Hello! It looks as though Tides of Time might be heading towards the end of an era...

I’m looking to find a replacement for my privileged position, and so if you’re at all interested, and have any experience at all of IBM machines and typesetting software then come and see me... you never know, you might find yourself an editorship! It can be a very lonely, uncomplemented position. I sometimes wonder what I could get away with saying here as I doubt that anyone actually reads this bit of the magazine, and even if you are, I doubt whether you have any interest in my slightly eccentric rambles. Squiggle biggle, booble flip. See, you read that through without any emotion whatsoever. Oh well, back to Dalek Attack...

Please feel free to send in articles and comments, letters and views at any time to:

Julian Mander, St. Peter’s College, Oxford. OX1 2DL.

Production Personnel:

Collating articles, Typing, Editing, Checking, Typesetting, Layout and design, Printing, Photocopying, Assembly, Retail Management, International Consumer Relations, Interstellar Marketing, Universal Copyright Securement, General Dogsbody...

ME!
by Mark Hanlon

The Tom Baker era is an extremely difficult period of Doctor Who to review. Seven years worth of material for instance, does not fit easily into any cogent but necessarily comprehensive analysis, a fact which is compounded when we consider that the era was not just one long stylistic whole, but rather an odd confection of four distinct and almost contradictory styles. One approach, for example, was the earth-bound/ action-adventure formula which had graced the Pertwee era under the aegis of Barry Letts as producer and Terrance Dicks as script editor. This was followed by a gothic-horror genre under the successful producer/script editor team of Philip Hinchcliffe and Robert Holmes, followed by a more loose, comedic style under Graham Williams. Baker's final year, however, saw the return to a more dramatic and glibly formula of storytelling previously seen in the Hinchcliffe/Holmes era, all under John Nathan-Turner as overall producer and Barry Letts as an advisory capacity. Baker's performance, far from unifying these four styles into a coherent whole, actually reflected, and in some cases initiated the changes of style: he was alien and aloof in the gothic serials; eccentric - perhaps even camp - in the comedic serials; and visibly older and more subdued in his final year. Such inconsistency of style and performance, as said, makes any overview of the era difficult, but most importantly knocks down the traditional generalisation that "the programme was at its best under Tom Baker" and "Tom Baker was the best Doctor". Any review, therefore, needs to examine not the era as a whole but the eras within an era, and Baker's suitability in each. Such an approach therefore reveals some of the programme's highest ever peaks both in terms of production values and the performance of its lead, but, more controversially, it also reveals that Doctor Who had reached its ultimate nadir in the Tom Baker era.

As has been mentioned, the Baker era began in distinctly Pertwee style. "Robot", produced by Barry Letts and written by Terrance Dicks, was deliberately aimed against the alienation of a viewing public which had become increasingly accustomed to pertwee as "the Doctor". Traditional Who-lore figures such as the Brigadier, Sgt Benton, and Sarah Jane were therefore in abundance in a plot which was in traditional Pertwee style: a mad scientist attempts to take over the world with the aid of a bunch of extreme right-wing Hitleresque fanatics, penetrating the otherwise liberal scientific establishments of Who-earth. But the old, traditional elements of the show did not end there. The story was directed by the capable Christopher Barry who had streamlined the original cast back in '63, introduced the Daleks, and directed what could perhaps be described as the 'quintessential' Pertwee story, "The Daemons" (although such a contention is now rightly in dispute). The new era, therefore, was deliberately playing it safe. "Robot" was a more decisive step towards a conclusion of the Pertwee era which was still not complete even in 1989, rather than a new dawn for the programme. But even so, by 1974 it was becoming abundantly clear that some form of conclusion was beckoning. Baker looked decidedly uncomfortable in the old set-up, which, in any case, had started to look tired and jaded even in Pertwee's final year (or two). Not for this new distinct persona was the crusty military establishment which had suited the cosmopolitan Pertwee or the affectionate Troughton: Baker "walk(ed) in eternity" and simply refused to "spend the rest of my life running round after the Brigadier" (Pyramids of Mars). Thus the new producer and script editor, who arrived in time for Baker's second story, had their job cut out for them. "Robot" had revealed clearer than anything else that change was now necessary for the programme's survival.

Certainly, the Holmes/Hinchcliffe era on paper does seem to ring in the changes. It is widely regarded (justifiably in my opinion) as the most enjoyable and successful era of Doctor Who, a change indeed if we regard success and change as necessarily concomitant. Viewing figures increased from an eight million average to about thirteen million (a high unprecedented since the Hartnell era), coinciding with new levels of violence and a set of increasingly sadistic adversaries such as Davros from "Genesis of the Daleks", Sutekh from "Pyramids of Mars", Harrison Chase from "The Seeds of Doom" and a revamped Master in "The Deadly Assassin" devoid of the charm and warmth of Roger Delgado's version, now consumed by bitterness and physical decay. The programme this gained a new adult status and the tenacious attention of Mrs Mary Whitehouse and the National Viewers and Listeners Association. Changes were also afoot in the tradition Doctor/Companion relationship: for the first time characters such as Sarah Jane and Leela could be conceived as real people rather than characterless cyphers. Witness Sarah's touching leaving scene in "The Hand of Fear" and Leela's self-initiated development of the plot in "The Talons of Weng-Chiang" as evidence of this. Another novel idea pioneered in this era was the attempt at a story without a companion. This was Baker's idea who argued that stories would be less cluttered without a traditional Doctor/companion narrative, and was indulged by Robert Holmes who wrote "The Deadly Assassin" to prove that the idea would not work. "The Deadly Assassin" is however, a story of the highest calibre and added weight to Baker's claim that he could carry the show on his own. True as Baker's estimations of his acting skills were, though, perhaps it is fair to say that the success of "The Deadly Assassin" was due more to the strength of the script and that prolonged internal monologues from Baker (as in "The Face of Evil" until Leela appeared) would have become tedious and disruptive to the narrative. Nevertheless, the fact that the idea was attempted at all is testimony to Baker's success in creating a more alien interpretation of the character in a programme which had become decidedly more mature: no Doctor before or since has been able to work effectively without the aid of some earthly complement and certainly no writer would have been confident enough to write even one story which contained no immediately identifiable earthly perspectives as did "The Deadly Assassin". A further facet of this increasingly alien
Doctor was his penchant for physical violence: in "The Planet of Evil" he takes the opportunity of Sarah's distress to assault the distracted Sorenson; Scourby in "The Seeds of Doom" is twice the victim of Baker's fists, the second encounter being prefigured by Baker jumping on him through a glass sky-light sending him unceremoniously into the fireplace: in "The Deadly Assassin" the Doctor acts as God and engages in a very effectively staged fight sequence ending in a drowning sequence which Baker to this day says he finds 'particularly repugnant', True, Pertwee; Doctor was never afraid of physical violence, but more often than not the 'Venusian Karate' sequences were rarely well stages and in any case, embarrassing in concept.

