



CHAPTER FOUR:
THE SENSORITES, THE REIGN OF TERROR, PLANET OF GIANTS

THE REIGN OF TERROR

"I didn't say half the things I wanted to say. He twisted my words."

"Politicians usually do."

SYNOPSIS

After squabbling with Ian as they left the Sense-sphere, the Doctor angrily declared that he was going to send Barbara and Ian home, and set coordinates to bring the ship back to the junkyard at Totter's Lane in 1963. The TARDIS materialised in a field, although the Doctor insisted he was only a few miles off course. The travellers investigated, and found he was several *hundred* miles off course – they had landed in the middle of France.

Exploring, they found an isolated and seemingly abandoned farmhouse, and discovered they had landed in 1794. They were right in the middle of the French revolution. The farmhouse was used by a pair of conspirators named D'Argenson and Rouvray; they knocked the Doctor unconscious and threatened the other three at gunpoint, believing them to be agents of the revolutionaries. The pair intended to escape from France and the Terror. The standoff was broken by the arrival of revolutionary soldiers, who besieged the farmhouse. The two conspirators were shot in the struggle, and Ian, Barbara and Susan were captured. The soldiers decided to take them to Paris where their superior, LeMaitre, would decide their fates. The soldiers set fire to the house, not knowing the Doctor was unconscious upstairs.

Susan and Barbara were imprisoned in one cell in the Conciergerie Prison. Ian was thrown into another cell, where he met a fellow English prisoner named Webster. Dying, Webster begged Ian to help him. He was an agent of the British government, sent to warn a spy named James Stirling to return home. Webster told Ian the name of an inn where Stirling's associates gathered.

By a stroke of good fortune, Ian managed to steal the keys from his cell when the jailer was distracted by the sinister LeMaitre, the master of the Conciergerie. He broke out of the jail – but the watchful eye of LeMaitre monitored his escape. LeMaitre suspected that Webster had passed secret intelligence to Ian, so he dispatched guards to follow him. Meanwhile, the Doctor escaped the burning house and made his way to Paris, adopting the identity of an official along the way by visiting a tailor and swapping his clothes for more suitable period garments, then forging a certificate of identity. These precautions, however,

came too late for Susan and Barbara, who were sent to the guillotine. Before they were executed, they were rescued by three other conspirators, Leon, Jules and Jean, who whisked them away to a safe house. They were soon joined by Ian, who was captured when Jules and Jean saw him asking questions near an inn they frequented.

The Doctor arrived at the jail and learned that all his companions had escaped. Meeting LeMaitre, he was forced to accompany the master of the jail to a meeting with Robespierre of the Committee for Public Safety – the architect of the Reign of Terror. The Doctor posed as a deputy from a rural province, and discussed the political situation so adroitly that Robespierre insisted he return the next day for another consultation. LeMaitre arranged for the Doctor to stay overnight in the prison. That night, the tailor contacted LeMaitre and denounced the Doctor as a spy and traitor. LeMaitre took the tailor's evidence, but did not immediately arrest the Doctor.

Susan fell ill, so Barbara took her to a physician. The physician betrayed them, and called the guards. They were brought back to the prison and reunited with the Doctor. After a brief exchange of greetings and information, the Doctor tricked the guards into freeing Barbara.

Ian, too, fell victim to treachery. He suspected Leon might be the mysterious Stirling, so arranged to meet with him at a disused church. However, Leon was actually a spy for the revolution, and he arrested Ian to interrogate him. Jules arrived and rescued Ian, killing the treacherous Leon in the exchange.

With Ian and Barbara both free, the Doctor decided the time had come to leave the prison. He asked LeMaitre to free Susan, but LeMaitre refused and instead blackmailed the Doctor. He knew the Doctor was not a provincial deputy – but he was willing to overlook this deception and free Susan if the Doctor led him to the conspirators.

The Doctor led LeMaitre to the house of Jules Renan, where LeMaitre revealed that he was a friend to the conspirators. In fact, he was the infamous Stirling. He permitted Ian's escape so that Ian could deliver Webster's message without endangering Stirling's secret identity. Now, he was ready to return to England after one last mission. He had learned of a secret meaning between another senior revolutionary, Paul Barras, and a mysterious third party. Stirling wanted the travellers to help him spy on this meeting.



They travelled to an inn called the Sinking Ship and lay in wait for Barras. There, they watched as Barras met with none other than Napoleon Bonaparte. The pair had laid a plan to overthrow Robespierre, and had already put it into operation. The Doctor realised that Susan was in terrible danger – Bonaparte’s scheme would throw Paris into chaos, and Susan was still lying sick in the Conciergerie.

He rushed back to Paris, bluffed his way into the prison, and rescued Susan just as Barras’ agents arrested Robespierre. The Doctor claimed to be an agent of Napoleon, and that he had killed LeMaitre. He bullied the jailer into freeing Susan, then they fled back to the TARDIS as the Reign of Terror came to an end, and the stage was set for the rise of Napoleon.

◉ RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

This whole adventure can be blamed on the unreliability of the Doctor’s rickety old Type 40 TARDIS. Not only does it land nearly 200 years and hundreds of miles off course, it also cannot tell when or where it is, forcing the travellers to leave the safety of the ship and look around. If the location systems worked correctly, then the Doctor could have just looked at the readout and said “*oops, off course. I’ll try again*”. Keeping the TARDIS faulty, unreliable and unpredictable makes time travel feel much more dangerous and disturbing.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

We could give you a potted history of the French Revolution right here, but you’ve got history books and the internet, and it’s not hard to look details up. Running any historical game requires a bit of research. Before you start researching, though, write down the four or five things that you immediately think of when someone mentions that time period.

