

Press Pack



# GONE

**NEW PICTURES™**



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# SERIES SYNOPSIS

Inscrutable headmaster MICHAEL POLLY returns home one afternoon to find his wife SARAH missing. As the hours roll on, he reports her disappearance to DS ANNIE CASSIDY, a no-nonsense detective who is immediately perplexed by the apparent stoicism of the headmaster. As the case escalates with the emergence of puzzling evidence, Annie is assigned the role of Family Liaison Officer. News of the disappearance spreads despite Michael's concerted efforts to contain it; his commitment to the rugby team he coaches, remains unwavering.

An awful discovery soon catapults the investigation into new territory. Annie finds herself at odds with boss IVAN as she pushes beyond the confines of her role. The stricken Polly family is riven with mistrust and hostility. Meanwhile, we see an historic case continue to haunt Annie, her sense of failure deepening as old friend CAROL seems to lose faith in her. We also see Annie furtively rekindling things with her ex, CRAIG, though their history weighs heavily between them. At the school, concerned school parents begin to fear for the safety of their children under the tutelage of Michael Polly.

Annie's persistence pays off as she alights on a new suspect with a surprising connection to the school. Michael is muscled out by his colleagues, forcing him to confront the personal cost of his long dedication to his career. Police pursue evidence that Sarah was harbouring secrets, as rumours swirl at school. A suspect incriminates himself under heated questioning, and Annie discovers evidence which turns the investigation on its head.

Soon, the investigation zeroes in on two chief suspects, as insights into their characters paint a damning picture. Annie begins to let her guard down with Craig, as her strange bond with Michael deepens. The investigation arrives at an impasse as public pressure mounts, while Michael's relationship with his daughter ALANA comes under increasing strain. As the weight of suspicion begins to tip, Annie is witness to a violent encounter which brings her professional and personal lives crashing together.

The investigation broadens as Annie pursues a new line inquiry in the face of pessimism from her colleagues. She finds herself sidelined. Meanwhile, an increasingly isolated Michael renews his hope in teaching as he continues to ruminate on his marriage to Sarah and his perceived failures. Doubts swirl among a circle of teachers, while Alana is rocked with indecision. Struggling school pupil DYLAN reaches out to Michael in a desperate moment, his frustrations rising to a furious crescendo. Annie dares to let her emotional guards down further, with crushing consequences.

Alana, Annie and the rest of the police are left reeling after a devastating incident. Annie and Ivan are at loggerheads as they grapple with the evidence. Ivan pushes to sew up the investigation, but Annie refuses to be swayed. Through a series of explosive interviews, Annie weaponises her role as FLO to extract a devastating truth. A shocking new suspect emerges, and the investigation hurtles towards a shattering conclusion as Annie's instincts and courage prove decisive.

# EPISODE SYNOPSES

## EPISODE 1

Impassive headmaster MICHAEL POLLY surveys a school rugby pitch as the First XV of St Bartholomew's, his team, snatches victory from the jaws of defeat. Afterwards, he arrives home with daughter ALANA to find there is no sign of his wife SARAH, a music teacher at the school.

Next day, an inscrutable Michael reports Sarah missing to DS ANNIE CASSIDY, a no-nonsense, breezy detective who, we've seen, is furtively rekindling things with her self-deprecating ex. Annie and DC BECKY HAMMOND begin investigating. Why would a woman with no apparent difficulties just walk out on her life? Michael appears to cooperate, while a puzzling discovery sends Alana in a tailspin.

As more evidence emerges, Sarah's disappearance is escalated to high risk, and the news begins to spread despite Michael's efforts to contain it. He remains fixated on the school and the rugby team, whose star player DYLAN SEDGWICK is getting into constant trouble. In her newly assigned position as Family Liaison Officer, Annie observes the curious headmaster, as Sarah's disappearance takes a sinister turn.

## EPISODE 2

Annie is struck by Michael's strangeness in the wake of an awful discovery. A stricken Alana seeks comfort from her dad, but he's in denial. As the case escalates, Ivan reminds Annie that her duties are restricted to family liaison: she's not leading the charge here. But when Becky makes a technical breakthrough, Annie gets the bit between her teeth: could they be the ones to solve this?

