

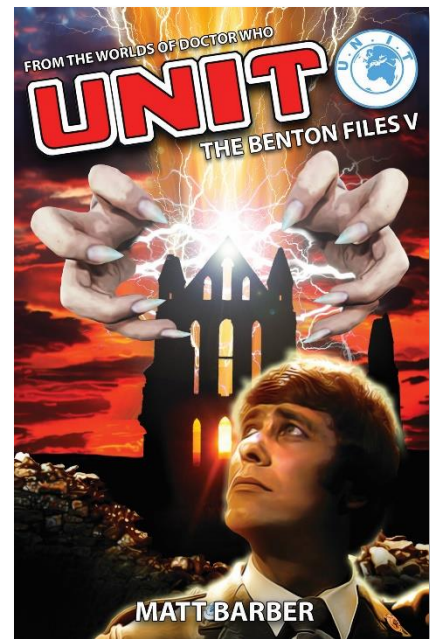


THE BENTON FILES V: THE CHIMES OF WHITBY

Candy Jar is pleased to announce the fifth book in the ongoing Benton Files short story series.

Unlike the previous books, *The Benton Files V* contains just one long story instead of two shorter ones. *The Chimes of Whitby* is written by Matt Barber, a writer new to Candy Jar.

Range editor Tim Gambrell tells us how this came about: "I've known Matt for some years. I knew of his writing for the *Seasons of War* charity anthology, and also his Black Archive on *The Daemons* for Obverse Books. I asked if he'd like to pitch an idea for a Benton Files story. When it came in it was clear that the usual length simply wouldn't do Matt's story sufficient justice and I didn't want it to be compromised. *Benton Files IV* featured linked short stories, so I figured we'd try something different again with *Benton Files V* and make it one long single-story volume. I think it's worked incredibly well."



"I'm a sucker for the Hammer Horror gothic shockers," says Matt. "They're overblown, theatrical, gory thrillers with a dark thread of comedy. I love their simplicity and straightforward drama, and, in the later films, their laudable attempts to site the ancient evils in a contemporary environment. When I was asked to write a Benton Files story, I was determined to indulge my fondness for the genre. A recent trip to Whitby proved the perfect springboard for it: there's something about Whitby, with its quaint streets haunted by the ruins of an ancient abbey, that just cried out to be the location of a supernatural chiller. Add to that the ominous presence nearby on the moors of RAF Fylingdales: a dark, sepulchral wedge of a building that dominates the barren skyline like a giant tombstone, and you have a late-period Hammer Horror waiting to happen."

With such a rich cultural playground in which to run free, Matt is keen to highlight that the idea for the sinister chimes referenced in the title is down to his partner. One thing's for sure – after reading this many of us won't feel the same next time an ice cream van tinkles away in the distance!

Matt is also a fan of Robin Jarvis' *Whitby Witches* novels series. "They provided a link," he says, "between the town and my main obsession with the occult, also giving Benton some allies to fight alongside. But, of course, the notorious Victorian cultural significance of Whitby didn't escape my attention either, and this proved the perfect source for a monstrous enemy for Benton to fight against."

Tim concludes: "Having played around with the framing narrative in *Benton Files IV*, I knew I needed to do something different again in *Benton Files V*. And with Matt's story ticking so many horror boxes, it seemed to me a no-brainer to have Benton telling it on Hallowe'en. Of course, he starts off telling only Ted, but unwittingly he draws a crowd. With almost the whole village in his thrall by the end, he may have set himself up for more to follow!"

The cover is once again by Richard Young, who has taken Matt's ideas and created some very atmospheric artwork.

Blurb

The Benton Files V: The Chimes of Whitby is a spine-tingling tale of gothic horror as John Benton faces his most terrifying challenge yet.

Summoned to the mist-shrouded village of Whitby, where the ruins of an ancient abbey loom ominously, Benton encounters a coven of witches who guard a dark secret.

The witches task him with a mission that would chill the blood of any man: to destroy Dracula, the undead fiend who has stalked the town's shadows for centuries.

Benton's journey becomes a nightmarish descent into the heart of darkness, where his battle against Dracula is not just a fight for survival – it's a confrontation with the very essence of evil.

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Matt Barber is a digital marketer, compulsive podcaster and former contributor to a number of *Doctor Who* series including fan anthologies, essay compilations and the *Black Archive* range of academic-level monographs. He has degrees in Medieval Studies, American Politics and the

History and Literature of Witchcraft, none of which he uses in his professional life, but all of which he has used in his *Doctor Who* writing, including this short story.