

Snowfall

The Thaw, by Gavin Collinson

David Kershaw looked at the photograph of the Doctor, Big Jack, Millie and Louie.

'It's a grab from the security camera footage,' Jack said.

'I wish I'd thought to take a photo of him,' David replied. 'I think he changed my life. Well, no. He did change my life. And I haven't even got...'

The two men sat at the corner table of the station refreshments room.

'Keep it,' Jack said.

But David shook his head. 'I couldn't. Here. It's a good one of you. You always took a good photo, Jackie.'

And as he spoke, Jack opened his wallet to return the snap, and several well-worn photographs tumbled to the table. One landed face-up between them. A faded shot of two young brothers, arms around each other's shoulders and smiles like summertime. Dirty faces, sparkling eyes. A pause. Jack returned the photos to his wallet and the two men finished their mugs of tea in silence.

'Here you go!' It was the girl with long red hair.

'Biscuits!' added the man in the porter's uniform.

'Yeah!' That Scottish accent again. 'Love a biccy!' She placed an unopened tin box on the table. 'You get stuck into these, I'll top up your tea and you two can- ' She started moving her fingers and thumbs as if she was wearing a sock puppet.

'What are you doing?' asked her friend, quietly.

She looked affronted by the question. 'It's like the universal sign thing for talk. Chat. Chinwag thing.'

'Why don't you just say, have a conversation?'

'You can be so boring!'

'Excuse me!' It was Jack. 'I broke the seal of this so I know it's not been opened but...'

The four of them peered into the box. All the columns of biscuits were full except one.

'How did that happen?' David asked.

'Someone's eaten all the jammy dodgers,' said Jack and the girl began to laugh.

Jack and David were alone again at their table. 'Looks like we have a bit of time to kill before our trains arrive,' said Jack.

'Yeah. Thank god for Bourbons.'

'No. I was kind of meaning you could tell me your story. How you met the Doctor. Got to see the TARDIS.'

'Swapping fun stories at Christmas?' David snapped.

A slight hesitation. 'Why not? It's what brothers do, isn't it?'

'Maybe you're right. Sorry.'

'You're still angry.'

'Angry? I'm still furious, Jack, I'm still... Oh, what's the point?'

'Have another biccys. Good for... ' Jack did the sock puppet mime and David laughed.

'Okay! You wanna story?'

'I want a story!'

'You want to hear about how the Doctor fought an army of monsters? A tale that takes you from Incan pyramids to man's last stand, way above the city of London?'

'You betcha!'

'Then hang onto your toupee! This is the story of how I met the Doctor. This is the story of the vampire hurricane...'

TO BE CONTINUED