


# THE EYE SHIELD



Issue 61

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## MESSAGE FROM ME

Greetings, fellow denizens of Knightmare Land, and welcome to Issue 61 of The Eye Shield! As we enter the second decade of the twenty-first century, and wonder how it can possibly be ten years since we were all worrying about the Millennium Bug and impending Armageddon, The Eye Shield is here as ever to bring you yet more Knightmare delights.

I have been busy at the keyboard as usual to bring you all your regular favourites, as well as another random but interesting moment in *Multiple Character Appearances*. Rosey shares with us her *Top Ten Films*, while Gehn "Lex" Luthor takes us by the hand and leads us down Memory Lane once more in the latest instalment of *When We Were Very Young*.

Special thanks go out to Ricky Temple, who has been providing my humble fanzine with a great deal of fantastic material lately. This issue is all but overflowing with Ricky goodness, including the seventh chapter of the gripping tale *For Dungeon and Dungeon Master*, the second instalment of *Kids' TV Shows I Didn't Grow Up With... But now enjoy!* and a teaser trailer for the brand-new questing season in *Adventure Time*, which Ricky is co-writing with fellow *Fire & Ice* scribe Andy Marshall. Thanks a million, guys - I'll soon be returning the favour!

You may have noticed that the subject of this issue's *Remember Him?* has been examined before - yes, Mogdred was the star of the very first instalment of this feature, way back in the mists of time in December 1995. The reason for this is that I have finally run out of fresh characters to include in this feature, so I have decided to add to the information that Paul McIntosh provided in the early issues by publishing my own thoughts about the characters he reviewed. I have not, however, redone the scores out of ten, as there is really no need to. *Remember This?* will be receiving the same treatment in a couple of issues' time.

Don't forget to visit [www.kmramdram.co.uk](http://www.kmramdram.co.uk) to download the enthralling episode commentaries of Jake "Eyeshield" Collins, Martin "HStorm" Odoni, Rosey Collins, Andy Marshall and Alastair Payne, as well as all the fantastic audio plays!

Jim Waterman discusses the somewhat one-sided commercial rivalry between Ah Wok and Julius Scaramonger.

Might there have been a hidden subtext here? Might one of the producers have been trying to hint that British manufacturing was being swamped by a torrent of cheap imports from China? I'm well aware that there were a fair few political subtexts in Knightmare that the parents might have locked onto if they'd been watching as well, such as Bumptious and the striking miners of the early 1980s, and the alleged Maldame/Thatcher connection – although I never really saw the similarity between the two; I just thought Maldame was an utter bitch!

*I never realised that Knightmare was so political, but it seems that Spitting Image was a satirical wasteland in comparison!*

## KNIGHTMARE QI

I am now quite keen to relaunch this feature, but thanks to the dwindling interest it received previously, I am looking for at least four people to sign up for the next round before I reveal the questions. There is no limit to how many people can sign up, but I don't think it would really be worth doing with less than four. I have been making a few tweaks to the rules – as I discovered before, it is not easy to run Knightmare QI with a set of rules that everyone completely approves of, so if you don't like any of the conditions listed below, please do not sign up! If you do want to take part in a round of Knightmare QI under these circumstances, please drop an e-mail to [eyeshield2002@hotmail.com](mailto:eyeshield2002@hotmail.com) between now and **Sunday February 14<sup>th</sup> 2010** telling me so.

**1) Each round contains ten questions. There is a maximum score of four points for each question – one point for providing a correct answer and up to three bonus points for any Quite Interesting supplementary information you may be able to think of.**

**2) Any question written in red will have a cliché – give this cliché as your answer and you will lose ten points. The full quota of three QI bonus points will only be available for cliché questions when the cliché is identified as part of the QI information.**

**3) Time bonus points will be awarded to the first three entries I receive. The first entry will earn one time bonus point for every three points scored, i.e. a score of 15 would be increased by five points to 20. The second entry will earn one time bonus point for every five points scored, i.e. a score of 20 would be increased by four points to 24. The third entry will earn one time bonus point for**

every ten points scored, i.e. a score of 30 would be increased by three points to 33.

4) There will be a time limit of three weeks to get your answers in. Any questions that remain unanswered after three weeks will incur a penalty of five points each, therefore if you do not submit any answers at all then you will score -50.

5) Nightmare QI will only be relaunched if four or more people agree to sign up for the next round. By signing up for one round you are not committing to any further rounds, but you are more than welcome to enter as many rounds as you like!

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## MULTIPLE CHARACTER APPEARANCES

Not long ago, I was recording a commentary track for the fifth episode of series 3 and I mentioned the fact that it's the only episode in this series that doesn't feature Natasha Pope, who appears in all fifteen of the remaining episodes - seven as Velda, six as Brangwen and two as Morghanna. This led me to realise that Natasha Pope is one of the few Nightmare actors never to have played two or more different characters in one episode, and I speculated that only two or three other actors (apart from the obvious exceptions of Hugo Myatt, David Learner and Jackie Sawiris) would fit into this select group.

As you may have guessed, I quickly did a bit of investigation and I discovered that my prediction was pretty much bang on the money. Below you will see a table listing every credited Nightmare actor, along with details of the first episode (sometimes of only one or two) in which that particular actor played multiple parts. Actors listed in **blue** only ever played one character, and therefore never had the chance to appear as two or more characters in one episode, but actors listed in **red** did play two or more roles in the series, but never in the same episode.

Actor	Episode	Character #1	Character #2	Character #3
<b>Hugo Myatt</b>	<b>N/A</b>			

Clifford Barry	701	Lissard	Raptor	
Rayner Bourton	504	Skarkill	Julius S.	
Bill Cashmore	804	Bartram	S-Jack	
Michael Cule	402	Fatilla	Doorkis	B. Mace
Edmund Dehn	201	Gumboil	Igneous	
Anthony Donovan	702	Grimaldine	Brollachan	
Erin Geraghty	N/A			
Juliet Henry-Massy	508	Gwendoline	Aesandre	
Stephanie Hesp	506	Pixel	Elita	
Joanne Heywood	N/A			
Audrey Jenkinson	206	Gretel	Oracle	
Jacquelin Joyce	710	Marta	Romahna	
Tom Karol	N/A			
Iona Kennedy	602	Sidriss	Greystagg	
Mark Knight	505	Sir Hugh	Lord Fear	
David Learner	N/A			
Zoe Loftin	304	Mellisandre	Oracle	
Mary Miller	201	Mildread	Lillith	
Adrian Neil	N/A			
Clifford Norgate	315	Owen	Hordriss	
Samantha Perkins	408	Malice	Gundrada	
Natasha Pope	N/A			
Jackie Sawiris	N/A			
Guy Standeven	102	Granitas	Olgarth	
Paul Valentine	412	Motley	Ferryman	
David Verrey	303	McGrew	Golgarach	
Lawrence Werber	103	Cedric	Casper	
Alec Westwood	104	Gibbet	Folly	
John Woodnutt	203	Mogdred	Merlin	

## REMEMBER THIS?

Series 7. Level 2.

**THE RIFT OF ANGAR**

This great rift valley - situated between the towering peaks of a green mountain range - was the entrance to level two in series 7. Unlike much of the Dungeon in this series, the environs of the Rift of Angar were created using fairly primitive Virtual Reality techniques, one of the first signs that the programme was moving away from using digitised photographs of real locations and back towards creating the Dungeon rooms on computers from scratch. This technique was continued in this series with the introduction of Goth in level three, before the entire Dungeon became computer-generated in series 8.

As Smirkenorff was the only means of travel to the second level in series 7, the Rift of Angar was the first CG location to feature in a flight sequence. The first time the Rift is seen, Treguard describes it as "*a very dangerous place*" and it seems to be implied that dungeoneer Simon has made a grave mistake when he asks Smirkenorff to land in the valley, but in all subsequent quests Treguard and Majida readily describe the Rift of Angar as the one and only entrance to level two, and Smirkenorff always lands there as a matter of course.

The first challenge in level two was always to enter a doorway in the mountains after Smirkenorff had landed in the valley, a task that was sometimes made harder than it might have been by the presence of trolls - which had apparently overrun the area - or (in the case of Nicola's quest) by Hordriss and Grimaldine throwing fireballs at each other across the path. On several other occasions, the Rift played host to a spyglass, and once (during Naila's quest) it even served as the clue room for level two.

I don't really have any strong feelings about the Rift of Angar. I suppose it served as quite an atmospheric opening to the second level, and it was certainly a precursor to the whole style of series 8... and that's all there is to say about it, really!

**Difficulty:** 7 Plenty of hazards to dodge...

**Killer Instinct:** 1 Unlikely that anyone would have died, though!

**Gore Factor:** 6 It looked like there might be some nice quicksand...

**Fairness:** 8 Things should always start to hot up in level two!

## ADVENTURE TIME

Coming soon...

