

JAUNT

AN UNOFFICIAL GUIDE TO
THE TOMORROW PEOPLE



ANDY DAVIDSON

FOREWORD BY SERIES CREATOR ROGER PRICE

JAUNIT

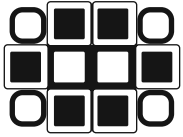


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THE TOMORROW PEOPLE

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JAUNT : An Unofficial Guide to The Tomorrow People



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Season 1 Overview

One into Two

'After the series went out, all these people wanted to be my friend. I would walk back from the studios and there'd be people playing me.'

— Peter Vaughan Clarke

The first series of **The Tomorrow People** was, and I'll apologise for this in advance, a breakout success. The programme was seized upon by young audiences, just as the producers hoped it would be.

The Tomorrow People was promoted heavily in ITV's own **TV Times** magazine with regular features throughout the series' run, and a long-running comic adventure series began in the pages of **Look-in** just a couple of days before the final episode of *The Vanishing Earth* aired on 30 July 1973. The first in a successful series of spin-off books was released by Piccolo that same month with Roger Price and Julian R. Gregory's **The Visitor**, a tale of an alien child stranded on Earth and the Tomorrow People's efforts to send them safely home.

As successful as the programme was, there were elements which the production team were less happy with. Paul Bernard's contract ended after the first season and co-producers Price and Boswell decided that they no longer required his services. 'When I watched Paul and the elaborateness of the whole set up, I don't think the series would have lasted. Roger pioneered chromakey and from then on we used that. The chromakey, at which we got quite good, was excellent,' observes Boswell. Price was also dissatisfied with Bernard's working methods: 'Things were taking far too long to do...Also, being from the Theatre, he liked a lot of rehearsal time. It was costly, and as we were using discontinuous recording – shooting in short scenes like a film, although with TV cameras – it was not necessary. Paul was trying to shoot them like he was pointing cameras at a live theatre production. He was older than me and it was a generational thing, I think. Like kids nowadays understand computers and I struggle with them.'

Nicholas Young was particularly unhappy with some of the series' early effects: 'I complained bitterly because although I was not a snobbish actor, I liked to do good quality productions, and to appear in something which was quite clearly thrown together... there was no thought given to it at all.'

As part of a general overhaul of visual effects for Season 2, the rather attractive sparkle effect that accompanied the team's jaunting was removed. From now on, Tomorrow People would simply vanish and reappear at their destination. That Price

created an explanation for this change of effect is a lovely piece of detail: it's due to the hyperspatial zonal shift breakthrough, apparently. There's no such explanation for why the team no longer hang from wires when they're in hyperspace, and if I'm honest I did prefer that effect to them simply standing on invisible boxes and waving their limbs in Season 2, but you can't have everything.

As techniques were streamlined, the team became more confident with the visuals they were able to achieve. By the time they reached the Season 2 story *The Doomsday Men*, Price and his team were creating effects which were the envy of the television industry. As he recounted in 1992, for a **TV Zone Special** focusing on the 1970s, 'Verity Lambert phoned me up and said, "All right – last night somebody appeared out of thin air while other people were moving around in the studio, walked over to a table, a drink appeared on the table, they picked it up and drank it and it was all in one shot – how did you do it?"'

The Thames team kept their secrets to themselves as the production began to develop a reputation for technical excellence as well as challenging, hugely enjoyable storytelling. Price stepped down as co-producer of the programme for its second season, preferring to concentrate more on writing and directing. That left Boswell as the series' sole producer and script editor.

Co-writer Brian Finch's services were no longer required as Price grew in confidence as a dramatist, and the writer returned to the streets of Weatherfield following completion of the 1973 novel **The Visitor** under the nom-de-plume 'Julian R. Gregory'.

But Finch wasn't the highest profile departure from the series. Sammie Winmill was offered a three-year contract to remain with the programme after the first series, but the actress decided her future lay elsewhere. 'Instead of feeling the character deepening, I actually felt like I was becoming more shallow as a person,' she told **Tomorrow People** fans in 2001. 'I always seemed to be saying, "John, look out!" and I didn't want to be typecast. I was then 25 and needed to broaden my career.'

Winmill left the programme to pursue a career in the theatre, but while producers were keen to retain the actress, they were less happy with the capabilities of another member of the cast. Young Stephen Salmon had failed to impress Price and Boswell in the first series of adventures and the actor's contract was not renewed for the second.

