

# DOCTOR WHO

## THIEF OF TIME

An adventure for the eighth Doctor and Mina Harker

by Duncan Johnson

The Doctor pulled on the oars and the little rowboat glided gently through the streets of Knightsbridge. Seated uncomfortably in the opposite end of the boat, Mina Harker looked about her in bewilderment.

'Beggars belief, doesn't it?' the Doctor said. He was in his shirtsleeves, his blue velvet coat folded in the bottom of the boat, and he had unbuttoned his collar, his silk cravat hanging loose and unknotted.

'I confess I never expected to see the Brompton Road under three feet of water,' Mina said, 'let alone be rowing down it.'

'It's quite the sight.' The Doctor paused in his rowing to gesticulate with an oar. 'One hundred years from now they'll be building Harrods on that corner, once this area starts to become fashionable.'

Mina dragged a small fishing net through the water and examined its contents. She was wearing a dark red riding habit, with matching petticoat and tricorne hat, and was being careful not to get the sleeves wet. She had wrapped a black silk scarf around her throat and the ends of the scarf had been thrown over her left shoulder.

'What I don't understand, Doctor, is where all this water came from in the first place,' she said.

'Of course, the River Westbourne is underground in your time period, like the Fleet and the Walbrook and so many other lost rivers. I caught a salmon on the Westbourne once.'

Mina raised an eyebrow and the Doctor pouted.

'Nobody believes me about the salmon in the Fleet either,' he said, 'even with Bede as an eyewitness. The Westbourne flows from Hampstead in the north down through London to join the Thames at Chelsea. Well a few years ago, as the Vortisaur flies, Queen Caroline decided that what Hyde Park really needed was a lake so she had her husband - that's George II, by the way - dam up the Westbourne to create the Serpentine. Lovely girl, Caroline. I remember discussing monadology

with her and Gottfried Leibniz over dinner at the Herrenhausen. The partridge was overcooked, but the conversation was divine.'

'The River Westbourne, Doctor,' Mina said, prompting him back on track.

'Oh yes. The problem with damming the river, of course, is that, in the event of really heavy rain, such as London's had these past few weeks, the water's got nowhere to go but out. The Westbourne burst its banks and London's underwater from Hyde Park to Belgravia.'

The Doctor waved at a passing waterman who scowled back at him in response.

'These poor people,' Mina murmured.

'You say that,' the Doctor replied, 'but you have to remember that this area has yet to be gentrified to the state it's in when you come from. In the early eighteenth century, Knightsbridge is pretty appalling, really, and even the locals would prefer not to walk through the streets. The option of travel by boat is arguably an improvement. Found anything yet?'

Mina strained her net into a bucket and pulled a face.

'Much,' she said, 'and all of it unpleasant, but there's been no sign of any alien artefacts. Why do I have to fish for them anyway?'

'Would you prefer to row?' the Doctor asked, offering her a turn at the oars.

'That's not what I meant,' Mina said. 'Surely space debris falls to earth all the time?'

'Not all the time,' the Doctor said, 'but I take your point. Still, this is different. If I'd been paying more attention then the TARDIS wouldn't have collided with it in the first place and knocked it out of orbit. I feel responsible. Plus, I'd rather not be fined for littering.'

'I warned you not to overindulge at Madame Bernhardt's party.'

'Sarah's an old friend,' the Doctor said, 'and it would have been rude not to have accepted her hospitality.'

'Yes, but did you have to accept quite so much of it?' Mina asked.

The Doctor harrumphed. 'I resent the implication that I was drunk in charge

of a time machine.'

'If the shoe fits...'

The Doctor was preparing an indignant comeback when he spotted something caught in Mina's net. 'What's that?'

Mina peered closer. The gold and silver object looked like a cross between a pocket watch and a Christmas bauble.

'It looks alien enough,' she said.

'Excellent!' The Doctor reached over and fished their find out of the net, heedless of the muddy water he splashed across Mina's skirt. 'This is exactly what we were looking for.'

'Is that it?' Mina frowned. 'I was expecting something... bigger.'

The Doctor looked offended. 'It's not all about size, Mina.' He looked up at the sky. 'That's that, then. Let's get back to the TARDIS before it gets dark and we can be on our way. Are you sure you don't want to row.'

Several miles to the south-west, in the pink brick palace of Hampton Court, the state apartments overlooking Fountain Court echoed to the sound of cello playing. Rolling her eyes, Queen Caroline closed the book she was reading, stood up, smoothing down her skirts as she did so, and strode across the *Galerie des Glaces* to find the cause of the disturbance. An infinity of Caroline's were reflected in the multitude of mirrors, an homage to the gallery of the same name in the Palace of Versailles. Now in her fifties, age was beginning to take its toll on the Queen, but her rich, blonde hair still shone in the light (and not, whatever the nursery rhyme may say, because she washed it in turpentine). She rapped her knuckles on the door to her son's apartments.

'Griff, darling,' she called, 'it's your mother. Please let me in.'

The cello playing stopped. 'What do you want?'

Caroline tried the door, but, as she had suspected, Frederick had locked it from the inside. 'Must you play that instrument in the house?' she asked. 'It's

disturbing the rest of us.'

'I have to practice, mother,' Frederick said. 'I promised Senesino I'd perform with him next week.'

On his arrival in England, one of the first acts of Frederick, Prince of Wales, had been to found the Opera of Nobility as a rival to Handel's opera at the King's Theatre that was sponsored by his parents. Senesino was considered the finest castrato in Europe and by luring him to his own opera, the prince had achieved quite a coup. In this, he had been helped in no small part by Handel himself, who had a reputation for throwing temperamental singers out of the first floor window of his house in Brook Street.

'If you must practice, at least do it up at Lincoln's Inn Fields,' Caroline said. 'That's what the theatre's there for, after all.'

'But I want to stay near my Augusta,' Frederick insisted.

'It's Augusta I'm concerned about,' Caroline said. 'Surely you don't want to disturb her in her delicate condition.'

'As if you care about the health of my wife.'

'Of course I care. Wasn't I the one who chose her for her in the first place.'

'Only because you wanted to control me!'

Caroline rested her forehead against the heavy wooden door. 'Please let's not argue, Griff. This is supposed to be a joyous time for all of us. Soon you'll be a father.'

'And you'll have another young mind to try to mould in your image,' Frederick said. 'Well we'll see about that, won't we, mother?'

And with that, he resumed sawing away at his cello.

