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SECRETS

A Drama in One Act
by KT Curran
and
The SOURCE Teen Theatre

Dramatic Publishing Company
Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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SECRETS

SECRETS is performed by a group of 8 to 28 teenagers.

Characters and Scenes

Mark and Cathy
Julie and Stephany
Meg and Ryan
Danny and Amber
Tesa and Gina
Susan and Mark
Eric and Mike/Alison and Kristen
Mary and Jane
Sharon and Annie
Stacey and Kurt
Ruth Ann, Dan, and Liz
Kate
Judi and Lynn

Time: The present

Place: A bare stage
representing various
places around the
school and home.

NOTES FROM THE AUTHOR

SECRETS was created by KT Curran and The SOURCE Teen Theatre of Southwest Florida, Inc. in Sarasota, Florida. The play was written to shine a light on the hidden questions and feelings that grow into the secrets teens have regarding their sexuality. Teens are living in difficult times today. Fear, shame, and ignorance leave many young people feeling isolated, not knowing where to turn, afraid to get the help and attention they need. It is hoped that this play will show that in listening and talking about our secrets, we find we are not alone. We find we are better able to reach out for help and understanding.

SECRETS can be done with a cast as small as eight or, as The SOURCE Teen Theatre did, with a cast of twenty-eight. It is important to add original or contemporary music to assist in the transitions between the scenes. The setting can be as simple as a bare stage and a few boxes, or it can be quite complex with various levels, platforms, and moving pieces.

SECRETS appears here in its original form. If you feel that any of the material is not appropriate for your production, you have the playwrights' permission to delete entire scenes that are unacceptable for a particular audience. You may present one, two, or any combination of the scenes. You may not, however, delete parts or portions of scenes.



SECRETS was written by SOURCE Teen Theatre Director/Producer KT Curran along with the following members of The SOURCE: Dorian Boyd, Brie Coker, Gina Considine, Eric Currie, Cat Ford-Coates, Ali Foster, Michele Garafalo, Carla Hyman, Holley Jones, Peter Lukas, Marc Kendall, Lori Marsh, Corelia Peacock, Candice Rankin, Nick Roberts, Mandy Schlacter, Brooke Schulte, Evan Schulte, Tyna Shetler, Amber Smith, Ryann Stanley, Pam Sumner, Amanda Taulere, and Erinn Warren.

Planned Parenthood Association of Southwest Florida's SOURCE Teen Theatre is a nationally award-winning group of young people dedicated to peer education through theatre. Conveying information on human sexuality, peer pressure, dating, teen pregnancy, AIDS, The SOURCE performs both published plays and original works developed by Planned Parenthood.

NOTES FROM THE PUBLISHER

SECRETS is about secrets—the hidden thoughts and anxieties of teenagers which often determine the course of their lives. The message of this play is that secrets must be revealed—tell somebody. Most adults can't handle their own problems alone; how can we expect inexperienced, immature young people to handle theirs? Tell somebody. Get help.

Playing time for the whole script is about 60-70 minutes.

SECRETS

[The play begins in darkness. Loud, contemporary MUSIC begins, and as the LIGHTS come up, a large group of TEENAGERS enter from all directions. They strike various poses in different areas and levels across the stage. Some are sitting, some are standing, forming a pleasing stage picture. The MUSIC fades to a low level as they begin to speak]

VOICE: Take a look.

VOICE: I am an American teenager.

VOICE: I am male.

VOICE: Female.

VOICE: Black.

VOICE: White.

VOICE: Artist.

VOICE: Lover.

VOICE: Poet.

VOICE: Athlete.

VOICE: Thinker . . .

VOICE: . . . and Dreamer

VOICE: Who am I?

VOICE: I am me.

VOICE: Straight.

VOICE: Gay.

VOICE: Undecided.

VOICE: Full of questions—

VOICE: Full of secrets.

[The ACTORS begin whispering from different areas of the stage]

VOICE: If my mother finds out, she'll kill me.

VOICE: Please don't tell anyone.

