

# Snowfall

## Vampire Hurricane, Part Two By Gavin Collinson

The crescent of vampires in front of the Doctor, David and Lyttle moved forwards, fangs bared and arms aloft. They may have resembled half a dozen children parodying Bela Lugosi but David knew these kids could kill. As he crushed his back into the wall he wondered which of them would plunge their teeth into his throat and -

The Doctor stepped forward. *Forward!* He raised his right arm, pointing to the back of the chamber. 'Go to your room!' he said to the infant closest to them. 'You've been a very naughty vampire!' Voice raised. 'I mean it! Go to your room!'

The children paused, exchanged glances and resumed their advance.

The Doctor caught David's sideways look. 'Well,' said the Time Lord. 'It's worked before.'

### *The Lost City of El Niño Diablo, 1934*

The man interrogating the Doctor plunged his hand into the box of ice and as his fingers searched, he smiled. 'Let's see if this will convince you to talk...'

They sat opposite each other in a hut just outside the pyramid where ten minutes earlier the Doctor had been found clutching a small cube that now rested on the table between them. They were alone. The hut was about twenty foot square, a weird decorative clash of Incan and Americana with a portrait of Queen Victoria thrown into the mix. The calls of exotic birds filled the hot, humid air. Palm warblers, white hawks and bat falcons all screeching through the jungle. At last the man questioning the Doctor - the American explorer ostensibly leading the expedition - pulled his hand from the ice box and tossed a Hershey Bar across the table. 'Candy always helps me think.'

'I just had a take-away with Baden-Powell.' The Doctor thrust the chocolate into the middle of the table like a gambler staking a chip. 'And I doubt you'd believe what I had to say, so I'd rather-'

'Try me.'

'All right. What you call the Great Bear is the Great Bairn, *bairn* being an old Indo-European word for child or children. Someone must have misheard me when I called it that the last time. When it landed. And it's not stone in the sense that you know it. Several

thousand years ago a very dangerous race faced a battle it knew would destroy its home planet. To avoid extinction the species regressed its children to the point of DNA, stored them on this cube and jettisoned it into space. The plan was that if a single soldier survived, the cube could be found and the race rebooted. Following me so far?’

‘Oh, like a traffic cop, Doctor.’

‘Good. Because it fell to earth. The Incas found it, sensed the Great Bairn’s power and built a pyramid around it. I came back for a look-see and found an expedition – your lot – about to plunder it. But I need to take that cube because I’ve detected another alien life form very close by. And I suspect it might want to get its hands on it. I can’t allow that to happen. So I have to take the cube to the future, away from that alien.’

‘Okay.’

‘You know, just for once, it would be rather peachy if someone actually believed what I had to say before–’ He checked himself. ‘I’m sorry. Did you just say *okay*? As in okay-dokey. As in -’

‘Sure did, Doctor. Since joining the organisation that pays for my little expeditions, well, let’s just say I’ve heard weirder. Take the Great Bairn. But you’ll have to run for it. Just one thing. If you do take it to the future, are you sure it’ll be safe?’

The Doctor smiled. ‘What could possibly go wrong?’

*London, Seventy-five years later.*

‘We will feast!’ hissed the vampire children.

‘Oh, for the sake of... They’re kids!’ Lyttle grabbed the child who was entering through the window, tugging him into the room. ‘Now just you listen to-’

The vampire hit the floor with a bump. His eyes glowed electric red and Lyttle unfurled his fingers.

‘Forgive him!’ shouted the Doctor. ‘He didn’t mean to -’

But the creature clutched Lyttle’s lapels and in a startling display of strength, hurled him across the room. The American slammed into the arced bank of cylinders and crashed to the floor. The seven vampires switched their attention to the Doctor and David. ‘*Your turn...*’ David felt one grasp his hair and pull his head downwards. His neck had never felt so exposed. Through a vampire’s crooked arm he saw the crumpled figure of Lyttle look up. His lip was cut and a single drop of blood dropped to the floor. Although the vampires had their back to him, each of them froze.

‘Run, Lyttle!’ yelled the Doctor.

