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DIMENSIONS

2014



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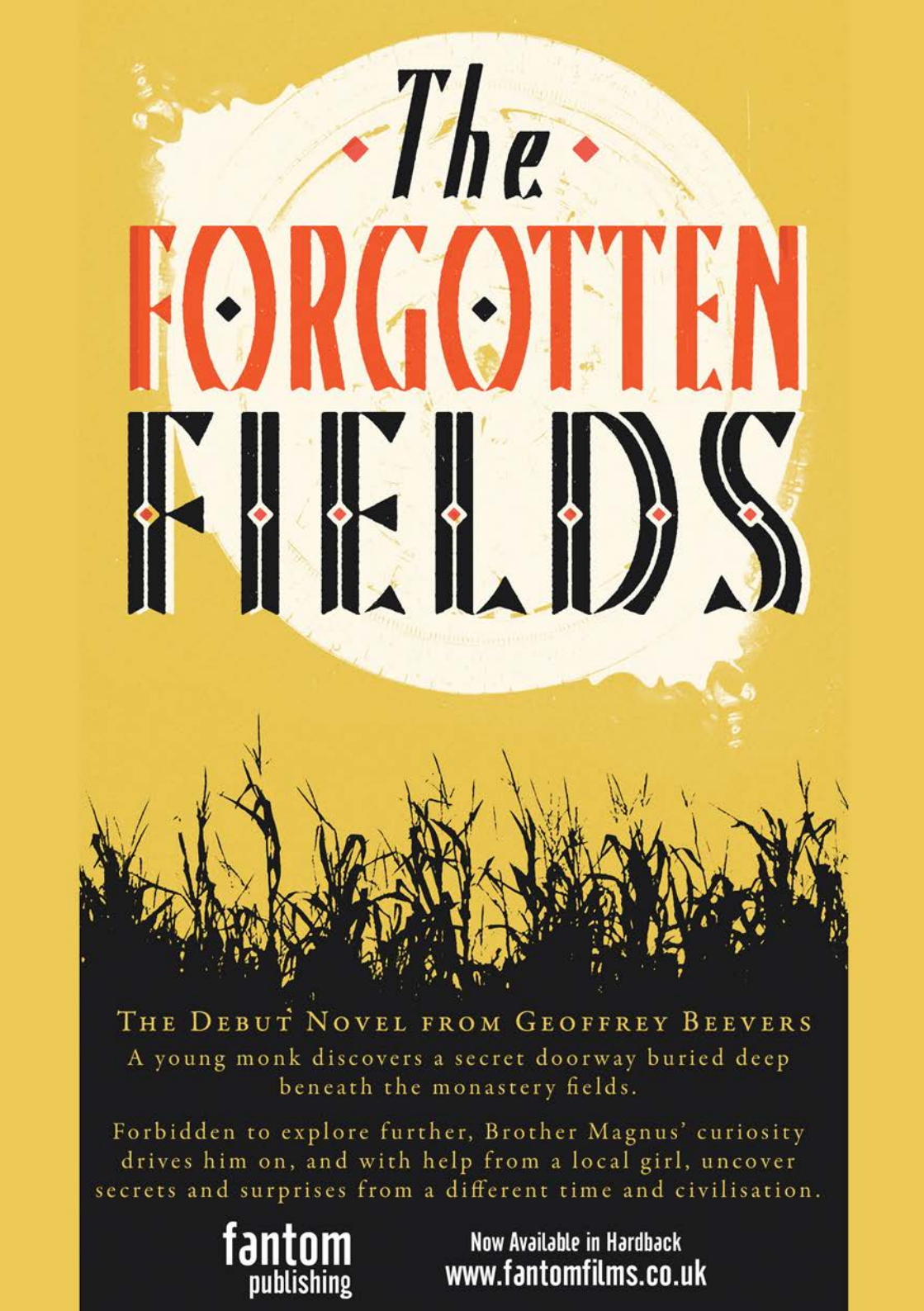
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SNEAK PREVIEWS AND WHISPERS

DOCTOR WHO: THE HIGHEST SCIENCE

Following on from the success of 2012's *Love and War*, Big Finish is once again dipping its toe into Virgin territory with another adaptation of a *Doctor Who* *New Adventure* from the 1990s.

December 2014 sees the release of *The Highest Science*, based on the brilliant debut novel of Gareth Roberts. "It was an obvious choice," says producer Cavan Scott. "Not only is it one of the first solo outings for companion Bernice Summerfield, it also introduced the Chelonians, the giant, cybernetic war-mongering tortoises that became synonymous with the *New Adventures*."

Breathing life into the savage shell-heads is Tom Bell, best known as Jathro in *Wizards vs Aliens* and the dome-headed quiz-master of *Ludus*, CBB's new interactive quiz show. "Tom came to the studio armed with a well-loved, extremely dog-eared copy of *The Highest Science*," remembers Cavan. "He even managed to get a little lettuce-chewing into his performance of General Fakrid, the leader of the Chelonians."

Homicidal tortoises aren't the only challenge the Doctor and Benny face as they explore the legendary planet of Sakkrat. Shelducker, the most evil man in the galaxy, has his eyes on the Highest Science, aided and abetted by master thief Rosheen. "Daniel Brocklebank puts his all into playing one of *Doctor Who*'s most despicable villains," reveals Cavan, "while Sinead Keenan, of *Being Human* fame, gives as good as she gets as Rosheen."

And she has a lot to cope with in a story that adds ancient temples, prog rock and a giant suicidal brain into the mix...

EDITORIAL

Ot can be tough at times being a nerd. Or geek. Or whatever term you prefer. Watching a TV show where they're laughing at Daleks and their inability to go upstairs when you know full well they can go wherever the heck they please. Seeing people point and laugh about Superman wearing his pants on the outside and dearly wanting to say, 'Ah, but since DC's New 52 reboot three years ago, he doesn't. It's Kryptonian armour now.' And you can't correct people either, because then you get weird looks, as if it's wrong that you know a particular fact (though I grant you that in the long-term, knowing the world's capital cities might be more handy than Superman's underwear placement). I once went to a press launch and got chatting to someone from the *Radio Times* who became pretty confident, once I'd broken out my nerd credentials, that I lived alone in my Mum's basement. I've never lived alone in my Mum's basement. She doesn't even have a basement, and I live in a nice flat with my girlfriend, Nat – whose birthday it is as I write this.

