

Easter Miracle

By ChronoEclipse

Every Sunday morning the families in the small town of Walker's Bluff would gather together for their weekly church service. The moms would dress their daughters up in frilly yellow or pink dresses, the men would wear suits and they'd all slip into the pews of the church to sing songs and hear the weekly sermon.

But in recent years as the children grew into teenagers, Sunday mornings hadn't been so peaceful and routine for certain families.

"I don't give a shit about what people at church will think mom! I'm not putting on that stupid fucking dress!" Val screamed at her mother, Pam.

The 16-year-old was standing in her room in fishnet stockings; a short black leather miniskirt; a matching black halter and a spiked collar. Her blonde hair was dyed black and she had a lip piercing that her mother hated - thank goodness that was the only 'non-traditional' piercing that Pam was aware of!

Her mother, a conservatively dressed woman with a short neat haircut in her mid 40s, held out the floral-print knee-length dress that she wanted her goth daughter to change into.

"I told you not to use that language in this house young lady! The lord is watching you!" Pam warned.

Val scoffed and rolled her eyes.

"Gods watching me? What a pervert!" The teenager retorted.

Pam's jaw dropped at her daughter's crude and sacrilegious joke. She stared at the teenager wondering what in the world had happened to the sweet little girl she had raised.

“That’s it. No internet for a week young lady! Those friends of yours on that twitcher site are certainly a bad influence. Now I’m going to go downstairs and you better be dressed and ready to go in 30 minutes!” Pam said, putting her foot down firmly.

Ultimately Val won that battle. She came down stairs still wearing her all-black outfit and the family drove to church in tense silence. When they got to church Val met up with her friends Izzy, Sarah and Kyle. The other teens were dressed similarly in goth/punk outfits with various piercings and tattoos. Izzy had long pink and blue hair styled over to one side of her head; Kyle had a spiked mohawk; Sarah kept a short pixie-cut with purple highlights that drove her mother insane.

The four of them piled rowdily in the very back pew of the church, far behind their disapproving families. They mocked and laughed at all of their parent’s frumpy conservative friends as the adults gave them sideways looks on their way to their seats.

They spotted the mom of one of their friends enter the church helping an elderly woman who was shuffling in with the aid of a cane dressed in her Sunday best.

“Who’s that old bag that Morgan’s mom is with?” Val said loud enough to show that she didn’t care who heard her.

“I dunno maybe Mrs. Huddle’s mother-in-law or something?” Kyle suggested shrugging.

“Where *is* Morgan? She was supposed to bring weed for us to smoke after church.” Sarah asked, sounding annoyed.

“Beats the fuck out of me. I was texting with her last night but I haven’t heard back from her this morning.” Izzy informed her friends.

“Texting or *sexting*?” Val teased with a knowing look.

Izzy demurred into a cheshire grin and shrugged, playing it cool.

“Whatever. She probably just overslept again. I wish I could fucking just sleep in and get out of coming to this boring-ass place.” Val declared and her friends all mumbled their agreement.

Throughout the service Kyle and Sarah loudly made-out in the back of the church, groping and feeling each other up in the pew while Izzy and Val entertained themselves by making rude noises and trying to see if they could cause the minister to lose his train of thought by flipping him off or pretending that they were going to flash him the next time he glanced up at them.

After service the minister tersely pulled their mother’s aside and told them that their daughters wouldn’t be allowed to attend in the future if they continued to be such a disruption.

“God help me. I just don’t know what to do Betty. I’m at my wits end.” Pam lamented to Izzy’s mother.

“I know what you mean Pam. I feel like there’s this little ungodly hoodlum living in my daughters room these days - I think it’s the music! I threatened to take away all of Isabella’s CDs if she kept acting up and she just asked me what a CD was!” Betty replied, tossing her hands in the air in disbelief.

“You ladies don’t even want to know what I caught Sarah and my darling little boy up to on our couch last week when I got home from work!” Karen, Kyle’s mother, said joining the conversation.

The middle-aged woman mouthed ‘premarital s-e-x.’ to the other ladies who all gasped in shock and shook their heads.

“I just pray every day that they’ll grow out of this - *phase* that they’re in!” Pam lamented, clasping her hands together.

“I know - I’d just as soon leave Sarah at home next week rather than go through the embarrassment of watching her prance around church in next to nothing being a little hussy! But next Sunday is Easter!” Sarah’s mom, Brenda added.

All of the middle-aged women nodded and murmured their agreement that their unruly offspring couldn't possibly miss church on Easter.

"Pardon me ladies. I couldn't help but overhear you. Believe me, I know what you're going through! My daughter Morgan was a complete wild child - getting tattoos; swearing; flaunting her body; spending too much time on the internet - you name it! And every Sunday morning it was all the same struggle 'church s-u-c-k's' 'I don't want to wear a pretty dress' 'I want to play video games with my girlfriend'. But this morning was the first peaceful morning our family has had since Morgan entered puberty thanks to these." Morgan's mother, Debbie said to the group of matronly women as she revealed a sheet of white pills.

