THE BIG FINISH MAGAZINE

POLIC

THE EIGHTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES

THE EIGHTH DOCTOR AND HIS FRIENDS ARE FINDING THAT FUTURE HISTORY HAS CHANGED AROUND THEM...

ALSO INSIDE

BAYBAN THE BUTCHER

Bayban the Beserker, Bayban the Butcher, Bayban the Bold, Bayban the Bad... is back!





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DOCTOR WHO

THE SIXTH DOCTOR

It'S ALWAYS exciting when a new companion joins the Doctor and that's exactly what's happening next year in The Sixth Doctor Adventures.

Colin Baker and Bonnie Langford will be joined in the TARDIS by Ruth Madeley, playing marine biologist Hebe Harrison, in a box set which will be released in May 2022.

Hebe is part of a survey team on an abandoned North Sea oil rig. As her colleagues disappear one by one, she teams up with the Doctor and Mel to find out what's really happening...

Ruth says: "Being a part of the **Doctor Who** family is so much fun. Hebe is such a great character to play and I'm excited to find out what adventures she gets up to with the Doctor and Mel."

Producer Jacqueline Rayner adds: "Champagne corks were popping when we got the news that Ruth was on board! As well as being a wonderful actor, she's one of the loveliest people to work with and hearing Hebe spring to life during recording was just amazing. Ruth instantly became part of the Sixth Doctor family and we're so lucky to have her." **VORTEX**

DOCTOR WHO THE SIXTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES

RELEASED: MAY 2022
FORMAT: CD/DOWNLOAD
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EDITORIAL

OVER THE past week or so, I've been re-listening to *Stranded* in **The Eighth Doctor Adventures** range, just to remind myself exactly where things are in the series as we prepare for the release of the third box set.

Coincidentally, I've been watching the series **Annika** on the digital channel Alibi which stars Nicola Walker as a detective, Annika Strandhed (pronounced Stranded!), with her love interest in the series played by one Paul McGann... you just couldn't make it up!

Now back to OUR Stranded.

This is the first time I've listened to these stories since they were released (anyone who follows me on Twitter will know just how much Big Finish I listen to!), and this time I listened all in one go. And it's been something of a surprise to me.

There are so many things I hadn't picked up on, or just missed, and it's been fascinating to find the Doctor gathering a new group of friends around him so quickly after what could be considered a rather fractious start.

Let's be honest, a huge part of me would love to have the Doctor and his companions as housemates – but an equally large part warns that I may come down the stairs one day only to find there are, in fact, no stairs at all. Or half the house is missing. Or I might find that I was missing and in the wrong century entirely!

That's the beauty of *Stranded* – it's so different. It's all about the people. And I can't wait to hear just where our friends, old and new, are headed next. **VORTEX**

THE EIGHTH DOCTOR AND HIS FRIENDS ARE FINDING THAT FUTURE HISTORY HAS CHANGED AROUND THEM...

WARPED FACTOR

SLOWLY BUT surely the TARDIS is repairing itself. The Doctor, Liv, Helen and their new chums residing at his house in Baker Street have enjoyed (well OK, endured!) some travels through time and now, as we reach the third box set in **The Eighth Doctor Adventures** – *Stranded* series, the TARDIS is finally starting to have the ability to move through space once more.

POLIC

Script editor Matt Fitton tells Vortex: "In Stranded 1 the TARDIS is completely grounded and in Stranded 2, it starts to be able to move around in time. And by the time we get to Stranded 3 it's healed a bit more and able to move a little in space and time. But after realising what's happened to the future of Earth and the human race is very, very wrong, the Doctor and his friends have to move around incredibly cautiously. They start by testing the limits of this weird paradox timeline in which they're trapped."

This series has very much been about people, particularly the Doctor's new friends with the mysterious group Divine Intervention operating in the background.

Producer David Richardson says: "For me there's a certain magic in the *Stranded* series. We have amazing actors playing amazing characters and we just hit upon the idea of putting them into a lovely contained story world which allows human interaction to take centre stage.

"We're on box set three now and I'll find it hard to let this world go when the time comes. Tania and Andy have become such a vital part of the Doctor, Liv and Helen's lives. So have Zakia, Aisha, Ron, Tony and Robin. Oh it's tempting to stay in Baker Street forever and just be with them but the day will come to move on. It's been a <u>special time indeed.</u>"

Stranded 3 brings some new scribes into the mix. Matt explains: "It was a case of picking some of my favourite writers, who I've worked with on other series, and bringing them into the Stranded team. The theme and tone of Stranded as a whole is very personal, it's all about characters and relationships, even though we're moving out into the universe."

LOOKING AT the opening adventure in this set, Matt says: "We begin with a lovely story by Tim Foley called *Patience* where the TARDIS crew are split up and sent to different places in the universe. They are trying to work out

funny coming from a **Torchwood** perspective, where Andy's been the main character in a lot of his own stories. And now I'm writing for him in *Stranded* where he fits in as part of an ensemble team which he's always wanted in the **Torchwood** world.

"Where things pick up is going to surprise a few people – it's not immediately obvious what's happening. It's an onion of a story where layers get peeled off and you figure out what's occurred. Our team have split up and gone their own ways across the universe – and the Judoon are out there in pursuit! But something more disturbing is rippling away in the background. Slowly the Doctor's friends start

I WAS ENCOURAGED TO SHOW THEY'RE NOT QUITE READY TO BE WHIZZING AROUND IN SPACE AND TIME JUST YET. TIM FOLEY

Above: Tom Price

exactly what's going on and how far this changed history stretches, but they are being hunted as Judoon have been sent after them."

Tim adds: "The only bad thing about being invited into the writing team for *Stranded* meant that I was briefed about everything that's going to happen. Up until that point I'd been following **The Eighth Doctor Adventures** as a fan! That's always the life balance with Big Finish – you desperately want to write for some ranges but you also like the surprise of not knowing what's happening next!

"Time travel was re-established back in *Stranded 2* and we're opening it up further with space travel in *Stranded 3*. But I was encouraged to show they're not quite ready to be whizzing around in space and time just yet. It's still a weird world out there, especially in the dangerous and strange universe our heroes find themselves in.



"It was great to be able to put words into this team's mouths as I know them so well as a listener. Getting to write for Liv is something I am so delighted about and writing for Andy again was excellent. It's to wonder what kind of danger he's put them in this time..."

