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DOCTOR WHO: TIME FOR A SONG

THE DIARY OF RIVER SONG: WE GO BEHIND THE SCENES ON THE BRAND-NEW AUDIO SERIES STARRING ALEX KINGSTON!

PLUS!

THE PRISONER

WELCOME TO THE VILLAGE!

WE CRUNCH THE NUMBERS ON THE NEW PRISONER AUDIO...

THE CHURCHILL YEARS

WAR STORIES!

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Sneak Previews & Whispers



Doctor Who: Short Trips

Short Trips producer Ian Atkins previews the year ahead...

“ I’VE ALWAYS loved Doctor Who prose. As with many fans of my generation, I was taught to read by Terrance Dicks (something I thought I was the first to say to him – apparently I’m about #2637 in the queue on that one!) and experienced so very many of the TV episodes for the first time through Target paperbacks.

“As with fan friends I met in the 1980s I started writing stories myself, with the Fitzroy Tavern serving as possibly the only Writers’ Circle uniquely dedicated to Doctor Who fiction. A Writer’s Full Circle, if you will. And that’s led to so many things, including now being presented by David Richardson and Nick Briggs with the producership of the Short Trips range for 2016-17.

“It’s been a joy seeking out new writers, new readers and new perspectives for the range, including this month when Jenny T Colgan and Mark Strickson between them bring Turlough back like it was still 1983. And amongst others coming up, there’ll be a few specials, two Christmas stories, Dan Starkey’s wonderful take on ol’ Sixie and Peri, Penelope Faith’s magical Polly tale, and the Doctor, Dodo and Steven in a brush with iconic Sixties history...” **VORTEX**

Editorial

WELCOME TO 2016 – and it’s going to be one heck of a ride with Big Finish. We dipped our toes into the worlds of new series **Doctor Who** at the end of last year with **UNIT: Extinction, Jago & Litefoot & Strax** and the first **War Doctor** box set, and now things are all set to get even more exciting over the coming 12 months.

This month, we’ve got River Song and Churchill arriving into the Big Finish stable, to bring us new adventures with the Eighth, Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Doctors.

Looking ahead over the coming months, with **Classic Doctors: New Monsters, The Tenth Doctor Adventures**, more **War Doctor** and there’s plenty more for **Doctor Who** fans to look forward to.

And that’s on top of all our regular favourites, with the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Doctors in the monthly range, the Fourth Doctor releases, and the Eighth Doctor in **Doom Coalition!**

And that’s just the start – there’s plenty of other series on the way, with more **Charlotte Pollard, The Avengers** – with Dr Keel and Mrs Peel, **Pathfinder Legends, Dracula, The Confessions of Dorian Gray, Torchwood, Sherlock Holmes, Dark Shadows**, and **Terrahawks**, to name but a few.

This month, we’ve also got **The Prisoner...** I’m a fan with a more than casual interest in the series, and whilst I wouldn’t class myself as a devotee, I know enough about it to want to hear what Nick Briggs has done with it. Going by the trailer, Mark Elstob sounds like he’s got Number Six down to a tee...

Be seeing you!

KENNY

ISSUE 83 • JANUARY 2016

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A woman with voluminous, curly, light-brown hair is the central focus. She is wearing a black, sequined, low-cut dress. She has a slight smile and is looking towards the camera. The background is a festive party scene with colorful balloons (pink, blue, white), streamers, and bright, multi-colored lights. To her left, a mannequin in a black and white ruffled dress is visible, and another person's arm holding a silver tray is partially seen.

Kenny Smith goes with the flow as Big Finish begin...

River's Run

RIVER SONG has been one of the most memorable characters created for *Doctor Who* in the 21st century. With her witty one-liners, quotable catchphrases and hidden secrets, it's been impossible to ignore Alex Kingston bringing Steven Moffat's creation to life.

The Doctor's wife has been a fully-rounded character since her first appearance in *Silence in the Library*, and producer David Richardson reveals that a chance conversation at a convention made Alex aware of Big Finish.

He says: "It was pure chance that I emailed Alex's agent to enquire if she'd be interested in playing River at Big Finish on a Monday and over that weekend she had been at a convention where a fan had been enthusing to her about Big Finish. So, in a way, I suspect Alex had already made the decision ahead of us popping the question! So thank you to whoever that fan was..."

Speaking at the recording, Alex confirms: "I didn't know about these audio box sets and it was only about a month ago I was talking to a fan in North America, who actually said to me, 'Do you know about the audio box sets?', and I said 'No.'

"She said, 'They are amazing, and we love them. Paul McGann is so incredible in them.' It's a chance for us to reacquaint ourselves with the Doctors from the original series. Another chimed in and said, 'You should do them.'

"It's really fortuitous in a way and very quickly I got a phone call asking if I would be interested, and it just so transpired I was here anyway and I thought, 'Yes, I would love to have a go!'"

David continues: "Matt Fitton, the script editor, formatted the series brilliantly – I know Alex is very pleased with how River has been placed at the very centre of events."



Right: Spoilers! Alex Kingston returns as River Song

Below: Samuel West

THE DIARY of River Song kicks off with *The Boundless Sea* by Jenny T Colgan. Drawn out of self-imposed academic exile by an archaeological dig, River crosses paths with British Consul Bertie Potts – leading to a secret buried in a lost tomb...

Jenny, who has written *Time Reaver* for the forthcoming **Tenth Doctor** series from Big Finish and this month's Short Trip, *Gardens of the Dead*, admits

"She's very much like the Doctor but far, far naughtier!" Matt Fitton

she became involved with the series through a cryptic question.

She laughs: "They didn't come and say outright, 'Would you like to write a play for River?' as they just said a more general, 'What do you think of River?', in a casual kind of way.

"To be perfectly honest, I just thought they were making conversation, so I told them I thought she was a tragic

figure and I wouldn't like to see her become a pantomime character and slapping her thigh. I'm very protective of her.

"When we learned that Rory and Amy were River's parents, I had just had my baby, so I had a real empathy for the character and it was only then they said, 'Do you want to have a shot at a play?' It was a very easy, 'Yes, please!'

"Big Finish were very, very kind to let me have the first one – it was a massive thrill and very unexpected."

