

CLEANING UP





Contents

Press Release	3 - 4	Interview with Ben Bailey Smith	23 - 25
Foreword by writer Mark Marlow	6	Interview with Rosie Cavaliero	27 - 28
Interview with executive producer Jane Featherstone	8	Episode Synopses	30
Interview with Sheridan Smith	10 - 14	Character and Production Credits	31
Interview with Jade Anouka	16 - 17		
Interview with Matthew McNulty	19 - 21		

ITV'S BRAND NEW SERIES, CLEANING UP, STARRING SHERIDAN SMITH, PRODUCED BY SISTER PICTURES

ITV's new six-part series, *Cleaning Up*, starring BAFTA award-winning actress Sheridan Smith. The series has been produced by Sister Pictures and created and written by screenwriting newcomer Mark Marlow.

The characterful drama focuses on an ordinary working-class woman, Sam, who is caught between two worlds – the everyday life of a devoted and loving mum and the darker, dangerous world of insider trading.

Sheridan will be joined by Matthew McNulty (*Versailles, The Syndicate, The Musketeers*), Jade Anouka (*Trauma, Chewing Gum*), Branka Katic (*Captain America: The Winter Soldier, Black Cat, White Cat*), Robert Emms (*War Horse, Happy Valley*), Lloyd Owen (*Apollo 18, Silent Witness, Death in Paradise*), Ben Bailey Smith (*Brief Encounters, David Brent: Life on the Road*), Rosie Cavaliero (*Unforgotten, Call the Midwife*) and Neil Maskell (*Humans, Utopia*)

Sassy office cleaner Sam (Sheridan Smith) is one of an invisible army of cleaners on a zero-hours contract, who mop, sweep and vacuum in the early hours. Struggling with an online gambling addiction, Sam realises she has access to lucrative inside information which, if used correctly, could be the answer to all her prayers.

With her husband threatening to take custody of their two daughters, 14-year-old Alice and 8-year-old Lily, Sam is being backed into a corner and needs to come out fighting.

Set in the contrasting worlds of shiny Canary Wharf and the realities of modern suburbia, *Cleaning Up* explores how far Sam will go to survive, claw back some self-respect and get her life back on track.

Getting back to black is going to be tough and Sam is about to stake everything on the unpredictable world of the stock market. Smart and witty, with her trusted band of cleaners gleaning information while the rest of the world sleeps, can Sam, knowing insider trading is against the law, read this dangerous line without getting caught?

Cleaning Up was commissioned for ITV by Head of Drama Polly Hill.

"I am delighted to be commissioning Mark Marlow's first drama. It's such a wonderful script that finds real humour and joy in the human struggle to survive. Sheridan is perfect for the role of Sam and I'm thrilled she's returning to ITV to play her. Produced by Jane and Sister Pictures, it's a fantastic team and promises to be a real treat for our audience."

Produced by Sister Pictures, the drama indie launched by former Kudos Chief Executive Jane Featherstone in January 2016, *Cleaning Up* has been created by screenwriting newcomer Mark Marlow. The series will be executive produced by Jane Featherstone (*Broadchurch, Humans, River, Spooks*) and Chris Fry (*Humans, The Smoke, Spooks*), and directed by Lewis Arnold (*Humans, Broadchurch, Misfits, Banana*) who has also developed the drama with Mark Marlow.



Commented Jane Featherstone:

“It’s such a pleasure to be making a show for ITV about contemporary Britain with a strong and complicated female lead character. It’s also enormously gratifying that this comes from an exceptional brand new voice, Mark, and a brilliant up-and-coming director, Lewis Arnold. Expect it to be moving, funny and surprising.”

Cleaning Up was filmed in London during 2017 and 2018.

Note to Editors:

Sister Pictures is an independent production company, founded by Jane Featherstone in 2015, to develop authored, bold and distinctive stories for UK and international audiences. Jane has executive produced some of the UK’s most ground-breaking television including *Spooks*, *The Hour*, *Utopia* and *Life on Mars*.

Sister’s current forthcoming projects include *Chernobyl* (Sky Atlantic, HBO) starring Emily Watson, Jared Harris, Stellan Skarsgard, Paul Ritter and Jessie Buckley, *Giri/Haji* (BBC Two, Netflix) written by Joe Barton (*Humans*) and directed by BAFTA winner and Emmy nominee Julian Farino (*Entourage*, *Marvellous*), and *Don’t Forget the Driver* (BBC Two) written and created by acclaimed BAFTA winning actor Toby Jones (*Detectorists*, *Marvellous*, *The Girl*) and Obie award-winning playwright Tim Crouch (*An Oak Tree/ Beginners/Adler & Gibb*).

Recent projects include *The Bisexual* (Channel 4/Hulu), written, directed and starring Sundance Grand Jury Award Winner Desiree Akhavan (*The Miseducation of Cameron Post*, *Appropriate Behaviour*), *Flowers 2* (Channel 4), written, directed by and starring Will Sharpe, with both projects being executive produced by Sister exec Naomi de Pear through her in-house label Hootenanny, and *The Split* by award-winning writer Abi Morgan for BBC One. Forthcoming adaptations include Adam Kay’s *This is Going to Hurt* (BBC Two) and Naomi Alderman’s *The Power*.



FOREWORD BY WRITER, MARK MARLOW

Being someone with very little experience and no writing credits to speak of, I always knew getting a show off the ground in my name was going to be something of a challenge. I'd had a few near misses with some previous ideas, but alas, that difficult greenlight and the start of my writing career remained elusive. I came to the conclusion that if I was going to convince the industry I was capable of writing a television drama it would need to be because I had something they hadn't seen before. An idea that had the potential to tap into the contemporary world in a surprising and original way. Something that would convince the powers that be I was worth taking a chance on. It's something a lot of writers are looking for I guess, and I was very fortunate that one day it just hit me.

