



Doctor Who: Dragon's Claw

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The TARDIS materializes in a Chinese fishing village in the year 1522 AD, where warrior monks are fighting pirates with uncharacteristic fierceness -- and the Doctor and Sharon find evidence that an alien weapon has been used. Abbot Yueh, puzzled by the strangers, takes them back to Shaolin monastery as prisoners. The Doctor learns from the novice Chang that the monks have been practising martial arts for centuries; but ever since Yueh took over from the former abbot Hsiang, the monks' abilities have been tested by the "bronze men" in a secret chamber. The Doctor slips out of the monastery to question Hsiang, who has apparently become a hermit. Hsiang informs him that some time ago a star fell to Earth, and Yueh went to investigate; when he returned, he deliberately crippled Hsiang and left him here on the mountain.

The Doctor returns to the monastery, but his absence has been noted and Yueh pursues him into the hall of the bronze men. The Doctor discovers that the "bronze men" are Sontarans, but he manages to escape, and Chang accompanies him and his companions in their flight, seeking answers. Hsiang directs them to the site of the fallen star, a Sontaran scout ship with a damaged hyperspace transmitter. The transmitter requires quartz crystals to function, and Chang informs the Doctor that the Emperor owns a similar crystal the size of a man's fist. The Doctor questions Chang about his training with the "bronze men", and realizes the monks have been given post-hypnotic commands. When they learn that the Emperor has invited Yueh to bring his monks to demonstrate their abilities to his court, the Doctor realizes that Yueh intends to order the hypnotised monks to the Emperor. But while Yueh believes he will then become ruler of China, the Sontarans will in fact use the Emperor's crystal to repair their transmitter, summon reinforcements, and conquer the Earth.

The Doctor and his friends return to the monastery with Hsiang and reveal the truth to the monks. Yueh speaks the command phrase which turns the monks into bloodthirsty killers, but K9 records it and plays it back, breaking the spell. Chang, however, only hears the voice once, and attacks the Sontarans in a berserker frenzy, killing them all. The Doctor, Sharon and K9 return to the TARDIS while Hsiang is reinstated as abbot.

Doctor Who: Dragon's Claw Details

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Moore , Mike McMahon

From Reader Review Doctor Who: Dragon's Claw for online ebook

Justin K. Rivers says

Steve Parkhouse and Steve Moore, along with Dave Gibbon's art, really begin to hit their stride. The first group of DWM strips, collected in "The Iron Legion" were ok, but existed in an awkward space between the TV show and the new comic feature, not quite their Own Thing yet.

"Dragon's Claw" shows the creative team grow in confidence, maintaining all the great things about the Fourth Doctor, while not striving as hard to be just like the TV show. I especially enjoy the larger galactic world that they create, with references to worlds and histories beyond that which the comics present to us. And the writers are also taking risks in some of these stories, where tragedy and humor coexist.

Brent says

Fresh adventures with solid plots. Classic elements of the fourth doctor well inked. Would have liked to been introduced to a new, and more robust, companion after Sharon but K-9 is a mainstay.

Philip Higgins says

More classic strips from the "Doctor Who Weekly" comic and its cunningly titled successor, "Doctor Who Monthly". Dave Gibbons' artwork is excellent as ever and captures Tom Baker's fourth Doctor perfectly. It's fizzing with wit & charm; K9, jelly babies, sonic screwdriver and a couple of classic villains. How I miss the days when companions left speedily & happily ("I'm staying to get married Doctor" "Oh, I'll miss you, cheerio") without all the Sturm und Drang of recent TV series.

Apart from the rather disappointing opening story set in medieval China ("Dragon's Claw") there aren't any multi-episode arcs. Some of the tales are surprisingly bleak - the satirical "Spider God" and especially post apocalyptic "End of the Line". The only story not illustrated by Gibbons is "Junkyard Demon". Mike McMahon & Adolfo Buylla's weird & wonderful pics are a good fit for this jolly if lightweight two parter. All in all, good fun in a lovely big glossy book from Panini that presents the original stories Marvellously (pun intended) .

Mark says

Enter the fourth Doctor, the mad one played by Tom Baker. Also my first Doctor who really never got matched in sheer brilliance by the later Doctors. My daughters would probably hit me around the head with their Tennant books and whatnot.

This time in this second 4th Doctor collection less epic but far more intimate and smaller scale stories which also shows so much more about the Doctor than the grandness we got used to in the revival series of the new Who. We see far more of his Humanity (or Gallifreyan in his case) and what makes him tick.

Well drawn and great little stories that makes this second installment far more fun than the previous book.

Still a must read for all who really enjoy Doctor Who.
