



# HIM

## Production Notes





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## ITV COMMISSIONS THREE-PART DRAMA “HIM” WRITTEN BY ACCLAIMED WRITER PAULA MILNE AND PRODUCED BY MAINSTREET PICTURES

*“What’s that thing they say? There is no greater fear than fear itself.”*

HIM is a three-part ‘domestic horror’ drama commissioned by ITV from the producers of *Unforgotten*, Mainstreet Pictures, and written by the multi award-winning screenwriter Paula Milne.

Katherine Kelly (*Mr Selfridge*, *The Sound of Music Live*), James Murray (*Suspects*, *Cucumber*, *Primeval*), Patrick Robinson (*Mount Pleasant*, *Casualty*, *Holby City*) are joined by Simona Brown (*The Casual Vacancy*, *Murdered by My Boyfriend*) and newcomer Fionn Whitehead.

The story focuses on a 17-year-old boy, known only in the drama as HIM (Fionn Whitehead), who is caught in the limbo between childhood and adulthood. But he’s also trapped in a limbo between the two homes of his divorced parents, mum Hannah (Katherine Kelly) and dad Edward (James Murray), each now remarried with new families. Patrick Robinson plays step dad Victor, Simona Brown as stepsister Faith and Lucy Liemann as step mum Beth.

HIM is the cuckoo in both their nests, a reminder of the failure of their past and a threat to their newfound domestic bliss. Like any teenager, he is riding a rollercoaster of confusing emotions. Like most boys he finds it hard to process his feelings so tends to “act out”. But his behaviour is also triggered by something else. He is engaged in a primal struggle to contain the terrifying secret of a supernatural power he inherited from his grandfather. A power that only his ageing grandmother, played by Susan Jameson (*Casualty*, *New Tricks*) understands. She urges him to use his gift only for ‘good’ for she knows if he doesn’t it could end in tragedy.

When his 17-year-old stepsister Faith (Simona Brown) moves into the family home, HIM finds himself irrevocably drawn to her. They both know their mutual attraction could rupture the family. The turmoil this causes in HIM escalates out of control and with it his supernatural power – and those closest to him are in his line of fire.

Alec Newman (*The Bastard Executioner*, *The Last Kingdom*) stars as Psychotherapist Clive, and Anastasia Hille (*You, Me & the Apocalypse*, *Not Safe for Work*) is also cast as Professor of Physic Research Magda Denham.

This striking and original drama focuses on life’s major themes: the painful breakdown of relationships, love, loss, betrayal and passion. At the heart of the story is HIM’s rite of passage from boyhood to manhood as he struggles not to lose his humanity and control his supernatural power.

HIM has been commissioned by ITV’s former Director of Drama Steve November and Controller of Drama Victoria Fea.

The drama will be executive produced by Laura Mackie and Sally Haynes who departed ITV in 2013 to establish production company Mainstreet Pictures. Him will be produced by Chrissy Skinns (*The Last Kingdom*, *Mr Selfridge*, *Marchlands*) and directed by Andy De Emmony (*Lucky Man*, *Recovery*, *God On Trial* and *Bletchley Circle*).

Paula Milne is known for writing *The Virgin Queen*, *The Politician’s Husband*, *White Heat*, *Small Island*, *The Nightwatch* and *Endgame*.

HIM will be distributed internationally by ITV Studios Global Entertainment.





## Foreword by Paula Milne, Writer

I've always been fascinated by the horror genre. More specifically, why it has compelled the audience so enduringly over the generations. What is it about the genre that keeps bringing the audience back to it? Does it play out our darkest fears – as Stephen King once said – and the father in the HIM says in the opening – “there’s nothing there in the dark that isn’t in the light”. Haven’t we all woken in the night, disorientated and fuelled in dread, and seen some familiar object in the dark and recoiled, thinking it is something threatening and ominous? So does the horror genre then allow us to exorcise these visceral nocturnal fears, then afterwards return to the safety and normalcy of our daily lives?

And why, on the whole does the genre focus on adolescences? THE TWILIGHT movies latterly demonstrate this. Is there something in the quest to find out who you are and if you can ever fit into the world that resonates? Is there some enduring part of us as adults that still hankers for answers to such primal questions?

So when thinking about the horror genre, the idea of some external supernatural force taking someone over, like poltergeists, ghosts or witchcraft simply didn’t interest me as much as the idea of someone fighting to control the emotional demons within them. The movie *CARRIE* was a big influence in that respect, how it centres on an alienated teenage girl, using telekinesis to symbolise her struggle with puberty and the brutal reality of her life ahead. So she tries to take control.

