THE TIDES OF TIME

THE PERTWEE YEARS
FULL IN-DEPTH REVIEW!
SADNESS OF THE SONTARANS
RETURN OF THE POTATO HEADS!
THE AXEMAN COMETH!
THE NEW ADVENTURE THEY WOULDN'T PRINT!

THE MAGAZINE OF THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY DOCTOR WHO SOCIETY
Hello and welcome to *The Tides of Time*!

This issue has been horrifically delayed, for a variety of reasons - mostly my own fault, partly technical and partly geographical. I do hope however that this will not spoil your enjoyment of any material contained within. I would like to take this opportunity to insult as many people as possible - Yah Boo! to all those of you who deserve it, since I am well out of harm's way here... This term we have some very good stories put in by a number of authors, some even making a debut in ToT. Once again, we have a mammoth entry from Mark Hanlon (if you are wondering why you have to pay so much for the issue, then consider how much it costs to photocopy one of Mark's articles!)

Just before I run out of space to put anything more I would like to say a HUGE thank you to the members of DocSoc last year who made me welcome into the society. I am sorry I had to move on to pastures new. Best wishes for the future to you all!

Long Live Doctor Who (Down with David Hasslehoff)

Paul Fisher, November 1993

Yes, I know it's later than a British Rail commuter service, but this issue's been worth waiting for. The massive amount of time spent (8 months, believe it or not) writing, editing, typesetting, sitting around on our backsides waiting for Paul to get a working computer has led to the BIGGEST and BEST *Tides of Time* ever. Well, since the last issue, anyway.

The more astute of you may have noticed the reinstatement of the "the" in the title; this is merely a JNT decision (i.e. one based on style rather than content) so don't worry about it. Not content with changing the title we've also changed the editors: from issue 13 I, along with the society's professional beard wearer, Mr David Steele, will have the responsibility for chucking the magazine together. So get writing (or drawing, we want to hear from any artists as well) and either bring you articles to general meetings or send them to David Steele at Pembroke College or to me, Gary Meehan, at Lincoln College. The deadline for the second ToT of the term (yes, there's two!) is Monday of 5th week of Hilary term. Good reading.

Gary Meehan, January 1994
Pertwee’s European Adventure

Any good piece of science fiction/fantasy says more about the age in which it was written, rather than about when it was set. Doctor Who is no exception. This was particularly noticeable during the Pertwee era. I’ve noted at least six themes which reflect the time it was made.

Firstly the early 1970’s was the time ecological issues first entered the political agenda, these concerns were mirrored in stories such as Inferno, The Green Death, and The Invasion of the Dinosaurs.

Secondly it was the end of the British Empire, and fears arose about the ex-colonies such as South Africa and Rhodesia. These issues are considered in Colony in Space, Carnival of Monsters and The Mutants.

Thirdly, after Enoch Powell’s “Rivers of Blood” speech in 1968, racism and immigration questions were raised, as seen in The Sontarans, The Sea Devils and Ambassadors of Death.

Fourthly it was an age which marked the crossing over from the Cold War, and references were seen in The Mind of Evil, Day of the Daleks and Frontier in Space. Also The Time Warrior had a striking parallel to the superpowers’ policy of supplying modern technological advanced weapons to the third world.

This brings us to the two stories Brian Hayles wrote for the Letts/Dicks period of the show, Curse of Peladon, and Monster of Peladon.

It has gone down in the folklore of the show that Monster was an analogy of the miners’ strike of 1972 (and it was fortuitous to be shown during the 1974 dispute). However, Curse has never to my knowledge been noted as having a very similar theme to that of the British application for membership to the European Economic Community (EEC). With the release of this story on video in August, it seems an opportune time to reassess this tale.

The EEC was set up in 1957 by the treaty of Rome, Britain was not one of the original members. For a variety of reasons, the UK changed its mind and applied to join in both 1963 and 1967. Both requests were scuppered by President De Gaulle of France. By 1970, De Gaulle was dead, and a conservative government under Edward Heath was elected, with one of its main proposals being entry into the EEC. The next few years saw Britain debating the merits of EEC membership.

The Euro-Supporters’ argument was that the UK had fallen behind Europe economically and that it was isolated from the continent. The Anti-Europeans believed that Britain would lose sovereignty and control of its own affairs to the EC commission. It was in this political atmosphere that The Curse of Peladon was written. There is a large resemblance between Britain of that time and Peladon. A noble, but technologically backward kingdom applies to join the intergalactic organisation known as “The Federation” [Ah - this is where the Blake’s 7 crossover was - Ed], to integrate itself into the universal community and improve its economic position. Whilst the Federation assesses whether Peladon is ready to join the body, the debates within Britain at the time are represented most clearly by Hesphas and the Doctor.

Hesphas was one of the most sympathetic of Doctor Who’s villains. His argument paralleled the Euro-Sceptics view. The Federation would exploit and corrupt Peladon, its people would be put into slavery. Furthermore, the past would be swept away, and everything of value would be lost. In short, Peladon would lose its power of self determination, its culture and its identity to the Federation. A classical sovereignty assertive, Hesphas would prefer to have separate agreements with the other planets, such as Arcturus, mirroring the Anti-European view of relations with other countries, such as the USA.

The other side of the debate is put forward by both the Doctor and King Peladon. The Federation will give Peladon a chance to rise from its “barbarism” through the technology and advice the Federation will be able to provide. The ancient ways of Peladon have held Peladon back, and caused no less than war in the past. Peladon has to stop looking to the past and instead head towards a brighter future within the Federation. As with Britain, both sides had considerable support which, unlike Britain, leads to a civil war.

Can we take the analogy further? I believe we can. The position of the Ice Warriors within the Federation is similar to that of the Germans in the real world. Both are seen, as in the Doctor’s words: “a savage and war-like race.” However, they have both turned their backs upon their old militaristic ways and become peaceful races. The Doctor’s mistrust of the Ice Warriors at the start of the story echoes the British public’s views of West Germany. Like us, his memory of the race is affected by his last meeting (The Seeds of Death), where they had been seen to massacre everything in sight.

Also, some of the workings of the Federation’s structure mirror the EEC’s mechanism. For example, the assessment committee on Peladon has to have a unanimous vote to intervene in the affairs of Peladon. Similarly, the council of ministers in the EC operated on the same voting system. Some of the other parts of the Federation system parallel other inter-government organisations, such as the United Nations. For instance, there is talk of a Federation Charter which disapproves of intervention in other countries internal matters. This is clearly an instance of Doctor Who working on a number of various levels. The story is not just concerned about the merits of EC membership even though the Doctor gives a very Pro-European view.

Brian Hayles uses the EEC issue as a backdrop to his adventure. A point of reference with which to attract adult viewers who can raise a smile at the analogy. This makes The Curse Of Peladon into one of my favourite stories, turning it from a potentially mediocre adventure into a little gem. [Curse receives his blessing! - Ed]

M.J. Ritson
The Sylvester McCoy Years
A Reassessment

On the day following part one of Time and the Rani, Sylvester McCoy's first episode as the Doctor, TV critic Nina Myskows branded McCoy 'Wally of the Week'. The body of the popular press followed suit, and thus the Sylvester McCoy years were judged by twenty-five minutes of McCoy as a post-regenerative amnesiac wearing Colin Baker's costume. Hardly a representative sample.

Is Tom Baker's first episode representative of his era? Just as a reminder, he plays a slipping game with Harry and dresses as a clown, a Viking and a Roman. Bizarrely, fan opinion seemed to follow the same course and many declared Doctor Who under Sylvester McCoy to be dead, puerile, an object to be ridiculed. Some of my local group even made up their minds prior to watching a single McCoy episode. Add to this 'closed-mind' attitude the facts that revision is easier than appreciation and that those with no imagination often have louder voices than those blessed with one. Allow me to quote a letter from David Chandler, printed in the magazine, upon McCoy being voted the best Doctor.

'Exactly how anyone can vote for McCoy as their favourite Doctor is beyond me, but I don't suppose we can expect a readership with an average age of eighteen to know any better! Maybe next year they will consider more carefully when they vote in this category - or not vote at all'.

Whatever happened to democracy? Freedom of opinion? This article proposes to look at 1987-9 rationally and reasonably. As Tom Baker once pointed out, "The important thing is to keep an open mind."

Enter Number 7

The 1987 season appeared almost unheralded on BBC 1, with barely a trailer to inform us of its arrival, unlike the blazes of publicity which had ushered in previous Doctors. Pitted against Coronation Street on ITV, ratings for the new series were low, but what of the substance of the season?

Time and the Rani was the vehicle for presenting McCoy to the world, and as such required the plot to be simple in order not to distract the viewer from getting to know the Doctor. This proved to be so for the first three episodes, but the fourth presented us with a lot of technical jargon and while Kate O'Mara as the Rani was thoroughly beastly throughout, her ultimate aim (building a Time Manipulator) was presented too late, in terms too overtly neo-scientific, and defeated too quickly to genuinely interest the viewer. This was a shame, because the other elements of the story were, to be honest, very promising. The bat-like Tetrams were convincing, the direction outstanding and the acting undemanding but good. Kate O'Mara's impersonation of Bonnie Langford was a joy to watch, and to all those who claim that it wasn't Doctor Who, I ask "what is Doctor Who?"

The overall impression of the story was that it had a lot of good ingredients but failed to have us on the edge of our seats. McCoy, hampered by a lot of strange lines, was beginning to emerge as a Doctor with authority. In fact, McCoy's character exhibited an interesting dichotomy of behaviour throughout his first year. At times, he indulged in Chaplinesque slapstick, while on other occasions he portrayed a no nonsense crusader for justice, a straight speaking man who brooked no excuse in his quest for good. This strange dualism seems to have been the result of an executive decision to steer into comedy realms, coupled with Sylvester's opposing desire "to be dangerous." The two extremes were not entirely compatible; fortunately they did not continue in any real degree beyond the first season.

The season continued with the infamous Paradise Towers in which a good script and moody sets promised four episodes of chilling brilliance. This promise was never fulfilled. Exemplary performances from McCoy, Bonnie Langford and much of the supporting cast, especially Clive Merrison as the Deputy Chief Caretaker almost created a situation in which disbelief was suspended. Almost, but not quite, because their efforts were foiled by other performers. The cannibalistic women were, it is admitted, very stereotyped, perhaps purposefully so, and frankly unbelievable. However, the chief (sorry, the pun was irresistible) offender was Richard Briers, he of The Good Life, playing the Chief Caretaker.

The Guest Star Syndrome

A villain can make or break a story, and Briers broke Paradise Towers. I do not judge Briers' acting, but he was convincing neither as a homicidal maniac nor as the Great Architect. As a result, the efforts of the other performers to maintain believability fall a little flat. Ultimately, Paradise Towers is an excellent idea which suffered in the hands of certain actors.

This is indicative of possibly the greatest problem of the McCoy era: the "famous guest-star" syndrome. A number of stories are detrimentally affected by the presence of a famous face in the ranks of the performers. Paradise Towers is one: in the absence of stunning acting on Briers' part, the Chief Caretaker is destined not to be seen as the Chief Caretaker but as Richard Briers wearing a silly hat. If another less well-known actor had taken the role, then Paradise Towers would have passed muster. Enlisting the Honey Monster as Kragannon didn't help it either - Dep Ed.

Nor is Paradise Towers the sole victim of the problem. Delta and the Bannermen was shot in the foot by Stubby Kaye playing a duft
American, by Hugh Lloyd playing an eccentric beekeeper, by Richard Davies playing Welsh ex-army holiday camp manager, and most of all by Ken Dodd playing Ken Dodd, Dolores Gray performs as a Dallas-esque tourist in a needless scene in Silver Nemesis. Hale and Pace act as a double act of shopkeepers in Survival. Another example is of course Bonnie Langford, who acted (let's be honest here) quite superbly but who, as a celebrity dancer, was not going to be seen as anything other than Bonnie Langford on an alien planet even if she had turned in an Oscar-worth performance. Sylvester McCoy, in an interview, blamed viewers for their inability to suspend their disbelief.

This is a good point, but the real blame seems to lie somewhere else:

Musical Who

Paradise Towers was followed by Delta and the Bannermen, which suffered, as already mentioned, from a surfeit of celebrities. Despite this, the rest of the cast and the director gave their all to create an authentic 1950's atmosphere and an exciting open air adventure which was a breath of fresh air and a pleasure to watch. Doctor Who is at its best when it refuses to conform to somebody's idea of the norm, and Delta and the Bannermen fell into this category. The overt musical content (something that would not have worked with any other Doctor) showed the flexibility of the programme in the late 1980s. The adventure was fun and refreshing, although perhaps somewhat out-of-place in a season of only fourteen episodes.

Season 24 concluded with Dragonfire, a claustrophobic tale introducing Sophie Aldred as Ace and bidding farewell to Bonnie Langford (every story has its good point - Dep Ed. McCoy was now firmly established as the Doctor, and a cast of convincing characters pulled together to create a moody story. Edward Peel was outstanding as the icy villain Kane, and despite a few overtly silly touches such as Ace's propensity to pile milkshakes at people and the pointless presence of a four-year-old Joanna Lumley, Dragonfire set the scene for the stories to come: action-filled, fast-paced and oppressively sinister.

