Lucky the Cat, Where Babies Come From, and Why I Am Never Having Children

Lucky the cat was buried in my Grandam’s backyard. I know this because I remember looking out her kitchen window and seeing the hump where the dirt was piled over his grave. I was five, so my concept of death was weak at best. What I did know was that Grandam was very sad, sadder than I had seen her before.

As no one was in the mood to babysit me, my sisters were tasked with keeping me out of trouble.

“It’s not a cat,” said Alexandria. The oldest, she was around 10, blond hair, blue eyes, and looked so innocent.

“It’s Grandam’s cat,” I said.

“No, it’s a leprechaun. All of them told you it is a cat, but that’s not true. Grandam is sad because Lucky the Leprechaun lives there. She needs a shovel to dig him up and get the three wishes” she said, smiling from ear to ear.

I thought for a moment. “No, that’s not true.”

“It is so true. Grandam was talking about it with Uncle Phil.” Vanessa said, looking to solidify the claim. “You need to go get Lucky.” Vanessa was the forgotten middle child, eight years old, and a tom-boy.

“But how? He’s underground.” I said, confused by the sudden interest in wishes.

“Go ask Grandam for a shovel. Go dig him up. You’ll get three wishes and that horse you keep asking for.” Alexandra pushed me towards our grandmother.

Grandam stood by the window looking out onto the grave of her beloved cat. He had been her favorite pet and faithful companion for almost twenty years. She struggled to imagine life without him. Her eyes welled with tears.

I toddled up to her, “Grandam?”

“Yes, Sweetie?”

“Can I have a shovel? I need to dig up Lucky, so I can get the three wishes.”

I haven’t seen anybody turn from sadness to anger so fast in my life; before or since. She grabbed me by the arm, dragged me to the door, shouted to my Pappy what I had said, dragged me back to the living room. I was told to sit on the sofa, and by no means was I supposed to move, touch anything, or talk.

I knew I had made a mistake, but to what degree, I wasn’t really sure. I sat on her floral patterned “Golden Girls” type sofa. My feet swung off the side. I knew my day was over.

Fifteen minutes goes by. “Morgaine,” Alexandra said, “Pappy needs you in the bathroom.”

“No, he doesn’t.”

“Yes, he does. If you don't help him, they’re going to be more mad at you.”

“You’re lying.”

“Am I? Pappy told me he needs your help in the bathroom. You need to hurry up or you’ll get more time out.” She sounded serious, but I could never be sure.

“It’s true. I was there.” Vanessa added. “You’re going to be in big trouble.”

I jumped off the sofa, ran down the hall to the bathroom, and opened the door on my Pappy peeing. “Pappy, do you need help?”

My Pappy, mortified I might have been something, began yelling at me to close the door.

“But you need my help!”, I insisted, not wanting to get into more trouble.

He slammed the door. Grandam was behind me. “Come with me.”

As my sisters giggled, my Grandam gave me “The Talk.” I’ve seen some things. I once saw a motorcycle crash in Florida where the guy’s brains were all over the highway. I’ve watched Discovery Channel, where baby animals get killed and eaten by other animals. I’ve seen every messed up meme that existed, but nothing can top this. This was a 10 out of 10, fuck-you-up-kind-of-talk.

After the talk was finished, the three of us were banished to the basement. This was not the best idea my Grandparent’s ever had. The basement was furnished, and also contained one brand new pool table. Pappy was in love with this pool table, and it showed.

This full-size pool table had this nice felt cover. The outside was solid wood with a ball return. This means if you were to hit a ball into the far pocket, it would drop in, slide down, and return to the top again. This system allowed us to create a new game.

My sisters would push the balls to the far end. I would try to stop them from going in the pockets, and if need be, stop them from going down the ball return. We played this for about an hour. Finally, one ball went in the pocket, I went to grab it, and my hand got stuck.

When I say stuck, you think it’s not so bad. I mean very stuck. After my sisters’ unsuccessful attempts to free me, they yelled for Pappy to come down. He was not pleased.

Pappy started with some butter, then Crisco, then bicycle grease. His face grew more tense with every oil product getting closer to his beloved pool table. He shouted up for my Uncle Phil.

Uncle Phil was a firefighter, so I had no idea what was coming next. Uncle Phil and Pappy went back and forth over the next move to make. They finally agreed they would use a jigsaw blade to cut the underside of the table open, release what was holding me, and patch up Pappy’s first true love.

As the blade started up, I cried as I was sure they were going to cut off my arm and bury me with Lucky the Leprechaun out back. Pappy stopped, looked me dead in the eye. “Morgaine? Look at me. Are you holding on to the ball still?”

“Yes Pappy.”

“Let go of the ball,” he said with the disappointment of knowing we were not only related but that evolution has decided I was not the brightest child. I released the ball, pulling my greased-up arm out of the pool table. I thought of Lucky, growing old, and never having children.