



# AUDITION PACKET

## The Games Afoot

By Ken Ludwig  
Directed by Greg Anderson

**INFORMATION:**  
218-878-0071 theater  
countyseatgm@aol.com

### AUDITIONS: Sunday, August 26 at 6:00 pm

*\*\*Please note casting may take 1-2 weeks. Those not cast - may or may not receive an individual phone call.  
Feel free to contact the theater for cast list or further questions.*

**WHAT DO I NEED FOR AUDITIONS?:** Auditions will consist of a cold read from the script. Some audition pages are attached, and full scripts can be loaned from the theater. Bring your completed audition form and a calendar reflecting any conflicts with you.

### REHEARSAL & PERFORMANCE INFORMATION:

Rehearsals will begin October 8 (Rehearsals will run approx. 4-5 days per week)  
Local Performances will be held: November 29-Dec. 2 & Dec. 5-9

### ABOUT THE SHOW:

It is December 1936, and Broadway star William Gillette, admired the world over for his leading role in the play Sherlock Holmes, has invited his fellow cast members to his Connecticut castle for a weekend of revelry. But when one of the guests is stabbed to death, the festivities in this isolated house of tricks and mirrors quickly turn dangerous. It is then up to Gillette himself, as he assumes the persona of his beloved Holmes, to track down the killer before the next victim appears. The danger and hilarity are non-stop in this glittering whodunit set during the Christmas holidays.

**Time:** December 1936      **Setting:** The living room of the mansion of William Gillette on the Connecticut River near East Haddam, Connecticut.

### CHARACTER BREAKDOWN: 5 women, 3 men

- \* **WILLIAM GILLETTE** - Broadway star. Strikingly handsome man, smartly dressed, good-humored, full of irony and life. A sort of modern-day Ulysses.
- \* **MARTHA GILLETTE** - Williams mother. Smartly dressed, somewhat vague and dithering woman in her mid-70s.
- \* **FELIX GEISEL** - Plays the actor Moriarty. Early 40s and married to Madge. Historic and arch in a Lionel Barrymore/Sir Toby Belch sort of way.
- \* **MADGE GEISEL** - Plays the actor Marian. Early 40s and married to Felix. Flamboyant and wry in a Rosalind Russell smart-mouthed-gal-about-town sort of way.
- \* **SIMON BRIGHT** - Plays the actor Zerlinsky. Sweet and enthusiastic, age 25, affectionate, good-natured. Bright and Wheeler are a couple.
- \* **AGGIE WHEELER** - Plays the actor Alice. She is a real product of her age; 25, beautiful, bright-eyed and full of spunk, affectionate, good-natured. Bright and Wheeler are a couple.
- \* **INSPECTOR GORING** - late 30s-mid 40s
- \* **DARIA CHASE** - late 30s-mid 40s

# Audition Form - Sweet

Please bring this completed form with you to the audition with calendar and conflicts  
(acting resume and headshots are optional).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ (Do you text message? Yes / No)

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_

Work or school hours \_\_\_\_\_

If you are familiar with this play, are there any part that interests you?

\_\_\_\_\_

Would you accept another part if not offered any listed above? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you consider working on the crew or technical team? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you, sing, dance, play an instrument or have other special talents? If so, please explain level of skill:

Experience: Although not required, please list some of your theater background. *Some of this information may be used in the playbill for the show.*

Do you have ANY conflicts with the rehearsal/performance schedule? \_\_\_\_\_

Please list ALL conflicts below (be as specific as possible to dates, times). Additional conflicts after being cast may not be accepted?

**Casting Agreement:**

By accepting a role, I agree to play the role assigned to me to the best of my ability, trusting the judgement of the director and staff. In doing so, I also agree to wear the costumes, makeup and wig or hairstyle of the director's and/or designer's choosing. Initial \_\_\_\_\_

**Attendance Agreement:**

By accepting a role, I agree to attend all rehearsals and performances as defined by the rehearsal schedule. I agree to arrive in a timely matter and be prepared to start when directed to do so. Initial \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you so much for auditioning for the show! We appreciate your time and interest in the County Seat Theater Company!*

**GILLETTE** (*cont.*) The greatest game, the biggest adventure. Shakespeare got it right on the nose. Henry the Fifth charging 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 *lived*, 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 Chase!

(**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 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.

SIMON. Four weeks, two days, and six hours. I'm especially proud of the six hours. It shows I can really stick with it.

