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*Dramatic Publishing*

# **SARAH**

**A Play in Two Acts**

**by**

**MAX BUSH**



**Dramatic Publishing**

**Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand**

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MAX BUSH

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(SARAH)

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For Sarah Beelen

*Sarah* was co-commissioned by Portland High School and Gull Lake High School in Michigan. The play opened in Portland on Thursday, March 20, 1997, with the following cast and crew:

## CAST

Sarah . . . . .	EMILY MATHEWS
Molly . . . . .	CHRISTINA LANCE
Claire . . . . .	RENEE HORNBY
Sally . . . . .	KATIE BERGERON
Brandon . . . . .	NATHAN CLARK
Matt . . . . .	DAN INGRAHAM
Doug . . . . .	ERIC DUMAS
Ian . . . . .	RORY MILLER
Ms. Pritchard . . . . .	TANA ADAMS
Karen . . . . .	MELANIE LUNA
Princess . . . . .	LAURA FREED
Old Doll . . . . .	HEATHER MCCLUNG
Singer . . . . .	KATIE BERGERON

## STAFF

Director . . . . .	Phil Huber
Stage Manager . . . . .	Rachel Wintermute
Lighting . . . . .	Casey Ries, Sarah Tanner
Sound . . . . .	Rob White, Sam Wintermute
Scenographer . . . . .	Lydia Huber
Costumes . . . . .	Ann Stump, Ginger Lehman
Set Construction . . . . .	Bob Fernholz
Running Crew . . . . .	Emily Schrauben, Katy Stevens
Set Construction . . . . .	David Brandsen, Marci Gladding
	Luke May, Sarah Miller, Laura Opperman,
	Casey Ries, Sassy Spedoske, Sara Tanner,
	Katy Stevens, Rachel Wintermute,
	Sam Wintermute, Rob White

The play opened on January 23, 1998, at Gull Lake High School, with the following cast and crew:

### CAST

Sarah	JESSICA DEVRIES
Molly	SARAH MARTIN
Claire	LOUISE HANAVAN
Sally	MARY TEUTSCH
Brandon	ERIC STONE
Matt	DAVIS JOYNER
Doug	BERIN IWLEW
Ian	NYQ BONAVENTURA
Ms. Pritchard	MEGAN HAMILTON
Karen	JANE RISDON
Urna	JEN EDWARDS
Theater Students	KRISTEN MCMILLEN, KEVIN WILSON

### STAFF

Director	Robin Nott
Student Associate Director	Holly Bostwick
Stage Manager	James Perra
Assistant Stage Manager	Austin Cole
Lighting Chief	Pat Walls
Property Master	Jenny Perry
Running Crew Chief	Kim Sandefur
Wardrobe Master	Bethany Martin
Publicity Manager	Sean Cauffiel, Judy Risdon
Set Designer	Jeff Sonnevill
Set Dressing	Ellen McKinney
Stage Crew	David Johnson
Tour Technical Director	Joe Ratti

Crews. . Margaret Russell, Ramina Nazarians, Scott Iwlew,  
Josh Riefert, Laura Taylor, Crystal Heidarisaifa,  
Ryan Hebert, Stacy Bartell, Carol Miller, Erin Hoeneke,  
Jen Thomas, Kristi Stonerock, Diana Densmore,  
Aimee Sugden, Adrienne Carpenter, Doug Coombs,  
Katie Prentice, Michelle Stratton, Marc Bengelink,  
Ben Flaten, Sam Allen, Brad Kent, Beth Hatton,  
Mike Mollo, Brrasie Walmer, Justin Schoenfelder,  
Jill Nance, Ed Fleece, Brit Lindstrom, Amanda McFarlin,  
Jackie Garrison, Ashley Pierson, Nicole Lockwood,  
Jane Risdon, Jennifer Stonerock, Aaron Avila,  
John Rastoskey, Tony Williams, Adam Markham,  
Jonquil Schurr, Beth Brink

