

# SATISFACTION

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*“What does not satisfy when we find it, was not the thing we were desiring”*

*C.S Lewis*



*Micah*



*Addicted*

*Oh Baby. Oh Baby. Damn Baby  
I'm addicted to you. Yeah I said it. Addicted to you.  
Honey you are the water to my dry well  
Replenish me baby.  
Give me what I need to stay alive.  
If I could touch you for just a second  
My world would be complete  
If I....oh sugah....If I could wrap my legs around you  
For just a minute  
The ticker on my clock would stop  
A moment in time just for us  
My skin tingles at the thought of your touch  
My voice trembles whenever I try to say your name  
Oh Baby. Oh Baby. Damn Baby*

Snaps. Snaps. Snaps. She takes a step back and looks out into the audience. There are couples sitting cozily in soft chocolate brown leather benches and groups of women seated around candlelit tables. Servers walk the room handing out appetizers and drinks. It's a nice crowd. She waves quickly and grins before exiting the stage.

As she weaves her way through the dimly lit room she can feel the eyes on her. She pauses to say hello to some regulars and smiles and shake hands for introductions. She tries hard to ignore the tiny chill shooting up and down her spine but it's useless. She knows he is there again sitting in the booth in the corner. All by himself. Checking her out.

She noticed the handsome stranger on a few occasions. It was always the same. She would get on stage and say what she had to say.

Afterward, she would look out into the crowd and he would be there drinking a glass of red wine staring at her curiously. She imagined herself sliding into the booth across from him and asking what his deal was.

She wanted to ask his name and find out why somebody as handsome as him kept showing up alone. She hadn't quite worked up the nerve to talk to him before but bravery was finally reprising its role inside of her. She wasn't ready before but she was tonight.

Micah Green opened the doors of Lyric's Café in the spring of 2007. She took over the restaurant after her Uncle Joe decided to retire and move to Florida with his new bride. He ran the place as a barbeque joint for over 30 years. Micah worked there as a cook while she attended culinary school.

She loved everything about the fast paced kitchen environment and she loved her Uncle Joe. She looked up to him because he was such a great cook and an even better business man. He didn't limit himself when it came to thinking big about his restaurant. Joe's BBQ Joint was the most famous soul food restaurant in the city of Columbus.

Over 30 years, he'd been able to expand his business and open two additional restaurants. The original Uncle Joe's was located on the Southside of the city. He opened one restaurant on the Eastside and another on the Northside. Joe Green was very successful and well known in the city.

Uncle Joe took Micah under his wing as soon as he learned of her love for the culinary world. He had no children of his own and was always close to her. She was always his favorite niece and he wasn't good at hiding his fondness.



When Micah was ready for her first summer job Uncle Joe let her come and work as a hostess. She was supposed to stand at the door and greet customers but found herself wandering into the kitchen more often than not.

She was fascinated by the surroundings. She loved the hot frantic pace of the kitchen. Orders were prepared almost as quickly as they were placed and dining room patrons only witnessed the delicious end results of the beautiful chaos.

By the time she reached her senior year, Micah knew that she was destined to be a chef. She enrolled in culinary school and worked part-time shifts at the restaurant. Uncle Joe was well aware of Micah's passion for cooking and regularly encouraged her to open her own place one day. She couldn't imagine doing anything else with her life. Food was her life.

Micah remembered the day her uncle first approached her about taking over the restaurant. It was a month before her culinary school graduation and she was sprawled across the navy blue love seat in his office. She bought a cookbook full of Asian recipes and was eagerly flipping through the pages. She loved the idea of learning to cook dishes from a variety of world cultures.

Micah barely acknowledged her uncle's presence as he walked in the room and sat across from her at his desk.

"Hey Micah. Let me holla at you for a minute. You always have your head stuck in some cookbook!" He said with a smile.

"You know me Uncle Joe. I can't help it! What's up?"

Micah said as she sat her book down next to her on the sofa. She made a mental note of the Thai curry recipe she just read.

"I've been thinking about something for a while and I want to get your thoughts." He said.

"Ok sure."

"How would you feel about taking over the restaurant after I leave? I've been watching you walk around this place for the last six years and you know it better than anybody here. Well except me that is. I know you said you were planning on looking for a job at some high end place after graduation next month but I can do you one better. If you're willing."

Micah stared at her uncle with her mouth open. The only thought she could muster was *Did he just offer me his restaurant?* She was in shock. After a few seconds she was able to speak again.

"I would love to do that Uncle Joe but I don't know if I'm ready. I love working here but I've always pictured myself being more experienced. I always thought my first restaurant would be a little different. This is your baby and I'm sure you wouldn't want me changing up the place now would you?" Micah replied.

"Baby girl. You're ready. You're intelligent and you know this business. I actually wouldn't mind if you made some changes around here. It's been exactly the same for the past 30 years and I happen to have two more like it in the city. Listen, why don't you write up something for me. Tell me what your vision is and we can talk about it. But don't take long. I'm out of here in a month."

"A month! You told me you weren't leaving until the spring."

“Hey my lady is ready to go. I have to keep my lady happy now! I’ve been hanging around this city all of my life and it’s time for some new scenery. You just get to work on your plan little lady.” Micah felt like her stomach was trying to jump out of her throat.

She was excited and terrified. This was such a big opportunity. She spent six years of her life in that restaurant and she daydreamed often about what kind of place she would like to own. She never imagined that she would possibly have the chance to live her dream so soon. It took most people years to open their own restaurant.

