

# MY HUSBAND

BY PAUL RUDNICK

CATE. Oh God, there is so much more.

LIZ. Anyways, it was hilarious. Then her dad ...

CATE. Then my dad, 75 years old, former Marine, tears streaming down his face, saying how privileged he was to be alive for this wedding, and that the only way it could be a happier day, was if my mom was alive too. (*Chokes up a little.*) Tears everywhere. Even my hedge-fund brother! It was lovely. I did miss my mom though. I wore her veil.

LIZ. Then our friend Perry, who married us said, "You may now kiss the broom."

CATE. Oh, right, Liz didn't want bride OR groom and we didn't like the sound of "Gride," so we picked "Broom."

LIZ. We even had two little brooms on the cake.

CATE. Everyone said it was the best reception they'd ever been to.

LIZ. And now we're legally hitched. My old ball and chain. The

Missus. The Little Woman. My Old Lady. The Battle Axe.

CATE. That's enough.

LIZ. My spouse. (*Beat.*) It's funny, when you grow up thinking there is no way a certain thing can ever happen for you, you belittle it, you make fun of it, you say it's stupid because if it is meaningful, if it does matter, then where does that leave you? I used to say a piece of paper couldn't possibly make a difference in how two people feel. But then it did. It does. For me, anyway. Maybe not for everybody.

CATE. For me too. I *feel* married.

LIZ. I do too, well, in New York.

CATE. I don't think I'll feel completely 100 percent married until we're married in every state.

LIZ. Which at this rate won't be till when?

CATE. Like 2060.

LIZ. I think it'll be before then, right? I mean, we know thousands of couples that have gotten married.

CATE. Eight honey, eight so far. But we have a wedding at the end of the month.

LIZ. There is no going back!

CATE. That's right! One day we'll be just as bad at marriage as the straight folk.

LIZ. Yup, and that's how we'll know we've achieved equality. (*She turns to Cate.*) You may now kiss the broom.

**End of Play**

# MY HUSBAND

*Time: 3 P.M.*

*Place: The Upper East Side living room of Gabrielle Finklestein.*

*The front door opens and Michael Finklestein runs in, frantic.*

*Michael is nice-looking, in jeans and a sports jacket. He's a dedicated New York public school teacher.*

MICHAEL. Mom? Mom? Where are you? Are you okay? Mom? (Gabrielle Finklestein enters, from the kitchen or an interior hallway. She looks great; she's an NYU professor, a deeply loving mom and a passionate advocate for liberal causes. At the moment, she's moaning and staggering, as if she's very near death. She can barely speak.)

GABRIELLE. Michael ...

MICHAEL. Mom! (Michael runs to his mother, and helps her into a chair.)

GABRIELLE. Michael ...

MICHAEL. Mom, what is it, I ran all the way here, should I call someone, should I call 911 ...

GABRIELLE. Michael ...

MICHAEL. Mom, talk to me, what's happening, is it your heart, is it, oh my God, do you have a fever, are you nauseous, okay ... (He holds up his hand, in front of her face) How many fingers?

GABRIELLE. (Even closer to death.) One ... two ... three ... (She pauses.)

MICHAEL. Oh my God — only three?

GABRIELLE. Four ... five ... five fingers ...

MICHAEL. That's right, thank God, five fingers ...

GABRIELLE. But I still don't see a ring ...

MICHAEL. Mom?

