

Buck's Last Straw

by

Joseph Arnone

Copyright © 2022

www.MonologueBlogger.com

All rights reserved. No part of this ePlay may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or any other storage and retrieval system, without the written permission of the author or publisher.

Cast of Characters

RICK: 30's

BUCK: 30's

Place

Rick's place

Time

Early morning

2.

Setting: The play takes place inside a large open-spaced house owned by casting director Rick Turns. It's a massive place with a winding staircase, a ton of light, large pieces of furniture and expensive art work hanging on the walls.

At Rise: The play opens with Rick passed out on his couch when a powerful knock to his front door instantly wakes him.

Rick sleeps on his couch.

A rapid knock at his front door makes him jump awake.

Rick slowly approaches the door, opens it to see Buck. Rick turns and goes back to his couch.

Buck follows.

BUCK: Right in my chin. Whack! Like a lightning bolt.

RICK: On.

BUCK: Huh?

RICK: Right 'on' my chin, not 'in' my chin.

Rick does a line of coke off the coffee table in front of the couch.

BUCK: In, on, so what?

RICK: It's proper English Bucky. You can't go around town talking like some kind of ass.

BUCK: I'm trying to tell you---

RICK: Haven't you been going to the speech lessons I've been paying for? You sound exactly the same to me, NO, worse, FAR worse actually, like you're forgetting to talk altogether.

BUCK: I'm trying to tell you something serious. I didn't come here for a fucking English lesson, okay?

Rick gets up and enters the kitchen.

Buck follows.

RICKY: Go on.

BUCK: Like a thunderbolt.

RICKY: A what?!

BUCK: For chrissake let me say what I came here to say before I explode!!!

Ricky stares at Buck.

RICK: (*calmly*) Alright.

Ricky makes coffee at the kitchen counter.

Ricky lights a joint. Puffs. Hands it to Buck. Buck puffs, hands it back.

BUCK: ...with a lamp...

Rick observes Buck and notices the bulge over his chin. He goes into the icebox and tosses Buck a bag of ice.

Buck applies it to his chin.

Rick pours two whiskeys.

RICK: A lamp?

BUCK: A fucking lamp! Boom! Across my chin..the crunch, like broken bone, something feels loose when I touch it, like I can move something around in there. When I talk it moves.

RICK: What moves?

BUCK: A loose bone.

RICK: Chipped bone?

BUCK: Been moving my chin around like a cow ever since.

RICK: Then what happened?

BUCK: I fucking grabbed her and growled. Spit and snot poured out of me and then I cried...

RICK: ...You what?

BUCK: I cried.

RICK: You cried.

BUCK: I fucking cried. I could have crushed her. I wanted to dismantle her, but I couldn't bring myself to act on my hatred. I wanted to kill her, in that moment, I wanted to eat her alive.

RICK: You should sit.

Rick passes Buck the joint. Buck hits it and passes it back.

BUCK: Eh.

RICK: You grabbed her, you growled, you cried. Then what?

BUCK: I puked. I fainted. I ran to come here..drove as fast as my car could go, almost flew off Mulholland on that stupid turn, but I made it. I'm here.

RICK: You're here.

BUCK: I'm here.

RICK: ...Coffee?

Buck nods.

Rick pours coffee - dialogue continues over action.

RICK: I have work in three minutes.

BUCK: You're gonna be late.

RICK: What day is it?

BUCK: Saturday.

RICK: Oh. Right...forget her.

BUCK: I love her.

RICK: She beats you with objects.

BUCK: I know it.

RICK: She will kill you.

BUCK: I know it.

RICK: But you stay.

BUCK: I know it.

RICK: How long you moving in for?

BUCK: I don't know...a week, maybe two, it was a lamp, Rick.

RICK: How long were you here for the ashtray?

BUCK: Three days. I remember exactly cause I was doing that lousy show you got me at the time.

RICK: Show some appreciation.

BUCK: I had to wear a cowboy outfit.

RICK: You're an actor, aren't you?

BUCK: But I'm a certain type. Even you said so.

RICK: I was hoping to drown myself in my pool today.

BUCK: We can save each other.

RICK: Prick face didn't take my guy.

BUCK: Even with a million less?

RICK: It's too spite me.

BUCK: I'd really like to beat the shit out of him for you.

RICK: So would half of Hollywood.

BUCK: Sorry.

RICK: One door closes...

BUCK: Right.

Rick takes out a crackerjack box from cabinet and eats. Offers some to Buck who nods no.

BUCK: Can't.

RICK: You could lose the weight.

BUCK: Fuck you, Rick.

RICK: *(laughs)*

BUCK: She really is the greatest woman that ever lived. Can you imagine what it's like dealing with all my rottenness? Always broke, always grumpy. I'm too crass. Dress like a gangster but I can't help it, I don't look good in soft clothes. I'm a dark clothing kind of guy. It's the reason she fell in love with me. I saved her from guys who don't have hair on their balls. But, eh...what's the use...I'm a mutt...went from hero to zero in her eyes...one year.

RICK: Been that long?

BUCK: *(nods and claps his hands)*

RICK: Been like two years, no?

BUCK: One year anniversary was just last week. The one you never showed up to.

RICK: Carlotta and I don't get along. I wasn't about to ruin your special day.

BUCK: But you're my buddy. Couldn't give a shit what she thinks.

RICK: But still.

BUCK: We had a good time. Got wasted and made love on the trampoline.

