

201 Dragonfly



WHAT IT IS

It reoccurred with the regularity and accuracy of a Citizen Caliber 0100 quartz watch. Every Sunday night at 2 am Flagstaff would awake, turn on the 2 watt lamp on her bedside table, drop a couple sleeping pills then fall back to sleep. She did this in the hopes that the dream she was about to have would somehow resolve itself.

It was cold, fresh snow that covered the ground and she shivered in the summer dress she wore, the same dress she wore when she met No. 1 months ago. The inside of the barn smelt like straw, old straw, and not even the wind rushing through the many broken boards could diminish the smell. The barn door was missing, but when she tried to walk through the opening to the outside, an impenetrable force kept her inside the barn. She attempted to pry away loose boards without success, then started digging a tunnel under the barn's wall but hit solid rock. Finally, in desperation, she set the barn on fire and as the flames grew larger and the heat intensified, a dragonfly emerged from the flames and Flagstaff woke up.

Monday morning saw a pale and anxious Justine Flagstaff slouched in the threadbare, upholstered armchair beside the assignment desk, waiting for her boss to confirm she was on her way to Northern Ontario to chase down some stories about three chipmunks, precious metals, some real life crime drama and anything else she could dig up during the ten day assignment.

Flagstaff found herself a few kilometers from the Moose Lodge, white knuckled on the steering wheel trying to navigate the worse washboards she'd ever driven on, when she slammed on the brakes, pulled over to the side of the road and starred at the barn she'd been dreaming about.

WHAT IT IS NOT

To drown the noise of twenty teenagers doing calisthenics, Jared Deakins would slap on some headphones, slip into a beer buzz and meditate the night away or at least ruminate as meditation did not jive with his way of thinking. He hated camp life, the structured activities, the buddy-buddy complexions, the one size fits all modules...but here he was. What of the truck driver who hates to drive or the introvert who leads the "team", the doctor, trained for seven plus years, then becomes a bureaucrat? The world is full of people doing something they shouldn't and it's a damn good thing, Jared thought as he cracked open his last beer.

As for Jared, he remembered clearly when his love for all things mother nature came to a halt. He was a young boy of ten, walking with his parents near Pine Creek Gorge trying to net butterflies and dragonflies on a Sunday afternoon when he got separated from the adults and came face to face with a black bear. As the bear reared up on its hind legs a man appeared out of nowhere and attacked the bear with his white cane. Leo Barnard fought off the bear and received numerous bites, cuts and scrapes but in the end was more than alright, as the unexpected encounter saw the return of his sight.