An Unheeded Return

by Nathaniel Tower

On an overcast and humid day in August, Jesus—with Dad's permission, of course—decided to make his grand return.

Much to the dismay of the world, he didn't come surfing in on a beam of heavenly light. Nor was his hair quite as long as they expected. He was singularly handsome, naturally, but he didn't quite exude the rock star persona they had hoped. And his skin was much darker.

There was something so ordinary about his return that many didn't even believe it was him. In fact, it was nearly impossible to find someone that did buy into his story.

He wasn't clad in long and flowing elegant robes. Sure there was a glimmer in his eye, and his voice was more than friendly, but the way he spoke almost made him seem foreign.

“I have returned to save the world,” he announced on a crowded sidewalk.

“Watch it, bud,” an impatient passerby replied. No one else seemed to notice his presence.

“Stop what you are doing. I am here to save you,” he spoke again, this time a little louder.

A group of men in suits chuckled about a crazy man on the streets.

For a moment, Jesus contemplated cracking the sky open and raining furious lightning bolts at the ignorant people. But that wasn't really his style. That was always more of Zeus's thing. Besides, he wasn't too sure that his dad would be pleased.

He tried once more, this time shouting as loudly as he could. “I'm here to save all of mankind.”

“You can save us by getting off the streets,” a young man retorted, a wave of laughter following.

“Don't you want to be saved?” he pleaded with them.

The question was answered by the bustling sound of people engrossed in their own lives.

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“Look at my hands and side if you don't believe me.”

No one took him up on the offer.

A young police officer tapped him on the shoulder. “Move along, or I'll move you along,” he said through shiny silver glasses.

“I can't move along. I have a job to do. I need to save the world,” Jesus said in near desperation.

“These people have jobs to do as well. They don't need to be saved,” the policeman responded as he reached for his handcuffs.

“I need to save the world,” Jesus whispered repeatedly as the officer wrapped the shackles around his fragile wrists.

“Let's go, Superman. This world has enough heroes.”

The officer led Jesus away, a few members of the crowd wondering what crime he had committed, most of them glad that their street had been cleared of one more lunatic.