*"Time starts to turn, the fire begins to burn once more, and soon..."*

*Treguard: Are any of you armchair adventurers bright enough, quick enough and brave enough to tread the path once more?*

*Lord Fear: Bring on your boldest and your best, Dungeon Master. The Opposition is back - bigger, badder, bolder and better equipped, and this time not one of your dungeoneers will get through!*

*"A new age of Nightmare begins!"*

The Dungeon realm has changed, and among the familiar there are new dangers and new foes, new adventures and new allies.

Coming in The Eye Shield Issue 62, March 2010...

### **Adventure Time Season 2: Opposition Rising**

Written by Andy Marshall & Ricky Temple

### **PUZZLE PAGE ONE Nightmare Wipeout III**

Each of the two grids below contains twelve answers, six of which fit into the category at the bottom and six of which don't. Identify all six

correct answers if you can, chalking up cumulative amounts of theoretical money as you go (£10 for the first answer, £20 for the second, £30 for the third etc) up to a possible £210 for each grid, but just remember this - one wrong answer will wipe you out completely, so be careful!

<b>Giant</b>	<b>Casper</b>	<b>Granitas</b>	<b>Folly</b>
<b>Olaf</b>	<b>Merlin</b>	<b>Lillith</b>	<b>Gibbet</b>
<b>Igneous</b>	<b>Cedric</b>	<b>Troll</b>	<b>Gumboil</b>
<b>CHARACTERS FROM SERIES 1 WHOSE APPEARANCES IN THAT SERIES WERE CONFINED ENTIRELY TO ONE PARTICULAR ROOM</b>			

<b>Merlin</b>	<b>Mogdred</b>	<b>Lillith</b>	<b>Mildread</b>
<b>Igneous</b>	<b>Casper</b>	<b>Olgarth</b>	<b>Dwarf</b>
<b>Olaf</b>	<b>Gumboil</b>	<b>Cedric</b>	<b>Gretel</b>
<b>CHARACTERS FROM SERIES 2 THAT DID NOT APPEAR IN SERIES 1</b>			

## **MY TOP TEN FILMS**

By Rosey Collins

### **10. Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure (1988)**

**Starring:** Keanu Reeves, Alex Winter, George Carlin.

**Sequel:** Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey (1991)

In danger of failing their History class, Bill S. Preston esquire and "Ted"



Theodore Logan are given a helping hand by Rufus, who comes from a future where Bill and Ted's band, Wyld Stallyns, has created world peace through music. Of course this cannot happen if Ted is sent to military school by his father because he fails History, so Rufus lends the boys a phone booth/time machine to do their research. In spite of their bumbling, and then a mad dash to get to school in time to give their report, Bill and Ted manage to persuade several historical figures to accompany them to their own time and appear in their presentation. It may not sound very good, but somehow this film works. It is pure fun and silliness, with no getting caught up in ethics and issues to do with time travel. There is only one moral, which I personally think should be remembered worldwide: "Be excellent to each other."

**Sci-fi/fantasy rating:** 4/5

### **9. Lethal Weapon (1987)**

**Starring:** Mel Gibson, Danny Glover.

**Sequels:** Lethal Weapon 2 (1989), Lethal Weapon 3 (1992), Lethal Weapon 4 (1998)

The cop/buddy movie genre is quite a prolific one, and this film's basic plot is not completely original. Level-headed police officer and family man Roger Murtagh is teamed up with maverick and grieving widower Martin Riggs. Feeling that he has nothing left to live for, Riggs is constantly risking his life to protect innocent people from the misery caused by crime, until he meets Murtagh and is taken into the bosom of his family, where he finds love and acceptance. As a premise, it is rather trite - but a great script and the right balance of action, comedy and emotion, combined with brilliant performances by Gibson and Glover, make this film a true classic.

**Sci-fi/fantasy rating:** 0/5

### **8. Thelma and Louise (1991)**

**Starring:** Geena Davis, Susan Sarandon, Christopher McDonald.

Thelma, living under the thumb of her unpleasant husband Darrel, leaves for a holiday with her best friend Louise. Then when Louise shoots and kills Thelma's would-be rapist, the two women find themselves on the run from the law. This is essentially Thelma's story, as she undertakes a significant personal journey, the turning point for her most definitely being after she has slept with a young and sexy Brad Pitt. The film contains a lot of laughs, a lot of understated emotional moments and a fascinating take on how our relationships shape who we are. It is partly through Brad Pitt's emotional and physical superiority over Darrel, and

largely through her strong and loyal friendship with Louise, that Thelma is able to liberate her true self. All of the performances are marvellous, but I must give a special mention to Christopher McDonald as Darrel, who is brilliant in every part that he plays.

**Sci-fi/fantasy rating:** 0/5

## **7. Ghostbusters (1984)**

**Starring:** Bill Murray, Sigourney Weaver, Dan Aykroyd, Harold Ramis.

**Sequel:** Ghostbusters 2 (1989)

Following the escapades of three scientists as they set up their own ghost extermination business, this is quite simply a funny and very entertaining film. It isn't emotional, it isn't thought-provoking and most of us probably don't have any hopes for the characters once they have achieved their goals within the parameters of the film. For Egon, Ray and Winston (who cannot be counted as a protagonist until he is properly fleshed out in the cartoon *The Real Ghostbusters*), their objective is to save the world from impending apocalypse. Peter Venkman, played brilliantly by Bill Murray, has this same objective, and he also wants to win the affections of Sigourney Weaver's character Dana Barrett. The film is packed with laughs, fun ghost-catching sequences and a little bit of character development - though nothing too heavy. Most fans of the film seem not to like *Ghostbusters 2* very much, but personally I think it's a little funnier and therefore marginally better than the original. The premise does translate very well into a twenty-two-minute cartoon, and the whole *Ghostbusters* franchise - films and cartoons - has been enjoyed by many, and rightly so. We now have a *Ghostbusters 3* on the horizon, and I am extremely cynical about this, but whatever happens it surely cannot take away from the very excellent, original *Ghostbusters*.

**Sci-fi/fantasy rating:** 4/5

## **6. The Wizard of Oz (1939)**

**Starring:** Judy Garland, Frank Morgan, Margaret Hamilton.

Groundbreaking in its time, this most famous adaptation of L. Frank Baum's classic children's story is a sheer delight. Oz itself, though obviously made almost entirely from painted backdrops, is a visual feast - and let us not forget that in its time, the sheer fact that it was in colour was amazing. The script is not entirely faithful to the book, but that hardly matters; the film is a great spectacle with plenty of excitement, great performances by the cast, and musical numbers that always bring a smile to the face (except for one, performed by the Lion in the Emerald City, but let's not go into that). Margaret Hamilton is particularly

memorable as the Wicked Witch of the West, and the little dog - or rather, the little bitch (but you can't tell) - who plays Toto has such fun doing the film, it's worth watching just for that.

**Sci-fi/fantasy rating:** 5/5

#### **5. Little Women (1994)**

**Starring:** Winona Ryder, Christian Bale, Susan Sarandon.

I have long suspected that I would not particularly enjoy the writings of Louisa May Alcott had I discovered them when I was any older than ten, but as it is *Little Women* holds a special place in my heart, and this was the first adaptation of it I ever saw. Comparing it to the book, the only cast member who really captures Alcott's vision is young Kirsten Dunst as Amy, and the atmosphere she created isn't quite there. For something closer to the feel of the book, the 1949 version is better (if you can get over the fact that Beth and Amy swap ages - very annoying!). The 1994 version gives a slightly different take on things, but still tells the story of Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy beautifully in its own way. Winona Ryder is too pretty and much too old for Jo, but she throws herself successfully into the role of a tomboy faced with the prospect of becoming a woman in Victorian times. This, as well as the love that warms the poverty-stricken March family (who only have *one* servant), means that the heart of Alcott's *Little Women* still comes through.

**Sci-fi/fantasy rating:** 0/5

#### **4. Some Like it Hot (1959)**

**Starring:** Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis, Jack Lemmon.

Joe and Gerry, after witnessing a murder, are forced to hide from scary mafia guys by joining a women's jazz band. Posing as Josephine and Daphne (Gerry "never liked the name Geraldine") both men fall for the charms of singer and ukulele player Sugar Cane, played by Marilyn Monroe. I truly believe that a little over half of this film's brilliance is down to Jack Lemmon's performance after he puts on the wig, dress and high heels. The man was clearly a comedy genius, and surely the most gripping and the funniest aspect of the film is Daphne's reluctant romance with elderly millionaire Osgood. But let that not take away from the skilled and funny performance of Tony Curtis, who gets to spend a little more time as a man than Lemmon does, as he disguises himself as a millionaire in order to seduce Sugar aboard Osgood's yacht. Poor Marilyn was having some problems at the time, and you can hear the frustration in the director's voice when he talks about it forty years later, but the material she eventually managed to give is quite up to standard. The film

is very dated, especially in terms of gender dynamics - it could not have been made more than about ten years later - and yet it's still as fresh and as funny as it ever was.

