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BUCKSHOT AND BLOSSOMS

BUCKSHOT *and* Blossoms

"A RIP-ROARING COMEDY WESTERN"



BY TIM KELLY



Meriwether Publishing Ltd.

Contemporary Drama Service

PO Box 7710 • Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7710

BUCKSHOT *and* *Blossoms*

"A RIP-ROARING COMEDY WESTERN"

(For a very flexible cast of about 22.

Roughly 14 Female, 8 Male.

Larger with use of Extras, smaller with doubling.)

BY TIM KELLY

STORY OF THE PLAY

Here's a rip-roaring saga of the Old West sure to delight audiences of all ages. This west is not only wild, it's hysterically funny. Jokes, action, even romance. As the lights come up, we get our first glimpse of the Trail Dust Hotel, home of the villainous Whip Lash Gang. The oily Whip spends his time thinking up nasty schemes to rob citizens while his partner-in-crime, the clever but wicked Pearl of the Pecos, deals marked cards. Things heat up when Whip thinks he owns a mine of fossilized seashells that can be converted into profitable chicken feed, and Sally Sutton, the newspaper editor, hires on a new sheriff — Johnny Wright — “Fastest Gun in the West.” The mine's true owner, the lovely Annabelle Rawlins, turns up with her campaign against guns inside town limits. She favors blossoms over bullets. Cattle herds are rustled, safes broken into, stagecoaches held up. To get rid of the lawman, Whip hires on the meanest gunslinger alive — The Durango Kid — and the fun really starts to gallop. Wait till you meet Gabby Ways, a relic who loves the Old West (Sitting Bull once sat on him), Cactus Kate, Widder Jones, the Mayor's wife, who only knows one song, and the fabulously wealthy Nellie Rectangle. Plus all the eccentric folk who inhabit the town.

We guarantee that your audience will be rolling in the aisles when The Durango Kid and the Sheriff play High Noon in the hotel lobby without a single shot being fired. It's uproarious. Oh, yeah — there's a wedding, too. Someone in the audience even gets to catch the bride's bouquet. When this wonderfully wacky spoof hits your stage, you're in for a barrel of laughs. “Yippee!”

Suitable for all groups. Easy to produce.

About ninety minutes.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In Order of Speaking)

CACTUS KATE

Stagecoach driver, rough and tumble.

MRS. JUNIPER

Stagecoach passenger.

LETTY

Her teenage daughter.

MISS GRAY

Another passenger.

GABBY WAYS

A Western legend.

ALIBI

Member of the Whip Lash Gang, rather stupid.

HOPALOT

Another stupid gang member. Hops every now and then.

WHIP LASH

Gang leader. On the outside cool as a cucumber. On the inside rotten as they come.

PEARL OF THE PECOS

Gambling lady. Beautiful to look at, clever. No heart.

SADDLEBLANKET RAWLINS

Dusty prospector.

SALLY SUTTON

Editor of the "Trail Dust Dispatch."

MINERVA
Citizen of Trail Dust.

MRS. NORTON
Mayor's wife.

MAYOR NORTON
Man of many talents.

ANDY ALLEN
Young rancher.

WIDDER JONES
Motherly type, a woman of few words.

JOHNNY WRIGHT
Straight-shooting young lawman.

HENRIETTA GEYSER
Mineralogist, knows all about chicken feed.

DOLLY ROGER
Confidence woman.

ANNABELLE RAWLINS
Saddleblanket's lovely niece, a crusader.

JUDY FORD
Her friend and co-crusader.

NELLIE RECTANGLE
Wealthy Easterner.

THE DURANGO KID
Meanest, dirtiest gunslinger in the Wild West.

Flexible Casting: Extras can be utilized as Citizens. Saddleblanket can double in the role of The Durango Kid. For other flexible casting suggestions, Consult Production Notes.

