

VORTEX



ISSUE 170
APRIL 2023
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THE PATERNOSTER GANG TRESPASSERS

FANS OF investigations into strange goings on in Victorian London will be delighted by the forthcoming return of **The Paternoster Gang**.

Created by Steven Moffat, the trio of the Silurian detective Madame Vastra (played by Neve McIntosh), her human wife Jenny (Catrin Stewart) and Sontaran butler Strax (Dan Starkey) are back for 12 adventures in **The Paternoster Gang: Trespassers**.

The first of four box sets is due for release in October 2023, as the popular characters have new mysteries to uncover – but somehow they all seem to have something in common. Who, or what, are the trespassers?

Producer David Richardson says: “**The Paternoster Gang** is back! I love this range – it always puts a huge smile on my face. What a joy to have Neve, Catrin and Dan back recording a whole new saga beginning with a trio of escapist and witty scripts featuring an array of colourful characters. Simply put: 180 minutes of happiness!” **VORTEX**

THE PATERNOSTER GANG TRESPASSERS 1

- RELEASED: OCTOBER 2023
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EDITORIAL

I'VE RECENTLY returned from my first **Gallifrey** convention in Los Angeles where I had the honour of being part of the Big Finish team. I was blown away by it all. But what I really enjoyed the most was the enthusiasm of the fans, and I was delighted to meet, in real life, many of the people I've chatted with on Twitter.

One of the great things was being able to share in the love of Big Finish. There were lots of cosplayers there including a superb Sixth Doctor in his blue coat. I made it my mission to walk around, chat with random strangers and then find out if they had the Big Finish app. And if they didn't I made sure they downloaded it!

Having been a Big Finish fan since the start and heard virtually everything that's ever been released since 1998, I was able to recommend content to those who told me what TV stories they like best.

So a big shout out to Ivy, Lela, Jessie, Chris, Ivq (a massive Bernice Summerfield fan), Hollie, Will (and especially Will's mom!), DJ, Elizabeth, Hannah and Nicholas. I hope you've bought and liked all of my recommendations! **VORTEX**

Kenny



SEASONS OF FEAR

It's time to return to Bishop Grave School, three decades after whispers of conspiracies and computers, fascists and scientists...

DARK SEASON is a show that matters. When *Doctor Who* was off air, there was little else in the way of new tele-fantasy, then along came this six-part show on children's BBC television.

Spawned from the mind of Russell T Davies, it gave him his drama writing debut, while a young actress named Kate Winslet appeared on screen and, well, the rest is history.

In *Dark Season: Legacy Rising*, we return to Bishop Grave School to meet Taylor Sullivan. Can they discover the secrets of the past... before that past discovers them?

Producer and director Scott Hancock says: "Senior Producer David Richardson reached out to Russell about delving more into the *Dark Season* legacy. It's a series that left an indelible mark on the imaginations of a generation of viewers, as well as launching the careers of both Russell and Kate, so it sort of made sense to ask the question: what happened next?"

In an exclusive chat with *Vortex*, Russell says: "I hadn't realised it had been 30 years since we made *Dark Season*. David wrote to me and suggested an anniversary audio

and I thought, 'What a good idea'. I asked if Scott could produce and direct it because I'd worked with him before, and then we had a talk and went through various options."

Scott continues: "Russell and I had a good discussion asking questions such as do we reimagine the TV series with a new cast in the present day? Should we reunite the original cast and have them play their teenage selves? Should it be a new cast and new adventures but with links to the original characters? In the end, the latter was the route that felt most natural. It meant we could keep the spirit of *Dark Season*, bring it bang up to date, cast a new trio of heroes but also celebrate the original cast as they are today. The best of both worlds!"

Russell adds: "As we talked about it, we said let's try and get the original



Above (l-r): Kate Winslet and Russell T Davies

cast involved. At first, we spoke about just one or two cameos but in the end we got them all! Hurrah!"

THE ORIGINAL cast featured Victoria Lambert as Marcie, Kate Winslet as Reet, Ben Chandler as Thomas, Brigit Forsyth as Miss Maitland and Grant Parsons as Mr Eldridge. Since **Dark Season** was originally broadcast, Kate Winslet has gone on to have a stellar career with Academy Awards, BAFTAs, Golden Globes and Emmys to her name. But, here she is, swapping Hollywood for the Big Finish studios!

Russell says: "Kate's always said lovely things about **Dark Season** in interviews. I think it was Executive Producer Jason Haigh-Ellery who brought it up recently and Kate spoke about it very fondly.

"As is the way with these things, when you approach a star like Kate you usually go to her agent. But I

SHE'S PROPERLY LOVELY. I ADMIRER HER BEFORE WE WENT INTO THE STUDIO, AND WHEN I CAME OUT, IT WAS TOWERING ADMIRATION!

RUSSELL T DAVIES

actually wrote her a letter, a proper note, saying how honoured I'd been to work with her in the first place, and how lovely it would be to do this. I got an immediate reply with her phone number – not going through her agent. She was so direct about it, so straightforward and so full of love. It was not what I'd imagined!

"And I remember when Kate turned up for the recording, I was kind of expecting her to have an entourage but she just came strolling down the Soho street on her own and gave me a big hug. She's properly lovely. I admired her before we went into the studio, and when I came out, it was towering admiration! I adore her."

Scott adds: "I've worked with Russell long enough to know how he feels about recasting so that was never an option. If Kate had said no, Reet wouldn't have featured. And the same with Marcie, or Tom or Eldritch. Instead, we'd have found another way to bring the history of **Dark Season** with us. But we knew well in advance that Kate was keen and that really helped us shape the character of Taylor. It wouldn't have felt the same bringing back everyone else without Reet. And now we have all the surviving cast back: Kate, Victoria, Ben, Grant and Brigit. After three decades, that's no small feat!"

GIVING AN overview of the new series, Scott explains: "Even if you've not seen or heard any **Dark Season** before, you can listen to *Legacy Rising* and you won't feel left out. It's all about our new trio of heroes – Taylor, Nina and Jack – and their battles with dark technology.

"We work our way through the seasons – Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter – facing deadly home assistants, corrupt reality TV producers and everyone's worst best friend, before Russell wraps everything up in an epic finale."

Tim Foley opens *Legacy Rising* with *Spring*.

He says: "Any project Scott leads is one I want to be part of. On a series he can balance the macro and the micro, the bigger picture and the individual scenes between characters, and he really brings out the best in his writers. On top of that, he's a fab director. Too talented that man. I'm glad Big Finish are shot of him, he was making the rest of us look bad!"

"Working with Russell was amazing. And intimidating. Especially when you know this is his passion project. He was in putting on this whilst getting the 60th anniversary of **Doctor Who** ready, that's how much he cares."

SUMMER HAS been written by Chris Chapman, who enthuses: "Back in 1991, I was 10 and **Dark Season** was my favourite show on CBBC. I completely fell in love with its

Doctor Who-ish vibe, its quirky outsider characters, and its sinister and twisty plotting. I loved the first adventure where every schoolkid gets a free computer but **THEY'RE EVIL** – and then I loved the follow-up where a supremely powerful supercomputer is discovered under the school playing field.

"Flash forward 30 years and Scott emails me, mentioning in passing that he's working on a revamp of **Dark Season**. I didn't need to be asked, I was already suggesting/demanding that I write for it! And luckily, Scott let me pitch a storyline – and that idea became **Dark Season: Summer**.

"*Summer* shows what happens when our heroes return from their Easter break to find that TV cameras have been installed all over the school: the pupils are to be the stars of a new 'fixed rig' documentary series. Students will be split into 'A Characters', 'B Characters' and 'everyone else', much to Taylor's indignation.

"As a fan from 1991, I'm just overjoyed that my favourite show is back."

AUTUMN IS written by James Goss, before we conclude with *Winter* by Russell T Davies. Russell explains: "Scott had lots of ideas. I couldn't work on this full time but I loved his suggestions. He ran the storylines past me, and when it became clear that the ending was going to have Victoria as Marcie, Kate as Reet and Grant playing Mr Eldridge it really attracted my attention.

