

Robert set his bags down and looked to the northwest. He had Jumped to the roof of the office building he had worked at and looked at the Space Needle. He was judging the distances and plotting his course of action. It was all about The Space Needle.

On the roof of his office building he was in the shadow of the Seattle Space Needle. The iconic Space Needle was at the top of the list of what a lot of his former coworkers thought made being a Seattleite cool. Pike Place Market? In the shadow of The space Needle. Taking a ferry ride, in the shadow of The Space Needle. Taking in a ball game, shadow of The Space Needle. Even the Columbia Center Tower, while technically higher, was depicted in most pictures and postcards to imply it too was in the shadow of The Space Needle.

Glancing south at the raging fire there Robert smirked at the thought that it too was in the shadow of the Space Needle.

It was also perfect for someone with his sudden need for privacy. His need for a safe place. The elevators were down. No one could reach him up there once he cleared the place out. First, a few things to try and see if his plan was even possible.

Stepping to the edge of the roof he checked to see there was no one on the street, and Jumped.

From the sidewalk he looked up and after a moment of judging distances, Jumped.

Robert appeared twenty feet in the air and a few feet from the glass front of the building. As gravity took hold of him and pulling him toward the ground Robert reached out with his tentacles and grabbed onto the glass. The pull of gravity and his hold on the building swung him closer and with all six paws landing against the glass windows cushioned his impact. It had worked.

He'd only Jumped twenty feet to test his ability but he had done it. He'd literally managed to cling to the glass side of the building like a gecko. He started climbing higher. Three floors later he stopped and looked behind and below himself. With his pads still gripping the glass he Jumped. And stood on the street directly below where he had just gripped the side of the building.

Looking up he Jumped again. Back on the roof he went over his plan looking for anything he might have missed. Confident he had it right Robert looked to the base of The Space Needle and Jumped.

Standing amidst groups of people camping in the open space under the Needle Robert ignored them as best he could and quickly looked around for more open spaces. He guessed there would still be a large number of tourists trapped up in the Space Needle. Looking up he judged the distance and Jumped.

Thirty feet above and thirty out from the observation windows of the tower Robert saw his perspective change as he started falling. He Jumped closer and with his tentacles grabbed the glass. As he had done in his practice run Robert let gravity swing him to the glass. Even before he had clutched onto the sheet of glass he realized he'd forgotten how the observation deck had been designed.

He was clinging to glass that had been installed with the top positioned well out over the bottom at about a thirty degree angle. While not completely upside-down he was on the underside of the glass and could feel the strain of his weight pulling him away from the surface. He cautiously pulled his body closer to the glass and couldn't help but look down.

"Shit. Oh shit." He whispered.

Hundreds of feet above the ground Robert felt his mind come to a complete stop. There were several factors that caused his mind freeze. Most troubling was the void under him. Having become used to the

sensory input from his tentacles they were now telling him that there was nothing under him but a blank void. The sense of gravity pulling him away from the glass, the void under him and being exposed to anyone inside all came together to block any thought constructive and freeze his mind.

Forcing himself to slowly and cautiously move his head and look inside the Space Needle, Robert rested the side of his face against the glass and peered inside with one eye. He saw no movement but still felt no better. He dared press his face against the glass a little more. The coolness of the glass was a welcome relief. He was shaking from the sudden terror swamping his mind.

Rotating his eye to look up he saw that he would have to climb up, and then grab onto an overhanging structure. From there he would have to climb further out and only then could he gain the safety of a stable surface under him. His ability to Jump had deserted him. He needed his mind to be clear and working properly to focus on a destination, and the subconscious magic had also come to a complete halt. At the moment all his mind could bring up was the thought of him falling to the ground for the final moments of his life.

