

[PDF] Pegasus: The Flame Of Olympus

Kate O'Hearn - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: Pegasus: The Flame Of Olympus

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Released: 2012-05-22

Language:

Pages: 385

ISBN: 9781442444096

ISBN13: 978-1442444096

ASIN: 1442444096

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pdf, mobi, epub, azw, kindle

Description:

About the Author **Kate O'Hearn** was born in Canada, raised in New York City, and lives in England.

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EMILY PUT HER HAND ON THE WINDOW AND felt the glass shaking from the heavy peals of thunder cracking overhead.

All day the radio had been reporting on the unexpected violent storms raging up and down the East Coast of the United States. Where Emily lived, in the heart of New York City, the storm was at its worst. Sitting alone in the apartment she shared with her policeman father, she never imagined that a simple thunderstorm could be *this* bad.

She clutched her cell phone and felt guilty for lying to her father. He'd just called to check on her.

"All the police have been summoned into work, honey," he explained. "We're doing double and triple shifts. The city's a madhouse because of the weather, and they need everyone on duty. Do me a favor, will you? Keep away from the windows. There are lightning strikes all over the city, and our top-floor apartment is at particular risk."

Yet, despite his warning and her promise to keep away, Emily sat in the large window seat and watched the raging storm. This had always been her mother's favorite spot. She used to call it her "perch": her special place to sit and watch the world moving around twenty stories below. Since her mother's death, Emily found herself sitting there more and more often, as though it could somehow bring her closer to her mother.

But not only that; from this vantage point Emily could see the top of the Empire State Building. Her father had once told her that the building itself worked as a giant lightning rod to protect the other buildings around it. But as more and more forked lightning struck its tall antenna, she wondered how much more it could take.

Emily hugged her knees to her chest to keep from trembling. She'd never been frightened of thunder when her mother was alive. Somehow they'd always found ways of making foul weather fun and exciting. But now, all alone with her father at work, Emily felt her mother's loss as acutely as the day she died.

"I wish you were here, Mom," she whispered sadly as she gazed out the window. Emily's eyes filled with tears that trickled down her cheeks.

Suddenly there was an ever-louder peal of thunder and brilliant flash of lightning. It struck the Empire State so hard, the antenna at the top of the building exploded in a flash of electrical sparks and flying debris.

Emily could hardly believe what she had just witnessed. She wiped the tears from her blurred eyes as all the lights in the tall building blinked out. Immediately after, the lights in buildings around it went out. The darkness spread like a grape-juice stain on the carpet, as the city was hit with a blackout.

Emily followed the progression of the blackout as she peered up Broadway. Block after block was going dark. Even the street- and traffic lights were out. It wasn't long before the power outage reached her block, plunging her apartment building into darkness. She leaned farther against the glass and tried to see where the blackout ended. It didn't. The whole city was in darkness.

She jumped as her cell burst to life. With trembling hands, she flipped it open and read her father's name on the small view screen.

"Dad," she cried. "You won't believe what just happened! The top of the Empire State just blew up! Lightning hit it and it exploded. Pieces went flying everywhere!"

"I just heard," her father said anxiously. "Are you all right? Did anything hit our building?"

"No, everything's fine," Emily replied, trying to hide the fact that she was far from fine. She was actually starting to get very frightened. "But the power's gone out. From what I can see, it's dark all over the city."

Emily heard another voice in the background. Her father cursed before speaking to her again.

"We're getting reports that the blackout has spread to all the boroughs and is hitting New Jersey. This is a big one, Em. And from what I've just been told, it's not going to be fixed anytime soon. I need you to go into the bathroom and fill the tub with water. Then fill whatever you can in the kitchen. We don't know how long this is going to last, and we'll need that water."

"I will," she promised. Then, before she could stop herself, Emily asked weakly, "Dad, when are you coming home?"

"I don't know, honey," he answered. "Hopefully soon. Look, do you want me to call Aunt Maureen and ask her to come over and stay with you?"

Emily loved her aunt, but she didn't want to sound like a baby. She was old enough to take care of herself. "No thanks, Dad, I'm fine."

"You're sure?" her father asked. "I bet she could use the company."

"Yeah, I'm sure," Emily said. "The storm's just got me a bit freaked. But I've got lots to do here. Besides, it's too dangerous for Maureen to come over in all this and then have to climb twenty flights of stairs. Really, I'm fine."

There was a hesitation in her father's voice before he said, "All right. But if you need me or anything at all, I'm just a phone call away. Understand?"

"I do. Thanks, Dad," Emily said. "Now I'd better go before the water shuts down."

Emily ended the call and used the light from her cell-phone screen to guide her into the kitchen. She quickly found the emergency flashlight and crossed to the bathroom.

This was the standard operating procedure for blackouts. Fill the bathtub and every other container with water. One of the downsides of living in a tall building during a blackout was the pumps sending water up to the apartments soon stopped. If they didn't store all the water they could, they would quickly find themselves in a lot of trouble.

She began to fill the bathtub, and then the pots and pans in the kitchen. Just as she finished filling the last big soup pot, the pressure behind the water flow started to weaken. It wouldn't be long before it stopped completely.

"Well, it's better than nothing," she sighed aloud as she shut off all the faucets.

While she worked, Emily had managed to forget about the storm for a few minutes. But with the water off, the sound of the rumbling thunder and police and fire sirens from the city were the only sounds in the apartment.

Just outside the bathroom window, Emily saw another burst of lightning and heard more thunder. The lightning was so bright it left her seeing flashes, even after she closed her eyes. There was no pause between the light and sound, which meant this latest strike was very close.

As the thunder rumbled angrily, Emily moved away from the window. This time she would follow her father's advice and stay well clear of all the windows. The storm was directly overhead—and getting worse by the minute.

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