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THE ΩMEGA FACTOR

COMING SOON

Listeners missing **The Omega Factor** are in for a treat this July in the form of a new story written by Natasha Gerson – whose father Jack created the series. **The Omega Factor**, based in Scotland, starred Louise Jameson as Anne Reynolds and the late James Hazeldine as Tom Crane. Big Finish revived the series on audio in 2015 making three series set in the modern day, with Louise Jameson reprising her role of Anne (now a doctor), and John Dorney playing Adam Dean, the son of Tom.

Festival of Darkness will be the latest release in a series of original fiction audiobooks set around the time of the 1979 TV show. Natasha says: “We start with Adam looking at one of his father’s case files. Tom has returned to Edinburgh in late July 1979 at Anne’s urgent request. But he’s there somewhat against his better judgement because he is meant to be taking a sabbatical after attacks on his physical and mental well-being that resulted from his

work at Department Seven.

“Then Tom finds out that Anne wants him to watch one of the shows that is going to be performed at the upcoming Edinburgh Festival. The story which follows is mysterious and traumatic. Many lives are put in danger. There are inexplicable events which seem to mirror Adam’s experience in the present day... You’ll have to listen to find out more!”

She adds: “**The Omega Factor** had an impact because it wasn’t just an ordinary thriller. It also contained timeless elements of the supernatural, extra-sensory perception and science-fiction, with echoes of the work of MR James, Algernon Blackwood and one of my maternal relatives, RL Stevenson. It couldn’t fail to fascinate, or even shock, as evidenced by Mary Whitehouse’s reaction. She thought it ‘thoroughly evil.’ I still love that!” Read by Louise Jameson, *Festival of Darkness* is available to pre-order now at £9.99 on download. **VORTEX**

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EDITORIAL



IT’S RATHER well known within Big Finish that I love Sheridan Smith. So when she was cast as Lucie Miller I was delighted as I had been a big fan of her work for many years. I first remember seeing Sheridan in **Holby City** when she guest starred in half a dozen episodes as a character who claimed to be the witness to a killing, and I was impressed that such a young actress was able to give so strong a performance.

I then followed her career with interest from guest appearances in **The Royle Family** followed by a starring role in **Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps**. And that’s when I fell in love with her, long before the rest of the country did after **Cilla**, **The C Word** and **Mrs Biggs**.

Late in 2011 my mum died just 41 days after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. This obviously floored me, but the two things that helped me get through my grief were the Eighth Doctor audio stories with Lucie Miller and TV episodes of **Two Pints** – particularly the musical special.

This issue I achieved something of a lifetime ambition by having an interview with Sheridan (courtesy of Nicholas Briggs, who knows I love her so much). When I mentioned the above to Sheridan, I actually made her cry – and I feel bad about that – sorry Sheridan! So to cut a long story short, I can’t wait to hear **The Further Adventures of Lucie Miller!** **VORTEX**



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and encountered the Doctor and Rose as he tried to pull off a con.

Then having reformed his criminal ways, he joined them on their travels before being left behind on Satellite 5 after the Doctor's regeneration began.

The Lives of Captain Jack introduces us to the exploits that follow – before and after he ended up at Torchwood Three in Cardiff.

The second box set in the range features *Piece of Mind* by James Goss, *What Have I Done?* by Guy Adams and *Driving Miss Wells*, also by

Right: John Barrowman



James. We begin with a story which John Barrowman himself teased us with on Instagram when he donned a very familiar-looking brightly coloured patchwork coat...

James says: "A *Piece of Mind* is a hoot and a half with a heart, in which Captain Jack meets the Sixth Doctor. There's a line in the TV episode *Utopia* about how Jack's been waiting around 'for the right Doctor' and we asked Russell T Davies if he could meet the 'wrong' one!

"As we couldn't not have Jack wearing the coat, the story grew from there – it's sort of *Cyrano de Bergerac* meets *The Prisoner of Zenda*. Something terrible happens to the Sixth Doctor mid-story, and Jack has to step into his spats and save the day.

"You'll be thrilled to hear Colin and John stealing scenes from each other, and the photoshoot with John in the coat was an utter joy – proof that that man can

"IT'S ESSENTIALLY JUST A STORY ABOUT **FEAR** – THE SHEER **CRIPPLING EFFECT OF FEAR...**"

GUY ADAMS

look good in anything!

"And yes, John insisted on going for an English accent. His Doctor is the kind of person grannies would punch on the nose – but he's also very charming."

Director Scott Handcock adds: "It's a lovely trio of stories. The first, *Piece of Mind*, finds Jack still waiting for 'his' Doctor to come back for him after the catastrophic events in the TV episode *The Parting of the Ways*, and instead having to deal with – and help save – a much earlier incarnation. It's a fun, tender script, with joyous performances from John and Colin, both of whom get to show a different side to their characters."

FROM A story with lots of fun, we get to explore the more serious side of Jack in *What Have I Done?* James says *What Have I Done?* is: "A thoughtful adventure set in the trenches of World War I, which sees Jack determined to save someone's life against all the odds.

"It's a proper character piece from Guy Adams that really captures the pointless, grinding misery of the setting. It's also set at Gallipoli, a battle famous for being fought uphill."

Writer Guy explains: "The story I've written is basically a two-hander. *What Have I Done?* sees Jack paired up with a young

soldier. It's essentially just a story about fear – the sheer crippling effect of fear, the sheer destructive quality of fear, the viral quality of fear... it's surprisingly heartfelt at times.

“What’s important when writing about a historical era is conveying the truth and sense of that era.

“A lot of time when I’m doing research, I collate a lot of facts, but these don’t tend to make their way in. For me, when you’re writing about an important real event, you want to capture



Above (l-r): Timothy Blore, Lachele Carl, Vikash Bhai and Maeve Bluebell Wells

“HE’S HAUNTED BY HIS IMMORTALITY, AND WANTS NOTHING MORE THAN TO SAVE A SINGLE LIFE... BUT LIFE IS NEVER AS STRAIGHTFORWARD AS DEATH.”

SCOTT HANDCOCK



Above (l-r): Sophie Hopkins, John Barrowman, Hannah Arterton and Prasanna Puwanarajah

the truth of it.” Scott adds: “*What Have I Done?* is a more serious affair, pitching Jack into the battlefields of Gallipoli not long after the death of Ianto Jones.

“Jack’s at a point where he’s haunted by his immortality, and wants nothing more than to save a single life... but life is never as straightforward as death. For the most part, it’s a delicate, dark two-hander, with the brilliant Atilla Akinci playing a soldier just as haunted as Jack, but for very different reasons.”

THE BOX set concludes with the return of a character who has the unique distinction of appearing in not just **Doctor Who**, but **Torchwood** and **The Sarah Jane Adventures** – AMNN newsreader Trinity Wells. Scott explains: “*Driving Miss Wells* is a paranoid thriller, focussing on a newscaster who no longer believes the news and is questioning everything. “And rather than any old newscaster, when I knew this story was looming I suggested to James that we write it for Trinity Wells, played by the

fantastic Lachele Carl, who featured so routinely across **Doctor Who**, **Torchwood** and **The Sarah Jane Adventures** back in the day.

