



**Time Capsule**  
**A Doctor Who ebook**  
**Presented by [The Famous Starstore Blog](#)**  
**Written by Andrew Hawnt**

This is an unofficial and unauthorized work, and is in no way intended to be confused with an official product of the BBC. Doctor Who and all of its related elements are trademarks of the BBC and this ebook is an appreciation intended to praise the work of the BBC in bringing the Doctor back to our screens once again.

# TIME CAPSULE

Thanks for downloading this special Doctor Who ebook! This is a special collection of the TARDISWATCH blogs from the Famous Starstore Blog, with additional new content on the special episode 'Planet of the Dead', and a look at what lies ahead for the Doctor as he hurtles towards the final adventure for his tenth incarnation. As anticipation grows to see how David Tennant's much-loved tenth Doctor will meet his demise and regenerate into eleventh Doctor Matt Smith, we present this special collection of articles covering the heady times of series 4 (of which there is a full review of each episode) to the 2008 Christmas Special, Matt Smith's announcement, Planet of the Dead and beyond to what is to come.

Written by a lifelong fan of Doctor Who and presented by one of the best pop culture memorabilia sites around, Time Capsule is for you to keep and enjoy. Hopefully it will help you pass some of the time between now and the finale of the tenth Doctor's era.

So then, before we go forward, let's hurtle back in time to the start of Series 4, and get reacquainted with Donna Noble as the Doctor meets the Adipose...

## **TARDISWATCH**

**Our new series of review features begins!**

### **PART ONE: PARTNERS IN CRIME**

Well, possibly the most controversial series of Doctor Who since its return has begun, and expectations have been high to see if comedian Catherine Tate would cut it as the Doctor's new companion, Donna Noble. Fans were set upon one another following Tate's first appearance (back in 2006's Doctor Who Christmas Special, The Runaway Bride), and there has been a great deal of debate over her return right across fandom. Would she still be the obnoxious, screeching harpy of that lacklustre Xmas special? Would she turn out to be brilliant? It will certainly be interesting to see her face the challenge of the series' more dramatic elements, and I do hope that people will be pleasantly surprised. I certainly count myself amongst those that are going to need some persuasion, but with Martha, and (as you saw on Saturday) Rose returning to the fold too, it'll certainly be fascinating to see how the character of Donna reacts and indeed how Catherine Tate measures up in their presence. Add to that the return of all manner of monsters (and a bunch of new ones) and we're in for one of the most unpredictable series yet.

### **EPISODE REVIEW**

Possibly the most important series of Doctor Who's run thus far has got off to a very shaky start indeed. What the motivation behind this farce of an episode was is anyone's guess. Okay, that sounded harsh, sorry. The episode as a whole is far too chaotic and does rely heavily on slapstick comedy during the scenes of the Doctor and Donna repeatedly missing sight of each other, but it does have its good points. Mainly those

good points lie with two elements: Bernard Cribbins as Donna's grandfather, and the massively shocking final few seconds (THAT cameo and THAT piece of music), which elevate the episode into the realms of the great. What starts out as a standard runaround (possibly leaning thematically towards The Sarah Jane Adventures), ends up being incredibly shocking. The contrast between the lightness of the rest of the episode and that final twist is delicious, and instantly sent me into paroxysms of geeky ecstasy. I think, from what we know of this series and how it is going to develop, that it is certainly going to be full of enough twists and turns to keep the diehards guessing and the casual viewers entertained. Catherine Tate's depiction of Donna is slightly more reserved this time out, and strikes us as a character that has actually made some progress, which is cool. The main problem I had with the episode was its strong echoes of the Sarah Jane Adventures pilot episode Invasion of the Bane, which, as an episode of TV drama, worked much better than this. Partners in Crime isn't the best opening episode so far, but it certainly helps the show hit the ground running.5/10

**Visit the BBC shop for [official Doctor Who merchandise!](#)**

## **TARDISWATCH 2008: DOCTOR WHO FEATURE REVIEWS EPISODE 2: THE FIRES OF POMPEII**

Now that the awkward premier episode is done with, we can get down to some powerful Doctor Who stories for a few weeks before the big arc starts to make its presence felt properly, and we're off with a Historical, which keeps in with the sequence of earlier series- there always tends to be a historical story in the first three episodes. I do like this habit, and while it has become a tad predictable, it both shows off the wealth of possibilities and reminds us all of The Doctor's time travelling abilities- not everything happens in contemporary London or Cardiff!

Actually this seems to be a series which isn't going to stick around in one place for too long,. That was a bone of contention with fans during earlier series, but this was understandable- budget is tight, even now with the show a massive hit. But now, the boat has really been pushed out with what is shaping up to be the most far-reaching and epic series yet. So then, how are the Doctor and Donna getting along?

### **EPISODE REVIEW**

Donna's first trip back in time is quite a harrowing experience for the feisty redhead. Aiming for Rome, The Doctor lands in Pompeii the day before Vesuvius erupts, and discovers all manner of alien goings-on that are playing on the superstitions of the time, and why have all the soothsayers suddenly become powerful psychics? What follows is a great adventure episode, with lots of running, lots of shouting and some of the best effects that have graced the series since it came back. There is a huge atmosphere to the episode, almost filmic in places, which helps the viewers take in the magnitude of the story.

Two things grind a bit with the episode though, namely (you guessed it) Catherine Tate, whose character of Donna Noble is becoming incredibly annoying already, and the fact that, once again, the Doctor is responsible for one of the most historic moments in human history.

Now, call me an old codger, but does anyone remember Earthshock? That superb fifth Doctor story ended with the Doctor failing to stop the ship that Adric was trapped on from hitting the earth and wiping out the Dinosaurs, thus paving the way for mankind to exist! There are now far too many instances of historic events being used as plot points, as eventually it will get to a point where the Doctor is responsible for absolutely everything that happens on earth. Granted, The Fires of Pompeii saw the Doctor keep history intact, but still, it's the same thing again.

Having said that, this was a fantastic episode, and if Donna will SHUT UP for a moment, I think we're going to have the best series yet. The teaser for next week's looks great - the Ood are back!

Episode rating: 7 out of 10

## **TARDISWATCH 2008: DOCTOR WHO FEATURE REVIEWS EPISODE 3: PLANET OF THE OOD**

The third episode of each series of Doctor Who generally is the point where we start to see how the whole thing will pan out. Just to be awkward, this series is set out rather differently to what has gone before, which is marvellous to see as otherwise the format would start to become a bit predictable. Comparing this third episode to previous third entries since the show came back (The Unquiet Dead, School Reunion, Gridlock), you can see that the third part of the series always carries elements that will become important later on. So far this series has stuck to the regular format, but as of next week that goes out of the window somewhat and we are going to be taken on rather a different journey, with earlier companions popping up, not to mention another historical episode on the way, in which we meet Agatha Christie. Playing with an established format will be very good for keeping hold of new viewers and stopping the diehards complaining too much, and with Doctor Who, that's how things should always be.

## **DOCTOR WHO: PLANET OF THE OOD EPISODE REVIEW**

The Ood were last seen in the fantastic series 2 double parter consisting of 'The Impossible Planet' and 'The Satan Pit', a story which was deemed to be one of the best since Doctor Who returned to our screens. The subservient and very alien creatures are back with this single episode story, in which we discover their origins, the nature of their translator spheres, and that Donna actually has more than one tone of voice.

While nowhere near as good as their first appearance, this is still a powerful episode in many respects. While the 45 minutes zip by in a flurry of running and shouting, I thought that the reasons behind their obedience were both chilling and heartbreaking. The sight of the unconverted Ood cowering in fear was difficult to watch, and made their plight seem very real indeed. Catherine Tate brought some real pathos to Donna's character this week, which is both a surprise and a relief.

The Doctor seemed to be something of a weak link this week, with David Tennant's performance coming across as a little on autopilot, but this is probably down to some shoddy lines of dialogue here and there as opposed to any fault of our hero. The planet of the Ood was magnificently realized, with some gorgeous CG vistas that boasted a rather 'oil painting' type effect, which, as opposed to making them look cheap, actually worked in their favour. Once again The Mill outdid themselves.

