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ISSUE #12 FEBRUARY 2010
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THE MAGAZINE

JACQUELINE RAYNER

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the writer of
The Suffering

DAVID GARFIELD

chalks up another
memorable Who
villain in The
Hollows of Time

REBECCA'S WORLD

is finally here!

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EDITORIAL

It's February and it feels like I've only just recovered from that week of Big Finish podcasts we produced in December! What do you mean you didn't hear them? Naturally, we've already continued with our January podcast and the February one will be on the way soon.

So I thought it was high time I brought the attention of any of you out there who haven't yet discovered them. We put them up on the Big Finish site at least once a month. They usually contain a chaotic mixture of David Richardson, Paul Spragg, Alex Mallinson, me and possibly a guest star, talking about the latest releases, tea and what we're eating for lunch. There are also loads of exclusive clips from upcoming



productions and we also read out listeners' emails and comment on them... mostly in a constructive fashion. If you want to take part, you can email us on podcast@bigfinish.com. If you want to make an audio appearance in the podcast, why not send us an mp3 version with your email? I think that would be fun.

The newest feature, which we started in December, is the shameless

phenomenon known as 'the podcast competition'. In each podcast from now on, we will be giving away a prize! Now that's what I call bribery!

Nick Briggs – executive producer

SNEAK PREVIEWS AND WHISPERS



Jago and Litefoot - Series 1 Box set

Thirty-three years after *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*, the irrepressible Henry Gordon Jago and demure Professor Litefoot get their own spin-off series! The pair made their audio debut in last year's *Companion Chronicle The Mahogany Murderers*, which was a huge success and almost works as a pilot for this

series, introducing barmaid Ellie (Lisa Bowerman) and the terrifying villain Dr Tulp (now played by Toby Longworth). Joining the regulars is Conrad Asquith, who played PC Quick in *Talons* – though Quick has now been promoted to Sergeant.

The four stories – *The Bloodless Soldier*, *The Bellova Devil*, *The Spirit Trap* and *The Similarity Engine* – fit neatly together to form one bigger tale, and there's much fun to be had in piecing together all the threads. Trevor Baxter and Christopher Benjamin are back on fine form, and the scripts (by Justin Richards, Alan Barnes, Jonathan Morris and Andy Lane respectively) are brimming with sparkling dialogue and imaginative ideas. The studio recordings were, by all reports, wonderfully rambunctious, and this looks set to be a Big Finish highlight for 2010... The boxset is available for pre-order now.

AVAILABLE IN JUNE 2010

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: The Time Vampire

We love our trilogies at Big Finish, and here we have a trilogy coming to an end, as writer Nigel Fairs brings to a close the story of Leela of the Sevateem and her endless imprisonment by the Z'Nai. But it might not end as you'd necessarily expect...

Louise Jameson is back on brilliant form, here accompanied by John Leeson as the loyal K9. Yes, Leela and K9 back together in *Doctor Who* at last!
AVAILABLE IN MAY 2010

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PUTTING THE BAND BACK TOGETHER

David Richardson goes behind the scenes with the mid-Eighties TARDIS team...

It all began many months ago, when the weather was much warmer. Mark Strickson was over from New Zealand, and we were recording the **Companion Chronicle** *Ringpullworld* at the Moat Studios. During a break in recording, Mark and I were chatting in the sunshine, and I asked him if he'd be up for doing any more full cast plays with Peter Davison. He was absolutely for the idea, but suggested wouldn't it be fun to get everyone back together – Peter, himself, Sarah Sutton and Janet Fielding?

I had to agree. Wouldn't that be amazing? Four actors who haven't worked together for 27 years, reunited for a run of brand new stories? So I rang Nick Briggs and put the idea to him. He said to go for it. And then I called Sarah Sutton, to see if she had any contact details for Janet. And she did. So, one Sunday, I left a message on Janet's answerphone, explaining that I was from Big Finish, and could she please call me back. Given Janet's reticence over the past 10 years to reprise the character on audio (she has done it once, for *The Gathering*), I was convinced that would be the end of the matter.

But the phone rang. It was Janet. And I told her about Mark's suggestion, and how much we would love her to play Tegan again. And she said yes. That was it. That brilliant TARDIS team were going to get back together!

Writers were set to work. Storylines were drawn up, and an overall arc for the season of three stories was devised. That was all down to Nick and Alan, working with three writers whose names have yet to be announced.

Meanwhile, I was trying to pin everyone down to dates. Mark would be in the UK again from December 28 until January 8, for his mum's 80th birthday. We needed six days for recording, but Janet could only do four of them. And Peter would be appearing in **Legally Blonde** in the West End – so he'd be leaving early and arriving late on some days. These kinds of restrictions to schedules could have driven a lesser director over the edge, but Barnaby Edwards devised a cunning schedule that allowed him to get it all done, while ensuring that the cast recorded together at all times.

So there we were, at the tail end of the festive season, making three special **Doctor Who** stories. And it was wonderful. The four stars proved to be the most

rambunctious of personalities – Peter and Janet were always teasing each other, Mark was never short of an ironic comment, while Sarah kept it all together with the kind of tranquility that we expect from Nyssa.

Listening to the stories being recorded was like being shoved through a time warp. Their voices hadn't changed

at all: Janet was channeling Tegan, her no-nonsense brashness so perfectly evoked by the scripts. Mark was young Turlough, partly devious, partly cowardly, sometimes heroic. And as for Nyssa... ah, well, wait and see...

We had famous guest stars (yet to be announced). We had one old enemy (and one we haven't used before at Big Finish). Plus I got myself a nickname – Janet took to calling me Harpo, after Harpo Marx, because I'd been so busy I hadn't had a chance to get a haircut.

