

EXT. ALIEN PLANET - NIGHT 1 - 2215

A human citadel on an alien world. Several dozen small buildings sprawl around an imposing castle, which we push towards. In the sky sit twin moons, one white, one blood red.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, OUTSIDE THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

HAIG, the chief courtier, is approaching an opulent door, as the court PHYSICIAN is leaving.

HAIG

What's the news?

PHYSICIAN

Same as ever. The queen has not conceived. I'd leave her be for now if I were you. I nearly got a vase to the head just for knocking on the door.

HAIG

Thank you, but she asked for me. I must make sure she has everything she needs.

PHYSICIAN

Good day to you then.

As the physician walks away, Haig knocks -

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

- HAIG enters the room. The chamber is spacious, elegantly designed, tastefully opulent.

THE QUEEN sits on a chaise longue, gazing out of the window at the moons, ashen-faced.

HAIG

Your majesty? The, er, usual ceremony is being arranged. Can I get you anything?

THE QUEEN

Ah, Haig, good. I've been thinking. Come over here. I want you to recite the legend to me.

HAIG

Which -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE QUEEN

You know exactly which legend. The one you've put your best men onto analysing this last year. Oh, don't think I don't know. I have my spies.

HAIG

Very well, majesty. "In the colony's darkest hour, the sovereign will appear barren. Salvation shall come in the form of the rarest of paragons, from the union of a hand and a ring. The hand shall come from one who is the last man of his kind. The ring shall come from one who is the last woman of hers. And when the ring encircles a finger of the hand, the line of succession will be refreshed."

THE QUEEN

Well?

HAIG

Majesty?

THE QUEEN

You have the ring, do you not?

HAIG

We have... a ring.

THE QUEEN

But no hand?

HAIG

We're working on that.

THE QUEEN

Any reason you haven't told me about your little project?

HAIG

If I may speak freely?

THE QUEEN

Of course.

HAIG

Because if I implied that you were barren, my head would be on a spike within the hour.

THE QUEEN

That was a good answer. I'm forty two years old in a few weeks.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED (2):

THE QUEEN (CONT'D)

Even if I'm not barren, the window
of opportunity continues to narrow.
We must have an heir. Get together
the best minds in the kingdom.
Consult whatever oracles you must.
I want that hand before my birthday,
or it's spikes all round.

CUT TO:

INT. THE TARDIS - CONTINUOUS FROM PREVIOUS EPISODE

The time machine is being buffeted this way and that as it
hurtles towards its unknown destination. CU of THE
DOCTOR's severed hand in its jar, which is bubbling
furiously.

MARTHA, the Doctor and DONNA are trying and largely
failing to hold onto something solid.

THE DOCTOR

But this is impossible! No one has
the technology to pull the Tardis
off course!

MARTHA

Where are we going?

THE DOCTOR

The future.

DONNA

Helpful.

The Tardis lands with an almighty thud. The trio pick
themselves up.

The Doctor's jabbing at the console, reading what's on the
scanner.

THE DOCTOR

A human settlement, former colony,
thirty-third century. They
definitely shouldn't have the
technology to just reel in the
Tardis like a, like a prize trout!
Will you two stop bubbling, I'm
trying to concentrate.

DONNA

That's not us.

DONNA turns her attention to the hand in the jar for the
first time.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Ugh! What is that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTHA

That's his hand. It was cut off while his body was regenerating. So he just grew another one.

DONNA

It's going mental in there. What does it mean?

THE DOCTOR

Family.

The Tardis door opens - the jar instantly stops bubbling.

Two armed COURT GUARDS walk in. They are dressed perhaps more for pomp than combat, though their armour and guns mean business.

THE DOCTOR

You can't do that! The Tardis is impenetrable! Stop doing impossible things!

The guards part to reveal - HAIG, walking through the door.

HAIG

You must be the Doctor. I extend the warmest greetings of the Queen of Palladia to you and your consorts. Give us the hand and we will offer you every hospitality.

THE DOCTOR

And if we don't?

HAIG

Then your daughter and the heir to our great civilisation can never be born.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE - DAY 2 1800

THE DOCTOR and HAIG are walking down a stone passageway, with MARTHA and DONNA behind them, followed by the two COURT GUARDS.

Haig carries the jar - which is quite placid now.

THE DOCTOR

Careful with that, it's a family heirloom.

HAIG

Don't worry, Doctor, we know what it is, and how precious it is.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE DOCTOR

How do you know?

HAIG

We've been searching for it. It's written of in our legends. We scoured ancient documents and eventually found oblique references to it in those of a quasi-mystical Earth organisation. Earth was our original home.

MARTHA

You're not talking about Torchwood, are you?

THE DOCTOR

Oh, I might have known Captain Jack would have blabbed about it.

HAIG

You know of them? But I forget, you are all travellers in time. It must be fascinating. In a spare moment I would like to talk to you about the principles of your craft.

THE DOCTOR

No offence, but in my experience, it's those who are most interested that you least want to give any information away to.

HAIG

Wise counsel. Now the ladies are to be guests in this wing, the guard will show them where. I will take you to your chamber, Doctor.

DONNA

I'd rather stay with the Doctor.

THE DOCTOR

Oh there's no need, it's not like we're prisoners. Hardly at all like that in fact. You two go along, have a bit of a look around, rendezvous later.

Donna and Martha are led off by a court guard.

CUT TO:

EXT. PALACE, COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

THE DOCTOR, HAIG and the remaining COURT GUARD emerge onto a beautiful courtyard basking in evening sunlight.

Haig gestures that they cross the courtyard, so they do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE DOCTOR

Must say, beautiful place you've got here. So... you mentioned something about a daughter of mine. Why mine, particularly?

HAIG

We have a sisterhood, called the Paragons, made up of only the purist women of our society. This purity is of vital importance - any flaws can have devastating consequences for our whole people. The queen has been unable to produce an heir, and is becoming desperate.

THE DOCTOR

And you blame that on a bunch of wayward nuns?

HAIG

Not us - this time is written of in our legends. But the problem with legends is that they cannot help but leave room for interpretation, don't you find? They talk of the "rarest of the paragons" - you are pretty rare, wouldn't you say, Doctor? Perhaps even, unique?

THE DOCTOR

Well, everyone's unique really, aren't they? I'm just a regular guy. And if it's purity you're after, well, I've been around the block a few million times. I don't think I can be of much use to you.

HAIG

You're corrupted by your travels, certainly. Forgive me, that was a poor choice of words. You have been made more complex, more of a mixture of many elements.

THE DOCTOR

Yeah, that's true.

HAIG

But your offspring, if educated in our traditions, could attain the required mixture of rare biology and purity of mind.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, PASSAGEWAY - DAY 2 1805

The conversation is continuing as THE DOCTOR, HAIG and the COURT GUARD head down a stone passageway similar to the first.

