

“If we start now, in the middle of things, leaving everything that’s gone before ignored, none of this will work.”

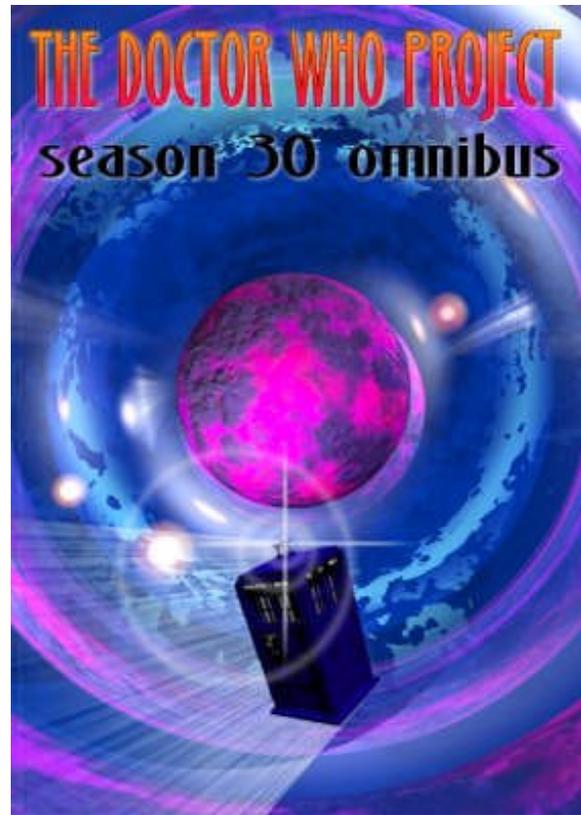
Well, I don’t know about that... “The Things That Matter-Part II”, in addition to being the first story of *The Doctor Who Project Season 30 Omnibus*, also serves as my introduction into the world of TDWP, so the above quote is eerily prophetic, but ultimately incorrect.

I quite like the world I find myself entering in this story. One where the Doctor is allowed to be the Doctor, without dolling him up or readjusting his psyche or anatomy all for the sake of a story. TDWP’s Eighth Doctor is every bit as enjoyable as the Edward Peel-Smith incarnation of James Bow’s *Trenchcoat* series (the first fanfic I ever read) or the audio version of the televised Eighth Doctor as played by Paul McGann.

Fandom, bless every one of us, has a tendency to blow things out of proportion with the return of old enemies or with retelling their origins. Many, I’m sure, are the occasions where one is subjected to a glut of convoluting plotlines, none entirely matching, and many suffering for the attempt.

“TTTM-PII” is nothing like this. It is, instead, a story about the most tragic kind of love. Unrequited love. Well, not quite unrequited, but in typical great story fashion, a love seen differently by each of the two lovers involved. All Kurik can see is his love for Elsee, while Elsee views their relationship as emotions that will betray her. It is no surprise, then that the Cybermen could be born from such a tale, as they have, from their first appearance in “*The Tenth Planet*”, considered emotions to be weaknesses.

Without going into to great a detail, and thus ruining the story for those who have not read it, this is a very enjoyable tale with an only marginal predictable plot twist, yet the twist is a very well-employed one. The Doctor, in the end, wonders if the creation of the Cybermen might be his own fault, and the line he utters regarding the possibility is one of the most rudimentary yet chilling lines of prose I’ve ever read and evokes in me the kind of feeling I



usually only get at the cliff-hanger of “*Pyramids of Mars*” Part One.

It’s working so far...

Reviewed by Jessie Loflin