

# THE CHALLENGE

A Comedy in One act

By

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## PREFACE

*By Vanessa Dodd, Course Leader Applied Drama,  
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When God meets modernity....power struggles and drama ensue

Never shy of the seriously philosophical, Tshiana tackles the big questions of doubt and faith in this his new play *The Challenge*. In the mid nineteenth century, when the official age of the earth according to the Bible was 5853 years old, religious beliefs were severely tested by Darwinian evolutionary theory, God as a supreme being and the bible as a source of knowledge were challenged and changed forever. God however as a caring benevolent father and figure head survived the onslaughts of the scientific revolution and its impact on ontology in successive religious systems, only to face new challenges in the modern world. It is these new challenges, the pressure of economic forces within the Church and the corruption of capitalism from without, the stuff of the socio-political play, Tshiana explores with surgical precision and determination. As with most good dramas, there is a transformative trickster character who performs this task, who challenges the moral fitness of the church and the biblical text as moral compass to which the protagonist clings.

Shavian in nature, where setting and action are subservient to the message, *The Challenge* is not without its tensions with Adrian its protagonist in an ideological tug of war. Adrian, a genuinely moral person, finds himself in an uncomfortable position, caught between the rock of a corrupted church and the hard place of sexual liberalism as represented by Harold his neighbour who can only offer him faithless and unstable human love as an alternative. Harold who swears in the name of his grandmother in a reference to the now lost earth religions which once honoured fertility and life, relentlessly exposes the 'G.H.H'. , the gossip, hypocrisy and hatred of the modern 'African' church and its authorities, with stories of sexual abuse and dodgy deals. Adrian's friend, the charismatic but very human Pastor Michel provides a disarming counterpoint to Harold's challenge in battle of words between the traditional church and modernity. In the challenge, Adrian exposed as being duped by God (played by one of the pastor's bodyguards) and its representatives is forced to reconsider his relationships to his Maker, his friend and himself with some positive results, Adrian finding something of a place for himself as peacemaker in an uncertain world.

In previous plays such as 'Red is the Royal Blood', Tshiana has experimented with blending pre-colonial African theatre troupes with the

dramatic narrative of classical European theatre alla Soyinka, to explore his ideas, but in *The Challenge* he finds a new voice in the Aristotelian tradition of uniting theme, time and place. Tshiana, a keen observer and recorder of characters displays a natural wit in his writing, pitting the colourful patois of Pastor Michel against the more prosaic Harold. A voice that speaks both to the universal human condition and his community.

*Vanessa Dodd, 9th May 2015*

## CHARACTERS

ADRIAN

PASTOR MICHEL

HAROLD

HAROLD

BODY GUARDS

THE VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY

THE CHOIR

'The Challenge' was first performed at Durban University Court Yard Theatre, South Africa, on 22<sup>nd</sup> of April; with the following cast list:

<b>ADRIAN</b>	Sandile Magagula
<b>PASTOR MICHEL</b>	Andile Tevin Nsibande
<b>HAROLD</b>	Sfundo Maphumulo
<b>BODYGUARDS</b>	Gabriel Miya Kwenzokuhle Ngcobo
<b>VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY</b>	Gabriel Miya
<b>THE CHOIR</b>	Nokukhanya Mkhize (Female) Zimme Hadebe Khethiwe Mzolo Nosisa Sithole Philile Cele Celestia Mpanza Thandeka Shangase

#### **TECHNICAL CREDITS**

<b>Director</b>	Soyiso Ndaba
<b>Directing Advisor</b>	Prof Debbie Lutge
<b>Theatre Manager</b>	Mthandazo Mofokeng
<b>Stage Manager</b>	Nomvelo Dlamini
<b>Lighting and Sound Design</b>	Mthandazo Mofokeng
<b>Wardrobe Master</b>	Simphiwe Mthembu
<b>Administration</b>	Lebohang Sibisi

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS (before the beginning of the show)**

Ladies and Gentlemen of the press.

Thanks go to our Acting HOD Stephen van Dyk.

To the playwright John T. Nambombe, I don't know how to thank you.

You allowed me to put your vision into action without asking anything from me. Instead you trusted and helped me. I really appreciate your kindness particularly as most importantly it is the first time this work is being staged.

To my advisor Prof Debbie Lutge thank you so much for all your help.

I've learnt a lot from you. "Igama lakho ngingu Debbie"

My Stage Manager Nomvelo Dlamini you play your role so humbly. I enjoyed working with you.

"Main man" Mthandazo Mofokeng with the lighting - Ndiyabulela.

Simphiwe Mthembu ne costume thank you.

My last thanks go to my brilliant cast for their dedication, time and respect.

*Soyiso Ndaba, the director, 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2015*

## THE SET

Upstage centre there is a white cross, centre stage a pulpit.

Downstage right there are three blue chairs facing the auditorium, downstage left there is a table decorated with white cloth and two blue chairs. Upstage left a bookshelf.