THE DOCTOR

So this hypothetical offspring would be offered a position as one of these paragons of yours? Be a shame if you went to all that trouble, only for her to decide she wasn't interested.

They approach a large wooden door, which Haig opens with chunky iron key.

INT. PALACE, THE DOCTOR'S CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

HAIG and THE DOCTOR enter the chamber. It's noticeably smaller and less well decorated than the queen's, but still very pleasant.

HAIG

Here you are, Doctor. As for your question, interest is irrelevant. The Paragons enjoy a highly privileged lifestyle here - they are respected and their wisdom sought. They have many rights not given to ordinary subjects. No novice has ever turned down such a position. Now, if you'll excuse me, preparations are needed for the ceremony. The guard will remain outside your chamber, please don't hesitate to ask him for anything you require. Your party will of course be guests of honour at the ceremony, I will return to escort you there later.

THE DOCTOR

What will I actually have to do at this ceremony?

HAIG

Nothing at all.

THE DOCTOR

Oh dear. I've never been very good at that.

CUT TO:

INT. DONNA AND MARTHA'S CHAMBER - DAY 2 1805

DONNA and MARTHA inspect their chamber. Very similar to the DOCTOR's, but perhaps a touch more feminine in the furnishings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONNA

Well, this is an improvement on that Sontaran spaceship.

(TO MARTHA)

Still keen to get back home?

MARTHA

I think I could stand to be inconvenienced for a little while.

FX: Donna notices a large red FLAME at the far end of the room which appears to be suspended in the air.

DONNA

Look at this.

FX: She walks round it.

DONNA

This is actually a flame, isn't it, I'm not just going mad?

MARTHA

Looks real enough. But where's the fuel?

DONNA

It must be a holographic wotsit.

FX: Donna puts her hand through it. It licks up around her and burns.

DONNA

Ow! Well, I didn't know holograms did that.

MARTHA

A bit reassuring, though, in a way.

DONNA

What do you mean?

MARTHA

Well, the whole place is like something out of the middle ages - all legends and courtiers and heirs to the throne. Quite nice to see some actual... science fiction.

DONNA

Unless we're in a fairy tale.

CUT TO:

INT. OUTSIDE THE DOCTOR'S CHAMBER - DAY 2 1820

THE DOCTOR opens the door. The COURT GUARD is posted outside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE DOCTOR

Hallo. I'm the Doctor. What's your name?

COURT GUARD

Bob.

THE DOCTOR

Bob? Good. Good name, Bob. Well, Bob, I'm just popping out for a little stroll.

COURT GUARD

I can't allow that, sir.

THE DOCTOR

Oh. Why?

COURT GUARD

Well, you're honoured guests of the queen. It would be terrible if we didn't look after you.

THE DOCTOR

Right, well, perhaps you could come along with me then?

COURT GUARD

I can't do that sir.

THE DOCTOR

You have orders to stay here.

COURT GUARD

Yes, sir.

THE DOCTOR

Just hypothetically and out of interest and that, what would you do if I did walk out of here and down the corridor?

COURT GUARD

Well I'd probably have to kill you.

THE DOCTOR

Really? Bit extreme, that.

COURT GUARD

Yes, I suppose so.

THE DOCTOR

Hmm, well, thanks for that little chat, I'll just go back inside and not be a nuisance somehow.

COURT GUARD

Righty-ho, sir.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR'S CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

THE DOCTOR's not going to be put off that easily - runs to the window - it's narrow.

It's also a couple of storeys' drop - thinks he can make it - lowers himself backwards out of the window until he's clinging to the sill - steals himself.

The Doctor drops and rolls - hits the ground hard but is uninjured - picks himself up -

HAIG approaches.

HAIG

Ah, Doctor. Getting a little exercise? Good. It's time for the ceremony. Please come this way.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, THEATRE - DAY 2 1830

A smallish indoor amphitheatre - the seating curves round in a full circle, except for a raised royal box opposite a sloping central passageway. The main entrance for the audience is at the end of this passageway. At either side of the raised section are doorways that lead backstage. The place is a bit of a hybrid - the layout is like a performance space, but the atmosphere / style is more like a church. In the middle of the circular central space, there is an altar-like arrangement. There is at least one armed COURT GUARD at each exit.

DONNA and MARTHA sit in the front row, near the central passageway. They are dressed elegantly in clothes that fit their hosts' society. Other dignitaries are assembling around them.

HAIG and THE DOCTOR come down the central passageway. THE DOCTOR is wearing his usual clothes.

DONNA

You could have smartened up, you scruff.

THE DOCTOR

I had a look in the wardrobe, but I didn't see anything that was really me.

The Doctor sits beside Martha. Haig bows.

HAIG

If you'll excuse me.

He leaves via one of the doorways to the side of the raised section.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONNA

It's about time we were treated like royalty, instead of being thrown in prisons and suspected of murders.

THE DOCTOR

Oh, we're prisoners. Look. Armed guards at all the exits. Oh, and it's a royal variety performance.

He points up at the raised section, where we can see THE QUEEN and her entourage taking their seats.

MARTHA

That's the queen? Look, I know I always regret asking this, but any idea what's actually going to happen?

THE DOCTOR

Pretty much. They're going to take out my severed hand and put some ceremonial ring on it. Nothing will happen and then I imagine we'll be executed.

DONNA

And at what point are you expected to get jiggy with some unfortunate wench?

THE DOCTOR

Oh, no need for that. Apparently they think my daughter will just sort of magically appear. Somehow. Haig was a bit imprecise as to the details.

CUT TO:

INT. THEATRE, BACKSTAGE - DAY 2 1835

HAIG is at a table on which there are two large, ornately embroidered cushions. Resting on one is a jewelled ring. Haig is removing THE DOCTOR's severed hand from its jar.

HAIG

If any gods are listening, this had better work.

He dries off the goo with a towel and lays the hand on the second cushion.

He indicates to two COURTIERS to come over and take the cushions.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, THEATRE - CONTINUOUS

The place is darkened and the crowd hushed. HAIG enters, walking into the central space to the sound of a bugle.

HAIG

Your majesty, my lords and ladies,
honoured guests - I bid you welcome
to the conception and birth of the
new Vestalis.

To another bugle cue, a PRIEST enters from backstage. His vestments suggest a rank that we might equate to archbishop. Haig stands off to one side, into the shadows. The priest stands behind the altar, with his back to the royal box.

PRIEST

For a generation we have sought the
new Vestalis. For a generation, we
have failed. This is not the fault
of our great people. Rather it
fulfils the prophesies made in our
legends many centuries ago. They
speak of a period of great darkness.
Our salvation will come in the form
of the rarest of paragons. The
product of the union between a man
and a woman, both the last of their
kind.

