



KINGS

BY SARAH
BURGESS



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.



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KINGS was originally developed and produced by The Public Theater (Oskar Eustis, Artistic Director; Patrick Willingham, Executive Director) on February 20, 2018. It was directed by Thomas Kail; the scenic design was by Anna Louizos; the costume design was by Paul Tazewell; the lighting design was by Jason Lyons; the sound design and original music were by Lindsay Jones; and the production stage manager was CJ LaRoche. The cast was as follows:

LAUREN Aya Cash
KATE Gillian Jacobs
REP. SYDNEY MILLSAP Eisa Davis
SENATOR JOHN McDOWELL Zach Grenier

CHARACTERS

LAUREN, 30s

KATE, 30s

REPRESENTATIVE SYDNEY MILLSAP, African-American,
probably 40s

SENATOR JOHN McDOWELL, 60s

KINGS

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Early December. Vail, Colorado. Four Seasons Resort. The Remedy Bar.

Lauren does work on her phone. Lauren has a name tag clipped to her tasteful, designer ski-lodge clothes.

Kate enters with luggage and a name tag, which at some point in this scene she will attach to her ski vest, which is nice enough, but it's not nearly on the level of Lauren's.

KATE. Hi.

LAUREN. There she is. Somehow still committed to that vest.

KATE. This is my one vest. Not all of us make a zillion dollars.

LAUREN. I'm just teasing. It's cute.

KATE. I didn't know you were coming to this one.

LAUREN. McDowell made me. She's from his state.

KATE. Her fundraising numbers aren't good?

LAUREN. *(Laughs.)* No.

KATE. How is the new congresswoman?

LAUREN. Oh, I haven't seen her.

KATE. What? Is she not here?

LAUREN. No, she got in yesterday. She's been in her room the whole time.

KATE. Wasn't the make-your-own-s'more event earlier this afternoon?

LAUREN. Yeah. She didn't come down.

KATE. What?

LAUREN. I think we actually may not see her.

KATE. We gave thousands of dollars to her campaign committee to fly her and her son out here and she's not even going to come down?

LAUREN. I've never seen a member do this. I don't know.

KATE. I really need to get her on board with this new podiatrist bill.

LAUREN. What?

KATE. I had this idea—lets the lawmaker get at the opioid issue and it's a win for podiatrists.

LAUREN. Did she run on opioids?

KATE. Yeah, you can't not these days.

LAUREN. That's smart.

Queen of the medical associations.

KATE. Don't make fun of me.

LAUREN. I'm not. You're like the best healthcare mind in Washington. There are eight funders in Vail this weekend. Talk to someone else.

KATE. Millsap's on the right committee. Really needs to be her.

LAUREN. OK, but you can't stress about getting something done with a freshman lawmaker who won't even come to her own funder. She's toast.

KATE. The press loved her in the special election.

LAUREN. She's a war widow. Her opponent had catastrophic dermatitis.

KATE. Amazing they couldn't recruit better.

LAUREN. It was all so sudden.

She notices something on her phone.

Oh god. How many all-caps emails am I going to get today?

KATE. What?

LAUREN. Klein is reintroducing his carried-interest bill again.

KATE. Wait but he chairs Ways and Means now.

LAUREN. Yep.

KATE. Whoa, so will it actually make it to the floor?

LAUREN. Decent chance.

KATE. You must be raking it in.

LAUREN. Three new clients in the past forty-eight hours. I'd buy Klein a gift basket if that weren't against the law.

KATE. That's a tough No vote for a lot of members, politically.

LAUREN. It'll be fine. Tax policy confuses people.

KATE. But are you worried?

LAUREN. No. It has no path.

Still I'll be busy calming everyone down this weekend.

Rep. Sydney Millsap enters.

MILLSAP. *(Complete lack of enthusiasm.)* Hi.

LAUREN. Congresswoman!

KATE. Hey there!

MILLSAP. I was told I should talk to you people.

LAUREN. Great!

KATE. Great to see you again.

LAUREN. Can't wait to hit the slopes.

KATE. Kind of nice to be in here where it's warm.

LAUREN. Looks like fantastic powder.

MILLSAP. *(To Kate.)* I guess I'll...talk to you.

KATE. *(To Lauren.)* You can go check out the fantastic powder.

LAUREN. *(To Millsap.)* Chat soon!

Lauren leaves.

KATE. Vail.

MILLSAP. Yep.

KATE. I know you said you're not big on outdoor activities.

MILLSAP. Oh, have we met?

KATE. We have. Kate Totten, Iridium Policy Group.

