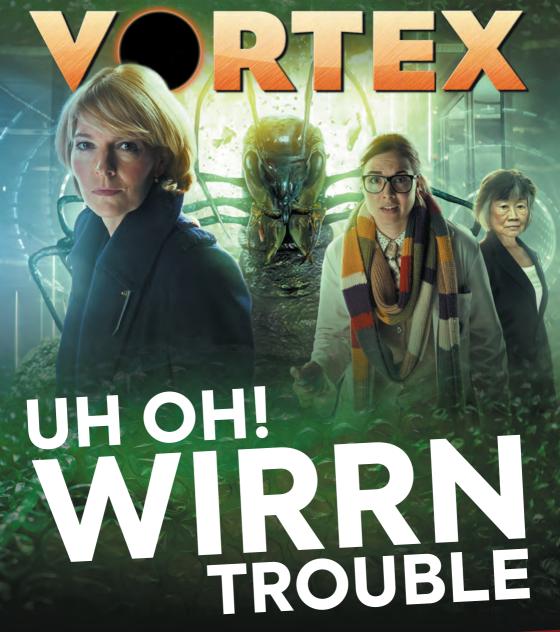
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GOMEZ RETURNS TO PLAY MISSY IN A NEW BOX SET OF ADVENTURES EARLY NEXT YEAR...

ISSY – THE first female incarnation of the Doctor's arch-enemy the Master – makes her Big Finish debut, and there's no sign of her old rival to put a stop to her malevolent and mischievous plans.

It's not Michelle's first time in a Big Finish studio, of course, having appeared with a Scottish Time Lord, Sylvester McCoy, many moons ago in Main Range story Valhalla.

Michelle said: "Missy's such a ridiculously brilliant character, and hopefully that earns her that moment in the spotlight. To find myself centre stage with these Missy adventures is thrilling – I'm very grateful."

In February 2019, we'll meet Missy in her own box set of four new adventures with A Spoonful of Mayhem by Roy Gill, Divorced, Beheaded, Regenerated by John Dorney, The Broken Clock by Nev Fountain and The Belly of the Beast by Jonathan Morris.

Although there's no sign of the Doctor in these tales, there will be a different Time Lord showing his face, as Missy encounters another renegade from Gallifrey, the Meddling Monk, played again by Rufus Hound.

Big Finish senior producer David Richardson teases: "Just wait until you hear the collaboration of Missy and the Meddling Monk!"

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'VE MENTIONED before that when writing Vortex each month, I sadly don't get the chance to attend the Big Finish studio recordings and talk face to face with the actors, writers, directors, producers and the plethora of other talented individuals who bring our favourite stories to life each month.

But sometimes, just sometimes, I'm in the fortunate position of being able to meet some Big Finish contributors in person if they cross the border and venture into Scotland! That was the case earlier this summer when Ingrid Oliver – better known to us all as Osgood in **UNIT** – attended the Glasgow Collectormania event.

I'd been told beforehand that Ingrid is lovely, and that's always a reassurance. But, as the kids say – OMG! She was absolutely wonderful. I introduced myself to her and she was more than happy to talk about her work with Big Finish. It's always a relief when you meet someone whose work you've enjoyed for years and they more than live up to your expectations in the flesh.

Equally as impressive was the fact that she even remembered the name of the first character she played in a **Doctor Who** story – long before Osgood on TV – Lt Baraki in the Seventh Doctor **Lost Story** *Earth Aid.* It just tripped off her tongue!

It is a well-worn cliché, but the Big Finish family – an extension of the larger **Doctor Who** family – really is a wonderful thing. Those two words, Big Finish, instantly give a connection to people you've never met before, with friends and colleagues in common. I feel so lucky to be a peripheral part of that. **KENNY**



UNITY IN NUMBERS

NIT IS used to facing all kinds of alien threats. Since arriving at Big Finish, they've taken on familiar foes like the Autons, Sontarans, the Master, Cybermen and Daleks, and faced new threats like the Silence and the Tengobushi. The latest series, UNIT – Revisitations, the seventh to be led by Kate Stewart and Petronella Osgood, has a mixture of the old and new.

The Wirrn are a familiar foe of the Doctor's, and they arrive on Earth in this new series, while a menace from the past, the Keller Machine, makes a surprise return.

Producer David Richardson says: "Our original plan for **UNIT**

was to have two two-part stories in box set seven. However, when we were unable to turn around one of our two-part stories in time, it made total sense to have a two-parters, and two one-parters! And so we have Kate and Osgood facing up to the Wirrn in the lake district – how irresistible is that? And the return of Captain Chin Lee (Pik-Sen Lim) and the Keller Machine.

"The latter came about when Pik-Sen guest starred in Jenny – The Doctor's Daughter, and we chatted about her husband Don Houghton's Doctor Who scripts. I suggested we could do a sequel to *The Mind of Evil* and

Pik-Sen was intrigued – although she admitted she wasn't sure how we'd make it work. When she saw the script, however, any such worries vanished!

"And finally in this box set we have an excellent morality tale from David K Barnes, with Breach of Trust. Jemma and Ingrid loved the moral dilemmas in this story and, in only his second script for Big Finish, David is proving to be a talent to reckon with."

OMEONE WHO'S
delighted to return is
Ingrid Oliver, playing
Osgood. Having first appeared
as the character in 2013's 50th



Hosts of the Wirrn - Back row (1–r): Glen McReady, Ingrid Oliver, Katherine Senior and Chris Chapman \bullet Front row (1–r): Vineeta Rishi and Ramon Tikaram



Above: Pik-Sen Lim

anniversary special, The Day of the Doctor, on TV, Ingrid admits she's surprised to still be playing the part, five years later: "I didn't think I'd still be involved, and I'm absolutely thrilled. Ask anyone doing a Big Finish job, and they'll tell you they love it. We all muck in. They've asked recently if I'll keep doing them, so yes – yes please!"

Like many actors, Ingrid's first involvement with **Doctor Who** came through Big Finish in *Project: Destiny* and *Earth Aid*.

She recalls: "Weirdly, I was in two stories both with Sylvester McCoy. I played an ant alien, and I can recall that one character was called Lieutenant Baraki. I remember them telling me how David Tennant had been in and worked for Big Finish before he had become the Doctor, and I thought, 'Oh, maybe one day...' – and now I get to come back as my own character!

