

FALLEN ANGELS

By
ALEX JONES

The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, August 2001.

Inspired by improvisatory work by 'The Shysters', a group of learning-disabled actors, directed by Richard Hayhow at Coventry Belgrade Theatre, *Fallen Angels* has a poetic text that is also inspired by the stories of Cain and Abel and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, the production centres on an evil God-like being who opts for revenge over redemption by creating and deriding outcasts within society with the help of a confused henchman. It is dark, mesmerising, but full of redemptive power.

**SYNOPSIS & SAMPLE SCENES
FOR MORE PLAYS VISIT:
ALEX-JONES.ORG**

CHARACTERS

Plastic God

God's Apprentice

God's Victims

God's Mother

God's Angels

Mortals

All parts were played by *The Shysters* –
Jon, Sunjay, Kelvin, Mathew, Alan,
Katherine, Lisa and Tasleem.

SCENE 1

GOD'S LABORATORY

Music - dark and foreboding, screeching and metallic penetrates the darkness. lights up.

JON is playing PLASTIC GOD in his heaven. SUNJAY is sitting on top of the ladder, looking at himself in the mirror. JON sits behind the ladder with his back to the audience. ALAN is C.S. apprehensive and nervous. He makes occasional whimpering noises. JON laughs with cruel delight. He walks seriously to ALAN. He stops before him and pulls on his glove - The glove is as red as blood and PLASTIC GOD can feel his own pulse in his wrist, throbbing with power, electric power. He looks seriously at ALAN and suddenly grabs his head with his gloved hand. and it feels to ALAN like his fingers are penetrating his skull; like electricity stabbing into his brain. He screams - He knows there is no going back now, There is nothing he can do as PLASTIC GOD drags him behind the ladder to his secret laboratory.

ALAN (SCREAMS) Nooo!! Nooo!!

PLASTIC GOD clamps ALAN'S wrists and ankles. and ALAN feels like a fly caught in a web. PLASTIC GOD laughs.

Help me?!? Help me?!?

But no one hears him and PLASTIC GOD just laughs. He begins to set up his experiment, tapping away at his computer.

Don't please?! Let me go?!

But PLASTIC GOD walks to the levers.

What are you doing?

JON Creating.

ALAN Creating what?

JON Pain!

PLASTIC GOD pulls three levers and then the final one, and ALAN feels the electricity slice through his muscle and bone like a thousand knives.

ALAN (Screams).

PLASTIC GOD is enjoying himself and he begins his macabre dance, stamping on ALAN'S feet as he does. and then he gets serious. he grabs his chain-saw and pulls the cord - it sputters to life and ALAN is terrified.

ALAN (Screams) Nooo!! Let me gooo!!

JON Not yet... you need more... you need more pain... I know you can take it.

There is nothing ALAN can do, but scream in anticipation of the pain to come. and it is too much to bear; it tears not only at the brain, but also at his soul. he screams his last scream as something is torn from him that will leave him dull and listless.

ALAN *(Screams) Help me!! Help me - Somebody?*

Just then, MOTHER and her two friends enter, and they are furious.

JON What do you want?

KATHARINE *(Pointing)* Turn... it... off!

JON I'm busy - go away.

KATHARINE TURN... IT... OFF!!

JON deliberately taunts KATHARINE by revving up the chainsaw.

NOW!!

JON turns it off. KATHARINE pokes JON in the eyes and then she beats him to a pulp. KAREN and LISA stand like sentinels at either side of the ladder. ALAN is released from his pain and hangs loose like a rag doll.

PLASTIC GOD is lying crumpled on the ground. HIS MOTHER stands over him.

KATHARINE Listen to me!

JON I'm listening.

KATHARINE I am angry, I am disappointed - I tell you now in words of stone: Never, *never do this thing again!!* Now... what do you say?

JON Sorry Mother.

KATHARINE I'll be watching you.

MOTHER and her friends exit.

SCENE 2

GOD UNWINDS

JON *summons SUNJAY by snapping his fingers.*

SUNJAY *climbs down from the ladder and does a bit of manipulation on JON, cracking his limbs back into position, last of all his head - it looks and sounds painful! SUNJAY Then brings jon his lap-top. as SUNJAY begins to massage his shoulders,*

JON *types his journal.*

I am an eye like a telescope Watching. See you all in close-up,
Rewind your sins like some shock-horror flick-book.

JON *(Commenting on massage) Ooh, very nice!*

People are ants, creeping about the planet;. I am a foot like a giant one to stamp, Stop their crawling and moaning...

Ooh yes!

For I can see from here that they have failed me and must suffer for it...

Just the spot - lovely!

So I will send my right-hand man and he will deliver them from their evil.

