

TALES OF THE TARDIS

6. 'The Curse of Fenric'

by

Pete McTighe

SHOOTING SCRIPT

20 September 2023

1 EXT. SPACE

1

The TARDIS, twisting and turning in the void.

And the DOORS OPEN as we track towards it --

CUT TO:

2 INT. MEMORY TARDIS

2

ACE (late 50s, smart tailored suit & Doc Martens) stands in the closed doorway, staring around in awe and wonder.

She crosses to the control panels dotted around the room, inspects trinkets and artefacts from days gone by. A FORUM POSTER from 'The Happiness Patrol'. The remains of a tattered red KITE from 'The Greatest Show In The Galaxy' --

A white metal BASEBALL BAT ('Remembrance Of The Daleks'). *

She grins as she picks it up, and remembers. And then --

THE DOCTOR (O.S.)

That Dalek got quite a beating... *

She spins round.

THE DOCTOR (CONT'D)

...if I remember rightly.

There he is -- THE SEVENTH DOCTOR. Appeared out of nowhere. Standing there in his dark brown Season 26 jacket and question mark pullover, leaning on his red-handled umbrella. Still twinkling with mischief and secrets.

ACE
Professor!

She goes to him, hugs him tight.

THE DOCTOR
Hello Ace.

ACE

Last time I saw you you were a hologram. But you're here. You're real!

(then)

You got old. *

THE DOCTOR
Time-streams are a funny thing. In some, I regenerate. In others, I don't. It's all a matter of perspective.

ACE

I was in a meeting. In the middle
of a meeting, and then I was here.

The Doctor sits at the CRYSTAL CAMPFIRE; melancholy.

THE DOCTOR

It's a Memory Tardis. A special
place, for old friends to come
together. To share stories, to
remember.

There's a battered, old wooden CHESS SET beside the fire. The Doctor considers it. Moves the WHITE KING'S PAWN two spaces.

THE DOCTOR (CONT'D)

To confront difficult truths.

Ace joins him, tentative.

ACE

I missed you, you know.
(then)
Did you ever think about me?

THE DOCTOR

Oh Ace. I thought about you every
day.

ACE

Sometimes I wish I'd never left.
That I'd stayed with you forever.

THE DOCTOR

Ah, well. That's the thing. You
see, this place, this is forever.
It's kept alive with memories. We
stoke its engines with our stories,
and return here whenever we like.
With a wish.

ACE

That's how I met you, remember?
With a wish. I wished I was
somewhere else, somewhere that
wasn't Perivale. And then I was
halfway across the universe.

THE DOCTOR

Ice World.

On Ace, as darker memories start surfacing. Unnerving, long
buried truths.

ACE

Except it wasn't my choice. I was
taken there. By Fenric.

Ace picks up the white pawn from the board and inspects it.

ACE (CONT'D)
I was just a part of his game.

THE DOCTOR
The game of traps.

ACE
Don't think I want to remember
that.

She replaces the chess piece.

THE DOCTOR
Maybe you should. Maybe we *both*
should.

On Ace, uncomfortable.

ACE
It's too much.

THE DOCTOR
Our pain comes to define us, Ace.
Alongside the joy.

ACE
Good people died that day. So many
lives were ruined.

THE DOCTOR
Others were set in motion.

A loaded look from the Doctor. He's talking about *her*.

ACE
Dangerous undercurrents.

THE DOCTOR
I taught you to dive beneath the
surface. To be unafraid.

*

Ace processes. As the Doctor offers his hand.

THE DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Let's dive together this time. Into
the water.

Finally Ace takes his hand, daunted but brave.

And they stare into the crystal campfire.

MIX TO -

A compilation of 'The Curse Of Fenric' (1989), a brutal, exciting, emotional rollercoaster which pits the Doctor against Evil itself, and an army of monsters from the polluted oceans of Earth's future.

After Ace learns dark truths about her role in Fenric's game, she is cleansed by a dive in the ocean off Maiden's Bay, and leaves with the Doctor for new adventures...

CUT TO:

3 INT. MEMORY TARDIS

3

Back to THE DOCTOR deep in thought, lit by the shimmering crystal fire. ACE stands by the doorway.

THE DOCTOR

We never talked about it. What happened that day. That was my fault - always on the move, always eager for the next adventure.

ACE

Wasn't just you. That was my life. Keeping my head down, bottling things up inside.

(beat)

Maybe if we'd talked, we wouldn't have fallen out.

THE DOCTOR

I did things I'm not proud of. I used you. Manipulated you. Kept secrets. No wonder you abandoned ship.

ACE

Walked off in a strop, you mean? 'Cause I kept seeing their faces. Sorin. And Mike. Kara, Bellboy... all those people who'd died for us. I think I needed someone to blame.

The Doctor understands.

ACE (CONT'D)

By the way, that wasn't West London where you dropped me off.

THE DOCTOR

Oh really?

ACE

It was London, Ontario. Had a right palaver getting home without a passport.

THE DOCTOR

Oops. To be fair, we'd had a busy day as I remember. With the Rani up to her old tricks.

ACE

I'm sorry I left like that.

THE DOCTOR

But you had to go, to become the person you are today. To save the world. That was your destiny, that you set in motion.

A beat on that, then Ace sits:

ACE

I went back to see her. Kathleen Dudman. My Nan. After I left you, I went to the care home, every Tuesday. She never said much, she was so ill. We just sat together, holding hands. But before she died, I think there was a moment when she realised. Who I was. How we'd met before, when she was young. Her eyes changed... they sparkled... and she smiled like she'd never smiled before. Like she knew.

The Doctor puts his hand on Ace.

THE DOCTOR

She'd be so proud of everything you've achieved.

ACE

...You know about that.

THE DOCTOR

Oh I check up on you, from time to time.

(leans in)

And do you want to know a secret?
The best is yet to come.

They sit there, smiling at each other, tears in their eyes.

ACE

I loved you, you know. Like the dad I never had. I never said it before but I did. I still do.

THE DOCTOR

And I loved you.

*

ACE

We made a great team.

THE DOCTOR
We were wicked.

A beat on that. Their love for each other. Then:

THE DOCTOR (CONT'D)
By the way, where's that jacket of
yours?

ACE
On a hanger, in my office. Pride of
place, but officially retired. I
think it's time to grow up.
(then)
So. Does this thing fly?

THE DOCTOR
Of course it does.

The Doctor gets up, goes to a control panel.

ACE
How about a trip somewhere, for old
time's sake?

THE DOCTOR
Where would you like to go?

ACE
Dunno. Anywhere. Everywhere.
"Somewhere there's danger.
Somewhere there's injustice."

THE DOCTOR
"And somewhere else the tea's
getting cold!"

Ace joins him at the controls.

ACE
Come on Professor, we've got work
to do.

Fast cuts: And they're flipping switches, and wrenching
levers, and laughing and smiling --

So happy --

As the TARDIS comes alive, and the crystal campfire rages --

CUT TO:

And the police box spins away, tumbling into the distance,
traveling on and on forever -

END OF EPISODE