

PART ONE

THE DOCTOR AND HIS COMPANIONS

A Young-Old Face

Out with the New and in with the Old in *Doctor Who*

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Introduction

‘I approve of your new face, Doctor - so much more like mine.’ This line, spoken by the now ancient, enervated and seemingly dying Davros in ‘The Magician’s Apprentice’, is just one of many age-related barbs directed at the Twelfth Doctor during Peter Capaldi’s reign, serving as a constant reminder that the Time Lord is no longer (if, indeed, his on-screen self ever was)¹ a young man. Throughout his tenure, friends and foes alike highlighted the latest incarnation’s wrinkled, somewhat cadaverous visage, grey hair, and scrawny body, the Doctor being variously described as a ‘desiccated man crone’ (‘Robot of Sherwood’), a ‘grey-haired stick insect’ (‘Listen’), and a ‘skeleton man’ (‘Last Christmas’). Although she ultimately comes to regard him affectionately as a ‘daft old man’ (‘The Woman Who Lived’), in ‘Deep Breath’ Clara (Jenna Coleman) struggles to comprehend how the Doctor’s face can have so many wrinkles when it is brand new (much to the similarly long-lived Madame Vastra’s [Neve McIntosh] disapproval). Stalwart ally Kate Lethbridge-Stewart (Jemma Redgrave) and former spouse River Song (Alex Kingston) both suggest it might be advisable for the Time Lord to touch up his roots (‘Death in Heaven’; ‘The Husbands of River Song’), and even a mildly embarrassed Bill (Pearl Mackie) feels the need to pass the Doctor off as her grandfather in front of contemporaries (‘Knock Knock’).²

Announced in 2013, Peter Capaldi's appointment as the Doctor added a new dimension to the frenzy of media coverage already surrounding *Doctor Who*'s fiftieth anniversary. Much of this centred around the fact that, at 55, Capaldi was the same age original Doctor William Hartnell had been when he took on the role, and showrunner Steven Moffat swiftly claimed this as his USP (unique selling point), stating that 'to emphasise the senior consultant over the medical student for once reminds people that he's actually a terrifying old beast.'³

Establishing the Doctor's exact age is problematic. As given on screen, it veered between 450 and 953⁴ in the original series, but by 'The End of Time' had been retconned to a reassuringly precise 906.⁵ However, the Eleventh Doctor's (Matt Smith) extensive off-screen adventures made it increasingly difficult to pin down accurately – something the Time Lord himself admits in 'The Day of the Doctor'. His lengthy sojourn on Trenzalore only added to the confusion, though by 'The Zygon Inversion' the Twelfth Doctor is able to state with confidence that he is 'over two thousand years old.' This approximation still stands in the later 'Smile' and 'Thin Ice', despite the Doctor having previously been trapped in his Confession Dial for four and a half billion years ('Heaven Sent').

Perhaps appropriately, the apparent age of the Doctor's physical body has also varied wildly. While it was possible that the first 'regeneration',⁶ in 'The Tenth Planet', was indeed a 'renewal' – as the Doctor himself described it⁷ – in the sense of his body becoming younger, this has not always been the case since; the Doctor can also grow visibly older, as occurred with Jon Pertwee and Colin Baker's incarnations. However, it is the casting of a younger actor that is usually deemed most newsworthy, Peter Davison and Matt Smith having received particular coverage on these grounds. Since its own 'renewal' in 2005 the series has

placed the emphasis more firmly on youth, with the then 40-year-old Christopher Eccleston the most senior of the re-launch lead actors prior to Capaldi's casting.

This was a trend that showrunner Steven Moffat initially intended to reverse upon taking the helm in 2009, but his plan to cast an older Doctor was sidelined when the 26-year-old Matt Smith impressed him during auditions. However, the introduction in the 2013 anniversary special 'The Day of the Doctor' of John Hurt as the grizzled War Doctor could be seen as paving the way for a more mature actor to take the lead – a move compounded by Capaldi's own (brief) appearance in the episode, the return of a visibly older Tom Baker as the Curator (a possible future incarnation of the Doctor) at the narrative's close, and the subsequent ageing of Smith's incarnation while on Trenzalore ('The Time of the Doctor').

