GOSSIP

By Brian Hampton

© Copyright 2014, by Brian Hampton

Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that a royalty must be paid for every performance, whether or not admission is charged. All inquiries regarding rights should be addressed to Pioneer Drama Service, Inc., PO Box 4267, Englewood, CO 80155.

All rights to this play—including but not limited to amateur, professional, public reading and translation into foreign languages—are controlled by Pioneer Drama Service, Inc., without whose permission no performance, reading or presentation of any kind in whole or in part may be given.

All other rights in this play, including radio broadcasting, television and motion picture rights, are controlled by BRIAN HAMPTON to whom all inquiries should be addressed c/o Pioneer Drama Service, Inc. PO Box 4267, Englewood, CO 80155-4267.

These rights are fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and of all countries covered by the Universal Copyright Convention or with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, including Canada, Mexico, Australia and all nations of the United Kingdom.

ONE SCRIPT PER CAST MEMBER MUST BE PURCHASED FOR PRODUCTION RIGHTS.
COPYING OR DISTRIBUTING ALL OR ANY PART OF THIS BOOK IN ANY MANNER IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN BY LAW.

On all programs, printing and advertising, the following information must appear:

1. The full name of the play
2. The full name of the playwright
3. The following notice: “Produced by special arrangement with Pioneer Drama Service, Inc., Englewood, Colorado”
GOSSIP
By BRIAN HAMPTON

CAST OF CHARACTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th># of lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOSSIP</td>
<td>new girl at school; charming, manipulative, attractive, sinister</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIM</td>
<td>nice guy but easy victim; Dallas’s boyfriend and Gossip’s First Day Partner</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANDY</td>
<td>narrator; smart, observant, intrigued</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DALLAS</td>
<td>popular girl; sweet, pretty, everyone’s favorite</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CANDY</td>
<td>slightly ditzy twin</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAINÉ</td>
<td>Candy’s twin sister; has a dry sense of humor</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEEN ENSEMBLE*</td>
<td>of any number; serves as a Greek chorus</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Though all of the characters are teenagers, whenever the script refers to TEEN or TEENS, it is intended to reference a member or members of the TEEN ENSEMBLE.

SETTING

Time: Present.
Place: A high school.

SET DESCRIPTION

The setting is a high school common area, but a formal set is not required. The show may be played on a bare stage. All that is needed is a stool set to one side of the stage, where Andy sits as he shares the story.
GOSSIP

1 LIGHTS UP: TEEN ENSEMBLE ENTERS and forms a line facing the AUDIENCE. The first TEEN leans over to the next TEEN, telling a secret. It continues down the line. It’s the Telephone Game.

TEEN: There’s a new girl at school today. She just picked up her schedule. There’s something about her. I don’t know what it is.

TEEN: There’s a new girl at school. There’s something weird about her. I don’t know what it is. I’m picking up her schedule.

TEEN: There’s a new girl in the school today. She’s weird. I picked up her schedule.

TEEN: There’s a new weird girl at school, and she has a schedule. I picked her up.

TEEN: There’s a new girl with a schedule. She’s weird. I picked her up.

TEENS: (Look at each other and then at the AUDIENCE.) Wow. (The TEEN ENSEMBLE forms a tableau on the set—one of mischief and enjoyment. GOSSIP and TIM ENTER. GOSSIP is dressed in all red with a red cardigan. She drops her schedule. They FREEZE.)

ANDY: (ENTERS. To AUDIENCE.) When a person leaves a place, sometimes they go to be someone else. Or, at least, that’s what she told us. (Sits on the stool.) Her name was— (GOSSIP and TIM UNFREEZE.)

GOSSIP: (Introduces herself to TIM.) Gossip.

TIM: And I’m your First Day Partner?

GOSSIP: Yep.

TIM: Great. Tim. So, here we are. Welcome to East View High. So, I guess I’ll give you the skinny on everything.

GOSSIP: (Sinister.) I sure hope so.

TIM: What do you mean?

GOSSIP: Nothing.

TIM: All right. Let me see your schedule.

GOSSIP: Oh, no. Where— (Sees it on the floor.) —oh, there it is. I must’ve dropped it.

TIM: I got it. (Picks it up and reads it.) Let me see. What do we have here? (They FREEZE.)

ANDY: It was Tim’s responsibility to take her around. Make sure she got to each of her classes. Make sure that she wasn’t eating alone at lunch. And then make sure she was okay at the end of the day. It was between AP Calculus and Biology II when she first met Dallas. (They UNFREEZE.)
DALLAS: (ENTERS, wearing a cardigan in any color but red.) So, who is this?

TIM: Gossip. Gossip, this is my girlfriend, Dallas.

DALLAS: Gossip? That’s an interesting name.

