

# **Stormbringer:**

## **Legend of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Century**

written by  
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dedicated to  
**All the hard working staff and pupils at  
Don Valley Academy**

special thanks to  
**Cam Reid  
Cynthia Fridsma**

Your encouragement and hard work have made this story possible

**Legends of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Century Volume 1**

## **Prologue: An Average Family**

Under the relentless midday desert sun, a humanoid grub held a seven-foot tall armadillo by his throat.

The brown and white segmented hero smiled victoriously as he started to coat his armour plated nemesis with strands of sticky silk.

“Time’s up, Armadillon!” announced the maggot-like hero as the silk formed a white cocoon around his enemy.

“Your pathetic threads can’t hold me, Grub Guy!” yelled Armadillon, bursting from his stringy prison before it could harden.

Suddenly a female voice interrupted the action, “Simon! Come down for dinner.”

Armadillon raised his fist, ready to strike down Grub Guy.

Before he could land his punch, the two combatants froze when a pause symbol appeared in the sky above them.

Simon Anderson loved watching super heroes. His collection of comics and movies was impressive, though not very well stored; in fact, his bedroom floor was dominated by the vast majority of it.

The scent of pizza filled the air as he opened his bedroom door.

“Coming Mum!” he shouted as he ran down the stairs two at a time, before charging through the living room to get to the kitchen. “Where’s mine?” he asked, noticing two empty pizza boxes in the middle of the table.

He didn’t care that the kitchen window had been boarded up after the break-in the night before, as none of his Christmas presents had been taken from under the tree.

“Have you been watching those baby movies again?” asked June, his older sister.

“Grub Guy’s NOT for babies,” insisted Simon.

## Prologue: An Average Family

“Stop arguing!” snapped their mother. “Simon, I called you down three times. Your pizza’s in the microwave,” she added as she left the room.

June waited for the door to close. “A grub is a baby insect, so Grub Guy must be a baby,” she whispered, trying not to alert their mother.

Simon’s frustration got the better of him, “Stop making fun of Grub Guy, or I’ll...”

“Or you’ll what?”

He contemplated his threat for a moment. “I’ll tell Dad you’ve been sneaking out at night again,” he mumbled through a mouthful of cold pizza.

“Fine, Grub Guy is really cool,” she admitted sarcastically.

“And?” he prompted while reaching for a glass on the draining board.

“And he’s a realistic hero who could really happen in real life.”

“That’s better. You can go now,” said Simon as he waved his sister out of the kitchen.



June’s ego was bruised, but not for the first time.

She recalled the day she had first met Simon, almost four years ago.

She’d been living in a care home for children for only a few months before Simon moved in.

He’d been taken into care after his abusive parents left him at home while they went on a month-long holiday.

Simon would often get June into trouble, blaming her for things she hadn’t done and only rarely getting caught himself.

## Prologue: An Average Family

His favourite trick was to swap the contents of the sugar pot and the salt shaker, before leaving a trail of evidence leading to June's bedroom.

The worst revenge she could think of involved pouring concentrated orange juice into the steam iron before planting the bottle in Simon's room, but he watched silently as she executed her scheme and hid the bottle in her bedroom while she wasn't looking.

Regardless of which of them was guilty, the staff at the care home were relieved after nearly two years when the Andersons, a childless couple in their thirties, were looking to adopt a boy and a girl.



June followed her mother into the living room, where a local news program was being displayed by a high definition holographic panel.

The brand name "Holovision" was labelled along the front edge of the device.

The news report was about unexplained dents in the roofs of vans and busses.

"Have they talked about the purple light again?" asked June.

"They said it left three robbers in the police station last night," replied her mother.

"Dad says it's a trick."

"It does seem a bit farfetched," she said, pausing to take a sip of tea, "The police called while you were at school. Apparently there was a note left with those very same burglars saying they were trying to break in here."

June was about talk when she was interrupted by an impatient knock at the front door. "I'll get it," she said before skipping out of the room.

