



EXCLUSIVE PICTURES AND INTERVIEWS

'BAD GIRLS' CLAIRE KING AND NICOLE FARADAY TALK OF THEIR CONTRASTING ROLES AND EXCITING FUTURE PLANS

they say opposites attract. In the case of *Bad Girls* characters Karen Betts and Snowball Merriman, nothing could be further from the truth. Karen, played

and turned her into a hate figure. She and Karen have been sworn enemies since it was revealed they slept with the same man. This vendetta reaches a

forces again for an exclusive photo shoot for HELLO! and to talk about their roles and their lives.

Claire King was once known as one of

scenario of being in another long-run series, says Claire, who will be 40 in June. She felt right to go. Having taken the plunge to leave *EastEnders*, it didn't



'In episode two, I end up in the boot of the car at gunpoint, all thanks to Nicole here!'

retaliation over the bombing. "Sometimes I had to have the scar reapplied twice a day by make-up as I got so hot it melted!" says Nicole.

She found the kidnap scenes exciting to film. "It's all to do with Ritchie [the son of inmate Yvonne Atkins], who Snowball adores. She's really down in this series but is still focused on getting out of Larkhall and being with her true love. Her love for him is her one redeeming feature."

Nicole lives in Greenwich with her long-time boyfriend, a fellow actor. "He's been very supportive and proud of me with these two roles. We open my fan mail and he reads out all the funny letters," she says.

Nicole's seaside childhood was idyllic, and she returns there as often as possible. She has a younger brother and sister and says, as the eldest, she still feels responsible for them. "I hope I'm a nice older sister. We speak all the time on the phone and are very close as a family."

Despite starting in two of TV's top shows, Nicole's life hasn't changed much. "I live in the same flat - although I'm considering buying a house in Dorset - and I have the same friends and spend the same amount of money. The difference is I can now afford it! I do take more taxis now and feel less guilty about it but that's the only change."

She freely admits to being star-struck. "Meeting people like Stephanie Beacham and Amanda Barrie - both of whom are now in *Bad Girls* - is incredible. Being in the same programmes as them is exciting because they're such icons."

She relishes the idea of being a big star herself. "I'd love to be a star and have all that glitterati thing. I'm finding it all really exciting and hope it carries on. I've loved doing this shoot today. Who wouldn't? Having your hair and make-up done and being made to look fabulous - it's terrific."

Her roots are very much in musical theatre and her first love is singing. Recently, she was able to combine both singing and her *Bad Girls* job when she took part in workshops for the proposed *Bad Girls* musical. "I played Shell Dockley, Debrah Stephenson's role in the series. It was weird because I'd done some scenes with Debrah as Snowball. I loved doing the musical. It's still in the early stages but I'd love to do it in the West End if it came to that."

She wouldn't mind having another shot at Dr Heather Lincoln, either. "It was a shame she was a bit of a bad doctor. Maybe she could improve and come back, maybe go into *Holly City* where they didn't know she was so bad before!"

Once a bad girl...

...), 40 in June, is leaving *Bad Girls* to spend more time with her husband and ex-co-star, *Emmerdale*'s Peter ...y, Nicole, 26, who also starred in *Casualty*, is hoping to appear in a musical stage version of *Bad Girls*

...d. "Not seeing Peter was a big ...g factor. I get to Harrogate from ...n at nearly midnight on Friday ...ve to be back on Sunday after- ...-having two nights together out of ...n't enough. Thank God he's in ...iness and understands, other- ...ould be a nightmare." ...ouple will soon be able to spend ...of time together as Peter is leaving ...ate later this year. "He has already ...ffered parts in theatre - which, ...lly, could mean we'll be apart ...s Claire.

...hile, the actress has had lots ...er teeth into with the kidnap ...e. "In episode two, I end up in a ...t at gunpoint, all thanks to Nicole ...he laughs.

...Girls producers are keeping a ...uarded secret exactly how they'll ...t Claire's character. But they will ...hat it's not during the kidnap. ...an bet Jim Fenner, her ex-lover ...al, will have something to do with ...ears.

Claire may want to relish time at her and Peter's country home, where they also own a stud farm, but the work is already piling in. "I've done two episodes of *Doctors* for the BBC and am currently filming *Dad's Army* and *Pascoe* in Scarborough and Birmingham. I've had an ongoing project with ITV which I hope will go into development at Christmas. I must say, I'd like a job in Yorkshire or Manchester for a while, though."

Even though she's made her name as a TV glamour girl, the prospect of hitting 40 doesn't faze her. "Everything has moved on a decade," says Claire. "Your forties are now your thirties. Women are looking better. I'm really not bothered - getting older is part of life. I certainly couldn't be bothered with Botox. I wouldn't do it because I've seen people who do and they can't move their faces. As an actress, that's the weirdest thing as you're really limiting yourself."

"I feel the same about false boobs. They look false and odd. I don't know many men who think they're great."

Whatever the future holds, Claire's optimistic. "I've got lots of good things ahead. I've never plotted out my life. I'm more a person who waits to see what comes along, really."

Nicole Faraday, a doctor's daughter from Dorset, wanted to act from the age of five. "Mum's a nurse, so both my parents were worried about me going into a profession where there was so much unemployment. They wouldn't let me go to drama college until I'd got A-levels. I had to apply to university, just in case," says Nicole, 26.

Her parents' fears were unfounded as, since she graduated from Guildford Drama College in 1996, she has hardly been out of work. Her big break came last year when not only was she offered the role of Snowball in *Bad Girls* but also that of Dr Heather Lincoln in *Casualty*. Naturally, her parents were thrilled. "They've watched *Casualty* since the beginning and were delighted I was in it," she says.

Whereas Dr Lincoln was newly





It's a far cry from Larkhall prison