

= Danielle Jones (EastEnders) =

Danielle Jones is a fictional character from the BBC soap opera EastEnders , played by Lauren Crace . The character appeared between 18 August 2008 and 3 April 2009 . Crace 's casting in the role was announced in July 2008 , when she was described as a love interest for fellow new character Callum Monks (Elliott Jordan) . In October 2008 , it was revealed that Danielle was actually the long @-@ lost daughter of established character Ronnie Mitchell (Samantha Womack) . Crace has disclosed that even she was unaware of this fact upon being cast in the role , but always knew Danielle would only have a short arc . Danielle 's feelings were further explored in a segment of the BBC EastEnders homepage entitled Danielle 's Diary , documenting the character 's thoughts on the storylines she was involved in , while a special episode of EastEnders Revealed entitled " The Secret Mitchell " further explored the character 's impact on the show .

Danielle 's storylines focused on her friendship with local resident Stacey Slater (Lacey Turner) , her crush on Callum , and her adoption secret . She was deemed a welcome addition to the soap by members of the Telford local council , for raising awareness of the town the character originates from , however was poorly received by The Guardian 's Gareth McLean and Grace Dent , and dubbed " Drippy Danielle " by the Daily Mirror 's Jane Simon . Her final episode was watched by 11 @.@ 46 million viewers , and caused a notable power surge on the National Grid .

= = Storylines = =

Danielle arrives in Walford , having left her hometown of Telford and is befriended by local resident Stacey Slater (Lacey Turner) , who gives her a job on her market clothing stall and offers her the spare room in her family 's home . Danielle quickly develops a crush on fellow stall @-@ trader Callum Monks (Elliott Jordan) , who leads her on in an attempt to make Stacey jealous but he helps her get a second job , cleaning at The Queen Victoria public house , where she gets caught in the feud between Ronnie (Samantha Janus) and Archie Mitchell (Larry Lamb) . Both try to use Danielle to get information from the other , with Archie persuading Danielle to steal Ronnie 's post . Ronnie is furious when she realises and sacks Danielle after publicly berating her . Danielle is devastated , and is later seen clutching a locket containing a photograph of Ronnie , revealing herself to be Ronnie 's long @-@ lost daughter , Amy .

It transpires that Danielle is the result of a teenage romance between Ronnie and her first boyfriend , Joel Reynolds . Archie disapproved of the pregnancy and put Danielle - named Amy by Ronnie ? up for adoption . Danielle was adopted by Lizzie and Andy Jones (Aneirin Hughes) . She began trying to locate her birth mother after Lizzie 's death in 2007 . Following Ronnie 's tirade , Danielle tries to leave Albert Square but Stacey and her family persuade her to stay with them .

Ronnie 's sister , Roxy (Rita Simons , gives birth to a baby girl that she names Amy , to Danielle 's surprise . Ronnie 's dislike of her lessens with time , and when Danielle falls out with Stacey and ends up squatting in a flat owned by landlord Ian Beale (Adam Woodyatt) , Ronnie convinces him not to call the police .

Danielle later breaks down and tells Ronnie that she is pregnant by Paul , a barman she had a one night stand with . She intended to tell him about her pregnancy until he reveals he has a girlfriend . Ronnie comforts Danielle and contacts Andy , suggesting that he take Danielle home but she resists in favour of staying close to Ronnie . She is dismayed when Ronnie confides in her that having her own child was the biggest mistake of her life . Danielle makes up with Stacey and decides to terminate her pregnancy . She is delighted when Ronnie accompanies her to the clinic but dismayed when she backs out of attending her second appointment . Following her abortion , Danielle visits her family for a while , but soon comes to miss Ronnie and Stacey and returns to Walford . Danielle becomes increasingly angry with Ronnie for rejecting her . She decides that she will tell Ronnie who she really is and leave Walford for good but Archie stops her when he learns who she is . Unknown to Danielle , Archie has told Ronnie that her daughter died as an infant , so in order to preserve his story , he convinces Danielle that Ronnie suffers from depression and she should keep quiet until he decides the time is right to make her revelation . Although Danielle continues to press Archie to

reveal the truth , he repeatedly puts her off to maintain his lie . Eventually , believing that Archie has told Ronnie about her , Danielle tells her the truth but Ronnie refuses to believe her . Distraught , Danielle intends to leave Walford but Ronnie discovers that Archie has been lying and chases her . They are about to reconcile when Danielle is accidentally run over by a car driven by Janine Butcher (Charlie Brooks) . Ronnie cradles Danielle and apologises for not believing her , saying that if she had known , she would never have given her up . Danielle passes away in Ronnie 's arms , leaving her devastated . Danielle is buried and a grief @-@ stricken Ronnie sings by her grave when alone .

