

= To the Last Man (Torchwood) =

" To the Last Man " is the third episode of the second series of the British science fiction television series Torchwood , which was first broadcast on BBC Two on 30 January 2008 . The episode was written by returning series guest writer Helen Raynor , directed by Andy Goddard and produced by Richard Stokes . As with every episode of Torchwood 's first two series , " To the Last Man " featured the five initial series regulars John Barrowman , Eve Myles , Burn Gorman , Naoko Mori and Gareth David Lloyd , with Mori 's character Toshiko Sato given the main focus .

The narrative centres on the intersection of Toshiko 's romance with Tommy Brockless (Anthony Lewis) , a ' cryogenically ' frozen soldier from World War I , and a number of hazardous time slips from 1918 . As the impending crisis becomes more severe , Toshiko must choose between the man she has fallen in love with and the world at stake . Tommy eventually elects to sacrifice himself and returns to 1918 , where Toshiko knows he will be executed because of his shellshock , in order to save the world .

" To the Last Man " was filmed as part of the first production block of Torchwood 's second series . Helen Raynor was inspired to write the episode to explore the issue of soldiers executed for cowardice during the First World War . The episode was watched by an aggregated total of 4 @. @ 97 million viewers across its first three showings . Critics were divided on the nature of the episode . The characterisation was largely praised , in addition to the romance between Tosh and Tommy , the atmosphere and the criticism of war . However , the storylining of the episode and the reliance on plot devices to advance the narrative was heavily criticised by some reviewers .

= = Plot = =

Tommy Brockless (Anthony Lewis) is a young World War I soldier , shell @-@ shocked from his experiences in the trenches . In 1918 , Torchwood agents Gerald Carter and Harriet Derbyshire (Roderic Culver and Siobhan Hewlett) take Tommy from the St Teilo 's military hospital in Cardiff to be kept in cryonic storage . They leave instructions for future Torchwood members that Tommy will one day be key to saving the world . In the present day it is revealed that Torchwood have kept Tommy in storage for almost a century , releasing him one day a year for a medical check @-@ up .

Whilst Tommy is under day @-@ release , Toshiko (Naoko Mori) elects to keep him company . Whilst Toshiko spends time with Tommy , Jack (John Barrowman) and Gwen (Eve Myles) discover that the abandoned Cardiff hospital is showing signs of time distortion , with elements of the 1918 hospital appearing in the present . Meanwhile , Toshiko and Tommy grow closer ; after an afternoon in the pub , he kisses her romantically . Later , Toshiko 's colleague Owen (Burn Gorman) realises that Toshiko has developed feelings for Tommy and warns her to be careful as he does not want her to get hurt . Upon their return , Jack realizes that the present year is when Tommy will be needed : he will have to travel back to 1918 and activate a Rift Key to close the connection between 1918 and the present and prevent disaster . As Tommy is due to be executed for cowardice three weeks after his return to 1918 , Tosh initially refuses to let him go back . Jack persuades her of the necessity of Tommy 's return .

After spending the night together , Tosh and Tommy return to the hospital as the disruptions intensify , accompanied by Jack . During one disruption , the three witness the 1918 Torchwood team ; Jack relays instructions through Tommy for them to take the 1918 version of Tommy into their custody before the older Tommy arrives . Tommy and Tosh share a goodbye , and Jack briefs Tommy on using the Rift Key before he steps back to 1918 during the next disruption . However , when back in the past , Tommy becomes shell @-@ shocked , and is led back to his bed by nurses ; he is unable to operate the Rift Key in his state . At Torchwood 's headquarters , Jack and Tosh use the Cardiff Rift to project an image of Tosh into Tommy 's mind . Tommy senses some familiarity with Tosh but otherwise does not recognise her . Despite this , Tosh is able to instruct Tommy to activate the Rift Key , and the distortions at the hospital soon dissipate . Recovering from events , Tosh brushes off Owen 's sympathy and takes a moment to consider her short time with