SUNJAY *stops massaging - he points to himself and silently mouths the word "Me?"*

Carry on - bit higher!

SUNJAY *begins to massage him again.*

And the red blood of my rage will pump through his veins, and he will deliver my words like heavy hammers. for it is time to punish, not forgive...

Bit of a knot there!

And my massage... *ooh no, delete!* And my message will be branded on their poor mortal flesh!

He presses a key and his journal appears.

(To SUNJAY) There has to be a scapegoat;. Bleed for all of them. Find him - time to make my presence felt.

SUNJAY And then..?

JON Do it good and you can turn a feather, fall through clouds,
Flap away to your heart's content.

He passes it to SUNJAY, almost casually.

There you go - have a nice day!

SCENE 3**SHADOW**

JON releases VICTIM, who staggers away like a zombie.

JON and SUNJAY are sitting on the steps. JON above SUNJAY, face in hands looking out, contemplating. SUNJAY'S head is buried in his hands, heavy with responsibility and apprehension. THE REST OF THE CAST walk on from the back of the set and wander around like ghosts in an empty house.

Eventually SUNJAY lifts his head and looks out into the audience.

SUNJAY

I am a shadow in your head;
A dark shadow,
Sleep-walking
In your dream.

You know I'm there;
Swimming in your blood,
Fingering my way through flesh and bone
Till I'm deep in the electrical mystery
of your brain.

You can feel me
Messing about inside your head,
Stealing those secrets you keep hidden there:
Down-loading your soul
Like a phantom hacker
As you panic
In silent terror.

There's someone else inside your dream -
I won't go away.

APPRENTICE looks up at PLASTIC GOD, who gestures for him to get on with the job.

SUNJAY walks down the steps, lies on the the ground, and as the snow is crisp and deep and so white and clean, he lies in it and makes his impression - a snow angel.

THE CAST now make their way to their chairs, where they sit, trapped in heir dreams and nightmares and SUNJAY walks into their dreams, tuning in, feeling their pain; waking their fears and secrets. He is frightened by his task, but he has to search for the one who PLASTIC GOD has selected: the one who is in most pain. as they speak, he drags them all into their fear and guilt.

KELVIN

Leave me alone; I ain't done nothing to you!

LISA

I've got an evil streak.

ALAN

Pulled the wings off and put it in a box - it was still breathing.

MATHEW

I'm a target and I'm full of arrows.

TASLEEM

It grows inside you.

JON Acid burns - I can't stop it.
SUNJAY Help me?
KATHARINE It's dark in here.
JON I cut them all up - why did I do it? What will I do now?
KAREN Give me a hug?
ALAN I made dust of everything... dust... and then I swept it up.
KELVIN I'm bad; I'm so bad and I LOVE IT!
SUNJAY (To JON) I want to go home.

But JON ignores SUNJAY'S plea. instead he points at KELVIN.

He was a man in a shop doorway; drunk on dirty dreams - like a disease,
he was - watch you don't catch it. He's not dead... you can't kill a disease..
(*He coughs*) I feel like I'm breathing dust.

KATHARINE I'd like to be a dolphin - that is what freedom is!
ALAN I said "*Will you listen to me!*"
MATHEW It's too dangerous, you can't go out there in the dark!
KELVIN I'm going to die... I asked for water and they gave me dust.
JON I'm a prophet on the wrong planet.

SUNJAY approaches KELVIN - He can feel his pain and knows that he is the one he has to sort out.

SUNJAY I'm like you; I made mistakes.
The guilt is like acid;
It burns your bones,
It burns your spirit.
It's such a big, big world
And there's so many people here...
The world is full of so many people.

APPRENTICE makes contact with KELVIN. He places his hands over his and make him move them unconsciously. Then KELVIN wakes and walks away, but he is aware that there is someone following him. he turns and sees SUNJAY. KELVIN gestures at him with one finger. SUNJAY tries to do the same, but his hands are different from THE MORTALS, and so he can't.

SCENE 4**BLIND**

KELVIN *is standing in a shop doorway. SUNJAY is standing before him, staring at him.*

KELVIN (TO SUNJAY) Open your eyes! Are you blind to the truth?

SUNJAY *clicks his fingers and the music begins. The MORTALS rush around.*

(To Everyone) Open your eyes! Are you blind to the truth?

THE MORTALS *walk around in circles.*

KATHARINE I wish you'd shut up!

THE MORTALS *rush around again.*

KELVIN You're treading in it, mate! Like dog shit up to your knees.

They walk around again.

TASLEEM What's your problem?

KELVIN You're my problem! It doesn't have to be like this! Open your eyes!
Are you blind to the truth?

They rush around again.

KAREN Have you been drinking?

KELVIN Drunk on truth, darling! See more than you. Open your eyes!
Are you blind to the truth?