TWISTED FOLKLORE by

Lizzie Hopley continues the action, and Matt reveals: "Lizzie's story is set on Rarkelia where we find the world is run by Divine Intervention as part of an Earth Empire, a far more brutal regime than it should be. We've got the Doctor starting to lead a revolution with Liv, Tanya and Helen embedded at various levels to try and find out what's going on."

Lizzie tells Vortex: "This was exciting but daunting as the series is so popular. I've written a few stories for Paul McGann so I feel I know his voice and the draw of the rest of the team was immense – I mean Nicola Walker, Hattie Morahan and Rebecca Root – I wasn't going to say no!

"I was asked to fit my story into an arc in an 'aberrant timeline' where Earth has become an aggressive fascist power. Matt was after a standalone 'slice of life' story under the evil Earth empire type thing and asked me to watch **Mrs**

DOCTOR WHO

Miniver, a film focusing on one family and their domestic life with the massive backdrop of war going on in the background. Again, one of those pitches from Matt that has you hooked from the start.

"Twisted Folklore draws a lot on the history of the Brothers Grimm

himself and it's now the only place in the world where it still snows. There's a mystery there with human drama and pain."

James says: "One of the big things about *Stranded* is that it departs a bit from the standard format of a **Doctor Who** series and allows you A BIT MORE CHARACTER AND MOOD-DRIVEN RATHER THAN YOUR CONVENTIONAL WHO THRILLER.

JAMES KETTLE

and how they travelled to collate traditional folklore. I was interested in how the fascist movement used these tales to 'unify' Germany. It seems like the perfect subject matter for Big Finish – a story about the power of storytelling, how the person telling the tale can manipulate the words to influence the audience in a specific way. I was also interested in how the Hitler Youth affected families by having a 'spy', or someone who was being indoctrinated in a different way to you, under your roof – your own child."

Above: Rebecca Root

THE THIRD story in the set is Snow by James Kettle – a newcomer to writing for The Eighth Doctor Adventures. Matt continues: "Snow is a lovely personal story set back in Baker Street but again venturing a little more into the future. There's one resident of Baker Street left there by



to pursue some storytelling that's in places a bit more character and mood-driven rather than your conventional **Who** thriller.

"Matt was good enough to leave me reasonably free to write as I wanted beyond briefing me on the events that conclude Stranded 2 and giving me an indication of the narrative direction of travel. He did ask for some juicy scenes between Liv and Andy because that's a pairing that's worked for the series in the past. We discussed in some detail the kind of 'through the wringer' developments I had in mind for the major characters - this is a story that leaves no one in quite the same emotional place as when they went into it.

"Unusually for me the whole thing came from a single dream-like image – a garden with snow falling but there's no snow on the other side of the garden fence. Just one garden in the whole world with snow falling. So it's an extrapolation of that image but it's not a fairy tale. It's about very real things like grief and the inevitability

story treads are feeding in and starting to pay off. The first two box sets have been building things up and we get a few answers to some of the questions. But now we ask a few more which springboards us into Stranded 4.

"My adventure is set in all manner of places. It's in the nearish future around the time of the potential apocalypse for humanity that's been hinted at as far back as *Stranded* 2, and we're finally beginning to find out what happened there.

EXHAUSTING IN A WAY THAT I WASN'T EXPECTING IT TO BE! JOHN DORNEY

"We're able to leave Earth but we don't go that far. It's a bit more like your standard **Doctor Who** but still rooted in the worlds we've covered in *Stranded* before.

"Writing What Just Happened was structurally complex which is always interesting and exciting to do whilst at the same time, on this particular occasion, exhausting in a way that I wasn't expecting it to be! But hopefully that will result in a story that's quite thrilling and exciting for the listener to discover." YONTEK

DOCTOR WHO



STRANDED 3

RELEASED: DECEMBER 2021

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Above: Robert Whitelock

of loss, as well as less real things like the psychological cost of time travel. And there are jokes about shorts..."

James adds: "I tried to do some things that were unpredictable, things I haven't done before for Big Finish. The way I approached the pre-titles was unusual, and the way I treated the aliens in the story is a bit different... I'm also really pleased that it's coming out at this time of year because *Snow* is my own kind of tearful take on a Christmas special!"

WHAT JUST Happened by John Dorney concludes this set. Matt says: "John has come up with another high concept finale. What Just Happened is a story told in reverse so it's kind of a game of consequences going backwards and working out what's going on. The Doctor gets some answers as to what's happened – and the stakes are bigger than ever and it's also really personal. The core Baker Street team of Liv, Helen, Tanya and Andy go into this uncertain future... but who's going to make it back?"

John says: "It's still very much Stranded. When I was coming to writing it I was very aware that none of my other Stranded scripts are quite your conventional **Doctor Who** story, and I wanted to maintain that with this one. I didn't want to do a story with a standard beginning, middle or end construct or content. That premise was at least part of my way into how to write it.

"The stories in this set are still a little bit standalone but a lot of the

ETTER TIME

BAYBAN THE BESERKER, BAYBAN THE BUTCHER, BAYBAN THE BOLD, BAYBAN THE BAD... IS BACK!

THERE'S NO doubt that Colin Baker's most famous role on television is as the Sixth Doctor but we shouldn't forget that he has another big sci-fi credit to his name. Colin appeared in the Blake's 7 TV episode *City at the Edge* of the World playing the memorable Bayban who has been brought back to life by Big Finish in new full-cast audio adventures.

The character first returned earlier this year in *Bayban's Bounty* in **The Worlds of Blake's 7 – Avalon** *Volume Two* box set produced by John Ainsworth. John recalls: "During my time producing the Blake's 7 audio dramas for Big Finish, the rights to use elements from the TV episodes written by Chris Boucher weren't available to us. However, when writer Niel Bushnell asked if he might use the character of Bayban for his episode in Avalon Volume Two, I was very keen and happily we were able to negotiate the character's use. An agreement to use Bayban and other Boucher creations was subsequently reached which is what has lead to the return of the Clone Masters and more Bayban adventures on audio."

And Bayban is back this December. Co-producing the new **Bayban the Butcher** box set is Peter Anghelides, who says: "Well, he couldn't possibly have survived the explosion in *City at the Edge of the World* that destroyed Keezarn, could he...?