Another bugle cue. The COURTIERS emerge from backstage with the two cushions, which are placed on the altar. They retreat to stand either side of Haig.

PRIEST

On behalf of the Queen of Palladia,
I now call upon the gods. Accept
this union, deliver us the Vestalis,
and provide us with our heir.

The priest reverently takes the ring on one hand, and the severed hand in the other - holds them aloft - carefully pushes the ring over the ring-finger of the hand. As the ring touches the hand, the fingers start to flex.

THE DOCTOR is watching the hand warily.

At the moment the ring is fully on, there is a blinding flash of light. The priest is thrown backwards, dropping the hand.

Everyone is shielding their eyes. Haig edges forward towards the altar.

As the light fades, CU on the severed hand resting on the cushions. An arm extends down to pick up the hand. Pull back to reveal THE VESTALIS, a preternaturally pretty woman who could be in her late teens or early twenties. She is clad in a finely designed but understated white dress.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The priest recovers and stands - Haig moves towards the Vestalis.

HAIG

Vestalis? Er, Vestalis, we welcome you. You are now a novitiate of the sisterhood of Paragons.

THE VESTALIS

Thank you.

PRIEST

In accordance with custom, I now offer to grant you your fondest desire. As the purest amongst us, a Paragon must be free of temptation for the rest of her life. Thus it is fitting that you use this chance to satisfy any traces of want that may linger.

THE VESTALIS

Thank you. I'd like a private audience with my father, please.

The Doctor stands up. The COURT GUARDS at the backstage entrances twitch.

THE DOCTOR

Er, yes, what a good idea, chip of the old block Vestalis, was that your name? I would insist that my handmaidens accompany me, however.

DONNA

Your what?

HAIG

This is most irregular -

THE VESTALIS

What would be irregular, Haig, would be to deny me my final desire. This is a fundamental part of the ceremony, is it not?

HAIG

Fine. Wait a moment. You. Martha Jones. You have medical training, yes?

MARTHA

That's right.

HAIG

Then I would be grateful for your assistance. The other one may accompany the Vestalis and the Doctor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DONNA

Oy, I've got a name too you know.

THE VESTALIS

Very well. Father?

THE DOCTOR

Allons y.

CUT TO:

EXT. PALACE - DAY 2 1845

The sun is just setting, the clouds in the sky a rich red. Some lights have started to go on in the palace which we can see through various windows. Slowly push towards one such window.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, PRIVATE CHAMBER - DAY 2 1850

THE DOCTOR is listening to THE VESTALIS' heartbeats as DONNA watches.

DONNA

So if you're the father, who's the mother?

THE DOCTOR

Who says there has to be a mother?

(To THE VESTALIS)

Could you hold your breath for me?

The Vestalis takes a deep breath and holds it.

DONNA

What do you mean?

THE DOCTOR

Not every species in the universe reproduces the way humans do. Take the Sontarans - a clone race. Every one an identical copy of his ancestors, served up with no imagination, no variation, like burgers in a fast food restaurant.

DONNA

OK, so how does your lot do it then? A visit from the Venusian stalk?

THE DOCTOR

(Beat)

I'm not telling you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONNA

Why not?

THE DOCTOR

Because you've got that look on your face, Donna Noble. That look that says, "I'm going to mock anything you say, because you're from outer space."

DONNA

As if I would! Come on, tell me, I promise not to mock you. Scouts honour. Or Girl Guides. Whatever.

THE DOCTOR

Well... if I said - not that I'm saying this is how it actually happened, or anything, but if I said that our chromosomes were woven on genetic looms -

Donna smirks.

THE DOCTOR

I knew it.

DONNA

Looms?

THE DOCTOR

I didn't say that was actually how it happened.

DONNA

Well, that's certainly more exciting than the way we do it, carpet boy.

THE DOCTOR

I'm not talking to you.

(To the Vestalis)

Are you still holding your breath?

THE VESTALIS

Yes. I'm sorry, father, should I have stopped?

THE DOCTOR

Extraordinary respiratory capacity, to go with the twin heartbeats. Fascinating. If you're not pure Time Lord, you're certainly well on the way.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, STONE PASSAGEWAY - DAY 2 1852

HAIG, MARTHA and an armed COURT GUARD are walking along.

MARTHA

So where are you taking me?

HAIG

(To guards)

Please accompany Dr Jones to her chamber.

MARTHA

I thought you wanted my assistance with something?

HAIG

You are assisting me by not examining the Vestalis too closely.

The court guard pushes Martha along the passageway while Haig returns back the way they came.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, PRIVATE CHAMBER - DAY 2 1855

THE DOCTOR, DONNA and THE VESTALIS, as before.

THE DOCTOR

Tell me something, Vestalis - look, I can't keep calling you the Vestalis, it sounds like an ointment. How about shortening it to Alice?

THE VESTALIS

I do not like the name Alice, father.

THE DOCTOR

Well it's either that, or... Vest.

THE VESTALIS

I prefer Vest.

THE DOCTOR

Alice it is then.

DONNA

What does Vestalis mean, anyway?

THE DOCTOR

Pertains to the Roman Goddess Vesta, I imagine - symbolises purity, and there's nothing more pure than someone who was created as a fully grown adult, with no history, no experiences. Strange goddess, Vesta.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Associated with the fireplace at the heart of the home, and yet destined never to experience love. Pompeii had a group similar to these Paragons, which we might have had a chance to meet if we weren't already busy with a more sinister sisterhood. And all that lava.

DONNA

Wait, are you talking about Vestal Virgins?

THE DOCTOR

Yeah. In return for a thirty-year vow of chastity they received unparalleled respect for women in Roman society. Living in comparative luxury, not being considered the property of a man. They even had the vote.

DONNA

They were robbed.

THE DOCTOR

After the thirty-year period was up, they were free to marry, but many chose to continue as they were.

DONNA

(To the Vestalis)

That's not what you're in for, is it? Three decades of chastity?

THE VESTALIS

Unlikely.

THE DOCTOR

No, these former colony worlds often dip into Earth's mythology, recast it to suit themselves. Allows them to make up whatever rules they like, while giving them an air of antiquity. Anyway, some things are puzzling me about you, Alice. Firstly, that you were born as a fully grown adult.

THE VESTALIS

It is the way.

THE DOCTOR

Yes. Secondly, that you can speak a language we understand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THE VESTALIS

Conversation would be tricky
otherwise.

THE DOCTOR

Right. And thirdly, that you seem
to be pretty familiar with the
traditions of this world.

THE VESTALIS

That is because I am.

THE DOCTOR

Well, that deals with all my
concerns. Donna?

