

BBC  
BOOKS



# DOCTOR WHO

**DEAD OF WINTER**  
James Goss



Wish you weren't here...

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## About the Book

'THE DEAD ARE NOT ALONE. THERE IS SOMETHING IN THE MIST AND IT TALKS TO THEM.'

In a remote clinic in 18th-century Italy, a lonely girl writes to her mother. She tells of pale English aristocrats and mysterious Russian nobles.

She tells of intrigues and secrets, and strange faceless figures that rise from the sea. And she tells about the enigmatic Mrs Pond, who arrives with her husband and her physician.

What she doesn't tell her mother is the truth that everyone knows and no one says - that the only people who come here do so to die.

*A thrilling, all-new adventure featuring the Doctor, Amy and Rory, as played by Matt Smith, Karen Gillan and Arthur Darvill in the spectacular hit series from BBC Television.*

**DOCTOR  WHO**

**Dead of Winter**

JAMES GOSS

**BBC**  
BOOKS

*To my beloved Perdita  
Nothing can replace you  
— Johann*

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## What Amy Forgot

The TARDIS was crashing. The big clue was that the floor lurched at a sixty-degree angle. I knew this because the Doctor pointed it out.

'Sixty degrees!' he called, like he was greeting an old friend. 'Amy, this is serious.'

I grinned, and then saw the expression on my husband's face. Rory was clinging to a chair, and making a noise. Making an 'oh my god, you didn't say this was a seafood restaurant' noise. My husband has one of those faces that looks best when it is worried. Since we've been travelling in the TARDIS he's looked worried a lot.

'Relax!' I cried. 'We've done sixty degrees before, haven't we, Doctor?'

'Oh yeah, heaps,' agreed the Doctor as the TARDIS's time engines made a noise like a crashing steam train. 'Well, perhaps not sixty degrees. Not for a while.' A small fire started on the control console. 'Hum,' he sighed sadly. 'The temporal couplings are burning out. Still, what else can you expect? Sixty degrees is serious stuff.'

'Right,' muttered Rory just loudly enough to carry over the sound of an exploding time machine.

The Doctor wrapped his arm desperately around the giant crystal pillar at the heart of the TARDIS. It was glowing an unhealthy colour. If it was a girl on a hen-do, I'd say the TARDIS was about thirty seconds away from crying, 'Hold me hair, Sharon.' Steam was rising around the Doctor's hands. 'Grab on to something!' he yelled.

Rory was about to say, 'But I am grabbing on—' when the entire inside of the TARDIS performed an advanced roller-coaster move. The room spun like a washing machine, in a tumble of brass, books and alien machinery, and then stopped. Wrongly.

'Gorgeous!' breathed the Doctor. 'That is one beautiful ceiling. Funny how you don't appreciate how lovely a ceiling really is until you're dangling twenty feet above it.'

I was holding on for dear life to a piece of TARDIS control thingy. It was seemingly made out of an old banjo. I hoped it wasn't something important. I could already feel it snapping under my weight.

'Why is this happening?' I shouted.

'Yeah!' said Rory. I was suddenly aware how far away from me he was, wedged into the staircase.

The Doctor looked at us both seriously. 'Can't really tell, not at the moment.' He was still upside down like a tweedy praying mantis, clinging to the crystal pillar, which was now rather the wrong shade of red. 'What I can tell you is that we are definitely still crashing, and that the time rotor is getting quite hot.' He looked at me. 'Sorry. I don't suppose you can reach the warp transfer coil, can you, Pond?' He paused and repeated, louder: 'The Warp Transfer Coil.'

'Shout as loud as you like.' I glared at him. 'Still not a clue what you're talking about.'

'Hey-ho,' said the Doctor, somehow managing to shrug.

Something else exploded, and the ship lurched again. You know that terrible feeling on an airplane when you hit turbulence and suddenly remember that you're in a thin metal tube that really has very little business being miles off the ground? That! I could just see across to a large screen which showed us tumbling through the Time Vortex like ball bearings down a drain.

'Something pretty bad's happening nearby in the space-time continuum,' the Doctor shouted over the noise. 'The

TARDIS is a terrible rubbernecker – like a little old lady, she can't resist slowing down for a gawp at a car crash in the next lane. Bless.'

'This is not slowing down,' bellowed Rory.

