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**BLAKE'S 7: PAUL DARROW • WRITERS' PREVIEW OF**  
**THE LIBERATOR CHRONICLES – VOLUME EIGHT!**

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ISSUE 63 • MAY 2014

# DIMENSIONS

# 2014



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# SNEAK PREVIEWS AND WHISPERS

## TERRAHAWKS

JAMIE ANDERSON, SON OF THE LEGENDARY  
GERRY, SNEAKS A PEEK AHEAD:

**F**lamming thunderbolts! Big Finish is producing a new audio series of **Terrahawks!** And having been one of the original show's biggest fans since watching the VHS tapes almost daily for most of my formative years, I'm utterly thrilled to be working with them on the new series.

Although my dear late father (Gerry Anderson) might be better known for shows like **Thunderbirds**, **Captain Scarlet** and **Space: 1999**, back in 1983/4 **Terrahawks** was being watched by nearly ten million viewers a week during its UK run. By the end of its original run it had really found its feet, and it's those later episodes that will guide us through the writing process, and as we enter production – aiming to make the new series as faithful to the original series as possible.

As well as using the original voice cast – Jeremy Hitchen, Robbie Stevens and the wonderful Denise Bryer – we are also making use of existing, unfiled **Terrahawks** scripts that were intended for use on the next series of the show but sadly never made it into production.

New stories in the series will be written by writers direct from the Anderson stable – like Terry Adlam (**Terrahawks**, **Dick Spanner**), Mark Woollard (**Terrahawks**, **Dick Spanner**, **Space Precinct**, **New Captain Scarlet**), and yours truly (among others) and we really hope to be able to bring an authentic feel to the new stories.

This new audio series is a very natural continuation from the existing TV show (which, coincidentally is due for a brand new, fully restored Blu-ray release in 2015), and will continue to follow the evil android Zelda in her increasingly bizarre and complex attempts to destroy Earth's protectors – the **Terrahawks** – and enslave the human race.

It will be released in April 2015 as a five-CD box set (or digital download), featuring eight brand new episodes and a selection of as-yet-undisclosed extras.

Until then... stay on this channel!



# EDITORIAL

**F**orgive me for doing a variation on an old classic story here. During the second half of my formative teenage years, there was no **Doctor Who**. Well, that's not strictly true; videos started to come out so there was some there, including quite a lot I'd never encountered before. My parents even bought me the expensive (and edited) *The Brain of Morbius* for my birthday, which was particularly appropriate as it was first broadcast four days after my birth; it's as close as I get to my 'birth' story. Not that they realized that.

Nowadays, I'm constantly astonished by the reach that **Doctor Who** has, and the affection it's held in. While I'd expect all the merchandise to be piled up around Forbidden Planet, I wandered past the Stamp Centre in The Strand the other day and there was loads of stuff! Toys, games, signed bits and bobs – I'm amazed there's any room left for stamps, quite frankly.

And it's on buses! Wherever I go around London, I keep spotting buses with the Doctors on the side. And not the new series being plugged in some way, but the classic series. That didn't even happen when it was first transmitted, yet it's bought by the Horror Channel and suddenly: little running cartoon Doctors plastered on a bus, and on posters around the Tube! They've missed a trick there, of course. What they wanted to do was a really realistic-looking Yeti image that could be pasted to Tube walls to make it look like they were invading the Underground again. There you go, Horror Channel, you can have that one for free for your next campaign. It'd be awesome for when (or possibly if) you transmit *The Web of Fear* on TV for the first time in decades.

It's lovely to know that we're also part of that outpouring of affection. We may not be as visible as a massive Tube poster – tell your friends about us! And your enemies too! – but we're toiling away making brand new **Doctor Who** month-in, month-out, and it really is enormous fun. We've got series ending, new series starting, and so much more coming up that we hope will continue to surprise and delight you, our listeners. In the meantime, I need to head back to the Stamp Centre and get the sonic screwdriver electric toothbrush my girlfriend had her eye on...

