

*From the classic
era of Doctor Who*



THE FRIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS
TOM DEXTER

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LETHBRIDGE-STEWART

THE FRIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Based on the BBC television serials by
Mervyn Haisman & Henry Lincoln

Tom Dexter



CANDY JAR BOOKS • CARDIFF
A Russell & Frankham-Allen Series
2015

The Curious Star

‘It’s traditional, old chap. Breaks down a few barriers here and there. Makes the formal a bit more informal.’

Before Lethbridge Stewart could even speak into the receiver, General Trubshawe cut him short.

‘Wouldn’t want to let the side down, would you now? After all, I had the suit tailored to fit you.’

The visitors’ suite he was sitting in was serviceable, compact and included everything you’d require for an overnight stay, just as the Dorchester porter had outlined when he showed Lethbridge-Stewart to his room. The large cardboard box from Hamleys’ costume department was already addressed to him, demanding his attention and sitting waiting for his arrival.

‘Canapés and champagne at eight o’clock sharp. Think of it as one of those peace missions,’ Trubshawe said. ‘Showing our chaps there’s a sense of humour deep down inside. Eat a few mince pies and the night will be over before you know it.’

Lethbridge-Stewart lifted up the hat he’d retrieved from the box. ‘With all due respect, sir...’ He looked at it. Bright red with a white fur trim that matched the bobble on its end. ‘I’ve just never seen myself as Father Christmas.’

*

Corporal Woodley felt he'd drawn the short straw. Christmas Eve, and he was on watch. The Lovell Telescope, all part of the Nuffield Radio Astronomy Laboratories, where a very 'off the record' room to one side allowed a military presence to monitor every signal and reading that registered on radar. It had been precisely a week since he'd completed his training, and as a new recruit he could have placed a bet on getting the Christmas shift. No actual polite requests or any choice in the matter at all, it was just accepted and probably about three hours into its eighteen-hour shift.

The faint blip on the screen only distracted him from his crossword for a few seconds. Something so small it could barely count as a meteorite, let alone a potential threat. Yes, it was heading towards England, London in fact, but it would be a vapour trail of dust in seconds.

Nothing that small ever got through.

Woodley went back to thirty-seven down. Cryptic. His favourite kind.

The blip continued to descend, right through the outer atmosphere, solid, intact. And starting to show signs of speeding up.

Everything became insufferable as soon as Lethbridge-Stewart stepped outside the door to his suite and saw two other Santas leaving their rooms at the same moment. Trubshawe's idea of a joke, or one of those wretched themed parties that were so in vogue these days?

At least the white false beard concealed the faltering sense of duty he had towards the proceedings. This was a social event, between the upper hierarchy of GCHQ and the

more low key and undercover protective military forces. He had to get back in time to his flat, even if it meant just leaving and not checking out of this place. Surely just another white beard would go relatively unnoticed if it suddenly vanished?

‘Lethbridge-Stewart? Good to see you here. Need a word. I’ll see you downstairs?’

Lethbridge-Stewart didn’t know whether to salute or not. Finch? Was that his voice? Surely he wasn’t there too?

A quick exit might not be so easy after all...

‘Charles, are you sure that you know where we are?’

The vintage silver Bentley glided through a narrow side street, mud splashing across the lovingly cleaned wheel trims. Several cobbled mews stretched off the main route, but there were no signs indicating any particular turning.

‘I know Knightsbridge like the back of my hand. As soon as you see the Christmas lights, you’ll know that we’re nearly there.’

‘Harrods will shut in an hour. Can’t you speed up?’

Charles Wyvern was veering towards an uncomfortable retirement age where blood pressure and London traffic were not what you’d describe as a safe combination. Christmas Eve merely exaggerated the point.

‘For heaven’s sake, Dolores. If you’d just look. There, straight ahead of you! What did I tell you?’

Her temper bristling as much as her fur coat, Dolores leaned forward, peering through the windscreen. ‘It doesn’t look much like a Christmas light to me.’

‘Right!’

The hand brake screeched, the driver’s door was thrown

open and Charles strode towards the blatantly obvious street decoration. Hanging about ten feet above street level, pulsating with light, it was all red and gold.

