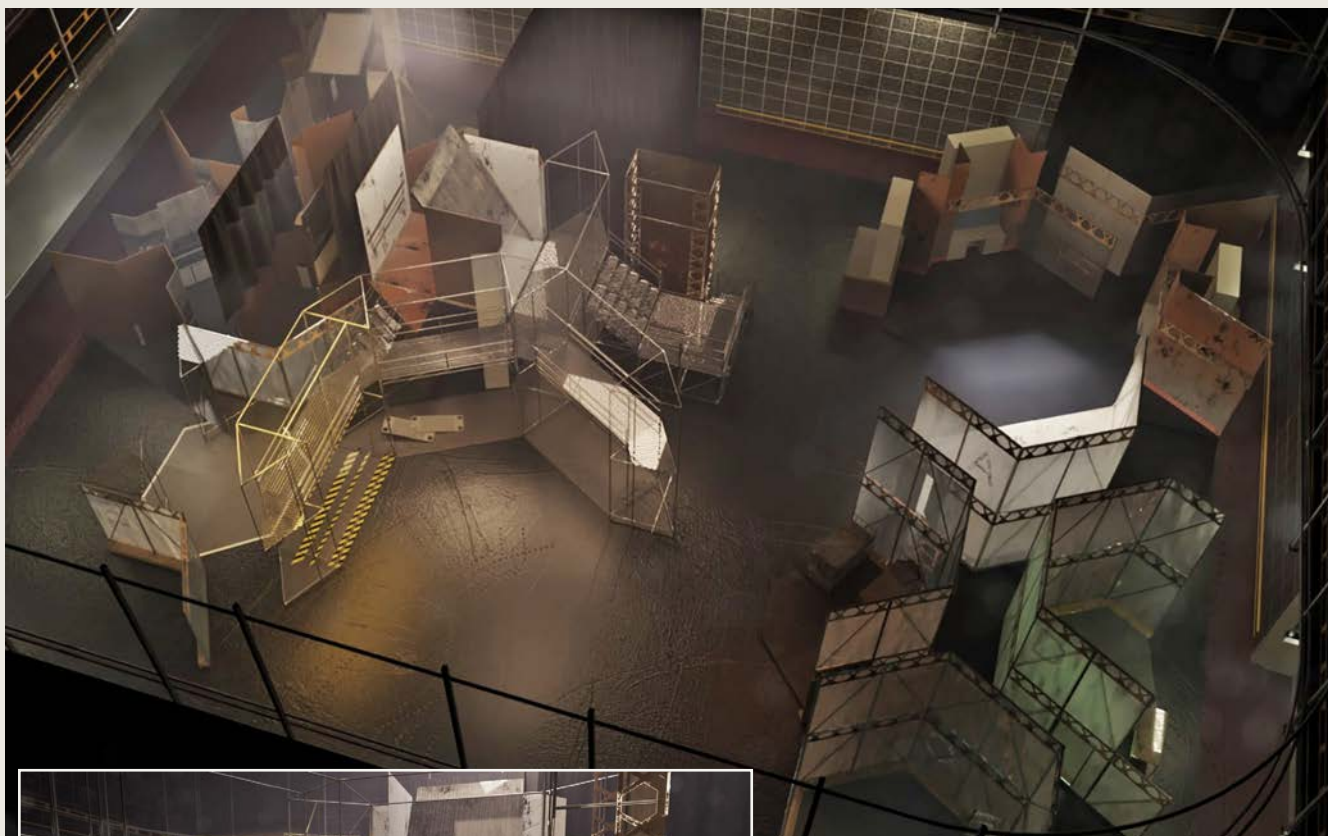
right). Things got off to a bad start with a two-hour power failure. Once resolved, Ridge found the sets had been erected off their marks. Problems with the circuitry in the TARDIS set led John Nathan-Turner to call a further halt. In addition, one of the robot props didn't work. With time running out on day two, Ridge had to delay some scenes until Block 2, the second remount this season. The Liner set required for that wouldn't survive undamaged in storage...

Gordon as a woman who grows disillusioned with married life. Judging by the lack of contemporary reviews, the play made little impact when broadcast in 1965, but when it was shown again in 2010, BFI reviewer Lez Cooke was quick to reappraise it. "Stylistically the play is interesting," he noted, "with a very elliptical structure at the beginning (two years of married life pass in 20 minutes of screen time) in which the narrative is conveyed largely through dialogue-free montage sequences overlaid with trad jazz music. Modernist in style and feminist in theme, *The Bond* is a welcome addition to the surviving catalogue of *The Wednesday Play*."

The next decade saw Ridge move on from directing one-off television plays to multiple episodes of long-running series including *Z-Cars* and *Dixon of Dock Green*. She also briefly served as associate producer on *The Duchess of Duke Street*.

Her most notable credit during this period was directing ten episodes of *The Brothers* between 1972 and 1976, including the final instalment. Based around a family-run haulage business, *The Brothers* featured many cast and crew members who would later appear in *Doctor Who*, including Colin Baker, Kate O'Mara and Liza Goddard. Margot Hayhoe worked alongside Ridge as an AFM on the series. Interviewed in 2021 by Rob Cope for *The Brothers Companion* book, Hayhoe remembered Ridge as "a very experienced director who worked meticulously on producing a detailed film shooting script and camera script. She was quite serious, but very loyal and protective of her team." Colin Baker, who played loathsome merchant banker Paul Merroney, told Cope in 2021, "I loved Mary and I think she liked me as well. I don't think the others like her so much, but for me she was great."

Set recreations
and text by
Andrew Orton



The interior of Terminus (centre-left in above plan), with the Restricted Zone at back left

↑ Block 2, TC8, 25-27 October 1982 (designer Dick Coles)

The second block involved scenes on a scaffolding-based set representing the Terminus interior. The main set (above, centre-left) was built around a Y-shaped scaffold, in place for all three days. The rooms on Terminus (bottom right) – Vanir HQ, the Recovery Room, the Stock Room and the Lazar Ward – were simple hexagonal sets crowded around each other. Also present was Terminus control (top right). The first order of the

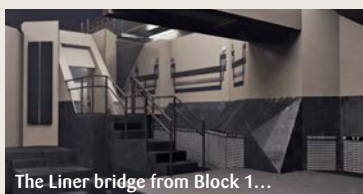
day was to remount sequences in a small portion of the Liner corridor set that was re-erected in the corner of the studio (top left in above plan). The Restricted Zone was also recorded in the scaffold area. On day two the Y-scaffold was left in place but the other sets were moved around to represent other areas of the station.

At the beginning of the 1980s, Ridge made her science-fiction debut on *Blake's 7*. She was drafted in at the last minute to replace Andrew Morgan as the director of series three finale *Terminal*, an episode that ended with the destruction of the titular rebel's iconic spacecraft the *Liberator*. "I think everybody was very upset to have a new director coming in to blow up their toy. It was a pretty grim thing to do," she admitted to journalist Joe Nazzaro in 1995. "Also, the *Liberator* at that time belonged entirely to Teddy the lighting chap, who had been running [it] for a long time, and challenged me on a lot of the things I was going to do. He said, 'Stop, you can't do any of that!' and I said, 'I don't see why not.'"

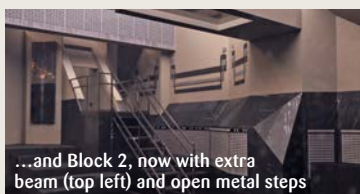
As well as resistance from "Teddy", Ridge had to contend with concerns raised by series producer (and former director) David Maloney. "I remember David talking to the technical manager and saying, 'She's not going to finish, is she?' This was just before the supper break and the technical manager said, 'Well, she might do; give her a chance.' I heard this going on behind me and I thought, 'Finish? I'll finish if it's the last thing I do!'" In their 2003 book *Liberation: The Unofficial and Unauthorised Guide to Blake's 7*, Alan Stevens and Fiona Moore cited *Terminal* as the "most postmodern and allegorical" of the entire series, comparing the "ominous heartbeat-like sound" on *Terminal* to *A Tell-Tale Heart* by Edgar Allan Poe. Bill Cotton, then head of



↑ Day 3 took the same approach, with the same scaffolding but the room pieces moved again. Also, material on the Liner bridge (above, top right) from Block 1 was remounted – but a problem was found. Parts of the set had been destroyed since Block 1 and had to be rebuilt, but the design was different. The staircase was metal instead of solid blocks and now descended to floor level rather than to a rostrum. An additional ceiling piece was also added (see below). Problems continued, however. With so much material to record, an hour's extension was promised but at the last minute the producer informed Ridge this wouldn't happen: she would have to do a remount. Sarah Sutton's leaving party was thus tainted – she would be needed back.



The Liner bridge from Block 1...



...and Block 2, now with extra beam (top left) and open metal steps

BBC drama, was similarly impressed with the episode and reportedly based his decision to commission a fourth series on his enjoyment of it.

Ridge was invited back to direct five episodes for the fourth series, including the final which saw the titular heroes gunned down in an ambush. Her involvement in these key episodes, as well as the dynamism she injected into them through the use of jump cuts and other editing techniques, cemented her as not only a favourite with the fans but also with the cast. "Mary Ridge was one of my favourite directors," Paul Darrow (Avon) wrote in his 2006 autobiography *You're Him, Aren't You?* "Small and shy she might have been, but she knew exactly what she wanted from her actors – and how to get it. She

cottoned on to me pretty quickly. 'Do I detect a trace of Mr Burt Lancaster in your performance?' she once said to me. And later, 'Ah, I see you've switched to Clint Eastwood.' From then on Mary always referred to me as 'Blint'."

Ridge retired from being a BBC staff director following the completion of *Blake's 7* in 1981 but continued to work for the Corporation as a freelancer, directing episodes of medical soap *Angels* and, of course, *Terminus*. Speaking to Nazzaro in 1995, she remembered the excitement of being invited to direct for the long-running series. "I was very happy to be working with John [Nathan-Turner] simply because I liked him. There were to be six studio days: a three and three with no location filming. Then, a fortnight before I started,

"Mary Ridge was one of my favourite directors," Paul Darrow wrote in his 2006 autobiography

John phoned me up and asked if I could do this all in just five days? I said I couldn't answer that. All I could ask him was if he had ever done one in five days that was originally meant for six and it was okay? John said that there was no choice, so it was a very solid six days crammed into five."

Undeterred, Ridge organised a workable five-day studio shooting schedule. Unfortunately for her, an electricians' strike disrupted the first day and a delay in getting the special effects set up disrupted the second. "[The effects team] arrived with all their special effects hours after they'd said they would be there, dumped them in the studio and turned around as if to go out again. I asked where they were going and they said they were going for lunch. I said 'You're not! I'll bring you sandwiches and coffee.' And all this was for stuff with the insides of the TARDIS, which proved to be all wrong anyway.

"Over the next three days, we had something like 400 shots to do and Sam [Barclay, lighting director] kept saying it was too much. John had said he could get me an extra hour's recording at the end of the third night to make up for the two hours I'd lost on the morning of the first studio day. So we were bowling along absolutely splendidly on the third day. I was within 25 shots of the end of the show



↑ ***The King's Demons*, TC1, 18-20 December 1982 (designer Ken Ledsham)**

Enlightenment was the next story planned but strike action delayed it, meaning *The King's Demons* was next into studio. However, *Terminus* wasn't yet finished so the two-day block of 19-20 December was preceded on 18 December by a remount of the earlier serial. The Liner bridge set (above, top left) was erected for a third time in among the medieval sets. Scenes on the TARDIS corridor set (centre right) were also recorded.

when John said, 'You haven't got the extra hour.' As the clock came up to 10pm, which is the time I'd normally finish (every *Blake's 7* was finished by ten – I had never overrun in my life), John slammed the script down on the counter and they all went off to a party, to which I refused to go. I've never not finished on time, and to be within 25 shots of it and working on the last set-ups, well, I was dreadfully upset, and will be until the day I die."

"I've never not finished on time, and to be within 25 shots of it and working on the last set-ups, well, I was dreadfully upset"

Sadly, Ridge was never invited back to work on *Doctor Who* and by the end of 1984 had retired from the industry altogether. Her last job was directing several episodes of *The District Nurse*, a period medical drama filmed in her home country of Wales.

Mary died in Fulham, London on 20 September 2000, aged 75, and is survived by two nephews and a niece to whom she was very close. Although she will be remembered by *Doctor Who* fans for handling a problem story, she'll always be commemorated by *Blake's 7* fans for reinvigorating the series in its final years and ensuring its legacy. Her insistence for high standards meant she sometimes ruffled a few feathers, but she was a highly respected and much-loved member of any crew she worked with, many colleagues citing that insistence as one of her strengths. Compared to the many other productions she was involved in, directing four episodes of *Doctor Who* was a mere footnote in her otherwise illustrious career. Not being invited back was more of a loss to the programme than it was to her. ≡



Artwork by
Connor Adkins

CJA

ENLIGHTENMENT

A boat race through space could give Turlough the reward he's after, but at what cost to the Doctor?

WRITTEN BY **BARBARA CLEGG** • DIRECTED BY **FIONA CUMMING**
AIRDATES **1, 2, 8, 9 MARCH 1983** • RATINGS **6.6m, 7.2m, 6.2m, 7.3m**
NOVELISATION BY **BARBARA CLEGG** • PUBLISHED **16 FEBRUARY 1984**

In another first for Season 20, Barbara Clegg was the first woman to write a *Doctor Who* for broadcast. Despite submitting further storylines, she didn't write for the series again, but those ideas (*Point of Entry* and *The Elite*) were eventually developed and produced by Big Finish as part of their Lost Stories range of audio dramas in 2010 and 2011. The opportunity to write for *Doctor Who* arose when Eric Saward realised there were no women writers working on the programme. Clegg had wanted to write for the series as she knew it would please her children, who were very keen on the programme.

Saward and John Nathan-Turner liked Clegg's proposal, which involved sailing galleons in space, crewed by immortal beings. They commissioned

the scripts in October 1981. The story was originally titled 'The Enlighteners' and would conclude the Black Guardian's attempts to kill the Doctor.

**The opportunity
arose when Eric
Saward realised
there were no
women writers
working on the
programme**

Clegg told *Doctor Who Magazine* (issue 267, July 1998) that the idea for the Eternals "came from some very rich relations I have. I'm very fond of them, but some have this air of not worrying about how they're going to live or afford anything. They need to be amused, they have to find things to do and play with. Likewise, because Eternals live forever, they're bored. I'd heard about the solar wind, and I had this vision of the sailing boats. I also found the idea of 'enlightenment' itself quite interesting. All the characters thought it was going to be some sort of enormous giving of power, but it was actually the same as the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. It gives you conscious realisation of the fact you make decisions. Enlightenment is not the prize, it's the choice."



Artwork by
Andy Lambert



Directorial duties went to Fiona Cumming, one of Nathan-Turner's preferred directors, who had previously handled *Castrovalva* and *Snakedance*. Like Clegg, she had begun her career in acting before moving into television production in 1964. She started out at the Royal Scottish Academy and went on to a variety of theatre and television work, including a stint at Border Television as an announcer and features interviewer. In a 2014 interview with *Scotland Now*, Cumming remembered how she had been teaching at the Bellahouston Academy in Glasgow when *Doctor Who* began in 1963, and the kids would come in talking about a brilliant television programme that was set in a police box. In 1964 she went to the BBC as a relief assistant floor manager, working on various programmes including *Doctor Who* (*The Massacre*, 1966). After being promoted to a production assistant, she returned to the series on the stories *The Highlanders* (1966), *The Seeds of Death* (1969) and *The Mutants* (1972).

In 1974 Cumming was hired as a staff television director for the BBC and directed episodes for series including *Angels*, *Z-Cars* and *The Omega Factor*. After directing two episodes of *Blake's 7*, she was approached by Nathan-Turner. She recalled, "I did *Blake's 7* and suddenly John Nathan-Turner is saying what about *Doctor Who*? But he knew



better than to put me on to shows that had metal monsters, so he gave me four stories over three seasons which were fantasy, they weren't heavy, heavy shows... you could let your imagination take off, you could go where you wanted to. Yes, I was fortunate he gave me those stories, but he knew better than to give me any others."

Cumming liked the script for *Enlightenment*, which she thought was incredibly inventive, but bizarrely she and Clegg weren't allowed to meet but

could only ever speak on the telephone. They finally met in 2007 to record the audio commentary for the DVD release and when asked why they couldn't meet, Clegg exclaimed, "Eric Saward!"

Enlightenment was one of the bright spots in Season 20 for me, as it gave Peter Davison material that allowed his Doctor to shine. He shows his vulnerable side as he realises with horror that the Eternals can read his mind, but he never seems helpless as he so often had in previous stories. It's great to see some anger and passion from the Doctor in his scenes with Captain Striker. The cliffhanger of episode one is so good, with the Doctor realising they're not on a yacht but a spaceship as Striker's first mate, Marriner, opens a screen to reveal sailing ships floating through space.

I really enjoyed Keith Barron's performance, playing Striker as driven, competitive and aloof. The role had originally gone to Peter Sallis who had completed one day of rehearsals before strike action delayed recording and he was unavailable for the new dates. In choosing Barron to replace him, Cumming told *Doctor Who Magazine* (issue 129, October 1987), "I think that when you've had something very firmly in your mind, it's better to go totally away from it, in case you try to impose that person onto another actor. It was a case of wipe the slate clean."

Keith Barron plays Striker as driven, competitive and aloof



Lynda Baron, known best to viewers as Nurse Gladys Emmanuel in the BBC sitcom *Open All Hours*, was cast as Captain Wrack, who believes winning the prize of Enlightenment will rid her of being dependant on the Ephemerals for entertainment. Baron's performance is full of energy and pantomime in style, but it works as a contrast to Striker.

David Rhule was cast as Wrack's first mate, Mansell, but when he too couldn't make the revised recording dates he was replaced by Lee John, lead singer of the pop group Imagination, in his first acting role. He enjoyed working with Cumming, who he thought was very patient, and having not done a television series before he appreciated that everyone went through their paces blocking out what they had to do, as this meant he knew where to stand and what he had to do for each scene.

The most interesting element of the story for me is the character of Marriner and his infatuation with Tegan's thoughts and emotions. Cumming had made the decision that the Eternals wouldn't blink and cast actors who she thought could provide detached performances. Christopher Brown as Marriner followed this brief to perfection. Tegan believes his feelings for her are romantic, but he doesn't recognise what love is and struggles to understand why he's so captivated by her, which makes for uncomfortable viewing. I think Brown gave a fantastic performance and Janet Fielding had the chance to show a different side to Tegan's character as she tries to cope with Marriner's obsession.

It's great to see some character development for Turlough too, making him more palatable to the audience. Mark Strickson put in a solid performance to show Turlough's internal battle to rid himself of the Black Guardian. I was genuinely shocked at the end of episode two when he throws himself overboard to escape the continual taunting. One of my favourite scenes is where Turlough is given the choice of giving up the diamond or sacrificing the Doctor to gain both Enlightenment and the TARDIS. For a moment you feel Turlough's struggle to choose, but he makes the right choice



Most interesting is the character Marriner and his infatuation with Tegan's thoughts and emotions

and throws the diamond at the Black Guardian who disappears in flames. Barbara Clegg was happy with this scene, saying In *DWM* 267, "I love the way the Black Guardian went up in flames at the end. I specified in the script that he melted in his chair, rather like a film negative, and they did it awfully well on screen."

Colin Green was the set designer and I thought he did a great job with both ships. Cumming was impressed with the sets, saying, "Colin's designs on the floor were so different from each other. The Edwardian ship and the pirate ship, those had such a clarity about them, and then once you took the pirate ship and you put all the party guests into it and just filled it full of people and costumes, he just did something which was better than I would have expected."

Costume designer was Dinah Collin, who raided the costume department at the BBC to produce some fantastic results. The party scene on Wrack's ship is a visual treat and I particularly like the costume Tegan wears, which is beautiful and elegant. The models of the boats used in the racing sequences were props sourced by visual effects designer Mike Kelt following research at the National Maritime Museum. Due to delays, the serial finished filming only a month before transmission, meaning composer Malcolm Clarke received the first episode for scoring a week before its broadcast and had to rely on the musical cues he had recorded weeks before without having seen any footage. To produce the wonderful score that he did under those circumstances was amazing. Clarke had previously provided the music for *The Sea Devils* (1972) and *Earthshock* (1982).

I really enjoy *Enlightenment's* story and the performances of the cast, although the ending does feel rushed and I would have preferred to have seen how Wrack and Mansell fell overboard rather than trying to make the viewer think the two bodies Tegan sees ejected into space are the Doctor and Turlough.

It took 20 years for a *Doctor Who* serial to have both a female writer and director, but it was worth the wait as for me this is the best story of Season 20. ☺

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

I enjoyed this tremendously, the whole concept being one of the most original for years. The first episode was excellent with the initial impression of normality, leading up to the climax with the revelation that the ship was in fact a space ship. The Eternals were well played [with] suitably bland expressions. The idea of them 'feeding' off the thoughts and ideas of ephemerals was good and especially well done.

JJ Wall, TARDIS, Volume 8, Number 2, 1983

The Path to Enlightenment

Before writing for *Doctor Who*, Barbara Clegg had a long career as an actor working with numerous future stars of the series

Barbara Clegg, who died on 7 January 2025 aged 98, is known to *Doctor Who* fans for her 1983 serial *Enlightenment*, which drew attention by stretching the conventions established by the middle of the Peter Davison period. Where *Earthshock* had struck a direction towards fast cutting and a sort of technological machismo, *Enlightenment* unexpectedly stressed the experience of women and men amid the ‘other ranks’. Janet Fielding as Tegan was given some more demanding material than often, resisting objectification in the eyes of the Eternal Mariner. The principal villain of the story is an exemplar of one route to female empowerment in a man’s world: Lynda Baron’s Captain Wrack, who rejects conventional feminine virtues and seeks to out-manipulate through foul play her male-presenting Eternal rivals. Amid beings who deny humans the freedom to choose, *Enlightenment* is the rediscovery and assertion of that right. In the tenure of a Doctor who increasingly seeks affirmation in past precedent, *Enlightenment*’s reframing of the Black and White Guardians felt curiously liberating.

Surveying Barbara Clegg’s life and career, one begins to feel that *Doctor Who*, or at least its fandom, didn’t know how distinctive her background was. She had great experience of theatre and of television stardom. She might plausibly have

been brought into the series much sooner given her life in Oxford in the mid-1940s, how embedded she was in post-war theatre, and how the paths of people associated with *Doctor Who* crossed well before any association with the series.

OXFORD, 1944-47

Barbara Clegg’s writing career grew out of the first phase of her working life on the stage. Although she acted at school, the foundations of her acting career were laid in student drama at the University of Oxford. Clegg read English at Lady Margaret Hall from 1944 to 1947. She was one of the leading personalities in the student theatre scene as it found its feet after the Second World War. In the immediate aftermath of the war, women were excluded from being the subjects of profiles – ‘idols’ – in student magazine *The Isis*, but for a while eminent Oxford female students were profiled in a separate feature, ‘Have You Met-?’. This suggested people who might be interesting or useful to know, while avoiding unfeminine attributions of ambition associated with the male *Isis* idols. Shirley Catlin (later Williams) and Val Mitchison eventually broke the gender barrier and were profiled as *Isis* idols in 1950.

In *The Isis* of 8 May 1946, readers were asked whether they had met Barbara Clegg. She was reported as cutting a distinct



Playing nurse Jo Buckley in *Emergency-Ward 10* made Barbara Clegg a TV star

figure in mid-1940s Oxford, cycling “very upright” on her “absurd little blue bike”, paid close attention – “really listening” – in lectures, and had taken to wearing scarlet stockings and keeping goldfish. Readers learned that she liked Ucello’s painting ‘Hunt by Night’ in the Ashmolean, the poetry of Virgil, which she read beautifully, sentimental French songs, ice cream and the cakes at Oxford restaurant The Angel. Most of all, though, readers would know her as one of the principal forces in the Experimental Theatre Club (ETC). “She doesn’t merely want to act in the rather ineffectual way of many of us up here. She is not merely going to act, in some dimly realised future. She acts.” The article mentioned two of her recent successes, as Alison in *Thomas of Ercildoune* by Roger Green (then Merton College’s deputy librarian, a few years from first publishing under the name by which he is best remembered for his collections of Arthurian and other legends for Puffin Books, Roger Lancelyn Green) or “the harder, more shaded part of the wife” in Eugene O’Neill’s *Beyond the Horizon*. Clegg had a maturity and a “cohesion” that gave audiences confidence in student productions, and had also mastered the “financial intricacies” of the ETC.

Clegg’s Oxford theatre career continued: she played Doris in TS Eliot’s *Sweeney Agonistes* in June 1946. This was the ETC competition entry of Kenneth Tynan, a rising figure of Oxford student theatre and journalism, and within a few years he made his mark on Fleet Street and the wider world as an acerbic, acute and enthralling theatre critic. Indeed, Tynan’s securing Clegg’s participation was seen by *The Isis* critic as a

crucial element in his winning the competition. In the final *Isis* of Trinity 1946 (19 June), columnist ‘Pintpot’ declared Barbara Clegg and Christina Hodgson the university’s best actresses; as for best actors, “we have none.” The same issue reviewed the ETC’s staging of the Tynan production of *Sweeney Agonistes* as one of its eighth-week plays, crediting Carol Mullen and Clegg with the play’s “authoritative opening”.

Over the Christmas vacation of 1946/47, Clegg was a member of the touring student company the Oxford Players, whose venues included Regent Street Polytechnic, St Paul’s Cathedral, St Mary’s Church, Warwick and Horspath parish church. They performed *A Mystery for Christ’s Nativity*, bringing together the Second Wakefield Shepherd’s Play and one of the East Anglian mystery cycle with carols. They travelled around the country in two small cars and a trailer. The company’s members, as identified by *The Isis*, included future film directors Lindsay Anderson and Guy Brenton; a report in the *Stratford-upon-Avon Herald* (20 December 1946) revealed that it also included Paul Johnstone, eventually deviser of *The Sky at Night* for BBC Television and later head of its archaeology and history unit. Johnstone would become Barbara’s husband.

Clegg’s youthful activities were followed by her local newspapers at home. As a member of one of Merseyside’s most prominent families – her uncle was John Moores, founder of Littlewoods – she often appeared in the social columns of the *Formby Times* and occasionally of the Liverpool papers too. She was on the front page of the *Formby Times* on 2 September 1944, as one of the godparents at the christening of her cousin Simon Brierley-Jones. In the summer of 1946 the paper reported on Clegg’s membership of a student touring company, playing a “bad angel” in the morality play *The Castle of Perseverance*, visiting London, Bath, Barnstaple and Exeter. It was also remarked that she was going to make acting her profession. While the *Formby Times* clearly regarded Barbara as a favoured daughter of the town, sometimes it could be too enthusiastic. On 5 October 1946 it apologised for reporting that she had been married in Liverpool before going on honeymoon in Switzerland; only the trip was accurate. Reporting on her twenty-first birthday party in Oxford, where her brother John brought her a bottle of sherry, was probably less controversial (*Liverpool Evening Express*, 4 March 1947).

Clegg took finals in Trinity 1947. She wasn’t involved in Tynan’s production of Milton’s *Samson Agonistes* at St Mary’s Church in Oxford that term, unlike the majority of students active in drama at the university and in which **Russell Enoch** (later acting as William Russell) had a minor role. Barbara and Russell seem never to have acted together at university. A few months after leaving Oxford, she headed north to Dundee Rep and her professional career began.

