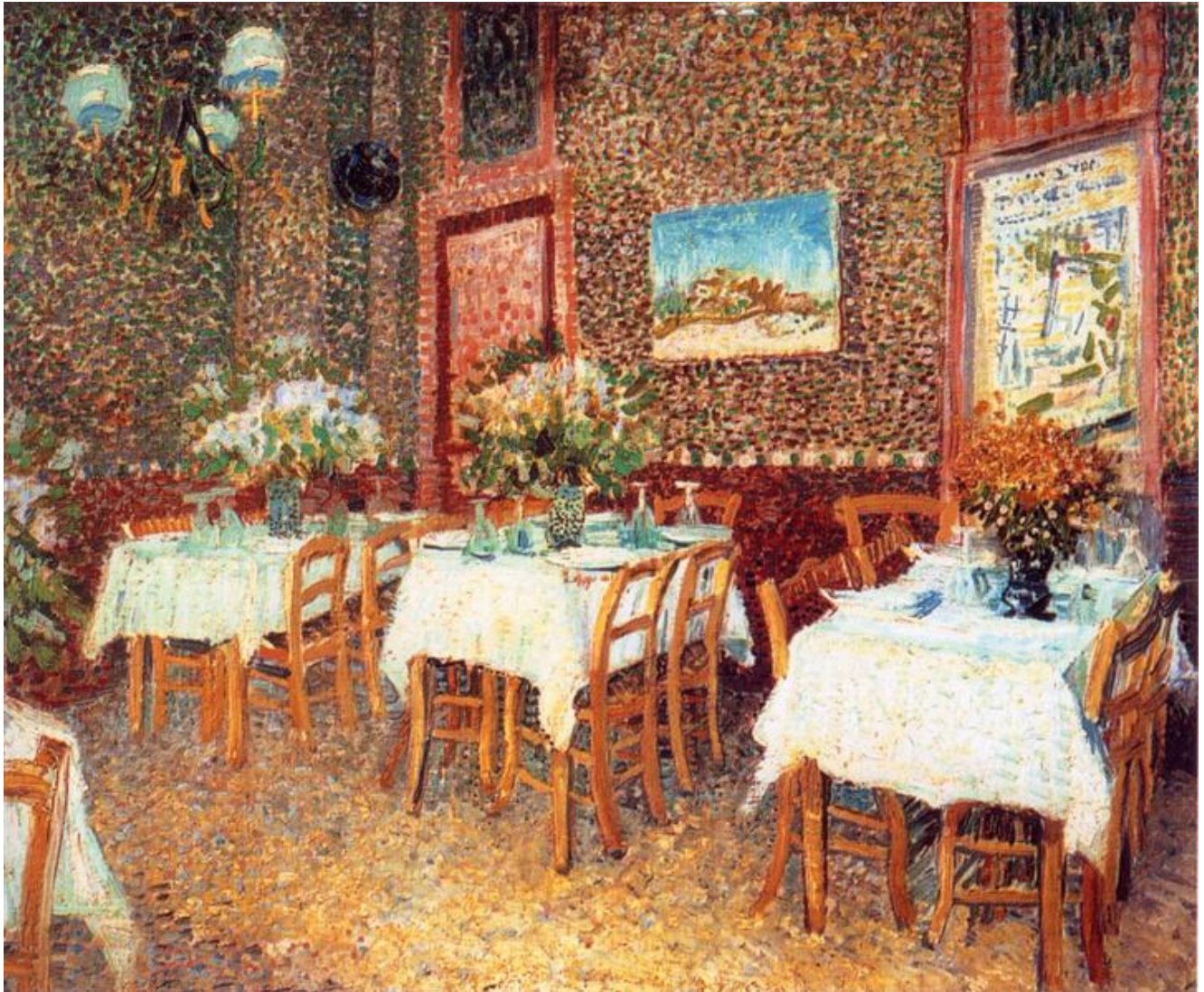


# A Racist Restaurant

by [Armando Simón](#) (July 2023)