“It’s such a small tweak, but makes it just that extra bit familiar, and Lachele relished the chance to tackle more than simply declaring the end of the world!” James agrees: “We all love Lachele Carl’s newsreader (from every crisis in Russell’s era of **Doctor Who**) and Scott suggested we give her a second act.

“This is a story about a newsreader who one day

“CONSPIRACY THEORIES, FAKE NEWS AND WHY PEOPLE GO ON STRICTLY”

JAMES GOSS



stops believing the news and becomes convinced she's caught up in a conspiracy so bizarre even she can't believe in it. She's also in the middle of a book tour and her publisher has given her a very dashing new driver.

“It's basically a chance to shine a spotlight on Lachele Carl (which she seizes) and

to people – her mother, her boss, Captain Jack – people who inhabit a world outside of the newsroom, which gives her a bit more depth.

“It ties her more into the narrative yet still sets her apart in a way that shows her more as a person with flaws and vulnerabilities; and it still allows for a bit of mystery



Above (l-r): Attila Akinci and John Barrowman

also to talk about conspiracy theories, fake news and why people go on Strictly.”

Lachele spoke to *Vortex*, and admits she had never expected to be asked to play Trinity again: “Yes, I was surprised, and it was lovely to be asked to revive her!”


She was also happy to have a role more central to the story, rather than just reporting on it. She says: “Again, it was a surprise and a very nice one. The script was well written and it was fun!

“What I loved most about it was that Trinity was relating

about who she really is.”

Lachele, who is no stranger to Big Finish having appeared as Sheriff Rhonda Tate in the **Dark Shadows** range of audios, had a good time returning to her old part of Trinity.

She adds: “Absolutely – everyone was kind and professional, the cast were great to work with, it was all very relaxed, and we just had a fun time lifting the words from the page to life. Scott, James and the team seemed very pleased with the end result, which all made for a happy day.” **VORTEX**



She's back and it's about time!
Sheridan Smith chats exclusively
to *Vortex* and says...

"I Love Lucie"

IT'S THURSDAY 23 August 2018. It's 1.15pm and *Vortex* takes a call from Big Finish executive producer Nicholas Briggs. "Hello, Kenny," says Nick. "Hope you're well, I'm at Moat Studios and I've got someone here who wants to talk to you." There's a brief pause as he hands over his mobile to someone else. And then Britain's sweetheart, Sheridan Smith, introduces herself. "Hiya, I'm Sheridan..." says a very familiar voice.



Above (l-r): Paul McGann and Sheridan Smith

enthusiasm led to Big Finish commissioning a new box set of adventures in **The Further Adventures of Lucie Miller**.

Sheridan says: "I remember the last time I came in to play Lucie – we worked out it was eight years ago – and when we finished I was feeling so sad. I was like, 'Please

“PLEASE HAVE ME BACK ONE DAY! I DON'T WANT TO GO! I DON'T WANT TO DIE!” SHERIDAN SMITH

have me back one day! I don't want to go! I don't want to die!

“And Nick said, ‘Well the thing is with **Doctor Who**, anything can happen!’ So when they said that they were wanting to bring her back and do four adventures with her, I was so excited! It's something everyone wants to do – everyone wants to work with Big Finish and everyone wants to be part of the **Doctor Who** family.”

Having played a number of parts to critical acclaim since she last donned the mantle of Lucie, it's easy to image that while Sheridan might look back on her time with Big Finish with fondness, now that she has moved on in her career, she has no wish to revisit the character. But that's far from the case.

Sheridan enthusiastically replies: “Oh my gosh – I will *always* make time for Lucie. I love her! Poor Briggsy has had to try and organise the schedules as Paul McGann has been so busy filming and I've been working – but we managed to get this week when we could both come in. It worked out great – Nick was free to direct and it all came together – all the mates are back. I'm so thrilled to be here again. But it's my last day and I'm really sad about that.”

AND IT'S true. Lucie Miller IS BACK in **The Further Adventures of Lucie Miller**. It suddenly becomes real – and it's been a long time coming. The road to the return of Lucie in these four full-cast plays has been a long one. On 5 July 2010, Sheridan recorded her final scenes as the Eighth Doctor's best friend, and, it seemed, was certain never to return.

Since then her career exploded, winning acclaim for her roles on stage and television – the Laurence Olivier Award for Best Actress in a Musical and the WhatsOnStage Award for Best Actress in a Musical for *Legally Blonde: The Musical* in 2011; the Critics' Circle Theatre Award for Best Actress and the Laurence Olivier Award for Best Performance in a Supporting Role for *Flare Path* in 2012; the British Academy Television Award for Best Actress for *Mrs Biggs* in 2013; the WhatsOnStage

Award for Best Actress in a Play in 2013 for *Hedda Gabler*; and the National Television Award for Outstanding Drama Performance for *Cilla* in 2015. But despite all of that success, Sheridan has never forgotten Lucie Miller.

IAN ATKINS, when producer of the **Doctor Who Short Trips** range, contacted Sheridan's agent in 2015 to find out if she would be interested in performing a couple of his short stories. And the word came back that she was. Very interested. After weeks to trying to pin down recording days, Ian breathed a sigh of relief when he saw that the taxi which had been sent to collect her was en route to Moat Studios on 28 January 2016. The two scripts were subsequently recorded – *The Curse of the Fugue* by Alice Cavender in April 2016, and *Flashpoint* by Andrew Smith in July 2017. During the recording the actress'



Left: Sheridan Smith

Ever the optimist, *Vortex* points out that it's Sheridan's last day – *for now*. “Oh, of course, for now! Exactly! I love that!” She bursts out again into that famous laugh. “I love coming back to her. It's the best character I've played, my favourite that I've had I think – Lucy bleeding Miller!”

“It was so funny on the first day as I walked back into my booth. They were all laughing as I went into my old one, like a well-trained dog. It had been years but it was like no time had passed. It's fantastic – we've been able to pick up the conversation just like a family, and carry on exactly where we left off. It's just wonderful.”

“We went straight back into it and it was so much fun – I've missed running on the spot to get away from Daleks!”

“I love working here – you don't have to come in dressed! Well I did come in dressed, I don't come in naked! I did arrive in my slippers one time, which Paul was laughing at, but you can come in looking rubbish, you don't have to learn your lines, and you get to have all these amazing adventures and meet so many lovely actors.”



“When people are listening to it, their minds can go anywhere. It's a really nice way for people to get some new **Doctor Who**.”

“I love **Doctor Who** on telly but doing it for audio recordings is just so much fun. I feel privileged getting to do them. Hopefully, fingers crossed, I can always come back and do more.”

SHERIDAN IS currently one of the most high-profile actors in Britain, starring in a constant stream of successful dramas on

TV, and regularly featuring in the TV and showbiz columns of the national press. But she admits that, despite her fame, she is touched by the devotion of the **Doctor Who** fans who want her autograph or a photo with her.

