



## Truly, Madly Manhattan: Local HeroDual Image

By Nora Roberts

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When Harry Met Sally, Serendipity and An Affair to Remember showed us the lighter side of love. Nora Roberts shows audiences the sensual side. Capturing the splendor and excitement that New York City is famous for, this dramatic volume of two full-length novels will truly entertain Nora's millions of fans!

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## **Editorial Review**

### **Review**

"Her stories have fueled the dreams of twenty-five million readers." -- *Entertainment Weekly*

### **About the Author**

Nora Roberts is a bestselling author of more than 209 romance novels. She was the first author to be inducted into the Romance Writers of America Hall of Fame. As of 2011, her novels had spent a combined 861 weeks on the *New York Times* Bestseller List, including 176 weeks in the number-one spot. Over 280 million copies of her books are in print, including 12 million copies sold in 2005 alone.

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Zark drew a painful breath, knowing it could be his last. The ship was nearly out of oxygen, and he was nearly out of time. A life span could pass in front of the eyes in a matter of seconds. He was grateful that he was alone so no one else could witness his joys and mistakes.

Leilah, it was always Leilah. With each ragged breath he could see her, the clear blue eyes and golden hair of his one and only beloved. As the warning siren inside the cockpit wailed, he could hear Leilah's laughter. Tender, sweet. Then mocking.

"By the red sun, how happy we were together!" The words shuddered out between gasps as he dragged himself over the floor toward the command console. "Lovers, partners, friends."

The pain in his lungs grew worse. It seared through him like dozens of hot knives tipped with poison from the pits of Argenham. He couldn't waste air on useless words. But his thoughts...his thoughts even now were on Leilah.

That she, the only woman he had ever loved, should be the cause of his ultimate destruction! His destruction, and the world's as they knew it. What fiendish twist of fate had caused the freak accident that had turned her from a devoted scientist to a force of evil and hate?

She was his enemy now, the woman who had once been his wife. Who was still his wife, Zark told himself as he painfully pulled himself up to the console. If he lived, and stopped her latest scheme to obliterate civilization on Perth, he would have to go after her. He would have to destroy her. If he had the strength.

Commander Zark, Defender of the Universe, Leader of Perth, hero and husband, pressed a trembling finger to the button.

**CONTINUED IN THE NEXT EXCITING ISSUE!**

"Damn!" Radley Wallace mumbled the oath, then looked around quickly to be sure his mother hadn't heard. He'd started to swear, mostly in whispers, about six months ago, and wasn't anxious for her to find out. She'd get that look on her face.

But she was busy going through the first boxes the movers had delivered. He was supposed to be putting his books away, but had decided it was time to take a break. He liked breaks best when they included Universal Comics and Commander Zark. His mother liked him to read real books, but they didn't have many pictures. As far as Radley was concerned, Zark had it all over Long John Silver or Huck Finn.

Rolling over on his back, Radley stared at the freshly painted ceiling of his new room. The new apartment was okay. Mostly he liked the view of the park, and having an elevator was cool. But he wasn't looking forward to starting in a new school on Monday.

Mom had told him it would be fine, that he would make new friends and still be able to visit with some of the old ones. She was real good about it, stroking his hair and smiling in that way that made him feel everything was really okay. But she wouldn't be there when all the kids gave him the once-over. He wasn't going to wear that new sweater, either, even if Mom said the color matched his eyes. He wanted to wear one of his old sweatshirts so at least something would be familiar. He figured she'd understand, because Mom always did.

She still looked sad sometimes, though. Radley squirmed up to the pillow with the comic clutched in his hand. He wished she wouldn't feel bad because his father had gone away. It had been a long time now, and he had to think hard to bring a picture of his father to his mind. He never visited, and only phoned a couple of times a year. That was okay. Radley wished he could tell his mother it was okay, but he was afraid she'd get upset and start crying.

He didn't really need a dad when he had her. He'd told her that once, and she'd hugged him so hard he hadn't been able to breathe. Then he'd heard her crying in her room that night. So he hadn't told her that again.