The Further Adventures of Carol and Kenny

With Earth playing a greater role in cosmic affairs, Carol and Kenny have joined Overmind, a telepathic network which advises the Council of the Galactic Federation. Aboard the Trig, Carol has fallen in love with an Andonesian ambassador. The Tomorrow People would receive a message from their old

friend in *A Rift in Time*, and Timus namechecks Kenny in *Worlds Away* but neither Carol nor Kenny would return to the television adventures.

The pair did, however, feature in the eighth adventure of the **Look-in** comic series (27/4/1974, issue 16) and were due to have appeared in story twelve (14/12/1974, issue 49), but industrial action put paid to that and the edition never made it to the presses.

In Roger Price's **Three in Three**, the Tomorrow People are reunited briefly with their former colleagues, and in the print adaptation of **One Law** we learn that Carol has married her boyfriend, Narcissa, and together they have a son, Nova. Kenny, meanwhile, is now an ambassador to the planet Spyra.

In the 2006 Big Finish audio drama *Spiritus Mundi*, Carol returns as a semi-regular character, working as a senior investigator for the Galactic Federation. Her husband died some years earlier and the older Carol still bears the scars of that terrible loss.

Kenny might pop back from time to time, according to John. But between you and me I wouldn't count on it. When next we hear from Kenny, it is in the 2001 Big Finish audio adventure *The Deadliest Species*.

With just two Homo superior left in the Lab, the production team held open auditions for a new Tomorrow Person. Once again, the issue of race reared its head. 'I insisted that the powers of the Tomorrow People are not limited to the white race,' recalled Roger Price in issue 107 of **DreamWatch Bulletin**.

Elizabeth Adare was 24 years old when her agent suggested she audition for **The Tomorrow People**. An experienced actress with a growing list of television and stage credits, Adare was no stranger to playing against her age. However, the fact that the role she was auditioning for was that of a 14-year-old did present something of a challenge: 'Originally the point was that Tomorrow People broke out around puberty – and I was much older than that. I remember travelling there by train with short socks and my hair in bunches!' Adare read for Price and Boswell and so impressed the pair that they rewrote the then-unnamed role to accommodate Adare's age. 'They had me down as a trainee teacher to cover the age gap. I was "latent" in terms of reaching puberty!' She was then asked what her favourite name was. 'I said "Elizabeth"; well, it was my name. He [Roger Price] hadn't thought of a name for the character at the time, and they then created the surname M'Bondo – an East African-sounding name, I think.'

Elizabeth Adare would remain until the end of **The Tomorrow People's** original run and her constant presence on television led to the actress becoming a highly visible role model for young black children. However, for the first few years in the series, Adare was forced to continue with her hair in bunches so as to appear more 'Western'. Price recalls that advertisers at the time continued to be wary of a black

actress in such a prominent role, and, in a 1977 interview for **Look-in**, Adare commented that 'being black can make getting work quite difficult. The trouble is casting directors will turn you down for a part because putting a black person in a certain role automatically makes the viewers look for special meanings that possibly detract from the plot.'

With the new team assembled, filming for the second series began on October 18 1973. However, within days the production was put on hold. 'The guy playing Ginge broke his leg when his bike fell over,' Price told **Starburst** in 1987, 'so we had to do some drastic rewriting and reshooting in order to get to air on time.' Director Darrol Blake, who would helm that season's *Worlds Away*, suggested Christopher Chittell as a suitable replacement. Chittell, whom Blake had previously directed in programmes such as **Paul Temple** and **Doomwatch**, joined the cast, and with some hasty rewrites production continued throughout the winter of 1973.

'We did the first outside broadcast, which was at St Margaret's in Twickenham,' recalls Peter Vaughan Clarke. 'I remember seeing all these trucks outside and some serious actors...for a kids show? It was all in the days when it was very impressive to have a film crew about. There'd be crowds watching...I think then they realised they had a hit on their hands.'

The Tomorrow People were back.

The background of the entire page is a series of concentric circles of varying diameters, centered on the left side. The circles are light gray and create a sense of depth and movement, resembling a ripple effect or a target. The text is centered horizontally and vertically within the space created by these circles.

THE TOMORROW PEOPLE

Season 2

30/4/1973 – 30/7/1973

The Blue and the Green

4/2/1974–4/3/1974

5 episodes

Synopsis:

Around the world, people are allying themselves with a mysterious new cause, proclaiming themselves to be either 'blue' or 'green'. Tensions grow between the two factions and a bitter fight for supremacy engulfs mankind.

Meanwhile, at Stephen's school, a strange painting by a gifted new student, Robert, seems to be linked to the aggression – a painting of an alien planet that Robert couldn't possibly be aware of. A painting which undergoes a strange transformation whenever violence erupts nearby.

