

## Dinner with the Career Counselor (written January 4, 2013)

Waiting for a table, I say to my friend, “I have to make a decision.” Having just survived the apocalypse, and now knowing there will be no free ride out of hopeless indecision, I find myself once again weighing my career options.... We are finally seated and I look over the menu. I say, maybe I could offer resume-writing services to all the newly unemployed internet gurus whose job it was to prepare us all for ascension and/or death at the end of December. I have doubts as to whether I could craft a resume that portrays their skill and foresight convincingly, however, so I move on to all the things I really love to do, none of which make much.. money... at all. I have read the book “Do What You Love and the Money Will Follow”, but the author fails to mention from how far behind the money must travel in order to catch up with you.

The service is very slow. As I catch the waiter’s eye, I suddenly remember something I read, about what you’d want your epitaph to say regarding what you contributed to the world before they put you six feet under. “I must pick a cause and devote myself to service toward that cause”, I say to my dinner companion. I start to pore over a mental list of all the things that spark my righteous indignation. There are many, and all are worthy of the next 20 or more years of my considerable passion and devotion. But there is one word that keeps nudging the others out. Truth. Truth is printed in bold on the menu, but it’s the most expensive entrée. “That’s such a broad stroke,” I say. Truth about what? Politics? Heh. The afterlife? Aliens? And in a natural progression from there... Relationships? That last one has some interesting ingredients, I say..... and then it hits me. Truth between people! That’s it. I’ve made my selection. I’ll have that, please.

The way I see it, there are 2 things that stand in the way of truth between people – assumptions and judgement, both of which are stale and tasteless. We make assumptions because we don’t have the *whole story*. And we judge because we can’t feel empathy. And then the waiter comes along with a giant grinder and asks, “Would like some fear on that?” When my entree is sufficiently blackened, I say, “That’s enough, thanks.” The people at the next table glance over from behind a heaping plate of assumptions and judgement, and I feel badly for them that they ordered such a bitter dinner when they could have had something so much more enjoyable.

Truth is sometimes on the menu, but it’s pricey.... and not always in season. You have to be willing to ask for it and accept no substitutions. After one bite, I realize the waiter has been heavy-handed and I scrape the fear away to taste the most delicious meal ever.. the whole story in a delicate sauce of empathy. My companion looks at me with a knowing smile as I declare that my next job will be that of a chef. I will bear the discomfort and go out into the cold dark early morning to make sure I get the freshest harvest of truth, and serve it up to patrons who crave it as much as I do.