Although, in the original era, the pace of the show was often constrained by its multi-camera studio format, which made scenes of physical combat challenging to stage convincingly, the single camera model of the Davies and Moffat series has often seen the Doctor functioning more as high-octane action hero than cerebral sage, complete with elaborate post-production special effects that could only have been dreamed of by the original series production team. Capaldi's arrival therefore raised several questions with regard to age and ageing in *Doctor Who*, both in terms of characterisation and narrative form. With the Doctor played by younger men for so much of his recent tenure, Moffat's re-establishment of the Doctor as a middle-aged hero was a daring move in a televisual era that featured few such role models, even the quinquagenarian Inspector Morse having been replaced by his twenty-something counterpart in *Endeavour* (ITV, 2013-). This chapter will therefore investigate the narrative and performative strategies employed to accommodate this approach, and the impact Capaldi's arrival had upon the pace and style of *Doctor Who*.

In need of assistants?

In a direct mirroring of the 1963 series, Capaldi's era saw the Doctor initially accompanied by a teacher from London's Coal Hill School, Clara Oswald ostensibly representing a counterpart to original series companion, history tutor Barbara Wright (Jacqueline Hill). While Clara was a hangover from the Matt Smith years, her role at Coal Hill had only been established in Smith's penultimate adventure, 'The Day of the Doctor', and at first seemed little more than a nostalgic nod to the classic series in its anniversary special. When it was announced that she would be joined in Capaldi's first year by soldier-turned-Maths teacher Danny Pink (Samuel Anderson), it could have been surmised that Danny's inclusion in the regular cast was intended to replicate the role originally played by science master Ian Chesterton (William Russell), who had been included in the TARDIS crew to take care of any physical business that may have proved too demanding for Hartnell/the First Doctor.⁸ Following Ian's departure, the Doctor was similarly 'assisted', first by astronaut Steven Taylor (Peter Purves), and latterly by sailor Ben Jackson (Michael Craze). Although in 1966 Hartnell was replaced by the younger Patrick Troughton, the new lead's cerebral approach meant that action sequences were for the most part undertaken by brawny Scot Jamie McCrimmon (Frazer Hines), the Second Doctor rarely embarking upon any form of physical engagement. This formula was attempted again in 1974, the character of naval surgeon Harry Sullivan (Ian Marter) having been conceived before the Fourth Doctor was cast. In the event, Tom Baker's incarnation proved perfectly adept at handling combat scenes, and Harry's stay proved brief indeed. John Tulloch and Manuel Alvarado have previously highlighted the issue of the 'running and punching' role of the male companion,⁹ but in the event this satellite archetype was one that Danny Pink would largely deviate from.

Ultimately, Clara and Danny were less the mature guides envisaged by the 1963 production team than a youthful counterpoint to the casting of Capaldi, their ill-fated romance providing an emotional spine to the new Doctor's first year, and reminding the audience (and Clara) that the Doctor was, in his own words, not her boyfriend ('Deep Breath'). The programme's move to a later time slot meant that the need for youthful points of identification had become increasingly moot, and any similarities between Clara and Danny and the original Coal Hill duo proved superficial at best. Indeed, Danny Pink could only be said to play a 'traditional' companion role (i.e. assisting the Doctor in his endeavours) in two stories: 'The Caretaker' and 'In the Forest of the Night'. In the former, Danny's efforts only serve to frustrate the Doctor's plan to neutralise the Skovotz Blitzer, sparking a mutually antagonistic relationship atypical of that enjoyed by the Time Lord with the majority of his previous male companions,¹⁰ while in the latter the spirit is more one of competition than collaboration.

Much of the Twelfth Doctor's resentment of Danny seems to stem from the latter's former career as a soldier, and from this perspective it is interesting to compare the Twelfth Doctor with the Third, played by Jon Pertwee. It is series script editor Terrance Dicks' oft-employed description of Pertwee's 'young old' face in his Target novelisations of the broadcast stories that provides this chapter's title, and – like Capaldi – Pertwee was a 'senior' performer (aged 50 at the beginning of his term) who had little need of the 'action men' frequently surrounding him in the form of Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart (Nicholas Courtney) and his UNIT troops. Indeed, Pertwee's was arguably the most physical Doctor of all; his description of himself as 'quite spry' for his age ('The Green Death') and the numerous action sequences in which Pertwee (or occasionally his stunt double, Terry Walsh) took part, suggest that age need not be a barrier with regard to the Doctor performing as action hero.

