

A man with short, dark hair and a light beard is shown from the chest up, wearing a light blue button-down shirt. He is looking back over his right shoulder with a serious expression. The background is a blurred interior with a warm, orange-toned lamp hanging above him and a decorative glass object on a surface to the right. A large, bright yellow diagonal shape is on the left side of the image.

**itv**

**Coldwater**

# COLDWATER

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## SERIES INTRODUCTION

*Coldwater* is a new six-part thriller starring Andrew Lincoln. Created, written, and executive produced by award-winning playwright David Ireland, the series is produced by SISTER (known for *Black Doves*, *Eric*, and *Chernobyl*) and will air and stream on ITV1, ITVM, STV, and STV Player this autumn.

Commissioned by ITV's Head of Drama, Polly Hill, *Coldwater* also stars Ewen Bremner (*Our Flag Means Death*, *Trainspotting*), Indira Varma (*Obsession*, *Obi-Wan Kenobi*) and Eve Myles (*Hijack*, *Keeping Faith*).

Lee Haven Jones (*A Cruel Love: The Ruth Ellis Story*, *Passenger*, *Doctor Who*) directs the first three episodes with Andrew Cumming (*Shetland*, *Payback*, *Cold Feet*) directing the second half of the series.

Set in the fictional Scottish village of Coldwater, Lincoln (*The Walking Dead*, *Teachers*), plays John, a repressed man who is shocked to find himself in middle age, secretly raging at his life as a stay-at-home dad.

When his failure to intervene in a violent confrontation in a playground brings his identity crisis to a head, John ups and moves his family to the rural idyll of Coldwater, as far away from London as possible.

Upon arrival, John is quickly befriended by next-door neighbour Tommy, played by Ewen Bremner, a charming, confident man and devoted husband to the local vicar Rebecca, played by Eve Myles. He is a man of faith, a pillar of the community and self-appointed leader of the village's all-male book group.

John is both impressed and slightly fascinated by Tommy. His wife Fiona, played by Indira Varma, despises him. Fiona saw the move to Coldwater as an opportunity to leave the past behind them and reignite the spark in their fading marriage. When her husband's relationship with their enigmatic new neighbour becomes increasingly intense, Fiona's suspicions are aroused. She is unconvinced Tommy is all he seems to be.

When John's long-repressed rage comes to a head with disastrous results, he soon finds himself unexpectedly indebted to his new friend, unaware that Tommy himself is harbouring horrifying secrets.

It's only after a series of unsettling incidents start to occur that John begins to wonder who the real Tommy actually is.

This is the story of a normal man, in a normal marriage, who finds himself in a far from normal situation. A man who discovers a newfound sense of his own power, right at the moment he falls under the influence of someone incredibly dangerous.

The series will be executive produced by Chris Fry (*Black Doves*, *Kaos*, *Landscapers*), Alice Tyler (*The Following Events are Based on a Pack of Lies*), Lydia Hampson (*The Following Events are Based on a Pack of Lies*, *Cheat*, *Fleabag*) and Jane Featherstone (*Black Doves*, *Eric*, *Chernobyl*), for SISTER, David Ireland and Andrew Lincoln with Brian Coffey (*Dinosaur*, *Our Ladies*) set to produce.

ITV Studios is handling international distribution.





## INTERVIEW WITH DAVID IRELAND

### **Where did the idea for Coldwater come from?**

I wrote the first episode in 2020, which was a very strange year for everyone. I was having trouble sleeping and I would write really late in the middle of the night. The things that were on my mind then are in the first couple of episodes, the obsessive running, I was reading the bible obsessively as well. I was also reading lots of true crime books. My wife and I were talking about moving out of Glasgow and into the countryside, as many others were in 2020 so all of those things were in the mix and I had an idea. I really like thrillers about urban men being put in situations in rural settings where they're out of their depth. Stuff like Straw Dogs and Eden Lake. I thought I'd really like to just write a TV series that's a really great thriller about a man who's in a violent situation and out of his depth.

The main character John is a bit like me, although I don't look like Andrew Lincoln!

He's middle aged, has two young children and is at a point in his life where he's examining everything. He's dealing with a lot of difficult personal issues. He's drawn to violence and worried that he has a huge potential for violence, but ultimately he's just an ordinary man. He's a man trying to do what's best for his family and trying to recover from the traumas of his past. He literally runs away to the countryside but he runs into deeper darker danger and that's always been something that fascinated me. If you run away from something, do you put yourself in greater danger? That's all where it came from.

### **Tell us about the town of Coldwater...**

I've always loved small towns in Scotland and I've always wanted to live in one but never had the chance to. I love a lot of small towns in Northern Ireland so Coldwater is my little fantasy. You've got the beautiful Church, beautiful coffee shops, it's an idealised version of rural Scotland. Everybody is friendly, and a little bit strange. Everyone knows your business and people don't seem to judge you, but maybe they do.

## INTERVIEW WITH DAVID IRELAND

### **Why was Glasgow the perfect location for this story?**

Well it's the perfect location because I live here and I wanted to write something about my life away from Northern Ireland and the troubles. My life bringing up a family in Scotland, I was trying to get away from writing about violence, tribalism and identity and all the issues in my other work, but I couldn't escape it, even though I've written something about a family in Scotland, all this rage crept into it. No matter what I'm writing about, it's always there. I love living in Scotland, I love the people and the actors and the crew.

### **Can you tell us about casting Andrew Lincoln as John and did you have him in mind when writing the character?**

I didn't think it would be possible to get him so I didn't have Andrew in mind. He's kind of perfect for it because he's so sympathetic and vulnerable and relatable and likeable.

John does some unlikable things, often he's not a very pleasant character but Andrew has a way of playing people who are unlikable but letting us see where they're coming from. A lot of great actors have that quality. He's been instrumental in the evolution of the character and he's brought so much to it with his talent.