**Sci-fi/fantasy rating:** 0/5

### **3. The Iron Giant (1999)**

**Starring:** Eli Marienthal, Jennifer Aniston, Christopher McDonald.

As far as I can remember, Ted Hughes's novel *The Iron Man* is very unlike this feature length animated adaptation, although I admit the book didn't really stay with me after I'd read it. This film, however, will be forever etched into my heart and mind. Set in small town America during the Cold War, it follows the relationship between young protagonist Hogarth Hughes and the giant robot he discovers after it interrupts his movie by eating the television aerial (or "TV antenna"). Eli Marienthal stars as Hogarth, and beautifully carries the film, helped along the way by a well chosen supporting cast. Christopher McDonald is always a delight to watch, or in this case listen to as the narrow-minded military agent determined to destroy the gentle and sweet-natured iron giant that he assumes is a threat. This film is an emotional rollercoaster, suffused with clever and well executed satire exploring prejudice, the Cold War and the general attitude of certain members of the US military. In under an hour and a half it made me think, laugh and - I admit it - cry. No one is more deserving of a happily ever after than Hogarth and the Iron Giant, and I was rooting for them.

**Sci-fi/fantasy rating:** 3/5

### **2. Watership Down (1978)**

**Starring:** John Hurt, Richard Briers, Michael Graham Cox.

I can't have been more than about eight when the boy who lived six doors down the road, knowing that I liked animals, handed me a novel and a VHS and said he thought I'd like them. *Watership Down* the book, by Richard Adams, was a little too heavy for me to read at the time, so I started by watching the film. Some small children may have been traumatised, but I found the hyper-violent rabbits and the somewhat demented seagull to be a sheer delight. The film has a dull and grainy look about it, and rather a grim feel to it as well, but there is more to it than just doom and gloom. As well as revelling in the suspense and the violence, I enjoyed getting to know the characters as I watched the film over and over again. To this day the three rabbit heroes, Hazel, Fiver and Bigwig, remain close to my heart, and you will never see a scarier bunny than General Woundwort. Since then, I have read the book a number of times, and realise what a

true adaptation this film is - albeit a very condensed version of the story. The multifaceted characters and the atmosphere created in Adams's brilliant writing translate beautifully to the screen. (Well, okay, they translate rather disturbingly yet effectively to the screen.) Now a quick tip: do not eat a jam sandwich whilst watching this film. The colours used to denote two fighting rabbits, both torn and bloody and foaming at the mouth, may just put you off butter, jam and wholemeal bread for a time. They certainly did me!

**Sci-fi/fantasy rating:** 1/5

### 1. *Psycho* (1960)

**Starring:** Anthony Perkins, Janet Leigh, Vera Miles.

**Sequels:** *Psycho 2* (1982), *Psycho 3* (1986), *Psycho 4: The Beginning* (1990)

Watching this film now, it is hard to imagine that it once scared somebody so much that she had to be carried out of the cinema on a stretcher. Most of us nowadays are not so easily disturbed as people were in the '60s, and perhaps that means we're missing something from this film, but it still has plenty more to give. Atmospheric, disturbing and very intriguing the first time you watch it, this is surely director Alfred Hitchcock's most famous film, and deservedly so. Apart from anything, Anthony Perkins is brilliant as Norman Bates. After the first murder, he spends several minutes cleaning up and disposing of the body; he doesn't say a word, we see every sweep of the mop, and he acts it brilliantly. Nowadays I doubt any actor would be given the chance to show what he could do in a scene that consists purely of cleaning a bathroom, but together Hitchcock and Perkins have given us that, and lots more besides. Perkins later appeared in all three sequels, adding more and more dimensions to Norman with every scene. I am sure a lot of people don't realise that *Psycho* is in fact a novel by horror writer Robert Bloch. It is quite a good book, but long before the final scene of the first *Psycho* film, Perkins has snuffed out the Norman Bates in Bloch's novel and made the character entirely his own. It is surely because of him that this film tops my list. I have watched all four *Psycho* movies several times, analysed them, thought about them for hours afterwards, even written a sequel in story form (a few years ago), all because Norman Bates and his scary homicidal Mother fascinate me so.

**Sci-fi/fantasy rating:** 0/5

## CLASSIC QUEST

### Series 1

**Quest:** To survive the Dungeon.

**Dungeoneer:** Helen Abbott.

**Advisors:** Anthony, Claire and Jean-Paul.

**Home town:** Unknown, Mid Glamorgan.

**Team score:** 3 out of 10.

The penultimate quest of the first series ended perhaps a little sooner than it deserved to, although the advisors did forget one very important directional guideline - remember to stay on the right!

**Level One:** As usual in this series, the quest begins with a Simple Starter in the grey four-door room. There is nothing complicated about this one, as Helen has to do nothing more than walk over a large key symbol on the floor (without having to join different pieces together) in order to unlock one of the doors. The first appearance of the spectral scorpion (and the only one in this series) follows; the team direct Helen out safely with no problems.

The next chamber is the level one clue room, where Granitas is on guard. He asks his three riddles as usual, and the team scores two. Acting on information from the wall monster, Helen picks up a key and a vase of rather sickly looking flowers from the clue table, before moving on to a bomb room. The door is locked, but the key soon sorts out this problem, and Helen arrives in Lillith's lair. Lillith is apparently convalescing from an illness, and insists that Helen present her with a gift to make her feel better. The flowers do the trick, and Helen is allowed to exit through the Serpent's Mouth, along with a WELL spell as a token of Lillith's gratitude.

The chamber of the Giant is next, where Helen advises the allergic monster to hold his nose when he's around humans in order to cure his sneezing problem. The Corridor of the Catacombs is the next port of call, where the team has to choose blindly whether to take Helen through the left-hand or the right-hand door. Unfortunately they plump for the left, which leads on to a dead end. The WELL spell is cast, but to no avail: "*The WELL spell can only reveal a well; it can't create one.*" - **Treguard**. Life force runs out and the quest ends here.

**Summary:** A typically tentative early attempt, which reached a dead end and could go no further thanks to a slightly dodgy decision.

## CREATURE FEATURE

Series 3/5/6/8. Level 1/3.

### HOBGOBLINS

As Barry so rightly tells the Brollachan during the final episode of series 7, a hobgoblin is a large goblin - that's according to Knightmare and Tolkien, mind you, not to popular folklore. But boy, does it strike an impressive pose! About three times the size of a regular goblin, a hobgoblin could have been a terrifying foe for any dungeoneer... but unfortunately, most of Knightmare's hobgoblin appearances are a little disappointing in my opinion.

The first (and by far the best) appearance of a hobgoblin can be found in the fifteenth episode of series 3, as Martin and friends are taking on the daunting challenges of deepest level three. Martin has just picked up a sprig of energy in the rocky cave that is usually home to cavernwights when a hobgoblin strides purposefully into the chamber without warning, waving a giant sword above its head. The fact that it is accompanied by a regular goblin serves to underline what a huge and potentially deadly creature the hobgoblin is: *"Extreme warning, team - a hobgoblin in the level!" - Treguard*. I still remember the unadulterated thrill and shock I experienced when I first saw this scene back in 1989 - a classic moment of Knightmare at its most exciting.

Watching the encounter on video in the cold light of day soon reveals that Martin isn't actually in too much danger from the hobgoblin, which doesn't make any attempt to move towards him or threaten him in any way, unlike its smaller counterpart. Neither goblin stands much chance of nabbing Martin anyway, as he is practically at the exit when they arrive, but this takes nothing away from the excitement of the encounter - at the time it was totally unexpected and totally terrifying, epitomising Knightmare at its very best!

Unfortunately, the three subsequent hobgoblin appearances are far less exciting. During the latter stages of series 5, Skarkill (in his role as Goblin Master) starts bugging Lord Fear to procure a hobgoblin for him, and we eventually meet the giant creature - Tiny - in the final episode of the series. It's certainly a shock to see the hobgoblin wandering in to the final chamber of level one with the obvious intention of doing away with dungeoneer Kelly, but the Gatemaster is present and he very quickly uses his magic staff to send Tiny back to Mount Fear. What a shame that Kelly - unlike Martin - never seemed to be in any real danger - without the Gatemaster's reassuring presence, this could have been a worthy follow-up appearance to the one in series 3.

However, that series 5 scene is still far better than the final two hobgoblin appearances, as neither shows the huge foe presenting any threat to a dungeoneer whatsoever - in fact, the hobgoblin does nothing more than sit on a large stool on both occasions! During Sofia's quest in series 6, a hobgoblin can be seen as a pupil at Hordriss's school for aspiring sorcerer's apprentices. Perhaps we can assume that Tiny was getting a bit bored of following Skarkill's orders all the time and was looking to broaden his horizons by studying a bit of magic - he clearly wasn't interested in antagonising Sofia, anyway!

