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Playscripts, Inc.  
P.O. Box 237060  
New York, NY 10023

Phone/fax: 1-866-NEW-PLAY (639-7529)  
Email: [questions@playscripts.com](mailto:questions@playscripts.com)  
Web: [www.playscripts.com](http://www.playscripts.com)

## **Cast of Characters**

SALLY, the female entertainment reporter from hell

SAM, the male entertainment reporter from hell

APRIL, the bitter reigning queen of Hollywood who is growing older by the moment

DANIELLE, the young starlet whose innocence is quickly fading

PAULINE, the British diva

RACHEL, the independent-movie princess

TRACY, the “token” African-American nominee

## **Setting**

Backstage at the Academy Awards, during a commercial break.

## **Acknowledgments**

*And the Winner Is...* received its world premiere at The Wing & Groove Theatre in Chicago on January 7, 2000. The production was directed by Nick A. Moreno and produced by The Dorothy Nickle Performing Arts Company. The original cast was as follows:

SALLY..... Jennifer Faletto

SAM..... Erick Jacobson

APRIL..... Sharon Carr

DANIELLE..... Megan Doherty

PAULINE ..... Michelle Thorson

RACHEL..... Kelly Norris

TRACY..... Karina Smith

# AND THE WINNER IS...

by David-Matthew Barnes

*(When the play begins, we are backstage at the Academy Awards. SALLY and SAM, the entertainment reporters from hell, scurry on stage, clutching microphones. SALLY's hair is teased and ratted and looks gigantic. SAM is "too pretty for his own good." They are both ridiculously dressed in styles that match their obnoxious personalities.)*

**SALLY.** I smell it, Sam.

**SAM.** Cheap perfume?

**SALLY.** A *scandal*. It's in the air.

**SAM.** How's my hair?

**SALLY.** Not as pretty as mine, but still, you look good.

**SAM.** Not as good as you, Sally.

**SALLY.** Nobody is, Sam.

**SAM.** You amaze me, Sally.

**SALLY.** In another life you would be madly in love with me.

**SAM.** I don't really like you, Sally—I just pretend that I do.

**SALLY.** It's part of the job.

**SAM.** Do you love your job?

**SALLY.** Destroying the lives of overexposed celebrities by contributing to false and fabricated rumors? *(Quick pause:)* I love it! They should give me an Emmy for the amount of *crap* I have to come up with. Do you know how much creativity this job requires?

**SAM.** The viewers love you.

**SALLY.** Not as much as you do.

**SAM.** Sally, I have erotic dreams about you.

**SALLY.** It's because of my hair.

**SAM.** It's because you're a coldhearted, manipulating bitch who shows no mercy on even the most obscure celebrity.

**SALLY.** Tonight's the night, Sam.

**SAM.** You're finally going to give in and allow me to make mad passionate love to you?

**SALLY.** If I only I had five minutes to spare. Let's run down the list.

**SAM.** The list?

**SALLY.** The nominees. The overpaid wenches that slept their way into a nomination for Best Actress.

**SAM.** April Newton.

**SALLY.** The Blair Witch Project herself. She adopted a crippled child for publicity.

**SAM.** Audiences love her.

**SALLY.** She scares the hell out of me. I saw her beat the shit out of a stuntwoman.

**SAM.** Danielle Taylor.

**SALLY.** She's so goody-goody, she makes my teeth hurt.

**SAM.** She's made the cover of *seven* magazines.

**SALLY.** She's trailer park trash who got lucky. She'll be selling dog food in a year.

**SAM.** Pauline Emerson.

**SALLY.** Another rich bitch from England. Send her back. Send her back!

**SAM.** Rachel Riley.

**SALLY.** Oh God—that awful twit who *ruined* the Sundance Festival.

**SAM.** The independent crowd worships the ground she walks on.

**SALLY.** The independent crowd doesn't know any better. They're all brain-dead.

**SAM.** Tracy Morrison.

**SALLY.** Who?

**SAM.** She's African-American.

**SALLY.** Never mind. She'll never win.

**SAM.** *I* like her.

**SALLY.** Like I said, she'll never win.

**SAM.** Here comes April Newton.

**SALLY.** My first victim.

*(APRIL enters. She rolls her eyes at the sight of SALLY and SAM.)*

April—hi! I loved your film.

**APRIL.** Get over it, Sally.

**SALLY.** I'm over it. Having a wonderful evening?

**APRIL.** The time of my life.

**SALLY.** *Love* your dress.

**APRIL.** *Hate* your hair.

**SALLY.** Isn't your career over yet?

**APRIL.** It was an honor just to be nominated.

**SALLY.** *(Into camera:)* Hi, this is Sally Huegenaut, with Entertainment News. I'm here with April Newton, nominee for Best Actress. April, how do you feel?

