



THE BAD GUYS

BY ALENA SMITH



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.



THE BAD GUYS
Copyright © 2013, Alena Smith

All Rights Reserved

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that performance of THE BAD GUYS is subject to payment of a royalty. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, and of all countries covered by the International Copyright Union (including the Dominion of Canada and the rest of the British Commonwealth), and of all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention, the Berne Convention, and of all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations. All rights, including without limitation professional/amateur stage rights, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all other forms of mechanical, electronic and digital reproduction, transmission and distribution, such as CD, DVD, the Internet, private and file-sharing networks, information storage and retrieval systems, photocopying, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved. Particular emphasis is placed upon the matter of readings, permission for which must be secured from the Author's agent in writing.

The English language stock and amateur stage performance rights in the United States, its territories, possessions and Canada for THE BAD GUYS are controlled exclusively by DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE, INC., 440 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016. No professional or nonprofessional performance of the Play may be given without obtaining in advance the written permission of DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE, INC., and paying the requisite fee.

Inquiries concerning all other rights should be addressed to Paradigm, 360 Park Avenue South, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10010. Attn: Jack Tantleff.

SPECIAL NOTE

Anyone receiving permission to produce THE BAD GUYS is required to give credit to the Author as sole and exclusive Author of the Play on the title page of all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Play and in all instances in which the title of the Play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the Play and/or a production thereof. The name of the Author must appear on a separate line, in which no other name appears, immediately beneath the title and in size of type equal to 50% of the size of the largest, most prominent letter used for the title of the Play. No person, firm or entity may receive credit larger or more prominent than that accorded the Author. The following acknowledgment must appear on the title page in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Play:

Originally produced by Second Stage Theatre, New York, 2012
(Carole Rothman, Artistic Director).

SPECIAL NOTE ON SONGS AND RECORDINGS

For performances of copyrighted songs, arrangements or recordings mentioned in this Play, the permission of the copyright owner(s) must be obtained. Other songs, arrangements or recordings may be substituted provided permission from the copyright owner(s) of such songs, arrangements or recordings is obtained; or songs, arrangements or recordings in the public domain may be substituted.

For Neil, a true friend (1981 – 2010)

THE BAD GUYS was presented Off-Broadway by the Second Stage Theatre (Carole Rothman, Artistic Director; Casey Reitz, Executive Director) at the McGinn/Cazale Theater in New York City, opening on June 6, 2012. It was directed by Hal Brooks; the set design was by Jason Simms; the costume design was by Jessica Pabst; the lighting design was by Seth Reiser; the sound design was by Ryan Rumery; and the production stage manager was Kyle Gates. The cast was as follows:

NOAH James McMenamin
PAUL Raviv Ullman
FINK Michael Braun
JESSE Tobias Segal
WHIT Roe Hartrampf

CHARACTERS

NOAH — a filmmaker

PAUL — a bartender

FINK — a banker

JESSE — a drug dealer

WHIT — a Marine

All the characters are 31 or 32, except for Paul, who is only 23.

PLACE

A brick patio and the surrounding lawn outside
a large house in upstate New York.

TIME

One afternoon in September.

The action takes place in continuous time,
and the play is to be performed with no intermission.

THE BAD GUYS

September. Upstate. A perfect day.

Outside a large, modern shingle-style house, a wrought-iron table rests on a brick patio. The patio is edged by a soft green lawn that slopes off into surrounding woods.

We hear a car pull up on the gravel driveway, and then the engine cuts off. A moment later, from the unseen driveway, comes Paul, a jauntily disheveled young man, like a piece of the city that has been blown accidentally up the Hudson. Paul looks around, with interest. He's never been here before.

A side door that leads out to the patio from the kitchen bangs open, and Noah bursts out. He is a sharp, supremely confident person, in a rumpled hoodie and sneakers.

NOAH. Buddy! You made it.

PAUL. *(Greeting him.)* Yeah, dude. That was an adventure. What's that road called? The really winding one?

NOAH. That is the beautiful Taconic State Parkway, my friend.

PAUL. Yeah. Fun. Lotta cops, though.

NOAH. I hope you weren't speeding.

PAUL. Oh, no — I'm way too hung over to speed. I was having trouble maintaining the state minimum.

NOAH. Hey — I didn't entrust you with my beloved Volvo so you could drive around wasted.

