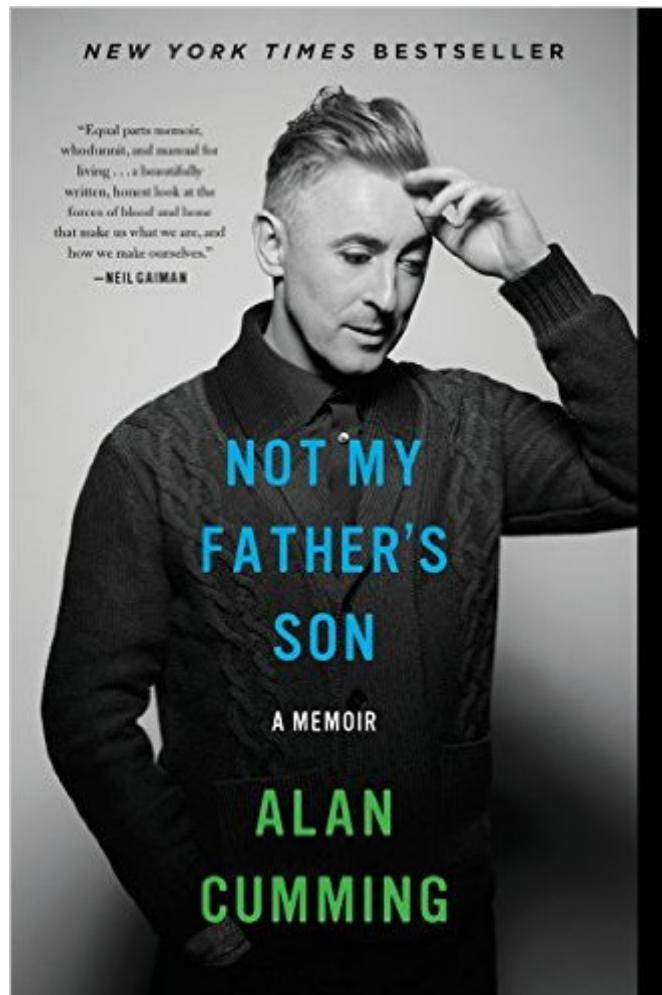


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Not My Father's Son: A Memoir



Synopsis

In his unique and engaging voice, the acclaimed actor of stage and screen shares the emotional story of his complicated relationship with his father and the deeply buried family secrets that shaped his life and career. A beloved star of stage, television, and film—“one of the most fun people in show business” (Time magazine)—Alan Cumming is a successful artist whose diversity and fearlessness is unparalleled. His success masks a painful childhood growing up under the heavy rule of an emotionally and physically abusive father—a relationship that tormented him long into adulthood. When television producers in the UK approached him to appear on a popular celebrity genealogy show in 2010, Alan enthusiastically agreed. He hoped the show would solve a family mystery involving his maternal grandfather, a celebrated WWII hero who disappeared in the Far East. But as the truth of his family ancestors revealed itself, Alan learned far more than he bargained for about himself, his past, and his own father. With ribald humor, wit, and incredible insight, Alan seamlessly moves back and forth in time, integrating stories from his childhood in Scotland and his experiences today as a film, television, and theater star. At times suspenseful, deeply moving, and wickedly funny, Not My Father’s Son will make readers laugh even as it breaks their hearts.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In the 43 years that Alan Cumming writes about in his memoir, he has endured much pain and much happiness. Born in Angus, Scotland, he lived with his parents and brother. His father a brutal

man who certainly left his mark on Alan and the entire family. In this book, 'Not My Father's Son', Alan Cumming moves from 'then' 1965 and his school years to 'now', 2010. The Then and Now occur in alternating chapters. We are introduced to Alan as his father cuts his hair with a rusty pair of clippers, all the while screaming at what a useless boy he was, and worse. This was what his days were like, terrified of his father's outbreaks of violence and abuse, Alan and his brother, Thom, walked and talked as silently as they could. Any little matter could cause pain and injury. Their mother was mostly silent and compliant, we don't know if she was beaten into silence or why she never came to their rescue. Life until Alan was 17 and old enough to go to college was filled with violence, abuse and dislike. Now, brings us to 2010, when Alan was caught up in a television show, 'Who Do You Think You Are', which traced his relatives, and in this case his grandfather, Tom Darling. Alan's mother, Mary, never knew her father, he went off to War and never came home. He lived his later years after the war in Malaysia. No one knew why he had given up on his family. Now, Alan was going to trace his last years, and it would appear on this show. In the process Alan faced his own demons, and, in particular, his father. This is Alan Cumming's story to find the truth of his grandfather, his father and himself. This is a marvelously written memoir. Poetic at times, but always written with such surety that I was confident that Alan would find his true self and his way.

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