

SUNDAY SCHOOL

LOGLINE: A cranky old man's spirits are lifted when he gets stuck
in Sunday School.

18-DE06-W34

EXT. ESTABLISHING - TRINITY CHURCH - DAY

A quaint church tucked in a well-manicured neighborhood. We see YOUNG FAMILIES walking into the church. A WOMAN pulls her small SON inside.

INT/EXT. OLD MAN POTTER'S CAR - DAY

Cranky OLD MAN POTTER, dressed in a Leisure Suit that is straight out of the eighties and two sizes too small. It looks as if he's been crying. He wipes his eyes with a Kleenex and blows his nose. He touches a picture of him with his deceased wife taped to his dashboard.

He exits the car and almost steps in dog poop.

OLD MAN POTTER
(grumbles)
Ugh...nasty varmints!

EXT. TRINITY CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

A woman walks by with her small dog.

INT. TRINITY CHURCH - LOBBY - DAY

Old Man Potter enters, looks around, takes a BULLETIN from an USHER. The WOMAN pulling her SON bumps into him.

OLD MAN POTTER
Hey...watch it, will ya.

WOMAN
I'm sorry, please excuse me. My son is having a rough morning.

OLD MAN POTTER
Yeah, yeah...sure. We're all having a rough morning...I'm having...

She's not listening and continues to walk.

OLD MAN POTTER (CONT'D)
Yeah, and good talking to you, too.

He pushes past people to get to the GREETER, a vibrant millennial in his 20's, with hair hanging in his face.

Waves the Bulletin in front of the Greeter.

OLD MAN POTTER (CONT'D)

I give way too much money to this church to hear all that noise coming from those screaming kids. How do you expect anyone to pay attention in church? Can't you move them outside or something?

The Greeter looks around as if trying to hear the noise.

GREETER

Mr. Potter, I assure you, you can't hear anything up here from the classrooms.

OLD MAN POTTER

Of course, you can't...you don't hear anything. Try cutting your hair.

A MAN in his 30's walks up and glares at the young Greeter.

GREETER

But I'll send someone down there.

Old Man Potter grumbles under his breath, waves him off and walks away. Stops, turns and...

OLD MAN POTTER

Oh. By the way, a little dog has been leaving bombs all over the front. Why don't we have a sign to say scoop your poop or we'll scoop your dog?

GREETER

Ah, okay, sure, Mr. Potter...sir.

Old Man Potter walks away.

INT. CHURCH - CLASSROOM - DAY

CAITLIN, 35, well put together in a modest skirt and blouse, tries to calm several 5 and 6-year-olds. SEVERAL KIDS run around the classroom ignoring her request.

CAITLIN

Kids! Settle down, please.

An Usher sticks his head in the door.

USHER

Here comes Mister Cranky Pants...

CAITLIN

Oh no. Not today, I can't deal with this. Can you...

He's gone.

She claps her hands once. Twice. A few kids clap back. She claps twice again, a few more kids join and claps twice.

In walks Old Man Potter. The KIDS stop for a second to see who entered, then back to running. Caitlin rolls her eyes.

OLD MAN POTTER

When do you plan to do your job and stop these kids from ruining church for me?

Caitlin looks over to the door and fakes a smile, pushes her hair behind her ears.

OLD MAN POTTER (CONT'D)

Well...

TOMMY, a rambunctious kid, runs into his legs trying to tackle him.

TOMMY

GERONIMOOOOO...

Old Man Potter loses his balance a bit. Caitlin leaps to his side.

CAITLIN

Are you okay?

She grabs Tommy's arm aborting his second attempt.

CAITLIN (CONT'D)

Tommy, you apologize now.

Tommy runs off.

OLD MAN POTTER

(under his breath)

Little brat. I bet his mother doesn't hug him enough.

Caitlin overhears his mumbling, she shoots him a look, narrows her eyes.

CAITLIN

If you think you can do a better
job, by all means, have at it. The
lessons on here.

She shoves the iPad in his chest, grabs her purse...

She exits.

Old Man Potter stands there waiting for her to return.

OLD MAN POTTER

(under his breath)

I'll show her how to control these
little misfits.

(to Tommy)

Hey you, get down from there.

He looks at the iPad, digs in his pocket and pulls out
READERS, fumbles to put it on without dropping the iPad,
turns iPad around, taps the side, then the top with his
finger. Nothing happens.

Looks back at the door.

