



## Doctor Who: Cat's Cradle-Warhead

*Andrew Cartmel*

[Download now](#)

[Read Online ➔](#)

# Doctor Who: Cat's Cradle-Warhead

*Andrew Cartmel*

**Doctor Who: Cat's Cradle-Warhead** Andrew Cartmel

**The place is Earth. The time is the near future - all too near.**

Industrial development has accelerated out of all control, spawning dangerous new technologies and laying the planet to waste. While the inner cities collapse in guerrilla warfare, a dark age of superstition dawns.

As destruction of the environment reaches the point of no return, multinational corporations and super-rich individuals unite in a last desperate effort - not to save humankind, but to buy themselves immortality in a poisoned world.

If Earth is to survive, somebody has to stop them. From London to New York to Turkey, Ace follows the Doctor as he prepares, finally, to strike back.

## Doctor Who: Cat's Cradle-Warhead Details

Date : Published April 16th 1992 by Virgin Publishing

ISBN : 9780426203674

Author : Andrew Cartmel

Format : Mass Market Paperback 262 pages

Genre : Media Tie In, Doctor Who, Science Fiction, Fiction, Science Fiction Fantasy, Cyberpunk

 [Download Doctor Who: Cat's Cradle-Warhead ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Doctor Who: Cat's Cradle-Warhead ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Doctor Who: Cat's Cradle-Warhead Andrew Cartmel**

---

## From Reader Review Doctor Who: Cat's Cradle-Warhead for online ebook

### Sammy says

A reasonable novel, and certainly an improvement on the clunky "Time's Cradle". Cartmel was well known for his "masterplan" during the last years of the TV series, wanting the Doctor to become more of a malevolent and conspiratorial figure, and - while we don't see a lot of the Time Lord in this book - that characterisation comes through. Overall, the prose is more mature (although still fairly B-Grade) and, while there are probably two too many characters for them all to work as well as he would like, the plot flows along very nicely. My favourite part is undoubtedly Ace's trip to Turkey. It lacks much dialogue - which hasn't been the strongest part of any of the 6 books in the series to date - but creates a true sense of character around this young woman.

It helps, I think, that I didn't grow up with "Doctor Who". Many traditionalists vehemently dislike this type of darker narrative, and I can appreciate that on one level; the series often had a light, quirkier air to it, and I certainly think it's a shame that hasn't really shone through yet. At the same time, I found most of the characters - particularly wacky ol' Sylvester McCoy and his explosive-toting, slang-garbling Ace, to be a little bit too children's-fiction to ever really come into their own on television. Overall, I'm glad to see the series going down this path. If these were going to be children's books, what would be the point?

And yet, at the same time, this is a Doctor who leaves people to die - or even be murdered - because of their past actions. While I think that Ace's development follows on very logically from the TV series, this is an interpretation of the Doctor that the series can't come back from. We'll certainly see elements of this in later Doctors (and the series will deal with them in the fullness of time) so I'm keeping an open mind as I continue on with the series.

---

### Michael Holloway says

This is a wonderful book.

But it is not a Doctor Who book. The characterisation, the tone, the structure are decidedly not Doctor Who; you could change the names of the Doctor and Ace, and it would not make any material difference.

It was still a fun read though.

---

### David Sarkies says

#### Doctor Who gets environmental and anti-corporate

26 February 2012

Well, this is the second of the Cat's Cradle trilogy, and I have only vague memories of what actually tied these novels together. The Timewyrm series were tied together with the Timewyrm (and ended up being cyclical with the end of the series coinciding with the beginning) and I suspected that these were tied

together as well but I simply cannot remember what the relevance of the Cat's Cradle was (and I suspect that it has nothing to do with the book of the same name by Kurt Vonnegut).

This book is set in the near future where everything goes to hell in regards to Earth. It is very dark and gritty and in a way different to what a lot of fans would normally expect from Doctor Who. Many of the episodes are very light hearted, high-science fiction with the occasional commentary, but in general it was mostly for entertainment purposes. In fact, I found it difficult to see if there was really any indepth commentary within any of the Doctor Who stories of the past. However, come the novels, this begins to change.

Environmentalism is something that I care about. While there is a debate over the legitimacy of global warming, this debate seems to push a lot of the other issues to the background, such as poisoning the air and water supplies. I have known people who go out of their way to bombard us with anti-global warming propaganda, however refuse to listen to any other aspect of the argument. Me, I try to steer away from the global warming debate as there are other, more serious, things that we need to confront and I will go over some of them briefly (at least to the extent that they relate to this book).

One I have mentioned about is of particular concern to me and that is poisoning the air and water supplies. It is a proven fact that toxic chemicals that are pumped into the atmosphere do not bode well for people living in the proximity of the factory. In fact, in a lot of cases (but not all), toxic chemicals do not rise, but they fall. Take mustard gas for instance. The most dangerous aspect of mustard gas during World War I was that it was heavier than air, so it will fall into craters and trenches where people would be sheltering. This is not taking into account the amount of damage it would do to one's respiratory system.

