

Gore blimey!

Actress Sarah Smart loves getting her hands dirty in the Edwardian ER series!

Casualty 1909

SUNDAY 9pm BBC1 Drama

Most people hate hospitals – but imagine having to spend time on a ward 100 years ago, complete with barbaric surgery techniques and unreliable anaesthetic!

That's just what actress Sarah Smart did while filming the third series of this drama, which centres on The London Hospital in Whitechapel at the start of last century. Luckily Sarah, who plays Sister Ada Russell in the six-part series, has a strong stomach!

"It's really good fun to get stuck in with all the blood and guts and goo, because you know it's not real," laughs Sarah. "I love it!"

In this opening episode,

a suspected bomb explodes nearby. With scores of injured people pouring into The London, Ada finds herself helping Dr Culpin (William Houston) remove shrapnel from one patient.

"She's used to Wellington Ward, which is quite quiet, so being involved in the action excites her and really stirs something up in her," explains Sarah, 32.

After Ada gives the police short shrift when they want to interview her patient

about the blast, Matron Eva Luckes (Cherie Lunghi) suggests Ada switches to the Receiving Room, where patients are initially treated.

"It's the front line, the hub of the hospital," adds Sarah. "And Ada realises it's where she wants to be."

● Words by Gemma Quade

"The blood and guts are good fun!"



Sarah as Ada, right, with Cherie Lunghi. Inset: Ada assists Dr Culpin in surgery