

NICK DEFALCO, PRIVATE EYE
"The Goddess In Green Satin"

CHARACTERS

MEN:

NICK DEFALCO, P.I.
DARK LORD
ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

WOMEN:

DEMETER
PERSEPHONE
DELIVERY TEEN
PALM READER

SETS / PROPS

OFFICE:

Desk, desk chair, side chair, coat rack.
Sandwich bag, coffee cup.
Delivery teen: roller blades.

PSYCHIC FAIR

Card tables, folding chairs
Deck of cards, Darth Vader Helmet.

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LIGHTS UP

NICK'S OFFICE: COAT RACK, DESK, SIDE-CHAIRS, PHONE.

ANNOUNCER: (O.S.)

A life in pursuit of answers to other people's questions. That's the life of Nick DeFalco, Private Eye.

NICK is dressed in a trench coat, shabby suit.

NICK:

It was autumn. Around Halloween. The time of year given over to the glum reality of approaching winter.

TEEN: (O.S.)

Watch out...!

NICK:

Zenith Deli had just instituted roller blades for their delivery staff...

ENTER TEENAGE DELIVERY GIRL, out of control, on roller blades carrying a small sack. SHE CIRCLES DESK AND NICK.

TEEN:

(unsteadily) Ooh, ooh, ooh...! Ow!

SHE FALLS ONTO SACK IN FRONT OF DESK.

NICK:

(helping her up) You okay?

TEEN:

(getting up) I think so.

SHE HANDS NICK THE SACK.

TEEN:

Sorry, Mr. DeFalco.

NICK:

(peering into sack) It was a B-L-T -- the last of the fresh tomatoes from the garden.

TEEN:

(anxiously) You don't want me to skate back and get you 'nother one, do you?

NICK:

Naw. But what about customer service?

TEEN:

We got customer service, Mr. DeFalco. Danny says we've got to be AGGRESSIVELY POLITE with our customers!

NICK:

Aggressively polite?

TEEN:

Yeah. No matter what I REALLY think, I'm SUPPOSED to act EXTRA NICE to you! (a beat) SEE! I'm smilin', Mr. DeFalco.

NICK:

Stop with the smile! You're takin' away my appetite! How much was that? \$2.75?

TEEN:

BLT is \$2.75 Mr. DeFalco.

NICK:

Here you go -- three bucks. That's a quarter tip for you!

TEEN:

Twenty-five cents? Oh, wow-ee! A whole quarter! Thanks, Mr. DeFalco! Now I can go to college!

TEEN SKATES OFF.

NICK:

(sits in desk chair) Destiny is a flattened BLT made from the last tomatoes of the season and a half-a cuppa cold coffee.

AUDIO: GLISSANDRO. ENTER DEMETER DRESSED IN A LONG, SHIMMERING, GREEN, LOW-CUT SATIN DRESS. SHE HAS LONG AUBURN HAIR. SHE WALKS ON VERY HIGH-HEELS.

DEMETER:

Mr. DeFalco?

NICK:

Trick or treat, sister!

DEMETER:

I beg your pardon?

DEMETER CROSSES TO DEFALCO'S DESK.

NICK:

(to audience) I had never seen a stack of pumpkins quite like this one.

DEMETER PRIMPS A BIT.

NICK:

(to audience) From her long auburn hair down to her shimmering, emerald green satin dress, to her 3 and a half-inch stiletto heels, if her name was Jacqueline Frost, she could nipped at my nose all afternoon!

DEMETER:

Mr. De Falco...?

NICK:

I didn't catch your name, Miss...?

DEMETER:

MRS Demeter [DAH-METER].

NICK:

(sitting) Well I got dah-meter runnin'! What can I do for you?

DEMETER:

Mr. De Falco, I have a problem.

NICK:

Nothing wrong from where I sit! (gesturing to chair) Oh, won't you have a chair?

DEMETER:

(sitting) I'm a goddess.

NICK:

And I'll fight the man who says you ain't!

DEMETER:

My daughter is missing.

NICK:

(getting a pad to make notes) What's your daughter's name?

DEMETER:

Persephone.

NICK:

(writing) How long has she been missing?

DEMETER:

Two thousand five hundred years and I'm sick and tired of it! I look for her. I worry! I totally neglect the farms and fields...

NICK:

Hold it, sister, did you say twenty-five hundred years? Is this some kinda joke?

DEMETER:

I told you. I am the goddess Demeter and my daughter Persephone was abducted two-thousand five-hundred years ago by the Dark Lord of Hades.

NICK:

Demeter -- you mean like the MYTH of Demeter?

DEMETER:

I'm no myth, Mr. DeFalco. I'm sitting right here with you. WorldCom profits, sub-prime mortgages, "mission accomplished", those were a myths. (she touches paper bag) Here, watch your sandwich...

AUDIO: GLISSANDO.

NICK:

(looking into sack) Hey! You plumped my sandwich!

DEMETER:

I can plump checkbooks too. You help me with my daughter, Mr. DeFalco and I'll plump your checkbook.

NICK:

You got a photo of your daughter?

DEMETER:

Mr. DeFalco, goddesses can't be photographed.

LIGHTS FADE DOWN ON OFFICE. SINGLE SPOT AREA ON STAGE. NICK CROSSES TO SPOTLIGHT.

NICK:

It was the tale from 9th grade mythology. The good girl Olympus Drive and the boy from Hades Lane. He had flashy wheels. They went for a ride. They had lunch. She ate pomegranate seeds, possibly laced with hallucinogenic substances. Now she spends six months in Hades and six months on Olympus.

SPOTLIGHT FADES. LIGHTS UP ON OFFICE. NICK turns back to scene. DEMETER CROSSES TO NICK.