But the vampires moved as blurs and suddenly Lyttle was lost as seven capes flapped around him like a single fluttering bat.

David stepped forward but the Doctor grabbed his elbow. 'There's nothing we can do!' The Time Lord was already on the move, pulling David through the gap in the window, onto the balcony and towards the emergency exit.

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The Doctor flicked his sonic screwdriver and the television switched channel, changing from chat show to news item. It was a bulletin – a small child was causing havoc in –

Another channel. Another report. And another and another, each one bringing live pictures of chaos erupting across London and the south east of England.

'They're causing...,' David nodded towards the flat screen 'but there's only twelve of them. I'm thinking the military could -'

'I've got some bad news for you,' the Doctor interjected.

They were standing in the 16th floor's party room where minutes earlier the festive celebrations had looked set to sizzle into the early hours. It was quiet now, tables and chairs overturned as the revellers had fled after the Doctor had elbowed the fire alarm.

'There are several species that are similar to your idea of vampires. But that lot like to be called the Vampire Warriors because of their thirst, not just for blood, but for war. I've seen solitary Vampire Warriors get bored during a meal and destroy whole empires between entrées and the main course.'

'You're right,' said David, 'that is bad news.'

'Oh, that's not the bad news. Their race has a gift. The children replicate. They literally divide themselves less than an hour after their birth. One becomes three and then a dozen and then more and *those* clones immediately replicate until...' He pointed to the television screen. 'That is a light drizzle.' The latest news report showed the huge Christmas tree in Trafalgar Square ablaze. As it toppled, people ran screaming from the falling flames. 'And there's a storm coming.'

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On the fiftieth floor, the bowler hat appeared first, hovering in mid-air for a moment before its owner materialised beneath it. The teleportation was complete in seconds and he stepped forward, addressing the solitary figure at the oval table. 'Well, General?'

He was answered with a smile. 'It's going magnificently! The Time Lord retreated to the lower levels where he sent a message to this nation's armed forces, global governments and UNIT, instructing them not to go nuclear on the vampires. He assured them he was addressing the problem. Ha!'

'I'd save the self-congratulation until you have the Doctor. When you sought to become one of us, to join the Council of Dead, we delivered the plan, the organisation to build the Vampire Arc and the information about the Great Bairn. So far *you* have delivered *nothing*.'

'Look!' The General gestured to the monitor. On the sixteenth floor the Doctor was sonic-ing the lift controls, trying to gain access to the elevator. 'He's actually trying to re-turn! Does he think -'

'Yes, he does! He carries no guns, explosives or nuclear weaponry. Yet he is the most dangerously armed opponent you will ever face.'

'You worry too much. He will never defeat the deadlock.' General Marze, last survivor of the Prex-Em War Fleet, scrutinised the Doctor's face. 'Everything is running to plan.'

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'Time for you to leave, David. Take the staircase and good luck.' The Doctor didn't look up from his work on the control panel.

'What are you doing?'

'Who-ever resurrected those vampires is close. The camera on the 49th level was very short range and I've got a feeling that the top floor is where the nerve centre's located. Evil geniuses always go for the penthouse or the cellar. Rule of thumb. You know, if ever you become an estate agent and get a purchaser who's an -' The elevator doors slid open. 'At last!' He stepped into the lift and David heard a groan.

'What's wrong?'

'I need a PIN to get this thing to the higher levels. The controls are deadlocked. And I've only got minutes before those vampires replicate and humanity is... It can't end like this. The world lost because I didn't have a number.'

David looked at the Doctor, at the eyes of a man used to having all the answers and suddenly finding he had none.

'I'm good with numbers!'

David span around. Hawke Lyttle the Third stood at the far end of the room, silhouetted in the doorway leading to the emergency staircase. 'I can forgive their attack on me. Hell, they're vampires. But they took my fob watch. And that belonged to Hawke Lyttle the First.'

David said, 'You know the PIN to get us to the top floor?'

'You bet your life!'

The Doctor beamed. 'What do you say, Mr Lyttle!'