### **There's also Ewen Bremner, Indira Varma and Eve Myles in the ensemble, how has it been seeing them bring these characters to life?**

It's just dream casting. They're a terrific foursome. Ewen, like a lot of people, I fell in love with after watching Trainspotting. I think I had a poster of him on my wall - don't tell him that! He's a fascinating actor to watch, to see him play this character, he's so far removed from that, he's very gentle and charming, and yet this darkness comes out of him, he really gets under the skin of the character.

Eve has brought so much to Rebecca, when I saw what she was doing with the character, I wrote more and more for her because she's completely compelling to watch. She's very very funny and very quick witted.



## INTERVIEW WITH DAVID IRELAND

Indira has also brought so much to Fiona, I struggled to find Fiona until Indira was cast. Indira was great in pointing out certain elements to Fiona that I could bring out more. She's brought an unpredictability to the character and a natural tone, she makes the whole thing seem very plausible. She reacts like someone really would in that situation but she doesn't do it in a boring way.

**Tommy and Rebecca's children are interesting characters, Cameron and Moira Jane, played by Samuel Bottomley and Abigail Lawrie, tell us about them...**

Cameron is really interesting as a character because he intuitively feels the darkness of his father, he's in denial about it. I think he's both attracted to violence within himself and repelled by it. He's faced with a moral choice of what kind of man he is going to be, will he be like his father or like John? Samuel is a really charismatic young actor, he's really interesting to watch.

Moira Jane is the daughter of Tommy and Rebecca, I find her a very compelling character. She's like John running away from life, she's run away from Coldwater and set up a life for herself in the city. She's aware that she has her own unhappiness and flaws. Abigail is terrific, she's got a real vulnerability about her and an edge to her acting. Moira Jane is a very complicated character and yet she seems to find it easy to access that.

**The series opens with a shocking scene, can you talk us through that and the choice to include it?**

The story opens in this play park in London, John is with his children and he is trying to flirt with another parent. He witnesses an act of violence towards a woman, a very violent man attacks a woman and John doesn't know how to react. It's intentionally a very shocking scene, I wrote it and was surprised to see it once it was filmed, but that moment becomes a huge catalyst for the rest of the show and John's arc so it's important to the story. It needed to be a huge moment that triggered the family's move to Scotland.



## INTERVIEW WITH DAVID IRELAND

In the show, John is shocked by what he sees and his first instinct is to run away, he's with his kids too. I think I wrote that because I was spending a lot of time in play parks with my children in Glasgow. There's always a potential for violence in an inner city, and I was thinking I should really be doing better for my children, move them somewhere a lot nicer and quieter. I've never seen anything as extreme as what happens in the story, but there's always that sense that anything that could kick off. A play park is meant to be a lovely safe place for children. That seemed to me, a good place to start the story, it's about safety and looking after children and being a parent.

**One of the big questions that the series explores is what does it mean to be a man and masculinity, can you talk about how that's explored through the male characters?**

Everything I write is personal, I find I write a lot about my Father and because I am now a Father. It's about how different things are for my generation of men and my generation of fathers and my son's generation.

My Father was a real alpha male, a bit like Tommy. I also had a stepfather who was a very lovely man, the very polar opposite to my father, another example of how you can be a father and I suppose that all came from questions about what kind of Father I was going to be. A lot of men confront that question. The alpha maleness of Tommy is fairly attractive to many, he's very self assured whereas John is very unsure of who he is and he doesn't really know what he's supposed to be doing in life, so the series explores these two opposite met and how their relationship becomes a co-dependent, coercive and ultimately dangerous.

**Coldwater also looks at two very different marriages between the main characters...**

When you've got actors like Indira Varma and Eve Myles, it's very hard to write them as boring characters because they're such interesting, exciting actors. Coldwater is about marriage as well and I was very interested in the relationship between Tommy and Rebecca because at the outset they are Romeo and Juliet, they'll be together forever and love each other fiercely.

## INTERVIEW WITH DAVID IRELAND

Contrasting that to John and Fiona, who have a little bit more of a complicated marriage, they may be questioning their love for one another, they've been together since university days and things have become stagnant and transactional between them. The opposite to their new neighbours and moving into Coldwater really shines a light on that for them both.

Tommy is everything that John wants to be and John, in a funny kind of way, has the same relationship with Tommy. Tommy also really admires John and looks up to him, wants to be more like him and this intense friendship forms.

### **The show touches on our obsession with serial killers...**

The bible group that Tommy runs reads biographies and autobiographies of serial killers. One of the characters Malky runs a murder tour, there was a woman murdered in Coldwater many years ago, it's almost like anyone in that town could be a serial killer.

I read all the biographies about them and yet I'm the least violent person you could meet. Now it feels like everybody is obsessed with serial killers and I find the current obsession a bit disturbing. I think the reason is because it's harder to be a serial killer at present. Some of the most awful people had a superficial charm and I wanted to write about a potentially dangerous person being a normal man.

### **Another theme throughout Coldwater is religion, Rebecca is a pastor, where did you get that idea from?**

It came up because as well as running and reading serial killer books I also started reading the bible a lot during lockdown. I started praying and going to church and then I ended up getting baptised and becoming a Christian. It's this disturbing thriller that is actually a story of faith as well. There's lots of references to the book of Jonah and the story of Jonah is that God instructs Jonah to go to Nineveh and he refuses and he does the opposite of what God tells him and he ends up in the belly of a big fish.

## INTERVIEW WITH DAVID IRELAND

I don't want to write anything that's preachy, I wanted to write in some way that Tommy is the devil and I wanted to create this relationship that had a very different relationship with God than John had. There's a conflict in it, Tommy and Rebecca aren't necessarily good Christians and yet they lead the community, whereas John who appears to be this very flawed atheist Londoner surprises them all with his faith.

