

**MOTHER CALDWELL by David Foley**  
**excerpt**

**REGINA:** Come in.

*[ERIC enters, carrying a suitcase.]*

**ERIC:** *[a little grimly]* Mother.

**REGINA:** Eric...? *[She notices the suitcase.]* Are you... going somewhere?

**ERIC:** Yes, Mother. I'm leaving.

**REGINA:** Leaving?

**ERIC:** *[a little less certain]* Yes, I'm—I'm—going away.

**REGINA:** Where?

**ERIC:** To live with a friend. No. Not a friend—that's not true. To live with a man—a man who is my... lover. I'm gay, Mother. This is what I wish to tell you. I'm... gay.

**REGINA:** Oh... I see...

*[He stares at her.]*

**ERIC:** You... see?

**REGINA:** Yes, yes. I see. But then... *[as if to herself]* I see so much now... So much more than I used to.

**ERIC:** I'm not sure I understand.

**REGINA:** *[distractedly]* Yes, yes... How could you...? When even I... *[She drifts into silence.]*

**ERIC:** Mother, I feel you are not paying attention.

**REGINA:** But of course I am.

**ERIC:** But listen to what I'm telling you. I'm going away.

**REGINA:** Yes, you said.

**ERIC:** Just listen a minute. I'm going away. To live with a man. Who is my lover. You see?

**REGINA:** *[meditatively]* Yes... Yes...

**ERIC:** Mother—

**REGINA:** Eric?

**ERIC:** I guess what I'm looking for—I guess what I need from you right now, Mother—is some reaction more—pronounced than that.

**REGINA:** But why?

**ERIC:** Mother, for years you have told me—about right and wrong. For years you have—instructed me. And I've just told you that I'm flying in the face of all you taught me.

**REGINA:** Yes. How much I thought I knew...

**ERIC:** Wait a minute, Mother. Here I am throwing aside everything you ever stood for. I've said I'm gay which is something you abhor. I've said I'm going to live with a man—as his lover—which, in your eyes, is a sin of the worst description. I think the least I'm owed at this point is—is a lively discussion! [*He waits a beat. Then a plea:*] Mother? Please? Speak to me.

[*Pause.*]

**REGINA:** I have nothing to say.

**ERIC:** Nothing?

**REGINA:** Nothing.

[*Pause.*]

**ERIC:** Well, I guess that's it then. I'll be— on my way.

[*He starts to go. Then suddenly turns on her.*]

**ERIC:** Look at me!

[*She looks at him, but only with the same inscrutable serenity. He waits a moment—for some word or some break in her composure. Then he turns and goes. The lights go down.*]