Therefore, it seems that the Hinchcliffe/Holmes era in terms of story content, violence, Doctor/companion relationship and characterisation, did ring in the changes. Yet, perhaps, it is more accurate not to stress 'change' too far. For a start, the overall writing team was the same as other eras: out of the 16 stories made by Hinchcliffe/Holmes, only four were written by two newcomers. The remainder of stories were handled by experienced old-hands such as Robert Holmes (who wrote three stories and re-wrote at least five others), Bob Baker and Dave Martin (stalwarts of the Pertwee era, who provided two adventures for Holmes/Hinchcliffe), Louis Marks (who wrote for Hartnell and Pertwee, and likewise provided two stories for Holmes/Hinchcliffe), and Henry Doig (who wrote for Hartnell and 10 for Pertwee, and again provided two stories in this era). The same can also be said for directors. The only new names were Rodney Bennet and Penant Roberts, among such familiar as David Maloney (who directed three Baker stories, one Pertwee, and nineteen Troughton episodes), Douglas Camfield (who directed more episodes than anyone else), Christopher Barry, Paddy Russell, Lennie Mayne, and Michael E. Briant - all of whom worked with two Doctors or more. Even in terms of story content the new production team were reluctant to phase out UNIT completely, since it appeared in "Terror of the Zygons", "The Android Invasion" and "The Seeds of Doom". Sarah Jane was as much a part of the UNIT set-up as Jo Grant, and despite what was argued earlier, conform to the traditional Doctor/companion relationship: both she and Leela asked silly questions, screamed, and tripped over, along with the rest of them. The success of both Sarah and Leela had more to do with the strength of the actresses than the characters as written. Thus perhaps much of the Hinchcliffe/Holmes era was more "traditional" than has previously been realised. The 'difference' was that it used the cream of the writers, the cream of the directors, and the cream of the ideas that had worked in the programme's past: UNIT, an alien equivoval Doctor (Hartnell), a strong female companion (Barbara, Sara Kingdom, Zoe, Liz) and the violent gothic, doom-laden form of storytelling seen in "The Dalek Masterplan", "The Tomb of the Cybermen", "Inferno", etc. The appearance of the gothic horror genre in the Hinchcliffe/Holmes era was hardly original in execution either: "Planet of Evil", "Pyramids of Mars", "The Brain of Morbius", "The Hand of Fear", "The Deadly Assassin" and "The Talons of Weng-Chiang" were all deliberate re-makes of classic horror legends and Hammer films. The very "originality" of the Hinchcliffe era, therefore, lay in the fact that it represented a purge of all that had been unsuccessful in other eras of Who: excessive comedy, armies of unconvincing rubber monsters, and patronising scripts, were all conspicuous by their absence. Hinchcliffe/Holmes possessed an understanding of what successful Doctor Who should be, based on the past experience of the most able writers and directors. Change, therefore, which was most embodied by "The Deadly Assassin" was conducted only in the most secure and certain of confines.

Yet, it was to be this 'pure' 'unadulterated' form of Doctor Who which was to be the victim of its own success. Adult mature styles of storytelling might have been better suited to the tastes of the majority of a much expanded audience, but key vocal minority interests were to express their opinion much more loudly. Mary Whitehouse's campaign against violence in Doctor Who finally reached its peak with the infamous drowning scene in "The Deadly Assassin" episode three. This sequence has now become commonplace in Who-lore, but at the time initiated a radical shift of policy on the part of the BBC hierarchy. Incoming producer Graham Williams was ordered to tone down the violence and accept a significant cut in the show's budget as part of a wider package of BBC cuts. Thus by the end of 1976 the end of an era was clearly apparent, but it was by no means the end of an era in any common-place sense.

It was the end of a period in which the programme had truly discovered itself, but part of that discovery had involved the realisation that Doctor Who, at its best, was considered untenable and 'dangerous' outside its 'children's programme' format. In fact, this seems to have been the central conflict of the programme in the 1980's, particularly the McCoy era. The audience by and large demanded a return to the realism of the early Tom Baker days, but were among the first to deride the programme as being unsuitable for family viewing when their wishes were complied with. But in 1976 at least, this was barely becoming apparent in a programme which was having to come to terms with another upheaval. The release of "Star Wars" had created new expectations in the field of special effects and set design, which the Who-team, working on a considerably smaller budget, were hard pressed to realise. Doctor Who thus faced considerable problems not only in that it was a victim of its own success by which future episodes would be carefully, but unfairly, scrutinised; it also faced considerably enhanced expectation against a background of swinging cuts.

The Graham Williams era, however, opened as if nothing had happened. "Horror of Fang Rock" and "The Image of the Fendahl" seemed typical of Holmes/Hinchcliffe: both were dark, gothic, claustrophobic, and centred on themes such as physical possession and paranoia. We may attribute this continuity to the presence of Holmes as script editor for the bulk of Williams' first season, but even here, the BBC's list of changes was being complied with as Holmes' last contribution to the programme as editor. "The Sunmakers" was visibly more lightweight and humorous. The arrival of Tom Newman as the new script editor further completed this process. Thus by the end of the season, it was clear that the programme was in radically different hands. With the exception of "Horror of Fang Rock" and "The Image of the Fendahl", Doctor Who lacked the scriptural and visual punch of previous years. Perhaps the season was most embodied by its final story, "The Invasion of Time", (screened last term) which, although compelling and convincing drama for the most part, was nevertheless let down by gratuitous humour in supposedly climactic moments, lack of money, and permissible levels of violence in its final two instalments, which were very poorly realised. As a Gallifrey story, it paled visably in comparison with "The Deadly Assassin" a year previous.
Yet to condemn the Graham Williams era as unimaginatively spartan or overtly humourous fails to take account of the highly successful "Key to Time" season. The basic idea was to link the season's twenty-six episodes under an umbrella theme consisting of the Doctor and Romana's search for the six segments of the Key to enable the White Guardian to restore the natural equilibrium between good and evil. The idea was designed to entice on several levels: firstly, it revealed a little of the Doctor's larger universal role as a pawn in a war between two omnipotent Guardians; it also gave a much needed structure to the programme and attracted viewers to watch the whole season rather than just random episodes. Indeed, there was much in this season which was attractive, not least in the first story, "The Ribos Operation", which is something of a forgotten gem. Written by Holmes, it easily ranks alongside his other classics such as "The Ark in Space" and "The Deadly Assassin" in terms of originality, the quality of the script, and the characterisation. Even the humour works well in this story, complemented as it is by lavish production and tight direction. The Ribos is entirely a story long in need of reappraisal by popular fan opinion. The second story "The Pirate Planet" was one of Douglas Adams' (he of the "Hitch Hikers..." fame) first works for television and full of original ideas, if a little too humourous in places for my taste. The first three episodes of "The Stones of Blood" however, were pure throwback to Hinchcliffe/Holmes in the use of pseudo-occultism (which always seems to work well in Who), a claustrophobic setting, and strong supporting characters. "The Androids of Tara" remains a very well-made spoof on "The Prisoner of Zenda" and the scripts for both "The Power of Kroll" and "The Armageddon Factor" contained some very interesting ideas (even if "Kroll" was the standard savages versus technocrats story). Lack of money, therefore, was the only bugbear which let the season down. In a Hinchcliffe season, the money would have gone far enough to make a universally satisfying season; Williams, at most, could make only four decent-looking stories, and in this instance, both "Kroll" and the "Fact" looked remarkably made of cardboard. Nevertheless, the season was considered by most to be a success and certainly exhibited a sense of care and commitment which, sadly, the following season did not.