"At conventions, lots of people talk about Big Finish, so there must be people listening. I love doing them, although the Moat Studios are literally the other side of London for me in quite an

66 I DIDN'T THINK I'D STILL BE INVOLVED, AND I'M ABSOLUTELY THRILLED.

NGRID OLIVER

annoying way, but it's worth it – not just for the lunches – but because everyone involved is so fantastic.

"With the newest series, we have the Wirrn – I had to say the word so often that it almost got to the point where it lost all meaning! Wirrn, Wirrn, Wirrn..."

ALKING OF Robert Holmes' 1975 creations from TV episode, The Ark in Space, UNIT – Revisitations begins with the two-parter, Hosts of the Wirrn, written by Chris Chapman.

He tells Vortex: "This was the first time Big Finish have approached me with a brief for a story, rather than me pitching something mad to them - in this case. David Richardson and Matt Fitton were in touch to see if I'd like to try a UNIT two-parter with some kind of Wirrn infection within UNIT, I'm equally geeky and loving towards modern Who as I am to the classic variety, so I jumped at the chance of writing for Kate and Osgood's UNIT troupe - and I was particularly chuffed to get a chance to write for one of my favourite Doctor



66 I WANTED TO HARNESS HOW HORRIBLE THE WIRRN ARE. CHRIS CHAPMAN

Who creatures, the Wirrn!"

The Wirrn are still a memorable adversary, despite the creatures only having one major TV appearance.

Chris continues: "Creature' is the right word there, not 'monster'. When Robert Holmes invented the Wirrn way back in Tom Baker's first season. he created something totally terrifying, but I've always loved that they're not really 'evil', they're just animals who need to breed to survive - just like us. But, let's not mince words, they are also really really grim - superbly disgusting! I wanted to harness how horrible the Wirrn are, and channel both Holmes's original script for The Ark in Space and also Ian Marter's superbly nasty novelisation. In short, I had a whole lot of fun with them. I was particularly interested in the idea

of their shared mind, and that if you become part of that very alien gestalt, then they will know everything you know. You can't keep secrets from the Wirrn.

"Writing for UNIT itself was a real pleasure – all the lead characters are very well drawn, and it was so much fun to get to play with the dynamic. I tried to get in a bit of the absurdist side to the organisation, that Steven Moffatt wrote so well when he introduced Osgood in The Day of the Doctor, so it was fun to embrace the madder side of UNIT and get to write for the robotic ravens too!"

Although we have an established cast, Chris introduces us to a new face.

He adds: "It was also a chance to introduce a new character – entomologist Shana Siddiqui. Seven seasons in, it felt timely



UNIT: THE NEW SERIES REVISITATIONS

FOUR HOURS OF EPIC FULL CAST AUDIO ADVENTURE

HOSTS OF THE WIRRN by Chris Chapman BREACH OF TRUST by David K Barnes

OPEN THE BOX by Roy Gill

- ▶ RELEASED November 2018
- CD £23.00
- Download £20.00
- Extras Bonus Disc
- Director Ken Bentley
- Cast Jemma Redgrave (Kate Stewart), Ingrid Oliver (Osgood), James Joyce (Josh Carter), Ramon Tikaram (Colonel Shindi), Vineeta Rishi (Shana), Roger May (Sergeant Brundle/Simon/Fisherman/Jasper), Glen McCready (Marcus/Evans/Jacob), Katherine Senior (Kirsty/Private Sedgwick), Lizzie Stables (Vara/Norei), Richard Earl (Jarrak/Richard), Pik-Sen Lim (Doctor Chin Lee), Jonathan Christie (Seth Heyer), Simon Hepworth (Miles McLellan/Pandora)



to re-introduce the UNIT team through the eyes of a new recruit, that old classic TV trope for a pilot episode – and hopefully it gives listeners a new perspective on all of the regulars. Shana is brought in to help Osgood with a very strange alien artefact that's fallen into UNIT's hands – a Wirrn egg. And although I'm always keen to avoid giving out spoilers, it's safe to say that things do not go entirely to plan! Robert Holmes was one of the chief architects of UNIT back in

its early days, and I think he'd enjoy seeing them come crashing together with his Wirrn."

OLLOWING THE Wirrn encounter, the team face a *Breach of Trust*, which has been written by David K Barnes.

David reveals: "I was asked to create an alien that was known to UNIT but would be totally new to the listener, to give a twist on the 'returning monster' format. I ended up cheating

a little, as the Kalvyri aren't known by our lead characters either – but an examination of the UNIT files reveals some very important information...

"I realised writing this script that I'd never been asked to create an alien species before! The Kalvyri have a unique relationship with music and sound, with beautiful voices that can paralyse or destroy. Oh, and they speak through three mouths!

"A space capsule crashes in the grounds of the Tower of London, and UNIT discover two aliens inside: a mother, and her child. Translating their language is the first obstacle to overcome – but the message that the aliens bring will eventually force Kate and her team to face a terrible choice, and nobody's going to come out of this OK...

"This story would have gone very differently had the Doctor been involved, because the UNIT team can't fly away in a police box and leave their worries behind. They've got responsibilities with long term repercussions, and sometimes they'll have to consider the unthinkable so that the rest of us can sleep at night. I really appreciate being able to write that kind of story. I think the cast responded really well to the script, and seeing them get their teeth into it was incredibly rewarding to watch."

ROM A new foe to an old, Open the Box by Roy Gill features the return of the Keller Machine from Jon Pertwee's era in The Mind of Evil.

Roy says: "As research for my second **UNIT** adventure, I went back and studied *The Mind of Evil*. Apart from being an exciting sci-fithriller, the story connected to contemporary concerns. Capital punishment had been abolished, so the prison setting and intrigue was topical. I was looking for something to hang my story off



in the modern day, so linking to training courses and ideas of self-actualisation and 'being your best self' seemed to be an interesting route to go down. The Mind of Evil offers us some interesting insights into the Doctor's mental processes, and I was soon relishing the idea of delving into the darker parts of our current UNIT team's psyches...

"Kate, Osgood and Josh find themselves reluctant attendees of a government-backed training course on a remote island. The Director is a face from UNIT's past – but what are her motives now? And who or what is behind the deaths connected with the training centre that seem to have risen up from people's darkest fears?"

How much fun can writers have with UNIT, when there's no Time Lord around to stop them from using more physical and violent means?

