

# Unremembered Loss

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

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## Rewriting

I think the thing I like best about writing is rewriting. My editor suggested that I rewrite my novel in first person and I resisted. The more I thought about it, however, the more I agreed that the story might be better.

So I started. I'm now 108 pages in (that's double-spaced, one-inch-margin manuscript pages) which is 24,550 words, or 21%. So what do I think so far?

It's a lot of work. There are things that are harder to show, but I can show more depth in the things I do show. When I'm telling the story through someone's journal, I can show what's in their heart. And that, it seems, can have a down side for me.

Most of you probably know that this novel, *Unremembered Loss*, is two stories. One is Annay's grief journey and the other is Hector's struggle to hold onto his faith when he can't see God's plan.

Both of these stories are extensions of my own story. When I originally wrote the story, I was one year into my grief journey and I wrote what was on my heart. I didn't think a lot about "tension" and "making it hard" for my characters. I already

knew it was hard from personal experience.

Now I'm rewriting it. Looking at structure. Trying to weave the story into a complete whole from several different people's points of view. Exploring how to expose the raw nerves that Annay and Hector wouldn't be willing to show to anyone, but somehow find comfort in committing to the pages of their journals.

All well and good. I'm finding some things that I didn't see before, and in that I'm finding some things about myself I didn't know. I wrote this novel, because I couldn't write in a journal. It's not what you might think. I spent the first year after Nigel's death writing a blog, [douglasclarke.me](http://douglasclarke.me), dumping my heart onto the virtual pages. The novel was a way to look at things from a different point of view, and to feel like I was doing something worthwhile (writing a novel, not just wasting my time writing for myself.)

Now I'm experiencing it all again. Feelings that I had forgotten. The confusion when everything was changing around me. Being out of control. Being overwhelmed with emotions one

minute and then feeling nothing the next.

A friend at work asked me why I'm spending all this effort on this book. It was a good question, and like all "why" questions, doesn't have a concrete answer. Why am I spending effort on something that causes me pain? From the fatigue that writing causes me (because it's hard), to the emotional turmoil that reliving those days again causes me.

I told her it was partly because I want to feel a sense of accomplishment in finishing this, or put another way, avoiding the pain I would feel for failing and having wasted all that time. While this is true, I think the bigger part is that there are things that I know I'm not done dealing with and this is one of the ways that I can force myself to deal with them.

My novel and my personal story, in the end are about working through the pain and coming out the other side better for the journey, if not grateful for having to go on it. So the restless nights and missed TV shows feel like steps in the right direction.

Anyway, I hope so...

Douglas Clarke