



It's quite *surreal* when you consider it. A week ago today I was preparing for a transatlantic journey - and now I'm back, writing on my computer as if nothing has happened. But it has. A *lot* has happened. I've been to New York, I've done a signing, I've been to a *Doctor Who* convention and I've been surrounded by men in cowboy hats - and not in a *good* way. And I get a week rest before I start the next trip...

So Tuesday the 27th I get up at *stupid O'Clock in the morning* and, after kissing Tracy goodbye, drag my unfeasibly heavy, *packed with copies of*

***From The Pages Of Bram Stoker's 'Dracula': Harker***

suitcase to Heathrow. For the first time in a decade, I live in London while travelling there which meant that rather than drive to my father's, drop the car off, go to the station, catch the Heathrow Connect etc, I could hop on the Central Line outside my house all the way to Ealing, and from there straight to Terminal 3 of Heathrow. In principle, the journey takes about an hour and a half, door to door - unless, like me, you only discover that you're *not*

at Terminal 3 (and in fact you should be at *Terminal*  
*4*

) as you arrive. Still, I managed to check in with time to spare and settled down for some breakfast and a hopeful catch up with both Ben Templesmith (also traveling to New York) and the lovely wife of celebrity chum James Moran (and celebrity chum herself) Jodie Kearns, who was going to Dublin.

Of course, I soon discovered that *neither* of these people were in Terminal 4. I was in the 'naughty boys' corner, it seemed. So I resigned myself to looking at overpriced tat and then boarded the plane. Continental are cheap and cheerful - I have my own media player so I always bulk up with TV shows to watch and I'm not a massive fan of airline food, so I pretty much vegged out until I hit Newark, making my way into town via the Newark Liberty bus. I wasn't staying in my usual stomping ground this time, as the Milford Plaza had lost out on price to the Mayfair Hotel which proved to be cheaper, nicer, friendlier and had free wifi in the lobby. Which was well needed, as pretty much the moment I arrived I had to read, proof and re-edit the about-to-go-to-press ***Doctor Who* #6.**



After I freshened up I watched some US television and was stunned to find *Liberace in a gold cape* talking Spanish at me. I have since been informed that he is a Spanish horosope / psychic guy for New York. He's like Doctor Strange, in gold lame.

He scared me. Enough to go to the bar.

The plan was to go to the Lansdowne Road bar and drink with some good type people, but the Zuda crowd were in the neighbouring Pony Bar, owned by the same guys, so the evening was spent flitting between the two, with the excellent company of Kevin Golden and his lovely wife Miss, Neil Kleid, Marc Bernardin who (as some of you might have seen on Twitter that evening) had issues with the fact that I felt that Han Solo was cooler than Lando Calrissian (Marc's entire life is built around the fact that one day he will get the dream job of becoming Lando's pale blue cape, and will be able to travel to *Star Wars* conventions, draped around Billy Dee William's neck), Rick 'MTV' Marshall, Jimmy Aquino, both Peter and Bobby Timony (and respective wives) and Ron, Kwanza and Dave of Zuda, among others. And there were a

lot  
of others.

Suffice to say that there was a lot of drinking.

Wednesday started with work, editing a PDF script followed by lunch with Michael Wright and the aforementioned Zuda guys in a Greek restaurant where Ron Perazza could prove to me that there was such a thing as *cheese on fire* in a restaurant, I caught up with Dan Didio and Bob Wayne while back in the office before I hopped across the road to Random House to see Tricia, my ***Pride & Prejudice & Zombies*** editor, who showed me some utterly awesome finished pages. It comes out the first week of May, and it looks incredible.



From there I went to see Rick in the *MTV* offices and was shown a soon to be put up video of David Tennant from this years SDCC talking about *Doctor Who* while looking at ***Doctor Who: The Forgotten***, which gave me professional pride and fanboy squee at the same time, and then I hoofed it down to Jim Hanley's Universe where Vito Delsante had arranged a ***Doctor Who***

signing, before my visit to the  
*Doctor Who New York*  
guys.

As ever I enjoyed seeing Vito, I don't see him enough, and I really enjoyed the signing, as I was beside Nick Tapalansky and Alex Eckman-Lawn, signing their new book ***Awakening***. Which is brilliant, by the way.

From there I hit *Doctor Who New York* with top chums Barnaby, Jill (ex-CBLDF) and Daniel (current CBLDF) and drank a lot of red beer until about four in the morning with people including David, Gemma and Kevin. I then managed to grab a cab home, where I went to bed. They gave me a mug. This time I managed to keep hold of it.

Thursday was the long day - I got up, checked out, went to the airport and flew down to Orlando, Florida where I was attending as a guest of *Hurricane Who*, arriving about 4pm where I was met by the wonderful Jarrod Cooper and a stretched limo. Very nice.

*Hurricane Who*

is the first Orlando Whocon in almost two decades, and it was always going to suffer from 'first con syndrome'

- but I have to say, I loved every minute of it. The crew, the guests, the fans, brilliant. the only downside was the hotel itself. who didn't seem to give a damn about the guests and, when my good friends Salina and Jessica found their room broken into and their items stolen, informed them that it wasn't the hotel's fault, as they'd obviously left the door open.

*The door, that is, that was hard to keep open at the best of times. And an excuse that even the sherriff didn't believe.*

But apart from that blip, the bland lunch options the hotel arranged and the 'Dog Grooming' exhibition that shared space with us, the convention was one of the smoothest I've ever seen. Thursday night was the launch party in the local pub and I got to spend time with Rob Shearman (who I always enjoy talking to) and meet Colin Spaul, an actor who's voice is right there with Ian McKellen and John Hurt for '*voices you want children's books to be recorded by*'. I even told him that eventually when Tracy and I have a kid, 'Uncle Colin' will be the man we phone.



~~Southwest Travellin' Man... Great! Don't forget to get a good night's sleep!~~



~~Southwest Travellin' Man... Great! Don't forget to get a good night's sleep!~~