WHOTOPIA

ISSUE 43 ◆ JULY 2024

SHINING KNIGHT

A tribute to William Russell

Plus...

EXCITING ADVENTURES

Interview with author and biographer Simon Guerrier

THE UNRELIABLE NARRATOR

Perspective storytelling in *Love & Monsters*

THE CYBERMEN

Destiny episode 7

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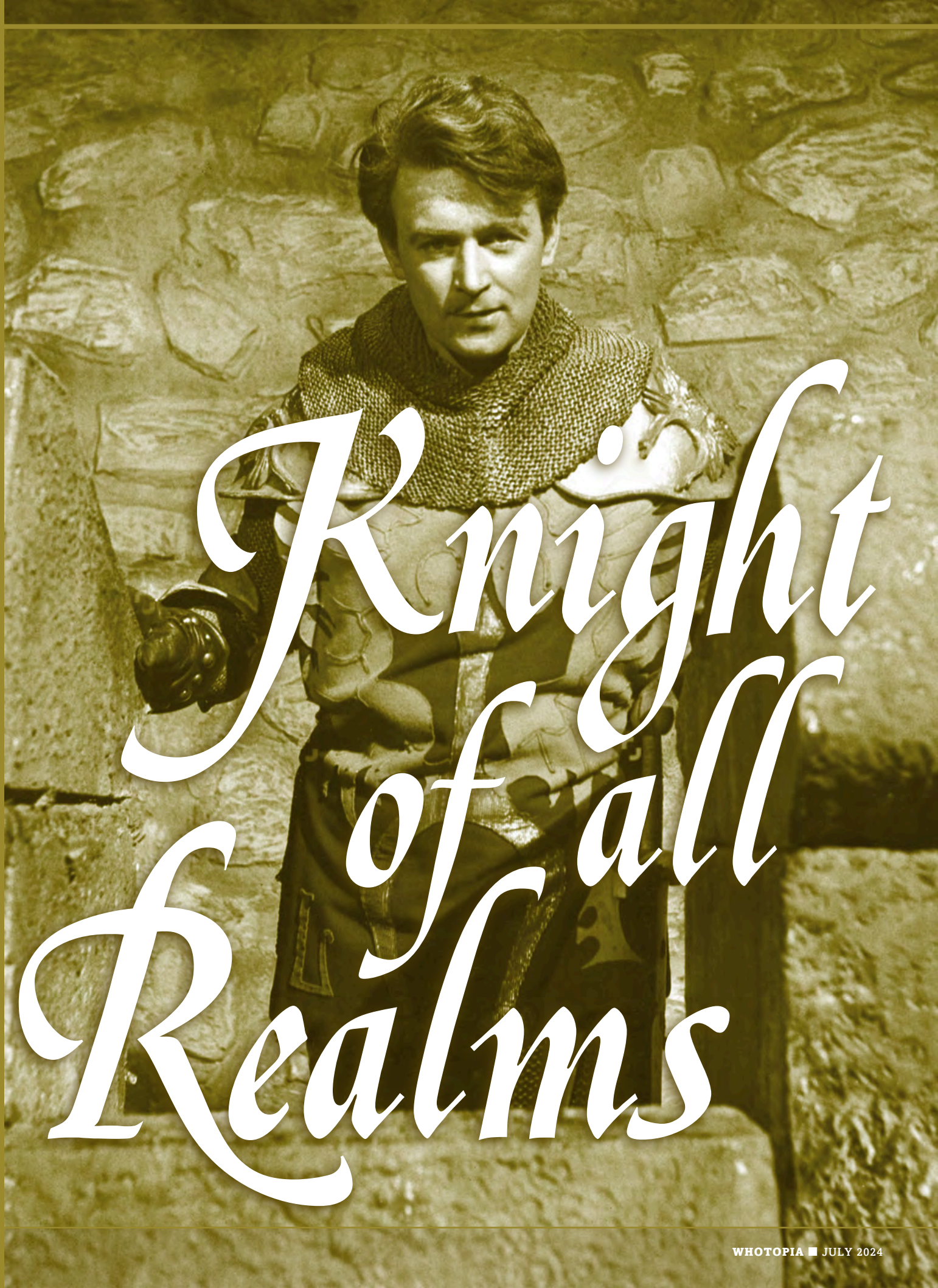


Knight of all Realms

WILLIAM RUSSELL, WHO PASSED AWAY LAST MONTH, WAS AN ESTABLISHED TV SERIES LEADING MAN WHEN HE TOOK THE PART OF IAN CHESTERTON IN THE FIRST SERIES OF *DOCTOR WHO* AS CO-STAR TO RENOWNED FILM ACTOR WILLIAM HARTNELL. HE ESTABLISHED A ROLE THAT HAS BECOME THE ROOT OF ALL THOSE WHO FOLLOWED IN HIS FOOTSTEPS, WRITES **MATTHEW KRESAL**

WILLIAM RUSSELL ENOCH

19 NOVEMBER 1924 – 3 JUNE 2024

The 1963-64 TARDIS crew has become iconic among fans of 20th Century *Doctor Who*, due in no small part to their being responsible for helping launch the series that has lasted more than sixty years. Between them, they would establish many of the character archetypes that have become central to its success. Among them was William Russell – who passed away in June 2024 at the age of 99 – as Ian Chesterton.

At a time when the Doctor was portrayed, by William Hartnell, as a grandfatherly figure, the role of Ian was intended to be more of the traditional heroic figure. Russell, who had been established as a star on British television by playing the title role in ITV's *The Adventures of Sir Lancelot* the previous decade, certainly fit the role. In later years he recalled with some amusement that one of his daughters, quite young as the time he was making *Doctor Who*, would refer to him as "action man".

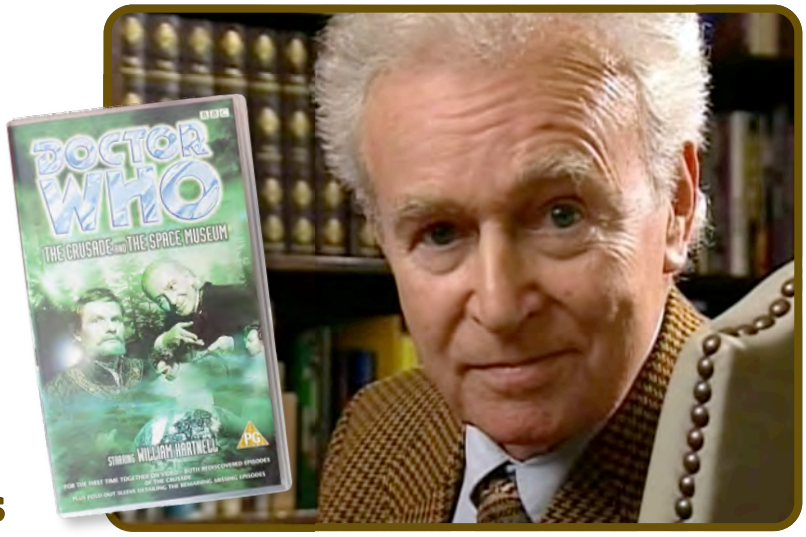
Of the original TARDIS foursome, it's easy to see why Ian and his performance earned that reputation from *An Unearthly Child* through to *The Chase* eighteen months later. From impersonating a Dalek and crossing a chasm in *The Daleks* to facing a group of ice-encased knights on the planet Marinus, Ian found himself involved in more than his fair share of dangerous situations. Indeed, two of the character's most memorable moments came from life-or-death fight sequences in historical settings, facing off against Aztec warrior Ixta and finding himself in a Roman arena. In all of those circumstances, Russell showed Ian equipping himself well, providing the standard for *Doctor Who*'s male companions that was to last for much of the next decade, through his immediate successor Peter Purves as Steven Taylor to Frazer Hines as Jamie and, at least in concept, Ian Marter's Harry Sullivan. The action aspects would later be adopted by the Doctor, notably Jon Pertwee's before becoming a mainstay of the modern series, but it's difficult not to see Russell's influence there as well.

