

## Platform 7 Press Pack

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**\*\*Strictly Under Embargo until Tuesday 28th November 2023\*\***



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## **Series synopsis**

After witnessing a cataclysmic event on Platform 7, Lisa is forced to confront the mystery of her death.

Marooned in the train station where she died, Lisa has no memory of who she was. After witnessing a cataclysmic event on Platform 7, her fragmented memories return to reveal the mystery of her death.

### ***Episode 1 Billing – 90 characters***

Lisa's memories begin to return and Transport Police officer Akash takes an interest in her case.

### ***Episode 1 Billing – 180 characters***

A suicide on Platform 7 prompts Lisa to discover more about her own death. Transport Police officer Akash Lockhart takes an interest in Lisa's case.

### ***Episode 2 Billing – 90 characters***

Finally free from the station, Lisa grapples with clues about her death while Akash investigates.

### ***Episode 2 Billing – 180 characters***

Free at last from the station, Lisa continues to hunt for clues about her death before a dark realisation dawns. Akash's investigation leads him in an unexpected direction.

### ***Episode 3 Billing – 90 characters***

Lisa's past is revealed, and we are confronted with the truth about her death.

### ***Episode 3 Billing – 180 characters***

When Lisa's past is revealed, we get a glimpse into the events that led up to her death before witnessing the shocking revelation of what really happened on Platform 7 that night.

### ***Episode 4 Billing – 90 characters***

It's time for Lisa to get justice. Akash races against the clock to get her case reopened.

### **Episode 4 Billing – 180 characters**

Akash races against time to gather evidence for Lisa's case. Armed with the truth, it's time for Lisa to turn the tables and finally get the justice she deserves. But how far will she go?

### **Interview with Louise Doughty - Writer**

#### **Tell us where the idea for the book came from?**

The novel version of Platform 7 was set on Peterborough railway station and it's a station that I've had a long relationship with. I grew up in the East Midlands, went to university in Leeds, which involved changing trains at Peterborough, then I did a postgrad in Norwich which meant I had to change chains at Peterborough and I then moved to London for the next 30 years of my life and whenever I went home I had to change trains at Peterborough. There was many cold winter night where I stood on that platform having just missed a connection. I used to have a standing joke that if I had been bad and died and went to purgatory, I would find myself trapped on Peterborough railway station on a freezing November night. That's where the idea came from: a railway station as a metaphor for purgatory, and a young woman who has died there in mysterious circumstances and is trapped there until the mystery of her death is solved.

#### **Can you introduce us to the main character, what can you tell us about her?**

The lead character of Platform 7 is called Lisa. She's a young woman, she's a ghost and as the story begins she has no memory about her past life let alone what caused her death. One night at 4am a man comes onto the station to throw himself under a freight train - she attempts to stop him and fails - and the next day, to her shock, he is back on the station as ghost. She begins to talk to him, and her memory starts to return. Then one day she sees Matty or Matthew, a man that she was in a relationship with in her living life. She sees him with her parents as they come to lay flowers on the spot where she died and she finds she's free of the station - she's able to follow the people that she knew in her real life, and she starts to unpick what happened to her.

#### **In terms of a toolbox for a set for a story - talk about what a train station gives you as a writer.**

It's a fantastic gift for a writer because you have a setting where there is huge amounts of action: there are scores of people passing through at all times of day and night. I spent a lot of time on Peterborough railway station myself as I was researching the novel and got to know the staff quite well: I really felt for the way in which this small community has to be dealing with customer's minor needs all day - why is the lift broken, why is my service six minutes late - and then suddenly they may have to deal with life or death situations.

Every staff member that I spoke to had witnessed a very serious incident or dealt with the aftermath: maybe on a station, or when they were working on the trains, either somebody had gone under a train or been injured or a fight breaking out. Railway station staff aren't trained in the same way that paramedics or police officers are, and most of the time they have to deal with very mundane things but then suddenly they have to deal with these extraordinary situations. So creating that community was great fun and it was a terrific backdrop for the main story and I'm really glad we managed to preserve some of that in the TV version. Something that sounds quite unpromising actually turned out to be a great gift for me as a novelist.

**Talk about your experience of creating a show, or a show being created by your book? And also your working relationship with Paula.**

One of the more amusing elements of being adapted for television is that everybody asks, how do you feel about it, it's your baby and you have to let it go when another writer comes in and takes your work and changes it... I'm here to tell you that it's absolutely bliss. I love it! Paula Milne is a wonderful writer in her own right, she does very few adaptations, so I was very lucky to get her for Platform 7 and I have to be honest, when I wrote that novel I thought myself, well there's no way they'll put this one on film or TV but how wrong was I about that!

