= Donna Jackson =

Donna Jackson is a fictional character from the BBC medical drama Holby City , played by actress Jaye Jacobs . She appeared in the programme from its sixth series in 2004 , to its thirteenth in 2011 . Donna entered the series as a staff nurse , characterised as a wild @-@ child with a chaotic personal life . During her tenure , she grew to take her work more seriously , becoming a ward sister and accepting more personal responsibilities by adopting her half @-@ niece Mia (Jada Wallace @-@ Mitchell) . A tart with a heart character , Donna had many romantic liaisons with her colleagues , including a one @-@ night stand with midwife Mickie Hendrie (Kelly Adams) . She ultimately fell in love with agency nurse Keiran Callaghan (Barry Sloane) , and departed to be with him after he was injured in Afghanistan as part of the Territorial Army .

Jacobs ' casting was chronicled in the documentary Making It at Holby . She made appearances as Donna in both Holby City 's sister show Casualty , and two crossover editions of the programmes , broadcast as Casualty @ Holby City . After seven years , Jacobs resigned from Holby City in order to pursue new projects . Donna 's relationship with her terminally ill father Derek (Clarke Peters) attracted praise from critics . Her affair with married consultant Michael Spence (Hari Dhillon) proved less popular , with several critics opining that Donna deserved better treatment . She was named " Best Emerging Talent " at the 2005 Screen Nation Awards for her portrayal of Donna , and was nominated for two further awards while part of the series .

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= = Storylines = =
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Donna arrives at Holby City Hospital as a staff nurse on the general surgery ward , making a poor first impression by being disorganised and insolent . Mistakenly believing that living with her superior will ensure her an easy time at work , Donna invites herself to move in with nurse Lisa Fox (Luisa Bradshaw @-@ White) . The two have a strained relationship : within weeks , Donna is evicted for falling behind on her rent , and when she is later allowed to move back in , she lets bailiffs take Lisa 's possessions after failing to keep up her own loan repayments . Forced to run a shift in charge of the hospital 's Acute Assessment Unit as recompense , Donna struggles to manage and learns a new respect for Lisa . During this period , Donna has a friendship with midwife Mickie Hendrie (Kelly Adams) . Mickie is questioning her sexuality , and the two have sex while drunk . Mickie is disappointed when Donna states that it was just a one @-@ night stand , but they are able to reconcile their friendship . When the general surgery ward is downsized , Donna is forced to reapply for her job . Although she gives a good interview and impresses Lisa , other candidates have more experience , so she is unable to retain her position and has to work as a bank nurse .

Following a short @-@ lived relationship with physiotherapist Justin Fuller (Ben Richards), Donna moves on to date hospital manager Bradley Hume (Scott Adkins). Their relationship is terminated by the discovery that Bradley has been running a pharmaceutical scam, resulting in the death of one of Donna 's patients due to a morphine overdose . After entering into a scratchcard syndicate at work, Donna wins £ 20 @,@ 000 . She refuses to share her winnings with the others and resigns from her job, making plans to travel to Australia . On her last day, a patient with bi @-@ polar disorder steals and re @-@ distributes her money . Donna misses her flight, and is forced to remain in Holby . She goes on to begin an affair with consultant general surgeon Michael Spence (Hari Dhillon), despite the fact he is married . When Michael 's wife Annalese (Anna @-@ Louise Plowman) begins working at the hospital as a locum anaesthetist, she suspects that Michael has been unfaithful to her and confronts Donna, who confesses the affair and apologises profusely .

Donna is shocked when her estranged father Derek (Clarke Peters) is admitted to the hospital and diagnosed with cancer . He dies soon thereafter , and when dealing with his effects , Donna learns that he unknowingly fathered another daughter . Though her half @-@ sister is recently deceased , Donna meets her half @-@ niece Mia (Jada Wallace @-@ Mitchell) , who is being raised by her

grandmother , Patti (Barbara Drennan) . Within weeks , Patti also dies , and Donna decides to adopt Mia . She and her friend Maria (Phoebe Thomas) compete for a ward sister position on the general surgery ward . Although Maria is the successful applicant , she realises that Donna needs the job in order to support Mia , and withdraws her candidacy so Donna is appointed sister . Donna falls in love with agency nurse Kieran Callaghan (Barry Sloane) , and is devastated when he is called to serve in Afghanistan with the Territorial Army (TA) . Kieran asks her to marry him , but Donna refuses , terminating their relationship with the intention of giving Mia stability . When Kieran is injured by an improvised explosive device (IED) , Donna reconsiders , supporting him through the amputation of his leg . Upon learning that he will be transferred to a rehabilitation unit in Liverpool , Donna resigns in order to move there with him .

