

A Funny Story about Good Spirit

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This is a funny (although really sad) story that my mother told me about an event that took place in her youth in rural Pickens County, Alabama sometime in the 1920s or 1930s.

One of the deacons (I will call him Deacon Smith) of the local church had a moonshine operation on the side and this was generally known in the community particularly by the customers. But he was a deacon in the church so he could not be all bad and this side operation was overlooked. One of his methods to generate a new customer base was to give free moonshine to teenagers approaching adulthood so they would become addicted.

There was a woman in the community who had lost her husband and was raising her teenage son by herself. She was a member of the church that Deacon Smith attended. She found out that her son had been given moonshine by the deacon. She was furious and went to the deacon and told him among other things that he was a nothing but a God-damn son of a bitch. This was serious language in those days, particularly for a woman. The deacon met with the others in the church and they decided to have a hearing to determine if the woman would be allowed to remain in the church.

So, on the following Sunday after morning services the hearing was held in front of the congregation. The deacons met and came up with a compromise plan. They explained to the congregation the charge against the woman and offered that if she would apologize to Deacon Smith in front of the congregation that the matter would be settled and she would be allowed to remain in the church.

Upon hearing this, the woman immediately accepted and got up and stood in front of Deacon Smith. In a loud voice that could be clearly heard by the entire congregation she said, "I am *sorry* that you are nothing but a God-damn son of a bitch." With that she walked out of the church and never returned.

I never knew that woman but I like her spirit. I hope she did well in life.