“Don’t Blink. Don’t Even Blink. Blink And You’re Dead”: Elements of Fear and the Gothic in Doctor Who

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1. Introduction

This thesis will explore the elements of the Gothic that are present in a number of episodes of *Doctor Who* and will examine the effect these Gothic elements have on the series. I will argue that these elements of the Gothic are used in two specific ways. The first way in which the Gothic is used throughout *Doctor Who* is to create an atmosphere that evokes fear and terror in the audience watching the show. These episodes particularly stand out from others due to the difference between them and the more science-fiction-based nature of the other episodes. Second, the premise of most episodes in *Doctor Who* is based on the juxtaposition of threat and safety: there are evil or dark forces present in the universe that threaten the safety of either the Doctor and his companions, planet Earth, or other species, planets, or galaxies in the universe. The Gothic is used to present these enemies as 'other', and the Doctor is presented as the hero whose scientific knowledge offers both explanations and solutions to every threat that he encounters. The Gothic, in this case, creates an environment that is menacing, strange, dark, and threatening, and it is the Doctor's role to defeat this evil. One of the Gothic's characteristics is the concept of victimisation, which is also the one characteristic the Doctor refuses to succumb to. In *Doctor Who*, the 'good' always triumphs against evil, accompanied by rationality, science, optimism, and the Doctor's clever plans. Therefore not only does the Gothic create the uneasy atmosphere that keeps viewers from being unable to look away from their TV screens, it also creates the 'evil' and 'other' side the Doctor is constantly confronted with.

Chapman's *Inside the TARDIS: The Worlds of Doctor Who* opens with an introduction stating that *Doctor Who* was voted the third-best British television programme of all time in a 1999 poll conducted by the British Film Institute, with television critics and professionals all casting their votes. At the time, this might have come as a surprise, considering the last episode of *Doctor Who* had been broadcasted 10 years prior to the British Film Institute's poll, and had

not been "in regular production for a decade" (Chapman 1). However, as Chapman continues, the mere fact *Doctor Who* was voted into the top 3 by professionals in the business is testament to "the series' special place in British television history" (1), beating "ostensibly prestigious fare such as *Boys from the Blackstuff*, *Brideshead Revisited* and *I, Claudius*" (1) in the process. As *Doctor Who* is officially categorised as belonging to the science fiction (SF) genre, it might be thought by some to remain "largely beyond the pale of critical respectability" (Chapman 1). However, the British Film Institute's poll shows otherwise, as these results might indicate "the growing legitimation of popular culture as a subject worthy of serious attention" (Chapman 1). Despite the show's reputation of belonging to a niche cultdom and being considered as somewhat of a cult classic, as is partly supported by the fact "the programme continues to fascinate those studying Cult TV" (Hills 2), as research on the topic has been "cropping up as a case study in *The Cult TV Book*, *The Essential Cult TV Reader*, and *Cult Telefantasy Series*" (Hills 2), it cannot be denied that *Doctor Who* is one of the most popular and fascinating science fiction programmes of the last few decades. Chapman states that "*Doctor Who* is often described in such terms as the 'longest-running TV SF series' in television history" (2). Compared to *Star Trek*, which according to Chapman was "the only SF adventure series to rival it in international popularity and the extent of its fan base" (2), *Doctor Who* can certainly be considered not only the first science fiction programme to reach such high levels of popularity, it can also be considered one of the longest in production.

Due to *Doctor Who*'s immense popularity and the changing opinions about research on popular culture, plenty of research has been done on the show in recent times. Hills quotes Paul Magrs, who stated in 2007 that "we are at the start of *Doctor Who* Studies" (3), and though Hills at first thought this statement merely hyperbolic, only a few years later would it turn out that Magrs might have been right, as more and more research on *Doctor Who* was published. The research on *Doctor Who* covers a wide range of topics: Miles Booy's *Love and Monsters:*

The Doctor Who Experience, 1979 to the Present discusses all of *Classic Who* and parts of *New Who* up until the series of Matt Smith together in one book, focusing on the shifting meaning of the show across the years. Booy's book covers topics such as religion, highlighting the Third Doctor's suggestion to read the Bible, the concept of fandom and cosplaying, and politics regarding the general election in Great-Britain in 2010. In 2013 Mark Campbell wrote a complete guide on the series, under the very suitable name *Doctor Who: The Complete Guide*. Campbell's guide discusses all eleven Doctors who had taken to the screen at the time of publishing, including comprehensive guides to every episode and including facts and figures for long-time-watchers and fanatic fans. James Chapman's *Inside The TARDIS: the Worlds of Doctor Who* was printed in the same year; it discusses both *Classic Who* and *New Who*, and also delves into two *Doctor Who* spin offs, namely *Torchwood* and *The Sarah Jane Adventures*. Also in 2013 Matt Hills released *New Dimensions of Doctor Who: Adventures in Time, Space and Television*. Hills' *New Dimensions* is a collection of eleven different essays, written by a collection of different researchers. His book explores contemporary developments in *Doctor Who*'s music, design and representations of technology, as well as issues of showrunner authority and star authorship. Next to this, Hills' *New Dimensions* focuses on changes in the TV industry, the rise of branding and transmedia storytelling, and the way current *Doctor Who* relates to real-world spaces and time. Kim Newman's *Doctor Who* takes the reader through *Classic Who* and the series' run from 1963 until 1989. Newman's BFI TV Classics book, Doctor Who (2005) examines prominent themes, recurring characters, and monster types to draw conclusions on *Doctor Who*'s influence as a television masterpiece and cultural phenomenon. Alan Gibbs wrote on trauma in *Doctor Who* for the *Journal of Popular Culture*, while Courtland Lewis' *The Real Meaning of Doctor Who* (2021) explores the Doctor's distinctive view of life, from an ethical, spiritual, and scientific point of view, after centuries of regeneration and different personal identities. Courtland Lewis also edited another book on philosophical

standpoints together with Paula J. Smithka named *Doctor Who and Philosophy: Bigger on the Inside* (2010). This book discusses the Doctor's philosophy of science, ethics in a universe that a million different species share with one another, who decides which species is more important than the other and if one could even argue if one life-form is more important, and whether time travellers can and should change history. Graham Sleight's *The Doctor's Monsters: Meanings of the Monstrous in Doctor Who* (2012) and takes a closer look at the other side of *Doctor Who*: its monsters and its villains. Sleight examines some of *Doctor Who*'s most well-known monsters, such as the Daleks, Cybermen, the Slitheen, the Sontarans, the Ood, the Wiirrn, and others, and looks at the inspiration behind these creatures. In his book, Sleight tries to answer the most commonly asked questions about these monsters, such as "why are we so scared of them?", "why are they portrayed the way that they are?" and "how do they reflect the time and place in which they were created?". In *Gender and Contemporary Horror in Television* (2019), Steven Gerrard, Samantha Holland, and Robert Shail wrote on the concept of gender and instances contemporary horror in television, with one of their chapters specifically focussing on the two World Wars that are depicted in "The Empty Child" and "The Doctor Dances". Another chapter in their book tackles the monstrous feminine, researching female monsters and villains including a section on the Weeping Angels. Iain MacRury and Michael Rustin's *The Inner World of Doctor Who: Psychoanalytic Reflections in Time and Space* (2013) includes a chapter that focuses on life and death in *Doctor Who*, looking at the Weeping Angels in "Blink" and "The Angels Take Manhattan". In Marcus Harmes' *Why does your church look like a fortress? God and the Gothic in* Doctor Who *and Hammer* (2014), Harmes researches the way religion, science fiction, and the Gothic are intertwined. Lastly, Alec Charles' *The Crack of Doom, The Uncanny Echoes of Steven Moffat's* Doctor Who (2011) specifically focuses on Moffat's time working on the series, both as a screenwriter and executive producer from 2005 until 2010.

Within Leiden University, student theses from the last 10 years have also researched different topics relating to *Doctor Who*. One Master thesis from 2016 looks at colonialism and postcolonialism and the decline of the British Empire. Another Research Master thesis from the same year explores the Posthuman in *Doctor Who*. One Master thesis from 2014 looks at relatedness, alterity and the function dialogue has in the show, while the most recently uploaded Master thesis from 2020 takes a feminist approach to examining the series, looking at the representations of women in *Doctor Who*. Though research that has previously been conducted on *Doctor Who* includes specific explorations of episodes such as "The Empty Child" and "The Doctor Dances", "Blink", and the Weeping Angels, and despite the fact previous research on the monsters in *Doctor Who* and Steven Moffat's era of writing already exists, there is still more to say. Most of the research on *Doctor Who* focuses on the science fiction elements, as it is a science fiction show after all. However there are elements of the Gothic woven into the new, more terrifying episodes of *Doctor Who* that work together with the science fiction genre to create certain episodes that evoke more fear in the audience. This thesis will therefore focus on how the gothic elements are represented in the episodes discussed, why they are represented in this particular way, and to what effect this influences the audience's viewing experience of the episodes. As mentioned in the opening section of this introduction, this thesis will focus specifically on the terrifying atmosphere that is created through the inclusion of Gothic elements, and on the manner in which the Doctor is portrayed as the hero with science and rationality by his side, tasked with defeating the 'evil' or 'other' creatures or events that threaten the safety of the universe, refusing victimisation. The episodes that will be discussed are: "Blink", "The Time of Angels", and "Flesh and Stone"; "Silence in the Library" and "Forest of the Dead"; and "The Empty Child" and "The Doctor Dances". This introduction will devote the next sections to: setting out the history of *Doctor Who*; the origins of the Gothic and the critical responses to it; Gothic Film and television. After these sections, a more detailed description of

the materials used for this thesis will be given, and the methodology used for my research will be explained. Lastly, this introduction presents a chapter plan which will explain the topics that will be discussed in the following chapters.