DEMETER:

Find her, Mr. DeFalco. Bring her back to me.

NICK:

How do we stay in touch? You got a cell phone?

DEMETER:

Just whistle, Mr. DeFalco, put your lips together and whistle...

DEMETER EXITS.

NICK:

Perfect! A goddess throwing a famous line from a great old movie starring... (points to chin) you know... the guy with the dimple.

NICK CROSSES BACK TO DESK.

NICK:

What a case! I knew I was gonna need some spiritual help and I knew EXACTLY where to find it... The Psychic Fair.

LIGHTS DOWN on DEFALCO OFFICE.

NICK CROSSES TO PALM READER. LIGHTS UP.

PALM READER:

(Brooklyn accent) Read your palm, \$10 bucks... (looks him over) ...in advance.

NICK:

(getting cash from pocket) Okay.

PALM READER:

Put out your left hand.

NICK:

Okay.

PALM READER:

(looking at his palm) Now... everybody's got three main lines, a head line, a heart line and a life line. Your head line is, uh, short.

NICK:

What!

PALM READER:

(covering) I mean in comparison with your heart line which is ver-ry long. And that's good. That means you're a LOVER!

NICK:

And my life-line?

PALM READER:

Your life line is... oopsie!

NICK:

What do you mean when you say oopsie?

PALM READER:

Now if your long heart line on your left hand, crosses a PANTY LINE on some good-lookin' girl's derriere, then her boy friend is gonna send you some fist-mail! And you'll say...

NICK:

Oopsie!?

PALM READER:

Exactly. I'm not a mind reader but you should visit the Dark Lord at the back of the room.

NICK:

(surprised) The Dark Lord!

LIGHTS UP ON BACK TABLE. THE DARK LORD IS SITTING AND WEARING A UNIVERSITY OF _____ (PICK THE UNIVERSITY YOU WISH) T-SHIRT AND A DARTH VADAR HELMET.

LIGHTS DOWN ON PALM READER AS NICK CROSSES TO DARK LORD.

NICK:

Excuse me, are you the Dark Lord?

DL:

(DARTH VADAR VOICE / BREATHING) I am the Dark Lord. My mother-in-law sent you.

NICK:

How do you know that?

DL:

(DARTH VADAR VOICE / BREATHING) She's a major pain in the Force. (shifting to normal voice) Can I stop with the breathing and voice thing? (removing helmet) That's annoying!

NICK:

So why do you wear it?

DL:

Gimmick. Humans love gimmicks. You liked it, didn't ya? We gods adopt a form pleasing to mortals. So, why not have some fun? It's a costume. Take my mother-in-law for example... you think she's a beautiful woman in a green, shimmering dress. Mr. DeFalco, she's thousands of years old! She's the mother of the entire Earth! You can't imagine the stretch marks!

NICK:

She wants her daughter back.

DL:

I want her daughter back!

NICK:

Persephone's gone?

DL:

Persephone's busy since she got her MBA and opened up the Hades delivery division.

NICK:
Delivery division?

ENTER PERSEPHONE.

DL:
Yeah! Sure! Everybody delivers today, even Hades!

NICK:
Delivers what?

PERSEPHONE:
Nervousness. Fear. Free floating anxiety. Regret. Greed. The little stuff that wakes you up at night. It's BRAND DEVELOPMENT. Hades is selling way upstream into the buying cycle, Mr. DeFalco.

NICK:
Persephone, I presume.

PERSEPHONE:
We're into sports, medical, brokerage... Here's our latest! We're getting all restaurants to insist that their employees be AGGRESSIVELY POLITE! Talk about anxiety!

NICK:
That kid on roller-blades! I had no idea! (he whistles)

ENTER DEMETER

DL:
Uh-oh, I wish you hadn't done that...

NICK:
Done what?

DL:
Whistled!

PERSEPHONE:
Mo-ther! So good to see you!

DEMETER:
Thank you, Mr. DeFalco.

DL:
Hello, Mom. How's tricks? Started any hurricanes lately?

DEMETER:
Very funny. (to Persephone) Dar-ling, I've missed you so TERRIBLY! I even hired this nice man to find you!

PERSEPHONE:

I've been so BUSY! What with the U.S. economy tanking, I've had to set up a Fear SWAT team! We've been working overtime just on retirement anxiety alone! (a beat) How's it going with the new species?

DEMETER:

Oh, they fill the bathtubs and keep me busy!

PERSEPHONE:

Let's do lunch, shall we?

DEMETER:

Of course!

DEFALCO CROSSES BACK TO OFFICE SET.

PERSEPHONE:

Can't do Tuesday -- Wednesday I'm launching a new Republican Party Division. Friday?

DEMETER:

Oh, I can't. And Next week's out!

LIGHTS FADE DOWN.

NICK:

Back at my office, I wondered if the whistle thing would work. So I gave it a try. (whistles)

ENTER DEMETER - CROSSES TO STAND NEXT TO NICK.

DEMETER:

Ah, Mr. DeFalco. (seductively) I'm going to plump your checkbook!

DEMETER PATS HIS JACKET POCKET. AUDIO: GLISSANDO. DEMETER KISSES NICK ON THE CHEEK.

DEMETER:

Good-bye, Mr. DeFalco.

DEMETER TURNS AND EXITS. NICK REACHES INTO HIS JACKET AND TAKES OUT HIS CHECKBOOK AND OPENS IT. INSIDE IS A CARROT

NICK:

My checkbook was plumper, all right...

NICK BITES CARROT. TURNS TO STAND BEHIND DESK.

ANNOUNCER: (O.S.)

A life in pursuit of answers to other people's questions. That's the life of Nick DeFalco, Private Eye.

FADE LIGHTS OUT.