Season 17 has rightly been described as the ultimate nadir in Doctor Who's history. True, on paper it might seem to have a lot going for it. "Destiny of the Daleks" was based on the fascinating idea of the Daleks reaching a military impasse against an enemy as coldly logical as they. The result: universal peace. "City of Death" used the interesting locality of Paris to produce a story of great panache, and other intriguing ideas included a race of aliens purely dependent on chlorophyll in "Creature from the Pit" and the Mandrel's decomposition into an addictive drug in "The Nightmare of Eden". Even "The Horns of Nimon" had redeeming features: the operation of the Nimon's lair on the basis of a printed circuit was undeniably novel. Yet this should be as far as recent revisionist theories are allowed to press their case. To say that the execution of the above ideas was shabby, is an understatement indeed. Of course, budgetary restrictions must always be taken in to account, but these alone could not explain the presence of so predominant a level of camp comedy which was the main drawback of the season. The reason for failure, therefore, was the lack of any retaining influence on either the wilder excesses of Baker or new script editor Douglas Adams, perhaps the most unsuitable script editor to have worked on the show. It seems that Williams in his final season had lost both the understanding of the programme and the will to control it which he had possessed in earlier seasons; certainly neither seasons 15 or 16 had three such appalling stories in a row as did season 17 ("Creature from the Pit", "The Nightmare of Eden" and "The Horns of Nimon" being the three in question). Even experienced directors like Christopher Barry had no influence on Baker or Adams by this stage. In fact, this brings us to the contentious point raised earlier, that Baker may have done more harm than good to the programme since much of the humour was not scripted but the result of his injections in rehearsal and example to fellow actors to "ham it up". One suggestion of Baker's which was almost, but thankfully never, adopted, was that he should be transformed into a talking cabbage. Thus the man who has been credited with the mantle of best actor to have played the part, had extremely suspect judgement as to what made the programme work. The dreadful culmination of the whole of season 17 approach was "The Horns of Nimon" which, as fate would have it, unintentionally became Williams past story as producer replacing 'Shada', which was lost due to industrial action. Perhaps it is more fitting that 'Horns' should have ended Williams' time as producer since it was the more logical conclusion of his approach (or lack of one) than was 'Shada'. It is better that we remember certain sections of the Williams era for the disasters that they were rather than allowing for intended final stories or consistently high ratings to swamp overall impressions. Doctor Who in 1979 had endured its most painful period in a decade since Troughton's final season.

The last Baker year, however, was a distinct improvement and more of a return to the quality of the Hinchcliffe/Holmes era. The new producer, John Nathan-Turner, had worked closely with Williams during his final season and understood the problems of the programme which he now felt needed to be brought into the 1980s. Firstly, the titles and theme tune were revamped and a larger budget negotiated to allow the show to compete for the latest post Star Wars special effects. The overall feel of the programme was radically altered in other ways too, as Dudley Simpson's instrumental musical arrangements were replaced with synthesized scores generated by the BBC Radiophonic Workshop; and Baker's increasingly scrappy costumes were replaced with a more uniform look to match the more serious and subdued performances requested of him. The humour on the scriptural side was also subdued too, as new script editor Christopher H. Bidmead introduced scientific and mathematical concepts as the programme's primary explorative genre. Thus "The Leisure Hive" which opened Season 18 was a vastly different story from "The Horns of Nimon", which preceded it. Even in 1993 the sets, music, special effects and direction are impressive, as anyone who saw the story in Trinity 1992 will testify. These production values however continued without interruption throughout the rest of the season, thereby ensuring it as one of the most impressive and successful throughout the show's entire duration. For the first time since 1963, the programme led the field in British small-screen advancement and innovation. "Meglos", for instance, pioneered the revolutionary scene-sync technique of superimposing the images of two synchronized mobile camera with very impressive results (previously one of the cameras had to be immobile and so the effect was always static and of limited realism). But special effects, of course, did not make or break the show, whereas the quality of the scripts certainly did. It is to Bidmead and Nathan-Turner's credit
therefore, that the quality of the scripts improved as dramatically as they did. Bidmead claims to have re-wrote over 70% of the season to bring it up to scratch, added to which his injections of scientific principles gave the programme new adult edge. Of the eight stories in this season, only "Meglos" did not come up to standard, yet would still have been impressive the previous year. "Logopolis", the final story of the season was, however, very impressive and marked the pinnacle of Bidmead's approach. Written by Bidmead, the scientific concepts reached their peak in a very interesting examination of the relationship between block transfer computation and regeneration. The directorial inspiration of the season also reached its zenith in this story as Peter Grimwade secured for himself the position of one of the best directors to have worked on the programme. Rom Baker thus could not have had a better exit from the programme, especially as "Logopolis" embodied some of the themes of earlier Baker eras: the banter between Tegan and Aunt Venessa reflected the more acceptable forms of humour from the Williams era, whereas the unscrupulousness of the Master reflected the very best of Holmes/Hinchcliffe gothic horror ("State of Decay" earlier in the season had also been a return to this). Season 18, though, did not enjoy a position of almost unadulterated success. In fact, the programme reached one of its lowest ebbs of popularity in ratings which were as low as 3 million at one point - against ITV's "Buck Rogers". There was also considerable opposition to the departure of K9 and the new overall style of the programme. Moreover, Baker became ill halfway through recording the season and thus looked very gaunt and haggard on screen, as well as becoming very difficult to work with during rehearsals. The cloud hanging over the season was most evident in "Warriors' Gate", although by the time of "The Keeper of Traken", Baker's mood looked much lighter. By and large, though, the season was a great success. From "State of Decay" onwards, the season was rapturously received, especially "Logopolis", which achieved some very positive reviews. The show had been pulled back from the brink of cancellation, which was a very distinct possibility at the end of the Williams era.