Vortex tells her just how beloved she is to fans of Big Finish, and how much people have taken to the character of Lucie.

Sheridan says: “That's amazing, thank you so much. I get letters from all over the world and listeners bring the Big Finish CD sleeves for me to sign when I'm working in theatres. It's lovely that people are interested and remember me. I've been to a **Doctor Who** convention so I know what it means to people, and I get what people mean about the **Doctor Who** family.”

Honestly, you have no idea how proud I am to be associated with it through Big Finish.

“I loved what I knew about **Doctor Who** from what I'd seen on TV, but I had no idea just how big it really is. And I just love Big Finish, coming up to the 20th anniversary of making audios now.”

With four new scripts, Sheridan admits she's had a blast each day but has a real affection for the one she was recording on the day we're chatting. She says: “I really enjoyed the one



Above (l-r): Paul McGann, Nicholas Briggs and Sheridan Smith

“THERE ARE SOME REALLY FUNNY BITS FOR LUCIE WHO’S DOING A ‘**DEAR DIARY**’ KIND OF THING.” SHERIDAN SMITH

we did today, *The Dalek Trap*, as it’s basically bonkers. Everyone is losing their mind, without giving too much away, and it really makes me laugh.

“There are some really funny bits for Lucie who’s doing a ‘Dear Diary’ kind of thing.

“I love Lucie and the Doctor’s relationship – they’re like squabbling siblings. He’s the annoying posh older brother with an annoying northern brat sister. But there are some real sensitive moments between them: they really love each other. There are sad moments too but also loads of fun, as you can imagine.

“It’s been incredible. It’s an honour to be a small part of the whole **Doctor Who** thing. Nick Briggs is a genius – it’s great to be back working with him.”

Vortex asks if he’s standing close by in order to retrieve his phone when the interview

is done. “Nah. But he’s going to pay me later!”

SINCE SHERIDAN last played Lucie, Paul McGann played the Eighth Doctor on TV for his regeneration in *Night of the Doctor*. And before he changed, he mentioned several of his Big Finish companions by name... including Lucie.

This, however, is news to Sheridan. She shrieks: “What? No? Really? Are you kidding me? I didn’t even know that! Oh my gosh, Lucie’s been mentioned on TV? That’s amazing!”

“I remember when I finished the audition and I was so excited when they told me I had got the part, and I remember them saying welcome to the family. I thought that was nice, but I had no idea how big it was.”

And while we never got to see Lucie alongside the Doctor on

TV, we did get to see Sheridan and Paul sharing screen time in *The Judas Tree*, a **Jonathan Creek** episode in 2010.

“That was mad, wasn’t it?” says Sheridan. “I have such a great relationship with Paul from doing the **Doctor Who** series, and when I was doing **Jonathan Creek** I had a good relationship with Alan Davies.

“When Paul came in and did an episode it was so bizarre, having my two ‘brothers’ in the industry in the same place. But that was really nice, to be filming with him. I would love to have done Lucie with him on TV.

“Paul’s a great guy. He’s lovely. He took me under his wing. When we first started, I was this young mad head from the north. I’m still a northern mad head, but just not so young – I’m 37 now!”

Vortex thanks Sheridan for her time, as she returns to the studio to finish recording her last story... **for now!**

Sheridan laughs again: “Yeah – **for now!** It’s been lovely talking to you – it’s really made my day!” **VORTEX**



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Miller TIME

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THE INSIDE TRACK ON REUNITING THEM...

DOCTOR WHO: THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF LUCIE MILLER

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THE DOCTOR and Lucie. Lucie and the Doctor. Whichever way round you think of them, they are without doubt one of the most popular combinations of Doctor and companion in any media – of all time ever!

Over the course of four series, Paul McGann and Sheridan Smith became a beloved pairing as they made their way through space and time, enjoying delirious highs and heartbreaking lows along the way.

But all good things must come to an end and that was the case in 2011, when Lucie left the Doctor's side in *To the Death*.

Executive producer Nicholas Briggs admits: "We always had it in mind to bring back Lucie – we only let her go in the first place because we could see Sheridan's stratospheric career path approaching."

"After Big Finish producer Ian Atkins asked Sheridan to record two *Short Trips* single-voice releases as Lucie, we discovered that Sheridan was really keen to do more. And so script editor Alan Barnes, producer Scott Handcock and I started devising *The Further Adventures of Lucie Miller*."

The Further Adventures of Lucie Miller is set between the first

Below (l-r): Alan Barnes, Sheridan Smith, Lauren Cornelius, Carlyss Peer, Bethan Dixon Bate, Atilla Akinci and Paul Panting



“IT’S LUCIE HAVING TO COPE WITHOUT THE DOCTOR. IT’S **TRAUMATIC FOR HER** BECAUSE HE HASN’T DISAPPEARED...”
NICHOLAS BRIGGS

and second series of her adventures with the Eighth Doctor, between *Human Resources* and *Dead London*.

Nick explains: “I have always been clear that I wouldn’t reverse the finality of Lucie’s departure. That would somehow seem like cheating and would lessen the emotional impact of what we did. So my plan was always to revisit Lucie earlier on in her adventures with the Eighth Doctor. It’s pretty much what we do with every classic companion-and-Doctor pairing, so why not do it with Lucie?”

Nick has written the first story of the new box set, which just happens to feature a race of aliens Lucie encountered on her first trip in the TARDIS.

The Dalek Trap sees the Doctor behaving distinctly out of character, and Lucie having to take control to thwart the Daleks and a mysterious force of ‘Darkness’.

Nick admits he was delighted to have the chance to write for Lucie once more: “I really enjoyed it. I couldn’t wait to get started. Lucie’s voice has been in

Above (l-r): Paul McGann, Nicholas Briggs and Sheridan Smith



my head for so long. We all fell in love with the character and what Sheridan did with her, and then we expanded our approach when we realised that with Sheridan, anything was possible. “That was how it went when we did the four seasons back in the day. Such a happy time. So I jumped at the chance to write

another episode that was mostly about Lucie. It’d been a long time since I’d written for her but she just leapt back to life as I wrote. A truly joyous experience.”

The Dalek Trap gives Sheridan a chance to shine from the off.

Nick explains: “It’s Lucie having to cope without the Doctor. It’s traumatic for her



Above (l-r): Eddie Robson, Paul McGann, Nicholas Briggs, Rupert Vansittart, Sheridan Smith, Scott Handcock, Emily Woodward, Alicia Ambrose Bayly, Joe Jameson and Carla Mendonça

“YES, LUCIE IS TAKING PART IN A COMPETITIVE SPORT. AND IT’S QUITE EASY TO IMAGINE HER ON SKATES.”

ALICE CAVENDER

because he hasn’t disappeared – just his personality has. He’s like a sort of clockwork shell of himself. There, but not there.