Tommy .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing = = =

Helen Raynor , the writer of the episode , expressed an interest in writing a Toshiko @-@ centric episode at the first script meeting for the second series of Torchwood . She wanted to write a story centred on Toshiko because she " absolutely [loves] Tosh as a character " and wanted " to take her on another step " . Inspiration for the story came from a short fictional document written by James Goss for the in @-@ universe Torchwood Institute website created by BBC Online for the first series . The document detailed a man whom Torchwood would defrost " once a year , give him a day out , and then pop him back in the freezer " . Series creator Russell T Davies described the episode as a " love story " but felt it inevitable that the story would end in tears . In creating the character of Tommy Brockless , Raynor felt that he was " the perfect boyfriend " for Toshiko . However , she stated that their brief relationship was not a " mature relationship " but " a pretend relationship " as Toshiko only " gets him out of the box once a year " . She added that what Tosh has to learn is that Tommy can 't be " treated like a toy " . In regards to the conclusion of the episode , she stated that " it 's a hugely painful goodbye for both of them " .

Raynor was also inspired by the issue of World War I soldiers who were executed for cowardice when they were suffering from shellshock . One of the episode 's working titles was " Soldier 's Heart " , an American Civil War term for shellshock . The final title recalls an infamous order from Field Marshal Douglas Haig on 11 April 1918 , in response to the German Spring Offensive , which included the phrase : " Every position must be held to the last man : there must be no retirement " . This policy led shell @-@ shocked soldiers , like the fictional Tommy , to be sent back to war after a very short recuperation period . Director Andy Goddard felt that a scene in which Tommy watches footage of the Iraq War was key to the episode ; this experience tells Tommy that that the human condition has not changed since 1918 and that humanity still makes the same mistakes . During the episode , Jack suggests that the British army executed " more than 300 " shell @-@ shocked soldiers for cowardice during the First World War . Executions for all offences numbered 346 , of which 40 were for murder or mutiny . The remaining 306 were for desertion (266) , cowardice (18) , and other offences (22) . While some of these can now be attributed to shell shock , most cannot , although all 306 were posthumously pardoned in 2006 . Early drafts of the episode included Tommy asking for Suzie Costello , a member of the Torchwood Institute who had committed suicide in the series ' 2006 premiere episode . In regards to the sensitive material in the episode , actress Naoko Mori stated that whilst reading the script she " kind of forgot it was Torchwood and [that] it was science @-@ fiction " . She found the climax of the episode " heartbreaking " .

= = = Filming and effects = = =

" To The Last Man " was filmed alongside " Adam " as part of Block 1 of production . It was originally intended to be the fourth episode transmitted . The scenes featuring Toshiko and Tommy on the Penarth Pier were recorded , in between heavy rainfall , on 9 May 2007 and marked the first significant location shoot for the second series . Scenes set in Toshiko 's flat were also filmed this day at a house in Palace Road , Cardiff . The episode 's final scene , showing Toshiko and Owen looking out over Cardiff Bay was recorded 10 May . Cardiff Royal Infirmary provided the interior locations for scenes set in the fictional St Teilo 's military hospital which were filmed between 12 and 18 May . The pub where Toshiko and Tommy play pool was the Eli Jenkins on Bute Street , Cardiff . The Red Cross emblem is used throughout the episode ; the closing credits include the attribution : " Thanks to the British Red Cross for permission to use the Red Cross emblem . "

