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Doctor Who

Made of Steel

Terrance Dicks

Chapter One

The Raiders

The MegaTech Centre was the first to be hit.

It was the biggest and best computer and electronics store in Britain - possibly in the world. A big modern showroom in the heart of London's West End. Inside, it was all glass and steel, packed with everything from bogstandard PCs to the latest MP3 player. MegaTech advertised everywhere: press, telly, Internet, mailings... Upgrade today! Limited offer! Lowest prices ever! Buy now!

And buy they did. Monday to Saturday, 8am till 6pm, customers flooded in, prowling display stands and shelves, grabbing overworked assistants, spending all they could afford and more. Anything to keep their precious computers and electronic gadgets up to date - even though up to date would be out of date by next week.

MegaTech reckoned to cope with any kind of customer. But not the ones who arrived at 3am one morning.

The vast showroom and the storerooms behind were dark and silent by then. Only a few dim lights were working. Old Trevor, retired policeman and senior nightwatchman, sat in his chair by the main door, thermos and sandwiches by his side. Kevin, his assistant, was off somewhere checking the storeroom.

Kevin was keen, so let him get on with it. Trevor knew that MegaTech was protected by the finest alarm system in the world. If anybody so much as breathed hard on any of the outer doors and windows, bells would ring, sirens would howl, lights would flash and linked alarms would go off in the local cop shop.

Technology was there to make a man's life easier. Let it do its job.

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Trevor poured strong sweet tea into the cup of his thermos, unwrapped his sandwiches and took a bite of cheese and onion.

Suddenly the air seemed to shimmer in front of him. He took off his glasses and rubbed his eyes. Maybe he'd put off that overdue eye test too long. He replaced his glasses and stared. A circle of light was forming in the centre of the showroom floor...

At its centre appeared a shimmering, metallic figure. Slowly it became solid. The thing was terrifying. It was more or less man-shaped but much bigger than any man. The head carried a sort of crest with strange handle-like attachments, and the face was a terrifyingly blank steel mask. Trevor jumped to his feet, dropping his sandwich and spilling his tea. 'Ere!' he shouted feebly.

The metallic figure raised an arm and a gun barrel clicked into place at its wrist. Energy pulses of scarlet light flashed out, and Trevor staggered back and crumpled to the floor.

A second, identical figure shimmered into existence beside the first.

Ignoring Trevor's body, the steel figures moved out of the circle. They began moving among the display cases. Some they passed by. Others were shattered with a sweeping blow of a powerful metal fist. The contents of some of the cases were carried to the circle of light and stacked inside.

In the storeroom, Kevin heard the sound of shattering glass. Drawing his only weapon, a truncheon, he ran towards the sound.

He stopped in the doorway of the showroom, staring round in disbelief. Trevor's sprawled body. Smashed display cases. Two huge silver shapes moving among them.

The nearest of the giant figures turned and saw him. Kevin turned and ran, and the gleaming terrance dicks figure stretched out a metal arm. Scarlet light pulses flashed again. Kevin spun round and fell. The silver figure strode past him into the storeroom.

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