The idea for *Cleaning Up* came to me almost instantaneously whilst I was watching Oliver Stone's *Wall Street*. For those who don't remember, there's a scene where Charlie Sheen has to break into an office building and find some inside information for Gordon Gecko, but I noticed there were a few cleaners in the background of the scene. They bare no relevance to the story and are used for little more than set dressing. They're unimportant and overlooked, and it was at that moment the ideas hit me all at once.

Deep down I thought the idea of a cleaner who uses the very fact she's overlooked and invisible to access inside information had a chance because it tapped into themes of contemporary culture. The class divide. Austerity. Corporate greed. Plus, it was an underdog tale about a working-class woman getting one over bankers. There was only one problem... I didn't have a main character. Whose story was this? From early on I realised the success or failure of the idea would rest on my main protagonist, so I set to work creating the character of Sam.

I thought about the world of stocks and shares and the economic crisis and how the bankers gambled with the world's finances to line their own pockets.

There it was. Gambling. An important issue and problem faced by many people in contemporary society.

The character of Sam suddenly came alive as I looked into why people gambled and the effects it has on their family and friends. I looked into the differences between why women gamble as opposed to why men gamble and I discovered women do it more as an escape. I felt it was important to reflect this.

Life hasn't turned out the way Sam hoped for and now she turns to gambling as a way of dealing with it. She's a victim of circumstance, but given the right opportunities, she could have been anything she wanted. She sees the insider trading as a way of turning her life around and as a result, it gives her a new sense of purpose. An opportunity to be the best version of herself. Unfortunately, this chance has come at a terrible price... She's had to become a criminal.

Once I had a pilot script I felt I had a fighting chance of it being read. I showed it to Lewis Arnold, a talented director friend and thankfully he loved it and came on board. We worked the script up a little further, then he sent it to Jane Featherstone, which, I didn't realise it at the time, was the major break I'd been waiting for. Suddenly everything fell into place and we had the green light from ITV. It was at this point I suddenly realised I'd never written an episode two of a drama, let alone an entire series before. However, with Jane's incredible help and the experience of the team around her, I was on a fast learning curve and quickly discovered the benefits and joy of working as part of a creative team.

It was an amazing thing, knowing that I was writing an ITV drama without any real experience – and I had my ups and downs. Moments of self-doubt and moments of great joy along the way. Learning Sheridan Smith was going to play Sam was an unbelievable moment. Watching her turn my words into something real, was fantastic. I've had many fortuitous breaks over the past couple of years but having Sheridan play Sam is possibly the best of them all.



INTERVIEW WITH JANE FEATHERSTONE, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Can you tell us how *Cleaning Up* came to the screen?

“It was the writer Mark Marlow’s idea. He was put together with the director Lewis Arnold by their agent who thought they might get on together. They then developed Mark’s idea into a longer version.

“This is Mark’s first ever TV script and he has written all six, which is a phenomenal achievement. He was an editor but had always felt writing was his true calling.

“When we started working with him he was so open to learning. It was very much a case of trying to help him find his voice and encouraging him to find the stories he wants to tell.

“I love working with new writers. It’s great when you then see them evolve into the next stage of their career, particularly when they are as talented as Mark.”

Are people like cleaners really invisible to others?

“There is an invisible workforce all around us. Everyone is so busy in cities going to and from their jobs and you don’t really pay attention. Many of those are working contracts, coming in overnight when we’re all going home.

“The issues that come with that in terms of stability, finances and child care are real. It’s not that *Cleaning Up* is only a socio-political piece but I do think it shows us a side of life we don’t often get to see.

“Sam is super smart but hasn’t had the education or the opportunities other people have had. She realises cleaners are invisible and the gambler in her thinks it’s time for her to have a piece of this world. It’s a very human story. What can she get away with?

“It’s about education, opportunity and self-belief. At first, Sam doesn’t believe she can do this. But grows in confidence over the course of the series.”

Are there parallels between Sam’s gambling and City trading?

“When Sam gambles in a casino she has no control over the outcome. While with trading you can start to learn about the market and so on and use your brain more. She might be at the bottom but Sam is as smart as the people who are making all the millions. And starts to realise it.”

Where did you film?

“We filmed on one of the floors of a privately-owned building in Canary Wharf. The views were extraordinary. London is a city of two halves, more than ever now. So many people who have ordinary normal jobs are being pushed further and further out of the city. And that’s a story that isn’t just true for London. There’s a sense of the inequality the country is experiencing.”

Is this also a family story?

“Sam and her husband Dave (Matthew McNulty) have separated, but they are not screaming and shouting the whole time. They have just hit a barrier in their relationship. Largely caused by Sam’s gambling, but also probably because she wasn’t able to fulfil her potential in their relationship.

“Sheridan Smith and Matthew McNulty are brilliant together. You want them to try and find a way through it. You just want that family to be together. Dave tries to help Sam get better and really wants her to do that. She also becomes more attractive to Dave as she grows in confidence.

“There are very few actors who have the emotional range of Sheridan. She can take you from very dark places to real lightness and comedy, all in a breath, in a twist, in a moment. There’s also a rawness, honesty and authenticity about Sheridan.

“She is just so engaging and fascinating to watch.”



SHERIDAN SMITH PLAYS SAM

Can you tell us who Sam is?

“Sam is a mother of two young daughters who has got into a lot of debt because of her gambling addiction. She’s separated from her husband Dave and is struggling on her own. Sam works as a cleaner at a company involved in stocks and shares. A very different world from where she lives with her children.

“It really is two different worlds. I loved playing all the scenes at home with the two girls who play Sam’s daughters. A total contrast to the world of Canary Wharf, which was also brilliant to film. We were on the 33rd floor of a building there and the views were just incredible. It’s very much those two different worlds and the divide between them.

“What I love about Sam is she’s working class and maybe not educated like a lot of people are, but she’s still savvy and smart. She’s a chameleon who can fit into any world. A smart cookie. She’s not educated like all these bankers playing the stock market. But she can fit into that world if she wants to.

“Sam never gives up. She takes knock after knock after knock and just keeps going and striving and wanting to fight back.”

What attracted you to the role?