**APRIL.** I feel like shit, Sally. I haven't slept in a week and my husband is cheating on me.

**SAM.** April, we're live.

**APRIL.** It was an honor just to be nominated.

**SALLY.** How do you feel about the controversy surrounding this year's awards ceremony?

**APRIL.** You mean the fact that Rachel Riley was caught on videotape having illegal sex with four underage boys and somehow it ended up all over the Internet and is being sold for \$69.95?

**SALLY.** Yes, what can you tell us about that?

**APRIL.** I had nothing to do with it, Sally. I think it's just a tragedy for poor Rachel. She is such a—brilliant actress.

**SAM.** What about the rumors that you're having a lesbian affair with your director from *Women Will Conquer*?

**APRIL.** I'm *not* a lesbian, Sam. I am a happily married woman and I have been for three years—

**SAM.** April, you've been married for *five* years.

**APRIL.** Has it been that long?

**SALLY.** Any words to your fellow nominees?

**APRIL.** We are all winners.

*(PAULINE storms in, carrying a drink. DANIELLE follows behind her, slightly buzzed from the bottle of champagne she is drinking.)*

**PAULINE.** This bloody show is three fucking hours too long! Can we please get this over with?!

**DANIELLE.** I think it's a wonderful evening. I've always dreamed about being here.

**PAULINE.** Take a long look around, little girl. This is your last trip to Oz.

*(She downs her drink.)*

**APRIL.** Pauline—as always, it's a pleasure.

**PAULINE.** April, you look *stunning*.

**APRIL.** Image is everything.

**PAULINE.** Tell that to Emma Thompson.

**APRIL.** Didn't she die?

**PAULINE.** God I hope so. She is an embarrassment to my country.

**DANIELLE.** What country are you from?

**PAULINE.** Who is this *orphan* child? Are you an Olympic ice skater?

**APRIL.** Pauline, this is Danielle Taylor. She's a nominee tonight.

**PAULINE.** My God, she's *twelve*.

**DANIELLE.** I'm sixteen, ma'am.

**PAULINE.** *Ma'am?!*

**DANIELLE.** I've seen all of your movies.

**PAULINE.** Who hasn't?

**DANIELLE.** I remember—when I was three years old—I saw you in—

**PAULINE.** Memory lane is a long street, *dear!* No need to get sentimental.

**SAM.** Danielle, I'm Sam Barrington with Entertainment News.

**DANIELLE.** I have your workout video at home.

**SALLY.** You should see his other movies.

**PAULINE.** She's too young to rent them.

**APRIL.** Aren't we all?

**SAM.** How do you feel being a first time nominee, Danielle—and for your first film, too?

**DANIELLE.** I can't believe that I'm actually here. This is a dream come true, Sam. Everyone has been so nice to me.

**APRIL.** Give it a year. You'll be strung out and neurotic like the rest of us.

**DANIELLE.** I feel like a fairy tale.

*(RACHEL enters, with cocaine all over her face and wearing only one shoe. She has a lollipop in her mouth, which she toys with flirtatiously.)*

**PAULINE.** Here comes the Wicked Witch.

**APRIL.** Don't forget, Pauline. Rachel Riley makes *real* movies.

**PAULINE.** She's an underpaid slut who works for no budget.

**RACHEL.** I'm going to murder someone! Which one of you bitches is responsible for the videotape?!

**PAULINE.** What videotape?

**APRIL.** Did something happen, Rachel?

**RACHEL.** It was *you*, April. I know it was!

**APRIL.** Prove it.

**RACHEL.** I've never done anything to you.

**APRIL.** You've never done anything *for* me either. If it weren't for Mr. Potato Head, you would never have a career.

**PAULINE.** I see the resemblance.

**SALLY.** Rachel Riley—just the girl I wanted to talk to.

**RACHEL.** Eat me, Sally.

**SAM.** I'll take this interview.

**RACHEL.** Back off, you repressed homo. I want answers here! I know one of you did this to me!

**APRIL.** According to the video footage that *I* saw—*four* of them were doing it to you.

**PAULINE.** Really, Rachel, learn to close the drapes. Have some decency.

**RACHEL.** (*To SAM and SALLY:*) April Newton lies about her age.

**APRIL.** I do not! I'm 32.

**RACHEL.** Maybe in *dog years*! You were born in 1904, you decrepit hag!

**APRIL.** You are sadly misinformed, you sorry excuse for an actress.

**PAULINE.** Go buy some talent, Rachel Riley.

*(She hands RACHEL a few dollars. RACHEL slips the money into her bra.)*

**RACHEL.** And you're not even British. You were born in *Utah!*

**SALLY.** (*To SAM:*) Are you getting all of this?

**SAM.** Every word.

**RACHEL.** (*Turns on SALLY and SAM:*) And you two—with your white-trash television show.

**SALLY.** We have stayed in the top of the ratings for five consecutive years!

**RACHEL.** And you've been on your back for three of them!

**DANIELLE.** (*Drunk and staggering, holding on to SAM for dear life:*) I got my start with a small part on Baywatch. And then I did the new Love Boat. Next I'm guest starring on Pacific Blue with Mario Lopez.

