

TITLE: FLYING MONSTERS
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How to get through Christmas Day

Shaun, an inventive genius in woolly clothing, sets the tone for the day with his customary sweetness in **Shaun The Sheep** (BBC1, 9.50am). Having received their gifts from the farmer, he and his flock notice his house lacks festive cheer. So, relieving the local church of its Christmas tree, they install some seasonal sparkle.

Doctor Who maintains the cheerful spirit with an interplanetary variation on A Christmas Carol (BBC1, 6pm), visiting Christmases past, present and future as only a Time Lord can. Michael Gambon and the mezzo-soprano Katherine Jenkins guest star. Pterosaurs have not yet troubled the Tardis traveller, but these airborne reptiles, which grew to the size of planes 200m years ago, would be a worthy foe. In the visually stunning three-dimensional documentary **Flying Monsters** (Sky 3D, 6pm), it is David Attenborough's turn to travel back in time and discover why they took flight and what eventually brought them down to earth.

We will wait and see if the very different types of comedic monsters on display in **Come Fly With Me** (BBC1, 10pm) will take off. In a spoof on documentaries such as Airport, Matt Lucas and David

Walliams lampoon the easyJet owner Stelios Haji-Ioannou and the many low points of bargain-basement travel. Little Britain is a tough act to follow, but Lucas's take on a Japanese schoolgirl could yet give Vicky Pollard a run for her

dole money. Being squashed into economy would never have suited **Poirot** and his portly frame (ITV1, 9pm).

Luxury rail is more his style, but this version of Murder on

the Orient Express delivers the biggest surprise in the television Christmas stocking. Psychologically acute and unexpectedly troubling, it is a bumpy journey for all. That just leaves time to see how England's campaign to keep the Ashes is progressing in Melbourne, where it will already be December 26 (**The Ashes**, Sky Sports 1, 10.30pm). The Aussies traditionally do well in Boxing Day encounters, and the tourists have not claimed the urn in Oz since 1987. Could they get their best Christmas present in 23 years?

Sally Kinnes