That's another area of trickiness: I know what I'd like for my birthday, and quite often feel that that's what I'm getting for Nat. It's hard to adjust the mindset. This year, for instance, there was a small David Tennant vinyl figure among her gifts. Luckily, that's also the kind of thing Nat likes (because she's awesome), though I do feel sometimes that despite her confirmations that I've bought things she appreciates, she might one day want something... nice. A bit of jewellery, a necklace, a bunch of flowers, that sort of thing. I tend to leave those things to her female friends; they have a better handle on it.

Now, recently I went to the London screening of *The Enemy of the World* and *The Web of Fear*. I'd deliberately not seen them prior to that point, but what a joy it was to appreciate them with others. There was laughter, there was a bit of chuckling at dodgy bits of dialogue, but overall the feeling was one of such enthusiasm and affection. It extended to the Toby Hadoke-led Q&A afterwards, where the host of our superb *Who's Round* podcasts – we're past fifty now, check them out! – allowed his guests to talk without interruption and regale the audience with fun reminiscences from the past without making fun or over-explaining. He just assumed the audience had a bit of specialist knowledge and those who didn't could make the leap. I like being a part of that sort of appreciative fandom, and I love that it's one that Big Finish has a share of. Long may the nerds secretly reign.

PAUL SPRAGG

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THE FIFTH DOCTOR REBOOT

PETER DAVISON TAKES TIME OUT OF LAZING ABOUT IN THE GREEN ROOM TO TALK TO PAUL SPRAGG ABOUT THE NEW FIFTH DOCTOR TRILOGY AND HIS FUTURE PLANS

Hi Peter. While I'd love to hear about your latest trilogy with Sarah Sutton as Nyssa, there's some unfinished business. For *The Light at the End*, I asked everyone two questions and put the answers in *Vortex*, but you weren't available to answer them. So here's your chance... Firstly: without **Doctor Who**, you would be... what?

■ Without **Doctor Who**, I would be an actor, I guess. Hopefully, still. Just doing other stuff. Probably no one would know my name. I would be referred to as 'that bloke in that series there'. For years, until I did **Doctor Who**, I was commonly

known as 'the bloke in the vet series'. So I suppose I may have moved on from there. Hopefully I will have worked, and I would be 'the bloke in the series about the people who won all that money' or 'the bloke in the series about the university'. I'd be one of those I think, probably. Funnily enough, I saw a documentary recently in America about actors – not unsuccessful actors, actors who work quite a lot, who you will see in various series – but no one ever knows their name. You see them – and I recognized all of them – but I couldn't have told you anything about them.



OUT THIS MONTH!

MOONFLESH

One wouldn't normally expect to find elephants, gorillas and rhinoceroses roaming free in Suffolk in the year 1911. One wouldn't normally expect to find an extra-dimensional police box at the same time/space location either. Two aliens, named the Doctor and Nyssa, exit said box, only to find themselves pursued by a hungry lioness – for they've landed in the private hunting grounds of the famous explorer Nathaniel Whitlock, who's brought together a motley group of friends and acquaintances for a weekend's shooting.

But one of Whitlock's guests isn't all they seem. One of them wants the secrets of the Moonflesh, the mystic mineral looked after by Whitlock's retainer, a Native American known as Silver Crow. Because the Moonflesh is reputed to have the power to call down spirits from another realm...

...and soon, the hunters will become the hunted.

Written by Mark Morris

Peter Davison (The Doctor)

Sarah Sutton (Nyssa)

Tim Bentinck (Nathaniel Whitlock)

Rosanna Miles (Phoebe Whitlock)

John Banks (Silver Crow)

Francesca Hunt (Hannah Bartholemew)

Hugh Fraser (Edwin Tremayne)

Geoffrey Breton (Hector Tremayne)



“SOME IMPOSTER COMES IN AND DRESSES UP IN YOUR COSTUME AND SITS UP AND SUDDENLY YOU ARE NO LONGER THE DOCTOR.”

I think *Doctor Who* really was something I got past, rather than a thing that elevated me. I think it did mean that people knew my name, because your name is up there, but most of the parts I've got subsequently have not been because of *Doctor Who*. If anything, they've been because of *All Creatures [Great and Small]*. So I don't think it would have made that much difference.

I don't mean to be rude about *Doctor Who*; I'm very glad I did it, because it's made all sorts of other things possible, and the fact that we're now celebrating the fiftieth anniversary and I'm part of that iconic, selected bunch of people who are one of the Doctors is great and I love it. But I do feel in my mind that I survived *Doctor Who* – it didn't affect me in the end.

What's your one overriding *Doctor Who* memory?

■ I don't know that I have a moment, it's just that feeling that you're kind of hugely identified with the outfit and when you're walking around and you're filming, everyone is pointing and



Above: Peter Davison and Sarah Sutton
Inset: Tim Bentinck and Francesca Hunt

everyone knows about you. I've seen it later, and probably in an amplified way, with David Tennant; it's like a magnet. And so all the time I was doing it, I very much felt an instant charisma that then sort of dies away a bit when you leave. You're still left with the afterglow, fortunately, but it fades away a bit.

I suppose the most poignant moment is that final moment. You make the decision to leave **Doctor Who**, and you're very happy with that decision, you think you've made the right one – and I think I did make the right decision to leave – but then there's something hugely poignant and very, very tough about that final afternoon where some imposter comes in and dresses up in your costume and sits up and suddenly you are no longer the Doctor. And it's very, very hard, that. It's really hard. You just sit and think, 'No. No!

“I'D SUDDENLY FIND MYSELF IN INDIANA OR CHICAGO AND WOULDN'T QUITE REMEMBER HOW I'D GOT THERE.”

That was not meant to happen! And I know that David, in the event, when it came to it, found very much the same thing. That although he knew it was the right decision, he found that day probably the worst of his whole time as an actor, the fact that you're handing over the keys, and in the end part of you doesn't want to do it.

Right then, on to the new trilogy. You're down to one companion again!

■ Yes, I am. I like, as I think has been noted, Nyssa as a companion and she's kind of underestimated in terms of she's a very bright, intelligent companion to have around, who doesn't just stand around going, 'Help me, Doctor' – although she does fill that capacity admirably well. Although I miss having Janet [Fielding, Tegan] and Mark [Strickson, Turlough] and occasionally now Matthew [Waterhouse, Adric], it's quite nice sometimes to have one companion.