The American stepped into the light. His face was scratched and pale, his suit torn and his top lip swollen. 'Let's go 'n' get my grand-daddy's watch,' he replied.

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This time the view of the capital was less comforting. As the elevator crept up the side of Lyttle Monsters' London HQ, the three occupants could see fires below, helicopters whirling through the night and in the distance, tiny black dots pirouetting in mid-air before diving towards London.

The Doctor was pointing his sonic screwdriver at the ceiling.

'What are you doing?' Lyttle asked.

'Taking some readings.'

'The funny thing is,' said David, 'me and my brother used to play at being vampires. We used to love the old Hammer House of Horror movies and used to pretend we were... Ironic, eh, Doctor?'

'The readings indicate we'll be facing one non-human life form up there...'

'In our little role plays my brother was always the wisecracking one. He'd make terrible puns about fangs and dropping in for a quick bite and I'd be the old-fashioned hero, smiling but saying nothing. Because that's what heroes do.'

'And no security. Whatever's up there isn't armed.'

'But when those vampires hit, I was just terrified. Some hero.'

The Doctor slipped his sonic screwdriver into his pocket. 'You came with us, didn't you? You could have stayed downstairs but you chose to fight by my side. I'm afraid I've not got time for a morale boosting pep talk. But David Kershaw, there is one thing I want you to know...'

Grateful and proud, David put his hand on the Time Lord's shoulder. 'Yes, Doctor?'

'There's a vampire right behind you.'

A vampire was floating besides the elevator, keeping pace with its ascent and studying the three individuals within. As they faced him, each of the trio inside let out an almost comic yell of terror before the child punched his hand through the lift's glass casing.

David snatched the fire extinguisher from its fastening and smashed it against the creature's knuckles. The only effect was a fanged smile. 'Pathetic,' said the vampire.

'Get your own lift!' shouted the Doctor.

In one swift movement the infant creature ripped the pane of glass from the elevator and span it over London as if throwing a frisbee. He grinned. 'Going down?'

But as quickly as his onslaught had begun it was over. The Doctor peeked over the side of the elevator. 'He's just frozen in mid-air,' he told his companions. 'Like someone hit the pause button!'

David and Lyttle whooped with joy. 'You did it, Doctor!' the American shouted. 'You must have done something when you zapped 'em with your magic electric toothbrush thing.'

'One. It's a sonic screwdriver. Two. I didn't zap. I never zap. Three. The vampires are entering their replication phase. They close down to conserve energy and then, whoosh! You're suddenly facing several million vampires. We've got about ten minutes to save the planet.'

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The lift doors opened and the Doctor strode forward, David immediately behind him and Lyttle bringing up the rear.

'You get one chance,' said the Doctor and raised his sonic screwdriver, aiming it at the monitor over the table. A flicker of recognition. 'General Marze! Hello, again. I'll get to the point. Those vampire children have been regressed to DNA strands before. It's time to do it again before they replicate. If you refuse I'll send an entropy pulse virus into your technology and in about one minute every piece of machinery that got you to this planet and gives you any kind of power... Well, let's put it this way. You'll wish you'd kept the receipt.'

'Put your vampires back in the box.' David took a step forward. 'The Doctor can take you and them to a part of the universe where you can live in peace. Just leave our planet.'

Marze smiled. 'I knew you'd come. That's why I sent you the message about all this to begin with, Doctor. To finally get you here. And now you've arrived, I would like the secret of the Time Lords.'

'Is that what this has all been about?' The Doctor looked deflated. 'Just another mad maniac who wants to get his hands on my TARDIS? To conquer all time and space and -'

'Don't insult me, Doctor! What would I want with time travel? I have no wish to be some gawping temporal tourist, visiting so many centuries like a holiday-maker flitting in and out of public museums.'

The Doctor pointed at him and then let his finger drop. 'Oh. Right. Then what do you want?'

'A blood sample. Nothing more.'

The Doctor narrowed his eyes. 'The technology that revived the vampires... you want to use that to...' He shook his head. 'The power of a Time Lord to regenerate!'