SOMEONE WITH experience of writing for River Song is Justin Richards, who penned the second story of the box set, *I Went to a Marvellous Party*. River is invited to the most exclusive gathering; right in the middle of hyperspace. Hosts Gifford and Isabella hold a connection to the mysterious Rulers of the Universe; but with a murderer on board, is River too late to discover the truth?

While writing for River was a new experience for the other scribes in the set, Justin had previously crafted a tale for her. He says: "To be fair, it's probably not so different for me, as I've already written for her in the BBC Books, in *The Angel's Kiss*, the Melody Malone novel, which came out as an audio book that Alex read, so I've already got her voice in my head.

"For my story, it was a good set-up – River turns up at a party and at the end, if I could tie it in with what happens at



The Diary of River Song

the start of the next one, that would be great. That meant I had quite a bit of leeway in what I could do, and I felt a murder mystery would be fun to do.

"You think about what kind of story would this character fit into, and a murder mystery just seemed perfect for River. It was good fun making it fit in as an ongoing arc."

WITH THE third story of the set, James Goss was the writer of *Signs*. River is on the trail of mysterious, planet-killing SporeShips. Her only aid is a handsome time-travelling stranger with a connection to her future – her husband, Mr Song.

Of writing for River, James says: "It's a puzzling thrill because, as a character, she's actually really enigmatic. There's the surface idea of her – sassy and cool, striding across alien planets with her high-heels in her hands and then there's the real inner River, the heartbreak, forced by time into never quite telling the truth to those she loves."

What kind of brief was he given? Smiling, James says: "Matt Fitton had it all planned out, and it was such a pleasure. I just looked at the paragraph he'd written and went, 'Yes, I can do this. Not a problem. Oh, can I invent a future incarnation of the Doctor? No biggie.'

The biggest challenge for James was: "Writing a two-handed love story that takes place during the solving of an ancient mystery set across the universe turned out to be surprisingly easy, actually. I was staying in a house in Spain up a mountain and the internet wasn't working, so I sat down one morning and it just sort of gushed out. I was having so much fun doing it and it was so terribly hot outside that it seemed stupid not to carry on."

ROUNDING OFF this first River Song set is *The Rulers of the Universe* by Matt Fitton, and it's very eagerly anticipated for a reason – the Eighth Doctor is drawn into events, as River must contend with a secret society and a face-off with an

"Oh, can I invent a future incarnation of the Doctor? No biggie." James Goss

ancient alien force – with her future husband caught in the middle!

Matt was reluctant to say too much, without giving the game away, but reveals: "It's very exciting because we've also got River in *Doom Coalition 2*, and she appears to carry on backwards through the Doctor's life. She can play with the earlier Doctors, to an extent, but she's always very aware of where she is in his timeline, and is very careful about it with her own continuity.

"That's a real challenge, to try and fit them together, but you get to play with the moment and enjoy the interplay without messing up the storyline and future continuity. I think I managed to pull it off!"



Above: Alex Kingston and Alexander Vlahos



Doctor Who: The Diary of River Song

THE BOUNDLESS SEA

Drawn out of self-imposed academic exile by an archaeological dig, River crosses paths with British Consul Bertie Potts - leading to a secret buried in a lost tomb...

I WENT TO A MARVELLOUS PARTY

River is invited to the most exclusive gathering; right in the middle of Hyperspace! Hosts Gifford and Isabella hold a connection to the mysterious Rulers of the Universe; but with a murderer on board, is River too late to discover the truth?

SIGNS

River is on the trail of mysterious, planet-killing SporeShips. Her only aid is a handsome time-travelling stranger with a connection to her future - her husband, Mr Song.

THE RULERS OF THE UNIVERSE

The Eighth Doctor is drawn into events, as River must contend with a secret society and a face-off with an ancient alien force - with her future husband caught in the middle!

CAST: Alex Kingston, Paul McGann, Alexander Vlahos, Alexander Siddiq, Imogen Stubbs, Gbemisola Ikumelo, Charlotte Christie, Alisdair Simpson, Oliver Dimsdale, John Banks, Letty Butler, John Voce, Aaron Neil, Samuel West

WRITTEN BY: Jenny T Colgan, Justin Richards, James Goss, Matt Fitton

DIRECTED BY: Ken Bentley

OUT THIS MONTH!

How does it feel bringing together Alex with one of the classic Doctors?

David adds: "We were hugely excited, and so was Paul McGann - he loved the idea of River Song intersecting with the Eighth Doctor's timeline."

DIRECTOR **KEN Bentley** was full of praise for leading lady Alex Kingston. He reveals: "Alex is delightful. Bundles of energy and enthusiasm and works really hard. Everything you want in a

way. It was refreshing to have a strong female character calling the shots."

David adds: "It was a gloriously happy recording. What I really love about Alex is that not only is she a superb actress and a star, but she wears it very lightly. There was a great team spirit and she threw herself into the fun of working at Big Finish. I must admit, as a long-time fan of ER and River Song, I was a little nervous to be working with her, and that melted away the moment she walked through the door with a big, beaming smile."



Alex Kingston and Paul McGann!

lead. Someone who sets the bar for the rest of the company. We needed to get through a lot of story in the short amount of time we had with Alex, and she took it all in her stride. That and cake. It's always nice to meet someone who likes cake.

"Working on **River Song** is the closest we've got to seeing what it would be like if the Doctor was female. The story world is similar - in the sense that it's broad - and she can travel in a similarly unrestricted



Also working behind the scenes has been cover artist Tom Webster. "I'd say the biggest challenge when it came to this one was to differentiate it from **Doom**

Coalition 2, which also features River Song and the Eighth Doctor. In the end, I went for something a little brighter than usual, as opposed to the ominous look for **Doom Coalition!** It was also quite a daunting task to create ranks and ranks of Spore ships. I think the end result is quite unsettling!" **VORTEX**



KENNY SMITH
LEARNS HOW
THREE NEW SERIES
DOCTORS HAVE
GOT ON WITH ONE
OLD FRIEND...

PRIME

S U S P E C T

THE 21ST century *Doctor Who* releases are coming thick and fast, with the release of **The Churchill Years** bringing together the Prime Minister with the Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Doctors, alongside Ian McNeice's hugely-popular – and indomitable, Winston Churchill.