The Baker era, therefore, was never a consistent whole but rather a collection of widely different genres loosely bound by just one actor and various degrees of Who mythology. By far the most successful of these approaches was that of Holmes/Hinchcliffe which achieved the oft elusive balance between gothic/horror and previous approaches to the programme which had been successful in previous eras. It was into this approach that Baker fitted best: his innocent eccentricities yet aloofness were both sufficiently controlled so as to complement and effectively contrast the more adult tone of the stories. Problems emerged, though, when Williams gave Baker a freer hand in the running of the show, which culminated in many stories being worse than they otherwise would have been had more control been exercised. Baker was unintentionally pulling down the very programme which had given him the very opportunities to shine in the public eye as the best actor to have played the part. Thankfully, though, his reputation was justifiably saved by a very strong final season in which he established himself once again in the eyes of many as the best Doctor. Good for the programme this was in the short-term however, in the long-term it might have been better had Baker left on a low note. This in no way would have tarnished his earlier performances, but would have made the task of his successor - all of them worthy actors - much easier since they suffered from considerable unfair comparison. Thus at best Tom Baker made an inestimable contribution to Doctor Who and showed just how good a programme it could be. At worst, his very success under Hinchcliffe/Nathan-Turner and corresponding failure under Williams may have done perhaps irreparable dao the programme in the long-run.

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**Making your own Doctor Who serial**

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<th>The DocSoc Guide to making your own Doctor Who serial</th>
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<td>by Gary Meehan</td>
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Seeing as there hasn’t been any new Doctor Who for over three years you might be thinking, "Hey why don’t we make our own Doctor Who story?" On the other hand you may be wondering, "Where’s the bar?" If the former, then read on.

We can break down the design process into a number of distinct steps. First off we have:

1) The Title

Every story must have a title, otherwise a typical conversation at DocSoc might go along the lines of:

"What are you showing tonight?"
"The one with the Doctor and the Daleks in it."

"Oh, that one. It’s not as good as the one with the Doctor and the Daleks in, is it? What are you showing afterward?"
"Sapphire & Steel."
"That’s it, I’m off."

What to call our story? If you look through the programme guide you will notice that most stories are either called (The) something of (the) something or just plain something.

Since the latter involves inventing a word that no-one can pronounce - could you say Logopolis or Castovalva when they first flashed on our screens. Probably not, you’d be about 7 or 8 at the time.

If given this template you still can’t think up a suitable name you can always pick a word from one of the old stalwarts of Who - Planet, Death, Evil & Daleks. Of course, if you pick the latter it’s sort of obligatory to bring the Daleks into your story. But don’t let this put you off.
You're almost guaranteed two million extra viewers and a place in the annals of Doctor Who classics.

2) The Monster

Once you've got a title, you need a monster or two (but not three, remember your budget won't stretch that far). Preferably your monster should be human-sized, have two arms, two legs, one head and an appallingly good grasp of the English language. And most importantly, it should be encased head to toe in a rubber costume. Methinks someone in the BBC costume department has got a severe rubber fetish.

Your monster needs a name. The usual method for this is to grab a copy of the O.E.D., turn to any page at random, pick a word, jumble the letters around a bit, then give up and ask the Script Editor what he thinks.

However, this monster business may not be for you, especially if your name is Terry Nation (Er, I need a monster for my new story. I know, I'll use the Daleks, I've not used them since, ooh, last season). If so you can grab one from Doctor Who's varied past; it's sure to bring in the nostalgia freaks.

Can't decide which one to pick? Undetermined as to whether you should go for the Silurians or the Sea Devils (lots of rubber there!) Pick them both! Even better, get a load round and have an anniversary party!

3) Guest stars

In this category I'll lump anyone who isn't the Doctor nor his companions.

First we want our main star to whom you can give all the good lines and generally creep to. The presence of this guest star is to 'broaden the aspect of the programme and to widen the series' appeal.' This is, of course, in no way a pathetic attempt to gain extra viewers and a mention in the Daily Mirror. Then you need lots of other, minor stars who can spend their time being killed, preferably by involving lots of really advanced special effects, like overexposure or displaying the negative. But remember, no blood (look what happened in The Brain of Morbius). The cast should include at least two people who can't act to save their lives.

4) Setting

Now you've got your monster and your guest stars, you need somewhere to set your story. Will it be in the future, the present or the past. The first one is practically unachieviable by the beeb, the second gives you a chance to do some 'dramatic location work' and the third option gives you a chance to raid the BBC's costume department, and thus save a fortune on production costs.

When you've decided when to set your story you have to decide where to set it. Isn't life complicated, but if you'd wanted the easy life of regurgitated story lines you would have become a Star Trek writer.

Actually, the setting isn't really that important, more of a case of which quarry you want to use. In a cynical ploy for extra viewers you could shoot overseas but that would be really sad, wouldn't it?

5) The plot

Now, you may have thought that the plot was the first thing to be considered, but that was just a vicious rumour put about by John Nathan Turner to give the impression that the stories under his tenure actually made sense.

The plot is very simple. The goodies are at varying degrees of war with the baddies, the baddies usually having the upper hand. The Doctor turns up, gets captured a few times by the baddies (depending on how much the story needs padding out), escapes every time, finds the goodies, helps them beat the baddies and everybody lives happily ever after.

There, that wasn't too hard, was it? While we're on the subject of the plot we should think about;

6) Continuity

Sod that for a game of dominoes.

7) The Sets

Now we get to the business of actually making the story. The first thing we need is sets and it's wise to tell the set designers about your ideas early or else they'll get bored and start to make things off their own bat. Originally The Horns of Nimmon was supposed to be a classical adventure set in Ancient Athens, but someone neglected to tell the set and costume designers this and they let their imagination run riot, especially the costume designer who was rumoured to be on an LSD derivate at the time which caused her to lose her colour vision. This explains the crap rewrites and the totally nonsensical script - the script was written around the sets, not the other way round (can one write sets?)

With sets we need something else. That extra something that sets Who apart from other, mundane S.F. series, i.e. Star Trek.

8) Corridors

And lots of them. They are invaluable for drawing out your story and showing what good shots your baddies are - they can miss the Doctor and his companions with every-single-shot. Corridors are much beloved by designers as they're cheap, versatile and can be knocked up in two minutes flat. In some cases they have even persuaded the producer to take the corridor to its evolutionary summit: the corridor based story. This can best be seen in such stories as The Horns of Nimmon and Paradise Towers. However, it has to be noticed that both of these are notoriously crap.

9) Rehearsals

While the sets are being built we can begin the rehearsals. Right, that takes care of the first ninety minutes, what shall we do for the rest of the fortnight? Thank God the pubs are open all day now.