"And that's when I nudged myself in! There was already a script but I said, 'Let me rewrite it as I have something to say'. I was able to flex my muscles and what a joy it was as I wasn't expecting to do that at all. So yes, *Legacy Rising* developed between Scott and myself, particularly the last story which was very much where I stepped in to have a say."



Above (l-r): Grant Parsons and Victoria Lambert

WHEN IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THE ENDING WAS GOING TO HAVE VICTORIA AS MARCIE, KATE AS REET AND GRANT PLAYING MR ELDRIDGE IT REALLY ATTRACTED MY ATTENTION.

RUSSELL T DAVIES

SCOTT HAS directed the series, and concedes: "It was a bit strange, to be honest. It had been about six months since I last directed anything for *Big Finish*, and it wasn't just a one-off day. This was an entire week of the same project. It required a lot of time and thought, as well as scheduling the key cast to be available in August to tie in with my availability too.

"But it was an absolute blast. We'd already picked up material with Brigit and Kate on a couple of separate mornings and weekends, and both of them were delightful and so full of love for the series – we knew where those performances were



Above: Lu Corfield



Above (l-r): Aitch Wylie, Jacob Dudman, Jordan Broatch, Bethany Antonia and Liz Sutherland-Lim

being pitched. The fun then came in introducing our brand-new trio to the series and each other, and we honestly couldn't have been luckier.

"I've praised Jake Dudman to the hilt before now, and all those comments still stand, but Aitch Wylie and Bethany Antonia are equal forces to be reckoned with.

So professional and fun and strong. They completely got the characters but also clicked as cast mates, which made it so much easier for the guest actors to relax on coming in.

"Our second day, oddly, was the day we recorded the finale, and it was just a pleasure to see Grant and Victoria in awe of our new heroes, and vice

versa. How often do you get the chance to reunite a team who haven't seen one another in decades? And personally, although other things will be released later, it was the final thing that I've directed for Big Finish so it's special on a number of levels."

Russell adds: "I went along to Kate's recording but sadly wasn't able to be there for Grant's session – I was dying to see him again after all these years: he's now a very famous agent.

"Victoria was fascinating because we couldn't find any trace of her until I went through Facebook and, completely by coincidence, about three days before she'd posted a photo of Marcie's paddle and put it as the header of her page. I was scrolling through Facebook and thought, 'That's Marcie's paddle!'

"And of course, getting Brigit was the greatest honour. It was incredible. She's officially retired but is still a marvellous trooper, fighting on, and she actually came out of retirement just to do this, especially for us. It was terribly moving and wonderful."

Russell concludes: "I'm absolutely delighted. I always like to think that everything I write is all set in the same world. There are small hints here and there that Marcie is actually working for UNIT. And I wrote a **Doctor Who** novel in 1986, *Damaged Goods*, which actually had a Colonel or Sergeant Marcie Hatter, so we kind of confirm in this that when she's off stage – before she comes centre stage – she's working for very important people in this sphere. I love that it's all connected." **VORTEX**

DARK SEASON
LEGACY RISING



■ RELEASED: MAY 2023
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THE BIG FINISH
DOCTOR WHO
60TH ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION,
IS ABOUT TO GET
UNDERWAY...



A BLAST FROM THE PAST

I CAN IT REALLY be 60 years since *Doctor Who* first began on our television screens? It's the 50th birthday of *The Three Doctors*, *The Five Doctors* is marking its 40th anniversary and *Dimensions in Time* is now 30...

And, from a Big Finish audio perspective, somehow – unbelievably – *Zagreus* (release number 50 in *The Monthly Adventures*) is going to be 20 years old... and it's a decade since *The Light at the End* first became available!

Big Finish's contribution to *Doctor Who*'s diamond anniversary celebrations gets underway next month as *Once and Future*, a special eight-part series, begins with one

story released each month between now and October, with a concluding final episode to follow in 2024.

As we all know, marking special occasions and arranging celebrations takes a long time to do. Producer David Richardson started thinking about this milestone four years ago. To make an anniversary story unique it needs a special hook, and in *Once and Future* there's a twist.

David tells *Vortex*: "I've been trawling back through correspondence trying to find when the very first germ of this anniversary series came into my mind.

"It was 2019 when I emailed executive producers Jason Haigh-Ellery and Nicholas Briggs saying,

"The 60th anniversary will be here before you know it! It's four years away but we will need all the time to make something huge and special". And I pitched them the idea of the Doctor being injured during the Time War and his body degenerating – flipping back through previous incarnations.

"I felt that, with numerous multi-Doctor stories already under our belt, it wouldn't feel special any more just to do a straight multi-Doctor story. We needed a different approach but still within a story that included many incarnations of the Doctor."

Things have evolved as time has passed, including the chance to use two Doctors from



Above (l-r): Tom Baker and Sadie Miller

the 21st century TV series.

David explains: “For a long time this was going to be a six-release miniseries, but that grew when more Doctors joined Big Finish. Who could have dreamed that we’d get both Christopher Eccleston and David Tennant in our 60th special!

“*Once and Future* has had a long gestation period – the recording has spanned the whole run of the COVID-19 pandemic. The first sessions were conducted remotely at the height of lockdown, and then we moved into hybrid recordings as things opened up. By the very end of the recording – which happened on the 1st of February 2023 – it was entirely a studio affair.

IT'S BEEN A MASSIVE STORY TO PUT TOGETHER WITHIN A BACKDROP OF MAJOR WORLD EVENTS.

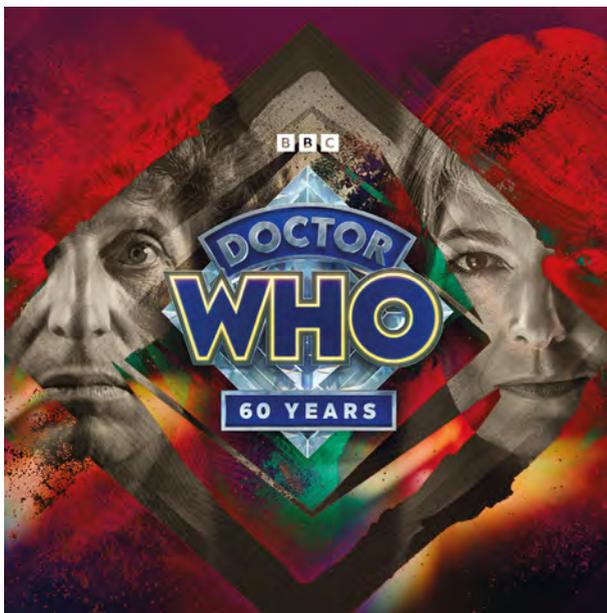
DAVID RICHARDSON

“So it’s been a massive story to put together within a backdrop of major world events. I hope that listeners really enjoy it.”

Script editor Matt Fitton tells *Vortex*: “As David says, our chats about *Once and Future* began in 2019 when he had the first thoughts about what Big Finish could do for the 60th anniversary.

“David had this idea where the Doctor is somehow slipping between bodies during the course of these adventures, and so we set up that mystery.

“Writer Robert Valentine kicks everything off with *Past Lives* which is set in the midst of the Time War. The Doctor is found on



**WE'RE JUST
STARTING
TO FIGURE
OUT WHAT'S
GOING ON.
THERE ARE
MANY MORE
SECRETS...**

MATT FITTON

the battlefield. He manages to get to his TARDIS, setting off to find out what has happened to him."

The Doctor has been injured and brought to a Time Lord field hospital. His body glows with energy, but this is no regeneration into a future form – instead, the Doctor's past faces begin to appear as he flits haphazardly between incarnations...

Staggering to his TARDIS, the Doctor sets out to solve the mystery of his 'degeneration'. Who has done

this to him? How? And why? From the Earth to the stars, across an array of familiar times and places, he follows clues to retrace his steps, encountering old friends and enemies along the way. Tumbling through his lives, the Doctor must stop his degeneration before he loses himself completely...