Nyssa does seem a bit more lippy than usual in these stories.

■ She's standing in for Janet, isn't she! That's what I'm saying; she's a little bit more of a solid companion than people give her credit for sometimes.

It also means you've got a bit more of the meat of the storyline, as recently you've been sharing the limelight with three companions.

■ I actually quite like that, because I'm a very lazy actor, and I like having time off! What happens, oddly, when there's only one other companion, is very often we get separated and then we go off on our own little streams and we meet back up. Also, I'm more focused on who I'm trying to find. Sometimes when there's three of us in there, you get a bit confused about who's lost and who isn't lost and...

Just hope they'll all reappear by the end?

■ They'll probably turn up in Amsterdam somewhere...



OUT IN MAY!

DOCTOR WHO: TOMB SHIP

WRITTEN BY GORDON RENNIE & EMMA BEEBY

The TARDIS brings the Doctor and Nyssa to a vast pyramid, floating in space. A tomb ship – the last resting place of the God-King of the Arrit, an incredibly advanced and incredibly ancient civilisation, long since extinct.

Those who seek the God-King will find death in their shadow. Death from below. Death from above. Death moving them back and forward, turning their own hearts against them. Because only the dead will survive.



OUT IN JUNE!

DOCTOR WHO: MASQUERADE

WRITTEN BY STEPHEN COLE

France, the year 1770: by special invitation, the famous 'Doctor', friend of Voltaire, arrives at the lonely estate of the lovely Marquise de Rimdelle – once a hostess to the highest of high society, now isolated by the strange, pernicious mist that lingers round the countryside.

But there's more in that fog than mere vapour, confesses the Marquise's strange niece to the Doctor's ward, Nyssa. She senses some uncanny machine circling the fringes of the estate, in the space between the shadows. Watching. Always watching. She's given it a name: 'The Steamroller Man'.



Above (clockwise from bottom left): Peter Davison, Hugh Fraser, John Banks, Francesca Hunt, Tim Bentinck, Rosanna Miles, Geoffrey Breton and Sarah Sutton

Interestingly, bar Erimem, you've not really had a 'Big Finish-created' companion.

■ No, I haven't really! It's odd isn't it? Why is that? Is it because mine keep stubbornly turning up, my original ones? It's always nice to get the occasional new character thrown in your direction, although I do like my old team.

How was the fiftieth anniversary for you?

■ It was very good in the end. I was slightly trepidatious about the actual fiftieth anniversary show at the ExCel, simply because I didn't think there was enough time set aside for us to come in contact with the number of fans that were there. But there was a lot of other stuff going on, so they probably didn't mind about that; we certainly did all our panels to an enormous number of people. I think generally people enjoyed it and that's really the only criteria. It's not for us to enjoy; you kind of give up your life – for a financial reward! – but you give up your life nevertheless just making sure that people who are there, who've paid a fairly large amount of money, have a nice weekend.

I was so busy, what with various conventions and also making this thing that at last, after so many months, I can talk about, the *Five(ish) Doctors* thing. We had to fit in days of filming on that in between people going off for conventions here and conventions there, so it wasn't easy. But it took up an enormous amount of time, and I think an enormous amount of energy, if I'm honest. I didn't quite realize how much time I was devoting to it. So it went in a sort of hazy, kaleidoscopic piece of chaos, really, for the whole year. I'd suddenly find myself in Indiana



or Chicago and wouldn't quite remember how I'd got there. And all the time fielding this question, 'Were we going to be in the fiftieth anniversary special?' And of course I knew we weren't going to be in it, speaking for the majority of the classic Doctors, and we had been told not to say anything. But unfortunately, as far as fans are concerned, when you say nothing they take it as meaning a positive – because they're optimistic, I suppose. So every time we said, 'I can't tell you if we're in it or not', they just thought, 'That means you're in it'. And even when we were photographed in the course of protesting outside the BBC about our lack of inclusion in the fiftieth, I noted on the forums that still meant, 'Oh, that means they're in it because they're just trying to distract us'. So in the end, I think all of us got round to saying, 'We're not in it' in the hope that that might take people's expectations down. I didn't mind not being in it, because if I had been in it, I wouldn't have been able to make the other thing that I was working on. So from my point of view, I didn't care at all.

The response to your short film, *The Five(ish) Doctors Reboot*, was very enthusiastic.

■ It really was quite overwhelming, the response to it. We were hopeful that it would fill a gap that was there, but it kind of did more than that perhaps, I think, because it was much more accessible to everyone than I had anticipated. I thought that people who weren't fans would say, 'I don't understand that', and while obviously there were bits they missed if you weren't major fans of the series, it kind of didn't matter. And so yeah, I was very, very pleased with the way it turned out and the way it went down.

“THERE ARE LOTS OF COMMENTS ONLINE, AND BEEN SENT TO ME PERSONALLY, SAYING, ‘YOU’VE GOT TO DO A SERIES WITH SYLVESTER AND COLIN.’”

It was so popular, in fact, that at last year's Chicago TARDIS event, you stayed on stage while me, Ken Bentley and Dick Mills were wondering when we got to come on for our panel...

■ That's right. Well, I know that you were worried about not having many questions to answer so I thought I'd just take up a bit of your time!

Do you have plans for more videos?

■ There are lots of comments online, and been sent to me personally, saying, 'You've got to do a series with Sylvester and Colin,' or extend that idea, but in a way I think that would be a shame, because we've kind of now done the definitive: Colin, Sylvester and myself, searching to be in the fiftieth. I just don't quite know where you go with it. I have other ideas which I'm working on in my head, because I so enjoyed writing it and directing it. As an actor you spend an awful lot of time just basically sitting around doing nothing, wasting time really. And there are moments in this when I had the cameraman saying to me, 'How about this shot here?' and 'Let's try and do a shot from here and a shot from here and a shot from here' and then I have the location man saying, 'Can we just go and have a look at this set for this afternoon?' and I'd go, 'Yeah, okay.' And I'd look across at Colin and Sylvester and they'd be sitting there reading the newspaper and sipping cups of tea. And while on one level you can be very envious of that, the fact is, what we do as actors, most of our lives, is kill the time between scenes we're doing. And it was really exciting to be involved all the time with something. Tiring, but nevertheless really exciting. So if I could do more of that, that would be very nice. But it would have to be the right thing, I think.