Not everything went to plan. During Tuesday's recording, we started hearing of extreme weather warnings that were going to affect London and the South East. I began

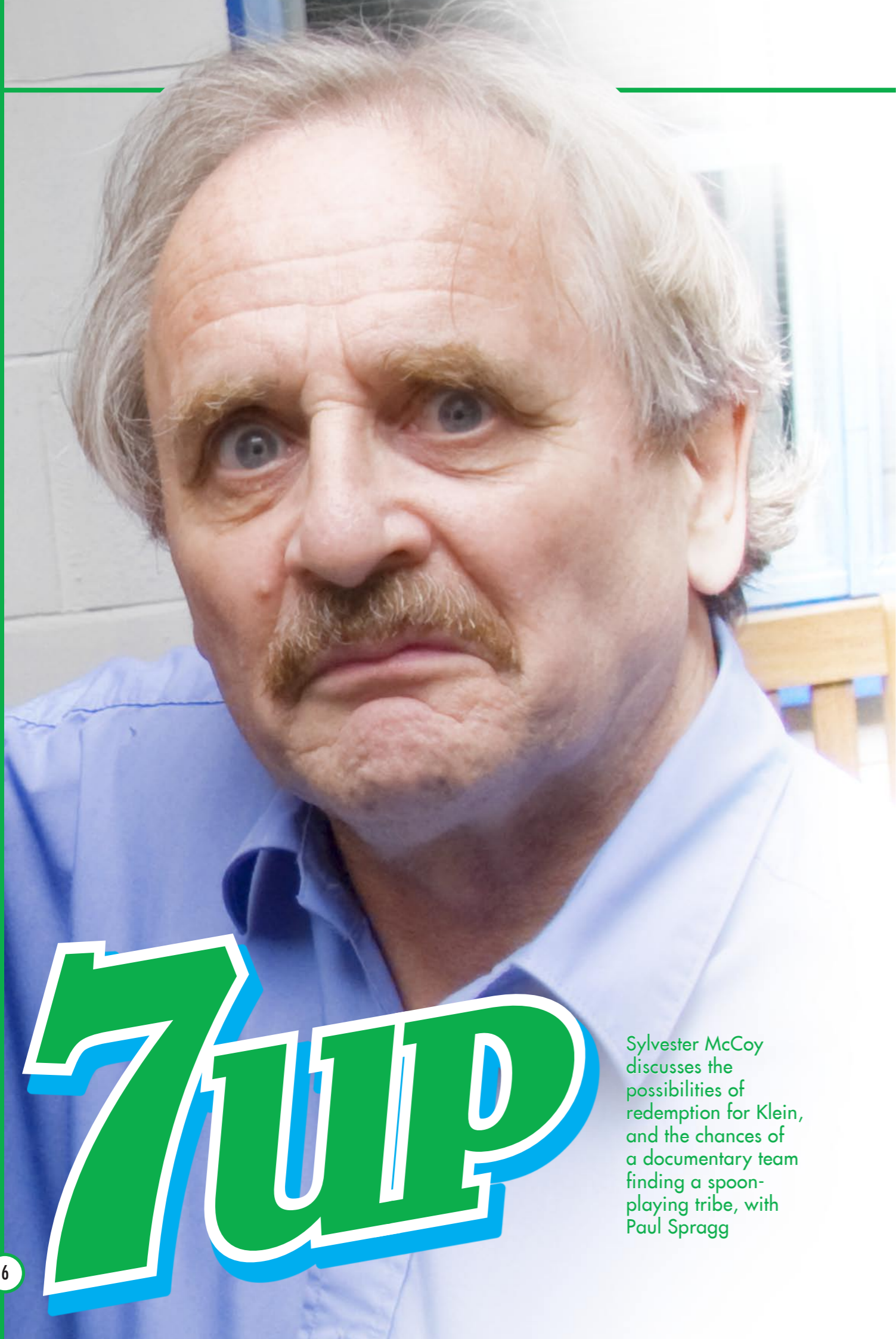
to worry that the first day of recording on the season finale on the Wednesday could be compromised by the heavy snowfall. But I needn't have been concerned. Actors will always turn up to work. Not even freezing adverse conditions can prevent them making it to a studio – just take Sarah, who spent hours single-handedly digging her car out of her driveway just to ensure she'd make it there on time!

This was one of my favourite weeks at Big Finish. And when Peter left for the theatre on the last day, Mark rushed off for his plane, Janet headed home and Sarah went to catch her lift, it felt like the end of an era.

Or is it the end? Wait and see...



Photo © Barnaby Edwards



7UP

Sylvester McCoy discusses the possibilities of redemption for Klein, and the chances of a documentary team finding a spoon-playing tribe, with Paul Spragg

Today you're working on *Survival of the Fittest*, the middle part of the Klein trilogy, but being recorded last. How's it going?

Pretty good! It's a great cast, great fun. Food's terrific. Sun's out. The recording seems to have gone without a hitch so far so all's well!

It's an interesting thing to have a companion who the Doctor disapproves of immensely and is a fascist, which is a nasty philosophy. I worry that we don't make her somehow too sympathetic; there should be no sympathy for her whatsoever because she represents something utterly and totally evil. But she's played by Tracey Childs and she's a delight! I hope that [lack of sympathy] still comes through. It's very important that that's not lost. I'm keeping her with me because she's too dangerous to be allowed out on her own in the universe, and she stands for terrible things.

Klein first appeared in *Colditz*; have you gone back and listened to that since you heard about this trilogy?

No, I haven't gone back because up until we started this I've been very busy doing work and travelling so I haven't had time to go back and listen to it. But I remember doing *Colditz* because that's when I first met David Tennant, he was in it playing a German soldier. And it was good fun. I liked *Colditz* because I've always loved the story as a child growing up. It's an absolutely true story, that it's kind of a university for escapees, the greatest escapees out of the German prison system during the war were all sent to this one place which was inescapable – and they still escaped. I always liked that story, it's an attractive story.

It seems that the Seventh Doctor tends to get much darker stories.

I love having to deal with that, I think it's good taking on those kind of challenges. My knowledge of the other Doctors' stories is not that great; do they do musicals and comedies? You've got more of an overview of this stuff than I have... [laughs]

He also seems to end up in the middle of a lot of wars...

Well, yes, you should ask the producers about that really! I just get the script and read the lines and try not to bump into the monsters. [laughs] I enjoy the serious ones; I enjoy doing the serious stuff. Partly because I think I'm naturally comedic anyway so it's more of a challenge, more of an adventure to go for the dark and deep and deadly. The other I can do; I know that. Maybe not well but I can do it! But I'm not against that either. I've done some comedy ones, I remember, on my route along the way.

Plus there's always the chance to lighten the mood with some spoon playing, as you did in *The Angel of Scutari*.

Did I do that?

You did indeed.

