

ISSUE: 141 • NOVEMBER 2020

WWW.BIGFINISH.COM

BIG FINISH WE LOVE STORIES

VORTEX



GENETICS OF THE DALEKS

THE **FOURTH DOCTOR**
ESCAPE ROOM PREQUEL



PLUS WE RETURN TO KALDOR WITH
THE ROBOTS: VOLUME THREE

**BIG
FINISH**

BIG FINISH



WE MAKE GREAT
**FULL-CAST AUDIO
DRAMAS AND
AUDIOBOOKS** THAT
ARE AVAILABLE TO
BUY ON CD AND/OR
DOWNLOAD

WWW.BIGFINISH.COM

[@BIGFINISH](https://twitter.com/BIGFINISH)

[THEBIGFINISH](https://www.facebook.com/thebigfinish)

[BIGFINISHPROD](https://www.instagram.com/bigfinishprod)

[BIG-FINISH](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBGFN)

[BIGFINISHPROD](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBGFN)

SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you subscribe to our **Doctor Who The Monthly Adventures** range, you get free audiobooks, PDFs of scripts, extra behind-the-scenes material, a bonus release, downloadable audio readings of new short stories and discounts.

Secure online ordering and details of all our products can be found at: bgfn.sh/aboutBF

WE LOVE STORIES!

ABOUT BIG FINISH

Our audio productions are based on much-loved TV series like **Doctor Who**, **Torchwood**, **Dark Shadows**, **Blake's 7**, **The Avengers**, **The Prisoner**, **The Omega Factor**, **Terrahawks**, **Captain Scarlet**, **Space: 1999** and **Survivors**, as well as classics such as **HG Wells**, **Shakespeare**, **Sherlock Holmes**, **The Phantom of the Opera** and **Dorian Gray**.

We also produce original creations such as **Graceless**, **Charlotte Pollard** and **The Adventures of Bernice Summerfield**, plus the **Big Finish Originals** range featuring seven great new series: **ATA Girl**, **Cicero**, **Jeremiah Bourne in Time**, **Shilling & Sixpence**, **Investigate**, **Blind Terror**, **Transference** and **The Human Frontier**.



BIG FINISH APP

The majority of Big Finish releases can be accessed on-the-go via the Big Finish App, available for both Apple and Android devices.





DOCTOR WHO

DALEK UNIVERSE

DAVID TENNANT RETURNS TO THE ROLE OF THE TENTH DOCTOR FOR A NEW SERIES IN 2021.

AT THE time of its release it will have been 13 years since the Tenth Doctor's last full run of stories on television. **Dalek Universe** comprises nine hour-long episodes which will see the Doctor pulled out of time and sent back to the era before the last great Time War. Here he finds himself battling for survival in a universe full of Daleks, Mechnoids, Movellans... and Davros!

Actor David explains: "Each story has its own self-contained world but the whole thing has an over-arching momentum. I've really enjoyed how varied it is all within this one story arc, and the variety of worlds that we go to and environments that we're in."

The Doctor will be joined by two serving agents from

the Space Security Service: Anya Kingdom (played by Jane Slavin), who previously betrayed the Doctor in his fourth incarnation, and Mark Seven (Joe Sims), an artificial man with a mysterious history.

The series will be preceded by a special prologue: *The Dalek Protocol*, a four-part **Doctor Who** adventure set on the planet Exxilon, starring Tom Baker as the Fourth Doctor and featuring Leela (played by Louise Jameson) and K-9 (John Leeson).

Each of the three volumes in **Dalek Universe** will be released as a four-disc collector's edition box set or download containing three brand-new full-cast audio adventures, plus a selection of behind-the-scenes extras. It will also be available as a limited edition vinyl. **VORTEX**



EDITORIAL

IT'S RATHER hard to believe that November is upon us already. The nights are drawing in here in chilly Scotland, and that means it's time to wrap up warm and find ways of keeping the long evenings busy.

Over the summer I did lots of walking with Big Finish stories in my ears (if you're interested in what I was listening to, my Twitter feed has had daily updates!), and it's been the perfect way to keep me happy. And now I'll be able to use my evenings to keep the good audio times rolling!

This month is rather exciting. We preview some releases that are bound to whet the appetite such as *Genetics of the Daleks*, a drama that ties into the live game, *A Dalek Awakens*, which I hope to visit before Christmas. It's a fantastic concept – a Big Finish audio that acts as a prequel to an escape room.

We've got **The Robots** back for a third box set in which we start to learn more about the events on Kaldor that led to Liz Chenka leaving the planet in a hurry.

And, of course, there's more **Doctor Who The Monthly Adventures** with the Sixth and Seventh Doctors. Personally I'm excited to hear the Seventh Doctor and the Brigadier meet once again – after all, writer Lizbeth Myles has set it here in chilly old Scotland! Now there's something to warm me up! **VORTEX**

Kenny



The Tenth Doctor and River Song return this month in a box set of three exciting new tales across space and time. *Vortex* spoke exclusively to former **Doctor Who** executive producer Steven Moffat to mark the occasion...

IN 2013'S *The Night of the Doctor*, Big Finish was delighted when the Eighth Doctor very wonderfully mentioned some of his audio companions before he regenerated.

The man behind the mini-episode was Steven Moffat, who before becoming the **Doctor Who** showrunner on the TV series, had attended the debut Big Finish writers' meeting when the company first got the licence to produce original **Doctor Who** audio adventures. But Steven left halfway through the meeting when he learned Eighth Doctor Paul McGann wouldn't be appearing in any stories at the outset.

After naming Charley, C'rizz, Lucie, Tamsin and Molly in the adventure aired on iPlayer and YouTube, Steven tells us: "I suppose you could call that a bit of an apology! I remember at that very first Big Finish writers' meeting that I thought



resurrecting old Doctors on audio wouldn't work... it needed to be new stories. I had spent the whole weekend writing *The Curse of Fatal Death* – the Comic Relief story – and I was up to my eyes (or so I thought at the time, I obviously had no idea what was coming in the future!) writing for **Doctor Who**, so I ducked out of the meeting early.

"But Big Finish made a huge success of it and I was completely wrong! I've apologised many times since then and, of course, the company is named after an episode of *Press Gang* so I've done my service!