## *The play*

*Present day anywhere in the United Kingdom. The set is a Pentecostal Church. The action takes place on a Friday, between seven and nine in the evening.*

*Lights up we see PASTOR MICHEL on the pulpit preaching and the two guards standing beside him on both sides and there is a choir wearing blue gowns standing in front of the Pastor while he is preaching.*

### **VOICE OF PASTOR MICHEL**

(Off, in French accent)

When the Lord gives to you everything, you said 'Amen!' Beloved! One day, Jesus turned water into wine and stone to bread, you said 'Amen!'. The Lord gives the daily life, you also say 'Amen!' Beloved! Do you think saying 'Amen!' is enough? No, my brothers and sisters. You have to pay back to the Lord what he gave to you with mercy. Well! Last night, God revealed me something. He required me to construct a big religious complex, such as the one made by the King Solomon. Dear brothers and sisters! Commit to the Lord what you owe him. Give what you have, golden or money. God knows how much you have in your pocket. He also knows how much you saved in your depository financial institution account. Commit everything to him and he will bless you. Hebrews chapter 10:22-25 says "Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. ... For he who promised is faithful. And let us think how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit

of exercising, but furthering one another—and all the more as you attend the Day approaching’.

*Lights up. ADRIAN, 45, wearing a white shirt and black trousers sit on the chair behind the desk, doing the church bookkeeping. He’s singing a church tune. A woman is moaning sexually and at the same time the voice of PASTOR MICHEL is heard offstage.*

*Enter PASTOR, 47, wearing a chic costume, a shirt with a black collar, with his guards wearing black t-shirts, trouser and black sunglasses.*

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*(Embarrassed)*

New technology, uh! When they make all those laptops and sophisticated mobile phones, they think that they are more intelligent than God. Adrian, when you use them, problems begin. What a foolish waste.

*ADRIAN stops working and looks at him*

**ADRIAN**

How can I help you, Pastor Michel?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*(with pride)*

Nothing, Adrian! I don’t need anything from human being. The Lord is with me.

**ADRIAN**

Oh! Stop. When you blame people that mean something is wrong. Please, put your stubbornness behind you.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

All right! My laptop is freezing. Do you know someone who can fix it?

**ADRIAN**

I have a friend who can check it for you.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

That would be good if you could call him. Is he a Christian?

**ADRIAN**

What that have to do with being Christian? Are all hospital doctors Christian?

*ADRIAN dials a number from his mobile phone.*

**ADRIAN**

Yes, Harold. It's Adrian. One of my church's laptops has some trouble. Can you come and check it for me, please? Cool. It is the Church of Liberty. Oh! You know the place. I am waiting for you now.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Is he coming?

**ADRIAN**

Well, yes he is.

*PASTOR MICHEL sings a gospel tune and dances at the same time.*

**ADRIAN**

Everything is okay?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Every day, when I think about the marvels of the Lord, I am so happy. Did you know that King David was dancing for the Lord?

**ADRIAN**

No, but I understand in the Bible he was playing a sitar. I have never heard that he was dancing.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

What is this Sit...

**ADRIAN**

... Sitar.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*(struggling to say the word)*

Sit... tar. What exactly is it?

**ADRIAN**

I thought you knew about it. It's all in the Bible.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Just tell me what it is. All right. Stop pumping my ears with your lectures

**ADRIAN**

*(Lecturer's tone)* Well! A sitar is a big and long-necked lute with movable frets, played with a wire pick. The pers...

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*(interrupt him)*

I understand. Just stop it.

**ADRIAN**

By the way! How do you know he was dancing?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

It's in the Bible.

**ADRIAN**

Sure! It's useless asking you for a biblical evidence, because doubtless you will find me one.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

According to the King David, it is an obligation for Christians to dance in the church.

**ADRIAN**

Sure.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

The King David was a full soul who accomplished good work

for the Lord.

*Enter HAROLD with a heavy bag.*

**HAROLD**

Isn't it the guy who sent a general of his army to die,  
so he could shag his wife?

*PASTOR MICHEL looks at him with disgust.*

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*(to ADRIAN)*

Who the hell is this guy?

**HAROLD**

Is it the way you welcome hosts in your country?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You are no my host. I did not invite you.

**HAROLD**

Yes, you did. Adrian called me. I am the one who will fix  
your fucking computer.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*(to Adrian)*

Is it the guy you called? Oh my God.

**ADRIAN**

Yes, pastor.

**HAROLD**

*(to the pastor)*

Am I not your type?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

What type are you talking about? I am not gay? Oh I knew that. You are a gay.

**ADRIAN**

Pastor Michel! Meet Harold, my neighbour.

*HAROLD gives his hand to shake PASTOR MICHEL hand, but he refuses to shake his hand.*

**HAROLD**

Wow!

*Angrily, the PASTOR MICHEL enters his office. ADRIAN hands the Laptop to HAROLD and shows him the desk. HAROLD carefully places his bag on the desk and begins his work. ADRIAN continues with his bookkeeping. HAROLD starts singing "La Traviata".*

**ADRIAN**

Do you mind lowering your voice, Harold? We are in God's house.

**HAROLD**

What did you say? I can't hear you.

*He continues singing loudly.*

**ADRIAN**

*(Loudly)*

For God sake - why are you singing aloud?

**HAROLD**

My mother was Italian. She told me to be happy in every situation.