Michael is frustrated by Annie and Becky's constant presence in the house. As they gently probe for intel, Alana is upset by the suggestion her mum had anything to hide. Michael stoically – or suspiciously? – presses on with school duties as gossip spreads. Sarah's distraught parents arrive; MALCOLM is hostile towards Annie, who isn't being straight with them. Meanwhile, we see an historic case continue to haunt her, as she takes things slow with Craig.

A defensive Michael is under increasing pressure to carry out the grimmest of tasks, finally relenting. Concerned school parents fear for the safety of their children, as he is subjected to more intensive questioning. Annie witnesses a rare moment of vulnerability from her chief suspect, before landing a breakthrough.

# EPISODE SYNOPSES

## EPISODE 3

Under heated questioning, Michael expresses his discontent with the investigation. Meanwhile, Annie alights on new suspect STEPHEN SEDGWICK, who has a surprising connection to the school. He insists Sarah was unhappy in her marriage, but Annie puts him on the back foot. At the school, officers conduct a thorough search of the headmaster's house. Ivan reaches an impasse with Michael, whose alibi seems tight. Annie then brings him up to speed with her Stephen Sedgwick revelation – which a disgruntled Ivan admits feels promising.

To Annie's dismay, Carol appears to be losing faith in her. Will she ever find justice for Carol's daughter? Meanwhile Michael feels muscled out by his deputies at the school, forcing him to confront the sacrifices he's made for the sake of the job. The police pursue evidence that Sarah was harbouring secrets, as rumours swirl about the school. Alana begins to feel the police are keeping things from her; she fears her dad is vulnerable to accusations. Desperate, she seeks help from boyfriend Paul.

Under fire, Stephen Sedgwick insists he has an alibi for the day Sarah went missing, revealing an incriminating detail in the process. Annie offers honesty to Michael in respect of her marriage, in an attempt to peel back the layers of his. Later, a bruised Michael elicits devastating information from his daughter which is brutal for her to share. Meanwhile a dogwalker offers a fresh insight to the police, as Annie spots evidence which turns the investigation on its head.

## EPISODE 4

Annie and her colleagues begin to see things in a new light as fresh information continues to emerge. Two suspects come to hang in the balance as each must account for their movements on the days surrounding Sarah's disappearance, and insights into their character paint a muddy picture. Annie begins to let her guard down with Craig as he offers help on her cold case. She feels frustrated in her role as Family Liaison Officer but then starts to realise how she might use it to her advantage. Her strange bond with Michael deepens as he begins to share his regrets about the difficulties of his marriage. But is he telling her the full truth? The police investigation seems to come to an impasse as pressure from the press and public mount. Michael's relationship with his daughter comes under strain, just as Dylan's relationship with his own father does. As the weight of suspicion begins to tip towards one of the two suspects, Annie is witness to a violent encounter which brings her professional and personal lives crashing together.

# EPISODE SYNOPSES

## EPISODE 5

Michael is increasingly isolated following the events of the previous episode. The investigation broadens as Annie doggedly pursues a new line of inquiry leading to the emergence of a compelling new suspect. Sidelined in the investigation, she fights the pessimism of her colleagues. Dylan continues to struggle at school and, in a desperate moment, ends up reaching out to his headmaster for help. An abandoned Michael finds renewed hope in teaching as he continues to ruminate on his relationship with Sarah. He comes face to face with the man intimately involved in the breakdown of his marriage. Doubts swirl among a circle of teachers, and it becomes increasingly unclear who to trust. Alana is rocked with indecision. Annie is torn between two men she wants to trust, ultimately daring to let her guard down further, with crushing consequences. Dylan's frustrations rise to a furious crescendo. Alana takes a daunting leap, as a devastating act prepares to rock the investigation.

## EPISODE 6

Alana, Annie and the rest of the police reel from the events of the previous episode. Michael, numb with shock, is left to reckon with the enormity of what has happened. Ivan and Annie are at loggerheads as they grapple to grasp the meaning of the evidence before them. The senior teachers rally to keep the school running as normal, but there is palpable discomfort among staff. Paul and Alana find themselves at odds as they try to make sense of things. Ivan and Nira push to sew up the investigation but Annie refuses to be swayed, finding an ally in Alana. A series of explosive police interviews point to a single culprit. Annie weaponises her role as Family Liaison Officer to extract a devastating truth, as new evidence leads to the emergence of a profoundly shocking new suspect. The investigation hurtles towards a shattering conclusion as Annie's instincts and courage prove decisive.