DONNA

That ring. It must contain the
mother's DNA. Where did the ring
come from, Vest?

THE VESTALIS

I don't know. But Haig does.

THE DOCTOR

Yes, I'd like a word or five with
him.

DONNA

One more. Why did you ask for this
private audience?

VESTALIS

The Doctor is my father. Since I
was born, my only desire has been to
know him, and earn his pride.

THE DOCTOR

Oh. Well. Ta dah!

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, MARTHA AND DONNA'S CHAMBER - DAY 2 1900

MARTHA enters, closing the door on the COURT GUARD behind
her.

FX: Her attention goes to the flame which is still
suspended in mid air. She approaches it.

MARTHA

Are you... talking to me?

(Pause, listening)

Are you... alive?

(Pause)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTHA (CONT'D)

You're upset. Worried. Someone's
in danger. Someone's going to die.

(Pause, realisation)

The Doctor's daughter is going to be
killed!

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, PRIVATE CHAMBER - DAY 2 1900

THE VESTALIS is rising to leave - not meeting THE DOCTOR
or DONNA'S eye.

THE VESTALIS

I must go and accept my destiny.

THE DOCTOR

Yes. Is it what you really want,
though? I mean, we can offer you an
alternative. I know that serving
the people for the rest of your life
is an honour, but there's so much
out there. You could come with us.
What do you think, be my travelling
companion? See the stars?

THE VESTALIS

Companion? I would rather you
regarded me as your daughter.

THE DOCTOR

That's very important to you, isn't
it?

THE VESTALIS

I came from you, and it feels like
you wish I didn't.

THE DOCTOR

Oh, no no no no, I... just don't
think I'm father material. I... had
another daughter once.

THE VESTALIS

I have a sister?

THE DOCTOR

Not any more.

THE VESTALIS

Oh. I'm sorry. I cannot be your
companion, father. I have another
destiny. They're waiting on us.
Let us go complete the ceremony.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, DONNA AND MARTHA'S CHAMBER - DAY 2 1905

FX: MARTHA still listening intently to the flame.

MARTHA
But how can I help?

FX: As she watches, the flame grows and surrounds her, a ring of fire, like a burning hula hoop.

MARTHA
Cool!

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, THEATRE - DAY 2 1910

THE VESTALIS, THE DOCTOR and DONNA are coming down the central passageway. The Doctor and Donna retake their seats.

HAIG hovering in the shadows again. The PRIEST comes forward as the Vestalis approaches the altar.

PRIEST
Vestalis. Have you satisfied your desire?

THE VESTALIS
I have.

PRIEST
Look into your soul. Is there no trace of longing there?

THE VESTALIS
There is not.

PRIEST
Then all that remains is for you to call upon the sacred flames of the oracle, to confirm you as their chosen one.

THE VESTALIS
I am bound to accept.

PRIEST
Then proceed with me to the heart of the sanctuary.

The Vestalis and the priest make to walk back up the central passageway - very stately, this is all part of the ceremony - when -

MARTHA appears at the main entrance. The circle of fire is still around her. The COURT GUARDS back away from it, more in awe than fear of being burnt.

MARTHA
Stop!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The CROWD all turn round to look.

HAIG comes forward.

HAIG

What is the meaning of this?

MARTHA

The sacred flames of the oracle do not accept this woman as the Vestalis.

HAIG

You are not a paragon! You cannot speak on behalf of the flames.

MARTHA

Don't anger them, Haig. You can plainly see that I am under their protection. They say this ceremony must end, now.

HAIG

And why is that? What have the oracles foreseen that they cannot communicate through one of our own?

MARTHA

I am told this woman does have a destiny, but she is too pure, too rare, to be a sacrifice.

THE DOCTOR

Sacrifice? I thought she was going to be heir to the throne?

HAIG

Don't be absurd. Only a naturally born child of the queen can rule this land. I will forgive your ignorance, but do not interfere in our ways.

THE DOCTOR

Oh, if I had a dime for every time I'd heard that.

DONNA

(To the Vestalis)

So what is your destiny, if not to be the next queen?

THE VESTALIS

Impurities in the sisterhood have prevented the queen from conceiving. My birth and position of Vestalis is one of utmost purity.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THE VESTALIS (CONT'D)

Thus, the queen will now be able to conceive naturally.

MARTHA

Except that she won't. The queen is barren. She always has been. She will never produce an heir.

The crowd reacts with shock to this outrage.

MARTHA

These people have been trying to create the Vestalis in one way or another for a very long time, and when each is perceived as having failed, they're considered too corrupt to continue in the sisterhood. So they're sacrificed. Burned alive.

HAIG

This talk is treasonous. Even as a guest here you are not immune from that charge. And my question stands. Why could the oracles not speak through one of the sisterhood?

MARTHA

Perhaps they've tried. But put yourself in the position of the Paragons - speak up and you'll be the first on the pyre.

HAIG

The Paragons are above such mortal concerns.

MARTHA

But you don't think they've been pure enough - you said as much to the Doctor. Perhaps fear for their own life was one of the impurities.

THE DOCTOR

You've got to admit, she talks a lot of sense. Infuriating, I know, but you get used to it. Well, I guess that wraps everything up - Alice, you come along with us. Best of luck finding a new ruler and everything.

HAIG

Guards! Take them to the catacombs.

(Indicates Vestalis)

Including her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARTHA

No!

FX: The ring of fire leaps up from around her and splits off into several smaller flames which dart in the direction of the guards.

In the confusion, the Doctor, Donna and the Vestalis head for the backstage area. Martha follows after them.

CUT TO:

INT. THEATRE, BACKSTAGE CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

A dingy corridor compared to the earlier passageways. THE VESTALIS, THE DOCTOR and DONNA are running down it.

The Vestalis grabs the Doctor, indicates an old door.

THE VESTALIS

In here, father. There's a priest-hole that leads into the village.

THE DOCTOR

Good thinking. Very good in fact.

DONNA

Will we be safe there?

MARTHA catches up with them.

THE DOCTOR

It's a start. Come on!

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, THEATRE - DAY 2 1915

FX: The flames have reassembled and now appear to form a thin, rectangular barrier that perfectly seals off the exit the gang took.

The CROWD and COURT GUARDS are milling around, unsure what to do next.

THE QUEEN stands and shouts down from the box.

THE QUEEN

Let them go.

HAIG

But majesty -

THE QUEEN

If the sacred flames really have foreseen a different destiny to the one we expected, we need to know what that is, don't you think? Fetch a Paragon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FX: Haig turns back to the flame, but it is fading away to nothing.

THE QUEEN

Well?

HAIG

The flame has gone.

THE QUEEN

The heart of the sanctuary has been continuously lit for how many generations now?

HAIG

Er, fifty, so the legends say.

