

My goodness! What a journey. It's been almost exactly a year since we met on 14th street to discuss plans at that restaurant space. (In hindsight I should have waited 8 more weeks to confirm anything, but I was so nervous that whoever your replacement was going to be at the *Freep* wouldn't get it right. I trusted only you to tell that story that was so personal to me).

Thank you for the call last week. It was so great to hear your voice. You're also so calming and reassuring. It's really embarrassing to think that throughout your illness, *YOU* were the one telling *ME* that it would be ok and not to worry.

I don't know if I quite understood how important you were to me until that last phone call. My career, yes. But also just me, the girl.

This can be a cruel industry. You have to love it and devote your life to it. And thus the lines become blurred of where personal identity ends and public identity/reviews/yelp starts.

I've always been a risk taker and also unwilling to just stand by when things aren't right. (Ha! you know this better than anyone. I think you once wrote: "...An unexpected choice for a venue but then with Kate we can never know what to expect"). But that means there are times when you say 'uncle' and move on.

Often in journalism the narrative can be skewed or manipulated to wanting "the story" and the controversy, which, as a chef, can take its toll. But not with you. You understood our stories. You had a knack for seeing behind the fluff and trends and just wanted to let people know what you knew about the people behind those dining experiences. The idea that someone got out of bed today just to serve someone a beer. Your writing reflected it. You saw all the nuances and little details that an owner laid awake at night stressed about. That meant the world to me and to so many others.

My mother once said to me after a pretty public restaurant departure "Kate, your worth as a woman has nothing to do with you as a chef. Promise me you'll remember that."

And you, as a restaurant critic in a major city, made me feel that. That you were here for me, Kate, and not the story. You called me right after I left Republic and said exactly that. "Ok I am going to write something on this but first, are you OK?".

And because of that, I wanted to be better for you.

Right about now I'm wishing we had had time to do that last *dinner series* we talked about (well now I HAVE to do it in your honor haha).

Thank you for believing in me. Thank you for reassuring me of the things I needed in those times. Thank you for being a cheerleader for restaurant people in this world of comment sections and snarky writing. Thank you for telling our stories. Thank you for being so certain of my success, even years and years ago, that I have to work every day to prove myself to you and that vision.

There will always be a seat saved for you at my table and I'll spend the rest of my cooking years trying to be best for you and waiting for that next story that you so gracefully tell.

My eternal admiration and gratitude-

Kate