

THE BIG FINISH MAGAZINE

VORTEX

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OF STORIES

SHORT TRIPS

IMPECCABLE

THE LATEST COLLECTION IN THE POPULAR
SHORT TRIPS RANGE IS ON THE WAY ...

THE THIRD DOCTOR ADVENTURES

THERE'S A LETHAL ENCOUNTER WITH THE
VENUSIAN KARATE DOWNWARD K-KLAK!





THE LATEST COLLECTION IN
THE POPULAR SHORT TRIPS
RANGE IS ON THE WAY...

SHORT AND SWEET

IMPECCABLE AND Other Stories is a new **Short Trips** anthology featuring six stories from the worlds of **Doctor Who**.

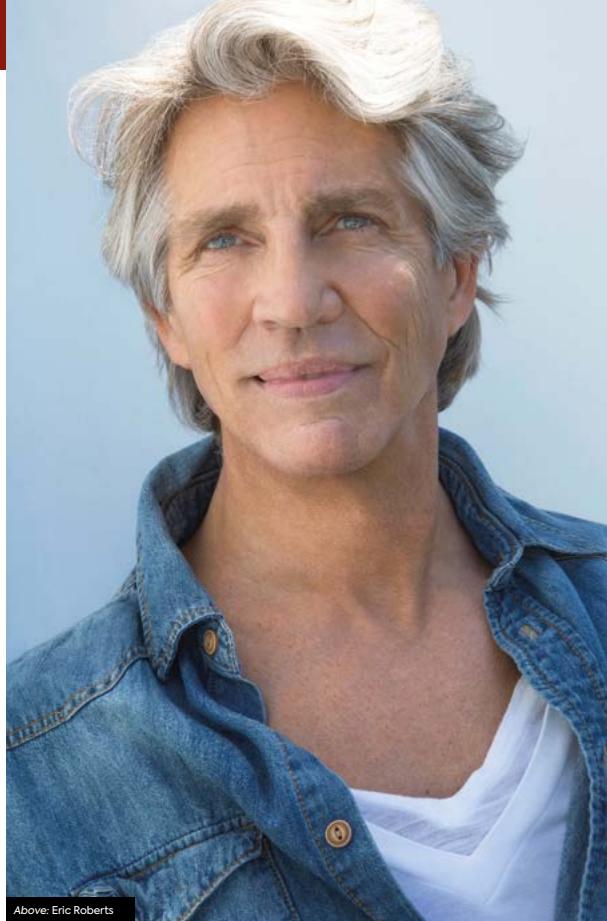
The new adventures are:
Impeccable by Georgia Cook – a story set in the **Master!** universe read by Erik Roberts; *Hard Feelings* by Philip Lawrence – a Fifth Doctor and Nyssa story read by Sarah Sutton with Nicholas Briggs; *Cut-Out* by Dominick Polon read by Duncan Wisbey; *Bring Me the Head of*

Dorium Maldoval by Nick Slawicz – a Twelfth Doctor story read by Peter Forbes; *The Tip of the Mind* by Peter Anghelides – a conversation with Doctor Sandra Urtiman performed by Lisa Bowerman; and *Is Anybody There?* by Benjamin Mackenzie – a Ninth Doctor adventure read by Bronté Barbé.

Short Trips producer (and writer) Peter says: "For this set, I wanted six distinctive stories and so approached writers with different styles and

experience who could handle the particular requirements of writing prose. They included people new to Big Finish or who hadn't written **Doctor Who** for a while.