The fourth and final hobgoblin appearance takes place during the first minute or so of series 8, in the introductory scene before the opening credits of the first episode. We see Lord Fear and all the other members of the Opposition (as well as freelancers Snapper-Jack and Maldame) gathered together in Marblehead, and a hobgoblin is there as part of the array, along with two miremen, a red dragon (presumably Bhal-Shebah) and a couple of regular goblins. Perhaps this hobgoblin was Tiny himself, although he had not been mentioned by name since series 6, but rather disappointingly this was the last we saw of any hobgoblin - what a shame another one didn't appear during an actual quest!

It was always nice to see a hobgoblin, but I do feel there should have been a few more appearances, and that teams should have actually had to do something to escape from the enormous monsters on occasion, such as casting a spell. But if you ever find yourself having to pick one hobgoblin appearance to watch before you die, don't think about it for a second - go for Martin's, and enjoy that classic Nightmare moment once again!

**Fear Factor: 10** Huge and deadly!



**Killer Instinct:** 1 Unfortunately, they didn't get much of a chance.

**Gore Factor:** 6 Depends how you feel about goblins, I suppose...

**Humanity:** 7 Goblins and humans may be closer than goblins and other creatures of folklore, according to Tim Child.

## FOR DUNGEON AND DUNGEON MASTER

By Ricky Temple

Weston sighed and nudged DeCobray's side as he saw Rio Bolt come back into the refreshment tent. "That doesn't look to me like a man who's been put out of the competition... by non-lethal methods or otherwise."

DeCobray followed Weston's gaze and winced ever so slightly at the sight of Rio, clearly in some small discomfort, but nowhere near enough to prevent his further participation in the tournament.

"Drago and Keno obviously didn't get the job done," DeCobray said, shrugging physically as he tried to shrug off this failure.

"Obviously," Weston said in an aggravated tone, which caused DeCobray to give him a hard glance, before he moved his eyes to Rio and observed him whisper something to his partner Zyssa Silverdale, before taking her by the arm and leading her outside the tent.

DeCobray downed his drink. "Come on, we'll get some fresh air... while we handle this matter ourselves," he said, placing his glass down on a table, and made to follow Rio and Zyssa. Weston followed him.

Just as they got to the tent flaps, they found their path blocked by the figure of Countess Jane Mercurio (a.k.a. Lady Mercury) and she didn't look very amused.

"Yes, I know, Isabel," Leytan started. "The plan didn't go quite right..."

"Have you seen the state those two have made of my good dresses?!" Lady Mercury said, cutting DeCobray off mid-sentence.

Zyssa had smiled at the reassuring return of Rio, though her smile had faded slightly as Rio had whispered to her and started to lead her out of the tent, and by now - as Rio was nearing the end of his explanations - it had all but gone completely.

"Are you sure, Rio?" she asked nervously. She knew he was - she could tell from the look in his eyes - but she was hoping against hope that he had got it wrong.

Rio nodded his head. "Fraid so, Zyssa," he said gravely. "It was definitely Drago Lestrade and Keno that attacked me, and the presence of that pair can mean only one thing."

Zyssa swallowed hard. "That the Fire & Ice mercenary gang is somewhere on the estate," she said.

Rio nodded. "And most likely en masse too - I doubt it's just Drago and Keno here."

"And what about the Countess?" Zyssa pointed out. "She led you right into that trap."

"Yes, Countess Jane Mercurio certainly needs... wait a moment! Mercurio... of course!"

"What, Rio?" Zyssa asked.

"Countess Mercurio," Rio said, with a smile on his face.

"What about her?" Zyssa asked, puzzled.

"Zyssa, Mercurio is the Spanish for MERCURY! I'd wager gold to Gelp that our flirty Countess is none other than one of Fire & Ice's senior members, the aristocratic mercenary herself, Lady Constance Isabel Mercury!"

Zyssa looked stunned as Rio continued. "Talk about the height of ego - she takes her own name as an alias!"

"Well, what are we going to do about them?" Zyssa asked.

"There's nothing we can do," Rio said to a shocked Zyssa. "They've not got any arrest warrants from the Powers That Be, and unless a local Inquisitor requests help in apprehending them we can't lay a finger on them... and they know it. Besides, we've got a bigger actual Opposition fish to fry, remember."

"But why are they here?" Zyssa asked.

Before Rio could respond, the trumpet sounded again to signal the end of the rest period. All the remaining archers and their seconds started to file back from the refreshment tent to the tournament area, while the spectators once more took their places to observe the climax of the day's display of archery prowess.

"Come on, Zyssa, we'll try to figure that out afterwards. For the moment let's just get back to the tournament, and the job in hand," Rio said, taking Zyssa gently by the arm and walking towards their allotted place on the tournament field. Rio could see that DeCobray and Weston were already back in their space, as were Vizar Galgen and his strangely silent second.

Meanwhile, in the spectators' box, Lady Mercury (still fuming over her ruined dresses) also returned to her seat. Deanery's Shar could sense her simmering fury and couldn't help but smirk slightly, though she said nothing. A few moments later, Keno - the "bodyguard" - still looking a little glassy-eyed from his encounter with Rio, the porcelain vase and the solid oak doors of the wardrobe, also joined her. He avoided her eyes, and the hard glare she gave him when he first arrived, and merely resumed his position standing slightly in front and to the side of her.

Soon the tournament was once more underway. As before, Commander DeCobray, Kal of Greenshades (a.k.a. Rio Bolt) and Vizar Galgen were the top three scoring archers, and as one after another of their fellow competitors bowed out around them, it became obvious to anyone watching that it was going to come down to these three to decide the winner.

"It would appear Your Highness has as keen an eye for spotting a champion archer as you have for hitting a target yourself," Countess Mercurio said to Crown Princess Deanery's Shar.

The Crown Princess turned her head slightly and looked at the Countess. She smiled faintly and nodded her head. "My thanks for the compliment, Countess Mercurio. The House of Shar only chooses the best to represent it." She turned back to watch the tournament, adding under her breath, "And a keen eye runs in the family."

Eventually, and inevitably, it came down to the final few archers. The last one to bow out before the final three was the representative from Grimdale, who put up a very valiant showing but was just outclassed by the trio of DeCobray, Kal and Galgen.

The trumpet sounded again and Hubert Dracher addressed the three remaining archers. "My admiration and congratulations to you three most skilled archers. You have each proven yourself to be highly proficient and skilled with your chosen weapon, and to have incredible accuracy. However, only one of you can win the tournament. You will each have a set number of arrows as before, but this time the number is increased to six. As before, the lowest scorer is eliminated and then the final two will be given one more arrow each, and whoever hits closer to the centre of the target will be declared the winner."

The three archers prepared their weapons and readied themselves mentally for this final hurdle.

"Best of luck, Kal... and may the best man win," DeCobray said, offering his hand to Rio.

Rio regarded it briefly, then took it and shook it. "The same to you, Commander."

Rio then turned towards Vizar Galgen and was about to extend the same courtesy, but DeCobray laid his hand on his shoulder. "Don't bother, Kal," he said, shaking his head. "I don't think he understands good sportsmanship."

Rio looked at the sullen Galgen and decided DeCobray was right. He made his way over to his place.

Weston came over to DeCobray. "Doesn't understand good sportsmanship? That's a bit hypocritical, isn't it, considering we just tried to have Kal eliminated from the tournament by rather foul means?"

DeCobray looked at Weston and smiled. "That was business, this is pure competition... there is a difference, you know."

The trumpet sounded for the penultimate time and the three archers took aim for their first shot. The crowd held their breath; there was a twang and a click, a whistle of air, and then a dull thud. All three archers had struck the target and there was very little difference in the score. The next arrow gave the same result; the third and fourth, both the same story. The tension in the crowd was so great that it could be cut with a battleaxe... then suddenly it was broken by a gasp.

The fifth shot of Commander DeCobray had gone wide, and although it hit the target it was not in the high scoring area. DeCobray sighed and shook his head, as did Weston. Meanwhile, in the spectators' stand, Crown Princess Deanery's Shar and Countess Mercurio exchanged a quick glance.

"It appears, Your Highness, that your champion has fallen at the final hurdle," Countess Mercurio said. "It seems even the best have their off days."

Deanery's nodded her head slightly. "It would appear so, Countess. However, our honour is satisfied. The House of Shar put on a good showing; there is no shame in losing to a better competitor, so we can leave with our heads held high."

The archers took their sixth and final shot but it was now a matter of formality, for DeCobray's misfire had sealed his fate. The final score told it all - DeCobray turned to his fellow competitors and bowed, then he turned to the crowd and bowed to them. He and Weston exited the field in a dignified manner to polite applause from the crowd.

Rio turned and looked at Vizar Galgen. "It seems it comes down to you and me, Mr Galgen," he said respectfully.

Vizar Galgen turned and looked at him. "No, Kal of Greenshades, it comes down to me... you are merely the person I will beat!"

Vizar then went over to his silent second and made ready for the final shot. Rio watched him go, then went over to Zyssa and handed her his bow.

"That man scares me," she said quietly.