“I’m used to playing real-life characters, very much removed from yourself. When you really feel you are acting. But Sam is completely fictional and is more like me, I guess, which I’ve actually found quite hard. It’s quite close to me and my own emotions and feelings so it’s hard to switch off. I relate to Sam a lot. It felt rawer and more real. Which is a good thing.

“Having said that, I do have a London accent in *Cleaning Up* while I’m from Yorkshire. So that helped me change a little bit. Playing a fictional character as opposed to a real one is very different, but I’ve enjoyed the challenge.

“When I first read the script, the first episode, I just thought Sam is an everyday woman and I love playing those roles. She’s working class and I’m a working-class girl, and I know lots of people who are single mums and are in debt like she is so I related to her in that respect.

“That’s what made me want to do it. I thought, ‘This story needs to be told.’ It’s an important topic at the moment. We’ve all seen the bingo and casino ads on TV. There are a lot of women who are struggling with debt and a gambling addiction. I think it’s a really important story to be told. That’s what made me want to play Sam.”

Why have Sam and Dave separated?

“Matthew McNulty plays Sam’s estranged husband Dave. They’ve been separated for about six months. It’s really sad and raw because they still love each other and really should be together. Dave has left Sam because of her gambling addiction and he has also cheated on her. It’s heartbreaking.

“Dave is a great dad and their two girls love him. There’s nothing to fault him, except for the fact he cheated. But the marriage started to break down before that. He was hurt by all the lies Sam told him as she was gambling and getting into debt.

“Now he’s with this other woman but Sam is torn. She still loves him and he still wants to love her. You can see they had something special but he couldn’t cope with her gambling.”

SHERIDAN SMITH INTERVIEW CONT'D

How was it working with Kristy and Anya who play Sam's daughters?

"Those girls are incredible. Kristy Philipps plays Alice with Anya McKenna Bruce as little Lily. We got on well from the first moment and started messing around and playing.

"Anya and I had these little dance routines and singing numbers that we did off set so when the cameras were rolling that real warmth was there. That's important to me, I never want to just fake that. Especially the family life, which is at the heart of this story.

"There are some lovely scenes with Anya. She's so little and Sam is trying to hide from her how much her mum is struggling. She's a great little actress and gets me every time.

"Sam is so big-hearted and I really wanted that relationship to work. The two girls were incredible. Those were my favourite scenes because we had so much fun."

How would you describe the relationship between Sam and her friend Jess?

"Jade Anouka plays Sam's best friend Jess. They are like sisters in a way. Jess is another cleaner and Sam's confidante. The one who she has all the banter with. Jade is lovely and we also had a lot of banter off set as well.

"Jess is younger than Sam and the only person she's got to turn to now that Dave has gone. Their relationship is really strong. But Sam continues to make the wrong decisions and does bad things. We're all flawed, aren't we, in life? And she hurts Jess sometimes.

"Even so, they make up because they love each other. It's that thing - sometimes you do things with friendships and family members, and you all forgive each other because the love and the bond is so strong."

How does Sam get involved with higher stakes?

"Cleaners are invisible to the Canary Wharf traders in their big steel and glass offices. They don't even notice them. So, when Sam overhears something about insider trading she thinks this could be a way for her to make some real money and pay off her debts.

"She's savvy enough to do it herself. Is it immoral? Sam thinks if a few people in this company are getting away with it, why shouldn't she? If I've done my job properly I hope the audience will be rooting for Sam. She is a victim and a fighter.

"Sam is not going to apologise for what she is doing. She's fighting back against the system, and it's that whole class thing. That divide.

"Hopefully this story will provoke a debate about right and wrong. If you were given the opportunity to do something illegal like this and change your life, would you do it? I can't wait to see what people think of that.

"Obviously I wouldn't do anything illegal, but I'm pro-Sam all the way and I hope people will be cheering her on. I love the script and the character."

What drives Sam? Is it the thrill of the gambling or the desire to protect her children?

"Sometimes it's the gambling. Sam is an addict but is in denial about that, which is why she's lost her husband and is in so much debt.

"It's also why she might lose her house. Everything is coming down around her, because of her gambling.

SHERIDAN SMITH INTERVIEW CONT'D

“When the stakes are raised she realises how they could make really serious money to change the life of her family. The girls are her life. Despite everything she is a great mum and just wants a better life for them, so that’s a main driving force.”

Did anything surprise you about Sam’s world?

“Not much has surprised me about Sam’s world because she’s from the same kind of world that I grew up in. I totally get that working class drive. My mum and dad were grafters. And that’s what Sam is. She cleans all hours in this crazy world.

“She’s trying to bring up two kids and is always on the go. I don’t know how people do it. When I was doing the scenes when the kids are running around and Sam is trying to make sandwiches, I was thinking, ‘How do people do this for real? How do they manage to juggle having a job and being a single mum?’ Hats off to anyone out there who has to do it.

“So that’s the bit that surprised me. I couldn’t do it. I can do it on screen but I don’t think I could do it in real life. They really do deserve a medal. And there’s so many single mums out there now.”

What was it like filming at Canary Wharf and other locations?

“The locations they found were unbelievable. Sam lives in a rented house overlooking Canary Wharf. It’s just the most amazing location. To see so much money and then poverty, right next door to each other.

“It’s very much like that in London with lots of working-class areas in and amongst affluent areas, almost back-to-back. This drama depicts that and shows the two different worlds. It was also fascinating filming high up in the Canary Wharf towers.

“Probably my favourite day’s filming was when we were filming on the Docklands Light Railway - the DLR. We filmed scenes of Sam going to and from work on the DLR.

“But, of course, you can’t shut that down just for filming. We had to shoot the scenes with lots of real passengers using the trains. We used a minimum crew but there’s still quite a lot of us. It was like a school trip.

“We’d have to get on the train and then would have ‘one take’ to get it right as it travelled along the tracks. There were crew members holding sound booms and lights and we’re all swaying about. Then they’d tell us to get off at the next stop so they could film that.

“It was like the most dysfunctional family outing ever. But then people - the public - are just fascinated watching us. We did that for a couple of days.