'Good point,' agreed the Doctor, looping a leg around a stray cable. 'Still, on the bright side it explains why whenever we land—'

'We end up in trouble!' I laughed.

Despite everything I was having fun. The thing about the Doctor is that you keep on forgetting there is no safety net. Just one look at him, at the excitement in his eyes, the smile on his face, at the slightly hopeless way he was trying to shin up a melting crystal and I somehow stopped worrying. *Oh Doctor*, I thought, *I'll never forget you*. This turned out to be a bit ironic.

An old-fashioned alarm clock started ringing on the console, a little brass hammer striking a tiny bell over and over.

'What's that?' yelled Rory.

'Proximity sensor!' whooped the Doctor, finally losing his grip on the pillar. 'Which means—'

We crashed.

# A Letter from Maria

*St Christophe  
4th December 1783*

Dear Mother,

Oh! I am so bored and so cold. Now the summer season is over, there's no one here to play with any more. I am feeling much better now, thank you very much, so please, when will you send for me? I do so long to be back in Paris. I miss Papa, I miss the puppies (this week I think they should be called Antony and Cleopatra - won't that be fun?), and, of course, I miss you the MOST.

It seems ever so long since I last saw you. I bet you must have several wonderful new dresses by now. I fear mine are starting to look awful drab - the laundry here is worse than even Eloise in one of her baddest moods. So please tell me what your new dresses are like, and if we have any new horses, perhaps?

Dr Bloom's establishment is much as it was in summer only darker and much colder. You would not like it now. You would miss the sun and it is always raining. There are draughts in every room and the fires smoke so much they make the patients cough dreadfully.

You would find the people here most dreary and lacking in conversation. The only new arrival is a fat old Englishman who swears loudly at Dr Bloom and complains about EVERYTHING. Dear Prince Boris has taken to his rooms. And the others are all so quiet. I don't want to talk to them much.

What I meant to say, dear Mother, is that I don't LIKE to talk to them. Of course, they are all very ill and should not be disturbed unless they ask to be, I know that, but... they are different now.

If you have a moment I shall tell you how. But if I do, then I should like you to be brave for me. You might find what I say frightening, but I don't wish you to.

Dr Bloom continues with his Fresh Sea Air Cure for the worst patients - you remember how it was in summer? The parade of nurses wheeling everyone down to the beach and leaving them? Well, it's still the same, even in winter. Madame Bloom says that the chill freezes the bad out of the lungs, but it can't be good, surely, to leave them sat there from dawn till dusk, can it? The light is so meagre and the fog is so thick. They look like the Dead. I can't help it - I know you told me not to call them that. The Dead sitting waiting on the beach.

But that is not the frightening thing, Mother. Sometimes I go down to them, to keep them company. But the Dead are not alone. For there is something in the mist and it talks to them.

There! I've said it.

Oh Mother, it scares me dreadfully. Please let me come home. Write soon with news.

Your ever loving  
Maria

## What Amy Remembered

I woke up. I immediately wished I hadn't. My head spun and it took a while before I could see where I was. It was a very white room, and there was a little girl sat on my bed. She was dressed like she was in *Cranford*, only without the bonnet.

'Ah!' she exclaimed, clapping delightedly. Houston, we have a clapper. Could be exhausting. 'You're awake! I'm so pleased, Mademoiselle.' She sounded French. Interesting.

'Yes,' I croaked. My throat was dry.

She passed me a glass of water.

'Who are you?' she asked, her eyes as wide as curious spoons.

That floored me for a second. I was not entirely sure. I could remember... hmm. Not much, actually. Oh dear.

'I'm Maria,' announced the girl importantly, chewing at her hair, which was really, really long and golden. Like she did adverts. She stared at me. 'I am 11.' She waited for me to say something.

'Right.' I sipped the water and played for time. I was feeling a rising panic. What was my name?

'You can't remember, can you?' Maria smiled slyly. 'They said you might not.' She giggled like it was funny.

'Who said I might not remember?'

'People,' she shrugged. 'I heard people talking in the corridor. You're new here. We don't have many new visitors. So there is bound to be talk. But I'm ever so pleased you're here. I do hope you'll be fun. Do you like to play games?'

I was a bit fazed by that. Frankly, the sense of rising panic wasn't really helping. I tried smiling at her, but it all went a bit wonky.