They walk around in circles.

You're all walking through life with your eyes shut!

They rush around again. MATHEW falls to the ground in a drunken stupor. he begins to crawl towards KELVIN.

ALAN Flap off, yer black ragbag! Go and scare some worms, Crow Man! *(Laughs).*

SUNJAY *is standing before him, staring at him. preening himself before his mirror.*

(To SUNJAY) What do you want?

SUNJAY *doesn't reply.*

(To THE CROWD *again*) Open your eyes! Are you blind to the truth?

MATHEW *reaches KELVIN. He taps his shoulder.*

(To MATHEW) Go away!

(To THE CROWD) Open your eyes! Are you blind to the truth?

(To SUNJAY) What are you looking at?

(To THE CROWD) Open your eyes! Are you blind to the truth?

MATHEW taps his shoulder.

(To MATHEW) Will you go away!

SUNJAY is still staring at him.

(To SUNJAY) What do you want?!

MATHEW taps his shoulder.

(To MATHEW) I said - go away!!

KELVIN stabs MATHEW. MATHEW falls to the ground.

SCENE 5

THE MARK

PLASTIC GOD is up his ladder, looking down on earth.

JON *There was a man in a shop doorway, hitting his head with his fist.. He was drunk with guilt and disappointment. He wore his pain on his face, like a scar. His eyes were screwed up tight in grief and he didn't want to open them; because the eyes they say are the window to the soul. and he doesn't think he has a soul anymore.*

APPRENTICE drags MATHEW off. he places his hand on his forehead and MATHEW stands, restored to life again.

SUNJAY Little troublemaker, got a bad mark. Scapegoat on a stone, waiting for the knife.

JON Ooh, they'll all blame him... *Poor little victim.*

PLASTIC GOD manipulates HIS APPRENTICE. He makes him single out KELVIN.

APPRENTICE grabs his victim and places his hand on his forehead and PLASTIC GOD'S anger surges through his body, tingles through his fingers and burns through his victim's skin to his brain - KELVIN screams with pain. the other mortals line up behind the victim, who is now marked. they all laugh at him.

Shivering, are you?

Bet your blood's as cold as ice now -

Any comments for the record?

Anything you want to share with us, loser?

SCENE 6
CLICK IN MY HEAD

KELVIN Something went click in my head

ALAN clicks his fingers

Like a trigger on a gun.

ALAN clicks his fingers and the music starts.

ALAN clicks now, while the others dance a rather groovy dance.

I felt the click
And a bang like from a gun
Sent me reeling back –

And here I am as I was,
Falling through the air
Like on a swing;
Falling into my childhood,
Falling out of bed,
And how it was then I would smash things
Because there was no angel;
Only in my head,
And I didn't know if it was good or bad
When it spoke to me.

So there was this click in my head,
And yes, I was angry
And I wanted to smash things,
Break it up,
Tear it up -

THE CAST stand at the back of the set in a line.

*KELVIN repeats the phrase break it up, tear it up, while
THE CAST perform the "DYNAMITE GAME". It reaches
a conclusion and they all shout dynamite!*

KELVIN stops the music with a gesture of his hands.

If I had enough dynamite
I would blow up the world;
Blow my head apart
And send the angels screaming back to heaven.

SUNJAY gestures and the world explodes.

SCENE 7

GOD ON A ROLL

The music is fast and frightening. The cast run around, desperately searching for cover and shelter from the cataclysm about them. It is as if the world is coming to an end; it is as if meteorites were falling, or the ground beneath them is giving way, cracking and crumbling in a terrifying earthquake. and no matter how fast they run, no matter where they hide, nature is rebelling against some unnatural onslaught, and is punishing its prisoners. In the middle of all of this, JON stands, triumphant high on the steps, surveying the carnage around him... like a god. if anyone dares to come near him, he sends them flying; as if he is brushing away an irritating fly.

- JON I am a God;
Creating and destroying,
Picking away at the fabric of life
To see how it works:
Pulling at sinews;
Dissecting and dissolving
the tissue of existence,
Scouring the atom
And snapping the dry bones
Of creation.
- But an atom is as empty as a Cathedral,
And the further I dig into the depths of your body,
The more I have come to believe
you are made of nothing...
- Do you understand?
He zaps KELVIN. KELVIN screams.
- KELVIN I don't understand..!
- JON Then I'll have to repeat myself.
He zaps LISA.
- LISA You're hurting me..!
- JOHN We all have to suffer.
He zaps TASLEEM.
- TASLEEM Why are you doing this?
- JON Because I have to.
He zaps KATHARINE.
- KATHARINE Leave me alone..!
- JON It'll be alright.
- SUNJAY How will it? I want to go home..!