LITTLE JESSICA, an adorable 5-year-old, walks up, swipes the
iPad, unlocking it, and walks away.

OLD MAN POTTER (CONT'D)

Ah, yeah, I knew that...

LITTLE JESSICA

(as she's walking away)

No, you didn't.

TOMMY

Hey, do you know how to do
anything?

OLD MAN POTTER

(under his breath)

Says the boy who can't read yet.

INT. CHURCH - CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Old Man Potter walks to the desk.

One of the kids start to cry, KELLI, runs to him throwing her
arms around his leg. He stops, tries to pry her little
fingers open to break free.

OLD MAN POTTER
(impressed)
Oh, nice grip.

She holds tighter. He attempts a smile. Shakes his leg, trying to get her off.

He shuffles to the desk with her still attached.

OLD MAN POTTER (CONT'D)
There, there...

Barely pats the top of her head.

KELLI
No! I wanna stay with you. Tommy
won't leave me alone.

His fat fingers press a button, up comes the camera, he presses another button taking a picture of his shoes and the top of Abby's head.

Here comes little Jessica to the rescue. Takes the iPad from him, presses a few buttons and hands it back to him.

LITTLE JESSICA
Told you, you don't know how to
work it.

OLD MAN POTTER
I do too, it's just been a while.
(beat) okay, now, Ahem, we are...

TOMMY
Do you even know the Bible?

ARIEL stands in the corner. Old Man Potter pries Kelli's fingers open...

OLD MAN POTTER
You've got a grip on you, kid. Tell
your mom to put you in softball.

He breaks free--

INT. CHURCH - CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

He makes his way to Ariel.

OLD MAN POTTER
Are you alright?

She turns to him, holding her doll close, pushes the hair from her face.

ARIEL

My Pop Pop gave me this doll.

She shoves it in his face.

OLD MAN POTTER

Do you want to sit with the others?

ARIEL

No. Not really. I want to stay here with my doll.

Old Man Potter moves closer.

OLD MAN POTTER

You and your doll can sit up front with me. Would you like that?

Reaches for her hand.

ARIEL

My Pop Pop died.

OLD MAN POTTER

(shocked and tries to find the right words)

I'm sorry. I know you miss him.

ARIEL

He's in Heaven, my mommy said.

OLD MAN POTTER

That's good.

ARIEL

I'm going to Heaven, too.

She looks up at Old Man Potter and...

ARIEL (CONT'D)

Are you?

Old Man Potter leans down and whispers.

OLD MAN POTTER

(uncertain)

Ah, I don't know...I hope so.

Ariel furrows her brows, she's not convinced.

He stays in deep thought for a BEAT.

She stands, takes his hand, follows him to the front of the room.

INT. CHURCH SANCTUARY - DAY

Caitlin walks into "Big Church" and takes a seat next to her husband. MARSHALL POTTER, 37, one would call him a geek at first glance. Tall and wiry with glasses that should be contacts because the lens are so thick. He's shocked to see Caitlin.

MARSHALL

(whispers)

What are you doing here? Who's with the kids?

She rolls her eyes, shoots him a 'please don't ask' look.

CAITLIN

One guess?

He slinks down in his seat, trying to hide.

MARSHALL

You're kidding me? I know he's still grieving over mom but he has gotta stop barging into your class.

Marshall looks around as if everyone's watching him in disbelief. Ducks his head in embarrassment. Except no one's watching.

CAITLIN

He misses your mom, maybe this is just his way of being close to her.

INT. CHURCH - CLASSROOM - DAY

Old Man Potter is a human jungle gym with THREE kids on him. One kid on each leg, another hang on his arm. He tries to shed them one by one.

TOMMY

Gerann...

OLD MAN POTTER

Don't you dare Geronimo us...

The kids let go and go even crazier, screaming as they go.

Little Jessica is now running from Tommy who's chasing her with glue.

OLD MAN POTTER (CONT'D)
 Simmer down. Simmer down!

The kids quiet down. Old Man Potter walks around the room. Takes the glue from Tommy. He backs up and knocks into the table, glitter spills all over the floor.

TOMMY
 I thought you were gonna teach us
 somethin?

Old Man Potter tries to pick up the glitter covered floor with his hand, now he has glitter all over his hands.

Little Jessica walks over and hands him a paper towel. He snatches it and wipes it off.

The kids start to laugh.

LITTLE JESSICA
 You can't work an iPad. What can
 you do?

