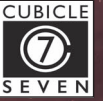


BBC



# DOCTOR WHO

ROLEPLAYING GAME



GAMEMASTER'S COMPANION



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## INTRODUCTION

*'HELLO.**ANYWAY, WHY DON'T WE STOP AND HAVE A NICE LITTLE CHAT  
WHERE I TELL YOU ALL MY PLANS AND YOU CAN  
WORK OUT A WAY TO STOP ME,  
I DON'T THINK.'*


All of time and space, everywhere and *everywhen*. From stopping a Cybermen invasion in the heart of London to venturing inside a Dalek and (almost) everything in between, the Doctor's been there and done that. But when it comes to writing and running your own adventures, where do you even begin? This is where the **Gamemaster's Companion** comes in.

The **Gamemaster's Companion** is an invaluable resource to help you run the **Doctor Who Roleplaying Game**, offering advice on telling stories in the style of the Doctor's adventures. It's a veritable toolbox of tips, tricks and techniques that you can use in your own games, picking and choosing which ones you want to try out. You'll be using flashbacks, starting games *in media res* and ending your next session with a killer cliffhanger before you know it!

The first part of the **Gamemaster's Companion** is divided into five chapters.

**Chapter One** offers advice on starting a new game, from setting concept to creating characters and putting the group together. **Chapter Two** is about planning an adventure, from plot to pacing, finishing off with the mother of all random adventure generators. **Chapter Three** is all about the bad guys, offering advice on how to create a truly memorable villain and some special rules for making them truly threatening. It also takes a look at that staple of *Doctor Who* adventures, the monsters, particularly focused on how to make your own. **Chapter Four** provides a toolkit for bringing the setting to life, helping you to create a vivid location for your adventure to unfold in. **Chapter Five** delves into the nitty-gritty of how you go about running an adventure, from describing things to bringing things back on track when they go somewhat... awry. This chapter also zooms out to look at the bigger picture, helping you link all of your adventures into a campaign. Finally, it is loaded with what we're terming 'stock footage' – that is to say, ready-made characters and locations that you can dip into when you're in tight spot.

The second part of the book contains three complete adventures, each of which showcases some of the techniques and tips explained earlier in the book, letting you put all you've learned so far into practice.

**Death Comes to Toytown** starts the game in the middle of the action in a fantastical location; the characters have been transformed into toys, trapped in a toy shop filled with otherworldly foes. Who's done it and what do they want with the characters' real bodies?

**The Grip of the Kraken** sees the TARDIS becalmed in space about a powerless starship, drifting towards a mysterious asteroid belt and into the maw of a new monster – the Kraken.

**The Bellagio Imbrolio** is a sandbox-style adventure, pitching the characters into the political intrigue of 18th-century Venice with a cast of NPCs all pulling the story towards a different agenda. Who will the characters choose to help and what will the outcome be?

Finally, a note of caution. If you're a player; while there's nothing inherently spoiler-y about this sourcebook's contents, reading it will be something akin to working out how the magician performs all his tricks. So while we won't come out and say "players, stop reading now!", reading it might take away some of the mystery of your game. Alternatively, it might just inspire you to run your own game!

STARTING OUT



## STARTING OUT



*“So, all of time and space, everything that ever happened or ever will. Where do you want to start?”*

Starting a new game of the **Doctor Who Roleplaying Game**? Let’s work out the best set-up for you and your friends.

### ⚙️ HOW TO SET UP A NEW GAME

Here’s the thing: the game set-up you choose needs support from the whole group. You need a thumbs up from everyone, even if it isn’t their first choice. As Gamemaster, making sure of this is your job; this is a game where the Gamemaster calls a lot of the shots, and the players will expect the same here.

So this is how you do it:

- You tell them your best idea.
- Then you talk about it.

First up, think about game ideas that you get excited about. After all, you’ll be putting more work into this than any of the players. Choose a concept that really catches your imagination. Think about how to describe it to your players. You want the players to see why your idea will make for a really exciting game that they’ll love to play. Adding a bit of detail can help: instead of “I think the game should be about

some people who stumble into a rogue TARDIS”, try “I think the game should be about some people from different periods of Earth’s history who stumble into a mysterious TARDIS and are yanked out of their own times. They keep getting dragged into exciting adventures throughout time and space, all while trying to figure out the secrets of the TARDIS”.

Warning! Don’t fall so in love with your idea that you can’t bear to change it! No game concept entirely survives contact with player creativity!

You don’t need to stop at one idea, but you don’t want to share more than three or four at once. Beyond that you’ll be presenting the players with so many options that it will be hard to make a good decision.

Now the second step: talking it through. Get the players together (or send out group emails, whatever works) and tell them you want their help deciding the concept for the game. Describe your idea to them, but – and this is important – present it as a starting point, not something set in stone.

Invite suggestions, counter ideas, modifications, whatever they come up with. Talk it out. Many times, the group will be happy to go with your suggestion, but even then see if you can get at least one suggestion from each player for a change or addition to the

concept. The more the game reflects the interests of everyone, the more likely it is to deliver an amazing experience in play.

## THE CORRECT WAY TO START

There is no correct way to start. No, that's wrong: there are lots of correct ways to start. You can do it like this:

- Step One: Decide on a concept.
- Step Two: Choose characters to fit.
- Step Three: Work out your starting point.

Or like this:

- Step One: Decide on some characters.
- Step Two: Develop a concept to fit.
- Step Three: Discuss issues like canon.

Or this:

- Step One: Have a big rambling discussion about all the different aspects of a new concept until something starts feeling right.
- Step Two: Play!
- Step Three: Discuss how it went and make changes to improve things.

Or maybe this:

- Step One: Decide something.
- Step Two: Decide something else.
- Step Three: Change the first something for a better idea.

In other words, don't hesitate to do things in whatever order feels right. Test the waters, try a few options – the method that works best for your group might not be obvious until you try it.

## ⚙️ OVERALL CONCEPT

What is your game idea about? Who are the characters and what are they doing? This is the big-picture concept, and it gives you some important information.

## TIME LORD PLUS HUMANS EXPLORING TIME AND SPACE

Everyone knows how this one works: a Time Lord with a TARDIS takes a few human companions on the adventure of a lifetime. It reliably delivers fun times and gives you a stable set-up for continuing adventures. This is the classic concept, and most

groups will give it a try the first time they play – but, of course, there are other ways to play.

**Potential Pitfalls:** Even though this is the classic approach, it has its problems. First, it requires committed players. Say you have a large group but because of work or family commitments, you never know who will make it to any particular game session. The classic set-up won't be a great fit, because there's only so many times you can make excuses as to why one of the team sits out the adventure in the TARDIS before it starts to feel fake.

There are also some balance concerns with this model. The Time Lord and the human companions are mechanically balanced by Story Points, but despite this it can be easy for a dominant player to use their Time Lord character to grab a lot of time in the spotlight, or to direct the course of the whole game, at the expense of other players. Some groups prefer a more equal arrangement: is yours one of them?

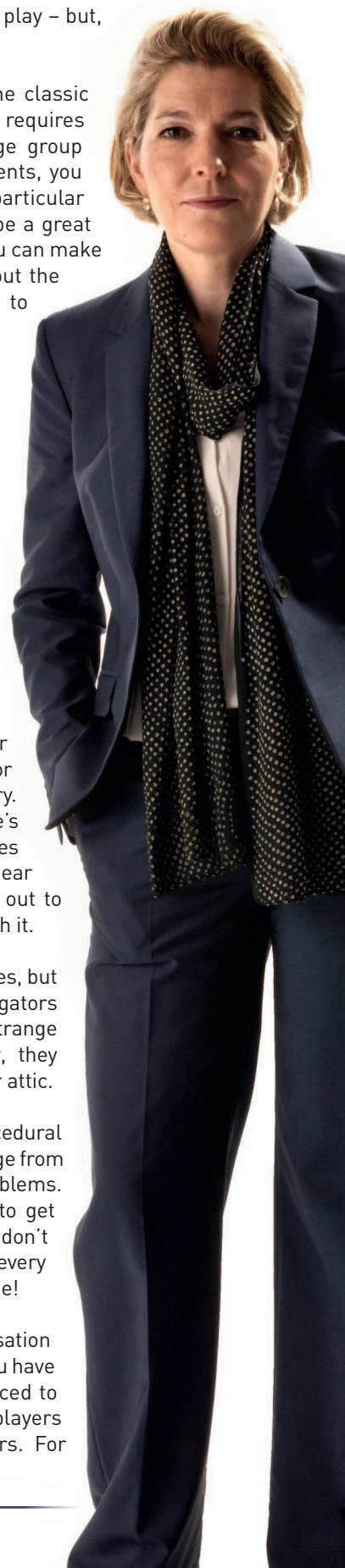
## EARTH TEAM INVESTIGATING STRANGE EVENTS

This is also a fairly easy model to get your head around. UNIT has been doing this for decades, and Torchwood for over a century. There's a group with a headquarters. There's someone more-or-less in charge who likes to get out in the thick of things. They hear about the latest unusual event and head out to inspect it and, if there's trouble, to deal with it.

UNIT and Torchwood are organised agencies, but this set-up also works for amateur investigators who like to stick their noses into the strange things they hear about. If they're lucky, they might even have an alien computer in their attic.

This is a great model for a flexible procedural game. The exact group of players can change from week to week and it won't cause any problems. The drive to investigate means it's easy to get the group off on a new adventure. And you don't need to come up with a new alien planet every time, because the setting will stay the same!

**Potential Pitfalls:** When you have an organisation you have a chain of command, and when you have a chain of command you have players forced to take orders. Even worse, you often have players forced to take orders from other players. For





## STARTING OUT



some groups this won't be a problem, but in others, this will be a huge minus to their experience. If you decide on a small agency where people are expected to take the initiative, and you this problem mostly goes away.

If the group aren't in a formal organisation, but are just curious amateurs, then the main problem is that of protecting themselves. If any given set of villains can portray the group as criminals, then that might be the end of their careers and the game right then and there – they won't have UNIT or Torchwood advising police not to press charges.

### ACCIDENTAL WANDERERS

Just because they're travelling through space and time doesn't mean they know how to steer. Perhaps their travel is entirely accidental. Your game can be about a group of people who stumble into a situation they don't understand. Perhaps they crawled through a wardrobe and ended up in a strange new world, with no clear idea of how to get home, and the controls to the wardrobe are extremely confusing...

This can be a handy one for a Gamemaster, because it means the players entrust you with deciding where they go from week to week. You decide if it's Roman Britain now, ancient Mesopotamia next, then the year 3 million. They go along for the ride.

**Potential Pitfalls:** While hopping from random place to random place can be fun for a while, many groups will want some control over their destiny before too

long. When that happens, you'll either change the concept into something new, or start winding up the game. This can actually be a really good thing, as players might find it very satisfying to go from helpless victims of circumstance to travellers in control of their own fates, but it's worth knowing what you're getting yourself into. This set-up also shares the problem of player commitment. If you have an irregular player or two, then it will be quite hard to keep continuity from one game session to the next.

### HIGH CONCEPT

"You know what would be an awesome idea? If we play..."

- "...Sontarans who were infected with human emotions by the Doctor, and now we're chasing him through time and space to make him put us back like we were before!"
- "...the bridge crew of one of those time-travelling shape-changing robots, only instead of enforcing justice we're tracking down the Key to Time!"
- "...a band of thieves plotting the biggest heists in all of time and space, and we decide on the Daleks as our first target!"
- "...members of a cross-time flower delivery service, and we're constantly competing with a rival cross-time flower delivery service!"
- "...people whose lives got messed up by aliens but they blame the Doctor and want to put him on trial, so they investigate everything mysterious in case he's involved!"

- "...ordinary people who wake up in a world where all of time is mashed together and who try to work out what went wrong so they can put things right!"

When someone says "You know what would be an awesome idea?" you're dealing with a high concept. These ideas are unique and distinctive. The concept by itself should be enough to get everyone interested. A high-concept game can be one of the most memorable experiences you'll have at a tabletop: you know your game will be unlike every other game out there, and you have an amazing opportunity to get wildly creative together! These ideas are always a bit odd, though, so it is extra important to make sure everyone likes the idea and wants to play.

**Potential Pitfalls:** Unsurprisingly there are lots of things that can go wrong with this sort of game. High concepts are never sure things. Sometimes an idea that you're all excited by and committed to can still fall over when you sit down to play it.

When you're talking about high concepts, two big things to consider are longevity (will the adventures keep coming, or will they dry up pretty quickly?) and equity (will all the players share in the fun, or will some characters get more attention than others?).

### WHAT SORT OF CHARACTERS DO WE PLAY?

In most other roleplaying games, the starting concept is clear enough that everyone pretty much lands on the same page: you're all fantasy heroes who like looting dungeons for treasure, or you're all 1920s occult investigators, or whatever. This game is not like that. A new **Doctor Who Roleplaying Game**

can start anywhere in time or space, with any sort of characters. In fact, there are so many choices, it can be a challenge to even get started! Here are some good options to start you off...

### THE TARDIS CREW

You take on the roles of your favourite TARDIS crew. Be the Doctor, Clara and Danny! Or be the Doctor, Amy and Rory! Or be the Doctor, Martha and Jack! Or be the Doctor, Rose and Mickey! Those character sheets appear in the various books for a reason, after all.

Some groups will be happy to use a non-standard crew: the Doctor, Donna and Amy, for example. You can come up with a clever explanation, or just shrug your shoulders and go for it, whatever feels right to you.

A good option if the players...

- Love the iconic characters.
- Have the right number of people.
- Want to start playing right away.
- Won't argue over who gets to play who.

Avoid this option if the players...

- Enjoy arguing about the merits of the characters (you'll never get anything done!).
- Want to use their own creativity.
- Don't all know the characters.
- Can get a bit worried about canon (see pg. 10).



### OTHER FAMILIAR CHARACTERS

The Doctor has encountered many other interesting folk through his travels, and many of them would make great people to adventure with. There's various UNIT brigadiers and scientific advisers, a cat burglar, a Silurian and a Sontaran in Victorian London, the Doctor's vat-grown 'daughter', Wilfred's grey-haired alliance, maybe even funny-forehead Adam after he grows up a bit.



Get everyone to pick one of these characters, come up with a way to bring them together, and begin! You can also mix-and-match these characters with an established TARDIS crew, adding them in as extras to fill out a game table.

A good option if the players...

- Love the huge world surrounding the Doctor's travels.
- Have favourite characters who they want to see more.
- Aren't confident creating new characters from scratch.

Avoid this option if the group...

- See the Doctor as the centre of the story.
- Want to invent their own characters.
- Want to go off completely in their own direction.

### SOMETHING ENTIRELY NEW

Who could forget the adventures of the Adjudicator and her companions Mikael and Sondra! Or that

## STARTING OUT

### RELATIONSHIP TO 'CANON'

Here's something else you'll want to talk about in advance – or, at least, fairly early on. How does your game fit in with the known adventures of the Doctor and his friends? If you play a game with the Doctor, Mickey and Rose, and Mickey sacrifices himself saving Rose from the Daleks – well, that isn't what happened in the adventures everyone knows. Mickey ends up in Pete's World, then comes back to save the universe, and ends up married to Martha. Right?

At some point you and the group are going to have to pick an option. Best to talk about it early, even if you don't make a firm decision right away.

- **Not a problem!** We're not using the Doctor and chums, so we don't need to worry about whether our adventures match up to the story everyone knows. Besides, the Doctor's adventures do seem to contradict each other anyway from time to time, so if we do end up incompatible with something, well, so what?
- **We're on our own!** As soon as we sit down to play, we're off into a tangent universe where anything can happen. Time can be rewritten, Rigby can keep the chronolock instead of Clara, the Doctor can die battling the Silence, Donna can turn right instead of left...
- **We'll fit in the gaps!** We'll play with the understanding that our game will slot neatly in between two of the Doctor's escapades, like a missing adventure. We'll all try and avoid invalidating the future adventures of our characters. And if we do end up breaking our expected future, we'll see if there's a way to put things back together again. (I mean, Rory keeps coming back to life after dying, right?)

You can play many games without this decision mattering terribly much, but some players will care a whole lot about it. So talk about it in advance!



memorable pair of time travellers, Theta Gamma and Miss Collins! And of course, everyone is awed by the incredible escapades of Hugh Sonic and the Dub Stepsisters!

You haven't heard of these people, because they don't exist. By creating a brand-new group of time-travelling adventurers, you can find something that perfectly fits your players and goals.

You might also want to split the difference of familiar and new, by creating a brand-new future Doctor and their companions.

A good option if the group...

- Is eagerly creative.
- Doesn't want to be constrained by established characters.
- Doesn't mind bending around canon.

Avoid this option if the group...

- Want to play the Doctor and companions; that is the name of the game after all.
- Don't have confidence in their own creativity.
- Are impatient to get started.

## ⚙️ CREATING CHARACTERS

In many groups, everyone's happy to leave problems like concept and canon to the Gamemaster. However, there is one part of game set-up where everyone wants a piece: character creation.

Coming up with the characters who will be your main focus when you sit down to play is, unsurprisingly, somewhat important. It is an incredibly good idea to get the entire group talking about everyone's characters, rather than sending everyone off to invent their own characters in isolation then present them to the others as "finished!" If you want the characters to make sense as an ensemble in a game, then develop them together as a group.

## WHO ARE THE CHARACTERS?

The overall concept and other decisions provide big-picture options of the sorts of characters available. Have a chat with the group about the specific characters that you need for the concept to work. For example, if you're going with a classic approach, someone will need to be the Doctor, and one or more people to be his companions. If you're a UNIT squad, you'll need someone to be the officer in charge, and

perhaps a scientific advisor, and a reliable sergeant who knows how to set explosives, and so on. Also, try to ensure each character has a role to play that makes them special. In other words – don't create two characters who both have the same job. Giving everyone a distinct niche means that everyone will get their own moments to shine in the adventures to come. Some examples:

- Talking to people.
- Punching people in the chin.
- Sneaking around and investigating.
- Playing with gadgets.
- Understanding time, space, the universe and everything.
- Anything else that you expect to come up in adventures.

Work towards everyone having an idea, even a loosely defined one. As Gamemaster, you should help things along. Feel free to make suggestions about character possibilities. If you spot that a player seems interested in an idea, ask them about it. Watch for when players respond to the group's ideas, and encourage exploration.

Note that some groups might want to start with character ideas and work upwards from there to find a concept which fits. This can be tricky, especially if two players have their hearts set on playing characters that seem to belong in contradictory concepts. Or if two players both want to be the Doctor! As always, as Gamemaster it ultimately falls to you to make suggestions and get the conversation going to sort these issues out.

### HOW DO THE CHARACTERS END UP TOGETHER?

So, how did these characters come together as a group?

Your concept might answer this question: a UNIT squad is together because they're a UNIT squad, for example. But even here, a chat can be useful. A newly assembled squad of recruits from civilian services is a different sort of thing to a tight-knit squad of career soldiers with years of experience firing five rounds rapid at chaps with wings. Most groups will fit into one of these three options:

- They are family or old friends.
- They are working together on a project or as part of an organisation.
- They are acquaintances or strangers who are forced together by circumstance.

It's also possible to have a mixed set-up. Perhaps two characters are work colleagues and friends, schoolteachers, say. Perhaps two other characters are family, perhaps a grandfather and granddaughter. These two pairs are then forced together by circumstance and get to know each other as they embark on a series of adventures. That might work.



### PLAYING THROUGH THE MEETING

You might want to play through how the characters all meet, or you might decide to have that happen 'off-screen' before you begin. Which way will suit your group?

- **Hello! Nice to meet you!** In this approach, the characters don't know each other at all when you start. Their first interactions will happen as part of the game. This is neat because the players learn things at the same time as their characters. The catch is ensuring there's a reason for these new acquaintances to stick together. Maybe they've been assigned to work together; maybe they're about to fall through a time portal together and will have to rely on each other to survive. If you can't think of a way to do this, then it might be better to use the second option. (You can always flashback to their first meeting later on...)
- **Here we go again!** In this approach, the characters already know each other when you first sit down to play. You can even start right in the middle of the action, in a pitched battle with the Cybermen or running away from Robespierre's men. The great advantage is getting right into the fun without worrying about the details yet. Yes, things will be confusing to start with, but if everyone just goes for it then things will fall into place later on. This option is also great if the reason your characters get together is complex

or full of coincidence – nothing ever quite goes to plan when you play things out, so it's far safer to keep that detail in flashbacks only!

### WHAT ARE THEIR SKILLS AND TRAITS?

Now it's time to get those character sheets filled in. Everyone should start choosing skills and traits based on their character concepts.

Everyone should keep talking as they go. Hearing everyone else making decisions will help players narrow down their own ideas. Keep those special roles in mind, and watch out for any signs of overlap between characters.

Watch out for combinations that will instantly cause trouble during play! If one player chooses the Outcast trait, explaining that they are a compulsive thief, and another takes the By the Book trait, announcing themselves as determined to uphold the law, then you're headed for trouble in play.

On the other hand, you could try to set up some combinations that will lead to a fun character dynamic. If one character is Cowardly and another is Brave, then there's probably going to be some bickering down the line, but likely the fun sort of bickering. An Eccentric who keeps wandering off would be well-matched by a friend with a Sense of Direction and Keen Senses who can track them down.

While all this detail work is being done, it's a great opportunity for you as Gamemaster to talk one-to-one with each player. Make sure you understand why they're excited to play this character. You'll get inspiration from their ideas!

### WHAT STUFF DO THEY HAVE?

You can skip this question if the answer is 'ordinary things'. If the group concept is to be university students, then just assume everyone has university-student-type gear, and move on. Problem solved.

But some concepts need a little more care. If the group is a UNIT squad, then presumably they'll have weapons of some kind. A Torchwood scientific unit might have strange and interesting gadgets. And any concept that has the characters travelling through time and space requires them to have a time machine!

Individual characters can negotiate with the Gamemaster to have Gadgets that suit their situation, but a shared conversation can decide what equipment is normal for this group. If there are any Gadgets or vehicles that will be important to everyone, like an alien supercomputer hidden inside an attic wall, now is the time to scope them out.

As Gamemaster, you must have a strong role in this discussion. It is a good idea to be cautious about what you allow. At this stage you're just making



guesses about the potential impact of different kinds of gear, so try to hold back on firm approvals until the game has started and your guesses become a bit more educated.

As part of this process you must decide if there's any Story Point cost from the Gadgets, and whose Story Point total it counts against. Split the total among multiple characters if the Gadget will genuinely be shared, but usually you should designate one owner and count it against their total.



Remember also that if the game concept relies on a time travel device, then that device is 'free' – it doesn't count against anyone's Story Points.

### CHARACTER HOOKS AND PLOTS

Finally, once you have your characters laid out, you can think about tying them into the concept as tightly as you can. This is where you add a bit of detail to the characters.

Start with personal goals. Encourage the players to come up with powerful personal goals that they can chase hard during the game. Pay attention to the goals they come up with – when gametime rolls around, you'll want to give them every opportunity to pursue these.

Then, ask the players to think about their connection to the concept. Is there something about the character's personality that makes them suited to adventure? If the chance to go home and relax came, what would hold them back? Characters shouldn't start with the Unadventurous trait!

Finally, as an optional extra, ask every player to come up with a problem for themselves. They can devise a plot complication that suits their character. This helps

you as Gamemaster because it gives you some great story ideas that you know will grab player attention. And it helps the players, because it ensures they get stories that suit their interests, and it helps them define and enjoy the characters they've invented.

These story ideas might end up being just small parts of upcoming adventures, but they could also become huge ongoing themes. As a small example, Clara's player might come up with "Holds down a job as a school teacher in between adventures in the TARDIS". Playing through the drama as she juggles her work responsibilities with time with the Doctor might not be the focus of the game, but it is a powerful way to define Clara's character.

As a larger example, consider Amy's player, who suggested a problem of "grows up while waiting for the Doctor, and he returns on her wedding night". And then throws in "mysterious connection to a crack in the wall", just to make things a bit more complicated!



Some players might feel a bit strange coming up with their own problems like this. Isn't that sort of thing the Gamemaster's job? You can assure them that once they've made their suggestion, it does fall to you to make it happen. They should consider it part of the character creation process: the character isn't quite finished until you know the first big problem they're going to face.

## GETTING FROM HERE TO THEN



Most **Doctor Who Roleplaying Game** concepts rely on the characters being able to move through time and space. How can this be accomplished? Here are a few suggestions:

- **A TARDIS:** The Doctor's, or any other example – there are probably a few battered and bruised TARDIS capsules lying abandoned in the wake of the Time War.
- **An alternative TARDIS:** Many attempts have been made to copy TARDIS technology, from the SIDRAT of the War Lords to the Dalek time machines and the hidden timeships of the Silence. Few of these attempts end well, but they might just work well enough for your group to have some adventures.
- **A Vortex Manipulator:** As used by 51st century Time Agents, these complex devices are highly prized by any species with a technology level high enough to understand their power.
- **A Time Ring:** Also Gallifreyan technology, but much more limited in power and scope, there might well be a few of these hanging about in odd corners of the universe.
- **Time Corridors:** Daleks mastered this technology, but it's out in the wild now. Not a vehicle as such, rather a shortcut through time. They usually require conduits at each end.
- **A Mysterious Old House:** It sits on a country road, overgrown and abandoned, all its windows boarded up. You go inside, and when you step out again you're somewhere else. The house is a crossroads, existing in countless spaces and times all at once. But how do you control where you end up when you go outside?
- **Advanced UNIT Technology:** They've dealt with a few time invasions, and if they can get their hands on a burnt-out TARDIS they might be able to rig something up that can send a team through time and space!
- **Weeping Angels:** A tame Weeping Angel, hurling the characters back through time and slipping along with them. Can it be trusted? Of course not. It helps when it must, and for the rest of the time it stands in the corner with hands over its eyes, and it waits...

## ⚙️ QUICK-START CONCEPTS

Grab one of these ideas and get a new and different game up and running fast!

### FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS

*The Doctor has cast a long shadow across the universe. A traveller through time and space, standing up for the weak and the vulnerable, staring down the powerful and cracking jokes as he does so. Wouldn't you like to be like that?*

In this concept, the players take on characters who have been inspired by the Doctor to emulate his adventures. They find or build a time machine, and set off to explore the universe and stand up against tyranny along the way. Of course, it's not going to be as easy as all that...



Fits well with:

- Both familiar and original characters.
- Characters who start out as friends.
- Reliable players who will turn up every week!

Twists to consider:

- "We are the Time Lords now!" Without the Doctor's fierce integrity, can the new time travellers resist the temptations that come with power over space and time?
- The Doctor makes it look simple, but inexperienced travel through time leaves a trail of havoc, paradox and broken realities. Are these amateurs causing more problems than they solve?
- The exploits of the group draw the attention of some of the Doctor's most fearsome enemies. Without warning they become targets for pre-

emptive destruction – or for use as hostages against the Doctor himself.

- There are secrets behind the provenance of their time vehicle. Are they exploring the Time Vortex in an evil TARDIS?

What the Gamemaster will need to do:

- Come up with situations that challenge the characters to be like the Doctor – and tempt them off the path.
- Develop adventures, but also encourage the players to suggest their own goals and destinations.
- Think about the ramifications of time travel and watch out for paradoxes and other wibbly-wobbly timey-wimey stuff...

### SOMETIMES THEY COME BACK

The Doctor has met a lot of people on his travels, and a scarily high number of those people died shortly after meeting him. But for a small number of these people, death was not the end. They wake up, alive and well, in an unfamiliar building on a windswept coast. The building is full of conduits leading to other times and places, but the technology is old and unreliable. Where are they? How did they get here? Why are they alive?



Fits well with:

- Familiar characters who died in one of the Doctor's adventures.
- Characters who start out as strangers.
- A flexible group of players who like mysteries.

Twists to consider:

- There is a pattern to the places on the other side of the portals – every one leads to a fixed point

in time that must be preserved. But why would someone build time portals only to the places that should be left alone?

- They all remember dying. They remember what it felt like. But here they are, apparently alive. How can this be? Did some force pluck them from the timestream just in time and repair their bodies? Or are they dead, and they just don't realise it yet?
- Where are they, anyway? Why are there no signs of any other people, anywhere? What will they find if they start walking along the coast?
- And what does it mean when they find a battered blue police box, silent and impenetrable, in the dusty corner of the abandoned basement?

What the Gamemaster will need to do:

- Dynamically present a series of unfolding mysteries, slowly revealing answers that pose deeper questions.
- Work out the truth behind these mysteries, or at least a possible explanation for them that can be modified as the game goes on.
- Decide the destinations of the portals and prepare adventures behind each one.

### FIGHT THE TIME WAR

The Time War is now! A war party of Time Lords struggles for victory. In the thick of battle they run

a crucial mission along death-trapped timestreams and under the folding husks of spent planets. Then the Vortex convulses around them, and they are pushed out of the main warzone, into a tentacle of bent time that extends far from the war.

Somehow, they have arrived in the world after the Time War, where Gallifrey and the Time Lords were trapped. It is unclear how they can get back. One thing they do know, however: they didn't arrive here alone. Some of the most dangerous weapons of the Time Lords – or of the Enemy – were also caught up in the convulsion and spat out into a universe unprepared for their power. And then there are rumours about one other Time Lord who made it out of the war: the Doctor...

Fits well with:

- Brand-new characters who are Time Lords.
- Characters who start out in a well-defined team.
- Groups who like to choose their own goals and go after them.

Twists to consider:

- The characters arrive with some other Time Lords who are of a more militaristic bent, and who immediately set about establishing a military rule of their new reality. Do they become tyrants who the characters must oppose?



- As the characters learn more about the progress of the Time War, they discover just how vicious and wicked the Time Lords became. How far have they already fallen? Do they want to try to save a Gallifrey that would commit such atrocities?
- If there is a way back into the Time War, and a chance to change how that war ended, will any of the characters take it? Especially if it becomes clear that it's a one-way trip?

What the Gamemaster will need to do:

- Expect the first few adventures to revolve around the characters making sense of what happened to them and trying to get back to the war. After a few adventures it will be clear they are stuck, and more settled wandering and exploring can begin, but until then the characters will be pushing strongly for their goals.
- Think about how time travel works, particularly around the thorny issue of the Time War. Some of the Doctor's statements suggest that this group's escape should have been impossible. You don't need to come up with a thousand-word essay explaining how it works, just get yourself ready for the characters trying all manner of tricky things as they respond to their circumstances.
- Come up with a series of mind-bending Gallifreyan time weapons, and decide where each has ended up and what havoc it is causing in its new resting place.

### CHOSEN BY THE BOX

One afternoon, the Box comes for you. It materialises with a wheezing, groaning sound in the corner of your bedroom, and its blue doors swing open. Inside there is a miraculous and strange new world. And then the doors close, and the central column starts moving, and the blue box sets off again... In this concept, the characters are all chosen by the Doctor's TARDIS. It welcomes them into its corridors and teaches them how to fly through time and space. They then embark on a series of adventures, some chosen by the TARDIS and others by their own initiative. And throughout it all, the TARDIS remains silent on a very important question: where is the Doctor?

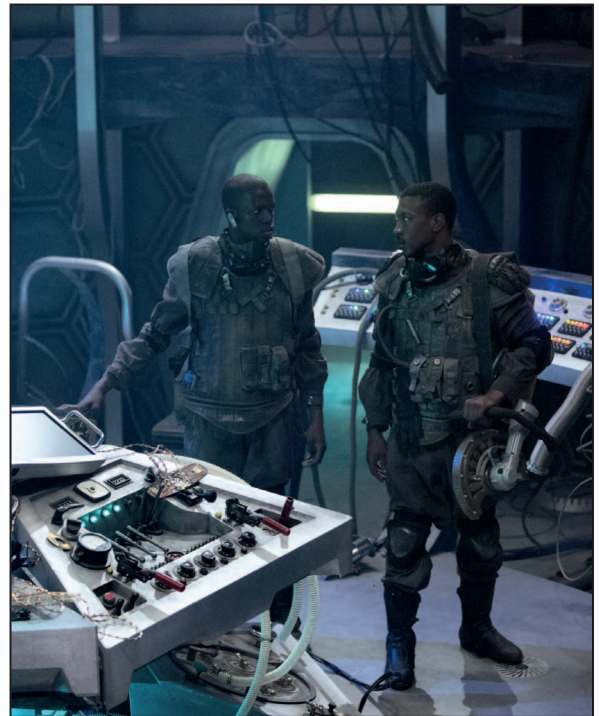
Fits well with:

- Groups who want the iconic elements of the Doctor's adventures, but don't want to play as the Doctor.
- Original characters who may or may not know each other at the start.

- A mix of characters, perhaps including aliens, but none of whom are Time Lords.

Twists to consider:

- The TARDIS starts returning to places the Doctor has already been, a week or a decade or a century after the Doctor's visit. The characters have to deal with the unfinished business from, or unintended consequences of, the Doctor's adventures.
- The Doctor may not be in evidence, but something very strange is happening in the depths of the TARDIS – as you go further in, the walls themselves seem to decay into a strange Gothic nightmare, and whispers can be heard always around the next corner...
- Across a number of adventures it becomes clear that the TARDIS has a mission in mind and these characters, out of all of space and time, are the only ones who can succeed. What is the mission? And why is it up to them?



What the Gamemaster will need to do:

- Work hard to make this TARDIS feel like the Doctor's TARDIS, even in the absence of the Doctor himself.
- Look at the Doctor's adventures and think of 'sequels' that would make good adventures for your game.
- Work out what has happened to the Doctor and what the TARDIS is up to.



ADVENTURES

## ADVENTURES



*'Oh, this is my own fault. I like adventures as much as the next man, if the next man is a man who likes adventures.'*

Writing and running an adventure for the **Doctor Who Roleplaying Game**, may seem daunting at first. The truth of the matter is that, although producing a cracking **Doctor Who** session is very similar to writing and producing an episode of a real-life television series, the actual work involved is quite minimal. Let's look at it from the perspective of the typical production studio staff.

### THE MANY HATS OF THE GAMEMASTER

#### THE GAMEMASTER AS PRODUCER

The first and most important role you will take on is that of producer. In television terms, this person organises and assigns tasks, handles budgets and keeps the whole process moving smoothly. As Gamemaster, you will be doing this when you run the game, keeping track of how the story is progressing and making on the spot rulings about various game mechanical elements. Unlike an actual producer, however, your budget and influence is limitless! You can set a story anywhere, anywhen and with anyone

you can imagine, living, dead or fictional, without worrying about set budgets, expensive special effects, actor's fees or casting problems. Want the late, great Sir Ralph Richardson to play the Time Lord mentor in your story? He's always available and will never charge you a penny.

#### THE GAMEMASTER AS WRITER

This will be your main 'pre-production' role when creating an adventure for the game. You must come up with the story, the characters and the general plotline for the players to interact with. Unlike a normal writer, however, you don't have to write a 45-page script with extensive scenes complete with dialogue. On the contrary, you only need to prepare a basic plotline, some short scene descriptions, and come up with characters. The vast majority of the story will come from the interaction between you and the players!

#### THE GAMEMASTER AS DIRECTOR

It is the director's job to keep the story moving, give the actors clues on how to play the scene, and dictate the action as it occurs. The director also has a hand in casting the guest stars and minor roles. Like a director, the Gamemaster sets the scene for the players during the game and answers any

questions they might have about the environment their characters are interacting with. You also 'cast' the NPCs, giving them attributes, traits and possibly even Story Points, and then having them enter and exit the scene as needed.

## THE GAMEMASTER AS ACTOR

Finally, the Gamemaster needs to be an actor, playing the roles of all the non-player characters, giving them a voice and a life so that the players may interact with them. Now, this doesn't mean you have to adopt a funny accent or produce scenery-chewing dialogue, if that sort of thing makes you feel a wee bit strange. You can, instead, relay the gist of the conversation to the players with whatever verbal clues might be needed to tell them that the NPC is shifty, ill or possibly an alien in disguise. Or, if you prefer, you can indulge your inner thespian and give full expression to the NPCs.

## ⚙️ THE PLOT

First things first: you need a good plot. As we mentioned earlier, you don't need a fully fleshed out story treatment here, you just need the following elements...

## THE THEME

This is the main focus of the adventure, the driving force behind all the action. If, when running the adventure, you ever become stuck for an idea on how to proceed, you should always remember to return to the Theme as quickly and directly as possible.

A selection of themes drawn from the adventures of the Doctor are provided starting on pg. 30, but the general rule of thumb is that you should be able to encompass a theme in a few words, like "Invasion", "Technology Gone Wrong" or even something specific like "The Massacre". You might even work the Theme into the title, like *The Massacre of St Bartholomew's Eve*.

## THE ADVERSARY

Not all adventures need an Adversary; in fact many of the Doctor's adventures are instigated by natural environmental forces or innocents tampering with forces that they don't understand. These types of adventures can be fun in their own right and provide a nice diversion from the 'monster of the week', but true Adversaries, beings who actively work against and resist the players' characters, can make an adventure much more memorable.

And good Adversaries are not hard to come up with. From major baddies like Daleks and Cybermen, to more uncommon species like the Dominators or the Boneless, all the way up to beings of almost godlike power like the Eternals or the Celestial Toymaker, there is no shortage of adversarial conflict in the Doctor's universe. **The Doctor Sourcebooks** are very handy in this regard and will provide you with villains and aliens (and villainous aliens) enough for years of continuous campaign play.

Should you desire something new and interesting, like maybe an evil mastermind to act as Moriarty to the players' Holmes, we have a system for creating powerful, unique villains, with a well defined set of abilities, resources and motivations, on pg. 49.

Keep in mind when selecting an Adversary that you aren't limited to one. Imagine the players getting caught between a small war between the Daleks and the Cybermen over the possession of the inhabitants of a primitive world (who see them both as gods, have picked sides, and started a war of their own).

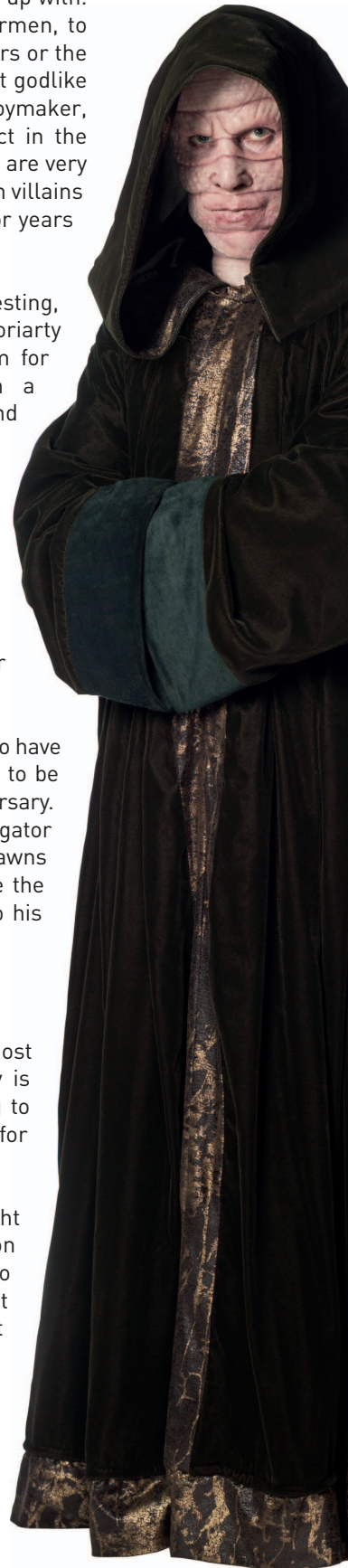
Another good use of multiple Adversaries is to have the main Adversary or Adversaries turn out to be pawns in the game of another, hidden Adversary. Once the players figure out who the real instigator is, they might even be able to turn the pawns against their master (who might literally be the Master, who often uses other species to do his dirty work).

## OBJECTS AND OBJECTIVES

If an adventure has an Adversary it will almost certainly have an Objective that Adversary is trying to meet or an Object they are trying to procure. There is a wide selection of ideas for both on pgs. 42 and 44.

Even without an Adversary, an Object might be the focus of your adventure, depending on the Theme. A powerful artefact that needs to be removed before it can harm an ignorant population or alter the timeline is a perfect example of this.

Normally, Objectives are adversarial in nature, as the players will typically determine their own goals to pursue in play, but there are plenty of instances where the Doctor has been given an Objective and forced to



achieve it for reasons not necessarily his own. He's been used as a messenger to deliver artefacts to mutants on Solos, hijacked mid-transmat to stop the genesis of the Daleks and ordered to quest for the Key To Time under the threat of nothing happening to him.

### LOCATION AND SETTING

Once we know the who and the what, we need to know the where and, most importantly for a game about time travel, the when.

Think both small and large when coming up with a setting. You want to give the impression of an alien world with its own climate, its own ecology and biology, its own history and culture, but at the same time keep in mind the needs of the adventure. There's no point in coming up with the history and geography of the Five Moons of Zoltar if the whole adventure takes place in a cave, a mine and an isolated outpost on Moon 4. Come up with a handful of key Locations (ideally, ones that show off different aspects of the setting), then break them down into Sets. For instance, a spaceship can be a single Location that is made up of a number of Sets, like the airlock, the lab, the command deck, the engine room and any other areas that are important to the story (we'll discuss the breakdown of Locations into Sets on pg. 27). The entire adventure can be set within that single Location or it might jump between that one, a small asteroid base and Galileo's study.

The number of Locations is up to you, but it is best to limit it to half a dozen or so at most (including smaller scenes and Sets within a single Location). This keeps the players from wandering too widely and losing track of the story due to being presented with too many options.

### THE PLOT SYNOPSIS

After you have the general Theme, any potential Adversaries, Objectives and Locations sorted out, it's time to write your Plot Synopsis. At this point, brevity is important and your synopsis shouldn't take up any more space than a quick television listing; a paragraph at most. Don't sweat the details at this point; we're just trying to get a basic idea down so the development of the adventure runs a bit more smoothly.

*For example, the Doctor lands on a mysterious island paradise populated by bronze-skinned natives who worship a one-eyed god: the Cyclops. Unfortunately for the Time Lord, the servitors of the Cyclops are none other than a group of Daleks who crashlanded here in a DARDIS 50 years before and have ordered the villagers to bring the time travellers to them for sacrifice!*

### THE THREE-ACT STRUCTURE

Writing a cracking adventure that moves along at a good pace and doesn't bog down too much or take too long to unravel is a lot like writing a script and,



for your first few adventures, you will find it helpful to stick to the well-worn and time-tested format of the Three-Act Structure.

This structure gives you a pretty handy set of 'beats,' clearly identifiable moments of change in direction. It also helps you to break down the story into manageable chunks so that you don't get overwhelmed with the 'big picture.' In most cases, a good Gamemaster with an outline of the act structure along with a couple of ideas for Sets and NPCs can largely wing an entire adventure.

In this section, we'll show you how to build that structure and, more importantly, how to make it work for a non-linear medium like a roleplaying game.



## ACT I – THE BEGINNING

In Act I, the characters are introduced to the adventure setting and take their first steps into the wider storyline. There are typically three parts to this act.

### Prologue

Every good *Doctor Who* adventure starts off with an introduction known as a Prologue. This is a short scene in which the characters interact with each other and possibly other NPCs before being presented with the 'hook' that leads them into the adventure proper.

The Doctor might be showing Amy the fun of weightlessness when a massive ship hoves into view, walking with Clara through an alien marketplace in which she wanders off and encounters a runaway child, or the whole adventure might start off in the middle of the pursuit of a runaway Chula Ambulance. Whatever the case, let the players interact with each other and the locals a bit, establishing their current situation and getting into character, before hooking them and moving them on to the next bit...

*For example, the Doctor and Amy are exploring a museum when he finds a starship home box with ancient Gallifreyan burned into it. He translates it and finds that it says "Hello Sweetie." He quickly returns to the TARDIS, hooks up the box, dematerialises and rematerialises just in time to catch River Song falling out of an airlock. Before he can even ask her what's going on, she tells him to "Follow that ship!"*



## ALTERNATIVE PROLOGUES

Some adventures start out, not with the Doctor and his companions, but with NPCs who get involved in the situation before the time travellers arrive. This trick can be used (sparingly) as a variation on the Prologue, with the players taking the roles of NPCs for a scene or two before the game proper starts.

The important thing to remember is not to provide too many spoilers as the NPCs move through the Prologue. This can be easily done by ratcheting up the tension but, when the big reveal is made, the scene cuts away to the title sequence without you actually describing what they saw or how they met their doom. If they survive, these NPCs can be brought back later on in the adventure. A prologue of this sort is an excellent way of introducing the cast of an adventure in a dramatic way.

### The Set-up

After the Prologue, it is time to introduce the characters into the adventure and start them investigating and interacting with NPCs. At this point you should have a limited number of Sets for them to explore and a general idea of who and what they'll meet. Let them wander a bit, get their bearings and find a few clues, but while you can provide a bit of

menace, nothing in this section of the adventure should be life-threatening. Give the players time to get comfortable before you drop the floor out from under them.

In this part of Act I, introduce the key NPCs and plot elements. Allocate one scene per NPC if you can, or else have a way of introducing all the NPCs clearly and concisely.

For example, **The Impossible Planet** is a great example of how to introduce all the elements of a complex story quickly. The Doctor and Rose arrive at the Sanctuary Base and have a hair-raising encounter with the Ood (Prologue), then meet the crew (the Set-up). Captain Zachary Cross Flane quickly introduces each member of the crew, giving them a name, a title and associating each of them with a section of the base. That one scene tells the players about the situation, the supporting cast and the location, and also gives them several mysteries to investigate.



### The Hook

The best adventures are ones where the players drive the story through the decisions and actions of their characters. An adventure where the Doctor arrives on a strange planet and gets hunted by invading aliens is one thing, but it's not as exciting and involving as one where the Doctor arrives on a strange planet, learns about the approaching invasion, and decides to single-handedly stop it. To bring your players into the story, though, you need to hook them with interesting things to investigate. Nudging the players towards a

set goal isn't inherently bad if used delicately and in a manner that leaves the characters' free will intact, but it takes a keen eye to know when it should be used and when it shouldn't. It is a far better idea to insert a few Hooks into your adventure.

A good Hook is something that will strongly entice the players to keep moving forward of their own free will. It might play on their natural curiosity, provide some positive incentive or threaten their characters in some way (in which case it's less of a Hook and more of a Prod...). The trick is knowing your players and the particular things that push their gaming "Go" buttons. Does one player really like mysteries? Then give them a puzzle to solve! If one character always talks to children, then put a crying child in their path.

A much more direct method to hook characters instead of players is to provide instances where their Bad Traits come into play. Have a character who is Insatiably Curious? You should provide at least one Hook that presents them with an open door into a restricted area or a box that contains something so bizarre that they have been ordered not to look inside it. Does one of them have an Obsession? Throw a Hook related to that Obsession into the Prologue. That should get them jumping into the adventure feet first and dragging everyone else along with them. Codes of Conduct, Phobias, Dependencies, Obligations, even seemingly benign traits like Argumentative or By the Book, can all make good Hooks that can be used to move players in the right direction.

### The Ending Beat

Act I ends with a single trigger that rapidly and dramatically advances the story and sends the players into Act II. This could be a vital clue, the revelation of the villain's identity or some sort of danger or force that thrusts them deeper into the plot against their will. Note that the Ending Beat doesn't always have to be related to the players' direct actions and can be a timed event, or simply activated whenever you feel the time is right for the plot to advance.

For example, in **The Impossible Planet**, the Ending Beat of Act I is the discovery that the TARDIS has fallen into the depths of the planet and cannot be retrieved.

## ACT II – RISING ACTION

Act I is relatively leisurely but Act II sees the action ramping up and building to the climax of Act III with all sorts of serious threats cropping up. Within this Act the villain becomes aware of the characters and

starts to actively resist them. As a result, NPCs will often be killed or even turn on the players as the plans of the enemy come to fruition.

### Development

In Act I, you established the setting of the adventure and a selection of NPCs and Sets. Now we'll develop the story further by altering some of the existing Sets and NPCs, and introducing new ones for the players to explore. Many of these changes will alter the characters' behaviour and plans, so you must be ready to react to the ingenuity of the players as they re-experience old encounters or explore new locations.

### Side Trips and Bangs

Quite often, the players will do unexpected things you haven't prepared for. They'll come up with brilliant plans, they'll make crazy assumptions and chase after the wrong clues, and they'll get into arguments and dangers you didn't think were possible. We'll return to the topic of improvisational gaming when it comes to actually **Running Games** (see Chapter Five, pg. 74), but right now, let's talk about ways to plan for the unplannable.

First, plan less! In Act I, you can expect the players to stick to your pre-planned scenes and Sets. You know the opening scene and the scenes that are immediately connected to that, so you can predict with a fair degree of accuracy what the players will do. By Act II, though, the possibilities multiply.

This is where we abandon the subtlety of Hooks and trade them in for Bangs. A Bang element should be direct, dramatic and designed to immediately catch the players off guard and put them on their toes.

Before each game session starts, consider the way the story is going or might go based upon what you know about your players, and jot down at least three Bang elements (roughly one per Act) that will push the players back towards the action.

Examples include a sudden radio call for help, a mass attack by the enemy designed to drive them back to a previous location, an easily discovered but extremely difficult or dangerous to attain clue that detours them to another part of the scene map altogether (likely as part of an Ending Beat to move the story along) or an early implementation of the Act II Turning Point to get them back on track.

You don't have to fire off a Bang if you don't want to – sometimes, what you come up with on the spot in response to unexpected action by the players is better than what you prepared. The point of Bangs is to shake things up in a way that fits with your prepared material.

*For example, the players have wandered far off track as a result of misreading a previous clue. The Gamemaster has prepared for this and tells them that they can see a strange, sinister fellow following them and speaking into his collar while touching his ear. The players come up with a plan to catch him but the whole thing turns into an exciting chase which just so happens to lead them to the first scene of the next act...*

### The Turning Point

In Act II, introduce something that throws the players a curve ball. A major disaster that must be averted, an attack on the good guys by a massive force



of bad guys or the ever-popular ‘allies who turn out to be traitors’ gambit are all excellent examples of events that will quicken the pace of the story and keep the players on their toes.

You might even create a sub-plot that, while not directly involved with the main story, is none-the-less critical to the players’ success. A good example of this is using a character’s Adversary trait to add another enemy into the already-high-stakes situation. A Time Lord who is a Wanted Renegade, for example, might suddenly find themselves dodging CIA agents as well as trying to foil the Daleks.

*For example, Mels regenerates in Hitler’s office, revealing herself to be River Song! After gleefully examining her new body she turns a gun on the Doctor and says “Now, let’s get down to business!”*



### The Ending Beat

Like Act I, some dramatic element leads the players into the final act. Typically this is the big reveal of the Adversary’s master plan, the capture of the characters who face total annihilation or the world being brought to its knees as the Adversary’s plans come to full fruition.

*For example, Think Tank has been defeated, but their killer Robot is now at large, thanks to the Brigadier and a shot from a disintegrator gun. The Doctor must find a way to defeat it while the UNIT troops hold it at bay.*

## ACT III: THE FINALE

Once your adventure reaches Act III, all further action needs to bring it to a close quickly and dramatically. The players are either close to defeating the villain or one step away from doing so, so don’t let them dilly-dally. There are two parts to Act III.

### Confrontation and Climax

The threat is blazingly apparent at this point and the characters rush to confront the Adversary directly or bring their plans to final ruin. Reveal at least one Set devoted to the Adversary’s main lair by the end of Act II. Seed a few ways for the players to defeat the Adversary or solve the problem, but don’t restrict yourself to those pre-planned solutions. If the players find a different solution, run with that.

*For example, the Doctor and UNIT, having identified the location of the Nestene Consciousness, assault Channing’s plastics factory. The Doctor must stop the Duplicate General Scobie and fight his way to the breeding chamber to confront Channing and destroy the quickly growing Nestene.*



### The Denouement

Once the Adversary is defeated and the threat is largely over, it’s time for the characters to say goodbye. They may have to set something right before they go, like towing the Earth back to the solar system, and this might provide one last bit of action before the adventure ends, but you should have some appropriate way for them to exit the scene, with fond farewells, a joke or just slipping quietly away.

It may not seem important, but getting this ending right is as important as getting the prologue right, so spend some thought on a few potential endings and how you might wrap them up.

*For example, after defeating the villainous Weng Chiang, the Doctor strolls across London with Jago and Litefoot, munching on muffins as they try to explain tea etiquette to Leela. Once they reach the TARDIS, the Doctor bids them farewell. As the TARDIS dematerialises, Litefoot declares “It’s impossible!” and Jago exclaims “Good trick that! I venture even the Great Li H’sen Chang himself would have appreciated it!”*

## ⚙️ SETTING THE STAGE

Once you have a general idea of how your story is going to play out, it's time to start building the Sets in which the action will take place. As you build your Sets, populate them with assets, like NPCs and props, and then note them down on an ever-growing scene map that organises them into a structure your characters can explore.

### THE SET

A Set is a single important location in the adventure. It can be a single building or area, like a small house, warehouse or an ancient barrow, or it might be an important part of a larger structure, like the Doctor's lab in UNIT HQ. There's a longer discussion of setting and culture on pg. 64, but right now, we're just interested in how the story fits together. You can add detail later.



