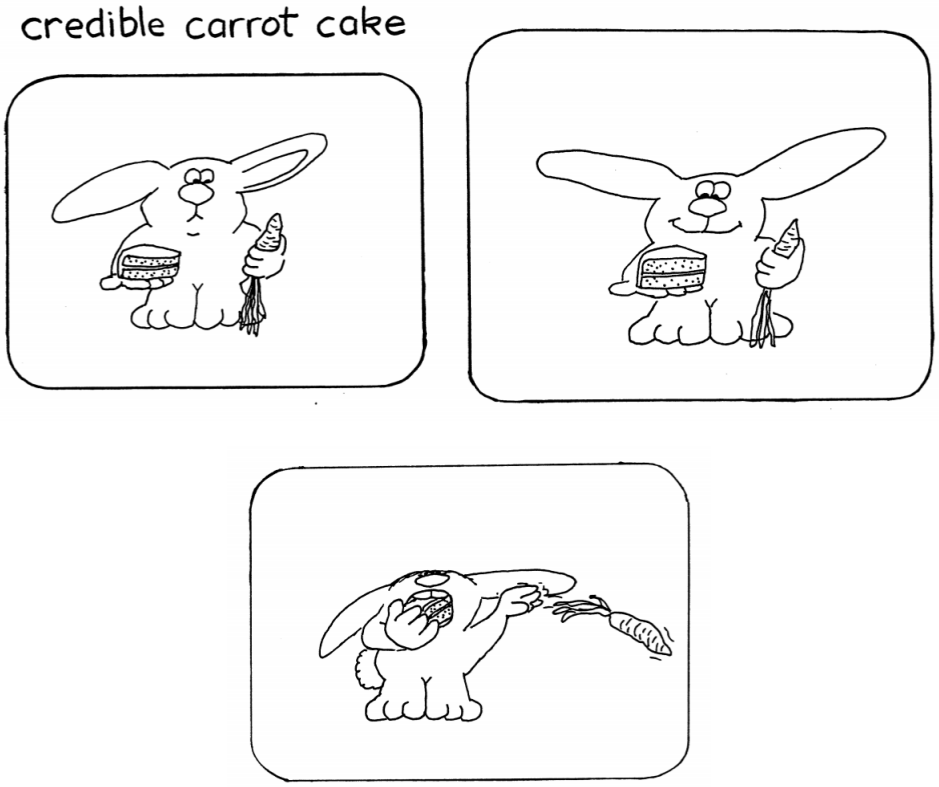

The choice was clear…

A food tale from the 1990s by dr bob jantzen

In the early days before bob knew either of his future in regular intimate innovative food preparation (as distinguished from regular food preparation, in which he was involved even as a kid as the son of an occasional 3 to 11 shift private duty nurse, a kid who had never heard of carrot cake or cheesecake by the way) or of his eventual insertion into the upscale restaurant frequenting social class, bob accidentally stumbled into one of the early legends of the Philly food renaissance that began in the 1970s: Frog, the restaurant. Kind of a strange name for a restaurant, which must be a story in itself, but a real quirk of fate in this case, since it closed the following week.

It was the dr bob and ms_ani first date somewhere in the late 1980s. bob had tickets to Dream Girls, one of those traveling Broadway musicals, in Center City Philly, after which he planned to take Ani to dinner, and then maybe dancing. That big impression first date thing. Being a guy, and usually an expert map reader, bob did not think to ask directions to her family's house. Cobbs Creek Parkway he'd used a few times getting to the airport from the Main Line in those early days before completion of I-476 a-k-a "the blue route" (which is another interesting story). Armed with the street number, the plan was to cruise down the Parkway until the number turned up. It didn't

turn up on the first pass, nor on backtracking the same stretch. bob called from a pay phone and asked one of his eventual brothers'-in-law for help. Insufficient. A second call from another pay phone, when the fine distinction between Cobbs Creek Parkway and West Cobbs Creek Parkway finally became apparent: they're located on opposite banks of the creek. bob arrives like an hour late, and calls the theater since it was clearly useless to try to make the first show, already in progress with travel time still separating them from arrival. The theater person agrees to a second show alternative as a random act of kindness and bob's stress level normalizes.

So the restaurant is the first event. Who knows where bob heard of Frog. Probably from the Philadelphia Inquirer. It indeed was a fancy restaurant, and bob's first pretty expensive meal as a young assistant professor in his first real job. No carrot cake was had. The Dream Girls was fun. The discotec on South Street was fun. And being with ms_ani was fun. The most expensive date in bob's mating career till then was clearly a success. Although it took quite some time afterwards for the wedding merger to take place.

Years later after having developed his cookbook acquiring habit, bob spotted the Frog/Commissary Cookbook and snapped it up. And shelved it like most of the other acquisitions. But eventually looking for a good carrot cake recipe, it was consulted and merged with some other reputable sources to produce bob's pretty good version. Touched by memories of that first evening together at Frog.

For food details see: https://drbobenterprises.com/recipes/frog.htm