"So the first thing to do was devise a plausible reason how he did and then to thread that through the box set. In turn, the three stories also weave their continuity into the characters and scenarios of the previous **The Worlds of Blake's 7** box set *The Clone Masters* and January's release *The Terra Nostra*. Each box set is standalone but there's a bonus 'big sound' – that rewards listeners who buy all three collections.

"I wanted us to meet Bayban in his pre-TV days earning his awful

credentials. After this, he needs to work his brutal way back to power without his previous set-up of a fullycrewed ship and a laser cannon. He's relying on his native cunning without any earlier infrastructure, perhaps even without his reputation, so that in the third episode he can attempt to confront his old tormentors and wreak his horrible revenge.

"Of the regular cast in the TV episode, Avon has only heard of Bayban; Vila knows Bayban is top of the Federation's 'Most Wanted' list (after Blake) but does not recognise him; and Tarrant has met him before though Bayban doesn't recall him. ('That's the problem with celebrities,' grumbles Tarrant, 'they recorded another adventure with Michael Keating who plays Vila where I'm hunting him in order to kill him again. I got on very well with Michael when we acted together originally so it was lovely to be reunited.

"You know, I can't give you many quotes from my time in **Doctor Who** other than, 'I am the Doctor, whether you like it or not!' But I can give you a great Bayban quote... "Babe, my mother used to say – she called me Babe – live every hour as though it were your last... I'll be back in an hour.'"

THE SET opens with Conscience by Katharine Armitage as Captain Jenna Stannis and her smuggler crew accept a job to help the people of Samana. However, a new, rival captain is interfering in the supply chain and Bayban doesn't

I MAY HAVE ASKED IF HE COULD COME BACK – IT WOULD BE VERY UNLIKE ME IF I DIDN'T... colin baker

never remember the little people.'). I liked the idea that Jenna had encountered him in her pre-*Liberator* days as a pilot. And if Bayban is able to crawl away from the ruins of Keezarn, then he obviously has unfinished business with Vila.

"If I was going to wish for the impossible, what would it be like if Bayban got face-to-face with Travis... but after the events of TV episode Star One?"

Vortex caught up with Colin Baker for a chat and discovered he is delighted to have donned Bayban's leathers on audio once more. Had Colin ever suggested he could return as Bayban? He tells us: "I may have asked if he could come back – it would be very unlike me if I didn't as I was very fond of Bayban! But I don't recall actually saying anything, and so when I was offered it, I dived at it! Bayban is a great character and when I was playing him previously I felt he didn't die and escaped that explosion!

"I have completed several recordings now and I've loved them all – they've really fleshed him out – and he even gets married! I've



care who gets hurt in the process. Katharine says: "Who doesn't love Bayban? I remember when I first saw the TV episode, he came on screen and I sat upright and actually said out loud, 'That's Colin!' and then a second later, 'And he's wearing the greatest costume I've ever seen'! Bayban is so deliciously bad and I don't often get to write for real out and out baddies so I jumped at the chance. I also adore how Bavban relishes language - which is hopefully the only trait I share with the infamous 'Butcher' - so I was excited to get to play off that and really delve into the backstory of this criminal.

Above: Colin Baker "The brief was really exciting because it had a lot of great ideas in it but it was also really open. The starting point was Bayban meets one of the *Liberator's* crew using *City at the Edge of the World* as the inspiration. We three writers



were given the chance to work out which part of Bayban's timeline we would each take and I managed to wrangle the pre-**Blake's 7** story because I am obsessed with origin stories (honestly, I could watch the first bits of films where the lead becomes the hero all day)!"

THE BUTCHER'S Wife by Lizzie Hopley is the second tale. Desperate after escaping certain death, Bayban plans to pair up with a princess and usurp the wealthy planet Arl – unless another secretive visitor called Travis prevents him.

Lizzie says: "The brief was stories inspired by the concepts and characters from *City at the Edge of the World*. It was a brilliant excuse to watch the entire **Blake's 7** catalogue of course. The exciting addition was the introduction of a female psycho strategist, an excellent character idea. I knew such a person would annoy Bayban massively.

"Bayban gets a wife – what more do you need? And she's a princess. Oh and he meets Travis (kind of)



making this literally one of my favourite stories to write ever! A power triangle of Bayban, Travis and a psycho strategist and I'm not saying any more for fear of spoilers."

> VENGEANCE GAMES by Lizbeth Myles concludes the set. Bayban is in the mood for settling debts and he's hunting down his old enemies – literally. This is not good news for Vila.

Lizbeth says: "**Blake's 7** was on the telly a few years before I was born but I was introduced to it at uni by a friend who was horrified that, despite being a massive **Doctor Who** fan, I'd never seen **Blake's 7**. I ended up binge watching it all in a couple of weeks. But before I even watched a **Blake's 7** episode, I did know Bayban as 'the character Paul Darrow is taking revenge for in *Timelash*'. "Peter wanted Bayban and Vila to be reacquainted after *City at the Edge of the World*. The plot is that Bayban wants to meet up with all his old buddies, have a nice meal and then kill them.

"The highlight was getting to write Bayban's dialogue, it's so much fun. I've never written for a character who hits these levels of bombast before! And working with Peter was brilliant. His ear for Vila's dialogue especially is amazing. When I was sent the brief I did a wee cheer as I thought



this was an inspired idea for a box set. And really, the one great flaw of *City at the Edge of the World* is that there's not enough Bayban."

Also due for release this month is an original novel, *Bayban Ascending*, by Nigel Fairs. Colin concludes: "I'm hoping that when these are released and achieve the enormous levels of uptake that I think they will, that they will invite me back to do some more. I reckon Bayban has a great future!" VORTEX

THE WORLDS OF BLAKE'S 7



BAYBAN THE BUTCHER

RELEASED: DECEMBER 2021
 FORMAT: CD/DOWNLOAD

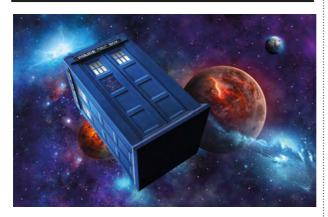
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SHORT TRIPS: VOLUME ONE



WHEN THE Short Trips

printed anthologies came to an end, Big Finish continued the range on audio and the first **Short Trips** audio collection was released in November 2010. The stories in the double CD release were *Rise and Fall* by George Mann, *A Stain* of *Red in the Sand* by David A McEwan, *A True Gentleman* by Jamie Hailstone, *Death-Dealer* by Damian Sawyer, *The Deep* by Ally Kennen, *The Wings of a Butterfly* by Colin Baker, *Police and Shreeves* by Adam Smith and *Running Out of Time* by Dorothy Koomson.