‘There! See! Our tax payers’ money paid for the blessed things, so I should know one when I see one!’

Dolores now stood at the open passenger door, squinting into the darkness surrounding them. Her eye sight was not what it was, but surely the decoration was supported on some kind of wire. Why was it lowering itself towards her husband like that? What were those things coming out of the sides? Some kind of metal arms?

‘Charles? Charles, come back to the car.’

A sound rather like a dentist’s drill filled the air.

‘Charles!’

Silence.

Lethbridge-Stewart stared at his glass of single malt whisky. A good drink at the end of the day was usually an antidote to most of his problems, but not today. For some reason he didn’t feel like it. This was his first Christmas as a formally engaged man!

Sally, Corporal Sally Wright, was making so much effort to get things right, but at the back of his mind he knew there would be questions: an officer and a junior NCO getting married? Working together in the same section was bad enough. Accusations of bias and preferential treatment could easily knock back any credibility that he’d fought to build up the last half a year, but for the moment he’d try to enjoy himself. Sally had been invited as his plus one, but had insisted that her prior engagement was more appealing. She was in Oxford Street *buying* Christmas. At least

Lethbridge-Stewart had escaped that. Like most men he hated shopping and also, like most men, he hadn't given a single thought to what he would get his fiancé. Gifts, and bureaucracy for that matter, could wait for the hangovers to clear.

Another Father Christmas approached, his incongruous thin hands clutching a sausage roll in a napkin. 'Bit of a commotion in the West End, so I hear. Any of your chaps onto it?'

'What do you mean?' Lethbridge-Stewart had no idea what this Santa was talking about.

'Two bodies found near Knightsbridge. Bit of a mess, by all accounts. Now there's two more, just the same, near Marble Arch. Some kind of pattern forming, at a guess.'

A way out, Lethbridge-Stewart thought, as Santa bit into the pastry, the flakes spilling unceremoniously onto his red velvet jacket.

The Slaying Ball

So many shoppers, so much last minute panic buying, all heads down trying to push through the crowds and find that final bargain, while the Christmas lights and baubles stretched out overhead, arched high above the buses and taxis. But no one saw that one of the brightly lit spheres was moving silently in and out of the display, weaving around the tops of lamp posts, soaring up and gliding forwards.

Suddenly, it stopped.

A red central cross hatch pattern of light turned on, almost as though it was watching, and seemed to focus in on the heat rising from an old oil drum cooking chestnuts near the main road below.

Guthrie claimed his efforts were all for charity, but, in reality, were actually intended for his pocket. He reached into the satchel around his midriff, fingerless mittens counting out change deliberately and slowly, while the husband and wife in front of him waited. It was all tactical, if the smell of his coat didn't make them want to move on, then his sudden dyscalculia did the trick.

'Sorry, mate. I've lost count. Sure you don't want a second bag of chestnuts instead?'

He poured the coppers back into the pouch and started

the whole routine again.

‘Tom, just tell him he can keep the change.’

It was always the wives who snapped first, and always the husbands who wanted the chestnuts.

Guthrie looked up and smiled, his graveyard of teeth beaming at the couple.

He recoiled as something impacted into the oil drum behind him. Hot embers and coal spat out onto the pavement causing a slight commotion, but only because it delayed people getting home.

Across the road, in the alleyway between the shops, a sphere hurtled ferociously into the shadows. Was someone playing a joke on him? Adjusting his Santa beard and tightening his belt around a moth eaten red jacket, he stormed into the darkness ready to sort out whatever it was.

‘Get out of the way! This is an emergency!’

People just laughed. To them, another inevitable Santa was just trying to push his way through the crowd.

‘What’s wrong, mate? Rudolph got a parking ticket?’

‘Yo ho ho, you idiot!’

‘Try gettin’ down the chimney instead!’

That’s when Lethbridge-Stewart heard a scream from further up the street, maybe two hundred yards ahead.

Coal from the oil drum sat smoking in the gutter, and the sphere rocketed back out of the alleyway, spinning wildly as various slender cantilevered arms retracted into its shell.