VOICE: Did you hear what happened to Anne Marie?

VOICE: You haven't told him yet?

VOICE: Why can't I talk to her any more?

VOICE: They'd never forgive me.

VOICE: I haven't told a single, living person.

[The ACTORS all lean forward toward the audience]

ALL: *[Stage whisper]* It's a secret.

[Slowly most of the ACTORS begin to leave the stage, leaving only the few who are addressing the audience]

VOICE: We're all hiding something. From our parents, friends, teachers. Questions we have about life—

VOICE: and love.

VOICE: But how long can we keep hiding?

VOICE: What can you do with a secret that wants to come out?

[Each VOICE leaves the stage after she/he has spoken, leaving CATHY alone on stage]

CATHY: *[To audience]* All through middle school I felt like I was invisible. I had a few friends, but they were all either really fat or really skinny. And they always got good grades. Even though they were dependable and honest, I wanted more. They were just so boring. I was boring. We played stupid games like truth or dare with stupid questions like, "Would you kiss Ryan Anderson?" And I was sick of drooling over guys and never having a boyfriend. By eighth grade I still hadn't even kissed a guy. It was my big secret. That's when I decided that come high school . . . my friends and life were gonna change. *[She is sitting on a school bench and MARK enters, passes her, and then takes a second look]*

MARK: Cathy? Is that Cathy?

CATHY: I call myself Cat now.

MARK: Huh?

CATHY: My name is Cat now. *[Looking around to see if anyone is watching]* And I'd appreciate it if you would not call me Cathy in high school.

MARK: But that's your name. I've always called you that.

CATHY: Not any more. Okay?

MARK: Where did you get those clothes?

CATHY: *[Striking a cool pose]* From Glad Rags. What do you think?

MARK: Different.

CATHY: Thanks. *[There is an uncomfortable pause]* Listen, I've got to run. I want to smoke a cigarette before the bell rings.

MARK: You smoke?

CATHY: *[Mocking him]* "You smoke?" Something wrong with that?

MARK: No. It's just . . . *[pause]* Cathy . . . Cat . . . uh . . .

CATHY: What?

MARK: Are you okay? I mean is anything wrong?

CATHY: Of course I'm okay. What's that supposed to mean?

MARK: You seem so . . . changed.

[A MEMBER of the group enters and crosses the stage as if he or she is walking down a school hallway]

CATHY: *[Seeing someone she knows at the other end of the hall]* Hey, Jinx! Wait for me! *[To Mark]* Listen. I've got to go. I'll see you around. *[She runs off]*

[The ENTIRE CAST comes on from Stage Left and Right. They take their original poses from the beginning of the play]

VOICE: Who am I?

VOICE: That's the biggest secret of all.

VOICE: If I tell you who I really am, will you still like me?

VOICE: If I tell you who I really am, will you care?

[One MEMBER of the group moves forward and addresses the audience]

VOICE: Who am I? I'm an artist, a musician, a dreamer, a thinker, a lover. My passion runs deep, my emotions run deeper. I'm practical. I'm irresponsible. I'm a realist. I feel everything with all my being. I dream with all my might. Maybe I seem incomprehensible, and maybe you don't understand, but that's 'cause you're on the outside looking in from a world away, and I'm in here *[Taps her chest]*. That's not important though, 'cause I understand who I am, and what my life's gonna be. And I've learned to pretend that's all that matters.

[A VOICE (male) starts to move across the stage as he speaks. The other ACTORS shift positions]

VOICE: Who am I? An awkward child in a large sports-oriented school, stuck with no personal athletic abilities whatsoever. While my friends put their energies toward basketball, football, etc., I generally put in long hours hanging lights at the theatre, working on music, or drawing. To my friends I make very little sense. To my family, even less. Does a person who chose to play tuba in the marching band of his own free will make sense to you?

