

Gallifrey,
the long way round

Issue 10 - Autumn/Winter 2023



DOCTOR WHO 60th ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL!

Gallifrey, The Long Way Round

Issue #10

Autumn/Winter 2023

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EDITORIAL

Hello and Welcome to our **Doctor Who 60th Anniversary Special!** Yes, that's right — *60 years!* I can well remember the heady delights of my youthful self buying the *Radio Times* 10th and 20th Anniversary Specials, and how long **Doctor Who's** history seemed to me then!

Okay, you could be really pedantic — and **Doctor Who** fans like me are anything but pedantic of course (ahem) - and say that **Doctor Who** was off air for 16 long years from 1989 to 2005 or, if you count the 1996 TV Movie —15 years, until Russell T Davies triumphantly brought **Doctor Who** back to our screens in 2005. (And it's hard to believe, we're only two years off celebrating 20 years of "Nu-Who").

But in those wilderness years **Doctor Who** didn't die — It *thrived* and, if anything, grew stronger. It was kept alive by novels and novelisations, by *Doctor Who Magazine*, by Big Finish Audios from 1999 (still going strong today) and, of course, crucially, by *us*, the fans.

Let's remember that *Star Trek* was cancelled in 1969, but again, the fans kept it alive until 1979 when *Star Trek: The Movie* led to more movies and numerous new *Star Trek* TV series and a whole ongoing franchise. But for all that, **Doctor Who** is officially the longest running Sci-Fi show on TV in the world. Fact. Whether you say it's been around "officially" for 60 years, 44 years or 45 years, that is still a world record and it's set to be bigger than it's ever been.

Now with RTD back at the helm as Showrunner, his own Bad Wolf Productions in charge, animations of missing stories and colourisations of all black and white stories, together with spin-off shows planned, and Disney Plus covering the streaming rights to the rest of the world, **Doctor Who** has never looked stronger! It's all a long way from the flickering images on our 405 line black and white televisions on a dark, drizzly night in November 1963 when two curious schoolteachers blundered into a police box in a junkyard, but what a journey it's been! Here's to the next 10, 20, oh heck, why not — **60 years!**

Nick

WHO is my DOCTOR

**A Personal Reflection
by Annie Worrall**

Forgive the pun, but when I was asked to write about *my* Doctor, I realised that this was not the simple task my initial reaction had suggested it would be. After all, I've been in a relationship with the individual for 60 years of my life - longer than I've been married- and boy have I put up with a lot during that time! Changes in appearance and age are only the half of it.

Let's start with the easy stuff...

The Doctor has been my (rather grumpy) teacher, my wacky, sometimes dangerous uncle, my kid brother, my cocky co-worker, my lesbian friend, my heterosexual crush (three times, woo!). They've been unfaithful (I think) on multiple occasions, but that's been easy to forgive because I've always had other relationships too. I've been fascinated, entertained, in love, irritated, confused, angered - swapping between reactions to their many incarnations. We've been on partial breaks when I just couldn't put up with their shenanigans any longer, yet I've never, ever been so riled up that I've wanted to end the relationship entirely.

But what a confusing association it's been. Just trying to get the pronouns straight has kept me awake at night, especially as they've mostly referred to themselves as 'he', only to suddenly present as 'she'. During one of our high spots, the Doctor told me he was an alien who walks "in eternity", only to claim later (when I wondered what the hell I was doing hanging about with him) he was 'half human on his mother's side'.

And to cap it all, I've recently found out she knows nothing about her origins and has been brain washed into living an entirely separate existence (the one I've been sharing) for reasons that are still unclear to me but which I hope will be explained in another article in this edition of the 'zine. [We can try! - Ed]

I first met the Doctor as a teenager, 18 to be precise, with a Saturday job looking after three kids of a local GP -pretty ironic, when I think about it! We'd watch the show together on a fairly small TV, quite often, literally, from behind the sofa. The Doctor wasn't somebody I felt instantly warm towards - though I did love his impatience with idiots, chiming as it did, with my own, spiky, teenage arrogance. It was his companion, Ian, who kept me watching as I lusted after him (and indeed had done since he burst into my life as Sir Lancelot). If it hadn't been for him and the



appearance of the greatest of *Who* monsters, the Daleks, I might have given up, though I did eventually come to like Hartnell, but Ian stayed and the Daleks didn't disappoint, so the show wove itself inextricably into my life.

Doctor Two's arrival coincided with university, where I had far too much life-learning to do than engage more than casually with his adventures- though his gremlin chaos energy was pretty familiar to us students and greatly enjoyed whenever we sat down to watch him. I can't say the same about Pertwee's Doctor – controversially, he has always

credible, well written adventures, characterful companions and challenging themes. My heart broke a little when he left, and I've never forgiven JNT for his shoddy regeneration story.

Since then, my love for the Doctor has been patchy and there have been some incumbents of the role that I felt shame in acknowledging as part of my social circle. Wimpish or over- emotional Doctors have never attracted me. My love is for the abrasive, strange, confusing yet empathetic Doctors. But although Ecclestone and Capaldi gave me a lot of joy, I never found their stories as compelling as those of Tom Baker. I can't deny however, the presence of all the incarnations, the slightly malevolent included, in the being that I recognise as my Doctor Who.

Nor can I ignore that this alien (hybrid?) has done things that appal me when I think about them, like for instance, condemning 2.47 billion kids to oblivion. I'm not sure that the Daleks have EVER been responsible for such carnage and it's possible that some of those kids were his own relations. So why can I forgive these atrocities so easily and continue to watch without disgust?

The only conclusion I can come to is that the Doctor isn't an alien at all- he's you, me, all of humanity with its many faces, each reflected in his newly regenerated form. Their history mirrors our own, the good and the terrible, and the decisions that face us on the macro and micro level. The Doctor speaks for me politically and personally, when he asks, "Have I the right?" whether it's to destroy his enemy or his home world in saving the Universe and watching him wrestle with problems reminds me of the enormous power and responsibility that comes both from being in a partnership and the dominant species in our world.

He is, literally, Dr **Who**- asking us who should be in charge of deciding what is morally acceptable, who should make the world changing decisions, and who should be companions to those that do,

monitoring and challenging them to think differently.

And that's the reason *Who* is my Doctor.



been one of my least favourites as I bristled at his treatment of Jo and his posh superiority. Even the good story telling throughout his era failed to win my heart.

But Doctor Four. Oh, Doctor Four. Now he's the one I would choose if you backed me against a wall and threatened to shoot me unless I claimed one of the Doctors as mine. For me his tenure was the perfect mix of compassionate, difficult alien and



The *Doctors* Will See You Now...

BECAUSE THERE ARE SO MANY OTHER DOCTORS!

By Damian Mark Whittle

Doctor Who fans come in all shapes and sizes and in all shades of opinion. For every diehard classic fan who doesn't care for anything after Season 14 there's a *Thasmin* enthusiast making videos for TikTok. But if there is one common thread that unites us, it's that we all love a good list. Lists of favourites, lists of least-favourites, lists of dates and so on. And the list we all learn early on is the list of Doctors. We all know that William Hartnell was the First Doctor and Eccleston was the Ninth and each number comes with its own set of associations, opinions and memories. So when, in 2020, the Thirteenth Doctor – as we thought at the time – discovered that there was a whole series of previous Doctors we knew nothing about, some sections of fandom were genuinely up in arms. And despite the significantly more important world events that occurred in 2020, some of them continue to be so.

Because Hartnell not being the First Doctor, Doctor One, 'the Original you might say', struck at the heart of the list that was in every guidebook we had ever read about the show. Suddenly, the numbers didn't make sense anymore.

But here's the thing: There have *always* been other Doctors. Almost from the very start. Some of them were one-offs. Some of them enjoyed ongoing adventures in their own continuity. And some of

them had a significant impact on the ongoing history of the programme.

It's typical of **Doctor Who's** quirky history that from the very beginning, it had an alternative reality. As most fans know, a pilot version of *An Unearthly Child* was recorded in 1963 which was then re-staged with significant changes on Sydney Newman's instructions. Although the pilot version was bedevilled with technical issues, the biggest change between it and the final version was in the character of the Doctor. Hartnell's performance has a noticeably harsher and more ruthless edge here. He shows little concern for Susan, preferring to lecture her. His motivation for kidnapping Ian and Barbara isn't softened by the broadcast episode's threat of his Granddaughter leaving him.

He even dresses differently, favouring a professional suit and tie over the Edwardian feel that proved so enduring.

For those that like the Doctor as a detached alien, the Pilot episode has much to offer. The variations in the performance are fascinating and a tribute to Hartnell's skill as an actor, showing there was far more to him than a series of 'Mmmms' and muddled lines.



"Change my dear..."
How the First Doctor's costume changed between the pilot episode and the broadcast episode of *An Unearthly Child*. (So did Susan's, for that matter!)

A couple of years after the more familiar version of *An Unearthly Child* had been broadcast, **Doctor Who** was riding on a crest of Dalek-fuelled popularity that in 1965, would lead to the appearance of one of the most iconic alternative Doctors of them all. The Peter Cushing Dalek movies are now so beloved, treated to pristine blu-ray releases and special cinema screenings, that it's hard to believe that they were once regarded with disdain by fandom. In the 80's they were seen as too garish, too silly and too childish to be 'proper' **Doctor Who**. And they went and called the character "Doctor Who" and made him human, which *really* upset some people.

In subsequent years, the films have been re-assessed as bold, colourful retellings of the TV stories with often better visuals and less moments of lag. But as great as those films are for Dalek fans, it's easy to forget just what a good job Peter Cushing does as Doctor Who. Although principally known for horror, he shows a keen knack for comedy, playing the absent-mindedness with relish but he also brings a sense of earnestness to his confrontations with Skaro's finest. He may be Doctor Who but in his warmth for his friends - his fam you might even say - and resolve with his enemies, he is still *the Doctor*. Cushing was a well-respected, much in demand actor and the Dalek movies were essentially quick jobs for him, yet at no point does he descend into caricature or behave as if the material is beneath him (as his friend and colleague Christopher Lee told him it was). There is even a degree of character progression across the two movies as the Doctor of **Daleks – Invasion Earth 2150 AD** is a steelier, more authoritative character with a greater control of his TARDIS than in the first film **Doctor Who and the Daleks**.



Peter Cushing as the big screen "Dr Who"

In 1967, the *Sky Ray* ice lolly cards featured a Doctor modelled on singer Gerry Grant, who also appeared with hands conveniently over his face in a TV advertisement for the cards.



Top: Dr Who licks the Daleks with the help of the Sky Ray Space Raiders
Bottom: Trevor Martin as an alternative Fourth(ish) Doctor sets the stage for a battle with his arch foes.

For Christmas 1974, the stage show *The Seven Keys to Doomsday* opened featuring Trevor Martin as the Doctor. The play clearly intends this Doctor to follow on from Jon Pertwee. Which, if you really squint, might be *just* about possible whilst the Third Doctor is lost in time dying of radiation sickness. In 2008, Big Finish released an audio version of the play in which Martin reprised the role. It emerges as the most 70's story imaginable, with ancient civilizations, mad computers and a quest for objects of power. Martin's Doctor is very much the straightforward, fatherly hero figure with few quirks. Given that writer Terrance Dicks wrote so prolifically for the Doctor, it's a fascinating insight into how he saw the character.



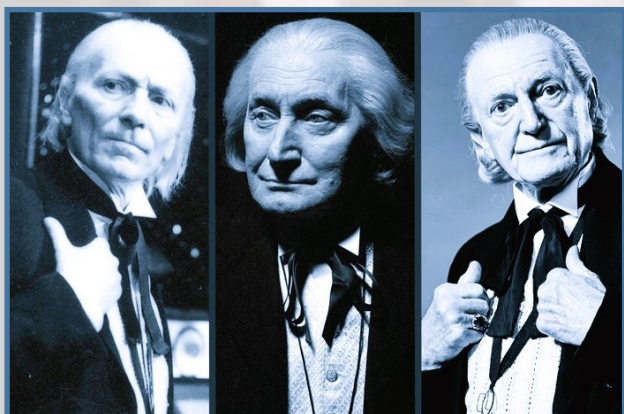
'How long have you lived, Doctor?' Doctors 1, 2 and 3... and their previous selves? The so-called "Morbius Doctors", who may (or may not) have preceded William Hartnell's Doctor. And if you take the *Timeless Children* into account, there weren't just eight previous incarnations...

Returning to the 70's and during Tom Baker's second season, *The Brain of Morbius* included a scene of mental combat between the Doctor and evil Time Lord Morbius which clearly implied there had been several incarnations of the Doctor prior to the Hartnell one as a variety of new, unfamiliar faces flashed before our eyes during the psychic duel (well, unfamiliar if you didn't know the production

team whose photographs these were). The villainous Morbius was heard screaming 'How long have you lived?' in a way that was going to echo across Twitter in a few decades' time. Oddly, this revelation was somewhat undercut the following year when *The Deadly Assassin* stated that Time Lords only had thirteen lives. It was almost as though the Doctor was far more than just another Time Lord...



There was a lot riding on the 20th Anniversary special *The Five Doctors*, undoubtedly the highest profile **Who** story of the 80's. The task of replacing the late William Hartnell fell to Richard Hurndall and his performance has a lot to recommend it. Hurndall's Doctor is rather sardonic and has a definite patronising streak to him. However, he rises to the occasion as the lead character for the finale and his scenes with Tegan are very funny. It's a shame he never got to return to the role as though it's not quite Hartnell, his Doctor is still a marvellous crotchety old man. In 2017, another alternative first Doctor appeared in Peter Capaldi's last story, *Twice Upon A Time*, played by David Bradley. Arguably closer to Hartnell in performance, this version enabled the production team to examine some of the attitudes of the classic series.



1 + 1 + 1 = The First Doctor as portrayed by William Hartnell, Richard Hurndall and David Bradley

In 1986, *The Trial of a Time Lord* series/story saw the return of an idea first floated for the 10th anniversary - a dark version of the Doctor. Although *Trial* is about as divisive a story as you could hope to find, the Valeyard rightly occupies a place amongst the series' supervillains due to Michael Jayston's excellent performance. In truth, there's very little that's Doctor-ish about him - though his fondness for words clearly parallels the Sixth Doctor - and instead he comes across as a demonic Victorian figure, as commanding in the fantasy world of the

"Come to the dark side, Doctor!" The Valeyard, as portrayed by Michael Jayston



Matrix as he is as court prosecutor. The Valeyard remains an idea never really explained - future incarnation? Mr Hyde? Time Lord Victorious? - which has become part of his fascination. He can be whatever you want him to be and he'll do it with relish and grandiloquence.

However, even before the Valeyard, the notion of manifesting the dark side of the Doctor's nature as a separate entity had been played with. Initial plans for *The Three Doctors* had the story as a rather more gothic concept inspired by the film *The Seventh Seal*. In the original outline, a villain called Ohm (the name produced by rotating the Who in Doctor Who!) forced the trio of Doctors to confront shadow versions of themselves in a dark netherworld. As the idea evolved, Ohm became the Time Lord stellar engineer Omega and it was the dark side of his mind that was made manifest. However, co-writer Dave Martin clearly liked the idea and in the Make Your Own Adventure book *Search For the Doctor*, suggested that Omega was the embodiment of the Doctor's dark side. Intriguingly, this book was released before the Valeyard appeared on screen.

Omega's close link to the Doctor was emphasised in 1983's *Arc of Infinity* in which he tries to create a new physical form for himself modelled on the Fifth Doctor. In Big Finish's 2003 sequel, the simply titled *Omega*, his mind has splintered and he has come to believe that he is the Doctor. On the printed page, the 1997 novel *The Infinity Doctors* by Lance Parkin had Omega encounter a Doctor apparently inspired by the TV Movie's initial plans to reboot the character, as he resides on Gallifrey but behaves a lot like the McGann version. In fact the 2013 anniversary celebrations were unusual in that they *didn't* include a fresh identity crisis for poor, long suffering Omega!

During Colin Baker's time in the part, Lenny Henry played the character in a skit for his own TV show. As well as being the first person of colour to play the Doctor, Lenny Henry was the first of what Steven Moffat later termed the 'Geezer' Doctors - young, even sexy Doctors, who were just as cool as their companions. It's a great sketch and you can tell Henry loves the part. Even his desire to get all the best lines - 'I wanted to say that!' - feels very Doctor-ish.



"I wanted to say that!" Lenny Henry as a comic Doctor.

A rather more befuddled incarnation played by Jim Broadbent showed up in a Victoria Wood sketch a couple of years later, wrestling with the sort of technobabble that SF is notorious for. This also gifted us the term 'Ming Mongs' but never mind.

tells everyone how much of an emotional island he is. Although he softens somewhat as the story unfolds, the swift curtailment of his time with the announcement of the programme's return to TV means that the *Shalka* Doctor remains only partially developed. *Shalka* did have a significant impact though: not in the choice of Doctor but in that of the Master: Derick Jacobi. The scenes between Grant and Jacobi are very much the highlight of the production and inspired the scene in *Last of the Time Lords* when the Doctor offers to keep the Master safe in his TARDIS.



The Doctors from the 1999 Comic Relief skit *The Curse of Fatal Death*. Hugh Grant. Richard E Grant, Jim Broadbent, Joanna Lumley and Rowan Atkinson

Inset: Richard E Grant again as the (original) Ninth Doctor in the animated adventure *Scream of the Shaka*

The most elaborate **Doctor Who** skit of all was the Comic Relief mini-adventure *Curse of Fatal Death*. Rowan Atkinson's Doctor in some ways foreshadows the character of the Matt Smith version. He wants to get married, likes playing games with time and always gets the last word. Interestingly though, rather than the Eleventh Doctor's hyperactivity and love of attention, Atkinson plays it deadpan, with a hint of just wanting to be left alone with his girlfriend. It would be fair to say that he is more funny than likeable, though Atkinson of course excels with this kind of characterisation. At the end of the sketch, we have brief glimpses of other Doctors played by Hugh Grant, Richard E Grant, Jim Broadbent (again) and finally Joanna Lumley. As the first female Doctor, Lumley is the most interesting of these, even if the first thing she does is to start flirting with the Master.

Richard E Grant would be back a few years later, playing what was - for about a week - being proclaimed as the official Ninth Doctor in the 2003 BBCi webcast *Scream of the Shalka*. Grant's Doctor is aloof and bitter, a man who walks into a room and

Also in 2003, Big Finish released six alternative universe audio dramas featuring Geoffrey Bayldon, David Warner, Arabella Weir, Michael Jayston, David Collings and Derrick Jacobi playing the Doctor in very different - and sometimes very bleak - scenarios. By far the best and most enduring of these proved to be David Warner whose grumpy, cautious and melancholy Doctor also brought a mischievous twinkle to the character that made you wish he could have had an outing on TV. The *Unbound* range is one of the strongest and most diverse Big Finish has produced and it is rather touching that they number among the last performances of David Warner, especially as he stars alongside his partner Lisa Bowerman.



The Alternative Doctors from Big Finish's *Unbound*

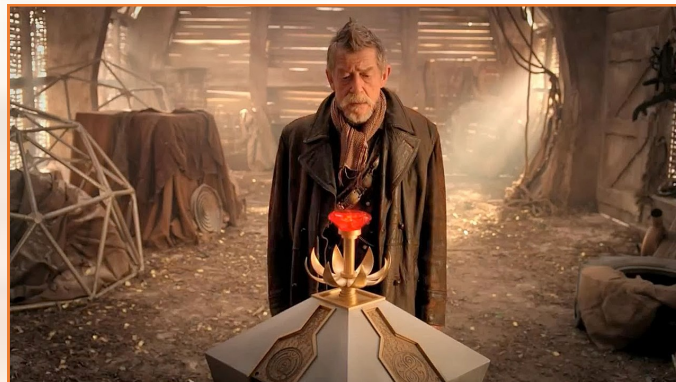
The return of **Doctor Who** to television was of course an enormous success. By 2008, the programme was secure and confident enough to start being playful with its lead character. Journey's End saw the creation of the human "Metacrisis Doctor", meaning that it could pull off the clever trick of having an ending to the Doctor/Rose love story that was both happy and sad. David Tennant brings a different, more youthful and ruthless energy to the human Doctor which has led to some speculation (including by the actors themselves) that Rose may have come to regret her choice! The 2008 Christmas special *The Next Doctor* introduced the character of Jackson Lake, a man who wrongly believed he was the Doctor. After the Metacrisis Doctor, this was a different kind of meta, with Russell T Davies having fun in the gap between viewers knowing that one Doctor was leaving and finding out who would be taking over. Thanks to David Morrissey's performance, Jackson is an ebullient Doctor, then a sympathetic victim and finally a hero in his own right. The relationship between Doctor and imposter emerges as one of the series best explorations of male friendship and it's hard not to hope they had a few more adventures together.



The Tenth Doctor and Jackson Lake—The Next Doctor?

In 2013, the programme pulled off one of its biggest casting coups with the appearance of John Hurt as the War Doctor in *The Day of the Doctor*. Even before he got his own audio series courtesy of Big Finish, there were fans who claimed this incarnation as their favourite and there's no denying it is a superb performance. Hurt brings a genuine sense of sadness and vulnerability to a grizzled Doctor faced with only bad choices. Even if you have no interest in the expanded media of **Doctor Who**, the War Doctor's sole TV outing is nothing short of electrifying. Following John Hurt's passing, Big Finish created an alternative 'Warrior' Doctor played with icy gusto by Colin Baker.

Which brings us back to where we began. In 2020, Jo Martin made her debut in *Fugitive of the Judoon* as the first fully-fledged, fully confirmed pre-Hartnell Doctor, which is explored further in *The Timeless Children*. Rather brilliantly, the episode employs familiar tropes from previous regeneration stories. This new/old Doctor doesn't know who she is to begin with, is less knowable and sometimes less



Above: John Hurt as the world-weary War Doctor

Below: Jo Martin as The Fugitive Doctor



likeable than the Thirteenth Doctor but by the end is behaving in a way that assures us she *is* the Doctor. Her brusque manner makes for an entertaining contrast with the more socially awkward Thirteenth Doctor and does recall some previous incarnations, especially the Sixth. We can't overlook that this was the first time a person of colour had played the Doctor in the programme proper and, by locating this incarnation in the character's past, it challenged a history of white-centric casting. All these other Doctors, all these unfamiliar and sometimes fleeting faces, have had a habit of upsetting fans, of muddling lists and making us unsure of what we know. But that is also part of their joy. They bring us back to the *Who* of the title, the mystery and - just as important - playfulness that is always present. They can drive change too. It was in the pilot episode that who the Doctor was (and wasn't) was first toyed with, Peter Cushing's Doctor proved the role could be recast and a comedy sketch showed you didn't have to be white to be the Doctor.

How long have you lived Doctor? The answer, with so many other strange, wonderful, heroic, silly and mysterious Doctors, could be forever.



MONSTER MASH

How Some Fan Favourite Monsters Evolved Over Time

By Tony J Fyler
PART ONE

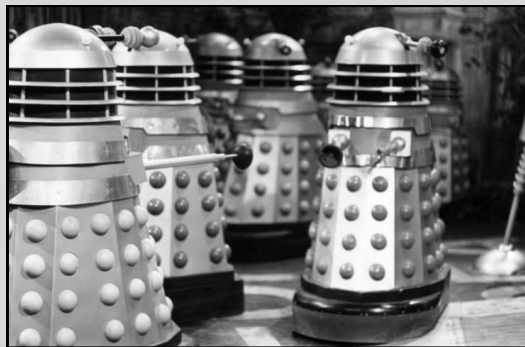
Every fan loves a great **Doctor Who** monster – and every fan thinks they know what that is when they see it. It's ironic that the show's gold medal monsters, the Daleks, first terrified us without ever appearing on screen – Jacqueline Hill selling the terror at the end of Episode 1 of *The Daleks* convincingly enough to make us come back the following week to discover what was threatening her.

But the point about some of **Doctor Who's** greatest monsters is that very often, they've had to evolve over time – sometimes keeping the essentials of what made them great the first time, sometimes abandoning almost everything we knew about them to deliver new chills and intakes of breath.

Let's look at the evolution of some of the finest monsters in the history of Who...

The Daleks

Hoo boy! Dalek evolution is enough to fill a book. Let's say one thing – this is not going to be an exhaustive catalogue of the differences in neck slats or eyestalk designs over sixty years. But there are certain key points in the evolution of the Daleks that are worth addressing. When we first met them on Skaro, they were dependent on static electricity to move. That changed dramatically the next time we saw them – when a dish on their back

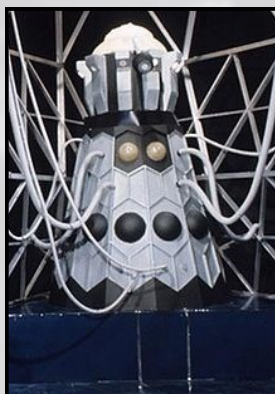


meant they could travel anywhere at will, even underwater.

They quickly began developing both a colour-coded and

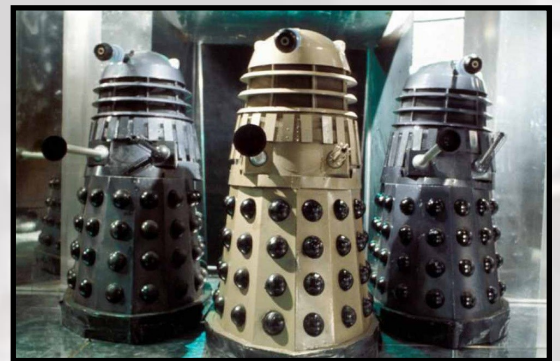
a vocally coded hierarchy, and the initial organic quality of their voice, that still conveyed emotional pitch, was dropped in favour of more staccato monotonous.

Evil of the Daleks showed us their ultimate emperor – huge and weirdly static, a kind of super-Dalek that had traded its mobility for greater strategic processing power. And *Evil* also gave us the first seeds of Dalek factionalism that would go on to be such a feature of their later development.

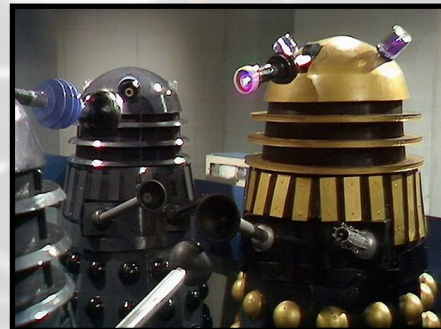


Usually, when such things could be determined, a Black Dalek denoted status as a supreme commander, while in *Day of the Daleks*, the supreme Dalek was finished in gold to show its status.

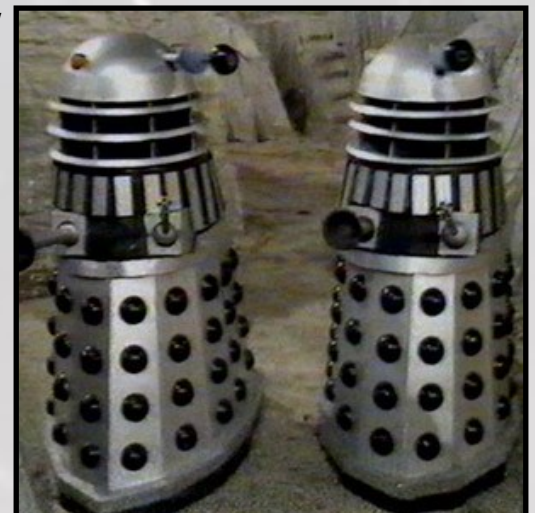
Death To The Daleks gave us shiny silver and black Daleks, and also swapped out their energy



weapon for a more brutish machine gun arm. And *Planet of the Daleks* gave us at least a hint that they were overcoming their staircase problems, with anti-gravity discs – although it would be some time before we saw a Dalek properly levitate.



Genesis of the Daleks took the design a little back to basics in dark tones of dull grey with black baubles. "A little primitive, but undeniably a Dalek," as the Doctor said. And the design remained the same until *Revelation of the Daleks*, though both *The Five Doctors* and *Resurrection of the Daleks* gave us the treat of seeing the mutant inside the casing for the first time since a little cloth-covered claw action back in 1963.



It's only when you look at how little the fundamental Dalek had changed up to the Eighties that *Revelation* and *Remembrance* really blow your hair back.

Revelation of the Daleks gives us not only cream and gold Daleks, loyal to Davros, and your standard grey and black version loyal to the Supreme Dalek, but also, while we're here, a glass Dalek with a living human head inside it, transforming into a Kaled mutant while it feels everything about the process. *Niiice!*

Meanwhile, *Remembrance* gives us Daleks going up stairs, a full-on war between Imperial and Renegade Daleks, two Dalek ships, a Dalek-head interface for a human operator, a Dalek Emperor that took a lot of design cues from the bulb-headed version in the *TV Comics* strips of the 1960s, and, oh yes, the big, bold, battle-scarred beauty that is the Special Weapons Dalek



– essentially an extra strong Dalek with a pith helmet and a bazooka. We'll have more of that, thank you very much. That was how you made the Daleks exciting again... riiiiight before the show got taken off the air.

When the show came *back* in 2005, there was more than a touch of Special Weapons Dalek about the standard Daleks, now bronze and heavy-looking and rivet-covered. The early mission of the New Series Daleks was to undo all the weaknesses of the Classic era – now they could not only go upstairs, but they could also *fly* properly, like they'd been doing in comics since the Sixties. They were cunning, and clever, and powerful like they'd never been. New Who gave us a brand-new Dalek Emperor – much more akin to the one from *Evil of the Daleks* – and it lost some of its emotion-free staccato, in a beautiful vocal performance from Nicholas Briggs.



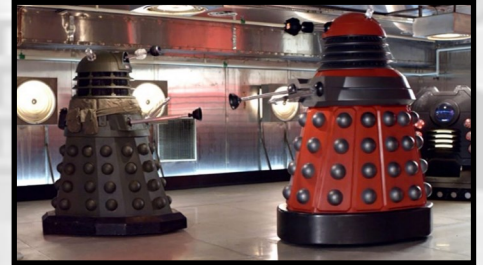
That started becoming a theme – different Daleks with vocal tweaks. The Cult of Skaro – Daleks with *names* – led to the idea of Dalek-Human hybrids, an idea that was questionably conceived in the first place and rendered with an unfortunate appendage-wagging effect. Dalek Caan, the last of the Cult, was rendered a twitching mutant with a gift for deeply flawed prophecy and a singsong, away-with-the-Dalek-fairies voice as Davros returned to the show for the first time in the 21st century. And we also got a brand-new Dalek Supreme in *The Stolen Earth*, this time in blood red and gold, with chunky struts supporting a bigger headpiece. It would still be fun to see more of these in the RTD2 era, because as a design it had significant potential.

Which...sadly...brings us to the New Paradigm.

Bless 'em. Bright, primary-coloured, redesigned Daleks with big butts, no real necks, and no real sense of their own purpose either. They probably felt like a marketing dream – rather than selling one bronze Dalek toy, you could sell the whole collection – strategist, drone, supreme, you name it, you could sell it time after time.

There was no real reason why they shouldn't have worked. The music in their introductory episode was superb and

gave them the entrance they needed. Nick Briggs again pulled it out of the vocal bag with a *big* new voice for the Supreme. And they were, after all, very imposing.



It was just that the fandom took one look at them and went "Nnnnnope. That's not what a Dalek looks like." They were gradually phased into invisibility, poor things. Even a more metallic paint job and a designation as "officer class" Daleks couldn't save them.

