

Unremembered Loss

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

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Here is a short story that is set in my fantasy world. It is a look at how a daughter might be asked to remember her mother. I hope you enjoy it. Check out my web site to see another short story about a horse race. DouglasGClarke.com

Remembering Mother

by Douglas G. Clarke

The walk back was a hard one. The silence, the absence of friends, the weight of her own thoughts, all combined to make each step a struggle. She questioned the tradition of sending a daughter off on her own after the death of her mother. Wasn't it bad enough she was feeling the loss of the most important person in her life without being deprived of her friends as well?

She looked over her shoulder and saw the stream of mourners winding down the hillside, illuminated by the candles they carried. The moon was her only light, and its pale glow did little to cheer her. Twenty years before, when she was twelve, she had been part of a similar stream of mourners watching her mother walk off into her darkness after having said good by to Nana.

The weight of the memory was more than she could bear. She sat down on a large bolder. The rough stone grabbed at the fabric of her dress, its coldness drew the heat from her, but she didn't care. Her feelings were ripping at the fabric of her life and her heart felt colder than the stone.

"Why am I doing this," she yelled at the sky. "Why should I walk this path alone? This path that only the alone walk."

The sky only replied with a whispering of wind through the rocks. Time passed as the moon traced its way across the sky. Coldness settled into her bones. Her eyes ran dry.

With no hope left in her soul and no love left in her heart, she found she still

had the wit to realize that she needed to continue and the strength to stand. She followed the path again, the clicking of her heels against the hard stone echoing through the darkness.

In the dim light she saw two chairs carved into large boulders, between them a flat stone resembling a table. She walked closer - intricate carvings becoming visible in the stone. She sat in the closest seat, her fingers instinctively tracing the smooth lines in it.

A sparkling of moonlight reflecting off the table caught her eye. She reached forward, running her fingers along the lines there. Her fingers left a glowing path where they traversed. She continued tracing the glyphs, leaving more and more of them glowing.

At first she didn't really understand what she was doing, she was just caught up in the moment. But after a while she began to recognize some of the shapes she was tracing - they were names. She froze when she finished tracing the symbols for her Nana - of red hair and eagle's wings.

She watched as the lines slowly faded. A glimmer of hope awoke in her. She reached out a trembling finger and traced out her Nana's name again. The name glowed. Then the air around the whole place began to glow and a mist began to swirl within it. The swirling mist settled into the other chair and then formed into the shape of a woman.

"Hello my dear."

She wanted to run, to escape not only the aberration that was before her,

but the memories that were crashing down on her like a rock slide.

"Do you remember me, Isabelle? You were so very young that last time we talked."

Her Nana's voice was soothing. She took a deep breath and sat in her own chair, her heart still pounding.

"I remember," was all that Isabelle could say.

"Would you like to remember more?" Nana asked.

A fresh tear rolled down Isabelle's face. "I'm afraid to remember."

"I understand."

Isabelle and her Nana talked for hours. Isabelle traced the names for her grandmothers back eight generations while Nana told her about all of the loving women who had come before her, who's legacy she was.

"Will you add your mother's name to this tablet now, so that when your daughter comes she will be able to talk to her nana, as I've talked to you?"

Without hesitation, Isabelle traced her mother's name below Nana's, leaving a fine line in the once smooth stone. When she was done, the glowing lines all faded and with them Nana.

Isabelle was alone again, but her soul was once again filled with hope and her heart with love. She walked down the mountain, not looking back, but forward to what was to come. When she reached the small village, her daughter ran to her and she held her in her arms.