

THE
LUCY WILSON
MYSTERIES



THE PLATINUM SCEPTRE



BAZ GREENLAND

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CANDY JAR BOOKS · CARDIFF
2022

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Range Editor: Shaun Russell

Continuity Editor: Andy Frankham-Allen

Cover: Steve Beckett

Licensed by Hannah Haisman

Published by

Candy Jar Books

Mackintosh House

136 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 1DJ

www.candyjarbooks.co.uk

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Lucy Wilson was in the Tower of London. She had been planning her trip with her brother Conall and his husband Dean for months. After spending what seemed like forever stuck in Ogmores-by-Sea, she was out in the world again with the people she loved.

And Lucy was in London for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on Thursday 2nd June 2022, which incidentally was her seventeenth birthday. She hoped to see the Queen during the celebrations. Conall and Dean were determined to find the perfect spot to wave to her.

But that was a few days away. Lucy had a whole weeks' worth of activities planned for half-term and, first up, was a trip to the Tower of London to see the Crown Jewels.

As she stepped into the big room with the glass display cabinets, she was greeted with the glow of gold, silver, diamonds, and lots of brightly coloured jewels. Lucy was certain the contents of this room cost more than the entire population of Ogmores-by-Sea made in a year.

'Pretty neat, isn't it?' Conall said, pointing towards the big crown fashioned with hundreds of diamonds in the centre of the room.

'Do you think Queen Elizabeth is going to wear that on Thursday?' Lucy asked in awe.

Dean laughed. 'Nah, I think she's a bit old to be

wearing that now. I can see her in a nice yellow hat.'

Lucy thought the crown looked incredibly heavy. The Queen was in her nineties now. She was sure no one *that* old could wear that on their head.

As Conall and Dean moved off to inspect the other bejewelled items on display, something odd caught Lucy's attention. Across the room, a man in a plain black suit was standing over another big glass display case.

Lucy thought she saw his nose twitch back and forth.

The man scanned the room, eying the crowd of tourists and guards uneasily. Lucy turned away before he could spot her looking at him, waiting for him to return his attention to the glass case.

Slowly, Lucy took a step towards the man. She had an uneasy feeling about what he was up to, and she had learned to trust her instincts over the years. It had saved her life on more than one occasion.

The strange man took something out of his jacket pocket. It was small and silver, a little bigger than the palm of his hand. There was an orange glow coming from the object as he gently placed it on the protective glass casing.

There was a flash of orange light. The strange man lifted the silver object off the glass and put it back in his pocket quickly.

Lucy turned away before he could spot her

watching him. No one else in the room seemed to have noticed what had happened, not even the two guards standing near the entrance. Conall and Dean were chatting and laughing away in one corner.

She frowned and turned back, wondering whether she should ask the man what he was doing.

He was gone.

Lucy hurried over to the glass case and peered inside.

A long silvery sceptre, woven with gold and jewels, lay beneath the glass on a red cushion. Beneath it, the card read,

The platinum-coated sceptre will be held by HRH Queen Elizabeth II during the Platinum Jubilee celebrations, as she marks her seventy years on the throne. It was last used by the Queen during her Silver Jubilee celebrations in 1977.

Lucy frowned. Why did that strange man want the sceptre? A sceptre, the Queen herself would be holding in a few days.

She looked around the room, her heart racing, looking for any sign of the man in the black suit. What was he up to?

Lucy looked back down at the sceptre. Her instincts told her to touch the glass. She held her breath and gently laid her fingers on the cabinet. The glass was warm to the touch and melted away from her hands like a sugar cube in a cup of tea.

That wasn't right.

Lucy hesitated. Should she warn the guards? Would they believe her?

Is the Queen in danger? she thought. Her heart was racing as she put her hand down onto the sceptre, wrapping her fingers round the gold base...

...and the world changed around her.

Lucy gasped as she came face-to-face with crowds of people, cheering and waving. She was still holding the end of the sceptre, but when she looked up, she wasn't the only one with a hand wrapped around it.

