

Everyone
Welcome



A soup Kitchen story
by Robert Prins

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His wife had just given birth. Five under five. Times were tough and with a growing family it was hard to find enough food to feed them all. No father wants to see his children going without.

Harold had seen the sign on the door previously, but had lacked the courage to go in. "Soup Kitchen," the sign read, "Everyone welcome." Desperate and needing food to feed his family, Harold decided to risk it.

The door swung open as a patron walked out with a steaming cup of nutritious soup and a piece of toast. Harold scurried in out of the cold before the door closed. No one seemed to notice him, but that was okay - he didn't need to be noticed, he only needed food.

Suddenly, there was a deathly scream. Harold looked around to see what the scream was about, only to see a giant frying pan swinging for his head. He ducked and ran, the frying pan grazing past his ear. Thank goodness for the warning scream. Looking up to see who had screamed, he was shocked to see someone else rushing toward him ready to hit

him with a broom.

Harold ran again. What was this place? A plate thrown from the other side of the room was hurled in his direction as a lethal weapon. Harold spun and raced off in a zig-zag as the flying plate hit the wall where he had been standing and smashed into a thousand lethal pieces of shrapnel. A jagged shard embedded in his back and knocked him off balance. A boot swung a kick at him. Harold pushed through the pain, twisted around and raced through a doorway he hadn't seen before.

His pursuers held back, giving Harold a moment to glance around the darkened room. He froze. Rasta! His best friend, Rasta, was lying stiff and dead against the wall just ahead of him. Rasta's eyes were open and glazed, but Rasta had gone. His neck had been broken, his head off on a strange angle to his body.

Harold slowly turned to face the door. Now he knew. They would stop at nothing. If they had killed his best friend Rasta, they would be out to kill him too. Blood dripped from his wound to the floor. "Everyone welcome," he scoffed.

No longer on a mission to feed his family, Harold just wanted to get out alive. Footsteps ran toward the doorway. Lots of them. He imagined torches and pitchforks, but in reality, they were madmen with frying pans, brooms, shovels and pots.

Head down, keeping low, aiming for an element of surprise, Harold leapt back out toward his attackers. Jumping over obstacles, and avoiding kicks, he dived for the open door.

Sprinting down the street, he kept running until he could no longer hear footsteps behind him. "Everyone welcome." Discrimination was rife. Down at the soup kitchen they need to learn that rats are people too.

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The sign on the door said "Everyone Welcome."
Only wanting to feed his family, Harold walked
through the door of the soup kitchen, but not all
was as it should be...

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