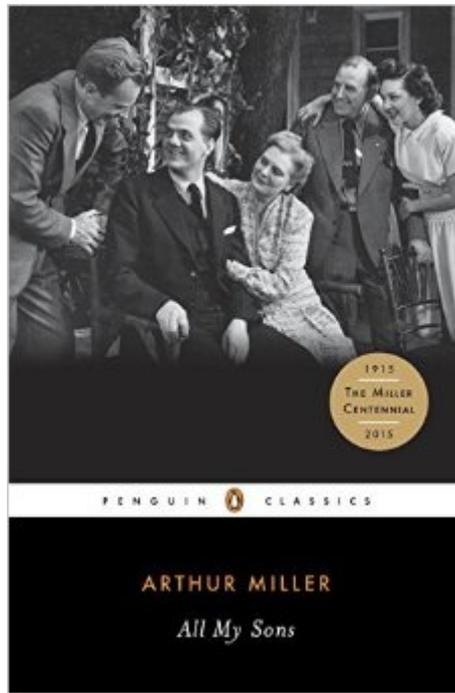


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All My Sons (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

Joe Keller and Steve Deever, partners in a machine shop during World War II, turned out defective airplane parts, causing the deaths of many men. Deever was sent to prison while Keller escaped punishment and went back to business, making himself very wealthy in the ensuing years. In Miller's work of tremendous power, a love affair between Keller's son, Chris, and Ann Deever, Steve's daughter, the bitterness of George Keller, who returns from the war to find his father in prison and his father's partner free, and the reaction of a son to his father's guilt escalate toward a climax of electrifying intensity. Winner of the Drama Critics' Award for Best New Play in 1947, *All My Sons* established Arthur Miller as a leading voice in the American theater. *All My Sons* introduced themes that thread through Miller's work as a whole: the relationships between fathers and sons and the conflict between business and personal ethics. This edition features an introduction by Christopher Bigsby. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

The late Lord Bertrand Russell once said, "Actions have consequences." Arthur Miller makes it

clear: Bad actions have bad consequences in his early play, "All My Sons." Set not long after the end of World War II, the play concerns big issues: life and death, and the necessity of living a moral life. The conflict pits the idealistic son, Chris Keller against his pragmatist father, Joe Keller, owner of a manufacturing plant that shipped out defective airplane parts during the war. As a result, twenty-one pilots died when their planes crashed. This early play foreshadows the disillusionment by the son of the father that plays so predominantly in "Death of a Salesman," the flagship of Miller's dramatic output. Miller also introduces the idealist's version of moral behavior. When younger son Chris discovers his father's flawed decision to continue production of cracked engine parts, he berates him for lacking the high caliber of character of which he thought his dad was made. His father sincerely asks Chris: "What could I do?" The key line and one which comes to fruition in "The Crucible" is "You could be better." Actions have consequences. Yes, I am revealing a key secret in the play, but it is the consequences of this revelation that is really the clincher of Miller's powerful morality play. That I will not reveal. But lack of idealism, lack of moral turpitude show the inner essence of a person. Everyone is born with this pure core. Time and circumstances chip away, a day at a time, a person's idealism. Only the few survive. Joe Keller has revealed a seriously hacked core; Chris's is still intact. But at what price? Two other stories deal with the consequences of idealism.

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