Rio nodded reassuringly. "Yes, he unnerves me as well, Zyssa, but don't worry - we'll soon be away from him, just one more shot to make."

Zyssa smiled at him and then - as she handed him back his bow - she leaned towards him and kissed him on the cheek. "For luck," she whispered in his ear.

Rio smiled warmly at her, took his bow and walked back towards the firing position. He didn't even look at Galgen or his second; he just focused his view solely on the target, readied his bow and took aim. Rio shut out any other sound, sight or thought - his world became nothing more than him, his bow and arrow, and the target. The crowd, his opponent, and even Zyssa ceased to exist.

For the final time, the trumpet sounded. Rio let his bow string twang forward and at the same time, Vizar Galgen let his final arrow fly. Rio let out what seemed to be his first breath in an eternity and looked at where his arrow had gone. It was dead centre. He then looked across at Galgen's target. His arrow was just outside the bullseye.

There was a round of applause and cheers from the crowd; Zyssa ran up to Rio and threw her arms around him in a celebration embrace. Meanwhile, all Vizar Galgen could do was stare venomously at both the target and his victorious opponent, before he and his eerily silent second slinked off and disappeared into the throng of applauding spectators.

Meanwhile, in the spectators' box, Crown Princess Deanery's Shar and Countess Mercurio also applauded, although Countess Mercurio could see from her vantage point that Hubert Dracher - although he was applauding - looked very displeased.

"Don't worry, dear Hubert," she said quietly. "Soon all your troubles will be over... forever." She then turned to the Crown Princess. "Excuse me, Your Highness, but I need to attend to some business. It has been a pleasure to meet you."

With that the Countess got up from her seat, curtsied to Deanery's, and - along with her bodyguard - quickly departed. The Crown Princess watched

her go, then took one more look at the triumphant Kal of Greenshades on the tournament field, before she also elegantly rose from her chair and departed the spectators' box.

Back on the tournament field Zyssa broke her embrace of Rio, blushing a little as she realised she'd embraced him for just a little longer than a celebration embrace should last. Rio smiled and took her hand. He kissed it.

"Thank you for your help, Zyssa. I couldn't have done it without you. Now, let's go and receive our prize."

The two made their way over to the spectators' box, where Hubert Dracher - having now composed himself - was waiting to greet them with a smile that was again just too broad to be trusted.

"My congratulations to you, Kal of Greenshades, and to you also, my dear Miss Elizabeth Fern. You have proven yourselves to be without question the most talented combination here this day, and therefore you have more than earned your prize."

Dracher snapped his fingers and one of his servants stepped forward with a silver tray, upon which was a golden silk drawstring purse. It was open just enough to allow Rio and Zyssa to see the gold coins inside. Zyssa took the purse from the tray and curtsied to the servant, then turned and curtsied to Dracher, while Rio bowed.

"Thank you, Mr Dracher, for your kind words and hospitality this day, but now my fiancée and I had better start our journey back to Greenshades. It's a long ride."

At this Dracher smiled and a small glint appeared in his eyes, as an idea occurred to him. "Nay, my dear Kal, I shall not hear of it. You and your fiancée can stay the night here as my guests, and tomorrow my driver will take you back to your village in my own personal coach."

Zyssa looked at Rio. Rio bit his bottom lip - this was an unexpected complication. If he refused it might incur trouble, and also raise suspicions - after all, why would a simple militiaman not accept such an offer, unless he knew of Dracher's alignment with Lord Fear? He didn't dare to look at Zyssa - he'd deal with that issue later.

"We'd both be extremely honoured and grateful, Mr Dracher, and we humbly accept," said Rio.

Dracher smiled and signalled for some more of his servants to come over. "Take Miss Fern and Master Kal inside and prepare rooms for them," he instructed.

Rio and Zyssa were then led away by the servants towards the main house. Dracher watched them go.

"I assume, Mr Dracher, that this is some type of plan," a cold voice said ominously from behind Dracher. He turned to see Vizar Galgen and his second standing there.

"Indeed it is, Vizar. Kal and his lovely fiancée - if that is who there are, for I have my suspicions - won't live to see the sun rise. His Lordship's money is safe."

The sinister duo of Galgen and his second nodded and then left, while Dracher made his way over to the main house, following Rio, Zyssa and his servants.

But Dracher and his fellow Opposition cohorts weren't the only ones plotting, for hidden from view within the shadows cast by the spectators' booth and the refreshment tent as the sun started to descend, a group of figures emerged. Two of them were Commander DeCobray and Weston. Another was the Royal Coach driver, Drago Lestrade, still nursing a sore head from his encounter with Rio. Also present were Countess Mercurio and Keno, her bodyguard.

"Well, this didn't go quite as planned, it seems," Drago said. "We prevented Dracher from pulling the wool over the eyes of the auditors, but we didn't recover the Guild's money."

"Yes, and without that we won't get any payment from those tight-fisted antiques who run the Guild," Countess Mercurio said, as she unscrewed the top of a glass phial she had in her hand, which she then drank from.

"A bit of respect for tradition please, Your Ladyship," Weston said, as he was untying the think piece of cloth that was around his eyes. He took



it away but still held his hand to his eyes to shield them from the natural light, as they got used to it once more, and also from the unnatural glow that was emanating from the Countess after she had drunk from the phial.

"Our original plan may have fallen through, Drago, that is true," DeCobray said, removing his eye patch to reveal his right eye which - unlike his left, clearly Winterian and piercing blue - was a deep emerald green like that of an Atlantean. "But you should know by now, my friend, that Fire & Ice never have only one plan."

"Which is the reason we brought you along on this job, Drago," Weston said, finally lowering his hand from his obviously perfectly working eyes, which were blood red in colour. "You're going to relieve our friend Kal of his winnings."

"But he won't just leave them lying around, Wren," Drago replied.

"No one is suggesting he will," sighed Countess Mercurio, or rather the woman who had formerly been Countess Mercurio. Lady Mercury, having taken the antidote to her glamour spell, now stood before them in her true form. "However, seeing that Master Kal and Mistress Zyssa Silverdale - or Elizabeth Fern, as she is calling herself at the moment - are Powers That Be agents, they will have to report back to Treguard."

Drago smiled - he had a feeling he knew where this was going.

"And as they say," Lady Mercury continued, in a tone of voice that seemed almost like a cat purring with enjoyment, "walls have ears."

"And in Dunshelm there happens to be one set of ears that belong to Fire & Ice, and if memory serves she's on guard duty tonight," finished the man who had been masquerading as Commander DeCobray - the notorious soldier of fortune, the "Ice Killer" Leytan. "But, first things first," he added, turning to Keno. "You go and drive my sister back to the inn, and then come back here straightaway."

The mute Keno nodded and left.

"Now to contact our eyes and ears in the Powers That Be," Leytan continued. He put his fingers to his lips and gave a low, short and sharp whistle.

There was the noise of someone scrambling up the wall to the group's left, and a black shape appeared at the top. It scanned around like a cat, and then with equally catlike balance and finesse, it leapt down from the wall and landed in front of the group. It was a small cloaked and hooded figure, obviously a child, however its mannerisms were more catlike than child-like, for not only had it just moved and jumped like a cat, it crouched in front of the group in the same manner as a cat.

The child reached up with one hand and lowered its hood, revealing a messy and tasselled shock of reddish brown hair, and a pair of brown eyes that gleamed with both childish enthusiasm and also a manic glee which was further enhanced by the beaming, almost insane looking smile that she - for it was a young girl - was wearing on her face as she looked up at the four mercenaries. She was dressed in clothes that, while not quite rags, were definitely well worn and included a tatty, faded brown waistcoat. From her belt there hung a spyglass.

"Ley-Ley calls Jan-Jan?" she asked, in a bizarre, sing-song tone of voice.

January Lucile Mallory the Third - otherwise known as Jan-Jan - was a young, half-feral, wildly eccentric but fiercely intelligent urchin that had adopted the Fire & Ice gang as her new family. She acted as their communication expert, due to her incredible knowledge (bordering almost on the level of a savant) of spy and communication magic. She had been hiding outside in the bushes around the estate the whole day in case she was needed. She had passed the time by counting - and accurately at that - all the leaves on the group of bushes she had chosen to hide in.

Leytan smiled and nodded at the young girl. "We need your spyglass, Jan-Jan. We need to contact someone."

"Aye-Aye," Jan-Jan said. She quickly unhooked her spyglass from her belt and handed it to Leytan, who passed it to Drago.

"Here you go, Drago. Contact her and tell her to find some way to be in the antechamber. Our friend is liable to wait a while before he contacts Treguard, so she should have time to get in place. Once she knows where

he's hidden the gold, she is to contact you with the information. Then you and Jan-Jan here relieve Kal of it."

Drago nodded and started using the spyglass. He tuned it in to the frequency that she used for her own spyglass. When the spyglass started to make a low humming noise, he began to speak. "My love, can you hear me? It's Drago, sweetheart. My love, if you can hear me and are able to, please respond - we are in need of your aid."