“So she’s thrown into trying to be the Doctor. But of course she isn’t the Doctor, so she bashes about in the situation like a bull in china shop, and eventually comes out on top... sort of. It’s a story in which the Daleks have a very strange, unexpected role alongside the humans who find themselves trapped in a threatening, deadly environment.”

THE BOX set’s second story is *The Revolution Game* by Alice Cavender, where something sinister is happening in a far-flung future Earth colony – and Lucie is forced to partake in a perilous rollerskating contest!

While it may be her first full-cast

story for the characters, Alice is no stranger to writing for the pair.

She explains: “I was working with Ian Atkins on the Lucie Miller **Short Trip** *The Curse of the Fugue* when he managed to tear Sheridan Smith away from her hectic schedule to record both of the Lucie stories. When she subsequently agreed to reprise her role for this full-cast box set I was fortunate to be asked to contribute.

“The brief from script editor Alan Barnes was that the stories could be fun and energetic. There are some dark times in Lucie’s journey with the Doctor and I dearly love those tales, however this one is set when the pair are still getting to know each other. I wanted to push Lucie out of her comfort zone physically and for some reason roller

derby skated into my head.”

Yes, Lucie is taking part in a competitive sport. And it’s quite easy to imagine her on skates, physically battling with other contenders. Alice says: “Some say sport is nothing without its supporters. When the Doctor and Lucie attend the greatest sporting event in the galaxy and release a mysterious captive held by its sponsors, that’s when the people of Castus Sigma really have to choose a side. To outrun disaster Lucie Miller will literally have to get her skates on...”

THE THIRD story in this series, like the first, is written by an old hand from the original run. *The House on the Edge of Chaos* by Eddie Robson finds the Doctor and Lucie trapped in a bizarre building, packed with eccentric, social class obsessed characters and an emerging alien foe like no other.

Eddie admits that he thought the days of writing for the Doctor and Lucie were gone: “The combination of the character being killed off and Sheridan being so busy these days made me think that ship had sailed.



Above (l-r): Paul McGann and Sheridan Smith

"I'm so glad she wanted to return to the character and I think it's testament to Big Finish that she did. Actors seem to know it's a fun job to do. And although I didn't create Lucie, having written a big chunk of her first season I do feel a bit proprietorial about her – all the writers on that season pitched in on the initial character outline Alan Barnes came up with – so I was really pleased to be asked to write one for her comeback."

Eddie was given a free hand to craft a story for Lucie's return. He explains: "There was no brief for this one – just an Eighth Doctor and Lucie story. I'd had a loose idea about a Jane Austen-inspired *Who* story for a while, though that changed quite a bit in the process. It was also inspired by Winchester House, the allegedly haunted house that was perpetually being extended.

"The Doctor and Lucie land in a vast house that forms the hub of a human colony – but it operates in a very hierarchical 19th-century sort of way. And everything outside the house is blind, unnavigable chaos..."

Eddie was delighted to capture the energy and feel of an era of *Doctor Who* that he first wrote for over a decade ago.

He admits: "I slipped straight back into it. It's mostly about the characters really – every *Doctor Who* story has its own energy and feel, regardless of era. Back when Lucie was being created I tried to drive her more towards being irreverent and sarky because that's the kind of character I like to write! So finding her voice again wasn't hard.

"Paul and Sheridan have a terrific rapport and I think that comes through in the stories they've done

together. And Sheridan has a great relatability, that's why she's doing lead roles on ITV, she feels like your friend and she brings that to Lucie."

LAST IN this set, but most definitely not least, is *Island of the Fendahl*, as the classic monster makes its first appearance in a *Doctor Who* audio since the original TV episode *Image of the Fendahl*. The story is written by Alan Barnes, who originally created Lucie. He says: "We always knew that Sheridan loved playing Lucie, so I guess I thought it wasn't impossible. I mean *Death in Blackpool* was 100% definitely, no-question-whatsoever going to be her last-ever story, and look how that turned out! Certainly, **The Further Adventures** has been on the cards for a while – the trouble was finding and fixing dates. We knew, though, that we weren't going to bring Lucie back from the dead – there was lots of narrative space before and during her second season particularly, for an added run. That said, it was still a massively unexpected thrill to actually type her first 'chuff' into her first scene!"

With the Fendahl having faced Torchwood earlier this year, what made Alan bring them back to face the Doctor and Lucie? He admits: "I never saw *Image of the Fendahl* when it was first on TV – it came slap-bang in the middle of the time my mother had banned me from watching *Doctor Who* because it was too frightening – so to me the Fendahl existed only in the Target Books novellisation.

"I think, actually, it was the idea of the glowing skull that fascinated me the most. I love all the lore around the Fendahl. Like all the best mythologies, it has rules and structure – stuff you can play with. It needs the skull, it needs a coven, it needs the Core, it manifests Fendahleen, it's affected evolution. If the Fendahl was a 'real' myth, academics would have written thousands of books and millions of words about it.



Above (l-r): Madeline Duggan, Jonathan Keeble, Alicia Ambrose Bayly, Tom Alexander and Alice Cavender

“THERE’S A WONDERFUL BIT IN THE SCRIPT WHEN **THE DALEKS** GET CAUGHT IN A MOMENT OF **ELONGATION**.”

IAIN MEADOWS

It’s all just incredibly rich.”

Alan admits there was a particular pleasure to be taken when writing this script. He says: “Er, well it should be pretty obvious that *Island of the Fendahl* is something of a, cough, ‘homage’ to a particular classic British cult movie of the early 1970s. Not completely – I couldn’t actually put the Doctor and Lucie inside a giant Wicker Man, because that’s what actually happened in *Dead London*, the first story in the second season of the original Lucie adventures. But *Fandor Island*, the island of the *Fendahl*, isn’t entirely unlike *Summerisle* in certain other respects...

“But for me, personally, it’s incredibly satisfying that the whole **Further Adventures** season has turned out to be

the last thing I’ll work on as a script editor, at least on a semi-permanent basis, because Lucie’s debut season was pretty much the first thing I worked on when I started script-editing for Big Finish over 13 years ago. I seem to have come full circle!”

WITH THE recordings completed by Moat Studios, the files were then handed over to sound designer Iain Meadows. When he read the scripts, was there anything that he immediately gulped at and wondered how he would realise them? He smiles: “The scripts really do push the boundaries with what sound can do, so there’s always a moment where you stop and wonder how you might achieve something. In *The House on the Edge of Chaos*, there’s something to do with static,

in fact, one specific aspect regarding this white noise (and here I could get into spoiler territory if I’m not careful) that had me wondering how I could get that working.

“And in *The Dalek Trap* there’s a wonderful bit in the script when the Daleks get caught in a moment of elongation. That needed a bit of care because you could just over do it, but I hope the balance is right. The scripts though are really first class and were a joy to work on.”

Iain says there were a few interesting sound origins for *Island of the Fendahl*. He explains: “The island described in the script reminded me a lot of a place I used to visit as a boy whilst growing up in Scotland and subsequently on family holidays to the borders and Northumberland – *Lindisfarne Island* – in the sense that it can feel very remote and blustery. It so happened that I’d only recently returned there as my wife, being American, was curious to see that part of the world.

