

The Beginning of the End of the Post Vegetarian Movement

The forty-something couple was escorted to their reserved table on the top level at Mandrake, the posh eatery and most popular nightspot in Quaintsville.

The menu had changed recently, Dora hadn't seen it yet, and Buford couldn't read it anyway. Long story. One of those education funding cutback things.

This was the new future, where gluttony and disregard for anything but one's self reigned, and the food industry was aboard and running the ship of state.

"Look honey, they've got a special tonight. Your favorite."

"I forgot, what's my favorite?" asked Buford. His jowls drooped nearly to the table top, drool dripped onto his bib.

"Snail darter fin soup with a crunchy shiitake and bacon tapenade drizzled onto a bran muffin and served on a flaming napkin."

"Oh. Yeah."

The waitress brought water. "You folks ready to order?"

Buford held up the menu and pointed to the picture. "I'll have that, with extra bacon."

"And you, ma'am?"

"I'll try the charbroiled squab and cranberry quiche with the chipotle and ginger brulee."

"Very good. Would you care for an appetizer?"

"Philly cheese doodles!" Buford's saliva flow increased dramatically. He fell out of his chair.

Dora helped him up, then excused herself and headed downstairs to the ladies room. She never again saw Buford alive. While lighting his flaming napkin, the waitress also ignited the paper tablecloth and Buford. Unfortunately, he didn't move, even with the table and his sweatsuit on fire. Instead, he continued to cram philly cheese doodles into his cavernous maw as fast as he could.

Lars the Druid comic waddled over to help, then hesitated when he saw the half eaten plate of philly cheese doodles. Torn with indecision, he waited too long. Buford succumbed to the inferno, one hand in his mouth and the other reaching for the plate.

Dora laid Buford to rest a week later, and while his oversized casket was lowered into the ground, The Pottstown College Choir danced and sang his favorite song, The Bee Gees "Stayin' Alive."