It's my only great talent! I'm very proud of it really. I manage to get spoon playing in as much as possible in everything I do. I got it in *King Lear*. I mean, that's the height of spoon playing. But also I was playing The Mikado in *The Mikado*, Gilbert & Sullivan's operetta set in Japan, and I managed to get an homage to the spoons in. I didn't actually play the spoons but I played the fans, because the fans have got two wooden bits on either side and if you rat-a-tat-tat them, you can play them just like the spoons! And I did.

Did you get a round of applause?

Oh yes. Spoons are magic! They really are! I love them because people are really captivated by it. It does charm people; they just go 'Ahhh' all over the world. I was playing the spoons to a tribe in Indonesia in the 1970s and they were eating out of my hand, and now there's a tribe of spoon players in Indonesia. One day a BBC camera crew will arrive looking for dying species and find this spoon-playing tribe and wonder at it...

Do you keep the Doctor where he was at the end of your time on the series or have you changed your performance over the years?

It has changed, I suppose, because I've got older and my voice has changed a bit. But when I got my Doctor, when I found how I wanted to really play him by the second or third year I was doing it, I think it's still in there, the same place, because I instinctively went back to where that was and the writing, most of the time, has supported that.

Has there ever been a time you've not been happy about a script?

Very rarely. There's only been one time where I went back and said, 'The Doctor wouldn't do that. My Doctor doesn't do violence. Violence is a weakness, a human weakness, not a strength' and that my Doctor's strength is his intellect and brain and he defeats violence. Not with a fist, not with a gun; that was something I insisted on from the beginning of my Doctor, which was great for Ace because she got to do all the wonderful violent stuff! But I still do think it's an incredibly important thing and sometimes it comes out in the writing.

I was looking at *Battlefield*, and thought yes, that was a battle that I, as the Doctor, was having with myself, and the fear of becoming polluted by violence through human contact was one point. I run into the middle of the battle and it looks as if I'm gonna take up the sword and start slashing and killing and murdering and maiming but I manage to control myself. I enjoyed that, I enjoyed that temptation, and we're going to do some more of that [in the Klein trilogy], where the Doctor has been tempted by fate, by force, having to make the choice between good and evil. But sometimes it's very hard; you have to do certain evil things to justify the good.

You say the Seventh Doctor wasn't violent, but he did wipe out Skaro...

Yes, but that was, in a way, like kung fu, I just bounced their power back to them. They did it. If they hadn't pressed the button and sent that destructive force out... all I did was just change its direction, and it could have gone anywhere but it went back and blew them up. I didn't press the button, that's the important bit.

You've been Ace and Hex-less in this trilogy. What's it been like without Sophie Aldred and Philip Olivier around?

I have missed them. And also they're great friends and I like to see them. Sophie's living her life with her children growing up and her husband and her voiceover work and all that and we don't see each other a lot, but when we do it's a delight and the working together is great. And Hex has turned out to be a smashing bloke; he's a marvellous actor, I look forward immensely to working with Hex because when he does a first read-through, you think, 'Ooh, I wonder if he's gonna get this?' and on the second read-through he's got it, and stunningly. Because first read-throughs are for that, just exploring, 'What does this mean, how does it sound, what's it like?' so you're not actually concentrating on the pin-point of the performance. And the second one, bang! And it's such a joy to work with someone like that. But at the same time working with Tracey, she, off-mike, is great fun and I tried to get her off mike all the time but she wouldn't leave him alone!

Very droll, Mr McCoy. Good to see that genius for comedy is still intact!

The comedy genius, long may it survive; I love it and I practice it as much as I can.

How does the Doctor deal with a companion like Klein who he doesn't want?

Well, it's a difficult one. I mean, he doesn't want her around but he doesn't want to leave her and let her go off on her nasty, destructive fascistic journey. So in a way he thinks, 'If I keep her with me, I can control her. And maybe I can change her. Maybe I can show her the light.'

Do you think it's possible for someone like that to change?

Yeah, I think people can change. Redemption is part of life, in all sorts of ways. Not everyone does, but it's possible. You've got to try to make sure you can redeem them if you can. It's not a bad thing to do, it's a good thing to try.

It's a very Doctorish thing to do.

It is. It might be arrogant – well, that's the Doctor again; he's arrogant.

That desire to 'improve' his companions started with Ace, really.

That was very important in our long-term relationship with the Doctor and Ace, from the very beginning. And it was something I, Sylvester McCoy, wanted, and naturally Sophie wanted it as well because it was much more interesting as a companion for her to play that. And that was always the ambition, that I would take her off to the University of Space and when she came back she would have a doctorate that would mean she could be something very powerful and very positive in the world. Plus we were doing it in Thatcher's time, and we had this female icon that stood for not very good things. The economy we have now is because of the result of her philosophy. And so to try and build up Sophie as an opposite of Thatcher was part of the thing as well.

Have you seen the new Doctor Who, and would you return to it if you were asked?

All the answers are yes to those questions. I'm delighted at what's happened to it. Also, I find it a bit of a kick the fact that I'm a 20th century Doctor and the new ones are 21st century Doctors; I think that's really good that the centuries fell that way; that's real time travel for you! But if they asked me to come back and do some stuff, I would. But also because I know the fans would love it. The fans have always been very important to Sophie and I over the years, especially the fallow years when nothing much was happening and we were at Big Finish flying the flag and trying to keep it going.

It's unusual for an old and new version of a series to happily co-exist side by side.

The new fans are, rightly so, falling in love with Doctor Who and it's great that they're actually exploring the back catalogue, and new young fans come up to me, young kids, and I'm just knocked out that they know my Doctor, they've seen it, and they've chosen me to be one of their favourites as the others have done with Colin and Tom and Peter and everyone else. But it's a joy! The other 20th century Doctors, they must be delighted by that as well.