Drago waited and then an image began to form in the spyglass. A female voice started to emanate from it; it had a very distinctive Upper Class accent to it.

"Gosh, Drago my love, talk about bad timing. I'm on guard duty in Dunshelm - anyone might have heard you there."

"I'm sorry, Stiletta, but we need you to do something for us," Drago said apologetically to his lover, Fire & Ice's double agent in the ranks of the Powers That Be, the famous Warrior Thief.

"What is it you need me to do, my love?" Stiletta asked, and Drago began to relay Leytan's plan and instructions to her.

## REMEMBER HIM?

Series (1)/2/3/4. Level 2/3.

### **MOGDRED**

Mogdred is one of my favourite characters, and I have always found John Woodnutt's portrayal of him to be very chilling and suitably scary. I do feel, however, that Mogdred is a tragically underused character - his unnerving sense of implacability does a lot to strengthen his eerie nature, but I can't help feeling that appearances in only eleven episodes (over four series totalling fifty-six possible episodes) do not really do Mogdred justice.

I think it's a shame that Mogdred didn't manage to turn up in series 1 - even though no team reached far enough in level three to meet him, he could have made a quick appearance in level two, but he didn't. Having said that, I personally have no doubt that had Richard taken the horn instead of the dagger in the level three clue room, Mogdred would have appeared on the far side of the crumbled Wall of Jericho and threatened the team with imminent death, necessitating the use of the spell OPPOSITE to change him into Merlin; that would have been the final challenge and the team would have won.

Series 2 is undoubtedly the best series for Mogdred in terms of the number of appearances made, although it does not - in my opinion - contain his best appearance. Mogdred can be seen and heard haunting levels two and three on many occasions during this series, creating a very nice bit of atmosphere and generally unnerving the teams as only he is able. Despite the fact that he never really does anything to threaten the quest directly, Mogdred is always great to watch, particularly his very chilling appearance at the end of Tony's quest, when he pronounces death for the team in no uncertain terms, although this is purely because of a previous mistake and actually has nothing to do with Mogdred himself: *"Welcome to one of Mogdred's little playpens, dungeoneer. Play awhile - play forever!" - Mogdred.*

Sadly, Mogdred's appearances in series 3 and 4 are few and far between. After a fairly nice series 3 appearance menacing Leo in level three, Mogdred is seen disguised as a monk in the Bridged Vale (when he trades insults with McGrew and then turns him into a toad) before he disappears from the series altogether - yes, there's no sign of him for the entire second half of series 3! Thanks to the ineptitude of three teams, Merlin takes four episodes off during the third quarter of this series, but then he makes up for this absence by appearing in all of the last four episodes. Mogdred, however, does not resurface, which I think is a shame.

Mogdred's first appearance in series 4 goes some way towards making up for this absence, as it is undoubtedly his finest hour. Not only does he appear in level three to menace Helen and her promising team of Geordies, he cruelly snuffs out their quest with a haunted sword in one of the greatest death scenes ever! The team's death is entirely due to their own mistakes, of course, and they could have defeated Mogdred if they'd cast the spell BUT instead of trying to cast the much longer (but apparently more powerful) TRANSFORMATION, but this takes nothing

away from the brilliance of the scene, and what a great moment it is for Mogdred - he deserved more scenes like this!

Unfortunately, Mogdred then disappears until the very last episode of the series, seemingly having lost his power in level three to Malice for a brief period. His final appearance is fitting enough, mocking Giles's efforts and threatening him in no uncertain terms, but I would've liked to have seen a lot more of him during the first four series!

## **KNIGHTMARE LOCATIONS**

Chiltern Open Air Museum, Chalfont St Giles, Buckinghamshire

**Location:** Just outside Chalfont St Giles, Buckinghamshire.

**AKA:** Holmgarth.

**Series featured in:** 6.

These pictures were taken by me, Jake Collins, and scanned by Rosey Collins, in September 2008.

I was a little surprised to discover that this iron-age roundhouse is the one and only Knightmare Location at the Chiltern Open Air Museum, but a quick glance at the guidebook confirms that all the other salvaged buildings are actually too modern for Knightmare, originating mainly from the seventeenth to twentieth centuries. However, visiting this secluded area of the museum makes it all too easy to imagine that one is actually Matt, the first dungeoneer of series 6:





**Next Issue:** A little more of the Chiltern Open Air Museum.

**WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG**  
**Pre-school TV Shows of the 1980s V**  
By Gehn "Lex" Luthor

As mentioned at the end of last issue's article, the *See-Saw* banner was discontinued in 1988. From 1989, all children's programmes came under the banner of Children's BBC, and the old *See-Saw* slot was filled with programmes that had previously been shown during the late afternoon. Such programmes will be the focus of the next articles in this series. The dates in brackets denote when the programmes were originally broadcast.

**Charlie Chalk (1988-1989):**

This is definitely one of the more well-known of the later programmes, as most people of the correct age will recognise the name. Charlie Chalk was the name of a clown who was shipwrecked on the island of Merrytwit during the first episode. This storyline is briefly outlined in pictures during the opening credits, and is accompanied by appropriate lyrics. Interestingly, the last episode features Charlie leaving the island and is

composed mostly of flashbacks from earlier episodes. However, these are the only two episodes that need to be seen "in order", as there does not appear to be an underlying plot in episodes 2-12, meaning that they can be seen in any order. That being said, one character, Mary the Hover-Fairy, is introduced in the episode where Trader Jones wishes for something three times, and remains in the show for the rest of the series.

That leads us nicely into a perusal of the characters. Charlie Chalk is, of course, the main protagonist. As mentioned earlier, he is a clown, although he strikes me more as a "children's party entertainer" than a "circus" clown, as he frequently performs magic tricks. However, it is not unknown for him to perform acrobatics and other such "clowny" actions. As with most children's programmes, his purpose in each episode is to help a friend, go on an adventure or solve a problem. Captain Mildred is the head of the island and lives on a ship. It is she who has to be consulted when Charlie arrives in the first episode, and in the end of course, she accepts him. Perhaps the most memorable characteristic of Captain Mildred was her ability to put a list into pretty much any conversation, a list that was bullet-pointed by letters: "Charlie! A: it's brilliant and B: welcome to Merrytwit."

Other characters include: Trader Jones, who owns a shop and sells just about anything, but also takes the rôle of doctor; Lewis T. Duck, who is fairly pompous and acts as if he knows better than everyone else; Arnold the Elephant, who is fairly dim and extremely clumsy, often at Lewis's expense; Edward, a gorilla who is always asleep; Bert, who is introduced during the Moaning Mountain episode; and the previously outlined Mary.

Charlie Chalk was an easy-going programme that viewers could relate to easily, which is perhaps why it is so well-remembered. Nevertheless, the educational aspect was still present, as such ideas as teamwork and selflessness were demonstrated.

**Educational Value = 4/5.**

**Entertainment Value = 5/5.**

### **Greenclaws (1989-1990):**

Unlike many of our favourite *See-Saw* programmes, *Greenclaws* enjoyed two series (consisting of thirteen episodes each), one at the beginning of 1989, and one at the end and into early 1990. Quite why this show was given two series while such a classic as *Chock-A-Block* received only one I guess we shall never know, but it just goes to show the injustice in the



world. Not that *Greenclaws* was particularly bad, but it was not in the same league as *Chock-A-Block* and *Postman Pat*.

*Greenclaws* himself was played by Nick Mercer, who was dressed up in the costume of what could only have been a caterpillar. He lived in a greenhouse, although there appeared to be a cosy living room attached to it, in which there was a (real) parrot called Percy. *Greenclaws* was friends with Iris (played by Stella Goodier), who lived next-door, if I remember correctly. She would come over to his greenhouse, and during their conversations, they would talk about a problem that needed to be solved, for example the local princess had lost her crown. This would result in the planting of a magic seed and the placing of the flower pot in the magic tree, which was the home of Owlma, a mechanical owl that spoke in a "twit-twoo" language that only Iris could translate.

While they waited for the plant to grow, Iris would go out and either attempt to solve the problem herself, or show the viewers an aspect of outdoor or farm life. Either way, there would be a song, sung by Iris herself. In the meantime, *Greenclaws* would remain at home and narrate a story that related to the problem in hand. If we again look at the princess's crown affair, we hear *Greenclaws* narrate a story about a lost item that needed to be found. The stories would always feature a relative of *Greenclaws* (in the case outlined, it was his Aunt Ivy) and the stories were depicted as stills from a book (à la *Puddle Lane*).

When the story was over and Iris had come back, Owlma would hoot to indicate that the plant was ready. However, they could not have the plant until they answered Owlma's three questions, and since Iris was the only one who could understand her, she translated them aloud. The questions were normally based around familiar nursery rhymes, although this was not exclusively the case. Once the questions had been answered, the plant was taken out of the tree. Amongst its leaves would be the required items to solve the problems. In the hat episode, a crown was present, as well as a sun hat for *Greenclaws*, who had lost his own.