Does that mean you'll be pitching to the BBC imminently?

■ I don't know about that. There are a couple of ideas I've had. I suppose I'm slightly in a state of elation about them; I'm probably supremely over-optimistic about the fact that I'll present the BBC with an idea and they'll go, 'Yes! We've gotta have this idea!' In fact, they'll probably go, 'No, sorry, go away'. But it's an interesting idea I came up with, but, once again, I can't tell you anything about it! **VORTEX**

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SEVEN'S SEMINAL SCRIPTERS

JAGO & LITEFOOT RETURN THIS MONTH FOR MORE INVESTIGATIONS INTO UNSAVOURY UNDERTAKINGS. THE WRITERS PROVIDE A LITTLE PREVIEW OF WHAT'S TO COME...



Above top: Lisa Bowerman and Louise Jameson
Above bottom: Christopher Benjamin and Trevor Baxter

“Of course, Jago and Litefoot would have to play Holmes and Watson... but which way around?”

JONATHAN MORRIS THE MONSTROUS MENAGERIE

I think *The Monstrous Menagerie* is my best Jago & Litefoot story. Whenever I have a crisis of confidence in my own ability as a writer, which is roughly every forty-five minutes or so, I like to read through one of my older, better scripts to remind myself that I can still do it (or that I could do it once). And ever since I wrote *The Monstrous Menagerie*, that has been the script I've turned to for reassurance and inspiration. It was just one of those occasions where I had a very good, strong idea for a story where all the ideas meshed together beautifully and where, in writing it, the characters came to life and wrote all their dialogue for me.

The idea was simple: to have our heroes meet Arthur Conan Doyle. The Jago & Litefoot stories are set during the 1890s,

at the point in Doyle's life where he had just 'slayed' his most successful creation, Sherlock Holmes, because he was getting in the way of 'better things'. The thought of Doyle being flooded with letters from irate fans begging him to bring back Holmes made me smile; the more things change, the more they stay the same. So I had a lot of fun writing Doyle as a very modern writer, resentful of a fanatical readership that is unappreciative of his serious literary endeavours. And, in particular, those people who insist on sending letters to Sherlock Holmes, even though he is both fictional and dead.

And that gave me my story. Why *did* Doyle kill off Sherlock Holmes – and what made him bring him back to life? Were any of his later adventures inspired by real-life events? Plus, of course, Jago and Litefoot would have to play Holmes and Watson... but which way around?

JAMES GOSS THE NIGHT OF A THOUSAND STARS

In which Henry Gordon Jago just wants a quiet evening in, but Leela's brought a haunted photograph to Earth and his friends must put the show on right here.

If you've ever hoped for a bit more Music Hall in Jago & Litefoot, then your wishes are granted. It is my pleasure to have the regulars bring you all the star turns. There's a magic lantern act, there are magic tricks, there's a sing-a-long, a freak show and there's even juggling. Yes. Juggling. On audio. That's a first, even for Big Finish.

This being Jago & Litefoot, there's also spooky supernatural menace, romance, heartbreak and a high body count. Henry Gordon Jago is the master of ceremonies on a night of spooky catastrophe which shows his friends in unusual lights. We discover that one of them is a killer and one of them is a surprisingly decent conjuror. But it's not who you think. And don't forget the juggling.

SIMON BARNARD AND PAUL MORRIS MURDER AT MOORSEY MANOR

In which Jago and Litefoot join a party of Sherlock Holmes aficionados at an isolated country house, and soon discover that truth is stranger than fiction as the house itself seems to turn against them...

The ongoing tale of Jago and Litefoot's life on the run takes a turn for the better, as they finally track down the one man who knows the truth about the crime for which they



Above: Trevor Baxter
Inset: Brian Protheroe and Steven Miller

stand accused. But how to gain access to the country house where the ex-Private Willis is working? Cue yet another change of identity, as our heroes gatecrash what turns out to be a gathering of Holmes fans. Yet just as things are going their way for once, the story takes another twist, and the assembled guests discover that Moorsey Manor has some rather unusual, not to say unpleasant, secrets.

The brief for this story was to produce a murder mystery in the classic style. We've done our best to play fair by the listener, who can play 'guess the murderer' and stand a decent chance of working it out. Certainly a better chance than the story's cast of Sherlock Holmes devotees, whose attempts to apply the Great Man's methods to the mysteries of Moorsey Manor leave much to be desired.

However, it wouldn't be **Jago & Litefoot** without an element of the fantastical and the grotesque, and as such we've done our best to put the 'foul' into 'Murder Most Foul'. If you ever wondered what a country house murder mystery would be like if told in the Grand Guignol style of **The Abominable Dr Phibes** or **Theatre of Blood** – Agatha Christie meets Vincent Price – you may be about to find out...

“Henry Gordon Jago and Professor George Litefoot are quintessentially Victorian – as Victorian as smog and Sherlock Holmes and Jack the Ripper...”

JUSTIN RICHARDS THE WAX PRINCESS

In which Jago and Litefoot's quest to clear their names leads them to the terrible truth about Jack the Ripper...

Henry Gordon Jago and Professor George Litefoot are quintessentially Victorian – as Victorian as smog and Sherlock Holmes and Jack the Ripper... so it was always only a matter of time before their paths crossed. The problem, of course, is that the murders of Jack the Ripper predate *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*. Jago mentions Jack the Ripper to Casey in episode one. So how could our heroes encounter the world's most notorious serial killer? Or perhaps it's the effects of his murderous rampage that will have repercussions for them?

One of the fun things about writing for the **Jago & Litefoot** series is finding ways of working in real historical events and characters. It gives the London they inhabit more depth and credibility. So we've met Oscar Wilde and Sigmund Freud, amongst others. And in this series they'll be meeting

some other genuine Victorians. In *The Wax Princess*, they'll meet perhaps the most Victorian Victorian of all. But more important to our heroes is the question of whether they'll be able to clear their names and retrieve their reputations after the events of the previous series. Series seven is 'Jago and Litefoot on the run'. And series eight – well, you'll have to wait and see. But *The Wax Princess* ends on one of our most intriguing cliffhangers so far. I don't know about you, but I can't wait! **VORTEX**



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SALLY FORTH

SALLY KNYVETTE IS BACK AS JENNA ONCE AGAIN IN THIS MONTH'S **BLAKE'S 7** RELEASE, **MIRROR**. PAUL SPRAGG SAT DOWN FOR A CHAT ABOUT IT

Hi Sally. Obvious question first: what's it like being back with the full **Blake's 7** cast?