"But what is canon really? It does sometimes mean that the Doctor has been through certain adventures twice!"

This November sees the long-awaited reunion of the Tenth Doctor and River Song as it was obvious that they must have had many adventures together off-screen.

Steven says: "*The Time of Angels* was a slightly odd one to do because as far as the general viewing public was concerned, this would be the second time the Doctor had met River, but at the same time I made absolutely certain that I never referred to this as being a second reunion as actually it couldn't have been.

"Logically if River recognised the Tenth Doctor then she must have met him before, and sufficiently

often that this didn't have to be the second time, so there must have been a number of encounters. When I did the novelisation of *The Day of the Doctor*, I wrote some more for River and David Tennant's Doctor, so we've got some of it detailed there.

"It was always a slight problem to me that River refers in *Silence of the Library* to, quite presciently on my part, the crash of the Byzantium which is the adventure in *The Time of Angels*, which at the time seemed odd. Why has she got the Doctor mixed up? It's the wrong Doctor! But over the years we've learned that she's barely aware of which face he's wearing, so that's kind of alright.

"It's always nice if something you've created works. It's been



across the screen makes that part interesting. The Master is not the easiest character in the world to play; the Doctor's endlessly-defeated arch enemy, as reliably defeatable as the Daleks!

"I was always sure that people would love Michelle, and she was BAFTA-nominated for the role.

"On TV, **Doctor Who** was getting very Scottish for a while. Michelle and Peter are astonishingly good, established actors, with a heavy grounding in comedy, which always helps if you are doing something like **Doctor Who**. I was talking to Russell T Davies about that and just how much of **Doctor Who** is funny. That was part of its success. The

BIG FINISH MADE A HUGE SUCCESS OF IT AND I WAS COMPLETELY WRONG!

STEVEN MOFFAT

quite a while since River has been on screen and *The Husbands of River Song* was her big return after several years away. It's lovely that Alex Kingston has the great kindness never to age – she looks younger in *The Husbands of River Song* than she does in *Silence in the Library*!"

Over the past year Big Finish has produced four box sets of adventures with another of Steven's creations: Madame Vastra, Jenny and Strax, better known as The Paternoster Gang.

Steven reveals that at one point, there was serious talk about giving them their own series on television.

He explains: "We always thought that we might try and spin them off into something on television but I kept not wanting to fray the output: it's quite good if **Doctor Who** is off the air sometimes! Also, at the time I had **Sherlock** and **Doctor Who** going on as well."




ANOTHER OF Steven's creations, Missy, has also been rampaging through our ears, as Michelle Gomez gives the Master's first female incarnation a life beyond the television screen.

Steven says: "I was pretty confident that Michelle, in a role like that, would own it. She's a real star. She was, when we cast her, a fairly under-employed actor and she's doing loads of stuff now. At the time it felt like she had slightly drifted away but she's a vital comic presence and I thought seeing her dancing

modern show is very funny – at a time when comedy isn't laugh out loud – and **Doctor Who** comes along and is light-hearted with a lot of zingers and there's a whole load of explosions!"

One of the Doctors cast during Steven's time as showrunner has already joined the Big Finish family – Sir John Hurt. What would Steven say to Matt Smith and Peter Capaldi?

Steven laughs: "I've always said Matt and Peter are welcome to join the Big Finish family, if I have any say in it! Who knows? Perhaps they might." **VORTEX**



For **Doctor Who** fans there's a fantastic new escape room, *A Dalek Awakens*, but there's more to it than that as Big Finish has created some of its backstory

ESCAPE TO DANGER

I **GENETICS OF the Daleks** is a **Doctor Who** story that's rather different to the norm. Not only is it part of the larger **Time Lord Victorious** arc, but it's also tied in to the escape room adventure, *A Dalek Awakens*, available in selected locations across the UK.

Game designer Dr Bob Rimington tells *Vortex* more: "We started work on *A Dalek Awakens* quite a while ago – the turnaround to create an escape room takes rather a long time.

"I was originally a lowly games master and there was a competition throughout the company looking

for new talent across all the branches. So I submitted an entry and won, getting a secondment to work in London that eventually became a permanent position.

"I took over from the designer Dean Rodgers who was working on *A Dalek Awakens* at the time as I was a more in-house member of the team, and brought it to fruition. It launched and we were all very excited – and then COVID-19 hit. The Government lockdown started two or three weeks after we launched *A Dalek Awakens*.

"We immediately started development on ways we could keep people entertained at home

with print and play games, digital games – experimenting with what we could do. Print and play games seemed to be a success with families so we proposed making one as a tie-in with *A Dalek Awakens* to the BBC.

"They said it was a great idea, suggesting we also tie it in with **Time Lord Victorious**, and they put us in touch with the good people at Big Finish.

"Between us, Big Finish and the BBC, we worked out the detail of all these projects, their timelines and how they were linked together. Thus **Doctor Who**: Print and Play – *The Hollow Planet* was born."

Genetics of the Daleks, the tie-in



room is set on the terraforming spaceship *Starship Future* on its way to a colony world. There are ten thousand colonists in cryogenic storage ready to wake up when they arrive. This story is set on that spaceship as a prelude to the escape room adventure. The crew of the spaceship have discovered a dead Dalek frozen in a lump of Oort cloud ice in deep space... but, of course, it doesn't turn out to be dead at all. The Kaled mutant within survived and has plans to build itself a new casing. And then

ESSENTIALLY THE STORY BRIDGES A GAP BETWEEN MUTUALLY ASSURED DESTRUCTION AND THE DOCTOR WHO ESCAPE ROOM GAME, A DALEK AWAKENS. JONATHAN MORRIS

audio adventure, has been produced by Emma Haigh. She explains: "It happened very quickly. We had conversations with the Escape Hunt team and James Goss, producer of **Time Lord Victorious**. We wanted to get something recorded to come out around the time of the new escape room but because of the lockdown that got kiboshed and we ended up with a bit more time. It's now slightly more evolved and will be released to complement the escape room.

"We did talk about which Doctor to base the story around, and the escape room team were keen to introduce a classic Doctor to the new generation of **Doctor Who** fans."

As a result, Jonathan Morris was commissioned to write a script for the Fourth Doctor, and the wittily-titled *Genetics of the Daleks* was born.