Asylum of the Daleks was a fun opportunity to fill the screen with more Daleks from various periods of the show than had ever been seen before, but it did also involve a couple of concepts that were bonkers and alien to Daleks – what the ever-loving hell the *Parliament of the Daleks* was meant to be, apart from a heavy-handed swipe of satire, nobody knows.

Into The Dalek gave us a whole new idea for the Daleks – Daleks that had learned compassion and wonder – only to be infected by the Doctor's own hatred of their kind. Ouch!

The Magician's Apprentice/The Witch's Familiar pulled a similar trick to *Asylum of the Daleks*, having a rebuilt Skaro with Daleks from every period on it, but the story focused mostly on Davros, and the ending was too sewer-heavy to really take note of them all.

And then there are the Chibnall era Daleks.

The one thing you must acknowledge about the Chibnall Daleks is that they... well, they *look* like Daleks. They look like Daleks built from scrap, and then built on a posh version of the same design as the scrap Dalek, but all of that is factored into the scripts, so it makes a certain amount of sense. So, compared to the New Paradigm Daleks, fans generally went along with their existence. The Chibnall Dalek stories also gave us some high quality "Daleks outside of their casings" action, too, the sons of Skaro proving they could still be dangerous without their polycarbide shells.

It's logical in-universe that the Daleks in *Revolution*, *Resolution*, and *The Power of the Doctor* revert to the Russell T Davies bronze, because it is, beyond doubt, the GOAT 21st century Dalek design, and arguably – this is Doctor Who fans we're talking about, everything's arguable – the GOAT Dalek design, period.

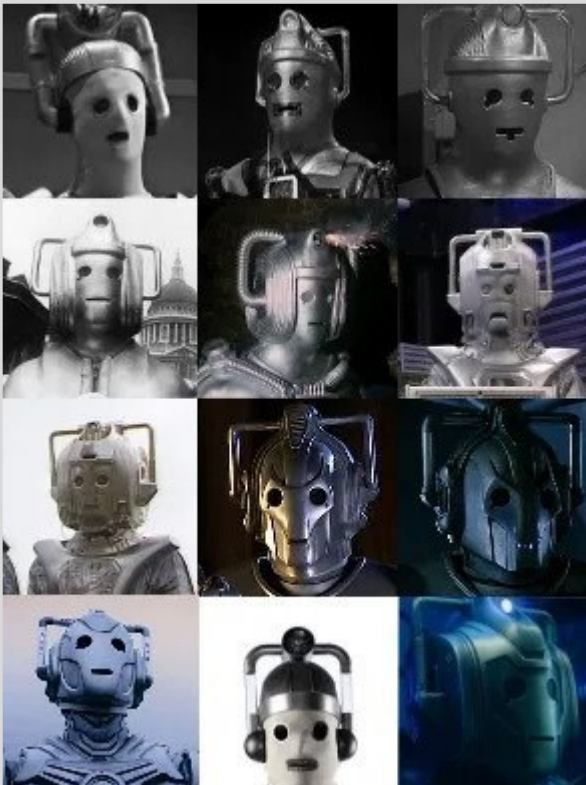
What's next for the Daleks? Who knows? Probably some tall Welsh bloke – but he won't tell you until it's time.

The Cybermen

If the Daleks had only subtle redesigns throughout their time in Classic Who, the Cybermen are the fashion diva monsters, getting some kind of redesign almost every time.

From the initial “iron lung and bandages” design in *The Tenth Planet*, they quickly embraced the metal lifestyle, running through new variants in *The Moonbase*, *Tomb of the Cybermen*, and *The Wheel In Space*.

The Invasion gave them their biggest physical change since they went metal, turning their head-handles into a chunky headpiece and making their suit a more convoluted affair than it'd ever been – zips and laces included. And the look remained similar in *Revenge of the Cybermen* – with the now trademark addition of black handles for the Cyber Leader.



Earthshock saw them redesigned *again* for the shiny Eighties, and – with the addition of a revamped and chunky Cyber Controller in *Attack of the Cybermen*, the design remained largely the same until *Silver Nemesis*, their last outing in Classic Who, went they went extra shiny and apparently decided that five articulated fingers were altogether too much like hassle.

The real evolution of the Cybermen in Classic Who was in Things To Which They Were Suddenly Vulnerable. And also, if we're being real, The Illogicality Of Their Plans.

Right from the outset, they were weirdly vulnerable to a lack of energy being sent to them from Mondas – quite the staggering vulnerability when you're going far from home and your planet is on a timeclock of destruction. But over the years, everything from a “Polly cocktail” of chemicals, to gravity, to radiation (OK, fine, that makes sense) was able to do for them. And if anyone can make the plot of *The Wheel In Space* make sense, they get a special Cyber-Biscuit.

Revenge of the Cybermen gives us the weakness that marks out the Cybermen for the rest of their time in Classic Who – an aversion to gold – and they're killed with it in *Earthshock* and *Silver Nemesis* - in this latter case far too easily.

When they came back in the 21st century, they were given a whole new Parallel Earth origin story, tapping into human satirical themes of product cycles, upgrading, and the lack of care we pay in society to the forgotten people at the bottom of the heap.

But when they came back, they were clunky, heavy-looking, and perhaps understandably, lacking in the personality that had characterized them during the Eighties. And the ways in which they could be destroyed continued its Classic era path to ultimate silliness – from a sudden burst of self-realization in *The Age of Steel* to the now-infamous “I blew them up with love!” of *Closing Time*.

They evolved again in *Nightmare In Silver* – going significantly streamline, and showcasing new abilities like super-speed, detachable body parts, and, perhaps the most logical and joyous evolution the Cybermen ever had, Cyber Mites to carry the upgrade infection and to rewrite systems. It also showed us the Cybermen finally doing what they've always been reputed to do – upgrading to overcome different situations as they go.

While it's true that not every story can be a *Nightmare In Silver*, as a story it shows off the *potential* of the Cybermen perhaps better than it had ever been shown before – or since.

That was doubled down in *Dark Water/Death In Heaven*, where not only can the Cybermen finally fly, but the insidious nature of their conversion process is taken on in leaps and bounds – nano-clouds that rain Cyber Mites and convert flesh into Cyberform showing the truly unbeatable, implacable nature of the foe they should be.

Surprisingly perhaps, after showing such a pinnacle of what the Cybermen *could* be, they went significantly backward the next time we saw them in *World Enough And Time/The Doctor Falls*. Showing a twist on the original Cyber-origin story, we went right back to the hospital feeling of the original Mondasian Cybermen – pain, amputation, surgical replacement, and an ongoing life of emotional cauterisation because of the sheer, screaming horror — and “pain, pain, pain” — of eternal existence.

That was terrifying, but it was a strange back-step, having brought the Cybermen so far forward.



YOU WILL BE LIKE US MISS POTTS



And it grew even more bizarre in the Thirteenth Doctor's era, when, led by a kind of Cyberman Supreme in the form of Ashad – one who could express emotions in conversation – they appeared at first to be striving towards complete robotization, before they were offered a better option.



The option of perpetual bodily regeneration, within their Cyber-forms. The Cyber Masters were a logical progression for the species, to be sure, but the horror of the Time Lords within, regenerating, presumably briefly free of Cyber-implants and control, and then, immediately, having that freedom stripped from them again, and again, and again as they stride around in capes no Cyberman should ever understand, is something at least as rich in body-horror as the Mondasian Cyberman.

Where the Daleks have a more linear evolution, the joy about the Cybermen is that they exist in so many forms, with so many origins now, that the show can take any version of them in any direction – or invent new ways for them to be.

It will be interesting to see whether the RTD2 era continues with the notion of the Cyber Masters, or whether, like the New Paradigm Daleks, they'll be a thing that once was, and is discretely sidelined as new tales are told.



The Ice Warriors

The Ice Warriors are one of the most intriguing “monsters” Doctor Who has ever seen.

Introduced in the Patrick Troughton era as vicious warriors with plans of conquest, they were given an arc of evolution in Pertwee's era, becoming civilized members of the Galactic Federation. The journey is like that of the Klingons in *Star Trek* – initially out-and-out villains, they came to be viewed as a society of their own, with their own warlike traditions, but also their own art, culture, and peculiarly honourable code.

The Ice Warriors took a long sabbatical in **Doctor Who** after the two Peladon stories and when they came back in *Cold War*, it was an appropriate riff on the original Ice Warrior stories that the Doctor encountered a single warrior who'd been kept in the ice for geological swathes of time. The character had no truck with the modernization of his society, giving a useful storytelling technique to make the Ice Warriors a threat again.

Cold War gave us some interesting new developments – Ice Warriors with noticeably sharp teeth, for one, and the notion that their armour was not, as it had always previously seemed, a natural carapace, but in fact a bio-mechanical addition to their bodies. Thus, allowing for some “out of the suit” action which gave *Cold War* a touch of *Alien*.



And if *The Empress of Mars* is relatively forgettable, it does at least have a whiff of ye olde Ice Warriors about it – duplicity, honour, cryogenic chambers, the potential re-emergence of the Ice Warrior race – and in a way that ties into the Pertwee stories neatly.



The difficulty about the Ice Warriors is what to do with them in storytelling terms, so it will be interesting to see if they make a comeback any time soon in the RTD2 era. Personally, we wouldn't hold our (sibilant) breaths.

Next in Part Two: Let Zygons be Zygons and When Mr Potato Head Goes Bad!



ON



FOR 50 YEARS

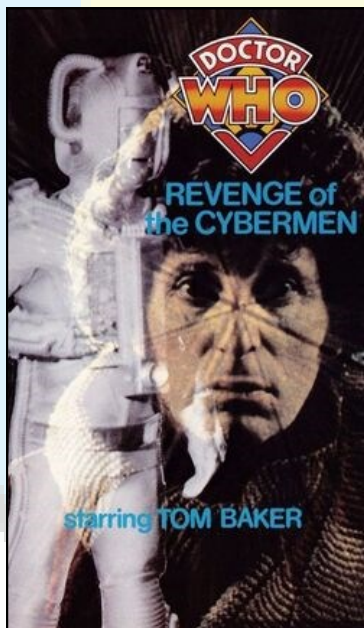
Part One

By Rob Peasley

WHEN editor Nick Mays sent me a list of possible article titles to celebrate **Doctor Who's** 60th anniversary, I jumped at the chance at the **Target Books** feature, for two major reasons: (a) as a child, these books were my route into reading fiction (b) I've re-read the whole range since 2019.

To try to explain to newer fans what made the original Target range so magical, it's necessary to shuffle back to 1983 and the world as it was, when I obtained my first six Target books. Before we begin though, for the sake of simplicity, I am going to remove the *Doctor Who And...* prefix that most of the range had until the early eighties.

At the end of 1983, there was the first release of a Doctor Who story (*Revenge Of The Cybermen*) on VHS videotape. But it cost a small fortune —about



Over-priced!

£40 on initial release. Additionally, many people didn't have anything to play it on – I recall we didn't get a video recorder until around 1987. It wasn't until the Christmas of 1989 that I got *Terror of The Zygons* and *The Ark in Space* on video.

Until video arrived, the only way to experience older stories in full were through the novelisations. Even for the more recent

stories - since repeats were rare and completely disappeared after *The Five Doctors* in the summer holidays of 1984 - the only way to re-live them was to read the book.

I was a keen reader from an early age, but with a big caveat. I tended to devour *factual* books – my two speedway yearbooks dated 1981 and 1982 practically fell apart I read them so many times. I also had *Buster* comic on a weekly basis. But reading a whole novel? I think it was beyond my concentration level. Then came the **Doctor Who** novelisations.

In 1983, when I was 10, we went to South Devon for our summer holidays for the third year in succession. I loved it down there.



The very first Doctor Who Target novelisations

It was there that I came across the range of **Doctor Who** novelisations in a bookshop in Brixham and I had enough holiday money to buy two of them. I'd started the year buying my first-ever novelisation, *The Visitation*, with some of my Christmas money.

I was given two further books as birthday presents from my mum and dad, *The Keeper of Traken* and *Death To The Daleks*. I think my parents must have just bought them without asking me which ones I wanted, because I didn't even know that *Death To The Daleks* existed. A year later, when I laid my hands of *The Making Of Doctor Who* from the school library, I realised although it had Sarah in it, *Death To The Daleks* featured the third Doctor, and not as I had assumed, the Fourth. Obviously, I didn't read the description about the Doctor being introduced as white-haired too closely!

But walking into that bookshop in Brixham was the first time I had a good selection of books from the Target range in the shop before me. I quickly decided on *Logopolis* and also plumped for some reason for *Time-Flight*. Actually, that's being unfair. I liked *Time-Flight* on original transmission.

Logopolis quickly became a firm favourite amongst my fledgling collection, as did the sixth and final book *The Three Doctors*, which I added that year.

Either *The Keeper of Traken* or *Logopolis* was the first-ever novelisation that I read from cover-to-cover. And I can remember the first thing I did with *The Keeper of Traken* – I read the final chapter with the big Master reveal!



Two of the best!



The start of Rob's collection...

In any case, I was soon reading complete novelisations with ease – concentration levels were no longer a problem. I think it helped the books were never that long. To be honest, that's something that's stayed with me until the current day. I think it was great, late Douglas Adams who once said no book should be more than 250 pages long – beyond that it's just waffle. In 1983, at a time a strict wordcount limit was in place, the standard size of a **Doctor Who** novelisation was 128 pages.

It soon became a regular thing for me to ask for a whole heap of **Doctor Who** Target books for my birthday or Christmas. I also had books out on a regular basis from both the school library and also the local library in Woodstock.

I had *The Deadly Assassin* on almost constant loan from the school library. I don't know how many times I read it! My favourite from Woodstock library was the Dalek Omnibus consisting of *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*, *Day of the Daleks* and *Planet of The Daleks*. I wasn't so keen on reading the latter one but loved the first two. As for *Day of The Daleks*, it remains one of the prime examples of the prolific Terrance Dicks at his very best within the range.

Meanwhile, I hated what had happened to on-screen **Doctor Who** in 1987. I felt a particular affinity to Colin Baker – he had previously lived in Tetsworth in Oxfordshire and my grandad had been his postman! We used to visit my nan and grandad on Sundays, and we'd pass the white door where "Doctor Who used to live!" When I attended the Panopticon convention in 1992, my dad told me to ask if Colin remembered my grandad and he recalled his first name without prompting!

I wasn't happy when Colin Baker was sacked. Poor Sylvester McCoy never stood a chance. He could have been the best **Doctor Who** of all-time and I still wouldn't have liked him! Not back then, in any case. As it does with many things, time heals: Sylvester wasn't that bad a **Doctor Who** at all!

In any case, by Christmas 1987, something curious had happened – my favourite part of being a **Doctor Who** fan was the books! I found out an old diary that reveals that I had ten books for Christmas that year and had devoured nine out of ten by the time I returned to school less than two weeks later. Between 1987 and 1990 was the peak of my devotion to the Target book range.

When I got an office job during the summer school holidays in 1989, I was paid an almost scandalously low £2 an hour. But I had more money than I'd ever had before. I was earning a whole £70 a week for 35 hours employment. And I was working slap bang in the middle of Oxford. It annoyed me at the time that the **Doctor Who** novelisations were still in the 8-11 age range of bookshops – I was 16 and didn't think these books were just for little kids!

During that summer, I almost doubled my number of novelisations from almost 60 to well over 100. I can still tell you the first 28 books I obtained between 1983 to 1986 (I won't bore you with the list!) but not surprisingly, I lost track exactly what I bought during 1989. Most evenings, after returning from work and then watching a bit of TV, I spent an hour or two reading a book before going to bed.

Of course, life moves on. I went to university in 1991, by which time virtually every story had been novelised and the original **New Adventures** range of books had started. These original novels, most of which were written by fans—which included future showrunner Russell T Davies — were self-described as “...stories too broad and deep for the small screen...”. They were certainly more “adult” in tone and, as the series progressed, nudity, sex and swearing found their way into the literary Whoniverse.

And that would have probably been the end of the story, although the new series of **Doctor Who** had successfully launched on TV that same year.

However, when the **Target** book range was revived by BBC Publications in 2018, I ordered the entirely new four books over Amazon and read three over a single bank holiday. *The Day of The Doctor* by Steven Moffat was sublimely good, and *Rose* by Russell T Davies wasn't far behind.



The first *New Adventure* range of original **Doctor Who** novels — The *Timewyrm* series... More in-depth stories with added sex and swearing...!

But I had other things to do and soon fell behind with those. At the same time, I met a friend at university, who had every **Doctor Who** story on video. He had two video recorders and over three years copied his whole collection for me. When the DVD range of “Classic” **Who** commenced, I bought the lot, so I think I more than made up for a little bit of video piracy while a penniless student in the early 1990s!

In any case, at some point around 1994, I no longer read **Doctor Who** novelisations – although I do remember, as a one-off, reading *The Abominable Snowmen* in around 2005 - I'd arrived at Weymouth Speedway early and needed something to occupy me while I waited, so took along one of the novelisations I'd never got around to reading.



The new kids on the bookshelf: The re-launched **Target** range of *Doctor Who* novelisations of stories from the revived TV series.

In early 2019, I'd been caring for my dad for nearly a decade. He'd been the one who'd got me into watching **Doctor Who** in the first place – since it was always on our television on a Saturday early evening in the 1970s, until *Destiny of The Daleks* hooked me in completely and started my transformation from viewer to fan. My dad's vascular dementia and general health had deteriorated, and he'd been bed-bound for several years. I'd got a bit bored watching various DVD box sets and needed something else to occupy my time in the evenings.

Reading four new **Target** novels the previous year had got me thinking and I took my old books out of a cardboard box in the spare room and put them back onto a bookshelf. I thanked my younger self, when I found an old list marking off the **Target** books that I'd read – it told me which 13 were still

outstanding. I read most of those in the first half of 2019. My dad died that July.

The year of the Covid-19 lockdowns again saw me again exhausting my DVD collection, and by the beginning of 2021, I decided to re-read some more of the old Target novelisations. It's here things really started to explode. I'd started watching a fraction of the television that I once did - I avoided all news on TV in 2020 and it grew from there. I quite often had an hour or two to read during a day.

At first, I was only planning to read selected favourites. But by 2022, I was motoring through the range at speed. I had a slight health scare at the beginning of 2021 and started to go on walks at lunchtime and in the evenings to keep fit. I soon mastered the art of reading and walking at the same time - I have yet to have an accident while doing that!

In short, I completed the rest of the range in 2022. I read over 140 books last year - nearly all of them Target Books. I even read some of the subsidiary ranges, such as the stories from the missing Colin Baker season and the *Companions of Doctor Who* series.

It sounds like a lot, but it's less when you think many of the Target books only take around two-and-a-half hours to read and after an hour's walk, that's nearly half a book read! I have to say that I agree with Douglas Adams and I still prefer short books over longer ones.

Re-reading the books gave me a fresh perspective on **Doctor Who**, especially on some of my 'less-loved' stories such as *Time-Flight* and *The Mutants*, both decent books. I think it's possible to slightly 'turn off' when watching a less favoured story on DVD - it doesn't need 100% of your attention and the mind can wander. I don't think it's possible to do that while reading a book. I am quite a quick reader, but I am reading every word.

So that's my own history of reading the **Doctor Who** novelisations. A lot of people will have experienced something similar. It was said that Terrance Dicks, as the most prominent author in the range, had taught a lot of kids to read fiction!

But what of the history of the range itself? I shall tackle that in Part Two!



Autobiographical Editor's Note:

In 1983, then aged 21, I'd been collecting the Target Doctor Who books for ten years, although by then, I was missing a lot of the later Fourth Doctor stories as I'd grown away from the series somewhat until Peter Davison took over as Doctor Number 5. So I was buying up all the missing novelisations. I decided to take several on holiday to catch up with the stories I'd missed on TV. It just so happened that in summer 1983, my then girlfriend and I were on holiday in Brixham, Devon at exactly the same time that the 10 year-old Rob Peasley was starting on his voyage of discovery of the Target range of Doctor Who books! We probably even rubbed shoulders in the town.

Now that's timey-wimey, isn't it? - Nick



RENEGADES OF TIME

PART ONE: THE CLASSIC ERA

BY TONY J FYLER

Renegade.

Such an evocative word with a hint of malevolence about its sound – its meaning effectively determined by where and how people are raised as a renegade is anyone who breaks the rules of their society – *whatever* its nature and *whatever* its rules involve.

Copernicus, Galileo, DaVinci – all renegades in their day.

Charles Manson, Jim Jones, David Koresh – all renegades in theirs.

The point is, you can be a renegade and be right, and you can be a renegade and be wrong. To make it into the club, all you need to do is rebel against the constraints of the society in which you were raised.

So, in Time Lord terms, a “renegade of time,” needs to have been both born on Gallifrey, and to have broken its rules.

You might think that narrows it down a little. It doesn't.

The Best of Renegades

Doctor Who is practically full to the brim with renegades of time – and none of them is more central than the Doctor themselves.

Proof of the Doctor and Susan's renegade status was etched into *An Unearthly Child* when the Doctor asks Ian and Barbara “Have you ever thought what it's like to be wanderers in the fourth dimension? Have you? To be exiles? Susan and I are cut off from our own planet, without friends or protection.”

There could have been many reasons why these time travellers had ended up in 1960s London, but *exiles* [is](#) a precise word. They've been cut off from their planet and people *deliberately*. They are, at least when we first meet them, renegades.

Much of the next sixty years of fan brain power has been dedicated to filling in the backstory of exactly what had either made them run or had seen them banished from their home society - the Doctor wanting to see the universe, rather than just study it; the Doctor and Susan being involved in some political issue that went badly wrong and fleeing its consequences. Either would break the rules of their society as we've come to understand them, so when we're talking about the 'renegades of time', it's inescapable that the Doctor and Susan are the first such characters we encounter.

It makes the point that there's something inherently renegade in their nature and this has always made their fans and viewers root for them. It is inherent in us as humans to believe that, while we pick and choose our beliefs, our principles, our political and ethical stances, there are forces of official oppression out to stop us having the life we should have.

It's as fundamental as “I don't *wanna* go to bed, I'm not sleepy!” and it only escalates from there. The Doctor and Susan were always, on some level, the highly advanced children, sneaking out of their Tardis window to play with their friends after dark, rather than obeying the rules of the universe's grown-ups who wanted them in bed.

The Doctor's original morality is a strange thing, half composed of the overbearing weight of authority of a time-sensitive species – as when he lectures Barbara in *The Aztecs* about the impossibility of re-writing even a single line of history - and half performative, to meet the approval of those with whom he travels, as when Ian stops him from stoving in the head of a caveman in *The Tribe of Gum*.

While he may effectively learn to “become” the Doctor we know by virtue of keeping up a good appearance in the eyes of those with whom he travels, he is an inveterate renegade, throwing himself in the way of any plan of which he disapproves.

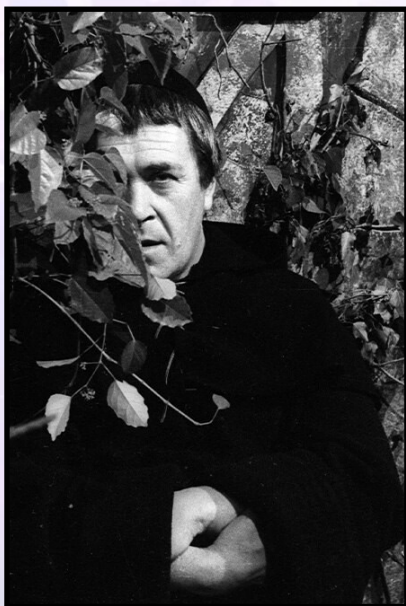
It would be easy to argue that the very nature of the Doctor – standing up for the little people against the bullies of the universe – is a single long escapade in the key of ‘renegadism’. “Over my dead body” is the clarion call of the Doctor’s kind of renegade, and it can move mountains, raise armies, and defeat tyrants – all of which the early Doctor did with a gleeful abandon, week after week.

In fact, it would take the Doctor meeting his equal to really show us the nature of that rebellious spirit – and its limitations...

The Meddler

Susan had gone (or been left behind, depending on your point of view) when the Doctor, Steven and Vicki met the **Meddling Monk** (Peter Butterworth). The first in a long line of renegade-Time-Lords-as-villains, and a breathtaking conceit, the Monk was the Doctor’s first Moriarty. Equal, but opposite, the Monk flitted around time having inordinate amounts of fun and treating the timelines as his personal plaything.

To the Doctor’s po-faced lectures about how you couldn’t re-write a single line of history, the Monk’s response was a gleeful “Ya-boo, sucks to you! Just you bloomin’ watch me!”



It’s only through meeting the Monk that we realise quite how restrained the Doctor is in terms of his renegade philosophy. Yes, absolutely he’s happy to declare that he will defeat the Dalek invasion of Earth – a significant meddling with the course of history – but when faced with the Monk’s comparatively anarchistic actions, he looks like the

most responsible time traveller imaginable.

The dichotomy between the Doctor and the Monk redefines the world of Doctor Who. Not only is the Monk the first non-Dalek villain to get a return outing, but he also does what the Master will later do in the more evolved show – he equals the Doctor in terms of his TARDIS ownership, and he espouses a moral and ethical position entirely different from the Doctor’s.

But where the Master will later break the dichotomy down into “good and evil,” the Monk is arguably much more interesting, because he’s a renegade

and not because he wants to conquer the universe, or just because he wants to see the universe. He’s a renegade almost entirely for the *fun* of the universe – there’s a reason he’s traditionally been played both on screen and in audio by comedians and comic actors. He’s never “Now the universe will be mine, all *mine!*” He’s always “Sure – why not? Let’s see what happens!”

Each in their own way are flat-out renegades against what we eventually learn about Time Lord society, but the difference in their attitudes to time and other species could not be more apparent. If anything, what we learn from the Monk in his first two on-screen adventures is that the Doctor has been travelling with “someone to stop him,” while the Monk travels alone, and it has, presumably, been a long time since anyone said “no” to him.

The Doctor is an escapist renegade, determined to see the universe in person, and discovering that on occasion, it needs someone to stand up for it, while the Monk is all about tweaking things to see what happens, bending at the slightest provocation for an easy life.

On reflection, it’s insane that the Monk (later named in spin-off fiction as **Mortimus**) has never returned on-screen after his two Butterworth outings in the Hartnell years. But throughout his ongoing life in the expanded universe – and especially in *Big Finish* audio stories – he has maintained that sense of fun, of cowardice under pressure, and of giving no stuffs to what happens to the web of time because of his antics.

That has made him (and occasionally, in the person of Gemma Whelan, her) a fan favourite – not least because, unlike the Master, there doesn’t necessarily have to be an ultra-focused, super-intelligent plan at the heart of his stories.

They can be entertaining, darkly sinister, and often, a mixture of both. That’s everything you need in a renegade of time.



The Master – Maybe?

The next occasion we encountered a time renegade, it's in the final story of Patrick Troughton's era.

The ten-episode madness of *The War Games* was threatening to collapse in upon itself, and it also became clear that not only the Second Doctor but both his companions, would have to be written out, so something special was required to elevate the tale above its "Aliens set make a demented attempt to create the finest army in the universe," plot.

That was a stretch given that the audience was already very familiar with a universe positively teeming with Daleks and Cybermen. To push up the stakes and finally bring the Doctor face to face with the consequences of his own actions, we were introduced to a Time Lord known at the time only as "the War Chief".

Forever caught up in the debate over whether he was a version of the Doctor's academy friend, the Master, or simply a cunning Time Lord by the name of Magnus, the War Chief is one of the more curious renegades of time and played with a gloriously saturnine sense of superiority by Edward Brayshaw.



What argues against his being a version of the Master is both the seeming desperation of his involvement in the affairs of the War Lord and his alien acolytes, and the lamentably small scale of those affairs.

The Master as we would come to know him, has always been a thinker of big thoughts, a schemer of big schemes. The War Chief, while a relatively rich and charismatic creation, is more like a Time Lord who has thrown in his lot with a bunch of chancers and feels compelled to see out the game.

That said, if you were making the case that he was an early incarnation of the Master, Brayshaw's saturnine looks would lend you some credibility,

given their similarity to both the Delgado and Ainley incarnations. And you might also be able to claim that the mischievous inversion of the Time Lord technology – not TARDISES, but SIDRATs – has a certain irresistibly Masterish cheek about it.

Whichever theory you espouse, the War Chief's actions are much more Monkish than they are Masterly – those of a renegade who fell into bad company and improvised wildly, rather than one who set out to take over the universe.

But in his look, his eventual outright defiance of Time Lord authority, and his bearing, he did at least create a template for the first temporal renegade of the colour era.

Enter – the Master

There is, probably, far too much to say about the renegade status of **the Master** for any single article. But when he arrived in the show, he was, perhaps ironically, a scripting convenience and little more.

When the series shifted to its earthbound version, with a handful of regular players making up the UNIT family, there was a risk that the stories would get increasingly samey: aliens invade, are defeated or naff off making way for the next story, in which aliens invade...

Terrance Dicks and Barry Letts, feeling somewhat shafted by the strictures of the earthbound format, realised they needed to give it a Sherlock Holmes vibe.

To accomplish this, they had to create WHO's version of Moriarty, not only making him the Doctor's equal and opposite, but using his character to introduce credible alien threats to the story while avoiding the whole format turning stale. Dicks, who had been both writer and script editor on *The War Games*, knew instinctively how to accomplish this, using Edward Brayshaw as his model, but if anything, doing it larger.

He, Robert Holmes and Barry Letts, created possibly the ultimate renegade of time, cleverer than the Doctor, unscrupulous about his use of alien and temporal technology, but without the Monk's comic tinge, or the War Chief's relative haplessness. Their Master was a serial killing, high-handed, deeply charming psychopath, in the body, at least initially, of Roger Delgado.



The Delgado Master and the Pertwee Doctor were exactly what Dicks and Co had intended them to be – equal and opposite. Delgado's real charm, married to the Master's offhand casualness and cold soul, made for a perfect foil to Pertwee's warmly aristocratic and frequently outspoken moralist.



In this combination, the Master was a stroke of storytelling genius, and easily stamped himself into the book of time renegades with an emphatic footprint.

Delgado was already looking to quit the show when, tragically, his life was cut short in a car accident. That stopped any plans for a final battle between the Pertwee Doctor and the Delgado Master, and so the character disappeared at the end of *Frontier In Space*.



A regeneration would have proved necessary to take the character up against Tom Baker's Fourth Doctor in any case, but the way in which Peter Pratt played the Master in *The Deadly Assassin* was inspired. Where Delgado had been the foil Pertwee needed, the Pratt Master was a creature

surviving entirely on rage and desperation, shorn of any of the trademark charm of the Master as we'd experienced him.

And while we're here, let's throw another renegade of time into the pile:

Acolytes and Gods

Let's talk about **Chancellor Goth**.

Goth, played by Bernard Horsfall, is the Master's acolyte in *The Deadly Assassin*, a member of the Time Lord High Council who was turned, either by the Master's mesmeric personality or by promises of power, against everything for which Gallifrey stood.



There's a delicious frisson around Goth, in that Bernard Horsfall also played the main Time Lord accuser at the Second Doctor's trial in *The War Games*, for all that he's nameless in that story. While it would be a tragic irony for the one-time voice of rectitude to have succumbed to the powers of the Master, the pleasing symmetry of that idea of the fallen Time Lord makes us *hope* that this is the trajectory of Goth's life.

