

## **Future Perfect - more about the story**

Nick Randall's quest to track down stories that Leo Parrish wrote for little-known 1950s science fiction magazines is affected by turbulent events in the wider world that may be dangerously destabilizing. Angered by Western anti-terrorist activities, Zhuyldz Muvart, the unpredictable President of the central Asian republic of Khanistan, has threatened to add toxins to his country's petrochemicals exports and may have embedded activist cells in many countries. There are rumours that a covert attack against Muvart is planned.

At the same time, a new star has appeared in the Draco constellation which people fear might be an imminent supernova whose destructive potential could prove catastrophic for the entire planet. Day by day, Draco Nova grows ever brighter.

Meanwhile, feverish media reports and press conferences suggest other dangers. An outbreak of an unknown haemorrhagic fever is reported with rapid onset and harrowing symptoms; the US and UK governments are forced to deny reports that they are involved in germ warfare programmes and the illegal detention of Khanistani exiles; the US Secretary of State for Defense is an irascible character with hawkish opinions and a worryingly short fuse.

Closer to home, Nick's attempts to find out more about Leo Parrish are thwarted by what seems to be a concerted plan to keep him in the dark. His activities attract the attention of a shadowy and threatening US intelligence operative and an officer from the UK's Special Branch. Members of a religious cult called the Church of the Ascendancy also seem to be involved in efforts to keep Leo Parrish's legacy hidden. When it emerges that the Church was founded by someone who knew Parrish and stole ideas from his only novel for his

religion, Nick's sense of a murky conspiracy grows. His peace of mind is not helped by the fact that the people who seem to know most about Leo Parrish are the very ones who are most reluctant to tell him the truth.

Ranging from London to Miami, Nick's search for the truth takes him on a journey that starts with science-fiction enthusiasts and collectors of memorabilia and leads on to encounters with an eminent author, an expert in apocalyptic prophecy, a narcissistic movie star and even the reclusive founder of the Church of the Ascendancy, who published Leo Parrish's stories when he was the opportunistic editor and publisher of cheap newsstand magazines. The foreboding sense of the world on the brink of catastrophe increases. Is Zhuyldz Muvart the new Anti-Christ? Is Draco Nova the harbinger of doom? Or is it the signal of salvation for those who believe that it portends the cleansing dawn of a new order in which only they will inherit the Earth?

And why is it that the dangers the world now faces appear to have been foretold in the stories Leo Parrish wrote a half a century before?