



Something in the Water

Trevor Baxendale

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Dr Bob Strong's GP surgery has been treating a lot of coughs and colds recently, far more than is normal for the time of year. Bob thinks there's something up but he can't think what. He seems to have caught it himself, whatever it is - he's starting to cough badly and there are flecks of blood in his hanky.

Saskia Harden has been found on a number of occasions submerged in ponds or canals but alive and seemingly none the worse for wear. Saskia is not on any files, except in the medical records at Dr Strong's GP practice.

But Torchwood's priorities lie elsewhere: investigating ghostly apparitions in South Wales, they have found a dead body. It's old and in an advanced state of decay. And it is still able to talk. And what it is saying is 'Water hag'...

Something in the Water Details

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Author : Trevor Baxendale

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From Reader Review Something in the Water for online ebook

Andrew Butcher says

I really enjoyed this author's writing style. A good, fast-paced read, and the clever descriptions made everything easy to visualise.

Kathy says

Every time I read a Torchwood novel I am forcefully reminded, again, that Torchwood does not belong in the Doctor Who universe.

This universe that so definitely lacks hope doesn't have any business being near the Doctor Who Universe, which is steeped in Hope (with the capital H) -- that said, however, I do enjoy reading the Torchwood novels, as I did enjoy the television shows.

In this one, a vile alien creature has haunted the world for some years, biding its time and growing in strength as it prepares for invasion -- previous manifestations written into the history of the world as myth and superstition. It's up to Jack and his canny crew to stop them before they can take over the whole world through Cardiff!

It's a good romp -- I enjoyed it thoroughly; Baxendale is writing the "Captain Jack" that Russell T Davis took over, and not the happy-go-lucky fellow Moffatt created, but that's all right. He does a bang-up job of capturing Owen, one of my favorite Torchwood characters (funny how I came to like the "unlikeable" Torchwood characters best...).

Our heroes win out, of course; and there's plenty of blood and gore along the way. Doctor Who-niverse? Not so much. But Torchwood? Oh, yes.

Rebecca says

I found this book to be fun and entertaining, a quick read and not at all challenging, which was what I was looking for when I picked it up. Not much attention is given to developing the "Torchwood" characters, but the book's original characters were better written and more likable than I often find to be the case in TV show novelisations. Baxendale avoids making much reference to the relationship between Jack and Ianto, and in fact Ianto only makes a few comparatively brief appearances, which was a bit disappointing (although I freely admit that I am heavily biased in this case - Ianto is by far my favourite character in the series). On the other hand, Baxendale does write some very interesting scenes between Gwen and Tosh in the first few chapters, which I liked because he took the time to explore their relationship in a bit more detail than in the TV episodes or other novels. As the cover suggests, it's Owen who heads the team in this novel, and he gets to show off his medical skills to the full here as he plays a major role in solving the case. To summarise: "Something in the Water" was like one of the fast-paced, plot- rather than character-driven episodes of the TV show. Not overly memorable but enjoyable if you're a "Torchwood" fan.

Jules Jones says

First in the trio of books released for the start of the second tv series. There are a couple of internal references to tell you that it's set between "To the last man" and "Meat", but there's nothing that requires specific knowledge of the show other than the basics of who Torchwood are and what they do.[return][return]Baxendale takes an old British legend and puts a Torchwood spin on it, as a water hag causes havoc around Cardiff. The book starts with several different strands which have no connection other than stagnant water, and for good measure tosses in a flu epidemic that isn't. It takes the Torchwood team some time to connect all the clues, by which time they're infected as well. Much running around chasing or being chased by bad guys ensues, making for a plot that offers both thoughtful research by the team and physical mayhem before they manage to close down a major threat.[return][return]Excellent characterisation, and I could hear the voices while reading much of the dialogue, as Baxendale catches the distinctive speech patterns well. There's a decent spread of word count across the characters, and good ensemble play between various combinations rather than focusing on only one or two (though don't go looking for any overt reference to the relationship between Jack and Ianto, because it isn't there). Owen gets a fair bit of attention, as this is partly a medical mystery and his expertise is directly relevant to one strand of the story. Owen's very likeable in doctor mode, without entirely losing his nasty edge with his teammates, which is the way I like him.[return][return]There's a lot of good banter, and some nice one-liners, not just for the main characters but for the one-offs created for this story.[return][return]It's a solid story that makes good use of both the inspiring myth and various quirks of the Torchwood universe. This isn't just a generic science fantasy with the right names pasted in, but something that's very clearly Torchwood. There are some minor disappointments (in particular, I felt the ending was rather abrupt), but overall I thoroughly enjoyed this one. I can see why people with different tastes might have found it a bit flat, but it happens to hit my buttons rather well.