Aside from all the running, shouting and gunfire, this episode comes across as a tad empty, and a little light on plot, but it is a fun ride for all the family, aside from the incredibly graphic climax involving a character ripping off his own scalp and vomiting Ood tentacles during a transformation sequence.

Once again, events later in the series are foreshadowed, with a possible end to the Doctor's life (regeneration rumours ahoy!) and another mention of 'All the Bees keep disappearing'. All in all a fun romp, but a little light on substance. Great to see the Ood get a little redemption, though.

Episode rating: 6 out of 10

## **TARDISWATCH 2008: DOCTOR WHO FEATURE REVIEWS**

### **EPISODE 4: THE SONTARAN STRATAGEM**

Once more Doctor Who fandom is rocked by the return of a classic villain. We've already had Daleks, Cybermen, The Master, the Macra, Autons and the latest comeback kings- The Sontarans. Each time an old foe comes back, a great deal of attention is paid to their updated appearances. Do they still look like the classic Doctor Who series version? How much will they differ in terms of prosthetics, armour and weaponry? And so on. BBC Wales have come up trumps with their redesigned Sontarans, they really have. The pint-sized warriors were never the most convincing of Doctor Who monsters, largely down to their limited facial expressions and the muffled way in which the actors had to deliver their lines, but major kudos to the current team, who have recreated them as a rather imposing and formidable race, despite their short stature. Their armour has been visibly updated, but the helmets that cover their spud-like heads are identical, still boasting those dark eyes and shiny dome (Sounds much like me really, but the dark eyes are limited to the grey circles under mine). Where the production has really excelled is with their facial expressions. Granted, there's only two Sontaran faces visible in this episode (the rest keep their helmets on), but the range of expression and characterization visible in those prosthetics is really quite something to behold. Makeup staff, we salute you.

## **DOCTOR WHO: THE SONTARAN STRATAGEM EPISODE REVIEW**

Crikey!!! We're only up to episode four and already we've had one of the best episodes in years. 'The Sontaran Stratagem' is modern Doctor Who at its absolute best- intelligent, fast paced, funny, and utterly thrilling. The setup is great, and each character gets a fair amount of screen time. I'm very glad the Sontarans were revealed relatively early on in the episode, and not right at the cliffhanger. This gave them much more time to establish their threat and get a huge amount of exposition out of the way before all hell breaks loose in the next episode. Martha Jones is back too, and it is great to see that the character has moved on lots since we last saw her. I particularly liked Donna's observation that being with the Doctor turned Martha into a soldier (A nice reminder of the year she spent wandering the earth, telling the Doctor's story at the end of series 3). As stated quite a lot on various Doctor Who fan forums, it was a breath of fresh air for Donna and Martha to get along so well, as opposed to the usual bickering that seems to happen when companions meet. This episode succeeds on literally every level. The acting, script, production, direction, effects, pacing, the works. Donna comes into her own, with some incredibly heartfelt scenes that show there is more to the character than shouting and one-liners. David Tennant was also on top form, coming across as the most 'Doctorish' we've seen him so far this series. It is such a good episode, in fact, I'm rather concerned that the conclusion won't live up to it. Mind you, judging from that (literally) explosive teaser, I don't think we have that much to worry about.

Episode rating: 9 out of 10

## **DOCTOR WHO NEWS: CHRISTMAS SPECIAL PHOTOS LEAKED**

I've held off from talking about the leaked photos from the filming of this year's Christmas special, but I can't hold my tongue any longer. I won't give away who the creatures are other than saying they're classic monsters, but I will tell you that series four won't see a regeneration into the eleventh Doctor, as David Tennant is currently filming the Christmas tale! Mind you, that does raise some questions over one leaked series 4 photo in particular, namely that of Rose huddled over the Doctor's body, after the faceoff with... (CENSORED). Plus, the leaked photos show David Morrissey in a very Doctor-ish costume, which has raised all sorts of 10th/11th Doctor crossover episode rumours, but I can't really see that being the case. Mind you, David Morrissey's costume does look \*very\* Time Lord-ish.

**Find [Doctor Who memorabilia](#) online!**

## **TARDISWATCH 2008: DOCTOR WHO FEATURE REVIEWS EPISODE 5: THE POISON SKY**

Ending a two-part story with a bang and not outdoing the series finale is always a tricky thing to manage, but the Doctor Who team pull it off every time. The conclusion to this year's Sontaran comeback tale works on many levels, and is a much more powerful

second part than last year's Evolution of the Daleks. However, the relentless pace of the story leaves me wondering whether or not the show would benefit from the odd three part or even four part story once in a while, to let things build even more. Last year we essentially had a three-part climax, which worked wonderfully. The events in 'Utopia' set the final two parts up perfectly, and left the audience wanting much more. Apparently the entire series this year is a big build up to the climactic final story, and with Daleks, Rose, all manner of companions and an enslaved Earth all rumoured to be playing their part, I hope the payoff is as satisfying as this week's magnificent episode.

## **DOCTOR WHO: THE POISON SKY EPISODE REVIEW**

After a first part that was crammed full of plot, there were concerns that the second half of the story wouldn't be quite so dense. Those fears were gladly unfounded, as here, once again, we have a second episode that delivers massively on the promise shown in the first part. While everyone is given their screentime, the other characters this week took a back seat to the Doctor, who is on top form for the duration of the episode. The resolution to last week's gripping cliffhanger is very satisfying too. There is a great sense of battling against massive odds in this huge scale climax, and the presence of the rejuvenated UNIT is a massive boon to the series. I wonder if they are due to return for the series finale? I was very pleased the Brigadier got a mention too, even in passing. It is those little nods to the history of the series that keep the old fans grinning. The production values are once again incredible, with makeup, CG and sets all vying for the top spot. The cloned Martha is dealt with nicely, as is the character of Rattigan, who, naturally, redeems himself by the story's end. The only way the episode suffers is from its even more frantic pace than the previous episode. The final moments, in which the Doctor stops the Sontaran's plans and Rattigan sacrifices himself, are wonderfully exciting, and very, very Doctor Who. Oh, and leading the end of this episode into next week's masterclass in science fiction was a stroke of genius. Here comes the Doctor's Daughter...

Episode rating: 9 out of 10

## **DOCTOR WHO NEWS**

### **DALEKS, DAVROS, ROSE, SARAH JANE AND 'THE STOLEN EARTH'?**

Speculation and tidbits of fact about the series finale are mounting up thick and fast. The Daleks will indeed return, apparently led by a revived Davros (rumoured to be played by Julian Bleach), and from the outlines that have surfaced for the finale episode, 'Journey's End', it seems that not everyone is going to get out alive...

## **TARDISWATCH 2008: DOCTOR WHO FEATURE REVIEWS**

### **EPISODE 6: THE DOCTOR'S DAUGHTER**

The subject of The Doctor's Daughter has been a source of great debate ever since the episode title was announced. As the first Doctor's companion was his own granddaughter, Susan, it was feared that we would discover the truth about the Doctor's

family in this episode. Thankfully, the mystery is largely still intact. It does raise the issue of the Doctor's background in this new era. Having a few morsels of information about his origins is a great thing, but I'd hate it to get bogged down in continuity again (Anyone else remember Trial of a Time Lord?). The mystery of the character of the Doctor came back to a certain extent in classic era stories such as The Curse of Fenric (which is an excellent story- I recommend getting the DVD version as it contains the story cut into a movie with new CG effects and extra stuff), but it was too little too late and the show disappeared up its own TARDIS. Since the show came back in 2005 however, the subject of the Doctor's history has remained low key. It has been the Time War that has had more screentime than anything. The series 3 glimpses of Gallifrey were wonderful, and rather than give too much away actually served to create more of a mystique around the Time Lords and their demise. The way things are going though, we may well see some remnants of the Time War again before this series ends...