\* \* \* \*

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\* \* \* \*

### Songs (see back of book for music):

Music by Ric Averill - Lyrics by Max Bush



# SARAH

A Play in Two Acts  
For 7 Women and 4 Men

## CHARACTERS

SARAH	17
MOLLY	17, Sarah's sister
URNA	
CLAIRE	40, Sarah's mother
SALLY	17, Sarah's friend
BRANDON	17, Sarah's friend
MATT	17, high school actor
DOUG	17, high school actor
MS. PRITCHARD	Sarah's high school drama director
KAREN	17, assistant to Ms. Pritchard
IAN	21, Molly's old boyfriend

TIME: Present.

PLACE: The kitchen and bedroom of Sarah's home  
and the stage of her high school theater.

Note: All Urna's songs are to be sung a cappella.

Running time: Approximately 90 minutes.

# ACT ONE

## SCENE ONE

*SCENE: We see, right, the kitchen in Sarah's house, center her rather unusual bedroom. Left is open to allow for a third environment, and one that contains fragmented, unfinished scenery—a high school stage. The kitchen is a fairly standard, working-class kitchen. The bedroom, however, is an extension of Sarah's complex, multifaceted personality. The overwhelming feeling from first looking at it should be one of dream. Many objects inhabit the bedroom, but it is not in disarray. On the contrary, it has an artistic arrangement to it. The bed has a colorful quilt, the walls are lined with mirrors, Mucha reprints, old photographs, old pictures, old colorful, spangled dresses and purses, lace purses, hats, pieces of rusted metal machinery, etc. A collection of large, old dolls is placed around the room.*

*AT RISE: SARAH sits at the vanity in her bedroom, facing mostly away from us. She is wearing a new, colorful spring dress and no shoes as yet. She has long, wild, red, curly hair. MOLLY paces anxiously. URNA, facing us, is applying intricate makeup to SARAH. URNA appears to have just left her forest; she's womanly, dressed in an earth-toned, layered dress, uneven at the hem. Her arms and feet are bare. Her hair is also wild, with flow-*

*ers in it. URNA's clear, full voice is heard singing in the blackout and continues as the lights come up.*

URNA (*sings.*)

**I KNOW A BANK WHERE THE WILD THYME  
BLOWS  
WHERE THE OXLIPS AND THE NODDING  
VIOLET GROWS.**

MOLLY. It won't look good with your new dress.

SARAH. But it's just how I feel right now, Molly.

MOLLY. All that color will clash with your clothes.

URNA. I like all the color.

SARAH. I like all this color.

MOLLY. Are you wearing that to rehearsal?

SARAH. I was going to.

MOLLY. Sarah, you don't know this so I'm going to tell you. That's what sisters do. They tell each other the truth.

SARAH. Tell me what?

MOLLY. Ian won't like it. (*URNA stops applying make-up.*)

SARAH. Oh.

MOLLY. He'll laugh.

SARAH (*considers a moment*). I can take it off before he gets here tonight.

URNA (*moving down, seeing the place*). But you won't want to take it off. We'll go out to the forest, tonight, into the clearing by the stream. (*Pointing.*) There's a grave there.

SARAH. I didn't see a grave.

URNA. It's a place to dance. To clear your mind. To keep you strong. The flowers are blooming.

SARAH. Already?

URNA. Mandrakes and hepatica. Blooming all along the banks and into the oaks and beeches. (*Sings.*)

**I KNOW A BANK WHERE THE WILD THYME  
BLOWS  
WHERE THE OXLIPS AND THE NODDING  
VIOLET GROWS.**

SARAH. We'll go after Ian leaves.

(*URNA returns to SARAH, resumes applying make-up.*)

SARAH (*to MOLLY*). Can he just leave college when he wants?

MOLLY. They don't send you to a therapist if you skip college classes.

SARAH. Molly, was he a good...ha...was Ian a good kisser?

MOLLY. Oh, yes.

SARAH. I thought so.

MOLLY. That's when I knew I had his attention. Sometimes he couldn't talk and tell me how he was feeling, so he said things to me when he kissed me. And very well.

