



Kyte Spyte

with Lindsay Kyte

As the school year winds down and exams are about to begin, students drop their books in the UPEI library sun room, and dream of the up-coming summer break --- a time for happiness, swimming, and oh-so-toasted marshmallows, right?

Wrong!

Wake up and smell the rancid coffee that will someday give you ulcers, folks. This break is a fictitious carrot held over noses in the middle of never-before-opened texts, that turns out to be, upon the first sumptuous bite, a chance to work at a job you don't care about for less money than they throw in the fountain in front of the Confederation House.

I am pretty lucky this summer, as I have a job which I started last summer and kept as part-time throughout the year as a buffet server in a more expensive restaurant in Charlottetown. My boss is understanding, my co-workers are friendly, and I actually do get that mythical fifteen-minute break now and then. The only thing I can complain about with my summer job are the customers (read on--- I'm sure you'll recognize the types).

Sometimes I think that I must lose my literacy in the summer because I surely cannot read my name tag. I thought it said, "Lindsay," but I am obviously incorrect, as it seems to read "Little Girl." I mean, that's what all of the customers shout at me at six in the morning, and I'm sure that the gold-shoes-wearing ones who are putting silverware in large black purses

could never be mistaken.

My boss' favourite story about me is one that happened last summer on a particularly crowded morning. A line of tour buses was lined up outside our window, sighing like impatient elephants, and I was cruising around the buffet, which is in the middle of the restaurant, filling up dishes and removing things like dental floss which someone felt the decor was lacking (?). I saw a giant of a man with a look on his face like "I'm not really big enough right now, so I think I'll embarrass the 'little' server girl and boost my self-esteem." And I know he called me "little" in his head, that jerk.

Anyway, I did the ol' "I did not see your eyes--no eye contact, no service---" move that I'm sure is in my contract, when I heard a series of loud taps on the buffet. Clang . . . "Little Girl!!!!" . . . Clang . . . "Little Girl!!!!" . . . Clang . . . Slow turn and reluctant look from me (aka "little girl"). Mr. Big Man been shouting at me, and as he is in the middle of the restaurant, all eyes are on us, like the people in the Burger King parking lot on Friday night, hoping for a scene. "Little Girl!" he says one more time in case my complex hadn't fully developed. "This bread is as hard as a rock!" he bellowed, clanging the knife down once more for emphasis. I looked at the table, and looked to the heavens. I thanked the angels for this glorious opportunity and prayed for the ability to keep my voice free of sarcasm. None was necessary,

but I opened my eyes wide for an innocent effect just the same. "Actually, sir," I said for the hundreds of eyes behind Shoppers Drug Mart sunglasses, "that IS a rock." Captain Brainiac had been attempting to saw off a piece of wholesome Island sandstone, which was a decoration piece on the buffet, for his breakfast. Score one for the "little girl."

And why is it, when I'm carrying a tray of steaming hot food, that people feel the need to attack me, armed with forks and spatulas, as if they were wild animals fighting over a carcass instead of "respectable" people in an expensive restaurant? Let's say I'm carrying a tray of eggs benedict. I walk towards the big silver chaffing dish, my hands burning, and a stupid lady will stand in front of it. I grit my teeth, as she obviously thinks I have some sort of buffet-server laser device which allows me to change dishes through human flesh. I ask her politely to move over a fraction of an inch so the sought-after eggs benedict will not be "as hard as a rock" (still gloating over that one). Stupid Lady is joined by three members of her family---Stupid Kid, Stupid Mother-In-Law and Stupid Husband (for his story, see above). They crowd around me, all vying to be the first lucky recipient of one of twenty eggs benedict. There's no prize for the first taker, there geniuses. If it were possible to teach them simple math, I would point out that if they are four in number, they could each have five of the twenty

benedicts, and not have to put metal utensils in each other's eyes to attain them. And not live until lunchtime, as those eggs benedict will clog your arteries faster than I can not hear someone asking me for more coffee (it's not my job-- I'm not a slacker).

So for those who will insist on being rude to student employees this summer, remember that this is merely summer employment for us, and we usually hate what we

are doing (I actually like my job, as it gives me lots of material for my writing). Just be aware, ye who insist on using us for releasing some pent-up confidence issues, that we see that it's your fifth trip to the buffet table, we know that you will only leave a silver change tip, and we may have columns in student newspapers where you will find your likeness, just like the Stupid Family with their rock-crunching father.

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