10) Filming

After you've sobered up your cast it's down to the serious business of filming. It's here that the cast from the cast get to utter classic lines, such as "I've reversed the polarity of the neutron flow," "Destroy them!" "Excellent!" and "Exterminate!" There must also be at least three line fluffs per episode and one member of the cast must be hammering it up for it's worth.

11) Post production

This is the fun bit where you get to add all those dodgy special effects. The main way of achieving this, since The Silurians is by Colour Separation Overlay (C.S.O.) or Chromakey as it's known by the other side (I mean I.T.V., not Cambridge). This involves shooting the actors (?) against a single coloured background, usually blue, and then mixing this with another shot a model, set, etc. - this shot replacing all the blue in the original shot to achieve the most unconvincing, flat effect you could
possibly imagine. You can see examples of C.S.O. in most colour episodes of Doctor Who, but the most infamous of these stories is Underworld, in which most of the story was set using C.S.O. The story is that officially they ran out of money, but in fact the designers didn’t want to do another cave set and instead created a nice, detached house. This caused a few problems but at least the producer got a free place to live.

Post production is where you also edit your story and are able to cut out all the bits where the guest star was swearing his head off at the director.

**Oh no…**

**Not another bloody review!**

**Opinion by Paul Groves**

In the last issue of Tides of Time I wrote two reviews under assumed names. The Horns of Nimon review a lot of readers seemed to take seriously, although in fact the review was a blatant parody. The word ‘gullible’ seems to come to mind. The other review, of Transit, I actually used to express my genuine opinion of the book, but bizarrely most people thought it was a piss-take, they obviously couldn’t cope with a creatively and originally written review, which brings me to the body of my feature.

It seems that every single periodical in existence on the subject of Doctor Who is tanked up to the eyeballs with endless reviews. Tides of Time is no exception, although at least half the magazine if usually free from this scourge. I can believe that somewhere right now, a Doctor Who fan is writing a review of his own novel. I recall a joke, “How many Doctor Who fans does it take to change a light bulb? Answer: One to change the bulb, and ten to write the reviews.”

I firmly believe that writing a written criticism of something that you couldn’t do any better yourself is immoral. For example if a Historian or PPEist published an article in Cherwell criticising my ability and judgment as a Physicist, suggested my DPhil would be better if someone else did it, and then went on to suggest my research was based on the work of a BioChemist in 1963 in 1963, because the apparatus looked similar, I would feel within my rights to take them to court.

Similarly, I feel a layman criticising the ability of a Director, Producer, Script writer or Actor to do his or her job, when they know nothing about the skills and challenges involved is just as wrong.

Reviewers of Doctor Who regularly criticise the way a scene or even a whole story is put together, but they rarely mention that the creative staff involved would have been constrained by time, budget, manpower, availability of people and technical limitations, and so could well have done the best job anyone could under the circumstances, and certainly a better job than the reviewer could have done.

Another thing that irritates me about people who write reviews about Doctor Who, is that they usually take the program so bloody seriously. The purpose of Doctor Who is to turn a perfectly good Science Fiction idea in pantomime. Doctor Who is entertaining, fun, and often silly… if you want serious SF, you watch ST:TNG or read a book. After all, no sane person could seriously believe that an alien as badly designed and stupid as the Dalek could even contemplate conquering the universe.

An unpleasant feature of many reviews is the plethora of silly parallels drawn between the Doctor Who story in question and other works. Fictitious examples of this sort of thing are… "The plethora of corridors in Paradise Towers suggests [Author] has drawn inspiration from the Horns of Nimon", "The Movellans were an attempt by [Author] to bring the Cybermen up to date", and "This rustic country village is obviously a continuity reference to the Daemons."

However, the one real ‘silly parallel’ that really made my blood boil was a member of the society’s comparison of Genesis of the Daleks with the bible. I was several times tempted to write a parody of that review, my working title "Genesis of the Daleks: A geological interpretation". After all, there were lots of rocks in it!

Moving on to the less odious aspects of reviews, many reviews also praise stories, but unfortunately praise of one story implies criticism of another.

A lot of reviews contain a summary of the plot - although this proves a useful reminder to those who’ve seen the story, it can spoil it for those yet to view it and to be honest, writing a plot summary isn’t the most intellectually challenging of tasks.

Some reviewers also use their reviews to demonstrate their knowledge of Doctor Who and although a few snippets and asides can be interesting, they often tend to be used to excess and bore the reader solid. For example, I personally don’t give a dicky bird who directed Nightmare on Eden or who the set designer for Terror of the Vervoids was - after all, I’m never likely to meet these people. I’d also like Matthew Kilburn to explain what exactly Doctor Who chocolate wrappers have to do with the Android Invasion.

I am quite happy to acknowledge that most Doctor Who reviewers know far more about the program than I do, after all, I think that says a lot more about them than it does about me.

Okay, so I’ve said what I don’t like about reviews, but it would be hypocritical of me not to make a constructive suggestion of how people should write about Doctor Who. I firmly believe that people should be
plot might have evolved or how things develop after the Doctor has left.

Although some reviewers do contribute new ideas such as these, most don't. After all, thinking up constructive new ideas requires intelligence and imagination, whereas slagging off someone else's work is easy.

The views expressed here are those of the Author and don't necessarily represent those of Tides of Time or O.U.D.W.S. [Editor: Personally, I thoroughly agree!...]

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Matthew Kilburn

Revising is something I ought to be good at. After 'O' and 'A' levels, and an almost incalculable number of mocks, I should find preparing for examinations ridiculously easy.

Yet it gets harder.

Four weeks to finals, I told myself. An hour ago, when I'd opened one of my overflow files and tried to turn my attention to the conflicting arguments surrounding economic development in thirteenth century England, I'd thought the same thing in an attempt to concentrate. It wasn't working. My mind was still drifting, efforts to remember lines from medieval records occasionally turning up opinions from Lord Castlereagh or someone else I'd studied in the sixth form, but more often dwelling on otherwise inconsequential conversations or events.

This didn't use to happen, I recalled. Five years ago, I could spend hours in seclusion at home, absorbing facts about Shakespeare or Hitler, or the rules of German grammar, and could be certain of remembering them when the time came. Funny how complicated simple things seemed then.

"Yes, but of course, you're dealing with ideas now, not just empty facts. You're trying to meet the challenge by telling yourself the task should be easier. Won't work, you know."

My heart felt for a moment as if it had switched places for a few seconds with someone running a marathon. Part of me tried to dismiss the existence of the person who'd just come into being behind me as irrational; the other part told me irrationality was fun, so I turned round in my chair.

The fourth Doctor was sitting there among the half-forgotten papers next to my window, his eyebrows raised and his lips pursed quizzically.

"Well come on then! Aren't you going to say hello?"

