

DOCTOR • WHO

WATCH

EXCLUSIVE



**OLD NEW YORK**

Daleks glide over Manhattan as lightning strikes the Empire State Building – an image created exclusively for RT by The Mill



# ENEMY OF THE STATES

Only in America, they say. Unless it's a Dalek plot to enslave humanity, in which case, only in *Doctor Who*! For a taste of this week's episode, **turn the page** ▶



Things don't always turn out as you might expect, not even in television. Take the transmutation of Dalek Sec and Mr Diagoras into the Dalek/human hybrid at the end of last week's episode. "I'd always written it so that Dalek Sec opens up his casing in that classic Dalek style and inside there's this familiar little squid-y creature, which draws Mr Diagoras towards him, and envelops him in a kind of grisly kiss," says Helen Raynor, who wrote the script. "But what [special effects wizards] The Mill did was an extreme wildlife documentary! When the casing opens, the Dalek extrudes its guts, wraps itself around Mr Diagoras like some giant, head-eating leech, drags him inside the casing, then closes."

This week's *Evolution of the Daleks* concludes Raynor's two-parter, and it has some fairly grotesque elements: dispossessed New Yorkers struggling to survive; genetic experimentation; and mutated Pig Men wading through sewers. Raynor – who also script-edits the series – admits she had to rein in her imagination on occasions: "The first draft of last week's *Daleks in Manhattan* had Tallulah the showgirl [Miranda Raison] stumbling on the caged survivors of the early Dalek experiments, and it was just too much. Even though it was implied rather than full-on, it was still absolutely horrific."

"The idea of the Daleks doing genetic experiments is actually a very horrible thing, although it is the origin of their species. We do have to be careful what we show – *Doctor Who* is a children's series."

There is, however, one supremely



#### NEW YORK, NEW PORK

The Pig Men are engineered to assist the Daleks, but Laszlo (Ryan Carnes, second right) is able to retain his humanity

"Laszlo is a tragic figure, but he's an absolute hero. He has a very good and pure heart – and an unfortunate snout"

**Helen Raynor, writer**

grotesque character that survived intact from script to screen: Laszlo the stagehand, played by Ryan Carnes, who ends up part-pig/part-human. "I'm really proud of the fact that we kept Laszlo," says Raynor. "He's stolen by the Pig Men, but escapes partway through the 'pigification' process, so he still has his own mind. *The Phantom of the Opera* was a big influence – once you've got a theatre and showgirls and things living in the sewers coming up through the basement, what you need is a monster with a good heart."

Laszlo is one of those tragic figures," continues Raynor. "How can he face the world looking like he does? He has to hide from the Daleks and he can't face Tallulah, his girlfriend, seeing him, so he haunts the theatre, desperate for a glimpse

of her. That's so sad. But he's an absolute hero. And that's a really nice thing to have in a kids' drama: that good people aren't necessarily beautiful people. Laszlo has a very good and pure heart – and an unfortunate snout."

*Frankenstein, The Island of Dr Moreau, The Phantom of the Opera* – Raynor happily acknowledges her influences. They're all horror classics, but remember that this is Saturday teatime, *Who*-style, and series overlord Russell T Davies doesn't believe these Dalek episodes are particularly dark.

"I think that Dalek stories are more fun than, say, a werewolf story. Or the monster coming up in episode six [next week], the Lazarus monster, which is genuinely scary," is Davies's verdict.

"There's something gloriously fundamental to the format when you're pitching the Doctor against his oldest enemy. The fun can't help creeping in. That's why the showgirls are there. And I think the Pig Men are fun. Some kids might be scared of them, but equally they're a bit of a laugh, having a Pig Man face. You can imagine the kid in the playground who gets chosen to be the Pig Man. He's not going to be happy!"

**Nick Griffiths**

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