



**IRISH**  
it was  
dinnertime...

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Emma June  
GROSSKOPF

**HOOT AND  
HOLLER**

## The Good Knife

Let me tell you the story about how I poisoned my family last weekend.

I was back in town for a bridal shower that Sunday, honoring my brother's fiancée Jamie. Saturday, however, was a day of errands.

My dad and I were running all over Fredericksburg, stopping at Staples to put a pair of Old Navy jeans that didn't fit (curse standard sizing!) in the UPS drop-off, stopping at Walmart so Dad could buy some filters and other car stuff I'm ignorant about in the auto section, filling up Mom's van with gas, just typical dad-daughter errands.

Mom was helping out with my younger cousin's birthday party on the other side of town, so she was also busy all afternoon, so she had cleaned some chicken thighs to pop into the crock-pot. Easy peasy.

When dinnertime rolled around, Mom asked if I'd help her whip up a salad to go with the chicken.

Now, we've done this a million times. Mom knows I don't like to wash and cut the lettuce, so I worry about the mushrooms or tomatoes or whatever else we're throwing in there.

At the Grosskopf house, whether anyone wants to voice it or not, there is a clear knife hierarchy. There is the Good Knife, then there are a few iffy knives and then there are some bad ones that I can't stand to use.

(There is also a cutting board hierarchy – the white one is best, then the wood one, then the orange one shaped like a pumpkin, then the cumbersome glass ones that we RARELY use. Just in case you're ever at the Grosskopf house and my mom asks for your help with a salad.)

I saw the Good Knife on the counter next to the sink. I picked it up, inspected it for a second, then ran it under some water, sliding my thumb along the side of the blade.

Did I use soap to wash it? No. Did I ask if it had been used for anything earlier that day? No.

Footloose and fancy free, I used the Good Knife to slice up some mushrooms and a hardboiled egg. Not a care in the world.

The salad was great. The chicken was superb.

Then, when we were cleaning up, my mom had a look on her face as she began washing the dishes. She said, "Did you use that knife that was on the sink?"

That knife. The Good Knife.

It wasn't until that exact moment that it occurred to me that my mother used the Good Knife to clean the chicken earlier that day. Of course she did – she's no fool; she understands the knife hierarchy.

Why would you go for any knife OTHER than the Good Knife for all your slicing, dicing, chicken-cleaning needs?

In responding to her, I didn't miss a beat. I thought up a lie, and I thought it up quick:

"Yeah, but I washed it first."  
That, my friends, was a whopper. A tall tale. The fibbiest fib that has ever flown from my lips.

I didn't say, "Egad! I DID use that knife, and now everyone in this house probably has E. Coli, giardia, salmonella, citroneella, Cinderella, any and all the foodborne illnesses."

Nope. I lied to my mother. I also did a lot of Googling – "How long do chicken germs stay on a knife?"

And, "How sick can you get from using a raw chicken knife?"

And of course, "Can you get rid of raw chicken germs from just water, no soap?"

See, if I were at my own house, these would be questions I'd be asking my mother. But I was on my own for this one.

The good news: no one actually got sick – not that I know of anyway. For the rest of that evening and throughout the bridal shower the next day, I was monitoring every twinge of my stomach very, VERY closely.

I could see the news headline flashing before my eyes: "She Clucked Up: Clueless West Virginia Journalist Poisons Family with Raw Chicken Knife."

I feel much better having confessed this particular sin, but my future as Mom's right-hand salad gal may be in jeopardy.

Lettuce hope she forgives me.

Emma June moved to Romney from the D.C. metro area after she graduated college in 2019. She's the Review's editor, and her days are filled with all of the emotions, challenges, delights and frustrations of being a 20-something-year-old in today's world. □



## Our NECK of the woods

Event attendees bundled up and faced the windy March weather to participate in the show – including a big buck contest on Saturday.

No matter how you slice it, last weekend's inaugural Potomac Highlands Sports and Outdoor Show was a rousing success. Folks braved chilly March weather to check it out at the Augusta fairgrounds, and there was something for everyone.



A couple young outdoorsmen stop by the kids' activities Saturday, hosted by Susan Carroll with WV DEP.



Vendors sold a wide range of products – including woodworking crafts.

Photos by EMMA JUNE GROSSKOPF Review Staff

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SEE THE SLIDESHOW



Out the door: the line to get into the main building on Saturday was long, indeed; folks bundled up in their hats and gloves to wait their turn.



Welcome to the gun show: a camo-clad outdoorsman chats it up with a vendor.



Collin Waybright presents a red-tailed hawk during a demonstration last weekend.



The Boy Scouts sold funnel cakes at the event.



Folks listen with rapt attention as falconer Collin Waybright showed some of his raptor birds of prey – an owl, a falcon and two species of hawks.



A DNR representative displays different kinds of pelts to an attendee. The exhibit barn, where the majority of the show was held, was jam-packed.