# CHARACTER BIOS

**DS ANNIE CASSIDY** is a bright, gutsy, rule-bending detective with an unwavering sense of justice. As we peel back the layers, we'll begin to see her frustrations and vulnerabilities: the way she is stymied at work; her fears about rekindling things with her apparently solicitous ex; and her acute sense of failure surrounding the unsolved murder of a young woman she used to know. As the series unfolds – and Annie develops a surprising bond with chief suspect Michael Polly – she will be forced to confront the reality of her past relationship in her relentless search for the present-day truth.

**MICHAEL POLLY** appears to us as a serious, emotionally inhibited man. Someone who insists hard work leads to individual success and who probably wishes he'd been educated at the type of school of which he is now headmaster. He prides himself on industriousness, honour, but in his rigidity represents a now questioned version of masculinity. As he is rocked by the events of the series, Michael is forced to accept that the principles which have guided him through life (discipline, determination, control) are not wholly adequate, prompting a deeper introspection into his long-term failures as a husband and father.

**ALANA POLLY** is a dedicated and principled young teacher who, despite brief teenage rebellions, has always been preoccupied with doing the right thing, instilled with a strong sense of fair play. This means that when deeply uncomfortable evidence comes to light, Alana is thrown into turmoil, wrestling with conflicting feelings about whom to trust and protect. She has always wanted to prove herself to her dad but senses a gulf widening between them as her unfettered emotions come into striking contrast with his tightly controlled, angry detachedness.

**STEPHEN SEDGWICK** is an outwardly cordial, successful man in finance who feels acutely the burden of providing for his family. His marriage is in tatters, and we see that he's a dismissive and selfish husband to Claire. Yearning for the freedoms of his youth, he recently started taking something for himself, which has only inspired his children – specifically his son Dylan – to turn against him. As Stephen finds himself in the police's crosshairs, he assumes an arrogant and defensive posture which ends up being self-defeating. Is this a man who could boil over?

**CLAIRE SEDGWICK** is a dedicated but weary mother to teenagers Dylan and Freya. Enduring a difficult and loveless marriage, she will go to any lengths to protect her children, even if this means compromising her own happiness. As the series progresses, Claire will be forced to reckon with the suspicion that falls on her husband, and the escalating frustrations and furies of her son.

**DYLAN SEDGWICK** is the star player of his school rugby team but is struggling academically, a difficult position to be in at his elite private school. He feels alienated from his parents and picked on by his overbearing headmaster. Dylan is in a troubled place across the series, by turns muted and angry in the face of his dad's selfish choices, his teacher's punitive attitude, and the taunts he's subjected to by his teenage classmates. This anger will bubble up across the series, as the investigation impinges on Dylan's family at this very formative time of life.

# CHARACTER BIOS

**DI CRAIG STANHOPE** appears as an ordinary, unremarkable, caring bloke. At the beginning of the series, we see him making a careful gambit to rekindle things with his wife Annie, wanting to prove himself to her without taking things too fast. He offers to help her out with a cold case that means so much to her, but his motivations here are not entirely clear. As Annie fixates on the present-day investigation, Craig finds himself unable to keep his jealous and manipulative sides in check, forcing Annie to reckon with the truth of their relationship.

**DC BECKY HAMMOND** is a diligent and intuitive police officer who plays very much by the book but can't help but admire Annie's "just get on with it" style. A supportive and comforting presence to Michael and Alana, but at the same time highly astute, Becky is a superb family liaison officer. She's also a knowing, if occasionally frustrated friend to Annie. Becky's experience of a stable and loving relationship sometimes brings her at odds with Annie's more cynical view of adult life.

**DI IVAN PEMBERLEY** is SIO of the investigation into the disappearance of Sarah Polly. Authoritative and by the book, Ivan is from the process-driven, digital school of policing. He rose quickly through CID without spending much time in uniform, which is grating to more "analogue" (and older) police officers like Annie. He gets frustrated when she goes beyond her remit as Family Liaison Officer but has to concede when her gutsy approach pays off. Ivan is a slightly high-handed and crotchety but fundamentally fair and honourable boss.

