

Unremembered Loss

For all the news and information from the world of Rathrae, and for the story Unremembered Loss.

Issue 23

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Welcome to another issue of the newsletter. Don't forget to forward this newsletter on to your friends and help me build a following that will one day lead to Unremembered Loss being published. Sign up for the newsletter at <http://www.douglasclarke.com/lists/?p=subscribe>

Doug

Faith

For the last two months I've written about hope. I explored it through the eyes of a ten year old; who learned about hope by watching his mother; and a turpes; who had never seen hope before.

I found the experience of writing about hope moving as I looked at my own understanding of hope and the struggles I've come through to stand in the place I am now.

This month I'd like to look at hope's twin – faith.

While hope is the confidence that the victory has already been won – built up by seeing the results of that victory over time – faith is the action that hope powers.

Here are two people's reflection on faith.

Tom

Click.

I heard the unmistakable sound of a pin falling into

place as Frank fiddled with the lock. He continued his tinkering for another minute and stopped when another click echoed in the deathly silence of the hallway.

"It's all yours," he said. Then stepped away from the door. "It's not trapped"

I returned his smile and stepped forward, sword drawn. I knew that Frank was good at his trade, but I also knew that we had found three booby-trapped doors already; almost half of the doors we had gone through. He had found and disarmed them, but now I was stepping up to the eighth door.

I always get to go first – it's my privilege and my duty. I've got the best armor. I'm the best with a sword. I'm the leader. Still, stepping up to that door I wondered if this would be the one he missed.

It's not a matter of trust. I trust my life to Frank all the time. I know that he would never intentionally put me in harms way. This was a ques-

tion of faith. Was I willing to act based on something I couldn't know for sure?

Do I open the door with confidence, ready to fight, or do I open the door hesitantly waiting for a trap to spring? If I choose the latter, I won't be ready for an attack. If I choose the former I won't be able to react to a trap. If I try to plan for both possibilities I won't be ready to handle either.

I chose to have faith. I opened the door quickly and with confidence, and charged into the room. I caught the monster inside off guard and quickly dispatched it.

My faith had been rewarded, but I wondered, what if my faith had been misplaced? I had chosen to have faith in a man who could make mistakes. How different that is than having faith in a God who doesn't make mistakes.

But then it seems easier sometimes to trust what you can see than have faith in what you can't see.

Julie

I was walking to town today, my pack heavy with the furs and dried meat I'd collected over the last two weeks, when I first saw him out of the corner of my eye. He was sitting against a tree some distance off of the trail, which was strange because of the number of dangerous animals in the area.

I decided to put down my pack and see if every thing was alright. I made my way through the thick undergrowth to where he sat.

"Greetings," I called to him when I got closer. He did not reply. I thought about turning away and leaving the man, but then I remembered the times I have been in trouble in the woods – and what would have happened to me if someone had not stopped to help.

I knelt down next to him and placed the back of my hand against his forehead; he was burning up. Again I thought about leaving, knowing how deadly fevers can be, but then God calls us to help those in need. This man was definitely in need.

I knew that helping him might cost me my life, but it was what I needed to do. I said a little prayer for him, and one for myself.

I reached down and grabbed his arms. I pulled him up onto my shoulders; knowing that God would keep me safe. I made it as far as the trail before I collapsed under his weight.

I didn't go down gracefully and found myself pinned beneath him. I lay there for several minutes regaining my strength. I could smell the disease in his sweat.

"How can I do this?" I whispered to God. I didn't get an answer - at least not in words - but I knew what I needed to do. I rolled the man off of me and got up. I cut some small saplings and tied them together to make a carrier.

I managed to get him on to it and realized that I couldn't pull him and carry my pack. I climbed high into a tree and hung my pack from one of its branches. Then I lifted one end of the carrier and started dragging him back to town.

The trip was long and hard. I stopped several times when we passed small streams so I could cool his body with their waters. When he started moaning I knew that time was running out. I wanted to stop - to rest - but I knew if he was going to live, I had to keep going.

The sun went down and I pulled on by moon light.

In the shadows I heard the sounds of creatures. Some of them sounded large. Many of them were undoubtedly deadly.

Listening to the cry of a wolf in the distance, I realized that I had left my bow hanging in the tree with my pack. I reached down and felt the knife against my side.

For some reason no animals came near. Was it that I looked too big? Did I make too much noise? Did we both smell of death and they figured that they would wait for us to die? Or did God have his hand around us?

It was nearly ten when we came out of the woods and saw the town ahead. I stopped at the first farm and the owner let me borrow his cart and ox.

Within a half an hour I had the man to the church and the priest took over care of him. I sat on the front step of the church, exhausted and smelling of death myself, but thankful that the man was going to be okay.

The next morning I walked back to the place where I had hung up my pack and found that it was still there. It wasn't till I got back home that I found out a family of mice had already taken up residence in it.