'Exactly!' Marze replied. 'I have the technology to take your blood and isolate your cells' ability to regenerate. I will splice that secret into my DNA. I'm an old man, Doctor. Lived for fifty decades.' He stood and stepped into the light. He appeared to be in his mid-thirties. Tall, muscular, lean. Thick dark hair. Tight khaki t-shirt. 'I need a few more centuries. And to prove to certain allies that-'

'It's not going to happen. So just regress those vampires or your world is dust.' The Doctor flicked his sonic screwdriver and it began to hum. 'Do it now.'

'Put that device away!'

The Doctor looked interested. 'Or else what?'

Behind David and the Doctor, Lyttle's eyes glowed an electric red.

'You're not armed. There's no security. Just do as I ask, General, and no-one gets hurt.'

Lyttle raised his right arm.

'That's a negative, soldier,' said Marze, 'and I believe that someone is about to get hurt right now.'

Lyttle brought his clenched fist crashing down, the Doctor gave a mieu of pain and toppled to the floor.

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When the Doctor recovered consciousness he was sitting in one of the chairs at the oval table. He glanced at the monitor. It showed a vampire, still as a statue, surrounded by a ring of armed police. The image switched to another frozen vampire in the middle of a football pitch, a row of soldiers pointing rifles in its direction. More news flashes of inert vampires, from Berkshire to Bermondsey.

The Doctor tried to move but found his wrists lashed to the chair support. His arm throbbed and he could see Marze shaking his head.

'Too late, Doctor. Your friend took your blood sample, put it into the analyser and the isolation was over in no time. I have already added the required element to my blood-stream and you'll be relieved to hear I never even threatened him!'

David Kershaw walked back into the room carrying a metal bowl covered with a small white towel. 'He said he'd kill you if I didn't comply. Now, let him go, Marze!'

'But you can't leave now! Just when my boys are mobilising!'

On the monitor the Doctor could see the vampires begin to tremble.

'Stop this now!' he shouted.

Their shaking became faster until each individual vampire grew indistinct, a succession of black, white and red blurs.

'Marze, you have to stop this, now!'

'Now I have everything? Near immortality, an army of vampires and the blessing of the Council of Dead?' Marze was shaking his head. 'I shall never stop! Never!'

Suddenly, a ripple ran laterally through each vampire, with figures spitting out of their bodies. Fully formed children, each identical to the creature that spawned them. Clothes had somehow been replicated and the process began accelerating. It was impossible to count the number of vampires being sent spinning into existence but around each blurred figure at least a dozen stood waiting.

‘They’ll kill you, too, Marze!’ the Doctor said. ‘There’s still time to stop them!’

‘Kill me? They will obey me, Doctor! I am their father!’

The screen became black with vampires. Marze was laughing and the curtains surrounding the room swept back to reveal the chaos of the London night. The skies were thick with vampires, cackling with joy.

‘A vampire hurricane,’ murmured the Doctor.

‘Listen to them! Children of the night!’ yelled Marze. ‘What music they make!’

‘You’re insane!’ cried David

‘No, no! I am immortal! I am...’ He held his arms aloft in a mad victory salute and then looked down at his stomach. Something odd had happened. His toned abdomen had become flabby. It slowly curved outward until Marze was looking at a cute but fat little belly. ‘*What?*’

David was by the Doctor’s chair. ‘I contaminated the blood sample,’ he whispered. ‘Put a dash of my own in there.’

‘By the pricking of your thumbs,’ said the Doctor, ‘something human this way comes.’ He stared at Marze.

The General’s raven black hair turned white and within five seconds, most dropped to the floor. Marze looked in horror at his reflection on the flat screen monitor. His hand rapidly re-arranged his remaining locks, fashioning a hasty comb-over effect to cover his baldness. His skin was wrinkling and he shouted, ‘The funny thing is, I feel younger now than I ever did. No, really! But I don’t fancy going out. Not tonight. It’s always a dear do, isn’t it? Christmas!’ He shook his fist at the screeching vampires that flew around the windows. ‘Keep that music down! Do you hear?’ He looked at the Doctor. ‘Kids today! Not like when I was..’ The General’s frame was diminishing, his body becoming as curved as a bow. He clutched the table for support. Something within Marze noticed this movement and he roared, ‘I will rule the universe...’ A short cry of pain and he put his palm to the base of his back. ‘But not today ’cause this weather’s playing havoc with my back. *Will you be quiet?*’ His teeth fell to the carpet. ‘How are you, Doctor? How long has it been?’ More wrinkles, more curvature of the spine. He indicated to the monitor. ‘There’s nothing on TV these days, is there? Don’t know why I bother paying the licence.’

