

③ JOANNA, CHRISTINA

Guess Who's Coming To Dinner

17

JOHN

shy. That's when I went straight up and kissed him. Kissed him right there in the hospital lounge. People must've started but I didn't notice. That was ten days ago. Only ten days ago but in that ten days is everything. He's supposed to be in New York now but changed his plans and we haven't been apart since.

CHRISTINA. The whole world has changed in ten days.

JOANNA. Add ten days plus all the lunches plus everything we both were until we met and that's how we fell in love.

CHRISTINA. Where's he from? Was he in the same intern program as you?

JOANNA. There's something I should tell you . . . You should know straight upfront. *(Beat)* He's older than me. Not much. Eleven years older to be exact. And John's a . . . doctor. A very important doctor—Where's Daddy? John was married before and he had a son and—it was so tragic—both his wife and his son were killed in a train accident in Belgium, eight years ago. But John— I haven't even told you his name yet . . .

(JOHN enters and stops in the entryway in full view of CHRISTINA, behind JOANNA.)

It's John Wade Prentice. Do you like his name? Prentice . . . *(Beat.)* There's something else. John's really the one concerned. He's worried what you and Dad will think . . . whether you'll be upset—

(From behind, JOHN puts his hand on her shoulder.)

Now you see. Mom, this is John, and—

CHRISTINA. Dr. Prentice . . . I'm so pleased to meet you—

JOHN. *(Taking CHRISTINA's hand:)* I'm pleased to meet you, Mrs. Drayton. I take it from the look on your face that Joanna's busted out with the big news—

CHRISTINA. Well, she—she has told me a great deal, Doctor—

JOHN. Mrs. Drayton, I'm medically qualified, so I hope you won't think it presumptuous if I say you ought to sit down. Before you fall down, I mean.

JOANNA. He thinks you're going to faint.

CHRISTINA. I don't think I'll faint but I'll sit down. *(Sitting:)* Can we all sit down?

(They sit. Beat.)

CHRISTINA. I suppose it would be all right to say "my goodness," wouldn't it? Well . . . My goodness . . .

JOANNA. Do we mind her saying "my goodness"?

JOHN. My goodness.

JOANNA. What did your parents say?

JOHN. We didn't talk long. I'll write them on the plane.

JOANNA. You didn't tell them?

JOHN. Of course I did.

JOANNA. What did they say? What did they ask about me?

JOHN. They could tell we were serious.

JOANNA. You told them everything?

JOHN. You understand it came as quite a shock.

JOANNA. Were they upset?

JOHN. My mother has wanted me to meet someone for years. But she didn't think it would happen for me again. Neither did I.

JOANNA. I truly am feeling guilty now that you gave up your visit. (To CHRISTINA:) John's parents live in Sacramento and he was supposed to stop over to see them on his way to New York. That was his plan ten days ago.

~~(HILARY enters from the office.)~~

HILARY. Excuse me . . . I hate to interrupt but . . . Christina . . . I wanted you to know—

CHRISTINA. (Standing up) Mr. Cazales will be here any minute.

HILARY. Don't worry . . .

CHRISTINA. We have to get—

HILARY. I called and cancelled.

JOANNA. You didn't need to do that.

HILARY. (To CHRISTINA:) I told Mr. Cazales that your daughter had returned home unexpectedly. That there was a family situation. I'll call his secretary later and talk us back onto his calendar sometime next week.

CHRISTINA. Yes . . . Thank you, Hilary . . .

HILARY. I'll get these paintings back to the gallery. Unless you want to keep them here?

CHRISTINA. No . . . We'll . . .