Roy suggests: "I think you can maybe push the content, a little bit. I think there can be a darker edge to some of the horror than if the Doctor's around to breeze through things, and let us know it'll all be alright in the end.

AS LONG AS THEY WILL HAVE ME, I'LL KEEP COMING BACK. I'LL BE HAPPY TO BE HERE WHEN I'M A 90 YEAR OLD, FRANKLY.

INGRID OLIVER

And our UNIT team – although super smart and tech-capable – are still human and have human failings and needs and insecurities. So sometimes the stakes are higher too!

"I guess at the heart of Open the Box is a question about whether people (or monsters, even...) are allowed the possibility of change. Can we be what we want to be? Being a new series UNIT story too, it's also about horrible things happening to people in really scary ways. So it's psychology and monsters, really!"

With seven series of **UNIT** now in the can for Big Finish, it's still a series which the faithful listeners are enjoying – and the cast are too!

Ingrid adds, with a cheeky grin: "As long as they will have me, I'll keep coming back. I'll be happy to be here when I'm a 90 year old, frankly.

"Actually, if I get a spare moment, I would love to write one. I would love to write an audiobook because they are read by amazing people – like Derek Jacobi! When people are nice, people want to work with you, and Big Finish are testament to that." VERTEX

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ORIGINAL THINKING

I just finished off Jeremiah Bourne in Time last week.
I didn't quite know what to expect going in, but all I can say is this: wow. It was an absolute treat, from start to finish, with a phenomenal cast, spellbinding writing, and stunning music and sound design. Between this, the incredible ATA Girl, and the excellent Cicero, the Big Finish Originals range seems to be off to a cracking start!

Andy Ritz
Nick: Glad you're loving the Big
Finish Originals, Andy. We're
only doing the ones that have been
announced so far, but we'd love to
do more. It all depends on how well
they do.

SOUNDS GOOD

When I first found out about Big Finish, I did not expect much, but my mind was blown by the amazing writing, great acting and professionalism. Since I am from that weird 80s generation of German children who were reared on audio dramas, I was basically transported back into my childhood with your amazing stories (well, except for a change

in language). Your audio dramas provide a great bit of escapism and I love them as a stress relief for when I commute or go for a walk. And, they also help me calm down and fall asleep at night (and I mean that in a positive sense!). Life can be quite hard, but it is great when you find something that makes it a bit easier. I am also looking forward to more releases with the Eighth Doctor (Doom Coalition was great!) and the Sixth Doctor (for the simple reason that I really admire Colin Baker). Ellen Schöner

Nick: Ellen, thanks so much for this. It really makes a difference to everyone at Big Finish to know our work is loved so much.

STRIPPED FOR ACTION

I was surprised and very glad to hear that Big Finish was adapting the fantastic comics and graphic novels from Tom Baker's run. While this made me very excited, it also made me think. Considering how many of these types of Doctor Who end within a certain date, how long will this run last? I would love to see more comics adapted. I do hope something happens with this range that makes it continue.

Ben Rohde

Nick: We have no plans to do any others at the moment, Ben, but we'd certainly be open to the idea if these proved popular enough.

BACK TO BANNERMAN ROAD?

Is there a chance that **The Sarah Jane Adventures** could join Big
Finish? With the fifth TV series
unfinished, there could be an

opportunity to tell the untold stories in the form of Companion Chronicles or Lost Stories, a fitting tribute to the Big Finish veteran and star Elisabeth Sladen? With the original target audience now grown up like myself, it would be nice to hear the old SJA cast return under the guidance of Big Finish.

Jack

Nick: We did enquire about this some time ago, Jack, and Russell T Davies felt that it wasn't appropriate for us to continue The Sarah Jane Adventures without Lis, and it's a decision we fully respect.



STAY ON TARGET

Looking forward eagerly to **The Avengers**: *Too Many Targets*. Re-reading the episode guide in anticipation, I rediscovered the extracts from Brian Clemens' *Avengers – International script*, which would have seen an older Steed teaming up with Mrs Peel's daughter and an American agent. Any possibilities of adapting this in some form? **Simon Darley**

Nick: I was certainly aware of this, Simon, as I know Brian's son Sam really well. We were in fact chatting about it the other day. But the rights issues with The Avengers are quite complicated, so there are no plans for The Avengers International at the moment. I'd never rule it out, though! VORTEX



Kenny Smith goes behind the new series of Doctor Who's The Early Adventures...

ITH THE leading men of the 1960s television episodes of **Doctor Who** being sadly no longer with us, Big Finish created a format that allowed the black and white era to be brought to our ears in the form of **The Early Adventures**. Using narration to capture the vivid, breathless imagination of the period, the Doctor's assorted companions perform the Doctor's lines.

And this year's series adds another tweak to the established format as this time around we have a mini-series of four adventures running one after the other – just as they did on television at the time.

Peter Purves and Maureen O'Brien reunite as Steven Taylor and Vicki, in a series of new tales starting with *The Dalek Occupation of Winter* released this month.

Written by David K Barnes, who was introduced to Big Finish by regular scribe John Dorney, he admits: "I was quite nervous to write for the Daleks. My natural inclination is towards comedy, and so I've certainly had some fun with

them, but the story has to treat the Daleks with respect or it won't work. I thought back to the Dalek stories I've enjoyed the most, which were just as interested in the effects the Daleks have on others as they were in the Daleks themselves. How and why would a society ally itself with the Daleks, and what would the Daleks get out of it? Dramatically, I like the Daleks as a lurking menace, bringing out the worst in other people!

"I was delighted to be given the First Doctor, Steven and Vicki as my first TARDIS team.



Above (I–r): Peter Purves, Maureen O'Brien and John Rowe



It's a crime that they didn't have more serials together in the 60s because they're so good as characters. Steven and Vicki are like brother and sister, constantly bickering and teasing each other, but there's nothing they wouldn't do for one another when the chips are down."

HE SECOND October release is An Ideal World by Ian Potter, where a vast human spaceship hangs in orbit over a cloudy alien planet. Ian says: "The brief was just do a science fiction one – something a bit more like the series of the time, so I

66 GOING INTO SPACE IS SO HARD, EXPENSIVE AND BASICALLY AWFUL THAT I SUSPECT WE'LL NOT BE SENDING THE VERY BEST OF OURSELVES OUT THERE.

IAN POTTER

offered an idea about Earth colonists on an alien planet.

