

= The God Complex =

" The God Complex " is the eleventh episode of the sixth series of the British television series Doctor Who , first broadcast on BBC One 17 September 2011 . It was written by Toby Whithouse and directed by Nick Hurran .

In the episode , alien time traveller the Doctor and his companions Amy Pond and her husband Rory find themselves trapped in what appears to be a 1980s hotel with constantly changing corridors . They meet Rita , Howie , Joe , and Gibbis , who have also appeared in the hotel , without any idea how they arrived . The Doctor learns that each hotel room contains the greatest fear of someone who has been in the hotel , and that a minotaur @-@ like creature is feeding off their fear .

Whithouse originally developed the concept of " The God Complex " for the previous series , but due to it being similar to episodes in that series , it was pushed back , with Whithouse contributing " The Vampires of Venice " instead . The episode ends with the departure of Amy and Rory , though this was not a permanent exit . " The God Complex " was filmed during the early months of 2011 , mainly on sets constructed for the hotel . The episode was seen by 6 @.@ 77 million viewers in the United Kingdom and received positive to mixed reviews from critics . While the performances in the episode , especially Smith 's , were praised , not all critics were impressed with the plot .

= = Plot = =

= = = Synopsis = = =

The TARDIS , while travelling to a new planet , arrives in what appears to be a 1980s Earth hotel , but the Doctor recognises it as an alien structure specifically designed to take that appearance . They soon meet a group of three individuals ? humans Rita , Howie and the alien Gibbis ? each of whom had previously been taken from their routine lives to find themselves in the hotel . They are also introduced to Joe , a human who has already succumbed to a madness that infects everyone who sets foot in the hotel , and so has been tied up for his own protection . The four explain that there is a beast in the hotel that consumes everyone who has been trapped here . It does this by enticing them to enter one of the many rooms in the hotel which contains their greatest fears , upon which they become brainwashed to " praise him " and allow themselves to be taken , their bodies left without any signs of life ; many others have experienced this , and photos of them and their fears cover many of the hotel 's walls . The hotel would seem inescapable ? its doors and windows walled up ? and its halls and rooms can change on a whim . The Doctor , Amy , and Rory soon find the TARDIS has also disappeared , and the Doctor warns them from opening any door they are drawn to , for fear of being possessed .

As the Doctor tries to ascertain the situation , the group is thrown into panic when they hear the beast coming for Joe , and hide in rooms where Rita and Gibbis face their fears . The Doctor spies the Minotaur @-@ like beast through a keyhole , just before Joe escapes from confinement and is killed . Howie soon becomes possessed after entering a room against the Doctor 's warnings . The remaining group set up a trap to lure the beast into the hotel 's hairdressing salon using Howie 's voice , upon which the Doctor questions the trapped creature and learns it is in agony wishing for its end . The Doctor realises the hotel is really a prison for the creature , and the " fears " in each room are harmless illusions . Howie also escapes from the group , allowing the beast to escape and chase him down , killing him before the Doctor can save him . While exploring more of the hotel , both Amy and the Doctor are separately lured to look into two specific rooms , facing their own fears . Rita also begins to praise the monster , and after thanking the Doctor for trying to save her , follows the fate of Joe and Howie .

The Doctor , Amy , Rory , and Gibbis regroup , and the Doctor surmises that the other three believed in some form of faith . The hotel and its rooms were , by design , meant to challenge their " faith " by fear to allow the beast to possess them . The Doctor identifies that Gibbis has survived due

to the extreme cowardice of his species , while Rory lacks any such " faith " to be broken . However , the Doctor realises that it is Amy 's trust in him that is being challenged ; it is that faith that brought them to the hotel in the first place . Amy soon becomes possessed like the others . As the beast comes for Amy , the Doctor and the others grab her and take her to the room she opened previously . Inside , they find the illusion of young Amy , Amelia , still waiting for the return of her " raggedy Doctor " (" The Eleventh Hour ") . The Doctor asserts to Amy that he is " not a hero " but " just a mad man with a box " to break her blind trust in him ; once this is done , the beast outside the door collapses on the floor .