**PAUL SPRAGG**

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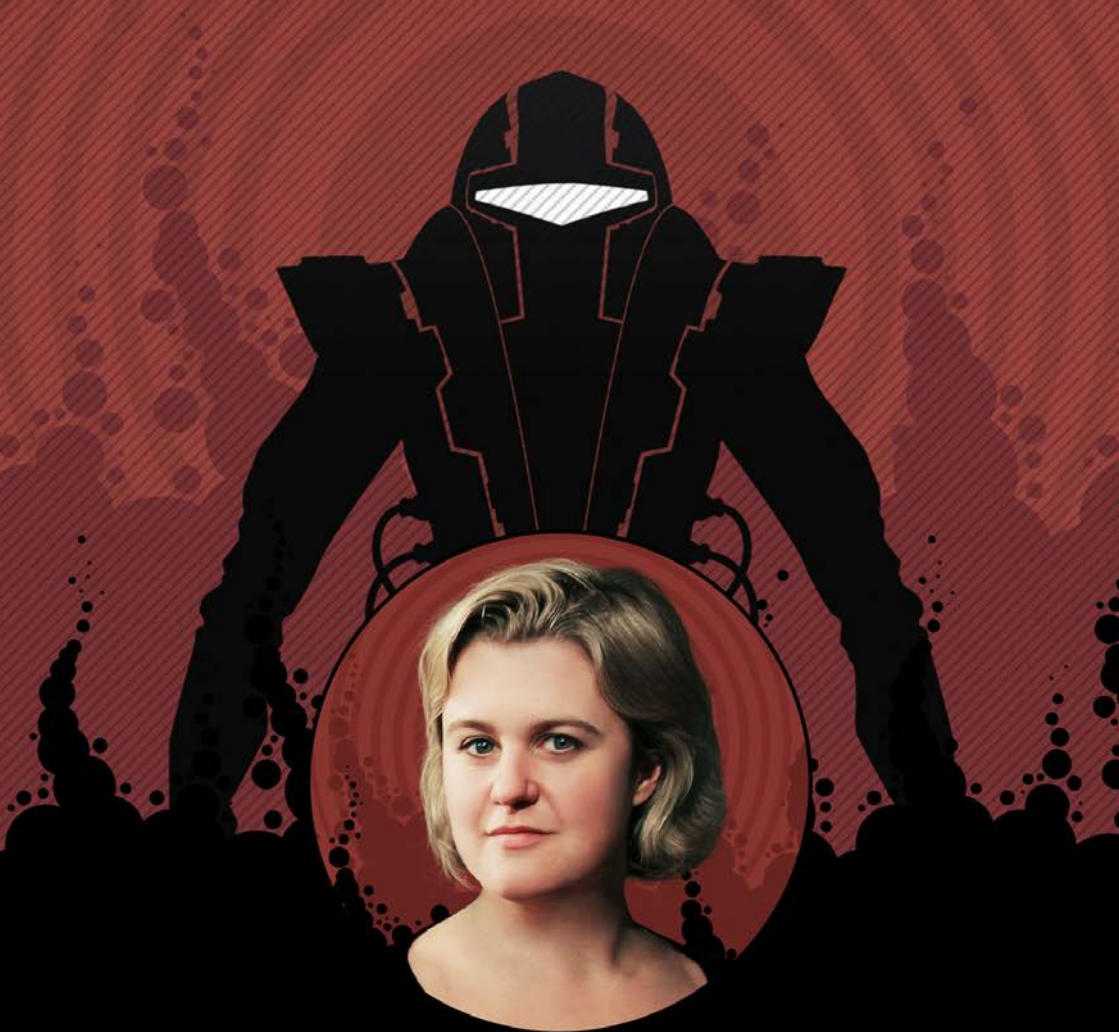
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# FISHER QUEEN

SHE'S TRAVELLED WITH THE EIGHTH AND SIXTH DOCTORS BUT NOW SHE'S STEPPING OUT INTO THE LIMELIGHT OF A SOLO SERIES. INDIA FISHER TALKS CHARLOTTE POLLARD — AND WE GET A BABY UPDATE!

**H**i India! How does it feel to be back as Charley after your absence (bar *The Light at the End*)?

● It's always great to play Charley again; she's like an old friend, and has been part of my life for well over a decade now, which is scary. I was very sad to leave the Sixth Doctor and I missed playing her and being part of the Big Finish family. So I was naturally thrilled when I got the call to say they were writing a spin-off. It was especially interesting to venture into this new era with her. Life after the Doctor. I always wondered what she'd been up to and how she'd cope.

**Were you surprised that the character is loved enough to warrant a spin-off?**

● Frankly I'm amazed. I knew from talking to people over the years that she was a popular companion. And rightly so, she's so enthusiastic and full of life, she's really good fun, such a great character to play. You can't be in a bad mood after having been Charley for the day! But it was only when I ventured onto Twitter and the spin-off was announced that I had an inkling of how strongly people felt about her. I feel that has far more to do with the brilliant writing over the years rather than anything I've done. She's a character that has always jumped off the page, no acting required. From the first encounter on the R101 she was fully formed and I have Alan Barnes to thank, from the bottom of my heart, for that.

**How do you approach the character these days?**

● I never have to worry about 'finding' Charley; she is so much a part of me now, she instantly comes out. She's familiar and comfortable, like putting on an old pair of shoes. Although she has evolved as a character, she's grown up. Which is no bad thing as I'm no longer in my twenties (ahem!), so she needed to grow with me and I'm very lucky that she has.

**What's different about Charley in this series as she goes out on her own?**

● She had grown massively as a person during her time with the Sixth Doctor. She'd lost her innocence and naivety. Now when we meet up with her after years of working with the Viyrans, she has certainly become much more worldly-wise, not to say jaded. She's the same Charley at heart, but she's



**"I NEVER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT 'FINDING' CHARLEY; SHE IS SO MUCH A PART OF ME NOW, SHE INSTANTLY COMES OUT. SHE'S FAMILIAR AND COMFORTABLE, LIKE PUTTING ON AN OLD PAIR OF SHOES."**

been beaten down by life somewhat. She's seen a darker side and that has had an influence on her. There are hints that she has had to do some morally questionable things and that gives a brilliant new dimension to her.

Which is brilliant to play. This isn't Anti-Charley, it's Charley: the Dark Side. She's at breaking point and is prepared to risk everything, even her life, to escape.

**What can you tell us about the stories in this box set?**

● Well, obviously they're all brilliant, but then, I might be slightly biased! There's a bit of everything. Space adventure hijacking escape pods and jumping through wormholes, mysterious treks through jungles being chased by ferocious creatures, time travel and family reunions. All whilst being pursued by the Viyrans. Oh, and there's a bit of flirting thrown in for good measure!

**You may have had no Doctor, but we've given you a nice starry cast. What were your co-stars like?**

● Michael Maloney [the Viyrans] is not only one of the best



"I LOVED BEING BACK IN THE EARLY DAYS OF CHARLEY WITH PAUL [McGANN] AGAIN. ALTHOUGH IT WAS RATHER WORRYING THAT I WOULDN'T SOUND LIKE AN EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD ANY MORE!"

actors I know, he's also one of the nicest men. We hit it off instantly when he played the Viyrans in previous encounters and he joked that if there ever was a spin-off, I was to make sure he was asked back. I, of course, have no sway in this department, but I was thrilled when I saw the Viyrans would be returning. Another really nice surprise for me was seeing Jacqui King again. I'd understudied on an Ayckbourn she'd been (brilliant) in, many moons ago, so it was lovely to see her. The entire cast for all the stories was brilliant. It really felt like an ensemble piece, which is the way I love to work.