### Description

When designing your Sets, the first thing you should do is get an image of it in your mind and then write down some notes so you can describe it to your players later. You should describe what it looks like and possibly even what it sounds and smells like. Little details like "paint peeling off the wall" will further help to pepper your description and make the set come alive in the players' minds.

If you're feeling particularly artistic, you might even draw a map of the location, particularly if it has a lot of smaller areas of interest, like the rooms in a house or the various tents in a UNIT encampment. If you like to use miniatures in your games, you might even mark out the map in 'Areas' for movement purposes.

*For example, the UNIT Camp is set up in a clearing in the woods a mile off the main road. It comprises several canvas tents in the typical military olive drab. There are two tents with guards and one tent with an open front that appears to be the temporary HQ for the camp. The whole affair has a very earthy smell to it that mixes with the heady aroma of diesel fuel from the military vehicles parked all about.*

### MULTI-SET LOCATIONS

Very large structures, like UNIT HQ, the lair of a resourceful villain or a medieval village, should be treated as one large Location split into a series of smaller Sets. Note that not every room, boot

## CORRIDORS. ENDLESS CORRIDORS...

An essential part of any large Location in *Doctor Who* is the ubiquitous Corridor Set. This should be a single Set that serves as the connecting hub for several other Sets (and could alternatively be called 'Tangled Woods' or 'Twisting Caverns'). Under normal circumstances, if a character knows their way around, they can get to any connected Set via the Corridor Set easily enough (assuming the connection between Sets hasn't been cut off by blast doors, cave-ins or whatnot). If the characters are unfamiliar with the location, then they must make an Awareness + Survival roll to try and find their way. On a failure, they end up randomly popping out of the Corridor set into one of the other Sets connected to it on the map (randomise which or just pick one). Once a character has found their way to one connected Set, however, they no longer need to make this test to get to that Set.



Chases in a Corridor work like normal chases, except the difficulty of hitting a character in the twisting corridors means that, so long as they stay more than one Area ahead, they cannot be hit by ranged fire. On the downside, they must always test to see if they exit where they intend, even if they've been to every connected Set before. And if there are enemies coming from that location as well? They might dive back in the corridors again, but this time, all the enemies move one Area closer...

cupboard and water-closet in the place needs a Set dedicated to it, only the more important bits that players are likely to explore or that are important to the story, like a jail cell (which the players might end up in) or the villain's laboratory (where the players might find evidence of his diabolical plan).

*For example, Nerva Beacon, a large space station orbiting another Location, the planet Voga, is the target of the Cybermen. We need the following Sets: the Bridge, the Ready Room, the Docking Bay, the Transmat Room, Kellner's Cabin and some Corridors. Everything else is cut off by sealed bulkheads or unimportant (like any other cabin besides Kellner's).*

### SCENES

Sets are locations in space – but you also need to think about events in time. Scenes are pre-planned events that either anticipate the actions of the players, or that are triggered by external events and the actions of non-player characters. For example, if an alien monster attacks when the characters explore a crashed starship, that's a Scene whose timing depends on the players. A Scene where the alien monster breaks out of the crashed spaceship and attacks an innocent victim can be run whenever the Gamemaster wants.

While you should plan for Scenes in your adventure, don't be surprised if they don't happen exactly the way you envision them. Never design a Scene that

assumes the players will definitely do a particular thing – leave room for improvisation, unexpected decisions and wild dice rolls.

### 'ACTORS'

These are the primary NPCs that will be taking part in the adventure. They deserve full write-ups and a set of Story Points of their own. They include any non-player character who is not necessarily fixed to a single Location (although a sentient computer might just be) and can move about freely and interact with the characters intelligently.

### EXTRAS

Along with the major NPC's that will populate your adventure, there will also be a variety of low-level NPCs that serve basic functions but do not, as such, contribute much to the overall adventure, or exist only to be bumped off early on in Act I or II. They do not typically leave their assigned areas, unless they are soldiers or the like.

Extras should be built with full attributes, possibly with one or two traits, but with no Story Points.

As a rule, do not use the normal damage rules for Extras. Any attack that damages an Extra (after armour, cover and the like) takes them out immediately. The characters may attempt to save them and get them on their feet again, but only a



Fantastic Success with a relevant skill (Medicine, Technology or similar) will restore them to full working order, otherwise they may live, but they won't be active for the rest of the adventure.

## GUEST STARS

The **Doctor Who Roleplaying Game** tends to work best with three or fewer players taking on the role of a Time Lord and his crew. More than that and the TARDIS gets a bit crowded. But that doesn't mean you can't have a full roster of six players or even more.



Extra players may take on the role of Guest Stars, characters who happen into the adventure at the same time as the TARDIS crew or are part of the adventure from the very beginning. In an adventure set on a spaceship, for instance, the other players could take on the roles of the ship's crew, like the captain, security officer and chief engineer. All you need to do is create the characters before the adventure, give the players a write up on the background as known by that character, and run the game as normal.

The biggest advantage for a Guest Star is that they get to take on a different role every time they play. If a companion's player gets tired of playing a companion or their character leaves the game, they can swap places with a Guest Star player, who creates a new companion to take their place on the TARDIS. Equally, should a Time Lord regenerate, one of the Guest Star players can take on the new incarnation, allowing the Time Lord to really change!

So you see, along with providing for a larger group of players, Guest Stars can also add a lot of variation and flexibility to your *Doctor Who* campaign.

## PROPS

Note one or more useful items lying around the Set that might be used in interesting ways by the players. For example, in an adventure featuring classic Cybermen, you could leave a gold pen lying on a desk in an office; or in a Victorian house being used by Daleks as a time travel point, you could leave a pot of ink that might be thrown at an eyestalk ("MY VISION IS IMPAIRED! I CANNOT SEE!"). They don't all have to be that specific, and you'll be surprised what inventive players will do with the odd vase, cricket ball, random collection of kitchen detritus or junkyard scrap. Just give them something to grab hold of and use.

It doesn't have to be definitive either: always leave room for a player to ask "is there a fireaxe in this room" or whatever, even if you make them spend a Story Point before you'll answer yes.



## THE SCENE MAP

Once you've got your Sets and Scenes together, it's time to arrange them into a Scene Map. Starting with Act I, draw a circle for every Set in that Act and then connect them to each other using lines in whatever fashion you find logical. Larger, multi-location Sets can be represented by a larger circle containing a series of smaller, internal Sets.

For a Set that will change over the course of several scenes, you could also draw a set of smaller circles just beneath it. During the game you mark these as the characters visit that particular Set to keep track of it for purposes of description.

Connections between Sets are vague distances relative to what they connect to. A connection between a lab and an armoury in UNIT HQ, for instance, might only be a few minutes' walk, while the line connecting UNIT HQ to the encampment outside the Auto Plastics factory might require some form of transport if you want to get there before the

adventure ends! You should make a notation next to the connecting line in cases where this sort of timing will be important.

Connections are meant to guide the players from one scene to another, but, for the most part, if the players know where they're going and can get there without impediment, just let them arrive at their destination without any real fuss. They exist mainly to show the relative positioning between Sets and the only time the players should be forced to really follow them is if they are unfamiliar with the area they are exploring.

## ⚙️ LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

Once you have all your pre-production work done, and your players have gathered to take their parts in your new adventure, it's time to put on your director's hat. For the novice Gamemaster, running an adventure might seem like a mind-blowing task to take on, but if you keep the following pointers in mind, you'll find your games will run a great deal more smoothly than you'd expect. In time, you might even be able to run an entire adventure with a single page of scribbled notes and roughly drawn maps. Very experienced Gamemasters can run whole adventures on the fly, using only on a single simple plotline they rolled up 15 minutes before, improvising the rest based on the actions and responses of the players during the game!

Don't worry though – we'll cover how to run an adventure far more in **Chapter Five: Running Adventures, Campaigns and Stock Footage** (see pg. 74).

## ⚙️ RANDOM ADVENTURE GENERATOR

The final section of this chapter is packed with loads of tables, allowing you to randomise almost every aspect of the adventure. They're a great help if you're stuck for an idea, or just after a little inspiration. Just grab some dice and roll up the Doctor's next great adventure!

## ⚙️ THEMES

The following Themes cover many of the different plotlines that have taken centre stage in the Doctor's adventures and should serve as examples to fire off your imagination. Choose one or roll on the table below. Once you have a Theme, fill in the specifics by replacing the capitalised text items, with an appropriate entry from their respective sections. ADVERSARIES, for example, should be chosen from **The Adversary** section on pg. 42.

## RANDOM THEME GENERATOR

D6	D6	THEME
1	1	Alien Menace
	2	Alter History
	3	Ancient Power
	4	Chase
	5	Disaster
	6	Exploitation
2	1	Historical Adventure
	2	Infection
	3	Intrigue
	4	Invasion
	5	Mad Scientist
	6	Mistaken Identity
3	1	Parallel or Pocket Universe
	2	Raid
	3	Revenge
	4	Rightful Rulers
	5	Survival
	6	Technology Gone Wrong
4	1	Temporal Anomaly
	2	Things From Dimension X
	3	Traitor
	4	War
	5	World Gone Mad
	6	The X Doctors
5	1-2	Roll again and Double the number of Adversaries.
	3-4	Roll Again and Double the Number of Locations.
	5-6	Roll Again and Double the Number of Objects or Objectives.
6		Plots Within Plots

## ALIEN MENACE

An alien or group of aliens have ended up in the LOCATION and are either stranded or looking to achieve an OBJECTIVE. Regardless of why they are at the location, the aliens' attitudes towards the natives might range from scared to hostile (or some combination of the two). You can choose their attitude or roll a die:

## ALIEN ATTITUDE

- 1 The aliens are hostile.
- 2 The aliens seek peace, but are unable to due to lack of communication or native perceptions of hostility.
- 3-4 The aliens are scared and will defend themselves if they think that the natives are threatening them.
- 5-6 The aliens are surviving as best they can, even at the cost of the natives.

You could use known aliens, like Daleks or Cybermen, but this type of adventure works best when it involves a previously unknown species created using the rules in the **Doctor Who Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook** or **All the Strange, Strange Creatures Volume 1**.

The alien doesn't have to be intelligent, and could represent some sort of animal life-form, like space dingoes, that are on the planet simply by chance or due to some hunting instinct. It doesn't even have to be from another planet, and creatures from the inky depths of the oceans or hibernating lizard-people from the age of the dinosaurs would also fit this Theme.

**Example Adventures:** *The Dominators, The Hungry Earth, Flatline.*

## ALTER HISTORY

A time-travelling ADVERSARY is trying to alter the history of a specific LOCATION, which is likely some turning point in history or at least has some personal significance to the Adversary.

There are many reasons why they might be seeking to alter the timeline, but if you're stuck for specifics, roll a single die to see what they want:

### REASON FOR ALTERING HISTORY

- 1-2 Conquest.
- 3 To conform the future to their vision.
- 4 To right a perceived wrong.
- 5 To alter time back to their original, erased timeline.
- 6 Some other random OBJECTIVE.

**Example Adventures:** *The Time Meddler, Day of the Daleks, Turn Left.*

## ANCIENT POWER

Whatever the Doctor's companions and allies might think of him, there are things greater than even he. Things of terrible power and terrible evil. During the early aeons of the universe, many of these things were defeated and imprisoned, or placed themselves into a voluntary torpor, to await the time when others would, by accident or design, set them free. This adventure assumes that this has either happened or is about to happen thanks to (choose or roll a single die):

### LIBERATORS

- 1 The players' characters. Oops.
- 2 A natural disaster
- 3 An ADVERSARY.
- 4-5 Curious innocents
- 6 Servants of the Ancient Power

The Ancient Power itself cannot be stopped by conventional means and requires some special method of banishment or destruction that will have to be researched but could include any of the following (choose or roll a single die):



### ANCIENT POWER WEAKNESS

- 1-2 An OBJECT.
- 3-4 An ancient device or formula.
- 5-6 Using the Ancient Power's own weapons against them.

**Example Adventures:** *The Daemons, The Satan Pit, The Rings of Akhaten.*

## CHASE

Considering the sorts of trouble the typical time traveller gets into, it won't take long for them to acquire some very powerful enemies. And sometimes they interfere so often one particular ADVERSARY will decide to chase them across space, and possibly time itself, in order to put an end to their interfering ways. It isn't always revenge that drives a chase, however, and there are other reasons for hounding the players. Choose or roll one die to see what the hunters are after:

### DRIVE TO PURSUE

- 1-2 Sweet, sweet revenge.
- 3-4 An OBJECT possessed by the hunted.
- 5-6 To capture the hunted for some reason (to acquire their knowledge, steal their body, etc.).

Choose or roll one die to see who they're actually after:

### THE HUNTED

- 1-2 The players' characters.
- 3 An NPC.
- 4 A ship.
- 5-6 A group (like UNIT) or an entire race.

A variation on the Chase is a Race, in which all of the NPC's are racing to gain an OBJECT or OBJECTIVE first.

**Example Adventures:** *The Chase, Delta and the Bannermen, Human Nature.*



## DISASTER

All planets face environmental chaos, from earthquakes to volcanic eruptions to massive asteroid strikes that cause worldwide chaos. The Earth itself has had its entire surface licked clean of life by solar flares at least three times in its history. And then there are the unnatural environmental disasters caused by ignorant civilisations whose technology outpaces their common sense and morality and threatens to wipe them out before they learn any better.

In this story, a LOCATION is threatened with destruction by some environmental catastrophe. Choose one or roll one die on the list below:

### ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER TYPE

- 1-2 Planetary (earthquake, volcano, etc.)
- 3-4 Stellar (asteroid, gamma ray burst, etc.).
- 5-6 Artificial (nuclear chaos, pollution, etc.).

The cause of the disaster may not always be what you think. Even man-made disasters might have a natural instigator (an earthquake that breaches a nuclear reactor, for instance). Choose one or roll a single die below:

### ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER CAUSE

- 1 Nature.
- 2-3 Greedy, power-hungry or mad people.
- 4 An ADVERSARY.
- 5-6 It's a side-effect of some other phenomenon.

**Example Adventures:** *The Green Death, The Fires of Pompeii, In the Forest of the Night.*

## EXPLOITATION

The universe is replete with woeful tales of abuse and exploitation by unscrupulous individuals or organisations. From the predations of the Intergalactic Mining Corporation to the slave trade in Ood, many of the Doctor's adventures revolve around ending such exploitation. The OBJECTIVE of exploitation can be extremely varied as well as the

LOCATION. The driving force behind the exploitation can also vary. Choose or roll one die below to determine one:

### FORCE BEHIND THE EXPLOITATION

- 1-2 ADVERSARY.
- 3-4 A corporation or special interest group.
- 5-6 An alien race.

**Example Adventures:** *Colony in Space, Planet of the Ood, The Beast Below.*

### HISTORICAL ADVENTURE

Sometimes, the Doctor and his companions visit the past and have adventures that are totally devoid of interstellar marauders or temporal menaces and simply revolve around the people, places and events of that era. Roll another Theme to serve as the main plot, but try to choose only those in which the locals, objectives and adversaries can easily be drawn from the historical period in question, re-rolling those results that do not.

**Example Adventures:** *The Aztecs, The Highlanders, Black Orchid.*



### INFECTION

Space is dangerous and often unpredictable, but not nearly as dangerous and chaotic as the average biosphere. For every intelligent species there are millions upon billions of viral and parasitic life-forms, some of whom have an intelligence all their own, as the Doctor found out on Titan Base in the 51st century!

Typically, the characters or some NPC will come in contact with the infection by exposure to one of the following (choose or roll a die):

### SOURCE OF INFECTION

- 1-2 A LOCATION.
- 3-4 An OBJECT.
- 5-6 An ADVERSARY.

If it is an Adversary, they may be the creator of the virus, in which case they have some other motive for the infection (roll for another Theme and treat Infection as the sub-plot). They may equally be a carrier of the infection, as the Master was when he was infected by the savage world of the Cheetah People. In such case, their goal is likely finding a cure and they may even form an alliance with the characters for as long as it takes to find that cure (typically turning on their allies to steal the cure and hold the world to ransom immediately thereafter).



A virus or parasite on its own is usually unintelligent, seeking only to reproduce and survive, not resisting the characters in any direct way. Determining the ultimate OBJECTIVE for the infection will help you to determine whether or not it is possibly intelligent

One final note: this Theme could easily be used not only for living viruses, but computer or other non-organic infections, as well as your classic daemonic possession scenario. After all, what else is a possessing entity if not a highly evolved form of parasite?

**Example Adventures:** *The Invisible Enemy, The Empty Child, Last Christmas.*

## INTRIGUE

The characters are caught in a power struggle between ADVERSARY 1 and ADVERSARY 2, involving betrayal, assassination and political subterfuge. While many intrigues have long and sordid histories with shifting goals, this particular one is aimed at acquiring something of specific interest to both parties. You can choose one or roll a die:

### GOAL OF INTRIGUE

- 1-2 A coveted OBJECT.
- 3-4 An important LOCATION.
- 5-6 Some emotional desire, like love, revenge or power for the sake of power.

The characters are probably going to spend the first part of the adventure trying to figure out who is on the side of right and deserving of their help, while avoiding the wrath of both sides and protecting innocent bystanders in the middle. You can decide who is in the right or determine it randomly.

In any case, open warfare should be an act of last resort and most of the action in this type of story will develop from more subtle means, like disinformation campaigns meant to discredit the enemy in the eyes of their peers, sabotage of business interests, kidnapping the odd family member or the occasional assassination attempt.

A twist on this theme is to have the Intrigue instigated by another, outside party with a goal of their own (roll another Theme and treat the Intrigue as a sub-plot). This Adversary should only be revealed in the last act of the adventure.

**Example Adventures:** *Frontier in Space, The Androids of Tara, The Zygon Invasion.*

## INVASION

An ADVERSARY is invading a LOCATION. It is typically a full force military action, with the players' characters working to prevent the establishment of a 'beachhead,' but it can be something more subtle, like the slow takeover of a government with plastic duplicates. The OBJECTIVE of the invasion varies from invader to invader and target to target.

When planning an Invasion adventure, it often helps to roll up a few more Themes to act as 'sub-plots' for the main invasion, especially for those that rely on stealth. These sub-plots will represent stratagems and ploys that the attacker will be using to weaken the defender before the main invasion and give the players some sort of goal to achieve outside of 'blow 'em up real good,' which is not a very Doctor-like solution.

For those moments when the players must deal with the massed military might of the enemy, the **UNIT: Defending the Earth** sourcebook is the one-stop supplement for all of your mass combat and military invasion needs.



**Example Adventures:** *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*, *The Sontaran Stratagem*, *Death in Heaven*.

## MAD SCIENTISTS

A brilliant scientist or group of scientists have acquired, modified or designed an OBJECT that will irrevocably change a LOCATION. These scientists can be motivated by a number of reasons. Choose a motivation or roll a die:

### MAD SCIENCE MOTIVATIONS

- 1-2 To better the world (although they are misguided in their intentions).
- 3-4 For the sake of knowledge at any cost.
- 5-6 A specific OBJECTIVE.



Occasionally, mad scientists will be working on their own as their experiments are often considered too unorthodox, dangerous or even heretical to gain sponsorship from their peers or government, but more often, they are backed by corrupt governments, private investors with loose morals or possibly even an alien force (disguised or not) with designs on the end product that even the scientists don't suspect. You can choose or roll a die:

### MAD SCIENCE BACKERS

- 1-2 Corrupt government officials.
- 3-4 Greedy investors.
- 5 An ADVERSARY.
- 6 The scientists are independent.

**Example Adventures:** *The Seeds of Doom*, *The Lazarus Experiment*, *Sleep No More*.

## MISTAKEN IDENTITY

The characters are mistaken for (choose one of the following or roll one die):

### WHO ARE YOU?

- 1 A lost family member.
- 2-3 An important personage.
- 4-5 A member of some important group.
- 6 A god.

Roll another Theme to serve as the main plot for the adventure.

The characters can go along with the misunderstanding and try to get to the bottom of the main plot, or they might try to explain the error. Even if they do explain, the other parties involved might not be willing to listen or accept their protestations (not at first, anyway) and might even try to capture or kill them, especially if the character is a dead ringer for someone that is particularly evil!

**Example Adventures:** *The Aztecs*, *The Enemy of the World*, *The Face of Evil*.

## PARALLEL OR POCKET UNIVERSE

The characters have been thrown outside of their home universe and into a pocket dimension or parallel timeline. There can be any number of reasons for this happening, but in this case it is because of (choose or roll a die):

### PARALLEL OR POCKET TRAVEL AGENT

- 1-2 A bizarre natural phenomena.
- 3 Equipment malfunction.
- 4-5 A powerful entity.
- 6 An ADVERSARY.

The number and types of universes are many and varied as well, but can be summed up in the following choices (choose or roll one Die):

## ALTERNATE UNIVERSES

- 1-2 Pocket Dimension
- 3-4 Alternative Universe
- 5-6 Parallel Timeline

Pocket Dimensions are small, self-contained universes with limited space and, often, unusual physical laws and highly unusual creatures. The Land of Fiction, the Celestial Toyroom and House's dimension were all pocket dimensions.

Alternative Universes are very similar to our own except in certain particulars. The anti-matter universe of Omega is made up of anti-matter, for instance, whereas E-Space has negative coordinates in relation to ours.



Every decision made in our universe springs off a Parallel Timeline that can be visited and is often both remarkably similar yet strangely different from our own. In some cases, like the parallel timeline the Doctor was thrown into when working on the Inferno drilling project, everything might be a mirror image, with jack-booted thugs replacing friendly UNIT regulars and a fascist government in place of the democratic UK. In other cases, like Pete's World, the people and places may be the same, but the world itself is now filled with advanced zeppelins and cybernetic technology, and a character's dead dad is alive (and a millionaire) but the character no longer exists!

Whatever the case, you should roll a second Theme to serve as a sub-plot to keep them busy until they can return to their proper universe by:

## TICKET HOME

- 1-2 Exploiting some natural phenomenon to pull them back where they belong.
- 3-4 Finding and using a specific OBJECT.
- 5-6 Getting help from an ADVERSARY, who is friendly in this universe.

**Example Adventures:** *Inferno*, *Rise of the Cybermen*, *The Wedding of River Song*.

## RAID

An ADVERSARY attacks a single LOCATION to acquire a specific OBJECTIVE. Raids may be part of a larger goal, and make great sub-plots for an Invasion Theme, but if this is the main plot for the adventure, the raiders will return to wherever they came from once they have what they're looking for. Whether they leave anyone alive when they do is largely dependent on the Adversary involved.



The action is almost always entirely contained within a single location and these sorts of adventures typically turn into 'Base under Siege' stories in which the characters are trapped with the defenders and are doing everything they can to help drive off the attackers.

A neat twist on this Theme is to have the characters take the role of raiders, either on their own or in concert with others, to try and achieve the objective. And not all raids need necessarily be military ones, either. An archaeological team investigating the

Tomb of the Cybermen on Telos is technically raiding it for archaeological information (and possibly technological secrets as well).

**Example Adventures:** *The Ark in Space, Under the Lake, The Girl Who Died.*

## REVENGE

An ADVERSARY is looking for revenge and is willing to do anything to make the other party pay for some past transgression. The target of this hatred can be (choose one or roll a die):

### TARGET FOR REVENGE

- 1 Another ADVERSARY.
- 2 A specific individual.
- 3-4 The players' characters.
- 5 A group (UNIT, the United States government etc.).
- 6 An entire species or race.

The characters can be the target of revenge schemes even if this is their first adventure, as events from their past and events in the future are fair game. The Doctor has, on more than one occasion, fled from unknown enemies howling for his head, enemies that he hasn't even met yet.



Whatever the target, the ultimate goal is the death or imprisonment the subject, usually after some form of torture or humiliation. Such Revenge plots are rarely straightforward, however, and you should choose or roll up another Theme being used by the villain to snag the target and set them up for their eventual downfall.

**Example Adventures:** *The Deadly Assassin, The Caves of Androzani, The Name of the Doctor.*

## RIGHTFUL RULERS

Exiles seek to regain their rightful inheritance and force out or destroy the ones who have stolen or kept them from it for so long. The target of the exiles is (choose or roll a die):

### LOST BIRTHRIGHT

- 1 An OBJECT.
- 2 A specific LOCATION.
- 3 A country.
- 4 A planet.
- 5 An interstellar empire.
- 6 A group of people or gene-banks.

Whatever the target is, it is firmly in the possession of one or more enemies who will keep it from the exiles at any cost. These enemies are (choose or roll a die):

### ENEMIES OF THE EXILES

- 1-2 An ADVERSARY.
- 3-4 A rival tribe or clan of their race.
- 5-6 A former subject race.



The term 'Rightful Rulers' doesn't necessarily imply that this title is deserving and many times the side of right may not be so clear to the players. This is especially true in cases where the current holders of the birthright are former subjects and the exiles have been overthrown for abusing their power.

**Example Adventures:** *The Web Planet, The Silurians, The Hand of Fear.*

## SURVIVAL

A race or species has been driven to the edge of extinction and reduced to primitivism or near-primitivism due to some disaster. Typically, by the time the players arrive on the scene this state of affairs has been going on for quite some time, leaving the species desperate for assistance if they are going to survive. Their level of primitivism varies (choose one or roll a die):

### LEVEL OF PRIMITIVISM

- 1-2 They shun technology as sorcery or the cause of their downfall.
- 3-4 Technology is the domain of religious elite and even they treat it with mysticism.
- 5-6 They understand the technology, but it is broken, rationed or incapable of saving them without outside help.

The exact reason the survivors have been reduced to their current state is (choose or roll a die):

### CAUSE OF THE DOWNFALL

- 1-2 An ADVERSARY.
- 3-4 A natural disaster.
- 5-6 Their own negligence or devolution.

In the case of an Adversary being the cause of the downfall, the foe may still be at large and the survivors may be hiding from them to avoid final extinction. You should roll up another Theme to serve as the reason the Adversary attacked and remains in the Location.

**Example Adventures:** *Colony in Space, Frontios, Utopia.*

## TECHNOLOGY GONE WRONG

This Theme covers any adventure where man's ability to advance technology outpaces his ability to control it. Outside of the obvious out of control robots and revolutionary sources of free energy that turn out to have terrible consequences, it also covers technology that dehumanises or enslaves humanity, like Lumic's EarPods and the Cybermen. The technology is (choose or roll a die):

### OUT OF CONTROL TECH

- 1 An AI, robots or androids.
- 2 A new energy source.
- 3 A biological creation (monster, virus, clones, revived dinosaurs, etc.).
- 4 Species enhancement (genetic, cybernetic, chemical, etc.).
- 5 Experimental physics (dimensional gates, singularity generators, etc.).
- 6 Temporal Experiments.



Technology can go wrong on its own or be corrupted by outside forces. The source of corruption in this case is (choose or roll a die):

### CAUSE OF CORRUPTION

- 1 An ADVERSARY.
- 2 Emergent (or existing) self-awareness.
- 3 An unforeseen problem with the technology.
- 4 Greedy backers cutting corners.
- 5 Warning signs and problems were ignored.
- 6 Interaction with some other phenomenon.

The technology will start off affecting a specific LOCATION (although it might expand outwards from there) and, in the case of intelligent or self-aware technology gone wrong, may have a particular OBJECTIVE.

**Example Adventures:** *The War Machines, Robots of Death, The Rebel Flesh.*

## TEMPORAL ANOMALY

The characters find themselves in the middle of a dangerous temporal anomaly. The following temporal phenomena are described in detail in **The Time Traveller's Companion**, but if you don't have that book, a sample adventure is given as an example for each:

### TEMPORAL ANOMALIES

- 1 Chronic Hysteresis (*Meglos*)
- 2 Time Rift (*The Unquiet Dead*, *Boom Town*)
- 3 Time Spur (*Father's Day*)
- 4 Time Eddy (*Invasion of the Dinosaurs*)
- 5 Skipped Time Track (*The Space Museum*)
- 6 Pan-Dimensional Cross Rip (*The Pandorica Opens*, *The Big Bang*)

Temporal anomalies are largely unnatural occurrences and are typically instigated by some powerful external (or internal as the case may be) force, such as (choose or roll a die):

### EXTERNAL CAUSE

- 1 An ADVERSARY.
- 2 Ill-advised experiments.
- 3 Malfunctioning time equipment.
- 4 A natural phenomenon.
- 5 Two time machines colliding.
- 6 The players' characters. Oops.



Sometimes temporal anomalies are a side-effect that draws the characters into a greater plot. You can roll a new Theme that must be handled before the temporal anomaly may be resolved, if this is the case.

**Example Adventures:** *Father's Day*, *The Pandorica Opens*, *The Girl Who Waited*.

## THINGS FROM DIMENSION X

Slimy, crawly, tentacled or just plain creepy Things-Man-Was-Not-Meant-To-Know, gain access to this dimension with help from (choose or roll a Die):

### THE KEY TO THE DIMENSIONAL GATEWAY

- 1 An ADVERSARY.
- 2 Blasphemous cultists.
- 3 A scientific experiment gone wrong.
- 4 Innocents uncovering the past.
- 5 The Stars are Right...
- 6 The players' characters. Oops.

Creatures from other dimensions have desires and appetites that are largely alien to those of us who live in normal, Euclidean universes. As such, the following are only approximations of their true intentions, from the perspective of the characters' limited understanding of their actions during the adventure.

### WHAT DO THEY WANT?

- 1 An OBJECT.
- 2 Worship.
- 3 To devour (souls, the stars, etc.).
- 4 Entertainment or playthings.
- 5 To satisfy their scientific curiosity.
- 6 To conquer or destroy the universe.

The scope of the intrusion into this dimension will be largely determined by the goal determined above. They might be happy with a single LOCATION if they simply plan to devour anything that comes nearby, but the destruction of the universe might require them to open a number of breaches into

our universe that cross space and time (i.e. multiple Locations). That's up to you. Whatever the case, this is not a threat that can be dealt with by using simple weapons. You might blow away a tentacle here, or knock out a cultist there, but the intrusion cannot be stopped with violence alone. The entity can only be stopped by (choose or roll a die):

## STOPPING THE ENTITY

- 1 Entering the other dimension and facing the entity in its own realm (a sanity taxing experience).
- 2 A mass psychic show of faith.
- 3 An OBJECT that will appease or repel the entity.
- 4 Replacing something that was taken from the other dimension.
- 5 Closing the gate(s) between universes.
- 6 A major sacrifice (a human life, a Time Lord's incarnation, etc.).

In the case of gates between dimensions, they need not be obvious swirly openings torn into the fabric of space-time (although there is nothing that says they couldn't be) and they may come in a variety of forms such as (choose or roll a die):

## THE GATE

- 1-2 An actual swirly tear in space-time.
- 3-4 A literal, physical gate.
- 5-6 A living being (alive or dead).

**Example Adventures:** *Planet of Evil, Snakedance, Flatline.*

## TRAITOR

Someone who seems to be helping the characters is actually working against them for reasons of their own. This is actually more of a sub-plot than a theme on its own, so roll up another Theme to serve as the main plot.

This could be an ally or even another character if they are being coerced, duplicated or mind-controlled, but if it is another player's character, make sure you pull them aside before the game. Let them know the circumstances behind their betrayal and, more importantly, make sure they are comfortable with playing the traitor and capable of doing so without being too obvious about it.

**Example Adventurers:** *Invasion of the Dinosaurs, Mawdryn Undead, Remembrance of the Daleks.*



## WAR

The characters are caught in the middle of a major military conflict between ADVERSARY 1 and ADVERSARY 2. Wars are common enough in history that it shouldn't be difficult to find a reason for two (or more) sides to fight. In this case the war is being fought over (choose or roll a die):

### DECLARATION OF WAR

- 1 Territory
- 2 A LOCATION.
- 3-4 An OBJECT or OBJECTIVE.
- 5 Social, religious or philosophical reasons.
- 6 Economic reasons.

While war itself has no innocents, there is typically a clear aggressor in the conflict (choose or roll a die):

### THE AGGRESSOR

- 1-2 ADVERSARY 1.
- 3-4 ADVERSARY 2.
- 5 Both are equally to blame.
- 6 The whole thing has actually been secretly instigated by ADVERSARY 3.

The characters must determine the best course of action, avoiding the wrath of both sides while protecting the innocent. The characters may decide to have a go at stopping the war or just trying to escape with their skins intact.

Another option is to set the action during a war that cannot or should not be stopped (like World War I or II). In this case, you should restrict the action to a very specific location, object or objective within a smaller front of that war or roll another Theme to serve as a major sub-plot within the larger backdrop of the war. A battle over a crashed flying saucer in the Ardennes during WWII would make for an interesting adventure, for example, especially as the characters will have their hands full trying to keep the technology out of the hands of both sides!

**Example Adventures:** *The Armageddon Factor*, *The Doctor's Daughter*, *Into the Dalek*.



## WORLD GONE MAD

Something has so upset the fabric of the universe, and the changes have so reverberated up and down the timeline, that the world the characters know is now a bizarre amalgam of lost empires, famous historical personalities, dinosaurs, zeppelins and other strange contradictory and anachronistic nonsense. This is not an alternate timeline, more of a complete and utter rearrangement of what was by a massive rupture in space-time, likely caused by massive interference in fixed events by:

### WORLD GONE MAD

- 1-2 An ADVERSARY.
- 3-4 A temporal accident.
- 5-6 The players' characters. Mega-Oops!

The only way to fix a World Gone Mad is to go back and undo whatever caused it to happen in the first place. This is unlikely to be easy, as the power behind something that can change a fixed point in the first place would be immense and require a major sacrifice of some sort or another to resolve, possibly that of a companion or the Time Lord's life, or even a reboot of the entire universe!

**Example Adventures:** *The Big Bang*, *The Wedding of River Song*.

## THE 'X' DOCTORS

Multiple instances of one of the characters team up. This is rarely the goal of the adventure itself – roll up another Theme to find out why they need to team up, or what has caused them to all end up in the same place at the same time.

Crossing an individual timeline with itself is no small feat and will typically involve a concerted effort on the part of a time-aware entity of great power, like a Time Lord or the Daleks. It can sometimes happen as a result of technical malfunctions or powerful universal forces interacting in highly unusual ways, but typically there is intelligence behind such an anomaly.

**Example Adventures:** *The Three Doctors, The Five Doctors, The Day of the Doctor.*



## PLOTS WITHIN PLOTS

Sometimes, there are a lot of little plots going on within the larger storyline. Roll a die: this is the number of Themes that must be generated for this adventure. Choose one to be the main Theme; the rest are sub-plots.

Each of the sub-plots should be connected to a particular LOCATION or OBJECT.

*For example, in **The Keys of Marinus**, for instance, the main Theme is a Raid [the Voord attack on the Conscience of Marinus]. Five additional sub-plots are at work too. To activate the Conscience and repel the attackers, the Doctor and his companions must involve themselves in the local affairs of five different civilisations, each with its own particular Theme to solve before the keys can be returned.*

Alternatively, you could use this Theme to generate a multi-adventure story arc (see pg. 88) where the main Theme is only connected to the sub-plots by the fact that the characters are at the centre of it.

*For example, the Doctor found himself the target of Revenge by the Black Guardian, but the evil being's machinations were obscured by the plight of Mawdryn and his people [a Mad Scientists sub-plot], the paradox of the starship Terminus [the Infection sub-plot], and a race across space with the Eternals [a Chase sub-plot]. None of these smaller stories had any relation to each other outside of the*

*Black Guardian's manipulations of the events within them through his agents, but they all formed a story arc centred around the Black Guardian's quest for vengeance.*

**Example Adventures:** *The Key to Time, Bad Wolf, The Impossible Astronaut.*

## THE ADVERSARY

Adversaries can come in many different forms, but for the purposes of choosing one or more for an adventure, we have classified them into three categories: Famous Adversaries, those the Doctor has faced during his millennia of travel through time and space; Custom Adversaries, new alien species or human foes created specifically for the adventure; and Arch-Villains, specific individuals with abilities and resources enough to make them a thorn in the characters' sides for a whole campaign and who are possibly linked to one of the characters through the Adversary Bad Trait.

If you can't decide which category to choose from, roll on the table below:

### TOTALLY RANDOM ADVERSARY

D6	D6	TABLE
1-3	1	The First Doctor
	2	The Second Doctor
	3	The Third Doctor
	4	The Fourth Doctor
	5	The Fifth Doctor
	6	The Sixth Doctor
4-6	1	The Seventh Doctor
	2	The Eighth Doctor
	3	The Ninth Doctor
	4	The Tenth Doctor
	5	The Eleventh Doctor
	6	The Twelfth Doctor

## FAMOUS ADVERSARIES

The following tables contain a wide variety of Adversaries from the Doctor's adventures. They are grouped based on the incarnation of the Doctor and this will allow you to select creatures appropriate for the style of a particular era. You can choose an era, or roll one up randomly as you see fit.

## 1 THE FIRST DOCTOR

D6	D6	ADVERSARY
1-3	1	Cybermen
	2	Daleks
	3	Drahvins
	4	Human
	5	Mechanoids
	6	Monoids
4-6	1	Moroks
	2	Humans
	3	Renegade Time Lord
	4	Sensorites
	5	The Celestial Toymaker
	6	Voord

## 2 THE SECOND DOCTOR

D6	D6	ADVERSARY
1-3	1	Chameleons
	2	Cybermen
	3	Daleks
	4	Human
	5	Ice Warriors
	6	Krotons
4-6	1	Macra
	2	Master of the Land of Fiction
	3	Humans
	4	The Dominators
	5	The Great Intelligence/Yeti
	6	Time Lord

## 3 THE THIRD DOCTOR

D6	D6	ADVERSARY
1-3	1	Daleks (with Ogrons)
	2	Draconians
	3	Humans
	4	Humans
	5	Ice Warriors
	6	Nestene Consciousness & Autons
4-6	1	Sea Devils
	2	Humans
	3	Humans
	4	Silurians
	5	Sontarans
	6	The Master

## 4 THE FOURTH DOCTOR

D6	D6	ADVERSARY
1-3	1	Cybermen
	2	Daleks
	3	Humans
	4	Movellans
	5	Nimon
	6	Robots
4-6	1	Rutans
	2	Sontarans
	3	Humans
	4	The Master (or Arch-Villain)
	5	Wirrn
	6	Zygons

## 5 THE FIFTH DOCTOR

D6	D6	ADVERSARY
1-3	1	Cybermen
	2	Davros & The Daleks
	3	Eternals and/or Black Guardian
	4	Humans
	5	Humans
	6	Renegade Time Lord
4-6	1	Silurian & Sea Devils
	2	Terileptils
	3	Humans
	4	The Malus
	5	The Master (or Arch-Villain)
	6	Tractators

## 6 THE SIXTH DOCTOR

D6	D6	ADVERSARY
1-3	1	Androgums
	2	Cybermen
	3	Davros & The Daleks
	4	Giant Gastropods
	5	Humans
	6	Humans
4-6	1	Mentors
	2	Renegade Time Lords
	3	Robot
	4	Sontarans
	5	The Rani
	6	Third Zone Scientists

## 7 THE SEVENTH DOCTOR

D6	D6	ADVERSARY
1-3	1	Avalonians
	2	Bannermen
	3	Bio-Mechanoid
	4	Cybermen
	5	Haemovores
	6	Human
4-6	1	Humans
	2	Imperial Daleks
	3	Cheetah People
	4	Renegade Daleks
	5	Renegade Time Lord
	6	Tetraps

## 8 THE EIGHTH DOCTOR

D6	ADVERSARY
1	The Master
2	Daleks
3	Humans
4	Ice Warriors
5	Cybermen
6	Time Lords

## 9 THE NINTH DOCTOR

D6	ADVERSARY
1	Daleks
2	Gelth
3	Humans
4	Jagrafess
5	Nestene Consciousness & Autons
6	Raxacoricofallapatorians



**10 THE TENTH DOCTOR****D6 D6 ADVERSARY**

1-3	1	The Master
	2	Carrionites
	3	Cybermen
	4	Daleks
	5	Graske
	6	Humans
4-6	1	Judoon
	2	Macra
	3	Pyroviles
	4	Sontarans
	5	Sycorax
	6	Weeping Angels

**11 THE ELEVENTH DOCTOR****D6 D6 ADVERSARY**

1-3	1	Atraxi
	2	Cybermen
	3	Daleks
	4	Humans
	5	Minotaur
	6	Order of the Headless
4-6	1	Saturnynians
	2	Silurians
	3	The Dream Lord
	4	The Great Intelligence/ Snowmen/Whispermen
	5	The Silence
	6	Weeping Angels

**12 THE TWELFTH DOCTOR****D6 D6 ADVERSARY**

1-3	1	Missy
	2	The Boneless
	3	Davros/Colony Sarff
	4	Daleks
	5	Clockwork Robots
	6	The Mire
4-6	1	Me
	2	Zygons
	3	Dream Crabs
	4	Cybermen
	5	Robot Knights
	6	Time Lords

**OBJECTIVES**

Adversaries will typically have some sort of motivation behind their machinations and we've listed the most common ones below. Choose or roll randomly:

**RANDOM OBJECTIVES**

D6	D6	OBJECTIVE TYPE
1-3	1	Biological
	2	Destruction
	3	Energy
	4	Knowledge
	5	Relic
	6	Mineral
4-6	1	Sacred Object
	2	Slaves
	3	Technology – Bio-Tech
	4	Technology – Temporal
	5	Technology – Weapons
	6	Worldly Power and Glory

**Biological**

The Adversary is looking for some sort of living material or whole organisms for food, experimentation, breeding or other purposes. It might be a drug or other resource extracted from the organism – perhaps even a source of immortality!

**Destruction**

The Objective is the destruction of something, someone or some race. The motivation can vary from revenge, to bigotry to pure unadulterated hatred of all other living things.

**Energy**

The Location holds some form of specialised energy that the Adversary needs. You should choose an energy source that is rare for the time and place in question.

**Knowledge**

The target possesses some form of specialised knowledge that the Adversary wants or needs. This could be anything from the general (scientific knowledge) to the very specific (the hiding place of an ancient enemy).

Relic

Some device or object that the Adversary needs to complete their plan. It could be anything from an extremely specialist piece of tech to a 'magic' sword to the Key to Time. Whatever it is, the Adversary's future plans will fail without it.

Mineral

The Adversary wants to strip the mineral wealth of the Location. They might just want a specific rare ore (like taranium) that can only be found at the adventure site or they might want to turn the whole planet into fuel.

Sacred Object

An object of religious significance to the Adversary is located in the adventure location. The Adversary might be fanatically seeking to retrieve it, or they may equally be planning to destroy it or exploit it somehow.

Slaves

The Adversary wants to enslave the Location's population. The type of slavery varies, although most races, like the Daleks, use them for hard labour. The Adversary's strengths and weaknesses should determine whether they are simply raiders looking to pick up a small number of chattels or a major invasion force looking to take the entire population, while any special powers or traits possessed by the local population might determine why they're being taken as slaves.

Technology

The Adversary is looking for a technological item, to use or retro engineer.

**Bio-Tech:** The Objective is some form of biological technology, like a genetically modified creature or psychic amplifiers.

**Temporal Tech:** The Adversary wants to possess the means to time travel, either stolen from the Location or the characters' own TARDIS (in which case, they have probably set a trap to lure or bring the characters to the location).

**Weapons Tech:** The Adversary is seeking some awesomely destructive weapons technology held at the Location.

Worldly Power and Glory

Pure unadulterated power is the goal. The Adversary plans to achieve this through political, military or economic means. Possibly all three.



LOCATION

Locations represent one or more connected 'Sets.' It could be as small as a single Set, like a hermit's cave in the desert, or it might consist of a half dozen or more, like the important areas inside a UNIT base. For more information on fleshing out Locations, see pg. 63.

Roll on the following table to find the general location and then move to the specific tables to generate any specifics:

LOCATIONS		
D6	D6	LOCATION
1-2	1	The Americas
	2	The United Kingdom
	3	Europe
	4	Africa
	5	Asia
	6	Earth – Remote Places (Antarctic, Under the Sea, Lost World, etc.)
3-4	1	Sol System (Venus, Mars, etc.)
	2	Primitive World
	3	Alien World
	4	High-tech Alien World
	5	Adversary's Home World
	6	Gallifrey
5	1	Asteroid Base
	2	Planetary Base
	3	Orbital Base
	4	Deep Space Station
	5	Starship
	6	Generation Ship
6	1	Ground or Underwater Vehicle
	2	Artificial World (Ringworld, Dyson Sphere, etc.)
	3	Hyperspace
	4	E-Space
	5	Outside Time and Space (Void, Land of Fiction, etc.)
	6	Bizarre (Inside a living creature, Flatland, etc.)

Each Location will be set in a specific Time Zone. If you don't have a particular time period in mind and don't mind an adventure that can potentially jump a number of Time Zones, you can roll on the following table once for each Location:

WHEN		
D6	D6	TIME ZONE
1-2	1	Early Universe
	2	Mesozoic Era
	3	Stone Age
	4	The Bronze Age
	5	The Iron Age
	6	The Dark Ages
3-4	1	The Renaissance
	2	The Colonial Period
	3	The Victorian Era
	4	Early 20th Century
	5	Mid 20th Century
	6	Late 20th Century
5-6	1	21st-23rd Centuries
	2	24th-31st Centuries
	3	32nd-41st Centuries
	4	42nd-50th Centuries
	5	51st Century
	6	Far Future to the End of Time



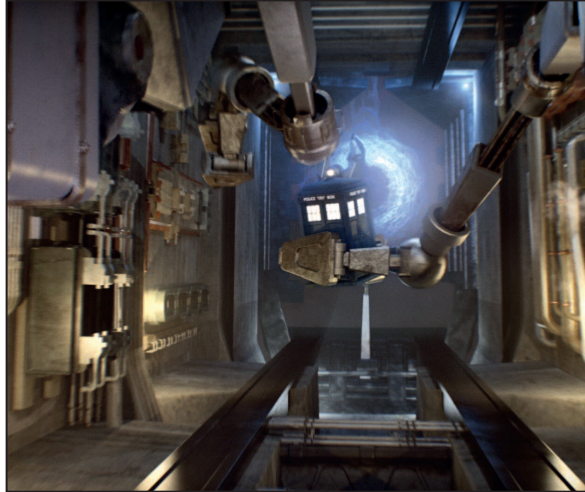
Choose or roll up a few Sets for the Location. Only Sets where important things happen need to be detailed, so don't feel you have to generate the entire interior of a spaceship, just the bits relevant to the story. Roll D6 times if you're not sure how many to generate.

## EXTERNAL SETS

D6	D6	SET
1	1	Battlefield
	2	Beach
	3	Castle/Palatial Home
	4	Caverns/Mines
	5	Church/Monastery/Temple
	6	Circus/Carnival
2	1	Factory/Workhouse
	2	Forest/Jungle
	3	Garden
	4	Government Building
	5	Graveyard/Tomb
	6	Hospital/Asylum
3	1	Hotel
	2	Lake/Sea
	3	Library
	4	Menagerie/Zoo
	5	Military Base/Bunker
	6	Museum
4	1	Natural Oddity (Elephant's Graveyard, Psychic Grove, etc.)
	2	News Agency
	3	Office
	4	Park
	5	Factory/Power Plant
	6	Prison
5	1	Project Site
	2	Pub/Tavern
	3	Recording Studios
	4	Research Facilities
	5	Rock Quarry
	6	Ruins
6	1	School/University
	2	Sewers
	3	Cinema/Theatre
	4	Tower Block
	5	Underwater Habitat/Base
	6	Village/Town/Colony

## INTERNAL SETS

D6	D6	SET
1-3	1	Attic
	2	Bathroom
	3	Bedroom
	4	Cellar
	5	Corridors (see pg. 27)
	6	Dining Area
4-6	1	Kitchen
	2	Living Area
	3	Office/Study
	4	Secret Chamber
	5	Specialised Room (Library, Lab, Observatory, Solarium, etc.)
	6	Yard/Field/Greenhouse



## MILITARY/STARSHIP INTERIORS

D6	D6	SET
1-3	1	Armoury/Equipment
	2	Bridge/Command Centre
	3	Corridors (see pg. 27)
	4	Docking Bay/Inner Ward
	5	Engineering
	6	Holding Cell/Dungeon
4-6	1	Infirmmary/Sickbay
	2	Lab/Research
	3	Living Area
	4	Private Quarters
	5	Storage Hold/Warehouse
	6	Vehicle Bay

## UNUSUAL SETS

D6	D6	SETS
1-3	1	Antimatter Realm
	2	Continual Event Transmuter
	3	Gallifreyan Death Zone
	4	Hyper-Condensed Cloud
	5	Inside a Computer/Video Game
	6	Inside the Mind
4-6	1	Inside the TARDIS
	2	Labyrinth
	3	Mortuary
	4	Pocket Dimension
	5	Space-Time Rift
	6	Inside the Matrix





VILLAINS AND  
MAKING MONSTERS

## VILLAINS

***'Compassion, Doctor. It has always been your greatest indulgence. Let this be my final victory. Let me hear you say it, just once. Compassion is wrong.'***

Villains are as close as the Gamemaster gets to having their own character in the game. Just as players get to lavish attention on their characters' quirks and traits, and have fun roleplaying them, you should make your villains special. Make your villains awesome, make them charming, make them terrifying. Make the galaxy tremble before them... but always remember that they're born to lose.

When making a villain, first ask why they're a villain. Few people consider themselves to be the bad guy, unless they've already been kicked around by the universe and want revenge. Most 'villains' are actually the heroes of their own stories, and it's the players' characters who are the misguided meddling fools who are trying to stop the villain from doing something wonderful and heroic. Then again, there are some people who get up in the morning, put on their space jackboots and their dark helmets, and set out to conquer the universe because it's there.

### THE SEED OF EVIL

At some point in their life, the villain made a decision to turn away from the light and forge a path towards darkness and damnation. Why would any sane being do this?

### CHAOS INCARNATE

*'They took me there, into the dark. I looked into Time, old man. And I heard it, calling to me ... Drums. The never-ending drums...'*

At some point in their life, due to some traumatic experience or experiment gone awry, the villain's mind simply snapped and any concern for morality or order was shed like the discarded pupae case of a mad butterfly. From that point on, the villain became dedicated to chaos and turmoil, finding pleasure in the dismantling of order and civilisation and watching them burn.

While they may or may not bear their madness openly for all to see, the chaotic villain is often hard to defeat simply for the reason that they are utterly unpredictable. They can seem totally hell bent on a particular goal one moment, only to abandon it the next. The Master is an excellent example. He wasn't born evil. His long rivalry with the Doctor, his

plans for universal conquest, every evil act he has ever done has been motivated from an early age by the madness caused by the ever-present sound of drums. A madness his own people, in their hour of desperation, had inflicted upon him as a child. While the Master was still culpable for his crimes, how much more responsible were the Time Lords for the actions of this madman who would go on to threaten not only Gallifrey itself, but the entire universe, on numerous occasions.

### FOR A GREATER GOOD

*'[She is] hope. Hope in this endless, bitter war.'*  
*'What war? Against who?'*  
*'Against you, Doctor.'*

If you asked this villain why they chose the side of wrong over right, they would look at you as though you were stupid. In their mind, they are not the 'bad guy.' They are doing what they do for a greater purpose, for the benefit of all.

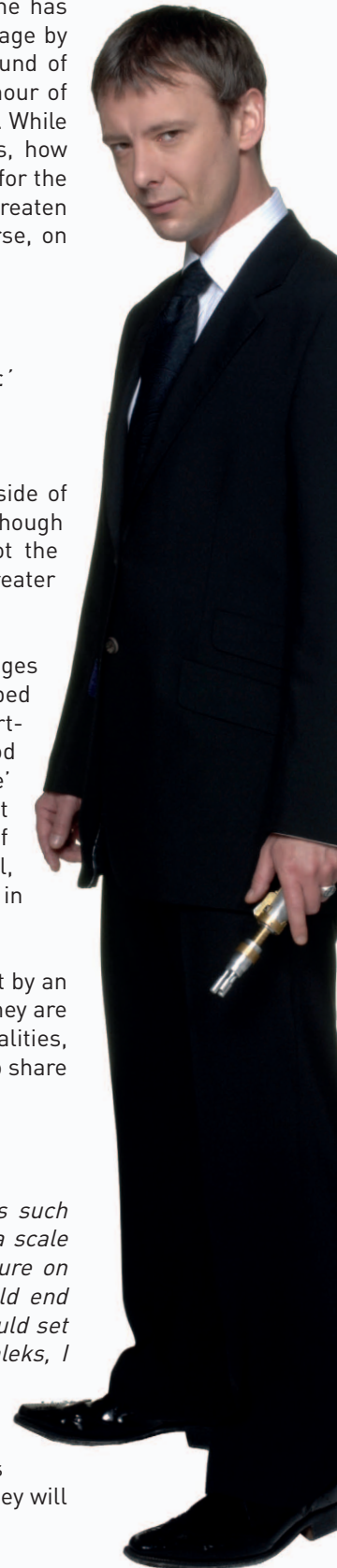
They may be arrogant, self-appointed judges of what is and isn't right, beings with a warped sense of morality, or (worst of all) short-sighted crusaders and do-gooders whose good intentions never seem to take the 'big picture' into account. Whatever the case, they do not realise or acknowledge the tragic results of their actions, discounting them as either small, unfortunate mistakes or necessary sacrifices in their pursuit of a greater good.