There was more to Chesterton than simply being the brawn, of course. While Ian is remembered for those action sequences, it's easy to forget the sense of intelligence Russell brought to the role. *The Aztecs* displayed this with how Ian initially disarms Ixta, a scene Russell played with assured confidence despite having watched how potentially deadly his opponent might be. The previous serial, *The Keys of Marinus*, had highlighted this as well, with Ian using his knowledge to formulate a makeshift bridge to escape the ice knights in the episode 'The Snows of Terror'. In the serial's final episode, it's Ian who ultimately foils Yartek and the Voord's plan to use the Conscience of Marinus for their own diabolical ends. While the writers seemed to forget Ian was a science teacher, script editors David Whitaker and Dennis Spooner

▲ Russell with original co-stars Carole-Ann Ford, William Hartnell and Jacqueline Hill in their fourth serial *Marco Polo*

▲ The 'action man' rehearsing a fight for *The Crusade*

Russell's chemistry with his fellow cast members would also help to serve Ian as a character. The obvious and immediate chemistry between him and Jacqueline Hill's Barbara Wright would in later years lead to the characters' romance in novels and audio dramas



▲ Russell returned as Ian on the VHS of *The Crusade* and in various ranges for Big Finish ▼

never let him be portrayed as dumb, something Russell brought out when the scripts called for it.

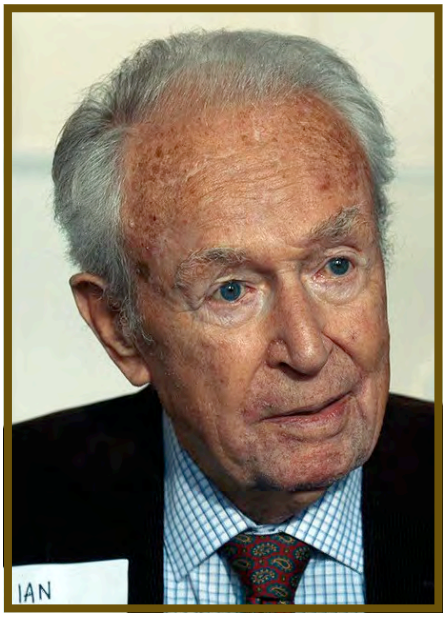
Russell's chemistry with his fellow cast members would also help to serve Ian as a character. The obvious and immediate chemistry between him and Jacqueline Hill's Barbara Wright would in later years lead to the characters' romance in novels and audio dramas. While not intended at the time, as Russell would say in later years, it made an impact as early as the novelization of *The Daleks* that original script editor Whitaker penned in 1964. Without Russell's half of the chemistry both from the outset but also in later serials such as *The Romans*, it's doubtful the book would have been written as it was, in the first person from Ian's point of view as an alternative version of the TV serial. Ian was something of a protective older brother or even a father figure to both Carole Ann Ford's Susan and Maureen O'Brien's Vicki, friendly and occasionally goofy.

TIES FOR LIFE

Leaving *Doctor Who* in 1965, Russell went on to a long career away from the series. Yet like so many of the show's cast, he returned to it in later years. For the 1999 home video release of *The Crusade* and *The Space Museum*, he played Ian again to fill in for the missing episodes of the former serial. From 2005 to 2012, Russell contributed seven audiobook readings of Target novelizations. He proved an adept narrator, including a memorable reading of that novelization of *The Daleks*. An eighth reading, a new adaptation of the series' debut serial penned by Nigel Robinson, has been left unreleased since 2013 due to a series of rights issues.

Russell's skills as a performer on audio would also be apparent from his appearances in audio dramas from Big Finish, starting with a non-Ian appearance in the 2005 audio *The Game* opposite Peter Davison's Doctor. Once the Companion Chronicles and Early Adventures ranges began, Russell returned to the role of Ian, including in 2011's *The Rocket Men*, which combined the pulp-inspired titular villains with a non-linear narrative that allowed him to explore the burgeoning relationship with Barbara. Russell also brought to life serials unmade for his era on television via the Lost Stories range, including the historical epic *Farewell, Great Macedon* and the robot tale *The Masters of Luxor*. Those releases, and others such as 2013's *The Light at the End*, also allowed him memorably to voice Hartnell's Doctor. Ian was reunited with a Time War-era Susan in the 2020 release *Susan's War: Spheres of Influence*, recorded in 2018.

Russell also, eventually, returned to *Doctor Who* on television. In 2013 he had a memorable cameo appearance as BBC Television Centre parking officer Harry in the docudrama *An Adventure in Space and Time*, appearing alongside Brian Cox as Sydney Newman. While on set he recorded remembrances of the series' early years and fellow actor Hartnell. Nine years later, Russell returned briefly to the role of Ian Chesterton for another memorable cameo as part of the Companions Support Group at the end of *The Power of the Doctor* alongside a number of his successors, expressing surprise the Doctor had become a woman. The appearance, which would prove to be Russell's final role, also earned the actor a Guinness World Record for the longest span between television appearances as the same character, nearly 58 years after Ian and Barbara arrived in London, 1965.



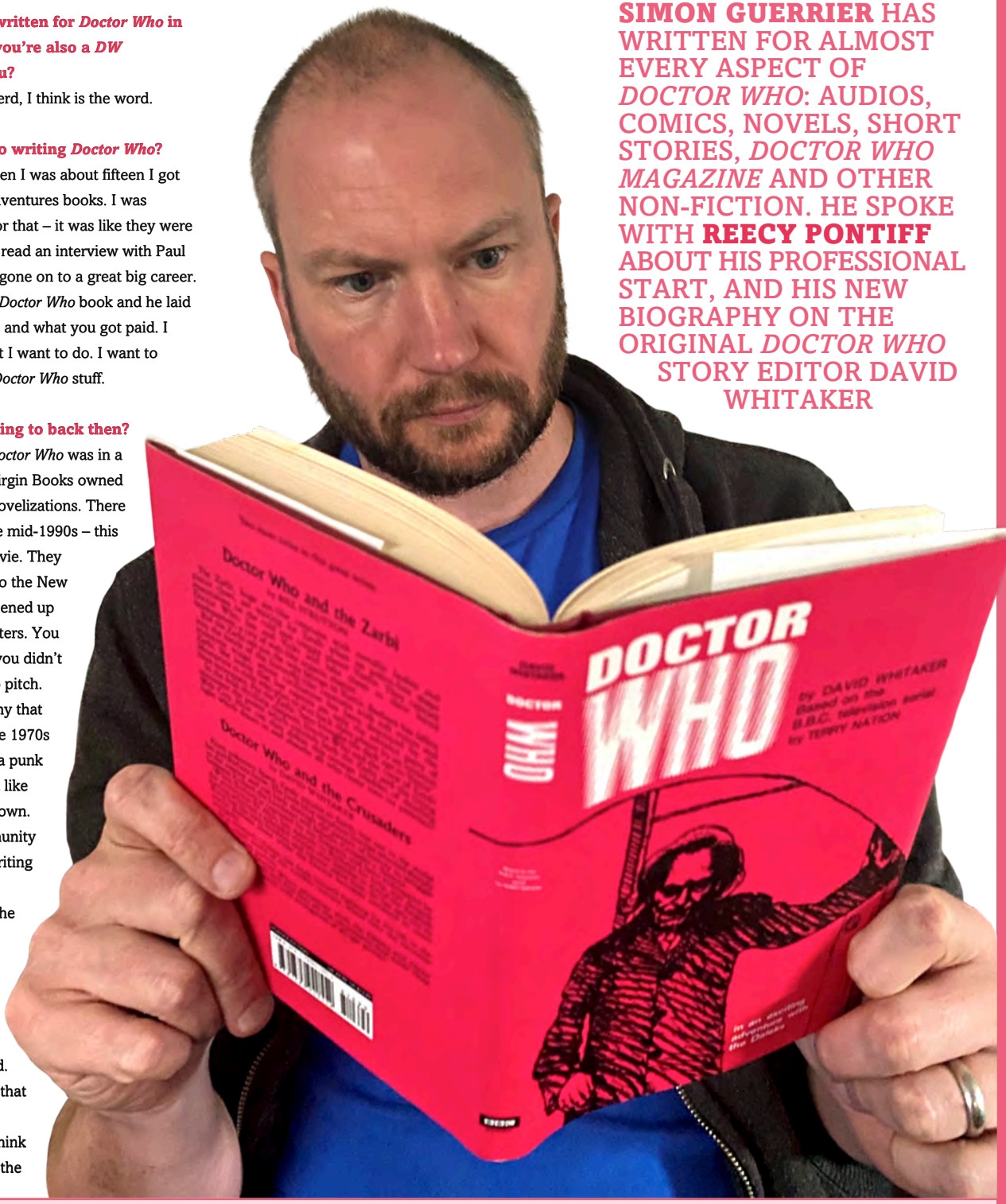
▲ A 60th anniversary cameo in *The Power of the Doctor*