Big people were funny, Radley thought with the wisdom of his almost ten years. But his mom was the best. She hardly ever yelled at him, and was always sorry when she did. And she was pretty. Radley smiled as he began to sleep. He guessed his mom was just about as pretty as Princess Leilah. Even though her hair was brown instead of golden and her eyes were gray instead of cobalt blue.

She'd promised they could have pizza for dinner, too, to celebrate their new apartment. He liked pizza best, next to Commander Zark.

He drifted off to sleep so he, with the help of Zark, could save the universe.

When Hester looked in a short time later, she saw her son, her universe, dreaming with an issue of Universal Comics in his hand. Most of his books, some of which he paged through from time to time, were still in the packing boxes. Another time she would have given him a mild lecture on responsibility when he woke, but she didn't have the heart for it now. He was taking the move so well. Another upheaval in his life.

"This one's going to be good for you, sweetie." Forgetting the mountain of her own unpacking, she sat on the edge of the bed to watch him.

He looked so much like his father. The dark blond hair, the dark eyes and sturdy chin. It was a rare thing now for her to look at her son and think of the man who had been her husband. But today was different. Today was another beginning for them, and beginnings made her think of endings.

Over six years now, she thought, a bit amazed at the passage of time. Radley had been just a toddler when Allan had walked out on them, tired of bills, tired of family, tired of her in particular. That pain had passed,

though it had been a long, slow process. But she had never forgiven, and would never forgive, the man for leaving his son without a second glance.

Sometimes she worried that it seemed to mean so little to Radley. Selfishly she was relieved that he had never formed a strong, enduring bond with the man who would leave them behind, yet she often wondered, late at night when everything was quiet, if her little boy held something inside.

When she looked at him, it didn't seem possible. Hester stroked his hair now and turned to look at his view of Central Park. Radley was outgoing, happy and good-natured. She'd worked hard to help him be those things. She never spoke ill of his father, though there had been times, especially in the early years, when the bitterness and anger had simmered very close to the surface. She'd tried to be both mother and father, and most of the time thought she'd succeeded.

She'd read books on baseball so she would know how to coach him. She'd raced beside him, clinging to the back of the seat of his first two-wheeler. When it had been time to let go, she'd forced back the urge to hang on and had cheered as he'd made his wobbly way down the bike path.

She even knew about Commander Zark. With a smile, Hester eased the wrinkled comic book from his fist. Poor, heroic Zark and his misguided wife Leilah. Yes, Hester knew all about Perth's politics and tribulations. Trying to wean Radley from Zark to Dickens or Twain wasn't easy, but neither was raising a child on your own.

"There's time enough," she murmured as she stretched out beside her son. Time enough for real books and for real life. "Oh, Rad, I hope I've done the right thing." She closed her eyes, wishing, as she'd learned to wish rarely, that she had someone to talk to, someone who could advise her or make decisions, right or wrong.

Then, with her arm hooked around her son's waist, she, too, slept.

The room was dim with dusk when she awoke, groggy and disoriented. The first thing Hester realized was that Radley was no longer curled beside her. Grogginess disappeared in a quick flash of panic she knew was foolish. Radley could be trusted not to leave the apartment without permission. He wasn't a blindly obedient child, but her top ten rules were respected. Rising, she went to find him.

"Hi, Mom." He was in the kitchen, where her homing instinct had taken her first. He held a dripping peanut butter and jelly sandwich in his hands.

"I thought you wanted pizza," she said, noting the good-sized glop of jelly on the counter and the yet-to-be-resealed loaf of bread.

"I do." He took a healthy bite, then grinned. "But I needed something now."

"Don't talk with your mouth full, Rad," she said automatically, even as she bent to kiss him. "You could have woken me if you were hungry."

"That's okay, but I couldn't find the glasses."

She glanced around, seeing that he'd emptied two boxes in his quest. Hester reminded herself that she should have made the kitchen arrangements her first priority. "Well, we can take care of that."

"It was snowing when I woke up."

"Was it?" Hester pushed the hair out of her eyes and straightened to see for herself. "Still is."

