**Game Story**

**The Babel's Tower**

NB: the part between [...] are gameplay notations/ideas

[Backstory]

The story begins after the end of the ninth season, this is the situation:

* Clara, suspended in time by the Time Lords, has no heartbeat, and will need to be re-positioned in its timeline to die as intended and to avoid a rift in time continuum. Clara and Ashildr start a new journey on board a second TARDIS to return to Gallifrey, but to fully exploit its suspension condition, she decides to "take the long way": travel in time and space with his new companion and live many other adventures.
* The doctor has lost his memory of likeness of Clara (but not those of the adventures with her) and leaves with his TARDIS, where he finds a new sonic screwdriver and a message that Clara left him on his blackboard: "run, clever boy, and be a doctor."

Babylon (where our story is settled, read the following chapter) is under the government of Nimrod, a traveler arrived from far away, which, thanks to its technological knowledge and the fact that after his arrival every language becomes understandable, is worshipped as a god by the locals. Nimrod began construction of a tower, that rises from the center of town and that grows more and more, thanks to all the followers who come from all over to settle there.

The population is very devout, but there is a small rebel movement, led by a man named Abram, who does not believe in the divine nature of the new sovereign and tries in every way to open eyes to the rest of the people.

Nimrod is actually the Doctor, at his penultimate reincarnation, who, afraid of becoming the Valeyard (the evil last reincarnation of the doctor), is trying everything to extend his own life.

His plan is to be worshipped by people and to use their vital energy to live forever. The “magic” behind the fact that everyone can understand each other is indeed the translation circuit of the TARDIS.

Some years after the first landing, the TARDIS perceives the corruption growing inside the doctor soul, and for this reason it closes itself and keeps out the doctor. The TARDIS is now linked too strongly with base of the tower, so it can’t escape, and the doctor quickly manage to pull the translation mechanism out the TARDIS, which, in this occasion, succeed to send out a call for help.

[Setting]

The story is set in the Babylon of the 6th century BC in the moment of maximum expansion of the city.

The city has a quadrangular plan, is crossed by the Euphrates River and surrounded by two walls: in the outer part, live most of the population, mostly farmers, who cultivate the fields outside the walls, craftsmen and tradesmen. The inner part is inhabited by richer merchants, the nobles, and the high rank servants. In the city center rises the strangely technologic Tower of Babel (Babel and Babylon are synonyms).

[Introduction] After leaving the doctor, Clara and Ashildr are traveling, and the TARDIS receives a call, which is a request for help from Babylon in the 650 BC: Enchanted, the protagonists insert the coordinates from which the signal arrives and leave. [initial, non-playable movie sequence] Once they leave the cabin, they find themselves on top of a very tall tower, in the center of a city surrounded by the desert. The landing of the TARDIS has not gone unnoticed, in fact the two protagonists are immediately stopped by a handful of guards, who, amazed and somewhat scared, lead them inside the tower, by their sovereign, Nimrod, who all the guards call god. The man receives the two guests in a huge room, but not particularly sumptuous, asks them many questions about who they are and about the presence of the TARDIS: Clara and Ashildr try to answer in various ways [they can also say the truth, in any case they will be imprisoned], but Nimrod shows he does not believe one word. The god-king puts them in the underground prison of the city.

[Level 1] In prison [with some strangely advanced technologies inside] Clara and Ashildr meet another prisoner: Abram, who, surprised at their way of dressing and behaving, is at first confused, but when he realizes that they have been also locked up because considered hostile to the king, he "softens" and tells them that he is the leader of a rebellion against the current sovereign-god, who (according to Abram) is just a man like the others, and, most importantly, is exploiting people to make them build its useless tower.

This story is strange enough to the protagonists, who in fact have received a request for help, and therefore they suspect that it may be related to the "government" situation of the city.

