

MEET THE DEVIL!

Written by

Patricia Poulos

Adapted from the book:

'You Never Die'

Dedicated to God

EXT. BUSY CITY STREET, AFTERNOON

Snowing.

Taxi-Cab travelling along. Passes illuminated Billboard "YOU NEVER DIE!".

Pulls up outside swanky Hotel.

MIKE FORESTER (55), seasoned Reporter with the Profiler Magazine dressed in brown trench-coat alights. Walks into Hotel.

NARRATOR (O.S.)

Now by all accounts, Mike Forester would probably be the last person you'd ask to write up this story, or is he? He's a sceptic doing a story on 'Is there a God?'. Mike's usually a personable character, but he has no patience for 'God Pushers' and he's about to interview Author Kathy Bishop of the book advertised on the Billboards... 'You Never Die!'... little knowing, this encounter is about to change his life forever.

KATHY BISHOP (45), expensively dressed, sits in a booth quietly sipping coffee.

She looks up as Mike approaches.

MIKE

Sorry. Roads are almost impenetrable.

Kathy smiles, nods, indicates for him to sit.

KATHY

Been snowing most of the night. Drink?

Mike nods as he pulls out a notebook, pen, and small tape recorder from his pocket. Takes off his coat, throws it over a chair and sits.

WAITER (20) stands by in attendance.

MIKE

(to waiter)
Coffee. Thanks.

Waiter nods. Leaves.

Mike places removed contents on table.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Impressive signs.

KATHY
Thanks.

Mike indicates to tape.

MIKE
You don't mind if I...

KATHY
No. No. Of course not.

Mike nods.

MIKE
Easier...

Kathy smiles.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Before we get started Ms Bishop, I think you should know I don't believe in any of the characters in your book, or in their existence.

Kathy smiles. Nods.

As Mike gets comfortable, Waiter delivers coffee.

Mike pours. Sips.

Places finger on tape.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Ready?

Kathy nods.

Mike pushes button.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Ms Bishop, why did you write this book.

KATHY
To awaken people to the truth.

MIKE
What's 'truth'... truth about what?

KATHY
Well really, 'Truth' is what one chooses to believe it is.

MIKE

Really. So why are you pushing something that people may not accept as 'truth'?

KATHY

Well, I'm not really pushing anything. People can choose, whether or not they want to read what I've written. No one is forced to buy my book.

MIKE

Perhaps not. But your advertising campaign is drawing people in.

KATHY

Thank you. I'm glad it's working successfully.

MIKE

Well it got me here.

KATHY

Yes. Thank you for taking up the challenge.

MIKE

Don't know I've done that... but, let's get to it!... What are you trying to achieve?

KATHY

People are being conned!

MIKE

Nothing new in that. People are being conned every day of the week.

KATHY

Yes. But this 'con' is everlasting for all of eternity.

MIKE

You've titled your book, "You never die"!... But that's not so, is it?... I mean cemeteries are full of dead people.

KATHY

That's precisely 'the con'. And it's imperative that people know, that it is, because, if they don't wake up NOW it's going to be too late!

MIKE

And so you've written a book that states, despite all the billions of 'dead' people... 'You never die'!

KATHY

Yes. Because that's the truth... we don't EVER die.

MIKE

Well how do you account for all those buried or cremated. Are you saying they're all still living?

KATHY

Yes.

MIKE

On what planet do you say that is?... Because I don't see them on Planet Earth.

KATHY

Unfortunately it seems that most are, living in 'inner' Earth.

MIKE

Okay, let's go back a step. Let's talk about a child. He grows up. Lives until he's whatever age... now we get to it... he has a heart-attack... with me so far?

KATHY

Yes.

MIKE

Now this is where it gets interesting. The doctors at the hospital declare him 'Dead'!

KATHY

Yes. This is where He, the person, is separated from his body. That's what I'm saying. Just because your body goes into the grave or an oven, this is just a carcass.

Mike looks at his body and breaks the intensity of the interview.

MIKE

Well that's a different way to describe what I take and work out at the gym very day.

Kathy smiles.

KATHY

It is a body that you inhabit and which protects, you. You're still in it!

MIKE

Well I Hope so.

KATHY

But if you weren't?... It, would be in the grave or ashes and then... where would you, be?

MIKE

You mean... if I wasn't in my body?... Well I'd be dead as well, wouldn't I?... You've just said, buried or cremated.

KATHY

No. Your body's dead because you, are no longer in it.

MIKE

Let me get this straight. What you're saying is... I... me... is not what you, are looking at, it's just my body.

Kathy smiles.

KATHY

Not quite.

MIKE

Okay. I'll bite!... Tell me.

Waiter returns.

Mike stops tape.