JON *climbs down from his throne and approaches HIS APPRENTICE. He stretches out his hand to SUNJAY and yanks it back. SUNJAY clutches his chest in pain and shock. he falls to his knees, aware that JON has his beating heart in his hand.*

JON Home is where the heart is... welcome home. I'll take care of you.

APPRENTICE *watches in horror as PLASTIC GOD kicks his still beating heart into the sky. He watches as it curves back to land with a splat neatly back in SUNJAY'S chest cavity.*

JON *does a double take.*

Come on, mate - you've got a job to do. Just do it.

He ruffles SUNJAY'S hair and walks off.

SUNJAY Mind the hair!

SCENE 8

CHUNK OF LIFE

THE MORTALS *are struggling to get up, but an invisible hand seems to be pushing them down again. they are suffering and they are obviously in pain. APPRENTICE is checking his appearance in his mirror, suddenly realising that something is missing; that he has changed. as he speaks against the music,*

PLASTIC GOD *performs a weird ballet dance up his ladder.*

SUNJAY What did he say..?
What was it he said..?
His words are thumping away inside my head...
He said:
"If you can steal a heart away,
why not a life?"

"It doesn't make sense"
I said to him
"It doesn't make sense
to steal something as big as that,
What would you do with it anyway?"

But the more I looked around me,
The more I began to realize
that people were losing bits of their lives, daily.

They'd leave a piece of it
on a bus or a taxi,
Or a complete stranger would grab a chunk
and walk away.

And I remember he said:
"One day
someone might take your name away."

That's when I asked him what his number was,
And he said it was number one,
"Because one is the loneliest number
always searching for number two."
And I woke up the next morning
Aware that a big piece of my life was missing...
I never saw it again.

SUNJAY stands C.S. confused. JON is still dancing as he speaks.

JON
Like a crippled beetle
He scuttled away,
Flitting about the fields of golden corn,
Hopping through the long grass
At the edge of green meadows;
Gadding about the hedgerows and byways
Of a beautiful Spring day.

I caught him talking to the insects.
He was a bit confused -
I straightened him out.

*JON sends a bolt of lightning to SUNJAY - he is no longer confused.
the pain is terrible, but apprentice tries to shrug it off and fly away,
but somehow he can't manage to take off.*

SCENE 9

*PLASTIC GOD is sitting high on his throne, watching as THE MORTALS
walk around the set, each in turn walking into view with their story.*

KELVIN
I am consumed with guilt.
My hands are stained with blood,
I have scissors for fingers
And I'll cut you if you come too close.

SUNJAY
(To KELVIN) Come near, though -
Come and put your arms around me;
I need someone, and I'm falling
through the cloudy death of a dream
And if I hit the ground I'll be dead;
Dead and alone
In my dream.

*Worried that HIS APPRENTICE may be straying from his task, PLASTIC GOD
wakes ALAN from his slumber.*

ALAN
*I'll bang your heads together!
It's time you got a job;
Did something with your life!*

MATHEW I had a dream when I was a child, I was, I was.
Oh yes, I was a child when I was good,
And everything was good.
Remember those presents?

KAREN *Come and have a hug -*

SUNJAY I want a hug.

KATHARINE I was swinging on a swing.

JON In the park?

KATHARINE In the park it was I was swinging.

JON And laughing?

KATHARINE Laughing and swinging - it was my birthday and I had lots of kisses.

TASLEEM *Tidy up that mess - paper everywhere!*

SUNJAY My hands are like scissors... or knives. *"What am I doing?"*

KELVIN Who's bleeding? Is it me?

LISA I'm sorry - *I feel so bad!*

TASLEEM *I'll give you sorry!*

LISA I'm sorry.

TASLEEM *It's too late for sorry!*

SUNJAY *(To PLASTIC GOD) if i hit the ground..!*

JON There was a man in a shop doorway,
hitting his head with his fist.
He was drunk with guilt and disappointment.
He wore his pain on his face, like a scar.
His eyes were screwed up tight in grief
and he didn't want to open them;
because the eyes they say are the window
to the soul.
And he didn't think he had a soul anymore,
and he didn't want anyone to see he was
hollow inside;
and so he closed the window.
The man in a shop doorway...
I think it was me.

JON repeats his speech, while KELVIN stands by him, feeling the pain of it all, hitting his in sympathy with the story. the rest of THE CAST begin to walk around, repeating their lines in turn, quietly to themselves. during this, APPRENTICE walks to the edge of the stage. he looks down, as if he is gazing into a precipice.

SCENE 10**HUNTED**

KELVIN *looks at his hands, as if for the first time he notices they are different.*

KELVIN What the fuck are these? Hands to kiss, to wave, to welcome?
Or crow's claws, all cracked and dry? (*SHOUTS*) WHO DID THIS TO ME?!!

