

LIVING ON LOVE

BY **JOE DiPIETRO**

BASED ON THE PLAY *PECCADILLO*
BY **GARSON KANIN**



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

LIVING ON LOVE
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LIVING ON LOVE received its world premiere at the Williamstown Theatre Festival (Stephen M. Kaus, Producer; Jenny Gersten, Artistic Director Emeritus) in Williamstown, Massachusetts, on July 16th, 2014. It was directed by Kathleen Marshall; the set design was by Derek McLane; the costume design was by Michael Krass; the lighting design was by Peter Kaczorowski; the sound design was by Scott Lehrer; the music coordinator was Rob Fisher; and the production stage manager was Brandon Kahn. The cast was as follows:

RAQUEL DE ANGELIS Renée Fleming
VITO DE ANGELIS Doug Sills
ROBERT SAMSON Justin Long
IRIS PEABODY Anna Chlumsky
BRUCE Blake Hammond
ERIC Scott Robertson

LIVING ON LOVE premiered on Broadway at the Longacre Theatre on April 1, 2015. It was directed by Kathleen Marshall; the set design was by Derek McLane; the costume design was by Michael Krass; the lighting design was by Peter Kaczorowski; the sound design was by Scott Lehrer; the music coordinator was Rob Fisher; and the production stage manager was Beverly Jenkins. The cast was as follows:

RAQUEL DE ANGELIS Renée Fleming
VITO DE ANGELIS Doug Sills
ROBERT SAMSON Jerry O'Connell
IRIS PEABODY Anna Chlumsky
BRUCE Blake Hammond
ERIC Scott Robertson

CHARACTERS

RAQUEL DE ANGELIS: One of the greatest opera singers on the planet, she couldn't be more beguiling. When Raquel De Angelis enters a room, everyone in the room knows it.

VITO DE ANGELIS: Her husband. One of the greatest conductors on the planet. His Italian accent is thick. His temper is legendary. He has Einstein hair.

ROBERT SAMSON: A young, somewhat nervous writer. Forced to ghostwrite to earn a living.

IRIS PEABODY: A young, dedicated, determined career woman.

BRUCE: A servant.

ERIC: A similar servant.

PUCCINI: Raquel's tiny dog.

PLACE

A glorious Manhattan penthouse.

TIME

1957.

LIVING ON LOVE

ACT ONE

Scene 1

In the dark, we hear Mozart's overture to The Marriage of Figaro.

As the music plays, the curtain rises on the living room of a truly glorious Manhattan penthouse.

A spring afternoon, 1957.

Robert, our youthful scribe, listens to a Dictaphone recording as the Figaro overture comes to its stirring conclusion.

VITO. (*Voiceover on Dictaphone.*) And-a then, after I conduct the most beauty-ful *Marriage of-a Figaro*, I looked at all the peoples loving Maestro and Maestro began to cry.

ROBERT. Cry?

VITO. (*Voiceover on Dictaphone.*) Because Maestro was not-a just-a good, Maestro was *magnifico!*

ROBERT. Oh c'mon!

VITO. (*Voiceover on Dictaphone.*) And of-a course, before I-a leave Cleveland, I make-a the love to the entire humming chorus of-a *Madama Butterfly*.

ROBERT. What? Is that even possible?

VITO. (*Voiceover on Dictaphone.*) I-a know what you-a thinking—is-a that even possible?

ROBERT. Oh for the love of... (*Robert switches off the machine.*)

Maestro! You need to come out now! We're writing a memoir! Something in it has to be true! *(He rings a bell and Eric and Bruce, our identically dressed servants, simultaneously enter.)*

ERIC and BRUCE. Yes?

ROBERT. The Maestro and I had a session scheduled for ten A.M. It is now— *(Glances at his watch.)* Good lord—quarter to three!

BRUCE. Sir, the Maestro operates on the Maestro's time—

ERIC. And there's nothing anyone can do about it.

ROBERT. Do you at least have any idea when he'll be ready for me?

BRUCE. Sir, the Maestro will be ready for you when the Maestro will be ready for you—

ERIC. And there's nothing anyone can do about it.