PAUL. But you had to know that was probably in the cards.

NOAH. Look — just be careful, okay?

PAUL. Aw — that's so sweet! You're concerned about me.

NOAH. I'm concerned about my car.

PAUL. I thought it was my car now.

NOAH. You're just taking care of it for me. Eventually I might want it back.

PAUL. When?

NOAH. Well — if I ever come back from California.

PAUL. You sure you don't want to take the car to L.A.? People do drive there, you know.

NOAH. Nah — I don't want to take anything with me. Clean break! I'll get a new car.

PAUL. Yeah, a fancy car! 'Cause you'll be famous.

NOAH. Yeah — that's right. Oh — check this out. I set up a Twitter account.

PAUL. Nice. Working on that brandentity.

NOAH. That's right. Gotta get the word out about how awesome I am.

PAUL. Gotta let people know.

NOAH. Gotta give them a chance, at least. If they don't pick up on it quickly enough, that's their problem.

PAUL. Your stock is rising.

NOAH. My stock is getting hard as fuck.

PAUL. Not sure I get that — but I like it.

NOAH. Okay, wanna hear one of my tweets?

PAUL. But of course.

NOAH. Okay. (*He reads from his phone.*) "Never forget: Inside the gentlest house-cat, lives an ancient hunting machine."

PAUL. That's a good one.

NOAH. Yeah. And they're all like that. That's the kind of quality, top-shelf shit my Twitter account will be known for. I'm ready for this, Paul. I've never been so ready for anything in my life.

PAUL. I'm so happy for you.

NOAH. You should be happy for yourself! You're gonna be famous too. Probably not quite as famous as me, but somewhat famous. I mean, come on. You're the star of the movie!

PAUL. I know. I'm freaking out.

NOAH. It's exciting.

PAUL. Yeah — we should be celebrating! And look — I brought beer.

NOAH. No — no. Time to go.

PAUL. *Go?!* But I just got here! And your flight's not for hours!

NOAH. (*Grudging.*) Okay, fine. We can have *one* beer. But then we have to get out of here. If my mother comes back, she'll go into hysterics again. I don't know how that woman is going to survive without me.

PAUL. (*Opening a beer, relaxing.*) It is seriously beautiful here. Just like I pictured it. (*Beat.*) So in high school — were all your friends rich?

NOAH. Some were richer than others.

PAUL. Ha — tell me about it. Like some of the kids in my trailer park got *name-brand* sodas. Fuckin' brats.

NOAH. Whatever. I'm sick of this place.

PAUL. How can you be sick of it?! It's so picturesque!

NOAH. It's just new to you. That's why you like it. You're coming to it fresh. You look around, you're like, trees! Rocks! Whereas I look around, I'm like — oh. The past. Memories.

PAUL. Yeah, I see what you mean. This is a historic situation right here. I mean — this is where the *movie* took place.

NOAH. No — the movie took place in the city. Where we shot it. Remember?

PAUL. Yeah, but I mean the *real* movie. Real life.

NOAH. Whatever. See — I don't care. I made the movie so I could forget the real thing.

PAUL. (*Reflecting.*) Huh. (*Beat.*) Oh! — did I tell you? I've been writing. A little.

NOAH. What have you been writing?

PAUL. I don't know yet. Just taking notes. Actually — could I read you something?

NOAH. Definitely. In the car. On the way to the airport.

PAUL. Come on, we're not leaving yet! Dude, you're making me nervous. Is that what's going on here? You're nervous?

NOAH. Nervous? About what?

PAUL. About the festival. About people finally seeing the movie.

NOAH. Are you saying I should be?

PAUL. No — I mean, the movie's great. Especially *my* performance.

NOAH. You really are fantastic. I still don't understand how you pulled off that shitbag junkie thing so perfectly.

PAUL. Well — I felt like I could really relate to the character.

NOAH. Crazy. You can relate to this guy you've never met, meanwhile I grew up with him and I don't understand him at all.

PAUL. Well — the character's not the same as the person. Right?

NOAH. Right. (*Beat.*) Right.

PAUL. Anyway, that's what I'm asking. Are you nervous about *him* seeing it.

NOAH. It's a little late for that.

PAUL. Will he be at the premiere?

NOAH. Uh — I doubt it. Remember? We haven't spoken since high school.

PAUL. Oh — right. Dumb question. I guess I was just hoping he might be there.