Producer David Richardson says: "We were looking at potential new series spin-offs and Churchill seemed like a natural fit. He has a history with the Doctor before his first appearance in *Victory of the Daleks*, and he's such a strong character to play with. And he comes with a fascinating period in British history, which has the potential to provide

all sorts of backdrops to really contrasting stories. Plus, it allowed us (for the first time at Big Finish) to tell stories with the Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Doctors, as Churchill relates his adventures with the support of a full guest cast. I'm fiercely proud of this series – I think the scripts are top notch, Ian does a superb job, the tone is really engrossing and the stories are very rich. It's one of my favourites and I think people are going to love it."

One man in particular who was happy about the series was its leading man, Ian McNeice, who was over the moon to become involved with the series, saying: "I was delighted



“Not only had I to find the Winston voice, but I had to do the dialogue as Winston, being the Doctors.”

Left: Ian McNeice stars as the incomparable Winston Churchill

Right: Danny Horn and guitar!



about it, as it came out of nowhere! I was so excited when they brought him back after the initial one with Matt Smith, to do *The Wedding of River Song*. After doing that, I realised he could really be brought back at any time. So now, getting the chance to do these audios is just fantastic.

“I’d worked with Big Finish a couple of times before, so I knew the set up, but really, it was great to have the opportunity to do it.

“The only slightly tricky thing was having to do an approximation of the Doctors. Not only had I to find the Winston voice, but I had to do the dialogue as Winston, being the Doctors, being Matt Smith, David Tennant and Christopher Eccleston.

“It was quite hysterical as I would get a note from the director saying, ‘Maybe a bit more London!’, which made me laugh. It’s an

approximation of all the Doctors, and I think you will be able to work out who it is.”

THE SET kicks off with *The Oncoming Storm*, which has been written by Phil Mulryne. The war is raging over Europe, and Churchill is desperate for any advantage. A mysterious stone may hold the key to victory – but can the Ninth Doctor stop it from falling into the wrong hands?

Phil had to do some, ahem, strenuous research to get the voices of the Doctor and Winston.

“Isn’t it great when ‘research’ means basically having some fun...? Yes, I definitely did. *Rose* felt key to revisit, as the first episode that introduced us all to the Ninth. I sort of wanted to capture that experience all over again. I also watched *Victory of the Daleks*



Ian McNeice (left)
and (bottom)
Holly Earl

“I had the idea: ‘What if Churchill’s Black Dog was real – like the Baskerville hound?’”

Alan Barnes

to remind myself of Ian McNeice’s superb rendition of Churchill. Possibly even more useful than that, however, was reading up about Churchill’s extraordinary life and reading over some of his speeches. I wanted to capture something of that extraordinary, restless character and that incredible, intelligent, loquacious speech-making ability of his.”

With (TV story) *The Empty Child* being set in a similar time period, was Phil conscious of avoiding similarities?

“Hopefully they’re very different. Simply the inclusion of Winston as a main character sees to that. It’s also a very different period of the war – before the horrors of the Blitz. And Winston isn’t even Prime Minister yet. But on the other hand, I suppose I didn’t mind a few similarities – I’m very happy to sit at the feet of Steven Moffat! As long as any similarity is an homage not a pastiche. Both stories do involve the Doctor pursuing something alien that’s fallen to Earth during World War II...”

THE SECOND story of the set is *Hounded* by Alan Barnes. Churchill is plagued by a creature from his own psyche, which he calls ‘the Black Dog’. The Tenth Doctor finds himself imprisoned by a conspiring government agency...

Alan says his brief: “was ‘Churchill in WWII’, and that was it really! I’d already had to abandon a Churchill story years ago, when BBC Wales were doing *Victory of the Daleks* – it was very much a kind of **Eagle Has Landed** thing. But rather than disinter that, I had the idea: ‘what if Churchill’s Black Dog was real – like the Baskerville hound?’ And it grew from there!”

MATT SMITH’S interpretation of the Doctor arrives in *Living History* by Justin Richards. Churchill joins the Eleventh Doctor and Kazran Sardick for a trip to Roman Britain. Julius Caesar’s legions are clashing with the ancient Britons. But a far more powerful enemy is planning a war of its own...

Justin said: “A few years ago, we were going to include Churchill in one of the *Quick Reads* books by Terrance Dicks, when Russell T Davies was in charge, but he suggested we didn’t use Churchill as, although he had no plans, he was the kind of character that could be used in the TV series, and he didn’t want to do anything that would contradict continuity.

And then, a couple of years later, when Steven Moffat took over as executive producer, we got Churchill!

“In my play, the Doctor and Churchill are not together very much, as they arrive, Churchill gets out of the TARDIS and then the TARDIS disappears and doesn’t reappear until the end. It’s quite nice that he’s sort of an old friend, although he had never been in the TARDIS, but wants to. I’ve got the story where he finally gets to do it.”



ROUNDING OFF this first box set is *The Chartwell Metamorphosis* by Ken Bentley. Comfortably retired, Churchill plans to live out his days in peace, but an alien incursion launches the Prime Minister back into action and it will take everything he’s learnt to win the day. Can Lily Arwell – who appeared in 2011 Christmas special *The Doctor, The*



Ian McNeice and Holly Earl



Doctor Who: The Churchill Years

THE ONCOMING STORM

The War is raging over Europe, and Churchill is desperate for any advantage. A mysterious stone may hold the key to victory...

HOUNDED

Churchill is plagued by a creature from his own psyche, which he calls 'the Black Dog'. The Tenth Doctor may be the Prime Minister's only hope...

LIVING HISTORY

Churchill joins the Eleventh Doctor and Kazran Sardick for a trip to Roman Britain. Julius Caesar's legions are clashing with the ancient Britons. But a far more powerful enemy is planning a war of its own...

THE CHARTWELL METAMORPHOSIS

Comfortably retired, Churchill plans to live out his days in peace. But an alien incursion launches the Prime Minister back into action...