REPERTORY, 1948-50

Acting across Britain in the 1950s in a succession of repertory companies, Barbara Clegg was among several theatre people whom BBC television cameras would project into space and time in later decades. One of her early appearances at Dundee Rep, in November 1948, was Amy in an adaptation of *Little*

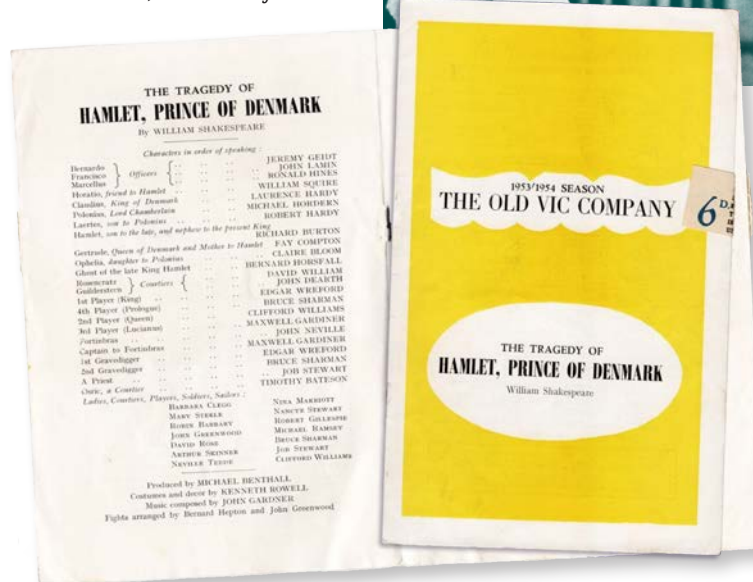
Women, directed by **Graham Crowden**, who also played Professor Antoine Baret; he would be considered as a potential Doctor when Jon Pertwee left in 1974, and later played Soldeed in *The Horns of Nimón* (1979). In January 1949, Crowden directed Clegg in Philip King's *See How They Run*; as Ida she "contributed largely to the success of the production" showing "good sense and sound acting, especially in her romantic advances towards the soldier." Crowden, as the Reverend Lionel Toup, was "strongly marked and highly accentuated" but "through all his affected mannerisms there was a fine vein of reality" (*St Andrews Citizen*, 15 January 1949). There was perhaps a shadow of that Dundee performance in Soldeed. Also at Dundee in 1949 was **Joseph Greig**, otherwise the Second Sensorite and Sensorite Warrior in *The Sensorites* (1964); he could be found as Clegg's schoolgirl character's "unsophisticated sweetheart" (*The Scotsman*, 8 March 1949) in AP Dearsley's *Fly Away Home*, and as the Artful Dodger in *Oliver Twist* alongside her "charming Rose" (*Courier and Advertiser*, 28 April 1949).

By the end of the season, Clegg was well established as a favourite of reviewers: "easy to watch and easy to listen to" in Keith Winter's *The Shining Hour*, wrote the *Evening Telegraph* on 31 May 1949. Another future *Doctor Who* contributor joined Dundee Rep that spring: **Morris Barry**, later director of *The Moonbase*, *The Tomb of the Cybermen* (both 1967) and *The Dominators* (1968), was cast in *Life with Father* by Clarence Day, adapted by Howard Lindsay and Russell Crouse. Summer saw **Peggy Mount** arrive; the future Stallholder in *The Greatest Show in the Galaxy* (1988) played a 'Daily Woman' in Kenneth Horne's *Yes and No*, with Clegg as a clergyman's daughter.

Dundee Rep's producer AR Whatmore declared to the *Daily Record* (28 December 1949) that Barbara would follow in the footsteps of alumnus Richard Todd and appear in films – the quotation anticipated her playing Mrs de Winter in *Rebecca* in January 1950. After this starring role, in February 1950 Clegg appeared in *The Linden Tree* by JB Priestley as one of the younger Lindens; **Daphne Heard**, later Mrs Tyler in *Image of the Fendahl* (1977), played her mother. By April, when Clegg appeared as Amelia Sedley in *Vanity Fair* (adapted from Thackeray by Constance Cox, who would go on to adapt several books for television), the company had been joined by **Peter Howell**, the Investigator in *The Mutants* (1972) and another former Oxford undergraduate. In May, they appeared together in *Watch the Wall, My Darling* by David Raven, Clegg playing "the young wife of a mystery character" according to the *Dundee Courier and Advertiser* of 9 May.



Richard Burton and Claire Bloom headlined a season of Shakespeare at the Old Vic in 1953-54, with Clegg in their august company



Later that year she and Peggy Mount migrated to Liverpool Playhouse. Already ensconced there was **Cyril Luckham**, who would play the White Guardian in *Doctor Who*, including in Clegg's own

Enlightenment. In September 1950, they played opposite each other in Bernard Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra*. *The Stage* of 21 September 1950 chimed with other reviewers in thinking Luckham's Caesar erred too much towards the benign rather than the ruthless, while Clegg was "a kitten with sharp claws" as Cleopatra. Directing was **Gerald Cross**, later to voice the Guardian and a Megara in *The Stones of Blood* (1978). In November 1952, he was in the Ipswich company with Clegg, appearing in *Hobson's Choice*, as was **Arnold Yarrow**, Bellal in *Death to the Daleks* (1974).

Before then, in October 1950, Barbara had appeared in Lewis Galantine's adaptation of Jean Anouilh's *Antigone* at the Sheffield Playhouse, in the title role opposite **Peter Sallis** as Creon. Sallis was cast as Striker in *Enlightenment* but surrendered the role when production was rescheduled; it would have been his second *Doctor Who* appearance after Penley in *The Ice Warriors* (1967). His colleague from that story, **Peter Barkworth**, was also in this *Antigone*. Appearing with them was Patrick McGoohan, amid many other credits later the star of *Danger Man* and *The Prisoner*.

LONDON TO AUSTRALIA, 1953-55

Clegg reached the London stage with a run at the Mermaid in July 1953, playing the Second Witch in *Macbeth*, with old colleagues Howell (as Macduff) and Yarrow (as Caithness and the Porter). In August it was up to the Edinburgh Festival production of *Hamlet* directed by Michael Benthall, with Richard Burton as Hamlet and **Claire Bloom** as Ophelia; she

wouldn't reach *Doctor Who* until the twenty-first century, as the enigmatic woman in *The End of Time* (2009). Clegg was a Lady of the Court, while haunting Burton as the Ghost was **Bernard Horsfall**, later to play Gulliver in *The Mind Robber* (1968), a Time Lord in *The War Games* (1969) and Chancellor Goth in *The Deadly Assassin* (1976).

At the close of 1953, Clegg appeared at the Old Vic as Maria in *Twelfth Night*. Directing this sumptuously designed production was **Denis Carey**, the third of the directors she encountered who would play authority figures in *Doctor Who*: Chronotis in *Shada* (1980), the titular Keeper of Traken (1981), and the false Borad in *Timelash* (1985). Burton and Bloom carried over from the Edinburgh *Hamlet*, this time as Sir Toby Belch and Viola. A photograph in *The Sketch* suggests **William Squire** was mischievous to the point of malevolence as Sir Andrew Aguecheek; he later appeared, albeit masked, in a production that arguably made limited use of his abilities, as the Shadow in *The Armageddon Factor* (1979).

Clegg received good notices for *Twelfth Night: Truth* (15 January 1954) thought her "consistently delightful" and *The Sketch* (27 January) found her "bubbling". She seems to have been carried around the stage a lot by Burton. She stayed at the Old Vic for *Coriolanus*, directed by Michael Benthall, again with Bloom, Burton, Horsfall and Squire, but the expanded cast also included her Oxford contemporary **Timothy Bateson**, the future Binro of *The Ribos Operation* (1978); **John Dearth**, who would voice BOSS in *The Green Death* (1973) and appear in person as Lupton in *Planet of the Spiders* (1974); and **James Maxwell**, Jackson in *Underworld* (1978).

In October 1954, Clegg was at Glasgow Citizens' Theatre playing Hero in *Much Ado About Nothing*. **Fulton Mackay**, Dr Quinn in *Doctor Who and the Silurians* (1970) and a hod-carrier's width from becoming the Fourth Doctor in 1974, was Verges. Also present was **Andrew Keir**, Wyler in *Daleks: Invasion Earth 2150AD* (1966). Further confirming an impression that late-1970s and early-1980s *Doctor Who* tended to cast the rep directors of a quarter-century or so before as authority figures, the director of this production was **Richard Mathews**, who would be Rassilon in *The Five Doctors* (1983).

1955 was more adventurous as Clegg returned to the Old Vic Company for their tour of Australia. At the head of the

Barely six months into appearing in *Emergency-Ward 10* Clegg was promoted to top billing in *TV Times*

company were Katherine Hepburn and Robert Helpmann, but with them were **David Dodimead**, later Barclay in *The Tenth Planet* (1966), and **Christopher Burgess**, Swann in *The Enemy of the World* (1967), Professor Phillips in *Terror of the Autons* (1971) and Barnes in *Planet of the Spiders* (1974).

TELEVISION STARDOM, 1956-60

Clegg made her television debut on 5 August 1956, in John Dighton's play *Who Goes There?* on BBC Television. She was an Irish maid opposite a guardsman played by **Bernard Bresslaw**, later Varga, leader of *The Ice Warriors* (1967).

After this Clegg's career is more difficult to track as detailed theatre reviews became less common in the regional press. She did more television: *Armchair Theatre*'s 'It's an Ill Wind' (14 October 1956) seems to have been her ITV debut, appearing with **Stratford Johns**, afterwards Monarch in *Four to Doomsday* (1982), with a swift return for 'Michael and Mary' (13 January 1957), which featured **Llewellyn Rees**, the President in *The Deadly Assassin* (1976). Clegg appeared with the Liverpool Playhouse company in *The Desk Set* by William Marchant on BBC Television on 29 May 1958; other members of the company included **Thelma Barlow**, who would play Lady Thaw in *The Lazarus Experiment*; and **Nicholas Hawtrey**, Quinn in *The Power of the Daleks* (1966).

Barbara's life changed drastically in July 1958 when she joined the cast of the television medical drama *Emergency-Ward 10*, as Nurse Jo Buckley. Set in a general hospital in the fictitious town of Oxbridge, the series had begun in 1957 and

attracted a devotion probably then unprecedented in British television. It was made by ATV, the ITV franchise holder for the Midlands during weekdays and London at weekends. This half-hour drama was screened twice a week in the early evening and made stars of its cast. Clegg's fellow regulars included her old colleague Peter Howell. Other actors, whether regulars or guests, who would later make *Doctor Who* appearances included **John Carson** (Ambril in *Snakedance*, 1983), **Philip Latham** (Borusa in *The Five Doctors*), **David Garth** (the Time Lord from *Terror of the Autons*, 1971), **Arthur Hewlett** (Kalmar in *State of Decay*, 1980, and Kimber in the Vervoid segment of *The Trial of a Time Lord*, 1986), **Olaf Pooley** (Stahlman and Stahlmann in *Inferno*, 1970) and **Colin Douglas** (Bruce in *The Enemy of the World*, 1967, and Reuben in *Horror of Fang Rock*, 1977). Writers included Margot Bennett, who was approached to work on *Doctor Who* during its first season.

Barbara's life changed drastically in July 1958 when she joined the cast of *Emergency-Ward 10*



Interviews with Clegg suggest she was keen to separate herself from Jo Buckley from the start: she had never been inside a hospital, the *Nottingham Evening News* reported her saying (15 July 1958), although she revealed that the cast were assisted by a sister tutor in rehearsal and a medical student on studio nights. Nurse Jo was played as a Lancashire girl, drawing on Clegg's own geographical origins, though not so much her education in Cheltenham and Oxford. By the time a reporter visited the studio for the *Liverpool Echo* (23 October 1958), she seemed more relaxed, remarking that she thought she would have made a good nurse. One suspects it was the ATV press office who put stories in the papers of Barbara's visit to Guy's Hospital to give blood, on learning she was of a rare blood group, rhesus negative (*Manchester Evening News*, 4 December 1958 and Newcastle's *The Journal*, 5 December).

Clegg's position as a star was confirmed in January 1959 when her new contract specified her name should be featured as one of the main cast in television listings: they now began, "with Charles Tingwell, Iris Russell, Peter Howell, Barbara Clegg". Nurse Jo was presented as an identification figure for young viewers – a teenage girl reportedly wrote to Barbara asking if she could send her the stories of episodes she was missing as television was banned at her new boarding school. Also, three schoolgirls regularly turned up outside the studio and washed her car, Nurse Jo being their "pet personality".

Jo Buckley's storyline built up to television's wedding of the year when she married Desmond Carrington's Dr Chris Anderson. The characters tied the knot in the episode of Friday 14 August 1959. A viewer had sent in a wedding cake, which would be seen on screen. Emotional investment in Nurse Jo was widespread: one newspaper, *The Shields Gazette*, reminded its readers that Clegg and Carrington weren't themselves a couple in real life.

In September, Clegg was one of the stars, alongside *Crossroads*' Noele Gordon, attending a major retail show in Derby. Yet being in *Emergency-Ward 10* had its complications. In October it was announced that Desmond Carrington was leaving but Barbara Clegg was staying – it was arranged that he would make short appearances in some future episodes to reassure viewers that Chris and Jo were still married. Yet reality and fiction were blurred. In January 1960 ATV announced that Clegg had asked to leave the series; subsequently Jo left the hospital to have a baby. "I wasn't myself any longer," she told the *Sunday Mirror* (10 January 1960). She had been stopped by strangers following the wedding episode in August and asked whether she was enjoying her honeymoon, as if she actually were Jo Buckley.

STAGE AND WRITING, 1960-63

Back to the theatre went Barbara. In April 1960 she appeared in *The Lotus-Eaters* by Mary Rose Barrington at the Pembroke Theatre, Croydon, directed by **Derek Martinus**, who helmed several *Doctor Who* serials including *The Tenth Planet* (1966) and *Spearhead from Space* (1970). In July she was Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Ludlow Festival, in a company which included **Colin Jeavons** (Damon in *The Underwater*



Clegg in *Strange Concealments*, an ATV children's serial she also wrote

Menace, 1967, and George Tracey in *K9 and Company*, 1981), **John Woodvine** (the Marshal in *The Armageddon Factor*, 1979), **Morris Perry** (Dent in *Colony in Space*, 1971) and **Terry Scully** (Fewsham in *The Seeds of Death*, 1969). The play's choreographer was Geraldine Stephenson, responsible for movement in *The Brain of Morbius* (1976).

Clegg was a publicised guest star in the newspaper-set TV series *Deadline Midnight* that August, also from ATV, as a woman whose missing husband turned out to have another wife. The other wife was played by **Wendy Williams**, Vira in *The Ark in Space* (1975). An interview in the *Manchester Evening News* (15 August 1960) suggested a wariness of television on Clegg's part and a wish to do more Shakespeare; indeed, in October she was Ophelia in *Hamlet* at the Pembroke.

There were still television jobs, though, including race relations drama *The Dark Man* (BBC, 8 December 1960), where the eponymous taxi driver was played by **Earl Cameron** (Williams in *The Tenth Planet*, 1966). Publicity still brought up Nurse Jo, however, and there was a national outcry in January 1961 when the character and her baby were drowned off-screen in *Emergency-Ward 10*, with some viewers thinking a real mother and baby had died.

"Nurse Jo was conveniently allowed to die," the *Liverpool Echo* stated bluntly on 26 June 1961, as Clegg had other irons in the fire. The piece was headed 'New Authoress' as she was now writing "very successful" scripts for *Coronation Street*, researched, she said, from visits to markets in Lancashire towns with her mother. She talked more about the soap to the *Manchester Evening News* (7 August), saying she found writing episodes at her parents' home in Formby easier than at her flat in London, distant from script conferences in Manchester, where writing often had to compete with rehearsing a play. "I want to carry on writing as well as acting."

Clegg was becoming less visible as a public personality, as she had wished, but her engagement to the BBC television producer Paul Johnstone was still a front-page story for the *London Evening News and Star* (6 December 1961). A longer piece had appeared in one of her home-town papers, the *Liverpool Daily Post*, the day before: the “actress, TV artist, lecturer, script writer” had become “so well known” as Jo Buckley she had asked to be killed off, it said. Nevertheless, when Clegg and Johnstone married in March 1962 the piece was headed ‘TV star weds producer’. It doesn’t seem surprising that when she returned to the stage in June at Regent’s Park, again in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* this time as Titania, she played the part behind a silver mask. It seems to have been her last major stage role.

In late 1962 and early 1963 Barbara was the co-writer of two children’s serials for late Saturday afternoons from ATV, made for the very slot that *Doctor Who* was soon to occupy on BBC Television. *Strange Concealments* concerned two branches of a family – one English, one American – who partook in a treasure hunt at a fourteenth-century moated manor house. Clegg acted in this alongside **Frederick Jaeger** (Jano in *The Savages*, 1966, Sorenson in *Planet of Evil*, 1975, and Marius in *The Invisible Enemy*, 1977), along with Michael Bancroft and Henry Soskin – who as **Henry Lincoln** would later write *The Abominable Snowmen* (1967) and *The Web of Fear* (1968) with Mervyn Haisman. Clegg and Soskin then wrote another serial for the same slot, *Once Aboard the Lugger*, shown in January 1963. Writing was rapidly becoming the main part of her career.

SERIAL SCRIPTING, 1964-83

Her next move provided further front-page coverage, in both the *Liverpool Echo* and *London Evening News and Star* of 19 February 1963. The long-running BBC radio serial *Mrs Dale’s Diary* had been renamed *The Dales* the previous year; now the head of sound broadcasting intervened, dismissed its two lead actors Ellis Powell and James Dale, made Barbara Clegg one of two regular writers, and installed a new producer in the person of **Peter Bryant**, who would later produce *Doctor Who* from 1967 to 1969. The new creative team’s connections to television soap opera were stressed, Bryant having been a regular in *The Grove Family* in the 1950s, and Clegg’s past as Nurse Jo supposedly having relevance to Dr Dale’s practice.

Within a few weeks it was revealed that the new Mrs Dale would be someone with more star power: Jessie Matthews, who had enjoyed a substantial career in musical theatre and film. Interviewed on 13 March 1963 in the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* about the change, Clegg’s responses showed that a character doesn’t have to regenerate in the narrative to be reconceptualised. While she hadn’t yet met Matthews, she imagined “the new Mrs Dale will be a better mixer and not as exclusive as the old”. She might almost have been talking about a later substitution made by Bryant at *Doctor Who*, where the self-effacing Patrick Troughton was replaced with the more gregarious Jon Pertwee.

On 29 May 1964 the *Liverpool Echo* reported the birth of Clegg’s first child, Adam, at Queen Charlotte’s Hospital in

London. That seemed to be the last appearance in the press of Barbara Clegg, television star, and the papers ceased regularly reporting on her life. She returned to television writing between January and May 1969, when she was responsible for 21 episodes of ATV’s *Crossroads*. This had once provided gainful employment to Derrick Sherwin and Terrance Dicks, by then at *Doctor Who*, but its presiding genius and co-creator was **Peter Ling**, author of *The Mind Robber* (1968); fellow writers included **Malcolm Hulke**, who must have been engaged with *The War Games* at the same time, and Basil Dawson, whose idea for Season 14 failed to reach the screen. She narrowly missed writing alongside founding *Doctor Who* story editor **David Whitaker**, whose first episodes for the series were screened in July 1969.

Clegg’s press coverage resumed with a group photograph of the writers of another radio serial, BBC Radio 2’s *Waggoners’ Walk*, that appeared in the *Ealing Gazette* on 23 January 1976; she was described as “an ex-actress”. Her colleagues included “veritable king of serials” Peter Ling. The end of *Waggoners’ Walk* in 1980 lost Clegg the second of two long-term regular radio commissions which had covered nearly 18 years. She retained her ties with radio drama, but with Radio 2 having ended its daily serial, the future lay with Radio 4 and it seems to have been her adaptation of John Wyndham’s *The Chrysalids* that marked her out as a possible contributor to *Doctor Who*. Her commitments to continuing serial drama on radio had perhaps suggested a narrower range than she had. Clegg wasn’t unusual in having worked with other *Doctor Who* professionals before joining the series, but the breadth of her career suggests she could have become its first woman writer much earlier than she did.

POST-SCRIPT

Barbara Clegg’s student life in Oxford was 35 years in her past when she wrote *Enlightenment*, but I do wonder whether the peculiar idealisation of women sometimes seen in 1940s Oxford – full of young men with barely any experience of women – had an influence in the depiction of Marriner’s behaviour towards Tegan. Perhaps the Eternals are all student actors co-opting a real world they don’t understand for their own purposes. Alternatively, Marriner is an audience member whose gaze subsumes the personality of the object of their worship beneath a constructed narrative that they’re unable to distinguish from reality, a reflection on Barbara Clegg’s period of television stardom.

I’ve lived in and around Oxford for a long time and it has a lot of ghosts: buildings, shops, institutions, people I knew and people I didn’t, contemporaries and those who came before and after me. If, when I walk along the High, I glimpse a flash of blue as a bicycle shoots by, perhaps with a dash of scarlet and a sense of wisdom beyond its years, I’ll be glad to imagine I’ve encountered the Oxford shade of Barbara Clegg. ☸

Combined from two articles by Matthew in issue 50 of The Tides of Time, published by the Oxford (University) Doctor Who Society
oxforddoctorwho-tidesoftime.blog

THE KING'S DEMONS

The Master is causing mischief in Earth's history
but his control over King John is not all it seems

WRITTEN BY **TERENCE DUDLEY** • DIRECTED BY **TONY VIRGO**
AIRDATES **15, 16 MARCH 1983** • RATINGS **5.8m, 7.2m**
NOVELISATION BY **TERENCE DUDLEY** • PUBLISHED **20 FEBRUARY 1986**

When I started watching *Doctor Who* more than 40 years ago, Tom Baker was the Doctor. When making that statement, I don't just mean that he was the current star of the series who also happened to be the fourth actor to play the part. He was *the* Doctor – the definite article, I might have said had my grasp of the programme's lore at the time been sufficient to make such allusions. Baker's persona was so powerful that I couldn't imagine anyone had been the Doctor before him, let alone that anyone would be – or even could fill that role – after him.

It didn't help matters that the feature in one of Marvel's American reprints of comic strips from *Doctor Who Weekly*, where I learned about the change,

showed an illustration of Peter Davison that resembled former President Jimmy Carter – an admirable figure but not one who signified captivating adventure. Consequently, when I finally saw Tom Baker's much lower-key successor, I found him somewhat underwhelming. By the time I got to watch more than a

**Compared to
some stories
from Davison's
tenure, this has
aged rather well**

few of Davison's episodes, which weren't widely available in the US, I'd already seen one of Colin Baker's stories at a convention and decided that this more extroverted Doctor was more to my liking. My initial impression solidified into the kind of firm judgment only teenagers are capable of: Davison had appeared in some great stories but was not himself a great Doctor.

It would be many years and numerous DVD purchases later (not to mention several of Big Finish's audio dramas) before I revised this view. Having children who were embracing *Doctor Who* with fresh eyes, plus a healthy scepticism about my opinions also played a role. Amusingly, some of the less respected stories from Davison's tenure did the most to make me

BBC video cover artwork by
Colin Howard – colinhowardart.com



appreciate him as the Doctor. In a story like *The Caves of Androzani*, where nearly every element of the production is excellent, even a strong performance like Davison's doesn't necessarily stand out. In contrast, the more uneven stories sometimes allow viewers to appreciate what he brings to the part.

A case in point is 1983's *The King's Demons*, a two-part serial frequently ranked as one of the show's worst instalments when fans are surveyed about such things. Like many other less regarded stories, whether it deserves such derision is a separate question worthy of genuine consideration. Although not a classic piece of television

by any stretch, it remains a fun way to spend an hour. In fact, compared to some stories from Davison's tenure, it has aged rather well (except, perhaps, the incidental music).

Nothing on television dates quite like depictions of the future but, thanks to its historical setting, *The King's Demons* offers few if any of the fashion victims that sometimes make futuristic episodes of *Doctor Who* hard to enjoy. Despite the golden age of BBC costume drama being several years in the past by this point, the broadcaster's craftsmen still had a knack for creating convincing period settings that looked far more impressive than you'd expect with the tight budget

a two-part story would have had in the early 1980s. Combined with some effective location filming at Bodiam Castle in East Sussex, it allows viewers to focus on the story and performances on their own terms.

The narrative shortcomings of *The King's Demons* have always been easy targets. As the Doctor himself points out on screen, the Master's plot to prevent the signing of the Magna Carta is "small-time villainy". Also, some of the historical background is shaky and the resolution is somewhat lacking in drama. That said, the process of getting to that resolution is quite enjoyable. Terence Dudley wasn't *Doctor Who*'s





most dynamic scriptwriter but the TARDIS materialising in the midst of a jousting match is an entertaining sight, and the historical mystery that builds over the first episode as the Doctor realises something is amiss with King John is engaging. There are likewise some genuinely amusing pieces of dialogue, such as when the Doctor prepares to face King John's champion Sir Giles Estram in a duel.

Sir Ranulf: "He is said to be the best swordsman in France."

The Doctor: "Fortunately, we are in England."

Some of the intrigue inevitably falls by the wayside once the Master's identity is revealed but even then there are enough questions posed to keep things lively. Ultimately, it's hard to shake the feeling that the story's bad reputation is a reflection of it being almost assertively unambitious than its actual weaknesses. This is unfortunate because there's a great deal more to appreciate in *The King's Demons* than just its period atmosphere. Both the series regulars and guest stars Gerald Flood and Frank Windsor, as King John and Sir Ranulf respectively, give strong performances. Even Anthony Ainley, perhaps relieved to have a plot that doesn't overtly involve universal domination, is in good form, relishing his dual role without going too far over the top.

The key to the story, though, is Peter Davison. Throughout the story, his performance exemplifies the quiet conviction he brings to the role, holding the viewers' attention without drawing it to himself. Watching him in action – never overwhelmed and quietly putting the pieces together in a way Tom Baker's incarnation often lacked the patience for – there's no question about who's driving the story.

In that respect, *The King's Demons* brings to mind some of the historical stories from William Hartnell's tenure, when both time and budgets were even tighter and much of the audience wanted nothing more than non-stop Daleks. Like Hartnell, even when his Doctor is in the thick of history, Davison makes it clear this is his show. John Nathan-Turner famously intended each

story in *Doctor Who's* twentieth season to feature an element from the show's past. Although the Master's return might have been top of mind for him in this regard, the historical setup nevertheless recalls the programme's early years. While never said directly, the Doctor's drive to ensure history follows its proper course echoes Hartnell's declaration: "You can't rewrite history, not one line."

That observation is ironic because, as fans, we frequently rewrite *Doctor Who's* history, or at least redefine the significance of its various elements, both those on screen and behind the scenes. *The King's Demons* seems unlikely to benefit from any widespread reappraisal, which is probably fair. That said, one of the great things about *Doctor Who* is that even a lesser story can offer new perspectives. ☐

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

It was an excellent little piece, if rather out on a limb as a two-parter because of the strike. It was a lovely production – the jousting, feasting and lute playing were all captivating. It was really a shame in this case that there had to be a story, and the Master (so obvious with one glance!) rather intruded on the atmosphere. The cast was very good, especially Gerald Flood. I don't think it quite reached the level the classic *Black Orchid* did, maybe because it was a bit too hurried. It was, however, an extremely enjoyable 50 minutes (I put it second in the season poll) and these historical two-parters provide a welcome break from the other, more science-fiction stories. All in all, a very good story.

Saul Nasse, *TARDIS*, Volume 8, Number 2, June 1983

LONGLEAT HOUSE, WILTSHIRE

3rd & 4th APRIL 1983

BBC

THE
DOCTOR
WHO

50p

Celebration

TWENTY YEARS OF A TIME LORD



COMMEMORATIVE
PROGRAMME



BBC Enterprises Ltd. presents
The Dr. Who Celebration
Twenty Years of a Time Lord
Lansham, Wiltshire, 3rd & 4th April 1983, 10am - 6pm
ADMIT ONE ADULT £4.00
to The Dr. Who Celebration only.
One Day Only Ticket. Road toll NOT included.



Cover recreation by Paul MC Smith
Original artwork by Iain McCaig

Missing the Party

If you couldn't get to the Celebration at Longleat in April 1983, Radio 2's Ed Stewart was on site to alleviate listeners' FOMO

Where were you on Monday 4 April 1983? I can pinpoint exactly where I was: in the driveway of our recently purchased new family home. My parents were either gardening or working on the outside of the house. I have a feeling there was an expectation I should be helping with whatever DIY project they were working on. There really was no excuse for a 14-year-old boy on his Easter school holidays *not* to be lending a hand. One thing's for certain: my parents were listening to BBC Radio 2.