= = Creation and characterisation = =

On 19 July 2008 , The Sun reported that a new character , Danielle , would be introduced to EastEnders as the love interest of fellow newcomer Callum Monks . Nineteen @-@ year @-@ old Danielle was described as a " naive blonde [...] easily taken in by Callum 's smooth patter " , arriving in Walford with " just a suitcase and a dream of a new life " . It was later revealed that Danielle had additionally been created as the long @-@ lost daughter of established character Ronnie Mitchell , and a member of the soap 's long @-@ running Mitchell family . Her introduction had been planned from 2007 , when story producer Dominic Treadwell @-@ Collins conceived the idea of two new Mitchell sisters , Ronnie and Roxy . Ronnie was depicted as the more detached and icy sister , and a hidden secret was first alluded to eight months after their introduction , when Roxy made a veiled reference to Ronnie 's child and a physical fight ensued . Several months later , off @-@ set episodes shot in Weymouth and dubbed " Mitchell Week " by the BBC were aired , during which the audience were introduced to Ronnie and Roxy 's father Archie , and learned that Ronnie had given a child up for adoption .

Treadwell @-@ Collins explained that it was necessary to introduce Danielle shortly after this revelation , but in such a manner that she would arrive " under the audience 's radar " , to preserve the later revelation of her identity as Ronnie 's daughter . Lauren Crace , then a third year student at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art , was cast as Danielle and began filming in June 2008 . EastEnders was Crace 's first professional acting role , and executive producer Diederick Santer expressed his pleasure that Crace had chosen to make her debut on the show . Upon her introduction , EastEnders 's producers attempted to deceive the audience into believing Danielle was nothing more than a new friend for Stacey . Crace herself was only told of Danielle 's true identity after her successful audition , though as she only signed a six @-@ month contract with the show , was always aware Danielle would only have a short arc . She stated that some audience members guessed Danielle to be Ronnie 's daughter almost as soon as she arrived , and that she found maintaining the secret difficult .

Crace initially portrayed Danielle as being shy and afraid of rejection , though felt that Stacey 's friendship and living with the Slater family could have a positive impact on her confidence . Discussing her failure at romantic relationships , Crace assessed that Danielle 's eagerness may scare men off . She came to find portraying Danielle depressing , explaining that she was bored by and had doubts about Danielle 's constant naivety and passive personality . She suggested to the producers that Danielle should stand up for herself more , which was accepted and adapted into her personality , to the point that by the end of her tenure on the show , Danielle was " not a little mouse any more " . Crace 's view is that Danielle 's Mitchell heritage manifested itself in an inner @-@ strength and ability to " come back fighting " , giving her a toughness beneath her " wet and pathetic " personality .

= = Development = =

Series writer Simon Ashdown explained that Danielle initially chose to conceal her identity from Ronnie due to her fear of being rejected . He described her as " hurt and broken by her life " , and hoping to charm Ronnie into liking her before revealing the truth . Crace observed that Danielle was intrigued by Ronnie and the Mitchells , but also worried that she was too different from them and

may be a disappointment to Ronnie . Danielle 's pregnancy was used as a plot @-@ device to bring the two closer together . Crace deemed the development " a huge thing " for Danielle , as contrary to her constant rejection , the one person she most desired support from was finally showing her affection . However , Ronnie 's failure to attend Danielle 's second clinic appointment signified " a step back " for the character , leaving her " hurt and distraught " and less willing to confide the truth in Ronnie than ever .