THE QUEEN

So it will still be lit now. Send a sister there. We will await the response.

CUT TO:

INT. VILLAGE, TAVERN - DAY 2 1920

THE DOCTOR, THE VESTALIS, MARTHA and DONNA are emerging from a dusty old door that looks as if it hasn't been opened for a generation.

The tavern is busy with FOLK dressed in dirty work clothes.

DONNA

Your round, I think, Doctor.

They approach the bar area where the LANDLORD spots them.

LANDLORD

Eh up, the toffs are in. Why the fancy dress?

(spots the Vestalis)

Oh God, I'm sorry sister, I didn't see you. My apologies.

THE VESTALIS

There's no need. My companions and I have a fine sense of humour. We need to rent your upper room immediately.

LANDLORD

Of course, but there will be no charge. To have a Paragon staying here - well, it's bound to bring me luck, isn't it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE VESTALIS

If we're not disturbed for the rest
of the night, I will personally
bless the tavern.

LANDLORD

That would be an honour. I'll show
you to the room.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, HEART OF THE SANCTUARY - DAY 2 1930

This place is spacious and while the décor is not
dissimilar to the design of the court, it is more austere
and airy. Standing and seated around the room are several
PARAGONS, all dressed in white as THE VESTALIS was, though
to the keen eye their dress is a notch plainer.

FX: In the centre of the room is a roaring fire sitting on
a raised dais. As we pan across, we realise that the fire
floats an inch or two above the platform. It resembles the
first flame we saw in DONNA and MARTHA's chamber, but is
significantly larger, darker, more awesome.

FX: Two more PARAGONS enter and approach the flame.

PARAGON

Sacred flames of the oracle, we
beseech you, tells us of the future
of our world.

PARAGON #2

Is the queen truly to be without
heir?

PARAGON

Does the Vestalis have another
destiny?

PARAGON #2

Why did you speak through the alien
girl?

Pause - the sisters look between each other - they aren't
receiving any messages.

PARAGON #2

Sacred flames, please tell us
something.

FX: As they watch, the flame flickers, gutters and dies.
Everyone reacts with shock.

PARAGON

What's happened?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PARAGON #2

The flames are often weak for days
after a sacrifice.

PARAGON

But there hasn't been a sacrifice
for nearly a month. And they aren't
just weak, they've been
extinguished. The heart of the
sanctuary has died. What can this
mean?

PARAGON #2

It means we're fatally impure.
Every single one of us.

All the women look between each other, concerned.

CUT TO:

INT. TAVERN, UPPER ROOM - DAY 2 19:35

THE DOCTOR, THE VESTALIS, DONNA and MARTHA are sizing up
this room. It's large but sparsely furnished. There are no
lights on inside but it's still just about bright enough
outside to see. Over the course of the scene, the lights
outside gradually brighten.

DONNA

Anyone else feel like we've been
kicked out of first class for not
having a valid ticket?

MARTHA

I'm kind of more at home here,
actually.

DONNA

Martha Jones likes slumming it?
Excellent.

THE DOCTOR

She also likes making very strange
friends.

DONNA

Was that the flame from our room?

MARTHA

Yeah. It spoke to me. No, not
quite like that - it was as if
information drifted into me. It's
like, when someone's cooking
something really good, and you take
one sniff and get all the flavours
at once.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE VESTALIS

The same thing happened to me when I was born. I woke up, took a deep breath, and knew so much.

DONNA

So why didn't it follow us?

THE VESTALIS

The flames never leave the palace. They get weaker the further they are from the heart of the sanctuary.

THE DOCTOR

There's something very familiar about them. I hate to go on about legends again, but my own people said that our final end would be in fire. Creatures of pure flame, embedded in the very fabric of the universe - one of the elemental races born in the crucible of the big bang - who would rampage across the cosmos, consuming species. The legend went that when the last Time Lord was consumed, the fires would have only one species left to taste, and when they had tasted it - well, the universe would end. During the war, when... when my planet burned... it was like the legend had been a metaphor all along. But now I'm not so sure.

DONNA

These flames are on our side, though aren't they?

MARTHA

Not all of them. I didn't tell you everything back there. The one that spoke to me, it was like a rebel? The flame creatures had been planning this for centuries - they knew that eventually a queen would be barren and they would be able to demand whatever they liked. They just had to engineer the prophecies in the right way and then sit back. They want the Vestalis to fail and be judged impure.

(To the Vestalis)

Then you'll be taken down to the sanctuary and sacrificed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THE DOCTOR

And they'll finally taste a Time Lord.

(frowns)

The lamps aren't lit.

MARTHA

What?

THE DOCTOR

The lamps in this room. It's night time and they're not lit.

THE VESTALIS

I shall see to it, father.

DONNA

You stay where you are, I'll do it.

THE DOCTOR

No no no! I mean that it's night time, and none of the lamps in this room are lit.

MARTHA

So?

THE DOCTOR

So how come it's so light?

They look over to the window - the light is coming from there - the Doctor walks over, followed by the others.

FX: Outside they see the whole village. Every building is on fire. FOLK are running around, panicking, screaming.

THE VESTALIS

It's them. How can they do it?

THE DOCTOR

Desperation? My guess is they've found out one of their number has defected and now they're furious. Alice, Donna, go downstairs and get back into the priest hole. Wait there until we come and get you. Martha, with me.

THE VESTALIS

What are you going to do?

THE DOCTOR

If they want to consume a Time Lord, I'm not going to let them destroy the whole town looking for one.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, HEART OF THE SANCTUARY - NIGHT 2 1935

THE QUEEN is walking reverently up to the still-empty dais, flanked by two armed COURT GUARDS. HAIG nervously shuffles behind them.

The group of PARAGONS are looking expectantly at her, wondering what she will command.

THE QUEEN

I had to see it for myself. Is this in the legend, Haig?

HAIG

Well, it does speak of the darkest hour, but we thought it was a figure of speech.

THE QUEEN

Am I really barren?

HAIG

Majesty?

THE QUEEN

I never dared believe it until now. Five husbands have tried and failed. And a handful of other suitors you don't need to know about. Each man executed. And it was me all the time?

HAIG

The court physician could find no reason why you couldn't conceive -

THE QUEEN

He could not, or he dare not? Without a clear line from the throne, my people will tear themselves apart. But how can we maintain order now? And why have the oracles been extinguished?

HAIG

You will rule for many decades yet, majesty. This is just another setback.

THE QUEEN

Don't be sycophantic now, Haig. There's been too much of that. The Vestalis is key to all this somehow. We must work out how.

A COURTIER runs in.

COURTIER

Sorry to disturb you, your majesty, but there's something strange happening outside the palace walls.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE, OUTSIDE THE TAVERN - NIGHT 2 1940

THE DOCTOR and MARTHA are emerging from the main tavern entrance -

FX: Every building still on fire - some FOLK throwing buckets of water to no effect, others just panicking.