It's great. Of course it's great. We have so much fun and we slot very easily back into our old characters and relationships that we had when we were working together thirty-something years ago. It reminds you how quickly time passes, but it also takes you back into that wonderful, lovely, youthful, foolish sort of frame of mind. Yeah – great.

I always get ribbed, but that's fine. I can bat back in my own way. We have a really good time here. It's probably a lot easier than it used to be.

I'm enjoying it a lot more now. I didn't enjoy it in those days. I felt far too insecure and didn't feel very confident in what I was doing. I feel very relaxed now doing it, and I also think there's marginally better writing! I left, as you well know, after year two because I was just so fed up with not getting decent writing, but everybody knows that story.

And you're still happy with that decision?

Oh God, yes. Definitely. I went to university and university obviously made my life very different. It educated me for a

“WE HAVE A REALLY GOOD TIME HERE. IT'S PROBABLY A LOT EASIER THAN IT USED TO BE”

start, and has led to me doing all sorts of very interesting things in my life. I've had the ability to be a teacher, to be a director, and to work in areas of things that I wouldn't have probably ever felt I was capable of doing without having a sound education. And so I think it was very good I did that, yeah.

I threw away a television career on one level, by leaving at a very pivotal stage in my career. I remember I was offered a series with Patrick Stewart at my first term at university in a thing called *Maybury*, and I was going to be playing his sidekick. I can't remember the name of her character now. I was very tempted to take it and I thought, 'I can't possibly do this and university, and I've done so much work to get to university.' So I didn't do it. So who knows? The road less



BLAKE'S 7: MIRROR

BY PETER ANGHELIDES

Orac has tracked Space Major Kade – the man who killed Jenna's father – to the planet Vere.

Jenna wants her revenge, but that must wait.

Blake needs her to pilot the Liberator to Stellarid Four, where he has a small window of opportunity to solve the mystery of a new Federation device.

It's a daring plan. And it could be the beginning of the end for the Liberator crew.

travelled. What would have happened had I taken that? Maybe I'd have ended up in *Star Trek*! Who knows? But you've always got to stand by your decisions and generally I'm extremely glad I did what I did, yes.

And now I'm back! So I can't get away from it, can I? And enjoying it infinitely more than I did in the past. It's good fun, it's lovely to see everybody, and working on radio's obviously fun and it's quick. I have been told by someone in studio that vocally I don't sound a lot different. I hope that's true! One is, in a sense, ageless on the radio and people have an image of what they think you were. The fact that I'm no longer that age – I'm certainly not twenty-seven any more! – that doesn't matter. Anyone who's my age feels twenty-seven inside.

What do you make of today's script?

I've got less to do in this one. On the other hand, I think there's the spirit of the old show in this one today. I would

“I HAVE BEEN TOLD BY SOMEBODY IN THE STUDIO THAT I DON'T SOUND A LOT DIFFERENT. I HOPE THAT'S TRUE! ONE IS, IN A SENSE, AGELESS ON THE RADIO...”

love to see Jenna getting some proactive roles in terms of taking charge in a really difficult situation. I mean, today I've just been getting petrified and screaming that Blake's going to kill me; she's gone a bit wimpy! I personally think she could be tougher than that, I think she would fight back. She's gone all girly again. So I hope, just for the record, that she doesn't continue down that line; I hope she becomes more stoical and tough and a survivor. She is a survivor.



There's always talk of a revival, but it's been said SyFy is remaking *Blake's 7*. Could it come back?

I'm dying to find out more about it, I'd love to be in it! If it really goes ahead, which there's always a big question mark about because there's been talk for so many years about these things, and seeing is believing. I really would hope that if it does go ahead we will have some part in it. I'm not sure what that'll be, but I think it could be very interesting, because most of us are still acting and would love to play an alter ego of a younger character. I think

it could go well. Sci-fi fans out there are keen for more sci-fi; it's very popular at the moment and seems to be thriving. I would have thought, with present-day production values and updated stories, it would be absolutely snatched up. I thought the stories were always good in *Blake's 7*, but we're obviously living in a different age now. To be honest, I get so many letters on a regular basis thanking me and saying how much they love *Blake's 7*, I think people would be delighted if we did a film. However, I'm not deluded; I don't expect to play the young Jenna! **VORTEX**

TRANSPORT OF DE-FRIGHT

WRITER ALAN FLANAGAN AND GUEST ACTOR GREG PATMORE TAKE US STEAMING FULL SPEED AHEAD INTO THIS MONTH'S **DARK SHADOWS** RELEASE, **CARRIAGE OF THE DAMNED**



So Alan, what can you tell us about Carriage of the Damned? Since finding out that she is suffering from the werewolf curse, Sabrina Jennings has been hunting for a cure – and she thinks she may have found it. Unfortunately, it means climbing aboard a cross-country train trying to find the head of long-dead warlock Gerard Stiles, and coming face to face with the mysterious Hallie Stokes. When their carriage becomes separated from the rest of the train, the passengers on board are thrown into a panic, and then suspicion. And when they begin chanting one by one – "Forgive me, I wasn't myself" – Sabrina realises that she may have bitten off more than she can chew.

So who is Sabrina Jennings?

During the **Dark Shadows** TV series, Sabrina never seemed to encounter anything but bad luck. She entered the show

in a catatonic state, was going out with a werewolf, and her hair was pure white. Things haven't gotten much better for her of late, now that she has the werewolf curse and unwittingly murdered her husband – but now she thinks she may have found a cure. Writing for Sabrina and the actress Lisa Richards has been great fun because her character has undergone such a transformation, both figuratively and literally. When we meet her in *Carriage of the Damned* she's a very driven woman, very damaged, and it's exciting to see how she sparks off the other passengers aboard the Maine Overnight.

Is this your first audio play? Tell us about your writing career and how you got involved in Dark Shadows for Big Finish.

I've written for theatre for the past seven years, and over the past year I've written several short films for production – but



“THINGS HAVEN’T GOTTEN MUCH BETTER FOR [SABRINA] OF LATE, NOW THAT SHE HAS THE WEREWOLF CURSE AND UNWITTINGLY MURDERED HER HUSBAND.”