**You're also reunited with your parents in the shape of Anneke Wills and Terrence Hardiman. How did you build (or rebuild, in Anneke's case) those relationships?**

● Seeing Anneke is always like going home anyway. She's such a warm and caring person. She just lights up the room. And Terrence was wonderful. Seeing the two of them together was amazing, they had such a rapport and gelled so

brilliantly. I would stay in the studio for scenes I wasn't in just so I could hear them together. They were magic. So that made it supremely easy for me to just slip into the mix. The Pollards were a joy to play, and I loved the fact we finally get to see where Charley came from.

**For one episode it's an all-woman cast, which is quite the sci-fi rarity. What was that like?**

● Noisy! There was a lot of chat, mainly about babies. I was thrilled that Big Finish had written an all-female story. It's very rare and was great fun both whilst recording and the story itself. I do think that the boys at the recording were pretty terrified though.

**We last heard you in *The Light at the End*; how did it feel revisiting that early Eighth Doctor/Charley era and adding Tom Baker to the list of Doctors you've worked with?**

● I loved being back in the early days of Charley with Paul [McGann] again. Although it was rather worrying that I wouldn't sound like an eighteen-year-old any more! But





## CHARLOTTE POLLARD SERIES ONE BOX SET

Charlotte Pollard's adventures are over. She escaped death aboard the R101 and travelled in time and space – but now in the service of the monolithic, unknowable Viyrans, their unending mission is stifling her. An encounter with would-be adventurer Robert Buchan, near the mysterious Ever-and-Ever-Proximity, provides the opportunity Charley needs for escape...

So, the adventuress is abroad once more: meeting a lost expedition in uncharted forests, solving enigmas, and hoping beyond hope to see the people she misses most: her family. But Charley cannot run forever. The Viyrans know the power of the 'Lamentation Cypher' and they have a solution... for everything.

**Part One: The Lamentation Cypher**

**Part Two: The Shadow at the Edge of the World**

**Part Three: The Fall of the House of Pollard**

**Part Four: The Viyrans Solution**

## OUT THIS MONTH!



I was amazed how we just slipped straight back into it, like riding a bike. Meeting Tom was a dream come true. He is my Doctor Who. I made a fool of myself, as you do, being starstruck. I could listen to him in the green room forever. My dream job would be just sitting in a green room listening to him and Anna Massey telling stories.

**For those who've not encountered Charley before, why should they jump on board with this box set?**

● She's a gun-wielding, alien chasing, Edwardian Adventures with a good line in witty banter. What's not to love?

**Finally, we've mentioned in the past that you were pregnant while recording the series; can you give us a baby update?**

● Aneurin (Nye) Harrison was born on 4th December, so a matter of days after we finished recording. Excellent timing. He is now nearly five months old, finding everything fascinating and giggles and drools in equal measure! As we speak he is sitting on my lap (so I'm having to type this one-handed), as he's refusing to be put down or sleep. Life is just too interesting today. So forgive me if the answers have been somewhat erratic; motherhood tends to take precedence these days to all other aspects of life! But it's an adventure worthy of Miss Pollard herself and I'm loving every minute of it. **VORTEX**



# SOLO ACT

SARAH SUTTON CHATS WITH PAUL SPRAGG ABOUT BEING SOLE COMPANION TO THE FIFTH DOCTOR AND BEING PART OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

**Hello Sarah. What's it like being the sole companion for this trilogy?**

Yes, we've had a spell of having Matthew [Waterhouse, Adric] in and Janet [Fielding, Tegan]; I haven't done one with Mark [Strickson, Turlough] for a while. This trilogy's strange because normally when we do a trilogy, we do them relatively close together but *Moonflesh* we recorded a long time ago, so it's a very elongated trilogy time-wise.

When it's just a Doctor and a single companion, you do get a lot more to do. The story is a lot fuller for my character in this

**“THAT’S THE JOY OF BIG FINISH, THAT IT’S GIVEN ALL THE COMPANIONS OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND ON OUR CHARACTERS.”**

set of three. Particularly in this one that we're recording at the moment [*Tomb Ship*], she does have her own separate plot, which is great. That's the joy of Big Finish, that it's given all the companions opportunities to expand on our characters.

**What do you think this trilogy has added to Nyssa's character?**

What do I think this trilogy has added to Nyssa? That's a very, very good question! I can't think of an answer to that! It does cement the relationship between the Doctor and Nyssa every time we do a story that's just the Doctor and a single companion. She seems to be growing in confidence, doesn't she, with him? She does put him in his place a little bit more than perhaps she would have done on the show thirty-odd years ago. Which is nice, in a way, but you've got to be careful a bit with that because I have to remember that I'm doing Nyssa as was. I think those sort of traits are great when we're all together as a group when Nyssa's supposed to be older, because she's a much more mature person then. But it is fun, I have to say, giving Nyssa a bit of lip!

**It must be fun to talk back to Peter considering the good-natured flak you get.**

It's no secret we all have a lot of fun in the studio. It is great fun. It's a job, but oh my goodness, what a job to have.

**Traumatising director Ken Bentley for money?**

Yes! We get paid for doing that! That's amazing!

