



Inside my casebook

The newly-knighted star of *Wallander* tells us of his shock at receiving the honour *and* opens the Swedish detective's files...

NEW WALLANDER
Sunday BBC1

T*V Times* meets a clearly chuffed Sir Kenneth Branagh just a few days after he's been knighted. So, we wonder, how do you find out you're being named in the Queen's Birthday Honours List? 'A nice man from the Cabinet Office writes to you and the letter's so official that you're terrified you've committed some kind of super-parking offence,' he laughs. 'Then you look a bit more

carefully and you realise that you're having this great privilege visited on you.' Happy and relaxed, the 51-year-old is far removed from Insp Kurt Wallander, the melancholic Swedish detective he revisits this week in the first of three new feature-length stories. Based on the award-winning crime novels by Henning Mankell, Kenneth's portrayal has won over fans because he perfectly inhabits a man who seems to have the weight of the world on his tense shoulders. Our one tiny criticism

is that the actor-director looks a bit too healthy for a cop who survives on pizzas, mouldy cheese, red wine and litres of coffee. 'I try to look a bit rougher for him,' says Kenneth with a wry smile. 'But I suppose my attitude to it is that, by the end of a day playing Wallander, I always feel internally beaten up. 'I remember a friend of mine saying to me, "Oh my God, why do you want to play him?". I went, "What do you mean?". And he replied, "Well, he eats so badly!"'

To give us an exclusive taste of what's in store, here Kenneth chooses his key moments from the three stories, *An Event in Autumn*, *The Dogs of Riga* and *Before the Frost...* DAVID HOLLINGSWORTH

Wallander is previewed on pages 42-43

6 The letter's so official that you're terrified you've committed some kind of super-parking offence! 9

Sir Kenneth Branagh on his title

EPISODE 1



HITTING A BRICK WALL
With right-hand woman Ann-Britt (Sarah Smart)

Deadly decision

'This is an apparently innocuous moment from the opening episode, *An Event in Autumn*, just before Wallander and his police partner Ann-Britt's lives change for ever. It's a moment where you really wish they'd made a different decision. 'Ann-Britt [played by Sarah Smart] is an incredibly talented detective and a good friend of Wallander's because she sees through his personal idiosyncrasies. 'She understands him in a way that few people can and they have a very healthy relationship. 'They're seen here peering into a scrapyard which they have to enter illegally because they strongly suspect the owner of being a murderer...'

Death and decor

'The design of his office is Swedish retro, with strong graphic patterns and pre-IKEA furniture. 'There's a kind of domestic quality to it that's true of a lot of Swedish police stations that I've been to during filming and yet, on the wall, there are pictures from our cases. 'The Swedish clarity, cleanliness and efficiency is polluted in a way by the darkness of the cases themselves.'



HOME, SWEDEN HOME
The office has a cosy feel

EPISODE 1



LOVE INTEREST
Vanja (Saskia Reeves) tests her man

EPISODE 1

New beginning?

'This is Vanja [Saskia Reeves], who's in a relationship with Wallander. Like him, she's a damaged individual who has a lot of history and a young son. 'They've taken the decision to live together as a family in a farmhouse and the story of the first episode is them testing how solid their new relationship is while some terribly dark events occur. 'Vanja won't let him be a passenger in the relationship and she wants him to change. And it's partly about whether Wallander can, in fact, ever change.'

RIGA MORTIS

A death takes the cop to Latvia



I spy trouble

'This is the detective trying to make himself anonymous in Riga on a tram. There's almost a Jason Bourne quality to it and there's a real sense of paranoia.'

'A real issue in this is who he is and isn't able to trust. This is particularly true of the wife of the major, whose death at the beginning of the episode sends him to Riga in the first place. So it allows us to go through this very pictorially-striking town of trams, old KGB buildings and modern high rises. It has a really distinctive Eastern European flavour.'

EPISODE 2

The Iron Curtain

'We filmed in Latvia for the second story, *The Dogs of Riga*. An investigation takes Wallander to Riga, Latvia's capital. Unusually, it drags him into a world of espionage. It's updated but is very much the world of the Iron Curtain, where former secret police officers are involved in the crime and there's a sense of being spied upon.'

HIDE AND SEEK

Try as he might, he looks furtive

EPISODE 2



FRIEND IN NEED

Lindsay Duncan plays an old pal

EPISODE 3

An important guest

'Lindsay Duncan guests as Monika, an old friend of Wallander's. She's the mother of the girl who goes missing in *Before the Frost*. Lindsay plays the character brilliantly and was an absolute joy to act opposite. I'd never worked with her before and have always admired her from afar. This was a real treat and I also think she looks quite Swedish!'

8 July **SUNDAY** **Times** TV

**Pick
of the
Day**

Kenneth Branagh
plays the weary
Wallander

Crime Drama 9.00pm, **BBC1**

**A fresh start for the
Swedish detective is
soon tainted by murder**

NEW Kenneth Branagh is arguably our finest Shakespearean actor and he brings a sense of the playwright's great tragedies to his portrayal of Wallander. For once, however, things are looking bright for the Swedish detective as he starts a new life with his girlfriend and her son in a remote farmhouse. But you know Wallander's doomed and their cosy world is shattered when he discovers a body in the garden. Is this connected to the suspicious death of a young woman on a ferry? In this superbly taut if relentlessly grim tale, Wallander risks everything, including a colleague's life. This is TV drama of the highest quality. ★★★★★ *DH*

Inside my casebook: see page 10



Sarah Smart as
sidekick Ann-
Britt Hoglund

Wallander

7-13 July 2012

Great for
Freeview
sky

WALLANDER
Kenneth Branagh
on-set exclusive

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