The number of visual and narrative signifiers in Capaldi's era that recall Pertwee's characterisation are difficult to ignore. In the photo-shoot revealing the new Doctor's costume in January 2014, Capaldi struck a pose strongly reminiscent of Pertwee in his own early publicity shots, pointing directly into the lens of the camera, and the similarities between their respective outfits in terms of colour scheme (white shirt, black jacket, red lining) were swiftly picked up on by press and fans alike. The Twelfth Doctor subsequently donned a necktie almost identical to that worn by the Third (at least in his early adventures) for 'Mummy on the Orient Express', and his later favouring of a velvet frock coat would doubtless have met with his predecessor's approval. In addition, Capaldi's hair – initially cropped unflatteringly – grew increasingly bouffant with each passing year, much as Pertwee's had. In 'Robot of Sherwood' and 'World Enough and Time' the Doctor employs the long-neglected art of Venusian aikido pioneered by his third incarnation (Capaldi even mimicking Pertwee's 'Hai!') to disarm, respectively, Robin Hood (Tom Riley) and Jorj (Oliver Lansley), and 'The Girl Who Died' sees him reversing the polarity of the neutron flow on a Mire helmet – recycling the line originally adopted and memorised by Pertwee to deal with overly complicated technological jargon.¹¹

However, the Third Doctor and the Brigadier's relationship, while occasionally frosty, seldom became as fractious as that between the Twelfth and Danny Pink. It is implied throughout Capaldi's first year that the Doctor both reviles the role of the military man, and yet is aware of himself as a soldier of sorts; possibly as a result of his experiences as the War Doctor, but also in a broader sense as one who frequently involves others in his battles against evil, often at the cost of their lives – as proves to be the case with series ten companion Bill Potts.¹² Tellingly, it is Danny who hails the Twelfth Doctor as a 'blood-soaked old general', and this militaristic antipathy is taken to extremes in 'Death in Heaven',

when the Doctor is disturbingly (at least for fans with long memories) disdainful of the Brigadier's hitherto unstated desire – as revealed by his daughter, Kate – that the Time Lord salute him, just once: 'He should have said'. This lack is, however (perhaps predictably), rectified by the episode's close.

While the Twelfth Doctor is, like the Third, Fourth and Fifth,¹³ shown to be adept with a sword, offering to train a Viking village in self-defence in 'The Girl Who Died', he is also happy to subvert swashbuckling norms by facing off against Robin Hood armed only with a spoon. In fact, Capaldi's performance often undercuts the notion of the Doctor as action hero, arguably for the first time since the series was re-launched in 2005. Whereas Christopher Eccleston, David Tennant and Matt Smith played running and fighting scenes 'straight', Capaldi introduces a comedic, stiff-jointed run when the Doctor takes flight. Described by Bill as resembling 'a penguin with its arse on fire', this less than heroic gait provides a frequent visual reminder of the Doctor's great age. What could be regarded as his first 'action' sequence, mounting a horse and galloping to meet the dinosaur he has accidentally transported to Victorian London during his regeneration trauma, is played primarily for laughs; the Doctor is dressed only in a nightshirt, and visibly struggles to control his steed. By the time of 'The Woman Who Lived', the Doctor has become a more capable horseman – though viewers may doubt that Capaldi is performing his own stunt.¹⁴ In this respect, while action still forms a significant part of Capaldi's narratives, he is neither the near superhuman figure cut by Pertwee or Tom Baker (and at times by Peter Davison, Colin Baker and their post-2005 successors), nor the more physically passive type of Hartnell, Troughton or Sylvester McCoy, who typically relied on intellect over physicality. While the pace of his episodes is as frenetic as that of any other post-2005 Doctor, the Twelfth did not fulfil the more recent tradition of the action hero role to quite the same extent.

