

## Daria, Gillette, Felix, Madge

GILLETTE. *(cont.)* The greatest game, the biggest adventure. Shakespeare got it right on the nose. Henry the Fifth changing into battle against overwhelming odds and what does he cry? "It's all a game and if I die, I die!" So let them praise me, hate me or shoot at me – but at the end of the battle, I will have ~~them~~, even for a moment. And if you think you need Simon in order to live like that, then take him by all means! Cling to him! Don't hesitate for a second!... I will, however, miss you unutterably.

*(Beat. AGGIE is speechless. Her heart starts racing and she realizes how much she loves him. She leans in to kiss him – when sounds from the terrace interrupt the moment.)*

FELIX. *(off)* Gillette! Guess who's here?! It's our old friend Daria Chasel!

*(DARIA CHASE enters, followed by the others. DARIA is gorgeous, glamorous, and dressed to the nines with holiday chic. She's one of those people you can't take your eyes off of; and despite all of her show-biz cattiness, you can't help liking her – or at least admiring her. She has a start sense of humor and has invented herself from the ground up, which is no mean feat.)*

DARIA. *(She poses.)* Merry Christmas! Oh William! My dear, sweet, vulnerable man! How is your arm? Your heart? Your soul? Ah! After that ghastly shooting I thought I'd never see you again! That or I'd find you limping like a broken lion to the final watering hole.

GILLETTE. And here I am as right as rain and twice as healthy, Daria, you look magnificent.

DARIA. Oh, please. I simply grabbed whatever was hanging in my sad, little closet as I bounded out of New York City for the countryside on *Christmas Eve* and oh my God just smell the air out here! I haven't smelled air like this since I was a little girl growing up in Kansas or wherever it was with all those divine little cows and things. How lucky you are to have all this...nature to comfort you.

FELIX. Just like that famous painting on the grass, but with our clothes on.

DARIA. Oh, Felix, my dear, how *are* you?

FELIX. Not as well as you, obviously.

DARIA. Oh stop it. My beauty is superficial and yours is on the inside. And Madge. My God we go back a ways, don't we? I remember when I first came to New York as a youngster – how I looked up to you with all your years of experience.

MADGE. And yet my friends and I called you "Mother."

DARIA. Now stop it, that's impossible. You didn't have any friends.

MADGE. I had Felix.

DARIA. And didn't everyone.

GILLETTE. Daria, let me introduce the rest of the clan. This is my mother, Martha Gillette.

MARTHA. We've met before. Very briefly, at a party. But I do read your column. In fact, I keep it right next to my bed in case I can't get to sleep at night.

GILLETTE. Mother!

DARIA. What a witty thing to say. And so unexpected.

SIMON. Hello, Daria. It's nice to see you.

DARIA. Simon, my dear, you're looking very well.

SIMON. As do you!

GILLETTE. I didn't know that you two –

DARIA. Of course we do. We met at Killington, at the big weekend. I was there for the skiing and those divine parties.

*(to AGGIE.)* Then after I left, your husband had that ghastly accident, didn't he. I was so upset. If I had stayed I would have had one of the biggest scoops of the whole year! And poor you, it must have been quite upsetting.

MADGE. I'll bet you don't know they're married now.

AGGIE. For four weeks.