Under the auspices of producer, Xanna Eve Chown, who has overseen many of the printed books, the short adventures were read by William Russell, David Troughton, Katy Manning, Louise Jameson, Peter Davison, Colin Baker, Sophie Aldred and India Fisher.

Executive producer Nicholas Briggs tells *Vortex*: "My idea for this was to do something that was uncomplicated and a way to find upcoming writers. So I asked Xanna to commission these **Short Trips** using new and newish talent.

"My intention was for these releases to be about the words and the voice of the actors - I thought any accompaniment would mainly be music. But then Martin Montague really went to town on the sound design. Every time a character spoke we were given an ambient effect on their voice, every single moment of sound was illustrated with pinpoint accuracy, and, in general, they turned into typically Big Finish-style full sound-scape sort of productions! I'd planned to do the music for all of them but just didn't have the time so Daniel Brett took over from the second release and did some amazing work. With hindsight I'm really glad they turned out this way!

"Of course the difficulty with the short story format is that it demands that you do something odd, original and often very, very 'different' – you can't tell a whole, traditional **Doctor Who** story..."

One of the writers that grabbed particular attention was Colin Baker who performed his own short story, *The Wings of a Butterfly*, following a suggestion from producer David Richardson.

Xanna confirms that selecting Colin to write an adventure was an easy choice: "Of course it was! David suggested it as Colin had just had a book of his articles published and we thought it would be fun to see what he would come up with. And it's great, isn't it? The Sixth Doctor writing the Sixth Doctor. I love it!"

Colin tells Vortex: "I have written one or two short stories for 'my' Doctor and relished the chance to record one of them for Big Finish. And I have to say it's lovely to work on a script written by someone who completely understands Old Sixiel It was, of course, enormous fun to immortalise my own words in that sanctum of sanctums, Moat Studio, where the work of so many wonderful writers is laid down. I am honoured to join their ranks." VORTEX

DOCTOR WHO



SHORT TRIPS: VOLUME ONE RELEASED: NOVEMBER 2010 FORMAT: DOWNLOAD ORDER NOW: bgfn.sh/shorts

THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF

MARTHA JONES HAS SPENT A YEAR TRAVELLING THE EARTH Warning Humanity About the Master and Spreading Hope with Tales of Her Friend, the Doctor...

ROSE TYLER'S done it. So has Donna Noble. And now, Martha Jones has too. No, we're not talking about kissing the Tenth Doctor, we're talking about his companions having their own box set of audio adventures from Big Finish!

The Year of Martha Jones finds the Tenth Doctor's television companion returning for three new stories.

The Master has won. He has stolen humanity's future and imprisoned his nemesis, ruling the Earth with an army of deadly Toclafane. But Martha Jones escaped, and now walks the Earth telling stories of the Doctor. Above all else, humanity needs hope. And Martha will carry that hope across the world...

The creation of the box set came after actor Freema Agyeman reprised her role as Martha for Big Finish in the **Torchwood** adventure, *Dissected*, with senior producer David Richardson then inviting her to rejoin the **Doctor Who** universe.

Director Scott Handcock says: "I chatted with Freema initially about coming back for a **Torchwood** release with Eve Myles, which we then recorded and released back in 2019. David asked if she might be interested in doing more and the notion appealed, so he and Matt Fitton developed a set of stories set during The Year That Never Was. Freema is hugely successful, living in New York and shooting **New Amsterdam** most of the year, so it actually took 18 months to complete recording from beginning to end.

"As an actor and human being, Freema is one of the most positive, brilliant and dedicated people you could work with. We first met 15 years ago back on television series three of **Doctor Who** when I was a runner working away behind-thescenes and she was just beginning her journey as Martha on screen. We got to know each other better on *The Infinite Quest* animation and kept in touch, and it's great to see her go from strength to strength. It's been a joy to reconnect and work with her

"It's the best time to tell stories about Martha where she, as the companion, came into her own and pretty much saved the world herself whilst the Doctor is incapacitated and imprisoned.

"It's been great to just explore a little bit of the adventure that she goes on, on the road for a year.

We join Martha just as she has escaped from the clutches of the Master but the Toclafane are always watching and looking. There have been books and short stories about her adventures but we've tried not to step on any of those toes."

The set opens with The Last Diner by James Goss. Martha arrives on the west coast of the US and finds an old friend waiting to make contact. A desperate group gathers for her stories. But when Francine arrives, escaped from the Valiant, she isn't

AS AN ACTOR, I'M ALL ABOUT PERFORMANCES AND DOCTOR WHO HAS ALWAYS EMPLOYED FINE ACTORS... MARINA SIRTIS

Above (I–r): Marina Sirtis Below: Serin Ibrahim

> on these stories and we're all chuffed that she found the time to come back and recreate the good Dr Jones!

"I think the **Torchwood** story, Dissected, helped Freema find Martha again, though it was pretty instantaneous. She really commits to the role which is essential on audio. The Year of Martha Jones has the advantage, in a sense, of being set during the final episode of TV series three, so it was quite helpful to be able to say, 'remember that scene with the Toclafane,' or 'imagine you're on that waste ground'. Muscle memory can be incredibly useful shorthand!"

> SCRIPT EDITOR Matt was delighted to be able to write for another character from 21st century Doctor Who. He explains: "It's an era we haven't explored that much, the third



series of the Tenth Doctor, and we've been able to place this box set between the final two episodes of that season.

so keen to hear about the Doctor...

Matt continues: "We begin the set with Martha coming ashore on the coast of America, the start of this little section of her global journey.

"James has written a story where word of what she is doing has spread around the underground movement. She's meeting with desperate people, an odd collection of individuals, who are trying to find some little bit of hope and solace in the world that the Master has created, so it sets the template for what Martha's doing.

