

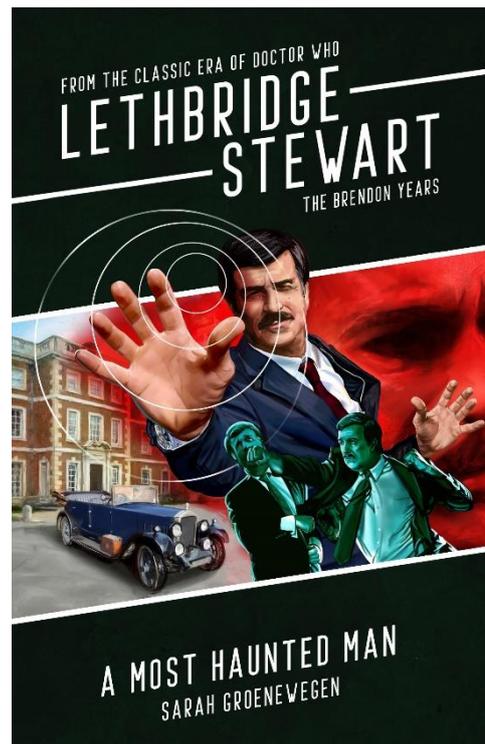


## **Lethbridge-Stewart** **THE END BEGINS**

Candy Jar Books is pleased to announce the first book in its final series of **Lethbridge-Stewart** novels.

The final year of **Lethbridge-Stewart** novels is split in two halves, with the first a trilogy of novels set during Lethbridge-Stewart's time as a teacher at Brendon School. This first of these, **A Most Haunted Man**, sees the return of Sarah Groenewegen to the series, with her first novel since 2017's **The Daughters of Earth**, although her most recent short story featured in the **UNIT: Operation Wildcat** collection.

The 2022 series was put back a little when it was discovered the book planned to open the year was a little too close to the events at play in Ukraine. Thus, **Spheres of Influence** has been put on indefinite hold. Hopefully it will see the light of day at some point but, for now, and to make up for the delay, Candy Jar Books have also decided to reprint the very first **Lethbridge-Stewart** novel, **The Forgotten Son: Special Edition**, with a brand-new cover by Richard Young.



Head of Publishing Shaun Russell says: "When it became apparent that the themes and events depicted in **Spheres of Influence** too closely echoed current events, Andy Frankham-Allen and I quickly came to the decision that to release it at this time would be, at the very least, insensitive. Putting it on hold did mean bringing forward the rest of 2022's books, and finding a replacement. Fortunately, Andy quickly solved that problem by commissioning a third Brendon novel, turning the first three titles into a loose trilogy. For myself, I decided it would be a nice idea to reprint **The Forgotten Son** with a new cover, to hopefully make up a little for the delay. I must stress, however, that the content remains the same from the previous revised version."

**A Most Haunted Man** is set two years after the Brigadier's traumatic encounter with his future self in the *Doctor Who* television serial, *Mawdryn Undead*.

Range Editor Andy Frankham-Allen says: "This is another of those books which started an idea that came up through discussions with Shaun – a good two years ago, at least. It was a while before I realised it was the perfect fit for Sarah. I'd been wanting to do another novel with her, and she came back for a short story in **The Laughing Gnome: The HAVOC Files**, so it was great when she agreed to do another novel for us. The only real prerequisite, other than the core idea, was that it had to be set during the Brig's time at Brendon when he'd lost all memory of the Doctor."

Sarah Groenewegen says: "I adore writing for the Brigadier, and being able to explore different facets of this much-loved character has been great fun. When I was offered another novel in the series, this one set in 1979 and during the Brig's post-army career as a school teacher, I immediately said yes. It's an honour to be asked to contribute a novel to the final season of **Lethbridge-Stewart** novels, which has proved to be a terrific series of stories."

Sarah's previous novel, **The Daughters of Earth**, dealt with the breakdown of his relationship with his then-fiancée. In this book, Sarah's dealing with a breakdown of a different sort.

Sarah says: "I wanted to explore how he deals with strange goings-on when he has forgotten so much, and when he doesn't have his soldiers to call on to help. My brief was to write a psychological thriller, in which the Brig's identity and life is stolen from him. The novel allowed me to explore the nature of identity theft, and memory loss, and the combined uneasiness of not being able to trust your own mind. I added a set of identical twins to the mix, a boy at Brendon, and a girl at a local comprehensive. They are at the cusp of their own change from creepy kids who enjoy playing tricks on people, to young adults facing choices."

Setting the book in 1979 also freed Sarah up from the ongoing narrative, and gave her a chance to explore a different facet from the usual setting of the early-70s.

Sarah continues: "The setting was apposite because of the feeling of being on a cusp of change, but without knowing its direction. In that, it parallels much of today's politics. I found it cathartic to explore similar themes of being seduced by the apparent certainty of authoritarianism — even with the attendant feeling it could turn on its own to destroy at a moment's notice. 1979 proved to be a watershed year in Britain. The full assault on the unions, LGBTQIA people, and appeals to jingoism of the worst kind were all yet to come; and for a while the political turmoil that brought much of the UK to a standstill ceased. It's hard to think that in this day and age of TV-on-demand, the stations that are now ITV were off air for much of the year. 1979 was an amazing year for British pop music. Punk began to segue into the New Romantic movement, and rap, reggae and disco attracted huge numbers of fans. It was fun delving into the music of the time through a few of the kids who are important during the story."

The cover is by popular artist Martin Baines, returning from the success of his recent cover for **UNIT: Operation Wildcat**.

Martin says: "I was partially inspired by a German poster of a classic British film. My last Candy Jar cover I did was for the UNIT anthology, **Operation Wildcat**. It

was very flash, bang, wallop. Because of this, I enjoyed tackling a more psychological concept for this book.”

Blurb:

*In 1977, Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart suffered a shock so great that he was hospitalised. Not that he can remember what happened. Teachers found him, knocked out cold beside the obelisk on the hill. No signs of an attack. No bumps on his head, and no memory of why he lay where he fell, who he'd been with, and great chunks of his past torn from his mind.*

*It wasn't like any form of amnesia described in the textbooks. The clinic discharged him back to Brendon Public School and he resumed his duties as a teacher of mathematics and ruggie.*

*Two years later and a series of nightmares send him back to the clinic. Then come the pranks played by identical twins, his own erratic behaviour and short-term memory loss leading to a breach of the Official Secrets Act. Someone else is living in his house, driving his car, and making changes to the school he loves.*

*It seems that the demons haunting him prove too big for him to fight on his own.*

The final series of **Lethbridge-Stewart** will be split in two parts over 2022, the first half is the Brendon trilogy and will continue with **Legacy of the Dominator** by Nick Walters, and **The Overseers II** by James Middleditch. The second half will be the final in the road to UNIT narrative which began in 2015, with novels by Natasha Gerson, John Peel, and Jonathan Blum.