He's not a deeply-written character, but he is an emblem of what became a familiar theme among the renegades of time – Time Lords not in and of themselves powerfully evil but turned to it by their proximity to power or to a grander potential destiny than the one they've been able to carve out for themselves.

But let's leave the Master in his Peter Pratt incarnation, with his acolyte Goth, for a moment.



To mark the tenth anniversary of **Doctor Who**, Bob Baker and Dave Martin created *The Three Doctors*. If you're going to have a disaster so large that three Doctors meet up (in a world where that had never yet happened, rather than the multi-Doctor weary world of 2023), you needed an epic reason to cause that kind of cataclysm.

The Bristol Boys imperilled Gallifrey itself – and with it, the rest of the universe – by delivering one of the biggest 'renegades of time' in the canon to this day.

Looked at down the long lens of 2023, the creation of **Omega** is a vastly imaginative leap. At this point, we'd seen the Time Lords *en masse* only as a judgmental force, or the occasional wildly incongruent messenger, warning of the arrival on Earth of the Master.

To make one of the biggest villains in the show's history a mythic character from the Time Lords' *own history* is a mind-blowing development, and one that rarely gets the credit it deserves. But the story of Omega is a tragedy of pride. In *The Three Doctors*, he's misunderstood, embittered, paranoid and given to fits of terrifying rage (thank you, Stephen Thorne, for a towering performance), but it's not really the case that he's a renegade Time Lord.



As he says himself, he's responsible for the Time Lords *becoming* Time Lords in the first place, and so feels that almost any sacrifice is worth the price of his return to the universe of matter to resume his place among them "as a god."

As such, it's probably a little churlish to include Omega in the list of the renegades of time, but for his sheer scale of mythic importance and tragedy, and the corresponding scale of chaos and terror he engenders, he more than earns his place.

When Omega returns (this time played by Ian Collier) in *Arc of Infinity*, he's still in a similar condition, but he earns his renegade status more than he does in *The Three Doctors*. Corrupting Councillor Hedin (Michael "The First Celestial Toymaker" Gough) with the virtue of his cause,

here Omega's actions are much more intentional, not to say vindictive, and he even manages to use the Fifth Doctor's body print (who knew those were a thing until Johnny Byrne magnificently invented them?) to run around Amsterdam watching puppet shows and experiencing innocence for the first time in aeons.

If we were in doubt that Omega deserved his place among the renegades of time after *The Three Doctors*, by the end of *Arc of Infinity*, while we still feel enormous sympathy for his position, he's well and truly gone over to the dark side, leaving the Doctor with no alternative but to shoot him dead (at least as far as we believe).

For most of the Third Doctor's time, the Master was renegade Time Lord enough for anyone's money, but just at the end of the era, it's worth noting the presence on Earth of K'anpo and Cho-je, two seemingly Tibetan monks, both of whom are incarnations of the Doctor's one-time Gallifreyan hermit teacher.

Do they count as renegades?



Remember- being outside the law of the society in which they were raised is probably all they need to qualify, and so their presumably unauthorised presence on Earth, not to mention their simultaneous existence, despite being two incarnations of the same Time Lord, is enough to include them, albeit in their cases, as particularly benign examples of the breed.

Revenge and Power

The first renegade Time Lord of the Tom Baker era is significantly scarier in his backstory than he ever is as the junkshop reject creature controlled by *The Brain of Morbius*.

Referred to as especially handsome in his day, Morbius was a political genius, and – in the first real instance of a trope that was revisited in subsequent stories – his closeness to Time Lord power, in his case the Lord Presidency, turned his head. He was deposed, became one of Gallifrey's most notorious criminals, and was subsequently executed – only his brain surviving.



Like Omega's continued existence in the universe of anti-matter, Morbius' continued existence as a bodyless brain is enough to drive him into a rage of revenge against both the Time Lords and the universe in general.

Let us, we beg of you, ignore the fact that Solon, Morbius' "Frankenstein" scientist, is played by none other than Philip Madoc – who previously played the War Lord alongside Edward Brayshaw's War Chief, because really, we'll be here all day.

The point about Morbius (an almost entirely fresh creation of Robert Holmes based heavily on *Frankenstein* after Terrance Dicks' robot-based script proved unfilmable within the budget) is that like Omega before him, he's a Time Lord disgruntled at having reached the highest peaks of Time Lord society. There will be more like him along in another decade or so...

Speaking of the heights of Time Lord society, it feels a little churlish to include **Castellan Kelner** from *The Invasion of Time* in this list.

He's not by any means an active renegade, and yet through his weakness of character, Kelner (played by Milton Johns) aids and abets the invasion of Gallifrey by first the Vardans and then the Sontarans.

But does he count as a renegade? Only tangentially – he's one of those who believes he's acting in the best interests of Gallifrey (and the best interests of keeping himself alive) by what he does, and it's fair to point at the Doctor here as the much bigger, bolder, brasher figurehead of the invasion.

But then, those who invaded the US capitol on January 6th, 2021, thought they were acting in the country's best interests, too – and that didn't stop them being arrested for their actions, any more than it stops Kelner being hauled away for treason by the Doctor's old tutor, Borusa (introduced in *The Deadly Assassin*) who by now has achieved the rank of Chancellor.



Gentle Renegades

If K'anpo and Cho-Je were benign renegades, and Kelner was an accidental one, spare a thought for **Drax**, that most unlikely of beings – a Time Lord renegade with no ill will, but who does love a little profit where there's one to be made.

We meet him in on-screen Who just the once, towards the end of *The Armageddon Factor*, and it's fair to say that it makes spectacularly little sense that he's there at all. But Drax is a ducker-and-diver, played by Barry Jackson with a cockney accent (lots of planets have a London?), and he's particularly handy when you need someone to tinker with bits of technology.



More than anything, Drax is an example of a Time Lord renegade who – much like the Doctor – isn't out to enslave or especially mess with other species, but is just trying to see the universe, have some fun, and where possible, make a deal or two.

But whereas the Monk was able to offer an entirely different moral outlook to the Doctor's, and the Master placed himself firmly opposite everything

the Doctor believes in, Drax works to puncture the Doctor's occasional Time Lord pomposity, remembering him as "Theet" – a diminutive of "Theta Sigma," the Doctor's academy nickname.

He's the equivalent of that school friend who finds you on Facebook and insists on telling everyone your most embarrassing stories from back in the day, which you'd hoped would be buried forever. That makes him an irritant to the Doctor, it provides some much-needed lightness against the background of *The Armageddon Factor* and a memorable renegade – to the extent that he's now had a couple of Big Finish adventures in which [Spoiler Alert!] we get to hear many incarnations of the character.

While **Romana** travelled with the Doctor on his quest for the Key To Time, she didn't actually become a renegade of time until the High Council ordered her to return, and instead she kept travelling with the Doctor. She took another step towards the Doctor's own breed of interventionist 'renegadism' when she left him to help the Tharils in E-Space. And while that was the end of what we knew of her on-screen, her renegade status goes significantly further in Big Finish audio – attempting to assassinate Rassilon, anyone? Oh, my dear little time tots, you have such a lot to learn...



And although *Shada* was never broadcast in its original space and time, it's subsequently had more outings in more versions than any other Doctor Who story, so it's worth adding in **Salyavin** to our list of temporal renegades. A Time Lord with immense mental powers, he was sentenced to imprisonment on Shada more out of Time Lord paranoia than for any genuine criminal intent – but his potential was realised when he managed to escape the inescapable prison, and wipe the memories of his name and existence from every Time Lord record, leaving only his alias, **Professor Urban Chronotis**, to eventually retire into a life of

comfortable bafflement in Cambridge, England, Earth.

It might well be argued that Salyavin was a relatively benign renegade – but the potential of his mental powers was high, and clearly, his ability to hoodwink the whole of Gallifrey into forgetting he ever existed, and then to decamp to a quiet life away from the clutches of any ensuing Time Lord justice, made him a renegade of time through and through – whether, on the whole, he could remember it or not.



A New Body, At Last

Have we had enough time away from the Master? Nah! Let's catch up with him...

The Keeper of Traken gives us not one but two versions and bridges the gap for the character between the suave Delgado portrayal, the horror-movie performance of Peter Pratt, and the vicious Anthony Ainley take of the Eighties, where the Delgado charm is worn more like a pose than a personality.

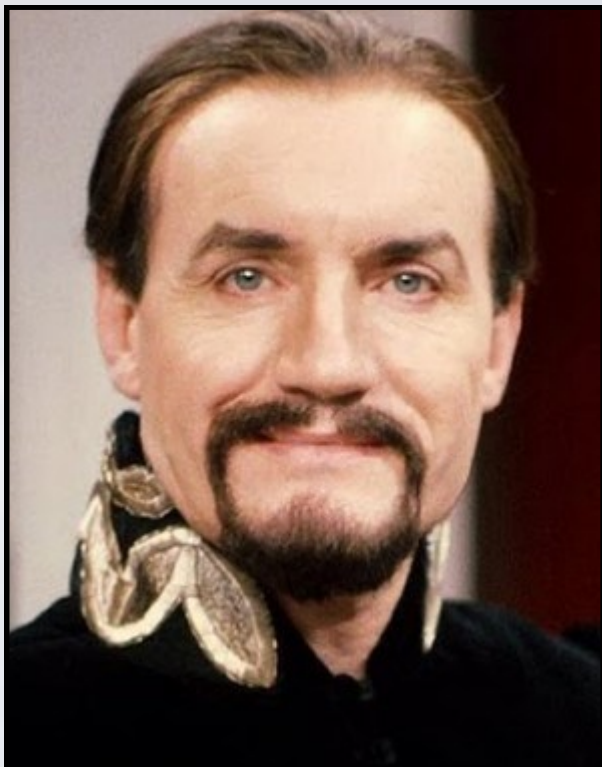
Geoffrey Beevers' Master is that bridge – the raging bitterness of the Pratt incarnation matured with suffering into



something gorgeously, dedicatedly sadistic, a voice like the cork from a bottle of honey mead, coming from a scarred, charred figure who wants to share his agonies.

The Beevers' Master might only have had the one outing on TV, because its whole point was to hand the role over to Ainley, the first of the 'Bodysnatching' Masters, but it made a big impression, to the extent that his incarnation remains one of the most used in Big Finish, giving a much longer life to a Master that technically on-screen only existed as a means to enable Anthony Ainley's version to walk into existence.

And the Ainley Master went on to do what no Master before or since has done. He defined what the Master was across four whole Doctors' lives, without particularly shaping a central motivation in opposition to the Doctors.



The Delgado Master was a renegade with his own personality – it just so happened that that personality was the perfect Moriarty for Pertwee's Holmes.

Ainley's Master, driven by contempt and a kind of Doctor-obsession that far exceeded anything that had come before it, did have his own personality, but the production team didn't try to mould him to be the Moriarty for any of the Eighties Doctors – which actually made him slightly less effective in the show than Delgado had been.

Arguably, more than Delgado's, the Ainley Master is about grandiosity of schemes, about proving how clever he is, and about getting the Doctor to notice. Some of his finest moments come in *Logopolis*, where he's fresh in his body and almost seething with excitement and new energy. He's delicious in *The Five Doctors*, where tellingly, Terrance Dicks gives him things to do and reasons to be on-screen – not something on which Ainley could routinely

depend on. And in *Survival*, by Rona Munro, he's allowed to evolve a little, bringing out some of Pratt's savagery as the story demands.

But before we make the leap beyond the Ainley Master, we have a decade's worth of other renegades to deal with.

Omega and Rassilon

Arc of Infinity brought us the return of Omega in a more actively renegade way and showed us how corrupting the power of fandom could be.

Councillor Hedin was seduced from the straight and narrow of Gallifreyan power structures, betraying everything the Time Lords stood for to aid his idol in his plans to return to the universe of matter.



We'd like to include Colin Baker's Commander Maxil among the legion of Time Lord renegades, but really, he doesn't qualify. "Following Orders" may be a narrow-minded way to live your life, but it doesn't equate to overturning your society – so whereas Castellan Kelner falls into the renegade pack, Commander Maxil escapes it.



In *The Five Doctors* we encounter a telling lesson as Borusa, now in the body of Philip Latham, as he goes full renegade in the quest for ever more power. This we see the fantastic Time Lord legend, vital to the solutions of *The Deadly Assassin*, *The Invasion of Time*, and *Arc of Infinity* for over a decade is now subject to a fantastic fall, unearthing the Game of Rassilon (of whom, significantly more later!) bringing a bunch of Doctors into the Death Zone, having the Castellan killed (poor Paul Jericho earning a return shot in the role, the infamous catchphrase "No, not the mind probe!",

but sadly, never a name that's spoken on-screen), and ultimately earning the curse of immortality as he trashes an extraordinarily long and prestigious career.



Like Morbius before him, Borusa was a renegade who had everything. But where Morbius was discovered and executed, Borusa took his worm-in-the-apple form of renegadism to its inevitable, horrific conclusion.

New Old Friends and Foes

Creating a new Time Lord out of the blue, but one with whom the Doctor is supposed to have history, is a dangerous business, and so it's only been done a handful of times in the history of the show. The Master was a classmate of the Doctor's – and so was Drax.

Colin Baker's tenure in the Tardis, short though it was, gave us three full-on renegades of time, and two of them, he supposedly knew in centuries past. In *The Twin Dilemma*, we meet Azmael – for reasons never fully explained, masquerading as someone known as Professor Edgeworth – a former friend of the Doctor's, who, probably distinctly against Time Lord rules, made himself overlord of the planet of Jaconda, and who, when we meet him, is aiding a giant slug with its plans to propagate itself all over the galaxy.



While it's entirely possible to classify Azmael (Maurice Denham) as among the more benign renegades of time, in the first place, setting yourself up as ruler of a planet full of non-Time Lords is *preetty* renegadey behaviour. And then there's the child kidnap, enforced algebra, and sluggy shenanigans, so he's not all that benevolent, despite being a friend of the Doctor's.

A much bigger personality was to emerge in *The Mark of the Rani*, by Pip and Jane Baker. **The Rani**, played with swaggering panache by Kate O'Mara, does the same job that the Monk did back in the Sixties, but takes it in a different direction, bringing an absence of moral philosophy, that resonated with her backstory as a focused, narrow-minded, mostly brilliant chemist. And when the Master forces the Doctor's Tardis off course and brings his fight with the Doctor into the Rani's playground, she's utterly vexed with the pair of them, bringing an an older-sister-who's-had-quite-enough-of-your-nonsense air to the mix.

Granted she's only on Earth collecting brain chemicals to solve a problem that's arisen on the planet she's subjugated, but we're pretty sure that's against Time Lord rules. Her amoralism feels like a lesser threat than, say, the Master's obsessive thirst for power, yet it's worth noting that in her second story, *Time and the Rani*, the scale of her experiments is revealed, and she's shown to have no love for natural evolution.

Essentially, what the Monk does for timelines, the Rani does for biochemistry – they both treat their domains as their own to meddle with, because letting things unfold “naturally” is messy, chaotic, and fundamentally unsatisfying to their arrogant Time Lord minds.



The Dark Side

And it would of course be impossible to leave Colin Baker's time without mentioning the renegade-within-a-renegade that is **the Valeyard**.

When you break *The Trial of a Time Lord* down looking for a plot, it makes no sense at all – the Time Lords investigate the Doctor's activities again, during which evidence of their own colossal wrongdoing is available for viewing, then 'excised' with a big shouty alarm to draw attention to the fact, in case anybody missed it.

Madness. Entertaining madness, but nevertheless, madness.

With an overall story arc as messed-up as that, you need a Big Bad to make any kind of sense. It's arguable that the Master has no place in the story at all, as the revelation of the Valeyard as a future incarnation of the Doctor – and an amalgamation of all his worst traits – was a stroke of evil genius, in that it's the antithesis of that K'anpo/Cho-Je experience of two incarnations working together, and an extra twist on all the multi-Doctor stories. What if there's a version of you out there, doing everything they can to kill your reputation?



Arguably, we all have a Valeyard – it's ourselves on tequila – but his place in the pantheon of renegades of time is special, simply because he's proof that not even the Doctor, and particularly not even the shouty Doctor of extreme moral outrage, is protected from the power of the renegade within.

While the story of the Valeyard went a bit... weird

at the end of *Trial*, due to famous behind-the-scenes dramas, his creation in the show was monumental, hinting – perhaps appropriately at the end of Colin Baker's run (which had been spattered with complaints over its darker themes, including televised torture and surgical punishment) – that even the Doctor we trusted as we ran away into his universe wasn't immune to that universe's malign influences.

That would be a theme that became overt in the Sylvester McCoy era – and in what it's still somehow right to call "New Who" even though we're 18 years in.

Dressing For the Occasion

Next up in the roster of wrong 'uns – it's the Master again, but probably not the one you're expecting. The Eric Roberts Master doesn't have a lot of screen time to develop a distinct personality – he's casually cruel, a slick, accomplished liar, more in the Delgado mode than anyone who's come between the two, and like Delgado, he likes to dress for the occasion – you could almost draw a straight line between Delgado in *The Daemons* and Roberts in the TV movie.



And while his plan, such as it is, appears to be sketched out briefly on the back of a \$10 bill, there's also a touch of the Pratt and Beevers Masters about it, a desperate incarnation willing to throw the universe down a black hole just to get more life, and to almost literal Hell with anyone who tries to stop him.

As renegades of time go, the Roberts Master is reasonably high in the hierarchy – single-minded in purpose, easily cruel, creating a huge threat to the universe, and yet, rather cutely, adopting Gallifreyan Time Lord Robes to do it in.

In a sense, his 'dressing for the occasion' is him giving the ultimate finger to all things Gallifreyan while he harnesses the gift of regeneration for himself. That right there – that's #RenegadeLife.

Part 2 of this article will investigate the renegades of time as we've experienced them in the 21st century – the New Renegades? Please yourselves...

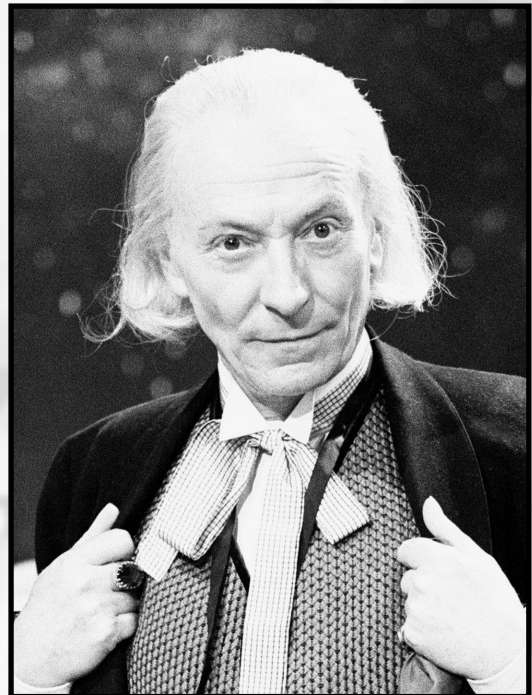


IMAGES FROM THE PIT

By Damian Mark Whittle

As it approaches its 60th Anniversary, it's easy to forget that not everyone is a fan of **Doctor Who**. Some people actively dislike the whole programme, not just least favourite relatives or painfully cool kids who are good at sport. *Doctor Who* has attracted its fair share of high-profile critics over the years, including former BBC Controller Michael Grade and the campaigner and professional bigot, Mary Whitehouse. But perhaps the most surprising critic was a man without whom **Doctor Who** might never have existed in the form we know it: Nigel Kneale, creator of the only British TV sci-fi hero to truly capture the imagination of the nation in the same way that the Doctor did.

Rocket scientist Professor **Bernard Quatermass** experienced four dark and unsettling adventures on TV between 1953 and 1979, stories which would be retold on film, on radio and in print before returning to the small screen just as **Doctor Who's** 21st Century revival was beginning.



William Hartnell as the First Doctor — the original you would definitely say (Timeless Child notwithstanding)

As well as being Time Lord's 60th birthday, 2023 marks the 70th anniversary of the very first **Quatermass** serial. It's a coincidence which would have doubtless displeased Kneale. He hated **Doctor Who**, both for its use of his ideas and for its ability – and desire – to scare children. All the same, their joint anniversary make this an excellent time to look back at how the four adventures of Professor Quatermass shaped the time travelling escapades of the Doctor, and to explore how the programme has interacted with, embraced, and sometimes challenged Kneale's ideas.



Reginald Tate as Professor Bernard Quatermass — the original, you might say

1. Contact Has Been Established

The first episode of *The Quatermass Experiment* was broadcast on 18th July 1953. For a tense half hour, viewers watched as Professor Quatermass (Reginald Tate), head of British Experimental Rocket Group and his staff of scientists and technicians attempted to guide a missing space capsule and its three-man crew back to Earth. Eventually the capsule makes a landing in the middle of a London Street, and after a long wait, it is opened to reveal that only one of the astronauts has survived. The other two have seemingly vanished altogether. In 1970, during the beginning of a new era for **Doctor Who**, viewers would see the Time Lord grappling with a remarkably similar situation in *The Ambassadors of Death*. The Doctor helps with the recovery and opening of a missing space probe which also has a three-man crew. This time however all the astronauts turn out to be missing. Both *The Quatermass Experiment* and *Ambassadors* present space travel as exciting, cutting-edge stuff and yet full of dangers. They explore an underlying anxiety of the space age: what would galactic travel do to human beings, and might they come back changed into something else? Venturing into the unknown may be exciting but it is, as the narrator of *The Quatermass Experiment* tells us, 'A risk'.



Above: Quatermass 1953: One astronaut returns

Below and bottom left: Doctor Who 1970 - No astronauts return



Implicit in the scenes showing the damage caused by the crash-landing capsule in *The Quatermass Experiment*, is another contemporary fear, that of atomic and hydrogen weapons. 'They've finally dropped one' screams one of the residents of the ruined street. This is the age of duck and cover, when people believed that they might survive a radioactive blast but find their home city destroyed. That same dread of atomic weapons also haunts the first Dalek tale *The Mutants*,¹ which was only the second **Doctor Who** adventure to be screened. Much has been written about the Daleks as a parable of Nazism, but the creatures as we first meet them are as much to do with the threat of nuclear war and the mutating effect of radiation. In their first outing they are dependent on radiation, a notion dropped from every subsequent appearance and yet at the time a very potent one. In the 50s and early 60s the mysterious power of radiation was a recurrent theme in science fiction and horror, one which on the big screen had already sent Godzilla rampaging across Tokyo and unleashed giant ants in America.

It's interesting to compare Quatermass as we see him in his first adventure to the Doctor, because there are definite similarities between the two as well as telling differences. Each is presented as a possessor of wisdom, able to make deductive leaps and with a concern for morality. They are also both short on patience with officialdom: 'Yes, I thought you hadn't understood' Quatermass sharply tells a civil servant, and his antagonistic relationship with the police has shades of the Third Doctor and UNIT. Although the Professor is not an alien, he is often presented as "separate" from those around him by virtue of this greater knowledge. There is also a sense of loneliness. He was once married but his wife has died leaving him with a daughter. This is echoed later in the 'incomplete' family of the Doctor and his granddaughter Susan.

Like the Doctor, Quatermass can be brusque and short tempered but kindly when the need arises. He is quick to comfort the distraught Judith Caroon, the surviving astronaut's wife, and is gently understanding when she reveals that she was going to leave him for another man. However, the key difference is that in *The Quatermass Experiment*, the alien arrives in the recognisably human world of the Professor,



whereas in *An Unearthly Child* the Doctor is the alien who has arrived in the recognisable world. Part of the journey of *Doctor Who* is that we come to know this particular alien as a hero. In *Quatermass*, as we shall see, all aliens are distant and unknowable, sometimes not even tangible.

There is a further striking difference between the two in the humour of the Doctor compared to its complete absence in *Quatermass*. From *Marco Polo* onwards, the First Doctor tends to be mischievous and playful, his self-assuredness sometimes played for laughs and he even has some moments of outright silliness. *Quatermass* by contrast, hardly ever jokes, his conversations are generally a series of pronouncements and deductions, and we are never invited to find anything funny in his self-assuredness. It's impossible to imagine *Quatermass* paired with a character like Donna Noble or Barbara Wright who would successfully challenge him, let alone dare to tease him. This marks **Doctor Who** as very much a product of the 60s where authority figures and heroes were being granted more humour and their position was less absolute. The character of the First Doctor is a remarkable sign of how such figures were already being shown as more fallible and, in all honesty, being allowed to have more *fun*

The first episode of *The Quatermass Experiment* isn't just about scientists though. We also meet members of the press, and this is one of the programme's most significant innovations. By showing the opening of the rocket being covered by newspaper reporters and a radio interviewer, the serial is giving the events extra plausibility by introducing recognisable representatives of the real-world news services. This is a trick **Doctor Who** would play first in *The War Machines* with the televised coverage of WOTAN's creations rolling around London, fronted by an actual TV presenter rather than an actor. It would occur again occasionally during 20th Century **Doctor Who** and then become a staple story telling method of the Ninth and Tenth Doctor eras, as well as in **Torchwood** and **The Sarah Jane Adventures**. Perhaps it's stretching the point to say that Kneale invented postmodernism in Britain, but his use of the news media in a television programme is distinctly meta.

The aftermath of the capsule landing also initiates a tendency to show the consequences of events through their impact on working class characters, and to derive some humour from this. The husband and wife whose house is partially demolished by the returning capsule, the old lady they rescue and the drunken reveller who shows up later on are all overtly comic characters - rather like Sam Seely and his wife from *Spearhead from Space* or Sam Ollis from *The Three Doctors*. This leads to a

potential criticism that, while both include working class characters, *Quatermass* and **Doctor Who** see them as innately comic.



“Cor Blimey! What will them scientists come up with next?”

The second episode of *The Quatermass Experiment* – and the last one we can watch because no recordings were made of the remaining four episodes – introduces a theme that is key to the **Quatermass** universe and frequently addressed in the **Doctor Who** one: the absorbing of the individual into the mass. The Professor begins to find evidence that the consciousness of the three astronauts has been merged into one body. The discovery of a weird substance towards the end of the episode backs up the idea that a brutal biological process has taken place to facilitate this. ‘What did it do to them?’ screams one of the scientists, a question rich with implications of unseen body horror.

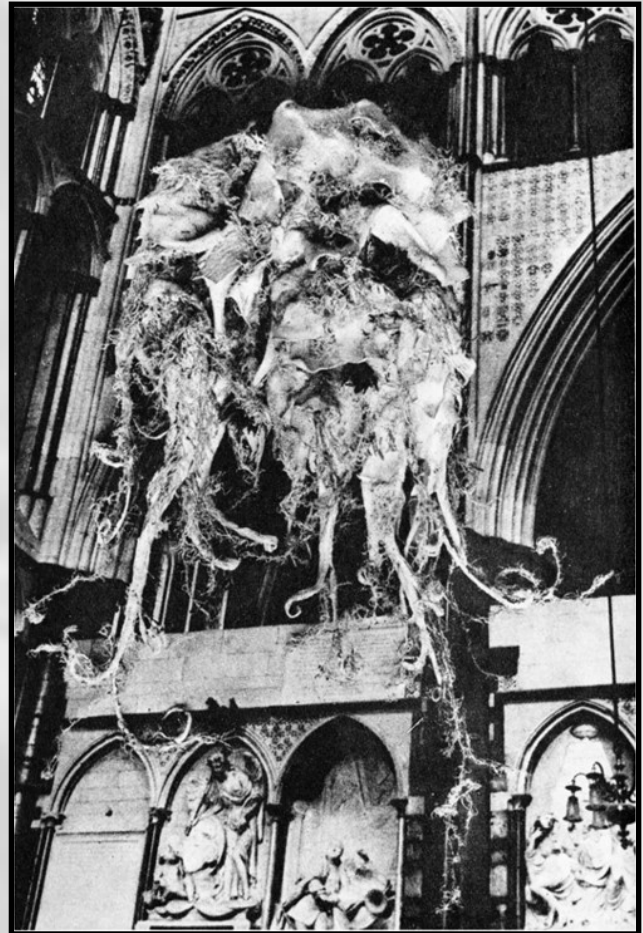
Hybridisation and indeterminate physical states are often a source of unease in **Doctor Who**, with examples including the Davros, Morbius, any number of characters from the Sixth Doctor's era and the Lone Cyberman Ashad. Interestingly, the programme has only rarely presented examples of positive hybrid characters (for example the half human Eighth Doctor or the Dalek Sec Hybrid) whereas **Star Trek** embraced the idea early with Spock's mixed Vulcan/Human heritage.

The merging of three bodies into one is a creepy idea, but for Kneale, the real horror is the loss of a single identity within a greater whole. The astronaut identifying himself as one of his dead colleagues is recalled in *The Ark in Space* with Noah's chilling statement ‘But I am here. I am Dune’. This touches on the question of how the individual can survive being drawn into the mob. The most obvious **Doctor Who** comparison is the uniformity of the Cybermen. In the last episode of *The Quatermass Experiment*, *Quatermass* defeats the hybrid alien by appealing to the lingering human nature of the astronauts within it, leading it to kill itself – just as the Tenth

Doctor would trigger the Cybermen to self-destruct by restoring their emotions and sense of self in *The Age of Steel*.

Although we can only see two episodes of *The Quatermass Experiment*, we can get an idea of the remainder of the story (at the cost of a letter from the title) in Hammer's film adaption starring Brian Donlevy. *The Quatermass Xperiment* downplays the mental merging plotline somewhat, but it tackles the physical aspects with relish. Indeed, viewed as a horror movie, it is still one of the studio's best productions, even if Kneale hated it.

Given that Robert Holmes was a fan of Hammer Films and often mined them for inspiration, it seems highly likely that he would have been aware of *Xperiment* and perhaps sought to recreate the film's powerful image of an astronaut's transformed and bloated hand with Noah's discovery of his own mutated hand in *The Ark in Space*. Considering *Ark* has long been cited as an inspiration for *Alien*, perhaps traces of Kneale's influence can also be found in Ridley Scott's classic film. Everyone's favourite Zolpha-Thuran, Meglos, may owe it a debt too.



No Special Effects Department in those days, kids!

The finale to the first *Quatermass* movie (and for those that saw it, the TV series) would cast a long shadow over **Doctor Who**. The astronaut's transformation into a huge tentacled creature in Westminster Abbey is very much an influence on the Krynoid from *The Seeds of Doom*. *The Lazarus Experiment* would also deliberately pay homage to this imagery while taking a distinctly Kneale-like view of the perils of scientific arrogance.

More importantly though, the sequence in the Abbey is the first use of an idea that **Doctor Who** would employ frequently and very successfully throughout the years: the contrast of the alien with

a recognisable landmark. Daleks on Westminster Bridge, Cybermen outside St Paul's, Slitheen spaceship crashing into Big Ben: they all have a lineage stretching back to what was, in the lost television episode, Nigel Kneale's gloved hands poking through a photograph!



The original Transformers:
Top: Victor Caroon
Bottom : Noah and Meglos



2. The Mark

The huge ratings success of *The Quatermass Experiment* demanded a sequel and, in 1955, *Quatermass II* was broadcast by the BBC. Reginald Tate had passed away and so, at short notice, John Robinson stepped up to play the part. Unlike the Doctor, the change of actors didn't really change



John Robinson as
Quatermass 2

the character very much, though he does become even more abrupt. We also see a greater ruthlessness in *Quatermass* that it's hard to imagine from the Doctor, especially when he refuses to stop to help a family in danger from armed guards. He is still very much the lead character and the source of wisdom.