## **DOCTOR WHO: THE DOCTOR'S DAUGHTER EPISODE REVIEW**

From the opening scenes this episode doesn't let up, and rather than losing you in the madness, it grabs hold and takes you running through the corridors with it, kicking and screaming as the Hath chase after you. The setup is dealt with in the opening seconds, and after that it is a mad dash for the finish line with the plot unravelling at a steady pace and the thrills coming thick and fast. The character of the Doctor's daughter (played by the 5th Doctor Peter Davison's real life daughter, Georgia Moffett) is handled very well, and the moments later in the episode where some of Dad's traits start to shine through are wonderful. The Hath are convincingly odd aliens, and the design of the prosthetics is first rate. I do like the fact that we don't get to understand what they're saying, and this is most effective in the scenes where Martha is taken captive. It makes a nice change for a Doctor Who episode to contain creatures that don't speak perfect English (albeit via the TARDIS). Catherine Tate is on excellent form as Donna (I am quite surprised that I actually just typed that) and the character has really come into her own. One thing that did grate a bit when Donna is working out what the numbers on the walls mean- a plot device rather reminiscent of modern science fiction classic CUBE. That aside, the climax was incredible, featuring a wonderful performance from David Tennant, who really is perfect as the Doctor in this series, and the revelation surrounding the 'war' was inspired. The closing moments are heartbreaking and uplifting in turn, and with Jenny resurrected and flying off into the expanse of space, who knows when or where we'll see the Doctor's daughter again? This episode was brilliant in pretty much every way. Encore.

9.5/10

## **TARDISWATCH 2008: DOCTOR WHO FEATURE REVIEWS EPISODE 7: THE UNICORN AND THE WASP**

Since Doctor Who came back to our screens, it has become something of a yearly tradition to have a 'famous' guest character in each series. Thus far we've had Charles

Dickens, Queen Victoria, William Shakespeare (plus Elizabeth the First briefly in the same episode) and now Agatha Christie. This is a marvellous thing to do, and is another example of how different Doctor Who is from any other genre show around now or previously. The format is so flexible that we could meet pretty much anybody each week, and why the hell not? It is a great, fun idea that harks back to the days of the show being intended as an educational tool. It doesn't always work out, but when it does, like in Chris Eccleston's episode *The Unquiet Dead* (featuring Simon Callow as Charles Dickens) it can be incredible. It is a little strange for the 'guest historical' episode to air so late on in the season (they're usually shown in the first three), but this is a nice thing as it mixes the pattern up a bit and keeps us on our toes. When it works, it is incredible TV. When it doesn't, well, read on...Keep checking back for the latest news on new Doctor Who merchandise!

## **DOCTOR WHO: THE UNICORN AND THE WASP - EPISODE REVIEW**

The Doctor and Agatha Christie? That sounds like a great idea doesn't it? It is a good idea, but sadly it falls a bit short of being great TV, and it is hard to work out why. Gareth Roberts' script is very good, even though it does have too many groan moments when Donna keeps trying to copyright the Miss Marple character. I think this is one of the first episodes that was shot for this series, as the backgrounds and hair etc tie in with the first promo photos of the Doctor and Donna together. That might be why it feels a bit disjointed- they were still trying to find their feet and a direction for the series. It also explains why Donna seems to have taken a backwards step in characterization, and why it has been screened later in the series, thus minimizing the negative aspects as people are now used to seeing Donna and Ten together onscreen. I think the main problem with this otherwise serviceable episode is with the guest cast. It seems that aside from Felicity Kendal, they are playing it as something of a pantomime. Its great to see such British archetypes onscreen, and funny in the context of a modern SF show, but they come across as very artificial and take the viewer right out of the story. There are moments where it comes across as a village amateur dramatics production, which is a shame, as otherwise it would have been much, much better. Next week? A spooky galactic library and Alex Kingston. That sounds more like it. This week? First damp squib of the series since the opening episode...

4/10

## **DOCTOR WHO NEWS**

### **WAR ON SKARO?**

Rumour has it that the twelfth episode of this series is to be entitled 'War on Skaro' and feature the return of Davros and the Daleks, not to mention a load of other popular characters too, including, as you already know, Rose Tyler. The title has long since been known to consist of three words, and has been kept secret thus far as it 'Gives too much away'. This title would fit that, plus there is a 'war on Skaro box set' of figures coming out in October... Of course, until this is all confirmed, it remains a rumour. Either way we'll be watching!

## **TARDISWATCH 2008: DOCTOR WHO FEATURE REVIEWS**

### **EPISODE 8: SILENCE IN THE LIBRARY**

Guest stars in Doctor Who can be a bit hit and miss over the course of a series, but for the most part they are excellent, and this week the BBC have excelled themselves and given us Alex Kingston and Steve Pemberton. It would be easy to dismiss them as unsuitable for science fiction, but if you take a look at some of their previous work, it has set them up perfectly. Alex Kingston was, amongst many other things, a part of the cast of ER, which has put her in good stead to play the archaeologist she portrays in this two part Doctor Who story. Steve Pemberton is an incredibly versatile performer, known to UK audiences as one part of the team that brought us The League of Gentlemen. In that show he regularly played something in the region of eight characters per episode, and the dark, surreal humour he is known for must have come in as a great tool for working on Doctor Who. The Doctor Who team could get pretty much anybody they want for roles in the show now it is so massive, but it is a constant reminder of how seriously they take their casting that they always get the right people for the job. This week is no exception.

### **DOCTOR WHO: SILENCE IN THE LIBRARY - EPISODE REVIEW**

Hot on the heels of the news that he is to take over from Russell T Davies, we are treated to the first part of this year's Steven Moffat scripted adventure. Set on a library planet and featuring guest stars Alex Kingston and Steve Pemberton, we are treated to an incredible episode that more than makes up for the shortcomings of last week's Agatha Christie romp. The first thing that is very much apparent in this episode is that it had cash thrown at it from all angles. This is quite possibly the most beautiful looking 45 minutes of Doctor Who we've ever had. The sheer scale of the effects and the sets and the cleverly used interior locations makes for something that feels truly epic. This isn't just eye candy though, not by a long way. Moffat's script is fantastic, and dare I say, even cinematic at many points. The various plotlines are all given ample room, and the mystery of the present day little girl and how she fits into everything is extremely interesting, and the scene in which her psychiatrist tells her the library world of her dreams is real is wonderfully creepy. The idea of the shadows literally eating the skin from people's bodies is chilling, and how the deaths of characters are dealt with- including the 'Ghosting' of their personalities through their suit communicators, is a stroke of genius. This is Doctor Who on a grand scale, reminiscent of many classic era stories. This is how those much loved stories would look today- sumptuous, fascinating and utterly believable. The obligatory chase through the library aisles is gripping thanks to the superb use of lighting and pacing, and the episode as a whole is incredibly strong. Those final moments are thrilling, and leave the viewer wondering what the hell is going to happen next time. What actually happened to Donna? What's the story behind the Doctor's involvement with Alex Kingston's character? How will the group escape the swarm? This is how two parts should start. Magnificent.

9.5/10

## Find [Doctor Who Action Figures](#) at Character Online!

### **TARDISWATCH 2008: DOCTOR WHO FEATURE REVIEW EPISODE 9: FOREST OF THE DEAD**

Fans are rejoicing right now, we really are. The man that brought us the new era episodes 'The Empty Child', 'The Doctor Dances', 'The Girl in The Fireplace', 'Blink', 'Silence in the Library' and 'Forest of the Dead' is going to be the man who takes over the show's running when RTD leaves. This is old news now, but it needs to be pointed out again, especially after the episode we were all treated to on Saturday. Steven Moffatt isn't just a writer who understands the Doctor- he also understands the medium of television and how fans old and new want to be drawn into a story. If his previous episodes are anything to go by, we are heading for an incredible time with future series. The layers that he works into each episode are incredible, subtle plot points become hugely important, characters are given motivation and closure, and the scale rarely dips beneath epic. It is going to be fascinating to see how RTD's climax to the season tops this fantastic two-parter. As it is, Doctor Who just keeps getting better, and once Moffatt is at the helm, who knows what secrets, mysteries and ideas will be uncovered?