As I said at the start, not a bad show, but not in the same league as the classics. Nevertheless, as far as education and entertainment are concerned, it does the job pretty well.

**Educational Value = 5/5.**

**Entertainment Value = 3/5.**

### **The Family Ness (1984-1985):**

Twenty-five episodes were made of this five-minute show. It was based around the legend of the Loch Ness Monster, although in this programme there was a whole family of monsters in Loch Ness, hence The Family Ness! The main human characters were siblings called Elspeth and Angus, the children of Mr. MacTout, a typical Scotsman and keeper of the loch.

In the first episode, the children were as sceptical as anyone else about the existence of the Loch Ness Monster, but then they come across Ferocious-Ness. As far as I can remember, he asks them to help him out of a difficult situation, and when they succeed in doing this, the Queen of the Nessies (Her High-Ness) gives the children "secret thistle-whistles", which can be blown to summon a member of the Family Ness. The Nessies get their names from their characteristics, in a similar way to the Mr. Men, hence we have such characters as Speedy-Ness (able to move extremely quickly and acts as a speedboat so that Sporty-Ness can go water-skiing) and Hungry-Ness, who will eat anything. Of course, the adult characters never believed in the monsters, and often dismissed the children's stories.

I was trying to think of the best way to describe what the monsters actually look like, and my thanks go to Wikipedia for providing me with what I consider an unimprovable description: "Very fat, yellow dinosaurs with bulbous noses." Well, that is the case for all of them except Ferocious-Ness, who is more like a dragon or a crocodile.

In all the episodes following the first one, the children summon the Nessies with their thistle whistles to ask their advice or get them to solve a problem. However, a Nessie would sometimes arrive and tell the children about a problem they were experiencing themselves, meaning that that would need to be solved before the Nessies could help Elspeth and Angus. One aspect which I always felt added to the show was that one never knew which Nessie would answer the thistle whistles - good suspense for a younger viewer.

As already pointed out, each episode was only five minutes long, so developed plots were never going to happen. However, entertainment and education were there, and the stories worked well. I seem to remember that it was repeated fairly frequently at various times of the day, which is always a sign of a good programme. My only complaint is that the episodes were so short.

**Educational Value = 3/5.**

**Entertainment Value = 4/5.**

**P.C. Pinkerton (1988):**

P.C. Pinkerton was another five-minute programme that migrated from its original broadcast time to the *See-Saw* slot. As we have discovered in earlier articles, a five-minute programme would always be partnered by a ten-minute programme, and this was still the case even after the *See-Saw* banner had disappeared. Whenever I think of P.C. Pinkerton, I think of either Fireman Sam or Philomena being the partner show, suggesting that the slot could have been extended to twenty minutes at some point in time. We shall look at Philomena shortly, but first to P.C. Pinkerton.

P.C. Bob Pinkerton was a traditional policeman who worked and lived in Cleybourne. As in the case of Fireman Sam, the programme was fairly educational, as it provided a simple view on the work of the police, and any "lessons" it had to give focused on such things as road safety and how to ride a bicycle properly. Indeed, Pinkerton's bike was also the focus of the episode entitled *Rain, Rain Go Away*. The episode opens with Pinkerton cycling to work in the rain and getting soaked. Sandy, one of his colleagues, arrives on a motorbike and suggests that Pinkerton should invest in one too. Of course, later on, the motorbike breaks down and has to be fixed by Vincent Villiers, who appears in several episodes and is a motorbike enthusiast and mechanic.

As with so many five-minute programmes, it is very difficult to develop a significant plot in the given time, but P.C. Pinkerton does particularly well at it. The episode entitled *See You in the Morning* revolves around reports of strange noises occurring during the night, keeping people awake and worrying them. In the end, it turns out to be the cat, Macavity, who has been responsible for all the disturbances, but the suspense and tension created in this episode works particularly well - at least, it did for me when I was considerably younger!

P.C. Pinkerton scores well in terms of education and entertainment, and does a good job of teaching younger viewers about the police and the work they do. Thirteen episodes were made, and the fact that I remember it alongside both Fireman Sam and Philomena suggests that it was repeated fairly frequently.

**Educational Value = 5/5.**

**Entertainment Value = 3/5.**

### **Philomena (1986-1987):**

Hosted by Johnny Ball, Philomena was about a small white kitten named - yes, you've guessed it! - Philomena. At the beginning of each of the ELEVEN episodes, Johnny Ball would welcome the viewer and look around for Philomena. However, with him in the very plain studio were some large yellow letters, and Philomena would not come if the letters did not spell her name correctly. The amount of work Johnny Ball had to do to accomplish this varied from episode to episode: he might simply have to put the dot on top of the "i", but the letters were just as likely to be piled on top of each other, meaning he would have to set up every single one. Once the name was spelt correctly, a cartoon cat would be superimposed on the letters, and the story would then begin.

Philomena lived in a farmhouse with Grandma and Grandpa, an elderly couple, and their other cat, Bonny-Face, who was a black cat and quite pompous. Since online information on this programme is fairly scant, it is difficult to give much detail as to the content of the stories, but they would normally focus on Philomena and Bonny-Face having a small adventure, or on some sort of job that needed to be done in the farmhouse.

In one episode, Grandma has to do the washing (and interestingly, she does this by means of heating water and then running the clothes through a mangle) but because it is raining outside, a space needs to be cleared in the attic so that the clothes can hang there. Grandpa goes up to do this and is helped by Philomena, while Bonny-Face lies on a bed and sleeps. The underlying theme of this episode is mess and why it should be cleared up, and this also ties in with the way the yellow letters are set up at the start of this episode - they are piled together untidily and Johnny Ball mentions the importance of clearing up mess.

The lack of online information about Philomena suggests that repeats were fairly rare, which is a shame because the stories were simple and welcoming, yet educational at the same time. Johnny Ball managed to manipulate his voice enough to give each character his or her own memorable and unique personality. Furthermore, "Philomena" was probably the longest word many young people of the late '80s knew - a much better name than such things as "Iggie Piggie" and "Po"!

**Educational Value = 5/5.**

**Entertainment Value = 5/5.**

## KIDS' TV SHOWS I GREW UP WITH

**Focus on:** Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles.

**Original Broadcast Run:** December 1987 - December 1996.

**UK TV Channels:** BBC1, BBC2.

This was the one late '80s/early '90s fad that I got totally caught up in without stopping to think about it! There can be no denying - this cartoon is absolutely terrible! Yet there was a time when I couldn't get enough of it, or of the action figures and collectors' cards that accompanied the series. I even made the sewer playset as demonstrated on Blue Peter - for a brief period of time, I lived for the Turtles, as did a lot of people in my age group.

To explain the premise of the show, I think it's best to start by introducing two Japanese martial arts experts - Uroku Saki (Shredder) and Hamato Yoshi (Splinter). Shredder had managed to discredit Splinter, who was forced to flee to America and live in the sewers of New York. Shredder, meanwhile, was recruited by an exiled alien from Dimension X named Krang, who'd had his body confiscated and wanted Shredder to build him a new one. Krang and Shredder had some sort of plot to take over the world, for which they would require an army of mutants. Krang got hold of a powerful mutagen from somewhere, which would cause anyone who was exposed to it to take on the attributes of whatever animal they had most recently been in contact with.

Unsurprisingly, some of this mutagen found its way into the sewers of New York, where it transformed Splinter into a giant rat. He had adopted four pet turtles that had been accidentally dropped down a drain, which (thanks to the mutagen and their close proximity to Splinter) took on human attributes and became (with Splinter's training) the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (I've never really understood why the show was renamed Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles for us British kids - there was plenty of Ninja action in the show, regardless of the title!) Splinter named the Turtles after his favourite Renaissance artists, and armed each of them with Ninja weapons - Leonardo (blue headband) had two

Ninja swords, Donatello (purple headband) had a wooden bo, Raphael (red headband) had two sai, and Michelangelo (orange headband) had a pair of nunchucks. Highly marketable, I'm sure you'll agree!

Krang and Shredder did manage to create a couple of their own mutants using human recruits from New York's meanest streets - Beebop (a warthog) and Rocksteady (a rhino), both of whom were pretty thick and inept. Shredder and the two mutants (along with an army of Foot Soldiers) caused a lot of trouble in New York, with Krang rolling around under the city in his Technodrome telling them what to do, but the Turtles usually got blamed and were branded a public menace. Only April O'Neal, the spirited Channel Six news reporter, knew the truth about the Turtles, and helped them out whenever she could.

This cartoon is one of the worst culprits for production errors - often the Turtles would speak with the wrong voices or be wearing the wrong headband, but at the time I really didn't care! I don't remember many specific plots, although one that I still think was quite fun was Shredder's attempt to create a quartet of mutant frogs to rival the Turtles. While Splinter had named his pupils after artists, Shredder named his after history's most tyrannical leaders - the two names I can remember are Genghis Frog and Napoleon Bona-Frog.