At 11.30am my ears were alerted to the sound of the TARDIS materialising, mixed in with the *Doctor Who* theme, blasting out from the portable radio in the garage. Then Ed 'Stewpot' Stewart's dulcet tones announcing he was at Longleat "along with thousands and thousands of *Doctor Who* fans". He went on to say that 30,000 had arrived the day before so if you didn't have a ticket "please don't come along cos I don't think you'll be able to get in". I didn't have a ticket and, although I was aware a 20th anniversary celebration of the show was taking place, I knew that, unlike my frequent visits to the

Blackpool *Doctor Who* exhibition, Wiltshire was too far from Stoke for my parents to take me.

My obsession with Blackpool has been well documented in the two free ebooks I've written with my dear friend Alex Storer: *Blackpool Remembered* and *Blackpool Revisited*. Our third book, *Longing for Longleat*, is a love letter to a place neither of us managed to visit. So spending this spring morning listening to Ed meandering among the various marquees and talking to stars, fans and BBC employees from different departments was the closest I ever got to this legendary location.

Through the power of time travel (*ie* a quick YouTube search), I've been able to relive that original broadcast once more and boy has it made me realise how much times have changed in the last four decades. First off, there's an interview with the "present" Doctor, Peter Davison, inside the exhibition (or "TARDIS" as Ed calls it). In the background can be heard an evocative soundtrack of Daleks and other monsters that drew crowds year upon year. Peter is quizzed

on his costume, which he describes as “a variation on a Victorian cricketing outfit in beiges and lovely striped trousers”. He goes on to divulge that he has “about two outfits and several shirts”, they being something he needs lots of. He then takes great delight in noticing that more fans are dressed as his incarnation of the Doctor rather than any of the previous four. “There are a lot of me’s about this morning,” he chuckles. One of those is nine-year-old Philip Jones, who explains how his copycat attire has been created from a jumble-sale blazer, a cricket jumper knitted by a friend and pyjama bottoms, topped off with a real stick of celery that Peter describes as “even droopier than mine. It needs a good bucket of water, that.” Philip declares he has met Peter previously, getting his autograph at the *Cinderella* pantomime staged at the Assembly Hall Theatre in Royal Tunbridge Wells in 1982. I was well aware of this production as there had been an advert in *Doctor Who Monthly* announcing it, with the offer to purchase a copy of the souvenir programme for £1, which I had done.

John Nathan-Turner and Janet Fielding were the next to be interviewed by Ed, on the Conference Room set from *The Five Doctors*. John was quizzed on the global success of the show, followed by an awkward discussion about the Doctor having a “colonial” companion. The mood is only slightly lifted when he states, “One of our American fans once described Janet as the mouth that walks.” He quickly adds, “or rather Tegan, I should say!”

Peter Davison takes great delight in noticing that more fans are dressed as his incarnation of the Doctor

Ed next chats to two female members from a “local” American *Doctor Who* club, the grandly titled Prydonian Renegades. Jane Eerie is described as a “journalist for science-fiction” and the other is called Bobbie. They both hail from Columbus, Ohio, have been fans of *Doctor Who* for six years and have matching Fourth Doctor scarves so they can “spot each other in a crowd”. Ed prefers to call the ladies “addicts” of the show and is flabbergasted when Jean suggests the number of people in the States who are hooked on the show could be 20 to 30 million. Jean shares the fan club plan to stage a summer convention featuring Jon Pertwee and Elisabeth Sladen as the main guests,

Jon Pertwee talking with Ed Stewart while aboard the safari boat (photo: Nick Joy)



with “other guests too, as our budget permits”. When Bobbie is asked what makes the show special to her, she answers simply: “Peter Davison.”

The longer the outside broadcast goes on the weirder it gets. In the Visual Effects marquee, one

Mrs Shrub is interviewed next to a Triffid prop. Ed asks for her feelings about the event, which she describes as “very good apart from the crowds”. She goes on to say her family has only come

“for the children”, one of whom is James, who tells Ed his favourite bit so far has been “the bang and the blood”. James’ mum clarifies this was the Visual Effects team demonstrating how they fake a gun shot. Moving on to the Make-up tent, Ed interviews “three beautiful young ladies” who strap him to a seat and give him “a very nasty black eye”, which listeners are asked to imagine. Make-up artist Sheila Wells promises not to give Ed a vampire neck bite (which I imagine greatly disappoints him).

A highlight of the broadcast, for me, is Ed and Jon Pertwee feeding sea lions from a boat.

Spotting the presenter’s shiner, Jon asks if Phyllis gave it to him, to which Stewpot replies, “Er, Anthony Ainley.” This prompts Jon to ask if Ed has seen “a gentleman called Mr T Baker”, leading to a brief discussion with Ed’s producer about the name of the companion he interviewed (Janet). Jon spends the rest of the interview using his Worzel Gummidge voice, beginning with him telling a sea lion to “shut your face” and going on to ask if he can have one of the fish with some chips.

The show ended with the *Doctor Who* theme underpinning Ed’s list of thanks to all his guests and to Longleat owner Lord Bath, who says the event has made him “a really happy man”. As Ed reminds us throughout, it was all “terrific”.

Listening back, one of the most amusing things about the broadcast is the ‘themed’ music choices interspersing the chat. They included Tight Fit’s *The Lion Sleeps Tonight*, Zager and Evans’ *In The Year 2525*, Sunnys’ *Doctor’s Orders*, Peter Shelley’s *Love Me, Love My Dog*, Bucks Fizz’s *Run For Your Life* and Stevie Wonder’s *Black Orchid*. Yet the most cringe-worthy moment has to be Ed asking if young fan Timothy Hawkins is a “fella or a girl”. One can only assume he was confused by the length of the lad’s hair. The 1980s really were a different time. ■



LUNAR LAGOON

Issues *Doctor Who Monthly*
76-77 (May-June 1983)

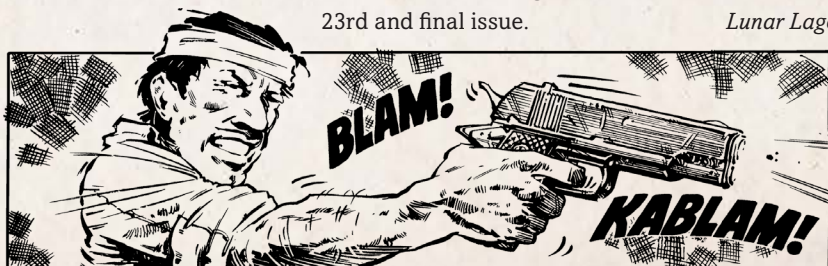
Script Steve Parkhouse

Art Mick Austin

Editor Alan McKenzie

NOTES Introduces American Airforce pilot **Gus Goodman** (although not yet named).

FANTASTIC FACT For American fans the comic ended here. That is, if they were following the colourised reprints of the strip in the *Doctor Who* comic published by Marvel in the USA. The title was cancelled in 1986 with *Lunar Lagoon* in the 23rd and final issue.



Comic panels courtesy of and copyright Panini Publishing Ltd



REVIEW Leaving Stockbridge behind, the Doctor relocates to a pacific atoll in search of peace and quiet, but realises that time is out of joint as he encounters Fuji, a Japanese fisherman turned soldier who has been left behind on the island.

Lunar Lagoon takes an intriguing sidestep into the alternate past of a parallel world where World War Two is still being fought in 1963, but is otherwise devoid of science-fiction elements. The tale is a reflective meditation on the futility of war and the conflict of ideologies, contrasting the pacifism of the Doctor with Fuji's determination to prove himself.

4-DIMENSIONAL VISTAS

Issues *Doctor Who Monthly* 78-83 (July-December 1983)

Script Steve Parkhouse **Art** Mick Austin **Editor** Alan McKenzie

NOTES The **Monk** and the **Ice Warriors** are the main adversaries. **Gus Goodman** joins the Doctor aboard the TARDIS. **SAG3** return.

FANTASTIC FACT Mixing up the name of the character and the television story he debuted in resulted in the Monk being referred to as the Time Meddler in the strip (part 4, page 3).

REVIEW On television the twentieth anniversary was marked by bringing back various elements from the series' past. The comic took a similar approach to marking this special occasion. The Ice Warriors, whose previous strip appearances had been confined to back-up tales, join forces with the Monk, who hadn't been seen since 1966.

The story curiously begins at a slow pace, with the opening instalment taking place in the same location as the previous story as the Doctor realises he's on a parallel version of Earth and befriends Gus Goodman. The strip pre-empts the television series by giving the Fifth Doctor an American companion. Although Gus has little else in common with Peri, they both board the TARDIS for the first time on a tropical island beach following a near-drowning incident.

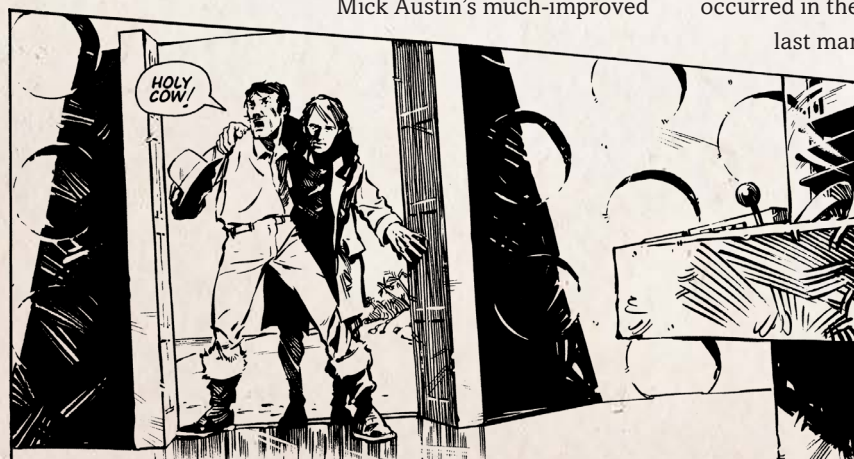
The action ramps up significantly as the story relocates to the frozen wastes of the Arctic for subsequent instalments.

Mick Austin's much-improved



artwork accurately captures the Ice Warriors, depicting thrilling action sequences involving intense battles, and culminates in a chase between the Doctor and the Monk's TARDISes through a surreal visualisation of the time vortex.

4-Dimensional Vistas, particularly the latter half, holds special significance for me. This was my jumping-on point for the strip as my collection of *DWM* began with issue 81, midway through this story. I often speculated about what had occurred in the preceding issues until, several years later, I at last managed to acquire a full set.



THE MODERATOR

Issues *Doctor Who Monthly* 84 (January 1984), *The Official Doctor Who Magazine* 86-87 (March-April 1984)

Script Steve Parkhouse **Art** Steve Dillon
Editor Alan McKenzie

NOTES Introduces **Josiah W Dogbolter**, **Hob** and **Intra-Venus Inc.** First appearance of a **Zyglot**. **Gus Goodman** dies.

FANTASTIC FACT The second part of *The Moderator* in issue 85 (February 1984, the first with the magazine's new title) was substituted by a reprint of an earlier back-up tale: *Skywatch-7* (part one first published in issue 58, November 1981, with part two in that year's Winter Special). While this was most likely owing to delayed artwork, a one-issue pause would have been required before changing over Doctors. The Fifth Doctor's final strip appearance in issue 87 was published on 8 March 1984, the same date as the broadcast of the first episode of *The Caves of Androzani*, so the following issue is the earliest that could feature the Sixth Doctor.

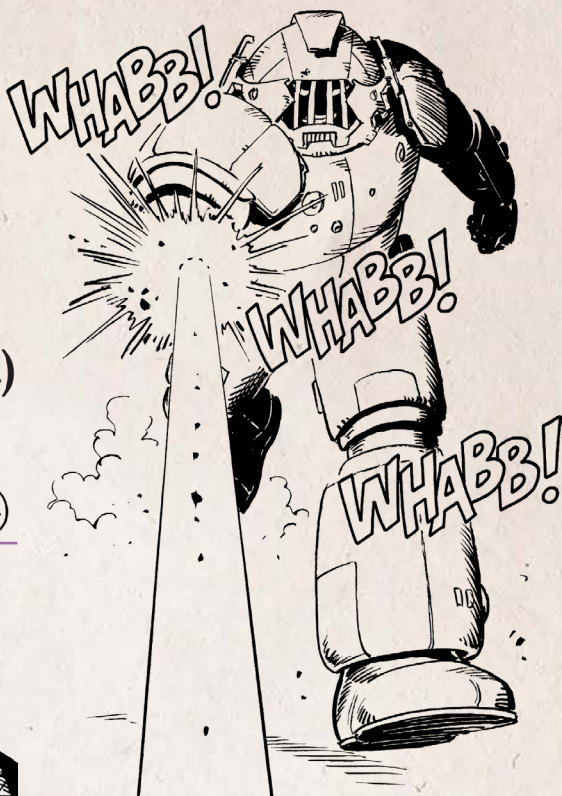
REVIEW The Fifth Doctor takes a back-seat role for his final regular strip adventure, only present on half of the story's 24 pages. The tale's focus is on a couple of original characters: the titular Moderator, a heavily armoured mercenary, and his employer, the immensely wealthy and avaricious half-man, half-frog Josiah W Dogbolter (who seems to have been inspired by Danger Mouse's arch-enemy Baron Greenback).

The tale jumps back and forth between two separate and seemingly unconnected storylines, one involving the Doctor's exploits leading to his encounter with Dogbolter, the other the

Moderator's mission to track down the TARDIS. It's only near the conclusion that everything clicks into place: the Doctor's story takes place first, followed by the Moderator's quest, which has been related by the mercenary in a medical facility just before the plug is pulled on his life-support.

Something that doesn't quite work is that the Doctor returns Gus to the Pacific atoll in the past on the parallel Earth – "The same time, the same place that we first met!" – yet the Moderator is somehow able to catch up with them there. This implies he can travel in time and across parallel worlds, even though Dogbolter specifically desires the Doctor's TARDIS because he wants the ability to time travel.

Coincidentally mirroring the Fifth Doctor's final screen adventure, here he's unwittingly drawn into a violent conflict where he and his companion's lives are put in jeopardy due to the greed and self-interest of others, ultimately leading to a tragic conclusion. I can still recall the shock I felt reading the strip for the first time as Gus dies in the Doctor's arms following a shoot-out with the Moderator. This made a great impression on me, resulting in an enduring admiration for *Doctor Who* in the comic medium.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 168

20TH ANNIVERSARY

starring

**PETER DAVISON
JON PERTWEE
PATRICK TROUGHTON
JANET FIELDING
MARK STRICKSON**

with guest stars

**ANTHONY AINLEY, NICHOLAS COURTNEY,
DAVID BANKS, CAROLE ANN FORD,
RICHARD HURNDALL, PAUL JERRICHO,
PHILIP LATHAM, RICHARD MATHEWS,
DINAH SHERIDAN and ELISABETH SLADEN**

**plus RICHARD FRANKLIN, FRAZER HINES, CAROLINE
JOHN, JOHN LEESON and WENDY PADBURY**

**appearances by TOM BAKER,
WILLIAM HARTNELL and LALLA WARD**

**Script editing by
ERIC SAWARD**

**Produced by
JOHN NATHAN-TURNER**



Target cover artwork
by Andrew Skilleter
andrewskilleter.com



Artwork by
Andy Lambert

REVIEWED BY PHILLIP HUNTER GILFUS

THE FIVE DOCTORS

Who is pitting the Doctor's past incarnations and friends against old enemies in the Death Zone on Gallifrey?

WRITTEN BY **TERRANCE DICKS** • DIRECTED BY **PETER MOFFATT**
AIRDATE **25 NOVEMBER 1983** • RATING **7.7m**
NOVELISATION BY **TERRANCE DICKS** • PUBLISHED **24 NOVEMBER 1983**

When it comes to a multi-Doctor anniversary special, is it a celebration of the current state of *Doctor Who* or is it about all that has come before? *The Five Doctors*, which marked 20 years of TARDIS travels on our screens, arguably exists outside of time. It's neither part of Season 20 nor Season 21 (although it can be found on the *Collection* Blu-ray set for the former). In a sense, like most multi-Doctor adventures, the story itself also exists out of time and continuity. Therefore, should anniversary specials be judged as containing any real meaning or just be a fun, mindless romp?

The Five Doctors was broadcast on Friday 25 November 1983, two days after the official birthday of the show.

Producer John Nathan-Turner intended, as you'd expect, that the special would be transmitted on the anniversary itself, Wednesday 23 November. However, the Controller of BBC1 felt that better ratings would be achieved if it were part of the channel's annual Children in Need appeal. As it turned out, the ratings for the special were in line with the best from the previous season, no charity boost. Much has been made over the years that US audiences were shown the

The Five Doctors
arguably exists
outside of time

special on the 23rd while viewers in Britain, the 'home' of the show, had to wait. What's often forgotten is that the novelisation had been on bookshop shelves since mid November. WH Allen had planned both hard and softback editions to be published a week after transmission, but distribution was a little quicker than expected.

This story, the last on television written by Terrance Dicks, might be more accurately described as 'The Four(ish) Doctors', with Tom Baker choosing not to participate, yet still present thanks to previously unshown *Shada* footage. The late William Hartnell was replaced by Richard Hurndall, although he was seen in a pre-credits clip from *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*. Nothing against Mr. Hurndall



Doctor find the Second's musical interludes annoying or charming? Does he admire or avoid the Third's gallant style? Is he embarrassed by his first incarnation? Sadly we'll never know. We later get to see the Fifth Doctor with the Tenth in another Children in Need special, *Time Crash* (2007). It's notable, perhaps for reasons of the Tennant and Davison familial connection, that the Tenth Doctor is the only one to cite the Fifth as an inspiration, stating, "I loved being you. Back when I first started, at the very beginning, I was always trying to be old and grumpy and important, like you do when you're young. And then I was you, and it was all dashing about and playing cricket ... Because you know what? You were my Doctor."

Perhaps others would disagree, but *The Five Doctors* doesn't necessarily feel like the Fifth Doctor's era; rather, it acts like more of a generic mishmash of what *Doctor Who* is, with Doctors, friends and enemies interacting in a mini-*Dungeons and Dragons* campaign. But maybe that's enough for an birthday bash.

What makes it a quintessential part of the Davison era is that, of course, the Anthony Ainley version of the Master appears. Even then, the Fifth Doctor only has a brief confrontation with him, then uses the Time Lord recall device to transmat himself from the Death Zone to the Council chambers, leaving the other Doctors and companions to deal with the Master. However, there's an inconsistency in which Doctors seem to recognise their old frenemy that ends up dampening any potential larger exploration of the relationship between Doctor and Master.

What then of the Fifth Doctor's companions? Tegan and Turlough host the First Doctor and Susan as they hide in the TARDIS while the Cybermen try to force their way inside. I've never been a fan of the Turlough character but I felt a bit sorry for him getting stuck in the TARDIS for almost the entire story, his only job to look at the monitor as the Cybermen attempt to gain entry. He and Susan don't even get to discuss their shared experiences in the British school system. Not even a sly, "I didn't know the Doctor had a granddaughter!"

– who had a hard job to do – but that leaves only three of the *actual* Doctors appearing. Of course, we also had past companions reappear, as themselves or as phantoms, leaving fans to debate whether the Doctor/companion pairings made sense. Susan was arguably one of the most important regular characters from the series' past to be brought back, but her role is on the periphery of the action and we learn nothing new about her or her life since leaving the TARDIS.

Even some of the choices about which enemies to represent from two decades of *Doctor Who* are a bit odd: a single Dalek appearing for one scene, while battalions of Cybermen repeatedly get destroyed throughout the story. This was down to practical production logistics: the former would not be very practical on location with rough terrain, while the latter could do both very well. Plus, Eric Sward was a Cyber-fan.

The Fifth Doctor spends most of his time handling the Time Lord conspiracy on Gallifrey while his past incarnations

and companions face peril entering the Dark Tower in the Death Zone. He unravels the mystery first by questioning the too-easy accusation of the Castellan as the suspect who used the time scoop to kidnap the Doctors, then by being sceptical about his convenient death. He further investigates the disappearance of the Lord President and figures out how to access the secret chamber using the Harp of Rassilon. However, the Doctor does get mind-controlled by Borusa and must rely on his fellow selves to save him (and the day). It's the First Doctor who gets the credit for convincing Rassilon to grant Borusa's wish for eternal life, although with a twist, and thus the story ends.

Perhaps it's too much to ask, with so many characters to juggle, that the Fifth Doctor should get more time to interact with his predecessors – all we have is a brief argument with the First Doctor. That was certainly the magic of *The Three Doctors* and later *The Two Doctors* and *The Day of the Doctor*. Does the Fifth



Tegan is more involved in the action but I also felt bad for her. Foreshadowing the First Doctor's treatment of Bill Potts in the 2017 Christmas special *Twice Upon a Time*, Hurndall's Doctor expects Tegan to be the one to fetch refreshments for the group. As someone who was barely three years old when this story first aired, it's nice to know that, even back then, the rest of the TARDIS crew collectively winced at this request. Unfortunately, Tegan ends up as the First Doctor's companion as they enter and journey through the Dark Tower. It

seems quite obvious he has no patience for Tegan or even any fondness. I suppose this mismatch might have been for comedic purposes but it just seems uncomfortable to watch.

The huge scope of requirements for *The Five Doctors* exposes the limitations of the script and the time devoted to each Doctor, their companions and monsters, but there's lots of things to enjoy in the story. We get a new TARDIS control room and console, which will last almost to the end of the Classic era. We get to see a surprising number of

past companions: Susan, Jamie, Zoe, Liz, Mike, Sarah-Jane, Romana and K9. Does Bessie count too? We get a return to Gallifrey and explore further the society of the Time Lords, a look at UNIT HQ and its odd signage, lots of Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart, an older-than-expected-looking Rassilon, the superb sequence of the Raston robot destroying the Cybermen, Susan tripping over and twisting her ankle, and Sarah falling down an incredibly gentle ravine only to be rescued by the Third Doctor. We also get the catchphrases (in various forms) of "You've had this place redecorated – I don't like it," and "I'll explain later." The First Doctor is tetchy, the Second is contrary, the Third is heroic and the Fifth is the detective. And the ending brings the series full circle:

Tegan: "You mean you're deliberately choosing to go on the run from your own people in a rickety old TARDIS?"

Doctor: "Why not? After all, that's how it all started."

The main story of *The Five Doctors* is that the Doctor can't survive without those who came before him. An obvious metaphor, perhaps, but it reminds us that, whether celebrating 10, 20, 50 or however many years of *Doctor Who*, it will remain the sum of its parts. ☐

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

Borusa was an obvious traitor but perhaps an apt one after past characterisation. Power obviously went to his head whilst he held office as Lord President. Borusa appeared deluded rather than evil and this was made apparent by the acting skills of Philip Latham. It must have been a moment of personal sorrow for the Doctor. JNT has severely dented the image of the Cybermen... they were portrayed as stupid robots instead of their usual cold calculating selves. A whole squad were left shattered by a *Star Wars* gimmick. Then they fell for the obvious trick, being blasted down on the board in the Tower... *Andrew Riddick*

The central idea of the story was great, but I was disappointed to find that Borusa ended up as a baddie. Considering the number of times he has helped the Doctor, it seems terribly unfair that he's doomed to spend eternity as a gargoyle. *Christopher Denyer*

The Master is now more or less Anthony Ainley's part. The Cyber Leader was again convincing, but they still sounded a bit human for my tastes. The inside of the Dalek was a good effect, but the Dalek itself was given little to do. As for the criminal waste of the Abominable Snowman – what can you say? The Raston warrior robot was OK, but nothing spectacular – it made for a few good Cyber-deaths. *Guy Clapperton*

Surely Borusa didn't have to go to all the trouble he did to get what he wanted. The 'scooping up' of Susan and Sarah was totally unnecessary, and if he wanted the Doctors to deal with the dangers of the Death Zone then why complicate matters for them by providing even more dangers such as the Cybermen? Doing so is stupid as it lessens the chances of the Doctors doing what he wants them to do. *Saul Gething*
All reviews from TARDIS, Volume 8, Number 4, 1984

Essential Reading

To celebrate a second decade of *Doctor Who*, *Radio Times* revived an old idea with a special edition highlighting the series' history



Alternative shots of the TARDIS crew for the Special's poster

Trapped by the Master and surrounded by Cybermen, the Doctor has memory gaps from a time before both renegades left Gallifrey. His nemesis gleefully mastersplains the details to his captive audience, with revelations that shatter our conception of the Time Lord hero's origins.

No, this plot isn't gleaned from every fan's favourite episode *The Timeless Children*. It's the crux of 'Birth of a Renegade', a short story published by *Radio Times* in 1983 as part of a bumper celebration of all things *Doctor Who*. Its *20th Anniversary Special* was jam-packed with colour photographs, recaps, interviews, production information, and a lavishly illustrated new story written by Eric Saward.

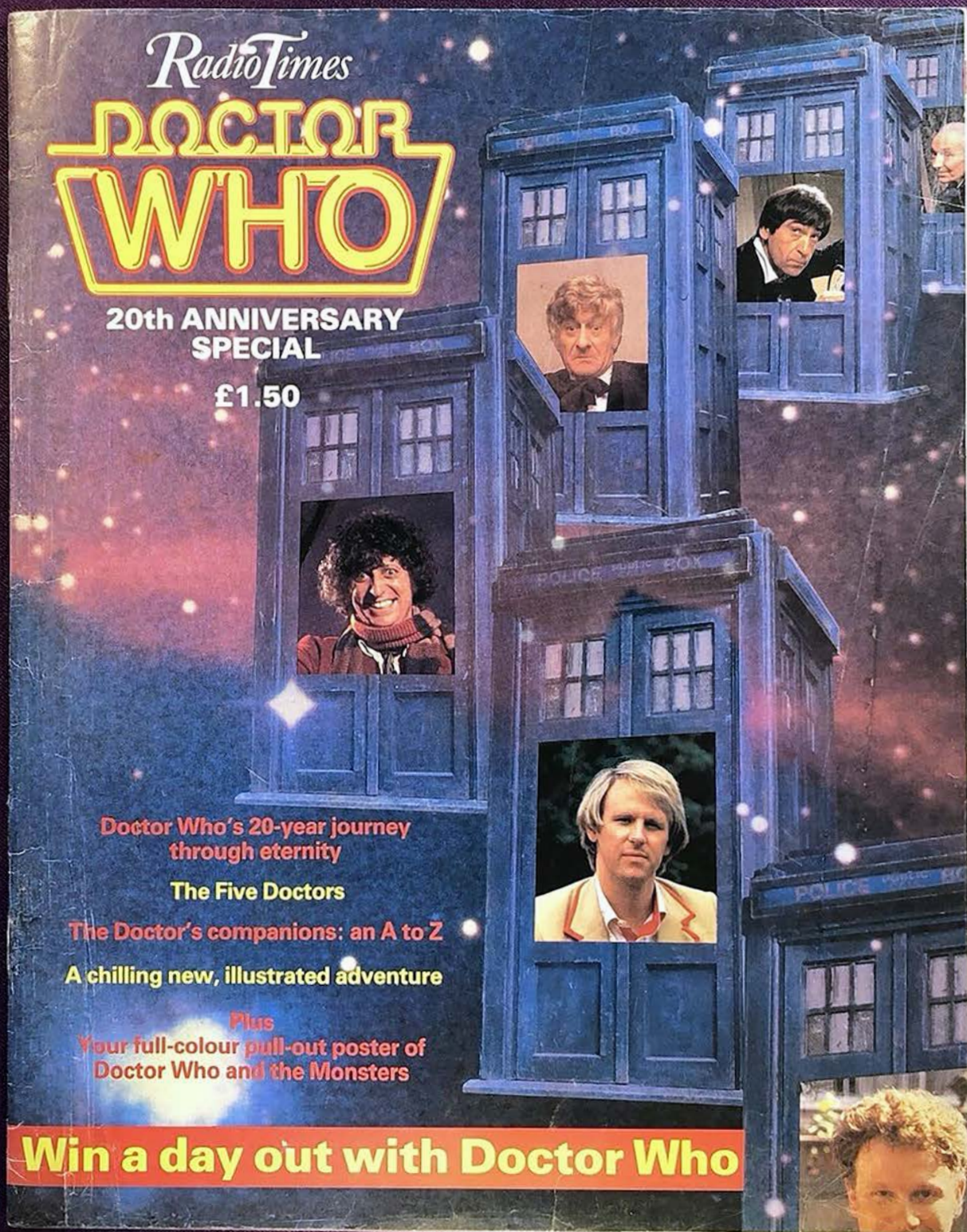
In the early 1980s the show had a stellar future and a rich past to look back on. Along with Terrance Dicks and Malcolm Hulke's book *The Making of Doctor Who*, the *Radio Times Special* was my go-to guide to the Doctor's history. This glossy magazine, repeats like *The Five Faces of Doctor Who* and the feature-length *The Five Doctors* all helped to cement the show's legacy and the idea that it was a

continuous, ever-evolving epic. *Doctor Who* wasn't just a weekly treat, it was a saga – Beowulf with binary stars, the Mahabharata with meteors.

