

The Team Excerpt – Michael Kras

The Team

A Play by Michael Kras

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The Team Excerpt – Michael Kras

CHARACTERS

Bobbie

Alicia

Miranda

Jenna

Jess

SETTING

A high school gym. A hallway. Miranda's house.

SYNOPSIS

Bobbie Brantwood just returned to school after dealing with the suicide of her brother Ben, a former high school basketball superstar. To process her grief, she's joining the White Oak senior girls' basketball team as they prepare for a live-or-die battle to championships. The crushing weights of expectation, grief, and identity loom as each member of the team reaches the end of high school and stands on the precipice of their uncertain futures.

The Team was written and developed with support from the Ontario Arts Council and Theatre Aquarius. The play made its world premiere in the 2018/19 seasons at Essential Collective Theatre in St. Catharines, Ontario and Theatre Aquarius in Hamilton, Ontario from March 14th-23rd, 2019 with the following cast and creative team:

Bobbie – Lennon Bradford

Alicia – Kaitlin Race

Miranda – Emily Lukasik

Jenna – Laura Welch

Jess – Kaylyn Valdez-Scott

Director – Colin Bruce Anthes

Assistant Director – Michelle Mohammed

Stage Manager – Jessica Campbell-Maracle

Costume Design – Jo Pacinda

Lighting and Set Design – James McCoy

Sound Design – Ethan Rising

Production Manager – Rebecca Walsh

Dramaturg – Luke Brown

ACCOLADES

Herman Voaden National Playwriting Prize (Winner, 2017)

TYA Award – Tom Hendry Awards, Playwrights Guild of Canada (Nominee, 2018)

Safe Words New Canadian Play Award (Finalist, 2017)

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ON THE CHARACTERS

While these characters are teenagers, these young women are also dropped-in, grounded, complex individuals. Please avoid stereotype in all aspects of the work, including voice and body, even when it might feel like the text could be pushing you there.

ON SIMULTANEOUS DIALOGUE

A slash (/) in the middle of line of dialogue denotes the start of the next line, creating an overlap. Two groups of text side-by-side are to be spoken simultaneously. In cases where each piece of text is the same length, try to start and end them at roughly the same time. In cases where one line starts later or ends earlier, try to be as precise as possible with that timing.

ON BASKETBALL

These characters are proficient basketball players. Your actors don't need to be. The premiere production of this play didn't have a single basketball onstage, and everything was suggested by precise choreography and rhythmic soundscape. It worked gorgeously, and meant that there were no basketballs bouncing around to get in the way of the intricacies of the text.

ON PACE

The play was written with a very specific pace, rhythm, and music in mind. Keep it moving. Keep it active.

ON CASTING

This members of the team can and should reflect the diverse make-up of a contemporary Canadian high school. Please do the work to cast accordingly.

ON BLACKOUTS

No blackouts except for the very end, for the love of god.

ONE MORE THING

Empathy first. Empathy always. Despite the intense circumstances, there's tons of love between these young women. Embrace it every chance you get.

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It starts in the high school gym at White Oak Secondary School. There's a game play energy to this whole play. Even when they're not actually playing basketball.

Preshow, ALICIA, MIRANDA, JENNA, and JESS, four core players of the White Oak Senior Girl's Basketball Team, are warming up, stretching, practicing fundamentals. A whistle blows.

ALICIA

Welcome back ladies!

I hope we all enjoyed the break

Unexpected as it was.

But we've got some extra practices to play catch-up so

Let's get back in it

And kill the rest of this season

We'll get started when everyone's here.

Warm up

Stretch

Whatever you need to do.

MIRANDA

Guys tell me I dreamed that

Tell me Coach actually chose Amy Schneider

AKA the best and most qualified player at those tryouts

For our

You know

Biggest and most important season ever?

Tell me Bobbie Brantwood is not about to walk in that door.

JENNA

Miranda don't be like

Mean

MIRANDA

I'm not

I'm sure she's a lovely human

But let's be real

I mean just because her brother was great

Like

You can't tell me this wasn't a pity pick.

ALICIA

Bobbie earned it too

She deserves it.

JESS

Becky can suck my dick for leaving.

Midway through season?

Fucking Becky

Dead to me

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JENNA

Blame her dad

JESS

Fucking Becky's dad

Dead to me

ALICIA

Oh how dare he get a job!

Monster!

JESS

A job in Pickering though?

MIRANDA

Whatever

Can't change it now

We just have to make it work.

With

Bobbie Brantwood.

ALICIA

She was focused

She was present

I saw it

Coach saw it

She'll be great

Coach wouldn't blow the season on someone who sucks.

MIRANDA

Like she disappears from school for like ever

And the first day she comes back

She's like

Hmm maybe I should join the ball team?

She's never even played before.

ALICIA

So?

MIRANDA

So some of us worked hard to get here

Some of us still work our asses off

And someone walks in

Who's never trained

Who's never played for real before

Who looks like a boy band dropout

And oh here you go

Here's a spot

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JESS

Boy band dropout
Oh my / god I'm gonna pee

ALICIA

I think it's the right choice

MIRANDA

We'll see.

JENNA

Hey what do we say to her about Ben do / we say

JESS

Nothing are you crazy?

JENNA

Well like I don't want it to be weird so
And besides the gym?
Ben Brantwood Memorial Gym?
We can't really avoid it so

ALICIA

She'll be here any minute
And when she gets here
We're not gonna be weird
We're not gonna treat her weird
We're gonna welcome her
We're gonna be like
Welcome to our team
Because we're a team
And she earned it
Just like we did when we joined
Let's warm up

They break off and get ready. BOBBIE rushes in.