**ADRIAN**

Look Italian boy! I don't care about your mother being whatever she was. Bookkeeping job is not easy. I need to concentrate.

**HAROLD**

I like singing while I am working.

**ADRIAN**

Well, not me. Just lower your voice.

*HAROLD approaches ADRIAN and stands adjacent to him, then places his right arm along his shoulder.*

**HAROLD**

I have a plan after tonight, after ten.

**ADRIAN**

A plan? What plan?

**HAROLD**

My girlfriend has a very beautiful black friend. She can introduce her to you if you want. So when we'll leave here, we can join them in the club.

**ADRIAN**

Girlfriend... club? What are you even talking about?

**HAROLD**

What is wrong with you, man?

**ADRIAN**

Who told you I am into black?

**HAROLD**

Because you are black.

**ADRIAN**

I am not interested, man.

**HAROLD**

Just a suggestion.

**ADRIAN**

I am a man of principle. I decide not to have sex before I meet the person I really want to get married.

**HAROLD**

Did I mention shagging?

**ADRIAN**

I am reminding you that we are in the church. What do you think boyfriends and girlfriends do? Do they just watch cartoons together?

*HAROLD Laughs Loudly.*

**ADRIAN**

What? Why are you laughing at me? What is wrong?

**HAROLD**

We are in the twenty-first century. People do everything with their girlfriends before they get married, so they can decide if they want to get married or not.

**ADRIAN**

No. I don't want.

**HAROLD**

Come on, Adrian! It's not like the time of Mary and Joseph. You deserve to enjoy your life. Marriage is a complicated business. People who are inside want to quit and people who are outside want to get in. My God!

**ADRIAN**

I want it to be legal.

**HAROLD**

You are not serious, are you? Find a girlfriend and enjoy your life.

*ADRIAN stands and walks about agitated.*

**ADRIAN**

You can't change the way I feel inside. I am Christian and I am devoted to God. I don't intend to violate Lord's law.

**HAROLD**

What law? Are you really listening to yourself? You speak like Moses. People transgress laws every day. Sometimes laws are meant to be bypassed. Look! You need a break. Have some fresh air and meet someone.

**HAROLD**

Just give her a try and see for yourself. If you don't like her, you are free to move on. She is sweet as honey. You know, having a girlfriend provides you with energy.

**ADRIAN**

What energy?

**HAROLD**

You will become emotionally stable.

**ADRIAN**

You see, Harold! A woman is a very dangerous being. It's because of Eve we are suffering today.

**HAROLD**

How can you be so misogynistic?

**ADRIAN**

She gave the forbidden fruit to Adam.

**HAROLD**

Stop telling yourself stories. They shagged. That is it. And in that time, God hadn't given his authorization yet.

**ADRIAN**

Come on Harold. They were married.

**HAROLD**

Who preceded their marriage? Boris Johnson, the Mayor of London, Bertrand Delanoë?

**ADRIAN**

Stop blaspheming in the God's house

**HAROLD**

You are missing something.

**ADRIAN**

Like what?

**HAROLD**

Kissing... cuddling... some different stuff. You see what I mean, right?

**ADRIAN**

I am just too busy for that. Unfortunately I do not have enough time.

**HAROLD**

Let me tell you a little story.

**ADRIAN**

Oh my, yes. Made up stories as usual?

**HAROLD**

No. This is a true story, I swear.

**ADRIAN**

I don't believe you when you swear to God.

**HAROLD**

Not to God! I swear in the name of my grandmother.

**ADRIAN**

Please, don't complicate things as they already are. A friend of mine told me that.

**ADRIAN**

Go on then.

**HAROLD**

Check-up after check-up, no doctor could heal him. And then he resolved to see a Chinese physician. The Chinese doctor asked him if he was sexually active, he said no'. 'What a shame', said the doc. 'That is the cause of his illness.' Then he prescribes him some secret drug. The

Chinese doctor advised him to pick up a prostitute and stay with her all night long. You're excited now, aren't you?

**ADRIAN**

No.

**HAROLD**

All right. The same evening, he went to visit a prostitute. He did everything asked by the doctor. On the following day, he returned to visit the doctor and said: 'I feel good'

*HAROLD sings the song 'I feel good'.*

**ADRIAN**

*(ironically laughs)*

I have never heard a silly story like this. What are you trying to do to me?

**HAROLD**

Come on! I just want you to open your eyes.

**ADRIAN**

I don't want to be a hypocrite. In any case, I am overly busy for playing 'Rudolf Valentino'.

**HAROLD**

Who is that guy again?

**ADRIAN**

I thought you knew everyone.

**HAROLD**

Can you tell me who that guy is?

**ADRIAN**

He was a handsome actor, who liked to have sex with all women, even the married ones.

*HAROLD is very interested.*

**HAROLD**

Where does he live?

**ADRIAN**

He died a long time ago.

**HAROLD**

Did he?

**ADRIAN**

Yes.

**HAROLD**

When?

**ADRIAN**

In nineteen-twenty-six.

**HAROLD**

What a shame that would be, eh? How do good people die like that?

**ADRIAN**

Good people? Would you like your wife to be shagged by someone else?

**HAROLD**

Of course, not.

**ADRIAN**

So! Why do you think he was a good guy?

