

# IN MY DREAMS

## CONVERSATION WITH KATHARINE MCPHEE AND MIKE VOGEL

Katharine McPhee (*American Idol*, *Smash*) and Mike Vogel (*Bates Motel*, *Under the Dome*) star as the perfect romantic couple in *In My Dreams*, the new Hallmark Hall of Fame special premiering on ABC Sunday, April 20. There's just a couple of problems. First, they've never actually met – except in their dreams. Second, they have one week – and not a minute longer – to turn their sweet dreams into romantic reality.

Katharine McPhee and Mike Vogel were interviewed on the movie's set, in Canada.

QUESTION: Could you each tell us something about the character you play in *In My Dreams*...

KATHARINE MCPHEE: Natalie has just taken over running her family's Italian restaurant, after the death of her mother.

It's a major challenge. The place hasn't changed in decades. The décor's the same, the menu's the same, and the music's the same. Problem is, customers today don't want dark – which the restaurant is. They don't want heavy, heavy food – they want to be offered something lighter, more interesting. They don't want to hear opera playing at full volume!

Natalie's so focused on dealing with the heartache of losing her mother, and on turning the restaurant into a winning business proposition, that's she's just kind of given up in the romance department. The last thing on her mind is trying to find Mr. Right.

Lo and behold he *does* show up, but only in her dreams.

MIKE VOGEL: Nick is a very talented bridge designer who's just gone through a really tough breakup. He's trying to focus on his career at this stage in his life, much to the chagrin of his mother, played in our movie by the amazing JoBeth Williams. She's very involved in Nick's life, she's forever trying to set him up with 'Ms. Right.'



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Nick's Mom's a meddler, but she's not mean-spirited. Actually, she and Nick have a great relationship, and that relationship is one of the things I really liked when I first read the script.

Q: Natalie and Nick never go out on an actual date or anything. How do they meet?

MV: Well, there's an old wives' tale involving the Hayward Fountain in our mythical town. If you make a wish, then toss a coin in the fountain, you'll meet the man or woman of your dreams, and you'll have the most *fantastic* dreams for seven nights. But if the dream couple haven't actually met in the real world before that time limit expires -- well, it's all over. *Finito*, as Natalie would say.

So it's really a race against time.

KM: Meanwhile, Natalie has hired this new good-looking chef, Mario. He's right off the boat from Italy, and when you look at the two of them together, working in the restaurant, you assume that they're the match made in Heaven. And yes, there are some romantic sparks flying between them, but when Natalie goes home, goes to bed and starts dreaming, she meets this guy who absolutely knocks her socks off. I'm talking, of course, about Nick, played by Mike.

MV: One of the really interesting things about this movie is that Katharine and I actually hardly work together at all -- only in the dream sequences, which are fairly brief. Most of the time we see Natalie in her restaurant and Nick in his office, where he's having to deal with the boss from hell. He also has to deal with his mother, who's absolutely *determined* to get him married, the sooner the better!

Q: Is Charlotte the Mom from Hell -- or not?

MV: Absolutely not! Her heart's in the right place. She means well, she really does. *She just can't help herself!* She loves her son. She wants what's best for him. And she sincerely believes that what's best for him now is to meet the right woman and to get married, and probably to start having kids, although she never goes so far as to say that last part in our movie.

Q: It's really cold here in Canada where you're filming, and some of your scenes are outside. How do you deal with the cold?

MV: I actually don't have a lot of outdoor scenes, but Katherine does. I'm not sure how she's managing... especially when it's 15 or 20 degrees and she's wearing a short skirt!

KM: I'll tell you how I'm managing! It's all about layers of clothes ... and propane heaters. I've got so many layers on during some of these scenes that I feel like a marshmallow! I'm hoping when people watch the movie they'll look at me and think, 'Oh well, she runs an Italian restaurant, so of course she put on a few pounds to be believable in the role!'

And the minute the camera stops rolling I make a beeline for one of the propane heaters! I am so looking forward to moving into the restaurant next week to shoot all those scenes – because I'm assuming it's going to be warm in there!

MV: Let me tell you, it's quite a challenge as an actor to make a scene work like the one we just shot where you and your co-star are trying to look like you're madly in love – and it's so cold your teeth are chattering!

Q: Speaking of the restaurant, Katharine, are you a real-life fan of Italian cooking and food – or not?

KM: I love Italian food. And Spanish food. And Greek food. I'm a real Mediterranean girl! So interesting, so varied, so healthy. But I'd have to put Italian at the top of my list. Let's hear it for pasta and pizza!

Q: You mentioned getting rid of the Italian operas playing in the restaurant. Does that mean your character, Natalie, will maybe break out into song now and again?

KM: Absolutely not! Customers come to my restaurant to eat great food ... not to listen to a lounge act!

Also, when the restaurant's firing on all cylinders and is packed with customers, Natalie's working her you-know-what off, welcoming guests, seating guests, schmoozing guests, taking orders, schlepping food from kitchen to table! No way could she stop everything and break into a song or two!

MV: That said, when the cameras aren't rolling on this set, there's a lot of singing happening. I'm a shower singer myself, and I love nothing more than teaming up with a real pro like Katharine. We've pretty well worked our way through just about every Broadway song there is.

But I don't kid myself. *She's* the headline act ... I'm just the chorus!

Q: Is *In My Dreams* a romance ... or a comedy?

MV: Both, I think. I'd describe it as a romance with hints of comedy. Charlotte, my mother, provides a lot of comedic moments. But at its heart it's a romance.

KM: I agree with Mike. This is a romance, first and foremost. I firmly believe that Mr. Right or Ms. Right is out there for all of us. And who's to say that throwing a coin in a fountain won't lead you to the pot of gold at the end of the romance rainbow. I mean, if that can work for Nick and Natalie, why can't it work for all of us?

The trick is to find the right fountain!

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