An important sequence within the episode was the time @-@ shift which ends in Tommy returning to 1918 . Goddard noted that the time @-@ shift " essentially happened off @-@ screen " and that

what the audience sees is " great big wind machines and camera lights " . Anthony Lewis described the wind machine used as " the biggest wind machine I 've ever seen in my life " . He comments that the intensity of the wind machine and the lighting enabled an " instant @-@ made reaction " from himself and Mori . Goddard added that his first assistant director was " instrumental in gearing up all the extras into a frenzy " . The episode 's soundtrack included the song " One of These Mornings " by Moby , which featured the vocals of Patti Labelle , from his 2002 album , 18 . The track heard in the pub scene is " She 's Got You High " from Mumm @-@ Ra 's 2007 debut album These Things Move in Threes .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" To the Last Man " was first broadcast on BBC Two on 30 January 2008 at 9 : 00 pm . The episode was later repeated on the digital channel BBC Three on 30 January at 11 : 00 pm , with an edited pre @-@ watershed repeat airing the next day , 31 January 2008 , at 7 : 00 pm . Stephen James Walker , a writer who publishes on the subject of Doctor Who and its spin @-@ offs , noted that the pre @-@ watershed edition of " To the Last Man " had fewer cuts than any other . According to consolidated figures the episode was viewed by 3 @.@ 51 million viewers on BBC Two , 0 @.@ 31 million viewers for its first BBC Three repeat and 1 @.@ 15 million viewers for the pre @-@ watershed repeat , amounting to an aggregated 4 @.@ 97 million viewers across its three initial showings .

= = = Critical reception = = =

Ben Rawson @-@ Jones of Digital Spy gave the episode a four star review , stating that it provided " another example of a resoundingly triumphant ending that conveys so much via [a] simple image " . He praised the characterisation of Toshiko ? stating that both Mori and Raynor " deserve a great deal of credit for reaching such dramatic heights " ? and also the " refreshingly non @-@ mawkish glimpse at the brutality of war and humanity " . Ian Berriman of SFX was more mixed , giving the episode three stars and comparing it to a re @-@ written version of the series one episode " Captain Jack Harkness " . He felt that though the episode provided a " likeably girlish side of Torchwood ? s blindest character " the characterisation did not add enough depth . Berriman acknowledged the " sweet , surprisingly subdued , almost coy " tone as an indicator of the programme 's flexibility , but added that he " [prefers] the show when it ? s full @-@ blooded and outrageous . " Charlie Jane Anders of io9 gave a critical review , feeling that Toshiko and Tommy had " no chemistry " and that the episode seemed to convey that " men die for women 's wiles " . She felt that despite the flaws of the romance plot , the episode provided some " powerful stuff " and that Tommy 's plight was a strong concept if poorly resolved .

Travis Fickett of IGN gave the episode 7 @.@ 9 out of ten , enjoying the time overlaps , the relationship between Toshiko and Tommy and the appearance of previous Torchwood employees . However , he felt that some of the episode 's plot elements strained the " credibility of the mythology " . Joan O 'Connell Herdman of Slant Magazine enjoyed the characterisation and British historical perspective the episode afforded , though stated that " characters make this episode , plot devices nearly destroy it . " She felt the main strength of the episode was the use of a science fiction crisis " to frame a story about love and sacrifice , the horrors of war and the burdens of command " . Alan Stanley Blair of Airlock Alpha felt that the episode succeeded in the atmosphere it created , opining that " 1918 is a fantastic setting for a ghost story " and that like " Kiss Kiss Bang Bang " and " Sleeper " , the episode showed that " all the [wrinkles] from the first season have been completely ironed out " .

Den of Geek 's Andrew Mickel also enjoyed the episode , contrary to his expectations , having not been impressed by either Torchwood 's earlier stories nor Helen Raynor 's Doctor Who scripts . He appreciated that the episode centred on Toshiko , rather than Gwen whom he felt to be " a personal figure of hate " , and felt that Tommy was " endearing in a burkish kind of way " . Mickel felt that Raynor " pulled off the characterisation that was so sorely missing from [" Sleeper "] " whilst also

treating Tommy 's wartime origin with subtlety . Jason Hughes of AOL TV singled out the juxtaposition of Toshiko and Tommy 's romance and the military hospital ghost hauntings for praise . He compared the episode to a " monster @-@ of @-@ the @-@ week " episode of The X @-@ Files in that it " doesn 't do much to push the overall mythology of the series forward but still manages to capture what day @-@ to @-@ day life in Torchwood would be like " .