“It’s a bit like doing a play because you’ve just got one go at it. You can’t be messing up, but I was also in hysterics. It was just so funny, seeing all the crew rocking about.”

What sort of look does Sam have?

“Sam has two totally different looks. One for her normal life as a single mum and another for later in the story when she gets involved with insider trading.

SHERIDAN SMITH INTERVIEW CONT'D

"Sam's usual mum look is whacked-up hair and she's thrown her clothes on. There's no vanity involved. You don't really care because you haven't got time. You're too busy making packed lunches and who's going to look at a cleaner? I've become very attached to my cleaner's tabard."

"Her other look has to fit in with this other world of bankers and so on. She takes on another persona and puts on a posh voice. Then my hair is down and Sam wears suits. Initially it's just some skirt she's worn to a wedding or a jacket, but then her look progresses as she tries to fit into this other world. Sam is such a chameleon and it works."

Where do you think Sam might have ended up if she'd had more opportunities?

"It's hard to say. Like a lot of people, Sam hasn't been given the opportunities in life that others have, but she is very smart. I think she could do anything. You can do anything you put your mind to."

Are you any good at cleaning?

"In a word, no. Until I was 25 I hadn't made a bed. I hadn't changed covers on a bed. I'm useless. It's terrible, but we did a day of cleaning training and they taught us how to do various things. You don't wipe a stain, you dab it. I've also learned how to tie a bin. There's quite a few scenes where I'm doing the bin bit because I'm quite good at that. It's all very well researched."

"My housemate is happy now: 'You've got no excuse now. You've got to start cleaning because you've played a bloomin' cleaner.' So I'll have to up my game now at home. I've learned a few things."

Have you ever played the stock market?

"I've never played the stock market but now I've done all the research I could. Nothing illegal, of course! But I'm not as savvy as Sam. I haven't got the gambling head she has. I'd lose it all. I'd lose all the money."

How would you sum up the series?

"It's compelling, important, funny, entertaining, warm, real and, hopefully, exciting."

"We've also had great directors. Lewis Arnold is amazing and he's been working on it for two years with the writer Mark Marlow, so he's totally lived, breathed and invested in it."

"Lewis directed episodes one to four. He was brilliant at going, 'Right, where's Sam? What have we been doing at this moment?' Really helping and guiding me through it, because it is quite a lot to get your head around, jumping from family life to the stock market."

"Robbie McKillop, who directed the fifth and sixth episodes, was also lovely. It was like nothing had changed when he stepped in. Both of them were so enthusiastic and passionate. We couldn't have asked for better directors."

SHERIDAN SMITH INTERVIEW CONT'D

How do you reflect on the whole experience of making *Cleaning Up*?

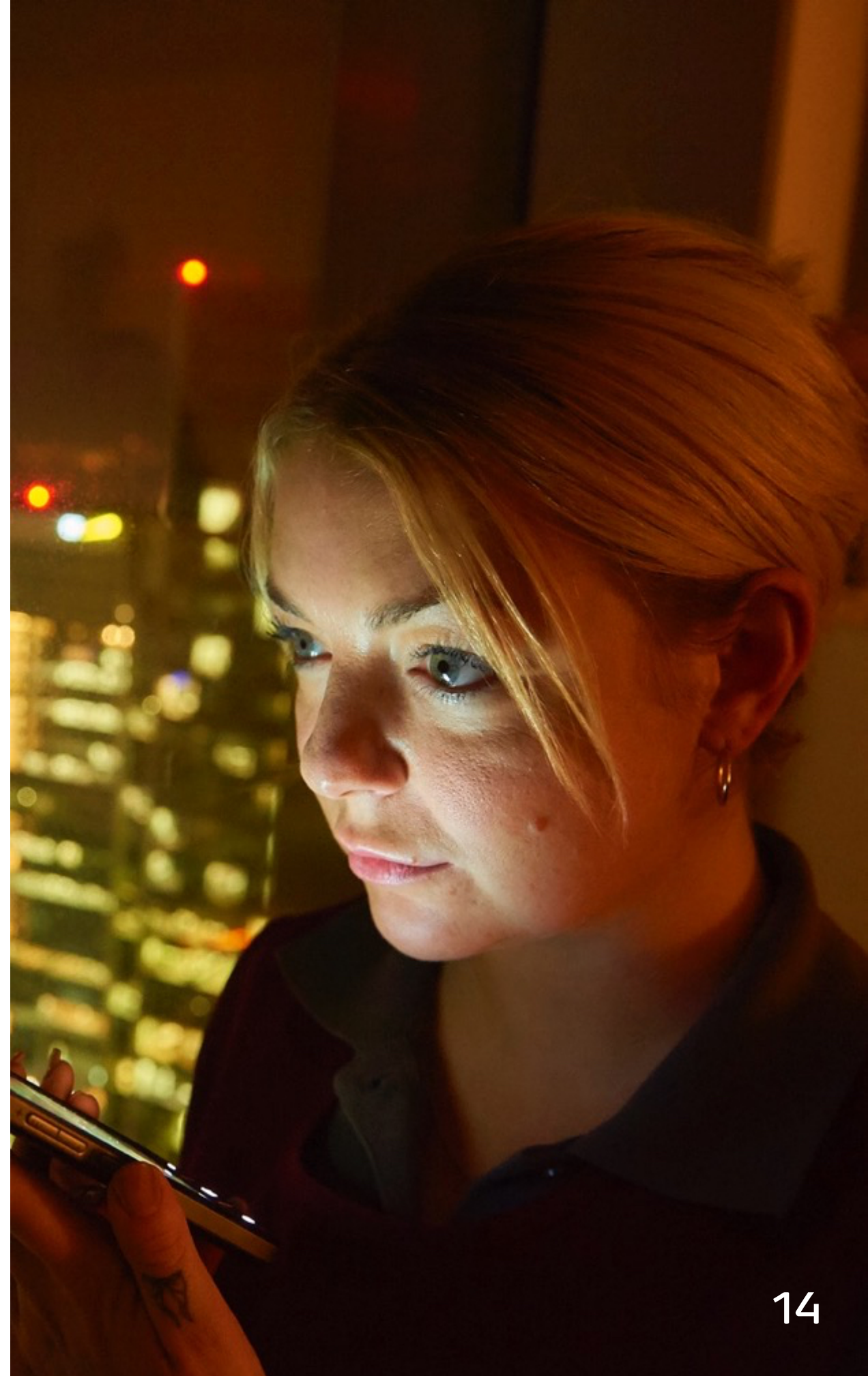
"I've never done a job for this long. Usually the dramas I've worked on are two months at most, but this one has been a five-month job. The cast and crew become like a family. I'm going to miss them a lot.