"What do they do?" Karen asked, looking at the pills skeptically.

"And where is your daughter?" Pam asked, looking around for the punk Asian-American girl that usually hung around with her daughter.

Debbie reached her arm out and guided an elderly Asian-American woman wearing a pink skirted suit and loafers over to the ladies.

"Why don't you ask her yourself. Morgan hunny? What did you think of church today?" Debbie asked the old woman.

Morgan slowly nodded her gray head and gave the group a wrinkly smile.

"Oh, the sermon was lovely. And it was nice to hear the organ played." Morgan rattled serenely.

The other moms gasped at the elderly woman who was a far cry from the disrespectful teenager that they had come to know.

"Here you go ladies. For Easter. I have more where this came from so next week we can talk about how much you'd like to order!" Debbie said, handing each of them a pill.

“Does it... is it permanent?” Pam asked cautiously. She wanted her daughter to grow up but didn’t want to rob the girl of her entire life. Though clearly that moral quandary didn’t seem to even enter into some of the other moms minds as long as it meant that they wouldn’t have to engage in constant screaming fights with their kids anymore.

“Oh no haha. Not at all. It lasts 24 hours and afterward they don’t even remember it! Now if you’ll excuse us. My daughter and I are going to spend a nice afternoon at the park.” Debbie said proudly.

“There’s a nice comfortable bench down there where we can sit and feed the birds!” Morgan added excitedly.

Debbie gave the other moms a knowing look once more and put her hand up to her mouth.

“Sure beats spending the afternoon playing video games and french kissing her girlfriend!” Morgan’s mom whispered to the other ladies with a wink.

The moms of Walker’s Bluff all went home that day with a spring in their step. They patiently held off using the pills all week despite arguments with their teenagers about staying out too late; or watching their daughters leave the house wearing next to nothing; having to sit in a house that was literally shaking by how loud their kid was blasting music out of their speakers upstairs and dozens of moments of rudeness and disrespect.

But finally Saturday night rolled around and the time had come to use the pill Debbie had provided them. They had been texting one another all week to decide the best way to administer it.

Brenda, Sarah’s mother suggested telling the kids it was an important new vitamin; which the other mother’s pointed out would be a sure-fire way to make sure that the teens refused to take it. Karen, Kyle’s mom then suggested that they gaslight the kids and tell them the drugs that they found in their sock drawer and leave it out ‘accidently’ for them to take. But that didn’t sound like a great option either.

Finally Pam just suggested that they drop it into a drink and serve it to their kids without telling them.

“Sweetie... I made you some lemonade....” Pam said as she brought the glass out to Val who was watching TV and tapping on her phone while sprawled out on the couch.

“Whatever.” Val said, barely acknowledging her mother as the woman entered the room.

The teen goth girl took the drink and gulped a big sip of it, never once even glancing at Pam.

“...Not even so much as a ‘thank you mom’?” Pam asked in frustration.

Val replied by rolling her eyes and taking another sip of her drink.

“God my mom is such a *bitch*.” Pam heard her daughter say into her phone as she left the room, making any pangs of guilt she felt spiking Val’s drink like this instantly vanish.

Val stayed up late like she did most Saturday nights and ended up passing out in her bed half dressed, ready to argue with her mom in the morning about how bullshit it was that they needed to go to church early on Easter.

But as the sun rose up over the town Val found herself getting up bright and early. She swung her legs, still clad in their fishnet stockings over the edge of the bed and struggled to lift herself up. Every part of her body felt achey and weak. She struggled to focus her eyes as she looked around at the band posters decorating her wall.

“Mooooom!” She yelled in a rattling voice.

Pam rushed into her daughter's room and clasped her hand to her mouth in shock, gasping at what she saw. Standing in front of her, gripping the bedpost for support was a woman who was easily in her 70s or 80s. Her long gray hair fell down around her curled shoulders and wrinkled face. Her trembling bony

legs no longer filled out her fishnets and visible veins squiggled along the pale flesh. Her sagging breasts hung down under her cropped band shirt, swaying just below the hem.

“Mom, I feel really weird...” Val quavered.

Her lip ring adorned a thin pruned lip and it was clear that she likely didn't have any teeth. Her studded collar synched the loose dangling skin of the aged goth girl's waddling neck. She looked absolutely ridiculous in her teen clothes at this age. Pam tried to stifle a laugh and looked at her daughter with concern.

“Val honey? Does it hurt?” She asked, momentarily regretting what she had done to the girl.

Val's mind was feeling very fuzzy. It was hard for her to think clearly as all of her thoughts and awareness became a jumble.

“Eh? What?” The elderly Val asked.

“Are you in pain?” Pam asked louder wondering if she should skip church and take Val to the doctor or demand that Debbie give her an antidote.