Changing the pace?

As mentioned earlier, modern *Doctor Who* is made in a very different production context from the original series, whose primarily multi-camera studio process was already becoming outmoded when the programme was cancelled in 1989. Television drama today is largely the domain of single camera location, though an effects-heavy programme such as *Doctor Who* makes greater use than most of studio soundstages. These are usually of the type more commonly associated with feature film production, more suitable both for 'green screen' CGI (computer-generated imagery) and sizeable 'standing' sets such as the TARDIS interior, which would have been difficult to accommodate in the era of Television Centre and Lime Grove Studio D (the first production site of *Doctor Who*).

The impact of this change in production process is evident in the increased number of action sequences featured in the series post-2005, the more dialogue-heavy sequences of the original having given way to 'set pieces' of a type that would have been impossible to stage in the 'classic' era. This is not to say that scenes of emotional intensity, with the focus on verbal sparring or conflict between the Doctor and his antagonist of the week, no longer have any part to play. Rather, they provide periods of calm between the storms of expansive action sequences, frequently driven by orchestral scores from Murray Gold and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. The climax of the series' 2005 premiere episode featured the explosive demise of the Nestene Host, while the following week saw the similarly incendiary end of the world in special effects sequences that would have been near-impossible to realise on the original series' comparatively meagre budget.

This same aesthetic is applied throughout both the Russell T Davies era and that of his successor Steven Moffat, and is also visible in the Capaldi years. While there is, perhaps, a slightly greater reliance on longer conversational sequences, these continue to be sandwiched between spectacular scenes of destruction and/or flight. ‘Death in Heaven’ and ‘The Witch’s Familiar’ are both cases in point. Each forms the second instalment in a two-part adventure, and features lengthy segments which the Doctor spends in conversation with an old adversary (Missy/Davros), while companion Clara takes on much of the physical ‘business’ of confronting the monster of the week (the Cybermen/the Daleks). In this respect, each episode in a sense replicates the pace of the more studio-bound original series serials, in which the Doctor’s confrontations with foes such as the Master or Davros were primarily verbal. When physical combat was attempted, it was ultimately compromised by the multi-camera set-up and the need to accommodate the action taking place in real time, as with Jon Pertwee and Roger Delgado’s sword fight in ‘The Sea Devils’ (1972). Each of the new series narratives culminates, however, with action sequences in which the Doctor usually plays a prime role (escaping in his Presidential ship, and then facing off against the Cyber-army/confronting a Dalek army, before escaping in the TARDIS), and lack nothing for spectacle when compared with similar escapades of the Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Doctors. ‘Under the Lake’ is equally high octane, and illustrates how far the modern series has travelled from its multi-camera origins. While centring around the ‘base under siege’ premise that formed a template for many of the stories in Patrick Troughton’s era as the Doctor (e.g. ‘The Moonbase’, 1967, ‘The Ice Warriors’, 1967, ‘The Seeds of Death’, 1969), ‘Under the Lake’ is both more ambitious and expansive in terms of the sets employed and the use made of them. Lengthy underground corridors and the pressurised doors that seal them off form a major part of the plot, as both Clara and various base personnel decoy the ‘ghost’ members of the crew subsequently revealed to have been created by the Fisher King. Such sequences would have

been difficult to accommodate in the limited studio space of Lime Grove or Riverside,¹⁵ which also provided a production home for the original series. However, it is notable that, for these tantalising ‘action’ sequences, the Doctor plays a relatively static role, co-coordinating events via communicator from a control chamber where he surveys events on a monitor, rather than joining in the running and hiding, as Tennant or Smith’s incarnations might arguably have done. The same logic applies to ‘Sleep No More’, where lengthy dialogue-based scenes are interspersed with more action-oriented sequences, in which the rescue crew do battle with the Sandmen. In the ‘Monks trilogy’ from series ten (‘Extremis’, ‘The Pyramid at the End of the World’ and ‘The Lie of the Land’), the Doctor’s ability to perform as action hero is impeded by his temporary blindness, which leads to increased physical hesitancy, and a greater reliance than usual on companions Bill and Nardole (Matt Lucas), the latter often narrating what is happening before them for the Time Lord’s benefit. However, these mid-series episodes also feature some of the year’s more epic and adrenalin-fuelled set pieces (not least the Doctor and Erica’s [Rachel Denning] attempt to avert biochemical disaster). Such stories demonstrate that, while Capaldi’s Doctor at times plays a more sedentary role, the overall pace of the stories is in no way slowed; by way of exception, his ‘action’ scenes in ‘The Doctor Falls’, in which he vigorously dispatches a number of Cybermen on the field of battle before being struck down, are as physical as those of any previous Doctors.