GREG PATMORE

Hello Greg. So, what can you tell us about Major Crawford Jacobs?

He’s a man with a past for sure... Some people might ask in what regiment he served and in which campaigns, some people might be curious as to his pedigree, regardless of his impeccably upper crust appearance... only he knows the truth!

You’ve played a few other roles in this series of **Dark Shadows**. How did you get involved?

Ah yes, a variety of characters including a lecherous drunk, a gay waiter, an obsessive football coach... and possibly an alien impersonator! I’ll leave it up to the audience to decide which is most like me! I got involved through producer Joe Lidster, with whom I’ve become good friends over the last year. Luckily, by the time he sobered up he’d already offered me the job.

So what’s next for you?

I’ll be popping up in guest roles in **Law & Order UK** with Bradley Walsh, also in **Vera** with Brenda Blethyn and in a new US spy series **The Assets**. And I’m very active on the new writing circuit in London too... a personal passion.

And finally, why should someone buy this story?

It’s as much fun as it’s possible to cram onto a CD. It’s got all the elements of a classic Agatha Christie whodunnit but with its tongue very firmly in its cheek throughout. There are some wonderful characters and a liberal splash of supernatural weirdness too.



writing for radio is a relatively recent turn for me. I started working with Big Finish as a script editor just over a year ago, which meant by the time my story rolled round I was completely up to speed on everything that was happening. Being a script editor is fantastic training as you get to give notes to other writers who are working through their drafts; now I’m just hoping my piece is up to scratch.

What else have you been up to and what’s next for Alan Flanagan?

At the moment I’m actually knee-deep in more **Dark Shadows**, as I’m writing four episodes for the next series – it’s going to be a heavily serialised piece, more similar to the original show, with some really meaty stories that I can’t wait to get

out there to listeners. My most recent

short films (**Offline** and **Super Brainy Zombies**) have racked up a couple of hundred thousand views on YouTube, while my new play **Dupont & Davenport** will premiere this May at the Dublin Gay Theatre Festival. My current pet project is a sci-fi noir feature which I’m hoping to complete over the next few months, while I continue to work as a script editor with Big Finish.

And finally, why should someone buy this story?

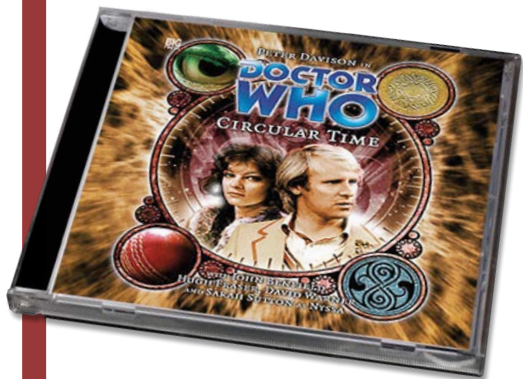
Because it’s set on a train, of course! Well, it’s inspired by **Murder on the Orient Express**, but with a very **Dark Shadows** feel, so if you like Agatha Christie and mysteries, you’ll love this. It’s a chance to catch up with Sabrina and Amy, as well as reintroducing Hallie Stokes and Gerard Stiles. And seriously, on the train element, it’s great to do a story with such a rich visual location, something they probably couldn’t have done on the original show. So yes, it’s a werewolf, and a head in a box, on a derailed train. Gold! **VORTEX**

DARK SHADOWS: CARRIAGE OF THE DAMNED IS AVAILABLE THIS MONTH ON CD AND DOWNLOAD FROM BIGFINISH.COM

DOCTOR WHO:

CIRCULAR TIME

KENNY SMITH IS A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS THIS MONTH AS HE LOOKS BACK ON CLASSIC FIFTH DOCTOR AND NYSSA STORY **CIRCULAR TIME**



The Fifth Doctor and Nyssa have been Big Finish stalwarts since virtually the word go, with Peter Davison having often spoken at conventions about how Nyssa was the ideal sparring partner for his Doctor with her enquiring mind, but who rarely had the chance to travel with him solo.

Although they only enjoyed just one adventure together before Tegan returned in *Arc of Infinity*, that gap after *Time-Flight* has been reaped by Big Finish – and a new trilogy of adventures featuring the Doctor and Nyssa begins this month.

In January 2007, a new format of play was released, *Circular Time*, featuring four one-part stories, a concept idea which has now become an annual feature in the Big Finish schedule.

It was written by Paul Cornell and Mike Maddox, with Paul saying, "I think the old-time **Doctor Who** format sprawls a bit now. It's hard to make four twenty-five-minute episodes interesting. It was one of those things I'd always been trying to persuade someone to do."

Mike met Paul at Greenbelt, a Christian arts festival, having invited him to speak about **Doctor Who**. He

says, "I didn't know Paul at this stage, although I'd loved his work for years. Those **New Adventures!** He wrote **British Summertime**, for goodness' sake, one of my favourite novels! Greenbelt loved him, of course. They packed out the venue he was speaking in to the point where they queued around the block beforehand, and we had to turn people away. They did the same thing the next day when we showed [new **Who** story] *Father's Day* in the cinema. They got the references, the themes of sacrifice and grace being written into history, and the whole thing just felt incredibly special. A few weeks later, Paul got back in touch and asked if I'd like to co-write his next audio. I was, to put it mildly, a bit shocked!"

Mike continues, "The story had already been approved, and so I'd have to write what had been agreed. There were two single episodes. One was an alien planet story about bird people (which came with a fairly detailed breakdown of characters and plot) and another was 'The Doctor meets Isaac Newton and gets arrested for forgery'. Paul wrote *Winter* and *Autumn*, I wrote *Spring* and *Summer*. Once we finished, we then swapped and added comments or made suggestions. *Winter* was so utterly beautiful that there was nothing I could think of to say about it other than how wonderful it was! Then came notes from Paul, bits from the editor, bits from both asking for this to be lengthened, this taken out, and so on.

"Paul's not only a wonderful writer, but he's also a brilliant human being. I loved the whole thing, start to finish." **VORTEX**

DOCTOR WHO: CIRCULAR TIME IS OUT NOW ON CD AND DOWNLOAD!