A crowd was beginning to gather, staring up at it incredulously. The onlookers watched as a narrow light

beam projected down and strobed across their faces, almost as though it was searching for something. It quickly came to focus on a man dressed as Father Christmas, who pushed his way past the others and looked directly up at it.

‘State your nation of origin and your intent.’

Two or three people started to applaud, clearly thinking it was an elaborate street performance. One man came up and slipped some coins into Lethbridge-Stewart’s open hand.

‘If you can throw your voice, so it talks to you, you’ve got a hit there, mate.’

‘Get back, man!’

‘If you say so, Santa. If you say so.’

The man patted Lethbridge-Stewart on the shoulder as he moved off and headed into a department store. Other people started to move away and, at that moment, Lethbridge-Stewart glanced down and realised: no uniform, no authority. And no gun! He looked back up – the sphere was gone.

There was no real light. Just dustbins, rubbish and empty cardboard boxes. It was obvious that people had been sleeping rough there.

The drum was on its side. Cold to touch.

It couldn’t have cooled down that fast. The ash was in two piles, one with embers, but the other...?

There was a scorch mark up the side of the nearest wall. And something was sticking out of it. It was the burnt remains of a Father Christmas jacket, still bright red in patches.

Some kind of spontaneous combustion, Lethbridge-Stewart decided.

Dusting himself down, ready to take charge, he headed along the alleyway and towards oscillating blue lights.

‘There’s whisky on his breath, Guv,’ said Officer Watkins as he frog marched Lethbridge-Stewart from the alleyway and onto the street. Watkins’ radio mic crackled as the duty sergeant, back at base, barked out orders.

‘Get him over to Charring Cross and take him straight to the interview room. There are five other Santas in the cells already!’

‘I am a ranking officer in the British Army, and I suggest you call—’

‘Get in the back of the van!’

‘Whatever you think this situation is, it isn’t a joke!’ pleaded Lethbridge-Stewart. The cuffs dug deep into his wrists as two of the officers physically lifted him into the caged open doorway of a police van.

‘So, cross me off your Christmas list!’ said Watkins with a chuckle. He kicked the door shut as the cage closed, and slammed his right palm against the surface signalling for the van to depart.

The Santa Mission Statement

‘So, let me get this right. Nobody actually bothered to check what he was saying was true?’

DI Meadows was walking fast, attempting to keep up with the figure ahead of him – Trubshawe. They both marched towards the cells. ‘He was dressed as Father Christmas! You know what I mean, sir, and what with the time of year—’ He produced a set of keys for the cell and quickly unlocked it. As the door swung open with a groan, Trubshawe spun around, looking the DI squarely in the eye.

‘Implying?’

‘To be blunt, sir, we get a lot of problems with Santas getting a bit too merry.’

‘My driver is dressed as Santa, so’s my adjutant. So, in the eyes of the police, that suggests we’re madmen in red suits, correct?’

‘Er... What... How should I refer to you then, sir?’

Trubshawe didn’t look back. ‘Santa, you blithering idiot. My men will be arriving shortly. Show them to the debriefing room.’

If the outriders on motorbikes dressed as Santa Claus were hardly a conspicuous enough sight, the two armoured personnel carriers following them caused people to stop and

stare in disbelief as they sped down Whitehall and began to circle Trafalgar Square. Soldiers clung to the sides, machine guns slung round them on straps, and all wore the same bright red, fur trimmed costumes.

Lethbridge-Stewart stood in front of a large white projector screen, which showed a basic map of London's West End. He used his swagger stick to point to the six circles marking various spots heading along the main thoroughfare from Marble Arch to Tottenham Court Road.

'This route indicates that the device will reach the area surrounding Nelson's Column in just under thirty minutes. I want you to spread out and focus your attention on the Mall.'

A hand shot up from one of the lines of desks laid out in front of him.

'Yes, chap dressed as Santa?'

'Do we know what the device you've described is?'

'The enemy, pure and simple, targeting civilians without prejudice or motivation.' Lethbridge-Stewart glanced at some paperwork on the desk in front of him. 'Early reports indicate that no two deaths are the same. It's attacking indiscriminately and appears to be utilising different means of dispatch. One body was burned to a crisp, one dehydrated of all fluids, one simply had the main arteries removed. Precise, lethal, and an immediate and present threat.'

