



THE PATRON SAINT OF SEA MONSTERS

BY MARLANE MEYER



DRAMATISTS
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THE PATRON SAINT OF SEA MONSTERS was presented Off-Broadway by Playwrights Horizons (Tim Sanford, Artistic Director; Leslie Marcus, Managing Director; Carol Fishman, General Manager) at the Peter Jay Sharp Theater, opening on November 13, 2013. It was directed by Lisa Peterson; the set design was by Rachel Hauck; the costume design was by Paloma Young; the lighting design was by Russell H. Champa; the sound design was by Darron L West; and the production stage manager was Marisa Levy. The cast was as follows:

CALVIN LITTLE..... Rob Campbell
AUBREY LINCOLN..... Laura Heisler
PENNY PATCHETT, MOLLY CARLSEN,
BETTY PIRESIUS, ST. MARTYRBRIDE..... Jacqueline Wright
SPEEDY, JACK PATCHETT,
RAY, JESUS Danny Wolohan
CANADIAN BILL, PSYCHIC TOM,
FATHER FABIAN..... Haynes Thigpen
HELEN LITTLE, MRS. CARLSEN,
LYNETTE LINCOLN Candy Buckley

CHARACTERS

CALVIN LITTLE — Mid- to late forties. Perennially unemployed, funny, handsome, charming, damaged, with an underlying sincerity. He is evolving.

HELEN LITTLE — Calvin's mother. Alcoholic, sexy, sociopathic, controlling, harsh, formidable, quick-witted.

JACK PATCHETT — Calvin's half-brother. Darkly menacing, with anger-management issues.

AUBREY LINCOLN — Mid- to late forties. Intelligent, awkward, assertive, self-conscious, sensitive. She has a leg-length discrepancy.

LYNETTE LINCOLN — Aubrey's mother. Cultivated, sanctimonious, and a cunning loony.

SPEEDY — Calvin's best friend. Kind, not particularly enlightened, but intuitive.

CANADIAN BILL — Calvin's other best friend. Intelligent, bookish, with a strong sense of justice.

PENNY PATCHETT — Jack's wife. A woman in a difficult marriage. Quick, smart, acerbic, combative.

MRS. CARLSEN — Aubrey's landlady. Kind, no-nonsense, eccentric, but plain-spoken.

MOLLY CARLSEN — Mrs. Carlsen's daughter. More creature than human, and devoted to her mother.

PSYCHIC TOM — Mrs. Carlsen's brother, an ex-Marine, and a shaman. He has a very high-pitched voice.

BETTY PIRESIUS — The local prostitute. Sexy, jealous, not too bright, but persuasive.

FATHER FABIAN — A Jesuit priest.

JESUS — A statue, played by an actor.

MAILMAN — An image on a poster, played by an actor.

RAY — A prisoner of love.

ST. MARTYRBRIDE — An imaginary saint dressed in a luminescent gown, large pearls, seaweed garlands, and a starfish crown.

THE WHALE and THE YOUNG SEA MONSTER — Puppets or people.

PLACE

A small California town surrounded by a forest.

TIME

The play has the quality of a fable
and as such could take place anytime.

PRODUCTION NOTES

This play is not meant to be played naturalistically. It is a *comedy*, with strong dramatic themes and magical elements. It should be paced up and played at a clip. It should be performed by six talented actors who can do multiple characters. Here is the doubling scheme:

AUBREY and CALVIN should remain single characters.

PENNY PATCHETT doubles as MOLLY CARLSEN,
BETTY PIRESIUS, and ST. MARTYRBRIDE.

HELEN LITTLE doubles as MRS. CARLSEN and
LYNETTE LINCOLN.

SPEEDY doubles as JACK PATCHETT, RAY, and JESUS.

CANADIAN BILL doubles as PSYCHIC TOM and
FATHER FABIAN.

The set should be suggestive of a mysterious and forbidding forest, where animals both real and imagined may live. The playing area should be flexible enough to suggest the various homes and locations.

THE PATRON SAINT OF SEA MONSTERS

Prologue

Lights up on the interior of an old trailer. A woman's body lies downstage, facing upstage. A young Calvin Little, nineteen, sits on a chair, his head in his hands. He's dressed up, but his suit is dirty and rumpled. Helen, his mother, stands smoking, impatient. She wears leopard-skin pants, a revealing halter top, and very large hair.

HELEN. I told you to just let that slut go, didn't I? Calvin! I said to let that slut go to hell on her own but you had to chase her down and now look what. *(A knock on the door. A young Jack Patchett enters, carrying a tarp. He looks at Calvin and the body. He begins to laugh.)* Will you shut up?

JACK. I told him Marie was no good. Pussy hound!