Beyond *Doctor Who*, Russell had an incredible career that took in everything from playing a Knight of the Round Table on television to Shakespearean roles on stage at the Globe Theatre to appearances in classic feature films such as *The Great Escape* (1963) and *Superman: The Movie* (1978). Yet it's *Doctor Who* that will remain the actor's legacy, with a role that helped to launch a series that has become a British television icon. More than that, he established an archetype through a mix of action, intelligence and chemistry with his co-stars. It's no wonder fans were thrilled by his all-too-brief return to the role for *The Power of the Doctor* or have mourned his passing.

For what would *Doctor Who* be without its original action man or the incredible legacy he left behind in the form of Ian Chesterton? WT

EXCITING ADVENTURES

SIMON GUERRIER HAS WRITTEN FOR ALMOST EVERY ASPECT OF *DOCTOR WHO*: AUDIOS, COMICS, NOVELS, SHORT STORIES, *DOCTOR WHO MAGAZINE* AND OTHER NON-FICTION. HE SPOKE WITH **REECY PONTIFF** ABOUT HIS PROFESSIONAL START, AND HIS NEW BIOGRAPHY ON THE ORIGINAL *DOCTOR WHO* STORY EDITOR DAVID WHITAKER



Whotopia: You've written for *Doctor Who* in many formats, but you're also a *DW* academic, aren't you?

Simon Guerrier: A nerd, I think is the word.

How did you get into writing *Doctor Who*?

I grew up as a fan. When I was about fifteen I got the first of the New Adventures books. I was exactly the right age for that – it was like they were written for me. Then I read an interview with Paul Cornell, who has now gone on to a great big career. He'd just sold his first *Doctor Who* book and he laid out what he had to do, and what you got paid. I thought, oh that's what I want to do. I want to make money writing *Doctor Who* stuff.

Who were you pitching to back then?

When I first started, *Doctor Who* was in a very different place. Virgin Books owned the license to do the novelizations. There was no TV show in the mid-1990s – this was before the TV Movie. They wanted fans to buy into the New Adventures so they opened up submissions to fan writers. You didn't need an agent, you didn't need representation to pitch. Virgin was the company that put out punk LPs in the 1970s and there was kind of a punk sensibility: if you don't like the music, make your own.

There was a community of people who were writing the books, reading the books, responding to the books. It felt like you were part of something. In my late teens I desperately wanted to be part of that world. So I pitched. The idea that I'd get a three-page rejection letter, I still think it's amazing they took the

time. Their encouragement kept me going, continually feeling I was getting closer to the prize.

After the TV Movie in 1996, the BBC took back the license from Virgin but still allowed new writers to pitch. That was the case until 2004 when it was known *Doctor Who* was coming back to TV. Then it just became unmanageable. Open submissions are a lot, I've had some experience with that myself. So now you need an agent and a track record, alas.

Fellow *Doctor Who* author Kate Orman had an email list. Through that I met some other students, including Eddie Robson, who went on to write *Doctor Who* audios and everything else. On that list we got to talking about the *Doctor Who* pub in London that we'd all heard about. Four or five of us agreed to meet up, and that's where I met loads of people, in the days when you could fit all of UK *Doctor Who* fandom in a pub.

One of the rejection letters I got was a sheet of A4 with a big *Doctor Who* logo at the top and a form paragraph, then a tick list of reasons for the rejection: the prose is awful, continuity's wrong, whatever it was. There was space at the bottom to add a comment. Whoever had received my submission had written that they really enjoyed it but there were some problems with the structure or whatever – and had gone over the page because they'd run out of space. I was so delighted by this. It was encouraging.

When I went to the next monthly pub meeting, I took the letter with me to show my mates, who were also all pitching stuff. I was showing it to Eddie when Paul Cornell saw what I had. He laughed and said, there's somebody you should meet. He introduced me to Jac Rayner. She'd sent me that letter. We had a bit of a chat and she talked about things I could do better.

What I hadn't really factored in until I met Jac was that the people at Doctor Who Books knew my name because I continued sending them things. They had an idea of what I could do and what my strengths and weaknesses were. It probably helped that I've got an unusual surname. It never occurred to me that I was building up a relationship while I was pitching all of these submissions.

Jac then got asked by Big Finish to edit a book of short stories. She was looking for people to contribute and got in touch with me. That was the first thing I had published professionally, which was amazing. The book was called *Zodiac* so it was 12 stories, each one on a star sign. I thought it would look overly keen to send her a pitch for each one, so I sent her six. I thought that was the right balance between being very enthusiastic and being a terrifying stalker. She commissioned one.

Jac invited me to pitch for the next book and I got into that. Then she did a book called *The Muses* and told me up front she wasn't going to be taking pitches. But then she rang me up and said, we're supposed to be going to print next week and one of the stories hasn't worked out. I've asked everyone I can think of. We need an outline we can send to the BBC for approval tomorrow and 7,000 words by Wednesday. It has to be a Third Doctor story and it has to be about music. I said, I have no idea what I'm going to do but yes, of course I will!

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After getting them out of that hole, I became the person to go to when things were running late. I got loads of work like that. Now I'm probably too old and knackered to do all the last-minute, working-till-three-in-the-morning stuff I did then.

One of the guys at Big Finish, Ian Farrington, liked the way I'd written for the Brigadier in that short story. He was going to do a UNIT series for Big Finish – he had Nicholas Courtney lined up. So he said, would you like to write for Nicholas Courtney? Yes I would! That was my first audio.

Then I just kept going, really. Books, comics, non-fiction books, DVD documentaries. Anyone willing to pay me to write this stuff, I'd do it.

What did your parents think?

Freelancing is weird. I think for a long time they thought I lived in a smock on a houseboat and smoked long cigars and took lots of opium, like some sort of struggling poet.

What's the difference in writing for BBC Books now versus when you started in the late-1990s and early-2000s?

The main thing is there's a TV show so it all has to be coordinated with that, that's what drives everything. The magazine and the books follow in its wake, so that means there's a certain amount of coordination with the production team.

For example, I did a set visit for *Doctor Who Magazine* for *Space Babies* last March. I went down and had a day on set, I had access to scripts, access to crew and things. The agreement is that I don't say anything, that's fairly standard. But I was also working for BBC Books so I told the editor there, Steve Cole, that I had been cleared to see stuff, because then he could get me to write things and we didn't have to go through clearances.

Is it more secretive now than when the show first returned to air?