'Yeah,' I said eventually. 'I do like games. Did they say what happened to me?'

Maria tilted her head to one side. 'Your carriage crashed, apparently. They brought you in this morning.'

That made sense. Kind of. I could remember something vaguely about that - about the world turning over and a big thump but... that wasn't everything. There was something else. Wet sand.

I craned to look out of the window. I could only see grey sky and a few twiggy trees blown about in the wind. But I could hear...

'Are we near the sea?'

Maria nodded, solemnly. 'Oh yes. St Christophe is a resort. It is very fashionable and most expensive. People come here from all over France and Italy.'

I struggled up in bed. 'So this is a hotel?'

Maria giggled, her hand clasped over her mouth, 'Of sorts, yes. A hotel for the dead.'

Well, that floored me. It did not sound good.

'What do you mean?' I narrowed my eyes until it hurt my head, so I stopped.

'The dying come here.' She pulled a face. 'I mean, they hope to get better. But they're dead, really. Some do go home, they're the lucky ones. Mother did. She's back in Paris. Did I tell you we live in a lovely house with ponies?'

Ponies? I shook my head and tried to keep focused. My head was pounding, and I didn't even know my own name and so much enthusiasm and... I was on my own and...

'What year is this?' I asked her. As I said it, I realised it was an odd question, but one I was used to asking. Was this a problem I often had? A memory tugged at my head. A memory of something blue, lying on its side in the sand. Cold water, blue light... wet sand.

'1783.' Maria nodded, clearly proud.

'Oh, very good, Maria, that's absolutely right,' I said, moving with difficulty. I tugged at the quilt, realising for the first time that I was wearing a really rather lovely old lace nightie. I swung my legs onto the floor, realising that the room was very cold. I looked at her. 'Now then, Maria,' I said seriously. 'I am going to try walking. Then I am going to find out where I am.'

'And then will we play a game?' Maria was all excited.

'Quite possibly "Catch me if you can",' I vowed. 'I'll go first.'

I took a step, the world spun and the floor collapsed under me.

At which point, the door burst open and two men piled in.

Someone said, 'Hey! Steady on!'

Someone else cried, 'There she goes!'

Two sets of arms grabbed me and I found myself back on the bed with the ceiling dancing around and around. All that was missing were some dancing stars and the sound of a bird tweeting.

When things settled down a bit I looked at the two men. It was like fireworks went off in my head. One was wearing a suit badly, the other a worried expression and a frock coat. He was holding my hand, checking my pulse.

'Maria!' I shouted, suddenly very pleased with myself and the world in general. 'My name is Amy Pond, and these are my boys!'



# Dr Bloom's Journal

*5th December 1783*

Damn, damn, damn, damn, damn!

Kosov found the three strangers lying on the beach this morning, just as the sun was rising. Kosov likes to go for walks. I tell him, I tell him so many times not to leave Prince Boris unattended, but it is like Kosov has a mind of his own. He does so love to go down to the beach, probably to talk to... well, you know what I mean.

According to Kosov, he found the three of them huddled together on the sand, soaked to the skin. I wonder that they did not perish in the night - it would have been a blessing for all of us if they had, no doubt. The girl was quite unconscious, but the two men were just starting to sit up, rubbing their heads and groaning. It was the sheer amount of complaining they were doing that first made Kosov suspect they were English - Ha ha! Dear Kosov is no fool. Lord knows, we've all had to listen to the endless cries and lamentations of that London brute Nevil. It's as if Mr Nevil doesn't realise that he's here for his health not a holiday. The stupid man does not trust me at all.

'Let me cure you, sir,' I begged him when he arrived.

'God will cure me,' he belched, then started complaining about the food.

The stupid man does not understand that there is a reason why the rooms are so well ventilated, why the meals are so simple, and why there is an absolute ban on guests drinking beer, wine, or porter. Honestly, the man is a disgrace, but that's beside the point. Oh, he infuriates me -

but I shall cure him. I shall cure everyone! Yes, I shall even cure Mr Nevil.

Where was I? Ah yes, as ever, The Sea...

Kosov could see the morning mist gathering heavy around them and acted quickly before it could settle on them - the men could just about support each other, and he carried the girl all the way back here himself. Imagine it - that lumbering giant lugging her in like a bundle of firewood! I'd barely started my breakfast when he came in with her, those two gibbering fools staggering in behind him.

