

# WHAT WOULD'VE MADE "DEEP BREATH" PERFECT

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## Some "Doctor Who" Nips and Tucks



So Doctor Who's Season 8 opener premiered on Saturday, August 23 to mostly positive reviews for the newly minted 12th Doctor, Peter Capaldi, who showed his more serious and darker version of the Time Lord. Some may have had reservations on having the much older Capaldi controlling the TARDIS (I'm still wondering why), but the veteran actor proved to have a strong handle on the role.

I liked the episode...a lot. And I could have LOVED it. Why didn't I? There were just a few things that took me out of the episode (and no, that "inappropriate kiss" was not one of them). Unnecessary moments and characters, and plot decisions put certain dents into what could have been a pristine vehicle. I have some nip and tuck ideas that could have made "Deep Breath" perfect.

### Getting Rid of the Paternoster Gang

Well, maybe not getting rid of them entirely. **The Paternoster Gang**, the group of detectives active in Victorian London (consisting of a reptilian female, a human female and a Sontaran, Strax), facilitated Clara losing the veil from her eyes which was making her biased against an old looking Doctor. But other than that, and other than having a place for the Doctor to recuperate during his regeneration, what other contribution did they add to the episode?



*The Paternoster Gang is cool and all, but do we really need to see them again? (cameronmoviesandtv.wordpress.com)*

Whatever else they did could have easily been done by Clara. Granted, scenes with Strax were comedy gold and emphasized how out of place he seems to be with normal social etiquette. But their scenes were too long and took away from the main event, and that was the first outing of the new Doctor. Past first showings of previous Doctors have always been surrounded by just a small circle of characters which made the center of attention land squarely on the story. For the future, I'm hoping not to see them often...or again. They just add too much.

### **"I'm Scottish!"**

Really? Cause I thought you were Gallifreyan. For the most part, the role of the Doctor has been played by British actors. Once in a while, though, another part of the United Kingdom steps into the Doctor's shoes. So far, including Capaldi, there have been three actors who weren't British to play the role (Sylvester McCoy, 7th Doctor, and David Tennant, 10th Doctor). Funny enough all three are Scottish. But the previous actors managed to (or was told to) use a British accent, with Tennant even using his authentic Scottish accent as a disguise in Season 2's episode "**Tooth and Claw**". So there's been no problem with a foreigner playing the Doctor.



*"I'm Scottish! I am Scottish. I can complain about things!" (radiotimes.com)*

What I had a problem with was the fact that the Doctor, an alien from the planet Gallifrey, proclaimed to be Scottish. I'm assuming that was done to ease the fans into the fact that Capaldi will be keeping his native accent, trying to prevent a big hoopla about it. For me, it just made him too...earthly. Too grounded. The Doctor, while seeming human on the outside, is supposed to be otherworldly, because, well, he is. Proclaiming that he's "Scottish!" just made him seem like any other kind of human male. Too relatable. That's what the companion is for – to be our voice to a being who sometimes needs that kick in the pants when he needs to be reminded of normal human decorum and emotions.

### **Holding the Audience's Hands**

Obviously, Clara had a rough time with letting go of "her" Doctor (whether it's because the new one looks like an old man or it's because of her emotional attachment is up for debate). The resistance and emotional push back was quite annoying because, frankly, in the 50th Anniversary Christmas special, "[The Day of the Doctor](#)", she was up close and personal with the War Doctor (John Hurt) who was WAY older than this version. They sat, they talked, and they had tea. Not only that, she also got familiar with the previous incarnations of the Time Lord, and some of the others were old too. Therefore, the grey hair and wrinkles shouldn't have been a shock to her. What show runner, Steven Moffat did to appease the audience was to have the younger version ([a Matt Smith cameo](#)) make a call to Clara, asking her to accept this older, more irritable Doctor. Why? And where was this hand holding with the previous Doctors? Sometimes you just need to say to the audience, "Take what you get." But then lovingly tell them, "Don't worry, you're gonna love it!"



*Matt Smith had to step in and comfort Clara. (haruspis.wordpress.com)*

## Theme Song

The melodic foundation of the theme song has never changed, but as the decades or Doctors go by, there are updates to it that reflect the time or decade the show is in. Those traditional first chords and the X-Files type sounds from the synthesizer will never fail you, and you definitely know Doctor Who is on. But the **theme song I heard** fell kind of short. There were some obvious changes to the whole thing (including the visual effects of the intro), but the wailing/banshee mating call in the theme took me out. COMPLETELY.

Or maybe I just don't like changes.



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