A woman in a pink dress and hat was holding the other end of the sceptre and she did not look amused. 'Who are you?' the woman said with a gasp.

Lucy's jaw dropped. 'Are you Queen Elizabeth?'

'How did you get here?' the Queen – a much younger Queen, by the look of her – demanded angrily.

Lucy let go of the sceptre and spun around in shock and disbelief. She was standing on a balcony, overlooking huge crowds of people waving flags and cheering. Next to her stood a very angry looking Queen Elizabeth and a man in military uniform she was sure was the Queen's husband, Prince Phillip.

He didn't look happy either.

Several other uniformed men were looking at her

too with bewildered expressions. Lucy spun round one more time, gasping in disbelief and hundreds, maybe thousands of faces, all began to stare at her direction.

She broke into a run.

Lucy had no idea what she was going to do, where she was going to go, or how she was going to find a way back. She just ran, darting past one surprised guard and into a big room, where several other startled men and woman were gasping at the sight of a teenage girl running away from the Queen of England.

She kept running, past two men in uniform who leapt with outstretched arms to grab her by the shoulders and around a startled maid who screamed as a silver tray of teacups smashed to the floor.

Lucy kept running down a long, carpeted corridor, past doors and tapestries and vases and flowers. If she stopped even for a moment, she would probably have found it all beautiful and impressive. But right now, she needed to find somewhere to hide.

She saw an open door and ran into a room with several tall bookcases, some big armchairs, and a piano. It was empty. Panting for breath, she closed the door behind her and collapsed on one of the big chairs, heaving for air.

Luckily, no one came. Lucy laid her head back

on the soft furnishings and took a deep breath, trying to quell the panic she was feeling. Eventually, the room stopped spinning, her heartbeat slowed, and she relaxed.

Lucy sat in the room, wondering how far she must have run. People would surely be looking for her everywhere, a strange girl that had startled the Queen on the balcony of Buckingham Palace. She knew she couldn't stay here long. She needed a better hiding place.

And then what? Lucy wracked her brain to work out what she would do next. Somehow, she was in Buckingham Palace, with the Queen of England and she was pretty sure, it wasn't 2022. She had travelled through time before, but this wasn't like that one time with Edward Travers and HG Wells.

The sceptre.

She remembered that the Queen had used it for the Silver Jubilee in 1977. Was that where she was now? Had the sceptre sent her back through time? And if so, what did that strange man in the black suit have to do with it?

Lucy waited a little longer before she decided to step outside into the corridors of Buckingham Palace and find a safer place to hide. She walked down a long passage and found herself near a large staircase and walls filled with huge paintings that seemed as big as her bedroom at home.

It was magnificent.

She allowed herself a moment to take in the splendour of the palace, and then she heard footsteps coming up towards her. Holding her breath, she skulked behind a large potted plant and hoped she wouldn't be spotted.

A man in a black suit reached the top of the steps. Lucy gasped. It was the man from the Tower of London, and he looked exactly the same as he had in 2022!

Was he a time traveller like her? An alien, perhaps?

Lucy needed to know what was really happening. With a deep breath, she stepped out from the plant to confront him.

The man looked at her with wide eyes and gasped. 'It's you!'

'What did you do with that sceptre?' she demanded, hands on hips. 'Why did you bring me here?'

'Bring you... you?' he stuttered angrily, and his nose did that same weird twitch it had done in the tower. It wasn't natural. 'You ruined my plans!'

'Your plans? You mean that was meant for the Queen?'

His eyes widened into a fierce glare, and she stepped back with hesitation. She suddenly felt a lot less confident about confronting him.

‘What were you trying to do?’ she demanded, keenly aware that her voice was wavering a little.

She thought she heard she heard footsteps behind her and glanced nervously back the passage she had come from. Two men were hurrying in her direction.

What was she going to do? Lucy knew that she was running out of time to get some answers.