**Tell me about your reaction to Jasmine coming in to play Lisa?**

I was completely thrilled to bits when we got Jasmine Jobson for the lead role of Lisa. I'm a big fan of Top Boy, I've watched it since the very first series and I think what she brings to Platform 7 is something that's so necessary, which is that you feel that Lisa is an active participant in her own drama even when she's a ghost. In the novel the character of Lisa drifts around, thinking about things. In a work of prose fiction, you can get away with a character being relatively passive because you have interior thought. But on the screen, she needed to be much more dynamic, more of an active participant in the investigation of her own death. Jasmine's performance really brings that dynamic quality to Lisa's character: we first meet her as a ghost - but when you see her in flashback as a living woman, you realise how vibrant and strong Lisa was, and that brings real poignancy to what has happened to her. Jasmine really shows her range here, and it's a joy to see.

**Interview with Chris Carey and Kate Triggs - Executive Producer's**

**Tell us about the genesis of the show...**

Chris: I've known Louise Doughty for several years, we'd worked together on another adaptation of hers (Apple Tree Yard) and became very good friends. When Platform 7 was released as a novel, I read it and thought "This is an amazing story - God knows how you'll adapt it, I'll have to find someone very clever to do that and I wonder if she'll let me try"...and she did! We then met Paula Milne, Paula and Louise hit it off immediately and worked together very effectively.

**What was it about Platform 7 that made you think it would make a great show?**

Chris: Platform 7 is exciting as it's a brilliant book about something important and it was told in a particularly compelling, original way. It was really hard to know how it could be rendered for a television drama and I love that kind of challenge. It's a challenging book to adapt for many reasons. All I knew was that this is a great story that needed to be told. Adapting a book like this, you need to choose things and not choose other things and Paula is the best, her career is unparalleled! It was a really exciting moment when we sent Paula the book, I didn't know her at that point, and she said yes I'm interested! To not give away too many spoilers, this story is largely about some very important topics and how they can affect anyone - even the seemingly strongest characters.

Louise's choice of telling that story through someone who is already dead and trapped at a train station struck me as such an original idea. Telling Lisa's story from the vantage point of a ghost, the challenge is the central character is already dead - what are the stakes for her?

The worst thing that can happen to a main character has already happened - who does she talk to? How do we know what's going on? Those are the sorts of questions we put to Paula to answer and she did magnificently.

### **The next challenge is casting - what was that process like?**

Chris: We're really excited about giving Jasmine Jobson a platform to showcase her talent beyond the world of Top Boy and other great work she's done. The idea of Jasmine playing the role of Lisa who is so strong, tough and confident, those are really important qualities as the story goes on, Jasmine enhances that offering. There's a really great, young cast - Toby, Reese, Yaamin, Rhiannon to name a few. To have actors with agency, figuring their way through the story felt like it elevated the original proposition - what was already a magnificent book taken to a brilliant television level by Paula, then the cast came in and brought it to another level.

### **What do you feel the supernatural element to the story adds?**

Chris: One of the very early conversations that Paula and I had was establishing the rules of the ghost. What can the ghost do, what can we see, how do we know what is going on at any particular time? We looked at a ton of different movies and TV series' which had ghosts in them and the story is madly different. The rendition of the supernatural in Platform 7 bears some degree of honour to Ghost - the Patrick Swayze movie. We didn't really want it to be a tricky show, we wanted audiences to accept the reality of Lisa the ghost existing so the movie was a way of guiding us through. The conversation about the rules of the ghost is something we've talked about the entire way through. I think it should be quite unusual, there is something arresting about seeing Jasmine in pyjamas and trainers on a train station - you think what's going on?! It's not in any way a fantasy or supernatural show, it's a psychological thriller.

### **Tell us about the score for the show**

Kate: Platform 7 is a heart-stopping modern ghost story. It is a story about young people with a fantastic young cast. So we wanted to find a soundtrack that felt fresh and arresting. Toy Drum's music (Pablo Clements and James Griffith) has given the series all this and more. It has enhanced the themes of love, loss, identity, revenge and redemption and has brilliantly elevated the show.