VORTEX MAIL

Just a quick query if I may? Do you know if it's been discussed whether to bring forward Lalla Ward's first season to 2015, thus evening out companions a bit (if you understand what I mean) as I presume Lalla will continue now, and if 'seasons' stay as they are, we will have two Leela seasons followed by two Romana seasons. Sorry, sounds a bit long-winded, but thought to ask direct as didn't want to open a can of worms discussion either on BF, Roobarbs or GB forums! And I know details can't be discussed, just wondered if the idea had been mooted?

Peregrine

Nick: Hi Peregrine. I'm afraid it wouldn't be possible for us to swap those seasons around, because of the order in which they've been recorded. The Romana stories just wouldn't be ready in time. I do take your point about getting two Leela seasons in a row, but the second one will feature K9 too. Also, in my view, you can never get enough Louise Jameson. She's brilliant.

I am compelled to write in order to praise you for the imaginative new **Doctor Who** ranges now being offered: the Hinchcliffe box, special releases such as *Trial of the Valeryad*, and above all, more adaptations of the **New Adventures** novels. I would like to put in a plug for an adaptation of my favorite **NDA**, Terrance Dicks' *Blood Harvest*, which is quite simply Terrance's finest story. Not only does it surpass its prequel, *State of Decay*, but it brilliantly portrays the Doctor and Ace posing as two shady nightclub owners in 1920s Chicago, and in cahoots with Al Capone! As an American (and academic), I appreciated Terrance's evocation of history and milieu (Big Finish has accomplished the same with releases like *The Glorious Revolution*). Colin Baker proved he could do a great 'wise-guy' American accent in *The Maltese Penguin*, so why not Al Capone?

Congrats also for continuing the Big Finish Classics line. **Treasure Island** was superb and, if anything, too short. With your company of great actors, why not take the plunge into Shakespeare? For example, **The Tempest**, a work of science fiction. Tom Baker was born to play Caliban. Likewise, Peter Davison = Gonzago and Sylvester (or Bonnie Langford?) = Ariel. Colin, Paul Darrow and Nick himself would make ideal comic villains. David Warner and Derek Jacobi have been great Prosperos in the past. And since most of these characters don't appear in the same

scenes together, it's not quite the scheduling nightmare it sounds...

Thank you for your dedication.

Dr Peter Yacovone (writing from China!)

Nick: Hi Peter, no plans to do *Blood Harvest* at the moment. Glad you enjoyed **Treasure Island**. The Classics range is a tricky one. It's very popular with those who buy it, but not many people buy it. We have to be very careful with what we choose and how we budget it. My gut feeling is that Big Finish listeners would not be that keen on Shakespeare. If you can prove otherwise, I'd be only too keen for us to do some. Also, all the people you mention are fairly costly cast members – not including me! – so it would be impossible to load a production with all those great names.

Hello Vortex!

Just like to say first off what a fantastic job you do, and I enjoy every single one of the releases I buy. I just have a few questions;

1. I don't like hanging plot threads, and **Iris Wildthyme – Series Four** ended on a whopper. I know old series must make way for new ones, but is there a chance the issue will be resolved in the main range with the help of the Doctor? Go on, lovey, say it will...

2. Will items in the bonus releases category of the BF website, ie *The Four Doctors* and *The Five Companions*, ever be released from their 'subscription exclusive' prison to be bought normally?

3. Are there any plans for a double Master release, starring the delightfully-nefarious Geoffrey Beavers and the whackily-sinister Alex Macqueen? We have seen so much multi-Doctor action recently, but what about his arch-nemesis? I think it would be truly terrifying!

Can't wait for the **Charlotte Pollard** series in May. Keep up the good work!

Ian Manning, EIRE

Nick: Hi Ian, here are your answers. 1) Paul Magrs, who created Iris, decided he didn't want Big Finish to produce any more **Iris Wildthyme** adventures. His decision, not ours. 2) We made a promise when we released *The Four Doctors* and *The Five Companions* that they would be subscriber incentives only. Having made that public promise, we can't really go back on it. 3) No plans currently for a face-off between Alex and Geoff. But we have certainly discussed this. Glad you're looking forward to Charley... I'm working on it now.

Please forgive the barrage of question but I'm keen to obtain further **Doctor Who**

audio stories and would like some further information to help me decide the best way to go about this.

I should be grateful if you could answer the following:

1. Is your new subscription rate a permanent fixture, or only going to be available for a limited time?
2. If I order a subscription of stories that have already been released (ie from story 51) would these be sent on a monthly basis or in one package?
3. Is it possible to purchase more than one subscription at a time (for example stories 51-62 and stories 63-74)?
4. Whilst there are over 100 stories that I am yet to purchase, I have previously taken advantage of offers you had and purchased, for example Dalek stories, that mean I would end up with a duplicate copy if I take out subscriptions in certain ranges. Would it be possible to purchase the same number of stories as a subscription but miss certain stories out? If so, would the price be at the same rate as a subscription?
5. If the answer to question four is no, is there an alternative to taking out subscriptions which means I can complete my back catalogue at a similar price to the subscriptions?

Once again, apologies for the bombardment of questions and many thanks in advance for your help.

Darren Elliott

Nick: Barrage of answers... 1) Our new subscription rate is permanent. We have no plans to change it. 2) If you order a subscription of older stories, you wouldn't have to wait for monthly intervals. They'd be sent all at once. 3) You can purchase as many subscriptions at a time as you like. You could even purchase the same subscription twice... although I appreciate there's no real reason to do that. 4) It is not possible to purchase subscriptions that skip certain stories. The main principle of subscriptions is to encourage people to purchase regularly on an ongoing basis. 5) Subscriptions are the bedrock of our business model. That money that comes in pays for our running costs, so undermining that by giving the same discounts for other random purchases wouldn't be financially prudent for us. Boring, I know. That said, if you wanted to make a really, really, unusually large purchase, you could contact our Sales people and see if we could offer a discount. No guarantees, but it's not beyond the realms of possibility.