= = = Casualty @ Holby City; Casualty = = =

Donna has appeared in two editions of Casualty @ Holby City? crossovers with Holby City 's sister show Casualty, which is set in the hospital 's emergency department (ED). In the first such crossover, originally broadcast in December 2004, Donna works alongside ED staff members when a fuel tanker crashes into the hospital. She reappears in the fourth edition of Casualty @ Holby City, originally broadcast in December 2005, when she is involved in a car crash en route to the staff Christmas party. She and paramedic Paul "Woody" Joyner (Will Thorp) then inadvertently cause a tunnel to collapse while trying to rescue a trapped baby. In 2010, Donna appeared in Casualty itself, for the launch of the show 's twenty @-@ fifth series. She was included in the episode at the bequest of its writer, Mark Cately. Casualty 's series producer Oliver Kent deemed her "hilariously funny" and "one of Holby 's best characters". During the episode, the ED staff work through the aftermath of a school shooting. Jacobs explained that Donna finds the shift difficult and is "really quite scared", as she is used to working with routine rather than emergency patients. In contrast to her typical disorganisation and laziness, Donna is forced to work hard and "put herself on the line" to keep up with the other staff members.

= = Development = =

= = = Casting and characterisation = = =

Jacobs was cast as Donna immediately after leaving drama school , and considers herself "completely blessed "for having won the role . She was cast alongside fellow series six newcomer Kelly Adams , as midwife Mickie Hendrie . A BBC documentary entitled Making It at Holby chronicled their casting process , which entailed seven weeks of auditions , including group workshops to allow the series producers to gauge candidates 'personalities . Adams originally auditioned as Donna , however the casting directors felt that she would be better suited to Mickie , the quieter character , and "mild mannered "counterpart to Donna 's "sassy staff nurse ". She and Jacobs were paired together during a three @-@ hour workshop , and the producers detected an "instant spark "between them , leading to their dual casting . Following her successful audition , Jacobs was mentored by actress Jan Pearson , who played ward sister Kath Fox .

Jacobs characterised Donna as " a working class tart " . Upon her arrival in the programme , Donna was said to be a recent college graduate . Lacking career ambition , she selected nursing as the most exciting role available to her , hoping to meet a wealthy surgeon . The BBC stated that , despite her lack of ambition , Donna was likely to succeed on her chosen career path due to her propensity to " land on her feet " . On the series ' official website , Donna was described as a party girl with a " wild @-@ child reputation " . Her negative characteristics included being easily led and materialistic , easily bored , and " outspoken , stubborn and lazy " . The website also highlighted her determination to " live life to the full " , her fun @-@ loving and straight @-@ talking nature , bravery , honesty and loyalty , and the fact that " her heart 's in the right place . "

Donna 's costume initially involved short skirts, tight @-@ fitting tops, multi @-@ coloured hair

extensions and a nose @-@ stud . Jacobs , who affected a Bristolian accent for the role , commented that Donna had " no sense of what she should keep covered up . " A size 12 , Jacobs was not pressured to lose weight for the role , and considered Donna 's figure " part of her loveable charm " . In early episodes , the character was seen to partake in recreational drug use and arrive for work hungover . Jacobs described her as " everything that you secretly want to be , but can 't get away with in normal society " , calling her " very gregarious " and immune to maturing . The Guardian 's Grace Dent deemed her " weak @-@ willed " in a 2006 feature on television medics , and in 2008 , the Daily Mirror 's Jane Simon branded her unintelligent .

A 2006 review by Simon noted that Donna lacked dedication to her job , and was easily distracted by her love life . Following an April 2008 interview with Jacobs , the itv.com website for the entertainment show This Morning observed that despite Donna 's " chaotic " personal life , she had grown more serious about her work . Ultimately , adopting her half @-@ niece Mia forced Donna to grow up , focussing on her career by attaining promotion to ward sister and accepting the resultant responsibilities . Reflecting on Donna 's development in January 2011 , Jacobs observed that she had changed a great deal from her early days , when she was used as a comical character with " bumbling one @-@ liners " , into a serious , more responsible person .