‘Tell me everything you—’

She froze.

The man was running away, down another passage near the top of the stairs. Lucy ran after him and spotted three men walking up the steps too. They shouted something in her direction, but she didn’t wait to be caught. Her best chance was to catch the man that had brought her here.

He pushed open a door and vanished inside. Lucy ran after him and grabbed the handle of the door, forcing it wide open.

It was a simple store cupboard, with brooms and other cleaning implements neatly stacked. But at the end of the space, a glowing white barrier of light revealed another room beyond. The man was stepping through what Lucy could only describe as a portal.

She ran after him and jumped through the portal after him.

Lucy found herself in a big room with weird green lights and a giant computer on a silver table. She frowned. This was 1977. She was quite sure that people didn't have computers in this time, even in a place like Buckingham Palace.

The room looked nothing like the rest of the palace, though. Where had the portal taken her now?

The man faced her with a fierce glare. 'What do you think you are doing, little girl?' he said with a snarl.

Lucy gave him her fiercest stare back. 'Little girl?! I'll have you know I have faced worst things than you. This isn't my first trip through time either.'

His nose twitched again. 'Yes. I sense something about you.' He grabbed a strange glowing device from the silver table. It looked like the one he has used in the tower. He pointed it at the portal, and it vanished behind her.

She was trapped.

'Are you part of the anti-Zork-Morkavi-Rokosh Consortium?'

Lucy frowned. 'The Zork what?' she demanded.

He smiled and tapped the side of his nose. His appearance shimmered and revealed a pale, yellow face that looked almost robotic. He had no nose and his eyes looked like glass. She thought she heard the hum of what sounded like a computer fan coming from his chest.

Lucy took a step back. 'Are you a robot?' she asked nervously.

He laughed. Or at least she thought he was laughing. His response sounded less human and more a jumble of hums, clicks and beeps.

'The Zork-Morkavi-Rokosh are not robots,' he replied. His voice sounded like he was speaking underwater. 'We are so much more.'

'You look like a robot to me.'

'We are travellers,' he continued. 'We feed on paradoxes. On time distortions. On the what was, and the what might be.'

Lucy pretended to yawn. She wasn't going to show him she was afraid. 'A load of old nonsense if you ask me.'

'You pretend to mock me. You do not understand.'

'Then explain it to me,' she snapped. If she could get him to tell her his plans, maybe she could get some help. Her grandfather was alive and well in this time. One call to UNIT and these silly Zork robots would be stopped, once and for all.

'You would not understand. Your feeble human brain would not comprehend the majesty of the Zork-Morkavi-Rokosh's plan.'

'The sceptre,' she said coolly. 'It was a trap, for Queen Elizabeth II, right?'

'It would have taken her,' he replied.

Well, at least I've got him talking, she thought. 'Back here? To 1977? But there's already a Queen Elizabeth here. Why would you want the old Queen and the young Queen in the same place?'

'What was, will not be. What is, will be unborn.'

Lucy frowned. 'Wait, if I was holding the sceptre in 2022 and the younger Queen was holding it in 1977, what would have happened if both Queens were holding it at the same time?'

'What was, will not be. What is, will be unborn.'

'Yes, you said that.' She sighed and then froze. 'If both Queens were sharing the same space and time, would that... create some kind of paradox?'

The robot's face seemed to smile. 'So, you do understand, human girl.'

'What was, will not be. What is, will be unborn,' she repeated those words, reality dawning in her. 'It would have destroyed them both?'

He laughed. It was worse, this time. Menacing. Cruel. 'It would have ripped her from time. Then and now.'

'And then what?' What would removing the Queen do?'

He seemed to hesitate. 'In front of the world. Everyone would have seen. Everyone would have feared.'

The whole world had been watching the Silver Jubilee! 'A world, wide panic!' she gasped. 'The Queen

vanishing before the world's eyes.'

Lucy tried to reason what that would mean. 'But, if the Queen was removed from time in 1977, then the future Queen couldn't have gone back in time to be removed from time?'