Because they wear a mantle of virtue wrought by an unshakeable faith in the purity of their goal, they are often strong-willed or commanding personalities, possibly with a group of devoted followers who share their vision.

### KNOWLEDGE AT ALL COSTS

*'To hold in my hand a capsule that contains such power, to know that life and death on such a scale was my choice. To know that the tiny pressure on my thumb, enough to break the glass, would end everything. Yes, I would do it! That power would set me up above the gods. And through the Daleks, I shall have that power!'*

For this villain, some event in their past has proven that the only truly worthy goal in life is the pursuit of some type of knowledge, and they will not rest until they have acquired it.



This knowledge could be something very specific, like the identity and location of the being or race that destroyed their family or home, or the secret to time travel so that they can go back and prevent some very personal tragedy. It could equally be something very general, like scientific knowledge that will move the universe out of the dark ignorance of superstition and morality (which made the villain a pariah) and into the pure light of scientific reason (which will make the villain a hero).

Whatever the knowledge this villain seeks, they are willing to rip the universe apart to find it and they have few qualms about destroying people, worlds or even whole galaxies in their quest for ultimate understanding. Because of this complete and utter lack of moral concern or compassion, this type of villain is often found on the fringes of society. They are often outcasts of peculiar disposition and are very likely plagued by enemies of a very personal nature who can often be counted on to aid the characters in trying to stop the villain's machinations.

### LOVE AND VENGEANCE

*'I was sacrificed to that supernova. I generated those forces, and for what? To be blown out of existence into this black hole of antimatter? My brothers became Time Lords, but I was abandoned and forgotten!'*

*'No, not forgotten. All my life I've known of you and honoured you as our greatest hero.'*

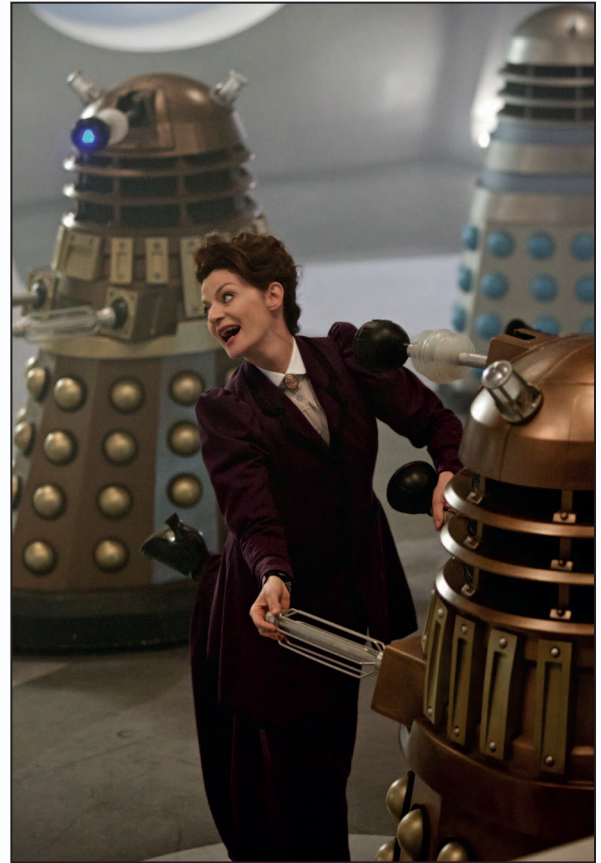
*'A hero? I should have been a god!'*

Possibly the two most ancient and powerful emotional drives any sentient being can possess are undying attraction and undying hatred. Often, when the love is unrequited or stolen, the two are combined into a powerful force that can make even the most sane being into a destructive monster who would see the universe end rather than let the source of their distress go unpunished.

In the case of love, the villain has a deep and abiding attraction to or affection for some person, place or idea, and seeks to possess it or protect it at any cost. That person could be a paramour, but they could easily be a family member, a great leader or a race of people. A place might be their home, their country or even a planet, and many a person has been willing to die for an idea like national pride or religion.

In the case of vengeance, the villain seeks to avenge themselves on a person, place or idea. Whether they seek to kill a particular adversary or trap them in eternal torment, destroy the home world of their racial enemy or eradicate a religion whose views

offend them, the villain will not rest until vengeance is theirs. And even after they accomplish that goal, they will probably find another to turn their flaming hatred towards, typically any who stood in the way of their original target (which almost invariably includes the players' characters).



### POWER CORRUPTS

*'The skies of this entire world are mine. My family tamed them, and now I own them.'*

While all seek, in some way, to exert their will upon others, they typically only seek or use power in order to achieve some particular, overriding goal that is important to them. This villain, however, has no particularly strong drives or goals outside of the acquisition of power for its own sake. Many power-hungry villains start out as victims of some form of oppression from which they eventually escape, vowing to never be in a position where others have control over them again. Others are simply greedy beyond belief, having been raised the spoiled scion of a rich family or born with an deep emotional and spiritual emptiness that drives them to possess everything. Still others come to the conclusion that as money gets spent, love is fleeting, and knowledge and vengeance are only within the grasp of those

with the resources to achieve them, the only truly worthwhile goal is total control.

Whatever their origin, the typical power-hungry villain is one of the more cunning of the villain types, with a chess master's grasp of power dynamics and political manoeuvring coupled with a complete willingness to sacrifice anything, be it physical comfort, 'loved' ones, even control over major assets, if the end result is greater personal power.

## MONSTROUS NATURE

*'Evil? Your evil is my good. I am Sutekh the Destroyer. Where I tread I leave nothing but dust and darkness. I find that good.'*



Some villains are the product of utterly alien cultures. They don't easily fit into human conceptions of good and evil, because they cannot be good. A creature that feeds on the life force of whole civilisations, for example, can't be redeemed. It can't even be negotiated with – it has to feed, and it's going to feed unless the characters stop it. It is a thing of inhuman horror.

## BUILDING A VILLAIN

Major villains – renegade Time Lords, crazed alien conquerors, mad scientists, evil computers, ancient evils from beyond time and space and so on – are mechanically built on around 40 Character Points, 20 Skill Points, and 10 Story Points. More mundane villains like misguided bureaucrats or inventors should be built like Henchmen (see pg. 52), but have 8-10 Story Points instead.

## VICTORIES, MONOLOGUES AND DEATH SCENES

When creating your villain, think about these three situations and consider how your villain would behave in each of them. These might never actually come up in the game, but they'll give you a feel for how your villain would act – and if they do come to pass, that's a bonus!

**Victory!** What's your villain's ultimate end goal? What would satisfy them? They look out the window and say "my work is complete"; what's outside that window? A conquered Earth? A galaxy in flames? The Citadel of the Time Lords, ablaze?

**Monologue:** So, the villain captures the characters, ties them up and... what? Do they try to convince them of the rightness of their cause? Do they mock the characters for daring to defy them? Make the characters watch as the villain activates their doomsday weapon? Clone them and send their duplicates off to take down Earth's defences from within? What would your villain say if they were in a position of complete power over the players' characters?

**Death Scene:** What's a fitting end for your villain? What would be a satisfying way for them to get their just desserts? Imagine their ignominious defeat, with all their grand schemes crashing around their ears – how do they react? What's the best way for your villain to lose everything?



## ⚙️ POWER BASE

Every villain has characteristics or resources from which they habitually draw their power from. This could be great intelligence, physical superiority, vast armies, great wealth or any number of other potential sources which they will always use to complete their

plans and oppose the characters. What does your villain possess?

### LAIRS AND BASES

A particularly resource-rich villain may have a lair or base of operations from which they operate. Some of these are secret, like Madame Kovarian's base on Demon's Run, while others sit in plain sight, like the Global Chemicals factory or International Electromatics. The characters must sneak into the villain's lair to foil their plans – and, of course, any characters who get captured are imprisoned in the villain's base. They can then break out, sneak around, learn vital bits of plot, get captured again...



Make sure that the base reflects the personality of the villain, and think of 3-4 things that can happen in the base during the game, especially during action scenes. For example:

A small-minded bureaucrat has a base that's a warren of offices and cubicles.

- Lots of computers to hack, and documents to steal.
- Desks to hide under as guards go past.
- Disrupt the villain's filing system, and they break down.
- Everything's regimented and organised – so if you steal the right ID card, no one questions you!

A mad scientist has a laboratory filled with blinking lights, bubbling test tubes, and humming computers.

- Captured characters get used as experimental subjects.
- A little Jiggery-Pokery can build a Gadget out of all these spare parts.
- You should never let the Doctor push all those buttons!

An alien invader commands from the bridge of a gargantuan warship.

- If anyone starts shooting in here, maybe they'll hit a vital console.
- A big viewscreen so the invader can threaten the United Nations in high definition.
- Launch controls for the doomsday weapon, right next to the self-destruct.
- A transmat for quick escape from an exploding ship.

Remember to use the villain's base and resources in the scenario. If the villain's base is in a medieval castle, then the characters should be crawling through secret passages in the dungeons or laying siege to the walls. If the villain sets up camp in an industrial plant, then whatever they make in that factory should be part of the scenario in some way, either as a key clue or just a bit of background detail.

### MINIONS

Some villains work alone, but others have followers, servants or soldiers working for them. Other villains – especially the Master – dupe others into becoming their minions, or make dangerous alliances with alien invaders. Minions are the villain's spies and agents, their tools and their disposable cannon fodder. Minions come in three flavours:



### Henchmen

The Henchman is the villain's right-hand being when it comes to getting things done. A Henchman is unique, and if one is killed or captured, they are unavailable for the rest of the adventure.

Henchmen are built on 30 Character Points, 18 Skill Points and 3-5 Story Points. Henchmen almost always have attributes and skills that counterbalance the villain's weaknesses. So, a villain who is physically

feeble might have a henchman who is a big tough fighter; a villain who is a monstrous warmonger gets a Henchman who is a brilliant-but-misguided scientist, forced to carry out the warmonger's mad plan for conquest. If the villain has more than one Henchman, you can decide if they are ranked or carry equal authority.

### Elites

Elites are a group of specialist soldiers, scientists, infiltrators or similar that handle very specific and complex jobs for the villain, like a group of black ops soldiers, a group of temporal scientists or a group of duplicates of key authority figures. There are usually a number of NPCs in the Elite cadre equal to the villain's Presence.

Build a single character using 24 Character Points, 15 Skill Points and 1-3 Story Points. All the Elites will share those stats.

### Functionaries

Functionaries are a mob of worker drones who fulfil a number of tasks, but none of them particularly well. When they aren't performing perfunctory tasks, they are often sent in force to overwhelm the villain's enemies. There are a number of Functionaries in a group equal to the villain's Presence x3.



Functionaries are considered to have a 3 in every Attribute and 3 Skill Points spread amongst whatever skills it is that they are tasked to do. A group of plumbers might have some points in Craft with a specialisation in Plumbing, while a band of cultists might have Fighting 2 and Convince 1, and a group of soldiers might have Fighting 1, Marksman 1 and Transport 1.

## TRAITORS, SLAVES AND UNRELIABLE ALLIES

Often, it's not the Doctor who finally stops the villain – someone else strike the final blow, even if the Doctor set the dominoes in motion. Maybe the villain's ambitious Henchman betrays his master, or the Doctor shows the Henchman that the villain was tricking her all this time. Slaves can break their chains (or their hypnotic control or their programming) and rise up against their tormentor. Allies can turn on each other, especially if one faction learns their former 'friends' never intended to fulfil their end of the bargain.

The characters may be able to convince a villain's minions to turn on their master. To do so, they first need to find a good reason for the minion to switch sides – maybe the minion has a trait like Enslaved, Obsession, Owes Favour or Code of Conduct that the characters can exploit to get inside the minion's head (and if the minion doesn't have a trait like that, maybe they can create one, either by spending some Story Points or by winning a social conflict with the minion).

After that, they need to make a Presence + Convince roll at an appropriate moment; the difficulty depends on how loyal the minion is and how dangerous it will be for them to switch sides, but is usually between 18 and 24.

## VILLAINS AND STORY POINTS

Knowing when and where a villain will use their Story Points to counter the characters can be tricky. After all, you are running the game to allow the players to be the heroes of their own story and frustrating their plans with the use of deus ex machina that seemingly favours the bad guy can be a source of great irritation for them. That, however, *is the point*.

For a villain to be more than another 'monster-of-the-week' they need to be more of a thorn in the character's sides, to be a source for emotive response, someone that just makes them want to



scream “We’re going to get that fiend if it’s the last thing we do!”

There are two basic things you need to consider when using a villain’s Story Points:

## YOU ARE OMNISCIENT, THE VILLAIN IS NOT.

When it comes to the story and everything that will happen in it, you are pretty much the god of the game universe and know everything that is going on. The villain, however, is not (except in cases where the villain really is omniscient, ).

This simply means it is alright for a villain to know that the characters are visiting the lab to find a secret antidote to their poison, but they should have some trait (Friends in particular, but some other traits might apply) or should have to spend their dwindling supply of precious Story Points to do so. In effect, a villain can interrupt and foil the players’ plans with miraculous efficiency, but they will weaken themselves in the process.



The corollary to this, of course, is that, to avoid the players up and quitting out of frustration, sometimes you should throw them a bone. Remember to use the villain’s Bad Traits to colour their interference so that, even if they throw a few Story Points at the players, the players can react with Story Points of their own. A villain with the Adversary trait who is too blatant in their interference, for example, might draw another enemy into the adventure. Allow the players to bring that trait in when they’ve had just about enough with the judicious use of a Story Point – and possibly give them a discount for doing so if the timing is particularly appropriate.

## THE RULE OF A THIRD

As laid out in **Chapter Two: Adventures** (see pg. 22), any good adventure will have three acts: the intro, the development and the finale. To make sure that the finale is sufficiently exciting and doesn’t resolve itself too easily, you should always keep at least 1/3rd of the villain’s Story Points in reserve for the last act.

Also, in keeping with the advice above about not overly-frustrating players, a villain should spend no more than a 1/3rd of their Story Points in any single act. If they do, then each player should receive a Story Point at the end of the act to represent random opportunities arising from the villain over-tipping their hands.



## USES FOR STORY POINTS

So, with those caveats in mind, what might a villain do with all their Story Points?

First, they can do all the usual things that a monster does with Story Points:

- Buy extra dice (1 Story Point = 2 extra dice, 2 Story Points = 3 extra dice, 3 Story Points = 4 extra dice).
- Reduce failure by one or more success levels.
- Restore lost attributes.
- Change the story.
- There are also a few special tricks only available to Villains.

## OH NO YOU DON’T!

So, one of the players just spent a load of Story Points to change the story or charge up a Gadget. You think the villain hadn’t prepared for that? If the villain spends an equal number of Story Points, they

get to counter whatever change the player just made. The Gamemaster describes how the villain blocks or overcomes any change to the story. The players can't do the same by spending more Story Points – they'll have to come up with a new plan.

## GET AFTER THEM!

By spending a Story Point, the villain can dispatch a Henchman, a squad of Elites or a bunch of Functionaries to wherever the characters are. (1 Story Point sends a single Henchman, the villain's Presence in Elites or their Presence x3 in Functionaries, so spending 2 Story Points gets any two of the three, or a double-strength set of Elites or Functionaries). The villain has to know where the characters are in order to send in the bad guys.

The characters have just enough time to escape before the bad guys arrive – unless the Villain wants to spend another 3 Story Points, in which case the bad guys get there quickly enough to catch the characters, capturing or trapping them!

## SOMEONE'S BEEN PLAYING A LONG GAME

As a more cunning stratagem, the villain can have agents in place already. At a cost of 1 Story Point for a Functionary, 2 for an Elite and 3 for a Henchman, the villain can reveal that some minor character in the background of a scene was actually one of their Minions all along. Say the Doctor and companions have just arrived at UNIT HQ to help the Brigadier deal with the latest threat to world security. The villain spends a Story Point, and one of the UNIT guards sneaks away and reports back to his superiors, "the Doctor has arrived!"

Unless the villain is known for being especially sneaky or having lots of spies (or shapeshifters or something else equally sinister), only do this once per game session.

Once per adventure, the villain can also use this to 'turn' a non-player character. The villain picks some contact, ally or friend of the players' characters, ideally someone they don't expect, and spends at least 2 Story Points (more if the target is especially powerful, skilled or dangerous). That non-player character either turns to the villain's side, or retroactively has always been a secret spy for the Villain.

A great example of this is Professor Docherty in *Last of the Time Lords* – the characters go in search of an expert who has the Science and Technology skills needed to help them understand the Toclafane,

and the Master spends some Story Points to turn Docherty into a minion after they leave...

## SO, YOU ESCAPED...

Some villains always escape. A villain can spend a Story Point to flee the scene – and if it's the last scene of an adventure, they can even escape certain death! If the villain uses this option, they flee with their metaphorical tails between their legs – they don't get to take anyone or anything with them, they lose any bases or minions they have, and they don't get to come back to the scene after they escape. Spending that Story Point keeps the villain alive to try again another day, nothing more.

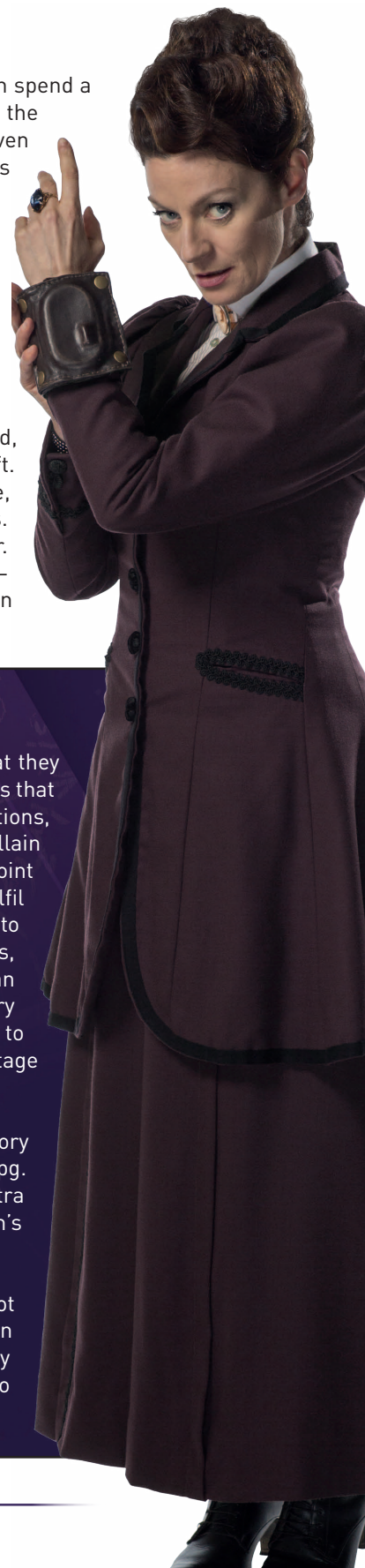
Maybe the villain runs to an escape pod, or activates an Emergency Temporal Shift. Maybe they die but come back as a clone, or get resurrected by a cult of followers. Maybe they just escape out the back door. Maybe their escape is never explained – but they got out alive, and can engage in more villainous plans in future!

## M IS FOR MINIONS

If a villain has minions, remember that they have Story Points as well! Not only does that allow them to escape from sticky situations, but if they survive until the finale, the villain may use them as a reserve Story Point pool, draining any they have left to fulfil the villain's goals. Yes, this may lead to their demise, but they are only minions, after all, and many a loyal Henchman has found themselves left high and dry by a master who is perfectly willing to sacrifice them for some small advantage against their enemies.

The villain may even use a minion's Story Points to exceed the 1/3rd Rule (see pg. 54) without giving the characters extra Story Points in return! Only the villain's points count towards the 1/3rd Rule.

Villains being villains, this does not work the other way around, and a villain may never directly give their own Story Points to their minions, not even to keep them alive.



## MAKING MONSTERS



***'Imagine the weight I will have to lift; the monsters I created, the people they killed.'***

In his travels, the Doctor has encountered all sorts of incredible creatures and aliens, many of whom wanted to kill or eat him. This section is all about making your own alien monsters. A lot of this advice also applies to nice aliens, the sort you can sit down and have a cup of tea with, but for the most part, we're talking about the ones who want to kill or eat you. Or kill and then eat you. Or, if you're really unlucky, eat you then kill you...

### INITIAL INSPIRATION

Where do you start? There are lots of ways to approach the making of a monster. You might start with the role the creature will play in your adventure, and then go from there. Ask yourself questions to flesh out the monster's concept. Do you want:

- A dangerous, unstoppable monster that kills people, like the Vashta Nerada. *Why can't these monsters be stopped? Are they immune to conventional weapons? Who are they attacking? How do the characters survive long enough to have an adventure?*
- A monster that's a puzzle to be solved, like the Krafayis that menaced Vincent Van Gogh? *What's the puzzle? Is the problem finding out*

*a way to stop the monster, or is the monster misunderstood and the real problem is communicating with the monster?*

- An invading army, like the Daleks or the Sontarans? *Why are they invading? Do they have a cunning plan, or do they just use brute force? Who are their enemies?*
- Sinister minions for your villains, just like the Headless Monks served Madame Kovarian? *Why are these minions serving the villain? What makes them good soldiers?*

You could start with physical appearance, drawing inspiration from nature, from other monsters, or from your own nightmares.

- What would a tree be like if it could walk and talk? *The Forest of Cheem and the Androzani Trees both explore this concept in different ways. What about a jellyfish, or a mushroom, or an ocean?*
- Take a classic movie monster like a zombie, and explain all its supernatural traits like infecting others with a bite, rising from the dead and shambling slowly after its prey with alien science. *The Great Vampires encountered by the Fourth Doctor and the Saturnians fought by the Eleventh Doctor both play with legends of vampires, and of course the Doctor has also encountered werewolves and ghosts. What about gargoyles? Or dragons?*

- Ugly, slimy grubs turn into beautiful butterflies. What would an intelligent species that underwent a transformation like that be like? *Real-world creatures, especially insects, are as weird as any alien. What about a species where males and females are radically different in size and appearance? Or what about two intelligent species, where one is a parasite that lives on the other?*
- In the Time Vortex itself? *What sort of creature could exist in the vortex? Are they godlike, mythological entities like the Chronovores or the Weeping Angels? Or are they the time-travelling equivalent of dust mites or leeches, feeding off the Artron energy of passing time machines, or do they lay eggs in the past timestreams of victims?*

You could think about the environment, and how it affects the creatures that live there. What sort of aliens might you encounter:

- On an icy planet? *Do they have fur or blubber to protect them from the cold, or do they steal heat from each other, like vampires drink blood?*
- Deep underground? *Maybe the creatures have huge eyes to see in the dark, or no eyes and they see by echolocation or by following the vibrations in the stone. Can they burrow through rock, or maybe they're partially out of phase with normal matter so they can swim through stone!*
- In the corona of a star? *How do they protect themselves from the heat and radiation? Do they have super-science? Maybe you could look at human cultures that live in harsh environments like deserts, and create nomads of the stellar wastes? Or are these creatures patterns of gas or plasma or energy instead of solid matter?*
- In a radioactive wasteland? *Are they mutated by the radiation, or have they some way of protecting themselves? Maybe they feed on radiation! Or maybe they're left-over weapons from the war.*

### STARTING WITH A TRAIT

You can start from the other end, with the rules! Pick a trait like Cyborg, Psychic or Obsession and build a monster around that!

You could start with how you want the monster to behave, and then develop its concept based on how the players are going to interact with it?

- Is it going to chase the characters? *How does the monster move? Does it scuttle on too many legs? Does it slither? Fly? Teleport? Walk through walls? Maybe it can only exist in the green sunshine from the planet's weird sun, and can't go indoors or exist at night? How does it hunt the characters? Can it smell them? Sense their technology? Taste their fear?*
- Is it going to stop the characters getting somewhere? *How does it stop them? Why is it stopping them? Was it created to be a guardian, or does it just happen to make its lair right on top of that ancient tomb? Can it stop the characters from using the TARDIS or some other gadget to get past?*



- Is it the cause of a mystery for them to investigate? *What clues does the monster leave behind? How do the characters find it? How do they stop it?*

You could start with a superstition, or a story about a place, or a legend.

- “Step on a crack, break your mother’s back” – so what’s in the cracks? *Maybe something ghastly lives under the pavements of a ruined city, and if you attract its attention, it’ll rise up and eat you...*
- Two words: Space Leprechauns. *They’re small and green and can mess with the flow of time. That’s where legends of fairyland come from – they can slow down your personal timestream so that while a day passes for you, a hundred years pass for those outside the time bubble.*
- There are lots of legends of sea monsters and serpents – what’s at the root of them? *Better yet – there are lots of legends about people being swallowed by sea monsters, and getting trapped in their stomachs. There’s your opening scene right there: the TARDIS gets swallowed by a giant sea serpent!*

You could start with an everyday object, and turn it into a monster. The Autons are shop window dummies

brought to life; the Wire made televisions into face-sucking soul traps; and the Great Intelligence put something nasty in the WiFi.

- Look for things that are everywhere, but forgettable and ordinary. *Houses are everywhere. Walk down a suburban street, and there are houses all around you, all the same. What if one of them is just this big slimy carnivorous snail-thing that learned to camouflage itself. It’s wearing a shell of plaster, but underneath it’s alive and hungry...*
- The monster might hide behind everyday things. *There’s a thing living in the sewers. A huge alien monster, with long snaky tentacles. It can reach up into our world through storm drains and manholes – toilets, even – to grab its victims and drag them down into the darkness. Listen for the scraping noise in the night as it pushes the manhole cover aside...*
- The monster might use an everyday object to control its prey. Cybermen in Pete’s World, for example, used EarPods to take control of their victims. *What’s ubiquitous these days? How about social networking? The monster becomes your friend online, then takes you over from the inside until all that’s left is your online presence?*

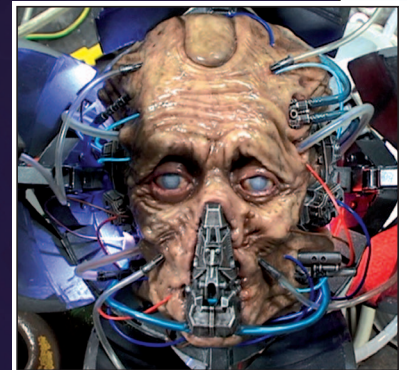
## MONSTERS VS. ALIENS

If a creature is only going to show up in a single adventure, then you don’t need to worry too much about how it fits into a wider context. For example, take the Toclafane. We know everything we need to know about these flying balls of terror for the purposes of *The Sound of Drums*: they’re made from the last humans who tried to get to Utopia (so they can be stopped by fixing the paradox), they’re vulnerable to electricity (so the characters can bring one down) and they’re nearly unstoppable (making them great minions for the Master). That’s enough for that one adventure.

However, if an alien makes a repeat appearance, then it’s time to start thinking about that creature’s society, culture, lifecycle and so on. For example, if the characters returned to the End of Time and met the Toclafane on their home ground, what would the Toclafane be like? Are they all crazy, childlike murderers? Did the Master create those flying life-support pods, or did they turn themselves into disembodied heads?

The Ood are a great example of this sort of evolution. They start off as slaves just waiting to get turned into minions for the Beast. In later adventures (like *Planet of the Ood*), their origins and culture are explored. Each bit of Ood-lore gets revealed gradually, as it is needed.

The lesson to take from all this is: be lazy. Don’t create an elaborate backstory or culture for a creature unless it’s necessary for the adventure. Only create what you need immediately.



You could even start with nothing more than a single memorable image.

- A slug that steals your skeleton, leaving only a loose skin-bag of organs and flesh behind.
- A stalker that exists five seconds ahead of you in time, so all you ever hear are the echoes of its footsteps.
- A monster that's made of eyes.
- A thing that lives under your bed.
- An invisible monster – all you can see are its teeth just before it eats you.

## ⚙️ MAKING IT MEMORABLE

The best monsters aren't necessarily the biggest, or the nastiest, or the most powerful; they're the ones the players remember. Making your monsters interesting and scary and weird is the best way to create stories that linger with the players who experience them.



## THE ONE-LINE SUMMARY

Take your idea for the monster and summarise it in a single sentence. You don't need to sum up everything about the monster in this one phrase, but nailing the concept down in just one line forces you to concentrate on what the monster is really about.

So, the Cybermen are *emotionless cyborgs who turn humans into more Cybermen*. Daleks are *hate-filled xenophobic mutants in armoured shells*. Weeping Angels *turn to stone when you look at them*. The Family of Blood are *a family of short-lived shapeshifters who hunger for a Time Lord's lives*.

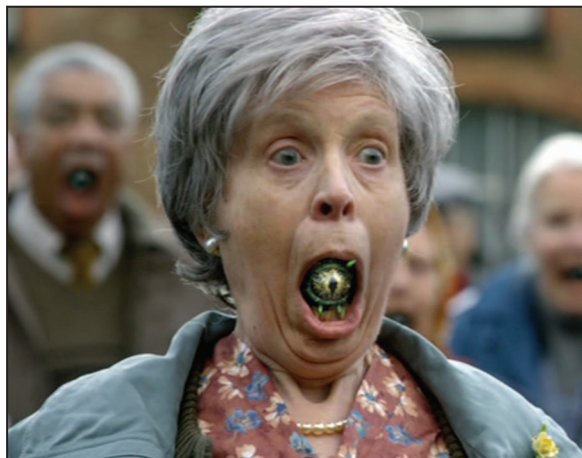
## APPEARANCE

Roleplaying games are a verbal medium. You can show the players pictures and draw sketch maps and use miniature figures, but the core of the game is a conversation between players and Gamemaster. So, when you describe your monster, it needs to have some quirk or aspect that you can get across in a verbal description. Imagine you're on the witness stand in a court room, and the prosecutor asks you to describe what you saw – what would you say about your monster?

Think about big, obvious traits, like unusual physical features, strange smells or sounds, or an effect on the environment. Maybe the presence of the monster causes all nearby lights to get dimmer. Maybe the creature has a huge hammer-hand, or a single glowing eye. You can also go for traits that aren't immediately obvious until they're revealed – remember the Eknodines that attacked Leadworth (well, Upper Leadworth) in *Amy's Choice?* They looked totally human until they opened their mouths to reveal eyeballs-on-stalks.

Aspects of appearance to think about:

- **Eyes:** Glowing, missing, injured, on stalks.
- **Hands:** Clawed, extra fingers, extra joints, mouths or eyes in the palms, cybernetic.
- **Teeth:** Sharpened, fangs, dripping with venom, in weird places.
- **Skin:** Slimy, flaking, metallic, sloughs off like a lizard.
- **Clothing:** Oddly human (a monster in a business suit is much weirder than a monster in a spacesuit), heavily armoured, bones and trophies from fallen foes.
- **Cuffs and Collars:** For monsters that appear human, but aren't, pay attention to the places that are almost-but-not-quite hidden by clothing.



## MAKING IT SCARY

Or intimidating, or weird, or funny – whatever emotional reaction you’re going for with this monster. Sontarans, for example, aren’t that scary, but they are dangerous foes, worthy of respect. Some monsters can provoke a whole range of emotions. Cybermen, for example, can be terrifying, intimidating or tragic depending on how you use them.

Remember, you’re going to have to convey this emotion through verbal description, and verbal description is slower and more subjective than actually seeing the monster. Some things just don’t work very well in verbal descriptions – a monster that suddenly jumps out and goes “rrraagh” may be shocking on television (or in person), but if you’re just sitting there describing it, it’s not half as surprising.

Try going for creepy horror instead; the sort of monsters that get scarier the more you think about them. The Weeping Angels, for example, get scarier when you realise that any statue could be an Angel. A Slitheen suddenly chasing you through the corridors of Downing Street is a fun action scene, but a Slitheen prisoner talking to you about the horrible fate that awaits her if you bring her home for execution – *that* stays with you.

Look for things that the players can’t anticipate. A monster that rips its victims apart is alarming; a monster that bites you once, then drains your life energy away over the next few hours is scary because the players have a chance to realise they’re in trouble.

Another great technique is to think about how the monster kills its victims – and what clues it leaves behind. Daleks exterminate, leaving a blasted corpse. Cybermen upgrade or delete, leaving a fried victim or nothing but bloodstains and left-over chunks of meat. Vashta Nerada reduce their prey to skeletons. The Minotaur made its victims worship it before consuming them. A distinctive killing method goes a long way – especially if the characters find a victim of the monster long before they encounter the monster itself! Imagine finding the body of a space traveller who’s had her blood removed and replaced with mercury. Who did that? What did that? Why did they do that? Those questions will occupy the players’ minds throughout the adventure until they find the answers.

## COMMUNICATION

We’ll return to this topic in more detail below, but think about how your monster speaks – assuming

it does speak. Give the monster a distinct sound, voice or speech pattern. Everyone knows the **DAL-EK VOICE, WITH ITS BARE-LY SU-PRESS-ED RAGE**. Other monsters might buzz, or gurgle, or whisper. Others have a distinctive speech pattern (“Chan-like this-tho!”) or a particular obsession (Sontarans talk about military tactics and conquest all the time!).

Maybe your monster doesn’t speak at all. The Headless Monks don’t speak – they just intone the attack prayer, and that makes them terrifying.



## SHADOW OF THE MONSTER

Another great way to make a monster scary and distinct is to have a clue or sign that tells the players the monster is nearby. This foreshadows the monster, giving the players a chance to feel dread and fear without jumping straight into an action scene. The distinctive silhouette of a Dalek, the tally marks up your arm to remind you that you saw a Silent, the extra shadow of a Vashta Nerada swarm, the egggy whiff of a Slitheen – OK, maybe not the last one, but the principle remains. Giving the players a sign to look for can effectively raise tension in the adventure.

Some classic signs:

- Leave evidence of the monster’s attacks! This ties back to the idea of giving the monster a distinctive way of killing people. Just as two pin-pricks in the neck scream “there’s a vampire out there”, and a discarded skin-suit suggests a Slitheen, having the monster leave some particular clue that it recently killed here can scare the players. Imagine a monster that vomits acid on its victims! What do the player characters do when they find a patch of partially dissolved goo outside the TARDIS door – and then realise that the door was unlocked...
- The monster might create changes in the environment. Running water signalled the approach of the Flood on Mars; snowfall heralded

the arrival of the Great Intelligence; the tolling of the Cloister Bell might warn of impending Reaper attacks. The presence of the Beast caused hallucinations; the Ambassadors of Death were radioactive and so could be detected by a Geiger counter. A high-tech alien might cause radio static or scramble computer systems nearby.

- If the alien has the Infection trait or some other way to alter or possess its victims, then the slow progression of the infection will keep reminding the players of the danger they are in. Look at how the victims of the Minotaur slowly lose their will to resist, which makes the Minotaur more and more scary even when it is not present.
- Try giving the alien a distinct sound or noise. The stomp of a Cyberman, the tick-tock of a Clockwork Robot, the hiss of a Silurian – all tell the players what they're facing. Imagine a situation where the players are investigating a mystery, and they meet a young girl who has psychic powers. She saw the villain of the adventure; it was dark, so she can't describe his face, but all she remembers is telepathically 'hearing', over and over, the sound of drums.

## MEMORABLE MONSTER CHECKLIST

- What's the core concept? Boil the monster down to a short description.
- What does the monster look like? Give it one really distinct feature!
- How does the monster scare people? Make sure there's an easy way to tell who's responsible!
- What does the monster sound like? Find a way to portray that to the players!
- What's the clue that signals the monster is nearby?



## DEALING WITH MONSTERS

It's easy to get carried away when designing a monster, and forget how it's going to be used in the game. A race of alien monsters that communicate telepathically and fly spaceships that look like a cross between a Gothic cathedral and a wasp may sound cool, but how will they work in the game? The best thing to do is to take the list of actions in an action round – talking, moving, doing, and fighting – and making sure that there's something interesting to do with the monsters in most of them.

### TALKING

As we said earlier, roleplaying games are a conversation, and the best monsters are ones who can talk back to the characters. Can your monster communicate? Monsters that don't talk can be spookier and more mysterious; monsters that do speak can match wits with the players. The Weeping Angels would be much less sinister if they spoke directly; the Family of Blood wouldn't be half as nasty without Son of Mine's wonderful delivery of threats. One clever compromise for especially alien aliens is to have someone or something else do the talking for them. The Weeping Angels, for example, stole the mind and voice of Private Bob to speak for them, while the Jagraffess had the Editor as a figurehead and Dorium Maldozar explained the Headless Monks. An alien might have a telepathic connection to a victim, or take over a computer system. Alternatively, you can have some expert on hand who knows about the monsters and can predict their behaviour.

### MOVING

Or, usually, running away! In an adventure, the characters are almost certainly going to encounter the monster one or two times before they finally defeat it. It's a classic pattern – first, the initial encounter; then, the monster shows how dangerous it really is by defeating the first attempt to stop it; and then the characters build on what they've learned and finally save the day. However, for that to work, the characters need to be able to escape the monster in encounters #1 and #2!

So, how do the characters escape the monster? Can they just run away? (There's a reason many monsters are slow!) Is there somewhere the monster won't go? Does something drive



the monster temporarily away? If you can, avoid situations where some third party shows up to save the characters from the monster – you can do that once in a while, but in general, the players should be the ones to save themselves!

### DOING

Fighting's always the option of last resort in the **Doctor Who Roleplaying Game**. Monsters are almost always better at it than the characters are, and lots of monsters are immune to weapons anyway! The Doctor's known for clever solutions and cunning plans, not his big guns or his two-fisted fighting (Venusian aikido and duelling with his spoon aside). Make sure there are things to do other than directly fighting or running away from the monsters.

What sort of things can you do with a monster other than fight it? Consider including opportunities for the characters to:

- Investigate the origins or behaviour of the monster.
- Scan for readings or traces of the monster.
- Research existing information on the monster.
- Repair key equipment.
- Search for missing people or supplies.
- Spy on the monster.
- Hide from the monster.
- Heal those injured by the monster.

Maybe the monster can only be defeated by a particular chemical concoction or transmission wavelength. Maybe human invaders disturbed the monster's nest. Maybe someone's forcing the monster to attack. Maybe the characters can open a rift in space and time and suck the monsters into the void. However the scenario unfolds, try to ensure the characters have a chance to do something.

### FIGHTING

This is the easiest of the four key actions to cover. Just don't forget to show the characters how dangerous a monster is *before* they start fighting it. If your Raston Warrior Robot has Marksman 8 and does L/L/L damage, then let the characters see it beating up a bunch of Cybermen first, so they know not to engage it directly.

### DEFEATING THE MONSTER

Finally, of course, there has to be a way of defeating the monster. It's not up to you to come up with this – that's the players' job – but you should still have a few ideas of your own. Scatter clues throughout the

adventure, and then see what clever solutions the players come up with. Remember, while it's great fun to make new monsters – in the end, the Doctor's the scariest monster of them all, because he's the one the monsters fear!

### INTERACTIVE MONSTER CHECKLIST

- How do the players talk to the monster?
- How do the players run from the monster?
- How do the players do things related to the monster?
- How do the players fight the monster?
- How do the players stop the monster?

### ATTRIBUTES, SKILLS & TRAITS

The last thing to do is to give the monster its attributes, skill and traits. Unlike a character, you don't need to stick to a budget of Character Points when doing so, but in general, a minor monster gets 25 points, a more dangerous beast gets around 50, and a really dangerous monster gets built on 75 or more points. Keep your characters in mind when building the monster. A bunch of college students who investigate mysteries with their talking dog should face very different monsters to a team of elite Time Agents.

Monsters also get Story Points. Cannon fodder and lackeys get 1 or 2 points; most monsters get 3-5; monsters that are supposed to be resourceful, resilient or come up with their own plans get 6-8. If the monster's on its own, then give it another few Story Points to give it the edge over a group of characters.





SETTINGS



## SETTINGS



***'You spend an awful lot of time here, considering it's a dump.'***  
***'I spend an awful lot of time being kidnapped, tortured, shot at, and exterminated. Doesn't mean I like it.'***

With your characters, adventure, villains and monsters ready to go, you might think you have everything ready. However, all these elements need something to bring them together and create a context for the story you are going to tell; for this we need a setting. The setting is more than just the place your adventure happens. The people who live or work there, the food they eat, the customs they have are all part of the setting. Essentially, setting is everything that forms a background to the adventure.

Setting can be one of the most easily forgotten aspects of design; after all, it's just the background. The walls and random characters can't be that important can they? It's certainly not as important as having an actual adventure or a villain or a monster for the characters to face up against is it? While it may be possible to run an adventure without much of a setting, it won't be nearly as much fun though. Building a setting allows you to create a world of your own. It's the point you can indulge your imagination as far as you want to go, creating fascinating 'what ifs' and memorable characters and places. The incidental characters, descriptions of strange cultures and even the odd colour of the local

drinks can all not only add fun to your adventure but make the whole story more realistic and immersive. Setting allows you to create the imagined place you are all taking part in, and it can be the most subtle tool in the Gamemaster's toolbox for creating a living, breathing world.

### COMING UP WITH A CONCEPT

The place to start with a setting is very simple, a couple of words that tell you what the place is, 'a UNIT base', or 'an old spacecraft'. Keep it simple, as considering the place in broad detail will help give you ideas when you come to specifics and help stop you falling into a rut. At this stage you just want a place to start, something that will fit the adventure you have in mind.

When you've picked a place to start, consider what you need available to the player characters and what you want to deny them. Will their TARDIS work? Is help on the way? Do the villains have back up nearby? How useful is the local technology? How friendly are the natives? However, as well as all these important questions, it is still OK to ask yourself what would be cool! You have all of time and space to play with so feel free to think outside the box. Put your spacecraft on the back of a Star Whale, lead the characters' TARDIS outside the universe to a junk yard, hide an arena for ancient gods in a circus or let them travel to the end of the universe.

Setting is also the place to establish genre, the general theme and style your adventure is going to follow. If they step out of the TARDIS onto the rainy streets of 1940s Chicago, the players might expect an adventure of film noir-style gangsters, private detectives and femme fatales. Every genre has its tropes, and their own unique aspects that make them fun and cool to explore. Space settings have massive starships, sleek technology and vast scale, where the fate of whole worlds can be in the balance. Horror settings have mystery, and the lingering dread of not quite knowing what might happen next. Historical settings let you delve into the past, with elegant costumes and different manners that seem both alien and familiar at the same time. Westerns have gunslingers, saloon girls with a heart of gold, and above all Stetsons, which in the absence of a Fez are most defiantly cool.

Adventure can happen anywhere, and even an apparently mundane setting (such as a school or housing estate) can bring a sense of familiarity, made strange by the knowledge that something is going to happen soon. Such a setting makes the ordinary extraordinary; because the players know something is there to be discovered. In fact, in some cases the more mundane a place is, the stranger and more frightening the alien elements can be. Cybermen on a space station isn't quite as frightening as thinking of them walking the streets of London. Such settings bring the horror closer to home, and make it a little harder to dismiss as mere fantasy.

### EXPANDING THE CONCEPT

Now you have a place to start we need to get down to basics. You need to decide what you need your setting to do. Consider it in purely functional terms. The bad guy might need a lair. The fanatical villagers will need a temple of some kind for their dark god. Is there room for the invading Cybership to dock or land? Here you need to consider the basic practicalities of your adventure, simple things like how many rooms you need, and how isolated it might be. In most cases the adventure will demand its own setting, but not always. Setting is not always defined by place, but by what you need that place to do.

Let's take three examples from the Doctor's adventures, *The Ark in Space* (a space station), *The Beast Below* (a spacecraft) and *The Rebel Flesh* (a monastery). While each setting is vividly detailed, to a certain extent they are all interchangeable. The Wirrn could have attacked a monastery, the population of England might be trapped on a space station and the Flesh might become self aware on a spacecraft. However, in all three cases the important thing about the setting is isolation. In each of these places there are a number of people unable to get help from anywhere else. So it is important to consider your setting in terms of the adventure's requirements.

Once you know your setting will function, you can start to get clever. You can add the details, big or small, that will make the setting interesting.



These details will provide you with side plots as the players interact with or investigate the people and things they come across that are incidental to the adventure. Strange customs can trip up the characters, such as it being considered rude to look someone in the eye or a no-no to wear clothes to church.

You also need to consider how the setting functions without the adventure. After all, before the good or bad guys show up the setting might be going about its business. Think a little about how the appearance of the characters might disturb the status quo, and how the inhabitants and the technology of the place might react to the villain's plan. What gives the characters the right to interfere anyway? What might they be able to do that the locals can't? How will the locals react to their involvement, even if they know they are trying to help? If your setting works and seems interesting, even without the villain and monsters that might inhabit it, you have created something believable as well as functional.



### FACTIONS, CONFLICTS

As we've mentioned before, no setting should exist in a vacuum. Most people and aliens have a tendency towards tribal behaviour; just look at humanity. It's very easy to create alien worlds where all the aliens of the same species get along just fine. If your population is especially enlightened, or not very large, it may be possible they have all learned how to get along. However, in most cases there will be factions and divisions in any society. In many cases this might not be overtly oppositional. There is usually a political and religious branch in any society, who might mostly get along, except for a few grey areas in their respective jurisdiction. Often it is the appearance of the players' characters that is enough to spark off open hostility between two or more factions who don't get along as well as they should.

So you should first consider what might divide the occupants of your setting. Religion is the obvious example, and might be a single faith opposing the political leadership, or several different faiths competing for ascendancy. Religion might not come into it at all, as politics can be just as divisive, especially when one social class is having a better time of it than another. Even in an equal society devoid of religion there might be antipathy. Different technologies and philosophies can cause conflict. Scientists often argue about what is and isn't 'proper science' and the ethics of what might be done with their creations is also fertile ground for conflict. Many scientists might find their research turned into a weapon and do their best to destroy their own work and stop their patrons from getting hold of it.



The other thing to remember with any factions you create is to give them an agenda, rather than to simply classify them as good guy or bad guy. Muddy the waters when it comes to who is actually right. Simply concern yourself with what they want and what they are prepared to do to get it; this will define their morality. It will also allow members of any faction to lose faith when the faction starts to take a direction they can't agree with. The Doctor is often making friends with good people who have chosen to join the fight against the wayward leadership of their faction. Such people still believe in the goals of their faction, just not the way things are being run. Finding such people from both sides is one of the best ways to create the vital dialogue that will get things back on track.

### TECHNOLOGY

The level of technology available to the people in your setting will have a huge impact on the setting itself. Compare the world of the 1970s with today and see the difference the mobile phone and the Internet have made to society and how we relate

and communicate with each other, and that's just 40 years ago. Consider not just how advanced the technology is, but how available it is. Inventing the mobile phone isn't what changed anything; it was making that technology available to everyone.

Technology can also make a setting interesting. Maybe there is a miniature sun powering the place or ghosts are used to carry messages for people. Such odd constructions will bring new questions that will help expand your idea. Do these ghosts remember who they were? How do people feel about using Grandma as a phone? Are there people trying to track down their relatives to either bring them back or give them a final rest? What will happen if the ghost they finally release is operating most of the government's communications, or that of the intelligence service? How does this make people feel about death and the possible afterlife? Does the church object to or support this use of people's souls?

You might also consider the form that technology takes and how similar it is to what we know today. Highly advanced cultures often look primitive as their technology is so small they can hide it away, living a pastoral existence. Alien technology might not follow the same path as our own as well. It might be based on organic forms, allowing it a degree of sentience. It could be an advanced version of something we see as primitive, such as Clockwork Robots. A lot of aspects of technology come down to the power source they use. The physics of electricity define our technology, but what if we used life energy, emotion or temporal energy? Some forms of energy, like the power of words, might be what we would consider magic.



### CURIOUSER AND CURIOUSER

The universe is strange and wonderful, and there are places within it that make even haunted spacecraft and living planets look utterly mundane. The Doctor has faced several villains capable of manipulating

– or at least appearing to manipulate – the laws of reality themselves. The Celestial Toymaker and the Mind Robber as well as the Dreamlord all created whole worlds to trap the Doctor and his companions. Going on a journey through the rabbit hole can be a lot of fun. The settings can be abstract and imaginative with not even the laws of physics holding sway. You can create upside down rooms, seemingly magical technology and dreamlike mindscapes, then link them all with doors that never lead to the same place twice.



You have to be careful though. Crazy is fun for a while, but if the characters have no frame of reference they are unlikely to figure out how to escape. You need to give them a fighting chance and if you take away the basic rules of the universe by using a godlike villain you must give them decent clues about how to escape their predicament. You can't assume they will make the right assumptions!

However, a little surrealism and whimsy can go a long way. Pulling things from the characters' minds and backgrounds and giving them form can prove very effective. Such odd beings might still exist in a normal world, even if they pull it out of shape a little. After all, the Dreamlord was able to make even peaceful Upper Leadworth and the TARDIS seem strange and foreboding. In fact, it is the mundanity of some places that makes strange things seem more frightening. If beings are coming into your home, or taking things from the deepest corner of your mind, how can anywhere possibly be safe?

### FUTURE AND PAST EARTH

While bouncing around the universe is all well and good, don't forget that time as well as space is your playground. Settings in the past can be a little easier to develop as there is already a lot of material to draw from. There are copious books written about

the Victorian era, Jane Austen's England and living in the American West. When planning a historical setting, bear in mind the level of knowledge among your player group. If you are the only one who has read a book on Victorian England then you won't have any arguments when you get it wrong. However, if one of your group is a Victorian scholar, they may assume your mistakes are part of the adventure, a clue to meddling in history. They might also just choose to be pedantic about details when you get something wrong too.

So, with any historical setting, the key is research; although don't think this means hours of study time in the local library. You don't need to understand the difference between French and English artillery tactics in the Napoleonic era to use the battle of Waterloo as a setting. The only thing you really need is a sense of the style of the period, and you can often pick that up from watching the right movie. You may find the more you learn about an era the more interesting it becomes. By all means do more research if you want to, as that can only help your game; just don't sweat it too much if you feel you have a convincing grip on the age. You'll also find history is awash with stories that will inspire adventure. Unsolved mysteries like Jack the Ripper or the disappearance of Agatha Christie have proved fertile ground for even the Doctor's adventures.

The future, unsurprisingly, is just as packed with possible settings. You have more of a free reign to imagine the future than you do with the past, and only a time traveller is going to correct you. However, it is

important to try and keep some grounding in what we understand today. Some things have survived hundreds of years and it might appear odd if they simply disappeared. So, a simple thing like being able to find a cup of tea on a new space station reminds the characters they are in humanity's future, not some alien world. It's important to have some way to trace new technologies and cultural changes back to something we know today.

### DIFFERENT CULTURES

It's very easy to limit yourself to British or American history and forget that Earth is home to a myriad of other cultures, each with their own history and future. India, Japan and Egypt offer a wealth of mythology and history, as does any country. As with history, research is vital. Japanese Samurai culture is famous for its focus on etiquette and propriety, and any game set there will have to take this into account. You have plenty of choice. The cultural details you discover, like any other details about your setting, can powerfully evoke the atmosphere of the place. In some case the players might have to delve into the world to find out the best way to interact with the locals, even with no language barrier. A TARDIS will ensure you can speak to each other, but it can't tell you how to understand someone.

### THE DOCTOR'S PREVIOUS ADVENTURES

The Doctor's adventures offer you a wealth of settings to choose from, all ready prepared. You might visit Skaro to take on the Daleks, seek out the



wreck of the *Byzantium* and face the Weeping Angels or challenge an invading Sontaran fleet. There are many, many settings you can pluck straight out of your favourite adventures. Such settings are already full of detail ripe for a *Doctor Who* adventure and you can probably find a few pictures of its various elements to show your players.

Using such settings lets you follow in the Doctor's footsteps, which may be very cool, but avoid recycling the Doctor's adventures. Instead, look to build on them. It can bring a certain excitement to the game when the players know a little more than their characters. If the TARDIS lands on Skaro, the players are going to assume Daleks are close by. A voyage to the centre of the Earth usually means a date with the Silurians.

This sort of a hint is fine, and can draw your players into the adventure looking for the cool things they know are on the way. However, try to go somewhere the Doctor hasn't been. What might be on Skaro outside the Dalek's city? Who used to live at Wester Drumlins, before it was abandoned? What other events has Platform One hosted? What will *Starship UK* encounter as it continues its search for a home?

For an exhaustive source of information about the Doctor's many adventures, and ideas for how to use them in your own games, check out **The Doctor Sourcebooks** – each one is dedicated to a different incarnation of the Doctor and contains information about all of their adventures.

## NOT FOLLOWING THE DOCTOR

On the other hand, with the whole universe to consider, why limit yourself to the travels of one particular Time Lord? The Doctor hasn't quite been everywhere, or everywhen, yet. There are plenty of parts of Earth's history yet to be explored, and countless planets teeming with alien life. You might choose to use something from the Doctor's adventures as a springboard. Who is the Moxx of Balhoon anyway? What planet does he come from? What are his people like? Is he typical of them?