I don't think it's any different. When BBC Books commissioned me to do my second novel in 2007, a book with the Tenth Doctor and Martha Jones, I didn't know anything about Martha because she hadn't been on TV yet. They didn't give me any scripts in advance; they basically said, watch the

David Whitaker was the first story editor. He's credited as the writer on more episodes of *Doctor Who* in the 1960s than anybody else. He's the guy who commissioned the Daleks. He wrote the first novelization. He did the first stage play, he worked on the second of the Peter Cushing movies. So he's all over early *Doctor Who*.

episodes as they go out. So it's all done on a need-to-know basis.

I read all the Eleventh Doctor scripts from 2010 to early 2013 in advance while I was working on a kids' magazine called *Doctor Who Adventures*. It came out fortnightly and we would try to get our material to follow what had been on TV the previous Saturday. You'd get the scripts and you'd read them in the open-plan office, on the screen, as fast as you could. Then when you watched the episodes, that would be exciting. If you'd read it in advance you'd go, that wasn't quite how I imagined it or they've changed that bit.

When I left *Doctor Who Adventures*, the next episode on was *The Day of the Doctor* and I knew nothing about that. I absolutely loved it because I had no idea where it was going to go, no idea that Tom Baker was in it. That was properly exciting. I still hold to that – although it's my job to find out stuff, to be honest I'd rather not know. It's much better to watch not knowing what's coming up.

Is it stressful, having to watch what you say?

No. The rule has always been that you don't spoil things before broadcast. That's fairly easy. But, for example, earlier this year I was at a thing with Steven Moffat. I knew he was coming back because I'd read the script for *Boom*. We were talking to a colleague and we realised they didn't know Steven was back – both of us went, we need to be careful what we say here.

Do you have a favourite Doctor?

Yeah. Well… Some of them I know, so that's a bit awkward. I've been to the pub with more than one of them. If forced to choose, I think of Tom Baker as the default Doctor, because that's where I came in. But I really like them all. I've written for most of them in one form or another. That variety is exciting.

What do you enjoy about writing *Doctor Who* non-fiction?

I think that knowing how *Doctor Who* is made is a big part of the fandom, because how it's made is just as nuts as anything that happens in an episode. Since it began it's always punched above its weight, it's never had the money it needs, it's never had the time it needs. It's full of odd things happening because they were fixes on the day. I find all of that fascinating. I often think it's much better than it has any call to be. Also, understanding how it's made gives you insights that you can then use in stories.

Is there a favourite piece of *Doctor Who* non-fiction that you've worked on?

Doctor Who Adventures was a laugh because that was for kids. You'd just go into work and muck about. If you could make the editor laugh, it would go in the magazine. My mate Lisa Bowerman was in *Survival* and she showed me an amazing photo of her as this Cheetah Person. I asked if she had it in high-resolution so we could do a poster of that in the magazine. I showed the picture to the editor and she laughed, so in it went.

I also had a really happy time working on the Eaglemoss figurine collection. You'd get a little figurine of a *Doctor Who* character and a magazine with it. One of the features of the magazine was 1,200 words on the costume or the design of the figurine. Sometimes that would be Doctors and companions, sometimes it would be big monsters like Koquillion from *The Rescue* or Sutekh from *Pyramids of Mars* – I spoke to an Egyptologist about that. A lot of it was stuff that had just been on TV or was coming up, so I was talking to costume designers Hayley Nebauer and Ray Holman. Once I had to write 1,200 words on Nick Frost as Father Christmas. What is there to say? He's wearing a red Santa suit. That took a bit of lateral thinking.

I once took Frazer Hines out for a few beers. On my laptop I had everything he wore in *Doctor Who*. Mostly they're black and white photos, so what I wanted to know was what colour everything was. There were people colourizing pictures, and our figurines were in colour, so I came up with a definitive list for that.

Sarah Jane Smith wore a lot of clothes from Bus Stop, which was a fashionable shop in Kensington in the mid-1970s. I spoke to its owner and designer, Lee Bender. Her market was women in their late teens/early twenties who were working, probably as secretaries, and had some disposable income. They could go out and have fun. What they wanted were clothes that looked cool but which they could wear to work and not need to go home to get changed before going out to the discotheque. It'd be sort of suit-y things but you could take the jacket off and go dancing. So when you watch *Planet of the Spiders*, Sarah Jane is dressed to go to the disco. That tickled me.

Once you know that, it completely changes your sense of who Sarah Jane is, so the next time you write something for her you can use that in the fiction. That's how these things feed on each other.

Let's talk about this David Whitaker biography you've written. What makes him important to *Doctor Who*?

David Whitaker was the first story editor of the series. He's credited as the writer on more episodes of *Doctor Who* in the 1960s than anybody else. He's the guy who commissioned the Daleks and stuck to it. He introduced several companions, Victoria and Zoe were him. He wrote the first *Doctor Who* novelization. He and Terry Nation co-wrote the first *Doctor Who* book. He did the first stage play, he worked on the second of the Peter Cushing movies. So he's all over early *Doctor Who*.

He also wrote the first post-regeneration story, *The Power of the Daleks*. In the script – not on the screen – the Doctor says, the last time this happened I was wearing an earring. There's some kind of hipster pre-Hartnell Doctor!

What was your initial inspiration to pursue David Whitaker as a subject?

Well, as a journalist, you're always looking for something that has legs. The BBC has all its written paperwork in a facility, an archive in a place called Caversham, quite a way out of London. I had always wanted to go there and every time I pitched a trip, for a documentary on a DVD or *Doctor Who Magazine*, it never worked out.

I heard about the Black Archive books, each one devoted to a particular *Doctor Who* story. I pitched to them *The Evil of the Daleks* from 1967, but what I wanted to do was a fishing trip, where I go and research it and see what I come up with. Once I had that agreement, I contacted the Written Archive Centre. I thought I would look at the paperwork that survives for the production of the story, and also its writer.

In the course of this I cottoned on to a couple of things, one of which was that there are elements of *The Evil of the Daleks* that are drawn from David Whitaker's own life. The middle section of that

story is set in a house a few miles outside Canterbury, and David Whitaker's mum had grown up a few miles outside Canterbury. She had been disinherited by her father's second wife, and *The Evil of the Daleks* is about a family where somebody else comes in and takes over the household. I thought, oh, there's something there.

Because David died in 1980, just as *Doctor Who Magazine* was getting going, he'd never done an interview. I wrote a few articles on him for *DWM*, for which I interviewed some people, but it looked like the book wasn't a viable concern. I needed to do more research, but could I justify the time and expense of more archive work?

Then lockdown happened. A big thing was that, around the world, people in archives were digitizing paperwork from home. In the summer of 2020, loads of stuff became available. Archives I'd already been in touch with suddenly had more pictures and more information.

The other thing was that David's first wife was in a care home. I tried to interview her in 2016 and was told she wasn't well enough, but I left word. She died in spring 2020 and the care home had a box of stuff with my name attached. I was talking to Toby Hadoke about this. He said, we're thinking of doing a documentary for the Blu-rays. Chris Chapman, the producer, asked if I would come on board as a researcher, he could pay me something. The moment that happened I was like, oh, I could actually get the book done.

The book seems as much about the history of television and pop culture in that era as it is about Whitaker. What was he witness to?

Although British television had been going since the 1930s, it really explodes in the 1950s. The big, galvanizing thing is that in 1955 ITV starts, so you have two rival channels. ITV is much more populist, much racier and more exciting. David joins the BBC in 1957 when it's trying to get back the audience, trying technological things, different types of shows.

When the BBC buys an Ampex recording machine, which basically means it can pre-record programs so not everything has to be live, that changes the way you make and commission programs. It's also realizing that a lot of drama was one-off plays, adaptations of books or theater. So they're experimenting with more stuff written specifically for the medium, but also realizing that one-off stuff doesn't hold an audience as well as continuing serials. And there's also the pop cultural thing. This is a time of teenage music, 1962 is the Beatles. Those cultural things are all hitting, and David is right in the midst of it.

