Celebrate the 50th anniversary of Doctor Who with this special feature-length story by Doctor Who TV writer Paul Cornell and artist Jimmy Broxton.

When a strange force flings the TARDIS into our universe, the Doctor encounters a 12-year-old girl who happens to be a huge fan of the Doctor Who television show. The Doctor then must grapple with being a fictional character along with monsters lurking at the girl's school on the way to coming face-to-face with the actor who portrays him, Matt Smith!
The Doctor is an alien, the last of the powerful Time Lords. He is an intrepid traveller through time and space, armed only with his incredible intelligence and his fix-anything sonic screwdriver. He travels alone except for the human companions he befriends, briefly sharing his life with them and showing them the astonishing wonders of the universe.
In June 2007, I stepped inside the TARDIS.

It was my first time in Cardiff, and I was there to meet with the BBC to discuss plans for our new Doctor Who series. We’d just secured the license to produce new comics in the States—the first publisher ever to do so—and there was a big licensing summit where all of us partners were to meet up, hear Russell T Davies’ plans for the Tenth Doctor, and set our courses for the future.

Which was all well and good, but I’d been to various licensing summits before. On the surface, this was more of the same—the comic-book guy meeting the T-shirt guy meeting the Top Trumps guy and exchanging cards and promising to find ways to “cross-promote the brand.” That’s what these things are like.

But they’ve never had a working TARDIS before. This one did. So this one was better.

In an area of Wales called Upper Boat, there was a new studio, opened the year before, and inside it, various Doctor Who soundstages; storage rooms filled with Judoon heads and Scarecrows and Cybermen and even an older Dalek or two; and both the exterior and interior of the TARDIS (which is, as you know I’d say, bigger on the inside).

It was a pretty magical start, cementing the deal at the studio itself and then being sent off and running. And while we’re not having a poignant death scene like the Eleventh Doctor, there is a poignancy to seeing it all come to an end with this issue.

We took a rather safe approach at the start of our comics run, launching with a series written by BBC staffer/writer Gary Russell, but it was a perfectly solid way to kick things off, especially as brought to visual life by Nick Roche and others.

And so began our six-year run of Doctor Who comics. We released a huge array of comics featuring the good Doctor, from numerous series with the Tenth and Eleventh Doctors, but also helping re-present great past material by creators like Dave Gibbons, Grant Morrison, and other notables, too. No matter your favorite Doctor, we tried to have something for you.

As always on these kinds of ventures, there are two components to them that are always my favorite parts: one is the fan feedback we receive, especially on such a British property as this. We faced a degree of cynicism at the start, us being the upstart American publisher who deigned to publish Doctor Who (we dealt with that again when we signed on for Judge Dredd. I hope to someday face that attitude again if we ever get a chance to produce James Bond comics…).

When the veddy British fans who doubt our ability to properly capture the character later tell me that we won them over, that makes it all worthwhile. Like I say, when we started out, we went the safe route, hiring well-established British Doctor Who writers like Gary Russell and Tony Lee, Which leads me to the second part of doing these comics that I love: working with such a diverse group of creators.

From Brits like Gary, Tony, Andy Diggle, and now Paul Cornell, to Americans like Scott and David Tipton, Matthew Dow Smith, Matt Sturges, and Joshua Hale Fialkov, along with an immense list of wonderful artistic talents too long to mention here and the strong editorial hand of Denton J. Tipton, who took over the titles from me, we presented numerous artistic takes and diverse voices, offering hopefully something for everyone. (And if not, well, just wait, maybe whoever takes up the mantle next will hit your particular sweet spot.)

Along the way, I’m pretty proud that we managed to do the first-ever storyline that involved all the Doctors (in Tony Lee’s The Forgotten series); the first-ever Doctor Who crossover (Star Trek: The Next Generation/Doctor Who by the Tiptons and J.K. Woodward); a 50th anniversary series involving all the Doctors in the just-concluded Prisoners of Time; and even got a chance to work with the great Who writer Paul Cornell here in this concluding issue.

It’s always a bit bittersweet when these things come to an end; after living with the Doctor for these past six years, my relationship to him will be forever changed now that we’re parting ways. Like Joss Whedon’s Angel, the Doctor is now much more a part of my past than my present. I certainly wish he and his future companions well, but they’ll be journeying on without me. Which is okay—I had my Doctors (Ten and Eleven) and think we brought them to new comic-book heights. Someone else can do so now, and I hope they do right by all of the fans that were so supportive of us, even if I won’t be watching or reading. I don’t have to—the Doctor is owned by the BBC, but he (or, hopefully someday, she) belongs to all of you.

So thank you and retailers on both shores for trusting this American upstart to handle your beloved 50-year-old Time Lord; thanks to the BBC for giving us this shot in the first place, and a final note of gratitude to all the creators who made for such great companions along the way.

As the Doctor said, “We’re all stories, in the end. Just make it a good one, eh?”

I hope we made it a good one for you.

Chris Ryall
October 2013
THERE?

NO.

There is just nowhere that goes.

I suppose I could just tell and I hung it... but it took ages to sit for.

BOINNG... BOINNGG?!
BONG
THE CLOISTER BELL?
BONG
YES, I KNOW, "BOINING"! BUT WHAT'S THE EMERGENCY?!
I REALLY SHOULD JUST HAVE A BIG SIGN THAT SAYS WHAT THE EMERGENCY IS. WHO HAS A BELL?!
WHY DID I SET THE DASHBOARD TO "CRYPTIC"?!

OH.
OH NO.

NOW, THIS... THIS IS VERY, VERY--

--UN-POSSIBLE!
IMPOSSIBLE!

PARALLEL UNIVERSE, UNABLE TO COMPUTE EXIT POINT.

"UNABLE TO COMPUTE"?
NOT POSSIBLE!

IF THE TARDIS CAN'T FIND THE EXIT POINT...
...WE CAN'T GET OUT.

NO, THERE MUST BE A WAY. THERE HAS TO BE A WAY. I JUST HAVE TO FIND OUT WHAT CAUSED THIS.

OP, WHATEVER TERRIFYING WORLD IS OUT THERE—
THE GIRL WHO LOVED DOCTOR WHO

WRITTEN BY PAUL CORNELL
ART BY JIMMY BROXTON
LETTERING BY SHAWN LEE
EDITED BY DENTON TIPTON
GREAT STUFF! WE HEARD YOU WERE GONNA BE ABOUT! CAN GINA HERE HAVE YOUR AUTOGRAPH?

WELL, ERN, YES, I SUPPOSE, VERY KIND OF YOU...

SO HOW WAS THAT DONE? WHERE'S THE FILM CREW, EH?

IT WAS DONE BY... COMPLICATED!

To Gina, happy times and places, The Doctor

AWW, HE SIGNED IT AS THE DOCTOR!

THANG GWEH!

SAV THANK YOU TO THE DOCTOR, GINA!

WHY SHOULDN'T I HAVE SIGNED IT AS—?

AH.
AREN'T YOU GONNA GO AND KISS YOUR BIG HERO, THEN?
NO. NO.

YOU LOVE DOCTOR WHO!

YOU LOVE DOCTOR WHO!

YOU LOVE DOCTOR WHO!

YOU LOVE DOCTOR WHO!

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