

Mmm. Well. This room seems comfortable enough. After the day I've had. Killer snakes, and imaginary monsters. I nearly killed the Doctor. I suppose you want me to tell you all about it. I'd rather not, but... well, here goes. My name's Mickey Smith, and this is the story of the Tomorrow People...

The Tomorrow People

by M Roderick Grant

Sarah Jane had just left the TARDIS after that whole business with the Krillitanes and the school. Anyway, the Doctor said I could come along with him and Rose to prove that I'm not the tin dog! I wanted to see the universe, but instead it turned out to be very different.

Rose had dragged me off down a corridor, to show me round. We had just walked past the TARDIS music room, when the TARDIS flipped. Completely. It fell on its side, forcing Rose and me to fall on to each other and land with a thump on the floor. We pushed ourselves off the floor, and began to walk back towards the console, which was pretty difficult when you consider the fact that the whole TARDIS was rocking back and forth like a ship on stormy seas. Perhaps this was the TARDIS equivalent.

We got to the TARDIS console to find the Doctor whizzing round the console at a million miles per hour. He had the infamous TARDIS mallet in his hand (or in his terms, the persuader). Sparks were flying off the console, and it looked like it was about to catch fire.

“What’s wrong?”

“What’s wrong? Everything! It’s all gone mad! Mad! Mad!”

“Mad?”

“Mad! Honestly, you materialise in real space time to take a reading, and see what happens. What does the scanner say?”

Rose walked over to the scanner and stared hard at it. “Sort of, white, weird stuff.”

The Doctor raised his head, one eyebrow up. “Weird stuff?”

He walked over to Rose, and pulled the scanner in his direction. He took out his glasses and glanced at the screen.

“Oh dear.”

“What is it? Doctor?”

“The TARDIS is caught in a temporal balance. It’s trying to land.”

“I don’t understand.”

The Doctor whipped off his glasses, and looked at me and Rose like we were stupid. “The place we’re headed for doesn’t exist. But the TARDIS thought it was real, and began to attempt a landing. It tried to land, but then realised that this place doesn’t exist. It’s caught between two points in a dimensional continuum.” The Doctor looked at me to see if I understood.

“Sorry Doctor. But I’m not fluent in total gibberish, so I didn’t understand.”

“The TARDIS wants to go somewhere that doesn’t exist.” I still didn’t quite get it, but I nodded my head anyway because I could see that we were wasting time.

The Doctor very slowly walked towards the door. He gingerly put on his coat, like he was trying to be stealthy, which was a little strange, because a big blue box was hard

to miss. He opened the door very slowly. He stepped out, me and Rose following shortly. It was nothing. A big white expanse. The Doctor's brow lowered. He was concerned. I'd seen it a thousand times before. Then something strange happened. He gingerly lifted his arm, his finger out straight. He lightly tapped the air. A huge ripple flew out from where he'd touched it.

"A force field."

"What? Like Star Trek?"

"Precisely Mickey. Like Star Trek." The Doctor ran back in to the TARDIS, and then came running out a few minutes later carrying a large shoe box.

"What's that?"

"A box. A box of stuff to throw!"

"Wow, you've really got everything in there!"

The Doctor then went crazy. Throwing random bits of junk at the force field. A cricket ball, a book, a tennis racket, a CD, a small trophy, and then the shoe box itself! He then stopped, stood up, red faced in irritation. He kicked the bits of the burnt junk that he'd thrown at the force field.

"Can't we just leave?"

"Circuits are fried. Can't do anything until the self repair systems are finished."

"How long will that be?"

"No idea. Couple of minutes. Couple of hours. A few centuries maybe. No idea."

"So we're stuck here?"

"But we've been bought here. The TARDIS isn't drawn to things that don't exist. It deletes the place from its data banks. So why are we here?" The Doctor began to stroke the wooden panes of the TARDIS, the way he usually does it. Like it's a pet.

ZAP! The Doctor pushed me and Rose to the floor along with himself as a laser beam shot narrowly past my ear.

"What the bloody heck was that?" I looked up. Nothing. No killer alien robot holding a space ray gun. No Doctor and Rose. Not even the TARDIS. They'd

completely vanished, leaving me behind. All alone in the big white wilderness.

“Doctor! Rose! Anyone!” I sat down. If that was possible. I was sitting on nothing. As long as I didn’t look down, I could take it.

All alone.

But not for long. What seemed like a few minutes later, the Doctor and Rose appeared again. Smiling a crooked, creepy smile. They somehow seemed different. But I didn’t care, I was just so happy to see someone, especially someone I trusted.