Writerlibrarian says

Interesting and well done for a tie in book. It didn't have enough Ianto for my taste but it was mostly an Owen and Jack book. The plot was solid but this is Torchwood, you usually don't watch or read for the plot. :)

Ken says

A flu epidemic is spreading through Cardiff, whilst a strange corpse is found in the water. It's a race against time for the Torchwood team to piece together all the clues.

The story is fast paced as the team try and solve the mystery, the characters are also well written. It really felt like the show.

Leila Anani says

The Torchwood crew encounter the folk legend 'The Water Hag' in this one - but in true Torchwood style she turns out to be an evil alien laying her spawn in the throats of men...

So there's some great 'Alien' style body horror with parasites being vomited up killing their hosts. I also like the water hag as an alien - she's interesting and hard to defeat.

Characters are all on point, the voices are right and they all perform their jobs admirably but there's little development, back story or emotional interaction - this one really is all about the story. I like Ianto in this one his cool competence comes across - he's always there hovering in the background providing whatever anyone needs.

In contrast to the other Torchwood novels this one is very streamlined and focused - the majority have multiple plot strands that come together at the end. This one has a lightening pace and is really tight - everything is connected and there's very little filler.

Overall I thoroughly enjoyed this one - it's a very quick read and while it doesn't have too much character development it has a nasty alien and a nice level of body horror.

Ryan says

I have been going through serious withdrawal from Torchwood (the best Sci Fi show ever) and I had been seeing these books around but had not picked one up before.

Well the absence of Captain Jack and crew became too much for me the other day so I had to go buy one of the books. This isn't the first book in the series but it was the first one they had available, so into my hands, out the door, and into my house it came.

I was not disappointed by the story, it felt like I was watching a really good episode of the show and it was nice to see Tosh, Owen, and Ianto again. Those three characters are highly missed by me and I wish they could be brought back to life on the show.

So anyway back to the story the basic concept is you take the legend of Jenny Greenteeth, make her the last survivor of an alien race, strand her on Earth, and make her bent on taking control by creating homunculuses of herself. She uses a bacteria that infect human males and uses their bodies as incubators to grow the little tots. Now I know this sounds cheesy as hell and it sort of is, but it's done in a way that only Torchwood can do. Nothing was lacking in this book the humor I expect, the danger and action that compels the storyline, and the oh so wonderful Captain Jack. Captain Jack makes Torchwood for me and he doesn't let me down in this book. I can't wait for my next trip to the store so I can buy the next book in the series.

osoi says

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annikeh.net

Anna Pothecary says

Loved the storyline, it kept me very gripped.

? Irena ? says

4.5

I loved this story. Even Owen was great. Actually, he was awesome here. The cases are connected, but you

get that right in the beginning. The problem they are facing here is more than serious and it keeps you on the edge of your seat until the very end. There are a few moments when you think they've beaten it only to realize the fight isn't over. It was exhausting in a good way. Jack's role is more pronounced, Toshiko got a moment to shine and, as I said, Owen wasn't his usual whinny self-absorbed self.

