

Serving Up Apathy

by Jake DeVries

"Did you want that with the shrimp or the chicken?" the waitress asked. "Uh, shrimp is fine" the old man replied. "I'll be right back with some more bread" the waitress plasters a fake smile on as she walks away. 'What the hell am I doing. I've got a BS in Biology and here I am dishing out pasta. God, I hate my life.' she thinks to herself. Walking into the kitchen she hears a muffled scream from behind the door. "Oh I am so sorry Tina! I didn't see you there!" the waitress apologizes furiously. "No matter" mutters Tina, wiping the excess iced tea off her shirt and walks into the dining room. The waitress grabs a plate of bread and delivers it to the old couple before digging Camel Lights out of her purse and heading out back for a smoke. 'Sometimes I just wish I was someone else, somewhere else, doing anything else!' her mind races with each forlorn drag of the cigarette. She wonders where Andy was right now, probably on a mountain in Europe or living with Eskimos or some shit, that guy was always good for a story. As often as she pretended not to care about his misadventures, she really wanted to be the one coming home with the tales. She sighs as the camel nips at her thumb and forefinger and flicks it into the back alley before limping back inside to finish the night shift.

The waitress walks into her studio apartment and flicks on the Daily Show, a nightly ritual she started back in college. Into the kitchen she goes for a glass of OJ and a few pieces of plain wheat bread, knowing she's going to need it in a few minutes. Slumping into the sofa she loads up her one hitter and takes a deep long pull, trying not to cough it out. It's the last of the California stuff and with the way her tips have been going, probably the last good weed she'll get for awhile. Exhaling slowly as Jon begins his opening monologue she smiles and shifts further into the recesses of the goodwill couch. Her mind hasn't stopped racing since earlier and she desperately wants to forget and just be content with being what she is. It's not like she

didn't try to find a job after college, even her professors tried but nothing transpired. Deflated she took a job serving and two years raced by filled with sleeping in and smoking out until she forgot that she was supposed to be something more than a food slinger. Until Andy's email a month ago. That email filled with stories of week-long drunks on the beach, parties in Ibiza, wandering the markets of Morocco, the bizzare in Russia. It was so alien, so exciting, so so so she wanted to be there. The waitress tried focusing on Jon's guest, author of some political book no one's going to read but everyone's going to talk about, but the frustration of her situation decided that moment would be a good one to hit her with all the force of Katrina. She broke down and cursed the waste of the weed as the tears created waterways down her skin. She thought briefly about petitioning the heavens for a lifeline but thought that might be a bit hypocritical since she hadn't prayed since the 3rd grade.

As the sun peeked into her bedroom, the waitress woke up determined to find a way out. 'Anything will do, as long as it's not here and not serving' she thinks as she boots up her MacBook.

The former waitress rolled off her new bed two weeks later, still astonished at how much a change in latitude can affect the attitude. 'That Jimmy Buffett wasn't all wrong' she thinks while catching a glimpse of the familiar yet foreign ocean through the hostel window.