NOAH. *Why?!* That would be horrible!

PAUL. Not for me! I want to meet him!

NOAH. Well — he's not coming.

PAUL. What about the other guys, then? Your stepbrother — will he be there?

NOAH. I hope not.

PAUL. Why?

NOAH. 'Cause then he'll find out what the movie's about.

PAUL. He doesn't know what it's *about?!* How is that possible? Your movie is your life!

NOAH. I've been trying to keep my stepbrother out of my life. And *especially* my movie.

PAUL. Okay, so he hasn't even *asked* what the movie's about?

NOAH. No, of course he asked. And I told him. I just sort of — skewed it.

PAUL. Okay ...

NOAH. I told him it was about high school. Some coming-of-age type shit. I just didn't get into the specifics.

PAUL. So, for example, you didn't mention that it was about — *the murder.*

NOAH. Nah. I left that out.

PAUL. Minor detail.

NOAH. I'm gonna get my bag. Then we'll go. (*Noah turns, but just then a car pulls into the driveway, and honks.*)

PAUL. Someone's here.

NOAH. Fuck. It's my dealer.

PAUL. You have a dealer up here in the boonies?

NOAH. I know him from back in the day. We grew up together.

PAUL. So many old friends.

NOAH. Yeah. I'm working on losing them. *(From around the side of the house, Jesse appears. He's slightly wacked-out looking, but striking, with longish hair and long limbs. He's wearing camouflage pants, a T-shirt with the sleeves ripped off, and holding a rifle. Delightfully, the picture on his T-shirt is of something incongruously gentle, such as a kitten or a unicorn.)*

JESSE. Yo! Scorsese!

NOAH. Dude — what the fuck is that gun?

JESSE. I been quail huntin'. Shot ten of 'em just now. They're in the back of the van — you wanna come see?

NOAH. No. But speaking of the van—

JESSE. Uh-uh. Nope. Not gonna let you blow up my dad's van.

NOAH. Aw, come on. Be a pal.

JESSE. Fuck your action sequence.

PAUL. What is this action sequence?

NOAH. It's a hypothetical action sequence that could be executed if this guy would donate his dad's old piece of shit van.

JESSE. Yeah, well, I can't do that.

NOAH. Gimme one good reason why not.

JESSE. Okay — how 'bout this. 'Cause my dad doesn't even own the van. The bank owns the van. How 'bout that? My dad owns nothing anymore. He doesn't own our house. He doesn't own the shop. He doesn't even own his little Donovan record collection. The bank's gonna seize that, too. How 'bout that.

NOAH. That's a reason.

JESSE. Pretty soon my whole fuckin' family's gonna be living out in the woods. Me, my parents, my brother, and his pregnant girlfriend. Yep, it's been a bad year for us. Third-generation family business, down the crapper. Grandpa must be shitting in his grave. So, unfortunately, I can't help. Why don't you blow up your own vehicle? Get your stepbrother to buy you one off eBay. He can afford it. Rich-ass homo.

NOAH. *(Glancing at Paul.)* Watch it with the gay-bashing, buddy.

PAUL. *(Unfazed.)* Fink's gay?

NOAH. No. *(Back at Jesse.)* But my mom is.

JESSE. Yeah — his mom and Fink's mom are members of the synchronized muff-diving team.

PAUL. Right. I knew that.

JESSE. They're *lesbians*.

PAUL. Got it.

THE BAD GUYS

by Alena Smith

5M

Childhood buddies whose paths have diverged reunite on a late summer afternoon for some beer, grilling and weed — but deep within their friendships lurk ghosts that rock the patio beneath them. Bitingly comic and ruthlessly recognizable, this is the story of a generation at war with itself over what it means to “man up.”

“Ms. Smith displays a perceptive understanding of the male ego. The men’s contrasting voices are captured with a natural ease that makes them stand on their own as believable and memorable characters.”

—**The New York Times**

“Smith hands the cast juicy lines marinated in testosterone.”

—**The New York Post**

“Smith’s dialogue sounds real and there are smart observations about how lives get irreparably connected and tangled.”

—**The New York Daily News**

“Alena Smith’s drama about sticky male bonding asks pertinent questions regarding the judgments we make about one another and when things have crossed a line.”

—**Time Out New York**

ISBN 978-0-8222-2753-3



9 780822 227533

DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE, INC.