Then I started thinking about teenage boys, how they get a bad rap in these post feminist days: under achieving, acting out and in particular, their difficulty in articulating the emotional turbulence they face during their own burgeoning puberty. Having three sons gave me some insight into that! Add to that the backwash of HIM’S parents’ divorce, now both remarried with new families; the boy is a kind of cuckoo in both nests. I thought the drama could be a kind of allegory of contemporary family life, to explore the complexities of it. HIM has to navigate complicated relationships with step-parents and step-siblings – not least control the powerful attraction he feels for his new stepsister that he never asked for, but was expected to simply accept as a sister - though he didn’t feel that way about her. So I suppose I wanted to use the horror genre as a prism to explore all these powerful issues of family life that so many in the audience have either witnessed or directly experienced in these post divorce days. .

...That’s why I gave him no name but HIM; in that sense he is all our brothers and all our sons.

Paula Milne 2016

## Cast interviews

### Fionn Whitehead is HIM



#### Q: How did you get into acting?

"I started acting in primary school. The classes were few and far between but when we did do them I really enjoyed it. Originally it was just to entertain my friends. Then as I got older I started doing more workshops and looking for opportunities outside of school.

"I joined the Orange Tree Youth Theatre in Richmond, Surrey. I was also quite into sports, including rugby, but I left that behind and just focused on drama. I became a member of the National Youth Theatre and completed their two-week intensive summer course. I also studied drama at GCSE and A-level.

"Acting is a release, a rush I don't really get from anything else. I've always been interested in the way other people's minds work, how people interact with each other and relationships, so it combines all of those things."

#### Q: How did this role come about?

"I saw the audition posted on the National Youth Theatre website and applied for it, but I didn't hear anything back. Then I was encouraged to apply for it again by an old Youth Theatre director and so I re-applied and included a very clear photo in the email. The casting director Daniel Edwards called me within 10 minutes. I put a lot of it down to him, he was incredible.

"This is my first professional acting job. I was pretty gobsmacked for a solid two months after I got the role, I was delighted but also extremely shocked and couldn't really believe it. I'd set myself up for a life of doing little jobs and trying to make ends meet. I was working in a cafe at the time and just doing acting because I really loved doing it. Then when I got this role it blew it all out of the water. It was not what I was expecting at all. It was amazing.

**Q: Was the first day on set a memorable experience?**

"I didn't know what was going on. It was bizarre. I was just being pointed to places and told to do different things. It was crazy and the most hectic thing I've ever done. I enjoyed that new, weird feeling. Not so much a learning curve, more a learning vertical incline."

**Q: Who is HIM?**

"HIM is a 17-year-old boy who has been hung out to dry a bit. His parents are divorced and they've both got new families. So he's been left in the middle and he feels left out, isolated and lonely. He doesn't feel like they want him, even if that's not true, because they're both busy with new families. He isolates himself by removing himself from social situations, opting to be on his own a lot, smokes a lot of weed and blocks it all out. Everything he does is done to block out the rest of the world.

"He also has this uncontrollable power which is part of the reason why he isolates himself. The emotional response and the supernatural power, it's hard to know which came first and which triggers which. HIM is smart but under so much pressure, he's conflicted and it bursts out of him. Because no 17-year-old can really handle that intense secret."

**Q: Why is he just called HIM?**

"The writer Paula Milne gave a little speech about HIM at the script read through, which was really moving. She said, 'I didn't give the character any name because he represents all of our sons.' That was quite poignant.

"A lot of aspects of the character are extremely relatable for any teenage boy's life. All supernatural aspects aside, the feelings of loneliness and isolation a lot of people get at that age and that is very easy to fabricate in your own head. Anyone can relate to it, whatever age you are. It's something a lot of people experience. That was why the choice of 'HIM' was good and why I didn't want to give HIM a name, even just to myself. I felt like that would be disrespectful.

"It's a coming of age piece as well. It tracks his teenagehood, so it catches him at a very interesting time, one that is touched on in film and TV but rarely the darker side of it. There's a lot of propaganda surrounding teenagehood, that it's the best time of your life and you need to have a really great time. But I'd say the reality for a lot of people is it's quite a dire time. This drama really captures that."

**Q: How would you describe his relationship with Faith (Simona Brown)?**

"Tortured. HIM is extremely down and harsh on himself. He finds it very easy to beat himself up because he's got this power that is so out of control and quite devastating. So when it comes to Faith that's just another thing he feels bad about.