“Because the terrain is so wonderful, I’d taken my recorder with me to get some audio that



“A CHANCE TO BREATHE AND CONCENTRATE ON LUCIE, THE DOCTOR AND ANYTHING THAT COMES THEIR WAY!”

JAMIE ROBERTSON

I figured might be useful down the line and so I'd got some fantastic blustery wind which I was then able to mix in with some other wind FX to get what just what I was looking for. There was also a moment that a Fendahleen needed to scream – looking around I managed to mix together a series of pig squeals that matched the old TV effect quite nicely.”

With Iain having completed the sound design, the music was then added by Jamie Robertson. He says: “Sheridan Smith has grown

as an artist in the last couple of years since Lucie left the Doctor and the Big Finish universe, so it's really a great honour to be doing the music on these stories.

“Paul's Doctor has really taken off at Big Finish and to have a companion come back is very exciting, isn't it? Lucie is fun and bubbly and I think that should always be reflected in her stories and music.

“I've created her own little motif too. And it's very clever because it intertwines with the Eighth Doctor's motif. It has a fun touch, a cinematic touch, a victorious touch for those moments, and also an emotional touch.”

Each of the stories has been given its own musical palate.

Jamie explains: “Nick gave me a brief in the style to aim for in each story. For instance, 'atonal and droney' for the first. The second is more 'futuristic' or that sort of sound, and then the third is a more classical Victorian tone but blending in the modern score of the Eighth Doctor and Lucie themes, of course.

“It's quite interesting because for the past two or so years we've had the **Doom Coalition** motif amongst the **Time War**

and **Ravenous** series. That's not present in these stories giving me a chance to breathe and concentrate on Lucie, the Doctor and anything that comes their way!”

Jamie had a personal highlight working on *The Revolution Game*. He grins: “Episode two with the rollerblading is really cool. I had to create some music for the arena and so did that first, then made the incidental music sort of come in and out alongside of it. It actually took me a while to get it right but I think we got there in the end and it makes the episode go at a really fast pace.”

COMPLETING THE package with the cover art is Will Brooks. He

says: “The brief was nice and clean – here's four brand new adventures for the Eighth Doctor and Lucie Miller set between their first and second series together. “Producer Scott Handcock sent me the scripts for the four stories and they are brilliant. It really was like being transported back to 2007. The stories are packed with so many great images that it was tricky to work out which ones I wanted to have on the cover. Daleks trapped beneath a black hole! A world made of static! Insects! Rollerblades! Fendahl! And, of course, right at the heart of it, you've got the Doctor and Lucie. In the TARDIS – right where they belong.”

Now that we've had Sheridan back as Lucie, does that mean we could expect to possibly hear more from her in the future – if her hectic schedule allows?

Nick nods: “Yes, definitely. If we can make it happen in terms of the scheduling. Sheridan and Paul loved it. Sheridan and I spent another day, mostly just the two of us together doing pick-up recordings, and we did a lot of gushing about how much we loved working together. And she told me that playing Lucie has been her most favourite job. She said she'd love to come back, and we and Paul would really like that too.” **VORTEX**



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MEN OF WAR

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN **THE WAR MASTER'S** LATEST SCHEME IS DISCOVERED BY THE DOCTOR?

THE WAR MASTER: RAGE OF THE TIME LORDS

- Released: July 2019
- Format: CD and download

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SPACE AND time are being ripped apart by the Time War. The Daleks and the Time Lords are devising deadlier weapons for the conflict. And running through space and time are two renegade Time Lords.

The Master is plotting his most audacious project yet. But where is the Doctor when the universe needs him?

Derek Jacobi plays the Master and Paul McGann is the Eighth Doctor in the third **The War Master** box set, *Rage of the Time Lords* – to the delight of series producer Scott Handcock.

Scott reveals: “Even during recording on our very first story we knew Derek was keen to return to the role of

the War Master, so Big Finish very swiftly commissioned three more box sets.

“The first volume told the end of the War Master’s story to some extent, so we had free rein to explore him earlier in the Time War and see what else he may have been up to.

“I instantly knew I wanted to tell a story with the Ood, and the possibility of an encounter with the Doctor was irresistible... so I had a quick chat with Russell T Davies to check we weren’t stepping on his toes as far as continuity was concerned and, with his blessing, we were able to concoct a finale featuring the Eighth Doctor and the War Master.”



Above (l-r): Dominic Thorburn, Lu Corfield, James MacCallum, Shvorne Marks, Liz Sutherland-Lim and Derek Jacobi

After one single epic story in the second **War Master** release, there's a change again for this third volume.

Scott says: "Unlike *The Master of Callous*, which was one grand scheme featuring the same cast, this volume reverts to the format of the first release, *Only the Good*: four separate episodes but all connecting to tell a much larger story.

"The first sees the Master masquerading as a priest in a small English village during wartime, then travelling to nineteenth-century America for the second. The third instalment takes us to a high-tech medical facility on a barren alien world, before the Master faces off against the Doctor in the final episode, both adapting to the ravages of the Time War in their own way.

"There's even room for the recently released Series Five of **The Diary of River Song** to slip in between episodes one and three, so the War Master's adventures continue to build and build, even away from his own series."

"IF THIS INCARNATION OF THE MASTER HAD APPEARED DURING PEACETIME HE'D HAVE TAKEN OVER THE UNIVERSE IN A MATTER OF DAYS..."

TIM FOLEY

THE WRITING duties on this series are split between Tim Foley and

David Llewellyn. Tim sums up the series, saying: "The Master has a plan, as he so often does, but normally we only get to see the end result. Here we follow our evil Time Lord travelling across space and time to collect certain things and prepare for certain events.

"I reckon that if this incarnation of the Master had appeared during peacetime he'd have taken over the universe in a matter of days... But there's a war on, and that's hampered his progress. So this box set definitely explores his responses to that."

Tim opens the box set with *The Survivor*. He reveals: "My first story is set in a community of land girls during World

War II which was lovely to research, and we had Derek reminiscing about his own wartime memories. I really enjoy writing about small rural communities – I spent a year as writer-in-residence on a farm a while back, and it allowed me to tap into that."

David has written the second adventure and explains: "*The Coney Island Chameleon* takes us to Coney Island in the late 19th century and the murky world of freak shows, a popular – but exploitative – form of entertainment at the time. It's a slice of **American Gothic**, complete with a cross-country chase and spooky swamps."

The third and fourth stories form a two-parter, with Tim writing the first called *The Missing Link*. He says: "It's set in the Master's base of operations,



Back row (l-r): Su Douglas, Laura Riseborough and Tim Foley • Front row (l-r): Derek Jacobi, Mina Anwar, Paul Clayton and Katherine Pearce

“THERE’S THE FRISSON OF A DOCTOR/MASTER COMBINATION MEETING FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME.”