CALVIN. It wasn't like that.

HELEN. Jack! Stop talking.

JACK. Golden boy!

HELEN. Can you shut up and get about your business.

JACK. *(Grinning.)* Okay, but he owes me, Ma. You owe me, shithead! *(He stops and looks down at the body. The smile dies on his face. He looks at Calvin. Calvin looks away. With a look of disgust, Jack throws down the tarp, wraps up the body, and exits. Calvin calls after him.)*

CALVIN. I want to know where she goes.

HELEN. She? Who is "she"? "She" doesn't exist! Okay?! You forget her, now. It's over. Marie ran off just like she said she would. The end. Understand me? The end. Now let's get drunk and forget this night happened. *(Lights crossfade to a church with a life-sized statue*

of Jesus. Aubrey, eighteen, enters, wearing a cheap white wedding dress. She carries a small, beautifully decorated box. She sets down the box, opens it, and takes out a votive candle, a small icon, and a starfish. She lights the candle. She places the starfish with Jesus. Just then, Lynette enters quietly. She wears a business suit, hat, and glasses. Beat.)

LYNETTE. You know, this is voodoo.

AUBREY. No, it's not.

LYNETTE. How many dresses like this do you own?

AUBREY. I don't know.

LYNETTE. More than ten?

AUBREY. I suppose.

LYNETTE. Aubrey? You cannot marry Jesus.

AUBREY. It's not Jesus anymore.

LYNETTE. Oh, a new bridegroom?

AUBREY. It's none of your business.

LYNETTE. It better not be that Calvin Little.

AUBREY. Don't say his name!

LYNETTE. He's married, you know.

AUBREY. He is my soulmate.

LYNETTE. According to whom? (*Beat.*) St. Martyrbride?

AUBREY. (*Surprised.*) How do you know about her?

LYNETTE. I might have found your diary. While I was cleaning. And read parts of it to Dad. The parts that weren't X-rated. And since neither of us had ever heard of St. Martyrbride, I showed your diary to that new priest. He'd never heard of her either.

AUBREY. What did you do with my diary?

LYNETTE. I burnt it. Now, look at me. You are not going to marry Calvin Little. There is no St. Martyrbride. And the Church of Rome does not have a patron saint of spinsters, childhood infirmity, and sea monsters.

AUBREY. She said you'd say that.

LYNETTE. You know, Dad thinks you're going crazy.

AUBREY. He says the same thing about you.

LYNETTE. He says that because I don't want to have sex with him. He thinks he's God's gift. He's the crazy one, okay? Now take off that stupid dress, you're going to college. (*She exits. Aubrey stares out. A collection of animals gathers around her, a forest appears, trees grow, and time passes.*)

Scene 1

Many years later. The men's locker room of a jar factory, Blaster Glass and Bottle: a bench, lockers, a mirror, a sink, and a dirty towel. Calvin is older now; he enters wearing a shirt with a logo. He opens his locker, takes out a pint of vodka, and drinks deeply. He takes off his shirt and stares at it; he's near tears. A loud whistle sounds, signalling the end of the workday. He stops, wipes his eyes, and collects himself. Speedy and Bill enter, each wearing the same shirt as Calvin. Neither man looks at Calvin, and there is an air of disappointment.

CALVIN. Shit! You'd think a man in a position of power would have a better sense of humor.

SPEEDY. Not about his wife.

BILL. Coincidentally, "uxorious" was my new word of the day.

CALVIN. Look, she's fat. She's got a big, fat ass. And Lloyd's skinny, everybody knows that. Everybody knows that rhyme, it's not like I made it up to torment him? It could be I was trying to be helpful.

BILL. How do you figure?

CALVIN. (*Earnestly.*) "Fat and skinny went to bed, fat rolled over and skinny lay dead"?

BILL. So you're calling it a cautionary tale?

CALVIN. They didn't fire Paul Revere when he shot the lights out in the church to keep the English from stealing the bells?

BILL. That's not why you got fired.

SPEEDY. Who cares why? The question is, what are you gonna do now.

CALVIN. Get drunk. See if Tiger Hat wants to have a pajama party without our pajamas.

BILL. Tiger Hat...?

SPEEDY. Tiger Hat is that nurse that put the cops on his brother.

BILL. (*Annoyed.*) She's not a nurse.

CALVIN. He's not my brother, he's my half-brother. Jack is my half-brother, you moron ...

SPEEDY. I may be a moron, but at least I can drive.

