

The Time of Bacon

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Every hero's story includes a journey, archetypes, and conflict. I was the hero. I grew up in an ordinary world, The Time of Meat and Two Veg. They were simple times with simple pleasures. When I got my call to adventure, I was as naive as a boiled potato. My mentor wafted into my life one day and gave me the confidence to cross the threshold, where I landed in The Time of Soups and Broths, and that's when I first met my shapeshifting nemesis.

It appeared to me, subtly, a mere warning, tantalising my tongue in salty stock, so I devoured it. Fear and suspense reside in the void where the mind wields potential consequences, more so than in the use of power, I realised.

The more I consumed my enemy, the more present that enemy became. I traveled to The Time of The Entrée in pursuit, intending to overcome and destroy. There it was, choking a flushed prawn and drowning its head in white sauce, so I devoured it once again, satisfied – but not for long.

Every hero has their weakness, and I actively pursued my enemy, knowing its trick, how it would continue to appear through time, in different forms, alluring me, and I let it.

I reached The Time of the Main Course and there it was, belly first staring me down from underneath its salted, crackled cape. We fought the eternal conflict yet again. I chewed

through and in the end, I won once more.

I'm just a human hero, and I could feel myself getting older and slower and I knew that one day I would have to return home, albeit a changed being, but I felt I would never be able to live a normal life again since I crossed the threshold from my ordinary world. My mentor advised me, proceed and you will become the hero of the ages, and then warned me that I couldn't give up now, for there is no way to go back in time.

So I boldly marched on through The Time of Desserts where I knew I would be safe: there was no way my enemy could reach me here in this sweet oasis. I trudged along through the Banana Cake Swamp, wading through sticky maple syrup, avoiding choc chip hotspots. Just as I was bending my body forward, slurping myself from banana quicksand, there it appeared, in glazed chips, broken and sweet but everywhere. I consumed, devoured, I licked its salty sweetness from my lips and crossed finally, into The Time of Aperitifs.

That was it, I had won! Lemoncello rained upon my shining soul. I caught my reflection in the sweet and sour clouds and I knew it was time to heal after a lifetime of eternal conflict.

I slept, I bathed, I meditated, I flossed. I sawed that string back and forth, dredging my gums, and lo and behold, from within a cavity, it appeared again: my shapeshifting enemy, Bacon. I hung Bacon from my finger and stared it down, face to face and said, I will not let you control me anymore, and I flicked Bacon from my finger, down the plughole, where it slurped through to the drains of Hell.

These many years later, I sit in my old skin and bones, frail and frumpy, and I realise that I never successfully abolished Bacon, for Bacon had shapeshifted into its most powerful form;

I didn't realise that Bacon had been inside of me this whole time. What was meant to be an external conflict was truly internal; I am my own worst enemy.

My heart is struggling as Bacon strides through my veins commandeering Captain Salty Cholesterol in staggering pulps. Okay, you win, Bacon. I could never beat something as formidable as you. I'm dying, I know.

My mentor appeared again in a light at the end of my bed, dressed as a nurse. You can live, you know. There is a way. My mentor placed a tray of Meat and Two Veg before me and that's when I learned that a hero can travel back in time, for Time is subject to perception, and the threat of losing it is just like that of fear, more powerful in its promise. Much like the alluring aroma of an adventurous meal.