DAVID LLEWELLYN

which was a fun notion. I initially conceived a more gothic set-up but Scott quite rightly pointed out that we’ve seen that sort of villain’s lair before. How about a functioning institute, complete with staff and resources? We’ve made our Master as difficult as possible to defeat – and that only seems fair since he is the lead in this series!

“I don’t tend to write for the Doctor and *The Missing Link* contains the first bits of Doctor dialogue I ever got to write, so I was over the moon. It’s such a clash of personalities! I’m clearly biased but I think this is why Paul and Derek make such a good pairing – they’re both suave in their own way but complete polar opposites. Their characters would slink seamlessly into a dance hall, but whilst Paul’s Doctor never wants to stop waltzing, Derek’s Master has already poisoned the orchestra!”

The final episode, *Darkness and Light* follows on directly from

The Missing Link. David adds: “I can’t say too much about this one as it brings together threads from the previous stories, but it’s the Doctor and the Master at the edges of reality itself!

“By the time we get to *Darkness and Light*, the Doctor’s really been put through the wringer so he isn’t quite as ebullient as we’d normally find him, but this story is very much about the Doctor and the Master’s relationship, about how – in a twisted kind of way – they complement and maybe even need one another.”

AS WELL as producing *The War Doctor* range, Scott is also the director of this set. He says: “It goes without saying that Paul and Derek are two incredible actors with brilliant voices so listening to them together is a dream. They both know their characters inside-out, and clearly relish playing them, so it really is like hearing two old

friends encountering one another after a long time away.

“They’ve not worked together before so there’s quite naturally the frisson of a Doctor/Master combination meeting for the very first time whilst knowing each other of old, and it’s something both Paul and Derek really enjoyed!”

There’s also been a bit of time travel behind the microphone... Scott explains: “Weirdly *Rage of the Time Lords* was recorded before we did *The Master of Callous*, but you’d never get that sense from listening to it. Derek’s incarnation established itself so swiftly over the course of *Only the Good* that he immediately becomes the Master the instant he gets behind a microphone!

“The Master is so disarmingly pleasant and reasonable, at least to begin with, which makes it all the more unsettling when he turns. He doesn’t care who sees behind the mask – the Master’s always in total control – and that’s what makes this set a real thrill. It’s the Doctor encountering the Master in



a Master adventure, rather than the other way around.”

Tim adds that writing for the War Master is: “Curiously liberating! When you have someone so horrible as your protagonist, why do we care? What’s to stop them massacring a planet just to pick a daisy? You can’t just imagine him as an ‘evil Doctor’ or it doesn’t work. You’ve really got to get into his cunning mindset, and see him through the eyes of his victims.”

THE POST-production duties on the series were made by Peter Doggart creating the sound design, with music handled by Ioan Morris.

Ioan says: “I think Scott Hancock and the writers smartly tread the line of making the Master a compelling figure but not one with whom you’re invited to empathise. Sir Derek is brilliant and frequently very funny as the Master, but the character does some horrible, manipulative things. But in terms of working on the series, it’s great fun. A total pleasure.

“The Master is the protagonist but he’s not the hero, and I wouldn’t want to portray him as such. A victory for him is not a happy ending, certainly not for the characters on the receiving end of his deception (and worse). So although it’s more instinctive than anything, I feel I’m scoring the episodes hoping that our heroes/his victims find



Above: Derek Jacobi

a way out of the spider’s web, but as we know in this series that’s not often the case.”

Peter adds: “Creating otherworldly creatures is always a challenge and requires quite a bit of time and forethought. I often find myself recording foley for creature design and putting together a palette of sounds that I think complement each other and will work well to give the creature voice, movement and character. Both episodes three and four have creature design and required a bit of thought.”

Does Pete approach these stories with an ‘evil’ sound in mind, given our leading man is a bad one? He says: “The great thing about working with Derek Jacobi is that he’s such an incredible voice actor and solely able to impose that

preying sense of evil through the deliverance of his lines. It makes my work very enjoyable and all I need to make sure I do as sound editor is support, accent and complement his tone and narrative. That means picking up on specific lines and boosting them in level above the mix, adding dark transitional sound design effects on the tails of certain lines and generally highlighting important plot moments. So in that respect I don’t approach the stories in a different mindset or with a different palette of sounds.

“I think perhaps a lot of the mood and ‘evil sound’ of the Master is generated through the wonderful music created by Ioan Morris. With the score I think you’re able to more suitably suggest undertones of scheming, puppeteering and pure evil, so when I’m reading through a scene I’m always looking for where music will support the narrative better than sound design, and making sure I leave the space for it.”

THE COVER art has been created by Lee Binding.

He tells us: “Scott’s a joy to work with because he’s very visual in his story-telling and pretty much knows what he wants on the cover each time. And that’s usually a lot of colour!”

“Scott loves bright, bold colours, and it took me a while to catch on to that because I’m often using more muted or uniform colour schemes for the covers I do. I have to say, his instincts are utterly right and I now love working with these bold swatches! So I am really fond of this third **War Master** because it is the brightest and boldest yet.

“A few people have asked me, ‘Is that the laser screwdriver on the cover’. I’m gonna say yes, but a more rough prototype version. The Master – and Missy! – are such tinkerers. Only they can think of turning an umbrella into a sonic!” **VORTEX**



HIT FOR SIX

DOCTOR WHO: MEMORIES OF A TYRANT

- Released: July 2019
- Format: CD and download

 **ORDER NOW AT:**
BGFN.SH/MEMORIES

IT'S BEEN a while but one of the most popular **Doctor Who**

partnerships is back. Over the next three months, the Sixth Doctor and Peri are reunited in **The Monthly Adventures**.

Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant last recorded together in 2014 in three adventures set after their TV travels ended. Producer John Ainsworth reveals: "This new trilogy of stories featuring the Sixth Doctor and Peri is set firmly within established TV continuity. In other words, the stories are set

between *Revelation of the Daleks* and *The Trial of a Time Lord*. The Sixth Doctor has now had many different 'eras' and quite a few different companions, and it's been a while since we heard some adventures with him and Peri.

"Although it's great that we can explore different relationships for the Sixth Doctor, I think it's good to return to the format of the TV series. Peri remains a very popular companion, and I'm delighted that we are able to present some new adventures for her and the Sixth Doctor."

And that's not the only similarity with this new run of stories. John adds: "The three stories are all self-contained and have no link with each other, apart from the Doctor and Peri. Story arcs across multiple adventures are popular, and there are several such epic adventures currently on offer from Big Finish such as **The War Master** and **The Time War** box sets. But I think

it's good to have a balance and also offer individual stories that are completely wrapped up in the one release. That's what we're doing in these three adventures."

Out for release in July, *Memories of a Tyrant* by Roland Moore is a tale of morality, mystery and memory.

John explains: "*Memories of a Tyrant* is set in the far future and focuses on one man, Garius Moro, who may or may not be a war criminal. He can't remember, but there are a lot of people who want to find out the truth, one way or the other. Written by Roland Moore, the story touches on issues of why we feel the need to punish or venerate individuals for their past actions, even though they may now be very different people."