MILLSAP. OK, yeah, I guess you look familiar.

KATE. I'm sure it's been a crazy two months.

MILLSAP. Yes.

KATE. I think we met at the breakfast the Lockton Group did for you.

MILLSAP. Which one?

KATE. Back before swearing-in. At Sonoma's, on Pennsylvania Avenue.

MILLSAP. You remember every fundraiser you attend?

KATE. Yes.

MILLSAP. (*A question she has been told to ask.*) What brings you out here?

KATE. What brings me out here? You're like, one of the most exciting new members we have. You're one of the good ones, we all know that.

MILLSAP. Thanks.

KATE. Plus, it's a weekend in Vail. I'm not complaining.

MILLSAP. So.

I'm sure you have something you want from me.

KATE. Oh.

No. Just want to get a chance to get to know you a little better.

MILLSAP. Huh.

KATE. I gotta say, your son. What a cute kid.

MILLSAP. Thank you.

KATE. That was him, out front just now, throwing that little football with your comms guy?

MILLSAP. Yeah. Yeah.

KATE. Longhorns better keep an eye on him.

MILLSAP. He's an active boy.

KATE. He's adorable. And I'm not just saying that, I often tell people their children are unattractive. Just all the time. I've lost some friends.

MILLSAP. Thank you. So. What did you want?

KATE. I'm just here to say hi, hear what's on your mind. You know, I only come to these things when it's a lawmaker I believe in. To take the 24th by that margin when you had to put your campaign together so fast, that's not easy. And you're the first woman and the first person of color ever to represent your district? Is that right?

MILLSAP. My state is changing.

KATE. And that's because of you. You're working to push it forward.

MILLSAP. No, I'm spending seven hours every day doing breakfasts or cocktail parties or luncheons—

KATE. Yeah. It's a lot, I know.

MILLSAP. Or fundraising calls—

KATE. It's a lot going on, yeah.

MILLSAP. It's humiliating.

KATE. My hat's off to you guys.

MILLSAP. It's a disgrace.

KATE. Well, you should know that everyone in D.C. is talking about your potential. You're a star.

MILLSAP. Hundreds of members have fundraisers this weekend. There are eight others right now in Vail. You chose mine. So tell me what you want.

KATE. All I want is for you to win reelection next year.

MILLSAP. I've heard that a thousand times.

KATE. OK, I can help you with the fundraising hell you're in. I can help you to raise money without compromising your values.

MILLSAP. I've heard that a thousand times too.

KATE. OK, I'm here because some of your positions align with those of my clients.

MILLSAP. Which clients?

KATE. When we get back to D.C., I'd love to get you in a room with Ted Johnson. Ted runs the American Podiatric Medical Association—

MILLSAP. And what does this guy want?

KATE. We don't have to get into specifics now.

MILLSAP. I don't want to take the meeting if it's not something I believe in.

KATE. The meeting would be an opportunity for you to determine whether or not you believe in it.

MILLSAP. Is it something he wants to happen or something he wants to prevent?

KATE. Oh, we don't have to get into the weeds.

MILLSAP. I like the weeds.

KATE. Alright. It's legislation that could be introduced through your committee, Energy and Commerce.

MILLSAP. What kind of legislation?

KINGS

by Sarah Burgess

1 man, 3 women

Kate is a sharp-witted lobbyist who doesn't waste her time on candidates who can't get elected, stay elected, and, above all, remain loyal to her clientele. Representative Sydney Millsap has a more idealistic approach to politics, which Kate fears may cost Millsap a prosperous political career. But when Millsap's high-minded principles prove surprisingly resilient in Washington, Kate faces an unexpected dilemma: back the system or what she actually believes in?

"KINGS is entertaining and informative... The greed of special interests, the mendacity of politicians, the cockroach endurance of lobbyists: If these are familiar, they are also endlessly compelling..." —**The New York Times**

"...a tautly intelligent drama... that goes against the theatrical grain... KINGS [is a] nuanced and accomplished play [that] shows us how inextricably bolted to American government the ironwork of special interests has made itself... KINGS gives you a short, useful course on the fuel Washington runs on. It adds to a vital public discourse about the kind of government we have vs. the kind we want." —**The Washington Post**

"A timeless exploration of timely political issues... KINGS, at its best, actually draws you into the campaign—giving you a hero to root for, a villain to lambaste, a slogan to memorize—before zooming out, imbuing the action with the kind of perspective and emotion that only fiction can provide..." —**Entertainment Weekly**

Also by Sarah Burgess
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