

Perfect Strangers at High Speed

Collision

On MASTERPIECE Contemporary

Sundays, November 15 and November 22, 2009 at 9pm ET on PBS
hosted by David Tennant

At 5:57 on a Friday afternoon, a car suddenly swerves on a superhighway leading into London. In the resulting pileup, fate entangles the lives of a remarkable group of strangers, whose loves, intrigues, crimes, and secrets test the skill of a dedicated team of police investigators. MASTERPIECE Contemporary presents a tense and suspenseful story about the hidden drama that lurks inside a random group of vehicles, on *Collision*, airing in two parts Sundays, November 15, 9 to 10:30 pm, and November 22, 9 to 10pm on PBS (check local listings).

Smuggling, murder, and international conspiracy are just some of the pieces in the jigsaw puzzle that emerge from the wreckage—along with injustice, betrayal, and dashed hopes, plus a surprising twist that shows how a trivial incident can snowball into disaster.

Written by Anthony Horowitz, creator of MASTERPIECE's acclaimed *Foyle's War*, *Collision* stars Douglas Henshall (*Primeval*) as Detective Inspector John Tolin, who is called in to make sense of what happened in a six-vehicle collision that leaves two immediately dead, others severely injured, and one driver mysteriously missing. Tolin's obsession with the case is fueled by a personal tragedy: the death of his wife and crippling of his daughter in a road accident a year earlier.

Coincidentally, Tolin is paired with his estranged former lover, Senior Investigating Officer Ann Stallwood (Kate Ashfield, *Poirot*). Together the two must overcome their troubled love affair and get to the bottom of what happened on England's A12 expressway and why. Above all, they must confront allegations that police misconduct led to the smash-up.

Taking just seconds, the accident starts when Sidney Norris (David Bamber, *Valkyrie*) inexplicably veers into the adjacent lane, causing Karen Donnelly (Claire Rushbrook, *Doctor Who*) to crash into him. Sidney is a piano teacher with a secret fetish that he hides from all except a close friend. Karen is on her way to a rendezvous with a journalist to deliver a purloined corporate document with explosive implications.

Immediately behind, a furniture van driven by Danny Rampton (Dean Lennox Kelly, *Cranford*) brakes and skids into the two cars, leaving the ground and vaulting into the oncoming lanes. Having just picked up a mysterious contraband cargo in Holland, Danny flees the scene as soon as he comes to, before emergency responders can interview him.

Meanwhile, a chauffeur-driven car carrying wealthy property developer Richard Reeves (Paul McGann, *Our Mutual Friend*) plows into Sidney and Karen's cars, followed by Brian Edwards (Phil Davis, *Bleak House*) in a station wagon, with his mother-in-law (Sylvia Syms, *The Queen*) in the passenger seat.

And on the other side of the road, Gareth Clay (Anwar Lynch) is speeding at 83 mph with his fiancée, Alice Jackson (Lenora Crichlow), when he notices a pursuing police car in the rear-view mirror. Distracted, he misses the unfolding accident ahead and smashes into Danny's upended van. The police car screeches to a halt, barely avoiding the mayhem.

With blood and adrenaline flowing, the action has only just begun. The search for Danny will turn up a horrific scheme. Karen will find herself trapped in a nightmare of intrigue. Richard will pursue an ill-advised romance with one of his rescuers. Brian will be investigated for murder. Gareth will face scrutiny over his actions in the split second before the crash. And Tolin and Ann will have their wits—and relationship—tested in ways they never could have imagined.

Collision is a coproduction of Greenlit Collision Ltd. in association with Ingenious Broadcasting and WGBH Boston. It is written by Anthony Horowitz (*Foyle's War*) and Michael A. Walker and directed by Marc Evens. The producers are Jill Green and Eve Gutierrez. The executive producer is Neil Zeiger. David Tennant is the host of MASTERPIECE Contemporary.

MASTERPIECE has been presented on PBS by WGBH since 1971. Rebecca Eaton is executive producer. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting and public television viewers provide funding for MASTERPIECE.

pbs.org/masterpiece

Online press materials available at **pbs.org/pressroom** and **pressroom.wgbh.org**

For a limited time beginning November 16, *Collision* will be available to view online at **pbs.org/masterpiece**.

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