The *Radio Times Doctor Who 20th Anniversary Special* provided a creditable record of the series' first 20 years, with an understandable emphasis on the then-current Doctor. Its inside cover showed snaps from all five Doctors' title sequences, encapsulating two decades in neat, orderly rows.

This was followed by a two-page feature called 'In the beginning', which featured a full-page photo of John Nathan-Turner clutching a copy of *The Doctor Who Technical Manual* in his production office. The text covered the creation of the show from the perspectives of Sydney Newman and Verity Lambert, before hopping to the production office of their latest successor.

Each Doctor was then given a couple of pages – surprising considering Tom Baker's longevity and popularity. The Fifth Doctor's section included an interview with Davison in which he explained that he drew aspects of his portrayal from the first two Doctors: Hartnell's brusqueness and Troughton's





vulnerability. “I felt it was very important to put back the idea that the Doctor was vulnerable, and could be defeated,” he said, encapsulating the openness that made his performance so endearing.

After an A to Z of companions (yes, Katarina and Sara Kingdom too), the Master – dubbed ‘Time Lord of Evil’ on the contents page – warranted a page of his own. A photo from *The Claws of Axos* hearkened back to the RT’s tenth anniversary Special, from which this magazine took its cue. Anthony Ainley is quoted as revelling in “hurling Tom Baker from a great height” in *Logopolis*, “because I knew all the fans would be having palpitations.” You can almost hear his evil chuckle as you read his words. Interestingly, the article notes, “The original idea was for the Master to be played by a woman – The Mistress? – but it was finally decided that the audience would be able to accept evil much more readily in a man than in a woman.”

provided a wide-eyed objectivity, with a heavy emphasis on cosplay; the enthusiasm was undoubted, the appeal was worldwide, and the meet-ups were extraordinary. Since the fans hung on his every word at conventions, Peter Davison admitted, “If you’re not careful, that can do strange things to your head!”

The crowning gem in this celebration was a visit behind the scenes of Season 21, prior to airing, with profiles and interviews by Search. Hitherto mysterious names from the end credits, such as Dorka Nieradzick and Peter Howell, now had faces thanks to Don Smith’s colour photos. In this section, readers met costume designer Amy Roberts, responsible for the richly woven robes of *The Keeper of Traken*; she talked about the technical challenges of “doing monsters”. Make-up artist Nieradzick



The fans got their own four-page article, covering conventions, fanzines (including *TARDIS*), overseas clubs and DWAS, which assisted with the compilation of the magazine. Reporter Gay Search

discussed *The Leisure Hive*’s Argolin, while set designer Tony Burrough (looking exceptionally 80s in a white suit and stripy shirt) explained how he researched the sets for *Warriors of the Deep*. Subsequent pages shed light on the unsung work of composer Howell, sound guru Dick Mills, graphic designer Sid Sutton, VFX designers Matt Irvine, Peter Wragg and Tony Harding, and video effects artist Dave Chapman. A full-page pose of Harding with *The Awakening*’s Malus – both puppet and Face of Boe version – was particularly striking, showing the range and ingenuity of the effects team. “You need to be creative but you also need the technical know-how to translate your ideas into three dimensions,” Harding said.

‘Birth of a Renegade’ should have been the centrepiece of the Special in an era when original *Doctor Who* fiction was rare. Its illustrations by Mark Thomas, reminiscent of *Radio Times* stalwart Frank Bellamy, were a highlight, but Saward’s story failed to capture the essence of any of the companions involved.

When the Doctor insists on responding to a distress signal on the edge of a supernova, Tegan is true to form, complaining about the danger. "Are you out of your mind?" she asks; the Doctor offers a reassuring smile. The TARDIS materializes near a decidedly un-distressed battle cruiser and Turlough states the obvious: "Shouldn't we get away from here?" It's when the cruiser turns out to be the Master's TARDIS that Tegan and Turlough are sidelined, described as fearful and, at one point, embarrassed as the Doctor and the Master argue over Gallifreyan politics. They have none of the agency given to them in their televised stories.

In a heaping pile of revelations, the Master tells the Doctor their world was in turmoil before they both ran away. "Your memory was selectively wiped," the Master says, kindly offering to explain everything. His lengthy exposition involves corrupt and evil presidents, a student revolt, and Rassilon's Law: a rule of heredity to allow a descendant of Rassilon to take the throne. That descendant is the Lady Larn, better known to us as Susan.

As a refresher for long-time viewers and an introductory guide for younger fans like me, a story list was related in the form of one long picaresque adventure, from *An Unearthly Child* onwards. The



Fifth Doctor's travels were covered in a little more than one of this epic's 12 pages, but did include the upcoming season. The overview wrapped with an interview with incoming Doctor Colin Baker, looking dapper in a black shirt and pale jacket. The article sums up with, "Doctor Who has given its fans a rich heritage indeed."

After the silliness and union strikes that hampered some of Tom Baker's later stories, *Doctor Who* appeared to be at the top of its game in time for its twentieth year – and no one understood the power of packaging like John Nathan-Turner. With his guidance and the BBC's blessing, the programme was learning to trade on its legacy, pleasing fans and casual viewers alike.

For me and thousands of other fans, the *Radio Times Doctor Who 20th Anniversary Special* was a ringside seat to a television show at the height of its powers, with the Fifth Doctor lordling over it all. ☿



In this wordy version of the Doctor's origin, our hero left Gallifrey after bloody reprisals against an attempted coup, and Susan stowed away in the TARDIS, nicknaming him Grandfather. Once she gets hold of the Master's tissue compression eliminator, she's a first-person shooter, blasting Cybermen and TARDIS circuitry so that she can escape with the Doctor, Turlough and Tegan.

The pistol-packing 1980s version of Susan is a far cry from the sensitive teenager of the 60s, but her behaviour tracks with the Seward era, when the Doctor himself resorted to gun-toting at times. In another Sewardism, green liquid spurts from a wounded Cyberman's chest. The story comes across as fan fiction rather than an official aspect of the TV show. More than 40 years later, it's a non-canon curio, an alternate take on the Doctor's past.





Doctor Who as John Nathan-Turner inherited it in 1980 was arguably in a rut of stagnant populism. Largely unchanged over the previous six years – bar the BBC’s mandate to dial down the violence and horror, and inject more humour and fantasy – the show was a firm fixture of the Saturday line-up on BBC One for six months every year. However, bar the industrial action of 1979 which robbed the audience of ITV for several months – leaving just the two BBC channels to watch – the show’s viewing figures had gradually slid to reflect the growing over-familiarity the programme had in the eyes of the general audience.

Tom Baker’s Doctor was by now indelibly fixed in the minds of viewers, particularly children for many of whom no other actor had played the part in their brief lifetimes. Repeats were rare and usually a pair of stories from the previous season. In the days before home video releases opened up an entire treasure chest of past glories and whispered-about classics, only the Target range of novelisations gave even a hint of life before Tom.

Nathan-Turner’s first season was therefore a mission statement to unravel the present and build a new future. Some changes were immediate and startling: a fresh title sequence, synthesised theme tune and an increasingly glossy look using directors (and writers) who were largely new to the show. This enabled the incoming producer to slowly but surely deconstruct and rebuild a show that, while maintaining a fond place within viewers’ hearts, nevertheless had the humdrum and over-familiar comfort of a pair of slippers.

Change was afoot, indeed necessary, and Nathan-Turner’s involvement with the series in various roles since the late 1960s had provided the perfect apprenticeship for knowing how it worked within a set budget. Now firmly in the post-*Star Wars* landscape of heightened audience expectation for the genres of science-fiction and fantasy, *Doctor Who* was still hampered by the sort of budget afforded a procedural police drama or sitcom. Arguably the greatest skill Nathan-Turner brought as producer was an eye for the glamorous and expensive irrespective of the money pot offered. In

BOSS MOVES

When given the producership of *Doctor Who*, John Nathan-Turner grabbed the opportunity and propelled the show to new heights

that respect, no other producer, either before or since, treated the show with the belief it could punch far above its weight than meagre BBC budgets could possibly allow.

Nathan-Turner's first season was the last to air at Saturday tea-time until 1985. The decision was already made by then-Controller of BBC One Alan Hart. The ratings were immediately of concern for a show now approaching its 18th year, especially given ITV's attempts to rival it with imported American shows had finally struck gold with *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*. Ironically, this was the sort of glossy and overblown type of sci-fi that Nathan-Turner might have produced himself had he been given an matching special effects budget.

Ratings got Season 18 started low (*The Leisure Hive* averaged 5.1 million) and continued to slump as the autumn nights drew in (*Meglos* 4.65m, *Full Circle* and *State of Decay* 5.25m), something at odds with the show's natural tendency to suit darker evenings with the curtains closed. Only after the

Christmas mini-break did viewers begin to top six million, topping out at 8.3m for *Warriors' Gate* part three. Tom Baker's final episode of *Logopolis* after seven years and more than 170 episodes managed just 6.1m despite the assumed draw of not just a magisterial end but also the hint of a brighter future.

By then, not just Baker but co-stars Lalla Ward and John Leeson (heard if not seen as K9) were also out of the door, and the transitional team of Adric, Nyssa and Tegan were already bedded in awaiting their new lead man. The themes of change and decay throughout Season 18's run were just as true off-screen as on. With former producer Barry Letts casting a paternal gaze over Nathan-Turner's shoulder for his first year, the show had adopted a far more scientific bent to both the stories' plots and themes, ejecting the much-loved (by some at least) 'undergraduate' humour that had become the norm under Graham

Between the start and end of Season 18 the regular cast had all changed bar Tom Baker, but even a new Doctor was waiting in the wings



Williams' stewardship, particularly when paired with Douglas Adams for his final year.

Script editor Christopher H Bidmead was responsible for much of this deep dive into real scientific principles and ideas, with stories that at times seemed to emerge from the features pages of *New Scientist*. While the watching audience might have been perplexed by terms like tachyonics, block-transfer computation and charged vacuum emboitements, the overriding sense was of a show that was taking itself – and its audience – seriously again. With Bidmead's departure, the scientific tone would be dialled down the following year but not before doing its job: *Doctor Who* was no longer sub-*Star Wars* silliness with little more than rubber monsters and a make-do aesthetic. Those intelligent 14-year-olds so cherished by former script editor Robert Holmes were again being talked to, not talked down to.

At the heart of all this change was John Nathan-Turner, who had called his star out and refused to blink when moody allusions were made to his stepping down. With Baker gone, Nathan-Turner had a clean slate to work on. The new twice-weekly format of slightly later airtimes (in a similar slot to that enjoyed by *Blake's 7*) saw immediate results, with the new Doctor's debut episode hitting just over nine million viewers. The figures would continue to grow during Season 19, peaking at 10.4m (*Castrovalva* part four) and never falling below eight. The show was thriving despite being taken away from Saturday evenings.

Integral to this success was the casting of Peter Davison, who was arguably one of the most

Christopher Bidmead was writing for *New Scientist* at the time he was sounded out as script editor



Peter Davison was widely known as Tristan Farnon (left) in *All Creatures Great and Small*. It was a photo of him playing for the All Creatures 1st 11 (right) that inspired John Nathan-Turner to adopt a cricketing look for his Doctor

recognisable faces on television by the start of the 1980s. His selection was therefore both sensible and something of a coup. Davison himself was

eventually persuaded, despite feeling too young for the role, largely down to his own fond memories of the show in his youth. This immediately marked him apart from his predecessors – someone young enough to have watched and grown up with the show from its very first episode. Although notably younger than his predecessors, Davison's casting now seems prescient given the modern era's preference for actors well below the age of 35.

Picking Davison was also a very deliberate reaction to the bohemian and scatterbrained Doctor that Tom Baker had established over the previous seven years. With his fine blonde hair and smooth features, Davison had the look of the school swot who was more likely to be doing extra lessons after hours rather than detention for being caught smoking behind the bike sheds. His Doctor, once over the extended regeneration trauma of his opening story, was well-mannered, often uncertain of himself and, most importantly, young at a time when the part had been firmly established as an older, authoritarian figure. In every sense Davison's Doctor was a direct contrast to Baker's, both in creative intent but also by necessity, given his predecessor's indelible position as the only Doctor experienced by an entire generation of children.

Of course, every new Doctor's costume is as much a revelation as their actual casting in the minds of both fans and general viewers. Here Nathan-Turner's guiding hand was both inspired by and tapped into the zeitgeist of the filmic television dramas that had come to dominate both BBC and ITV. A photo of Davison in cricket whites that was pinned to the production office's wall chimed perfectly with the look of series such as *Brideshead Revisited* and *The Jewel in the Crown*, both soaked in a nostalgia for Edwardian pomp and colonial majesty. The flannels and frock coats of Davison's Doctor perfectly matched this most lordly of Time Lord portrayals, affecting an air of affluent privilege



as he strolled into every new world and time period with little of the anachronistic attitude and attire of his predecessors. Even Davison's public school accent added to the 'upper class evolution' that Nathan-Turner envisioned for his show.

Where Tom Baker's Doctor had walked into situations confident of owning the room/space ship/villain's lair, Davison's often arrived under an air of suspicion and oppression. His vulnerability was again in stark contrast to the overconfidence of his predecessor, and even early discussions about how he would play the role revolved around the perception of being a 'reckless innocent'. This air of powerlessness and being out of one's depth was arguably another of Nathan-Turner's mandates to make the character more accessible and believable. When coupled with incoming script editor Eric Saward's frequently bleak and nihilistic world view (not just in his own scripts but across much of the hostile universe seen in this era), it soon became apparent that in Davison the show had a flawed hero who often lost as much as he won. Even the Doctor's reaction to the death of Adric is buttoned up and repressed, as though the very thought of acknowledging such a loss would represent another fracture in his already fragile exterior.

Nathan-Turner's take on the TARDIS crew was another acknowledgment of the show's pre-Baker ancestry. For the first time since William Hartnell helmed the controls, there were three companions representing different identification figures for the audience, from the teenage duo of the highly intelligent Adric and Nyssa, to the 'older sister' Tegan representing a modern 1980s career woman. Even Davison's age lent him more of an 'older brother' sense of authority. The complications of having to create multiple plotlines for the larger TARDIS contingent was often painfully stark, though, and by Davison's second run two companions had become the norm, eventually down to one just before his departure.

Whereas the First Doctor's friends had revelled in their adventures (at least after an awkward baptism), the Fifth's crew was often at odds with one another, and with the Doctor himself. Tegan spends Season 19 forever moaning about getting home, perhaps leading to Adric's own half-hearted desire to return to Exo-space during a periodic sulk at the Doctor's greater attention to his female companions. Along with Saward's bleaker touch, the lack of bonhomie in the TARDIS was very much at odds with the show's previously optimistic spirit. When Tegan eventually leaves, despite finally warming to the premise of 'go anywhere, do anything' time travel at her fingertips, the reason



Nathan-Turner was getting himself into press shots as early as Peter Davison's costume reveal on 15 April 1981

she gives is that "It's stopped being fun, Doctor" – something the viewing audience might also have felt after three years of emasculated Doctoring in an increasingly brutal universe.

Beyond the show itself, Nathan-Turner pursued a far more active profile than any of his predecessors in the producer's chair. Where the likes of Barry Letts and Philip Hinchcliffe had acknowledged and facilitated the show's growing fandom with arms at full length, Nathan-Turner courted fan opinion and adulation. The return of the Cybermen following a gap of seven years was merely an aperitif for the onslaught of returning villains and monsters that would come to characterise the Davison era. While

Nathan-Turner pursued a far more active profile than any of his predecessors in the producer's chair

successful ventures like the Cybermen and the regenerated Master were unqualified successes to start, by the end even of Davison's first series the Master popping up again was becoming weary and contrived, especially as each comeback diminished the initial gravitas of Anthony Ainley's performance. While Daleks were delayed by industrial action during Season 20's production, the likes of Omega, the Black Guardian and the Brigadier paid homage to the past in the 20th anniversary season.

With an audience of fans now grown up from the very early days of the show, a tendency to please

the hardcore began to override previous production teams' desire to plough their own furrow. Much of this feedback came from Nathan-Turner's wish to engage with fans on their level and in their environment: the rise of conventions on both sides of the Atlantic brought the producer into direct contact with his public. But as the honeymoon period started to wane, Nathan-Turner was increasingly motivated to silence the naysayers with nostalgic hits rather than allow his script editor and team of writers to establish their own creations.

While playing to the crowd of the nostalgic hardcore, Nathan-Turner didn't neglect the wider audience and filled his guest casts with some very recognisable faces from the worlds of television, film and stage. None was more incongruous than Beryl Reid's turn as a hardened leather-clad space freighter captain in *Earthshock*. Other names came and went with varying degrees of success and notoriety: Stratford Johns, Richard Todd and Nerys Hughes in Season 19 alone. The following year saw Leonard Sachs, Elspet Grey and Michael Gough as stately Time Lords, and a then-unknown Martin Clunes making his television debut. Liza Goddard,

UK fans were upset that while we got waxwork stand-ins, the Americans could afford a plethora of stars – and John, of course – to attend the 20th anniversary Chicago convention



Keith Barron and Lynda Baron brought experience and star attraction to 1983's celebratory season. As with Reid, the wheels only threatened to come off when trying to suggest Ingrid Pitt as a judo-kicking scientist against a still-wet panto horse monster under unforgiving studio lights was in any way a good look. But even if some performances didn't chime, the publicity each attracted couldn't be denied for keeping the show in the public eye.

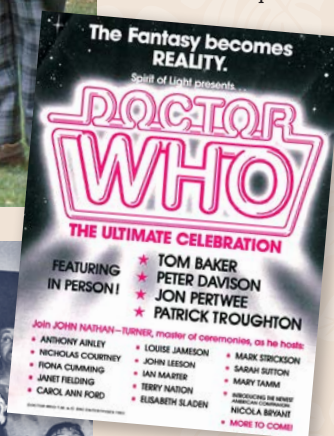
Arguably 1983 saw Nathan-Turner's reign as producer hit its zenith, both in terms of the show's profile with the general audience and the hardcore's satisfaction with having their wishlist of classic enemies ticked off. The critical mass of the Longleat gathering that April marks something of a watershed in the show's 1980s fortunes as tens of thousands descended on an event that had seriously underestimated the enthusiasm of its target audience. With former *Doctors*, companions and sets from the anniversary story *The Five Doctors* (then still seven months from broadcast), it's little wonder those two days have become regarded as the Woodstock of *Doctor Who* fandom. As a culmination of Nathan-Turner's mission to bring the show into the modern age while exploiting its rich and lengthy past, it's hard to overestimate its success in a time long before such corporate events were *de rigueur* and more cynical regarding the fan/consumer dynamic.

Even then the signs of strain between the show's producer and its acolytes were beginning to show, leading to one terse exchange when Nathan-Turner was told in no uncertain terms, "Just remember, we'll still be here long after you've gone." No doubt the subsequent news that November's Chicago

convention would include the world premiere of *The Five Doctors* on the actual anniversary – two days before its airing in the UK – did little to quench the simmering embers of disgruntled British fans.

Nathan-Turner's relationship with the show's fans was nothing if not complicated, but his active courtship of the fanbase from the very start of his producership would arguably lead to his later

downfall. While he often privately dismissed British fans as "barkers", over in the United States a far less critical and more celebratory welcome – with enhanced appearance fees – put him on a pedestal equal to or even above that of the on-screen stars of the show. This high of adulation, however, swiftly became the poison of animosity from a significant





Nathan-Turner was criticised by fans for taking time out from production to attend conventions (here at Panopticon 2000) and work on his Christmas pantomimes (photo © Stephen Hatcher)

portion of the British fan community. From the very start of the Davison era, Nathan-Turner's insistence on holding an annual pantomime utilising the show's stars was seen by some as detrimental to the series. Transatlantic conventions in lieu of rehearsal time were also pilloried as symptomatic of a producer taking his eye off the ball. Access to filming and the galleries of BBC Television Centre were at first considered an effective way of keeping information about forthcoming stories limited to a select few fans. But when leaks and unauthorised visits became dominant, Nathan-Turner closed them off, leaving little to fill their 'zines bar an increasing enmity towards the show's top dog.



raised the stakes in terms of gritty dramatic storytelling and 'adult' aesthetics, but ultimately its legacy was one of later stories trying to mimic its tone and characterisation only to fall short without Holmes' keen understanding of the show's limits. Fortunately for Davison, the fallout from that was to impact his replacement and not him, confirming

his decision to leave as arguably the biggest bullet dodge in the show's history.

By 1984 Peter Davison was done with *Doctor Who*, but *Doctor Who* was far from done with its producer. Had Nathan-Turner known then what he discovered just a year later, it's arguable the post-anniversary year, his fourth on the show, would have been the ideal time to step aside. Having brought the programme firmly and vibrantly into the 1980s, while reminding the viewing public that, despite the popular leading man changing, the show must go on, he was nevertheless aware of a turning tide of opinion among his most critical of viewers. With that same hindsight, a discreet exit and a job producing one of his beloved variety shows for the next few years would have been the ideal next step. Instead, the once bright-eyed boy and would-be BBC Controller soon found his career being tossed on the pyre of *Doctor Who*'s declining popularity, resulting in the saddest of dead marriages despite repeated attempts to gain a decree absolute.

For the three years of Peter Davison's tenure, however, John Nathan-Turner's star – much like his later life – burnt bright, if only for half as long. ≡

Hindsight tells us that these three years of producership that made up the Davison era were the honeymoon period of John Nathan-Turner's time at the series' helm. For a year the viewing figures were outstanding, and even when they began to flag in Davison's sophomore year there was still the hullabaloo and celebration of the 20th anniversary to keep everything on a buoyant and optimistic keel. Even his final year saw better scripts eliciting regret from the star at not having signed on for a fourth term, culminating in *The Caves of Androzani* swiftly becoming one of the most fêted and highly regarded serials in the show's entire history. This perfect blend of Robert Holmes' ear for dialogue and characters with Saward's doom-laden and depressed world view may have

SEASON 21

starring

**PETER DAVISON
NICOLA BRYANT
JANET FIELDING
MARK STRICKSON**

with guest stars
ANTHONY AINLEY

**plus TOM ADAMS, IAN McCULLOCH, INGRID PITT,
GLYN HOUSTON, POLLY JAMES, DENNIS LILL,
LESLEY DUNLOP, JOHN GILLET, PETER GILMORE,
WILLIAM LUCAS, JEFF RAWLE, CHLOE ASHCROFT,
RODNEY BEWES, MAURICE COLBOURNE, LESLIE
GRANTHAM, RULA LENSKA, TERRY MOLLOY,
DALLAS ADAMS, BARBARA SHELLEY,
PETER WYNGARDE, CHRISTOPHER GABLE,
ROBERT GLENISTER, JOHN NORMINGTON
and MAURICE ROËVES**

**Script editing by
ERIC SAWARD**

**Produced by
JOHN NATHAN-TURNER**



Artwork by Owen Ruthven
owenruthven.myportfolio.com

WARRIORS OF THE DEEP

The Silurians and Sea Devils join forces to rise and reclaim their world from Mankind

WRITTEN BY **JOHNNY BYRNE** • DIRECTED BY **PENNANT ROBERTS**
AIRDATES **5, 6, 12, 13 JANUARY 1984** • RATINGS **7.6m, 7.5m, 7.3m, 6.6m**
NOVELISATION BY **TERRANCE DICKS** • PUBLISHED **24 MAY 1984**

1983 had been a bumper year for *Doctor Who*. The first quarter had seen the transmission of the twentieth season, followed in April by a two-day celebration event at Longleat. Filming on the new series had begun in the summer and, in November, the anniversary special *The Five Doctors* aired. The only slight blot on the landscape was the announcement on 28 July that Peter Davison was to leave the show the following year.

Some six weeks after transmission of *The Five Doctors*, the season got underway with *Warriors of the Deep*. Producer John Nathan-Turner wanted a 'monster' season following the 'villains' of Season 20. *Warriors of the Deep* fitted that bill perfectly, featuring not one but two monsters from the Jon Pertwee era.

On paper it had a lot going for it: the return of two much-loved monsters, the feelgood factor coming off *The Five Doctors* and a popular Doctor. Despite this, *Warriors of the Deep* has become one of those stories that consistently find themselves in the lower reaches of all-time polls and is derided as often as other stories are lauded.

For me, it's something of a guilty pleasure, possibly because it was a favourite of my sister who got me into watching *Doctor Who* when she was forced to babysit. Mostly it's because it

On paper it had a lot going for it

marks a clear turning point in tone for the way stories would be produced leading into the following incarnation. The change was even more stark, coming off the back of the nostalgic glow of the anniversary special.

The main plot of *Warriors of the Deep* gives us a classic base under siege, mixed with elements of spy thriller and psychological drama. On paper, at least, this comes across as an enthralling Cold War story, an underwater *Manchurian Candidate* if you like. That it has suffered from much negativity over the years is mostly due to the perceived production values of the story. Criticism has focused on the lighting, make-up and costumes, shuffling reptiles, messy characterisation, karate kicks and the Myrka. The main problem, though, is

Artwork by
Andy Lambert





sense of its setting as an underwater base operating under pressure. “I wanted designer stubble, glistening on the foreheads and things coming apart,” Byrne told *Doctor Who Magazine* (issue 199, May 1993). “That feeling should have been reflected more in rust, sweat and condensation running off the walls – that sort of thing. You had this fraught situation which was almost reflected in the design of the base, but not in the rusting round the doors or feelings of tension and stress.” It’s worth noting that the two-tier set does give the base some much-needed scale. The interior of the Silurian battle cruiser is also an unsung highlight, as are the underwater model scenes, which are well realised.

The bright one-piece jumpsuits of the command crew add to the brightness of Sea Base Four. It’s interesting to note that the costumes were given particular colours to denote their rank and the duties that entailed, not dissimilar to the uniforms worn in *Space: 1999*, a series Byrne had a significant association with. Other crew staff wear a loose fitting, radiation-style suit with plastic helmets – the Doctor ends up donning one for the majority of the story after changing out of his waterlogged cricketing costume at the start of episode two.

The main villains are somewhat pantomime, Ian McCulloch in particular hamming up his role of Nilson. The make-up team goes to great lengths to let us know he and Solow (Ingrid Pitt) are the villains, with exaggerated eyebrows and hair. Their performance comes straight out of *Carry On Spying*, especially Solow’s attempt to kung-fu kick the Myrka, a creature that kills by touch. For all this, the traitors’ plan is one of grim resolve. With the main operator dead, it’s suggested by their hand, they can manipulate Maddox, the trainee operator. He’s pushed to his limit by the synch-up drills before breaking down, which allows Nilson and Solow to suggest to base commander Vorshak (Tom Adams) that Maddox be mentally reprogrammed. Thus they’re able to control him, have him kill his friend Karina and sabotage the computer, before Nilson uses the conditioning control to burn out his mind.

one that afflicts much of *Doctor Who*: over-ambition amid limited resources.

