

DOCTOR WHO



Haunted
Part Two

By Joseph Lidster

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We're running. This man called the Doctor and me. We're running away from the Ghost.

"There's no such thing as ghosts," says the Doctor. I tell him that that's what I thought but what else could it be. The lights are still going out and the *tap... tap... tap...* of footsteps are still following us. We reach a classroom and run inside, closing the door behind us.

"It could be anything. Why do you think it's a ghost?" he asks me. So I tell him.

"Our school is haunted. Well, the basement is. That's what everyone says." He's not looking at me and he's listening at the door so I stop talking. He waves an arm at me so I carry on. "Apparently a boy got locked in here once hundreds of years ago. Nobody knew he was here and he died. He froze to death or starved to death or something. And now the older kids tell the younger kids how his ghost haunts the school. He's always here, looking for a way out."

"Poppycock," snarls the Doctor. "What proof have you got? Has anyone seen it? Have you seen it? What's your name?"

I tell him my name is Ross McNamara and I'm 13 years old.

"Well, Ross McNamara, have you seen it?"

"No, but... the tapping. The footsteps. Something's making the lights go out and-" Suddenly I stop. "Why were the lights on? They shouldn't be on when there's nobody here. We're meant to be environmentally friendly. We've won awards."

The Doctor gives me an odd look. As if I've said something really stupid or really clever. He strides over towards me and kneels down. He stares right into my eyes.

"No..." he mutters before he smiles. "Well done, Ross McNamara. Very clever."

I look at him confused and he waves up at the lights. Then, he looks around the classroom at the tinsel and paper-chains. "Is it Christmas?" he asks.

I laugh. Everyone knows it's Christmas.

"I can't stand Christmas," he growls. "Right, so, it's not a ghost, we're both agreed on that, yes?"

I hadn't actually agreed on that at all but I thought it was best not to argue.

He's standing directly under one of the lights. His face is all craggy, like the surface of the moon, and he's wearing a velvet jacket and he's odd. He's weird. There's something so weird about him. He's looking into the air...

"Could be alien," he says with a shrug. "Or one of your friends playing a trick on you?"

There's a pause as he looks at me.

"It's more likely to be an alien," I say quietly.

He smiles but it's a sad smile like my Mum's. He understands what I mean. Then he laughs. "Well, that's good news, isn't it? Boring friend or exciting alien? But what does it want, Ross McNamara? What does it want?"

I find myself smiling back at him.

And that's when the light above his head explodes and the room is suddenly pitch black. I'm desperately trying not to be a little kid and run over and hug him but I'm scared! Suddenly a pair of arms have wrapped themselves around me. The Doctor. I guess he's scared as well.

"I'm getting better at this," he mutters. "Who needs cue cards?"

Suddenly, there's a loud BANG on the classroom door. It's like someone REALLY big has slammed into it.

"Well, come on in, then," the Doctor snarls. "Show yourself!"

There's a second of silence and then the door slowly opens. I can hear it open but I can't see it open because it's pitch black. I can't see anything. I hold my breath and I think the Doctor's doing the same because I can't even hear him and...

Silence.

Then, a line of fairy lights around the door blink on. Then, they immediately blink off again. But in that blink we both saw it. Something. It looked like.... A ghost!

We move back away from the door. The lights blink on again. And it's not there. It's in the room with us! Over on the teacher's desk a Father Christmas toy lights up and starts playing music. We back away from it.



Behind us, there's a *tap... tap... tap...* and then suddenly the whiteboard falls off the wall and crashes at our feet. I scream and let go of the Doctor. I run towards the door as the fairy lights blink on and off and the musical Father Christmas toy grins at me. I stand in the doorway staring into the classroom.

"Doctor!" I call into the darkness.

"Wait," he says. "I'm just going to try something."

So I stand there. In the doorway. And I wait. I can't see into the classroom so I turn to look back out into the corridor. It's pitch black except... some of the lights in the distance have come back on. Far down, near the entrance to the basement. I stare down, straining my eyes, trying to see if there's anything there.

And that's when I feel the fingers on the back of my neck. Cold fingers. Cold like ice.

"Doctor..." I can hardly speak.

"I've found it," he replies. But his voice is back in the classroom. So far away from me, back in the darkness.

They're not his fingers.

To be continued...

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