

C. GREEK

By DJ Sanders

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ISBN: 1-931805-33-4

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CAST: TEACHER and STUDENT

TIME: Any time.

PLACE: A small classroom with two chairs.

(Small classroom with two chairs. The TEACHER is standing in the classroom checking the time. The STUDENT runs into the classroom, panting.)

STUDENT: Is this room 213?

TEACHER: Yes.

STUDENT: Good. Sorry, I'm late, I couldn't find the room and I went in the wrong building at first and then when I did finally find the right building I went up the wrong staircase which apparently only goes to the third floor so I had to find another staircase that came back down and— Sorry. This is the Greek class, right?

TEACHER: You're in the right place.

STUDENT: Great. It looks like I'm the first one here. You are the teacher, right?

TEACHER: Yes.

STUDENT: Okay, good. Because I guess you could be a student too, ya know. I shouldn't make any assumptions or anything. Because you do look young. I mean not too young to be a teacher because obviously you are the teacher, so... I think that I'll just take a seat now. **(STUDENT sits in one of the chairs and makes self comfortable looking around. The TEACHER stands and waits)** Perhaps the other students got lost too. It's not an easy room to find. You'd think that people would think of these things when they build a building. **(Pause)** Have you been teaching this class a long time?

TEACHER: For several semesters now.

STUDENT: Cool. So you must pretty experienced, and very fluent.

TEACHER: Yes. Quite.

STUDENT: Great. I've always heard that having a good teacher helps a lot when learning a new language.

TEACHER: It does.

(Pause)

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STUDENT: So, how many students signed up this semester?

TEACHER: A total of two.

STUDENT: Only two? Does that mean the class will be canceled?

TEACHER: Oh, no. Why would we cancel the class?

STUDENT: I thought you had to have a certain number of students.

TEACHER: No, we have no such minimum for the class. We will hold the class regardless of how many students are signed up.

STUDENT: Unless there's none, I suppose. You couldn't really have a class with none. But don't worry. I don't plan on dropping. I'm required to study a foreign language to finish my degree, and I thought long and hard in choosing which one to study. And I'm very motivated. I mean, I did get an F on my Spanish One final, but that was a long time ago. I'm much more studious now. **(checks watch)**

Hmmm, this class could turn out even smaller than anticipated, eh?

TEACHER: Not to worry. Small numbers work better in the language classroom. It allows students more opportunity to speak and practice. And it allows me as the instructor to give you more personalized attention and feedback to help you achieve your linguistic goals.

STUDENT: That sounds good. But what happens if the other student doesn't show up?

TEACHER: What other student?

STUDENT: You said that two students signed up for the course.

TEACHER: Yes. But one has already dropped it.

STUDENT: Oh. Then why didn't you say that?

TEACHER: You only asked me how many people signed up for the class, not how many dropped it.

STUDENT: I see.

TEACHER: **(checks watch)** So shall we get started?

STUDENT: With only one student?

TEACHER: Yes. Why not?

STUDENT: It just seems very small. Or do you do it more like an independent study or tutoring when it's one-on-one?

TEACHER: The class will proceed as planned. In a tutoring session, the student typically chooses the topics to be covered and there is no syllabus. In an independent study the teacher and student plan a course of study and set forth objectives that are mutually agreed upon. In this instance of a language classroom, I already have a syllabus fully planned out that goes through all the necessary pedagogical steps needed for an adult learner to acquire a new foreign language. From my experience, by following this guideline of methodologies and approaches you will receive more optimal results than could be offered by tutoring or an independent study.

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STUDENT: Okay. Sounds good to me.

TEACHER: So shall we begin?

STUDENT: Sure.

TEACHER: Good. Now before I begin any course, I always feel it important to begin with a pedagogical explanation of my methods and approaches to language teaching, many of which are based in the foundations of communicative language teaching and strict language immersion in the classroom. For that reason, when we begin the language training section of the course—which will begin momentarily—all lessons will be conducted in the target language. That means that I will only speak to you in the target language and I will expect you to respond in the target language. We want to try to avoid using English at all costs in order to get your mind functioning in the target language.

STUDENT: What if I don't understand something?

TEACHER: At the beginning it is very possible that there will be many things that you do not understand, but little by little you will find that through meaningful context you actually understand a lot more than you originally thought you were able to understand. At first we will not bother focusing on accuracy, but rather fluency. I just want to get you listening, comprehending, and communicating. Communication is the key. The whole essence of language is... **(TEACHER motions to STUDENT who sits still confused)** The whole essence of language is...

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