**RORY BOWMAN** is deputy head of St Bartholomew's School, and a former pupil there. Studious, fastidious and anxious to please, he provides a more parent-facing counterpoint to Michael's frostier approach to leadership. But Rory is also calculated in his own way, quick to assume the mantle of Head in Michael's absence. He's outwardly extremely loyal to his boss but as the series progresses, becomes more assertive in his bid to protect the school that means so much to him.

**PAUL WHITCHURCH** is a well-liked science teacher at St Bartholomew's who also occasionally trains the rugby team. Paul is dating the headmaster's daughter Alana Polly and is definitely aware of her father's disapproval. An assured young man who stands his ground in the face of Michael's hostility, Paul is also a decent and caring boyfriend – although the relationship is complicated when Paul weighs in on a difficult choice confronting Alana.

# CAST INTERVIEW

## Eve Myles Interview

### *Annie Cassidy*

#### **Can you tell us the story of GONE?**

The story is a deep psychological thriller set in and around a prestigious private school in Bristol, as well as the surrounding countryside and forests. We follow my character Annie Cassidy, who is quickly involved in a missing person's case that turns out to be a murder. It's a very deep, nuanced series about what makes us human. What is a 'monster'. What is 'nature' and 'nurture'.

#### **What kind of a show is GONE and what makes it stand out?**

Gone is a thriller. I'm a detective in it, so there's a huge police presence, but it's not your usual procedure show. There's no blue lights, big action sequences or events. It's about the people and the characters and what lies beneath them, what makes them do what they do. What trauma have they experienced? What was their childhood like, and how does this define us as adults - what we do as a result of that. It is a deep seated mystery. It's not your usual procedural drama. I know you've heard that many, many times, probably, but it genuinely isn't because this is about the people. Of course there's a crime, but it's about what lies underneath the crime. The show really leans into the drama that happens within the house, within somebody's life who's also not only lost a wife and a mother under really horrendous circumstances, but is actually the number one suspect.

#### **Does the series show the family dynamics that happen as a result of a crime - which hasn't really been shown before?**

My character Annie takes the new position as someone that is very unwelcomed. She's almost sidetracked and put into the perimeters of the case, even though she was the first at the scene, she's just pushed aside. But, she uses that to her advantage. She's in and amongst the suspect and what happens is an unlikely friendship or an unlikely relationship between Michael Polly and Annie Cassidy that neither of them expect, and it's a really unique relationship. It becomes a confession box or a therapy room, but through the series you forget which one is the therapist and which one's the client.

#### **What was your first impression when reading the scripts?**

My first impression when I read the scripts was one of intrigue and excitement because of the family liaison side of it, which is something that is not ignored, but hasn't been explored as much as we've done in this series. That really got me excited and I wanted to know more about it and how difficult and complex it is, because, not only is Annie the family liaison officer, she never clocks off as the detective, so she's got two hats on throughout the entire thing. Also, she has her own private stuff going on, which then bleeds into the main story.

#### **Yes, you feel that it's pacy, but you are kept guessing...**

All you can do is play what's on the page. Especially with a thriller, if you do know the outcome, subconsciously you play it. With this, I couldn't and it was a thrilling process!. There's a truthfulness in that. The show has a thorn running through it where it is really bedded in truth. It doesn't veer off track into an action thriller or horror, or anything. It's truthful to its genre and we've really dug deep into it and made it as character driven as possible.

# CAST INTERVIEW

## **Can you just tell us a little bit more about Annie, and where we first meet her? What was her story, and how does it kind of develop?**

We first meet Annie trying to rekindle her marriage that seems to be on the route to being fixed. She's a woman in her forties. She's happy in her job, but very lonely in her life. Her job actually is her life, it's everything she has and everything she thinks she needs at that point. Very quickly we find that Annie is working across a possible murder: Sarah Polly, a woman that has been missing for 24 hours. Annie is assigned to the family as the family liaison officer (the FLO). We've also got a series about what happens underneath that story, where we delve into trauma, controlling and cohesive behavior and abuse. That's the monster that this wonderful woman struggles with on a daily basis, because she's a fixer and she feels that she can fix everything and anything and the world doesn't work like that. You will travel with her and go through that process with her. It's been a wonderful, difficult, frightening role that I've been blessed to play. So hopefully I've done it a bit of justice.