The Silver Season

McCoy had abandoned the overt giddiness of his earlier stories. A darker Doctor was in the ascendance, and very much in evidence when the 25th Anniversary came around, with the return of the Daleks. The Daleks had not been quite this menacing in a long time. The Pertwee years had made it patently obvious that the "superior power of the Universe" consisted of only four working Daleks, while the Dalek stories of Tom Baker, Davison and Colin Baker saw them playing second fiddle to creator Davros. In Remembrance of the Daleks they were back, they exterminated for real, there were lots of them and they were menacing all over 1963 in a serious sort of way. Moreover, Davros was deposed to a two minute slot at the climax.

Unsurprisingly the story was hailed as a classic. The return of the Daleks was not the only reason. Direction and characterisation were strong; Sophie and Sylvester displayed a true Doctor/companion chemistry; special effects were convincing. However two further reasons spring to mind for the undoubted improvement that the story and in fact the whole season represented. The first is the character of the Doctor. A man of mystery during the Hartnell and Troughton years, the Doctor was revealed as "a maverick Time Lord" in The War Games, one of an almost omnipotent nice. This myth was explored and shattered by Tom Baker, showing the Time Lords up as impotent and atrophied. The Davison and Colin Baker era further developed the Gallifreyan system until the Time Lords became boring and predictable. With them, the Doctor became merely an adventurer from a corrupt home.

1988 saw the long overdue introduction of mystery to the character of the Doctor. No longer was he merely a heroic cipher figure. Later stories revealed him to be connected with the birth of time travel and something more than a Time Lord. In a parallel universe he is to take

"For the first time in nearly two decades, the viewer is forced to wonder what or whom their hero really is..."

the guise of Merlin. Moreover, he has dark secrets connected with a "time of chaos" that allow Lady Peinforte in Silver Nemesis to attempt to blackmail him. For the first time in nearly two decades, the viewer is forced to wonder what or whom their hero really is...

The second choice is the choice of scriptwriters. In the past, Doctor Who had been penned by science fiction writers. Terry Nation, Chris Boucher and Robert Holmes were old hands at Blake's 7. Pip and Jane Baker had graduated from Space:
1999 (aaaaargh!). No one had a vast amount of experience beyond that. But in 1988, Doctor Who being written by people who wrote other types of drama. Ben Aaronovitch, Ian Briggs, Stephen Wyatt and Rona Munro are all names to be found in the credits of real-life human drama series *Casualty*. Graeme Curry is an *Eastenders* scriptwriter, so for once we saw human emotions explored and contemporary issues illuminated in Doctor Who. Under their auspices, Ace became the first three-dimensional companion since Barbara Wright in 1965. The Doctor became an angry and moody person. The whole Doctor/companion relationship was revolutionised, with three quarters of season 26 devoted to Ace based scripts. The Doctor was portrayed as a man who treated people like skittles. *Remembrance of the Daleks* was a subtle investigation of fascism, allowing the Doctor time to ponder over his actions in a scene in the cafe. In no other era of the show’s history would such a scene’s beauty be given space on the screen. Never before had we been allowed to see a vicar agonising with his faith; the funeral of a main character; or the captivating sight of Morgaine restoring a blind woman’s vision. The horizons of Doctor Who were widening.

**Sherbert and Cybermen**

Season 25 continued with *The Happiness Patrol*, which is in my opinion, another unrecognised classic. The mood of the story is frightening; a thin veneer of pink candy which barely covers a back drop of fear, misery and foreboding. The streets of Terra Alpha were claustrophobic and dark, aptly reflecting the atmosphere in a totalitarian state. The “happy” leaders of the planet are realistic: dangerously seething with resentment but living on a knife-edge. All of the characters inhabit a grey world: hardly villains, but inadequate people whose defeat can only lie in breakdown. Even the Kandyman is inspired; he is more than Bertie Bassett turned bad, he is perhaps the most original creation for a long time.

*Silver Nemesis* followed swiftly on, presenting us with a four handed poker game between Lady Peinforte, the Nazis, the Cybermen and the Doctor. The production was glossy but insubstantial; all icing and no cake. The plot was all too predictable in the wake of the Dalek story, and Sophie and Sylvester were foiled by a script which featured no serious acting, merely a series of scenes in which they are required to tripse around Windsor. As a 25th Anniversary story, *Silver Nemesis* demanded nothing of the viewers and gave nothing. It was the lowest point of the McCoy years.

Season 25 rounded off with a circus based story, *The Greatest Show in The Galaxy*, Gaudy and unashamed, the adventure offered us a werewolf, buried robots, any number of circus stereotypes and the so-called Gods of Rragnamok, all to hide the fact that the plot was paper thin. *The Greatest Show* managed to entertain the viewer, which is the job of Doctor Who. It did this by serving up a handy cocktail of characters: some believable, some less so. On the negative side, there was a colonial bore, a fortune teller with a bizarre accent, a cheery-grinned ringmaster, a hard man with a big bike and a spotty teenage Doctor Who fan, complete with tank-top and a BMX. On the positive side, a frightened lycanthrope, a suicidal robot maker, and a truly chilling clown. McCoy is reduced to juggling, swallowing eggs and escapology for four episodes while Sophie Aldred presents Ace as a vulnerable girl with a phobia about clowns. Put them together and what have you got? A jolly run-around with forced humour and a smattering of good characters; visually impressive but unlikely to stand up to real scrutiny.

**Parallel Knights**

*Doctor Who* was back on form for 1989, commencing with the much detested *Battlefield*. The story of Arthurian style knights from a parallel Earth was received by many fans as the biggest abomination in *Doctor Who* ever. It is hard now to see why. Certainly there are a few regrettable moments, which I will not honour by recounting, but they were outweighed by the good elements which most critics overlook. McCoy was performing well as the Doctor, for once not in control but proclaimed as Merlin. The Destroyer was gloriously and demonically evil. Jean Marsh was convincing as Morgaine, as was Christopher Bowen as hard-drinking glory-boy Mordred. The story also featured such gems as the barroom scenes with the publican and his blind wife; the computer-generated snake attacking the Doctor in the spaceship; and the relationship between the Brigadier and his wife. Witter Ben Aaronovitch admitted that *Battlefield* suffered from the extension from three episodes to four. Yet the direction remained taut and the acting consistent across the board. Watch *Battlefield* again. See what you think.

**Evolution**

Next came *Ghost Light*. Marc Platt’s first mistake was to base a script on the theory of evolution, accepting it as fact in the face of arguments to the contrary. The second was to make that script inexplicable to the casual viewer. Having watched *Ghost Light* quite a number of times, I think I now understand what was going on. Perhaps you could explain to the membership when we show it then. Dep Edl. The direction was promising and the atmosphere of the story chilling and claustrophobic. The acting was consistently good, notably from Sophie Aldred, although McCoy was given nothing to do but to wander around in a knowing sort of way. Unfortunately, the three episodes are overpopulated with both characters and concepts.

Inspector Mackenzie was ridiculously pointless and the odd couple of Control and Redvers Ferr-Cooper were a waste of space: it was difficult to care about them when the cast is so outsized. Similarly the conceptual content of the story was cluttered. The plot was hard enough to follow anyway, even without subliminal references to *Pygmalion* and *Paradise Lost*. To sum up, a bizarre
three episodes for the more cerebral amongst us.

The Curse of Fenric, a World War Two adventure featuring vampire haemovores, was next and was probably McCoy's greatest moment. The setting was realistic, the acting superb and the direction faultless. McCoy and Aldred delivered a tour de force in the Doctor/Ace relationship, and Nicholas Parsons refused the opportunity to overplay the Rev. Warinwright, instead making him believable and sympathetic. Need I say more on this epic classic? All in all a genuinely frightening and riveting story.

The End?

Finally came Survival. The relationship between the Doctor and Ace was at an all time high, and the supporting cast were as a rule, convincing. Anthony Ainley played the same old Master and once the intrusive Hare and Pace scene is over, every character is well drawn, and we are forced to either love them or loathe them. The Cheetah People were an imaginative race (shame about the name) and the special effects realistic. The only fault is in the plot. Too many important points go unexplained, particularly: how did the Doctor escape a fatal motorbike collision? How did he escape from the planet of the Cheetahs? The problem with the plot is also reflected in episode one, which saw the Doctor doing monumentally silly things in suburbia.

Time for a conclusion. And it is simply this: the McCoy years were actually quite good. No doubt the rest of the committee will lynch me for saying that. Seriously, the McCoy era was for me an enjoyable time. I'm not blind to the faults, indeed I've named them in this article. Equally, let us not blind to the faults of previous years: the disastrous violence of the Colin Baker era; Tom Baker's overt silliness; Peter Davison's K9, need I go on? We're all Oxonians. We all have brains. Let's not follow the vocal minority of fandom in McCoy bashing, let's make up our own minds. Let's reappraise Sylvester McCoy.

Ian Fellows

ACROSS

1. Guerilla from the 22nd century.
2. Snail-like creature which understood the gravity of the situation.
3. Something that baddies in Doctor Who can rarely do.
4. The Doctor killed here in the 1st century, and left the place in flames.
5. Pilot of the Sandmimer.
6. Was the second Doctor a cosmic one?
7. Goth found the Master here.
8. Chosen Warrior of the Aztecs.
10. Campalot of 8 across.
11. He went to pieces when he met U.N.I.T.
12. Egyptian Sun God.
13. Savannah member killed by Xenon.
15. The colour of hallucination on Varos.
16. Sea 1 down.
17. American Goddess.
18. Kane's lover.
19. These aliens had hearts of stone.
20. Clown who murdered Steven and Dodo.
21. The colour of Welsh death?
22. 38 across.
23. Did this mad megalomanic like salted pork?
25. She was a real diamond underneath!
26. He could have met the dinosaurs, but he was busy dying at the time.

DOWN

1. (And 26 across) It saved the Doctor's life on Gallifrey.
2. The home star system of the Drashigs.
3. An Ice Warrior who crashed on Earth in its First Ice Age.
4. Gallifreyan Strangeways?
5. There was some on the Sense-Sphere.
6. Currency coveted by the Graff Vynda-K.
7. Half-Krarhaken, half-Morlok (half-biscuit?)
8. He was taken prisoner by the Metebelis spiders.
9. Meeting up with the Master took years off his life.
10. Ace had a job here once.
12. SVF found him a pain in the neck.
13. Muscles of this would-be hero?
14. If you want to be a tree, she's your woman.
15. Turlough's stamping ground.
16. Shockeye tried to buy a meal with a twenty of this.
17. Lady Pimental was not this.
18. The Daleks did this a lot when they met the Doctor.
20. They evolved in to the Daleks.
21. Old you.
THE AXEMAN COMETH
PART 1

Time Passed.

Magnus Magnusson went on to the next question.
“What is Groenov’s constant, used to measure the actuality of a time displacement field?”

Time considered the question for a picosecond. Or was it a millennium? He had never managed to work out temporal units. “5.124512356319,” he finally answered.

“Correct. What being caused the temporal phenomenon which some scientists believe to have caused the creation of the universe?”

“Oh, well, the was this funny little bloke with the blue box...”

“Wrong. That was the theory put forward by a bunch of third-rate science fiction authors. The actual answer is God.” Magnus went onto the next question. “What is the pulse rate of the Q47 Neutron Star, Amxtsine?”

Time Passed.

Battered by time winds, slipping in the occasional time eddy and attracting the passing interest of a passing chroovore the TARDIS passed through the Vortex. Inside a small man clad in a light-coloured suit and wearing a paisley scarf was making minute adjustments to controls mounted on a mushroom shaped control console in the middle of a large, white room whose walls were decorated by indented roundels.

The Doctor frowned as a small red light began flashing on one of the panels on the console. The light stopped when he banged the console near the offending light. Satisfied, the Doctor looked up as the door leading to the exterior of the craft opened and a figure in battle armour walked in.

“Are, what are you doing in that thing?” asked the Doctor in his gentle Scottish accent.

“I’m a f***ing hard soldier now, Professor. We wear f***ing stuff like this,” Ace hissed a 261A1.20mm Vulcan Cannon over her shoulder and stared at the Doctor through mirrored sunglasses during him to say otherwise.

“If you say so, Ace,” muttered the Doctor and he pretended to be absorbed by one of the instruments on the console.

Ace was followed into the console room by a dark-haired woman in her early thirties.

“Who are you?” the Doctor asked the newcomer. “Do I know you from somewhere?”

“I’m Professor Bernice ‘Benny’ Summerfield, your new assistant,” stated the woman cheerfully. Ace sneered at her, pointed her gun at Benny and idly thought about blowing her away. She abandoned the idea - the Doctor would only complain about having to clean up all the blood and brains.

“You are?” The Doctor took another look at the woman. “Well, I suppose you look slightly familiar,” he admitted. He doffed his hat and welcomed Benny aboard the TARDIS. Benny pointed out that he had already welcomed her. Twice in fact. The Doctor shrugged and went back to the console.

“When are we f***ing landing, Professor?” asked Ace. “I want to be f***ing out of here and f***ing killing people.”

“In a minute, Ace. Be patient.”

“A f***ing minute?” Ace snorted. “Your f***ing minutes always seem like f***ing days!”