## Prologue: An Average Family

She opened the front door.

“Did your Mum leave the keys in the lock again?” grumbled her father as he pushed his way past.

“She ordered some pizzas tonight, but I think Simon ate it all,” she said with a grin, trying to get her brother into trouble.

Simon crept out of the living room. “I was going to ask Mum to get a Chinese, but then I remembered we’ve already got one!” he laughed in an ignorant attempt to make fun of June’s apparent ethnic background.

“SIMON!” she yelled before turning to slap her little pest of a brother.

But he was so small and agile that he dodged June’s flailing palm and dashed up the stairs, giggling all the way.

Nobody in the house, not even June, knew where her biological parents were from. She had been told her mother had died in childbirth and her father had abandoned her, never to be heard from again.

“I grabbed a sausage roll on the way home. Where’s your Mum?” asked their father.

“In the living room, watching TV.”

“Oh. Hang my coat up,” he instructed as he shed his rain soaked jacket.

June picked up the drenched jacket and draped it over a coat hook. She was just tall enough to reach it on her own, which she considered to be her only advantage over her brother.

She couldn’t help but notice that Simon seemed to be their father’s favourite.

June sneaked up to the living room door, hoping to catch a word or two about the mysterious purple light which had been in the news.

Her parents were instead arguing over why the alarm had failed to go off during the previous night’s break-in.

## Prologue: An Average Family

“Sneaking about again?” shouted Simon.

June cringed before turning to face her brother. He’d crept back down the stairs with a tormenting grin.

“Oh, it’s you. Don’t you have a movie to watch?” she whispered.

“Yeah, Grub Guy and Armadillon were having the best fight ever!” he said with an even bigger smile before he ran up the stairs again.

June followed him and went to her bedroom.

Apart from her mountain of homework, she had a feeling that the night ahead would be very busy indeed.

## **Chapter 1: Break-in at Number Forty-Eight**

The night lay dark and silent over the town of Macclesfield.

A battered blue van rolled quietly to a stop across the road from forty-eight Western Avenue.

After a few minutes of hushed chatter from within, the side door of the vehicle slid open.

Three muscular men wearing novelty masks crept out of the van, crossed the road and entered the front garden.

“Jack?” whispered the shortest of the men.

“Quiet! We’ve got a job to do,” replied Jack, the next tallest of the trio.

“But do you think it’s true, about what happened to the others?”

“They got sloppy. We should’ve never hired locals. Is the alarm dead, Max?”

Max, the tallest and strongest looking of them, held a finger to his ear, listened for a signal from his ear-piece and nodded.

“Right on time!” whispered Jack. “Our client can hack his way into any system,” he continued before using a crow bar to lever a wooden board from the window frame. He looked around nervously, “No cops, James?”

James examined the dimly lit street before whispering, “We’re clear.”

“Good. Pass me that counter thing and wait in the van.”

“Why do I have to wait in the van?” asked James, handing a Geiger counter to Jack.

“Because, you’re going to screw this up,” predicted Jack before he turned on the Geiger counter, which clicked slowly and quietly, “And Max can take care of whoever lives here. We’re not scared of a bit of light, are we?”

James stepped quietly towards the van while his accomplices broke into the house.

## Chapter 1: Break-in at Number Forty-Eight

He watched the windows, following the beams of torch light as Jack and Max made their way through the building.

Then the thing James feared the most happened; a brilliant purple light shone through the ground floor windows.

As the vividly coloured gleam died down, darkness settled over the street again. The night was broken only by the street lamps and flashing Christmas lights which adorned the houses.

There was no light from the torches.

He closed his eyes and wondered if he should wait for the others or flee.

When he was sure there was no sign of Jack or Max, he removed his mask and yelled, "START! Manual drive!"

A holographic display filled the windscreen. The words, "Atlas Autodrive Disabled" appeared in red letters at the bottom of the screen while the engine hummed quietly.