The poisoning of water supplies is also a serious concern. Just like pumping toxic smoke into the atmosphere, dumping toxic chemicals into the rivers, or even on the ground where it can sink and become mixed with the ground water, is just as, or more, damaging. We need both air and water to survive, but whereas toxic air can slowly kill us (and it is interesting to note the rise in cancer throughout the 20th Century) toxic water can be even worse. Consider what will happen if all of our water supplies become poisoned. All of the sudden, not only will we have nothing to drink, but we will also have great difficulties growing things.

This is where the rise of the mega-corporations come into play. There is only one thing that they care about and that is profit. If it is too expensive to properly dispose of waste, then they automatically go the cheaper way. Sure enough wealthy people can get around the problem of poisoned water, but those of us who are stuck on limited wages simply get stuffed around. Where as in the past (I remember) we could easily, and cheaply, get our hands on clean drinking water, that has changed a lot. I remember a time when the corner store did not stock drinking water in their fridges, but as our natural water supplies become more toxic, bottled water becomes more popular, and in the end it could be argued that it is more beneficial for corporations to poison natural water supplies as it means that they can then charge more for clean, drinkable, bottled water (unless, of course, you have a water tank, like my parents).

---

## **Don says**

I still can't believe I'm giving five stars to a Doctor Who novel, of all things. After the last DW I read, I figured I was done with such dreck. And yet here we are...!

For one thing, unlike the previous entry, this one avoids all of the schlocky things I dislike about sci-fi, and Doctor Who in particular. There's no fan-wankery about Gallifrey, the origins of the Time Lords, or any of that twaddle. It's also not a space romp about fighting space aliens in big space battles, full of sound and fury but wholly unrelated.

Instead, this is a Doctor Who novel in which the Doctor appears only occasionally - and the story is far better

for it. The Seventh Doctor was increasingly conceived as a master manipulator (seeds of which have carried over into the recent incarnations), always with good intentions and a mind-boggling scope, yet disturbingly at ease with the idea of moving everyone around as chess pieces in order to bring about his intended effect. A force for good, yes, but a frightening one. (Accordingly, the book is split into sections - the first of which, "Assembly", takes up the bulk, while the brief latter part, "Detonation", shows the culmination of his plans.)

Mostly, though, what impressed me about this novel above all else was what it taught me about plotting. As mentioned, the Doctor only rarely appears. Instead, the early movements were somewhat shocking by having each chapter introduce a new character and follow them around in the part they had to play (which might or might not include meeting the Doctor), until their story met their conclusion. The next chapter would then introduce ANOTHER new character, follow them on their small story, and do the same. These early chapters were thus almost a set of linked short stories - except that you absolutely see the larger story emerging from their movements when taken as a whole. Honestly, when Ace finally took over the story a few chapters later, and claimed the narrative for the next sixty-something pages, it was almost disappointing (but only briefly).

With its near-future setting, and commentary on the dangers of both unchecked technology and increased centralization, it's a novel that absolutely speaks to the fears of our times (as the best sci-fi novels should). And the innovative approach to plot prevents one from ever getting bored with one character or viewpoint for much too long. All in all, it was certainly the most engaging Doctor Who novel I've read to date, and - to my great shock - one of the best sci-fi novels I've read in a long, long time.

---

### **C S says**

The manipulations of the shadowy Doctor lead to the downfall of an Orwellian corporation in this dystopic, gritty page-turner.

---

### **Brendon Schrodinger says**

It's probably been more than a decade since I have read this novel and while I could give a simple review on the book there are two aspects that I am really surprised about which come from a further 20 or so years of Doctor Who history after this publication.

This book is a statement about where Doctor Who was in the early nineties and it is very different from what had been Doctor Who before and what it has been since. Firstly it should be mentioned that this is penned by the former script editor for the final three series of Classic Who. Cartmel had certainly started to show his vision in the TV show, dragging it from a mid 80's fluffy glamfest into a more sophisticated but darker direction. The Doctor was mysterious again. And while he was cold and manipulative, he was still the Doctor. Sure there was a lot of angst and sometimes it was blatantly trying to be edgy to be edgy, but it was a new direction that showcased the Doctor in a new light; and that is what Doctor Who has always been about.

So the book carries on with Cartmel's vision of a dark Doctor, playing chess in the background while Ace becomes more of a soldier. And I enjoyed this direction back in the day being a teen and having the right mindset for this work, but even all these years later I still enjoyed this work. It is so a product of its time, and it could work with no other Doctor, but it works oh so well here.