Part two of the Klein trilogy, Doctor Who - Survival of the Fittest, is out this month

FEBRUARY

- Doctor Who – Survival of the Fittest/Klein's Story (131, Seventh Doctor/Klein)
- Doctor Who: The Lost Stories – The Hollows of Time (1.4)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles – The Suffering (4.07, First Doctor)
- Rebecca's World (Audiobook)

APRIL

- Doctor Who – City of Spires (133, Sixth Doctor/Jamie)
- Doctor Who: The Lost Stories – Point of Entry (1.6)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles – Shadow of the Past (4.09, Third Doctor)
- Dark Shadows – Audiobook 12
- Love Songs for the Shy and Cynical (Paperback)

JUNE

- Doctor Who – Legend of the Cybermen (135, Sixth Doctor/Jamie/Zoe)
- Doctor Who: The Lost Stories – The Macros (1.8)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles – Solitaire (4.12, Eighth Doctor)
- Jago and Litefoot – Series 1 Box Set (Four full cast adventures)
- Dark Shadows – Audiobook 14

AUGUST

- Doctor Who – TBA (137, Fifth Doctor/Tegan/Turlough/Nyssa)
- Doctor Who: The New Eighth Doctor Adventures – Nevermore (4.03, Eighth Doctor and TBA)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles – TBA (5.02, Second Doctor)

OCTOBER

- Doctor Who – TBA (140, Seventh Doctor/Ace)
- Doctor Who: The New Eighth Doctor Adventures – Deimos (4.05, Eighth Doctor and TBA)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles – TBA (5.04, Fourth Doctor)

MARCH

- Doctor Who – The Architects of History (132, Seventh Doctor/Klein)
- Doctor Who: The Lost Stories – Paradise 5 (1.5)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles – The Emperor of Eternity (4.08, Second Doctor)
- Dark Shadows – Audiobook 11

MAY

- Doctor Who – The Wreck of the Titan (134, Sixth Doctor/Jamie)
- Doctor Who: The Lost Stories – The Song of Megaptera (1.7)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles – The Time Vampire (4.10, Fourth Doctor)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles – Night's Black Agents (4.11, Sixth Doctor)
- Dark Shadows – Audiobook 13

JULY

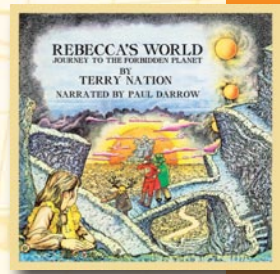
- Doctor Who – TBA (136, Fifth Doctor/Tegan/Turlough/Nyssa)
- Doctor Who: The New Eighth Doctor Adventures – Situation Vacant (4.02, Eighth Doctor and TBA)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles – TBA (5.01, First Doctor)

SEPTEMBER

- Doctor Who – TBA (138, Fifth Doctor/Tegan/Turlough/Nyssa)
- Doctor Who – TBA (139, Seventh Doctor/Ace)
- Doctor Who: The New Eighth Doctor Adventures – The Book of Kells (4.04, Eighth Doctor and TBA)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles – TBA (5.03, Third Doctor)

NOVEMBER

- Doctor Who – TBA (141, Seventh Doctor/Ace)
- Doctor Who: The New Eighth Doctor Adventures – TBA (4.06, Eighth Doctor and TBA)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles – TBA (5.05, Doctor TBA)



SALLY HUMPHREYS

Sally Humphreys chats to *Vortex* about adapting Terry Nation's beloved children's book for audio.

Hello Sally! So, what exactly is *Rebecca's World* all about?

This magical story is about a young girl called Rebecca who sneaks into her father's study to play with a very expensive telescope. She soon starts to feel dizzy and before too long the whole room is spinning. Suddenly she finds herself in another world, and she has no idea how to get home.

She's in a world where the people are terrorized by jelly-like monsters called Ghosts. Rebecca knows she has to try to save them. With the help of Grisby, a sore-footed misery-boots, Kovak, an out-of-work spy, and Captain 'K', a rather puny superhero, they set out for the Forbidden Lands in search of a solution. There's only one problem... the evil Mister Glistler.

This story is an awfully big adventure, so get ready!

When did you first discover *Rebecca's World*?

I first remember reading *Rebecca's World* at school – I borrowed it from the library. It was published when I was born in 1978, so I feel as if I've grown up with it. Over the years, it's become a bit of a cult classic, and it's now not that easy to track down an original copy. If you've got one hiding somewhere you might want to hang onto it...

What was it that appealed to you most about the book?

This book is full of magic and fantasy and you just can't put it down. The characters are so detailed and believable, you really feel as if you're travelling with them on their journey. It's also extremely funny and very cute in parts.

How easy was it to adapt to the audio format, and what changes did you have to make?

Adapting the book wasn't too difficult because the story is so well structured; although it's always hard condensing a book into an audio script without losing any of the magical moments. Terry Nation's writing is so brilliant that you want to keep it all in, so the most difficult part was deciding what to cut.

Were you concerned about any changes? Were there any parts you were sad to lose or has it survived relatively intact?

I have tried to keep the audiobook as true to the original as possible. Luckily the majority of the changes or cuts have been replaced with sound effects, so hopefully everything is still in there.



What do you think Paul Darrow brings to the book? Are the voices just as you imagined them?

Paul Darrow is the perfect choice, he's amazing! His voices are spot on and just as I'd imagined. I'm thrilled that he was chosen to narrate it.

What will fans of the book enjoy about it, and how would you recommend it to newcomers?

Fans of the book will hopefully love it because it's such a fantastic trip down memory lane. Before I started working on this book I searched for extra copies online and found comments saying, 'A plea to whoever holds the rights to *Rebecca's World*: please publish this book again!' and 'This is a book which cries out for a reprint.' I now know I'm not the only one that desperately wanted to hear the story again!