"I hope people will go on the journey with Sam. It's a real journey she goes on, and you get to know her gradually. She makes some bad decisions and I love playing a character that has these flaws.

"It's so easy to play the safe character, but this is not your typical heroine. Sam is flawed and is going to make you shout and scream sometimes and say, 'Don't buy those scratch cards!' The struggles she has are what makes her real.

"It's really important to have flawed characters because we all are flawed. I certainly am. I've got loads of flaws so I relate to Sam and I love playing her. No one is perfect. No one is like they are in the movies when they're all amazing.

"I love that she's got all these flaws and quirks and scars and bad habits and that's what we're all made up of. It doesn't mean you haven't got a big heart."





JADE ANOUKA PLAYS JESS

Can you tell us who Jess is?

“Jess is a strong-willed woman who wants to do what’s right and help out her family. She’s always been a hard worker. Jess works in the family cafe and then to make extra money she is doing cleaning work with Sam.

“The family cafe business is really struggling and it looks like it will end up as part of another chain. The rent has gone up so they can’t afford to pay that anymore.

“They know they’re going to have to move out so Jess has come up with an idea to open up a mobile cafe business which would keep the business alive but without having to pay a huge rent.

“Her brother is in prison so Jess is the backbone of the family. She is the one keeping it afloat, but she still finds time to enjoy life - you see her dancing at work with her headphones on.

“Later in the story Jess faces a moral dilemma and finds that quite difficult. In some ways she is Sam’s moral compass and generally more level-headed. Jess encourages Sam to think, not just jump into things.

“Jess is definitely the voice of reason when it comes to Sam. They have been friends for a long time and she has seen the struggles Sam has had. If Sam is about to do something that Jess feels is not right, she wants to help Sam do the right thing.”

Is their friendship tested during the series?

“Jess and Sam have grown up together and been through a lot. Jess has been there for Sam when Sam’s marriage broke down. And Sam has been there for Jess when her father died. They’ve always had each other’s backs and can talk to each other about anything.

“But when Sam does certain things it really does hurt Jess and tests their friendship.”

Do you think cleaners are invisible to office workers?

“It’s amazing to have a TV drama that focuses on people you don’t usually see. Cleaners are like an invisible army, especially in London and other big cities. They go into all these offices at night and clean like fairies.

“Business people then go to work the next day and suddenly everything is clean and shiny again, but they don’t really think about who has been responsible. It’s interesting to see Canary Wharf and that whole world through the eyes of the cleaners.

As events unfold, does Jess worry about her future?

“She’s very conscious of the impact of her brother going to prison on her mum and the family. The last thing they need is more trouble in their lives. Jess needs to be there to help the family and make money for them. It’s a massive worry for her – Jess doesn’t want to be like her brother.

“Jess and Sam have to do what their boss tells them to, especially as they are on zero-hour contracts. If they upset him they might not be given the hours you need to survive so they simply have to deal with it. Unfortunately, this is the reality for so many people in their working lives.”

JADE ANOUKA INTERVIEW CONT'D

What do you think about Sam's gambling?

"It's great that a story like this is being highlighted on TV because I think an issue like Sam's gambling is a rising problem in real life.

"It's so easy to do with a few taps on your mobile phone, and almost feels like it's not real money you're playing with. They say if you open up a new account they will give you a certain amount of money, but you never really see that money, and people end up in a big hole that they can't get out of. It's a big problem."

What was it like filming in London's Docklands?

"It was amazing filming at Canary Wharf. We were 33 floors or so up in this office complex overlooking the Isle of Dogs. We could look around 360 degrees through floor to ceiling windows. It was the most incredible view. If you worked there it would be quite a thing to look down on London every day with everyone else looking up at you.

"We also filmed on the Docklands Light Railway which was good fun. We were there filming in and around people on their way to work. We'd have to leap on with the crew, do the scene and then jump off and do it again.

"I'm not sure what the passengers thought of it. Most people weren't really paying attention while others were trying to hear what was going on. We had to film that really quickly, running through the train and leaping off and on."

Do you like cleaning?

"I hate cleaning. I filmed a scene cleaning a toilet the other day and I thought, 'This is not for me.'"

What was it like working with Sheridan?

"It was great fun working with Sheridan. It's such an easy chemistry with her. Sam and Jess have been best friends since they were young so it was good that Sheridan and I got on really well."

Does Cleaning Up tell a different kind of story?

"Characters like Jess and Sam are just trying to get by the best they can and survive. I hope the audience will understand what that's like and be drawn into the story. I don't think I've ever seen a drama from the cleaners' point of view."



MATTHEW MCNULTY PLAYS DAVE

What attracted you to *Cleaning Up*?

“It’s always the script. That’s the first thing that attracts me. Does it read well? Does it flow? Is there enough drama, character and colour in it? *Cleaning Up* ticked all of the boxes. I also knew Sheridan Smith was involved as Sam so the opportunity to work with her was a big draw. I’d also worked with the producer Karen Lewis before on *Unforgiven*.

“It looked like a really good drama and an interesting concept. The combination of a very real, earthy story on the domestic side along with the world of high finance and Canary Wharf.”

Can you tell us who Dave is?