SARAH. When he was home for Christmas we took a walk and it was snowing and we stopped under a streetlight—I thought he was going to kiss me, but ...

MOLLY. He will.

SARAH. Why do you think he's coming here?

MOLLY. To see you.

SARAH. Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes!

MOLLY. He's coming here to see you and when he finds out who you really are he'll go wild.

SARAH. He'll go wild?

MOLLY. Which is why you should look as beautiful as you can.

SARAH. I'm trying, Molly. I want him to see who I am.  
*(She stands, turns around. URNA's painted a large, colorful butterfly that covers SARAH's face.)*

MOLLY. What is it?

SARAH. You can't see it's a butterfly?

MOLLY. It looks stupid.

SARAH. Stupid?

MOLLY. It's silly. Like a child would do.

SARAH. I think it's pretty.

URNA. And fun.

SARAH. And fun. And how I feel. It was so warm, today; we sat outside on the edge of the woods for lunch and we saw a butterfly.

MOLLY. Do you feel like being laughed at?

SARAH. Didn't you ever wear something—yes, you did! You wore an antique dress to school once, *(Pointing to a dress on the wall.)* that black, lace dress with—

MOLLY. And people laughed at me.

SARAH. But you wore it the next day, too.

MOLLY. I wore it for three days, until they got bored and stopped laughing. But you can't go to rehearsal like that. You hate people laughing at you. It hurts you and you cry.

*(CLAIRE enters carrying a jacket. She doesn't see SARAH's face immediately and seems distracted. She moves to SARAH's scarf rack and looks through scarves.)*

CLAIRE. What time is Ian coming?

SARAH. Ten o'clock.

CLAIRE. So late?

SARAH. I have rehearsal.

CLAIRE. Remember, older guys aren't necessarily interested in your personality. They don't want to just hang around with you and play tag.

SARAH. Where are you going?

CLAIRE (*seeing SARAH, stopping her scarf business*).  
What's on your face, Sarah?

SARAH. It just flew there and I let it stay. Where are you going?

CLAIRE. For a drive. I just feel like moving. Are you wearing that for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*?

SARAH. No, I didn't get the part of Queen of the Faeries.

CLAIRE. Then, are you going to rehearsal like that?

SARAH. Yes.

CLAIRE. Well, they're theatre people; they're all strange.  
Maybe they'll like it. Does everybody paint on their face?

SARAH. No, no one else.

CLAIRE. How can it be that you are the strangest person I know.

SARAH. God, Mom, I'm not piercing my tongue or wearing beads.

CLAIRE. I meant that in a good way, too. You're just...  
you're always a surprise, Sarah. Always a surprise.

SARAH. Thank you, Mother.

CLAIRE (*at the mirror, tying on scarves, trying on SARAH's jacket, etc. This begins a familiar litany*). Don't let any bad men in the house when I'm gone.

SARAH. I won't.

CLAIRE. Don't let any good men in the house.

SARAH. Oh, Ma, you're no fun.

CLAIRE. You're too old for a baby sitter.

SARAH. I am a baby sitter, Mother.

CLAIRE. Just say no to drugs.

SARAH. "No."

CLAIRE (*puts on SARAH's jacket*). Don't drink the alcohol in the alcohol cabinet. Don't have your boyfriend over.

SARAH. I don't have a boyfriend.

CLAIRE. Lock the door behind me. Keep the phone near you and answer it when I call.

SARAH. I always do.

CLAIRE. I like this jacket better than mine. May I wear it?

SARAH. Yes.

CLAIRE. Scarf, too?

SARAH. Yeah, OK.

CLAIRE (*starts off; stops*). Are you depressed again?

SARAH. No.

CLAIRE. You're not like before?

SARAH. I'm fine.

CLAIRE. You're not pretending you're fine, so I won't worry? Because that wouldn't be fair.

SARAH. Why are you so worried all of a sudden?