PRODUCTION NOTES

STAGE PROPERTIES

Registration desk (or table) with: ledger, ink pot and pen, bell. Three vases of flowers (for first scene of Act One, last scene of Act Two), bucket. Tables (2), chairs (6). Swinging doors (optional). Stairs (optional). Floor safe or cabinet with key lock.

To “dress up” the view, you might add a key/mail rack behind the registration desk. Some hides, rustic chandelier. Cutout cactus plant. Even some old-time footlights (cut a tomato can in half and paint it black). Backdrop at rear of stage, etc.

Brought on, ACT ONE, Scene 1: Apron (GABBY), buggy whip, holster and gun (CACTUS KATE).

Brought on, ACT ONE, Scene 2: Holster with gun (ALIBI, HOPALOT), cards (ALIBI), whip (LASH), fake beard, battered hat (SADDEBLANKET). Tray with glass of ginger ale (GABBY).

Brought on, ACT ONE, Scene 3: Newspapers (SALLY).

Brought on, ACT ONE, Scene 4: Broom (GABBY), black sash, top hat (MAYOR), newspapers (SALLY), deck of cards (PEARL), sheet of paper (LASH). Tin star, holster and gun (JOHNNY).

Brought on, ACT ONE, Scene 5: Holster with gun (ANDY), shawl (WIDDER JONES).

Brought on, ACT ONE, Scene 6: Black bag with document, bottle with seashells (HENRIETTA), wallet with dollar bills (LASH), cards (PEARL), pocketbook (DOLLY), glass of sarsaparilla (PEARL), key, bundle of bills, document [in safe] (LASH). Handbills, flowers (ANNABELLE, JUDY), cigar (LASH).

Brought on, ACT TWO, Scene 1: Handbills (Women at town meeting), blue hanky (JOHNNY).

Brought on, ACT TWO, Scene 2: Carpetbag with small cloth bag containing large prop diamond (NELLIE), key to safe (LASH), judge's robe, powdered wig, gavel (MAYOR), wanted

poster (JOHNNY), wallet (LASH); small bottle/vial, spoon (PEARL).

Brought on, ACT TWO, Scene 3: Diamond, key (JOHNNY).

Brought on, ACT TWO, Scene 4: Diamond, key (JOHNNY), small pistol (LASH).

Brought on, ACT TWO, Scene 5: Black bandanna, hat, holster and pistol (THE DURANGO KID), bouquet of flowers (JOHNNY), more flowers (CITIZENS).

Brought on, ACT TWO, Scene 6: Vases of flowers as in Act One, Scene 1, clerical collar, hymnal (MAYOR NORTON), rice and confetti (CITIZENS), bridal veil, bouquet of flowers (ANNABELLE), carnation (JOHNNY), apron, mop, pail (LASH, PEARL).

SOUND

Rinky-Tink or banjo music, western mood music for shootout, optional bass drum.

COSTUMES

As indicated in the script. The usual western melodrama wardrobe. Boots and cowboy garb for the gents, whatever works for the ladies. ANNABELLE should be dressed prettily and, of course, THE DURANGO KID is a portrait in black. NELLIE must look wealthy.

FLEXIBLE CASTING

Extras as townspeople, used at logical moments, for a larger cast. For a smaller cast, consider: Saddleblanket and The Durango Kid can be played by same actor. With a change of costume and a slightly different voice, Mrs. Juniper and Miss Gray could double as Henrietta and Dolly. Or Henrietta and Dolly might double as Townswomen; and so forth. If you're not using extras as citizens, simply divide citizens' lines among cast members.

With minor line adjustments, some roles can be played as either male or female. For instance, Cactus Kate could become Cactus Joe, Miss Gray could become Mister Gray; Sally Sutton could become Sam Sutton; Henrietta could become Henry, Nellie Rectangle could become Cornelius Rectangle. Minerva could become Midas, Widder Jones could become Willie and played as a young boy. Dolly Roger could become Solly Roger.

