

MAMA'S BOY

SYNOPSIS

***WILL** and **MICHAEL** are a couple in their forties. **WILL**'s mom, **AVA**, is becoming more and more ill. His father never took good care of her and neither did **WILL**, who is now coming to grips with being a middle-aged gay man with parents who could potentially come to rely on him.*

WILL *(on phone)*

Yeah, Dad. I said I'd think about it. No. I don't think so. Listen, I have to talk to Mike about it first, okay? I'll call you back later tonight.

MICHAEL *(enters with birdcage)*

All clean. *(He clucks to the bird.)* Yes? Who's pretty? Handsome boy Conan, that's who! Who's all clean? Is it the Conan-bird? *(Turns to WILL.)* Who was that on the phone?

WILL

My dad.

MICHAEL

Oh, dear. Conan says oh, dear, too, don't you, Conan-bird? Was it awful?

WILL

Not too bad. He wasn't drunk. *(pause)* It's Mom. He has to take her to the clinic again tomorrow. He says she's losing her sight and there's nothing they can do about it. He thinks they're not telling him everything. He doesn't know how to handle them ...

MICHAEL

You know, I swear Conan poops more often than the average bird. It's always a mess. Do you think there's something wrong with him?

WILL

With who?

MICHAEL

Conan. Do you think there's something wrong with Conan?

WILL

Of course not. *(pause)* So here's the thing: Dad wants me down there. To help out with Mom.

MICHAEL

Well, of course he does, honey. After the way he's treated her! I wouldn't be able to look her straight in the eye if I were him!

WILL

I don't think it's about that. I think he's feeling tired and scared and ... and old. I think what this is about, is handing her off. Not literally, but maybe figuratively. Like it's my turn to start taking care of her.

MICHAEL

Oh, no, you don't! You are so not thinking of moving her in here! Tell me you're not thinking of moving her in here! Conan would never stand for it, would you, darling? Seriously, you know I love your mother, but Ava would not, but not, fit in here. We couldn't have friends over! We'd have to share the bathroom with

her! We'd have to give her the first-floor bedroom, and we can't do that, it's the only one with a southern exposure ...

WILL

I think he wants money. I think he wants me to help with decisions.

MICHAEL

Oh, well then, if that's all...

WILL

That's all? Is that what you said? Yeah, that's pretty much all. Making decisions about my mother is all. Minor little thing. You don't get it, do you? Oh, hell ... All this time —

MICHAEL

Yes?

WILL

I never thought about it, you know? My parents, I mean. I spent so much of my life getting away from them, from their small-town stupid narrow mentality and my father's drinking and cheating on her, and her playing the martyr all the time, and everything I hated, the expectations, the disappointments ... and then when I came out it was a relief, you know? That part of it, anyway. Knowing I didn't have

to marry someone I hated just because it's what people do. (*as if just thinking of it*) Knowing I wouldn't ever have to have children. (*beat*) Knowing I wouldn't have that responsibility, that was the biggest relief.

MICHAEL

You have responsibilities, don't kid yourself. We have a nice home, the health club, vacations, that cruise last year ...

WILL

Come off it. Those aren't real responsibilities: they're indulging a lifestyle we both happen to like.

MICHAEL

Yeah, well, you try telling the condo association we don't have this month's fee and see how indulgent they are!

WILL

This is different. Children are a commitment. A long-term responsibility. You know when you have children that your life is changed forever, that you'll never be able to just be you anymore. You know you've taken on something that isn't ever going to go away.

MICHAEL

Don't scare me here, honey. It almost sounds like you've been thinking about it.
Is there something you haven't told me?

WILL

Christ, will you just listen to me for once?

MICHAEL

Yes. Yes of course. I'll stop. I'll be good. Go on.

WILL

It's just ... I've spent my whole life just taking care of myself, you know? And I've made decisions that reinforced everything being just about me. I spent my entire adolescence worrying about coming out and my early twenties coming out and the next ten years proving that I could be as gay as anyone else, and now ... well, here I am, this is it: I'm a middle-aged man with parents who aren't doing well and I don't know how to deal with it. They're expecting me to step up to the plate and I don't even know where the plate is.

MICHAEL

In the china cupboard, of course! Oh, stop, don't look at me like that. You want me to take you seriously and I can't, not when you're not making sense. It's not like you're being irresponsible, you know ... Well, there was that boy in Venice that time, the gondolier, but never mind about that—we agreed not to talk about

him. Come on, you're being a little hard on yourself here. Ava is *not* your responsibility.