**APRIL.** I *love* Mario.

**PAULINE.** So do I.

**SAM.** He's got a huge—

**APRIL / RACHEL / SALLY.** (*In unison:*) We know!

**RACHEL.** Danielle, let me give you some advice.

**DANIELLE.** That's very kind of you, Rachel.

**RACHEL.** Stay away from these women. They are the *whores* of Hollywood.

**PAULINE.** And you, my dear, are the cold sore.

**DANIELLE.** I just wish everyone wouldn't fight so much.

**APRIL.** It's part of the job, babe.

**DANIELLE.** I just wanted to be famous.

**APRIL.** We all did.

**RACHEL.** I'm a serious actress. It's about the art and craft, not the money.

**APRIL.** You're a whore like the rest of us, Rachel.

**RACHEL.** I will *never* be like you, April Newton. I know about your crippled child.

**APRIL.** Little Tommy means the world to me.

**RACHEL.** You did it for publicity.

**PAULINE.** So did Monica Lewinsky.

**APRIL.** That bitch is selling handbags now.

**SAM.** Rachel, is it true that the videotape of you having illegal sex with four underage boys has gone international?

**RACHEL.** It's not what you think, Sam. I was simply doing research for a new role that I'm working on.

**APRIL.** The life story of Heidi Fleiss?

**DANIELLE.** Will it be on Lifetime?

**RACHEL.** The best thing that can happen for any of you is late night cable.

**APRIL.** You're way ahead of us on that one, babe.

**RACHEL.** I've worked hard for my career! I've turned down roles in huge studio produced pictures, just to keep my dignity intact.

**APRIL.** You won a fucking award at Sundance. Get over it.

**RACHEL.** But *you've* never been to Sundance.

**APRIL.** And I've also never had an orgy with junior high school students either!

**RACHEL.** They were seniors!

**DANIELLE.** That's disgusting—you had sex with old people?

**RACHEL.** *(To DANIELLE:)* Get a sitcom and leave the rest of us alone.

**SALLY.** We're going live in 90 seconds.

**RACHEL.** I have *plenty* to say.

**SALLY.** *(To SAM:)* This is it, Sam. All hell is about to break loose and we are here to get it all and share it with the world.

**SAM.** We owe it to the American public to expose these women for the horrible monsters that they are.

**SALLY.** Yes, but how does my hair look, Sam?

**APRIL.** Like a geriatric hard-on.

**SALLY.** Keep it up, bitch, and I'll mention your first film.

**APRIL.** Do it and I spread the word that you were known as "The Party Favor" in high school.

**DANIELLE.** I just can't believe that I'm here.

**PAULINE.** Will somebody give her a Valium?

**APRIL.** I'm all out.

**RACHEL.** She'll be ruined soon enough.

**PAULINE.** I'll see her in rehab in a year.

**APRIL.** Yes, Pauline—how was your visit last month?

**PAULINE.** I slept with my therapist.

**APRIL.** Hell, I did that in high school.

**RACHEL.** Not to mention the football team.

**APRIL.** I preferred baseball, myself.

**PAULINE.** I always had a thing for soccer players.

**DANIELLE.** My stepbrother plays soccer.

**APRIL.** Maybe you should introduce him to Rachel.

**DANIELLE.** No offense—but she isn't his type.

**APRIL.** That's a first.

**RACHEL.** I know it was you, April.

**APRIL.** You deserve what you get. You and Sharon Stone both.

**RACHEL.** I made fourteen films last year.

**APRIL.** All for the price of one.

**RACHEL.** You'll pay for what you've done to me.

**APRIL.** Actually, it didn't cost me much at all. A few hundred bucks and a hidden video camera and for once, you made the prime time news.