When they reached Hyde Park and the edge of the flooding, the Doctor hopped out of the boat and waded the last few feet to land. Then he took hold of Mina round the waist and hoisted her up and onto solid ground. It was not a particularly ladylike way to travel, but at least it kept her feet dry. The sun was setting to the west of the

city, but the park was still full of people, gentry and commoners alike, enjoying a promenade in one of London's precious green spaces.

The Doctor offered Mina his arm.

'Shall we?' he asked.

They proceeded arm-in-arm along Rotten Row, which had been established fifty or so years earlier by William of Orange as his own private road for travel between Kensington and St James's Palaces. Now it was the place for fashionable Londoners to see and be seen. The fading light was not an issue because the highway was lined with hundreds of oil-lamps, illuminating riders and walkers alike. Several people greeted the Doctor as he passed, either verbally or through gesture, a wave of an arm, a nod of the head. The Doctor returned such greetings formally.

'Do you know these people, Doctor?' Mina asked.

'Never seen them before in my lives,' the Doctor replied, 'but it never hurts to be polite.'

There was a scream from across the park and, without a moment's hesitation, the Doctor bounded in that direction to investigate.

'Doctor!' Mina cried out.

The Doctor had neglected to release her arm and was dragging her along behind him. She had to run to keep up - not easy in her period outfit - lest he tear her arm from its socket. The burst through a line of bushes, Mina nearly losing her hat in the process, and came across the source of the disturbance. A pregnant young woman had collapsed on the grass. A number of other people had been drawn to the scene and the Doctor finally let go of Mina so that he use both hands to part the crowd.

'Let me through, I'm a Doctor,' he said.

He dropped to his knees next to the woman and began to examine her. Mina, working her way through the crowd in the Doctor's wake, also took the opportunity to study the cause of so much interest. She was wearing a black dress with violet detailing, her hooped skirts billowing around her where she had fallen. She had

chosen not to wear a corset, presumably on account of her condition. Her skin was a pale cream colour and she had the widest green eyes Mina had ever seen. Her hair, what little of it was visible under her lace hood, was rich and dark.

The Doctor had produced a vial of smelling salts from a waistcoat pocket and was wafting them under the woman's nose. With a cough and a splutter, she sat up.

'Are you quite all right, madam?' the Doctor asked.

'I don't know what came over me, sir,' she said. 'I was taking the air when I suddenly came over all faint.'

'Have you been feeding yourself properly,' Mina asked, recalling her own pregnancy. 'You're eating for two now.'

The woman offered her a weak smile. 'I believe that must be it.'

'Perhaps you'd like me to examine you and the child,' the Doctor said, 'just to make sure there's nothing untoward. I am a doctor, I assure you.'

'That will not be necessary.' The woman batted his hands away. 'I am already feeling much recovered.'

'Then at least promise me that you'll consult your own physician,' the Doctor said as he helped her to her feet.

'As soon as I have returned home,' she replied, 'and on that subject, sir, might I impose upon you just a little more to hail me a cab?'

'It's no imposition at all,' the Doctor said. 'Where should I tell the driver to take you?'

'Clerkenwell Court.' The woman curtsied. 'Thank you, Doctor, you've been most generous.'

'Do you think she'll be all right?' Mina asked the Doctor once they had seen the woman into a carriage.

'Hm? I expect so.' The Doctor reached into his pocket for the TARDIS key and a look of panic crossed his face. It was not lost on Mina.

'Doctor, what is it? What's wrong?'

The Doctor frantically began patting down his clothes and rooting through his pockets. Trousers, waistcoat, jacket... he even pulled off his right shoe and tried

shaking it out.

'The artefact,' he said. 'It's gone.'

'You've lost it?' Mina said.

'I didn't lose it,' the Doctor replied indignantly. 'Someone must have taken it.' He slapped his forehead with the heel of his hand. 'Of course, how could I have been so stupid? That woman, it was all a set-up. Don't you see, Mina? While we were helping her, she was going through my pockets!'

Within the comfort of her carriage, Jenny Diver unlaced her bodice and loosened the stomacher enough to remove the pillow that had transformed her into a pregnant woman. Having divested herself of her disguise, she emptied out the hidden pockets sown into her gown so that she could examine the haul she had gathered from the samaritans who had rushed to her aid and those bystanders who had just wanted to gawp. She had purses and watches, rings and other jewels and, nestled among the other treasures, one curious bauble filched from a doctor. She held it up to the light.

'My, ain't you summat?' she said, throwing the bauble up and catching it one-handed as it fell. 'You'll fetch me a pretty penny, like, and no mistake and I've just the right buyer in mind.'

'Can I borrow your horse?' the Doctor asked.

'Borrow him?' The horse's rider, who bore an uncanny resemblance to his steed, had dismounted to talk to the Doctor and his companion, an action he was coming to regret.

'Buy him then,' the Doctor persisted. He fished in his pockets and pored over their contents. 'Do you take Arcturan Express? No? But it's accepted in five galaxies. How about this, a scarf woven by the blind nuns of Metebelis III from genuine spider silk? Feel that craftsmanship. Not your colour? What about a telescope

previously owned by the Duke of Wellington himself? No, wait, Arthur hasn't been born yet. Bag of jelly babies? Please, pick something. We're in a bit of a hurry here.'

'You're not the only one who considers his time to be precious, Doctor,' the rider said, 'and I feel you've wasted quite enough of mine. Good day to you.'

He made to remount his sorrel-coloured horse when Mina's eyes fixed on a point over his shoulder and her arm shot out in that direction.

'Oh my god, look!' she shouted before releasing an ear-splitting scream.

Instinctively, the rider turned. 'I don't see any...'

Mina lunged forward and shoved him with both hands. He lost his balance, toppled over and ended up on his backside in the dirt. Mina, meanwhile, was scrambling onto his horse.

'Come on, Doctor,' she said, 'what are you waiting for?'

The Doctor put a foot in the stirrups and swung himself up behind her.

'That was terribly underhand, Mina,' he said. 'I'm impressed.'

'You're a bad influence,' Mina told him as she spurred the horse out of the park.

'Freddy, what's going on?' Princess Augusta asked. 'Why are the maids packing up my things?'

'Because we're going on a journey, my sweet,' Frederick replied. He sat down on the edge of the bed and took her hand in his.

They made an odd couple. She was a fresh-faced teenager, naïve to the ways of the world. He was twelve years her senior, driven, ambitious and politically savvy. He had spent fourteen years as the most senior royal in Hanover between the time his parents had moved to England and the time they had summoned him to join them. He had grown used to being the centre of attention and resented being relegated to a mere supporting player.