Jonny explains that he had quite a detailed brief for the adventure: "Essentially the story bridges a gap between *Mutually Assured Destruction* and the **Doctor Who** escape room game, *A Dalek*



Tom Baker

Awakens. I got sent all the **Time Lord Victorious** stuff, along with the escape room design schematics, and was tasked to come up with something that fitted. The escape

the Doctor arrives; the same Time Lord who consigned the Dalek to die. So here's a chance for it to not only take revenge, but to change the events that led to its defeat...

"Once I had a storyline it went back to James Goss and the escape room people making *A Dalek Awakens*, not just to make sure it fitted, but also so that more links could be added. There are little Easter Eggs in it that will add to the experience whether you listen to the audio first and then do the escape room, or listen to the audio after doing the escape room.

"That said the most important thing, which I can't stress too strongly, is that it also had to work as a standalone adventure in its own right. A story that would be comprehensible and satisfying for people who haven't listened to the preceding story in **Time Lord Victorious** or who haven't visited the escape room. If you just want an exciting story with the Fourth Doctor facing the Daleks... then this is the story for you! It draws together elements from all eras of **Doctor Who**, from the stories of the 60s, 70s and 80s all the way up

to *Resolution* and the forthcoming *Revolution of the Daleks*. It's like a mini action-movie!"

Games designer Dr Bob Rimington continues: "Big Finish were fantastic to work with. Normally we create theme books after a game launches to communicate the game story and structure, but because we'd just launched and had to put all photography and such like on hold, all I could give them were various breakdowns and graphics."

"Writer Jonny just took those details and ran with it. There are all these side characters who are hinted at in *A Dalek Awakens* – the backstory of the ship and how

Tom Baker



IT'S INCREDIBLE TO IMAGINE TOM BAKER'S DOCTOR BEING ON THIS SPACESHIP THAT WE DESIGNED FOR THE ESCAPE ROOM.

DR BOB RIMINGTON

the Dalek came to be there – and they're all fleshed out in *Genetics of the Daleks*. It builds up the canonical history, which is also added to in *The Hollow Planet*, to the extent that you start to feel a bit sorry for the Dalek as it's had such an unfortunate time with various Doctors at various times in its life!"

The tale also brings the Fourth Doctor into **Time Lord Victorious**.

Jonny adds: "Being given the brief that it should be a story for the Fourth Doctor informed the type of adventure it would be. The setting suggested a hard-science fiction tale in an isolated location with the Dalek using psychological tactics rather than firepower. A sort of *Horror of Fang Rock* but in space, with a Dalek!"

"So I wrote the Doctor in that sort of dark, sardonic mode where he is making jokes in the face of mortal danger. And where he has a strong, dramatic confrontation with the Dalek as it tries to psych him out using





Nicholas Briggs shouts at Rod.

has been a challenge. The **Doctor Who** recordings, so far, have gone really well. The first production I recorded remotely was the second series of *Callan* at the end of April and early May. We had a slightly different set up to how we are recording now and Ben Miles had a power cut and we lost him for a day! It has been a learning curve but it's also been incredibly

STORIES ARE SO IMPORTANT, PARTICULARLY AT THIS TIME. WE ALL NEED ESCAPISM AND WHAT BETTER MEDIUM THAN THE AUDIO WORLD? EMMA HAIGH

its knowledge of events from his future and what he will become. In a way it's a reversal of *Genesis of the Daleks*... a Dalek presenting the Doctor with the fact that one day he will become as bad as the Daleks, and offering him the opportunity to avert that fate."

BOB WAS particularly excited by the notion of having the Doctor onboard. She adds: "It's incredible to imagine Tom Baker's Doctor being on this spaceship that we designed for the escape room.

"Without giving away too many spoilers, imagine at some point we're in distant space and there is an Ark-class spaceship called *Starship Future* carrying thousands of humans to their new home. It's going to take a while to get there so there aren't many people awake, but in that system there's a helpful AI called Helix and the ship finds a Dalek frozen in space. Scientists, being what they are, have to have a closer look at it... and that's our set-up!

"I can say that the Dalek is on the ship by the time we play *A Dalek Awakens*. It's weakened

and trying to drain power from the ship to rebuild itself, but it's the player's job to stop it. It does scan the room and if you get caught by its eye scanner it will draw power more recklessly and you will see part of the ship starting to break off and explode, being lost into space! You've got to diligently get to your escape room tasks!

"I'm thrilled by it all and beyond excited to be part of **Time Lord Victorious** and **Doctor Who** in general."

Recording took place with the cast working from home. Emma says: "It's all been recorded remotely and Tom's wife, Sue, did a sterling job, acting as a sound engineer for him. I've really enjoyed it but it

satisfying and reassuring that we can keep producing adventures.

"Stories are so important, particularly at this time. We all need escapism and what better medium than the audio world? We're also spending many more hours looking at screens so from my perspective getting complete escapism in your head is just phenomenal.

"That's the really nice thing – this acts as a prequel to the escape room experience but even if people never visit the escape room itself, they can just enjoy the story as it is. It's a great Fourth Doctor romp and it stands up on its own. There are little tidbits in our episode, so if you do the escape room there are connections there that you can make. But remember, you don't have to have listened to our episode to complete the escape room – they just complement each other nicely." **VORTEX**



DOCTOR WHO: TIME LORD VICTORIOUS
GENETICS OF THE DALEKS

■ RELEASED: DECEMBER 2020
■ FORMAT: CD / DOWNLOAD

ORDER NOW AT bgfn.sh/starship





BYTESPIECES

IT'S TIME TO RETURN TO KALDOR TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT LIV AND TULA CHENKA'S LATEST EXPLOITS...

“EVERYONE SEEMS to be totally on board with what we’re doing, which is a deeply exciting thing,” says John Dorney, the script editor of **The Robots**. “The gentle arc in this new range has got a lot of interest from people – it’s not too pronounced but it’s on its way there.”

For the uninitiated, **The Robots** is set on Kaldor, the planet of the robots which originally featured in the **Doctor Who** television episode, *The Robots of Death*. And now we’re finding out just what happens when Liv Chenka (companion of the Eighth Doctor played by Nicola Walker) returns home for a year to join her sister Tula (Claire Rushbrook).