At this point, Clara, Ashildr and Abram set up an escape plan. During the night the three of them escape from the prison, passing through a series of traps and security systems that are out of place in the 650 BC [puzzle / enigma in which we put sci-fi elements to give some hint about the king using alien technology]

The tunnel outside leads out outside the city's first wall, near the river Euphrates. The three fugitives begin to run away, but the guards gave the alarm, and they go for the pursuit. For this reason, during the escape Abraham is hurt by an arrow and left behind. Clara and Ashildr dive into the river to flee and they swim across it.

[Level 2] After walking for a bit, Clara and Ashildr arrive at the door of the city. Now, their priority is to understand how to reach the TARDIS, not to leave (they have received a request for help, they must investigate), but to avoid leaving the TARDIS in the hands of unknown people, and a king who may be alien and surely could be very dangerous.

So, the two protagonists are looking for a way to get back into town: it seems that the only way is to go through the main door, but it is certainly not easy, because the guards are watching it day and night. They see a caravan of merchants coming in: they try to join one of them, but with their appearance and the fact that they are two women alone, they do not have much cooperation. The only way they could use is by fooling a procurer (and owner) of a group of prostitutes, who takes them in "service", once convinced that they are two repudiated wives for their frivolous habits. [to convince the procurer is quite a challenge, the player must talk to the other caravan members and find out what his “weaknesses” are and how to convince him (eg: bring a bottle of wine, try to charm him…). With these dialogues we introduce a little more the player to the lore of the game] Dressed up and mixed with other slave girls, Clara and Ashildr enter the city, chained inside a wagon. Shortly after passing the city gates, the two try to get away from the wagon: Clara wants to find a diplomatic or non-violent way, without bloodshed, but Ashildr, who had managed to free herself from chains, instead pounds the merchant in his throat without thinking too much. [In this gameplay moment Clara remains non-playable, the player can only move Ashildr inside the wagon, and, behind the procurer’s back, it appears the option “put to sleep”, which makes Ashildr kill the man, surprising the player]

For this reason, the two protagonists quarrel badly: Clara finds Ashildr has no respect for life, and Ashildr is disappointed because she thinks the comrade is too much kind-hearted, and that with that attitude they would have never come out that wagon.

[Level 3] Once inside the city, they find that there is a second wall, much more guarded and fortified than the first, where riches and nobles reside, and where is situated the very tall "Tower of God", as it is called by the locals. They understand that they can do little on their own, so start investigating, [going around the city and talking to people] to find out more about the rebellion and the current situation. Thus, they come to know: how the god-king came, and that after his arrival every language became understandable; how the city began to grow more and more; and how the tower, which began as a project to give work to the faithful, has been rising for a long time, thanks to all the people who come to pay tribute to the god.

Now, Clara and Ashildr understand that there is really something strange, everyone in town seems really exhausted and tired, but despite this they are increasingly persuaded to work on the tower and to make the "Divine City" thrive, to achieve the best for themselves and for humanity. They decided that before they left they would have to come to the bottom of the question, even though they have not yet found out who sent the help message.

Speaking to the locals, they find out where Abram lived with his wife, before becoming wanted, and go to his home.

Here the only soldier guarding the house is avoided, but he notices some movements inside and goes looking for reinforcements. [start of a timer, representing the time left before the soldiers’ arrival: when the deadline is over, you must be out, otherwise you will be fooled, and you must start again.] They are looking for clues about members of the rebellion (eg: where they could hide) and they find a particular object that make them remember about a caravan merchant they talked to before and who has entered the city with them.

The guards arrive, Clara and Ashildr run away and start looking for this man. In the square just behind the house of Abram, a gathering of Nimrod worshippers is taking place, the king makes its appearance from the terrace of a poor home, to speak to the crowd and to preach a sermon. [here the player must be confused in the crowd and depict the guards, while Nimrod's speech and the comments of the people present are in the background, so we have some more information, and a deeper idea of Nimrod's character] To escape they confuse themselves in the crowd and they sow the guards.

[Level 4] Having reached the man's house, a middle-wealth merchant, a bit freakish and not particularly smart, they can convince him to help them cross the second wall, as long as they can help Abraham escape again.