Rob says: "It's incredibly exciting to be kicking off the 60th anniversary celebration for Big Finish. And in the wider context of this being **Doctor Who**'s diamond jubilee, the party begins here!

"We find the Doctor in the most chaotic situation imaginable.

He's been blasted by some sort of degeneration weapon. Meanwhile, the Meddling Monk has a price on his head, Sarah Jane Smith gets kidnapped, and Kate Stewart and Osgood are being menaced by a belligerent alien race with plans to revive their glory days.

"In this adventure you'll get to revisit one or two familiar locations from the Doctor's past and a lot of old faces. Writing for Tom Baker's Fourth Doctor is the most fun I ever have on **Doctor Who**, and having him reunited with Sarah Jane Smith and meeting the 21st century UNIT team was a delight. And if you're a fan of

the Monk as played by Rufus Hound, he's up to a lot of no good in this one!"

Matt adds: "This is a full-on celebration of 60 years of **Doctor Who**, throwing together friends, companions, enemies, different Doctors and paying tribute to some degree to every single era of the show.

"It's lovely to make these connections, and of course we have classic UNIT represented in Sarah Jane tying in with modern UNIT. That's always fun to do!

"We're only at the beginning of the adventure so we're just starting to figure out what's going on. There are many more secrets and mysteries to be uncovered..."

Rob concludes: "*Past Lives* is very much the opening chapter to the whole *Once and Future* saga, and it kicks off the mystery of who or what is behind the Doctor's predicament. Fortunately, because I script-edited the climactic story in the sequence, I know where it's all leading, which was a big help when writing this one.

"All I can say though, really, is that it's as big as Big Finish gets." **VORTEX**

DOCTOR WHO ONCE AND FUTURE: PAST LIVES



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THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

BIG FINISH has adapted a number of works by HG Wells, one of which is *The Shape of Things to Come*. The original work was published in 1933 and speculates on future events from 1933 until the year 2106.

The novel was dramatised for audio by Guy Adams and features a cast headed by Nicola Walker as Jane and Sam Troughton as Raven.

In the novel, a world state is established as the solution to humanity's problems. Wells claimed that the book is his edited version of notes written by an eminent diplomat, Dr Philip Raven, who had been having dream visions of a history textbook published in 2106, writing down what he could remember of it.

Producer David Richardson says: "At one stage we weren't even sure if we were going to make *The Shape of Things to Come* in our HG Wells season as the original work doesn't really lend itself to a dramatic full-cast production.

"But... Guy Adams is a genius and he wove Wells's original piece into a

framework of his own devising. It's a dark, prophetic and thoughtful piece.

"I was so pleased to be able to secure Sam and Nicola as the two leads.

Sam is pure class, he's worked for Big Finish a few times and it was great to get him back. I've been working with Nicola for the past few years on our *Doctor Whos*, and I'd always wanted to cast her in something else."

Guy says: "The structure of the book – the very big, very long book – doesn't lend itself to dramatisation. In fact it quite actively avoids it! There is one moment that could be accused of containing human drama and the book actually apologises for it.

"Wells himself decided not to attempt it when he wrote the screenplay for the 1936 film version *Things to Come* produced by Alexander Korda. But, you know, sometimes it's those challenges that make for the best work. As aware as I am of the inherent risk of saying this: I think it's good.

And I'm one of those writers who doesn't say that easily. I'm usually an apologist. I sit in the green room of the recording studio begging

forgiveness from the actors! This one though... I actually think it works!"

For those who haven't read the novel, how much did Guy have to add to make it pull together as an audio drama?

He explains: "Really it was a case of the framing. The book, naturally, starts in what was the present day at time of publication and then works forward. Wells's book was intended as a warning. It wasn't an idle chunk of speculation offered for casual amusement, it was a roar from a podium. It was a signal flare, shot up through the brittle air of the 1930s, a thing of fear. I needed to capture that somehow. I didn't want to just keep Wells's plot, I wanted to try and keep his intentions, which sounds presumptuous but I'm sure you know what I mean. I wanted this version to still bring a few chills, ask a few pointed questions."

Guy was delighted with the cast, concluding: "Absurdly so. Director Lisa Bowerman really had her work cut out with this one. You should see the list of characters, it's terrifying! But she was amazing." **VORTEX**

BIG FINISH CLASSICS THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME



■ RELEASED: MAY 2017
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PIONEERING SPIRIT

THE NINTH DOCTOR IS BACK FOR HIS THIRD RUN OF AUDIO STORIES...

IT'S HARD to believe but Christopher Eccleston is about to start on his third series of audio adventures as the Ninth Doctor. Given he left us with 13 memorable episodes on television, by the time this series finishes in 2024, he'll have been in 36 Big Finish episodes, as well as a *Once and Future* episode too!

It's fair to say that Chris has settled back into the part and is feeling very much at ease with the Big Finish team, as demonstrated in **The Ninth Doctor Adventures: Pioneers**.

Producer David Richardson recounts: "Picture this: we're on a short break in recording a Ninth Doctor adventure. Chris pops over to the control desk and asks our engineer to put some Barry

White songs on the speakers. Out blares the music and Chris starts dancing around the room.

"Our director, Helen Goldwyn, then joins in, dancing away at the director's station, while gradually everyone else gets with the rhythm and starts to sway. For a good five minutes, the Ninth Doctor studio is lost in music.

"I share this because it sums up for me what it's like working on these productions – everyone is so relaxed, and there's an infectious sense of fun. I think it's significant because all of that energy and joy ends up right there in the episodes. We're just having the time of our lives."

Listeners who have heard *Red Darkness* from the last Ninth Doctor box set, *Shades of Fear*, will be aware

that the story finished with the Time Lord in the TARDIS with a pair of new friends – the partially-sighted Callen and his dog Doyle who communicates through his collar.

And now the duo are back with the Doctor in a new adventure, *The Green Gift*. Writer Roy Gill says: "Script editor Matt Fitton suggested I maybe revisit some of the concepts from the television episode *The Green Death* but in an outer space, far future setting... It's been 50 years since that iconic serial went out – I don't know if that's what prompted Matt's notion – but the concerns that drive that story: the effects of pollution; the increasing need for energy coupled with corporations' drive to make profit; and humanity's impact upon their environment –



Above (l-r): Christopher Eccleston and Louise Jameson

these are all still hugely relevant.

“So the challenge was to find a way to bring all those elements into a story shaped around Chris’s passionate and driven Doctor. The Doctor, with his friends Callen and Doyle, lands on board a vast spacecraft called *The Greenwood*. They swiftly run into trouble – and just as swiftly meet some new allies in the form of Tay Lothlor and Laika. The ship is nearing the end of a long journey and its charismatic community leader Steff Fiacra (played by Louise Jameson) has had to make some tough decisions to keep them going... At long last, the green gift is to be delivered – but what might be travelling along with the ship?”

Roy was delighted to tell another story with characters he’d previously created. He explains: “It’s always good to be asked to bring back or

GETTING TO WRITE FOR THE NINTH DOCTOR IS – DARE I SAY IT? – FANTASTIC!

ROBERT VALENTINE

revisit a character: I take it as a sign that something clicked or went right with the original story! I was really happy to bring back Callen and Doyle, especially. I loved writing them and their dynamic, and I think it was clear that Adam Martyn, Harki

Bhambra and Chris bounced off each other well in the studio. I don’t know exactly when David decided to ask for a follow-up but I’m sure that must’ve been part of why he thought of it.”

Roy was also delighted with the main guest star: “Helen got us an absolutely top notch guest star in the form of Louise Jameson as Fiacra. I’ve been lucky to write for Louise before in *The Omega Factor* and as Leela – though this is another sort of performance entirely. Hearing her and Chris spar verbally was an absolute joy. They’re both powerhouses of actors!”

NORTHERN LIGHTS by

Robert Valentine continues the explorations with a trip back in time. The author admits he still gets a huge buzz penning words for the Ninth Doctor: “Getting to write for the Ninth Doctor is – dare I say it? – fantastic! Chris is one of the nation’s finest actors and simply getting to write anything for him is incredible, full stop. It’s not something teenage me would have dreamt of happening when watching him in *Cracker* back in the day!”