To some degree the book uses him as a focal lens for this history of that era of change.

Yeah. Most histories of *Doctor Who*, if they talk about other shows, they'll talk about *Quatermass*, which was a sci-fi drama serial, they'll talk about other sci-fi maybe, they'll talk about BBC drama. But I think, given where *Doctor Who* was designed to fit in the schedule on a Saturday, it's Light Entertainment that you need to understand.

David wrote a paper while he was at the BBC about what they could learn about a variety show on ITV. It had a structure. David spells out, this is how the variety show commands an audience, because it's always the same yet it's always different. So even though the acts are always different, the audience always knows what to expect, and then he applies that. And that's the structure of *Doctor Who* right there.

An awful lot of the special effects on *Doctor Who* were pioneered on Light Entertainment too, because they did trick photography, whereas drama tended not to do that. The things the design department were working on, which were weird and unusual, were props for dance numbers and that kind of stuff.

David worked on a kids show called *Crackerjack*, which would have party games, dance numbers and comedians. It was made in a very small theater in front of an audience of kids, so you had to work out the use of space. Basically you're shooting one part of the show while clearing the set of the thing you've just done, so you have room to get the big band in.

I was like, oh, he does that in *The Keys of Marinus*. At the end of the episode they arrive in front of a door, and the next episode they open the door and show you what's beyond it. You have this sense of this huge space – but in the first episode when you just see the door, that's all the space that's left in the studio. It's all about making as much of the limited facilities as you can, and that all comes from Light Entertainment.

Do you feel like you really got to know David Whitaker?

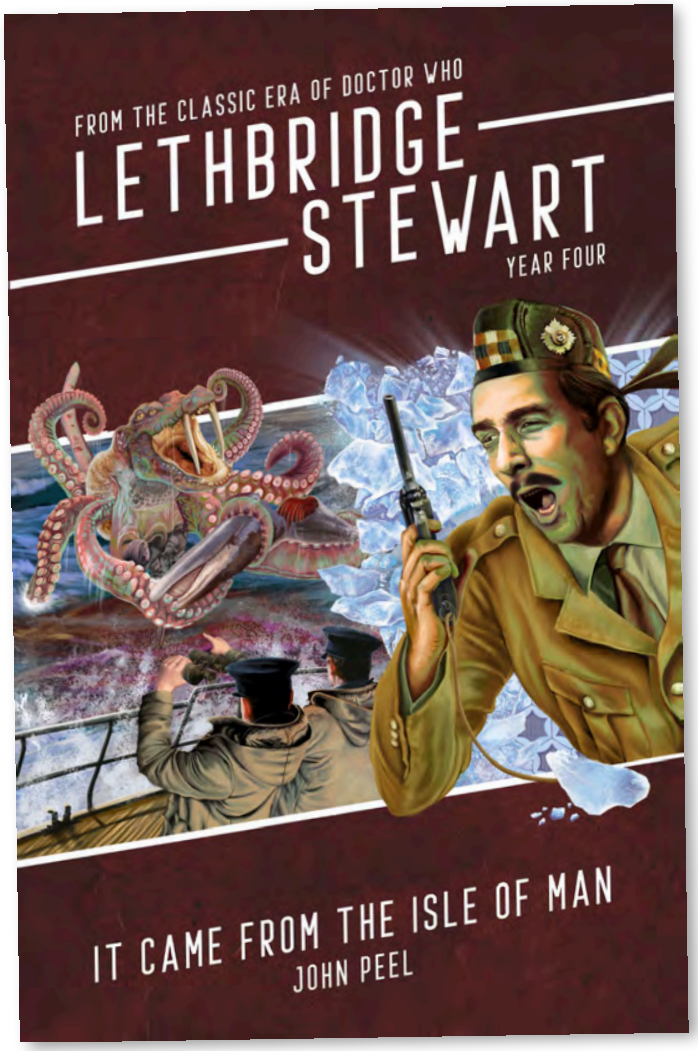
My wife still refers to me as the third Mrs Whitaker.

I do get a real sense of him. He was born in 1928 and, as I say in the book, it's fair to say he wasn't exactly a feminist. But I was braced for sexist, racist views, or for him to be a villain. And although he's quite a flawed character, I really like him, and I think that's quite important. WT

The paperback edition of *David Whitaker: In An Exciting Adventure With Television* by Simon Guerrier is available from The Who Shop or www.tenacrefilms.bigcartel.com

Lethbridge-Stewart Yr4: It Came From the Isle of Man

REVIEW BY
BRYAN JENNER



What came from the Isle of Man was intrigue, duplicity, reunions, incredulity, sexiness (really) and the final act in the rehabilitation of Anne Travers.

It Came From the Isle of Man by John Peel is the second book in the Year Four section of Series 10 of Candy Jar Books' *Lethbridge-Stewart* series. While sporting a rushed ending that marred it slightly, overall this is another of those novels best described as 'fun to read'.

Giant energy barriers are discovered on the Isle of Man (a small self-governing island between England and Northern Ireland) and then also in Siberia and Nevada. Lethbridge-Stewart supervises the investigation on the Isle of Man while directing teams to liaise with the Russians and Americans. No one really trusts anyone else, although the members of the Fifth and the American military mistrust each other less than they do the Soviet agent.

Aah, Tanya. Sexy, nubile, beautiful, flirtatious… I honestly couldn't believe I was reading about such a sexy and desirable woman in a Lethbridge-Stewart novel. Seduction and flirtation have been severely downplayed over the history of the range, so it was refreshing to have a character like that. They do exist in the real world (Lord knows I've been schooled) so acknowledging that fact was good.

Also refreshing was Anne reacting and behaving like a real person. Long gone are the days of the shrew; rather, Peel has expertly presented a woman who can be both loving and romantic yet still be a professional scientist. I really enjoyed her storyline in this book and as she gradually became the main focus I was happy with her decisions, her emotions and her approach to the challenges presented by both her Russian and American colleagues.

Thankfully we have universal translators because there's a wide variety of alien beings communicating with various sides of our Fifth-American-Russian triangle. Some aliens are earnest, some are more or less human, and some are wacky in that they constantly complain about everything. Kwith had me chuckling constantly, and gives us the funniest joke in the history of the Lethbridge-Stewart novels on page 94.

Around the midpoint, after some interesting and well-written setup and buildup, an unexpected but reasonable left turns take hold.

I really wish this book had another 30 or 40 pages available to it as it had so much going on. The main Anne plot was resolved in a logical way, with a heavy dose of Hartnell era about it, but perhaps some of the subplots were wrapped up way too quickly, or shrugged off with fairly loose endings (events in Siberia). There's a 50-megaton nuclear detonation during the climax in Nevada, killing a major character and taking out the baddie, and it all happens 'off-screen'. If the page count had to be maintained, then I would rather have shrunk the Siberia aspect, the least necessary of the three subplots, and presented the Nevada resolution with more detail, intrigue, and conflict.

The conflict at the heart of the book was clearly, unequivocally, about Israel and the Arabs, and I applaud Peel for being brave enough to carefully present that issue in a thought-provoking way. I did wonder if anyone would have thought of burrowing underneath the energy barriers to get to the other side, but the fact they don't is not a big problem as we have Fifth scientists working on their own method to accomplish the same goal.