“Doctor! Rose! You’re alive!” They just stared at me. Their heads turned slightly. They stared at me. And for a split second I swear their eyes turned yellow. Like a serpent. Or the devil.

“No. I don’t think he’s realised it yet.”

“He will do soon though.”

“It will take a while though. He’s not exactly bright.”

I just stood there. Looking at them. Dumbfounded. Gobsmacked. This wasn’t like the Doctor or Rose I knew.

“I’m not stupid Doctor.”

“Yes you are. The tin dog remember. That’s what you are.”

“Shut up. I’m not the tin dog.”

“Oh put a sock in it Mickey! Just go back to what you usually do! Cower in the corner, and just as the alien squid creatures cut open your head, me and the Doctor will come in, and save the day.”

“Yeah. You’re worthless Mickey. The only reason I let you on board the TARDIS was because I felt sorry for you.”

In a blind rage, I stumbled to my feet. I leaned over to where the box of junk. I reached in, and grabbed the letter opener. I thrust in the Doctor’s direction, swinging it back and forth. The Doctor retaliated by throwing a punch in to my jaw. I was momentarily taken aback, but then threw myself at the Doctor, almost hitting Rose. The Doctor attempted to reach for his sonic screwdriver, but I knocked it out of his hands with my weapon of choice.

I pinned the Doctor to the floor, Rose watching on with a sarcastic expression

on her face, like she was unimpressed. I placed the blade at the Doctor's throat.

"Let's see what time lord innards look like."

Hang on. This wasn't making sense. If everything had disappeared, then why had the box of junk returned, with a letter opener inside? There had been no letter opener before. I began to notice the differences. The Doctor's hair was parted on the other side. He was wearing a different colour shirt and tie. I slowly began to withdraw. Putting the letter opener by my side.

"I'm so sorry Doctor. But this has got to be an illusion. I deny your existence."

The Doctor lifted up his sleeve, to reveal a tattoo. A snake tattoo. It was blood red, and had the demon eyes I'd seen on him earlier.

"Beware the mark of the Mara!"

The snake blinked! It reared its ugly head, and stared at me, just as the Doctor and Rose had done before. It then did something I couldn't believe (mind you, the things I've seen I'm no longer sure what to believe). It shot out at me. Growing larger in size as it came further out of the Doctor's arm. It came at me. Mouth wide open, fangs ready to bite. In one swift move, I threw myself up off the floor, over the head of the snake, with the letter opener pointed at the snake's neck. The head was cut clean off, landing next to my hand. I got up, looking at the dead snake.

"Now that's what I call badass." But I then remembered something. Something I should have remembered ages ago. Rose was just like the Doctor. Infected. And she'd just knocked me out.

When I came to, I was in a completely different place. Tall golden pillars were in the corners. I was lying on a large, four-poster bed, with silk sheets. The letter opener was on a small, circular table by my pillow. In one corner was a fainting couch, and in the other corner, a harp was being played by a small girl in a toga. It looked like a Hollywood version of ancient Rome.

I sat straight up, threw the sheets off my legs, and got out of bed. As I did, a man entered. He was dressed like a warrior from Sparta, but he had two guns holsters on each leg. He had a helmet shaped like a motor-cycle helmet. Extending

from the side of his helmet was a small panel, with a lens in front of the eye. On the lens, was a sniper style target.

“Hello Mr Smith. I am Captain Jones. Was your stay comfortable?”

I looked at them. I was confused that I hadn't been attacked yet.

“Yeah. What is this place?”

“We are the tomorrow people.”

They led me down a small corridor in to a grand hall. Even the corridors were heavenly.

“So, what happened after I was knocked out?”

“While you were knocked out, we managed to teleport you out of the area. You were quite lucky Mr Smith. When we got there you were just about to be bitten by the Mara.”

“And the Mara is what exactly?”

The man pointed at a screen. Images of the snake like creature began to appear on the screen. The presentation was disturbing. It's terrible message still touches me now.

“The Mara comes from a long way away. It has roots in most civilisations. As a legend. On your planet, the Mara has been likened to a serpent who tempted the first of your race in to disobeying their god.”

“I always knew that snake was alien! If only my RE teacher was here now. But hang on, who are you?”

“The tomorrow people. A composite race. We are a combination of all the powerful empires of a particular species. In your case, we have adapted to your species.”

“So that's why your buildings are Roman, but you're weapons are from Star Wars?”

“Exactly Mr Smith.”

A foot soldier came crashing in through the doors. His sides were spewing blood, and his hand was on his heart. Lodged in his back and chest were strange shaped marks.