**SALLY / SAM.** In seventeen countries!

**SAM.** I enjoyed it.

**RACHEL.** You watched it?!

**SAM.** For professional purposes only.

*(TRACY enters. They all looked dumfounded and confused.)*

**TRACY.** Am I late for the interview?

**SALLY.** Excuse me?

**TRACY.** I was told that Entertainment News was doing a live interview.

**PAULINE.** Who *are* you?

**TRACY.** Tracy Morrison. I was nominated for my performance in *Sorrow Is My Sister*.

**APRIL.** I think *Oprah Winfrey* is *your* sister.

**PAULINE.** You don't honestly think that you will win, do you?

**TRACY.** I hope so. Tonight is my grandmother's birthday. She raised me and my two sisters when our mother died.

**APRIL.** Is she for real?

**SALLY.** I thought they already made the Tina Turner movie.

**PAULINE.** Honey, they never let *your* people win. Don't you know that?

**SAM.** Forty-five seconds until we go live!

**TRACY.** My name is Tracy Morrison. I am an actress and I have been nominated for an Academy Award. I'm here to be interviewed like the rest of you.

**APRIL.** Tell it to *Ebony*. I'm not interested.

**PAULINE.** I told you—the only reason why you're here is to make it look *fair*.

**TRACY.** I'm here because I worked my ass off in that film. I deserve that award.

**PAULINE.** Listen, you got a free dinner and drinks. Just leave it at that and go back to community theatre in Mississippi or wherever it is you're from.

**APRIL.** We really don't have time for this.

**DANIELLE.** I loved *The Color Purple*!

**APRIL.** What has happened to Hollywood? Wasn't *Gone With The Wind* enough?

**PAULINE.** My God—what if they start picketing outside?

**TRACY.** Listen up, you little *starfuckers*! My name is Tracy Morrison and I'm here because I was nominated for my performance in *Sorrow Is My Sister*. Now, if y'all wanna be *nasty* about this, then I can be *nasty*. First of all, April Newton—everyone that I know has slept with your husband at least a dozen times—and they all complain about the same damn thing—two inches don't go very far in *my* neighborhood, *okay*?! And Pauline Emerson why don't you take your skinny white ass back to England and choke yourself on a pot of piss and tea. Your movies are almost as bad as your nose job—and don't even let me get started on how many sexually transmitted diseases you be spreadin' 'round town, you triflin' ho! You lay on a doorstep faster than the mornin' newspaper. And Rachel Riley—for some God-awful reason, some dumb ass put you in a movie and told you that you can act. *Shhheeeit*. That son of a bitch *lied* to your stupid ass and because of that—we all have to suffer by seeing your ugly grin smilin' up at us every time we go to Blockbuster. I could make one of your movies with ten dollars and a hooker from Harlem. And Danielle Taylor—you little drunk bitch—that sweet innocent routine doesn't fool *me*. You've got an arrest record a mile long and more ex-boyfriends than Elizabeth Taylor. In a year, you'll be burned out, used up, and doing infomercials. I, myself, worked three jobs to put myself through college. I've studied every aspect of actin' you can possibly imagine. I've played every maid, call girl, and the wife of countless dope dealers—on every

stage from here to Kentucky. It took me eleven years to get a part in a film—and now that I'm here—I'm not going anywhere! I got an agent. I got a manager. I got a lawyer. I got a publicist. I've got a personal *mothah fuckin'* assistant. And it's about time. I deserve all of this—because unlike the four of you *dirty tramps*—I live an *honest* life with dignity and self-respect. I *care* about the movies I make and not the size of my bank account. So if the four of you cannot maintain yourselves like the decent young women that God intended y'all to be, then step aside, because I *can* and I *will*. It's not about box office. It's not about power. It's not about having your face on every trashy magazine in America. It's about givin' somethin' to the world—and believe you me, I've got plenty to give. Now, get that camera rollin', because I am ready for my interview.

*(Everyone looks stunned and is speechless.)*

**SAM.** Five seconds until the live telecast.

**SALLY.** I'm ready.

**TRACY.** So am I.

**SALLY.** This is Sally Hueganaut with Entertainment News. I'm here tonight with the *exquisite* and *multitalented* Tracy Morrison. Tracy, you look absolutely gorgeous tonight. What's your secret?

**TRACY.** Oh, Sally, I tell you—the secret to life is to be who you are and to love yourself no matter how many mistakes you make. I am thrilled to be here. It's quite an honor.

**SALLY.** Well, we're happy to have you here.

**SAM.** Tracy, you have become a role model to women everywhere. Why do you think so many women identify with you?

**TRACY.** Because I am *real*. I'm not scared to be myself and I'm happy with the person that I am.

**SAM.** Any words for your fellow nominees?

**TRACY.** I think all four of the women are beautiful and special in their own ways. I hope they truly realize how incredible they are. I am honored to work in an industry where women are constantly recognized and acknowledged for their work.

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