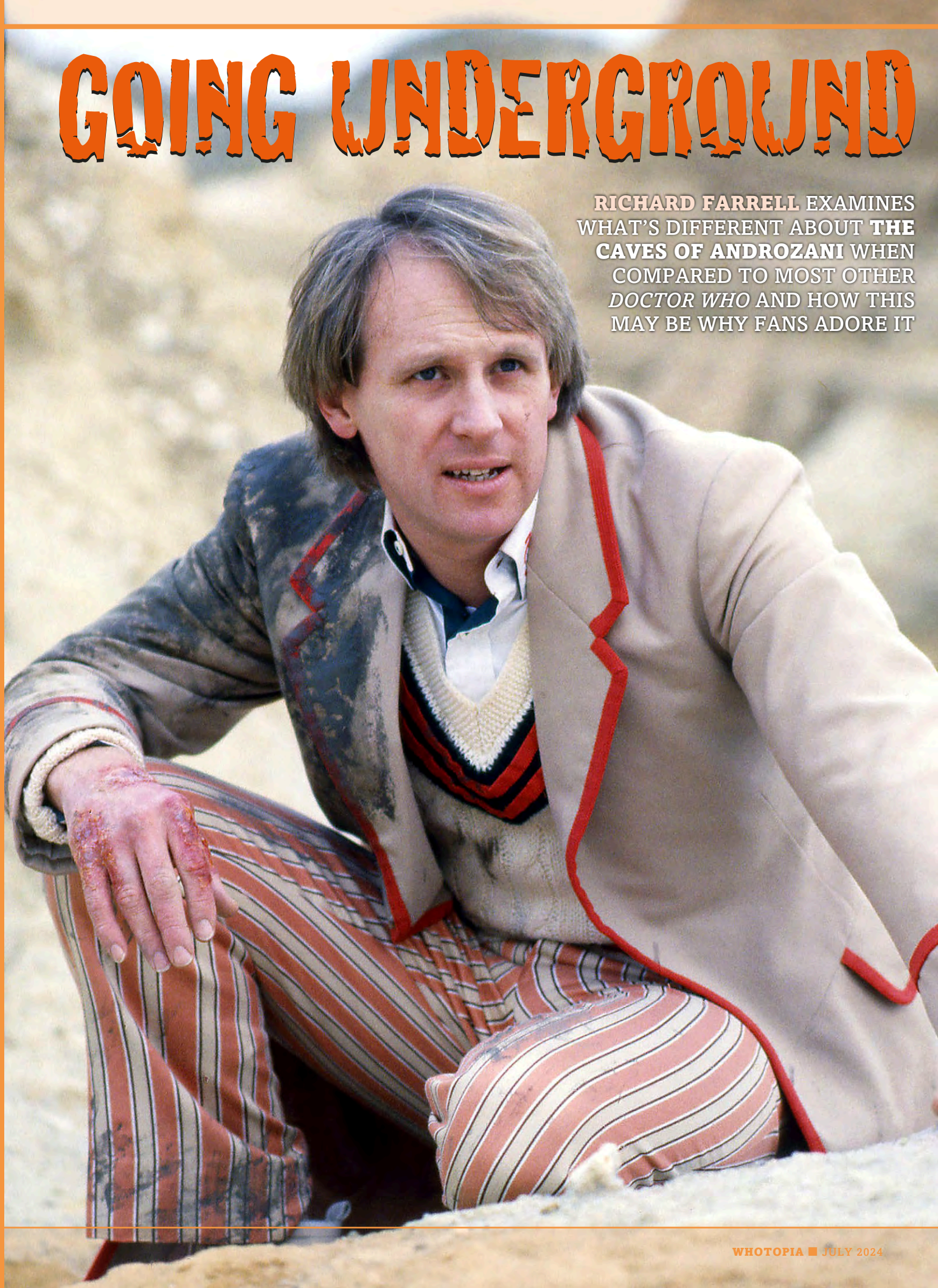
There are a couple of ouches: we have the hanger/hangar problem again, and there are some timezone problems as Nevada is sometimes five hours, sometimes seven hours off the Isle of Man's time. Not a biggie but probably should have been caught. Also, we live on the Earth, not the earth (that's just soil, isn't it?).

Overall, *It Came From the Isle of Man* is fun, thought-provoking, crazy, outrageous and at times both childish and adult. Flawed only because it needed more pages to tell its expansive storylines, but not enough of a problem to not recommend this book. WT

Also refreshing is Anne reacting and behaving like a real person. Peel has expertly presented a woman who can be both loving and romantic yet still be a professional scientist

GOING UNDERGROUND

RICHARD FARRELL EXAMINES WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT **THE CAVES OF ANDROZANI** WHEN COMPARED TO MOST OTHER *DOCTOR WHO* AND HOW THIS MAY BE WHY FANS ADORE IT



It's a story that has been discussed and dissected to the minutest degree many times over the years. But it occurs to me that the reason *The Caves of Androzani* is so highly regarded is that it's a very atypical take on what constitutes a *Doctor Who* story.

As a kid, anything to do with politics was anathema to me – very dull stuff compared to the machinations of the Axons or the Daleks. On the rare occasions the series featured politicians up to this point, they were invariably portrayed as various degrees of imbecile. Take a look at the Dulcian pacifists in *The Dominators*, or Brownrose, Chinn and Walker from the Barry Letts era. Similarly, when the subject of drug smuggling was addressed in *Nightmare of Eden*, the theme was diluted in a mêlée of Mandrels and Tom Baker's clowning. In contrast, *The Caves of Androzani* drops the fantasy figure of the Doctor into an all-too realistic scenario of revenge, greed and corruption, where smart-aleck quips are likely to be met with a quick bullet or three.

Just look at how much writer Robert Holmes packs into that first frenetic episode. He introduces the set-up and the relationships between the various characters faster and more coherently than anything in 21st century *Doctor Who*, and 24 minutes later the Doctor and Peri are on the business end of a firing squad. He had done similar jobs on *Spearhead from Space* and *Terror of the Autons*, with the introduction of new Doctors, companions, villains and/or formats left to his trusted hands. Just compare this opening episode to those produced immediately before and after; in terms of pace, narrative and direction it's barely the same series at all.

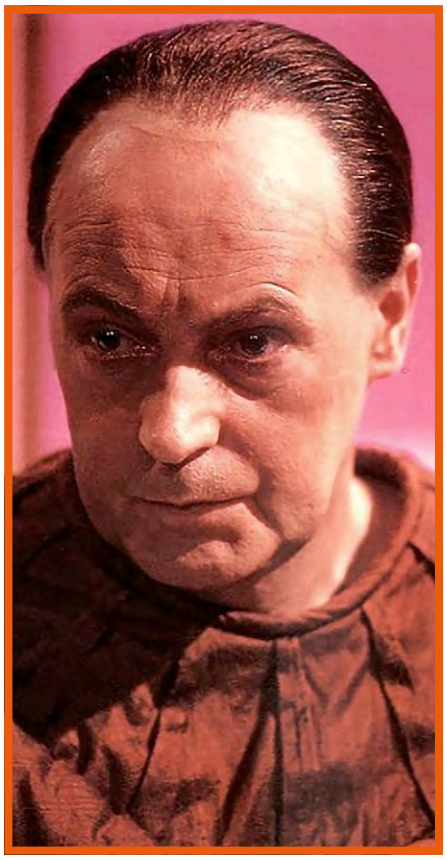
CHARACTER STUDY

The story is awash with well-drawn characters. The writer sees the Doctor as an analogue of Sherlock Holmes, following clues and making deductions but simultaneously putting himself and Peri in mortal danger. It's that curiosity which proves to be his downfall yet again – didn't he learn anything from the Great One on Metebelis 3? Sharaz Jek, another once-great man disfigured by his hatred (similar to Magnus Greel) appears at first to be the story's villain, although by the end he's seen in a slightly different light (there are strong parallels with the plight of the character of Erik in *The Phantom of the Opera*). He is driven to the point of madness by not only his need for companionship but also his hatred of Morgus, who himself is consumed by uncontrolled avarice and paranoia.

