

***BAKE FOR LIFE* DRAMATURGICAL PACKET**

Prepared by Caroline Hull

DRAMATURGY NOTE

“Even though I am a victim, I do not and will not live my life as one. I am an Olympian.”

– Jordan Wieber (Larry Nassar Trial)

When people look to celebrities for guidance and inspiration, it is typically because of a subconscious and incorrect ideology that assumes those found in the spotlight are simply unbreakable. It can even seem almost unnatural to witness household names out of their expected environments - an Oscar-winning actress running to the grocery store, a Grammy-nominated artist playing with their dog. This concept that famous individuals, particularly athletes, are somehow immune to the trials and tribulations faced by so-called "normal people" is entirely false and utterly delusional. Rainah Gregory has done something genuinely impactful with the significance of setting and character in *Bake for Life*, placing an Olympic boxer on the set of a celebrity baking competition to actively show to the audience how even those who appear made of iron are capable of uncertainty. Vulnerability is a quality so incredibly human that even those who throw professional punches are familiar with uncomfortable feelings of fragility.

Bake for Life also reveals another relevant and vital issue - sexual harassment and violence towards female athletes in professional and leisure sports. The trial of Larry Nassar, a former national gymnastics team doctor, revealed that he had assaulted over 500 women and girls who competed in the sport. Hashtags, including #CoachDontTouchMe and #SportToo, have spread on different forms of social media and brought attention to the horrifying fact that coaches are taking advantage of the trust and closeness given to them by aspiring athletes across the globe. Melody Posthuma-Vanderveen, one of Nassar's former patients, spoke out during the trial on how "We need to call out the deeper issue at hand. We live in a society where action is not taken when it's most needed." Gregory's script does precisely this - this story shows the gravity of how abusive coach/athlete relationships can leave even the strongest feeling weak. However, it is our job to remember; this is not just a story. It is the story of hundreds, thousands of women who make up a mighty army. Not because they are celebrities, not because they are Olympians - but because they are survivors.

“I will not stop speaking until I am heard, until we are heard, until things are changed.”

- Amanda Smith (Larry Nassar Trial)

TERM DEFINITIONS/REFERENCES

Most of these terms may seem familiar to you, but each of them plays a role in the script and it would be wise to give them some extra thought – even the simplest references/terms can help provide informative context when building the world of the play!

BLUETOOTH EARPIECE – A Bluetooth device works by utilizing radio waves as opposed to wires or cables to connect with cell phones, smartphones, and computers. Bluetooth headsets enable individuals to speak and hear through an earpiece while



leaving their hands free. Bluetooth dates back to 1998, and the first Bluetooth headset sold using this technology was launched in 2000.

BOXING – Boxing is a combat sport in which two people, typically wearing protective equipment (gloves, mouthguards, wraps), throw punches and swings at one another for a predetermined amount of time within a boxing ring. The earliest evidence of boxing dates back to Egypt circa 3000 BC, and it was introduced to the ancient Olympic Games by the Greeks in the late 7th century BC. [OLYMPICS - HISTORY OF BOXING, ORIGINS & INTERESTING FACTS](#), [BBBOFC HISTORY OF BOXING](#)



GOLD MEDALIST– A gold medal is awarded for the highest rank of achievement in a non-military field. The name originates from the usage of at least a fraction of gold in the form of plating or embellishment during manufacturing. Gold medals have been awarded since the eighteenth century, and now many organizations award gold medals as a form of recognition. Olympic gold medals are required to contain a minimum of six grams of gold. [HISTORY OF OLYMPIC MEDALS](#), [ALL-TIME OLYMPIC RECORDS](#), [2020 OLYMPICS MEDAL TABLE](#)

GREAT BRITISH BAKE-OFF– *The Great British Bake Off*, sometimes referenced as just *Bake Off* or *Great British Baking Show*, is a British television baking competition produced by Love Productions. The competition consists of a collection of amateur bakers competing against one another in a series of rounds, with judges present to determine the quality of their baking skills. Each round, a contestant is eliminated, and in the final round, one contestant is declared the overall winner. [OFFICIAL WEBSITE](#)



HONEY CORNBREAD LOAF – A sweet type of cornbread that is extremely sweet due to the added sugar and honey, expected to melt in your mouth. Compared to other recipes of cornbread, it is quite moist and extra crumbly. [RECIPE EXAMPLE](#)



KITCHEN ISLAND – A freestanding unit meant to permit easy access on all sides. Traditionally, it is in a rectangular shape and offers additional storage space as well as the ability to move freely while cooking.

