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THE FEATURES PAGE

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GOSSIP

Liz Smith

Heche Feels the Sting of Work

The Clintons' 'Good Will' gesture

Oh, Scorpio, your name is woman! The ubiquitous and beautiful Anne Heche was stung by a real scorpion in her new movie, "6 Days, 7 Nights," but recovered enough to laugh about it. "The arachnids in the film were supposed to be plastic, but some joker slipped four real scorpions into the chute," she said. Her sting was a mere pinprick compared to the consternation-causing situation in her current excellent, for-grown-ups movie "Wag the Dog," wherein she plays a White House aide trying to get the president out of a sex scandal.

■ Speaking of the president and Mrs. Clinton — they asked Sunday to screen an Oscar front-runner, "Good Will Hunting." The First Couple invited the film's director, Gus Van Sant, actors Robin Williams, Matt Damon, Ben Affleck, Minnie Driver and exec producer Lawrence Bender to join them at the Camp David retreat.

■ Recently this space reported on Noel Twyman's new book, "Bloody Treason," which claims that JFK was murdered in a conspiracy involving the Mafia, the FBI, the CIA, LBJ and the military-industrial complex.

This elicited a letter from former LBJ aide Jack Valenti, who now represents the Motion Pic-



Minnie Driver was among the cast members invited to Camp David for a private screening of Gus Van Sant's "Good Will Hunting."

ture Association.

"There is one reason, one defining reason, why Lee Harvey Oswald was the sole gunman in Dallas. In the 34 years since JFK was murdered, there has not been a single leak! In this porous world, everything leaks — Watergate, Irangate, Campaigngate, you name it. Whenever more than one person is involved, it will leak.

"So, when all these conspiracy geeks begin to hallucinate about FBI, CIA, zygotes and assorted Frisbee tossers banding together to kill the president, just remember, it's merely book-selling time."

■ Naomi Campbell has been

telling chums she's very happy with her new man, the hunk Gabriel Byrne, who'll next be seen swashing his buckles as D'Artagnan in "The Man in the Iron Mask." Could it be Byrne-ing love? . . . Meanwhile, Gerard Depardieu, to be seen as Porthos in the same film, will play the title role in a major bio-pic about France's Charles de Gaulle. You remember De Gaulle. He helped liberate France from the Nazis. He presided over France for years. In time, he uttered the fateful words: "Old age is a shipwreck!" . . . Early peekers are predicting "The Wedding Singer" will be "The Graduate" of the '90s. This ingenious comedy stars Adam Sandler and Drew Barrymore, with a killer soundtrack featuring the hottest pop and rock classics of the '80s . . . Mark Wahlberg, who plays Dirk Diggler in the popular "Boogie Nights," will get a fat, fat seven-figure paycheck from New Line for his role in "The Corrupter." The former rapper/Calvin Klein model, whose ascent began when he showed us what was in his shorts, will get \$2 million to play a New York cop . . . Robert

Duvall, as a Pentecostal preacher, is nothing short of astonishing in "The Apostle." Among his fellow actors with grand things to say about Bobby is Daniel Day-Lewis, being hailed in his own right for his knockout performance in "The Boxer." "Duvall," says Day-Lewis, "is *the* actor to beat at the Oscars." . . . "Houdini," Ray Stark's long-in-development project, will take a year to make and will be ready by Christmas 1998. Stark, the moviemaker extraordinary who gave Barbra Streisand and so many others their starts, has landed Paul Verhoeven to direct this epic about the world's most incredible escape artist.

■ Grammy afterthoughts came as I realized that Streisand's latest album came out too late to be eligible this year. And my remark that Bob Dylan was "seemingly comatose" was simply based on my seeing him on TV as he accepted an award on the Kennedy Center Honors earlier this month.

NEWSDAY

Leah Garchik is on vacation. Her column, Personals, will return later this month.