John briefly explains the details of events so far: “We’ve experienced a lot of growing tension between humans and robots with varying degrees of sentience in the robots. There’s the development of the Sons of Kaldor, as featured in Andrew Smith’s story of the same name in **The Fourth Doctor Adventures**.

And we’ve got the development of various mysteries that Liv and Tula are looking into as well.

“One of the best decisions we made was asking Nicola who we might get to play her sister. Without hesitation she suggested Claire and you buy into them as sisters right from the get-go. They have a glorious chemistry: we chose not to make them too at odds with each other, as that’s a trap you can fall into with female characters.”

The second series, **The Robots Volume Two**, brought back the characters of Toos and Poul who featured in *The Robots of Death*. Sadly David Collings, who played Poul, passed away after these recording sessions.



(l-r): David Collings and V12

we have is that the recording block contained all of David and Pamela's scenes for **The Robots Volumes Two, Three and Four**. How fortunate we are that we still have episodes with David to be released in the future."

OPENING THE Robots Volume Three is *The Mystery of Sector 13* written by Robert Whitelock, who also wrote the middle episode of the first box set. Robert says: "I think that because my first story *The Sentient* worked well, David and

AN ASTONISHING AND GREAT ACTOR, AND THE BEST DOCTOR WHO WE NEVER HAD. DAVID RICHARDSON



(l-r): Susan Penhaligon, Roger May, Carolyn Seymour, Glen McCreeady

Producer David Richardson says: "It was always my intention to bring David Collings and Pamela Salem into our ongoing story arc for **The Robots**. They'd both created such brilliant characters in Poul and Toos, and there were so many possibilities for how we could explore them within our series.

"As Pamela lives in the US it meant planning ahead and recording all of their material within one block during the middle of 2019. Little did we know this would very sadly be the last time we saw David – such a lovely man, an astonishing and great actor, and the best Doctor Who we *never* had. The only consolation

John trusted me with a much freer-floating brief. I was allowed to come up with a standalone story that could also feed into the ongoing narrative. I'd always wanted to write something about the scientific effects of what we call 'hauntings' and this seemed like the perfect time. I initially called it *The Haunting of Sector 13* but David thought it was too low tech for Kaldoran society so we renamed it *The Mystery of Sector 13* – and kept in all the elements of a haunting.

"I've loved being able to inhabit Kaldor. John approached me to write a third adventure for *Volume Four* recently, and I was absolutely over the moon. Writing for these characters living in this particular world has been such a joy. To me, Kaldor is like Earth plus. If you stripped away all our regulations that constrain companies from exploiting unethical tech or monopolising business and meddling in government, you'd have Kaldor. That kind of world is always going to be interesting to anyone who loves sci-fi."

How would Robert sum up the events of the story? "Liv is chasing up leads that she's gathered on the Sons of Kaldor. Most of them are dead ends, but when a major

health incident is triggered at a location in Sector 13, she goes to investigate. A massive abandoned warehouse complex is at the epicentre of the outbreak. She's warned by the onsite caretaker not to venture in as the place has a terrifying reputation. She ignores him but finds very quickly that its reputation is well earned. She pushes on, overcomes some adversity along the way and discovers a few things that were completely unexpected..."

Robert continues: "I've certainly learned some very technical things about writing audio drama as opposed to something for screen or stage, but I won't bore you with those. I'd say that if anything, the audio-writing process has confirmed to me that you can create very full and realised worlds using the power of words, music and soundscape. I've always been a big fan of audio drama – science fiction



(l-r): Louise Jameson,
Claire Rushbrook and Nicola Walker

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A BIG
FAN OF AUDIO DRAMA
– SCIENCE FICTION
PARTICULARLY.

ROBERT WHITELOCK

particularly – and writing it has only increased that for me."

He adds: "I like the bits that other people would probably think weren't anything special. Liv's experiences in the warehouse as she tentatively navigates the physical geography and her own disturbed feelings. Liv walking down a deserted street in Sector 13 with a robot explaining to her what the area has become after years of underinvestment and neglect. These things draw parallels with our lives here on this planet and what can happen if money and power is allowed to dominate society, and how that can affect how we as individuals view the poorer inhabitants of our cities and towns."





(l-r): V12 and
Pamela Salem

THERE'S NO BETTER WAY TO DISCUSS A HEAVY, WEIGHTY THING THAN HAVING GREAT ACTORS, KILLER ROBOTS AND FUN!

GUY ADAMS

TOOS AND Poul are back in the second adventure, *Circuit Breaker* by Guy Adams. Guy reveals: "I really wanted to write for these characters, and I was able to effectively pitch a storyline that would fit in with the overall arc but was very much about the two of them – without being too heavily linked to the rest.

"That meant I could write a story I wanted to tell with two of my absolutely favourite actors, although sadly one of them is no longer with us. David Collings has been a hero of mine for many, many years. Firstly as Silver in **Sapphire & Steel**, and he's also one of the greatest audiobook narrators of

our time. Listening to his readings of MR James's short stories is one of the best things to do with my ears! I've been force feeding it to anyone who loves amazing voices and literature for years.

"The idea of writing for Pamela Salem and David was a huge, huge thing for me. I was determined to come up with something that would put to good use the extra skills those two always brought to their parts – like a wonderful, sharp vinegar – an intelligence you can hear behind every word. I wanted to tell an unusual detective story within that framework."

Guy has also tapped into mental health, given some of the serious

issues which are touched on in the original TV story where Poul has a mental breakdown.

He explains: "I wanted to look at psychosis. David Collings was so good in *The Robots of Death* with his breakdown on screen, with his robophobia. It's a very serious issue, Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. I was recently diagnosed with PTSD and my partner has CPTSD. It's a heavyweight thing, and there's no better way to discuss a heavy, weighty thing than having great actors, killer robots and fun!

"In the **Adam Adamant** series, I've looked at states of mind over the past couple of years – examining depression – and made them into jolly romps. I don't know what cathartic effects this has had on my grey matter but hopefully it won't have driven listeners insane!

"The last two years have been a difficult time for me but you can tap into things that

have affected you and make something from it. That's what stories are for, to enrich our lives, to help save our lives."