OLD MAN POTTER
 I have you know, I was a principal.

LITTLE JESSICA
 What's a pencetable?

OLD MAN POTTER
 A Principal... never mind. Yes, I
 know things. I know a lot of
 things.

LITTLE JESSICA
 (hopeful)
 When is Miss Caitlin coming back?

OLD MAN POTTER
 Soon. Very soon. She's just playing
 a joke on us. A really bad joke, at
 that.

Little Jessica perks up.

TOMMY
 You're boring. We're bored.

He gets up and begins to chase Little Jessica around the room with glue.

Old Man Potter sighs, defeated.

Ariel runs to him and hugs him.

ARIEL

Don't be sad, you can have my doll.

INT. CHURCH SANCTUARY - DAY

Caitlin reaches for Marshall's hand, squeezes. He turns and smiles.

CAITLIN

I should go back in there...

MARSHALL

No...I'll go.

INT. CHURCH - CLASSROOM - HALLWAY - DAY

Marshall hears a lot of noise coming from the Kindergarten class. He runs to help. He opens the door--

INT. CHURCH - CLASSROOM - DAY

Marshall's POV

Old Man Potter sitting in the middle of the floor. He is dressed in a boa around his neck, a straw hat on his head and his Leisure Suit partially covered in glitter and feathers. He has three kids piled on his lap and others sit on the floor listening and laughing, screams and yells as Old Man Potter tells a story.

OLD MAN POTTER

Then the little doggie did what?

The kids burst into laughter again as if the tenth time wasn't enough.

LITTLE JESSICA

He drops little bombs.

They burst out laughing again.

TOMMY

Tell us again...

Marshall stands in the doorway, slowly backs out, closes the door before he's noticed.

INT. CHURCH - CLASSROOM - HALLWAY - DAY

Marshall leans up against the wall. Caitlin comes down the hall.

CAITLIN
(very concerned)
I should've never left him in
there...

MARSHALL
Honey... it's alright.

He pulls her close.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)
They're fine...

EXT. CHURCH - CLASSROOM - DAY

Caitlin peeks through the window. Turns to Marshall.

CAITLIN
(she's shocked)
Look at them.

INT/EXT. CHURCH - CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marshall places his hand on the doorknob, just as he turns to open, the door swings open.

INT. CHURCH - CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tommy stands on the other side of the door with glitter and feathers all over his face and a great big snaggletooth smile.

He lunges into Caitlin and Marshall and hugs them.

TOMMY
Mom, dad, look! Grandpa's not
grumpy anymore...

Old Man Potter stands with assistance from his little helpers and begins to dust himself off.

Ariel takes his hand, pulling him along.

OLD MAN POTTER
I'm coming, I'm coming.

He stops in front of Marshall and Caitlin.

MARSHALL

Dad...

OLD MAN POTTER

Look, son, I know what you're gonna say...

MARSHALL

I was gonna say, this is the happiest I've seen you look since Mom died.

Marshall moves closer, Old Man Potter pulls him close into a long embrace.

OLD MAN POTTER

(whispers in his ear)

Best day I've since my Maggie left...

He turns to Caitlin.

OLD MAN POTTER (CONT'D)

I owe you an apology. Maggie would be so proud of you and how you've taken over her class. I didn't mean what I said. You're a great mom and a terrific teacher. Can you forgive me?

Caitlin moves in for a hug. They embrace.

CAITLIN

Of course, I can.

She looks around.

What happened in here?

OLD MAN POTTER

Let's just say, it took this little village to make me see what's right in front of me...life and how it should be lived.

Old Man Potter begins to tear.

OLD MAN POTTER (CONT'D)

I see a lot of Marshall in this little guy...

He musses Tommy's hair.

CAITLIN
And a lot of you.

TOMMY
Can grandpa teach all our Sunday
school classes like Nana did?

All the kids begin to cheer and jump around.

Marshall and Caitlin look around the classroom that looks
like a glitter and feather bomb exploded.

CAITLIN/MARSHALL
Noooo.

MARSHALL
Grandpa can visit...

CAITLIN
Once a year.

They bust out laughing.

FADE OUT:

END CREDIT PHOTOS:

Picture of Old Man Potter in his wet Baptismal gown standing
next to Ariel, both giving a thumbs up.

Picture of a very pregnant Caitlin in the Sunday School
class.

Picture of Old Man Potter holding the Bible teaching the
class with Tommy in the background holding glue over Little
Jessica.

THE END