

Bass Burgers

I walked into my office, a low lit, large room with a brown leather couch in one corner and a large wooden desk in the other. On the beige walls were countless numbers of awards, saying, “Best burgers in Rockport” and “Number one fries in Massachusetts!” For a few minutes, I was comfortable, not rushing to a customer or a chef that set the kitchen on fire. I just sat, resting in my black rolling chair, with my feet on top of the desk and my head back, relaxing. Of course, it didn’t last.

“Mr. Bass!” a young waitress named Celeste with a messy black bun and tired eyes rushed into my office, without knocking.

I sighed. “Yes?”

“There’s a woman who’s very angry because she found a hair in her burger and she’s asking for a new one but since your policy states we can’t do that unless you agree on it we need you out here to help,” she quickly explained.

“Again?” I got up and walked out of my office, through the large, busy kitchen and arrived in the dining area of my restaurant.

I easily spotted the customer who clearly overreacted. Her arms were folded over a light blue polo shirt and she pursed her lips while furrowing her brows. When she saw me walk into the dining room and pass by a photo on the wall that said, “Owner of Bass Burgers,” under it, she scoffed and her nose crinkled in disgust. I walked over to her table, trying to smile.

“What is the problem, Miss?”

“Your employees *refuse* to give me a refund, or at least a new cheeseburger, after I found a hair in it! I spent seven dollars on this, and I cannot believe no one will give me back my money!”

“Sorry, but I don’t know what we can do. It may even be your own hair.” I examined the strand placed on a napkin; it was dark brown, which couldn’t possibly be hers, because the woman at the table had light blonde, short hair, but I couldn’t let her get away with manipulating me into giving her money.

“Really?” she looked at me and rolled her eyes. “Does *this* look like my hair?” She pointed to the napkin.

“It could be. I wouldn’t be so accusing if I were you.”

“I swear, this place has the worst customer service! If I go to another restaurant and see something wrong, they fix it, not argue with me! You know what? Keep your money! It isn’t worth the trouble. You are the most cheap human being I’ve ever met!” The woman got up from her table, grabbed her handbag, and stomped out of the door.

I smirked. It was good to win an argument with people who are so greedy that they can’t spare a few extra dollars. It takes a lot to make delicious burgers like mine; it wasn’t my fault she happened to find a hair inside it. I looked around the room. Everyone seemed to be enjoying their food, so I decided to go back inside my cozy room and take a short nap.

As I was entering the kitchen, Celeste walked up to me.

“Mr. Bass?” she said quietly, chewing on her fingernail.

“What?” I responded, annoyed.

“Well, I think that, maybe if you weren’t so...frugal, then so many customers wouldn’t leave angry all the time.”

“Are you going to tell me how to run my restaurant?” She shook her head quickly. “Good, because if you want to, you can quit now and I will let you set up your own burger place where you make up all the rules, and be a slave to everyone that walks inside.” Her eyes widened and I grinned. “Also, it would be so much easier for you to quit, because it’s one less paycheck to sign.”

“No, sir, I was just...never mind. I’m sorry,” she said, and rushed out of the kitchen.

I examined the chef’s cooking inside. When they noticed me lurking around them, everyone started to look at each other and whisper. I saw a young man being too generous with the French fries.

“Tom!” I shouted, and his head shot up. “Didn’t I tell you to put exactly *fifteen* fries on the plate, not forty?”

“There is only seventeen, sir.”

“Then take two away from the plate.” He did as I said, and almost everyone began to pick French fries from their dishes. I felt the urge to fire people on the spot, but it was Tuesday, and paying for them the rest of the week while they sat at home doing nothing but crying didn’t sound fun.

I stepped back into my comfortable office. I loved owning a popular hamburger restaurant, but it did get annoying, and expensive at times. But at the moment, it felt good to lie back without worrying about my budget.

I soon got a phone call, and answered.

“Bass Burgers, voted the best in town, how may I help you?” I said a bit too angrily.

“Yes, is this Brody Bass? I am calling from the Health Department of Essex County in Rockport, Massachusetts.”

“Oh, hello, again. What do you want?”

“A woman called complaining about a hair in her food; this is second time it has happened in the past week. She also stated that you denied her a refund.”

“It wasn’t even one of my staff member’s hair. They wear hair nets,” I lied; hair nets were too much maintenance and money.

“I happen to be very good friends with a worker of yours, and they have told me that you do not offer hair nets; they have to buy themselves one.”

I clenched my teeth. I knew it was Celeste who told them; that snitch hates me. “What do I have to do then? It was only a little hair, its not like their was a roach inside her food. That woman was also very disrespectful to me; she made it seem like it was all my fault.”

“That isn’t the point, Mr. Bass. You never follow the department requirements.”

“Of course I do! My restaurant is healthy and I take care of my customers!”

“Brody, I have a list in my hand that shows every one of your health violations. In the last month, you have had twenty-three complaints. If this was the first time, I would let it slide.”

“Come on, Hank, give me a break. What are you even asking for, anyway? That I say sorry, because I am *not* apologizing to that woman!”

“Well, we weren’t going to ask for that, but now that you mention it...”

“No.”

“Okay, fine. But, the department rules state you need to give refunds when a customer complains. Since you cannot seem to do that, we have to charge you a 250 dollar fine, or your restaurant could be easily shut down.”

“Seriously? A fine for having a strand of hair in someone’s food? This is ridiculous!”

“Sir, don’t argue. Send in the fine by next week or we shut down your business. That is it.” Then they hung up.

Bass Burgers, Grade 6-8

Well, I was going to have to do something about my restaurant. Maybe Celeste was right about me being too frugal. I guess I would have to talk with my employees, and make up new policies. I sighed, and pulled out my checkbook.