## **You said she's a fixer, but she needs to work on herself, doesn't she?**

She is a fixer, but like most women who have experienced domestic violence, she tends to forget about herself and focuses on making sure that everybody else around her is okay and looked after. She comes last. That's due to the abuse and controlling behaviour - being told that you're not important, that you come last, that everyone else comes before you, and that you don't really matter.

We've delved into these issues in the series and tried to be as truthful and respectful as possible. They run throughout the entire show and bleed into her work and her relationship with Michael Polly, possibly the first man she's been in a room with for a very long time where she's felt both safe and unsafe.

A lot of research went into this. I was very lucky to have many phone calls with organisations and to speak to people who have been in those circumstances firsthand. So we've been as respectful and honest as possible, without shying away from anything that's difficult to watch or see. We've leaned into it and told the truth. Hopefully, it's been done very well.

## **What attracted you to this series?**

What attracted me to this series was, firstly, the team behind it - from the writer to the production company, to the director, and also the opportunity to work with David. I instantly knew that the people captaining the ship were leading incredible creatives and had a history of shows I'm a huge fan of. Then I read the scripts and I was instantly hooked.

If I get scared about something, I know it's absolutely for me and that it's the next thing I should do. If I read something or get involved in something and feel comfortable, then I've already done it, so it's time to move on. There are issues in this particular piece that I felt I wanted to give voice to. The tone and vision Richard Laxton created was intoxicating. Everything came together like a chemistry set, hopefully we've created a story people really invest in.

# CAST INTERVIEW

**You touched on working with organizations, but what other research did you do to prepare for the role?**

I have two very good friends who are detectives *who* I've really annoyed throughout this process with messages back and forth. They've been a constant support, helping me with details, because George has supplied everything else in the script.

We've also got consultants on the floor with us. Richard Laxton always has the answer for me, along with Mark Hedges, who has been an amazing producer and has put me in touch with a lot of people. So, all in all, it comes together, and what you can use is great - but there's a lot of stuff you can't use. *24 Hours in Police Custody* also has a lot to answer for. I love it, and I've watched a lot of it.

It's addictive because it has a very similar tone to the series, in a way. It's not about explosions, car crashes, or five o'clock raids, but about a terrible crime and the people affected by it - the people who've done it and the people directly hit by it.

George Kay and Richard Laxton have really collaborated on that, and it's a fascinating psychological watch. It's such a good program to watch when you're doing something like this because it's really not about the big stuff. It's about how you deal with this person, how you get inside this person, and how you get them to trust you. You're a psychologist, a therapist, a police officer, a wife, a sister, a best friend - you could even be a possible lover - all while asking: did this person do it or did they not, and how do I get that answer as quickly as possible.

**It's a human story, isn't it? It's not guns blazing. It's not police sirens turning up..**

It's about getting inside somebody - getting inside their life, getting inside them. This show, again, is very much like a game. It's like a card game: who's going to throw down the ace, who's going to put down the joker, who's going to play a full house; especially between Annie and Michael. It's a dance of power and control, and the whole thing is a game of chess. Who makes the next move? Who's going to take that person out? It's a really deep-seated, psychological, delicious thriller.

**So can you tell us about Annie's relationship with Carol Bradley and her connection to the Tina Bradley hold case?**

Annie has a sacred relationship with Carol Bradley, and this is due to Carol's daughter, Tina Bradley, who went missing many years ago and is still an active case. Annie is leading that case, and it's been very unsuccessful so far - there's very little evidence and it's gone nowhere - but Annie, being Annie, won't give up and firmly believes that she will find her and catch the person responsible.

The relationship between Annie and Carol has grown out of trauma, out of something horrific. These two women have found each other in their lives, spent a lot of time together at the house, and found themselves in a sort of confession box. It's a safe space for both of them not only to talk about grief, but also to talk about today; what they're going through as women, and how they find peace, serenity, and joy in each other.

