Echoes of the Reich.

The air lingered with the aroma of chips as people milled around, engrossed in their conversation. The fiery sun scorched down like an irate orb in the sky, casting shimmering diamonds amongst the tidal waves. Lucas, with a grin spread across his face, sashayed about the beach while his Dad fished. Then Lucas noticed something unusual sticking out from a clump sand-a small tin jar. That had washed ashore. Uncorking the cork, with his bony wrists he saw the enigmatic pattern. It had convoluting stripes, smudges and squiggles. Racing back home, to Mrs Smith his cryptography teacher. Her house was covered with white bricks, and a vine draped over the chimney as if concealing a secret. Filled to the brim was ripe strawberries, pumpkins and tomatoes twirling around their stem like a graceful ballerina. Barging inside, Lucas could smell the fresh baking of homemade scones and jam tarts.

“This is a Nazi Code. It is a map, showing the way in- or out, of the Echoes of the Reich!’’ commented Mrs Smith, patting Lucas’s shoulder with her hands. What was the secret from this message? Where had even found the map? Would it be dangerous to follow this map or was it a decoy? Lucas’s words swirled in his mind, racing like runaway trains, as questions collided with a growing sense of dread…

The Stars Lullaby

Every midnight, the stars above the village flickered off for exactly one minute, but only Liam seemed to notice.

The Twilight became Night, casting dark eerie shadows over the quaint and desolate village of Crowden. Liam, a small but sage boy had bony wrists and a cleft lip. From little he had fostered a love for space and astronomy. Though his parents were too poor to afford proper education, but Liam’s love for astronomy still blossomed as he spent every night gazing at the stars. Every evening, as the clock struck midnight, he would listen intently for the three resonant chimes that echoed through London. Dong! Dong! Dong! Then the stars which illuminated the sky would flicker like torches for one minute. He would plead the villagers and show them. They would always reply with a dismissive wave of their hand, “It must be the clouds covering the stars!’’ Undeterred, he couldn’t shake the feeling that there was something more to it. His desire to understand grew stronger, and he made up his mind to discover the truth for himself.

With the moonlight guiding his way, Liam ventured out one fateful night, determined to unravel the mystery that had eluded him—and the villagers—for so long. He knew that if he succeeded, he could change the way the world viewed the skies, and perhaps even his place within it…