

= Flesh and Stone =

" Flesh and Stone " is the fifth episode of the fifth series of British science fiction television series Doctor Who . Written by showrunner Steven Moffat and directed by Adam Smith , the episode was first broadcast on 1 May 2010 on BBC One . It is the conclusion of a two @-@ episode story that began with " The Time of Angels " that features the Weeping Angels as primary villains and sees the return of the character River Song (Alex Kingston) .

Following the cliffhanger of the previous episode , alien time traveller the Doctor (Matt Smith) , his companion Amy Pond (Karen Gillan) , River Song , and Father Octavian (Iain Glen) and his militarised clerics have escaped entrapment by the Weeping Angels , creatures who only move when unobserved by others . They take refuge inside the crashed starship Byzantium , but the Angels pursue them and Amy is on the brink of dying from the imprint of an Angel in her eye . Both the Angels and the Doctor 's team face danger from a widening crack in space and time which has the power to erase persons from history .

Moffat wrote the two @-@ part story as a more action @-@ packed sequel to his 2007 episode " Blink " , inspired by the relationship between the film Alien and its sequel , Aliens . The episode contains vital information concerning the main story arc of the cracks in time , and contains many instances which are character @-@ motivated . " The Time of Angels " and " Flesh and Stone " were the first two episodes to be filmed ; filming for " Flesh and Stone " took place in late July , with location filming in Puzzlewood and Southerndown beach . The episode was watched by 8 @. @ 495 million viewers in the United Kingdom and received mostly positive reviews from critics , though many commented that it did not live up to the quality to the first part and disagreed about the decision to show the Angels moving . Additionally , a scene in which Amy attempts to seduce the Doctor generated some complaints to the BBC .

= = Plot = =

Continuing from the cliffhanger of the previous episode , the destruction of the gravity globe allows the Doctor , Amy , Dr. River Song , and Father Octavian and his clerics to jump into the localised gravity well of the starship Byzantium and escape the horde of approaching Weeping Angels . The Angels follow them into the ship and the Doctor directs everyone into the ship 's oxygen factory , a forest contained within the starship . While in the secondary control room , the Doctor observes a familiar crack in the wall and realizes that it is the same one from Amy 's bedroom (" The Eleventh Hour ") . He determines that it is leaking time energy from which the Angels are attempting to feed .

In the forest , the Doctor and River find Amy struggling with an image of an Angel imprinted in her brain . Amy has been counting down backwards and is close to being killed by the Angel when The Doctor instructs her to keep her eyes closed to starve the angel . With Amy unable to move , The Doctor , River and Octavian attempt to reach the primary control room on the other side of the forest . River and Octavian reveal to the Doctor that she is a prisoner in Octavian 's custody , with a pardon promised should she help them complete their mission . Octavian is captured and killed by an Angel as the Doctor and River enter the control room . As Amy and the clerics wait for rescue , the crack in the secondary control room opens further and the Angels move away from it . When some of the clerics approach it to investigate , they disappear completely ; while Amy remembers them , the remaining clerics have no knowledge of their existence . Amy is soon left alone as the remaining clerics also disappear investigating the crack . The Doctor instructs Amy to begin moving towards the primary control room , keeping her eyes closed but acting as if she is still able to see in order to fool the Angels . Amy trips and reveals her blindness to the Angels , but before they can kill her River teleports her to the control room .

The Doctor reveals that the crack is due to an explosion somewhere in time , a date that he and River are able to determine . The Doctor warns that anything that falls into it is erased from time ; this is why the Angels fear the crack . The only way of temporarily closing the crack is to send a " complicated space @-@ time event " such as the Doctor himself or the whole of the Angels into the crack . The Angels continue to drain power from the Byzantium until they cause the artificial gravity

to fail , dropping the Angels into the crack and sealing it while the Doctor , Amy , and River hang on to the controls . With the Angels gone , the Angel in Amy 's mind never existed , and she is able to recover . River is teleported away by the clerics ; she tells the Doctor that they will meet again soon when the " Pandora " opens , which is dismissed by the Doctor as a fairy tale .

Aboard the TARDIS , Amy asks the Doctor to return her to Earth on the night they left because she wants to show him something . In her room , she shows the Doctor her engagement ring and wedding dress and tells him that she is to wed Rory the next day . Amy then attempts to seduce the Doctor . Alarmed by this , the Doctor tries to deter her by pointing out that kind of relationship she is suggesting will not work between them , and that she is engaged . He then realises that Amy 's wedding the next day , 26 June 2010 , happens on the same day as the time explosion epicenter and he takes Amy away so that he can figure out what is going on .