A MATTER of Conscience by Lisa McMullan brings this set to a close. She tell us: "As I recall the fourth series was written before the third and I got a bit confused! I really enjoyed this one as it was a bit different. It was non-Doctory but still within the **Doctor Who** universe, which was a nice change.

WHEN YOU KNOW THE ACTORS ARE SO GOOD, IT MAKES WRITING FOR CHARACTERS LIKE THIS SO MUCH EASIER.

LISA McMULLAN

"When you know the actors are so good, it makes writing for characters like this so much easier. They are already established and you know what they sound like, and what their relationship is with each other. You don't need to make it up – which seems a little like cheating!

"When this series was first mentioned I was in a meeting about something else and I overheard John Dorney and David Richardson chatting about this. So I asked, 'Are you doing a series set in that missing year where Liv stays behind?', and they said 'Yes,' and I thought it was such a brilliant idea, to create this little series that has to be self-contained but so much happens in one year. It's quite traumatic!

"There's the ongoing plot with Liv and Tula trying to discover what is going on with the company and these robots who seem to be developing independent thought. My little sub-plot is about the Sons of Kaldor and a new recruit, and why someone might be drawn into a terrorist organisation. And what has happened in their life in order to make them want to rise up against the robots."



Pamela Salem

Lisa jokes: "I don't know who I'm on the side of. I keep veering between the robots, who I think are great and didn't ask to be created, and thinking, Oh no, now they're killing people!"

However, she notes seriously: "Most terrorists don't think of themselves as bad guys as they believe they are doing it for a good cause. And when you look back in history at some of the people who were labelled as terrorists, or heads of terrorist

organisations such as suffragettes and Nelson Mandela, you can't argue that their causes weren't right, good and just. So what's good terrorism and bad terrorism? It all depends whether you are the one facing it or not."

A surprise is also in store. Lisa teases: "There's an old character from the original TV story returning, who crops up in my episode but in a very strange way... It's somebody who has not appeared as yet in this range!" **VORTEX**



FROM THE WORLDS OF DOCTOR WHO
THE ROBOTS: VOLUME THREE

■ RELEASED: DECEMBER 2020
■ FORMAT: CD / DOWNLOAD

ORDER NOW AT bgfn.sh/chenka





GRACELESS IS ONE OF THE FIRST BIG FINISH RANGES TO STAR ORIGINAL BIG FINISH CHARACTERS.

IT FEATURES the sisters of Abby (originally called Amy) and Zara, who initially appeared in *The Monthly Adventures* trilogy, *The Key 2 Time*. Big Finish chairman Jason Haigh-Ellery recalls: "I remember being slightly surprised when we were asked what happens next for Amy and Zara – it was great to hear that we'd created characters who people liked and wanted to know more about."

Graceless was developed by Simon Guerrier who wrote *The Judgement of Isskar*, the first episode of *The Key 2 Time* trilogy. Along with producer Mark Wright and director Lisa Bowerman, the team has continued to shape the direction of **Graceless** since then with actors Ciara Janson and Laura Doddington playing the siblings with superpowers.

Simon reveals: "When I created Amy and Zara, I always hoped they would run and be characters. They had their three *The Key 2 Time* stories to begin with, and then we waited to see how they did. But I designed them with the idea that there was a lot more potential.

"I was at a convention with Jason and somebody asked us whether there would be more with the characters of Amy and Zara following *The Key 2 Time*, and that prompted Jason to ask if I could write something else. He was very conscious at the time of trying to broaden the Big Finish output a bit so it offered more than **Doctor Who**.

Jason basically said: 'Go away and think about it and pitch me an idea!'" **Graceless** series one, *Alone in Time and Space*, contains three stories.

Simon explains: "On audio it helps if you've got something the listener can latch on to and a 'soundscape' they can attach to the story, so they know where they are. But there was a conscious decision to make the stories all quite different to each other.

"The first one is based on the fact that Mark and I had been to Las Vegas together before a convention in Los Angeles, and I had made some notes while we were out there. The second story is a ghost story. It was something I had written before for the Sara Kingdom **Companion Chronicles**, but I wanted to do something different with it this time around. And I think the idea for the third story came from the *Missing Believed Wiped* event at the British Film Institute where lots of recovered bits of TV were shown. One of them was a ropery recording of **Top of the Pops** featuring Pink Floyd and Syd Barrett,





(l-r): Ciara Janson and Laura Doddington

and it got me thinking, since Keith Richards had been in **Pirates of the Caribbean**, what if a 60- or 70-year-old Syd Barrett was a pirate, what would he look like? And that fed into the character of Kreekpolt!" **VORTEX**

GRACELESS: SERIES ONE

■ RELEASED: NOVEMBER 2010
 ■ FORMAT: CD / DOWNLOAD

ORDER NOW AT bgfn.sh/grace 



THE SIXTH AND SEVENTH DOCTORS RETURN TO **DOCTOR WHO** THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES AT THE END OF 2020 WITH A PAIR OF INTRIGUING RELEASES.

THE MULTI-COLOURED

PIMPERNEL

AND THE GREY MAN

PLIGHT of the *Pimpernel* by Chris Chapman has been inspired by an idea from Colin Baker, whilst Sylvester McCoy's incarnation encounters Brigadier

Lethbridge-Stewart in Scotland in *The Grey Man of the Mountain*.

Sixth Doctor producer John Ainsworth tells us: "Colin Baker provided the original impetus for *Plight of the Pimpernel*. During a break in the recording of *The Cry of the Vultriss*, he suggested to me

that the Scarlet Pimpernel books by Baroness Orczy could be a possible source of material for a *Doctor Who* adventure, with the Doctor himself perhaps being the Pimpernel.

"I thought this was a great idea and invited Chris Chapman to develop the concept. Chris had recently written two very good historical stories for Colin's Doctor, and I thought he would be a good fit for the Pimpernel story. Of course, what neither Colin or I had considered was that the

Pimpernel is a fictional character, so how could the Doctor meet him or become him? But Chris took all of that on board and made it an intriguing part of the story."

In the adventure it's 1793 and the Reign of Terror is slicing through the elite of Paris – but not if the Scarlet Pimpernel has anything to do with it.

Writer Chris says: "I've always loved Colin's era as he was the first Doctor I saw on television. He's such a great actor and Big Finish

has allowed for a renaissance of his Sixth Doctor character.