*Interior of a Restaurant, Vincent Van Gogh, 1887*

The Favorite Flavors\* restaurant was very popular, so popular in fact that it had expanded and had a presence in over a dozen cities in three states. Throughout all the restaurants, quality control by the founder was rigidly adhered to for the unique flavors that the cuisine offered the patrons, and these truly unique flavors had their basis in imported fruits, vegetable and spices from other countries halfway around the world, which were almost unknown in the country. Aside from

these exotic offerings, Fantastic Foods also offered numerous traditional dishes for the timid customer, though again utilizing superb quality of ingredients and preparation. There was always a line waiting to enter the premises, said line fluctuating in length depending as to whether it was a weekday or weekend. The staff was proud to work there.

The line on this particular day had, as usual, women and men, children, blacks, whites, Asians, Hispanics, athletes, disabled, you name it. At one point, a group of three black patrons in their thirties named Jamal, Lakesha and Mykisha were led by the hostess to a booth and were handed menus. After a few minutes, a young waiter appeared.

"Hello! My name's Isaac and I'll be your server. Can I start you off with some drinks?" He was bubbly in demeanor.

"No, thank you," they responded.

Noticing the menus lying on the table, their waiter assumed that they had made up their mind what to order, so he asked them, "So have you already decided what you'll have?"

"No thanks," Jamal responded.

"OK, I'll give you some time to look over the menus and I'll check back with you. Meantime, I'll bring you some bread." He then checked with the customers in two other booths to see if their drinks or bread baskets needed refilling.

Ten minutes later, he checked back with the trio. "Here's your bread. And the butter. Have you decided what you'd like to order?" Isaac could have sworn that the menus were in the very same spot as before, untouched.

"No, thank you."

*OK ... that's odd.*

"Are you waiting for someone to join your party?"

"No, we're it," said Mykisha.

"Well, can I get you a drink? An appetizer, perhaps?"

"No, thank you," said Jamal.

This continued for three more times, at which point Isaac finally asked them, "Well, are you planning on ordering anything?"

"No, we're not going to," said Jamal.

Although he had half expected it, he was still taken aback by the answer. "Sir, this is a restaurant. If you're not planning to order anything, you should leave so that other people waiting in line can sit down." His tone remained polite, he did not raise his voice, but his face filled in the blanks.

"No, we're fine."

The waiter marched to the manager of the restaurant, who was busy working in the kitchen, as usual. "Jerry, I've got a problem, I've got three people in #12 and they've been sitting there for almost an hour. I checked with them five different times. They won't order anything. They refuse to."

Jerry frowned. "What? What d'you mean they *refuse* to? Are they waiting for someone to join them?"

"No! I asked them and they said no!"

Two of the cooks listening in laughed at the absurdity. One of them remarked, sarcastically, "They do know this is a restaurant, right?"

"Yeah, they know. They just want to sit there. Jerry, I'm losing customers! These jerks are not going to leave a tip for just sitting there, picking their noses."

"They're picking their noses??" one cook asked.

"Figure of speech!" he told the cook. "Jerry!" he once appealed to his boss.

"Come on. Let me talk to them." This was the part of being a manager that he hated, having to deal with obnoxious jerks while having to remain polite. He wiped his hands on a towel and started to go to where the trio sat. On immediately seeing them, he briefly rolled his eyes, knowing in advance the trio were going to make a scene.

"Yes, can I help you?" he asked them.

"No, we're fine."

"Well, Isaac here tells me you've been sitting here close to an hour and don't want to order anything and you're also not waiting for anyone to come join you. If that's really the case, I must ask you to leave so other people can sit down and order their food and enjoy their meal." He spoke in a low tone of voice.

"We're not moving," said Mykisha, scowling.

"We're not budging," Lakesha confirmed.

"We're just sitting here, minding our own business," Jamal enlightened the manager.

