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**TELLS THE TALE OF A
DRAMA SHOWCASE**

**NICHOLAS BRIGGS AND
RICHARD DINNICK**

PREVIEW SEASON 2 OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

THE LOST STORIES

**SOPHIE ALDRED AND ANDREW CARTMEL ON
MAKING SEASON 27 A REALITY**

PLUS! MEET THE AUDIO SONTARANS!

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EDITORIAL

My life seems to be completely taken over by the Eighth and Fourth Doctors at the moment. Scripts, scripts, scripts, as I keep putting on my Facebook updates. I suppose the mathematicians among you out there might draw some significance from the numbers eight and four, but anyway, for me, those numbers are bringing a lot of fun.

Our new series of Eighth Doctor adventures, three double-CDs in the main range, take a step back from the horrifying events of *To the Death*. We explore another part of the Eighth Doctor's long, long life. But I wanted to take this opportunity to assure you that we already have firm plans to return to the post-*To the Death* Eighth Doctor. I won't go into detail now, but never fear, the consequences will be explored thoroughly and dramatically.

And as for Doctor number Four, well... 'authenticity' is our watch-word. Our aim is to make these new adventures with Leela and Romana feel like they fit right in to their respective

eras. I have to confess that there may be a bit of 21st century sound design and music around, but in terms of narrative and character, these stories have to feel right. Who will be the arbiter of this? Let me just say I was about fourteen years old when Tom became the Doctor, so I will apply the Briggs teenager-throwback test to each script as it comes in. And what about the scripts? Too early to spill the details yet, but I can confirm that the Daleks will be back, along with a couple of other, perhaps unexpected, classic elements of the show. But rest assured, there will also be some brand new creatures and characters too. What else can I tell you? Um... oh, I know: the Leela stories will be set just after *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*, so K9 will not feature in those. He will, however, be putting in an appearance in the Romana stories. Right, now then, I must read that Fourth Doctor **Lost Story** script...

Nicholas Briggs

SNEAK PREVIEWS AND WHISPERS

Robophobia

The Robots of Death remains one of the most revered stories from the classic series of **Doctor Who** and it takes a brave man to attempt a sequel. But you know what? We think our Mr Briggs has done the business with this enticing twist on the original story, which neatly plays with the themes in the original. This time around it's Sylvester McCoy as the Seventh Doctor, who is facing the Vocs and Super Vocs (no Dums – they wouldn't work so well on audio), and he's travelling alone – there's no Ace and Hex this time around. There may not be companions, but there's a brilliant guest star to step into the centre stage, as Nicola Walker (Ruth from TV's **Spooks**, and recently a social worker in **Being Human**) plays Liv Chenka, a woman whose life has been touched by a new spate of murders. The cast also includes Toby Hadoke (**Moths Ate My Doctor Who Scarf**) and Dan Starkey (the Sontarans from the new TV series). And listen carefully, because you might just hear a very important clue to future events...

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HOLMES SWEET HOLMES

With a brand new series of **Sherlock Holmes** audio adventures commencing in October 2011, we investigate the strange case of Nicholas Briggs and Richard Dinnick and ask: have they got a clue what they're doing?

Now, Nick, we all know the story of how the Big Finish **Sherlock Holmes** audio adventures came about, with you deciding to adapt Holmes stage plays *The Last Act*, *The Death and Life* and *Holmes and the Ripper*. But why is there a new series?

Nicholas Briggs: Because the first releases were popular enough to justify doing more! And I was keen to develop a new run of Holmes stories with a consistent style. The first three were very much experiments, with David Stuart Davies's two one-man shows, then Brian Clemens's unique take on the whole Holmes genre. Since everything worked out really well on *Holmes and the Ripper*, and Richard Earl was brilliant as Dr Watson, I really wanted to continue. Playing Holmes has always been a passion of mine and, luckily for me, I got some lovely reviews – both for playing him on stage and on audio – so I can immodestly assume that I haven't been an utter disaster in the part.

So what's behind your decision to make the new series of four double-CD releases a mixture of old and new stories?

NB: Again, it's something of an experiment. I want to find out which type of story our audience prefers so that we can, hopefully, move on to a third series. I also wanted the fun of developing something new, but I do find the classic Holmes stories irresistible. One of my main aims was to do the Conan Doyle stories as faithfully as possible.

How do you go about making those stories faithful, especially given that *The Final Problem*, *The Empty House* and, in particular, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* have been adapted many, many times?

NB: I very much wanted to use the convention of Watson narrating, which instantly brings you

closer to the original text. You don't have to think up clever dramatisation techniques which get round the difficulties of adapting for audio, you have Watson as your narrator. And in the case of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, it's never actually been adapted really faithfully. People always find the need to tamper with it, often in quite odd ways that seriously mess up the story.

You're adapting *Baskervilles* aren't you, Richard? How did that come about?

Richard Dinnick: Well, Nick and I were having lunch to discuss my **Doctor Who** one-parter, *Paradoxicide* (part of release #150, *Recorded Time*), and then we got chatting about **Sherlock Holmes** and how much I loved it. And then I got an email from Nick offering me the opportunity to help out on the next season. There was a flurry of emails discussing which stories we should do. Finally, Nick decided that we should indeed do the legendary *Hound of the Baskervilles* and that he would like me to adapt that, along with David Stuart Davies's *The Tangled Skein*.