“Captain... It’s....” He collapsed in a heap on the floor, blood spreading from his back. Captain Jones ran over to the man. In one swift move, he ran his finger over the foot soldier’s wound, and rubbed it on his tongue. He spat it out straight away, like a dolphin blowing water from it’s blow hole.

“The venom of the Mara!” He lifted up the foot soldier’s arm. The mark that was on the Doctor’s arm had materialised on his forearm. I tugged at his crimson cloak. He turned to look at me. I pointed at the man’s blood. It had changed. It was spelling out three words. I am here.

“The Mara has broken in Mr Smith. We are doomed!”

Drip.

Drip.

A purple liquid was dripping on to my shoulder. At first I didn’t notice. But then I looked up. The purple liquid was coming from above the ceiling.

The ceiling was made of glass, with jewels dotted along the sides. Above that, was a large, deadly looking creature.

“Is that the Mara?”

“Yes. In the form of another of your people’s legend. A Basilisk!”

CRASH!! A twenty foot long basilisk came crashing down, with shards of glass flying around it. It glided along the floor with ease, and reared it’s head in front of mine and Captain Jones’s. Captain Jones pushed me aside. He pulled a laser blaster out of his holster, and a sword from a sheath on his back. He began to weave the sword around in a ninja like motion.

“Get out of here Mr Smith! It’s too dangerous.”

The Captain span on the spot, spinning the sword around in an attempt to slash the beast that was coming to kill us. The basilisk leapt up to attack, opening it’s jaws to bite him. The Captain slid under, pointing his sword up. The blade cut through the basilisk’s stomach. He rolled over, and jumped on to the creature’s tail. The tail swung him up, but the Captain leapt off just in time. He fired his laser blaster in to the creature’s eye. In one swift move, he reached in to a sheath by his gun holster, and threw it in to the creature’s throat. It went through like a stone in water. He landed next to the creature’s tail.

The creature lifted its head and roared. It echoed through the chambers of the hall. It turned and stared directly in to the Captain's eyes. The cut in its stomach inverted, The blood slid back in to the body. It was as if time was being reversed. The creature was completely healed. It was as if it had never been hurt.

Then it hit me. The one thing that could save us. "Captain! Throw me your sword."

He reached in to the sheath on his back, and threw me his other sword. I caught it, and in one action, cut off the arm of the dead foot soldier. I grabbed the blood stained arm, and held it high above my head.

"Heed the mark of the Mara, beast."

The basilisk drew back from me, its head bent down as if I was king. As I moved the arm closer, the basilisk drew further back. The Captain stared at me in utter disbelief.

"That's impossible."

"As the Doctor would say, it's not impossible, it's logical. The Mara won't attack itself, it's logical thinking, and now we've got something to fight the Mara."

"Mr Smith. We can use this. It can lead us to the Doctor, and your friend."

"You're right Captain." I held the arm high in the air, and pointed outside.

"Take us to the Doctor and Rose. Take us now beast. Obey the mark of the Mara."

The basilisk beckoned us forward. We gingerly moved forward until we were between its tail and head. Then, something strange happened. The basilisk coiled round, drawing its tail in to its mouth. When we were almost completely sealed in, it stopped. Suddenly, the body began to spin. Faster and faster, like an electric fan. Just before I was about to throw up, we vanished.

"Ow!" said the Captain, as he slammed down to the floor, landing on a large rock. I landed a few feet away, but the basilisk had gone.

We sat up, and look around. We were outside. But it was the opposite of inside. The sky was grey, and whirling. Twisting and turning. The sky was a like a hurricane.

A few miles away was a large tower. The walls were made of burnt, and broken up stone. Weeds were growing up and down the walls, emerging from the cracks in the stone.

I picked up the Captain's sword, and held it in front of him.

"Here, I believe this was yours."

"No Mr Smith. You'd better keep it. We don't know what's inside this tower. This is where it gets dangerous."

The door flew off its hinges, as we leapt forward, brandishing swords in front of us. But instead, there was nothing. Zilch. I shuffled my feet together.

"Typical!" I said. "And I wanted to look cool!"

The Captain placed his hand on my shoulder. "Being a good warrior has nothing to do with being cool. Now lets keep moving."

Suddenly, the doors picked up off the floor, and threw themselves at me and the Captain. I leapt out of the way just in time, landing in a confused heap on the floor. The door had re-attached itself to the wall. Self repair? Or maybe prison walls?

Ring! Ring! I fell to the floor, hands on my head. Then the Doctor appeared. Mirage?

"Mickey! I found you!"

