



## **Press Release**

### **RAYMOND FINCHER – MYSTERY MAN!** **Backstage Friday October 6**

Raymond Fincher (Jonathan Taylor) goes Backstage on Friday October 6 to introduce himself as the anonymous benefactor of the extensive, expensive and pioneering surgery procedure that has enabled music student, Gyles Westcott (Ryan Laatz), to walk again.

Gyles' self-penned, cathartic story about his unfortunate past was poignant enough to be published in a newspaper. It was after reading it that Jonathan decided to reveal himself. Raymond has lost a son who had similar experiences to Gyles. As a father, he didn't pick up the warning signals, so it was too late to intervene. Since the tragedy, the architect has lived as a recluse with deep regrets and painful memories.

That's his story. Or is it? Just who is Raymond Fincher, and why is he increasingly involving himself in Gyles' life? That there is more to the man than meets the eye will become obvious. And why does this stranger seem so familiar to Gyles?

Jonathan Taylor received a Naledi Award nomination for Best Supporting Actor for his role of Monsieur Firmin, the manager of the Paris Opera House, in the South African theatre production of The Phantom of the Opera. He spent a year touring the Far East in the same role. A singer, dancer, pianist and guitarist, Jonathan, has appeared in straight stage productions (6 Degrees of Separation), comedy shows (Jo'Burg Follies), and musical theatre, (Grease, Godspell and Joseph).

His first screen appearance was in the film, Killer Force, starring Christopher Lee, Peter Fonda, and OJ Simpson. Since then he has appeared in numerous international movies including, The Red Phone, in which he appears with Joe Penny, Arnold Vosloo, Michael Ironside and Ben Cross. His South African TV credits include various soapies, dramas and comedy. Jonathan's CV lists his special skills as equestrian; scuba diving; parachuting; weapons handling and advanced driving.

Gyles is going to need all the support he can get. He's alienated friends and staff at Vulindlela Arts College. A kickboxing fanatic, Gyles was taking, and dealing in, steroids. He's been expelled from campus. He's estranged from his father (who took exception to his son fathering a child with the former head of the dance department, who has since fled to London with baby Hamilton). He has terrified his girlfriend, Melissa (Mari Michael) with his verbal and physical assaults, and acts of vandalism (although he's trying to redeem himself there). He's lied, cheated, threatened, and blackmailed. A fight with his trainer, Mike Jennings (David Dukas), led to the dislocation of his spine that resulted in paralysis of his legs.

Now Gyles will experience a series of hallucinations and suppressed childhood memories. On delving into his past, he will find out that there was mental illness in his family; that he had a clinically depressive mother (she died when he was young) who was addicted to prescribed medication and suffered physical abuse from his father. He will discover that his mother committed suicide. He will suffer a nervous breakdown. And learn many truths.

Tip off: Look out for an absolutely astonishing episode of this storyline on Monday October 9.

Yes! All of life's little surprises: Backstage, weekdays, 6.30pm

For photos of Jonathan, or photos of Jonathan with Ryan, please contact:

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