James drove the van away as fast as he could. "I waited, didn't I?" he muttered to himself, narrowly avoiding a cat in the road, "Vee's gonna kill me."

The nervous driver didn't notice the passenger hiding in the back of the van.

She held on silently as they swerved left, then right, then left again before the van stopped.

The terrified burglar climbed out of the van and walked nervously towards the door of a boarded up factory.

A small hatch opened at eye level before the door was opened fully to let James inside.



The interior of the abandoned factory was dimly lit.

James shuffled slowly through a corridor into grim looking room at the far end of the building.



## Chapter 1: Break-in at Number Forty-Eight

“Did you find it?” growled an angry voice.

“No, Vee, Jack and M-m-max were -” stammered James.

“DID YOU FIND IT?” demanded Vee, a tall bald man who was sat behind a dusty desk. His face was obscured by shadow in the dimly lit office.

A hunched figure sat next to him, wearing a thick coat and gloves. A medical mask used for treating burns covered his face, with sunglasses to completely hide his appearance.

“No, Vee, sir. The p-p-purple li-”

“Aye, we have the right house,” cackled the hunched man with a slight hint of a Scottish accent, “After all these years, I will have my prize and you will have your reward!”

Vee stood up and yelled, “You’ve lost two of our best men, and all you’ve got is some nonsense about ‘purple light’! Just because you overheard those locals going on about how they saw it before they woke up at the cop shop. Enough! When I find out who’s behind this, I’m gonna personally wring his neck!”

A ferocious black and brown dog ran towards James, barking and snarling so loudly that nobody noticed the short yell of the doorman in the corridor.

“Down, Rabies!” commanded Vee, pulling back on the steel chain attached to the dog’s collar and halting it less than an inch from James’ leg.

“W-what do you want me to do, Sir?” asked James, trembling as he stepped nervously away from the dog, which trotted proudly around the desk to return to his master.

“Call your friends in Manchester. Tell them to fetch crate four from my lab and bring twenty of your best men,” the old man suggested calmly.

Vee nodded in agreement and reeled in his pet, which kept its eyes fixed on James.

## Chapter 1: Break-in at Number Forty-Eight

“I’m on it, boss,” said James, who turned around and ran to the door. But before he finished opening it, he noticed the figure of a girl on the other side.

She was no more than thirteen years old, wearing black leggings, a short purple dress, a black eye mask and pink wellington boots. “Stop!” she shouted commandingly, holding the palm of her hand towards James.

While she barely looked threatening, James was so distressed by now that he jumped backwards in surprise.

“What do we have here?” laughed Vee. “Did you get lost on your way to the ballet? Rabies, KILL!” he ordered, releasing the chain.

The powerful hound jumped onto the table, barking and baring his teeth before leaping past James towards the masked girl.

Calmly, she pointed her raised arm towards the dog.

As she spread her fingers, a glowing disc of purple swirling clouds appeared to open silently in front of her.

Rabies yelped before disappearing into the circle without emerging from the other side.

James ran and hid behind his boss, who pulled a small gun out from under the table.

“I don’t believe my eyes. Who are you supposed to be?” grunted the gang leader with his finger on the trigger.

“The Stormbringer,” she said confidently, even with a gun aimed at her head.

“Stormbinger? Are you gonna rain dance me to death?” he laughed before his followers joined in.

The old man at the table watched silently.

“So, this is the gang that’s been robbing my - erm, the house on Western Avenue,” said the Stormbringer.

“And you’re the one who’s been sending my men to the cops. Now everyone in this room knows where you live. After I kill you, we’re gonna come after your family. NOBODY

## Chapter 1: Break-in at Number Forty-Eight

DEFIES THE MOSS SIDE GANG!” he ranted, raising his voice mid-sentence.

The girl stepped back.

She had revealed her identity to an armed gang and wondered how she could stop them all from hunting her parents and her brother.

The Stormbringer had to think fast.

“Now we know we’ve got the right place, you’re not gonna live there no more,” laughed the bald man as he squeezed the trigger.