"Their relationship is understandable. They are step-brother and stepsister, who've never known each other, who suddenly find themselves living under the same roof. They've both got a lot going on and comfort each other. This relationship grows but we have to see where that goes."

**Q: And his relationship with his grandmother Rose (Susan Jameson)?**

"It's a pretty unique relationship. Rose is the one other character that he can confide in and relate to. Rose has been there from the start and is very understanding and typically grandmotherly. Its pure unconditional love and the only simple relationship he's got in his life. She is there for him because she knows his secret, her husband has been through it all and she knows what's going on for HIM and how to talk to him. She is the only person who can even begin to understand what's going on in his head."

**Q: How was it filming the 'supernatural' scenes?**

"It was really cool. We shot a big scene right at the start of filming so it was the first time I'd acted what he was going to do when he lost control. I had no set plan about what to do. I controlled my breathing, tensed up the muscles in my body and just zoned in.

"It was easy to do because the special effects guys did some amazing work and it did feel real in the moment."

**Q: Do you believe in unseen, unexplained forces beyond our understanding?**

"I think there is a lot of stuff that goes on that is not known to us. It would be arrogant to say we know everything as human beings. That's stupid. There is so much out there that is unseen. There are so many places where we can't go. Who knows what's going on? I think it's also true a lot of things happen while we're not looking. And then when you look at them they stop. It seems overly arrogant to me to think this is all there is and that we are the centre of the universe.

"When I was younger I wanted to teleport, to be able to go anywhere. I used to be late for school a lot so I would arrive half-dressed with mud all up me from cycling. And I'd think, 'Wouldn't it be amazing if I could just click my fingers and be at school?'"

**Q: HIM has got into trouble since he was a young boy. Did you get up to mischief at that age?**

"I was forever breaking bones from climbing trees and jumping off friends' roofs trying to do tricks. I was not exactly the most stress-free kid when I was younger. I used to 'break in' to our house a lot. My mum would get very annoyed. I'd forget my keys, run round and climb over a fence or do whatever to get in. I also still drop a lot of things. I'm quite clumsy in some ways."

**Q: How was it working with the rest of the cast on your first job?**

"They were all amazing and really took me under their wing. I was asking all the questions I could, trying to get a handle on what it is I should do and what way to go about it all. And they were all really helpful. It was just one big education.

"The writing is amazing. It's beautiful. The thing I liked so much about the script is that it would have been so easy to go with extreme action. But it's all very subtle and underplayed. Less is more.

"It's more about the relationships between different characters and how people relate to each other. That's what I loved. All of the other things are a by-product, it's mainly centered on the emotion behind it all and the family dynamic. Very clever writing."



## Cast interviews

### Katherine Kelly is Hannah



#### Q: What attracted you to HIM?

"It was one of the most unique television scripts I'd read. I thought, 'This is something really different, especially for mainstream television.' A current television show that could be something really special and that always excites me. Something that is domestic but not obvious.

"It is a modern family drama and I'm sure a lot of people will relate to that. And then in the telling of it this supernatural element comes out of something a lot of teenagers will relate to. It's not something put on top. It's cleverly done."

#### Q: Who is Hannah?

"Hannah is on maternity leave having just had a baby called Christopher - HIM's half brother - with her second husband Victor (Patrick Robinson). A bit of a jaded character in many ways, she's definitely not had the life she thought she was going to have. Hannah met her first husband Edward (James Murray) and got pregnant very young, she was happy to put her career on hold for a little bit while she looked after the family, thinking that they were going to be together forever. Like many women she sacrificed a lot for the family unit.

"Then Edward had an affair and the family collapsed, which she was absolutely devastated about. But Hannah has pulled herself together and met her second husband who is the complete opposite of Edward. Now she is starting her second family in her early thirties. Edward is probably the love of her life but she is very happy to have this second chance with Victor and a new baby. A mother who I hope people can relate to as she's just a mum doing her best."

**Q: How would you describe Hannah's relationship with her teenage son HIM?**

"Hannah is very close to her son. The reason why she doesn't suspect anything is going on is because she attributes his behaviour to changes at home. She married Victor a couple of years ago and now there's a new baby on the scene and she thinks HIM acting out is par for the course given the circumstances.

"I remember my brothers at 17, it's a tricky age for boys. I had my tricky age a bit earlier, I was 13 going on 18. Because I'm the oldest of four I was always treated like a bit of a mini-mum. I was bottle-feeding my brother when I was four-years-old, so I thought I was older than I was.

"By the time I was 17, I was allowed to do more stuff. And when I went to drama school at 18 I was actually pretty grown up and sensible."