"This was a remarkable assignment – one given by the Doctor himself! That was a weird kind of added pressure, but a nice kind – I was on orders from Gallifrey! I love writing for Colin's erudite, outspoken Doctor and this is my first time writing for him and Peri. What I especially loved was being able to play with a friendship as deep and knowing as theirs.

"I had John Ainsworth coming to me, saying, 'I was in the studio with Colin the other day, and wouldn't it be a good idea to do a story with the Scarlet Pimpernel, and perhaps the Doctor could become the Pimpernel? Why hasn't the show done this idea

THE THING I FOUND MOST INSPIRATIONAL WAS WATCHING CARRY ON DON'T LOSE YOUR HEAD...

CHRIS CHAPMAN

before?! John asked if I could figure it out and what it could be.

"I did a fair bit of research, reading the original book and looking at

film adaptations from the 1930s up to the Ian McKellan BBC version, but weirdly the thing I found most inspirational was watching *Carry On Don't Lose Your Head* which has always been one of my favourite **Carry Ons**. There's a lot of attention to detail and history, and it has Kenneth Williams as the Robespierre-type character chasing after Sid James and Jim Dale. I said, 'Let's do it, but isn't it predictable if the Doctor becomes the Pimpernel? Maybe we could do it backwards and begin almost like a 2005 Russell T Davies era way where the Doctor is already the Pimpernel and saving the aristocrats of Paris. Then going home to his country house in England where Lady Blakeney is there to meet him – only it's not Lady Blakeney, it's



Colin Baker



Peri! I thought, let's do it in reverse and unfold why they have to play these roles. It's really a story about disguises and the masks people wear, and the levels of lies people tell to be the person they want to be.

"The Pimpernel didn't really exist but was an amazing creation of Baroness Orczy, but he is the kind of character that people are convinced existed like Sherlock Holmes, in that he was based on somebody.

"Being fictitious meant I could have a bit more fun and enjoy it – you don't need to adhere to established rules. It quickly spins off from being a historical into something a bit madder – that's why *Carry On Don't Lose Your Head* was such a good inspiration, the history you think it was – the pop culture version of the Reign of Terror."

Chris adds: "I've been asked when this is set. There are a few Big Finish stories in different parts of the history of the Doctor and Peri,

with adventures before and after Yrcanos. So I want to get it out now: Pimpernel is set between *Revelation of the Daleks* and *The Mysterious Planet*. This way you're starting to see that the softening of the Doctor has begun and Peri's picking up on it. This story allows the Sixth Doctor to be kind and trusting but we get a flashback to his angrier, moodier self – this is very much a transition between TV seasons 22 and 23.

“Being able to play with the relationship of the Doctor and Peri, and the love that you see between them in *The Mysterious Planet* but not in *Attack of the Cybermen*, I wanted to capture the warmth and friendship and knowingness that Colin and Nicola have in the real world, and bring

sure if it's what he was expecting but he and Nicola certainly seemed to enjoy recording it.”

DECEMBER'S RELEASE is an appropriate one, as, on a chilling Christmas Eve, the Seventh Doctor and Ace search for *The Grey Man of the Mountain*. Producer David Richardson explains: “We all love a creepy story at Christmas time and *The Grey Man of the Mountain* is dripping with atmosphere and threat – an evocative, unsettling journey through the snowy remote landscape of Scotland during the festive season.

“And there's an old friend back – Brigadier Lethbridge-

Something with heavy footsteps striking terror into the hearts of those who sense it. With climbers going missing, the Brigadier visits Scotland to investigate. But when some old friends join his ascent, he worries that they will make things even more dangerous.

Lizbeth says: “The brief was a story with the Seventh Doctor, Ace and the Brigadier,” and she sums it up succinctly as: “The Abominable Snowman in Scotland.”

To ensure she got the right dynamic, Lizbeth watched the trio's only onscreen meeting: “I rewatched *Battlefield*, one of my most watched stories thanks to it being comfort viewing. The Doctor and the Brig are really easy with each other,



I ALWAYS TRY TO SET STORIES IN SCOTLAND. BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THE SCOTTISH PITCH GOT THE THUMBS UP.

LIZBETH MYLES

that to the Doctor and Peri. From what I heard at the recording, it seems to have come across.”

Chris concludes: “I'm really pleased with how the story turned out – I can only hope that the Doctor likes it too or I might need to hand back in my fan badge! I think Colin was really happy when we spoke to him in the studio. I'm not

Stewart (played impeccably by Jon Culshaw) is reunited with the Seventh Doctor and Ace, some time after the events of television episode, *Battlefield*. How brilliant to have this trio working together again.”

The Grey Man of the Mountain by Lizbeth Myles sees something haunting the peak of Ben MacDui.

there's an implicit trust and understanding between them.

“I wanted to have that, and for a tension between them to have escalated due to the Brig feeling like he didn't really need the Doctor to be there, that's he's got the knowledge and experience to handle alien threats without him. And that he can do it without blowing things up.”

Lizbeth was also delighted to set the story in her homeland: “I always try to set stories in Scotland. But this is the first time the Scottish pitch got the thumbs up. (I wanted to do one with Sawney Bean, but that was considered a little too macabre!).

“I've been to the Cairngorms – I used to ski up at Aviemore – so



Sylvester McCoy



have been in the general vicinity and close to some of the locations but I've never actually walked up Ben MacDui. I spoke to some people who have though, and did a bit of reading and looking at maps, pictures and hillwalking clips. So, yes, plenty of location research but liberties have been taken for storytelling purposes."

Director Samuel Clemens adds: "The Grey Man of the Mountain is a fantastical story that delves into the real life myth and legend of The Grey

Man atop Ben Macdui. This story finds the Doctor and Ace caught in a daring search and rescue mission to find a missing man. Along with a climbing party with different agendas, fearful, freezing and firm in their resolve they might just discover the truth about 'The Grey Man' and get more than they bargained for."

Playing the Brigadier is Jon Culshaw, who has impressed since stepping into the late Nicholas Courtney's role, with his loving recreation of the part.

He says: "Sylvester is an old mate of mine. I'm quite indebted to him, really, as he's been a great, great pal for many years and I've got him to thank for reintroducing me to Big Finish.