1.1 A History of Doctor Who: an Introduction

Though most people will be more familiar with the newer version of the *Doctor Who* franchise, which returned to the TV screens in March 2005 and has been running to this day, over 14 seasons, Newman explains that "from 1963 to 1989, *Doctor Who* was a British TV institution" (1). The series' first ever episode, "An Unearthly Child", aired on a Saturday afternoon, just after dark at 05:15pm. *Doctor Who* would remain in a Saturday broadcasting spot on BBC1 for "most of its original run" (1), sandwiched in between *Grandstand* (1958-2007) and *Juke Box Jury* (1960-1967) (Newman). This original scheduling, according to Newman, "was entirely apt: for decades, the show was a lively strand of mainstream British culture, watched by children and adults who had paid attention to the football results and would soon be thinking about the pop charts" (1). Occupying this specific time slot, the series originally started out "as mildly educational science fiction for children" (Newman 1), taking inspiration from its predecessors such as the *Pathfinders in Space* (1960-1) serials and ITV's *Target Luna* (1960). However, as Newman states, "*Doctor Who* should not just be seen in the context of science-fiction television, lodged in history between Nigel Kneale's *Quatermass* (1957) serials and *Star Trek*" (1). Originally fitting into both the categories of British science fiction and BBC period drama, a genre the broadcasting corporation is most known for, *Doctor Who* soon "expanded to take in modes as variant as … the blood-and-thunder Gothicism of Hammer horror, panto humour, conspiracy thriller, studio-bound fantasia" (Newman 3) and many other modes such as social-satire comment, design-led futurism, both deliberate and unintentional camp, and ambitious philosophising (Newman 3). Most importantly, Newman mentions that, despite

criticizing the way "lazy writing" (3) about *Doctor Who* often replies on this stereotype, his childhood experience watching this series very much confirms its existence and effectiveness too: *Doctor Who*'s episodes are written partly with the 'children watching from behind the sofa' effect in mind. Newman states he "can confirm the authenticity of the 'behind the sofa' stereotype" (5-6), explaining that despite the imagery on the television frightening him, leaving him to sleeping with the light in the hallway turned on, the impulse to keep watching was simply stronger. Through *Doctor Who*'s usage of a variety of different modes and genres in combination with its ability to keep children and adults glued to the TV screen, "the programme evolved into BBC-TV's most eccentric saga, at once cosily familiar and cosmically terrifying." (Newman 3).

It might not look like it now, but originally this is not the direction the creators of *Doctor Who* envisioned when the idea for a new science-fiction programme was first pitched. In December 1962, Canadian film and television producer Sydney Newman arrived at the BBC as their new Head of Drama. Newman was made aware of an open slot in the broadcasting programme in between *Grandstand*, a sports showcase aimed at adults, and *Juke Box Jury*, a pop music programme targeted at children and teenagers. A huge science fiction fan himself, Newman decided to create a new science fiction programme that would appeal to both the adult audience of *Grandstand* and the younger audience that was already accustomed to this Saturday time slot and would tune into *Juke Box Jury* after. Newman was strongly against the inclusion of 'bug-eyed monsters' in his new programme, and therefore opted for the exclusion of creatures such as these, aiming for the main character to be a "time-and-space travelling adventurer hero" (Newman 2) who would "use a Wellsian time machine to visit past and future, learning about historical periods and solving problems involving 'proper' science" (Newman 2). Together with writer C.E. Webber, Newman drafted 'The Giants', which was supposed to be the first, introductory story of the new serial. The new serial was to feature characters that would be

reduced to insect-sized people due to a software malfunction and would "face peril in an ordinary garden" (Newman 2). However, Newman's idea was rejected by the production team. Webber's 'The Giants' was completely rewritten by Anthony Coburn into the version of "An Unearthly Child" that would become the official pilot and therefore the series' debut. Despite Newman's dislike for the bug-eyed monsters and his original plan to exclude them from the programme, these creatures eventually led to the series' breakthrough to popular acceptance, most notably through the success of 'The Daleks' (or 'The Mutants', 1963-64) "who trundled on in archetypal form" (Newman 3). The success of *Doctor Who* continued on into the 1970s, "when it seemed to grow up with its audience by becoming more ambitious in production and dramatic terms" (Newman 5), with the series no longer content "to be a 'kiddie *Quatermass*'" (Newman 5).

Part of *Doctor Who*'s success is due to the introduction of the concept of 'regeneration'. When William Hartnell, the first actor to play the role of the Doctor, could no longer continue in his role, the production team realised that they could continue the series by casting different actors in the role of the Doctor, which allowed the production team to not only continue making and writing the series, but also introduce recastings when necessary, upgrades, and reformattings (Newman). The pilot episode, "An Unearthly Child", which exists in two different versions due to major changes between the pilot and the later broadcasted version, starts off a 26 year long run of the *Doctor Who* series, starting in 1963 and ending in 1989. During this 26 year stint, the series introduced fans to the Daleks, the series' "most persistent and recognisable villains" (Newman 4), multiple different regenerations of the Doctor, and introduced and said goodbye to many different villains, monsters, and secondary characters joining the Doctor on their adventures. Newman explains *Doctor Who* experienced "mushrooming popularity for at least its first fifteen years" (4) before declining into a nice cultdom due to the producers' decision to market the series more towards their already existing

fanbase. In 1989, the last season of *Classic Who* aired, due to the show's cancellation. In 1996, *Doctor Who* returned for a one-off TV movie, before permanently returning in 2005 in the form of an entirely new version of *Doctor Who*, which is still running to this day.

In 2003, it was announced *Doctor Who* would be making its return to BBC1 and TV screens after a 16 year absence. Chapman states the announcement "was greeted with much jubilation by the series' legions of fans" (1), as it was promised the series "would be accorded the level of production resources that it had always deserved but had rarely received" (1). Set for transmission in 2005, in-house production at BBC Wales started in 2004, with Russell T Davies, who had been trying to persuade the BBC into bringing the show back since the late 1990s, joining production as the series' showrunner, chief writer and executive producer. Though the first new season would be referred to as Series One, switching from the previously named 'seasons' and not continuing *Classic Who*'s numbering, the series would continue on its story and Christopher Eccleston would join the series to play the Ninth Doctor. The new series was received very well by fans and critics alike, and would be renewed for a second season shortly after. Series Two to Four would see David Tennant take on the role of the Tenth Doctor, and the role of the Doctor would later be played by Matt Smith, Peter Capaldi, and Jodie Whittaker (the first woman to be cast in this role). For the 60th anniversary, David Tennant would return to *Doctor Who* to play the Fourteenth Doctor in three special episodes to commemorate the occasion. The Fifteenth and current Doctor is presently being played by Ncuti Gatwa, who was announced to join the series in 2022 and is confirmed to play the role of the Doctor until at least 2025.

1.2 An Introduction to the Gothic and Its History

The Gothic started out as a "voguish and minor form of writing in the mid-eighteenth century" (Hughes 3), but before the Gothic became a literary genre, it had two relevant connotations

which “provide a central context as to why this specific and somewhat unfashionable word” (3) became the definition of a new style of writing. Hughes explains “[t]he term ‘Gothic’ is derived from the name of a warlike Germanic people whose destructive activities in the declining years of the Roman Empire are popularly considered to have initiated that period in European history known as the Dark Ages” (3). Not only does the Gothic refer to a group of people, it also refers to “a style of northern European architecture that flourished from the twelfth century” (Hughes 4). These two connotations allowed the term ‘Gothic’ to have a paradoxical meaning, as it was both associated with the historical Goths, who were assumed to be “culturally primitive, superstitious and not regulated by law” (Hughes 3) and the Gothic architecture which is “frequently positivised as a northern European counterpart to the Hellenism of Romanesque classicism” (Hughes 4). However, the Gothic carried the first and more negative connotation with it for the most part of its inception in the eighteenth century. It was not until the nineteenth century when the genre was able to part ways with its negative reputation. During this period, the Gothic was able to insert itself into “the nascent popular genres of the nineteenth century, most notably crime fiction and science fiction” (Hughes 5) due to its “historical implication within explorations of the monstrous and the perceptibly abnormal” (Hughes 5). According to Hughes, these genres “make extensive use of Gothicised modes of characterisation and geographical description and implicate also another defining element of Gothic since the time of Walpole: the disruptive potential that the past may have in the present day” (5). It is at this point in time that the stylistics of the Gothic became “highly adaptable and singularly responsive to the needs of any form of writing that expresses deviance, whether this latter indicates a departure from moral codes, from statute law or from conventional human corporeality” (5). Wasson and Alder state “Gothic tropes have sprung up in other nineteenth-century literary forms and modes: stage plays and Romantic poetry, the sensation fiction of Wilkie Collins and the urban London of Charles Dickens and G. W. M. Reynolds all feature an

uncanny ambience, revelations of family secrets and nested narratives, along with associated stock characters of Gothic" (1-2). From the nineteenth century onwards, texts such as the ones previously mentioned "began to blur any perceived dividing line circumscribing the Gothic as a genre" (Wasson and Alder 2), and scholars had started to identify the Gothic "as a mode or a 'tone' of writing" (Wilt, *The Imperial Mouth* 619; qtd. in Wasson and Alder 2). Hughes states that the Gothic "remains a vibrant and still mutable cultural force in the first quarter of the twenty-first century. It is, significantly, a form of fantasy which seems more than ever to have become implicated in social and political discourse" (7). In the period between the First and the Second World War, the Gothic "enters a wider cultural field, becoming implicated in both popular cinema and the rising 'pulp' tradition of (particularly US) fiction" (Hughes 6). Hughes goes on to argue the Gothic "retained its function as a vehicle through which cultural – as well as individual – monstrosity might be expressed, and this element of Gothic persisted through the Second World War and into the period of the Cold War" (6). The Gothic was no longer just a genre, it had become a mode of writing which could be used to combine with many other different genres, as it had blended into the popular writings of the twentieth century, one of which was science fiction.

