

Fairy Tale – The Diner

Once upon a time there was a young married couple who decided to open a restaurant. Not because they had any particular experience in the restaurant business or knowledge that would cause them to be successful, but just because most everyone else in their families had started restaurants and they didn't know what else to do. They thought they loved the restaurant business. But how could they even know for sure?

Soon after the grand opening, they gave birth to twin baby girls. But, alas that didn't fit well into the plans for the restaurant because they were sickly – one died and the other cost too much money because she needed doctor care. But as she grew up she found her place in the family business – she was the one who stirred the pot.

Then #2 came along – he loved to try new dishes. Mrs. Diner didn't deal with him very well because he reminded her too much of Mr. Diner's family, whom she didn't seem to like.

Number 3 on the menu arrived without fanfare. Her restaurant job was to clean up all the messes made in the kitchen, keep the customers happy and make sure nobody found out what was really going on in the kitchen.

Numbers 4 & 5 came along and it seemed no one really knew what to do with either of them. Numbers 1&3 tried to parent them, but the restaurant business was becoming fuzzier all the time.

Mrs. Diner needed a way out so she got a night job at the tavern down the street serving up more than liquor and Mr. Diner stayed at the restaurant with number's 1,2,3,4 & 5. He was there, you see, but he was never really there. He was fixing things that needed to be fixed – not realizing that all the time the really important things were breaking down all around him. For instance, Mr. Diner was fixing a nail hole in the wall while the adjacent wall was crumbling down.

Number 1 was trying to take the place of Mrs. Diner while Mrs. Diner was busy replacing Mr. Diner.

Eventually Mr. & Mrs. Diner lost all interest in the restaurant and it would have closed down if not for numbers 1,2,3,4 & 5 getting a crash, self-taught course on how to run a restaurant.

Most of the time Number 3 didn't know if the restaurant was open or closed. She didn't know what the specials were or the cost of what was ordered up. She saw chaos and dirt in the kitchen. Rotten food was being served. There was a certain clientele who thought they could come in after hours and eat the forbidden food and not have to pay. All the while, the store front looked average. But no one was supervising, no manager on duty.

As a result the little adults did the best they could to make it. Mr. Diner moved on – out of the restaurant business completely and Mrs. Diner in other peoples restaurants like they were her own.

Well, one night while Mrs. Diner was dining privately with a new restaurant owner, a robber came and held them up. He caught them by surprise and it was not a pretty sight when he was finished. Once again the little Diners were left to pick up the pieces, figuratively and literally speaking. They were so afraid the robber would come back. They were scared for a very long time.

Number 1 suffered from overcoming depression the robber and the after – hours clientele stole too much.

Number 2 learned to steal just to relieve anxiety.

Number 3 thought she could earn love, suffered depression, broken relationship and never good enough.

Number 4 was depressed, fearful of abandonment and unhealthy attachments.

Number 5 was exposing too much, ANGRY! And saw too much.

How does it all affect business? Not good for business at all. The health inspectors wrote the following on their last report. There is old garbage left out in the kitchen. The floor is filthy and somebody put layers of wax over dirt trying to shine it up. There is old stuff hidden behind the cabinet doors. Some supplies are frozen, some have been burnt. Canisters are empty. Food is contaminated. Things that should have life are dead and things that are better off dead still have life. We recommend this restaurant be condemned, torn down and rebuilt.

Number 3 has been trying to do that for years. She has tried to steer her offspring away from the restaurant business entirely. She has shared the nightmares of her experience in the family business. But with all her effort and diligence she has at times slipped into the old ways and taught them amiss. She wanted a new family business, she wanted the health inspectors' stamp of approval, but she keeps ending up with the same old menu. Some changes have been made, but she desires a whole new family business.