What was Nick's brief to you?

RD: Well, Nick had already adapted *The Hound of the Baskervilles* as a kind of comedy thriller for a production at the Theatre Royal Nottingham in the summer of 2009, so he sent me that, and it was massively helpful to see what could be cut from the story without losing the essence and at the same time remaining as truly faithful to the original story as possible.

How did the work progress?

RD: I wrote a first draft of episode one to see that Nick was happy and he suggested some changes including moving the cliffhanger of



Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson, played by Nicholas Briggs and Richard Earl

part one, and then I went away and produced a complete draft of the whole story. And Nick was very kind, saying he was very happy with it.

NB: I wasn't being kind. Richard really hit the nail on the head. He's done a brilliant adaptation. Absolutely every single important plot point and twist is in it. It moves like a bloomin' rocket! It's very exciting, but he's also managed to make it very atmospheric. One of the things that struck me when I was re-reading the original in order to adapt it for the stage is the amount of sympathetic background stuff Arthur Conan Doyle put in. All that business about the ancient people and the ruins of their dwellings on Grimpen Mire. Richard's kept all that in, and it gives the whole thing a really dark, sinister tone.

And tell us a little about the second script Richard has worked on...

NB: It's an adaptation of David Stuart Davies's *The Tangled Skein*, which is both a sequel to *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and also includes, controversially, Dracula. Now, this is not the first time Dracula has been pitted against Holmes, and I'm sure it won't be the last. But it has been done in a beautifully authentic way. It doesn't feel outrageous or silly. Indeed, Peter Cushing, who read the book and wrote a foreword for it, described the book as 'a stunning yarn', and I think he was spot on.

RD: *Skein* has followed a similar writing schedule to *Baskervilles*, so I'm about to deliver the first draft to Nick any day now. It's been a joy to work on and I'm really looking forward to hearing them recorded in May.

NB: Me too. I can't wait to get my teeth into **Holmes** again, and this time there'll be so much more to do.

What about the other scripts?

NB: Well, I've adapted *The Final Problem*, which is the Holmes-Moriarty confrontation, and *The Empty House*, the aftermath of that. Then we have *The Reification of Hans Gerber*, which is a brilliant new story by George Mann. George is a very experienced novelist and has written other stuff for Big Finish too. We met when we first set up our deal with the **Warhammer** people, for whom we produce talking books. He really has a great, authentic Victorian style, and he's come up with a really intriguing case which has a twist that has never been done in a Holmes story before. The script for that one is now going through the editing stage, but it won't need much work done to it, because George has done such a fantastic job.

How do you see the future of Sherlock Holmes with Big Finish? Would you like it to just go on and on, like the Doctor Who range?

NB: Clearly I would. I don't see that I'll be able to manage doing thirteen double-CD Holmes stories all year round, mind you! However, I'm really keen that we find out exactly what Holmes aficionados want, so I would ask that as many listeners as possible give us their feedback on what they'd like to see us doing with Holmes. At the moment, I'm very happy to continue producing a mixture of old and new stories. The new stuff will be exciting and challenging, and I want the original stories to be dramatic and engaging, at the same time as being the most faithful adaptations you'll ever hear.

Sherlock Holmes: The Final Problem/The Empty House is out in October 2011



Ace IN THE PACK

As season twenty-seven finally sees the light of day, Sophie Aldred talks to Paul Spragg about returning to 1989...

Hello Sophie! This must be a little odd, going from main range releases to **Lost Stories**.

It's like this is the new term, and you've suddenly forgotten all the maths you did last term and you've got a new teacher – except we haven't. It's lovely to come back and do these last two **Lost Stories**. It's been really weird because all of a sudden I'm starting to reminisce about the old series. It's very bizarre. I think it must be having [writer/script editor] Andrew Cartmel here; I keep remembering things and we haven't really done that ever before. I keep saying to Sylvester, 'Do you remember when...' and we bore the pants off everyone else reminiscing. Maybe it's because we're getting so old now, two old codgers sitting there with a nice cup of tea and slippers, reminiscing about the old days, 'Ooh yes, it was much better in them days...'

Do you remember being told of any of these stories at the time?

I do remember some talk of this one [Earth Aid] going around and it was Ben [Aaronovitch] and Andrew going around giggling to themselves about how fantastic it would be if Ace was suddenly in control of a starship, and you'd open the story with this view of a **Star Trek**-like console with the seat in the middle, the William Shatner seat, and then you'd suddenly realise it was Ace. And she was in charge and didn't know the first thing about it, and then she'd go and find the Doctor and say to him, 'This is not gonna work' and that's the whole idea from which this story had then progressed. But I love that idea. I love the idea of Ace sitting there in a **Star Trek**-like suit with boots and everything.

How's your Patrick Stewart impression?