GOSSIP: “Interesting” like “good”? Or “interesting” like “bad”?

DALLAS: Like good.

GOSSIP: Thanks.

DALLAS: What’s your last name?

GOSSIP: I don’t have one.

DALLAS: Oh. That’s cool. Gossip. Sounds famous. Are you famous?

GOSSIP: Everyone’s famous in one circle or another.

DALLAS: Oh. Well, so nice to meet you. (They FREEZE.)

ANDY: The way she looked at Dallas, it was all right there. It was a hunger. Like an animal. (They UNFREEZE.)

GOSSIP: You, too.

DALLAS: Okay. (To TIM.) Hey, walk me to my locker?

TIM: Sure. (EXITS with DALLAS. GOSSIP watches them go. KAINE and CANDY ENTER with their books and backpacks.)

ANDY: The twins saw it, also. It was so quick. So intense. You could see it in her eyes.

GOSSIP: (Turns to the TWINS.) So, tell me again. Your names. It’s—


GOSSIP: (Blank.) Oh. Okay.

KAINE: Candy…? Kaine…? …Christmas.

KAINE/CANDY: Candy canes.

KAINE: Our parents are idiots.

CANDY: We’re fraternal.

KAINE: She can tell that, Candy.

CANDY: Right.

GOSSIP: So you two get along?

CANDY: Yeah. I guess. Right?

KAINE: For the most part.

GOSSIP: That’s interesting.

KAINE: Why is that interesting?

GOSSIP: ’Cause you’re sisters.

CANDY: Oh. (Pause.) What?

GOSSIP: I just met Dallas. She seems cool.
CANDY: She’s awesome. She’s, like, the nicest person in the school. Like, the only one that—
KAINЕ/CANDY: Everybody likes.
KAINЕ: Yeah. It’s true. Everybody likes her.
KAINЕ/CANDY: She’s awesome.
CANDY: Sometimes we finish each other’s sentences. We don’t mean to.
KAINЕ: It’s the only thing we have in common.
GOSSIP: Can you two keep a secret?
TEEN: (Leans forward towards KAINЕ, CANDY and GOSSIP) Can you keep a secret? (All other TEENS lean forward as well.)
TEENS: Yes! (KAINЕ and CANDY don’t notice the TEENS.)
KAINЕ/CANDY: Yes!
GOSSIP: I’m kinda hot for Tim. (TEENS return to their tableau.)
KAINЕ: What?
GOSSIP: He’s cute.
CANDY: Oh, yeah. He is. But he’s—
GOSSIP: Really, really nice.
CANDY: He’s— (ANDY leaves his stool and joins the scene.) Andy. Hey,
ANDY: Hey.
GOSSIP: (Not as nice as she’s been.) Hey.
CANDY: He’s Tim’s best friend.
GOSSIP: Oh.
ANDY: We kind of watch out for each other.
ANDY/KAINЕ/CANDY: Like brothers.
KAINЕ/CANDY: Twins. (They EXIT with GOSSIP. TIM ENTERS. ANDY and TIM greet each other with a best friend handshake.)
ANDY: (Referring to GOSSIP) Who’s the new girl?
TIM: Oh. Gossip. I’m her First Day Partner.
ANDY: What does Dallas say about her?
TIM: Nothing. She doesn’t say anything about her.
ANDY: Really?
TIM: Yeah. She seems harmless.
ANDY: So does the cheese in a mousetrap.
TIM: (Laughs.) Hilarious. Come on. (EXITs with ANDY.)
DALLAS: (ENTERS with books for her next class as GOSSIP also ENTERS.) Hey, Gossip. What do you have next?
GOSSIP: Hey! I was hoping we could talk. Um, French III.
DALLAS: Really? Me too.

GOSSIP: Oh! Sweet!

DALLAS: Hey, I was wondering if you wanted to join me—us—on
Friday night? Kaine and Candy’s parents are going out of town,
and they’re having people over.

GOSSIP: I’d love to.

DALLAS: Great! It’s a secret though. Their parents are super strict.
You can keep a secret, right? (During the following, each TEEN
turns to the AUDIENCE.)

TEEN: Yes! This is just between us.

TEEN: This does not leave this room.

TEEN: This is one of those just-us-talking moments. I get it. Trust me.

TEEN: Trust me.

TEENS: Trust me. (TEENS turn back and watch DALLAS and GOSSIP with
strange enjoyment. ANDY ENTERS, sits on his stool and watches.)

GOSSIP: I’m a vault. I won’t tell a soul. I promise. Who’s going?

DALLAS: There’s a bunch of people. You know the twins, right?

GOSSIP: I do. They’re great. I love the way they talk all at once
sometimes. So cute.

