



MARK GATISS WHY I
WANTED TO BRING BACK THE

ICE WARRIORS

After four decades in the deep freeze,
the invaders from Mars are back – and
creating havoc on a nuclear submarine

Doctor Who
Saturday 6.00pm BBC1

BACK IN 1967, the *Doctor Who* producers faced a problem. The Daleks, the show's most enduringly popular monster, were set to vanish in a bold, but ultimately doomed, attempt to conquer America. Given their patchy track record in conquering Earth and other planets, you'd imagine they'd have thought twice about it.

But this left the series with a big, monster-shaped hole in its storylines, despite the popularity of the Cybermen (already everyone's next

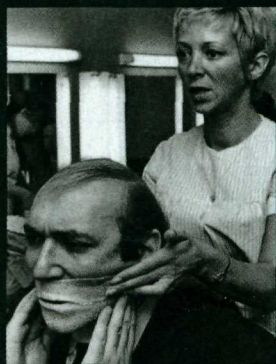
favourite baddie). The hunt was on for more nasties and led to what was to become fondly remembered as "the monster season".

Patrick Troughton's *Doctor* took on Cybermen (twice), weed creatures on a North Sea gas rig, a double of himself (in that year's only monster-free story) and the glorious Yeti – both in their Himalayan backyard and in the London Underground. But the monster that would make the greatest impact hailed from Mars...

The red planet has long held a fascination for science-fiction writers so it was only a matter of time before *Doctor Who* turned its attention to our neighbour in space. Writer Brian Hayles >

"I've been badgering
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to let me bring back
the Ice Warriors"

WRITER MARK GATISS



DR WHO on Ice

The crew of the Tardis face new enemies—the Ice Warriors

1 In the new series of adventures, starting tonight, the Tardis returns to Earth—but England—in the year A.D. 2000, in the grip of the Second Ice Age. Some scientists have set up an emergency base near where the Tardis lands, and they are struggling to keep it warm. But this is not the only peril that the Doctor, Jamie, and Victoria face. There are the Ice Warriors, alien creatures from the planet Mars, who are trapped with their space ship in the ice and their attempts to free it bring them into conflict with the scientists. The leader of the Ice Warriors, Varga, is played by Bernard Bresslaw, but once he's got his costume and make-up on he's pretty unrecognisable. "I'm all dressed up in a sort of six-foot lizard!"



Deborah Watling with Leading Ice Warrior Bernard Bresslaw

CARRY ON SCREAMING In 1967, *Carry On* star Bernard Bresslaw has a mask and costume fitting to play the original Ice Warrior, assisted by make-up supervisor Sylvia James. Right: the RT preview from 11 November 1967

devised a race of armoured reptilian cyborgs, dubbed "Ice Warriors" by the scientist who finds the first one entombed in a glacier. This first story took place not amid the red dust of the dead planet itself but on a future Earth in the grip of a new Ice Age. A world where, in the beautiful pop poetry of the script, "suddenly, one year there was no spring". A bit like this year, in fact.

Enormous, green and scaly, the first Ice Warrior, Varga, was played by 6ft 7in Bernard Bresslaw, who brought this new baddie to imposing life just after shooting, ironically enough, *Carry On Doctor!* The idea of the creatures' hissing voice seems to have originated with Bresslaw, hinting both at their reptilian origins and their difficulty coping with Earth's atmosphere.

A BIG HIT WITH the audience, the Ice Warriors returned for a rematch in *The Seeds of Death* (1969), which introduced a different tier of Martian society, a slimmer "Ice Lord" (as they became known), sleeker and more articulate than their lumbering predecessors.

In 1972, third Doctor Jon Pertwee faced the creatures in the fondly remembered *Curse of Peladon*, a tale of intergalactic politics on a medieval planet. We discovered, in a brilliant twist, that they've become the good guys! Two years later, a sequel, *The Monster of Peladon*, saw them revert to type.

And that was that. Despite appearing in fan lists of top monsters, the Ice Warriors stayed firmly in the show's past for nearly 40 years. Until now...

I must admit I'd been badgering Steven Moffat for years to let me bring back the Ice Warriors. He'd been nervous about their possible return as they seemed almost the embodiment of the slow-moving *Who* monster of legend. But I kept trying and, as I'd always wanted to set a *Doctor Who* on a submarine, one day I said, "How about an Ice Warrior on a sub? And there's something else about them. Something new..."



WET LOOK
Clara and the Doctor get a good soaking in *Cold War*

UPDATING A CLASSIC
Monster maker Neill Gorton says, "The old ones [right] had puny arms, Lego hands, fur and almost feminine hips. We've given them a beefier bodybuilder physique [left]"



The "something new" got us both excited and so this Saturday's episode, *Cold War*, was born. En route to Las Vegas, the Doctor and Clara find themselves on a Russian submarine under the North Pole. It's 1983, global nuclear tension is at its height and into this mix comes... well, wait and see. The episode is a love-letter to those Troughton stories that so often saw a group of desperate, frightened people under attack from an alien menace. A "base under-sea" if you like.

I've always loved submarine movies, too, and I'm thrilled at what the team have achieved on screen. It's our very own *Das Boot* (or *Dasssss Boot*, as I took to calling it) with Liam Cunningham twinkling and grizzled as Captain Zhukov and the great David Warner as bobble-hatted Professor Grisenko. We had to "Hollywood-ise" the amount of room on board, though. It would be hard to hide a seven-foot monster on a conventional submarine.

I WAS DETERMINED THAT we should honour the original, brilliant Ice Warrior design. It's so imposing and scary. They've now got an iridescent quality to their scalliness, like dragonfly wings. I was knocked out when I saw the result. Lots of the crew didn't know they were a famous returning baddie; they just reacted to them as a really cool, scary monster. Perfect!

Perhaps because the Ice Warriors have appeared in *Doctor Who* so infrequently and have so little backstory, there's tremendous room to invent. The Martians seem to have strict codes of honour, but we have seen them, at various points in their history, behaving as militaristic aggressors and pragmatic diplomats. Is their Mars dead or alive? Are they as noble as Spartans or as ruthless as Romans?

Cold War will be, I hope, only the beginning of a new chapter for these fabulous *Doctor Who* monsters...

Mark Gatiss, formerly of the *League of Gentlemen*, is an executive producer of *Sherlock* and a regular writer on *Doctor Who*