



## Doctor Who: Silhouette

*Justin Richards*

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## **Doctor Who: Silhouette** Justin Richards

*"Vastra and Strax and Jenny? Oh no, we don't need to bother them. Trust me."*

Marlowe Hapworth is found dead in his locked study, killed by an unknown assailant. This is a case for the Great Detective, Madame Vastra.

Rick Bellamy, bare-knuckle boxer, has the life drawn out of him by a figure dressed as an undertaker. This angers Strax the Sontaran.

The Carnival of Curiosities, a collection of bizarre and fascinating sideshows and performers. This is where Jenny Flint looks for answers.

How are these things connected? And what does Orestes Milton, rich industrialist, have to do with it all? This is where the Doctor and Clara come in. The Doctor and his friends find themselves thrust into a world where nothing and no one are what they seem. Can they unravel the truth before the most dangerous weapon ever developed is unleashed on London?

## **Doctor Who: Silhouette Details**

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Author : Justin Richards

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## From Reader Review Doctor Who: Silhouette for online ebook

### Vendea says

Líbilo se mi to vážně hodně - mělo to atmosféru a odehrávalo se to v mé oblíbené viktoriánské Anglii... A Strax byl vtipný jako vždy (nemluví o Madam Vastrě a Jenny). Dvanáctka mě škvěle přepovídky a ty narážky na jeho předchozí regenerace byly boží.

4/5\*

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### Muratcan says

Kötü adam? ilginçti. Senaryosu klasik bir Doctor Who bölümü tadındaydı?. Doktor'u bazı noktalarda iyi yansıtmışlardı ama çok da aman aman değil. Yol arkadaşları pek etkin bulmadım. Clara ve Paternoster Çetesi var Doktor'un yanında. Madam Vastra'yı çok az görüyoruz. Jenny ve Clara etrafta dolaşıp baktılar mı? belaya sokuyorlar, klasik. Ama favorim Strax. Sadece Strax için kitaba 3+1 = 4 yıldız verebilirim aslında. Onun konularını okurken kafamda dizideki tipi, ses tonu vs. birebir canlanıyordu. Zaten Strax'ın dizilerden de severim, kitaptaki hali de güzel olmuştur.

Kısayacası Doktor'a ağına olanları seveceğimi, ortalama bir kitap. Diziden haberiniz yoksa size pek bir şey ifade etmeyebilir, önce gidin diziyi izleyin.

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### Alejandro says

**A good book but it could be better.**

#### **WHO:**

The Doctor:

The Twelfth Doctor

Companions:

Clara Oswald

&

The Paternoster Gang:

Lady Vastra, Jenny Flint & Strax

#### **WHERE & WHEN:**

London, in the Victorian age.

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## **WHAT:**

The Doctor picked an unusual energy reading in London, around the Victorian age, so he decides to investigate it, along with Clara. In the middle of that, the Paternoster Gang is investigating initially two murders (Some more to come). Soon, both parties realized that all must be connected and they join forces to solve the case.

## **TARDIS' REPORT:**

First of all, the title, *Silhouette*, isn't adequate, since she is a character on the story, relevant, but hardly the most relevant element in the story, she shares relevancy with other characters that some of them are even more relevant in how the story developed. So, I think that it should be titled something like *The Carnival of Curiosities* or *Curious Weapons*, just doing some quick brainstorming. But definitely the selected title for the book was a bad choice.

***It'll be smelly, dirty and dangerous... ...you'll love it.***

While the Doctor and Strax are managed quite well, and both are certainly the best on the story, the other main characters: Vastra, Jenny and Clara, are poorly developed and even wasted.

Each doctor has been recognized for particular items, the Fourth Doctor had his scarf, the Eleventh Doctor, his bow-tie, and now it seems that the Twelfth Doctor will have... his eyebrows... no, really! On TV, he is quite expressive using his eyebrows, and on the story, it's clearly using them. Also, I think that taking in account that he is a very "new" Doctor, he is used on the book as any would expect, due the brief development so far in the "Series 8" (five episodes, so far, at the cut of this review).

Strax is absolutely wonderful. He is easily the most amusing character, in this story, always saying priceless comments.

***...I have a comrade who tells me that once one has eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must also be eliminated.***

Vastra is supposed to be "The Great Detective" which even the London Police and Scotland Yard look for her help in complicated cases but in here, she basically did nothing. And easily the character less exploited on the story.

