

Not My Son

A One-Act Play

By Dolores Klinsky Walker

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Dedication

*To my son Mark Ellis Walker,
who lovingly enabled both script and playwright*

STORY OF THE PLAY

What does the Bible really teach about homosexuality? How can some Christians think it's an awful sin and others welcome gays into church leadership? Sixteen-year-old Peter thinks he is gay, and he's still hoping it's not true, that no one will ever have to know he even suspected it. Peter's father is the pastor of a church, his best buddy is the leader of the youth group. The world would end if they found out. Worse yet, if Ashley did, a girl who's definitely attracted to Peter.

But bit by bit his secret leaks out, and then he isn't the only one facing the dilemma of being gay and Christian. The Bibles come out and questions dance with answers.

This play attempts to fairly represent differing perspectives on an issue many Christians grapple with, and could be particularly helpful for congregations attempting an honest exploration of the topic.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 m, 4 w)

PETER WINSTON: High school youth in mid-teens.

ASHLEY: Peter's buxom date, also mid-teens.

CRAIG: Youth leader at Peter's church. Early 20s.

REV. CLARK WINSTON: Pastor of that church and Peter's father.

KAY CARLSON: A parishioner.

PATRICIA WINSTON: Peter's mother.

ARLINE BERRY: Patricia's mother.

SETTING

(Please see set design last page.)

Autumn, current day. The living room of the Winston home. Offstage up right is the dining room and kitchen. Upstage left is the front entrance. A hall leads offstage left to implied bathroom and bedrooms. The living room is furnished with a sofa, coffee table in front of sofa, occasional chair and recliner, a large footstool, bookcases, etc. A TV is implied downstage center. On a sideboard or shelf down left are three or four framed family pictures; and illustrations hang on the walls.

PROPS

Framed pictures, mugs and coasters, magazine (*on coffee table*), sofa throw pillows, bra, Bible, two backpack of books, TV remote control, 2 glasses of water, 2 cell phones, sacks of groceries, apron, coats for all characters, purses for women.

Scene 1

(AT RISE: Time is the present, early October. The Winstons' living room, late Friday evening. The only light is the front porch light offstage. We hear laughter and the unlocking and opening of the front door; then PETER, holding ASHLEY'S hand, flips a wall switch to light the room as they enter. Peter releases her hand, removes his jacket and hers, and tosses them on the chair. He watches as Ashley wanders around the living room, looking at pictures on the wall, the books on the shelves, running her hand over the fabric of a chair, the book spines, etc.)

PETER: Too bad they can't schedule football games when it isn't so cold!

ASHLEY: *(Not listening picks up a framed picture from the sideboard.)* Who's this, Peter?

PETER: *(Taking it from HER; THEY stand side by side to look at it.)* That's my grandparents -- their wedding picture.

ASHLEY: They must be pretty old. Interesting dress...

PETER: Yeah, Grandma's in her sixties...or seventies? Grandpa died a few years back. Grandma's coming for Thanksgiving. Maybe you'll get to meet her.

ASHLEY: *(Glancing toward the hall at left, and lowering her voice.)* Have your parents gone to bed already?

PETER: No. They're out of town. Dad was invited to come back for a church's 100th birthday celebration. When he was pastor there I was too young to know anyone, so I didn't go along.

ASHLEY: *(Playing with HIS hair.)* So, are you one of those *(Emphasizes.)* "wild" preacher's kids?

PETER: *(Mildly sarcastic.)* Sure. Hadn't you noticed?

ASHLEY: We should have a party! I could text --

PETER: *(Interrupting.)* No thanks.

ASHLEY: It'd be fun!

PETER: It'd be trouble! Want to watch something? I Tivo'd "Glee." *(Or popular show.)*

(ASHLEY stands in front of PETER and gives him a thorough look-over. Then she fingers his hair and smiles.)

ASHLEY: Naaa.

(SHE steps close to him and pulls his head down for a kiss. When it seems to last forever, PETER pulls away.)

PETER: Hey! I'm still getting used to the fact that the hottest girl at school actually went out with me.

ASHLEY: And why shouldn't I? You're quite a hunk. *(SHE draws HIM close for another kiss, and afterwards draws back.)* You could show a little more enthusiasm, though.

(PETER obligingly initiates the next kiss, but keeps it short. He then takes ASHLEY'S hand and pulls her down beside him onto the sofa and turns on the TV. As she scoots close to him he stands up and tosses her the remote.)

PETER: Find something you like. *(Enters the kitchen and moves out of sight while talking.)* I'm going to heat some water for hot chocolate. *(SFX: Brief sound of water running.)*

ASHLEY: *(Speaking over the sound of the water.)* Hot chocolate? *(SHE dumps the remote onto the coffee table and walks unhurriedly toward the kitchen.)* Don't you have anything stronger?

(PETER appears just inside the kitchen opening. He hesitates as he realizes that she's referring to alcohol. Then he smiles, gives a slight shake of the head, and retreats into kitchen.)

ASHLEY: *(Cont'd.)* Some "wild preacher's kid" you are!

PETER: *(Offstage.)* Aren't you cold? I was afraid that game would go on forever! I was freezing. All I could think of was hot chocolate.

ASHLEY: *(Leaning in the kitchen doorway, flirting, as PETER comes back into view.)* That's all you were thinking about? *(PETER apparently misses the point.)* I'm plenty hot. You don't need hot chocolate! I can heat you up.

PETER: *(Grinning and poking HER teasingly.)* Well, having you wrapped around me at the game helped. But hot chocolate's what I need right now.

(Just as ASHLEY pulls HIS head down for another kiss, SFX: The teakettle whistles loudly and PETER jerks back. He escapes into the kitchen and the whistling stops.)

PETER: *(Offstage.)* I'll have these ready in a minute. Go ahead and sit down.

ASHLEY: *(HER face registers irritation, but her voice doesn't.)* Can I use your bathroom first?

PETER: *(Appearing in the doorway and pointing the way.)* Sure. Down the hall. First door on the left.

(HE turns back into the kitchen. ASHLEY exits to the bathroom. Peter returns to the living room with two mugs. He puts them temporarily on a magazine on the coffee table, then gets coasters from a stack on the coffee table, and repositions the mugs on the coasters, at opposite ends of the table. He studies the sofa, thinking, then positions throw cushions at dead center, obviously dividing it into "his" and "hers." He sits on the sofa, channel surfs, and takes a sip of overly hot chocolate and reacts accordingly. Busy coughing, he doesn't notice Ashley return at first. She saunters into the room, slowly swinging a bra dangling from her hand. Peter glances in her direction and stands up abruptly, incredulous.)

PETER: What?!

ASHLEY: Didn't I tell you I was hot?

(PETER just stares at her, his face showing he has no idea what to do next.)

End of Freeview

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