CAST: Ian McNeice, Danny Horn, Holly Earl, Emily Atack, Michael Gould, Derek Riddell, Phil Mulryne, Jo Stone-Fewings, Amerjit Deu, Stewart Scudamore, Alistair Petrie, Laura Rogers, Carolyn Seymour, John Banks, Nicholas Briggs

WRITTEN BY: Phil Mulryne, Alan Barnes, Justin Richards, Ken Bentley

DIRECTED BY: Ken Bentley

OUT THIS MONTH!

Widow and the Wardrobe, offer her assistance? Matt

says: "I thought it would be good bring in Lily Arwell: in her TV appearance, Holly Earl was brilliantly engaging and Lily proved herself excellent companion material. She lives in the right period – and by having her return in the mid-1950s it means Holly Earl can actually play Lily in her twenties!

Ken, who also directed the series, picks up the story: "The brief was fairly broad. I think it went something like 'it's about Churchill in his retirement, his fascination with butterflies and Lily Arwell appears.' His life was quite fascinating at that time.

"As was the way with people of Churchill's generation and class, routine was strictly maintained. That became the backbone of the story and slotting Lily into his life was quite straightforward. He famously had nurses caring for him in the latter years, so that seemed the

most natural way to bring Lily into his life.

"The thrill about getting Churchill into the studio was, for me, about the

storytelling world. One of the fascinating things about Big Finish (and Doctor Who itself) is the broad range of storytelling worlds the plays inhabit. Unusually the period in which Churchill lived isn't a world we've visited often, so it felt fresh and exciting to explore."

Completing the package is the cover, designed by Tom Webster. He adds: "It was great fun creating a 40s feel for this one. I instantly started looking at tonnes and tonnes of war posters. I wanted searchlights galore and a strong central image of Churchill. I'd say that the highlight of this one was definitely creating the small Doctor silhouettes, which was the first time I'd put any of the new series Doctors on a Big Finish cover – and hopefully not the last! It gave me a real buzz doing that!" **VORTEX**

Kenny Smith climbs off his penny farthing to find out the goings on in **The Prisoner**...



Be Seeing You

IT'S BEEN a long time coming, but finally Big Finish is heading to the Village for the highly-anticipated release of **The Prisoner**.

The new four-story box set is based on the 1967-68 ITV series, which starred Patrick McGoohan as a former spy imprisoned in the mysterious Village. The authorities running the Village are determined to learn his secrets, using ever more ingenious methods to break McGoohan's

character, known only as Number Six. Getting the rights to **The Prisoner** was the culmination of years of interest from the set's writer/director Nicholas Briggs, who reveals he first asked: "Certainly over five years ago. I was originally having meetings and conversations with ITV about the Gerry Anderson shows, like **Thunderbirds**, **Captain Scarlet** and **Stingray**. Having been given unofficial permission to do audio productions based on them by Gerry Anderson



Mark Elstob (the new Number Six) plotting his escape...

allegory, when so much of it seemed to be a straight mystery story about good and bad guys. The incredible visual style of it. The music. Patrick McGoohan's incredible central performance. Its overwhelming eccentricity and strangeness. All these things. And Rover. The big balloon!"

“I didn’t know Mark was a fan of The Prisoner, but I knew he was a fan of Doctor Who.”

Nicholas Briggs

PATRICK MCGOOHAN dominated the original TV series through his incredible presence both in front of and behind the camera. Stepping into his shoes, as Number Six at least, is Mark Elstob.

Mark is known for his many stage appearances, including *Present Laughter*, *Neville's Island*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Sir Peter Hall's *Hamlet* and Steven Berkoff's

Salome, as well as his year in *Emmerdale* as Andrew Fraser. In terms of finding his leading man, Nick says: "I knew, of course, that the casting of Number Six was pivotal. Patrick

McGoohan was the driving force of the original series, both on and off-screen.

The new central performance would have to be every bit as powerful in its own way. I did a lot of searching and listening to clips and showreels.

"I toyed with various famous names and had meetings and conversations.

But ultimately, I decided I wanted someone who would be good and unknown, who wouldn't have a 'star' personality that would override the character –

but the clinching factor was that I wanted someone who knew and loved the series.

"I said to myself, 'Surely, I must know someone for whom this would be a dream job and who is a brilliant leading man?' I racked my brains and nearly gave up and then,

suddenly, Mark popped into my head. I'd worked with him on a tour of *Brideshead Revisited* in 1995, in which he'd played the Jeremy Irons part (Charles Ryder).

He had been brilliant. And I'd bumped into him a couple of years ago. I had a meeting with him, to make sure he was still the same strong-voiced, handsome leading man. He was! And he knew all about Big Finish.

"I didn't know Mark was a fan of *The Prisoner*, but I knew he was a fan of *Doctor Who*, so I harboured a hope that, as



John Stark as Number Two

himself, I was trying to work out with ITV what the best way to do it was. Negotiations got a little way, but then it was made clear to me that 'something' was happening and that everything to do with *Thunderbirds* was under a 'NDA' (non-disclosure-agreement).

"But all the way along, I mentioned *The Prisoner*. Initially, ITV wanted us to do something based on the remake, but I wasn't keen on that, so I let it drop. But every time I went back to talk about Gerry Anderson, I mentioned *The Prisoner*. And when it was made clear that nothing could happen with any Gerry Anderson franchises because of the return of *Thunderbirds*, Giles Ridge and Maggy Harris at ITV very kindly said, 'But is there anything else we can do for you?' And I said, 'Well... *The Prisoner*!' They were immediately enthusiastic and we got it all sorted out pretty quickly, with a licence being issued by November 2014."

Despite there only being 17 episodes of the show, what does Nick believe it is about *The Prisoner* that has made its popularity endure for so long?

"The fight of the individual against faceless authority," replies Nick. "The fact that so much of it is difficult to fathom – the mystery. The crazy ending that tips into

Free Information:

Patrick McGoohan claimed that the pennyfarthing motif was to denote progress, or a lack of it.

The Prisoner



In the green room (left to right): Helen Goldwyn, Nicholas Briggs, Ramon Tikaram, Sara Powell and Mark Elstob discuss sensory deprivation over orange juice and biscuits.



Celia Imrie as Number Two

someone interested in cult TV, he'd at least have heard of **The Prisoner**. As luck would have it, he is as nuts about the series as I am. We had a meeting – and there, sitting in front of me was my new Number Six. And he's been brilliant!"