**There's a great ensemble of Scottish actors that make up the book club, can you tell us about them?**

I was very happy to get some of my favourite actors in Scotland to play the characters that make up the book club. Johnny Watson is a Scottish comedy legend and Greg Hemphill. I really like putting great comedy actors in straight roles because they bring all of the great stuff they bring to comedy but there's a different kind of quality to it. Great timing, great empathy, I'm really pleased with the casting.

**How did you find the transition from writing plays to TV thrillers?**

It was really hard writing six hours of TV and to really find ways to keep the audience interested. It's kind of like writing six plays that have to interconnect with each other. Also it did feel like it was something that has been in me for a long time and I've always loved thrillers. I feel like that character's of John and Tommy had been building up inside me for a while so once I started, it became easy for these characters to exist. They took on a life of their own. When I first started writing, my first couple of plays would be sent to theatres and I'd get rejected because people would say it's a bit too extreme and everyone behaves in such an extreme way, now people don't say that anymore because the world has caught up! I feel like when people say my plays are shocking it's like -well look on social media, look how overwhelming and extreme social media can be. I ignore the outside world generally and just write. One of my favourite playwrights, Neil Simon, said,"ignore fashion and let fashion come to you". I just kind of do my own thing whether or not people like it, is up to them.



## INTERVIEW WITH ANDREW LINCOLN





## INTERVIEW WITH ANDREW LINCOLN

**What was it about Coldwater that got you on board?**

Well, the truth is, I got sent the scripts and I loved it. It made me laugh in all the wrong places and squirm with recognition and it constantly surprised me with the unpredictability of the characters, it made me scared as well. I was quite scared about playing a character that was so unpleasant and weak and emasculated. I wasn't quite sure tonally where it sat, so I said no twice! And then I had a lovely chat with David, and I couldn't walk away from it.

David and I had a lovely hour long zoom and I just thought 'I really think he is a singular voice'. I'd seen one of his plays and when I came back from America, I asked a close friend who I should be paying attention to here and David was at the top of their list. Meeting him and the SISTER team, it couldn't be a better pedigree of production company.

The thing is that's what I liked about John as a character, I thought this is going to be frightening, it's going to be difficult to thread the needle and I think I'll probably learn something by doing this part and grow a bit.

**This is your first role on UK screens, how did you find filming back in the UK?**

It was great! The truth is it's a brilliant script and there were options to go back to America and do other things, but I couldn't walk away from Coldwater. It was one of those scripts that was really interesting and about lots and lots of things. I said to David, 'is this a middle-aged Fight Club?' And he went 'absolutely not.' Then he came back the next day and said 'if Edward Norton and Helena Bonham-Carter had kids and then moved to the Highlands it might be that.'

I was also Executive Producing it, by that I mean having a little bit of influence on the casting and then we got incredibly lucky with this extraordinary ensemble. We just got some of the best actors and actors I've always wanted to work with and then this whole swathe of Scottish comedic royalty too. We felt very, very blessed, that's all largely down to David's writing.

## INTERVIEW WITH ANDREW LINCOLN

**Your character is quite different to one you've been playing previously, tell us about John and was that part of the appeal to the character?**

It was a bit of a palate cleanser from Rick Grimes yes! This is a great opportunity to not only work with David, but also to play something that is diametrically opposed to an archetype of a hero. To look at another version of masculinity. He's a man who is middle aged and struggling with his place in the world. It made me uncomfortable because there's so many brilliant lines in it and it's familiar to me, the tribal nature of human beings and the vanity of small differences. I love all of that.

John is a stay-at-home father, he doesn't feel he's particularly good at doing it and he's in catch up mode in all areas. We find John and Fiona in an impasse, in a very strange place where a lot of parents find themselves, where there isn't time for each other, they've lost a sense of who they are as a couple because so much focus is on the children.

They aren't in a good place, and I've waited so long to work with the brilliant Indira Varma. It's been one of the greatest thrills to build this marriage and relationship with someone that I admire so much.

**As John and Fiona visit their neighbours the Bible study group is talking about their favourite killers, why do you think we as society seem to be obsessed with murderous stories?**

That's a really good question, why are we obsessed with the macabre and the dark? I think to play with that idea, it's perhaps why we go on rollercoasters, that feeling of danger, I think that's why horror movies are so popular too, that visceral feeling that happens when you get fearful.

## INTERVIEW WITH ANDREW LINCOLN

### **Why do you think audiences will enjoy the series?**

That's up to them, I've enjoyed this series enormously, I worry about when you make something like this, where you've had so much fun making it, that it won't translate. But I hope that the mad, anarchic energy that has been surrounding this project has percolated into the end product because it's been an amazing job. I've loved working in Scotland with this brilliant crew and cast. It's been a real joy. There's lots of really good domestic dramas and really good horrors and excellent comedies. What I hope is that this is a combination of all of those genres, but more especially that we are able to hear David's unique voice in the final edit.

INTERVIEW WITH EWEN BREMNER





## INTERVIEW WITH EWEN BREMNER

### **Tell us what Coldwater is about?**

The series is about a man in crisis and in an attempt to heal himself, he escapes to an idyllic small town in Scotland and finds that no matter how far he runs, he can't escape from his demons, or his neighbour Tommy!

### **Why was this a series you wanted to be a part of?**

I was drawn to the project by the quality of the writing. I was surprised they wanted me to cast me, so I thought they were very brave asking me to do it and I enjoy working with brave people. For a long time, I really puzzled over who my character was and couldn't approach this script in the way I usually do. It was a challenge to find who Tommy was and once I found it, it was like putting the puzzle pieces together.