Morgus is the ultimate capitalist, concerned with stocks and prices, prepared to influence the market to his own ends – destroying his own copper mine to keep the supply down and the price artificially high, and profiting from a war by arming Jek to fight the army and ensuring sole access to Jek's refined Spectrox. In the end it's his paranoia that leads to his downfall, assassinating the President in the mistaken belief he has been found out. He's helped on his way by the ruthlessness of his PA, Timmin, who helps herself to his assets in his absence. It's dog eat dog out there. Stotz, Morgus's henchman, is a loose cannon, prepared to gun down Krelper and his own men to line his pockets with more Spectrox, sadistic enough to shoot Jek slowly so that he feels every bullet.

Holmes' plot is driven by the themes of greed, revenge and what appears to be lust (Jek is entranced by Peri). On the face of it this is a retrograde step for a female companion at this point in the series, but looking a bit closer it's not quite what it seems. Spectrox is a drug capable of doubling a person's lifespan, enabling them, in a way, to retain their youth. Peri is the only character who has the natural youth and beauty which others seek to regain for themselves.

However, by the end of the story things look a little different as Jek cares for Peri when she is stricken with a fatal illness. The camera closes in on the shot of him clutching her hand as she struggles to hold onto life, to emphasise that this isn't base lust but empathy. Love, even. So Jek is in some ways redeemed, being the only character in the story (apart from the Doctor, of course) capable of performing a selfless act – and Peri is (unknowingly, admittedly) the key to this. Yes, Jek is as mad as a box of frogs, but underneath that mask he's as human as the rest of us in his need for companionship and love.



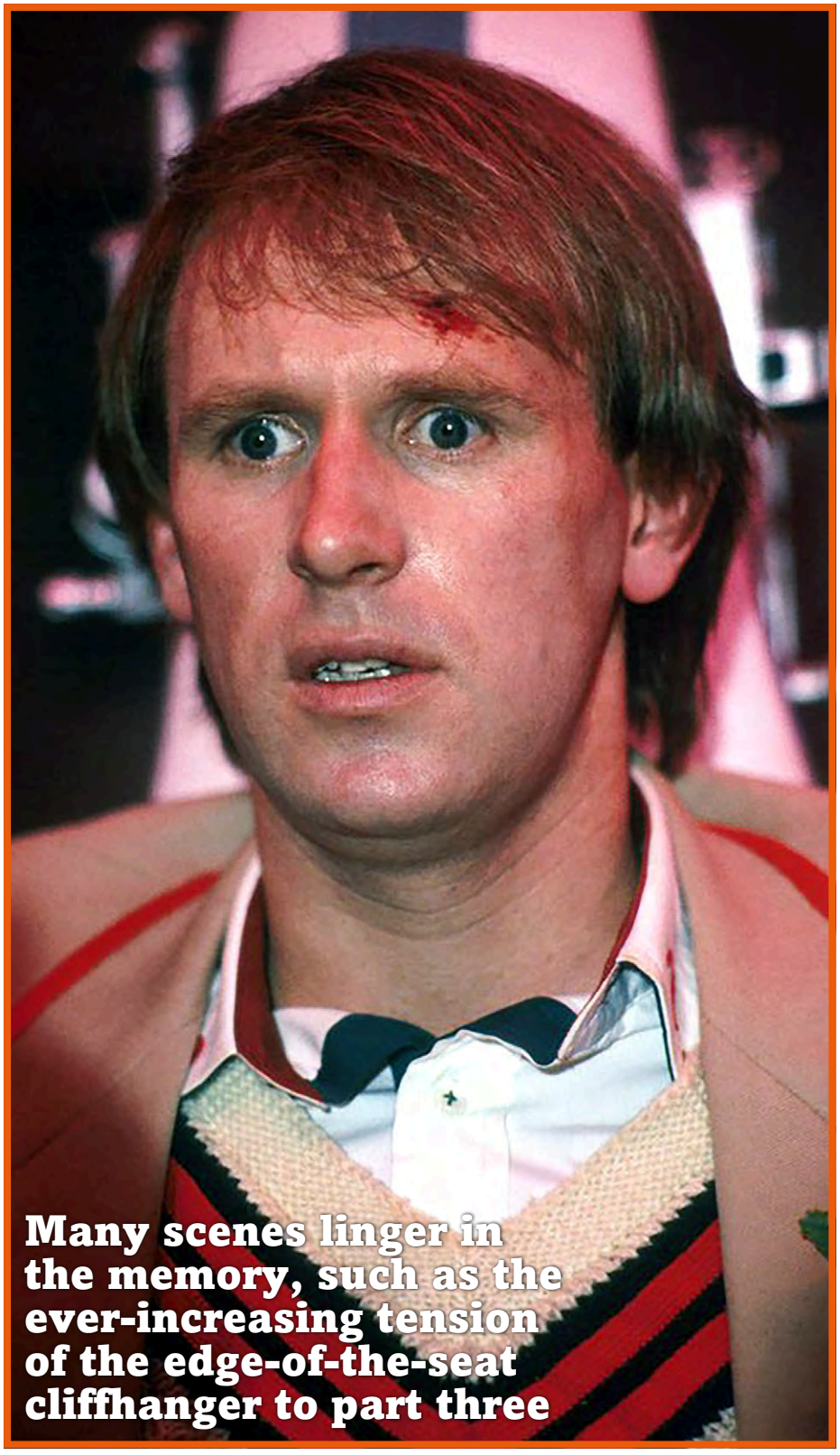
Morgus is the ultimate capitalist, arming Jek to fight the army and ensuring sole access to Jek's refined Spectrox

Holmes really puts the Doctor through the ringer. No sooner does he escape the firing squad than he finds that he and Peri been given another death sentence in the form of Spectrox Toxaemia. It's this funereal mood that pervades the whole four episodes. There's something very Shakespearean about the death toll by the end – only the Doctor and Peri get out alive (arguably only the latter). It's something Holmes had done before in *Pyramids of Mars*, and was even done in *Warriors of the Deep* a few stories prior to *Caves*.

A familiar theme throughout Holmes' work is the use (or misuse) of TV and radio. The Nestenes sent a radio pulse to activate their weapons, while Chellak uses his video link to Morgus to transmit disinformation in the hope that Jek will pick it up

and act on it. Fake news, anyone? Nothing's changed – don't believe everything you see or hear.

While Robert Holmes was an old hand on *Doctor Who*, Graeme Harper was making his series directorial debut in some style. Like Paul Joyce on *Warriors' Gate*, Harper took the BBC's arcane multi-camera system and managed to create four episodes which look like no *Doctor Who* seen before. The lighting in the cave sets adds atmosphere (and obscures any ropey detail) and the editing gives the story a frantic pace. Many scenes linger in the memory: the Doctor falling on his way to Stotz's ship, with that almost Biblical shaft of light illuminating him from above; the scuffle between Stotz and Krelper on location, their threats echoing across the quarry (for once the desolate quarry is apt); and the ever-increasing tension of the edge-of-the-seat cliffhanger to part three. Notice too how Morgus is seen perched in his penthouse office while Jek has to scurry through underground passages, a visual metaphor for their different situations.



Many scenes linger in the memory, such as the ever-increasing tension of the edge-of-the-seat cliffhanger to part three

The Magma Beast is, of course, as redundant as a box of cassette tapes and is the production's Achilles heel. Maybe it's only there to remind us that despite all the gunfire and brutality this is still a fantasy programme – although it's a fantasy that anyone thought the Magma creature would look convincing. Harper wisely gives us only the merest glimpses of it, however, shrouding it in smoke and back-lighting to minimise the damage to our suspension of disbelief.

The casting is top drawer for this or any other series. John Normington's venomous asides to the camera add chilling insights into his thoughts, while you could run a city on the energy from Christopher Gable's intense performance behind that mask. Maurice Roëves gives off a sense of real danger as Stotz – I wouldn't fancy my chances with the rather thick Krelper, never mind Stotzy.