“Time is relative, Ace.”

“He’s no f***ing relative of mine!”

Before the conversation could descend further, the central column stopped oscillating, indicating that they had landed.

“Come on Ace, we’ve landed. I’m sure you can find something to vent your anger on.” As an afterthought he turned to Benny and told her, “I suppose you might as well come along.”

There was a wheezing, groaning sound. Darth Vader rounded the corner, quickly figured out he was in the wrong story and exited stage left.

The Doctor grimaced as he surveyed the bland metal corridors that they had landed in.

“Not very appealing, is it?” he said to no one in particular.

“Too f***ing right,” replied Ace. “There’s nothing to f***ing shoot at!”

“Is that all you think about?” asked the Doctor.

“Shooting things?”

“That and jumping into bed with people I’ve only just f***ing met,” replied Ace with a grin. She peered around the corridor, “It’s a bit f***ing dark in here, isn’t it?”

“I’d take my sunglasses off if I were you,” advised the Doctor.

Ace did as he said. “That’s a lot f***ing better.”

“Oh, and Ace.”

“Yes, Professor?”

“Will you please stop swearing every other word.”

“This is meant to be an f***ing adult novel,” Ace protested. “That’s why we have lots of f***ing sex, f***ing violence and f***ing swearing.”

“Really? I thought the definition of an adult novel was one that explored concepts that children wouldn’t understand.”

“Well, f***k me. Must tell Ben that when I f***ing see the c***.”

The Doctor had another look around the corridor in which they had landed. The walls were grey metal plates riveted together in a haphazard fashion suggesting that either the place had been built in a hurry or the set designer had been at the brundy again. The Doctor put his hand against one of the walls. It vibrated, sending a tingling sensation through his fingers. “Very interesting,” he murmured under his breath. “Come on Ace,” he said to his companion, “Let’s go and explore.”

“Doctor, what shall I do?” asked Benny. Up to now
The Tides of Time #12

She had been largely ignored by both the Doctor and Ace. It was not unintentional.

"You go and lose yourself down that corridor," replied the Doctor, waving in the opposite direction to that which he intended to take. "Perhaps then you might get the author to write a couple of chapters about you."

The arrival of the three time travellers had gone unnoticed. As soon as the TARDIS had materialised, security cameras had picked up their arrival. As the Doctor, Ace and Benny proceeded small cameras hidden in the ceiling tracked their progress.

Up until now the door had had a peaceful life. Occasionally someone would open it, sometimes they would close him and once in a while somebody would slam him shut.

It was bloody annoyed when Ace's boot forced it off its hinges and crashing to the floor.

"Don't nobody f**king move!" warned Ace as she burst into the room swinging her gun in wide circles. She let rip with it and pumped a dozen shells into a wall at random.

The room was fairly small and badly lit by a fluorescent strip which had the annoying habit of flickering on and off every other minute. It was furnished by two under-stuffed settees which had seen better days and a low, coffee-stained table on which rested what once had been a cup of coffee but had now become a retirement village for ageing fungi. On the walls were a couple of insipid prints which hid the worst of the cracks in the plaster, which had increased in number since Ace's arrival. At the end of the room a man was working at a desk, making marks in a large leather bound volume with a quill. It was a remarkable change from the metallic corridors they had been walking in.

"Take a seat, I'll be with you in a minute," said the man, apparently taking no notice of Ace's threat to blow everything to kingdom come nor her demolition of various bits of plaster. He waved to one of the couches. The Doctor doffed his hat and sat down motioning for Ace to do the same.

A few minutes later the man put down his pen and turned to the Doctor. "Now sir, what can I do for you?" he asked, a tired smile plastered onto his face.

"We're travellers and we seem to have lost," explained the Doctor. "You couldn't tell us where we are, could you?"

"You f**king heard him," Ace snarled, waving her gun at him to emphasise her point. "Where are we you f**king c**t?"

The clerk smiled weakly and shook his head. "Not my department I'm afraid. You'll have to go to Reception. That's back through the door, turn right, left, left again, right, straight down, pass the fire escape, turn right, left, right, left, and through the large double doors."

"And will we f**king be able to find out where the f**k we are at Reception?" demanded Ace, thrusting her gun at the man.

"Maybe, maybe not," replied the clerk enigmatically.

"But at least they've got a coffee machine."

"Why can't you f**king tell us where the f**k we are?"

asked Ace.


Discretion was not a word in Ace's dictionary. Neither were a few other thousand words, but they were normally blamed on the script writer. She raised her gun so that it was pointing at the ceiling and let off a volley of shots. All she got for her pains was a shoulder ache caused by the massive recoil of the cannon and a helmet covered in plaster which had been disrupted from its position on the ceiling and was now seeing what life at a lower altitude was like. It didn't care for it much; people kept stepping on it.

The Doctor sighed. Mindless violence got you nowhere, even if it was fun. He brushed some dust off his jacket and ordered Ace to follow him. After giving the clerk a quick glare Ace slung her gun over her shoulder and trailed after the Doctor.

The clerk looked in dismay around the plaster littered room. "And I've just tidied up as well."

Ace trundled solidly behind the Doctor who had proclaimed that with his photographic memory he would have them in reception in no time whatsoever. He would have none of Ace's protestations that he always managed to lose himself in the TARDIS and had marched confidently ahead.

"Are you sure you know where the f**k we're going?" she asked the Doctor.

"Of course," he replied. "Look, there's the fire escape."

"But it's a f**king window!" protested Ace.

"Are you saying that if there was a fire you couldn't jump through it and escape?"

"Well..."

"Exactly" declared the Doctor.

Ace walked up to the window. "It's dirty than a f**king Dennis Potter play!" she exclaimed. She rubbed at a patch of glass in order to make a view hole so she could see outside but the dirt which had built up there through the years was having none of it and refused to budge. Not daunted by this she still tried to see what was on the other side but she could only see a black void. "I can't see a f**king thing," she told the Doctor.

"Never mind," the Doctor consoled her. "Come on."

There was a curious smell in the air. A sickly sweet odour which made one want to retch yet at the same time was curiously addictive. Benny stood in the corridor for at least five minutes letting the aroma play around her nostrils and trying not to throw up. Eventually she managed to make her legs start to move again but she felt curiously light-headed. Subconsciously she began to walk to the origin of the strange scent.

Ace and the Doctor had finally managed to make it to the double doors after what seemed to Ace an eternity of walking through appall corridors only punctuated at the odd place with the odd dirty window. Ace idly wondered if anybody knew how to clean around here.
"Are you ready?" the Doctor asked her. He had his hand on each of the door handles.

"Readier than an f***ing erection," Ace declared. She thumbed off the makeshift safety catch which she had welded onto the Vulcan cannon and raised it to the door. "Just stand back and let a f***ing professional do the work."

"You don't need heavy artillery to open a door," castigated the Doctor. With a hefty pull the doors opened.

It was like a scene from a psychedelic nightmare. They were visually attacked by colours so bright that they could have joined Mensa and which seemed to move in more than three dimensions. Sound warped round them filling their eardrums with noise that defied harmonic analysis. Then all of a sudden it was gone, to be replaced by a grey room filled with computer equipment apparently controlled by a greasy haired teenager wearing a pair of ripped jeans and a pizza-stained T-shirt.

"What the f***ing hell do you want?" the young man asked aggressively. The Doctor wondered if he'd had the same language teacher as Ace.

He ignored the hack's question for the moment and studied the computers and their assorted peripherals. "Nec Octaphon Mark III audio-visual real world interface linked to an IBM TS4800-40 super-minicomputer," he stated offhandedly.

"It's a f***ing Octaphon Mark III.1," corrected the teenager pedantically. "And it's a TS4800-50." "Ah, 256 gigabytes main memory, 64 gigabytes backup RAM and three 512 terabyte Winchester 4 hard disk drives. Linked to a Sony Sonatoo sound manipulator with hexaphonic surround sound, 500 watt speakers and five separate bass boosters."

"Coupled with a f***ing Silicon Graphics NX352A2 3D surround visual unit with full spectrum capability and PMP, off course," added the computer hack smugly. He took out a small mirror, poured a small quantity of white powder on it and snorted the powder using a rolled up twenty targe note.

"Of course," replied the Doctor looking with distaste at the white powder. He gave the teenager the benefit of the doubt and presumed he had a cold.

"So what are you f***ing doing with all this technological junk then?" asked Ace. "Playing f***ing Space Invaders?"

"St***ing TT, ain't it," came the reply. The greasy teenager cracked open a can of Jolt Cola and sent some of down his throat.

"What the f***k's that?" demanded Ace.

"Technological f***ing Trips. Where you bin, girly?"

"Yes, of course," muttered the Doctor.

"What the f***k's this all about?" Ace asked again, waving her gun about in order to emphasise her point.

"Technological Trips was a way to simulate LSD trips through the use of virtual reality," explained the Doctor. "However using the normal goggle method didn't really have the desired effect so they had to come up with a way of implanting the information directly onto the retina. So they came up with this," the Doctor waved his arm around, "which uses lots of low power lasers to do the job."

"That wouldn't f***ing work," sneered Ace.

"Of course not," the Doctor answered. He rested his chin on his umbrella. "But this is a new adventures novel. We've got to be littered with cod science."

"What the f***k are you on about?" demanded the hyper-energised challenged young man. "It's not like all this lot is f***ing drugs, is it like?" The teenager took two small white pills from one of his pockets and swallowed them with the aid of his can of Coke. The Doctor strongly suspected they were amphetamines. "Now f*** off!"

Ace, however, had different ideas. The racks of computer equipment looked like excellent target practice.

"Eat lead, f***ers!" she cried as shells erupted from the barrels of her gun and were propelled into the metal cases with a roar of thunder. The computers offered no resistance; they obligingly exploded and were set ablaze. "Come on Professor, time to get out of this f***ing s***hole!" she shouted.

The Doctor shook his head in disgust. Would Ace never learn? "Stop that!" he shouted over the din the six barrelled cannon was making. Ace complied, though only because she felt that she had done enough damage. With a sneer on her face that said, "Stuff that dogbreath" she stormed out of the room and into the corridors beyond.

The hack looked at the Doctor and took a hypodermic out of one of his jeans pockets. "Now who's going to f***ing pay for that?" he asked. He tested the hypo. A fine spry gushed out of the dirty looking needle.

The Doctor doffed his hat, apologised and flipped the now-computerless hack a card saying that he would pay for the damage. The calling card was that of Henry Gordon Jago. The hack looked at it, threw it to the floor and plunged the needle into his arm.

The sickly-sweet odour was getting stronger now and with it Benny's conscious mind. She was walking in automatic now, forever trying to find the origin of the strange odour which was both so appealing yet so revolting.

Ace was sulking again. It had been ten minutes since they had left the lab of the computer hack and they were now thoroughly lost. Of course the Doctor wouldn't admit it and he was striding through the featureless corridors like a man who knew precisely where he was going and the exact way to reach it.

"Ah!" declared the Doctor stopping outside a pair of double doors. "We're here."

"Where?"

"The reception of course." replied the Doctor. He straightened his jacket, dusted down his jacket and reached out for one of the handles....

To be continued...
The Doctor's Greatest Fan

He sat at one of the chairs that lined the far wall of the Job Centre, his face grim. Apart from himself and two women, the room was empty. The two women were at the other end of the room, talking. One of them was describing jobs that she had had over the past few years while the other was trying to find a job that suited her from a long list that she held in one of her hands.

When the woman had finished talking, the other one gave her a card with an address on, telling her that this job seemed to suit her perfectly. Then the woman got up and left and Paul heard the word that he'd been waiting for the past three and a half hours: "Next!"

He got up and walked over to the desk. Placing his bag on the floor, he sat down.

"Right, name?" asked the woman opposite him.


"OK, now tell me about all of your previous jobs and what type of work you're looking for."

"Well, ever since I got my degree from Cambridge in 1963, I've been interested in meeting any of the actors who have played the Doctor in the science-fiction series Doctor Who. Have you heard of it?"

"Yes, I've got Tom Baker's autograph, the original scripts from Frontier in Space and the test tube that Tom Baker used in Robot."

"Really? You're lucky. Ever since I began working for the BBC, I've always wanted to meet him. The first job I had on the series was as a policeman at the start of An Unearthly Child. I was told that this Doctor bloke was going to be messing about in this junkyard, so there I was with my torch, wandering round trying to find him. I tell you I hung about for ages looking for him. Well, after two hours, I just gave up and went home. Then the next day I was told that he arrived just ten minutes after I had gone. I can't tell you how disappointed I was, so I got a part as someone in the next season."

"And which story was this?"

"The Dalek Invasion of Earth. I got a job as a Roboman. There I was, with this great empty tin of baked beans on my head looking for him when suddenly, I tripped over and fell into the Thames. That was a nightmare I can tell you. I went floating off towards the English Channel. Well, they sent a Dalek in to rescue me, didn't they, only he couldn't find me, so he came back out and was given the clinkus to Part One."

"Well, I decided I'd better be more careful in future, so I decided only to get jobs where I wasn't going to have any accidents. The next story I appeared in was where I played this bloke called Marc Cory who was on an expedition on an alien planet. It was in this one part adventure called Mission To The Unknown. It was the best job ever - or so I thought. I lasted a whole twenty-five minutes. I began to think that this was my lucky episode. Twenty minutes into it and I began to wonder where the Doctor was, so I went looking for him. Only I got zapped by one of them pepper pot things, didn't I?"

