



Who's ready for the GHOST TRAIN?

With just one week to go, **Steven Moffat**, the creative force behind *Doctor Who*, gives us his exclusive guide to the thrill-packed new season. And guess what – it's the scariest yet...



AH, IT'S THAT TIME of year again. If you close your eyes and wish your hardest, you can just about hear them – the Tardis engines grinding in the sky. The Doctor is coming back.

When last seen, he tumbled down a chimney on Christmas Eve and saved a bad man's soul, but darker days now lie ahead for the last of the Time Lords. The Silence, the unseen enemy who blew up his Tardis last year, have laid deeper plans and set the deadliest trap of all – one that has been ticking away in the Doctor's life for longer than anyone knows.

Newlyweds Amy and Rory are caught up in a century-spanning scheme, and somewhere out there, in a storm-lashed prison, River Song is getting ready to tell the Doctor something that will change his life for ever.

By Lake Silencio, on the Plain of Sighs, a story will begin and end. A good man is going to die, an impossible life will begin, and our heroes will set out on the long road to the deadliest secret in the universe – and when it stares you in the face, you might just discover you've known about it all along.

This year *Doctor Who* happens twice. Seven episodes now, a cliffhanger that changes everything, then six more episodes after the summer. But that's not all that is changing. Last year was a rollercoaster: Matt Smith's amazing new Doctor came bursting out of the Tardis and tried every ride in the funfair – except one. It's time to step aboard the ghost train.

Welcome to new monsters, new terrors and *Doctor Who* season six. Hold tight!

Steven Moffat is head writer and executive producer of Doctor Who, co-creator of Sherlock, and winner of a Royal Television Society award for an outstanding contribution to television.

MATT SMITH ON THE DOCTOR'S FUTURE AND STEVEN MOFFAT'S UNMISSABLE EPISODE GUIDE

'The Doctor gets to flirt'

Matt Smith on the life and loves of a Time Lord

HE HAS PLENTY to smile about. Filming of his second series as the nation's favourite Time Lord – including a cinematic jaunt to Monument Valley, USA – is inching towards completion; his portrayal of Christopher Isherwood in *Christopher and His Kind* has received glowing notices and tonight Matt Smith is going out for dinner à deux with model girlfriend Daisy Lowe. And then he has to spoil it all by saying something stupid.

"What cheese does a horse wear to a ball?" he volunteers. Don't know, comes our reply.

"Mascarpone!"

"I'm not a joke-teller," he adds, possibly unnecessarily. "And yet I want to be funny."

Of course, there's a big difference between being a joke-teller and being funny. Smith, it can be safely said, is probably not the former but is certainly the latter. He's succeeded David Tennant with a Doctor who is, above all, playful, fusing a child-like inquisitiveness with an offbeat sense of humour to create a character a million miles away from the William Hartnell original, yet unquestionably the same. In an era when being "dark" is automatically assumed to equate with being good, Smith's way is refreshingly bold.

His playful approach might be tested in the forthcoming series, however, for despite an episode of piratical swashbuckling, there will also be the Silence, an enemy as grim as anything he's faced, and a subject that is nobody's idea of a laughing matter: marriage. One episode, written by bestselling author Neil Gaiman, is called *The Doctor's Wife*. Is he really going to tie the intergalactic knot?

"He's too much of a space bachelor," Smith naysays with a laugh. "The universe is his mistress and he's not going to give her up for anyone!" Yet with Amy and Rory now married, one might imagine the Doctor feels a little locked out of their love-in.

"He finds marriage all rather peculiar, I have to say. To him, spending his whole life with someone is an alien concept. Should he meet the girl of his dreams and they travel around together? Naaah! He wants to keep them coming. He loves the attention of a beautiful young lady on his arm. The Doctor gets to flirt – he gets all that – he just doesn't get all the rubbish stuff. He doesn't have to clean up!"

Of course, Smith isn't going to answer, but you have to ask

anyway. Is he going to get it on with River Song, Alex Kingston's intriguing woman of mystery?

"Maybe the Doctor will pack it all in and go and live in a shack with River, but I can't see it," he muses. "I think he's always going to have the element of a mad man with a box, which I really like." During the past three years, the Doctor and River's lives have often intersected but in the wrong time order. "What Steven Moffat has done with those two characters is so clever because she knows more than him. Obviously, for the Doctor that's a rarity, because usually he knows the most. He doesn't like not knowing the most. He knows the science, but River knows the future."

Now deep into his second series, Smith has fully embraced the culture of the programme and the depth of feeling it evokes in so many. "Doctor Who is brilliant," he states unequivocally. "Science fiction invites conspiratorial thinking, which I also think is brilliant. Why not sit at home on the computer and be conspiratorial? There are worse ways of spending an evening."

What were his obsessions when he was younger? "Football, really, was my obsession," he replies, with reference to his truncated time playing as a schoolboy for Nottingham Forest and Leicester City. "It was my only obsession like that, I suppose. Everyone has faith in something, whether it's science fiction or football or... fabrics, anything. You have to have passion for something. It's lovely to think that the show I'm involved in incites so much passion and so much opinion, where people care about their opinion and want to be heard. To be part of something like that is thrilling."

How long does he expect that involvement to continue? "I take it year by year," he says. "I would hope that this year wouldn't be my last, but you don't know. I would like to do next year as well, I think. But these matters are unto the gods!"

