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Newsletter

What I Learned In Vegas

By Gavin Johannsen



Jurnee Smollett, Jim Belushi, Tanya Fischer, and Jerry O'Connell, star in *THE DEFENDERS*, a new CBS drama about two colorful Las Vegas defense attorneys (Belushi and O'Connell) who go all-in when it comes to representing their clients.

Prosecutors are boy scouts. They eat their vegetables, say their prayers, and take their vitamins; superheroes in their own minds. Not able to leap tall buildings in a single bound, but able to crush the hopes, dreams, and lives of the accused sitting across the courtroom. They are the State's sharp end of the stick.

Luckily for me, *The Defenders* are the other guys.

Nick Morelli (Jim Belushi) and Pete Kaczmarek (Jerry O'Connell) are the kind

of guys you want on your side. That may sound like the tagline on a business card, but it's true. Think about it, if you were put in a situation where the twelve people who didn't have anything better to do than jury duty held your fate in their hands, you'd want the lawyer who always had something up his sleeve defending you. Not the guy with a six-dollar hair cut. Not the guy whose idea of dry-cleaning is hanging his suit in the bathroom with the shower on. And definitely not the guy who relies on

John Grisham paperbacks in lieu of *Black's Law Dictionary*.

While prosecutors are strictly looking for law and order, *The Defenders* are the ones looking out for the little guy. Their methods aren't conventional, but in the criminal justice system conventional gets you a crappy plea deal and a cellmate named Bubba. Sometimes the difference between guilty and not guilty is as simple as the representation sitting next to you. Most people believe trials are won and lost on the facts alone – this unfortunately isn't true.

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Newsletter Staff

Contributing Editor Marsha Gorodkin
Design Elizabeth Gulick

PRODUCTION SCHEDULE

CSI:NY

(CBS PRODUCTIONS/CBS)

ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT

(CBS TV DISTRIBUTION/CBS)

THE INSIDER

(CBS TV DISTRIBUTION/CBS)

THE DEFENDERS

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THE PAUL REISER SHOW

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D E C E M B E R

- 1 Hanukkah begins at sundown
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- 25 Christmas Day
- 26 Kwanzaa begins Boxing Day

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trivia question

What other long-running show filmed at CBS Studio Center starred Jim Belushi?

ANSWER on page 4

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What I Learned In Vegas

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1



"LAS VEGAS V. JOHNSON" — Nick Morelli (Jim Belushi, left) begrudgingly accepts Pete Kaczmarek (Jerry O'Connell, right) request to represent the finicky mistress, Black Betty (Lana Parrilla, center) on *THE DEFENDERS*, which airs Wednesdays (10:00-11:00 PM, ET/PT) on the CBS Television Network.

Trials are won and lost by the lawyers.

I understand the feeling of skepticism when hiring Morelli and Kaczmarek, mainly because of their panache and bravado; however these men aren't the soulless district attorneys who believe they are the law. These are the kind of lawyers who care. Whether they're fighting to prove a mother's innocence in a vehicular manslaughter case or clearing the tarnished name of a United States Senator, Morelli and Kaczmarek will go toe-to-toe against incredible odds if it means helping those who can't help themselves.

Ironically, by putting clients' problems before their own, Morelli and Kaczmarek developed their own problems away from the office. No matter how hard he tries, Nick can't seem to repair his broken family and struggles with the idea that his marriage

may be over forever. Pete, on the other hand, has let work directly affect his personal life after a verdict caused the split of his budding relationship with ADA Meredith Kramer (Natalie Zea). Facing these problems in their every day lives has caused Morelli and Kaczmarek to be that much more tenacious when going to battle for you.

Upon entering the quaint offices of Morelli and Kaczmarek, I was met with nothing but kindness and generosity from their friendly (and quirky) receptionist Zoey Waters (Tanya Fischer). Zoey's warm smile and pleasant conversation instantly calmed my nerves while I waited for my appointment. When that time came she introduced me to Nick, Pete and the lovely and brilliant Lisa Tyler (Jurnee Smollett).

The instant I shook Lisa's hand I had the strangest feeling of déjà vu (weeks later Pete told me she used to be an exotic dancer to pay her way through law school. Needless to say I then knew how I recognized her). Lisa acted as co-counsel on my case with the utmost professionalism. She gave Nick and Pete more research and information than Rambo has bullets. It was easy to see that Zoey and Lisa are very important parts in the machine that is the law firm of Morelli and Kaczmarek.

In the two years I lived in Nevada, I learned one very important thing: everyone has a story about Las Vegas. I know I do. However, the only reason I'm around to tell my story is that all the dumb decisions I made in Vegas ultimately lead to the smartest decision of my life: hiring *The Defenders*.

CBS Diversity Employee Network Group

By Tiffany N. Smith-Anoa'i

Recently, the West Coast CBS Diversity Employee Network Group had their kick-off meet & greet on the CBS Radford lot in Carla's Café and featured guest speakers, Jean Barrett, Colleen Bates and Linda Burum, all authors of *EAT LA*, a guidebook that features the favorite LA food finds by savvy food journalists. The focus of the West Coast CBS Diversity Employee Network Group is to create opportunities for employees of all backgrounds to come together for mixers, speaker series and community outreach events. "With a speaker's series and community outreach effort already underway in New York, it was a natural expansion to the employees on the West Coast," said Josie Thomas, CBS Senior Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer.



Tiffany N. Smith-Anoa'i, CBS VP Diversity & Communications, Jean Barrett, Colleen Bates and Linda Burum (*Eat LA* authors) at The CBS Diversity Employee Network Group kick-off mixer.

These events are part of the group's larger, ongoing professional development programs. The Group (also known as RAD - Respect, Appreciation and Development) is open to all employees regardless of gender, race, color, religion, national origin,

physical or mental disability, marital status or sexual orientation. To join or for more information, please visit www.cbsandyou.com, click on the "Your Workplace" tab and then the "Diversity" link in the left margin for the Diversity Employee Network Group.



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Use your reusable bags for all of your shopping not just groceries. It really helps the landfills.

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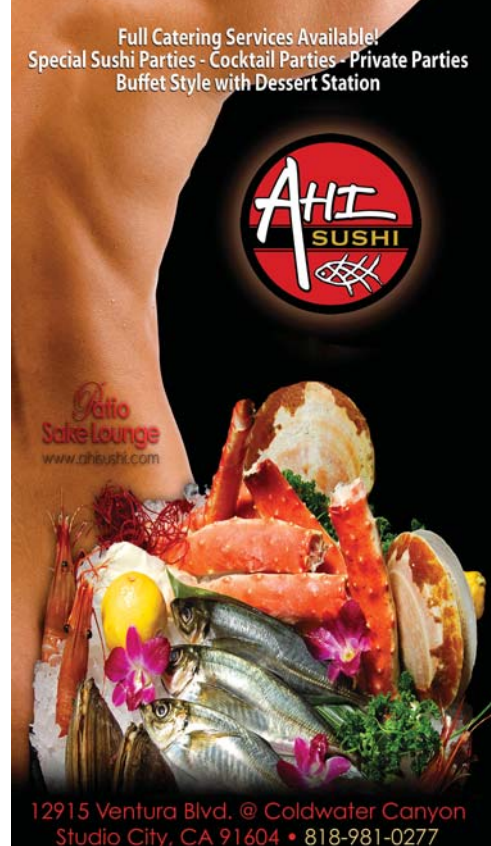
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