BOBBIE

Yo sorry sorry
Anderson wanted to talk to me after math
And it uh went long
Am I late?

ALICIA

No no no you're fine
We're just all early

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BOBBIE

Anyway I'm uh
I'm here I'm ready let's uh
I've never done anything like this before
I've never played like legit before
Whatever it's
I'm Bobbie by the way
I don't / think we

MIRANDA

Miranda
Nice to meet you
Congrats on making the best team in the district.

BOBBIE

I think this'll be cool
I mean I'm excited to / uh

MIRANDA

It will be
My advice though?
Just be ready to work
You have a lot of catching / up to

ALICIA

I think you're gonna do great
Welcome to the team
How have I never seen you play before now?

BOBBIE

I've been around and uh
I mean my brother and I
We used to play together
One on one
So I just kinda learned by doing it

ALICIA

Well consider me impressed
Anyway get settled
I've gotta go check in with Coach before we start

ALICIA walks away. MIRANDA flings a basketball at BOBBIE, who misses it completely.

MIRANDA

Catch

BOBBIE

Shit

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MIRANDA

Rule one
Always be ready
Always be present

BOBBIE

I wasn't uh

MIRANDA

Ready
That's what I'm saying
If you're on this team
You're present
You're here
No matter what

BOBBIE

I'll keep that in mind

MIRANDA

We've been playing together for a long time
So make sure you work extra hard
Because it's a big year
There's a lot for all of us if we make it to the top
Scholarships
Scouts
This is real
But you obviously know that.

BOBBIE

Absolutely

MIRANDA

Hey can you do a figure eight?
Just for fun
Show me a figure eight

BOBBIE

Aren't we about to do like drills / and stuff?

MIRANDA

But we don't usually do figure eights

BOBBIE

I mean I haven't
Okay I think I uh

BOBBIE tries it and fails. JESS, watching from afar, giggles and runs off.

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BOBBIE

Shit

Had it for a sec

BOBBIE chases the ball.

BOBBIE

I'll have to work on that

MIRANDA

Sure

Hey

This is new

I get it

We were all new once.

Oh also

And please don't take offense to this

We all got the same speech from Coach but

It helps to like you know

Hit the gym a bit

Work on your like

You know

BOBBIE

My

MIRANDA

Like we all need muscle tone

Like I mean you're really tall

Which is obviously great

I just don't want you to get hurt

BOBBIE

Noted

I'll eat a lot of steak I guess

MIRANDA

Su/re?

JENNA enters, sees BOBBIE, and runs up excitedly to hug her from behind.

JENNA

Baaaaaaaabe what are you doing here you

Oh my god / shit sorry

MIRANDA

Jesus / Jenna

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JENNA

I just touched you from behind like a creeper
You looked just like my boyfriend from behind
James
Clearly you're not.

BOBBIE

Sorry to disappoint

JENNA

You're the new recruit

MIRANDA

The new Becky

JENNA

I'm Jenna

BOBBIE

Bobbie

JENNA

So uh
How are you holding up?

BOBBIE

Fine?

JENNA

I just wanna say like
If you ever need a
Like people say I'm good to talk to
I mean I know I don't know you yet / but like

BOBBIE

Yeah yeah it's cool thanks uh

MIRANDA

I just noticed your nose ring

BOBBIE

Oh uh

MIRANDA

Coach is probably gonna make you get rid of that

BOBBIE

Really?

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I mean I've had it for forever
It's kinda part of who I am / so

MIRANDA
And someone could hook you wrong
And grab it and pull

ALICIA returns.

ALICIA
Right!
You could totally bleed out
And die

BOBBIE
I uh / don't

ALICIA
Kidding I'm kidding
Is she bugging you?

BOBBIE
Nah nah it's fine
Uh
Thanks

MIRANDA
We're all friends here
Like that's what a good team is
And it's so easy to get hurt here
And I'd hate
To see you get hurt

BOBBIE
Me too

MIRANDA
I'm gonna stretch
You all probably should too

MIRANDA leaves

ALICIA
She's just stressed out
She can be an asshole
Don't take it personally

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BOBBIE

Wait isn't her dad / a

ALICIA

A ball legend?

JENNA

Yep

BOBBIE

His picture's / up on the wall outside

ALICIA

Up on the wall outside yeah.

He was legit and he went pro

BOBBIE

Right!

JENNA

He's a DILF

ALICIA

She wants to do it too

Play pro be like dad

He's breathing down her neck so

So is everyone actually

I mean it's not totally fair

She shouldn't have to be as good as her dad

But naturally everyone compares

And that probably gets to you.

BOBBIE

Is she always like that?

JENNA

Like what?

BOBBIE

It just feels like she doesn't uh

Like me

ALICIA

Oh no no she's just sizing you up

JENNA

She's a control freak

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ALICIA

But don't worry
You earned your place

JENNA

We all had to
For me it was my ex

ALICIA

Here we / go

JENNA

Shhh Leesh / just let me

ALICIA

She tells this story like / every day

JENNA

Anyway my ex
This fuckboi Chad
You've probably seen him he's like
The fuckboi
And so he played on the boy's team
And he was like
'Hey baby hey maybe you should try out for cheer squad'
And I was like not a chance that sounds awful
And he's like 'come on baby come on you'll get to cheer me on'

JENNA/ALICIA

'Don't you wanna cheer me on?'

JENNA

And then I realized like
Oh my god
There's nothing I'd rather do less
So I tried out.
For this team.
And I just thought of his fucking face the whole time.
And I got in.
And it pissed him off so much that he broke up with me
And I can play circles around him now.

JENNA/ALICIA

Fuck you Chad

JENNA and ALICIA high five