

On the DVD commentary of episode 2, Watling says that producer Innes Lloyd told her Victoria's character would be like Alice from Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865). Carroll himself described Alice as 'loving and gentle', 'courteous', 'trustful' and 'wildly curious [...] with [an] eager enjoyment of Life'¹. She's also about seven years old in his story.

But Lloyd was probably thinking less of the book than of Watling's performance in the title role of *Alice*, an episode of **The Wednesday Play** written by Dennis Potter and broadcast on 13 October 1965 to mark the 100th anniversary of the book's publication – Watling even appeared on the cover of *Radio Times* to promote the broadcast. Potter's play explores Lewis Carroll's relationship with the real Alice Liddell on whom he based the stories, but she's a very different character. For one thing, Watling was 17 when she played the part, and her Alice is flirtatious and encouraging of Carroll, and then bored by him and condescending.

'Innes Lloyd saw me in that and thought, "Yes, that could be Victoria",' Watling remembered in 1994². She said she didn't audition for the part of Victoria, just went for a meeting with Lloyd, suggesting he already thought she fit the role. But there's little sign of Potter's Alice in *The Evil of the Daleks* – or any of Victoria's subsequent stories. Whereas Polly, Samantha Briggs and Mollie Dawson are rather plucky, bold characters, Victoria is innocent and timid, often someone to whom things happen rather than having the agency to affect the plot of a story herself. Her acts of defiance are limited to protesting at her treatment and feeding her rations to the birds.

There's not a great deal to her – as Watling admitted. 'I was only told that she was a Victorian girl wearing a Victorian dress,' she said in 1984, 'and that her attitudes were to be correspondingly conservative. It was largely left up to me, in other words.'³

Archive interviews with Lloyd, story editors Gerry Davis and Peter Bryant, writer David Whitaker and director Derek Martinus offer little insight into their thinking about the character of Victoria, and it's tempting to see that absence as revealing in itself. But the story's incidental music – composed by Dudley Simpson in consultation with Martinus – is perhaps instructive. Simpson recalled:

'I remember having to write the music to establish her [first] appearance. And it was completely different to any other music I'd written at that stage [for **Doctor Who**]. It had a little romance to it. And I brought the oboe in – it seemed to work beautifully. And then of course [...] when she swings around and spots the Dalek, that's a big contrast. But that I wrote only through being told that there was going to be a picture of her [...] I didn't get a viewing [of the episode] at all.'⁴

This melodic theme bridges the transition between our first close view of the portrait of Anne and our first sight of Victoria. Was that transition originally planned to match up the two faces? As it is, a close up of the head and shoulders of the portrait, gazing up and towards the left of frame, mixes to a closer, head-only shot of Victoria, facing the other way. Simpson's romantic theme plays as she feeds the (heard but not seen) birds through the barred window of the room in which the Daleks keep her prisoner. It underscores her kindness and, as Simpson says, contrasts her with the cruel and alien Daleks, again scored with radiophonic sound. But note that Simpson refers to the 'romance' of Victoria's theme.

¹ Cited in Carroll, Lewis, ed Martin Gardner, *The Annotated Alice*, pp25-6.

² Walker, Jane, 'Leatherlungs is Back'. DWM #212.

³ Marson, Richard, 'Deborah Watling Interview: Archetypal Heroine'. DWM #124.

⁴ Simpson, 'The Doctor's Composer'.

As a classically trained musician, Simpson would be familiar with the Romantic movement in music that flourished in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, as typified by composers such as Beethoven and Chopin, where larger orchestras enabled especially lush, rich and emotional music. This was tied to the Romantic movement in the visual arts which, partly in reaction to the Industrial Revolution and the Enlightenment, emphasised the emotional, individual and natural. Another key feature is the domestic, with a sentimental view of women as nurturing home-makers and peace-makers.

There's something of this in *The Evil of the Daleks*. Women don't drive the plot. In the first episode and a half, set in 1966, the only women to appear are the non-speaking extras in mini-skirts seen in the Tricolour. In the Victorian part of the story, Ruth and Victoria have no more power to change events in the house than Mollie the domestic servant. They can ask questions of the men and encourage them to take action, and in episode 6 Mollie and Ruth promise to look after Terrall – but they react rather than take action themselves. In episode 5, Mollie almost gets to change things, before Maxtible mesmerises her into submission. In the last part of the story, Victoria is the only female character on Skaro, but her actions don't direct or change the plot.

This passivity contrasts with the powerful Daleks, actively hell bent on the conquest of time, but also with the male characters. All the men in the guest cast are active participants in the plot, and none are quite what they appear when we first meet them. We've already discussed Maxtible's transformation in the story, as the veneer he presents to his household comes apart. Waterfield is a well-meaning gentleman forced into a life of crime. Kemel switches sides. Terrall is a good man conditioned to do wrong against his will. Toby – like Kennedy 100 years after him – dies because he's too greedy and tries to steal from his employer, so neither are simply paid henchmen. Bob Hall is in on the scam to steal the TARDIS and dupe the Doctor, and Perry knows the antique shop operates some 'dicey' business, but only calls in the police when Kennedy is murdered. They're still stock archetypes, but they've more dimensions than the women characters.