I'm the William Shatner generation. I do love Patrick Stewart as well and I've always seen the **Star Trek** films because I love 'em, but this is quite a departure in a way, because this is a very funny script. I hope. I hope the humour comes over all right and we haven't over-egged it; it's quite witty. You're used to Ace being in control and knowing what's going on but suddenly she's presented with this scenario where she hasn't a clue what to say, so she's using all this old-fashioned terminology, from **Star Trek** and movies that

she's been to in the 1980s, and it's very funny. There's one line she keeps coming up with, which is, 'Belay this!' and then she says to the Doctor, 'I love saying, "Belay this and he says, "Yes, so I've noticed"...' There's a lot of scenes between the Doctor and Ace where they're not particularly progressing the plot very quickly but it's good relationship material; it's nice interplay between them.

Are you playing Ace more like the TV version or closer to her current Big Finish incarnation?

That's tricky. It's almost like a mixture between the two, because I watched *Remembrance of the Daleks*, funnily enough, last week, because some friends of mine who'd never seen **Doctor Who** before, they were very curious to know what I was like on **Doctor Who**. So I said, 'Ooh, let's have a **Doctor Who** Night' and so we put on *Remembrance of the Daleks* and my eldest son watched as well; he's never seen me doing one before, and it was really strange to look back. I've seen it when we were doing the commentary for the DVD, but not really properly sitting there with an audience watching. And it was quite surprising how young Ace was. Looking young, of course, it was twenty years ago, but in terms of maturity she actually does appear to be quite vulnerable in that episode in particular. And I think she changed a lot, particularly towards the last season, but there was very much a sweet little girl aspect to her which I hadn't remembered. So it was very useful to watch that, and actually this script is not for quite that Ace; she would have grown up a bit and the Doctor wouldn't have put her in charge of a spaceship in her first season, but she's been through quite a lot with him and yeah, he's obviously thought that she's okay.

You've also been working with Beth Chalmers, who plays new companion Raine.

Beth is great. We get on very well. It's as though she's been around for ages. She's quite knowing, quite clever, and that she and Ace, at first, have this slight bridling and a bit of rivalry. But Ace very much accepts her because I think Ace thinks she's quite cool, really. She recognises one of her own. It's a very good mix and Beth is great as well, she's a very good actress and a beautiful voice. I love listening to her voice.



On the front of this week's *Radio Times*, it asks of David Tennant if there's life after **Doctor Who**. Is there?

Well, there certainly has been life for me after **Doctor Who**. I think it was very fortunate for me that I'd also got this presenting career simultaneously, so I never stopped working really. I only stopped TV work by choice when I started having children. And for me, I'm still not quite ready to go back to that yet. My boys are ten and seven now, and I just have loved being a mum so much with all the challenges that that brings, it's been the best and the most challenging work I've ever done and I've been supported by this fantastic world of voice work, which I love. I love doing cartoons and commercials and all that stuff. So yeah, I've been exceedingly fortunate to have that side of my career. It's difficult to speculate what might have happened if I'd wanted to carry on and do drama and stuff like that; I got rid of my theatrical agent when I was pregnant with my first child, eleven years ago now, so it's not really been an issue for me. Certainly my personal life after **Doctor Who** has been much better and so here I am, married with two children, very happy. So it hasn't been so relevant to me as I think it has been for some of the other assistants.

You even bumped into one of those assistants, the extra-tall Karen Gillan, in studio. I reckon you're stalking her...

She's stalking me! It's like being stalked by a heron...

Are you up for more **Lost Stories** in the future? It would be great to continue them. And it's been so lovely to be in touch with Andrew Cartmel again. Although he never actually wrote for the Seventh Doctor and Ace, he was always script editing. It's been wonderful to bring that relationship to bear on something he knew so well, and this script, which is by Ben, and [Andrew] as well, it does remind me of how good the relationship is between the Doctor and Ace and I hope there's a lot more to be squeezed from that particular stone.

The Lost Stories: Thin Ice is out this month



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BBC

TALES FROM THE

SCRIPT

EDITOR

In the first half of a two-part interview, Andrew Cartmel discusses the season 27 *Lost Stories* with Paul Spragg



Hi Andrew. What's it been like returning to these never-made stories?

It's been really great after all these years to suddenly be able to go to them. Because I'd reached the point in my mind where they were completely dead as a dodo. It just goes to show you that in life you never know what's around the corner. It's been a fantastic experience really, both that they were good stories and it was enjoyable to do them, but that sense, that wonderful feeling of relief, of having finally concluded unfinished business that's been unfinished for what, twenty years now?

Were there any obvious candidates for stories you wanted to do?

Absolutely. Two we knew we had to do. The one that introduces Raine, the cat burglar story where she cracks the safe and the Doctor's inside, that was one of the things we – me and Ben [Aaronovitch] – used to talk about a lot that we really regretted never happened on screen. The other one was this great idea that Ben had where we see the bridge of a starship and it turns out that Ace is the captain. Those weren't entire stories in themselves, but they were the starting points for stories and now we have the chance to develop them fully, which is lovely.

How did you pick the other two?