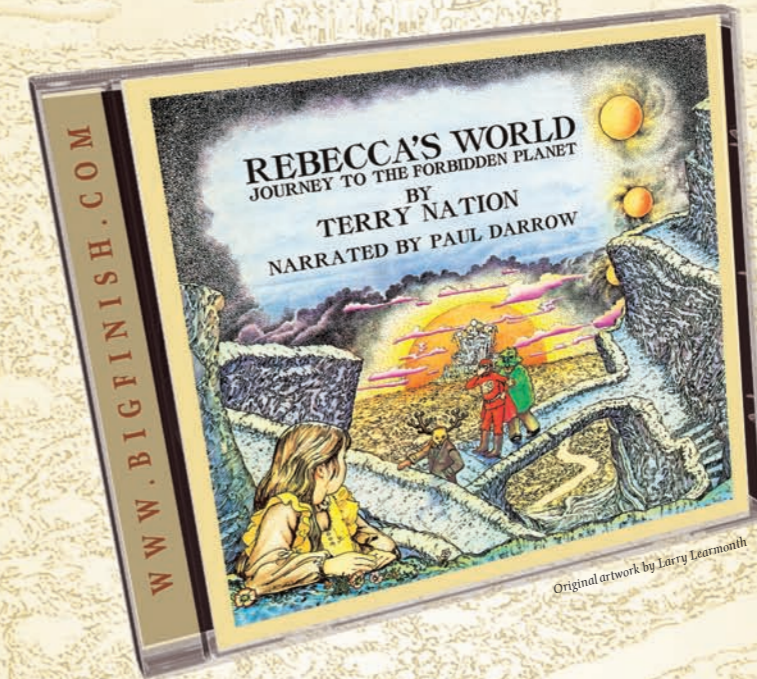
If you're a fan of Terry Nation's then you will love this story. After more than thirty years, it still reads as the perfect fantasy adventure story. *Rebecca's World* continues to appeal to all ages because a good story never goes out of date. For old fans and new readers, I hope you will really enjoy *Rebecca's World*.

Oh and one last tip: you can see *Rebecca's World*. It's the first bright star of evening. And if you stare at it long enough, then close your eyes and think about it very hard, you can make it your world too.

Rebecca's World: the audiobook is out this month

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Paul Darrow



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I received series two of **Cyberman** on Saturday. Can I just thank you for an excellent weekend, a ripping adventure, well told and well produced. Many thanks to all the team. I look forward to what 2010 may bring.

Jonathan Yewdall

Nick: Thanks, Jonathan. I think Jim Swallow did a marvellous job with the script. It was so lovely to work with some of my favourite actors again, and Jo Castleton was brilliant as the new 'regular'. What really blew me away, however, was the sound design and music by the guys at Fool Circle Productions. Incredible stuff, I thought!

I'm emailing at this ridiculous time because I've been babysitting since five o'clock (I still am actually), but now the kids are asleep and the dog has calmed down (he's eight months, never seen snow before, he was going mental) I've finally had a chance to listen to the podcast.

I just wanted to say how much I've enjoyed the podcasts. I've driven my sister mad every day by ignoring her and giggling when listening to them. She got her revenge by trying out her new blender during Wednesday's one. They've been great fun and I'll be looking forward to the next one, once you've had a break!

Finally, this has been my first year as a subscriber and I've enjoyed every minute. I haven't been disappointed with anything I've bought and the little extras (scripts, download extras, **Short Trips** readings) have been brilliant. I have already subscribed to season four of the Eighth Doctor and I will definitely be renewing my subscription to the main range. (By the way, I'm disappointed season four will be the last but my bank account will look much healthier, at least until I find something else to buy from you!)

So, thanks to everyone and keep up the good work! Now, I still have a while until I get to go home. Time to give *Plague of the Daleks* another listen, I think.

Karen Masson

Nick: Now Karen, you weren't thinking that we wouldn't replace the Eighth Doctor seasons with something else equally exciting, were you? Glad you liked the podcasts. Maybe we should add a blender into the next one! Could work. Certainly more interesting than Paul Spragg's witty comments... [Hey! Or possibly thank you - Spragg] Perhaps we should start an online poll. Is the sound of a blender more interesting than a) Nicholas Briggs, b) David Richardson or c) Paul Spragg? Glad you've liked all the subscriber benefits too. As for the free **Short Trips** readings, I have an apology to make. There haven't been enough. All I can say is, there will be more!

Are you kidding me? I just finished the **Gallifrey** series. Hundreds of dollars, WASTED. That's the way you end it? Do you not plan on a one-shot special to end it? I have every **Who** CD that you've

produced. I am quite disa-(fade to music). I feel like I've been ripped off and may even-(fade to music). Are you guys-(fade to music). Did you run out of ideas or-(fade to music).

Did you write yourself into a corner and just-(fade to music). You should send your members a warning stating, 'Listen to this series if you want to get-(fade to music). I feel like never buying another-(fade to music).'

Rawleigh Armes

Nick: Rawleigh, Rawleigh, Rawleigh... It's okay, everything's all right. Don't worry. You're safe now. There will be more **Gallifrey** in the not too distant future. Gary Russell is already working on more!

I was just enquiring about your *Vortex* magazine. I am unable to download it as I only have access to the internet at work and from a visit to a Forbidden Planet in Manchester I discovered actual print versions.

I buy my copies of your **Doctor Who** releases from Forbidden Planet in Leeds and unfortunately they have never got in the actual print versions of your mag.

My question is (if possible), could I obtain back copies of *Vortex* mag and how am I able to get future copies?

Marc Ofner

Nick: *Vortex* is a kind of incentive for people to come to our website and buy directly from us. That's the whole reason we created it. We wanted to give something good away as a way of attracting more direct custom. And we love doing it too, naturally! So, print copies are sent out on a first come first served non-specific basis every time you order direct from us. This sometimes leads to multiple copies being received by those who order more than one CD from us in a month. But we figure they can pass those on or use them to steady particularly rocky bits of furniture. The fact that some shops are receiving them is more an example of our mail order department getting a little bit carried away and over-generous! These magazines are meant to be for those who buy or subscribe direct from Big Finish only.

I've emailed in the past about 'back-story' spoiling the narrative (in my view anyway) of **The Companion Chronicles**. Recently things seemed to improve with *The Stealers from Saiph* and *The Pyralis Effect*. Straight into the story with no messing about. I've just listened to *Ringpullworld* and it's back to messing around again as we don't even have a clear ending.

Can we get back to standalone stories, please? Or are we heading for further spin-off series such as *Jo Jones: Eco Warrior* or *Leela: Beyond Gallifrey*! (When will we get a proper end to **Gallifrey** series three?) It all just seems like unfinished business.

Happy New Year to you all.
Andy Garside

Nick: There's nothing wrong with a bit of back-story, is there, Andy? Oops, obviously you think there is. But I can offer you good news on **Gallifrey**. As mentioned earlier, there will be more!

I signed up with yourselves as a Big Finish subscriber for 12 months in December. I don't quite understand why I cannot get my hands on *An Earthly Child* as it states on the homepage it's available to all subscribers.

