

FAMILY TIES

BY DANIEL GOLDSTEIN

BASED ON THE CBS TELEVISION
SERIES



FAMILY TIES
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FAMILY TIES was given its world premiere by Human Race Theatre (Kevin Moore, President and Artistic Director) in Dayton, Ohio, on June 1, 2017. It was produced by special arrangement with Araca Media & Entertainment. It was directed by Kevin Moore, the scenic design was by Tamara L. Honesty, the costume design was by Janet G. Powell, the lighting design was by John Rensel, the sound design was by Jay Brunner, and the production stage manager was Lexi Muller. The cast was as follows:

ALEX Jim Stanek
MALLORY Thea Brooks
JENNIFER Sara Mackie
ELYSE Eve Plumb
STEVEN Lawrence Redmond
ELLEN Maggie Lou Rader

FAMILY TIES was developed by Araca Media & Entertainment.

CHARACTERS

ALEX P. KEATON

MALLORY KEATON

JENNIFER KEATON

ELYSE KEATON

STEVEN KEATON

ELLEN

NOTES

Flashbacks, no matter where they're set, are meant to be played in the existing set—with no extra pieces brought in. Simple changes in light and sound, creative use of existing scenery, clever costume adjustments, and smart staging should accomplish the change in time. We should never “blackout” to go to another scene—it should feel seamless and effortless.

The slide projector should remain present throughout the play and presents an opportunity to use creative projections as a way to aid transitions from past to present.

MUSIC

Music and lyrics from three songs are written into the script: “Without Us,” by Jeff Barry and Thomas Wright Scott, the theme song from *Family Ties*; “At This Moment,” by Billy Vera; and “New York, New York,” by John Kander and Fred Ebb. Additional royalty fees apply if you would like to use these songs in your production. You must notify Dramatists Play Service in writing that you are using these songs, and the royalty fee will be added to your invoice. **See Note on Songs/ Recordings on page 70 for more information.**

If you do not wish to use these songs and pay the fees, please see page 71 for alternate lines.

FAMILY TIES

PROLOGUE, CALL WAITING

Lights up on Alex P. Keaton isolated in light. Around him is complete darkness. (It's important that we do not see the set during the prologue.) He's forty-ish years old, but still looks seventeen if you squint, and still dressed impeccably, with a swagger that has dulled very little over the years. He's got the kind of face that will get him carded in bars until he's seventy. He's on a cell phone—and because this is a play, we don't need to see the cell phone. They can just face out to the audience and speak.

ALEX. Go for Alex.

Lights up on Mallory Keaton, next to Alex. She's isolated in light as well. And just about forty.

MALLORY. You've gotta be kidding.

ALEX. Good morning, Mal.

MALLORY. People really say that?

ALEX. What?

MALLORY. Go for Alex?

ALEX. (*Hopeful.*) Testing it out. What'd you think?

MALLORY. Boooooo!!!

ALEX. It's 6:30. You're up early.

MALLORY. Never too early to harass my brother. Are you coming or what?

ALEX. Why can't you change the date?

MALLORY. No, Alex!

ALEX. Just a week.

MALLORY. No!

ALEX. But—

MALLORY. You need to get your priorities in line, young man. What on earth could be more important than your family?

ALEX. Mom make you call?

MALLORY. God, I can't believe you think that I'm just some flunky who—

ALEX. She did, didn't she?

MALLORY. Yes. Hold on, I'm getting another call.

Lights fade on Alex and up on Jennifer Keaton, isolated in her own light on the other side of Alex. She's in her thirties but still has a baby face.

JENNIFER. Well, what'd he say?

MALLORY. Nothing yet.

JENNIFER. He better come. Mom'll kill him if he misses this.

MALLORY. The election's in a week, he's got a million people needing him, I'm surprised he even answered the phone, why am I defending him?

JENNIFER. I dunno, but if you can't get the job done, we'll have to find someone who can.

MALLORY. Who, you?

JENNIFER. Mom.

MALLORY. Oh no.

JENNIFER. Oh yes. *(Hearing a call-waiting tone.)* I'm getting another call. Hang on.

Lights fade on Mallory, Lights up on Elyse Keaton— isolated in her own light. Now about sixty but looks like Joni Mitchell would look if Joni had ever quit smoking.

ELYSE. Well, did she get him?

JENNIFER. She's on with him now. And I'm on with her.

ELYSE. So, I'm on with you and you're on with her and she's on with him.

JENNIFER. Yup.

ELYSE. And you can push a button and put us all on together?

JENNIFER. Yup.

ELYSE. Well, what are you waiting for? Let's get him.

JENNIFER. I like the way you think, Mom!

