

## Blu-Ray, TV Review: 'Torchwood: Children of Earth' is Riveting, Must-See Television

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on July 20, 2009 - 1:11pm

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CHICAGO – Everyone with a TV should tune in tonight to one of the best hours of science fiction that the genre has ever seen, the opening night of the five-part “Torchwood: Children of Earth” mini-series. BBC America is broadcasting the US debut of this five-night event and it is simply incredible, earning every bit of the glowing praise and buzz that has been building in anticipation of its debut.



TV Rating: **5.0/5.0**

“Children of Earth” is essentially about the end of civilization. It is about a species - mankind - presented with a horrible situation and how bad decisions in the face of adversity simply add up over time. The sins of the past generation will be visited on the next one. It may sound deep for a sci-fi mini-series, but as any “Torchwood” fan will tell you, this is no ordinary sci-fi show.



Torchwood: Children of Earth - Day 1 - the children.

Photo credit: BBC

If you're completely unfamiliar (and even if you are, you should still tune in), “Torchwood” takes its name from an underground alien-fighting team a la “Men in Black” or “The X-Files”. Spun-off from the new version of “Doctor Who,” the soldiers in the fight against the unknown are led by the immortal Captain Jack Harkness (the great John Barrowman). Dark, sexy, twisted, funny, and totally unpredictable - “Torchwood” the show has been great for two stellar seasons.

As good as "Torchwood" has been, it's never been *this* good. "Children of Earth" is heart-breaking, action-packed, incredibly unpredictable, and genuinely scary. And the storytelling is as good as anything I've seen on television in a very long time.



(l to r) Ianto (Gareth David-Lloyd), Captain Jack (John Barrowman) and Gwen Cooper (Eve Myles).  
*Photo credit: BBC*

The first hour is a mind-blower. Without warning, all of the children on the planet stop moving. They just stare off into space for a little over two minutes before they go back to whatever they were doing. The panic starts to build. It gets worse when it happens again in a few hours. When all of the children of the planet stop again, they start to chant. "We. We. We. We Are. We Are. We Are. We Are Coming. We Are Coming." It's one of the most terrifying images I've seen on television and I've been covering this form for a very long time.

From here, "Children of Earth" goes many, many places, but I don't want to ruin any of the twists and turns of the excellent screenplay. Who (or what) is controlling the children of Earth? And what will they want when they get here? The amazing thing about "Children of Earth" is how unlikely it is that you will know where it's going. So much television writing is predictable from the first act set-up but each episode of "Children of Earth" features multiple twists and turns.

This is amazing storytelling, always staying one step ahead of the audience, who will likely be on the edge of their seat waiting for the next development. I honestly can't remember the last time I could actually feel my heart race as a complex, intriguing, action-filled story came to an explosive climax. That happened with "Children of Earth".

To be fair, the second hour of "Children of Earth" doesn't quite live up to the incredible ending of the first. But very few things could. Just as more people remember the pilot of "Lost" than the second episode, a let-down is natural. The fact that the team behind "Torchwood" get back to near the same quality level of that amazing opener by the third episode is remarkable. The fourth hour is a bit talky - although thematically fascinating - and the end comes a bit too abruptly, but these are minor complaints for what is one of the best mini-series in years. Don't miss it.



Torchwood: Children of Earth - Day 4 - (l to r) Ianto Jones (Gareth David-Lloyd) and Captain Jack (John Barrowman).

Photo credit: BBC

If you don't have BBC America or can't watch it this week, "Children of Earth" will be released on a perfectly transferred Blu-Ray release on July 28th, 2009. The two-disc set only includes one special feature, a half-hour look at the making of the project, but the video and audio are gorgeous.

The same stunning technical quality holds true for "Torchwood: The Complete Second Season," hitting Blu-Ray on July 28th, 2009. All 13 episodes look flawless in 1080i High Definition and the accompanying DTS HD audio track is perfectly mixed. Copious special features include deleted scenes, outtakes, "The Life and Deaths of Captain Jack," and detailed behind-the-scenes information in "Torchwood Declassified".

July 2009 should finally be the month when most of the world catches up with "Torchwood," one of the best shows on television right now and one of the best science fiction shows in the history of the medium.

*'Torchwood: Children of Earth' premieres on BBC America on Monday, July 20th, 2009 at 8pm CST and runs every night this week. It stars John Barrowman, Eve Myles, Gareth David-Lloyd, Peter Capaldi, Paul Coply, and Liz May Brice. It was created by Russell T. Davies.*

*'Torchwood: Children of Earth' & 'Torchwood: The Complete Second Season' will be released on DVD & Blu-Ray from BBC Home Video on July 28th, 2009. They are not rated.*



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By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [18]

Content Director

HollywoodChicago.com

[brian@hollywoodchicago.com](mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com) [17]

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