Vortex suggests that the story’s title implies the involvement of either the aurora borealis or somewhere in the north of England. Rob explains: “*Northern Lights* does indeed refer to the aurora borealis, and this story is set far up in the frozen wastes of Franz Josef Land in 1896.

“The brief was to write an adventure where the Ninth Doctor meets Norwegian polar explorer, Fridtjof Nansen. It came about because Chris is very interested in Nansen and mentioned the fact to David during a studio session. I then read about it in an issue of *Doctor Who Magazine*, and promptly thought no more about it until David asked me to write this.”

Rob also reveals his highlight of the script. He tells *Vortex*: “Other than getting to do loads of research and learn as much as I could about Nansen’s life – which was incredible – the highlight might actually have been the decision to give him and his colleague, Hjalmar Johansen, Salford accents.

“I was listening in over CleanFeed when Chris was reading the cover page, and he gave such a lovely laugh of delight when he noticed

it. It was one of those choices you make as a writer largely on instinct, as I wanted there to be a real sense of kinship between our real-life Norwegian heroes and the Doctor, and giving them his accent just seemed the best way to do it.

“The other thing, of course, is that writing *Northern Lights* has been an education on a man I previously knew nothing about, and that’s one of the best things about being a writer.”

... treat and drop in on the historic meeting which founded the football league. He lands in Manchester in 1888 but, of course, he’s a bit too early and something very dangerous has hitched a ride on the TARDIS. It’s a game of two halves which might well result in a lot of people dying, but the Doctor has help from football pioneer William Sudell as well as hotel staff members Donald and Daphne who have to overcome some

with football: it allows us to feel such powerful emotions, to be part of a mass of humanity, but it also has a dark side which can make you feel very scared and small. I wanted to try to capture some of this in the story.

“And football is also, for me, inextricable from my grandparents whom we would visit whenever we went to a home game (Southampton, the finest football team there is!).

“Their names were Donald and



Above (l-r): Raymond Coulthard, Christopher Eccleston, Rachel Fenwick and Becky Wright

IT ALSO HAS A DARK SIDE WHICH CAN MAKE YOU FEEL VERY SCARED AND SMALL.

KATHARINE ARMITAGE

Daphne and I created the two characters in *The Beautiful Game* as a homage to them. Especially my grandma: a fiercely intelligent woman who never really got to explore where that could take her. The Daphne I’ve created is different from her real life counterpart but I like to think that both of them would be equally good at helping the Doctor kick some alien backside come injury time!” **VORTEX**



Above (l-r): Helen Goldwyn, Ian Conningham, Christopher Eccleston, Gerard Kearns and Ginnia Cheng

THE BEAUTIFUL *Game* by Katharine Armitage is the third and final adventure in this set. The story’s title is a nickname often given to football in the UK – a passion of Chris’s. Kat says: “The Doctor decides to give himself a

demons of their own.

“Football is etched into my heart. This is partly because of the game itself which I grew up watching and has always filled me with joy and despair! I don’t think anyone in this country has a simple relationship

DOCTOR WHO
PIONEERS



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Nick: That's beautiful, many congratulations Christopher and Jane.

JUST FAB!

I've only just discovered the fantastic range of Gerry Anderson audios available through Big Finish – I never knew about the original cast audios for **Captain Scarlet and the Mysterons**.

I hope that there are lots more to come as the adaptations of 1960s novels and comic strips have been great – and the new cast are so good.

SIMON SMITH

Nick: Really FAB that you're enjoying these, Simon. There will be more Anderson content!

really consider, Mel, as our licence with BBC Studios is for audio production and not book publishing. But it's a lovely idea, and maybe it's something we could consider in the future.

SCREAM IF YOU WANNA GO SHALKA

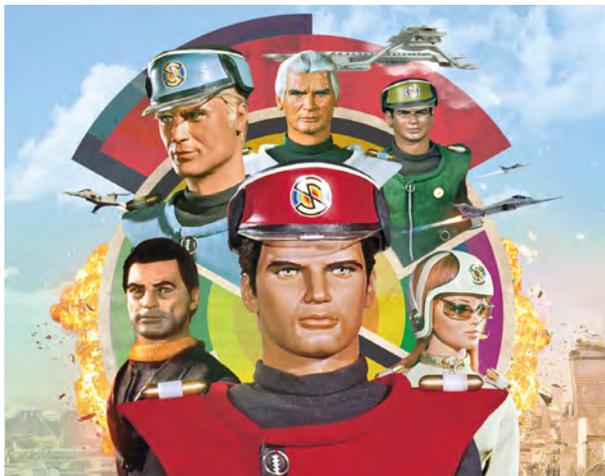
With 2023 marking the 20th anniversary of *Scream of the Shalka*, I was wondering if you would consider bringing back Richard E Grant's Doctor for a one-off special box set? I feel that Big Finish could really do wonders for the Shalka Doctor and truly make him a beloved Unbound incarnation.

ADAM ROSS

HAPPY ENDINGS

As good as 2022 was for Big Finish in terms of wonderful releases, I had something even bigger to celebrate for it was the year I got married. And I have you dear Big Finish, amongst others, to thank for it! Little did I know when I made my way to Derby in November 2018 for the revived Big Finish Day, that I would be meeting my future wife who had travelled all the way from the USA to make it. We married in Manchester in September of this year – after getting together during the COVID-19 pandemic on opposite sides of the Atlantic – in the company of many friends who are also avid Big Finish aficionados and who introduced us back in 2018. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts (get what we did there?) from two happy, happy nerds who found each other through the love of stories. Attached is a photo from the big day. Thank you to all at Big Finish towers for being there in spirit, if not in person.

CHRISTOPHER AND JANE LATHAM



STAY ON TARGET?

I've always loved the Target novelisations of the TV stories, the way that you can add to some stories with epilogues and breaks from the story to show us a new perspective.

I was wondering if we could ever get any novelisations of Big Finish audios?

MEL

Nick: It's not something that we can

*Nick: I'm not sure that the Shalka Doctor is one that's screaming out for a return trip, Adam! I have a funny feeling that it's something Richard E Grant would not be interested in, but maybe I'm wrong... **VORTEX***



THE BAND

on the Run

TORCHWOOD: AMONG US MARKS THE ONGOING CONTINUATION OF THE TV SERIES...

IN JUNE 2019, the Torchwood team made their escape in a Smart car. Everyone was after them – the Government, the Welsh Senedd, the police, the security services... basically anyone you can name! And now we'll find out what happens next as the story continues.

Producer James Goss says: "It feels so bizarre that we've been recording three box sets that comprise *Among Us* since 2019. I remember back then we were thinking about creating a box set about (brace yourself) the catastrophic consequences of measles antivaxxers when a pandemic happens. Um! We didn't

quite get to tell that story. The best science fiction predicts humanity's next steps and, sadly, sometimes real life runs fast and true.

"Director Scott Handcock, writer Tim Foley and I have essentially been plugging away at this series ever since. Every now and then we've be able to record a bit of it, maybe remotely, maybe not. Some actors had time during the apocalypse, some sadly didn't. Adjustments were made, and we kept plodding away at it.

"We've been recording this for so long that a guest actor from volume two came in as a complete unknown and is now super famous. That sums up the whole process!"

Aliens Next Door by Ash Darby opens the first box set. James says: "We're telling a story about the worst elements of human nature being manipulated. Torchwood, in hiding and on the run, is having to come back together and give the

human race a stern talking to.

"*Aliens Next Door* is about online harassment, racism, forgotten wars, crypto bros, the dangers of using the internet, AI content creators and about the world being saved by the maddest guest star Torchwood's ever had (every bit as bonkers a bit of casting as Sir Michael Palin!).

"By the time we were finally able to finish recording last autumn, we were worried that what had seemed like an eerily prescient satirical thriller would be outdated, but I've just heard an edit of episode nine and it's painfully relevant. If anything, we've been too kind on human nature. Hopefully you'll come away from it having had a great time."