“Dave is Sam’s husband, but the couple are separated. He is also the father of their two daughters. The relationship between Dave and Sam is fractured. He is a good guy at heart who has made mistakes, but those mistakes are the result of the breakdown of Sam and Dave’s relationship because of Sam’s gambling addiction. He has had to put up with a lot of negativity and deception from Sam.

“We meet him when his patience has worn thin. A man full of frustrated love. He still loves Sam and is a family man. But he can’t go back because there has been too much deception and hurt. They were young sweethearts so there’s a really strong bond and a love that will never go, but he’s had to put up with so much.”

How are the two children following the split?

“Above everything else he wants the best for his two young daughters. That’s why this situation pains him so much. In his eyes the best for his girls is for them to live with him and not with their mother, who seems unstable and tells lies, but Sam has other ideas.

“That’s what hurts the most. He has to break up his family. Dave knows it’s going to hurt Sam, who he still loves, and his daughters.

“Sadly, many modern families find themselves in similar situations where the parents are breaking up and the children are impacted. Family life is hard work and it takes a lot to keep a family together.

“No matter how hard you try there are always going to be problems along the way and sometimes they lead to mothers and fathers separating. In this instance it’s a bit more extreme because of the gambling addiction.

“I hope the audience might sympathise with Dave. You do feel for him and the situation he’s found himself in. It’s not his fault. Maybe he did make a bad decision, but he was driven to it. Sam also knows she has done something wrong. It’s not just him.

“That’s life. People do things and they make mistakes. You could take a slice of anyone’s life, judge it and paint them in a bad way. But you have to look at the full picture.”

One of the themes of the drama is the invisibility of cleaners. What are your thoughts about that?

“It’s good to highlight the fact that people like cleaners are mostly invisible to the office workers they clean for. No matter what you do or where you are, everyone is a person. There’s drama and intelligence in everybody, but people often look past that.

“*Cleaning Up* focuses on the two worlds of the cleaners and the City workers, which really does highlight the invisibility of cleaners.”

MATTHEW MCNULTY INTERVIEW CONT'D

What's the difference between Sam's gambling and what City traders do?

"I don't think there is that much difference between those two worlds. In terms of taking risks and the addiction of a win it's probably the same kind of buzz, but the implications of a loss in Sam's world are far greater. She can lose everything. There's nothing left and her family falls apart.

"In the City it's okay to some extent to take risks, but some people pay a heavier price than others. Working class people do tend to pay the price of what happens when things go wrong in the banking world. And as far as gambling themselves, it may be smaller stakes but a bigger risk in terms of the percentage of their income."

Do you ever gamble?

"I have a flutter now and again, but only on a big event. I'm hopefully too sensible to get sucked into it all.

"There is now near constant advertising for betting companies and gambling on TV sports channels and elsewhere. Sport is a positive and fun thing. Connecting gambling to sport masks the dark side of gambling.

"It's so in your face at the moment. The adverts make gambling look bright, colourful and fun. It doesn't seem like a bad thing. Maybe we'll see the full effects of this in a couple of years and it won't be good.

"Gambling is a massive industry. We even have sports teams sponsored now by online betting companies. I think that says it all. That's when it becomes dangerous. When gambling takes over the sport people love.

"Most people are too busy to take reality checks so they just go with it. And you're constantly told how great things will be if you gamble, with the slogan, 'When the fun stops, stop', as if you can do that when you're addicted to gambling.

"If every day is a struggle, then it's tempting to take the risk and gamble, but the reality can be very different. It can end up as a massive trap for some people."

Are actors, by their very choice of profession, gamblers?

"I think so. Especially when you're starting off. At first, I thought, 'In reality, I'm probably not going to become an actor, but I'll just keep trying.'

"I took risks and it paid off for me. I used to have an extras agency and a lot of the supporting artistes on our books had been doing it for a long time. They had put their lives on hold and were still trying to get roles.

"Acting is so addictive because it's what we all love. There's nothing like being on stage and performing. Or being in front of a camera and people appreciating what you're doing. But the odds are stacked against you."

Dave and Sam go back to school for a parents' evening. Did that bring back any memories?

"Going back to school brought back lots of memories. It's the sitting on the little chairs and that feeling of having to be quiet while the teacher is talking to you. There were little reminders everywhere.

MATTHEW MCNULTY INTERVIEW CONT'D

“Sheridan has an infectious personality and if there’s any hint of humour anywhere you can sense it in her and a bit of cheekiness. We were trying to stop ourselves from laughing and also trying to remember that the teacher was really an actor.”

What do you think makes Sheridan such a great talent?

“It doesn’t feel as if Sheridan puts on an act. She always finds some kind of connection to her character, so it seems real. She doesn’t have to switch it on or off. It’s always there. She can get in the moment so quickly. It’s so believable, and it’s easy to get lost in it with her.

“That’s what’s great about working with Sheridan. You know she’s in that world and you can just join her. It feels real. She is very easy to work with because of that. Sheridan is genuine and honest. That’s what it is.”

Do you enjoy cleaning?

“I get overwhelmed by cleaning, to be honest. Especially in my house with three kids. It’s a bit chaotic, but I generally have no choice but to do it.”





BEN BAILEY SMITH PLAYS BLAKE

Can you tell us who Blake is?

“Blake has a couple of sides to him. He is a slick, arrogant trader who has a sense of entitlement, and believes he knows what he is doing and that no-one knows better than him.

“But that masks a huge vulnerability. He knows what he’s doing is insider trading and he’s risking everything. He is living something of a double life, and he’s probably more aware of the risks he is taking than anyone else involved.

“That makes him something of a tense character who is constantly on edge and worrying about being found out. He’s got that duality going on and is definitely struggling with that.

“In a way he is the face of the crime. The others are hidden. Blake is the one who is passing information on. His knowledge is ahead of everybody else’s because of his job. Insider trading is illegal and a hugely risky thing to be doing.

“Blake preaches caution and is constantly at war with what he does, but because money is power and power corrupts, others in this enterprise want more money and they want it quicker. Blake is put under pressure to keep going and do more, but that will bring an increased risk of being caught.