Jenny is a wonderful character, full of amusing ironic comments and witty humoristic remarks. However, you won't realize that in this story, since she is poorly used and basically walking from here to there and back again, without accomplishing anything.

Clara is a strong woman, a teacher, but in here she is a cliché "damsel in distress" and even worse, making dumb comments, insulting the intelligence that the character truly possess.

***I'm a doctor of so many things I forget more than half of them.***

The story itself is quite entertaining, offering good mysteries, an interesting team of villains with remarkable powers, and a good rhythm in the narrative.

However, the story is forcibly extended by the cliché of separating the heroes' squad, doing asunder queries, making them susceptible to fall into evident traps. Also, while it's too obvious who the culprits are, they still wasting time looking for redundant evidence.

There is a priceless moment between the Doctor and one of the villains, while isn't effective the attack by this villain, just the experience to the reader (if it's a fan of the whole legacy of the Doctors) must be something quite awesome. Too bad, that the author opted to "cut" it a bit, honestly I wouldn't mind to read the expected "complete" scene.

Still, with all my complains and observations, this book is still an amusing story that readers interested on adventures using the Twelfth Doctor may consider to read.

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### **Can says**

Sen ne güzel kitapt?n be! Son iki sezondaki ço?u bölümünden iyiydi beee

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### **Asl? Da?l? says**

Yorumum için -> Instagram: dagli\_asli

:)

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### **Brooklyn Tayla says**

Full review can be found on my blog <https://brooklynandherbooks.wordpress...>

This was a second re read and a buddy read with a fabulous friend of mine.

I actually found I enjoyed this more the second time around, I picked up on more of Strax's wit and found that the characters were written to a t. This will definitely remain a favourite doctor who book of mine.

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### **Dan Schwent says**

When the Doctor and Clara visit a carnival in Victorian London after the Doctor detects a power spike, they cross paths with Madame Vastra, Jenny Flint, and Strax. Vastra and Jenny are attempting to solve a locked room mystery while Strax is on the trail of someone who murdered a friend of his. How are the cases linked with the mysterious power spike the Doctor detected and what do they have to do with origami birds and the carnival?

### **I got this from Netgalley.**

This is the second Twelfth Doctor novel I've read and it's pretty damn good. Since we haven't seen much of Doctor Capaldi so far, I can't vouch for the accuracy of Richards' portrayal but it didn't feel like a book written for a different version of the Doctor that was hastily modified. Clara rang true to character and the Paternoster Gang were well done, especially Strax, not surprising since Justin Richards also wrote Devil in the Smoke, a novella featuring the trio.

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Orestes Milton proved to be a good foil for The Doctor and company, as did his weaponized carnies. Without a doubt, my favorite part was when the shapeshifter tried to distract the Doctor by assuming the forms of past Doctors, which the Doctor ignored.

The plot was like a greased pig at first. It took me a little while to grab hold of it. When you combine a carnival, a weapons dealer in hiding, a shapeshifter, and a creature that drains emotions, you've got a certain amount of fiddling to do to get everything into the proper place. Richards proved himself a good fiddler. Everything game together in the end and it was a pretty satisfying Doctor Who adventure.

However, it wasn't without a minor hiccup. I thought Madame Vastra made a stupid mistake around the midpoint of the story, funny considering she's The World's Greatest Detective.

Anyway, Doctor Who: Silhouette is a worthy addition to any Doctor Who fan's library. Four out of five stars.

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### **Sean Kennedy says**

I would be happy with a whole series of Vastra, Jenny and Strax books. Just sayin'.

(Of course, I would also be happier with their own TV series.)

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### **Kandice says**

When I read these books I want two things:

- 1.) To get to know the Doctor (and his companion(s)) a little better.
- 2.) To read a story that may be too expensive to film, but comes across the page beautifully.

This book hit neither mark. Granted, we don't know Capaldi's Doctor that well, so almost anything would have been a bit "more", but he barely appears. When he is part of the narrative, he is incredibly bland. Anyone with a passing familiarity with the Doctor knows he is anything but bland. Come on!

Richards does give us realistic versions of Clara, Jenny, Vastra and Strath, but I know them. I know THEM well. I wanted the Doctor. Also, if you take away Clara, the other three are pretty much caricatures. Their characters have large, stock personalities with plenty of quirks so they seem pretty easy to write in a recognizable way. Clara probably proved a bit more difficult as "The Impossible Girl", but I just didn't feel Richards gave me enough to make reading this worth my time.

