Mrs. Hemer

Creative Writing

Jumble Story – 4

August 23, 2012

 As the body rolled away on the stretcher, the crowd didn’t disperse. Everyone watched the medical examiner’s van drive away, and then, as if on cue, all faces turned toward me. I pretended as though I didn’t notice and spun on my heel to walk back towards the kitchen. Investigators were already questioning my staff members and a few customers. A young blonde was sitting next to a detective, her body still shaking with leftover sobs. She was the wife, or maybe girlfriend. Who could keep track these days? I didn’t spend any time wondering. All I could think about was how this could possibly happen just when everything was going so well.

 With the grand opening of Calypso came flocks of the rich and famous. When I inherited my parents’ estate money, the first thing I did was start scoping out real estate on Sunset Boulevard. Nearly three years later I lucked out with a newly renovated restaurant. It was more expensive than I wanted, but I knew I’d make it all back and then some within weeks. They always say location, location, location….and this one was perfect. The PR firm I hired was exceptional and was able to get all the big name celebrities and athletes in on my first day of business. As I watched them in awe that night, I almost felt the need for a red carpet leading to the front doors.

 As owner I spent every night transitioning between the front doors, the floor, and the kitchen. Most of my time was spent out front because I had full trust in my head chef Gilles and his staff. All of the dishes I had tasted were delicious and every one I saw headed to the tables was presented impeccably. Calypso, under the guidance of Gilles’s kitchen, had recently been named the “Hottest Spot in Hollywood”. We’d never had a customer complaint, the service was always timely, and patrons always enjoyed their dining experience. The entire staff, from the head chef to sous chef to hosts to servers, had helped keep Calypso on the radar, and now the death of one of the richest and most famous faces in Hollywood threatened to crush us all.

 If anything, business was even greater after the death. Rather than being troubled, customers were curious to see where the famous celebrity had died. Some were even so crass to ask to be seated at the same table. I insisted the staff keep things light. I didn’t want customers to know the table, what he had been served, what he was drinking. A death had occurred, and we were going to respect that – not make a spectacle of it.

 When the coroner’s report was release that cause of death was a heart attack and not an allergic reaction related to the restaurant as the wife/girlfriend had originally claimed, everyone at Calypso breathed a sigh of relief. Months later we still remained busy with celebrities, athletes, tourists, and locals alike. The death made for good business.