"It feeds on a concern of mine, that's also in *The Bounty of Ceres*, that going into space is so hard, expensive and basically awful that I suspect we'll not be sending the very best of ourselves out there. I think any colonists leaving the solar system are likely to be pretty driven and odd because well balanced people wouldn't go!

"So, I'm afraid this is another play where humanity may not be covering itself in glory, but hopefully there's a fair bit of action and jeopardy and an intriguing sketched in future in there too.

"The ethics of terraforming. which a good chunk of the story hangs on, has always bothered me. Media science fiction often seems quite gung-ho about it but it's us imposing what we need onto a planet that's not quite right for us, whether or not there's anything living there already. It puts us in the same category as those non-native invasive creatures we seem very keen to stamp out in our countryside because they're muscling in on another animal's niche."

Robert Khan and Tom Salinsky, will be released in November and takes the TARDIS to Cambridge in the mid-1930s, where they discover a dark plan is underway which threatens the future of humanity itself.

Robert and Tom said: "We loved writing *The Ravelli Conspiracy* and were delighted to be asked back by David Richardson to write for Steven and Vicki again. We had also had a fancy about writing a **Doctor Who** story set in a Cambridge college for some time and this seemed like an ideal opportunity, so we pitched it and David liked it, which was great.

"When we started we weren't sure that it would turn out to be part of a mini-season but it's a nice idea – we're great fans of mini-seasons since The Key to Time, about a thousand years ago!

"Setting it in Cambridge with certain resemblances to a certain university college one of the writers has a connection with, was immense fun, although any resemblances



66 THERE'S ONE SCENE IN IT WHICH IS THE DARKEST, MOST TRAUMATIC THING I'VE EVER WRITTEN.

JONATHAN MORRIS

to any real people, animals or aliens is purely coincidental...!"

HE CRASH of the UK-201, out for release in December, rounds off this run, and it is written by Jonathan Morris.

Jonny says: "The premise is very simple. Before she met the Doctor and joined him on his adventures, Vicki was a passenger on a spaceship which crashed on the planet Dido. That spaceship was the



UK-201 and Vicki's father died shortly after the crash. (This is all from the television story The Rescue but you don't need to have seen it). So the idea for the story is... what if Vicki went back in time, back through her own lifetime, and found herself back on that spaceship shortly before it crashed? She would be in a position to prevent the crash and save her father's life. But, of course, if she did that, she would never have met the Doctor...



DOCTOR WHO

THE DALEK OCCUPATION OF WINTER

- ▶ RELEASED October 2018
- CD £14.99
- Download £10.99
- Extras Interviews
- Written by **David K Barnes**
- Director Lisa Bowerman
- Cast Maureen O'Brien (Vicki), Peter Purves (Steven Taylor), Shvorne Marks (Amala Vost), Robert Daws (Gaius Majorian), Sara Powell (Jacklyn Karna), Matthew Jacobs-Morgan (Kenrik Vost), Nicholas Briggs (The Daleks)

"That's the starting point.
In keeping with The Early
Adventures approach,
each episode is fairly selfcontained in terms of location
and cast, to be as authentic as
possible, while the story itself
is, I think, emotionally hardhitting. There's one scene
in it which is the darkest,
most traumatic thing I've
ever written. It is basically
all about Vicki – her life...
and trying to recover missed
opportunities." YORTEX

LISTENAGAIN

DARK SHADOWS BLOODLUST

RELEASED JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2015



ARK SHADOWS is one of Big Finish's hidden gems – a consistently fascinating series that celebrates the dark and macabre world of the American horror soap opera of the 1960s and 70s.

Big Finish returned to the show's original format in its 13-part series *Bloodlust*, with an on-going storyline told in 30 minute episodes.

When Melody and Michael Devereux came to Collinsport on their honeymoon, they didn't know the secrets that were hidden behind closed doors and were revealed when an innocent was murdered.

Co-producer Joseph Lidster says: "I was very keen to do something that would be an ideal jumping-on point for new listeners and also something that was a bit of an event."

Fellow producer David
Darlington points out: "The soap
opera form of **Dark Shadows**renders it distinctively different
to any other franchise within
which Big Finish operates. I've

always thought that by only producing hour-long, largely stand-alone stories – as our dramatic readings, by default, have to be – we were slightly selling that distinctiveness short.

"So we started by analysing the TV show's presentation format – an episode a day for five years – and pared it down until we came up with a format that nicely reflected that, while still being distinctive and feasible to produce: twiceweekly for thirteen episodes. Thirteen being a standard TV production block and, of course, unlucky for some...!"

Joe agrees: "And I loved the idea. Doing a longer series of shorter episodes means more cliffhangers! And some of the cliffhangers in *Bloodlust* are great fun. The end of episode four is genuinely something I don't think has ever happened anywhere else in any piece of drama, ever!"

Bloodlust was released to huge critical success, with two episodes available to download per week from the Big Finish website. David continues: "The most exciting and subsequently rewarding thing about Bloodlust was finally really being noticed; from my first day in the job I wanted to do something that better mimicked the show's status as a soap opera-cumserial, where the gaps between the episodes - and audience speculation about what might or might not happen next – is almost as important

as the episodes themselves.

"We devised the whole 13-part format and the twice-weekly release pattern with those notions very much in mind, and we knew from the first launch night that it had worked. By which I don't mean we were suddenly outselling **Doctor**Who or anything ridiculous – but we'd got people talking.

"We were not just making good stuff we were proud of, but we were being noticed in doing so. Mission accomplished. Still very proud of it, though obviously

I WANTED TO DO SOMETHING THAT BETTER MIMICKED THE SHOW'S STATUS AS A SOAP OPERA-CUM-SERIAL.

DAVID DARLINGTON

right now we think *Bloodline* is going to be even better..."

Bloodline is the sequel to Bloodline, and Joe explains:
"Coming up soon we've got Series 2 of The Tony & Cassandra Mysteries followed early next year by the long-awaited Bloodline. By the time you read this, most of Bloodline will have been recorded and it is sounding amazing. Three words for you – birth, death, marriage..." VORTEX

BLOODLUST IS AVAILABLE NOW ON CD AND DOWNLOAD FROM WWW.BIGFINISH.COM



IG FINISH has brought a 'lost' era of Doctor Who to the fore in recent years with its Doctor Who Novel Adaptations audio range, breathing new life into a series of tales which were originally written as books. Adapting several of Virgin Publishing's New and Missing Adventures, these were a critical success, especially the casting of Yasmin Bannerman as Roz Forrester and Travis Oliver as Chris Cwej, adjudicators from Earth's future who joined Sylvester McCoy's Seventh Doctor.