= = = Family = = =

Donna was raised by her grandmother Shirley (Lynda Baron) , who appears in the series eight episode " Bad Blood " . Clarke Peters , star of American drama series The Wire , was cast as her estranged father in 2009 . He appeared from 14 July to 11 August 2009 , suffering from cancer of the splenic flexure , pancreas and abdominal wall . Jacobs was " thrilled " by Peters ' casting , and reported that his first appearance rendered the programme 's crew " star @-@ struck " for the first time in her five years on the show . His appearance allowed Donna to confront her father over his abandonment of her as a child , and rendered her devastated upon learning that he had accepted his impending death . Peters assessed that his appearance had an " enormous impact " on Donna , explaining that his role allowed the audience to discover more about her life , as : " This is a way to get into these characters rather than just seeing them as one @-@ dimensional characters , dealing with whatever happens at Holby . " Producers Diana Kyle and Tony McHale intended the storyline to reveal a new side to Donna , depicting her attempting to cope , in contrast to the " smiling party girl " viewers were familiar with .

Following her father 's death , Donna adopted her half @-@ niece Mia . Discussing the development in the context of her 2010 Casualty appearance , Jacobs explained that it made her ED shift particularly stressful as " she now has little Mia to look after ? if anything happens to Donna , Mia is completely on her own . " She expanded that , " The stakes have really moved on for Donna over the last couple of years . She 's had to accept some responsibility and it 's not now just about which man she 's going to sleep with next " .

= = = Relationships = = =

Perennially "unlucky in love ", Donna fits the tart with a heart stereotype . Her numerous romances during her tenure earned her the nickname " Nurse ' Action ' Jackson " . In 2004 , she had a lesbian liaison with Mickie . The scene in which they kissed was edited to half its original length after being deemed too explicit for pre @-@ watershed broadcast . Later that year , Jacobs stated that her ideal storyline would be for Donna to find a good man and gain a promotion , hoping she would find someone who would treat her well and help her give up her recreational drug habit . Her love interests included physiotherapist Justin Fuller , registrars Ed Keating (Rocky Marshall) and Mubbs Hussein (Ian Aspinall) , manager Bradley Hume , senior house officer Sean Thompson (Chinna Wodu) , and a love triangle with married consultant Michael Spence and his cardiothoracic colleague Connie Beauchamp (Amanda Mealing) . Although Michael did not initially disclose to Donna that he was married , Jacobs stated that her character was aware of this " deep down " , but was unfortunately unperturbed . He treated her badly , to the point that he would only have sex with

her in a toilet stall; nonetheless Jacobs assessed that Donna was in love with him, believing him to be "the one" and different from her previous lovers, branding her deluded in this respect.

In a November 2007 article for the Daily Mirror , television critic Jim Shelley described Donna as a "nymphomaniac", though qualified his comment with the addendum " to be fair , sex addiction is a job requirement in Holby . " His Mirror colleague Simon branded Donna supremely unsubtle in her pursuit of Michael , deeming her " unsinkable " , and in a later piece for The Guardian , Shelley commented on Donna 's proclivity for sleeping with senior staff members at inopportune moments , to the detriment of patient care . She was dubbed " man crazy " by Tina Miles of the Liverpool Echo , and " shameless " by the Mirror 's Clare Raymond , who noted that she would " stop at nothing to snare a rich doctor " .

Despite her numerous sex scenes , Donna did not have a genuinely romantic storyline until beginning a slow @-@ burning romance with agency nurse Kieran Callaghan in late 2010 . She initially disliked him , suspecting him of shirking his work duties , and at one point requested that he never return to her ward . Jacobs assessed that Donna was attracted to him , but would not allow herself to accept it at first , having had so many failed relationships with men ill @-@ suited to her . They went on to begin a relationship , with Jacobs describing Kieran as " Donna 's dream come true " , and co @-@ star Sloane deeming the two a " great match " . Their relationship was impeded by Kieran 's commitment to the TA and tour of duty in Afghanistan . Sloane felt that Kieran did not sufficiently explain the extent of his involvement with the TA , and assessed that Donna failed to understand his " soldier mentality " , stating that their problems stemmed from a mutual stubbornness . Following Kieran 's deployment , television magazine What 's on TV noted a change in Donna 's demeanour , observing that she had " soured " in contrast to her former " bubbly " friendliness . In a plot designed to " bring home the horrors of war " , Kieran lost a leg in an IED explosion . In the aftermath , he and Donna reunited , before moving away together .

