

# DOCTOR TO THE DEAD

Written by: James  
M. Russel

TV Documentary Series – 8 x 54 min Episodes  
Co-production opportunities: Canada / South Africa

## LOGLINE

Dr. D, a veteran South African forensic pathologist, struggles to maintain her sanity and professional demeanour while living with the threat of death at the hands of a violent gang leader who must silence her before she reveals that he killed his boss.

## PILOT EPISODE:

The night air blanketing this Johannesburg slum is heavy from the oppressive humidity and a thick layer of rubbish-fire smoke.

MAO, 25, leader of the J-Squad gang, pauses then grimaces as he pulls a blood-covered, steak knife out of his stomach then resumes running through the maze of sheet metal and scrap wood-lined paths before being shot dead by an unknown assailant.

DR. MINA VAN SCHOOR, ('Dr. D'), 54, a Forensic Pathologist, is asleep in bed when the tenacious buzz of her cell phone drags her awake. BENNIE, a former stunt driver, pulls up to her front door driving an armoured passenger car decked out with an array of devices designed to foil professional kidnappers and garden-variety thieves.

Dr. D arrives at her destination to find herself in the middle of an armed standoff between two gangs and discovers that she must conduct an autopsy on Mao to determine the time of death, cause of death, and crime scene location in order to prevent a gang war.

Dr. D performs the autopsy skillfully and thoroughly despite having to improvise by using garden tools and kitchen implements. Dr. D determines that Mao's girlfriend stabbed and shot Mao but also discovers, but does not reveal, that the second gunshot, and cause of death, was from the pistol of CHIN, his second in command.

Chin, realises that Dr. D knows that it was his shot that killed Mao. He and Dr. D lock eyes for a moment before she climbs back into her car and Bennie drives away.

The next morning, Dr. D arrives at her laboratory and greets her staff: **CHARLIZE**, 24, a brainiac; **MURRAY**, her soil specialist; **TADALA**, a disabled, entomology student and **TIPS and TOPP**, two indigenous, identical twins.

In a dark alley, Chin hands an unseen, black leather gloved man, a thick roll of money and a photo of Dr. D.