Another hand towards the back.

'Santa on the far left?'

'Sir, with all due respect, we'd function more efficiently with our own men. We've got Army, Navy and Air Force present...'

‘And we’ll all be working together,’ Lethbridge-Stewart said. ‘For the purposes of the party earlier on we’re all dressed the same way, and I’d suggest for the sake of unity, we remain as such. There’s no time to evacuate the streets, and there’s nothing more reassuring than Father Christmas on today of all days.’

‘Ho, ho, ho!’ came a lone unidentified voice near the back.

Lethbridge-Stewart stared in its direction. ‘Objectively, you have to realise that whatever this... This rogue agent is, its gathering data. At a guess, it’s figuring out the easiest way to kill us. We have to stop it before it gets too much information.’

‘Where do think it’s going,’ asked another Santa.

‘Isn’t it obvious?’ replied Lethbridge-Stewart. He pointed towards the map. There was a hushed silence as the implication kicked in.

Buckingham Palace was at the far end of the Mall, and everyone was home for the holidays.

It was a painting kit, if you looked at it harshly. No more than two inches in height, they were collectors’ pieces and tied in with an exhibition of military portraiture at the National Portrait Gallery. Not the kind of thing you’d normally associate Alistair with, but these were key figures from the history of the Scots Guards who fought in the Peninsular War during 1809. Sally was determined to make his desk look more particular and less cluttered, so if she could just engage his interest in finishing them, then maybe, just maybe...

As she queued to pay, she saw a note saying concessions

were available to military personnel attending the exhibition, so she got her ID out and glanced at the stern photo staring back at her.

Corporal Sally Wright. Soon to be Mrs Lethbridge-Stewart.

The phone just rang and rang. Nobody picked up. 'Sir, we're waiting outside...' A younger Santa, maybe a flight lieutenant or something, was calling into the office Lethbridge-Stewart stood in.

He replaced the receiver.

All he could do was hope that Sally was home.

Sally left by the north doors and stopped to look over at the centre of the Square. There, by one of the lions at the foot of Nelson's Column, a small crowd was gathering, all looking upwards.

She squinted, not quite able to make out what they were looking at. Her last medical had implied glasses might be needed within six months. Whatever the case, there was no way that was anything other than some kind of Christmas ornament, a bauble maybe, hovering above their heads.

But, how?

The Race Down the Mall

People were running and screaming. A sign it was too late! Lethbridge-Stewart was the first to reach the scene. His vehicle pulled up along the kerbside leading down the steps to the heart of the square, which had rapidly cleared as soon as it had begun.

There were three, four, possibly five figures frozen, some expressions of confusion, some in shock. A thin layer of ice had encased them, sealing them perfectly in a split second. Veins of frost, steaming at an even lower temperature against the natural chill in the air, threaded out from their feet like webs.

The freezing point of the human body was being tested. Maybe at varying temperatures for each victim. Nobody had survived.

‘Sir! Over there!’ One of the Santas stood on a low rising wall. He helped Lethbridge-Stewart up onto the ledge and handed him binoculars. ‘The left flank of Admiralty Arch.’

A black hole in the upper support pillar. Adjusting the focus, Lethbridge-Stewart could see it in more detail. The surrounding brickwork had simply melted away, like a hot wire had been forced through wax. He turned and shouted to the Santas who’d disembarked from the vehicles.

‘As suspected, it’s heading for the target. We’ve got

seconds. Maximum deterrent, go!

‘Sir.’ The Santa on the wall alongside him pointed towards the roads. ‘Too many abandoned cars on the streets, we won’t get through!’

At that second, Lethbridge-Stewart saw the answer. ‘Can you shoot? Pin point accuracy?’

‘Battalion champion, sir.’

‘Time to prove it. You!’ Two uniformed police officers on horseback had just arrived by the steps leading up to the gallery. Lethbridge-Stewart jumped down and headed towards them. ‘I’m seconding your horses!’

Sally never bothered with newspapers on Underground trains. She liked to people watch, mulling over in her mind who they were, what they did, and whether they even noticed they were being read like this.