Sadly, though, despite an encouraging start, the range was brought to a premature halt.

Senior producer David
Richardson explains: "When
our run of **New Adventures**adaptations came to an end, a
lot of listeners wrote to us to say
how disappointed they were that
there wouldn't be any more. And
we were disappointed too – but

sadly the outpouring of love for the range wasn't reflected in the sales figures which were dipping. But we still wanted to work with Yasmin as Roz and Travis as Chris, alongside the Seventh Doctor, and so with Andy Lane's blessing a new box set, The Seventh Doctor – The New Adventures was commissioned, telling brand new stories for the team. I can't wait to hear what producer Scott Handcock has done with them!"

Scott picks up the tale: "I was thrilled to be asked to produce this box set. I was still quite young when the original novels came out, but it really was an exciting time. The **New Adventures** were the official continuation of the series. It felt the same but also radically different, and introduced some brilliant new companions. I've been lucky enough to tackle a few of the novel adaptations for Big Finish, and loved the Chris and Roz adventures we've heard.

so the opportunity to tell some completely original stories with that TARDIS team has been a real treat, and especially so being able to work with Andy Lane.

"Obviously Andy created Chris and Roz for the New Adventures. and it would be very easy for a creator to want complete control, but working with Andy on this project has been a dream. He introduced me to Stephen Jordan, who's written our second story, and gave feedback on all the storylines to make sure they felt authentic. Plus, of course, he contributed an episode of his own that opens the box set. Together, they're four very distinct adventures that feel very much a part of the New Adventures universe."

Adventure Original Sin introduced Chris and Roz (later adapted for audio by John Dorney), and he returns to the pair



in the first story of this new box set, The Trial of a Time Machine. Andy tells Vortex: "I'm constantly amazed about the continued popularity of Cwej and Forrester. They weren't even meant to be companions - the original intention was that an old tramp character called Old Tom would join the TARDIS crew (and would have eventually turned out to be Bernice's dad, but I never told Virgin that!). Cwej and Forrester were generic detectives, based on the characters of Andy Sipowicz and Bobby Simone from the TV series NYPD Blue (and partly on Han Solo and Chewbacca from Star Wars, but that's another story!). The two of them just seemed to take over the book, and the rest is history. I think I'd accidentally tapped into a generic archetype the cynical cop and his naïve sidekick - and refreshed it slightly by mucking around with gender and race.

"Writing for them both was as easy now as it was all those years ago. If the characters are strong enough – and these two obviously TWIST ON THE TRIAL OF A TIME LORD, WITH THE TARDIS BEING PUT ON TRIAL THIS TIME RATHER THAN THE DOCTOR.

ANDY LANE

are – then they take over and virtually write their own dialogue.

"The plot of my story is very simple – it's a twist on *The Trial* of a *Time Lord*, with the TARDIS being put on trial this time rather than the Doctor. The difficulty was coming up with a civilisation/culture who knew enough about time travel and sentient machines that they could blame the vehicle rather than the pilot without making them into a different

version of the Time Lords. In a way (and I've only just realised this) I'm doing a science fiction version of the medieval trials where they'd accuse a pig of murder and haul them squealing into court!

"As for Yasmin and Travis – I think they're both brilliant. Like Ian Fleming with Sean Connery, I can't imagine anyone else playing those parts now."

HE NEXT tale is Vanguard
by Steve Jordan, who
knew of the New

Adventures before starting on his story. He grins: "I was fully aware of them as they follow on from the events of season 26, my all-time favourite season of **Doctor Who.** I think my love of the Seventh Doctor's TV run was my main reference point, in lieu of having read all of the **New Adventures** themselves.

"I was asked to pitch a one-page outline of the story with the main TARDIS team and four or five extra characters. I was advised to avoid continuity references, along with a couple of other practical pointers



Above (I-r): Elaine Fellows, Rhian Blundell and Melanie Kilburn

otherwise, I was encouraged to go 'anywhere and anywhen', as long as it wasn't anywhere near Daleks or Cybermen or anything like that. I was thrilled with the amount of freedom I was given, but that didn't mean the first idea I had was necessarily the best one—I had to work hard on getting the pitch right, and most importantly, very different from anything else that had come before it."

Steve also enjoyed writing for the characters of Chris and Roz, adding: "I was keen to make sure I did my research before even attempting to write for them. There was plenty of information online about their shared history, but not so much on what they're actually like as people, so I spoke to Andy, their creator. Andy likened them to a pair of New York cops - the one 'who's seen it all and become cynical' (Forrester) and the one who's 'still naïve and believes that the world is great' (Cwej), which was a great starting point. I also listened to Damaged Goods, Original Sin and Cold Fusion to get a better handle on them and Travis and

Yasmin's performance styles. Both were a lot of fun to write for."

he adventures continue in

The Jabari Countdown by Alan Flanagan.
Scott says: "Alan was someone I'd previously worked with on The Confessions of Dorian Gray, and he's also done a lot on Dark Shadows, so I was very keen to

and he's also done a lot on **Dark**Shadows, so I was very keen to
invite him back on board. His
story's a wonderful period piece
set in the 1940s, with a group of
mathematicians trapped on an
island with a mystery to solve.
It's a really simple story, but
intricately told, with a whole
host of fascinating characters
that bring the drama alive.

"The dynamic between the Seventh Doctor, Roz and Chris is a really fun one to explore, and working with Sylvester, Yasmin and Travis has been a ball. They feel like a team in that they really set the tone in studio. They're bags of fun, know the scripts and characters inside-out, and always make the guest cast feel at home.