I had to read the forums to tell me that unless my subscription began with *Plague of the Daleks* (and it doesn't because I bought it separately), it's not available to me. Which seems very odd and unbelievable.

Can you tell me, am I entitled to *An Earthly Child*, and if not why not? Also, if I am not, I think you should remove the advert on your home page or amend it.

John Branigan

Nick: The subscriber special free stories are available to anyone whose subscription includes the December release of every year. But you have a point in that this is no longer that clear on the website, so I will ask Webmaster Paul Wilson to make that clearer.

I'm working my way through **The Companion Chronicles** and have gotten up to 3.5 with Sara Kingdom. I understand why you want to have the Doctor 'present' in these, but the 'telling of tales' motif can serve to distance us from the story.

I'd love a CC that had Sara and her brother Bret Vyon, aka Nicholas Courtney, in an episode together pre-Doctor. Or Polly and Ben after, or Jamie after or, well, you get the idea. Jo and Benton or the Brig and Liz Shaw sometime when the Doctor isn't around.

Love the audioplays though, and waiting for Sylvester and Klein. The three-part Nyssa and Peter Davison was very good as well as *Death in Blackpool*.

Can you do another podcast soon, though? I always enjoy those, lunch or no lunching going on.

David: **The Companion Chronicles** was originally devised as stories told by the companions. I'm sorry if the format hasn't worked for you, but it has proven hugely popular - so much so that it became a monthly range after two years of short seasons.

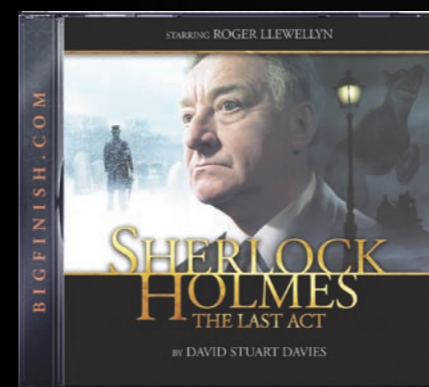
We have tried to vary the format, and a few upcoming titles (*The Suffering*, *The Emperor of Eternity* and *The Time Vampire*) feature two companions working together. These are the exception rather than the rule, however, because of budgetary restrictions. Nevertheless, they may be more to your personal taste.

Nick: Interesting that your view is the opposite of Andy Garside's view above, who hates back-story! As for the podcasts... they will never end. Which sounds more like a threat, I know... and maybe it is! Wahahahahaaaaaa!

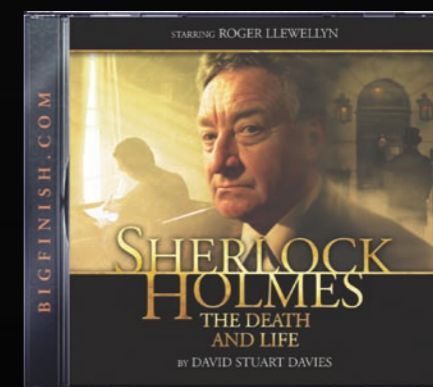


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JAC RAYNER



Jacqueline Rayner relates the joys of working on the **Companion Chronicles**, including this month's *The Suffering*

What do you enjoy most about script editing the **Companion Chronicles?**

You're getting to work on **Doctor Who** stories from times that have been and gone. I adore the First Doctor era, but it ended six years before I was born. And yet here are new stories, featuring the proper companions, and I'm part of it! How fab is that?

Are there any titles in the range that you have script edited that you are most pleased with?

Most of the ones I've loved the most I've hardly had to do any work on, so it would be fair to say that they owe nothing to me at all. Paul Magrs's scripts are always wonderful – he has such a gift for language – and arrive pretty much fully formed and perfect. Andy Lane's Jago and Litefoot story was glorious. And I must highly recommend Nev Fountain's forthcoming Peri chronicle, which is just stunning. Funny, moving and clever.

How did you come to do the first two-companion **Companion Chronicle?**

I wasn't sure about writing another **Companion Chronicle** – not because I didn't enjoy doing the first, just because of time – but David Richardson suggested I could do one for Vicki, who I adore (she vies for top female companion position with Sarah Jane and Donna), so I was very tempted. Then he came up with the idea of two linked stories, the other one being for Steven, and asked if I'd like to do both. Well, I love the era, I love the characters, and I think both actors are fantastic, so that was an offer I couldn't resist!

Was it freeing having more time to play with than just a single-disc release?

I was pulled in two directions, really. The writing of the play was not very enjoyable, as my children came down with swine flu and I wasn't in a good place for dealing with, well, anything, so I was cursing how much there was to do. On top of that, readers (and definitely editors) of my books may have spotted that I tend to write short – compactly, shall we say? – so it seemed a bit daunting. But in the end, I think it was nice having the space to do two complete stories, as it meant there was room to go properly into both of them – and for possibly the first time ever, I went over length and had to cut a load of stuff!

What was your inspiration for the story?

It didn't feel very inspired at the time, I was scrabbling around for ideas a bit... I've wanted to do a suffragette story for a long time and this seemed like the right place. Then looking around for what Steven might be getting up to, the Piltown Man just jumped out as being made for **Doctor Who** – I'm amazed it's not been done before! Then there just might be a tiny link to a previously existing Hartnell 'monster' (I have a ridiculous weakness for those), although that was pretty much an afterthought near the end; something that just seemed to fit and pleased the sad fangirl part of me.

You visited the studio for the recording. How was that?

It was the bit where I realised I was standing in a room with actors from probably my two favourite **Doctor Who** stories: *The Myth Makers* (Peter

Purves) and *Survival* (Lisa Bowerman) that my fangirl heart started to soar...

Hearing your own script being recorded is a very odd thing. My own words tend to make me cringe, and yet at the same time you've got a wonderful actor breathing life into them – and not only that, recreating one of your favourite characters. A mixture of utter pleasure and embarrassment; a very odd thing indeed!

Peter Purves was a huge fan of this script. You must have been delighted...

Goodness, yes. Getting praise from Peter meant a lot. I was a bit smitten, actually. He's a very charming man!

You also wrote *The Transit of Venus*, which was a very popular release. Was it a thrill to write for Ian Chesterton?