"I see. You don't seem to be having much luck, did you? What happened next?"

"Well, the next job I got was a few years later. I came back for another try to meet this mysterious Doctor, so I appeared in The Seeds of Death as Locke. There I was on the Moonbase waiting for him to appear when this Martian came along and shot me. Well, I didn't think it was very fair. It played havoc with my operation scar I can tell you. A whole six years without meeting him."

"My hopes were lifted when I heard that this scarecrow man was going to play the Doctor, because my dad was a farmer and he told me that scarecrows were inanimate objects. Well, there I was on the big day when I was going to star in Death to the Daleks and I actually thought I'd meet him. It was just as I was climbing off the bus that I realised that I had left my autograph book at home, so I raced home, got it and raced back. By the time I reached the studio, I was out of breath and they were just starting to film the first scene when I came rushing in. I ran right across the set, heading for his room when this arrow came flying at me. Thud, right through my autograph book. That finished me for the story."

"Oh, you do seem to be unlucky. Did you ever get the chance to meet Tom Baker? He's a lovely sort of bloke."

"Well, the next serial I was cast in was Genesis of the Daleks, even though I always seem to die when I'm in an adventure with them. I was starring as a soldier man. Well, I mean, if I'm a soldier, people might not try to kill me, especially if I look hard. I was in the opening minutes of the programme, looking for a bloke who was meant to be wearing a scarf and hat, when suddenly BANG, and there I was, lying, dying on the floor. It came as a surprise, I can tell you."

"Anyway, I gave up acting for the next few years and went on the dole. Then, when he regenerated again, I became even more desperate to meet him, so I got a part as a woman in Earthshock. That was not much fun, but I thought no one would shoot a woman. I was wrong. I played this officer called Snyder. Well, to cut a long story short, I got shot. It was disgusting, I can tell you. I was made to lie on the floor and look like a mixture between baby food and snot. It was amazing what the Special Effects team can make after working their way through the BBC canteen menu - I can tell you."

"My last appearance was in Paradise Towers, when I was cast as a caretaker. That was frightening, I can tell you. Wandering around all those corridors, looking for the Doctor. I heard this noise behind me, so I turned, thinking it was the Doctor, I was wrong. Again. It was this white, remote-control Lego car with a big, long, blowup arm. I tell you, I died laughing."

"I see. And that was your last attempt to meet this mysterious Doctor, was it?"

"Yes," replied Paul.

"Well, today's your lucky day, because I've just found out that they're going to do this radio programme. Why don't you go along and try to star in that? They're looking for people at the moment."

Paul got up. "Thank you. Thank you very much." He ran out into the street, whooping with joy. "Pertwee, here I come!" he hollered as he ran ecstatically across Fulham Broadway. The collision with the dust cart killed him instantly.

Garath Cornell
UNHAND ME MADAM!
Era review of Jon Pertwee

The Jon Pertwee era is currently the subject of much revision, with its release on BBC video, and the recent complete screening on the BBC satellite channel, UK Gold. Popular fan opinion has decided to sacrifice the traditional view that the period was something of a qualitative peak for the programme.

The traditionalists always point to the fact that Doctor Who came as close as it ever came to outright cancellation in 1969. Troughton had become tired of the part, and the series in general had become labouried, badly written and decidedly less popular with the viewing public. The Pertwee era was thus the proverbial phoenix rising from the ashes; saving the show with a new Doctor, the successful consolidation of UN'T under the ever popular Brigadier, and the introduction of the characters of The Master and Jo Grant in faster, more expensive, and above all colour stories. For five years it seemed the programme would never look back.

The new breed of critics however claim that Pertwee himself is rather difficult to take seriously, rarely learning his lines, and producing more wooden performances as each story went by. It is also frequently claimed that Liz Shaw was a far better companion than Jo Grant, and that the Brigadier degenerated from an intelligent, competent soldier into a complete buffoon.

First Season Excellence
Pertwee's first season, according to the traditionalists, was always rather oddball and the least successful of the five he made. This was before news producer Barry Letts and script editor Terrance Dicks had secured their hold over the programme and introduced the above landmarks that gave the era its popular symbolism. See the article entitled "Pertwee's European Adventure" for a discussion of just how much symbolism - Ed! Essentially, the first season was more of a Troughton season, being largely planned and executed by the Troughton team. This can be seen in the lengthier and denser stories (containing many elements of rewriting present in the previous season) than later Pertwee episodes. In short, Pertwee Season 1 was an awkward transitional phase, still uncertain of itself and struggling for survival within a programme which was even now threatened by the axe.

The revisionists however claim this first season to be Pertwee's best. They cite it to be one of the most mature and believable seasons the programme has ever produced. Scenes such as the Brigadier's genocidal destruction of the Silurians in the imaginatively titled Doctor Who and the Silurians, for instance were never to be repeated. The Ambassadors of Death also featured a very effectively staged battle sequence which would probably not now be allowed on screen before the nine o'clock watershed.

The season also possessed a moral tone which elevated it above many others. Apart from the season opener Spearhead from Space, no reasonable adversaries were present during the remainder of the season. In both Silurians and Ambassadors, the main opponents were not the Silurians, or the Martian Ambassadors, but rather humanity itself. The Silurians though responsible in some measure for the calamity at the end of the story, are nevertheless a proud and noble race; more the victim of human intolerance than any maliciousness on their own part. In Ambassadors, the audience feels revulsion for General Carrington's treatment of the alien ambassadors, yet sympathises with his statement "I did it for my country", illustrating more honourable motives (in his eyes at least) than sheer vindictiveness. Season 1 thus possesses a moral sophistication which leaves the viewer never quite certain as to who's moral viewpoint is the right one.

This unsettling aspect is best witnessed in the season finale, Inferno, in which the Doctor encounters Liz Shaw, Sergeant Benton and the Brigadier as Fascist parallel world thugs. At the end of the story, in an unprecedented move, the Doctor fails to save humanity and his companions from their own mistakes, as the counterpart Earth is engulfed in the inferno. A masterful story, and one which superbly completes a season which has rarely failed to unnerve and shock.

Production standards throughout the season are consistently high, giving it a quality which 23 years later has not dated. Perhaps this is why the revisionists find the rest of the Pertwee era so disappointing: from 1971 onwards, Doctor Who possessed a distinctly 70's, and therefore dated feel, that 1990's audiences apparently find unpalatable.

The Pertwee Family
Season 8 immediately rings in the changes, however. In the space of one story, the coldly scientific Liz Shaw has disappeared back to Cambridge to be replaced by Jo Grant, the complete antithesis of all the Liz Shaw stood for. Whereas Liz was self reliant, calm and intelligent, Jo was by her own admission "exceedingly dim", scatty, clumsy but a bundle of fun. UN'T was also streamlined with the introduction of the idealistic Mike Yates as a confidant for a softened brigadier, and also a fleeting love interest for Jo Grant. Add to this
the introduction of The Master, and the so-called ‘Pertwee Family’ - the perfect bond between cast and crew - was complete.

The ‘Pertwee Family’, so the traditionalists argue, was vital to the programme’s success, giving it a behind-the-scenes cohesion most evident in The Daemons (screened recently), cited by many as the best Pertwee story and of the programme...”

... the Pertwee era possessed a moral and political sophistication rarely seen in the programme....

as a whole. It is true to say that the story does have a touch of the magnetic as the cast revel in the opportunities presented by the superbly characterised script. The Brigadier, for instance, utters the immortal line, “Chap with wings - five rounds rapid”! a perfect one line summarisation of his character if ever there was one. The production team also delighted in the opportunity to make two thirds of the programme on location, to produce a story rarely matched in standards of acting, design, and special effects. For members of the cast and certain sections of fandom, The Daemons is everything. The programme had effectively been reborn after the trials and tribulations of 1969, as rating and levels of enthusiasm soared. What could possibly be wrong? According to the revisionists, quite a lot.

Firstly, the ‘Pertwee family’ is seen as a source of complacency with Pertwee writing his lines over the set and a sense of ‘chumminess’ between the Doctor and the Master, destroying many opportunities for dramatic potential (Baker’s relationship with the Master for instance, was one of absolute hatred, whereas with Pertwee a sense almost of “old school mates” existed). In short, the programme was starting to lose the grit, realistic edge it possessed the season before; instead settling into its old complacencies, descending almost to self-parody on occasions.

It is here however that any credence I might give to the revisionists’ case ends. The suggestion that the production team should have continued to make the rest of the Pertwee era in the same style as Season 7 simply ignores the realities of the times. Whilst I feel that the revisionists Inferno is a far better story than the choice of the traditionalist - The Daemons, nevertheless it must be remembered that the dictates of an early evening family audience prevented the likes of genocidal characters and overt moralising as a regular occurrence. I find myself in the paradoxical situation therefore of advocating that Doctor Who is at its best when it is believable, frightening and with a genuinely moralistic stance, yet supporting the “softenig” tactics adopted in 1971.

In any case, one might question to what extent the programme was softened, Seasons 8 to 11 might appear to look tame in comparison with season 7 and the early Tom Baker episodes, yet compared with the Hartnell seasons or later Tom Baker episodes, a proper sense of perspective is achieved. For was not Terror of the Autons criticised in the House of Lords for unacceptable levels of violence? Stories such as The Monster of Peladon, The Green Death and Invasion of the Dinosaurs criticised then Government policy towards the miners and environmental issues. The latter of course, being way ahead of its time in 1973.

M.J. Ritson’s article on The Curse of Peladon illustrates the wealth of political issues discussed during the Pertwee era, including racism, colonialism, arms sales and European integration. This, apart from Terry Nation’s rather patronising moralising in Planet of the Daleks and Death to the Daleks, the Pertwee era possessed a moral and political sophistication rarely seen in the programme on such a scale and in such a degree. The “softerning” process should therefore not be undervalued.

Third Season Sterility

The following season however, I find strangely hard to like. The overall impression, despite reasonably solid scripting, is one of sterility and absence of sparkle. Only two stories, The Curse of Peladon and The Sea Devils make satisfying viewing, the rest seeming to fail to rise above the turgid or garish, best (or perhaps worst) embodied in the season finale The Time Monster. To the traditionalists, the story’s epic plot, sparking characterisation, and final (though unintentional) meeting of the “Pertwee family” make the story quintessential Pertwee. To the revisionist, the plot is overlong, contrived, containing downright silly dialogue and characterisation descending almost to parody. If The Time Monster is “quintessential” Pertwee, as the traditionalists argue, this might explain why in Season 9 the show descended into a style of storytelling which did its reputation for realism...

... Pertwee was an earthbound figure, and therefore uncomfortable in non-terrestrial environments.”

no matter how heightened - no credit whatsoever. Thus The Time Monster, jarring incidental music, failed CSO Colour Separation Overlay, alias Chromakey or “Bluescreening” -Ed experiments and pedestrian storylines are my overall impressions of Season 9.

Back in Time

Season 10 celebrated the show’s tenth anniversary with the realisation that the Pertwee experiment, no
matter how successful, could never by its restrictive nature be continued indefinitely. For the sake of the programme’s long term survival, U.N.I.T. was now confined to a semi-regular feature, with the main emphasis placed on the Doctor’s wanderings through time and space. The change of emphasis, however, was not an altogether successful one. Pertwee was an earthbound figure, and therefore uncomfortable in non-terrestrial environments.

It is perhaps for this reason that many of Pertwee’s “space” stories are unsuccessful. Colony in Space, The Mutants, Planet of the Daleks, Death to the Daleks and Planet of the Spiders all contain unconvincing alien environments. It is only the two Peladon stories and Frontier in Space which are in any way successful as non-contemporary earth stories, and then only because they contain relevant political or social issues/themes. The need for change then, was very clearly realised, but as seen above, was executed without apparent success.

All indications therefore seemed that the Pertwee era was starting to draw to a gradual close. This however did not dampen the glory of the tenth anniversary special reuniting all four Doctors in a story achieving classic status, simply for the bickering between Pertwee and Troughton. During The Three Doctors, the show was riding on a high: ratings were over 11 million as the programme was recognised for the first time as a national institution. Yet despite the glitz and distraction of the tenth anniversary story, the seeds of change were sown, and this was obvious to both cast and production team as Katy Manning (Jo Grant) decided to leave at the end of the season and many writers found the earth bound U.N.I.T. format increasingly difficult to write for. Add to this the decline of the Brigadier to the lowest ebb of credibility (at one point his mistakes an alien planet for Cromer Beach), and one gets the feeling that the whole U.N.I.T. concept is wearing a little bit thin.

Overall however, the tenth season is immeasurably more enjoyable than its predecessor, with only Planet of the Daleks failing to excite.

... ratings were over 11 million as the programme was recognised for the first time as a national institution.

Carnival of Monsters is both original and diverting, whilst Frontier in Space is a more effective and entertaining attempt to examine the future of Earth’s Empire than was The Mutants. The Green Death concluded the season with a fine script enthusiastically directed by Michael Briant.