"Here we go," Isaac muttered.

"Sir, this isn't a park bench. Look, you have to understand that under the circumstances, you are now trespassing. We'd like for you to leave without making a scene." Fat chance, he told himself. The trio just shook their heads. "Well, in that case you give me no choice. I will have to call the police and have you removed from the premises. Isaac, go take care of your other customers."

The manager left and did, indeed, call the police. A pair of them arrived twenty minutes later and were briefed on the

problem. The duo approached the trio and a repetition of the previous dialogue took place, at the end of which the trio were arrested, handcuffed, and escorted from the premises.

Their booth was quickly filled in by a family that had been waiting for over an hour. They were black.

Jerry, like Isaac, had been bothered by the absurdity of it all, not to mention the loss in income, but the manager had been bothered by something else: contrary to what he had expected, the trio had not screamed obscenities and accusations, nor had thrown things around in a temper tantrum. It had gone smoothly, quietly.

The next day, he realized why.

The television, the newspaper and the internet were reporting that three blacks had been denied service at the Favorite Foods restaurant. There was a chorus of angry condemnations. Comparisons were automatically made by the journalists to the days of segregation when blacks were not allowed in "whites only" establishments. A picture of the dignified trio being taken out of the restaurant had been conveniently taken by someone at the time.

Condemnations of the restaurant and the staff poured in from people who had not been there, had next to no knowledge of the details, but who always and instantly responded whenever the "racist!" accusation was thrown around. Just like Pavlov's dogs had been trained—or brainwashed—to either salivate or snarl when a particular light bulb was turned on, so has an enormous contingent of people in the country been trained over the years to angrily snarl anytime that an accusation of "racism" was uttered anywhere.

And sure enough, Fantastic Foods everywhere began to receive a series of insulting and threatening phone calls. The hostesses were at first upset with all the hateful people denouncing the restaurant's hatred for black people, then they became angry

and gave as good as they got. All the social media was abuzz in an orgy of self-righteous condemnation and groupthink. The social justice warriors went to Yelp and flooded the Favorite foods site with one-star ratings which brought down the previously uniform 5-star status.

However, the actual decline in attendance at the restaurant was minimal.

In midafternoon, Jerry got a telephone call from the owner.

"Hello, Jerry. It's Geza. What's this I'm hearing about an incident at your restaurant?" He sounded worried.

"Geza, yesterday three people were seated at a booth for over an hour during peak hours and refused to order food or drinks. They just sat there! They weren't waiting for anyone to arrive, they just sat there while there was a long line out the door waiting to be seated. I tried to reason with them. Nothing! I then asked them politely to leave, but they refused. I finally had to have them escorted out by the police."

"Well, it looks like it's getting out of hand from what I can see on the internet."

"It's just the usual Twitter mob, Geza. It'll go away."

"I don't think so. I'll need you to issue a formal apology."

"What??" Jerry practically screamed. "No!! I mean, no, what for? We did nothing wrong!"

"I know, but nowadays it's expected."

"Yes! It's *precisely* because it's expected that I won't apologize. And for what? Geza ... I did the right thing. You know it and I know it. I'm sorry. I won't do it. Too many people are expected to grovel anytime these incidents occur."

"I know you did. But Favorite Foods is running the risk of from now on be known as 'racist.' I'd like for you to apologize."

"No! I'm sorry, but I won't. No! Absolutely not." Jerry heard the owner sigh. He knew he was going to be sacrificed as an offer to the gods of Twitter, Facebook, Reddit and YouTube. Fired. And he did not care.

"All right, Jerry. Bye." Geza hung up.

What the manager did not know was that the owner had earlier received a call from some woman named Letitia something or other, who told him that The Reverend Kabob from the Respect Black Lives organization would like to make an appointment with him to discuss what had happened at the owner's restaurant. Geza, knowing full well that it boded no good, nevertheless scheduled him in for that afternoon. The man's name sounded vaguely familiar.

