

## DOOL's Serial Killer Casualties

Written by Sunni and Linda Marshall-Smith  
Monday, 25 August 2003 16:00

---

Who's next for soap heaven?

Are They Really Out?

Hot on the heels of major rumors that Matthew Ashford (Jack Deveraux) has been fired from Days of Our Lives, Soapdom has learned that it is unlikely that the role of Jack will be recast - meaning Jack could be off the show's canvas permanently.

Ashford returned to the fictional town of Salem in February 2001 following an eight year absence. While Ashford is probably the best known actor to lend himself to the role of Jack, he isn't the only actor to play the part. During Ashford's time away from Days of Our Lives, the role of Jack was played by two other performers. From 1994 to 1997, Mark Valley held down the part and in 1997 and 1998 Steve Wilder tackled Jack.

Ashford's firing appears to be a result of James E. Reilly's return as head writer. Traditionally, new head writers scrap characters from a previous writer's reign that do not fit into their new vision for the show.

Reilly has been quoted as saying that he wanted to pare down the number of contract roles on DOOL. In reducing the number of faces, the show can focus more story on fewer characters - and save a heap of money on salaries.

To accomplish these cast cuts, Reilly has created a storyline involving a serial killer. Apparently the storyline will see several high profile characters fall victim to the serial killer. Along with Ashford, Suzanne Rogers, who plays Maggie Horton, and James Reynolds, who plays police chief Abe Carver, are also rumored to be among the first to go.

Ashford's contract was not due to expire until March 2004, however, he will make his final on-screen appearance well before then. Ashford is keeping quiet about his exit and a spokesperson for the show also had no comment. James Reynolds' publicist likewise has no comment.

However, Reilly does have a record of killing people off only to have them re-emerge at a later date, alive and well. On Reilly's other soap, Passions, he killed off the extremely popular characters of Sheridan, Julian, and Timmy. Both Sheridan and Julian are back and very much alive. If not for the unfortunate, untimely and sad real-life passing of Josh Ryan Evans who played the doll-come-to-life, Timmy, odds are that Timmy would have returned as well.

## **DOOL's Serial Killer Casualties**

Written by Sunni and Linda Marshall-Smith  
Monday, 25 August 2003 16:00

---

So the question remains -- are all these characters truly doomed on Days? Only time will tell.