

# THE JADE PYRAMID AND THE GEMINI CONTAGION

The Eleventh Doctor's latest audio adventures see him face demons and Samurai in feudal Japan and a unique linguistic problem in the 22nd Century...

Audio60 \$19.95

Authors: Martin Day and Jason Arnopp  
Read by: Matt Smith and Meera Syal  
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## The Jade Pyramid

### WHAT HAPPENS...

In medieval Japan, the all-powerful Shogun has dispatched seven Samurai to retrieve a mysterious artifact from the solitary Kokan shrine. As the Doctor tries to prevent a massacre and finds himself targeted by a ninja, Amy explores the shrine with a disgraced Ronin at her side. She soon discovers that the ogre-like manikins that guard the Jade Pyramid aren't what they seem...

### MAKING THE MYTH:

- » The Doctor claims he always tries to remain neutral in local matters. Really Doctor? Are you sure?
- » Amy hates playing the defenseless female stereotype but will if it means she gets her own way
- » The Doctor adds to his growing "Geronimo!" count
- » When she was little, Amelia Pond visited a waxwork museum and freaked out, imagining that the dummies were waiting to come alive. Good job she's never going to meet the Autons. Oh, hang on...

### FACT INTO FICTION:

The monstrous Otoroshi are huge, hair-covered manikins that guard the Kokan shrine.

They were inspired by traditional demons said to hang from the gates of Shinto shrines. If you dared enter the temple with mischief in mind, the hirsute sentinels would drop down from above and rip you to shreds. Nasty.

"The idea of the Otoroshi scuttling across ceilings came very late in the day," explains author Martin Day. "I didn't want them just shambling about like big overcoats – especially as, with audio books, one doesn't have to worry about the budget."

## INTERVIEW: MARTIN DAY BEHIND THE SCENES

Why did you choose to send the TARDIS to Japan?

I loved shows like *The Water Margin* and *Monkey* when I was a kid and have been interested in all things Oriental ever since. I don't consider myself an expert though. I've been doing kendo, kenjutsu and iaido for about five years and am very aware how little I know.

Was it daunting knowing that Matt Smith himself would be reading your story?

It certainly was a thrill to write for him. He was so new to the part that I wrote the whole thing without even seeing him as the Doctor. I later watched a sneak preview and was allowed a quick rewrite to make sure it wasn't a million miles wide of the mark.

# THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN

Japan hasn't had much luck in the *Doctor Who* universe:

- » The Master destroyed Japan during the calamitous year that never was (*Last of the Time Lords* – TV). Martha only just managed to escape the carnage (*The Story of Martha* – BBC Books).
- » Japan was one of the first nations to fall to invading Dalek forces. (*The Stolen Earth* – TV).
- » In the 17th-Century, alien scientists caused havoc by revealing the secrets of nanotechnology to a local matriarch. Cue a 13-story high reptile with laser vision and ultra-futuristic robotrox warriors. (*The Road to Hell* – *Doctor Who Magazine* comic strip).
- » Energy vampire Axos took over the youth of Japan using a brain-enhancing fizzy drink and a cutesy Anime show (*The Golden Ones* – *Doctor Who Magazine* comic strip).
- » The Doctor, Rose and Captain Jack visited Japan in 1226 for an untold adventure. Here's hoping they didn't cause too much grief. (*Bad Wolf* – TV).



## The Gemini Contagion

Seven things you should know about *The Gemini Contagion*

**1** It is 2112. On the ice-planet Vinsk a new handwash, Gemini, is about to ship to Earth. Its unique selling point is that it includes Meme-Spawn DNA. One wash of your hands will enable you to speak every language in the cosmos.

**2** Meme-Spawn (*memicillius-spawnonica*) are micro-organisms that drift through the universe, absorbing each language they encounter. There is an annoying side effect: You'll also be transformed into a violent so-and-so with the insatiable – and highly contagious – need to speak every language at the same time.

**3** "Inside your head, your brain is working overtime," writer Jason Arnopp explains. "You're desperate to communicate with whoever is within grabbing distance, but simultaneously attempting to process every



single language in existence. It quickly drives you insane."

**4** Once infected, the human inhabitants of Vinsk repeatedly yell, "Listen to me!" The urgent plea was inspired by Arnopp's belief that we're all listening to each other less: "We have more channels of communication than ever before, so pay less attention to each one. How many times have you half-listened to someone, while concentrating much more on the Really Fascinating Thing you're planning to say? We should stop that. Bad humans."

**5** We discover Amy has always wanted to learn French but hasn't bothered, as she thought she'd never leave Leadworth. She soon becomes au fait with all manner of alien tongues.

**6** Originally the virus was to be spread via an energy drink, until commissioning editor Michael Stevens pointed out the similarity to Bubble Shock! from *The Sarah Jane Adventures*. "A handwash is so much better," admits Arnopp, "I also liked an anti-viral handwash becoming a virus itself. You turn to it for protection, but there's no escape."

**7** Arnopp's favorite character is Korn Palloa, the Vinskan scientist who causes the whole disaster. "Initially arrogant," says Arnopp, "she comes to regret not carrying out thorough tests on Gemini. Hopefully you feel a little sorry for her in the end."