**HAROLD**

Don't take it from the religious viewpoint. Sometimes people need to change.

**ADRIAN**

Change? You are crazy, you know?

**HAROLD**

Since I was born. I like shag..

**ADRIAN**

*(interrupting)*

Mind your language, would you?

**HAROLD**

Do you know that lots of religious people shag married women?

**ADRIAN**

I am not concerned, because I don't do that.

*ADRIAN continues with his work.*

**HAROLD**

All right! I saw your friend the pastor with a girl.

**ADRIAN**

What did you just say?

**HAROLD**

Last night, I saw your pastor with a beautiful girl at Odeon cinema.

**ADRIAN**

You have to be kidding me, right?

**HAROLD**

Even people you think being saints can do what you think is bad.

**ADRIAN**

Maybe she was a church member

**HAROLD**

Do pastors kiss their church members? I heard him saying 'Good things are made to be tasted.'

**ADRIAN**

You must be lying! I have known him from my childhood.

**HAROLD**

Well! People can change. If only you had seen that woman! She was everything a woman should be.

*HAROLD describes the girl gesturally.*

**HAROLD**

She is the kind of girl who can make you forget everything.

*ADRIAN refuses to look at him.*

**HAROLD**

Look at me, Adrian. She has everything perfect; attractive legs, beautiful breasts, lips, eyebrows, cheeks, butt, waist... Oh my God! Oh, what I would give to smell her shoes!

**ADRIAN**

Enough!

**HAROLD**

Your pastor is a con artist.

**ADRIAN**

I know him better than you.

**HAROLD**

Obviously you don't, because it's not the first time I've seen him. I caught him coming out of a hotel with some other young woman. You are like a mother who is saying to the police officer 'I know my son very well'. You can't know someone very well.

**ADRIAN**

Let's not pay attention to small talk. They are kind of Chinese whispers.

**HAROLD**

Are you listening to me? I told you I saw him.

**ADRIAN**

Did you call him when you saw him?

**HAROLD**

No.

**ADRIAN**

This implies, it was not him.

**HAROLD**

What do you mean it was not him?

**ADRIAN**

You should call him to know if it was actually him.

**HAROLD**

How could I call him? He always has an air of superiority and a despicable arrogance. I know, for you he may be a saint, but trust, me he is not. He's not an honest guy, Adrian.

**ADRIAN**

If he was a bad man, I would know that.

**HAROLD**

Growing up in the faith, reading the Bible every day, attending church every Sunday, busy childhood life, no girlfriends. How awful! How can you believe me? My father was a Pentecostal Church pastor. You can't imagine what I have been through. You sit there and you don't see that you are becoming just like an alcoholic or a drug addict. I am happy today, because I quit the church and put it all behind me.

**ADRIAN**

Whatever you say, I am not quitting the church, Harold.

**HAROLD**

I want to save you before it becomes too late. It's a kind of magic. At the end you start seeing a psychiatrist like a mental case.

**ADRIAN**

I will surely not consider myself being addicted to something. I just go to the church, and listen to what the Bible says.

**HAROLD**

Religion makes people do such crazy things. Remember what Karl Marx said? 'Religion is the opium of the people!'

**ADRIAN**

That one was a sick man.

**HAROLD**

Do you know the story of the esoteric sect, the Solar Temple?

**ADRIAN**

No.

**HAROLD**

What do you mean 'no'?

**ADRIAN**

Because I don't know.

**HAROLD**

All the members of the sect committed collective suicide organized by their founding father Joseph and Luc Jouret.

**ADRIAN**

You said yourself it was a sect.

**HAROLD**

It doesn't matter, whether a sect or a well-known religious group. All of them have the same objective. To maintain their supremacy over others. They're all hypocrites and cheats. They're all false modesty and piety. They usually have sex with women even with men and children. Think about the Vatican and the priest scandal? To deflect public outrage, they think it is better to commit sin in private, not in public, but commit sin they do.

**ADRIAN**

I am a Pentecostal.

**HAROLD**

What difference does it make, Pentecostal, Catholic or others?

**HAROLD**

Think back! You told me yourself, your family were very religious, and you suffered a lot. You see, you and I have the something in common.

**ADRIAN**

Different people react differently. I admit that we have a similar problem, but it cannot make of me an atheist. I am not against God, but all those who call themselves believers and work the biblical rules. It is true my father was an example for me, but what he demanded of me, in my opinion, helped me to become an honourable soul.

**HAROLD**

Maybe your father was not shagging all over.

**ADRIAN**

I know, but he was not good enough to me. At a young age, he forced me to attend the church, whether I liked it or not. Any refusal had a consequence, a punishment, the deprivation of the day's meal. His wife did not like me. I was responsible for all bad things happened in the house. And even so, they were calling themselves Christians who swore only by the Bible. Were reared with the idea 'God said you have to do everything your parents ask you. You should not doubt on God's word, otherwise you get to Hades. I realized today it was a kind of child abuse- disguised. I still ask myself the question, why some religious behave badly in the name of God, but it is not my place to judge them.

**HAROLD**

Don't let him turn you into a fanatic. You are clearly an intelligent man. That guy Michel and his church are using you. The church only means three things: G.H.H.