**Q: Older people often judge teenagers and think they are threatening without knowing anything about them. Do you agree?**

"Yes, totally. This is a very un-judgmental piece as there's no baddie in it. Everybody is just trying to do their best. I like something that deals with grey areas rather than just painting baddies and goodies."

**Q: Nobody teaches you how to be a parent?**

"It's fine having all of these theories. But you don't know what you're going to get. Their personalities are there from the start. Then when you think you've sussed them I'm sure the personality suddenly changes. One morning they come down the stairs as a hormonal teenager, like a body swap. That is really captured in the script."

**Q: As a parent yourself, how does it change you?**

"Everything changes when you become a parent. I was very prepared for motherhood in terms of the fact I have a sister who is 10 years younger and I can really remember her at a young age. My parents made me her godmother because already at that age I was 10 going on 15 and I embraced her as if she was my own.

"There were no surprises about how tough it was to be a mother. But it's a selflessness that naturally kicks in that I just wasn't quite prepared for. The fact your heart is now toddling around outside your body. And that constant trying to juggle and find a balance, you're always just trying to do your best."

**Q: Did the scene in episode one where Hannah and Edward are sitting on a bench waiting to see HIM's senior school tutor bring back any memories?**

"I loved school. To me it was just one big social event. I had a really nice time at school with a big group of friends who I'm still friends with now.

"I was in the naughty group, for sure, but it was a good school and we weren't that bad. All of my school reports said, 'Katherine would do well if she'd just stop talking.' I was as bad talking to the teachers as I was to my friends."

**Q: Did you know much about psychokinesis or telekinesis before this?**

"I didn't know much about it. Hannah just never ever suspects. So I'll be really interested to watch that on screen as I didn't see any of it being filmed.

"I pride myself on being very open to everything and I find it fascinating when people really do believe in that world and talk about their experiences. I must not be very open to the spiritual world though because they certainly never come to me. Even as a teenager trying to do a Ouija Board they had absolutely no interest."

**Q: What was it like working with Fionn Whitehead, as HIM, on what was his very first job?**

"You wouldn't think it was his first job. He took it all in his stride. He's a pro already. Normally when you're Fionn's age you go in and do a very small part. My first screen job was Last of the Summer Wine.

"Because he was the lead he knew 100 per cent what was going on. The director was very aware that Fionn was carrying the show and that's a lot of pressure on somebody so young. And the only way you can do that is to have knowledge of what's going on around him.

"It's what you love to do as an actor, you just drink it up. You're like a sponge. And you know that millions of people would swap places with you. Fionn certainly knew he was extremely fortunate to be in that position and he seemed to lap it up. Hopefully, for him, it will be the first of many lead roles."



## Cast interviews

### James Murray is Edward



#### Q: How would you describe HIM?

"It's an interesting and complicated drama about dysfunctional families and broken homes, steeped in naturalism and recognisable issues. Paula Milne has really caught that in her writing and made the supernatural element almost incidental. Which makes it doubly frightening."

#### Q: Who is Edward?

"Edward is HIM's father. Arguably, he is one half of the blame as to why this boy is riddled with these issues. He's a surgeon who once he became a consultant succumbed to the temptations that offers. He had an affair, which ended up breaking his marriage with his wife Hannah."

"As the story begins we find him in his second marriage with his new wife Beth who is pregnant with twins. He's caught between a bit of a rock and a hard place when it comes to HIM because he desperately wants to keep his relationship going. But in the same breath his wife is very demanding and doesn't appreciate Edward giving any time to the boy. Edward has a lot of plates spinning. He means well. He's just not brilliant at executing those good intentions."

"He had HIM when he was in his early-20s and as is often the case he wasn't equipped to deal with being ambitious and a good father. His ambition got in the way, as far as HIM is concerned. As a result you've got this outcast child who doesn't feel he belongs anywhere and is increasingly unhappy."

**Q: How would you describe Edward's relationship with Hannah?**

"It's well written. Hannah and Edward are the biological parents of HIM. They are divorced and are still pretty raw. They get on for the sake of the children but there's no love lost. She is still angry with him and he has some regret, he's still not convinced he did the right thing but he's made his bed so he has to lie in it. When we see them together there is a lot of antagonism between the two, which only goes to create anxiety in HIM."

**Q: What did Paula Milne say to you about not giving HIM a name?**

"Paula was clear that HIM is all of our sons. That resonated because there are many HIMs out there. That's why she didn't give him a name because he represents the great swathe of these disillusioned teenagers."