APRIL 2014

Doctor Who: *Moonflash*
(185, Fifth Doctor and Nyssa)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures:
The Evil One (3.4, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles:
The War to End All Wars (8.10, First Doctor)

Jago & Litefoot: *Series Seven Box Set*

Blake's 7: *Mirror* (1.4, Full Cast)

Dark Shadows 42: *Carriage of the Damned*

MAY 2014

Doctor Who: *Tomb Ship*
(186, Fifth Doctor and Nyssa)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures:
Last of the Colophon (3.5, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles:
The Elixir of Doom (8.11, Third Doctor)

Blake's 7: *The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 8*

Blake's 7: *Cold Fury* (1.5, Full Cast)

Blake's 7: *Lucifer: Revelation* (Paul Darrow)

Charlotte Pollard: *Box Set 1*

Dark Shadows 43: *The Devil Cat*

Pathfinder Legends: *Rise of the Runelords –
The Skinsaw Murders* (1.2, Full Cast)

JUNE 2014

Doctor Who: *Masquerade*
(187, Fifth Doctor and Nyssa)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures:
Destroy the Infinite (3.6, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles:
Second Chances (8.12, Second Doctor)

Survivors: *Series One Box Set*

Blake's 7: *Caged* (1.6, Full Cast)

Dark Shadows 44: *The Darkest Shadow*

JULY 2014

Doctor Who:
Breaking Bubbles and Other Stories
(188, Sixth Doctor and Peri)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures:
The Abandoned (3.7, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

Counter-Measures: *Series 3 (Box Set)*

The Avengers – The Lost Episodes:
Volume 2 (Box Set)

Pathfinder Legends: *Rise of the Runelords –
The Hook Mountain Massacre* (1.3, Full Cast)

AUGUST 2014

Doctor Who: *Revenge of the Swarm*
(189, Seventh Doctor, Ace and Hex)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures:
Zygon Hunt (3.8, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

The Fifth Doctor Box Set
(Fifth Doctor, Adric, Nyssa and Tegan)

Blake's 7: *The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 9*

SEPTEMBER 2014

Doctor Who: *Mask of Tragedy*
(190, Seventh Doctor, Ace and Hex)

Doctor Who: *Signs and Wonders*
(191, Seventh Doctor, Ace and Hex)

Doctor Who - The Early Adventures:
Domain of the Voord (1.1, First Doctor)

Pathfinder Legends: *Rise of the Runelords –
Fortress of the Stone Giants* (1.4, Full Cast)

Big Finish Classics: *Frankenstein*

OCTOBER 2014

Doctor Who: *The Widow of Hurn* (192, TBA)

Doctor Who - The Early Adventures:
The Doctor's Tale (1.2, First Doctor)

The Worlds of Doctor Who *Box Set*

Jago & Litefoot: *Series Eight Box Set*

NOVEMBER 2014

Doctor Who: *Masters of Earth* (193, TBA)

Doctor Who - The Early Adventures:
The Bounty of Ceres (1.3, First Doctor)

Doctor Who: *Dark Eyes 3* (Eighth Doctor)

Blake's 7:
The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 10

Pathfinder Legends: *Rise of the Runelords –
Sins of the Saviors* (1.5, Full Cast)

DECEMBER 2014

Doctor Who: *TBA* (194, TBA)

Doctor Who - The Early Adventures:
An Ordinary Life (1.4, First Doctor)

Doctor Who: *Trial of the Valeyard*

Doctor Who: *The Highest Science*

JANUARY 2015

Doctor Who: *Mistfall* (195, TBA)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures:
TBA (4.1, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor
by Gareth Roberts
*Box Set: The English Way of Death/The
Romance of Crime*
(Fourth Doctor and Romana)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor
by Gareth Roberts:
The English Way of Death
(Fourth Doctor and Romana)

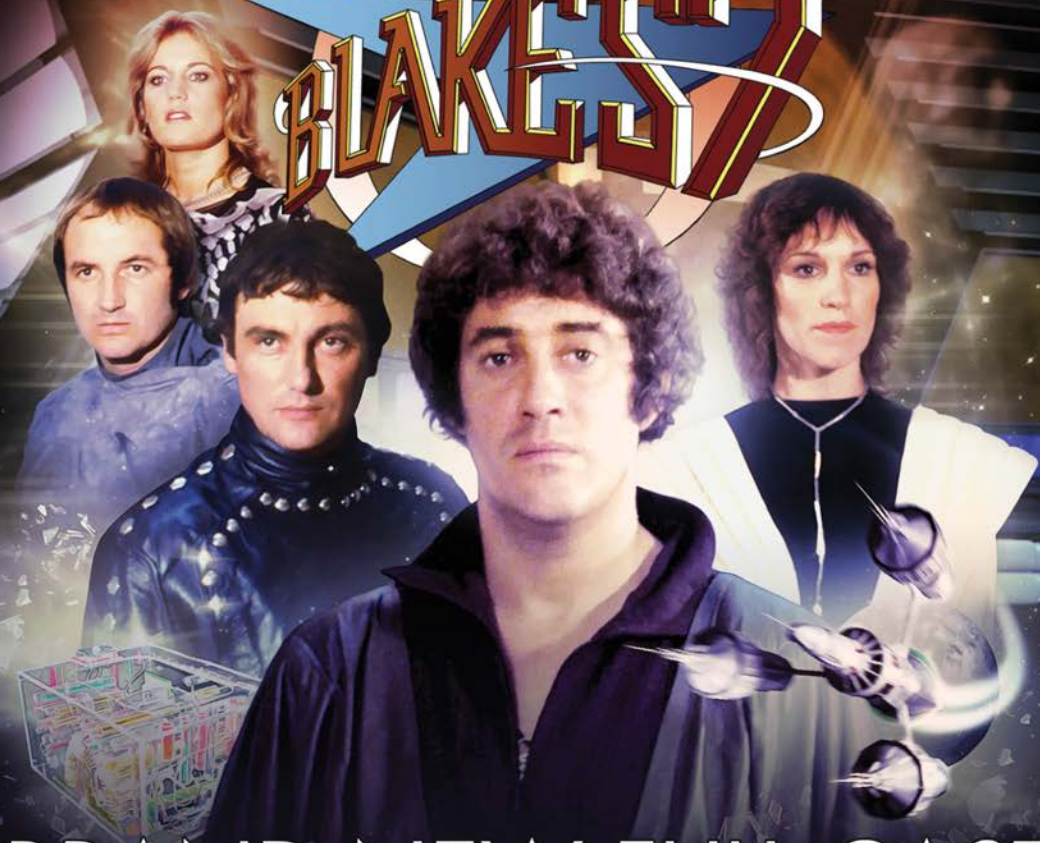
Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor
by Gareth Roberts:
The Romance of Crime
(Fourth Doctor and Romana)

The Avengers – The Lost Episodes:
Volume 3 (Box Set)

Pathfinder Legends: *Rise of the Runelords –
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