“Maybe in the early stages he was assured he could do it his way and at his pace. But that’s clearly not true now. He is trapped in this situation. You could say he is also a victim. He has made a bad decision and he’s not allowed to walk away.”

Did you do any research for the role?

“I watched a few documentaries about these guys. I also know a couple of City boys so I chatted to them. But there’s much less focus on his job than on the idea of somebody living a double life. That’s much more interesting to me than the job itself. The tension someone like that might have within them.

“We must always be clear that this is entertainment about a tiny minority of those doing wrong. Of course, most people in the City are law-abiding traders just going about their business.”

How’s your own maths?

“My maths is absolutely awful. My daughter asked me the other day, ‘Would this be the simplified outcome or the lengthy one?’ And I said, ‘What do you mean?’ She said, ‘If E is absolute and if it’s 27, should I use the simplified outcome?’ I said, ‘I don’t understand anything of what you just said to me.’ I never learned algebra. I hated all of that. My daughter is really good at it. When people talk numbers it just becomes like a different language.”

Can you tell us about the filming locations for the drama?

“We filmed at Canary Wharf which was an incredible location. We were high up on the floor of this office tower with spectacular views over London. That really added to it for me.”

Is there a difference between Sam’s gambling and what goes on in the City?

“I see them as very similar. I can’t believe there’s not more regulation around the fact that people gamble with our money. At least if you’re doing online gambling or going down the bookies it’s quite straightforward. You bet on something and if it doesn’t come in, you lose your money. And if it does, you win.

“But in these ivory towers people are gambling with the investments of normal people. It’s not that closely regulated because these are very rich and powerful companies that are overseeing it. Of course, there are gains to be made for the investors. But, as we’ve seen, there can be huge and life-changing losses.”

BEN BAILEY SMITH INTERVIEW CONT'D

Is choosing to become an actor a gamble?

"Any actor will tell you that as soon as their current role comes to an end they are unemployed again. It's a huge pressure. Especially if, like me, you have a family and are responsible for other people. It's a constant worry about what I'm going to do next.

"But at the same time that nervous energy adds to my strength as a performer. I think if I was too comfortable, too cosy, I'd start under-performing. You've got to try and make your own luck."

Do you agree that cleaners are mostly invisible to people like Blake?

"It's a recurring theme throughout the series and it's an insight into the class divide.

"We're all guilty of not noticing others every day. One of the strengths of *Cleaning Up* is it's not being preachy about that stuff. It's just an observation."

Do you like a flutter in real life?

"No, I don't. I always bet on the Grand National but I think that's more of a British tradition. It was something that brought my family together when I was little. It was a fun thing to do, but I don't really understand why I even do that because I don't know the first thing about horses.

"I know everything there is to know about Crystal Palace football club and I can often predict their scores. But I've never bet on them once. I guess that's probably because if I were to do it, it would be quite depressing because I'd be betting on them to lose a lot of the time."

What are your thoughts about gambling in general?

"It really is everywhere. Many Premier League football clubs are now sponsored by gambling companies. And if you watch football on TV you're constantly prompted to bet in play. So, within the game you're encouraged to keep gambling.

"They have this slogan, 'When the fun stops, stop.' That's not the way surviving and recovering from addiction works. For 99.9 per cent of addicts the fun stopped a long time ago. They are clearly promoting addiction. It's not a controversial thing to say because addiction makes money. It makes so much money.

"Football clubs are not allowed to put gambling sponsors' names on replica football shirts for kids. That tells you that even the clubs know deep down it's wrong. Because if they thought it was fine they would happily put the gambling sponsorship on the kids' replica kits as well. They know it's problematic.

"When there's that kind of sponsorship money being offered it's very hard to turn it down. I understand that and I'm not slapping anybody's wrists for doing that. I just think there needs to be a systemic review and more thought about how we indulge these gambling companies."

BEN BAILEY SMITH INTERVIEW CONT'D

What was it like working with Sheridan Smith?

"It's my second time working with Sheridan. I worked with her on a Christmas special of an adaptation of a David Walliams' book called *Ratburger* for Sky One. We weren't actually in any of the same scenes. But this time we have a few scenes together.

"Sheridan is a force of nature. She's got a number of unique qualities. She's a natural. But also, she's got this emotional outpouring that makes you feel for her. Yet she's got a twinkle in her eye that's very mischievous. She's absolutely perfect for this role.

"Sheridan is becoming something of a national treasure. It's great to see and I wish her all the best. She's a genuine talent in acting and singing."





ROSIE CAVALIERO PLAYS FRANCES

Can you tell us who Frances is?

“Frances works in compliance at a London trading company that Sam cleans for, but she has no idea who Sam is. Their worlds don’t collide at all.

“I did do a bit of research about working in a company like this. I didn’t understand half of it. It’s so technical, but it’s all about keeping an eye on everything and making sure nobody is behaving inappropriately or doing anything illegal. Everyone has to work within a framework of conduct.

“Frances comes over as quite professional and polite. A woman doing her job. She can be quite officious and a little pompous at times.

“I certainly couldn’t do that job. I’d be totally lost. I’m terrible with numbers and I was awful at maths at school. I was taught by an Irish nun who went far too fast for me.

“I did eventually get my maths ‘O’-level via a teacher who took us through it. Her first words were, ‘Welcome to the dunce’s guide to algebra.’ We managed to do it, but I would not last five minutes in that world.”

Are the cleaners in the office invisible to people like Frances?

“That’s one of the brilliant things about this drama. It highlights a whole underclass of invisible people who are totally ignored and nobody knows who they are. It’s also very multicultural. A lot of the cleaners are not English, which is so true of real life, so we have an excellent multicultural cast of people playing them.

“The cleaners come in after most office workers have gone or before they arrive, but even when the office workers are there they simply don’t notice them. They appear as a mass of cleaners rather than individual people.”

Where did you film *Cleaning Up*?

“We filmed at Canary Wharf, mainly at weekends when we could get access to the offices. It was cold because they turned all the heating off, but the views of London were spectacular. It was a real treat to be up in those skyscrapers. You could just sit there and look at the view all day through massive glass windows with light pouring in.”