ROBERT. Well is he going to show up at all today?

BRUCE. Sir, last night, the Maestro entertained Jackie Robinson—

ERIC. Salvador Dalí.

BRUCE. Tony Bennett.

ERIC. Jayne Mansfield.

BRUCE. And Vice President Nixon.

ERIC. And there's nothing anyone can do about it.

BRUCE. May we assist you with anything else, sir?

ROBERT. Well actually, not that I care but, I did read that Mrs. De Angelis is nearing the end of her world tour. Do you have any idea when she'll be home?

BRUCE. Sir, the Diva operates on the Diva's time—

ERIC. And there's nothing anyone can do about it.

ROBERT. Well thank you very much, you've both been incredibly unhelpful.

ERIC and BRUCE. It is our pleasure, sir. *(Bruce and Eric bow and exit.)*

ROBERT. Maestro! Please Maestro, we need to work! *(Robert notices an album.)* La Diva's *Tosca* at the Paris Opera! This was recorded?! This must be one of the only copies in existence. Oh! My! God! *(He puts on the LP and "Vissi d'arte" from Puccini's Tosca fills the air. It is sung—in glorious voice—by none other than Raquel De Angelis.)* Oh, La Diva— *(Robert begins to lip sync, subtly at first, but he gets so caught up in the music, he begins to grandly gesture and emote.)*

RAQUEL. *(On record.)*

*Vissi d'arte, vissi d'amore
non feci mai male ad anima viva!*

Con man furtiva quante...!

(And Vito De Angelis—wearing sunglasses, a bathrobe, and smoking a

cigarette, enters. As Robert makes a sweeping gesture to correspond with Raquel's glorious A-flat, Vito throws a pillow at the record player, scratching the record into silence.)

VITO. *Buongiorno.*

ROBERT. Oh my goodness, did you just...? Did you just...?

VITO. Sì, she-a sing too loud.

ROBERT. But it's La Diva! Your wife! The greatest voice in all of music!

VITO. And she-a sing all the time.

ROBERT. Maestro, we need to work! *(He rings the bell. Bruce and Eric enter with breakfast.)*

VITO. I-a try take a nap, she sing.

ROBERT. Oh, no, no, not you two—

VITO. I-a try to eat-a supper, she sing.

ROBERT. Back, back, back—

VITO. She sing here, she sing there—

ROBERT. Please, Mr. De Angelis—

VITO. Hey, always call me Maestro.

ROBERT. I'm sorry, Maestro, but we need to have a little talk.

VITO. This going to be long talk?

ROBERT. A talk between professionals.

VITO. Sì, long talk. Writer want some wine for long talk?

ROBERT. I don't drink wine when I'm working.

VITO. Why not? Maybe make you better writer.

ROBERT. Look Maestro, our publisher called this morning.

VITO. That nice. What he want?

ROBERT. Pages.

VITO. That nice. Of what?

ROBERT. The book. He needs to see pages but I have hardly any to give him.

VITO. Why not, you lazy?

ROBERT. Whoa, wait, what? You think I'm the one who's lazy? Me? Not you, me?! I'm the lazy one!?

VITO. You very nervous, you have girlfriend?

ROBERT. What?

VITO. You have girlfriend?

ROBERT. What has that got to do with...?

VITO. You need girlfriend. Then you no act so—yah! yah! yah!—all the time.

ROBERT. Maestro, I don't need a girlfriend—

VITO. You need a girlfriend—

ROBERT. No, what I need is for you to show up for our sessions!

VITO. And you need girlfriend. Here, have some wine.

ROBERT. I don't want any wine—

VITO. But it-a help you forget.

ROBERT. Forget what?

VITO. That you no have girlfriend.

ROBERT. I am perfectly happy without a girlfriend! I am a dedicated man of letters and I am content to be alone with my thoughts and my words!

VITO. Okay, now Maestro know why people no like you.

ROBERT. People like me.

VITO. *No*, they don't.

ROBERT. How can you say that? You've never even seen me with other people?

VITO. *Sì*, 'cause they no like you.