‘Marze!’ shouted David. ‘I’m sorry!’

‘You what, dear?’

‘David, hand me my sonic! Inside pocket,’ the Doctor said. ‘General! There’s still

time to stop the vampires!

'Vampires? What vampires?'

A line of the creatures appeared at the window. 'Look at them. You know, Doctor...'  
What remained of Marze flickered into beige and for a moment the General's body was a statue of dust. And then nothing. Just a heap of sand-like cells on the floor. One last ripple slinked through the small mound of Marze and his final words drifted through the air like a whisper. 'I blame the parents.'

'Me too,' said the Doctor, leaping from his chair, his fingers moving across the transparent keyboard built into the oval table.

'What are you doing?' David asked.

'Fighting an army. But it's too late. Too many of them unless...'

'Unless?'

'Launching boosters now! About one million micro-boosters that should...'  
The vampires outside the window vanished. On the monitor, images of fangs and fear become pictures of confused members of the public. 'Correction, *have*, returned the infant Vampire Warriors to the Great Bairn. DNA state. And you know what that means?'

'No.'

'It means, Mr Kershaw, you just saved humanity.'

'What happened to my head?' Hawke Lyttle staggered to his feet. 'I remember the party but *wowser!* What was in that cocktail?'

'Good, good, good,' said the Doctor. 'The vampire infection has also regressed. Victims should be right as -'

'Hey, you guys! What gives? My memory's a little...'  
His index fingers made circles in the air.

'No time to explain, Mr Lyttle. Too much to do. Got to take care of the Great Bairn. Properly this time. Got to get David home for midnight. No problem in the TARDIS. And finally, got to set those micro-boosters to explode. Should be quite a fireworks display.'

Lyttle sidled up to David and put his arm around the other man's shoulder. 'Hey, buddy. You'll fill in the blanks, won't you? What happened to me?'

'Well... for a brief period of time... you turned into a vampire.'

Lyttle looked at him as though he'd gone crazy. 'Dave! I'm in the toy business. That happens to me every Christmas!'

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David smiled at the wonderful normality of the scene. From the hallway he could see his three young kids watching TV in the front room and his wife at the kitchen table, gift wrapping a slab-like book on the Incas. A 1935 first edition she thought he didn't know about. Another smile. 'Hi, honey. I'm home.'

She kicked the kitchen door shut. 'No peeking! I'll be through in a second!'

David joined his children. His eldest, an eleven-year old called Zuzu, said, 'Hey, Dad! Seen the news? About this vampire hoax thing?'

'It wasn't a hoax, sweetie. Mankind was almost destroyed. But your old man helped save the human race.'

'And I've got a role in the next series of Glee.' She wrinkled her nose at him.

His wife appeared in the doorway. 'Tough day?'

'Ahh, come here, you lot.'

He hugged his wife and his three kids leapt to join them. A family embrace that David finally interrupted by saying, 'The Christmas party got a little crazy.'

'What was that?' asked Zuzu.

They could hear a cacophony of explosions outside. 'The micro-boosters,' David murmured.

The three children ran to the window and tugged back the curtains. 'Fireworks!'

David's wife nodded to the ceiling where a sprig of mistletoe hung over them. As they kissed, the sky was lit up with dazzling red words a mile high.

DAVID KERSHAW!

This line faded and a new one ripped across the darkness: THANK YOU FOR SAVING HUMANITY!

Another huge crackle and a new line:

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND...

'Dad!' cried Zuzu. 'I think you better see this!'

FANGS FOR THE MEMORIES!

His family looked at him, speechless. David Kershaw smiled, but said nothing.