Roland tells us more: "I've written a number of plays for Big Finish and I asked if I could pitch a Sixth Doctor idea. John Ainsworth listened



tries to uncover whether this old man has indeed committed war crimes. But soon the Doctor is in deep, deep trouble!”

Roland also enjoyed writing for the Doctor and Peri. He adds: “It was a joy to write for the Sixth Doctor and Peri. Colin and Nicola’s chemistry is fabulous and how they bring these characters so vividly to life is astonishing.

“FOR A LONG TIME IT WAS ACTUALLY CALLED **THE DALEK PLENIPOTENTIARY**.”

ANDREW SMITH

to some of my previous stories and kindly allowed me to give him some ideas.

“John was interested in adventures where the story would have an impact on characters’ lives – showing how they respond to situations and showing how they are changed by what happens. He also wanted – for this run – stories where perhaps the location changes or a new character is introduced halfway through.

“Having specific aspects to a brief is so useful as you can let your imagination dream up story ideas and then interrogate them as to how they could fit those aspects.”

How would Roland sum up the events of his adventure? He says: “The Doctor and Peri are invited to the Memory Farm – a state of the art space station where memories can be harvested, reviewed and analysed. There they find an old man who is being assessed in a bid to find out who he really is because there is a possibility that he may be a dictator who killed billions of



Above: Nicola Bryant

people in a single afternoon.

“And because of the importance of discovering who this man is, various factions and alien races – each with their own agenda – have assembled on the space station to view the proceedings. Then there is a murder...”

“So it’s partly a whodunit in a closed environment as the Doctor races against time to find out who the murderer is, and partly an examination of memory and mis-memory as the Doctor

“And it’s such a great motivator when you’re writing to know that one day, if it all goes well, you will be sitting in a green room with those actors and they’ll be slipping back into those roles as if a day hasn’t passed.”

THE FRIENDS face their old foe in August’s release, *Emissary of the Daleks*. John explains: “*Emissary of the Daleks* by Andrew Smith is a deliberate attempt to capture the same feel of last year’s popular release, *Hour of the Cybermen*, also by Andrew. It’s set in the far future on an alien world, and sees the Doctor and Peri fighting to liberate a people oppressed by one of their own kind who has apparently allowed herself to become a puppet of the Daleks. But were her choices as simple as they might seem?”

Andrew tells Vortex: “For a long time it was actually called *The Dalek Plenipotentiary*. I had read about a really interesting tactic which the Persians used to use. They would attack a city state, win the battle, and then put one of their people in place to run it.

“Generally, they were quite benign rulers after winning these brutal fights, and there were no reprisals against the people they had conquered afterwards. However, if there was an attempt to overthrow the Persian rule, they would be brutal in repressing it.

“On one occasion when there was a plenipotentiary in place, there was an uprising against him. It was subdued, the leader of the uprising was killed, and his skin was made into a chair!

“In *Emissary of the Daleks* we meet the plenipotentiary the Daleks have put in charge of a world, and if there is any resistance to the Daleks, they



“STEVE AND I WERE KEEN TO SHOW MORE OF **HOUDINI'S** ADVENTURES WITH THE DOCTOR, AND THIS IS THE RESULT.”

JOHN AINSWORTH

will come in fast and hard, and put it down ruthlessly.

Andrew did some research to help with the plotting of the story. He explains: “When the Doctor and Peri arrive, the Doctor notices there are not as many Daleks there as he would have expected.

“I did a bit of scientific research with this script into primordial nuclides. They are pieces of matter that can be found on Earth, and have been around since the Big Bang. I’ve used that as an element in the story, which helps give the Doctor a



Above (l-r): Richard Keith, Nicholas Briggs, Natasha Karp, Nicola Bryant, William Ellis, Ray Cezan and Colin Baker

breakthrough to explain why there are fewer Daleks there.

“I love writing for the Sixth Doctor. It’s almost a cliché but the character is so well served by Big Finish and I really enjoy being in studio with Colin, to hear what he does with the script. He’s such a good actor and always well prepared.

“To write for Colin and Nicola again was great. *Emissary* is my fourth script for ‘Old Sixie’, but it’s been quite a while since I had the pair of them together in *The First Sontarans*.”

S EPTEMBER’S RELEASE is *Harry Houdini’s War* written by Steve Lyons.

Not only is the title a nod to 1980s novel *Harry Sullivan’s War*, it’s also a sequel to a previous Big Finish release. John explains: “*Harry Houdini’s War* takes the Doctor and Peri back in time to World War I. There the Doctor is reunited with his old friend, famed escapist Harry Houdini, but Harry’s not sure whose side the Doctor is on.

“Steve Lyons previously wrote *Smoke and Mirrors* for the **Destiny**

of the Doctor series released in 2013. In that adventure, Harry Houdini met the Fifth Doctor, but it was clear that he had met other incarnations of the Doctor in his past. Steve and I were keen to show more of Houdini's adventures with the Doctor, and this is the result."

Steve says: "I talked through a few ideas with John, and this is the one we ended up going with. I wouldn't call it a sequel, though that was originally the idea. I first developed this story as an Eleventh Doctor talking book for AudioGo but they were working on other World War I-era stories at the time, and then they went bust so it just never happened.

"Coming back to *Harry Houdini's War* six years later, reworking it for a different Doctor in a different format in a different range, I thought it best to make it as standalone as possible. That was easy to do, as it's set earlier in Harry's life than *Smoke and Mirrors* was. The Doctor knows what happened/will happen in the earlier story, but of course he keeps this to himself."

Steve was delighted to have the chance to write for Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant. He smiles: "I've always loved writing for the Sixth Doctor in various media, but this is my first full-length story with Colin playing the part, so a real treat for me. One day, I'd like to really explore the relationship between the Doctor and Peri during Season 22 – but this isn't that day.

"They don't actually spend a lot of time together in this story. Instead, they take it in turns to partner Harry Houdini, and those are the scenes I really had fun writing. Harry has a touch of the Sixth Doctor's pomposity – at least, he does the way I've characterised him – and they spark off each other really well. And Peri can undermine Harry with a sarcastic quip, just as effectively as she does the Doctor!" **VORTEX**

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- **DW • The Paternoster Gang:** Heritage 1 (Box Set)
- **DW • Short Trips:** The Same Face (9.06) **DLO**
- **Torchwood:** Sargasso (28)
- **Torchwood:** God Among Us 3 (Box Set)
- **Survivors:** Series 9 (Box Set)

JULY 2019

- **DW • The Monthly Adventures:** Memories of a Tyrant (253, Sixth Doctor and Peri)
- **DW • The Legacy of Time** (Box Set)
- **DW • The War Master:** Rage of the Time Lords (Box Set)
- **DW • Eighth Doctor Adventures:** The Futher Adventures of Lucie Miller (Box Set)
- **DW • Short Trips:** Battle Scars (9.07) **DLO**
- **Torchwood:** Serenity (29)
- **The Omega Factor:** Festival of Darkness (Audiobook) **DLO**