The second adventure is *Colin Alone* by Una McCormack where we encounter the husband of Mr Colchester, now played by Joplin Sibtain, and how he lives by himself.

Una says: "James emailed



HE CAN'T PAY
THE SERVICE
CHARGE TO
GET THE LEAK
FIXED BECAUSE
HE CAN'T
CONTACT THE
BANK BECAUSE
HE HAS NO
PHONE, AND SO
ON. THERE'S A
FAINTLY KAFKA-
ESQUE FEELING
ABOUT IT.

UNA McCORMACK

asking whether I would like to write a play about Colin battling bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is one of my very favourite things so I immediately said yes.

"I feel pretty rotten doing such horrible things to Colin! He absolutely doesn't deserve what happens to him in this story. He's alone and scared, and the world seems to be trying to make him feel as miserable as possible.

"All through this story, the little things are getting to Colin. His bank card doesn't work. His phone gets stolen. The flat springs a leak. And he can't get the building manager to do anything. These things keep piling up and becoming worse. He can't pay the service charge to get the leak fixed because he can't contact the bank because he has no phone, and so on. There's a faintly Kafka-esque feeling about it.

"And the worst thing is, it's probably not all a figment of his imagination. There are, most likely,

people doing this deliberately, to try to get to St John. Poor old Colin!"

Misty Eyes by Tim Foley marks the return to Torchwood of Eve Myles as Gwen Cooper, and Kai Owen as her long-suffering husband Rhys.

James tells *Vortex*: "It's wonderful that Eve found the time to reunite with Kai to kick off **Torchwood: Among Us**. We've been sat on this coup for some time now and it's great that people are finally going to find out what brings Gwen back."

Tim says: "*Misty Eyes* is all about giving Eve a good send-off from the world of **Torchwood: Among Us**. Tying up some loose ends and dangling some new ones! I was

given a lot of creative freedom.

"This series is a little more international in scope because Torchwood are on the run and Cardiff is pretty much destroyed. I plumped on setting it in Iceland for various reasons – which turned out to have some surprising advantages for the rest of the series.

"Gwen and Rhys are living out in Iceland when someone turns up with some unfinished business. This script is one of my favourites, very character driven, and I'm writing a story I wanted to write from my very first **Torchwood** script back in 2017.

"It's very much the clash of old and new. Gwen and Rhys, the old heart of Torchwood, figuring out their place in the new world after the events of the last two series. But they've changed. For starters, Rhys is now an excellent cook!"

Moderation by James Goss concludes the set, and is the story of newspaper columnist Petra Malik. James says: "Tyler is working, moderating the newspaper's comments section and realises something very strange – someone at the newspaper wants Petra Malik dead.

"It's a story about algorithmic news generation but told through the medium of lots of explosions. The last line also sets up what's really going on in this box set."

James concludes: "Four years in the making and we're stupidly proud of *Among Us*. In the next box set, prepare for the return of four old favourites." **VORTEX**

TORCHWOOD AMONG US 1



- RELEASED: MAY 2023
- FORMAT: CD/DOWNLOAD

ORDER NOW: bgfn.sh/sus 



HERE BE DRAGONS

COMMANDER KOENIG AND HIS MOONBASE ALPHA COLLEAGUES ARE ABOUT TO FACE NEW DANGERS...

THE BIG Finish reimagining of *Space: 1999* goes from strength to strength with the release of the third volume, *Dragon's Domain*.

Mark Bonnar heads up the cast as Commander John Koenig with Maria Teresa Creasey (Dr Helena Russell), Clive Hayward (Professor Victor Bergman), Timothy Bentinck (Space Commissioner Simmons), Glen McCready (pilot Alan Carter), Susan Hingley (scientist Sandra Benes) and Amaka Okafor (computer expert Dashka Kano).

There are three adventures, with the set title taking its name from one of the episodes within. Executive producer and director Nicholas Briggs says: "In terms of story, I wanted us to find ever more exciting things for the Alpha team

and I wanted to continue to make it a very character-based series.

"So, there's some development from the fall-out of Helena Russell nearly going back to Earth with Captain Zantor in volume two, *Earthbound*, and how that kind of broke John Koenig's heart. There's some unexpected 'news' about Paul Morrow. Alan Carter has his moment in the limelight, although it turns out to be gut-wrenchingly emotional for him, and Dashka Kano takes centre stage when translating an alien language becomes vital for Alpha's survival.

"What we have here are two brand new stories and one adapted from the original television series. The latter is *Dragon's Domain*, but in the style of my adaptations of *The Prisoner*, I've written it in a very different way.

"The decision to have two, entirely original scripts was influenced by the way the characters we've recreated here are really taking on a life of their own. That's because, unlike the original show, there's no

need for us to do the old TV reset where they had to make it possible for the episodes to be shown in any order. So you could have character moments but there couldn't be any episode-by-episode development.

"We're very much creating something that has to be listened to in order."

SKULL IN *the Sky* by Marc Platt opens this new run, as a portent of doom arrives above the Moon.

Nick reveals: "Marc is one of the most delightful human beings you could ever meet. And his imagination knows no bounds. His previous *Space: 1999* writing has been great, we've worked closely together and he's a joy.

"Marc's pitch for *Skull in the Sky* was excellent. It's true to say we had a challenging but good humoured journey with the script, which did lead to me having a lot of input, and I confess that I gave it a different conclusion. It's a story that really wrongfoots the listener,

and I thought we needed one, last bit of wrongfooting at the end.

"The strength of *Skull in the Sky* is that it takes the characters who we know and love so well and does something ever so slightly different with them."

Nick has written the middle adventure, *The Godhead Interrogative*.

Dashka Kano has been working on translating the alien script on Zantor's artefact. She's beginning to make progress when one hundred objects are detected, advancing towards the Moon.

Nick explains: "Producer and script editor David Richardson pitched this to me as Kano's episode. We love working with Amaka, who plays her. She is a superb actor.

"David had this idea that alien language translation should be central to the plot, with Kano's skills being the factor that everything balanced on.

"In this set, I wanted to really push the idea that Alpha's journey has been going on a long time: we eat up a lot of years in this volume. So I wanted this story to be about Kano's obsession with cracking a code, as it were. It begins with everyone worrying that she's become obsessed. But that obsession is at the core of the story. How do you work out what people from other civilisations are talking about?"

Dragon's Domain, adapted by Nick from Christopher Penfold's original script, is the concluding story.

Nick says: "*Dragon's Domain* is a storyline from the original TV series that everyone will remember. It involves a horrible monster that mindlessly slaughters people in the most disgusting fashion.

"But this version is different. What's the same is that there is a 'dragon' and it has a haunting, hypnotic effect and kills people horribly. How and why and to whom it does that has all changed. But yes, this is the episode everyone remembers - including Mark who found it terrifying."

Mark confirms: "*Dragon's Domain* was my favourite episode as a child! But it gave me a very specific nightmare which has stayed with me forever."

Nick continues: "The original plan for *Dragon's Domain* was for it to be about Alan Carter but Martin Landau (who played the original



Above: Christopher Naylor



Above: Lara Lemon



Above: Timothy Bentinck

Commander Koenig) allegedly vetoed that. Rumours were that he didn't like the amount of fan mail that the younger, more handsome

IT INVOLVES A HORRIBLE MONSTER THAT MINDLESSLY SLAUGHTERS PEOPLE IN THE MOST DISGUSTING FASHION.

NICHOLAS BRIGGS

Nick Tate (the original Alan Carter actor) was getting! So they invented a random, new character instead called Tony Cellini, who nobody cared about, thus losing any emotional impact in the story.

"They also made it about something that had happened in the past, and I wanted this horror story to unfold as part of a 'current' encounter for the crew of Alpha. So it gave me the opportunity to make this very much about a real chance of a potential return to Earth. But this time it's about one of the central people in the story who we've grown to love, beautifully played by Glen.