I also have a bone to pick with him regarding the title. Silhouette was a player, no doubt, but not a major character and certainly not worthy of the title! Granted Silhouette sounds cool and caught my interest. There are a LOT of Doctor Who books out there and I can understand his desire to be catchy, but the title was incredibly misleading, especially once the character was introduced. That may have attributed to my not enjoying the book as much as I might. I kept expecting her to figure more largely in the plot and when she did not I was disappointed.

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## **F.R. says**

What one hopes from a Doctor Who spin-off novel is that it captures the characters – while perhaps adding a few wrinkles the reader hadn't considered before – and unveils the type of story it just wouldn't be possible to tell on TV. You know, the kind of thing with nine different planets, fifteen different species and the sort of special effects budget that would make the Director General of the BBC turn sheet white and quiver. Sadly we don't have that here. Instead what we have in 'Silhouette' is something so generic as to be painfully bland. A mild cheddar of Doctor Who. Part of that wouldn't have been Richards' fault, as he would have had to write it before he ever saw Peter Capaldi play the part, and so it's perhaps understandable he finds himself writing for a pro-forma, cookie-cut Doctor. I did like some of the cutting quips though. (To be fair the rest of the characters are captured well, and I did like the bit where The Doctor [sort of] meets his former selves.) However the plot just feels so lacklustre and unimaginative: a return to Victorian London and a reunion with the Paternoster Gang (which in of itself unwelcome) to face a threat the likes of which fans of Doctor Who will have seen again and again and again, until a conclusion which is painfully familiar.

This isn't a terrible book. In fact it's a book which hits most of the targets it sets for itself, except those targets are so unambitious it can't help but be a disappointment.

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## **P?nar Kaya says**

Yeni y?la çok keyifli bir kitapla girdi?imi dü?ünüyorum.

Çok sevdi?im 12. Doktor'a k?sa bir süre önce yay?mlanan Noel Özel Bölümü ile veda etmi?tik. Gelecek sezonda Doktor rolünde Peter Capaldi'yi göremeyecek olmay? henüz hazmedememi?ken Clara'l? günlerde geçen bu olay? okuyarak an?larda ya?atmak istedim kendisini... :( Kitaptaki olaylar k?? mevsiminde geçti?inden okumak için iyi bir zaman? seçmi?im bence.

12'nin ba?larda ne kadar huysuz oldu?unu unutmuyum. :) Clara'y? da hat?rlad???mdan farklı buldum, karakterin derinli?inin yeterince yans?t?lamad???n? dü?ünüyorum. Vastra, Jenny ve Strax'? yeniden görmek ise çok çok güzeldi.

Siluet, kitaptaki önemli karakterlerden olsa da neden kitaba isim olarak seçildi?ini anlayamadım.

E?er siz de Doctor Who'yo ve 12. Doktor'u seviyorsanız? bu kitab? siz de benim kadar be?enirsiniz san?yorum. :)

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## **Jon Arnold says**

The technician writer is an underpraised species; a backbone of the publishing industry. They will, quietly and without fuss, deliver a publishable manuscript on time. Justin Richards, editor of the Doctor Who range for several years, is one such writer. With a Richards book you can be certain that the book will be draped around a solid, enticing hook and chug through a logically worked out plot and that the characters familiar from the television will act perfectly consistently with their screen selves. Each story or script is a well-crafted tale, a formula he has honed over more than twenty years of writing Who novels.

Silhouette is a perfect example of Richards's work. The high-concept summary - Doctor Who donning the

mantle of Philip Pullman's Sally Lockhart adventures, with Clara taking the bulk of the action against a dastardly Victorian industrialist. His revolutionary weapon is an agreeably Doctor Who concept, eventually foiled in a very Doctorish way. The Doctor appears a little Matt Smith-esque at times, but it's a minor point you can brush aside by pointing out that each Doctor tends to have the same moral core with only surface differences of approach. Everything chugs along as smoothly and mechanically as a well-oiled machine. And almost as soon as the book is done the details evanesce into thin air, almost making you forget the little elements lifted from old Who books such as Managra and Conundrum. Richards has so perfectly honed his formula there's little to distinguish it from previous novels, no memorable passages, ingenious juxtapositions, interesting subtexts or surprising turns of plot. It's machine-tooled, mass-produced Doctor Who that keeps the novel range ticking away but without ever expanding or challenging the boundaries of what Doctor Who can do; a shadow of what's possible from a series so rich in storytelling possibilities.