"She runs into someone she didn't expect, a friend from a previous life, and then part-way through this story there's someone else she really didn't expect to meet in the form of Francine! The Joneses are reunited for the next step of the journey."

Martha's mum Francine Jones is played by Adjoa Andoh and there was another big surprise when it was revealed who the story's main guest star was in an enterprising piece of

DOCTOR WHO MARTHA JONES

casting by Scott Handcock. Marina Sirtis – best known to sci-fi fans as Counselor Deanna Troi in **Star Trek: The Next Generation** – makes her Big Finish debut as Martha's friend Karen.

Of swapping strange new worlds for the universe of **Doctor Who**, Marina tells *Vortex*: "When people ask me who my first Doctor was, it was the First Doctor! As an actor, I'm all about performances and **Doctor Who** has always employed fine actors – it's a very unique and special show.

"And this box set tells us that stories are important which is why they last. They are handed down from generation to generation and are what give our imaginations flight."

SILVER MEDAL by Tim Foley is the second adventure in this set. Matt says: "This is more of a traditional **Doctor Who** story with Martha telling the people she meets in this little mining area in the middle of a forest, about what happened when she and the Doctor were there before."

Martha journeys to a forest camp hidden from Toclafane patrols. It's

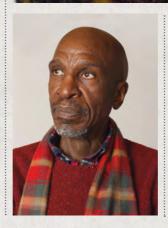
LIKE TORCHWOOD THERE'S NO DOCTOR HERE, AND MORALITY CAN GET A LITTLE BLURRED. TIM FOLEY

Above: Freema Agyeman Below: Ewart James Walter:

somewhere she's been before with the Doctor – more than a century ago – and the silver mines held a deadly secret. The resistance are ready to risk everything but there'll be no prize for second place.

Tim, writing for Martha for the second time after creating her **Torchwood** debut, confirms: "I got the gig for this straight after doing the **Torchwood** script for Freema – so I'm delighted I didn't mess up there! I really like Martha as a character.

"Matt wanted a story where Martha's trying to encourage people not to act rashly and that victory can be found in defeat. I started to imagine who or what would be a similar yet opposing force – an individual who had different ideas on how to save the world, and how Martha had to navigate that personally.



"I like the fact that, like **Torchwood** there's no Doctor here, and morality can get a little blurred. It does allow you to introduce a bit of grey into the characters. Martha is our hero – her course is true and we believe in what she's doing – but there are a couple of moments in the story where we may query how she's going about it. She's telling stories about the Doctor and we don't know whether these stories are entirely true or if she's just using them as a means to inspire certain people to do certain things."

Tim adds: "I wrote it a while ago and I'll be delighted when I hear it – the cast for the whole box set is wild! I'm always blown away by the amazing actors."

IT'S LIKE PLAYING DRESS-UP BUT WITH

ORV OCT THE YEAR OF MARTHA JONES 1.1 THE LAST DINER BY JAMES GOSS

DRAMATIS PERSONAEL

MARTHA JONESI FREEMA AGYEMAN MARTHA JUNEAR FREEMA AGTEMAN Former companion, Earth's only hope

FARMEINE JUNEST ADJOA ANDON Martha's mother (actually a clone - but doesn't know (t1) RDLLY1 (r, mld-20m, diverse cast) Someone who knew Martha in another life

TUCKER: (M, 60s, diverse cast, American) Brave (ace

(F, 40s, American) Boccer mom turned slave

The set features a number of impressive guest stars. Famed voice artist Lorelei King (Alien: Covenant) is returning to Big Finish to play resistance leader Jessie Grant. She says: "I love my character - Jessie is very maternal in that she is always making sure that everyone is OK. We learn that she has reasons for this and although she has a hard exterior, it's a hard world! This adventure was so much fun - it's got all the survivalist elements in it which I really like."

And returning to the Whoniverse after appearing in Doctor Who and The Sarah Jane Adventures, Iulie Graham plays Miss Beecham. an ambitious and efficient agent of the Master. Julie tells

Vortex: "I love the whole Doctor Who franchise – it's just such a national treasure. It's part of our Britishness and lovely to be a part of in any way whatsoever. And what's great about doing audio is that there's not so much pressure, you can really play with a part and go for it."

THE SET concludes with Deceived written by Matt. The Master's minions are competing to please him. And agents Beecham and Strand believe nothing would please him more than finding the Doctor's stray companion. As Martha and friends hide out in Vegas, the Toclafane

arrive. How many levels of deception must be uncovered for Martha to reach the truth?

Matt says: "Martha grows so much as a companion through this story arc. During her time in the TV series, she's already quite assured - she's training and about to become a doctor. Then she sees what else she's capable of and she ends up working for UNIT before she branches out on her own.

"We're heading towards the finale of TV series three where Martha wants to believe in the best of people. But against her are the Master's agents, the worst of humanity who are trying to get one over on each other just to curry favour with Harold Saxon and fight their way up the food chain. It's the selfless Martha versus the Master's selfish agents."

One of the Master's agents is Mr Strand played by Game of Thrones actor, Gethin Anthony. Gethin tells Vortex: "This recording has just been the most fun - the feeling of adventure and escapism and imagination that you can get through voice performance is amazing.

"The scale of the stories you can tell in a very efficient amount of time, and in which you can go anywhere in the universe (as we tend to do), always reconnects me with why you get onto this crazy path in life in the first place. It's like playing dress-up but with your voice." VORTEX

DOCTOR WHO



THE YEAR OF MARTHA JONES RELEASED: DECEMBER 2021 FORMAT: CD/DOWNLOAD ORDER NOW: bgfn.sh/toclafane THE DALEKS ARE EDGING CLOSER IN THE SECOND THE WAR DOCTOR BEGINS BOX SET... WARBRINGER!

EARLIER THIS year, Big Finish returned to the heart of the Time War when the War Doctor was resurrected on audio.

With the sad passing of Sir John Hurt, this Doctor's boots have been filled by Jonathon Carley with a note-perfect performance in the style of the veteran actor. Jonathon is delighted with the response to his take on the character.

Speaking to Vortex he says: "Honestly, I've not heard a bad word about it which is more than I could ever have hoped for. It is a big deal entering the expansive world of **Doctor Who**. Everyone has an opinion – good, bad and in between! I feel very, very lucky to be almost universally embraced because it's a crazy world out there.