'What is the meaning of this, Kosov?' I heard myself demand (oh dear, oh dear, when did I get so pompous?), already leaping up and helping him settle the girl down on a couch. I could see that she was breathing, that everything was fine, and that the two men were very concerned about her.

I straightened up, patted down my waistcoat and smiled at them reassuringly. 'Do not concern yourselves unduly, gentlemen,' I began. 'There is no grave cause for worry. Your friend is in little more than a heavy sleep - probably the result of a mild concussion. Have you had an accident? You are fortunate to find yourself in excellent hands. I will happily place her temporarily under my care at this institute.'

'Institute?' One of the men blinked. 'Is this a hospital or a hotel?'

'A little of both.' I laughed. 'My name is Dr Bloom.'

The man shook my hand wildly. 'And I am Doctor...' He paused, and his face creased. 'Oh dear,' he sighed. 'Well, perhaps just "Doctor" for the moment. I'm sure the rest will come back to me.'

I arched an eyebrow. 'You are also a medical man?'

He nodded. 'Well, I think so... It's all a little hazy...'

I clapped him on the shoulder. 'You've spent a difficult night on the beach. The weather is inclement for it. The icy

fingers of winter grip even the Côte d'Azure.'

'Ah,' said this Doctor, and for a moment he looked as though he had no idea where he was. He muttered something to himself. It sounded like 'Warp transfer coil.' These *Ros-Bifs!*

His colleague - about the same height but with more authority - stepped forward. 'Along the shores of France and Italy. Lovely spot,' he pronounced. The English do so pronounce! 'I'm Mr Pond. Well, at least I think I am.' He smiled bashfully. 'Yes. I rather think we've had a bit of an accident with our transport. Quite an accident.' He paused, repeating the last word a couple of times, trying it out for size and then throwing it away as though it didn't quite fit. He shrugged. 'Anyway, we're here, you're Dr Bloom and I'm sure dear Amy - fairly sure she's my wife, by the way - will be more than glad of whatever help you can offer her.'

He stopped, all of a sudden, as if this was more words than he'd ever said before in his life. His friend, Dr Whatever, coughed. 'Well, there we are then. Perhaps we could borrow some clothes while these things dry?'

I looked at their clothes. They seemed... actually quite remarkable.

He caught my eye, and smiled. 'Travelling gear. You know how it is. Trying to be comfortable rather than presentable.'

The fool stuck his hands in his pockets with a wet squelching sound and tried to look dignified.

I smiled at him weakly. 'Well, of course. Of course, only too delighted to offer you hospitality. I shall find a room for Madame Pond and then my wife will fetch you some fresh clothes.'

Within minutes, my dear Perdita had arrived, the model of soothing efficiency. She conveyed the poor invalid girl to a room, the men were packed off to a warm fire and some baggy spare clothes, and I was left staring out of the

window, down the rocks to the beach wondering what it all meant. Had they really come here by accident?

I didn't hear her come in, but dear Perdita was suddenly back at my side. She wrapped her hand around mine and then settled her chin on my shoulder. 'Don't you worry, my dear,' she said, smiling up at me. 'I've taken care of them. It will all be fine.'

'Really?' I squeezed her hand and she squeezed it back. 'I'm just worried, that's all.'

'Of course you are,' her laugh was so tinkling it could make light of the worst disaster. 'Of course you are. But you're a brilliant man. You've done wonderful things. This is... this is simply an inconvenience.'

'How inconvenient.' I rolled the last word, exaggerating my slight Germanic accent until she smiled. Perdita has the most beautiful smile. 'Years of work have gone into this place. Untold effort. We are so nearly at the finishing line. You know what? In all those years of effort, I've never been scared. Three strangers turn up, and suddenly... suddenly I'm worried.'

We both stood at the window, holding hands and looking down at The Sea.

# A Letter from Maria

*St Christophe  
5th December 1783*

Dearest Mother and the Puppies and ALL the Horses,

We have strangers and they are ever so, ever so EXCITING! Today I met Monsieur and Madame Pond. They're staying here - their coach came off the road nearby, and they were brought here last night. Madame Pond is called Amelia, and she is lots of fun. She says she can't wait to play games with me and likes puppies. She has lovely long red hair (longer even than Cecile the kitchen maid's) and her laugh is very LOUD. She is from Scotland and her voice sounds all funny, but her French is really very good, much better than nasty Monsieur Nevil's.