"It's all part of our drive to open up the storylines of this box set to characters outside the 'big three' of Koenig, Russell and Bergman." **VORTEX**

SPACE: 1999 DRAGON'S DOMAIN



- RELEASED: MAY 2023
- FORMAT: CD/DOWNLOAD

ORDER NOW: bgfn.sh/axe 



LOST IN TIME

SPOILER ALERT!

THE SIXTH DOCTOR IS BACK WITH MEL – AND THERE MAY BE TROUBLE AHEAD...

IF YOU haven't listened to the first two box sets with the Doctor, Mel and their new friend Hebe, you might just want to stop reading now...

At the end of the previous release, **The Sixth Doctor Adventures: Purity Undreamed**, Hebe was lost, to reflect the erasure of disabled people from society.

Script editor Rob Valentine explains: "The Doctor and Mel have lost Hebe, and while they know that something terrible has happened to time and space, they don't yet know who's behind it.

"This new set – **The Sixth Doctor Adventures: Purity Unleashed** – marks the point where a new enemy makes themselves known to the Doctor.

Patricia McBride has vast plans for the human race, and thanks to her stolen time-tech, she's driven to make her twisted vision a reality."

Producer Jacqueline Rayner tells *Vortex*: "For this new release, Hebe's absence has to be as appreciable as her presence. That's a mighty big ask of a writer! But they did us proud."

Jac is delighted with the reaction to the first two box sets, and says: "What's been wonderful is the reaction to Hebe, especially from other disabled listeners. I was terribly worried about getting it wrong – after all, I only have my own experiences to go on – but Ruth's brilliant performance won people over.

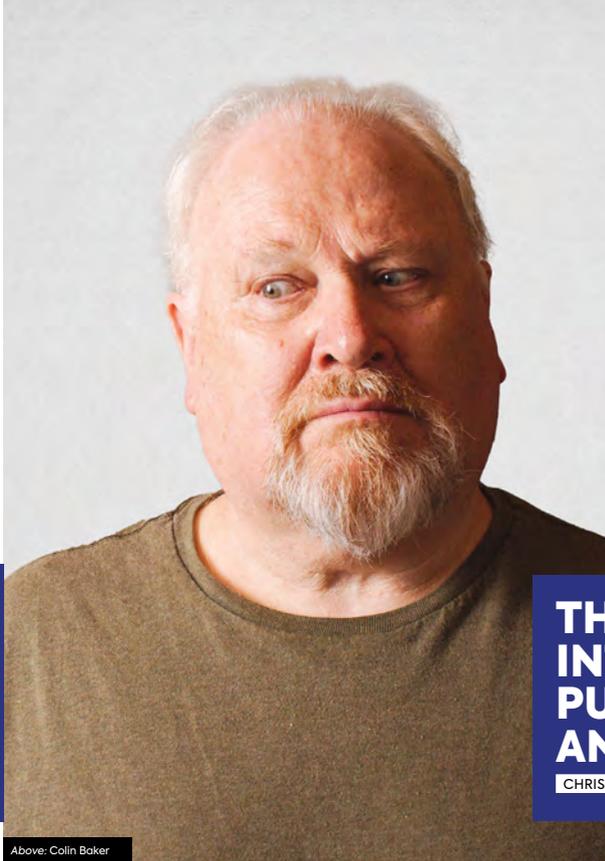
"That's really important because while Rob and I are trying to say something with this series, the story and characters themselves must drive the issues, not the other way around. We were also hoping to gobsmack people with the cliffhanger to *Purity Undreamed*, and it looks like we succeeded, so hurrah!"

THE FIRST adventure in the set, *Broadway Belongs to Me!* was written by Matthew Sweet. Jac explains: "Matthew's trip to Broadway is hilarious; I'm not sure how our director Helen Goldwyn managed to get it all in the can because people didn't stop laughing all day!"

Matthew says: "What I wanted to do was **Doctor Who** meets *42nd Street*. It was terrific fun, and it was great to be allowed to write a song as well.

"The day that we had in studio with this was, I think, quite difficult for Helen because we were having so much fun: we were almost uncontrollable. I've heard stories about things not getting done because people are laughing too much, and I really think we must have come quite near to that. I was aching at the end of the day!

"I can't wait to hear how they've created the tap dancing as there's a full-scale musical going on here. I think doing that in studio in a day would be a challenge for anyone no



Above: Colin Baker

flood's victims, and Ian's script doesn't let you forget that this really happened, a real-life tragedy. Plus there's an absolutely heart-stopping moment in it for the Doctor – and hopefully the listener too."

Ian continues: "The brief from Jac originally, after she'd checked how comfortable I might be about working on a series which is basically talking about eugenics, was to write the opening story of the box set after this that introduces the new status quo this release is leading to."

"But I looked at the whole story arc mapped out and saw a massive opportunity to do something at the end of this box set – a story set in Sheffield's history dealing with water,

THEY ARE THROWN INTO ONE MAD PUZZLE AFTER ANOTHER.

CHRIS CHAPMAN

matter how well resourced they were!

"I also want to hear Melanie Bush (played by Bonnie Langford) singing a fascist musical song written by aliens! No, really!"

PURIFICATION IS the middle adventure in the set. Jac says: "There's some beautiful character work with the regulars in Chris Chapman's story; he had the really hard task of bridging the set and making it all work."

Chris tells *Vortex*: "This was a lot of fun, getting to write a mad chase across time and space as Professor McBride bounces through the vortex to engineer her perfect future, with the Doctor and Mel in hot pursuit."

"It was quite a liberation to write a big old time-chase as it meant I could pick out a selection of seemingly random, but surprisingly pivotal moments in history, and hurl an improvising McBride and TARDIS crew into them."

"The Doctor and Mel really are on

the back foot here. They know that McBride's temporal meddling results in the wiping out of their friend Hebe (and countless others), but as they follow McBride's footprints through time they are thrown into one mad puzzle after another. It meant that I could play a lot of tricks on the Doctor and the listener at the same time.

"The key challenge for me was that apart from the 1965 television episode, *The Chase*, *Purification* really isn't structured like the average *Who* story – it's far more freewheeling and I hope it'll feel like events are really spiralling out of the Doctor and Mel's control."

THE CONCLUDING

adventure, *Time-Burst*, takes the team back in time. Jac explains: "Ian Potter's story about the Sheffield flood of 1864 is really something special. A Sheffield-born friend of mine remembers her older relatives telling her how they sewed shrouds for the

which from the arc document felt like Hebe's element! I mentioned the history to Jac along with a couple of links to articles, and she went for it."

Jac concludes: "It's been my rule for this 'arc' that each set ends on a cliffhanger. I won't give anything away but I did shed a tear at times (in a good way)." **VORTEX**

DOCTOR WHO PURITY UNLEASHED



- RELEASED: MAY 2023
- FORMAT: CD/DOWNLOAD

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THE GENESIS OF GENESIS

So you think you know all about the creation of the Daleks? Think again!

GENESIS OF *the Daleks* is one of the most beloved of all of the **Doctor Who** television adventures, consistently featuring in the top five of polls.

However, Terry Nation's 1975 classic with the Fourth Doctor, Sarah and Harry had a very different beginning, brought to life on audio this May by original star Tom Baker.

Daleks! Genesis of Terror celebrates the iconic *Genesis of the Daleks* story with a cast reading of the first draft of the opening TV episode (stage directions read by Nicholas Briggs) plus a reading of Terry Nation's

original six-page storyline. And in a bonus extra, BBC broadcaster and journalist Samira Ahmed interviews Philip Hinchcliffe – **Doctor Who's** producer at the time.

In a paved garden outside time, the Doctor is presented with an awful prophecy: the conquest of all time by the Daleks. To prevent this terrible fate, the Time Lords have decided on a radical course – to weaponise time themselves and destroy the Daleks before they were ever created. And they want the Doctor to carry out this extraordinary task!

Soon, he, Sarah and Harry are on the battle-ravaged planet Skaro, where a war has been raging for centuries. The war is now waged by teenagers using the last surviving weapons. Everything is desperate. But the Kaled's chief scientist has a new weapon that he thinks might just change everything...