"I had acted in *Death Comes to Time* with Stephen Fry and Richard E Grant, and later I did Nev Fountain's *The Kingmaker* story, but I wasn't yet fully a part of the Big Finish family.

"Then in 2017, Sylvester put in a word for me and I came back and worked on one of his recordings, *You Are the Doctor*, where I got to

know the whole team and some other stories started to come through. That led to Kamelion and the Brigadier of course, and now some **Third Doctor Adventures** and **Master Short Trips** – so to do a story with Sylvester again is wonderful for that reason."

Jon particularly enjoyed the atmosphere of the adventure, as well as its setting: "It's a story very much with the mood and feeling of the Seventh Doctor and Ace's era. It's wonderful that it is set in Scotland and has this real, wintry, Christmas-y vibe with spooky feelings and intrigue. It will be perfect to listen to on a dark, foggy, Christmas evening.

"It really was a wonderful story and made everybody happy recording it. We laughed an awful lot – the atmosphere of the tale infused us all!

"And it was wonderful to have the Brigadier back in Scotland. There was a feeling that he was on home territory, playing a home game. It's such a fabulous era for the Brigadier, around the time of *Battlefield*. He's retired but his sense of duty is as strong as it has ever been, and it will never, ever leave him. He really gets into the centre of the action – he wants to help, to lead and support. He will face the danger so others around him don't have to." **VORTEX**

DOCTOR WHO
**THE PLIGHT OF
THE PIMPERNEL**

■ RELEASED: DECEMBER 2020
■ FORMAT: CD / DOWNLOAD

ORDER NOW AT bgfn.sh/orczy



DOCTOR WHO
**THE GREY MAN
OF THE MOUNTAIN**

■ RELEASED: DECEMBER 2020
■ FORMAT: CD / DOWNLOAD

ORDER NOW AT bgfn.sh/macdui





IT'S TIME TO GET READY FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON WITH THE FIRST LADY OF BIG FINISH, BERNICE SUMMERFIELD

CHRISTMAS WOULDN'T be Christmas without Big Finish. As we head towards the festive season, it's time to sit back with a warm drink in our hands and some first class seasonal stories in our ears.

The Christmas Collection is, as the title suggests, a host of stories themed around the holiday season performed by Professor Bernice Summerfield actor herself, Lisa Bowerman.

Big Finish book editor Xanna Eve Chown tells us more: "All the stories in the collection are about Christmas or, because it's Bernice Summerfield, the Midwinter Festival, Advent, the Spiriting etc – some of

her friends getting into a variety of festive scrapes that make you wonder why Brax didn't just ban Christmas at the Collection. There's also a story written by Victoria Simpson which is an investigation on Legion that has spooky parallels with a certain Christmas movie starring Bing Crosby; a Christmas trip in the Unbound universe written by Q, and a mind-bending adventure which features the line: 'A flying cyborg reindeer with guns built into its horns,' written by Scott Harrison.

"*The Christmas Collection* also includes adventures by Matthew Griffiths, Sophie Iles, Eddie Robson, Simon Guerrier, Tim Gambrell and me. And yes, Benny does get to dress up as Santa in at least one of them!"

Xanna believes that the archaeologist is the perfect companion for this time of year. She explains: "Benny is great for Christmas because you just know she'll have a good time and at least try to bring on a party, no matter what distant planet she is celebrating on – as long as she isn't too busy averting an apocalypse.

In a year which has seen the world turned upside down due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the way Big Finish records its ranges has had to change. *The Christmas Collection*

CHRISTMAS CRACKER



the other names that aliens give their end of the year festivities.

"What is fun about this anthology is that there are stories from all through Benny's timeline. There's a chilling ghost story for the students and staff at St Oscar's written by Mark Clapham with Benny and

is one to note as Xanna concludes: "This is the first audiobook that Lisa recorded for us at home in lockdown and there is a little interview with her at the end of the stories where she talks about how that all worked. Needless to say she did a great job!" **VORTEX**



BERNICE SUMMERFIELD THE CHRISTMAS COLLECTION

■ RELEASED: DECEMBER 2020
■ FORMAT: DOWNLOAD

ORDER NOW AT bgfn.sh/christmas 

PETER
DAVISON

DERVLA
KIRWAN

ANJLI
MOHINDRA

JAMIE
PARKER

NICHOLAS
BRIGGS

BBC

DOCTOR WHO

SHADOW OF THE DALEKS
EIGHT STORIES – ONE THREAT

SHADOW OF THE DALEKS 1
OUT NOW



SHADOW OF THE DALEKS 2
AVAILABLE NOVEMBER

FULL CAST AUDIO DRAMA FROM **BIGFINISH.COM**
ON COLLECTOR'S EDITION CD OR DOWNLOAD

BBC
STUDIOS



@BIGFINISH



THEBIGFINISH



BIGFINISHPROD

BBC logo™ and © BBC 1996. Doctor Who logo™ and © BBC 2018. Licensed by BBC Studios. The Daleks and Davros created by Terry Nation and used under licence.

BIG
FINISH | WE LOVE
STORIES

VORTEX MAIL

CASTING A SHADOW

I'm hopeful you guys will be doing more **Dark Shadows** in the near future. I was disappointed when *Windcliff* didn't get a release this year, or any **Dark Shadows** releases in 2020, which is the first time in over a decade a year will pass without **Dark Shadows** from Big Finish. So any information on the future of **Dark Shadows** at Big Finish would be greatly appreciated! Keep up all your great work.

Michael McGinley

Nick: No further information as yet, Michael, unfortunately the pandemic has held things up with this range. Glad you've been enjoying it though.

K9 – AND MORE COMPANY?

It's always a shame to see a **Doctor Who** spin-off cease production, more so when it happens after only a season. Given you already work with John Leeson and Bob Baker properties, are K9 audio adventures something that have been looked into?

Even seeing the odd monster or two from the show would be incredible.

Kind regards and love from Brazil.

Guilherme Gusmão

Nick: It's not something we're looking to do at the moment, Guilherme, but we never say never!

A HUGE THANK YOU

I want to say thank you even though you are killing my disposable income with all of these discounts! I suffered a head injury three months ago and it impacted my vision. I can tolerate some driving and screen time now, but for a while the only thing I could do to keep sane was listen to your audios. And the discounts allowed me an opportunity to take on ranges I either never considered or was hesitant to start because, well... "Can I really start up another one?" And now old Bernice is getting digitized! Finally, I just adored *Stranded*.