Staring at the top of the glass pane Robert released one tentacle and slowly, as to not disturb any of his other grips, reached toward the top edge of the glass. Having reached up he wrapped the wide end of his tentacle around the first of the bars crossing the space above him. Robert used the grip to ease most of his weight from the rest of his limbs. Still moving as little as possible he released a second tentacle to the overhanging superstructure to take up even more of his weight.

Robert made his way to the top of the window and carefully started climbing out under the overhang. Now truly hanging upside down his mind threatened to completely shut down on him. His mind screamed that all his extra limbs were not enough and yet his body was telling him he was well within the limits of his strength. He moved carefully while still gripping at the holds tightly.

The wide ends of his tentacles and the extra thumb on each paw was proving to be more than enough to give him a firm grasp of the structure. Even still Robert held on with every ounce of his formidable strength. The extra effort he was putting into climbing under the outer ring of the Space Needle was only adding to his sense of fatigue growing in him. Slowly, forcing himself to concentrate on each move and then planning the next he climbed out to the edge of the overhang. It took even longer to pull himself up around the abrupt edge of the saucer.

Having finally struggled to a position where there was at least something solid under him Robert almost collapsed. Looking down through the bars he knew that would be just as bad as slipping from the glass. The gaps between the bars were wide enough for his body to slip through. As a sign that his mind was beginning to clear he asked himself why he hadn't tried climbing through the gaps. Panting and trembling uncontrollably now Robert continued toward the observation deck windows. He had four tentacles securely planted on the glass of the observation deck when he stopped and stared inside.

There was still no one in sight inside but that wasn't what stopped him. His mind was clear enough that he felt capable of Jumping again. As tempting as that was to him he paused. Eyeing the glass that was also tilted outward Robert was forced to judge his own mettle. He'd heard numerous times the advice that one should get back on the horse that kicked. He took a few more seconds to collect himself before finishing his climb.

Once he felt gathered enough to finish the last leg of his adventure he scaled the window and dropped down to the observation deck. That too was glass, he could see the ground so far below but now he was satisfied that it was solid enough. He could not only feel the solid floor but the sensory input from his tentacles informed him of its reassuring thickness. Robert collapsed limp on the deck, even his tentacles lay around him on the glass. The cool glass felt nice against his throbbing muscles of his overworked tentacles.

He lay there for long minutes just letting his body rest. He'd never taxed his old human body as much as he had just tested his displacer form. When he was ready he climbed to his feet and after looking for the entrance made his way inside the observation deck.

He stood inside The Space Needle and looked around. It was dark but not blindingly so. Even a human would be able to see at least shapes if nothing else. The glow of the fire to the south, and the smaller ones in the city reflected off the ceiling and cast a faint illumination everywhere. The sensory tips of his tentacles let him know the dimensions of the observation area down to a fraction of an inch.

It was the tendrils of his face that he needed to rely on now. He could smell the scents of multiple people around him. He couldn't see anyone moving, nor any bodies on the floor sleeping. Even his tentacles failed to sense movement or the sounds of breathing or even a single heartbeat. The Space Needle was empty.

He'd never visited the Needle before. The unfamiliar space and idea of people lingering somewhere within caused him to explore slowly. The observation deck was a fairly wide open space. There were overturned chairs and tables scattered everywhere and the signs of rapid evacuation. Purely out of habit he righted everything in his path. It was also good exercise to keep his tentacles from stiffening up after the exertion.

He wandered a third of the way around the deck before he spotted the stairs. Robert had heard there was stairs between the observation deck and a second level for the restaurant. Descending the stairs to the restaurant level Robert found the same scattering of the furnishings. Still righting everything within reach he searched the lower level. There was still no sign of anyone in the Space Needle. He eventually found the stairs that lead to the ground. It looked like they were normally locked, but had of course been opened in order to evacuate those trapped when the power had gone out.

Robert had The Seattle Space Needle to himself.

He closed the door to the stairs finding that once it was closed it locked automatically. He spent the next couple of hours cleaning up the mess left behind by the exit of everyone in their escape.