As they watch , the hotel is revealed to be part of a large simulation ; the Doctor identifies themselves aboard an automated prison spaceship , and the beast as a relative of the Nimon , a creature that feeds off the faith of others . The ship 's automated systems had provided it " food " by bringing aboard creatures who had a strong faith . The beast mutters that " death would be a gift " for the Doctor before it passes away . The Doctor finds his TARDIS nearby , Gibbis asks for a lift home and The Doctor then takes Amy and Rory to London , believing it best for the two to stop travelling with him before they end up getting killed . Giving them a new house and car , the Doctor sets off alone in the TARDIS .

= = = Continuity = = =

Several references to past Doctor Who species are displayed throughout the wall of photos of the past victims of the beast , including a Sontaran , a Judoon , a Catkind Sister of Plenitude and a Tritovore (" Planet of the Dead ") . The Doctor identifies the beast as being from a species that is distantly related to the Nimon , previously a foe in the serial The Horns of Nimon ; and the group witnesses two illusions of Weeping Angels , from the episodes " Blink " , " The Time of Angels " / " Flesh and Stone " . Though the audience is not shown the contents of the room (numbered 11) that the Doctor is lured to open , the sound of the TARDIS ' cloister bell can be heard . Young Amelia is shown waiting for her " raggedy Doctor " to return from the episode " The Eleventh Hour . " The Doctor , being forced to break Amy 's faith in him , echoes a previous event in The Curse of Fenric where the Seventh Doctor is forced to break Ace 's faith in him . In a much later episode , the Eleventh Doctor 's swansong (" The Time of the Doctor ") , it is revealed that what the Doctor saw in Room 11 was the crack in reality that dominated his first series .

The episode also introduces the Tivolians , a race of cowardly aliens who survive by docilely allowing themselves to be conquered by other species on a regular basis . The season 9 episodes " Under the Lake " and " Before the Flood " feature another Tivolian named Prentis , portrayed by Paul Kaye .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing = = =

Showrunner Steven Moffat originally pitched the episode to Toby Whithouse for the previous series with the idea of a hotel with shifting rooms . However , as production continued , Moffat thought that there were too many instances in which the characters were running through corridors in that series , so Whithouse wrote " The Vampires of Venice " instead and " The God Complex " was pushed to the next series . The idea to have a Minotaur be the monster came from Whithouse 's love for Greek mythology . Whithouse was more pleased with " The God Complex " than " School Reunion " and " The Vampires of Venice " , his previous Doctor Who scripts , as the tone was darker which he was " more comfortable " writing .

The first line of dialogue Whithouse wrote was the Doctor 's translation of the Minotaur 's words : " An ancient creature , drenched in the blood of the innocent , drifting in space through an endless shifting maze . For such a creature , death would be a gift " . The Minotaur then tells the Doctor he was not talking about himself , but rather the Doctor . This is foreshadowing of the upcoming event

of the Doctor 's death , the story arc of the series . Amy and Rory 's departure in the episode was only temporary ; they return for the series finale , " The Wedding of River Song " and appear briefly at the end of the 2011 Christmas Special . They permanently leave in the fifth episode of the seventh series .

= = = Filming and costumes = = =

The read @-@ through for " The God Complex " took place in February 2011 . It was then filmed mainly on hotel sets constructed in the studio . The Doctor , Amy , and Rory 's first encounter with a fear in the hotel is the ventriloquist dummies found in Joe 's room ; Whithouse wanted to include something " big and bold " and noted that there was " something macabre about ventriloquist dummies " . Many members of the crew were brought in to operate the dummies , most of them having to lie underneath them on the floor . The actor who portrayed the Minotaur , Spencer Wilding , was six foot seven inches tall . Wilding received a costume fitting in early 2011 , after which the suit was dressed up with paint and fur .

David Walliams was asked to guest @-@ star in the episode in an email and he agreed , having been a fan of the show . He had previously appeared in the Fifth Doctor audio drama Phantasmagoria where he played two separate characters . Matt Smith called his co @-@ star " hilarious " and found it hard to take him seriously , as when he was in his prosthetics for the part he resembled a giant mole . The prosthetics took about two hours to apply . Walliams felt the make @-@ up was not limiting to his acting , finding it " quite expressive " .