The train slowed down in the tunnel and ground to a halt. They weren’t even near Green Park yet, so the train had hardly even started its journey. The driver’s voice crackled over the tannoy.

‘Due to an incident in the Trafalgar Square area we’re holding the train for a few moments. We’re not going to be stopping until Knightsbridge, so please change there to continue your journey.’

More waffle followed, but Sally couldn’t help but wonder what had happened since she’d ignored the Christmas light – some street performer pulling out all the stops, no doubt – and decided to head home.

Even at the far end of the Mall there was no way the sound from Trafalgar Square could have been heard. The tourists

were more concerned with getting camera lenses open wide enough to take in as much of Buckingham Palace as possible. In a large group at the foot of the Victoria Memorial the lead chorister of a group of twenty-five or so carol singers led them in an acapella version of *The Twelve Days of Christmas* as more and more sightseers gathered to watch and listen.

Nobody really noticed the sphere hovering by the trees across the road, roughly level with the light of a lamp post. Its red grid illuminated and started scanning the group. Like a hi-tech Swiss Army knife, various armatures unfolded, stretching and flexing syringes, nozzles and blades, almost as though it was deciding what to do first.

‘Can you fire that thing from horseback?’ Lethbridge-Stewart bellowed.

He swerved his horse round a taxi as the two Santas raced head on down a line of oncoming traffic, moving across to the lane that was emptier thanks to the snarl up the sphere had caused at the Arch. The other Santa shouted back.

‘I can try!’

‘Precisely what I wanted to hear!’ Lethbridge-Stewart grabbed hold of the reins and leaned forward as his horse raced on.

One by one the carol singers stopped.

Whether it was their own eye line that caught sight of what was heading towards them, or nudges that had distracted them to look, they were transfixed. Only one or two had the presence of mind to try and get away.

The sphere had moved high in front of them, a pulsating grid pattern of light projecting across the group as an armature lowered and lit up, refining its glow to a fine beam that touched the pavement below.

Only then, as it started to burn and slice through the pavement, did any notion begin to form of what might be happening.

Rapidly moving across the grid, even the ground beneath them shattered and split open as the dissection began. The sharp crack of rifle fire suddenly caught the beam arm, and the singers ran screaming for their lives.

The fact that Father Christmas was standing up in the saddle of an approaching horse barely mattered, and no one cared that the second, closer Santa had balanced on the side stirrup of his saddle and jumped for all he was worth when he reached the sphere.

Lethbridge-Stewart landed with the sphere pressing into his stomach, his own weight bearing down on and winding him instantly. Without pausing, it began to spin and try to ascend, with several metal arms lowering down thrashing wildly, but by grabbing two with either hand, he began to wrestle against whatever force was repelling it against gravity and brought it crashing to the ground a few feet away.

For a few seconds, there was nothing. No energy, no movement, but then it was like a reserve of power kicked in and both he and the sphere took off, careering over the main gates and across the courtyard of Buckingham Palace.

As the support vehicles, helicopters, and the other Santas started to arrive, all they could see was Lethbridge-Stewart

crash through the windows of the lower ground floor as Royal Guardsmen raced after him opening fire.

Down at the Palace

‘Don’t move!’ Lethbridge-Stewart had no idea how long he’d been unconscious. It looked like he’d landed in an ornate reception room, lined with fading portraits and aging furniture that ultimately had immense individual meaning from some point in history. A Royal Horse Artillery Guardsman had the barrel of a rifle aimed squarely at his face.

‘You have to evacuate the building.’ Lethbridge-Stewart barely had any voice.

‘Don’t say another word.’

‘Is Her Majesty in residence?’

‘I’m warning you!’

The Guardsman was clearly nervous, on edge, liable to pull the trigger if one false move was made. The scream of pain from deeper within the palace was all the distraction Lethbridge-Stewart needed. Bringing his boots up, he managed to grab the rifle and steer the aim left, as he lifted the Guardsman up by the stomach and a bullet ricocheted across the marble floor.

Crashing down to one side, he didn’t even have a chance to regain his breath before the figure dressed as Santa had grabbed the weapon and run into the corridor outside.

*

The gates into the Palace courtyard swung open.