Wasson and Alder introduce the term 'Gothic science fiction' as a phenomenon that has found its footing as an existing concept in the last thirty years. The writers say "the category 'Gothic', like 'science fiction', is notoriously slippery" (1) as a concept and in its ability to be specifically defined. Gothic science fiction, according to Wasson and Alder, can be considered an oxymoron, because the Gothic and science fiction have the possibility to be incompatible for two specific reasons. Wasson and Alder's first reason is the following: "the Gothic often seems to be about inexplicable phenomena, often featuring the supernatural, dark magic and fantastical strangeness, while science fiction tends to depict a rational world which obeys natural laws even if that world's technology is substantially ahead of our own" (2). The second reason is the

time period the Gothic and science fiction are linked to: Baldick argues "the Gothic, by definition, refers to texts preoccupied with the menace of past ages" (Wasson and Alder 3), while Botting notes "science fiction usually projects its contemporary anxieties onto the future rather than the past" (*Gothic Romanced* 131; qtd. in Wasson and Alder 3-4). Both writers acknowledge that it "may seem a curiously contradictory hyphenation" (1) at first, however despite these differences, other critics see Gothic and science fiction as "firmly yoked" (Wasson and Alder 3). The most famous example of a novel that is considered to belong both to the Gothic and to science fiction is Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Wasson and Alder explain that Shelley's *Frankenstein*'s "darkly fantastical vision of transgressive medical science has inspired many to contemplate the connections between the two categories" (3). Aldiss and Wingrove categorise *Frankenstein* as purely science fiction, and define science fiction as follows: "the search for a definition of mankind and his status in the universe which will stand in our advanced but confused state of knowledge (science), and is characteristically cast in the Gothic or post-Gothic mode" (*Billion Year Spree* 164; qtd. in Wasson and Alder 3). Wasson and Alder introduce Marjean Purinton, Theodora Goss and John Paul Riquelme, three scholars who argue "science fiction emerges directly from the Gothic tradition" (3) and consider Shelley's *Frankenstein* the starting point of this emergence. Other scholars such as Judith Wilt attribute the coming together of the Gothic and science fiction to H.G. Well's *War of the Worlds*, therefore pinpointing the emergence to a later period in time. Despite these slight disagreements about the period in which Gothic science fiction was born, these critics agree that "the Gothic tradition was an influential part of the complex mesh of forms and cultural developments that saw the emergence of what we now call science fiction" (3). The Gothic and science fiction share further similarities, which is that they have been "hybrid creatures from their inception" (4). Wasson and Alder quote Fred Botting to explain that "even in the late eighteenth century, at the height of the Gothic novel, the form was 'hybrid … incorporating and transforming other literary

forms as well as developing and changing its own conventions in relation to newer modes of writing' (*Gothic* 14)" (4). The merging of these two categories not only "permits fresh examination of the ways in which they engage with the dramatic socio-economic changes accompanying these years" (Wasson and Alder 1), it also allows them to complement each other, most noticeably as "the Gothic mode emerges readily in science fiction that explores power, anxiety, resistance and capital" (Wasson and Alder 1). Wasson and Alder conclude by defining Gothic science fiction as "a hybrid category that can be deployed in the service of a wide range of ideologies, world-views and strategic investments" (16).

1.3 Television and Gothic Film

As was the case for the concept of the Gothic, another concept that is similarly difficult to define due to its wide range of genres it can apply to is Gothic film. Kaye explains "Gothic, as a genre born in darkness, has a natural affinity with the cinema" (239). Some of the earliest motion pictures were based on Gothic fiction and draw their inspiration from nineteenth century tradition stage melodrama adaptations (Kaye 239). A century later, in the 1900s, "Gothic elements crept into filmic genres from science fiction to film noir and from thriller to comedy" (239), creating and falling into a number of side genres in the process, one of which was the horror film, which includes monster movies, slasher films, and anything that would involve the supernatural or nightmarish fears (Kaye 239). There are three nineteenth century Gothic works that have been most influential in cinema, namely Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. These three works include more monsters and creatures than classic eighteenth century novels such as Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, and Matthew Lewis' *The Monk*, yet these classic Gothic novels did not transfer into the film industry like the other three works mentioned did. Kaye argues that "perhaps it is the monsters that make the later novels so

adaptable to the fears of various times. *Otranto*, *Udolpho*, and *The Monk* require their archaic foreign settings to work at all, but Frankenstein can be a contemporary experimental scientist, Dracula a trendy aristocrat, Jekyll a modern young man struggling against old-fashioned sexual mores" (240). The more recent works are more easily adapted to the current times; "the monsters can be seen as embodying modern fears such as alienation, the horrors of war, and sexually transmitted disease, whereas Walpole, Radcliffe, and Lewis's concerns, despite their pseudo-historical settings, are always of the eighteenth century" (240). It is the flexibility of the Gothic mode that allows these texts and films to constantly adapt to new and different time periods.

The Gothic is no longer a mode that can only be applied in texts such as poetry or novels. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the Gothic has developed into a mode that is also suitable for film and television. In John Fiske's *Television Culture* (2010), Fiske uses the following definition of television: "a bearer/provoker of meanings and pleasures" (1), and explains culture is "the generation and circulation of this variety of meanings and pleasures within society" (1). Fiske illustrates "television-as-culture is a crucial part of the social dynamics by which the social structure maintains itself in a constant process of production and reproduction: meanings, popular pleasures, and their circulation are therefore part and parcel of this social structure" (1). Television is considered a cultural agent, not only does it provoke meanings, it also circulates them through specific television broadcasts. The programmes that are broadcast on television often attempt "to control and focus this meaningfulness into a more singular preferred meaning that performs the work of the dominant ideology" (2), according to Fiske. These meanings and ideologies are communicated through the codes that are used by television. Fiske defines a code as "a rule-governed system of signs, whose rules and conventions are shared amongst members of a culture, and which is used to generate and circulate meanings in and for that culture" (4). These codes are "links between producers, texts,

and audiences, and are the agents of intertextuality through which texts interrelate in a network of meanings that constitutes our cultural world" (4). Fiske explains the codes work "in a complex hierarchical structure" (4) and are divided into three different levels. The first level is referred to as 'reality', and this level includes social codes such as appearance, dress, make-up, environment, behaviour, speech, gesture, expression, and sound, to name a few (Fiske 5). These codes are "encoded electronically by technical codes" (Fiske 5) of the second level called 'representation', which includes camera work, lighting, editing, music, and sound. The concepts in this second level "transmit the conventional representational codes, which shape the representations of, for example: narrative, conflict, character, action, dialogue, setting, [and] casting" (Fiske 5). The third level is called 'ideology', and this level is organised "into coherence and social acceptability by the ideological codes, such as those of: individualism, patriarchy, race, class, materialism, [and capitalism" (Fiske 5).

1.4 Materials and Methodology

This thesis discusses seven episodes from different series of *Doctor Who*, more specifically Series One (2005), Series Three (2007), Series Four (2008), and Series Five (2010). The seven selected episodes are "Blink" (S3.E10, 2007), "The Time of Angels" (S5.E4, 2010), "Flesh and Stone" (S5.E5, 2010), "Silence in the Library" (S4.E8, 2008), "Forest of the Dead" (S4.E9, 2008), "The Empty Child" (S1.E9, 2005), and "The Doctor Dances" (S1.E10, 2005). I selected these seven episodes for a very specific reason, and that reason is one very important characteristic they all have in common: all these episodes create the 'child watching from behind the sofa' effect Newman (2005) first mentioned. Though these episodes are more terrifying than others, and force you to hide away behind your hands, peaking through your fingers as you try to watch, it is simply impossible to look away from the TV and not take in what happens next. Another characteristic these seven episodes all share is the following: they

are all highly rated by the *Doctor Who* audience and fanbase, as most of these episodes are the highest rated episodes in their respective series. According to IMBd, “The Empty Child” and “The Doctor Dances” are two out of the three highest rated episodes in Series One, both scoring a 9.0/10. Not only is “Blink” the highest rated episode of Series Three, it is the highest rated episode of *Doctor Who* on IMBd, scoring a 9.8/10. “Silence in the Library” and “Forest of the Dead” are some of the top-rated episodes from Series Four, with a 9.3/10 and a 9.4/10 respectively. Though both “The Time of Angels” and “Flesh and Stone” score relatively well, they are outranked by episodes such as “Vincent and the Doctor” (the highest scoring episodes of the series), and the season finale. In “The Empty Child” and “The Doctor Dances”, the Ninth Doctor (Christopher Eccleston) and his companion Rose Tyler (Billie Piper) travel to 1940s London and end up in the middle of the London Blitz. A young girl named Nancy (Florence Hoath) is being followed by a little boy wearing a gasmask, and the Doctor and Rose, together with the help of another time traveller named Captain Jack Harkness (John Barrowman), are looking for a way to protect Nancy and the other children in the neighbourhood while simultaneously searching for a way to help the little boy. In “Blink”, the Tenth Doctor (David Tennant) and Martha Jones (Freema Agyeman) are stuck in 1969 without the TARDIS. They are able to contact a woman named Sally Sparrow (Carey Mulligan), and together with Larry Nightingale (Finlay Robertson) she is able to stop an alien species named the Weeping Angels from using the TARDIS’ power for themselves. “Silence in the Library” and “Forest of the Dead” sees the Tenth Doctor and companion Donna Noble (Catherine Tate) meeting a group of archaeologists, led by Professor River Song (Alex Kingston) on a planet called the Library, which is inhabited by a piranha-like species called the Vastha Nerada. In “The Time of Angels” and “Flesh and Stone”, the Weeping Angels have returned, and it is up to the Eleventh Doctor (Matt Smith), his companion Amy Pond (Karen Gillan) and Professor River Song to stop them from building an army and taking control of the TARDIS once more.

Several different works by researchers were used to build the methodology for this thesis. Fred Botting's *Gothic* (2005), David Punter's *A New Companion to the Gothic* (2012) and William Hughes' *Key Concepts in the Gothic* (2018) were consulted to write the section on Gothic and its origins in this introduction chapter and for the analysis sections in the next three chapters. These books were selected for their extensive explanation and content on the origins of the Gothic, the characteristics of the Gothic, and the critical responses to the genre. John Fiske's *Television Culture* (2011) was used for the section and analysis on television studies, with Heidi Kaye's chapter *Gothic Film* (in Punter's *A New Companion to the Gothic*) and Wasson and Alder's *Gothic Science Fiction 1980-2010* (2011) accompanying it. Third, Rob Latham's *The Oxford Handbook of Science Fiction* (2014) and Aldiss and Wingrove's *Trillion Year Spree* (1986) were selected for the parts on science fiction and its inception.