The Tomorrow People are joined by a new ally, Stephen's teacher, Elizabeth. Together, they investigate Robert's mysterious home life and discover a race of alien invaders who have been feeding on human aggression for thousands of years.

Written by

Roger Price

Elizabeth

Elizabeth Adare

John

Nicholas Young

Stephen

Peter Vaughan Clarke

TIM

Philip Gilbert

Robert

Jason Kemp

Johnson

Ray Burdis

Chris

Christopher Chittell

Grandfather

Nigel Pegram

Police Inspector

Simon Merrick

Howard

Stephen Brassett

Graham

Elvis Payne

Title Music

Dudley Simpson

Scientific Adviser

Dr Christopher Evans

Designer

Michael Minas

Producer

Ruth Boswell

Director

Roger Price

A Thames Television Production

Episode One: An Apple for the Teacher

Monday, 4 February 1974, 16.50–17.20

Repeated Monday, 30 June 1975, 16.50–17.20

A mysterious power is causing seemingly random outbreaks of violence at Stephen's school. Could there be a connection with the startlingly realistic images of alien worlds being painted by one of his classmates? Stranger still, Stephen's new teacher is able to hear his thoughts.

The Jaunty Angle:

Stephen shares a class with the entire complement of pupils from Anna Scher's stage school.

'TIM – I think she saw me halfway through a Jaunt!' Not even the Tomorrow People are immune to the more embarrassing moments of adolescence.

After their season break, the Tomorrow People's powers of deduction are a bit rusty. Strange children are painting images of alien worlds and whenever those images mysteriously transform, violence breaks out. It probably does involve some kind of rocket science, but the point stands that the Tomorrow People are worryingly slow on the uptake.

The Tomorrow People's method of gently revealing their special powers to newcomers hasn't diminished in its brutality, as their antics cause Elizabeth's panicked jaunt into a chromakey nightmare.

Episode Two: A Changing Picture

Monday, 11 February 1974, 16.50–17.20

Repeated Monday, 7 July 1975, 16.50–17.20

John and Stephen launch a desperate rescue mission to find Elizabeth, who has accidentally jaunted into hyperspace and faces certain death if they cannot reach her in time. On Earth, a sinister movement is springing up, casting people seemingly at a whim as either 'blues' or 'greens'. Their only desire...to fight to the death.

The Jaunty Angle:

John's and Stephen's attitude towards rescuing Elizabeth shows a laxity bordering on contempt as they muck about with their AE suits.

TIM's no better – after all that dithering, he tells them he has a good idea where she is anyway. No rush, chaps. The screaming woman floating in a destructive environment reminiscent of an early Pink Floyd video can bloody well wait.

The new AE suits are nowhere near as much fun as the old ones. Shiny silver is replaced by drab grey, and enormous collars with a far more functional-looking arrangement.

When they're absolutely sure that they've located the cause of death and destruction, the boys decide not to take it back to TIM for analysis because Elizabeth's a bit scared of it. Civilisations have ended for less.

Ginge has a younger, much posher brother. Broken family or teenage dropout?

Elizabeth is probably too shaken to pay attention, but the boy she tells Stephen she is going to check up on at home walked past her a couple of seconds earlier. She could have saved herself an awful lot of bother.

Superior scripting:

TIM: I don't have spools, Elizabeth. I am a biotronic computer. I consist of living fluids and I am capable of original thought so I don't have to be programmed.

Episode Three: The Trojan Horse

Monday, 18 February 1974, 16.50–17.20

Repeated Monday, 14 July 1975, 16.50–17.20

Violence is spreading in schools across the world as the strange alien paintings exert their mysterious force. John visits the shop belonging to Robert's grandfather and buys one of the boy's paintings. In doing so, he unwittingly unleashes a terrible power in the Lab.

The Jaunty Angle:

Coincidentally stopping outside the place which is at the very heart of a growing mystery is another of the Tomorrow People's special powers.

A mysterious junk shop owned by an implausible 'grandfather' is in no way a reference to **Doctor Who**.

TIM's neutron examination technique is basically a destructo-ray.

Robert's scheme to provoke psychotic reactions through art was a concept later explored by Tracey Emin.

Superior scripting:

Elizabeth: Come on, mix yourselves up. There are enough colour problems in the world already without introducing blues and greens into the spectrum of hatred.

Episode Four: Cuckoo in the Nest

Monday, 25 February 1974, 16.50–17.20

Repeated Monday, 21 July 1975, 16.50–17.20

Robert has a far more active role in the spreading violence than the Tomorrow People suspected and has kidnapped John. Chris sets out to rescue his friend, but when he convinces the police to raid Robert's grandfather's shop, John is nowhere to be found.