THE DOCTOR
The sacred flames of oracle! I am
the Doctor. I demand that you cease
your siege on these people.

(Pause. No change.)

Look, we have what you want. Leave
these people alone and we'll
negotiate.

FX: The flames begin to die down. After a moment, they're gone completely -

leaving the buildings charred, but otherwise no traces of the fire, not even smoke.

MARTHA
What if they just consume you?

THE DOCTOR
If they could do that, they'd have
come for Alice the moment she was
born. I imagine for some reason
they need the sacrifice to take
place in this "heart of the
sanctuary".

MARTHA
But why?

THE DOCTOR
Everything that eats needs somewhere
to put its mouth.

FX: A single flame, like the one that DONNA and MARTHA first saw, appears in front of them.

THE DOCTOR
Martha?

MARTHA
It says they're willing to
negotiate.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

From here we have a distant view of the scene just witnessed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FX: THE QUEEN and HAIG watch as THE DOCTOR and MARTHA retreat into the tavern, followed by the single flame.

HAIG

The oracles weren't extinguished.
They abandoned the sanctuary.

THE QUEEN

How did our guests get down there so fast?

HAIG

The priest hole?

QUEEN

Come on, let's go.

CUT TO:

INT. TAVERN, UPPER ROOM - NIGHT 2 1942

FX: As before but this time, the only light comes not from outside the window but from the flame. THE DOCTOR and MARTHA sit, businesslike, MARTHA as interpreter.

THE DOCTOR

So let's be sure we're on the same page here. You've spent countless generations on this world, manipulating the population to do your will, all so that you could consume the genetic material of different species? And now you want a Time Lord. Why?

MARTHA

They say they can absorb characteristics from the DNA, incorporate them into their own being. Their natural lifespan is close to an end and they hope the genetic code of a Time Lord will give them longevity. Ooh, like the Family of Blood!

THE DOCTOR

Yes.

MARTHA

I've just thought of something. That ring. Could it be like the fob watch - it had a Time Lord hiding inside. They might have stolen it from a humanised one of your lot?

THE DOCTOR

That's one possibility. I can think of a couple of others.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTHA

Wait, I'm getting something more... they say they didn't just manipulate this world's legends, but yours as well.

THE DOCTOR

I thought so. Let me guess - the idea of the universe ending shortly after consuming a Time Lord was designed to make us stay away from you out of fear. But thanks to the war, that backfired. Before, you'd known you had a limited lifespan and one day would need to go find a Time Lord. But when you thought the species had been wiped out you became desperate.

MARTHA

Yes. You're right. And - then they heard a rumour that there had been a single survivor. So they engineered this world's legends to trap you.

THE DOCTOR

How long have you got, if you don't consume a Time Lord?

MARTHA

A thousand years, then the last flame of the species will gutter and die out. Hey, that's ages.

THE DOCTOR

Not to them. Children of the big bang. A drop in the ocean. Very well. Let's go to the heart of the sanctuary.

MARTHA

What? You can't be serious. You don't have to do what they say!

THE DOCTOR

If I don't, their species will die out.

MARTHA

But... if you do, then yours will.

THE DOCTOR

Not now the Vestalis has been born.

MARTHA

You don't have a responsibility to these beings.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTHA (CONT'D)
(to the flame)

No offence.

THE DOCTOR
Genocide by inaction? Well, it's a knotty philosophical point, I suppose. I used to say that everything had its time, and everything dies. Now I wonder whether I just told myself that to make it all easier. To sit back and watch countless lives ending.

MARTHA
Well, what about me and Donna?

THE DOCTOR
The Tardis was plucked from its last destination - a quick flick of the reset switch will take you all back to London in the present day. And then you can get married, and start a family, and do all those wonderful ordinary things that you lot are so fond of. Let's go.

CUT TO:

INT. PRIEST HOLE - NIGHT 2 1945

A dark, dank tunnel. DONNA and THE VESTALIS are huddled up together.

DONNA
You just have to give him time, that's all. Suddenly being a dad. I've seen that happened before. That deer-in-headlights look. He'll get used to it. And if not, I'll sic the Child Support Agency on him.

THE VESTALIS
He shouldn't have to feel anything. I'm fully grown. It's not like he has to look after me.

DONNA
Hey. I'm fully grown up and I still need a bit of TLC sometimes. My... my dad died. Quite recently. It was sudden. First time I met the Doctor, he was fine, healthy, full of life. By the second time I met the Doctor, he was gone. And I miss him. So don't you feel guilty for wanting to spend time with that man.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONNA (CONT'D)

You grab hold of him and you keep his close as long as you can. Because you'll miss him. One day. He's lanky, he's self-satisfied, and he owns a blue suit, but he's your dad. He's your flesh and blood.

THE VESTALIS

Thank you.

DONNA

Someone's coming.

The QUEEN, HAIG and two armed COURT GUARDS emerge from the palace end of the tunnel.

HAIG

Vestalis, I demand that you come with us. The oracles are all out of balance, and it was precipitated by your birth. You must be responsible. You must be impure.

THE QUEEN

No, Haig. It's not her fault. Child, do you know what your destiny is?

The Vestalis looks at Donna for encouragement - Donna nods.

THE VESTALIS

I want to travel through space and time. I want to see the universe.

THE QUEEN

I didn't ask about your desire, I asked about your destiny. Do you know what it is?

THE VESTALIS

No.

THE QUEEN

Then come with us and we'll work it out together.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, HEART OF THE SANCTUARY - NIGHT 2 1955

HAIG, THE QUEEN, DONNA and THE VESTALIS enter. PARAGONS are still around, part of the background.

FX: The flames have returned to the dais - The queen visibly relieved to see this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE QUEEN

Haig, you and Miss Noble wait here.
Vestalis, accompany me to my
chambers, please.

THE VESTALIS

Of course.

HAIG

But majesty -

THE QUEEN

The Vestalis and I have a private
matter to discuss. We shan't be
long.

The queen and the Vestalis leave -

Haig slumps down.

DONNA

Not used to being left out of the
decision making, eh?

HAIG

Her majesty is changed. I don't
know what to do.

DONNA

(To the flames)

What are you staring at?

HAIG

We've looked to those things for
inspiration for so long... to see
them burning down the village...
what does it all mean?

DONNA

How often do you sacrifice one of
these women?

HAIG

Every time the queen fails to
conceive.

DONNA

So you get through about a dozen a
year?

Haig nods.

DONNA

Then if you ask me, I think all this
means it's time for a little less
superstition and a little more
respect.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER - NIGHT 2 2010

THE QUEEN and THE VESTALIS in conference. An armed COURT GUARD hovers nearby.