**What do you make of this trilogy?**

The first two stories are quite specific in their times; *Moonflesh* is set at a certain time in the early twentieth century so I quite like that for that reason. I quite like something that has a date because it's something to hang



was quite date-specific as well, wasn't it? This isn't so date-specific. But yes: big chasms opening up and hallways and tombs and tomb raiding and all that... yeah, it does have that feel about it.

**How was the fiftieth anniversary for you?**

It was incredible. Nothing like I expected. In the weeks leading up to the big weekend, I could feel the anticipation rising. There was more of it on the telly and we started to get an idea of what was going to happen and then the big event at the ExCel was amazing. I didn't seem to have an awful lot to do, but there were eight thousand people there on Friday, Saturday and Sunday; it was incredible and I suddenly realised what I am, still, a part of. It's quite something.

**I'm surprised you've still got hands after all the signing.**

It was a busy time for all of us, actually; there were so many things going on. I did an event up in Leicester the weekend before, then we had the big BBC event at the ExCel and then the following weekend went to Chicago, so it was one weekend after the other, so by the time I got back from Chicago I was exhausted! But it's been great fun. What a thing to do, fifty years. Fantastic.

**Are you planning a year off now?**

Well, it depends what Big Finish offer me! I'll never say no to Big Finish; never say no to Toby's lunches, that's what I say! I think things probably will be a bit quieter on the events side of things, but fingers crossed we'll do some more Big Finish.

**And outside Big Finish?**

I haven't got any plans! I have no plans for this year; I am free and available the whole year!

**So the message of this interview is going to be: book Sarah Sutton.**

She's still available! **VORTEX**

on to, something to visualise. Stories that are set on a ship somewhere in space, I find there's nothing really to hang on to when things are getting very complicated!

**Just remember the corridors of your youth.**

Exactly. One corridor looks much the same as another; in fact it is the same, it's just the other way round!

*Masquerade*, which is the third one, has that lovely sort of period feel to it with the **Dangerous Liaisons** types, which is great fun. [*Tomb Ship*] has a far more claustrophobic feel, I think, because it's on a ship and it's like being underground. It's a lot more claustrophobic, but there's a great cast in this one; it's been really good fun to do.

**I thought it was a bit Indiana Jones.**

Not so much Indiana Jones as *The Emerald Tiger*; but that

## DOCTOR WHO: TOMB SHIP – OUT THIS MONTH



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.

They're not alone, however. Another old dynasty walks its twisted, trap-ridden passages – a family of tomb raiders led by a fanatical matriarch, whose many sons and

daughters have been tutored in tales of the God-King's lost treasure.

But 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.



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# DARROW: LEDGE

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**THE LEGENDARY PAUL DARROW, AKA AVON, TALKS TO PAUL SPRAGG ABOUT THE CLASSIC SERIES AUDIOS AND HIS PART IN THE BOOKS RANGE**

**H**ello Paul. How's the day been?  
 Pretty good! It's been quite hard work this one, because it's very tricky. But it'll be worthwhile once it's all put together. Now you've got **The Liberator Chronicles**, and then you've got several adventures that are audio versions of what you might have seen on screen. They do seem to be pretty much similar to what we did all those years ago. I would say they're faithful.

**Does it help to have everyone present?**

I don't think it makes much difference, actually. With modern technology there's so much you can do. *Warship*, for example – for private reasons I couldn't be there and I recorded my bits separately. I don't think you can notice – unless you hear me being interviewed alone!

**“I THINK THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN THE CHARACTERS – THAT IS, THE SEVEN – THAT’S IMPORTANT IN AN AUDIO SITUATION.”**

**It must be gratifying to know there are still plenty of Blake's 7 fans out there.**

And they're very knowledgeable as well; we'd better not get it wrong! Like today for example, in the script Avon referred to Orac as 'him', and I said, 'He never did that. He would refer to it as "it"'. So we changed it.

**What are the differences between Blake's 7 then and now?**

Well, I was younger and fitter! Obviously it's audio not physical, so that's fine. You've already got the interplay between the main characters; that, I think, is what enhanced the reputation and success of the programme originally. I think the interplay between the characters – that is, the seven – that's important in an audio situation.

**What's it been like finding the voices of the characters in the Lucifer series of novels you're writing?**

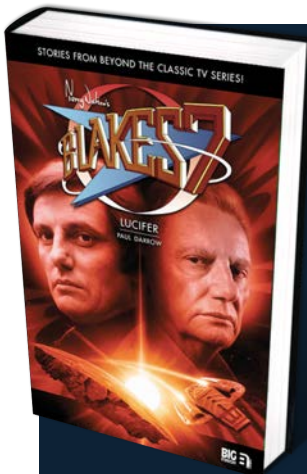
I think I've got a knack of being able to write for various characters – he said modestly! It's easier to write [Avon] than anybody else, of course. Blake. Vila. The women are a little difficult to write about, although I think I've managed Servalan all right. She's a game girl!

**You were there from the start of Blake's 7 to the end; how did it change over the years?**

The latter part of it, there was a bigger budget for a start-off. The costumes were better, the scripts had developed because Terry Nation created the roles but then they went on. I remember Terry said to me, 'I give you something to do and then you flesh it out, you pick the ball up and run with it. I always enjoy watching you do that'. So the character – I speak for myself – developed throughout the series, and as he developed, the more I enjoyed it.

**Did you feel any extra pressure when Blake went and Avon became the main lead?**

No, I always felt I was!



**BLAKE'S 7: LUCIFER BY PAUL DARROW**

Many legends surround the aftermath of the collapse of The Federation, including the fate of Kerr Avon...

What happened to Avon after the death of Blake and the crew of the Scorpion? Paul Darrow's vivid re-imagining picks up Avon's story at the final moments of the final episode of **Blake's 7** and follows him on his fight for survival, this time with no crew and no ship to help him.