'A paradox, of our creation. Our gateway to your world. To our dominion.'

'You feed on paradoxes. On time distortions.' Lucy gasped again. 'That's your plan. But what about everyone on Earth? What about humanity?'

'The Zork-Morkavi-Rokosh must feed,' he replied grimly. 'All the world shall be ours to do with as we please! Their panic. Their suffering. It makes the feeding so much richer.'

Lucy had to warn someone. She had to warn the UNIT. She had to warn the Queen!

'What's that, over there?' she asked, pointing behind the Zork robot.

He turned his head in three slow, mechanical motions. She almost couldn't believe he had fallen for it! She reached out and grabbed the strange device in his hand and saw a glass button as its centre. She turned around and pressed it.

The portal to the broom cupboard reappeared.

She took a step towards it and looked back at the Zork robot. 'How many of you are there?'

'Four. That is all we need to destroy your world. No more. No less.'

‘Gotcha!’ she said and jumped through the portal.

Lucy pushed open the broom cupboard door and stumbled into the corridor near the big staircase. She almost fell headfirst into a butler who was passing by.

‘What in God’s green earth are you doing!’ he exclaimed, holding onto a silver tray of cups, without knocking a single one onto the carpeted floor.

‘Hi, I’m sorry!’ she replied, catching her breath. ‘Listen! I’ve got to warn the Queen! There are alien robot imposters here in the palace and they are trying to kill us all!’

‘I beg your pardon, young lady!’

Lucy recognised that voice.

Queen Elizabeth II was standing right behind her.

Lucy wasn’t sure what to do. She smiled sheepishly and attempted her best curtsy. The Queen did not look amused.

‘Ma’am, I’m sorry. But you must believe me. There are—’

‘Yes, alien robot imposters,’ the Queen said with disdain. ‘Now enough of this nonsense. I demand to know what kind of game you are playing here, young lady. Do you know how much trouble you have caused?’

Lucy tried to say something, but the words

fumbling in her mouth were little more than gasped mumbles. The Queen was giving her a stern look. It was like having your mum, your dad, your grandparents and all your teachers disappointed at you, at once!

Before she could piece together a response, the broom cupboard door opened behind her. The Zork robot she had confronted stepped out, and looked at the startled butler, Queen Elizabeth, and Lucy. He had fixed his human face again.

‘That’s him!’ Lucy shouted, pointing frantically at the man in the black suit,

‘Enough of this nonsense!’ the Queen replied sharply. She looked at the butler. ‘George, would you kindly escort this girl downstairs and find out just how she managed to find her way into the palace.’

The butler turned his head sharply towards the man in the black suit. The man, the Zork alien imposter, looked at the butler and opened his mouth. A weird screeching sound erupted from his lips. It sounded like a car engine starting.

The butler opened his mouth. The same sound came out. Lucy gasped. The butler was one of the Zork alien imposters too!

The butler picked up a teacup and it started to glow orange in his hand. His head juddered in the direction of the Queen, like his head was attached

to a cog, and he threw it in her direction. Lucy reached out and swatted the glowing teacup against the far wall of the corridor, where it exploded in a shower of sparks.

‘George!’ the Queen said with a gasp.

‘That’s not George!’ Lucy cried. ‘They’re trying to kill you. Come on!’

Without thinking, Lucy grabbed the Queen by the hand and dragged her away. Her eyes wide, her mouth dropping in shock, the Queen simply followed.

‘In here, young lady!’ the Queen said, pushing open a door and hurrying inside, still holding Lucy’s hand. Only when the Queen closed it, and turned the key in the lock, did she let go.

Lucy took in her surroundings. It was another small drawing room, with some soft wing-backed chairs, a couple of bookcases and a table. It looked just as fancy as the rest of the palace.

The Queen eyed the door nervously and then looked at Lucy, composing herself. ‘Now, will you please tell me who you are and just what is going on.’