Mark adds: "Patrick MacGoohan's **The Prisoner** is a bona fide classic, representing a high watermark of television. In the hierarchy of British TV fantasy, Number Six has a status perhaps matched only by **Quatermass** and **Doctor Who**. For me personally, to play this part is more than just a great job for an actor, it is the stuff of which a fan's dreams are made."

T HREE OF the four story titles in the set will sound pretty familiar to fans, with *Departure and Arrival*, *The Schizoid Man* and *The Chimes of Big Ben*.

Nick said: "I am creating all-new tales, but mostly adaptations. Episode three is entirely original, *Your Beautiful Village*. But I wanted to adapt the original episodes, because I didn't want to insert new stories within the narrative run of the original. I didn't think that seemed to make sense, given

Free Information:

Canopied bicycles were in use at Butlins holiday camps. The camp hosts wore piped blazers...

that we'd have a new cast. So I've reimagined it for audio drama, drawing heavily from the originals, but trying to make it an exciting way for everyone who loved the show

to relive it, sort of afresh. For those who never saw the TV series, I hope this audio version will make them go and watch the original shows.

"At heart, they are the same stories, but they are told differently. They differ because stories have to be told differently on audio, but also

there are differences in order to give an audience very familiar with the originals something new to think about. In rewriting them, I followed the 'logic' of the episodes, but then deviated or embellished wherever I felt it was needed. But they are very faithful to the original."

How did Nick find writing the new tale, *Your Beautiful Village*, in which Number Six experiences sensory deprivation and finds himself in almost complete darkness?

"The moment I decided I was going to do it, the idea came straight into my head. I wanted to do something that really exploited the audio medium. A story that could only be told on audio and that wouldn't work visually. It really leapt out at me as an idea."

T HE PRISONER was also famed for its famous guest stars, who would play Number Two, the administrative head of The Village. Number Six found himself pitted against a series of different authority figures and the Big Finish series follows in this fine tradition, with different actors appearing, including Sir John Standing, Celia Imrie, Ramon Tikaram and Michael Cochrane.



The Prisoner

"I'm not a number. I'm a free man!"

January 16th, 1967...

A secret agent resigns, then wakes up to find himself imprisoned in 'The Village' — a bizarre community with a cheery veneer, but an underbelly of mystery and threat. All occupants of The Village have numbers instead of names, with our secret agent forced to accept the mantle of Number Six.

DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL
THE SCHIZOID MAN
YOUR BEAUTIFUL VILLAGE
THE CHIMES OF BIG BEN

CAST: Mark Elstob, John Standing, Celia Imrie, Ramon Tikaram, Michael Cochrane, Sara Powell, Helen Goldwyn, Sarah Mowat, Jim Barclay, Barnaby Edwards, Jez Fielder, Kristina Buikaite, Nicholas Briggs

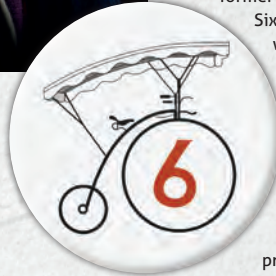
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY
 Nicholas Briggs

OUT THIS MONTH!



Michael Cochrane (A new Number Two)

Nick says: "My overriding motive was to get great people who would do a great job. Sir John Standing and Celia Imrie were both highly recommended to me by Ken Bentley — and they didn't disappoint. Ramon Tikaram and Michael Cochrane, I'd worked with before. Ramon and I had got on well in the green room of **UNIT: Extinction**, and I'd noticed he had a fantastic voice. So I sorted that straight away with an email to his agent, while Ramon was sitting in front of me! "I was determined to have Michael in it from the start. I knew he was a brilliant actor. But he was 10 times better in the part than I had even anticipated. I remember explaining to Celia Imrie that they used to hire whichever marvellous, fruity actor was available to play Number Two for each episode. And I can confirm that they are all not only fruity and marvellous, but by turns terrifying and mesmerising."



Free Information:


Is it possible that there was a clue hidden in the opening exchange between Number 6 and Number 2 all along? It's a matter of interpretation: Number 6: "Who is Number 1?" Number 2: "YOU ARE, Number 6."

Other inhabitants of the Village include Sara Powell as Number Nine, Kristina Buikaite as Number Eight and Jez Fielder as Number 17 — with Helen Goldwyn as the Village Voice, Jim Barclay as Control and Barnaby Edwards as Number Two's diminutive Butler. Sarah Mowat plays the role of Zero-Six-Two, a former accomplice of Number

Six. Barnaby laughs: "I was delighted to be offered the role of the Butler in **The Prisoner**. Having spent the last 11 years wordlessly acting on the TV series of **Doctor Who**, I felt fully prepared to play that taciturn domestic!"

LOOKING BACK over the whole **Prisoner** experience to date, Nick sums it up as: "Crazy, hard work. But the most brilliant fun. I felt and still do feel huge responsibility on my shoulders. Many people may not like what I've done. But it all comes from the heart. From my love of the original TV series.

"The recordings were thrilling and very hard work. And the post-production has been a real joy, with Ian Meadows and Jamie Robertson doing some amazing work. I've been a right pain in the neck to those guys. I was very pedantic, but I'm satisfied I've got the best work out of them. Jamie's music is stupendous. His new theme has all the flavour of the original, but none of the notes!" **BE SEEING YOU**



Kenny Smith
learns about the
Fourth Doctor and
Romana's all-new
audio adventures
for 2016!

GOING FOURTH

THERE'S SOMETHING very special about the Fourth Doctor and Romana," says producer David Richardson. "Two Time Lords on a journey through infinity and just having loads of fun with it."

Oh yes – Tom Baker and Lalla Ward's popular Time Lords are back with John Leeson's K-9, for eight brand new adventures.

David continues: "There's such a strong chemistry between the two characters, it was a joy to let our writers take them on new adventures and wonderful to hear Tom and Lalla back in their roles. We wanted series five to echo some of the kinds of stories we might have found in Season 17."

The ride gets underway this month with *Wave of Destruction* by Justin Richards. The Doctor, Romana and K-9 are enjoying a break in 1960s London when they detect a modulated frequency wave cancellation signal.

