



Canary Catch Up: Pride month gets off to a horrifying start with Tip Toe and Rivals

Description

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Four of the Tip Toe characters walk forwards in two rows. The woman in the front row holds a box at the front. The show ended

Hello and welcome to [Canary Catch Up](#) Each week, our resident teary addict Rachel Charlton-Dailey will bring us bang up to date with the shows she's been obsessed with, what she's hate-watching, and what she can't wait to get stuck into.

Trigger warning: This article contains discussion of homophobic hate crimes and the murder of a gay man. Please take care when reading.

Pride 2026

I've been thinking a lot about pride and my local community this week. We, like many parts of the country, got a Reform council in May. For anyone who is disabled and isn't straight, white and cis, that's terrifying. What's especially tough is knowing how many people in our city actively voted against our rights.

One of Sunderland Reform's first acts in power was to declare that the Pride flag would never fly on government buildings. This will do absolutely nothing to improve the lives of the one in three children who live in poverty here, but the gammons ate it up. That's why Pride this year feels even more poignant. When so many want us to be silent, we can't be.

Tip Toe is a terrifying look at queer hate

[Russell T Davies](#)'s new Channel 4 mini-drama, *Tip Toe*, is an unflinching look at how not only rights for queer people are being stripped away but how attitudes are dangerously changing. If you thought this would be a gentle look at how we should just be less homophobic, the opening scene, which shows

a gay man strung up on a lamp post, quickly puts that to bed.

The show tackles how social media, politicians and far-right mouthpieces have radicalised so many against queer and trans people. It's a brutal look at how so many never really accepted us. The hatred has always been simmering away in the background and fuelled by the misinformation screaming at us online.

Overall, Leo (Alan Cumming) just wants to support and protect young gay people, but his neighbour Clive (David Morrissey) only sees that as him wanting to groom and abuse his son.

The results are extreme and violent, but just as sinister is how much the hatred creeps into people who are also supposed to be good.

Leo's best friend, Stephanie (Elizabeth Berrington), is deeply gender critical. At several points, Stephanie blames girls getting abused on trans women, and even tells Leo that if he were more discreet in his life, he wouldn't have this trouble.

As a bi woman living in a country that overwhelmingly voted for Reform, this show chilled me to my bones. I have a lot of privilege as a white cis woman to be able to say I'm going to loudly resist. However, I'm doing it for my trans, non-binary and gay friends for whom it's much less safe.

To say I enjoyed [Tip Toe](#) is almost definitely the wrong thing to say. [Tip Toe](#) is an excruciatingly hard watch, as it should be. But everyone, and I mean bloody everyone, needs to watch it. My worry is, though, that they won't, because the people who hate gay people aren't going to watch a show like this. Therefore, all it will serve to do is terrify queer people even more.

Rivals' shocking mid-season finale

Rivals came to a jolting halt with its mid-season finale, which was also absolutely devastating. It's been clear from the outset how dangerous Tony (David Tennant) and Maud's (Victoria Smurfit) affair could be. But to see it break Tony's wife, the long-suffering Monica (Claire Rushbrook), was particularly devastating.

The scene in Lizzie's (Katherine Parkinson) [kitchen](#) between her and Monica, where Monica is clearly not mentally okay and discussing how her life could've been, was absolutely heartbreaking.

I cheered when she told Tony she would be taking him for all he's worth, but then sobbed when it became clear that Rupert (Alex Hassel), one of her oldest friends, was having to break the news of her death to his enemy, Tony.

It must be said how gross it felt that the show killed off a fat queer woman just before she was able to reclaim her life. I can see why it was done, but killing yet another queer woman as a device to further a man's story will never sit right. Monica deserved so much more. To see her story end like this is horrible.

I'm clinging onto the fan theory that she faked her own death, but I'm not very confident in that. I suspect Monica's death will be used instead to justify how even more disgusting Tony is about to

become.

Mandalorian and Grogu is a silly, lovely tale

On a much lighter note, I took myself to the cinema to see *Star Wars: The Mandalorian and Grogu*. I'm a big fan of the series anyway, but this movie was the perfect escape from the world. Just two hours of Pedro Pascal and his weird little alien baby being nuisances around the galaxy.

Mind you, be prepared to have very confused feelings for Jabba the Hutt's son, who they gave a six-pack and is voiced by Jeremy Allen White.

Brain-free binge of the week

This section of the column is going to very quickly become a look into my brain and what I need when times are tough. A lot of the time, that's political satire and/or Ben Willbond. Lucky for me, *The Thick of It* has both.

Considering my job, a political comedy-*canary* at *Newsnight* just how embarrassingly incompetent British politicians are might not seem like a break. But even if you're not a fan of *Newsnight*, you just need a Scottish man inventively screaming swears at the worst MPs imaginable to make your day better.

Featured image via Channel 4

By [Rachel Charlton-Dailey](#)

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