A tale of alien infiltration, meteorite landings and possessed humans, *Quatermass II* is perhaps the most notable example of Kneale's influence on **Doctor Who**. Much to Kneale's displeasure, **Doctor Who** all but remade it.

Spearhead from Space launched the Pertwee era with a bang, in full colour and with imagery that would have been very familiar to some viewers. The opening shot of a radar station, the countryman discovering a mysterious meteorite, the sinister industrial site that has already been infiltrated by a gestalt alien presence and the eldritch horror at the heart of it had all previously featured in *Quatermass II* – and first-time round were considered frightening enough that one episode carried a warning for such content. *Spearhead* was the first example of a trick Holmes would often employ – using borrowed ideas to simultaneously scare some viewers while playing a game of spot-the-reference with others. It's notable that it was Kneale's work that presented itself as a good basis for this kind of **Doctor Who** story. Kneale was less than flattered by the homage.

As Season 7 of **Doctor Who** is so rich in Kneale-flavoured imagery, it has often been said that this is where the **Quatermass** influence first really made its presence felt on the programme. In fact, it could

be seen as the culmination of a process that had begun as early as Patrick Troughton's first season. *The Macra Terror* clearly draws on George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* for some of its dystopian imagery, but the authoritarian voice extolling the colonists to work harder, sounds as much like the voice heard in the alien food production plant in *Quatermass II*. More tellingly, the *Macra*, like the aliens faced by *Quatermass*, are dependent on a gas refined by the human slaves and they go into a state of absolute panic when it is threatened. The colony in *The Macra Terror* is the same kind of new, cheerful but sinister place as the modern town which houses the factory workers in *Quatermass II* and in both cases, it is the complicity of people, albeit under influence, that makes the aliens' plans possible.

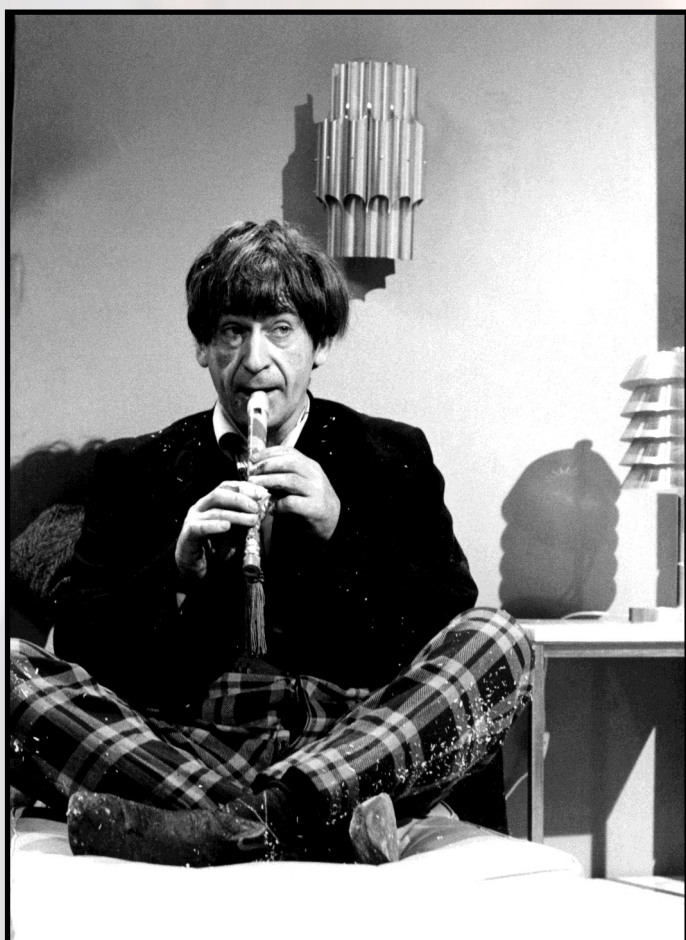


Industrial Accidents/Alien Infection in
Quatermass II (above) and
Doctor Who: Inferno (below)

Fury from the Deep similarly uses a modern, industrial setting as a home for shapeless terrors and possession. The susceptibility in the Troughton era of authority figures such as Hobson to going mad or being taken over has precedent in the wholesale control of the British establishment by the aliens in *Quatermass II*. *The Faceless Ones* similarly turns what is supposed to be a fun, safe and contemporary place – an airport – into a

a realm of identity loss with those we should be able to trust made dangerous. Kneale's object of suspicion is the newly made technological environments and the petty autocrats behind them. This resonates strongly throughout the Second Doctor's era, where time and again, technological settings and those who inhabit them are shown to be less than they are cracked up to be and frequently susceptible to possession by something both alien and ambiguous. In **Doctor Who**, this reaches its peak with *The Invasion* which offers us the ultimate technocrat in Tobias Vaughn and his plan to create an efficient society devoid of any individuality bar his own. It's probably no coincidence that in this story the Cybermen are spoken for by a Planner, an entirely non-humanoid form. *The Invasion* is often seen as a template for the Pertwee era, but it could just as easily be described as embodying the anxieties that underlay much of the Troughton era.

Again though, we see an important difference between the Doctor and Quatermass. Robinson's Quatermass is a terse man, bitter at the failure of his rocket programme and horrified at the thought of people feeling sorry for him. The second Doctor is a fey, mercurial character, dwarfed by the world around him and winning through because people underestimate him. Put quite simply, the Second Doctor is just more...chill



The Second Doctor—just more Chill!

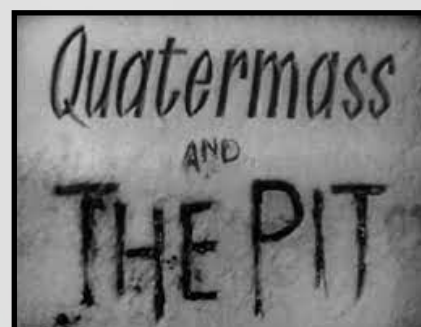
Like its predecessor, *Quatermass II* would spawn a film adaption with a slightly altered title – *Quatermass 2*. Shortly after, Quatermass would be back on TV for his third and most legendary adventure...

3. Hob

Of all the serials, *Quatermass and the Pit*, has made the most lasting impact. Its cultural footprint is comparable to the one **Doctor Who** left with *The Dalek Invasion of Earth* or *Journey's End*. Yet this serial is in many ways the most sedate. Much of it is taken up with Quatermass – superbly played by André Morell - and his colleague Doctor Rooney investigating a space capsule found during excavations for a new building development. They discuss ghost stories, dissect long dead aliens, play with psychic equipment and, as usual, fall out with the military. The threat initially seems very distant. Only in the sixth episode does it become an action piece, with the malign Martian influence unleashing a violent frenzy amongst the people of London.

This is a story where the aliens don't want to invade or take over our bodies – only their ghosts remain, and it is their lasting influence which now makes *us* the monsters. As Quatermass tells us at the end, 'We are the Martians'. In 1973, in a story printed in the *Radio Times* 10th Anniversary **Doctor Who** special, Terry Nation would assert that *We Are the Daleks*. And there are clear similarities between Kneale's Martians and Nation's Daleks. Both, in their organic form, are stunted creatures with nothing human about them. More importantly both believe in absolute racial purity. "The Wild Hunt", which the Martians engage in to purge their society of mutations, has strong similarities to the civil wars which the Daleks engage in throughout their history from *The Evil of the Daleks* to *Revolution of the Daleks*.

It's also worth noticing that *Quatermass and the Pit* contains Kneale's grimmest and most accurate prediction of our future. Whilst discussing the fate of the Martians, Quatermass and Rooney conclude that faced with extinction due to climate change, humanity will carry on squabbling amongst itself and do nothing to avert the crisis. Critics of Chris Chibnall's era of **Doctor Who** attacked him for scripts in which characters make direct, critical statements about the world, seem unaware that he was following in a TV tradition established by Kneale and which in literature stretches back to the beginnings of Sci-Fi and the work of HG Wells.



One thing obvious from *Quatermass and the Pit* is that Kneale learnt a lot from reading the ghost stories of M.R. James. Like one of James' best tales, the story takes its time to build up the atmosphere, gradually leading us to the monster and whatever grim fate awaits the protagonists; a style also at work in *The Power of the Daleks*, where an alien capsule is unearthed, opened, its content assumed to be dead and then revived through electricity, culminating in a massacre. Of course, the difference here is that the Daleks are very much alive. Like the Martians though, there is a suggestion that they cast a baleful influence on humanity. 'We understand the human mind' gloats one. It's an idea continued in *Evil of the Daleks*, which sees them plotting to infect humanity with the "Dalek Factor", turning them into creatures of hate, effectively proxy Daleks, just as the Martians tried to shape humanity in their image. Interestingly, both stories position Troughton's Doctor in an investigative role, recalling the somewhat Holmesian edge that André Morell brought to the Professor.



Andre Morell as the professor in *Quatermass and the Pit*

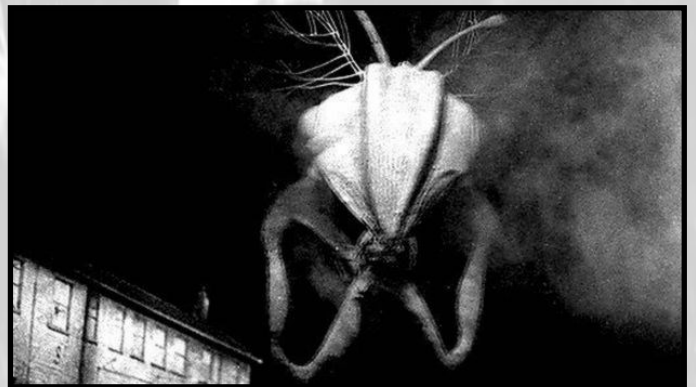
In many ways, I would argue that the Troughton era and the first two years of the Pertwee era are where we see Kneale's influence on **Doctor Who** at its strongest. Interestingly, this period also sees the first cycle of Folk Horror. This is a genre of television drama and film rooted in the landscape and the fear of what may be hidden within it, which has also often drawn on *Quatermass* for inspiration. Although Patrick Troughton's last season would see a move towards space opera in the likes of *The Space Pirates*, Jon Pertwee's first would see ancient terrors return from under the ground in *The Silurians* and then forces from beneath the surface rip apart a parallel Earth in *Inferno*. If the Kneale influence during this time properly begins with *Power of the Daleks*, it peaks in 1971 with *The Daemons*, a tale which is both very much in the mould of *Quatermass and the Pit* and the first full-on example of Folk Horror in **Doctor Who**.

The setting of *The Daemons* tells us straight away that we are in Folk Horror territory – a village that feels like it belongs to another time, a religious

authority figure who is in fact pursuing an evil agenda of his own and the unearthing of an ancient, inhuman source of power. The villagers may not have a Wicker Man and the Master may not be posing as the Witch Finder General, but the touch of Satan's claw is clearly being felt, albeit in the form of the alien Azal. The influence of *Quatermass and the Pit* shows itself both in the discussion of the lingering image of devils in the human consciousness and the revelation that our development has been shaped as part of a centuries-long experiment. The Third Doctor's slide show and lecture to his UNIT colleagues is perhaps the character at his most Quatermass-y. No wonder he didn't get on with his second incarnation.

Like the Martians, the Daemons seem to be a race headed for extinction with Azal the only surviving member. It's a story which forgoes the 60s view of humanity as moving towards a new future but needing the Doctor to protect them, in favour of one in which they are vulnerable to ancient influences that have been present for millennia. It is no longer the threat of becoming Cybermen which hangs over us, but rather our own genetic inheritance.

The Daemons also borrows from *Quatermass* by having the willingness of a human to self-sacrifice to save the hero as key to the story's resolution. Whereas *Quatermass*' friend Rooney does indeed die to curb the Martian influence, Jo Grant survives, her better nature overwhelming Azal's – presumably very cynical – comprehension of living beings.



Hob and Azal manifest!

Image of the Fendahl reveals that the entirety of humanity has been used to bring about the rebirth of a gestalt creature which feeds on death itself. This is clearly a far darker idea than Azal's experiments with human intellectual development. Rather than a super being, we discover at the core of our evolution a life form which is hostile to just about everything and with no other desire except to feed. This echoes the brutality of the Martians and the Knealsian view of humanity as irretrievably flawed. And almost everyone we meet in *Image* is either mad, lying, or deluded. The closest we have to a representative of humanity's better side is old Martha Tyler, and even her knowledge is shown to be founded on misunderstanding the true meaning of ancient beliefs. That the Fendahl's power is contained in a skull is also significant, as it was the discovery of a skull which set about the digging of the pit where the Martian capsule was discovered. *Daemons* and *Image* are like the twin children of *The Pit*, one distinctly nastier than the other.



**“Alas, poor Fendahl!”
The Fourth Doctor goes out of his skull**

Also taking a rather cynical view of human nature is 1984's *The Awakening*. Set in an isolated village where the inhabitants are re-fighting the English Civil War, the story itself feels like it has fallen through a time slip from the 1970s. It's most remarkable image, the stone face of the Malus erupting from a church wall, recalls the description of the Martians as being like gargoyles. However, whereas the Martians create violence in humanity to perpetuate their legacy, for the Malus it is a means of sustaining itself.

The notion of an alien life form moulding humanity in its image was twice visited in the 2007 series. *Daleks in Manhattan/Evolution of the Daleks* sees the Cult of Skaro all but resigned to their species' fall and seeking to create human Daleks. An optimistic note is struck with the Dalek Human hybrid Sec realising that there is more to humanity than hate, though the Daleks themselves are unable to move past their fascist nature and eventually kill the hybrid for his impurity. The series finale, *The Sound of Drums/Last of the Time*

Lords gives us the series' single darkest vision of humanity's future: the Toclafane, psychotic disembodied heads from the dying days of the universe who are little more than malicious children. This feels very much in accord with Kneale's view of where our future would probably take us if we weren't careful, but it's also striking that the Master is using the Toclafane as part of a plan to establish a new Gallifrey. Both these 2007 stories show species that are all but extinct trying to recreate themselves by proxy just as the Martians did. Both also focus on a theme that also runs like a seam through *The Pit*. Can we ever escape the worst of our nature? *Daleks in Manhattan* and *Last of the Time Lords* both conclude that we can, but only for a while. Sec's discovery of empathy is not enough to save him from the rest of the Daleks and even if humanity can unite for long enough to restore the Doctor, they will still become the Toclafane in the end.



**Dalek Sec: “I am your future!”
Toclofane: “Ahem...?”**



It took a while for Hammer to bring **Quatermass and the Pit** to the big screen, but eventually they did in 1968, with Andrew Keir as an anguished version of the Professor, spreading Kneale's influence beyond Britain and into the wider world of international horror. Shows like *The X Files* and film makers such as John Carpenter would cite the film as a powerful inspiration and Stephen King appears to have been a fan too. It's possible that the film's relocation of the buried capsule to a London underground tunnel provided inspiration for urban wyrd films such as *Death Line*, *An American Werewolf in London* and *Creep*, which also located horror in such places. The strong presence of the military in both versions of *The Pit*

almost certainly shaped Doctor Who producer Derrick Sherwin's development of the idea which became UNIT and it's possible that the combative but humorous relationship between Keir's Quatermass and Julian Glover's sardonic General Breen, was a model for the Doctor/Brigadier relationship of the Pertwee era.



Dealing with the Military Mindset: The Third Doctor and the Brigadier, Quatermass and General Breen

4. An Endangered Species

1979 is an often-discussed year in British history, seeing as it did a series of strikes and the rise to power of Margaret Thatcher. It was also the year in which Professor Quatermass returned for one last outing.

If Britain was a country ill at ease with itself, then no-one was more ill at ease with Britain than Kneale. Almost every scene of the simply titled *Quatermass* drips with anger and despair. The country has broken down, youth gangs run amok, and a hippy-like cult of youngsters called Planet People stage gatherings at stone circles where they are mysteriously taken up by an unseen alien presence which has come to harvest humanity, possibly just for some form of snuff powder. Into all of this is flung the embittered figure of Quatermass himself, played with solemn melancholy by John Mills. He has turned his back on his old dreams of rocketry and exploration but finds himself in a situation where he must use the very same nuclear devices he once railed against to Breen.



John Mills — the fourth actor to portray Quatermass on TV

This *Quatermass* story is clearly not supposed to be disco-era fun in any way. Almost everyone dies and in most cases their deaths make no difference. The Planet People may look like hippies, but their persecution of a Jewish scientist suggests they are as much Nazis as the Martian-influenced Londoners of *The Pit*. This is a series where it is not enough for a man to discover his wife and children have been killed, he also finds the dead body of their pet dog. The ending of the series is an ending for Quatermass and his family line.

Although it did exert some influence on the 1990s' *Doctor Who – The New Adventures* novels, especially Andrew Cartmel's *War* trilogy, the 1979 series didn't really make much of an impact on the TV series. However, in 2009, just as the Folk Horror Revival was getting underway and in the aftermath of the 2008 banking crisis, *Torchwood – Children of Earth* revisited its themes to great success. Like the aliens which the professor encountered, the 456 are harvesting the young of Earth for their own pleasure and this time it is explicitly stated that they are using them as narcotics. We see society begin to break down, political corruption and a hero ultimately forced into killing a family member.

And yet whilst *Children of Earth* has a lower body count than *Quatermass*, where someone seems to die every 10 minutes, it is far more disturbing than Kneale's story. This is because the 456 can articulate their sinister desires and partly because Captain Jack must confront the aftermath of his choice at the end which the Professor is at least spared. But more importantly, *Children of Earth* succeeds because it invites us to feel pity for those being harvested, whereas *Quatermass* seems to view the young with such disgust that it can't invoke pity for the Planet People, even though they are being driven against their will. The *Torchwood* series also does not shy away from showing the full complicity of the establishment in the giving of children to the aliens. For Kneale, the young are a threat to the old. In *Torchwood* this is turned on its head and the results, while less graphic, are far more upsetting. *Children of Earth* shows not just the horror of an alien race, but the horror of those who choose whose lives are disposable.



"Ley! Ley! Ley!" Quatermass tries to get through to the Planet people

5. *Memoirs*

Although the 80s and 90s saw rumours of further adventures for Bernard Quatermass, the only actual production was a short radio series *The Quatermass Memoirs* which saw the return of Andrew Keir to the role. It was broadcast in 1996, the same year that the Doctor made a brief return to the screen in the TV Movie and had his own rather odd radio adventure in *The Ghosts of N-Space*.

It took until 2005 for both shows to return in force but whereas the Ninth Doctor and Rose set out on new adventures, for Professor Quatermass (played this time by Jason Flemying) it brought a return to his very first tale.



“No, I’m not the Professor, but I might be the Doctor.”



Jason Flemying the 2005 production of Quatermass

And in an act of perfect synchronicity, Quatermass’ assistant Doctor Gordon Briscoe was played by none other than David Tennant, who would, later in 2005, be announced as the Tenth Doctor in the newly revived **Doctor Who**.³

Quatermass was looking back while **Doctor Who** was looking forward. And whilst the Doctor’s adventures will continue into 2023 and beyond, there is still no sign of a return for the redoubtable Professor. Yet his influence remains. In many ways, the **Quatermass** serials form a lingering, inescapable series of images that have returned to haunt **Doctor Who** at different points in its long history and may well do so again in the future.

It may even be that they occupy the same universe. Both *Remembrance of the Daleks* and *Planet of the Dead* refer to Bernard Quatermass and his British Rocket Group. Perhaps the Doctor has already met him, but if so, which of the many professors, from Tate to Fleming was it?⁴ Or was it one we have yet to meet? Perhaps contact is still to be established...



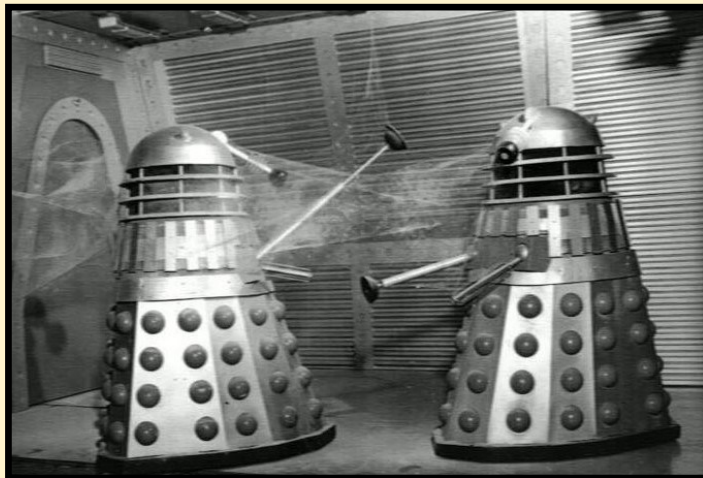
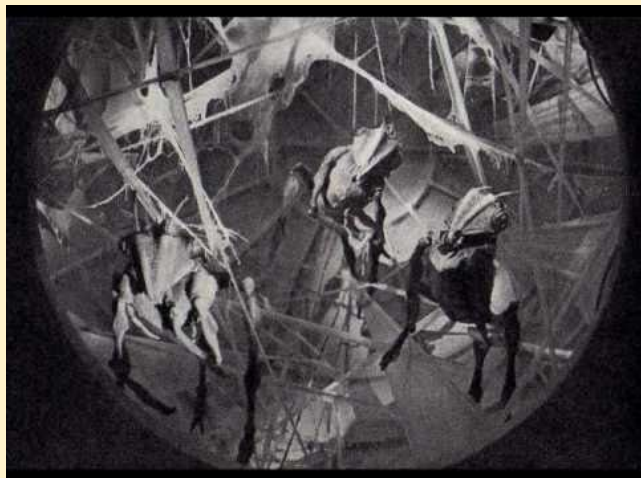
FROM THE PROFESSOR'S NOTEBOOK...

- 1) *The Mutants* was the overall story title for the second serial (serial code B) in *Doctor Who*’s first season (1963-64), which introduced viewers to the Daleks. Although Skaro’s finest were thought to be wiped out at the end of the 7-part story, they captured the public’s imagination and the Daleks have, of course, gone on to become the Doctor’s greatest returning enemies. In most overviews of the Doctor’s adventures, serial B is often referred to as *The Daleks*, to save it from being confused with the later Third Doctor serial *The Mutants*, screened in 1972.
- 2) *The Mutants* (1972) - the other one, not to be confused with the first Dalek story (see above).
- 3) During rehearsals for *The Quatermass Experiment* in 2005 that David Tennant was offered the role of the Tenth Doctor in *Doctor Who*. This casting was not announced to the public until later in April, but his fellow cast members, and crew became aware of the speculation surrounding Tennant. In the live broadcast Jason Flemying changed Quatermass’s first line to Tennant’s Dr Briscoe from "Good to have you back, Gordon" to "Good to have you back, Doctor." Seeing as the programme was broadcast live in tribute to the original Quatermass serial from 1953, it is to Tennant’s credit that he didn’t “corpse”. His smile to Flemying is, however, probably broader than rehearsed.
- 4) Many TV shows and films have featured a change of lead actor, but would it be a huge stretch of the imagination to suggest that Quatermass’s changing faces had a further influence on *Doctor Who*? In 1966, when William Hartnell became too ill to carry on as the Doctor, the production team hit upon the idea of the Doctor “renewing” his “old, worn out body”. Thus Patrick Troughton was cast as the Doctor with a different face and personality but was essentially the same being... rather like good Professor Quatermass himself.

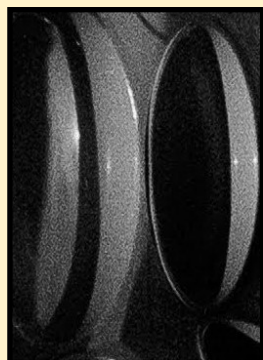
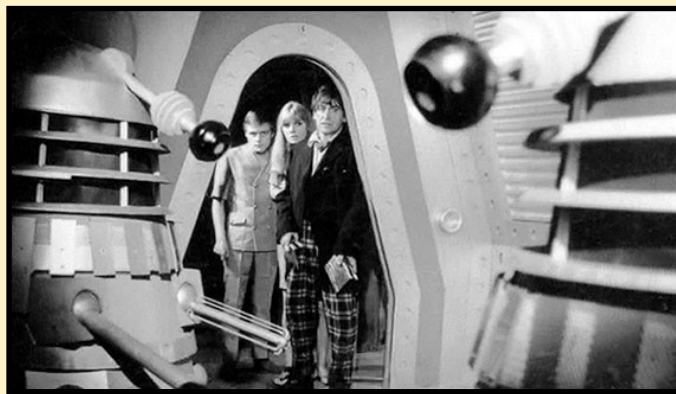
En-Capsulated Symmetry!

At the conclusion of *Imps and Demons*, Part 3 of **Quatermass and the Pit**, Quatermass and General Breen unseal a hidden chamber in the alien capsule and observe the cobwebbed husks of three long-dead Martians. A thread holding one of the Martians snaps and the creature's husk drops a few inches further down the web, causing Breen to jump back in shock,, although Quatermass says: "It's alright, they're dead." To this day, conflicting accounts of whether the thread breaking was accidental or planned is unclear, but it made for a brilliant jump scare for viewers. Breen's reaction takes place in the reprise at the beginning of the next episode, so the "drop", if accidental, was incorporated into the action by director Rudolph Cartier.

Nearly eight years later, **Doctor Who** emulated (or completely plagiarised) this sequence in Patrick Troughton's debut story *Power of the Daleks*. In the closing minutes of Episode One, the newly regenerated Doctor and his young companions Polly and Ben enter a secret compartment in a mysterious alien capsule to find two long dormant Daleks — covered in cobwebs. One of the Daleks' sucker arm suddenly drops from its raised position, causing Polly to yelp in surprise. But this isn't the cliffhanger—that honour belongs to a Dalek mutant scuttling across the floor and into an air vent. Director Christopher Barry was quite open that the sucker arm dropping was directly influenced by the Martian dropping in **Quatermass and the Pit**.



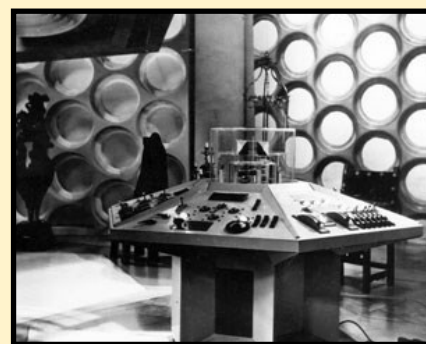
This isn't the only similarity to be found in both stories. The frightened workman edging down the corridor in the Martian capsule in *Quatermass and the Pit* is echoed in *Power of the Daleks* by Ben and Polly's cautious progress behind the Doctor into the Capsule chamber containing the inert Daleks.



Coincidentally, the Martian capsule's bulkheads seem to be made up of roundels... now *where* have we seen something similar?

Could production designer Peter Brachacki have been influenced to create the iconic roundel walls in the TARDIS — maybe subconsciously — by the work of Clifford Hatts, the set designer for **Quatermass and the Pit**?

Sadly, with both men long gone, the answer has been lost to time.



A Portrait of the Artist

RAINE SZRAMSKI

INTERVIEWED BY NICK MAYS

The Whoniverse is a melting pot of talent, from the makers of the programme itself, the script writers and of course the fans. Many of those fans have themselves directly contributed to the success of Doctor Who over the years, either as writers and artists for official and unofficial publications. Raine Szramski is one such artist whose works have appeared in official and unofficial publications- - including GTLWR.

Raine lives in Arizona and has been a Doctor Who fan for many years. She says that it's no secret that she's a "huge geek and enormous Doctor Who fan". Her artistic output not only includes *Doctor Who*, but also *Blake's Seven*, *Hammer Horror* and an eclectic mix of other sci-fi/fantasy

subjects. "I'm an artist/ illustrator/ cartoonist / writer/ comic book artist - quite a mouthful, all that," says Raine, "And there's a chance you may have stumbled across some of my cartoons on various social media sites."

Raine posts most of her artwork for free online because she loves sharing it and getting feedback. Recently her artwork has graced a cover of an issue in Titan Comics' *Twelfth Doctor* line, whilst she also contributed illustrations for the BBC book *Doctor Who: The Women Who Lived*.

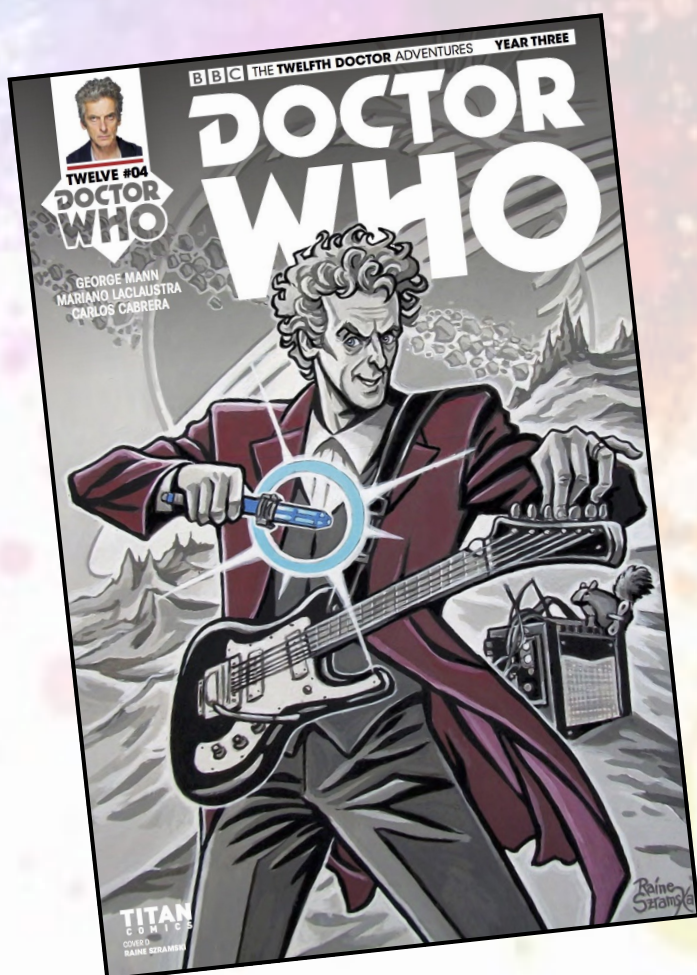
In this issue, Raine talks to Nick Mays about her art, her motivation and, of course, her love for our favourite Timelord...

GALLIFREY THE LONG WAY ROUND: So, to start with the obvious question Raine – how old were you when you (or your family) discovered that you had artistic talent, and what were your first notable works of art?

RAINE SZRAMSKI: I think my family noticed for the first time that I was artistically inclined was when I drew all over the furniture and walls and the side of the house (which had to be repainted.) I've been drawing ever since I can remember. I was usually the class artist in school. Even then, I was drawing fan art – usually of cartoon characters, or Godzilla. I was a little girl who really liked monsters and science fiction, which is mostly because my dad shared his enthusiasm for those things with me. It wasn't long before I started writing my own stories and drawing pictures for them. And to no one's surprise, I'm still doing that, decades later.

GTLWR: Did you ever pursue art as a subject as school/college/university?