### **DOCTOR WHO: FOREST OF THE DEAD - EPISODE REVIEW**

I have run out of superlatives. This second part defies any classification other than the best science fiction we have ever seen. Honestly. All concerns that the climax wouldn't live up to the first part were washed away instantly pretty much as soon as the episode started. The production values were top notch again, the cast were unusually fantastic right across the board, and the story reached a massively satisfying conclusion that throws up all manner of questions about the future of the Doctor's character. River Song is a perfect addition to the new era Doctor Who universe. Intelligent, determined and heroic, it's easy to see why the Doctor (sometime in the future) falls for her. The moment she utters a portion of the Doctor's real name had me gasping, and Alex Kingston was on top form in the role. The look on the Doctor's face when she leans over and whispers his full name into his ear is sublime- David Tennant reached brand new heights of performance in this episode. The pacing of the thing is perfect- energetic and solemn in equal measure. Donna's harrowing unreal life story with her imaginary children is a moving piece of drama that Catherine Tate handles with aplomb. The heartbreaking and subsequently uplifting ending made perfect sense, and the storyline of Cal's imaginary, matrix-like world was beautifully handled. Perfect script, perfect production, perfect cast, perfect Doctor Who. I honestly cannot recommend this story highly enough. Immaculate.10/10

### **TARDISWATCH 2008: DOCTOR WHO FEATURE REVIEWS EPISODE 10: MIDNIGHT**

The 'moneysaver' episodes have really been a mixed bag of delights and terrors since the series came back. They are a necessary thing- so much cash and effort goes into the finales of each series that there needs to be one or two episodes that don't drain the

resources too much. With the first series it was 'Boom Town'. Series two had 'Love and Monsters' and 'Fear Her', and series three had 'Blink'. Out of all of these episodes, it is by far Steven Moffatt's 'Blink' that is the most successful. Utilising minimal sets and effects are available for these episodes, and as such the weight of responsibility has to be on the shoulders of the scriptwriter and the cast to pull off something compelling. With the right ingredients you have something fantastic, and the rest of the time you get episodes with some great moments that otherwise come across as filler. The time has come for this year's cheapie entry...

### **DOCTOR WHO: MIDNIGHT - EPISODE REVIEW**

Its that time of year again- the point where we get a lower budget/scale episode to minimize costs and maximize the impact of the series finale. This year we have Midnight, which has a great premise which is sadly let down by a repetitive script and an unsatisfying ending. Donna is barely in it, which tells me this was shot simultaneously with next week's episode, which is very light on David Tennant. Okay, the basic plot is simple- the Doctor gets trapped on a bus craft while en route to a natural wonder. While trapped in the vehicle, one of the passengers is possessed by an alien entity that attempts to kill everyone. The Doctor must stop the rest of the passengers chucking the possessed woman- and himself- off the ship to their deaths. Right. Fair enough. The only problem is, this is a ten minute story stretched to 45 minutes, and the padding shows in the form of extremely annoying dialogue and a cast who have little to do but shout at each other until someone shouts louder. The best thing about the episode is the skill shown between the Doctor and Skye while Skye is mimicking everyone. A big let down after the last two weeks of perfection. We've served our penance now- onto the final three episodes and the stuff we've been waiting for!

3/10

### **THE RETURN OF ROSE TYLER**

Buckle up, everyone! Rose Tyler is back next week, but she's not going to arrive to find everything as it was, as the Doctor appears to be dead... The next episode, 'Turn Left' is apparently based mostly around the Doctor's female companions, which aside from being eye candy for Dads everywhere, means we get to see another side to the show and discover what the Doctor means to these people. It certainly looks interesting, and will hopefully be as good a build up to the finale as 'Utopia' was last year.

**Find official [Doctor Who memorabilia](#) at Starstore!**

### **TARDISWATCH 2008: DOCTOR WHO FEATURE REVIEWS EPISODE 11: TURN LEFT**

An independent, unofficial series of Doctor Who reviews and analysis from a lifelong fan of the show

Last year's antepenultimate (is that even a word?) episode, Utopia, formed the first part of what was essentially a three part story, and this year's eleventh episode does the same thing, albeit in much more of an intriguing way. Where last year's was a huge scale future tale, this one is more akin to something like series 1's 'Father's Day', a rather solemn story that tugs at heartstrings and tear ducts alike. Fans longing for the old days of multiple part stories are now getting what we want to a certain extent, and it is working in the show's favour that longer stories are being integrated into the new era- it gives much more room to build things up. Judging by the teaser for next week's episode, it looks as though RTD's promises of an even more epic climax are going to be true. Some people have noted that this episode felt a little like RTD giving himself a pat on the back for what has gone before, and why shouldn't he? He took a creaky old science fiction programme and turned it into the most vibrant thing on British TV. That deserves more than a pat on the back, but maybe not quite what Donna has on hers... Keep checking back for the latest news on new Doctor Who merchandise!

### **DOCTOR WHO: TURN LEFT - EPISODE REVIEW**

Rose is back! But wait... the Doctor is dead? The Titanic hit Buck palace? The Adipose destroyed America? The inhabitants of the ruined London are forced into emergency housing and labour camps? It must be time for an alternate history story. As a lead-in to the immense climax to the series, it is a great episode, and also works as a great piece of drama in itself. The fact that the Doctor is barely in it works in its favour- seeing Rose and UNIT trying to get Donna to correct the timelines after her past is altered by an alien parasite is a wonderful thing, and sets up the crossover to come. Torchwood, Sarah Jane, Martha and so on all get a mention, ready for their appearances next week, and Catherine Tate gets to play another version of Donna again, once more proving she is a much better actress than many fans originally gave her credit for. Billie Piper returns to the character that transformed her into one of the country's most respected young actresses, and carries the role of lead character here with grace and presence. There are some moments where she seems to struggle a little with Rose's accent (as she stated herself it took a while for her to get used to the character again), but for the most part she is excellent, and is very welcome back on our screens. The story, while convoluted and chock full of paradoxes and plot holes, is still a thrilling 45 minutes, and bodes extremely well for the story that it paves the way for...

8/10

### **THE STOLEN PLANET: HERE COMES THE DARKNESS**

The teaser trailer for next week's episode has sent fans into a frenzy. The sight of just about everyone the Doctor has met coming back to fight off the darkness (i.e. Davros and the rejuvenated Daleks), looks like it is going to be the pinnacle of the series since its return. Seeing the Torchwood characters and Sarah Jane making an appearance as well as the return of Martha, and Rose, and Donna, and and and... is just magnificent. This is the point where the world needs to wake up and see the truth- British science fiction TV doesn't just compete- it surpasses on every level.

# TARDISWATCH: DOCTOR WHO FEATURE REVIEW- EPISODE 12: THE STOLEN EARTH

## INTRODUCTION

The final piece of the puzzle has been put in place- the last remaining major villain from Doctor Who's classic era has returned at long last. Davros is back, and he's brought an entire new Dalek Empire with him. Davros has been a fascinating character ever since his first appearance in the 4th Doctor story Genesis of the Daleks, and while he is the absolute archetype of a science fiction villain, he carries with him a massive intellect and also an incredibly malevolent presence. That's the thing with Davros- where many evil characters will have some kind of weak spot or some shard of good left in them, Davros is pure, absolute evil. He revels in the suffering of others, and his sole aim is to overthrow the universe and prove that his creations, the Daleks, are the supreme beings in all of creation.

His grotesque visage is one that hasn't changed all that much since he first arrived in Doctor Who, and that is a testament to the character and his iconic image as a withered, ancient, crippled genius in a half mobile Dalek shell stuffed with gadgets. His stories have always had an incredible amount of power, especially in the exchanges between him and the Doctor, but the technology was never available back then to do the scale of the stories justice.

Thankfully that is exactly what has happened now- we finally get to see Davros and his plans in all their dark glory. He is Doctor Who's very own Lord Sauron. He is the epitome of darkness, evil, malevolence, negativity, power and oppression. His first story was blatantly a Nazi allegory, and that is as close as we can come to describing the level of evil at work. He is everything that we fear. He is everything that must be stopped. He is the greatest foe the Doctor, and indeed all of earth's protectors, have ever faced. Ladies and gentlemen of Planet Earth, this is how science fiction should be done. Watch, learn, and hide behind your sofas. Davros is back, and this time there seems to be no stopping him.