The season, however, ended with two very important changes. Katy Manning had left the series, feeling nothing further could be done with her character. Roger Delgado (The Master) also left, but in rather more tragic circumstances. Shortly after completing Frontier in Space, Delgado was killed in a car accident, the cast and crew were obviously shocked and saddened. Pertwee and Richard Franklin announced their decision to leave, followed shortly by script editor, Terrance Dicks, and producer Barry Letts. The planned final meeting between the Doctor and the Master - in which their true relationship was to be finally revealed - was now never to happen. The “Pertwee family” had been broken by the end for Season 10.

All Change

The era had now in many ways lost its direction. The final Pertwee season thus opened with something of a stylistic change. Gone was the now familiar diamond pattern title sequence, replaced by a much colder tunnel effect, indicating very clearly that the old cosiness of the programme was now starting to disappear. For a start, Jo Grant’s replacement, the journalist Sarah Jane Smith, had none of the bumbling charm of her predecessor. Sarah was the first of the tougher feminist companions, a break with the past and a catalyst for the future. This left Pertwee a rather uncomfortable looking figure, unable to exert his paternal influence on Sarah the way he had with Jo, obviously affected by Katy Manning’s and Roger Delgado’s loss, as well as tiring of the part he had now played for five years.

Despite all this however, I find Pertwee’s final season extremely enjoyable. Rarely has the quality of the scripts been better (with the exception of the rather padded final story). The show seemed to be experiencing an injection of creativity, an oddity considering the end of an era was in sight. The season did have its faults of course, the major being below par production standards. Both Invasion of the Dinosaurs and Death to the Daleks were unable to realise the demands of their respective scripts as the model dinosaurs were in the former story and the Exilon sets in the latter were sufficiently prominent enough to ruin the overall look for many people. Nevertheless, few would deny that Invasion of the Dinosaurs was a sensitively written script, dealing sensibly with environmental issues, whilst Death to the Daleks was dramatic enough to hook even the most casual viewer.

The Time Warrior, the season opener, was a fast moving and witty script by Robert Holmes, providing an excellent introduction to both Sarah Jane and the Sontarans. The Monster of Peladon saw the Doctor’s return to Peladon 40 years after it had joined the Federation, only to discover that the quality of life that he had once promised the Peladonians under the Federation had not
materialised. Whilst not as good as The Curse of Peladon, The Monster of Peladon is certainly a worthy and very enjoyable sequel.

Pertwee’s final story, Planet of the Spiders is something of a mixed bag. On the positive side, the Buddhist concept of conquering one’s own internal demons - in the Doctor’s case his greed for knowledge and the fear he faces by returning the Great Crystal he stole in The Green Death to the Great One is interesting. The sequences set on earth are very effective, although fail to disguise the fact that episode two is simply a protracted chase sequence more to appease Pertwee’s love of fast cars than to advance the plot. The scenes on Metabelis III also fail to inspire, let down as they are by poor special effects (CSO was always a bugbear of the Pertwee era) and wooden acting. Thus the story is in many ways disappointing, especially when we consider what the template for seasons 9, 10 and 11).

My view has already partially been stated. I feel it is important that the revisionists should remember, however justified some of their criticisms are, that it was undoubtedly a success when first broadcast, and effortlessly guaranteed the programme years of future success in sheer nostalgia value alone. Ratings and publicity were always good, and the programme was saved from the brink of extinction in 1969. Viewing tastes do however change, and much of the Pertwee era now seems dated in comparison with other era’s of programme. For instance many of even Patrick Troughton’s monochrome episodes stand better than some of Pertwee’s. Were I to choose my favourite Jon Pertwee story, the revisionists’ Inferno has to stand head and shoulders above the traditionalists’ The Daemons. The style of Doctor Who thus rejected by the then production team in 1971 has ironically better stood the test of time than its replacement. It is of course a matter of personal judgement as to whether long term success in television terms is better than the relatively short term one.

Mark Hanlon.

“The overall effect of Planet of the Spiders is thus one of self indulgence and by the cast and crew...”

story could have been had it witnessed the final confrontation between the Doctor and the Master. The overall effect of Planet of the Spiders is thus one of self indulgence and by the cast and crew - as everything that happens in the story has been done in the Pertwee era before. True, this was the whole point of the story, but a little more inspiration and originality would have helped. Thus, other than a few memorable scenes, and the aforementioned Buddhist ideas, Planet of the Spiders ends the Pertwee era with a rather damp squib.

Inferno vs The Daemons

Returning to the central theme of this article, viz. the traditionalist versus revisionist viewpoints; since both factions tend to agree by and large with the views presented on seasons 10 and 11 above, the debate centres around whether the programme should have been softened between seasons 7 and 8 (which provided the

SYLVESTER

(With apologies to Abba and Fernando)

1994, Sylvester:
D’you remember long ago with 1990 coming soon?
On a Wednesday night, Sylvester,
You were painting with yourself and playing loudly on the spoons.
You could hear the nitro-nine,
Fenric and Cybermen were moving to their doom.
Though the ratings dropped, Sylvester,
Every part of every story improved so dramatically.
And with Sophie there, Sylvester,
You were young and full of life, neither of you prepared to die.
And you’re not afraid to say the BBC announcement made you wonder why.

There was something on TV those years, now disappeared, Sylvester.
You were fighting for the galaxy, for liberty, Sylvester.
Did you ever think that you might lose? Have you regrets?
If you were asked to do the same again, would you, old friend, Sylvester?
If you were asked to play the role again, would you, old friend, Sylvester?

So you’re older now, Sylvester,
For five years now there hasn’t been a brolly in your hand.
You came close this year, Sylvester,
Do you still recall the day BBC cancelled what they’d planned?
And “The Dark Dimension” ‘s just
Another broken promise now flushed down the pan.

There was something on TV those years, now disappeared, Sylvester.
You were fighting in those escapades with renegades, Sylvester.
Did you ever think that it might end? Are there regrets?
If you were asked to do the same again, would you, old friend, Sylvester?
If you were asked to play the role again, would you, old friend, Sylvester?

Ian Fellows

The President did a fine rendition of this song at the DocSoc Christmas party. If you ask him nicely he might give you a burst!
SENTENCE OF DEATH
The Search for the lost episodes of Doctor Who

At the time of writing, there are currently 110 episodes of Doctor Who (all from the black and white era) listed as "does not exist" on BBC documentation.

From the inception of the programme on November 23rd, 1963 until December 1967, all but two of the episodes were broadcast from 2 inch 405 line black and white videotape (the two exceptions were transmitted from teledevision because of the complex editing that was required) video tape editing was in its infancy and it was necessary to physically splice the tape, thus rendering it unusable after it was edited. From then on until June 1969, 625 line tape was used (giving a cleaner, sharper image) and after that came the colour era.

A teledevision is a method of transferring videotape to film, because videotape was expensive, and because more was known about film, the videotape would be erased and reused after a while, but not before a telescript was made. Basically, a film camera, loaded with 16mm or 35mm black and white film, was pointed at a modified television screen (called a "kinescope") on which the episode would be played. This method involved the use of a system that reduced external light to zero (thus eliminating annoying screen "glare") and had a "flat" screen (to cut out image distortions towards the edge of the screen).

This was how Doctor Who was sold to overseas customers in the 1960s and even during the 1970s it was considered advantageous to transfer colour episodes on videotape to black and white film so that countries that didn't broadcast from tape could still use the film version (for instance, Australia was still broadcasting in black and white until 1975 - their first colour Doctor Who story being The Time Warrior). Unlike tape, film had the added bonus that it could be used anywhere that had projection apparatus, as opposed to the complex playback equipment needed for tape.

I should point out here that the telewriting equipment had the best technology that could be obtained and it was not just a case of

"... there are currently 110 episodes of Doctor Who... listed as "does not exist" on BBC documentation."

pointing a film camera at a monitor. The images that were obtained were extremely good, even though the recent restorations of the Pertwee episodes have shown that the so-called "flat" screen technology used in the 1960s and 1970s showed minute and undetectable distortions of the pictures.

The 1963-69 era was mostly preserved as 16mm teledevision (a few were recorded onto 35mm film), but due to a misguided notion currently in fashion at the BBC in the 1970s, once the episodes had achieved what was considered to be their full sales potential, the episodes were seen to have no more material value and were thrown onto rubbish skips, ready to be incinerated. Other factors such as high insurance premiums at the episodes' storage facilities (BBC Enterprises' Villiers House headquarters), which were grossly overcrowded, and the fact that it was felt that the black and white episodes of any television programme (not just Doctor Who) looked old and dated after the switch to colour in the late 1960s, meant that it became practical to dispose of the "old" episodes.

The junking started in 1972 and lasted five years. When it was over, the tally was huge. Vast chunks of the first six years of Doctor Who had gone, with the first few years of the colour era also being hit hard (their master videotapes had been wiped or lost previously). By the late 1970s, when the BBC finally realised its folly, and that it could market old episodes in new (and more profitable) ways, over 250 episodes had gone.

All was not quite lost: a lot was retrieved from BBC Enterprises, which held 16mm black and white teledevision of all bar one (Jurassic of the Dinosaurs Part 1) previously colour Pertwee episode, and the majority of the first two seasons of Doctor Who held in pristine negative format. And, of course, the fledgling BBC Film Library had been given a few randomly selected examples from the black and white era (later, this place also became the

"Vast chunks of the first six years of Doctor Who had gone..."

safe repository of videotape, and the "BBC Film and Videotape Library" was colloquially dubbed the "BBC Archive"

The British Film Institute also assisted: they had been given two complete Patrick Troughton adventures (The Dominators and The War Games) sometime in the early 1970s. In 1978/9, these were returned and along with one or two other examples returned from abroad upon expiry of their original sales rights (The Web of Fear Part 1 for example), the list of "the missing" was reduced to 136 episodes by 1981.

Today, Doctor Who is fortunate (and possibly unique) amongst
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contemporary BBC to series because everything made since 1970 exists, albeit the (Jon Pertwee) 1970-74 era exists in a peculiar variety of formats: 16mm colour film (Spearhead from Space), 625 line colour master tapes, 525 line copies that were returned from Canadian TV stations, untransmissible colour Hi-Matic tapes (copied from U.S. Betamax off-air recordings made in the 1970s by Ian Levine's friends just before their 525 line master tapes were wiped) and 16mm black and white telerecordings. More recently, these black and white episodes have been restored to colour by digitally superimposing the colour from the Betamax recordings onto the B & W images once they had been telecined (film/video or video/film transfer) onto modern 1 inch Betacam tapes. (As far as Doctor Who is concerned, 2 inch tape was used until 1985).

Since 1981, a further 26 episodes have turned up in a variety of places: car boot sales, a disused cupboard in old BBC Enterprises premises and, most intriguingly, a church cellar in London! Only six episodes have come from private collectors; most have been returned from past overseas customers. In the Winter of 1981, Sue Malden, the head of the BBC Film and Videotape Library, related in an interview with DWM that all obvious sources "such as those overseas customers that could be contacted" have been exhausted. What else languishes in some foreign archive, I wonder.

Over the years, eyewitness accounts of recent sightings of some of the long-lost classics in foreign countries have come forward to tantalise us.

For instance, it was reported that The Tomb of the Cybermen was seen in the Far East (Singapore) in 1978. Tomb was, of course, later discovered in Hong Kong and was last shown there in 1970.

And then, based on what a recently returned visitor to Nigeria said in 1984 that there might be Troughton episodes there, the Archives contacted all 32 broadcasters of Nigerian State Television (some are no more than tin huts in the desert!) and found two complete Hartnell adventures. Not actually what was expected, but a welcome return to the BBC since the two stories (The Time Meddler and The War Machines) were only represented by their second episodes at the BBC.

Then there's the report that Power of the Daleks was seen in Ghana in 1986; this report was so concrete that DWB even alerted the BBC to this snippet of news. The Ghana television company was contacted, and it was soon learned that their entire television archive had been destroyed by fire in 1988. However, I must point out that despite what DWB says, there is no real evidence that Power was shown in Ghana in 1986.

And, in the same year, The Abominable Snowman was reported to have been seen in Uganda. The source of this is an anonymous letter to a fanzine in 1987 shortly after Evil of the Daleks Part 2 and The Faceless Ones Part 3 were returned to the BBC and, should, admittedly, be treated with caution.

Just before their TV station came under rocket attack during the invasion by Turkey in 1974, Cyprus quickly sent off a whole batch of early BBC material onto Hong Kong, this material included Marco Polo. However, it is no longer held by Asia TV (in Hong Kong), because all the BBC material that they possessed were returned along with Tomb in December 1991. All that was left in Cyprus was some episodes that were already held by the BBC, plus the first three episodes of Reign of Terror. It is possible that copies of the outstanding episodes (4 & 5) do exist in the occupied northern sector of Cyprus but it is more probable that the episodes were destroyed in the attack.

Also, New Zealand reportedly shipped it's copy of Marco Polo to Iran, but when contacted in 1984 during the first big overseas hunt, all the BBC received was a curt reply to the effect of "Who in the name of Allah are you talking about?"

This strange process of shipping episodes all over the place to other overseas customers is/was known as "Cycling", and was quite commonplace. For instance, the copy of The War Machines that is currently held by the BBC was found in Nigeria, originally came from New Zealand!