It was really on the basis of what were more developed, and also to involve other writers, because I knew that Ben would be involved and I wanted Marc Platt. I would have loved to have worked with any of the writers; but it was a matter of availability and also which stories were in the forefront of our minds. We'd also gone some distance in developing the Ice Warrior story [*Thin Ice*], with Marc, and it was just a sheer pleasure to work with Marc again. There was also the connection between the two stories; we had the character of Raine and she had this father who was an underworld figure and a wideboy type, and he featured strongly in Marc's story, which was set in the Sixties, and which involved the birth of Raine, so the character is born in one story and grows up and becomes an adult in the later stories. So it was natural to have that one that introduced Raine. It was natural to have the story of her birth, and also to develop her father further.

The stories seem more linked together than you normally would have got in that era of **Doctor Who**.

Yes, we've increased the connectivity of them, part of which is inevitable because the characters were just thumbnail sketches at the time, and we've turned them into full-blown portraits. And as a result of that you know more about the characters and how they relate to each other, so since we're doing this group of stories it made perfect sense to increase the level of the relationships and the story arcs, the interlinking between the stories. If we'd done these as TV stories, they'd have been more standalone, but a certain amount of serial element had begun to appear in by season twenty-six, things like the development of the character of Ace. There's not a lot you can do with the Doctor in terms of serial element because I, at least, always feel that he should be kept as a pure enigma to a certain degree, so I didn't want to give too much back-story or too much in the way of continuity. Of course, in **Doctor Who** these days there's a great deal of that.

When I was working on **Doctor Who**, that's one of the things that I felt American television had over British television. I used to cite things like the Steven Bochco shows, which at the time was **Hill Street Blues**. What they did was they took an ordinary television genre, which is a cop show, and they introduced what you might call soap opera elements running stories about the characters and their relationships. That was a new thing in American television and was something that I felt we should be doing in British television. Perhaps because I'm a contrarian, I'm beginning to feel the opposite thing, I think there's a bit too much of that. I'm not really talking about **Doctor Who** here but I found an American show called **NCIS**, and I recently watched an entire season on DVD and the stories that were weakest, the least interesting, were all the ones about the season's story arc. And I've been watching series three of **Buffy**; I love **Buffy** and I think series three might have been the peak, and again, the stories that are the closest to being duds are the ones that are heaviest with the serial element. So I think you have to be very careful. I think judicious spicing up of stories with a bit of a series element is good, but too much can wreck them.

The Lost Stories: Crime of the Century is out this month

Continued in issue 28, with more on newcomer Raine, and the fate of Ace...

After the sad news last week about the death of Nicholas Courtney, I searched for more information about this great man on the web.

To my surprise, I found out that Big Finish carried out a series of interviews etc with stars of the **Doctor Who** universe and the Brigadier recorded his under the title *A Soldier in Time* — but it has to be out of issue as it no longer appears on the website, Amazon doesn't stock it at the moment, etc. I'm sure that there are people out there like myself who wish to capture the essence of this man after being so entertained with his TV and Big Finish performances.

I think that the **Talks Back** range should be resurrected for discussions with Peter, Colin and Sylvester, and Terry Molloy and Mr Briggs, as they too have become firmly entrenched in the **Doctor Who** universe and people like to know about their idols. Please accept this email as a plea to re-issue *A Soldier in Time* or, with the agreement of his estate, as a download.

Tony Hotchkiss

Nick: We're looking into the possibility of re-issuing *A Soldier in Time*. We stopped the **Talks Back** range because it wasn't very successful, I'm afraid.

I would like to thank all the people who make up Big Finish for the outstanding work you all do month in and month out. I'm a sometimes actor/director/writer here in the New Orleans area and getting into the BF world opened several doors for me. I've been working on finding space and financing for a theatre company for a couple of years now, but since my exposure to BF and the path it put me on towards BBC full cast adaptations I have decided to switch gears and put together an audio theatre company. The type of work Big Finish does is in short supply here in the US, so to my way of thinking it creates an opening. Hopefully it pans out but I really do have you all to thank for putting me on that road. So again, thanks.

I'm hoping to be back up in Chicago for Chicago TARDIS this coming year, and it would be great to buy all you guys there from BF a beer or three.

Nathan Gervais

Nick: I may even take you up on three beers! Nice to hear that we've spread some inspiration.

I have been checking out your web page and noticed that you do audio stories about **Doctor Who** and **Dark Shadows**, but I am writing to see if there is an interest to do audio stories about the characters from **Caprica**. I felt that SyFy did not give this series a chance for a second season and maybe a series of audio stories with the characters would be great. You don't even need to get the main actors, there are a lot of secondary characters on the series who can carry a story. What do you think?

Dan Holmes

Nick: Dan, I really don't think there would be enough of a market for it. Shame, but it takes a franchise with a really strong core following to make a success of an audio series.

I'm deeply saddened by the move to close the forum, one of the main things I have always enjoyed about the BF site. I can see your point but I feel that this sudden loss of the community may well cost you more listeners than the issues you have mentioned in the past. It's your decision and you know your market better than I ever could but I feel this is a mistake. Please re-open the forum.

Dom

Nick: Dom, as you have seen, we did re-open the forum. I think a period of mature reflection was required after some of the unpleasantness that had occurred on the forum. The bottom line is, the forum is mainly full of people having fun in a community of like-minded people, and when push came to shove, we just couldn't turn our backs on that. One of the irksome problems about the forum, though, is that we're almost unique in being a commercial company that has a totally open forum. That makes it tricky when people get cross about larger issues, because they seek to punish us by withdrawing their custom. Now, of course, customers always have the right to cancel their orders, but it seems odd when they do so because of a remark that someone has made on our forums

about a 'real world' issue, relating to sex, politics or religion.

