

# Unremembered Loss

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

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My Short Story from last month didn't received any award. Well, here is another try.

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## Just Another Rainy Day

by Douglas G. Clarke

The rain came down in sheets. It's always coming down. I looked in my log - yep, 492 days of straight rain, and that had been after only a three day gap. The rain beat against the window panes.

It was almost high tide so, I went downstairs to take a water reading. 34' 3". Two feet eleven inches higher than normal, but when had 28 feet above street level become normal? I noted the level in my log and wondered how much of that was storm surge and how much was just the sea raising.

With my stomach grumbling I keyed the mic and gave Stan my report. Water, two foot eleven. Wind, 45 knots out of the south south-east. Temperature, 38C. Humidity - yeah right, what's higher than 100%? I asked Stan about the food delivery that was two days late. He told me that there was flooding in the walled off part of the city. That everyone was busy shoring up the walls, running the pumps, or passing buckets. I told him I was getting pretty hungry. He told me to hang on and he would get someone to me as soon as he could. He also reminded me how important my work was and that I was a hero. Yeah, aren't most heroes dead?

I hiked up the six flights to the top of the building and spent the afternoon watching the sea from the penthouse. It's hard to watch the water through the rain - the line between the rolling waves and the sheets of rain seem to bluer into a dream. But, I watched. I had to believe what Stan had told me

- that what I was doing mattered. If it didn't, I would probably have curled up and died years ago.

And so I watched.

About four in the afternoon I though I saw something. I wasn't sure if it was a piece of drift wood, or a supper tanker, or something in between - the rain messes with your depth perception. I watched it for five minutes before I knew what I was seeing, then I ran for the radio.

Stan. Come in Stan. We've got a freighter on a collision course with Manhattan. Impact in 12 to 14 minutes.

Stan got the message. I went back to watching the ship, wondering what might have happened to her crew. The minutes ticked by painfully slow as the ship moved ever closer. I could guess where she would hit the wall and knew that if she did our city would no longer be divided, to everyone's determinant. 100 yards from impact I saw the flashes of the cannons. Moments later the windows rattled with their concussion. Five. Ten. Fifteen rounds. The ship pitched as water rushed through the holes in her bow. She turned and struck one of the buildings sticking out of the sea. The building shuttered, but it didn't fall. The ship sank into the waves until only her bridge was still visible. That and the cargo that had been on her deck - which now started on journeys of their own.

In the swirling and crashing waves that rushed between the buildings, crates and barrels and debris were moving out in all directions. The ones that moved towards the wall disappeared in bright flashes, but my eyes were draw to the ones moving towards me. I flew down the six flights of stairs and found some windows where I could look out over the waves. Moments later the first crate hit my building. The building shook and ceiling tiles rained down on me. A wave threw it against the building again.

I swung my shotgun off of my shoulder and fired it at the window nearest the crate. The glass shattered and a wave came rushing through it, followed by the crate. In its hurry it took out the next widow, too. I jumped and it came to rest where I had been standing.

The rest of the debris passed by me to run into other buildings and then out to sea. I opened the crate that now graced apartment 407 and found to my delight, cases of Spam. That night, and the nights for weeks to come, were the best I can remember. Stan did get a little suspicious when I stopped asking about my food shipment, but I started asking again. He did finally get me some food a week later when the rain had died down to a light drizzle.