CLAIRE. Because of tomorrow. (*Short silence.*) And you painted your face. And your English teacher sent me a note. (*Taking out letter.*) You haven't been reading your homework. I'm supposed to talk to you.

SARAH (*taking letter*). I don't like essays. They're like math. (*Wadding up letter.*) They're boring, that's all. I'll read them. (*Throws letter away.*)

CLAIRE. You're not like before? You're just weird?

SARAH. How am I supposed to answer that? I guess I'm just weird.

CLAIRE. That's good. OK. (*Hugs her daughter.*) I can't believe what a beautiful young woman you're becoming, already. My bright one; Sarah, the Bright Light.

SARAH (*retying her mother's scarf*). You'd better get something to eat. You didn't touch supper. Why don't you go out for a late supper with Ray?

CLAIRE. I'm not hungry.

SARAH. Why don't you pick Ray up and go to a show?

CLAIRE. I don't want to see Ray, tonight. He's always so... happy to see me.

SARAH. He loves you. And so do I. So don't go to the cemetery. You'll be depressed all night. All right?

CLAIRE. I'll try.

SARAH (*kisses CLAIRE*). Bye.

CLAIRE. Goodbye. (*She moves into kitchen and out.*)

MOLLY. She is so worried about you.

SARAH. Yeah... She's worried about herself, too. She doesn't want to be alone.

MOLLY. Are you worried about yourself?

SARAH. Not right now. It's spring! I'm in a play! Ian's coming!

URNA. It's a dancing place!

*(URNA plays SARAH's CD player—a loud rock and roll dance number. She and SARAH immediately dance freely, having a lot of fun. MOLLY stands center, frustrated and irritated as they dance around her and at her. URNA and SARAH take turns: one does a move, the other one does it; then the next does a move, the other repeats their version of it, etc. URNA does a sexy dance move, SARAH follows; URNA does it again, SARAH follows.*



*SARAH dances wildly, URNA follows her; then URNA spins and SARAH spins, arms out, as if they are flying.*

*There's a knock on the kitchen door. CLAIRE enters, goes to answer it.*

*SARAH blooms like a flower, URNA follows her. SARAH does it again and again, followed by URNA. MOLLY, in disgust, suddenly turns off music. SARAH keeps dancing and humming rock song as she gathers her backpack and puts on her shoes.*

*Lights up on kitchen as SALLY and BRANDON burst in. SARAH moves toward kitchen humming the song.)*

CLAIRE. She's in her room.

SALLY (*calling*). Sarah?

SARAH. Sally!

*(SARAH moves to kitchen. SALLY sees SARAH's face and screams. MOLLY and URNA remain in bedroom. Lights dim on bedroom.)*

SALLY. Ah! What is that?

SARAH. You can't tell?

BRANDON. A butterfly.

SALLY. I want one.

SARAH. You like it?

BRANDON & SALLY. Yes!

SARAH (*to CLAIRE*). Ha!

*(CLAIRE exits.)*

SALLY. Will you make one on me?

SARAH. After rehearsal. It'll look great on you.

SALLY. I want one now. Can I have yours?

SARAH. This is mine. Yours will be different. Hi, Brandon.

BRANDON. Who are you, Sarah?

SARAH. Sarah.

BRANDON. Snazzy face, babe!

SARAH (*holding two above her head*). I made your favorite for you! Giant Cookies! Woo-woo!

SALLY (*growling, taking one*). Giant Cookies!

BRANDON. You know this will just encourage her addiction.

SALLY. Shut up, Brandon. More! More! (*SARAH gives her another; she bites it.*) Strawberry chocolate chip.

BRANDON. Really? (*SARAH gives him one.*) You gave her two. (*SARAH bites another one and gives it to him.*)

SALLY. Are you wearing that for Ian?

BRANDON (*eating*). What's an Ian?

SARAH. What do you think?

BRANDON. What's an Ian?

SALLY. Her sister's old boyfriend.

BRANDON. You mean Molly's boyfriend?

SARAH (*to SALLY*). What do you think?

SALLY. He'd better love you, Sarah.