"Hello," I said, conscious that I was in all probability talking to an empty space, and my neighbour would be listening through the absurdly thin walls we have in my college, deciding I was madder than he already thought I was.

"You'll be going to ask why I'm here next, or how I'm here," he speculated aloud rapidly, rising from my window seat and proceeding in three steps to stand to the left of me, next to my door, scarf and papers trailing in his wake. He brushed the curls of his hair with his left hand, as if in irritation with some idea, and then supplied the answer to his own question, not looking at me at first but abstractly examining the edge of the ceiling as he talked.

"I was visiting a friend of mine who lives near here. That is to say - he would live near here, if..." He paused, looking at me from the corner of his eye as if considering his own fictionality, appeared to make some measure of the space between the door of my room and my desk with his hands, then continued. "He likes to think of himself as a sort of abbot, presiding over a sort of monastery, but relatively, that's only temporary. He's very into exploring Time Lord potential, physical projection, and so on. The Doctor tapped his head with one finger, and, leaning towards me, whispered conspiratorially "The power of the mind'.

He leapt back and considered my window.

"I like the view" he stated airily.

"Everyone says that," I began, but the Doctor ignored me.

"Of course, that wall could be a little higher, more decorous, and one or two of those trees could be chopped down... oh, I don't know, perhaps they should be made to blossom longer, adds a bit of colour..." He grinned.

All this time I was sitting in my chair in front of my desk, craning round when necessary to follow the Doctor's movements. The thought crossed my mind to offer the Doctor tea or coffee, but somehow I felt I would be demeaning this mythic figure by doing so, so I didn't. In any case, I still didn't quite believe he was there; the pressures of academia have been known to lead to psychological disturbance.

"Are you real, or are you just a product of the conflict between my imagination and my overflowing memory?" I asked finally.

"Well - reality's such an odd thing," the Doctor answered, picking up, as I might have expected, on an entirely different part of the question to that which I had intended. "I wouldn't let it bother you too much. Take this college, for instance. It continues because everyone believes it does, even though all its members change every few years. Well, almost all. Did you know Archbishop Laud?"

I told the Doctor that, were he still alive, the Archbishop would be about four hundred years older than I was.
The Doctor gazed out of the window, away from the modern building in which I'd been living, across the college garden, towards the back of a seventeenth century quad. "Serious chap. Far too flamboyant a dresser, though. I told him so, and he wasn’t happy with me. Lost his head, poor chap."

"You said that about Marie Antoinette."

My comment failed to stem the Doctor’s garrulousness. "The guillotine was usually the most effective means of execution. I once met a chap who thought himself something of a connoisseur of executions. He recommended a method called the yrsaarg, which the Dovrians use on Portach, but I’m not the sort of person who takes a great interest in seeing people put each other to death, and I don’t suppose you are either are you?"

"I can’t say that I am. Not that I would have the time," I added.

"Not have the time!" he exclaimed, stalking over to me intently. He surveyed the creatively arranged contents of the varnished surface next to me. "A slave to paper!" he proclaimed as he took up a sheet of notes based on M.M.Postan’s ‘Essays on Medieval Agriculture and the General Problems of the Medieval Economy’ (Cambridge, 1973), still covered with the pencil marks of his annotations. He proceeded to practise his skills in origami. "I never allowed examinations to assume more importance than they deserved."

I expected more originality from the Doctor than that, I thought. "What did you get from the Academy again? A double gamma?"

"Well..." He sank down on my bed. "It was a good, solid qualification. And they weren’t teaching me anything I didn’t already know, or particularly wished to know." He stared into space for a moment, but I couldn’t make out if this signified regret or indifference. "Perhaps I’m too bothered about doing well to do well," I mused after a while.

"Hardly an original response." Inwardly, I allowed myself a wry smile. "But you are too worried about crossing the finishing line without really thinking about the process of getting there, aren’t you?"

"What does that mean?"

"Think about what you’re dealing with. Don’t just treat examination like information jigsaw puzzles."

I remember moaning something about floating away at a tangent.

"There’s nothing wrong with floating away. My monastic friend - bit of a Buddhist at the moment, although he’s been on other things, and will be, no doubt - does it frequently." He rose and crossed over behind me to stand at my right. "That’s what he was trying to teach me to do, in a manner of speaking. What was it I once said?"

"A straight line may be the shortest distance between two points, but it is by no means the most interesting. Why couldn’t I remember useful quotations in the way I had that? I couldn’t remember anything from the work I’d done yesterday, let alone two years ago. "And I agreed with you. Unfortunately, a lot of people don’t, and they’ll be marking the papers I’ll be sitting in a few weeks."

"I’m sure they do agree with us, really." His voice was warmer and his eyes twinkled with the magic that I’d been enthralled by as a child. "They’re just restrained by convention. Have a jelly baby." A hand withdrew a sweet from an inner pocket, which I slowly devoured.

"Not all of us have TARDISes," I countered as I chewed.

"Why should that stop anyone?"

"Because it does. You can perform great acts of universal benevolence and retreat to your TARDIS before the repercussions of your actions strike you."

The Doctor frowned. "A little anarchy never did anyone any harm." He paused. "Well, now and again, yes - but why are you lecturing me? I thought I’d found the mind of someone who needed my help, not someone who’s going to start telling me what I’m doing wrong. I had enough of that on Gallifrey."

"Why bring Gallifrey up?" I questioned. "You don’t need to refer back to the Time Lords. What about the people who travel with you? You rarely let them say anything meaningful to you. I remember you ignoring Sarah once when -"

I didn’t know if I’d touched some reservoir of guilt in him, but he seemed disconcerted by the mention of Sarah Jane Smith. "Poor Sarah. She had a lot of insight, you know, perhaps more than either of us realised at the time. I hope she’s happy with that K9 I gave her. It was a sort of apology, I suppose."

I turned back to my work. "Perhaps you’re right about the anarchy. I can be too straight-laced at times."

I turned back to my work. "Perhaps you’re right about the anarchy. I can be too straight-laced at times."

"And I don’t know how lucky I am." He looked over at me, his hands behind his back, the collar of his coat upturned, resembling vaguely a Napoleonic general. "Perhaps you should try things your way."

"I think I may just have rediscovered it."

The Doctor looked across the garden again. "Romana will be wondering where I am. She’s too young to try and follow me. It could be dangerous. My old teacher had reservations about me trying this." He considered his clothing. "He suggested," raising both ends of his scarf, "that I should impose a little more order on myself first. A bit more discipline."

I considered suggesting that he avoided wearing the shirt with the question marks embroidered on the collars that he would soon discover in the TARDIS wardrobe, but, mindful of the Bliwnotch Limitation Effect and all that, I didn’t.

"Time I was off. Do be careful," he added as an afterthought, and disappeared.