It’s 2084 and the Earth is divided into two power blocs. The crew of Sea Base Four (we don’t know which bloc they represent) are on high alert, ready to launch missiles on the opposing bloc in the event of a global war. The crew are under stress as their synch operator, the one who interfaces with the weapons systems, Lieutenant Michaels has been killed in mysterious circumstances and his stand-in Maddox is inexperienced at best. The synch operator is the ultimate safeguard as the base’s missiles can’t be launched without the human operator syncing their mind with the computer and authorising their launch. Among the crew are two enemy agents – second-in-command Nilson and base doctor Solow – who plan to programme Maddox so he destroys the computer controlling the missiles. Into all of this blunders the Doctor having been attacked by a space defence satellite in Earth orbit. Instead of announcing themselves to the

seabase crew, they sneak around before tripping the security system.

This on its own would create an exciting adventure. The Doctor to this point had faced many threats from the sea – *The Underwater Menace* (1967), *Fury from the Deep* (1968) and of course *The Sea Devils* (1972) – but *Warriors of the Deep* was unique in that it featured a returning enemy in a team-up that had never been attempted in the series previously. Discussions took place in the summer of 1982 for such an alliance and in September writer Johnny Byrne was commissioned to expand his story outline into a full script. Script editor Eric Saward was a fan of the bases under siege and/or humans in an isolated setting under threat from an unknown external force, an approach he took for *Earthshock*. Byrne had seen that serial, admired it and wanted to write a similar action-style story.

What we get on screen instead is a rather lighter spectacle – literally. Sea Base Four is so brightly lit it has no



All this human infighting is nothing, however, to the external threat. We get to see the tragedy of the honourable and logical Silurians realising their only way forward is to destroy Man, as he will always try to destroy them. So Icthar, last of the ruling Triad, wakes the Elite Group One Sea Devils led by Sauvix, conveniently hibernating close to the seabase. By taking control of the base and firing its missiles, they can start the war above. Ironically, if they hadn't attacked the base, Nilson and Solow may have achieved the same goal, but this counterposes how this once proud society has fallen to Mankind's level.

As the Sea Devils and Myrka butcher their way through the base, including comedy electrocutions of extras, the threat is undermined once more by the production values. The long-necked Sea Devil heads are seldom attached well, making them great at looking around corners, and their slow-shuffle advance in their samurai-style armour counters their supposed proficiency. Their deaths, however, from the conveniently stored hexachromite gas are gruesome as they boil away to a green sludge.

For all the productions faults, *Warriors of the Deep* is a gripping story when you look past the surface issues.

It's tussling with geopolitics, the constant threat of war without knowing what has triggered it. It looks at the effects of working in isolation on mental health and the over-reliance of computer dependency. It also takes the Silurians and Sea Devils into new waters as they become outright aggressors.

Sea Base Four is so brightly lit it has no sense of an underwater base operating under pressure

This was the start of a series of darker stories, culminating in a harsh regeneration and heralding the violence and gore of Season 22. It was also, perhaps, the start of a recharacterisation of the Doctor that would become manifest in his sixth incarnation. Here he's somewhat out of character, fighting and pointing guns for example, which

will become a recurrent image within a few episodes. This out-of-Fifth-Doctor behaviour begins in the first episode. On setting off the base security system, the Doctor decides a perfect distraction would be to try and overload a nuclear reactor to buy time to escape. He then channels his inner third incarnation by fighting off security guards, before spectacularly falling into a coolant tank.

It also leaves us with possibly the most depressing ending since *Earthshock* and a foreshadowing of the end of *Resurrection of the Daleks*. As the Doctor, Tegan and Turlough stand surrounded by the bodies of both sides, Turlough laconically points out, "They're all dead you know." There is one survivor forgotten about, security chief Bulic, who was releasing the gas into the vents, but our final shot is the bruised and bleeding Doctor lamenting, "There should have been another way."

Suddenly our weekday evenings seemed that little bit darker and our hero just that little bit more weary. So no matter your memories of Myrkas and 1980s hairdos, or if you have never seen this story because of its reputation, I urge you to give it another go and look past the perceived production issues and see the story within. ☰

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

A return to the type of story that I thought had died out. Good, solid action with none of the inanities that so beset even Barry Letts. Tom Adams was especially good. The fourth episode was classic stuff. Peter Davison and Mark Strickson seem (at last) to have got hold of their respective parts by the scruff of the neck and the results are excellent. The Silurian masks were better than the originals, but as for the Sea Devil masks – they were terrible.

Linda Black, *TARDIS*, Volume 9, Number 1, 1984

I'm afraid I didn't like this story at all. The plot and characters all had a lot of potential but, in my opinion, not nearly enough was made of them. The moral issues surrounding the Silurians' right to the planet, the Doctor's position and the entrenchment of the two opposing power blocks were all underplayed. I couldn't really sympathise with anyone (closest was Maddox and Karina), and everyone 'died' very badly. A pity because I really wanted this story to work.

Frank Band, *TARDIS*, Volume 9, Number 1, 1984

Artwork by
Andy Lambert



The Awakening

A village forced to re-enact a time of turmoil creates the energy to resurrect an evil force

WRITTEN BY **ERIC PRINGLE** • DIRECTED BY **MICHAEL OWEN MORRIS**
 AIRDATES **19, 20 JANUARY 1984** • RATINGS **7.9m, 6.6m**
 NOVELISATION BY **ERIC PRINGLE** • PUBLISHED **14 FEBRUARY 1985**

There weren't many two-part stories in Classic *Doctor Who* and those there were tended to be because a season's number of episodes required it, rather than a deliberate decision to make a story of that length. When the series was revived in 2005, I was sceptical that 45-minute stories would work. Interestingly, it was watching the cutdown VHS version of *The Brain of Morbius* (1976) that convinced me they could. I could instead have watched *The Awakening*. It's odd that it didn't come to mind as I recall liking the story when it was originally broadcast. Davison's tenure featured three two-part stories, all historicals of a sort, and this is easily the best of the bunch.

Of course, these days 45-50 minutes

is the standard running time and often it works well. Over Ncuti Gatwa's run as the Doctor, however, I have spotted a number of weaknesses slipping in. In the majority of episodes, the Doctor and his companion are rarely separated (apart

There's an array of supporting characters played by solid well-known actors of the day

from Doctor-lite episodes, of course), which gives the latter little chance to show their initiative or have a subplot of their own. The pair arrive in a situation and quickly discover what's going on without much mystery or investigation. There are few non-regular characters who have much to do unless they're the main baddie. Rarely do the Doctor and companion get into and out of trouble before the final confrontation, which often sees the menace dealt with very quickly. Then they're off again in the blink of an eye, rarely staying anywhere for more than an hour or so. I know that some of these points are generalisations but they crop up often both in stories I rate highly and those that disappointed.

The Awakening overcomes most of these difficulties while not having an

appreciably different running time. The Doctor, Tegan and Turlough are separated, reunited and separated again, which allows each to have small bits to themselves. Admittedly these are not massive bits, but it does give a chance for Tegan and Turlough to have a useful role. Tegan gives chase to a bag-stealing peasant, and confronts both Sergeant Willow and Sir George. Turlough shows his cowardly nature in the way he skulks around the empty village trying to find his friends. Then, when locked up with Andrew Verney, he urges the older

It's fitting that Will is the one to defeat Sir George. Even then he doesn't find it easy kill a man, trying to convince himself as much as anyone by saying it had to be done. Will and Jane also provide key pieces of exposition that enable the Doctor to put together what's happening. Again, it's welcome that he needs help to work things out and doesn't

trying to figure out whose side he should be on. My assumption again is that the Malus has affected his thinking. He focuses on the honourable side of Sir George and not the way he's distorting the games. Yet he sympathises with Jane, confused that she can't see the games as anything but hearty fun. Ben is clearly on Sir George's side before realising that the man he has respected is no

man to try to escape. Full marks too for the fact that they take time and effort to bash down the barn door, unlike in most shows where doors can be smashed in by a single kick from the weediest police officer. This splitting up also allows us to see multiple characters each trying to work out what's going on.

There's a good array of supporting roles, the majority of whom have their own distinct characteristics and are played by solid well-known actors of the day. Jane Hampden (Polly James) stands up as the only one in the village not being influenced by the Malus (although not said directly, I assume this is why everyone's going along with the excesses of the war games).

Will Chandler (Keith Jayne), a temporal fugitive from the Civil War, shines as a fun character traumatised by what he has witnessed. Very rarely do we see people who've been through harrowing events not just brush it off.

instantly know what's going on from, say, seeing the carving of the Malus. I'd have been happy to see either of this pair continue travelling with the Doctor; indeed, I'm surprised that Big Finish hasn't made this happen.

Then we have Ben Wolsey (Glyn Houston), a friend of both temporary companion Jane and villain Sir George,



longer himself. He volunteers to be the one to deal with Sir George, his response to the guilt he might be feeling for his earlier actions.

Likewise we get to see glimpses of the positive in Sir George (Denis Lill). He's willing to discuss and win people over, albeit in a rather dogmatic way. There are times when we see his natural self, and times when his actions and decisions are being controlled by the Malus. There's just one instance when we see his true dark side, when he expresses his desire to take control of the Malus and use it for his own ends.

Andrew Verney (Frederick Hall) and Sergeant Willow (Jack Galloway) are the least developed characters. Willow just comes across as cruel and sadistic, happy to work towards Tegan being burnt as May Queen and merrily capturing and handing over our heroes,

Malus artwork by Andy Lambert

even intervening to help Sir George when the Malus manifests. Underplayed more than it might be today is the scene where he walks in on Tegan just after she has changed into the May Queen dress, maybe thinking she would have taken longer – another hint of a nastier side to his nature. Perhaps he's forgiven a little too easily at the end.

There are other interesting elements. The initial intercutting between galloping horses and Jane looking for Ben, followed by the curious mix of seventeenth and twentieth century, tricks us into thinking that some form of time jump has happened. The deserted village is shown off well by extensive location work. Presumably the Malus was playing with people's minds to get them to stay indoors and build up their expectations prior to the final war game (not, of course, to reduce the number of extras being employed). The design work is of Barry Newbery's usual high standard, ranging from the solid period study of Wolsey's house to the crumbling church.

For fans there are the throwbacks to *The Dæmons* (1971) without it being derivative: a country village, a foe with links to the Devil, a scene at a maypole, key scenes at a church which blows up (albeit without the controversy *The Dæmons* triggered when people feared an actual church had been damaged). Another nice touch is the throwaway reference to the Terileptils mining tinclavic – some continuity for fans who like that thing but not enough to trigger a bemused look from casual viewers.

The story isn't perfect, admittedly. The pixelation effect for the apparitions wasn't great in the 1980s and looks dated now. There's also the green goo running from the Malus in the TARDIS, which seemed to accompany the demise of several enemies at the time. There are a few plot points we might question too. Why did the inhabitants of Little Hodcombe in the seventeenth century accept the burning of one of their number each May Day? How did the Malus become embedded in the church and why didn't it blow up on losing the psychic energy of the village when the Civil War fighting moved on? Why did it



waste energy triggering a trip through time for Will? And how was the secret passage in the church not discovered by anyone before Verney? Did that bit of the church never get cleaned?

I started by commenting on some of the shortfalls of recent episodes and mentioned quick endings. This is a problem in *The Awakening*, too. The Doctor gets the TARDIS to block off the psychic supply from the village and Sir George gets pushed into the Malus in the church and Bob's your uncle! Mind you, there still seems more jeopardy and doubt that this would succeed than in some recent episodes. One of the other

comments I made was about how little time the Doctor seems to spend in a particular location. This looks like happening here until Tegan intervenes. She has to remind the Doctor that they came to see her grandfather in the first place, although quite why she'd expect the TARDIS to get them to the right place and time I'm not sure – she spent a whole season not getting back home.

Each of these faults is relatively minor, however. Not much would need doing to turn *The Awakening* into a single episode of today's show. Well done to writer Eric Pringle, director Michael Owen Morris and a good cast. ☸

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

Plagiarism ruled with *The Awakening*, the script being *The Dæmons* meets *The Visitation*. However, that's the only fault I can find in this otherwise flawless adventure. The cast made a very good job of it, especially Keith Jayne and Polly James. Denis Lill made a splendid villain and Jack Galloway backed him to the hilt. The Malus did very little but was a splendid creature for all that...it just looked so evil, leering in a manner Anthony Ainley would have been proud of! I liked the way the Malus was linked to the Terileptils and Raaga. Continuity in such minute detail is rare but very welcome and makes the monsters seem more real. All in all, a splendid story, one of the classics!

Tim Munro, TARDIS, Volume 9, Number 1, 1984

From start to finish *The Awakening* positively reeked of class. The look was terrific...the larger Malus was especially excellent. It was good to have so much of the story on film, which almost guarantees a 'real' feeling.

Saul Nasse, TARDIS, Volume 9, Number 1, 1984

SYNTH WAVE

Alex takes a personal journey back to the 1980s for an aural history of the revolution electronic music brought to *Doctor Who*

The identity of *Doctor Who* has always been multifaceted, encompassing everything from special effects to its distinctive opening titles and sound effects. A particularly important and continually evolving aspect of this identity is the music, from the iconic theme tune to the incidental scores that add unique moods and atmospheres to each story. There are many moments that are forever inseparable from the music that accompanied the visuals. Just like so many other parts of the show, however, the music has always moved with the times.

The late 1970s and early 1980s are synonymous with the rise of electronic music. The work of such pioneering artists as Tangerine Dream, Kraftwerk and Jean-Michel Jarre started to reshape our musical landscape, and by the early 1980s the record charts were dominated by a rich tapestry of synthesised pop from the likes of Gary Numan, OMD, Duran Duran and Depeche Mode.

But while the music we bought and enjoyed became more electronic, much of the incidental music of BBC television productions was typically

orchestral. For *Doctor Who*, the input of the BBC Radiophonic Workshop had been reserved for sound effects and the famous theme tune. This often created a puzzling juxtaposition, especially for a science-fiction series.

Some of the stories in the Jon Pertwee era favoured early synthesisers or distorted acoustic instruments in their scores, but by the end of his tenure, the incidental music had moved firmly into orchestral territory. This approach worked well for many stories, but for some, especially those requiring a sense of the alien or a certain menace, something was missing. For example, Carey Blyton's acoustic orchestral score for 1974's *Death to the Daleks* may be memorable but for a Dalek story it feels somewhat twee (despite matching the creatures' own resort to mechanical means). The minor-key brass melodies and crashing symbols of Dudley Simpson's score for *The Robots of Death* (1977) again lacks the aura needed for a story centred around murderous robots, but it was the formula of the time and Simpson's work remains an integral part of 1970s *Doctor Who*.



Synthesised music became increasingly popular through the 1970s with seminal works from the likes of Tangerine Dream, Kraftwerk and Jean-Michel Jarre



Photo by
Alex Storer

While there's no denying the quality and often effectiveness of the orchestral material, for a series based on time travel and exploring the universe, one might expect something a little more other-worldly. Fortunately, this eventually changed.

In August 1980, the sound of the show took a welcome electronic direction for Tom Baker's final year. Season 18 was heralded by Peter Howell's supreme new arrangement of the theme tune, reinforced by an epic suite backing *The Leisure Hive*. Along with a new title sequence, *Doctor Who* entered the decade with a fresh sound.

This aesthetic helped provide a transition to a different era. The previous six years had seen the show branded with the same title sequence and iconic diamond-shaped logo – one needs only to see that logo, even in its use in recent years, to be transported to the golden age of the Fourth Doctor.

Even now it feels oddly dissonant to watch Tom Baker's final season and see his face framed by what feels like the Fifth Doctor's title sequence, floating through the stars to Howell's updated theme

arrangement. Yet in hindsight, it's as if the moment had been prepared for, with Baker serving as a transitional guardian of the show's new look and sound, paving the way for his successor.

The title graphics themselves can almost be viewed as a visual representation of the theme, and Sid Sutton's 1980 starfield sequence still looks evocative and exciting 45 years later. The opening 'sting', vocoded 'aahs' and other special sounds work alongside the visuals, with multicoloured star refractions and the gradual formation of the Doctor's face. The previous abstract time tunnel sequence was replaced by a voyage through space, redefining the show's science-fiction identity in the post-*Star Wars* era. This transformation culminated in a striking new logo which, while arguably less timeless than its predecessor, gave the show a bold modern brand for the coming decade.

Howell's arrangement was recorded on a range of synthesisers including an ARP Odyssey, a Roland Jupiter-4, an EMS Vocoder-500 and a phase unit for effects and distortions. These synths were among the best in the business at the time, and all of them



Season 18 kicked off with a bang in 1980, Peter Howell's thumping theme matched by bright new graphics from Sid Sutton



Reader Digest's 1978 eight-disc boxset of TV themes. *Doctor Who* was track 6 on side B of disc 1, 'TV Themes of Today'

still considered classics today. For a certain generation of fans, the Howell arrangement is the *Doctor Who* theme. Like your first *Doctor Who*, whatever version was playing at your point of discovery inevitably becomes your definitive theme. That's certainly the case for me.

I've never forgotten the first time I heard Peter Howell's version in full. I was already familiar with

the original Delia Derbyshire arrangement of Ron Grainer's theme thanks to a Reader's Digest LP boxset of popular television themes my parents had called *TV Music Spectacular*, with the *Doctor Who* theme sandwiched between those for *New Faces* ('You're A Star') and *M.A.S.H.* I would ask repeatedly to listen to it and escape to other worlds in my mind. It was also thanks to my obsession with this music that I first learned words like 'arrangement' and 'incidental' – I defy anyone who claims *Doctor Who* wasn't educational.

In 1985, our family holiday destination was Blackpool so I could visit the *Doctor Who* exhibition. According to my parents, this was a "100-mile journey", which felt like an incomprehensible distance but one I knew would be worth taking. As a seven-year-old whose tiny world revolved around the show, to be able to see actual items from the series was a dream come true.

Ask any fan who visited that exhibition during its 11-year run on Blackpool's Golden Mile and they'll tell you that you heard the exhibition before you saw it. I vividly recall Howell's theme cutting through the cacophony of sounds from the Pleasure Beach, getting louder as we neared the exhibition with its oversized Police Box façade. What really excited me was hearing the music continue past the

familiar introduction, presenting previously unheard sections not part of the broadcast version. These only added to the excitement of visiting the exhibition. My dad bought a cassette from

the shop – *Space Invaded: BBC Space Themes* – which included that full version of Howell's arrangement, as well as the music from *Blake's 7*, *Tomorrow's World* and even *K9 and Company*. That tape became the soundtrack to the holiday and 40 years later, whenever I hear that version of the theme, I'm transported back to the excitement of Blackpool.

Just like Derbyshire before him, Howell created something that sounded unlike anything else – a vast array of space-age sounds and atmospheres, as if illustrating the workings of time travel through music, creating a piece that still doesn't sound its age. Although it vaguely evokes its era – largely due to the choice of synthesisers used – many of the sounds have been so extensively processed or distorted that it's difficult to pin it to any period.

Howell's version sounded unlike anything else, as if illustrating the workings of time travel through music

When it comes to Davison's tenure, the stories were enriched by the incidental scores from Radiophonic Workshop members Paddy Kingsland, Roger Limb and Malcolm Clarke alongside Howell. Ominous bass pulses, haunting strings and a whole range of chilling or unsettling sounds really gave 1980s *Doctor Who* a distinctive musical identity. The atmospheres and mood they created were a perfect match for the colourful new look of the series. Producer John Nathan-Turner had a clear vision for the show, and the shift in music had to reflect this.

It's almost impossible to think about 1980s *Who* without thinking of the music. One of the standout moments from the Fifth Doctor's first season was Malcolm Clarke's soundtrack for *Earthshock*. At last the Cybermen were presented alongside a dark and sinister soundtrack of menacing drones and discordant clangs – perfect for their fantastic upgraded design, with the thunderous 'March of the Cybermen' providing ample terror for the moment when the silver giants burst out of their containers.

Paddy Kingsland's score for *Mawdryn Undead* is another highlight. The darker tone of the story and its occasional elements of horror demanded something different. From the chirpy melody

Peter Howell's full theme arrangement was sold on 7" single RESL80 in 1980, 1982 (below right) and 1985. It was also the opening track of 1982 BBC album *Space Invaded*



accompanying Turlough's disastrous attempt at driving, to dynamic guitar-driven sections and minor-key moments heralding the Black Guardian, the score stands out as a cinematic piece of work, elevating an already brilliant story.

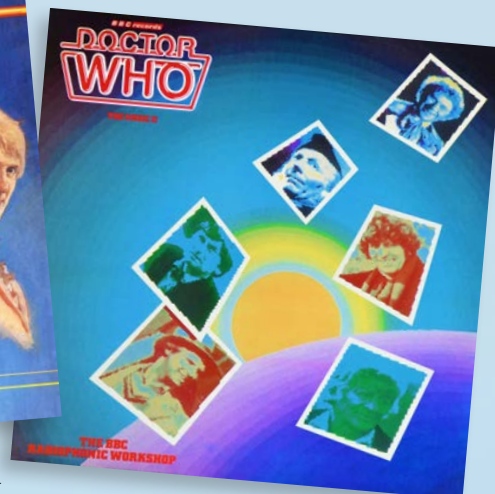
Listening to it in isolation, it never fails to conjure up the unsettling images of a rapidly ageing Tegan and Nyssa, or the Brigadier's nostalgic flashback.

Peter Howell pulled out all the stops for the twentieth anniversary story *The Five Doctors*. This thrilling opus epitomises 1980s *Doctor Who*, embodying the mood and atmosphere of the different parts of the adventure, from the bellowing horn of Rassilon to the clanking encounter with the Raston Warrior Robot and the most Dalek-like piece of music ever written – the mechanical rhythm and metallic trills were an ideal match for the explosive Dalek scene.

The incidental scores for each of Season 21's stories were particularly strong, with those for *Resurrection of the Daleks* (by Malcolm Clarke) and *Warriors of the Deep* (Jonathan Gibbs) again forming an integral part of those stories' identities. However, it was the scores for *Planet of Fire* (Peter Howell) and Peter Davison's swansong, *The Caves of Androzani* (Roger Limb), that really stand out, the latter even warranting its own comprehensive release on CD in recent years. Limb's soundtrack combines a more organic sound with the electronic elements, featuring all the drama and suspense of the story – a formula and sound palette he would return to the following year – and remains an example of *Doctor Who* incidental music at its finest.

The 1980s were also the first decade to give us *Doctor Who* soundtracks on record. Released in 1983, *Doctor Who: The Music* was produced by Dick Mills, long-time member of the Radiophonic Workshop and creator of sound effects for the show. The LP opens with the sound of the TARDIS dematerialising, segueing into Delia Derbyshire's arrangement of the theme. Malcolm Clarke's score for *The Sea Devils* (1972) follows, then the track list jumps to the Fourth Doctor's final season and beyond for the rest of the record, celebrating the then-current period of the show through cues from recent stories like *The Leisure Hive*, *Warriors' Gate*, *The Keeper of Traken*, *Arc of Infinity* and *Earthshock*.

The sleeve featured an illustration of all five Doctors by artist Ian McCaig, a painting that would be copied for the exterior mural of the Blackpool *Doctor Who* exhibition that same year, as it underwent a refresh as part of the show's twentieth anniversary celebrations.



Doctor Who: The Music II

followed in 1985, boasting a now-dated sleeve of early computer-aided design featuring digitised images of the six Doctors in garish colours. Despite the promise of its cover art, the track listing comprised only music from the Fifth Doctor's era, the main highlight being a suite from *The Five Doctors* that ran to almost nine minutes long.

At the time, the two *Music* albums certainly were a must-have, and I have fond memories of getting both and being intrigued by music from some stories I was yet to see. It helped me imagine what those episodes must have been like – the titles, along with the photos and descriptions I had seen in *Doctor Who Magazine*, would set my mind racing. Even without knowledge of some stories, hearing so much exciting electronic music was thrilling.

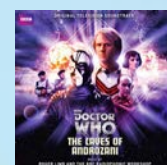
Compiling the albums would have been a challenge, especially given the amount of material to choose from. The limitations of vinyl would dictate the duration of some tracks, although it's fair to say those selected for inclusion on both releases do stand out as some of the very best *Doctor Who* incidental music ever produced.

There's no question: the *Doctor Who* theme isn't just one of the greatest ever composed, it's also a landmark in the history of electronic music. Bold, otherworldly and utterly unmistakable, it broke new ground the moment it first aired and has continued to inspire generations of composers and fans alike.

This revolution in sound was more than just a theme, it became the sonic signature of a show that thrives on imagination and reinvention. Past, present and future collided alongside the unknown, illustrated so perfectly by an electronic score. This connection perhaps reached its zenith in the 1980s when every episode was adorned by pulsating synths and shimmering textures. The music didn't just accompany the adventure, it *was* the adventure.

Doctor Who and electronic music aren't merely linked, they are forever entwined in a legacy of innovation and wonder, and the Fifth Doctor era is testament to that. ≡

The two *Doctor Who The Music* albums in 1983 and 1985 were the first dedicated to the series' incidental music, making them a must-have for fans



The full soundtracks for *The Caves of Androzani* and *The Five Doctors* were released on CD in 2013 and 2018

FRONTIOS

What on Frontios has the power to destroy the TARDIS? The Doctor finds the answer lurking under the surface

WRITTEN BY **CHRISTOPHER H BIDMEAD** • DIRECTED BY **RON JONES**
AIRDATES **26, 27 JANUARY, 2, 3 FEBRUARY 1984** • RATINGS **8m, 5.8m, 7.8m, 5.6m**
NOVELISATION BY **CHRISTOPHER H BIDMEAD** • PUBLISHED **20 SEPTEMBER 1984**

Frontios, like Christopher H Bidmead's previous stories *Logopolis* (1981) and *Castrovalva* (1982), is a contemplative, cerebral and ambitious entry into the *Doctor Who* canon.

Much like *Utopia* (2007) by Russell T Davies, which arrived over two decades later, *Frontios* is a story about the last remnants of the human race, surviving far out on the edges of the universe. So far out, in fact, that not even the Time Lords are permitted to travel there. The Doctor does venture there, however, and becomes embroiled in a story about survival, mysterious disappearances, relentless meteor storms, and a colony on the brink of functional and societal collapse. Then there's the mystery of what lies beneath the ground...

The narrative explores the fragility of civilisation, how easy it is to forget the past, and the failure of not learning the lessons of history. Bidmead paints a stark picture of humanity's future, one where people have lost hope in their purpose, in their leaders and in their ability to survive. Existence hangs on a

**To conjure
up such an
impressive set
for the colony
is astonishing**

thread, yet these people don't even realise the real threat that waits beneath the surface, ready to snap that thread.

Just as *Logopolis* and *Castrovalva* presented us with unusual yet logical and functional societies, so *Frontios* does the same for the human colonists. Given the meagre budget – in part due to expensive location filming reserved for *Resurrection of the Daleks* and overseas filming for *Planet of Fire* – coupled with the lack of cutting-edge visual effects, the fact that the production team was able to conjure up such an impressive set for the colony is astonishing.

One of the aspects I love most about *Frontios* is the attention paid towards characterisation. Although many of the colonists are ostensibly working together, they each come with their own



Artwork by
Andy Lambert

backstories, their grievances with the chain of command, their own emotional baggage and an unsettling lack of trust in one another. Every character is clearly set out without any nondescript, two-dimensional personas. Even the Doctor is beset by his own troubles: the sense that he shouldn't be there at all, his reluctance to get too involved, and the fact that the colonists don't welcome his help but rather view him as a threat.

The colony leader, Plantagenet (Jeff Rawle), is barely more than a boy, who has had great power and responsibility thrust upon his young shoulders at the worst possible time. In reality he's powerless, able to do little more than sound confident and deliver a rousing speech. It's not until his physical abuse by the Tractators in using him as part of

their mining machine that we witness him undergo a change, an emotional growth as he becomes the leader his people want him to be, and his own realisation that suppressing and controlling the colonists is not the way to win their respect.

Turlough also gets some rare character development as we learn a bit about his own world's history with the Tractators and the horror that he has suppressed deep within himself. Turlough has blocked his own memories and forgotten his history, just as the colonists have forgotten theirs, and that memory and history is now buried deep, just as the Tractators are. The knowledge Turlough has isn't just personal but ancestral, inherited. Bidmead continues to weave personal

and collective history into the subplot. Metaphors abound in all of his scripts, none more so than here.