The merchant then takes them to the crypt where the rebellion meets, and it is heavily scorned by both Sarah, Abram's wife, and other members, for having led two foreigners to their shelter.

At this point Clara and Ashildr convince the rebellion to help them: they deliver the "key" and the location to enter the underground from where they fled to Abraham's companions, and in return they promise to create a diversion (an attempt to revolt) to allow them to enter the inner part of the city. [to pass the door must overcome with a few cunnings the handful of guard left, and open the gate]

**[Livello 5]** At this point of the story, Clara and Ashildr have finally crossed the second wall, and now they need to figure out how to enter in the Babel’s tower. So, the two protagonists head themselves towards the Babylon’s Library, that it’s the most big, full and impressive collection of knowledge ever seen so far. They chose this destination guided by a Clara’s intuition: indeed, she believes that if any tower’s project really exists then it must be there; and finding it could help them discover a weak spot to enter. Once in the library, they discover a secret section, to which only Nimrod and his trusted priests can have access, using their “sacred” rod as a key (a precious item to which the folk attribute magic powers, but which is actually full of alien technology). Clara and Ashildr hide behind one of the inner pillars of the library, and when a group of priest pass by, they have, almost simultaneously, the idea of steal a rod from one of them. Typically, Ashildr would have a more direct and violent approach than Clara, but this time Clara convince her comrade that there is no need to kill anybody. [All that follows is gameplay] So, they manage to lure a priest from his group and knock him out to steal his rod. In this way, Clara and Ashildr manage to enter the hidden room; once in there they search frantically the project of the tower [it may be a timed enigma, in fact the priest who had been beaten up wakes up and goes in search of help] and after finding it they run away. From the project, Ashildir finds out that the tower is a life-draining device, and that Nimrod is using this energy for himself. After that, the two protagonists reach the base of the Babel’s tower, and after a mental challenge [puzzle involving the new information acquired about the projects], they finally manage to enter in the tower. Once inside they see a very strange and unexpected scene: In the dark room in front of them there is only one object properly enlightened, and it’s unmistakable: the Doctor’s TARDIS. It is tied up to the base of the tower, with some cables going to the upper floor, next to him there is Nimrod beating (with punches) the door, complaining to the TARDIS about the fact that even the other one is keeping him out.

**[Livello 6]** Nimrod, realizing the presence of the two girls, mocks them for taking too much time to reach him. He never doubted that they would escape from the prison, but this time he has a proper cage for them, as a matter of fact he has set up a trap that is able to confine them into a temporal loop. After having seen them trapped, Nimrod goes upstairs, towards the inner plans of his tower. The trap works for Ashildr, but not for Clara: she is herself a temporal paradox, because she is frozen in her last moments of life, so this kind of trap doesn’t affect her. Once free, she enters in the blue cabin (the TARDIS opens its doors, as inviting her to enter), thinking that Nimrod is an impostor that had trapped the real doctor in his own home. But, what she sees once steps in “our” familiar TARDIS is astounding: the mood is really depressing and everything is turned off. The chalkboard, the one she had written on “Run, clever boy” so many time ago, now has room only for a few, but bulky and creepy words: “The doctor is no more”. At this point Clara understands that it was the TARDIS itself that called her for help, but, most importantly, she fears for the life of the doctor, what the hells it means “the doctor is no more”?! After a moment of fear, Clara puts herself together, like always, and figures out that she can free Ashildr from the trap with the help of the TARDIS. [puzzle on the console of the TARDIS, the console assumes a more intuitive form]. After releasing Ashildr, Clara tells her everything. Now it’s time to find all the answers.

