

# The Niceties: Oberon Modern Plays' Provocative Exploration of Race, Identity, and Intergenerational Dialogue

Eleanor Burgess's award-winning play, "The Niceties," presented by Oberon Modern Plays, has captivated audiences with its incisive and timely exploration of race, identity, and the complexities of intergenerational dialogue. Through its deft characterization and thought-provoking themes, the play delves into the fraught terrain of racial bias, microaggressions, and the enduring legacy of historical injustices.

## The Interplay of Characters: Power, Privilege, and Misunderstandings

The play revolves around a pivotal meeting between Janine, an ambitious Black college student, and Zoe, a well-intentioned but oblivious white professor. As they engage in a thesis discussion, their seemingly innocuous exchange spirals into a profound clash of perspectives. Janine's experiences as a minority student intersect with Zoe's sheltered upbringing and inherent privilege, revealing the subtle yet pervasive power dynamics that permeate society.



## The Niceties (Oberon Modern Plays) by Kyra Kaptzan Robinov

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 3184 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Print length	: 106 pages
Paperback	: 342 pages
Item Weight	: 2.16 pounds
Dimensions	: 8.5 x 0.78 x 11 inches

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## **Unveiling Microaggressions and Unconscious Bias**

"The Niceties" delves into the insidious nature of microaggressions, those subtle but hurtful remarks and actions that perpetuate racial bias. Janine's encounters with Zoe's seemingly harmless comments—such as assuming she is destined for a career in social justice or referring to her as "articulate"—unveil the deeply ingrained stereotypes and microaggressions that Black Americans face daily.

The play exposes the subconscious biases that both characters hold, highlighting the pervasive impact of societal conditioning. Zoe's obliviousness to her own privilege and insensitivity to Janine's experiences

underscore the urgent need for self-reflection and empathy in addressing racial inequalities.

### **Challenging Historical Narratives and Intergenerational Perspectives**

Beyond its exploration of interracial dynamics, "The Niceties" also confronts historical narratives and their influence on contemporary race relations. Janine's research on Reconstruction and its aftermath challenges Zoe's romanticized view of the Civil Rights Movement. Through Janine's passionate recounting of the complexities and setbacks of the era, the play dispels simplistic notions of progress and reveals the ongoing struggle for racial justice.



The Historical Context that Shapes Intergenerational Dialogue

### **Audience Engagement and Provocative Dialogue**

Oberon Modern Plays' production of "The Niceties" has garnered critical acclaim for its powerful performances and thought-provoking dialogue. The play has sparked lively discussions among audiences, prompting them to examine their own biases and preconceptions regarding race, identity, and social justice.

The play's ability to ignite uncomfortable yet necessary conversations demonstrates its profound impact on society. Its exploration of complex issues in a relatable and nuanced manner makes it an invaluable tool for fostering empathy, understanding, and ultimately, meaningful change.

### **Oberon Modern Plays: A Platform for Contemporary Voices**

Oberon Modern Plays is renowned for its commitment to showcasing groundbreaking and socially relevant works by contemporary playwrights. "The Niceties" is a testament to Oberon's mission to engage audiences with thought-provoking theater that explores pressing social issues.

The company's ongoing commitment to producing diverse and challenging plays has solidified its reputation as a leading force in the world of contemporary theater, prompting audiences to question, engage, and ultimately strive for a more equitable and just society.

"The Niceties" by Eleanor Burgess is a tour de force that delves into the complexities of race, identity, and intergenerational dialogue. Oberon Modern Plays' production of the play captivates audiences with its thought-provoking themes, deft characterization, and powerful performances.

Through its exploration of microaggressions, historical narratives, and the often-fraught dynamics between people of different races, the play sparks

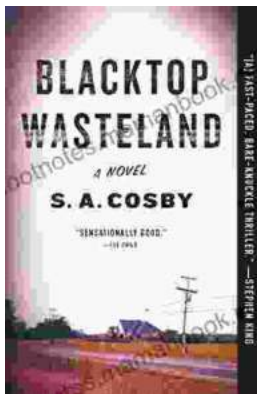
vital conversations and challenges audiences to re-examine their own biases and beliefs. As a platform for contemporary voices, Oberon Modern Plays continues to champion works that ignite social dialogue and inspire change.



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