ROBERT. Listen, Maestro, every day you distract me with these ridiculous digressions, but not today—we have to work!

VITO. Maestro work! Maestro talk into little machine you give Maestro.

ROBERT. Yes, but every time you speak into the Dictaphone, it's always about the number of women you've—how do you put it—“made the love to.”

VITO. *Sì, sì*, is good, no?

ROBERT. No, is no good! For one thing, most of it doesn't even ring true. I mean, did you really sleep with the entire humming chorus of *Madame Butterfly*?

VITO. I was-a whole weekend in Cleveland, what else Maestro to do?

ROBERT. Oh c'mon, at your age?

VITO. What?

ROBERT. What?

VITO. What?

ROBERT. What?

VITO. What?

ROBERT. Nothing.

VITO. *No*, what you just say?

ROBERT. Nothing—

VITO. *No*, you say “at your age.” You think Maestro old man?

ROBERT. No, I just meant, well...—

VITO. How old you think Maestro?

ROBERT. Oh, I know how old you are. You were born in nineteen-oh... (*Vito puts his hand over Robert's mouth.*)

VITO. No, that wrong.

ROBERT. But I went to immigration and checked your birth certificate and it said nineteen-oh...— (*Vito puts his hand over Robert's mouth.*)

VITO. Still wrong. Maestro born in 1920.

ROBERT. But that would make you thirty-seven. (*He laughs.*) You haven't been thirty-seven for many, many years— (*Robert laughs some more. Vito glares at him, holds up his butter knife.*)

VITO. *Va bene*, I take knife now and keel you—

ROBERT. Ah! No, stop, stop! I'm a writer! You can't just kill a writer! It isn't professional! What if Mrs. De Angelis should walk in?!

VITO. No! Wife on-a world tour!

ROBERT. But she's due back any day now!

VITO. Hey, why-a you care so much?

ROBERT. Oh, I don't care, no, no, no.

VITO. *Aspetta*. I-a walk in before, and you-a listen to her-a record and pretend to be her. Maybe you like La Diva more than you like Il Maestro?

ROBERT. What? Ha! That's ridiculous. Ha ha ha. We really need to work—

VITO. Maestro keep eye on writer—

ROBERT. Now where were we? Ah yes, page two. Nine weeks, page two. (*Reads.*) "It's no surprise that I became a conductor—..."

VITO. A brilliant conductor!

ROBERT. Okay, "a brilliant conductor," that's very humble.

VITO. *Grazie*.

ROBERT. "My papa told me..."

VITO. (*Suddenly emotional.*) Oh, Papa! Papa!

ROBERT. You okay? (*A choked-up Vito nods.*) "My... this person told me that at the tender age of three, I would stand in front of the gramophone and conduct whatever was playing. From the start, my big heart was always in conducting."

VITO. That very good! When I say that?

ROBERT. Never. I came up with that. (*Reading.*) "I often say that one cannot make art unless one has first lived. And I first started living when I met my Raquel."

VITO. *Molto bene!* You say that?

ROBERT. No, that actually came from you.

LIVING ON LOVE

by Joe DiPietro

4M, 2W

When a demanding diva discovers that her larger-than-life maestro husband has become enamored with the lovely young lady hired to ghostwrite his largely fictional autobiography, she hires a handsome, young scribe of her own. Sparks fly, silverware is thrown, and romance blossoms in the most unexpected ways in this delightful and hilarious romantic comedy.

“DiPietro ... has a knack for writing for daffy characters and this play has a half-dozen of them. It feels comforting, like an old black-and-white film, and yet there’s a newness here, too ... [a] satisfying, sweet comedy ...”

—Associated Press

“LIVING ON LOVE ... makes you laugh and love it!”

—National Public Radio

“A guilty pleasure ... This is a show that has its cake, eats it, and then rubs whipped cream all over its face.”

—New York Post

“LIVING ON LOVE flies by with nearly as many jokes as there are sparkles on a La Bohème costume ...”

—The Star-Ledger (NJ)

Also by Joe DiPietro

ART OF MURDER

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