I'm a **Doctor Who** fan, and I was getting to write for someone who was a part of it at the very beginning! That's pretty darn thrilling.

And what did you think of the finished story when you heard it?

Oh gosh – I'm sorry, but I haven't listened to it! The own work thing, you know – I'm not very good at dealing with it. But just hearing William Russell speaking in studio was glorious.

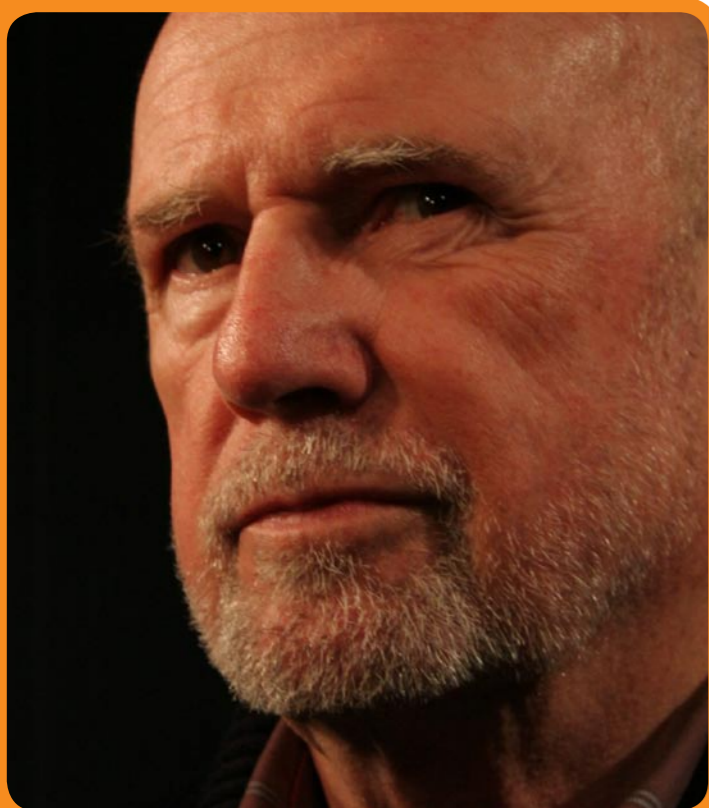
Do you have any more novels planned?

No more **Doctor Who** ones on the horizon, no. I've been kept very busy with a series of **Merlin** novelisations for younger readers, a forthcoming book series that, incredibly, has nothing to do with TV at all, and some other jolly exciting projects. But **Doctor Who** will never be far from my heart.

Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles – The Suffering is out this month



DAVID GARFIELD



We speak to the actor who plays the mysterious Professor Stream in this month's *Lost Story, The Hollows of Time*

Your association with *Doctor Who* started when you played Von Weich in *The War Games*. What can you remember of that story? Had you watched the show before appearing in it?

I have two sons who were avid fans at the time and I did watch the show with them, so I was quite familiar with the set-up. As to *The War Games*: I remember various things – like the amount of time I had to spend in make-up to get the scar that carved up my cheek. I did remember certain moments of certain scenes, but when I did a *Doctor Who* convention a couple of years back I needed a trip to the *Doctor Who* archives for reminders and was surprised to see again scenes that I'd forgotten all about.

You came back as Neeva in *The Face of Evil*. How had things changed by then, and what was Tom like? *The Face of Evil* was Louise Jameson's first story; how much potential did you see in her as a companion, and as an actress?

Things hadn't changed – only the Doctor and the director – both still excellent. Tom Baker is the same off-screen as on: what you see is what you get. I found him a joy to work with. As for Louise Jameson

– I'd never seen her in anything before then – she was new and very young. I didn't really get to know her – apart from the fact that we all tended to lunch together as a cast, I don't think I had a long conversation with her. I do remember she had astonishing blue, blue eyes.

You've renewed your association with *Doctor Who* via audio; how different is audio acting to stage, TV or film acting?

Radio acting is a different discipline and one I was least familiar with. You only have the voice to work with – so 'face acting' is not much help! I've done occasional broadcasts during my career, but not enough to feel really comfortable at it.

How would you describe Professor Stream, and what aspects of the role most appealed to you?

I can't tell you anything revelatory about Professor Stream but there were two things that really appealed to me: 1) At the ripe old age of 77 I was actually asked to do it! 2) It was essentially a dual role – the nice, benign retired professor and a barking mad megalomaniac! Who could resist it?

How was it going toe to toe with Colin Baker?

You don't go toe to toe – you go hand in hand. I was delighted to add Colin Baker to my personal collection of *Doctor Whos*. I'd never met him before, and he was a very generous actor to work with.

What was the most memorable/enjoyable part of the day?

There were, I think, four members of the cast who were vastly experienced in radio technique, and it was a big bonus to still learn so late in my career.

Would you come back to do more for Big Finish? What kind of character would you like to play?

I'd certainly come back if asked. As to the character, well, you have to read a script and decide if it grabs you, and if you really feel you can bring enough to it.

Doctor Who: The Lost Stories – The Hollows of Time is out this month



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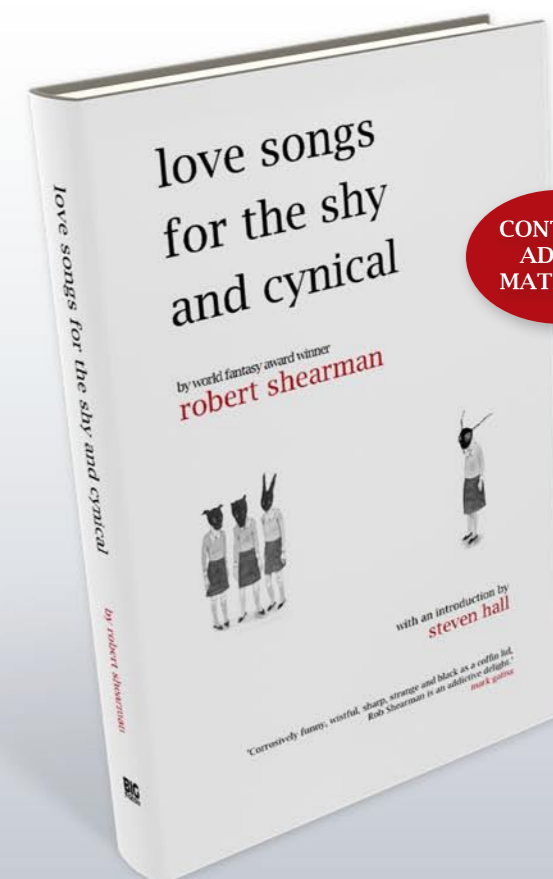
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Cover illustration by Rachel Goodyear

BIG FINISH

Toby Robinson on... Kevin McCloud: *Slumming It*
 McCloud's documentary found him sharing a few tiny rooms with a family of 20 in the Mumbai slum of Dharavi. Despite his wry opinion of himself as 'a useless piece of Western telly fluff', he unassumingly highlighted the apparent contradiction of this strong, vibrant community and the squalid conditions they endure.