Showing his age?

The fact of the Twelfth Doctor’s more visibly aged appearance (disallowing Tom Baker’s cameo in ‘The Day of the Doctor’, the Twelfth is the first grey-haired ‘regular’ Doctor since Pertwee) is highlighted in his earliest episodes, only to be gradually downplayed as Capaldi establishes himself. The costume chosen by the new Doctor for his first two stories (and

trailed heavily in the afore-mentioned publicity shots) is stark and severe, as is the haircut Capaldi sports for most of his first series, which has the effect of further emphasising the actor's age. Even when the Doctor begins sporting the ultimate emblem of 2010s teen culture – the hoodie – it serves only to emphasise the scrawniness of the actor's neck. In Capaldi's second year the Doctor temporarily exchanges that long-serving *deus es machina*, the sonic screwdriver, for sonic shades, and returns to them the following year in order to mask his blindness. However, the adoption of sunglasses – and a new penchant for contemplatively strumming an electric guitar (the modern equivalent of Troughton's recorder) – while positing the Time Lord in the iconic pose of the anti-authoritarian, still cast him more as old rocker than a youthful hipster. His musical repertoire, ranging from the 60s pop of Roy Orbison's 'Pretty Woman' to the more traditional 'Amazing Grace' and Beethoven's Fifth, also reflects this, as does his 'retro' choice of pseudonym when leaving a voicemail on Clara's mobile, 'Doctor Disco' ('The Zygon Invasion'). The positioning of the Doctor in diametric opposition to 'youth' culture is further highlighted in 'Thin Ice' via his anachronistic linguistic attempts to demonstrate that he is 'down with the kids' ('You guys hang tight. Later!').

When publicising Capaldi's appointment, Steven Moffat claimed that, just as predecessor Matt Smith 'had the demeanour of an older man ... [Capaldi] is terribly boyish and young at times.'¹⁶ Like several of his predecessors, Capaldi's Time Lord has a penchant for yo-yos,¹⁷ and sarcastically offers his Dalek captors a game of dodgems after appropriating Davros's wheelchair in 'The Witch's Familiar'. However, there is no escaping the physical fact of the Twelfth Doctor's advanced years, and in truth his great age – and his implied 'immortality' – increasingly come to the fore as a theme in Capaldi's second year. The Doctor's relationship with Ashildr/Me (Maisie Williams) is on one level a re-tread of the

Captain Jack (John Barrowman) storyline (a fact acknowledged in the script of ‘The Woman Who Lived’, the Doctor assuring Me that Jack will ‘get round to her’ eventually), though with the distinction that this time it is the Doctor himself, tired of ‘losing people’, who has bestowed the dubious gift of eternal life, rather than his companion Rose Tyler (Billie Piper).