**Find official [Doctor Who collectibles](#) on Amazon!**

## DOCTOR WHO: THE STOLEN EARTH EPISODE REVIEW

There are moments in this episode that simply take the breath away. The cameos. The links to the past. The Daleks. Davros. Rose. UNIT. This penultimate episode of the current series plays like the first half of a Greatest Hits of Russell T Davies album, and that is no bad thing. This is for the fans, and it delivers in spades. The entire planet is stolen and dumped in deep space along with a bunch of other stolen planets, but why? The answer becomes quite clear quite quickly- Davros is harvesting matter to create more Daleks for his new Empire. Dalek Caan, last seen in 'Evolution of the Daleks' last

year, escaped via Emergency Temporal Shift and headed straight for the Time War itself, where he took Davros out of time so he may recreate his armies. Now, there are no Time Lords left other than the Doctor, and even he can't seem to find where earth has gone...

This is an incredible episode on every count. From the moment the opening credits roll, with their extended names and urgent animation, you know you're in for a treat, and a treat is exactly what you get. Pulling together characters from Doctor Who's recent history, as well as the spin-off shows Torchwood and The Sarah Jane Adventures, this is a blockbuster ride full of guest stars, action, explosions, and Billie Piper running around with a ludicrously big gun. Even in previous series finales, the scale has never been this big. RTD did say that this year's climax would be bigger than anything we've seen before in the new era of Doctor Who, and he wasn't kidding. The sheer magnitude of this episode is stunning. The effects are on a par with the most expensive Hollywood blockbusters, but it is in the characters themselves and their interaction that this really shines. Julian Bleach is perfect as Davros. Nowhere near as shouty or OTT as previous incarnations. He plays it with a quieter presence, which is even more sinister. The makeup and chair are perfect, and the shot of his gaping chest when he reveals he has been using his own body as material for Daleks is chilling. The Doctor is genuinely unnerved when his old nemesis makes himself known, and the power that the Daleks have over the Doctor's companions is genuinely frightening. Here we have Captain Jack Harkness and Sarah Jane Smith, two people who have seen adventure right across the universe, breaking down and giving up. Hearing Jack say 'I'm sorry... there's nothing I can do- we're dead' and Sarah Jane weeping and holding onto Luke really hammers the threat home for the kids watching- these are our heroes, and they are admitting that this threat is bigger than anything that they can face alone. The casting for this episode is spot on, and even the Shadow Proclamation and Judoon get a look in along the way.

The Doctor and Rose are reunited at long last, after Rose is unable to contact him during the episode and is heartbroken at her discovery of Martha on the screen when Harriet Jones is talking everyone through her plans, but that reunion is horrifically short lived. I love this moment. It's everything fans wanted and then kicks you in the gut. The Doctor is exterminated, and lies dying in Rose's arms. As his companions drag him into the TARDIS and he begins to regenerate, we are left wondering what is going to happen. He was only hit with a glancing blow, and the regeneration seems to be going awry...

Including so many references to past stories may work against the episode's favour with some viewers, as it is extremely continuity heavy, referencing the Time war, the Slitheen, the events in The Christmas Invasion, the classic era and more, so while true fans are leaping for joy every couple of minutes, the others may be left feeling a bit cold by the episode. That said, this is truly brilliant, and aside from RTD's script having the odd shaky line here and there, it is nigh on perfect. All kinds of questions are raised, like what is that key device? How did Rose get back to earth? But the biggest question of all of them regards THAT ending. Just what is happening to the Doctor? Is he actually regenerating? With a thrilling pace, a fantastic and huge cast of characters, a story that

is jam packed with twists and turns, some ingenious plotting, some brilliant moments and some even more brilliant moments, it is easy to forgive the odd story weakness like the throwaway explanation of Davros' survival. The payoff better be massive for this episode. It needs to be huge, needs to explain everything, and needs to set up the Christmas special. This is great- I really have no idea what to expect from the final episode. Fantastic.

## **EPISODE 13 RUMOURS**

The Doctor Who fan community has gone insane with this episode and its ending, but what does that regeneration mean? Here's some of the theories and some thoughts regarding them.

-The Doctor is regenerating into the 11th Doctor, played by David Morrissey.  
Hmm, I really don't think so. The Doctor, played by David Tennant, has been glimpsed on location filming the Doctor Who Christmas Special for this year WITH David Morrissey. Rumour is that Morrissey is playing an alien character posing as the Doctor, but who is actually inn league with the Cybermen and their new counterparts, the Cyber-Wraiths.

-The Doctor is splitting into Two Doctors.  
I hope not. Many people are saying that the Doctor's severed hand is going to grow into a whole new Doctor, also played by David Tennant. Fans are wondering if this other Doctor will then go off with Rose back to her Universe. But then Rose is another matter...

-The Death of Rose?  
A companion is going to die, according to Dalek Caan, and Billie Piper herself said that this story would be guaranteed to make you cry. Is Rose going to be killed in the battle against Davros? Possibly. Out of all the rumours, this is plausible. There have been spy photos of the Doctor and Rose back at Bad Wolf Bay, as seen in 'Doomsday', so after Rose's supposed death, does the Doctor go back to that time and place and finish the sentence he never could do when they were first separated?

-Donna is a Time Lord  
Several people are saying that Donna may in fact be Romana, the Doctor's former companion and also a Time Lady. Much has been made of her being something other than what she seems, especially in last week's 'Turn left' with the fortune teller's horror at finding out about her. I'd say there's definitely something else going on with Donna, and it is going to be great finding out. Spy reports from filming of the final episode state that there is a line in which the Doctor is telling Donna's Grandfather that he can 'never tell her what happened'. Is this aimed at Donna's Mum after she is killed, or does Donna get her mind wiped and forget her adventures with the Doctor? Much is made this series of Donna having 'other lives' in other realities, which adds fuel to this rumour.

-Multi Doctors crossover

The most outlandish rumour is that the Doctor's regeneration fails, but it does call forth previous incarnations of himself, namely the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth Doctors, and together they overcome the new Dalek Empire together, along with all of the guest stars. I love this idea, but it is simply too big and too mad for new fans to understand, plus it would never fit into 45 minutes. Then again, next week's episode is apparently considerably longer, touching the hour mark. We shall see.

## **[Doctor Who toys, DVDs](#) and more on Amazon**

### **TARDISWATCH: DOCTOR WHO FEATURE REVIEW- JOURNEY'S END**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Russell T Davies really did need to end his time as head of the ongoing series of Doctor Who with a bang didn't he? He is returning to helm the four specials next year (and of course this year's Cybermen extravaganza), but 'Journey's End' saw his four years on the main series come to a spectacular (if controversial) close. Fans have been left with a time to reflect on what RTD has done with Doctor Who since its return. Love him or hate him, he has worked miracles with this most British of televisual institutions. There are many RTD detractors out there, who don't approve of this or that storyline, or who keep harping on about 'The Gay Agenda', but none of them can honestly say that he hasn't done the fans proud. Here we have a TV show that began in 1963 with no money and a mad premise, which ended in 1989 and was briefly resurrected in 1996, and was then forgotten by much of the populace. But not by people like Davies and Steven Moffat and Paul Cornell and everyone else involved in it now.

What it became since 'Rose' aired on march 26th 2005, is a true phenomenon that has captured the hearts and minds of adults and children alike. New fans have been earned by the million, all over the world. There was a time where all we fans had was semi regular BBC novels and the Big Finish audios. There were times we didn't even have those to enjoy, and we turned to the Virgin New Adventures books for our fix (which, incidentally, many new Who names wrote for, including RTD himself). They kept the show alive with stories official and unofficial, and when it came time to bring the show back, they were already brimming with ideas. Look what happened. Now we have the Doctor back, and he is going to be the hero of millions of children for a very long time to come. For that we should be grateful. Family entertainment is entertaining again, and there are still so many adventures to have.

Russell T Davies- From myself, the rest of the staff, and fans all over the planet (maybe even beyond); Thank you sir.

#### **DOCTOR WHO: JOURNEY'S END EPISODE REVIEW**

How could anything possibly top the grandeur of last week's episode and the gripping regeneration cliffhanger? Part Two of this massive story really had its work cut out for it, and it took to the task with gusto. Let me get this out of the way first: This is not a perfect episode. Is it brilliant? Definitely. Does it make sense? Not always, but it is incredible entertainment nonetheless. The Doctor is still David Tennant, only even moreso now! After siphoning off the regeneration energy into his severed hand, the Doctor is healed and ready to fight on against Davros and the new Dalek Empire. A final episode that ties up not just this series, but several story arcs from earlier years and even the odd curiosity (like Eve Miles playing a character in series one, before she landed her Torchwood role- this is handled nicely with a quick line of dialogue)? It is all this and more.