If it seems a little daunting to create from scratch, you can reverse engineer your setting by considering your adventure and possibly any creatures you are using. Life reflects the place it comes from, and you can go a long way with a setting simply by considering what a monster you are using might need. A race of frog people might live on flies, and so will want to live somewhere teeming with flies. They will also want somewhere warm and damp to live. However, maybe

they are trying to fit in with other alien species and trying to get away from their swampy home, looking down on those still like living there. Now we have two factions: the swamp dwellers and the 'urbane' city dwellers. Maybe the city folk are trying to destroy the swamps to build more cities, which provides us with a definite conflict as well. Our setting is now offering the possibility of an adventure, all from the question "where might frog people live?"

## SETTING TOOLKIT AND CHECKLIST

Each setting should be unique, its details tailored to the adventure you want to run and the characters who will be experiencing it. Here is a series of setting suggestions and a list of questions you might want to ask yourself when creating it.

### MILITARY BASE

This might be a UNIT base, the headquarters of the Shadow Proclamation or an asteroid fortress like Demon's Run. Such a base will have several military aspects:

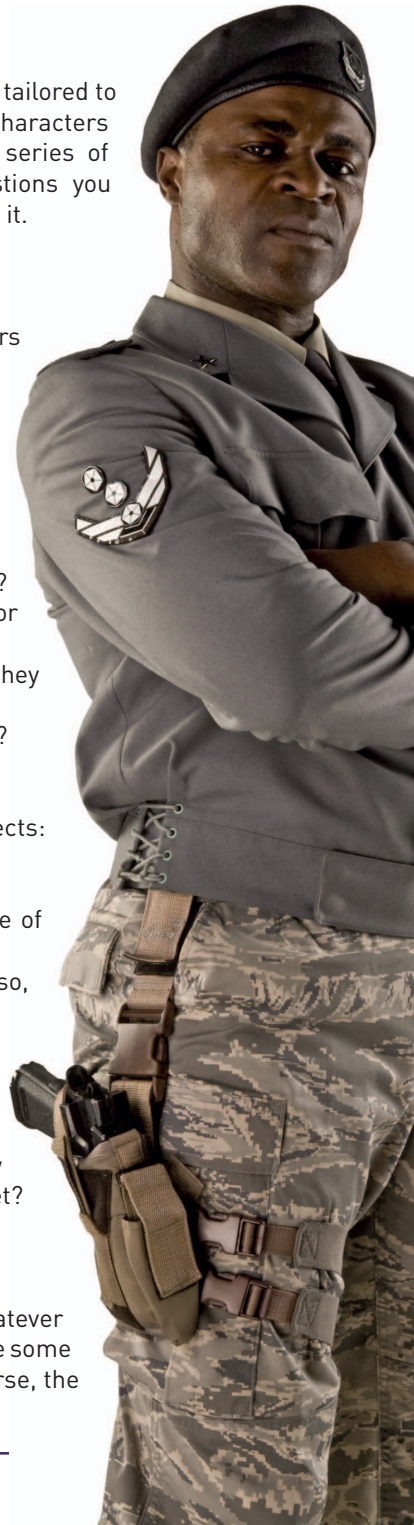
- How big is it?
- How many soldiers are stationed there?
- What level of technology do they have?
- Is it designed to protect something or to launch attacks? What?
- How are the soldiers trained? Are they disciplined or a bunch of thugs?
- Will they shoot first or ask questions?

It will also have several non-military aspects:

- Are there any administrative staff?
- If so, how much control do they have of military staff?
- Are visitors allowed on the base? If so, who grants permission?
- How tight is security?
- Does the base run any scientific projects? If so, how many and how important are they?
- Do most people on the base know about them or is their existence secret?

### HOUSING ESTATE

People have to live somewhere, whatever species they might be. Housing estates are some of the most mundane places in the universe, the



last place you might find aliens. Unless it's an alien housing estate...

- How wealthy are the residents?
- Is there a sense of community there?
- Do neighbours get on with each other?
- Are they welcoming to strangers?
- Do they share any secrets?



### COUNTRY HOME

Old estates come with more than just a few acres of land. History is often a heavy burden, one that rests on the shoulders of those who hold its secrets like family heirlooms.

- How large is the estate?
- Is it wealthy or a shade of its former glory?
- How many people live here?
- Is the place empty with many rooms covered in dust sheets, or full of life and people?
- Are the people here all related?
- Is it the seat of an old family or now a home for a growing community such as a commune?
- Who used to own the house?
- Do they still own it now or did something happen to make them lose it?
- What secrets are left in the house's history? Does the place have any secret rooms or bricked up passages?

### SPACECRAFT

The future is full of spacecraft, some sleek warships that can cloak themselves, some vast habitats resting on the back of huge star whales.

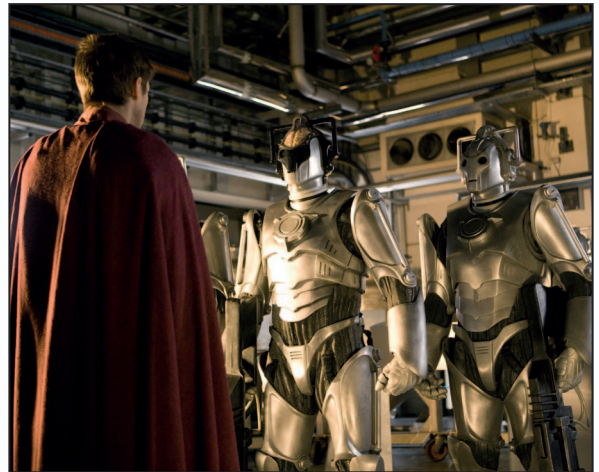
- What is the spaceship designed for: war, transport, pleasure?
- How advanced is it, in terms of weapons, defences and the comfort of the passengers/crew?

- How big is it?
- How old is it?
- How many crew are required to operate it, and are there enough of them?
- How does it work? Is there a big nuclear reactor, or something more exotic? Does it go faster than light? Through hyperspace? Through time?
- What else is on board? Escape pods? Cryogenic sleep chambers? Cybernetic forests? Doomsday devices?
- What's in the cargo hold?

### SPACE STATION

Most space-faring species create habitats and research stations to explore and maintain communications networks.

- What is the station built for: research, communications relay, prison, sentry post or habitation?
- How large is it?
- How advanced and recent is its technology?
- How many people/aliens live there?
- How many of them work there, how many are family or clients?
- Can the station defend itself?
- What are conditions like? Home from home or cramped and claustrophobic?



### MARKETPLACE

Trade is the lifeblood of plenty of cultures. There are several crossroads between culture and peoples that offer a myriad of strange and bizarre items for the right coins.

- How big is the place?
- Does the market sell a mixture of goods or a particular speciality (such as food, weapons, pottery)?

- What's the currency here? Electronic credits? Printed notes and coins? Precious metals or gemstones? Memories? Body parts? Bits of your future?
- How varied are the traders here? Are they all from the same place or a variety of different cultures/worlds?
- How cramped is the place, open and spacious or cramped and packed with sellers?
- How do sellers display their goods? Do they have stalls, small shops, carry them or use holographic catalogues?
- What is crime like, are there small spaces that make it a haven for pickpockets?
- Who runs the market and are they fair when dealing with disputes?



## PRISON

If they don't execute them, civilisations need a place to put their criminals. Prisons come in all shapes and sizes, depending on the criminals they house.

- How secure is the prison?
- How is the security maintained: technology, thick walls, big guards?
- How isolated is the place? Is it in the middle of a town, in a desert, on an island, underground, in space?
- What sort of criminals are kept there: hardened offenders, first timers, fraudsters, murderers, political prisoners?
- What is it like to live there, as a guard or a prisoner?
- Is it clean and sparse or dank and filthy?
- Do the prisoners know they are prisoners?
- Are they kept drugged or do they think they are living in a special village for their protection?

## RELIGIOUS BUILDING

Most cultures, primitive and advanced, find a place for religion. Most religions need gathering places, be they temples, cathedrals or stone circles.

- How popular is the religion – is it local, worldwide or has it spread even further?
- Is the building only open to the faithful or can anyone come in? If it is only for members, are there punishments for unbelievers entering?
- What sort of icons might be in the building?
- How are worship rites carried out and how does the building cater to that?
- Does the building have accommodation for priests or lay members?

## OTHER PLACES

Apply the same line of questioning to any other location. Don't just say "this adventure takes place in a haunted amusement park"; think about the history of the park, the sort of people who visited it in the past, the sort of entertainments you'd find there.

## ALL MUSEUMS HAVE A LITTLE SHOP

Even when the characters are on an alien world, put them in places that have an underlying familiarity. It makes it easier for everyone. This may be the Great Starport of Zarblo IX, but it's basically an airport. There are departure gates and waiting areas and security checkpoints and gift shops and overpriced cafeterias and tired, sweaty cranky people. Yes, the tired sweaty cranky people are nine-foot-tall and orange and sweat sulphuric acid, but it's basically the same thing.



If you get *too* alien with your descriptions, you'll have to describe absolutely everything to the players. By basing locations on familiar sorts of places, the players can assume much more about what's there.

## ⚙️ INTRODUCING THE SETTING

We end with the most important part of the setting: how are you going to introduce it to the players? All that work is a waste of time if they just decide to step back into the TARDIS and go somewhere else. So when you have created your masterpiece in all its glory, put yourself in the players' position and consider how their characters will be introduced to it by asking the questions below.

### WHERE ARE WE?

What is this place? What is the one or two word description they will get by turning on the scanner in the TARDIS, such as "It's a junkyard", "it's a Roman village" or "it's a space station". However, you should also add some sort of adjective if you can. "It's a cluttered junkyard", "it's a busy Roman village" or "it's a deserted space station". The adjective is the word that tells the players there is something interesting here, that the stage is being set for them.



### WHAT DO YOU SEE UPON OPENING THE TARDIS DOOR?

What part of the setting have they landed in? In a Roman village they might have landed in a market, outside a house, just outside the village, in the barracks, in someone's shop or even in someone's house. What is the light like? Can they see the whole place? Will they be able to tell where they are? After all, one cave looks very much like any other. Sight shouldn't be the only sense you appeal to though. Telling the players what they hear or smell can be far more evocative and mysterious than what they can see; especially if they can see little or nothing.

### WHO IS ABOUT?

Are there any people, anyone the players can possibly interact with? Are they going to be friendly? Might they run from strangers or attack them? Will they think the players' characters are strangers, or do they look like they'll fit right in?

### WHAT LOOKS INTERESTING ENOUGH TO MAKE THEM LEAVE THE TARDIS?

This question is vital. If the characters don't leave the TARDIS you have no adventure (unless the TARDIS itself is your setting...). So you must introduce a mystery to them. If they are inside a room or building, what can they see or hear on the outside that might be worth a look? Is there a monster growling or shouting in the street? Is there something odd about what they can see to pique their interest, such as some of the Romans having blue skin? Is there some injustice being carried out, such as a woman being beaten by a soldier? Is there an interesting mystery there, like a young girl sitting alone crying but being ignored? Perhaps there is something they are looking for outside, such as a piece of technology or even just a really nice pair of shoes.

Try turning this question around – ask the players "why do you leave the TARDIS?" or "why did you come here?"

### WHAT IS GOING TO PREVENT THEM GOING BACK INTO THE TARDIS?

Once they have sated their curiosity about the place, it is quite possible the characters might simply nip back in the TARDIS for tea and another adventure. Usually as soon as they leave, the adventure will hook them, but that is not always the case. You might choose to restrict their access to the TARDIS to prevent their 'escape'. It might have been sold by a market trader, fallen into a chasm caused by an earthquake, moved by authorities as it's parked in the wrong place or teleported away by aliens.

However, the best way to keep them investigating the setting is to continue the mystery, make them wonder what is around the next corner. In short, if you have built your setting well, you won't need an adventure to keep them interested, just wandering about in this fascinating, living new world will keep them occupied for a long, long time.

If you're stuck, ask the players. Say "you can't leave in the TARDIS – why not?" Their answers may surprise you!



# RUNNING GAMES, CAMPAIGNS AND STOCK FOOTAGE



## RUNNING GAMES



*'I'm following breadcrumbs laid out for me. This is somebody's game, and I can't stop playing.'*

A roleplaying game is a conversation about an imaginary situation. The Gamemaster says "hey, what do you think would happen if..." and the players respond. It's up to you as the Gamemaster to keep that conversation going. If things get too quiet and everyone's fiddling with their dice or doodling on their character sheets, then the Gamemaster should say something to spark action ("suddenly, a Dalek invasion fleet arrives!").

Similarly, if things are getting too confused or crazy, the Gamemaster should step in to keep things on track ("OK, the Doctor's trying to fly the TARDIS backwards through the black hole, Amy's flirting with Churchill... and what's Rory doing during all this? And is Hitler still in the closet?"). Think of your job as Gamemaster as the conductor in the orchestra – sometimes you speed things up, sometimes you slow things down, and all the while you keep everyone together.

This chapter is packed with tips and tricks on how to do all that. The **Doctor Who Roleplaying Game** has pretty simple rules, but players can – and will – get into all sorts of crazy situations, making it a fun but very strange game to run. Anything can happen when the dice hit the table!

### FRAMING SCENES

If you look at a pre-written adventure (flip to pg. 107 for an example), you'll see that it's broken down into scenes. Scenes are like chapters in a book or, well, scenes in a play or TV show; they're a familiar way of structuring a story, which is why we use them when designing an adventure. However, in actual play, roleplaying games don't fall neatly into scenes. Some of the game takes place outside the scene structure. For example, when players discuss their next move that's not part of any particular scene. ("I think we should try to sneak into the robot factory!" "No, my character's more interested in the swamps".) Don't be tempted to interfere too much in these conversations between players – let them make their own decisions. Your job here is to move the game along by framing a scene. To frame a scene, you say:

- Which characters are present.
- Where they are.
- and
- What's going on.

You should also have some idea of what's going to happen in the scene. Obviously, you can't (and shouldn't!) dictate the actions of the players, but it's up to you to throw problems, interesting dilemmas, fascinating non-player characters and bug-eyed monsters at them.

Sometimes, it's best to frame a scene gently – you provide a general description, let the players decide where their characters are, and build on those details.

**Gamemaster:** *OK, Amy and River are sneaking into the robot factory. The factory's a huge concrete monstrosity down by the river. What's the plan – try to bluff past the guards at the gates, or...*

**Player 1:** *Is there a waste pipe or something? Something we could climb up?*

**Gamemaster:** *Sure. It'll be messy. Is that where you're going?*

**Player 1:** *Yes. We'll try to get into the building from there, maybe a ventilation duct or something.*

**Player 2 (as River):** *"There are Ponds in the ducts but no ducks in the pond..."*

**Gamemaster:** *You wade through the reddish, metallic-smelling slime, and cut your way into the air ducts using River's Squareness Gun. Suddenly, you hear something clanking through the ducts towards you...*

Here, the group has moved from planning-and-chatting to the start of an action scene. At each stage, both the players and Gamemaster agree on different parameters – where they are, who's present, what's going on – and build up a picture of the scene. This is the approach you'll use most of the time.

There are other ways to frame scenes, though. Here's a more forthright example.

**Gamemaster:** *You've been busy since the TARDIS materialised on Galatea Station an hour ago. It's a lovely, quiet space station, the sort of place you transmat to for a nice Sunday stroll with the family. The Doctor went off to talk to an old friend of his who lives in the arboretum; River, you went to the tech sector to find a new power pack for your gun. So, Rory and Amy, you're strolling down the station's main corridor when a young boy of about six runs up out of the crowd and clings to Rory's leg. "Don't let them eat me!" he whispers with terror in his eyes.*

*And everyone in the crowd turns to face you, and they're hungry!*

Here, the Gamemaster has cut right to the action. They've dictated which characters are present (River and the Doctor aren't in this scene), where Rory and Amy are (in the middle of a crowd of cannibals). It's a jump straight to scary monster time. You can also use this sort of aggressive scene framing to create dramatic arguments or tension ("Rory, you manage to stay ahead of the cannibal horde, but you arrive back in the landing bay just in time to see the TARDIS dematerialise. The Doctor's abandoned you!")

Too much aggressive scene framing takes control away from the players, and too little makes the game seem saggy and unchallenging. Find the right balance for your group.

## TOP TIP: GIVING STORY POINTS

Players love bribes. If you give players Story Points in exchange for putting their characters into absolutely horrible situations, they'll happily scoop up those points like candy and ask for more. "I'll give you 2 Story Points if your character wanders off from the TARDIS and gets into trouble" works every time.



On the flip side, you should freely penalise them for ignoring hooks directly related to their traits. Does the strapping hero with a Code of Conduct to protect women and children run away from a school bus being attacked by Daleks? Unless he's also Cowardly, he is acting way out of character and should lose 1 or more Story Points (3 or more for abandoning a bus full of school children). Bad Traits are not mere window dressing to gain a character a few extra Character Points; they are deep motivations and a Story Point penalty will remind the player of that.

Finally, you can also let the players do some or all of the scene framing. Let them answer the questions, and then you react to their answers, like so:

**Gamemaster:** *So, where are you?*

**Player 1 (as the Doctor):** *We've just landed on the exotic planet of, er, um, Toasted Sandwich Four.*

**Player 2:** *Toasted Sandwich Four? Seriously?*

**Player 1:** *It loses something in the translation. Make sure you don't mention it, though, they're very touchy about it.*

**Gamemaster:** OK, what's Toasted Sandwich like?

**Player 2:** Hot.

**Player 1:** Yes, it's a desert planet.

**Player 2:** Toasted Sandwich is a dessert?

**Player 1:** I feel you're not taking the noble planet of Toasted Sandwich Four seriously.

**Gamemaster:** What are you doing on this desert world?

**Player 1:** Well, the Doctor's an honoured guest here. (slides a Story Point token to the Gamemaster).

**Gamemaster:** Of course. He Who Named The Planet is always welcome here.

**Player 1:** So I'm going to have mint tea with the governor.

**Player 2:** Rory and I are in the nearby market. We're trying to convince one of the aliens to serve us a slice of bread, covered in cheese and put under a grill, only we can't stop laughing.

**Player 1:** This is just the sort of cultural insensitivity that led to the War of Take Our Planet Seriously Or We'll Kill You All.

**Gamemaster:** What's the planetary governor like?

**Player 3:** Really stuffy and formal.

**Gamemaster:** Right. (As the planetary governor) "Ahh, Honoured Namer, you have returned wearing a new face. On behalf of the people of Toa'Stedsa Ndwich Four, I greet you. You have come in our hour of need!"

**Player 1:** I usually do...

In this case, the Gamemaster has an idea for a plot twist that can be adapted to fit any situation (in this case, it's a Cyberman invasion). He lets the players build up the scene, then intercedes.



## ⚙️ DESCRIBING THINGS

Keep descriptions short. A few punchy lines that paint a picture for the players work much better than a long, wordy description. Roleplaying games aren't books. Compare these two descriptions:

*"An elegant white-hulled ship flies through hyperspace. From the outside, the ship resembles a bird of prey adapted to this airless realm. Glittering weapon-projectors and shield arrays sweep like steely wings out in a great arc, and the ship's sharp prow bears a disturbing similarity to the beak of a savage hawk. Inside, past the racks of planet-cracker bombs slumbering in their bays, and the barracks where equally lethal gene-engineered soldiers wait in stasis pods, there is a corridor that leads between two storerooms. There, the lights flicker in time with a sound that seems to come from nowhere: VWORP VWORP VWORP."*

*The TARDIS materialises in a dark corner. On the scanner, you see that the corridor stretches for 20 metres in either direction. There's an airlock at either end. Standing in front of one airlock is a tall figure wearing an armoured spacesuit with a plumed helmet. She's positioned as if guarding the airlock, but hasn't reacted to your arrival. She's armed with a two-metre-long silver staff that crackles with energy."*

Or:

*"The TARDIS materialises in a dark corridor. You guess from the cramped conditions and the vibration of the deck underfoot that you're on a spaceship. Maybe a warship – it smells like gym socks and violence. On the scanner, you can see an airlock at either end of the corridor, and there's an armoured guard in front of one airlock. She hasn't reacted to your arrival."*

The first description gives more details, but it's much too long. Get the scene started as quickly as you can, and let the players ask questions to flesh their mental pictures of the scene out. Instead of mentioning all the weird weapons on the ship in the opening description, the players should discover them in play. Let the players ask how long the corridor is, or where the light is coming from instead of trying to tell them everything from the start. Short descriptions followed by clarification are better than confusing long ones.

Make sure, though, that the players understand what's going on. Misunderstandings and confusion always happen. In the above examples, the Gamemaster means that the guard at the airlock stands there like a statue, clearly ignoring the obvious TARDIS (in fact,

the guard was paralysed by the alien hijackers who are the villains of the scenario). However, the players might assume that the guard didn't see the TARDIS, and try sneaking past instead of examining her.

Always highlight the most important things in a description. Let's say the Doctor and his companions are in the library of a grand country house in 1911. There's an incriminating letter in the writing desk. Therefore, you should mention the writing desk prominently in your description. Give the players a clear path to the interesting stuff.

When the players ask questions, give answers based on their characters. Someone with a high Ingenuity and Science would notice more about technology or alien gadgets; someone with lots of Awareness or Convince might be more aware of social connections. For example, if Leela (a barbarian warrior-woman), Zoe (a genius mathematician from the late 21st century) and Sarah Jane Smith (a reporter from the present day) all investigate a mystery, the Gamemaster should take their characters' knowledge and background into account when answering.

### TOP TIP: STOCK FOOTAGE

When describing a location (or a person, for that matter), it helps to have a place in mind. Let's say the characters end up visiting an old farmhouse – just use your memories of your grandparent's farm out in the country. If they land on an alien world, then maybe draw details from that sci-fi movie you saw late at night last year, mixed with bits of a holiday visit to Australia. Build up a library of 'stock footage' – interesting places and faces that you can stick into your games. There's more emergency inspiration on pg. 95.

## PLAYING NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Non-player characters are the guest stars and villains of your adventure. With a good NPC, you can grab the emotions of the players and bring them into the action. Playing an NPC is like being an actor. Specifically, it's like being a bad actor. You're the supporting cast, not the lead. You're there to make the player characters look good, or to chew the scenery as a monstrous bad guy. Don't worry about subtlety: most NPCs aren't around for very long, so make an impression while you can.

If you're good at acting, improvising and putting on accents, that's wonderful. If not, don't worry; just

describing the actions and voices of your NPCs works almost as well.

### TOP TIP: LIST OF NAMES

Prepare a list of a dozen or so names that fit with your adventure's setting. That way, if you unexpectedly need to bring in a new NPC, or if the players talk to the third guard from the left, you've got a name ready. It's surprisingly helpful.

For each NPC, think of:

- A memorable feature.
- An accent or a verbal tic.
- A stance or other physical gesture.
- An emotional cue or drive.

Memorable features can be anything from physical traits (he's bald, fat and blue!) to a role (she's a priestess of the Blood Moon) to clothing (bow ties are cool). Even if you don't have a picture of the NPC, mentioning a physical feature gives the players something to remember.

How your characters speak is very important, especially if there are several NPCs in the same scene. Everyone should have a distinct style of speech. A grizzled captain might say "aaar" and salt their speech with nautical terms. A polished politician might use warm, oiled, slick words to convince the players to agree with her, while a veteran military commander speaks in a clipped, efficient way.

A ferocious alien growls and snarls, a robot (or a Cyberman) speaks in monotone. A paranoid alien hunter might nervously end every sentence in a question, and his indecisive pal might just trail off mid...

Voice is only half of how you present your NPC – your stance and body language are just as important. I like to stand and walk around when playing some characters, but even if you're just sitting at the table, you can do a lot to make the NPC more real. That sea captain? Maybe he smokes a pipe, or scratches his beard when he talks (you don't need a pipe, or a beard – just mime the action). That



politician might lean forward and make lots of eye contact, that military officer sits up ramrod-straight, and that alien bares its fangs and drools.

Finally, for your own benefit, think about what the NPC wants in each scene. What do they need – not just their immediate needs, but what drives them? Daleks are driven by hatred, Sontarans by their sense of military honour, Cybermen by their programming. That politician might be driven by her desire to make the world a better place, or maybe she just needs to be loved by everyone she meets. A thief might think the world owes them; a scientist might be obsessed by finding out how the universe works. Even if these inner drives are never directly mentioned in play, keep them in mind and they'll add depth and flavour to your roleplaying.

### TOP TIPS: NAMES AND TITLES

Many people are terrible at remembering names, and alien names can be even worse. If you can't remember if it's Robert or Roger, you're not going to remember K'zhor and Kh'azar (Sontarans are the worst: Strax, Styre, Stor, Stall?).



Titles and roles are much easier to remember. Give each NPC a 'hat' to wear – this guy's the scientist, that girl's the security officer, she's the rebel, he's the nurse. You can also use meaningful, evocative archetypal names; if you call someone Dr Dark or Captain Steele, it says a lot about their character.

Try to avoid situations where you're playing more than one NPC in a scene. There's only one of you, after all, so if there are multiple NPCs present, you'll end up talking to yourself. If you absolutely have to have several NPCs in the same place, then try separating them so the players can talk to them individually. Take **Midnight**, for example – there, the Doctor travelled

on a shuttle bus with half-a-dozen other characters. If you run **Midnight** as an adventure, you might have one NPC in the front of the bus, one at the back, one sitting near the external monitor, another feeling ill and sitting near the bathroom. That means that the Doctor (a player's character) can talk to each NPC individually, avoiding a troublesome 'committee' scene.



Obviously, if you split the players up, you can divide your NPCs between them. Donna can talk to the ambassador from Venice while Martha gives Pope Clement advice on dealing with his bad knee.

### JOIN THE AUDIO-VISUAL CLUB

The Internet (as well as magazines like *National Geographic*) provides a host of images to illustrate your game. Instead of saying "you arrive on a desert planet", hand them a photograph of a desert. If they arrive in 19th century New York, dig up a few period photos of New York. Similarly, you can use music to evoke moods. If the characters are at a ball in 17th century Paris, then try to find some suitable classical music. If they're on a haunted spaceship, then get the soundtrack for a sci-fi horror movie. Use all the senses – if the characters get invited to dinner, then you could even try serving the players suitable food.

### RUNNING ACTION SCENES

Ready... set... action! When the lasers start zapping and things start exploding, your players' characters should be in the thick of it. Keep the pace fast; go around the table quickly, encourage the players to make quick decisions, don't get bogged down in the rules. For example, if it's a chase, then don't worry about the exact number of Areas between the

characters and their pursuers if checking would slow the game down. Just roll the dice and keep the adrenaline flowing.

The **Doctor Who Roleplaying Game** rules use a very distinctive initiative system. Talkers go first, then movers, then doers, then finally fighters. That means that an action scene isn't just a fight scene; it's also potentially a talking scene, or a chase scene, or a techy scene. When running an action scene, try to include opportunities for all the characters to get involved, not just the guys with the guns.

Talking is used the least in action scenes. Normally, the only action scene where talking plays a bit role is the climatic final battle at the end of an adventure, when the players can shout "No! You don't have to destroy them!" or something similar and leap in to solve the day with Science! Talking's not much use if the characters get attacked by wild dogs or Weevils or dinosaurs or savage space hamsters.

Moving, though, plays a part in every action scene. Action scenes don't take place on featureless flat grids – throw in some interesting things for the characters to jump on/hide behind/run around/clamber over/crawl through/fall into. Let the players add their own details to a scene, too, by spending Story Points. If you're fighting in a ballroom, then a Story Point might add heavy velvet drapes to the walls (to be pulled down over the bad guy's heads) or a crystal chandelier (to be shot and dropped from above).

Doing stuff can be a part of a lot of action scenes. Again, present opportunities for the players to do stuff. For inspiration, look at the Doctor and his Sonic Screwdriver – he's always Doing Stuff, like sealing doors (just before the monsters charge through), blowing up lights, rewiring circuits or pressing just the right buttons to save the day.

Finally, there's fighting. Don't let a fight turn into a series of bland dice rolls. Even if a character just stands there shooting his gun and rolling Coordination + Marksman for six Action Rounds in a row, ask the player to describe how he's attacking. Throw added problems at him; get him to adapt to new threats, new conditions.

## RUNNING INVESTIGATION SCENES

Talking to people, running away, shooting things... what left? Oh yes – poking your nose in where it doesn't belong! Every adventure is going to have a lot of investigating and poking at things. The important thing to remember is that clues that seem clear to you may be totally opaque to the players. Try to have two or three different ways for them to get vital information, and make key clues obvious. The players should always have options and avenues to investigate (and remind the players that they can spend a Story Point for a hint if they're stuck). Investigations work best if you leave a little gap for the players to fill in. Let them make that final deductive leap. For example, say the adventure takes place on a space station that



orbits close to a dying star. A magnetic shield protects the station, and when the shield goes on the blink, it causes huge solar flares. Over the course of the adventure, the characters learn that the fluctuations in the shield happen when Slitheen spies sneak onto the station. A Slitheen ship is on its way to conquer the station.

Now, if a clever player were to adjust the shield so it provokes a really huge flare right beneath that Slitheen cruiser, they could save the day just in the nick of time. Ideally, the players work this out on their own (actually, the really ideal situation is that the players come up with a clever plan that the Gamemaster never expected at all...)

### TOP TIP: OPEN-ENDED MYSTERIES

You know, you don't have to know the solution to a mystery before dropping it on your players. You can just listen to their speculation about a solution, and then decide retroactively that one of their conclusions is correct. Let the players work out the connections between a genetically engineered flock of sheep, an ancient cult of demon worshippers and a crashed alien spaceship on the moon.



### RESPONDING TO THE PLAYERS

It's time to let you in on a dirty little secret: 'Gamemaster' really isn't an accurate term for what we do. 'Game Wrangler' or 'Game Facilitator' might work better. As we said earlier, a roleplaying game is a conversation. Listening to the players and responding to what they decide to do is more important than anything else in the game.

Never say "no" to any idea. Well, any sane idea, anyway. For example, the players' characters have landed on a far-future colony ruled by a fascist regime. According to your notes, the plan is for the players to get involved in the mystery of a Plasmavore that's eating political

refuges who try to escape via a secret underground railroad. The fascist government is just a background detail, there solely to provide context for this human smuggling operation.

However, as soon as the players arrive, the Doctor declares "I don't like bullies and tyrants. I'm going to overthrow the government." Your planned adventure just got thrown out the window. And you know what? That's fantastic.



Respond by asking the player how they intend to overthrow the government. Let the players drive the adventure. Throw obstacles in their path to make things more interesting. If the players decide their first step is to seize control of the television station and broadcast their own inspiring message of freedom, you've got to come up with some challenges and problems related to that. Maybe to override the government's powerful transmitters, one of the characters has to climb up onto a broadcast tower and fly a kite into a lightning storm to attract a thunderbolt that'll fry the signal dish. Maybe there's a frustrated young journalist they can recruit as an ally, but he's under observation by the secret police. Maybe they've got to sneak into the TV station to steal transmission codes.

When trying to think of obstacles for the players' actions, keep the following list in mind:

- *How* are they doing it?
- *What* do they need?
- *Who* wants to stop them?
- *Where* would be an exciting location for this to happen?

If you want, you can turn your plot about the underground railroad and the Plasmavore into a subplot. Maybe the Plasmavore realises that its food supply will be cut off if the government falls, and starts hunting these troublesome new rebels. Run with the players' ideas. Embrace the unexpected!

## TOP TIP: BE TOUGH

Running with an idea doesn't mean letting the players dictate everything about the game. Make them work for their victories. If Amy decides she's going to save Vincent van Gogh, then let her try, but don't make it easy. Players have more fun when they think they're winning against impossible odds.

That said, not everything has to be a challenge. Sometimes, the Doctor just wins because he's awesome. Players also have lots of fun when they get to be powerful and cool.

Running a game is like cooking. Sometimes, a pinch of nastiness, sometimes a teaspoon of weirdness, sometimes a shake of wild endeavour.

## PACING

We all know, instinctively, how stories are supposed to work (and you can read much more about the theories on pg. 22). The first few scenes introduce the major characters and set up the situation, then you've got a period of rising action. They learn more about what's going on, secrets are revealed, things get worse for our heroes, then much worse... and then there's a big climactic confrontation, and finally things get wrapped up, questions get answered, and sub-plots get resolved.

Trying to fit a roleplaying session into that structure is tricky. Keep one eye on the clock, and try to adjust the pacing to fit the remaining time. Early in the game session, let the players explore this week's setting without too much pressure. As time ticks on, make sure things get worse and put the characters into more and more danger. Finally, try to bring it all together for a big final scene, but leave enough time afterwards for things to wind down.

You can, of course, split an adventure over several game sessions (this really makes the game feel like the Classic *Doctor Who* series, where four or six-part stories were the norm). That means you should try to end each game session on a dramatic cliffhanger. There are really two cliffhangers – the one where the characters are threatened by unexpected danger, and the one where something is dramatically revealed.

If you do use an unexpected danger cliffhanger, then it's best to focus it on a single character. Instead of saying "suddenly, Daleks emerge from the shadows and level their lasers at all of you", go for "Rory turns a corner in the corridor and runs into a Dalek." Why? Because there's a week's gap between game sessions, and in that time, everyone always forgets the fiddly little details that can make the difference in a fight.

One player can't remember if they were in the TARDIS or just outside, someone else claims that the Daleks couldn't have captured their character because they were invisible, and so on. (For the same reason, never finish a game in the middle of a fight!) You spend the first half-hour of the game session untangling all the



threads and sorting out arguments, totally ruining any dramatic tension. Therefore, keep cliffhangers simple. Dramatic revelation cliffhangers are easier, and work really well in roleplaying games. A good cliffhanger keeps the players guessing and speculating all week long.

### ⚙️ DEALING WITH TIME TRAVEL

Time travel is complicated. Very complicated. Time travel + players is very, very complicated. Players are tricky, malicious creatures, and they try to do things to time that the Doctor would never dream of attempting. If your players have unfettered access to a TARDIS, they'll try to solve every problem they encounter with time travel.

Alien invasion? No problem: a quick time jaunt back a few hundred years to the alien homeworld followed by a word in the right ear, and suddenly historical records show that Vl'zor the Conqueror (All-father of the Ravening Invading Horde of Zor) was actually Vl'zor the Reformed (All-father of the Terribly Nice Tourist Company of Zor). Incoming asteroid? Easy! Just travel back in time and drop a jammy dodger in the right place. The microscopic gravitational field of the jammy dodger over the course of a few million years pulls the asteroid off course. Lost your keys? Travel forward in time to a point when you've found them and ask your future self where she found them. OK, so some of those tactics might cause paradoxes and others might wipe out three-fifths of the universe,

but that won't stop the players from trying. In fact, a lot of uses of time travel are perfectly fine (reforming Vl'zor sounds like a fun adventure), and meddling in history is part of the fun.

Here are a few ways to keep troublesome time travel to a minimum. (For plenty more, see the **Time Traveller's Companion** supplement.)

### LOCKED INTO EVENTS

As soon as the travellers arrived, they became part of the chain of events. They can't change the past without causing a nasty, Reaper-spewing paradox.

### INACCURATE LANDING

For most of those 2000ish years of phone-box travel, the Doctor couldn't fly the TARDIS accurately (he still leaves the parking brake on!). If the characters can't control where and when they end up, they can't abuse time travel. Even if they've got perfect control over their vehicle, then local conditions like eddies in the fabric of space-time or a weird kink in the Time Vortex might stop them landing accurately.

### FIXED POINT

This is a fixed point in time: time machines just don't work here. The safety systems automatically cut out the time engines if anyone is stupid enough to try altering a fixed point.



## INACCESSIBLE TARDIS

Alternatively, time travel works fine, but the characters can't get back into the TARDIS because it's fallen into a pit/under a pile of rocks/captured by the bad guys/clamped. You can adapt this solution to other time machines: a Time Agent's Vortex Manipulator isn't going to get lost, but it might run out of power at an unfortunate moment.

## ⚙️ GETTING THINGS BACK ON TRACK

So, what do you do when the game's no fun, the players are lost or confused or bored, and you've got no idea what to do next?

First thing: don't panic! It's just a game. It's supposed to be fun. If you need to, take a break and have a cup of tea. A cup of tea solves everything. Next, identify the problem.

## ONE PLAYER IS BORED

Sometimes, one player just doesn't connect with the story. Maybe they're not interested in whatever style of adventure you're running (it's a murder mystery, and they're more interested in action-filled excitement), or their character is marginalised for some reason, or they're just a bit quiet and feel left out. This problem is easy to solve: give that player something to do. Maybe monsters attack their character, or a mysterious stranger contacts them, or they get separated from the rest of the group. One word of caution, though: don't mistake deliberately staying on the sidelines for boredom. Some players just like to watch, and sometimes a player might be feeling tired and deliberately minimising his involvement.

## ALL THE PLAYERS ARE BORED

Ouch. One great thing about the **Doctor Who Roleplaying Game** is that every adventure can be different. Each week brings another planet, another time period, another cast of characters. Sometimes, though, your planned adventure can fall flat. If this happens, stop the game a bit earlier than usual and talk to the players. Ask them why it's not grabbing them, and what they'd like to do; often, it's better to take a break from the game for a session instead of trying to force the fun. If this happens repeatedly, it's time to switch gears. Maybe your group is tired of endless planet-hopping, and would prefer a longer series of adventures set in the same place and time. Try adding a new player to your group, or replace some characters to liven up the dynamics. Above all, talk to the players: making the game fun is everyone's responsibility.

## YOU'RE NOT SURE HOW TO HANDLE A PLOT TWIST

The players just did something utterly brilliant, but also utterly unexpected. Maybe they remembered they captured a broken Cyberman shell nine games ago, and dress up as a Cyberman to escape Cyber Milton Keynes.

Maybe someone hands over a double handful of Story Points and declares "my future self teleports in, hands me exactly the gadget we need, and vanishes again", or a player spots the disguised villain five minutes after meeting them. You've no idea how to run with this twist.

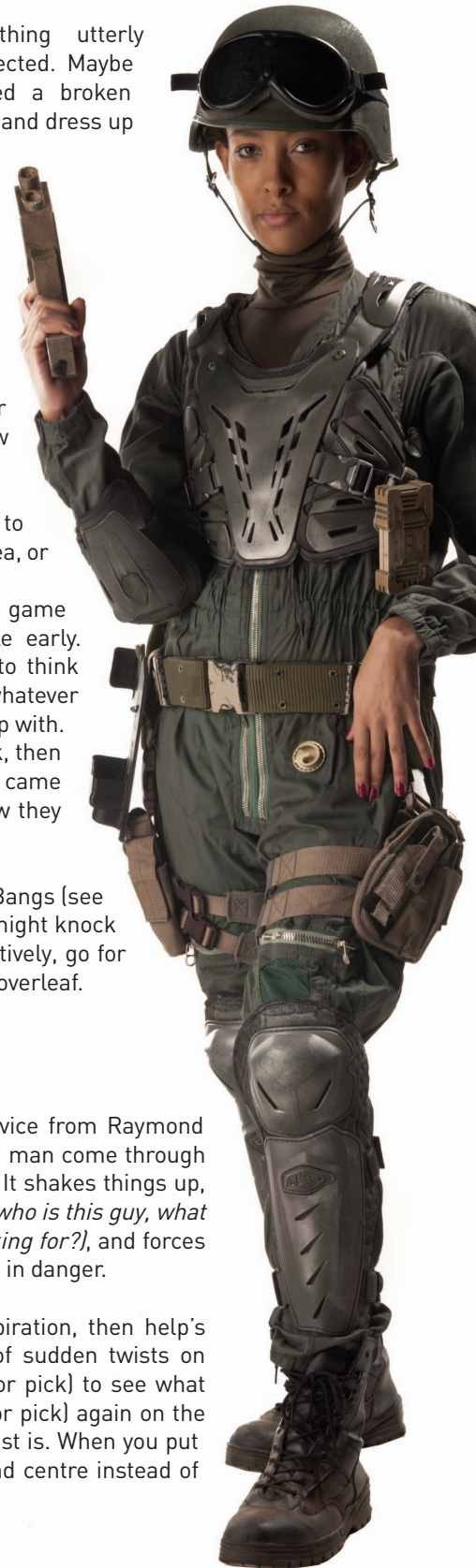
- Take a two-minute break to think. Maybe make a cup of tea, or run to the bathroom.
- If you've nearly finished the game session, try finishing a little early. That'll give you a few days to think about how to deal with whatever madness the players came up with.
- If you don't have time to think, then try asking the player who came up with the brilliant idea how they think things should play out.

If you've got some pre-prepared Bangs (see pg. 25), then using one of those might knock the action back on track. Alternatively, go for one of the emergency plot twists overleaf.

## YOU'RE STUCK FOR WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

There's a great bit of writing advice from Raymond Chandler: "when in doubt, have a man come through the door with a gun in his hand." It shakes things up, adds in a whole new plot thread (*who is this guy, what does he want, and who's he working for?*), and forces the players to act by putting them in danger.

If you're suddenly stuck for inspiration, then help's at hand with the handy tables of sudden twists on the following pages. Roll a die (or pick) to see what category of twist it is, then roll (or pick) again on the relevant table to see what the twist is. When you put in a twist like this, put it front and centre instead of hiding it. Don't be subtle.



**ROLL 1: UNEXPECTED DANGER**

- 1 Something nearby explodes. Terrorist bombing, sabotage, industrial accident or assassination attempt?
- 2 One or more of the players' characters are taken prisoner.
- 3 The characters learn that they've been exposed to a disease, or an alien parasite, or lethal radiation, or that one of them is a shapeshifting monster.
- 4 A formerly trustworthy NPC is secretly working for the bad guys, and he pulls out a gun and holds the players' characters hostage.
- 5 That dead monster isn't quite so dead...
- 6 An alien invasion fleet appears overhead.

**ROLL 2: SUDDEN DRAMA**

- 1 Someone mistakes the players' characters for somebody important. (*"Ah! You must be the minstrels here to entertain the Pope! This way!"*)
- 2 An NPC falls in love with one of the players' characters.
- 3 The local power structure changes, putting someone else in charge. Depending on the scale of the adventure, this could be anything from a mutiny or a military coup to a revolution.
- 4 An unexpected complication shows up. A new group suddenly gets involved in the adventure. If your adventure is set on Earth, then maybe UNIT arrives. If it's in space, then a Judoon platoon shows up – or maybe even a strange blue box appears...
- 5 One of the NPCs reveals a terrible secret that changes how the players see them.
- 6 A relative (or descendant, or ancestor, or clone, or psychic twin) of one of the characters shows up.

**ROLL 3: DISASTERS & STRANGE EVENTS**

- 1 There's a natural disaster – an earthquake, a solar storm, a radiation leak, a temporal schism. Is it a regular event? A weird coincidence? Or is it related to the villain's plan?
- 2 A key piece of equipment breaks down. Maybe it's the telephone, or the oxygen generator, or the castle gates... or the TARDIS?
- 3 A big, obvious timer starts to count down to impending disaster. It could be until the oxygen runs out or until an asteroid hits or a bomb goes off in the engine room.
- 4 The characters find something weird, like monster tracks, evidence of sabotage, a hidden camera, a secret door...
- 5 One of the non-player characters dies unexpectedly of mysterious and sinister causes. Was it murder? A monster? Or something more insidious. Whatever happened, it clearly wasn't a natural or peaceful death.
- 6 Something changes in the surrounding environment. It could be as simple as the weather changing, like a storm or a sudden fog. On board a ship, maybe the gravity fails or the atmosphere starts leaking.

**ROLL 4: PLOT TWISTS**

- 1 An old friend shows up unexpectedly. River Song, for example, could show up anywhere. The friend may be here to help the characters, or might be involved with whatever weird plot is going on here.
- 2 Not what it seems: there's a second layer to all this. Someone or something might be a disguised alien, or is working for the bad guys, or what the characters thought was the danger is only a big distraction. If you can't decide what the false thing is, pick the place, character or plot element that the players rely on most.
- 3 There's more than one bad guy in play. Maybe there are two alien races fighting, or there's a human faction allied with the enemy. This second threat appears on the scene in a dramatic way.
- 4 Some single intellect is behind all this. Everything that's going on is the plan of some sinister mastermind. Even seemingly unrelated events are all part of this deranged, overcomplicated scheme.
- 5 *Really* not what it seems: Nothing here is what it appears to be. This whole adventure might be a computer simulation, or take place inside a confession dial, or a psychic dream. Maybe the characters are Flesh duplicates who think they're real.
- 6 It's a trap – this whole situation was engineered as a trap for the characters.

### ROLL 5: UNEXPECTED HELP

- 1 One of the players' characters gets captured and thrown in prison. One of the other prisoners knows important information about the bad guy's plan.
- 2 Someone who would normally be opposed to the characters is willing to help them. The enemy of my enemy is my friend.
- 3 One of the characters – usually the Doctor – has technical knowledge that the bad guys need. The bad guys want to keep both the Doctor and his companions alive so they can force the Doctor to help them.
- 4 A servant of the bad guys – a footsoldier, a slave, a brainwashed minion – switches sides. Alternatively, the servant turns out to have been spying on the bad guys all along.
- 5 One of the characters blunders into an important clue. Maybe they fall down a manhole and find the Slitheen power cables running under Cardiff, or they happen to press the right button on a Library console to talk to Doctor Moon.
- 6 Some of the bad guys start fighting each other. Maybe bad guy number two decides he'd really rather be number one, and launches a takeover. In the confusion, the players have a chance to save the day.

### ROLL 6: TIME TRAVEL TROUBLE

- 1 There's some temporal weirdness. The players' characters meet future versions of themselves, another time traveller shows up, the group jumps a time track, or they find some object or creature from a very different time period.
- 2 Weird radiation affects the area. Maybe it leaks from the characters' vessel, or maybe the characters can do a scan for alien tech to find the bad guys.
- 3 Temporal flux – something warps the fabric of space-time nearby. Time machines get bumped around, events happen in the wrong order, and history gets a bit... muddled. As time travellers, the characters are partially immune to the chaos, and can take advantage of the flux.
- 4 The characters receive a cross-time message from themselves, risking a paradox to give their past selves vital information. After the adventure, the characters need to go back and complete the loop.
- 5 A relic of the Last Great Time War is involved somehow. It might be a left-over weapon, or an abandoned Dalek base, or a crashed War TARDIS... or maybe even a harmless old fob watch.
- 6 So much worse! Whatever the characters think is going on here – it's so much worse. The actions of the bad guys are going to cause a paradox. Somewhere beyond the walls of reality, the Reapers stir and uncoil, and the Cloister Bell tolls a desperate warning.



## CAMPAIGNS



*'Someone has to look out for the people you abandon. Who better than me? I'll be the patron saint of the Doctor's leftovers. While you're busy protecting this world, I'll get busy protecting it from you.'*

A campaign is a series of adventures, but not every series of adventures is a campaign. In a campaign the Gamemaster links all the adventures together with common themes, building to a climatic adventure that might well lead to the players' characters saving the universe. Through the campaign the characters will be tested to their limits and as a result will rise to the occasion or make terrible mistakes that might haunt them for lifetimes.

Not every adventure in the campaign needs to directly address the main villain or theme of the campaign. You need a break now and again, especially from the Daleks. However, as the adventures progress the characters will come to understand that powerful forces are at work and things that seemed random might be far more than coincidence. The Doctor's adventures often fall into the scope of a campaign; the words "Bad Wolf" draw him into a plot by his ancient enemies; the escape of Prisoner Zero leads him to discover a crack in time that eventually uncovers the mystery of the Pandorica; Amy is haunted by a woman with an eye patch until she discovers a terrible truth.

A campaign can be any size; it need not be a massive battle across the universe but could be a small series of adventures in one setting or fighting one villain. The Doctor's brief adventures in E-space are a good example of a short campaign, but on a larger scale you might consider all of the Doctor's adventures, from his first incarnation to his present one, to be a single campaign chronicling his battle against the Daleks.

## CHARACTER ARCS

Such grand adventures are testing times, and offer many opportunities to develop the players' characters (as well as recurring NPCs). Character arcs are particular ways a character might develop and adapt as they come to realise what is important to them, or how they can better themselves or even crumble under pressure. One of the best examples of a character arc is Rory's. When we first meet him it is difficult to see why such a confident and adventurous girl like Amy is attracted to him. We might easily believe she likes him because he is easily bossed about by her. Rory's first experiences in the TARDIS are not so much exciting as dangerous and confusing to him. However, he rises to the occasion. Having faced terrible enemies he gradually becomes more confident in his own abilities. When Amy is in danger we see the depth of his love for her, ready to sacrifice anything and stand against anyone to make sure she is safe. Rory's tale

is the classic “zero to hero” story; at first, unable to stand up to the doctor he works for, but finally facing off against an entire Cyberman attack fleet.

While Amy may seem strong and confident, she develops just as much. A little damaged by her abandonment by the Doctor she is quick to run away from everything she knows to go on adventures. It might seem brave, but she is actually running away. She is frightened of her relationship with Rory, that she might end up with someone mundane when a magical character like the Doctor is available. However, she learns how valuable it is to be loved so much by someone like Rory, and learns to trust that he won't abandon her like the Doctor once did.

What is important here is that none of the traits Rory and Amy develop are entirely absent when we first meet them. Their adventures bring out the best in them, but don't make them into something they never were. The key to creating character arcs is development, not invention. As a Gamemaster, you should look at each character and decide what elements of them are to be tested. You should discuss this with the player in question to see what sort of things they would like to develop in their own character as well, although don't tell them what you decide to maintain an element of surprise. While it is up to the Gamemaster to set the stage, it is still up to the player to decide how their character will react to any situation.

So, while opportunities might be controlled by the Gamemaster, it is up to the player to decide how and if the character develops by the choices they will make when they are tested.

When you are beginning a new game, such a deep investigation and understanding of each character might seem difficult. However, the tools to figure out how to develop them are already on the character sheet; they are the traits the player has picked. Each trait tells you something about the character, whether they are good or bad. The easiest thing to develop is a character getting rid of a Bad Trait, but improving (or even removing) Good Traits can tell you just as much. On the simplest level, you should pick one trait from each character. In each adventure you should aim to throw an encounter at the character that will test that trait. It will be up to the player to decide how the character reacts, and whether they rise to the occasion or allow their trait to dominate. At the end of the campaign you can then decide if the trait should be removed or improved depending on how the character has behaved.

You might allow a player to pick traits they would like (Good or Bad) that they do not already have. These traits might represent some potential the character has, or some trait they are unaware of.



For instance, they might not really understand they are in love with someone until they are in danger, or know they are frightened of spiders until they visit Metabelis III.

## NEW TRAIT – LOVE (MINOR/MAJOR GOOD)

You are in love with someone, really genuinely in love with them, and that love helps spur you on. Whenever you are attempting to protect or do something for the object of your affections you may add +2 to your dice roll. Sadly the object of your affection need not take this trait themselves and leave your love unrequited. Additionally, anyone with this trait need not be aware of it, not having quite understood how much they care about that special someone even though their actions tell a different story.



As a Major Good trait, you have found your true love. You gain a free Story point when taking an action to protect the one you love. However, you must spend a story point to stop yourself acting recklessly when they may be in danger.

The most common character arc to crop up in the game is a character deciding to leave their companions and the TARDIS. While some of the Doctor's companions have lost their lives or been separated from the Doctor, most leave of their own accord. Some have fallen in love, others decided to complete the work the Doctor may have begun in a particular culture.

In such cases the character in question discovers what they really want to do with their life; their travels with the Doctor were only really a temporary adventure, albeit one that helped them come to understand who they truly were.

## PLOT ARCS

When we talk of campaigns, plot arcs are what usually come to mind. These are the themes, villains or even settings that return to haunt the characters through the adventures that make up the campaign. Plot arcs should begin as sub-plot, something incidental and even apparently unimportant. However, as time goes on it becomes clear that there is something important lurking behind the scenes of the previous adventures. As the players begin to join the dots they see how their previous adventures link up and they begin to identify what might be the guiding hand behind them. Finally, they manage to uncover who is behind the curtain and force them into direct confrontation where they might carry the day.

There are several different themes you might use to create plot arcs in your campaign; but you needn't confine yourself to just using one of them! For instance, you might have a villain haunt the characters as they quest for the parts of some terrible machine. There are hundreds of ways you might thread a theme through your adventures, but for simplicity's sake we offer you four categories that most should fit into.

## QUEST

A Quest is the most obvious way to link stories together and offers you a lot of scope for different adventures. The characters are tasked to complete some quest, in the same way the Doctor was tasked with assembling the Key to Time.



They might have to travel time and space searching for parts of an artefact, seeking lost technology or even the remains of a civilisation and its people. The quest can be as grand as you like, from assembling an Armageddon device to recovering a series of items stolen from the Bank of Karabraxos. The beauty of the Quest arc is that you can link otherwise unconnected adventures together just by adding whatever the

characters are looking for somewhere into the adventure. However, making the Quest goal central to the adventure will make things a lot more interesting and keep their eyes on the prize.

## SETTING

The theme you use for your plot arc can often be quite passive, such as basing a campaign around a setting, such as a particular planet, culture or even your group's TARDIS. The best example of this is the Doctor's adventures in E-space. You might take the sandbox approach, with the characters exploring a place full of adventure simply because they can. However, usually the Setting plot arc involves trying to escape the place. The setting can be almost any size; it need not be as vast as another universe (although parallel universes are also very good for Setting arcs). Your characters might be trapped in a strange mansion that contains a different adventure on every floor, or inside a machine filled with different landscapes or even time zones.