= = Production = =

= = Writing = =

Writer Steven Moffat came up with the concept for " The Time of Angels " and " Flesh and Stone " when he was thinking of the worst possible situations to be in with the Weeping Angels and thought of the inability to see . His first idea was blindness , though this developed into the situation that Amy ends up in . Moffat designed the two @-@ part story to be a more action @-@ oriented sequel to " Blink " , an episode he wrote for the third series that introduced the Weeping Angels . He was inspired by the relationship between the film Alien and its sequel , Aliens , which he referred to as " the best conceived movie sequel ever " , describing it as being more " highly coloured " as opposed to Alien 's more low @-@ key tone . He also intended for the Angels to have a plan that could become " almost like a war " , in contrast to the way they were struggling to survive in " Blink " . The title " Flesh and Stone " was suggested by Moffat 's son .

The episode is also important in the main story arc concerning the cracks in time and space . The idea of the crack was inspired by a similar crack in the wall of Moffat 's son . As the crack reappears , several facts about it are revealed . In the episode , the Doctor speculates that they are connected to the fact that Amy could not remember the events of several previous episodes , as well as events in history that had occurred in " The Next Doctor " . He also discovers that the time explosion that caused the crack is 26 June 2010 , which is also the original airdate of the final episode of the series , " The Big Bang " . Before the Doctor , River , and Octavian leave Amy and the other clerics , the Doctor briefly returns to console Amy and to ask her to trust him and remember what he told her when she was younger ; however , the Doctor in this scene is shown wearing his jacket , which he had lost to the Angels earlier in the episode , as well as a different wristwatch . It is revealed in " The Big Bang " that this was in fact the Doctor from later in his timeline , setting up events in Amy 's past to try to help her remember him after he has rebooted the universe . River Song tells the Doctor she will see him again when the Pandora opens ; the Pandora was previously referred to by Prisoner Zero in " The Eleventh Hour " and is revealed in " The Pandora Opens " , which also sees the return of River Song .

Many instances in the episode were character @-@ driven . The action of the Angel to torture Amy " for fun " was met with anger from the Doctor but also gave him courage to defeat the Angels and save Amy . Moffat stated that in the scene in which the Doctor must figure out how to save Amy in a matter of seconds he was " very basic ... very pure , simple Doctor " and did not have time to comfort Amy because his compassion would get in the way of his thinking process . River was also meant to understand this and explain to Amy that he needed to think . Moffat believed that Amy was " passionate and a fighter and ... also really smart " which he showcased in the scene where Amy could not open her eyes for more than a second but was determined to do it for less than one . Moffat also believed that Amy 's decision to attempt to seduce the Doctor was consistent with the character he had built up from her first episode . It was also a reflection of how the two had just escaped from death and shared a hard time together , and Amy 's tendency to do things " in the

heat of the moment " . The Doctor 's reaction was intended to be a reflection of how he often acted embarrassed and flustered when women behaved that way .

= = = Filming and effects = = =

" The Time of Angels " and " Flesh and Stone " were the first two episodes to be produced in the series . The read @-@ through for " Flesh and Stone " took place on 15 July 2009 following the read @-@ through of " The Time of Angels " . The forest scenes in the Byzantium were filmed at Puzzlewood , in the Forest of Dean over nine nights in July 2009 . The final scenes on a beach were shot at Southerndown , Vale of Glamorgan in Wales during 20 ? 21 July 2009 , the first filming done for the new series .

Most of the Weeping Angels are not statue props but young women wearing masks , costumes , and paint that took two to three hours to apply . Director Adam Smith called them " an absolute nightmare to film with " because it took a long time for them to get ready and they had to stand still for long periods of time . In the climactic scene Gillan had to walk with her eyes closed , which she said was difficult and challenging as the ground was uneven and muddy . She stated that " it was the most scary thing " when she had to trip over a step and fall , even though she was aware of the crash mat . As she was not able to express herself through her eyes , Gillan had to make herself more animated to convey emotion . The scene in which the Doctor , Amy and River are horizontal in mid @-@ air when the gravity field fails on the Byzantium was achieved by using wires and powerful wind machines . The blue in Amy 's bedroom was an idea of Adam Smith to show that it was inspired by the TARDIS from Amy 's encounter with the Doctor when she was young .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