PACING

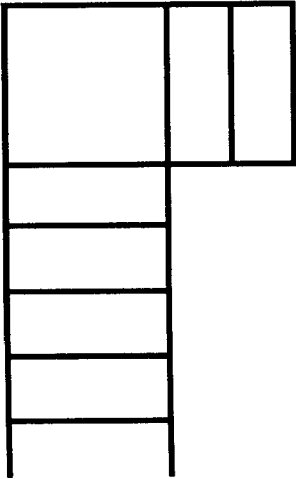
This is very important. Don't allow the tempo to drag. As mentioned earlier, although individual scenes are indicated as such, there should be no "stops and starts." The spoof flows seamlessly. Actors must move on and off-stage quickly. This will take some drilling, but the effect will be well worth it. There should never be a moment when something isn't happening. If there is an unavoidable lull, cover it with some sound or light effect and keep it brief. *Pick up cues and speak loud.* Dialog should be delivered in snappy fashion. In a free-for-all like *Buckshot and Blossoms*, subtlety is no virtue.

SYNOPSIS

Most of the action passes at the Trail Dust Hotel, in the town of Trail Dust, Arizona Territory. The 1880s.

There are two acts.

STAGE WALL OR BACKDROP



Suggested Setting for -
BUCKSHOT AND BLOSSOMS



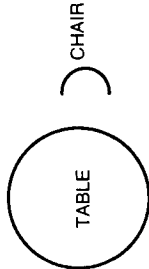
TO STREET



OPTIONAL SWINGING DOORS
TO DINING ROOM-SALOON



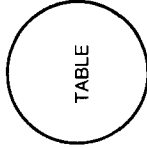
CHAIR



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FORESTAGE



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ACT I
Scene 1

SETTING: The Trail Dust Hotel. Center, Upstage a bit, is a registration desk. A bouquet of flowers in a vase. To right of registration desk, on the floor, is a bucket that passes for a cuspidor. Down Right Center is a table with three chairs. Small vase of flowers. Another table with three chairs Down Left Center. Another small vase of flowers. Optional swinging doors indicate entrance into dining room/saloon right. An exit Down Right. Up Right are optional stairs leading to the building's second story. Floor safe to one side, with lock for key. Entrance from the outside street is left, also with swinging doors, if you can manage it.

NOTE: For suggestions on "dressing up" the stage view and staging hints, consult Production Notes. There's nothing fancy about the hotel. It's the usual "Wild West" stopover.

AT RISE: Voices from the street, drawing near.

CACTUS KATE: *(Off-stage)* **The finest hotel in the Arizona Territory!**

MRS. JUNIPER: *(Off-stage)* **Really?**

CACTUS KATE: *(Off-stage)* **At least it's the finest hotel in the town of Trail Dust. Ha, ha.**

LETTY: *(Off-stage)* **Mommy, I'm tired.**

MRS. JUNIPER: *(Off-stage)* **So am I.**

MISS GRAY: *(Off-stage)* **Small wonder. It was a bumpy ride from Tucson. I, too, am exhausted.**

CACTUS KATE: *(Off-stage)* **If you'll follow me, ladies.**
(CACTUS KATE, the stage driver, enters. She's a rough desert type holding a buggy whip. Voice like nails on sandpaper. Wide hat. Holster low on her hip with pistol. She moves center calling out —) **Gabby! Gab-Gab-Gabbbbbb!**