"As characters, I think what makes them different is the



DOCTOR WHO

THE SEVENTH DOCTOR: THE NEW ADVENTURES

THE TRIAL OF A TIME MACHINE by Andy Lane

VANGUARD

by Steve Jordan

THE JABARI COUNTDOWN by Alan Flanagan

THE DREAD OF NIGHT by Tim Foley

- ▶ RELEASED November 2018
- CD £23.00
- Download £20.00
- Extras Bonus Disc
- Director Scott Handcock
- Cast Sylvester McCoy (The Doctor), Yasmin Bannerman (Roz Forrester), Travis Oliver (Chris Cwej), Liz Sutherland-Lim (Maratuk), Vikash Bhai (Sydyck), John Heffernan (Honos), Mina Anwar (Forsetti), Janine Duvitski (Alpha Wheeler), Leonie Schliesing (Zsa Zsa Straus), Franchi Webb (Eleanor Burke), Rupert Young (Binkum Fray), Silas Carson (Arbuckle), Sara Powell (Contessa), Olivia Morris (Green), Connor Calland (Blue), Jacob Dudman (Cannon), Melanie Kilburn (Hooley), Rhian Blundell (Isabel), Elaine Fellows (Annabel), Ellie Darvill (Willis)



fact that Chris and Roz had a partnership before meeting the Doctor, so in a way, he becomes the outsider. A bit like Ian and Barbara back at the beginning. Even when the Doctor has several companions, they tend to only meet because of the Doctor, so he becomes the common factor, but having two strong personalties who have a shared history beyond that makes for a really interesting take on that dynamic."

he Dread of Night by Tim Foley is the fourth and final release in this series. Scott adds: "The Dread of Night rounds off the set and is pretty much what you'd expect from the title. It's a period horror story set in 1899 with the Doctor and his companions stumbling upon a troubled household out

set in 1899 with the Doctor and his companions stumbling upon a troubled household out in the English countryside. It's a script with bags of atmosphere and one that genuinely terrified us in studio. There's one scene where Yasmin and our guest cast ended up howling with laughter because they weren't expecting the scare to be quite so scary!"

66 I WANT THIS TO BE THE KIND OF TALE PEOPLE LISTEN TO LATE AT NIGHT WITH A STIFF DRINK NEARBY... TIMFOLEY

Tim, who was also a **New Adventures** reader, reveals: "They were a little too old for me at first (I'm betraying my age here!). I came across them in charity shops and I was drawn to their lively covers but I was reading them all out of order and had no idea what was going on half the time. Even so, I found them pretty thrilling. I amassed a fair collection, and when I was a bit older I returned to them. I really appreciated what they were doing, and there are some real gems in the run."

Explaining what the story is about, Tim says: "We're in rural Northumberland at the turn of

the 20th century. The Doctor, Chris and Roz find themselves in a grieving household. Perhaps they're not the only unwanted guests that evening... and I'll say no more than that! The less you know the better. I want this to be the kind of tale people listen to late at night with a stiff drink nearby...

"We were bouncing all kinds of ideas, and then Scott suggested something inspired by **Sapphire & Steel** or *The Conjuring*. Ilove both of those, and then I threw into the mix a bit of Lovecraft, some Edgar Allan Poe... all the classics.

"I was wary about doing a 'creepy house' story because there are an awful lot of great ones to compete with, but... the more I thought about it, the more it felt right for this trio. Sylvester is very much at home in these atmospheric settings – and my line of reasoning is, for this New Adventures incarnation, we need a Doctor who's just a little too comfortable with his surroundings. He's one step ahead of everyone else!

"What stops it feeling like a gothic retread is the presence of Chris and Roz. It's actually quite an atypical setting for these two. The fact they have to investigate some spooky activity really plays to their strengths as adjudicators. Putting a different, darker spin on some traditional elements feels very true to the **New Adventures** ethos. So I won myself around!"

Tim particularly enjoyed writing for the Doctor's companions: "Chris and Roz have such well-defined personas - you can go back to their inception in Andy's fab novel, and their characters are already fizzing from their introductions. I like the mentor/mentee relationship they have, which mirrors what the Doctor normally has with his companions. It feels like a very grown-up TARDIS trio - Chris and Roz can handle themselves. and the Doctor will factor that into his plans accordingly. Of course, they may find themselves facing some dark terrors that could chill even the hardiest of adjudicators..." VORTEX





HE REVIVAL of Terry Nation's cult 1970s post-apocalyptic television series Survivors has been unpredictable in its time frame so far. We've had stories set before the TV show began plus many during it, with original characters who featured when the series was on air, as well as in Big Finish's new audio creations.

With a deadly disease having virtually wiped out the population of Earth in the 1970s, in **Survivors Series** Eight we meet those who avoided the tragedy as they try to rebuild their lives and international civilisation – and the best and worst of human nature comes to the fore...

Producer David Richardson says: "Listeners may have noticed that in the last box set our final episode edged past the end of the 1970s TV series, with Abby Grant and Jenny Richards reunited. Our eighth box set – and also the ninth – will continue that move forward, with eight linked

episodes that see the return of Peter Grant, and the rise of a new threat to the community."

Series Eight begins with Bandit Train by Christopher Hatherall. Chris says: "The series brief centred around establishing the Robert Malcolm character and his group of trained young men. It also wanted to hint

men. It also wanted to hint at a higher power that was in charge of organising several groups such as Malcolm's and looking to establish a strategic power base in a move to begin governing the country. For this series, we all had the opportunity to meet up and sit down to discuss the series and our episodes. It was the first time that I had experienced a 'writer's room' environment and I found it hugely helpful. In this episode I had to introduce Malcolm into our heroes' lives.

"It's an adrenaline fuelled mystery – half visceral action, half cerebral intrigue – it's shouts then whispers... guns then handshakes... a rollercoaster then a Sunday drive...

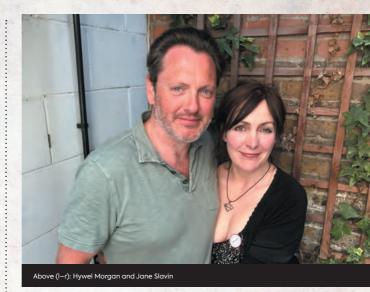
"From a narrative point of view, you have to have well drawn, realistic characters to keep an audience gripped for so long. And primarily we are depicting ordinary people in extraordinary situations, so I believe that you have the perfect

66 IT'S AN ADRENALINE FUELLED MYSTERY — HALF VISCERAL ACTION, HALF CEREBRAL INTRIGUE.

CHRISTOPHER HATHERALL

mix of realism and excitement. It also taps into the imagination of listeners too with the 'what-if' scenario of an apocalyptic event devastating the population and destroying all established tiers of society and structure. (The idea of Armageddon/the apocalypse has long gripped people's imaginations).