**ADRIAN**

What is this?

**HAROLD**

Gossip, hatred, hypocrisy. That is the reason people enjoy gathering here.

**ADRIAN**

That is not true.

*ADRIAN Looks at HAROLD's bag on the desk.*

**ADRIAN**

What is it in your bag?

**HAROLD**

Oh! I forgot that I brought for you something which change your mind about the religion.

**ADRIAN**

Show me your bag.

ADRIAN wants to take it by force but HAROLD keeps it strongly.

**ADRIAN**

Are they Job Centre claims?

**HAROLD**

No. I don't do Job Centre.

**ADRIAN**

I saw you there.

**HAROLD**

Why didn't you call me? That means it wasn't me. I am a business man.

**ADRIAN**

What business man? What products do you sell?

**HAROLD**

It's a secret.

**ADRIAN**

What secret?

**HAROLD**

I offer services.

**ADRIAN**

What services?

*HAROLD approaches ADRIAN's ear.*

**HAROLD**

*(whispers in Adrian ear)*

I'm...an escort.

**ADRIAN**

*(Loudly Laughs)*

What? You an escort? What a shame that would be, eh?

**HAROLD**

*(whispers in his ear)*

Not out loud, Adrian. It's a very good job.

**ADRIAN**

Do you consider it a job? That is a con job.

**HAROLD**

I entertain women and give them joy and give them all the pleasure they need.

**ADRIAN**

What? Surely you are not serious.

**HAROLD**

It is safer than getting money from poor people in the church.

**ADRIAN**

It is crazy the way you hate the church.

*HAROLD opens his bag and takes an internet paper with different articles.*

**HAROLD**

Let me read it for you.

**ADRIAN**

I can read by myself.

*HAROLD gives the article to ADRIAN.*

**ADRIAN**

A Christian priest busted for raping girls. Yamata, Kyoto  
- Christian... He's Japanese. Why didn't you say so?

**HAROLD**

Have you got problems with the Japanese?

**ADRIAN**

Just... hmm, they are not truly Christian.

**HAROLD**

What do you mean by that? Are they not human beings?

**ADRIAN**

I did not say that. Just... Hmm... Hmm... They are not  
proper Christian.

**HAROLD**

What do you mean not 'proper Christian'?

**ADRIAN**

They are Shintoists.

**HAROLD**

What's Shinto?... whatever!

**ADRIAN**

Shintoist comes from Shinto.

*He puts a chair next to ADRIAN and starts explaining like a  
Lecturer.*

**ADRIAN**

Shinto is the original natural spirituality of Japan. It  
is a set of.....

**HAROLD**

*(interrupting)* I don't need your lecture, Mister Lecturer? Check again. The article says: 'Christian priest'. A Christian is a Christian. A Christian can be Japanese, Chinese or Burmese.

**ADRIAN**

*(continues the reading)*

'Christian cult leader Tamotsu Nagata, the suspected rapist of several elementary school age girls, was arrested on Wednesday, police said.' *(To Harold.)* Like I said, he is just a Japanese Christian. I need an article about proper Christians, like American, European, African...

*HAROLD gives him another article.*

**HAROLD**

What about this one?

**ADRIAN**

*(Reading)* 'The Catholic Church abuse cases are a series of allegations, investigations, trials and convictions of minor sexual abuse crimes committed by Catholic priests, nuns and members of Roman Catholic orders against children as young as....'

**ADRIAN**

You're not telling me anything new here. I've known that one since I was a kid. Anyway, I am not Roman Catholic. We were calling our Parish Church 'Sango Bidoba'.

**HAROLD**

'Bidoba'?

**ADRIAN**

Someone who likes too much fucking.

**HAROLD**

Do you mean your priest was shagging boys?

**ADRIAN**

This is a church. Stop saying those words.

**HAROLD**

Fucking or shagging, what is the difference?

**ADRIAN**

Anyway, my family was Roman Catholic before my father opts for Protestantism.

**HAROLD**

*(showing him another net document)*

This guy does not belong to the Roman Catholic. He is pure race protestant. 'Gregory Ivan Hawkins, 54, is the pastor....

**ADRIAN**

How do you know that?

**HAROLD**

Read it, please.

**ADRIAN**

*(reading)*

Gregory Ivan Hawkins, 54, is the pastor.... of Zion Plaza Church in Tulsa, Okla. He was charged in July the 23rd, 2013, with four counts of lewd molestation and two counts of assault involving the misuse of a teen relative. *(To Harold.)*

**ADRIAN**

Okay, you made a point. I will read it later.

*HAROLD's Mobile phone rings.*

**HAROLD**

Excuse me for a moment. Sounds like I need to answer this call.

**HAROLD**

*(angrily)* Why? What made you change your mind? Tired eh? I don't believe you. You should call me around six o'clock. What are you up to? Are you sure there's nothing else?

*He suddenly cut the conversation.*

**ADRIAN**

Why are you so upset?

**HAROLD**

She's not going to the club tonight.

**ADRIAN**

Who?

**HAROLD**

My girlfriend. She doesn't want to go to the club.

**ADRIAN**

Maybe something came up.

