

F2 (Molly)  
M3 (Matthew)

heels here. And rightly so! Now, I don't want to speak ill of the dead, but Ellen was a controlling bitch.

MATTHEW. Thank you, Darla. I'll take it from here.

DARLA. Oh! Okay. Well, it was nice to see you, Matty, and it was great to meet you, Molly—he really did win the lottery. Merry Christmas. (*Lamely.*) Go, Lancers!

*Awkward hugs, etc. Darla exits, giving Matthew a big thumbs-up as she goes.*

Start

MOLLY. What's going on, Matthew?

MATTHEW. I don't want to do this anymore.

MOLLY. Men and shopping! Go home. I can finish the list.

MATTHEW. I don't like crème de menthe.

MOLLY. What?

MATTHEW. And I don't want to go to the Petersons'.

MOLLY. Okay...

MATTHEW. It's been five years since Ellen died, two years since I met you, and three months since our wedding. I've done enough to honor Ellen's memory. I don't want to think of my dead wife every time December rolls around. Is that awful?

MOLLY. (*With patience and tenderness.*) It's not awful at all. But are you really ready to move on? Because there's no rush. I have carloads of patience.

MATTHEW. I want to move on. To move forward. With you. Lundquist two point oh.

MOLLY. Why didn't you say something?

MATTHEW. Because I didn't want to jinx this...us. I can't believe you—the most wonderful woman on earth, married—till death do us part... Me. My first love lasted six years and I'm holding my breath here.

MOLLY. I'm not going anywhere.

MATTHEW. How can you be sure?

MOLLY. I'm as healthy as a horse. Strong peasant stock here. My whole family is famously long-lived. My grandfather had a liver this long!

*She indicates.*

MATTHEW. It's not funny.

MOLLY. Sweetheart! There are no guarantees in this life. I will do my very best to keep us healthy and strong, until we're not. Until we need to catch our breath after we walk upstairs. Until we get matching walkers. Until the end. But I could get hit by a bus—

MATTHEW. No—

MOLLY. Or have a piano fall on my head—

MATTHEW. Okay—

MOLLY. Or die in a bizarre firework-factory accident—

MATTHEW. Stop.

*Pause. Deep breath.*

Let's start with the tree.

MOLLY. Isn't that sacrosanct?

MATTHEW. I'm so sick of that damn tree—that whole white Christmas? It's never white! It never snows!

BOTH. It's always a brown Christmas!

MOLLY. Well, I did notice some fantastic bohemian-glass ornaments at the Christmas kiosk...maybe "Christmas in the Ottoman Empire"?

MATTHEW. You and the Ottomans.

*They kiss. Or make some gesture that's unique to them.*

Let me take you to lunch first. Somewhere fancy. With drinks! Alcoholic drinks.

MOLLY. I love you. And you're stuck with me forever.

MATTHEW. I love you. And I hope you're right.

*Pause.*

MOLLY. Why don't we go home and play "who's been naughty?"

MATTHEW. Are you sure you don't want to eat lunch first?

MOLLY. I'm fine. But if you think you'll need strength...

MATTHEW. Mrs. Lundquist, I'm feeling stronger already.

*They exit, and the scene changes to BEARING GIFTS, WE TRAVERSE AFAR.*