

The Church's Organ

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Andrew jumped awake in his bed, as the nightmare he had blurred away from his memory. A single drop of cold sweat fell from his forehead.

He couldn't remember anything from his dream, but whatever it was, it was undoubtedly terrifying. He was shivering, and felt cold. A strange thing indeed, considering he rarely had nightmares at his 24 years of age.

He climbed out of bed and dressed up. He wondered if his family would already be up, like every other Sunday.

Andrew shouted towards the ground floor, calling for his parents. But there was no answer.

He rushed down the stairs, wondering why he hadn't received a response. He resolved to look for them, and wake them up if necessary.

Yet he found nothing. The living room and dining room were empty. No trace of his parents or siblings.

The entire house was as empty as a ghost town. The beds were made, the house was clean and everything was in its right place. It was as if they had vanished from existence entirely. Andrew tried to convince himself that everything was okay, that perhaps his family had gone out for some last minute shopping.

He decided to go outside, to his front yard. Perhaps a bit of fresh air would clear his mind. When he exited through his front door, he stopped dead on his tracks.

Something was wrong.

He couldn't quite tell what it was at first. It was a dark, creeping feeling on the back of his spine that he couldn't shake. He could simply feel something was not as usual.

And then he noticed it. The silence. The entire street, and seemingly the whole town, was covered on a thick veil of absolute silence, broken only by Andrew's shaky heartbeat.

He tried to tell himself, again, that everything was perfectly fine. He was simply overreacting.

He had noticed by then that no car seemed to drive through his typically busy block.

This raced his thoughts even more. What in the world could be happening? Perhaps the whole town had overslept, except for his parents.

But he knew that wasn't likely. And his mind didn't become any clearer when he heard a sound coming from far away, to his right.

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It was an organ, akin to the one he heard being played during Sunday mass.

That was it! The whole town must be at Sunday mass!

This thought, as questionable as it was, stilled his rampant heartbeat, and he decided to follow the sound.

He walked for what seemed like an eternity, but was likely less than 10 minutes. The loud and long sound of the organ being played followed him all the way. He did not encounter a single living thing on his way to the church.

Before long, the white, ornate building was standing tall right before Andrew. The music was louder than ever, reverberating through his body. He walked up the stairs to the large, wooden door, pushing it with all his strength in an effort to move such a heavy thing.

And as the door opened, Andrew was blinded by the colorful light entering the church through the stained glass windows. As his sight returned, he observed that, as he had predicted, the entirety of the town was gathered there. However, they seemed different. Their expressions were filled with pity and sorrow. This confused Andrew. He kept looking around until he heard the priest speak.

“My fellows. As you may know we have all reunited here today for a sad occasion.”

As the priest spoke, Andrew’s eyes drifted behind the speaker. He saw a black coffin. And besides it, covered in fresh white flowers, was a photo of him. A photo of Andrew, smiling.

“We are here to bid farewell to our friend, Andrew Philler.”

And Andrew forgot how to breathe.