# CAST INTERVIEW

What George has written and what Richard has created is this beautiful mother-and-daughter relationship, best-friend relationship, and bond of confidants. There's a lovely dynamic between Carol and Annie, they move from humour to tragedy, to deep secrets they tell nobody outside those walls. It's a really lovely part of the drama, and one of the things that attracted me to it. It's not all set in a police station, and it's not all set in the victim's house. There are beautiful characters surrounding Annie Cassidy that are unique and moving - profoundly moving - and amongst all of that, there's great humour.

## **Could we just discuss some of the major themes that develop through the series?**

It is a murder mystery, but underneath all of that, it's a story about childhood trauma. It's a story about how elite situations and elite education can affect you for the rest of your life, and it looks at the ways those experiences shape you long-term. There's a class theme running through this, and we delve deeply into domestic violence, coercive and controlling behaviour, masculinity, femininity, and relationships between fathers and daughters. It also explores relationships between strangers who are brought together and discover something within themselves they didn't know existed.

## **I think there's something for everyone to take from the show.**

There's a simple thing, but it's a very difficult thing thematically in this show, and it's about how we connect with each other; how we talk, what we say, how we say it, and what we reveal about ourselves. That's really difficult to do in life. As an adult, it's very hard to find someone you can be completely honest and truthful with, to reveal something buried deep within you that hurts so much - your flaws or weaknesses. A lot of the time, when you share that, it actually becomes your strength because it's unique to you. It's a story of grief and survival. And that's your Michael Polly and that's your Annie Cassidy.

# CAST INTERVIEW

## David Morrissey Interview

### *Michael Polly*

#### **Can you give us a brief overview of GONE?**

The story is about a female detective who is called into a missing persons case. The missing person is my wife, and I'm the headmaster of a public school. She has to investigate where the missing woman has gone. I become a prime suspect at one point, if not throughout the entire investigation.

#### **What kind of a show is it and what do you think makes it stand out from other police procedurals?**

It's a thriller. I think what's interesting about the show is the public school setting and the fact that you're investigating crime in a world that has its own rules and regulations. Our detective has to navigate that world - the world of the public school, with all its history and legacy - while doing her job.

#### **What was your first impression when you were reading the scripts?**

I've been involved for a long time because I'm also an executive producer on this. I got approached by the production company and our writer George Kay a while ago. I found the world fascinating, it's been a long time in its development.

#### **That must be really interesting from an actor's perspective as well to be involved early on.**

It is. Most of the projects I'm involved with now, I tend to be involved from a very early point in the development. It's not new for me to be involved with something from a pitch point of view.

#### **Can you tell us more about your character, Michael Polly, what's his story and how does that develop over the series?**

Michael Polly is the headmaster of a public school. He's very well respected and serves as the public face of the school, so he has a role to play in how he presents himself to the world. He's married, his wife is also a teacher at the school, and so is his daughter. He's very aware of the legacy and fundraising in the world of public schools, and he carries the burden of making both the finances and the education work. He sees himself in terms of the school's legacy. The school has a lot of good history in terms of academic and sporting achievement, and he knows he's the person responsible for maintaining that.

#### **You touched on a good point, it's a massive burden to have your family closely involved in that.**

Yes. It's not unusual for couples to be in the same school and for their children to be in those schools as well, particularly in the public school setting. But yes, it does bring added pressure; especially with him living on the premises as well.

#### **Could you say what attracted you specifically to GONE?**

What attracted me was the personnel. I've worked with George Kay before, we did the long shadow. I was a fan of his work, but also the production company, Willow Grills - who is a producer I've worked with a couple of times. They were the main attractions. Then Richard Laxton came on board, who's a director I've wanted to work with for a long time.

# CAST INTERVIEW

## **How did you develop the character of Michael with George Kay?**

George writes it and I perform it, that's the way it goes. George went to a public school and I think he drew the character from people he knew. I just say his words.

## **What did you find most interesting about your character?**

I find his dilemma interesting. I find he struggles accessing his own emotion. He finds being vulnerable difficult, and when it comes to him being a suspect, this only adds to people's suspicions.

## **What was it like playing that character?**

I've enjoyed playing him. It's all about what he doesn't show, which is an interesting challenge for an actor.