Lucy took a deep breath. ‘Your majesty. My name is Lucy Wilson.’

The Queen nodded. ‘We are pleased to meet you. Go on.’

‘Those two men back they aren’t who you think

they were.'

'George has served me for the past seven years. One does not recall him ever throwing an exploding teacup in one's direction.'

'Yeah,' Lucy began to laugh nervously and thought better on of it. 'I don't know where the real George is. That man there... well... he's kind of a robot.'

'A robot?' The Queen asked with one raised eyebrow.

'Well, maybe he's an alien. Maybe he's both.' Lucy sighed. She wasn't doing a very good job of explaining it.

The door handle began to rattle, and the Queen took a step back quickly.

'Is there another way out?' Lucy asked. 'We need to get help.'

The Queen nodded. 'This way, Miss Wilson.'

She quickly moved to the large patio doors and pulled them open. She looked a lot younger than Lucy remembered. She had to be about fifty in this time. It was odd to see her moving around with so much energy.

Lucy followed the Queen onto the balcony, and they hurried along the outside path overlooking the gardens on the inside of the palace grounds. They passed three patio doors and entered another room.

Behind her, Lucy heard a crash and wondered if

the two Zork robots had broken their way into the room they had just been in.

They startled a maid, who was busy dusting the mantle of a big fireplace. The Queen looked at her and smiled. 'Do not mind us, dear. We are just passing through.'

Lucy gave the startled maid an awkward smile and followed the Queen. They exited the room and hurried down another corridor, until they came to another big room. They stepped inside and the Queen locked the door behind them.

'That should give you time to finish your story, Lucy Wilson,' the Queen said, taking a seat on a small sofa and brushing down the creases in the pink skirt of her dress.

Lucy stood awkwardly. 'Erm...'

'Do not mumble, dear. Speak up.'

'Right. Yes. The...'

'The alien robots?'

'Yes, the alien robots. They came to kidnap you. Or at least I think that was what they had planned. You see, I've dealt with things like this before and I think I mucked up their plan.'

'The plan, young lady?'

'Well, it's a bit complicated. All I know is that they are called the Zork Mork something. Er. Let's just call them the Zork, shall we?'

'We shall,' the Queen said with an encouraging

smile.

Lucy nodded. 'Good. Right. The Zork. Erm. When I turned up on the balcony, back then, I think I was able to stop them from taking you away.'

'How did one appear?' the Queen asked.

'Well, that's another long story,' Lucy replied. 'I am from the future.'

The Queen gave her another stern look. 'The future, young lady?'

'Yes... er... 2022, your Majesty.'

'2022? Well, that is a long time.' The Queen smiled. 'I assume Charles is King?'

'Actually, you're still the Queen.'

The Queen raised an eyebrow. 'Really? That would mean I have been on the throne for...'

'Seventy years. We're celebrating your Platinum Jubilee.'

'Really, Miss Wilson?' She didn't sound like the believed her.

'Listen, there are four of them, your Majesty.'

'Four Zorks?'

'That's what he said. So, there must be two more imposters here in Buckingham Palace.'

The Queen frowned. 'And how does one know that you are not one of these... Zorks?'

'Well, if I were, you would probably be dead, your Majesty. Sorry. Didn't mean it to come out that way.'

There was a hint of a smile at the corners of the Queen's mouth. 'Well, quite. Nothing would be served by telling me one's plan.'

Lucy was about to say the enemy revealed their plans all the time but thought better of it.

'Your Majesty. We need help. My grandfather. He works for UNIT.'

The Queen frowned. 'The... United Nations Intelligence Taskforce?'

'That's the one.'

'Does UNIT handle the likes of these Zork?'

'Oh yes! All the time. I think they're our best bet to stop them.'

The Queen looked her an awfully long time and then nodded. She moved from the sofa and walked across to an old-fashioned telephone on a small table and made a call.