Long before the series introduced us to 'mavity' we had gravity. The use of this as a physical force is central to the Tractators' powers. They manipulate gravitational forces as they hollow out the planet, altering the composition of the ground and pulling unsuspecting humans under; "Frontios buries it's own dead." Gravity becomes another metaphor representing the weight of history, the pull of inevitability, the descent into ignorance and subjugation, all ideas that sit heavily on the colony.

Something that injects another sense of jeopardy into the story is the way the Doctor's normally invulnerable TARDIS is pulled apart by those gravitational

forces, it's parts scattered about the caves like a broken jigsaw puzzle. The Doctor is made more vulnerable than ever but he doesn't give up the fight and, as we've come to expect from the Fifth Doctor, he doesn't resort to violence. By intellect and deduction, he rediscovers what has been lost and uses that to achieve victory – another hallmark of Bidmead's vision of the Doctor.

Thanks to the script and attention to character, all the actors shine in their respective roles. Peter Davison seems to be in his element as the breathless, urgent, scientist-philosopher, carrying the emotional and intellectual core of the story with his usual quiet authority. I would argue that this is one of his strongest outings as the Doctor.

Mark Strickson gets some emotional baggage and paranoia to work with as Turlough, and Janet Fielding's Tegan has settled down into a more traditional companion, aiding the Doctor, standing up to injustice and taking time to give care and attention to those who need it. Rawle as Plantagenet does a standout job of representing an authority figure bereft of power but who goes on an emotional journey to become a more open and considerate leader. Peter Gilmore as Brazen had less character development to work with but delivers the gruff, authoritarian qualities well, and gives us glimpses into the sadness and tragedy he carries with him.

Of course, it has to be said the realisation of the Tractators doesn't give us one of the series' most memorable monsters. That's not down to the script or the concept, simply the physical



limitations of producing such an ambitious creature on a tight budget. The original design called for them to coil and uncoil like woodlice when using their gravitational powers, and also suggested that they kill humans by this method of suffocation. Sadly the actors were unable to perform these moves convincingly and one actor who was filmed trying was unable to get back up again. Their wobbling, restrictive movements and lack of limbs does rather take away from the threat they pose, but the concept is a good one, playing on our fear of insects, grubs and the 'other'. I'm sure with modern technology this could be much better realised today. Christopher Bidmead was unhappy with them too but I don't believe any of that takes away from the idea or the intention.

I think *Frontios* sometimes gets forgotten, or remembered only as a nice little tale before the big Dalek story and Davison's epic finale. Taken in isolation, though, this is a little epic in its own right. It's a confident story with a lot to say, some memorable characters and nicely resolved plots. I make no apology for saying that *Logopolis*, *Castrovalva* and *Frontios* are three stand-out stories from 1980s *Doctor Who*, and showcase the thought, philosophy and attention to detail that the late Christopher Bidmead brought to the series.

Frontios is a story that challenges the Doctor and exposes his vulnerability like few other stories before or since, and sees Davison deliver one of his best performances. I strongly believe it deserves a revisit and reappraisal. ≡

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

Christopher H Bidmead shows a real knowledge of Davison's Doctor at its best, bringing him out of his usual somewhat bland presentation. This was also shown with the other characters in the story, who seemed to have more depth than usual.

Paddy Kingsland's music is worthy of praise. It is often said that if you notice the incidental music

then it is not doing its job properly, but I disagree [in this instance].

Adrian Harris, *TARDIS*, Volume 9, Number 1, 1984.

What a marvellous tale *Frontios* was. I always find it difficult to get excited over a story shot entirely in the studio [but] I am happy to say that I found it one of the most enjoyable Davison stories

to date. It was nice to see Lesley Dunlop I always thought [she] would have made a good assistant and I was very impressed with her performance. It was good to see a new monster, particularly [one] as original as the Tractators; what splendid creatures with their flailing arms and those sinister deep voices.

Ian Bresman and Tim Munro, *TARDIS*, Volume 9, Number 1, 1984



Artwork by
Connor Adkins

CJA

Artwork by
Andy Lambert



RESURRECTION OF THE DALEKS

The Daleks have their reasons for extricating Davros from his prison – but their creator has his own plans

WRITTEN BY **ERIC SAWARD** • DIRECTED BY **MATTHEW ROBINSON**
AIRDATES **8, 15 FEBRUARY 1984** • RATINGS **7.3m, 8m**
NOVELISATION BY **ERIC SAWARD** • PUBLISHED **18 JULY 2019**

These days reviews or analysis of *Resurrection of the Daleks* tend towards the scathing. This revision seems jarring in its extremity, particularly given that the serial was the *Doctor Who Magazine* poll winner for 1984. At the time it was seen as a gritty action-adventure capitalising on atmospheric settings and a returning enemy. Within about a decade of further analysis the phrases ‘cynical’ and ‘glossy mess’ started to creep into the discourse and now it’s often seen as an almost embarrassing slaughter-fest where wasteful death and explosions take the place of a coherent plot.

I think this at least in part it because of its position in Season 21 and the ‘squint factor’. Allow me to explain. If you stand back from Davison’s three

seasons and squint, what do you see?

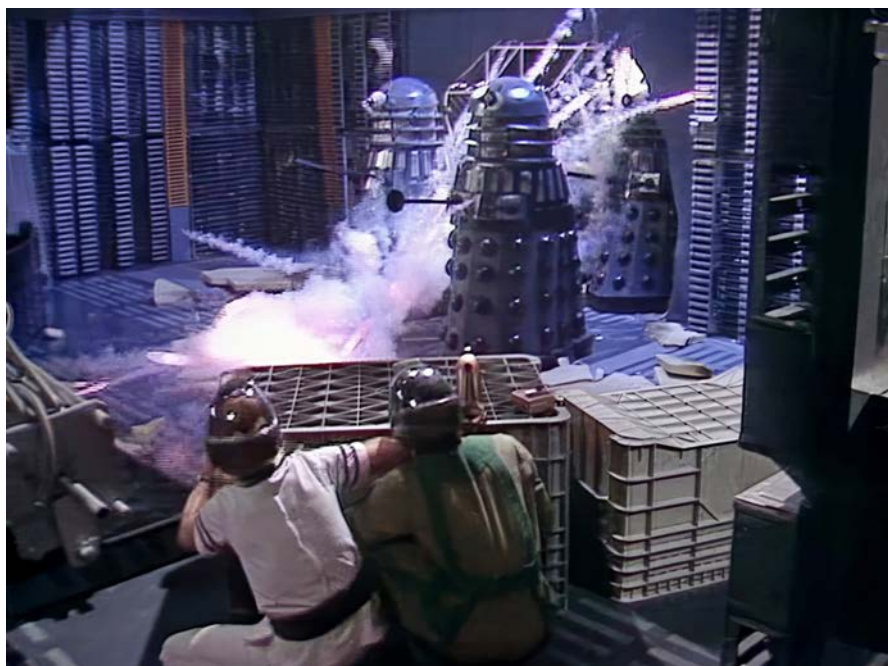
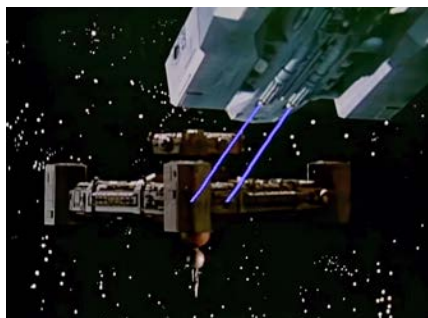
Season 19: a mish-mash of high-end science-fiction and pseudo historicals that builds to a mind-blowing climax with *Earthshock* but let down by *Time-Flight* being bolted on at the end?

It’s easy for the fan of today to wince at the darkness at *Resurrection’s* core

Season 20: a symphony in beige with not a lot going on and building to a two-parter which nobody really likes?

And finally Season 21: a series of mass slaughters with a few questionable design decisions building to a story where even the Doctor doesn’t survive?

Placed where it is, in the middle of the Season 21 carnage, it’s easy for the fan of today to wince a little at the darkness at *Resurrection’s* core. When standing back, the whole effect of Season 21 is one of relentless gloom that the other stories in the season do little to mitigate and, in some cases, actually reinforce. It matters little that it was well loved at the time; now it’s just a reminder that, years ago, killing people in *Doctor Who* occasionally erred on the heavy side and ultimately led to some



Finally, another step back and squint, and we see the Davison era overall. With all three seasons building to a climactic story, the whole thing seems incredibly well planned and organised, the production team deserving of more credit than history has allowed them and the impression of a tight ship with a gameplan for every year. Furthermore, the also-ran stories like *Time-Flight* and *The Twin Dilemma* are more obviously serving a purpose – not leaving the viewer hanging after the loss of a main character – as opposed to being an end of season budget-free mess.

This one move makes *Resurrection of the Daleks* and everything around it fundamentally better. Any story that impactful deserves our respect and the legacy of being something special.

Or you could argue this is too much what-if nonsense to be an effective analysis; that if you have to move things about and squint to see the merits of a story, they may not be there at all. ☰

big questions about the levels of violence in a TV show of its kind.

So let's test a theory. Let's put *Resurrection of the Daleks* back where it was supposed to be. I don't need to tell you good people that *Resurrection* – then known as 'The Return' – was supposed to be the climax to Season 20. By popping it back in its original position, taking another step back, and once again squinting, the Davison era takes on a somewhat different shape.

First, Season 20 now has an effective climax story which, like *Earthshock*, ups the jeopardy and tension, and stands out as something that the general drumbeat of the stories that preceded it seemed to be steadily building to. It's also a proper climax – no *Time-Flight* at the end to diminish the impact.

Second, with one of its bloodiest stories removed, Season 21 now takes on a far more logical and less cynical tone. The consequence is that the high casualty rates of *Warriors of the Deep* and, most importantly, *The Caves of*

Androzani are even more impactful. The season loses much of its overall image of unpleasantness without diminishing the stories that needed violence to be at a level significant to their plot.

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

If *Destiny of the Daleks* was the story which disgraced the Doctor's most famous arch-enemies then *Resurrection of the Daleks* has surely redeemed them. Almost everything about this story was first rate, but I would especially cite the hunt for the Dalek creature in the warehouse, the confrontation between the Doctor and Davros, and the climactic battle.

Stephen Bell, *TARDIS*, Volume 9, Number 1, 1984

Tegan's leaving scene was completely unbelievable for me. For such a strong character, I thought it would have been correct to show her disillusionment at least throughout the story, if not throughout the season. At least Sarah Jane started her last story feeling fed up!

Stephen Murphy, *TARDIS*, Volume 9, Number 1, 1984

Tegan's departure was the most moving since that of Jo Grant. It brought a tear to my eye. The final mention of the oft-repeated phrase "Brave heart, Tegan" multiplied the sadness a hundred times.

Stephen Birchard, *TARDIS*, Volume 9, Number 1, 1984



TARDIS

Information system

CREW DATA - TEGAN JOVANKA

TEGAN JOVANKA was a companion of the **Fourth** and **Fifth DOCTORS**. She was born in **Brisbane, AUSTRALIA**, but by 1981 lived in **LONDON** with her **AUNT VANESSA**. On their way to **HEATHROW AIRPORT** for Tegan to start her new job as an air stewardess, their car got a puncture. Stopping in a lay-by on the **Barnet Bypass**, Vanessa was killed by the **MASTER** while Tegan wandered into the Doctor's **TARDIS** thinking it was a real **POLICE BOX**. After visiting the planet **LOGOPOLIS**, she witnessed the Doctor's fourth **REGENERATION** at the **PHAROS PROJECT** with **ADRIC** and **NYSSA**.

After quelling the Master's **CASTROVALVA** plan, Tegan stayed with the Doctor hoping he would be able to return her to Earth to resume her job. During these early travels, **Adric** was killed by the **CYBERMEN**, which caused her great distress. Soon after, the **TARDIS** did land at Heathrow and, after travelling back to the **JURASSIC** period in **Concorde** along a **TIME CONTOUR**, Tegan was left behind on Earth.

By coincidence, she crossed paths with the Doctor very soon afterwards in **AMSTERDAM**, when he thwarted the return of **OMEGA** from his **ANTI-MATTER** universe. Tegan travelled with the Doctor again, during which time she met the **First, Second** and **Third Doctors** in the **DEATH ZONE** on **GALLIFREY** during the **BORUSA** incident. But she grew disillusioned with his dangerous lifestyle and left him after the **DALEK** incursion in London's **Docklands**.

Tegan suffered some distressing times with the Doctor, including the deaths of her aunt and **Adric**, being possessed by the **MARA**, and having to wear her air stewardess uniform for weeks on end. Her character was to be **loud** and **direct**, and she would often argue with her shipmates, in particular **Adric** and later **VISLOR TURLOUGH**. She was especially close to **Nyssa**. She would often **criticise** the Doctor, in particular his uncertain ability to pilot the **TARDIS**; she once remarked that a broken clock keeps better time than he did as at least it's right twice a day!

Tegan was, however, **loyal** and **brave**, and an important member of the **TARDIS** crew at this time. When she finally left the Doctor, she was the last of the three companions who had helped him at the start of his fifth incarnation.


Text by
Bruce Nicholson

Artwork by
Tony Green

Planet of Fire

Things get hot as the Master tries to harness the power of an entire planet to restore himself

WRITTEN BY **PETER GRIMWADE** • DIRECTED BY **FIONA CUMMING**
AIRDATES **23, 24 FEBRUARY, 1, 2 MARCH 1984** • RATINGS **7.4m, 6.1m, 7.4m, 7m**
NOVELISATION BY **PETER GRIMWADE** • PUBLISHED **18 OCTOBER 1984**

 *Planet of Fire* is one of that fairly large group of *Doctor Who* stories that are almost forgotten.

Every season has one or two outstanding stories that immediately become revered classics; likewise, there is usually one downright stinker which has some extreme unredeeming feature that leads it to be reviled over the years.

I know these are generalisations and that you can find fans who dislike *The Tomb of the Cybermen* (1967), *Genesis of the Daleks* (1975) and *Blink* (2007) about as often as you find those who adore *The Underwater Menace* (1967), *The Horns of Nimon* (1979-80) and *Timelash* (1985). But these extremes lead to a similar result: a swathe of stories that are rarely talked about and never feature in the Best/Worst polls. Nobody really talks

about *Planet of Fire*, just as nobody really talks about *The Krotons* (1968-69), *Colony in Space* (1971) or *The Long Game* (2005).

It's unfair that I don't ever think of *Planet of Fire* any time I'm in the mood for some Davison. It's undoubtedly an entertaining 90 minutes of television but it's inevitably overshadowed by its neighbours, *Resurrection of the Daleks* and *The Caves of Androzani*.

Planet of Fire
does have some
very significant
moments

On its first airing, the audience was still reeling from the Dalek bloodbath and the loss of Tegan to properly absorb the change of pace presented here, and the story was quickly forgotten in the fanfare of gunrunners, political intrigue and regeneration that followed.

Yet *Planet of Fire* does have some very important and significant moments for the series: we say farewell to Kamelion and Turlough, and hello to Perpugilliam Brown; the Master makes an interesting return after his dismissal at the end of *The Five Doctors*; there's another overseas location shoot; and Davison continues to build on the pitiful despair of his Doctor. My favourite part of this is the expression on his face when the Master has been vaporised in the gases: without saying a word, he conveys the "There

Target cover artwork
by Andrew Skilleter
andrewskilleter.com





should have been another way” mood after the mass destruction of *Warriors of the Deep* and *Resurrection of the Daleks*, as well as the pre-regeneration foreboding of *The Caves of Androzani*.

Taking those other points in turn, Kamelion was an idea considerably ahead of its time in terms of the ability to execute effectively. Having a shape-shifting robot companion is a logical step after K9, although the production team should have remembered that he had presented no end of technical challenges, let alone the temptation for writers to have him solve any problem by virtue of his knowledge and other capabilities. To the adage ‘never work with animals or children’ should be added ‘or mechanical characters’. Kamelion’s development wasn’t helped by the death of Mike Power, his software designer. So we have poor Kamelion appearing in a blaze in *The King’s Demons* but then, like so many children’s toys after Christmas, thrown into the back of a closet to be resurrected a year later. Then written out.

Here, Kamelion’s reappearance is treated in an intelligent way – it makes sense that he’s the Master’s puppet, with the Master himself reduced to puppet-sized proportions – and we develop a lot of sympathy for the poor automaton being torn between his will to serve and the evil purposes the Master is putting him to. In the form of Peri’s stepfather Howard, he’s well represented by Dallas Adams, who not only adeptly portrays his inner torment but is sympathetic and a supervillain at the same time. Kudos to any actor who can act in a suit and silver make-up in the Lanzarote heat.

After the his introduction as a puppet of the Black Guardian, Turlough became pretty much a cypher to help the Doctor explain things to the audience, although



his motives and scruples were always a little in question. As is common, we’re introduced to someone with a really interesting backstory that sets them up to be an engaging character only for most of that to be forgotten until their last few episodes when it’s all suddenly resolved. The details we learn about Trion and Turlough’s family’s exile are tantalizing but go no further within the televised realm of Turlough’s story.

In much the same way, we meet Peri with her knowledge of botany, which is promptly forgotten about for most of her time with the Doctor. She’s smart, feisty and, in a bikini, probably the most blatant example of the show pandering to older male viewers since Leela. It took a couple of seasons before Peri would be appropriately dressed and start to show some intelligence again.

I really like the Master in this story. He has to be particularly manipulative and devious to abuse Kamelion for his purposes. The reveal that he’s now a diminutive figure is quite a shock the first time and even on repeat viewing it’s not obvious he’s in that box. I like that they don’t overdo the comical aspect of his situation – it’s humorous when he’s hiding behind panels in the TARDIS like a bearded mouse, but writer Peter

Grimwade avoids too much childish dialogue or jokes, and Fiona Cumming doesn’t direct it as slapstick.

We also apparently have Cumming to thank for the foreign location shoot, as she’d raved to the production team with her holiday photos from the island of Lanzarote. For the most part it’s a missed opportunity, as we’re basically in a drier and warmer version of every other quarry that has doubled for an alien planet over the years. There are moments – looking out from the balcony and being able to see the ocean, the César Manrique architecture for the location-shot parts of the city, and the boat scenes that allow the show to present old and new companions in bathing costumes – but really all it does is highlight how boring the studio sets are in comparison.

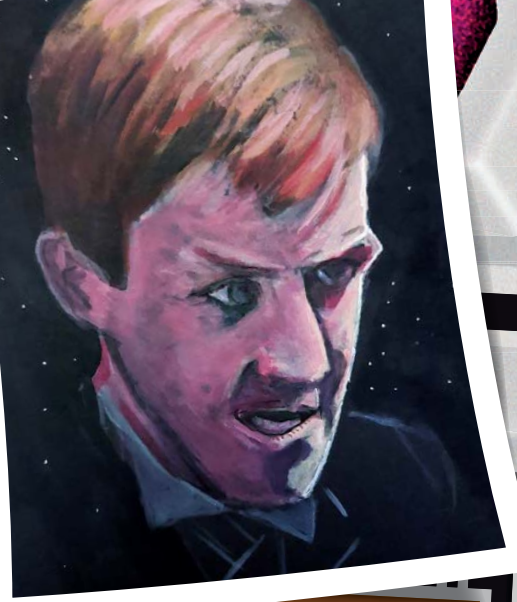
Which points to the main criticism of the story itself. Aside from all of the introductions and departures, it’s a fairly run-of-the-mill story of a remote colony where some of the population worship a deity while others think the answer to their problems must come from the technology around them.

Peter Wyngarde gets to overact a little as the religious leader Timanov but the rest of the inhabitants of Sarn could have been plucked from 30 other stories with similar plots. With all of the beiges and greys used for the interior design and costumes, the serial looks bland, which is replicated in the somewhat stale story being told. None of it’s executed particularly poorly but nothing is outstanding, just so-so. It’s enjoyable, not overly flawed, there’s nothing really wrong with it, yet it’s unmemorable. ≡

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

Generally speaking the whole story left me feeling quite sad, after the Doctor’s reluctant destruction of poor old Kamelion (to the delight of most fans, I dare say) who had been well used throughout the story and, finally, the Doctor’s refusal to help the trapped Master, leading to what would appear to be his final demise. At least, it was clear that the Doctor thinks he is no more. It can’t be though, can it? The final encounter would surely be more momentous. Incidentally, the ‘shrunk Master’ twist was a nice move and visually well realised, but was there anyone watching who didn’t guess at first sight what that black box contained?!

Robert Craker, *TARDIS*, Volume 9, Number 1, 1984



TARDIS

Information system

CREW DATA - VISLOR TURLOUGH

VISLOR TURLOUGH was attending **BRENDON** Public School in Hertfordshire, **England**, **EARTH** when he met the **Fifth DOCTOR** in 1983. He was in fact an **exile** from the planet **TRION**, where his family had been part of the ruling class. After a **civil war**, they were expelled, with Turlough sent to Earth. A **TRION AGENT**, in the guise of a solicitor, arranged for him to be lodged at the school. It was during his time at Brendon that Turlough was engaged by the **BLACK GUARDIAN** to kill the Doctor in return for his freedom. His attendance was also notable for coinciding with ex-Brigadier **ALISTAIR LETHBRIDGE-STEWART**'s teaching career there.

Turlough was a reluctant **assassin**, however, and after being awarded **ENLIGHTENMENT** he rejected his pact with the Guardian and joined the **TARDIS** crew. He initially asked the Doctor to return him to his home planet but then changed his mind.

Following the **DALEK** incident in **LONDON** 1984, **TEGAN JOVANKA** left the Doctor's company, leaving him alone with Turlough and the shape-shifting robot **KAMELION**. Shortly afterwards, it picked up a Trion **distress signal** that led the TARDIS to the planet **SARN**, where Turlough found his younger brother **MALKON**, who had been exiled there with other Trions. Learning that political prisoners were now welcome to return to Trion, Turlough elected to leave the Doctor.

Tegan didn't trust Turlough and the Doctor was also wary of him initially, but the young man slowly gained their respect and trust. He was sometimes **selfish** and often would do all he could to avoid confrontation. While some interpreted this as **cowardice**, his early life experiences on Trion had made him a **survivor**, leading him to avoid dangerous situations. When needed, though, Turlough could defend his friends, most notably on **SEA BASE FOUR** when he threatened at gunpoint a member of the crew who was refusing to help the Doctor and Tegan from attack by the **MYRKA**. His resistance to the Black Guardian's demands was also very creditable. Turlough also saved **PERPUGILLIAM BROWN** from drowning in **Lanzarote**.

It is not known what happened to Turlough after his return to Trion, but the **BLACK ARCHIVE** on Earth holds details about him, suggesting at some point he returned to Earth. It is thought he would have had a welcoming return to Trion.

Text by
Bruce Nicholson

Artwork by
Tony Green

EVIL INCARNATE

What the Master's repeated run-ins with the Fifth Doctor lacked in surprise was made up for by the devilish delivery of Anthony Ainley

For me, growing up in the 1980s, Anthony Ainley was the Master. Having taken Tremas's form in *The Keeper of Traken* and caused the death of the Doctor in *Logopolis* (both 1981), he became a recurring threat to the Fifth Doctor, much like Roger Delgado's Master had been during the Third Doctor's tenure. It wasn't until May 1992 that a story featuring Delgado, *The Claws of Axos* (1971), was available on home video. Back in the 1980s, we only knew the Ainley interpretation of this menacing figure in velvet.

Anthony Ainley's Master appeared five times throughout the Peter Davison era (six if you count his regeneration cameo in *The Caves of Androzani*). At times during this run the character seemed pantomime-esque as he returned yet again following certain death with a tenuous explanation. It is, however, Ainley's superb characterisation that raises this performance above a simple camp routine. His voice purrs like a panther, bringing a delicious malignant evil to each sentence with a twinkling of the eyes. He also switches seamlessly to wide-eyed panic when each scheme goes awry.

While Delgado brought a civilised menace to his encounters with the Doctor, exemplified by sharp suits and often playing the respectable alias (with the occasional disguise as a phone repairman), Ainley's incarnation delights in elaborate dressing up. But under all the theatrics, he arguably has a greater character trajectory. He progresses over the Fifth Doctor's run from someone seeking revenge (*Castrovalva*) to a desperation to survive (*Planet of Fire*). During the course of these episodes, the Master loses some of the suave calm of Delgado and regresses to the mad drive of his decayed form in *The Deadly Assassin* (1976) and *The Keeper of Traken*.

Ainley's tenure had begun with the ultimate prize: causing the death of the Doctor, with the handy by-product of nearly wiping out the cosmos in the process. *Castrovalva* shows two disparate sides of this Master. He starts out with all the cool, calculated planning you would expect. His sabotage of the TARDIS suggests that during the cataclysmic events of *Logopolis* he had a Plan B, a somewhat theatrical bid to send it back to the beginnings of everything at Event One. Plan C is the Master's



Artwork by
Andy Lambert

Can you tell who it is yet? While he may not have fooled the viewers, the Doctor always fell for the Master of disguise

block-transfer web, based on the computations of Logopolis, in which he has trapped Adric. By the time the Doctor has found his way to Castrovalva, the Master has adopted the persona of the Portreeve, beginning a penchant for disguise and



the dramatic much greater than his predecessors'. Once the disguise drops, after Shardovan breaks the web holding Adric, the wide-eyed, panic-stricken version of this Master is revealed as, without Adric, Castrovalva collapses in on itself and the Master finds himself caught in his own trap.

Time-Flight continues the theme of the surprise reveal as we're introduced to the great conjurer Kalid, a disguise the Master adopts for no apparent reason. Yet he relishes the persona and his eventual reveal. From there, however, we return to a formulaic hostage format as the Master threatens the lives of the Concorde passengers in return for co-operation from the Doctor to help repair his TARDIS, which was damaged in the escape from Castrovalva's collapse. There begins a run of scavenger hunting as the two Time Lords take it in turns to steal and swap TARDIS components to thwart the other. In some ways this is a homage to the original Pertwee/Delgado pairing, where the Doctor and the Master would declare a truce, squabble for a bit while trying to solve the problem the Master had caused, only for him to renege on the deal. The philosophy of Ainley's Master is expressed as: "Where I cannot win by stealth I shall destroy. That way I cannot fail to win."

The King's Demons serves to embody this core of the character once more. Here his scheme is designed to undermine English history and test his new acquisition, the shape-shifting Kamelion. This leads to more dressing up and verbiage, this time mixed up with a bit of swordplay. Once again the Master is playing a role as the king's champion allowing for another not-so-shocking reveal. There is a return to more basic villainy in the second half of the story as he can't help but tell of his plan to change history, along with the battle for control of Kamelion. Once again the Master is defeated but we're set up for a more traditional Master as we approach the anniversary special.

It's in *The Five Doctors* that this version of the Master truly shines, as he's given a central role and we get a fuller concept of his personality. From his carefree entrance into the Time Lord High Council chambers, full of bravado, he owns the room with his presence, mixing gentlemanly charm with dripping malice. He's contemptuous of the idea of being forgiven by his peers, taking pleasure as they list his crimes, but can't resist the idea of rescuing the Doctor. His encounters with the Third, Fifth and First Doctors each show a different aspect of his character. When he meets the Third he stands still, straight backed, much like the classic Delgado pose, and puts on a front that becomes strained as his intentions are doubted. When he then runs into the Fifth, we return to a more recognisable tone as the

two spar. In the following alliance with Cybermen, the panto Master begins to come to the fore. By the time he crosses paths with the First Doctor, this persona is on full display, hopping his way across the chequered floor and shouting back at the Doctor, “It’s as easy as pi[e]!” However, his underlying ruthlessness is always there as he guns down the Cyber Leader having led its squad to destruction at its ally’s behest.