## **Interview with Paula Milne - Screenwriter**

### **What have been the challenges for you when adapting Platform 7?**

Well in a way, it's the same challenges in doing any novel - the dramatic action in a drama is very different, you have to demonstrate feelings and emotions very often that's possible with dialogue but it's a very internalised book. The ghost reflects a lot - also Lisa has the ability to read minds, which I think is almost impossible to convey. I was working on a project with Steven Spielberg and he said it's really important to establish the rules of the ghost. They're the age they are when they die, they have unresolved business with the living, can they move objects or not. So I started by applying the rules of the ghost, from cinema, into the story, then you can work out what you can and can't do.

### **What were some of the challenges for you, when you were writing the script?**

The rules of the ghost, as mentioned, and Lisa becomes an observer, which is a very tricky thing to have a central character who's already dead. They aren't in any danger and they are essentially listening and forming conclusions about what happened to them. I thought you need to appeal to the audience on a different level of dramatic tension of wanting to know what happened to her as much as she does - empathising with her. Those things are very visual.

### **Was the supernatural element useful?**

I've never done it before, it was part of the appeal and I didn't want to make too much of it. I watched some movies, to see how other people had approached it. They were really helpful. Sometimes you see what you don't want to do supernatural can drift into horror - you have to establish the rules very early so that if you wish to break those rules later, that's legitimate because they've been set up.

### **In terms of the working relationship with Louise - how did you work together?**

A lot of screenwriters say the best authors of books to work with are those that are dead - because there aren't any issues! She is extraordinarily gracious. The most important thing is her authorial intention, the plot is the mechanic for the audience. You can say this won't work but if you don't change the course of the book then it's legitimate. I hope the response to the drama, for people who have read the book, they'll feel that I've done the right thing and that they won't be disappointed.

### **Interview with Jasmine Jobson - Lisa**

#### **Tell us a bit about Lisa...**

Without giving away too much, Lisa is a ghost, trapped at a station. She's very strong minded and strong willed and she witnesses a devastating incident that jogs her fractured memory. Along her journey she finds similarities to something that she's experienced herself, which in turn gives her a lot of power, which is very exciting.

#### **When you first read the script, what was your reaction?**

There's a lot of flashbacks so I was trying to keep up with the timeline and how things progressed, but the script was phenomenal. There's so much description, it's almost like the book - so I could visualise every scene for every moment because it was so beautifully detailed, Paula smashed it!

#### **Your character is a ghost - as a concept for an actress, what were your thoughts?**

My biggest concern about playing a ghost would have been the special effects side of things, - how I'd manage to walk through things, figuring out at what point in the story I'm able to do certain things as it changes as the story goes on. I've always been fascinated by special effects and how they film people walking through you, so it's been a beautiful thing to be a part of.

Sometimes it felt odd, talking and no one saying anything back to you - I had to adapt to being a fly on the wall. Especially being the main character in the show that often doesn't have a lot to say in scenes - I'd say about 60% of the job was facial expressions which is a tough skill to manifest. I was definitely ready for the challenge and think I did pretty well! Being a fly on the

wall was a crazy experience, to have everyone talking about you but no one talking to you and then when Lisa speaks no one responds!

### **What was your experience of filming at the train station?**

Well, filming the show was so much fun, but being in a train station in the middle of winter definitely wasn't fun all the time, I had to constantly act like I didn't feel the cold as a ghost - so I would always try to imagine I was in a hot country like the Dominican Republic! Other than the weather, it was a breeze! I'd come straight off of another job so coming into Platform 7 was a little bit challenging going from one project straight to another but it meant that my performance is all unchecked emotion, it was all round amazing.

### **Do you have any favourite scenes?**

All of the supernatural stuff! It was so fun to play.

### **What can you tell us about the other characters at the station - there's a whole community...**

There's a lot going on - outside of my character's family, there's Matt - played by Toby who was so great to work with, we had such a laugh. There's Transport Police Officer Akash and station worker Melissa too and another ghost Edward. He has his own story that viewers will discover too - Phil Davies is a phenomenal actor and a lovely guy, he's like a BFG (big friendly giant!). He's so great, I learnt a lot from him. It was nice to have another character that Lisa can talk to as well so we bounced off each other well too which was lovely.

### **Interview with Toby Regbo - Matt**

#### **So, what can you tell us about Dr. Matthew Goodson?**

Matthew is Lisa's boyfriend, they meet at the hospital, where he works, so there is a slight breaking of the rules in order to get her number. And then we follow their relationship as more and more of her past comes back to her memory as she learns more and more about her life and we see how their relationship unfolds.