"Cycling" was probably incurred to keep costs to a minimum: it is apparently quite expensive to strike new prints from a master negative.

So far as I know, the more recent hunt that was sparked off by Tomb has unearthed no more lost classics, although I find it doubtful that all 20-odd past overseas customers will have replied to BBC Enterprises queries; Iran and CBC Edmonton in Canada come to mind as two examples that have been extremely unhelpful in the past.

I am convinced that more episodes do exist in this country in the hands of private collectors, either "innocent" film buffs who are unaware as to the true value of their possessions, or by unscrupulous selfish fans who hoard such rare treasures, possibly because of the rarity value, and probably for financial gain.

Rumours concerning the missing episodes are constantly in circulation. For instance Marco Polo Part 2 (The Sontaran Stratagem), Evil of the Daleks Part 5 and The Tenth Planet Part 4 are all said to exist.

The latter one of these is the subject of more rumour and speculation than any other "lost" episode (at least, after Tomb was found) because it is definitely known that it was not junked by the BBC in the big 1970s purge.

The 16mm telecined of that episode had been requisitioned by the children's magazine programme...
Blue Peter so that the transformation from Bill Hamill to Pat Troughton could be incorporated into a 10th anniversary special in 1973.

After acquiring a clip, the episode vanished from the Blue Peter production office. That was not the only episode to have "vanished"; The Daleks' Masterplan Part 4 (The Traitors) was also stolen at the same time. This episode of Masterplan was used by researchers because it features a unique event the death of one of the Doctor's companions, Katarina. From various bits of news that have drifted to us over the years, a tentative identification of the Blue Peter thief can be made. He is a sound technician/engineer who had worked on 1960s Doctor Who episodes including The Tenth Planet and he still works for the BBC! This person, who I shall refer to only as Adrian is probably the same person as "Roger K. Barrett" (a pseudonym) who, as reported in a recent issue of DWM, delights in misleading and fooling people as to the existence of these two episodes.

Although I know of "Adrian's" possible address, my ability to ascertain as to whether he actually did work on the Blue Peter segment in question is hampered by the fact that the Blue Peter production office refuses to help me with my research.

"Adrian" sold the film print of The Tenth Planet Part 4 to a buyer by the name of Simon Marshall, an undisclosed number of years ago. It is reported that Mr. Marshall, who works on an oil rig, paid £5,000 for the episode.

This story first came to light last year when Adam Lee (no relation), the BBC Archive Selector, unearthed a letter that had been mislaid for about five years. Adam Lee then established the identity of "Roger Barrett", who had been trying to sell the episode for £800 to various "famous" fans in 1987. Roger/Adrian then was obliged to return the episode, which he purportedly did in October last year on the obsolete Shibaden format of half-inch open reel tapes; it was widely reported that "Roger/Adrian" had long since sold the print on to someone else, but had made copies onto videotape.

Unfortunately, the Shibaden format is so archaic (early-mid 1970s) that the BBC had to loan the tape to the National Film Archive, who possessed a Shibaden machine so that the episode could be checked for watchability, etc.

It was soon reported that the tape was blank! The BBC Archives then established the identity of the current holder of The Tenth Planet Part 4 episode, this delightful creature Mr. Marshall, who has so far resisted all attempts to buy the episode of from him; various financial offers from at least one fan and even Adam Lee have so far failed to secure the return of this episode (Mr. Marshall even replied "F**k off" to BBC enquiries, so I am told). Incidentally, it should be pointed out that Adam Lee knows the true identity of "Roger K. Barrett", but has let no one into his confidence yet: certainly "Roger/Adrian"'s insistence in using a false name and a false address (although the address published in DWB does exist) has meant that it has been very difficult to establish contact with him, post has often been returned marked "not known at this address".

What is not so well-known about the whole saga is that in order to get any kind of a response from "Adrian/Roger", Adam Lee had to put considerable pressure on this person, even going so far as to threaten the safety of his job! Now that the story seems to be at an end (for the foreseeable future), it is quite possible that despite the lost episodes "amnesty" (no questions will be asked, basically), this BBC employee is liable to find himself in serious trouble soon, even if it is just for wasting BBC time and not for handling stolen material.

The only footage known to be in official existence are three brief clips used for Blue Peter; these include the priceless 26 second regeneration scene.

It is interesting to note that the first three episodes of The Tenth Planet were preserved and although being of variable sound and picture quality, still exist to this day. Although, I was told last year that episode 3 of this story came perilously close to being junked and was found by a fan at the BBC Film Library in 1977 in a mislabelled film can! How many other episodes were "lost" in this manner? Bear in mind that almost two minutes of 35mm inserts for The Daleks' Masterplan Part 1 (The Nightmare Begins) were only found relatively recently in a wrongly labelled film can!

As for the other stolen episode (viz. The Daleks' Masterplan Part 4), there has been no word. We know that it exists out there, but its location and current owner is unknown.

Precious few other episodes from the 1960s era of Doctor Who were sent along to the Film Library for what is euphemistically called "safekeeping". Amongst this odd collection include the eight part Cybermen story from 1968, The Inversion - but without episodes 1 or 4! What an odd selection/preservation procedure!

It is also interesting to note that these two episodes are the subject of "... almost two minutes of... The Daleks' Masterplan Part 1... were only found relatively recently in a wrongly labelled film can!"

... some of the longest-standing rumours, too. For instance, it was rumoured that the two missing episodes from The Inversion were due to be returned to the BBC in the
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early 1980s, but were intercepted before they reached their destination. Given that the amount of interest in the BBC Archive regarding Doctor Who (for instance, a lot of people were very interested when The Faceless Ones Part 3 was loaned to the BBC in 1987 so that it could be copied) and the rather lax security in the Archive in the early part of the

“...it was rumoured that the two missing episodes from The Invasion were due to be returned to the BBC in the early 1980s...”

safely preserved, the ‘positive’ print has vanished.

And 35mm effects footage of the Daleks burning down a forest from The Daleks Masterplan Part 2 (The Day of Armageddon) cannot be located anywhere in the BBC’s capacious vaults, although the soundtrack film is retained. This is, or was, the only surviving footage from this episode, although there is a possibility that a Blue Peter may include this sequence.

It should be noted that several Doctor Who fans do hold legitimately obtained copies of this 35mm sequence on videotape, though.

This loss was partially remedied by the discovery in late 1991 of approximately two minutes worth of footage from the first episode of the mammoth Dalek epic, and just in time for portions to be included in the Resistance is Useless clips compilation on BBC 2 in January 92. At about the same time, all four episodes of the classic The Tomb of the Cybermen were located in Hong Kong and retrieved by BBC Enterprises (although they kept it secret for a while!)

In the next issue I shall consider the question of how many “lost” episodes are in the hands of fans.

Paul Lee

The Missing Episodes

The following episodes are currently missing from the BBC archives. The BBC are very keen to speak to anyone who might have any information about them. The BBC are also keen to trace colour versions of The Ambassadors of Death Parts 2 - 4 & 7, The Mind of Evil, Planet of the Daleks Part 3 and Invasion of the Dinosaurs Part 1.

Marco Polo

The Smugglers

The Reign of Terror

The Tenth Planet

The Crusades

The Power of the Daleks

Galaxy 4

The Highlanders

Mission to the Unknown

The Abominable Snowmen

The Myth Makers

The Ice Warriors

The Daleks' Master Plan

The Enemy of the World

The Massacre

The Wheel in Space

The Celestial Toymaker

The Invasion

The Savages

The Space Pirates

1 - 4

1 - 7

1 - 4

1 - 4

1 - 4

1 - 4

1 - 3

1 - 4

1 - 4

1, 2, 4

1, 3 - 7

1, 3 - 6

2 - 3

1, 2, 4 - 6

1 - 6

1 - 4

2 - 6

1 - 6

1 - 2, 4 - 5

1, 4

1, 3 - 6
SA D A N S  O F  T H E  S O N T A R A N S

Episode 1

The Fourth Battle Fleet of the Supreme Sontaran Space Service was amassed in orbit around Planet Zero X, the Time Lord industrial waste planet. Inside the control room of the flagship, Group Marshal Stout was pacing up and down.

"How long Blackboard?" he ranted. "The Supreme Sontaran Space Service waits for no one!"

His remarks were addressed at a human with a tendency to wear black clothes with disproportionately large collars and high boots, today he was also wearing a flowing cape. Professor Blackboard was leaping round a hastily constructed console at the side of the room, adjusting dials and switches, cackling evilly to himself.

"I've just got to override the Automatic Neutron Flow Control and we'll have it," he told Stout. He threw the most important looking switch on the console and leapt up in the air shouting. "Yes!" Blackboard turned to face Stout and oozed smugly, "It's all yours, and now the rest of the money..."

Stout stared at him arrogantly for a while and then laughed. " Inferiors should never trust a Sontaran." He then casually vapourised Blackboard with his blaster, which was short and bulky, just like its owner.

Deputy Group Marshal Squat looked up from his console. "It's leaving orbit and entering Hyperdrive, sir."

"Quick, after it!" yelled Stout. Unfortunately you can't do handbrake turns in a battle-cruiser.

It was June 2003 and as the TARDIS lurched precariously outside a cafe in Welwyn Garden City, the Doctor was inside having tea with an anonymous 1970s low budget, science fiction TV series producer. Needless to say the latter was somewhat advanced in years.

"Draconians, Silurians, Daleks, Axons, Sea Devils, Daemons, um..." rambled the producer.

"Yes, Zygons, er, Time Monsters, Autons and of course the cuddly toy," he continued.

"Didn't he do well," humoured the Doctor as he examined the producer's pills.

"Aye," rambled the producer. "These new fangled Haemavores and Cheetah people aren't a patch on the old monsters. Young people nowadays wouldn't know a really scary monster if it came up to them and roared."

"Aye, those were the days," echoed the Doctor as the television producer dozed off.

At that point a nubile young girl with long dark hair sidled up to the table brandishing a magazine.

"Hi, my name's Kylie and I've come about this advert here." She indicated a small ad in the personal column which read, "Intergalactic travelling companion required. Female 17-25. Contact the Doctor."

"Sorry, that advert was meant for someone else," replied the Doctor mysteriously. He was in one of his I know exactly what's going on but I'm not going to tell you moods.

"Oh, come on, let me travel with you. I'm just what you're looking for," pleaded Kylie.

"How old are you?"

"If I mean Nineteen." The Doctor looked around the room uncomfortably for a while and then looked Kylie in the face. "Coming with me is very risky, you'll be living life on the edge, rolling in the mud, getting tied up, sacrificed and whipped within an inch of your life."

Kylie looked excited about the S & M prospects. "Great, I'm coming with you," she replied enthusiastically.

"No certain, not, you're under age, the Time Lords would never allow it."

Suddenly a wailing, screeching siren pierced the quite, cafe environment. The producer woke up with a start. "What was that?" he blurted.

The Doctor stood up and smiling embarrassedly reached into his inside pocket. "Sorry, just my pager." He got out the TARDIS remote control and pulled up the aerial, read the message on the title screen and then strode out to the TARDIS, setting the co-ordinates with the remote as he walked. Kylie rushed into the TARDIS behind him, just as the door was shutting. The Cafe proprietor could be heard, "Oi, you haven't paid!"

Inside the TARDIS Kylie stared in bewilderment at the sheer size of the Doctor's equipment. "But outside, it's just an obsolete telephone kiosk, how can it be this big inside?" she asked.

The Doctor looked up from the console, where an orange light was flashing 'eclipt', and gave Kylie a quick tute in the physics of dimensionally transcendental space-time. Unsurprisingly Kylie looked puzzled, which is a clear indictment of the gross inefficiency of the tutorial system. She changed the subject, "What's up, Doc?"

"The Great Golden Cheeseburger of Old High Gallifrey has been released," replied the Time Lord darkly. "And don't call me Doc."

"What's the Great Golden Cheeseburger of Old High Gallifrey?"

"It's a stellar manipulator like the Hand of Omega only this one's an early prototype and doesn't work."

"And you've got to stop it," guessed Kylie a mischievous smile erupting over her fifteen year old face.

The Doctor grunted as he examined his contract under a microscope. He gave a cry of disgust, crumpled the three inch document into an impossibly small ball and threw it into a corner. "Yes, I must stop it," he replied gravely. "But first I must find out where it is going."

Kylie butted in, "No time like the present, Shall we go."

"We?" exploded the Doctor, clasping his lapels in a regeneration slipback. "Who said we?"

"Is this the launch switch?" asked Kylie, pointing to a
huge red lever marked "Do not pull this huge red lever."

"Stop!" screamed the Doctor, but it was too late and the Time rotor began to shudder and vibrate. Whether he like it or not the Doctor had a new travelling companion. The cliche' light on the console exploded.

**Episode 2**

The Doctor quickly put out the cliche' light, using the piece of cake he was still holding from earlier and then ran round the console setting the navigational controls to follow The Great Golden Cheeseburger.

Meanwhile, back on the Sontaran battle-cruiser, Group Marshal Stout had just finished sacking a substantial proportion of his subordinates and was turning his attention to his deputy.

"Have we caught up with the Time Lord manipulator yet?" Squat replied, "According to our detectors it's almost within range of our sensors, sir."