"Doctor? Is Rose there? What the hell is going on?"

The Doctor looked up, searching his mind for an explanation I would understand.

"To be honest, I don't really know, but I know how to get out, I can stop this entire affair, but I need you to get here!"

"How?"

"Follow the path round until you get to golden arched gates. When you get there, hold up the Mara mark to the door, and it should hopefully open."

I got up, reaching for the slowly rotting arm in my pocket.

"All right Doctor. Hold up, how did you know I was using the Mara mark?"

The Doctor chuckled, brushing his hair out of his face.

"Mickey, who do you think gave you the idea first?"

The golden arch was there, just like the Doctor said it would be. The Captain and I were constantly circling each other, seeing if trouble was there, but there was none. I held up the severed arm towards the lock on the door. It melted away like sand in the wind. With the final clanking of metal on stone, I was blown away by a force that almost knocked me off my feet. Rose had sprinted up like a cheetah, and had her arms wrapped around me.

“Mickey! You made it!”

“Of course I did.”

The Captain had wandered up to the Doctor, and was shaking his hand like a mad man.

“It’s so nice to finally meet you Doctor, I’ve heard so much about you.” The Doctor seemed a little confused about whether to be surprised or cheerful. His reaction was somewhere in the middle.

“Cheers, are you one of the tomorrow people? I’ve heard a lot about your people, but never seen one of you up close.”

Slam. The Doctor was knocked aside with great force, causing him to slam in to the wall. The basilisk had returned.

“Doctor, what the hell is that?”

“A basilisk. One of the incarnations of the Mara!”

“And the Mara is?”

The Doctor grabbed us, pulling us as he ran. The Captain followed closely behind, waving his sword, to try and fight the basilisk.

“It’s a long story,” the Doctor said. “It’s a sort of large, telepathic snake.” He slammed the front doors open, and dragged us outside.

“Doctor. The Captain’s fortress is that way.”

“We’re not going there!”

“Well where are we going?”

“I managed to get it back off the Mara when we were in the prison.”

“Get what back?”

We rounded a corner, to see a familiar sight. A seven foot tall wooden box. The TARDIS. The Doctor reached in to his pocket for the key, and in one swift move,

placed it in the lock, turned it, and slammed the doors open. The ancient engines began to roar as he entered.

“Hello old girl. I’m back!”

The Doctor ran up to the controls, gliding to the opposite side of the controls. He began to wave his arms frantically, pulling levers, pushing buttons, tapping dials.

“What are you doing?” The Doctor looked up, again trying to think of a good way to explain it.

“I’m setting the TARDIS a second out of synchronisation with the rest of this universe. If I give it enough steam, and delta a few rooms, we should have enough energy to get back.”

The room began to topple sideways like before. The basilisk was knocking the police box from side to side. It had caught up with us. The Captain stood up. He placed his helmet on his head. He turned, to look at the three of us.

“Glad to be of service Doctor. Mr Smith, I hope your travels find you well.” He took his sword from it’s sheath, and ran out towards the basilisk, screaming as he went. The Doctor leaned over, and flicked a switch, making the doors shut. The last I saw of the Captain, was of him defending our lives. Charging to slay the beast. Like Saint George and his Dragon.

The TARDIS floor began to vibrate. The console exploded. I was swept off my feet, but grabbed hold of one of the pillars for support. The bright lights from outside the doors faded, as the central column began to rise and fall. We had escaped. Leaving the world of the tomorrow people. Leaving the Mara, and the Basilisk. Leaving the Captain, to slay the beast.

The TARDIS began to materialise of a leafy Surrey street. The three of us stepped out, and wandered over to a bench on the other side of the road. The Doctor reached over in to his pocket, and handed me a small item. A key.

“Here you go Mickey.”

“What’s this?”

“The key. To the TARDIS.” My eyebrows raised in surprise.

“My own key? Thanks.”

“Well, you single handily fought off the Mara. I think you deserve something.”

“Cheers Doc.” The Doctor looked at me the same way a teacher does when they give you a warning.

“Never. I repeat, NEVER address me as Doc. I am the Doctor, and you’re not bugs bunny.”

We stared around at the street for a brief period. “What happened to the Mara?”

“For now, it is destroyed. But the Mara is never really destroyed.”

So that’s my story. An adventure involving telepathic snakes, Spartans with ray guns, and basilisks. We’ll pop quiz you later. Although it was dangerous, and terrifying beyond belief, I wouldn’t miss it for the world. I often wonder if the Captain survived. He probably didn’t, but I still think of him as our hero.

The knight with a ray gun.

One of the tomorrow people.

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