

# And another year comes to a close...



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## How was your 2021?

I suspect we all thought it would be a lot more normal than last year, something which didn't really pan out as we might have hoped. I trust you managed to find some semblance of normality this year, though. And I wish you all the very best for the festive season and the year ahead.

Let's be kind to each other. It's been a rough couple of years and we all deserve it.

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## Writing Update

My focus this month has been on my Science Fiction project, the sequel to 'The War of the Worlds'. (You didn't know I was doing that? Check out [my other mailing list](#) then!)

It's been going well, I had a lot of fantastic feedback from my beta readers. They're the folks who get to look at the half-finished story and let me know

what works and what doesn't. That's a vital part of the process, let me tell you. You can get so close to your own writing that you miss things, and one thing I'm very good at is removing something, meaning to put it back somewhere else, and then forgetting. And I don't notice, because when I get to the part of the book that depends on it, I remember it vividly! Someone who hasn't read it before, of course, sends me an email saying 'err, what?' and I go and fix it.

So there's been a fair bit of editing, not all of it quite that drastic, and some rewriting to do. When your readers say the ending doesn't work for them, it's very wise to listen. Even if it does mean rejigging the final third of the book... and the first third, so it sets up the new final third... And the middle, so they join up...

But if you're not interested in SciFi, I do have a special treat for you. Just read on...



## Free book!

### Final Night, by Kell Shaw

Speaking of beta readers, I was fortunate enough to be one for Kell Shaw's novella "Final Night". It's a great story, set in a world not that dissimilar to our own...

*Recently risen from the grave, Lukie has until dawn to avenge her death. If only she could remember who murdered her. And only if someone else doesn't kill her again.*

I love this story, and Lukie and her friends are a wonderful cast of characters. It's Urban Fantasy, so if you like my stuff I'm sure you'll love it too, but it's also a thrilling murder mystery!

And it's free if you sign up to her mailing list.

[Get it free now!](#)

High school's out for the class of 1983. Forever.

The last thing Lukie remembers is the farewell party in her hometown of Breakwater Bay. A final blowout before she went away to university.

But when she wakes up, corpse-cold, confused and weirdly hungry, she finds the sleepy coastal village is now full of strange cars and loud tourists. Her family home is a block of flats and she can't find her father. Her best friend has aged twenty years in a single night.

The sole fact she knows for sure is that someone hurt her. Someone betrayed her. Someone killed her.

In some dark lonely place, she made a pact with something, and now she's only got until dawn to find her murderer, or when the sun rises she'll be dead again. Forever.

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## Fae News

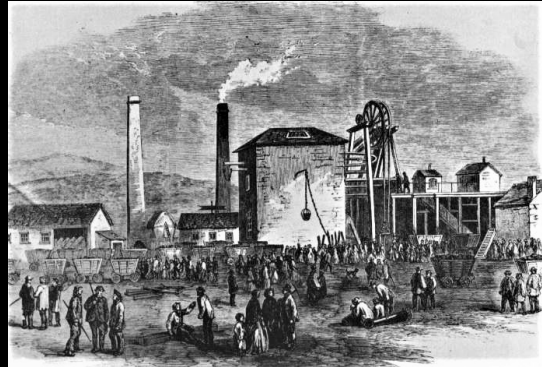
Recent updates from the unusual world that surrounds us



### The Ghost Forest of Nienhagen

Twisted trees shaped by coastal winds make this woodland look like something from a spooky story.

The Gespensterwald ("Ghost Forest" in English) is located in Nienhagen in Germany, right next to the Baltic Sea. During the day, the forest is filled with dappled light and the sounds of woodland creatures. But at night, they sometimes look like they've been pulled straight from a horror movie.



### The Haunted Mines of Victorian Wales

Working deep underground in the mines of Victorian Wales was a perilous profession. Tragedy, it seemed, lurked around every corner. As did the supernatural...

Industry advanced at an unprecedented rate during the 19th century. But while the onward march of progress dispelled many of the long-standing myths and legends once so prevalent in Wales, in some cases they were replaced with all-new supernatural horrors for the 'superstitious folk' to fear.

[View more](#)

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Marlin, one of the hardest working members of the Fae Defence Society, recommends



some of his favourite books, music or movies.

## Marlin's Media



*When The Sandman, also known as Lord Morpheus - the immortal king of dreams, stories and the imagination - is pulled from his realm and imprisoned on Earth by a nefarious cult, he languishes for decades before finally escaping. Once free, he must retrieve the three “tools” that will restore his power and help him to rebuild his dominion, which has deteriorated in his absence.*

As I'm sure you know by now, I'm a huge fan of Neil Gaiman, and his Sandman series of graphic novels are an undisputed classic of the genre. But how can you turn a comic book into an audio book?

It turns out, extremely well! This is a full cast recording, absolutely remarkable in its detail and adherence to the original source. I've been listening to it one chapter at a time to make sure it lasts!

And you can read-along with the original. I'm fortunate enough to have the [Omnibus Collection](#), which is hefty enough to build a fort to hide inside if it all gets a bit too much...

Listen to it now!

# Another Free Story!

## Are you a fan of Doctor Who, and/or fairies?

Yes, I told you there'd be something else for you. Thanks for reading this far!

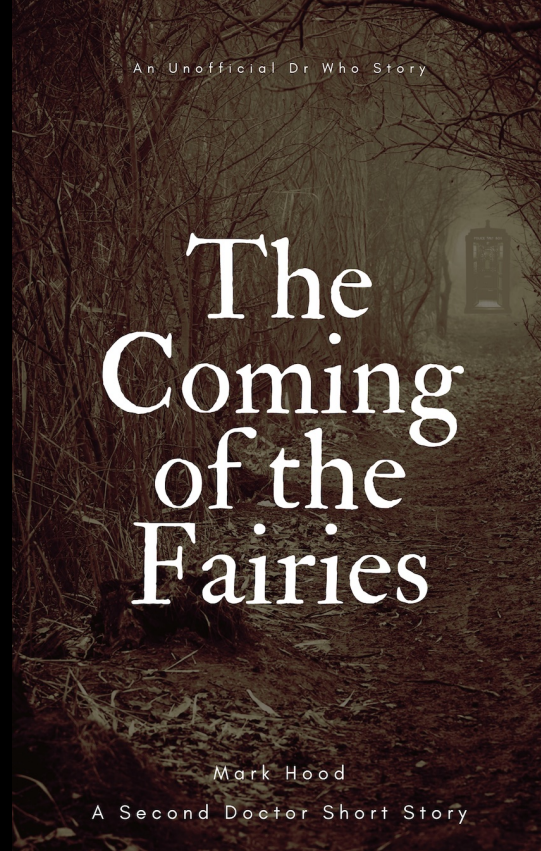
I wrote a Doctor Who story for a contest, but sadly I didn't win. I'm still proud of the story though, so I've decided to give it away!

*The Second Doctor, Jamie and Zoe run into a familiar figure when they're investigating a distress call. But what are they to do about the fairies at the bottom of the garden?*

Feel free to forward this link on to anyone who might enjoy it! The story is free for all, but if they're not already a member of my mailing list they will be prompted to sign up.

And let me know what you think!

Get it for free!



## Stay Alert

### Have you spotted anything unusual or unnatural?

You can contact us at any time by replying to this email.

Please report any sightings immediately, as vigilance is essential against the ever-growing Fae threat.

## Newsletter Archive

### Missed anything?

All of our newsletters are archived for you!

Enter the Vaults



## Sci-Fi Fan?

**Did you know I write  
science fiction too?**

If that interests you, I have a newsletter  
devoted to it!

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**Mark Hood**

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