

MOTHERS AND SONS

BY **TERRENCE McNALLY**



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

MOTHERS AND SONS
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For Tyne Daly

The world premiere of *MOTHERS AND SONS* was originally produced at the Bucks County Playhouse (Jed Bernstein, Producing Director) in June 2013. It was directed by Sheryl Kaller; the set design was by Wilson Chin; the costume design was by Jess Goldstein; the lighting design was by Travis McHale; and the sound design was by John Gromada. The cast was as follows:

KATHARINE GERARD.....Tyne Daly
CAL PORTER.....Manoel Felciano
WILL OGDEN Bobby Steggert
BUD OGDEN-PORTER..... Grayson Taylor

MOTHERS AND SONS was presented on Broadway at the John Golden Theatre in New York City, opening on March 24, 2014. It was produced by Tom Kirdahy, Roy Furman, Paula Wagner & Debbie Bisno, Barbara Freitag & Loraine Alterman Boyle, Hunter Arnold, Paul Boskind, Ken Davenport, Lams Productions, Mark Lee & Ed Filipowski, Roberta Pereira/Brunish Trincherro, Sanford Robertson, Tom Smedes & Peter Stern, and Jack Thomas/Susan Dietz. It was directed by Sheryl Kaller; the set design was by John Lee Beatty; the costume design was by Jess Goldstein; the lighting design was by Jeff Croiter; the sound design was by Nevin Steinberg; and the production stage manager was James Harker. The cast was as follows:

KATHARINE GERARD.....Tyne Daly
CAL PORTER..... Frederick Weller
WILL OGDEN Bobby Steggert
BUD OGDEN-PORTER..... Grayson Taylor

CHARACTERS

KATHARINE GERARD, Andre Gerard's mother.

CAL PORTER, Andre's lover.

WILL OGDEN, Cal's husband.

BUD OGDEN-PORTER, 6 years old.

PLACE

A desirable apartment on Manhattan's Central Park West with a maximum view of the park. It belongs to Cal and Will. It is a warm and very livable space. It is tended with care but well-used. Evidence of a child: a bicycle or a skateboard maybe. Doors and hallways lead off to bedrooms, a kitchen, and bathrooms. It is important it doesn't look "decorated" but someone at *Architectural Digest* would love to get their hands on it. The possibilities are boundless; they just haven't been realized yet.

TIME

The present. A blustery and very cold winter's day. The shortest day of the year. It will be dark soon. The change from pale winter light coming through the apartment windows when the play begins to the evolving warmth of the interior as and when the living room lamps are turned on during the play should be marked.

MOTHERS AND SONS

Katharine and Cal are taking in the view of the park below them. She still has her coat on.

CAL. That's the reservoir ... see? People jog around it, even in this weather, *crazy* people! I should know: I'm one of them. Christmas Day, hurricanes, monsoons, we're out there. Will thinks we're all insane. He says he watches us through that telescope and laughs and laughs. I can see his point. From up here we look like obsessive insects making our appointed rounds, except that's all they are is *rounds*. We're not going anywhere in the circle of fitness that other people aren't. We all end up in the same place. Will would say that's a metaphor and why he laughs. Will's a writer. Are you sure I can't take your coat, Mrs. Gerard?

KATHARINE. I'm not staying. (*But she doesn't move from her place at the window.*)

CAL. That view is pretty mesmerizing. I still pinch myself at least twice a day. The greatest city in the world and it's right there. I don't have to do anything but look. It's mine for the taking. Andre would have loved this view. As they say about London, the man who would grow tired of this is a man tired of life. Can I get you anything?

KATHARINE. I'm fine, thank you.

CAL. Oh, this will amuse you. Interest you, anyway. Directly across the park from us, there's a legendary apartment house, 1040 Fifth Avenue, just by the museum. See the obelisk? That's Cleopatra's Needle, well, not *really* but it's what they call it. Just beside it, that's the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Met, the *other* Met. To a Westsider, and you are on the West Side, the Met means the Metropolitan Opera; to an Eastsider it means the Metropolitan Museum. If you don't know this, an out-of-towner can end up looking at a Rembrandt instead of listening to *Turandot*. Anyway, I'm getting all tangled up in Manhattan arcana here: We

have a very good view of 1040 Fifth Avenue. That's where Jackie lived. Jackie O. Mrs. Onassis. Mrs. Kennedy.

KATHARINE. I know who you're talking about.

CAL. Andre would have loved having it for a view. He worshipped her.

KATHARINE. Didn't we all?

CAL. Can't you see him waking up every morning and bounding to that window and waving across the park to her, "*Bonjour, Jackie, ça va aujourd'hui?*" It would have been a ritual. I thought that might amuse you.

KATHARINE. Very little amuses me, Mr. Porter.

CAL. It was an unfortunate word choice, I'm sorry. And please, it's Cal.

KATHARINE. Who lives there now?

CAL. I don't know, rich Republicans, I suspect. Since Mrs. Kennedy died, I don't think anyone knows or cares who lives at 1040 Fifth.

KATHARINE. I'm sure the people who live there do. How long have you had this place?

CAL. It's getting on to 9 years.

KATHARINE. The last address I had for you was on Perry Street.

CAL. 85, 85 Perry. That was a century ago. It was one room in the basement that had the building's only access to the furnace which was always breaking down. We got quite friendly with the super that first winter. Things got better after Perry Street but not much. We were young, poor, and ready to take this city on. We were ready for anything. Well, we thought we were ready for anything. You're sure you won't take your coat off?

