

In a world where the survival of the human race is reliant on one final generation of hyper intelligent children, it seems logical to have genetically engineered spare versions in the event of a misfortune. However, what happens when the truth behind these spares is unraveled? Mount Vernon High School's performance of *A Spare Me* transported the audience to this dystopian reality where no one's identity is as it seems.

*A Spare Me*, by A. Ray Pamatmat, is a post apocalyptic play written for the Professional Performing Arts School's Waterwell Drama Program in 2012. In 2014, it was released onto Playscripts Inc. and has had a total of 19 performances. The story follows the daring plan of student, Win, after realizing that the Spare provided for her deceased boyfriend, Sel, is not the same person she knew and loved. Along with her peers, they set out to unearth the truth regarding the real identities within the Spares. Tackling mature and relevant topics including bullying, sexuality, substance abuse, and suicide, *A Spare Me* manifests the daunting task of discovering your true identity and standing up for what you believe in.

As a whole, Mount Vernon High School's entire cast and crew effectively created the futuristic atmosphere through their blend of unique acting choices and innovative technical aspects. Leading the show was Win, played by Nicole Duchaine. Her inquisitive and intelligent portrayal of the young heroine made for a captivating experience. Alongside her was her experimental sister, a Spare brought to life without uploading another identity, Tee, played by Keeley Bryant. Bryant did a wonderful job portraying the confused, social outcast as she was neither a Spare nor a Primary, which resulted in her essentially being a blank slate. Additionally, she did an

impeccable job of subtly developing her character's personality as she began to find her true self, making her a memorable aspect of the show.

Another standout performance came from Prox, a Spare played by Josiah Arnett. His authentic illustration of the harrowing life of being a victim of bullying through small, yet heartbreaking, mannerisms allowed for a moving scene when he finally acquired friends and started to come out of his shell upon realizing that the dueling personalities within him was normal. An additional Spare who stole the show whenever she entered the stage was Dos, played by Katie E. Ramirez. Her immense emotions and desperate-to-belong nature made for a chilling performance that had all eyes drawn to her. Other notable performances include those of Doppe and Elga, played by Laura Schmechel and Isabel Pascal respectively.

Along with solid acting, the technical aspects were impressive, with the most striking being the swift and clean stage crew, led by Tania Romero Gonzalez. Every scene transition was flawlessly executed in an efficient manner. Another spectacular feature was the thoughtful and detailed publicity campaign, done by Donovan Fisher, including talkbacks pertaining to the sensitive topics covered. Additionally, the beautiful lighting, designed by Micco Aniano Daniels, assisted in setting the mood for every scene by using a variety of different colors and intensities.

Mount Vernon High School's eye-opening performance of *A Spare Me* exhibited noteworthy performances and remarkable technological feats that left the audiences with the realization that it's time to wake up and be the change they want to see.