The effects of ageing on the memory are certainly more evident in Capaldi’s Doctor than in previous incarnations; natural enough given that, at double their age, he has twice as much to remember. In ‘Deep Breath’, he has a nagging feeling that he should recognise his clockwork antagonists (a reference to the Tennant story ‘The Girl in the Fireplace’), but ultimately fails to place them. He also vaguely recalls having seen his new face somewhere before (‘Who frowned me this face?’). These initial lapses of memory could, however, simply be symptoms of regeneration trauma.¹⁸ Although Clara Oswald is ultimately wiped from the Doctor’s memory (‘Hell Bent’), his tenure at St Luke’s University sees him commemorating two other significant females in his life – granddaughter Susan (Carole Ann Ford) and the departed River Song – via the surprisingly traditional means of framed photographs on his office desk (‘The Pilot’). It is difficult to imagine this sentimental touch on Steven Moffat’s part being applied to earlier incarnations of the Doctor, the character until this point usually having been one who looks firmly ahead rather than back. Other memories the Doctor has little difficulty recalling include his childhood nightmares and lapsed telepathic abilities (‘Heaven Sent’), the fact that the Tereleptils began the Great Fire of London (‘The Woman Who Lived’), his previous encounters with Earth survival ships (‘Smile’) and the many previous occasions on which he has vanquished the Cybermen (‘The Doctor Falls’). In addition, in ‘The Zygon Inversion’ he can clearly recollect both the events of ‘The Day of the Doctor’ and his low opinion of former companion Harry ‘the imbecile’ Sullivan’s intellect.¹⁹ Memory is a particular theme of the latter serial, the Time Lord

revealing at the denouement that the face-off between Kate Lethbridge-Stewart and Bonnie the renegade Zygon is nothing new, and the former has already been through the Osgood Box scenario ‘fifteen times’ prior to having her memory wiped. It thus becomes clear that the Doctor – along with Osgood (Ingrid Oliver) – has taken on the role of perpetual watchdog; aware, perhaps, that he will always be needed.²⁰

The fact that long life is more a curse than a blessing is not a new path for the series to tread,²¹ but Capaldi’s status as an ‘old’ Doctor lent it a pathos that would arguably have been less effective if played by one of his younger predecessors.²² Just as the Tenth Doctor was at first uncomfortable in the company of the immortal Jack Harkness, so the Twelfth is unwilling to take Ashildr/Me with him on his travels (‘The Woman Who Lived’), despite being personally responsible for her situation. Like him, she has lived so long that she no longer uses her original name, which she claims to have forgotten. When she assures the Doctor that she will, in the future, be looking out for his ‘leftovers’, as their patron saint, his response is not entirely that of a man reassured. While aware that he at times needs a watchful eye, the fact that there is someone else in the cosmos with the potential to match him for longevity does not sit easily. Tellingly, in ‘The Girl Who Died’ he is keen that Ashildr have the option of choosing a similarly immortal companion, reflecting the ultimate loneliness of the reluctant Lord of Time. This is, after all, a Doctor who has clearly spent much of his later life alone²³ – to the extent that he sometimes finds it difficult to focus on any conversation not directly relevant to his own train of thought, even when a gun is literally being held to his head (‘The Woman Who Lived’). Unlike Ashildr, however, the Doctor has not lived long enough to entirely forget the value of human life. The Doctor’s developing relationship with Clara is also indicative of his increased sensitivity with regard to the passage of time.²⁴ Just as the Tenth Doctor warned Rose that, though she could spend the rest

of her life with him, he could never have the same experience with her ('The Satan Pit'), so the Twelfth by turns pushes Clara away (in series eight, towards Danny) before pulling her back (even learning, eventually, to hug); their final stories in particular reveal a growing insecurity at the thought of losing her. Perhaps by way of compensation for Clara's later absence, the Doctor opts to spend a single night of twenty-four years with River Song on the planet Darillium ('The Husbands of River Song'). Although aware that she is fated to die after this meeting – an event his tenth self has already witnessed ('Forest of the Dead', 2008) – he is determined to prolong their encounter for as long as possible. By series ten the Doctor is seemingly resigned to watching over Missy in the Vault for the thousand years it will take to rehabilitate her; a possible acknowledgement that hers is one of the few lifespans to match his own, and perhaps a desire for company in his later years. As Missy later reproves him in 'World Enough and Time', only Time Lords can be friends with each other; anything else is cradle-snatching. As ever, though, the Doctor is uncomfortable growing old (or older) in any one place or time, and it is Bill (against whom Missy's admonishment is directed) that proves the catalyst for the Doctor renewing his wanderings in time and space (and, ironically, indirectly causing Missy to be released from the Vault).

