

SUNNYSIDE UP

Written by

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EXT. MILLER HOME - DAY

A sprinkler waters the overgrown grass. The white paint of the wooden fence has faded to a beige color. A missing shutter on the second floor is an eye sore. An oddity in the perfectly up-kept suburban neighborhood.

A police vehicle is parked roadside.

OFFICER TERRY, 20, and OFFICER HOLT, 44, stands at the front door. Officer Terry rings the doorbell.

OFFICER HOLT
Police. Open up!

No answer. They hear muffled noises in the household. A faint scream catches their attention.

OFFICER TERRY
Did you hear that?

OFFICER HOLT
Sure did.

INT. MILLER HOME - HALLWAY - DAY

Officer Terry kicks down the door. They walk in, pistols drawn. The voice of a disturbed woman gets louder.

INT. MILLER HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The officers stumble upon HENRY, 68, an All-Star All-American dad who's lived the good life, holding a needle and pinning MARGE, 73, the sweet grandmother type, to an armchair.

The officers point their firearms at Henry.

MARGE
Help! He's trying to kill me.

OFFICER HOLT
Freeze! Put your hands in the air.

HENRY
Hold your horses, she just needs her meds.

Marge panics while Henry attempts to give her a shot.

MARGE
This stranger has invaded my home.
Please do something!

HENRY

Cheers to the married life, fellas.

The two officers look at each other.

EXT. MILLER HOME - DAY

Marge sits on the front porch, reading a magazine.

Henry attempts to fix the front door.

A blue Nissan Sedan parks on the driveway. Marge smiles at the sight of the vehicle. Henry continues working.

SHERRY, 44, a full-time mother, exits her vehicle.

SHERRY

Hey Mom! Hey Dad!

Marge struggles to get out of her seat.

MARGE

Sherry! What are you doing here?

SHERRY

It's okay, Mom. Stay right there.

Sherry walks to Marge. They embrace each other. Henry continues fixing the front door. He ignores them completely.

MARGE

It's so good to see you.

SHERRY

I'm staying in Richmond for work and thought I'd surprise you.

They stop hugging. Marge wraps her arm around Sherry's shoulder. She presses her head against Sherry's chest.

MARGE

It seems like your father has recently become deaf and blind!

Marge and Sherry exchange looks. They both smile. Sherry walks to the front door.

SHERRY

Hey Dad.

Henry hammers a latch on the side of the door opening.

HENRY

So, I guess you heard by now?

SHERRY

It's good seeing you, too, Dad.

Henry's hammering increases in tempo and noise.

HENRY

You only come around here when you worry. Never just say hi.

SHERRY

Dad, can we talk privately, please?

Henry drops the hammer.

HENRY

Why make it private?

Henry searches his toolbox.

SHERRY

Dad, this is the third time this year Mom has dialed 9-1-1.

HENRY

And what of it? The boys downtown know all our business now.

SHERRY

She thought you were a stranger.

Henry grabs the drill then drills a latch onto the door.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

Dad!

Henry stops drilling.

HENRY

I'm listening.

SHERRY

Mom thought you were a stranger again.

HENRY

She remembers me for about three out of five days.

SHERRY

And you're content with that?

HENRY

Three out of five, that's a better batting average than Ted Williams.

SHERRY

Doesn't any of this bother you?

HENRY

Let me tell you something. During your teenage years, we pretended not to know each other at night clubs.

SHERRY

Jesus Christ.

Marge laughs.

MARGE

You should try it sometime, dear.

HENRY

Makes for a helluva more exciting time. I'll tell ya that!

Henry drills again.

SHERRY

I think it's time to look for a nursing home!

Henry stops drilling. He glares at Sherry.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

Seriously. It could--

HENRY

Absolutely not.

SHERRY

Dad...

Henry gets to his feet.

HENRY

I can't believe you would say something like that.

SHERRY

Dad, I don't mean it as an insult.

HENRY

I took care of myself. I took care of your mother. I took care of you.