There are some persons that, from the moment one lays eyes on that person, one knows exactly what kind of a person one is dealing with. A smiling The Reverend Kabob came in, "con man" and "hustler" written all over his visage.

"Ah, so kind of you to see me on so short notice."

"Not at all. What can I do for you?"

"It's about this racist incident yesterday at one of your restaurants ... I'll come straight to the point. As being the owner of the restaurant, people are going to blame you and hold you accountable for the actions of your staff, pretty much like a captain is held responsible for the actions of his crew. It's not fair, but it's a fact of life."

"I assume you're referring to the three individuals who were sitting in a restaurant for an hour without intending to order anything. The internet is full of idiots who are easily

manipulated.”

“True. Very true” he responded ominously. “But the fact is that the brother and sisters could not make up their minds to order and when the server became belligerent and abusive, they were understandably upset.”

“That’s not the way it happened, I am told.”

“Your staff is just covering up what happened.”

“But you know.”

“I know.”

“So, what, exactly, would you like me to do?”

“Well, RBL offers sensitivity training classes your staff could benefit from to prevent future incidents of bigotry. Enrolling your staff in these sensitivity training classes would go a long way in reversing the image the public has of your chain of restaurants.”

“Those three that were at your restaurant. They were your friends, weren’t they?”

The Reverend Kabob was momentarily taken aback at Geza’s remark. It was a bullseye hit. Hitherto, the white people he had met with under similar circumstances, had all been fawning and apologetic, practically groveling, having been conditioned for years to be afraid of being considered a racist.

“They are now,” he responded.

“I understand ... And this ... ‘sensitivity training’ is going to cost me how much?”

“I did some calculations and based on the number of restaurants, for a full day of sensitivity training, it would run to \$250,000. But, lucky for you, this week we’re running a special and it goes all the way down to half off.”



“\$125,000. Half off. Really. Lucky me.” Geza stopped talking and swiveled his chair to the side while he thought. This was obviously blackmail and it was apparent that this incident had been a setup. But it was also obvious that, considering today’s toxic climate, the accusation of “racism” could escalate and there were simply too many stupid people and too many knee-jerk fanatics. And the ravenous media hivemind had to be taken into consideration. Their agitation over time could result in losses twenty times the asking price. And the blackmailer knew it.

The Reverend Kabob said nothing, letting him think and stew and come to the inevitable conclusion.

“Very well. I’ll make the announcement later today,” said the businessman. They stood, shook hands and the distinguished visitor departed, leaving Geza with an urge to wash his hands after the handshake. Instead, he picked up the telephone and called up an old business associate.

“Hello, James. I have a job for you. But it has to be done fast.”

The next day Geza’s secretary called up the RBL office to inform The Reverend Kabob to come to the office and pick up the check, which he did, driving over the speed limit. The owner did not hand him the check personally. He did not want to feel soiled in the august presence again and had an underling do the distasteful honors. The con man deposited the check in his bank, went to his office and made a few phone calls. An hour later, the aforementioned trio, this time grinning from ear to ear, appeared at his office.

“Wassup, G?” said Jamal.

“Wassup, Dawg? Got it!” Critus said. The trio were practically jumping in anticipation. “And here’s your cut, \$20,000 apiece in cash, so no records for the tax man.” He counted the money out into three piles and Jamal, Lakesha and Mykisha snatched

up the money. “And as soon as this sensitivity training BS is over, I’ll go look for another pigeon and we’ll do it all over again.”

The quartet would have been less ebullient in knowing they were being recorded by the private detective that Geza had commissioned in order to get proof for the courts on a charge of fraud and blackmail.

The quartet was arrested the following day.

Of course, Geza made sure that it was spread in both the social media and the local news.

*\*The name of the restaurant is totally fictitious. Any resemblance is purely coincidental.*

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Armando Simón is a retired forensic psychologist and author of [Orlando Stories](#), from which this story is taken.

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