Whenever I have watched this cartoon since about 1993, I have not enjoyed it very much at all and I don't rate it as a brilliant piece of television (unlike the other shows I have reviewed in this feature so far) by any stretch of the imagination! I feel a bit embarrassed now about getting so caught up in the fad; I think it was mainly thanks to the three boys down the road and their enthusiasm for the Turtles that I got so into the merchandise. Turtle cards (featuring characters and scenes from the series) were available in packs of about six, and could be bought from the newsagent's at the bottom of our cul-de-sac (which is now a water softener shop) for twenty pence a pack. I ended up with a fairly impressive collection of these, although I don't think I had the full set. But where are they now? I have no idea and I really couldn't care less!

The main must-have for any Turtles fan was, of course, the action figures. There was a fairly extensive period when these were as rare as dragons, to paraphrase the first Knightmare book - you couldn't find them anywhere! Toys "R" Us in Stevenage managed to get hold of a few occasionally, but they were always snapped up very quickly, to the extent

that I (to my horror) just couldn't get my hands on those elusive figures! I only wanted the four Turtles, although there was an absolutely enormous range of figures that were apparently available, none of which I have ever seen on the shelves of a toyshop in this country!

Although the regular action figures were rarer than gold dust, my mum (bless her unswerving efforts) managed to find a collection of Wacky Action Turtles figures in Argos. I was more than happy to accept these in place of the regular figures - even though they didn't have the proper weapons, they had pupils in their eyes (the absence of which I thought made the regular figures look a bit weird) as well as more interesting facial expressions... Michelangelo was even sticking his tongue out! Each Wacky Action figure had its own wind-up feature and unique accessories, and in addition to the four Turtles, I even managed to procure Slice'n'Dice Shredder and Sewer Crawlin' Splinter! I used to have a lot of fun playing with these figures, and unlike my Turtle cards I do know where they are, and remember them with fondness.

Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles was a marketing phenomenon in its time, but unlike many of the cartoons from this era that doubled as toy catalogues, it has not stood the test of time and is something that I do not plan on watching again at any point. However, I will always remember the Turtles as a significant part of my childhood because I got so caught up in the inevitable flood of merchandising, and I still quite like those Wacky Action figures!

## **KIDS' TV SHOWS I DIDN'T GROW UP WITH...**

**But now enjoy!**

By Ricky Temple

### **Ulysses 31 (1981-1982):**

This Franco-Japanese sci-fi cartoon was based on the Greek myth Homer's *Odyssey*, and was a staple of Channel 4's Sunday morning kids' TV. It took the basic principle from *The Odyssey* of a soldier returning home from a war. In the original it was the Trojan War, and the title character was prevented by the Gods from reaching his destination after

he killed a Cyclops (a servant of Poseidon, the God of the Oceans) while in Ulysses 31 the war was unnamed, and transferred to the 31<sup>st</sup> Century.

Ulysses went from a Greek sailor to an Earth space traveller, his ship (named *The Odyssey*) became an advanced spaceship, the Cyclops became a giant robot, while the Greek Gods became powerful extraterrestrial beings, and their home, Mount Olympus, became the *Galaxy of Olympus*.

Some elements were toned down. The death of all Ulysses's crew was changed to them being put into suspended sleep, and there were alterations such as Ulysses's son Telemachus being with him on the journey, as well as the addition of both Yumi, a young female alien child that Ulysses saved from the Cyclops along with her older brother (who also falls under the sleep spell of the Gods) and a small robot call Nono, who was the comic relief of the show. The Gods were depicted as being as close to villains as possible without being out-and-out evil, with the inclusion of their minions the Shark Men, who often tried to hamper Ulysses's progress.

While Homer's *Odyssey* was the main source of inspiration for the show, it did also mix in other elements of Greek myths. Examples include the Minotaur (from *Theseus and the Minotaur*), the Harpies (from *Jason and the Argonauts*) and the Hydra (from *The Twelve Labours of Hercules*). There was only one series made, and in the final episode Ulysses finally managed to defeat the Gods, escape Olympus, and free his crew from their spell.

Due to the mythology the show was drawn from, and only ever being able to see parts of the episodes due to my family going to church, I never really got into Ulysses 31 until I bought the DVD box set. I finally got to see full episodes and to view it with a more grown-up eye and knowledge of the back-story, and to finally truly get into it and enjoy it for the action-packed, story-driven series that it is.

Ulysses 31: the Complete Series was released to DVD in September 2004.

### **The Chronicles of Narnia: The BBC TV Serials (1988-1990):**

This BBC live action adaptation of C.S. Lewis's classic series of children's books was one of the most successful Sunday primetime family viewing series the BBC ever produced, to the extent that following the last series, the BBC received complaints asking for it to be brought back.



There were three serials based on four of the seven books: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*; *Prince Caspian and The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (which encompassed two books) and *The Silver Chair*.

While the special effects don't measure up to the standards of the current Walden Media film series, for their day they were state of the art and cutting edge, rather like a little remembered kids' gameshow called Nightmare! The first of the six-part serials, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, started in 1988, and the final one, *The Silver Chair*, ended its run in 1990.

Oddly, though I've always been a fan of C.S. Lewis, I was never drawn to watch these adaptations, mainly because back when these were airing I wasn't a huge fan of live action kids' dramas. However, I did start to become a fan of these serials when I first got a VHS of *Prince Caspian*. I could never find the rest of the serials, until to tie in with the success of the big screen release of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the BBC brought out a DVD box set of all three serials.

So while the effects may seem dated nowadays, and the acting is in some places of a rather old and twee BBC style, these adaptations have stood the test of time and are as enjoyable today as they would have been back when they were first broadcast.

The Chronicles of Narnia: the BBC Serials DVD box set was released in November 2005.

## **PUZZLE PAGE TWO**

### **Knightmare Wipeout IV**

Each of the two grids below contains twelve answers, six of which fit into the category at the bottom and six of which don't. Identify all six correct answers if you can, chalking up cumulative amounts of theoretical money as you go (£10 for the first answer, £20 for the second, £30 for the third etc) up to a possible £210 for each grid, but just remember this - one wrong answer will wipe you out completely, so be careful!

Vicky	Chris I	Nicky	Simon I
Giles	Steven	Helen I	Ross
Dickon	Chris II	Jeremy	Jamie
<b>DUNGEONEERS THAT MET MERLIN ON LEVEL TWO</b>			

Alan	Simon I	Danny	Akash
Ben III	Neil	Sarah	Maeve
January	Anthony	Claire	Sofia
<b>DUNGEONEERS THAT WERE KILLED BY A CHARACTER</b>			

### POETRY CORNER

Today we're back at the very beginning of series 6, with Matt, Razer, Ben and John.

From Bath came Matt to play the game  
 In cocky style, oh what a shame!  
 They found the Holmgarth hut with ease,  
 Where Lord Fear's spell caused Matt to freeze.  
 ESCAPE's the key to end that stint,  
 While gold's the key to dragon mint.  
 Ah Wok's the one with trusty wares,

While Julius just stands and stares.  
 A music key from minstrel's loot  
 Revealed the dragon-powered route  
 To level two, where witches lurk,  
 And pookas send young friends berserk!  
 Hands covered from the spectre's sword,  
 The password was the team's reward.  
 With amber payment Matt flew high,  
 But he was sadly doomed to die.  
 The numbered causeway took its toll,  
 And Matt fell down a great big hole!

## PUZZLE ANSWERS

**Knightmare Wipeout III:**

Correct	WIPEOUT	Correct	WIPEOUT
WIPEOUT	Correct	Correct	Correct
WIPEOUT	Correct	WIPEOUT	WIPEOUT
<b>CHARACTERS FROM SERIES 1 WHOSE APPEARANCES IN THAT SERIES WERE CONFINED ENTIRELY TO ONE PARTICULAR ROOM</b>			

WIPEOUT	Correct	WIPEOUT	Correct
Correct	WIPEOUT	WIPEOUT	Correct
Correct	WIPEOUT	WIPEOUT	Correct
<b>CHARACTERS FROM SERIES 2 THAT DID NOT APPEAR IN SERIES 1</b>			

**Knightmare Wipeout IV:**

Correct	WIPEOUT	Correct	Correct
WIPEOUT	Correct	WIPEOUT	Correct

<b>WIPEOUT</b>	<i>Correct</i>	<b>WIPEOUT</b>	<b>WIPEOUT</b>
<b>DUNGEONEERS THAT MET MERLIN ON LEVEL TWO</b>			

<b>WIPEOUT</b>	<i>Correct</i>	<b>WIPEOUT</b>	<i>Correct</i>
<b>WIPEOUT</b>	<i>Correct</i>	<b>WIPEOUT</b>	<i>Correct</i>
<i>Correct</i>	<i>Correct</i>	<b>WIPEOUT</b>	<b>WIPEOUT</b>
<b>DUNGEONEERS THAT WERE KILLED BY A CHARACTER</b>			