MICHAEL. Who was their wedding planner?  
 GABRIELLE. Julie Taymor. And you know Madeline Melman, with the identical twin lesbian daughters? Last month in New Hampshire, they had a double ring ceremony, because they met another pair of identical twin lesbians!  
 MICHAEL. Mom ...  
 GABRIELLE. Isn't that spectacular news? Isn't that the best?  
 MICHAEL. Mom, you phoned me at work and said that you were having a dizzy spell and that it might be a stroke. I was in a meeting, which I left to run 38 blocks to make sure you were okay ...  
 GABRIELLE. I'm *fabulous!*  
 MICHAEL. But I don't even have a boyfriend!  
 GABRIELLE. Is that my fault?  
 MICHAEL. Mom ...  
 GABRIELLE. God knows I've tried. I introduced you to Carolyn Kramer's son, who was very hot ...  
 MICHAEL. He was 87!  
 GABRIELLE. And I fixed you up with my stockbroker, Billy Berman, who's so cute ...  
 MICHAEL. He's in jail!  
 GABRIELLE. And I set you up with my doorman, who's six foot four with shoulders and a jawline and biceps ...  
 MICHAEL. And he's straight!  
 GABRIELLE. Who cares — do you know how much we tip him?  
 MICHAEL. Mom!  
 GABRIELLE. Do you know what it's like for me? Do you have any idea? I'm a liberal Jewish Democrat, I teach Political Science at NYU, and all of my friends, when they heard the news, about the vote, everyone called, and they all wanted to know — so when is Michael getting married?  
 MICHAEL. Why would they call? Everyone knows I'm single.  
 GABRIELLE. Not everyone.  
 MICHAEL. What did you do?  
 GABRIELLE. Nothing!  
 MICHAEL. *What did you tell them?*  
 GABRIELLE. I was embarrassed, for both of us! I mean, fine, you're gay, but it's not enough, not anymore! You know Karen Calhoun, who teaches English Lit? Last week her son got married in the Grand Ballroom at the Plaza, with a 58-piece orchestra and 37 ushers, all dressed as angels, and the rabbi was flown in from the ceiling in a golden chariot, which burst into flames.

MICHAEL. Who was their wedding planner?  
 GABRIELLE. Julie Taymor. And you know Madeline Melman, with the identical twin lesbian daughters? Last month in New Hampshire, they had a double ring ceremony, because they met another pair of identical twin lesbians!  
 MICHAEL. Another pair of identical twin lesbians?  
 GABRIELLE. *African American* identical twin lesbians! How am I supposed to compete with that? It was so moving! You should've seen the wedding cake — it looked like an ad for *The Help!*  
 MICHAEL. Mom!  
 GABRIELLE. Every Sunday, when I read the wedding announcements in the *Times*, I look for your picture.  
 MICHAEL. Mom, I have been trying to meet someone forever. I've spent thousands of dollars on the gay versions of eHarmony and J-Date and Match.com.  
 GABRIELLE. Me too.  
 MICHAEL. You? Why?  
 GABRIELLE. I pretended I was you. "Michael Finkelstein, public school teacher, loves his mom, hot, hard-bodied and hung."  
 MICHAEL. Did you get any responses?  
 GABRIELLE. Only other moms.  
 MICHAEL. Exactly! Look, someday, like in a million years, maybe I'll find someone and maybe we'll get married, or maybe not. But you have to stop pressuring me.  
 GABRIELLE. Fine. I understand.  
 MICHAEL. Thank you.  
 GABRIELLE. I only have one minor, tiny little request.  
 MICHAEL. Name it.  
 GABRIELLE. This weekend, please do me a favor, and don't read the *Sunday Times*.  
 MICHAEL. Mom ...  
 GABRIELLE. At least not the wedding announcements ...  
 MICHAEL. Oh my God, *Mom* ...  
 GABRIELLE. Just aim right for the *Book Review* ...  
 MICHAEL. I swear I will kill you. Mom, Mother, what did you do?  
 GABRIELLE. Nothing! Not a thing! It's just, okay, please, I'm begging you, please try to understand, I was in Starbucks, minding my own business, and Eleanor Markowitz comes in, you know the one, she teaches Queer Cinema.  
 MICHAEL. Even though she's not gay.

GABRIELLE. Exactly. She just does it to show off, to prove that she's got the gayest life ever. She calls her husband, Sidney, she calls him her partner. And she's always showing me pictures of the two of them, both dressed as sailors, she says it's very homoerotic, in the tradition of Jean Genet. And I told her, no, it's ridiculous, in the tradition of *Anything Goes*.

MICHAEL. That's right!

GABRIELLE. But Tuesday was the last straw. Because she shows me pictures of her son Oscar's honeymoon. And you know, they named him Oscar Wilde, just to make sure he'd be gay.