"The War Doctor Begins – Forged in Fire landed really well which is testament to the work that everyone has done – the War Doctor lives again! A few people thought that it was a single release but it would have been a shame to let him slip away quietly. And so here we are."

Producer David Richardson says: "By sheer fluke we had the scripts for the second volume of **The War Doctor Begins** before *Forged in Fire* was written so we knew what we were building up to. *Warbringer* is a thrilling piece of work – a three hour story in which consequences do not follow an action. After his acclaimed debut, Jonathon throws himself into the drama and thrills of these three episodes and continues to prove himself to be nothing short of miraculous as the young War <u>Doctor.</u>"

SCRIPT EDITOR Matt Fitton says: "After his launch in the first box set, this is the War Doctor's follow-up album - it's his concept piece. Here we're looking at the effects of the Time War on a particular society and planet with the Daleks throwing everything they've got at it. In a very Time War kind of way, we're starting midway through the story and gradually picking up to find out how we got there. That's why episode one is called *Consequences*.

"The Doctor finds a new friend in street smart cyborg Case, who was largely created by Timothy X Atack, who wrote Consequences. She's brilliant. A cyborg-y person who, through circumstances we don't know yet, is thrown together with the Doctor and he isn't entirely happy about having to work with her. However, he can see how she can be of use in the situation in which he finds himself: on a planet riven by civil war with bizarre robot soldiers stomping about the place. It's something the War Doctor needs to get used to, being at the heart of a conflict."

Jonathon agrees: "Warbringer is more of an ensemble piece than Forged in Fire. We have Beth Chalmers back as Veklin and Ajjaz Awad as Case,



Above: Angela Bruce

and you can hear the stories from any of their viewpoints depending on who you choose to be your protagonist. It's equal parts War Doctor, Veklin and Case's story, and it is wonderful to have these access points.

"It also meant that the action was shared out and distributed between the actors so I had downtime to sit back and listen to what everyone else was doing. When recording remotely, you're able to hear it live and can enjoy the magic being created in real time. In the studio I'd have been sat in the green room but to still be able to be on the line and admire what everyone else was doing was so much fun."

CONSEQUENCES writer Tim says: "It wasn't so much a brief as a challenge: 'Come and have a go if you think you're grim enough'! *Warbringer* is told in a very distinctive way and I don't want to spoil it for the listener but perhaps I can say that what I took from Matt's overall plan was the theme of the profound confusion of war. It made me think of films like **Apocalypse Now** where the surreality of constant conflict takes over people's entire lives, and you have cultures and situations that could only exist where you're convinced every day might be your last.

"Because of where my episode sat in the set I got the job of designing a lot of the planet the story opens on. Fellow writer Andrew Smith and I would talk on the phone every now and then, batting ideas back and forth, agreeing on certain settings and locations. And then I'd take those away and make them as strange



and alien as I could! This is a world where war has gone beyond people fighting each other and become the reason why people live."

When asked to sum up the plot, Tim reveals: "It begins in the aftermath of a terrible incident that none of our regular protagonists want to talk about, told from the point of view of the new character, Case, who has no idea how she's ended up in the midst of it. And at that point I'll shut up, even though I've only described the first scene...

"There's one particular moment that for me sums up the sheer insanity of a world consumed by war, where I think the adventure is at its most tense and horrific, but it all happens in a quiet and domestic way. When I was writing that scene I kind of scared myself. It took me by surprise and I hope there's a similar journey for the listeners."

DESTROYER BY Andrew Smith is the second episode of the set. Andrew says: "It's a really interesting story as the whole box set plays around with the timeline. Tim's script is really clever, such a brilliant read, and I've inherited some of the wonderful things that he created such as the Deadweight robots and Case the Berserker, who's great to play with. The Deadweights are really fun too. Their dialogue is limited to the pre-recorded things that they say where you have to select one of them, a bit like Bumblebee in **Transformers.**

"It wasn't an extensive brief – not too much to the overall plan. I was working from a single paragraph after being given the set-up, and I had Tim's storyline to work from. It's a sequel after the cliffhanger at the end of his story. It carries on directly, set in the world and characters that Tim invented.

THIS DOCTOR HAS A LOUELY BELLIGERENCE TO HIM, HE DOESN'T CARE WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THINK ... and revismith

"The Doctor and his companions are under threat on a world that's itself under threat... and then the threat increases when it turns out this world has Daleks on it. in hiding.

"It was one of the first ideas I had – Daleks watching a world, out of sight, monitoring events. There's only a few of them... but why would they do that? What are the Daleks up to? That's answered but perhaps not in my episode!"

Andrew has written two adventures starring Sir John Hurt, and this is his second script for the young War Doctor. He adds: "The voice remains the same – it's the new, younger Doctor and Jonathon Carley is brilliant. This Doctor has a lovely belligerence to him, he doesn't care what other people think, he's totally single minded. Jonathon was great in The Shadow Squad, my episode of the first series. I was expecting an approximation but he absolutely convinces you that this is a young John Hurt - he sells the character completely. Stepping into the shoes of John would be daunting for anyone but Ionathon does a superb job. It's a superhuman effort - it's almost supernatural!"

WARBRINGER concludes with Saviour written by Jonathan Morris who reveals: "I had a storyline worked out for a series years ago called Save the Daleks which in the end wasn't used. Matt remembered it and asked me to rework it as the final part of the



Beth Chalmers

trilogy, except it would also be the first part of the trilogy chronologically!

"The interesting thing about this story is that the listener comes into it knowing how it ends and so there is the dramatic irony of them being one step ahead of the Doctor. You get the consequences then you get the cause. Everything else that happens in the trilogy came out of discussions between myself, Matt, Tim and Andrew, building on each other's ideas or providing extra twists - I can't really remember who came up with what now! Then we went our separate ways and wrote our stories with Matt making sure they all fitted together. By this point my story was almost entirely unlike Save the Daleks, that was just a starting point which was over-written by improved ideas.

"The Doctor detects a broken-down spaceship which is on a collision course with a planet, a planet which is inhabited but which won't be for very much longer if the spaceship hits it. So naturally he has to leap in and do what he does best; save the day by repairing the engines. But unfortunately, it isn't that simple..."