Loved **Gallifrey IV** though totally not what I was expecting; bonkers and grand, particularly Louise in chapter sixteen. Bring on series five.

To the Death was brilliant, and probably the darkest tale ever from **Doctor Who**. The triple wow, though not totally unexpected, left me numb.

Looking forward to **Drama Showcase**, purchased purely on the strength of Katy Manning's podcast. She definitely sold that play to me, but I'm glad I bought all four. It's very cool Janet Fielding has returned and there I was last year thinking, 'Blimey, next they'll be saying Tom Baker's gonna do one...'

Rob Tizzard

Nick: Well... um...

To the Death: thought it was very good, it hurt my hearts. But I had two problems with it:

1. Not long enough.

2. I don't believe that Susan would accept the death of Alex like that. I know the Gallifreyan in her would understand not to disturb the timeline but I feel that the mother in her would take complete control and talk the Doctor into saving Alex. Oh well, that's always something for the future main range.

Michael Garrity

Nick: I think Susan has been rooted in the 'human' world long enough to accept death.

Just want to say a massive thank you and incredible big smiles for the recent **Gallifrey** series. The original three series were marvellous and this just added to the storytelling. I really enjoyed it and thought the writing/acting/production was superb. Long may the series continue.

Keith Lawrence

Nick: Good to hear that, Keith. **Gallifrey** has always been a big favourite for many BF listeners. For years, every convention I went to, I got asked 'Where is the next series of **Gallifrey**? So I was determined for Gary to bring it back. I'm so glad he did. I know he and Scott Handcock had a ball doing it.

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BBC

Louise Jameson reveals the background of *Pulling Faces* and talks multiple Leelas with Paul Spragg

Facial

This month sees the release of **Drama Showcase**: *Pulling Faces*, about a TV diva entering a new, menopausal, phase of her life. How did you get involved?

I met [writer/actor] Helen Goldwyn at Big Finish; I went in to play her mum in **The Tomorrow People**; I think that's where we first met. We clicked straight away and she sent me her script, which I liked very much and tried very hard to get put on, but it had been cast and with an unknown writer it just didn't generate the interest that I thought it would have. I thought it was brilliantly written. And then I wanted to try a stand-up show and I thought there was a lot of comedy to be had around the menopause, which is still rather a taboo subject. From there she said, 'Can I come and interview you?' and she had

about four or five sessions interviewing me and then came back with a script. Originally we called it **Hot Flush**, but then somebody else nabbed the name for a musical and then we changed it to **Face Value** and this is its third incarnation really, which is edited and honed and directed by Nigel Fairs and I think rather a good product. I'm touring it next January as a one-woman show, and David [Richardson] suggested that we did it as an audio. Originally we did it as a monologue but I wanted to get as many people involved as possible for the audio version. And the end result is what you hear, which I'm really proud of.

Aside from yourself and Helen acting, you also have David Warwick, Nigel Fairs, Mandi



Feature

Symonds and a name very familiar to **Doctor Who** fans: Colin Baker.

Yes, just doing the old girl a favour, you know? It is only the one scene, but he did it beautifully. It's actually quite a pivotal scene in the play so it's very important the character was right. In the script he's described as a very, very small, dapper man, and Colin took the lower register out of his voice, and you absolutely picture this dapper little tiny man and not the lovely cuddly bear that Colin is. I was given a very strong hand in the casting, so I'm really delighted because I couldn't have wished for a better cast.

You've also directed next month's **Drama Showcase** release.



Yes, I have, and I'm really excited by *In Conversation with an Acid Bath Murderer*. I had directed that for stage, and I think I might have suggested this one to David – we sent him the script and he liked it very much and it became part of the season. I think it's very exciting and quite interesting work; much as I love doing all the sci-fi stuff, it's really lovely to know that Big Finish is embracing other projects now as well.

How would you describe the plays?

I suppose I would say this is the Radio 4 afternoon play genre, where you can expect to laugh and cry. In a way they're completely opposite, the two stories, because [acid bath killer] John Haigh actually existed and most of the script is based on absolute fact – newspaper cuttings, it's very carefully researched. Whereas *Pulling Faces* is very much a wry, comedic look at the process of ageing and set within the fiction genre. These dramas can encompass absolutely anything; I haven't listened to Katy [Manning]'s yet [*Not a Well Woman*], which I understand is part of the same season, and is completely different again, from what David's said.

Also newly out, and featuring you as Leela, is **Gallifrey** series four.

What a fabulous gig it is. I know we score points every time we mention Toby's [Hrycek-Robinson, sound engineer] cooking but it always goes into the mix. I love doing **Gallifrey**; especially when I get to be taken over, and the challenge of not being able to see. I hope the essence of [Leela] is still there and I'm not presenting a whole load of different characters. She's interesting and moral and brave, all those things, she's got a lot more to do and a lot more of the action. She has a much better relationship with the Romana character. I'm not just there as a cipher going, 'What is it, Doctor?' so I think that's been explored really well.