But the Stormbringer had already put her hand out in front of the bullet, creating another circle of clouds. At the same time, the previous disc collapsed into a dot before disappearing altogether.

The bullet vanished into the portal and the clouds faded away.

“Very well. AIM!” shouted Vee.

The sounds of guns being cocked filled the room.

Men with ancient looking revolvers stepped out of the shadows, surrounding the Stormbringer.

She looked around, silently counting the gunmen. “Eight! How can I stop that many?” she thought before lowering her arms to her sides.

“Clever girl,” laughed Vee, “Giving up will make this so much easier. FIRE!”

## Chapter 2: The Good News

As the sound of gunfire filled the room, the Stormbringer made a third disc of swirling purple clouds, this time at her feet.

She fell into the mist with her long black pony tail trailing above.

The bullets flew harmlessly through her hair, shredding only a few fibres as they passed overhead.



She landed in a dark room with a loud bump.

Putting her hands together she closed the portal, halting the source of the purple light and bringing total darkness to the room.

The child was safe from the gang for now.

Pausing for breath, she removed her eye mask, placing it under a nearby bed along with her wellington boots. She turned on the light and looked at her reflection in the mirror.

June had been working on her makeshift super heroine costume for almost two months.

Her brother, Simon, was fascinated by fictional super heroes and he constantly treated June with as much disrespect as he could get away with.

June planned to gain a reputation as a real super heroine before she revealed her secret identity to Simon to gain his respect.

Tonight she had used the costume to hide her identity from hardened criminals without success.

She had, however, successfully located the hide-out of the gang which had broken into her house two nights in a row.

It was a bigger gang than she was expecting.

## Chapter 2: The Good News

“June! Get to bed!” her father demanded as he opened the door just far enough for his head to fit through.

June jumped into bed before his eyes could adjust to the light, hiding her improvised super heroine costume under the sheets. “I fell out of bed,” she explained as innocently as she could.

“Get back to sleep. You’ve got school in the morning,” he grumbled as he fumbled for the light switch, flicked it to its off position and closed the door.

When she was sure her father was back in his own room, June slipped quietly out of bed, got changed from her costume into her woolly pyjamas and tried to get to sleep.

But she was too worried about the gang to sleep and wondered what would happen if they tried to break in again.

They might shoot everyone in the house before she could stop them.

June sat up, created two discs of glowing purple clouds near the ceiling and looked across the room at her desk.

Without setting foot on the floor, she pointed her index fingers at the violet portals.

With the flick of a finger, she moved one of them closer to the desk, the other to her side.

Then she pushed her right hand into the nearer disc of clouds. The hand emerged from the other portal close to the desk.

Taking great care not to make a sound, June grabbed a pencil and a book of mauve sticky notes from the desk before she pulled her arm back through the discs.

After guiding the furthest portal closer to the bed, June had enough light to write a note which read:

“Please send help. Moss Side Gang spotted at the old beer factory on Moss Lane with guns and dogs. Please come quickly. I don’t have much time.”

## Chapter 2: The Good News

After filling one side of the paper, she dropped the pencil next to her bed and peeled the note from the pad before closing both of the cloudy discs.

June closed her eyes and opened another portal before throwing the note into the swirling purple mist.

Once the paper had disappeared into the clouds, she closed the portal, threw herself onto her back and pulled the bed covers tightly around her shoulders.

“That should do it,” She said with a yawn before drifting off to sleep.



The loud ringing of June’s alarm clock filled her ears.

“Half-six already?” she thought as she dragged herself out of bed to reach the clock, which she kept on her desk.

June rubbed the sleep from her eyes as she walked towards her bedroom window and felt a gooey mess under her feet.

Her father would ground her for weeks if he saw the muddy stain left by her boots the previous night, but that was the least of her problems.

She drew open one curtain and looked out of the window overlooking the back garden.

The darkness of the cold December morning was broken by a lonely looking lamp post in the distance.