The adventure continues years later as Avon, now an old man, finds himself a key player in the game of power politics being played out on a grand scale by The Quartet – four ruthless leaders in an uneasy alliance, who govern the world in place of the Federation. Old enemies resurface and dangerous new ones appear as the time comes for old scores to finally be settled...



### Did you get a lot of fan attention?

There was a lot at the time, yes. There still is, to a certain extent, but there was a great deal then. I think I had an advantage inasmuch as I was playing a character who did not have to be politically correct. You'd never get away with it now. He hit women, shot people in the back, kicked people with steel-tipped boots; he did all the things that were necessary. Whereas the eponymous hero couldn't do that because he was supposed to set an example to the young viewers. Most young viewers I knew preferred my way of doing things!

**“YOU’D NEVER GET AWAY WITH IT NOW. [AVON] HIT WOMEN, SHOT PEOPLE IN THE BACK, KICKED PEOPLE WITH STEEL-TIPPED BOOTS...”**

### Was it the appeal of the bad boy?

Well, you know where you stand with him. If he said he would do something, he always did it. Even if he said, 'I'm going to kill you,' he'd do it. If he said he'd not, he wouldn't!

### After all the rumours, do you see the show ever coming back?

I don't see any reason why not. *Battlestar Galactica* was completely revamped, *Doctor Who* has had a ton of money thrown at it and been revamped. If you look at the William Hartnell stuff, and the last one I saw, the David Tennant stuff, there's a world of difference but it's still the same thing. So I don't see why not. But I don't think George Clooney is going to accept the part of Avon. I have a feeling he doesn't think he could compete. And Michael [Keating] wants Jack Nicholson to play Vila!

### Actually, when I interviewed him, he said Matt Damon...

That's because he's been to see the *Liberace* film!

### Do you have anyone else in mind for Avon?

I would do it myself if they would cast that old! They'd need to be in their late thirties, something like that. I can think of a couple of big movie stars but they wouldn't do a television show. I mean, if they made a great big movie out of it, you might get Tom Cruise to play Blake or something like that. It depends on the script, too, what storyline they're going to follow. But they did it with *Star Trek* and it worked okay. **VORTEX**



## BLAKE'S 7: COLD FURY

WRITTEN BY MARK WRIGHT AND CAVAN SCOTT

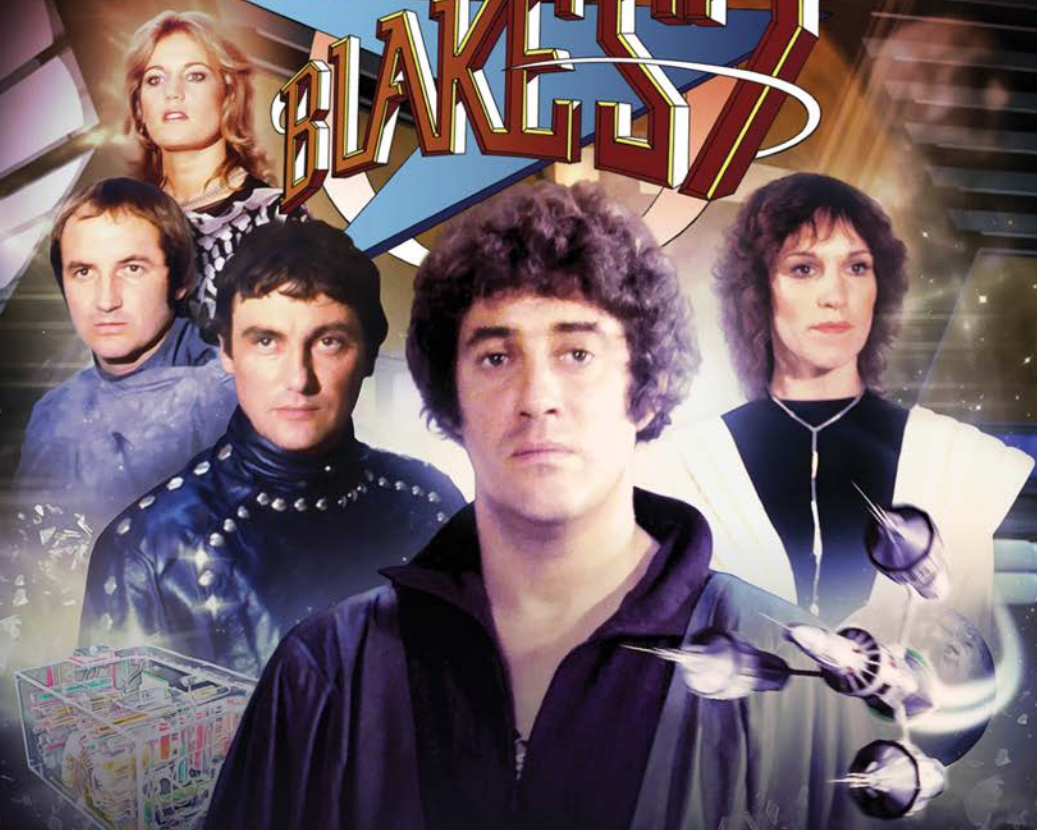
When Travis scores a victory over the Liberator crew, Blake is willing to risk everything in order to get back what is theirs.

The destination is the uninhabited ice world Horst Minor, where eugenics specialist Dr Tirus is working on experiments for the Federation President.

Horst Minor has many secrets. And Blake is not going to like what he finds there...