Nick Briggs on... *Flashbacks of a Fool*
 Baillie Walsh's overlooked movie, starring Daniel Craig as a spoilt Hollywood movie star on self-destruct. His childhood best friend dies and he thinks back to his seaside childhood in England, which holds a terrible secret. This is just brilliant, beautifully told and beautifully acted. I guess people didn't like it because they wanted to see Craig as Bond – but this is really worth catching. I accidentally saw it when I randomly selected it as a DVD rental. Happy accident, I'd say.

Alan Barnes on... *The Complete Fritz Lang Mabuse*
 A box containing all three of the Dr Mabuse films, made over nearly 40 years – from the silent *Dr Mabuse, Der Spieler* (1922) to *Die 1000 Augen des Dr Mabuse* (1960). Kinetically exciting, I'm told, they document the rise and fall and rise again of a criminal mastermind – James Bond films before the fact – and they've been now lovingly restored. Apparently. When I got the box for Christmas (thanks Mum), I was certain I'd be writing about it in this space. Tragically, however, my brood received a Nintendo Wii at the same time, and I've been powerless to resist. So I can offer no verification of the merits of this doubtless wonderful box, because it has sat on the shelf ever since while I've been busy playing *Rabbids Go Home* and working on my tennis backhand. Pity me – I am a weak and foolish individual, and I am truly ashamed.

Paul Spragg on... *The Beatles*
 Now, I should point out that I was aware of The Beatles before now, but at Christmas I was introduced to my stepfather Mike's *The Beatles In Mono* CD box set and, on reading the notes and having a listen to these remastered versions of classic songs, realised that after years of not having any Beatles albums, perhaps this was the right time to finally get them, 'as nature intended'. And when Mike gave me some Christmas money with instructions to spend it only on 'something frivolous', I shelled out for the box set, a glorious creature designed as a faithful recreation of the original albums, complete with art cards, cut-outs, the lot. Although I admit I only got it after I'd spent some of the frivolous pounds on Sooty and Sweep glove puppets...

Barnaby Edwards on... *Bleak House*
 Each of us has a list of books we feel we ought to have read. Mine is embarrassingly extensive and I have made it my New Year's resolution to reduce it significantly. In pole position, just above George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, is Charles Dickens's 1853 masterpiece *Bleak House*. I have now begun to read it – and what a joy it is! I'm 400 pages in and loving every word: the wonderful characters, that remarkable opening description of London, the Smallweeds! If the other titles on my Must Read list are a quarter as good, I'm in for a great year.

Jason Haigh-Ellery on... *Meeting Mike Tyson*
 So, I was walking down Sunset Boulevard with a friend on Saturday night (as you do) when I came upon Mike Tyson sitting with his wife and a friend outside a cigar shop chatting and watching the world go by. "Hi Mike," says I (what else could I say?). "Hey," says he. We both smile at each other and he says to his friend "Nice people," as I walk on by. What a nice bloke.

David Richardson on... *The Apprentice USA*
 I love the British show, and I've just discovered a passion for the US version, now airing on BBC1 at silly o'clock. Who cares that it's five years old, and I could save myself the trouble by looking up who won on the internet. It's not the winner, it's the journey that's the most important thing, as a group of ambitious and invariably beautiful people battle and betray each other to become Donald Trump's hired hand. Even the seemingly nice ones – yes, you Randal! – show their evil sides by the end. And Trump is hysterical, shouting his way through the narration of every episode, and firing no-hopers en masse with such glee that in the season last airing he shoved out so many people that the series ran out of contestants. Brilliant – he's worth a fortune, but couldn't calculate how many weeks the show was on air...

Alex Mallinson on... *building stuff*
 Years ago I started training to be a model maker at the University of Hertfordshire. I chatted to miniature maestro Mike Tucker for my coursework (who was glumly mixing gunge for Saturday morning kids' TV.) It was not to be, however, as my hands have all the dexterity of flippers. My 3-D skills, however, found their expression on the computer and I never looked back. Until now. I reckon that the debate of CG versus practical effects is a non-starter because the truth is, the best results are a blend of the two. This month I had to produce the *Solitaire* cover with a ventriloquist's dummy of the Eighth Doctor. Rather than use CG, I wanted the dummy to sit on the India Fisher's lap for the photo and lend it the immediacy it required. So I built an articulated wooden skeleton with a heavy card skin and dressed it in the appropriate manner (Thanks to the M&S kids range!) My model-making skills again proved an obstacle to the face, but when combined with a little digital tinkering, I was happy. I hope you will be too.

BEHIND-THE-SCENES



Top: Trevor Baxter and Christopher Benjamin are back and on fine form after over thirty years!
 Bottom: Familiar faces, clockwise from top left, are Conrad Asquith, Christopher Benjamin, Trevor Baxter, Toby Longworth and Lisa Bowerman

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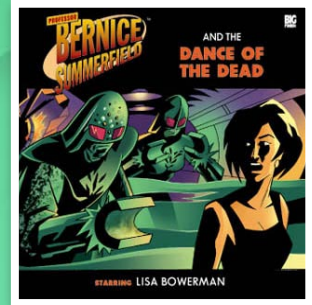
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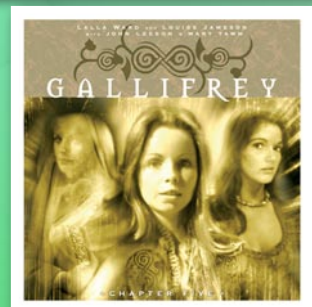
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