Everything worked. Loved the setting. Loved the Curator. Loved Helen's pragmatism. Loved Eight's shattered sense of self. Loved Liv... her scenes with Tania made me squeal with delight. More of that, please! You tell stories with so much humanity. This is important work. Thank you for continuing on so strongly while the world is in a state of uncertainty.

Matthew DeSciscio

Nick: Thanks so much for all you say, Matthew. So sorry to hear about your injury and I hope there are better times ahead for you. Glad we were able to help in some small way.



Kate Stewart
ponders the plans...

RETURN OF UNIT?

Any hope of seeing further adventures of Kate Stewart, Osgood and UNIT? Despite what was said in the most recent series, I cannot imagine them simply going quietly into that good night. And what would become of the Black Archive? The Undergallery? Its enigmatic Curator?

Jeffrey Collins

Nick: Oooh, Jeffrey, there are plans...

NATURAL PROGRESSION

In going through the many Big Finish audios and the audio adaptations, I was wondering if you have any plans to adapt *Human Nature* as it was originally written. The TV adaptation was good, but having read the book I cannot help but salivate at the prospect of at least hearing it acted out with Sylvester McCoy and Lisa Bowerman. Keep up the great work (as always).

Jamie Ashby

Nick: No plans for us to do this, Jamie, but it's an interesting idea. **VORTEX**



Managing Editor:
Jason Haigh-Ellery

Executive Producer:
Nicholas Briggs

Senior Producer:
David Richardson

Editor: **Kenny Smith**

The Big Finish Team:
**Cheryl Bly, Sue Cowley, Emily Davis
Karen Parks, Hannah Peel
Alfie Shaw, Paul Spragg**

Graphic Designer:
Mark Plastow

Copy Editor:
Stephanie Hornett

Marketing:
Steve Berry, Chloe Cooper

BFP Administration:
Brenda Smith, Alison Taylor

Publisher:
Big Finish Productions Ltd.

With thanks to **Mike Tucker**

[www.BIGFINISH.COM](http://www.bigfinish.com)

[@BIGFINISH](https://twitter.com/BIGFINISH)

[f THEBIGFINISH](https://www.facebook.com/BIGFINISH)

[@ BIGFINISHPROD](https://www.instagram.com/BIGFINISHPROD)

[BIG-FINISH](https://www.youtube.com/BIGFINISH)

[BIGFINISHPROD](https://www.youtube.com/BIGFINISHPROD)

"Jeddy 3 is what we first called him
Then it was Jed, but Jed's systems dead
Therefore so's Jed"

COMING SOON

THE BIG FINISH RELEASE SCHEDULE

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

NOVEMBER 2020

- **DW • THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES:**
Shadow of the Daleks 2
(270, FIFTH DOCTOR)
- **DW • THE TENTH DOCTOR AND RIVER SONG:**
(BOX SET)
- **DW • THE TENTH DOCTOR AND RIVER SONG:**
Expiry Dating (TENTH DOCTOR)
- **DW • THE TENTH DOCTOR AND RIVER SONG:**
Precious Annihilation
(TENTH DOCTOR)
- **DW • THE TENTH DOCTOR AND RIVER SONG:**
Ghosts (TENTH DOCTOR)
- **DW • THE FIFTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES:**
Wicked Sisters (BOX SET)
- **DW • TIME LORD VICTORIOUS:**
The Enemy of My Enemy
(2, EIGHTH DOCTOR)
- **DW • SHORT TRIPS:**
Blue Boxes (10.11) **DLO**
- **TORCHWOOD:**
Rhys and Ianto's Excellent Barbecue (44)
- **BLAKE'S 7:** *Chosen*
(AUDIOBOOK) **DLO**

DECEMBER 2020

- **DW • THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES:**
Plight of the Pimpernel
(271, SIXTH DOCTOR AND PERI)
- **DW • THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES:**
The Grey Man of the Mountain
(272, SEVENTH DOCTOR AND ACE)
- **DW • TIME LORD VICTORIOUS:**
Mutually Assured Destruction
(3, EIGHTH DOCTOR)
- **DW • TIME LORD VICTORIOUS:**
Echoes of Extinction
(EIGHTH AND TENTH DOCTORS) **DLO**
- **DW • TIME LORD VICTORIOUS:**
Genetics of the Daleks
(FOURTH DOCTOR)
- **DW • THE ROBOTS 3**
(BOX SET)

- **DW • SHORT TRIPS:**
The Shattered Hourglass (10.12)
DLO
- **TORCHWOOD:**
The Crown (45)
- **BERNICE SUMMERFIELD:**
Christmas Tales (AUDIOBOOK) **DLO**

JANUARY 2021

- **DW • THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES:**
Colony of Fear
(273, SIXTH DOCTOR AND CONSTANCE)
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES:**
Series Ten: Volume One (BOX SET)
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES:**
The World Traders (10.1) **DLO**
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES:**
The Day of the Comet (10.2) **DLO**
- **DW • MASTERFUL:**
Limited Edition (BOX SET)
Standard Edition (BOX SET)
- **DW • THE DIARY OF RIVER SONG:**
Series Eight (BOX SET)
- **TORCHWOOD:**
TBA (46)

FEBRUARY 2021

- **DW • THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES:**
The Blazing Hour
(274, FIFTH DOCTOR AND TURLOUGH)
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES:**
Series Ten: Volume Two (BOX SET)
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES:**
Thaddeus Nook's Time Tours
(10.3) **DLO**
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES:**
The Primeval Design (10.4) **DLO**
- **DW • GALLIFREY:**
The Time War 4 (BOX SET)
- **TORCHWOOD:**
TBA (47)
- **SPACE: 1999:**
Volume 1 (BOX SET)

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

DATES CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS.

VORTEX



ROBOTS

IT'S TIME TO RETURN TO KALDOR
TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT LIV AND
TULA CHENKA'S LATEST EXPLOITS...

PLUS CAN THE FOURTH DOCTOR ESCAPE
PLUS IN **GENETICS OF THE DALEKS?**

