



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Scandal!**

### **DONNA HARDY - NEW QUEEN OF SUBTERFUGE!**

**TX: Thursday February 25**

**Mondays to Thursdays, 7.30pm**

Oh, how heartless Donna Hardy, newly appointed Acting CEO of NZH, will amuse herself playing puppets in her upcoming personal and professional power games.

She has sweeping plans to revamp, re-brand, and reposition the once prestigious publishing company that is now in crisis – but her put-into-immediate-effect recovery strategies will cause major upheaval and distress for all - and Donna will lap that up with relish.

The currently suspended CEO, Daniel Nyathi (Sello Maake ka Ncube) has just been arrested for the murder of his wealthy ex-wife, Leticia. Nervous board members of Narpub - the company that his current wife Nadia (Sorisha Naidoo) inherited from her mother and which recently merged with NZH – desperately want to rectify negative public perception, block the exodus of advertisers, and stop the savage speculation stirred by rivals.

That Daniel is in custody has made sensational headlines...as did the recent leading stories concerning the murder – via car bomb - of the company's former financial officer, Abigail Rodriguez-Martins... the heroin habit of his son Mangi (Kagiso Modupe)...the fact that Nadia has suddenly gone mad.

So one can understand why the board has insisted an impartial party be hired for an interim period to steer the ailing company through these unsettling, but always interesting, times.

Fast-track troubleshooter Donna appears to be the person for the job: she's self-made and smart; she's a multi-award winning businesswoman; she's glamorous with impeccable style and taste.

However, her colossal career portfolio and private life contain far more secrets than those of any government: Donna (Louise Barnes) is the malignant mistress of psychological manipulation and ploys.

Eddie (Sandy Mokwena), old school editor of the weekly intellectual newspaper, The Voice, will fear for his job as she push-proposes the flash intro of New Media technology – and a name change - to capture the youth market; the volatile editor of gloss gossip mag Scandal, Shakira (Dawn Matthews), will - after being seriously insulted - feel obligated to retaliate; sexy Marketing and Sales Director, Alex (Shona Ferguson) will be hit on by Donna - while she industriously works on becoming the new best friend of his wife, shareholder and HR Manager Mo (Nthathi Moshesh).

Rumours will be rife, in this recession, re the general retrenchment of staff and the closing of certain NZH publications...never mind that going, going, gone hit list of local and international bureaus.

And poor, poor Mangi will now become Donna's personal assistant – and pay private penance (at horrific cost) for being Daniel Nyathi's (previously) privileged son.

Ask yourself this: what is Donna's true agenda?

Born in Natal, Louise graduated from Wits University in 2006 with a BA Honours degree in Dramatic Art, First Class.

It was during her final year of study that she landed her first professional role - in the SABC TV miniseries, Where Angels Tread. She has since worked in theatre and both local and international television and film: from Egoli, 7de Laan, and Binnelanders to productions that include the South

African/Canadian co-production, "Jozi H", and most recently, a feature film with Billy Zane, "Surviving Evil", and "The Sinking of the Laconia", a BBC miniseries with Franka Potente and Brian Cox.

Louise, 35 who lives in Johannesburg with her husband and 14-month-old daughter, once co-owned a health studio after training in the USA as an instructor of Bikram yoga. She is also a voice over artist and can be seen in local and international commercials.

Her favourite holiday destination is Thailand. "It's a seriously sexy place, but I haven't been back since the Tsunami in which I lost friends." Louise doesn't believe in harbouring guilty pleasures - everything in moderation.

She hates injustice and cruelty of any kind: "I love dissecting and analysing human nature. That's why I act." She describes Donna as, "hard to read."

Louise's secret ambition is to be a trapeze artist.