



KITCHEN TABLE STORIES 2022

SHARING OUR LIVES IN FOOD



...by, for, and about women.

A STORY CIRCLE NETWORK COLLECTION OF RECIPES AND STORIES



CRITICAL GAY MASS

BY ROSEMARY KEEVIL

"I was at your house at Whistler for Christmas, and you told me to tell my boyfriend to come later in the evening because there was a limit on how many gays you would let in your house at the same time.

"Then Demill said you were being homophobic, which prompted you to run into every bedroom in the house pointing at the beds and yelling, 'Gays have slept here. Gays have slept here. Gays have slept here. Would a homophobe allow that?'

"I noticed that you had bought grocery store mashed potatoes to have with Christmas dinner, which seemed odd for Rosemart (sic). So, I started questioning whether what was happening was real and I woke up.

"Excited to see you this Christmas."

That was a text I received from Michael just before last Christmas holidays. Michael is my daughter's best friend. He is a very tall (6'6"), slender (205 pounds), olive-skinned, audacious, promiscuous, flamboyant gay. One time in high school, Michael walked into our house sporting a bright pink T-shirt and matching pink-sequined purse and exclaimed, "I bought this outfit in New York. Isn't it perfect?"

Some fifteen years later, he was indeed invited to my home in Whistler, BC, Canada for Christmas, as he had been a number of times before. And, in my defense, I have had many gays sleeping in my house at the same time. It's inevitable with two lesbian daughters. And, I am perfectly fine with that.

I do, indeed, make a mean not-grocery-store-bought mashed potato. It is more like smashed potatoes. I add copious amounts of butter, cream cheese, and homo (pun

intended) milk, arm myself with a potato masher and do my smashed potato dance—vigorously bashing those potatoes in a large pot until they are sufficiently ground down. There are usually lumps left but that's part of their charm.

Then I assign someone like Michael to babysit the potato delight—keep stirring it on low heat so it does not stick—while I tend to the other major Christmas dinner fixin's like:

- My signature dressing: bread, onions, celery, salt, pepper and copious amounts of butter
- Yams baked with apple and copious amounts of butter
- Brussels sprouts boiled and drenched in copious amounts butter
- Chilled, canned Ocean Spray, whole cranberry sauce
- Canned turkey gravy (I'm not a gravy person but I cater to those who are)

- And of course, the bird! I'm never quite sure when it is actually ready, even with a meat thermometer, but it seems to always work out; I am useless at carving, so I assign that task to my partner (who is male)

- Grocery-store-bought pumpkin pie with real whipped cream (I usually assign that task to someone, too), and Häagen-Dazs vanilla-bean ice cream

I do, indeed, luxuriate in my turkey dinner rituals for Christmas and Thanksgiving, and Easter, too, no matter how many gays are in attendance.

SMASHING POTATOES

Ingredients

4 pounds small, white, new potatoes

½ to ¾ cup butter, the more the merrier

1 cup Philadelphia cream cheese
(consider adding more—is there such a thing as too much cheese?)

½ to ¾ cup homogenized milk

salt to taste

Preparation

Boil potatoes until soft, about 20 minutes.

Drain potatoes, put back in pot, and put pot back on the burner.

Keep burner on low.

Start mashing the potatoes.

Add butter and cheese while mashing.

Add milk to desired thickness.

Mash potato mixture until most lumps of potatoes are gone.

Add salt to taste.

Serves 8 people.