"Excellent!" boomed Stout.

At that point the Cyberleader teleported in, admonished Stout for using his catchphrase and was promptly blown apart by the trigger happy Stout.

Sub-Commander Shloc swivelled round to face his superior. "Tactical computers indicate The Great Golden Cheeseburger of Old High Gallifrey is heading for Varg 3, sir."

"Set course for Varg 3 and prepare to blast that Time Lord contraption to kingdom come!" roared Stout as he changed into his favourite pair of battle trousers. The bridge crew discretely averted their eyes.

The TARDIS materialised on Varg 3, which incidentally bore a well know resemblance to a disused quarry in the Home Counties. As the TARDIS appeared a bunch of leather clad people dematerialised in an expanding, badly drawn bubble.

"Great parking space, Doc," said Kylie as they emerged from the TARDIS.

"Yes, the TARDIS does seem to have an affinity for old quarries," replied the Doctor, "And I've told you, don't call me Doc!" The Doctor waved an inexpensive looking detector around. "Looks like the Great Golden Cheeseburger will be touching down," he paused to indicate a pile of ruined buildings half a mile away, "over there."

It is a well known fact that the Doctor and Trouble are very much inclined to walk hand in hand together in the moonlight, prior to consummating their relationship in the heart of the night. However, this is meant to be a family magazine - Dep Ed. So, it was with no surprise that at that moment a group of comedy Nazis dressed in black jump-suits and gas masks leapt out at them and pointed their badly constructed blasters at them. Predictably enough Kylie screamed.

The Nazi leader, a man called Nigel turned to the Doctor and demanded, "Who are you! What is your business here? Answer now, or die!"

The Doctor went red with rage. "You fools, you're late. This is supposed to be the cliche-hanger for episode one!"

"See, I told you we were meant to be here at two." The I-told-you-so Nazi was called Gerald.

Nigel waved him off and turned back to the Doctor. "I said answer, or die!" he menaced.

"Please tell them," Kylie quivered as she clasped her arms around the Doctor.

The Time Lord conceded, "Okay I'm the Doctor, this is the Kylie and we're waiting here for The Great Golden Cheeseburger of Old High Gallifrey." The Doctor wished they'd called it Bill. He was getting sick of saying The Great Golden Cheeseburger etc.

"Do you take us for fools or something?" stomped Nigel. The expression on the Doctor's face indicated that he did.

"But it's true," whined Kylie.

"Well, I haven't seen any giant cheeseburger anywhere around here," piped in one of the less intellectually challenged comedy Nazis, Nigel ignored him. "Kill them!" he yelled. He'd been under a lot of stress recently.

The Nazis fired their blasters and bombarded the Doctor and Kylie with beams of black light. Kylie squealed and fell over. The Doctor just stood there and said smugly, "I thought even the terminally stupid knew you couldn't have black light."

"Whoops, sorry," apologised Nigel and he turned to his men. "Reset to setting 2." They all adjusted the dials on their guns, one of them experimentally vapourised a nearby polystyrene rock with a red beam. They levelled their blasters again.

The tension of the moment was broke when an overweight man in a Hawaiian shirt mini-cupped up to the comedy Nazis and shouted, "Cut!"

The Doctor turned to him and bellowed, "get out of here you talentless fool. You were sacked last year. Besides the cliff-hanger isn't due for another couple of minutes yet."

The comedy Nazis levelled their blasters for a third time. Suddenly there was a roaring crescendo and they all turned in horror to see the menacing outline of a battle-cruiser rapidly approaching them.

"Oh, the forces of good are coming to save us!" cried Kylie.

The Doctor gazed up at the spherical craft and thought to himself that perhaps Jo Grant wasn't the ultimate in stupidity after all.

A moment later the nasty, brutish and short battle-cruiser landed and four nasty, brutish and short Sontarans waddled out.

"So Doktor, we meet again!" announced Group Marshal Stout.

**Episode 3**

At that point the comedy Nazis and the Sontarans decided to register an objection to each other so, as the other two sides were distincting each other with bungling incompetence, the Doctor and Kylie decided to make a run for the TARDIS.

Inside, the Doctor cancelled the plot hole alarm on the console.

"It looks like it was the Sontarans who released The
Great Golden Cheeseburger of Old High Gallifrey," he said to Kylie, because there was no one no more intelligent around, "but why?"

"Perhaps they want unlimited power," suggested Kylie.

"Nah, far too obvious. Anyway this is episode three so it's time for an explanation."

"How are you going to find out?" asked Kylie, displaying a notable lack of intelligence.

"Well," replied the Doctor, "I'm going to find the Sontarans and ask them."

"What about the men in black?"

"Oh, sod them," replied the Doctor dismissively. "They couldn't organise a piss up in a brewery."

He strode towards the door. Kylie proceeded to follow him, prompting him to turn round, deploy his index finger and bark, "You stay in the TARDIS!"

"For once she got the message and the Doctor left.

A few minutes later, inside the Sontaran battle-cruiser, the Doctor approached Group Marshal Stout.

"So Doktor, we meet again!"

"I do believe you're developing a new catchphrase."

"I should bloody think so as well," chimed in the head of the barely functioning Cyberleader which had been swept to one side of the bridge. Stout finished it off with his blaster.

"It is fitting that you should witness the destruction of The Great Golden Cheeseburger of Old High Gallifrey," Stout informed the Doctor.

"Now, why would you want to do a silly thing like that?" asked the Doctor.

"Because Doctor, we are Sontarans," stated Stout, obviously considering it to be a perfectly good excuse.

"You're still as predictable as ever," replied the Doctor.

"The Supreme Sontaran Space Service will Sustain its Superiority!" declared Stout overdosing on alliteration.

"Well, well, well," muttered Dougal.

"Oh dear, oh dear," sighed Emitterude.

"Boing!" went Zebedee.

"Get these Magic Roundabout characters out of here!" yelled Stout. Florence muttered something about limp canes as she was ushered out by Deputy Group Marshal Squat. As Stout turned round the Doctor noticed a sticker next to his probic vent.

"Insert new 10p coins only."

Meanwhile, back in the TARDIS, Kylie was exploring. She had found a book entitled An Introduction to Basic Relativistic Quantum Mechanics which was holding an important bit of circuitry in place. Picking the book (which had a turquoise and white cover like all physics books) up she noticed something stamped to the front page.

"Property of the Raddcliffe Science library. Anyone removing this book will be summarily executed by the Michelson interferometer." It said. Kylie dropped the book and ran out of the TARDIS screaming. Immediately she fell, twisted her ankle, banged her head on a (small) rock and fell unconscious. Smoke billowed out of the broken cliché indicator.

A few minutes later the comedy Nazis passed by and spotted her.

"Take her to our base," ordered Nigel. "And make sure you secure her properly," he added with a hint of sarcasm.

Inside the battle-cruiser the Doctor continued to pursue his line of questioning.

"Surely you haven't gone to all this trouble just for a bit of target practice?" he queried although he knew that this was quite possible.

Stout replied, "Blackbeard told us that it was The Great Golden Cheeseburger which destroyed the third battle fleet of the Supreme Sontaran Space Service." He turned to his deputy, "Incidentally, where is Blackbeard?"

"Over there," replied Squat. He pointed to a small pile of dust. "You killed him last night."

"I did?" replied Stout.

"I thought it might be something like that," said the Doctor. "I hate to contradict you, rhinoceros features, but your third battle fleet was destroyed by the Great Rutan Weapon of Death."

"You lie Doktor!" ranted the Group Marshal, steam pouring out of his probic vent. "It was the Cheeseburger!"

"No Stout, it was the Great Rutan Weapon of Death," replied the Doctor as he reached into his pocket and pulled out a battered copy of The I-Spy Book of Galactic Doomsday Weapons. He thumbed through to the right page and with a smug grin showed it to Stout.

Stout shrugged. "Okay, so you're right, Time Lord. But we're going to destroy the bloody thing anyway!"

Kylie awoke to find herself tied to a pillar in the comedy Nazi's base.

"Where am I," she asked.

"In the village, but that doesn't matter. We want information!" exclaimed Nigel. "So what interest do you and the Doctor have in The Great Golden Cheeseburger of Old High Gallifrey?"

"Only to save it from a nasty threat."

"What nasty threat?" demanded Nigel fondling his weapon. [Please, no masturbation in public if you don't mind - Derry Ed]

"The Doctor said something about Sontarans or something, I don't know."

Nigel lost his patience, "We're getting nowhere with the stupid female. Kill her!"

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THE TIDES OF TIME #13 - OUT 7TH WEEK, HILARY

The Axeman Cometh Part 2, Era review of the Troughton Years, Sentence of Death Part 2, An investigation of the science of Who and much more! So buy it.
Episode 4

"Wait!" interrupted Gerald, "she may be of use to us alive." It was fortunate from the safety point of view that they were out of range of the TARDIS cliche detector. Gerald continued, "We can use her as a bargaining detector." Nigel reluctantly agreed.

The Doctor left the control room and walked out of the Sontaran battle-cruiser without being challenged. This was probably because the BBC can't afford more than four Sontarans.

As the Doctor strode across the quarry-like landscape he noticed a giant cheeseburger-like object descended from the purple sky and settle itself behind the building he had been headed towards earlier. There appeared to be no reaction from the Sontaran battle-cruiser, they were probably squabbling amongst themselves.

Just before he reached the TARDIS a group of comedy Nazis leapt out at him shouting, "No one expects the Spanish Inquisition!" Actually they said, "You are coming with us Doctor!" but this doesn't have the same effect as the former.

Inside the comedy Nazi base the Doctor couldn't help noticing Kylie conspicuously tied to a pillar.

"What are you doing here?" he asked.

At this point any self-respecting companion would have come up with a cutting piece of sarcasm along the lines of, "I thought I'd just hang around for a while", "I just dropped in for a cup of tea" or the classic, "Standing here being strapped to this pillar", but all that Kylie could manage was, "Whoops, sorry Doctor."

"Wonderful," replied the Doctor, failing to suppress the avalanche of sarcasm that he'd been holding back all day. He turned to Nigel. "I suppose you're after The Great Golden Cheeseburger of Old High Gallifrey so you have unlimited power and take over the Universe?"

"Mind your own business," spat Nigel in a rather pathetic attempt to conceal his rather obvious intentions.

The Doctor smiled smugly. "Well, I've got some bad news for you. Firstly there's a bunch of angry Sontarans out there waiting to destroy it and secondly the dam thing doesn't work anyway."

Nigel seethed with hamish overstatement.

At this point the Doctor decided to play his trump card. "Oh, by the way, The Great Golden Cheeseburger landed about five minutes ago."

"Let's go!" barked Nigel as the comedy Nazis lunged for the exit. The exit deftly side-stepped and the comedy Nazis careered into the wall. They picked themselves up and plied out of their base.

As soon as they had left the Doctor quickly untied Kylie, who was gasping "Take me Doctor. Dominate me!" He gave her a scientific whack on her head. She continued, "How are we going to get out of here?"

"Through the door?" suggested the Time Lord as he walked up to the aforementioned aperture and tried the handle. It opened, unsurprisingly the comedy Nazis had forgot to lock it.

Outside, it hadn't taken the comedy Nazis long to find the stellar manipulator. Waving his arms in the air Nigel announced, "Behold The Great Golden Cheeseburger of Old High Gallifrey. Soon we shall be supreme Masters of the Universe!" Gerald tapped him on the shoulder. Nigel turned round to see a group of aggravated Sontarans coming towards them and a heavily built blond man in a loincloth playing with a large sword muttering, "What's this about Masters of the Universe then?"

Nigel ignored the male bimbo. "Fire!" he yelled. "But first a competition!"

The comedy Nazis aimed their guns in the air and fired corrosive acid shells in the air whilst chanting "A-eeeeeeeee!" and waving luminous smiley badges around. There was a deep wheezing groaning sound as that mysterious conqueror in space known only as Deputy Group Marshal Stout collapsed in a bubbling mass of green slime.

The Doctor and Kylie arrived on the scene. Group Marshal Stout greeted them with another, "So Dole-tor, we meet again!"

The Sontarans fired their own weapons and two of the comedy Nazis gloved bright pink and fell to the ground with artistic rolls. Nigel dashed for the Great Cheeseburger and was unsurprisingly shot. As he was the leader the pink glow lasted for a bit longer, he screamed loudly, staggered about for a bit, dropped to his knees clutching his chest (even though he had been shot in the back), then keeled over gasping and finally expired.

"Doctor, what are we going to do about the Cheeseburger?" asked Kylie.

"Shut up, I'm trying to think," the Doctor replied.

"I've got an idea," she bleated, taking no notice of the rather blatant hint. Then, without waiting for the Doctor's permission, she shouted, "Oh, Great Golden Cheeseburger of Old High Gallifrey, I command thee to go to Earth!"

The Cheeseburger started to rumble and the Doctor rugby tackled Kylie into a nearby stream. With a great roar the Cheeseburger launched itself into space. Its fireball of exhaust gasses tidily mopped up the remaining Sontarans and comedy Nazis. Needless to say, Stout's death was more elaborate than anyone else's, but I won't elaborate here.