### **Tell us about the character you play Tommy?**

Tommy is father and a husband to Rebecca, who he's very devoted to. He's also a complicated man and meeting John starts their complicated relationship.

I'd say Tommy is a compulsive liar too but he still remains as loyal as he can to his wife Rebecca. Tommy is fairly cold towards his children, there isn't a lot of paternal bond there, there's a superiority complex there as well, he feels superior to everyone and his children have suffered the consequences of that. His daughter has moved away so when she suddenly returns to Coldwater it's a surprise to him.

### **Tell us about Tommy and John's relationship?**

When John arrives to Coldwater he becomes a neighbour to Tommy, who is a very dominant alpha male of the town. He likes to mark his territory so Tommy tries to win the loyalty of John, Tommy sees him as almost a younger brother. He feels like he's found a new best friend in John though John doesn't realise that yet. John represents to Tommy a project, someone to create a mirror image of himself and Tommy controls the narrative around John's new life, casting a spell upon him.

## INTERVIEW WITH EWEN BREMNER

### **How is masculinity explored between these characters?**

I think in this series it's explored in an unconventional way compared to other dramas. My character is very much a dominant type but we also see what vulnerable man he is. John is this very handsome outsider who's come into the village and is a potential threat to Tommy's dominance. But John is a broken man, in crisis and struggling to come back to the surface of his life after experiencing trauma, so the typical male hero of the story, John, is actually suffering and confused about his responsibilities. I enjoyed the problem that the two characters have of not fitting the conventional male ideals that they're supposed to inhabit.

### **What's it been like working with the ensemble cast?**

The casting on the series has been impeccable. Every actor is bringing really surprising, playful, mischievous stuff to the scenes.

Everybody is really getting the most out of these really juicy scenes. It's been really inspiring to work with Andrew and his energy and his passion. His enthusiasm for everyone working on this production and his belief in the story and the scripts and making all of the scenes work to their full potential.

Eve Myles is a revelation to me. Always surprising, always courageous and coming up with ways of playing the scene that I don't think anyone else would have found. We share a similar appetite for finding the subversive elements of the characters, pulling out the parts that are close to the line.

### **Why do you think audiences will enjoy the series?**

I predict the audiences will feel very similarly to how the actors felt on receiving each new draft of each new episode, because every episode left us with an insane anticipation of what could possibly come next. Because the story starts off as something quite normal and it's like a chasm opens up and you realise, like, oh, this is really getting out of control.

## INTERVIEW WITH EWEN BREMNER

This is not what I thought it was going to be. And each episode does that. Each time a new script came in, we're basically gobsmacked thinking, 'oh my God, how can it get out of this mess? Or where can it go from here?'

**INTERVIEW WITH EVE MYLES**





## INTERVIEW WITH EVE MYLES

**Can you give me a brief overview of what this series is about?**

This series is about love. It's about friendship. It's about faith. It's about trying to find freedom, trying to belong and trying to hide.

**Can you introduce us to Rebecca? How does she fit into the story?**

Well, welcome to Rebecca. She is the pastor of the beautiful, sleepy, picturesque town of Coldwater. She's also the community leader, the wife of Tommy and the neighbour of John and Fiona and their lovely family. Tommy and Rebecca have been married for a long time and they found themselves in Coldwater, which is the perfect home for Tommy and Rebecca to bring up their children. They're very unique. They're very in love. They're very old fashioned. They're sort of like a Romeo and Juliet of Coldwater.

**What about Rebecca's relationship with her kids?**

I think Rebecca's relationship with her children is Rebecca's relationship with any human being that comes into Rebecca's world. She believes that giving love is receiving love. She's incredibly maternal. Her children are very important. But not as important as Tommy. Tommy is number one in this family and the children are number two. Given she hasn't seen her daughter in a long time as she lives away. It's dysfunctional on the outside, but on the inside, it works.

**What was your initial reaction when you read the scripts? And why was this a project that you wanted to be a part of?**

When I read the scripts, my initial reaction was, wow, I can't believe this is going on ITV. And that thrilled me. I found it unapologetic. I found it exciting. I found it thrilling. I found it daring. And I felt that if that was my initial instinct to these scripts, I hope that every person that watches it will feel the need and the addiction to come back for more.

## INTERVIEW WITH EVE MYLES

**You have a great ensemble cast. What's it been like working with your castmates on this project?**

Working with my castmates has been a joy. I've worked with Indira Varma a few times and when I heard Indira was involved in this, I couldn't say no to this job. It was so exciting to be back with her.

Andrew Lincoln is without doubt the best leading man I have ever worked with. His generosity, his kindness, his knowledge and his talent is ridiculous. And quite frankly, it shouldn't be allowed. He's a joy. And I'm so pleased that he's playing John in this series. He's leading from the front. He's got energy that my goodness, if we could just put into a jar and sell, we'd be millionaires.

Every choice Ewen makes is considered and perfect. And we have so many beautiful scenes and so much between their characters relies on the subtext in those scenes, the intimacy amongst this beautiful love story. You can only be as good as the person opposite you, and I'm opposite the best.

Ewen is tender. He's super intelligent with all his choices. He's generous. And a joy to watch.

**Coldwater is a fictional town made up of various locations in and around Glasgow. Can you talk about what's been like filming in Scotland?**

Well, filming in Glasgow has been a personal treat for me because my father was Glaswegian and I have so much family here. So for the first time, to come to Glasgow and work has been a real personal treat. People have been amazing. The locations have been jaw droppingly gorgeous. And it's a perfect backdrop for this wonderful, wacky, eccentric new series.

**Why do you think audiences will enjoy this series?**

I hope audiences will enjoy our new series because it's going to offer something very new, something thrilling, something unhinged, something exciting, and I hope it offers up something addictive that you'll want to come back for more and more and more.