LOAF – Loaf is used to reference a quantity of bread that is baked into a singular piece, usually sliced into multiple pieces before being served and consumed. Occasionally the word loaf is used to reference a generic oblong-shaped mass of baked food aside from bread – such as

“meatloaf.”

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION HOTLINE – The official name of this prevention network is The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. It is a United States-based suicide prevention organization consisting of over 160 crisis centers each provides 24/7 service at the number 1-800-273-8255. The Lifeline has engaged in numerous initiatives with the goal of improving crisis services such as innovative public messaging, best practices in mental health, and groundbreaking partnerships. [OFFICIAL WEBSITE](#), [STORIES OF HOPE AND RECOVERY](#), [PREVENTION BY THE NUMBERS](#)

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OLYMPIC GAMES – The original Olympic Games were an ancient Panhellenic festival held during every fourth year consisting of contests surrounding sports, literature, and music. The victor was awarded a prize – a crown made of wild olives. Nowadays, the Olympic Games consist of international athletic competitions held at individual summer and winter gatherings (still during every fourth year). The Olympic Games are considered to be the world’s most popular sports competition, with more than 200 nations actively participating. [OFFICIAL WEBSITE](#), [NBC OLYMPICS](#), [HISTORY OF THE OLYMPICS](#)

OLYMPIC WOMEN’S BOXING – Not until the 1970s were women able to begin training seriously for boxing, although they still had a difficult time gaining acceptance in the world of the sport. The 1904 Olympics did feature women’s boxing, but only as a display event. It wasn’t until the 2012 Olympics that women’s boxing was officially added to the Games. In amateur boxing, women still follow the rules of men’s boxing with a few simple exceptions. Rounds are shorter, groin protection is optional, and breast protectors are mandatory. [WOMEN IN BOXING](#), [HISTORICAL EVENTS IN WOMEN’S BOXING](#), [2021 USA BOXING ELITE WOMEN’S TEAM](#)

OVEN GLOVES - An oven glove, or oven mitt, is an insulated glove or mitten worn during cooking with hot ingredients to easily protect an individual from ovens, stoves, and other cookware that could lead to burns.



PSA – The term PSA, or Public Service Announcement, is usually used on radio or television to quickly inform the audience that important information is to follow.

TEAM USA – The United States national team or Team USA is used to refer to any number of sports teams representing the United States within international competitions – such as the Olympics. [OFFICIAL WEBSITE](#)

REAL-WORLD CONNECTIONS – WHAT INSPIRED THIS PIECE?

While this script may be a work of fiction – it exists because it is based on true events that continue to repeat themselves in the lives of athletes and women across the globe. It is important as artists that we educate ourselves on these happenings, and in turn, help educate our audience members. It is so important that we come together and do what we can to bring about change and awareness. I urge you strongly to watch and read as many of the following links as you can!



ATHLETE A ([FILM WEBSITE](#))

Athlete A is a 2020 American documentary film directed by Bonni Cohen and Jon Shenk. The documentary itself follows a team of investigative journalists from *The Indianapolis Star* as they uncover the story of Larry Nassar sexually assaulting young female gymnasts. The film released on June 24th of 2020 on Netflix. The title is a reference to gymnast Maggie Nichols who was called “Athlete A” in order to protect her identity while investigations into her sexual abuse by Larry Nassar were ongoing. A review of the film on Rotten Tomatoes reads “Harrowing yet essential viewing, *Athlete A* shines an unforgiving light on horrific abuses – as well as the culture that allowed them to continue unabated for years.”

As reporters began coming forward with the stories of abuse surrounding Nassar, more and more gymnasts revealed that they were also abused at the hands of the doctor at different points in their gymnastic careers. It turns out that over 500 people, including 9 Olympic competitors, had been affected by his crimes. Nassar was sentenced in 2017 to 60 years in federal prison on child pornography charges. In addition, he was sentenced in 2018 to up to 175 years in Michigan state prison after pleading guilty to seven counts of criminal sexual conduct.