Micah stayed up all night writing her proposal for Uncle Joe. He was not at all surprised when she showed up the next afternoon and told him she had it ready for him. She sat him down in his office chair and paced the floor while excitedly telling him her plans. She broke down every detail to him from the décor to the entertainment and the type of food she wanted to add to the menu.

Uncle Joe sat in his chair listening intently. A slight frown spread across his dark brown face when she mentioned her speed dating idea but he tried to hide it. He could hardly believe that the little skinny girl who used to ask him for a dollar every time she saw him had grown up into the woman standing before him.

She was passionate about her vision and she was undeterred by the fact that he hadn’t made one single comment about her ideas. If he ever had a daughter he was sure she would’ve been just like Micah. She reminded him so much of himself when he was starting up. He was young and intensely determined to be successful.

After nearly 30 minutes of talking, Micah stopped and stood in front of his desk.

“Well Uncle Joe you haven’t said a single word. Tell me what you think. I can’t take it!” Her heart was beating fast from excitement and nerves.

“I think you are even more ready than I thought. Now, I don’t know about that speed dating mumbo jumbo you were talking about. We didn’t do stuff like that in my day but you seem to know all about it. I believe in you baby girl and anybody that can come up with a pitch like that in less than 24 hours is my kind of business partner.”

They agreed that Micah would take over the restaurant and if she could turn her ideas into success within a year he agreed to sell her the restaurant. A week later they sat in his office again and Micah signed a contract detailing the terms of the agreement. It was official. Joe’s BBQ Joint would officially become Lyric’s Café.

After six months of renovations and major redecorating, Micah eagerly opened the doors for business. She fully embraced the excitement and anxiety that filled her spirit. Uncle Joe was right. She was ready.

There was only one thing in Micah’s life that rivaled her love for cooking and that was her affection for poetry. When she was fifteen, her mother gave her a book of poems by Nikki Giovanni. Micah was hooked the moment she opened the front cover.

She loved to write poetry as much as she loved to read it. Over the years, Micah wrote about any and everything that was going on in her life. She wrote about boyfriends, fights with her parents and everything in between.

She spent countless hours writing about food, dreams she had and even songs she heard on the radio. The bookshelves in her apartment were lined with tons of poetry books. There was no question. Cooking was her first love and poetry was a close second.

After tons of focused brainstorming with her best friend Jazzy, the idea of changing the restaurant's name to Lyric's Café was born. Micah wanted the atmosphere to be upscale but comfortable and inviting. They agreed that a name change would aid in accomplishing that goal.

Lyric's Café would be a restaurant by day and a social club by night. Each night would have a different theme. Micah understood that varied events would draw wide-ranging crowds and ultimately increase the number of customers that came in.

There was an open mic night for local musicians, poets and singers to perform. She added a karaoke night and a singles' night. She made speed dating an occasional part of singles night. Micah hated the concept of speed dating but it always drew a crowd.

Sundays were family days and the restaurant offered discounted meals to families. She had to thank Jazzy for that idea. It was very well accepted and Micah saw the numbers of customers skyrocket once she added it as a special to the menu.

Within the first few months, Lyric's Café was a bigger success than Micah ever dreamed it would be. It fed the need for quality entertainment to a young professional crowd. It also fed the stomachs of people of all different ages and backgrounds. Micah's career was in full swing and she had never been happier.

She got to show off her culinary skills as head chef during the day and have regular opportunities to share her spoken word every week. There wasn't more that she could ask for.

Micah came in early that Friday morning to do her bookkeeping. Uncle Joe taught her to do it herself.

"You keep track of your own books. That way you'll be the first to know what's coming in and what's going out." He advised.

Thursday nights were karaoke nights at Lyric's Café and the revenue was always excellent. People loved to get drunk and make fools out of themselves. She had absolutely no issue with collecting as much cash as she could from her happily intoxicated restaurant patrons. The profit she was staring at on her accounting spreadsheet reflected that.

Micah sat in the cozy office that once belonged to Uncle Joe and tried hard to focus on the numbers in front of her. She was distracted by her thoughts of the mystery guy. He made her nervous and she was rarely nervous about anything. Another Friday had arrived and she knew he would be there that night. He'd been coming and sitting in that booth every single Friday for the past month. She had no doubt that he would be there again.

She saw him for the first time on the night she performed her *Sixteen* poem. She finished reciting her poem and noticed him the second she looked out into the crowd. His face was so beautiful.

He had sultry bedroom eyes, a strong chiseled jaw and full lips. He looked at her so intensely that her heart fluttered. She wanted to stop and say hello but she couldn't think of a reason.

She didn't know him and he didn't try to stop her as she walked by. She had to admit she was disappointed. She would have loved to talk to him and have a chance to look into his eyes.

Instead, she walked to the bar and spoke to Jazzy and her boyfriend Tate. Her neighbor Laura had also shown up with a few of her girlfriends.

The energy in the room was electric. That type of vibe was typical for a Friday night. Open mic night was Micah's favorite night of the week. People came from all over the city to step up and share their views on the world. They spoke on topics such as relationships, economics, politics, sex and religion. Nothing was off limits at Lyric's Café.

Every Friday night Micah got up on stage and shared a piece of poetry. She always concluded by thanking everybody for coming out. She loved that part of the night almost as much as performing her poetry. Her connection with her customer's was important. She wouldn't have a successful business without them.

She was particularly appreciative of her new customer. Although she hadn't met him she appreciated everything about his presence. She couldn't get the image of him out of her head. She kept seeing him sitting in that booth sipping that red wine. She wished he would take a sip of her.

Almost an entire month had passed since she first laid eyes on him. He came in three times after that night and she had yet to speak to him. She was surprised at how shy he made her feel. She had always been assertive with the opposite sex. There was just something about him.