RS: Yes, I went to two different art schools in the 1980s. I majored in illustration at Moore College of Art in Philadelphia, and then transferred to Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, which is where I graduated.



GTLWR: And when did Doctor Who come into your orbit? I take it you're a fan?

RS: Yeah... just a little...? Because I live in the US, my first exposure to **Doctor Who** had been on our local PBS television station. In the afternoons after school was done, they would show episodes with Jon Pertwee and Tom Baker. (This was the early seventies then, and all we had were the Third and Fourth Doctors to watch.)

The first episode of **Doctor Who** I ever saw was *Terror of the Autons*, which was almost the *last* episode I ever saw - because it absolutely terrified me. Roger Delgado was making a plastic chair squish all over some poor guy. But a tall man in fancy clothes ended up defeating him and saving the day. And he knew some kind of martial arts and had a yellow car. I was hooked.

Years later, I found out that I was born the same week that the very first episode of **Doctor Who** aired. "Doctor Who" and I are the same age, to the week.

GTLWR: So what does a girl from Arizona love about a 60-year-old British Sci-Fi show? Is it the quirkiness?

RS: Well, I'm not *originally* from Arizona. I grew up on the other side of the country in New Jersey, and only moved to Arizona when I was an adult. (And Arizona felt a lot like moving to Mars when I first got here.)

What I love about *Doctor Who* is its wonderful weirdness, which might have to do with its inherent Britishness. The show could be whimsical and downright bizarre, then abruptly terrifying. And then it could be very silly — and then suddenly very profound. That it could repeatedly change its lead actor so that the show could go on for decades— that was just a simply brilliant idea. Its episodes could also fit into any kind of storytelling genre, be it science fiction, fantasy, horror, mystery, etc. The Doctor's adventures have unlimited potential.

GTLWR: You have a very distinctive style of rendering the various Doctors and their companions – they always seem to have a twinkle in their eyes and are usually full of *joi de vivre*. Is that intentional on your part?

RS: Ah, thank you so much. Here's a secret: I pose for most of my Doctor pictures myself, either using a mirror or my laptop camera to take reference photos. Basically, it's me playing pretend. I think that having drawn cartoons for so many years also helps me exaggerate the drawings a little, too.



Someone asked me this before and there's a simple trick to getting a twinkle in their eyes: just add a small white dot of light to each pupil, from wherever the light source is coming from. This makes the eyes look more "alive".

GTLWR: Do you ever "go dark" with your creations?

RS: By "going dark", do you mean doing darker subject matters? **[Yes]** I've done some darker things over the years. In the early 1990s, some of my first professional jobs were for horror comics, specifically the old *Child's Play* comic. Not something I probably would have chosen to do at the time, but it had been offered as work and I had needed the experience. I've also done a lot of early paintings and drawings of John Constantine and Sandman characters, mostly as portfolio pieces to show DC Comics. (I had been a big Vertigo fan.)

GTLWR: Who (ahem) is your favourite Doctor to draw?

RS: Anyone who knows me knows that I adore the 12th Doctor and Peter Capaldi. He's probably the Doctor I've drawn the most. But I love all the Doctors (of course)! I especially love to draw the older doctors because of how much character their faces have. (Patrick Troughton, for instance,



The evil Servalan, as portrayed by Jacqueline Pearce and Tarrant (Stephen Pacey) based on the *Blake's 7* episode *Sand*, written by Tanith Lee. Pearce cited this as her favourite episode of *Blake's 7*.

pretty much draws himself.) I also have a fondness for Paul McGann and the Eighth Doctor because, for years, he had been the last Doctor that we thought we were getting. And I loved the many Eighth Doctor novels and the Big Finish stories in the Wilderness Years.

GTLWR: Have you ever met any Doctor Who actors and, if so, what do they think of your likenesses of them?

RS: I've only met a few of the actors long enough to talk to them and show them my artwork. A few friends have also shown them my artwork when I wasn't there. For instance, my friend Sandra showed John Hurt a copy of my sketch of the War Doctor and he asked her if she extra copy that he could have. (Luckily, she did!

The first Doctor I ever met was Colin Baker, and he was so wonderful and patient with my nervousness. He was also very kind and encouraging. "Take deep breaths, my dear!" he told me because my hands were shaking so bad when I showed him his picture. He liked that I had put Frobisher in the picture and that I had given the Sixth Doctor a blue cat pin. Paul McGann thought that my drawing of him looked a bit like his father.

As for Peter Capaldi, I think he felt funny looking at pictures of himself and he wanted to see how I'd done the other Doctors. I had made a little book of all my Doctor Who art at the time to give to him as a gift at a convention in Austin. He had told me how important he considered fan art to be, that it helped to promote the show. "The BBC doesn't have a lot of money." Because he also went to art school, he asked if I use gouache to do my pictures. (Yes, I do.)

GTLWR: What is your process of rendering a drawing or painting?

RS: I work traditionally. (Well, the old-fashioned way.) I start with a sketchbook drawing, which I then enlarge and trace onto better paper so I can ink and paint it. I use gouache, which is a thicker watercolor paint. Sometimes I'll also add colored pencils and chalk, depending on what I think it needs. Finally, I scan the picture into Photoshop to touch it up so I can share it online.

GTLWR: Of course, some of your artwork has appeared in official Doctor Who publications – The Titan Comics cover art of the 12th Doctor for example - were you proud of this?

RS: Yes! I was *extremely* excited to have gotten a chance to do a Titan cover. I'd gotten to choose which Doctor I wanted to do, so of course, I picked Twelve. Just to see my artwork on a cover in a comic book shop was a dream come true. It was my first one.

Later, I also contributed some artwork to the BBC book, *Doctor Who: The Women Who Lived*, and got to do an illustration of one of my favorite companions, Bill Potts, which I was also really proud of. (One of my few full-color illustrations, as well.)



When Raine met Peter ...



A Raine favourite: Bill Potts, which appeared in the BBC book *The Women Who Lived*

GTLWR: Reading your blog recently, I came across a debate about the recent Hollywood writers' strike. As a writer myself and having worked as a freelance for many years, I can sympathise with the writers. Some people seem to think you do it all for fun and just to see your name in print. As an artist yourself, you clearly have strong views on this, as you expressed in the blog debate. After all, you do the work, so you should get paid, right?

RS: People can take creative people for granted, especially in the entertainment industry. It's a craft to being a writer, an artist, musician, actor, or sculptor—it requires not only skill, but patience and devotion. As with any job, it can be grueling and sometimes frustrating work, too. We can turn on our favorite shows and just expect them to be *there* for our entertainment, and we don't always see the great amount of creative effort it takes for that production to be *made*. It didn't exist in a vacuum, and a team of people needed to come together to make it a reality. And those people, because it's a service that they provide for audiences, should be paid for their hard work.

Sometimes creators share their work online or in publications without pay because they want to show people something that they're proud of. But that is their own generosity, and it should never be taken for granted, should not be expected of them to provide their skill and talent for free.

And don't even get me started on A.I. and that terrifying rabbit hole.

GTLWR: Do you make a living from your art or do you have to do a "proper job" too?

RS: Sadly, I don't make a living with just my artwork. I don't make enough money from it to do so, so I need to keep a full-time "day job." I wish I didn't have to, but there's no shame in needing to supplement your income. It helps give me health insurance, too. Someday, I still hope to make a living from my creative work; but until then, I need to pay my rent!



Cartoon © The Oatmeal

GTLWR: So,,, what about the monsters and villains in Doctor Who? You have tackled several of those artistically, so which are your favourites?

RS: I've always been partial to the Master (and Missy). When I saw my first *Doctor Who* episode at age nine, I'd come into the middle of it and encountered Roger Delgado as the Master even before I saw the Doctor for the first time. He had terrified me back then, and now, I absolutely love him.

And I love Michelle Gomez as Missy—who had also seen my artwork and said I'd given her "good hair".



Above: Missy Mashes the Daleks!
Below: Avon

GTLWR: What other sci-fi/fantasy subjects do you illustrate?

RS: I've done quite a lot of *Blake's 7* artwork for various fan and charity publications. I've also done some sketches for *Sapphire & Steel*, *Quatermass*, *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, *Star Wars*, *Doctor Strange* and Hammer horror films. With more time, I would love to do more finished artwork for other science fiction and fantasy shows as well.



GTLWR: Can you tell us about your graphic novel *Heaven and the Dead City*?

RS: It was something that I had attempted many years ago and never got further with because I had made the mistake of trying to hand paint hand letter the whole thing on my own, which was a little too ambitious on my part. After doing about one hundred pages of this and realizing how slow I was at it, I decided that the story would probably work a lot better as a prose novel with illustrations. So, that's what I'm working on now. As far as the 100 pages of graphic novel that I did, I've been putting a page a day up on my Patreon, along with commentary. I'm calling it "The Director's Cut." The story is a mix of gothic fantasy and western—with lots of magic and monsters.



Pages from Raine's Graphic Novel *Heaven and the Dead City*

GTLWR: What are you working on now Raine? Are there any more graphic novels in the works?

RS: At the moment, I've started writing the novel version of *Heaven and the Dead City*, which I'll later begin new illustrations for as well. I've still got a stack of illustrations to finish of the fan art sketches of mine that people said that they liked the most and wanted to see painted versions of. Eventually, I would like to put together another charity book of all of my Doctor Who artwork.

GTLWR: Finally, do you think Doctor Who will carry on to reach 70 years and will you still be illustrating characters from our favourite show?

RS: I hope so! Absolutely. It's a show about change and I think that it can go on forever, for a century. The show can keep regenerating over and over again for new audiences. There's just an endless source of stories about the Doctor still waiting to be told. I'm just glad that I was able to contribute to its long history in my tiny way.

GTLWR: Raine Szramski, thank you very much.

RS: My pleasure.

The Doctors—Renegades All!
 Left: The Renegade Doctor
 Far Left: 1,2,3,4,12 from the cover of *Celestial Toyroom* #476



Check out Raine's work at www.Patreon.com/raineszramski

All artwork © Raine Szramski unless otherwise specified



Analysing and attempting to explain and reconcile all those annoying contradictions and outright gaffes in our favourite Sci-Fi and Fantasy franchises

WHO is the Timeless Child? Or Maybe Not...?

CHANGE. A simple word, but a concept which can mean so much. In its 60 years of life, **Doctor Who** has always embraced change. Change goes back as far as 1964 when the Doctor's Granddaughter Susan left the TARDIS crew (or was forced to stay on Earth by her Grandfather), Then the orphan Vicki joined the crew, so setting the template for changing companion line-ups throughout the show's long existence.

Of course, the biggest change came in 1966 when the lead actor, William Hartnell left the show due to ill health and was replaced by Patrick Troughton. But this happened on screen to the amazement of viewers at the time – the Doctor simply... *changed*. He had a new face, a new body and a new personality. This “change” was to become a staple throughout the show as new lead actors came and went. In-universe this process was later called *regeneration*. At the end of the Second Doctor's run of stories, he was revealed to be an alien renegade from his own people, The Time Lords.

And so it goes... Lead actors change, production teams change, season lengths fluctuate, new ideas are brought in, the whole Doctor and Time Lord mythos built upon and changed. In-universe, the Doctor has (or will have) fifteen incarnations known as The Doctor. But then there was a ‘missing’ incarnation, the ‘War Doctor’ who fought in the time war, but chose not to go by the name of Doctor. Again, uber-fan outrage, but now the War Doctor is an accepted part of the show's canon.

It was shown in recent years that regenerating Time Lords could change sex, and thus in due course, we got the first female Doctor in the show's history in the form of the Thirteenth Doctor. This, like so many other changes, caused a lot of controversy amongst some viewers, especially die-hard *uber-fans*. However, consider... The Doctor is an alien with two hearts who travels in a time and space machine which outwardly resembles an old-fashioned police box, and is bigger on the inside. The Doctor can regenerate into a new body. If you can accept all of those concepts, then *why* (or *Y*) should the difference of one chromosome and therefore a change of sex be such a big deal?

Perhaps the biggest and most controversial change came in 2020, during the two-part finale to series 12, *Ascension of the Cybermen/The Timeless Children*. This was when it was revealed that the Doctor had lived many lives before becoming the First Doctor as we know him. Needless to say, showrunner Chris Chibnall's introduction of the Timeless Child storyline produced more uber-fan wails than a host of banshees in an echo chamber... with amplifiers.

But hang on... *is* it such a controversial development? There have been hints as far back as 1976 that the First Doctor may *not* have been the First Doctor after all. Or at least a Time Lord using the name Doctor.

Let's remind ourselves of this big reveal and how the Timeless Child entered the **Doctor Who** mythos-canon...

Hints about the Timeless Child were dropped as far back as the second story of Season 11, *The Ghost Monument* when the newly regenerated Thirteenth Doctor encountered psychic, cloth-like creatures called Remnants. One extracted her suppressed memories of "the Timeless Child" and taunted her about it saying: *"We see what's hidden even from yourself, the outcast, abandoned and unknown."* At this stage, the Doctor had no idea what it meant. Later, in the Season 12 opener, *Spyfall*, the Doctor's old nemesis, the Master told her that Time Lord society was built on a lie but deliberately didn't expand on this.

This storyline was left hanging until developments later that season in the episode *Fugitive of the Judoon*, in which the Doctor and her "fam" (Graham, Ryan and Yaz) arrive in present day Gloucester, where they attempted to stop a platoon of Judoon (sorry) who were hunting down a fugitive.



The fugitive was 44-year-old tour guide Ruth Clayton, even though the Judoon's initial scan showed her to be human. However, Ruth's partner Lee Clayton was revealed to also be a fugitive on the run from an organisation known as The Division. Ruth and the Doctor escaped in Ruth's car and headed towards her childhood home, a discussed lighthouse.

It turned out that Ruth was, in fact, the fugitive sought by the Division. She was a Time Lord who had used a chameleon arch to re-write her DNA as human and stored her memories in a biodata module, disguised as a fire alarm, in much the same way as the Tenth Doctor had done previously to pose as a human (*Human Nature/The Family of Blood*). Ruth had constructed memories so that she could pass as human Ruth Clayton.

Ruth smashed the fire alarm glass, and her Time Lord memories were restored. Meanwhile, the Doctor was outside, following a trace of alien tech on her sonic screwdriver which led her to a small mound. Having dug away the topsoil the Doctor was stunned to find a TARDIS – in the form of a police box, just like her own.

She then was teleported aboard the TARDIS where she met the restored "Ruth" who has now dressed more flamboyantly and was calling herself the Doctor. Neither Doctor recognised each other from their previous or future timelines. At this point, the TARDIS was brought aboard a spacecraft to meet with the Judoon's client, Gat, a Time Lord from Gallifrey's distant past. It turned out that Gat



was a high-ranking Division official who had been hunting their former agent, the Ruth/Fugitive Doctor.

Gat attempted to execute both Doctors, despite the Fugitive Doctor's pleas for her to stand down. The rifle she was pointing at the Doctor's had belonged to the Fugitive, who had previously sabotaged it and it backfired on Gat, killing her. After this, the Fugitive Doctor returned her Thirteenth incarnation to Earth, before departing in her TARDIS. Needless to say, this left the thirteenth Doctor confounded by these revelations.

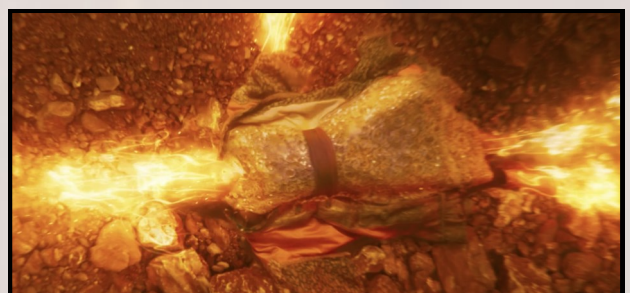
Later, in the series 12 finale, the Master had once again partnered with the Cybermen and brought the Doctor to Gallifrey. However, Gallifrey was in ruins (or at least the Time Lords' citadel), ravaged by the Master in a maddened rage, due to a discovery he had made in the Matrix, the AI repository of all Time Lord memories and knowledge. He had managed to access heavily redacted sections which revealed the story of the Timeless Child and the foundation of Time Lord society.

Using visual memories, the Master showed the Doctor how thousands of years ago, a female Shobogan¹ explorer named Tecteun set off from Gallifrey on a voyage of discovery across space. On a far distant planet, Tecteun discovered a small female child waiting beneath a dimensional wormhole.

The child was adopted by Tecteun, who took her back to Gallifrey. She discovered the child's power to regenerate into a new body after she



suffered a fatal fall from a cliff and regenerated before Tecteun's eyes. Tecteun went on to study the child's power for many years, experimenting on the child and causing it to regenerate at least seven times into progressively older beings of different sexes and skin colours.





in the form of the "Ruth Doctor" the Timeless Child had rebelled against the Division for the actions they were called upon to do and became a fugitive pursued across time and space by her boss, Gat.

Eventually, the Doctor was captured, their memories were

Tecteun was eventually able to isolate the genes necessary to replicate this regenerative ability, She undertook the ultimate experiment, regenerating herself into a new male incarnation. The Second Tecteun eventually spread this power to other selected Shobogans, to create an elite within Gallifreyan society, of which he was a leading member. To contain this special power, he genetically limited the number of regenerations to a maximum of twelve. In time, the elite discovered the secret of time travel, and became known as Time Lords, building a great citadel in which they lived, separate from other, ordinary Gallifreyans. This history was subsequently hidden deep within the Matrix with another explanation being given for the ability to regenerate instead. This became the mythology that all Time Lords believed was their true history.

deeply suppressed, and they were forced to regenerate into the form of a child, who was placed with foster carers in the Shobogan desert lands. Some years later, this lonely child, like certain selected others, showed sufficient aptitude and intelligence to be taken into the Citadel's Academy to study and eventually became a Time Lord, who grew up to once again take the name of Doctor.

By this point, Tecteun and the Division were operating outside of Gallifrey and mainstream Time Lord society, so the young Doctor was considered by the Time Lords to be just another Shobogan initiate, albeit a somewhat restless and difficult student. Eventually, the Doctor stole a TARDIS and ran away from Gallifrey with his Granddaughter, becoming a renegade... or, indeed, a fugitive. Again.

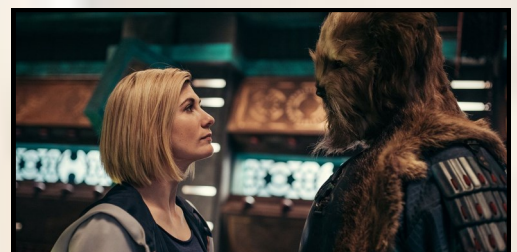


Tecteun and the child were inducted into a clandestine organisation called the Division, led by a Time Lord called Solpado, whose job it was to intervene in time when necessary. The now adult child underwent tests to become a field agent, the results showing that they were the best the Division had ever seen. The child spent many years and regenerations working for the Division. It was here implied that the eight pre-First Doctor images glimpsed



during the Fourth Doctor's mind battle with renegade Time Lord Morbius (*The Brain of Morbius*, 1976) were incarnations of the Child-Agent. Later,

The story was picked up again in the six-part Season 13, Flux, in which the Thirteenth Doctor faced a battle against the Division



and Time itself. She pursued a Lupari warrior named Karvanista, who was initially hostile to the Doctor. Karvanista eventually explained his former role as the companion of the Fugitive Doctor, at a time when they both worked as agents for The Division. He was unable to tell her more about their time together due to a deadly failsafe implanted by the Division.

At the conclusion of her battle against the Division, the Thirteenth Doctor met with Tecteun, again in female form. Tecteun was ultimately erased from existence, but she gave the Doctor a biodata module containing the memories stolen from her by the Division. However, the Doctor chose not to open it, placing it deep within the TARDIS's own memory banks.

Phew! Got all that?

Of course, this leads us to a LOT of questions, so here Squaring the Circle will attempt to suggest answers to some of them...

Is the Fugitive Doctor from an alternate reality, maybe a parallel universe?

According to the Showrunner Chris Chibnall in various interviews, no. She is definitely the Doctor from our universe.

In a flashback sequence, the Thirteenth Doctor recalls her mind battle with Morbius from 1976's adventure *The Brain of Morbius*, in which we see faces prior to the First (William Hartnell) Doctor. Were these really the Doctor and if so, are they from the Doctor's earlier life as an agent for The Division?

Then Producer Phillip Hinchcliffe, confirmed these faces were indeed meant to be those of the Doctor pre-Hartnell. Hinchcliffe even said, when interviewed in the 1996 reference book *Doctor Who: A History of the Universe*, 'It is true to say that I attempted to imply that William Hartnell was not the first Doctor.'

Later research published in *Doctor Who Magazine* showed that there was indeed a definite plan at the time to portray earlier Doctors, with members of the Production team donning historical costumes and then being photographed for this sequence. It was certainly Show runner Chris Chibnall's intention to incorporate the "Morbius Doctors" into the Doctor's earlier timeline and, therefore, into the show's canon.



Okay, so if these eight Morbius Doctors are part of the Doctor's earlier timeline, where does the Fugitive/Ruth Doctor fit in?

It's most likely that these Doctors precede the Fugitive Doctor, as it was in the guise of Ruth that the Fugitive Doctor hid out on Earth. That said, in the Morbius mind battle, the "Ruth" Doctor's image doesn't appear (real world-wise for the obvious reason she wasn't even thought of then). However, as she had become a human, it's possible that the mind lock apparatus didn't pick up on her.

This also indicates that these weren't versions of the Renegade Doctor hiding out on Earth, as they would have been easily detected by Gat, due to their Time Lord physiology. Remember, it was in the form of Ruth that the Fugitive Doctor took on human form and stored her memories and Time Lord essence in the biodata capsule.

The Morbius Doctors seem to be wearing clothes from different points in Earth's history, from Tudor times to Victorian times. What's all that about?

Presumably, this was part of a long game being carried out by the Agent Doctor, taking several regenerations. (Remember that the Timeless Child/Doctor isn't limited to 12 regenerations). Maybe they were on Earth to track

down alien invaders? After all, the Division operated to intervene in Time where necessary. And as **Doctor Who** has shown, Earth, for all that it is one small planet on the edge of an unremarkable galaxy, seems to be pivotal in the great scheme of things. Maybe aliens just like the atmosphere? Or the food?

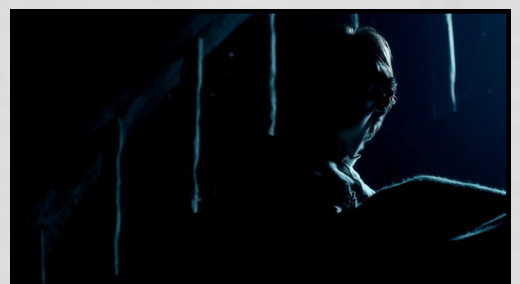
Hang about – in the 10th anniversary story *The Three Doctors*, when the Time Lord President authorises the retrieval of the Third Doctor's earlier selves, he explicitly states that the Troughton Doctor is the Second and that the Hartnell Doctor is the First. So why don't they go further back in the Doctor's timeline. And doesn't *The Brain of Morbius* contradict that?

Remember that the Division was a clandestine organisation, which presumably operated outside of mainstream Time Lord society. It may even have been a forerunner to the equally clandestine Celestial Intervention Agency, who used the Doctor from time to time during (and possibly before²) his exile. So quite simply, the "mainstream" Time Lords *don't know* about the Doctor's previous lives. The same is true of President Borusa who time scoops the Doctor's earlier selves in the 20th anniversary story *The Five Doctors*. But yes, the *Brain of Morbius* does contradict that, but hey – new production team, who cares about *continuity*?



If the Fugitive Doctor was forcibly regenerated back into a child with their memories redacted., why wasn't this picked up by the Time Lords or the Division or CIA when they chose the boy Doctor to become a student at the Time Lord Academy?

Well, as we said, the mainstream Time Lords simply didn't know, and by that point the Division were presumably not operating on Gallifrey. That said, there may still have been Division members infiltrated into mainstream Time Lord society and knew that this was the Doctor, so kept a close eye on him in case his memories returned. Which they never did until the Master broke into the Matrix.



Ah yes, the Master. How did he get to access the redacted parts of the Matrix in the first place? Surely he was a renegade?

At the conclusion of the Tenth Doctor's final story *The End of Time*, the Master is taken back to Gallifrey by Rassilon, who acknowledges that they had manipulated the Master as much as the Doctor. Possibly the Master pretended to be rehabilitated and lived peacefully. Yes, this version of the Master (played by John Simm) later partnered with a female incarnation of the Master, Missy (played by Michelle Gomez) and went up against the Twelfth Doctor in *World Enough and Time/The Doctor Falls*. But with the Master, you never know where in his timeline different incarnations exist. In any event, the Master gained access to the Matrix and found most the story of the Timeless Child. In his rage, realising that his own DNA contained part of the Doctor, he destroyed Gallifrey.

Blimey! How did he do that?



Well, he was partnered with the Cybermen in *Ascension of the Cybermen/The Timeless Child*, and several times previously, so maybe he brought them to Gallifrey and they laid waste to it. He also used the DNA of dead Timelords to create his Cyber Masters, who are capable of regenerating. Or he possibly found and operated the dreaded Moment, the doomsday device which the War Doctor thought he used to destroy Gallifrey and the Daleks, thus ending the Time War. (*The Time of the Doctor*).

Talking of Rassilon, I thought he founded Time Lord Society. Could Tecteun be Rassilon?



Quite simply, no. Rassilon was a very powerful Time Lord leader who may well have known about the Division's operations and kicked Tecteun and the Division out of Gallifrey. He then redacted the Matrix and re-wrote it to support his claim to have been the instigator of the Time Lords' regenerative powers.

So did Rassilon know the Doctor was the Timeless Child?

No, because by then the Doctor had been reverted to an anonymous Shobogon child, hidden in the wilderness outside the Citadel.

Is it possible that the Master got it wrong? He told the Doctor there were redacted parts of the Matrix which even he couldn't access. Maybe the Doctor *isn't* the Timeless Child?

Again, that's possible. In production terms, Chris Chibnall may have inserted that line give a future showrunner a loophole to pick up on or re-write the whole story. So it's possible *that someone else* could be the Timeless Child – *maybe even the Master* – and the Doctor was given that individual's old memories, which were then suppressed. Time Lords can, as we know, store their memories and essence in biodata capsules.



The Fugitive Doctor took part in a war before going rogue. Is this the legendary 'Dark Times' of Time Lord history that's been referenced in the past. And wasn't it hinted that the Doctor was a mysterious being alongside Rassilon and Omega known as "The Other"?

Yes, this battle against the forces of the Ravagers – Storm and Azure – ended the Dark Times. As to the Doctor being The Other, this was hinted at in the last couple of seasons of the classic series, part of the so-called "Cartmel Masterplan", devised by script editor Andrew Cartmel. The Doctor was said to be "more than just a Timelord". However, this story arc never reached fruition with the "resting (a.k.a. cancellation) of the programme by the BBC.



Why is the Fugitive Doctor's in the shape of a police box? I thought that it got stuck like that when the Chameleon Circuit malfunctioned when the TARDIS landed in London in 1963? And surely this TARDIS isn't "our" Doctor's TARDIS anyway?

This is a very interesting conundrum. According to the Titan comic story *Untitled* the Fugitive Doctor arrives in London in 1962, when the TARDIS assumes the shape of a police box. Maybe when the Fugitive Doctor is eventually captured, her TARDIS is damaged and impounded at which point its navigation and chameleon circuits are faulty. The TARDIS is then retired and left in a repair bay for hundreds of years until the First Doctor steals it. As shown in *The Name of the Doctor*, a splinter of Clara Oswald (a.k.a The Impossible Girl) in the Doctor's life-timeline directs him to this specific TARDIS, even pointing out that its guidance controls are "knackered". Maybe this suits the Doctor, as this will make it impossible for the Time Lords to trace him. He hasn't got time to think too much about it as his planned theft has been caught on camera, so he and Susan have to make a speedy exit. Clara seems to be wearing Gallifreyan clothing, so maybe she knows something about the Division and tracks this TARDIS down. Why is she even in the TARDIS bay? Perhaps she's a TARDIS repair engineer?



When the TARDIS lands in the London of 1963, the TARDIS recalls the previous police box pattern and this causes the Chameleon circuit to finally break down, locking the TARDIS in that form forever. Possibly in *Fugitive of the Judoon*, the Fugitive Doctor's TARDIS responds to the Thirteenth Doctor's Time Lord presence and assumes the shape of a police box. After all, the Fugitive Doctor doesn't see the TARDIS is its full, uncovered form and teleports herself and the Doctor aboard. She doesn't seem fazed by the shape of the TARDIS when she steps out of it onboard Gat's spaceship, but then she does have other things on her mind.



Presumably when she leaves Earth, the TARDIS assumes different appearances to blend in where it lands. It's also worth noting that the Fugitive Doctor's TARDIS console and control room is very much in the "classic" or default setting, before the Doctor (and the TARDIS itself) reconfigure the interior.



Surely all this Timeless Child stuff is disrespectful to the memory of William Hartnell, the First Doctor and the original production team?

Why should it be? As stated at the beginning of this article, *Doctor Who* is all about **change**. Doctors change and so do production teams. William Hartnell will always be the actor who first portrayed the Doctor and made the role his own, helping to make the fledgling series a success.

Besides, looking at it from an in-universe angle, the First Doctor *is* the First Doctor as we know him. The child with the redacted memories grows up into *our* Doctor. And remember, "Doctor" is not his real name, it is a name he chose. What's to say that one of those redacted memories was so potent that his subconscious mind chose the name of Doctor for him? After all, names are very powerful and they do much to define us.

Phew again! Make of this what you will, this is Bok's take on the whole Timeless Child saga. My advice is, don't be offended by it, don't get outraged by it. Just go with it. When you think about it, it all fits with **Doctor Who** as we've known it for 60 years.

It's all about **change**. Now I'm going for a lie down...



Footnotes

- 1: Shobogans is a term usually applied to ordinary non-Time Lord Gallifreyans, especially those who live in the dusty outlands beyond the Citadel.
- 2: The so-called Season 6B theory. Please, let's not go there... (Just see *Ish # 5* if you *really* want to know).



ЛАЙКА РАЙНЬФУ

BY RAINE SZRAMSKI



“Let's try this again, shall we?” he said.

She was still weak when she saw the human-shaped man. She knew that the man was not human because his scent was not right - different, but not threatening. She lifted her head and tried to wag her tail, but even that was too much for her.

Her senses were failing her, but the not-human man gathered her limp body into his robust arms and removed her from the terrible metal box.

She did not understand his words at first, then they reshaped and sounded more familiar. His human-like sounds were calming. He removed the harness which had been placed upon her by the scientists, doing this gently because of the sutures which were still fresh from when the doctors had put her on the metal table. The not-human man told her: “We'll do something about this. The TARDIS is a very good physician in her own right. Isn't that true, my old girl?” He directed this comment over his shoulder.

“Old Girl” was someone she could not see. She felt the presence of this other being, someone much bigger than even the man. Old Girl seemed to be all around her, conveying safety and healing. She closed her weary eyes, giving into trust. It was all she had left.

Old Girl and the not-human man were her new protectors. She also heard a third presence, a human female. At least she smelled properly human, not like the man-like creature with his strange scent full of...time?

Was that right? What was time?