**Q: Would you say his second wife Beth is a troubled soul having once been a free spirit?**

"Paula Milne captures how our generation, if we're not careful succumb to work, ambition and the daily grind. Then before we know it we're retired with arthritis, a bit of a small mortgage but not much else to show for it. People get on the treadmill of life and then before you know it 30 years have gone."

"Beth draws the line and stays on the cautious side of life. But she is particularly controlling as well. So that certainly has a bearing on HIM and on Edward as well. He just doesn't know which way to turn. If he shows his son too much attention, in his mind, it's going to upset Beth. It's no excuse but you can see why it's a struggle."

**Q: Is it true most actors like to seek out new and challenging roles?**

"Yes, absolutely. But also to keep stability, security and equilibrium at home by trying to work as much as you can within the confines you put on yourself of wanting to do challenging and interesting work that appeals to me. There's the struggle for an actor. You need to make money and you need to feed your family. But you also need to stay true to yourself and your creativity."

"When you do a job like this, these families are very recognisable. It's interesting to step into their shoes and take a peek at their lives and how they live."

**Q: How would you describe the relationship between Edward and Hannah's new partner Victor?**

"It is an interesting dynamic. There's a scene where they are together in Edward's surgery office at the hospital, which gave him the higher ground and which Edward very much takes advantage of, being the slightly pompous person that he is. Ego gets in the way of both of them. Both men are in a compromising position, and being men, instead of joining ranks and sitting down to talk about how best to work it out, they just confront each other."

**Q: Did the scene where Edward and Hannah are at a school waiting on a bench outside the senior tutor's office bring back any memories?**

"I was not a stranger to trouble at school. I found myself from time to time inside the headmaster's study being reprimanded. That was a fairly familiar feeling. Although obviously being the father in HIM as opposed to the pupil was quite interesting. But still nerve-wracking. It's seldom that you're sat outside the head's office and it's a good thing that's going to happen in that room. There's a lot of fidgeting that happens on those benches.

"We filmed that in an academy in north London. It was a fantastic new school. A huge complex. But it still had that feeling of someone about to tell you off."

**Q: Did you know much about psychokinesis or telekinesis before this?**

"We've all tried - at least I did in my childhood - to move things. Mine came through laziness as much as anything else. I wanted the salt passed down without actually having to get up and reach for it.

"I'm not a huge believer. I'd love to be proved wrong. While I'm fascinated with magicians, that's exactly what I think it is. I think it is smoke and mirrors. Nothing paranormal has ever happened to me. Or if it has, I'm certainly not aware of it."

**Q: This was Fionn Whitehead's very first job. Can you remember your first day in front of a camera?**

"I remember it being scary and nerve-wracking. To try and remember you're there to do a job and to act is really difficult. And to try and keep your nerves and excitement at bay and concentrate on the job at hand is really difficult.

"We all thought Fionn was a fantastic actor who we should support and help. But he needed none of that. He arrived on set focused with his lines learned, from the moment the camera rolled he was a consummate professional, incredibly grounded and confident. It was really impressive to witness. I think he's got a big future. He's a great actor with his head screwed on who deserves every success."

**Q: This drama is about our children, something your charity is involved with?**

"My wife Sarah Parish and I head up a charity called the Murray Parish Trust. We lobbied the government in the last six months to see if the Treasury would give us £2m to help us with our cause of building a new children's hospital. And the Chancellor George Osborne, out of the blue, announced it in the March 2016 Budget. That he would give us £2m.

"We were absolutely thrilled to be offered £2m match funding by George Osborne to build a new south of England children's hospital. But at the same time it's a huge challenge because we need to raise £2m ourselves. It's very exciting but we need as many donations as we can. There are more details at:

[www.themurrayparishtrust.com](http://www.themurrayparishtrust.com)



## Cast interviews

### Patrick Robinson is Victor



#### Q: What appealed to you about HIM?

"In a phrase, I loved it. I thought it was a really interesting look at how we all could possibly be. I loved Paula Milne's writing, the originality of the story and was really pleased to be offered the role. It features a teenage boy who has supernatural powers but it's not a superhero fantasy.

"For me it was real. A domestic drama. Victor's new partner Hannah has a son called HIM who is a little weird. But not weird that you can't deal with him. Until you see him doing something you just can't believe right in front of your face.

"I also love how Paula has called it HIM. We treat teenagers as if they don't really exist. They are seen in terms of problems. So we don't know his name. I like that. It's very cleverly done."