Justin reveals: "I've always enjoyed the combination of

the Fourth Doctor, the Second Romana and K-9 – the three of them are always a joy to watch. So it was a real privilege to get to write for them, I had immense fun doing it."

In February, the TARDIS stays on Earth for *The Labyrinth of Buda Castle*, when the Doctor and Romana arrive in Budapest, 1979, their plans for another holiday are cut short by a rash of violent killings. A nightmarish presence stalks the streets; is there a Vampire on the loose?

Written by Eddie Robson, he reveals: "David Richardson suggested I might like to do something set in Europe – as if *City of Death* had set a precedent for filming abroad in the way *Arc of Infinity* later did, and they did one story a year somewhere in Europe – and Budapest was his idea.

"I like to have those starting points, so I looked around for things in Budapest that might inspire it. Then I found a Wikipedia article that was titled '*The Labyrinth of Buda Castle*', and I sent it to David saying 'Look, this place comes with a **Doctor Who** story title attached!'"



Above: Tom Baker and Simon Rouse

Far right: Tom Chadbon and Lalla Ward



“I came up with my own brief for myself... Write the sort of story Douglas Adams would write if he was still alive.”

Jonny Morris

MARCH AND April sees the release of a two-part story by Jonathan Morris in *The Paradox Planet* and *Legacy of Death*, as the TARDIS arrives in the path of an advanced war machine. But this isn't just any tank – it's a Time Tank! There's guest stars of note, with *Kinda*'s Simon Rouse and *City of Death* legend Tom Chadbon.

Jonny says: "I came up with my own brief for myself, which was this: to write the sort of story Douglas Adams would write if he was still alive. Which I don't think would be a comedy, perhaps surprisingly. I think if he was around he'd write something which was about the world today, about the fact that we're destroying our planet, squandering its natural resources and making species extinct. In my darker moments I imagine how future generations will look back at our time, and I think they'll regard us as greedy, selfish idiots. Quite rightly!"

THE RANDOMISER brings the travellers to the future site of Brighton Pavilion in May for *Gallery of Ghouls*, where a travelling waxworks has set up a show. But what horrors does Madame Tisso's Exposition

hold? And what does it have to do with Marie Antoinette?

Writer Alan Barnes says of the Doctor and Romana: "Originally, I started out thinking about doing a story set in Madame Tussaud's, because of the proximity to the Doctor's Baker Street house. But... when I started researching the historical Tussaud, I became fascinated by her origins and her connections

to the French Revolution, not to mention the whole murky world of the touring wax exposition in the early-mid nineteenth century – long before she set up a permanent exhibition, she was just one of the many people hawking her figures around the country, in resorts like Brighton. So that's where the story started, really."

August features the return of an old acquaintance of the Doctor and Romana in John Dorney's *The Trouble With Drax*. John recalls: "There are various things you are always going to end up doing if you're dealing with a character like Drax. The whole tone is going to be a bit rompy – he's not the most serious of characters – there's a lot of fun to be had, as he's pretty joyous.

"We started talking about this one around October 2013, and we had initial discussions with Barry Jackson's

The Fourth Doctor Adventures



agent about him playing Drax again, but then we heard the sad news he had passed away. We did wonder if we should change the story, but it felt right to be carrying on and doing it as a tribute to him."

THE SEASON concludes in July and August with the two-part finale by Nicholas Briggs, *The Pursuit of History* and *Casualties of Time*.

They pick up from the end of the second season of **Fourth Doctor Adventures**, with the return of David Warner as Cuthbert and Toby Hadoke as his sidekick Mr Dorrick. If that wasn't enough, there's also David Troughton back as the Black Guardian!

Nick says: "We always had it in mind to bring Cuthbert back, because

"We were going to flit from Sarah, to Leela to the Brigadier and back again..."

Nicholas Briggs

there was so much about him left unexplained. Right back at the original planning stages of the Fourth Doctor adventures, when Lis Sladen was going to be in them, we were going to flit from Sarah, to Leela to the Brigadier and

back again, and this would have incorporated an explanation of what or who Cuthbert really is. But, of course, sad events overtook us and so Cuthbert's origin story has changed quite a bit, not least because of the input of David Richardson and the

brief he gave me for the final two-story conclusion to this upcoming season.

"It's a grand old game of cat and mouse between the Doctor and Cuthbert, through time and space."

VORTEX

Doctor Who: Wave of Destruction

A modulated frequency wave cancellation signal isn't something that the Doctor and Romana expect to detect in 1960s London. But then they don't expect to find Professor Lanchester, the man who invented it, lying unconscious. Or MI5 investigating.

With the help of MI5 Agent Miller, Lanchester's daughter Jill, and his nephew a pirate radio DJ called Mark, the Doctor, Romana and K-9 investigate. They soon discover that there is more at risk than they imagined, and an alien invasion is about to begin.

Can the Doctor identify and defeat the aliens in time? Will Romana manage to find a recombinant transducer before it's too late? And how will K-9 cope with his new job?

CAST: Tom Baker (The Doctor), Lalla Ward (Romana), John Leeson (K9), Karl Theobald (Mark Lanchester), Phil Mulryne (Barnaby Miller), Alix Wilton Regan (Jill), John Banks (Derek Fretus)

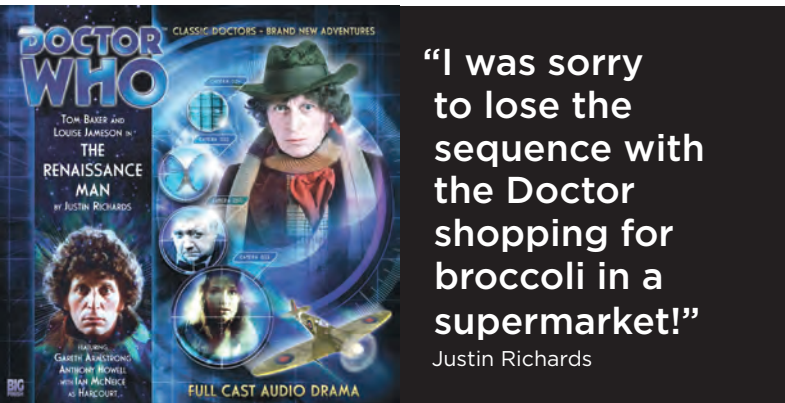
WRITTEN BY: Justin Richards

DIRECTED BY: Nicholas Briggs

OUT THIS MONTH!

