

Unremembered Loss

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

Issue 41

January 2013

Happy New Years and welcome to the Unremembered Loss newsletter. Since it is the new year and everyone else is figuring out what they want to accomplish on 2013, I guess I should do the same. So here it is...

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Douglas G Clarke

2013 - The year to come

2012 was a year of change for me. In January I found out that I was being laid-off in three months. In April I found my self sort of unemployed - I've been working the last nine months as a contractor for the same company, but in Santa Clarita (where Magic Mountain is).

This change in jobs rippled through to other changes in my life.

In July I started entering a monthly short story contest and have succeed in getting one second place win so far.

Some of the other writers and I who were entering the contest decided to pool our stories into an anthology. This book should be published any day now, and will contain four of my stories.

www.facebook.com/gianttales

But there's more. One of the writers in the group needed help with her stories - rather a lot of help - and I have started ghost writing her stories each month. She writes the story and then I rewrite it adding tension, plot and good grammar. The first book will also contain four of my ghost written stories.

This first book represents four months of short stories. Quick on its heels will be book two, with five of my stories and five I've ghost written. It should be published in the spring.

These short stories are on the very short side, 500 to 750 words. The publisher who is doing the first two books wanted us to increase the word count to 2,000 to 3,000 words - so started a second monthly short story writing contest this January.

I've complete my story - a family acting as a way station for refugees after a natural disaster - and ghost wrote one. This weekend I'm planning out the next 2K story set on a space elevator.

Since these stories are longer and there are more authors contributing to the anthologies, each book will have stories from only two or three months. It's not clear yet, but we may be writing two 2K stories this month - a second one for the disaster series and the first one for the space series. And of course there will be another 750 word story.

I'm not sure if I'm going to be able to keep up with all these stories. I may have to skip some of the anthologies if things get to crazy.

As it is, I'm having a lot of fun writing these stories. Very soon I will actually be a published author. I may even see a royalty check ('tho I'm not counting on it), but even if I don't, I am making money by doing the ghost writing. While not much, it can add up when I do it every month.

I've also been looking again for a professional editor for my novel. It will cost somewhere in the \$3,000 to \$5,000 range to get the kind of editing done that I want: character, plot, grammar. And it will take a bunch of my time to incorporate all the changes I'm sure will be recommended.

Could this be the year of "Doug the published author"? I'm giving it my best shot and we will see what happens. It would be easy, of course, if I wasn't doing a bunch of other things, but then life wouldn't be interesting.

Speaking of interesting...

Besides my writing, I've been looking into audio recording. I listen to a lot of audio books as I drive back and forth to LA. I bought myself a good microphone and the software I need. Now I'm working with Emma and Rory to start recording some of the stories I've already written.

I'm doing this for many reasons - it's fun, I like audio books, it is a technical challenge - but the biggest reason is because my son Rory wants to be an actor. There are lots of ways to get practices acting - like getting in the school play - but the only one that is in my control is giving him the opportunity to do voice-overs for my stories.

So why would an actor want to do voice overs? Depending on the study you look at, 75% to 93% of communication is non-verbal. Here are some numbers from a study that Dr. Alber Mehrabian performed.

He found that 7% of any message is conveyed through words, 38% through certain vocal elements, and 55% through nonverbal elements (facial expressions, gestures, posture, etc).

So in other words it is really hard to convey a story with just words (7%). You really have to be able to use the voice elements (38%) well. If an actor can compel people with just his or her voice, then he or she will have a leg up on everyone else.

Can Rory do it? I think so, if I can get him off the computer long enough to do it. Stay tuned for more on the audio books soon. I'll let everyone know when I've posted some stories, or even better, when I have them up for sale through www.audible.com.

I've also been busy at work on iPhone/iPad applications. 2013 will be the year that I have applications in the Apple AppStore.

I have been working with a gentleman from Switzerland on a game. I'm just about ready to put it out for Beta testing. So, if you have an iPhone or iPad or iPod Touch and want to see this game early, let me know and I'll tell you how to sign up.

I've also started working on a business application, on which I've made great progress. It is an application that will allow physical therapist to assign exercise for their clients to do. It will help the clients do the exercises and then report on their progress.

I'm working with a pair of local physical therapist who are both very excited about the project. I'm shooting to have a prototype done this Friday and a final application ready as soon as the end of February.

I have a bunch of other ideas in the back of my head and can't wait to put these two out on the market and start on the next one.

All of this creative work, coupled with the fact that I don't have a full time job, has pushed me to make another big change for 2013.

In January I filed incorporation papers with the State of California. In four to six weeks I will be a new legal entity. What does that mean? Lots of small things and a couple of medium sized things.

I can sign an NDA (Non-Disclosure Agreement) with Apple inc, to get some information that I can't get as an independent developer.

It means that it is easier for me to hire people to do things for me, like doing voice-overs. And it means I get a new web site.

Of all the things that I had to do, finding the name for the corporation was the toughest. I considered literally 2,000 names before I found one that I really liked and that someone else wasn't already using or sitting on, for the web site.

I wanted something that would work for my writing and other creative endeavors, but still be appropriate for my engineering work. I won't bore you with all the names that didn't work. Suffice to say they ranged from the very silly to the way too serious, a little too happy to very dark.

I ended up with one that is a little bit on the creative side, and has some good opportunities for fun marketing ideas and a few puns. So without further ado let me introduce you to my new company.

A Good Tale

It speaks to my writing, at least I hope it does. It also is good for the audio books. As an engineer, especially one that is doing qualification testing, being able to tell a good tale is critical.

The puns of course come from the word tale. I'm looking at having a series of mascots for the different parts of my company who each have a cute tail.

Wish me luck in 2013 - it looks like I'm going to be spending a lot of it running.

Doug Clarke