'I can't travel,' Augusta protested. 'I can't go anywhere. The baby could come at any time.'

'Which is why we must go now,' Frederick said. 'I can't stand to stay under the same roof as my mother for another moment.'

'But, Freddy...'

'Hush, darling.' Cupping her chin in his free hand, he tilted her face towards him and kissed her gently on the lips. 'I'm only doing this for your own good. If we let my mother in on the birth then she'll have her claws in our child for the rest of its life. Do you want that, Augusta?'

'I'm sure she's not as bad as you say,' Augusta said.

'You don't know her,' Frederick said. 'You didn't grow up with her. And you weren't abandoned by her when you were just seven years-old. You know what her nickname for me is? Griff, short for griffin. She calls me her mythical creature and I might as well be one for all she really knows about me.'

'Maybe it will be different now?' Augusta said.

Frederick simply shook his head. 'Get dressed, my sweet. The boat is waiting.'

'Can't this thing go any faster?' the Doctor complained as they negotiated the narrow lanes.

'It's not the horse,' Mina said, 'it's the traffic.'

The width of the streets was such that there was rarely enough room for two carriages to pass side by side. Instead, carriages travelling in opposite directions would square up to each other like stags bracing for combat, the drivers hurling insults at each other until one of them chose to back down. One lane had been so narrow that a carriage had become stuck, wedged tight between the walls of the houses on either side, and Mina had been forced to find an alternative route to avoid the obstruction.

'It might help if I better understood the danger,' Mina said. 'What does this alien object do?'

The Doctor shrugged. 'I don't know.'

'You don't know?'

'I've never seen anything like it before.'

'So what you're telling me, Doctor,' Mina said, 'is that, despite all your panic and rushing around, this object might not be any threat at all.'

'Be fair, Mina. It's an alien artefact at large in eighteenth century London. When was the last time you and I saw something land on Earth that wasn't a potential disaster? Not that I suppose it matter now.' The Doctor pouted. 'At this rate, we'll never catch her.'

'Look on the bright side, Doctor,' Mina said. 'She's probably having exactly the same problems we are.'

In fact, Jenny had got so fed up with her slow progress that she had jumped out of the carriage before the driver could stop her and had decided to complete the rest of her journey on foot. She pulled her fur-lined cape tighter around her shoulders to keep out the evening chill and dived headlong into the maze of alleyways. She parted the crowds before her with a polite word or two or, when that failed, the judicious application of a sharp elbow, but she had to keep her wits about her to jump clear when a carriage or phaeton rumbled by. London was still thirty years away from putting pavements at the edges of its street so carriage drivers in a hurry could scrape their vehicles along the buildings on either side. Pedestrians had to be quick on their feet to take shelter in doorways and alcoves if they did not want to be crushed.

On arrival in Clerkenwell, Jenny made short work of her business with one of the areas more curious residents before turning south once again to where that riot of noise and activity that was the Bartholomew Fair was in full swing. When it had first begun back in the twelfth century, the Fair had been a small event entirely confined with the grounds of the Priory of West Smithfield. In the intervening years, however, the Fair had grown in popularity and importance and was now a major highlight in the London calendar. What once had been just for the purpose of furthering the trade in cloth, had now been hijacked to incorporate all manner of

entertainments. From musicians to acrobats, prize-fighters to stallholders, puppet shows to freak shows, no manner of vice was left unexploited.

Jenny explored the Fair with a spring in her step, the strains of a hurdy-gurdy and the cries of Mr Punch standing out above the general chatter and enthusiasm of the Fair's patrons. She perused the stalls, asking their owners intelligent questions about the merchandise on display. She kept her hands on display at all times, folded demurely in front of her at all times. Whose hands were they, then, that snaked out to snag a trinket or two and return them to her pocket? Whose fingers snatched up the orange that Jenny could later be seen devouring as she paused to appreciate the prowess of a tightrope walker? And, when she grew bored of the acrobatic display, who was it who left the collection bowl that little bit lighter?

Some sixth sense, honed over the years plying her trade, made Jenny glance over her shoulder. That Doctor and his friend were sitting astride a horse just two stalls away. She cursed herself for a fool. She was in a cloth fair and had not thought to pick up something to disguise herself with, but then she had not thought that the Doctor would be dogged enough to track her across half of London. She searched around for somewhere to hide, but the Fair was made up of temporary structures, none of which seemed substantial enough to provide much in the way of cover. And then the Doctor's eyes met hers.

'Come back with my... thing!' he yelled, vaulting to the ground and running towards her.

Jenny started to run, but the Doctor's longer legs ate up the ground between them. He grabbed hold of her arm.

'That's quite enough of that,' he said triumphantly.

Jenny hit him in the stomach and he staggered back, winded, still holding on to the arm, which jumped free of her shoulder.

'What in the world?' the Doctor began.

In his bewilderment, he was not watching where he put his feet. He slipped in some horse manure, tumbled over a wine barrel and ended up in a tangle of limbs - his own plus one false arm - in the cobbled roadway.

'Are you all right?' Mina asked, walking the horse over to him.

'Forget about me,' the Doctor said, 'get after her!'

'Me?'

'There's nothing to worry about.' The Doctor waved the wooden limb in Jenny's direction. 'She's armless.'

Jenny stumbled onwards, heaving over an apple cart in the hope that it would delay pursuit, but the horse simply vaulted straight over the obstruction, its hooves turning scattered fruit to pulp. Looking for some place where she could lose her pursuer, she spied a crowd of people gathered around a roped-off ring. Bear-baiting was popular in this part of London and Jenny assumed that this was what the crowd had come to see.

'Stop, thief!' Mina yelled after her.

'What thief? Where?' someone in the crowd asked.

Jenny seized her chance and pointed at Mina. 'That one! There! She stole that horse, like. I saw her with me own eyes!'

The mob, already eager for blood-sport, advanced on Mina.

'What? No! She's lying!' Mina protested, but to no avail.

Spooked, the horse reared up and threw her. She landed in the crowd, knocking a woman off of her feet.

'What d'ye think you're doing, poppet?' the woman asked as she hauled Mina off of her. 'Like to play rough, do you?'

Mina blinked. 'I...'

The woman talked right over whatever objection Mina had hoped to make. 'Well, we's can play rough too, you hear, and Lady Cavendish never backs down from no challenge.'

