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### Crawfish, Catfish, and Lots of Crying

I thought that my senior year of high school would be a year of relaxation and bliss. Before the start of twelfth grade, I decided to quit my part-time job as a carhop at a local Sonic drive-in because I had decided at the time that this was going to be my year of change. The plan was to join more clubs, to get my GPA up, and to be more social. That all changed when I found out that my senior trip was going to be well over my budget, so I picked up a job at a locally known catfish restaurant to make payments on my trip because I thought that the restaurant was slow paced enough to allow me to accomplish all of my senior goals. However, I soon found out that unbearable coworkers, racist customers, and crawfish season were the reasons that I was wrong about this job being easygoing.

The first reason that I was wrong about this job was my unbearable coworkers. While I got along with most of my coworkers, there were a few that really knew how to push my buttons. I had one female coworker who had the idea that she could tell others what to do and when to do it even though she had started only a month before I did and had no management title. Because she wouldn't do any work herself, most of her entire shift was spent in the manager's office watching the rest of us do her nightly duties. I had a similar situation with another female coworker who never did any work but always seemed to bring her baggage into work, whether that was her boyfriend, her boyfriend's ex-girlfriend, or other ex-boyfriends.

More important than being wrong about this job because my unreliable coworkers ruined

my work experience, my racist interactions with customers made me rethink how badly I wanted this senior trip. I was the only person of color working in our front area most of the time, and my being there seemed to cause some issues when I met the Confederate Brothers in Arms Association. We had a large party room in the back of the restaurant which guests could rent for a large gathering, and when the Brothers rented this room, they showed that they did not like my working there. For example, when the other coworker that was assigned to the party and I got ready to take their orders, she had a line of over fifty people, and I had a line of exactly zero. I kept motioning for the party guests to come to my register, but most of them wouldn't even dare to make eye contact with me. One spoke up, saying that they would be all getting their orders taken from my white coworker. Later when I had their orders to pass out, one of the wives of the Brothers took my trays out of my hands to pass out while the white girl was allowed to do her job. The worst part was at the end of the night while we waited for them to leave so that we could clean the room when the head of the association gave my coworker a one hundred dollar bill for a tip. The tip he gave me was the location of their dirty dishes.

Lastly, racist customers were not the only thing that gave me my breaking point; crawfish season made this job more fast paced than easygoing. When I first started this job, I was told that it was going to be slow until crawfish season, which started in January, and my managers were right. Once the crawfish came in, it was like the number of customers we had was multiplied by at least fifty. We were selling an average of about one hundred pounds of crawfish per week, so I was always on the run to wait on customers. The behind-the-scenes workings of crawfish season were also fast paced. Once we poured crawfish out of the bag to clean them, we would find other critters who were not supposed to be there, like turtles and roaches. Also, more crawfish were being sold than had been cooked, so it was like a crime scene in the cooking area

since people were running frantically and live crawfish were crawling everywhere.

All in all, when it came to working there, the negatives outweighed the positives. Crawfish season made the job fast paced and not easygoing. I had coworkers that didn't like to work and didn't most of the time. Also, the racism I experienced from customers was another reason that I couldn't stand working there.