= = = Departure = = =

Jacobs departed from Holby City in 2011, wanting to "broaden [her] horizons "after seven years in the programme. The thirteenth series saw the departure of many regular cast members, and the arrival of a group of new ones, including Guy Henry, Laila Rouass, and Jimmy Akingbola. Jacobs deemed it "a new era with a new cast ", one which she was not part of, and stated that the time felt right to leave. She had some input in her exit storyline, the focal point of which was Donna 's relationship with Kieran, as they moved away to begin a new life together. Jacobs relayed feedback she had received from the general public with regards to how Donna should leave, and this was incorporated into her departure. The actress felt personal pressure to get Donna 's last scenes right, wanting to give the best performance possible. She found the filming "overwhelming ", explaining " it was incredibly emotional and intense, and it made it all very hard, and raw. [...] It wasn 't until later that I realised I 'd put myself under a hideously stressful situation, and that I should just be enjoying the experience. "She stated: "I 've absolutely loved playing Donna. I know that I 'm going to look back very fondly on the time I had with her. I really got to know the character, and she had so many facets and was always fun to play."

= = Reception and impact = =

Jacobs won the "Best Emerging Talent "accolade at the 2005 Screen Nation Awards for her role as Donna. She was also nominated for the "Best Newcomer" award at the 2004 National Television Awards, and the "Favourite Female TV Star" Screen Nation award in 2008. Discussing public reaction to her character, Jacobs stated that real nurses enjoyed her "man @-@ eating antics", and were envious that Donna got away with wearing so much make @-@ up. She commented, "I 've never met anyone who has been sensitive about Donna throwing herself at men. The women I meet seem to appreciate her tactics. "In the aftermath of the Donna / Mickie storyline, the BBC banned its actresses from appearing in raunchy photo @-@ shoots, after Jacobs and Adams were photographed in intimate poses while dressed in nurses uniforms for

various " lads ' mags " .

In November 2007, Shelley deemed Donna one of Holby City 's few " really good, realistic, characters". He named Peters 'casting as Donna 's father his " Worst TV moment of the year " in 2009, however found their relationship " deeply moving ". Donna 's farewell speech to Derek was again called moving by both a reviewer for the Liverpool Daily Post, and Simon, though she had previously despaired at Donna 's optimism despite Derek 's terminal prognosis. The following year, What 's on TV named Donna one of their favourite characters, praising her for taking a stance against Director of Surgery Henrik Hanssen (Guy Henry) in defence of her fellow nurses.

Donna 's relationship with Michael proved unpopular with critics . In an editorial discussing the boundaries between fiction and reality , The Guardian 's Scott Murray and Barney Ronay declared their love for Donna , commending the way she " always has time for people " and recommending that she stay away from Michael as she deserves better . Bree Treacy of RTÉ.ie believes that Michael had better chemistry with Donna than with his wife Annalese , however similarly commented that he did not deserve Donna , never having seen her as more than " a notch on his stethoscope " . Following her promotion to ward sister , Treacy hoped that the series producers would give Donna a man who would see her " as more than just a good time girl . " Simon criticized Donna for failing to observe correct organ donation protocol in an attempt to win Michael 's affection , commenting that she had " thrown her own heart willynilly at the first good @-@ looking doctor she s [aw] with an ego the size of Texas . " She later branded her " selfish to a fault " for her negative reaction to Kieran 's posting to Afghanistan , but opined that Kieran " makes a far more suitable partner for her " than Michael did .

Several of Donna 's pivotal episodes were selected as recommended viewing by critics . " Myself , Coming Back " , the series ten episode in which she goes on a road @-@ trip and discovers the existence of her niece , Mia , was named a televisual highlight by the Daily Mirror , Birmingham Post , and Liverpool Daily Echo , with the latter publication deeming it " refreshingly different " following the " doom and gloom " of preceding episodes . Many regional newspapers named " Promises " , in which she decides to adopt Mia , a " pick of the day " , and Sarah Morgan of the Daily Record cited Jacobs ' appearance as Donna in the premiere episode of Casualty 's twenty @-@ fifth series as a positive example of the BBC " pull [ing] out all the stops to make sure the first edition in this latest run is something of a cracker . "