#### Q: Who is Victor?

"Victor is an ordinary guy who was a bit off the rails when he was younger, but generally he's got a very good heart and he tries his best. He's now a committed Christian and it helps him to keep a sort of stability.

"It's a simple thing for him, keeping him focused, and reassuring him that he is doing the right thing. Even though he may come unstuck here and there in terms of dealing with his partner's son, he can put that down to the son being a teenager and maybe he didn't say the right thing at the right time. He's trying his best and that's all he can do."

**Q: What is Victor's relationship like with his daughter Faith (Simona Brown)?**

"He doesn't have much of a relationship with his daughter Faith but he's trying to make amends. Her mother has passed away and he feels it's up to him to take up the mantle and make her feel secure. His daughter now lives with him again but he hasn't been around in her life for a long time. Suddenly she's not just a little girl, she's a young woman and he's trying to do his best for her."

**Q: Nobody teaches you how to be a parent. Do you agree?**

"I said that to my eldest children way back when they were seven and nine years old. I said, 'Look, this is the first time I've ever been a dad and no-one teaches you how to do that. I'm learning how to do it with you guys so bear with me, give me a break. I love you but we're learning together, how to be with each other, and I try my best.' That is ultimately all Victor can do. But he has his frustrations and it's how he deals with those."

**Q: Did you know anything about psychokinesis or telekinesis before this?**

"I didn't know much about it in any real detail. I've had conversations where people ask me if I believe in all this and I have to admit, I believe in all things in that respect. I think it's all connected. I don't disbelieve it, in other words. I don't rule out anything in this world, even if you can't explain it."

"I think the physiological is all linked to the physical, the spiritual and the mental. It's just proving it. Some people will always be sceptics. But I believe these things can happen."

"I do have a close friend and a close family member who had those strange things happen. And I believed them. They saw things they can't explain. Not everyone can see it but there are some who do."

**Q: What was it like working Fionn and Simona?**

"Fionn was fantastic in his first screen job, very professional. And Simona is very accomplished already, having gone to the BRIT School. They both have great careers ahead of them."

**Q: Can you remember your first day on a TV set?**

"It was a children's thing. I couldn't say it was a great experience because it was a bit busy and they shot very quickly. The major role I did get was Ash in Casualty in 1990 and I'd say that was my first real stint in any regular way."

"That was a great time for me of learning the craft in terms of the TV world. And I had a good stab at doing 12 episodes to learn the ropes, then I did another five series after that and it was 15 episodes at a time. It wasn't all year round so there was a chance to do other things like theatre and doing five, six years in Casualty was the icing on the cake every year."

**Q: What's next?**

"It's been a purple patch for me since Strictly Come Dancing, with Mount Pleasant and a stage tour of the country in The Shawshank Redemption. Then HIM came up before I started filming another series of Mount Pleasant."

"I've also got another gig with the Royal Shakespeare Company. I'm playing one of the roles in The Rover at The Swan Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon from September, which is where I started my first job with the RSC in 1986. Now 30 years later I'm in The Rover again in the same place playing one of the main roles, one of the cavaliers this time, and I'm chuffed to bits. It's a restoration comedy, a bit of a romp."



## Cast interviews

### Lucy Liemann is Beth



#### Q: What were your first impressions of Paula Milne's scripts?

"When I was first introduced to the script it was put to me as being horror. So that's what I expected. But it didn't strike me as being a horror at all, it struck me as being essentially a family drama.

"Obviously you then have this supernatural element but that is so bedded in the complexities of modern family life and how children navigate their way to adulthood amongst this chaos, that it became just a very strong and rich family drama to me more than a story about that.

"I really enjoyed it from the basis of the characters. They've all got really rich stories, you can see where they have been and where they might go."

#### Q: What did Paula say about not giving the boy at the heart of this story a name?

"What Paula said was quite lovely. I appreciated the notion that HIM is about a boy and his confusion in coming into adulthood and navigating his way through that. Hence not giving him a name because he is an everyman. It felt while we were filming that there was a very strong presence from production and from Paula of who all of these people are."

#### Q: Who is Beth?

"Beth is stepmother to HIM. He is 17 and she has been with his father for five or six years. She has a son Jack of her own from a previous marriage, who is 12. And she is in late pregnancy expecting twins.

"Where she is in her life right now is a very vulnerable point. It's a terrifying prospect having twins; her first marriage failed and then added into that you have HIM behaving in a way which is very 'bad'. It's not the kind of influence she wants her 12-year-old son to be exposed to.