**[Livello 7]** Nimrod, located in his control room, (the upper room of his tower), notices that Clara just activated the TARDIS to free Ashildr. He is angry, upset, but most important surprised. He runs downstairs to reach the two girls and enter the TARDIS, but before he can do anything, Ashildr puts a knife to his neck, threatening and intimating him to tell the whole truth; this time Clara doesn’t seem particularly in the mood to stop her. So, Nimrod doesn’t have any choice, and he starts talking. The things he has to say are astounding. Nimrod is the Doctor, a real old one. He is in his penultimate regeneration. The two girls don’t believe him, so he shows them an incontrovertible proof: the sonic screwdriver. [the following “dialogue” is just a concept, to be rewritten for the real game] But why the doctor is doing all this? Why he is trapping them, why he is pretending to be a god? Because he doesn’t want to arrive at his last regeneration, because he knows that the last version of himself is an evil creature, called the Valeyard, with no more humanity left. The Doctor has already fought him, and he knows what he is capable to do: His last regeneration is nothing else than an evil timelord greedy of power and incapable of resigning to the idea of death. So, to avoid the moment in which he will transmute in this wicked creature, he set up a plan. He arrived in Babylon, he became the god-king of this city, and gathered so many people around him, using their ingenuity and even a little mental control. The crow was helpful because he could extract a little bit of life force from every one of them, energy useful to avoid the last regenerations forever. He used the construction of the tower as a pretext to gather people, and the module of translation of the TARDIS was helpful to create cohesion in this group of people and attract other people from other regions. Also, this was the only one feature left in function of the TARDIS, because, when the blue cabin felt this bad behaviour, shout him out and after some time it called for help. [ The doctor has recognised Ashildr the first time he saw her, but right now He also recognizes Clara! Because He knows that she is the only person in the whole universe who can be immune to a time loop].

After this great revelation, Clara and Ashildr are incredulous and indignant: The doctor is doing everything to avoid the evilness of his last regenerations, including assuming an awful behaviour to avoid become the evil version of himself! This is a paradox, but he isn’t seeing it that way because he is too busy with his plans, and too distracted by his ego, that has taken control of this mind.

Clara is scared, but she realizes that she can’t just tell the truth to the doctor right now, because he is out of control; and she isn’t sure how he will react eventually. So she pretends to be fine with that, and the three of them go upstairs, towards the inner plan of the tower. Once there, Clara shuts down suddenly the energy suction mechanism [because of the mental contraction, the whole population passes out] and slaps the doctor in the face. She tells him that he is acting like an idiot, and that all he's doing is just a useless way to run away, not having the courage to face death. [and to avoid being wicked is doing something wrong!]. The doctor, disappointed that neither of them had understood him, takes Clara and leads her toward her TARDIS, to bring her to the point at which she can see the worst side of the Valeyard, so that he can make her understand why he needs to do this. As soon as they enter the TARDIS, however, the doctor pushes out Clara and tries to escape. The TARDIS, however, remains embedded in the tower: all the huge structure is built around it, and it only manages to rise a little, chained to the tower.

[Livello 8] Clara and Ashidr must enter once again into the TARDIS, but this time they have to be really fast [Puzzle]. Once inside Clara convinces the doctor that what she is doing is wrong. Thanks to the bond Clara has with the TARDIS, they succeed in making him revive the best moments of the doctor, to remind him who he really is [final level]. She succeeds in making him see the truth: with this greedy lust for life and fear of death, he is much more like Valeyard than the doctor (in fact, TARDIS does not recognize him and leaves him out) and above all, it is likely to destroy the continuum of time, creating a paradox: if he continues to live and never reaches his last regeneration, how can he fight it and realize how much evil it is? That is an event that has already happened, a fixed point in time (like Clara's death) that will sooner or later have to be reached, otherwise the universe itself is at risk.

At this point the doctor understands and realizes that he is doing only evil to that mankind he has always defended, cause he’s exploiting their vital energy. He understands the inevitability of his destiny, and that the best thing he can do, always at every juncture, is to strive to live the rest of his life in peace, always following his true self.

The doctor leaves with his newfound friend TARDIS, as well as Clara and Ashildr do with their one. Without the TARDIS, the Babel tower core, and its translation circuit, the Babel tower fulfill its destiny, with its fall.

Some "technological insights" are left to the Babylonians, for example in astronomy, and some knowledge is left into the library.