

Reflection Thursday Week 1 – 2022

Jesus not only cures the leper but then takes his place because he has to hide away like the leper did before he was cured.

A story adapted from *The Ragman*, by Walter Wangerin, Jr.

A young man walked through the city pulling a cart filled with clothes. As he walked, he called out "*Rags! New rags for old, I'll take your tired, old rags. Rags!*" He was tall with arms like tree limbs, hard and muscular, and eyes full of brightness.

He encountered a woman sobbing uncontrollably into her handkerchief, her shoulders shaking, her heart breaking. The Ragman asked her, "*Will you give me your rag; I'll give you another.*" Slipping the handkerchief from her eyes, he gave her a linen cloth so clean and new that it shone. As he walked away, the Ragman put her tear-stained handkerchief to his own face and began to weep and sob as grievously as she had done. Yet she was left behind without a tear. "*Rags! Rags! New rags for old!*" he cried. Later the Ragman met a little girl whose head was wrapped in a bandage, her eyes blank and empty. A single line of blood ran down her cheek. The Ragman looked on the child with pity and drew a lovely bonnet from his cart. "*Give me your rag, and I'll give you mine.*" He removed the bandage and tied it to his own head after setting the bonnet on hers. With the bandage went the wound! Down his face ran a darker, richer flow of his own blood! "*Rags, rags! I take old rags!*" Cried the sobbing, bleeding Ragman.

As the sun reached its zenith, the Ragman started running. "*Do you have a job?*" The Ragman asked a man leaning against a pole. Pulling away from the pole the man showed the right sleeve of his jacket was empty. "*Give me your jacket, and I'll give you mine.*" Said the Ragman. The one-armed man took off his jacket, so did the Ragman. Astoundingly the Ragman's arm stayed in his jacket, and when the other put it on, he had two good arms, thick as tree limbs; but the Ragman was left with only one.

Weeping uncontrollably and bleeding freely, pulling the cart with one arm, stumbling with exhaustion, the Ragman ran on even faster. Eventually, worn out, the Ragman came upon a landfill, a garbage dump. He climbed the hill, cleared a little space, sighed and lay down pillowing his head on a handkerchief. Then, covering his bones with a jacket, he died.

But, just three days later, the Ragman reappeared folding his clothes, a scar on his face, but alive and healthy! He was ready once again to dress anyone prepared to accept the new clothes he offered for our rags!!

Do you suffer from anxiety that an intruder may be hiding in your room? **Well!** You're not alone.

My wife found out I was cheating on her after she found all the letters I was hiding. **She was** absolutely furious and said she'll never going to play scrabble with me ever again.