The Master’s final confrontation with the three earliest Doctors is full of exaggerated performance but sums up this incarnation perfectly. “I came here to help you. A little unwillingly but I came. My services were scorned, my help refused,” he carps. “Killing you once was never enough for me Doctor. How gratifying to do it three times over.” Here is the core of this Master: forever having a scheme that’s derailed by a need to humiliate and kill the Doctor. His character shifts from “a cosmos without the Doctor scarcely bares thinking about” to being ready to kill multiple regenerations as his frustration overcomes his self-preservation.

Planet of Fire brings this desperation for survival to the fore. Having shrunk himself experimenting with his tissue compressor, he’s forced to call on Kamelion to come to his aid and place him in the healing numismaton flames of Sarn. His intended final demise is full of desperation as he pleads with the Doctor, offering him anything he wants before seemingly perishing once more. Before this there are the Benny Hill-esque scenes of a mini Master running around his TARDIS hiding from Peri. One can’t quite picture Delgado doing this.

As the Fifth Doctor’s end approaches in *The Caves of Androzani*, it’s apt that the last voice he hears is of his arch nemesis, bringing a symmetry to this incarnation’s lifetime. Whether it’s a psychic projection or merely the side effect of the spectrox poisoning, this brings a jibe from *The King’s Demons* to fruition: “You’re getting old, Doctor, your will is weak. It’s time you regenerated.”

While this Master would return to plague both the Sixth and Seventh Doctors, it’s within the era of the Fifth that he makes his mark. He creates the

**The philosophy of
Ainley’s Master is
expressed as: “Where
I cannot win by stealth
I shall destroy”**



perfect bridge from the scheming of the Delgado incarnation to the flamboyance of Eric Roberts’ interpretation and the mania of John Simm’s modern approach. The consummate skill of Anthony Ainley in merging these various aspects of the character without leaving a single caricature shows how much he cared for the role. Whenever I see this Master I can immediately hear that feline voice, extending his words and dripping with unbridled menace. You knew your heroes were never safe when he appeared and instead of laughing at the panto performance you always felt something worse was on its way.

Perhaps he inspired such fear because this version succeeded in actually killing the Doctor. Delgado’s Master was dangerous and cunning but he never engendered his enemy’s regeneration. Throughout his face-offs with the Fifth Doctor, you never felt sure that this wouldn’t happen again – even while wondering if there’d be a Christmas episode Widow Twanky revealed as the Master and silkily stating, “My dear Doctor, you have been naive...” ☞

Gloating gets you nowhere. Missing his chance to end the Doctor early, the Master meets his own demise stood in a box

Artwork by
Elbert Smith




2025

THE CAVES OF ANDROZANI

In a world governed by greed and betrayal, even the Doctor's selflessness will prove the death of him

WRITTEN BY **ROBERT HOLMES** • DIRECTED BY **GRAEME HARPER**
AIRDATES **8, 9, 15, 16 MARCH 1984** • RATINGS **6.9m, 6.6m, 7.8m, 7.8m**
NOVELISATION BY **TERRANCE DICKS** • PUBLISHED **15 NOVEMBER 1984**

HEROES

As the eyes and ears of the viewer, the Doctor and companion in any number of stories are portrayed as saviours, arriving in a given situation and leaving it fundamentally changed by their presence. This has become the default setup across the show's various incarnations for more than 60 years. Villains are vanquished, monsters are defeated and the Doctor and friend(s) bid farewell once events are resolved with all the impact of a passing breeze.

The person who abhors violence often leaves the more bloody aspects of revolution in the hands of others, but there's no denying the impact their arrival has on those unable or unready

to rise up against their oppressors. Perhaps it's the tried and tested reliability of this format that makes rare exceptions feel so special. Sometimes even the Doctor can find themselves adrift in a universe of stark defeatism,

For once, the urge to live is the only heroic act accomplished in a universe at perpetual war

unable to provide even the spark of recovery for one person, let alone themselves. For once, the urge to live is the only heroic act accomplished in a universe at perpetual war.

Despite their opening bonhomie of banter about monoskids and reticular vector gauges, the Doctor and Peri are soon thrust into such a depressing scenario as they enter the caves of Androzani. Within minutes, both are exposed to a toxin that will endanger their lives, are arrested for a crime they have no possible defence against, and are sentenced to military execution without trial, representation or indeed proof. They've arrived in the middle of a localised war between corporate forces and a wanted drug smuggler, with the military and mercenaries fighting things



Infected



Arrested



Tortured



Hunted

out in between. All the result of greed, betrayal and an elixir farmed from the same poisonous substance that's now promising a swift death for our heroes.

Despite the presence of a figure of authority, there's no leverage to be made for common sense or unity here. Instead, a military general under the command of a civilian businessman is manipulated into making the Doctor and Peri scapegoats in an attritional war that's costing money and resources by the day. Not for them the cosy army setup of the Pertwee years; instead they face a tense and paranoid set of characters with careers on the line, and the constant fear of death by mudburst or the bullets of an android army.

With the Doctor and Peri reduced to jailbirds awaiting a kangaroo court judgment that benefits only militaristic morale, many of the events that occur without their presence nevertheless have repercussions. The head of Sirius Conglomerate, Trau Morgus, is using his position to fund a violent campaign

It's hard to think of an occasion before the Time War where the Doctor suffers more than he does here

against a former business partner, Sharaz Jek, and expand his own wealth through the life-enhancing properties of refined spectrox. Like every other figure at the top of the corporate food chain, however, Morgus fears being taken down by those beneath him. He uses nefarious means to keep his copper profits high despite over-production and sabotage, leaving a redundant workforce

to be reassigned as slave labour. Having the ear of the planet's president does little harm either, although as events escalate Morgus's paranoia elevates the Doctor's impact to an impossible level. For once, while the presence of the Doctor – knowingly or not – accelerates events to their conclusion, he's but a small cog in the workings of a bigger enterprise. His sense of desperation at having dragged his friend into a "petty little local war", combined with rapidly deteriorating health, leave him for once with little or no autonomy bar saving his own and Peri's diseased skins.

Even after being rescued by Jek from a hoodwinked firing squad (their bullets only hitting androids), the Doctor and Peri's plight seems equally grim. They are to be companions to an unhinged egotist, once of the same privileged and entitled world of Androzani Major at which Morgus now sits at the pinnacle, consumed with revenge against the business partner who betrayed him. The Doctor has little relish for Jek's particular brand of house arrest and, despite a similar level of intellectual small talk, both realise it's the soft-featured allure of Peri that Jek most craves. Isolation and disability has rendered his life little more than a game of hide and seek, surrounded only by his loyal androids and the captured major Salateen, for whom the arrival of the Doctor and Peri is initially seen as a threat to his own usefulness. When Salateen discovers the pair's spectrox infliction, his cruel laughter stems not only from a sense of ironic relief but also the coldly harsh world of profit over people that undercuts life on Androzani Minor and Major. Later, gunrunner Stotz will find equal amusement when dragging the paralysed Doctor to his interrogation on Major.

This is a world in which the Doctor's ineffectiveness and unimportance leaves him without the tools to gain leverage in a situation he would normally own. As a result, *The Caves of Androzani* marks a culmination of Davison's mandate to reimagine the character as a flawed idealist – a light year away from his predecessor's effortless strolling through any and all



situations with a flick of his scarf and a crumpled bag of jelly babies. The Doctor here is losing, badly, and not for the first time. Already the death of Adric, Tegan's possession by the Mara, Nyssa's Lazar exile and the carnage of humans, Silurians and Sea Devils have made this vulnerable Doctor question his own choices and lifestyle. "It's stopped being fun," Tegan told him on her departure and it's a whole new world of funless escapades that greet him on Androzani. Shorn of his most familiar friends and now travelling with a young American student looking for some kicks to tide her over before resuming college, the Doctor reverts to the role of protective teacher. Yet when his inescapable thirst for curiosity once again lands him in the hottest of water, it's his 'duty of care' for Peri that drives him on through illness, incarceration and even physical violence and torture. It's hard to think of an occasion before the Time War (largely shown more through consequences than actions) where the Doctor has suffered more than he does here; not the pain of loss or defeat but the attritional decline of ill health and physical compromise. For a story culminating in that periodic need to recast the show's lead, never before has regeneration been a culmination of such physical peril through a series of events threatening the Doctor's very existence. Disease, exertion, torture and being winged by a stray army bullet all lead to the most visceral, and mundane, causes for the curtailment of his fifth life.

And what of Peri, the plucky botany student who recently chased the miniaturised Master with her shoe, before taking a bold leap into the ultimate gap vacation? She's largely the archetype companion of questions and misunderstandings, although her exposure to increasingly gloomy scenarios is threaded with a caustic wit and black humour. For the first, and certainly not the last, time she falls under the male gaze of deformed villainy, although at least by Jek she's admired for her unspoilt beauty rather than lusted over. She recalls for him a time when he too was a man of status and good looks, a gentleman whose

graceful manner he still carries despite his hidden hideousness. Insanity, not just deformity, has blighted his life.

As Peri's human biology succumbs far quicker to the ravages of spectrox, her effectiveness diminishes in the story's second half, leaving her the pure unsullied innocent to be saved from this cruel and brutal world. The Doctor's frank and heartfelt apology to her for

fragile the protagonists' fate can be, then it's only because for once the travellers have arrived on an all too recognisable world: one of capitalist commerce, aggressive expansionism and free-market enterprise. Or to put it another way, Thatcherite Britain, where human lives have sunk below the importance of corporate greed, market forces and the monetisation of

The Caves of Androzani marks a culmination of Davison's mandate to reimagine the character of the Doctor as a flawed idealist



allowing his own adventurous zest to ride roughshod over her wellbeing is the story's most compassionate moment. By ultimately sacrificing his current life when giving her all that remains of the spilt bat's milk cure, this Doctor saves not an entire universe or the fabric of reality itself but the life of one person for whom his reckless lifestyle has proved nearly fatal. If he's doing this with the memory of Adric's demise foremost in his mind, it's little wonder his final words before regeneration seemingly add closure to the boy's death too.

If *The Caves of Androzani* champions the show's ethos by largely showing how

healthcare that privileges the rich over the ordinary. Spectrox is the BUPA private health model extrapolated over a science-fiction setting of future colonial expansion; the great and bountiful Human Empire spreading across the universe the way Earth empires once did across oceans. The Doctor and Peri escape only through a selfless act of heroism in a world that has adopted the mindset of mercenary exploitation at every level of society – and at the expense of the Doctor's current life.

When the Doctor hijacks his one-way ticket to Androzani Major justice, it's telling that this most suffering of

Doctors finally rails against the kind of misunderstanding world he has frequently struggled with. While his later seventh incarnation would manipulate events on a grand scale, the Fifth Doctor seeks only to save his friend from his own short-sighted failings. Not for him the rendering of justice upon a society so cruel and selfish that his own idealism is crushed beneath its heavy boot. For once, survival pure and simple is the goal, and the ends and the means to whatever victory can be claimed.

The Caves of Androzani remains a rare dive into the kind of bleakly realistic style of British television drama that would soon attract the plaudits and awards of BAFTA. The show couldn't be like this every week – despite the following year's attempts to evoke its dark and gritty aesthetic, results were never more than a sequence of diminishing returns. And perhaps that's best, because *Doctor Who* in the modern sense is drenched in optimism and hope despite the increasingly demoralising events of the modern world we live in today. *The Caves of Androzani* is unique not only in the sense of its tone and outlook, but also its durability as an example of the show's limitless capacity to tell stories. And that's why we're still talking about it now. **SA**



VILLAINS

Let's talk about villains. Not the moustache-twirling, cackling kind, but the complex, broken, painfully human ones. The kind that make us uncomfortable, that feel just a little too real. If you've watched *The Caves of Androzani*, you'll know exactly what I mean. It's one of the most gripping, tragic and emotionally raw stories *Doctor Who* has ever told. Not because of a grand alien invasion or a rift in time and space, but because of

two unforgettable figures: Sharaz Jek and Trau Morgus. This isn't a story about the Doctor saving the universe, it's about what happens when he walks into a world that has already gone to hell and meets the men who helped it get there.

Jek isn't your typical villain. He doesn't want to conquer the stars or enslave a race. He just wants revenge and something to love. Once a brilliant scientist, he was betrayed, horrifically injured and abandoned to the sulphur-choked underworld of Androzani Minor. He wears a mask to hide both his physical scarring and the raw pain underneath. His obsession with Peri is tragic and creepy in equal measure. But it's not really about her. She represents what Jek has lost: beauty, connection, the possibility of being loved. Watching him, we feel equal parts pity and fear. He's unpredictable, volatile, heart-breakingly lonely. His lair isn't a fortress, it's a tomb. And by the end he knows it. In another life, Jek might have been a hero but here, trapped by bitterness and pain, he becomes something far more dangerous: a man who knows he has lost everything and lashes out anyway.

If Jek is the wounded heart of the story, Morgus is its cold, calculating brain. Sleek, powerful and utterly remorseless, he's the man pulling all the strings. He plays both sides of a brutal war to keep profits flowing. He orders assassinations like he's signing off a

FROM THE DWAS ARCHIVES...

Probably the best compliment that I can offer *The Caves of Androzani* is that it was typical Robert Holmes; the snide look at industry, the sarcastic humour and the gripping atmosphere. In full, I believe, the best regeneration story ever.

Ian Clarke, *TARDIS*, Volume 9, Number 1, 1984

It contained plenty of slightly over-the-top characterisation – not a bad thing – and it had many of the tongue-in-cheek elements of *The Sun Makers*, notably the assassination of the president, Morgus's appalling business practices and Timmin's unexpected treachery. The Doctor seemed much more vulnerable than of late.

Christopher Denyer, *TARDIS*, Volume 9, Number 1, 1984

The Doctor seemed somewhat out of his depth towards the end; there was something pleasing and appropriate about his desperate and valiant race against time. The era of the Fifth Doctor has ended with a truly excellent, gripping adventure.

Robert Cracker, *TARDIS*, Volume 9, Number 1, 1984



budget. He delivers monologues to camera in a deadpan tone that makes your skin crawl. And yet he's not a madman. That's what's chilling. Morgus is logical, efficient, respected. He's a villain born not of madness or trauma, but out of a system that rewards the ruthless and punishes the kind. Sound familiar? In today's world, Morgus feels more relevant than ever. We've seen him in boardrooms, in headlines, in history. He's the face of power without conscience. And unlike Jek, he never even considers redemption.

In today's world, Morgus feels more relevant than ever

And here's the thing that makes *The Caves of Androzani* so compelling: by the time the Doctor arrives, it's already too late. The war is raging. Greed is in control. Everyone, from the military to the mercenaries, is just trying to survive or profit. The Doctor can't fix this world. He can't stop the spiral. All he can do is save one life. And that nearly kills him. For fans used to seeing the Doctor outwit empires or topple tyrants, this

story feels different. It's raw. It's bleak. But it's also honest. Sometimes, the greatest heroism isn't about saving everyone, it's about choosing to care when the world doesn't.

In watching the story today, you can't help but notice how modern it feels. The

cynical politics, the profit-driven wars, the disfigured genius cast aside, the powerful man behind a desk getting away with murder. These aren't science-fiction tropes, they're headlines. Sharaz Jek could be any broken soul lost to bitterness and loneliness. Morgus could be any CEO who sees human lives as numbers on a spreadsheet. And the Doctor? He's the best of us – still standing, still helping, even when it costs him everything. *The Caves of Androzani* is a story about what happens when monsters wear masks not to hide their evil but to survive their pain. It's about how obsession destroys, how greed corrupts and how, sometimes, the only light in the dark is one person doing the right thing because they must.

And that's why, decades later, we still talk about Jek, still recoil from Morgus, still feel that lump in our throat when the Doctor carries Peri to safety, whispering, "Is this death?" Because *The Caves of Androzani* reminds us that villains don't come from outer space. They come from us. **CMC**

CRYPTIC WHO CROSSWORD solution page 59



ROËVES AND VILLAINS

Maurice Roëves was known for playing tough, gritty characters when cast as gunrunner Stotz. “It just comes natural,” he revealed

Sometime during the spring of 2011, ahead of our third Whooverville convention, some of us were sitting in the café at QUAD in Derby making plans for our event, which would be taking place for the first time in this venue. We’d already made some interesting guest bookings but felt that perhaps we needed one more ‘big name’. Someone mentioned that Maurice Roëves, who played Stotz in *The Caves of Androzani*, lived locally and was even known to have watched films at QUAD.

The trouble was none of us had a contact for him. It was at that very moment someone pointed out: “Well, isn’t that him, over there at the box office counter?” It was an extraordinary coincidence and we didn’t waste the opportunity. I approached Maurice, we exchanged emails and within a few days the deal was done.

So it was that Robert Dick came to interview Maurice (his surname is pronounced as two syllables: ‘Row-eeves’) on Saturday 3 September 2011.

Robert began by mentioning that *The Caves of Androzani* had recently been voted the best ever *Doctor Who* story, an achievement Maurice had missed, although he was aware that the story was popular. Unlike Peter Davison, however, he didn’t get a trophy to mark the win – “I was a bad guy, and bad guys don’t get trophies.”

“What’s really interesting about it,” he added, “is the number of letters I’ve

had from children whose parents have shown them the video tape, saying, ‘This is what *Doctor Who* was like when I was a kid.’ And those youngsters have preferred *Caves* to the new episodes.”

Robert asked about the story’s director, Graeme Harper. “Graeme is a wonderful director. I had worked with him on *The Nightmare Man*, although that was directed by Douglas Camfield, another wonderful man, who died too early. I think the main thing about

Graeme is that he was unafraid as a director. He would get you to try things, adventurous things, and it was exciting to work with him. One example is in the scene where Stotz shoots his compatriots. He asks if they’re coming with him and originally that scene had him counting to ten and threatening what he would do if they didn’t. I said to Graeme, ‘Let’s just shoot them, that’s what Stotz would do.’ And that’s what we did. You didn’t see them die – you



Photos by Stephen Hatcher

didn't have to because it was almost like a radio drama technique. You knew what had happened. In their imagination, the audience moves that extra step, so you don't have to see the guys dying. When it was shown in Australia they thought that the scene in which I threatened Roy Holder's character with a knife was a step too far, too dangerous and too nasty, and the scene was cut."

Robert remarked that he had planned to introduce Maurice as a fellow Scot but had discovered he wasn't born in Scotland after all.

"I was born in Sunderland, which makes me a Mackem, but we moved immediately to Newcastle and I was raised there until I was about six, when we moved to Glasgow, where I stayed. So I don't class myself as Scots but I do class myself as Glaswegian. If ever I get into tight corners or find myself in any kind of trouble, that Glasgow accent comes out and it works admirably, it's a wonderful accent. I love Glasgow and I do feel very Scots when I'm there. My grandfather was Scots."

Robert asked Maurice about the origins of his surname. "Prussian! Another bunch of bad guys! My grandfather was called Otto Alexander Thomas and my great-grandfather was

also called Otto. There was this thing in the family that the eldest son should always be called Otto. Thank God my grandfather put a stop to that!"

The topic of the conversation moved on to Maurice's starring role in *Tutti Frutti*, according to Robert one of the best things that Scottish television had ever made. He asked Maurice how he

I said to Graeme, 'Let's just shoot them, that's what Stotz would do'

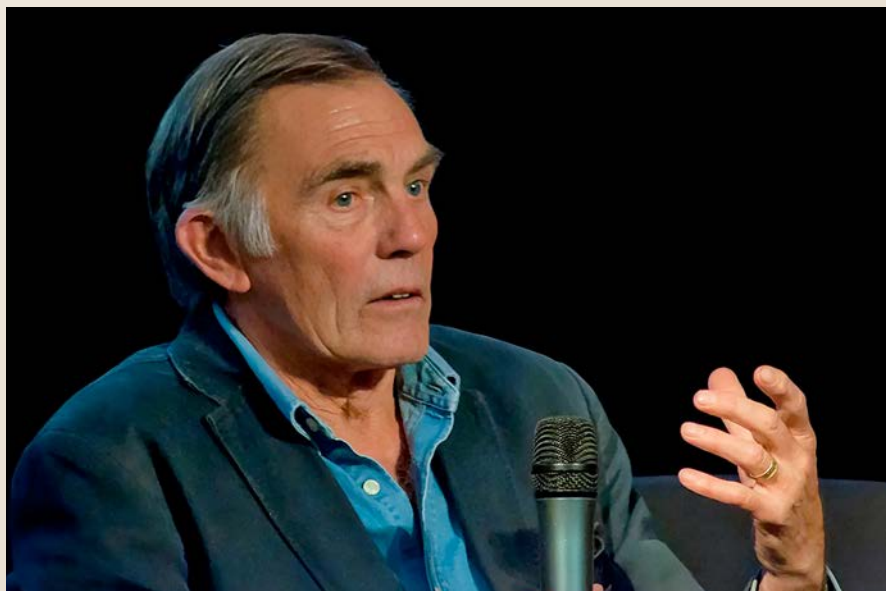
would describe the landmark series, for those who hadn't seen it.

"It's brilliant! It stands the test of time. It's about an ageing Scottish band who are absolute nutcases. They decide they want to do one last grand tour of Scotland. It's wonderful, you have to buy it, you'll roar with laughter. It's what made Robbie Coltrane – before that he had mostly just done *The Comic Strip*. There was Robbie, Emma Thompson, Richard Wilson. It was great fun. Nearly

killed us, we really did live the rock 'n' roll life. I'd never played a guitar before, never even held one, so I said I would do it only if no one is filmed playing the guitar. The music that you hear is played by a proper guitarist but I'm doing all the fingering. I was taught by the musician Zoot Money. That was hard work, really a mental exercise. I practised until my fingers bled. The great thing was, when *Tutti Frutti* was broadcast, the number of letters I got from musicians who said, 'We never saw you put a finger wrong.'

"It got lots of award nominations but for some strange reason it only won one BAFTA. It was like *The Last of the Mohicans*, the movie I did, which still sells, it's a great story, well told. It came to the awards in Los Angeles, I was there at the time, and it didn't get anything. I don't understand why the director didn't get an award but that's show business."

Robert asked Maurice about his time living and working in Los Angeles. "I spent three years working out there – I've got an American passport now – and I loved it. I miss it terribly. It's like being in a movie all the time, for me it was just a great thrill. It still is a great thrill, just thinking about it. For me as a



whatever it is they're feeling about what's going wrong in their lives, instead of rioting in the street. It fascinates me. It's a case of being the character and absorbing your lines, and knowing them so well that you forget them and they start coming out as natural talk.

"The *Doctor Who* story was remarkable in that it had a high sexual content. It was like *The Phantom of the Opera*, the way Christopher Gable's character talks to and handles the girl. He was very good. I hadn't noticed it before, it was only recently when I rewatched it that I realised it was a more adult episode. And I think the young audience likes that – they don't like being treated as kids. Robert Glenister, the young fella who played the clones, he was very, very good – excellent."



And so, with warm memories of *The Caves of Androzani* and to the applause of an appreciative Whooverville crowd, our time with Maurice Roëves drew to a close. In all the years that we've been organising our convention we've rarely had a more accomplished actor nor – although he might have denied it – a bigger star. Over a long career, Maurice featured in memorable roles in more than 120 films and TV series, achieving prominence in the 1966 film adaptation of James Joyce's *Ulysses* and going on to *Oh! What a Lovely War* (1969), *The Eagle has Landed* (1976), *Escape to Victory* (1981), *Hidden Agenda* (1990), *The Last of the Mohicans* (1992), *Judge Dredd* (1995), *The Damned United* (2009) and many more film roles. On television he enlivened many productions including *Danger UXB* (1979), *The Nightmare Man* (1981), *Doctor Who: The Caves of Androzani* (1984), *Tutti Frutti* (1987), *Rab C Nesbitt* (1990), *The New Statesman* (1990), *Star Trek: The Next Generation: The Chase* (1993), *EastEnders* (2003) and too many other shows to list, bringing his own very particular gritty realism, often with a terrifying dash of menace, to everything he did. He was a ubiquitous presence on TV from the late 1960s to the early 2010s, and a very special actor. ▢
With thanks to, and in appreciation of, the late Maurice Roëves, 1937-2020

kid growing up in Glasgow, I used to see all these movies in the local cinema, so living out there and going into 20th Century Fox and all these big studios, I was like a kid on Christmas Day. I couldn't believe it and I'm still like that. I love my job of work. I don't particularly love the business, I'm not very good at that, I'm afraid, but I very much enjoy the job of acting."

It was while Maurice was living in LA that he appeared as a Romulan in an episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, although he was confused and thought he might have played a Cardassian. In any case, he wasn't keen on the make-up and prosthetics the role required.

"At one stage I was the only person who had done both *Star Trek* and *Doctor Who*, but some of the younger ones have started coming through now. I don't brag about it. I always wanted to be *Doctor Who*. I kept telling them that but..."

Maurice played football trainer Jimmy Gordon in the film *The Damned United*; how much research did he have to do to play a real person?

"It wasn't so much research, more a case of following the script. As an actor, you're very much dependent on what the writers are doing. If it's a good script it'll give you the history of the character, so there's no point in doing anything else because you're stymied to an extent by what they and the director want."

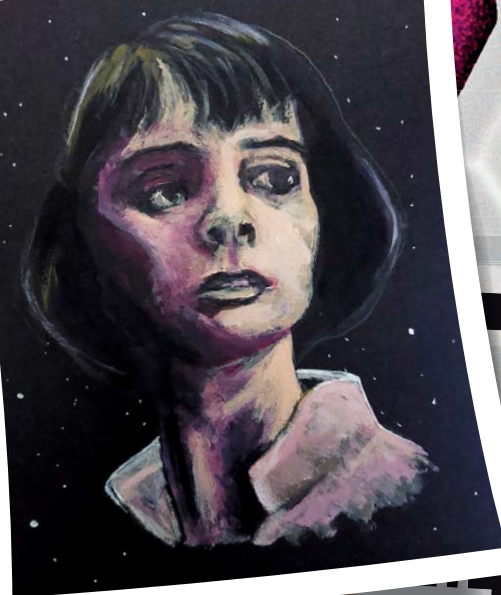
The conversation turned to *The Nightmare Man*, the television thriller written by Robert Holmes and directed

by Camfield, in which Maurice starred with Celia Imrie and James Warwick (Harper was production manager).

"Although it was set on a Scottish Island we filmed it in Cornwall, in Port Isaac. It was lovely down there. It was January and I was swimming in the bay. I think it was a lot better than the reviews said it was. Douglas Camfield was great. He also did an episode of *Danger UXB* [the Second World War bomb-disposal drama that Maurice starred in alongside Deborah Watling]. It was an episode in which Anthony Andrews was blown up while looking for mines on a pier. The stuntman who was to go into the water after him took ill, so guess who volunteered to go in? Just as I was about to take a running dive into the sea, the stuntman said, 'Don't forget the riptide.' I would have just 15 minutes before it came in and dragged me out to sea. The thought of that was frightening, so if you ever see that episode you'll never see an actor swim as fast as I did."

A question from the audience brought the subject back to *The Caves of Androzani*. What was it like playing someone as nasty as Stotz?

"It just comes natural!," Maurice joked. "I'm not really a method actor. I love my job because you can get inside somebody different. I've had offers to go and work in prisons but I'm not sure about that – they might keep me in! I'm thinking about it. It could be really good therapy for people, especially youngsters, to get rid of their negative emotions and



TARDIS

Information system

CREW DATA - PERPUGILLIAM BROWN

PERPUGILLIAM BROWN – who went by the diminutive **Peri** – met the **Fifth DOCTOR** while she was on holiday on **Lanzarote, EARTH** in 1984. She was born in 1966 to archaeologists **Paul and Janine Brown**. When Paul died, Janine married again to **HOWARD FOSTER**, also an archaeologist. Peri had an interest in the field but was studying **botany** at university when she met the Doctor.

In between terms, Peri had joined her stepfather on his field trip to the **Canary Islands**. Investigating an underwater wreck, his team discovered a metal object that, unbeknown to them, came from the planet **TRION**. When he refused to allow Peri to go travelling with friends she defied him, so he stranded her on his boat. Peri attempted to swim to the shore, taking the Trion object for its potential value, but almost drowned and had to be rescued by **VISLOR TURLOUGH**.