In the aftermath of her abortion , Danielle was depicted as being increasingly emotionally unstable and angry with Ronnie , believing that she deserved to belong to the Mitchell family . The writers had Archie discover her secret as a test of his character , experimenting with whether he would be despicable enough to conceal the truth . Lamb deemed Danielle " a huge threat " to Archie 's position as patriarch of the Mitchell family , explaining why he chose to lie that Ronnie was suffering from depression and Danielle ought not tell her . Danielle accepted the lie , believing it to explain Ronnie 's " hot and cold " reaction to her , and attempted to care for Ronnie and help her recover . Crace explained that despite their turbulent relationship , Ronnie was all Danielle had ever wanted . Despite seeing Archie as " a domineering figure " , Danielle initially trusted him and believed he would reunite her with her mother when the time was right . However , as time passed she became aware of Archie 's " true colours " and grew afraid of him .

The ultimate revelation of Danielle 's identity was set at Archie 's wedding to Peggy (Barbara Windsor) , matriarch of the Mitchell family . Crace deemed the wedding " the perfect opportunity " for the storyline to conclude , and Santer explained : " Weddings are great because they bring the community together . A wedding gives you a stage , it gives you an event , the context to play things out , so it felt right that these big Mitchell stories would collide at Peggy 's wedding . " Writer James Payne concurred that setting the reveal at the wedding helped to make the moment " as dramatic and sensational " as it could possibly be . The episode saw Danielle announce that she was Ronnie 's daughter in front of the entire wedding reception party , in what Crace has named her favourite scene on the show . She opined that the disbelief Danielle was faced with was " heartbreaking " and served to highlight the fact that " she came as the outsider and she still is the outsider because no one steps in to help her " .

Danielle was killed off minutes after revealing her true identity to Ronnie , dying in her mother 's arms . Although different outcomes to the storyline were considered , Santer explained that Danielle dying best preserved Ronnie 's status as EastEnders ' " tragic heroine character " . Treadwell @-@ Collins felt that to allow Ronnie to have her daughter , the " one thing that is key to her character " would serve to progressively weaken her character , and Santer agreed that while it may initially be touching , ultimately the relationship would become boring . The scene in which Danielle dies was filmed during winter , but as it was set in early April , snow had to be cleared away from the set before filming could commence . A body double was used for the moment Danielle was run over . Although sad to leave , Crace felt that the story 's conclusion was the right one , and was glad that Ronnie and Danielle finally shared a brief moment in the end , explaining : " It was so important that that tender moment was finally found , because that 's all people wanted . It 's all Danielle wanted , and it 's all Ronnie wants . " Crace concluded : " I think Danielle will leave quite a big mark on the Square and on the people in the Square ? probably a bigger mark than she did when she was alive .

News of Danielle 's death was subject to a media embargo , although several newspapers and magazines including the Radio Times leaked news of Crace 's exit in advance of the event . Digital Spy 's Kris Green reported that most of the online EastEnders community had anticipated the character 's exit from the soap beforehand , some as early as January 2009 .

= = Related media = =

The BBC used viral promotion on the EastEnders homepage to further develop the character of Danielle . A new section named Danielle 's Diary was launched , encompassing events in the show from 6 October 2008 onwards , written in diary style from Danielle 's point of view . Insight was given into the character 's thoughts and feelings on the events surrounding her each week , beginning with

the introduction : " Bit new to all this . Need some way to clear my head though . Can 't really talk to Stacey . Or Callum . Or anyone . Maybe if I write it all down , my head won 't explode ... Anyway , welcome to my life in Walford . "

In this manner , viewers were able to keep up with the character during her temporary absence from the show in February 2009 , when she returned home to Telford following her abortion : " Back in Dawley . Feels strange to be away from Stacey ... away from R & R ... away from Ronnie . Been sleeping a lot ? so tired . When I was younger I never dreamt that I ? d go through all of this . Stacey keeps ringing , but I can ? t speak to anyone . I can ? t even listen to my voicemail " , and were privy to Danielle 's internal worries about her relationship with Ronnie : " It 's like I scare R. It was as though she scared herself , as she actually admitted that she cared . For about ten seconds I felt close to her again . Like watching the sun appear from behind a cloud ... feeling the warmth across your skin again . But , then it disappears as another cloud sweeps over it . " The final entry , dated minutes before Danielle 's on @-@ screen death , reads : " All I ever wanted was for mum to look at me with love in her eyes . To call me her baby . To tell me she loved me . I have to leave now . I have to go back to Telford . Goodbye Walford . " After the character had been killed off , the diary format gave way to a wall of memorial messages , supposedly penned by other EastEnders characters , including Abi Branning (Lorna Fitzgerald) , Lucy Beale (Melissa Suffield) , Callum and Stacey .

