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# **Buckshot**

By

COURTNEY MEAKER

**Dramatic Publishing Company**

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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(BUCKSHOT)

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*Buckshot* was first produced by Macha Monkey Productions in November 2013 at the Cornish Playhouse Studio in Seattle.

Cast:

Alana ..... Katie Driscoll  
Mel ..... Megan Ahiers  
Jax ..... Jordi Montes  
Jalyn ..... Narea Kang  
Saul ..... Daniel Wood  
Uncle Hal ..... Gianni Truzzi  
Booker ..... Randall Brammer

Production Staff:

Director ..... Peggy Gannon  
Set Designer ..... Brandon Estrella  
Light Designer ..... Tess Malone  
Costume Designer ..... Julia Evanovich  
Sound Designer ..... Joseph Swartz  
Prop Designer ..... Robin Macartney

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## CHARACTERS

ALANA (w): Mid-20s to early 30s.

MEL (w): Mid-20s to early 30s.

JAX (genderqueer): Mid-20s to early 30s.

JALYN (w): Mid-20s to early 30s.

SAUL (m): Three years older than ALANA.

UNCLE HAL (m): Late 30s or 40s.

BOOKER (m): 16.

## AUTHOR NOTES

Families can be multiracial. Members of friend groups do not look like copies of one another and the default appearance of characters should not be able-bodied, slim Caucasians. In short, this should not be a homogenous-looking cast, and certainly not all white.

A “—” at the end of a line signifies quickly spoken dialogue. The thought can be completed as necessary.

Characters may remain onstage before/after their scenes have ended with ALANA.

The “shotgun” stage direction denotes a shotgun blast. Translate that as you will.

JAX should be performed as butch/genderqueer/androgynous. JAX should not be played by a cisgender male actor. JAX is not a caricature of maleness.

Blackouts should only be used for the end of acts. The play moves fluidly and should not be in darkness.

# Buckshot

## ACT I

*(Lights up on ALANA's apartment. MEL and ALANA are packing. MEL puts things in a box marked Goodwill. ALANA looks at the items, removes them from the box and puts them back in their original spot. MEL doesn't seem to notice. She picks up a blender.)*

ALANA. Wait a second. My blender? You're tossing my blender? You don't like it?

MEL. I have one.

ALANA. Well, we could toss yours then.

MEL. Mine's bigger than this.

ALANA. Since when are you a size queen?

MEL. You've taken everything out of the Goodwill box.

ALANA. I did not.

MEL. You are a pack rat.

ALANA. I am not.

MEL. Yes, you are. You are this close to being a hoarder.

ALANA. Foul!

MEL. We could call that trashy reality TV show and see if they'll film you amongst your treasures.

ALANA. This is important.

MEL. This blender is important?

ALANA. Yes.

MEL. Why?



ALANA. Because.

MEL. Because why?

ALANA. Because it is. Because. I bought it when my grandmother died and I'd make myself smoothies to feel better.

MEL. You're so full of it.

ALANA. Yes. I am. Because it's mine.

MEL. You've said the same thing about your bookcase.

ALANA. I have a lot of books.

MEL. Your comics.

ALANA. Whoa. Low blow.

MEL. And the card table.

ALANA. What about game night with Jax and Jalyn? We need it.

MEL. I have a dining room table. We don't need both. Isn't part of the joy of moving getting rid of stuff you don't need?

ALANA. Joy? You find joy in this? This is my nightmare. I don't care about these things. And yet, it's the most important thing I own at this moment. This blender. It's beautiful, isn't it?

MEL. It's cleansing. Cathartic. Letting go. I breathe easier now.

ALANA. And you're using this extra breath to pick on my poor, defenseless blender? His name is Coda.

MEL. OK. Fine, keep the blender. But half of your socks don't match. Why don't you toss those?

ALANA. My feet aren't bigots, Mel. They don't care that I'm wearing cerulean blue with navy. The segregationist sock-drawer movement died in the 60s. Integration now! Integration forever!

MEL. Wow. Feet had a sock movement?

ALANA. Well, the hands helped. Jesus, God. You have to help me, Mel. I'm getting sentimental about everything.

MEL. How about I throw things out without telling you?

ALANA. You would do that for me?

MEL. What's that over there?

ALANA (*playing along*). Why. It's a wall.

(*MEL puts the blender and other items on the table into the box.*)

MEL. OK. You can look.

ALANA. You're amazing. That was magical.

