

Where are all the Unitarians?

by Ryan Mitchell

*Where are all the Unitarians?* I ask myself as I stare out at the empty pews, as if the whole congregation had been zapped up into the sky by some tractor beam. *Where are all the Unitarians?* I ask myself, feeling tired from the bike ride and shell-shocked by the silence. No sermons. No announcements. No hymns. *Where are all the Unitarians?* I ask myself as I collapse into a deep sleep in a pew.

As I dream I find myself staring at the *kopjafa* in front of the parish hall. A sign dangling from it reads, "Due to the economic crisis Unitarianism as a whole has gone bankrupt. There are no more Unitarians."

This doesn't faze me, and I go to the brick wall by Greta's and pull a certain brick out. This brick opens a very complex mechanical door that leads me down spiraling stairs to the underground location of the Newburyport UUs. There torchlight reveals a banquet table set aside for 'coffee hour'. Everyone sits on cushions watching Harold play his guitar and sing, "You can't make a turtle come out." Everyone sings along merrily, " You can't make a turtle come out."

Then I awake, walk out into the sunlight and sit on the steps of the parish hall. I imagine a long line walking in on Sunday mourning all ready for the weekly sermon and the hymns they all knew and loved. I imagined them discussing their lives and then listening to the morning announcements. From there everybody would recite the doxology and the affirmation in complete unison. Then they would all listen carefully to the readings and the sermon and sing old hymns with joy and liveliness.

I found myself missing these things, not just because they were rituals but because they gave so much to so many, and because so many people were able to feel so much enjoyment and contentment after each service that it would inspire them to change their life on a daily basis. This I thought should happen in every building.

These thoughts passed through my head and then I started to imagine myself being part of some great Irony. I expected Rod Serling to pop up and say something corny like, "The best laid plans of Mice and Unitarians often go awry."

But instead a man in a similar suit approached me and said,

"What are you doing loitering, boy?"

"My whole congregation disappeared! Where are all the Unitarians?"

Then he said, "It's Saturday!"

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