" Flesh and Stone " was first broadcast on BBC One and simulcast on BBC HD on 1 May 2010 . Overnight figures showed that " Flesh and Stone " was watched by 6 @.@ 87 million viewers ; 6 @.@ 53 million watched on BBC One , with a further 0 @.@ 34 on BBC HD . This was a slight increase from the previous episode , but " Flesh and Stone " was still second for the night behind Britain 's Got Talent . Final consolidated ratings showed that 8 @.@ 495 million viewers had watched the episode , with 8 @.@ 019 on BBC One and 476 @,@ 000 on BBC HD , the fifth and first most @-@ watched programme on each channel respectively . It achieved an Appreciation Index of 86 , considered " excellent " .

A Region 2 DVD and Blu @-@ ray containing " Flesh and Stone " together with the episodes " The Time of Angels " and " The Vampires of Venice " was released on 5 July 2010 . It was re @-@ released as part of the complete series five DVD on 8 November 2010 .

= = = Critical reception = = =

" Flesh and Stone " has received mostly positive reviews . Daniel Martin gave the episode a positive review on The Guardian 's guardian.co.uk , saying that it " can lay credible claim to being the greatest episode of Doctor Who there has ever been " . He went on to declare : " It 's just ridiculously good ? so much that there 's scarcely any point in picking out moments because there was an iconic sequence every couple of seconds . " In particular he praised Father Octavian 's death scene , noting how " despair creeps over Matt Smith 's face as he realises he is going to have to leave him to die ; Octavian 's final speech weeps with honour and elegance " . IGN 's Matt Wales gave the episode a 10 out of 10 rating , saying it was " packed with huge , iconic moments " and stated , " by the end of it , we were left with more questions than answers and a far better sense of Moffat 's meticulous planning " .

Gavin Fuller , writing for The Daily Telegraph 's website , described the episode as " a rollercoaster ride of thrills and spills " . He praised the forest scenes , saying they were " easily the highlight of the episode , taking in a whole range of emotions as the nature and scale of the threat facing the Doctor , Amy , River and the clerics shifted as the episode progressed . " However he expressed

uncertainty over Amy 's " attempted seduction of the Doctor " , claiming that it " did seem out of keeping with the usual tone of the series " , and that " Given the number of young children who watch , it may not have been the most appropriate of scenes to screen " . Patrick Mulkern , writing for the Radio Times , gave the episode a positive review , describing it and its predecessor " The Time of Angels " as " two episodes of Who that deserve 10 out of 10 in anybody 's scorebook " , although he felt that of the two " The Time of Angels " was " marginally more dazzling " , as he found the Angels in that episode more " macabre " , but he still thought that " Flesh and Stone " " bombards us with shudders and tension " . He also stated that he was " much amused by Amy 's amorous antics at the end " .

Steven Cooper of Slant Magazine called it " an exciting , action @-@ packed roller coaster " and praised director Adam Smith 's " top @-@ notch visuals " as well of the performances of Smith , Gillan , and Kingston . He noted the difference between Moffat 's more obvious story arc as opposed to others in the revived series , believing it to be possibly a " long @-@ overdue innovation " for the show . Though he praised the final defeat of the Angels for making use of what the viewer had forgotten , he thought that being able to see the Angels moving was " creepy and well @-@ done " , but made them " much less original and interesting " and the reason behind it weak , considering that the scene had " no significance at all " and was just to fill up time . SFX Magazine 's Dave Golder agreed , calling the scene " very creepy " and the Angels moving " effective " , but feeling that " these once great monsters come across a bit wussy and stupid " . He also thought that it did not live up the " brilliant first part " , feeling " a bit one @-@ note " and lacking " a really good jawdropping revelation " . However , he thought it was " a solid , exciting , pulse @-@ pounding 45 minutes " that was " tense , action @-@ packed , and stuffed with memorable one @-@ liners and touching character moments " , particularly praising Amy 's countdown and Octavian 's death , and gave the episode four out of five stars .

The Daily Mail claimed that the seduction scene led to complaints from some viewers who accused the BBC of trying to " ' sex up ' the show to attract more adult viewers . " The article quotes a representative from pressure group Mediawatch @-@ uk and an anonymous contributor to an internet message board . A BBC spokesman confirmed they had received 43 complaints of the scene out of the millions who watched the episode .

= = = Reviews = = =

" The Time of Angels " / " Flesh and Stone " reviews at The Doctor Who Ratings Guide