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### **Amy says**

This is my maiden voyage with a novel based on Dr Who. The show is a big hit in my family, where three generations all consider themselves Whovians. I was curious to see how the characters translated to book format, knowing that usually, I am one of those "liked the book better than the movie" types. While the story, itself, was fine, it didn't thrill me with the same sort of delight that a well written Dr Who script does. I found the portrayals of the five "regular" characters rather flat, and, at times, had trouble remembering this was supposed to be the Capaldi Doctor, and not some ambiguous time traveller. There were a few moments when Strax seemed like Strax, and Jenny showed spunk, but for the most part, I wasn't wowed. Perhaps the fault is mine, though, as I expected the book to paint a picture in my mind that would match up to what I see on the telly each Saturday night.

I'm giving this book a 3 out of 5 stars, though, because even though I love the television series, sometimes the writers have an off time, and I moan and groan about how poorly the script was written, not giving the actors a chance to really strut their stuff. This plot-line was no worse than some of those scripts that I thought weak, perhaps even better than one or two. It could just be that my imagination is not trained to translate a story visually from a book to match what I know on the screen. After all, this adapting from a series is a new sort of read for me. So, just like me giving the writers of episodes I'm not keen on the benefit of the doubt, so I'll give the book series the benefit, too, and a three-star rating. It also strikes me that this would be a good YA type read.

This is something like the 53rd book in the series, so apparently, others have no problem translating from television to text. As I said, the fault is probably in me. Please don't bash me because our tastes are different. But if writers continue to have Madame Vastra refer to her wife, Jenny, as her maid, make Strax dull, Clara a bit of an imbecile, and the Doctor somehow enigmatic and dull at the same time, I'll cross future books off my wish list.

Many thanks to Blogging for Books and the publisher for sending this copy my way.

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### **Merry Farmer says**

Not bad! I would actually consider this book homework, in a way. I write romance, which is character-driven. This book was heavily plot-driven with rather bland characterizations of known characters. The plot was nicely put together, though.

## Yzabel Ginsberg says

*(I got an ARC courtesy of NetGalley, in exchange for an honest review.)*

This is only the second *Doctor Who* novel I read. In the meantime, I managed to catch up on a lot of episodes I hadn't seen (including the ones with the Twelfth Doctor); it was a good idea, since otherwise I would have had less clues about who the characters were, especially when the Paternoster gang was concerned. Unfortunately, it was therefore also very easy to realise that they weren't that well-portrayed, at least not in my opinion. Hadn't I watched the most recent seasons, I would've likely been confused; having watched them, I don't recognise many people in here. I guess Strax felt the closest to how he behaves in the series, but then, he may have been the easiest one to grasp as well.

I'm particularly miffed about the way Vastra and Jenny were handled. Vastra's supposed to be the Great Detective, the one who inspired Doyle to write Sherlock Holmes's adventures, and yet her role was completely stripped off meaning; she didn't get to do much, looked like she was here mostly to get into trouble and then saved, and this doesn't sit with me as far as she's concerned. Not a word about her relationship with Jenny either, which I found odd. This applied to several characters, in that I couldn't get a strong grasp of how they factored in the mystery, except to get into trouble (and only the women in this story happened to get into trouble and need saving; I don't recall Strax or the Doctor doing the same). As for the Doctor, he didn't feel and act much like the one I got to see in the most recent episodes. Clara was just insipid. At best they all were bland, at worst not true to their selves, cast in damsel in distress roles, and not allowed to unleash their full potential.

The plot was somewhat interesting. I liked the first half, for the atmosphere woven through the Carnival, and the way the mystery started to unfold. I liked it much less towards the end: nice twist, though predictable, but muddled. (Also, two characters get together without any serious apparent reason; while somewhat cute, it was useless, especially with the other relationships in the story not mentioned or developed.)

Conclusion: 1.5 stars. Mildly enjoyable as a quick read while travelling, yet totally forgettable in the long run, with characters that have little to do with who they are on TV. (And the point of reading a novel based on a TV series, to me, is to find the themes and people I liked in the show, after all...)

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