GABBY: *(From dining room)* **Whaaaaa?**

1 **CACTUS KATE:** Get on out here! Customers from the
2 Tucson stage!
3 **GABBY'S VOICE:** Why didn't you say so?
4 **CACTUS KATE:** I just did! *(Three females have followed*
5 *CACTUS KATE into the hotel. They are MRS. JUNIPER and*
6 *her teenage daughter LETTY and MISS GRAY. They look*
7 *about, none-too-impressed.)*
8 **MRS. JUNIPER:** Excuse me, driver.
9 **CACTUS KATE:** Name's Cactus Kate. Call me Cactus Kate.
10 I like all my passengers to call me Cactus Kate.
11 **MRS. JUNIPER:** You did say this is the finest hotel in the
12 Arizona Territory?
13 **MISS GRAY:** She qualified that, Mrs. Juniper. Finest hotel
14 in the town of Trail Dust.
15 **LETTY:** It's probably the only hotel in town.
16 **CACTUS KATE:** Smart kid. *(Yells).* Gab-Gab-Gabbbbbby!
17 **GABBY:** *(From Off-stage)* Hold on a minute, can't you? I'm on
18 the way!
19 **CACTUS KATE:** That's Gabby Ways. You'll enjoy meeting
20 him. He's a real character.
21 **MISS GRAY:** How long will we be in Trail Dust?
22 **CACTUS KATE:** Just long enough to feed and rest the
23 horses, Miss Gray. You ladies set yourselves down.
24 Gabby's a good cook and I reckon you're ready for some
25 vittles. *(Indicates Down Left Center table.)* Go on. Set. *(MRS.*
26 *JUNIPER, LETTY and MISS GRAY sit at the table.)*
27 **MRS. JUNIPER:** I could do with a cup of tea.
28 **MISS GRAY:** An excellent idea.
29 **LETTY:** I wonder if the kitchen is sanitary?
30 **MRS. JUNIPER:** Mind your manners, Letty.
31 **CACTUS KATE:** Gab-Gab-Gabby!
32 **GABBY:** *(From dining room)* I'm on the way... don't give up
33 hope... be there in half a shake of a lamb's tail. Yup.
34 **CACTUS KATE:** Try to get here before Christmas.
35 **GABBY:** *(From dining room)* You ain't calling hogs to slop,

1 y'know. (*GABBY enters.*) I said I'm on the way and here I
2 be.
3 (*ABOUT GABBY: He's almost a cartoon. A caricature of every*
4 *desert rat movie sidekick. He's bow-legged, bushy beard,*
5 *cantankerous. Battered hat, dirty apron. He looks about 102,*
6 *maybe 103. When he walks it's like watching a feisty land crab*
7 *maneuver.*)
8 **GABBY:** (*Cont..*) **Howdy, ladies. Welcome to the Trail Dust**
9 **Ho-tel.** (*Stagecoach passengers mumble an indifferent "Hello."*)
10 **CACTUS KATE:** These ladies are traveling on to Yuma.
11 **GABBY:** Mighty hot in Yuma.
12 **MISS GRAY:** It was a bumpy ride from Tucson.
13 **LETTY:** And a dusty one.
14 **MRS. JUNIPER:** We're parched.
15 **GABBY:** (*Indicates.*) Step into the dining room/saloon and I'll
16 pour you a nice glass of sarsaprilly.
17 **MRS. JUNIPER:** Never! Where intoxicating beverages are
18 dispensed a true lady never ventures. It would be
19 inconceivable.
20 **GABBY:** What she say?
21 **CACTUS KATE:** You know I can't understand fancy talk.
22 **MISS GRAY:** A pot of tea, please.
23 **GABBY:** Ain't got no tea. How about coffee?
24 **MISS GRAY:** It will have to do, I suppose.
25 **GABBY:** That's too bad.
26 **MISS GRAY:** Why?
27 **GABBY:** Fresh out of coffee.
28 **MISS GRAY:** Then why did you suggest it?
29 **GABBY:** Common courtesy.
30 **MRS. JUNIPER:** (*Scoffs.*) Finest hotel.
31 **LETTY:** (*Staring at GABBY*) Were you a cowboy?
32 **CACTUS KATE:** (*Amazed by the question*) Was Gabby Ways a
33 cowboy?
34 **GABBY:** Let me answer that, Cactus Kate.
35 **CACTUS KATE:** Tell it like it was, Gabby. (*GABBY takes*

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