Producer Simon Guerrier tells

Vortex: “The *Daleks! Genesis of Terror* script is largely the same basic story [as seen on TV] but with key differences that are really striking – which I won't spoil here!

“This has been thrilling to work on and quite unusual. It was a delight to discover that Terry Nation's first draft script survived, and I was obviously really excited about being given the chance to make it and to work with Tom Baker.

“It was fascinating to record because it's full of telling differences that reveal choices made by script editor Robert Holmes and producer Philip Hinchcliffe and their team.

“Tom also had quite a bit to say about the version of 'his' Doctor in the script which gave me a sense of how hard and how conscientiously he'd worked in those early days to create the character of the Fourth Doctor.”



Above (l-r): Philip Hinchcliffe and Samira Ahmed

Executive producer and Dalek voice Nicholas Briggs was thrilled when he learned of the existence of the original treatment.

He admits: "It did give me rather a buzz to discover that we had access to this, and I was very intrigued to find out what the differences were. It felt very special.

"There was only the first episode in draft script and the rest was in storyline form. The story was, in the broadest sense, more or less the same as the broadcast *Genesis of the Daleks*. It was mainly the episode cliffhangers that differed, strangely. All the story elements existed but the cliffhangers happened at different points in the plot."

Unlike some previous *Lost Stories* which existed as outlines, the decision was made not to give this story a full adaptation treatment.

Nick says: "Senior Producer David Richardson and I thought that the power of Terry Nation's

IT DID GIVE ME RATHER A BUZZ TO DISCOVER THAT WE HAD ACCESS TO THIS, AND I WAS VERY INTRIGUED TO FIND OUT WHAT THE DIFFERENCES WERE. IT FELT VERY SPECIAL.

NICHOLAS BRIGGS

original script for episode one was the visual aspect of it. The stage directions are pure Terry Nation action prose, and I felt strongly that it would be extremely entertaining for listeners to hear these.

"It was in the physical representation of the story that this

episode differed the most from the broadcast version so we opted for me to read the stage directions. I also had the fun of playing Tom's Doctor when we recorded the session with the rest of the cast, Tom having already recorded his bits separately."

How much can Nick reveal about the differences between the outline and the finished TV show? He says: "Some character names were changed and some of the information was presented in a different order. Also, you can see how much work Tom, Elisabeth Sladen and Ian Marter put into the relationship between the three leads.

"In common with Gerry Davis's original script for *Return of the Cybermen*, Terry Nation really leaps upon Harry Sullivan as a second male lead giving him far more interesting material than he gives to Sarah Jane Smith.

"I think it's very much a symptom of the mindset of male writers at the time that plots were driven by the male characters and the females were bystanders with no real agency. Sarah's job was to be scared, to make the children at home fear for her safety and be scared themselves.

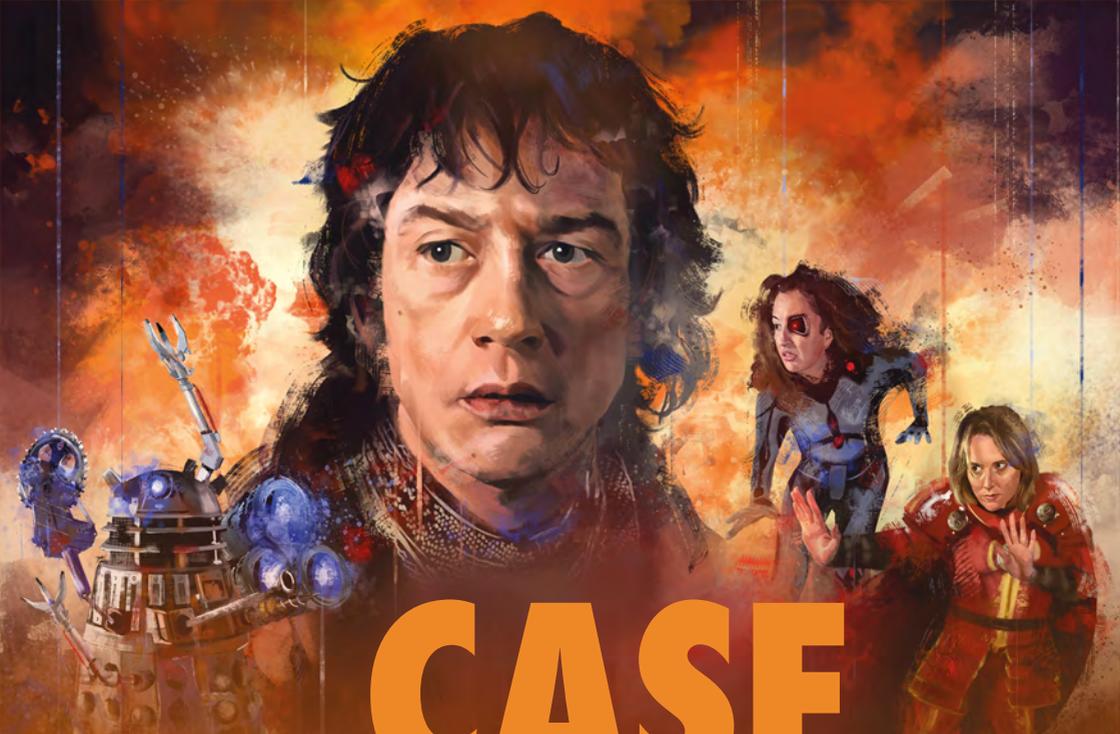
"Sarah's role in the broadcast version isn't greatly enhanced in the script, but Lis's performance really lifts it. But frankly, the main difference is that in Terry Nation's version, Sarah doesn't have much to say. It makes this an interesting historical document of male chauvinism." **VORTEX**

DOCTOR WHO DALEKS! GENESIS OF TERROR



- RELEASED: MAY 2023
- FORMAT: CD/DOWNLOAD

ORDER NOW: bgfn.sh/draft 



CASE IN POINT

THE WAR DOCTOR IS ABOUT TO ENCOUNTER AN OLD FRIEND AGAIN...

DURING THE course of his adventures, the War Doctor has made several new friends. Some have survived, but others – sadly – have not. Someone who made a big impression on him in *Warbringer*, the second volume of *The War Doctor Begins*, was Case played by Ajjaz Awad.

Producer David Richardson says: “Sometimes you can’t plan for the best ideas, they just pop into stories when you’re not really looking, and make such an impression that they deserve to stick around.

“This was the situation with

the character of Case who blew us away when we listened back to the finished production. Not only was Ajjaz absolutely majestic in the role but there seemed so much potential for exploring her further.”

And so Case and Ajjaz are back in *Comrades-in-Arms*, the fifth volume of *The War Doctor Begins*, and we discover more of her past and follow her as she steps towards her future. This being the Time War, the path could be a dark one indeed...

Script editor Matt Fitton adds: “I knew it would be fun to revisit Case. The War Doctor finds her in a medical facility where he discovers that someone has been making use of her talents.”

Mother’s Love by Noga Flaishon opens the set. Noga tells *Vortex*: “The brief was to reunite Case and

the Doctor during a mission for the Time Lords. I couldn’t help but include Veklin in it too – she is one of my favourite characters and her dynamic with Case is so much fun. I also wanted Case to be different than how the Doctor thinks she was when he left her. Previously she was lost and very dependent on others to tell her who she is and what to do, but after some time with Veklin as her operator she is very different. I wanted to explore what that dynamic looks like when they meet again on more equal footing.

“The Doctor receives a distress call from the Haven space-station: a state-of-the-art Time Lord field hospital operated by the highly advanced Medbay Operation Mainframe – MOM for short.

“But the station has been



Above: Jonathon Carley



Above: Ajjaz Awad



Above: Michael Amarrah

compromised. MOM's secrets run deep and time is running out. The Doctor must rely on some old friends to work out what is happening."