I looked at my watch. It was nearly an hour since the Doctor had first materialised. More precious revision time gone.

I first gather my notes together, then tossed them into the air. There was a brief, and shallow, feeling of release as I watched the leaves of paper descend to the floor. To be a legendary hero may be a heavy responsibility, but it has its luxuries, I thought.

I collected up the debris, sat down again, and started writing.

Written during the author’s finals revision in Trinity Term 1992, and dedicated to all those taking examinations in Trinity 1993. •
Ian Fellows

It's very easy and extremely satisfying to watch Paradise Towers for laughs. And at the root of our laughter is our perception of the characters. Say what you will, the direction is wholly adequate and the set design convincing. We're laughing at the characters alone.

Now, open your mind wide and prepare for a new and revolutionary concept: I like Paradise Towers, and rather than finding it uproariously ridiculous, I consider it chilling and darkly disturbing, and for exactly the same reasons that the vast majority of Who-addicts despise the story: the characters.

The world of Paradise Towers is far-removed from anything we know in the 1990s. The Kangs are juvenile for their age, the Rezzies are patently unbelievable caricatures of the old women in Arsenic and Old Lace, the caretakers are credulous and spineless, Pex is laughable, and as for Richard Briers' portrayal of the Chief Caretaker...

Perhaps the reason that we can't find them convincing is that we don't sympathise with the causes of the state of affairs. To sum these up, all the able-bodied men, plus the "in-between" women, have gone from society to fight a war of some description. Whoever are left - the school-age girls and the old women - are deposited in a closed system of no visitors and no outings and basically left to fend for themselves under the less-than-solicitous care of the Caretakers. And who are these Caretakers? None of them seem to have escaped conscription on any visibly physical ground, and neither are they too old. The only reasons left for their escape from conscription are internal medical ones, and psychological ones. And indeed the evidence of the screen reinforces this last proposition. The first Caretaker to be killed is nervy and over-frightened. The Chief Caretaker is diagnosed by Sylvester McCoy as "off his head" and "a power-crazed psychopath." And if the Deputy has been invalided out of the army on psychological grounds, then it certainly explains his false bravado and pretentious posturing, his unseemly dependence on the rule-book, and thus the Doctor's easy escape from him using the rules in Part Two.

So, Paradise Towers contains three distinct groups of people: the disturbed Caretakers, the Rezzies and the childish Kangs. Why are the Kangs so juvenile? The answer is obvious. With no outside contact, no education and no parental guidance, it is a fact of life that they can never develop. Hence their minds atrophy and slip incessantly into a rut of childish phrases: "chase us down carrydoors, catch us if they can"; of hurtful abuse aimed at Bonnie Langford's Melanie and especially Pex in the catcalls of "cowardly-cutlet" and "scaredy-cat." The juvenile arguments divide them into the ultimate girls' gangs, and their infantile grasp on life causes them to turn on the innocent Doctor as soon as the Caretaker track them down.

Finally, the Rezzies and Pex. The former are stand-offish and the demands of life cause the less scrupulous of them to turn to cannibalism. And this sterile atmosphere, where everyday is the same, where there is nothing to do, forces them to take refuge, like the Kangs., in safe ruts of putting the kettle on and spotting the basil.

Pex, in the meantime, alone and unloved, knowing the truth of his cowardice and uselessness, tries to build up a facade of exercise routines, shows of strength and offers protection to the Rezzies. His spiel that "the power to protect has been invested in me by those I am not allowed to name" doesn't fool the viewer, and doesn't really deceive Mel. It isn't meant to: more than anything, Pex is trying to convince himself.

Considering the background to the story, the characters are actually realistic. And if we can appreciate that, then the moments on screen are very chilling. Take the scenes where the Doctor is at the mercy of a group of young adults with the minds of girls and deadly crossbows in their hands. The unpredictability of their behaviour is dangerous and menacing:
a lot of pathetic and irrational youngsters with the power of life and death. It makes the Doctor’s plaintive cry of "If we don’t stop the wipeouts, who will?" even more dramatic.

Or take the scene where Mel is in the clutches of Tilda and Tabby, the cannibalistic Retzies. Two crazed women, teetering between cloying little-old-lady behaviour and moments of murderous temper. The point when Tilda (the pink one) accuses Mel of killing "poor dear Tabby" is especially disturbing, because she really is about to slash Bonnie Langford (however much you hate her) to pieces with a bread-knife. And it’s not what you expect a woman in fur-lined slippers to do.

Finally, consider the Chief Caretaker when he is possessed by Kroagnon. Look beyond Richard Briers with a daft moustache and sub-Nazi uniform, speaking with a very silly slurred voice, and see instead a crazed but brilliant mind slowly wiping out the residents, Kangs and Caretakers, yet not quite having motor or voice control (he has only been in the body a matter of hours). See the resentment and anger at having been bricked up in the basement without a body for a number of years. See Kroagnon as a very powerful but very bloated spider at the centre of Paradise Towers, slowly destroying everyone in his web.

In the end, of course, the Doctor wins through. He provokes the Deputy to question what is going on. He inspires loyalty in the Kangs. Mel ultimately causes Pex to act courageously. The entry of these two "real" people with their heartfelt urgency acts as a catalyst to at least the beginning of a restoration of true human thought and action in the Towers. Thanks to the Doctor, the splintered community begins to cohere, to forgive and to create a firm foundation for the future.

So, I implore you, think again. Paradise Towers may not be brilliant, and I'll be the first to admit to a few cringe-worthy moments. But look at the characters. Yes, they’re largely pathetic, but then they’re supposed to be. Their pitiful state should draw our sympathy, not our ridicule. Our minds are nearly all we have, and to see others of our kind in situations where their minds are atrophying, decaying, being oppressed, repressed and stunted is something that I find intensely stomach-turning and disturbing.

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**Quiz**

**By Steve Drape**

**Instructions**

Place the answers to the clues in order clockwise around the grid. The last letter of one answer is the first letter of the next answer. The letters in the bold boxes when read in order form the title of a story.

**Clues**

1. Twin planet of Zeos
2. Prison planet of the Time Lords
3. Planet where Seth and Teka originated from
4. Member of the Tribe of Gum and father of hur
5. One of its episodes was "Don't Shoot the Pianist"; The ?
6. Story featuring Skaar; The ?
7. Leader of the Ophira
8. Supposedly mythical beast of Peladon
9. The Doctor met her mark some time
10. Galaxy containing the web planet
11. Teacher of self-defence killed by Midge
12. Tryst's need is upset in a bad dream in this story
13. Kinda's term for outsiders
14. End loses a roman 500 for illumination in this story
15. Short for "Transmission Of Matter Through Interstitial Time"
16. Native race of Skaro
17. Dervish and Cavern for instance
18. Welsh holiday camp
19. He accompanied the Doctor on Marimus
20. She died in the Destruction of Time (first name only)
21. Its claws were felt on Earth
22. A singular of the 26th story
23. For example
24. The Exploding Planet was located here
The story: 

Writer: 

Parody of the Daleks

Paul Groves

"Perhaps it was here a few hours ago," replied Sapphire, "I'll reverse time and try and locate it." With that her eyes turned bright blue and the escalator slowed and then started to go backwards, it sped up and finally deposited the two elemental time detectives at the bottom in a crumpled heap. After a while Sapphire's eyes returned to normal and the escalator started going forward again. She spoke, "Well, it hasn't been here in the last two weeks."