## VILLAIN

For a more active – rather than reactive – plot arc, someone is actually out to get the characters. It might be a single villain or some alien menace such as the Daleks. When this arc begins you need to ensure the characters either have something the bad guys want, or have offended them in such a way as to make them seek revenge, or both! Given the way most characters trample their way across the universe it is pretty likely they'll have upset someone at some point.

Villain plot arcs usually start slowly, with the hand of their nemesis staying in the background. As the campaign continues the characters begin to understand that some of the woes they have experienced have not been mere coincidence. They may run into minions and cat's paws of their enemy before the villain finally reveals themselves. In such

campaigns, one of the best ways to twist the knife is for them to discover that the villain's point of view is justified. That the characters really are guilty of some wrongdoing that justifies the feelings (if not the actions) of their nemesis will make the final confrontation more poignant. While the villain must still be stopped, the characters are also forced to recognise (maybe even apologise for) their part in what has transpired.

## PERSONAL

A Personal plot arc is similar to a character arc, described earlier, but it applies to the whole group. The companions might all be looking for forgiveness for some crime they are culpable of, or seeking a lost love they each hope to claim as their own. Personal plot arcs can be very abstract, and for that reason work best coupled with another theme. In many cases the characters might not even notice what is developing around them. However, do not underestimate Personal plot arcs as they can cut deeply into the characters and be a powerful source of development for the whole group.

## ⚙️ FORESHADOWING

The advantage of having a plan is that it allows you to predict the future. Foreshadowing the later events in your campaign can be a powerful tool to create mystery and keep the characters on the right track. You need to be careful, though, as it can be embarrassing or frustrating if your prophecies and predictions fail to come to pass. It is key to only hint at events you know will happen; that is, those that must happen if the characters are to succeed.

So, while it might be cool to show one of them a vision of their TARDIS being invaded, it is possible the characters will manage to fend off the oncoming attack, especially as now they are going to be prepared for it. However, if they need to find the answer to an ancient riddle in a particular book to complete the adventure, you might offer a vision of them searching a library.



The two important things to remember are that the event you foreshadow must be something you know will happen, and that foreshadowing it won't give away too much. Stick to clues and mysterious hints, not only so they don't figure things out too early, but also to add a sense of mystery that something deeper is going on. These odd hints keep them reminded that there is a larger game being played across the adventure, and helps you build towards the eventual climax. There are many ways to foreshadow the events in your campaign, but most fall into one of these four simple categories. Simply pick your favourite, or throw in a little of each. However, remember foreshadowing is best used as seasoning rather than plot. Too much makes the players feel like puppets, and robs the game of its mystery and impact.

### I'VE HEARD THAT NAME BEFORE...

The smallest hint that repeats itself can be very useful. The best example of this were the words "Bad Wolf" that followed the Doctor through his early adventures with Rose. If you are subtle, it may take a while for the players to even notice it, and that's fine. When they finally figure it out they'll realise it has been haunting them for some time. You can overuse this technique, however, as once they catch on to it the players will start looking out for it.



You do have to be clear as to why this keeps turning up, as it usually hints at the actions of some powerful entity that needs their help. However, the best device is for the characters to end up having to send the words back in time to warn themselves of their coming trials.

### HIM AGAIN?

While you should be sparing with your main villain himself, his hand might be seen working from the earliest adventures. Mr Saxon kept cropping up in the Doctor's travels, but it was only when the Doctor returned from the end of the universe he

truly understood Saxon's importance. Should the players start investigating the mysterious figure, you will have to throw some adventure at them to keep them sidetracked until you are ready for them to meet – or perhaps it is the point at which they start to investigate directly that you stage the big reveal. The master villain might let them meet a false version of themselves, either as a pawn to be sacrificed (letting the players think it is all over and the villain has been beaten) or as a diversion when they discover the villain is actually really rather nice and helpful.



### MYSTERIOUS PROPHECY

There are plenty of wise prophets, time witches and mystics in the universe to offer strange visions of the future for a small favour. Plenty of powerful beings might also send strange dreams to the characters to help them on their way. Such visions can add a touch of mystery and magic to the adventure, and haunt the players with a future they don't quite understand, but know they must be wary of. It is important (and somewhat traditional) to make such prophecies rather vague and only really fully comprehensible when the moment has passed. After all, being too detailed might lead to the prophecy not coming quite true, or offering too much of a clue to the player characters. If you want to be truly cunning, you might open your campaign with the apparent death of a major character (killed by a mysterious spaceman, perhaps... ) only to discover this is part of a possible future that the characters need to stop.

### HAUNTED

If you have something truly weird in store for the characters, you might haunt them with some strange recurrent oddity that offers a clue to what is going on. Amy keeps seeing windows open in walls revealing a woman with an eye patch looking in on her. This

was actually a clue that Amy was not quite who – or where – she thought she was. You might do something similar to hint that the characters are actually trapped in a dream world or a virtual reality.

You can haunt the characters with all manner of strange things. The Weeping Angels made Amy count backwards as they closed in, something that might be stretched across a campaign. Your characters might discover that every time they flip a coin it always comes up heads, a clue from a higher power that the head of a gorgon will solve their predicament. If they are being chased by a shape shifter or a creature that possesses its victims, it might offer an odd salute each time it encounters them (such as making a circle around their eye with the thumb and forefinger and muttering “be seeing you”). Hauntings can be very spooky as long as they are obscure, and come regularly (but not continually) throughout the adventure. However, always make sure the characters can’t just grab the right person and force them to tell them what is going on, otherwise they’ll blow the mystery too early. The strange appearances should be too quick to make real contact.



## STEALING FROM THE DOCTOR'S ADVENTURES

The Doctor's adventures can serve as inspiration for your own campaigns. Once such example of a campaign is the search for the Key to Time. In a short introduction he meets the White Guardian who insists the Doctor take up the quest, which will involve searching for each of the six pieces of the Key. To help him, he is given a new assistant and a 'tracer' that will give him the coordinates from each segment. As campaigns go that's a very simple structure to follow; the Gamemaster is basically telling the players the campaign will involve six adventures, and during each one they will incidentally have to locate a piece of the Key.

When the Doctor is stranded in E-space, he faces a slightly different style of campaign. E-space is a setting the Gamemaster has declared to be more dangerous and slightly different from the usual universe. He plans some slightly odder adventures, involving vampires and marsh men, linked by the characters' attempts to escape back into their own universe. The final attempt to return the characters home lands them in a strange void where the players must choose their allies carefully. The E-space campaign is a great example of how to link a short series of adventures with a theme to create a campaign rather than just a series of unconnected adventures. The theme makes the adventures more interesting, and the conclusion more satisfying.

For a more complicated campaign you might look to the trial of the Sixth Doctor by the Time Lords. Here the adventures are linked with the ongoing theme of being evidence used in the Doctor's trial. This set-up brings with it a few special problems, such as knowing the characters on trial can't be killed (or they couldn't be at the trial). However, this being the Time Lords, some of their evidence comes from the future. At any point in the campaign the Gamemaster might break into the adventure as the prosecution, pointing out a character's failings as proved by their actions. This ramps up the stakes for the players, knowing they must not only solve the adventure at hand, but guide their characters well or further incriminate themselves.



## ⚙️ CHANGING CHARACTERS

As a campaign takes place over an extended period of time, you may well have to add new characters to the player group. This is usually as a result of a new player joining the group midway through. However, it is just as likely some of the current characters might resolve something in their background and leave the character group, meaning the player in question needs a new character. Sometimes a player just



## CAMPAIGNS

fancies a change, and that is fine too as long as they don't make too much of a habit of it. There is little wrong with changing characters, but it can interrupt the flow of a campaign. Be careful also in a campaign where the characters have time to develop and build relationships, as removing a character throws all that work away. You should make sure that any player wishing to change characters is doing so for a good reason, and not allow anyone to do it too often.

Generally, introducing a new character into the game isn't a problem. All you need do is land the TARDIS somewhere that character might run into them. If the new character has any temporal awareness themselves they might even find their own way to the TARDIS. So the trick is to make sure the player group will be happy to welcome the newcomer aboard. Give them an opportunity to prove their loyalty and trustworthiness. The other players should also do their best to find common ground with the new character. However, if the new character isn't going to fit in or the new player refuses to make an effort to be part of the group it is perfectly permissible for the TARDIS to leave without them.

It is the responsibility of the player to make sure they create a character that can fit in with the established group. You should do all you can to help fit the new character into the group but it is not your responsibility to make square pegs fit into round holes. As the group is already established it should be simple to figure out beforehand what will fit, or what might fill a gap in the skills or abilities of the group. They don't have to be great friends, but they do need to be able to

get along. At worst, as long as they don't appear to be working against the group they might be given the benefit of the doubt. While Tegan might not have liked Turlough when he joined the TARDIS crew, the Doctor was convinced that finding a way to get him home was worthwhile. However, sending the new character into the adventure under orders to kill one of the others is not to be recommended.

The best plan is to give the new character some useful purpose that fits the theme of the campaign and adventure. Maybe they are looking for the same thing as the other characters, or they have a vital clue that can help them. It might be the players need a guide to help them find what they need in a strange new world. Ultimately, with all of time and space to choose from, as long as the player creates a character that makes sense as part of the group you shouldn't have a problem finding a way to let them meet.

## KILLING CHARACTERS

People die; it's an unfortunate fact of life. However, in *Doctor Who*, it is rare for a hero to die. The Doctor and his companions have usually evaded death, but even the Doctor's luck sometimes runs out (forcing a regeneration) and for all his efforts he has failed to protect his companions on occasion. Without the threat of death, adventures can stop being exciting. Your players will begin to take stupid and unrealistic risks, such as trash talking a Dalek, and the game will lose its credibility. However, it is a game, it's meant to be fun, and it isn't fun to lose a character you and the player have invested time and energy into developing.

Character death is something each person will have their own thoughts about. Some Gamemasters are quite brutal; others too squeamish to let the hand of the grim reaper pass over their players' characters. It is up to you to decide what is right for your game, based not only on the level of tragedy you are happy with, but also the way your players will react. However, one rule is clear no matter how you feel about character death, it should always mean something. These characters are the heroes after all. Don't let them simply die by gunfire or fall off a cliff for a simple failed roll. If they must get shot, let it be in the act of saving their friends; if they fall, let it be after they destroy the antenna that was controlling the world.



When the dice come up with a fatal result, or the character has done something foolish or brave that will take their life, take the player aside for a moment. Tell them their character is not long for this world and ask if they want this to be their moment to die in glory or if they want to continue. Make it clear that avoiding death might have its own consequences, but that the choice is theirs. You will be surprised how often a player is actually intending this to be their character's swansong, or how happy they are to give them a grand or tragic final curtain.

If you choose to save a character, it is easily done but there should be consequences. For a Time Lord, this means regeneration and all the associated problems that come with that. However, companions can survive the most apparently fatal circumstances, although never unscathed. A fall might horribly wound but not kill a character; they might turn out to be simply unconscious after the gunshot. Often a character dies 'off screen', such as being left on the enemy ship before it explodes or in the villain's lair as the roof caves in. In such cases you might have them return, having found a life pod at the last moment or

walking coughing from the clouds of dust and rubble. However, surviving does not have to mean unharmed. They might not have managed to escape with their favourite Gadget, they may have gained a Bad Trait from the trauma, or they may even have a permanent wound, possibly resulting in the loss of an attribute point.

Of course, there will be times when you simply cannot save them. "I open the airlock door" or "I step into the disintegration beam" leave you with little option but to announce the death of such a character. Most Gamemasters develop their own withering stare coupled with the pointed question, "Are you sure?" when faced with such disastrous ideas. Should the player choose to ignore this warning, then their character deserves their fate. Having said that, some heroes put themselves into very dangerous positions and manage to survive. River Song managed to throw herself out of an airlock in deep space and survive, but it took planning and timing – and no small amount of Story Points, no doubt. So, should your player characters manage to pull off such dynamic escapes with the same planning and style, give them a round of applause and an extra Story Point rather than the cold hand of eternal rest.

## ⚙️ BIG FINALES

So now we come to the end: the climax, the big finish. This is when you can (and should) pull out all the stops and create a memorable conclusion to the adventures that have made up the campaign. While the final adventure can sneak up on the player characters it is best to let them drive the plot towards the climax.



Let them finally discover who the bad guy is and where to find him, so that they can decide it is time for a showdown. The final adventure is what you have been working towards too, so have fun with it! All the cool stuff you've been waiting to reveal can finally be thrown at the players' characters. You don't need to be

careful not to give away too much any more. Let the player characters figure out the last few pieces of the jigsaw, which usually raises the stakes as they realise what's on the line, and then start the fireworks.

The final adventure can sneak up on the players or be the only obvious path to take. For instance, once the Doctor knew where Amy was being held, he gathered a team and set forth to attack Demon's Run and rescue her. However, the Pandorica rather snuck up on him. Investigating some recent myths and rumours he lets his curiosity get the better of him. However, even this was no quiet conclusion as every one of his worst enemies arrives for a final showdown.

How you choose to end your campaign very much depends on what themes and ideas you have been using, so let's return to our four basic categories of plot arc and look at how you might bring them to a conclusion.

### QUEST

Ultimately, a Quest plot arc ends when you have collected what you need or achieved your goal. If you have been gathering the resources to achieve a single goal (such as rescue the princess) you can ensure that last adventure puts everything on the line. The player group might discover their enemies know they are coming or have some device they haven't planned for.

If the player characters have been collecting something (such as the Key to Time) simply grabbing the last piece can be something of an anti-climax. So instead make sure their enemies know enough to make them really work for the last piece, or do everything they can to stop the player characters assembling it. You might also pull a bait and switch and decide the bad guys have found the last piece themselves and been waiting for the characters to unwittingly bring them the others. So instead of a search for the last piece the player characters find themselves fighting to keep what they have as their enemies attack them.

### SETTING

If yours is a Setting plot arc, maybe you won't need it after the campaign ends. You can reveal all the cool parts of the setting you might not have had time to use by now, and then blow the whole place up! Escapes are made more dramatic if the whole place is falling apart as the characters make a run for it. When the characters have figured out how to leave, don't make it easy. Throw enemies and guards at them to stop them leaving, or make them have to work hard to pilot their TARDIS through the final barriers.

### VILLAIN

The climax to a Villain plot arc is a tried-and-trusted final showdown. At last the characters figure out who is behind everything or where they can find them, and they set off to take revenge or stop their plans. Needless to say the villain's plans by this point should be on the cusp of completion, leading to a desperate battle where winner takes all.



### PERSONAL

Given that Personal plot arcs are rather internal, they can be harder to conclude climatically. However, when something like love is on the line it might lead to the characters fighting among themselves. Most Personal plot arcs might pit the characters against each other, possibly as rivals in love or as candidates for enlightenment. This will force all the characters to choose sides, and lend a layer of tragedy as only a few might be successful, and at a terrible cost.

In general, you will find that as the campaign progresses, the way it should end will gradually reveal itself. Listen to the directions your players are taking and the options they are considering. This will tell you if they want to out-think the bad guys or take them on in a final battle. Their musings on what is going on will also give you ideas about not only the best directions to take but also some cool ways you can amend your plan. Feel free to put them through the wringer and heap torment and trials upon them. When they finally defeat the bad guy or deal with the danger around them it will make their victory all the sweeter.

## STOCK FOOTAGE

*'Look at these people, these human beings. Consider their potential! From the day they arrive on the planet, blinking, step into the sun, there is more to see than can ever be seen, more to do than – no, hold on. Sorry, that's The Lion King. But the point still stands. Leave them alone!'*

This section contains lots of what we're calling stock footage – people, places, things and events that you can grab and use when you need to fill a gap. Each bit of stock footage comes with multiple names and options so you can use them in different situations or different adventures. Most of the options can easily be used in any situation, but others are designed to be used in historical, far-future or alien settings.

The best way to use stock footage is to ignore this section entirely when planning your adventures. Don't bother with it; come up with your own characters and places. Keep this stock footage for when you *really* need it, when your players do something wonderfully unexpected and you need to add a new non-player character or a new encounter or a whole new galactic empire on the fly.

Obviously, you'll need to tweak the descriptions to wherever and whenever your adventure takes place, but that's surprisingly easy. A 19th century explorer can easily become a 21st century host of a travel show on TV, or a 24th century xenologist, or a 51st century temporal archaeologist. All you need to do is change their appearance and equipment – people are people, even if they're weird aliens or robots or super-intelligent clouds of interstellar plasma.

### PEOPLE

No matter how far you go, people are people, especially humans. Whether it's the Stone Age or the 12th century, or 21st century Earth, or the infinitely far future, people still gossip about the neighbours, complain about the weather, want what they don't have, and forget to look up at the stars.

#### SHOP ASSISTANT (MERCHANT, PEDDLER, TRADER)

**Name:** Lynda Brown

**Variant Names:** Bob Rains, Cheryl Tolliver, Monica Avers, Hoza Chal.

**Description:** Lynda's a bubbly young shop assistant. Her job would bore her to insanity if she didn't put her heart and soul into it, so she follows customers around like an eager puppy and gives them unsolicited advice about their purchases. She doesn't mean to be quite

so irritating as she is. She dreams of travelling, and spends most of her salary on trips abroad.

**As an ally:** Lynda saw something really weird, but no one will believe her. She's dying to find someone who'll listen.

**As an obstacle:** Lynda doesn't care if you've got 15 minutes to save the world – you're going to buy a new handbag in her shop, and she's not giving up until she's made a sale.

Awareness 4 Coordination 3 Ingenuity 2 Presence 3 Resolve 2 Strength 2

**Skills:** Convince 3, Knowledge 2, Transport 1.

**Traits:** Empathic, Face in the Crowd.

#### Variants:

- Ambitious, over-zealous, takes night courses in marketing and Mandarin.
- Loves a quiet life, likes a night in with beer and pizza, pet parrot.
- Working part-time, studying physics in university.
- Butcher in village market, mother is the local witchwoman, knows some tricks.
- Sells virtual memories, very persuasive, dips into her own stock from time to time.

#### SOLDIER (GUARD, MERCENARY, ENFORCER)

**Name:** Tom Vasco

**Variant Names:** Olive Jones, Roger Catlaw, Vincent Silverman, Thor 53-Beta.

**Description:** Tom's a veteran soldier. He's seen combat several times, and is always on guard. He takes his responsibilities seriously; he took an oath to defend this country against enemies, and he'll put his life on the line to do so.

**As an ally:** Watches your back and keeps you safe.

**As an obstacle:** Stops the characters from going where they need to go.

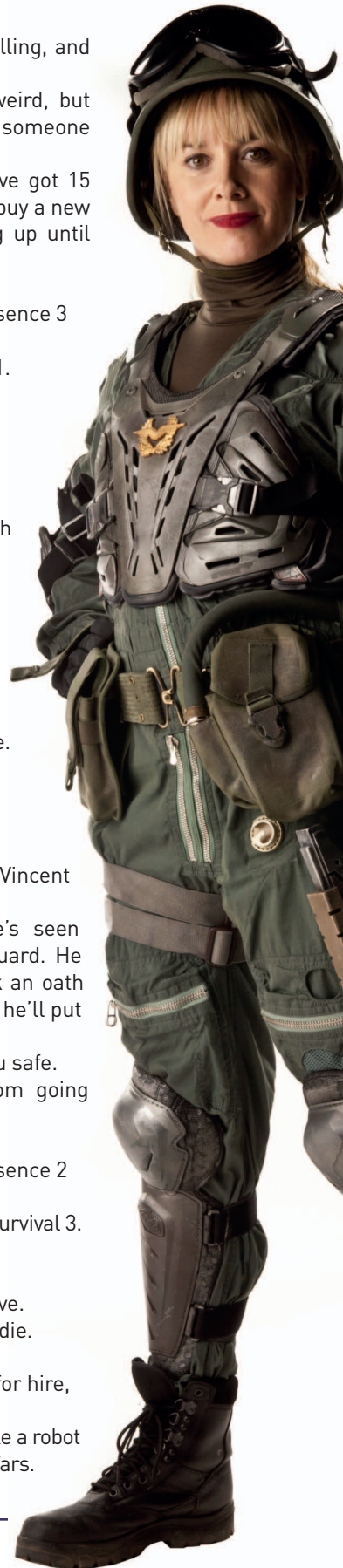
Awareness 4 Coordination 3 Ingenuity 2 Presence 2 Resolve 4 Strength 4

**Skills:** Athletics 3, Fighting 3, Marksman 4, Survival 3.

**Traits:** Code of Conduct, Tough, Brave.

#### Variants:

- Fresh-faced young soldier, eager to serve.
- Dour, fatalistic, convinced he's going to die.
- Bored, sloppy, not very observant.
- Wild, drunken mercenary with a sword for hire, death wish.
- Cybernetically wired to the unit, moves like a robot when on duty, veteran of the Draconian Wars.



**THIEF (BURGLAR, PICKPOCKET, SECURITY SPECIALIST)****Name:** Jade Hallos**Variant Names:** Jimmy the Finger, Ginger Spring, Pip Bringam.**Description:** Jade's a cat burglar, specialising in robbing the homes and businesses of the wealthy. She's the daughter of a long line of thieves, and has contacts and friends in both the criminal underworld and in the arty circle; she knows where to sell a 'borrowed' painting or weird little curio.**As an ally:** Jade can get past almost any security.**As an obstacle:** She just stole a gadget or other item you need.Awareness 3 Coordination 4 Ingenuity 3 Presence 2  
Resolve 2 Strength 3**Skills:** Convince 2, Fighting 3, Subterfuge 4,  
Technology 4.**Traits:** Charming, Technically Adept, Dark Secret.**Variants:**

- Fast-talking rogue, always has an angle, large collection of nephews.
- Exiled alien, hides in the crowds, lives in the sewers.
- Penniless street urchin, steals to survive, dressed in rags.

**PILOT (CAPTAIN, SAILOR)****Name:** Mosi al-Sefu**Variant Names:** Captain Hollister, Francine Yates, Antonious, Kelbor.**Description:** Mosi pilots a small, battered cargo plane that hops between airports in East Africa like an old-fashioned tramp steamer. Sometimes, when money is tight, he lapses back into his old smuggling habits, but most of his cargoes are machine parts, medical supplies or people. Mosi knows the skies of Africa better than anyone, and he's got a reputation as a daredevil pirate who'll fly in almost any weather.**As an ally:** He can get the characters where they need to go.**As an obstacle:** He can get the characters where they need to go – but they need to find a way to pay him.Awareness 3 Coordination 4 Ingenuity 3 Presence 3  
Resolve 4 Strength 3**Skills:** Athletics 2, Fighting 2, Knowledge 3,  
Technology 2, Transport 4.**Traits:** Lucky, Sense of Direction, Impulsive.**Variants:**

- Stern, by the book, experienced, serious moustache.
- Arrogant, hates passengers, expert pilot.
- Starliner pilot, sneezes whenever ship goes faster-than-light.
- Captain of a ship, former pirate, treats his crew like dogs.

**MEDIC (DOCTOR, NURSE, PARAMEDIC, HEALER)****Name:** Dr Keeler**Variant Names:** Nurse White, Dr Shen, Dr Stolze, Medtech Jensen.**Description:** Judith Keeler needs coffee badly. She works long shifts in a local hospital, mainly in the emergency room and the critical care ward. She wanted to be a doctor from a young age, and worked hard to achieve her dream. What she never expected was that she'd be so angry about it all – it makes her completely furious when she encounters people who are responsible for accidents or injuries. She knows how fragile the human body is.**As an ally:** If someone's injured, she's their doctor.**As an obstacle:** Blames the characters for whatever caused these injuries.Awareness 3 Coordination 2 Ingenuity 4 Presence 2  
Resolve 4 Strength 2**Skills:** Convince 2, Medicine 4, Science 3, Technology 2**Traits:** Voice of Authority, Indomitable, Argumentative

**Variants:**

- Close to retirement, seen it all, very tired.
- Clinical, uncaring, talks in medical jargon.
- Believer in folk remedies and old-fashioned medicine, speaks slowly.

**EXPLORER (ADVENTURER, ARCHAEOLOGIST)**

**Name:** Henry Hobart

**Variant Names:** Ernest Shackleworthy, Dr Liz Radi, Captain Yal.

**Description:** Hobart's a media sensation; he became a celebrity on the strength of his past discoveries. Since returning to civilisation, he's been a fixture on talk shows and the lecture circuit. His undeniable achievements and even more undeniable charisma go a long way, but his star is fading. Hobart needs a new, even more impressive discovery to avoid sinking back into academic obscurity.

**As an ally:** Bravely accompanies the characters with his expert local knowledge...

**As an obstacle:** ... and steals the credit for anything they find.

Awareness 3 Coordination 3 Ingenuity 3 Presence 4 Resolve 3 Strength 3

**Skills:** Athletics 3, Convince 3, Fighting 3, Knowledge 4, Marksman 3, Transport 3.

**Traits:** Attractive, Charming, Selfish.

**Variants:**

- Consumed by wanderlust, unhappy at home, speaks many languages.
- Works for a big corporation, looking for new resources, ambitious.
- Fringe theories about aliens ended her career, determined to find proof, slightly crazy.
- Alien archaeologist, fascinated by human history.

**REPORTER (INVESTIGATOR, SCRIBE)**

**Name:** Cyril Smythe

**Variant Names:** Lucy Barnes, Andrew Hayworth, Eve Skinner, Felix Uglow.

**Description:** A slightly slimy tabloid journalist. Cyril hates his job, but unfortunately he's terribly good at it. He wants to be a serious, respectable journalist, but he's too good at finding celebrity scandals and gossip to get promoted and he's too scared to force the issue.

**As an ally:** He's found out something about the bad guy's scheme, but his editor isn't interested.

**As an obstacle:** Follows the characters around and makes a nuisance of himself.

Awareness 4 Coordination 2 Ingenuity 3 Presence 3 Resolve 2 Strength 2

**Skills:** Convince 4, Knowledge 3, Subterfuge 3, Technology 3.

**Traits:** Charming, Photographic Memory, Cowardly.

**Variants:**

- Passionate independent-media blogger, really determined, inexperienced.
- On the inside, ethically compromised, lots of contacts, very respected.
- Never without a camera, always looking for an angle, resourceful.

**SCIENTIST (RESEARCHER, SCHOLAR)**

**Name:** Dr Vanterbild

**Variant Names:** Professor Thames, Dr Wendig, Dr Horus.

**Description:** Dr Vanterbild is pleased to meet you... for the 15 seconds he remembers you exist. He's thinking about protons, you see, and that's much more interesting than whatever you were just talking about. You can almost see his attention slide off you, like butter melting on a Teflon pan, as his mind wanders off to think about his real friends, those enchanting protons.

**As an ally:** His readings and experiments give the characters vital information about the adventure.

**As an obstacle:** He's working for the bad guys, even if he doesn't know it.

Awareness 2 Coordination 2 Ingenuity 5 Presence 2 Resolve 3 Strength 2

**Skills:** Science 4, Technology 4.

**Traits:** Boffin, Technically Adept, Forgetful.

**Variants:**

- Hyperactive and hyperenthusiatic, like a caffeinated squirrel.
- Cold, calculating, addicted to his smartphone.
- Cackling mad scientist, deranged experiments, very secretive.
- Alchemist and physician, lots of bubbling chemicals, smells of sulphur.

**MECHANIC (BLACKSMITH, CRAFTSMAN, TECHNICIAN)**

**Name:** Oliver Bradshaw

**Variant Names:** Owen Kaur, Peter Graham, Alex Barros, Jian Shao.

**Description:** During the week, Oliver works as a car mechanic in a small independent garage; the



weekends are for indulging his hobby as an amateur rally car driver. He's put a lot of money – too much, in fact – into both his rally car and into side bets on the races that didn't pay off.

**As an ally:** He's got just the right spare part needed.

**As an obstacle:** He's in debt to criminals, and they force him to sabotage the characters' vehicle or gadget.

Awareness 2 Coordination 4 Ingenuity 3 Presence 2  
Resolve 2 Strength 4

**Skills:** Athletics 2, Technology 3, Transport 4.

**Traits:** Technically Adept, Resourceful Pockets, Owes Favour.

## Variants:

- By-the-book military-trained technician, everything spit-polished and shined.
- Lazy, does anything to avoid having to do work, can't get the parts.
- Secretly working for sinister forces, much more dangerous than she appears.
- Local blacksmith, got kicked by a horse, now lame and scarred.
- Starship technician (third class), eager to see the galaxy, knows his way around the air ducts and maintenance tubes of the ship.

## FUNCTIONARY (SERVANT, ASSISTANT, BUTLER, UNDERLING, LOW-LEVEL ADMINISTRATOR)

**Name:** Louis Barker

**Variant Names:** Chelsea Gould, Imogen Rayner, Martin Smith, Leo Flowers.

**Description:** Barker's a junior assistant manager in the bowels of whatever organisation he works for. He beat several other applicants for the role, and fought tooth and nail to get this promotion. Being junior assistant manager means everything to him. One day, the boss might even notice his existence, and that would be the proudest moment of Barker's life so far. Sometimes, though, he goes home to his empty apartment and wonders if this is all there is to life. You don't become junior assistant manager without making a few sacrifices along the way.

**As an ally:** Barker may be obsessively devoted to his pointless job, but that means he'd be a fearsome ally if the bad guys endanger his company.

**As an obstacle:** Barker never considers the big picture; he might easily be a bureaucratic cog in a big evil machine.

Awareness 2 Coordination 2 Ingenuity 3 Presence 2  
Resolve 3 Strength 3

**Skills:** Knowledge 4, Science 2, Technology 2.

**Traits:** Face in the Crowd, By the Book, Obligation.

## Variants:

- Unflappable butler, always collected and calm, the perfect assistant.
- Overlooked assistant with all the right ideas, trying to prove himself.
- Complains about the organisation and the boss, cynical, paranoid.
- Consummate bureaucrat, very orderly, very dry.

## BUSINESS EXECUTIVE (CORPORATE BOSS, RELIGIOUS LEADER, CULTIST)

**Name:** Zara Moore

**Variant Names:** Morgan Bailey, Arthur Holloway, Demetrice Calhoun.

**Description:** Zara's the CEO of an investment brokerage; she manages a portfolio worth billions. That's a lot of responsibility; her clients depend upon her intelligence, good judgement and her ability to spot opportunities. Recent events convinced her that the growing number of alien encounters and weird events means that the next big thing is alien technology. She intends to put her considerable resources to work on recovering such items.

**As an ally:** Moore can swoop in to help the characters with her vast wealth and resources in exchange for their help.

**As an obstacle:** If she discovers that the characters are involved with alien tech, Moore may try to steal it from them; she might be opposed to both the player characters and the bad guys.



Awareness 3 Coordination 2 Ingenuity 4 Presence 5  
Resolve 4 Strength 2

**Skills:** Convince 4, Knowledge 4, Technology 3.

**Traits:** Charming, Friends, Voice of Authority, Obligation.

## Variants:

- Stuffy old businessman, very out of touch, thinks of the characters as adorably enthusiastic children.
- Sociopathic manipulator, tells everyone what they want to hear, very adaptable.
- Loud, boorish, entitled.

## PLACES

People make places. A 5th-century school in Ancient Greece might look very different to Deffry Vale comprehensive in the present day, or to Jack's boyhood school on the Boeshane Peninsula, but they all fulfil the same function: they're a place to educate the young. You can 'redress' a place to make it fit a different setting very easily. The function stays the same, only the appearance changes. Look at the Library from *Silence in the Library*: it's got all the same things you'd expect to find in a modern museum (books, information points, ways of getting around), but they're all given a high-tech remodelling (digital copies of books, computer consoles, teleporters). For each place, therefore, we describe a few functions and things you'd find there, as well as possible 'desktop themes' for different places and eras.

### SCHOOL

A local secondary school for a few hundred students.

**Names:** Deffry Vale Comprehensive, Farringham School for Boys, Reformed Rattigan Academy.

**Places:** Classrooms with desks and chairs, cafeteria, library, science labs, gymnasium, assembly halls, computer room, staff rooms, offices.

**Details:** Posters on the walls, smell of gym socks, overworked teachers, kids hanging around the sports ground.



#### Variants:

- Spooky Gothic boarding school with a stern old headmaster
- Far-future virtual school; everything's an interactive screen and all the teachers are computer programs.
- School on a war-torn alien planet; combat and survival training are taught alongside maths and geography.
- Alien egg hatchery, where larvae are imprinted with genetic memories

## TOP TIP: BREAK EXPECTATIONS

Try not giving the players what they expect. For example, the Fifth Doctor once landed his TARDIS in the hold of an Edwardian-era sailing ship. The crew were all early-20th century sailors. Everything looked exactly as it should – until it was revealed that the ship sailed through space on course for Venus. That fantastic twist was much more interesting than having the spaceship look like just another metal cylinder.

Or, to put it another way, why is there a horse on this spaceship?

Jam concepts together in weird and wonderful ways, and you'll create unexpected and compelling situations. Make your alien spaceships look like 1980s hotels; have your adventurers find a London Black Cab on the streets of a distant alien metropolis; make the bad guy's footsoldiers into laughing children instead of jackbooted thugs.

### SHOPPING CENTRE

A big suburban shopping mall with dozens of stores.

**Names:** Henrik's Department Store, Greenfield Shopping Centre, Border Market.

**Places:** Big department store, clothes shops, cinema, food court, electronics shops, farmer's market.

**Details:** Screaming kids, bustling crowds, uniformed security guards, advertising events.

#### Variants:

- Historical street market, lots of stalls and merchants barking their wares
- Alien merchant ship crammed with traders from hundreds of worlds, all speaking the universal language of commerce.
- Glamorous, exclusive shopping arcade from the gilded age (late 1800s), with uniformed footmen and exotic goods from distant countries.

### FACTORY

Lots of clanking machinery and conveyor belts making something terribly boring.

**Names:** Magpie Electronics, Weapons Factories of Villengard, Consolidated Manufacturing, .

**Places:** Machines that go clank, machines that go whirr, conveyor belts, machines that crush and

squeeze, forklifts, packing crates, manager's office, shipping trucks

**Details:** Noisy, oily, busy, confusing if you don't work there. Dark corridors, exposed pipes, flashing lights.

**Variants:**

- 18th century factory – like the modern day, only steam powered and with more industrial accidents.
- Stone Age flintknapping site, where they carve stone tools.
- Future factory, operated by robots; no human input required.
- Alien biotech hatchery, pulsing with life.

### HOSPITAL

A modern hospital in a big city.

**Names:** Redfern Memorial, Royal Hope Hospital, Albion Hospital.

**Places:** Wards full of beds, nurses bustling around, operating theatres, diagnostic equipment, nursery, emergency rooms, quarantine, intensive care, morgue.

**Details:** Smell of disinfectant, sleepless nights, visiting families, sick people.

**Variants:**

- Medieval plague ward attached to a monastery.
- WWI battlefield hospital, lots of soldiers missing limbs or suffering from trench foot and poison gas.
- Future clone-bank, where they grow a new you while you wait.
- Alien healing cave, where the weird energy of crystals can heal any injury.



### SEWER

Or a cave network, or a river, or the bilges of a starship if starships have bilges – anywhere that's close to a settlement, but is still mysterious and dangerous.

**Names:** Sewer tunnel 14B, Main Drainage Scheme Sump, Subsector C.

**Places:** Rivers of filthy water, dark passageways, access ladders, pumps, locked gratings, swarms of rats, confusing dead ends, narrow low tunnels.

**Details:** Foul smells, total darkness, strange fungal growths, discarded junk floating in the slime.

**Variants:**

- Dark cave, infested with snakes or spiders.
- High-tech network, maintained by killer robots.
- Old tunnels, used by resistance fighters.
- Abandoned missile silo, awash in rust-stained water and heavy metal poisoning.

### WAREHOUSE

Like a factory, only quieter.

**Names:** Warehouse 23, Consolidated Storage, Trotter's Lane Storage.

**Places:** Boxes. Lots of boxes. Cranes, forklifts, access gantries overhead. More boxes. Night watchmen.

**Details:** Confusing maze of boxes, scurrying rats, anonymous crates.

**Variants:**

- Ramshackle junkyard, full of scrap metal and debris.
- Vast dockyard full of shipping containers.
- Huge zero-gravity storage facility, with magnetic crates floating in Christmas-tree helices high overhead, tended by hovering robots.



### TRAIN

An intercity train, thundering through the night.

**Names:** *Flying Scotsman*, *Orient Express*, 1510 to Liverpool Street.

**Places:** Engine, dining car, mail car, guard's car, sleeper carriages.

**Details:** The little drinks trolley, passengers staring into laptops, ticket inspections, emergency stop buttons.

### Variants:

- Graffiti-scarred subway train underneath a city.
- 18th century carriage, drawn by six swift horses.
- Martian train racing across the deserts in a vacuum-shielded tube.
- Giant centipede with dozens of linked howdahs on its back.

## CHURCH

A place of worship, the centre of a community.

**Names:** St Christophers, Suleymaniye Mosque, St Judes, Cathedral of the Tin Vagabond.

**Places:** Religious icons (altars, statues, paintings), pews, instruments, spires or towers, community bulletin boards.

**Details:** Smell of incense, little old ladies on the church cleaning roster, collection boxes, bells or other calls to prayer.

### Variants:

- Gigantic medieval cathedral, thronged with monks.
- Quaint little village church, covered in ivy.
- Temple of the Founders – it's clearly a depiction of the bridge of a Mordee-class colony ship, only carved out of stone.



## FARM

A small dairy farm out in the country.

**Names:** Home Farm, Green Farm, Highfield Farm, Oakham Farm.

**Places:** Green fields, orchards, greenhouses, barns, storage sheds, tractors, fertilisers, cows, more cows.

**Details:** Smell of manure, isolated, close to nature.

### Variants:

- Medieval farm, owned by the local lord. Trespassing or poaching means death.
- Huge industrial farm, stretching over hundreds of acres.
- High-tech agri-sector, hydroponic plants monitored by robot arms.

## SHIP

An ocean – or space! – going vessel.

**Names:** *Trieste*, HMS *Victory*, SS *Great Britain*, *Byzantium*, *Enlightenment*.

**Places:** Bridge, cabins, engine room, propellers (or sails), cargo hold, mast

**Details:** Rolling back and forth with the waves, water everywhere, cramped spaces.

### Variants:

- Chinese junk with a cargo of tea
- WWI steam-powered battleship
- Luxurious star liner



## PLANETS

Planets are just big places. Many of the Doctor's intended destinations are famed tourist attractions, but he rarely ends up where he meant to go...

For each type of planet, we suggest a few names, a few common traits to that sort of planet, and then a few variants showing different ways those traits might be developed in the game.

## ICE PLANET

A frozen world, covered in icy glaciers or snowstorms.

**Names:** Svartos, Woman Wept, Frimaire, Nivos.

**Details:** Looming glaciers, frozen seas, howling snowstorms, freezing fog.

### Variants:

- **Tunnels under the Ice:** Everyone lives in heated tunnels carved into the glaciers. Going onto the surface is extremely dangerous. Huge ice caves contain whole cities under the frozen mountains.
- **Temperature-controlled Zones:** Using nuclear-powered heaters (or even more advanced methods), the locals can produce zones of heat. There might be artificial tropical beaches next to looming glaciers, or maybe everyone huddles around the fading heaters trying to stay warm.
- **Carved Ice:** The inhabitants live on the surface, and use ice as a building material. They even use ice for heating – huge polished ice-lenses focus the sun's heat onto carefully positioned heating elements.
- **Adapted Biology:** The locals – even the humans – have adapted to the cold conditions. They might be furry and protected by a heat-retaining layer of blubber, or they might slow down or even go into hibernation when cold.

## FIRE PLANET

Volcanoes, hot springs, earthquakes, lava – and toasty warm to boot!

**Names:** Sarn, Pyrovillia, Infernos, Fylir.

**Details:** Mountains belching sulphur into the air, intense heat during the day, tortured rock, ash clouds everywhere.

### Variants:

- **Power Plants:** Huge geothermal plants like silver webs sprawled across the lava fields, powering the air-conditioned, lava-shielded domes.
- **Gas Bags:** Civilisations in flying cities that skate above the yellow-stained clouds, avoiding the baking-hot surface below.
- **Living Flames:** The natives of this planet are composed of highly organised energetic plasma – they're made of living fire. They flicker in and out of existence, dancing on the fringe of being, whole civilisations with the life of a candle-flame.
- **Shaped Fire:** Using geomagnetic fields and polished obsidian walls, the natives keep the fires out of their cities. There are little islands of life in the midst of burnt ash zones.

## MOON

Some moons are as big as planets, and you can look up and see a gas giant filling half the sky. Other moons are like Earth's moon or even smaller; airless, rocky places, stepping stones to a wider cosmos.

**Names:** Poosh, Demogorgon, Navarro, Simba, Lure.

**Details:** Airless, big horizons, meteor craters, silent and dead.



### Variants:

- **First Colony:** The inhabitants of the planet below only recently reached the moon. Obviously, like all intelligent beings, they set up a colony there as quickly as possible. It's rough and ready and a bit of a mess, but that's life on the frontier.

- **Aristocratic Retreat:** The moon was colonised hundreds of years ago. Now it's a place for the super-wealthy elite, a stately pleasure-dome where they can literally look down on the squabbling masses below.
- **Artificial Moon:** This moon is not what it seems to be. Maybe it's a huge space station, or an ancient alien ship surrounded by a mile-thick layer of dust. Maybe it's the colony ship that originally settled this planet.
- **Mystic Moon:** The moon is somehow connected to the planet below. It could be a psychic resonator, or orbit along a cosmic ley line, or it's full of mysterious crystals, or it reflects weird radiation down onto the night side. The moonlight has strange effects on people.

## JUNGLE WORLD

The planet is one big jungle, a vast tangled forest, a riotous explosion of life. Imagine trees the size of mountains, leaves the size of football fields... oh, and savage monsters with teeth the size of *really big teeth*.

**Names:** Deathworld, the Gamma Forests, Angolos, Cheem.

**Details:** Huge trees, jungle creepers, dark undergrowth, thick atmosphere, warm sunlight, lots of insects.

### Variants:

- **Genetic Creation:** Bio-engineered plants and animals, trees shaped into buildings, computer-like flowers that communicate through binary pollen emissions, insect warriors.
- **Wilderness:** Savage wilderness filled with monsters; any civilisation has to hide behind electric fences and watchtowers.
- **Smart Plants:** Intelligent trees, with lifespans measured in millennia. Humans move too fast and live too short for the trees to communicate meaningfully; the trees use fast-grown accelerated saplings to speak for them.

## OCEAN WORLD

Most or all of this planet is covered with water (or something similar – don't go or a swim without checking!). There's little or no dry land.

**Names:** Antalin, Morbel, Poseidon, Rlyeh.

**Details:** Huge oceans (obviously), vast raging storms, cities on rafts or underwater domes, lots of fish things.

### Variants:

- **Factory Fish:** Earth-like ocean, filled with fish.

Huge factory-ships plough the surface, sucking up fish and plankton for reprocessing into food. Intelligent squid live in the depths.

- **Viking Planet:** The inhabitants have only a primitive level of technology, but they build their settlements on huge rafts or lash them to the back of titanic sea serpents. The few spots of dry land are sacred places.
- **Acid World:** Oceans of acid, beaches of glass. The domed cities of the lightless sea floor are connected to the surface using huge bubbles that protect rising submarines.
- **Untamed Ocean:** The planet rotates especially slowly. Half the ocean is on the night side, and is frozen solid. The other half is boiling hot. The line between the two is a chaotic, explosive zone.

## PARADISE PLANET

Oh, this is a *nice* planet. Everyone and everything here is just thoroughly lovely.

**Names:** Barcelona, Planet of the Coffee Shops, Midnight, Fiesta 95.

**Details:** Gorgeous beaches, famous museums, beautiful architecture, proper cups of tea. That sort of thing.



### Variants:

- **Tropical Paradise:** It might look faintly like Lanzarote, but it's really a tropical paradise more beautiful than anything on Earth. Laze on the golden-silken beaches as the semi-sentient Amorous Ocean caresses your skin.
- **Cultural Nirvana:** This planet is famed for its cultural sophistication. Discuss the works of the great philosopher Oolon Colluphid while simultaneously admiring the living artworks and appreciating the Memory Vestige Opera.
- **Leisure Hive:** Okay, it's a bit of a tacky paradise planet, with its pleasure-domes and gambling zones and joyariums, but it's better than Rollercoasterworld or Space Vegas.
- **Tranquillity:** This is more like it – all Zen gardens and wind chime trees. Just looking at the vibrating

mountains and the aurora centralis puts you in touch with your inner self. (Warning: your inner self may manifest as a psychic projection of your karmic misdeeds and try to eat you.)

- **Ancient Monuments:** This world was once the seat of a galaxy-spanning empire; conquerors went out from this place and slaughtered trillions, and built mile-high monuments to their bloody victories to glory in the devastation, and the gods themselves hid and trembled before the wrath of the empire. Then the empire fell apart, and someone built a gift shop on the ruins.

## CITY WORLD

The whole planet is one big big city.

**Names:** New Earth, Metropolia, Trantor II, Steelsky.

**Details:** Staggeringly vast populations (in the trillions), automated life support systems, agricultural supply worlds.



### Variants:

- **Hellish Hive:** Ten people per room, two hundred rooms per floor, five hundred floors per building, a thousand buildings per sector, and thousands upon thousands of sectors. Every breath of air recycled from the lungs of a billion other people, every drop of water full of other people's sweat, every moment of your life surrounded by other people, never ever ever alone.
- **The Perfect City:** The all-wise, all-knowing computer maintains the city in perfect order. The inhabitants live in accordance with the directives and computer-issued mandates; there are so many people here that they need the guidance of the computer or there would be anarchy. The Cybermen would love this place – maybe they come here on holiday.
- **Conurbations:** This huge city is actually made up of lots of smaller cities, linked by underground tunnels or high-speed train links or transmats. It's not a stable arrangement – the various cities have their own goals and quirks.

- **City in the Waste Land:** This city isn't the whole world – it's just the only habitable part of it. The rest of the planet is blasted and uninhabitable, maybe as a result of nuclear war or some other catastrophe.

### MINING COLONY

There's something valuable in the ground, and people are here to get it out. It's always about the money, isn't it?

**Names:** Androzani Minor, Interplanetary Mining Company Extractor Zone 4, Ta, Adatam.

**Details:** Industrial processing plants, newly dug mine shafts, workers (slaves/robots/underpaid miners).



#### Variants:

- **Worked-Out Mines:** They've been mining this planet for thousands of years. Shafts riddle the crust for hundreds of miles, and the whole place is soft and, well, crumbly. The planet's on the verge of collapse.
- **Natural Caverns:** Most of the mines are natural caverns, linked by artificial tunnels and passageways. Something lives in the darkness...
- **Toxic Nightmare:** Passages awash in toxic slime, huge snow-drifts of poisonous ash, tailings of heavy metals and broken rock, chemical spills – this is not a healthy place to be.
- **Surface Mining:** Instead of delving into the planet's depths, the mines are on the surface. Huge machines criss-cross the desert, swallowing up whole mountains and processing them into ore.

### DEAD WORLD

Everything dies. The universe is billions of years old, and many millions of civilisations have risen to greatness and fallen to dust in that time, leaving behind only a few scattered relics of their former glory.

**Names:** Telos, Krop Tor, Alfava Metraxis, Ghastel, Shadox IV, Atarsi.

**Details:** Ruined cities, decaying monuments, dying biospheres.

#### Variants:

- **Archaeological Dig:** An archaeological team is on the dead world, digging into the relics of the past. What have they uncovered?
- **Sudden Death:** The disaster that wiped out the previous civilisation happened incredibly quickly; it's like a planet-sized Marie Celeste, disturbingly frozen in the moment of extinction.
- **Preserved Remnants:** The remains of the extinct civilisation are still here. Maybe they are mummified, or frozen in ice, or maybe they were robots and their rusting shells litter the planet... or maybe they're not all dead.
- **Degenerate Descendants:** The descendants of the previous civilisation live in the shadow of their ancestors' great works. They remember little except myths and legends of their ancestor's culture and technology.



### AGRICULTURAL PLANET

It's a farming planet. Maybe the locals export food, or it's a low-tech planet with no industry. Or maybe they just like farming. Everyone needs a hobby.

**Names:** Archersworld, Relos Beta, Cornucopia.

**Details:** Verdant fields, farming machinery, workers, markets.

#### Variants:

- **Terraformed Colony:** This agri-world was terraformed by human engineers. Part of the planet is Earth-like, but the rest is still in its original (and potentially dangerous) configuration.
- **Fountain of Vitality:** Something about this planet – a mineral, some sort of radiation, or maybe some ancient technology – means it's just bursting with life. Things grow faster and stronger here, making it immensely valuable.
- **Unique Product:** This planet produces something that's completely unique, or at least immensely

rare. For example, Androzani Minor was the only source of life-extending spectrox.

- **Unusual Livestock:** The farmers tend to something strange here, like giant worms or herds of humans or dinosaurs or carnivorous coral polyps or shoggoths.

## GAS GIANT

Gas giants like Jupiter can't sustain human life (except on floating stations or onboard huge dirigibles), but alien life might thrive in the tremendous vapour oceans of hydrogen and other gases.

**Names:** Zeus, Bel, Polarfrey, Indra, Whirligig.

**Details:** High gravity, intense pressure, many moons, vast size.

### Variants:

- **Unlikely Core:** The incredible crushing pressure of the gas giant's gravity has turned the planet's core into something unusual, like a solid diamond bigger than the Earth, or a portal into the Time Vortex, or a just-barely-subcritical mass of something explosive.
- **Gas Harvesting:** Miners scoop gases from the upper atmosphere of the gas giant, harvesting and processing them to extract valuable minerals, or fuel, or gasbag tadpoles.
- **Titanic Storms:** Storms bigger than continents wrack the gas giant. It's a dangerous place to fly. These storms are so intense that they affect the plane's magnetic field – imagine incredibly huge lightning bolts jumping from the gas giant to its moons!
- **Close Colonies:** The gas giant has a dozen Earth-like moons, and they're all inhabited. They might be colonies, or maybe different forms of intelligent life live on each world. They're neighbours in interplanetary terms.

## SPACE STATION

Planets are so old and boring. Big space stations are much more fun.

**Names:** Satellite Five, Platform One, Chimera Station, Varga Cluster, Roundworld.

**Details:** Artificial gravity, crowded or cramped, central hub, life support systems.

### Variants:

- **Rotating Station:** This is a low-tech station – the race who built it haven't even figured out how to generate artificial gravity – so part of it spins to simulate gravity with centripetal force.


- **Ramshackle Station:** The station is either really old and run-down, or else is made up of dozens of decommissioned ships and other space debris all lashed together.
- **Orbital:** It's a big space station that forms a solid ring around some celestial object. It might be a wheel in space, or orbit around a moon, or even a whole planet. Celestial-scale engineering could even create a ring or a Dyson sphere around a star.
- **Observatory:** The space station was not built by the inhabitants of the planet below. Maybe it's there to observe them, or to monitor them... or to control them.

## IMPOSSIBLE PLACES

And then there are those places that just don't fit into any sane list of places. Impossible places, nowhere places, between places. Think of House's junkyard outside the universe, or the Void, or E-Space, or the Forgotten Place. Every Impossible Place is unique, so our usual system doesn't work here. We'll just give you a few rumours of such Impossible Places borrowed from the Doctor's 900 year diary...

- **The Wood Between the Worlds:** A dimension that exists at left angles to our reality; it looks like an endless forest, studded with portals to different times and places. Fairies live here.
- **Stalice:** A parasitic realm, Stalice grows from the minds and memories of those who enter it. For example, when you arrive, you might find yourself in your childhood home. That copy of your home is made from your memories... but as soon as you set foot in that copy, Stalice consumes it from your mind, so it only exists as a copy. If you stay in Stalice too long, it eats all your mind, turning your memories and thoughts into physical objects until there's nothing left inside you.
- **The Stopped Clock Bar and Grill:** It looks like a small English pub; it's actually a Gallifreyan base that somehow escaped the destruction of the Last Great Time War, although its crew were all killed. Its connection to the time barrier survived, so time travellers can only visit the Stopped Clock sequentially – they'll always arrive sometime after their last visit. This makes it popular with wanderers in the fourth dimension who want a nice holiday in linear time.



A promotional image for the Doctor Who series. Peter Dinklage, as the Twelfth Doctor, is shown from the waist up, looking upwards with a concerned expression. He is wearing a dark red velvet suit jacket over a dark vest and a white shirt. The background is a dark, dense thicket of bare, tangled branches. The image is framed by two large, diagonal, semi-transparent orange-red overlays. The top-right overlay contains the text 'DEATH COMES TO TOYTOWN, THE GRIP OF THE KRAKEN AND THE BELLAGIO IMBROGLIO' in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The bottom-left overlay features faint, stylized technical drawings and mathematical formulas in a similar orange-red color.

DEATH COMES TO TOYTOWN,  
THE GRIP OF THE KRAKEN AND  
THE BELLAGIO IMBROGLIO

## DEATH COMES TO TOYTOWN

There's a little toyshop off the high street where they say the toys come to life at night. The story probably began with some drunk student or crazy old tramp looking into the window of that quaint little shop, and thinking they saw something moving in the shadows.