**HAROLD**

Or maybe she found someone else. Women are changeable...like the British weather.

**ADRIAN**

Have a seat Harold. Don't make yourself ill. Anyway, what makes you think like that? Has she cheated on you once?

**HAROLD**

No.

**ADRIAN**

What is the problem, then?

**HAROLD**

Just, hmm, I love her so much.

**ADRIAN**

Trust her and think positive. Everything will be good. Do you need some advice?

**HAROLD**

*(Laughs)*

Advice from you?

**ADRIAN**

Yes, why not? Don't even give one hundred percent of your love in a girlfriend. Give her sixty percent and keep forty. So when she decides to leave you, you will not suffer a lot.

**HAROLD**

Where did you learn that?

**ADRIAN**

I saw it on the television.

**HAROLD**

Son of a bitch.

*Both Laugh.*

**ADRIAN**

Take a glass of wine, drink and forget about that this evening. You will see tomorrow everything will good.

**HAROLD**

I'll try.

**ADRIAN**

After that you can come read the Bible with me.

**HAROLD**

Spare me that, Adrian.

**ADRIAN**

It is good for your spirituality.

**HAROLD**

I need some fresh air, not spirituality. Let me repair your pastor's laptop.

*ADRIAN bows his head thinking.*

**ADRIAN**

Gregory Ivan Hawkins! Yamata Kyoto! What a waste of time!

*Enter PASTOR MICHEL.*

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Yamamoto? Are you doing in Japanese Kendo now?

**ADRIAN**

No. We are talking about bad pastors in Japan.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

What is this again?

**ADRIAN**

Come and read.

*ADRIAN gives him articles.*

**ADRIAN**

I begin to realise that in the religion there are too many questions, but not enough answers.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

(after reading)

Bullshit!

**ADRIAN**

Pastor!

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Oh sorry! Adrian! The Bible always answers every single question.

**ADRIAN**

Give me some answers after you read this.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Shit!

**ADRIAN**

Pastor! You can't swear.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Oh sorry! Don't you understand that your neighbour want to put in a deep shit with the Lord?

**ADRIAN**

Pastor!

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Oh shit! Sorry again.

**HAROLD**

This pastor yours is awful.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You, shut up ...

(to ADRIAN)

All those articles are fake.

**ADRIAN**

Why can't you envisage the possibility that they are authentic?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Maybe the guys who wrote them are racists.

**ADRIAN**

That is what I said when I first read the article. (*He hands him another article*) What about this one?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Japanese? I have never heard about Japanese Christians in my life.

**ADRIAN**

Well! You are wrong.

*Adrian's mobile phone rings.*

**ADRIAN**

(*on the phone*)

No, I haven't seen anyone yet. I know, but I don't want

to get married at the age of twenty-five year like you. No. I don't need a post pack. I will let you know when I am ready. No. I don't want to get married right away. I am telling you I don't necessitate a post pack. I will choose myself, my wife when I will be ready. I don't need your money, dad. Church? Yes, I am actually still attending. I will speak to you later. Yes. Call me in half an hour. I am very busy now. Yes. I know that.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I bet it was your dad.

**ADRIAN**

Yes. He wants me to find a woman. I am even surprised he called me. He never showed an interest in me. Pastor, I need answers.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Well! You can call on God. I might confess that at any time I have some doubts, I call on God. God loves you, Adrian. The bible says: 'Everything you ask will be given to you.

**ADRIAN**

Are you kidding? How? Do you have his telephone number?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Oh! The Lord is calling.

**ADRIAN**

Are you kidding me? I did not hear your phone ringing.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

It is the miracle of God.

*PASTOR MICHEL walks to the corner of the scene.*

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*That is right. I know he is a bit stubborn, but I will try. Yes, my Lord. I will tell him. I will give it to*

him. Amen!

*PASTOR MICHEL comes back where ADRIAN is sitting.*

**PASTOR MICHEL**

This is the number. Call on him, he will answer you.

**ADRIAN**

Son of bitch!

Both laugh.

**ADRIAN**

What do you want me to tell him?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You are the one who is complaining, Adrian, not me. Use your brain instead.

**ADRIAN**

*(repeating)*

Use your brain, huh!

*(to PASTOR MICHEL)*

Very encouraging!

*PASTOR MICHEL's phone rings, he answers and goes to the corner out of earshot; and rushes to enter his office. ADRIAN is looking at him when he is speaking on the telephone.*

**ADRIAN**

*(to himself)*

Call on God! That is funny. Harold can be right. *(Looking at the direction of the heaven)* If you really exist, why don't you stop this crime?

*He gets up and walks around the church agitated, stands as if by a window, looking out to the audience. Enter a guard pretending that he's forgotten some under the pulpit then*

*takes the microphone and pretends to be God.*

**ADRIAN**

God! Where is he? Does he really exist? He might not exist since he understands nothing, he hears nothing and he surely does nothing. Otherwise, he will step in to prevent any criminal offence. I go to the church every Sunday, but I discover around me people suffering, starving, people who don't have jobs, like me. Why God? What did they deserve to live this kind of life?