## **Annie serves as both investigator and counselor within her role. She starts off as an investigating officer then becomes the family liaison, and they forge a strange relationship.**

Annie becomes a family liaison officer, which means she's in my house all the time. She's ostensibly there to give us support, but actually, she feels a bit like a spy in the nest, and he doesn't trust her. Because she's around so much, she observes things about him and is also able to get under his skin a little. Likewise, he can observe things about her and slowly begin to engage with her about what's going on in her personal life as well.

## **You get the sense that there's a shorthand in that relationship, is it strange to play that kind of character where you are very close and have someone in your space?**

Yes, he's in a state of flux. His wife has gone missing, and she's also been having an affair - which he knew about but wasn't really engaging with. He's in a place where a lot of big life events are happening while he's also at a crucial time in the school timetable, with young people passing exams and playing important rugby matches, for example. He's caught between his responsibilities, and it's interesting to see what someone chooses to focus on in times of crisis.

## **Do you think he's an unfeeling man?**

Yes.

## **But maybe that's a shield because he's breaking down?**

Yes. But sometimes it's also about the fact that he's dealing with what's in front of him and what he can control. He's not a speculative person; he doesn't imagine scenarios that may or may not happen. He focuses on practicalities, and I'd say that's exactly the kind of person you want in a crisis. But when the crisis is happening to him, it's a different kettle of fish entirely.

## **Can you discuss some of the locations of GONE and filming in and around Bristol?**

I've not been to Bristol much before, but I've loved being here. It's a great city; vibrant, cultural, and very beautiful to look at. We've been filming at Bottle Yard Studios, but also on location at Downer School, which is between Bristol and Bath. We had to film in the school during the Easter holidays, and pupils from the school helped us, which was really great. They had to do a lot of rugby, and they were brilliant.

# CAST INTERVIEW

**Can we touch on some of the themes that develop within GONE? Between maybe your characters, Annie and Michael.**

The main theme for me in the show is culpability, what are you responsible for in big events? We can wonder, "If only I'd turned right instead of left, would things have been different?" and torture ourselves with that. There's an element of both characters reflecting on their past and wishing they'd been different, but what they really need to focus on is the present and look to the future.

**Would you say there is a power dynamic as well?**

There's a power dynamic between them because he is used to being in control, and suddenly the rug is pulled from beneath him. He's struggling to regain that control. She also has a power dynamic at work. She's a great officer who works very hard and intuitively, but she's not really getting the recognition she deserves. There is a power dynamic here, but it's really about control. He's used to being in control, so he keeps trying to do things his way; it's what he's accustomed to. He's a man who's used to having authority, and suddenly it's all being taken away from him. How he reacts to that is interesting. Being a headmaster, you are dictated to by the timetable and have structure imposed on you. When that structure is taken away, he doesn't know what to do. It's like people retiring and suddenly not knowing what to do with themselves. He's lost a lot personally, and his touchstone - which is his security blanket - is the structure of the school. When that's taken away, he goes into free fall. He's naturally defensive because he doesn't like his authority questioned. He's reached the position of headmaster at a prestigious public school because he's able to exert authority. When that is challenged, he doesn't respond well. He doesn't delegate very well. He likes to take responsibility for everything, and by taking responsibility, he's also accountable. When fingers are pointed at him, he's not used to being unable to defend himself or fix things.

**Would you like to summarize GONE?**

The show is just a really great thriller. It's a thriller that makes us ask lots of questions about people in authority, people who are suddenly thrown into a world where they don't have the control that they used to have.

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

Eve's great, I've been an admirer of hers for a long time. It's a very heavy script, this very heavy story, and she's so much fun. She brings a levity to everything and I've really loved working with her..

# CREW INTERVIEW

## George Kay Interview

*Writer, Executive Producer*

### **Where did the idea for *Gone* come from and how long has it been in the works?**

*Gone* is very loosely inspired by the career of a detective I had been aware of for a while. Detective Superintendent Julie MacKay had worked for over 30 years solving a number of challenging cases and when the opportunity arose to meet her, I jumped at it. Julie then, alongside journalist Robert Murphy, wrote about her career with particular focus on the murder of Melanie Road (a 30 year cold case she solved) in the book *To Hunt a Killer*. Whilst *Gone* is an entirely fictional story, it was brilliant to have the expert minds of both Julie and Robert to help us develop the crime story and accurately reflect the way a police officer interacts with someone who is both a suspect and a victim.