After daydreaming for a few minutes, she moved a white faux fur rug over the muddy mess, quickly changed her clothes from pyjamas to the uniform of Macclesfield Brunel Academy and left the room.

Downstairs, Simon was raiding the kitchen cupboards. “Dad, where are the Cookie Puffs?” he whined.

“They’re on the shopping list,” grumbled his father as he hastily buttered his toast.

## Chapter 2: The Good News

June decided not to enter the kitchen with the two of them in the room.

She dropped onto the settee while an episode of “Grub Guy” was playing on the HoloVision and changed the channel to watch the local news.

After a few minutes of a report about a collapsed building in Stockport, she found what she was looking for.



“In other news, the mysterious purple mist which had dropped three youths into a Macclesfield police station two days ago has been spotted again, this time bringing in three members of Manchester’s notorious Moss Side gang and a dangerous dog.

A note informing the police of the location of their base of operations was also found.

Nobody knows who sent the note, but CCTV footage shows it emerging from some sort of purple vortex.

The message led police to an old brewery on Moss Lane, where they found a cache of weapons and nine more armed men claiming to be from the Moss Side Gang.

Police have yet to comment on what the gang was doing so far from their home ground.

Some of the suspects had suffered bullet wounds, prompting a search for a rival gang, but no activity has been reported in the area.

But the strangest discovery was a set of artificial body parts, put together to resemble a human figure,” stated the voice of a news reader over live footage from outside the former bottling plant.



June breathed a sigh of relief.

## Chapter 2: The Good News

Her family was safe, at least for today.

She tried not to think about what might happen if the gang were to escape from jail.

June walked calmly into the kitchen, put two slices of bread into the toaster, and said, “Dad?” in the most innocent voice she could muster.

“What do you want now?” he grumbled, trying to eat his own toast while concentrating on the computer display built into his glasses.

“Have you ever thought of moving house?”

“Let me guess, you want to move back to Lomas Square again.”

“No! I mean, where would you like to live?”

“Ideally, Stoke. It’d be closer to work.”

Stoke sounded good to June. She knew it was further away from Manchester and the Moss Side Gang and asked, “When can we go?”

“We’re not moving! I’ve put too much work into this house. Don’t let those burglars scare you. It says here they caught a gang around here just this morning,” he insisted while tapping on his glasses.

June buttered her toast and ate it quietly.

If she couldn’t move her family out of harm’s way, she would have to get rid of the gang, even if it meant giving them what they were looking for.

But first she needed to find out what that was.

“They broke in through the same window last night,” her mother called as she entered the kitchen, “They didn’t leave a van behind this time though.”

Her father slammed his glasses onto the table, “That’s the second time this week!” he yelled before examining the lenses for damage. “Bloody cops, never around when you need them,” he continued quietly.



## Chapter 2: The Good News

“Do you think the gang they caught in the old industrial estate is connected to the break-ins? It’s strange how they never took anything,” pondered her mother as she examined the contents of the fridge.

“They always left in a hurry. The cowards took off when they heard me coming down the stairs,” boasted Mr Anderson.

June left the kitchen and went back into the living room.

She remembered how she had summoned the so-called “purple mist” which had been reported so lightly in the news, and how she had used it to send the burglars to the nearest police station.

Her mother walked in behind her. “Don’t worry, dear. The glaziers are coming this afternoon to fix the windows properly. Do you want me to take you to school?” she asked softly.

“No thanks Mum,” said June with a tear in her eye.

“What’s the matter?”

“Nothing. I just don’t want anything to happen to you, or Dad, or even Simon.”

“Nothing’s going to happen. Get your bag and I’ll see you when you come home.”

June collected her packed lunch from the kitchen, came back through the living room to the front door and took her long coat down from the hook.

After making sure Simon wasn’t around, she went up the stairs to her bedroom and silently shut the door.

Everybody else was far too busy to notice the sliver of purple light which shone out from under her bedroom door a few minutes later.

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