= = Outside references = =

The hotel and setting has been compared to Stanley Kubrick 's film The Shining , using similar composition such as long corridor shots and odd angles . Critics also observed that the episode drew inspiration from George Orwell 's novel Nineteen Eighty @-@ Four , particularly in the concept of rooms (or , in Orwell 's case , Room 101) containing each person 's deepest fear . Joe also quotes the old English nursery rhyme " Oranges and Lemons " , singing " Here comes a candle to light you to bed , here comes a chopper to chop off your head ! " .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" The God Complex " was first broadcast in the United Kingdom on BBC One on 17 September 2011 and on the same date in the United States on BBC America . Overnight ratings showed that 5 @.@ 2 million viewers watched the episode on BBC One , beaten by direct competitor All @-@ Star Family Fortunes on ITV1 . This made Doctor Who third for the night behind The X Factor and Family Fortunes . The episode was ranked number 1 on BBC 's iPlayer the day after it aired service and was also popular on social networking site Twitter , where the phrase " Amy and Rory " trended the night it aired . When the final consolidated figures were calculated , an additional 1 @.@ 57 million time @-@ shifted viewers were added , bringing the total up to 6 @.@ 77 million . With these figures it beat Family Fortunes , which achieved a consolidated rating of only 5 @.@ 39 million viewers . The episode also received attention on BBC 's online iPlayer , where it placed fourth for the month of September . It was given an Appreciation Index of 86 , considered " excellent " .

= = = Critical reception = = =

The episode received positive to mixed reviews from critics . Radio Times reviewer Patrick Mulkern called Whithouse 's script " clever and original " and Walliams " endearing " as Gibbs , believing it was another entry into the series ' " fabulous " stand @-@ alone episodes. io9 's Charlie Jane Anders was also positive , especially of the way the Doctor 's character was explored through his overconfidence making others believe in him instead of themselves and praising Smith 's performance . Keith Phipps of The A.V. Club gave the episode a B + , praising the guest stars and

the way the Doctor 's character was explored . Neela Debnath , writing for The Independent , also gave a positive review , praising the creepiness , Karan and Leonidas ' performances , and the sadness in the ending . However , she was surprised that Amy accepted the Doctor would be leaving her despite her wanting to find her child as seen earlier in the series .

Dan Martin of The Guardian praised the exits of Amy and Rory and highlighted Gillan and Smith 's performance , noting how more of his dark side is shown . Of the plot , he stated that it was " funny and thoughtful " but felt " like a runaround bolted on to make way for the ending " . Martin later rated it the fifth best episode of the series , though the finale was not included in the list . Digital Spy 's Morgan Jeffery wrote that Hurran " excelled " in directing and that the episode worked " incredibly well " on an emotional level . However , he felt it did not succeed as well in terms of plot , citing the " thin explanation " for the happenings . Gavin Fuller of The Daily Telegraph awarded the episode three and a half out of five stars , stating that " the surreal tone to the episode ... helped camouflage the fact that the plot made very little sense " . However , he praised the cast 's " impressive performances " , especially Smith 's .

Dave Golder of SFX also gave " The God Complex " three and a half out of five stars , questioning some logical aspects but noting that it was " extremely witty , particularly when it comes to David Walliams 's cowardly moleman Gibbis " . He also did not believe Amy and Rory would be gone for long , especially as the Doctor had placed them in more perilous situations before . IGN 's Matt Risely rated the episode 7 out of 10 , calling it " a notably wonky episode , both in terms of tone and plot development " that came off as " a confused , slightly ill @-@ fitting hodgepodge of a tale " . While he praised Hurran 's directing and the performances of Walliams and Karan , he felt the characters were sidelined near the end . Risely noted that " things certainly chugged along with a witty , sparkling vibrancy at least early on " , but the tone " lost its way halfway through " culminating in a " hollow and rushed " final scene where he left Amy and Rory .