The next three chapters discuss the aforementioned *Doctor Who* episodes in more detail. Chapter Two will investigate Moffat's episodes on the Weeping Angels, more specifically on "Blink" from Series Three, and the two-part story "The Time of Angels" and "Flesh and Stone" from Series Five of *New Who*. Chapter Three explores two episodes from Series Four, another two-part story written by Moffat namely "Silence in the Library" and "Forest of the Dead". Chapter Four focuses on two episodes from Series One which also count as a two-part story: "The Empty Child" and "The Doctor Dances". The last chapter of this thesis will be the conclusion, in which the content from the previous three chapters will be summarised.

2. Beware The Weeping Angel: “Blink”, “The Time of Angels”, and “Flesh and Stone”

This chapter discusses a two-part story and a standalone episode written by Steven Moffat featuring the Weeping Angels for *Doctor Who*’s third and fifth series, namely “Blink” (June 9 2007), “The Time of Angels” (April 24 2010) and “Flesh and Stone” (May 1 2010). It will explore the episodes as a group, while also investigating the Gothic elements that can be found throughout. The chapter opens with a quick summary of the episodes discussed in the following pages. The second section will then focus specifically on the Gothic elements in “Blink”, and the third section discusses “The Time of Angels” and “Flesh and Stone”.

2.1 Plot summary of the episodes

In “Blink”, a young woman named Sally Sparrow (Carey Mulligan) visits the abandoned house at Wester Drumlins at night. There she receives a message from the Doctor (David Tennant), who warns her to be wary of the Weeping Angels. Sally and her best friend Kathy (Lucy Gaskell) return the next day to investigate further. When a man who claims to be Kathy’s grandson (Richard Cant) arrives at the house with a message for Sally, the Weeping Angels teleport Kathy back to the 1920s. Together with Kathy’s brother Larry (Finlay Robertson), Sally tries to decode the message from the Doctor that features as an easter egg on all seventeen DVDs she owns. Her task is to send the Doctor’s TARDIS back to him, as he is currently stuck in 1969. Sally and Larry return to Wester Drumlins to face the Weeping Angels. They manage to return the TARDIS to the Doctor, who tricks the Angels in the process. One year later, Sally and Larry run the DVD shop together when they meet the Doctor and Martha (Freema Agyeman). Sally is able to warn them both and gives them the finished manuscript of their conversation. In “The Time of Angels” and “Flesh and Stone”, the Doctor (Matt Smith) and Amy Pond (Karen Gillan) are contacted by River Song (Alex Kingston) to follow a spaceship

called *the Byzantium* to its crash site. The ship was transporting a Weeping Angel which manages to escape and flee into the temple, and it is the Doctor's task to locate the Angel and stop it from causing any harm. During their voyage through the temple, the Doctor realises all of the statues inside are Weeping Angels, and it is up to him to get his companions to safety and to stop the Angels from becoming too powerful.

2.2 "Blink"

One of the Gothic elements present in "Blink" emerges from the story's specific setting. In Gothic literature, locations such as a ruined castle, a graveyard, an abandoned building, dark forests or mountain regions are often used to create the eerie, unsettling atmosphere associated with this genre. In "Blink", classic settings associated with the Gothic and more modern settings alternate. The *Doctor Who* episode is set in a few locations that have a strong Gothic feel to them, such as the old, abandoned house at Wester Drumlins and the cemetery Kathy Nightingale is buried at. However, in contrast, the episode features many settings that do not fit the description of the Gothic at all. These locations, such as Kathy Nightingale's house, the police station, and the DVD store Larry Nightingale works at, are much more modern, and allow the viewer to relate to the ordinary world that is depicted. These differences in setting also create a strong juxtaposition, which adds to the episode's tension throughout the different scenes. The viewer is allowed to sit back and observe more casual and less tense scenes, and is almost tricked into lowering their guard in the same way the characters in the episode are. This rhythm of scenes containing ominous threats or attacks followed by a sudden relief when the threats or attacks have passed is a common rhythm in the Gothic. The settings that do not fit the description of Gothic settings, such as Kathy Nightingale's house, the police station, and the DVD store give the characters and the viewer a feeling of safety; the Weeping Angels are less likely to appear in these settings. Through the changes between settings, tension builds up, as

the viewers and characters are more likely to experience feelings of fear or even terror in settings that are heavily linked to the Weeping Angels, such as Wester Drumlins. The abandoned house is most heavily associated with the 'evil' and 'dark' Other that is presented as the enemy in this episode, and is therefore most likely to create the 'child looking from behind the sofa' feeling introduced by Newman in the introduction of this thesis. Wester Drumlins is also the location in which Sally and Larry finally decipher the Doctor's warning message to them before defeating the Weeping Angels and sending the TARDIS back to the Doctor and Martha in the past.

Suspense is a common characteristic of the Gothic that is woven through "Blink", combined with the effect the different settings have on the viewer and the characters. At first, this suspense is most notably felt by the viewer. Through the camera angles used at the beginning of the episode, the characters are unaware of the Angels removing their hands from in front of their eyes to watch Sally, or their moving around the house following Kathy, while the viewers do get to see these actions. As such, the viewers are aware of the threat the Angels pose, and this leads to the audience automatically sharing the characters' fear. Later in the episode, Sally Sparrow and Larry Nightingale start experiencing this suspense as the episode progresses. As they work their way through deciphering the Doctor's warning, they learn more about the enemy they are facing and how to defeat them to get the TARDIS back. The reason the viewers experience this suspense both earlier and more often is because they are able to gather the information that the characters do not have access to yet. This is where the Gothic blends in with and influences other genres: Gothic elements are not only often found in science fiction works, they are also used in crime fiction and detectives. Together, the characters in "Blink" and the viewers watching the episode collect clues to identify the threat and to find solutions on how to defeat this threat. Especially during the very first few scenes that feature the Weeping Angels at Wester Drumlins, the viewer is shown what the Angels are capable of,

collecting these clues ahead of the characters themselves. The Angels can be seen moving when both Kathy and Sally are not looking at them, standing with outstretched arms inches away from sending either of the two women back into the past, or uncovering their face when either Sally or Kathy turn their back towards them. The Angels and the abandoned house at Wester Drumlins are linked in this situation, creating the aforementioned suspense through the combination of the setting and the information the viewer is able to gather before the characters understand what it is exactly that is happening. As the characters uncover more information about the Weeping Angels, the viewers now share this knowledge, which adds to the suspense the characters and audience are feeling, and which intensifies the feelings of fear the viewers experience while watching the episode. It is made clear through various settings such as the cemetery and the abandoned house at Wester Drumlins and the scenes that take place here that the Weeping Angels are not to be underestimated, and both characters and viewers should rightly feel afraid.

Supernatural beings such as monsters, demons, witches, ghosts, banshees, and vampires to name a few examples are integral parts of Gothic literature. Since *Doctor Who* blends the Gothic with science fiction elements, the Weeping Angels in this episode are part of the reality of the Doctor's universe. This is where *Doctor Who* strays away from the Gothic: the Weeping Angels are not an 'otherworldly', spiritual or supernatural force, they are existing entities in this universe and reality, which allows the Doctor to find rational explanations on how to defeat and outsmart these creatures. Though the Weeping Angels are not supernatural creatures and therefore cannot be defined to fit into the characteristics of the Gothic in this way, their concept still relies on Gothic tropes. Moffat is said to have gotten inspiration for the Weeping Angels whilst on a family holiday. When visiting one of the graveyards in the area, a location which already has a strong connection to the Gothic, Moffat saw statues of angels near the graves, which allowed him to get his inspiration for the Weeping Angels. As their name suggests, the

Weeping Angels are based on angel statues. Angels are considered to be supernatural, divine, and spiritual entities, allowing this aspect of the Gothic to loosely come forward in "Blink". The Gothic has always had a strong affiliation with the past, and this is where the Weeping Angels' strong link with the Gothic also comes in. Their powers allow them to send people back into the past, forcing them to live out their life in the time period they have been teleported to. This way, the Angels consume the energy of all the days that these people could have lived in the present, which is what keeps them strong and powerful. However, in the case of "Blink", defying the Gothic and fully embracing the science fiction nature of the show is what allows the Doctor to be the hero who saves Sally and Larry from the enemies. Because the Weeping Angels exist in the Doctor's reality, he knows about their powers, and is able to warn Sally through the message on the wall at Wester Drumlins and the easter egg on her DVDs. Had "Blink" followed the Gothic conventions of magical, supernatural otherworldly creatures, information about the Weeping Angels would have been scarce, which could have resulted in Sally not being able to send the TARDIS back to the year 1969, leaving the Doctor and Martha stuck.

Repetition is another characteristic of the Gothic, and it is a feature that is also used throughout episodes of *Doctor Who*. In "Blink", specifically, repetition can be found most often in the message from the Doctor. His message has been added as an easter egg on seventeen specific DVDs, all of which are owned by Sally Sparrow, and this easter egg message is shown at least three times throughout the episode; first at Kathy's house, then at the DVD shop as Larry is watching it, and a third time at Wester Drumlins when Sally and Larry are watching the message together. The repetition of this message is incorporated into this episode as a plot device: it brings Sally Sparrow into the equation as the main character, with the important task of saving the Doctor and Martha from the past. Not only is the Doctor's message shown multiple times on differing TV screens, his most important warning is also repeated multiple times

throughout the episode: “don’t blink. Don’t even blink. Blink and you’re dead.” This specific warning is what helps Sally and Larry survive against the Weeping Angels, and is simultaneously the most important advice anyone would need when facing the Angels. The repetition of the Doctor’s message and his warning in combination with the inability to blink when facing the Weeping Angels all adds to the tension and fear aspect of the episode. Viewers at home share the characters’ anxiousness and through Newman’s ‘looking from behind the sofa’ concept of not wanting to miss a single second of the series, are unable to look away from the TV screen. In this way, they are similar to Sally and Larry, creating a level of relatability between the viewers and the characters, as both are now unable to blink, even for a split second.