[He moves back as the next VOICE (female) moves through the group. The other ACTORS shift to another area of the stage]

VOICE: I want to be a dancer. A ballet dancer. I practice for hours and hours. I don't want anything to get in the way of my future. Not love. Not sex. Not relationships. I hear my friends talking about this guy and that

party and how much fun they had over the weekend. I feel like I'm on the outside of the window, looking in. But then I turn on the music and dance in front of the mirror. I imagine the lights and the audience. And being on the outside doesn't seem to matter any more. All that matters is the music. *[She crosses to the back as the next VOICE (female) jumps up on a box or platform)*

VOICE: Who am I? Who am I? What does that mean? I'm me. Your normal fourteen-year-old teenager who does normal teenage stuff. My day consists of four things. Sleep, school, eat, and more sleep. My parents think I'm "Miss Goody Two Shoes," but sometimes I wish they knew the real me. The person inside the person. The fear behind the face. I wonder if they did know every detail about my life if they'd still treat me like their little girl or if they'd kick me out of the house. But how can you tell someone who you are when you don't even know?

[The VOICES begin to exit but freeze with their backs to the audience]

STEPHANY: *[Leaving the group, crossing to audience]* I've got a secret. A big secret. I'm a virgin. I've never had sex. *[The ACTORS unfreeze and quickly look at Stephany, then exit as if they are talking about her]* Is that so terrible? My friends are always talking about it as if everyone is doing it. I'm afraid if they find out, they'll think there is something wrong with me. I've had boyfriends. And believe me they wanted to. It's just that I think sex—making love—should be something special. That sounds cliché, doesn't it? I really believe it though. And I've never met anyone I thought I might want to share that much of myself with. It's not like I'm going to be a virgin forever. But for now it's just not right for me. Why do I feel like I have to hide who I really am?

[STEPHANY begins to brush her hair and fix her make-up in a school restroom. JULIE enters]

JULIE: Stephany! I had the greatest weekend. Guess who I was with?

STEPHANY: Who?

JULIE: Steve Parker. You know. The captain of the football team. The one with the red sports car. You know—the senior. Well anyway, Saturday night he called me and asked me out!

STEPHANY: Oh yeah?

JULIE: It was fabulous! We went out on the beach. He is sooo good-looking! And so good.

STEPHANY: Good?

JULIE: You know what I mean.

STEPHANY: *[Looks at her for a moment]* Oh. Yeah. I went out with John this weekend.

JULIE: You guys are getting pretty serious. What was that? Your third date?

STEPHANY: I don't know. I guess so.

JULIE: So have you two . . . you know . . . done it?

STEPHANY: Julie!

JULIE: Have you?

STEPHANY: Well no . . . yeah . . . maybe . . . kind of.

JULIE: What do you men, "kind of"? Me and Steve did a lot more than "kind of."

STEPHANY: Well . . . I didn't, okay? And I'm not going to either. I'm not ready.

JULIE: You don't know what you're missing.

STEPHANY: I don't care. I want him to like me for who I am, not what I do for him. I'm not saying I'll never have sex. But when I do I want it to be . . . right. I want it to be special.

JULIE: Don't you worry that you'll lose him if you don't have sex with him?

STEPHANY: If I do, he's not worth it.

JULIE: Can you keep a secret? Me and Steve . . . on the beach . . . it wasn't really that great. I passed him in the hall this morning and he didn't even look at me. He didn't even see me. And I was standing right in front of him. *[They merge with the entering Actors]*

[Several ACTORS cross the stage as if they are between classes and moving through the halls. We hear "secrets" whispered at various levels from different directions]

VOICE: Secrets.

VOICE: Secrets.

VOICE: Secrets.

VOICE: Secrets.

ALL: Secrets.

[RYAN runs onstage and addresses the audience]

RYAN: *[To audience]* Do you want to know *my secret*? I am in love.

Madly, truly, deeply in love—with a girl who doesn't even know I'm alive.
[MEG crosses the stage on her way to class. RYAN watches her for a moment as he tries to get up the courage to speak]

RYAN: Hi.

MEG: Hello. *[She walks on]*

RYAN: Meg!

MEG: What?

RYAN: Uhhh . . .

MEG: Yeah?

