

Easter

by Daniel Harris

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Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis

Marge didn't eat lamb or pork. Looking at the meat selections in the supermarket, Chuck wasn't sure what to buy for Easter dinner. Once he made lamb, but Marge refused to eat it. Chuck bought some vegetables and went home.

—What are you making for Easter dinner? asked Marge.

—I dunno. You won't eat lamb or pork, so I don't know what to make.

—Can't you make ham slices with pineapple rings and brown sugar like my mother used to make?

—I could do that, but it is so Eisenhower era.

—Well, that's what I'd like, said Marge.

Chuck didn't know. As a kid his family always had leg of lamb on Easter: *Agnus Dei* and all that.

Chuck went to the market the next day and bought a small ham, a can of Dole pineapple rings, sweet potatoes and green beans.

For Easter dinner Chuck prepared: bland sweet potatoes topped with marshmallows; green beans with butter; ham with a coating of brown sugar and pineapple rings; and an industrial dousing of salt and pepper.

—This is the best meal you've ever made, said Marge, helping herself to another slice of ham.

When Chuck did the dishes, he threw the leftovers in the garbage. The night before he had made salmon almandine, sautéed broccoli rabe with pine nuts, rice pilaf with shitake mushrooms and a kale and avocado salad. Marge hated it.

Chuck tried to remember if Easter was when Jesus was crucified, or if crucifixion was a fact of married life. He remembered Easter

celebrations came *after* all the pain and suffering. Like Passover, it was a story followed by eating. Chuck never figured out why Easter involved ham, or how that fit in with Jews and Romans, or for that matter Christians.