RICK: Spare me the details.

BUCK: What would you do?

RICK: What would I do, what?

BUCK: Would you change for someone you love, or would you leave?

RICK: You're asking the wrong guy.

BUCK: Need your opinion.

RICK: But you already know my answer.

BUCK: ...But I can't walk away...she's the only thing that keeps me going. I know when I finally have my breakthrough, I'm gonna walk on water with her. All my promises will be fulfilled.

RICK: I need some vitamin d. Going out on the float. Your room is exactly how you left it. Filthy. Maybe open a window to let the flies out.

BUCK: I don't want to be alone.

RICK: I have a pounding headache.

BUCK: I could sit outside. I won't talk.

RICK: Suit yourself.

Rick pours them both coffee.

BUCK: Thanks. *(beat)* Rick?

RICK: Ya. *(hands coffee mug to Buck)*

BUCK: I'm hurt.

RICK: That's alright buddy. We're all hurting over something. Some of us hide it better than others.

BUCK: Yeah, but, she wants a divorce.

RICK: You think?

BUCK: I'm serious.

RICK: So am I.

BUCK: I'll die first before I give her a divorce.

RICK: You need to book work.

BUCK: ...Yeah...yeah, I know.

RICK: You need to...hey listen, I do have something out in Italy...they're shooting---

BUCK: No westerns Rick, please.

RICK: It pays good money.

BUCK: I hate westerns.

RICK: You see, that's your problem.

BUCK: No.

RICK: You could be a celebrity by now but you're too picky. You say no to everything, everything! Yeah, I get it, some aren't the best roles in the best stories, but how are you ever going to get the best offers if you don't start somewhere Buck? Everybody starts somewhere but you, you want to start from the top and that's your problem. Always been your problem. Nothing is ever good enough, talk 'bout high maintenance! They're out there asking for you but it just doesn't register with you, does it? Come on, if you don't realize it soon, you're gonna exist in some middle of the road life because you're not taking the risks, you don't put your ego aside and all these roles that are waiting for you are passing you by, they're going to someone else more deserving of them because you're above it all and one day, one day there won't be any more opportunities and what will you do then Buck? Time is running from you. Take this western and watch all the work it'll lead to, it'll grow your reputation, you can feel good about yourself again and not argue so much with that crazy ass woman you have back home.

BUCK: Don't call my wife crazy.

RICK: She's fucking nuts.

BUCK: Rick. You're one of my brothers, I care about you, you're a good friend, but don't call my wife nuts.

RICK: You said so yourself.

BUCK: I can say whatever I want.

RICK: I knew Carlotta long before you.

BUCK: What does that even mean?

RICK: It means, I feel as though I know her more than you and because of it I feel perhaps in your eyes, I come off too comfortable calling her crazy and things like that.

BUCK: I'm not so sure how to take that.

RICK: Look, I'm not trying to argue with you..I'm sorry..I'm sorry if I offended you is all, alright? You're in a bad spot, I get it, so am I, okay? I have a lot of shit I'm trying to get through and now your mess is in my lap and I have to tend with that. So forgive me if I'm a little bit of a bastard.

BUCK: That's fine. But you don't know my wife better than I know my wife.

RICK: Okay, Buck.

BUCK: Is there something you're trying to say to me?

RICK: There's not.

BUCK: Something I should know?

RICK: Buck...look, here, finish this joint, join me outside by the pool, drink my whiskey, give me an ear full but don't fucking accuse me of fucking Carlotta.

BUCK: What?!

RICK: The past is the past.

BUCK: Wait, WHAT did you just say to me?

RICK: I'm saying--

Buck punches Rick in the face.

Rick falls to the floor and stands back up completely shaken.

RICK: I wasn't, no, I was, we did, a long time ago, GOT IT, okay, NOW YOU KNOW...back in the day, Carlotta and I had a thing, a small thing, we dated for like a week but it ended badly, as fast as it happened is as fast as it ended. Never thought it was that big of a deal to bring up cause you know, who cares, right? But that's what happened and it doesn't even matter.

BUCK: Why didn't anyone ever tell me?

RICK: Because everybody fucks everybody in this town and nobody cares.

BUCK: I care.

RICK: You are a rare item.

BUCK: You? She slept with you?

RICK: I mean there's a whole group of guys that...you know, youth.

Buck sits down on the couch.

RICK: Hey, hey buddy, it's no biggie, nobody thinks about these things you know. Carlotta is a beautiful woman, okay? We were young..er..at the time, everybody was fooling around with everybody -

BUCK: Shut the fuck up!

RICK: ...I don't...I'm going to go drown myself in my pool...you are welcome to watch me if you want...

Buck gets emotional.

RICK: I'll leave you to it.

BUCK: Maybe I should leave her.

RICK: Hey, that's the spirit. There you go buddy. That's what I've -

BUCK: Be quiet!

Buck gets up.

BUCK: You are a punk bitch weasel.

RICK: Right.

BUCK: I'll take the western.

RICK: Huh?

BUCK: In Italy.

RICK: You, you want the part?

BUCK: Didn't you ask me?

RICK: Well, yeah, it's -

BUCK: It's mine if I want it, right?

RICK: Yeah.

BUCK: I want it then. Send the contract over to my agent. Today.

RICK: Are you...you sure?

BUCK: I want the role.

Buck goes upstairs to his room.

*Rick stands in the middle of the living room
watching him.*

Rick turns and goes out into his yard.

END OF PLAY