THE QUEEN

So the flames have been manipulating us all along? And they want to consume a Time Lord. What exactly is so special about a Time Lord?

THE VESTALIS

They can have different bodies. Each time they are about to die, their cells merely regenerate and begin anew.

THE QUEEN

You say "they". Don't you mean "we"?

THE VESTALIS

My first duty is to this planet. My home.

THE QUEEN

I believe you. And you'd do anything to maintain the stability of our people?

THE VESTALIS

Of course.

THE QUEEN

So would I. Guard?

The court guard comes forward.

THE QUEEN

Give me your gun.

He hesitates, but sees she means business - does so.

THE QUEEN

Thank you. Now go and find the ceremonial robes used during a sacrifice of the Vestalis.

(To the Vestalis)

I hope they fit.

She primes the gun ready to fire.

THE QUEEN

So. Let us see exactly what we're both prepared to do for our people.

Cut to the Vestalis' POV as the queen aims the gun at her.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, HEART OF THE SANCTUARY - NIGHT 2 2015

THE DOCTOR and MARTHA enter. HAIG, DONNA and sundry PARAGONS still milling around.

THE DOCTOR

Well, the gangs all here. Almost - where's Alice?

DONNA

She's having a chat with the queen. They'll be back soon.

THE DOCTOR

Good. I want a chance to say goodbye to her.

DONNA

Why?

MARTHA

He's going to feed himself to these things.

DONNA

What?

MARTHA

Don't waste your breath. His mind's made up.

THE DOCTOR

When they consume me, they'll leave the world alone. I guarantee it.

DONNA

How can you be so sure?

THE DOCTOR

They gave me their word.

DONNA

Well. They really broke the loom when they wove you up.

THE QUEEN and a HOODED FIGURE enter. The figure is wearing robes similar to those worn by the sisterhood, but more elaborate. The large hood completely covers the figure's head.

THE DOCTOR

Alice?

THE QUEEN

Please do not attempt to communicate with the Vestalis. Tell him why, Haig.

HAIG

Because from the moment the Vestalis dons the robes of sacrifice, she is already dead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE DOCTOR

No! I won't allow it.

THE QUEEN

She is doing this freely, Doctor.
It was her choice. I promise you
that.

THE DOCTOR

But she can't! It has to be me!

THE QUEEN

Why?

THE DOCTOR

Because... because she's my
daughter. I can't lose her. I just
can't. Not after I've lost
everything else.

THE QUEEN

She told me you didn't seem to think
of her as your daughter. She
wondered if she wasn't worthy.

THE DOCTOR

Worthy? Of course she's worthy! It
was the other way round, I didn't
think I was worthy to call myself
her father.

THE QUEEN

Then if you love her, respect her
decision. Her first duty is to help
maintain the stability of this
world, her home.

The Doctor lightly touches the figure's arm.

THE DOCTOR

Then she's a better person than me.
Goodbye, my daughter.

The figure nods to him - steps towards the dais.

FX: The flames lick up around her. As the others watch in
horror, the figure is burned to death in front of them.

The Doctor's expression is a combination of shock and
distress.

FX: The figure burns away completely, until not a trace
remains, the dais completely clear - the flames still
there, but greatly subdued.

THE QUEEN

Now!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FX: Another flame leaps through the door - appears to wrestle with the flame on the dais - at first seems like an even struggle but the new flame gains the upper hand.

FX: Eventually the new flame appears to consume the original flame - takes up its place on the dais, which now looks much as it did the first time we saw the heart of the sanctuary.

DONNA

What just happened?

MARTHA

That was the rebel flame.

HAIG

It fought the rest. While they were subdued. That was the plan? To weaken the flames just enough so they could be destroyed?

THE DOCTOR

Clever. Worthy of a Time Lord.

THE QUEEN

Thank you, father!

The Doctor spins round to face the queen.

THE DOCTOR

What did you say?

THE QUEEN

It's me. Alice, if you like.

THE DOCTOR

But... I don't understand! Wait a minute, I think I do... you regenerated... into the queen?

THE QUEEN

I was able to take on her form as I died.

THE DOCTOR

So that was...?

THE QUEEN

The real queen. She chose to give her life for the stability of her kingdom. To be honest I think the guilt had given her a bit of a death-wish.

DONNA

A lot of that going around.

HAIG

She sacrificed herself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

THE DOCTOR

So one flame remains. And will for a thousand years.

THE QUEEN

Longer than that. The queen and I agreed to trigger my regeneration by shooting me, but the flame appeared to us just in time. It suggested it could consume me and let me go just at the point at which the regeneration took hold. And that's what happened.

THE DOCTOR

Two birds with one stone.

MARTHA

It worked. The flame will burn for countless millennia.

THE DOCTOR

Another being that's the last of its kind. And another that's a little bit Time Lord.

HAIG

So what happens now?

THE DOCTOR

Well, you've got your queen. You may even find she doesn't have the same difficulty in conceiving from now on.

HAIG

But she's not the heir!

THE DOCTOR

Well, seems to me you need to take another look at your prophecies.

THE QUEEN

In our darkest hour, the queen will appear barren -

THE DOCTOR

- But the offspring of two people, the last of their kind -

THE QUEEN

- Will renew the succession.

THE DOCTOR

Rather a neat fit, actually, to say that the flames were aiming for something else entirely when they made it up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

DONNA
(To the queen)

So you're going to stay here and rule? What about your desire to travel?

THE QUEEN
This is my destiny. Besides, I'm not used to having desires. I think I should take them one step at a time.

DONNA
(To the Doctor)

Quick word?

THE DOCTOR
Sure.

DONNA
You have to take her along in the Tardis. Even if just for one trip.

THE DOCTOR
But she's got a lot to sort out here
-

DONNA
For a genius, you can be thick sometimes. That blue box is a time machine, right? So you and her pop in there together, you fade away, you take as long as you both need to come to terms with each other, and then you arrive back, ten seconds after you left.

THE DOCTOR
Oh. Yeah, that could work. Kind of bends the fourteenth law of time, but I never bothered too much about the even-numbered ones. Well, I suppose it's all aboard!

DONNA
Me and Martha'll stay here until you get back.

THE DOCTOR
Why?

DONNA
Look, this may not be how it happens on your planet, but girls and their dads need to spend time alone together, to develop a relationship.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

DONNA (CONT'D)

She's nearly an hour old, so it's way past time for her to have you wrapped around her little finger. If we all go along together, she'll just be one of the gang. That's not right.

THE DOCTOR

I... I don't know how to do it. Be a dad.

DONNA

Yes you do. Oh, by the way, one question.

THE DOCTOR

Yeah?

DONNA

Time Lords get to choose their appearance when they regenerate. And you chose that?