Noga adds: "I had a blast writing for Veklin, and for Case especially. They are the sort of characters teenage me would have been obsessed with back when I first got introduced to **Doctor Who**, and I know a lot of fans love them. Veklin is also, frankly, a terrifying person, so having Case stand up to her was a ton of fun to invent."

Berserker by Timothy X Atack is the tale in the middle. Matt says: "We've got the Berserker Daleks back! Tim came up with them in *Rewind* – the third story in **The War Doctor Begins: Battlegrounds**. Case is a new class of Berserker Dalek that's being developed, a converted humanoid

version. And here she and the War Doctor are up against a rampaging Berserker trapped in a bunker."

Tim continues: "In *Comrades-in-Arms*, Case goes undercover as a Dalek killer, and the War Doctor is playing the part of her 'squire'. They've joined a highly dangerous mission to infiltrate a long-sealed

WE'VE GOT THE BERSERKER DALEKS BACK!

MATT FITTON

fallout shelter on a planet scoured by the Daleks, abandoned for centuries.

"There's a single Berserker, trapped inside the bunker, where it's destroyed every last inhabitant and has been raging around on its own without anything to kill. As a result it's gone bonkers. So our heroes are in for a very rough ride, because this lone mad Berserker stands between them and their objective: a genetic database that could save a whole species. It looks like a mission of mercy for Case and the War Doctor... at first at least..."

Tim concludes: "My highlight was to massively ratchet up the tension between this mismatched pair of heroes, and there's some properly incandescent, ground-shifting moments for both of them. The whole episode is written in the style of a 'single-shot' film, following the

platoon in real time as they break into the bunker and chaos erupts."

THE THIRD adventure in the set is *Memnos* by Phil Mulryne.

Matt says: "Phil works really well as a writer in the Time War. He's come up with another scenario that captures the War Doctor's moral dilemmas."

Phil concludes: "We're right in the thick of the Time War and its struggles. And in particular this one looks at the War Doctor's relationship with his Dalek hybrid companion, Case.

"Case's Dalek aspects are now fully integrated into her, yet she still lacks any memory of her humanoid past, before the terrible Dalek 'harvester' ships arrived on her home planet.

"As this adventure opens, the War Doctor has brought Case to a project called Memnos. Sited on a ravaged planet, Memnos is a non-Time Lord sanctioned endeavour – something between a memorial, a museum and a bitter cry of protest. It commemorates the systems and civilisations consumed by the Time War, psychically recreating those lost places in as much detail as possible. Within Memnos, Case is able to experience the home planet she no longer remembers. But even here Dalek manipulation is going on.

"And as the fight between Case's Dalek and humanoid sides reaches a climax, the War Doctor has to help Case continue to fight, even when that means fighting against half of her very self." **VORTEX**

THE WAR DOCTOR COMRADES-IN-ARMS



- RELEASED: MAY 2023
- FORMAT: CD/DOWNLOAD

ORDER NOW: bgfn.sh/arms



FAN-ART-STIC!

THE THIRD volume of Big Finish's **Doctor Who: The Eighth of March** anthology series was released last month, showcasing strong female characters from the Whoniverse.

Released to mark International Women's Day, this year Big Finish ran a competition for artists to create traditional portraits – using non-digital media – of one of the box set's stars; either Louise Jameson (as Leela), Michelle Gomez (as Missy), or Caitlin Blackwood (as teenage Amelia Pond).

Three winners were chosen, with one selected for each category, with the Leela winner being Alan Peacock, the Missy prize went to Kate Claxton, while Callum Weston was chosen for their work on Amelia. Each will receive a £100 voucher to spend at bigfinish.com.

THE JUDGING panel included producer of **The Eighth of March** Emma Haigh, Big Finish's Creative Director Nicholas Briggs, Big Finish's Graphic Designer Mark Plastow, and illustrator and graphic artist Sophie Cowdrey (winner of Big Finish's 2018 artists' competition). Emma tells *Vortex*: "Our three winners stood out to all of us for their excellent work – each artist has created an image that's both striking and sympathetic to the character they've portrayed."

OF THE LEELA image, Nick says: "The fine, detailed work on this is delightful, and I particularly loved the expression on Leela's face in the close-up. I really felt it captured the spirit of Leela."

Talking of the Amelia image, Mark adds: "There is a beautiful melancholy to this. The bold, impressionistic application of the skin tones are a striking juxtaposition to the background. You are drawn to her eyes – which steadfastly refuse to meet yours – and they contain a world of mystery..."

And of Missy, Sophie concludes: "The winning painting of Missy is such a brilliant likeness – just spot on! This entry shows a great understanding of paint application and style; I love the bold thick brushstrokes and complimentary shades of orange." **VORTEX**

Top: Leela by Alan Peacock
Middle: Amelia Pond by Callum Weston
Bottom: Missy by Kate Claxton



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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

APRIL 2023

DW | THE FIFTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES
Conflicts of Interest (BOX SET)

DW | THE ROBOTS *Volume 6* (BOX SET)

DW | RANI TAKES ON THE WORLD
Beyond Bannerman Road (BOX SET)

SURVIVORS *New Dawn 3* (BOX SET)

STAR COPS *The High Frontier 2* (BOX SET)

IRIS WILDTHYME *The Polythene Terror*
DLO

STINGRAY *Terror Fake* **DLO**

TORCHWOOD *Launch Date* (73)

MAY 2023

DW | ONCE AND FUTURE
Past Lives (SPECIAL EDITION)

DW | ONCE AND FUTURE
Past Lives (STANDARD EDITION)

DW | THE SIXTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES
Purity Unleashed (BOX SET)

DW | THE NINTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES
Pioneers (BOX SET)

DW | THE LOST STORIES
Daleks! Genesis of Terror
(FOURTH DOCTOR, 2XCD)

DW | THE WAR DOCTOR BEGINS
Comrades-in-Arms (BOX SET)

SPACE: 1999 *Dragon's Domain* (BOX SET)

DARK SEASON *Legacy Rising* (BOX SET)

TORCHWOOD: THE STORY CONTINUES
Among Us 1 (BOX SET)

JUNE 2023

DW | ONCE AND FUTURE
The Artist at the End of Time
(LIMITED SPECIAL EDITION)

DW | ONCE AND FUTURE
The Artist at the End of Time
(STANDARD EDITION)

DW | THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES
Angels and Demons (BOX SET)

DW | THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES
The Wizard of Time/The Friendly Invasion **DLO**

DW | THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES
Stone Cold **DLO**

DW | THE SEVENTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES
TBA (BOX SET)

DW | THE LOST STORIES
The Ark (FOURTH DOCTOR, 2 DISC)

DW | THE WAR MASTER
Solitary Confinement (BOX SET)

LUTHER ARKWRIGHT
Heart of Empire (2 DISC)

TORCHWOOD: THE STORY CONTINUES
Among Us 2 (BOX SET)

JULY 2023

DW | ONCE AND FUTURE
A Genius for War (SPECIAL EDITION)

DW | ONCE AND FUTURE
A Genius for War (STANDARD EDITION)

DW | THE SECOND DOCTOR
ADVENTURES
TBA (BOX SET)

DW | GALLIFREY: WAR ROOM 2
TBA (BOX SET)

DW | UNIT: NEMESIS 4
Masters of Time (BOX SET)

DW | THE AUDIO NOVELS
Prisoners of London **DLO**

TIMESLIP
Volume 3: A Life Never Lived (2 DISC)

TORCHWOOD: THE STORY CONTINUES
Among Us 3 (BOX SET)

DLO = DOWNLOAD ONLY • **DW** = DOCTOR WHO

DATES CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS.

THE **BIG FINISH** MAGAZINE

VORTEX

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APRIL 2023
BIG FOR THE LOVE
FINISH OF STORIES

ONCE AND FUTURE

PAST LIVES

THE **BIG FINISH DOCTOR WHO**
60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION,
IS ABOUT TO GET UNDERWAY...

ALSO INSIDE

A PIONEERING SPIRIT

THE **NINTH DOCTOR** IS BACK FOR
HIS THIRD RUN OF AUDIO STORIES...