TASLEEM *Why do people stare at me?*
I asked them,
But they just laughed at me.

KATHERINE I'm a pig, trapped in a sty.
But I'd love to be a dolphin -
That is what freedom is!

LISA Voice in a bucket.
Can you hear me?

KAREN *Don't touch me - leave me alone!*

ALAN *Scum of the earth!*
Bury me deep in a cardboard box.
Then forget all about me.

MATHEW They said they'd stick me full of pins,
Then maybe I'd pop.
But I just bled -
Red tears in the dust.

SUNJAY walks into the scene, appalled and disgusted by these people. he pretends to cry at MATHEW'S story - it sounds false. he sees a fly buzzing around him and stamps on it.

SUNJAY He's right - you're all the same!
Sad gits!
Pull off their legs and put them in a jar.

SUNJAY touches all of THE MORTALS in turn. he sets them off and they hunt out KELVIN and corner him.

I am a shadow in your head;
A dark shadow,
Sleep-walking
In your dream.

You know I'm there;
Swimming in your blood,
Fingering my way through flesh and bone
'Till I'm deep in the electrical mystery
of your brain.

There he is - get him!

THE MORTALS *beat up* KELVIN. PLASTIC GOD *is waiting.*

he taps at his laptop.

JON And verily, like a phantom hacker
I down-loaded his soul!

PLASTIC GOD sucks the victim's soul from his body. SUNJAY uses a joystick to manipulate KELVIN into a chair.

*(To SUNJAY) Off the hook, you are.
Apprentice learnt a lot today.
Pleased as punch, I am.
Time for tiffin!*

PLASTIC GOD exits.

SUNJAY Oh, look at me -
So good I have done;
A world in my hands,
My brain is the sun.

The APPRENTICE calls the others together for a party.

*Come out to play, you drones,
Come gather nectar in the heat of the day;
I'll be your King while God's away.*

*Before indulging his ego, he reflects on what
has been happening to him, what he has witnessed.*

*I won't hit the ground -
I'll fly away;
Away from here,
Away from fear,
Forever.*

SCENE 11

MASSAGE

APPRENTICE BOY, elated at his success on earth now has a rather inflated ego and decides to join his fellow angels in paradise. he arranges them in a circle (sitting on chairs) and they begin to massage each other, while the APPRENTICE stands in the middle, preening himself like a counterfeit peacock.

SUNJAY Here's my mirror,
I like to see my smile.
I'll smile at you today,
Lucky people, you are,
Spinning around such a beautiful star!

Just then, PLASTIC GOD walks into the scene,

*Sipping his tea. He is surprised to see his Angels so contented and relaxed.
His APPRENTICE ducks down quickly and hides himself. he shouldn't be
back in paradise yet. PLASTIC GOD walks around his angels, inspecting them,*

suspiciously. APPRENTICE sneaks out of the circle and tries to escape PLASTIC GOD'S wrath.

Time to make a sharp exit!

But it is too late - PLASTIC GOD sees him and he is stopped in his tracks. the other angels are apprehensive and nervous - what will he do now to this errant angel? JON looks stern and SUNJAY looks nervous. but JON'S expression changes. he puts out his arms to embrace his chosen one and SUNJAY rushes into his arms for a fatherly hug. the other angels are relieved and pleased. just then the music changes. JON smiles knowingly at the audience and begins to dance - the others join in. he does a bit of a duet with his APPRENTICE. but then the tone of the music changes once more and it's more sombre. PLASTIC GOD places his APPRENTICE at the edge of heaven, smiles and waves goodbye. the others wave goodbye, too. PLASTIC GOD puts out his hand and APPRENTICE hands over the remote control joystick.

SUNJAY Can I go now?

But PLASTIC GOD doesn't answer. he merely turns his angel around to face the cloudy sky and give him a little push. SUNJAY begins to fly back down to earth, smiling at his good fortune. as APPRENTICE is flying down to earth; all smiles and happy thoughts flitting through his head. PLASTIC GOD is getting serious again. he orders his angels away with an authoritative brush of his hand. they obey immediately.

JON Crawl back to your filthy holes before I squish your yellow blood like custard through your eyes!

They make a quick exit. He then climbs his ladder, and watches his jumped up APPRENTICE as he flutters downwards through fluffy clouds to land once again on earth.

SUNJAY *Freedom!*

He takes a fishing rod and casts off through the clouds. the line spins out and the hook spikes his APPRENTICE. He reels him in. He then takes his remote control and manipulates his APPRENTICE. SUNJAY is shocked - he thought he had been freed, that his tasks were over. PLASTIC GOD in turn pulls up his arms and pins his hands, like a butterfly on a specimen board. he then manipulates his feet, which shoot out like a puppet. SUNJAY tries to resist, but it's hopeless - again PLASTIC GOD pins his feet to the ground. he taps a key and pulls out his latest edict. he begins to fold it into a paper dart.