*Suddenly, there is an almighty bang, like a huge clap of thunder, and the stage is lit with a blinding light. A wild gust of wind sweeps everything from the table... Adrian drops to his knees in terror and puts his hands over his head, he is sweating profusely and his heart is racing.*

**ADRIAN**

Who is that?

*Then a voice is heard. Adrian's body is shaking.*

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

I am the one you are looking for. Don't be afraid Adrian. Go and sit back down. I am the one you were looking for. I am your God, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the last.

**ADRIAN**

Are you real? Are you the same who appeared to Moses?

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

Yes, I am.

**ADRIAN**

May I see you?

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

No man sees me, and lives. My face shall not be seen.  
Even Moses did not see my face.

**ADRIAN**

It's been a long time you did not appear to people.

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

I do appear, but indirectly. Sometimes I send someone  
else. Like the apparitions of the Virgin Mary.

**ADRIAN**

I did not hear you mention the apparition of Saint  
Antonin to Kimpa Vita.

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

Who is that?

**ADRIAN**

Beatrice of Kongo. Do you remember?

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

Is she alive or dead?

**ADRIAN**

She died a long time ago. I thought you knew everything.

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

Are you sure I appeared to her?

**ADRIAN**

No, but People said it was saint Antonin, one of your  
servants.

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

Ah!

**ADRIAN**

What this 'Ah' means? Did you forget her because she was  
like me?

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

No. I am a God of equity. Wait a minute! Beatrice of  
Kongo! The one who said Emmanuel, my son and other early

Christian figures were from the Kingdom of Kongo?

**ADRIAN**

Yes.

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

That could be because she changed her Christian name.

**ADRIAN**

What Christian name. Japanese and Chinese don't have Christian names. (*He imitates Japanese and Chinese accents*) Keiko, Kanji, Yang Li, Yang Tang..... Yes.

**ADRIAN**

All right! Did you know we belong to the same country?

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

Of course, I know everything.

**ADRIAN**

Sure.

ADRIAN sits back more relaxed.

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

Now! Ask me any question you want my son. I know everything, but ask me just for formalities, because I know everything.

**ADRIAN**

Oh right, for formalities! (*Nicely*) I like that too. Look at these articles. I just wanted to ask you if you could prevent those crimes.

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

I recognize that people shout and swear at me thinking I do nothing about those crimes, especially committed by religious. But you know, everything has its moment.

**ADRIAN**

I know you are the Almighty, the Master of the universe.

But in our country elders say adults can also dance in the sound of tom-tom play by the young. You don't mind me giving you some ideas, do you?

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

Of course, not. You can.

**ADRIAN**

Thank you very much. You know, Mister Almighty, you have all the power, can't you just help them to stop what they are doing?

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

When I created Adam and Eve, I gave them a free will to accept or not for what I asked them.

**ADRIAN**

You mean kind of democracy.

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

No. Theocracy.

**ADRIAN**

Do you know that the theocracy down here looks like the dictatorship? I don't want to name the countries.

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

My theocracy is different. I give people the opportunity to express themselves like I did to Adam and Eve.

**ADRIAN**

I believe you, dear Almighty, but people continue to blame you.

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

It is comfortable to blame me for the abuses and ills that men have in life, particularly when it adds up to the numbers of those that observe different religious texts. Like you said, they sustain the right to say and do what they desire, but the day will come, I will make all of them disappear and a new world will be made.

**ADRIAN**

But in the meantime, they continue to do bad things.

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

I am a God of patience.

**ADRIAN**

But everyone blames you.

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (Guard)**

They have the right to blame me, but they are wrong.

**ADRIAN**

I understand that, but you are the leader and the omnipotent. In a country if the economy or health system falls down, everyone blames the regime. Have you got a government with ministers or something like that?

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

Naturally, I have a government which is composed of my angels. They are like my ministers.

**ADRIAN**

Who is the premier minister?

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

My beloved son Emmanuel is the premier minister.

**ADRIAN**

If he really is your beloved son, why did you send him to be killed?

**VOICE OF TH ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

It was the only way to clear humans of their sin.

**ADRIAN**

I believe you could find another way to proceed.

**VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

What would you do in my place?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*(offstage)*

Is that you talking alone, Adrian?

*Enter HAROLD. The ALMIGHTY VOICE stops.*

**ADRIAN**

*(to the Voice)*

Wait! Can you come later?

**THE VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY (GUARD)**

Read well your Bible. I only appear once.

**HAROLD**

Eh! I can hear you now. Who are you talking to?

**ADRIAN**

Can't you be quiet for a while? I have unfinished business.

**HAROLD**

What kind of business is that?

**ADRIAN**

The kind which is not your business.

**HAROLD**

Please Adrian. I need your help.

**ADRIAN**

What do you want, now?

**HAROLD**

I am suspecting my girlfriend of cheating on me.

**ADRIAN**

It is normal. Does she know you do escort?

**HAROLD**

No.

**ADRIAN**

They always know.

**HAROLD**

What do you mean?

**ADRIAN**

Women always know. You interrupt my business.

**HAROLD**

What business, Adrian?

**ADRIAN**

If I tell you, you will not believe me.

**HAROLD**

Try me.

**ADRIAN**

I was talking with God.

**HAROLD**

*(Laughs)*

Are you serious?

