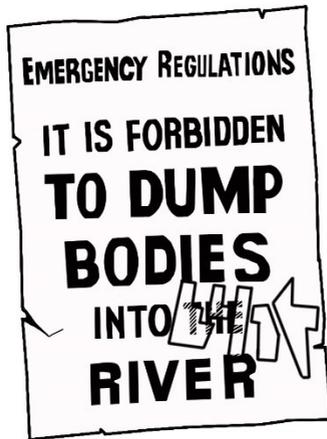


The Black Archive #30

THE DALEK INVASION OF EARTH



By Jonathan Morris

Published April 2019 by Obverse Books

Cover Design © Cody Schell

Text Jonathan Morris, 2019

Range Editors: Paul Simpson, Philip Purser-Hallard

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Dedicated to the two Terrys, Dicks and Nation

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CHAPTER 7: DALEKS INVADE EARTH

When, in 1965, Milton Subotsky sat down to adapt *The Dalek Invasion of Earth* into a film screenplay, what was he working from? Well, it seems obvious that he had on the desk in front of him a copy of the camera scripts, as the film contains characters and material introduced by David Whitaker in the camera scripts: for instance, the two women in the wood. This is why Whitaker is credited on the film for some ‘Additional Material’; not because he contributed directly to the screenplay, but because the screenplay was based on a set of scripts to which he had contributed.

There are also a few areas where Subotsky includes elements introduced by Martin in the TV serial, such as the Robomen wearing helmets (although that wasn’t his original intention, as we shall shortly see) and the Doctor’s male companion falling through the door in the warehouse.

However – and this is where it gets interesting – the British Film Institute archive contains an undated¹ ‘working’ draft of the film, probably Subotsky’s first draft, which contains a large number of substantial differences from the final script. Indeed, there are very few similarities – practically the whole script was rewritten from scratch. As such, it offers a fascinating glimpse of a ‘missing link’ between the scripts of *TDIOE* and Subotsky’s final scripts for *Daleks’ Invasion Earth 2150 AD*.

In terms of structure, it is closer to *TDIOE* – most obviously, because it includes sequences of alligators in the sewers and the Slyther. On

¹ Although presumably it was written after the cinema release of *Dr Who and the Daleks* in August 1965.

the other hand, there are significant omissions – it doesn't contain Ashton, and the climax doesn't have the mine exploding. But broadly speaking events happen in the same order, though with some tweaks – for example, the flying saucer that destroys the vehicle is now the same one that took off from London.

In the working draft, Subotsky retains the characters of Dr Who, Susan and Barbara from *Dr Who and the Daleks* (presumably in expectation that Jennie Linden would reprise her role as Barbara) but he replaces Ian with 'Tom', a young man from contemporary Earth. For the first part of the story, the characters' paths follow those of the characters in *TDIOE*, until the attack on the saucer. Thereafter, Dr Who and David make their way to the mines. Susan accompanies Barbara, Dortmun and 'Wylar' (formerly the character Tyler) to the Transport Museum and then Wylar, Barbara and Susan proceed to the wood. Tom, like Ian, is trapped on board the saucer, where he meets the gutsy 'Laurie', replacing the character of Larry. Once they reach the mine, Wylar, Barbara and Susan are captured, and so are Dr Who and David; they are reunited as prisoners. Tom hides within the Daleks' capsule and then plays no further role in events (even when he overhears the Daleks outlining their plans it prompts no action). The story is then resolved in a very similar way to Nation's original draft; by Dr Who simply ordering the Robomen to attack the Daleks. There are also some interesting innovations: in Subotsky's screenplay Dortmun's bombs **are** effective, and people turned into Robomen can be restored to normal. The Daleks' plan is also markedly different, but that is a surprise I shall leave for later.

The most significant, and yet subtle, aspect of Subotsky's rewrite, however, is that he turns the story into a family-friendly adventure yarn, with all the explicit parallels to the Second World War and the

Nazis toned down or removed. The Daleks are simply alien invaders acting out of self-interest; there are no scenes of them patrolling London landmarks, or espousing a 'final solution'. This is, after all, a children's film where, instead of a poster forbidding the dumping of bodies in the river there is a poster advertising Sugar Puffs.

Subotsky's working draft has problems. The ending is anticlimactic, the character of Tom is barely sketched out, and there are scene-ordering issues – for instance, there's a lengthy scene with Dr Who and David escaping alligators which somehow happens in the time it takes for Tom and Laurie to walk a short length of corridor. In the next chapter I'll look at how he solved those problems in the final draft. But first, let's take a more detailed look at his working draft.

It is entitled

'DALEKS INVADE EARTH'.

BIOGRAPHY

Jonathan Morris is a freelance writer and one of the most prolific contributors to *Doctor Who Magazine*, with over 100 features to his name, including 24 'The Fact of Fiction' articles. He has also written synopses of every *Doctor Who* episode up to 2018 for *The Complete History* partwork and documentaries for the DVD releases *Doctor Who: Earth Story* and *Doctor Who: City of Death*. He has written in excess of 50 *Doctor Who* adventures for Big Finish Productions, including an adaptation of Russell T Davies' *Damaged Goods*, as well as five original *Doctor Who* novels for BBC Books. In his spare time he writes scripts for television and film. He lives in Winchester and can be found on twitter at @jonnymorris1973.