The story is wrong, of course. Toys don't come to life at night. They're *always* alive. During the day, they bide their time, and watch, and wait...

### ⚙ ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

#### DEFEATING THE NESTENE

To defeat the Nestene and save the world, all the characters need to do is:

- Work out what's going on
- Escape the murderous toys in the toy shop
- Rescue Samuel Qilong
- Get to the university laboratory and stop the Nestene
- Rescue their own bodies

### ⚙ HAMILTON'S TOYS & GAMES

Hamilton's Toys & Games Shop is a dinosaur of the high street. It's a little independent toy store, selling a mix of traditional wooden toys, puppets, art kits, dolls and board games, as well as a selection of plastic figures, toy ray guns and whatever the latest kid's craze is. It is run by Edgar Hamilton, an eccentric, gangly chap who looks like a well-dressed spider. He inherited the shop from his father, who inherited it from *his*. It never makes much money, and if Edgar had any sense, he'd sell the shop and the flat above it where he lives. For years, he clung to the shop out of a sense of nostalgia and devotion. He grew up here, and working in the shop sometimes makes him feel like a child again. These days, though, he stays because he has no choice. The toys won't let him leave.

### ⚙ THE NESTENE CONSCIOUSNESS

When the Ninth Doctor defeated the Nestene Consciousness in London, back in 2005, he hurled a vial of anti-plastic into the alien. This chemical dissolved most of the Consciousness. A small fragment survived and slithered away into the sewers of London. Over many months, it ended up in Hamilton's Toys and Games. This fugitive Nestene fragment was extremely weak. It was unable to create full-scale plastic duplicates, or to extend its control over a long range. It needed a different plan.

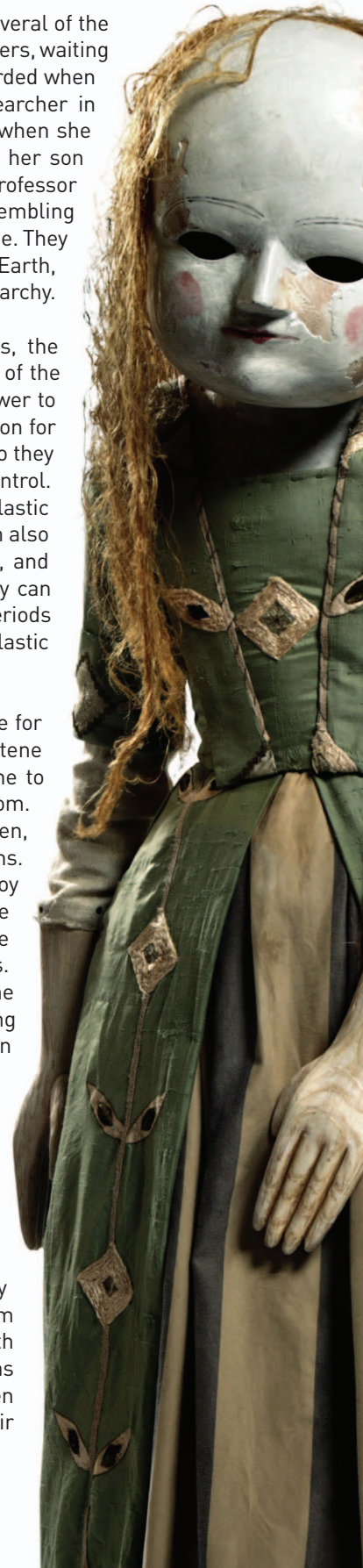
The consciousness began by inhabiting several of the toys in the toy shop. It observed the customers, waiting for the right target. Its patience was rewarded when it spotted Professor Lena Qilong, a researcher in materials science at the local university, when she called into the shop to buy a present for her son Samuel. The Nestene intend to use the Professor as their pawn, by manipulating her into assembling the tools they need for escape – and revenge. They intend to seize control of all plastic on Earth, destroying it and throwing civilisation in anarchy.

Under their standard operating protocols, the Nestene would create an Auton duplicate of the Professor, but they don't have enough power to do that. Necessity is the mother of invention for the Nestene as well as humans, though, so they developed another method of seizing control. The Nestene can shunt their minds into plastic bodies, but – with the right tools – they can also shunt a human mind into a plastic body, and then occupy the vacant human body. They can only maintain control for relatively short periods of time, and they need to implant a plastic control chip into the victim's body to do so.

When Qilong bought a plastic action figure for her son, she unwittingly invited the Nestene into her home. One night, the figure came to life and crept into the Professor's bedroom. It 'shot' her with a plastic chip. Since then, the Professor has had the strangest dreams. Every night, she dreams she is a toy in a toy shop, while at the same time the Nestene use her body and all-night access to the university's labs to prepare their plans. Soon, everything will be in place, and the Consciousness can emerge from its hiding place. Nothing will stop it – not even meddling time travellers!

### ⚙ THE PLAYERS' CHARACTERS

Several days *before* this adventure begins, the players' characters discovered that some alien force was active on Earth and centred on Hamilton's toy shop. They investigated, but the Nestene got to them first. The characters were all shot with the same mind-shunting plastic slugs as Professor Qilong. Their bodies are hidden in a storeroom at the university, while their minds got transferred into plastic vessels.



The mind-transfer technology damages short-term memory, so the characters have all forgotten the events of the last few days. The last thing they can remember, they were in their TARDIS (or equivalent). Now, they're toys.

Each of the characters has been transferred into the body of a toy. Pick the type of toy based on the personality of the character (or let the players pick). For example, the Doctor might have his mighty Gallifreyan consciousness dumped into a toy, becoming a mad-jack-in-a-box, while Amy becomes a plastic ballerina. Rory might yet again become a plastic Roman, only this time he's only six inches tall. Captain Jack might become a posable action man (and what will he do when he finds out he's no longer anatomically correct!!) The toy does not have to be humanoid, although most should be (Mickey might literally end up as a tin – or plastic – dog).



The characters can keep their usual attributes, skills and traits, but they are now scaled proportionately to the character's new size. If you've got Strength 6, that means you're a big tough toy who can overpower a smaller toy, but you're still going to lose a fist-fight with a toddler or a puppy. Assume that a normal-sized creature gets a +6 bonus to any rolls against a toy relating to Strength or Speed. For example, if a toy tries to wrestle a gun off a human, that's an opposed Strength + Fighting contest, and the big nasty human gets a +6 bonus to their roll.

Toys can attack normal-sized bad guys, but do half normal damage. On the bright side, it's easier for small toys to hide – toys get a +6 bonus to any roll related to hiding or sneaking.

Getting around obstacles scaled for humans is also going to be really tricky – to open a closed door, for example, you need to find a way to pull or turn the handle far above you, and then push the giant door open.

Most traits transfer to the characters' new forms. If you're Forgetful or a Boffin normally, you're now an absent-minded puppet with a knack for electronics. Mental traits (including Psychic and so on) also work, as the characters' whole mind has been swapped into the toy's body. The only traits that do not function are those tied directly to the character's original body, like Cyborg or Robot.

By a strange quirk of the psychic shunt, the toys speak with exactly the same voices as the characters' original bodies.

### NEW TRAIT: TOY (SPECIAL)

Toy is a special trait for this adventure. It works like the Cyborg trait, but also means the character is very, very small.

## 1. VALLEY OF THE DOLLS

Pick a player. Their character suddenly 'wakes up' as the psychic shunt activates. They've just been picked up by a four-year-old kid called Jamie – although from the character's perspective, Jamie's a 50 foot-tall giant monster. Jamie vigorously waves the unfortunate character back and forth in the air, shouting "I want! I want!" until his mother grabs the toy off him, throws it back on the shelf, and drags Jaime out of the toy shop. The door jingles behind them. Edgar Hamilton comes out from behind the counter and locks the door. He flips the little wooden sign from OPEN to CLOSED and goes back behind the counter. He opens the till to add up the day's sales. As he does so, he casts a nervous glance over at a pair of smiling dolls that sit on a shelf next to the door. The other players' characters awaken, so the group can discuss pressing issues like...

### WE'RE TOYS!?

Yep. Every one of the characters is now a plastic toy. The last thing any of them can recall is arriving in the TARDIS. An Ingenuity + Resolve test (Difficulty 12) lets the characters remember a few vague images. They'd detected an alien signal, very weak, emanating from somewhere in London. They'd investigated... somewhere with white corridors, somewhere with lots of computers. They remember something about small shadowy figures, like children running through the darkness... and now they're here. As toys. The characters don't have any equipment, gadgets or other possessions on them, other than whatever non-functional accessories their toy comes with.

If the characters can find a radio or other transmitter (and yes, a remote-control car will do), then a Boffin can use Jiggery-Pokery to turn it into a makeshift scanner. Spending a Story Point lets the characters pick up a control signal that's being received by each of the characters. They're being controlled from some distant source. Their real bodies must be out there somewhere. For more on this, see **Tracking the Signal**, pg. 115.

## EXPLORING THE SHOP

The only human here is Edgar Hamilton, who's currently finishing up the day's accounts. He hasn't spotted the characters yet. A successful Awareness + Subterfuge roll (Difficulty 12) suggests that he's very, very nervous. If the players walk up and talk to him, see **Edgar Hamilton** (pg. 111). If they want to sneak around without being seen, then that's a Coordination + Subterfuge roll (Difficulty 12). If they try to escape, see **Escaping the Toy Shop** (pg. 112).

Remember that the characters are just toys. Climbing up onto the counter is like scaling a mountain. Getting a chemistry kit down off a shelf probably takes all the characters working together.

There's one exit from the shop out onto the busy street outside, where Christmas shoppers bustle through the gloom. Inside the shop, there are two brightly painted doors. One leads to a storeroom at the back of the shop. The other door is behind the counter, and opens onto a narrow staircase that goes up to Hamilton's bedroom.

Mounted on the wall, directly above the entrance to the stairwell, is a security camera. The shop's crammed with toys of all sorts, from hand-crafted wooden toys to plastic action figures, from chemistry sets and jigsaws to toy guns and puppets. Christmas music plays endlessly from speakers near the ceiling.

## NOTABLE TOYS

Mention a few specific toys as the players look around:

- Near the door are two big sinister-looking plastic dolls, who seem to be looking at the characters. These are the largest dolls in the shop. One's a boy dressed in blue dungarees; the other is a girl in a floral-print dress. If the characters get close to the dolls, they spot that both dolls have big steak-knives strapped to their backs.
- On a shelf near where the characters woke up is a plastic robot – a blocky, 1970s-style robot with wind-up walking action.
- On another nearby shelf is a family of four plastic bears.



There are also lots of educational toys – construction kits, chemistry kits, electronic kits and tool sets, in case any of the characters decide to try building a Gadget.

## THE STOREROOM

The storeroom is locked. The key's in Hamilton's pocket, or the players can pick the lock with an Ingenuity + Subterfuge roll (Difficulty 12 – but to pick it, the characters need to work out a way to get up to the lock!). Once the door is unlocked, it can be pushed open with Strength + Athletics (Difficulty 12). Inside, it's crammed with boxed toys. Searching around, the characters find an oddly stained patch of floor near a water pipe. There's a crack in the pipe, as if something pushed its way out. (The Nestene Consciousness came through here.)

There's also a cardboard box full of empty bottles that once contained chemicals. Any character familiar with alien life who makes a successful Ingenuity + Medicine test (Difficulty 12) can work out that those chemicals could be used to treat an injured creature from a biosphere that is very, very different from anything that evolved on Earth. Something alien once lay here. A successful Ingenuity + Science test (Difficulty 18) works out the biology – the only creatures that match that particular mix of chemicals are the Nestene.

## HAMILTON'S FLAT

The small apartment upstairs is messy and lived in. There's a cramped, smelly bedroom, a living room crammed with books about toys and a kitchen that was last cleaned in the 1980s.

Examining the bedroom reveals several spots of dried blood on the floor; Hamilton was attacked by the dolls. There's also a brand-new cheap laptop computer in one corner. Hamilton doesn't know how to use computers. Checking it reveals that it was last used to run a series of Internet searches about chemical factories and universities within a 20-mile radius of the toy shop. Whoever did the searches zeroed in on someone called Professor Qilong.

Behind the television in the living room is a cabinet containing the video recorder for the shop's security camera. Searching through the footage lets the characters spot the moment when the Nestene Consciousness identified Lena Qilong; they see a well-dressed woman enter the shop with her young son. Her mobile phone rings, and she answers it while the child runs around looking at toys. There's no sound in the video, but any character who lip-reads (Awareness + Subterfuge, Difficulty 9) can work out that she's talking about synthetic materials and new forms of plastic. As she talks, one of the dolls behind her turns its head to watch her. After the phone call ends, her son Samuel runs up to her, excitedly waving a plastic action figure of an astronaut. She sighs and buys it for him, paying for it with a gift token.

## 2. THE TOYS COME TO LIFE

Once the characters have had a chance to look around the toy shop, many of the other toys come to life. The family of plastic bears stretch and yawn, and then climb down off their shelf. The robot whirs to life, clanking back and forth. Other toys animate too; balls quiver and bounce, plastic roundabouts whirl and sing, Rubik's cubes spin and solve themselves. The two big dolls by the door smile horribly, revealing rows of white plastic razor-sharp teeth, like the mouth of a shark.

Most of the toys aren't really alive, they're just animated by the Nestene Consciousness as it bleeds off excess psychic energy from its prisoners. Some of the toys, though, are just like the players' characters:

they're humans whose bodies have been stolen by the Nestene, and their minds shunted into plastic toys.

The four bears are the four night watchmen at the university, while the robot is Professor Qilong. The humans believe they are dreaming the same recurring dream, and cannot remember their daytime, human lives clearly. The bears spend their nights playing with building bricks, assembling strange mechanical sculptures. They don't know why they do it. They're willing to chat with the other toys, but they don't talk much. The robot, though, is much chattier.

## THE ROBOT GIRL

It may look like a clunky robot, but it speaks with the voice of an enthusiastic, middle-aged woman. The robot introduces herself as Lena. She's surprised to see the player characters; she's had this dream a dozen times before, but this is the first time the characters' toys have started moving on their own. Lena's convinced that she's dreaming, which is a fairly rational response to the whole experience. She puts it down to stress at work and home.

## PROFESSOR LENA QILONG

AWARENESS	3	PRESENCE	4
COORDINATION	3	RESOLVE	4
INGENUITY	5	STRENGTH	2

### SKILLS

Craft 4, Convince 2, Fighting 2, Knowledge 2, Science 4 (Chemistry 6), Subterfuge 1, Technology 2.

### TRAITS

**Biochemical Genius:** The professor can whip up all sorts of exotic materials in the lab.

**Toy:** She's a plastic robot. She gets a +6 bonus when hiding, but big bad guys have a +6 bonus to any roll to overpower her.

**Obligation (Minor):** She's got to take care of her son, Samuel.

**TECH LEVEL:** 5    **STORY POINTS:** 3

Unlike the bears, Lena remembers enough of her waking life to answer the characters' questions. She's a researcher at the local university. A few weeks ago, she received a gift token for the toy shop. She doesn't

know who sent it – the card was blank. She assumed it was a present from an absent-minded friend. She visited this toy shop with her son, Samuel, and ever since then she keeps dreaming about it.

She warns the characters that they can't leave the toy shop – the dolls won't let them.

Lena believes she's dreaming, but the characters can convince her of the truth in various ways. The best route is probably to get a message to her while she's awake. During the daytime, she dimly remembers her experiences as a toy robot.

Once the characters convince Lena that this isn't a dream, her first priority is to protect her son Samuel. When they visited the toy shop a month ago, he made her buy a small plastic astronaut toy because he said it talked to him. Now, he won't go anywhere without the astronaut. He even takes it to bed with him. If this isn't a dream, and some toys are really coming to life... then Samuel could be in terrible danger. What if the astronaut takes her son hostage? She begs the characters to help her rescue her son from the toy astronaut: see **Saving Samuel**, pg. 114.

If the characters question Lena about herself, she mentions that she is a researcher and lecturer in materials science at the university, specialising in plastics.

After a few hours, both the robot and the plastic bears suddenly stop moving, as Professor Qilong and the university watchmen wake up in their normal bodies. The toys reanimate again each night, as the Nestene steal their bodies again and shunt their minds back into the plastic toys.

## THE DOLLS

The two big sinister dolls near the door are the jailers appointed by the Nestene Consciousness. Their role is to keep the animated toys from escaping. The dolls don't move unless a doll tries to escape the shop. The characters can go into the storeroom without the dolls responding. They can go upstairs to talk to Hamilton, but one of the dolls follows them if they do so. However, if they try escaping, see **Escaping the Toy Shop**, pg. 112.

The two dolls are mini-Autons. They are inhumanly strong for their size, and have small guns in their arms. They won't kill the toys – doing so would disrupt the psychic shunt and jeopardise the Nestene's plans – but they can break them if they have to.



## THE DOLLS

AWARENESS	3	PRESENCE	2
COORDINATION	4	RESOLVE	5
INGENUITY	2	STRENGTH	5

### SKILLS

Athletics 4, Fighting 3, Subterfuge 3, Survival 4.

### TRAITS

Toy

**Natural Weapon – Blaster:** (4/L/L)

**Networked (Minor):** Controlled by the Nestene Consciousness. It has no independent thought.

**Weakness (Major):** If the controlling signal from the Nestene Consciousness is blocked or severed, the Football becomes useless plastic and is immobilised.

**EQUIPMENT:** Steak Knife (Strength +1 damage in combat, and they can do full damage to normal-size enemies).

**TECH LEVEL:** 6 **STORY POINTS:** 5

## 3. EDGAR HAMILTON

Edgar Hamilton is a man trapped in a very strange hell. He's a prisoner of his own toys. Three months ago, he woke up to find two plastic dolls standing at the end of his bed. He assumed he was dreaming, or that they were troublemaking children playing a prank on him. Then one of the dolls leapt on him, clawing at his face and holding him down. The other straddled his chest and pointed its pink plastic fist at him. The fist swung down, revealing the barrel of a gun.

"Serve us!" demanded the doll. "Serve us or die."

The dolls brought him downstairs to his own shop, and forced him into the storeroom. There, lying on the floor, was something alien, a writhing bubbling lump of jellied tentacles. The dolls forced him to take care of the blob. They sent him out to buy chemicals to heal the blob. It was scarred by exposure to something called "anti-plastic."

Two weeks ago, the blob vanished. He doesn't know what happened to it. All he knows is that the toys watch him everywhere he goes, and won't let him leave.

### TALKING TO EDGAR

Hamilton knows the toys come to life, but the dolls told him not to talk to any of the other toys. If he tries, they'll hurt him again. Therefore, Hamilton avoids all contact with the toys; he's terrified of the dolls. To talk to him, the characters must distract the dolls or keep them away long enough to have a conversation.

To convince Edgar to help, the characters need to make a Presence + Convince test at Difficulty 12; otherwise, he's too scared of the dolls to do anything. Once persuaded to help (or once the dolls are defeated), Edgar can tell the characters the following:

- The dolls made him sent a gift token for the shop to an address nearby. He doesn't know why.
- He suspects the strange blob thing in the storeroom is somehow in control of the toys. They seemed to serve it, or worship it.
- He thinks the toys are only keeping alive because they find his shop useful somehow.
- Once, back when this all started, he tried escaping. The doll tracked him down and shot something at him. It struck him in the back of the neck. Edgar woke up in the body of a rubber duck down in the shop. The dolls told him that if he tried to escape again, they'd put him back in the duck.

There's a small scar on the back of Edgar's neck. If examined with Medicine, the character finds a tiny plastic chip embedded in the skin. Ingenuity + Science or Medicine (Difficulty 12) lets the character work out that the chip must somehow integrate into the victim's nervous system to provide a psychic shunt. Coordination + Medicine (Difficulty 12) can remove the chip. If persuaded, then Edgar can help the characters escape the shop, but he won't do anything that involves facing the dolls. He can drop them out of the window, or distract the dolls, or just sell them to a customer. If the characters can deal with the dolls,

then Hamilton is more able to help them: he can carry them through the streets.

## EDGAR HAMILTON

AWARENESS	3	PRESENCE	2
COORDINATION	3	RESOLVE	2
INGENUITY	2	STRENGTH	4

### SKILLS

Craft 3, Convince 1, Knowledge 3, Technology 1.

### TRAITS

**Unadventurous:** He doesn't like to leave his shop.

**TECH LEVEL:** 5    **STORY POINTS:** 2

## 4. ESCAPING THE TOY SHOP

Next step – getting out of the toy shop. It's not going to be easy. There are three obstacles to plastic freedom. In order, these are:

**Getting out of the shop:** There are three exits from the toy shop – the front door, and the two upstairs windows. Opening the front door is tricky for a six-inch-tall toy, as just turning the handle requires a Difficulty 12 Strength + Athletics test. The windows are even harder to open, but are left ajar during the day. The door is locked at night. The characters can try dodging out of the shop when a customer opens the door during the day, but that requires a successful Coordination + Subterfuge test (Difficulty 9). If a character fails, then the customer spots the moving toy, and either puts the toy back on a shelf, assumes it's a mouse and screams, or just accidentally kicks it back inside the shop.

**The dolls:** The two dolls watch the door. If any toy tries to escape out the door, they'll attack. A doll also follows the characters if they go upstairs to Hamilton's flat. It's impossible to open the door with the dolls watching.

**The footballs:** If a toy makes it out of the shop, the Nestene Consciousness dispatches a white plastic football to bring the errant prisoner back to the gaudy cage. The white football ripples and bounces its way out of the shop and rolls after the toys. If it catches up, it envelopes its target and rolls back to the shop, where it then vomits them up in a flood of temporarily liquid plastic.

## WHITE PLASTIC FOOTBALL

AWARENESS	2	PRESENCE	1
COORDINATION	4	RESOLVE	2
INGENUITY	1	STRENGTH	3

### SKILLS

Athletics 3, Fighting 3, Subterfuge 2.

### TRAITS

**Toy:** It's a football.

**Capture:** If a football wins a Fighting contest, it can capture a toy instead of dealing damage. The toy is sucked into the football and trapped there until the football is destroyed.

**Networked (Minor):** Controlled by the Nestene Consciousness. It has no independent thought.

**Weakness (Major):** If the controlling signal from the Nestene Consciousness is blocked or severed, the Football becomes useless plastic and is immobilised.

**TECH LEVEL:** 6    **STORY POINTS:** 3

## TOYS ON THE STREETS

The streets of London are a dangerous place to be when you're only a few inches tall. Pedestrians step on you, cars won't stop for you. Walking from one end of the street to another is the equivalent of a ten-mile hike. You can't even call a cab.

Fortunately, most people don't pay attention to their surroundings. If the characters stick to the corners and the alleyways, they can make their way across London without being spotted by any people. Dogs, rats and other animals are another issue; a shiny toy might be grabbed by a passing magpie, a dog might mistake a character for a chew toy, and defeating a pigeon in single combat is an impressive feat for a toy.

Ask the players how they intend to travel through the streets as toys. Remember to describe the holiday crowds; it's the middle of December, so everyone's out shopping.

## GETTING BOUGHT

Getting bought by a customer is a great way to dodge both the dolls and the dangers of the streets of London. If the characters can get a message to Professor Qilong, then she can call in and buy the characters. Alternatively, they can attract the

attention of a child (like Jamie from pg. 108) and get bought by some random customer. From there, they just need to escape the customer's house *and* the white plastic balls before heading to Professor Qilong's house (see **Saving Samuel**, pg. 114), finding out where the Nestene is (see **Tracking the Signal**, pg. 115) or heading to the university (see **The March of the Chairs**, pg. 116).

If the players wait to get bought, they hear two shop assistants from a nearby clothes shop complaining that someone stole several clothes dummies during the night.

## BREAKING TOYS

"Hang on", your players might say, if they're both clever and a bit ghastly, "if the Nestene stuck us into toys so they could control our real bodies, what happens if the toy is destroyed? Shouldn't my mind jump back into my real body?"

If a character's toy body is destroyed, they do indeed wake up in their real body – for a few seconds. The character finds themselves lying on a cold floor in an unfamiliar room; it looks like a storeroom for a university, judging by the piles of old science journals, broken chairs and outdated pieces of equipment. The bodies of the other characters are nearby. The back of their neck stings with pain.

There's a small window in the door. Outside, the character can see a large room – possibly a disused cellar – containing a machine that... well, it uses human-built components, but that's definitely not Earth science. Waves of blue energy crackle and pulse from the machine's transmitter dish. Any character with experience of such matters (or a high Science skill) can recognise it as an Auton transmitter. It's still unfinished. A successful Ingenuity + Science roll (Difficulty 9) lets a character guess at its purpose – it's an amplifier. Once it's ready, the Nestene will be able to take over all the plastic on Earth. There's something unusual about the device, but the character doesn't have time to work out what it is. A moment later, the chip in the character's neck activates. It is agonisingly painful – and then the character wakes up in the body of a different, intact toy back in Hamilton's toy shop. There's no escape from the Nestene as long as the characters have those chips in their necks.

## ⚙️ 5. SAVING SAMUEL

Samuel Qilong is a nervous eight year-old boy. His parents divorced a year ago, and while he doesn't understand why, he feels like it's his fault. His mother does her best, but she's a university professor and researcher at the height of her career, and she doesn't have as much time for her son as either of them want. He doesn't have any friends at school.



A month ago, an astronaut talked to him. It was a plastic toy, but it stood up and whispered to him, saying that it was his special friend and that he should tell his mother to buy it. He did so, and now the astronaut goes everywhere with him. Sometimes, it talks to him, telling him that he has a special destiny and that soon he will never be alone again.

Embedded in Samuel's neck is a very special chip. It's very hard to find – while all the other chips were injected by firing them from a distance, this chip was inserted while Samuel slept. The scar is almost invisible (Awareness + Medicine, Difficulty 18 to find).

### SAMUEL'S CHIP

Samuel's chip isn't like the psychic shunt chips implanted in the characters' necks. The Nestene intend to use him as part of their scheme to destroy humanity. All the other chips are clearly designed to do a single-channel shunt – they push a mind from one body to another. His chip is capable of shunting one mind into *billions* of bodies. No one could undergo such a process without going completely insane – even the Nestene Consciousness can only control a limited number of Auton forms.

## THE QILONG HOUSE

The Qilongs live in a nice semi-detached house in a quiet street a short distance from the university. Samuel's room is on the top floor. His mother's study, with its advanced computers, chemical samples, 3D printers and other gadgets, is on the floor below and is kept locked. There is a convenient catflap in the front door, so the family pet – a tabby called Buckminster – can get in and out. Buckminster likes to bat and claw at things that move and squeak. Characters generally like to move, and squeak when a large cat swipes at them. Right now, Buckminster's lurking under the Christmas tree.

### BUCKMINSTER

<b>AWARENESS</b>	4	<b>PRESENCE</b>	2
<b>COORDINATION</b>	5	<b>RESOLVE</b>	1
<b>INGENUITY</b>	1	<b>STRENGTH</b>	1

#### SKILLS

Athletics 3, Fighting 1, Survival 2.

#### TRAITS

**Cat:** Buckminster's not a toy, but he's about the same size. Treat him as a toy for the purposes of fighting.

**STORY POINTS:** 2

Once the characters get past the cat, they can explore the rest of the house. If it's during the day, then Professor Qilong is likely to be at work and Samuel at school. If they arrive at night, then Qilong is missing again; from 1am to 6am, her mind inhabits the toy robot while the Nestene control her body and use it to build the transmitter device in the university.

## RESCUING SAMUEL

To save Samuel from the Nestene, the players need to deal with his toy astronaut. He keeps the toy with him at all times. The toy won't hurt Samuel, but it will happily shoot at the characters. This mini-Auton has a nasty hand-gun that can shoot either mind-control chips or laser blasts. While Samuel is devoted to the toy and won't willingly give it up, he's too scared and confused to get in the way of the characters if they act quickly.

Examining the remains of the toy with an Ingenuity + Technology roll (Difficulty 9) lets the characters

analyse its built-in weapon. The weapon resembles a standard Auton gun, but the astronaut also has six mind-control chips in its backpack. These chips – the same as those embedded in the characters' necks – give off a strong radio signal that can be used to find the Nestene lair (see **Tracking the Signal**, pg. 115).

### THE ASTRONAUT

AWARENESS	3	PRESENCE	2
COORDINATION	3	RESOLVE	4
INGENUITY	1	STRENGTH	3

**SKILLS**  
Fighting 2, Marksman 3.

**TRAITS**  
**Natural Weapon – Hand Blaster:** The Astronaut's gun does 2/5/7 damage on a successful hit.  
**Networked (Minor):** Controlled by the Nestene Consciousness. It has no independent thought.  
**Toy:** It's a plastic astronaut.  
**Weakness (Major):** If the controlling signal from the Nestene Consciousness is blocked or severed, the Football becomes useless plastic and is immobilised.

**TECH LEVEL:** 6    **STORY POINTS:** 3

RESCUING LENA

Professor Qilong is unwittingly leading a double life. During the day, she goes about her normal routine – lectures, research, taking care of her son, socialising – but at night, her mind is shunted into a plastic robot while her body rises and goes back to the university to continue work on the Nestene machine. If the characters meet her during the day, she recognises them as figures from her recurring dreams. If they meet her at night, she ignores them.

Removing the chip from Lena's neck (Co-ordination + Medicine, Difficulty 9) frees her from Nestene control.

6. TRACKING THE SIGNAL

The next step is to find the characters' own bodies. There are several possible approaches to do so.

GADGET TIME

Jiggery-Pokery (Ingenuity + Technology, Difficulty 12), plus a Story Point, plus a suitable source of electronic

bits (like Professor Qilong's study, or an electronics shop) lets the characters build a tracker that can detect the source of the Auton control signals. The signals are coming from somewhere in the nearby university where the Professor teaches.

The signals are growing more powerful. There are two different types. One is like a normal Auton control signal, but more dense, more complicated; those must be the signals connecting the player characters to their toy avatars. The other signals are less complicated and unfocused, but much more powerful; they suggest the Nestene are trying to control something on a large scale without much finesse.

ASKING SAMUEL

Lena doesn't know where she goes at night, but her son Samuel does. When she first left the house at night, he woke up and asked his mother where she was going. The Nestene-controlled Lena ignored him, and the astronaut told him that she didn't love him. He watched her walk up the road towards the university. Appalled by this revelation, Lena comforts her son. She volunteers to bring the characters to the university so they can deal with whatever monster did this to her.

FINDING THE TARDIS

If the characters arrived by TARDIS or a similar time machine, then their vehicle is parked near the university. They don't remember exactly what happened after they left their time machine, but its sensors are locked onto the Auton signals coming from within the university.



## 7. THE MARCH OF THE CHAIRS

The university is mostly empty right now; all the students have gone home for the holidays. The signals emanate from the old science building on the far side of the campus. The rambling building dates back to the 1950s, and some sections are disused due to their poor condition. The Nestene laboratory is in one of these. To get to it, the characters need to make their way into the science building, go down a long corridor, then take an elevator up to the top floor, and then finally go down an even longer winding corridor to the old 'C' block.



If they enter during the day, then there are a few cleaning staff to dodge (unless Lena Qilong is with them, in which case she can carry the characters in). At night, there *should* be four night watchmen here, but they're off being plastic bears.

Between the characters and the laboratory, though, is a very unexpected obstacle.

### THE UNIVERSITY CORRIDORS

An empty university smells of gym socks, spilled chemicals and exam stress. The walls are covered with posters advertising end-of-term parties. All the lecture theatres are empty, all the desks are lined up in rows for exams and the lockers stand open and abandoned. Most of the staff are gone too, with only a few lonely graduate students working on their experiments.

There are also hundreds of plastic chairs. You know the ones: a plastic seat with four metal legs, seemingly designed for a lizard species with a very differently shaped spine. Lean too far back on it, and the legs will bend and break. They're stacked in hallways, tucked into desks, or just left toppled on the floor. *Plastic* chairs.

As the characters approach the lab, they hear a strange clattering, clicking noise. It sounds almost like an insect. A giant insect. *Lots* of giant insects.

Something scrapes against a nearby door, clumsily pawing at the handle. Finally, it gets a grip on it. The handle turns, the door opens... and a chair walks into the corridor. The Nestene cannot control the metal legs, but they can warp and control the plastic body enough to move the legs. The chairs move stiffly, like bad stop-motion animation. They cannot attack very effectively on their own, but there are hundreds of chairs in the building.

The chairs aren't very dangerous to the toys, but can imprison Professor Qilong. The chairs try to block access to the laboratory at the end of the corridor, or to trap the characters so that the Nestene's human servants can capture them.

### KILLER CHAIRS

AWARENESS	1	PRESENCE	1
COORDINATION	1	RESOLVE	3
INGENUITY	1	STRENGTH	4

#### SKILLS

Fighting 1.

#### TRAITS

##### Armour (3)

**Impede:** If a chair makes a successful Fighting attack, it can trip or entangle an enemy, reducing that enemy's Movement by 1. Each chair can only impede one enemy, but groups of chairs can work together to attack a single target.

**Networked (Minor):** Controlled by the Nestene Consciousness. It has no independent thought.

**Slow:** Chairs aren't very fast.

**Weakness (Major):** If the controlling signal from the Nestene Consciousness is blocked or severed, the Football becomes useless plastic and is immobilised.

**STORY POINTS:** 0

## 8. LAIR OF THE NESTENE

The characters burst into the disused laboratory. Right in front of them is the huge Nestene transmitter, crackling with energy. Strangely, there's a metal seat right in front of the machine. Between the characters and the transmitter stand four security guards;

human, but staring with the blank expressions of Auton robots. There are also several plastic shop dummies standing against one wall. Off to one side, there's a door leading to a storeroom, and through a grimy glass panel in the door, the characters can see their unconscious original bodies.



If the characters just charge in, move onto **Toy Soldiers**. If they sneak in, they have to make Coordination + Subterfuge tests (Difficulty 12) to sneak past the security guards.

## SABOTAGE

As long as they're hidden from the Nestene, the toys can get up to all sorts of trouble. However, they've got to be careful – if they're spotted, skip onto **Toy Soldiers**. When a player tries any of the options listed below, they have to make a Coordination + Subterfuge test. The difficulty for the first test starts at 9, then increases by +3 for each test after that. Remember that the toys have a +6 bonus to sneaking around, but full-size humans don't.

- **Recovering their bodies:** The characters' real bodies are in a storeroom on one side of the laboratory. Removing a chip (with Medicine) breaks the psychic shunt, and the character instantly wakes up in his normal body. There's no need to roll Medicine for each chip, but do roll Subterfuge.
- **Examining the Machine:** With a successful Ingenuity + Science test (Difficulty 12), a character can work out what the gadget's designed to do. It's clearly a Nestene transmitter. There are two sections. One is a psychic relay, designed to shunt a human consciousness from one body to another. The other is an immensely powerful transmitter. The characters can make Ingenuity

+ Technology tests (Difficulty 15) to disable the shunt (thus freeing the characters) or to shut down the transmitter (delaying the Nestene's plan). Alternatively, the characters can redirect their psychic shunts to another nearby plastic object, like the shop dummies.

- **Freeing the Guards:** If the characters climb up the unmoving guards, they can remove the control chips from their necks with Medicine, freeing them.

## TOY SOLDIERS

The Nestene Consciousness itself is helpless, but it's got the four night watchmen guards to protect it. If the characters somehow deal with them, then the Nestene switches to its backup bodyguards: the bodies of the players' characters! The characters' Auton-controlled bodies stumble out of the storeroom to protect the transmitter.

If the characters are captured, move onto **Plastic Doomsday**. If the characters somehow deal with the guards (talking doesn't help), move onto **Plastic Doomsday** too, but the Nestene's no longer in a position of strength.

## PLASTIC DOOMSDAY

From the ceiling, something descends. It looks like a glob of plastic, a big plastic ball hanging from a liquid plastic thread. As the glob approaches, it becomes transparent, and inside the characters see a glowing fiery chaos: the Nestene Consciousness!

The Nestene recognise the characters immediately – remember, this isn't the first time they've met (even if the players don't necessarily remember it). This fragment of the Consciousness was terribly scarred and damaged by its confrontation with the Ninth Doctor, so it's insane and obsessed with destroying humanity. It jumps right into its monologue, speaking through its four human slaves.

"You are too late! The time of your destruction is at hand! This is the age of oil and plastic... your entire civilisation is built on matter that we control!"

The Nestene explain that they intend to seize control of all plastic on Earth simultaneously. Think of how much plastic there is in modern life. Imagine what will happen when every single piece of plastic transforms simultaneously. Every machine fails. Every power cable and fuel pipe breaks. Civilisation collapses in an instant.

An Ingenuity + Science or Technology test (Difficulty 9) points out the flaw in this plan: if the Nestene Consciousness could safely take control of all the plastic on Earth, then it would have done so already (or during a previous invasion attempt). Only the full Nestene Consciousness could command all the plastic on a planet – this part of the Consciousness could never survive the attempt. The Nestene agree. “It will not be our consciousness that destroys you. It will be one of your own!”

The door opens. Samuel Qilong enters the room. The Nestene plan to use the boy to active their transmitter. “The child’s mind will be our weapon. He will inhabit the world – and destroy it! Now!”

If the characters already found and removed Samuel’s chip, then he’s not here because the Nestene control him – he just followed his mother. The Nestene screams with fury as it realises that its plan has already been foiled. The characters can use the distraction to sabotage the transmitter, destroying the psychic shunt and returning them to their bodies.

If the characters haven’t removed Samuel’s chip, then the boy stumbles towards the transmitter. An eerie red light shines out of the back of his neck, illuminating his skull. He walks to the seat in front of the machine and sits down. Energy streams from the boy into the machine. The control signal reaches out into the world. The nearby store dummies suddenly *melt*, like a toy put in a microwave. Liquid plastic drips down from light fittings. The radios on the guards’ belts dissolve into goo.

The characters have a chance to save the day. There are several ways to accomplish this:

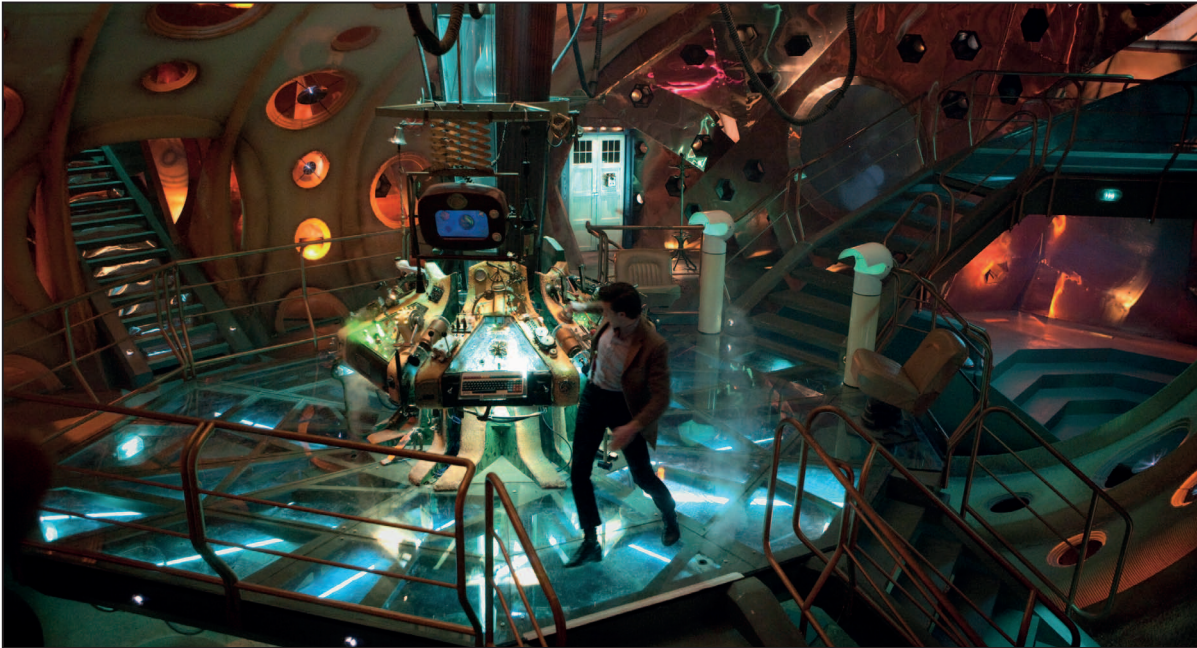
- **Wriggling Free:** If a toy can escape its captor (remember that big creatures get a +6 bonus to Strength contests with toys), then it could do a quick bit of sabotage.
- **Appealing to Samuel:** Right now, Samuel’s connected to a very powerful Auton transmitter. If the characters can break through to him (maybe by reminding him that his mother is in danger), then he can overload the transmitter or deactivate the psychic shunt, returning the characters to their bodies.
- **Taking Samuel’s Place:** The character’s chips are similar to the one in Samuel; if they push him off the chair, they can take his place. However, as their chips are less powerful, they’ll only inhabit a single piece of plastic – they can seize control of an Auton body, or direct the transmitter at the Nestene Consciousness, or free Professor Qilong from the chairs.

### AFTERMATH

The fragment of the Nestene Consciousness boils away: it was mortally wounded anyway, and this last-ditch plan for revenge used up the last of its energy. With the destruction of the transmitter, the characters are instantly returned to their original bodies. If Professor Qilong survives, she takes Samuel to Hamilton’s toy shop a few weeks later to say goodbye. While there, she buys a plastic robot that seems oddly familiar to her...



## THE GRIP OF THE KRAKEN



*'Below the thunders of the upper deep;  
Far, far beneath in the abysmal sea,  
His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep  
The Kraken sleepeth.'*

– Alfred, Lord Tennyson

The characters encounter a monster threading itself through the space-lanes, capturing star ships and dragging them towards their doom. Having landed aboard the Earth Colony Ship Yatsoshiro, trapped in the grip of this interstellar Kraken, the characters must save an entire space-borne civilisation from a grisly fate.

### ⚙️ ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The TARDIS is ailing, struck by a mystery fault and forced to materialize. Taking refuge from the harmful energies being released inside the TARDIS, the characters discover that they are on board the *Yatsoshiro*, an Earth vessel from the distant future carrying thousands of colonists. It is drifting towards a vast column of debris, the wreckage of star ships captured and broken apart through the centuries. The ship has only a few hours before it impacts this planet-sized stream of wreckage.

The characters are not the only ones to have boarded the ship. Pirates, caught by the creature, their vessel's propulsion systems offline, made their way to the

colony ship and boarded the Yatsoshiro looking for a way to escape the debris column's gravitational pull. Faulkner, one of the ship's engineers, has gone missing. Sent to investigate the problem with the failed engines, he has been possessed by the alien slime, spawn of the Kraken, working its way through the ship. And to add to the mix, a young journalist and her robot assistant – stowaways – are there to write a story from the front line.

As the threat becomes apparent the characters confront the amoeboid monsters that have infected the ship. But this is only the start. A giant colony of these life forms is approaching, intent on consuming the ship's passengers and crew.

### ⚙️ THE KRAKEN

Nobody knows how the Slime first developed or when, but one day, a starship able to cross entire galaxies suddenly stopped, and then another, and another still; all in the same region, all without hope of rescue, and all down to the Slime. As the millennia went by thousands of vessels and countless lives were lost and yet nobody seemed to notice; except the accountants, and they wrote off the losses as a tax break.

Before long, a river of dead starships snaked through the infinite cold of space, held together by the gravity generated by their own mass. Recently, smaller

ships have become ensnared and resourceful crews have turned privateer, tracking down precious working power cells, looting what they can from the drifting ruins.

The stranded ships are the handiwork of a vast colony of self-replicating molecular robots, the microscopic engineering and medical tools from hundreds of civilisations that have shared their blueprints. They have optimised their compatibility over the millennia resulting in a new non-organic species; a type of Gelatinous Locally Organised Pluriform.

This soup of autonomous parts acts like an Earth slime mould: countless individuals acting as a single organism. This mould spread out from a central point in space in fine tendrils and filaments; the Kraken of the old legends of the sea written large against the stars. As starships sped through space, they picked up the microscopic infection, which corrupted each ship's systems and steered it back to the colony, so that the colony could feed.

The Earth Colony Ship *Yatsushiro* is the latest ship to have become ensnared, becalmed and drifting helplessly towards the debris column. By the time the characters and their TARDIS come crashing into the story, the *Yatsushiro* has already been invaded by both the Kraken Slime and a crew of pirates looking for fresh supplies. The ship's systems are steadily failing one-by-one; the result of the Slime feeding off a crewmember's engineering knowledge.

### SHARING THE STORY

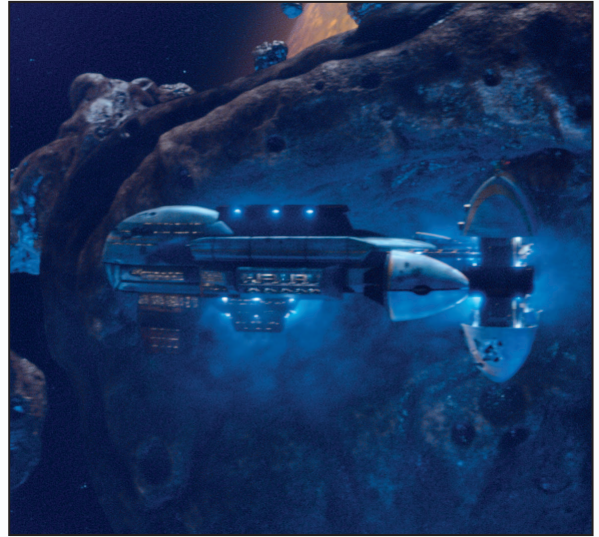
In any roleplaying game it is important that everyone gets a chance for their character to shine. To help with that, throughout this story, whenever a situation calls for a check in which any character has a chance for success, such as an Awareness check to notice a clue or an Ingenuity check to find the right path, have the players roll in order from the highest attribute to the lowest.

Stop when you reach a success. On the next similar roll, start with the character that didn't get to roll last time – give them the chance to spot the clue or find the path.

### THE YATSUSHIRO

The *Yatsushiro* is an Earth Colony Ship. These sub-light-speed vessels are built by their crews during their

long voyage as they explore the galaxy, eventually finding new worlds for their passengers and crew to colonise. Construction never stops; new towers are built to house a growing population and new solar collection domes housing verdant forests are constructed to ensure that the population has sufficient food.



Raw materials are mined from asteroids as they are encountered, or goods are traded, brought to the ship by the faster-than-light vessels that speed through the universe. Its vast agricultural pods, solar energy converters, and onboard industries act as resupply points for these faster vessels, oases of life in the never-ending night. The *Yatsushiro* will one day find a planet and put down to start a brand-new human civilisation, but until then generations of humans will live and die aboard the *Yatsushiro*.

*Starship UK*, which fled Earth in the 29th century to escape the solar flares and was later encountered by the Doctor and Amy Pond, is a form of colony ship, though obviously powered by the last of the great space whales instead of the enormous ion engines usually employed.

The *Yatsushiro* is Technology Level 6. The outer hull provides an Armour protection of 30 and any single instance of damage over 30 to a section of the outer hull causes a pressure leak, which the auto-repair systems attempt to fix. The internal walls provide an Armour Protection of 15 and doors provide an Armour Protection of 10.

### CHARACTERS

All the characters you need for this story can be found in this section.

## BUURMAN PRIVATEER

AWARENESS	3	PRESENCE	1
COORDINATION	4	RESOLVE	2
INGENUITY	2	STRENGTH	6

### SKILLS

Athletics 1, Fighting 4 (6 Buurman Blaster), Knowledge 1, Marksman 5 (Buurman Blaster 7), Subterfuge 3, Survival 3, Technology 3, Transport 3 (Starships 5).

### TRAITS

**Alien:** The pirates are Buurmen.

**Alien Appearance (Major):** Orange-skinned with heavy and pronounced brows.

**Outcast:** Wanted for piracy and other crimes across half the galaxy.

**Selfish:** Each of the pirates will save their own skin before thinking of their shipmates.

**Tough:** After a life of piracy, the privateers are tough and can reduce damage taken by 2.

**Unlucky:** Led into a life of piracy, stuck with Trant in charge, marooned in a deep space debris trail, and now likely to be possessed by an alien slime... Yes, these guys are unlucky. Any time a roll turns up two sixes, they roll again and keep that result (including a second roll of two sixes).

**EQUIPMENT:** Buurman Blaster (3/6/9).

**TECH LEVEL:** 7 **STORY POINTS:** 1

## THE BUURMAN BLASTER

This heavy gun, requiring a Strength of 6 to use one-handed, projects charges of pure kinetic energy. Being hit by one is like falling six metres, or around 20 feet. There is no heat, radiation or laser damage associated with a Buurman Blaster, so it's good for knocking in doors. If used in hand-to-hand combat, it counts as a heavy weapon requiring two hands to use, so it adds +2 to damage.

## THE YATSOSHIRO CREW

The *Yatsoshiro* is a civilian vessel and so the crew does not have easy access to weapons.

- **Captain Ryan:** Tall, grey-haired, and with a prodigious moustache, Captain Ryan takes the

safety of his ship and its thousands of colonists very seriously.

- **Engineer Romer:** Against the odds, Romer usually keeps the ion drives working, but he had to shut the starboard engine down to prevent the ship tearing itself apart. Something is preventing them from being restarted. Balding and with a uniform always two steps away from standard issue, he's a distinctive man.
- **Chief Medical Officer Shirley:** Logical, practical, and gifted with human understanding, his current concern is that the power reserves don't fail before Romer can restart the engines. If they do, the colony will be without sufficient energy, resulting in massive loss of life.

## YATSOSHIRO CREWMEMBER

AWARENESS	3	PRESENCE	3
COORDINATION	3	RESOLVE	3
INGENUITY	3	STRENGTH	3

You can use these statistics for all of the *Yatsoshiro* crew, just swap some of the skill levels around to suit the speciality.

### SKILLS

Athletics 1, Fighting 2, Knowledge 2, Marksman 1, Medicine 2, Science 2, Survival 2, Technology 3 (Starship systems 5), Transport 3 (Yatsoshiro 5).

### TRAITS

**Brave:** In the face of a threat to the *Yatsoshiro*, the crew are resolute and gain a +2 bonus to Resolve rolls when they need to show courage.

**Sense of Direction:** The action takes place aboard the *Yatsoshiro*, which is handy for the crew as they know their way around. They gain a +2 bonus when navigating inside the ship.

**Technically Adept:** The crew live and work with the *Yatsoshiro's* systems and so they gain a +2 bonus to Technology rolls to repair broken equipment or use any of the ship's devices and gadgets.

**EQUIPMENT:** A communicator with the Transmit Gadget Trait and the Restriction (Communication only) Bad Gadget Trait. It contains 1 Story Point.

**TECH LEVEL:** 7 **STORY POINTS:** 1

## TRANT, THE PIRATE CAPTAIN

AWARENESS	2	PRESENCE	2
COORDINATION	4	RESOLVE	3
INGENUITY	3	STRENGTH	6

### SKILLS

Athletics 1, Convince 2, Fighting 4, Knowledge 1, Marksman 4, Subterfuge 3, Survival 3, Technology 3, Transport 3.

### TRAITS

**Alien:** Trant is in fact a Buurman.

**Alien Appearance (Major):** Trant's skin is bright red, as befits an alpha Buurmale, with a brow heavier than that of a human. His hair is long, dark and naturally curly.

**Brave:** You don't get to be alpha Buurmale without facing down a few challengers. Trant receives a +2 bonus to any Resolve rolls to direct challenges or when he needs to show leadership in frightening situations.

### Experienced

**Outcast:** Trant is a pirate wanted by the authorities on his home planet of Buur, several systems surrounding it, and by the Judoon.

**Quick Reflexes:** For a large man, Trant knows how to move.

**Selfish:** Of course his crew get their share of the loot, just as soon as Trant has taken what he wants.

**EQUIPMENT:** Buurman Blaster (3/6/9).

**TECH LEVEL:** 7    **STORY POINTS:** 4

She eventually caught up with the deep-space colony cruiser *Yatsushiro* and stowed away to observe the goings on. When the ship was boarded by pirates, Fliss took to the escape pod to observe from safety.

## FLISS

AWARENESS	4	PRESENCE	3
COORDINATION	2	RESOLVE	4
INGENUITY	3	STRENGTH	2

### SKILLS

Athletics 1, Convince 3, Knowledge 3, Science 1, Subterfuge 3 (Sneaking 5), Survival 2, Technology 2, Transport 3 (Spaceships 5).

### TRAITS

**Face in the Crowd:** Fliss gets a +2 bonus to Subterfuge rolls when sneaking about and trying to blend in.

**Keen Senses (Hearing):** 20/20 hearing, or is that eyesight? Whatever. Fliss gets a +2 bonus to Awareness rolls when trying to hear something.

**Run for your Life!** It's amazing what being chased by monsters can do for your sprinting. Fliss gets a +1 bonus to her Speed when being pursued.

**Sense of Direction:** As a junior reporter it's important to know where you are at all times and Fliss gets a +2 bonus to Awareness and Ingenuity rolls to work out where she is and how to get to where she wants to be.