JON You can't get away that easy!
I hear no fat lady singing - do you?

SUNJAY But I've done your job -
Scapegoat's took the rap.
It's time for me to flap.

JON Change of plan... little friend:
Actually, I've been thinking -
There's not enough dust around.
Go and make more dust:

He begins to type his list again.

Pulverise stone
And crumble bone;
Strip the clouds from the sky,
Make day night,
Love hate,
Tears blood.
They should all be stamped on - it's what they deserve.
So - leave no beat of a pulse behind.

You will do it, won't you?

SUNJAY

Yeah.

JON

Here endeth the chapter! *My gift is death.*

PLASTIC GOD has finished the dart and throws it down from his throne. when he has gone, SUNJAY wrenches his hands and feet free.

SUNJAY

A new chapter beginneth - *I give you breath!*

SCENE 12

I GIVE YOU LIFE

SUNJAY dances to each of THE MORTALS in turn and places his hand on their head. and each one feels relieved of their pain, they gasp at their freedom - "ahhh!" as he sets them all free, they join the dance.

SUNJAY

(To ALAN) Walk in the light... (MATHEW) Don't be afraid of the dark... (To LISA) Speak words of thunder. (To KAREN) Embrace the world... (To KATHERINE) Be a dolphin... (To TASLEEM) Laugh at their laughter... (To KELVIN) This is what freedom is!

Last of all, he releases KELVIN. they dance together. As the music ends KELVIN turns to SUNJAY

KELVIN

Gimme five!

SUNJAY extends his hand and KELVIN sees it's a claw.

Think you've been short-changed, mate. I owe yer -catch you later!

He turns to the mortals.

Your eyes are open now. You can see the truth. Get yourselves a life!

Music, KELVIN and THE MORTALS exit. APPRENTICE is gobsmacked to find them so ungrateful. but unknown to APPRENTICE, KELVIN returns to thank him. he conceals himself when PLASTIC GOD reveals himself and bears witness to APPRENTICE'S dilemma.

SCENE 13

LIAR

PLASTIC GOD *is angry. APPRENTICE trembles, he is afraid and knows he should have finished KELVIN off, he decides to lie his way out of it. but PLASTIC GOD knows the truth.*

JON There's one thing I can't stand and that's a liar!
Have you done it?

SUNJAY Left them empty,
Husks of bodies,
Everything dust.

JON Have you done it?

SUNJAY Earth like bones, all charred.

JON *Did you really do it?*

SUNJAY Oh yes, bloodless they were
When I'd finished with them;
Empty rattle of nothing
When I'd left them.

JON *LIAR!*

SUNJAY *No - lifeless to the bone and beyond,
Dry like the wind.*

JON *You fucking liar!*

SUNJAY Carcass in a cocoon;
A burst balloon drifting in space.

JON *LIAR!*

SUNJAY Sucked their souls out,
Should have seen them -
Like empty coffins.

JON I've had enough of you..!

PLASTIC GOD *climbs down from his throne. apprentice approaches, about to plead.*

Please...
Please don't tell me you care;
My stomach couldn't take it!

PLASTIC GOD *beats the living crap out of APPRENTICE. finally he rips out his restored heart and stamps on it.*

KATHARINE (Off) I tell you now in words of stone -
Never, never do this thing again!

PLASTIC GOD, *reacts, looks around him, concerned, but can see nobody, and so he shrugs it off, and returns to his APPRENTICE.*

JON Oh dear,
 What a comedian!
 Stay here then -
 Stagger about the streets
 With these tragic wasters,
 Breathing the dust of failure.

 Tosser!

 PLASTIC GOD *dances off.*

SCENE 14

FREAKS

APPRENTICE is crawling around the ground, desperately searching for his heart. KELVIN enters. he picks it up and hands it to him. SUNJAY replaces it again.

KELVIN So, is this how the story ends?
 Scissors cut paper... what do you say?

APPRENTICE is confused, he doesn't know what to say. KELVIN gestures in friendship with his hands and SUNJAY notices how different his own are. he pulls his hand away, shocked.

SUNJAY Ahhh! What the fuck are these?

KELVIN Same as these, only different. *(LAUGHS).*

SUNJAY No way - I'm special; blood in my veins, not dust!

KELVIN *Liar, liar - bum's on fire!*

It's as if SUNJAY has seen his hands for the first time and is appalled. KELVIN gestures and the music begins and THE MORTALS rush on pretending their bums are on fire, mocking APPRENTICE. They then mirror APPRENTICE's self-disgust; each one trying to rid themselves of a part of their body they hate. He is marooned on earth with THE MORTALS and can't bear it.