She looked like no 'Lady' Mina has encountered before. Her skirts were coarse and woollen, dyed green with an orange strip near the hem. Her blouse, which might once have been white, was stained and patched in places and the sleeves had been torn off to expose bare, well-muscled arms. Bits of red ribbon had been tied around her wrists and in her grey-streaked hair.

'You hear that, Ladies and Gentlemen?' a red-waistcoated barker declared. 'Looks like we've found ourselves a contender willing to challenge Mad Madge.'

'No, you've got it all wrong,' Mina said. 'It was an accident.'

The crowd seized her and carried her to the ring. Blue ribbons were tied around her arms.

'Place your bets, folks,' the barker said. 'Who will win? The untried challenger or the unbeaten First Lady of Northampton?'

Mad Madge punched the air and grinned, exposing the gaps in her teeth. The crowd cheered. Her captors knocked Mina's tricorne hat from her head, dislodging the pins that held her hair in place and sending it cascading in waves down her back. It was soon bound up again, however, as more and more blue ribbons were tied in place. Mina was dumped unceremoniously inside the roped-off area and a knife was shoved into her hand. She looked at the weapon with a mix of horror and puzzlement. Mad Madge strode round to the other side of the ring and climbed over the ropes. Jenny had been mistaken, this crowd had not gathered to witness bear-baiting. They were here to see another type of blood-sport entirely.

'Ladies,' the barker began, 'the last woman standing will be the winner. Other than that, there are no rules. Have at it!'

'But I can't,' Mina began, but Mad Madge was already lunging towards her. Mina tried to roll away, but she was not quite quick enough and Madge's blade open up the right sleeve of her riding habit.

'Too proud to fight me, are you?' Mad Madge snarled. 'We'll be making short work of you then, poppet.'

Mina backed away, trying to clamber over the ropes to safety, but the crowd were pressed right up to the edge of the ring and they forced her back down, jeering as they did so.

'Lady Cavendish, was it?' Mina held the knife in both hands, her arms stretched rigidly in front of her. 'This is all a terrible mistake. We don't have to fight.'

'You're missing the point,' Mad Madge said. 'I wants to fight!'

She ran forward, blade outstretched like a lance. Mina tried to parry it with her own knife, but the impact of the two weapons sent shockwaves through her arms and she stumbled back. Mad Madge pressed her advantage, thrusting her knife towards Mina's face, but the blade stopped less than an inch from Mina's eye. Mina had grabbed hold of the ribbons around Mad Madge's wrist and was using them to hold her arm at bay.

'You're stronger than you look,' Madge grunted, trying to break Mina's grip, but Mina had braced her feet and was not about to back down.

They remained locked together for a few moments and then Mad Madge grinned. Twisting her hand, she turned the blade away from Mina's eye and ran the point down her cheekbone. It was a shallow cut, all that Madge could manage from her position, but Mina could feel the warm blood welling up from the wound and dripping slowly towards her chin. Mad Madge broke away, staggering backwards to the opposite side of the ring. She leaned against the ropes, recovering her breath.

'First blood to me, innit, poppet,' she said.

She charged again, slashing great X-shapes in the air with her knife. Panicked, Mina tried to run, but there was nowhere to go and she stumbled on the loose sand in the ring. Her ankle gave way under her and she dropped painfully to one knee. The shock of the impact caused her to let go of the knife and the blade went skittering out of reach. Seeing her predicament, Mad Madge halted her charge, walked over to the dropped knife and kicked it towards.

'Pick it up,' she said.

Mina stared at the knife. She remembered its weight in her hand, how her arm had shook when she held it. She tried to imagine striking this woman with it, but the image would not come.

'No,' she said softly.

'Pick it up!'

Mina looked Mad Madge in the eye. 'No,' she repeated. 'What would be the point?'

'Do you wanna die?' Mad Madge demanded.

Mina's mouth set in a grim line. 'I will not fight you. I won't give you the satisfaction.'

'You think that makes you better'n me, like?' Mad Madge spat a gobbet of phlegm into the sand at Mina's feet. 'You've ruined it now. It's no fun when they don't fight. Or scream.'

'I'm sorry for you,' Mina said.

'It don't matter none,' Mad Madge said. 'I get paid the same for I kill you on your feet as on your knees.'

She grabbed hold of a handful of Mina's hair and roughly tilted her head back to expose her throat. Mina could feel the cold blade of the knife against her skin. She could smell Madge's rancid breath as she leaned forward to whisper in her ear.

'Nighty night, missus,' she said.

Mina heard a crack and then a thump and the pressure on her throat vanished. She risked tilting her head forward and looked around her.

'Goodnight yourself,' Jenny said to Mad Madge's unconscious body. She was holding the false arm she had struck her with in both her hands.

'What are you doing here?' Mina asked.

'I couldn't never leave you to the like of her,' Jenny said. 'Who knew I had a conscience? Now let's a-running while we're still able, this crowds getting right ugly.'

'They weren't particularly attractive before,' Mina said, allowing Jenny to help her to her feet.

Fredrick grunted as he moved the oars that were driving their boat up the Thames. He was not use to all this physical exertion and his arms ached. He wanted nothing more than to collapse upon his own bed and to sleep for a week.

'I still don't see why we have to row up the river on our own,' his wife said.

'Because we're trying to escape in secret,' Frederick said, 'and our entourage would have been too conspicuous. They'll travel to St James's Palace by road and

have everything ready for you by the time we get there.'

'They certainly will at the speed we're travelling,' Augusta muttered.

Frederick was stung. 'I'm rowing as fast as I can.'

'I know, darling, I'm sorry,' Augusta hastily apologised. 'But what if I give birth in the boat? What then?'

'Then we'll simply have to make the best of it,' Frederick said, 'but that won't happen. I'll get us to the palace in plenty of time, you'll see.'

Augusta gazed across the water towards the trees of Richmond. 'Perhaps things would be different if you didn't provoke them so. Your parents, I mean.'

'I don't provoke them,' Frederick said. 'At least, I don't mean to. I just want to show that I'm my own man with my own ideas.'

'But do your ideas have to be in exact opposition to theirs?'

'I'm the heir to the throne, Augusta,' Frederick said. 'One day all this will be mine and I'll fight for what's best for my country and her people.'

'You really love it here, don't you?' Augusta asked.

'This is home now,' Frederick said, 'for us and our child – children one day, I hope – and I am proud to consider myself an Englishman.'

'Is that why you are so obsessed with this thing called “cricket”?' Augusta said with a wry smile.