You'll also be heard in the third series of **Jago & Litfoot**.

Oh, how wonderful is that? It really is like stepping back however many years it is – 25?

Just to be in the room with those two, I'd forgotten... well, I hadn't forgotten actually. Of all the stories I think [*The Talons of Weng-Chiang*]'s the cast I remember; it's partly because we were away on location filming a lot of it, but also the relationship between Chris Benjamin [Jago] and Trevor Baxter [Litefoot] is unique, with a capital U. We did veer away from the usual Doctor/Leela relationship because he actually, within the script, puts her in charge of the adventure. The Doctor's sent her out.

And you'll soon be back in another **Companion Chronicle**.

Yeah! It's lovely! Nigel Fairs is just finishing off a script.

Last time you were reborn...

Yes, that's right. I really liked it. I think it's touched quite a dark side, it really went somewhere emotionally and wasn't just the adventure.

So many people are writing just for you...

I turn 60 in four weeks, so it's like a little birthday present for me.

Do you prefer carrying most of the story yourself and would you rather have a full cast around you? That's interesting, isn't it? I think I rather enjoy

the large casts to be honest, just because of the socialising that goes on in the green room. That's a purely selfish decision; generally speaking, for me the best theatre is a studio theatre – small spaces; small, intimate audience; small intimate play. That's my favourite genre of all. Artistically I like the small ones, and socially I like the bigger ones.

Let's not forget that you'll also be reuniting with Tom Baker for some new Fourth Doctor stories.

I'm delighted! I am really fond of Tom Baker! I'm thrilled to bits! I'm really, really sad that Nick Courtney won't be joining us, because I never got to play a **Doctor Who** scene with him. I did lots of conventions and got to know him very well, but I was rather hoping he'd make an appearance in some of these stories.

Finally, what else are you working on?

I'm currently playing Jocasta in Steven Berkoff's **Oedipus**, which I found quite a challenge, to say the least, and today I rehearsed for **Doc Martin**; I'm about to become the mother-in-law from Hell in **Doc Martin** for five episodes, which I'm absolutely thrilled about. I couldn't have a better birthday present!

Drama Showcase: *Pulling Faces is out this month*



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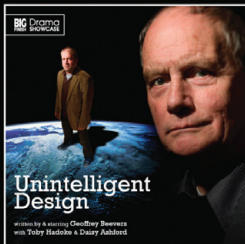
NOT A WELL WOMAN
Written by & starring Katy Manning
Out: March 2011



PULLING FACES
Starring Louise Jameson
with Colin Baker
Out: April 2011



**IN CONVERSATION WITH
AN ACID BATH MURDERER**
Written by & starring Nigel Fairs
with Louise Jameson and Richard Franklin
Out: May 2011



UNINTELLIGENT DESIGN
Written by & starring Geoffrey Beavers
with Toby Meador
Out: June 2011

HOME A CLONE

DEREK CARLYLE AND ANDREW FETTES GIVE THEIR THOUGHTS ON GETTING INSIDE THE RUBBERY SKIN OF TWO OF HEROES OF SONTAR'S ANTAGONISTS

How familiar were you with the Sontarans when you took the role?

Derek Carlyle: I have a vague recollection of the original Sontarans from the television but aside from that I only know the current interpretations. My boys are both big **Doctor Who** fans and a great source of information, even if it comes with a modern twist! I watched various wonderful YouTube clips including the very first appearance of the Sontarans when Linx (Kevin Lindsay) arrives in that fantastic spaceship and tunes in his translation device. Top stuff! Also, talking to friends who know far more about **Doctor Who** than I do and could help me with the history, culture and attitude of these incredibly single minded and belligerent beings helped.

Andrew Fettes: When first asked to play a Sontaran I cast my mind back to those bluff old warriors and smiled, as I always remembered them with affection. I had seen episodes of the Doctor and Sontarans and had a quick YouTube trip down memory lane and was not disappointed; there they were in all their glory.

How would you describe your particular Sontaran?

DC: That was quite confusing on first reading. The storyline being what it is, a lot of the Sontarans are unusually flawed. Until this became clear I was reading it with the legacy of the Sontarans in mind and thinking Vend is a disgrace to the empire and, frankly, a bit of a wuss! However, when all became clear, I



started to see more of who he is and actually warmed to him. He's quite a confused misfit really. Aware of his rank and position and the expectation of the empire, he feels awkward, embarrassed and weak when faced with his true feelings about doing battle and facing danger for the glory of Sontarans. Not 'normal' for a Sontaran. He's a lover not a fighter!

AF: My particular Sontaran, Clun, is an old campaigner, a hoary old veteran whose memory of past battles and campaigns proves of value to the Doctor. However, as with many Sontarans, his ability is somewhat hampered by his stubborn single-minded nature, ie all Sontarans are right and everybody else is wrong – including, very often, other Sontarans.

What were your favourite aspects of the role?

DC: That contradiction between superficial expectation, warrior training/breeding and Vend's own vulnerability. He tries hard to bluff it out but when faced with genuine peril he crumbles pretty quickly and that's fun to play.