'Ah yes, good afternoon. Yes, I am fine, thank you for asking. But I must make you aware of a small problem I have encountered. Yes, one is fine but looking for action. Yes. Exactly. Now would you please find the Captain of the Queen's Guard up immediately and send a message to the United Nations Intelligence Taskforce please. Ask for...'

The Queen put her hand over the receiver. 'Your grandfather's name?'

'Oh, err, Brigadier Alistair Lethbridge-Stewart, but I think he's retired now. He's a teacher at

Brendon, but he might not be. Sorry, Grandad says time is really confusing in the 1970s.'

The Queen returned to her call. 'See if you can track down Brigadier Alistair Lethbridge-Stewart. I will await him, and the captain, in The Crimson Drawing Room in fifteen minutes. Thank you.'

The Queen put the phone down and turned to Lucy. 'Miss Wilson, would you care to accompany me?'

The Queen decided it would be best to avoid any palace staff – and any potential Zork alien imposters – until she had spoken with the captain of Queen's Guard personally. They hurried through the corridors of Buckingham Palace as stealthily as they could muster.

Some of the rooms they passed looked magnificent, but nothing could have prepared her for The Crimson Drawing Room. It had bright red walls, decorated with huge paintings in ornate gold frames, a stunning, intricately decorated ceiling and massive chandelier. Even the chairs were special. Gold, with red cushions. Lucy's jaw hung open in awe.

'This was Queen Charlotte's drawing room in the 1760s,' the Queen said, as she looked at the paintings. 'You will notice several masterpieces in this room, including Rubens and van Dyck.'

‘What? Oh, yeah.’ Lucy replied sheepishly. She had no idea who Rubens and van Dyck were, but they must have been painters. Hobo would have known.

A moment later, the doors of The Crimson Drawing Room opened and an officer in a red jacket strolled in.

‘Ah, thank you for joining us, Captain,’ the Queen said with complete grace and calm. The fact that killer alien robots were after her didn’t seem to have flustered her at all.

The captain nodded and turned his head to Lucy. His eyes narrowed suspiciously.

‘Allow me to introduce Miss Lucy Wilson. She was kind enough to save my life. Now—’

The captain’s nose twitched, and Lucy gasped, cutting off the Queen mid-sentence.

‘He’s a Zork!’ Lucy cried.

The captain turned his head sharply and looked at the Queen. He ripped the buttons from his jacket and gripped them tightly. An orange glow poured through his fingers.

Lucy grabbed the Queen by the arm and yanked her away just in time as the Zork sent the handful of exploding buttons in her direction. They scattered on the marble floor, scorching it black.

‘We’ve got to go!’ Lucy screamed.

But before they could reach the door, two more

figures appeared. George the butler and the man in the black suit. They were trapped!

The man in the black suit, tapped his nose, revealing the yellow, nose-less robot face within. The other two Zorks did the same. The Queen gasped.

'You have ruined our plan, Lucy Wilson. But we will prevail.' The Zork in the black suit said in his weird, robotic voice.

'Just who do you think you are!' The Queen snapped.

The Zork in the black suit looked at her with those glowing, glassy eyes. 'We are the Zork-Morkavi-Rokosh. We will feed.'

'Not in my country! Not in my home!' The Queen said defiantly. 'I have seen tyranny in my life and every time, it was defeated. You will be no different.'

The Zork seemed to smile. 'Irrelevant. You will—'

Before he could finish, his glass eyes exploded, and he fell, face down, onto the marble floor. Five men burst into the room, guns ready and took down the other two Zorks.

Lucy's smiled in delight. She recognised the green uniforms. It was UNIT.

One man stepped forward, holstering his gun as he approached the Queen. He had a black moustache and a very serious expression. Lucy's heart leapt. She knew who this man was. It was Grandad.

'You Majesty,' Grandad said, with a bow. 'I must

apologise for our tardiness. I was invigilating a Maths test... but duty calls, Ma'am.'

The Queen shook her head. 'No apology required, officer?'

