

## ***A Father's Love***

*A Play in Two Acts by Bernard Mersier*

### **For Producers, Directors, and Marketing Teams**

#### **1. Elevator Pitch**

*A Father's Love* is a **visceral, emotionally explosive drama** that exposes the hidden wounds of domestic and sexual abuse, while celebrating the redemptive power of love and chosen family. With its **high-stakes conflicts, complex characters, and cathartic resolution**, this play is designed to **grip audiences from the first scene to the final curtain**. It's a story of **survival, resilience, and the courage to break generational cycles of violence**—perfect for theaters seeking **socially relevant, character-driven works** that spark conversation and inspire action.

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#### **2. Why This Play? Why Now?**

##### **Relevance**

- **Timely Themes:** In an era of #MeToo and heightened awareness of domestic violence, *A Father's Love* speaks directly to contemporary conversations about **abuse, accountability, and healing**.
- **Audience Connection:** The play's focus on **teenagers navigating trauma** resonates with young adults, parents, educators, and advocates.
- **Community Engagement:** Ideal for partnerships with **domestic violence organizations, schools, and mental health advocates** for talkbacks, workshops, and outreach.

##### **Artistic Appeal**

- **Dynamic Characters:** Bernard and Tiffany's journeys are **emotionally compelling**, offering actors rich, transformative roles.
  - **High-Stakes Drama:** The play balances **intimate, quiet moments** with **explosive confrontations**, creating a **visceral theatrical experience**.
  - **Cathartic Resolution:** The final act delivers **hope and empowerment**, leaving audiences moved and inspired.
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### 3. Staging Vision

#### Director's Playground

- **Intimacy and Scale:** The play can be staged in **black box theaters** (for a raw, immersive feel) or **proscenium stages** (for a more cinematic approach).
- **Lighting as Storytelling:** Use **moody, shadowy lighting** in Act I to reflect the characters' emotional turmoil, shifting to **warmer tones** in Act II as hope emerges.
- **Sound Design:** Incorporate **subtle, unsettling sounds** (e.g., distant shouting, a ticking clock) to heighten tension, contrasted with **uplifting music** in the final scene.

#### Key Staging Challenges & Opportunities

##### Element

##### Challenge

##### Opportunity

##### Violence on Stage

Depicting abuse without glorifying it.

Use **stylized choreography** and **sound/lighting cues** to imply violence.

##### Set Transitions

Multiple locations (home, school, hospital).

**Modular set design** (e.g., rotating platforms, sliding panels).

##### Emotional Intensity

Maintaining audience engagement.

**Pacing and silence** as tools to amplify emotional beats.

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### 4. Marketing & Audience Development

#### Target Audiences

- **Theatergoers** who appreciate **gritty, realistic dramas** (e.g., fans of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Glass Menagerie*).
- **Advocacy Groups:** Domestic violence shelters, women's organizations, and mental health nonprofits.
- **Educational Institutions:** High schools and universities for **theater programs, gender studies, and psychology courses**.

#### Marketing Hooks

- **Taglines:**
  - *“Some bonds are stronger than blood.”*
  - *“Love shouldn’t hurt. But healing will.”*
- **Visuals:** Use **striking imagery** of Bernard’s boxing gloves, Tiffany’s diary, and Francine’s gun in promotional materials.
- **Social Media:** Leverage **hashtags** like **#BreakTheCycle** and **#MoreThanAMattress** to engage online communities.

## Potential Partnerships

- **Local shelters** for co-hosted events or fundraisers.
  - **Schools** for matinee performances and post-show discussions.
  - **Mental health professionals** for panel discussions on trauma and recovery.
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## 5. Character Arcs & Casting Notes

### Bernard Mersier

- **Arc:** From **rage-filled survivor** to **compassionate protector**.
- **Casting:** Requires an actor who can **balance vulnerability and intensity**, with strong physicality for fight scenes.

### Tiffany

- **Arc:** From **silent victim** to **empowered advocate**.
- **Casting:** Needs an actress who can **convey deep trauma** while projecting **quiet strength** and eventual **triumph**.

### Francine

- **Arc:** From **protective mother** to **maternal figure for Tiffany**.
- **Casting:** A **commanding presence** with the ability to **switch between warmth and steely resolve**.

### Michael & Earl

- **Arc: Villains with depth**—Michael’s charm masks his monstrosity, while Earl’s remorse feels hollow.
  - **Casting:** Actors who can **humanize their flaws** without excusing their actions.
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## 6. Budget & Logistics

### Set & Props

- **Minimalist Approach:** Focus on **symbolic props** (diary, boxing gloves, gun) and **versatile set pieces** (e.g., a single bed frame that doubles as Tiffany's and Bernard's rooms).
- **Cost-Effective:** Can be produced on a **modest budget** with creative lighting and sound design.

### Rehearsal Focus

- **Fight Choreography:** Essential for **Bernard vs. Michael** and **school confrontation** scenes.
  - **Emotional Preparation:** Work with actors on **trauma-informed performance** to ensure authenticity without retraumatization.
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## 7. Post-Show Engagement

- **Talkbacks:** Invite **domestic violence survivors, therapists, or advocates** to lead discussions.
  - **Workshops:** Offer **writing or theater workshops** for survivors to share their stories.
  - **Resource Tables:** Provide **local helpline numbers** and **mental health resources** in the lobby.
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## 8. Closing: The Ask

*A Father's Love* is more than a play—it's a **movement**. We're seeking **producers and directors** who are passionate about **storytelling that challenges and inspires**.

Whether you're drawn to its **artistic potential, social impact, or commercial appeal**, this play is a **powerful addition** to any season.

**Let's bring this story to life—together.**