The Jaunty Angle:

Don't trust old people; they're all harbouring homicidal alien grandchildren.

A stun gun is no match for really good chromakey.

There's always room for a car chase, although the US military would do well to ditch their Jeeps and switch to Austin Allegros if the one Chris drives is anything to go by.

If you've ever laughed at that wobbly wall in **Fawlty Towers**, you'll love the one in Robert's grandfather's shop.

Episode Five: The Swarming Season

Monday, 4 March 1974, 16.50–17.20

Repeated Monday, 28th July 1975, 16.50–17.20

Robert reveals to John that he is an alien, one of a new generation that is preparing to swarm out into space. But to do so, they need to feed on the combined aggression of a world that is tearing itself apart. The Tomorrow People must find a way of helping Robert and his kind before the human race dies a bloody death.

The Jaunty Angle:

Robert was just slumming it in that basement. He had a far grander hideout tucked away somewhere else.

Robert and his kind only needed to ask and the Tomorrow People would have gladly helped. All that locking people up in cellars was pointless but admittedly would have made for a far less exciting story.

By the same token, the Tomorrow People are far too willing to forgive and forget. They may be pacifists but this is the second alien race they've let walk all over them and later helped.

Even an unnecessary car chase can be fun.

Production:

The Blue and the Green was recorded between October and December 1973.

Key location filming was done at Orleans Park School and the surrounding streets of Twickenham. Additional filming took place in Alexandra Gardens, Chiswick.

The scenes recorded at Orleans Park were the first OB drama for Thames Television.

All the school scenes were shot over the course of a week on location.

The AE suits worn by the team were tailor made for the actors in this season, replacing the rented suits the team wore in the previous year.

See this:

Watch out for the new picture of Stephen in the opening titles. Look closely and you can see the younger incarnation's hair from last year behind the character's cut-and-pasted new picture.

New girl Elizabeth jumps straight to the top of the closing credits, ousting the team's senior member, John.

Take a look at the link table in the Lab and you'll notice that the design has changed slightly since Season 1. There are fewer upright columns around the table, and those that are there will be noticeably less wobbly from now on.

Look closely and you'll spot a few well known actors in Stephen's class, including Linda Robson, Pauline Quirke and Ray Burdis. Roger Price maintained a close relationship with the Anna Scher Children's Theatre and would later source the cast for projects like **You Must Be Joking** from among its pupils.

Keep an eye on the background while Elizabeth and Stephen are talking at his desk about his secret friends and you'll see a fairly obvious boom shadow moving about.

When Stephen jaunts into hyperspace to try and find Elizabeth, he appears to have a badge pinned to the collar of his AE suit. By the time we next see him in hyperspace it has disappeared.

The wall behind Chris wobbles so much that it almost falls over when he's confronted by Robert's grandfather.

The interior of the *Watchdog* satellite would be pressed into service again for the 14 July 1975 episode of Thames Television's quiz show **Whodunnit?**, in which Jon Pertwee hosted the programme from a desk aboard the flight deck.

Review:

An alien race which thrives on the heightened emotion of humanity and needs the psychic energy we release during violence to complete its life cycle. A race which infiltrates the lives of the unsuspecting, forcing them to nurture their young like

cuckoos in the next. Oh, that's good, especially when the writer manages to tie it back into actual events in our history – the Nika riots of sixth-century Constantinople. Weaving history and science into science fiction drama without sounding preachy and over-earnest is difficult, and while **The Tomorrow People** doesn't always get it right, *The Blue and the Green* is a masterful piece of storytelling. It's beautifully written, with a fiendishly clever premise and enough historical and scientific context to make it more than just a great slice of children's adventure.

A consequence in any long-running series is the need to get new viewers up to speed with events that have already taken place. While Elizabeth's introduction to the world of the Tomorrow People is exhaustively comprehensive, the explanation of Earth's position in the galaxy so well articulated that it makes this sequence so much more than simply **The Tomorrow People** for Beginners. The political implications of the Tomorrow People being guardians of a race who don't even know of their existence are delicious and will be explored in more detail in the third season.

The cast have matured in the intervening months. John is a slightly more relaxed character this year, not quite as loud and stiff as he was in the first series. Nicholas Young makes the character authoritative but at the same time he is much more approachable. Stephen appears to have aged more than just one year since the last season, and Peter Vaughan Clarke is visibly far more confident in the role.

Kenny will never really be missed because Stephen now fulfils his role (and does so far more convincingly), but Carol's departure left a significant gap in the dynamic of the team and Elizabeth takes that role and shapes it into something wonderful. She has none of the occasional coquettishness of Carol; she's a more grounded, mature character and the perfect foil for Stephen and John.