With at least eight Santa Clauses on foot, others disembarked from the personnel vehicles. In seconds, they were dividing up to search the inside of the palace.

Crouching low, rifle fully breached and loaded, Lethbridge-Stewart moved sideways up the grand staircase ahead, levelling its sight line for anything that moved. Into the first state room, and a loud crash ahead made him lower the weapon and run to the next set of doors.

A long richly furnished gallery opened up ahead. At the far end mounted on the wall, reaching from floor to ceiling, an ornately gilded mirror offered no respite for anyone from being easily seen. But that didn't seem to be an immediate problem.

The sphere hovered, transfixed by the reflection of itself. The red lighting grid on its surface switched on and immediately bounced the light away in the glass, projecting it right over Lethbridge-Stewart's head. He quickly dived for cover behind a table as the sphere spun round. Even though it clearly saw him, it slowly turned back, analysing its own reflection, considering that a more worthy problem for now.

One of the cantilevered arms lowered, a blue flame igniting from its tip, which then hesitantly began to reach towards the reflection. There were only seconds before it realised its mistake; that there was no second sphere present.

Lethbridge-Stewart had to take his chance.

Aiming the rifle squarely at its centre, one bullet clipped the casing and made the sphere spin round, wildly firing

blasts of flame from the armature, strafing across incalculable historical value and reducing it to ash in seconds. Part of the blast caught the brace holding an overhead chandelier, so it lurched and held on to the ceiling, swinging heavily from a few wires.

Lying on the ground, Lethbridge-Stewart focused and took aim. He could see a chance, but the timing would have to be spot on. Gliding forward, the sphere kept spitting fire. The crack of the rifle shot told it exactly where its assailant was, but before it could even turn the flames towards him, the entire chandelier had landed on top of it, trapping it with the weight and dense mass of jewels that enveloped it. More flames belched out, increasing in volume and fury, and the sphere rocked and slammed against the makeshift cage pinning it down. And then suddenly it stopped.

Like the iris of a camera, the front of its dome opened allowing a small circular disc to open up like the petals of a steel flower. The shrill screech of a scrambled transmitter signal shredded the air as it began to pulsate.

Whatever it needed to know, or whatever the reason behind its sudden appearance, it was letting the owners know what it had found out. How the hell could it be blocked?

‘Have you got any idea how much that carpet’s worth?’

Trubshawe stood by Lethbridge-Stewart, who was still holding the fire extinguisher he’d retrieved to try and stop the transmitter. The chandelier and sphere lay in a pool of foam.

‘And you’d better pray the paintings don’t run!’

Trubshawe turned and left, and Lethbridge-Stewart couldn’t help but wonder where exactly the spheres had

come from. The USSR? No. Not discreet enough. Korea? There was no way to tell.

‘Do they have any idea what this thing was?’

‘Need to know basis, I’m afraid.’ Trubshawe didn’t even look back. ‘And the less we know, the more you needn’t worry. Oh, and by the way, old chap, I let Corporal Wright know you’ll be back by eight. Don’t let me down.’

A little bit inside Lethbridge-Stewart quietly sank. That one will certainly go up and down the corridors. Sometimes you tended to forget that even intelligence officials gossip.

Outside the doorway to his home, the smells of cooking inside were drifting out. He’d got back to the Dorchester, picked up his presents for Sally, but in a move that even surprised himself, he decided not to change.

This wasn’t going to be a normal Christmas. He wasn’t alone anymore. And that called for a change.

‘Ho, ho, ho! Merry Christmas!’

He tapped on the door. Even though he’d lowered his voice, she knew. And he could hear her excitedly undoing the lock.

This was Christmas would be different, and the first of many with Sally.

The End

Lethbridge-Stewart will return in Spring 2016.

Moon Blink
by Sadie Miller

*Daughter of Doctor Who legend,
Elisabeth Sladen.*

Available from Candy Jar Books

LETHBRIDGE-STEWART: THE FORGOTTEN SON
by Andy Frankham-Allen

For Colonel Alistair Lethbridge-Stewart his life in the Scots Guards was straightforward enough; rising in the ranks through nineteen years of military service. But then his regiment was assigned to help combat the Yeti incursion in London, the robotic soldiers of an alien entity known as the Great Intelligence. For Lethbridge-Stewart, life would never be the same again.