Frederick smiled back warmly, but the moment was dispelled by the harsh caw of a rook that echoed across the water.

'I'm scared, Freddy,' Augusta admitted.

'Don't be,' Frederick said. 'I'm here for you. I'll always be here for you.'

They found the Doctor searching the Fair for them.

'Mina, Mina, Mina, where have you been? Are you all right?' he asked, wrapping her up in a hug before she could stop him.

'Thanks to this one,' Mina said, nodding in Jenny's direction as she wriggled free.

'Jenny Diver, at your service, guv'nor,' Jenny said. 'Can I have me arm back, like?'

The Doctor glanced at the wooden arm he was still carrying. 'I though the Right to Bear Arms was an American one.'

'So maybe I should go to America,' Jenny said, fixing both her false arms back into place. 'Seek my fortune in the New World.'

'Maybe you should,' the Doctor replied.

'What are the arms for?' Mina wanted to know.

'The clue's in the name, Mina,' the Doctor said. 'A diver is a pickpocket.'

'Guilty as charged, guv'nor,' Jenny said. 'People think they're safe cos they can see my hands. Reckon they wouldn't never feel quite so content if they's knew my real hands were down here.'

'Ingenious,' the Doctor said, 'and I'm guessing that "Jenny Diver" is a nickname, about as real as that gutter accent you've chosen to affect.'

'Would you prefer it if I spoke thusly, sir?' Jenny said, all cut-glass vowels, the same accent she had been using for her ruse in Hyde Park.

'I'd prefer for you to drop the act altogether,' the Doctor said. 'Who are you really, Jenny Diver? Where are you from and how did you end up here?'

'That's none of your business,' Jenny shot back.

'Doctor,' Mina said, 'Jenny *did* save my life.'

'You're right, I'm sorry,' the Doctor said. 'It is none of my business. All I'm really interested in is getting my property back.' He held out his palm. 'Hand it over.'

'That... could be a problem,' Jenny said.

The Doctor sighed. 'What have you done with it, Jenny?'

'I went and sold it, like, didn't I,' Jenny said. 'Knew it were right valuable soon as I clapped me peeps on it.'

You sold it? To whom?'

'Gent of me acquaintance,' Jenny said. 'He'll never say no to items such as yours.'

'And there's the rub,' the Doctor said. 'The item is mine. Take us to this man you sold it to.'

Jenny locked stares with him, sizing up the potential for defiance. In the end, she decided that the struggle was not worth the effort.

'All right, follow me,' she said, 'but I ain't giving him his money back.'

Kenelm Burlingame was sitting on a three-legged wooden stool in the back room of his shop. He had not bothered to light any candles and yet, despite the drapes, the room was not in total darkness. Light was coming from the object cupped in his hands, the object Jenny Diver had sold to him earlier that evening. The Doctor's bauble was glowing.

The light reflected off of the metal and glass all around him. Springs and gears were arranged neatly on the table ready for assembly and completed items lined shelves along three of the room's walls. The items were ticking, a few loudly, most softly, but the cumulative effect of all the devices was deafening. Kenelm did not even notice, his attention was entirely focussed on what he was holding.

Kenelm Burlingame made clocks, watches and other intricate clockwork items, like his father before him. He had started learning his craft almost before he could walk, sitting on his father's knee while the older Burlingame explained the purpose of each component as he put them together. Kenelm considered himself to be good at his craft - until tonight he had held the opinion that he was the best - but the object he had bought this evening changed all that. He had never seen craftsmanship like it.

He turned it over in his hands looking for a hinge or a catch, some way to prize it open so that he could see exactly how it worked, but the surface appeared to be seamless. He ran his thumb across the metal. It was smooth and warm to the touch and he could feel vibrations emanating from inside the device. Suddenly, the bauble burst open and for one heart-stopping moment Kenelm was terrified that he had broken the device, but closer inspection revealed that it was not falling apart.

Rather, it was slowly unfolding, like a flower in bloom. Inside, he saw three dials, each with three tiny metal hands, positioned at the corners of a triangle. They looked like watch-faces, but with more than the standard twelve divisions that Kenelm was familiar with. In the middle of the arrangements of dials was a single gold switch. Kenelm's finger hovered over it. His mouth had gone dry. He tried to swallow, but it did not help. His hands were shaking.

Closing his eyes, he pressed the button.

And the ticking stopped.

'Is this the place?' the Doctor asked.

They were standing on Clerkenwell Court in front of a small shop with a crude wooden shingle in the shape of a clock. The shop front had been painted green, though much of the paintwork was now cracked and peeling, and was split by three windows, each of which was made up of many small squares of glass held together by an iron lattice.

'This is Burlingame's,' Jenny confirmed.

Mina peered through a window. She still had some blue ribbon stuck in her hair and was absently pulling at it with her right hand. Through the glass, she could make out a few clocks and watches on display, but little else.

'It looks closed for the night,' she said. 'Are you sure that he's here.'

'He ain't got nowhere else to be,' Jenny said. 'I hear tell his father were pretty well off, but he lost the lot. When he died he had nuffink to leave his boy 'cept this shop. Burlingame sleeps on a bench in the workshop in back rather than find proper lodgings, like.'

'But surely he must be able to earn a living through trade,' Mina said.

'Not much demand for stuff like that in these parts,' Jenny said. 'If the sun's out, it's day. If folks can see that stars then it must be night. Don't need no watch to tell you that. Now the toffs, on the other hand, they can't get enough of this kind of thing and, back in the day, Burlingame's father was getting commissions from

royalty no less.'

'So what happened?'

Jenny shrugged. 'Don't know the details, like, just know he fell out of favour with his royal nibs and if the King don't like you then the King's toadies ain't never gonna do business with you. The work all but dried up. What little money Burlingame makes now he puts right back into making more watches. He's obsessed, like, but he doesn't know how to do anything else.'

'Mr Burlingame.' The Doctor knocked on the shop's door. 'Mr Burlingame, I'm the Doctor. I'd like a word with you, if I may.'

There was no answer.

'Maybe we should come back in the morning.'

The Doctor shot her a brief baleful look then produced a tubular device from inside his coat.

'What's that?' Jenny asked.

'Sonic screwdriver,' the Doctor said, 'and it's a good thing you kept your sticky fingers off this.'

He pointed the sonic screwdriver at the door, unlocked it and then stepped inside.

'Coming?' he asked his companions.

The shop was in darkness and they cautiously picked their way around the merchandise.