**INTERVIEW WITH INDIRA VARMA**





## INTERVIEW WITH INDIRA VARMA

**Can you give me a brief overview of what the series is about?**

This series starts off with John and Fiona essentially running away from their lives and not really, dealing with their problems head on, avoiding. We do that in life, avoiding problems by essentially running away. They run away from London and move to a small town outside Glasgow. But in Coldwater they meet more problems, as is what often happens in life. But the problems they meet, Tommy and Rebecca, are even worse than the problems they had back at home.

**Can you introduce us to Fiona? And who is she? And how has she found herself in Coldwater?**

Fiona is married to John. And at the moment she's in a long suffering marriage with her husband. He's being a bit of a child. And, she has essentially moved because John wanted to move out of London. Their relationship at that moment is not in a great place, but ultimately, they adore each other.

And so even though they sort of hate each other, they really want to make it work. And they're trying to find each other. That's why I love this series, that it's, I think it's a celebration of long term relationships. The rough with the smooth.

**How does their dynamic, so Fiona being the breadwinner really, fit into the overarching theme of what does it mean to be a man and masculinity?**

Well, I think one thing I really love about this series is, the way David Ireland is looking at what it means to be a man and, and how in society at the moment, I think men sometimes feel like they've been pushed out because women are career women. Women can be mothers. Women don't need men around, supposedly. What is a man's role? So what does it mean to be a man if you are not the breadwinner in your family? How do you express your maleness? Especially if you're not having sex with your wife at the moment because you're both tired, parents, busy, the spark's gone at the moment. So how, what defines a man, in his manliness? Is it violence? Is it aggression?



## INTERVIEW WITH INDIRA VARMA

I think for John at the start, he is running away from that. So he's not even able to defend another woman, which is also a male sort of trope thing, isn't it?

So I think that's really interesting. And then we meet Tommy, who defines aggression, male aggression. And I think John is slightly seduced by that and finds it exciting.

**What is Fiona's initial reaction to her new neighbours? She's the one that shows a bit of concern around Tommy, whereas, John's infatuated with him.**

I think Fiona is socially more at ease, just generally meeting new people, being in the restaurant business. And so the idea of meeting new neighbours is fine. Apart from the fact that they are Christians and Rebecca's the vicar, which is kind of alien to them, but the idea of a female vicar feels very Dalston, very London and they're used to all that. John is more reluctant. But I think Fiona's pushing for them to fit in and join the community. So she's the one that really pushes for that initial meet.

And when they go round to Rebecca and Tommy's for dinner. She's immediately not keen on Tommy however Rebecca she loves, who wouldn't it's Eve Myles!

**Your onscreen husband is played by Andrew Lincoln. What's it been like working with him?**

Andy and I have known each other since we were 17, we both grew up in Bath, and we met at Musical Youth Theater. He was already a member. He'd been there for ages, and I met I went there in my last year of sixth form and he was the cool, popular one, and I was on the fringes just watching everyone and going, oh, look at that cool popular one over there. Then he went to RADA and was the year above me there too, so I've essentially followed him throughout our lives. He is joy in a human form and he's probably the best number one I've ever worked with. He's a brilliant actor, intelligent and thoughtful and he works really hard, and he's got an amazing sense of story. So we're able to really sort of dissect our character's journey and our relationship in the series together.

## INTERVIEW WITH INDIRA VARMA

**You've also got Eve and Ewen as your other co-stars. How has it been working with them?**

Honestly, this has been such a happy production and we've had the best time on it ever. And me and Eve, we go back. We did *Torchwood* together, it was night shoots in Cardiff and we just laughed the whole way. And then, Ewen, I love Ewen. It's my first time working with him, but I know his daughter, he's just brilliant. And he's so kind and lovely and funny and talented and we've just had some brilliant dinners as a cast all together.

**What was your first reaction when you read David Ireland's script?**

The first time I read David Ireland's script, Andy had forewarned me that he was going to ask them to send it to me. I was so excited because I just love the dialogue and he's a playwright. I love theatre, and why do I love theatre? Because the scripts are always better. Because it's not just about the visual, it's about relationships.

It's about great dialogue, the way he observes human behaviour so brilliantly.

**This series takes place in the fictional town of Coldwater. Can you introduce us to a town and what would it be like to live there?**

So Fiona and John moved to Coldwater, this fictional town just outside Glasgow somewhere. I think it was Andy that said it's like living in a snowglobe. And that's exactly what it's like. It's slightly strange, like a little suburbia, in the middle of the countryside. Very charming and pretty.

**Why do you think audiences will enjoy this series? What do you think will shock them the most when they watch?**

I hope they'll enjoy the series for the reasons that I enjoy the series - it's bizarre. It's weird. It's absurd. I think it's original. It's full of heart and striving for betterness in relationships, in friendships, in life and, and it's got intrigue and madness in there as well.



## INTERVIEW WITH LYDIA HAMPSON & ALICE TYLER

**Can you give me a brief overview of what the series is about?**

**Lydia:** This series is about a very ordinary man, who is put in an extraordinary situation. He's going through his own existential crisis in his marriage and at the beginning of the series, we see him in a very inflammatory situation in a playground where he witnesses a violent attack. And in the sort of melee that follows, he leaves his daughter behind and then has to run back to get her. And it sort of begins his questioning as to what kind of man does that and is capable of that. And in this unravelling of his character, he and his family up sticks from London move to Scotland. And he's vulnerable to the sort of exterior forces that prey upon the weaknesses of a man unruffled and that manifests in their next door neighbour Tommy.

**What was your reaction when you read David Ireland's scripts?**

**Alice:** I think everyone's initial reaction to a David Ireland script is always surprise, delight and horror. He has an ability to get under the skin of marriage, ordinary men, ordinary women in a way that is so truthful and relatable, and then to clash it up against ideas of faith and violence and horror and weirdness and absurdity. And it's just the most unique work. And when we first read the scripts, we knew that this show was going to be very special.