The extended running time of the episode helps a great deal, giving the insane pace and the billion plot points a little more room to breathe. The cast is huge, the effects are perfect, and Rose gets her man at last... sort of. Where previous years finales have been just that- season end finales, this one genuinely feels like an era coming to an end. The scale of the yarn is ridiculously huge, and the manner in which the Doctor and his many companions overcome Davros and the Daleks is equally mad, but no less entertaining. This is an episode that does try to cram in too much but it also has you on the edge of your seat for its entire duration. Julian Bleach is brilliant as the maniacal Davros, David Tennant is great as both Doctors, and Donna's revelation at the end is stunning, albeit played a little bit too much for laughs.

There are a couple of weak moments in the episode, such as the spinning Daleks once The Doctor/Donna hybrid takes control of them, and a few lines of Rose's dialogue, but slight niggles aside this is an exemplary piece of television that joins the dots, fills in the blanks and will no doubt give rise to many years of fan fiction with the human hybrid Doctor wandering off into the sunset with Rose in the parallel dimension. One surprise was the lack of a link to or a title for this year's Christmas special (although we did see shots from it after the credits). Rumour has it that this will be called 'Ghosts in the machines' but rumour says a lot of things doesn't it?

Journey's End. For all its plotholes and its jumps in logic, is a fantastic end to a series of Doctor Who that has divided and united fandom at various points. Roll on Christmas.  
9/10

### **DOCTOR WHO- THE CYBERMEN ARE BACK!**

As previously reported, the Cybermen are returning at Christmas, but they aren't alone... Here come the Cyber Wraiths! David Morrissey stars alongside David Tennant in the brand new story, which is said to have steampunk style Cybermen and a fake Doctor in it. Here comes the hype...

### **TARDISWATCH: SERIES FOUR OVERVIEW**

When it was announced that Catherine Tate would be returning to Doctor Who for the whole of series four, fandom was pretty much unanimous in its shock and derision.

Could this actress, known mostly for her comedy work, bring back her character from the 2006 Christmas special 'The Runaway Bride' and make her less irritating? Would she ruin the show that BBC Wales had worked so hard on to resurrect? Or, would she surprise us all and actually be really good? A bit of all of them, really, but mostly the last one. Millions of Doctor Who fans, myself included, are eating our own words as Catherine's portrayal of Donna Noble this time came across as more or less a real person, and not just that, but a person we actually cared about by the end of the series. Who would have thought it was possible? This was certainly a series that brought many surprises along with it.

We had the return of the Ood, the classic Sontarans, the Daleks and Davros. Along the way we met the Doctor's Daughter, Agatha Christie, the Adipose and we became reacquainted with many old friends. Russell T Davies promised us that this series would be the biggest ever, and he has seen his final series as the showrunner out in fine style. While it did have its weaker moments, such as 'The Unicorn and the Wasp' and 'Midnight', it also brought us some genuine classics, such as 'Silence in the Library', 'Forest of the Dead' and the ingenious 'Turn Left'. It brought us a cloned Doctor, a Doctor/Donna hybrid, an utterance of the Doctor's name and more. While fans always find something to complain about, it has been the general opinion that this has been the best series so far, although nothing will top the final moments of series two's 'Doomsday' or 'Blink' or even 'Dalek' for a long time to come. As a coherent whole it has been very satisfying.

The scale has indeed been epic on many occasions, with FX gurus The Mill going above and beyond the call of duty, bringing us CG that has been absolutely incredible for the most part, and even their weaker moments have been excellent. Of the multi part stories this year, it has been the Steven Moffatt penned 'Silence in the Library' and 'Forest of the Dead' double header that has been the most impressive story of the lot. This two part extravaganza was perfect on almost every level. The script, the cast, the production, the effects were all fabulous, and Donna in particular really came of age with that story and won over many of the naysayers. David Tennant continued his excellent run as the Doctor with some of the most gripping scenes he has had to perform in the role. Of course, the big news was the return of Billie Piper as Rose Tyler for the series finale (and flashes throughout the series), and while she didn't quite recapture the character that made her hugely famous as an actress, she was still marvellous in the role and the fans were ecstatic to see her back and battling Daleks. Much was made over the possible regeneration of the Doctor into his 11th incarnation, and aside from a glorious regeneration cliffhanger at the end of episode 12, it didn't happen, and won't do for some time yet! The main event other than that was the return of Davros. Julian Bleach was perfectly cast as the Doctor's most terrifying foe, and while the final story was full of plothes and some very dodgy jumps in logic, it was extremely entertaining. That really sums up series four as a whole- imperfect, but fantastic television.

**DOCTOR WHO: DAVID TENNANT TO LEAVE – OFFICIAL**

The era of the tenth Doctor is set to close with the special episodes that will air in 2009. David Tennant revealed that he would be laying down his Sonic Screwdriver at the end of the 2009 Doctor Who specials while at the National Television Awards. He will complete the special episodes that are currently in production (the 2008 Christmas special is complete, but the remaining four specials that will air in 2009 are yet to be made). This means that when Doctor Who returns for a full series again in 2010, it won't just have a new showrunner (Steven Moffat), but it will have a new lead actor. This means we can probably expect to see the tenth Doctor regenerate during the 2009 Christmas special.

David Tennant said: "I've had the most brilliant, bewildering and life changing time working on Doctor Who. I have loved every day of it. It would be very easy to cling on to the TARDIS console forever and I fear that if I don't take a deep breath and make the decision to move on now, then I simply never will. ... I'm still the Doctor all next year but when the time finally comes I'll be honoured to hand on the best job in the world to the next lucky git - whoever that may be."

The much loved Scottish actor added that he "always thought the time to leave would be in conjunction with Russell T Davies and Julie Gardner, who have been such a huge part of it all for me. Steven Moffat is the most brilliant and exciting writer, the only possible successor to Russell and it was sorely tempting to be part of his amazing new plans for the show. I will be there, glued to my TV when his stories begin in 2010."

Thus the speculation over who will be the eleventh Doctor will now go into overdrive. You can check out our ideas for his successor on our 11th Doctor article. What fans the world over need to remember is that, yes, this is the end of an era, but there are still five specials to come featuring David as the Doctor, and thus we have a proper send-off to look forward to for the Doctor that became a huge fan favourite during his stint in the TARDIS.

We had his awesome first appearance at the end of 'The Parting of the ways' in series one, then there was the incredible 2005 Xmas special- The Christmas Invasion. While series 2 had its problems, it was still an incredible series of science fiction adventures. The 2006 Christmas Special, 'The Runaway Bride' was flawed but fun, and gave us a glimpse at a very lonely Doctor. Series 3 saw the character of the Doctor explored even further, climaxing with his final confrontation with the Master. The 2007 Christmas episode, 'Voyage of the Damned', was a fun romp that recalled the classic series. Series four saw all of the new era's assistants return (along with a classic era heroine too), to help the Doctor face Davros and the Daleks in their most chilling plan ever.

It has been a rollercoaster of a ride for the tenth Doctor and David Tennant. Millions of new fans flocked to the show as he established himself, and he has seen Doctor Who through its most successful period in its entire history on TV, in books and in Doctor Who merchandise.

From all of us here at Starstore.com and The Last Picture Show, and from Doctor Who fans young and old all over the world, thank you David. Thanks for the adventures, the humour, the energy and your relentless enthusiasm for Doctor Who. We wish you all the very best for your future projects, and are on the edge of our seats already, waiting for your grand finale as our hero.

DOCTOR WHO - Looking to the future, the past and in-between

On the heels of David Tennant's announcement that he is to leave the role of the world's favourite Time Lord upon completion of the 2009 special episodes, the Doctor Who fan community has ignited with theories and suggestions for the future of the series. While some of these ideas are pretty outlandish, we can be sure that new showrunner Steven Moffat will do his utmost to remain true to the central core values and ideals of the series itself. There are elements that will always be there, whoever the Doctor is played by. It will always boring adventure and excitement, there will always be monsters, and you can bet there'll always be a companion helping the Doctor get into more trouble.

