

**Différence** was produced twice Off-Off-Broadway, appearing at the Pulse Theatre and then in the Midtown International Theatre Festival, as part of *I Love New York, What's Your Excuse?*, an evening of short plays by the author.

Melanie	Eva Lowe
Nick	Ed Baccari / John Tyrell
Robert	Philip Garfinkel
Chef Alain	David Grossman/Terrence Keane

Both productions were directed by Ann Bowen

*Nick and Melanie sit at their table as if they were occupying sacred ground. They're giddy, a bit high, both clutching empty martini glasses.*

MELANIE: These were the best martinis ever, Nicky. The best ever.

NICK: Let's drink the next round really slow. Just tiny, little sips to flick our taste buds. We'll get the essence that way. The true essence of the martini molecule.

MELANIE: Just flick, flick, like a hummingbird's tongue?

NICK: Like a hummingbird's tongue, Melanie. Exactly.

MELANIE: *(squeezing Nick's arm)* Oh my God, Nicky, Nicky, Nicky. I still can't believe we're actually here.

NICK: When I told you I had a surprise did you think for a second?

MELANIE: No, no, no. Bonne Bouche? Oh my God, I love to say that - Bonne Bouche. You try, you try, Nicky.

NICK: Okay...

*(Nick tips the martini glass to his lips to drain the last drop, then sits straight, clears his throat)*

NICK: I want to do this right.

MELANIE: Yes, yes.

NICK: Bonne Bouche.

MELANIE: *(shivers with delight)* Oooh. Do it again.

NICK: Bonne Bouche.

MELANIE: *(another shiver)* Oooh.

NICK: What did I say, Melanie? What did I say, huh? Hold on to me because we're going...

NICK and MELANIE: *(together)* ...Up, up, and away!

MELANIE: *(taking Nick's hand)* My superhero. My Colonel Marvel.

NICK: Captain. Captain Marvel, Melanie.

MELANIE: Who do you think sat in this seat before me? Somebody fabulous?

NICK: Everyone here is fabulous, Melanie. It's de rigueur.

MELANIE: We're so fabulous. Beyoncé is a regular. Maybe she - she could have... *(raises a hip, touches the seat under her)* Beyoncé's butt! Oh my God, Nicky!

NICK: Forget Beyoncé. Remember when that "freedom fries" nonsense was going on? Pouring French wine in the streets, boycotts - remember? You know where Dick Cheney's "undisclosed location" was?

MELANIE: No...

NICK: Yes.

MELANIE: Really?

NICK: This very table, Melanie.

*(She raises her hip, looks at her seat as if maybe she'd just sat on a large bug)*

MELANIE: Really?

NICK: I want to ask you something, Melanie.

MELANIE: *(still focused on the chair)* What?

NICK: Come closer, my sweet.

*(Something in his tone - Melanie forgets her chair, leans in close to Nick)*

MELANIE: What?

NICK: How long do you think I had to wait for a reservation?

MELANIE: A reservation? Well... uh... I heard Oprah waited three months.

NICK: Four. How long do you think I waited?

MELANIE: I don't know...

*(Nick holds up two fingers)*

MELANIE: ...Two? Just two months? Oh my-

NICK: Weeks, Melanie, weeks. I waited two weeks.

MELANIE: No, no, absolutely no.

NICK: Up, up, and away.

MELANIE: Is that the truth? The absolute truth? You waited only two weeks and Oprah had to-

NICK: Melanie, calm down, my daffodil.

MELANIE: I'm sorry.

NICK: The truth swallowed fills us up, allowing us to feed others. The truth spit out like spoiled milk, however, hungers everyone.

MELANIE: You run so deep, Nicky. Is that Zen?

NICK: The Mask of Dr. Fu Manchu, 1951. Page thirteen. Pretty good comic book. Worth about a thousand dollars in mint condition.

MELANIE: My Mister Comics.

NICK: Never underestimate the power of the books. You're sharing space with a vice president's derrière because of them.

MELANIE: What?

NICK: You're gonna like this story.

MELANIE: Tell me, tell me.

NICK: One of my big clients calls me and-

MELANIE: How big?

NICK: Last name starts with rock, ends with feller.

MELANIE:*(a beat as Melanie puts "rock" and "feller" together)* Oh...

NICK: Yeah. He calls. He has to have Captain Marvel Adventures number one, and not just in mint. Pristine mint. Come on, I say, this is the World's Mightiest Mortal. I find number one in pristine mint, I'm not gonna want to part with it. He says he'll pay ten times over guide. That's more than three hundred thousand dollars.

MELANIE: Very nice, Nicky.

NICK: I told him it wasn't enough.

MELANIE: What? Three hundred thou-

NICK: There's a lady, I said... a very special lady. And I want to make her happy for a long time. I want a table at Bonne Bouche.

MELANIE: Nicky.

NICK: The man is an investor. He and Chef Alain are like that... *(crossing two fingers)* ...So fourteen days later, Mister R has his number one in pristine mint, and you and I are making Oprah very jealous.

MELANIE: You spoil me terribly, my darling!

NICK: I meant what I said about making you happy for a long time.