AF: He is a little more stable than most Sontarans, so I rather liked him and there seemed to be a fatherly quality about him which I found rather appealing.

What kind of camaraderie was formed by five Big Finish old hands getting together at last?

DC: Well, it's always a good atmosphere at the recordings and this was no exception. It's quite unusual, however, for so many people to be playing this style of character and it was good fun working out the voices and especially doing the wild tracks. The more outrageous the voice, reactions and vocal effects that are required, the more vulnerable, exposed and silly you can feel. If you're all in it together then it's not nearly so intimidating and can be wonderfully silly. It was a lot of fun and there was plenty of scurrilous activity but the chief protagonists shall remain nameless. You know who you are, gents!

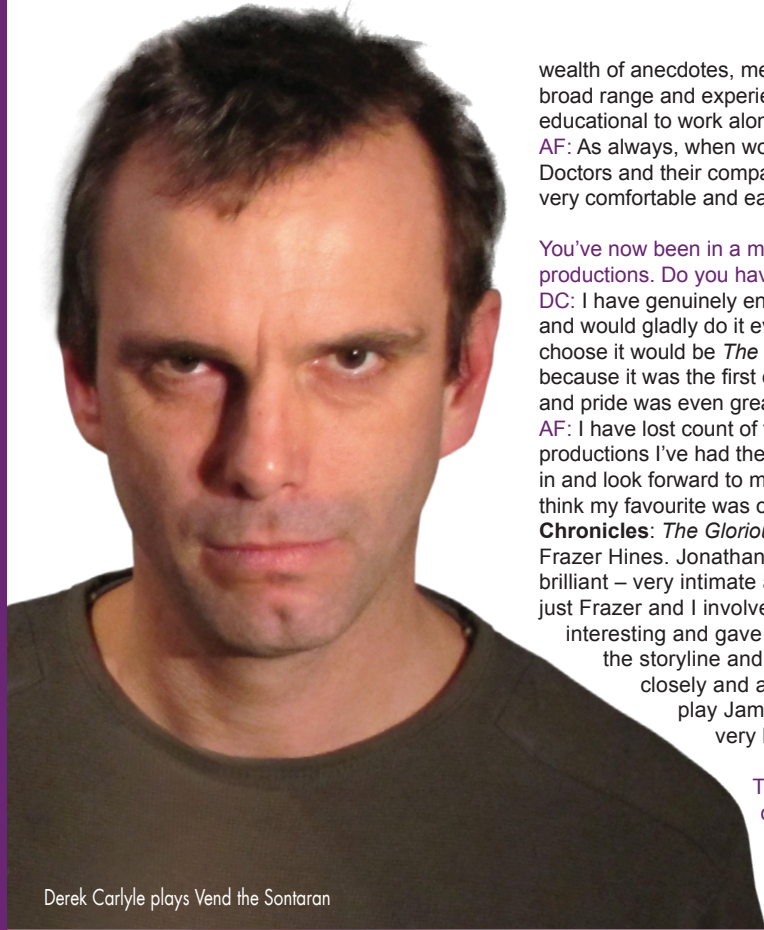


AF: It was great to work with a bunch of old 'voice-mongers', and once in our Sontaran roles the recording was enormous fun. It would be wrong of me to single out any of us for praise or criticism during recording, it would be fair to say we and our respective Sontarans were all equally badly behaved, with a lot of spontaneous corpsing, and equally brilliant. I think the Sontaran military choir in particular deserves special mention for its handling of very tricky harmony work and lyrics. I feel a Christmas number one calling, though not in any charts we know.

DC: Yes. I would strongly advise Simon Cowell to sign us all up before someone gets in first!

What was it like working with the Eighties TARDIS team of Peter, Janet, Mark and Sarah?

DC: It's always a privilege to work with actors I know from programmes or shows I've enjoyed. A lot of actors from that generation also went through the rep system which, apart from a



Derek Carlyle plays Vend the Sontaran

wealth of anecdotes, means they have a really broad range and experience. It's inspiring and educational to work alongside actors like that. **AF:** As always, when working with any of the Doctors and their companions it is a joy and a very comfortable and easy experience.

You've now been in a multitude of Big Finish productions. Do you have a favourite?

DC: I have genuinely enjoyed every single one and would gladly do it every day! If I had to choose it would be *The Death Collectors*, purely because it was the first one and the excitement and pride was even greater.

AF: I have lost count of the number of Big Finish productions I've had the pleasure to be involved in and look forward to many more (hint!) but I think my favourite was one of the **Companion Chronicles**: *The Glorious Revolution* with Frazer Hines. Jonathan Morris's script was brilliant – very intimate and fast-paced. With just Frazer and I involved, the recording was interesting and gave us time to explore the storyline and characters and work closely and accurately. I also got to play James II, a monarch I knew very little about.

Thank you very much, chaps!