(*SARAH smiles.*)

BRANDON. You want your sister's old boyfriend to love you?

SALLY. Shut up, Brandon.

SARAH. Let's go rehearse.

BRANDON. Are you going to wear that to rehearsal? It will anger the inmates and they'll rattle their cages at you.

SALLY. Shut up, Brandon.

BRANDON. Am I allowed to say anything?

SALLY & SARAH. Shut up! (*They exit.*)

## SCENE TWO

*(High school auditorium. SARAH sits alone reading script, BRANDON and SALLY are sitting on stage. MATT sits alone working on his lines. KAREN sits at director's table. Both DOUG and MATT are in partial costumes. DOUG enters with his backpack.)*

DOUG. Hey, Sally, would you hold this? (*He hits her in the back with his backpack, then moves to MATT.*)

SALLY. Karen, he did it again!

*(She throws backpack to KAREN. KAREN picks it up, carries it over to DOUG during the following.)*

DOUG. Are you off book?

MATT. I am off book.

DOUG. We are off book.

MATT. We are actors.

KAREN (*sweetly*). Doug, is this yours?

DOUG. Why, yes, thank you, Karen. (*He reaches out to take it, she throws it on his foot.*)

KAREN. You're welcome.

DOUG (*moving toward SARAH*). Hey, Helena, my love?

SARAH (*turning to him. Brightly*). Yes?

DOUG. Are you off—Whoa! (*Moving back to MATT, about SARAH.*) Matt, help me, I don't know who this is.

SARAH. Did you want something?

MATT. Who is it?

DOUG. Is it ... (*He considers.*) You?

MATT (*as SARAH*). Yes. (*As himself.*) No! Ah, no, no, I'm over here.

DOUG. Then who is it?

MATT. Speak to it.

SARAH. Did you want something or not?

DOUG. Are we needing a little attention, tonight?

MATT. Are we special?

DOUG. Are we five years old?

BRANDON (*moving between them*). Lay off. (*DOUG and MATT ignore him.*)

MATT. Wait a minute, it's modern art, not like Shakespeare.

DOUG. What do you think it's saying?

MATT. "Life is meaningless."

DOUG. "I am an insect. Please smash me on your windshield." (*For just a moment, he smashes against a windshield.*) Splat.

MATT. "Stick a pin though me and give me a name."

DOUG. "Insectus Freakeoptera."

MATT. "Butterflyus SillyTwitica." (*The boys think this is funny.*)

SALLY (*to DOUG*). What is your worst nightmare?

DOUG. I'm not telling you.

SALLY. It will happen. Soon.

*(MS. PRITCHARD enters, a little frazzled, carrying a briefcase, a cup of coffee, arms stuffed with too many notebooks, and a bunch of keys on a band around her arm.)*

MS. PRITCHARD. All right, you young lovers, dazzle me. It's time for truth and beauty. Make me weep. Make me laugh. Sarah, what happened to your face? We can't talk about it now, we have to rehearse. Karen—

KAREN. Places. Begin where we left off.

MS. PRITCHARD. Where's my prompt book?

KAREN. Here, Ms. P. *(KAREN finds it for her, then holds up a pencil.)*

MS. PRITCHARD. Pencil? *(She takes pencil.)* Thank you, darlin'.

*(The four actors take their places. SALLY [Hermia] off, SARAH [Helena] with DOUG [Lysander], and MATT [Demetrius] lying down. SARAH picks up her script, the others do not. BRANDON sits and watches.)*

KAREN *(hauling MATT into position, pushing him down)*.

You're over here, Doug.

MATT *(sitting up)*. I'm Matt.

KAREN *(pushing him back down)*. What's the difference?

DOUG. Do we want to use our script when we're supposed to be OFF BOOK!

SARAH. Off book? Were we—Karen, are we supposed to be off book?

KAREN. Yes, for Act III, Scene II.

MATT. WE ARE OFF BOOK! *(To DOUG.)* Are we off book?

DOUG. We are off book.