RYAN: Uhh . . . nice dress.

MEG: Thanks. *[She starts to go]*

RYAN: Wait.

MEG: Yeah?

RYAN: I . . .

MEG: I . . . what?

RYAN: I . . . uh . . . algebra.

MEG: Excuse me?

RYAN: Algebra. Homework.

MEG: Could you please try speaking in complete sentences?

RYAN: *[Laughing nervously]* Uh yeah. Sorry. I . . . uh . . . I just was wondering if you could tell me what our homework in algebra is tonight.

MEG: Oh. No homework. *[She turns to go]*

RYAN: Meg!

MEG: *[Yelling]* What?

RYAN: Did you get your hair cut?

MEG: *[Yelling]* No!

RYAN: Oh.

MEG: Can I go now?

RYAN: Well . . . see . . . I was just wondering if you could . . . you could

MEG: Could what?

RYAN: Tell me what time it is.

MEG: 10:35. And I'm going to be late for class.

RYAN: Oh.

MEG: Goodbye.

RYAN: 'Bye. *[She walks away]*

[A VOICE (could be male or female) is walking through the halls alone]

VOICE: Three months. Three months of my life I've been with him, and he still won't let me tell anybody. He says it's our little secret. Is he ashamed of me or something? I want to tell somebody. I want to tell the whole world that we are together. That we are in love. And he says keep it a secret.

[AMBER enters. She is at home, late at night, looking out her bedroom window. Her parents are asleep. To audience:]

AMBER: I am fourteen years old and I am in love. Some people might say that's impossible. How can you be in love at fourteen? But I am. I love him, and he loves me. He comes to my bedroom window and throws little rocks up to catch my attention. Isn't that sweet? I run down into the night and we . . . well we . . . we love each other. We don't really talk a lot, but who needs to talk? My parents are trying to keep us apart. They say we're too young of course. They say we should be busy with anything else but each other. So we keep our love a secret. And I think that makes us love each other even more. A secret love. Like Romeo and Juliet.

[DANNY enters. He looks up to Amber's bedroom window and calls softly]

DANNY: *[Whispering]* Amber! *[Louder]* Amber!

AMBER: Shhhhh. My parents are gonna hear you!

DANNY: Aren't they asleep yet?

AMBER: I don't know. I think so.

DANNY: Can you come out?

AMBER: I think they're beginning to suspect something. This morning at breakfast my mom said she thought she heard noises last night, and my dad said, "I wonder if we have a prowler. Maybe we ought to call the police." And then they both turned and looked at me. Right at me. I thought I was going to die.

DANNY: What did you say?

AMBER: I didn't say anything. I just sat there and ate my pop tart.

DANNY: You eat pop tarts for breakfast? I thought only little kids ate pop tarts.

AMBER: What's wrong with pop tarts?

DANNY: Are you coming out?

AMBER: Hold out your hands.

DANNY: *[Holding his hands together to catch her foot]* Careful.

AMBER: I'm gonna fall!

DANNY: I'm losing my balance!

AMBER: Ahhhh! *[They both fall to the ground, giggling]*

DANNY: Are you okay? *[A LIGHT goes on in the house]*

AMBER: Oh no. They heard us.

DANNY: What are we gonna do?

AMBER: Quick. Lift me back up.

DANNY: I didn't even get to kiss you.

AMBER: Quick! They'll kill me.

DANNY: One kiss.

AMBER: *[Kissing him]* There. Now lift me up!

DANNY: *[Lifting her up to the window]* I love you.

AMBER: I love you too. Goodnight, Danny.

DANNY: Amber!

AMBER: Yes?

DANNY: I forgot what I was going to say.

AMBER: I hear them coming! Goodnight. I'm gonna go jump in bed and pull my covers over my head.

DANNY: Don't talk about your bed. You'll drive me crazy.

AMBER: Go!

DANNY: You first.

AMBER: Go!

