

MOTHER'S DAY

(synopsis)

In a small Latin American village, a middle-aged couple from Michigan fall afoul of local customs, their own backgrounds, and the secrets they have long withheld from one another. The future of their marriage seems shaky, and, for a time, it seems doubtful that they will even live to tell the tale of their first vacation outside the United States.

STANLEY PUSIO, just forced into early retirement, is bitter and defensive. With his self-esteem at an all-time low, he has become unpleasant and overbearing with his wife, DOROTHY. She, for her part, is acting motherly towards him, which STANLEY resents. The central question arises: After a long but childless marriage, will the two of them have a future together once they get home?

On the last night of their quarrelsome vacation, STAN and DOT find themselves marooned in the village of Santa Marta. The village runs on drugs. When, soon after their arrival, STAN encounters JORGE, the village's young, brash, drug dealer, the two men take an instant dislike to one another.

STAN's collisions with JORGE escalate. A point of no return occurs when STAN, his bravado fueled by liquor, takes to the microphone on the bandstand in the crowded square and, belittling JORGE's virility, subjects him to public humiliation. JORGE swears revenge.

In the early hours of the morning, JORGE and his drug-addicted young cousin, RAUL, break into STAN's and DOT's bedroom and hold them at knife point. In a vicious, mock-classroom session, JORGE instructs the terrified couple on matters of respect and truthfulness. He forces both STAN and DOT into confessions of past transgressions they have withheld from one another. Intent on humiliating STAN to the utmost, JORGE intends to force him to witness RAUL's first sexual experience with a woman—that woman being DOT, herself. The consummation of the act is only narrowly averted. STAN and DOT, humbled and exhausted, are left desperately clinging to one another—desperately and forgivingly.

Later that morning, one final, violent confrontation between STAN and Jorge seems imminent and inevitable—but STAN has changed. Seizing an unforeseen opportunity, STAN saves the day. He and DOT head homewards, towards what could be a different, brighter future.

[114 pages, standard play format]

CAST

STANLEY PUSIO

A middle-aged American tourist

DOROTHY PUSIO

Stan's wife

JORGE	A drug dealer; about 30
MANUEL	The owner of a café/bar
RAUL	Jorge's cousin; about 20
ESTRELLA	Jorge's girlfriend; about 20
EMCEE	Male; any age; (can double with Julio)
JULIO	A bartender

SETTING

A café/bar on the plaza of a Latin-American town

A bedroom on the second floor

TIME

The present