AUGUST 2019

- **DW • The Monthly Adventures:** Emissary of the Daleks (254, Sixth Doctor and Peri)
- **DW • The Eighth Doctor:** The Time War 3 (Box Set)
- **DW • The Diary of River Song:** Series 6 (Box Set)
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SEPTEMBER 2019

- **DW • The Monthly Adventures:** Harry Houdini's War (255, Sixth Doctor and Peri)
- **DW • The Monthly Adventures:** Tartarus (256, Fifth Doctor, Nyssa and Tegan)
- **DW • Rose Tyler:** The Dimension Cannon (Box Set)
- **DW • The Companion Chronicles:** The First Doctor: Volume 3 (Box Set)
- **DW • Short Trips:** TBA (9.09) **DLO**
- **Torchwood:** The Vigil (31)

OCTOBER 2019

- **DW • The Monthly Adventures:** TBA (257, TBA)
- **DW • The Eighth Doctor Adventures:** Ravenous 4 (Box Set)
- **DW • The Paternoster Gang:** Heritage 2 (Box Set)
- **DW • Short Trips:** TBA (9.10) **DLO**
- **Torchwood:** Smashed (32)
- **Bernice Summerfield:** The Squire's Crystal (Audiobook) **DLO**
- **Dark Shadows:** The Tony & Cassandra Mysteries (Volume 3)

NOVEMBER 2019

- **DW • The Monthly Adventures:** TBA (258, TBA)
- **DW • The Lost Stories:** The Nightmare Country (Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Turlough)
- **DW • The Early Adventures:** The Home Guard (6.1, Second Doctor)
- **DW • The Early Adventures:** Daughter of the Gods (6.2, Second Doctor)
- **DW • Short Trips:** TBA (9.11) **DLO**
- **Torchwood:** TBA (33)
- **Blake's 7:** Restoration Part 3 (Box Set)
- **The Prisoner:** Volume 3 (Box Set)

DLO = DOWNLOAD ONLY
DW = DOCTOR WHO

VORTEXMAIL



MY KINGDOM FOR MORE SHAKESPEARE

Will we be getting any more Shakespeare adaptations? The *Hamlet* and *King Lear* recordings were brilliant! And is it possible for Braxiatel and Narvin to get their own box sets?

Jessica Botes

Nick: No more plans for more Shakespeare as they haven't really sold that well, Jessica, we're delighted you liked them. Nothing disastrous but we'd have to do a lot more outreach to other markets to get those sales up a bit. And no plans for stand alone Braxiatel and Narvin yet, although they're both great characters who will hopefully continue to appear in our stories for a long time to come.

THIRD DOCTOR MASTER PLAN?

With amazing talents like Frazer, Tim and Jon Culshaw doing roles such as different Doctors, Kamelion and the

Brig, is there a possibility of ever seeing Roger Delgado's Master with a new voice actor? Or is there something that prevents this Master's use at Big Finish?

Justin Bush

Nick: There's nothing to stop us, Justin. Perhaps we should hold open auditions for this Master... I'm only joking. Or am I? You - will - obey - me!

CONSTANCE CRAVING

Will we be seeing more of Constance and the Sixth Doctor? And is there any specific reason the Fourth Doctor box sets are going to four-part stories (not that I'm complaining - it's something I've wanted to hear from the start).

Simon J Garner
Nick: Yes Simon, there will be more from Constance after some Peri adventures. The reason for

the change in story format was largely down to people like yourself asking for it, and David Richardson, the producer, preferring the authenticity of that format. But we'll be returning to two-parters soon as well - we like to offer a variety of formats.

WHAT A CAMPION!

Can we get Peter Davison to do some **Campion** audios?

@19gary74

Nick: We have tried, but sadly we cannot secure the rights.

A SEED OF AN IDEA

Would you ever consider using the Krynoid as the main baddie for a **UNIT** box set?

@ClassicWhoLover

*Nick: I don't see why not! I'm very fond of the Krynoids as a **Doctor Who** monster.*

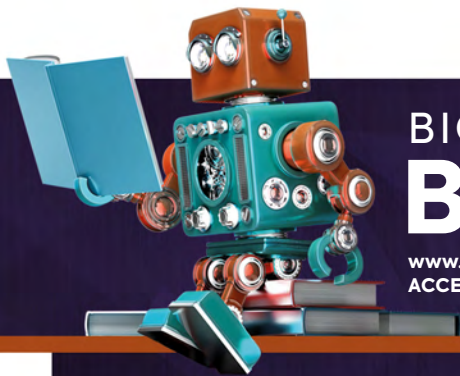
TIME FOR DAVROS?

I've been loving **The War Master** series so far, and I've been wondering if we'll ever see Davros in any Time War stories?

Harry Watson

*Nick: We've got some ideas fermenting on that topic. Harry. Stay tuned, as someone used to say. **VORTEX***





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SURVIVORS: SERIES 1



FOR SOMETHING to have an end it must have a beginning, so this month we turn back the clock to June 2014 and the first audio box set of **Survivors**. The world has been devastated after the accidental release of a disease which has wiped out most of the Earth's population. We follow what happens next, initially running in tandem with the events shown in Terry Nation's BBC series which ran from 1975–77.

Producer David Richardson says: "I love **Survivors** and I always have, right back to when I saw episode one on its first TV transmission in 1975. I've ever since thought it would be great to do the show on audio."

Script editor, Matt Fitton, who wrote the first episode *Revelation*, adds: "It was always the intent to begin

at the beginning. When David came to me with the commission he said that this was the way we were going to do it: tell the story of the outbreak with our own original characters, and then integrate Greg and Jenny from the TV series into the storyline.

"It's a very sensible course of action: this way, people who don't know the TV series, or who remember it only vaguely, can pick up this box set of stories and start the journey afresh. Equally, those more familiar with the TV series can enjoy spotting how the audio series interweaves with the events we see in the first few TV episodes. It also means that in using our own characters there is still a real sense of jeopardy: we truly don't know which of them will make it."

Jonathan Morris wrote the second story, *Exodus*,

introducing Jackie Martin played by Louise Jameson. Jonny says: "My big idea for this episode was to cover the stuff that apocalyptic dramas often skip – they have the hero wake up *28 Days Later* – the gradual, day-by-day descent with disease coming from decomposing corpses and dogs becoming wild and so on."

Writer, Andrew Smith looked at the issue of law and order in the third episode, *Judges*. He explains: "**Survivors** does get categorised as science fiction but it's all about how people would react in a realistic way, when there's less than one percent of the population left.

"It's harsher and basically it's more mature as well, to the point where there's a caveat on the packaging saying that it contains adult material and may not be suitable for younger listeners. There are characters with traumatic backgrounds and experiences across the four discs." The set concludes with *Esther* by John Dorney, who says: "I found it an interesting one to do – I would say that the plot of this story is actually the characters. I wanted to go back to my favourite episode of the TV series, *Law and Order*, which I think is one of the finest episodes of any television series ever, where everything is leading to a horrible and inevitable ending." **VORTEX**

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