**TECH LEVEL:** 7    **STORY POINTS:** 12

## FLISS

Fliss is a young journalist just shy of her 20th birthday. Having heard of ships going missing in this particular region of space, Fliss set out with her robot sidekick Watson to investigate.



## WATSON THE ROBOT

Fliss' best friend is her android, Watson, and she's spent far more of Daddy's money on accessories than is probably warranted when she could have just gone for an upgrade.

Watson is one of the Mark-3 *home-entertainment android-playmate* robots, designed to entertain with music, games, video, conversation and company. He used to belong to Fliss's father but had his original memory banks replaced when he was given to Fliss. He's been with her for all her life and he's unswervingly loyal. While he does worry about her safety, he admires her tenacity and while he sometimes persuades her to discretion, he knows she'll never give up on a job once she starts.

## WATSON THE ROBOT

AWARENESS	4	PRESENCE	2
COORDINATION	2	RESOLVE	3
INGENUITY	5	STRENGTH	2

### SKILLS

Knowledge 4, Medicine 1, Science 4, Subterfuge 1, Survival 1, Technology 5 (Gadgetry 7), Transport 1.

### TRAITS

**Boffin:** Handy with a wrench, a welding torch, and those very small screwdrivers used for fixing spectacles, Watson can whip up Gadgets in no time.

**Photographic Memory:** Not much escapes Watson's electronic memory. He can explicitly store images or snippets of information for later recall, or he can spend a Story Point to review his internal logs and restore information to working memory.

**Robot:** A little old and battered, but still very much functioning. His head is shaped like a bullet, his body like a barrel, and his limbs consist of jointed tubular metal parts.

**Scan:** Enhanced electronic provides +2 to Awareness + Skill rolls when actively scanning a given target.

**Transmit:** Watson has a range of built-in transmitters and receivers allowing him to monitor and manipulate electromagnetic signals and wavelengths.

**Unlucky:** There's a reason that Watson is one of life's pessimists; if Watson rolls two sixes, he rolls again and takes the second result (including a second roll of two sixes).

**TECH LEVEL:** 7    **STORY POINTS:** 12

different characteristics to the free-flowing Slime Monsters. The final form, in this story at least, is the huge Kraken slime colony. It drifts in space, almost the same size as the *Yatsoshiro*, crawling its way along the debris column. It is so large and complex that it is capable of reasoned thought. It has enough strength to tear a starship apart and it has the power to send filaments of itself through the cosmos, like the arms of a colossal Kraken, to ensnare new prey.



## SLIME-POSSESSED HUMANOID

AWARENESS	3	PRESENCE	2
COORDINATION	1	RESOLVE	4
INGENUITY	1	STRENGTH	3

### SKILLS

Athletics 4, Fighting 4, Marksman 3, Survival 4, Technology 2.

### TRAITS

**Alien:** Body-snatching hybrid.

**Alien Appearance:** It's a glob of alien slime controlling a humanoid body.

**Environmental (Major):** Able to function in a vacuum.

**Fear Factor (2):** The creature gets +4 to Resolve + Presence rolls to actively scare opponents, which it does in the first round that it encounters them.

**Networked:** The Slime creatures are able to communicate remotely.

**Special – Spawn Slime:** Just once per host, the Slime can consume its host's nutrients and manufacture another Slime monster.

**Special – Slime Monster:** When this creature has taken all the damage it can, it detaches from its host and becomes a normal Slime Monster as described above.

**TECH LEVEL:** 7    **STORY POINTS:** 2

## THE KRAKEN

The Kraken Slime takes three forms. The first is the actual slime itself. For the purposes of this story we'll assume that an individual Slime Monster has a mass about equal to a small child. It can cling to almost any surface, morph into almost any shape (while always looking alien), and can attempt to possess individuals or even computer systems. It does this through interfacing with neural or electrical circuitry and modifying its inputs and outputs. The second form is the Slime in possession of a humanoid target. It smothers the head and shoulders of the target, enveloping it in a slimy grey hood. In this form, it has

## SLIME MONSTER

AWARENESS	3	PRESENCE	1
COORDINATION	1	RESOLVE	5
INGENUITY	1	STRENGTH	3

## SKILLS

Convince 4, Fighting 4, Subterfuge 4 (Sneaking 6), Survival 4.

## TRAITS

**Additional Limbs:** The slime can extrude any number of additional limbs it needs.

**Alien:** It's certainly not human.

**Alien Appearance:** It's a glob of alien slime.

**Climbing (Major):** It can climb walls and is at home on any surface regardless of orientation.

**Environmental (Major):** As an artificial alien slime, these creatures are able to function within the cold vacuum of space and even the edges of the Vortex itself.

**Immunity – Ballistic Attacks:** The Slime takes only temporary damage from ballistic attacks. Apply the damage normally, but each round the Slime may take an action in the movement phase to piece itself back together.

**Natural Weapons – Tentacles:** The barbed tentacles it can form provides the usual +2 to Strength during hand-to-tentacle fighting, but apply the bonus to the attack roll rather than the damage. They don't make the slime any stronger, but they do make it more accurate.

**Networked:** The Slime creatures are able to communicate remotely. The larger the particular Slime monster is, the further it can reach and the more intelligible its communication is.

**Possess:** If the Slime makes a successful attack, it can attempt to possess the target as a fighting action in the next round. See the **Doctor Who Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook** for more information on being possessed.

TECH LEVEL: 7 STORY POINTS: 2

A blinding golden-white light sears from the console. Pick one of the players' characters, likely to be someone Clumsy or Unlucky or with Slow Reflexes (as per the Bad Traits) and definitely not someone who is Lucky or with Quick Reflexes (as per the Good Traits). That character must make a Coordination + Athletics check (Difficulty 9) or take 2/4/6 levels of damage as the Vortex energy escapes a crack in the console.



Each round, another character must make the same check to avoid another stream of Vortex energy escaping from a new crack. The route to the TARDIS doors is clear for now but the console room is beginning to fill with harmful energy.

## PLAYER OPPORTUNITIES

There are three actions that the players might want to try to find out what's going on:

- **Check the TARDIS Scanner:** The image on the scanner resolves itself, the TARDIS is hurtling towards the *Yatsushiro*, which itself is tumbling slowly towards a huge swathe of starship debris that almost totally obscure the darkness of space behind it.
- **Check the Coordinates:** The TARDIS is in deep space, on the outer edge of the galaxy. The TARDIS has never been to this region before. A success or higher against an Ingenuity + Technology roll (Difficulty 6) reveals that something is trying to close down the navigational systems.
- **Check the Fault Locator:** Any character trying to find out what's wrong should make a Ingenuity + Technology roll (Difficulty 9). A success confirms that the TARDIS is under attack, a good result confirms that most of the damage is being caused by the TARDIS fighting the infection, and a fantastic result confirms that the assault is both physical and psychic.

 PROLOGUE

Inside the TARDIS, sparks are flying from the console as the engines suddenly groan louder. The entire internal space shakes violently, then, for just a moment, there's calm... before the shaking starts again. The cables looping from the ceiling judder this way and that and there's an explosion somewhere beneath the console as the characters arrive.

It doesn't take a genius to work out that everyone is safer outside the TARDIS at this point than inside, just an **Ingenuity** check (Difficulty 6). The nearest viable place to put down is onboard the approaching Yatsoshiro.

## ⚙️ ACT I: THE KRAKEN WAKES

*'How long it is since I put out from land  
no man remembers. But one summer noon  
great tendrils reaching from the sea enchain'd  
my resting ship; until, so meshed and reined  
no wind might break its harness, it succumbed'*

– *The Ship Becalmed*, by Randolph Stow

In the first act of this story the Doctor and his companions arrive aboard the Earth Colony Ship *Yatsoshiro*, which is listing and drifting ominously towards the debris column.

## ⚙️ 1. ARRIVAL IN THE DEBRIS COLUMN

The speeding TARDIS rematerialises inside the *Yatsoshiro* command module, tearing chunks out of the walls, ceilings and decking as it goes. Then, with the TARDIS fully materialised, the blue box slams into a bulkhead somewhere on deck two. Steam vents from the broken bulkhead and sparks fly from the exposed and snapped wires. The lights in the corridor flicker from cooling soft white like daylight to harsh red emergency lighting. The characters rush out of the TARDIS and slam the door shut behind them. The self-repair systems should kick in, but it won't be safe to go back inside for quite a while.

- The characters are free to wander around the ship. The crew have been rounded up and while the pirates have set out to look for them, having felt the TARDIS' impact, you can give the characters a little time to explore their surroundings.
- Characters familiar with starship travel may make a **Ingenuity + Technology** (or **Transport**) check (Difficulty 18) to notice anything odd about the *Yatsoshiro*'s artificial gravity. Those who fail notice that they're having no trouble standing up; those who Succeed notice that the gravity is artificial; and those who make a **Good** success determine that they are on a ship, that the ship is moving; and those who get a **Fantastic** result notice that the ship is tumbling and that the artificial gravity systems are having to work to keep up.
- The ship's power loss is selective. Artificial gravity, life support and lighting are all still active, however overworked. But scanners, engines, and communications all appear to be offline.
- Allow the players to explore just about as much of the ship as they want to before moving on to the next scene. The large map of the *Yatsoshiro* that they'll encounter next gives them a good starting point.

## DOCTOR, WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

Now they are here, the characters will want to explore. The corridors are metallic and there are plenty of storage containers, fire extinguishers, communication points, and video display monitors along the walls. This is an opportunity to introduce the Task Manager and the Sense TV. If a character asks a question that



the ship might reasonably be able to answer – such as “where are we” – then the Task Manager will reply, “You are currently situated on the forward deck two”. Once engaged, the video screens present rolling advertising in one corner of the display. A large ‘mute’ symbol is overlaid, but the associated smells (from an Ogron restaurant, the pine forests of Agripod-9, and a sickly sweet soda drink) do not go away. It takes an Ingenuity + Technology check (Difficulty 9) to work out that the screen is broadcasting neural information in a low-level near-field.

And then there’s the sound of rain. The *Yatsushiro* is now close enough to the debris column that stray wreckage is impacting on the hull. Small taps for the most part, followed by the occasional larger clang.

- Characters with the Psychic trait (or who have tools or devices that are similarly sensitive) may sense a weak psychic signal running under the adverts, different and masked by what is supposed to be there. Any character who watches the Sense TV must make a Awareness (Difficulty 6) roll. A Success is enough for the character to notice that they are feeling slightly hungry.

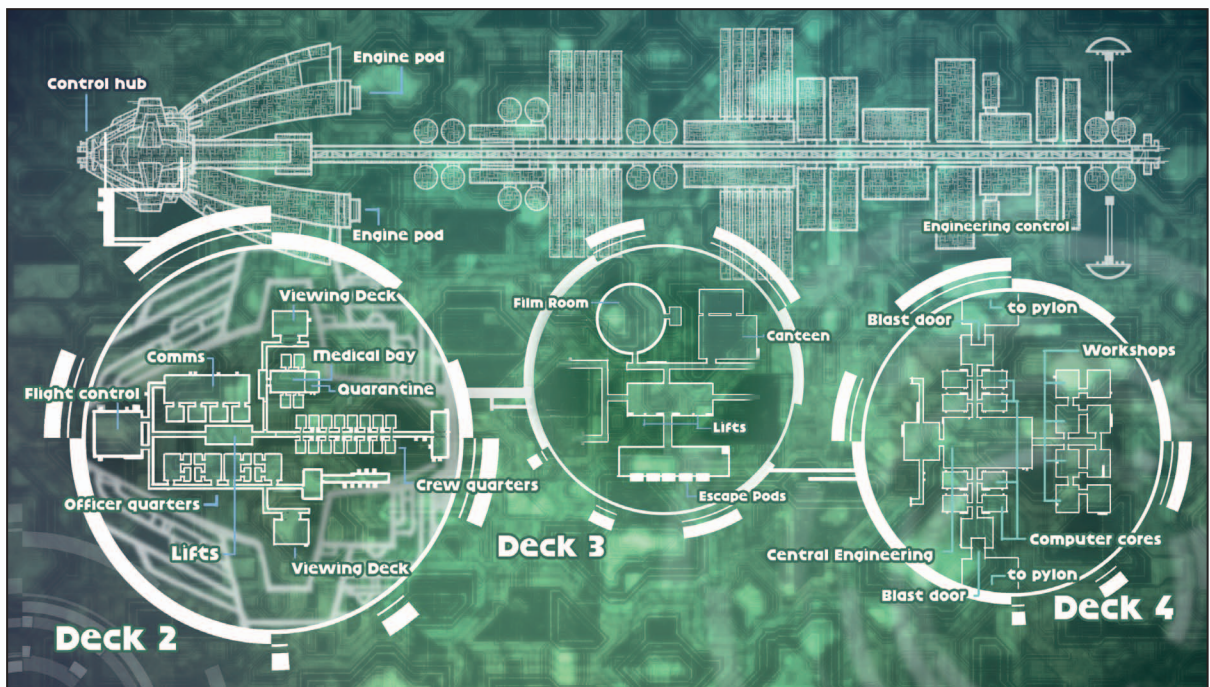
### MAP OF THE VESSEL

A large display screen is mounted into the corridor wall, from waist-height upwards. It shows schematic views of the *Yatsushiro*, including circles showing more detail on particular areas. This map should help to orient the characters.

The forward part of the ship consists of engineering and flight control and this provides accommodation and work space for the flight crew. Two great clusters of ion engines sweep out from this control hub, extending kilometres out and down. Extending from the rear of this complex is a spine some five kilometres long and consisting of a lattice of girders and supports. The spine houses the main power conduits supplying the colonists with energy and an array of rail shuttles that allow the crew to move between the command module and the colony.

The rear of the ship stretches far out behind the spine and is home to the growing colony. Tall multi-storey buildings rise up and down from the central level, each sealed against the harsh vacuum of space. A ring of large shallow domes, perpendicular to the line of the ship, makes up the very end of the vessel, their artificial gravity pointing towards a central point, and they contain the fields, orchards and forests needed to sustain the colony.

- The map lists distinct locations like the film room, canteen, engine pods and so on. Point these out as they are important tools that the players can use to complete this story. If the characters blunder into the canteen, then they’re more than likely to be captured by the pirates and you can move on to the next scene.
- The characters can also look for windows and observation ports that look out to space. The view is a little dizzying as the ship tumbles through the space, but the debris column can be seen, as



can the cloud of wreckage that keeps hitting the ship's hull.

## SCANNING FOR LIFE

The Task Manager responds to queries about the crew and passengers. It shows a schematic of the *Yatsushiro* and adds points of light indicating life signs, approximately 250,000 contained in the rear part of the vessel and about 30 in the forward command module, in addition to the characters. These 30 life signs seem to be congregated in the canteen.

## BLAST POINTS

If they stay on deck two, they soon find a series of broken and dented panels. Nothing seems burned or scorched; it all looks like crushing damage, like something was hurled into the walls. Then they find a circular piece of bulkhead, cut through to make an impromptu airlock that leads to the pirates' spaceship. The pirates' spaceship is cramped, smelly, and very nearly powerless. It won't be going anywhere.



- Any character going into the pirates' spaceship has a better chance of finding its location on the map of the *Yatsushiro* if they need to later. It's an Ingenuity + Technology roll (Difficulty 6) rather than a Difficulty 12 roll.
- Any characters with the Boffin trait or similar may be able to temporarily restore power to the ship or pilot it on remote control with a bit of Jiggery-Pokery. All they need is a long length of cable and a Story Point or two.

## 2. THE PRIVATEERS

Having heard and felt the impact of the TARDIS, Trant, the pirate captain, sends some of his men to investigate. And this is when they arrive and attempt to capture the characters. They raise their blasters and demand that the characters surrender. They will use their blasters to knock the fight out of anyone who runs or initiates combat, but otherwise their orders are to bring any intruders down to deck three. If the characters run, let them have their chase. Another group of pirates pop up in front of them when they next open a door, allowing the others to catch and surround our heroes.

Once the characters have been captured, one of the pirates (we'll call him Ausk) reports back to Trant over the communicator. Trant orders him to find the source of the impact they heard, at which point Ausk sends the prisoners to Trant while he goes searching.

Entering the canteen, the characters see the crewmembers seated in one corner while the pirates guard them with their blasters. Trant takes one look at the characters and then turns to Captain Ryan, asking which one is Faulkner. This mistaken identity introduces the idea that there is someone else on board, which in turn suggests that the escape pod could be important.

Finding out that this is not Faulkner annoys Trant and he demands to know who they really are and where they came from; at some point, Ausk reports back over the communicator that he's found a large blue box and Trant asks what the box is for and how the characters got it on board. Then the gravity shifts, as though the drift compensators are losing power. The ship is noticeably leaning to one side and the lights flicker. The characters should have easy access to the ship schematic by this point so they can see the engineering deck down on four and the flight deck up on one. It takes a Ingenuity + Technology check (Difficulty 9) to realise that if the power loss continues to affect the gravity it is going to become harder to move around.

## THE CANTEEN AND THE FILM ROOM

The canteen and film room are next door to each other so we'll describe them together. Tables line up in rank and file in the large open-plan canteen. The kitchens are at the back of this area. Apart from the service exits in the kitchens, the only way in or out is through the main double doors or a large ventilation grill in the wall. Electronic posters around the canteen advertise this week's menu and the various chef's specials.

The film room is a dome-like chamber that shows immersive 360D films. Like Sense TV, it beams sensations directly into the viewer's brain. The projector is powerful enough to affect multiple viewers at once. There are no seats and it's large enough for around 50 people to stand and watch the film.

- On the way out of the lift, the players can attempt an Awareness roll (Difficulty 9). Those who succeed, notice that one of the escape pods is missing. There should be a bank of five along one bulkhead, but the nearest pod to the canteen has been jettisoned.
- When they are inside the canteen, in order of highest Awareness to lowest and until some succeeds, the characters in the canteen get to make another Awareness check (Difficulty 9) to notice a half-empty cup of tea and a sandwich that appears to have been left in quite a hurry. None of the crew know anything about it. Trant gets frustrated if his prisoners start discussing old sandwiches while he's commandeering their ship, but let the characters have their moment. They may be captured, but this is the point at which the Doctor would usually take charge and start putting things together.

### 3. SUDDEN IMPACT

The landing gear of a Judoon cruiser is about to hit the *Yatsushiro* command module. This impending strike is being broadcast to a nearby view screen, which is on mute. Unless one of the characters notices this (with a success on an DC6 Awareness roll, Difficulty 6), the strike happens with no warning. If it is noticed, the character has between one and three rounds to warn the others (one on a Success, three on a Fantastic result).

### HOLD ONTO SOMETHING

The Judoon cruiser's landing gear hits the *Yatsushiro*. The ship judders as the landing gear impacts and then scrapes along the bulkhead. The characters need to make a Coordination + Athletics roll. This is Difficulty 6 if the character braced for impact, or Difficulty 12 if not. Characters who braced take 1/2/3 levels of damage, while those not holding onto something risk 2/4/6 levels of damage. The crew and pirates are thrown around too. You can assume any who braced take 1 point of damage, while those who didn't take 2.

### DECOMPRESSION

There is a moment when the ship seems still again, giving the players a chance to check on their

companions. The hull is creaking and groaning, however; straining to contain the atmospheric pressure inside the ship. And then it pops.

Out in the corridor, a hull plate buckles outwards, tearing a hole in the side of the ship. Ordinarily, the internal doors closest to the impact site would close, securing the internal atmosphere. Unfortunately, the door has been damaged by the impact and cannot close. As the atmosphere is sucked from the ship, the characters on board are dragged towards the open vacuum of space.

You get to freeze the action here and reposition the characters inside the decompressing deck, dangling above the tear in the bulkhead. The players have 10 rounds before the air starts to become too thin in this area and they start to take damage. They are also ten 'steps' away from the vacuum (with step eleven actually being sucked into space) and ten 'steps' away from the safety of the next blast door, which they can close behind them. They need to make Strength + Athletics rolls (Difficulty 12) to move forward away from the vacuum; success ranges from +3 steps to -3 steps.



Characters who opt to help each other, as per the Cooperation rules, both gain +2 to their rolls. Any character can voluntarily drop back any number of steps to help another character. By spending a Story Point, they can even do this after they have taken their normal action. Any character can spend a Story Point and gain assistance from a non-player character in this way, as everyone is trying to get out of the corridor. If you're feeling particularly nasty, you could send one of the pirates hurtling down the corridor and out into space, just to underline the danger they're all in.

You should also race Trant against the characters. If Trant gets to the door first (give him a penalty of -1 to his rolls as he's clinging to his blaster), he can shut it, locking the characters in the decompressing corridor.

In either case, all is not lost. The damaged door can still be repaired and closed. This means voluntarily dropping back until there are just two steps left between them and the vacuum so that the door release mechanism can be accessed. It is then a Ingenuity + Technology roll (Difficulty 18). A success is all that's needed to close the door. Failure doesn't close the door but does allow another free round. A Bad result wastes the round, and a Disaster makes everyone drop one step closer to the vacuum as the clumsy attempt shakes the corridor.

Once the characters are past the blast doors or close the damaged doors, the atmosphere normalises.

## THE IMPACT SITE

The characters should be able to see the impact site through the view ports in the blast doors. They will see a part of the rust-coloured landing gear sticking into the ship. They will also see what looks like fuel or some kind of lubricant running down from the landing gear and into the ship. This is actually more of the alien Slime. The characters can make a Ingenuity + Science roll (Difficulty 12) to notice that the Slime seems to be moving oddly, as though attracted to the ship in some way.

Unless they acquire some spacesuits, they aren't going to be able to get any closer to investigate the Slime.

- Apart from surviving a decompressing ship, the players might be able to shake the pirates and give themselves some more space. They also get sight of the Slime for the first time.

## 4. THE MISSING POD

Once attention switches to the missing pod, you'll need this scene.

The outside of each escape pod bay has a status display and an interface with the Task Manager. While the bay is clearly empty, the Task Manager reports that the escape pod is still in place – the result of the android Watson re-programming it. Those looking out of the viewport can see a small chunk of debris drifting alongside the *Yatsoshiro* and, every now and then, it fires small course-correction thrusters. It's holding position.

Fliss and Watson jettisoned themselves in the escape pod, intending to re-dock once the coast was clear of pirates. They're now holding station outside the ship's hull.



- Any character scanning the pod detects that the pod is actually scanning the *Yatsoshiro* back; someone aboard the pod is listening in.
- If the characters start some jigger-pokery to control the escape pod's engines remotely and bring the pod back to the ship, allow them an Awareness + Technology roll (Difficulty 6) to find the recall button. Pressing the big green button brings the pod back into its bay automatically. As the pod gets closer, it is clear that there's somebody in there.

## REVEALING THE KRAKEN

Fliss and Watson fled to the escape pod when the pirates boarded as she didn't want to be captured, but having now been discovered, Fliss attempts to explain the phenomenon that she's discovered through looking at media reports from a number of worlds. If given the chance, she plugs Watson into the Task Manager so he can project images on a screen; otherwise she'll use a marker pen to draw on any table or surface that comes to hand.

Firstly she describes the loss of the *Scanderia*, the first known loss that she can attribute to this region. It happened nearly a thousand years ago, and every year since then more starships from a hundred civilisations have gone missing. As she talks through them (the Draconian cargo ship *Limeressic*, the Bandril voyager *Naron*, the experimental Earth ship *Spirit of San Francisco* – assumed to have been destroyed by



its own warp engines – the list goes on) they appear as points of light on a large 3D image of this space sector (or she marks an X with her pen). As more points of light are added a shape resolves itself, like a series of tentacles all leading back to a central point. At that point she asks Watson to overlay the location of the debris column. The tentacles of light intersect the column near to what would be their apex; whatever caused the phenomenon must be close to the column. She finishes with a flourish, “There is our Kraken – our sea monster dragging ships to their doom”.

If Trant is still around he’s disbelieving, just interested in restarting the ship and escaping. He can’t conceive of being caught by something that he didn’t even notice. If any of the *Yatsushiro* crewmembers are listening in, they remember that before the engines died completely the ship veered off course, which left it drifting towards the debris column.

- Fliss believes that the ships have been affected by a natural phenomenon, but the players have the opportunity to associate the wrecked ships with the attack on the TARDIS and the psychic phenomenon that some of them felt earlier.
- The players have the chance to cross-examine Fliss before their encounter with the Slime (see below). And once the lights go out, give the characters an Ingenuity roll (Difficulty 6) to remember that the pirate Ausk hasn’t come back, and that the *Yatsushiro* crew still haven’t located Faulkner.
- It is also worth reminding the players that there are now only two hours until the ship collides with the debris column, which would have a devastating effect on the colony.

## 5. HERE WE ARE AGAIN

If the characters made a dash for it during the impact, now is the time to bring them all back together. The pirates catch up with them, and demand that somebody refuels their ship, fixes the propulsion system, or does something to get them away from the debris column. And if they don’t people are going to start to die!

It’s a stand-off between the pirates who want to force somebody, anybody, into action on their behalf and the characters who need to calm the situation. Captain Ryan is defiant. He would rather die than let the pirates command his ship. This stance doesn’t do much to help the situation. The characters need to make contested Convince rolls against Trant to prevent him from shooting people, starting with the crew.

Have a character, preferably one who isn’t too involved in all the talking in this previous scene, make an Awareness roll against a Slime Monster’s Coordination + Subterfuge roll. A failure results in the character putting his hand in the Slime that’s started dripping down the wall from the ceiling. With a Bad result, the Slime attempts to possess the character. On a Success or higher, the character sees the slime. Looking a little closer, they notice that it’s leaking out of the ceiling, and then the Slime reacts! Some of it lurches away from the wall and tries to grab the character. The Slime makes a combat attack. This should be enough to draw the everyone’s attention.



## 6. THE CLIFFHANGER

Let the conflict with the Slime play out. The unarmed crew and the cowardly pirates initially pull back away from the Slime. It’s down to the players to stir them into action. If the Slime has a hold on a player’s character (after a successful strike last round) it attempts to possess them. Other characters can help the character resist, either by spending Story Points or through cooperation as normal.

When the characters attempt to leave the area they are in, the lights go out; the white light is instantly replaced with red. Anyone with the Psychic trait (or Psychic Paper) gets a flash of a message, a single thought: “closer”. If they then stir the party to action, they get a moment to prepare themselves.

In the canteen doorway, blocking their path is the Buurman pirate, Ausk. His head and shoulders are covered in grey alien slime, obscuring his face. At the same time, the same slime oozes up through the deck plates and drips down from the ceiling. The doorway is effectively blocked.

Now is the time to freeze the action! The cliffhanger is coming. As the Slime seeps into the room, cutting

off the escape route, tendrils snake from the floor and ceiling feeling for their victims. The possessed Ausk raises his blaster. It hums with energy. From beneath the hood of slime, Ausk says one word, audible over everything, "hunger". End of Act One!

## ⚙️ ACT II: THE BODYSNATCHERS

If Act I has been about introducing the story, the characters and the imminent danger, Act II is about using the tools that the *Yatsushiro* provides in order to defeat the slime, restart the engines, and steer the *Yatsushiro* away from danger. This makes act two a little less structured as the players may think of some novel ways to use the *Yatsushiro* and its technology in order to save the day.

## RESOURCES

The players have the whole ship to potentially choose from. The only rule to bear in mind is that the larger the resource, the more likely the characters are going to encounter the Slime as it makes its way across the ship. You should also consider the time element. Each resource takes time to acquire. Some things come immediately to hand, such as Sense TV, the Task Manager, a Buurman Blaster, and others take longer. Start with 15 minutes for something that isn't immediately available or doesn't need to be taken from where it is, 30 minutes for something quite difficult, and one hour for something that can only be acquired from the colony. Remember, there are only two hours before the ship collides with the debris column.

## ⚙️ 1. THE CHASE

Act II starts with the players' characters having been split up. There are two important tasks that need to be done before the ship can be steered from danger, so have each party do one of those tasks. Half of the characters get trapped with Trant and Ryan, while the other half get caught up with Fliss and Watson. Ideally, you'll want to keep the group's most scientifically minded character (the Doctor, for example) with Fliss and Watson, and have two players take on their roles for all those scenes. If you have more than three players, the other players can take on the roles of Ryan, Trant and some of the other crew or pirates.

## GROUP ONE

The first group ends up in the medical bay where they have easy access to the scientific equipment they might need to analyse the Slime and work out how to defeat it.

The characters, Fliss, Watson and some of the crew and pirates, are being chased through the deck by the possessed Ausk. He shoots his blaster, smashing walls and screens around the fleeing characters. One of the pirates gets hit. The players can either leave him, or spend a Story Point on hoisting him up and helping him to safety.

In either case, they reach the medical bay. Rushing inside, one of the characters hits the controls that slam the doors shut. The doors to the medical bay are



large and heavy, designed to protect the occupants and to be closed air-tight and securely in the event of quarantine.

### The Medical Bay

Filled with a range of medical equipment that is principally geared towards providing first aid as the colony provides ample health care. There is, however, a quarantine bay, with large floor to ceiling observation windows. Should the characters need to undertake any kind of analysis on the Slime or its victims, there is suitable equipment here.

With all this equipment to hand, Gadgets can be built at a speed of 1 Story Point's worth of traits every 15 minutes. If they are designed to work directly against the Kraken Slime, then a sample of the Slime is first required.

- This is the chance for the players to plan their approach and more specifically, to plan how to defeat the Slime. The equipment in this area makes Jiggery-Pokery a little easier.

## GROUP TWO

The rest of the characters lead their group down onto deck four, where the engineering control is housed. They punch their way out of the ventilation shaft and drop down. They can hear the Slime sloshing after them through the shaft. What they need is to seal it and give themselves some time.

There are some metal plates and some welding gear to hand. The characters can attempt to seal the shaft themselves (with a Coordination + Craft roll at Difficulty 12, or spend a Story Point and direct someone else to do it). Once sealed, they're safe and have time to think.

### Engineering Control

The engineering control deck is largely given over to workshops for repairing faulty equipment and machining new parts. There are also computer cores that allow the ship to auto-correct for course, manage the constantly shifting fuel containment fields and regulate the fuel reactions that provide the ship's energy. As with the medical bay, the parts can be used to make one Story Point's worth of gadgetry every 15 minutes.

The support pylons for the two great ion engines run out from this deck, one on either side. They are each shielded by large blast doors, which need authorisation codes in order to open. The codes are held by the captain and members of the engineering team. Otherwise, the doors are deadlock-sealed. The

pylons are set to their own local gravity, ensuring that they feel horizontal to those within them, despite sweeping downwards. Each pylon has a number of small electric transport carts that the engineers use to get from one end to the other.

The characters can communicate over the internal ship communication systems, and build any Gadgets they need, including flamethrowers, freeze-guns, motion scanners, and so on.

## 2. DEFEATING THE SLIME

Remind the players what they know and what they haven't found out just yet:

- It appears to be psychic.
- It can survive in a vacuum.
- It can control humanoid forms.

Ideally, they need to analyse some of the Slime to learn more.

### CAPTURE THE SLIME

The characters may need to go on a Slime hunt. The medical bay has all the equipment the players may ask for.

When they go looking for the Slime, they soon see it threading its way through the corridors, entering circuitry and flowing through the cracks in the decking and doors.

Characters need to make an Awareness roll against the Slime's Coordination + Subterfuge to avoid being hunted themselves and they need to make a Coordination + Subterfuge roll against the Slime's Awareness in order to take one glob unawares. Give the characters a bonus for any good ideas and use of tools and Gadgets.

Failure on these tests sees the Slime attack the characters, so you'll need to run the physical conflict. All isn't lost though; the characters can withdraw, which draws one glob of Slime with them. If they do, give them a bonus to their Fighting checks. When they defeat the Slime, they have the sample they needed.

### ANALYSING THE SLIME

The characters need a Gadget capable of scanning to the molecular level (a Sonic Screwdriver or similar will do the trick), which then allows the character to make an Ingenuity + Science roll (Difficulty 18). If the characters don't already have such a Gadget one can

be found in the sick bay. Getting too close to the Slime is dangerous. Any time a character gets close enough to scan it, the Slime will attempt to attack. Luckily, characters who try to scan the Slime act before the Slime can attack, so they may still get some results. The table below lists the information gained at each success level.

RESULT	INFORMATION GAINED
Fantastic	As <i>Good</i> plus: The character gains enough information to be able to tune in scanners to pick up the telepathic field. There is a huge Slime colony outside the ship, and it's getting closer.
Good	As <i>Success</i> plus: the Slime is telepathic, an effect enhanced by proximity and the size of the Slime. If it touches a target, it can interface with their nervous system and countermand the electrical signals being sent to and from the brain.
Success	The Slime is non-organic, but it can process organic compounds and extract the elements it needs to replicate itself. It's composed of billions of tiny identical machines. Together, they form complex shapes and they communicate, perhaps by chemical signals. The closest analogy is an Earth slime mould. It is able to survive a vacuum.
Failure	The Slime reacts to the scanning and breaks free, moving away from the scanner and into a vent or grating on the deck. The Gadget can track the Slime so characters do have a chance of capturing it.
Bad	The scanning goes badly! The tiny machines that make up the Slime decompose into their constituent parts and no information can be gained from this specimen.
Disaster	The character comes into contact with the Slime as it breaks free. If the character can fight it off, the Slime can be contained again.

MAKING A WEAPON

The characters have free rein on what they might want to make. Some obvious examples might be to combine the Buurman Blasters with the Sense TV neural projectors and create weapons that stun the Slime creatures. Or a neural projector could protect an individual or room from the Slime by persuading it to move along.

The more powerful neural projector could be used to affect the whole ship, including the colony, if a delivery vehicle could be found (the Buurman pirate ship is still available, although by this time filled with Slime).

3. RESTARTING THE ENGINES

With no engine power, the ship will strike the debris column, taking several strikes to breach the hull in both the command module and throughout the colony.

REACHING THE ENGINE PODS

Both pods need to be manually restarted, and the characters need to be involved in at least one of those efforts. The vast engine pods each house hybrid-matter fusion reactors and their associated space-warp ion propulsion emitters. These areas are unsafe for organic humanoid characters due to the strange radiation (2000 REMs worth) given off by the propulsion technology. This equate to (12/24/36) levels of damage for each hour of exposure, modified as usual by the results of a Strength + Survival check (Difficulty 18).



The pylons connecting the pods to the command module contain a number of airlocks and decontamination areas along with bulky radiation suits that provide a bonus of +9 to the Strength + Survival check and reduces the potential damage to (6/12/18). Engineers trained in the use of the radiation suits receive an additional +3 bonus to the Survival check. There are three radiation suits in each pylon, providing Armour 8 and complete protection against the Slime's Possess ability.

A series of three large switches need to be thrown in order. They each require a Strength + Athletics (Difficulty 12) roll to throw and each takes two actions; one to engage, and one to fully open them up.

### RESTARTING POD ONE

Once two switches have been fully thrown, the characters gets interrupted! The Slime-possessed Faulkner is here; he attacks those who need to restart the engines. Use the statistics for the possessed humanoid and give Faulkner a big heavy wrench (+2 Strength to damage). The party need to fend him off and continue to restart the engines.

### RESTARTING POD TWO

You only need to worry about this if you have a character at each pod; otherwise, as soon as pod one has restarted, the non-player characters at pod two complete their task too. The restart switches in pod

two are covered in Slime, which makes it impossible to touch them without being attacked. The players need to find a way to neutralise the slime or remove it so that they can restart the engines.

## 4. ESCAPE THE DEBRIS COLUMN

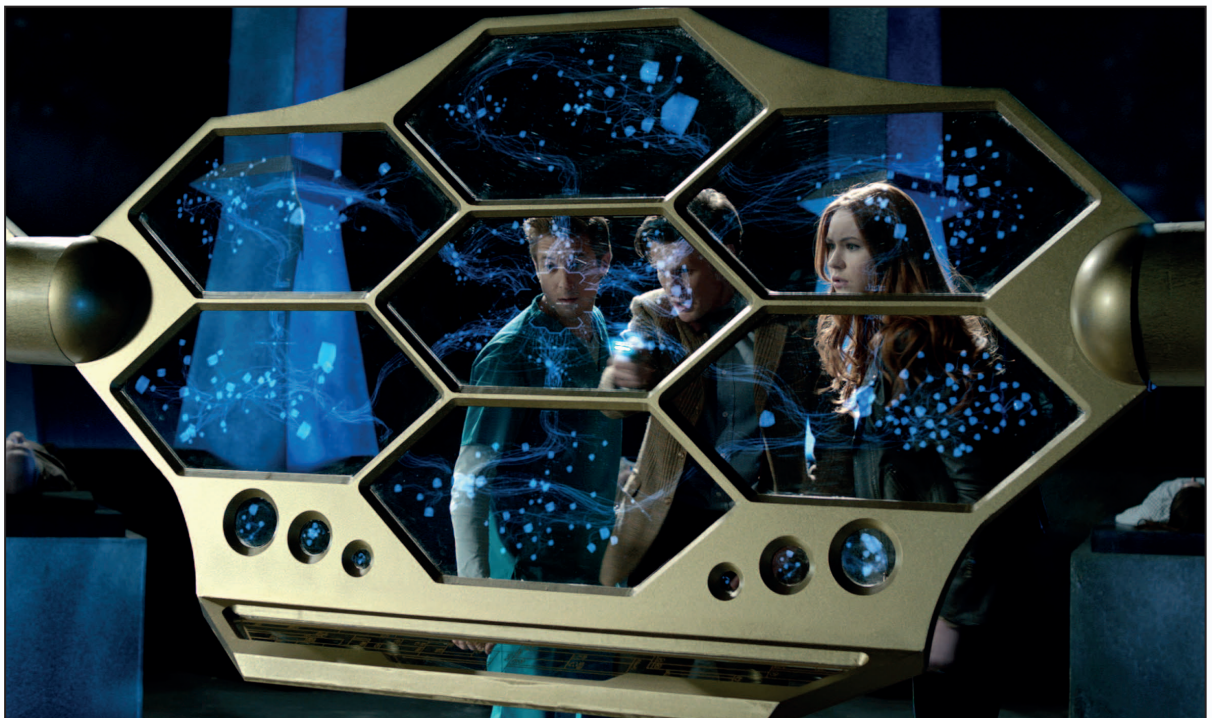
With the slime defeated and the engines restarted, the characters need to get to the flight deck to steer the ship away from the debris column.

### THE FLIGHT DECK

The flight deck is ringed with large floor-to-ceiling display panels, each showing a view out into space overlaid with telemetry and system status information. The views are grainy and occasionally short out; the residual effects of the Slime. The crew stand at workstations filled with physical dials and switches.

The characters each need to take a specific action in controlling the ship, and the group needs to make three successes between them on a Coordination + Transport roll (Difficulty 15). If a character fails, the next character needs to achieve a good result. If that fails, the next needs a fantastic result. They can cooperate in order to gain the +2 bonus. The actions needed are:

- Regulate the fuel reactions in the engines.
- Manage the speed of the ship.
- Adjust its pitch.





- Roll the ship using the thrusters.
- Bring the shields back on line.

Use the forward-facing weapons to blast a clear path. The characters can attempt these actions in any order they like. If a character fails an action, they can try again after everyone has had their go. Once a total of six actions have been taken, and if three successes haven't been gained, then the *Yatsoshiro* crashes.

## ⚙️ ACT III: THE MAW

*'How could they know, even stand back and see  
The nature of the place they stood on,  
When no man can, no man knows where he stands  
Until he leaves his place, looks back  
and knows.'*

– *Erebus and Terror*, Gwendolyn MacEwen

The final act of the adventure forces the characters to confront the result of their earlier actions. Have they done enough to save the ship, or must they struggle to salvage what they can from the wreckage?

## ⚙️ 1. THE CRASH OF THE YATSOSHIRO

If the players managed to save the *Yatsoshiro*, they can skip this scene and go straight to The Kraken Attacks. If the *Yatsoshiro* crashes however, the colony needs to be saved.

This is now a test of the players' ingenuity. They have just minutes before the colony collides with the debris column. Do they try to clear a gap with a controlled explosion? Knock the colony off-course with an explosion? Or find some other option that doesn't

include explosions? In terms of assets, they can reach the TARDIS, or the Buurman ship and they can release one or both engine pods and control them remotely. If they wanted to do something bold like evacuating the colony into the agripods and then jettisoning them, then make the time short, but achievable.

Whichever plan they arrive at, build the story around it. Importantly, this scene replaces the next scene and essentially brings the story to a close.

## ⚙️ 2. THE KRAKEN ATTACKS

The *Yatsoshiro* is clear of the debris field, and while minor bits of wreckage are still raining onto the hull, there is no real damage and the *Yatsoshiro* is free. The Slime on board the ship has been neutralised, the pirates are either going to be sent on their way, or sent to the brig, and the TARDIS has repaired itself. Just as everyone is saying goodbye... the Kraken attacks.

### THE ATTACK

A great section of the command module is suddenly pulled away by a massive Slimy tentacle. The monster isn't done yet. It starts to pull the command module apart, inching its way along in the direction of the colony.

### DEFEATING THE KRAKEN

There's always more than one way to solve a problem and the players are no doubt by now masters at finding novel solutions to impossible problems. Once the Kraken arrives, there will be too much Slime to

fight off. The entire colony, including the crew, the privateers, Fliss, and the characters are all likely to be taken over by the Kraken Slime if they don't do something to stop it. The players might come up with any of the following solutions:

- **Destroy It:** The option most beloved to scared pirates and the military, destroying the Kraken is possible. The Buurman ship, or one of the *Yatsushiro's* engines, could be detonated in the middle of the Kraken mass. The resulting shock could deactivate all the Slime networked to it.
- **Send it Away:** Either through reasoning with the Kraken, tricking it or dominating it through force of will, it may be possible to send the Kraken away.
- **Break it Up:** The Kraken has a hive mind; the more Slime there is the more intelligent and resourceful the Kraken becomes. If it gets broken up it becomes mostly harmless, for a while at least. The *Yatsushiro's* warp engines could be used to disrupt or scatter it, or the Buurman ship.
- **Contain It:** Can the Kraken Slime be tricked into one of the *Yatsushiro's* agripods? Can the characters materialise the TARDIS entirely around it?
- **Escape From It:** They could always try escaping from it. They could get in the TARDIS and go, or they could gun the *Yatsushiro's* engines and try to break free.

Your players will no doubt suggest options that aren't covered above. In any case, whichever idea your players come up with is exactly the right thing to do! So, help them make it happen. The players need to go through the following for each:

- **Setting up the Solution:** Ask the players, "What do you want to do to the Slime?" If they're not confident of their options, you can read them the quick headings above. Once they've decided ask them how they're going to do it. Again, help the players come to a plan. Finally, ask them what they need to make their plan work.
- **The Challenge:** Decide a couple of challenges that need to be completed quickly and by multiple characters. Do they need to jettison one of the engines? If so, how do they convince the captain ("Don't worry, the Doctor knows what he's doing")? And then how do they safely send it off into space ("This button here... Or was it this one")?
- **The Execution:** Something's bound to go wrong. A circuit breaks or a shield buckles, for instance. Give the characters that final

hardship, like dropping the Sonic Screwdriver at the very last minute, and give them a roll to save the day.

And after all that, their plan works!

## ⚙️ AFTERMATH

### BACK TO THE TARDIS

The TARDIS has completely healed itself, although there is a fine dust all over the console that will take an age to clean; the remnants of the Slime that infiltrated the TARDIS shell.

### FRIENDS AND FORMER ENEMIES

With the *Yatsushiro* saved, Captain Ryan ensures that the characters are known throughout the colony and they will always receive a warm welcome. Even Trant, pirate though he is, gives grudging respect to the characters on future meetings. Though not pleased to see them, he will do the characters no harm and may even help them in the future. If one of the characters feels that they have travelled far enough, Fliss and Watson have only just started. If you wanted to, you could start a new chapter with Fliss and Watson stepping aboard the TARDIS.

### THE FUTURE OF THE DEBRIS COLUMN

The debris column may be filled with becalmed ships now, but in the future, freed from the Kraken, a thriving community might spring up. Salvage crews may head to the column looking for parts and valuable resources. Archaeologists from across the cosmos might seek out the secrets of the ancient travellers that once found themselves lost and alone in deep space. And trader captains might steer their vessels to the column to service the needs of visitors.

As knowledge of the column spreads, more ships may choose to join, living off scavenged power supplies or joining with others to pool their resources. The column could become a safe haven away from the reaches of the law, while others might see the need to bring order to the chaos. There are fiefdoms to be carved out and reputations to be made in the debris column. The characters might even visit again in the future as the column makes its transition from a bustling but disorganised commune to a society the size of an entire planet snaking through the stars.

## THE BELLAGIO IMBROGLIO



In this adventure, the time travellers are pulled into a swirl of intrigue, mystery and romance! They find themselves entangled with the legendary mystic Count Cagliostro and the ageing adventurer Casanova while dodging the Inquisition through the canals of 18th-century Venice. At stake: the lives of an innocent family.

various problems they face, but their every move is noticed by rivals who are ready to react.

The adventure ends when the treasure comes to light and the competition for ownership becomes fierce and final, probably in one big multi-directional confrontation.

### ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The adventure is set in Venice, in July 1778. There is a historical celebrity who needs to turn his life around. Sounds like the Doctor's sort of thing. But one wrong move – including doing nothing at all – means innocent people will suffer.

This adventure is really just a web of relationships and a MacGuffin that everyone wants. Everything the characters do will tweak the relationship web, and whatever they do, everyone will chase after the MacGuffin. There are no aliens, monsters or time distortions: this is a 'pure' historical adventure of the type described on pg. 33. Now, that might not suit your game, so there's an optional section at the end with some of that good stuff – add to taste.

A lot of detail is given for the opening scene. This sequence drags the characters into a web of conflict and intrigue as various factions compete to find and hold on to a unique treasure.

After the opening scene the adventure opens up. The characters do whatever they please to deal with the

### STORY SPECIAL RULES

While there are some serious aspects to this story, overall this adventure is meant to be a romp, with big broad antagonists, moderate stakes and plenty of opportunities for laughter. Explain these special rules to the players before the start of play so they know what they're in for:

*Story Points spent on Convince rolls are doubly effective: if spent before a roll, 1 Story Point gives you 4 bonus dice instead of 2. If spent after a roll, 1 Story Point improves the result two levels instead of one. Likewise, Story Points are doubly effective for any Subterfuge roll involving the use of disguise.*

Characters can easily get separated in this adventure. As an incentive to keep bringing everyone together, *award a Story Point each time a player arranges for two separated characters to cross paths.*

## THE CAST OF CHARACTERS

As Gamemaster you will likely be playing these characters frequently, as they drive the whole adventure:

- The Ageing Rogue, Giacomo Casanova.
- The Generous Hostess, Elizabeta Bellagio.
- The Rebellious Daughter, Sabrina Bellagio.

Another set of characters will be 'on stage' less often but still have important roles in the story. As Gamemaster you will need to think about what they do when the player characters aren't around:

- The Special Inquisitor, Bernardo Battista.
- The Ruthless Twins, Mariano and Carla Palladio.
- The Murderous Assassin, Mostro, who works for the twins.
- The Roving Magician, Alessandro Cagliostro.

There are a number of other characters in the adventure who may take on large or small roles, depending on how events work out. You probably won't need to worry about them when they're not with the characters. These include:

- The Daring Gondolier, Vincenzo Cristiano.
- The Ill-Fated Informant, Anton.
- The Bellagio Servant, Teodor.

As the adventure unfolds you will probably invent other characters depending on what the players choose to do. As sparks for imagination, here are some potential further characters:



- The Principal of the Fellows of the Red Lion, Aureo Mare (perhaps he has his own special need for Cagliostro's help).
- The Police Captain, Fracastoro (perhaps he is actively trying to get the Special Inquisitor tossed out of Venice and waiting for a justification).
- The Singing Gondolier, Cesare (perhaps he knows the secret friendship between Vincenzo and Aldo).
- The Fool of the 40 Thieves, Umberto (perhaps he was sick of being treated poorly and tipped off the Inquisition about Vincenzo's and Sabrina's raid).

- The Beggar Woman, Margarita (perhaps her husband was imprisoned by the Inquisition and she is starving without his income, demonstrating the power the Inquisition can exert).

## WHAT HISTORIANS KNOW

In his memoirs, legendary adventurer and seducer Giacomo Casanova recounts a meeting with the man who would become the mysterious Cagliostro. It was 1770, and they happened to stay at the same inn in the south of France. Cagliostro posed as a religious pilgrim, but Casanova was not fooled by this act. He was, however, impressed by the younger man's skill at forgery. Eight years later they met again. Both their fortunes had changed, and now they were at odds. The true nature of their secret encounter has never been determined, but rumours have circulated for centuries. One rumour has persisted above all others: that they exchanged the secret of eternal life.

## PLAYING HISTORY

Historical settings can be intimidating, and 18th-century Venice is a perfect example. There's so much information out there! What if you misrepresent history, or contradict a known fact? Relax. If the Doctor's adventures have proved anything, it's that there's no such thing as a known fact, and history is always up for grabs. His visits to the past often bear little resemblance to what is recorded in the history books. Who could have expected that 16th-century Venice would have housed sinister vampires? Or that Charles Dickens would turn out to be a resourceful ghostbuster?

There are plenty of books and articles out there about Venice and Cagliostro and Casanova. You don't need to read any of them. Dive in if you want to, and bring all that extra detail and knowledge to the game table, but most players really won't mind if you don't. The most important thing is exciting play.

Whatever you do, don't overload the game with detail after detail! That just bogs everything down. In fact, regardless of how much you've researched, you should only bring a small number of vivid images into play. The players' imaginations will race ahead to fill in the gaps.

## ⚙️ GETTING THERE

This adventure assumes that the characters have the ability to travel in time and space – that they aren't already citizens of 18th-century Venice. Exactly how the characters arrive on the scene will depend on who they are and how they travel about. Here are some ideas:

- **Accident:** The characters are using a time machine that is often unreliable, or just cannot be steered with any accuracy, and they land here by accident.
- **Tourism:** If the characters travel to see the sights and wonders of the universe, they could be heading here in order to witness the famed Venetian Carnivale at its height. (They are about six months too late for Carnivale, but there's still plenty to see!)
- **Alchemy:** The characters could be seeking the fabled Philosopher's Stone – a secret alchemical substance that can turn lead into gold, among many other incredible properties – or the Elixir of Life. Records indicate Cagliostro came to Venice at this time, and rumours say he had these treasures. In this adventure, these two items are one and the same, two different expressions of the same treasure.
- **Investigation:** Records show the mysterious Cagliostro visited Venice in 1778, and there revealed some of his secrets. It is rumoured that he lived for centuries, adopting numerous persona over the years, with even his personality shifting as he went. Could he be a disguised, hidden Time Lord?

The adventure assumes the group arrives in Venice in a TARDIS. If they use another method of travel, some changes may be necessary.



## STICKING AROUND

A group of time travellers always has the option of just walking away. Why should they stick around for this adventure, especially when it starts getting tricky for them?

- **Getting Stuck:** This has been a common occurrence in the Doctor's travels; he loses access to the TARDIS, or the TARDIS breaks down, or everyone gets arrested and imprisoned. The rest of the adventure is about finding a way out. This situation probably happens in this adventure, but it's not a foolproof plan for a Gamemaster. A sufficiently determined set of players armed with Story Points can force their way to an exit point very swiftly indeed.
- **Responsibility:** The characters are in some way responsible for a bad situation and feel obliged to put it right. In this adventure an innocent family will be hurt if the characters simply depart.
- **Empathy:** The characters meet several people who are in trouble. Compassionate characters will want to assist them, and this will mean entangling themselves in the story threads.
- **Tourism:** Some characters will be delighted by the chance to spend time with famous historical figures such as Casanova and Cagliostro. Dangle this possibility in front of them, but don't rush to let them achieve their goal.



- **Curiosity:** If the group becomes invested in a mystery, they'll be keen to see it solved. While the adventure is underway you can play up any new mysteries they come across: What secrets does Cagliostro keep? What has happened to the Bellagio Stone?
- **Romance:** The characters get to meet Casanova! Any ongoing romance sub-plots in your game can be easily brought into focus using him as a provocation. He has a sixth sense for when characters like each other, and if someone wants

assistance in professing their love to someone else, why, there is no better advisor to be found! And of course there are several potential love matches for the characters, if your players like that sort of story.

## ⚙️ CASANOVA AND THE BELLAGIOS

The central characters each face difficult problems. Giacomo Casanova needs to prove himself to the Inquisition. He is using the Bellagio family as bait for the Inquisition's enemy, Cagliostro. When Cagliostro helps the Bellagios, Casanova will turn them all over to the Inquisition as occult criminals.

The Bellagios have problems of their own, of course. The widow Elizabeta is in worsening debt to some unsavoury characters, one of whom is courting her reluctant daughter Maria. There seems no way out – until they learn of the magician Cagliostro.

### “ANTONIO PRATOLINI” (GIACOMO CASANOVA)

- Declining fame.
- Conflicted about spying for the Inquisition.
- Using the Bellagios to entrap Cagliostro.

Casanova, the adventurer of legend! He bedded the finest women of Europe, and feared no man, a jealous husband least of all! However, by 1778, the legend has faded. Now aged 53, his manners are out of fashion, his money has run out and his name is slipping into obscurity. He scrapes a living as an informant (or, in his words, a “spy”) for the Venetian Inquisition. His humiliation is acute, because he first found fame for escaping the Inquisition's prison.