MEL. You're trying to peek in the box, aren't you?

ALANA. No. I'm not.

MEL. All right. Fine. I'll put it back.

ALANA. No. It's not that. What would you think if I. Not that. I mean. I'm just thinking.

MEL. Spit it out, babe.

ALANA. I've been thinking about quitting my job.

MEL. You're kidding.

ALANA. No. When I kid, I make you laugh. You didn't laugh. So I'm not kidding.

MEL. You can't quit your job. Not without another one in place first.

ALANA. I don't know the statistics or anything, but I've heard that it's like a thousand times harder to find a job while the other is slowly sucking your soul away. I think it was an article in *Seventeen*.

MEL. I know Brad's a jerk, but—

ALANA. It's not just Brad.

MEL. Then what is it? I'm serious. I'm listening. Make your case.

ALANA. A case. Right. I guess. Well. It's the cookies.

MEL. Alana. Come on.

ALANA. Hear me out. Every day there's a debate in the break room about whether or not some woman will eat a cookie. Because if she eats the cookie, she's a demon hippo or something, and if she doesn't then well, she's a slender saint. Just eat the damn cookie. Or, at the very least don't suck everyone in the break room into the decision-making process. I don't give a shit if she eats the cookie, and yet, every day I'm pulled into this argument.

MEL. So you're going to quit your job over cookies? That's the story you're going with? I mean, if you had said brownies, maybe.

ALANA. Nevermind. It was just a thought. That's all.

MEL. Babe. I know you're unhappy there. And you'll have my support. I promise. But you need something else in place before you just move on. Listen to me. I'm smarter than you.

ALANA. Very true.

MEL. It's gonna be fine. We'll take care of each other. That's why we're doing this.

ALANA. Or, you could quit my job without me looking.

MEL. We're gonna need a bigger box.

ALANA. Or. Oh. This is a genius idea. What if I became your kept woman?

MEL. What?

ALANA. Come on. It would be so much fun.

MEL. You can't cook.

ALANA. I can, too.

MEL. You don't move the furniture when you vacuum.

ALANA. You're supposed to do that?

MEL. Yes.

ALANA. I thought a kept woman was just supposed to do all the kinky sexy weird stuff you want to do.

MEL. Well, there's that, I suppose.

ALANA. I could do that.

MEL. Very well, too, I imagine.

*(They kiss.)*

ALANA. I can't stay there, Mel. I just. I feel like I'm losing myself.

MEL. I understand that, really I do. I'll help you find something amazing. Something where they see you and know how good you are. But we're starting a life here. Fights over dishes, our first dog, all of that good stuff. Just, promise me—

ALANA. Don't you get sick of dogs at work? You want to come home to dogs?

MEL. Yeah. Don't you?

ALANA. I could be into that. One step at a time, though. I've just started admitting to my friends that you're my girlfriend.

*(Their kissing continues over the following dialogue. ALANA's cellphone rings.)*

MEL. You're hysterical.

ALANA. They thought you were my strange cousin. From Canada.

MEL. So so funny.

ALANA. It's cute you're so excited.

MEL. Aren't you?

ALANA. Really excited. Want to feel?

MEL. You make everything dirty.

ALANA. It's why the fight over dishes will be a cute quirk.

MEL. Well, if you just do them when you're finished eating.

ALANA. Ah. Foiled again.

MEL (*regarding the kissing*). You're doing some impressive work.

ALANA. Hush, woman.

*(Phone rings.)*

MEL. Your phone is ringing.

ALANA. You want me to stop.

MEL. No.

ALANA. Good.

MEL. But. Oh fuck it. I don't care.

*(Phone stops ringing. Brief pause, then it starts ringing again.)*

ALANA. Jesus. Fine. Cock-block brick of a phone. (*Into the phone.*) Hello?

SAUL (*entering opposite, on the phone*). Alana.

ALANA. Saul?

MEL. Your brother? Don't tell him I'm here.

ALANA. Are you drunk dialing me again? I can hang up so you can sing "Closing Time" on my voicemail.

SAUL. Is that funny?

ALANA. Did you laugh?

SAUL. I think you're losing your touch, lil sis.

ALANA. Or, maybe you've gone even stupider staying in Tennessee.

SAUL. You know that Washington is a baby state, right? The forty-second state. So one of the last states to ratify. Almost like they were weak and ineffectual. You know. Like you.

ALANA. Yeah. But my state never got into a racist war.