Much is being made over the identity of the next Doctor, with many calling for either a female Doctor or a black Doctor. Really though, does it matter? As long as whoever is cast has a strong voice, a strong presence and an appreciation of the source material, then the future of the Doctor's adventures is in safe hands. The key here is the new man in charge. Moffat really is the only person that could follow on from the achievements of Russell T Davies, and with Phil Collinson and Julie Gardner also moving on, it is reassuring that someone with so much experience of the new era, as well as the classic material, will be the man who takes the Doctor into the next decade. He certainly has his work cut out for him. Then again, you only need to look at the stories Moffat penned so far for the new era of Doctor Who for proof that he knows the series well.

Series one saw his breathtaking two part story The Empty Child/The Doctor Dances become a fan favourite, and it also enjoyed much in the way of critical acclaim. It also introduced us to the character of Captain Jack Harkness, played by John Barrowman, who would take the lead in Doctor Who spin-off Torchwood. Series two saw Moffat take David Tennant's tenth Doctor to meet The Girl In The Fireplace, which was a rather flawed episode in some ways but it still hit the mark with fans. The third series featured his award winning episode 'Blink', which took many viewers by surprise with its chilling nature and ingenious plot. The fourth series had Silence In The Library/Forest of The Dead, which saw Moffat in serious science fiction territory, as well as boasting a massive scale of production for the show. With a heck of a lot of previous TV experience, I think that fans are in for some real treats once his era as head honcho commences.

But what of the remaining specials to feature David Tennant and the influence of Russell T Davies? Each one is clearly going to be something of an event, that much is certain. The rumours persist of previous incarnations of the Doctor showing up, but as

these are the final stories for David Tennant's hugely popular tenth Doctor, this is looking more and more unlikely. It would be a great thing for the fans, but this year is all about the tenth Doctor having his final adventures. As much as I'd love to see a previous Doctor crossover, I'd like David Tennant to have a proper send-off from the character that he made his own. Personally I would like it for the last two specials he stars in to be a two-part story, in order to give him a final story with some real weight.

Some things will have to change with the Doctor Who series, which is only natural. With another Doctor in the TARDIS after so long, some elements of the series could do with changing a little. These are just personal preference, but I'd like them out there. The opening titles, for example. They have long since been a bit of a sore point with some fans who long for the Doctor's face to be in the sequence. I'm not hugely bothered either way, but a new title sequence of some kind would be nice after four years. Many fans would also like to see more of the TARDIS interior. Not necessarily whole episodes set inside the ship, but as the craft is potentially infinite in size inside, it would be nice to see a little more than just the console room.

Speaking of which, how about giving the now familiar console room a bit of a facelift before it starts to date? At least the console itself could do with a bit of an overhaul. Then there is the format itself. How about some more multi-part stories? Two or three-part stories have some great things in their favour- not only do they give more room for character and plot development, but are also rather cost effective due to less sets needed to be built and locations to be found. I'd also love to see less reliance on old villains, but still have them involved to some extent.

Whatever happens to the Doctor along the way, it does look like fans are in for a very memorable year of specials and a very exciting future to look forward to. Have the jelly babies at the ready.

## **DOCTOR WHO: MATT SMITH IS THE ELEVENTH DOCTOR**

The BBC have officially announced that the eleventh actor to portray the rogue Time Lord known as The Doctor will be 26 year old Matt Smith. Smith, the youngest actor to ever take the lead in Doctor Who, is known to audiences from the TV adaptations of Philip Pullman novels as well as the hugely popular stage version of Alan Bennett's History Boys. This ends the months of speculation as to whether there would be a woman or someone of a different ethnic background piloting the TARDIS.

My opinion? Disappointment, really. My first thoughts are that he is too young, too wiry and has little of the presence that the Doctor needs. I look forward to being impressed, or at least proven wrong, and as Stephen Moffatt will be in charge by the time that Smith takes over, the stories should at least be well put together. Until I get to see him in action, I'll have to reserve judgement. My chief concern is that the casting of Smith is leaning more and more towards concentrating on pretty boys instead of a lead actor with real gravitas. I wish Matt all the best with the role, but would have much preferred

someone a good twenty years older. More William Hartnell/Tom Baker than David Tennant. The Doctor should be a force of nature, not a heart-throb.

As ever, we will be following the evolution of Doctor Who's next series very closely.

### **DOCTOR WHO: BIONIC WOMAN CAST IN NEXT SPECIAL**

It will soon be officially confirmed (well, it should be considering this publicity shot is out) that Michelle Ryan, star of the recent Bionic Woman remake series (and, erm, Eastenders) has been cast in the Doctor Who Easter special, namely Planet of the Dead. Ryan is said to play a character called 'Lady Christina de Souza' and is to be the tenth Doctor's companion for the duration of the new special, which apparently sees the Doctor trapped on a bus on a very odd journey. Erm, okay...

Michelle Ryan was previously rumoured to be appearing in Doctor Who as a full-time companion when Billie Piper quit as Rose. In the end, Freema Agyeman landed the role of Martha Jones, and Michelle Ryan went to the States to play the lead in the short-lived Bionic Woman series. Recently she was rumoured to be in line to play the eleventh Doctor's companion when Matt Smith takes over from David Tennant next year. This may still happen.

### **DOCTOR WHO: Fan mail already for the 11th Doctor**

He may not have shot a single scene as the rogue Time Lord yet, but 11th Doctor Matt Smith has already been getting fan mail. In a comment to Doctor Who Magazine, he has stated that he'll try to respond to all of them.

It is nice to know that the man who will be taking over as the nation's favourite science fiction hero is being welcomed by fans of the show. While his casting was controversial due to his age and the stark difference between him and David Tennant, it is wonderful to know that someone with such a unique look and an obvious presence will carry on the sterling work of the new era of Doctor Who.

One thing that does confuse me a little is the line about the last special being shown early next year. We were under the assumption that the tenth Doctor would regenerate in the 2009 Christmas episode, giving us our first glimpse of the 11th Doctor and acting as a huge teaser for series 5 to come in 2010. Hopefully some light will be shed on this soon.

### **Doctor Who - The Next Doctor - A Review of the 2008 Christmas Special**

By [[http://ezinearticles.com/?expert=Andrew\\_Hawnt](http://ezinearticles.com/?expert=Andrew_Hawnt)]Andrew Hawnt

The Doctor Who Christmas specials have been something of a mixed bag so far. The first one, 2005's The Christmas Invasion, was superb in every way. That was followed by 2006's excruciatingly bad 'The Runaway Bride' and 2007's rather mediocre 'Voyage of the Damned'. This year, the BBC have gone for a full-on Christmas extravaganza set

in that staple of warm and fuzzy Christmas yarns- Victorian London. Here's 'The Next Doctor'. Thankfully there's mischief afoot in the shape of the Cybermen, and thus we're not just watching the Doctor eat mince pies for an hour. The Next Doctor takes a whacking chunk of inspiration from the current surge in the Steampunk offshoot of science fiction, with some fantastic results and some not so fantastic.

The story fits the hour-long format well, giving ample room for characterization and pacing, but it does show that the budget was all spent on the massive scale ending. The Cybermen seem a bit tougher and more like the classic era cybermen in behaviour (and certainly in voice), the production is sumptuous and the cast are spot on, but the piece is let down somewhat by the curiously realized Cybershades. What are they? Dogs? People? Animated fur coats? While everything else in the episode is based largely on materials available at the time the episode is set, where would they have found these odd creatures? The bronze faces are a bit comical after a while, really.

David Morrissey's 'Next Doctor character' is very Doctorish to start off with, but it becomes clear before the midway point that he isn't all that he seems, and the gradual realization of his own past will remind Doctor Who fans of the Doctor himself in the Human nature/Family of Blood episodes from series 3, when he himself had his memories replaced. That story is mentioned a few times, as is the legend of the fob watch (part of the Chameleon Arch process in those earlier episodes), and it is this element that makes you wonder if Mr Davies struggled with the script. It is evident that he didn't though, as this is one of the best written episodes in a while.

