

All My Sons

Arthur Millier's ***All My Sons*** tells the story of an American family caught up in the struggle between personal responsibility and duty to their country. Joe Keller, a successful, self-made man has done a terrible thing: during WWII, hurriedly trying to meet an order from the Army, he knowingly sold them defective airplane parts that later caused the planes to crash and killed 21 men. He engineered his own exoneration and falsely turned in his business partner; now, his son is about to marry the partner's daughter, the situation is revisited, and his lie of life is revealed.

Male Roles:

Joe Keller (late 50's to 60's) Middle aged and prosperous. Joe is a genial, uneducated but hard working manufacturer and is secretly responsible for the death of 21 pilots because he allowed damaged cylinder heads to be shipped from his factory during WWII, and then let his business partner Steve Deever take the rap and go to prison. American rugged individualism alienated Keller, whose past misdeeds haunt the future of his family.

Chris Keller (30's) Returning from the war a hero, Chris found the day-to-day provincialism of his old life stifling. However, Chris is a family man, and he is devoted to his parents. He is uncomfortable with the success his father's business found during the war, when so many of his comrades died pointlessly. He redirects his discomfort into idealism and an attitude of social awareness that is foreign to his family environment. Others perceive Chris's idealism as oppressive, asking sacrifices of others that Chris himself does not make as he lives comfortably (if guiltily) on his father's dime.

George Deever (30's) George is a successful attorney and WWII veteran and childhood friend of Chris's. He initially believed in his father's guilt, but upon visiting Steve in jail, realizes his innocence and becomes enraged at the Kellers for deceiving him. He returns to save his sister from her marriage to Chris and is the catalyst that destroys the Keller family.

Frank Lubey (30's – 40's) Another childhood friend, Frank was ahead of the draft. He married Lydia and has three small children. He is helping Kate by drawing up a horoscope that proves Larry (the Keller's other son) could not have died. He is a somewhat simple but a kind family man.

Jim Bayliss (40's – 50's) Jim is a successful doctor, but is frustrated with the stifling domesticity of his life. He wants to become a medical researcher, but continues in his job as it pays the bills. He is interested in medicine not for the money but to help people. He is a close friend to the Keller's and spends a lot of time in the backyard.

Bert (7-10) Bert is a little boy who lives in the neighborhood; he is friends with the Bayliss' son Tommy and frequently visits the Keller's' yard to play "jail" with Joe. He appears twice in the show.

Female Roles:

Kate Keller (Mother) – (50's to 60's) Though she has a successful husband and a loving son, Mother cannot abandon the memory of her other son, Larry, who was lost in the war. Her delusions about Larry's disappearance and her vehement self-denial are symptomatic of greater issues than just a grief-stricken mother's inability to cope with the loss of a child. Nervous and suspicious, Mother has taken on the burden of her husband's secret while he presents the face of an untroubled conscience to the world, while she suffers from headaches and nightmares. Her fantasies about Larry are constructed from a sense of self-preservation, and the flimsy basis for her hopes is threatened any time someone who loved Larry intimates that he or she may not share Kate's confidence in his return.

Ann Deever (30's) – The beautiful Ann has not become attached to a new man since her beau Larry died in the war, but this is not through lack of suitors. Ann is mired in the past, though she has not been waiting for Larry to return. Rather, she has waited for his brother Chris to step forward and take Larry's place in her heart. She is an honest, down-to-earth girl, and she is emboldened by the strength of her convictions. Sharing Chris's idealism and righteousness, she has shunned her father for his crimes during the war, and she fully understands Chris's assertion that if he has any suspicions of his own father, he could not live with himself. Ann and her brother George work to establish 'appropriate' reactions to a father's wartime racketeering.

Lydia Lubey (30's – 40's) Frank's wife and George's former girlfriend. Lydia is a picture of domestic bliss and a sweet positive example of the one-who-got-away.

Sue Bayliss (40's – 50's) Sue put her husband through medical school, and she expects more than gratitude in return. She is needling and dangerous but affectionate, but is secretly resentful of what she sees as Chris's bad idealistic influence on Jim. Sue confronts Ann about her resentment of Chris in a particularly volatile scene, revealing to Ann that the neighbors all think Joe is guilty.