The final addition to the regular cast is introduced in a piece of remarkably efficient shorthand. Chris barges into the Lab as if he'd been part of the team all along, and within moments you'd think he had been. But Chris is more than simple window dressing. We're offered a glimpse into his background and a lovely dollop of eccentricity, with his US Army Jeep, his little pilot's hat and his gang of posh mates. While Ginge and Lefty, themselves beloved characters, are eschewed without much in the way of explanation (none in Lefty's case), Christopher Chittell's delightful performance and the attention to detail over his character's foibles make the character instantly accessible.

But it's not all bouquets for the casting department. Just what is Nigel Pegram supposed to be? He looks and acts like a young man pretending to be old. I was half-convinced for a time that's what his character was meant to be and that there'd be a revelation later in the story. It's a distinctly odd piece of casting and one which pulls the viewer out of an otherwise compelling story. Having said that, Pegram's inclusion did make for good publicity. The **TV Times** of 16 February 1974 made mention of the star of **Roberts Robots** joining **The Tomorrow People**, inviting viewers to try and spot the actor underneath the make-up. Honestly, they wouldn't have had to look too hard.

Roger Price's political views have informed **The Tomorrow People** since the beginning, but *The Blue and the Green* wears its heart on its sleeve. Further adding to the richness and plausibility of the Tomorrow People themselves is the fact that despite the many sleights they've been dealt, they are compelled to help when asked. This is entirely consistent with previous stories like *The Slaves of Jedikiah* and reinforces the series' moral underpinning. That Price manages to take his ideals and weave them into a story which mixes history, science, imagination and childhood trauma so deftly is quite an achievement.

And so to the conclusion of the story. Putting the entire population of Earth to sleep and letting them dream the violence the Denagelee need is the perfect solution to a potentially high-budget situation. After all, this is a programme for children, so having the imagination provide the solution to the world's problems is just the sort of message we want the adults of the future to take with them. It's the perfect lesson for young viewers.



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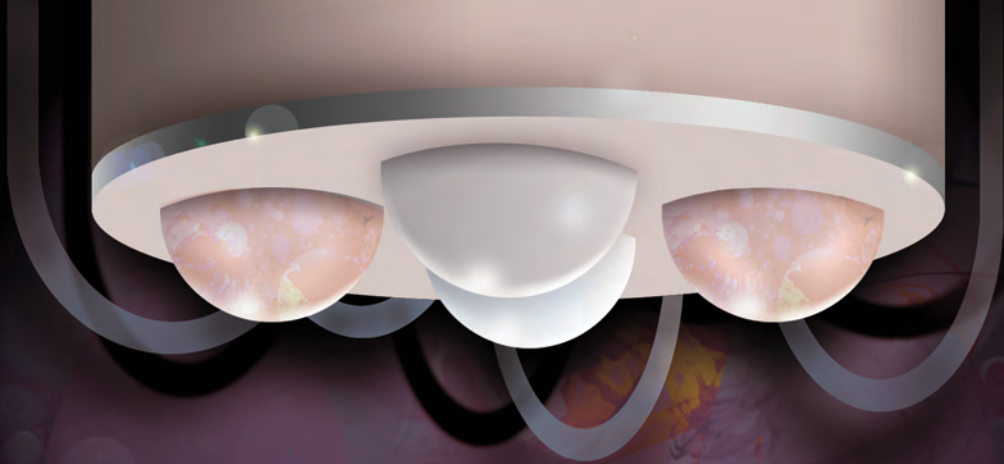


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Shape-changing robots, military masterminds, ITV technicians – it's a deadly universe out there, but the Tomorrow People are here to help.

The Tomorrow People are man's next step up the evolutionary ladder: Homo superior. From their secret base deep below the streets of London, they offer hope of a better future for the human race as members of the all-powerful Galactic Federation.

Jaunt follows **The Tomorrow People** from its origins in the creative melting-pot of 1970s children's television to a worldwide hit. It revisits them in the 1990s for some light-hearted **Avengers**-style action and returns a decade later for a series of bold, challenging audio plays.

Homo superior has been with us for forty years, and **Jaunt** chronicles the phenomenon that is again preparing to return to our screens in a big-budget US adaptation.

Jaunt includes exclusive interviews with series creator Roger Price, producer Ruth Boswell and the Tomorrow People themselves – Nicholas Young, Peter Vaughan Clarke, Elizabeth Adare, Mike Holoway and Misako Koba.

With an introduction from Roger Price, **Jaunt** also features the complete script of the unmade ninth series adventure *Mystery Moon*.

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