THE RENAISSANCE MAN

Two genii go head to head in this month's Listen Again!



"I was sorry to lose the sequence with the Doctor shopping for broccoli in a supermarket!"

Justin Richards

and that can in turn add clarity. But I was sorry to lose the Battle of Waterloo and Lloyd George's budget speech and the sequence with the Doctor shopping for broccoli in a supermarket!

Ian McNeice has his own outstanding memory from the recording session. He recalls: "I remember going down to Tunbridge Wells to record it and I wondered, why were we going all the way to a small studio.

"Then, coming through the door was Tom Baker and it all made sense! He only lives five minutes down the road."

With this being the first time Justin had written for Tom Baker's Doctor, knowing the actor would be performing his work, was that an added thrill? "Oh very much so. I've written prose fiction for the Fourth Doctor before, of course. But there's an extra buzz from writing something you know will be performed."

Director Ken Bentley recalls: "The Fourth Doctor series seemed very different in tone to most of the stories I'd worked on to date. They were populated by much more theatrical characters, and role play seemed to be a consistent theme. I don't know enough about the history of the TV series to know if this was an intentional reference to Tom's tenure on the telly.

"I always enjoy working on stories with theatrical characters. It makes casting fun. And since we're working in an audio environment, casting actors with rich, characterful voices is something I get a lot of satisfaction from."

Of the finished play, Justin adds: "Oh it's just amazing. I'm easily pleased – I just love hearing anything I've written being read or performed. But yes, there's something extra special about the first one you do for any of the Doctors. And to be in close to the start of Tom Baker's Doctorial Big Finish career is a great privilege and hugely exciting." **VORTEX**

IAN MCNEICE is no stranger to Big Finish, having appeared in a couple of adventures before playing Winston Churchill in his own series. He first appeared in a Big Finish play in 2007 opposite Paul McGann and Sheridan Smith in *Immortal Beloved*. He was back in 2012 with *The Renaissance Man*, in the first series of Fourth Doctor adventures.

Writer Justin Richards recalls his original brief featured the Doctor and Leela, saying: "The only other stipulation was that it should progress the theme of the Doctor trying to educate Leela in some way. So that's what got me thinking about an academic trip of some sort.

"I've always thought that the Doctor in general, and the Fourth Doctor in particular is a sort of 'Renaissance Man' in that he comes as close as anyone can to knowing everything about everything. It's always good to have a villain or opponent who is a sort of distorted reflection of the hero, so I decided that an aspirant 'renaissance man' should be the enemy."

Were there many changes to *The Renaissance Man* during the writing process?

"Only the details, really," says Justin. "I scripted it to be four episodes long which we then cut back to two. So a lot of the detail and some of the subtlety inevitably gets lost when you do that. But in exchange you gain a greater focus

RELEASE SCHEDULE

Forthcoming audio releases.



JANUARY 2016

- DOCTOR WHO: **THE WATERS OF AMSTERDAM** (208, Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **WAVE OF DESTRUCTION** (5.1, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- DOCTOR WHO: **THE DIARY OF RIVER SONG** (Box Set)
- DOCTOR WHO: **THE CHURCHILL YEARS** (Box Set)
- DOCTOR WHO: **SHORT TRIPS: GARDENS OF THE DEAD** (6.01, TBA, Download only)
- TORCHWOOD: **UNCANNY VALLEY** (1.5)
- THE PRISONER: **VOLUME 1 BOX SET**
- THE AVENGERS – THE LOST EPISODES: **VOLUME 5** (Box Set)
- PATHFINDER LEGENDS – MUMMY'S MASK: **SECRETS OF THE SPHINX** (2.4)

FEBRUARY 2016

- DOCTOR WHO: **AQUITAINE** (209, Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **THE LABYRINTH OF BUDA CASTLE** (5.2, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- DOCTOR WHO: **THE WAR DOCTOR: INFERNAL DEVICES** (Box Set, The War Doctor)
- DOCTOR WHO: **SHORT TRIPS: PRIME WINNER** (6.02, TBA, Download only)
- TORCHWOOD: **MORE THAN THIS** (1.6)
- VIENNA **SERIES 3** (Full Cast)
- PATHFINDER LEGENDS – MUMMY'S MASK: **THE SLAVE TRENCHES OF HAKOTEP** (2.5)

MARCH 2016

- DOCTOR WHO: **THE PETERLOO MASSACRE** (210, Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **THE PARADOX PLANET** (5.3, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- DOCTOR WHO: **DOOM COALITION 2** (Eighth Doctor)
- DOCTOR WHO: **SHORT TRIPS: WASHINGTON BURNS** (6.03, TBA, Download only)
- PATHFINDER LEGENDS – MUMMY'S MASK: **PYRAMID OF THE SKY PHAROAH** (2.6)
- TORCHWOOD: **TBA** (2.1)

APRIL 2016

- DOCTOR WHO: **TBA** (211, Fifth Doctor)

DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES:

- THE LEGACY OF DEATH** (5.4, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- TERRAHAWKS: **VOLUME 02**
- DOCTOR WHO – THE NOVEL ADAPTATIONS: **NIGHTSHADE** (Seventh Doctor and Ace)
- DOCTOR WHO: **SHORT TRIPS: TBA** (6.04, TBA, Download only)
- BLAKE'S 7: **THE LIBERATOR CHRONICLES** (Box Set 12)
- THE AVENGERS – STEED AND MRS PEEL: **THE COMIC STRIP ADAPTATIONS** (Volume 1)
- TORCHWOOD: **TBA** (2.2)