THE DOCTOR

Only the female of the species get to choose. Never understood why.

DONNA

Because girls are better than boys?

THE DOCTOR

Yes, that must be it.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, STONE PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT 2 2030

The Tardis is here - THE DOCTOR, THE QUEEN, DONNA, MARTHA and HAIG walking up to it.

THE DOCTOR

Well. See you in a few seconds. Oh and Haig, I'll have my hand in a jar back if you don't mind.

HAIG

I shall fetch it.

Haig walks off back the way they came.

THE DOCTOR

Ready, Alice?

THE QUEEN

Ready.

FX: The Doctor and the queen enter the Tardis - it dematerialises.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Donna and Martha wait expectantly for its return.

DONNA

Any moment now. Any moment... now.
Hmmm.

MARTHA

You do think he can steer the thing
well enough to get back at all?

Haig returns with the jar.

DONNA

Mine and Martha's posh bedroom in
the east wing is still available,
right?

HAIG

I suppose so.

FX: The Tardis reappears - the door opens - the Doctor and
the queen emerge.

The Doctor looks the same, but the queen is dressed
differently, and has had a haircut.

THE QUEEN

Quite an adventure.

THE DOCTOR

Quite a series of adventures.

THE QUEEN

That bit with the sentient word
monsters of Cryptonom IV was...
brilliant.

THE DOCTOR

Brilliant it was.

THE QUEEN

Thanks, dad. Come back and visit,
won't you?

THE DOCTOR

Of course.

The Doctor and the queen hug.

The Doctor grabs the jar from Haig.

THE DOCTOR

Right, you two. Off we go.

(Looks at the jar)

I wouldn't mind grabbing the ring,
too, if it's all the same.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAIG

I'm afraid it was missing, Doctor.
Someone must have taken it in the
confusion.

THE DOCTOR

(suspiciously)

How terribly unfortunate.

THE QUEEN

Don't worry father, Haig and I will
get to the bottom of it, won't we?

HAIG

Yes... your, er, majesty.

THE DOCTOR

Oh, don't go to any trouble, you've
got enough to do around here -

THE QUEEN

Father - I'd quite like to find out
who my mother is.

THE DOCTOR

Ah. Yes. Um, here.

(hands her a small device)

Give me a shout when you find out.
I'm curious myself. Goodbye.

Donna, Martha and the Doctor retreat into the Tardis.

FX: It dematerialises.

THE QUEEN

Haig?

HAIG

Yes, majesty?

THE QUEEN

I think my subjects may be troubled
by what happened in the village
tonight - and you know what the
court's like - Martha's interruption
of the ceremony will be town gossip
by tomorrow morning. We need to
reassure everyone. I think some
kind of personal broadcast. And if
it goes down well - we could make it
an annual thing.

HAIG

Very good majesty.

CUT TO:

INT. THE TARDIS - DAY 3 0845

THE DOCTOR and DONNA prepare to see MARTHA off.

THE DOCTOR

There we are. London, the present day. Are you sure I can't tempt you with another trip?

MARTHA

Nah. It's like you were saying. There's a lot to be said for starting a proper family.

Martha walks towards the door.

DONNA

Oy, don't we get hugs?

MARTHA

Yeah, sorry.

(Hugs Donna)

It's just that, well, it's never goodbye, is it? There's bound to be some catastrophe at UNIT, and I'll be on the phone again. Speed-dial was invented for this man. We've got to figure out how to get Sir Alistair back from Peru, for a start.

THE DOCTOR

Give my love to him when you do.

The Doctor and Martha hug.

MARTHA

Ooh, you're right. Paper cuts.

DONNA

I know, right?

Martha heads for the door - waves - and leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, QUEEN'S CHAMBER - DAY 3 0900

THE QUEEN speaks directly to CAMERA, as if we are watching her broadcast the same way we watch our own royal messages.

Slowly push in to her as she speaks.

THE QUEEN

My fellow citizens. I speak to you this morning just as the sun rises on a bright, clear, warm day.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE QUEEN (CONT'D)

Yesterday I might have believed that was fitting. But this morning I do not. Why, you ask? Not because this day is not a wonderful, vibrant new start for our people, but because I no longer accept such superstitions. This golden morning is not a sign or a portent. It is just a beautiful day. That is all, and that is enough.

CONTINUED, INTERCUT WITH -

CUT TO:

INT. TAVERN - CONTINUOUS

FX: FOLK are gathered round what appears to be a holographic projection of THE QUEEN - the LANDLORD stands behind the bar - all are rapt -

THE QUEEN (CONT'D)

Last night, the sacred flames of the oracle expressed their grave unhappiness. Every month that goes by without my conceiving an heir, a Paragon has been sacrificed, consumed at the heart of the sanctuary. Last night, we went too far. We destroyed the Vestalis.

The FOLK exchanged excited whispers - can this be true?

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

An ordinary residence on this world - a typical family sit around a flat panel attached to the wall - their equivalent of our television. On this display, THE QUEEN continues -

THE QUEEN (CONT'D)

We thought we were fulfilling prophesy, but we were not. The oracles believed the Vestalis had another destiny. Today, I ask forgiveness of the sacred flames for not listening to their sage counsel.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE, QUEEN'S CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

FX: The flame approaches THE QUEEN - splits off and forms a ring of fire around her, as it did to MARTHA.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE QUEEN (CONT'D)

The ancient legends were right about one thing - this has been our darkest hour. Not because we could not fulfil our destiny, but because of the depths we sank to as we tried.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARKET SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

A busy market square somewhere on the planet. A CROWD of people all give their attention to -

FX: a projection of the image of THE QUEEN and the flame, onto the side of a tall building.

THE QUEEN (CONT'D)

We must learn from this. We must go forward, rejecting superstition and embracing rationality. As we know from our ancient texts that our ancestors did on Earth, many generations ago.

CUT TO:

INT. TARDIS - CONTINUOUS

FX: Similar hologram to the one in the tavern, except that as we pull back from it, we realise we are aboard the Tardis -

THE DOCTOR and DONNA are watching the broadcast.

THE QUEEN (CONT'D)

From this day forward, let there be a new covenant. We shall never again practice human sacrifice. We have learnt an important lesson - we make our own destiny, and we are responsible for fulfilling our own desires.

FX: The Doctor switches off the hologram at the console, and it fades.

DONNA

She'd better watch it with all this modern talk - they'll be wanting a republic next. Do you think she'll be all right?

THE DOCTOR

All right? She'll be superb!

DONNA

Right then. Where to now?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE DOCTOR
I don't know. It's a mystery.

CUT TO:

FX SHOT

Slowly pull back as the Tardis tumbles this way and that
in the blue vortex.

END OF EPISODE