DARIA. The truth is, I do know about it, and I plan to put it in my column on Monday morning. I mean, just look at the two of you. You're headline news! One minute you're character actors, the next minute you've inherited half of the Pacific Northwest.

SIMON. What do you mean?

DARIA. What do I - ? Darling, you've just married the Merry Widow of Manhattan for God's sake.

SIMON. Sorry, but you've got it wrong. Hugo didn't leave her anything.

DARIA. *Excuse me*, but I *am* a reporter. When I found the records on your marriage, I happened to see Hugo's will and testament.

(*to AGGIE:*) He left you everything, didn't he? All his millions.

AGGIE. ....Yes, he did.

(*The room erupts.*)

FELIX, MARTHA & MADGE. Oh my God!/That's amazing!/ Oh, Aggie!/Simon!

GILLETTE. Why didn't you tell us?

AGGIE. I-I don't know. I-I didn't want it to affect my relationship with anyone. They'd treat me differently, you know they would.

SIMON. Does this mean I'm rich?

(AGGIE *nods.*)

Very rich?

(*Nod.*)

Hahaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa! I'm rich, I'm rich, I'm rich! How do you do? I'm rich. You may touch me...

(*He rushes to AGGIE, but stops abruptly:*)

You just made my day.

(*He embraces her and they all laugh.*)

DARIA. I must say, this cast of yours gives me endless things to write about. It's like I *invented* you just for the purpose.

MADGE. We'd rather you wrote about the play and not us.

DARIA. Oh, nonsense. Of course you wouldn't. Everyone wants publicity. It's magic, and it's changing the world. Look at me, I'm a sorceress. A wave of the pen and I can make you a star. Poof. Publicity equals fame equals money. It's like a drug, but it never stops. And I must say, you've all been hogging the limelight beautifully, haven't you. First the shooting, which in itself must have doubled my readership, then the inheritance and now the *murder* –

FELIX. Murder?

AGGIE. What murder?

SIMON. You mean the shooting.

DARIA. No, I mean the murder this morning.

(*Dead silence.*)

Don't tell me you don't...

(*to GILLETTE*) Do you know about it?

GILLETTE. I'm afraid I do. I was going to tell everyone *after* dinner.

DARIA. Oops.

AGGIE. Who was murdered?

GILLETTE. Noggs.

(*Shocked silence.*)

SIMON. Stage doorman Noggs?

GILLETTE. I'm afraid so.

AGGIE. Oh no.

GILLETTE. The police asked me to identify the body this morning. It happened late last night, apparently.

DARIA. I was there.

GILLETTE. Excuse me?

**DARIA.** At your theater. Last night. Not at the murder, of course.

**MADGE.** But there's no show on at the moment.

**DARIA.** I was doing background work on my article.

**FELIX.** Did you see Noggs there?

**DARIA.** Yes, I did. When I went *in*, but he was murdered apparently when I was inside.

**SIMON.** But who would murder him? I mean – poor Noggy.

**MARTHA.** Perhaps he saw something related to the shooting. Or overheard someone talking about it.

**AGGIE.** Could it have been an accident?

**SIMON.** Or natural causes, like a heart attack.

**GILLETTE.** That would be very comforting indeed, except his throat was cut from ear to ear with a razor blade.

*(BOOM!! A thunderclap. They all jump. Through the windows we can see the snow falling.)*

**MADGE.** There's a storm brewing.

**FELIX.** And I have a feeling it's going to get quite nasty before it's over.

**MARTHA.** Oh nonsense, it's Christmas Eve, now let's have dinner. Right this way. Let's go everybody!

*(MARTHA opens the door to the dining room, and Portia starts barking again.)*

**PORTIA.** Bark, bark, bark, bark, bark!!

**MARTHA.** Oh, Portia, be quiet!

*(Everyone starts filing into the dining room chatting.)*

**DARIA.** *(winding FELIX's arm around hers)* Felix, my darling, will you take me in? I'm like the maiden aunt of the family, all sad and lonely.

**FELIX.** *(glancing at MADGE)* ...Of course.

*(DARIA and FELIX go in.)*

**SIMON.** *(taking AGGIE's arm, imitating Daria)* Aggie, my darling, will you take me in? I'm like the bachelor uncle of the family, all full of myself and annoying...

**INSPECTOR.** *(cont.)* Now I'll need some assistance, but I assume that this telephone is still dead.

*(She picks up the receiver.)*

"Hello...Hello!"