Another subtext to Capaldi's later episodes is the fact that 'old' need not necessarily mean decrepit – particularly when even an aged Time Lord still has regeneration energy available to draw upon at will. In 'The Witch's Familiar' it is this ability that 'renews' both the ailing Davros – just as the Kaled scientist intended – and the decaying, near-liquefied remains of the 'old' Kaled mutants that populate the sewers of Skaro. These 'regenerated' Daleks then turn, in time-honoured fashion, on their own descendants, their attack on the present-day Daleks facilitating the Doctor and Clara's escape. In 'Empress of Mars' it is the veteran Ice Warrior Friday (Richard Ashton) that provides the impetus both to revive his

leader, Iraxxa (Adele Lynch), and to launch a new, golden age of Ice Warrior/human relations. Capaldi's Doctor is often derided and dismissed on first appearance as an 'old man', much as Hartnell's and even Pertwee's sometimes were; in 'The Girl Who Died' he is not among the strongest and best selected by the Mire for culling from the Viking settlement (though he admittedly works hard to avoid detection), and in 'Knock Knock' the Caretaker (David Suchet) states that, as he is of advanced years, the Doctor will possess less energy than the house's younger victims (though he will be harvested just the same). However, the Twelfth Doctor usually proves to possess both the intellect and energy required to resolve the situation, and a recurring theme of his first year in particular is the ceding to him of leadership by initially dismissive authority figures ('Into the Dalek'; 'Time Heist'; 'Kill the Moon'; 'Mummy on the Orient Express'; 'In the Forest of the Night'). In 'Dark Water' he is even made President of the World – a role for which he is seen to have developed a certain relish in 'The Zygon Invasion', and that he has taken entirely for granted (much to Bill's surprise) by 'The Pyramid at the End of the World'.

Conclusion: The New (Older) Statesman

The introduction of Peter Capaldi as the Doctor could be read both as a return to the elder statesman style of lead actor that predominated for the first 18 years of the original series, and a continuation of the more action-oriented hero of the re-launch. While much was made of Capaldi's advanced years in terms of scripting and characterisation, the Twelfth Doctor proved more than adept at keeping pace with his more youthful predecessors. The programme's single camera production model, and the increased volume of post-production special effects, allowed for a far greater emphasis on visual spectacle than was possible in the era of multi-camera studio, and the fact that the Doctor's body was slightly older than

contemporary audiences may have been used to in no way militated against this faster-paced narrative style. If, upon its 2005 re-launch, *Doctor Who* could have been seen as a case of ‘out with the old and in with the new’, the Moffatt/Capaldi era refined this to draw upon the best of both classic and modern *Who*, demonstrating that an older and wiser head need not necessarily preclude the high octane style of storytelling that now predominates in so much twenty-first century television drama. This chapter has therefore demonstrated the importance of thinking through ideas of aging in the Peter Capaldi era; however, in their later chapters for this collection, Matt Hills and Paul Booth look at the way in which Capaldi’s age was, in some cases, highlighted paratextually, but also at the way in which this was sometimes sidestepped.

¹ Missy’s comments to Clara in the same episode suggest that the Doctor was female for at least part of his early life.

² Interestingly, the Doctor himself seems oblivious to the increased age of his physical appearance, twice assuming that Bill Potts thinks he looks younger than his years (‘The Pilot’; ‘Knock Knock’).

³ Steven Moffat. ‘Day of the Doctors’, in *Radio Times* 17-23 May 2014, p.13.

⁴ The Second Doctor estimated that he was 450 years old in Earth terms in ‘The Tomb of the Cybermen’ (1967), while the Third stated that he had been a scientist for several thousand years in ‘The Mind of Evil’ (1971). The Fourth gave his age as 749 in ‘The Brain of Morbius’ (1976), and as 750 in ‘The Robots of Death’ (1977), but according to Romana had aged to 759 by ‘The Ribos Operation’ (1978). He then turned 760 in ‘The Power of Kroll’ (1978). The Sixth Doctor gave his age as 900 (‘Revelation of the Daleks’, 1985), and the Seventh as 953 in ‘Time and the Rani’ (1987).

⁵ The War Doctor would subsequently state that he was 400 years younger than the ‘twelve hundred or something’ Eleventh Doctor in ‘The Day of the Doctor’, making him around 800 years old. The Ninth Doctor claimed to be around 900 years old in ‘Aliens of London’ (2005).

