

**NICK TICKLE,
FAIRY TALE DETECTIVE,
IN:
SAVED IN THE (NICK) TICKLE
OF TIME!**

By
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Cast of Characters

Nick Tickle
Mrs. Toffeynose, a member of the audience
King Mousepants
Princess Porcupine
Goldilocks

Nick's office in the woods
The garden of King Mousepants' castle

NICK TICKLE, FAIRY TALE DETECTIVE, IN: SAVED IN THE NICK (TICKLE) OF TIME!

Nick's office in the woods. There is a desk and chair or maybe just a tree stump. On the desk is a phone.

In the dark, a phone rings. It rings and rings.

Lights up on Nick's office. It is his phone that is ringing.

Finally, a woman in the audience, MRS. TOFFEYNOSE, gets up from her seat, enters into the playing area and answers it.

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

Hello? No, this is not Nick Tickle, Fairy Tale Detective. Do I sound like Nick Tickle, Fairy Tale Detective? (Listens) No, I don't know where he is. (Listens) Because I don't work for him! I simply came up here to answer the phone because it would not stop ringing. (Listens) Don't growl at me, I don't know when he's coming back. (Listens) Oh, very well. (SHE picks up a pen and writes down a message on the pad) Home invasion today at noon, stolen porridge, broken chair, rumped bed, blond hair on pillow. Yes, I'm sure it's a very important case, Mr. Bear. I'll tell him as soon as he returns. Thank you for calling.

SHE hangs up.

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

Fine. So now I suppose I have to wait here until this Nick Tickle person shows up. He really should get himself a secretary. Of course, having your office in the middle of the woods does present certain challenges. Maybe he could talk a bunny rabbit into answering the phone. Squirrels have those clever little paws. I bet they could type very well. And it would be very cost effective - they'd work for peanuts! (SHE laughs at her own little joke)

The phone rings again.

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

Kitty whiskers! There it goes again! (SHE answers) Hello, Nick Tickle's office.

Lights up opposite. There is a throne, a stool and a low balustrade to indicate a castle. On top of the balustrade at one end is a vase of flowers.

NICK sitting on the stool with a ball and chain around one ankle. HE is talking on a cell phone.

NICK

No it's not.

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

It most certainly is.

NICK

It can't be because I'm Nick Tickle and I'm not there!

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

Are you sure you're Nick Tickle?

NICK

(Dropping his pants and checking his underwear) I better be, I'm wearing his underwear.

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

Aha! If you are Nick Tickle, why are you calling yourself at your office when you know you're not here?

NICK

I was hoping I'd be back by now. Who are you?

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

I am Mrs. Toffeynose, Nick's secretary.

NICK

Aha! I don't have a secretary!

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

Well, you must because I'm here taking phone messages. Mr. Bear wants you to find out who broke into his house earlier today. He was very insistent.

NICK

Never mind that now. I'm a Tickle in a pickle...(HE pulls at the ball and chain attached to his ankle)...and I need you to help me out.

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

(Looking longingly out at her seat in the audience) Well, I was really just hoping to watch the show...

NICK

I never thought you'd cash out on me when the chips were down, doll-face.

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

But I'm not even really...

NICK

Pleeeeeeeeeeease?

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

(With a sigh) All right. What's the matter?

NICK

King Mousepants is trying to find a prince worthy enough to marry his daughter Princess Porcupine. Whoever answers his riddle wins an apple made of gold and the Princess's hand in marriage. I was guarding the Golden Apple and would you believe it, someone stole it!

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

Hard cheese! How's the King taking it?

NICK

Not well.

NICK holds out the phone.

KING MOUSEPANTS

(Off) Ti-ckle! I said no phone calls! You're being punished! Who are you talking to?

NICK

(Calling) Someone who cares enough to tell me I need more life insurance! (To MRS. TOFFEYNOSE) I'm in chains until the apple is returned and that means I can't track down the thief and restore my good name.

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

That is a puzzler. But what can I do?

NICK

I have a plan and I need your help! Listen carefully...

NICK and MRS. TOFFEYNOSE continue their conversation silently.

Enter KING MOUSEPANTS and PRINCESS PORCUPINE. THEY stand behind the balustrade and wave at the audience.

KING MOUSEPANTS

Royal princes and lowly scum! I, King Mousepants, must unhappily announce that the riddle contest to win the Golden Apple and the hand of my lovely daughter Princess Porcupine has been indefinitely suspended.

PRINCESS

(Waving her fist) Hurray! Whoo! Whoo! Whoo! (Sees KING giving her a look) I mean, boo, boo!

NICK hangs up. MRS. TOFFEYNOSE hangs up and exits.

KING MOUSEPANTS

I know, I know, it is such a disappointment but it cannot be helped. The apple has been stolen! (A black look at NICK) Until it is returned, everything is on hold. But there is some good news. Whoever finds the apple will receive a handsome reward. So, let's all get looking, shall we?

KING and PRINCESS wave again, ending the announcement.

PRINCESS

But Daddy, I don't want to get married, especially to someone I don't even know. I like being on my own.

