

TWO NICKS

by

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TWO NICKS

Characters

NICK, apparent 30s, handsome and fit, with a ruddy, almost sunburned complexion and a soul patch.

NICHOLAS, apparent 50s-60s, portly and clean-shaven.

AIRPORT SECURITY GUARD, female, 40s.

JERRY CANTRELL, himself.

Time

Present, sometime in the middle of the year.

Setting

A row of seats in a terminal at the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport.

NOTE: Jerry Cantrell's airport announcement is included in the "Experience the City of Music" clip at

<http://www.portseattle.org/Sea-Tac/Passenger-Services/Pages/Music.aspx>

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A terminal at Sea-Tac airport. NICK sits in a waiting area, a small bag draped with a parka at his feet. He's dressed like a GQ lumberjack. He holds a lit cigarette in one hand, while he pages through a magazine with the other. An AIRPORT SECURITY GUARD enters.

SECURITY GUARD

Sir. You can't do that here!

NICK

Huh?

SECURITY GUARD

You can't smoke anywhere in the terminal. Put that out.

NICK looks at the cigarette as if he's surprised to see it in his hand.

NICK

Almost done.

He takes a drag.

SECURITY GUARD

Sir, put that cigarette out now!

NICK

Of course. Sorry.

NICK looks around for an ashtray, but of course there is none. HE stubs the cigarette out on the sole of his boot, smiles at SECURITY GUARD, then tosses it in a trash can.

SECURITY GUARD

Don't let me catch you smoking in here again. I'll be watching.

NICK raises both hands in surrender. SECURITY GUARD exits. NICK laughs and returns to his magazine. After a few moments, NICHOLAS enters, pulling a roller bag. He wears sunglasses, a Hawaiian shirt, shorts, sandals, and a floppy straw hat.

NICHOLAS

Thought I might find you here.

NICK looks up. NICHOLAS removes his hat and sunglasses and strikes a pose. NICK leaps to his feet in recognition. They hug without restraint, that is, without those fake manly back slaps.

NICK

Nicholas, you old bastard!

NICHOLAS

Nick, you God-damned son of a bitch!

Finally, they part, but still holding each other for an arm's-length appraisal.

NICK

For a moment, I didn't recognize you without the beard. And you gained weight, you fat fuck!

NICHOLAS

I always gain weight this time of year, you know that. What else are vacations for?

NICK

Cabo again?

NICHOLAS

Yeah, although it never hit triple digits. Next year I might go further south. You hear so much about global warming, I say Bring it on, baby!

NICK

You're headed home, then. When's your next flight?

NICHOLAS

I got time. Hey, I'll always make time for you. It's been months since we talked.

NICK

That it has. Sit, sit.

NICK ushers NICHOLAS to a seat. NICHOLAS arranges his belongings and sits heavily.

NICHOLAS

Where you off to this year? This climate change thing must put you in a bind.

NICK

It's getting harder and harder to get away, true. But a I booked an Antarctic cruise. On my way now to tour the Ross Ice Shelf before it disappears.

NICHOLAS

You can always come to my place, you know. You want ice, I got ice. I could even put you up in my walk-in freezer.

NICK

(Laughs.)

Can you imagine? What would he neighbors say?

NICHOLAS

Yeah, but think of the work we could get done. Skype is great, and all, but I prefer face to face in the flesh--even when the face is as ugly as yours.

NICK

You are so deluded, my friend.

NICHOLAS

Say, you got a minute? I want to check something out. You don't mind?

NICK

Might as well. Vacation clock doesn't start until Tierra del Fuego.

NICHOLAS digs in his bag.

NICK (CONT'D)

This about merging databases?

NICHOLAS

Yeah, it came to me while I was sitting on the beach.

NICK

You don't know how to relax.

NICHOLAS

You can't turn off an intellect like mine. It's like a finely tuned machine. It needs to purr...ah, here.

NICHOLAS extracts a folder, then a spreadsheet.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)

We already know we have to eliminate duplicate data entry. My workforce is finite and, while yours is unlimited, it's not motivated.

NICK

Only so much I can do carrot-and-stick-wise. Damned if I do, damned if I don't.

NICHOLAS

So I was thinking--suppose we build an app that puts data from either of us in one place where we both can get at it.

NICK

Single-entry, multiple-access, automatic sorting?

NICHOLAS

Exactly. Look, at the cost-and-time savings.

NICK peruses the spreadsheet.

NICK

Good...Good...Very good...And once we agree on the sorting criteria we can save even more manpower over time.

NICHOLAS

I called and had my little people get started on a program. I'll send you a beta.

NICK

Just wait 'til I get back from the cruise, will you.

NICHOLAS

Sure, you lazy fuck.

NICHOLAS starts to gather up his papers.

NICK

But this is a great start. Just what I was hoping for when I first brought it up to you a year ago.

NICHOLAS

Key insight was: We're dealing with the same market.

NICK

And the beauty of it is, we're not even competitors. We're like the fox and the hedgehog: *Multa novit vulpes, verum echinus unum magnum.*

NICHOLAS

Let's stick with Anglo-Saxon, shall we. You know I fell out with the Romans a long time ago.

NICK

"The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing."

NICHOLAS

Yeah, but which of us is which?

NICK

Depends on how you view your target audience. I'd argue that there are far more ways to be naughty than to be nice.

NICHOLAS

(Laughs heartily.)

You old fox, you.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Alaska Airlines flight 239 to Prudhoe Bay, now boarding at Gate Number C-16. Alaska Airlines flight 239, now boarding at Gate Number C-16.

NICHOLAS prepares to leave. NICK stands with him.

NICHOLAS

Well, I got a long way to go yet.

NICK

Safe trip, man.

NICHOLAS

And may you have a nice, hedgehog-like cruise.

They embrace warmly and part simply. NICK watches his friend exit, then sits.

JERRY (O.S.)

Seattle-Tacoma International Airport is a no-smoking facility. This is Jerry Cantrell, of Alice in Chains, reminding you that smoking is allowed on the lower drive outside the building, and only in designated areas. Bummer, dude.

NICK resumes reading his magazine. Somehow a lit cigarette has reappeared in his hand. He takes a drag. SECURITY GUARD enters in high dudgeon.

SECURITY GUARD

Hey! I told you not to smoke in here!

NICK imperiously studies SECURITY GUARD through the smoke.

NICK

I heard you, Madge Peterson, age 43, of 4020 Delridge Way Southwest, Number 311, Seattle, Washington, U-S-A. Don't you be naughty, now.

SECURITY GUARD freezes, stunned. NICK takes another drag.

Fade to black.

THE END