MAY 2016

- DOCTOR WHO: **VAMPIRE OF THE MIND** (212, Sixth Doctor)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **GALLERY OF GHOULS** (5.5, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE TENTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **TECHNOPHOBIA** (1.1, Tenth Doctor and Donna)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE TENTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **TIME REAVER** (1.2, Tenth Doctor and Donna)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE TENTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **DEATH AND THE QUEEN** (1.3, Tenth Doctor and Donna)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE TENTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **VOLUME 1** (Ltd Edition Box Set, Tenth Doctor and Donna)
- UNIT: **THE NEW SERIES: SHUTDOWN** (2.1, TBA)
- DOCTOR WHO: **SHORT TRIPS: TBA** (6.05, TBA, Download only)
- GALLIFREY: **ENEMY LINES** (8, Romana II, Leela and Ace)
- TORCHWOOD: **TBA** (2.3)
- BIG FINISH CLASSICS: **DRACULA**

JUNE 2016

- DOCTOR WHO: **TBA** (213, Seventh Doctor)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **THE TROUBLE WITH DRAX** (5.6, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- DOCTOR WHO: **SHORT TRIPS: TBA** (6.06, TBA, Download only)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE COMPANION CHRONICLES: **THE SECOND DOCTOR – VOLUME 1** (TBA)
- SURVIVORS – **SERIES 4: BOX SET** (Full Cast)
- TORCHWOOD: **TBA** (2.4)

JULY 2016

- DOCTOR WHO: **TBA** (214, Seventh Doctor, Mel and Ace)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **THE PURSUIT OF HISTORY** (5.7, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- DOCTOR WHO: **SHORT TRIPS: TBA** (6.07, TBA, Download only)
- THE NEW COUNTER-MEASURES: **WHO KILLED TOBY KINSELLA?**
- TORCHWOOD: **TBA** (2.5)
- THE AVENGERS – THE LOST EPISODES: **VOLUME 6** (Box Set)

AUGUST 2016

- DOCTOR WHO: **TBA** (215, Seventh Doctor, Mel and Ace)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **CASUALTIES OF TIME** (5.8, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- DOCTOR WHO: **SHORT TRIPS: TBA** (6.08, TBA, Download only)
- SHERLOCK HOLMES: **THE SACRIFICE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES** (Box Set)

SEPTEMBER 2016

- DOCTOR WHO: **TBA** (216, Seventh Doctor, Mel and Ace)
- DOCTOR WHO: **TBA** (217, TBA)
- DOCTOR WHO: **THE WAR DOCTOR: TBA** (Box Set, The War Doctor)
- DOCTOR WHO: **SHORT TRIPS: TBA** (6.09, TBA, Download only)
- GRACELESS: **SERIES 4** (Box Set)
- DOCTOR WHO: **THE EARLY ADVENTURES: TBA** (3.1, TBA)

OCTOBER 2016

- DOCTOR WHO: **TBA** (217, Sixth Doctor and Constance)
- DOCTOR WHO: **DOOM COALITION 3** (Eighth Doctor)
- DOCTOR WHO: **THE EARLY ADVENTURES: TBA** (3.2, TBA)
- DOCTOR WHO: **SHORT TRIPS: TBA** (6.10, TBA, Download only)
- CHARLOTTE POLLARD: **SERIES 02** (Box Set)

VORTEX MAIL

SEBASTIAN?

So I've just finished listening to **Jago & Litefoot Series 10**. I liked it very much, as always, but there's one question that I'd like to ask. A certain resurrectionist is namedropped several times, his name given as 'Sebastian Crow'. Is this an oversight? Because a similar character showed up in *Series 2*, but by the name of Sibelius Crow rather than Sebastian. Should I chalk it up to numerous unseen infernal investigations, pegging him as a cousin that shared Sibelius' love for reanimation?

Joe

Producer David Richardson: *My theory is that J&L since discovered that Sibelius was an affectionation and he was actually called Sebastian.*

Script editor Justin Richards: *I think David is right – as J&L later discovered, his real name was Sebastian but he used 'Sibelius' because he was pretentious as well as bonkers.*

A TORCH FOR TORCHWOOD!

I have bought loads of stuff from Big Finish over the years, but very rarely been moved to get in touch with you. After listening to **Torchwood: Fall to Earth**, though, I simply cannot just step on to the next one in my playlist. I adore this play. From the moment it started I had a stupid grin of pure enjoyment on my face. The simplicity of

the setup, the lovely conceit of doing it all as one long junk phone call; the emotional range and tight writing, the subtle editing and sound design, the brilliant performances from the two actors, and even the way that it so perfectly captured the essence of Ianto and early-season **Torchwood**. I am so glad I subscribed to this series, and really looking forward to the next. Well done and many thanks to everyone involved!

Frank Carver

Nick: *Thanks, Frank. I must admit that I too was blown away by this release. Superb performances, great script, with amazing sound design and music. Very proud this is part of the Big Finish world. Producer James Goss is doing an amazing job.*

PARADISE TOWERS 2?

On hearing you'd signed up John Hurt, I meant to email you all to congratulate you on landing your first 21st century Doctor. I'm delighted to see that, in my tardiness, David Tennant and Catherine Tate have materialised as well. It's absolutely splendid news. Please can someone think of an excuse for a multi-Doctor story featuring Doctors old and new? I mean, it's the 28th anniversary of *Paradise Towers* part four, for instance... It's been a pleasure, over the years, to see the company go from strength to strength and get its hands

on more of the show's rich history. It's entirely deserved too. Belated thanks also for the last Big Finish Day – I love the openness of the company to us punters. They're such relaxed, friendly affairs; I'm already looking forward to the next one.

Mark

Nick: *Thanks, Mark. That must mean it's the 29th anniversary of The Trial of a Time Lord, then? But seriously, Mark, thanks for all you say. Our aim is to be as open and friendly as possible.*

ESSENCE OF VILLAGE

Just listened to **The Prisoner** trailer and sounds like you've captured the essence of it. I wanted to wish you all success on the release. Like **Survivors** this is one of THOSE moments you look forward to.

Andy Scott

Nick: *Thanks, Andy. I'm very excited about The Prisoner. Five or more years getting it to happen, and a year of production work on it. I hope you love it.*

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feedback@bigfinish.com and remember to put 'Vortex Mail' as the subject...

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THE PRISONER:

I'M A FREE MAN!

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WAR STORIES!

IAN McNEICE RETURNS TO A
PRIME ROLE FOR BIG FINISH!

DOCTOR WHO

FIFTH FOR THE FOURTH!

THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES
SERIES FIVE PREVIEW...