"Ben's **Short Trips** competition entry impressed me a few years ago, even though it wasn't a winner, and Nick won in 2022. Phil is an experienced screenwriter who last wrote for Big Finish a decade ago and was keen to do so again, and Georgia was my first choice for a



Above: Eric Roberts

Master story based on her recent *Doctor Who* novel and audio plays. "We have readers from across *Doctor Who*'s TV and audio history. Like prose writing, prose reading is a particular talent distinct from performing full-cast audios. It's marvellous to introduce Brontë (Lizzie from the 2025 television story *Lux*) to our roster, and I hope we'll hear more from her at Big Finish. Nick's story was originally written for the late Simon Fisher-Becker to read — we invited Peter back to Big Finish for a respectful tribute as Dorium Maldovar. We've given Duncan a challenge with a variety of voices in his story. Sarah has read half a dozen *Short Trips* before and provides a brilliant reading in a story that focuses on Nyssa. And Hollywood royalty Eric reads our title story commissioned specifically for his Master."



Above: Alistair Lock

IMPECCABLE OPENS the set. *Mark* loves every little moment of his perfect suburban life. His beautiful home. His friendly neighbours and their children. His wonderful wife, whatever her name is. But today there's

a nagging feeling in his mind. A nagging headache building at the back of his skull. And worst of all, a nagging voice that has very different ideas about Mark's cosy world.

Georgia says being asked to write for Eric's Master was: "Very exciting! He's not a **Who** character (well, regeneration) I've ever written before. I love getting to sink my teeth into a new incarnation."

"The brief was something possibly a little horror-flavoured, set during a certain point in the Master's timeline (and obviously to the usual word limit) but otherwise I was allowed to do pretty much what I liked. Which is always great fun, especially when it comes to prose pieces."

"He's certainly very different from Sacha Dhawan's Master who I've written for previously. He's much more calculated and ruthless — more of a shark, a predator, doing whatever it takes to survive. While

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GEORGIA COOK

he still has that Master-adjacent flair for the dramatics, he's much less childish and fun-orientated than some of his other selves."

Hard Feelings marks the return of Philip who previously wrote *Question Marks for Recorded Time and Other Stories* plus *The Fifth Traveller* for **The Early Adventures** and a pair of *Short Trips*. Since his last Big Finish release in 2016 he has written numerous episodes for *EastEnders*, *Holby City* and *Casualty*, and won the C21 Drama Script Prize with his black comedy *Euthanasia in Suburbia*.

Nyssa is trapped in a collapsing building during a Cyber invasion — terrified, unarmed and hunted by a lone Cyberman. As the creature closes in, Nyssa's fear becomes something different. What drives her growing anger, and will she really seek a cruel revenge on her pursuer?

Philip says: "I was introduced to

Peter virtually by Rossa McPhillips who was writing a **Short Trip** for Big Finish. I then vaguely pitched him some ideas but knowing that the slots were already filled for now. Coming up with **Doctor Who** stories is something I do in my downtime, I'm such a fan! I started thinking about Nyssa, a companion that's often quite

So encouraged by Lisa McMullin and Alfie Shaw, I emailed Peter on spec and said: 'How about this?'

"At first Peter said it wasn't possible because of the budget – I hadn't realised that Cybermen cost extra to use. He also envisaged it as a two-hander (again more expensive) which I hadn't. But luckily, I think something stuck

And writing for the Cybermen was just amazing; they've always been a favourite monster of mine.

"As a writer this one was a really fun challenge. I initially assumed it would be a single-person, prose adventure and it ended up being really different. A mix between prose, stream of consciousness and dialogue. It's like Nyssa meets *Die Hard*!"

CUT-OUT by Dominick is the next adventure. A shadowy island, a secret weapon, an off-the-books case. MI6 officer Benedict Flynn has run impossible operations before – though never with the Doctor as his undercover asset.

And the fourth episode in the set is *Bring Me the Head of Dorium Maldovar* by Nick. Nick is a former winner of the Paul Spragg Writing Opportunity (with *The*



Above: Peter Forbes



Above: Nick Slawicz

overlooked among the, shall we say, louder members of the TARDIS team, and I wondered what kind of stories I could tell with her? And *Hard Feelings* popped into my head and I thought, 'Hang on, this would make a good **Short Trip**.'

in the idea and Peter wangled a way that we could do it.