MICHAEL. So his name is Oscar Wilde Markowitz?

GABRIELLE. Oscar Wilde Walt Whitman Michaelangelo Markowitz.

MICHAEL. Oh my God ...

GABRIELLE. And so she shows me one picture after another, here's Oscar and his husband in front of Stonewall, here's Oscar and his husband at the revival of *The Normal Heart*, here's Oscar and his husband making one of those "It Gets Better" videos. They were surrounded by all of their hundreds of wedding gifts. Oscar looks right into the camera and he says, "If you're being bullied in middle school, don't worry, because it gets better." And the husband says, "And you get stemware."

MICHAEL. Oh my God ...

GABRIELLE. And the two of them, they're hyphenating their last names ...

MICHAEL. Oh no, please no ...

GABRIELLE. So he's gonna be Oscar Wilde Walt Whitman Michaelangelo Markowitz-Waldbaum!

MICHAEL. Stop!

GABRIELLE. And they just adopted a Ukrainian baby, and do you know what they're calling it?

MICHAEL. What?

GABRIELLE. Christopher.

MICHAEL. Well, that's not so bad ...

GABRIELLE. Christopher Street Marcel Proust Rosie O'Donnell Markowitz-Waldbaum!

MICHAEL. That's insane!

GABRIELLE. I cracked! I couldn't help myself! Eleanor just made me so angry, so I told her, I said, you know — my son Michael is getting married too!

MICHAEL. You didn't!  
GABRIELLE. To a cardiac surgeon who operates exclusively on gay children in third-world countries.

MICHAEL. Wait — how does he know the children are gay?

GABRIELLE. Because their hearts are so big.

MICHAEL. Oh my God ...

GABRIELLE. And your husband, I wanted him to be even gayer than Eleanor's son and his husband put together, so I told her that his name was — Dr. Todd Williams-Sonoma-Outlet.

MICHAEL. Of course.

GABRIELLE. And you're getting married next weekend, and you're registered everywhere, and I sent the announcement to the *Times*.

MICHAEL. I can't believe this! I can't believe that you have so little faith in me! I can't believe that my own mother would stoop so low!

GABRIELLE. I'm sorry, I was out of my mind! I'll call Eleanor, I'll tell her it was all a lie, and then I'll call the *Times* and I'll have them cancel the announcement.

MICHAEL. Wait.

GABRIELLE. What?

MICHAEL. Did you ... did you send in a picture? Of the happy couple?

GABRIELLE. Of course. Because when Eleanor's son got married the two men both had matching trendy haircuts and matching trendy eyeglass frames and they both looked so smug. So for Todd, I found this picture of a male model and I photoshopped the two of you.

MICHAEL. Which male model?

GABRIELLE. He's gorgeous, from the Dolce and Gabbana ads ...

MICHAEL. Oh my God, the guy with the chest and the abs and the tiny white bathing suit?

GABRIELLE. Of course.

MICHAEL. In the photo, in our wedding picture, is he — is he wearing the tiny white bathing suit?

GABRIELLE. You both are.

MICHAEL. Really?

GABRIELLE. For the picture of you, I used your head, but I photoshopped Superman's legs, Captain America's arms and the Green Lantern's shoulders.

MICHAEL. What about my waistline?

GABRIELLE. Wonder Woman.

MICHAEL. I love that!

GABRIELLE. I got an advance copy of the announcement. *(She takes out a copy of the Times and reads aloud.)* "Michael Finklestein and Dr. Todd Williams-Sonoma-Outlet were married earlier today onstage at Radio City Music Hall, during the Tony Awards, by the Pope. His Holiness told Mr. Finklestein, "Your mother has convinced me that gay marriage is great." The Pope concluded the ceremony by announcing, "*Fuck Eleanor Markowitz.*" Is that okay?

MICHAEL. *(Sincerely.)* Mom, it's beautiful.

GABRIELLE. *Mazel tov! (They embrace joyously. Blackout.)*

**End of Play**

# LONDON MOSQUITOES

BY MOISÉS KAUFMAN