“Her way of dealing with this vulnerability is to try and gain as much control over her life in ways that no-one can have control. She recoils from the unexpected. Her house is pristine, she’s got everything organised for the twins. And all of this is born out of fear of the unknown. She doesn’t know what’s going to happen and Beth is terrified she is going to be left with the two babies in the same way she was left holding one before.”

**Q: Tell us more about filming stunt scenes?**

“I love stunt stuff. I love seeing how they do it. How they prepare all of the cameras and all the ground around it. Because you just don’t know what is going to happen. We filmed a really big stunt early on and there was a contingency for doing another take, but really it was just a one take thing. So it’s exciting as well.”

**Q: Did HIM cause you to reflect on when you were 17?**

“I don’t want to be 17 again. One thing I still find quite charming is the beautiful arrogance of youth. It’s brilliant. A bubble that can never be burst. It allows young people to take risks, do stupid things and find wonderment. It’s an absolutely necessary stage of life.”

**Q: How do you view the supernatural and things that, perhaps, cannot be explained?**

“I think scientists have got loads more to explain. Their work is not done. I don’t understand it. I wouldn’t want to presume to tell another person their experience is fake or not true or invalid but I’ve never experienced it. I’ve never seen it. That’s as far as I can go. Really we know nothing.”

**Q: What was it like filming with this cast?**

“They were a brilliant cast. We had quite an intense week in Beth’s house and it was all of us thrown in together. James Murray is a very funny man, which always helps, and Fionn Whitehead is gorgeous while Bobby Smalldridge who plays my son Jack is so sweet. It was really interesting having a child who has probably done more work than I have.

“Also carrying the bump all of the time. It was really interesting to see how people reacted. I had to keep reminding them, ‘I’m not pregnant. You don’t have to give me your seat.’ There’s that kind of care that automatically comes with the image of a pregnant woman, which I thought was very sweet. I thoroughly enjoyed it.”

**Q: And this was Fionn’s very first job?**

“If people hadn’t told me that I would have had no idea, he’s extraordinary. My very first filming job might have been a Poirot and it’s always a steep learning curve when you start out. Every set is different and yet the same.

“I enjoyed Fionn’s curiosity. Asking questions, ‘What’s he doing? What’s that?’ And thinking, ‘Oh, I hadn’t thought of that. What is the answer to that question?’ That was lovely.”

## Cast interviews

### Simona Brown is Faith



#### Q: How did you get into acting?

"I've always been quite creative. That would come out in little plays I'd make at home or really extravagant storylines I'd make my Barbies play out. That eventually led to me going on to performing arts school when I was 14 and then I just kept pushing."

#### Q: You were out of the country when the role of Faith came up?

"I was filming Roots in South Africa when I heard about it. So I couldn't make it in for an audition and made a tape instead. From the script extracts I received it seemed really interesting and I was instantly intrigued with the style of the writing. I didn't hear anything back for two months so I was like, 'Oh, someone else got it.' Then I came back from filming and my agent said, 'You've got a recall.' We just took it from there."

#### Q: Who is Faith?

"Faith is layered. She's very precocious and witty and self-sustained. What she's been through - seeing her dad abandon her and her mother, going off to make a new family with someone else, then seeing her mum go through chemo and then die - she's had to endure a lot of pain and loss. She is intelligent with a thirst for knowledge and is quick-witted. But Faith has a fragility about her. She's angry and lonely."

#### Q: Could you relate to the characters in HIM?

"I think I've met nearly all of the characters featured in HIM. That's why I really wanted to get involved with it. This one stuck with me because it's so well written and very real."

**Q: What is Faith's relationship like with her father Victor?**

"He is quite the father absentee. Of course she had a relationship with her dad before but since then he's gone away and made a whole new family. He's got married and moved on and Faith has grown up. Now she has come back and he's trying to lead her down the right path but she feels rebellious to that. There's a little bit of unfinished business between her and her dad.

"In some ways I can relate to her relationship she has with her dad, living in a single parent home. I can definitely feel and understand and empathise with her."

**Q: And how would you describe her relationship with HIM?**

"Faith's relationship with HIM is very complicated. There's a lot bubbling under the surface that both of them want to say but they aren't really in a position to say it yet. There's a constant awkward energy between them but they do slowly start to make some sort of bond.

"The writer Paula Milne didn't want to give HIM a name. She didn't want to be too impressionable on the cast and everyone's perception of what he represents. I think what she was getting at and what I take from the script is that he could be any of us.

"Fionn did a great job. You would never believe it was his first ever role and TV job. He is a true talent. He's really cool as well. We got on well on set."