= = Reception = =

Miles Hosken , a former mayor of Telford , welcomed the choice to give Danielle a Telford background due to the national exposure it gave the area . Sarah Raper , chief executive of economic development company Transforming Telford , commented : " We hope the new character will portray Telford in a positive light and increase national awareness of the town " , and Councillor Eric Carter , Telford & Wrekin Council cabinet member for regeneration , adding : " There are a lot of people working to put Telford on the map and this will help " .

The Daily Mirror sympathised with Danielle over the storyline which saw her manipulated by Archie , deeming it one of the more interesting EastEnders plot strands . Gareth McLean of The Guardian 's described Danielle as a " wet weekend incarnate " , criticising the drawn out nature of the secret Mitchell storyline . Fellow Guardian critic Grace Dent was similarly critical of the storyline , particularly the scripting . The Daily Mirror 's Tony Stewart wrote that " when a downcast Danielle walks into a room , it 's like all the lights have been switched off " , and his colleague Jane Simon christened the character " Drippy Danielle " , writing that " If she 's half Mitchell , her father must have been a marshmallow . "

Discussing the character 's death , Digital Spy 's Kris Green praised Grace 's acting . He compared Danielle 's revelation that Ronnie was her mother to the EastEnders storyline several years previously , when Kat Slater (Jessie Wallace) revealed she was actually the mother of her supposed sister Zoe (Michelle Ryan) . Green opined : " Although it didn 't quite capture the magic of [the Kat @-@ Zoe scene] it definitely comes an extremely close second . " He concluded : " I 'd probably go as far as to say that it 's one of the best episodes EastEnders has produced in a long time " . The episode was selected as recommended viewing by The Guardian 's Sarah Dempster . Simon called it " the EastEnders episode of the year " , though was again critical of Danielle , writing : " As a nation we 've been driven mad by Danielle screwing up her forehead , shrugging her shoulders and walking around like a wide eyed simpleton . She isn 't the first person in the world to track down their biological mother and while it 's seldom easy , I can 't imagine it 's ever been quite so hard as Danielle has made it . " Writing for The Times , Tim Teeman was critical of the length of time it took for the storyline to conclude , calling it " the most drawn @-@ out ' reveal ' in soapland " . He deemed Ashdown 's scripting of Danielle 's exit to be " mad crescendo after mad crescendo " , and the storyline as a whole " implausible " , concluding that by the time Danielle died in Ronnie 's arms : " EastEnders had hit the misery mother lode . "

Grace was pleased with public reaction to the mother @-@ daughter storyline , commenting prior to the reveal : " Everyone seems desperate to know why Danielle hasn 't told Ronnie yet , so I 'm

taking that as a sign they 're enjoying the story . Viewers are always telling me that they love it when Danielle and Ronnie have a scene together ? I think they 're on the edge of their seats , waiting to see when Danielle is finally going to admit the truth about her identity . " Danielle 's death received a mixed reaction from viewers , with 90 % of viewers polled by The Sun opining that killing Danielle off was a mistake . The decision was defended by Santer , who stated : " We acknowledge that we didn 't deliver the happy ending that many of the audience may have been hoping for , and that for some people this was upsetting . We hope viewers understand that our aim is to deliver the best drama . That doesn 't always lead to a happy ending . EastEnders ? like all good drama ? contains a balance of storylines , both happy and sad . We ? re proud of the episode , the storyline which built up to it and the way the audience have engaged with it . " Following Danielle 's final episode , regulator Ofcom confirmed they had received a number of complaints from the public about the " violent nature of the show and the horrific death at the end " , and the fact it was broadcast before the 9 p.m. watershed .

Danielle 's final episode was watched by an average of 11 @.@ 46 million viewers , peaking at 11 @.@ 5 million during its broadcast , and attaining a 48 @.@ 3 % audience share . A further 1 @.@ 2 million viewers watched the episode 's repeat on BBC Three later that evening . The high ratings caused a power surge more than double the national average , seeing a grid surge of 1270MW compared to the 550MW usually experienced during EastEnders episodes . A National Grid spokeswoman commented that the surge was " equivalent to around half a million kettles being switched on at once . "