For the French Revolution, it might be:

- The guillotine
- The Bastille prison
- “Let them eat cake”
- The cult of reason
- Napoleon
- The Scarlet Pimpernel

Then try to get as many of these ideas into your adventure as possible. Treat history like a theme park ride. Boil it down into clichés! Part of the fun of time travel is living out those familiar ideas. Just like everyone goes to the Empire State Building when they visit New York for the first time, everyone should get involved in a shootout at high noon the first time they visit the Wild West, or get to warn Caesar to beware the Ides of March if they go to Ancient Rome.

SPLITTING UP

The travellers spend most of *Reign of Terror* scattered. The Doctor gets left behind in a burning farmhouse, Ian is put into a separate cell to Barbara and Susan, and then Susan falls ill and ends up stuck in the prison. The action of the adventure follows multiple separate threads. In a roleplaying game, following this structure means that some of the players will be side-lined for parts of the adventure – the Doctor’s player has nothing to do while the spotlight is on Barbara and Susan.

If you take this approach, try one of the following options:

- **Rapid Cutting:** Switch back and forth between scenes rapidly. Intercut, say, the Doctor climbing out of the burning farmhouse with Barbara being interrogated in prison. Never leave a player out

WHY DO YOU INVESTIGATE?

Sometimes, players may be unwilling to get involved in an adventure. Ian’s player might say “*No, Doctor, this isn’t our time. You said you’d bring us there – try again!*”, skipping the whole adventure that the Gamemaster has planned. There are three ways to deal with this.

First, and this is the best option in most cases, is to ask the players why their characters get involved. Get the players to look at their Personal Goals and other reasons for travelling. Barbara, for example, wanted to stop human sacrifice in

The Aztecs. The Reign of Terror is the Doctor’s favourite period in Earth history, so he might want to pop out for a quick tour while he’s here.

Second, if that isn’t enough, you can always push the players with Bad Traits (like *Insatiable Curiosity*) or a bribe of a Story Point or two.

Finally, there’s always the option of having the TARDIS break down and need repairs (and that means supplies, like fresh mercury for the fluid links). Where possible, though, have the players drive the action instead of sending them on a quest to fetch something.



of the game for more than a few minutes. This style keeps everyone involved, but it's exhausting for the GM and can be confusing for the players.

- **Temporary NPCs:** Give the side-lined player a temporary character to play with. The Doctor's player could also play one of the conspirators like Jules Renan, while Susan's player could take on the role of the jailer in the Doctor's scenes. The Gamemaster should write up some brief notes on these temporary characters for the players (two or three bullet points is plenty – who are they, what they want, what they can do). You don't need to bother with character sheets for such minor characters.
- **You're The Audience:** Some players are willing to watch other people play. It's ok to treat a roleplaying game as passive entertainment once in a while – the Doctor's player can just watch while the attention is on the other characters.
- **Story Point Interference:** Of course, even the audience can affect the course of a story. Players who aren't in a scene can still spend Story Points to change the story (or even suggest bad things and plot twists that might happen to the other characters. Make sure to reward the players for making each other's lives more... interesting).

ESCAPING FROM PRISON

The Doctor and especially his companions spend a lot of time in prison (although River Song probably wins the award for 'most time spent behind bars'). They get captured, thrown in prison, they learn vital bits of plot, and then they escape again. Getting locked-up is a time-honoured tradition, and it's a

lot less painful than getting shot and killed, which is the other likely result of being captured by enemies. With that in mind, below is the all-purpose Random Prison Table! Roll on any of the three columns for inspiration.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

- **Changing Time:** As they left in the TARDIS, Ian wondered what would have happened if he'd written a letter to Napoleon. Susan insists that *"it wouldn't have made any difference, Ian. He'd have forgotten it, or lost it, or thought it was written by a maniac"*. What if she was wrong? Maybe Ian did write such a letter while in his cell, in the hopes of averting war between France and England, and the scheme backfires – Napoleon is not a man of small ambition, and once he knows that time machines exist, he would stop at nothing to possess one.
- **The Doctor's Ring:** The Doctor bargains his ring away to buy clothes. He gets it back later when LeMaistre blackmails him, but what did the tailor do with it in the meantime? Could it have had some strange effects on the tailor or on those around him?
- **His Favourite Period in Earth History:** For that matter, why is the French Revolution the Doctor's favourite period in Earth history? What fascinates him about this bloody reign of terror? Does it remind him of why he left Gallifrey, with a cult of reason and misguided bureaucrat presiding over horrors? Time travellers searching for the Doctor could try looking for him here – or lay a trap for him. Perhaps it's time for the Doctor to face Madame Guillotine again...

ROLL	IMPRISON THEM...!	WHILE THERE, YOU...	ESCAPE WHEN...
1	... we will interrogate them later!	... overhear guards talking about the bad guy's plot.	... you're being transferred to another cell.
2	... and use them as hostages.	... are interrogated and learn vital clues.	... the world's dumbest guards are assigned to your cell.
3	... we don't kill people needlessly.	... see something out of the prison window.	... there's an explosion outside.
4	... and prepare the experiments!	... meet another prisoner who confides in you.	... one of the other prisoners shows you a way out.
5	... because one of them fascinates me.	... sneak around the place after escaping.	... you trick the jailers into letting you go.
6	... along with the rest of the prisoners, because they are all clearly in league.	... are infected/experimented upon/ altered in some way that's a vital clue for the other player characters.	... they let you escape.