Patience, said the largest of the three presences, the one called Old Girl, who seemed to be the very room itself. The room hummed and gave her alternating moments of blissful warmth and coolness, bathing her with comforting fragrances. She felt it vibrate again with that concept she did not understand. *Time.*

Time was as vast as space (that cold blackness into which she had been shot, trapped within her tight metal box) but it also had scents of its own - millions of overwhelming scents.

Too much, too much...

Laika slept and healed.

“Now. Time to expel Sputnik 2 back into orbit where it will fall to earth and disintegrate as it was meant to do.”

This was the not-human man again. From what Laika could gather of their friendship, he and the human woman liked to bark at each other a lot. It was their racket that woke her up.

“Doctor, she needs a proper bed and not a pile of your old clothes!”

“Peri, she needs to learn and become accustomed to my scent. It is imperative that she feels at ease with me. I am quite a complex being to one with such a sophisticated olfactory system!”

“Not to mention, you're not easy on the ears as well. Keep your voice down while you're bragging. She's still trying to sleep and recover!”

“Are you calling me loud? I'll have you know —”

Perhaps later, it might be fun to bark along with them. Her second name, Laika, meant “barker” after all.

Peri. Doctor. I am called Laika.

She made a tentative noise in her throat, prepared to introduce herself. Then she opened her eyes and saw the cat.

It stared back at her with unblinking, gleaming eyes.

A challenge then? Laika growled. ***So be it!***

The new, unexpected creature had startled her so much, she rose to her feet—and then discovered she had been entangled in some sort of lengthy human garment. She shook herself loose of it, then inspected the comfortable pile of clothing in which she had been resting. It smelled just like the Doctor. (*Time, time, time. What was time?*) When she had unravelled herself from the long woolly scarf, she observed it more closely, giving it an industrious sniff.

Oh! This is new!

She became distracted and almost forgot about the cat, riveted by what she saw within the scarf. There were bands of different kinds of brightnesses in the scarf: angry brightness, sunny brightness. There was some darkness there too — deep and frightening and as shadowy as space.

And then, abruptly, she remembered that the cat was still there.

Feeling foolish at letting her guard down around a potential enemy, she spun and barked. If this had been a real cat, the kind that usually annoyed her, it would have bristled and inflated its fur— but this feline was abnormal. It had no fur at all. Or skin. Or whiskers. It did not react to her challenge.

Laika's frustrated barks increased in volume, as did the Doctor's booming voice.

"Splinx!" thundered the Doctor. ***"Leave her alone!"***

Was the Doctor shouting at her? Laika lowered herself submissively. Was she being a Bad Dog? No—she realized that the Doctor was actually shouting at the cat. ***Good! Splinx was the name of the not-cat, and Splinx was being a Bad Not-Cat.***



The not-cat did not even smell like a proper cat, just as the Doctor did not smell like a human.

Only the woman called Peri had the correct scent for her species, which was a familiar Earthly fragrance which gave Laika comfort, made her feel as if she were still with her scientists. But where were her scientists now? Were they in another room, waiting to put her back in the metal box again?

Please don't put me in the metal box again, I'll be a Good Dog.

Where was the metal box now? She began to shake. The not-cat just sat there and stared at her, as defiant and impolite as any other feline she had ever met.

Behind the annoying creature, she saw an open door with a flashing light over it. Beyond this door was not another room or the outside world, but rather a terrifying blackness. Space. And in this darkness was a slowly spinning pale shape, floating in the void.

The metal box.

She began to whimper again. ***I don't want to go in there again. Don't put me back in there.***

"Now, now. We're sending that dastardly primitive thing far away. It's served its inelegant purpose. But you—you are a brave little girl, *Kudryavka.*"

Her ears perked up at the use of her very first name. The scientists had called her this before they had started calling her Laika. She looked at the Doctor with new wonder and her tail gave an uncertain wag.

There was a groaning sound as the metal box, the former Soviet capsule called Sputnik 2, was blocked from her sight by the closing door. The empty, terrifying darkness of space was also shut away from her and she would never see it again. With it out of her sight, her body finally relaxed.

Now her curiosity took over. With tentative steps, she began to walk past the glaring not-cat and approached the circular structure in the centre of this new room, wanting to sniff and study it. The room itself hummed back at her, tranquil. The soothing scent of pheromones told her she was in no danger. This room was as alive as she was, but how could that be?

It was another kind of box and a room at once. It smelled of time. It was Old Girl.

The not-cat approached her now and it smelled of metal and sparks. Its eyes blazed with something new, something different, something she had never known had existed before. It made her think of fire, and heat and danger. One of the bands of brightness on the scarf had matched the angry glow of this false feline's eyes.

She barked again at this new experience. She bowed to the not-cat, also testing its capacity for play. Neither was effective in provoking the irritating gargoyle, which continued to stare, unperturbed.

Old Girl spoke gently, patiently, into her mind:

It's called "red." It's a colour that you've never seen before.

Red. She growled at the metal cat with the glowing, bright – red - eyes.

"Splinx!" shouted the Doctor again. "Oh, leave poor Laika alone now. I don't know what her opinion of cats is, but I'm positive she's never met a robot cat before. Though I do think she might have liked K-9, however..."

The metal cat made a low, dismissive snarl and strutted away with a rhythmic creaking and clanking gait. **Not very quiet for a cat, now, are you? Not a very good cat at all,** thought Laika in triumph. **You're an imposter!**

"Splinx really needs some oiling in her joints," remarked the woman named Peri. "I'm still astonished at how she swallowed that capsule whole and spit it back out into space, like it was a big metal hairball."

"It's useful to have a dimensionally transcendental carrying vessel handy. Even better that she is cat-shaped. However, like most cats, I can only find Splinx when she wants to be found," sighed the Doctor.

"Why did you program her to be so cat-like then?"

The Doctor tapped his lapel and the cat-shaped pin there. "Do you really need to ask?" he grinned, then clapped his hands together, cheerfully. "But it's a canine who needs our attention now, Peri!"

When the Doctor stood before Laika in all his glory—large and startling and dazzling, so bright! — she froze in place, entranced, as if compelled to look at the sun. The Doctor was covered head to foot in... *colours.*

The gentle, encouraging voice of Old Girl came from all around her again.

Colours, the TARDIS told her. *You'll get used to them.*

The Doctor was luminous. He was also drenched with the smell of time. She had no names for all these new kinds of brightnesses that she saw within the Doctor's clothes. The TARDIS helpfully identified them for her.

Yellow—she thought again of the sun and not being able to look at it because it would hurt. Red was the angry, startling, hot colour, the colour of the robot cat's eyes. Orange reminded her of food, as well as fire. Green was cool and alive, like rolling in grass. Blue was cold like water, clear like the sky when the sun was out and shining over frozen Moscow. Purple was all mixed up, cool and hot together, and it confused her so much that she did not think she liked purple at all.

She tried to sniff at all the varying degrees of luminosity, but colours were empty and had no scent. Did they have taste, then? She tried to lick at one of the darker colours on the Doctor's trousers which seemed safer for its lack of intensity. This one, she knew, was called blue.

The Doctor was laughing. "The TARDIS may have healed her up a little too much. She can see colours now and she doesn't know what to make of me." He knelt before Laika, politely allowing her to sniff at his hands before he began to rub at her ears, which made her grin.

"I'm sure your outfit will make her want to go colour blind again," said Peri. "Poor sweetheart. To wake up to that chaotic excuse for a coat."

The Doctor gave an exasperated huff. "First of all, it's a misconception that canines are completely colour blind. Most Earth dogs can see a range between blue and yellow with a variety of greys and browns in between. Secondly, I'll have you know that there are colours in my clothes that even your human eyes cannot detect, Peri. There is a colour in my coat only the Zevarian people can see, which they call zowt. And the Tetraga people have ten primary colours as opposed to your Earthly three, all of which I have tried to incorporate into another splendid ensemble which I shall wear tomorrow. However, you will fail to see its resplendence due to your limited — and shall we say — gauche human vision."

"You mean, my human sense of good taste. Whatever, Doctor," sighed Peri. "I still think poor Laika should have started with something that wasn't an overload on her senses."

"Humans," the Doctor muttered. "Am I right, my dear Laika?" He smiled and rubbed her ears again with more vigour. It felt so good that her tongue rolled out in happiness. When the Doctor said, "*Zdravstvuyte, dobro pozhalovat*," she perked her ears up at the familiar sounds. When Peri looked puzzled, the Doctor said, "Just welcoming her in her native Russian. Though I daresay, the TARDIS is translating for us nicely already."

"I was wondering, Doctor, if the TARDIS can translate Russian, can it also translate... *dog*?"

"Dogs communicate more than just verbally, with body language as well as scent. The way you can see a rainbow of colours, Laika can experience a bouquet of scents."

I can smell time and space now, thought Laika. *But I still can't smell colours.*

Now that Laika understood this whole new sensation, seeing colours was indeed like scent for the eyes. And the Doctor wore a coat of so many dazzling and overwhelming colours, Laika found it hard to look away. She stared at it with the intensity—and impoliteness — that Splinx the cat had stared at her. The Doctor was a whole new universe unto himself.

Now Peri was beside her, stroking her fur. "Look away, Laika, or you'll go blind," she said. Then her hands found the surgery scars in Laika's back. They did not hurt when Peri touched them by accident, but the woman pulled her hands away and gasped. "Doctor, what did they do to her?"

"They implanted medical cables that would be attached to electrodes in order to measure her life signs in space," said the Doctor.

"Barbaric," Peri gasped.

"Science," the Doctor sighed, "at the cost of a non-human life. So many non-humans were sacrificed for science before her, and still many more afterwards. Paradoxically, she was loved by her scientists and they had felt this sacrifice was necessary. And yet, it still broke their hearts, as cruel as it was."

Laika looked up at the Doctor, then at Peri. Her tail thumped the floor. *Can I stay here? Can I stay with you?*

"But we rescued her in the nick of time, Doctor. The Soviets — all of the people on Earth — won't even know this. They'll think she died in the capsule. What's next for her, Doctor?"

The Doctor gave Laika a soft smile. "We'll give her what every dog wants, I think. Companionship."

"That's a nice new pin," the cat woman observed, fingering the Doctor's lapel with a precise claw. "I have yet to see a blue feline inhabitant of any world."

"Blue, to match the TARDIS," boasted the Doctor. Old Girl, the Doctor's blue box, was a distance away, settled on a nearby hillock. "Do you like my new Tetragan coat, Sister? It features all ten primary colours!" He opened his coat and displayed it like the wings of a bird in mating season. Both Sister Ovi, the Catkind woman, and Peri gave him blank looks.

"Right. This magnificence is wasted on beings of such limited colour perception," sighed the Doctor.

"Thankfully," whispered Sister Ovi to Peri, who snickered. The Doctor huffed in disdain. "Et tu, Sister Ovi? Et tu?" Blue-green was the colour of Sister Ovi's eyes. Laika was uncertain whether she could trust this new being who was neither cat nor human, and yet both. She was dressed in flowing white robes and a head-covering, but she had a feline

feline face which smiled as warmly as any of the humans Laika had ever known, dispelling her suspicion. At least this one was not a rude robot pretending to be a cat.

“And who have we here?” the Catkind woman asked. Being well-versed in dog etiquette, she also allowed Laika’s investigative sniffing.

“She was once called *Kudryavka*, but she is known on her home world as Laika. But I imagine that she might choose a new name for herself now, if that is what she wishes.”

Laika wagged her tail at her name. She liked all of her names.

She looked about at the myriad creatures roaming the grasslands and fields, chasing one another, bounding and barking, croaking and yowling and screeching—a cacophony of species at play. There were animals of all sizes that Laika recognized as fellow canines. One was of monstrous proportions, a bulldog as big as an Earth car, who seemed only to enjoy lying contented in the tall grass with his nose in the air and tongue extended. There were other creatures with impossibly long necks and faces more like rodents; they walked on legs like stilts that ended in paddle-like claws. A fox-like animal with spiky fur made a buzzing sound as it ran on six legs past Laika, chasing a rather ordinary-looking terrier. Laika sensed no hostility from any of these more bizarre-looking beasts. She was intrigued.

There were low structures with ramps and hills with perfectly round tunnel entrances, inviting the creatures with shorter legs to investigate. There were rocky ponds ending in cascades where some of the animals splashed and swam. Laika observed other Catkind females carrying out food and toys.

“Doctor, what is this place?” asked Peri.

“An interplanetary animal sanctuary that the Catkind have been maintaining. All of these animals here have been rescued from dire situations from many worlds and are cared for here for the rest of their lives.”

Laika wanted to join this congregation but first implored the Doctor for permission, as a good dog should.

“Of course!” boomed the Doctor. “This is much better than any enclosed space, even one as dimensionally transcendental as the TARDIS. Go forth, my lady!”
back at the Doctor and Peri.



He bent down before her, to ruffle her ears the way she liked. Laika remembered the scientists telling her goodbye, kissing her before placing her inside Sputnik. However, all about her was the sanctuary of open air and no more metal box to hurl her into space again. In a softer voice than she had ever heard him use before, the Doctor told her, "This is your domain now, comrade. It can be your home for as long as you wish. Be a good, good girl, *Kudryavka. Moya dorogaya ledi*. I will come back and visit."

Lastly, Peri came to her and kissed her on her snout. Laika licked the tears from the human female's face. "So much better," Peri grinned. "Much, much better."

Laika took a few paces forward, intending to run to the other animals, but stopped, once more uncertain, looking back at the Doctor and Peri.

"*Dasvidaniya*, dear Laika," said the Doctor. And she knew then that it was finally time. The sky was a smooth powdery plum; a cool white sun sank closer to the amber horizon. Some of the animals, despite being of vastly different species and quite alien to one another, walked side by side in companionship. Others, like the car-sized monster dog, preferred their own company and curled up to sleep in the soft grasses. Still other animals that looked canine to Laika had strange scales or feathers; one even had translucent wings that beat in time to its twin tails. When she recognized fur, she saw that it came in all shades — variations of black, red, brown; even yellow with green stripes. Laika was then approached by a blue spitz-like dog with a lush mane of that colour she distrusted — purple. This new dog seemed friendly enough and expressed an interest in playing.

Well, perhaps purple was not such a bad colour after all.

Scents. Colours. Sounds. So much, so much, Laika thought. She bowed to the other dog.

The purple-maned dog greeted her posture in turn. Despite their alien differences, they both recognized the universal symbol of canine play. The other dog's bark was a bit weird, however, reverberating as if it were in a tunnel. Running together, they traversed the grassy field past the monster dog, past the small rocky waterfalls. The buzzing six-legged fox joined in their fun. The pearly star that served as this world's sun sank lower in the amethyst sky, and all smelled of wonder and adventure. Laika's paws were firmly on the ground — except when she jumped into the air, never high enough to achieve space, no, not ever again.

Old Girl made a groaning sound from the hillock and Laika stood still for only a moment to watch her rescuer vanish into the air as if it had never been there at all. She caught a whiff of the perplexing scent of time again — and knew now that she had all of it in the world.

THE END



"I told you I would come back and visit, Laika!"



“I don't want to be, going through the motions, losing all my drive. I can't even see, if this is really me, and I just want to be – alive.”

A little thing like death of a major character isn't going to derail a show like **Buffy The Vampire Slayer** even when it's the title character herself!

As before, there's a lot of spoilers ahead. It's been designed for those wishing to reacquaint themselves with the programme or who don't mind spoilers. If you haven't watched **BTVS**, then please go and do so, because it's fantastic, and then come back and read the rest of this!

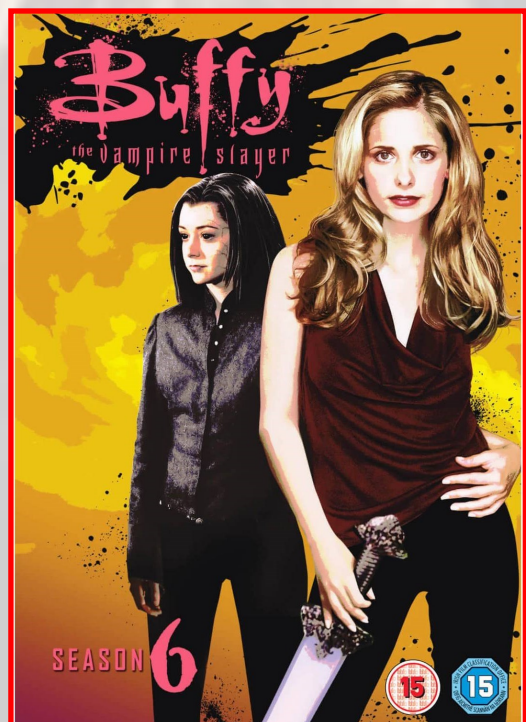
At the end of Season Five, we were presented with the ultimate 'Now Get Out Of That' ending, with the apparent death of Buffy Summers. With the US transmission being ahead, I resisted the temptation to look up what happened next on the internet. I didn't know if **BTVS** was going to do a **Blake's 7** and continue without its eponymous hero or not.

As with Season Five, the VHS box sets were ahead of the BBC2 transmissions, so I binged watch Season Six half a season at a time. For the first time since I'd got into the series, I had to wait almost a year to see these new episodes - previously, the effect of the BBC playing 'catch up' and the regular release of the box sets meant new episodes were never far away. By the final season, we had Sky, so I could watch them much closer to their US transmission dates.

It took me a long time to fully appreciate Season Six, but now I do. It sees a spell to resurrect Buffy in the opening episode that has serious consequences across the whole season. In this season, the demons are mostly the inner demons that most of us have to face at one time or another in our lives.

While I avoided background information on **BTVS** at the time (to avoid also finding spoilers), I've since found out that Marti Noxon took over as showrunner from Season Six, although overall control was retained by series creator Joss Whedon. Whedon was busy setting up a new series, **Firefly**.

So, without further ado, let's look at this darkest of seasons in more detail...



Buffy and Dark Willow adorn the front cover of the S6 DVD

SEASON SIX:

(6.1) BARGAINING (PART 1) by Marti Noxon

"Oh, poor Watcher. Did your life pass before your eyes? Cuppa tea, cuppa tea, almost got shagged, cuppa tea."

A glimpse of how **BTVS** could work without Buffy and how the characters have developed in a few months since her death. Willow has become the leader as well as an even more powerful witch, while Tara has become Dawn's surrogate mother figure, and Spike is far more accepted into the group by Buffy's friends when Buffy is not around.

The BuffyBot has been fixed by Willow. As Giles says: "We need the world and the underworld to believe that Buffy is alive and well." The bot adds a bit of amusement to the episode, especially when she accompanies Dawn to Parent Teacher Day.

On the subject of Giles, he is clearly feeling both guilt and a lack of purpose since the death of Buffy: "I did what any good Watcher would do. Got my Slayer killed in the line of duty."

Ironically it is a conversation with the simplistically-minded and innocent bot that convinces Giles to go home to England, and he's given a touching send-off at the airport by the gang.

By this time, Willow, Tara, Xander and Anya are already putting their plan into action to bring back Buffy. It's very much driven by Willow, who is concerned that Buffy might be trapped in a hell dimension, while Willow is now dealing in very dark magics.

The cliffhanger is quite grim, as a group of demon bikers have discovered that there is no longer a Slayer in Sunnydale, and they disturb Willow's ritual. The Scooby gang scatter, unaware that Buffy has come back alive in her coffin. A strong start to the season. (9/10)

(6.2) BARGAINING (PART 2) by David Fury

"Is this hell?"

A weaker installment, which starts off as something of a run-around, as the demon bikers set alight to Sunnydale.

Poor Buffy wonders around in a state and she watches as her look-a-like, the BuffyBot, is pulled to pieces by the bikers. Eventually she stumbles into her friends, and Xander works out why her hands are bloodied – she had to claw her way out of her own coffin.

Going back to the top of the tower from *The Gift* is a nice touch, while the one thing that stops Buffy throwing herself off is the instinct to protect Dawn, who followed her sister up there to talk her down.

For most of the episode, Dawn has been looked after by Spike. He tells her: "I get that you're scared. But I'm your sitter, so mind me. I'm not gonna let any of those buggers lay so much as a warty digit on you." Even in the absence of Buffy, Spike has continued his redemption.

I used to strongly dislike the opening two episodes, simply because they brought Buffy back to life which I thought it was a massive cop-out, but now I can accept them on their own terms. (7/10)



And she's back!

(6.3) AFTER LIFE by Jane Espenson

There's not an awful lot happening here, apart a still shell-shocked Buffy speaking to her friends for the first time in five months. It's interesting that, apart from Dawn, it's soulless Spike who shows her the most empathy and also displays anger to the rest of the group, who don't understand what they've done.

There's a nice reference back to *The Gift*, in which Buffy told Spike: "I'm counting on you to protect [Dawn]." Later in that episode, Doc says: "I don't smell a soul anywhere on you. Why do you even care?" and Spike replies: "I made a promise to a lady."

Now Spike tells the resurrected Buffy his guilt: "I do remember what I said. The promise. To protect her. If I had done that, even if I didn't make it, you wouldn't have had to jump. But I want you to know I did save you. Not when it counted, of course, but - after that. Every night after that. I'd see it all again, do something different. Faster or more clever, you know? Dozens of times, lots of different ways. Every night I save you."



"How Long was I gone?" "147 days."
Spike consoles Buffy

From the moment he appeared in *School Hard*, Spike was proof that a soulless creature can love. Then it was Drusilla – now it's Buffy.

The 'hitcher' that was created as part of Willow's spell is eventually defeated by Buffy quite easily, before the big moment at the end, as Buffy reveals to Spike that her friends did not pull her from a hell dimension: "I knew that everyone I cared about was all right. I knew it. Time didn't mean anything, nothing had form, but I was still me, you know? And I was warm and I was loved .and I was finished. Complete. I don't understand about theology or dimensions, or any of it, really, but I think I was in heaven."

It's at this point that you realise the writers are not going to take the easy reset button with resurrecting Buffy, this is going to hurt... for a long time. As Spike says during the episode: "That's the thing about magic. There's always consequences." (6/10)

(6.4) FLOODED by Jane Espenson & Douglas Petrie

"It's bills, it's money. It's pieces of paper sent by bureaucrats that we've never even met. It's not like it's the end of the world. Which is too bad, you know, because that, I'm really good at."

Not sure if I'm too keen on the real-life intrusion here. **BTVS** is about fighting metaphorical monsters, not problems with the plumbing and money! Although I do appreciate that Season Six is about facing up to adult responsibilities.

Giles is back and he's delighted to see Buffy and steps straight into a fatherly role. He lays into Willow, telling her: "You were the one I trusted most to respect the forces of nature", which leads to an argument:

GILES: *There are others in this world who can do what you did. You just don't want to meet them.*

WILLOW: *No, probably not, but ... well, they're the bad guys. I'm not a bad guy. I brought Buffy back into this world, and maybe the word you should be looking for is 'congratulations'.*

GILES: *Having Buffy back in the world makes me feel indescribably wonderful, but I wouldn't congratulate you if you jumped off a cliff and happened to survive.*

WILLOW: *That's not what I did, Giles.*

GILES: *You were lucky.*

WILLOW: *I wasn't lucky. I was amazing. And how would you know? You weren't even there.*

GILES: *If I had been, I'd have bloody well stopped you. The magicks you channelled are more ferocious and primal than anything you can hope to understand, and you are lucky to be alive, you rank, arrogant amateur!*

WILLOW: *You're right. The magicks I used are very powerful. I'm very powerful. And maybe it's not such a good idea for you to piss me off.*

Willow then relents, but it's one of the first signs that her increasing power is going to her head.

Meanwhile, this episode introduces the Geek Trio of Warren, Jonathan and Andrew, who hire a demon as a distraction tactic, while they rob the bank.

Straight away, it's obvious that Warren - the robotics genius seen in a couple of Season Five episodes - is the most dangerous of the three (he's happy enough if the demon kills Buffy), while Jonathan - a semi-regular from Seasons Two to Four - is the most sympathetic. (6/10)

(6.5) LIFE SERIAL by David Fury & Jane Espenson

"Why is the Slayer here anyway? She's a student, she's a construction worker, and now she's some kind of selling stuff person? It's like she's completely without focus."

This episode brings some much-needed fun back into **BTVS**, as the Geek Trio put Buffy through various tests. In particular, the Groundhog Day type sequence in the Magic Box with the mummy hand is a laugh-out loud delight.



**Buffy decides on a new look
—somewhat drastically!**

Buffy is a confused mess – the Geek Trio playing with her mind is really not what she needs. No wonder she gets drunk with Spike. We also find out that demons play poker with kittens, meeting Clem for the first time in the process.



The Geek Trio: "We are your arch nemesisis-sees!"

The Geek Trio represent an interesting shift in emphasis. When **BTVS** starts, the geeks (Willow, Xander and, to an extent, Buffy as well) were

amongst the heroes. Now, they are figures of fun and the bad guys. Although the various popular culture references are a lot of fun – such as the argument over which Bond was best. **(8/10)**

(6.6) ALL THE WAY by Steven S. DeKnight

There's a lot to like here, although the central storyline is slightly lacking. It's Dawn-centric – while the rest of the cast were busy in rehearsals for the next episode.

It's a bog-standard plot that sees Dawn get her first kiss but it's with a vampire – and she ends up having to dust him. The misdirection with the old man is nicely done – he doesn't turn out to be the threat after all.

The opening sequence of a busy Magic Box at Halloween is fun – with Xander taking this opportunity to announce his engagement to Anya.

There's also Tara telling Willow that she is using too much magic – Willow's response is to use even more magic to make Tara forget the argument. **(5/10)**



Tara and Willow—"Twillow"

**Re-animated
Ancient Egyptian
Relic? Buffy can
hand-le it...**





(6.7) ONCE MORE, WITH FEELING
by Joss Whedon

Perhaps my favourite-ever single episode of television. This is just wonderful and magical. Other series have inserted musical episodes into their run, but what makes this stand out is that it's all plotted. It's not people suddenly singing for no reason, plus the truths uncovered here make it a fundamental part of Season Six.

There's also the quality of the songs. Joss Whedon put his heart and soul into this. He learnt how to read music, so that he could write the score, and learnt to play guitar to able to write Spike's song.

And then the naturalness of the performers. Some have brilliant voices, some can really dance and move, others can't so well, but this just adds to the plausibility of the fiction.

The wonderful voices are: Amber Benson (love when Tara's song about her and Willow descends into porn at the end!), Anthony Stewart Head, James Marsters and Emma Caulfield. Meanwhile, Sarah Michelle Gellar throws herself into it, despite not having a theatrical background.

The lyrics are funny, profound, poignant, revealing, as they find how difficult it is to keep secrets when you keep on bursting into song. For example, Buffy's friends find out the truth about her and her current misery in the climatic *(Give Me) Something To Sing About* in the Bronze:

*Life's a song, you don't get to rehearse
And every single verse, can make it that much worse.
Still my friends don't know why I ignore
The million things or more, I should be dancing for.
All the joy life sends, family and friends*

*All the twists and bends, knowing that it ends, well
that depends
On if they let you go, on if they know enough to
know
That when you've bowed, you leave the crowd.
There was no pain, no fear, no doubt
Till they pulled me out of Heaven.
So that's my refrain, I live in Hell,
'Cause I've been expelled from Heaven.
I think I was in Heaven.*

Buffy then displays a death wish, dancing frantically, even though she knows it will cause her to combust and burn, until Spike stops her:

*Life's not a song, life isn't bliss
Life is just this, it's living.
You'll get along, the pain that you feel
You only can heal by living.
You have to go one living
So one of us is living.*

Dawn then speaks the line: "The hardest thing in this world is to live in it", repeating the advice that Buffy gave to Dawn before her noble self-sacrifice in *The Gift*.

To actually express depression within a song takes some doing – and again it shows off the sheer talent of Joss Whedon.



Are you feeling it? Buffy, Anya and Willow perform a musical number

We also have Xander and Anya expressing their doubts over their forthcoming wedding in *I'll Never Tell* – a chirpy Fred Astaire / Ginger Rogers type affair. Every song here is different and so many genres are covered.

Tara sings a beautiful love song to Willow, *Under Your Spell*, and then finds out later in the episode how true that is – she really is under a spell performed by her fellow witch. Meanwhile, Giles puts into song what we've suspected for a few episodes – that, by being around, he feels that he is *Standing (In The Way)* of Buffy becoming an adult.

Not a second is wasted. For example, when they open the door to see if the rest of Sunnydale is affected and we're treated to the brief but hilarious *Mustard Song*. And later, when Giles, Anya and Xander are walking along a pavement, there's a whole host of stuff going on in the background.

Even when Sweet has departed, after he decides not to make Xander his Queen (you'll have to watch the episode to understand that bit!), we have a rousing final number, concluding with a kiss from Buffy and Spike.

I really can't give this enough praise. It's uplifting, it's intelligent, it's huge fun, it's tear-jerking, it's thought-provoking, you spot new things every time you watch it. It's *brilliant*. (10/10)

(6.8) TABULA RASA by Rebecca Rand Kirshner

Initially, this deals with the fall-out from the previous episode, then we have true hilarity caused by the main characters all forgetting who they are, after one of Willow's spells goes wrong (again). And we have an actual loan shark, to whom Spike owes kittens.

Giles and Spike think they are brothers due to them both being English, while Giles and Anya think they are engaged to be married. Spike thinks he's called Randy Giles, while there's a bit of fun at the expense of Angel:

BUFFY: *I kill your kind.*

SPIKE: *And I bite yours. So how come I don't want to bite you? And why am I fighting other vampires? I must be a noble vampire. A good guy. On a mission of redemption. I help the hopeless. I'm a vampire with a soul.*

BUFFY: *A vampire with a soul? Oh my god, how lame is that?*

There's also Anya's hopeless attempts at spells – firstly creating multiple bunnies, and then a sword-fighting skeleton that Giles has to fight.

Tabula Rasa has several laugh-out loud moments, but as soon as the spell is broken and normality is

restored, we have a very sad ending, as Tara leaves Willow, after she broke her promise not to use magic for a week, while Giles leaves for England, over the accompaniment of *Goodbye To You* being sung by Michelle Branch in the Bronze.

If there's one thing that slightly grates, it's Giles' departure. He tells Buffy: "I've taught you all I can about being a Slayer, and your mother taught you what you needed to know about life. You're not going to trust that until you're forced to stand alone."

While that makes a certain amount of sense, the timing feels wrong. And after the way that Buffy pleads with him, I don't think Giles would leave her at this particular point in her life – when she really needs him.

Although, on reflection, Season Six is about becoming an adult and having to deal with your own mistakes. In this case, the character who is already a fully-mature adult makes a clear error of judgement. (8/10)



"Randy Giles" falls foul of a real Loan Shark

(6.9) SMASHED by Drew Z. Greenberg

A low Willow wants company, so she finally works out a way to bring back Amy – after being a rat for almost three years!

They go on a magical rampage at the Bronze, while there's also some funny stuff with the Geek Trio and a freeze ray.

Meanwhile, there's some nice moments between Dawn and Tara, as Tara continues to show how much she cares about Dawn despite having moved out of the house.

And Spike finds out he can attack Buffy. He tells her she came back wrong, and they end the episode in perhaps a slightly inappropriate scene - since BTVS had a large teen following - bringing the house down, quite literally, with their first sexual encounter. (7/10)

(6.10) WRECKED by Marti Noxon

An important episode for the season, since it shows how far Willow can go off the rails when her magic gets out of hand.