*(It's obviously dead. She hangs it up.)*

And I suppose no one knows where the murder weapon is?

*(No answer. Everyone shrugs.)*

All right, I would like all of you to go into the dining room and wait for me, and I urge you to keep an eye on each other. No one leaves! I'll call you for questioning one at a time, and believe me, this is not a joke.

*(Everyone exits except GILLETTE, who closes the door behind them.)*

**GILLETTE.** Good. Let's get down to business. I fear it's more complicated than I thought at first. They all have motives.

**INSPECTOR.** What are you talking about? Get in there!

**GILLETTE.** Surely I'm not a suspect.

**INSPECTOR.** Of course you are.

**GILLETTE.** But it's my house.

**INSPECTOR.** What has that got to do with it? If anything, it means you're a bigger suspect. You know the house inside-out and you knew about the hidden room.

**GILLETTE.** You know, when you think about it, you're just as much a suspect as I am.

**INSPECTOR.** I beg your pardon.

**GILLETTE.** It happens all the time in murder mysteries. The slightly odd "inspector" who arrives alone in the middle of the night and pretends to sort things out when in fact she intends to murder someone for some hideous crime that happened twenty years ago.

**INSPECTOR.** Oh nonsense.

**GILLETTE.** I don't see a badge.

**INSPECTOR.** I left it at the office.

GILLETTE. That's a likely story.

INSPECTOR. *You hid a murder and you're accusing me of stories?!*

*(MARTHA walks in wearing her dressing gown. She is rather loopy from her sleeping pills.)*

MARTHA. Hello...?

GILLETTE. *(alarmed)* Mother, what are you doing here?!

MARTHA. I heard a scream and it woke me up. At least I think it was a scream. It might have been a tea kettle.

GILLETTE. Mother, go back to bed. Right now.

MARTHA. Oh don't be silly. I am perfectly fine. How do you do. Are you a stranger?

INSPECTOR. Yes I am. I'm afraid.

MARTHA. Oh that's all right. I like strange men, don't I, Willie. Sometimes. If they're nice. Are you nice?

INSPECTOR. I like to think so.

GILLETTE. Mother, how many sleeping pills did you take?

*(Embarrassed, MARTHA holds up four fingers.)*

MARTHA. *(confidentially to the INSPECTOR)* They make me sleepy.

GILLETTE. All right, back to bed.

MARTHA. Oh, stop it!

*(to the INSPECTOR)* How do you do, I'm Martha Gillette.

INSPECTOR. How do you do. Inspector Goring from the Middlesex County Police Department.

MARTHA. *Oh, no!*

GILLETTE. Mother -!

MARTHA. I knew it would come to this, I just knew it.

INSPECTOR. So you know about the murder then?

MARTHA. Of course I know. How could I not know it when I was the one who -

GILLETTE. *Mother!* Don't say anything. Not a word!

MARTHA. Oh stop it. We knew it would come to this and I want to get it over with. *"It is a far, far better thing I do than I have ever done before. It is a far, far better place I go -"*

GILLETTE. Inspector, listen to me! I didn't want my mother to hear this, but...I killed Daria Chase. I'm turning myself in.

MARTHA. Willie!

INSPECTOR. Good God! Are you serious?

GILLETTE. Yes. She threatened to ruin my career and I couldn't just stand by and let her do it.

MARTHA. (*overlapping*) Oh stop being nonsensical. Inspector, I killed Daria Chase and he's trying to protect me.

GILLETTE. (*overlapping*) Mother, please. The Inspector can see that you couldn't do it. You're...you're too old.

MARTHA. Come over here and say that and I'll knock you down!

INSPECTOR. *Would you both be quiet!*

(MARTHA breaks down in tears.)

MARTHA. Oh, Willie, how could I do such a thing! And I didn't mean to kill her! She just made me so angry!

(She sobs in his arms. GILLETTE looks up. There's something wrong here.)

GILLETTE. ....You didn't "mean to"?

MARTHA. I only wanted to make her sick and teach her a lesson!

(GILLETTE pulls his mother aside and whispers to her.)

GILLETTE. Excuse us...Mother, you must have realized it would kill her.

MARTHA. No I didn't! I thought, "You can't treat my son that way! I'll make you suffer first. I'll make you sick as a dog!"

GILLETTE. But you stabbed her in the back!

MARTHA. What are you talking about? How could I stab anybody?

GILLETTE. You used the knife from the wall and then you... oh my God you didn't kill her.