"Possibly it hasn't arrived yet," speculated the grey suited one.

On a gargantuan escalator somewhere in that great realm of space and time known only as reality stood two elemental time detectives, their identities too abstract a concept for a mere human to comprehend and so for the purposes of human interface, labelled as Sapphire and Steel.

Steel spoke, "Well, the nineties style budget has stretched to an escalator, but there's still no sign of the plot."
Suddenly, the approaching sound of metallic voices began to grate their presence. "Reveal our plans, reveal our plans, reveal our plans."

Steel looked pissed off, "Bloody hell, it's those cretins again, one of the braincases can deal with them, and with that he and Sapphire dematerialised.

The Daleks halted in the front of the escalator. The one in the front with the black dome screamed 'Destroy the staircase', notably displaying insufficient intelligence to distinguish between a staircase and an escalator. In unison the Daleks opened fire chanting 'Exterminate, Exterminate', as usual, and the escalator exploded in a rush of blue flame.

The chief Dalek then turned to face the reader, "Soon we will have destroyed every single staircase in existence and we will be the supreme masters of the Universe" it ranted. The Daleks then left.

Meanwhile inside the TARDIS, the Doctor, presently in his fourth incarnation, was moving around the console flicking switches and cursing the pompous moron who designed it. As he reached for the Engage Time-path Control, thoughtlessly located on the opposite side of the console to the Time-Path Navigation Unit, he tripped over his immense scarf and landed face down in front of K9. He reached into his pocket and proffered a crumpled paper bag, "Would you like a jelly baby, K9?"

"Negative, Master. I am a mecanoid and therefore do not consume jelly babies" The Doctor looked disappointed, but extracted a liquorice allsort from the bag and placed it in his mouth.

"Are you alright, Doctor?" enquired Sarah Jane Smith.

Suddenly an aesthetically challenged young man in a black anorak stormed in clutching a 3-pack of blank video cassettes and started wittering on about continuity errors.

Captain James T.Kirk shot the anorak with his phaser and announced drunkenly, 'Screw the Prime Directive, I'll interfere in other people's programmes if I so choose, and anyway I never actually said 'Beam me up Scotty'! Spock materialised, never pinched Kirk and then the two of them dematerialised together.

Sarah Jane continued to stare irritated at the scene for a few moments and then turned to the Doctor, "Well, are you going to get me back to Croydon?"

The Doctor beamed, "Are you sure you don't want to go on a tour of the seven moons of Zartaraakereeterator 3?"

"I'm sure!", wended the reply through clenched teeth.

The Doctor pressed a couple of switches and minutes later, they materialised.

The three space-time hippies emerged from the battered old TARDIS to find themselves on a half-landing of a huge (and I don't mean merely large) staircase, in a gargantuan purple and green hall.

"This isn't bloody Croydon!" stormed Sarah somewhat needlessly, then she smiled, "but at least Mutley here will have to stay in the TARDIS."

"Well, let's explore," effervesced the Doctor as he perched himself on the bannister and proceeded to slide the remaining eight stories to the bottom of the stairs, where he shot off at 40 miles an hours into a triple head over heels roll leaving him on his feet. He turned to face Sarah and bowed theatrically, who clapped sarcastically and then proceeded to descend the staircase one step at a time.

Just as she reached the bottom, a motorised door at the far end of the hall began to open and chanting could be heard. "Destroy the staircase, destroy the staircase."

"Quick", whispered the Doctor, "into this conveniently located ventilation duct". He pushed Sarah Jane in in front of them and was just putting the grill back as the Daleks started to enter.

The Dalek's lined up in two rows and stood to attention and then, surprise, surprise, in glided Davros followed by two further Daleks. "I didn't think the Daleks could work it out by themselves", whispered the Doctor.

Davros began to speak, "The Great Stellar Staircase of Vadar, a regular source of Dalek defeat." He raised his voice, 'Destroy it'. In unison the Daleks all fired at the staircase which in turn collapsed into a pile of rubble. Davros then turned to face the reader, 'And now my Daleks will become the Supreme Masters of the Universe.'

As the Daleks dispersed the Doctor whispered, 'I fear something is very wrong here.' His contractual obligation fulfilled, he and Sarah disappeared down the ventilation shaft.

Meanwhile, amongst the wreckage of the staircase, stood the TARDIS, listing to one side, but in one piece. Three Daleks glided past, their eyestalks surveying the scene, but none of them noticed the TARDIS.

The Doctor and Sarah climbed out of another grill into a corridor, and then proceeded to creep up until they reached a T-junction. They turned the corner to reveal a Dalek approaching them. Our intrepid heroes took a double take and went back the other way just as the Dalek started to shout 'Exterminate'.

However, it is a well known fact that the Doctor is a smarmy bastard and at this point Number 6 approached from the third direction bouncing on an orange space-hopper and followed, poorly mimicking a Dalek shouting 'Why did you resign? Why did you resign?'

'Must be one of the later episodes' whispered the Doctor.

At this point the 'real' Dalek had noticed what was going on and started spinning and screaming, 'Emergency, emergency, my thinking is impaired, I do not understand.' The Doctor rushed out and pushed the Dalek down a nearby abyss and rushed off down another corridor, muttering to Sarah Jane that things didn't quite fit. A low rhythmic sound could now be heard.

As they dashed round a corner, the Doctor and Sarah collided into a couple of raggedly dressed youngsters. The Doctor offered them jelly babies and then introduced themselves as Meth and Spirita.

'Don't tell me", hazarded the Doctor. "The Daleks have taken over your planet, enslaved the population and are now turning it into a giant spaceship."

"How did you guess?" Spirita sputtered astonished.

"The Daleks are a particularly unimaginative species", came the grave reply.

The four of them then proceeded in the Doctor's direction, as they sneaked past an open doorway where a Dalek voice could be overheard saying, 'Is this gonna take long, I'm gasping for a slash.'

The Doctor leapt up and boomed, 'Of course, I've got it. This is Croydon after all, and we're in the middle of a KLF publicity stunt!'
Oxford University Doctor Who Society

College Distribution

by Matthew Dovey

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