SAUL. You always bring it back to the dark time. Don't you? Also your state killed a whole bunch of Native Americans. I think we're even.

ALANA. Two words. Andrew Jackson.

SAUL. Damn it.

ALANA. What's going on, Saul?

SAUL. I thought you might want to know about Uncle Hal.

ALANA (*suddenly serious*). What about him?

SAUL. He's moved back.

ALANA. When?

SAUL. A week ago.

ALANA. And you're telling me now?

SAUL. I left you a message.

ALANA. Yesterday. You left me a message yesterday.

SAUL. Yeah. So?

ALANA. Where has he been?

SAUL. Maine, or something. Mom was as surprised as I was.

ALANA. When was the last time she'd heard from him?

SAUL. Same as us, I'm guessing. I don't know. Didn't ask. Anyway, he's back. Old. Sick. Et cetera.

ALANA. Dying?

MEL. What's going on?

SAUL. Maybe. He's got Alzheimers.

ALANA. Alzheimers.

SAUL. Yeah. Because the world is funny and cruel.

ALANA. I see.

SAUL. It doesn't change anything.

ALANA. You sure about that?

SAUL. Yes. He's still Hal. He just can't remember anything.

ALANA. Us?

SAUL. Nope.

ALANA. And you don't think that changes anything.

SAUL. Do you want to back out?

ALANA. No.

SAUL. Then it doesn't.

ALANA. Should I come down?

MEL. To Tennessee?

SAUL. No. He's just sick. He's not going anywhere.

ALANA. Saul.

SAUL. Alana. It's fine. He's staying put. Plus, I don't want to have to cancel my trip to see you.

ALANA. You don't have to cancel.

MEL. Cancel what?

ALANA (*to MEL*). It's nothing.

SAUL. Don't bullshit me. If you come home, we'd stay. You'd have successfully weaseled out of the awkward meeting of your amazing brother and your current ... what do you call it?

ALANA. Relationship?

MEL. What? Is he dating someone?

SAUL. I was gonna say something like "squeeze," but I guess that works, too. I'm coming up whether you like it, or not.

ALANA. If you insist.

SAUL. It'll be fine, Lana. We found him. He's not going anywhere.

ALANA. You're all right?

SAUL. I'm a rockstar.

ALANA. Sully.

SAUL. Fine. I'm a folk musician. Is what's-her-name there?

ALANA. Mel?

MEL. I'm not here.

SAUL. Yeah. Mel.

ALANA. No. She stepped out.

SAUL. She knows I'm coming, right? She's making up the couch, or something? Planning on a big welcoming party? There better be cake. Red velvet preferred.

ALANA. Why do you ask?

SAUL. You didn't tell her, did you?

ALANA. Whatever, Saul.

SAUL. And she's standing right there so you can't argue with me. This is fun.

ALANA. Shove it.

SAUL. You should tell her before I show up. I have a tendency to give women heart attacks upon meeting.

ALANA. Don't flatter yourself.

SAUL. Fine. It's your call. See you soon.

ALANA. Love you, Saul.

SAUL. Love you, too. (*Hangs up and exits.*)

ALANA. Now, where were we?

MEL. Your brother OK?

ALANA. Saul's fine.



MEL. So, what's going on?

ALANA. Nothing.

MEL. You don't want to tell me?

ALANA. I'd rather be doing something else. Wouldn't you?

MEL. Alana.

ALANA (*resigning to the mood-killing spirit*). My uncle came out of the woodwork. He's sick.

MEL. Oh. I'm sorry. He was lost?

ALANA. Kind of. No one missed him, so it's an awkward way to put it. But I guess you could call it lost.

MEL. I don't get it.

ALANA. Nothing to get.

MEL. Is there something you need to do? Or, is there something I can do for you? Do you need a drink? Or a hug?

ALANA. It's really fine. It's not like with your mom. I haven't seen him in years. I'm not emotionally attached.

MEL. But your brother's upset?

ALANA. No. He's not. Saul doesn't get upset.

MEL. Like you?

ALANA. What do you mean?

MEL. Nothing. Jax said you and your brother are a lot alike.

ALANA. Then why are you afraid of my brother?

MEL. I'm not afraid of your brother.

ALANA. Yes, you are. You wanted me to pretend like you weren't here.

MEL. It seemed like a more grown-up choice than cowering in a corner.

ALANA. He's only my big brother. It's important to me that you like him.