Monsieur Pond is also very lovely, although he seems a little lost. They're both suffering from bumps to the head from the crash of their carriage, at least that's what their personal physician says. He tells me he is called Dr Smith and I like him ever so much, even if he is a bit nervous.

Whereas Monsieur Pond looks worried and severe, Dr Smith is quite smiley. He's ever so clumsy, and I don't think his suit quite fits him, but he's very good fun. He likes talking to girls - quite unlike Dr Bloom. He smells nice, much nicer than Monsieur Nevil - so I suppose not *all* Englishmen are filthy. Dr Smith keeps telling me he isn't a proper doctor, but Madame Pond clearly thinks the world of him. Monsieur Pond doesn't seem quite so convinced - it would not surprise me if he was *un petit peu* jealous?

Dr Smith and Madame Pond were talking about perhaps playing some kind of ball game, but Monsieur Pond didn't want to join in. He said that he wouldn't be any good. I told him he was wrong, but he looked all cross, as though people are always telling him he is wrong.

Then the door opened and Dr Bloom came in. I could tell that Madame Pond - she has told me to call her Amy and so I shall - that Amy had never met him before. She found his presence intimidating - I have got so used to him filling up the room like a big, cross flamingo. But she just looked at him. I'll tell you what happened, as it struck me as interesting, and I remember that you always found Dr Bloom so *amusant*...

'Ah, up and about, my dear?' he said, clapping her on the shoulder. 'Oh it's splendid, splendid. You're looking better already, much better. It's the air here, quite marvellous. It's a miracle, I tell you. Just fill your lungs with it and you'll be right as rain in no time.' He pushed his glasses high up onto his beaky nose so that he could peer down at her. He always does that - I suspect to make himself look serious, but how can he expect to when he has that ridiculous white wig? He patted it down, but it still stuck up around his ears, making him look like a spaniel. Without even looking at me, he laughed. 'I see you've met our youngest guest, dear little Maria. You must not let her tire you, Madame Pond. You really must rest up until you're feeling more like yourself.' He patted her carefully on the wrist and then turned to Dr Smith.

'Well, I must say, it all seems very, very promising with the patient, I'm sure you'll agree, Herr Dr...?'

'It's Smith, actually.' Dr Smith smiled, bowing. 'I've remembered that my name is Smith. Almost definitely. Good old English name, Smith. Hopefully means "noble, valiant warrior" and not "he who hits kittens with a hammer". You'd be surprised the derivations of common surnames in the English countryside...' He stopped,

realising we were all staring at him, and coughed. 'Sorry. Amy is better, you say?' He coughed again. 'Well, it is early... early days yet...' and then he trailed off. 'Dr... er? Now I've remembered my name only to forget yours. Whoops.'

'His name is Dr Bloom,' muttered Monsieur Pond. He was standing by the window, frowning down at the beach. He didn't turn around, he just sounded cross. You remember how Papa would sound when the porridge was burnt? Like that, really.

'Dr Bloom, of course!' Dr Smith clapped a hand to his head. 'Sorry. So sorry. I really don't... I think last night has shaken my head up a bit more than I realised.'

Dr Bloom threw a friendly arm around his shoulder and squeezed him reassuringly. He was making them trust him, and no one should, should they, Mother? 'Not at all, dear fellow, not at all. You're all very lucky people. Why, when you were found on the beach, I nearly gave up all hope of you.'

'Is there no sign of our carriage?' Monsieur Pond was barely polite. I know if you'd been there, Mother, you would have given him quite a look. The English are so rude! Poor Dr Bloom took it in his stride, however.

'Alas no, monsieur. It appears the horses cantered clean away with your vehicle. I am sorry. Not a sign of it, yet. But once your own personal physician is happy that you've all made a full recovery then I'll be only too delighted to make arrangements for alternative transport.'

'Um,' said Monsieur Pond. He didn't sound the least bit pleased.

Dr Smith spoke hurriedly. 'Perhaps you should sit down... Maybe you're not feeling yourself.'

'No,' muttered Monsieur Pond crossly. 'No, I'm not, Dr Smith.' He made it sound as though it was all Dr Smith's fault, which seemed unfair.