The Doctor and Kylie crawled out of the water. Kylie put her arms around the Doctor. "Doctor, thank you for saving my life!" she cooed.

"You completely screwed thing up!" bellowed the Doctor. "I was going to let the Sontarans destroy the bloody thing. Now you've set a very dangerous, faulty stellar manipulator to a highly populated planet in a very volatile stage in its development!"

Kylie wasn't listening. "Doctor, could I stay with you please?"

"You must be joking!" screamed the Time Lord.

Paul Grove

* Competition cancelled due to lack of interest on behalf of the Deputy Editor. 
**Sex, Drugs, Violence & Swearing (And a Bit of Rock n’ Roll)**

Rumours now abound about Stephen Spielberg, David Hasslehoff and huge quantities of money passing across the Atlantic, though by the time you read this I'll probably be able to say more in the meetings. But what of the Doctor's present existence? You'll all know that his adventures have been continuing in a new set of books aptly titled *The New Adventures*, books that many people aren't buying. They are accused of being insular, badly-written and inappropriate but they are no means all guilty of these vices. My position in reading them is that of a total ignoramus; I wouldn't know Cyberpunk if it came up to me and hit me around the head with a blunt instrument. This is then a layman's guide to the books, basically saying which are good and why. I've broken them up into "What if?" seasons and given their episode counts.

**Season 27 - Timewyrm**

Season 27 is an inter-linked series under the umbrella of "Timewyrm" and it looks like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genysys (John Peel)</th>
<th>6 parts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exodus (Terrance Dicks)</td>
<td>8 parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apocalypse (Nigel Robinson)</td>
<td>4 parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation (Paul Cornell)</td>
<td>6 parts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Genysys* is an interesting opener. It works itself around an era the Doctor has never visited and links in biblical and other mythologies (I'll talk more about religion later). It's not bad but lags occasionally. What Peel is guilty of is his attempts to make the books more adult. Sex is all very well if it makes a point; I don't, for example, object to the narrative about the prostitutes on the temple of Esther - they did exist at the time and exciting them to pretend the result is rather like setting a story during the Second World War and not having any killing. Nonetheless, Peel seems to be indulging himself in a private fantasy with Gilgamesh's "wandering hands" all over Ace. I wonder if has met Sophie Aldred; I hope not for her sake...

*Exodus* is a model for how the other *New Adventures* should have been written. Dicks, author of more books than some people have brain cells proves that he hasn't run out of imagination yet. The story he weaves and the characters he creates are believable and very good, though Dicks has the advantage that many of his characters existed in real life - Hitler, Himmler, Goering et al. He also, despite only having seen *The Curse of Fenric*, gets the characters of the Doctor and Ace spot on. My only regret about this book is the rather pointless appearance of the Timewyrm at the end of the story - we didn't need it and neither did the story.

*Apocalypse* is a disappointment after that. I read it over 18 months ago and since then I've forgotten the whole of the story; this should give you some idea about how memorable it was. The prologue is well written but the thing falls down as it continues becoming fairly turgid by "Episode 4". The only thing that sticks in the mind is that someone bit off something more than they could chew regarding continuity - whilst in the first two and final story of the "season" Ace is a young woman in *Apocalypse* she has barely left ice-world. This is a problem which has never been sorted out.

The season close, *Revelation*, is an odd one. It has an excellent cover and I can't really decide whether I like the book or not. I loved it when I read it, then I didn't like it, now I'm indecisive. Cornell's language is incredible, it flows off the page making the book a delight to read, the ideas are clever and well thought out but it's irritating in that Cornell explores the sillier aspects of time travel: Ace sees an advert in *NME* telling her to duck, she does so (avoiding certain death) and then puts the advert in later. It is rather reminiscent of the *Bill and Ted* films which is an indicator of how stupid it is.

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The other thing Cornell, and also Peel and Robinson, are guilty of is overindulgence, almost to the point of bragging, is the game of "Who's got the most Doctors?" (Dicks having edited *Three...* and written *Five...* has already done that one). This is selfish, pointless and hopelessly daft, especially in Peel's case - at least the others managed to make the other Doctors part of the plot. Thankfully it is a mistake which was swiftly learned and not repeated.

**Season 28 - Cat's Cradle**

Season 28 suffered from budget cuts and the recession being only 16 episodes long:

| Time's Crucible (Marc Platt) | 6 parts |
| Warhead (Andrew Cartmel) | 2 parts |
| Wiltmark (Andrew Hunt) | 4 parts |
| Nightshade (Mark Gatiss) | 4 parts |

The three first were linked with the "Cat's Cradle" story-line, a tale [tail] - Dep Edl which starts well, tails off in the middle and the less said about the end the better.

*Time's Crucible* is more complicated than *Ghost Light*, Platt's first offering (Oh my God!) but despite having to read it twice to get the story I really enjoyed it. He has a bit of everything: some of Gallifrey's history (well, actually too much of it - it can be rather slow), some spectacular special effects (shame it was a book) and a very clever (if sometimes incomprehensible) plot. Hmm. In a move unheard of since Troughton the Doctor is absent for "Episodes" 2 and 3, which concentrate instead entirely on Ace - something which surprising adds to the book. It has some excellent McCoy scenes: "I'm just a bookend, holding up one part of the universe. And I can't see what's going on at the other end." Best of all is the description of Rassilon in ancient Gallifrey: "He stood up to greet her; she was taller than he was - most people were". So much more entertaining than the Ho-Ho-Ho puppet king in *(Rassilon Ex Machina) The Five Doctors*.

*Warhead* explains why Andrew Cartmel was a script editor and not a writer: the book lacks something fundamental - a plot. He spends so
much time on individual character backgrounds, most of whom are never heard of again or gratuitously wiped out, that he neglects to tell a story in a wealth of descriptive overkill. Not impressed.

There is an advantage in using fan writers to write New Adventures rather than those who wrote on screen, as fans tend to have a better knowledge of the programme’s past than those who wrote for the last two or three seasons (see under Aaronovitch). The disadvantage is that some fans are incapable of writing a coherent story, as evidenced in Witchmark, a book which leaves more threads hanging than a frayed scarf. It was a clever idea (although the chapter titles stolen from Tolkien begin to grate after a while) and had some impressive use of language but there were just too many things left unexplained. The cynic in me likes to think that Hunt want to be commissioned to write the sequel. It’s a shame though, it has the best cover of all the books.

Nightsbade is more like it. Despite vague reminiscences of The Demons and other Pertwee the title is well-told and gripping (book review cliché #1). The character of the Doctor is a little unusual, at one point bursting into tears at the sight of Susan, but then don’t we all. However all-in-all it works well. By far the best character is Edmund Trevithick, a retired actor who used to play the part of Bernard Quatermass Professor Nightsbade. The book is worth reading for him alone.

Nightsbade also begins the Reign of the Pointless Prologue, something which should have been shot at close range with a large gun at birth. And again continuity rears its ugly head. This book ends with Ace fairly muddled (that’s called understatement) but by Love and War it seems to be completely forgotten about.

Season 29 - Future History Cycle

Love and War opens Season 29 - back to 26 episodes and a typical mix of good, bad and bloody awful:

- Love and War (Paul Cornell) 4 parts
- Transit (Ben Aaronovitch) 4 parts
- The Highest Science (Gareth Roberts) 4 parts
- The Pit (Neil Penswick) 4 parts

- Deceit (Peter Davill-Evans) 4 parts
- Lucifer Rising (Andy Lane/Jim Mortimore) 6 parts

The season is aptly named (albeit unofficially) “The Future History Cycle” - all the stories are set between 2100 and 3600 and are mostly to do with Earth colonies.

Cornell’s opener is a tale of love, war and death in large quantities. Like Revelation it is a delight to read if you like his complex writing style with imagery and pictorialism, lines like “The Doctor had opened up the mincing machine of war and beckoned them all in.” Which should give you some idea what I objected to - the Doctor, as Bernice so succinctly puts it, is “a bit of a git” to say the least. He manipulates and kills people on the grounds that the ends justify the means. The is not the

“... the Reign of the Pointless Prologue, something which should have been shot at close range with a large gun at birth.”

Doctor we know, the Doctor who was devastated at the death of the Silurians, who was incapable of killing the Daleks at birth or Morroed on the battlefield, who always tried to help the “villains” see the error of their ways rather than destroy them. You leave Love and War with a feeling of deep disappointment - he’s not who we knew. To be fair to Cornell he knew what he was doing - that it was a change and he illustrated this in Ace’s thoughts. I read it in Michaelmas 92 and didn’t read the next until Trinity 93. A bitter taste.

And in Trinity 93 I read Transit. Perhaps too much has been written about this book [don’t know why, it only needs one word and it begins with “c” and rhymes with “map” - Deep Ed] but the most important thing to remember is that there is a glossary at the end which explains the ridiculous “language” used in the book which should be a warning in itself. The story in itself was reasonable - not good, but reasonable. Unfortunately it was written by Ben Aaronovitch which made it totally unintelligible. Who, what and why is Kadian Lethbridge Steward? What drug was the prologue on? And where did Aaronovitch get hold of it? Why does every third word begin with “F”? And were the words “sexen taste” really necessary? Don’t get me wrong - I’m neither prudish nor shy but it’s totally irrelevant to the story and the programme as a whole, like too far much of this book. Not recommended. Getting used to my verb-less sentences? How can it be a sentence without a verb - Deep Ed?

The Highest Science is another odd book. Robert’s writing style is very similar to Douglas Adams’, but unfortunately the similarity doesn’t end there. Despite a (now unusually) good representation of the Doctor and the amazingly self-mimicking Chelonians, the whole story is just very silly and almost totally anti-climatic. Ignoring the plot the style is great - it’s fun to read (if you like Adams) and has some very funny lines and in-jokes.

Conversely The Pit is rather more miserable. The story is not great, neither original nor well-written and, since we know what’s going to happen by reading the back and the prologue, it’s almost not worth it. But only almost; there are some interesting thoughts and it has one redeeming feature (see below). I almost like it.

Deceit has many good points ... and many bad ones. I suppose I really like this book because it explains why the Doctor has been “not the man we knew” giving a reason (excuse) for what’s been wrong with him since Witchmark. It would be nice to think that this was planned but one feels it’s just Darvill-Evans (editor of the series as well as the author) just papering over the cracks. The story itself is good if a little slow on occasion and it begins to make the New Adventures a coherent entity as it has connections to Witchmark, Love and War and Warbead at least.

The bad points are mostly to do with Darvill-Evans having a number of, err, interesting tendencies, as well as a John Peel-like feel (and I mean “feel”) for Ace; one character spends most of the book being on the receiving end of a wide selection
of sadistic (in the sexual sense) experiences. I’m not sure I’d mind if I thought it was relevant, but I don’t, and I still don’t think *Who* is the right genre for this. (It might also be relevant at this stage to point out that Darvill-Evans is also editor of *Black Lace* - a series of erotic fiction for women. I look forward to the upcoming crossover *Blue Police Box*).

Dear I liked. *Lucifer Rising* I loved. Everything is right in this story: the characterisations not only of the Doctor, Ace and Benny, but of all the other characters as well. It also possesses a superb plot which has murder-mystery, strong science fiction, plenty of subplots and a gripping climax [back to sex again I see - Dep Ed]. It also makes *The Future History* Cycle a cycle, tying up, to some extent, the running plots concerning Ace and Bernice and we even get to worry about the Doctor.

In a quite brilliant twist Ace tells the Doctor something about manipulating people yet she herself has been manipulating him. This is followed by one of the best speeches McCoy has never made and finishes with the line “I feel a change in the air” and with a general air of satisfaction about the future. If you haven’t read it I urge you to go out, buy it and do so. Not only is it one of the best *Doctor Who* stories (including television) it’s also one of the best books I’ve ever read. Very little can beat this.

And that’s it. I hope they manage to continue in this vein and more upbeat style. In the end, at least in my opinion, *Doctor Who* has always been a tale of confidence about right defeating wrong. The problem with some of the stories is that the Doctor was also “wrong”.

There are a couple of more points I would like to make. Firstly, many of the books, notably *The Pit*, have tried to deal with Christian religious beliefs, and in general treat it negatively. I still don’t know where I stand on religion (a sort on non-practising, agnostic Anglican I think, if that’s not a case of tautology) but I feel strongly that it is not the place of *Doctor Who* to make judgements as they seem to be doing here. I don’t know if it’s Darvill-Evans’ views or the writers’ own but some of the comments which permeate the *New Adventures* cannot be described as either neutral nor fair. The good point of *The Pit* is that it asks a lot of questions but doesn’t provide any answers, something which should have been the case with most of the others. Insulting friends and readers is not a good way to keep them.

The other point is swearing, another subject about which there has been much argument. Ben Auronovitch has been quoted as saying “Everyone has sex” (some even with other people) in justification of most of *Transit* [and boy did it need justifying - Dep Ed] and, let’s face it most of us swear. Sometimes though...

“The disadvantage is that some fans are incapable of writing a coherent story, as evidenced in *Witchmark*...”

In forthcoming issues Mr Wilson will turn his pen onto the more recent *New Adventures*. The Editors would also like to reaffirm that the author’s opinions are his own and are not necessarily shared by them nor the *DocSoc* committee, though the President will quite happily endorse them...