Something that sets “Blink” apart from other episodes discussed in this thesis, but also from other *Doctor Who* episodes in general, is the absence of the Doctor and his companion. Throughout this episode, the Doctor and Martha are mostly seen only through TV screens. The first time the Doctor’s message is played on the TVs at Kathy and Larry’s house, only the Doctor is shown, however the second and third time Sally and Larry watch his message, Martha is shown on screen for a short period of time. It is not until the final scene of the episode when we finally see the Doctor and Martha outside of said TV screen. The viewer and Sally share this experience together, as it is also Sally’s first time officially meeting the Doctor, and she is able to give him the finished manuscript, which will complete the time loop the episode is known for. Next to these few instances, the Doctor and Martha are shown stuck in the past for a couple of short scenes, and can be seen interacting with Billy. Apart from these relatively short scenes, “Blink” is mostly focused on Sally Sparrow, and her best friend’s brother Larry Nightingale. The episode opens with Sally exploring Wester Drumlins on her own at night, receiving the Doctor’s warning after pulling wallpaper off the wall, and seeing the Weeping Angel for the first time. Sally returns to the house the next day, taking her friend Kathy Nightingale with her, who is first separated from Sally by the Angels and then taken to Hull in the 1920s. At the same

time in the present, Sally is given a letter by Kathy's grandson, featuring an explanation of what had happened to Kathy, and some further instructions. At Kathy's request, Sally visits her brother Larry Nightingale at his job in a DVD store, where he mentions a man featured on only seventeen DVDs on which he seems to be having a one-sided conversation. It is later revealed that the seventeen DVDs are the specific DVDs in Sally's collection, meaning the message the Doctor is trying to communicate is meant for her. It is therefore Sally's and Larry's task to decode the message and find out what their objectives are. Though the Doctor and Martha are still part of the episode in some way, and the main objective is to save them and bring the TARDIS back to them, the majority of the episode follows Sally's and Larry's battle against the Weeping Angels. Together, they manage to send the TARDIS back to the Doctor in 1969, while the Doctor manages to trick the Angels in the process by making them look at each other, causing them to be frozen in time. The Doctor's absence for most of the episode means that he is unable to fulfil the role the inclusion of Gothic elements bestow upon him: he is unable to retrieve the TARDIS himself, and therefore cannot defeat the evil in this episode himself. However, through his messages to Sally, he is able to offer his knowledge on the Weeping Angels to her, and still manages to find solutions to save Martha and himself.

Because the Doctor and Martha play a smaller role in "Blink", different main characters need to be introduced for at least one episode to save them, which leads to the question: why Sally Sparrow? Firstly, Moffat had already introduced her in a short story from the Doctor Who Annual 2006 about the Ninth Doctor, in which elements that were later used in "Blink" were already present. In Moffat's "'What I Did on My Christmas Holidays' by Sally Sparrow", twelve year old Sally Sparrow is writing an essay for a school assignment. This essay of hers features the Doctor and the TARDIS being separated in time, with the Doctor able to give instructions to Sally on how to bring it back to him. Moffat's short story also includes messages behind wallpaper, similar to the Doctor's first warning to Sally in "Blink", and an ontological

paradox involving a pre-recorded conversation between Sally and the Doctor recorded on a video cassette. Secondly, the Doctor and Sally Sparrow are already linked to each other in time in “Blink”. At the end of the episode, one year after Sally’s and Larry’s encounter with the Weeping Angels, Sally spots the Doctor outside of their shop. She runs after him to meet him, and finds out that in the Doctor’s timeline, none of the events depicted in the episode have happened yet. This is the moment Sally realises it was her who gave the Doctor the finished manuscript of their conversation through the television, and she explains to him what will happen to the Doctor in the future and how she will be able to help him. Through this warning, the Doctor is able to warn Sally about the Weeping Angels at the beginning of the episode. Next to their link through space and time, Wester Drumlins is an abandoned house nobody has visited in a long time. This allows for the argument a specific type of main character needed to be introduced in “Blink” to find the Doctor’s warnings and messages in the first place. This main character ends up being Sally Sparrow, as she is one of the few people brave enough to explore the abandoned Wester Drumlins at night on her own. When she brings Kathy with her the following day, she also explains to her that she has always had an interest and appreciation for older architecture and abandoned places. Because the Weeping Angels take Kathy and she disappears, Sally finds the key to the TARDIS when looking for her. This once again gives her the opportunity to save the Doctor and send the TARDIS back to 1969. When Sally receives Kathy’s letter from her grandson together with Kathy’s request to deliver a message to her brother, Larry Nightingale officially becomes the second main character of the episode. It is his job at the DVD shop and his interest in DVDs in the first place that allows Sally to learn about the Doctor’s one-sided conversation and the hidden message it contains. It is also with Larry’s and later Billy’s help that Sally finds out the seventeen DVDs have one thing in common: they all are a part of her own DVD collection. Sally, Larry, the Doctor, Martha, and Billy are all linked together, either through genuine relationships and being acquainted with one another, or

through the realms of time and space itself. As explained in the previous paragraph, the Doctor cannot fulfil his role of the hero refusing victimisation; in this instance, he has ended up being the victim, as he is stuck in the past with no way of returning back to the present. The introduction of Sally, Larry, Kathy, and Billy allow the episode to apply this refusal of victimisation to other characters who are then able to help the Doctor. Though the Weeping Angels send Kathy back to the past, she refuses to let that impact her present relations: she convinces her grandson to deliver a handwritten letter and pictures of her family to Sally in the present, and is able to help Sally in this way. Per Kathy's request, Sally delivers a message to Kathy's brother Larry, who eventually helps her decode the Doctor's messages about the Weeping Angels, and together they are able to send the TARDIS to 1969 and save the Doctor. The exact same is the case for Billy Shipton: he waits an entire lifetime for Sally to visit him in the hospital, and helps her find the connection between the seventeen DVDs on the list Larry gave her. In the Doctor's absence, Sally, Larry, Kathy and Billy take over his refusal to fall victim to the Weeping Angels.

2.3 "The Time of Angels" and "Flesh and Stone"

In both "The Time of Angels" and "Flesh and Stone", suspense plays an important role, even more so when comparing it to the previous episode focused on the Weeping Angels ("Blink"). Whereas "Blink's" primary plot device is the fear and terror that affects both the characters and the viewers, creating the specific atmosphere mentioned by Newman in previous sections, this is not the case for Moffat's Series Five episodes about the Angels. Because the viewers are already familiar with the threat the Angels bring, these two episodes are less focused on the fear and terror the Angels are able to evoke, but more on the Doctor's plan to defeat them a second time. As mentioned in the introduction, this is an important feature of *Doctor Who* as a whole: the return of the Weeping Angels creates a situation in which the Doctor and his companions

are in trouble and their safety is once again threatened. Through logical plans, rational thinking, and the knowledge the Doctor possesses about his enemies, the Doctor refuses to fall victim to the Angels and refuses to give up. In “The Time of Angels”, a large section of the episode takes place within the temple built by the natives hundreds of years ago, as the Doctor and companions navigate the tunnels to find their way up to the spaceship *the Byzantium* that has crashed on top of the temple. Throughout this episode, the tension cleverly builds up as the characters try and make their way through. The viewer, similarly to the characters, is yet unaware of what is bound to happen to them, though small hints are given to the audience only when Father Octavian’s men can be seen splitting off from the group and being killed by the Angel that has escaped from the ship one by one. Throughout their journey through the tunnel, the Doctor and Professor River Song consistently mention they are aware that something is wrong, however they have not figured out exactly what is causing this feeling. Tension reaches its peak when the Doctor and Professor Song realise that all statues in this temple only have one head, while the native alien species that used to inhabit the planet had two heads. It is revealed that every single statue in the temple is a weakened Weeping Angel. What first seemed a manageable task has now turned into a situation that evokes feelings of fear and worry, as both the characters and the viewers realise they are dealing with an army and are severely outnumbered. From here onwards, it is up to the Doctor to hatch a plan to defeat the Angels for a second time and to make sure he gets as many of his co-travellers to safety as possible. Throughout both episodes, though it may look like the Weeping Angels have outsmarted him many times and will defeat him, the Doctor manages to either distract or outwit them, and erases the existence of the Angels from space and time. The build-up of this suspense that is the driving force behind the audience’s uneasy viewing experience starts in the very first scene of “the Time of Angels”: River Song is very carefully introduced into another episode, leaving the viewers with more questions than answers. Throughout both episodes, the Doctor often seems to be on

the back foot, as the Angels manage to find solutions to every single plan the Doctor thinks should stop them. The viewer is therefore led to feeling anxious about the outcome of these episodes with the help of the suspense that is being created by the way the story unfolds.

The setting in “The Time of Angels” and “Flesh and Stone” plays an important part in creating the tense viewing experience for the audience. “The Time of Angels” takes place on an abandoned planet of which the native inhabitants have mysteriously died out hundreds of years ago, leaving only one temple with hundreds of statues and the dead buried in the walls to honour them. The temple takes on the role of a graveyard and a church at once, as it has become a final resting place for the dead and a location to visit to honour them. This setting creates the necessary eerie atmosphere that is required of Gothic literature, an eerie atmosphere which is enhanced when the statues in the temple are revealed to be the Weeping Angels, all waiting for a chance to regain their strength. This puts the characters in great danger, which adds to the terrifying viewing experience for the audience, as they are now able to share the characters’ anxieties. The setting in “Flesh and Stone” is a clear blend of Gothic and science fiction elements. Aboard *the Byzantium* spaceship, the Doctor discovers an entire forest. This forest is referred to as an ‘oxygen factory’, and is a combination of real trees and technology. The Weeping Angels are able to sabotage the trees and turn off the lights, and with the cover the trees offer, this makes for a dangerous playing field in which the Angels once again seem to be the stronger force. Together these two settings, unusual as they may seem for a Gothic story, are able to create the scary atmosphere that is common in this genre.

This chapter took a closer look at the Gothic elements that are used in “Blink”, “The Time of Angels”, and “Flesh and Stone”. In these three episodes, Gothic elements such as the setting of the story and the suspense that is created throughout the episode play an important role in creating a terrifying and scary viewing experience for the audience. In “Blink”, the Doctor has

fallen victim to the Weeping Angels, allowing Sally, Larry, Kathy and Billy to take over his refusal of victimisation in his place. In “The Time of Angels” and “Flesh and Stone”, the Doctor is able to portray this refusal of victimisation himself, as he is able to defeat the Weeping Angels once again through his escape plans based on rationality and logical decision-making.