WAITER

Can I get you something else?

KATHY

What do you recommend for lunch?

WAITER

We have mixed sandwiches... smoked salmon, caviar and cucumber with trimmings. But I could bring a menu...

Kathy looks at Mike seeking approval. He shrugs.

KATHY

Thank you, that's fine. May we also have some sparkling mineral water and two glasses of House White.

Mike smiles. Nods. Sips coffee.

KATHY (CONT'D)

I'd like to ask you, some questions. Is that okay?

MIKE

Sure. Go ahead.

Mike restarts tape.

KATHY

Have you ever met The Devil?

Mike shocked, flustered.

MIKE

What?... I've already told you I don't believe your characters exist, so how can you ask if I've met them?

KATHY

Yes. In your belief, neither God or The Devil exists. And so you don't know, the Devil is waiting for you!

MIKE

What? Don't talk garbage. What a cock-up? You're doing what you're claiming others do... conning the people.

KATHY

Not quite. I've got nothing to gain.

MIKE

Yes you have... sales of your ridiculous book.

Kathy nods.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Look... if you want to keep this interview going, a degree of sensibility must prevail.

KATHY

Yes. Yes, of course. But I think you should know what's at stake.

Mike waits.

KATHY (CONT'D)
You've got a Contract with The Devil!

MIKE
(agitated)
What?... What?... What garbage!

Kathy raises her hand to calm him.

KATHY
Just hear me out.

MIKE
(reluctantly)
Okay. I'm listening. Go ahead.

KATHY
You're an extremely successful reporter, with a number of awards. Correct?

Mike nods.

KATHY (CONT'D)
How do you think you achieved them?

MIKE
(indignant)
Through sheer hard work and sacrifice.

KATHY
Yes. But not quite!

Mike annoyed.

MIKE
What'd ya mean?

KATHY
You knew, it wasn't only you.

MIKE
This is becoming tiresome.

KATHY
Sorry.

MIKE
Look... when people see how dedicated you are, they want to reward you. There's nothing wrong with that, is there?

KATHY

No, of course not. But he who encourages and rewards is either of God or, has a Contract with The Devil.

MIKE

What fantastic garbage!

Kathy gives a reluctant nod.

KATHY

The Devil looks after his own. He's the greatest Benefactor of all time on this planet!

MIKE

Don't be ridiculous. No one's given me anything! I, did it. I did it... on my own.

KATHY

You can only succeed in this world in one of two ways. Either by the Grace of God, or, in a Contract with The Devil.

MIKE

That's crazy. I've got neither!

KATHY

That perhaps, is what you believe. But sooner or later you'll have to come down off the fence.

MIKE

Okay when I'm dead I don't care.

KATHY

Too late!... If you don't choose God, you trigger the 'default' position which is, the Devil. There are of course, those who consciously choose him. Even then, they don't realize what Hell really is. If you 'pass'... you'll go directly to Hell.

MIKE

I don't believe there's 'Hell'.

KATHY

Makes no difference. You accepted his gifts.

MIKE

It's yet to be established they were, his gifts.

KATHY

Are you saying, they might have been God's?

MIKE

Don't be ridiculous.

KATHY

So we're back to the Devil. And, he's legally entitled to redeem his entitlements under the Contract.

MIKE

Now listen. I know the identity of all those who opened the doors for me, and none, was The Devil.

KATHY

How do you know?

MIKE

This conversation's ridiculous!

KATHY

You have an opportunity to make another choice... make it!

MIKE

I'm okay with the choices I've made in my life.

KATHY

Okay. But today you have the opportunity to make the choice, not to go to Hell. But if you don't make it today, and tonight you 'pass', it'll be straight from your body to Hell.

MIKE

What, even without a burial?

KATHY

While your body waits to be buried or cremated you're already in Hell.

MIKE

Are you for real?

KATHY

Unfortunately, yes!

MIKE

(angry)
That's it!

He stands. Turns tape off. Grabs coat. Picks up table contents. Shoves them into his pockets.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Sorry about lunch.

Kathy nods.

Mike leaves.

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Mike and partner CHERYL (40) sit on lounge in front of open fireplace sipping red wine.

CHERYL
Don't let her get to you, Hon.

MIKE
In all my years as a Journo I've never had anyone rattle me like she has.

CHERYL
Put her to the back of your mind. In a couple of days she'll be yesterday's news.

He nods. Almost gulps his wine.

MIKE
Going to bed.

INT. MIKE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Snowflakes hinder moonbeams streaming through window but it's still bright. Cheryl and Mike asleep.

Mike is restless. He dreams, groans aloud as his body and bed-clothing become saturated with perspiration.

He's in Hell.

INT. HELL. HOT.