He nodded and saluted her sharply. 'Brigadier Alistair Lethbridge-Stewart, Ma'am.'

Lucy stepped forward. She didn't quite know what to say. She knew she couldn't tell him she was his granddaughter from the future.

'There was a fourth one,' she began hesitantly.

Grandad looked at the Zork lying on the ground. 'Yes, he attacked our helicopter the moment we landed in the palace grounds. Fortunately, he was no match for UNIT.'

'Excellent job, Brigadier,' the Queen said. 'She looked down at the three dead Zork on the floor. 'George, is he...?'

'No, Ma'am,' Grandad replied. 'We found your captain, the butler and two office clerks bound in a warehouse just outside the city.'

'That was quick!' Lucy exclaimed.

Grandad sighed. 'I must apologise, Ma'am. I'm told UNIT have been tracking these imposters since yesterday. They didn't realise what the threat was until an hour ago.'

He looked at the Zorks and grimaced. 'I just wish we had got here sooner.'

'There will be time for commiserations and

lamentations later, Brigadier,' the Queen replied softly. 'I am just relieved no one was seriously hurt, thanks to your actions.'

The Queen turned to Lucy. 'And Miss Wilson here. A brave young woman.'

Grandad's eyes hit her with a hint of suspicion but nodded. 'Bravery, indeed.'

Lucy waited in a drawing room alone, while the Queen returned to her duties and Grandad and UNIT busied themselves cleaning up the mess the Zork had caused. Outside the Silver Jubilee celebrations continued and the world seemed unaware of all the strange events that had taken place inside Buckingham Palace.

She sipped her tea, wondering what was going to happen to her. Would she go home again? She had travelled through time before and always, she found a way back. But this seemed different. She no longer had the platinum sceptre the Zork had used to bring her to 1977.

The door opened and Grandad stepped in. She wanted to run and hug him, but she knew that wouldn't be proper. He didn't know who she was, and she had no idea what damage might happen to the timeline if she told him.

She had probably revealed too much to Queen Elizabeth already.

Grandad looked at her sternly and sat down on a chair opposite her.

‘Young lady, I would very much like to know how you got here and how you knew so much about these invaders.’

Lucy didn’t know where to begin, so she deflected with a question of her own. ‘Did you find that secret room?’

Her grandfather paused and then nodded. ‘Funny thing. Everything inside was melting. The bodies of the alien imposters too. It’s as if all their technology started to erode the moment that we stopped them.’

‘The sceptre?’ Lucy muttered out loud. ‘Did that melt too?’

To her surprise, Grandad pulled out the platinum sceptre from his jacket and placed it on the table before her. ‘No. It does not appear to be made from the same material as the rest of their technology. I cannot explain what its purpose was or how they planned to use it to kill the Queen.’

Lucy wondered... just maybe... ‘Can I touch it?’
‘I would advise against it.’

Lucy wanted to spend time with Grandad. To find out what his life was like listen to all those crazy adventures he had told her when she was young. She desperately wanted to enjoy every minute she could with him.

This was a chance of a lifetime. Seeing her grandfather, Brigadier Alistair Lethbridge-Stewart, in action. She had so many questions to ask him. It broke her heart to leave him.

But she didn't think she would have another chance to touch the sceptre again. And if it was her only chance to get home. If only she had worn her ring this morning. It was sitting on the bedside table back home.

Lucy smiled at Grandad, taking in the image of his face, and holding it firm in her memory. Taking a deep breath, she grabbed the end of the sceptre...

Suddenly, Lucy was back in the Tower of London again. Conall and Dean were still talking, and everyone was walking about the exhibit without a care in the world. When she looked down at the case, the glass was whole again and the platinum sceptre was laid inside, looking as harmless as ever on the red cushion.

'Anything else you want to look at?'

Lucy turned as Conall approached her and placed a hand on her shoulder.

'No, I think I'm all done. Shall we get some lunch?'

Conall smiled. 'That sounds like a great idea.'