CALVIN. I can either drink or drive, I choose to drink.
BILL. Tiger Hat is not a nurse, she's Dr. Lincoln. She's a doctor, that free clinic is her clinic.
SPEEDY. That place I go when I get the clap?
BILL. Yes.
SPEEDY. Oh! Shit, Calvin. If you date a doctor, you could get all kinds of prescription drugs and that could be your new job? Boom. Drug dealer.
CALVIN. Date ... I don't date. Dating would involve getting involved.
BILL. What do you call the sex act?
CALVIN. I call it sport fucking, what do you call it?
SPEEDY. A once-in-a-lifetime experience.
BILL. I believe dating is the sacred foundation of a spiritual union, if you do it with the right person.
CALVIN. Audrey does not require a spiritual union.
BILL. It's Au-brey.
CALVIN. She makes no demands, she talks nice, and is grateful for the smallest attention.
SPEEDY. And it is small. Very small.
CALVIN. Have you been cock-watchin' again, homo erectus?
SPEEDY. (*Surprised.*) Is your penis visible to the naked eye?
BILL. I thought you were dating Betty?
CALVIN. Betty needs taking down. She's too high and mighty since she started charging.
SPEEDY. She doesn't charge everybody.
BILL. May I make a suggestion...?
SPEEDY. No ...
BILL. I'm talking to Calvin. Calvin, you need to think about why you can't keep a job.
CALVIN. I can keep a job. Sort of.
BILL. (*To Speedy.*) Tell him.
SPEEDY. Tell him what?
BILL. Your theory.
SPEEDY. (*Warning him.*) I don't know what you're talking about, Bill.
BILL. Yeah, you do.
CALVIN. What is it?
SPEEDY. It's nothing.
BILL. It has to do with Marie.
CALVIN. Marie? What about her?

BILL. Speedy thinks you never got over Marie's mysterious disappearance.

SPEEDY. Oh my God, I never said it like that ...

BILL. This is when all the heavy drinking started, the bar fights, the sex stuff, and your serial job history.

SPEEDY. Losing a job is no big deal, Bill. It's a part of life. Like a snake shedding his skin, right, Cal?

BILL. I don't agree and neither does Speedy when he's being honest.

CALVIN. (*He watches Bill.*) Why are you...? You know ... talking like this about me?

BILL. Trying to be helpful.

CALVIN. No. That's not it. Are you mad at me?

BILL. No.

CALVIN. You're something though, right?

BILL. I'm not mad. It's just ... I guess it does bother me to think you're taking advantage of someone like Dr. Lincoln, I mean, she's not like us, she's special.

SPEEDY. Yeah, like special-needs.

CALVIN. What are we talking about here, a little secret crush?

BILL. No ... we're just friends.

CALVIN. (*Seriously.*) Friends with benefits?

BILL. God, you guys? Not every relationship with a woman has to be about sex.

SPEEDY. Yeah, it does.

BILL. We are friends. We share common interests. We volunteer at the library. We pass the offering plate in church, back and forth, sharing personal insights about the nature of belief...?

CALVIN. Well, shit, Bill, if you want to get with her, I'll back off.

BILL. I'm not saying that, I mean, I would never presume ... God! This is what I get for sharing a confidence in a locker room full of drug addicts.

SPEEDY. Okay, hold up, I'm a recreational drug abuser, not an addict.

CALVIN. And I'm mostly just alcoholic.

BILL. Which, frankly, Calvin, is why you lost your job.

CALVIN. Which is also why I was seeking out a little female companionship by way of our local doctor.

BILL. Calvin? Haven't you had enough rejection for one day?

SPEEDY. Oh! I never saw that coming.

CALVIN. You think Audrey'll reject me?

THE PATRON SAINT OF SEA MONSTERS

by Marlane Meyer

3M, 3W (doubling, flexible casting)

Aubrey, a very determined romantic, believes she's met her soul-mate in Calvin, a boozing womanizer. But in this tilted, thoughtful comedy, true love is an even more tangled predicament. Peopled by an assortment of eccentrics, mystics, and front porch philosophers, Marlane Meyer's play is a sweet polemic, an unexpected love story, and a deliciously cockeyed view of the sustaining — and destructive — power of belief.

"... a rousing, confounding, otherworldly tragicomedy composed of (and this is not an exclusive list) recurring motifs of Catholic saints and animal spirits; profound meditations on the purposes and costs of sex and marriage; hagiography; political sloganeering; murder; an examination of the destruction of the American working class; discussions of domestic abuse; and a tale of a good woman's quest to redeem a very bad man ... [Marlane Meyer] manages to find delight, humor, and something lovable in even the vilest human beings. That should play well everywhere." —**The Village Voice**

Also by Marlane Meyer
THE CHEMISTRY OF CHANGE
ETTA JENKS
THE MYSTERY OF ATTRACTION

DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE, INC.

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