**Q: Did you know much about psychokinesis or telekinesis before this?**

"Not particularly. I used to read the Harry Potter books and something of that element was featured in those. I've always wanted to believe someone out there is telekinetic, that you can train your brain so you can move things. When I was younger I'd try and move a Cheerio cereal across the table.

"I've got an open mind about it all, it would pretty ignorant for me to think otherwise. These things could happen. As a kid I used to have dreams and believe they were real. Until you say it out loud 10 years later. It took me a long time to accept that wasn't real."

**Q: What was your first screen job?**

"It was about four or five years ago, I was 17. I just had a little cameo appearance in Run with Lennie James, he played my dad. That was so awesome and my first ever job acting alongside someone like that. It was a great learning experience for me.

"When I look back it has been a really great few years. The roles I've been given have all been challenging and interesting and I've learned from them in their own right. That's the brilliant thing about my job or career path, you never know where you're going to be or what you're going to be doing or what you're going to be playing. And that's awesome. It's so spontaneous."



**Q: The script asks if the one thing we have to fear is fear itself? Is that part of an actor's life?**

"Before I go on stage and I can hear the audience filling up the seats and people talking. I can see them through the curtains. Or I know that my scene is next and I've got a five-minute warning, I do sometimes get a bit nervous. But I try and use that - I try and change that feeling into something positive."

**Q: What's next?**

"I'm currently filming a drama for ABC Family called Guilt. It's about a student who goes to the UK and she allegedly kills her roommate. Or does she? Who knows? That's filming in London. My first ever American role, although I do play a Brit, is being shot here in London, half an hour away from home. It's amazing. Perfect."

"I'm also very happy to have been involved in the mini series Roots. South Africa was beautiful. It was an amazing project which I'm so grateful to be a part of. I remember watching Roots as a kid and being blown away. Before that I didn't really know about any of that history. I think it is a very important story and now is a great time for it to be re-told."

## Episode Synopses

### Episode One

Not only does HIM have to deal with adolescence, failing grades, the repercussions of his parents' divorce, and his feelings towards his stepsister. He has the additional pressure of learning to control his inherited telekinetic powers...

### Episode Two

Losing control over his powers, HIM nearly destroys his father's house. His parents struggle to work out what's best for their son. HIM learns some unnerving truths about his inherited abilities, and turns to his therapist, Ross, for help.

### Episode Three

Ross' whole scientific belief system is questioned when he witnesses HIM'S powers, and he struggles to find a way to help the boy. HIM has to make a painful and irrevocable decision to protect all those closest to him.

## Cast and Production Credits

### Cast Credits

#### Character Name

HIM.....	FIONN WHITEHEAD
Faith.....	SIMONA BROWN
Edward.....	JAMES MURRAY
Hannah.....	KATHERINE KELLY
Victor.....	PATRICK ROBINSON
Beth.....	LUCY LIEMANN
Ross Brodie.....	ALEC NEWMAN
Jack.....	BOBBY SMALLDRIDGE
Azfal.....	AARON PHAGURA
Fran.....	ANGELA BRUCE
Rose.....	SUSAN JAMESON
Jamie.....	MCKELL DAVID
Old Lady.....	MAGGIE MCCOURT
Magda.....	ANASTASIA HILLE
Robin Blakeston.....	HADLEY FRASER
Young HIM (1).....	WOODY NORMAN
Young HIM (2).....	ADAM O'REILLY
Irate Mother.....	LEILA CRERAR

## Cast and Production Credits

### Production Credits

Executive Producer..... LAURA MACKIE  
Executive Producer..... SALLY HAYNES  
Writer / Executive Producer..... PAULA MILNE  
Producer..... CHRISSY SKINNS  
Line Producer..... GUY DE GLANVILLE  
Director..... ANDY DE EMMONY  
1st Assistant Director ..... ALEX RENDELL  
2nd Assistant Director..... NIKKI MOLLOY  
Script Editor..... GWEN GORST  
Director of Photography ..... DALE MCCREADY  
Production Designer..... DICK LUNN  
Costume Designer..... JAMES KEAST  
Make Up Designer..... KONNIE DANIEL  
Location Manager..... NICK MARSHALL  
Composer..... NICK GREEN  
Sound Recordist..... GIANCARLO DELLAPINA  
Editor..... MARK THORNTON  
SFX Supervisor..... SIMON TAYLER  
VFX Producer..... DOUBLE NEGATIVE TV  
Stunt Co-ordinator..... ANDY BENNETT  
Casting Director..... DANIEL EDWARDS