**And what about this story and this world that David's created, did you think this is going to make great TV?**

**Lydia:** I think this story in particular is fascinating television, because it puts you in the heart of the protagonist. I'd say it's a roller coaster ride as well. You never know what's coming around the corner and it's pacy and propulsive and, and properly entertaining.



## INTERVIEW WITH LYDIA HAMPSON & ALICE TYLER

**John is our central character. Can you introduce John and why is he such a relatable character?**

**Lydia:** So John is an everyman, but he is on a downward spiral. And he's a bit lost in his life and in his relationships and in his career. He gave up his job to look after the family and the children. He's sort of pushing into his 40s now, and he's struggling a bit with the life that he was supposed to lead and the life that he is now leading, and how those two have veered off one another. And I think he's very relatable because everyone, I hope, feels at some point in their lives that things aren't going on the track that they thought they were. And I think to see that manifest on screen feels like, almost sort of like coming home, like, oh, that's me. I think that's why he speaks to our audiences.

**Alice:** Every man who's read the script, be they actor, director or crew member has said at some point, I am John.

**When they get to Coldwater. They have some very interesting neighbours, Tommy and Rebecca. Can you introduce us to these very bizarre neighbours?**

**Lydia:** So Tommy and Rebecca are the next door neighbours. And Rebecca is the pastor of the village, just of the town. And she is incredibly warm and empathetic and very engaging. And she's a real pillar of the community, but she also reveals in episode one that she is an atheist, which is quite a bold statement for your local pastor to make on their first meeting with you!

She's married to Tommy, who seems unusual but very pleasant and equally hypnotic, he really winds us in, but there's darkness within him. So they're a really fascinating mixture of the light and the dark of humanity.

## INTERVIEW WITH LYDIA HAMPSON & ALICE TYLER

**Could you also introduce the marriage of John, and Fiona? Where do we see their marriage at the beginning of the series?**

**Lydia:** At the beginning of the series, John and Fiona's marriage is in a kind of freefall. They've had some issues in the past, are still together but they haven't reconnected on any deep level. And so they're like two ships in the night who kind of operate alongside each other, but they've forgotten or they don't know, they, they no longer know how to connect.

**This series asks what does it mean to be a man and looks at masculinity? Can you talk about ways Coldwater explores that with our male characters?**

**Alice:** I think this show explores, skewers and subverts our ideas about masculinity. When we meet John, I think it's fair to say he's in a crisis, I think it is related to the fact that he doesn't fit within a traditional masculine box at that point in his life.

And his draw towards Tommy is in part driven by this kind of moth to a flame instinct, that has him pulled towards this symbol of a different kind of masculinity that he's sort of both afraid of and drawn to. I think a part of him wishes he could be Tommy. And by holding up these two men side by side, David really unpacks all our many misconceptions of what masculinity is.

**And how does the series explore the question of do we all have a little bit of violence within us?**

**Alice:** I think this story really speaks to the fact that we all have a little bit of violence within us. Deep down, I think that's at the heart of John's story in particular. When we meet him, he is sort of terrified of violence and has these violent impulses within him. And part of his fear is that they will come out. And I think there's a real truth in that. I think we all have a sort of dangerous edge. And that's maybe part of the reason why we love violent stories so much.

## INTERVIEW WITH LYDIA HAMPSON & ALICE TYLER

**Lydia:** I think John watching Tommy connect to that side of himself, there's a scene where they go hunting. It lights a spark in John that he's hidden in his modern liberal London life where he feels like that's being slightly snuffed out. And I think that connection with his masculinity on a more primal level is part of what sends them into this kind of folie a deux together.

**Alice:** I think it's definitely a show about rage, and that is John's rage, and it's Tommy's rage. But I think at different points we see almost all the characters express real rage, including the women. And that comes from a very animalistic place. And it feels raw and kind of inhuman, but very truthful.

**You have such a great ensemble cast...**

**Alice:** We couldn't believe how lucky we were to get Andy to play John. He is the perfect, funny, sad everyman for the role. Andy has brought so many layers of truth and depth and pain and humour and surprise to the role of John. I think he understood him on the page from the first time he read it.

And he truly has brought that character to life in a way that we almost couldn't have expected.

**Lydia:** Ewen is amazing. He is a very, sort of peace loving, gentle man, and so watching him transform into Tommy has been sort of staggering to see that performance come together. Tommy has layers, he has shades, which you totally empathise with. And shades with which you can totally see why John is drawn like a moth to a flame to him. And, and that's exactly what Ewen brought. Also, great bromance between Andy and Ewen. That, I think, has been key to making the show what it is.

**Lydia:** With Indira, we had a call with her right at the beginning of the casting process and the Fiona that she had found on the page, she then brought back to us and said, I love this woman, and I know who she is, and I know how to push those buttons. And I wonder, can I, can I press them? And we said, just go for it. And so she, along with David, found the layers which allowed Fiona to become the slightly spiky, slightly mercurial, very funny.

## INTERVIEW WITH LYDIA HAMPSON & ALICE TYLER

She has no qualms about putting John down. She feels very real as a wife and as a mother. And I think she helped all of us find the edges of Fiona in a way that made that marriage come to life.

**Alice:** Eve is amazing. Eve has just brought the most unique, fascinating flavour to Rebecca. She is warm and strange. Quite fruity. And that is, really intoxicating chemistry between her and Tommy. And we love it.

**Lydia:** She's definitely brought a side to Rebecca that I didn't know existed just because she, the tone of her voice, she'll take things up two octaves then you thought they were going to be. Or she will, you know, the way she greets other characters that, you know, John will get a huge kiss on the lips or Fiona gets a huge hug, and it's just she's so emphatic and empathetic.