Asked for his highlight, Jonny explains: "I was writing with John Hurt's performance and voice in mind, and so my main goal was to build the story around big, dramatic dilemmas placing the Doctor in an impossible situation where he is forced to question his own moral choices. And where the Daleks are very much playing their A-game; not just in terms of military might but in terms of psychological warfare.

"So my highlights are the scenes where the Doctor is having these extremely dramatic confrontations with the Daleks and other characters. Creating battles of words. My favourite bit during the writing was reading those scenes back and thinking, 'Wow, I must've been on fire when I wrote that!""

Actor Jonathon concludes: "Case is a new character who is finding herself, as much as we are learning about her, and there is a clash of the interpretation of that in what people's end goal is with her – whether to help her or to use her.

"That's a huge dramatic conflict with people coming from very different viewpoints of the best or right thing to do in this situation. It's the classic rescuer, persecutor and victim triangle which anyone who knows about drama will pick up on. It's a bold choice and absolutely works in the story." VOREX

DOCTOR WHO



THE WAR DOCTOR BEGINS WARBRINGER

RELEASED: DECEMBER 2021
 FORMAT: CD/DOWNLOAD

ORDER NOW: bgfn.sh/case





STAR COPS has undergone something of a renaissance since Big Finish resurrected the television series on audio. Overseen by former police officer, Andrew Smith, the Star Cops universe continues to grow with the release of Sins of the Father, a brand new audiobook out this December.

Written by Big Finish veteran Mike Tucker, *Sins of the Father* is narrated by Trevor Cooper – who plays Colin Devis in the original VV show and for Big Finish.

A series of gruesome killings send shockwaves through Moonbase as the ambitious new Coordinator announces plans to relax restrictions for the people who live and work there. And whoever is sending the chilling Jack the Ripper-style messages that accompany them seems to have access to Nathan Spring's personal computer, Box...

Can the Starcops solve the puzzle – before it's too late?

Producer Xanna Eve Chown tells Vortex: "Jack the Ripper in space! What more can you ask for? It's always a pleasure to work with Mike and Andrew, and this is a fantastic book with a storyline that is full of surprises and ideas as it unravels, keeping you guessing and thinking throughout." Vortex asks Mike, who wrote the previous **Star Cops** audiobook, *The Stuff of Life*, how big a fan he is of the show created by Chris Boucher? Mike says: "I think it's more accurate to say that I am a big fan of Chris Boucher! I love his scripts for **Blake's 7** and **Doctor Who** plus his fantastic **Bergerac** Halloween special, so I was really excited to hear that he was making a space-based drama.

"Although I never got to work on the TV series of **Star Cops** it was a major project in the BBC VFX department when I joined and it was fantastic watching the models and props taking shape.

"I was surprised and delighted to get a commission to follow up on *The Stuff of Life*. Xanna sent me an email saying that executive producer, Jason Haigh-Ellery was really pleased with how the first novel had been received and wanted me to write a second – that's always an encouraging thing for a writer to hear."

Of the new plot, Mike says: "I was keen to go in a direction that neither the TV series or the fullcast audio dramas have gone and do a serial killer story, sort of in the vein of **Silence of the Lambs**. Andrew and Xanna were happy for me to explore that so then it was a question of fitting it into the established **Star Cops** universe."

Mike adds: "A highlight was bringing back a popular character from the TV series but I'm not going to spoil things by saying who it is!" <u>vorrex</u>

STAR COPS SINS OF THE FATHER

RELEASED: DECEMBER 2021
 FORMAT: DOWNLOAD

ORDER NOW: bgfn.sh/father

THE TWELFTH DOCTOR'S MISSING HIS LECTURING DUTIES AND FINDS HE'S...

THE TWELFTH Doctor Chronicles returns this month as Jacob Dudman uses his vocal talents to bring Peter Capaldi's incarnation to life as our favourite Time Lord is Timejacked! Rookie Time Agent

Rookie Time Agent Keira Sanstrom needs the Doctor's help and she's prepared to go to extreme measures to get it. Unwillingly whisked away from St Luke's University, the Doctor quickly discovers that being forced off Earth is only the start of his problems... Three new stories in this full-cast audio box set open with Flight to Calandra by Matt Fitton followed by Split Second and The Weight of History, both by Lou Morgan.

Jacob, buzzing from the universal praise for his take on Matt Smith's incarnation in **The Eleventh Doctor Chronicles** says: "I was delighted to create a voice for the Twelfth Doctor to suit full-cast audio. It's a character I've thoroughly enjoyed working on and have really grown into.

"I think listeners will find the change to the full-cast format really lifts the range to the next level. We have an epic three-hour story told across three fantastic scripts involving terrifying time agents, brand new planets, hatred of pears and wibbly-wobbly madness!"

There's a new companion at the Doctor's side for this trio of tales and, whether the Doctor likes it or not, he's stuck with rookie time agent Keira Sandstrom.

Actor Bhavnisha Parmar tells Vortex: "Working with Big Finish was an absolute dream. From the first day to the last, the whole team – production and cast – created some wonderful acting moments. Being back in the studio with the whole cast was also a delight. The presence of real actors and their character's energies just

I THINK LISTENERS WILL FIND THE CHANGE TO THE FULL-CAST FORMAT REALLY LIFTS THE RANGE TO THE NEXT LEVEL JACOB DUDMAN

brought an already exciting script to life. Jake is an amazing actor and human being. He made the days so fun and we gelled really well from the word go – I couldn't have asked for a better scene partner.

"What can I say about playing Keira? She's a strong funny female – such a treat to play. Her emotional arc is not one you see a lot in female characters and that Above (l–r): Jacob Dudman and Bhavnisha Parmar

is a true gem about her. I'm really excited about what the future holds for the box set, for the team and for Keira. Until then..."

Producer Alfie Shaw concludes: "It's an exciting new era for the Twelfth Doctor at Big Finish when he's unwillingly whisked away from his duties at St Luke's. And it's always a delight to be working with Jake and director Helen Goldwyn, and to welcome Bhav aboard the TARDIS as Keira.

"The chemistry between Jake and Bhav was amazing, and it was great to have everyone back in the studio. Matt and Lou have pulled together a brilliant story, perfectly capturing the spirit of the Twelfth Doctor's TV adventures while pushing it into new territory." VORTEX

DOCTOR WHO



TIMEJACKED!