'Don't touch anything,' the Doctor warned Jenny.

'Wasn't gonna,' she protested. 'If you don't need me, maybe I should just go, like.'

She started for the door, but the Doctor grabbed her wrist - a flesh and blood one this time.

'Until this is over,' he said, 'you're staying right where I can see you.'

'Mr Burlingame!' Mina called. There was no answer. All that the threesome could hear was the tick-tick-ticking of all the clocks.

'Workshop's through there,' Jenny said, pointing to a door half-hidden by one

of the cabinets.

'I'll go first,' the Doctor said, striding forwards.

He threw open the door. A male figure was standing in the middle of the workshop. He was hunched over and his back was to the door. There was a light source of some sort beyond him because it was creating a gold halo around his silhouette.

'Mr Burlingame?' the Doctor asked.

'Who wants to know?' the figure said.

'I'm known as the Doctor, Mr Burlingame, and I believe you have something that belongs to me.'

'I don't think so,' Kenelm said hesitantly.

'I *do* think so, Mr Burlingame,' the Doctor replied. 'This young lady here sold it to you just this evening. It's stolen property, Mr Burlingame, and I'd like it back.'

'It's mine, Doctor, *mine*,' Kenelm insisted, 'and you can't have it!'

Kenelm turned. He was holding the device in the palm of his hand. The bauble had unfurled and its 'petals' were giving off bright, golden light. A metallic tendril extended from the base of the device and was coiled up Kenelm's arm. The tendril continued to climb over his shoulder and across his neck and jaw before embedding itself in his face just by the corner of his eye.

'What is that thing,' Jenny asked, 'and what's it doing to him?'

'The answer to both questions is I don't know,' the Doctor said, 'but I'll wager that it's nothing good.' He turned his attention back to Kenelm. 'Mr Burlingame, that thing is dangerous. Give it to me and I'll make certain that it's disposed of safely.'

'You just want it for yourself.'

'No, that's not it at all.'

'Well you can't have it, any of you,' Kenelm said. 'It's mine and I'm keeping it. It shows me such wonderful things.'

'I'm sure that it does, Mr Burlingame,' the Doctor said, 'but it's not good for you. Let me help you.'

He reached for the watchmaker, but his hands closed around empty air. Kenelm had vanished.

And so had Mina.

'What happened?' Mina asked of her captor. 'Where are you taking me?'

It had all happened so fast. One moment the Doctor had been trying to take hold of Mr Burlingame and remove the device, the next he had been frozen like a statue. Jenny was stuck as well, mouth open and hand half raised as if she had been about to ask a question. Only Mina had still been able to move, Mina and Mr Burlingame. The watchmaker had lunged for her, grabbing hold of the ends of her scarf and using it as a leash to drag her out of the shop with him. Mina had tried to divest herself of the garment so that she could escape, but it was all she could do to loosen it enough for her to be able to breathe.

'This happened,' Kenelm said, looking at the thing in his hand with awe. 'It sensed I was in trouble so it saved me.'

'How nice of it,' Mina said.

All around them, people were motionless as if in a trance. And it was not merely the people. A dog was suspended in mid-air, frozen partway into its jump. A shop sign, once blowing in the wind, was now fixed at a forty-five degree angle. A woman was empty a chamber-pot from a first floor window, but its contents were in no rush to reach the ground.

'You still haven't answered my question,' Mina said. 'Where are we going? And why have you kidnapped me?'

'You're going to protect me if those Doctors come back.'

'Doctors?' Mina said. 'Plural?'

Kenelm nodded. 'All of them lined up in a row from the oldest to the youngest. Only it was backwards. He gets younger as he gets older... Look out!'

He yanked hard on Mina's scarf pulling her off of the street.

'What was that for?' she said, clawing at her throat where the scarf had

tightened around it.

'Didn't you see it?' Kenelm said. His voice had taken on a sing-song, dreamy quality. 'The carriage without any horses. Only it wasn't like any carriage I've ever seen.'

Mina regarded him with a mix of pity and fear. Whatever else the device had done to Mr Burlingame, it had driven him mad.

'Doctor, watch...'

Jenny clapped a hand over her mouth to stop the flow of words. A moment ago, this little workshop had felt crowded. Now it was just the two of them.

'Where the heck did he go?' she asked.

'Out of that door,' the Doctor said, 'and he took Mina with him. I tried to stop him, but he was too fast or I was moving far too slowly.'

'You saw him?' Jenny said. 'I blinked and he was gone.'

'I have a different relationship to time than... most people,' the Doctor said. 'The temporal effect didn't hit me quite as hard as it did you.'

'The what-what?' Jenny asked.

'He stopped time,' the Doctor explained. 'Look at the clocks.'

Jenny did so and she that the hands were whirring round at incredible speed. When they resumed moving in what she considered to be a normal fashion, each and every clock had counted off an extra thirty-two minutes.

'I don't understand.'

'Mr Burlingame can only stop time in his immediate area,' the Doctor said. 'Once outside his influence, the affected area rushes to catch up with its surroundings. It's fantastic. And it also tells us how much of a head start he's got.'

'So what do we do now, like?'

'We, Jenny?' There was a twinkle in the Doctor's eye.

'Well, I've come this far, ain't I?'

'In that case,' the Doctor said, 'do you remember where I left my horse?'

\*

'It's incredible!' Kenelm was standing on the banks of the Thames looking back towards the City. 'All that glass and steel and... and I've never seen the like. Such wonder. Such intoxicating beauty. Is this the city I am to fashion?'

'It is the city that is to come,' Mina said, her eyes searching for something sharp that she could use to sever the scarf that bound her to her captor. 'I have seen it and it will be built by men other than you, Mr Burlingame.'

'That's what they always say,' Kenelm said. 'My father made a magnificent astronomical-musical clock for King Louis of France. He was going to make one for His Majesty King George too, but the King would have none of it. "If I wish for such a time-piece," he said, "it will be built by men other than you, me whose first loyalty is to their own country and not to the country that gives sanctuary to my Jacobite enemies." And him a German too. That remark finished my father. He hanged himself not long after.'

'I'm sorry,' Mina said.

Kenelm did not appear to have heard her. 'But I'll make my father proud,' he said. 'Everything I build is in his memory, so that he'll be remembered forever. And one day, one fine day, I'll have my revenge on those Hanoverians who crushed him. What's that?'

He was talking to the device, which had started to grow hot in his hand. A beam of light shot out from the centre of the 'flower', revealing two figures in a boat, bobbing up and down on the dark water.