Ace is fabulous and she is more hardened and more of a warrior. She is a lot more independent and a major section of the book consists of Ace on a mission in Turkey dealing with black market contacts and hiring of goons.

he Doctor is the Seventh Doctor in that you never see him and when you do he pops up with his face half in shadow saying enigmatic things.

But the writing is great. The story keeps you going and interested, it's far from your usual Doctor Who adventure, and the descriptions of the setting and characters are wonderful. I really did enjoy near future Turkey and felt like I was there.

This is a very niche read that not everyone will enjoy. Fans of the new Who won't recognise it and hate the Doctor, fans of the classic who will also think it is strange. But fans of Season 25 and 26 of classic Who will adore it. It was a great trip down memory lane for me and I was surprised how well it has withstood the test of time and how good quality the writing is.

---

### **Peer Lenné says**

Cartmel hat zwar einen ausschweifenden, aber dennoch angenehmen Schreibstil, so dass das Lesen dieses Romans ansich eigentlich sehr angenehm war. Er hat sich die vor allem in den späten Achzigern und frühen Neunzigern beliebten, heute fast (zurecht) vergessenen dystopischen Romane zum Vorbild genommen, in denen die Geschichte oft aus der Sicht von Nebenfiguren erzählt wird, um den Leser näher in die Emotion der Handlung zu bringen. Das ist Cartmel aber nur sehr eingeschränkt gelungen, was vor allem daran liegt, dass er so sehr darauf versessen war, den Doctor als Strippenzieher des Geschehens darzustellen, dass er dabei scheinbar vergaß, eine Umgebung zu schaffen, die dem Leser vertraut erscheint. Dadurch fällt es schwer, sich mit den Protagonisten zu identifizieren und sich von der Handlung, welche zugegeben dreimal in einen Fingerhut passsen würde, mitreißen zu lassen.

Warhead ist kein schlechtes Buch, aber einfach viel zu lang und für den weiteren Verlauf der Reihe (scheinbar) irrelevant. Cartmel gelingt es hier zwar hervorragend den Doctor als Enigma darzustellen, aber das ganze hätte als Kurzgeschichte vielleicht sehr viel besser funktioniert.

---

### **Shane says**

Certainly the best NA I've read so far. Characterising the 7th Doctor as the manipulator and using the ferocity of Ace to great effect. Their felt a certain disjointedness throughout the book as it went from character to character, plot to action, however the setting was bold for Doctor Who and after a few rather bad NAs this one was welcome.

---

### **Scurra says**

Andrew Cartmel was the last script editor of "old" Doctor Who (the version of the show that ran from 1963 - 1989.) During his time in charge, the show began to introduce elements that would today be called "story arc", although this was still a pretty new concept in SF television. I note this because it is an important part

of understanding why I felt Warhead was less successful than Time's Crucible in defining the Seventh Doctor as he would mostly appear in the NAs.

Cartmel had posited that the Doctor was "more than just a Time Lord", albeit without quite explaining what this meant; it was something that he intended to explore in the series except that it was cancelled.

And it becomes clear in Warhead that he wasn't entirely sure himself. He gives us an excellent portrait of the manipulative Doctor who appears to gamble whilst always stacking the deck, but he doesn't quite deliver on what he promises - although he does set in motion some things that are clearly intended to be paid off in future books, which feels good.

However, he's not a particularly great writer - although after two highly "literary" entries in the NA series, it's refreshing to have a more straight-forward narrative in a much more comprehensible setting (one that still feels prescient, even today.)

The story isn't anything like as involving as it should be, and I think that Ace is particularly badly treated with some inconsistent characterisation that makes her look stupid at times.

Next up: Cat's Cradle: Witch Mark

---

### **Leo H says**

Books like this make me annoyed at the 5 star rating system, because it's better than 3 stars but not quite 4 stars. Probably my favourite of the New Adventures I've read so far, it's a part cyberpunk, part Weird Teens with Psychic Powers, part corporate espionage thing that manages to humanise its characters in a way that is very prescient in comparison with New Dr Who.

A couple of things I didn't like, firstly there's a fairly creepy bit where Ace is naked after having just got out of a shower and a teenage boy having just got out of a coma feels her up, which is just... not necessary at all. Secondly, it's mentioned a couple of times throughout the book that the big evil corporation who the Doctor and Ace are fighting are literally killing poor people and harvesting their organs to give to rich people to combat the deadly pollution that covers the world, and the Doctor doesn't seem bothered about this at all? He fights them because they're taking people minds and putting them in computers, which is bad I guess, but the harvesting the poor thing seems a whole lot worse, y'know? Perhaps it's just me.

---

### **Alex says**

If Cartmel's plotting were as assured as his prose then we'd have a winner here. Doctor Who books shouldn't be so eloquently written surely? But then, they also shouldn't be so laborious either. Too much time is given over to intricate character and plot setups that ultimately drift away into nothingness and this novel becomes all anticipation with no payoff, the apparent detonation of the Warhead that the Doctor takes 160 pages to assemble is more of an indoor firework.