- RELEASED: NOVEMBER 2021
- FORMAT: CD/DOWNLOAD

ORDER NOW: bgfn.sh/calandra

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VORTEX MAIL



PICTURE PERFECT

I've been looking through some recent and upcoming releases and have to say that I really like the art by Claudia Gironi that you've got for the first two **The War Doctor Begins** and the audio novels sets. The way they look like old paintings that have been damaged by time really adds to the theme that they are stories that could have been lost for years which are being rediscovered and presented to us. The small details in each one, with the overall drip down of the lines on them, just really makes those covers stand out as works of art rather than just standard box art. Thanks for showing off some new talent. LOUISE WADE

Nick: Thanks, Louise, Claudia's work continues to be superb. We felt a change of style would look good on some titles.

SUPERB FROM SALES

With **The War Doctor Begins**, **The War Master** – *Killing Time* and **The Ninth Doctor Adventures** amongst others, it has been a great year for audio. Although I can listen via download, I do like having a physical copy on CD. Alas, a glitch with Royal Mail saw some of my purchases going astray recently. I badgered Royal Mail who tracked a couple down but with no sign of the others I contacted your sales team. Reanna, Brenda and the team were fantastically supportive and helpful and I am pleased to say my CD collection should be up-to-date again very soon. Many thanks to your sales team who do Big Finish credit and are as every bit as important to your success as its writers, directors, actors etc. MICHAEL CROUCH

Nick: Many thanks, Michael. They really are a fantastic bunch of people in our sales team. We love them.

BRING BACK BENNY!

I've been really enjoying this year from Big Finish, we've not heard much from Bernice Summerfield though. Is the lack of a box set this year because the Professor's fallen victim to COVID or should we fear for the future of the range? ALEX WATTS

Nick: Don't worry, Alex, Benny will be back!

VANISHING VINYL

I was discussing today with some friends about the vinyl ghosts of Big Finish. It feels like a lifetime ago but there was a plan to release some **Classic Doctors**, **New Monsters** on vinyl with Asda. With COVID still creating a nightmare along with Brexit, both have had a devastating effect on the way we live. Will we still be getting *Fallen Angels, Judoon in Chains, Harvest* of the Sycorax, The Sontaran Ordeal and No Place by James Goss? **BRYAN SIMCOTT**

Nick: There have been several factors connected with the production and distribution of vinyl that have affected the way Big Finish releases stories on vinyl and I'm sorry to say that the releases you've mentioned, Bryan, have been caught up in these issues. At the moment, we don't see any resolution to the difficulties but as soon as we have something more concrete to say either way, we'll make a public announcement.



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"Coconut milk, coconut water. You still like to tell me they're the same... and who am I to say?"

BIG FINISH RELEASE SCHEDULE

Please note that due to factors beyond our control, Big Finish is currently operating a digital-first release schedule. Our warehouse remains open but the mail-out of collector's edition CDs and vinyls may be delayed. However, all physical purchases of new releases will unlock a digital version that can be immediately downloaded, or played on the Big Finish app, from the release date.

FOR FULL DETAILS AND UPDATES VISIT: bgfn.sh/whatsnew

NOVEMBER 2021

DW | THE NINTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES Volume 3: Lost Warriors (BOX SET)

DW | THE NINTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES Volume 3: Lost Warriors (LIMITED VINYL EDITION)

DW | JENNY THE DOCTOR'S DAUGHTER Series 2: Still Running (BOX SET)

DW | UNIT: THE NEW SERIES Nemesis 1: Between Two Worlds (BOX SET)

DW | THE DOCTOR CHRONICLES The Twelfth Doctor: Volume 2 -Timejacked! (BOX SET)

I, JACOBI Derek Jacobi in Conversation DLO

SURVIVORS New Dawn 1 (BOX SET)

SURVIVORS Ghosts and Demons (AUDIOBOOK) DLO

DARK SEASON Novelisation (AUDIOBOOK) DLO

THUNDERBIRDS Peril in Peru (AUDIOBOOK) DLO

TORCHWOOD The Red List (56)

DECEMBER 2021

DW | THE EIGHTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES Stranded 3 (BOX SET)

DW | THE WAR DOCTOR BEGINS Warbringer (BOX SET)

DW | THE YEAR OF MARTHA JONES (BOX SET)

THE WORLDS OF BLAKE'S 7 Bayban the Butcher (BOX SET)

THE WORLDS OF BLAKE'S 7 Bayban Ascending (AUDIOBOOK) DLO

STAR COPS Sins of the Father

(AUDIOBOOK) DLO

TORCHWOOD The Grey Mare (57)

DLO = DOWNLOAD ONLY • DW = DOCTOR WHO DATES CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS.

JANUARY 2022

DW | THE FIFTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES Forty 1 (BOX SET)

DW | THE EIGHTH DOCTOR AND CHARLOTTE POLLARD The Further Adventures (BOX SET)

DW | THE AUDIO NOVELS Watchers DLO

DW | SPECIAL RELEASES Peladon (BOX SET)

THE WORLDS OF BLAKE'S 7 The Terra Nostra (BOX SET)

THE WORLDS OF BLAKE'S 7 Zero Point (AUDIOBOOK) DLO

IRIS WILDTHYME AND FRIENDS Enter Wildthyme (AUDIOBOOK) DLO

IRIS WILDTHYME AND FRIENDS The Polythene Terror (AUDIOBOOK) DLO

IRIS WILDTHYME AND FRIENDS Wildthyme Beyond (AUDIOBOOK) DLO TORCHWOOD TBA (58)

FEBRUARY 2022

DW | THE NINTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES Volume 4: Old Friends (BOX SET)

DW | THE NINTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES Volume 4: Old Friends (LIMITED VINYL EDITION)

DW | THE THIRD DOCTOR ADVENTURES TBA (BOX SET)

DW | THE LONE CENTURION Volume 2: Camelot (BOX SET)

DW | SHORT TRIPS Volume 11 (AUDIOBOOK) DLO

SURVIVORS New Dawn 2 (BOX SET)

SPACE 1999 Volume 2: Earthbound (BOX SET)

TORCHWOOD TBA (59)

THE BIG FINISH MAGAZINE



THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF



ALSO INSIDE

DOCTOR WHO **TIMEJACKED!** The Twelfth Doctor finds that he is out of time...