Val shook her wrinkled head.

“Oh no dearie... nothing more than usual. Back's a bit stiff... must have slept on it funny. Now what's this I'm wearing? How improper of me!” The elderly woman rattled and covered her exposed skin with her wrinkly arms.

Pam lit up thinking this was her chance to get her daughter to wear something nice to church again.

“Don't worry baby. I'll pick you out some much more appropriate clothes for the easter service.” The now younger of the two women said with a grin.

“Oh that's sweet of you dear. And once I'm dressed and ready I'll head on downstairs and you just let me know what I can do to help.” Val said with a wrinkly smile.

“Help with what?” Pam asked, confused.

“Why with preparing Easter dinner of course!” Val said like it was the most obvious thing in the world.

Pam was stunned. Never once in the history of family holidays and gatherings had Val ever offered to help her with the meal. She wasn’t even sure her daughter knew how to use a stove!

“Th-that would be wonderful... but you don’t have to do that sweetie...” Pam said, still stunned and just touched by the gesture.

“Oh don’t be silly! I may be old but I still know my way around the kitchen! Besides, you shouldn’t have to do everything yourself dear.” Val insisted.

Pam’s eyes watered a bit at finally being appreciated by her daughter – even if it took aging the girl more than half a century to get it. She rushed over and gave the old woman a big hug.

“Thank you.” Pam said into her daughter’s fuzzy old ear.

Val patted her mother with a gnarled hand and kissed her on the cheek.

“No, thank you dear. For all of your hard work and effort... now lets get ready, shall we? We don’t want to be late for Church!” Val declared.

None of the nice sunday dresses that Pam had bought for Val as a teenager that she had never worn fit her at her current age, so the middle-aged mother had to dip into her own closet. The elderly goth was dressed in a nice ankle-length yellow skirt, with a matching jacket to cover her wrinkly arms and a plain dowdy blouse. Pam also picked out a nice pillbox hat to place on her daughter’s gray head.

“You look like Jackie O!” Pam declared with a clap at how nice her daughter looked despite looking old enough to be Pam’s mother now.

“Thank you dear. Do you have a pair of loafers I can borrow? I don’t think all this walking around will do me good in heels.” Val asked.

Pam was just thrilled that her daughter wasn’t asking for combat boots. She dug out some of her grandmothers old clothes from a box in the basement that she had been meaning to send to good will for over a decade and pulled out sensible shoes for her daughter. Val pulled up some tan pantyhoses over her decrepit legs and slipped on the flat and was ready for church.

When they arrived Val was greeted by her friends who now looked like a senior center book club! Izzy was dressed in a long conservative blue floral print dress with a white rimmed hat over her blue-tinted thinning white hair. Her formerly impressive chest was now resting like a shelf in the middle of her top where the curves of her breasts melted into the curve of her wrinkled stomach.

Sarah’s short white hair was cropped into a little nest on top of her wrinkled head with a barrette in it. She was sporting a lavender colored sweater and matching long skirt. Pearl necklaces dangled around her turkey-wattle neck as she squinted through wire-rim glasses. Her wrinkly hand was clasping the gnarled mitt of Kyle who had his slacks pulled halfway up his chest and a crisp button-up tucked into them. His mohawk had transformed overnight into a gray horseshoe of hair on an otherwise bald scalp.

Morgan was with them as well dressed in a bright purple blouse and matching skirt with a jacket with sheer sleeves. Her arm tattoos were visible through the fabric but due to the aged skin they looked faded and indistinguishable.

The group of elderly former teens all chatted with each other about the weather and asked about each other’s families. It was a stark change from their usual talk of drug use, music concerts and sex.

“Such nice warm weather this morning.” Izzy rattled, looking up at the blue sky.

“Oh don’t I know it. How blessed we are. My joints always hurt if its too cold!” Sarah replied.

“Speaking of blessings, I’m excited to hear what the minister’s sermon will be on today. I want to get a good seat – if we sit too far back I might have trouble hearing him!” Val noted.

Her friends all eagerly agreed and the group of aged former punk teens all shuffled slowly into the church to grab seats in the front row. Their parents all entered behind them, grinning at one another looking delighted at how peaceful and enthusiastic their kids now were about church service.

The group of old people sat together, singing all of the hymns in loud, warbling voices; saying all of the prayers solemnly and correctly and hanging on every word of the minister's sermon. When it was finished Val even hobbled up to tell him how much she appreciated his words and added that the 50-year-old “young man” was a very handsome fellow.

As they hobbled out of the church Izzy remarked to Morgan that she could hardly wait until next Sunday’s service and that church was the highlight of her week. Nearby their parents were all hitting up Debbie for more pills.

“It’s an Easter miracle!!!” Pam declared looking at her peaceful, polite elderly daughter as she invited her aged friends over for a nice home cooked Sunday meal.

THE END