**What's it been like creating the world of Coldwater?**

**Alice:** The sets for John and Fiona and Tommy's and Rebecca's houses are just amazing. We all wanted to move into them ourselves. They look beautiful and lived in, but distinctive and unusual. And they are inspired by and based on two real houses that really do sit side by side, sort of on each other's shoulders. And we love that sort of idea of voyeurism and peeping Tom-ness, I guess, that comes with that proximity between the two spaces.

**Alice:** My favourite location from the series is William's house, the therapist's house, which is on a beautiful hill overlooking Loch Lomond. The landscape around it is amazing. It's got these amazing big glass windows that look out onto it. But I loved as well the fact that we start the series there with this quite funny, strange, intimate therapy session between John and Williams.



## INTERVIEW WITH LYDIA HAMPSON & ALICE TYLER

**Why do you think audiences will enjoy the series?**

**Lydia:** I think they'll enjoy this series because it asks you the question, what are you capable of in your darkest moments? And that's quite a fun question to contemplate from the comfort of your sofa.

**Alice:** Yeah. I also hope that people will just find it really entertaining. And propulsive and pacey, and it doesn't take itself too seriously. But it also really tries to explore quite big themes with truth, and to shock and delight in equal measure. I think David's writing is as subversive and brave as it gets. And I think what I know we love about working with him is that every draft he turns in, every new episode, episode, there will always be a surprise in there that you never saw coming. And I think that's why he is the perfect writer for TV, because that's what audiences want and need.





## INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR LEE HAVEN JONES

**Can you give me a brief overview of what this series is about?**

The series is about a man called John, who is in a crisis of identity. And in an effort to escape his problems, he uproots his family and moves to a small Scottish village in the Highlands, where, unbeknownst to him, he ends up living next door to a man who has dangerous intentions.

**What initially drew you to David Ireland's scripts?**

David's scripts are incredibly compelling. There's a wonderful narrative, drive to his, to his stories. The dialog fizzes with energy. It's warm and spiky and authentic. It's also highly conceptual, in a way. It has a very strong central idea around which we find these rather fantastically drawn, eccentric characters. So it, it's, it's the full deal. It's a great, strong narrative, complex characters that you long to kind of excavate and to examine in forensic detail and dialog that just pings off the page.

**When you first read his scripts, were there any inspirations that came to mind?**

David's story seemed to inhabit the spirit of the Coen brothers, of Tarantino in many ways, Ruben Östlund, that great sort of European filmmaker. They're quite quirky eccentric stories.

**John, is our central character in the story. Who is he and what makes him such a relatable character?**

John is the beating heart of the series. And in many ways, he's an everyman. He's a man in his 40s. He has a wife, Fiona, and two children, Violet and Harry. He's painfully middle class in the way that he deals with confrontation. He gets his kicks from horror films. He's slightly jaded and fatigued in life. He's obsessed with house prices, and he's supremely aware of the march of time and, of his jaded, youthful looks.

## INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR LEE HAVEN JONES

### **Can you talk a bit about the show's themes?**

What it is to be a man is central to the premise of the series. And, we see certain kinds of men reflected in all of the characters. But I guess the one thing that defines them is how weak they are as characters too so this is a series about masculinity. But actually it's also about femininity. And what we get in the depiction of the men is contrasted beautifully in the depiction of the women. The men, by and large are, although on the face of it are strong. Nevertheless, they're all quite sort of vulnerable, hapless, feckless individuals, whereas the women in the piece are very strong and they anchor the men, in many ways.

**The series is filmed in various locations around- in and around Glasgow, but the locations make up one location, which is Coldwater, tell us about the locations.**



Yes, Coldwater is a composite of many different locations surrounding Glasgow.

And the key thing for me was to make the place as real as possible. We have to understand why John and Fiona want to live in this rather lovely village. Because they've come from London and they're in search of a new life. So it was really important that this place felt aspirational, that it was beautiful. But at the same time, it felt very real. I wanted it to feel authentic and, within our village, we do have an old part to the town, which we filmed in Dunlop, south of Glasgow. That is the heart along with the church. That's the heart of the community.

### **Was there one location you really enjoyed filming on?**

The locations that I've enjoyed filming at are those ones that sort of really give a sense of the scale to the series because television is smoke and mirrors. We're creating fiction, and many of our locations are not in the Highlands, but I guess what gives me joy is when we have been to Glen Fruin or to Loch Lomond, that gives a real sense of what John and Fiona had in their mind's eye when they were thinking about uprooting their family from London and moving to the Scottish Highlands.



## INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR LEE HAVEN JONES

**When you were filming, what was one thing about the story that you really wanted to make sure made it across the screen to audiences?**

I guess the one thing I would like audiences to take is that it's a very entertaining, compelling piece of storytelling. I guess in terms of a moral lesson, the lesson is that you really can't run away from your problems. You can run, but you can't hide.

**And what's the one thing you think will shock audiences when they watch it?**

The one thing that will shock audiences is how bonkers it is. I mean, it's all, it's all in David Ireland's writing. He has a wonderfully, transgressive, kind of subversive voice that I'm really excited to be bringing to a mass audience.

## SERIES OVERVIEW

Andrew Lincoln makes his long-awaited return to British drama in this twisted thriller about an ordinary man who finds himself in an extraordinary situation.

John (Lincoln) secretly rages at his life as a middle-aged, stay-at-home dad. When his failure to intervene in a violent confrontation in a city playground brings his identity crisis to a head, John moves his family to the rural idyll of Coldwater. On arrival, he is befriended by neighbour Tommy (Bremner), a charming, confident pillar of the community. John is impressed by Tommy. However, he is blissfully unaware that Tommy is harbouring horrifying secrets.