SUNJAY What are you looking at?
 You need a mirror -
 See what freaks you are.

KELVIN You're a reflection too;
 Like us, you are.

SUNJAY No, I'm not!

KAREN Mirror in my eye.

SUNJAY *SHUT UP!*

ALAN Freak, you are -
 A broken reflection.

TASLEEM Cracked mirror.

LISA Broken glass.

SUNJAY Shut up!

KATHARINE *Can't bear to look.*

MATHEW is tapping him on his shoulder.
 APPRENTICE loses it and decks him.

KELVIN You're one of us now.

KELVIN hits him back.

SUNJAY Ohh - it hurts!

KELVIN Shame!

SUNJAY It's pain like glass, cutting.

KELVIN It's life making you bleed.

APPRENTICE is confused and frightened. He shakes his head in response. KELVIN helps MATHEW to his feet. APPRENTICE kneels in prayer.

 Are you with us..? Show us the way?

Again APPRENTICE shakes his head. THE MORTALS walk backwards away from him and seem to mock him with a strange ballet dance.

SUNJAY Please... don't leave me falling;
 Falling to a target.
 I don't want to be a reflection,
 Shattered into shards of cruel glass,
 Like an accident on a road,
 Hit and run
 And blood everywhere.
 I should be pounding their bones to dust,
 Not bleeding inside,
 Not facing a mirror,
 Looking at myself
 With their strange vision.
 You have torn my heart to shreds,
 And left me, an orphan in a world of strangers.

APPRENTICE takes out his mirror, breaks it and tries to cut himself with the broken glass.

SCENE 15**SELF PITY**

Attention-seeking, SUNJAY tries to kill himself. THE MORTALS seem to mock him with their weird ballet dancing. KATHERINE dances forward, breaking away from the others, taunting him with his own thoughts.

KATHARINE I want to kill myself.

You said you'd be there -

Where are you?

You lied to me...

Liar, you liar!!

It's not my fault!

APPRENTICE has had enough.

SUNJAY *Fuck - I can't do it!*

KATHARINE *gestures, nonchalantly*

KATHARINE *Life must go on.*

And she dances off. SUNJAY throws the mirror down and cries in despair. KELVIN approaches him.

KELVIN Scissors cut paper..?

SUNJAY has reached a decision. he stands up and strides out, followed by KELVIN.

SCENE 16

HEAVY HALLELUJAHS

PLASTIC GOD *is sitting high on his throne in plastic heaven, typing up his journal. APPRENTICE creeps into his chamber, but JON has seen him. He carries on typing, waiting for his opportunity to trap him. Eventually, relieved, SUNJAY reaches what he takes to be a safe place. But PLASTIC GOD presses a special key and clamps SUNJAY's arms to the ladder. PLASTIC GOD continues typing his journal.*

JON
And the rain fell heavy
On the dark night of my soul,
And my dreams of building
Were washed away
Into the gutters of the moonless streets.

JON is interrupted by the voices of THE MORTALS.

TASLEEM *Liar!*

JON pauses and looks around him, but he can't see anything and so he carries on.

And the chair was empty
And waiting.
80,000 volts were jolting
Like a bolt from an arrow...

JON presses a special key on his laptop and gives SUNJAY a shock. JON laughs.

Like a bullet from a gun;

KAREN *Scaredy-cat!*

Reaction - JON.

JON
Dynamite in my brain exploding
Watching someone melt
In a chair.

MATHEW *Scissors cut dynamite - cut you!*

Reaction - JON.

JON
I pulled the switch...

LISA *It's dark inside your head.*

Reaction - JON.

JON
And it was never over,
Never...

ALAN *Paper, you are - tear you to pieces!*

Reaction - JON.

JON Because I carry the computer in my head
 And only I can switch it off.

KATHERINE *Your mother's coming!*

At this, PLASTIC GOD descends the steps, worried. He checks around, half hiding. Eventually he is satisfied she isn't there.

JON She's not coming. There's nobody there.

And so he climbs the steps again to his throne and carries on typing.

For I...

JON is interrupted by a loud banging noise. He stops writing.

(Frightened) oh... mother!

But it is KELVIN that enters. JON is relieved, although a little surprised.

*You?! Come to poke around with your crooked little beak?
Good - you're just in time!*

Now he carries on writing, trying to scare KELVIN with his words.

For I am the butcher and the scientist
In his white coat
Spattered with blood.
Rusty blades
Hanging like a shrivelled butterfly
In a dark place -
Pull the lever
And watch those creaky wings flap;
In my nightmare
I give you,
Poor victim
What has been delivered unto me.