KATHARINE. I'm fine. I'll let you know when I'm not. I just stopped by on the chance you might be here.

CAL. Somebody usually is. As I said, Will's a writer and on weekends we're both sort of homebodies.

KATHARINE. I got the address from your sister.

CAL. Penny? You've kept in touch?

KATHARINE. Not really, Christmas cards. She gave me your unlisted phone number as well, but if you went to the trouble of having an unlisted telephone number, I'm sure it was to avoid calls from people like me.

CAL. No, never, no! I'm very glad to see you. Unlisted numbers are a New York fetish. Everyone has one. The woman who cleans for us, our doorman, the super. One winter night Andre and I had

locked ourselves out and we couldn't call anyone who might have a key. None of them had a listed number. We were frozen by the time we got in. (*Katharine is still looking down at the park.*)

KATHARINE. Growing up, I used to daydream about a view like this.

CAL. Where was that?

KATHARINE. Rye.

CAL. Rye, New York?

KATHARINE. It's a small town, more of an enclave really, in Westchester.

CAL. I know Rye. It's next to Port Chester, which is definitely not an enclave. I even know Rye Brook. I dated someone from Rye Brook. He never let me forget it. You know Mrs. Kennedy and I know Rye. Are you sure I can't get you something? In this weather, something to warm you up?

KATHARINE. Before it's too dark, where's the place we...? Where we had the...?

CAL. You mean the memorial?

KATHARINE. Can you see it from here?

CAL. See the little bridge? That's the Bow Bridge and just to the right of it, there's a lovely smallish lawn area — well, a lovely smallish lawn area 9 months of the year but this isn't one of them — It leads down to a duck pond. See it?

KATHARINE. I remember the ducks. They had a lot to say for themselves that day.

CAL. You would have thought it was too cold to quack. It was 12 degrees, the coldest day in years.

KATHARINE. I've never been so cold.

CAL. We all stood there in a circle and spoke.

KATHARINE. I was the only one who didn't.

CAL. I'm sure you weren't.

KATHARINE. It didn't matter. Your friends said everything that could possibly be said. They were very impressive. I didn't know Andre had so many friends and how eloquent they were. Some of them were quite funny.

CAL. We were attracted to people with a sense of humor.

KATHARINE. I personally thought the story about the two of you in the swimming pool in Mexico was a little risqué ... at least for my taste it was. Blue humor and funerals are not something I'm accustomed to.

CAL. It wasn't a funeral, Mrs. Gerard.

KATHARINE. You know what I meant. The music at the church had set such a serious and thoughtful tone, almost spiritual, I wasn't prepared for the transition to naked men in a swimming pool filled with gardenias.

CAL. It was pretty funny.

KATHARINE. I guess you had to be there.

CAL. In this case, I'm very glad you weren't.

KATHARINE. I couldn't get that one piece of music out of my head. The one the young woman sang at the church. I even went to a record shop and tried humming it to the clerk. *Nada*. He looked at me like I was crazy.

CAL. You should have asked. It was one of our favorites. It's by Mozart, a little-known opera of his, *Il Re Pastore*, The Shepherd King, "*L'ameró sarò costante*," "I will be constant in my love for him." I'll write it down for you. That same young woman is singing at the Met now and quite successfully. Andre always predicted a big future for her. "That, Cal," he would say, "is a star."

KATHARINE. If there are perfect moments, that was one of them. Naturally I was disappointed to see the rest of the service descend to jokes.

CAL. It wasn't a service either, Mrs. Gerard. It was a remembrance of someone we all loved and would miss. We still do.

KATHARINE. Except for the Mozart maybe it was all a little too gay for my taste.

CAL. There was some Shakespeare, too. I read "Fear no more the heat o' the sun" from *Cymbeline*. But except for them and a little Bach and my sister and my father and you and our dentist (our jury was still out on him. It's come in since then: gay as a goose.), I guess it was pretty gay.

KATHARINE. I never understood that expression, gay as a goose.

CAL. Neither did I.

KATHARINE. Is that...?

CAL. What? Where?

KATHARINE. It looks like some sort of amphitheatre.

CAL. It's called the Delacorte Theatre, free Shakespeare in the Park. With the windows open in summer, we can hear them.

KATHARINE. Is that where Andre...?

CAL. Yes. Where he played Horatio, the summer of 80 ... what? 8? 9?

MOTHERS AND SONS

by Terrence McNally

2M, 1W, 1 child

At turns funny and powerful, *MOTHERS AND SONS* portrays a woman who pays an unexpected visit to the New York apartment of her late son's partner, who is now married to another man and has a young son. Challenged to face how society has changed around her, generations collide as she revisits the past and begins to see the life her son might have led.

"Terrence McNally is a probing and enduring dramatist. A resonant elegy for a ravaged generation, MOTHERS AND SONS wears its significance defiantly."
—**The New York Times**

"Eloquent, exceptionally timely and intensely resonant. A moving reflection on a changed America."
—**The Chicago Tribune**

"Fantastic! McNally captures a moment of hope and promise ... MOTHERS AND SONS feels like the sun on your face!"
—**NBC New York**

"A masterpiece. Terrence McNally is one of the greatest contemporary playwrights the theatre world has yet produced. MOTHERS AND SONS is profound. Heartbreaking. Triumphant."
—**The New York Observer**

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