"And then of course, you have the production team at Big Finish that all work together so creatively to produce engaging and striking dramas, from the excellent casting and direction, to the expertly handled technical production."





obert, by Jane Slavin, marks a writing debut in the series for the actress who will join Tom Baker as his new companion in January next year.

Jane says: "David Richardson had read my novel and he

loved it. Afterwards, he said, 'Would you like to come and write something for us?' This was before the original dramas had been commissioned. I was thrilled to be asked. I couldn't write **Doctor Who**, it's not in my skillset, but David suggested





Above: Hywel Morgan I start on **Survivors**. It suits

my sense of dark drama.

"I listened to the previous series and was daunted (in a good way) by the enormous scope of the project and also massively excited, getting to

SOMETHING DARK AND TWISTED, WHICH IS WHY THEY ASKED ME! JAME SLAVIN

write about the end of the world.

"They wanted something dark and twisted, which is why they asked me! I loved doing it, as this is a world where anything is possible and it can bring out the good in people in the most adverse of situations. You can fall in love with someone according to how fabulous they are in a crisis, or from sharing adversity, and it's clear some of the characters who have been through the very worst of times adore each other."

This story also gave Jane the chance to write for one of her acting heroes, she explains: "I am so pleased I got to write Wendy Craig a part. She has



SURVIVORS

SERIES EIGHT

BANDIT TRAIN

by Christopher Hatherall

ROBERT

by Jane Slavin

THE LOST BOYS

by Lisa McMullin

VILLAGE OF DUST by Roland Moore

- ▶ RELEASED December 2018
- CD £25.00
- Download £20.00
- Extras Interviews
- Director Ken Bentley
- ▶ Cast Carolyn Seymour (Abby), Lucy
 Fleming (Jenny Richards), Helen
 Goldwyn (Ruth), George Watkins
 (Craig), Wendy Craig (Elsie/Celia/
 Dr Portman), Joel James Davison
 (Peter Grant), Hywel Morgan (Robert
 Malcolm), Gyuri Sarossy (Derek
 Gibb), Richard Popple (Kilby), Homer
 Todiwala (Scotty/Soldier), Susie
 Emmett (Twig), Jane Slavin (Julia/
 Mrs Brock), Vikash Bhai (Jesus), Isla
 Carter (Cayla Kenny), Eddie Eyre
 (Seth Pilkington), Katherine Rose
 Morley (Sonia Meadows), Susan
 Hingley (Jiao Li)



been a heroine of mine for so long, for literally all of my life. My very first audio recording was of Wendy and at two years old my mum and dad would put Wendy on the record player next to my bed and I would go to sleep listening to her stories!

"When I told director Ken Bentley I wanted her in the show, he told me, 'I'm not sure we'll be able to get Wendy Craig,' but I wrote her an email and told her how much I loved her (I sounded like a proper stalker!), how I had written this part especially for her. I said that ©© [WENDY CRAIG] CALLED ME AND SAID, 'I'D LOVE TO DO IT! I LOVE THIS SCRIPT,' AND I NEARLY WEPT WITH JOY!

JANE SLAVIN

although she may never get to read the script, I had written it for her and it would be a dream come true if she came to do it... and then a couple of days later she called me and said, 'I'd love to do it! I love this script,' and I nearly wept with joy!

"I've got everything I wanted with this script – I've written it, acted in it, and got Wendy Craig in it! It was one of the most incredible days recording, one of the best of my life."

Jane adds of her appearance in the story: "I'm playing a woman who has been locked up in a mental institution for six vears. The character meant a lot to me - she'd had post natal depression and so had I and vears ago women were locked up for this. When I went through it I was afraid to tell anyone in case they came and took away my baby. Julia, my character, has a darker story than this but one that was really told right from my heart. It felt like a real privilege as how often do you get paid to perform your own work with your absolute heroes playing opposite you?"

he Lost Boys, the third story in the set, marks the debut of another new Big Finish scribe, Lisa McMullin, who reveals: "I got chatting to script editor Matt Fitton at Richard Dinnick's birthday party. We chatted about **Doctor Who** and I bent his ear about Big Finish. I then bumped into him at another party and cornered him again and told him I'd love to write for them (he knew I was a writer).

"Then about a year later Matt emailed to say they were looking for new writers – did I have a spec I could send. I sent him a couple of things I'd written and he offered me **Survivors**.

"For this series of **Survivors**, Matt sent an overview of how he wanted the series to unfold and then got all the writers together at Big Finish HQ. We thrashed out the nuts and bolts of the different episodes and how they'd fit – it was great fun – calling shotgun for a particular character or hook. It felt very much like we created the series arc as a group, and then each went away to write our individual episodes. It was really useful to know what had happened in the episodes before mine and know what was going to happen in the one immediately after.

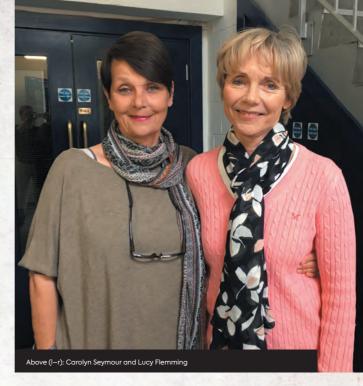
"My story – The Lost Boys – is about what happens to the children misplaced or orphaned in an apocalyptic or war-torn world. Where do they look for guidance and protection. And it's about what happens when power is placed in the wrong hands. There are huge exciting things going on in this episode but I probably can't tell you about them – MASSIVE SPOILERS!"

The series concludes with *Village of Dust* by Roland Moore.

Roland reveals: "I knew that I'd be writing the final episode of Series Eight but it's difficult to say exactly what my brief was without giving away some vital information. I hate being the kind of writer who says, 'I've got exciting news, but I can't tell you what it is,' but in this case. I think I have to be!

"It's dark and emotional (which isn't giving much away given the nature of the series!) and at the end it gives closure to Series Eight and spins things off in a new direction for Series Nine.

"The series concerns itself with the rise of an army that indoctrinates children to become fighters. It's a new approach to family. Abby, Jenny and Ruth see the effects of this army – and realise that the ideology of it conflicts with their idea of the federation they have been creating. Things are set on a collision course between the



two sides as the series progresses and the conflict comes to a bloody conclusion at Little Tadlow – the village we visited in my story in Series Seven.