Mike stands in the midst of flames projecting higher than his six feet.

Hanging around him are what once could have been humans... suspended, unsupported. Tormented, distorted faces pleading, piercing screams of "HELP" as a black goo-like substance falls from them down into the abyss of the unknown.

Two eight-foot tall charcoal-colored alien-beings with tri-level stepped-up heads and oval eyes, hold him down with distorted, knuckled hands with long sharp pointy-nails capable of ripping apart human flesh with a single swipe.

There is no floor as flames jettison from beneath them. The concern of his captors appears to indicate he'd float up.

Only his eyes move.

MIKE (V.O.)
Oh my God... the heat!

Flames immediately gush up from the abyss engulfing him. Heat more extreme.

MIKE (V.O.)
My innings - melting.

Screams.

MIKE (V.O.)
Oh...

His zombied-body immovable.

MIKE (V.O.)
Must hold my body together...
Can't... can't lift my arms.

Suspended humans lashed by engulfing fingers of flame. There's no help, no hope.

MIKE (V.O.)
Please God...

For a man who doesn't believe, twice he's called on God.

Flames lash fiercely against his body, rocking him. He cringes and the goon's hands tighten.

MIKE (V.O.)
Oh... the pain... my innings. Okay.
Okay. I've got it. Can't say that
name.

Human screams intensify.

Black goo drips onto his back sizzles, burning into his flesh.

MIKE (V.O.)
Oh! What's that? Oh... Oh... can't
stand it. Oh...

Suddenly back in his bed.

MIKE (V.O.)
Oh my God! Oh my God!... Thank you,
God.

INT. HOTEL ROOM. MORNING.

Kathy dressing.

Phone rings.

KATHY
Hello?... Yes. Yes, of course.

Looks at watch.

KATHY (CONT'D)
Ten's fine... See you downstairs.

INT. HOTEL LOUNGE. MORNING.

Kathy sipping coffee.

Mike walks to her a more humbled man.

MIKE
Thanks for seeing me.

KATHY
Not at all. Please sit. Coffee?

MIKE
Thank you.

Waiter attends.

KATHY
Another coffee. Thank you.

Kathy notices Mike's changed demeanor.

KATHY (CONT'D)
(concerned)
Are you alright?

He gives a half nod.

MIKE
I was in Hell last night.

Kathy takes that to be just an expression.

KATHY
Yes. My night didn't go so well
either. Had some computer problems.

Mike looks at her incredulously.

MIKE
No. I WAS IN HELL!

KATHY
(alarmed)
What do you mean?

MIKE
I was in Hell with tormented humans
and aliens and oh My God the
flames... and the heat... the
heat... and... and...

He stops. Unable to go on.

Wipes his brow.

Perspiration is running down his face. His face pleading.
It's as if he's still in Hell.

MIKE (CONT'D)
So bad. Can hardly describe it.

KATHY
Oh. I understand now.

MIKE
No words can describe it.

Kathy nods.

KATHY
You're lucky.

Mike in saturated clothes looks at her in disbelief.

MIKE
What?... Lucky?

Waiter delivers coffee.

KATHY
Thank you.

Mike's water-saturated face turns to waiter.

MIKE
Can I have some water please

Composing himself slightly.

MIKE (CONT'D)
So why am I lucky?... I just had
the worst experience of my life?

KATHY
Yes. But you're alive!

MIKE
Barely.

KATHY

You've got the opportunity to change your destiny. Very few, experience this. Don't waste it.

Mike looks down and shakes his head

MIKE

I was actually calling for God! Somewhere deep down I must have believed.

KATHY

Yes. All children believe until they make the decision not to. And being presented with the opposite, you remembered you believed. You didn't meet The Devil.

MIKE

No.

Kathy nods.

KATHY

You negated your Contract when you called for God.

MIKE

Does everyone who talks to you finish up in Hell?

KATHY

I hope not. I'd like to think they can just open their hearts and accept Him. He doesn't want anyone to go to Hell. Even, for a visit.

Waiter brings water. Mike picks up glass and drinks.

MIKE

I can't even write this up.

KATHY

You will. And it will be a greater than what you were going to write.

MIKE

We'll see.

KATHY

Perhaps, who knows... maybe your article will help other souls to slip through the Devil's fingers.

INT. HOTEL. BALLROOM. NIGHT.

Awards Night.

Mike and Cheryl with Kathy, sit with other guests at a table.

Silence.

SPEAKER (50} at podium, opening envelope.

Air pensive in anticipation.

SPEAKER
... and the winner is...

Slides card slowly out... holds up...

SPEAKER (CONT'D)
Mike Forester for 'The Devil's
waiting for you!', Profiler
Magazine.

Applause.

FADE OUT.