3. Donna Noble Has Left The Library: "Silence in the Library" and "Forest of the Dead"

This chapter explores the second two-part story written by Steven Moffat for *Doctor Who*'s fourth series, namely "Silence in the Library" (May 31 2008) and "Forest of the Dead" (June 7 2008). It will focus on the story as a whole, but also on the Gothic elements that can be found throughout the two aforementioned episodes. The first section will provide a quick summary of the two episodes, and the second section will look into the Gothic elements in "Silence and the Library" and "Forest of the Dead".

3.1 Plot summary of the episodes

In "Silence in the Library", the Doctor (David Tennant) and his companion Donna Noble (Catherine Tate) visit a library the size of a planet called the Library in the 51st century. They received a message to visit the Library, but when they arrive the planet seems to be abandoned. They find a machine that is able to scan the library for any sign of life, which informs them Donna and the Doctor are the only humanoid life forms currently present in the library. However, the machine also shows the presence of trillions of other non-human life forms that the Doctor and Donna are unable to see or hear. As they make their way through the library, the Doctor and Donna are informed the library has been breached and that others are coming, before they stumble upon archaeologist River Song and the group of travellers accompanying her. The group's mission is to find out why the library sealed itself one hundred years ago, and while exploring the library, Miss Evangelista (Talulah Riley) is attacked and killed by a species inhabiting the library called the Vashta Nerada. The Doctor teleports Donna to safety, but she is unable to materialise properly, and is saved to the library's database. In "Forest of the Dead", the Vashta Nerada are able to animate the bodies of the characters they killed, and they are chasing the Doctor, River Song, and the remaining members of their expedition through the

library. The Doctor, River and Strackman Lux (Steve Pemberton), whose grandfather is the one who built the library, end up at the heart of the library. Here, Strackman Lux reveals his grandfather's youngest daughter died of an incurable disease, and the library was created to give her an imaginary place she could live in forever. The Doctor realises all people present in the library when it was shut down were uploaded to the library's database. Before the Doctor is able to sacrifice himself, River takes his place, uploading the data to her own mind instead so the library's database is able to stabilize. At the end of the episode, the Doctor uploads River's consciousness to the library's database, where she is reunited with Lux's crewmembers.

3.2 "Silence in the Library" and "Forest of the Dead"

Repetition is one of the Gothic elements that can be found throughout "Silence in the Library" and "Forest of the Dead". In these two episodes, oral repetition is used in two different instances to create a certain atmosphere and to make the audience feel uncomfortable or uneasy while watching. The first time the audience encounters this oral repetition is during "Silence in the Library" when the concept of ghosting is first introduced. As some of the members of the expedition are attacked and killed by the Vashta Nerada, they are stripped of their skin, leaving only a skeleton in their spacesuits. These spacesuits are equipped with technology that allows the explorers to communicate with each other. However, once an explorer has died, an essence of them is kept alive for a little while longer in their communicators, allowing them to be able to speak for an extra minute or two. Once these minutes are up, their speech will fall into a repetitive pattern, repeating the last phrase the character has uttered. This process is described as ghosting. Not only does ghosting introduce the element of repetition in these episodes, it also alludes to Gothic elements relating to ghosts or the lingering of the past. Though rationally, the characters known their friend has already passed away, a small part of them has not moved on yet, and this creates a feeling of nostalgia and sadness the viewers are able to share with the

characters. In the case of ghosting, the repetition is also used as a tool to indicate a character's death. It adds to the horror and suspense in both "Silence in the Library" and "Forest of the Dead", as the change in a character's speech pattern not only alerts the Doctor that one of his companions is dead, it also allows the Vashta Nerada to take control of the skeletons stuck in the spacesuits. Instead of feelings of nostalgia and sadness, the audience here shares in the characters' fear. The second time the audience encounters this repetition is in the final scene of "Silence in the Library", when the Doctor discovers what happened to his companion Donna Noble after he teleported her to safety. While it was the Doctor's intention to teleport Donna back inside the TARDIS, the library's safe file detected her before she had properly materialised inside the TARDIS, and she is uploaded into the library's database to keep her safe. At the end of the episode, one of the interfaces that work as librarians can be seen wearing Donna's face, repeating the phrase "Donna Noble has left the library, Donna Noble has been saved" (*Silence in the Library*, 2008) over and over again. At the same time, Other Dave's ghosting process starts, causing his suit to repeat the phrase "who turned out the lights?" (*Silence in the Library*, 2008). These phrases overlap for the last minute of the episode, while the camera angles switch from the interface with Donna's face on it back to the Vashta Nerada who have now animated two suits and are closing in on the Doctor. This creates an overwhelming scene of noise, mirroring the Doctor's panic and helplessness.

Another characteristic of the Gothic is the concept of the double. Though the double is normally represented in a very different way, tapping into both the masculine and the feminine and combining both sexes into one character, "Silence in the Library" and "Forest of the Dead" portray the double in a different manner. In these two episodes, the concept of the double is used to create a tense atmosphere for both the characters and the viewers. Since the Vashta Nerada are an alien species living in the shadows, the only way to stay safe and keep track of the piranhas is by counting said shadows. Many of the characters' deaths in these two episodes

are at the hands of the Vashta Nerada, who use the same tactic repeatedly: they appear as a second shadow at the feet of the characters, waiting for a chance to strike. By disguising themselves as a character's second shadow, they temporarily become the double. The presence of the Vashta Nerada makes the characters balance on the line between life and death, their two shadows indicate their death might be near, and through their two shadows only one second separates them being alive from being dead. The double in these two episodes can be argued to be presented as being alive and close to death at the same time. As soon as this second shadow attaches itself to one of the characters, the characters and the viewers share this anxious feeling that the Vashta Nerada create: the characters are aware they need to be very careful and move as little as possible, knowing even the smallest mistake could mean their end, and the viewers share this panic with them.

The setting is an important characteristic of the Gothic story, as it often sets the tone and atmosphere of these works. As mentioned before, some examples of settings in Gothic stories are castles or deserted locations, such as cemeteries, dark forests or mountain ranges. The setting in "Silence in the Library" and "Forest of the Dead" can also be classed as a Gothic setting. The two episodes take place in a library the size of an entire planet, however the building has been completely abandoned and has been empty for decades. When Donna and the Doctor try using the software in the library, it tells them there are millions of life forms located inside the library, most likely referencing the Vashta Nerada and the people that have been uploaded to the library's database. Villegas explains the library "maintains the [G]othic convention of sublimity in its design, constituted by vastness and obscurity as its primary features" (2021). Villegas (2021) quotes Killeen (*Ghosting the Gothic*, 2009) to explain that the library's archaic interior in the form of its long, small corridors and the physical presence of books is another characteristic that ties these episodes to the Gothic, because this showcases the lingering of the past that is always present in Gothic media, even on a futuristic planet such as the Library. The

Library is able to evoke fear in the audience through its dark, long corridors and the sheer size of the library and the planet, which are now almost entirely empty. These concepts play into the audience's potential underlying fears of the dark and being alone at large and seemingly empty locations. For example, libraries are usually places of community and of learning. Many people can be present in a library at the same time, as was the case on the last day the Library planet in "Silence in the Library" and "Forest of the Dead" was in use: at the time, more than 4000 people were visiting the library. Because the viewing audience will think of the library as a very quiet, peaceful and unthreatening location, with many people often browsing at the same time, the Library pictured in *Doctor Who* should immediately alert them something is not quite right on this planet. Because the setting deviates from the audience's definition and expectation of what a library usually entails, "Silence in the Library" and "Forest of the Dead" are able to create an eerie and unsettling atmosphere from the first scene onwards.

After the Doctor and Donna bump into a team of explorers led by River Song and funded by Strackman Lux, they discover the library they have travelled to is inhabited by a piranha-like species living in the shadows called the Vashta Nerada. These aliens are a new species created by Moffat specifically for this two-episode story, and are described by the Doctor as "the piranhas of the air" (*Silence in the Library*, 2008). The Vashta Nerada are a species living entirely in the shadows, they can attach themselves to other species by appearing next to an already existing shadow. Therefore, the advice that is given by the library software is to count the shadows. The same vastness that is created by the immense empty library setting is also present in the design of the Vashta Nerada. Their vastness is what makes them terrifying and what creates the danger in the library. The Vashta Nerada are not individual creatures, they group together, and because of their vastness they are able to outnumber the Doctor and his companions, pose a threat, and endanger the safety of the entire group. Once again, these elements create Newman's specific viewing experience. The viewers at home feel all the

tension, suspense, and terror the characters in *Doctor Who* feel through the TV screen, while being glued to the screen and unable to look away due to the excitement at the same time.

Though it is not abundantly clear in the episodes due to the Doctor never having met River Song before, “Silence in the Library” and “Forest of the Dead” are the beginning of the underlying romance plot between the Doctor and River. Their romance plot builds throughout many episodes and series of Doctor Who, and the two characters will keep meeting each other in many other stories. However, because the two of them are time travellers, their travelling timelines run opposite each other. The Doctor meets River for the first time in “Silence in the Library”, and it is made clear he has no idea who she is or whether he can trust her or not. River, on the other hand, has met the Doctor countless times, and their meeting in the library will be the last time she will ever see him. It is revealed that River knows the Doctor’s real name, indicating that he will trust her more than he trusts anyone else in the future, due to their relationship. In “Forest of the Dead”, the Doctor decides it would be the right decision to trust River, and he eventually saves her life by uploading her into the library’s database after she sacrificed herself to stabilise the library’s core computer. The beginning of their relationship is an indication of how far the Doctor is willing to go to save the people he cares most about. River Song not only knows the Doctor’s longest and most well-kept secret, something the audience never finds out, she is also carrying around a version of the Doctor’s sonic screwdriver, a device he would not give up to anyone.