DALLAS: Oh, good. I’m glad you feel that way.

GOSSIP: How else would I feel?

DALLAS: I don’t know. Some people find it annoying, I guess. No, I’m
glad. So, they’ll be there. And Andy.

GOSSIP: Andy’s nice. (They FREEZE.)

ANDY: She was lying. Right there. I can see it now. She was blatantly
lying. She didn’t like me. (They UNFREEZE.)

DALLAS: Yeah, Andy’s nice.

GOSSIP: He and Tim are best friends, huh?

DALLAS: Yeah.

GOSSIP: One’s as cute as the other.

DALLAS: Right?

GOSSIP/TEENS: (Satisfied.) Right.

ANDY: It was wild how Dallas and Gossip hit it off. Like mad. I didn’t
really see anything wrong with it. I just thought they were becoming
friends. But the motive masked it all. (The TEENS form a semi-circle
around GOSSIP and DALLAS in a new tableau—a bit more threatening
than before. A TEEN playing the DRAMA TEACHER ENTERS with a red
script. [NOTE: If desired, this TEEN can leave the group and exit as
the OTHER TEENS are forming the semi-circle tableau.])
TEEN: Dallas! Dallas! Here’s the script, Dallas. For the fall production. You’re going to audition, right?

DALLAS: (Takes the script.) Of course.

TEEN: Great. See you at the auditions! (Begins to EXIT, but then stops.)

Oh! Look at the role of Julie!

DALLAS: Thanks. (The TEEN playing the DRAMA TEACHER EXITS [or rejoins the ENSEMBLE]. The TEENS watch with delight as DALLAS opens the script and begins to flip through it.) Hey. Do you like acting?

GOSSIP: Acting?

DALLAS: Yeah, like theatre. Acting?

GOSSIP: You mean, pretending to be someone else?

DALLAS: What?

GOSSIP/TEENS: Pretending to be someone else.

DALLAS: (Laughs.) Well, yes. Okay. If you put it like that.

GOSSIP: Really? But that’s your thing.

DALLAS: It’s anyone’s thing. The twins do it. So do Tim and Andy. Yeah. Now that I think about it, you should! (TEENS snap their fingers, ALL at the same time. GOSSIP tilts her head at the sound.)

What was that noise?

GOSSIP: I don’t know. What noise?

DALLAS: Huh. I thought I heard something, but oh—hmm—maybe I didn’t. (GOSSIP and DALLAS FREEZE.)

ANDY: (Stands. To AUDIENCE.) The thing about a snap is you hear it—the warning—but then you doubt that you heard anything and then forget about it. I wish Dallas hadn’t forgotten. (TEENS start to circle around GOSSIP and DALLAS, getting closer with each line.) But, after that moment, and through the next couple weeks, behind everyone’s back, Gossip changed towards Dallas. She wasn’t cool anymore. She actually became annoying. Dependent. Overbearing. Dallas didn’t tell us, though. She was showing Gossip grace because she was new. (Returns to his stool. GOSSIP and DALLAS UNFREEZE. The following lines are spoken to DALLAS with increasing intensity.)

GOSSIP: Do you want to go read lines?

TEEN: Read lines.

GOSSIP: What are you going to do?

TEEN: Do it. (DALLAS is getting more nervous and uncomfortable.)

GOSSIP: Do you think Tim will tryout?

End of script sample.
PRODUCTION NOTES

PROPERTIES ONSTAGE
Stool, red baseball cap (if preset).

PROPERTIES BROUGHT ON
Schedule, books, red scarf (GOSSIP)
Books, backpack, red flyer (KAINE)
Books, backpack (CANDY)
Books, red blanket (DALLAS)
Red script, red cast list, red clipboard, red article of clothing (TEEN)
Red note, red cap (ANDY)

COSTUME NOTES
When the show begins, GOSSIP is the only character who should be wearing red. In fact she should be dressed in all red, including a red cardigan. All others are dressed in regular teen attire with the following specifics:

TEEN ENSEMBLE may wear all black as an ensemble, or they may wear regular teen attire.
DALLAS wears a non-red cardigan.
ANDY wears a wristwatch.

As the show progresses, all of the characters will add a red article of clothing or accessory, specifically:
DALLAS takes GOSSIP’S red cardigan.
ANDY puts on a red baseball cap.

GOSSIP
We hope you’ve enjoyed this script sample.

We encourage you to read the entire script before making your final decision.

You may order a paper preview copy or gain instant access to the complete script online through our E-view program. We invite you to learn more and create an account at www.pioneerdrama.com/E-view.

Thank you for your interest in our plays and musicals. If you’d like advice on other plays or musicals to read, our customer service representatives are happy to assist you when you call 800.333.7262 during normal business hours.