

Masha + Spike + Nina + Cassandra

~~SONIA~~ Masha, I'm sure the power of your money and your connections will keep Spike at your side for a long time.

MASHA Oh. That's a comforting point. Thank you. I shouldn't be intimidated by a young girl, should I? Plus I don't actually know how pretty she is, maybe she's hideous.

Enter Spike and NINA. Nina is in her early 20s, and is very pretty and luminous.

SPIKE Look who I met at the pond.

MASHA Oh did you meet someone?

SPIKE Yes. She's visiting her aunt and uncle who live next door. And you're her favorite actress, and she came over here hoping to meet you.

MASHA Oh how charming. Welcome, lovely little nymph.

NINA Hello. Oh, it's so thrilling to meet you. My aunt and uncle said to me you mustn't go bother them, and plus she's never ever there, but then we had our binoculars out and we saw your car drive up, and I thought, I can't believe she's here! I can meet Masha Hardwicke. A woman who has achieved fame and success in theater and in motion pictures. I LONG to make theater my life, and you're an idol to me. And I'm only here for three days, and I hoped I could meet you, but then I didn't dare think it would actually happen. But it has.

MASHA *(sort of friendly)* Yes, you're meeting me. Hello. Hello.

NINA And today is my name day, can you imagine? Americans like to say "birthday," but I like to say "name day" because I love the plays of Anton Chekhov and Irina in *Three Sisters* is always saying "it's my name day."

MASHA Ah, well. It's lovely to meet you. You're so very pretty and luminous, and full of youthful hope and enthusiasm. I wonder if it makes it hard for older people to be around you.

NINA I'm sorry, what?

MASHA Nothing. My unconscious was speaking, pay no mind. Happy name day. What is your name by the way?

NINA I'm Nina.

MASHA (*furious*) GOD DAMN IT!

VANYA What's the matter?

MASHA That crazy psychic in the kitchen told me to "Beware of Nina" and now her fucking name is Nina!!!

NINA What? I'm sorry, what?

SONIA Hello, Nina, I have a feeling no one is going to introduce me, I'm kind of like furniture in the room rather than a person. But I'm Sonia, Masha's sister. Although I'm adopted and don't really belong here. Or anywhere. And this is my brother Vanya.

VANYA Hello, Nina. Happy name day.

NINA How lovely to meet you. And what a funny joke about the furniture.

Everyone looks confused.

SPIKE I told Nina I'd introduce her to my manager. And I invited her to the costume party.

MASHA (*taking that in*) You invited her. How nice. I have an idea! Spike, why don't we skip the party and hop in the car and race back to New York City right this minute. I suddenly want to see a Broadway show. How late is the half-price ticket booth open, does anyone know?

SPIKE No, I wanna go to the party. And Nina is so excited to meet you. She just worships you. (*a bit flirtatiously*) As do I.

MASHA (*taking in what he said, a bit mollified*) Well, that's sweet of you to say, Spike. I . . . uh . . . am flattered Nina looks up to me. Hello, Nina. Happy name day.

NINA Thank you.

Enter Cassandra.

CASSANDRA Lunch will be a little delayed. I dropped the omelettes on the floor. I'm going to have to start over. (*sees Nina, points at her*) What did I say? BEWARE OF NINA!

MASHA Cassandra, Nina is visiting from next door, and she's a lovely aspiring actress.

CASSANDRA Well, I warned you, but the curse of Apollo keeps everyone from acting on my warnings. (*feels drawn to make a bit of a speech*)

Oh mystery and misery, descends upon me like a thundercloud,
Pregnant with rain and Jupiter's arrows.

The terrible burden of true prophecy, of my unwanted but
unstoppable prelude.

Look out, look out—all around us are lions and tigers and bears.
Oh my, the omelette is a failure, I crush it beneath my foot.

The libation bearers bring guts and entrails
And parents' children chopped up and served in a shepherd's pie.
Something tastes wrong with it—little wonder!
Next time you won't go killing Agamemnon, will you?
He's already dead. My car needs to be inspected,
How can I keep all these facts in my head when I see calamity and
colossus

Lumbering up the walkway?
Oh wretches, oh misery, oh magical mystery tour.
Beware the future. I know you will not abide me,
You ignore because I am not tall.
But I am right! I see disaster ahead for all of you!
Lunch in about 20 minutes!

She strides out.

~~**NINA** Oh she's a wonderful actress too. What was that from, what she just recited?~~