In “Silence in the Library” and “Forest of the Dead”, the Doctor’s refusal of victimisation is very clearly portrayed. The Doctor and Donna arrive at the Library because the Doctor had received a message asking him for help. The interfaces in the library, also called Nodes, warn the pair to always keep counting the shadows, and as the lights start turning off in the entrance room, the Doctor and Donna quickly run for a room with more lighting. After they meet River Song and her team of explorers, the Doctor orders them to set up more lights around

the edge of the room. This is a clear example of his rational thinking and his ability to solve problems throughout his adventures. Though the Doctor is not aware of the threat he is facing yet, he is already taking precautions using the information he does have. As soon as the Doctor realises the creatures hiding in the shadows are the Vashta Nerada, he makes sure to inform everyone else in the room of the threat they are dealing with, and how to best handle this threat. The Vashta Nerada are the native species on the Library, the forests they lived in were all cut down to make the books in this library, and yet they are portrayed as the Other and the evil the Doctor will have to protect his companions against. When the Vashta Nerada start attacking and killing the other explorers that came to the Library with River Song, the Doctor seals the explorers into their spacesuits, hoping this will at least slow down the piranhas. Near the end of "Forest of the Dead", the Doctor and River Song learn the secret of the Library. It was created for grandfather Lux' youngest daughter, and an essence of her referred to as CAL now exists as the computer running the library. Saving all people present in the library at the time of the planet's shutdown destabilised her, and the only way to save these people is to allow CAL more memory space. This is where the Doctor is most easily portrayed as the hero of the series. His plan is to sacrifice himself to save everyone else. River stops him and sacrifices herself instead, sharing the Doctor's heroic nature. River's essence is saved to the sonic screwdriver she was carrying with her, and the Doctor uploads her to the now-stable library database, saving her life. The episode ends with River saying: "[h]e just can't do it, can he? That man. That impossible man. He just can't give in" (*Forest of the Dead*, 2008).

This chapter analysed the way in which elements of the Gothic are used in "Silence in the Library" and "Forest of the Dead". In these two episodes, the use of repetition and the setting of the library are the two elements that create a scary and uneasy atmosphere for the viewers at home. The tension and suspense that are built through the use of these elements cause the

audience feel uncomfortable and terrified while watching the episodes, while simultaneously being unable to look away from the screen, eager to find out what happens next. The Doctor's refusal of victimisation, both in "Silence in the Library" and "Forest of the Dead", is portrayed through the Doctor's constant search for solutions. He is often busy trying to solve problems and creating a safe environment, even when he has not yet identified the threat. At the end of the episode, the Doctor's stance is made most clear: he saves everyone in the library, was willing to sacrifice himself to achieve this, and saved the life of the woman who meant the most to him.

4. “Are You My Mummy?”: “The Empty Child” and “The Doctor Dances”

This chapter features the first two-part story written by Steven Moffat for *Doctor Who*’s first season, namely “The Empty Child” (May 21 2005) and “The Doctor Dances” (May 28 2005). It will examine the story as a whole, and look at the Gothic elements that can be found throughout the two aforementioned episodes specifically. The first section offers a summary of the two-part story, while the second section will focus specifically on the Gothic elements of “The Empty Child” and “the Doctor Dances”, and how these elements influence and affect the audience’s watching experience.

4.1 Plot summary of the episodes

In “The Empty Child”, The Doctor (Christopher Eccleston) and his companion Rosa Tyler (Billie Piper) travel to the London of the 1940s, where they end up in the middle of the London Blitz. While the Doctor is focused on locating the cylinder that brought them here, Rose sees a little boy with a gasmask on the roof and decides to follow him. On the roof, she holds onto a rope hanging from the sky, and gets lifted into the air. Dangling from the rope in the middle of the London Blitz, a time traveller named Captain Jack Harkness (John Barrowman) saves her. In the meantime, the Doctor meets a young woman named Nancy (Florence Hoath), who warns him not to pick up when the phone in the TARDIS’ phone box starts ringing. The Doctor follows Nancy, and learns that she takes care of the other children in the neighbourhood, and that the little boy with the gasmask (Albert Valentine) is in some kind of way linked to her, as the little boy keeps showing up at the exact same locations. The Doctor tries to ask Nancy for information about the little boy, and she points him towards the hospital near the crash site of a mysterious object. At the hospital, the Doctor speaks to Dr Constantine (Richard Wilson) and discovers the hospital is filled with patients who share the exact same injuries as the little boy with the

gasmask, wearing one themselves as well. As Captain Jack and Rose arrive at the hospital, all patients rise up from their beds, surrounding the trio. In “The Doctor Dances”, the Doctor orders all the patients to go back to their room in the opening scene, making it look like he’s addressing a child. Because the little boy, who is revealed to be Nancy’s little brother Jamie, was the first person to fall victim to this strange condition, all the other patients obey. The Doctor, Rose and Jack go to the room at the top floor of the hospital, and encounter Jamie. They manage to escape from the hospital, and return to the crash site where the army has shown up in the meantime to take care of the situation. The item that has crashed on earth is a container filled with nanogenes, which are used for medical emergencies. When the container crashed on earth, the first thing they found was Jamie’s dead body with the gasmask on, and wrongly assuming this was the proper state of human beings, they turned everyone into versions of Jamie. The Doctor discovers Nancy is not Jamie’s older sister, but his mother, and she is able to show the nanogenes the superior DNA, turning Jamie and all the hospital patients back to normal.

4.2 “The Empty Child” and “the Doctor Dances”

As with previously discussed episodes such as “Blink”, “Silence in the Library” and “the Time of Angels”, the use of repetition is also heavily present in both “The Empty Child” and “The Doctor Dances”. In these two episodes, the repetition is dedicated to a singular character, namely the little boy with the gasmask looking for his mother named Jamie. Phrases such as “Mummy?” and “Are you my mummy?” are repeated throughout the two episodes, indicating the child’s presence and his state of mind. At the same time, these phrases foreshadow important information the Doctor has to collect or unravel to understand what has caused the little boy and the patients in the hospital to behave like this. Therefore, the repetition in these episodes is used with two goals in mind. First, they indicate there is a problem to solve for the Doctor. This allows the genres of the Gothic and the detective story to once again blend together, as they did

in previously discussed episodes such as “Blink”. Second, Jamie’s repeated phrases can evoke fear in the viewer for multiple reasons. Jamie is able to appear and disappear without many characters noticing, thus his questions about his mother’s whereabouts are the first indicator of his presence in many scenes. His sudden appearance can create a jump scare effect, which will have the audience watching from the edge of their seats. Any calm, unassuming scene can suddenly turn into a scene filled with tension and suspense, because it is the characters’ objective to stay away from Jamie and to not let him touch them. In this instance, the repetition also indicates even though Jamie might look like a little boy wearing a gasmask, there is more to him than meets the eye, as he will only repeat a few standard phrases and does not listen to reasoning. Jamie’s touch will turn any healthy human being into someone like him, therefore his presence is incredibly dangerous to the Doctor, Rose and Captain Jack, but also to Nancy and the other children. His repeated “Are you my mummy?” is an indicator for Nancy and the children to either hide from Jamie, or to flee to a different location. Secondly, Jamie is able to evoke very personal fears for the viewers at home. As a child, it can be incredibly distressing to lose sight of your parents for even a few seconds. Many children worry about their parents disappearing forever, and having to fend for their own when their parents disappear out of sight for a few minutes. The relation between Jamie and the search for his parents in a relatively small vicinity is therefore relatable to and worrisome for the viewers at home.

Both “The Empty Child” and “The Doctor Dances” are set during the London Blitz of 1941, in the middle of the Second World War. Since *Doctor Who* is a British series airing on British television, the location of these two episodes is a logical decision, and Gerrard et al. explains Moffat’s two episodes “powerfully evoke the particular and often-recalled atmosphere of that period” (39). Once again, Moffat’s chosen setting does not overlap with the more common Gothic settings, such as the abandoned castles or houses, or graveyards, or dark forests or mountain ranges, however a few of its scenes do take place at the abandoned hospital near

the crash site, and both episodes take place entirely at night. The fact that it is dark for the entire story creates the eerie, uneasy episode which the Gothic is known for. However, that is not to say the more modern settings do not play an important role in these two episodes. Set in a neighbourhood in 1940s London, the situation in which this setting is placed still aligns with the horror and fear these Gothic settings usually evoke. It is the constant threat of the ongoing Second World War and the implications this has for all characters involved that gives the setting its Gothic, terrifying atmosphere as well.

Like Moffat's other episodes on the Weeping Angels and the Vashta Nerada, "The Empty Child" and "The Doctor Dances" introduce an alien species on which the episode focuses. However, in this case there is a stark difference between the episodes earlier discussed and the two episodes that are the main material for this chapter. Whereas the Weeping Angels and the Vashta Nerada were capable of killing and posed a threat to the Doctor and all other characters involved, this is not the case for the alien species that is introduced in these episodes. At first, the little boy Jamie does seem to form a danger to Nancy, the other children, and the Doctor and Rose, as Nancy explains to the Doctor that the little boy is "empty" (Gerrard et al. 40). Not only that, the hospital Jamie was originally treated in is filled with patients who have the exact same injuries as Jamie, such as the scarring on his hand, and who are all wearing a gasmask that seems to be glued to their face. Because the many patients in the hospital all listen to Jamie, the Doctor worries very fittingly about having to fight an army controlled by a little boy looking for his mummy. However, the Doctor uncovers the truth, when it is revealed that the item that had crashed on Earth contained nanogenes, an alien species that was used by a different alien species to heal soldiers in battle. These nanogenes stumbled upon the lifeless body of Jamie, who was injured wearing the gasmask, and because this is the first human being they found, their healing abilities assumed this is the way all human beings were. When the Doctor discovers Nancy is not Jamie's older sister, but in fact his mother, he is able to show the

nanogenes the true human form, due to the nanogenes being able to trace the superior DNA back to the mother of the child. In conclusion, the episodes feature supernatural beings, with the difference between “The Empty Child” and “The Doctor Dances” and the previously discussed episodes being the fact that these nanogenes aren not evil or dangerous, they are actually here to help and to heal.