⁶ The process was, however, not specifically referred to as such until eight years later in ‘Planet of the Spiders’ (1974).

⁷ The Sixth Doctor also liked to think of the process in these terms (‘The Twin Dilemma’, 1984), though in his case his body has clearly aged in comparison to his Fifth incarnation.

⁸ On the one occasion Hartnell’s Doctor does engage in physical combat, tussling with a would-be assassin in ‘All Roads Lead to Rome’ (1965), the actor is left palpably short of breath.

⁹ John Tulloch and Manuel Alvarado, *Doctor Who: The Unfolding Text* (London and Basingstoke, 1983), p. 229.

¹⁰ While the Fifth Doctor’s relationship with female travelling companion Tegan was, like the Sixth’s with Peri, sometimes antagonistic, this was not the result of the battle over another’s affections, as is implied for the Twelfth Doctor and Danny with Clara.

¹¹ While the Third Doctor reversed polarities on several occasions, Pertwee only delivered the line in full in ‘The Sea Devils’ (1972) and ‘The Five Doctors’ (1983). It should be noted, however, that Capaldi’s borrowings are not limited to the Third Doctor alone, the Second’s favoured line ‘When I say run, run!’ featuring in ‘Sleep No More’.

¹² Although her physical body dies when she is converted into a Cyberman, Bill Potts’ personality survives – and she is lately resurrected thanks to the Pilot.

¹³ The Third Doctor takes up arms against the Master in ‘The Sea Devils’ and the Fifth in ‘The King’s Demons’ (1983), while the Fourth tackles both Count Federico’s troops in ‘The Masque of Mandragora’ (1976) and master swordsman Count Grendel in ‘The Androids of Tara’ (1978).

¹⁴ In the Blu-ray commentary for the episode, producer Derek Ritchie confirms that a stunt double was used, with Capaldi seated on a mechanical horse for his close-ups.

¹⁵ In the Blu-ray commentary for the episode, actress Sophie Stone reveals that only two corridor sets were in fact used at the Roath Lock studios in Cardiff, though these are clearly substantial enough to ‘double’ for a complex network of walkways – something that would have been difficult to replicate in the earlier multi-camera studios.

¹⁶ Steven Moffat, ‘Day of the Doctors’, p.13.

¹⁷ Both the Fourth and Twelfth Doctors use the yo-yo to perform a gravity test (‘The Ark in Space’, 1975, and ‘Kill the Moon’), and a gold model is one of the possessions stolen from the Seventh Doctor by Chang Lee, and subsequently returned to the Eighth in the 1996 television movie.

¹⁸ The Fourth Doctor initially struggles to recall the names of Sarah and the Brigadier in ‘Robot’ (1974-75), the Fifth requires the healing powers of the Zero Room before he can recognise Tegan and Nyssa in ‘Castrovalva’ (1982), and the Sixth continues to misname Peri for some time after his first adventure (‘Attack of the Cybermen’, 1985).

¹⁹ The Fourth Doctor originally came to this conclusion in ‘Revenge of the Cybermen’ (1975) after Harry had inadvertently caused him to be buried under a rock fall.

²⁰ In this regard, it is tempting to speculate as to whether the Twelfth Doctor continues to execute the long-term duties of care undertaken by previous Doctors, such as the Tenth’s annual visit to Daughter of Mine as revealed at the close of ‘The Family of Blood’ (2007).

²¹ A sentiment first voiced by Rassilon in twentieth anniversary story ‘The Five Doctors’.

²² Even when swathed in layers of prosthetics, as Tennant and Smith were in ‘Last of the Time Lords’ (2007) and ‘The Time of the Doctor’ (2013) respectively, these actors fail to convey the full poignancy of the Doctor’s long life to the same extent as Capaldi. Indeed, Matt Smith is arguably more convincing as an ‘old’ man when playing against his own, naturally boyish visage.

²³ As witnessed by his monologues to camera in the prologues to ‘Listen’ and ‘Before the Flood’.

²⁴ However, he later dismisses this as ‘an illusion’ in one of his university lectures (‘The Pilot’).