That Thursday, Lucy stood waiting for the Queen's car to pass. The crowds were out cheering and

waving flags, much like they had on the Silver Jubilee. Some people still wore masks to be safe, but Lucy was glad to be out here in the open to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee.

Conall and Dean stood behind her, waving flags and waiting excitedly for the Queen's procession to pass.

Soon there was a cheer as movement appeared on the road ahead. Soldiers and horses marched past and then came the car, with the Queen inside. She looked far more fragile than when she had last seen her. But she was much older now.

Lucy smiled and waved out her hand excitedly at the Queen.

And then, something strange happened. As the car passed her by, the Queen's eyes fixed upon Lucy. For a moment, she saw what she thought was a wink.

Lucy smiled back.

Maybe the Queen remembered her after all...

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YEAR ONE



THE FORGOTTEN SON
ANDY FRANKHAM-ALLEN

FROM THE CLASSIC ERA OF DOCTOR WHO

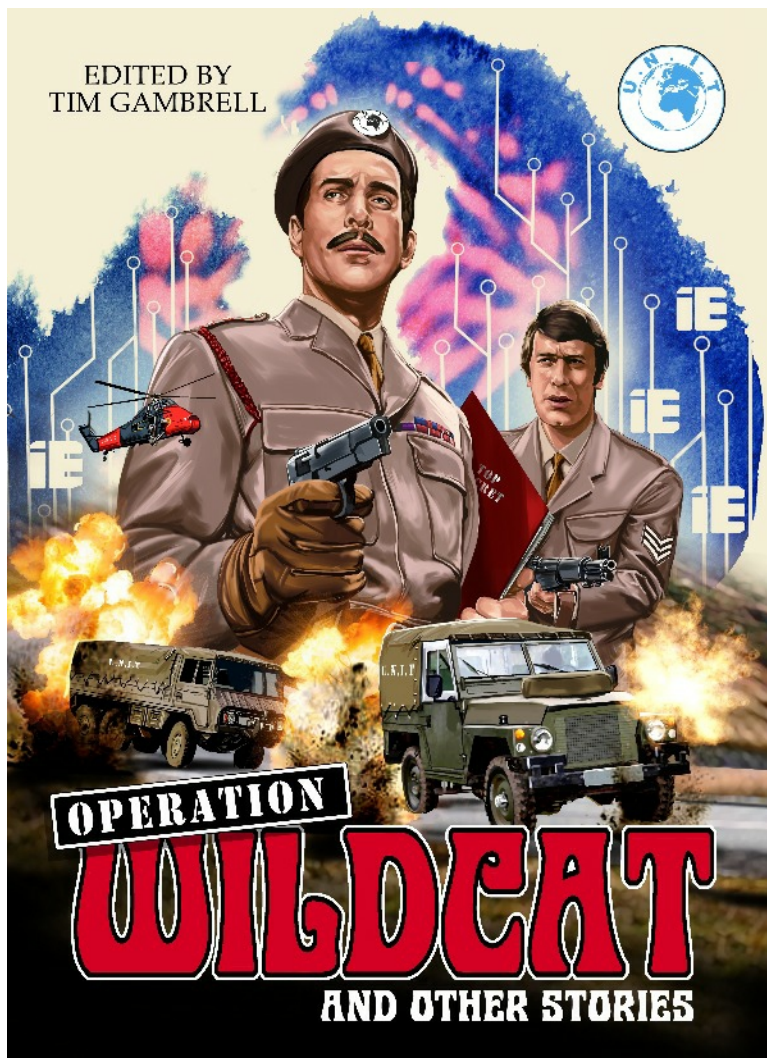
LETHBRIDGE STEWART

THE BRENDON YEARS



A MOST HAUNTED MAN
SARAH GROENEVEGEN

EDITED BY
TIM GAMBRELL



OPERATION

WILDEAT

AND OTHER STORIES

COMING SOON



COMING SOON