Nerry Nation's

# BLAKE'S 7



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Nerys Nation's

# BLAKES 7

# SCRIPTING 7

THE WRITERS OF THIS MONTH'S **LIBERATOR CHRONICLES** VOLUME  
PROVIDE SOME INSIGHT INTO THEIR RESPECTIVE STORIES



### SIMON GUERRIER ON **PRESIDENT**

**P**resident is an unusual **Blake's 7** story, as it's not about Blake and his crew. Producer David Richardson said we should break the normal rules and use the opportunity to explore what the TV series never did: how Supreme Commander Servalan rose to power in the Federation.

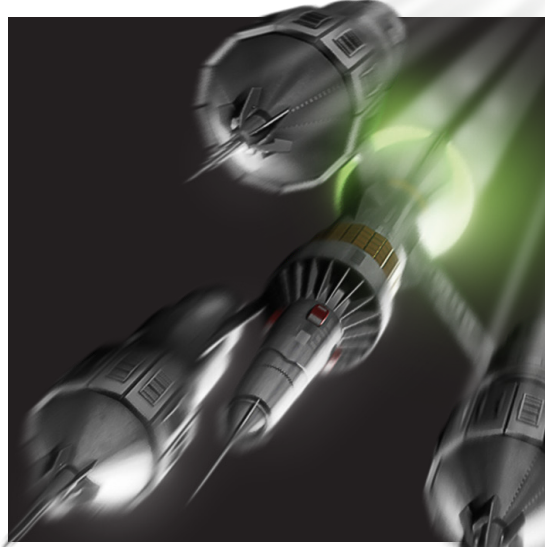
David was very keen to make Servalan the star, and sent me a link to Jacqueline Pearce's blog to explain why: the actress said she was returning to the UK from Africa because her cancer had returned. We thought from what she said that this might be her one and only **Blake's 7** story for Big Finish. Happily, her treatment was successful, but at the time I aimed to write the definitive Servalan story – how she took power, but also what made her tick.

### “ONE BIG INFLUENCE ON THE STORY WAS MARGARET THATCHER'S OWN RISE TO POWER FROM BACKBENCH MP TO PRIME MINISTER.”

She's a great character to write for because you never quite know how she'll respond to any situation: she'll execute her friends without a moment's hesitation, sacrifice a planet if it helps her plans, but when face to face with her mortal enemies she'll snog them. She's smart, she's often very funny and she's sneaky. For all she's got a temper, she's often at her most charming when cornered. That's the note I made as I rewatched the TV episodes: the more threatened Servalan's life is, the more she positively purrs.

One big influence on the story was Margaret Thatcher's own rise to power from backbench MP to Prime Minister. My wife had researched that for a collection of programmes and documents put up on the BBC Archive website (see [www.bbc.co.uk/archive/thatcher](http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/thatcher)), looking at how Thatcher moulded her look, her style and even the way she spoke to make herself seem more of a leader. I didn't steal from that directly, it was more that it helped shape my thinking about the subtle ways in which Servalan might have pushed herself forward.

Another influence was the **Doctor Who** story *Turn Left*, where we get to see what would have happened if the Doctor hadn't been around to save the day. I liked the way it drew together the events of lots of TV episodes, and showed them having real and lasting consequences on the minor characters.



I'm delighted by the final story. Jacqueline Pearce and Peter Miles were extraordinary in the studio – getting the perfect mix of ruthlessness and wit. Of all the **Blake's 7**'s I've done, this is the one I'm most proud of.

### MARC PLATT ON **THE SEA OF IRON**

**T**he *Sea of Iron* is a story about what Cally left behind – her world and her family. Her fighting determination and independence have always been balanced by her role as the voice of reason in the Liberator's crew. But they also mask her underlying streak of melancholy. However close and loyal she is to the rest of the volatile group, there will always be things in Cally's life that the others, the humans, cannot understand or share.

Since childhood, Cally's head has been full of the telepathic voices of her family – that's the legacy of being a clone. It's something the Children of Auron learn to live with. But now that Cally is separated from her world, do those voices still remain, advising, commenting, interfering, or are they just noisy memories that won't shut up?

I seem to have a bit of a Cally fixation. I'd already had a bash at the planet Auron in one of the B7 Productions **Early Years** plays (*Flag and Flame*). That story introduced Cally prior to her intended joining of the crew in the second season of the reimagined **Blake's 7** audio series – but that season never got as far as the studio. Nor indeed did a visit

# BLAKE'S 7: THE LIBERATOR CHRONICLES

to Auron for the even earlier, projected animated **Blake** series which never got past the script stage either – grey, Moscow-like Auron; giant statues celebrating the worker ethic; crowds of cloned cadets and munition factory workers; a coachload of Callys up from the collective farm singing the Auronar equivalent of *The Red Flag*. But nothing gets wasted – you just file the ideas away in your head, in the hope that they'll reemerge one day in a new and more dynamic form.

*Sea of Iron* reworks a couple of themes from the earlier audio script, but not in the same context. Cally may feel, deep down, that nobody understands her, but it seems that there is one person who does. Servalan is eager to get inside the Auronar's thoughts, for she has problems of her own: problems that only Cally can resolve. Unfortunately, the problems have ideas of their own. Even the most fundamental beliefs that you grow up with can take a knock sometimes. Both Cally and her tormentor, Servalan, are about to get a nasty surprise.

## JAMES GOSS ON SPOILS

**S**poils is all about Blake going to see the Dream-Makers. They specialise in showing people their future. The dream they have for Blake is of what happens when he wins.

Basically, this came about because I realised that the one thing that **Blake's 7** is missing is a happy ending. And this is it. We get to see Blake leading the Liberator back to Earth,

blasting out of the skies and toppling the Federation. We get to see him get everything he wishes for.