True, I never really worked out what was going on, or more specifically, I couldn't really understand why this particular disparate bunch of elements were being drawn together in this particular way. What I

determined was that a head of an evil corporate conglomerate wanted to save his rich customers - for whom he's already supplying body parts - from eventual death by world pollution by transferring their consciousness into a computer. The Doctor has a plan to stop him which involves a couple of Stephen King-esque kid's with telepathic/telekinetic powers that cause major explosions when emotions run high. Quite how the Doctor's machinations get us to the point of detonation is anybody's guess really but it involves cleaning ladies, computer hackers, arms dealers in Turkey and a couple of extended action sequences. Pretty cool in theory, but not so rip-roaring in execution - although those action scenes are lovingly written with lavish detail it must be noted.

But what does any of it actually has to do with a show called Dr. Who? The actual Doctor seen at times throughout this book doesn't bear a lot of relation to any character I've seen on the TV screen, this guy apparently like manipulating people in ways that The Doctor, noble pacifist that he is, probably wouldn't be interested in. He also seems to have a peculiar, inconsistent morality. He also has a plan that's far more complicated than hacking into the computer and causing it to shut down of its own accord. Or planting an actual real bomb, when it comes down to it

There's a nice cyberpunk feel to this book though and had it been thought and worked through a little more thoroughly from a narrative perspective this could have been an intriguing standalone novel for Cartmel rather than a franchise tie in. It's still an intriguing book and I'm still applauding Virgin's bold decision to publish books that the obvious Dr. Who audience wouldn't have been expecting. I just remain disappointed that they continue to be more ambitious in concept than the writers are capable of pulling off.

---

### **Cameron says**

While I enjoyed the world building, portrayal of the Doctor and social political climate, I just found this novel rather boring. I think the main problem is that Andrew Cartmel spends a lot of time setting up this novel. However, it's too much set up.

I found myself halfway through the novel and still it felt like it was setting up a grander story. I wanted to see the characters deal with the problems presented rather than being kept in the dark about them.

---

### **Chris says**

More so than any of the prior books, this probably sets up a lot of what many the VNAs would be. A dystopian future, a large array of disparate characters and The Doctor as a mysterious outsider manipulating events. These elements are probably the most interesting part (in particular the world building is quite solid if very early 90s cyberpunk).

There are however two major problems I have with this again:

First is the style but it is the total opposite problem to Time's Crucible. Whilst that long descriptions and musings but little incident. This is nothing but incident. It jumps between different scenes around where and describes in the most straightforward way possible what is happening, there are just pages with almost no dialogue or adjectives at all. As such it ends up being a rather flat reading experience.

The other is that is quite a bit of casual racism peppered throughout this. I would almost wonder if there was some point being made but lacking a narrative conceit and the fact that this occurs in others of his novels, I think it is just a blind spot.

It does do a number of interesting things and is very important setup for what comes later, but comes in the bottom half of the first six for me.

---

### **Joe Cooper says**

Inheriting the dark visions of a crumbling Britain from Nigel Kneale's 1979 Quatermass swansong, later to be ferried into the uneasy authenticity of Alfonso Cuaron's Children of Men by some kind of unspoken and nebulous tradition of whimpering Armageddon peculiar to the British and their fans, this Doctor Who book easily joins the procession as one of its, albeit less known, landmarks (in my opinion, which counts for little). A very local kind of cyberpunk is at work here. It's refreshing to see these Gibsonian ideas through the lens of someone who's no less Canadian, but altogether British in his worldview (I mean, check out his run as Who script editor... Perivale?! Doctor Who meets Sunday afternoon in Thurrock, circa 1991). Mr Cartmel easily writes the greatest Who book I have ever read.

---

### **Glenn says**

The New Adventures still continue to fascinate me to no end. And this story really brings to light the approach and direction in which the series was taking the Doctor.

Written by Andrew Cartmel, the script editor on DW as the classic series wound to an end, this book shines some light on what he wanted the Doctor to be, molding him into a darker, manipulative and more mysterious character.

And the direction that Ace's character would have taken as a soldier/warrior and more independent woman is never more obvious of Cartmel's intentions as it is here.

Superb storytelling from beginning to end.

The story does slowly set up the pieces by introducing an abundance of players, but spins each one into an important part of the narrative.

There are some interesting subtexts as well and how they parallel our own society and the direction it's taking, even having been written some 20 years ago.

An enjoyable novel through and through.

A warning to new Who fans, however. This story, as with others in the NA series, is a different approach to what has come from the television series since Season 26 of the classic era. It is not, perhaps, to the liking of those new to the DW universe.

---