Meanwhile in the small Cornish village of Bledoe a man is haunted by the memory of an accident thirty years old. The Hollow Man of Remington Manor seems to have woken once more. And in Coleshill, Buckinghamshire, Mary Gore is plagued by the voice of a small boy, calling her home.

What connects these strange events to the recent Yeti incursion, and just what has it all to do with Lethbridge-Stewart?

“A solid start to the series. The Brigadier is such an integral part of Doctor Who mythos, it seems right and proper he now has his own series.” – Doctor Who Magazine

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LETHBRIDGE-STEWART: THE SCHIZOID EARTH
by David A McIntee

Lethbridge-Stewart was supposed to be in the mountains of the east, but things didn't quite go according to plan. On the eve of war, something appeared in the sky; a presence that blotted out the moon. Now it has returned, and no battle plan can survive first contact with this enemy.

Why do the ghosts of fallen soldiers still fight long-forgotten battles against living men? What is the secret of the rural English town of Deepdene? Lethbridge-Stewart has good reason to doubt his own sanity, but is he suffering illness or injury, or is something more sinister going on?

Plagued by nightmares of being trapped in a past that never happened, Lethbridge-Stewart must unravel the mystery of a man ten years out of his time; a man who cannot possibly still exist.

“McIntee turns in a fine Who-based thriller that harkens back to the era in which it’s set while also exploring ideas and concepts more modern. It’s a fast paced tale that makes for a wonderful addition to this new series.” – Warped Factor

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by Andy Frankham-Allen

Based on a story by Terrance Dicks

Fang Rock has always had a bad reputation. Since 1955 the lighthouse has been out of commission, shut down because of fire that gutted the entire tower. But now, finally updated and fully renovated, the island and lighthouse is once again about to be brought back into service.

Students have gathered on Fang Rock to celebrate the opening of the ‘most haunted lighthouse of the British Isles’, but they get more than they bargained for when the ghosts of long-dead men return, accompanied by a falling star.

What connects a shooting star, ghosts of men killed in 1902 and the beast that roamed Fang Rock in 1823? Lethbridge-Stewart and Anne Travers are about to discover the answer first hand...

“With a story of ghostly recordings much in the style of Nigel Kneale’s Stone Tape, Anne Travers rather steals the story and becomes the key character. Overall a good tale. Worth a read.” – Starburst Magazine

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**LETHBRIDGE-STEWART: MUTUALLY ASSURED
DOMINATION**

by Nick Walters

The Dominators, the Masters of the Ten Galaxies, have come to Earth, and brought with them their deadly robotic weapons, the Quarks!

It's the summer of '69. Flower power is at its height, and nuclear power is in its infancy. Journalist Harold Chorley is out of work, and Colonel Alistair Lethbridge-Stewart is out of sorts. Dominex Industries are on the up, promising cheap energy for all. But people have started going missing near their plant on Dartmoor. Coincidence, or are sinister forces at work?

Join Lethbridge-Stewart and uneasy ally Harold Chorley as they delve into the secrets behind Dominex, and uncover a plan that could bring about the end of the world.

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Tommy Parker: Destiny Will Find You

by Anthony Ormond

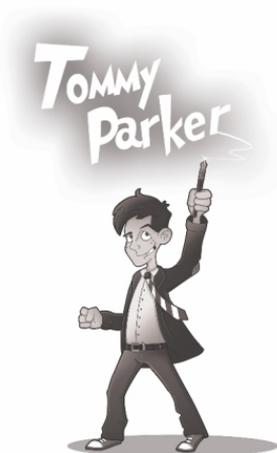
When Tommy Parker packs his bag and goes to his grandpa's house for the summer he has no idea that his life is about to change forever.

But that's exactly what happens when his grandpa lets him in on a fantastic secret. He has a pen that lets him travel through his own memories and alter the past. Imagine that! Being able to travel into your own past and re-write your future.

Tommy Parker: Destiny Will Find You! is an exhilarating adventure that redefines the time travel genre.

You'll never look at your memories in quite the same way again...

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