"Maybe it'll snow ten feet and there won't be any school on Monday." Radley climbed onto a stool to sit at the kitchen counter.

Along with no first day on the new job, Hester thought, indulging in some wishful thinking of her own for a moment. No new pressures, new responsibilities. "I don't think there's much chance of that." As she washed out glasses, she looked over her shoulder. "Are you really worried about it, Rad?"

"Sort of." He shrugged his shoulders. Monday was still a day away. A lot could happen. Earthquakes, blizzards, an attack from outer space. He concentrated on the last.

He, Captain Radley Wallace of Earth's Special Forces, would protect and shield, would fight to the death, would—

"I could go in with you if you'd like."

"Aw, Mom, the kids would make fun of me." He bit into his sandwich. Grape jelly oozed out the sides. "It won't be so bad. At least that dumb Angela Wiseberry won't be at this school."

She didn't have the heart to tell him there was a dumb Angela Wiseberry at every school. "Tell you what. We'll both go to our new jobs Monday, then convene back here at 1600 for a full report."

His face brightened instantly. There was nothing Radley liked better than a military operation. "Aye, aye, sir."

"Good. Now I'll order the pizza, and while we're waiting we'll put the rest of the dishes away."

"Let the prisoners do it."

"Escaped. All of them."

"Heads will roll," Radley mumbled as he stuffed the last of the sandwich into his mouth.

Mitchell Dempsey II sat at his drawing board without an idea in his head. He sipped cold coffee, hoping it would stimulate his imagination, but his mind remained as blank as the paper in front of him. Blocks happened, he knew, but they rarely happened to him. And not on deadline. Of course, he was going about it backward. Mitch cracked another peanut, then tossed the shell in the direction of the bowl. It hit the side and fell on the floor to join several others. Normally the story line would have come first, then the illustrations. Since he'd been having no luck that way, Mitch had switched in the hope that the change in routine would jog something loose.

It wasn't working, and neither was he.

Closing his eyes, Mitch tried for an out-of-body experience. The old Slim Whitman song on the radio cruised on, but he didn't hear it. He was traveling light-years away; a century was passing. The second millennium, he thought with a smile. He'd been born too soon. Though he didn't think he could blame his parents for

having him a hundred years too early.

Nothing came. No solutions, no inspiration. Mitch opened his eyes again and stared at the blank white paper.

With an editor like Rich Skinner, he couldn't afford to claim artistic temperament. Famine or plague would barely get you by. Disgusted, Mitch reached for another peanut.

What he needed was a change of scene, a distraction. His life was becoming too settled, too ordinary and, despite the temporary block, too easy. He needed challenge. Pitching the shells, he rose to pace.

He had a long, limber body made solid by the hours he spent each week with weights. As a boy he'd been preposterously skinny, though he'd always eaten like a horse. He hadn't minded the teasing too much until he'd discovered girls. Then, with the quiet determination he'd been born with, Mitch had changed what could be changed. It had taken him a couple of years and a lot of sweat to build himself, but he had. He still didn't take his body for granted, and exercised it as regularly as he did his mind.

His office was littered with books, all read and reread. He was tempted to pull one out now and bury himself in it. But he was on deadline. The big brown mutt on the floor rolled over on his stomach and watched.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Shawn Jones:**

As people who live in the particular modest era should be revise about what going on or details even knowledge to make all of them keep up with the era and that is always change and make progress. Some of you maybe can update themselves by reading books. It is a good choice for yourself but the problems coming to you is you don't know which one you should start with. This Truly, Madly Manhattan: Local HeroDual Image is our recommendation to make you keep up with the world. Why, because this book serves what you want and wish in this era.

#### **Robert Watts:**

Information is provisions for folks to get better life, information today can get by anyone in everywhere. The information can be a information or any news even a concern. What people must be consider if those information which is within the former life are hard to be find than now could be taking seriously which one is appropriate to believe or which one the resource are convinced. If you get the unstable resource then you understand it as your main information there will be huge disadvantage for you. All of those possibilities will not happen inside you if you take Truly, Madly Manhattan: Local HeroDual Image as your daily resource information.

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