Doctor Who: Heroes of Sontar is out this month



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FORTHCOMING RELEASES

APRIL 2011

- Doctor Who: Heroes of Sontar** (146, Fifth Doctor/Tegan/Turlough/Nyssa)
Doctor Who: The Lost Stories Thin Ice (2.3, Seventh Doctor & Ace)
Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles The Sentinels of the New Dawn (5.10, Third Doctor)
Drama Showcase 2 Pulling Faces (Louise Jameson)
Mervyn Stone 1: Geek Tragedy by Nev Fountain (Paperback)
Mervyn Stone 2: DVD Extras Include: Murder by Nev Fountain (Paperback)
Mervyn Stone 3: Cursed Among Sequels by Nev Fountain (Paperback)
Caustic Comedies The Stageplays by Robert Shearman (Paperback)

MAY 2011

- Doctor Who: Kiss of Death** (147, Fifth Doctor/Tegan/Turlough/Nyssa)
Doctor Who: The Lost Stories Crime of the Century (2.4, Seventh Doctor & Raine)
Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles Ferril's Folly (5.11, Fourth Doctor)
Doctor Who: Short Trips Volume 3 (2 CDs, various readers)
Drama Showcase 3 In Conversation with an Acid Bath Murderer (Nigel Fairs)
Dark Shadows 15 - The Blind Painter (Roger Davis, Nicola Bryant)
Dark Shadows 16 - The Death Mask (Jerry Lacy, Lara Parker)

JUNE 2011

- Doctor Who: Rat Trap** (148, Fifth Doctor/Tegan/Turlough/Nyssa)
Doctor Who: The Lost Stories Animal (2.5, Seventh Doctor & Raine)
Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles The Cold Equations (5.12, First Doctor)
Jago and Litefoot Series 3 Box Set (Four full cast adventures)
Drama Showcase 4 Unintelligent Design (Geoffrey Beevers)
Dark Shadows 17 - The Creeping Fog (David Selby, Matthew Waterhouse)
Dark Shadows 18 - The Lost Girl (Kathryn Lee Scott)

JULY 2011

- Doctor Who: Robophobia** (149, Seventh Doctor)
Doctor Who: The Lost Stories Earth Aid (2.6, Seventh Doctor & Raine)
Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles Tales from the Vault (6.01, First, Second, Third and Fourth Doctors)
Dark Shadows 19 - The Poisoned Soul (Nancy Barrett)
Dark Shadows 20 - The Carrion Queen (Lara Parker, Jerry Lacy)
Everyone's Just So Special by Robert Shearman (Special Leatherbound, Leatherbound and Hardback)

AUGUST 2011

- Doctor Who: Recorded Time and Other Stories** (150, Sixth Doctor and Peri)
Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles The Rocket Men (6.02, First Doctor)
Doctor Who: Short Trips Volume 4 (2 CDs, various readers)
Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles The Specials Box Set (*The Three Companions, The Mists of Time, Freakshow*)
Dark Shadows 21 - The Crimson Pearl

SEPTEMBER 2011

- Doctor Who: The Doomsday Quatrain** (151, Seventh Doctor)
Doctor Who: House of Blue Fire (152, Seventh Doctor)
Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles The Memory Cheats (6.03, Second Doctor)

OCTOBER 2011

- Doctor Who TBA** (153, Doctor TBA)
Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles The Many Deaths of Jo Grant (6.04, Third Doctor)
Doctor Who: The Lost Stories The Elite (3.1, Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)
Sherlock Holmes: The Final Problem/The Empty House (2.1)

NOVEMBER 2011

- Doctor Who TBA** (154, Doctor TBA)
Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles The Child (6.05, Fourth Doctor)
The Big Finish Companion Volume 1 by Richard Dinnick (hardback)
Doctor Who: The Lost Stories Hexagora (3.2, Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)
Sherlock Holmes: The Reification of Hans Gerber (2.2)

DECEMBER 2011

- Doctor Who TBA** (154, Doctor TBA)
Doctor Who Subscriber Special (Doctor TBA)
Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles TBA (6.06, Doctor TBA)
Doctor Who: The Lost Stories The Children of Seth (3.3, Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)
Sherlock Holmes: The Hound of the Baskervilles (2.3)
Graceless Series 2 Box Set

JANUARY 2012

- Doctor Who TBA** (155, Doctor TBA)
Doctor Who: The Fourth Doctor Adventures TBA (1.1, Fourth Doctor and Leela)
Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles TBA (6.06, Doctor TBA)
Sherlock Holmes: The Tangled Skein (4.4)



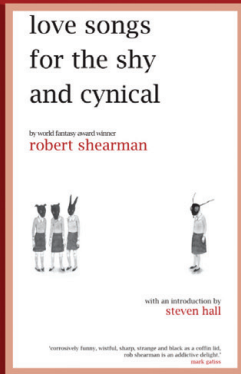
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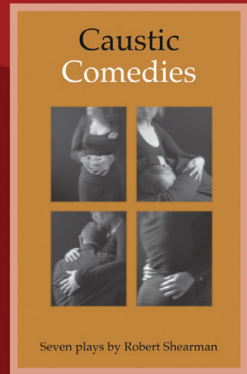


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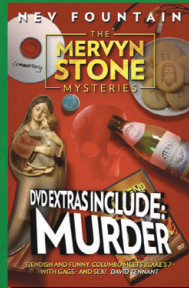
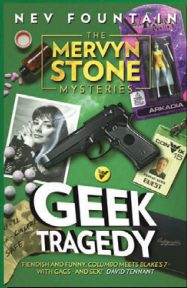
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