She presses a button.

Mal, you still there, I just—

MALLORY. Was she so annoying?

JENNIFER. —conferenced her in.

Beat.

MALLORY. Hi Mom!

ELYSE. Hi Mallory.

MALLORY. Oh my gosh! You look so pretty today, Mom! Did you get your hair done?

ELYSE. You can't see me. We're on the phone.

MALLORY. I can feel the beauty.

JENNIFER. Nice save, Mal.

ELYSE. Did you get him yet?

MALLORY. No, I was on hold with Jennifer.

ELYSE. Well then, let's get him on the phone.

JENNIFER. You mean an ambush?

ELYSE. Exactly.

MALLORY. Wow.

JENNIFER. Right?

MALLORY. Keaton women unite!

She presses a button.

Alex, you still there?

ALEX. Yeah, but in the meantime I did a televised debate, had two rallies, and ran a marathon.

MALLORY. That's all?

ALEX. Listen, Mal, I know why you're calling. Mom just has to understand—

MALLORY. Alex, I conferenced Jen in and—

JENNIFER. Hey Alex.

ALEX. Oh, hey Jen. Look guys, I know it's really important that I be there, but when you're running for office you have to make hard choices and I have an interview on CNN.

MALLORY. Alex, that's not all, Mom—

ALEX. Look, the bottom line is, if Mom wants me to come, she can change the date.

JENNIFER. But, Alex.

ALEX. Don't be Mom's henchmen, okay? If she has something to say she should say it herself.

ELYSE. I should? Okay, good to know.

MALLORY. Mom was conferenced in to Jen.

Gulp.

ALEX. *(Voice cracking.)* Mom! Hi!! I was just thinking about you!

ELYSE. As it so happens, I do have something to say. Want to hear?

ALEX. Of course I do, Mom! Mommy...

ELYSE. Change the interview. Come home.

ALEX. On the next plane.

Lights out on everyone but Alex as...

SCENE 1, LIVING ROOM, ALEX ARRIVES

Lights rise on a room we're all familiar with. It's the Keaton residence in Columbus, Ohio. The one you saw on TV. It's 2008, though you wouldn't necessarily know, because it's all the same. Stage left there is a door leading to the front porch. This is where everyone enters the house. To the right of that there's a set of steps that wraps to the right and is visible on a landing

just above the rest of the living room through balustrades. Downstage left there's a table with four chairs, and to the left of that, a small table with a telephone. On the right there's a sofa and a coffee table, and a few chairs. On the coffee table, there's a slide projector set up. It faces out toward the audience. To the right of the sofa, there's a fireplace. Upstage is a picture window with some stained glass and lacy curtains. Upstage right there's a door to the dining room. Everything in the house looks like it was inherited from your grandma, but nice, and well taken care of. It's the kind of place you always wanted to live, but wouldn't admit to yourself or anyone else.

To the stage right of this set—and connected through a swinging door—is the kitchen. Down left is an oak dining table with four chairs. In the middle of the kitchen there's an island. On the right wall there's a phone and a counter—with the fridge on the upstage side of that. Upstage there's a mudroom, which we can see through windows, and a door. And up left, a pantry with an exit to the dining room.

Alex stands in the living room. He wears a suit and carries a garment bag and a small carry-on suitcase. He drops the bag and lays the carry-on over a chair. He's on the phone. He can use a real cell phone from here on out.

ALEX. Yeah, gotta go. No just tell them—Can they hold off for a few hours? I just got here, I haven't been able to—Nobody knows anything. No, it's tomorrow, that's why I thought we could knock the interview out today. The focus is definitely not supposed to be on me. I just wanted to ask in person. I know—It's important, I know. Nobody knows better how close this race is than I do. Well, I wouldn't say do or die, that's overst... You would. Okay great thanks, no pressure, I'm hanging up now bye!

He ends the call.

FAMILY TIES

by Daniel Goldstein
based on the CBS television series

2 men, 4 women

One of the most beloved television families of the 1980s takes to the stage. Twenty years have passed and Alex P. Keaton, now running for Congress, returns to his parents' Columbus home with his sisters, Mallory and Jennifer, who are parents of their own. Gathered together once again, they relive some of the most important moments from their childhood—the growing pains, heartbreaks, and reconciliations—with fondness and appreciation for simpler times that defined a generation.

"...a real treat... It is a pleasure not only for those who are familiar with the series...but also a deeply relatable story for people of any age or walk of life."

—LeagueOfCincyTheatres.info

"FAMILY TIES will satisfy those who hold a special place in their heart for the Keatons. ...[the play] delivers the touch of emotional sentiment that *Family Ties* is known for."

—DaytonLocal.com



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