Breakfast At The Breece D’J International House Of Pancake

Michele Moore
St. John Fisher College

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Abstract
In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"It was cool and dim inside the restaurant despite the sun that came in through the east windows. The hostess’ greeting was equally cool. Anne remembered, as she followed Barb and the hostess to the table, the time her father had said he would never return to Canada because there was too much English influence and the people were unfriendly. They were seated at a table for two along the wall opposite the windows, between an Oriental couple and an American man and woman with their two little girls."

Cover Page Footnote
Appeared in the issue: 1985.

This prose is available in The Angle: https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol1985/iss1/20
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They each ordered coffee and picked up a plastic-coated menu. Anne couldn’t decide between waffles or blueberry pancakes. She gave up after a few minutes and glanced at Barb. Anne thought it was rather cliched to be studying someone over a menu, but Barb hadn’t noticed yet, and this was the first chance she’d had since May to look closely at her.

Barb’s red hair was a little longer, but it was still cut the same way, shaved short on one side, the rest hanging over the left side of her head. Her face was more tanned than it had been in May, but her skin was still smooth and clear. Anne had forgotten how soft her lips looked. She sighed quietly without realizing it, and Barb looked up from her menu, tossing her head to move her hair away from her face. Anne saw her questioning glance before she looked down at her own menu.

The waitress brought coffee, with real cream in a small white pitcher, and took their orders. Anne poured half the cream into her cup and added a packet of sugar. She stirred it slowly, listening to the clink of the spoon against the china, and watched wisps of steam rise from the cup. She took a tentative sip. Still bitter. She tore open another packet of sugar and dumped it in.

They sipped their coffee for a few minutes without speaking, and Anne looked around the restaurant. It was starting to fill with people who wanted to eat breakfast
before they caught their flights home or drove into the city to spend the day at the exhibition. Two men in business suits at the next table discussed the previous night’s Blue Jays game. Anne listened to them until the clatter of dishes in the kitchen drowned their conversation. The child behind her began chattering and kicking her chair. God, that was annoying. She made a remark about it to Barb, and they began to discuss their plans for the day.

She watched Barb as they talked. She didn’t seem uncomfortable, Anne noticed, but she didn’t look Anne in the eye often as they spoke. But then, she hadn’t looked Barb in the eye much since their awkward greeting at the apartment yesterday. That was something else she had forgotten, the clarity and depth of Barb’s eyes. She had imagined, months ago, that she could drown in those eyes.

Michele Moore