Music is also used well to complement the mood. There's little in the way of melody and it's all a far cry from the tinny early-80s incidentals or rumbling synthesizers of Malcolm Clarke. Roger Limb's incidentals are more akin to the unsettling soundtracks of numerous recent Scandi-Noir series.

FUTURE ECHOES

Caves has something in common with *Midnight*, the Russell T Davies story. Here, Tennant's Doctor is faced with a group of people who don't want to listen, won't believe him and who are led by suspicion, distrust and fear. In both cases the Doctor is out of his depth and at the mercy of a group of selfish people, where the usual rules of *Who* don't apply. Being clever or humorous just gets him further into trouble and no-one listens to reason (welcome to the real world, mate). It's not that the Doctor is ineffectual in either story, but I feel that in both cases the writers have put the character into a non-fantasy scenario awash with the worst aspects of human nature and it's not one he can successfully navigate. Whether that inadvertently confirms that the Doctor isn't a truly realistic character or that the series is no more than colourful whimsy, I'm not sure.

The Caves of Androzani is highly sophisticated for the series at this point in its history. Indeed, one does wonder how it slipped through, sandwiched between *Planet of Fire* and *The Twin Dilemma* (that really puts it into perspective). Script editor Eric Saward deserves a pint at least for persevering in bringing Holmes back to the programme. The end result, although in retrospect a blip in a series that was becoming increasingly out of touch with audience tastes, is a mesmerising rollercoaster ride through the dark side of human nature. I'm not sure I could have taken it on a weekly basis. WT

THE VAULT
Time and the Doctor

Time travel is perhaps the most vital ingredient in *Doctor Who*. As much as regeneration has been key to its longevity, and the bug-eyed monster an audience winner, it's the Doctor's ability to go to any place in any time that has made the series so remarkably varied in its storytelling. From historical drama to contemporary thriller, from ghost adventure to metaphysical puzzle, time travel is almost transcendental in its scope.

For fans of PJ Hammond and his iconic creation *Sapphire and Steel*, the notion of Time as more than a dimension is well-known. Sapphire explains how Time can "try to enter into the present. Break in. Burst through and take things. Take people" (Assignment One, part one, 1979). It's a chilling remark that begs a number of unsettling questions. Is Time capable of agency? Does agency imply intentionality? And can Time be weaponised?

To explore these questions, I'll outline two distinct strands of thought on the fourth dimension. The first centers on Hammond's rendering of Time as an agency. The second sketches examples of temporal phenomena being used as a weapon. In doing so, I aim to show how the nature of Time extends beyond the properties of a dimension.

TIME'S INTENTIONS

Time as a phenomenon that can act upon the physical universe is nothing short of befuddling. This is understandable as we naturally think of it as something through which we, as mortal beings, pass for a finite period. In short, it's a dimension, pure and simple. Yet even as a dimension it's not apprehended in the same way as the spatial proportions of length, width and breadth. The idea of it being capable of action, even intentionality, appears simply bizarre. However, in the same way that elements within space move and adjust where there's imbalance (such as material rushing in to fill a vacuum), perhaps Time reacts in a similar fashion. Just as physical events follow patterns which we articulate as laws (such as Newton's laws of motion), surely Time also follows patterns, expressed as laws by those beings with sufficient scientific knowledge (Time Lords). As such, Time can also act to re-establish harmony (like *Sapphire and Steel*'s eponymous time agents). This might be a form of agency, if a tenuous one.

Although there are a number of stories where the Doctor must mend Time, there are few where it resets itself through an intrinsic property or agency. Of the former, for example, the first complete outing of Ncuti Gatwa's bi-generated Doctor sees him repairing Ruby Sunday's timeline. Other instances include restoring pre-Toclafane Earth at the climax of *Last of the Time Lords* and fixing a time-frozen Earth in *The Wedding of River Song*. Season 16's Key to Time also touches on the idea of rebalancing space-time, but again via the actions of the Doctor and not some mysterious agency. Of the latter, however, *Father's Day* shows Rose Tyler inadvertently damaging the fabric of Time to save her father's life. As events spiral out of control, the Doctor says, "There's been an accident in time. A wound in time." So much so that the injury triggers the arrival of deadly bat-like creatures, which the Doctor likens to "bacteria" which have "come to sterilise the wound". Might we liken these beings to temporal angels, or demons for that matter, dispatched to solve the crisis? Whether angels or demons or something else entirely, these powerful beings point to Time possessing some sort of natural self-healing component.

Is this enough to point to agency and intentionality? I would suggest the former may not be out of the question, for restoring equilibrium in a system. However, there's little evidence of intentionality. The winged creatures that appear in *Father's Day* have not been further developed since, while elsewhere Time is repaired through the actions of third parties (Time Lords, Guardians and so on).

The same lack of evidence cannot be said of using time as a weapon.

WIELDING TIME

The instances of weaponising Time in *Doctor Who* are many and varied. Trapping a portion of space-time in a loop has cropped up on several occasions, whether to foil an alien menace (*The Claws of Axos*, *Pyramids of Mars*, *The Invasion of Time*) or avert catastrophe (*The Armageddon Factor*). An accidental time loop sees River Song caught inside the TARDIS as the universe collapses (*The Pandorica Opens*/*The Big Bang*). The titular villain in *Meglos* temporarily snares the Doctor and Romana in a time loop, referred to here as a chronic hysteresis (denoting a lag between cause and effect, such as floodwaters continuing to rise hours after a heavy downpour has ceased). A time trap of sorts is the ordeal Amy Williams must overcome in *The Girl Who Waited*. Inadvertently entering a slower time stream to that of Rory and the Doctor, she is forced to live through decades while for the others only moments have passed.

Operation Golden Age (*Invasion of the Dinosaurs*) relies on time technology to erase human history, surely a weapon as deadly as nuclear war. The Master utilises Time as a weapon in *The Sound of Drums*/*Last of the Time Lords* by using the TARDIS to sustain a version of the grandfather paradox*, enabling the cybernetic Toclafane to wreak carnage upon their terrestrial ancestors and remain temporally unaffected. The same renegade's corruption of Logopolitan mathematics sees Castrovalva's Dwellings of Simplicity become a space-time trap. The Doctor also appears to manipulate Time to imprison the Family of Blood for eternity (*Human Nature*/*The Family of Blood*).

As a twist on the weaponising of Time, there's the case of Tegan and Nyssa's contamination by the injured Mawdryn rendering them no longer able to time travel without the risk of ageing to death or being returned to infancy. The alternative to these fates is to spend the remainder of their lives aboard Mawdryn's ship, just as much prisoners as its contingent of mutating scientists. Only the happenstance of two versions of Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart triggering the Blinovitch Limitation Effect sees them restored to health, along with Mawdryn and co.

The ultimate example of Time as a weapon must be the Weeping Angel. This perfectly evolved killer exists as a quantum-locked species, living off the potential energy of those beings they predate, sending their prey hurtling back into the past. As the Doctor explains to Sally Sparrow, "They consume the energy of all the days you might have had. All your stolen moments." The Weeping Angels are more than assassins, however. More chillingly, we find them harvesting humans in 1930s New York City, its burgeoning population brimming with untapped temporal power. As the Doctor deduces, "This place is a farm. A battery farm."

Time in *Doctor Who* is more than a dimension. It hints at agency, itself an extraordinary idea. It can be a weapon of staggering magnitude, deployed by heroes and villains alike. It also raises a number of practical and philosophical questions, which themselves make for storytelling rocket fuel. Here's to the fourth dimension, perhaps the series' greatest constant. WT

* A lot has been written elsewhere on temporal paradoxes (I recommend Ryan Britt's article 'Wibbly-Wobbly, Timey-Wimey: Top 5 Doctor Who Paradoxes' available at reactormag.com/wibbly-wobbly-timey-wimey-top-5-doctor-who-paradoxes/).