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ADVANCE INFORMATION

TITLE: THE LAST STAR
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PRINT EDITION
PUB DATE: 05 JUNE 2023
FORMAT: DEMY (203 X 127MM) TRADE PAPERBACK, 146PP
PRICE: £8 / €10 / \$15
ISBN: 978-1-915304-27-8
RIGHTS: WORLDWIDE
RESTRICTIONS: NONE
ELECTRONIC EDITION
PUB DATE: 05 MAY 2023
FORMATS: EPUB, KINDLE
PRICE: £2.99 / €3.49 / \$3.99
ISBN: 978-1-915304-37-7
RIGHTS: WORLDWIDE
RESTRICTIONS: NONE
AUDIENCE: GENERAL (TRADE)
BIC CODES:
FL SCIENCE FICTION
FJ ADVENTURE
BISAC CODES:
FIC028090 FICTION / SCIENCE FICTION / ALIEN CONTACT
FIC028110 FICTION / SCIENCE FICTION / GENETIC ENGINEERING
FIC028130 FICTION / SCIENCE FICTION / SPACE EXPLORATION
COVER DESIGN AND ARTWORK: ALEX STORER



Beware god-like aliens bearing gifts

Stasis and inorganic self-repair, new spacefaring technologies for humankind, yet more gifts from its closest extra-terrestrial ally, the Iaens. There are, it seems, no limits to humanity's outward journey.

Then Lana Reed, Mission Commander of the interstellar colony seeder, *Drake*, awakes from her own stasis to discover that all but three of the vessel's other tanks are dark, their occupants suffocated, screaming yet unheard in their high-tech coffins. But the stasis tanks are not all that is dark. The sensors return no readings from outside. The external vid-feeds show only unending blackness.

There are no stars to be seen. No planet song to be heard. No galaxy cry. No echoing radio signals that proclaim life. The *Drake* and its surviving crew are adrift and alone in a lightless, empty universe.

From Terry Grimwood, another taste of the human realpolitik alliance with the Iden, begun in *Interference*

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Suffolk born and proud of it, Terry Grimwood is the author of a handful of novels and novellas, including *Deadside Revolution*, the science fiction-flavoured political thriller *Bloody War* and *Joe* which was inspired by true events. His short stories have appeared in numerous magazines and anthologies and have been gathered into three collections, *The Exaggerated Man*, *There Is A Way To Live Forever* and *Affairs of a Cardio-Vascular Nature*. Terry has also written and Directed three plays as well as co-written engineering textbooks for Pearson Educational Press. He plays the harmonica and with a little persuasion (not much persuasion, actually) will growl a song into a microphone. By day he teaches electrical installation at a further education college. He is married to Debra, the love of his life.

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