But it's all a bit confused, since Rack's customers are clearly drug addicts, not magic addicts. The metaphor here doesn't really work, with Willow subsequently carrying on like she's high.

In any case, the car accident in which Dawn breaks her arm, plus Dawn almost being killed by a demon brought forward by Willow's magic, is enough for Willow to pledge to give up magic. She tells Buffy:

WILLOW: *If you could be, you know, plain old Willow or super Willow, who would you be? I guess you don't actually have an option on the whole super thing.*

BUFFY: *Will, there's nothing wrong with you. You don't need magic to be special.*

WILLOW: *Don't I? I mean, Buffy, who was I? Just some girl. Tara didn't even know that girl.*

BUFFY: *You are more than some girl. And Tara wants you to stop. She loves you. (6/10)*

(6.11) GONE by David Fury

A strange mix, but it works. Buffy starts *Gone* on a real low, but the Geek Trio accidentally turn her invisible and she has a "giddy-fest" where suddenly can have a little fun and things turn very silly.

I particularly like invisible Buffy tormenting the social worker who wasn't very nice to her and was threatening to strip her of Dawn's guardianship, while an unwitting Xander bursting in on Spike and being unaware that he's doing with Buffy is also amusing.

It's nice to see Willow coming to Buffy's aid, after some good-old fashioned detective work, while Buffy discovers who her enemies are, as Warren declares: "We're your arch-nemesises... ses." (7/10)

(6.12) DOUBLEMEAT PALACE by Jane Espenson

Twelve episodes ago, Buffy was saving the whole of reality from a Hell God from another dimension. Now she's got a dead-end job at the local fast food outlet,



wearing a ridiculous outfit, while the rest of the staff seem to be half brain-dead.

Of course, it's all part of the growing up storyline of Season Six – as an adult, you have to do

things that you don't want to do, because you need the money.

But it doesn't make the most riveting installment of **BTVS**. The humour largely falls flat, although there is the horror at one point of Buffy believing that the Doublemeat Medley is made out of people – a sequence straight out of *Soylent Green*.

There's also a couple of sub-plots here such as Amy, bitter at being stuck as a rat for so long, trying to sabotage Willow's 'cold turkey' from using magic, and Anya getting a visit from a vengeance demon pal, Halfrek, with further hints of both Anya and Xander being insecure regarding their forthcoming wedding. (5/10)



"This burger tastes... funny!"

(6.13) DEAD THINGS by Steven S. DeKnight

There are times when the darkness of Season Six works massively in its favour. This is one of them, as the Geek Trio are no longer harmless.

Warren has become downright creepy. Able to subvert someone's will with a device, he uses it on Katrina, his ex-girlfriend - who dumped him during *I Was Made To Love You* after finding out he'd built a robot girl. Warren's intention to have sex without consent from her. When it malfunctions, and Katrina points out that he was trying to rape her, he accidentally kills her in the ensuing scuffle.

And then Warren tries to pin it on Buffy via a spell performed by Jonathan, and she seems to almost welcome the chance to turn herself in to the police, before the truth dawns on her. Buffy is a mess here – in particular, her soulless relationship with Spike is tearing her apart. While he loves her, she is using him.

Tara is Buffy's confidant at the end of the episode, as she breaks down in tears when she finds out that nothing went wrong when she returned from the dead. Buffy says: "There has to be! This just can't be me, it isn't me. Why do I feel like this? Why do I let

let Spike do those things to me?”

Meanwhile, the police mistakenly conclude that Katrina committed suicide or accidentally drowned. Warren shows no remorse at all, and even Andrew comments: “We really got away with murder. That’s kinda cool.” Up until now, Buffy has been dealing with vampires and demons – this time, she is dealing with human evil.

Dark. So dark. And so good. (9/10)

(6.14) OLDER AND FAR AWAY by Drew Z. Greenberg

Another birthday disaster for Buffy, as people can’t leave her house after her party despite a sword-wielding demon being on the loose, thanks to Dawn not realising that her new guidance counsellor is vengeance demon Halfrek.

The gang also discover that Dawn has become a kleptomaniac and a thief – something that viewers have been aware of for almost a year.

Dawn is a little whiny here. It’s understandable since she’s been through so much - but watching a stropky teenager doesn’t make for a great episode, while it also suffers from being a bit dull. At least there’s some nice stuff between Willow and Tara. (5/10)

(6.15) AS YOU WERE by Douglas Petrie

Riley comes back, along with his perfect new wife Sam, a fellow commando, to contrast how well his life is going, in comparison to Buffy, who is still working at the Doublemeat Palace. As she says: “Did you wait until your life was absolutely perfect and then send that demon here, so you could throw it in my face?”

To really rub salt into the wound, Buffy’s current squeeze Spike is - at least partially - behind the



Sam, Riley and Buffy— Not exactly a love triangle

demons that Riley and Sam are tracking.

At times, you want to smash Riley and Sam in the face with a troll hammer, but actually it’s a pretty good episode.

And to be fair to Riley, he does throw a nice few compliments Buffy’s way before he departs. He tells her: “You’re still the first woman I ever loved and the strongest woman I’ve ever known. And I’m not advertising this to the missus, but you’re still quite the hottie.” And he says: “Wheel never stops turning, Buffy. You’re up, you’re down - it doesn’t change what you are. And you are a hell of a woman.”

The brief return of Riley does seem to allow Buffy to see things with a fresh perspective, and the episode culminates in Buffy calling off her abusive relationship with Spike. She tells him: “I’m using you”, and then says: “I’m sorry, William”, referring to his original name, before she walks off. (7/10)

(6.16) HELL'S BELLS by Rebecca Rand Kirshner

A bizarre mixture of comedy and tragedy. The Xander/Anya relationship wasn’t just the “light at the end of this very long, long, nasty tunnel” for Buffy, but the watching audience too, and to see him dump her at the altar is just a bit too much.



The joke that Anya’s demon ‘family’ is from the circus isn’t particularly funny to begin with and is then overplayed, while the episode is overridden by clichés and is also very silly in places.

Xander’s family aren’t the nicest bunch of people. They’ve stayed off-screen until now – and just as well, because his father is a horrible man. You can see why Xander does not want to end up like him.

Unfortunately, the revenge-seeking victim of a vengeance spell by Anya plays on exactly the right fears when he shows Xander a false version of his future – enough to spook him even when he realises its false. It’s so sad because it feels that it just needs someone to point out to Xander “you’re not your dad”.

Hell’s Bells is not all bad. In particular, the early scenes with Anya as she gets ready for the wedding

are both touching and funny, as Tara advises she maybe she shouldn't include "sex poodle" in her vows.

If only Xander knew about Anya's final rehearsal of her vows: "I, Anya, want to marry you, Xander, because I love you and I'll always love you. And before I knew you, I was like a completely different person. Not even a person, really. And I had seen what love could do to people, and it was hurt and sadness. Alone was better. And then, suddenly there was you, and you knew me. You saw me, and it was this thing. You make me feel safe and warm. So, I get it now. I finally get love, Xander. I really do." (4/10)

(6.17) NORMAL AGAIN by Diego Gutierrez

A very clever episode that works gloriously - if that's the word for such a dark episode - at this point of Season Six.

The Geek Trio call on a hallucinogenic demon, and the alternative reality that Buffy wishes herself into is an insane asylum where the last six seasons have been a figment of her demented imagination. Or have they? Which reality is real?

The doctor in the asylum rips apart the last year of her life in a very meta fashion:

DOCTOR: *Buffy's delusions are multi-layered. She believes she's some type of hero.*

JOYCE: *The Slayer.*

DOCTOR: *The Slayer, right, but that's only one level. She's also created an intricate latticework to support her primary delusion. In her mind, she's the central figure in a fantastic world beyond imagination. She's surrounded herself with friends, most with their own superpowers, who are as real to her as you or me. More so, unfortunately. Together they face grand overblown conflicts against an assortment of monsters both imaginary and rooted in actual myth. Every time we think we're getting through to her, more fanciful enemies magically appear...*

BUFFY: *How did I miss...*

DOCTOR: *And she's...*

BUFFY: *Warren and Jonathan, they did this to me!*

DOCTOR: *Buffy, it's all right. They can't hurt you here. You're with your family.*

BUFFY: *Dawn?*

HANK: *That's the sister, right?*

DOCTOR: *A magical key. Buffy inserted Dawn into her delusion, actually rewriting the entire history of it to accommodate a need for a familial bond. Buffy, but that created inconsistencies, didn't it? Your sister, your friends, all of those people you created in Sunnydale, they aren't as comforting as they once were. Are they? They're coming apart.*

JOYCE: *Buffy, listen to what the doctor's saying, it's important.*

DOCTOR: *Buffy, you used to create these grand villains to battle against, and now what is it? Just ordinary students you went to high school with. No gods or monsters. Just three pathetic little men who like playing with toys.*

Perhaps it's the presence of her mum and dad there, and also because this episode happens when Buffy is at her most depressed, but she seems to consider the insane asylum as the more comforting reality, and she comes up with a plan which sees her attacking her friends and leaving them tied up as demon bait.

She asks Dawn: "What's more real? A sick girl in an institution... or some kind of super-girl chosen to fight demons and save the world. That's ridiculous."

This is a very clever episode, commenting on the nature of the fiction of a TV programme. Of course, TV is designed to grab the attention of viewers. It does this by presenting exaggerated circumstances – fantasy and science fiction franchises add a further element of unreality. A good programme such as **BTVS** will leave you feeling empathy with its characters. But, at the same time, that character will have undergone development quite different to any real person.

So much to recommend about this episode, including the fact the very final scene takes place in the asylum. So, is this the real world? (10/10)



Is this real or this... delusional?

(6.18) ENTROPY by Drew Z. Greenberg

Buffy's mood seems to be on the up - she goes shopping with Dawn and they are finally talking.

However, there are still so many issues to be sorted out, as Anya returns to town, looking for someone to curse Xander on her behalf. We, the audience, know that D'Hoffryn restored her to a vengeance demon at the end of *Hell's Bells*, but Buffy and her friends are unaware.

It leads to an amusing sequence where Anya is trying to put words into the mouths of Buffy, Dawn, Willow and Tara, but fails.

Anya eventually realizes that Spike is her man, but ends up having sex with him instead, after the two get drunk and find comfort in each other. Willow breaks through the network of TV cameras put up by the Geek Trio just at that moment, so Buffy and Xander see everything. Clearly signposted, but still strong stuff, while a nice coda is Willow and Tara getting back together. (8/10)

(6.19) SEEING RED by Steven S. DeKnight

Maybe the darkest-ever episode of **BTVS** and one I've grown to appreciate much more with the passing of time (similar, maybe, to the last episode of **Blake's 7**).

Amber Benson (Tara) is finally promoted to a full place in the opening credits – arguably she could have had a place from the start of Season Five onwards.

The episode starts in joyous fashion, with a delighted Dawn finding out that Tara and Willow are an item again.

But it soon takes a much darker turn. Spike, unable to get over his love for Buffy, but still a soulless demon, gets it seriously wrong, and ends up trying to rape her in her bathroom. Even though she's stronger than Spike and throws him off before he can do anything, it's still a shocking sequence.

Spike is distraught at his actions. He tells Clem: "It's the chip! Steel and wires and silicon. It won't let me be a monster. And I can't be a man. I'm nothing." He then bikes out of Sunnydale.

But there's no turning back for Warren. Most of the bad guys in **BTVS** have the excuse of being a demon; he doesn't. He is human, and he's turning increasingly murderous and misogynistic. The Geek Trio started off largely as figures of fun, but Warren has developed in a very dark way - he callously risks Jonathan's life at one point. And when he finds a way of becoming superhuman, he takes it and abuses it.



Buffy thwarting his plans and then reconciling with Xander after an earlier argument seems to be the conclusion of *Seeing Red*. But then a major twist in the final minute. An enraged Warren turns up at Buffy's house with a gun and life will never be the same. A very powerful episode. (9/10)



Willow sees red—literally!

(6.20) VILLAINS by Marti Noxon

This episode starts with a shock, with the confirmation that Tara is dead. Buffy is in a bad way too, but saved by Willow, who is back on the dark magic.

Warren first brags about what he did to Buffy, then starts to fear, when he learns she's still alive and that he has also a very angry witch on his tail.

Grief is a very powerful emotion, and in Willow's case, it is mixed in with a great deal of anger. We've seen before, in *Tough Love*, her driven to revenge after something's happened to Tara. While she was using magic in the first half of Season Six, the word "power" was often used in conjunction with her, and now we get to see just how powerful she has become.

Buffy and Xander are shocked by what's happened to their friend. Willow's hair is now black rather than red, after absorbing all the ink from the dark magic books in the Magic Box.

While this moves along at a fast pace, there is some time for reflection and some interesting discussions on morality:

DAWN: He (Warren) killed Tara, and he nearly killed you. He needs to pay.

XANDER: Out of the mouths of babes.

BUFFY: Xander!

XANDER: I'm just saying he's just as bad as any vampire you've sent to dustville.

BUFFY: Being a Slayer doesn't give me a license to kill. Warren's human.

DAWN: So?

BUFFY: So the human world has its own rules for dealing with people like him.

XANDER: Yeah, we all know how well those rules work.

BUFFY: Sometimes they do. Sometimes they don't.

We can't control the universe. If we were supposed to, then the magic wouldn't change Willow the way it does. And we'd be able to bring Tara back.

DAWN: And Mom.

BUFFY: There are limits to what we can do. There should be. Willow doesn't want to believe that. And now she's messing with forces that want to hurt her. All of us.

XANDER: I just ... I've had blood on my hands all day. Blood from people I love.

BUFFY: I know. And now it has to stop. Warren's going to get what he deserves, I promise. But I will not let Willow destroy herself.

The lines have never been so blurred in **BTVS** when it comes to humans and demons. Buffy is quite happy to leave Dawn with the likeable Clem, when she finds Spike has gone.

Once Buffy and Xander find out Anya is a vengeance demon again, it does help them track down Willow, but they are too late. Willow has already captured Warren, despite him having one-or-two tricks up his sleeve, and she confronts him with an apparition of Katrina, his ex-girlfriend who he killed in *Dead Things*.

Warren effectively signs his own death warrant, after answering Katrina's question of: "How could you say you loved me and do that to me?" with: "Because you deserved it, bitch!":

WILLOW: You never felt you had the power with her. Not until you killed her.

WARREN: Women. You know, you're just like the rest of them. Mind games.

WILLOW: You get off on it. That's why you had a mad -on for the Slayer. She was your big O, wasn't she, Warren?

Willow tortures him by giving him a taste of his own medicine by slowly ingrain a bullet into his chest by magic, and when she hears Buffy and Xander approaching, she flays him alive in a gruesome manner.

A fast-paced, shocking but excellent episode – with Alyson Hannigan excelling as the genuinely chilling Dark Willow. **(10/10)**

(6.21) TWO TO GO (Part 1 of a two-part story) by Douglas Petrie

"Come on, this is a huge deal for me! Six years as a sideman, and now I get to be the Slayer."

Who can stop Willow? That's the question here, as even Buffy seems unable to stop her friend from crossing a line and adding Jonathan and Andrew to her list of murder victims.

Jonathan comments to Buffy and Xander at one point: "I still can't believe that was Willow. I mean, I've known her almost as long as you guys. Willow was, you know. She packed her own lunches and wore floods and was always just Willow."

There are some memorable sequences - in particular when Willow is stood atop the articulated lorry. There's also an unsettling sequence where Willow threatens to turn Dawn back into a ball of mystical energy.

Meanwhile, Spike continues to be involved in the ultimate Bushtucker Trial somewhere in Africa – the prize had better be worth it.



There's also a terrific cliffhanger. Just as Willow appears to have won and comments: "And there's no one in the world with the power to stop me now", Rupert Giles - absent for thirteen episodes - appears at the doorway in the Magic Box: "I'd like to test that theory." (9/10)

(6.22) GRAVE (Part 2 of a two-part story) by David Fury

"Remember that little spat we had before you left? When you were under the delusion that you were still relevant here? You called me a rank, arrogant amateur. Well buckle up, Rupert, because I've turned pro."

Giles adds so much to this final episode of Season Six as he tries to stop Willow – it's great to have the talents of Anthony Stewart Head back on the show.



Dark Willow –No stopping her?

In particular, there's one sequence with Buffy that is a complete delight. Giles knows that Tara is dead, but unaware of other events in his absence:

GILES: *Buffy, what's happened here?*

BUFFY: *God. I don't even know where to start.*

GILES: *Well, Willow's clearly been abusing the magicks.*

BUFFY: *She has. She was, and I barely even noticed. Giles, everything's just been so... Xander left Anya at the altar, and Anya's a vengeance demon again... Dawn's a total klepto... money's been so tight that I've been slinging burgers at the Doublemeat Palace ... and I've been sleeping with Spike.*

Buffy is expecting to be ripped apart, but instead Giles bursts out laughing, and she joins in. He then becomes serious:

GILES: *Can you forgive me?*

BUFFY: *For what?*

GILES: *I should never have left.*

BUFFY: *No. You were right to leave. We're just stupid.*

GILES: *I know you're all stupid. I should never have abandoned you.*

BUFFY: *No. Giles, you were right about everything. It is time I was an adult.*

GILES: *Sometimes the most adult thing you can do is ask for help when you need it.*

BUFFY: *Now you tell me.*

It's wonderfully acted, while we can feel the warmth between the two characters.

Willow eventually overpowers Giles and takes his borrowed magic - leaving the Magic Box in ruins and giving her enough power to end the world. In pushing Jonathan and Andrew clear from a fireball created by Willow, Buffy gets stuck down a pit in the graveyard with Dawn. So, who can stop the apocalypse this time?

Well, actually, Xander can. He manages to get through to Willow by telling her he loves her. Yes, it sounds corny, but it works:

WILLOW: *You can't stop this.*

XANDER: *Yeah, I get that. It's just, where else am I gonna go? You've been my best friend my whole life. World gonna end - where else would I want to be?*

WILLOW: *Is this the master plan? You're going to stop me by telling me you love me?*

XANDER: *Well, I was going to walk you off a cliff and hand you an anvil, but it seemed kinda cartoony.*

WILLOW: *Still making jokes.*

XANDER: *I'm not joking. I know you're in pain. I can't imagine the pain you're in. And I know you're about to do something apocalyptically evil and stupid, and hey I still want to hang. You're Willow.*

WILLOW: *Don't call me that.*

XANDER: *First day of kindergarten. You cried because you broke the yellow crayon, and you were*

too afraid to tell anyone. You've come pretty far, ending the world, not a terrific notion. But the thing is? Yeah. I love you. I loved crayon-breaky Willow and I love scary veiny Willow. So if I'm going out, it's here. If you wanna kill the world? Well, then start with me. I've earned that.
WILLOW: You think I won't?
XANDER: It doesn't matter. I'll still love you.

Willow breaks down in tears, while Giles reveals to Anya it was part of the plan all along – the magic that she stole from him was “the true essence of magic” and gave Xander the chance to get through to her.

Buffy enlists Dawn's help to get free of the pit, and after a heart-to-heart, she tells her sister: “Things have really sucked lately, but it's all gonna change. And I wanna be there when it does. I want to see my friends happy again. And I want to see you grow up. The woman you're gonna become. Because she's going to be beautiful. And she's going to be powerful. I got it so wrong. I don't want to protect you from the world. I want to show it to you.”

A depressing season ends on an optimistic note, and thankfully also leaves very little baggage. But, wait a minute, Spike's trip to Africa has left him with a soul... now, how's *that* going to play out in Season Seven? (10/10)



SEASON SIX OVERVIEW:

BTVS goes very dark for its sixth season.

I'll be honest, I didn't like this season much when I first saw it in 2002, because of the nagging feeling that it was a huge cop out, following Buffy's noble sacrifice at the end of the previous season. However, my opinion has changed. The group who decided to resurrect Buffy face massive consequences, while Buffy is not her usual self for nearly the whole season.

I still feel the departure of Giles feels a little forced

(he wouldn't leave Buffy at this time, of all times), and they could have come up with a better way of taking Anthony Stewart Head out of the equation for much of the season, due to his real-life wish to return to England.

And the Geek Trio, while amusing, are a big come-down from Glory The Hell God, even if Warren presents us with the interesting question of human evil within the **BTVS** universe.

The Buffy and Spike relationship is a disturbing one, to say the least. She doesn't love him, but she is using him to have sex with and as a punching bag. In return, once rejected by Buffy, he attempts to rape her. It's destructive and Spike realises it can't continue.

I've loved *Once More, With Feeling* from the very first time I saw it (it shades *The Gift* as my very favourite episode of **BTVS**), and originally, I considered this and the three-part finale when Willow goes off the rails as the only good things about this season.

However, there are some dark classics in this season, such as *Dead Things* (Warren becomes a murderer), *Normal Again* (Buffy wishes herself into a lunatic asylum... or does she?) and *Seeing Red* (Spike and Warren both go too far).

Also, this has a very smooth season arc, where there is a real line of progression from episode 1 through to episode 22.

In short, it's the season of **BTVS** where everything goes to hell because of the characters themselves rather than any outside influence, and a result they emerge out of it, a group of adults better placed to deal with their respective futures. Not a bad message.



Season rank: 6th.

NEXT ISSUE: Season Seven: All Good Things...



VEERING OFF

WITH VEERLE BLAJIC-KIK

OMeNs

But of What Quality?

After the initial binge watch of ^{GOd}OMeNs in May 2019, whilst feverishly hoping my partner would like it just as much as I loved the book, it actually disappeared into the background again for me. I may have reread the book again in the year to follow, but between my wedding in 2019 and the pandemic hitting hard half a year later, it didn't really register on my personal Richter scale.

In fact, since *American Gods* was still struggling on through second and third seasons, I was mostly focused on that. Especially the Mr. Nancy character held my attention, as he also appears in *Anansi Boys*, by the same author.

But then, early 2023, *The Hillywood Show* released their parody of the show and Neil Himself appeared in it to confirm: a second season would soon be available! Exciting as the news was, I couldn't imagine how that would be happening, as there was only the one book and they'd done it already. I mean, of course we all knew the stories that Neil and Terry Pratchett having had *plans* for a sequel, but that had never been realised. Would that be what we'd get? After that, it all went kind of mad. The Algorithm had picked up on my interest for the show, and pretty soon all my social apps showed me anything *Good Omens* related.

Now, a little background about me is necessary. Apparently I'm pretty dim. Oh, not in general, I mean,

I do ok in the cognitive marshes of life, can't complain really. But in one particular and very relevant area, you could use me to hush a reasonably sized theatre audience right before the show starts, just because my attendance would bring down the brightness that much.

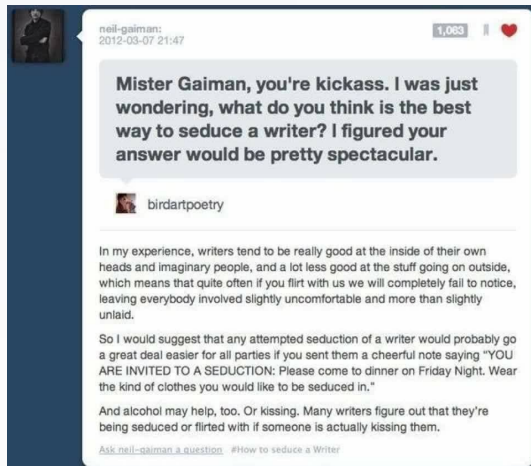
You see, I'm terrible at *subtext*.

The sheer amount of times people have come up to me 10 years later to let me know they liked me back then and I was completely vexed as to why they'd never let on, only for them to incredulously respond with 'why do you think I asked you to stay over at my place on 20 separate occasions??' or 'what did you think it meant when I asked you to be my date to the Christmas Gala?' Not to even start on the many foul looks I got from other women for 'flirting with their boyfriends'. I did no such thing, they were just being friendly with me, right?



"Subtext, Crowley, subtext!"

Since I was always very bookish and usually writing something or other, I think it's safe to say that Neil Himself hit the nail on the head with his online answer to the question of how to seduce a writer:



Although truth be told, even while being kissed I might've written it off as 'the spirit of the moment, all in good fun, they probably didn't mean anything by it'. Like I said, *dim*.

Because of this dimness, I was pretty surprised when my preferred social media started spewing memes and theories about Crowley and Aziraphale being lovers. That wasn't in the book, was it? I went back to read it, and sure, I found a growing friendship, but surely nothing else? When questioned right after the airing of the first season, Neil had responded that the characters *could* of course be interpreted as a-romantic or a-sexual (ace), but it didn't *reaally* apply since they are not human. They are abstract beings beyond such concerns or activities. Nevertheless, it was a love story, which I interpreted as the love for a friend. It all seemed to mesh.

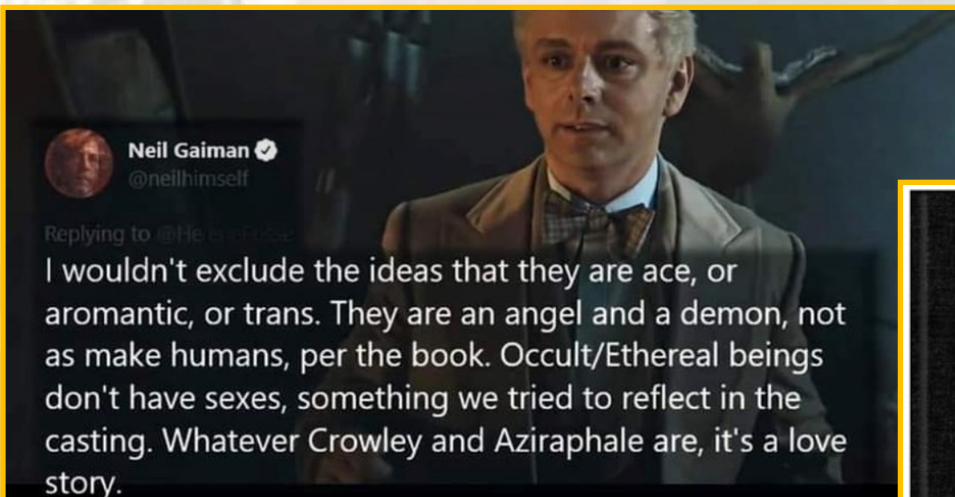
world is writing fanfics about David Tennant being wildly in love with you for 6,000 years? Even I might get that hint eventually.

The 'ineffable husbands', as a large part of the fan base tend to call them, didn't help matters with the way they behaved in their online pandemic series *Staged*, where they play themselves, sort of, and can be seen bickering like an old married couple, drinking out of cups with each other's faces on them.

By the time season 2 aired, I was fully aware of what others had picked up on, fantasied about, and hoped for. I was READY. And good heavens did it deliver! Things were so clearly spelled out, I had no trouble at all following the perfectly marked path to *spoilers* at all. It was everything I didn't know I wanted. The swelling of the music, the perfectly executed looks they gave each other, the go-for-broke speech, the hurt, the *spoilers*! It could only go that way and it was the most delicious hurt that made my stomach flutter each time I rewatched the scene.

I even got into a bit of an obsession when I found out there was a script book available, and a *Good Omens Companion*, a full colour behind the scenes interview book, and many MANY extras on Amazon Prime. I consumed it all. Rewatched scenes to find Easter eggs. Analysed the title sequence frame by frame. Counted the flies... I had dreams about it...

Knowing I'd probably have to wait another few years for the continuation caused a sweet despair. Just look at their faces in the final credit rolls! The sadness, the loneliness, the irrevocability of it all...



Still, when one of the main actors goes out of his way to let everyone and their granny know that he played the character like he was deeply in love with the other one, it's hard to write it all off as wishful thinking. (Looking at *you* here, Michael Sheen.) And the memes were quite funny and cute and... well, who wouldn't be flattered when suddenly half the



Still, in the back of my mind, something kept nagging. How come it was such a different experience from the first season? Was it me? Or was it the show itself? Was it the freedom of not having to stick to an already existing book that made this season so different? I mean, the book was decennia old, so maybe it was the inclusion of more contemporary ideas that changed the feel? The fact that so many different kinds of love are openly celebrated? Or the very modern idea of spending all this time pushing two people together, only to get rebuffed at the end with a 'you shouldn't meddle in other peoples lives'? I mean, a very valid point, but a bit... well, a bit of an anti-climax. Was it maybe that Neil now had completely free rein, since Terry Pratchett might be there in spirit, but not actually physically there to co-captain? Could there have been more compromises between them than we realised? I balked at that. For one thing, Terry's 'representative on earth' Rob Willikens was there for the whole process, and secondly, Neil went out of his way to keep incorporating his late friend in every way he could, from his books in the background, to his actual hat on the stand. I really couldn't put my finger on it... Maybe I was just getting too obsessed... I mean, once you start noticing little things like evening changing to midday halfway through an act, you are probably not spending enough time in the fresh air anymore. Maybe I should have some Eccles cakes to calm down? They seemed very important at one part of the show... wonder what that was all about?

After some healthy venturing into the outside to clear my head, I went back to casually watching the extras that Amazon provided, and was only half paying attention when I suddenly noticed: Nina Sosanya and Maggie Service (Nina and Maggie respectively in season 2), giggling together about how clever Mister Gaiman is. 'Oh, he's *really* clever isn't he?' while grinning mischievously at the camera.



They were Up To Something. They had gotten away with something and I missed it. Immediately it made sense: I may be dim, but I KNOW I am. For the whole season to be so neatly mapped out suddenly seemed way too convenient. If I thought I'd gotten everything, then there must be something hiding. Just to be sure I rewatched season 1. I still didn't

pick up on all the flirting that was supposedly going on, so I knew I hadn't suddenly gotten that much brighter. So why did it seem that season 2 was so much clearer? Neil wouldn't go for a cash grab by just pandering to the fanfic crowd. What was going on here?

I spent days scrolling memes and fan art and theories, eventually coming to grips with the fact that I may never know, or at least not until the next season. And then, just when someone mentioned the same frustration I felt, a solution was thrown our way. 'Do yourself a huge favour, and read *'The Magic trick you didn't see'* by Alexandra Rowland on Google Docs. Trust me, your mind will be blown! Something IS going on and she discovered what it is! And so I googled.

And my mind was blown as promised. The writer of the 16.000 word essay, is an accomplished author herself. She knows about writing. She also knows a bit about magic. A subject that *GOs2* seemed suspiciously full of. It turns out it wasn't just my lack of fresh air that made me notice all the little incongruences and oddities of the season. According to the essay, all of them are connected in a way, and are Neil's sneaky little way of preparing us for What's To Come.

She claims that in order for a magic trick to be successful, you have to have three distinct parts: a pledge, a turn, and a prestige. Roughly this means that you show an ordinary thing (pledge), you make it do something unexpected (turn) to capture the attention of the audience, then finish it off with the thing going back to ordinary again (prestige). You can see Aziraphale attempting this when he picks up the interlinking rings in the magic shop: He shows us the rings, then almost interlinks them, but messes up with the last part and they have to be gently taken out of his hands. And though it's a skill to interlink rings that seemed solid a second ago, you could brush it off with a 'oh well, must have missed something then' and it wouldn't impress you for long. Same as you could, theoretically, put a woman in a box, then saw her in halves and leave it at that. It was unexpected, sure, but the



real amazement only sets in when she is then put back together and steps out of the box completely *unsawed*. Now *that* is a prestige!