Another thing I loved is the humour. There is lots of it in *Something in the Water* and it is a Torchwood kind of humour. I'll just select a few examples in spoiler tags. They aren't really spoilers, but still. (view spoiler)

'Gwen and Toshiko have made it through alive.'

'Alive?'

'It was a close thing, apparently. They nearly died of boredom.'

Owen's dark humour:

'Two autopsies in one day. Business is good.'

'Y'know, I kind of prefer it when the dead stay dead.'

'Pot. Kettle. Black,' Owen said.

'Yeah,' agreed Jack with a shrug. 'The difference is, I do it with style.'

(hide spoiler)]

Now for annoying parts or *why do they give Gwen a weapon* part. Gwen manages to drop her gun every single time something or someone attacks them. Or they take it from her. This goes for the previous three books I've read too. Her presence has way more sense on TV than here. I see her as a necessity of having another fighter (not that she is that good at it) since Owen is a doctor, Toshiko is a genius and Ianto keeps them all sane. And Jack is, well, unique.

Carolyn says

I'd forgotten how grisly Torchwood could be. ? It's been a few years since I've read a book or watched the show, but I remember now.

This was a nice visit back to the characters, and with a great story. The title was spot on, hahaha. The characterizations were great, and it felt like a real thing that could happen in an episode. I'm really glad I wasn't sick while reading this though, as that's a huge part of the story. Sore throat, cough, etc. It may haunt me though, the next time I do come down with a cold! ?

Descriptions of how some of the people died were quite graphic, in a way that surprised me and made me squirm a bit. I'd be aware of that, if you're squeamish. Also, there's - SPOILERS - a dog death, which I know people are sensitive to, so be aware of that.

Honestly this was great though, and I really enjoyed it. Better than the Doctor Who book I read earlier this

year!

K. McDevitt says

I had a hard time reading this book. It was good, but it was also TERRIFYING to me. I don't do well with outbreak/epidemic stories that involve certain death. And that was definitely the entire plot of this story. So, yeah, terrifying.

People are getting sick. There is a water hag causing it. And icky, disgusting mucus creatures are emerging from the backs of people's throats, killing them in an explosion of blood and ick in the process. Yeah. Terrifying.

I did like reading about a completely clueless and compromised Torchwood team still somehow managing to go on and do their jobs, knowing they were the only people who could stop what was happening. And I loved that Owen had a lot of theories and thoughts, but it was ultimately Tosh who figured out the key things. But it really did take all of them, nearly dead at the time, to take the water hag down. I was SO RELIEVED when she was finally offed. The finale was tense and exciting but also, and maybe I mentioned this earlier: terrifying!

Erika Williams says

Baxendale's Torchwood books and I don't seem to agree much. The Undertaker's Gift was uninspiring and focused too much on how perfect and precious Gwen is. *Something in the Water* suffers from its own set of problems, but as far as reading material is concerned, it's still average. I can't even recommend it on its merits as a Torchwood book.

Something in the Water starts with three different mysteries that of course end up to all be related. A strange disease with flu-like symptoms, a corpse face-down in the water that turns out to still be able to talk, and an eviscerated Weevil are all the byproduct of the same grand scheme to take over the world. The gore and action sequences were drawn out and over the top, especially the final battle towards the end that takes up forty pages out of 249.

There are a few things that keep this book from sinking to the bottom of the Torchwood pile. (I would definitely recommend this one before *The Undertaker's Gift*.) For one thing, we actually get to see the doctor side of Owen. Even in the show, it's sometimes easy to forget that is his background. Even more importantly, however, is that Ianto actually does things. Like, Torchwood things instead of just serving everyone coffee and cleaning things up, although he does those things as well. It's like people have a tendency to forget that he actually is a member of Torchwood and not just there to do housekeeping or something.

Something in the Water falls somewhere in the middle of the Torchwood books, but make sure you can stomach the extra amounts of gore.

Tahsina Syeda says

An okay enough book.