### **What was the most challenging part of the shoot?**

*Gone* walks a fine line of keeping suspicion firmly on Michael Polly whilst also inviting the audience to speculate about suspects elsewhere in the story. So every scene had to be read both ways. Did he just say that because he's guilty or did he say that because he is a grieving man, unable to emote? It was a very delicate writing process.

### **What surprised you most during the production process?**

Our director Richard Laxton was so brilliant at focussing the drama on character that it gave us the confidence to not lean too hard into the expected areas that come with a show like this. We were able to free ourselves and move scenes that would usually take place in a police station to the front room in the home of the suspect which really allowed a lot of the two-handers to take on an extra level of tension.

### **What will set *Gone* apart from other similar shows and why will viewers engage?**

*Gone* is different from other shows because while it follows the structural graph of a police procedural, at its heart it's much more about the psychological aspect of stories like this. We're so lucky to have Eve Myles and David Morrissey bring these characters to life. When we started to conceive this show I talked to David about the puzzle of how emotional we expect innocent people to be and he really plays that stoic masculinity brilliantly which is true to his character and men like him. And Eve is someone who I think audiences immediately and so naturally warm to. She embodies Annie so much - that shoulder to cry on, to laugh with, to have a cup of tea with - that I really think she carries the heart of this show.

# CAST LIST

**EVE MYLES – ANNIE CASSIDY**  
**DAVID MORRISSEY – MICHAEL POLLY**  
**EMMA APPLETON – ALANA POLLY**  
**JENNIFER MACBETH – DC BECKY HAMMOND**  
**ARTHUR HUGHES – DI IVAN PEMBERLEY**  
**NICHOLAS NUNN – PAUL WHITCHURCH**  
**ELLIOT COWAN – STEPHEN SEDGWICK**  
**BILLY BARRATT – DYLAN SEDGWICK**  
**PETER MCDONALD – CRAIG STANHOPE**  
**CLARE HIGGINS – CAROL BRADLEY**  
**RUPERT EVANS – RORY BOWMAN**  
**JODIE MCNEE – DC NIRA BARKER**  
**OSCAR BATTERHAM – DC DUNCAN CARMOODY**  
**CLAIRE GOOSE – CLAIRE SEDGWICK**  
**AMY MARSTON – DCS DANIELLA LAING**  
**AMANDA LAWRENCE – SIMONE KINNARD**  
**SANCHIA MCCORMACK – TRUDY GILLAM**  
**KATE FAHY – VERITY SLEIGHTHOME**  
**PAUL FREEMAN – MALCOLM SLEIGHTHOME**  
**GAVIN SPOKES – GARETH BRADLEY**  
**DORIAN SIMPSON – SGT ANDY MUCH**  
**RYAN ZHOU – JACK PALMER**  
**TAHMID CHOUDHURY – JAMES BAURI**  
**ELEANOR FANYINKA – REBECCA HANNAH**  
**MELISSA COLLIER – MELODIE KENDALL**  
**KERRY CLANCY – KERRY CLANCY**  
**PHILIPPA DYCE – PHILIPPA DYCE**  
**FREYA SEDGWICK – FREYA SEDGWICK**  
**THEO DYCE – THEO DYCE**

# CREW LIST

GEORGE KAY – **WRITER, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**  
WILLOW GRYLLS - **EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**  
RICHARD LAXTON – **DIRECTOR, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**  
MARK HEDGES - **PRODUCER**  
DANIELLE LETHBRIDGE – **PRODUCTION MANAGER**  
REBEKAH HARVEY – **PRODUCTION COORDINATOR**  
JAMES LEIGH ACO – **CAMERA OPERATOR**  
BEN MANWARING – **GAFFER**  
MAT GRACE – **BEST BOY**  
BOBBY WILLIAMS – **KEY GRIP**  
RHYS JONES – **GRIP**  
STEEN YOUNG – **STUNT COORDINATOR**