What are your thoughts about Sam’s gambling addiction?

“It’s such a topical story. The world of Sam’s gambling and that of the traders are very similar, but it’s the people at the bottom end of it who have so much to lose. While the ones at the top end still get their massive pay packets and bonuses.

“The amount of money involved for Sam might not be as great as the millions of pounds in the City but the personal stakes are much higher for her.

“Sam is trying to address her gambling problem but is still a serious gambling addict, with all the impacts on her family that involves.

What was it like working with Sheridan?

“We’ve known each other of old because we did a BBC sitcom many years ago with Paul O’Grady called *Eyes Down* set in a bingo hall. We did two series. Sheridan was only 22 then but she was already proving to be a massive star and was lovely.

“We’ve run into each other a few times over the years but we haven’t worked together since. We’re terrible gigglers. We did get a big giggle sometimes filming on set. We just set each other off.

ROSIE CAVALIERO INTERVIEW CONT'D

“Sheridan is such a lovely person to work with. So generous. And she’s so good, so quick. I don’t know how she does it. She was like that on *Eyes Down*. She never forgot her lines and never missed a beat. Just so instinctive.”

Do you think actors are gamblers?

“If you choose to become an actor you’re potentially gambling your life away. There’s a lot of risk. There’s only so much control you can have in this business, but it’s such a risky, competitive job. With no job security. You never know when it could all just disappear.

“I’ve worked with some of the most brilliant, famous, wonderful actors, but even they have insecurities. Even when they’re in their 70s with a massive career behind them and every success they could get, they still don’t feel 100 per cent secure in it. It never goes away.

“I always feel for young people coming into acting now, but then they have all that energy, enthusiasm and optimism that you have to have.”

Do you ever have a flutter?

“We have a flutter on the Grand National, but nothing else. I’ve never done the Lottery or anything else.”

Frances does an internet search for information about Sam. Do you ever Google yourself?

“I have done it to remember my credits. Sometimes I can’t remember and think, ‘What have I worked with someone on?’ But it’s not something I generally do. The worst thing is if you see something nasty about yourself, which is not very nice.

“I don’t do Twitter. Someone said, ‘You should look on Twitter because someone said this really nice thing about you.’ I looked it up and the first thing I saw was this really horrible other comment someone had tweeted. And I thought, ‘Why am I looking at this?’ You only remember the bad comments.”

Are you a fan of cleaning?

“I would actually like a cleaner but my partner says our house is too small and we can do it ourselves. I’d love one but that would be a real luxury.”



EPISODE SYNOPSES

EPISODE ONE

Sam is a struggling mum with an online gambling addiction, desperately trying to keep her life together after separating from her husband. With her ex, Dave, threatening to take her daughters away, Sam wants to prove she's a dependable parent to her two daughters, Alice and Lily. But getting back on track looks impossible for Sam with spiralling debts and having to work a zero-hour contract on the minimum wage as a cleaner in Canary Wharf.

Sam's life is thrown into disarray when she discovers access to lucrative and illegal stock market information at the office she cleans. Realising this could be the answer to her prayers, Sam starts delving into the high-stakes world of the stock market. Persuading her best friend Jess to come in on the secret, the two cleaners start to navigate dangerous new territory.

EPISODE TWO

Sam's money-making plan starts to bear fruit, but it comes at a great cost. Frustrated by her mum's constant absence and the new lodger living in her bedroom, Alice seeks refuge at her dad's house. Sam's new lodger, Glynn, grows closer to Lily and babysits her when Sam has a job interview. But the trouble at home is affecting Sam's youngest daughter, and Lily gets them into trouble. Devastated by the possibility of losing her daughters, Sam's addiction takes hold and threatens to ruin her friendship with Jess.

When Sam's listening device is found in the office, an investigation is launched and the women's information source is cut off. Desperate to make amends with Jess and bring in some money, Sam follows an inside lead and enlists the help of a fellow cleaner, Mina, to execute a risky scam in another office.

EPISODE THREE

While the net closes in on their illegal activities, Jess makes a pivotal discovery in the office. Sam takes a chance on a new contact and gets in deeper with the insider trading network.

EPISODE FOUR

After a shock appearance at the Network meeting, Sam tries not to let her mask slip. The gang attempt to acquire some secret information as Sam organises a Birthday party for Lily.

EPISODE FIVE

Sam struggles to deliver on the promises she makes to Swanny as the two of them grow closer. Meanwhile, Jess and Mina are put under pressure to come clean.

EPISODE SIX

As Sam risks losing everything, she faces the disastrous consequences of her actions. Running out of options, Sam must confront the network of insider traders.

Character and Production Credits

Sam – **Sheridan Smith**

Jess – **Jade Anouka**

Dave – **Matthew McNulty**

Mina – **Branka Katic**

Alice – **Kristy Phillips**

Lily – **Anya McKenna Bruce**

Glynn – **Robert Emms**

Frances – **Rosie Cavaliero**

Blake – **Ben Bailey Smith**

Swanny – **Lloyd Owen**

Warren – **Neil Maskell**

Beth – **Naomi Ackie**

Viktor – **Uriel Emil**

Graham – **Con O'Neill**

Jake – **Hero Fiennes Tiffin**

John – **Jordan Dawes**

Chris – **Theo Barklem-Biggs**

Executive Producer – **Jane Featherstone**

Executive Producer – **Chris Fry**

Creator and Writer – **Mark Marlow**

Producer – **Karen Lewis**

Director, episodes 1-4 – **Lewis Arnold**

Director, episodes 5-6 – **Robbie McKillop**

Production Designer – **Claire Kenny**

Director of Photography – **Ollie Downey**

Costume Designer – **Amy Roberts**

Make up and Hair Designer – **Lesley Brennan**

Location Manager – **Gary Pickering**

Casting Director – **Victor Jenkins**

Editor, Block one - **Dominic Strevens**

Editor, Block two – **Hazel Baillie**