DANNY: I Love you. *[BOTH run off]*

[MUSIC up as a YOUNG WOMAN crosses the stage, reading a dictionary]

GINA: *[To audience]* "Love." What does it mean? The dictionary says love is *[reading from the dictionary]* "1. a strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties. 2. attraction based on sexual desire: affection and tenderness felt by lovers. 3. affection based on admiration, benevolence, or common interests." *[Closing the book]* Yep. That's what I'm feeling. All of the above. *[She puts the book down and stares into space. TESA enters]*

TESA: Gina *[GINA doesn't answer]* Gina. *[Still no answer]* Earth to Gina.

GINA: Huh?

TESA: Have you heard a word I said?

GINA: No.

TESA: I was wondering if you wanted to go to the movies with me this afternoon.

GINA: Ummm. I don't know. I don't think so.

TESA: Why not?

GINA: Jason might call.

TESA: So?

GINA: So. I don't want to miss him.

TESA: Gina. Ever since you started dating Jason you don't do anything. You don't say anything. You just sit around and stare into space.

GINA: I can't help it. I think about him all the time. You want to know a secret? I've decided to go on the pill. Jason and I talked it over.

TESA: Do you really think that's a good idea?

GINA: Why wouldn't it be?

TESA: You're sleeping with him already? You've only been dating two weeks.

GINA: Tesa. We're in love.

TESA: Do you know how many girls he's been with?

GINA: This is different.

TESA: If you say so.

GINA: What's that supposed to mean?

TESA: Nothing. I'm sorry.

GINA: You're just jealous.

TESA: What?

GINA: You're jealous because I'm spending so much time with him instead of you. It's true isn't it?

TESA: No. I don't know. Maybe. But that's not the point. The point is you don't give up who you are just because you fall in love. You don't give up your friends and your ideas and the things you do. You don't give up living to sit around and wait for phone calls from some guy.

GINA: Wait 'til it happens to you.

TESA: I don't want to fall in love. Not yet. I don't want to lose myself before I even know who I am.

GINA: Tesa. I'll go to the movies.

TESA: You will?

GINA: Yeah. But come on. Let's go before I change my mind.

[They exit. A VOICE (female) enters and addresses the audience]

VOICE: When I started being interested in guys everything in my life changed. I felt like I wasn't even the same person. See, when I was a little girl I was really a brave kid, you know? I did gymnastics, and I was the champion of the swim team. I was the fastest girl in the neighborhood and could outrun even all the boys. Then one day the girl who sat in the desk next to mine told me this guy named Frank liked me. I felt all funny inside. I didn't know how to act around him any more. I became real quiet and started wearing makeup and pretty dresses to school. I quit gymnastics 'cause somebody said it made me too sweaty. And pretty soon Frank asked me to go steady. I was considered popular by everybody in the class. But it wasn't me, you know? It wasn't me.

[She exits. SUSAN enters and sits. She is sitting on a bench outside her school. She is very upset]

SUSAN: *[To audience]* I had the scariest experience of my life today. I've been having these problems lately and decided to go get it checked out. I skipped my first period class and went to the walk-in clinic at the health department. I felt so scared. I kept thinking someone was going to see me, you know? They told me I have this weird disease. A sexually-transmitted disease. They made it sound really serious and said if I hadn't come in I could have ended up sterile. They gave me some medicine and said I had to make sure to take all of it or it might come back. The medicine is making me so sick. I've been throwing up for two hours. I'm stuck here at school. I could barely sit through Algebra without getting sick. The teacher kept asking me what was wrong, and if I wanted to go home. I don't want my mom to find out. If I go home she's going to notice something. I never could keep a secret from my mom. What am I going to do? The health department said I had to tell my boyfriend, but how can I? He said I was his first. He lied. I feel so betrayed. I don't ever want to see him again. How am I supposed to tell him?

[She sits for a moment, looking worried. Suddenly she sees MARK coming down the corridor]

SUSAN: Mark, wait up. I need to talk to you.

MARK: Make it quick! I've got to get to practice.

SUSAN: *[Looking around]* Can't we go somewhere a little more private?

MARK: I said I was in a hurry.