The gods seem to be smiling. So long as his contract doesn't stipulate joke-telling, he should be good for a while yet. *John Naughton*

Doctor Who will return next week. Read our preview and see more shots from the new series at radiotimes.com/doctor-who

NEXT WEEK:
MATT SMITH'S
EXCLUSIVE US DIARY,
PLUS KAREN GILLAN
AND ARTHUR DARVILL

THE ULTIMATE EPISODE GUIDE BY STEVEN MOFFAT



1 The Impossible Astronaut 2 Day of the Moon

Writer Steven Moffat **Director** Toby Haynes
Guest stars Alex Kingston, Mark Sheppard, Stuart Milligan

For the first time since the show came back, we're starting with a two-parter. I said to our genius director Toby Haynes (*The Pandorica Opens/The Big Bang* and *A Christmas Carol*), "Start like it's the finale", and my God, that's just what he's done. I'm not sure *Doctor Who* has ever felt bigger, bolder or madder. The Doctor, Amy, Rory and River in the Valley of the Gods, Nixon's White House, Area 51 and a strangely familiar spaceship. Oh, and there's Alex Kingston diving backwards off a skyscraper.

Look, what else do you want from your television? Well, monsters, I expect. And oh, we've got monsters. The Silence, revealed at last. And I'd like to tell you about them. I really would. But I can't – I just can't. You'll see.

BE AFRAID
New foe, the Silence

THE NIGHTMARE BEGINS
A desert picnic is interrupted for River (Alex Kingston), Amy (Karen Gillan) and Rory (Arthur Darvill) – but by what or by whom? Find out next week...

3 The Curse of the Black Spot

Writer Steve Thompson **Director** Jeremy Webb
Guest stars Hugh Bonneville, Lily Cole, Lee Ross

Pirates in *Doctor Who*? Hugh Bonneville [below] in a beard! Matt Smith in a stupid hat! Ooh, this one's got it all. Brilliant Steve Thompson (he wrote a *Sherlock* last year – good show, I hear) hinted to me he'd rather like to write a *Doctor Who*. And he hinted it every single day for the next six months. When I finally agreed (and he was kind enough to release my family from his garage), it was one of the smartest decisions I've made on this show.

This is *Doctor Who* in the grand tradition: spooky and clever and very funny. And new director Jeremy Webb did such a stellar job (on a *real* ship, by the way) that we locked the cutting-room door and told him he was staying to do another one straightaway. He's still crying. Tears of joy, I expect.



4 The Doctor's Wife

Writer Neil Gaiman **Director** Richard Clark
Guest stars Suranne Jones (below), Michael Sheen

"Fear me – I've killed hundreds of Time Lords." "Fear me – I've killed all of them." Remember those lines from the trailer? Well, this is the one they come from. At last Proper Writing God Neil Gaiman steps on board the Tardis. Now if you know Neil's work (and if you don't, what's the matter with you?) then you already know he's a *Doctor Who* fan. You can just sense it in every line, every joke, every spooky moment – and look at his hair! It's funny, but as one of the most famous novelists in the world, writing an episode of a television show should feel like a big departure for him – but actually it feels like he's coming home.

And it's a fact that of all the photos in existence of our studios, 82 per cent were taken by Neil on his one-day set visit. Ah, but I don't seem to have said anything about the plot or that title. Oh well!

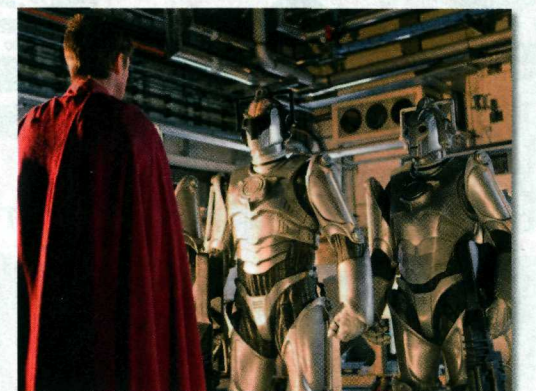


5 The Rebel Flesh 6 The Almost People

Writer Matthew Graham **Director** Julian Simpson
Guest stars Raquel Cassidy, Sarah Smart (above), Marshall Lancaster

"Oh dear," said Marcus Wilson, our steadfast and undefeatable new producer, looking at his BlackBerry. "The roof's fallen in." "What do you mean?" we asked. "Oh, what's happened this time?" "No, it's not a metaphor," said Marcus, wearily. "It's the roof. It's actually fallen in!" For a shoot that involved a collapsing location and, for a while, a director (hello, Julian Simpson!) on painkillers and a walking stick, this is a cracker of a two-parter.

Get behind the sofa *now* – reserve your place. If you, like me, have always longed for a movie about an alien shape-changer and an industrial dispute, this is the one for you. Yes, it's *The Thing* meets *Made in Dagenham* – and a brief but terrifying insight into the mind of that king among television writers, Matthew Graham (*Life on Mars/Ashes to Ashes*). You'll probably want a little sit-down afterwards.



7 A Good Man Goes to War

Writer Steven Moffat **Director** Peter Hoar
Guest stars Alex Kingston, Frances Barber, Christina Chong, Simon Fisher-Becker

Want to find the most dangerous place in the universe? Easy. Harm a hair on Amy's head and just wait. But as the last of the Time Lords and the Lone Centurion [above] blaze across galaxies to save the woman in both their lives, history is unfolding. In her cell, in Stormcage, River Song knows the time has come at last. She has a secret, and this is the day she tells it.

The battle of Demons Run has begun. And the Doctor's darkest hour is now.