

Christmas in the Pleistocene

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Written for rodlox's (from livejournal) fandom stocking.

Chapter 1

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A Primeval Flashfic

Even in her survival bag it was bloody cold. Helen knew she had to get up soon if she were to reach the anomaly - or even get up at all, for that matter. She forced her eyes open. The pale light in the tent meant that the feeble sun must have risen and she should start making good use of the limited daylight. It was three days past the equinox which made it Christmas Day in this dismal corner of the Pleistocene. Not that Christmas was particularly relevant. She had always hated Christmas, with its awkward trips in order to sit and be polite to Nick's dour relatives.

It had been a shitty, shitty month. Whenever she closed her eyes she recalled that final glimpse of Stephen's face as he shut himself in with the creatures. Nick hated her. The government no doubt had her on a most wanted list. She couldn't go back to the 21st century even if she had wanted to.

She forced herself out of the bag, packed it in her rucksack and hauled on her furs, the gloves, the snow goggles and all the other paraphernalia needed to survive out here. Then she crept out of the tent.

She almost didn't see the small parcel placed just outside the entrance. But the brightness of the red wrapping paper and the golden stars caught her eye beneath the light dusting of snow. Clumsily she picked it up, tiny in her bulky mittens. She retreated back into the tent to examine it.

Carefully she tore off the wrapping paper. It was a small box of handmade chocolates. Someone had gone somewhere very exclusive and very expensive to get hold of them. Wrapped around it was a loose sheet of paper, torn from an exercise book. Words were scrawled across the paper.

"Hang on in there," it said in Nick's distinctively untidy hand.