When John's long-repressed rage finally explodes with disastrous results, he finds himself unexpectedly indebted to his new friend. But how long will it take for him to figure out just how dangerous Tommy really is?

The six-part series is produced by award-winning production company SISTER (*Chernobyl*, *Black Doves*, *This is Going to Hurt*, *Eric*).



# SYNOPSIS

## Episode one

After witnessing a violent incident in a play park in London, John moves with his wife Fiona and their kids to the rural Scottish idyll of Coldwater. He soon meets his new neighbour Tommy, husband of local pastor Rebecca, and they become fast friends. But when John's long-repressed rage comes to a head with disastrous results, he soon finds himself unexpectedly indebted to his new friend.

## Episode two

John, shaken to his core after the events of the previous night, struggles to cope with his guilt. But a bizarre hunting trip with Tommy shifts his perspective. Tommy takes John under his wing and deepens his dark influence over him during a chaotic night of drinking, and John begins to embrace life in his new home, even starting an ill-advised flirtation with local barkeep, Catriona. Meanwhile, Fiona grows increasingly uncomfortable with their new life in Coldwater, sensing something off about Tommy. Unbeknownst to her and John, Tommy's secrets run more deeply than they could ever have imagined.

## Episode three

Tensions rise in Coldwater as John and Fiona attend a solemn funeral of a beloved local resident, before hosting old friends from London. Tommy and Rebecca are thrown into a panic when they discover that their son Cameron has gone missing. John and Fiona attempt to maintain the appearance of a contented life in front of their friends but old wounds resurface – and it's not long before Tommy shows up to their dinner unannounced to recruit John into his desperate search party, an intense, disturbing experience that leaves John questioning his association with Tommy.



# SYNOPSIS

## Episode four

John, full of regret over his friendship with Tommy, attempts to voice his suspicions to Fiona, who feels she needs space from John. She soon learns more than she bargained for when Catriona arrives to deliver a stark warning about Tommy. As Tommy's actions take an ever more sinister turn, he becomes haunted by past deeds. Rebecca struggles to allay Cameron and Moira-Jane's concerns about the increasingly bizarre events in Coldwater. Fiona's frustrations with John reach boiling point, ending in a confrontation with Tommy that spirals dangerously out of control and leads to a startling confession.

## Episode five

Fiona reconsiders her marriage to John when some unsettling truths come to light. John steels himself to face the consequences for his actions but news of another death in Coldwater spreads through the village like wildfire, throwing everything into doubt for him. The mood in the village grows fraught as more and more suspicion falls on John. At a prayer meeting meant to foster healing, a frightening attack by masked assailants leaves John and Fiona feeling increasingly isolated. As the pressure mounts, unexpected evidence surfaces, and John and Fiona realise the sinister truth about Tommy.

## Episode six

Keen to expose the truth about Tommy, John and Fiona invite him and Rebecca to lunch. What starts as a tense meal turns into a dangerous confrontation, as Tommy shows John who he really is behind closed doors. Fiona and Rebecca face a real test of their friendship when Fiona finally confronts Rebecca with all her suspicions about Tommy. As all Tommy's secrets are revealed, Moira-Jane and Cameron are forced to rethink their entire lives. John soon finds himself caught in a perilous game of life and death with the man he once called his friend, where it is kill or be killed.







## CAST CREDITS

JOHN .....	ANDREW LINCOLN
TOMMY.....	EWEN BREMNER
FIONA.....	INDIRA VARMA
REBECCA .....	EVE MYLES
CAMERON .....	SAMUEL BOTTOMLEY
MOIRA-JANE .....	ABIGAIL LAWRIE
WILLIAMS.....	JONATHAN WATSON
CATRIONA.....	LOIS CHIMIMBA
ANGUS .....	LORN MACDONALD
BOBBY .....	GREG HEMPHILL
MALKY.....	SANJEEV KOHLI
BRICK .....	DYLAN BLORE
NATHAN .....	GILLY GILCHRIST
KELLY .....	CARLA LANGLEY

## CAST CREDITS

ANGRY DAD.....WILL AUSTIN  
DONOVAN.....NUHAZET DIAZ CANO  
MAGGIE.....GABRIEL QUIGLEY  
OLD WOMAN.....ANNA HEPBURN  
PIPPA.....SACHARISSA CLAXTON  
JEZ.....CHRISTOPHER COLQUHOUN  
THERAPIST.....LOUISE LUDGATE



## PRODUCTION CREDITS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS .....JANE FEATHERSTONE  
.....CHRIS FRY  
.....LYDIA HAMPSON  
.....ALICE TYLER  
WRITER.....DAVID IRELAND  
DIRECTORS.....LEE HAVEN JONES  
.....ANDREW CUMMING  
PRODUCER.....BRIAN COFFEY  
LINE PRODUCER.....ANNA PURKIS  
DOP BLOCK 1.....BRYAN GAVIGAN  
DOP BLOCK 2.....ALFIE BIDDLE  
PRODUCTION MANAGER.....LORNA FERGUSON  
PRODUCTION DESIGNER.....TOM SAYER  
First AD BLOCK 1.....WENDY ASHMAN  
First AD BLOCK 2.....SUSAN CLARK

## PRODUCTION CREDITS

CASTING DIRECTOR.....DAN JACKSON  
SCRIPT EDITOR.....PELUMI AKINYEMI  
COSTUME DESIGNER.....KATHRYN DONALDSON  
HAIR & MAKE UP DESIGNER.....MAXINE DALLAS  
LOCATION MANAGER.....BEN O'FARRELL  
EDITORS.....OLIVER PARKER  
.....RACHEL ERSKINE  
.....NIKKI MCCHRISTIE  
PROPS MASTER.....DAVID MACLEOD  
SOUND RECORDIST.....CHRIS CAMPION