'The Next Doctor' comes across as ideal Christmas day entertainment, but its setting will limit its appeal on DVD. That said, it is a rather well crafted story on the whole. Personally I loved every minute of it, and that ending just blew me away. The scale of the last ten minutes is truly immense, and must have had steampunk fans screaming with glee at their TVs. I do hope that the rest of the Doctor Who special episodes to feature David Tennant as the Doctor (which will make up his last year in the part) are as well made as The Next Doctor. 2009 will be very interesting indeed for Doctor Who fans all over the galaxy. I give 'The Next Doctor' a resounding thumbs up, and would love to see David Morrissey show up in Doctor Who again.

Andrew writes for the popular Starstore blogs and their [http://www.starstore.com/acatalog/Starstore\_Catalogue\_Dr\_WHO\_MEMORABILIA\_\_TOYS\_\_COLLECTIBLES\_1747.html]TV and film merchandise site, as well as being a renowned music journalist, geek columnist, SF author and long-term Doctor Who fan.

Article Source: [http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Andrew\\_Hawnt](http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Andrew_Hawnt)  
<http://EzineArticles.com/?Doctor-Who---The-Next-Doctor---A-Review-of-the-2008-Christmas-Special&id=1822394>

**All the best [action figures, posters, collectibles](#) and more at STARSTORE!**

## **PLANET OF THE DEAD**

### **DOCTOR WHO: Planet of the Dead trailer reaction**

So then, the first trailer for the next Doctor Who special episode, Planet of the Dead, has now aired and also leaked online (but not through the BBC yet, so I'm not posting it here), giving us a glimpse at one of the tenth Doctor's final few adventures. While it seems that stylistically the episode will have some elements in common with season 4's 'Midnight' episode, I think it is going to be a winner.

Thanks to the fact that it doesn't have to have any Christmas elements nailed to the script, it looks like a solid Doctor Who story with some interesting effects (although the Tritovore still look horrendous to me) and a nice, strong science fiction setting.

The Dubai footage has a beautiful look to it, and will hopefully provide the episode with a great atmosphere. I'm curious to see if the edit style in the trailer matches that of the episode itself- a little adventurous editing and visual effects will help elevate it above a mere episode into something more special. After all, isn't that the point?

I'm still not quite sold on Michelle Ryan yet, but I'll reserve judgment until I see the episode itself. The Doctor seems a little on autopilot, but that is probably/hopefully just down to the limited running time of the trailer. It does look promising. Not long now!

### **Planet of the Dead- Synopsis and production**

Screened in April 2009, Planet of the Dead is the last episode of Doctor Who to be aired before the first part of the final two-episode finale that will see David Tennant's tenth Doctor regenerate into Matt Smith as the eleventh Doctor. This new series of special episodes got off to a very strong start with the Christmas 2008 special, The Next Doctor, so this one needs to be something special to maintain interest until the climax. Planet of the Dead is a very different tale indeed. Read on...

### **Doctor Who- Planet of the Dead: Synopsis**

The Doctor boards an everyday red London bus, as does a somewhat notorious jewel thief called Lady Christina (played by former Eastender/Bionic Woman Michelle Ryan), which is subsequently hurled into peril when sucked through a wormhole and flung onto a desert planet. The planet is infested by a terrifying flying swarm (known as The Swarm, funnily enough) and their bug-headed neighbours, the Tritovore, aren't too welcoming either.

The Doctor must enlist Lady Christina as his companion in order to try and get the wrecked bus and its terrified inhabitants back to Earth, without the help of his trusty TARDIS, before they are all consumed by the Swarm or destroyed by the Tritovore that are surrounding them. Thematically similar to Midnight in some respects, it is nevertheless a great adventure story and a strong vehicle for David Tennant to shine before the finale begins.

## **Doctor Who- Planet of the Dead: Behind the Scenes**

Planet of the Dead stars David Tennant in the role of the tenth Doctor and former Eastenders/Bionic Woman star Michelle Ryan as jewel thief Lady Christina. The cast of this special also includes noted comedian Lee Evans as Professor Malcolm Taylor. The production on this special episode was far from straightforward by all accounts, as location filming for the episode took place overseas in Dubai. The BBC shipped a full size London bus overseas to use in the episode, and when the bus was damaged severely during filming, the script had to be altered to accommodate a reason for the damage!

Russell T Davies stated that this episode would be all new in origin, and feature no old monsters and very little continuity from earlier episodes or eras, and was intended as an antidote to the fan-pleasing Journey's End episode from series 4 and The Next Doctor's references to the classic series and classic monsters.

It is the first Doctor Who story to be filmed and broadcast in HD. David Tennant has gone on record to say that he had to practice the Doctor's voice again as he's just been playing hamlet for six months previous to starting work on Planet of the Dead.

This is to be the last standalone story before the two-part climax to the era of the tenth Doctor. Russell T Davies has stated that the first part of the double-episode ending will air 'sometime in November-ish'.

## **BONUS MATERIAL:**

### **THE END OF THE TENTH DOCTOR: What is to come?**

Details are scarce on the fate of the tenth Doctor so far, but outgoing mainman Russell T Davies has stated that the climax to the era of the Tenth Doctor is a two part story. The first part is to be shown sometime in November 2009, with the final part, David Tennant's final episode, to be shown at Christmas.

This will then lead into series 5, which is to begin its run in Spring 2010. The main companion for that final two-parter is to be Bernard Cribbins, who, of course, played Donna Noble's grandfather Wilf in series four (plus appearing in the 1960s big screen Doctor Who movies that everyone seems to have forgotten about). Catherine Tate is

also to reprise her role as Donna Noble, but it will be Wilf who is the main companion for those final episodes.

I find that strangely fitting. Bernard is a great actor, and his screentime as Wilf in series 4 was some of the finest acting onscreen in that series. Freema Agyeman is also said to be returning as Martha, but now word on Billie Piper coming back. This is good, really, as I think it is time for the Rose Tyler character to be laid to rest, as much as I am fond of her. We had perfect closure for Rose at the end of series four (well, we had it at the end of series 2, but that's another story), and bringing her back again would cheapen her exit. It might be interesting to see her come back later during Matt Smith's run, but not before.

## **Recapturing the Imaginations of Millions**

It brings a warm glow to the heart of an old Doctor Who fan to know that our beloved Time Lord returned to our screens with such success, and it is exciting to know that the future is looking very strong for the show. With Stephen Moffat in charge, we are in for a serious treat. I (largely) loved the Russell T Davies era, and am thrilled that Moffat will be the man taking our hero out on even more adventures. The tenth Doctor built on the powerful start that the Ninth Doctor, Christopher Eccleston, brought to the rejuvenated show, and surpassed everyone's expectations with his popularity thanks to the effervescent performance of David Tennant.

The knowledge that children now have such an incredible role model on TV is heartening. The Doctor is a genius and loathes guns- what's not to love about him? He stands for everything that is good and right, and despite his own internal demons he will never stop until whichever villain is silenced. Then off for the next adventure. That is the essence of Doctor Who, and the fact that this essence has been present since the show came back in 2005 bodes well for the future. The Doctor is in safe hands indeed.

As a cultural phenomenon, Doctor Who's return is astounding. Before 'Rose' aired back in March '05, the show was little more than a footnote, a fading icon remembered by a select group of people who kept it alive through books and audio dramas. Now, well, you know the rest.

Now that the excitement has died down over the announcement of Matt Smith as the 11<sup>th</sup> Doctor, I can look again at the casting with fresh eyes. Now I've had some time to

think about it, Matt Smith looks very promising indeed. He has a great presence and some superb mannerisms that seem very much in keeping with the character of the Doctor.

The adventures that are to come are going to be some of the most important in years. We have a new Doctor, a new show runner, new companions, possibly a new TARDIS interior and theme tune, and more. The show, just like the Doctor himself, will regenerate into something new all over again.

Here's to the future.

Andrew Hawnt

April 2009

For the best in action figures, posters, calendars, collectibles and much, much more, visit

<http://www.starstore.com>

Follow us on Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/starstorecom>