"In Village of Dust, I play out that battle which has massive repercussions for Abby, Jenny and Ruth. It was liberating to write a full on battle for audio – which despite the scale I hope has a feeling of claustrophobia and desperation. Not everyone gets out alive. It's a game changer."

his series finally sees Abby Grant reunited with her lost son, Peter, who is played by the son of another Big Finish regular, and indeed another Peter – Davison, no less!

Of course, casting the offspring of the Fifth Doctor is nothing new to Big Finish, as Georgia Moffett (now Tennant) was given her first acting job by Big Finish in 2000 in Main Range story Red Dawn.

Producer David says: "Casting

Abby's son Peter was obviously going to be difficult - he's been mentioned, but has remained off screen since the first episode on TV back in 1975. So that's 43 years of build up to his first appearance in our audios! I know that Joel James Davison is doing very well as a young actor and so spoke to his dad, Peter, about the possibility of him taking part. Joel was keen, and he's brilliant in the role - clearly acting is in his genes - and he relished the opportunity to throw himself into the dark material in these scripts."

Director Ken Bentley adds:
"Joel had already been dipping a toe into acting. Peter had seen him on stage and asked if we might have a role we could offer him for the experience. Peter often suggests actors for us to work with and his suggestions are always very good. We knew we needed to find a young actor to play the role of Peter in Survivors and Joel is just the right age, so really the stars aligned." VORTEX

COMINGSOON

THE BIG FINISH RELEASE SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 2018

- DW THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES: THE QUANTUM POSSIBILITY ENGINE (243, SEVENTH DOCTOR, ACE AND MEL)
- DW THE EARLY ADVENTURES: AN IDEAL WORLD (5.2, FIRST DOCTOR, VICKI AND STEVEN)
- DW THE EIGHTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES:
 RAVENOUS 2 (ROX SET)
- DW SHORT TRIPS: I AM THE MASTER DLO
 (8.10, THE MASTER)
- TORCHWOOD: GOD AMONG US PART 1 (BOX SET)
- BIG FINISH ORIGINALS: BLIND TERROR: THE GODS OF FROST DLO

NOVEMBER 2018

- DW THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES: WARLOCK'S CROSS (244, SEVENTH DOCTOR AND KLEIN)
- DW THE EARLY ADVENTURES: ENTANGLEMENT (5.3,FIRST DOCTOR, VICKI AND STEVEN)
- DW SHORT TRIPS:
 THE MISTPUDDLE MURDERS DLO
 (8.11, FIFTH DOCTOR, NYSSA AND TEGAN)
- DW THE SEVENTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES
 (BOX SET, SEVENTH DOCTOR, ROZ AND CHRIS)
- UNIT THE NEW SERIES: REVISITATIONS (SERIES 7)
- DARK SHADOWS: THE TONY & CASSANDRA MYSTERIES: SERIES 2
- STAR COPS: MOTHER EARTH PART 2 (BOX SET)

DECEMBER 2018

- DW THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES:
 MUSE OF FIRE (245, SEVENTH DOCTOR, HEX, ACE AND IRIS)
- DW THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES:
 THE HUNTING GROUND (246, SIXTH DOCTOR)
- DW THE EARLY ADVENTURES: THE CRASH OF THE UK-201 (5.4, FIRST DOCTOR, VICKI AND STEVEN)
- DW SHORT TRIPS: THE DEVIL'S FOOTPRINTS DLO
 (8.12, SEVENTH DOCTOR AND MEL)
- DW THE WAR MASTER: THE MASTER OF CALLOUS (BOX SET)
- BERNICE SUMMERFIELD: IN TIME
 (NOVEL_EBOOK AND AUDIOBOOK)
- STAR TREK PROMETHEUS 3: IN THE HEART OF CHAOS (AUDIOBOOK)
- SURVIVORS: SERIES 8 (BOX SET)

JANUARY 2019

- DW THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES: DEVIL IN THE MIST (247, FIFTH DOCTOR, TEGAN AND TURLOUGH)
- DW THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: SERIES 8A (8.A, FOURTH DOCTOR, ANN KELSO AND K9)
- DW THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE SINESTRAN KILL DLO (8.1, FOURTH DOCTOR AND ANN KELSO)
- DW THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE ENCHANTRESS OF NUMBERS DLO (8.2, FOURTH DOCTOR AND ANN KELSO)
- DW THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES:
 PLANET OF THE DRASHIGS DLO

 (8.3. FOURTH DOCTOR, ANN KELSO AND K9)
- DW THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES:
 THE FALSE GUARDIAN DLO

 (8.4. FOURTH DOCTOR, ANN KELSO AND K9)
- DW THE FIRST DOCTOR ADVENTURES: VOLUME 3
 (3, FIRST DOCTOR, IAN, BARBARA AND SUSAN)
- THE DIARY OF RIVER SONG: SERIES 5 (BOX SET)

FEBRUARY 2019

- DW THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES: BLACK THURSDAY/POWER GAME (248, FIFTH DOCTOR, TEGAN AND TURLOUGH)
- DW THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: SERIES 8B (8.B, FOURTH DOCTOR, ANN KELSO AND K9)
- DW THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: TIME'S ASSASSIN DLO (8.5, FOURTH DOCTOR, ANN KELSO AND K9)
- DW THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES:
 FEVER ISLAND DLO (8.6, FOURTH DOCTOR, ANN KELSO AND K9)
- DW THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE PERFECT PRISONERS PARTS 1-2 DLO (8.7, FOURTH DOCTOR, ANN KELSO AND K9)
- DW THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE PERFECT PRISONERS PARTS 3-4 DLO (8.8 FOURTH DOCTOR ANN KELSO AND K9)
- DW MISSY: SERIES 1 (BOX SET)
- TORCHWOOD: GOD AMONG US PART 2 (BOX SET)
- CALLAN: SERIES 2 (BOX SET)

MARCH 2019

- DW THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES:
 EMPIRE (249, FIFTH DOCTOR, TEGAN AND TURLOUGH)
- DW THE COMIC STRIP ADAPTATIONS: VOLUME 1 (1, FOURTH DOCTOR)
- TORCHWOOD: TBC (25)

DLO = DOWNLOAD ONLY DW = DOCTOR WHO **ISSUE: 116 • OCTOBER 2018**

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UNIT: SERIES 7

SURVIVORS SERIES SEVEN DOCTOR WHO
THE EARLY ADVENTURES