And in season 2, we are *not* getting a prestige. At all. That's why it feels weird. Now, I've mentioned my dimness, so you know I did not come up with this myself. In fact, I probably still missed many of the little 'mistakes' that were put in the show, even though I now know what to look for. But writing is very similar to magic, so maybe I'm not even supposed to see it all coming? The trick might be all the more amazing for it in the end. As Alexandra Rowland puts it: 'You **set up** the audience's expectations. (Optional but generally considered stylish and elegant: You give those expectations a firm **jolt** to throw the audience off-balance.) You **pay off** the audience's expectations *in a way they weren't expecting*, while saying "TA DA!!!!" really loud with your arms flung wide.' And like her, I believe we are still in the off-balance part of the trick.



had to stare out the window for several minutes to process the implications before I could read on. Then again, who's to say my dimness isn't getting in my way again? Of course, there are those who were mildly outraged at the audacity of presuming to know the thought process of Neil Himself. It's been called into question whether the ideas in the essay aren't too much of a 'and then he woke up and realised it was all a dream' plot, while others are simply agreeing with the author herself, that it is simply a crackpot theory. At this point, I don't know what to believe... there's just so many omens!



A key player in her theories is Metatron (played by Derek Jacobi), who we all instinctively dislike and mistrust, without there being a very obvious reason for that. (To be completely fair here, the only Metatron portrayal I ever liked was the late Alan Rickman's in the movie *Dogma*, so he was at a disadvantage from the start.) To me, it makes the story believable, I didn't even hesitate one second to appoint him as the baddie. I audibly gasped when I read how he might be tampering with things, and

On one hand it would explain so much if this theory were true, on the other hand, won't I miss the full effect of the prestige now that I have been pointed in this direction? It's one thing feeling smug finding where the hidden trapdoor sits after the trick, but another to have it pointed out before the trick finishes...

Now, I don't want to give the whole essay away, in case there's others out there who enjoy their dimness as much as I do mine, and like to be surprised - and presumably amazed - by the actual third season. For those that like the sleuthing and conspiracy vibes, I highly recommend looking up the google document and form their own opinion.



One thing that I did find out with certain erm... certainty, is that Dottie and Sadie are DEFINITELY not who they say they are. *



[* Maybe you should write to your favourite Agony Aunts, Veerle... Ed]

OUT OF THE VORTEX

News, Reviews and Previews from the Sci-Fi and Fantasy Multiverse
(but mainly about Doctor Who this time)

Unless you've been abducted by aliens, it can't have escaped your notice (especially if you've read this far) that this November sees the 60th Anniversary of **Doctor Who**. As this is our special tribute issue to the good Doctor's 60th year on our TV screens - as well as on radio, CD, in books, annuals, comics, sweet collectors' cards, podcasts the Internet, fanfic, fanzines and social media - we've focussed on all the goodies due to be screened around, during and after (and probably before - *timey-wimey*, remember?) the big day itself - November 23rd 2023.

And if you worry about such things (does anyone read this anyway?), our regular reviews section will re-materialise in Ish #11. Anyway, you've got Alex Pinfold's always illuminating reviews in *Viewpoint Verdict* a few pages along.

So, as previously reported, Russell T Davies, the man who resurrected **Doctor Who** for the 21st Century, has returned as Showrunner to take charge of all matters WHO. It seems ages ago that this was announced in the Autumn of 2021, just before his predecessor Chris Chibnall's pandemic-produced short season of **Doctor Who** *Flux* was aired.

It seems only right to mention at this point that Chibnall's run as Showrunner, in which Jodie Whittaker assumed the role of the first female Doctor was somewhat controversial, at least as far as longer-term fans of **Doctor Who** felt. His run of stories were derided as "woke", "overly politically correct", "childish" to quote just a few of the printable comments which permeated social media. And let's not forget all the *Timeless Child* hoo-ha (see *Squaring The Circle* this issue). It's true that every Showrunner brings their own brand - or tone - to stories written and produced under their tenure. With this in mind, the simple fact is, not everybody is going to like them. But *Uber-Fan* opinion aside, the fact remains that **Doctor Who's** ratings were markedly diminished on previous seasons aired between 2005 and 2017.

Maybe it was the fact that the show was shunted from Saturday evenings on BBC1 Sunday evenings on BBC2, which many felt was a worrying call back by the BBC to the last seasons of "Classic" Who when the show was pinged around the midweek schedules and eventually led to its demise. (But that's a story for another time). Maybe moving the festive Special episode from Christmas Day to New Year's Day broke a much-loved tradition since the revival of the series.

Then there was the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 to 2021 which affected production of **Doctor Who** and so many other TV series. But the fact that the production team were able to observe Lockdown precautions and produce the six-part *Flux* season at all was something of a miracle.

Certainly, with ratings on the slide, seasons being truncated and produced months apart, Something Had To Be Done, hence the return of RTD. However, it did seem somewhat unfair/unkind/disingenuous of the BBC to announce his return and Chibnall's departure before *Flux* had even aired.

All this aside however, there's one thing we can always be certain of. If you don't like a particular Doctor, or Showrunner, or season, don't worry - there'll be another one along at some point. If **Doctor Who** as a series should teach us anything, it's all about *change*. Whether it's the title character regenerating into another actor, or a brand-new production team taking over, a change of tone (don't forget the "Classic" series saw Monster seasons, Gothic Seasons, Silly seasons, Earth-bound seasons, hard Sci-fi seasons and many more) the show survives by changing. So viewers, whether they are die-hard, lifelong fans or those who just like a bit of escapism in their viewing *embrace* that change. As the good Doctor himself once memorably said: "*Change, my dear - and it's about time!*"

Quite simply, that's why **Doctor Who** is still with us, in so many mediums, sixty years on.

The Whoniverse Expands



So, where to start? To start with, RTD and BBC announced some time ago that RTD's own Production company Bad Wolf would be producing **Doctor Who** for the BBC. Soon after, it was

announced that Disney Plus had secured the distribution rights for the series for the rest of the world. All parties concerned were at pains to point out that Disney were not involved in the production of the series in anyway, although they have poured money in to significantly boost the production budget.



A BBC press release proudly proclaimed the creation of a whole new brand – and direction – for **Doctor Who**. The **Whoniverse** became the official name, and dedicated home, for all shows within the orbit of **Doctor Who** made its own Big Bang on November 1st when it went live on BBC iPlayer. With over 800 episodes of **Doctor Who** content already in the back catalogue, the Whoniverse launched with a brand new logo, and every piece of Doctor Who content hereafter will carry a brand new ident, instantly bringing all the **Doctor Who** worlds together in one place and it will continuously expand.

The first exclusive content to land in the Whoniverse was *Tales of the TARDIS*, a brand new six-part series that reunites beloved classic **Doctor Who** duos, as they board a very special “Dream TARDIS” on a nostalgic voyage through space and time.

Reprising their roles as the Doctor and companions to go on a timey-wimey spin down memory lane in these unmissable adventures are; Maureen O'Brien and Peter Purves, Frazer Hines and Wendy Padbury, Katy Manning and Daniel Anthony, Peter Davison and Janet Fielding, Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant, and Sylvester McCoy and Sophie Aldred.

Over six parts, each episode of *Tales of the TARDIS* featured a different duo, with brand new scenes woven together with classic episodes to create a feature-length omnibus episode. With new scenes written by Showrunner Russell T Davies, and previous Doctor Who writers Phil Ford and Pete McTighe, *Tales of the TARDIS* allows fans to rediscover the stories they love whilst inviting new viewers to explore the vast mythology of the Doctor.

Russell T Davies, said: “The word Whoniverse was invented by fans, so it's time to give it official status. And *Tales of the TARDIS* is one of the greatest delights of my career - to see old Doctors and companions reunited, still fighting

the good fight, is a perfect way to celebrate the Doctor's 60th birthday!”

Davies has clearly stated his intention to expand the Whoniverse in the same way he expanded the series back in the mid noughties, with spin-offs such as *Torchwood* and *The Sarah Jane Adventures*. Already there are serious rumours of a UNIT spin-off series, an idea which was first mooted back in the early 1990s when Doctor Who was off air, seemingly for good. Now it looks like Kate Lethbridge-Stewart played by Jemma Redgrave will lead the military-scientific squad into new adventures, primarily when the Doctor isn't around to sort things out.

Eight? Straight!

There are also rumours of a stand-alone spin-off series featuring the Eighth Doctor, played by Paul McGann. The Eighth Doctor made his debut in the 1996 TV Movie *Doctor Who*, a co-production between the BBC Worldwide and Universal Studios, primarily as a potential pilot for a revived series. Although the TV movie garnered strong viewing figures in he UK, the US ratings were not enough to secure its future as a series.



However, the Eighth Doctor's adventures continued for many years in novels, the *Doctor Who Magazine* comic strip and in BBC radio and Big Finish audio adventures, with McGann reprising his role for the audio medium. In 2013, the Eighth Doctor — again played by McGann made an unexpected and crowd-pleasing brief return to TV in the minisode *The Night of the Doctor*, screened on BBC i-player as a prelude to the 50th Anniversary story *The Day of the Doctor*. The minisode saw a mortally



wounded Eighth Doctor regenerate into The War Doctor, played by John Hurt, a hitherto unseen incarnation of the Doctor who fought in the Time War.

If the spin-off rumours are true, whether RTD plans to adapt some of the Eighth Doctor's many audio adventures for TV and in what format —possibly animated — remains to be seen.

Note Perfect

As well as a special documentary *Talking Doctor Who* hosted by the Tenth/Fourteenth Doctor himself, David Tennant, there was a special edition of *Sunday Night is Music Night* presented by Jo Whiley on BBC Radio 2 to celebrate 60 years of Dr Who.

The BBC National Orchestra of Wales and the BBC Singers, conducted by Alastair King, will performed musical sounds of the TV series in *Doctor Who @60: A Musical Celebration*. The event was also filmed and screened on BBC i-player as part of the Whoniverse.

An Unearthly Row

Sadly, the positive notes of *Doctor Who @60: A Musical Celebration*. there was one very sour note which threatened to cast a shadow over the arrival of all the existing and animated episodes of **Doctor Who** to i-player. The very first 4-part serial, *An Unearthly Child* (also known as *1,000,000 BC* and/or *The Tribe of Gum*) will be absent from the collection, at least for the foreseeable future.



The episodes, screened between November 23rd and December 14th 1963 were written by Anthony Coburn, an Australian staff writer for the BBC who came aboard **Doctor Who** during the early stages of the show's development. Coburn is not the credited creator of the show, nor was he successful at writing further televised episodes for the series.

Nevertheless, Coburn held the trademark on the first four episodes until his death in 2013, at which point it was eventually transferred to his son, Stef. Following the BBC's announcement, Stef Coburn took to Twitter/X to announce that he had rejected the BBC's offer to re-license the episodes, which he calls a "pittance". In a thread, he asserts that his rejection is primarily motivated by "vengeance" against the BBC, whom he claims "registered my desperately ill father's IP as THEIR trademark." He also refers to the episodes as "leverage" which he desires to use to get other Anthony Coburn projects made, including "one of which, I was a significant part."

In 2013, when the IP rights were first passed on to him, Stef Coburn challenged the BBC for breach of copyright pertaining to ownership of the Doctor's time and space machine, the TARDIS. The claim coincided with the 50th anniversary of **Doctor Who**, an event the BBC celebrated with a TV movie dramatizing the creation of the series, titled *An Adventure in Space and Time*, written by WHO luminary Mark Gatiss. Stef Coburn was incensed that the dramatization focused on key **Doctor Who** figures Sydney Newman, Verity Lambert, William Hartnell, and Waris Hussein, and not his father. However, numerous other individuals credited with the birth of the show, such as script editor David Whittaker were also omitted, due to the necessary pace of the narrative

It is widely acknowledged that Anthony Coburn did indeed conceive the idea that the Doctor's vessel should resemble a police box and be bigger on the inside. However, Coburn himself had no problem with the series using his idea. Intellectual property attorneys MacLachlan & Donaldson: "If Anthony Coburn was employed by the BBC and the idea was developed in the course of that

employment then, unless his contract stated otherwise, the copyright would automatically belong to the BBC."

While Stef Coburn initially claimed a desire to see his father receive public recognition, it eventually materialized that he sought financial restitution for every use of the TARDIS. The BBC looked into the complaint, but it seems that Stef Coburn did not receive the outcome he wanted, further explaining his current antipathy for the institution.

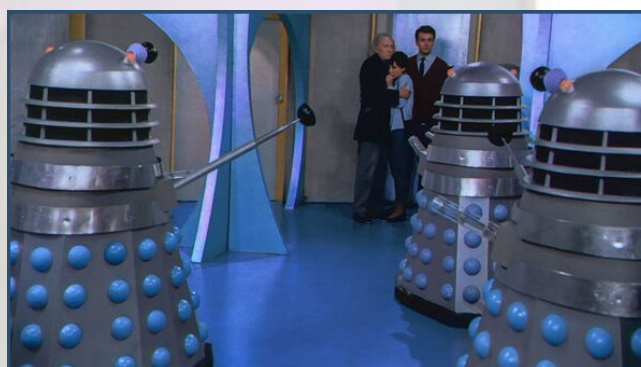
Until the issue is resolved – and this doesn't look set to be any time soon – the Doctor's original outing will not feature in the Classic back catalogue on i-player. Stef's decision was widely derided as "spiteful" and "childish" by WHO fans.

The entire classic run including *An Unearthly Child* is available on the streaming service Britbox, But Coburn's episodes may not be up forever. In his thread, Stef Coburn states that the Britbox license for the episodes will not be renewed when they expire. If this happens, **Doctor Who's** first season will only be available to purchase online or on DVD. The story itself was released on DVD several years ago and is still available to buy.

Dalek Delight!

Sharing a 60th birthday with **Doctor Who** itself are the Doctor's greatest enemies, The Daleks. They made their debut in the Doctor's second story *The Mutants* (later known simply as *The Daleks*) between December 21st 1963 and 1st February 1964. Created by writer Terry Nation, the Daleks were originally intended only as a one-shot monster, but caught the imagination of children (and many adults) across the UK, leading to a phenomenon known as *Dalekmania* (a riff on the term coined with the rise of British pop group The Beatles, Beatlemania). This saw Dalek-themed toys, games, sweet cards, fireworks, slippers, wallpaper and books produced *en masse* and secured the Daleks return in Season 2 of the programme. In fact, the Daleks are often credited with saving Doctor Who beyond its initially budgeted 13-week run, when several worried BBC bosses were contemplating the axing of the show, mainly on cost grounds.

The Daleks also made the movies, the two full colour, big budget cinema outings in 1965 with *Dr Who and the Daleks* and in 1966 with *Daleks Invasion Earth 2150*, starring Peter Cushing as human inventor "Dr Who". The films were based on the first two TV Dalek stories and told essentially the same adventures but in a more action packed, shorter format and, of course in glorious technicolour. It would be until 1972's *Day of the Daleks* serial that viewers in the UK would get see the TV Daleks in colour.

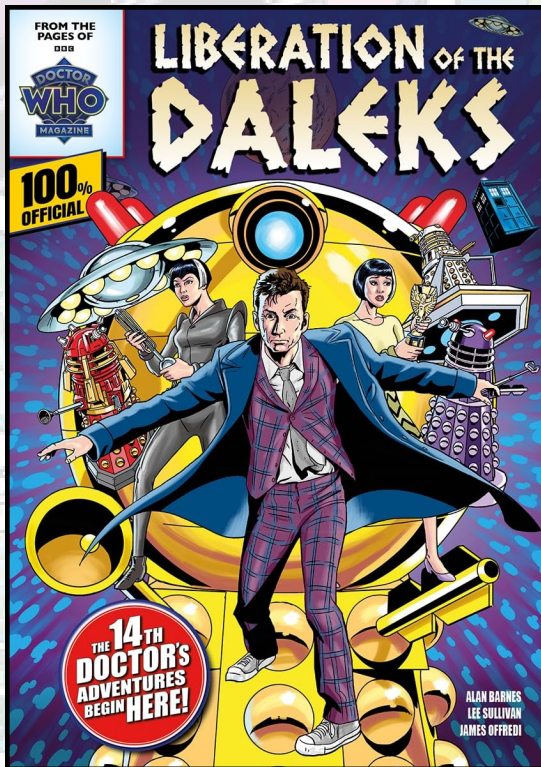


However, all that is set to change on Thursday November 23rd, the show's actual 60th birthday – when a re-edited and colourised version of the original Daleks debut story will be screened on BBC 4. The original serial was screened over seven 25-minute episodes, but the colourised edit has been trimmed down to a lean 75 minutes – ironically the same length as the first movie. Some scenes have been re-ordered to tighten the narrative, along with new special effects, brand new sound, a brand new score - created by Mark Ayres.

Phil Collinson, Executive Producer said: “It’s been my absolute pleasure to spend this past 12 months working with such a talented team to breathe new life into this classic adventure - a story that is literally the foundation stone of all that Doctor Who has become. The original is a masterpiece of 1960’s television drama and this new version stands on the shoulders of the pioneering spirit of 1960’s **Doctor Who**.”

Breaking News: Just before this issue went online it was reported that the next Doctor Who story to be colourised will be The War Games, Patrick Troughton’s epic swansong from 1969 and the last serial of the black and white era.

Daleks also feature in the Fourteenth Doctor’s first official adventure — in comic form. Doctor Who magazine’s bumper 14-part comic strip *Liberation of the Daleks* follows on directly from the Thirteenth Doctor’s regeneration into the Fourteenth Doctor at the close of the TV episode *The Power of the Doctor*. In fact, the strip started just over two weeks on from the screening of *The Power of the Doctor* in October 2022 and concluded in November 2013 (issue dated December 2023).

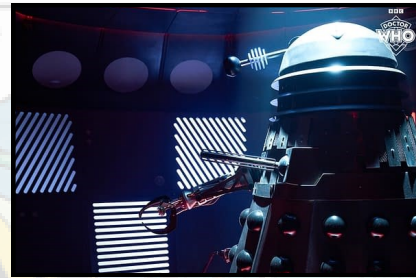


In the story, written by Alan Barnes and gloriously illustrated by artist Lee Sullivan, the newly regenerated Doctor finds himself in a futuristic leisure facility called The Dalek Dome where tourists can experience an immersive and totally harmless Dalek experience. Dalek avatars are produced by the brainwaves of living Dalek mutants and every known version of Daleks are featured, including —

and this is a corker — the Daleks, led by the bulbous-headed Golden Dalek Emperor from their own *TV Century 21* comic strip! The artwork for this segment is based on that of TV21 Dalek strip artist Ron Turner. This adventure has been cited as canon by none other than RTD himself and links (almost) directly into the following 60th Anniversary TV specials, by way of a special minisode screened as a 'serious' segment within the BBC *Children in Need* telethon on Friday 17th November (and then immediately afterwards in The Whoniverse on BBC i-player).

Classic Crossover

The *Children in Need* minisode was a joyous crossover between **Doctor Who** Old and New. As the TARDIS heads towards Skaro, the opening scene features Kaled scientist Davros — played by regular Davros actor Julian Bleach — at a time before the Thal missile attack which left him disfigured and housed in a mobile life support machine (which of course, resembles the lower part of a Dalek casing). Here Davros is showing Kastavillian, (*Cast-a-Villain*, geddit?) - played by comedian Mawaan Rizwan - a junior Kaled officer his latest creation, a Mark 3 Travel Machine designed to house the mutations that Kaleds will become due to the radioactive fallout from the neutron



war with the Thals. The Mk III is, of course, a Dalek.

The spoof tone is set when the Kastavillian suggests naming the creation from an anagram of 'Kaled' - basically everything *except* Dalek!

Davros is called away, at which point the TARDIS makes a near crash landing in the laboratory, damaging a vital part of the Dalek, namely its multi-dextrous claw arm, which was, in the words of Davros, “capable of annihilating a million Thals”. The Fourteenth Doctor emerges and realises that he has arrived on Skaro some time before the birth of the Daleks as told in 1975’s serial *Genesis of the Daleks*.



The Doctor worries that his arrival will shatter the timelines *and the canon*, but before departing, he dives into the Tardis, taking the severed claw arm with him, then retrieves a familiar replacement part which he gives to Kastavillian. So if you ever wondered where the Dalek’s sucker arm came from, it came from a sink plunger and was suggested as a workable tactile organ by... the Doctor!

And when Davros sees the sucker arm hastily inserted into the Dalek’s mid section he says “I *like* it!”

Judging my comments on social media afterwards, some WHO fans predictably took it all *very* seriously!

Very much the Face of Po!



Countdown to Ncuti

Saturday 25th November sees the screening of **The Star Beast**, the first of three Anniversary Specials which reunites the Fourteenth Doctor with Donna Noble (played by Catherine Tate). As previously reported, this is a story adapted from a DWM comic strip of the same name from 1980. Written by John Wagner and Pat Mills and illustrated by legendary comic artist Dave Gibbons, the original story involved a seemingly cute, cuddly alien called the Meep being pursued to the town of Blackcastle, Northern England, Earth by the Wrath Warriors, an insectoid race of law enforcers (possibly the inspiration to RTD for the Judoon). Two teenagers, Sharon and Fudge befriend the Meep, then meet the Fourth Doctor who is investigating the crash landing of the Meep's spaceship.



The story has been adapted previously in 2019 as an audio adventure by Big Finish. Now it has been adapted by RTD for the TV series. Teenager Sharon has been replaced by Rose Temple-Noble, Donna's daughter, although her friend Fudge still features. But is the Meep the cute and cuddly, frightened little furball he first appears? The Meep is voiced by none other than veteran actor Mariam Margolyes.

The following **Saturday, 2nd December** sees the second special, entitled **Wild Blue Yonder**. This adventure is a total mystery at the time of writing, because RTD has pulled off the near impossible task of allowing no pre-publicity and clamping down on any leaks. All we know from RTD's own column in DWM is that this is his "most Doctor-y Doctor Who story" and its focus is very much on how pivotal Donna is to the fate of the world, if not the universe.



The third special entitled **The Giggle** airs on **Saturday 9th December**. In this adventure, the Doctor pits his wits against his old foe The Toymaker. The two of them have history, with the Toymaker first appearing on our screens way back in 1966 when he was played by Michael Gough, facing the First Doctor, portrayed by William Hartnell. In that adventure, it was stated that the Toymaker and the Doctor had met previously in an unseen adventure.



They've faced off a number of times since in spin-off media, but this time the Toymaker has a new face, being played by former *Doogie Howser MD* star Neil Patrick Harris. There are hints that the Toymaker may even have something to do with the Fourteenth Doctor's own regeneration (or de-generation giving him the same face as the Tenth Doctor (although obviously older). Whatever happen, the story culminates with the Doctor regenerating into his Fifteenth incarnation, played by Ncuti Gatwa.

The Specials also see the return of Donna's grandfather, Wilfred Mott, played by the late Bernard Cribbins in his last ever TV role. Also returning is Donna's mum Sylvia (Jacqueline King). Newcomers to the clan are Donna's husband Shaun Temple (Karl Collins) and her daughter Rose is (Yasmin Finney). There are hints that Rose may be appearing in future episodes of the series, so it's very much a case of watch this space.

The title of the **Christmas Day Special** will be Gatwa's first full outing as the new Doctor, although at the time of writing, no title for the special has been released. The new Doctor will be joined by a new companion, Ruby Sunday, played by Milly Gibson. The new, 10-part season of **Doctor Who** will air in 2024, with most episodes now filmed or in post-production.



RTD has stated that he is already working on episodes for the 2025 season, so it looks like the Doctor's future is assured, as indeed is that of the ever-expanding Whoniverse. Exciting times ahead!





Reviews from the worlds of Sci-Fi and Fantasy: Do you agree with our resident reviewer Alex's assessments? All Vote Now!

The War of the Worlds

The BBC's 2019 interpretation of H.G. Wells' seminal science fiction work, available on DVD and Amazon Prime, offers a deeper storyline with stronger characters than the author's original novel, characters who are brought to life by an amazing cast that features Rafe Spall and Eleanor Tomlinson as the leads. Yes, you read that right. *The War of the Worlds*, not only with a female lead but also a central viewpoint character, and the overall result is all the better for this more realistic gender balance.

While the novel was more about ideas, this is absolutely a drama about the people who live them, making an effective transition from page to screen in the process. The three episodes neatly capture the seminal nature of the first famous entry in the 'alien invasion of southeast England' fantasy sub-genre, but also create an impression of a global apocalypse.



The visual effects are adequate and do not distract from the story being told, unless you have Hollywood expectations, and the very good use of

locations compensates for any perceived deficiencies in the CGI. Especially noteworthy is how the non-linear storytelling style favoured by Victorian writers, including Wells, is developed, and used across the three episodes to ask and answer questions gradually and logically. Even if you are not a fan of Wells' written works, this is very much worth checking out.

Secret Invasion

This recent Disney+ addition to the Marvel Cinematic Universe takes a long time to warm up. So long that it almost runs out of time, for which there is no excuse when you, the creative team, have months of preparation time and several hours of screen time to deliver structure and pace. The pay-off when it does come is good and leaves you wanting more but uses the ploy of marginalising the characters who fulfil it to protect the element of surprise.

This reviewer's question is whether that compromise is worth the sacrifice when it comes at the expense of narrative substance or the chance to enjoy more screen time with two of the current generation's best actors? My answer is an emphatic no, as I would rather get the best value for money (and time investment) over a whole serial. While guest actors such as Olivia Colman and Emilia Clarke are wastefully underused (please can they have their own spin-off show?) we spend far too much time watching Kingsley Ben-Adir struggling to find anything meaningful in a tired, jingoistic terrorist plot reminiscent of *The Falcon* and *the Winter Soldier*.

Some shows, such as *Blake's 7* and others, explore the terrorist or freedom fighter dilemma through thought provoking, character and motivation driven drama, while others just use terrorists as generic bad guys with the same disinterest in understanding other cultures that feeds terrorism in the first place.

This show falls into the latter category.



Oppenheimer

Although based on the story of actual events, real people, and a very real human tragedy, this is one of those films that, like *First Man*, in describing events that have inspired so much fantasy over a period of many years, nonetheless fits comfortably on the same Blu-ray shelf as the works of science fiction inspired by them. And, despite looking into an event that has and will continue to cause much strong emotion and ethical division, Christopher Nolan manages to strike the right balance between telling a story with a strong message without crossing the line and instructing viewers in how they should feel.

His use of special effects likewise enhances the effectiveness of the production without ever becoming a distraction, and there is much else besides to recommend his latest work. *Oppenheimer* is a historical record, a biographical drama, a political drama, a romance, and a Cold War espionage film, featuring an outstanding cast led by Cillian Murphy, Emily Blunt and Robert Downey Jr, and Florence Pugh fans should not be disappointed either.



Barbie

Barbie, directed by Greta Gerwig, might not be the kind of fantasy usually covered by this fanzine, but it is such a powerful film that we are going to recommend it anyway. Gerwig achieves a perfect balance covering strong, very difficult themes, with accessibility that will allow viewers of all ages to enjoy and take something away from the experience. Following on the turmoil of the #MeToo period, this piece explores the wider issues of class and gender from the perspective that all social domination is a form of prejudice, a study from which none of the characters necessarily emerge spotless. Although this is such an effective, affecting, and often dark satire, with most of the humour directed at older viewers with more life experience, there is also a fun, candyfloss adventure for the younger viewers to engage with.

As with Nolan's *Oppenheimer*, Gerwig also manages to explore ideals and ideas without the need to moralise, instead using clever analogies and metaphors, introducing perspectives before reversing them and revealing the flaws in some popular role-model stereotypes. The use of sets rather than CGI where possible, and great performances by Margot

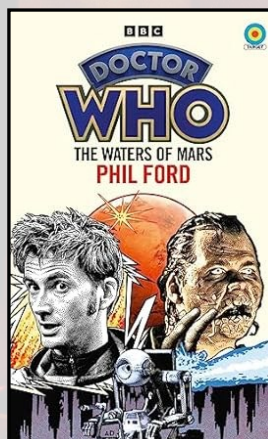
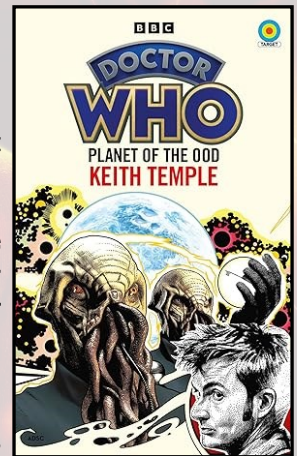
Robbie and Ryan Gosling, give this film an aesthetic and dramatic energy that complements the deeper themes.



DOCTOR WHO novelisations: Planet of the Ood and The Waters of Mars

The BBC has released two new novelisations of popular David Tennant episodes of *Doctor Who* in advance of his much-anticipated return to the show for its 60th anniversary.

Planet of the Ood is written by the story's original screenwriter, Keith Temple, with the audiobook version read by Silas Carson, a guest actor in the original production. This traditional novelisation uses descriptive prose and character perspective to enhance rather than change a work of which the author is clearly proud, and rightly so. Carson is an effective reader who shares the writer's enthusiasm and familiarity with the original production.



The Waters of Mars, written by Phil Ford, who co-wrote the original script with show-runner Russel T Davies in 2009, is the deeper of these two offerings, emphasising the darker aspects of the story in a way that the episode as broadcast arguably compromised in favour of spectacle and building tension ahead of the Christmas Special. This is one of the best new series novelisations, with

Maureen O'Brien delivering a measured and mature reading in harmony with the text.

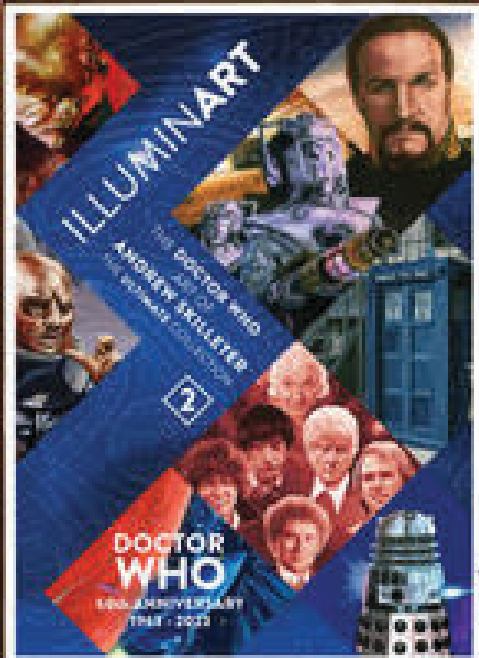


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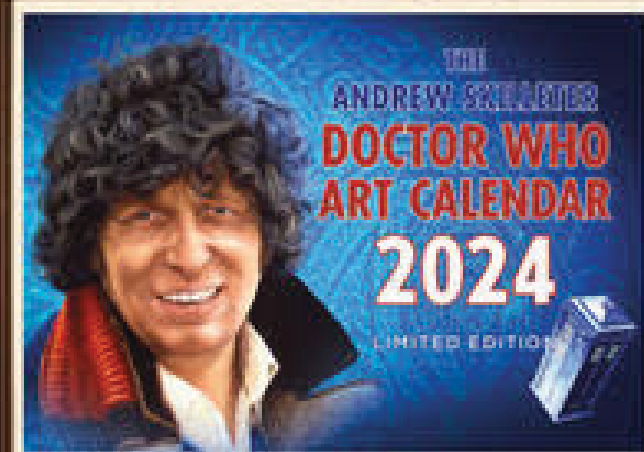
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