"It was hugely refreshing writing for Nyssa, really exploring who she is and everything she's been through in her young life, trying to give her a different kind of spin.

World Tree in 2022) and this is his first commission since then.

A long-forgotten dodgy deal by Dorium Maldovar comes back to haunt him, and a ruthless gangster has put a bounty on his head. With nobody (and no body) to help him, he calls in a favour from the Doctor. And like Dorium himself, the Doctor is not the man he once was.

Nick says: "It was just lovely to know that *The World Tree* had been well-received enough that Big Finish felt it was worth inviting me back – tremendously validating. It was pretty much an open pitch. Peter asked me for ideas and I ended up pitching two, this one and a Third Doctor/Liz Shaw bodysnatcher story set in a quaint English village.

"I worked on that pitch for about a month and then the day before I said I'd get it sent off the title for this one popped into my head and I decided to lean into it as my ridiculous

IT'S JUST YOUR AVERAGE OCEAN'S ELEVEN-STYLE BOOTSTRAP-PARADOX TIME-TRAVEL BUDDY-MOVIE HEIST-CAPER COMEDY...

NICK SLAWICZ

'well, the worst they can say is no...' alternative. I swore to myself after *The World Tree* that I wasn't going to do another timey-wimey story and then immediately ended up writing the most bootstrap-paradox story I could possibly have come up with!

"Basically, there's an alternate universe where my contribution to this set was instead a very sedate

THE TIP of the Mind by Peter is a conversation with Doctor Sandra Urtiman. Long-standing Big Finish fans may recognise this story as it was originally published in the printed **Short Trips** anthology *Companions* released in 2003.

Peter says: "Big Finish's **Short Trips** hardbacks are now long out of print. They were never made

on audio (plus, I know the author!). I may do the same with other people's stories in the future."

Is Anybody There? by Benjamin Mackenzie concludes the set with his Ninth Doctor adventure. A *disturbing unseen figure calls out to Keena from the shadows. It surely cannot be her bullying father: he died long ago and far from this space station. The Doctor arrives to help her – or is he just the creature's latest cruel manifestation?*

Ben says: "I had entered the Paul Spragg writing opportunity for Big Finish and unfortunately did not win, however, my entry clearly sparked some interest as about a year later I was contacted by Big Finish to suggest ideas for a Ninth Doctor story, which as a fan of *New Who* was a bonus in and of itself.

"I was asked to pitch a series of story ideas – some of them were good, some not so good – but one was chosen and we went from there. I was pretty open to being a part of the process, so whatever brief I was given, I was going to engage and write it to the best of my ability."

Ben concludes: "It was just an all-round great experience to get involved in. It is the first time I'll be a credited writer on anything so that's exciting enough really. Learning the process was also fascinating. The back and forth between producer and creative. The inner workings of something like Big Finish. It was work, but it was fun work and something I've always wanted to do." **VORTEX**



Above: Duncan Wisbey

and straightforward 1970s mystery – which I'm extremely grateful Peter didn't choose, as being trusted to write an established character and do something a bit more wild and out-there was a lot of fun.

"It's just your average *Ocean's Eleven*-style bootstrap-paradox time-travel buddy-movie heist-caper comedy, except there's only two of them and one is a head in a box. When an old swindle comes back to haunt a post-beheading Dorium, he and an unfamiliar Twelfth Doctor try to steal a priceless painting from Dorium's past self in order to stop him from making a very dangerous enemy. (Spoilers: it does not go well!)."

Nick adds: "It's been really great to come back and do this all again after a couple of years. Everyone I've worked with at Big Finish has been lovely, and it is just wonderful to be a part of that."



Above: Peter Anghelides

available as eBooks and cost a king's ransom if you can find them these days. Some of them would make excellent audiobooks. My story from over 20 years ago was written as a monologue script and thus a candidate for a stylistic experiment

DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS IMPECCABLE AND OTHER STORIES



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