

Unremembered Loss

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

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Saturday Morning

(Part one of the story in issue 81)

“What a welcome surprise. Who would have dreamed that I could capture Mega Spider. I had hoped only to kill you. How does it feel to be a fly in my web?”

Mega-spider tried to move, but felt the ropes that held her tighter than any web – and then there was the pain. Sharp and dull mixed. She remembered the fall – two stories – and the mayor. She turned her head and scanned the room. The word, “Mayor,” escaping from her lips.

“No fear, the mayor is fine. You do make a superb pillow. If you behave yourself, I might even let you see her before she dies. Would you like that?”

“I’d like to kill you.”

“Now, now. Is that any why for a lady to talk – and a hero besides?”

Mega-spider coughed and then spat out some blood. “After the way you butchered the officers at city hall? Just killing you is me being nice.”

The man associated with the voice she had been talking to stepped into view. Tall, dark hair, square jaw, Italian suit with just the right amount of snugness

to show off the muscles hidden under it. Mega-spider blinked her eyes, hoping her sight would be different when she opened them again.

“Brad?”

“Well, aren’t you full of surprises. I was going to let you die keeping your secrets, but now. Well.”

Brad reached down and pulled up on the mask that was covering Mega-spider’s face. As the mask slipped off and the long dark strands of Mega-spider’s hair fell to cover the table around her head, Brad’s eyes widened.

“Dena... I had no idea you’d look so good in spandex. If I had, I would’ve bought you some.”

“Brad?”

“I know, you still want me, right?”

Dena’s eyes fixed on his. Brad flinched involuntarily.

“Maybe you would kill me?”

Dena’s eyes didn’t move. Her voice was low and steady. “Not maybe.”

The smile left Brad’s face. He turned and walked out of the room, letting the door swing closed behind him. The room was plunged into darkness.

Dena lay in that darkness, feeling the pain washing over her body, but with each minute, with each breath, she felt the pain flowing away. Her body was healing itself in its super human way, but Brad. She had given her heart to him once and her super powers couldn’t protect her from her memories.

How could she have ever loved him? Trusted him! An eternity seemed to pass, locked in the darkness of the room and her memories. The next time the door opened, light did not flood in to chase away the darkness, only a less deep darkness was visible through its frame hugging the blackness of Brad.

“Are you awake my dear?” Brad’s voice was like an ice-pick. I told you I’d let you see your mayor before she dies, and well, if we don’t hurry I won’t be able to keep that promise.”

Dena watched Brad cross the room, waiting for the moment to strike, but he didn’t come up next to her to release her bonds.

He reached out and grabbed the table near her feet. She started rolling towards the door. She gasped.

“Sorry about that, I don’t want you to suffer, physically that is.” The soft laugh knotted her stomach.

They rolled along a series of windows. Glancing outside, the starlight reflecting off water told her they were by the lake. At the end of the hallway they exited onto a roof patio. Brad twisted Dena’s bed so her feet were against the rail.

“Here we are. The shows about to begin.”

Brad pulled his phone from his pocket and poked at its screen. Suddenly a series of lights flicked to life. In their center was a small boat and the mayor.

“Streaming live on every station. I think you taught me that one.”

Brad pressed another button and fire sprang up on the boat.

“Would you like a better view of your failure?”

Dena turned her head away.

“No, I insist.” Brad put one hand under Dena’s head and with the other released the

restraint that held her chest down. When Brad lifted her head, Dena reached behind his head and pulled it down onto her knee. Brad fell back.

With two flips, the restraints fell free from her waist and feet. She rolled off the table and a gasp escaped her lips as pain overwhelmed her and dropped her to her knees.

“Not as hurt as I thought. We’ll it doesn’t matter, there’s nothing you can do now.”

Dena looked up at Brad and saw the barrel of a pistol pointing at her. With a single thought, she kicked the table towards Brad and dove off the roof. That single thought repeated itself several times, like a mantra, in the two seconds it took her to reach the ground, it’s only one story.

Dena tucked and rolled three times before springing to her feet and sprinting towards the water. When the water was knee high she dove forward and started swimming. The cold water was biting, but at the same time numbing. She swam until her lungs burned, but the thought of the mayor actually burning pushed her on.

She reached the boat, fully engulfed in flames. She could

hear the mayor’s screams. She grabbed the boat’s gunwale and pulled herself into the flames. The boat rocked and Dena shifted her weight. The boat tipped and then flipped.

The mayor, flaming and tied to a chair, fell towards her. Once again she found the mayor landing on top of her, but this time her ribs were already half broken and stayed that way. She quickly worked the knots loose and dragged the two of them back to the surface.

As she pulled the mayor back towards shore, the flashing blues and reds of police cars converged at the beach, behind them the lights went dark and the fire sputtered.

“Go,” the mayor said. “I can make it from here.”

Dena hesitated for a moment, but then her foot touched the bottom. “You sure?”

“Yes. Go, and thank you.”

Dena released the mayor and started swimming along the shore. As the adrenaline left her system it was replaced with shivers – from the cold, and the knowledge that Brad was still out there.

Doug Clarke

So that’s the story I said you might see in July. I hope you enjoyed it. Next month I have an audio story to talk about and point you to. It was a lot of fun to make and also a little harder to wrap up than I thought. Did you see that 84 at the top? Seven years of writing this newsletter - wow.

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