As with previously discussed episodes, mystery and suspense are some of the Gothic characteristics present in these two episodes as well. The mystery and suspense are largely linked to the little boy Jamie, the Doctor’s mission to save him, and the Doctor’s investigation into the item that crashed on Earth that brought them to London in 1941 in the first place. Throughout the episodes, the audience is left with many questions, without receiving any answers. It is unclear what happened to the little boy Jamie until the very end of the second episode, when it is revealed Nancy has been hiding the fact she is his mother. Up until that point, it has been made clear Jamie does not seem to be entirely human, as he is able to call the phone on the TARDIS, turn on the radio without being anywhere close to it, and to write letters on the typewriter one of the children uses to write letters to his father. It is also not revealed why Jamie is following Nancy and the children, specifically. A large part of the storyline revolves around the Doctor’s quest to find out what exactly has happened in London and to the child, and how he will be able to save the people in this part of London when he is not sure what has happened to them, and when he cannot touch them either. The audience has to endure these instances of mystery and suspense until the very last minutes of the second episode, when the answers to the many questions that have been building up throughout “The Empty Child” and “The Doctor Dances” are revealed.

Another characteristic that can mainly be seen during the scenes in the hospital is the inclusion of the uncanny. Though most of the patients in this hospital room are adults, they are linked to Jamie through their similar injuries. In a sense, they have become like him. Due to the

nanogenes' healing powers, they all share a similar mind, with Jamie acting as their unofficial leader. Because Jamie is scared and looking for his mother, the patients in the hospital share this sentiment. When the Doctor visits the hospital and Dr Constantine, who has been looking after all these patients, he witnesses Dr Constantine turning into one of the gasmask people due to his long exposure to them. When all of the patients awaken at the same moment, they start calling for their mummy in unison, joining Jamie's search. This creates a scary scene of hundreds of people, all looking for the same person and surrounding the Doctor, almost chanting "mummy" for the entirety of the scene. Despite all these characters being adults, they resemble the child's fear of having lost his mother and being abandoned on his own. This is another instance where the Gothic blends with twentieth century concepts that stem from it, such as the creation of monsters such as zombies. Zombies are at their most dangerous when in large groups and able to outnumber you. This concept is mirrored in the scene with the hospital patients all stumbling outside to the crash site, the location where Jamie also is.

The Doctor refuses victimisation in both "The Empty Child" and "Th Doctor Dances" through his persistent search for the truth about Nancy's connection to Jamie, his visit to the hospital to speak to Dr Constantine, his examination of the crash site and Jamie's hospital room, and his knowledge about the existence of the nanogenes. In both episodes, the Doctor is constantly looking for answers to any questions or suspicions he might have, and he refuses to give up or stop searching until he knows exactly what is going on. In this two-part story, the Doctor is depicted as the knowledgeable hero, using rational thinking, quick decision-making, and scientific knowledge about the nanogenes to not only save Jamie, he manages to direct the nanogenes towards all the other hospital patients. Because the nanogenes now have a proper blueprint of the human DNA, they are able to cure every single patient who had been affected by them. The Doctor exclaims that for once, everybody lives, which means he has fulfilled his

role of saving the people who were in danger and becoming the hero this neighbourhood needed.

This chapter analysed the use of Gothic elements in “The Empty Child” and “The Doctor Dances”. Two Gothic elements that played a vital role in creating the eerie, creepy atmosphere that these episodes are known for are the use of repetition and the specific setting the story takes place in. Jamie’s repeated phrases add to the tension and suspense the characters and viewers experience simultaneously, and the setting of the story echo this tension. The Doctor takes up the role of the hero reliant on rationality and critical thinking once again. Through his questioning of events, piecing the information together as he goes, he is able to cure Jamie and the patients and save everybody in the neighbourhood, not only from their strange condition, but also from a bomb that is about to hit the same spot with the help of Captain Jack Harkness.

5. Conclusion

This thesis set out to examine the Gothic elements that can be found throughout a number of *Doctor Who* episodes and the effect they had on the series. I argued these Gothic elements were used for two specific reasons. The first reason is to create an eerie, uneasy and scary atmosphere for the viewers at home, which would influence their viewing experience. The Gothic elements in these Doctor Who episodes should evoke a certain level of fear in the audience, which would cause them to be too scared to keep watching, but would simultaneously keep them glued to the TV screen out of curiosity and excitement for what was to happen next. The second reason is to portray the Doctor in a way that is suitable for and matches the premise of the *Doctor Who* franchise. The series is set around the concept of the Doctor as a hero, who travels around the universe and shows up wherever he is needed. The Doctor is portrayed as a character that possesses knowledge about every planet that has ever existed, every alien species that is out there, and he uses this knowledge to either educate his travelling companions, or to defeat or incapacitate the aliens that pose a threat. Whenever he is faced with a threat to safety, the Doctor uses the rational and naturalistic essence of the science fiction genre to come up with solutions, explanations, or crafty plans to save everyone from harm. The Gothic elements in *Doctor Who* are usually linked to the threat that is presented in the episodes, with victimisation at the core of Gothic characteristics. However, instead of allowing this concept victimisation to define him as a character, the Doctor refuses this specific characteristic of the Gothic. The darkness that is associated with the Gothic finds polar opposite in the Doctor, and the elements of the Gothic are used throughout *Doctor Who* to show that, in the end, it is science, rationality, and the good that triumphs.

Seven episodes were analysed for this thesis. These seven episodes were: “Blink”, “The Time of Angels” and “Flesh and Stone”; “Silence in the Library” and “Forest of the Dead”; and

"The Empty Child" and "The Doctor Dances". What all of these episodes have in common is that they contain elements of the Gothic that are used in the two aforementioned manners: they create an eerie, terrifying viewing experience for the audience at home, and they depict the Doctor in a specific way. In "Blink", the setting, building of suspense, and repetition are three Gothic elements that are used to influence the atmosphere in the story, and to create an uncomfortable viewing experience. A majority of the scenes centre around the abandoned house at Wester Drumlins, which is also where part of the suspense is built through the camera angles that are used to slowly introduce the Weeping Angels and the danger Sally and Larry are facing. The repetitive showing of the Doctor's message on the TV screens, together with his warning, add to the suspense and tension in the episode. In "The Time of Angels" and "Flesh and Stone", the setting and suspense play a similar role. The temple and the forest are immense, overwhelming settings where the Weeping Angels seem to constantly have the upper hand. This causes the viewer feelings of anxiety, as they worry about the Doctor's ability to rescue everybody. The difference in these three episodes, though, relates to the concept of victimisation. "Blink" can be considered the only episode where the Doctor does fail his refusal to fall victim to his enemies. Because the Doctor and Martha get stuck in the past without their TARDIS, they are unable to refuse victimisation in this episode, as they themselves have fallen victim to the Weeping Angels. However, the other characters in "Blink" are able to take over this element, as Sally, Larry, Kathy and Billy all refuse to give in to the Weeping Angels. Through their resilience, these four characters are able to save the Doctor and Martha. Quite the opposite is true for "The Time of Angels" and "Flesh and Stone". In these two episodes, the Doctor is constantly trying to work out what has happened to *the Byzantium*, and as soon as he finds out the statues in the temple are all Angels, he is trying to find solutions on how to defeat them once again. In "The Time of Angels" and "Flesh and Stone", the Doctor is able to refuse the victimisation that is central to the Gothic. The Gothic elements that are most prominent in

"Silence in the Library" and "Forest of the Dead" are the use of repetition, the use of the 'double', and the setting. Throughout this two-part story these elements are once again used to influence the audience watching the episodes, creating an eerie atmosphere through the library's dark corridors and overwhelming size. The repetition of phrases such as "who turned out the lights" and "Donna Noble has left the library", which were repeated at the exact same time, created an overwhelming amount of noise and panic, mirroring the Doctor's inner feelings while facing the threat of the Vashta Nerada at the same time and making the audience feel this anxiety. In both "Silence in the Library" and "Forest of the Dead", the Doctor's refusal of victimisation is clearly portrayed. Though he mourns the loss of River Song's crew, and is heavily affected by Donna's assumed death, he does not stop trying to save as many people as he can, no matter how hard it gets. At the end of "Forest of the Dead", the Doctor is willing to sacrifice himself to save thousands, however River will not let him. She sacrifices herself, and through a last-minute realisation, the Doctor is able to upload a last essence of her that was saved in the sonic screwdriver he once gave her to the library's database, making sure she is not forgotten. In the last two episodes that were discussed in this thesis, namely "The Empty Child" and "The Doctor Dances", the three Gothic elements that help create the eerie atmosphere the Gothic is known for are repetition, the story's setting, and mystery and suspense. Set in the 1940s London Blitz in the middle of the night, The Doctor's search for answers about what happened to the little boy in the gasmask and his relation to Nancy leads him on a detective-like journey from one place to the other to gather information. This is not without risk: the Doctor discovers the seemingly abandoned hospital is filled with hundreds of patients that behave just like Jamie, and they become a serious threat to his, Rose's and Captain Jack's safety when all of the patients start approaching them at the same time. The suspense and tension of the Doctor trying to find answers to many unanswered questions, and his mission to evade Jamie and the patients for as long as possible keep the viewers at home on their toes, anxiously

awaiting if the Doctor is able to succeed. Also in these two episodes is the Doctor's refusal of victimisation very strong. Not only does he keep trying to get more information out of Nancy, trying to figure out what information she is withholding him, the Doctor's visit to Dr Constantine at the hospital indicates he was willing to learn what exactly had happened to Jamie and the patients. On top of that, his examination of their symptoms shows the Doctor was trying to find a way to cure all of them, even before he knew what exactly he was dealing with. To conclude, all seven of the previously discussed episodes contain elements of the Gothic. The addition of these elements in a show which is mostly known for its science fiction elements was done deliberately. They create a very specific viewing experience for the audience, filled with suspense, tension and fear, though they also force the audience to not look away, even for one second. On top of that, the evil darkness, the enemy, or the Other that is created through the inclusion of the Gothic portrays the Doctor as the hero that will always triumph and save the day. This hero uses logic, science, and an infinite amount of knowledge about the universe to defeat the aliens that are causing a threat to his, his companions', or the universe's safety. In adding concepts that are usually associated with the Gothic's dark, mysterious, and menacing world, the Doctor is able to turn against these very concepts, refusing victimisation, refusing to fall victim to evil and darkness, and clinging onto rationality, science, knowledge, the good, and kindness.

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