

“Rushin’ To-and-Fro”

by Greg Smith-Young (Elora-Bethany Pastoral Charge)

A monologue for the start of an Easter Sunday service

John 20.1-10

March 27, 2016

A man walks across the front, rake in hand. He stops, looks down, then starts raking. After a bit, he stops again. He looks at an imaginary bush, pulls out a pair of garden clippers, and cuts. He nods his head, satisfied. All the while, he has been oblivious to the congregation’s presence.

He turns and looks up, and sees everyone. Startled, he lets out a yelp and jumps back.

How long you’s been there?

A guy likes to be alone; you’d think groundskeepin’ would be a good career. A guy really liked to be alone; you’d think tendin’ gardens in a cemetery!

I had a nice Passover. Then a quiet Sabbath; no visitors. I come in this mornin’, sun pokin’ up, all the makins’ of a calm day. I’m strollin’ along and barely had a chance to hear em when they’re pushin’ past me: one sprintin’, the next huffin’ after. Around the bend, and they’re gone.

Folks don’t rush here. When they come for a burial, they’re always goin’ slow. Come later for sadness and thinkin’, they always linger. Come ‘long after to open things up, gather the bones and put ‘em in one of them boxes — that’s how we keep ‘em safe ‘n tidy for the great resurrection the Lord’s gonna give us — gettin’ folks ready for that, tendin’ their bones, that’s pious work. No rushin’ it.

Those fellas flyin’ past me was strange, that’s sure. So I sped up my walk. Caught up just in time to see them — and there’s this woman with them now (Where have I seen her before?) — and these two fellas are comin out of the tomb of those rich folks from up Arimathea way. And I’m thinkin’ they’re thieves! It’s a big problem, that lot breakin’ in lookin’ for treasure.

We’ll, they ain’t gettin’ much of anythin’ from that fella’ put in Friday. . . . Now that was strange. Never had a crucified fella’ brought here before. They just toss ‘em in a pit, or leave ‘em hangin’ up there to rot. Someone cursed like that . . . you want him sharin’ a tomb with your kinfolk? But this poor fella, seemed he meant somethin’ to Mr. Joseph — it’s his family tomb they put em’, and Mr. Joseph’s big in gover’nment — so I guess they made some sort of exception. We rushed to get him in before Sabbath, too. I was almost late home. More rushin’. Too much these days.

So I’m just gettin’ ready to yell somethin’ at those thieves, when I see this woman is cryin’. (I know her from somewhere.) And these two fellas don’t look mean. They look scared. Confused. Astonished. And deep-thinkin’. Don’t strike me as graverobbin’ sorts.

I know where I seen her before. It was Friday. I hardly noticed, gettin' him put in there before sundown. There was a few of them. Small bunch, sad really. Ya don't expect folks to be stickin' around with a fella's bein' crucified and all.

Anyhow, from what I can catch she'd come — or maybe there was a bunch of 'em — come early this mornin', and stumbled upon' this stone shoved back.

And I gather these fella's came 'long after she'd gone and fetched em', to see for themselves. They'd gone looked inside. So I thought I might to. Don't you know, it was empty. Not even an old one in there, never mind someone fresh from Friday. And the cloths they'd gone wrapped 'em with, they're sittin' there all neat. No way thieves' would take the time to unwrap him here. No way they'd have leaved it so tidy either.

Anyhow, the two fella's left a while back. The woman stayed on, and I let her be. Figured she needed some alone time. I needed some alone time. Don't worry, I'm keepin' an eye out for her. . . Strange things goin' on 'round here. . . . Someone moved that stone. . . .