'Can it be?' Kenelm asked the device. 'Is this... are you giving me *another* gift? Then I accept. And gladly.'

'There!' Augusta sat up straight, rocking the little boat. She pointed over her husband's shoulder. 'I can see the tower of St James's. Oh, Freddy, we're nearly there.'

'See, I told you I'd get you there safely.' Frederick tilted his wig back on his head and mopped the sweat from his brow with a lace handkerchief. 'Just one last little effort and we'll be warm and...'

Frederick trailed off.

'What's going on?' Augusta asked, an edge of hysteria to her voice. The rowing boat and its two occupants were now at the centre of a circle of golden light, lighting up the river as bright as a summer's day. 'Freddy, get us away from here. Hurry, please!'

'I'm trying, Augusta,' Frederick replied. 'But I can't move the oars. They're stuck.'

'Try harder!'

Augusta leaned forward to help him, but screamed when she saw a figure appear in the air beside the boat. There was no cloud of smoke or fog, no flash of light to signal his approach. One moment they were alone, the next he was right on top of them. As she got over her initial shock, Augusta realised that he was leaning over from another rowing-boat. She could see another figure sitting in the boat behind him, a woman in red whose hands were bound together with her own silk scarf.

'Who are you?' Frederick demanded.

'My name is Kenelm Burlingame, Your Highness,' the figure said.

There was something about his smile that sent a chill down Augusta's spine, but her husband seemed undaunted.

'Never heard of you,' he said.

'Your grandfather knew my father,' Kenelm went on.

Frederick was unimpressed. 'That was a long time ago.'

'He knew my father and he ruined him,' Kenelm said, ignoring Frederick's remark. 'Some might say he murdered him. And now I'm here to balance the scales.'

Jenny and the Doctor galloped along the north bank of the River Thames, their

sorrel-coloured horse leaving a trail of hoof-prints in the wet, grey sand. Fearful of being thrown at the speed at which they were travelling, Jenny had wrapped her arms around the Doctor's waist and had her cheek pressed up against the back of his velvet coat.

'And there's another thing what I don't understand, Doctor,' Jenny said, trying to talk and keep her teeth gritted at the same time. It she opened her mouth, the movements of the horse caused her teeth to hammer against one another with the violence of a crazed percussionist.

'Not *more* questions, Jenny,' said the Doctor, who had had to put up with her inquisitiveness all the way from Clerkenwell.

'Master Burlingame, he said like that flower was showing him things, right?'

'That's what he said,' the Doctor agreed.

'What things?'

'That "flower" as you call it seems to have some control over time,' the Doctor said.

'Seems to have quite a lot of control, if you ask me,' Jenny muttered.

'All right, quite a lot of control,' the Doctor conceded. 'The point is that I think the device is showing Burlingame events out of sequence.'

'What kind of events.'

'The past,' the Doctor said. 'And the future. And if I'm right then, in his current condition and given his interests, few things in the city are going to attract our man like the view from the river.'

'I don't see what's so special about it,' Jenny said. 'It's just... Hey, Doctor? Should it be lit up like that?'

'Lit up like...!' The Doctor's eyes followed the line of Jenny's outstretched finger. 'Oh dear. This is bad. Very bad.'

He tried to spur the horse to greater speed, but Jenny pulled on the back of the Doctor's coat.

'Doctor, wait!'

"Wait," she says. People's lives are at stake, Mina's among them!'

'And what happens when he waves that think, like, and stops time again?' Jenny pointed out. 'What are you going to do then?'

The Doctor slowed the horse to a trot. 'Jenny, I'm sorry. You're right of course.'

'You don't have to tell *me*,' Jenny said. 'I know I'm right, but what are we going to do about it?'

The Doctor considered. 'We need a plan. Jenny, can I borrow your arms?'

The figure in front of Frederick was out of focus, no matter how hard the prince strained his eyes. His breathing was ragged and he seemed to have no strength in his arms and legs.

'What have you done to him?' Augusta wrapped her arms around Frederick to shield him from Burlingame.

'We've quickened time around him,' Kenelm laughed. The flower in his hand was almost too bright to look at. 'He's rushing forward to meet his end.'

'You monster!' There were tears in Augusta's eyes. Frederick was trembling. His hair was falling out in clumps and his once perfect skin was wrinkled and liver-spotted.

'Augusta,' he wheezed, 'is that you? What's happening to me?'

'You call me a monster?' Kenelm said. 'What about what his family did to me and mine? You've married into a house of monsters, my dear, and all that remains is to decide how they'll meet their fate.' He stared into the heart of the flower in the palm of his hand. Its light was reflected in his eyes like dancing candle-flames. 'Do we carry on as we are, accelerating him towards his future until he's nothing more than dust in the wind? Or do we reverse things, send him backwards until he's once again a mewling infant? If we turn back the pages of history far enough, will it be as if he had never been born?' He laughed insanely. 'Now that you've found me, there's nothing we cannot do!'

'Burlingame!' a voice called from off to his right. 'Leave them be! Those two

have done nothing to you or to your father.'

Kenelm turned and saw the Doctors punting across the water on a makeshift raft. That girl, Jenny, was standing behind them, her arms wrapped around their torsos to steady herself. Her mind struggled to comprehend what he was seeing. There were many Doctors, but only one Jenny so how could she be holding on to each one individually? It made no sense.

'You're in pain, Burlingame,' the Doctors were saying, 'and that device is distorting your perceptions. You can't think straight. I understand and I can help you. Just give it to me and everything will be all right.'

'Give it to you?' Kenelm said. 'Never! It belongs to me. It came all this way to find me and now we'll never be parted.'

'Kenelm, no, you know that's not true,' the Doctors said. 'This was just an accident, a terrible, unfortunate accident. Don't make it any worse.'

'You're just like the rest of them, Doctors,' Kenelm said. 'You can't stand the fact that I have the talent, the vision, the *power*, so you want to knock me down and claim everything for yourself. Well, if you want our power so much then you can have it.'

Kenelm raised his hand, but the Doctor's were quicker. Each one was holding a metal wand that glowed with a blue light and buzzed with a sound Kenelm had never heard before. The flower in his hand writhed as if in pain. The tendril it had extended detached from Kenelm's face, unwrapped itself from his arm and withdrew into the body of the flower, which then folded up into a bud.

'I've taken your toys away, Kenelm,' the Doctors said. 'It's time to go home.'