One of the conversations that we had with Paula Milne was about her first-hand experience actually of being married to a surgeon and that type of temperament. We talked about the adrenal junkie - Matthew sort of thrives on the adrenaline and things change him all the time. When he talks about A&E, he talks about how he lives that process, that there is always something new. I think that feeds into his personality, he has a passion and a hunger but it is also extremely hard on himself. We see in flashbacks, that his relationship with his mother is not the best, so he thrives on the next thing in order to feel the thrive of surgery, the thrive of saving someone's life, and the chase and the passion in his relationship.

#### **What do we learn of Matthew in the early part of the show? Do we see Matthew before the flashbacks?**

Everything is seen through Lisa's memory. When I talk about my character, really what I'm talking about is what he means to her. All the characters are how they serve her really. So it's difficult to talk about him without talking about her. Even the memories- the way that she remembers them as a ghost, there are memories that aren't infallible so it mutates as she remembers more. Our memories are not infallible.

**When you first read the script, what were your thoughts about the show?**

I liked it because it's a mixture of genres that we don't sometimes see. It's a ghost story, it's a detective story, it's got elements of Noir. Almost my stuff with Lisa is this sort of a two-hander, almost like 'Blue Valentine' type relationship aspect of it and they will blend together. Which I hadn't seen before so it's a new mix match of genres.

**What was it like working with Jasmine?**

My favourite scenes - plural - have been really working with Jasmine. We've shot this montage or collage of moments of our relationship and a lot of that takes place in her flat and that was the one set build that we had, most of it's filmed on location but we had one or two weeks that we filmed just basically us - all of these very intense scenes, our life together over the course of a week or so and that was really great. It's like filmmaking when it's very self-contained there's nothing else to worry about and it was almost like shooting a play just a two-hander. Jasmine's great and so we had a lot of fun shooting those scenes. The back and forth, the love, the passion. It's been great.

**Do you have an idea of what the audience might take away or enjoy from this?**

I suppose if there was a theme that was slightly metaphysical - moving on and what keeps us stuck? If there are ghosts, what are they really? Is something left behind that can't they move on from until something is resolved? Something is dealt with? I think it's a beautiful story in that respect. Watching somebody do what it takes in order to let go and in order to move on you know. For a lot of the show, she is stuck in a particular place, in a particular time, in a particular memory, unable to move through it and it takes bravery and internal courage to be able to move through and move past it to, and move on.

**Interview with Geoffrey Sax - Director****As a director, what was appealing for you about the script?**

When you get a script written by Paula Milne you sit up and take notice! She's someone I've wanted to work with for a long time and the script was wonderful. It was also based on a very good book by Louise Doughty so the story was very compelling. The complexity and richness of it, I'd never read anything like it before. I was astounded by how original it was and the issues that it brings up without being preachy.

**What was your approach to any technical concerns for the story?**

The technical concerns is that it's told in several times, the ghost Lisa is trying to find out who she was and where she came from and gradually memories start to seep in. She can't interact with others but she can observe so the technical challenges were how to present that without it being too tricky. So you do see people pass through her but that's really as far as it goes. One of the things we had to look out for, when we had non speaking parts on set, to remind everyone that she can't be seen, if Lisa is walking towards you, you can't step around her. We had to stage everything to make sure they were walking past her without avoiding her, which often took a few tries!

**What look and feel were you aiming for with the show?**



We were steeping it, as much as we could, in reality to make it more believable, we tried to put the audience into the head of a woman that happens to be dead but otherwise a fully formed human being. We also tried to keep performances as truthful as possible too.

**What's it been like working with Jasmine, given so much of her character is conveyed through observing?**

I think we were lucky with Jasmine in that we had an actor that was able to show feelings through looks, rather than dialogue. There was a lot of discussion early on about voiceover or if she should speak more but she was able to pull those looks off so the audience knows what she's thinking at times.

**What do you think Platform 7 has to offer audiences?**

I think Platform 7 is a lovely rounded story, it's very unusual but it deals with serious issues and at the end of the day is an entertaining piece, one level its a ghost story but on another level it addresses some serious issues, and hopefully keeps audiences hooked throughout to find out what happened to Lisa and why. It's a multifaceted piece, I hope the audience lean in with it and go with the 'whodunnit' . There's the parallel stories of Lisa trying to work out what happened to her and Akash, the British Transport Police Officer who risks getting fired to find out the truth.