But, sadly, that's just the start of the story. The show being what it is, Blake can't even win in a straight line.

One of the joys of working on this was essentially getting to write the most foolishly epic episode of **Blake's 7** I possibly could. More people than you can imagine are in it, and I had great fun throwing everything in and then blowing up the kitchen sink.

**"I REALISED THAT THE ONE THING THAT **BLAKE'S 7** IS MISSING IS A HAPPY ENDING. AND THIS IS IT."**

When I mentioned it as an idea, David Richardson was very careful to point out the one thing I think we all hate about such stories: 'Ah, yes, but it's just a dream, isn't it?' We've tried to bear that in mind. Blake's just as aware as we are that this is a projection of his future – but it's telling him things he'd rather not know about himself.

A great reason to listen to it is the cast. Gareth Thomas is joined by Dan Starkey and Jemma Churchill as the Dream-Makers, people who are adept at adopting other guises. In this case an amazing repertory (repertoire?) of familiar characters from the **Blake's 7** universe, including a jaw-dropping Avon and Jenna. They're so uncannily spot-on that they'll make you laugh. Which is a good thing, as there's really nothing else funny about *Spoils*... **VORTEX**

# THE LIBERATOR CHRONICLES – AVAILABLE NOW!



### VOLUME ONE:

**THE TURING TEST**  
BY SIMON GUERRIER

**SOLITARY**  
BY NIGEL FAIRS

**COUNTERFEIT**  
BY PETER ANGHÉLIDES



### VOLUME TWO:

**THE MAGNIFICENT FOUR**  
BY SIMON GUERRIER

**FALSE POSITIVE**  
BY EDDIE ROBSON

**WOLF**  
BY NIGEL FAIRS



### VOLUME THREE:

**THE ARMAGEDDON STORM**  
**PARTS ONE, TWO AND THREE**  
BY CAVAN SCOTT AND MARK WRIGHT



### VOLUME FOUR:

**PROMISES**  
BY NIGEL FAIRS

**EPITAPH**  
BY SCOTT HARRISON

**KERR**  
BY NICK WALLACE



### VOLUME FIVE:

**LOGIC**  
BY SIMON GUERRIER

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BY JAMES GOSS



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**INCENTIVE**  
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### VOLUME SEVEN:

**SPY**  
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DOCTOR WHO:

# PATIENT ZERO

## KENNY SMITH CELEBRATES THE RETURN OF CHARLOTTE POLLARD WITH A LOOK BACK AT THE FIRST PART OF HER FINAL TRILOGY WITH THE SIXTH DOCTOR



**C**harley Pollard holds a special place in the heart of Big Finish fans, with India Fisher's portrayal of the self-styled Edwardian adventuress. With Charley returning in her own series, **Charlotte Pollard**, this month, the character had a stay of execution after leaving the Eighth Doctor's side in Alan Barnes' *The Girl Who Never Was* to travel with the Sixth, and the events for her final departure from the TARDIS were laid out by Nicholas Briggs in *Patient Zero*.

Nick says, "I wanted to have three major elements to the story. I wanted to start the whole crisis that would lead to the end of the Charley and Sixth Doctor storyline – largely because Alan refused to be the one to write her out again. He'd already had the emotional pain of doing that on *The Girl Who Never Was*. I also wanted to get closer to explaining who the Vyrans are. And I wanted the Daleks to actually win."

*Patient Zero* introduced the character of Mila, the Patient Zero of the story title and someone who had been hiding in the TARDIS since the events of *The Chase*.

The writer continues, "It's an idea that had been lurking in my brain since the days of the Audio Visuals **Doctor Who** audios that I worked on. When we were starting to plan a fifth series, which never got made, I wanted there to be a companion who had, unbeknownst to the Doctor, been in the TARDIS right from the start. Something terrible had happened to her that had made her imperceptible to the Doctor or anyone else. And now, she was just beginning to recover enough to be perceived."

Bringing Mila to life was Jess Robinson, and then India Fisher.

India recalls, "I really enjoyed playing Mila, she was such an interesting character. Someone who had been trapped on the sidelines of *all* the Doctor's adventures. A truly tragic figure, like a small child desperate to play but being left out of all the games. I tried not to think of her as bad or evil for what she did to Charley, she just finally saw an opportunity to be part of it all. She had an innocent quality. Mila wanted more than anything else to be the companion of the Doctor and she finally got her chance."

Charley also met the Vyrans, and India adds, "The Vyrans are deeply intriguing. At first sight they could be seen as altruistic – trawling the universe, ridding it of all viruses. But scratch the surface and you soon come to realise they have their own agenda. Their lack of empathy with humans or any real concept of emotions makes them ideal chilling **Doctor Who** baddies." **VORTEX**

**DOCTOR WHO: PATIENT ZERO IS OUT NOW ON CD AND DOWNLOAD!**

# VORTEX MAIL

## BIG FINISH ON TOUR

A strange message but I'd like to show my appreciation for all your efforts with your Big Finish range, especially with the last two *Dark Eyes* series.

For the last six months I have been serving with the British army in Afghanistan and believe me, the opportunity for any form of entertainment or escape was hard to come by in the middle of nowhere!

Thank God for *Dark Eyes*! I've always been a huge fan of the Eighth Doctor and have enjoyed the Big Finish serials with Paul McGann immensely! I was fortunate enough to download both series one and two of *Dark Eyes* (plus *Sword of Orion* and *The Time of the Daleks*) before going to Afghanistan and thank goodness I did!

During my downtime on tour, it was fantastic to escape into the world and adventures of the Eighth Doctor and Molly O'Sullivan/Charley Pollard and listen to the stories of my favourite 'reluctant hero'. The Whoniverse has always been a good avenue of escape for me and never more was it needed over those long six months!