He climbs down from his throne and pulls a lever - electricity surges through his APPRENTICE's body and finally he hangs limp, as if dead. KELVIN is furious. He grabs the journal and begins to read from it. PLASTIC GOD can't believe his audacity; no one has ever challenged him before.

KELVIN And then a gust of wind
 Blowing dry leaves,
 Motes of rust in the air;
 And there is my mother,
 In a red swirl of blood
 In my eye,
 Screaming her anger
 Through the tunnel of time.
 I can feel her voice echo
 And I'm crying on the floor:
 I say I am sorry...

KELVIN carries on reading, while the others repeat various phrases, banging their chairs in unison. PLASTIC GOD has lost control of his universe and he knows it. He is confronted with the horrors he has created and tries to stop them, but he can't.

And the Universe that began with a scream
I find is flat and void
And ends in a whisper;
The stars go out one by one;
And I am alone in the cavern of my skull,
Tapping a white stick
On white bone.
Alone.

APPRENTICE slowly wakes, and he is different. He looks commanding, as if he has found something that he has been searching for a long time. He pulls his hands free and addresses PLASTIC GOD. JON collapses in grief, full of remorse, his soul heavy with guilt. He crawls to the foot of the throne.

JON I'm sorry.

SUNJAY The guilt is like acid;
It burns your bones,
It burns your spirit.
It's such a big, big world
And there's so many people here...
The world is full of so many people.

JON *(Crying)* I'm sorry.

KELVIN Home is where the heart is -

SUNJAY Welcome home.

The errant angels walk into view as the new music starts, they begin to fly to earth. KELVIN is at the top of the throne, SUNJAY at the bottom - they fly too. At some point, SUNJAY puts up his arms into the position they were pinned by PLASTIC GOD, who is crying at the foot of the ladder.

And the tears are frozen.

KELVIN Big fat snowflakes.

SUNJAY Falling to earth.

TOGETHER Heavy hallelujahs.

They continue flying back to earth, while PLASTIC GOD weeps, broken and distraught.

Reviews:

The Birmingham Post - *Alive with hope and hilarious dance* - Someone somewhere needs to have a quiet word about scheduling with The Shysters. Glowing reports do not flow easily from a reviewer forced to miss out on extra time and penalties in the Italy/Holland euro 200 semi-final to attend the opening night. Hardly their fault perhaps, but none-the-less the company - much like the Italians in the football - were up against it from the start. Which is a situation that's nothing new for the cast of learning disabled actors, and probably the way they like it, judging by the gusto with which they go about the business of breaking down any potential barriers or pre-conceptions. Their latest work is probably their most ambitious, with director Richard Hayhow mixing mime, movement and dialogue by Alex Jones with a lively soundtrack to create an audio and visual treat. Inspired by the stories of Cain and Abel and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, the production centres on an evil God-like being who opts for revenge over redemption by creating and deriding outcasts within society with the help of a confused henchman.

The consequences are powerfully portrayed by performers with first hand experience of the situation, but delivered at complete odds with any perceived moral. For while the message often hints at despair, its delivery - by a hugely committed cast - is alive with hope, the hilarious dance routines especially engaging and effective. With enthusiasm as infectious as this it's no surprise The Shysters came out top - just like those Italians on the football pitch. *Steve Adams.*

Letters to Coventry Herald - Having lived in Coventry all my life (38 years), I had started to believe that art in Coventry was as rare as water in a desert. However, on Thursday night I found my oasis in the form of the brilliant *Fallen Angels* performed by The Shysters. This piece of sheer poetry was without doubt one of the most powerful plays (or any other form of media) I have ever witnessed. Performed in a blackout section of the stage and with the audience sat with them, the atmosphere was electric -something that would only have worked in such an intimate setting. Why, oh why then, bearing in mind that the performances have all sold out, were they only on for three nights? The Shysters are billed as being a theatre company of learning disabled actors. Forget it! The Shysters is a company of highly skilled individuals, all of whom give more to their performances than many of the so called "stars" I have seen at the Belgrade. I hope that when this play goes on tour it is given the billing it deserves and the appropriate number of nights for it to play over. Any play that can provide the emotions I went through on Thursday has a right to be seen by more people than have over the last three days. *Steve Shaw. Coundon.*

I don't think I have ever seen such a powerful, moving performance as the recent Shysters production of *Fallen Angles* at the Belgrade Theatre. The intensity of this drama moved me to tears. The words, music and movement were so outreaching that I felt as though I had been sucked into the performance. I felt speechless. On Thursday night, I saw a small group of actors perform so beautifully it could only be described as a masterpiece. To say 'well done' isn't enough - people in Coventry don't know what they missed. *Cheryl Gibbons. Ansty.*