As an informant, Casanova (spying alias: “Antonio Pratolini”) is worthless. He reports on dice games and unfaithful wives, to the Inquisition's dismay. There are greater sins being committed! Casanova must find something big, or he'll be out on his ear. Fortunately, he has learned that the magician Cagliostro is travelling nearby. This is his opportunity! Using a Venetian family as bait, he will lure in Cagliostro and deliver him to the Inquisition.

He is not sleeping easily over this plan, however. The family will be sacrificed along with the magician. Casanova has committed many sins in his life, but never has he betrayed innocents to such a dreadful fate.

Will he go through with his subterfuge? Will he be able to live with himself after? It is up to the players' characters to guide him.

## ELIZABETA BELLAGIO

- In spiralling debt to the dangerous Palladio twins.
- Invited Cagliostro to Venice for assistance.

Elizabeta Bellagio is the widow of textile merchant Aldo Bellagio. She does her best to carry on his business, but she inherited a bad situation from her husband. To keep going through a rough patch, he borrowed a substantial sum from the unscrupulous Palladio twins. The rough patch didn't end, and when he died, Aldo was struggling to service the rapidly growing debt. That debt is now hers.

Carla Palladio has offered a way out for Elizabeta. If she simply hands over a family heirloom, a precious gem known as the Bellagio Stone, Carla will forgive the debt. But the Bellagio Stone cannot be found; Elizabeta does not know where her late husband Aldo left it.

In need of help, Elizabeta has gone to one of her oldest friends, the adventurer Casanova, for advice. He suggested inviting the magician Cagliostro to Venice. Cagliostro's magic will surely divine the location of the stone.

Elizabeta went to her society of friends, the Fellows of the Red Lion, and convinced them to support a bid to bring Cagliostro to Venice. Although many of the Fellows hope to join in Cagliostro's renowned ceremonies, it falls to Elizabeta to be his host. And thus she bears the greatest risk; for playing host to a magician will not be received well by the Venetian Inquisition, should they discover the truth.

Will the Bellagio Stone be found? Will Elizabeta resolve her debt? The players will determine her fate.

## SABRINA BELLAGIO

- Dutiful daughter by day, daredevil by night.
- Enduring a deeply unwanted courtship.
- Landed her best friend in trouble with the Inquisition.

Headstrong and restless, Sabrina barely manages to keep up the appearance of the good daughter. But she tries, because she knows her mother faces great challenges, and her loyalty to family is absolute.

The greatest test of this loyalty comes from a suitor. She is being courted by the wealthy Mariano Palladio. She dislikes him, but dares not refuse him. She knows the family is in grave debt to the Palladios. For her mother's sake, she must endure his attentions. She only hopes that some solution is

found before he forces her into marriage. To protect her mother, yes, she will even marry this awful man. With that future ahead of her, all the more reason to live life to the full while she can. After the sun goes down, she has her real fun. She is the only girl in a gang of thrill-seeking troublemakers who call themselves the Forty Thieves. They sneak out at night and challenge each other to feats of great daring and adventure.

Sabrina's great rival is Vincenzo, the Bellagio's favoured gondolier, and also the leader of the Forty Thieves. He delights in belittling and baiting her, so she is determined to show him she is the bravest of all. This has caused her current predicament.

Sabrina announced that she would set off an explosive stink-bomb in the Inquisitorial Headquarters. She suggested Vincenzo was too cowardly to come with her. Vincenzo wouldn't let that stand. So, together, they broke into the Inquisitorial Chambers and thoroughly despoiled its aromatic integrity. But they were discovered! To give Sabrina a chance to escape, Vincenzo allowed himself to be caught. He is now in the Inquisition's custody, and Sabrina is determined to free him, no matter what it takes.

Will she be forced to marry Mariano? Will she free Vincenzo from his prison? The players will help decide her fate.

## ⚙️ JUGGLING THE CAST

Three big story characters, all with their own goals. Here's the trick to managing this crowd without going crazy: partnerships. Match up each of these characters with one of the players' characters.

Then have the story character focus attention on their match. They can confide in them, invite them home, challenge them, ask them questions. Try to get the player interested in the story character and keen to solve their problems.

These partnerships will mean that each story character will have a hook to one player. You just need to keep all your players engaged as you usually would, and the different stories will take care of themselves.

## POTENTIAL MATCHES

If you want, plan in advance who will be a good match for who. However, be prepared to throw all that planning out the window once the game is underway. If one player shows a lot of interest in Sabrina's story, then match them with Sabrina. Here are some suggestions for matches:

- Casanova is a good match for singular characters with complex histories like the Doctor, Clara or Sarah Jane.



- Sabrina is a good match for daring, wildfire characters like Captain Jack or Amy.
- Elizabeta is a good match for down-to-earth or worldly wise characters like Martha, Donna or Rory.

If you only have two players, match them with Sabrina and Elizabeta, leaving Casanova to bounce back and forth.

### THE BELLAGIO STONE

Within the Bellagio home, above the dining table, is a painting of the late Aldo Bellagio. He wears his fanciest clothes and his most serious expression. In his hands is a greenish-yellow gemstone that is shaped like a tall, thin pyramid. This is the Bellagio Stone.

It was passed down through many generations of Bellagios. Family legend called it a lucky stone, attended by guardian spirits who would give the owner visions of future success, and then use their spiritual power to make the visions come true.

All well-connected Venetians have heard of the Bellagio Stone. Most give little credence to these stories, but some say that is only the beginning. The Bellagio Stone, these whispers say, is in fact the legendary Philosopher's Stone. If properly understood, it could turn lead to gold, bring light in the dark and hold back death itself.

Elizabeta doesn't know what to think about these stories. She knows Aldo believed the Stone was powerful. Once he told her that the Stone's magic could drive a man insane. For that reason, she thinks, he hid the Stone away where no one could be tempted by its power. Despite her great need, a part of her hopes that the Stone will never be found.

### SECRETS OF THE STONE

The high society of Venice believe the Bellagio Stone is in fact the Philosopher's Stone. The Special Inquisitor certainly thinks this is the case. However, other views are available, and Casanova for one does not believe a word of it. Occult carry-on is just a fancy way to swindle the gullible, and Cagliostro is the biggest scoundrel of all.

However, Cagliostro is genuinely intrigued by the Stone and its legend. He wishes to claim it for himself. So what is the truth of the Stone? This adventure does not rely on any single explanation. You should choose one of the following:

- It is simply an unusual gemstone, cut in a distinctive shape.
- It is indeed special; perhaps a gem that has grown up inside the Time Vortex, offering glimpses of the past and the future to those who bathe in its artron radiation?
- It is an item of great significance in your own campaign; a message from the Time Lords, or a fragment of the Key to Time?



### WHERE IS THE STONE?

The Bellagio Stone is not lost forever. Indeed, it is very close indeed.

Vincenzo has served the Bellagio family since he became a gondolier. He is not a servant, but a favoured provider of an essential service. He knows the family well.

In this period, Vincenzo impressed Aldo with his good character, and also spritely attitude to life. When Aldo wanted to hide the stone, believing it would bring misery to his family if it remained where they could use it, he went to Vincenzo. Swearing the young gondolier to silence, he secreted the Stone within Vincenzo's gondola.

It has been there ever since. Vincenzo never doubted Aldo's expectation that the stone was bad luck. But Aldo did not reckon on one thing: Sabrina. She is working her way closer to Vincenzo than anyone else; if she is threatened, he might be tempted to break that vow.

Apart from a confession to save Sabrina or her mother, how will the characters determine Vincenzo has the Stone? They might logic their way to it, but Story Points will be of great use. As players

investigate, give them opportunities to find clues leading to this truth in return for a Story Point: for example, one of the other gondoliers might mention that Aldo treated Vincenzo like the son he never had, while a servant might note that in his waning days Aldo wanted to see the sights of Venice a final time and spent many hours touring the canals.

## ⚙️ THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

Quite a lot happens in this opening sequence, which sets up everything else in the adventure. As noted before, we're assuming the characters are using a TARDIS to get around.

### ARRIVAL

To set the tone and get the adventure rolling, it is recommended that you start the adventure with the characters emerging from the TARDIS and right into a tricky situation. Read or paraphrase the following:

*With a wheezing, groaning sound the TARDIS settles in its destination: Venice, 1778. The door opens, and the time travellers emerge, one after the other. They are all wearing masks, ready for the famous Venetian Masquerade. What masks are you wearing?*

Thinking up an answer to the mask question is a good warm-up for players, getting their imaginations working, giving them an opportunity to demonstrate something about their character. After they've answered, and perhaps launched into some banter, you can carry on:

*With surprise, you realise you haven't emerged into a quiet alleyway as planned. Instead you are in the centre of a crowded hall. The crowd stare at you in astonished silence.*

### WHERE ARE THEY?

This is the meeting hall of the Fellows of the Red Lion. They have gathered to welcome the magician Cagliostro to Venice. You can guess what will happen next:

*Everyone wears elaborate finery and artisan masks, and says nothing. Then a woman steps forward. She wears a silver-shot half-mask and a red dress lined with glittering jewels. "My Lord Cagliostro! What an entrance!" And with this cue, the entire room erupts into cheers and applause.*

There are only two exits from the hall, to the front and rear stairs, and both are guarded.

This hall is upstairs from the entrance floor, which is predominantly storerooms and antechambers and closets; there is an even higher level with locked offices and a balcony front and rear, and right at the back, a stone cell.



### NOPE, MY PLAYERS DIDN'T DO THAT

Some groups won't be keen on starting out in the room, preferring to cautiously check the scanner before opening the door, or otherwise taking care not to cause a scene. That's fine! Perhaps the TARDIS lands in the larder, among the wait staff, allowing a more subtle entry to the room?

If they're really cautious, they might also try a short jump to someone more discreet. You could offer Story Points to get them out into the room, but if they aren't tempted, let them go. Wherever they land, it isn't too hard to have someone witness their emergence, and word will quickly get around about Cagliostro's Magical Blue Box...

### IT GETS COMPLICATED

This scene should move fast. Keep the players off-balance by throwing events and details at them at speed – slow down just enough so they catch the important bits.

The woman, who is of course Elizabeta Bellagio, hushes the crowd:

"Of course, we must not use that name! Let me correct myself: I welcome you to Venice, Lord Pellegrini!"

Servants offer platters laden with wine and tiny delicacies. Yum.

Elizabeta was expecting an entrance, but this is incredible! She starts making introductions. (She will not mention Casanova.) The players can play along or try and clear things up.

The crowd is excited: what a coup, what a marvel! Did you hear that Cagliostro predicted the lottery? And spoke with the dead! Why, I heard he could be in two places at once! I was told he shrunk a French bishop to the size of a doll!

There are four important events that make up the rest of this scene. Introduce them in this order:

- One character notices a man wearing a golden hook-nosed half-mask (a Commedia dell'Arte mask for the character Pulcinella). He stands half in the shadows, watching intently. Candlelight reflects off his mask. And then, abruptly, he departs.
- One character is approached by a young man wearing red. He leans in to whisper: "Your host is in the grip of dark forces. I cannot talk here. Follow me." Then, some of the men from the Red Lion Fellows will tap him on the shoulder; he is not a member and is unwelcome. He will hurry from the building.
- Elizabeta introduces her daughter, Sabrina, an attractive girl of 17 in a pearl half-mask. She approaches to politely kiss "Cagliostro" on the cheek. While doing this, she takes the opportunity to steal something from his pockets: a Sonic Screwdriver, perhaps? (Technically this is a contested roll – Awareness + Ingenuity vs. Coordination + Subterfuge – but you could just hand over a Story Point.) Then she makes her way from the room, pausing to ensure one of Cagliostro's entourage sees her with the stolen item. She wants to be followed.
- And then, the Inquisitor arrives.

### CASANOVA, THE HOOK-MASKED LURKER

Casanova knows full well that these new arrivals are not Cagliostro and company. He slips away to regroup. He will be horrified when he sees that the Inquisition are about to raid the place: this is not at all part of his plan! Anyone who tails him will see him hide as the police march by, then find a position where he can watch the raid progress.

### ANTON, THE MAN IN RED

This uninvited guest is a young man named Anton. He hurries from the hall and ducks into a nearby alley. There, he waits for someone to come, so he can deliver his warning: "Your hostess is beholden to the wicked Palladio twins, who desire your treasures. She will try to steal them, and if she fails, they will murder her daughter. And then they will murder you. Be careful. If you give me your protection I will help you escape."

This is when his luck runs out. A noose will slip around his neck and yank him up. The fearsome Mostro, lurking above, will haul him up and leave him hanging from the rooftop for the crows.

Anton lost his inheritance thanks to an unwise deal with the twins, and became their servant. He hopes Cagliostro will cause their downfall and free him. His warning is broadly accurate but gets a few details wrong: the treasure is Carla Palladio's aim only, not her brother's, and she has yet to make any request of any Bellagio.

Note that a quick-thinking player might save Anton from death. Such a result is perfectly fine, although Mostro will make further attempts in short order. Realising the danger, Anton will do his best to make himself scarce, but a convincing player might get him to stick around and lend a hand against the Palladios.

## MOSTRO

AWARENESS	3	PRESENCE	4
COORDINATION	5	RESOLVE	4
INGENUITY	2	STRENGTH	6

### SKILLS

Athletics 6, Fighting 6, Subterfuge 4.

### TRAITS

**Distinctive:** hulking, hairy and huge.

**Fast Healing (Major):** He shrugs off most injuries.

**Outcast:** The only work he can find is murder, but luckily it is work he enjoys.

**Tough:** And most of the time he doesn't get hurt in the first place.

**Unattractive:** His features are twisted and terrifying.

**EQUIPMENT:** Spiked Club (4/8/12), Strangulation Noose (use the rules for drowning, see the **Doctor Who Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook**).

**TECH LEVEL:** 3    **STORY POINTS:** 4

### SABRINA, THE PEARL-MASKED THIEF

Sabrina wants to earn some attention and respect from the new arrivals. Hoping to be followed, she climbs the stairs to the highest level of the building and waits for whoever comes on a balcony overlooking the street. There she will return the stolen item and ask for help with rescuing her friend Vincenzo.

And then, from her high vantage, Sabrina will see the police approaching. She will realise there is no time to warn Elizabeta, so she will take the alternative option of getting away. She gives what advice she can to her new friend, then deftly climbs down the side of the building and heads home. The character can try to follow, or wait for the police to find them as they search the building.

## EVERYBODY HALT!

With a thunder of boots, the City Police come storming into the hall, brandishing pistols. Captain Fracatoro hollers, "All shall halt in the name of the Holy Inquisition of Venice!" Some people try to flee, most just freeze. The police attempt to intimidate the crowd into silence. Elizabeta, as host, is calm and cooperative. The players can respond in a variety of ways:

- **Back to the TARDIS!** This should be difficult or impossible. The first swathe of guards should cut the TARDIS off completely. If the characters persist in trying, offer a Story Point or two for a reason to change tack. If that fails, adjudicate their efforts fairly.
- **Talk to the Inquisition!** The rank and file know better than to chatter away in a situation like this. The Sergeant will be willing to talk however – confirming that his detachment have been seconded to the Holy Inquisition, and securing this building was their first task.
- **Run for it!** Now that's the spirit. The Sergeant will shout "after them!" and a chase will begin! For each fleeing character, two policemen will be in pursuit. They must be shaken off or otherwise dealt with for the escape to take; any fleeing character who is captured will be treated as a prisoner thereafter. If the characters are in trouble here, Casanova might intervene to help them evade the police.
- **Stay quiet!** Keep quiet, let what happens happen, don't draw attention to yourself. This works fine until the Special Inquisitor turns up.
- **Fight our way out!** Well, this isn't really recommended, but it might make sense for some groups. It works how you'd think: big fight, characters marked men thereafter. The rest of this adventure will probably run a little differently if the characters take this course, so you might need to think on your feet a bit.

## ENTER THE SPECIAL INQUISITOR

After the room has been secured and everything is calm, Special Inquisitor Battista makes his entrance.

His beady eyes explore every dark corner and delve into every soul. Everyone is terrified of him.



Marched in behind him is a rangy youth with a sack tied over his head and his hands bound behind his back. Battista makes no reference to this prisoner. This is Sabrina's friend Vincenzo; if she is there to witness, she will instantly recognise him despite the sack.

Battista will speak. Everyone will listen, because he is a very powerful man. He makes an absolute meal out of this:

"Fellows of the Red Lion. A society of mutual aid. Until further notice, you are **shut down**. Closed by order of the Inquisition! We have reason to believe that societies in this precinct conceal gambling! Paganism! Wrong music! And even those who actively plot to humiliate god's Inquisition in Venice!

"Do any of you... wish... to confess?"

If no one fills the silence, Elizabeta will speak up. Flustered, she says this is just a collection of friends who try to help each other get along. Unless the players' characters help, her response will obviously earn Battista's close attention and suspicion.

Battista's general mood is dark. He stands too close to those he speaks with, and his expression is a permanent scowl. He will be very interested in any characters he spots, sensing they are unusual.

Battista will ask questions. Where are they from? How long have they been in Venice, and how did they come? Where is their residence? (Elizabeta will say they are her guests.)

He will be particularly suspicious of the TARDIS: "Magicians are known to keep their secrets in magic boxes such as this. Open it!"

If this questioning goes particularly badly, Battista might decide to arrest some of the characters, or even Elizabeta. More likely, he will just take careful note of suspicious people, for future investigation.

Battista will then announce that this hall is requisitioned as his new headquarters, seeing as the usual office is uninhabitable due to the acts of vandals (see pg. 141).

He will have his men put any prisoners – including the captured Vincenzo – in the cell at the back of the house, to stay there under guard.

He will set up his office and receiving room in the hall, alongside the TARDIS. This means getting access to the TARDIS for the remainder of the adventure will be a bit tricky.

## VENETIAN POLICEMAN

<b>AWARENESS</b>	3	<b>PRESENCE</b>	2
<b>COORDINATION</b>	3	<b>RESOLVE</b>	3
<b>INGENUITY</b>	2	<b>STRENGTH</b>	3

Captain Fracatoro's police force is not actually part of the Inquisition. They have been put under Battista's command through some complicated internal politics that they do not understand. They aren't particularly pleased by this, but as long as they get to smash a few people up from time to time, they're willing to put up with it.

### SKILLS

Athletics 3, Fighting 3, Marksman 3.

**EQUIPMENT:** Club (2/4/6), Pistol (2/5/7).

**TECH LEVEL:** 3 **STORY POINTS:** 0

## THE REST OF THE ADVENTURE

Will Elizabeta be freed of her debt? Will Sabrina marry Mariano? Will Vincenzo be condemned? Will Casanova deliver his friend to the Inquisition? Without help from the players, every one of these questions will receive the most awful answer.

## IMPORTANT LOCATIONS

### CASA BELLAGIO

Cagliostro and company are expected at the Bellagio home, but even if the mistaken identity is discovered, the characters will still be made welcome. A servant named Teodor will attend to all their needs.

Casa Bellagio makes an excellent base of operations. It is large and well-appointed, with an excellent dining room containing a painting of the departed Aldo Bellagio with the Bellagio Stone.

### THE FELLOWS OF THE RED LION HALL

This meeting room has been seized by the Inquisition. Note however that the Red Lion Fellows only occupy one level of this multi-level building. There are various offices up on the very top floor, for example. There are police on guard at the main entrance to the building, but they cannot refuse those with legitimate business elsewhere in the building.

Vincenzo is held in the stone cell (which has also been requisitioned by Battista), with an additional guard at the door. Any other prisoners of the Inquisition will be put in the same room and will have a chance to meet Vincenzo. They will also have ample opportunity to chat with the Special Inquisitor, and even some Venetian Police who are none too happy being ordered around by Battista.

### CASA PALLADIO

This garish, over-dressed mansion is filled with the callous rich, who swirl about in a perpetual party haze and pay obsequious homage to their hosts, the Palladio Twins. Carla and Mariano are usually here, and Mostro lives here in a gloomy tower. There are thugs on the door turning away anyone who is not known to them.

### SAN TROVASO SQUARE

This square is an important location for the building and repair of the city's gondola fleet. Located on the corner of two intersecting canals, it features a wide slipway for launching boats into the water, a large number of gondolas in various states of creation and repair, and a number of shadowy alcoves and corners for privacy.

This square is the favoured midnight meeting place of the Forty Thieves, because Vincenzo stores his gondola here. This is also where Cagliostro arranges

to meet Casanova, because he has guessed that the Bellagio Stone is hidden in Vincenzo's gondola.

## OTHER STREETS AND CANALS

The maze of avenues, paved or watery, is always open for exploration. In this adventure, any character moving from place to place is likely to be spied upon and followed: Casanova, Cagliostro, Mostro and the Inquisition all have reason to follow the characters.



## HOW TO RUN THE REST OF THE ADVENTURE

That opening scene was heavily scripted, telling you exactly what happens when. From now on, though, it's all up to you. For the rest of the adventure, your job as Gamemaster is this:

- Make the story characters forcefully pursue their goals.
- Make the story characters react to everything the players do.

One way to handle this smoothly is to go around the table, giving focus to each player in turn.

- Are they doing something already? If so, great! Work out what happens.
- Is there something they want to do? If so, great! Get them started.
- Are they stalled or unsure? Take the story character they are 'partnered' with (see pg. 141), and have that character drag them into a new situation.

Or consider the opposition characters. Have one of them take an action that will force the player to respond.

Still stuck? Get the player to link in with another player's actions. Offer them a Story Point for suggesting a connection.

And then? Time to have a bad guy kick down a door. Have Mostro turn up to menace the character or anyone else in range. That would keep anyone busy.

## LIST OF EVENTS

Here is how it might go. Players can and will mess up these events. Given the miserable endings everyone finds below, that's probably a good thing.

### Early Afternoon:

- The players' characters arrive, and are mistaken for Cagliostro and company.
- Anton is murdered by Mostro.
- Battista shuts down the Fellows of the Red Lion.

### Late Afternoon:

- The characters are invited to Casa Bellagio, and meet Elizabeta, Sabrina and Casanova.
- Elizabeta asks "Cagliostro" for help in finding the Bellagio Stone.
- Sabrina asks the friends of "Cagliostro" for help in rescuing Vincenzo.

### Mealttime:

- Battista visits the Bellagios; Casanova leaves to avoid him.

### Early Evening:

- Elizabeta pleads with Carla Palladio for more time. (She is refused)
- "Lord Huntingdon" introduces himself to Elizabeta.
- Mariano Palladio gives Sabrina an ultimatum.
- Casanova reports to Battista. (Tells him about the meeting arrangements.)
- Sabrina tries to recruit the other Forty Thieves to help free Vincenzo. (They refuse.)

### Dead of Night:

- Sabrina launches her desperate attempt to free Vincenzo. (It fails. She is arrested too.)

### Near Sunrise:

- "Huntingdon", Casanova and Elizabeta meet at San Trovaso Square. (The Palladios come, and violence breaks out. Mariano kills Elizabeta, and is killed in turn by the arriving Inquisition. The others escape. Casanova has nothing to show for his betrayal.)
- Battista holds a Tribunal. (Vincenzo and Sabrina are condemned.)

## WEAVING STORIES TOGETHER

This is a busy adventure, and it will be easy for characters to split up. Luckily, this is a romp, so unlikely coincidences are entirely appropriate, and the characters should keep running into each other.

As Gamemaster you can take charge of this, but it's easier if you hand this job over to the players. After all, they earn Story Points when they bring separated characters back together (as described on pg. 137).

*For example, the Doctor is in a gondola with Sabrina Bellagio, discussing the Inquisition's defences. Elsewhere, Clara is running for her life with the fearsome Mostro on her tail.*

*Clara's player suggests that she runs over a bridge just as the Doctor's gondola passes underneath. The Gamemaster gives Clara's player a Story Point for linking the characters back together.*

*Or perhaps the Doctor arranges a secret meeting with Casanova. He sets the meeting for under the belltower at midnight. Clara has already arranged to meet with the Palladio twins at that exact time and place – what a coincidence! The Gamemaster gives the Doctor's player a Story Point for linking these events together.*

## SOME COMPLICATIONS

You have a lot of freedom in staging these events, and might find inspiration in the following ideas:

- **Masks:** In Venice at this time, lots of people wear masks. As Gamemaster, keep this in mind always when deciding what will happen next. Characters can disguise themselves in masks, can change their mask to confuse people, or swap masks with other people. Make this adventure "the one with all the masks".
- **Mistaken Identities:** More than once, the Doctor has been on a 'pure historical' adventure and encountered someone who was the spitting image of himself or one of his companions. What would happen if the Doctor looked exactly the same as Casanova?
- **Gondola Chase:** What's a trip to Venice without a good chase along the canals? Gondolas can capsize, or race under low bridges. People can leap from gondola to gondola, or gondola to solid ground. (And remember: gondoliers don't use poles to push, they use oars to row. That's the kind of detail that will convince everyone you've spent hours and hours on research!)

## ⚙️ WHAT THEY ALL DID NEXT

### CASANOVA

As soon as he sees the players' characters mistaken for Cagliostro, Casanova knows his plan is about to spiral out of control.

#### Action: Investigate the Cagliostro Imposter

First order of business is working out who these folk are. After watching for a short time, Casanova will arrange to cross paths with 'Cagliostro' or part of his company, introduce himself, and attempt to befriend them. He will pretend to have never met Cagliostro before, and to be excited to make the acquaintance.

He will not tip his hand, nor confide to Elizabeta that this is the wrong Cagliostro. A false Cagliostro is still a prize for the Inquisition, after all – no point driving them away just yet.

(When the truth does come out, Casanova will say that he knows Cagliostro sometimes sends agents ahead of him to determine if a place is safe, and he thought it simplest to play along.)

#### Action: Report to Special Inquisitor Battista.

Casanova is expected to report to the Special Inquisitor during the night. He will change into a black cloak and a silver mask to creep into the Special Inquisitor's headquarters, where he will insist on using only the name "Pratolini".

Unless there is some intervention by players, "Pratolini" will report (in craven and fearful manner) on a family indulging in ungodly magic. He does not tell Battista the name of this family! Then, to impress the Special Inquisitor further, Casanova will announce that his true target is the famed wizard Cagliostro. This will intrigue Battista, and give "Pratolini" some hope that his future may be safe, if he delivers this prize.

#### Action: Seduce a Lady

Whenever the opportunity strikes, Casanova will attempt to seduce any woman who impresses him. He does this in a good-natured way, with no sense of entitlement but every confidence that mutual pleasure will result. He is persistent but not offensive, and is quite gentlemanly in his own way.

#### Action: Spark a Duel

During the adventure, Casanova will be sensitive to challenges to his honour. In particular, any attempt to suggest he is in league with the Inquisition will earn the accuser an immediate challenge to a duel.

Action: Meet with Cagliostro

When Cagliostro's invitation to meet arrives, Casanova will eagerly agree. This is his chance to spring his trap – if Elizabeta comes as well. He will try to convince her to join them, and will tip off the Inquisition.

But Casanova is of two minds about this action. He also genuinely wants to meet Cagliostro again, and perhaps learn some of the master manipulator's secrets. He doesn't want Elizabeta to suffer. Only a character's intervention can change what he does.

GIACOMO CASANOVA  
A.K.A. "ANTONIO PRATOLINI"

AWARENESS	4	PRESENCE	6
COORDINATION	4	RESOLVE	3
INGENUITY	5	STRENGTH	3

SKILLS

Convince 6, Craft 3, Fighting 3, Knowledge 4, Marksman 2, Medicine 2, Subterfuge 5.

TRAITS

**Attractive:** Even with his advancing years, he's still got it.

**Charming:** His patter was honed by decades of practice.

**Dark Secret:** Secretly a servant of the Inquisition.

**Empathic:** He has always been a good reader of people, and knowing just how to push his luck has been very handy in the past.

**Lucky:** But he is the first to admit that he has had fortune shine upon him at many times through his life. Not so much right now, though.

**Psychic Training:** He's spent enough time faking the occult that he can swerve the real thing too.

EQUIPMENT:

Sabre 3/5/7.

TECH LEVEL:

 3

STORY POINTS:

 8

ELIZABETA BELLAGIO

(Note: In the unlikely event she was arrested by Battista, she is soon escorted home and placed under house arrest, with a single guard at the door.) Elizabeta's top problem is Carla Palladio. This is not a good day for her.

Action: Put Cagliostro to Work

Cagliostro has come at the invitation of the Red Lion Fellows, but Elizabeta has yet to detail her specific,

desperate need. She must recover the Bellagio Stone, and Cagliostro is her last hope. If and when she discovers that her new guest is not Cagliostro, well, perhaps that's just fate sending the right person at the right time. She will take whatever help she can find.

Action: Ask Carla Palladio for More Time

After Cagliostro is on the case, Elizabeta will set out to plead with Carla for more time. This will probably involve visiting the Palladio's estate, which is currently hosting a party, and finding Carla there.

Carla will not be moved by Elizabeta's pleading, and will instead try and extract as much information as possible from her: what has changed to provoke this visit? If she learns of Cagliostro she will be most interested.

ELIZABETA BELLAGIO

AWARENESS	3	PRESENCE	3
COORDINATION	2	RESOLVE	5
INGENUITY	3	STRENGTH	2

SKILLS

Convince 2, Knowledge 3.

TRAITS

**Screamer:** Elizabeta has been known to exercise her lungs when shocked or afraid.

**Unadventurous:** She just wants to be rid of all this drama.

TECH LEVEL:

 3

STORY POINTS:

 4

SABRINA BELLAGIO

Sabrina's initial goal is to free Vincenzo. After the visit from Battista that points out the Bellagio Stone might be a useful bargaining chip, she adds that to her list of options. She doesn't know much about Casanova. She particularly doesn't know that he made his name escaping from an Inquisitorial prison. If someone points this out, she might try and get him to help.

Above all, Sabrina is a strong force for action. She'd rather do something and make everything worse than sit quietly and wait for other people to decide her fate. Also, she will flirt with anyone who seems responsive. She enjoys flirting. And she is completely in denial about how hard she's fallen for the infuriating Vincenzo.

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## SABRINA BELLAGIO

AWARENESS	3	PRESENCE	3
COORDINATION	5	RESOLVE	5
INGENUITY	2	STRENGTH	4

## SKILLS

Athletics 4, Convince 3, Fighting 3, Subterfuge 4.

## TRAITS

**Argumentative:** Just because I'm a girl doesn't mean I'm not right!

**Brave:** Ah, the foolhardy eagerness of youth!

**Impulsive:** There's that foolhardy eagerness again.

**Run For Your Life!** The police are hot on her tail!

TECH LEVEL: 3    STORY POINTS: 6

## Action: Try to Recruit Cagliostro

This Cagliostro chap has some magic, and will surely be able to help rescue Vincenzo. Even if it turns out this isn't the real Cagliostro, well, there's something pretty special here. Any help will be gratefully accepted.

## Action: Try to Recruit the Forty Thieves

There aren't actually forty of them; only nine, in fact, including Vincenzo and Sabrina. That means seven possible helpers for a rescue mission. Sabrina sets out to get their help, going to meet them at San Trovaso Square. They are likely to turn her down. The Inquisition is serious business, and it is just too risky. This, of course, just makes Sabrina more determined to do it herself. Characters who stick their nose into this process might be able to get some of the other Thieves to help Sabrina after all; if not right away, perhaps they will be inspired to have a change of heart and race to the rescue in time for the climax.

## Action: Rescue Vincenzo

She has no idea how to do this. She plans to sneak in first, and make it up as she goes along once she's there. Battista is of course ready for this sort of thing, given the Forty Thieves busted into his last headquarters: he has a hidden force of police ready and waiting to spring a trap if she tries this. It will all go very badly unless she gets help.

## Action: Get the Bellagio Stone to Battista

She doesn't much know how to do this. If the Stone gets near her, she will happily steal it away and deliver it to the Inquisitor. When she hears that Casanova and

Cagliostro will meet in San Trovaso Square to recover the Stone, she will be prepared to hand over this information to Battista and try to broker Vincenzo's freedom.

## Action: Marry Mariano

If sunrise comes, the Bellagio Stone has not been found and she hasn't figured out another way to save everyone, she sadly gives up on Vincenzo and goes to the church to marry Mariano. A player might be able to show her other options, however.

## VINCENZO CRISTIANO

AWARENESS	3	PRESENCE	3
COORDINATION	4	RESOLVE	4
INGENUITY	2	STRENGTH	5

## SKILLS

Athletics 4, Convince 3, Fighting 3, Subterfuge 4, Transport 3.

## TRAITS

**Attractive:** He exudes a devilish bad-boy charm.

**Friends (Minor):** As the leader of the 40 Thieves, he has trustworthy contacts in all the powerful families of Venice.

**Obligation:** Aldo entrusted him with a secret and he will not break that trust.

**Quick Reflexes:** The sort of thing that comes in handy when you need to save your friends from the Inquisition.

TECH LEVEL: 3    STORY POINTS: 2

## MEMBER OF THE FORTY THIEVES

AWARENESS	3	PRESENCE	3
COORDINATION	4	RESOLVE	4
INGENUITY	3	STRENGTH	4

## SKILLS

Athletics 3, Convince 2, Fighting 3, Subterfuge 2.


**EQUIPMENT:** Sabre or Club (3/6/9)

TECH LEVEL: 3    STORY POINTS: 0

### SPECIAL INQUISITOR BERNANDO BATTISTA

Battista is the new Inquisitor in town. He is operating with a fairly free hand, having been sent from the Vatican to shake things up in Venice. Perhaps unusually for an Inquisitor, Battista has lost his faith. He is deeply cynical of all human action and sees everything as an attempt to win some advantage from another person. He has the power to arrest whoever he likes and subject them to fierce questioning, but he does not resort to torture.

At the start of the adventure, Battista has Vincenzo in custody, knows he is part of a group of troublemakers called the Forty Thieves and suspects Sabrina Bellagio is also involved. He also has heard that the Bellagio Stone is the Philosopher's Stone. He wants that stone. If he could bring it back to the Vatican Library, he would be made for life. He does not know that Cagliostro is in town, or that the Bellagios are dabbling in occult activity, or that Casanova is involved with the Bellagios.



## BERNANDO BATTISTA

AWARENESS	6	PRESENCE	4
COORDINATION	3	RESOLVE	4
INGENUITY	3	STRENGTH	3

**SKILLS**  
Athletics 3, Convince 4, Fighting 3, Marksman 3, Medicine 3, Survival 3

**TRAITS**  
**By the Book:** Following the rules is an instinctive refuge in a world of madness and sin. Fortunately, the rules do allow him a great deal of room for personal initiative.  
**Code of Conduct:** He must always live up to the goals of the Inquisition and the moral standard expected of an agent of the Pope.  
**Indomitable:** Battista will be cowed by no one.  
**Keen Senses:** The evidence of sin is all around, if you are just attentive enough to notice.  
**Psychic Training:** He can see through any hell-fueled deception.  
**Voice of Authority:** He doesn't need to raise his voice to be heard.

**EQUIPMENT:** Club [2/4/6], Pistol [2/5/7].

**TECH LEVEL:** 3    **STORY POINTS:** 8

Use Battista as an obstacle and antagonist. He is suspicious of the players' characters, sensing they are out of place. He is smart and sensible while also being a (certain kind of) zealot. If he can be somehow made an ally, he will be a valuable one, but his true allegiance is always to Godly Justice.

#### Action: Visit the Bellagios and put Pressure on Sabrina

Battista visits the Bellagios, timing his visit to the dinner hour, knowing that Elizabeta will be required by courtesy to invite him to join them. He intends to ask them about Vincenzo, who is likely to be convicted of acting against the Inquisition. He knows that Vincenzo has a long association as the favoured gondolier of the family. He asks if they have heard of the Forty Thieves (Elizabeta has not, and Sabrina will claim that she has not).

If he can get Sabrina alone, he tells her: "Vincenzo's tribunal will be held at sunrise. I expect he will be convicted. And you will never see him again. Unless... you bring me the Bellagio Stone. Bring me the Stone, and Vincenzo may yet walk free."

If he cannot get Sabrina alone, he pretends to admire the painting of Aldo, and notice the Stone: "You know, the Vatican would be very pleased to accept that Stone. I imagine we would be... kindly disposed... towards one who delivered it to the Church's care. It would surely put us in a forgiving mood." He gives Sabrina a very pointed look indeed. She catches his meaning.

#### Action: Arrest the Characters

Right from the moment he meets them, Battista will sense the characters are out of place. He will be watching them with hawk-eyes. If he ever feels like they are interfering with his work, or are themselves guilty of any crimes, then he will order their arrest. Once this order has been given, the police will do their best to comply. Launch the chase scene, unless a character or two wants to go along willingly!

It is quite likely that one character will draw Battista's attention and ire more than others. In this case, let him order the arrest of just that one character. The others will have plenty of other storyline to be getting on with!

And of course, if Battista gets hold of one character, he will try to get them to inform on the others – echoing the predicament in which Casanova finds himself.

#### Action: Hold Vincenzo's Tribunal

At sunrise, Battista will hold a tribunal against Vincenzo, and sentence him to prison in the Piombi,

effective immediately. Vincenzo is doomed unless he is rescued somehow, or unless someone speaks for him at the tribunal in a way that is extremely convincing.

Battista would much rather get hold of the Philosopher's Stone, of course. He will try to follow up with Sabrina Bellagio before going through with the tribunal, to see if she has come up with the goods. If he gets word about the Stone, he will deploy the full force of the Inquisition to crash that party.

### ABOUT THE INQUISITION

The Inquisitors, of whom Battista is the prime representative, hold their courts in secret and their justice is swift and terrible. The punishments they give out include confinement to the home, exile from Venice, condemnation to the galleys, imprisonment or instant death.

Venetian citizens all think of imprisonment when they think of the Inquisition. When the Inquisition wishes to imprison an ordinary criminal, they are placed in the Piombi, a small cell roasted by the summer sun. But more violent or sinister sorts were sent to the Pozzi, a dank, silent prison of horrid stone. The Venetian Inquisitors do not torture their suspects, mind you. They do maintain a fairly extensive collection of poisons, however, for reasons that remain unclear.

### THE PALLADIO TWINS, MARIANO AND CARLA

Mariano and Carla are in the business of being wealthy, and getting wealthier. They are a dramatic pair: handsome Mariano, beautiful Carla, both sleekly elegant with eyes like blades. They are ruthless in their dealings, and believe the law is for fools who don't have the courage to defy it.

Mariano has decided he wants Sabrina as his wife. As long as Elizabeta is indebted to them, then Sabrina cannot resist him. Once she gives in to marriage, he looks forward to taming her fiery spirit.

Carla has a much grander aim: in her vanity, she wants to live forever. Elizabeta has the Bellagio Stone, which might hold the secret. She wants the Stone. She will happily kill anyone who gets in her way.

Use the twins as your go-to troublemakers. They will turn up at the wrong times and make every situation worse. They have access to a wide network of thugs

and informants; anyone the characters meet could be on the take. And of course they have on their side the terrifying Mostro, a murderer of great efficiency and power (see pg. 144 for his stats)...

Their greatest weakness is that their partnership is far from rock-solid. Turning one twin against the other is a distinct possibility.

### MARIANO PALLADIO

AWARENESS	3	PRESENCE	4
COORDINATION	4	RESOLVE	2
INGENUITY	2	STRENGTH	4

#### SKILLS

Athletics 2, Fighting 4, Marksman 3.

#### TRAITS

##### Attractive

**Selfish:** The twins are loyal to each other – but only up to a point.

**EQUIPMENT:** Sabre (3/6/9), Pistol (2/5/7).

**TECH LEVEL:** 3 **STORY POINTS:** 4

### CARLA PALLADIO

AWARENESS	4	PRESENCE	4
COORDINATION	3	RESOLVE	5
INGENUITY	5	STRENGTH	2

#### SKILLS

Convince 4, Fighting 2, Knowledge 3, Subterfuge 4.

#### TRAITS

##### Attractive

**Selfish:** The twins are loyal to each other – but only up to a point.

**TECH LEVEL:** 3 **STORY POINTS:** 6

### Action: Murder Anton – and his Friends

This is one of the first events in the adventure: on the orders of the Palladios, who know he has betrayed them, Anton is murdered by Mostro. If the characters intervene, they will become marked for

the same treatment. The Palladios will send Mostro to kill them as well, to tie up loose ends. Similarly, they will soon work out that Anton was trying to recruit help from the Bellagios' guests – and if those guests take the slightest step in the direction of the Palladios? Then they become targets. Expect a surprise visit from Mostro.

**Action: Give Sabrina an Ultimatum (Mariano)**

When Elizabeta comes to talk with Carla at Casa Palladio, Mariano realises that Sabrina will be alone. Abandoning the lusty distractions he was passing time with, he makes haste to the Bellagio home and demands an audience with Sabrina. Then he tells her: the time has come. He will be at the church at sunrise. If she does not appear there and become his bride, then things will become very, very difficult for the Bellagio family.

**Action: Seduce Cagliostro (Carla)**

If Carla Palladio learns that the guest of the Bellagios is Cagliostro, she will be immediately intrigued. If anyone understands the secrets of eternal life, it is he. Perhaps he even carries with him an elixir of life?

The only way to find out is to seduce him, and conquer him. And Carla is not a woman to be easily deterred.

**Action: Trail Elizabeta (Carla)**

Carla has her thugs and helpers keep close tabs on Elizabeta's movements. If she might be close to finding the Bellagio Stone, Carla wants to know about it, so she can swoop in and claim it before the woman gets any funny ideas. If these thugs are spotted, a chase sequence could ensue as they try to keep up...

**PALLADIO THUG**

<b>AWARENESS</b>	3	<b>PRESENCE</b>	2
<b>COORDINATION</b>	3	<b>RESOLVE</b>	2
<b>INGENUITY</b>	2	<b>STRENGTH</b>	4

**SKILLS**  
Athletics 2, Fighting 3.

**EQUIPMENT:** Club (2/5/7).

**TECH LEVEL:** 3    **STORY POINTS:** 0



**CAGLIOSTRO**

Cagliostro is expected in Venice under the identity of Count Pellegrini. The invitation came from one Elizabeta Bellagio. Ever cautious, Cagliostro did not directly attend Bellagio's welcome, but rather took lodging elsewhere. (Cagliostro's wife, Lorenza, is also in Venice but she is happy to stay out of view throughout this adventure.)

Cagliostro goes everywhere with a sample of the Elixir of Life (in a small vial on a chain around his neck) and of the Philosopher's Stone (a crushed powder in a small bag on a leather strap also around his neck). He has observed the appearance of a false Cagliostro with some interest. He has also noted the presence of Casanova in the welcoming party. And, finally, the intervention of the Inquisition. He is curious to understand the full meaning of these events.

**Action: Enter Count Huntingdon**

Cagliostro will disguise himself and adopt another identity, "Count Huntingdon", a foppish and inept noble from England on his grand tour of Europe. Wearing an elaborate feathered mask, he will arrive at Casa Bellagio and – loud enough for the whole street to hear, in fractured Italian – he will announce he is there to see Cagliostro the magician.

His story is that he has been corresponding with Cagliostro for some time, and was advised by Cagliostro that they would have an opportunity to meet in Venice. He says that Cagliostro gave him the Bellagios' name, and he found their address himself.

He wants to be welcomed in where he can try and work out what is happening with the family, their needs, and the false Cagliostro.

#### Action: Arrange to Meet Casanova

Cagliostro wants to meet Casanova, to catch up on old times and share their learning from the last decade of life. He doesn't know Casanova is involved with the Bellagios until he observes him there, either from a spy point nearby, or up close as "Count Huntingdon". (Note that he doesn't spend too much time with Casanova in this identity, not wanting to push his luck.) However it happens, he sends word to Casanova that he wishes to meet shortly before sunrise, at San Trovaso Square. Count Huntingdon will of course consider himself invited to this meeting as well.

#### Action: Humiliate the False Cagliostro

How dare this foolish person claim to be him! A confrontation and duel of magic might be appropriate; or just turning Elizabeta against them? He is open to opportunity.

#### Action: Find (and Keep?) the Bellagio Stone

Cagliostro cannot resist a mystery. He swiftly guesses that Aldo hid the Bellagio Stone, that he must have confided in someone, and that the confidante would be a figure he had known a long time but who would be able to keep a secret from Elizabeta. Hearing from the Inquisition of Vincenzo's connection to the family, he concludes that it is concealed in Vincenzo's gondola. Or perhaps he saw it all in a dream?

Whether, or how, he reveals this truth depends on how the meeting progresses. He might, if it suits him, tell people with a flourish that the Stone is destroyed; or that it is concealed in one place, sending everyone rushing off to claim it, while he goes over to Vincenzo's gondola...

His preference is to keep the Bellagio Stone for himself. He expects he can arrange this amicably with Elizabeta, but will not be above simple theft should it come to that.

## COUNT ALESSANDRO CAGLIOSTRO A.K.A. "COUNT PELLEGRINI", "LORD HUNTINGDON"

AWARENESS	6	PRESENCE	6
COORDINATION	3	RESOLVE	5
INGENUITY	6	STRENGTH	3

#### SKILLS

Athletics 2, Convince 6, Craft 4, Fighting 4, Knowledge 5, Medicine 3, Science 3, Subterfuge 5, Survival 3.

#### TRAITS

**Charming:** Like the Devil himself.

**Empathic:** An expert reader of his audience.

**Friends:** Contacts with the great and good throughout Europe.

**Hypnosis (Major):** Few can resist his influence...

**Immortal:** Or so he claims. What is the truth?

**Indomitable:** And few can subject him to their influence.

**Outcast:** Devoting his life to magic means he is an enemy of the Church, which is hugely powerful throughout Europe.

**Psychic:** His fame is based on his displays of power. Are they real?

**Psychic Training:** He laughs at these petty tricks.

**Technically Adept:** He is always hungry for greater understanding.

**EQUIPMENT:** Sabre (3/5/7)

**TECH LEVEL:** 3    **STORY POINTS:** 12

Historians would report that Count Alessandro di Cagliostro is 35 years old as this adventure takes place. Cagliostro would laugh in their faces, announce that he is thousands of years old, and tell vivid tales of his adventures in past eras. Cagliostro's true identity has never been absolutely confirmed. Some say it is slander to identify him as an Italian petty thief, and that Cagliostro's real past remains a secret.

The stories that Cagliostro was very old, hundreds of years old, even thousands – perhaps they are true? Perhaps Cagliostro is an alien himself, or has been given a greatly-extended lifespan by an alien queen, or is a robot, or even a Time Lord? Or perhaps Cagliostro really is just a fraudulent sharpster with a good line in telling people what they want to hear? This adventure does not specify Cagliostro's true nature. It is quite likely that the players will never be in a position to find out. Should that circumstance arise, it is up to you to choose exactly what version of Cagliostro is 'true' for your game.

## WHAT ARE CAGLIOSTRO'S TREASURES?

The Elixir of Life and the Philosopher's Stone are both treasured by Cagliostro, and reputed to hold great magic. It is up to you as to their true nature. Are they simply an ineffectual potion and some fancy dust, devoid of special power? Are they relics of alien science, sufficient to lengthen human life and transmute one substance into another? Are they Time Lord devices concealed in the legends of occult science on Earth? Whatever the truth, they are seen as greatly valuable by everyone in the adventure.

## WRAPPING UP

### BEFORE SUNRISE

In this kind of adventure, with lots of characters pushing in different directions, no specific climax can be guaranteed, but three crucial events are scheduled in the vicinity of sunrise:

- Casanova, "Count Huntingdon" and Elizabeta will go to meet Cagliostro at San Trovaso Square.
- Vincenzo will face an Inquisition Tribunal.
- Sabrina will be expected at the Church for an unwanted wedding.

It is most likely that things will come to a head at San Trovaso Square. (However, the characters might end up at the Inquisition's headquarters, at the Church, at the Bellagio home, at the Palladio estate or almost anywhere!). Whatever the setting, as Gamemaster you should contrive to have as many factions

and characters as possible pile into the climactic sequence. Pay off all the prior events and give the players a romp to remember! Here is how the climax might go down:

- Casanova, "Huntingdon" (Cagliostro) and Elizabeta meet in San Trovaso Square. There they will discuss the mysteries of eternal life, among other things.
- The Bellagio Stone's hiding place is revealed, and the Stone is claimed by Elizabeta.
- Carla Palladio arrives (with Mostro and some other thugs), having guessed that the Bellagio Stone is about to be found (and to strong-arm Cagliostro into giving up his secrets).
- Sabrina Bellagio arrives, fleeing from the Inquisition with a newly rescued Vincenzo, hoping Cagliostro or Casanova will help them escape.
- Mariano Bellagio arrives, in search of his Sabrina.
- The Inquisition arrives, in pursuit of Sabrina, also tipped off to the secret meeting by Casanova, intending to arrest everybody and throw them all in prison.
- The Forty Thieves arrive to support Vincenzo.

If the players do not intervene, then this results in the worst possible outcome: the Palladios escape, the Bellagios are arrested, Casanova testifies against them and never forgives himself. (Cagliostro also escapes – he has a greater role to fulfil in history yet.)

If the players get to San Trovaso Square then things can go down very differently. They might help Sabrina and Vincenzo to escape, they might convince Battista not to arrest anyone, they might put the Palladios in the sights of the Inquisition, they might get the massed gondoliers of Venice to

## FITTING IN WITH LEGENDS

As the Bellagio Stone is passed around, find some way to get it into Casanova's hands, and then have something strange happen. Perhaps it is struck by Mostro and shatters, or Battista shoots it and it explodes, or perhaps a Sonic Screwdriver reacts badly to it and it vibrates out of phase – whatever the excuse, have it interact with Casanova in some dramatic and unexpected way. This will set up for a nice tip of the hat to Venetian legend. Cagliostro can explain: "You shall die as any other man would. But your death will not be your end. Instead, you will pass into a new existence, through a kind of bodily renewal. And then an entire new life will be yours to enjoy, then another, then another! As many as a dozen new lifetimes lie ahead of you."

Venetian legend, popular through to the 21st century, holds that Casanova met Cagliostro in San Trovaso Square in 1778, and learned the secret of eternal life. If the legend is true, then Casanova has lived many lives, with many faces, and still resides in the city of Venice. This is an old legend, and resemblance to the Time Lord process of regeneration is strictly coincidental... isn't it?

crash the party... The possibilities are endless. When you run this sequence, things to remember:

- Don't be intimidated by the large number of characters, just move through them one by one and have each of them chase hard for their goals.
- Put some genuine risk on the table – make this climax count. The players should have Story Points to help them turn things around, but don't make it easy on them.
- Put the Bellagio Stone in play. Everyone wants it, and it can bounce from person to person, be hurled into the water, be lost down someone's trousers...

Keep going until there are no more conflicting goals to worry about.

### ⚙️ AFTERMATH

Once the threats to Casanova and the Bellagios are resolved, the players will eventually prepare to leave. Make sure to give them a chance to bid farewell to the story characters whose lives they have changed, or failed to change, so they can appreciate their influence. The Bellagios and Casanova, in particular, will hopefully be waved off as friends, but perhaps circumstance will not be so kind.

### ⚙️ OPTIONAL VARIATION: ALIENS AMONG US

The Bellagio Stone is a time-sensitive device of Time Lord origin. As a focusing device, it could allow a military force to launch a remote bombardment of their target from the safety of the Time Vortex.

The Elixir of Life and the Philosopher's Stone are other versions of exactly the same technology. Cagliostro's presence in Venice with these items is not accidental – time itself is bending to bring them together.

The meeting of Cagliostro and Casanova in Venice is therefore a nexus point in time, that has drawn attention of others who understand the great power they could win:

### KRILLITANES

A family of Krillitanes have established themselves in Venice, waiting for an opportunity to swoop on the treasure. They have surrounded the Palladio twins, and the twins now work for these strange, sinister masters. However Carla and Mariano have goals of their own – immortality and Sabrina's hand respectively – and the Krillitanes are not at all interested in helping

them achieve these goals. Ultimately, this alliance seems destined to shatter; but perhaps not until the Krillitanes have achieved their goal.

The Forty Thieves know there is something amiss with the Palladio twins; they have witnessed the late-night transformation of some Krillitanes, and have learned not to climb too close to the gargoyles on the nearby buildings.



### DALEKS

Also hunting the treasure: a small force of Daleks, maintaining a time cabinet in the Inquisition Headquarters. Daleks roam underwater along the canals, emerging to exterminate any who stand in their way. The Inquisition is thoroughly corrupted to their needs; all except this new Special Inquisitor, who has his own agenda and senses trouble within the Inquisition.

The gondoliers are aware of a strange new presence in the canals, and more than one gondolier has disappeared entirely leaving no trace behind. They theorise that the Devil has sent his minions to harass the Inquisition, because this new presence seems to be centred on the Inquisition's headquarters.

### MANAGING THE ALIENS

With one or both of these new forces in play, the complexity of the adventure ramps up further, and it will take a bit more play to push things through to a conclusion. And that conclusion could be overloaded with danger as Daleks and Krillitanes join Cagliostro, Casanova, Mostro and the rest on the slipways of San Trovaso Square...

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