Not only does the documentary shine a light on the despicable actions of Nasar, but it also reveals the truth of the environment girls are forced to endure if they hope to one day compete at the Olympic level. These women live in seclusion at a compound under strict supervision by consistently abusive coaches – making them subject to bullying, name-calling, and worse from the people who are supposed to be enriching their lives. At times, they are even denied meals.

[Athlete A Trailer](#)

Even if you don't have time before our performance to watch the full documentary, I highly recommend that you at least watch clips from the film or a trailer on YouTube.

[Maggie Nichols Reveals She's 'Athlete A'](#)

This truly inspiring clip shows world champion Maggie Nichols stepping forward and identifying herself as the first gymnast to report Larry Nassar's abuse in USA Gymnastics.

I'm adding a few more additional links below that show the gravity of Nassar's actions.

[How Larry Nassar Got Away with Decades of Sexual Abuse | New York Times](#)

[Father of Victims Lunges at Larry Nassar in Court](#)

[Larry Nassar Victims Speak Out Ahead of Sentencing | NBC News](#)

NICOLA ADAMS

Nicola Adams (nicknamed The Baby-Faced Assassin) born on October 26th 1982, is a former professional boxer from Britain. She won her first fight at age thirteen, and she became the first English woman to win a medal in a major boxing tournament when she won silver in the bantamweight division at the European Championships in 2007. She also became the first female boxer to become an Olympic Gold Medalist in the 2012 London Games. She received another gold medal at the 2016 Olympics in Rio. She announced her retirement in 2019 when she discovered she had a torn pupil in her eye, meaning one unlucky punch could cause irreparable damage and permanent vision loss.



In addition to being a successful athlete, Adams was named the most influential LGBT person by *The Independent* in 2012, as she is openly lesbian and advocates for the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals. She was the first openly LGBT person to win a gold medal in the Olympics. In 2016, she was named number one in the DIVA Power LIST for the UK's most eminent lesbian and bisexual women.

Adams is an ambassador for Fight the Peace, a charity that encourages young people to move away from crime and learn valuable life skills by combining martial arts, boxing, and education. She was named an Officer of the Order of the British Empire in the Queen’s New Year Honours List in 2017.

[Lioness: The Nicola Adams Story \(Official Trailer\)](#)

This is the trailer for the Amazon Prime Video documentary following the experiences of Nicola Adams and her journey to achieving two Olympic titles, as well as the physical and emotional challenges she faced along the way. When asked about what motivated her to make the documentary, Adams said “I knew that my story would inspire someone.” The film explores her experiences with abuse during childhood, as well as overcoming constant encounters with racism, sexism, and homophobia.

[Piers Morgan Tells Nicola Adams He Doesn’t Like Female Boxing | Good Morning Britain](#)

This clip is from an interview with Nicola Adams and boxing promoter Frank Warren, and Piers Morgan decides to ask if it is sexist to dislike female boxing. This clip is significant as it showcases just one of the hundreds of instances where women are put in uncomfortable positions for choosing to participate in typically “male-dominated” industries. It really puts things into perspective.



JAMES ACASTER

James Acaster, born on the 9th of January in 1985, is an English stand-up comedian and television presenter. He won the Melbourne International Comedy Festival Award for Most Outstanding Show in 2019 with *Cold Lasagne Hate Myself 1999*.

One of the reasons Acaster has received so many fans and attention is due to his appearance on a celebrity edition *Great British Bake-Off* charity special that aired in 2019. This episode is the source of what has now become a popular internet meme of Acaster referencing a mental breakdown while cooking a meal (pictured here). His award-winning comedy show actually revealed the context for the “breakdown” – and the fact that it was not just a joke! He explained that when filming *GBBO*, he was experiencing the worst jet lag of his existence, a lack of sleep, and an abundance of caffeine.

[Bon Appétit! James Acaster Serves Up Pure Genius! | The Great Stand Up to Cancer Bake Off](#)

[The Start Of James Acaster's Bake Off Story | COLD LASAGNE HATE MYSELF 1999](#)