KING MOUSEPANTS

Nonsense! It's unheard of - an unmarried princess? I won't have it!

PRINCESS

Who died and made you king?!

KING MOUSEPANTS

My father!

PRINCESS

Darn! You're the only person that doesn't work with. I won't get married and you can't make me!

KING MOUSEPANTS

I most certainly can and I most certainly will, just as soon as that cursed apple turns up.

PRINCESS

(Suddenly sweet) But I don't have to get married until the apple's found, right?

KING MOUSEPANTS

(Unhappily) Right. But when it is, it's wedding bells for you, kiddo.

PRINCESS

(Angry, deliberately smashing the vase) Fine!

KING MOUSEPANTS

(Angry) Fine! And clean up that mess so it looks nice again. This is a castle not a pigsty!

PRINCESS

(Angry) Fine! Oink, oink, oink!

PRINCESS cleans up flowers and vase and exits.

KING crosses to NICK.

KING MOUSEPANTS

(Checking the chain) Maybe this will teach you to take your job a little more seriously.

NICK

Your Majesty! If you'll just set me free, I'll find your apple, I promise!

KING MOUSEPANTS

If I couldn't trust you to guard it, why should I trust you to find it?

NICK

You've got to give me a second chance!

KING MOUSEPANTS

You're such a great detective, solve the case where you are.

KING exits.

Enter PRINCESS with a bowl of fruit including a large yellow apple.

NICK

I'm not going to be stuck here much longer. I'll get that apple back before he can say "Peter Piper picked a puckered pack of puckered poopers." Wait, that's not right. "Peter Pepper pickled pipes of pooped-out pimples." Darn. (Continues muttering)

PRINCESS

(To herself as SHE takes out the yellow apple and polishes it) Oh, I don't think we're going to be seeing that apple again anytime soon. Not if I have anything to say about it!

PRINCESS replaces apple and exits.

Enter MRS. TOFFEYNOSE. SHE carries a dress and a wig.

NICK

(Saying it correctly, finally) "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers!" Ah ha! Wait, what was I talking about?

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

Mr. Tickle?

NICK

Mrs. Toffeynose? Thank goodness you've come! We haven't a moment to lose! Did you bring what I asked for?

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

Yes but may I remind you that Mr. Bear called again? He's getting very aggravated...and I don't think you want a bear mad at you.

NICK

Hold that thought. (To audience) Hello there. I'm Nick Tickle, Fairy Tale Detective. You got a problem here in the land of "Once upon a time," you come to me. Normally, I work alone and I like it that way. But things are different this time. As you can see, I'm in a bit of a jam. It's a good thing I have my loyal secretary here to help me out but I'm going to need even more help than that. Would you like to be my partners in this tough case? Great. Raise your right hand, your other right hand, and repeat after me - "I...your name...very funny...do solemnly swear...to help Nick Tickle...as his friend and partner." Good, now blow a raspberry to make it official. (HE blows a raspberry) Excellent! First, I'm going to need a volunteer to come here and help me. Who's up for some danger?

NICK chooses a VOLUNTEER from the audience and MRS. TOFFEYNOSE helps them up onto the stage.

NICK

What's your name? Okay, (name), you're going to take my place. Toffeynose, do your stuff.

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE takes the bobby pin from her hair and uses it to pick the lock on the chain and frees NICK's leg.

NICK

(As HE is freed) You're a handy gal with a bobby pin, Toffee. (HE stands and stretches) Ahh! Now, (Name), you're going to sit right here and pretend to be me.

NICK takes off his hat and coat and puts them on the VOLUNTEER, HE seats the VOLUNTEER on the stool and puts the chain around his/her ankle.

NICK

Now pull the hat down over your eyes and if anybody comes along, just pretend to be sleeping and snore real loud. Can you do that? (HE has the VOLUNTEER snore) Excellent!

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

That's all very well but won't people notice you walking around free?

NICK

(Taking the dress and wig and putting them on, rolling up his pants legs) Not in this disguise they won't. Now I can get to work solving this case.

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

Don't you mean these *two* cases? Mr. Bear...

NICK

All right, all right. What's Mr. Bear's problem again?

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

Somebody broke into his house, ate his porridge, smashed his chair and slept in his bed. His wife and cub are very upset. The only clue was a blond hair found on the pillow.

NICK

Blond hair, eh? (To audience) Partners, do you know who might be responsible? (HE waits for answer) Goldilocks? Hmm, could be. I've dealt with her before and she's trouble, all right. This does sound like something she might do. When did this happen?

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE

Noon today.

NICK

All right. I think I have an idea. Toffee, go and get Little Miss Tough Guy Goldilocks and bring her back ASAP, would you, please? Thanks.

MRS. TOFFEYNOSE exits.

NICK

(To audience) Now as to this apple caper, I know everyone would like to have an apple made of gold but does anyone have a special, important reason for not wanting the contest to go on as planned?

HE waits for someone to suggest the PRINCESS.

NICK

Princess Porcupine? You may be on to something there. She really doesn't want to get married. But don't you think someone would've noticed her walking around with a golden apple? Where could she hide it so no one would find it?