He walks to the front yard then points to the house.

HENRY (CONT'D)
I took care of all this!

SHERRY
What does Mom think?

HENRY
She's comfortable right here at home.

Sherry looks at Marge for a vote of confidence.

HENRY (CONT'D)
There's nothing more to be said.
End of story.

Henry storms back into the home.

Sherry confides with Marge.

SHERRY
I just wanted to help.

MARGE
You know how your father is. I'll say something to him. Promise.

SHERRY
Ok, Mom.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MILLER HOME - NIGHT

Henry and Marge lay in bed, covered in a vintage pattern blanket. They watch "All in the Family" on the mounted TV. Henry chuckles continuously. Marges smiles.

MARGE
Henry? Hun?

HENRY
Uh oh. What now?

MARGE
I've been thinking of what Sherry said.

HENRY
And...

MARGE
Maybe we do need help.

Henry laughs.

HENRY
I love this freakin episode.

MARGE
I wouldn't mind as long as I was
with you. That's all that matters.

Henry turns the TV off. He sighs.

HENRY
I don't want us to give up on life
and rot away.

MARGE
I just feel so guilty. I feel like
I'm losing my mind, and you're
paying for it.

Henry turns towards Marge. He stares into her eyes.

HENRY
Marge, my love... You'll never be a
burden to me.

Marge caresses Henry's face with her hand.

MARGE
I love you.

HENRY
You know I love you more.

Marge smacks him with a pillow. They both giggle then kiss.

MARGE
Good night, hun.

HENRY
Good night, babe.

INT. KITCHEN - MILLER HOME - DAY

Marge takes out eggs, bacon, and milk from the fridge.

Henry enters the kitchen, surprised.

HENRY
Hey, you making breakfast today?

MARGE
Yes. I have it, dear.

Henry approaches Marge, eager to help.

HENRY

I should help. I don't want you--

Marge chases him away.

MARGE

Don't worry. I still know what I'm doing. You've been working hard. Please let me do this for you.

HENRY

Alright, you sold me. But no imitation butter, ya hear me?

MARGE

How would you like your eggs?

HENRY

Sunnyside up!

INT. GARAGE - MILLER HOME - DAY

Henry jacks up his vintage Mustang.

INT. KITCHEN - MILLER HOME - DAY

Marge cooks up a storm as eggs and bacon sizzle on the stove.

Grease splatters everywhere. The bursts of hot oil burns Marge's skin.

MARGE

Shit!

INT. GARAGE - MILLER HOME - DAY

The Mustang is now lifted a few feet from the ground. Henry is underneath the front of the vehicle with a tool kit. He inspects the engine.

HENRY

Everything okay over there!

MARGE (O.S.)

Yes! Everything is fine.

INT. KITCHEN - MILLER HOME - DAY

Marge turns down the heat on the stove.

MARGE

Oh, dear.

She grabs the spatula then places the eggs on a plate. She turns around, plate in hand, to walk...

She slips. Her body crashes into the wet tile flooring with great impact. The plate immediately breaks. An explosion of white shards of glass and fluffy yellow pieces of egg. Marge yelps out in pain.

MARGE (CONT'D)

Henry!

INT. GARAGE - MILLER HOME - DAY

Henry hears Marge's cry.

HENRY

Babe!?

Henry rushes to move, hitting the car jack. The vehicle lands on him, crushing his chest. His legs squirm violently.

Henry screams in silence, the weight of the Mustang taking away his voice and breath.

INT. KITCHEN - MILLER HOME - DAY

Marge lays on the dirty floor, trembling.

MARGE

Henry!

EXT. NURSING HOME - COURTYARD - DAY

Families enjoy the company of their loved ones. The picture-perfect moment in commercials and brochures.

INT. NURSING HOME - MARGE'S ROOM - DAY

The window blinds block the sunlight from outside. The lights are turned off. The door is slightly open. Marge sits upright on her bed. She watches television stone-faced. The opening of "All In the Family" plays.

THE END