Please accept my sincere gratitude for your efforts, and rest assured I shall be taking plenty more Big Finish *Doctor Who* serials with me on my next tour! I'm amazed at the efforts that go into Big Finish productions and the magic you guys create in the studio. What I'd do to be a fly on the wall!

Many thanks again and keep up the good work!!

### PETER BRUIN

**Nick:** Thanks so much for writing in, Peter. Great to know that our labours can provide much needed escape. Emails like this really give us a boost. All best wishes to you.

## COMMUTE WITH TOBY

I'd previously let your Toby Hadoke *Who's Round* podcasts slip to the back of my attentions, and not bothered with them. Podcasts? Bah. It's just a lot of people talking, isn't it? Then I heard that he'd 'got' Russell T Davies, who is always interesting without fail, so I downloaded one to listen on the train to work. And – wow! – these are really good and very addictive. Toby asks intelligent questions

and is a good host, and the format is ripe for interesting *Who* anecdotes. Suddenly I am hooked. I need to hear more!

I am very pleased to discover there are over fifty of the things, and Toby has managed to secure some very rare and interesting guests. And best of all – the podcasts are completely free! I've downloaded the Terrance Dicks and Hamish Wilson ones to listen to next week alongside the three latest *Doctor Who* releases. No chance of my commutes being boring for the foreseeable.

### SI HUNT

**Nick:** Thanks, Si. Yes, you're right, Toby is a brilliant interviewer and asks such great questions. I remember writing to him to say so after I saw some of his brilliant DVD extras on the *Doctor Who* releases. Great actor too!

## CONCERNING LEELA

The *Fourth Doctor Adventures* are great (these made me become a subscriber), however, the subject of companions is an issue (especially with the sad loss of both Mary and Lis). Obviously I love Leela but there is an issue with developing the character because of the limitation of having to comply with the Leela as seen in *The Invasion of Time*. It could become staid if she can't become more than the intelligent savage or risk damaging the continuity of the character. I think the stories are already stretching Leela beyond the confines of the *Invasion of Time* Leela.

Perhaps you can get over this quandary by introducing a new companion alongside adding a new dynamic, or have the Doctor meet Leela in the future after he left her – a more tech-experienced Leela of the future – and have some more adventures.

Anyway, just a thought. Perhaps a new companion on their own would allow Tom's adventures more variety. Something you must have already considered, and sorry if you have heard all this before. Looking forward to Tom and Lalla being back together.

### RIVER JONES

**Nick:** Very intelligent points, River. I guess we are stretching it a bit with Leela... but then, *Doctor Who* was a very different programme in those days and I think we're stretching all our companions and Doctors. I don't think our

audience would be very pleased if we made stories *exactly* as they were on television. I loved all those episodes, but I think we expect a little bit more in terms of realistic character development now. Interesting thoughts on Leela meeting the Doctor later in her life, after *Invasion of Time*. The Doctor and Romana II stories are shaping up really well. I'm writing one at the moment, actually. It's such fun to do.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

I can see both sides to question five (*Vortex 65* – Darren Elliot). I too would love to fill the gaps in my collection – on a limited income, I can barely afford my annual subscription to the main range stories. I was overjoyed when I was able to stop the gaps in 1-50 at a fiver a go – I am eternally grateful. I am still missing twenty titles between 50 and 100 and here's the thing: I am old enough and poor enough to live in hope that, although it is possible I shall miss out (*Flip-Flop* is only available as a download), my patience tells me to wait and see if the same happens to 50 to 100.

Alternatives are to buy them second hand through Amazon or eBay (rather not) or save to take advantage of the spend £50 save 10% offer.

It seems to me that twelve already released titles are simply that – whether they are in a row or scattered through all the releases, twelve sales rather than twelve non-sales because I bought them elsewhere. Perhaps you should look at this again and make an offer available to existing subscribers for twelve titles between (selfish – tut-tut!) say 50 and 100 rather than lose the cash.

I still look forward to each and every title and will go on subscribing as long as I have puff or pop me clogs in the effort. Hey! Maybe we could ask the Doc to nip forward and see if and when there are further reductions...?

Love and slobbery kisses,

### PAUL WELSBY

**Nick:** Steady with the slobbering, Paul. We shall continue to look into this. Subscriptions or just discounts... Are they different beasts? Or are they just the same thing under different names? Hmmmm...



# FORTHCOMING RELEASES

## 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)
- Doctor Who - The New Adventures of *Bernice Summerfield Box Set***
- 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)
- Doctor Who – Philip Hinchcliffe Presents: *Volume 1 Box Set*** (Fourth Doctor)
- Pathfinder Legends: *Rise of the Runelords – Fortress of the Stone Giants*** (1.4, Full Cast)
- Big Finish Classics: *Frankenstein***
- Tom Baker at 80**

## OCTOBER 2014

- Doctor Who: *The Widow's Assassin***  
(192, Sixth Doctor and Peri)
- 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***
- The Omega Factor: *Audiobook of Novel***

## NOVEMBER 2014

- Doctor Who: *Masters of Earth***  
(193, Sixth Doctor and Peri)
- 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, Sixth Doctor and Peri)
- 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: *The Exxilons*** (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 – Spires of Xin-Shalast*** (1.6, Full Cast)

## FEBRUARY 2015

- Doctor Who: *Equilibrium*** (196, TBA)
- Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *The Darkness of Glass*** (4.2, Fourth Doctor and Leela)
- Doctor Who: *Dark Eyes 4*** (Eighth Doctor)
- Blake's 7: *The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 11***

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