'You think that just because it closed itself up, my friend has no power anymore?' Kenelm said. 'That just shows how little you really know, Doctors.'

Kenelm raised his hand again and a narrow shaft of light shot from the bauble in his hand to strike the Doctors in their chests. Their movements slowed. Their hair, which had been flowing in the wind, now seemed fixed in place. The raft continued to approach the boats, but at a crawl so slow as to be practically irrelevant.

'Now to finish what I started,' Kenelm said, returning his attention to the Prince and Princess of Wales.

'No, I won't let you!'

Mina had failed in her attempts to free her hands so instead she just threw herself at her kidnapper. She moved with all the finesse of a sack of coal, but succeeded in colliding with him and knocking him back against the side of the boat, which threatened to tip over. Mina rolled onto her back, but, still bound, could not get up again.

'That was very foolish,' Kenelm said. 'We had no quarrel with you, but now...'  
He raised his hand. 'Let's see how you like being an old crone.'

A beam of light struck Mina between the eyes, but, to Kenelm's dismay. It appeared to have no effect. There was no sign of even a single additional wrinkle or grey hair.

'What is this?' he said. 'Why won't you age?'

'Perhaps you're not as powerful as you think you are?' Mina suggested.

'I'll show you how powerful I am,' Kenelm replied. 'You can lie there and watch as I turn their Royal Highnesses into dust.'

He began to raise his hand to Frederick and Augusta, but then his jaw fell open. His hand was empty. The device was gone.

'Looking for this, guv'nor?' Jenny asked. She was bobbing in the water next to him. With one hand she held on to the side of the boat to stay afloat and with the other she held the device.

'How did you get here?' Kenelm asked. 'We stopped time on the raft. You shouldn't be able to move.'

'I weren't never on the raft,' Jenny said. 'It's just a trick, innit, and you fell for it.'

'Give that back to me,' Kenelm said, reaching for device. 'Give it back.'

'I don't think so.' The device started to extend its tendrils again, searching for purchase on Jenny's skin, but she hurled it away from her. 'Doctor, catch!'

Still caught up in the temporal effect, the Doctor could barely move, but he

was able to open his hand enough to keep hold of the device that Jenny threw to him. The tendril reared up like a striking cobra before plunging itself deep into the exposed flesh of his wrist. It obviously did not like what it found, however, because almost immediately it began to writhe and twist and spark before retreating back into the main body of the device. The bauble flickered once, twice, and then glowed no more.

Jenny paddled over to the raft. 'What happened?' she asked.

The Doctor tapped the device a couple of times with his fingernail, but it refused to respond. 'Indigestion,' he diagnosed.

There was a cry from one of the boats.

'Doctor,' Mina called. 'The Princess's waters just broke. The baby's coming.'

The Doctor paled. 'Oh dear,' he said.

'As I suspected,' the Doctor said, 'the device didn't find me terribly palatable and, in the absence of a suitable host, it simply turned itself off.'

Once the Doctor had successfully delivered the baby – a girl, whom they decided to name after its mother (Jenny had proposed that it be called after her, but no one thought that was a suitable name for royalty) – they found that quite a crowd had gathered to see what all the fuss was about. A messenger was dispatched to St James's palace and a carriage soon arrived to take the Prince, Princess and their new daughter home. Now, Mina, Jenny and the Doctor were sitting on the banks of the river and watching the sun come up. Their boats were beached at the water's edge, the false arms, broomstick and cloak that had served as the fake Jenny on the raft lying in the sand beside them.

'So now you'll destroy that thing, like?' Jenny said. She was still sopping wet after her swim in the Thames and the Doctor had given her his coat to keep her warm.

'Destroy it?' the Doctor said. 'Certainly not. I do, however, know a place to put it where no one will ever find it again.'

'I guess that'll do,' Jenny said. 'I've got another question.'

The Doctor sighed. 'Not again.'

'How come Mina didn't never age when he pointed that thing at her,' Jenny said. 'I hadn't had no chance to take it from him yet.'

'In that case, it was a good thing he turned it on her and not on the Prince or Princess,' the Doctor said. 'Like me, Mina has a very particular relationship with time, though for entirely different reasons.'

'What reasons?'

'Some questions are best left unanswered,' Mina replied, 'but I've got a question for you. How was it you were able to swim up to the boat and hide under the water for so long?'

'I used to run with the mudlarks,' Jenny said. 'A favourite trick was to swim out to a ship after dark, like, shin up the anchor cable and make off with whatever you could carry. Or you could shin down the cable and simply nick the anchor itself. You learn how to hold your breath in that job.'

'I don't doubt it,' Mina said.

'What about Master Burlingame?' Jenny asked. 'What's going to happen to him?'

'I imagine that he'll wake up in the morning and put all this down to a bad dream,' the Doctor said. 'That thing was in his mind. It's bound to have left a few holes in his memory when it came out again. No one need know what happened out here last night.'

'The Prince and Princess know,' Jenny said, 'and the Prince doesn't never strike me as the kind of man to keep his trap shut.'

'I don't think Frederick will say anything,' the Doctor replied. 'I told him I'd tell on him to his mother if he did.' The Doctor stood up. 'Well, Jenny, it's been a privilege and a pleasure, but I think it's about time Mina and I got back to the TARDIS.'

'Perhaps I should drive this time?' Mina suggested innocently.

'What's the TARDIS?' Jenny asked. 'Your ship?'

'I guess you could say that,' the Doctor said, 'and in it we sail the seven seas of time and space.'

'Take me with you,' Jenny said, 'please.'

'I don't think that's such a good idea,' the Doctor said. 'There are enough bits missing from the old girl as it is. Still, maybe another time.' He winked at her. 'When you're older.'

Jenny pouted.

'Try to keep out of trouble while we're gone,' Mina said.

'Of course I will,' Jenny replied. 'Cross me heart and promise, like.'

But all three of them knew that she had her fingers crossed behind her back.

\*

#### Author's Note:

Next year, a friend of mine will be walking the Great Wall of China in aid of the British Heart Foundation. If you've enjoyed the above story, it would mean a lot to me if you would consider showing your appreciation by sponsoring Heather and supporting what is a very worthy cause. Heather is blogging about her preparations for the trip at [www.charitychinesewhispers.blogspot.com/](http://www.charitychinesewhispers.blogspot.com/), you can read more about the British Heart Foundation at [www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk) and, most importantly of all, you can donate at <http://original.justgiving.com/chinesewhispers>. Any support you can give would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks for your help.

Duncan

28/11/2009