Peri was left to recover in the **TARDIS** and unwittingly taken to the planet **SARN** when **KAMELION**, under the influence of **THE MASTER**, hijacked the TARDIS. There she discovered the shrunken Master and was influential in freeing Kamelion of his control. When Turlough elected to leave the Doctor to pursue the chance of returning to his home, Peri asked to stay for the remainder of her vacation.

Soon after the TARDIS arrived on **ANDROZANI MINOR**. While exploring a range of cliff-side blowholes, Peri fell into a sticky fibrous substance that stung her legs. She soon developed a rash, as did the Doctor, and learned they had contracted **SPECTROX TOXAEMIA** and did not have long to live. While the increasingly ill Peri was tended by **SHARAZ JEK**, the Doctor battled to acquire the rare antidote. The pair only just made it back to the TARDIS before a major eruption of super-heated mud. The Doctor gave her the cure but had none left for himself and, following a speedy recovery, she witnessed the Doctor's fifth **REGENERATION**.

Peri was **intelligent, caring and compassionate**. She showed **sympathy** for the demise of Kamelion and demonstrated great **courage** in dealing with the Master.

For information on Peri's time with the Sixth Doctor, tap here ⓘ

Text by
Bruce Nicholson

Artwork by
Tony Green



THE LUNAR STRANGERS

Issues *Doctor Who Magazine*
215-217 (3 August-
28 September 1994)

Script Gareth Roberts

Art Martin Geraghty **Editor** Gary Russell

NOTES Tegan and Turlough both appear in a Marvel comic strip for the first time.

FANTASTIC FACT The aliens resemble cows as an in-joke at the expense of editor Gary Russell, who has a deep-seated phobia of these farmyard animals.

REVIEW Ten years after his departure, the Fifth Doctor returned to the *DWM* comic. In the mid-1990s the strip stopped featuring the ongoing adventures of the Seventh Doctor and instead showcased tales of earlier eras. Whereas the Fifth Doctor's original run of strips had stood apart from the television series, these new stories were firmly anchored in on-screen continuity. *The Lunar Strangers* is set prior to Season 21 – judging from the Doctor's clothing – and sees him accompanied by Tegan and Turlough.

In keeping with stories like *Warriors of the Deep* and *Frontios*, the action takes place in the future in an enclosed environment with an aggressive, cynical commander and the threat of imminent destruction. The absurd spectacle of space-suited talking alien cows on the Moon works because everything else is so richly evocative of this period of the series. *TV Comic* may have been an inspiration as in April 1994 *Doctor Who Classic Comics* reprinted the 1975 story *The Wreckers!* involving the Equinans, alien space-suited horses.



Comic panels courtesy of and copyright Panini Publishing Ltd

BLOOD INVOCATION

Issue *Doctor Who Yearbook*
1995 (September 1994)

Script Paul Cornell **Art** John
Ridgway **Colour** Paul Vyse
Editor Gary Russell

NOTES Tegan appears and Nyssa makes her first Marvel comic strip appearance. Set on *Gallifrey* and references Rassilon's war with the **vampires** from *State of Decay* (1980).

FANTASTIC FACT If a Fifth Doctor, Nyssa and Tegan story in which a companion becomes a vampire sounds familiar that's because this also describes Paul Cornell's Missing Adventures novel *Goth Opera* (Virgin Books, July 1994). He evidently liked the idea so much that he wrote it twice. Book and strip appeared just a few months apart.

REVIEW Set between *Snakedance* and *Mawdryn Undead* (judging from Nyssa's outfit), the Doctor is called to Gallifrey to investigate a mysterious death, although it's never explained why his assistance is required. There are some intriguing ideas here and we get a brief insight into a darker side of Time Lord society but, with only eight pages in which to tell the story, the plot progresses at lightning pace with frustratingly abrupt narrative jumps. No sooner has the Doctor discerned that a cult of Time Lords are worshipping Rassilon, than he finds the coven. The next time we see him he's back at the TARDIS with no explanation of how the cult has been dealt with, or indeed how the Time Lord vampire – who has attacked Tegan in the interim and temporarily turned her into a vampire – gained access to the TARDIS. The story is



wrapped up so fast that we're never even told the name of the vampire. It's delightful, though, to have a Fifth Doctor adventure illustrated by John Ridgway, the strip's regular artist for the entire Sixth Doctor era.

THE CURSE OF THE SCARAB

Issues *Doctor Who Magazine* 228-230 (2 August-27 September 1995)
Script Alan Barnes **Art** Martin Geraghty **Editor** Gary Gillatt

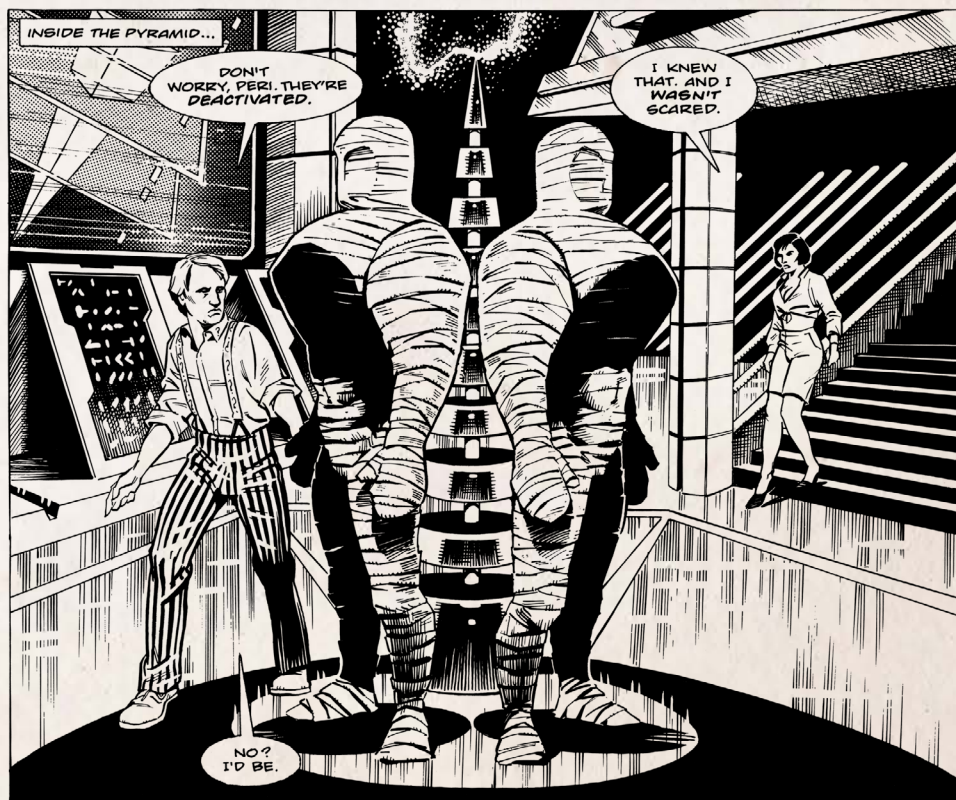
NOTES Peri has presumably only just joined the Doctor as both are still dressed as they were at the end of *Planet of Fire*. A sort of sequel to *Pyramids of Mars* (1975), this features an **Osirian** (sic) who was worshipped as a god in Ancient Egypt and the **Mummy** servitor robots. The first in a sequence of tales involving companion abductions, setting up the events of 1996's *Ground Zero*.

FANTASTIC FACT This was the first 'main strip' story to be written by Alan Barnes, who had previously penned one-off stories for special issues and the back-up strip *The Cybermen*. Thirty years later, he's again writing the ongoing comic adventures of the Fifteenth Doctor.

REVIEW The Fifth Doctor and Peri visit 1930s Hollywood in this disturbing yet highly effective thriller tale. Barnes' script is a magnificent love letter to Universal studios horror films, not only in its subject matter but also the setting on the soundstage of a movie of the same name.

The Osirian robots are more of a fearsome threat here, with metal blades bursting from their hands with a Wolverine-esque 'shink!' sound effect.

Geraghty's illustrations superbly convey visceral, disturbing scenes of grisly body horror. It's a relief the artwork is in black and white as this would be quite gruesome to behold in full colour! ≡



THE STUFF OF NIGHTMARES

The monsters, old and new, that faced the Fifth Doctor were more subtle and frightening than many fans care to admit

It's fair to say that, when *Doctor Who* fans rank eras by the calibre of their monsters, Troughton's and Pertwee's probably rise to the top, with the Weeping Angels and the Ood boosting Tennant's, while the Slitheen and Bandriils knock down Eccleston's and Colin Baker's.

In such a ranked list, Peter Davison's era would score pretty low. The only original monsters of his tenure that get much attention are the Mara and the Terileptils, with even the former written off for that mirror scene at the end of *Kinda* (which surely misses the point of Christopher Bailey's parable, but that's been argued up hill and down dale anyway). The Malus and Tractators might garner honourable mentions but many Davison serials operate in other tenors and have no need for things that go bump in the night. *Castrovalva*, *Four to Doomsday*, *Black Orchid*, *Time-Flight*, *Mawdryn Undead*, *Terminus*, *Enlightenment*, *The King's Demons*, *Planet of Fire*, *The Caves of Androzani* – any creepy-crawlies that pop up in these tales have the decided look of an afterthought. Even grading on a curve, there are more than a few outright clunkers: Plasmatoms, the

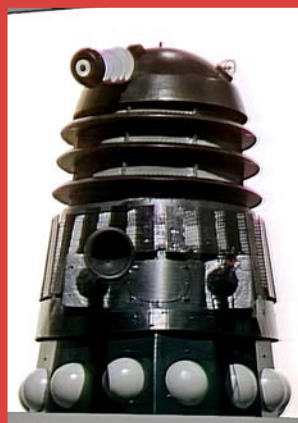
Garm, the magma beast, and *Warriors of the Deep*'s triple threat of smiling Silurians, floppy-footed Sea Devils and no one can forget the Myrka.

Yet I have vivid childhood memories of *Arc of Infinity*'s opening scene with the queasy wrongness of a TARDIS materialising in a crypt and abducting poor Colin. It's one of the most terrifying sequences I've ever seen in *Doctor Who*. If you were to ask seven-year-old Hamish, watching in early-1990s Canada, to list his top ten monsters, the Daleks and the Cybermen wouldn't have made the cut, while the Ergon would vie with the anti-matter creature, Krynoids, Wirrn, the Cailleach and, yes, Meglos.

Getting back to Davison, researching this article has made plain how many of my phobias originated in Seasons 20 and 21. Snakes, tattoos and skulls all terrified me in equal measure as a child, which is no doubt very Freudian, so *Snakedance* held a fearful fascination. (Years later, on returning to *Doctor Who* armed with a programme guide, I was shocked to learn the Mara only appeared twice.) The exposed, pulsating brain-pan of Mawdryn struck a chord that echoed years later with the skin-crawling, necrotic



Artwork by
Andy Lambert



body horror of *Hellraiser*. I also rate the Malus and Tractators highly, both having added terror for their easy breaching of the impregnable TARDIS.

Analytically, though, I suspect part of this period's low standing in the monster stakes comes through no fault of its own. *Doctor Who* fans make much of how *Star Wars* destabilised the show, but *Alien* arguably did as much damage – you can tell because Eric Saward pillaged both for *Earthshock* and *Resurrection of the Daleks*. The influence goes farther, however. *Arc of Infinity*'s Ergon and redesigned Omega both share design DNA with HR Giger's Xenomorph. Looked at in the right light (and through seven-year-old nostalgia goggles),

both of those beasts – with their pustular bulbs, jaundiced glowing and exposed exo-skeletal bones – look properly disturbing. The Myrka could have too, it's just that Ridley Scott's smoke-hazed film stock conceals design flaws (and wet paint) more effectively than overlit videotape.

These years also scored under-praised results with simpler designs. The androids from the first episodes of *Earthshock* – one of which returns polished up as the Raston Warrior Robot in *The Five Doctors* – are nothing more than body stockings and a blank mask. Sharaz Jek's sentries are even more haunting, with a similarly faceless robot head augmented with a glowing, roving Cyclops eye. The

The old guard: returning villains had some of their greatest moments in the Davison era

Grim Reaper get-up of the Terileptils' android may be a bit Halloween-store when dwelt on but its massacre of John Savident and family is a grisly overture that lends *The Visitation* considerable gravitas. The Malus is a ghoulish proto-Weeping Angel in its Medieval, stone-faced menace.

In line with Peter Davison's lower-key, more introspective Doctor, there's a repeated and rewarding examination of what makes monsters monstrous, with the perception proving unwarranted more than once. This continues the evolution in characterisation and motivation of the Tom Baker years. First, Philip Hinchcliffe and Robert Holmes moved away from earlier eras' invading armies to the more eloquent likes of Davros (Michael Wisher) and Sutekh (Gabriel Woolf). Then Graham Williams, Anthony Read and Douglas Adams continued to progress the monsters' purpose and function in their stories and worlds. For example, the motivations of the Pirate Captain (Bruce Purchase), Scaroth (Julian Glover) and the Nimon, plus Erato's unexpected ones, underpin the plot twists of *The Pirate Planet* (1978), *City of Death*, *The Creature from the Pit* and *The Horns of Nimon* (1979-80).

While hardly as consistent a theme of the John Nathan-Turner/Eric Saward stewardship, stand-out scriptwriters all dig down into their worlds (literally in the case of the Tractators) to create deeper, more textured conflicts. The seemingly threatening Garm, Kamelion and Tractators are victims, exploited by

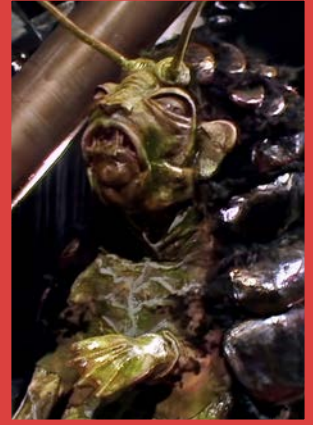
others. Mawdryn (David Collings) and his fellow mutants are no universal menaces but tragic and pathetic Flying Dutchmen, their aspiration to be Time Lords resulting in an endless and meaningless existence. Sharaz Jek (Christopher Gable), superficially cut from the same cloth as Robert Holmes' previous disfigured dastards Morbius and Magnus Greel (both Michael Spice), is more downtrodden and human-scaled, twisted by his circumstances but given reason for sympathy. In a moment played with interestingly ambiguous flippancy in *Frontios*, the Doctor praises the Tractators' achievements and chides Tegan for her narrow-minded human perspective. Even the series' most irredeemable foes are newly vulnerable: the Daleks become prey to the defrosted Davros's (Terry Molloy) lethal experiments in *Resurrection of the Daleks*, while in *The Five Doctors* the Cybermen are massacred left, right and centre by willier foes.

Hand in hand with this theme is the depiction with increasing nuance of monsters of the human variety. The Mara is a peripheral threat throughout *Kinda*, with the Doctor more immediately troubled by the very real mental collapse of Hindle (Simon Rouse). George Cranleigh (Gareth Milne), the 'Unknown' of *Black Orchid*, is imprisoned by his mother for the sake of the family's integrity. The Earth Reptiles in *Warriors of the Deep* find themselves adrift in the moral quagmire of 2084 and its new/old spectre of Cold Wars and mutually assured destruction. The Eternals of *Enlightenment* look like respectable Earthly sailors, yet their detachment from any common framework of existence and their parasitic exploitation of the sensations of 'ephemeral' humans ranks them among the most depraved of the Doctor's enemies. Similarly, Jek can hardly be called a monster in the same world where Morgus (John Normington) is manipulating politics and profiting from slave camps on Androzani Major (that story's monstrous corporation seeming to be the most depressingly plausible menace in our beleaguered world of 2025).

It also can't be overlooked how the monstrous can reflect back on the Doctor. Peter Davison may have been perceived as down-to-earth and ordinary after the Byronic excesses of Tom Baker, but more than once we're reminded starkly of the alienness, bordering on the monstrous, of a Time Lord. The theme arguably, if inadvertently, bookends his run. Shortly before Baker's regeneration we saw the unsavoury Time Lordly rebirth of the dying Master (Geoffrey Beevers) possessing Tremas (Anthony Ainley) in *The Keeper of Traken* (1981); then the evil Time Lord's borrowed life ends in a blast of numismaton gas in *Planet of*

Artwork by
Alex Storer





Fire, watched over by a surprisingly ruthless Doctor. It's a shame this particular progression was ignored when the cackling fiend inexplicably returned in the following year's *The Mark of the Rani* (1985).

The Fifth Doctor may have been born under more wholesome circumstances but his regeneration is possibly the uncanniest of any apart perhaps from that in *The Tenth Planet* (1966). Our first sight of him, after all, is not even as himself but the revenant Watcher (Adrian Gibbs) at the beginning of *Logopolis* (1981), looking down on the Barnet Bypass and the unavoidable events that will lead to his former self's death. He opens *Castrovalva* with his four predecessors haphazardly resurfacing and reducing his nascent persona to a babbling wreck, incapable of organising his knowledge and terrified

Mawdryn voiced these doubts when questioned about his 'inhuman' appearance. He counters, "Is a Gallifreyan human?" and Tegan can only reply, "He [the Doctor] was normal," sounding distinctly dubious; she's as aware as we are that in *Doctor Who* how can we gauge what is 'normal' anyway?

Fresh terrors: the Fifth Doctor faced new creatures that many fans long to be brought back

Fans do an injustice writing off this fertile and creative phase for a few scattered Plasmatoms

of the depths of his own TARDIS. It's played for nostalgia, but the notion the Doctor's multiplicity can diminish him resurfaces when his former selves are taken out of time in *The Five Doctors*.

Davison's fundamental character choice to play the Doctor as an old man in a young man's body can produce an unsettling contrast, which forms the crux of Tegan's terrifying Mara-influenced dream in *Kinda*. Her eerie guide Dukkha (Jeffrey Stewart), with his antiquated outfit (Elizabethan rather than Edwardian but the point stands) and sneering, opaque line of conversation, could very well be how poor Tegan views the Time Lord. A year later,

Ultimately, of course, there are dodgy and under-realised monsters in Seasons 19, 20 and 21. But every period, from Hartnell to Gatwa and Morpho Brains (*The Chase*, 1965) to Bogeyman (*Space Babies*, 2024), has their share of misfires. More damaging was the disproportionate effort that went into revamping and returning old foes like the Daleks, Cybermen, the Master, Omega, Davros and those underwhelming warriors of the deep, which overshadowed the originality and ambition of the new creations. To be fair, it's often underappreciated how effective those reprises were. *Warriors of the Deep* has a lot going for it at the script level; it's only the on-screen realisation that lets it down. And although Saward's ethos has come under fire, *Earthshock* and *Resurrection of the Daleks* give *Doctor Who*'s gold- and silver-medal arch-enemies new energy, and the strongest moments of those episodes rank among their finest across the series. It's arguable that the Cybermen have never bettered that surprise return in 1982.

So fans do a gross injustice writing off this fertile and creative phase for a few scattered Plasmatoms. When I watched 1980s *Doctor Who* I was as likely to be scared by the conceptual as the physical threats: the desolate, frigid-looking beaches of Brighton and Thoros Beta, the distant Watcher, a Mara-controlled Tegan laughing maniacally at a terrified Manussan fortune teller, the Doctor's former selves struggling to save the Borusa-possessed Fifth, the TARDIS destroyed leaving her crew stranded on Frontios, Davros's security guard's face melting.

To me, when *Doctor Who* is scariest it has nothing to do with rubber tentacles but rather it's at such moments of atmospheric, conceptual dread. ☰

Artwork by
Paul MC Smith



WATCH THIS SPACE

The regeneration into the Fifth Doctor was overseen by the Watcher – who was he and what has been his legacy?

“This regeneration is going to be difficult and I shall need you all, every one of you.”

Many consider it a fool’s errand to find consistency in the story of the Doctor, especially around the rules of regeneration. Nevertheless, as my wife knows well, I’m only too happy to play that fool. In a world that has experienced a meta-crisis Doctor, a ‘secret’ regeneration with the War Doctor, the tale of the Timeless Child and a bi-generation, perhaps there’s nothing left to say about how the show’s writers handle one Doctor leaving and another being introduced. Yet there’s no denying that something remarkably different happened with the Fifth Doctor and regeneration.

The story begins with the end of the Fourth Doctor. In *Logopolis* we’re not only introduced to the Davison Doctor in the last minute but, arguably, also in the very first episode with the Watcher. All the story’s talk of entropy certainly foreshadows the end to come for Tom Baker’s incarnation. However, we get more than mere subtext about his fate. The

Watcher makes it obvious what’s to come. The ghostly shrouded white figure, we eventually learn, *is* the Doctor. Somehow, the Fifth Doctor manifested himself before the actual regeneration.

Audio and novel adventures have offered various explanations for the nature of the Watcher, so I accept that your head canon may vary from my analysis. However, going by what we see on screen, the Doctor sees the Watcher and says, as much to himself as to Adric, “Nothing like this has ever happened before.” After an unheard discussion with this spectral observer, we see him with an even more haunted look. He states to his companion only that he has seen the future and they must be prepared for the worst. Later, on Logopolis, they see the Watcher again, reminding Adric of this warning:

Adric: “You said to be prepared for the worst.”

Doctor: “Indeed I did, and I am prepared for the worst.”

Adric: “Why are you prepared for the worst, Doctor?”

Doctor: “Because he’s here.”





"He was the Doctor all the time!" Is this what the other end of a bi-generation looks like?

Throughout those four episodes, the Watcher flies the TARDIS, brings Nyssa from Traken (saving her from its later annihilation), instructs Adric how to fly the TARDIS, and is an active (if background) part of the final adventure of the Fourth Doctor. This mysterious form of the Doctor-to-be has a vital role to play, guiding his earlier self to win out against the Master and meet his final moments. The Doctor's final remark about the Watcher, as the regeneration process begins, is that, "It's the end, but the moment has been prepared for."

It seems, then, that the Watcher is the Fifth Doctor who, in an unseen adventure, goes back and assists his previous incarnation. After all, there's no question that the Watcher knows all that is to come as he communicates warnings and directions to the Doctor, Nyssa, Tegan and Adric. And as he dissolves into the regenerating Time Lord, the Fifth Doctor is finally revealed. We never see anything like the Watcher again in the Doctor's future regenerations, although we do get amalgamations of the Doctor, notably the Valeyard. It seems the

There's evidence that following the intervention of the Watcher, the Doctor can accept or reject a regeneration at will, at least for a time

Watcher has every right to be included as part of the Davison era. It's not the earliest pre-appearance of a Doctor, as the Twelfth appeared in *The Day of the Doctor* (2013) – at least those power eyebrows – before the Eleventh's regeneration shortly after.

This unique regeneration continues in the events of *Castrovalva* and suggests the Fifth Doctor/Watcher paid a cost for appearing so early. His regenerative state seems perilous throughout this story, his memory and physical state appearing to be on the brink the entire time. Experienced fans know that regeneration tends to create a mixed-up persona in their first outing. However, I would argue that while the Second, Third and Fourth Doctors didn't recover instantly from their regenerations, they certainly took to their new forms much quicker and more easily. It was the Fifth Doctor who set the precedent of a rough transition from one incarnation to the next, with the newly regenerated Sixth, Seventh, Eighth (to an extent), Tenth and Twelfth Doctors all having an extended period of uncertainty after their changes.

As he stumbles around the TARDIS corridors in search of a null environment like the Zero Room, the Doctor states: "The regeneration is failing." Why? Perhaps because, at some point in his future, he expended too much energy by projecting himself as the Watcher. Did this cost affect how the new Doctor acts throughout his time? In a later incarnation he reveals that he wanted to be younger this time. We know the Doctor, even unconsciously, can manipulate his regeneration at times. Did this instance affect how different this Doctor would be?

The Fifth Doctor, as they all would be in times to come, is born into weakness. All those years of experience get jumbled up in that magnificent mind, and all Doctors to come will call their companions by previous TARDIS occupants' names. Often they forget who they themselves are, and a mini quest to 'find the Doctor' becomes the theme of their first



episode. Each new Doctor must rely on their companions to take care of them and complete the regeneration process. Whether it's a cup of tea for the Tenth or custard and fish fingers for the Eleventh, there needs to be someone to provide that special outreach to make the Doctor fully arrive.

Of course, we can simply dismiss all of this and say that it's just a narrative choice for viewers to be introduced to a new actor whom we are expected to accept as our new Doctor. But regeneration is more than that. It has to be for the magic of the series to work. It's a birth and a death, and everything in between. Some may make fun of the modern special effects-laden (and explosive) regenerations of recent years but all the bombast is symbolic of how the transition feels for the Doctor. The Tenth dreads his end, saying, "Even if I change, it feels like dying. Everything I am dies. Some new man goes sauntering away, and I'm dead." Perhaps this is the inheritance of the Fifth Doctor's choice to take the form of the Watcher and help his previous self.

This incarnation still faces an identity crisis beyond his first adventure. Even with all his memories back at the end of *Castrovalva*, there is ambiguity despite his smile:

Doctor: "Well, whoever I feel like, it's absolutely splendid."

His beginning is not the whole story of the Fifth Doctor's regeneration. As with all things, there's an end too. Unless one knows going into it that *The Caves of Androzani* is the Fifth Doctor's final story, there's little foreshadowing of the change to come; no Watcher to warn him of his fate. While both he and Peri are dying throughout the story, after contracting spectrox toxemia, if a viewer has no knowledge of the ending they might safely assume the cure will be found and the day once again saved. As those who have seen it know, however, the Doctor manages to escape with only one dose of antidote, which he gives to Peri. In his

final moments, the Doctor struggles with what's happening. "Is this death?" he wonders.

The regenerations before this seemed more certain. The First Doctor died of old age and, even incorporating the events of *Twice Upon a Time* (2017), his transition seems natural. The Second Doctor's regeneration is forced by the Time Lords; the Third's regeneration, despite a push from fellow Time Lord K'anpo, also occurs smoothly. The Fourth Doctor is assisted by the Watcher but the process is straightforward. Yet all is not well for the dying Fifth Doctor. His immediate future seems more uncertain. He tells Peri (or himself), "I might regenerate. I don't know. Feels different this time."

"Even if I change, it feels like dying. Some new man goes sauntering away and I'm dead"

He then recalls this lifetime's roster of companions, as did his predecessor and which has become commonplace in later regenerations. But their appearances are more than happy cameos or farewells: they're calls to continue, entreaties to live and not to let this regeneration fail. These have never been needed before. Then the Master appears, goading the Doctor into accepting his end and finally dying. It seems this final call, in a bit of reverse psychology, springs the regeneration into action. Even though it occurs in a much shorter time, this debate about whether the Fifth Doctor, born of the Watcher, can will himself to regenerate calls to mind the Twelfth Doctor's refusal to.

We know the Sixth Doctor has perhaps the roughest transition of all, resulting in him almost choking Peri in *The Twin Dilemma* (1984). Are all future bumpy regenerations because of the Fifth Doctor's experiences? As we look at the Davison era in its entirety, he's the Doctor without a sonic screwdriver, often on the back foot, yet with a more inviting and understanding manner than previous incarnations. He's a more vulnerable Time Lord, in the style of Thirteen and Fifteen.

This happy-go-lucky Doctor cared enough for his fourth incarnation and those companions to spend the rest of his life paying for that decision to assist himself by becoming the Watcher. Even though substantial portions of it were destroyed by the entropy unleashed by the Master's meddling with Logopolis, the universe persists because of the Watcher. That is, because of the Fifth Doctor. And his regenerations would forever be altered. ☰





THE CELESTIAL TOYROOM ANNUAL 2026

We hope you have enjoyed reading this Annual.
If you would like to own a full-colour printed
copy, you can buy one now from [Lulu.com](https://lulu.com)

[CLICK HERE for hardback edition](#)

[CLICK HERE for paperback edition](#)

The Annual can be ordered in the UK, US, Europe, Australia and Canada. Any purchase is under Lulu's terms and conditions and forms no contract with the Doctor Who Appreciation Society

Published by
THE DOCTOR WHO APPRECIATION SOCIETY
dwasonline.co.uk



This annual has been produced on a non-profit-making basis and is not endorsed by the BBC