**ADRIAN**

I am.

**HAROLD**

You are just kidding. Let's talk about my problem.

**ADRIAN**

What makes you think your girlfriend is cheating?

**HAROLD**

I have a kind of intuition.

**ADRIAN**

Intuition?

**HAROLD**

Intuition is always right in at least two significant ways; it is always in response to something. It always has your best interest at heart.

**ADRIAN**

And who said that?

**HAROLD**

Gavin De Becker in *The Gift of Fear*, survival....

**ADRIAN**

*(interrupting)*

... Yes, yes, yes. I got it.

**HAROLD**

You see, that is why I believe in it so strongly. I do feel that I am right. I don't know why. I just can't explain it.

**ADRIAN**

Sometimes the intuition can be wrong. Maybe you are thinking so much negative.

**HAROLD**

I don't know. Sometimes her phone is turned off. When I get her finally, the only excuse she gives me is that 'It was in silent mode'.

**ADRIAN**

You are just jealous, Harold.

**HAROLD**

Me, jealous? No.

**ADRIAN**

You can't admit it. You know what?

**HAROLD**

Women do that most of the time.

**ADRIAN**

How can you be a misogynist? Men do that too. Most of the time when they are with someone else, they turn the phone off.

**HAROLD**

Adrian, please tell me what I can do.

**ADRIAN**

The only way is to trust her.

**HAROLD**

You are not helping me.

**ADRIAN**

I don't know what to say.

**HAROLD**

How can you be so unhelpful Adrian? I am sure it is

because you read too much into the Bible.

*Enter the PASTOR MICHEL and sits at his desk.*

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*(to ADRIAN)*

I heard you talking to yourself.

**ADRIAN**

Not at all. I was talking with the Almighty.

*PASTOR MICHEL takes a seat.*

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Do you mean God?

**ADRIAN**

Yes. You told me to call on him and I did it.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You are lying. You did not see him.

**ADRIAN**

For what reason should I lie?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

To impress me.

**ADRIAN**

Impress you for what, pastor?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Do you mean God like God? The one who appeared to Moses appeared to you?

**ADRIAN**

Yes, his voice. Even Moses has never seen him. No one can see him my friend.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Maybe it was in your dreaming. A lot of people dream talking with kings, queens, presidents, celebrities... In

reality, they don't.

**ADRIAN**

Do you remember what you told me? 'Ask and you will receive'. That is what I did.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I was joking.

**ADRIAN**

*(ironic)*

Dear Church minister, don't joke with Lord's plans. His ways are impenetrable.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

If God wants to speak to someone, it will be me and not you.

**ADRIAN**

Why is that?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Why? Oh! You with your 'why'. It is because I am his servant.

**ADRIAN**

Well, he preferred me. He was so fantastic. He would tell me lots of things if Harold did not interrupt us.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Will he come back?

**ADRIAN**

You know better than me he never comes twice. Read well your Bible that is what he said to me.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Hmm!

**HAROLD**

I am sure, Mister Pastor is jealous.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Me, jealous? No.

**HAROLD**

Why did your face change like that, my Reverend Pastor?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

It is not your business.

**ADRIAN**

Don't be jealous my friend. One day, he will talk to you.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Do you really think I believe you?

**ADRIAN**

Are you playing the Apostle Thomas?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I am even worse than him.

**ADRIAN**

Man of not much faith.

**HAROLD**

*(to the PASTOR MICHEL)*

You told him to call on God, didn't you? You said 'Ask and you will receive'. That's what he did.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

This is a discussion between Christians. It is not your business. Anyway, I was joking when I told him that.

**HAROLD**

*(ironic.)*

Dear Church minister, don't joke with the Lord's plans. His ways are impenetrable.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*(to HAROLD)*

You shut up. I am not talking to you. *(To ADRIAN)* Tell me. What did you ask him?

**ADRIAN**

I asked him about the hypocrisy of the religious.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Why ask God, a stupid question like that?

**ADRIAN**

Do you think hypocrisy is not a sin?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Not really.

**ADRIAN**

You are not serious.

**HAROLD**

Did he give you any answers?

**ADRIAN**

He answered some of my doubts. During our conversation, of course, he blamed Satan, but human beings are also responsible for the bad behaviour.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Do you see? He told you himself the world is under Satan's influence. The duplicity of the evil one is too complex for Christians, like us. Satan is a real strong being. God is really good. He loves you and gives you the opportunity to accomplish everything you desire.

**ADRIAN**

*(ironically)*

You are right. This is the reason people act the way they do, so they can lay the blame on Satan.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You don't believe in Satan power, do you?

**ADRIAN**

No. And I don't want him to always be a scapegoat.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

It is not because he is a God of love, he can't get angry. It happened in the past.

**HAROLD**

Rubbish! If God is good and love, he should be hefty enough to deal with Satan and all the evil in the universe. He must be evil himself, to have the capacity and do nothing about it. Do you know what? I'm not finished with him yet. I'd like to ask him some questions.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*(to HAROLD)*

Shut up!

**HAROLD**

*(to ADRIAN)*

This a challenge to God, Adrian. Call him again.

**ADRIAN**

I am not challenging him. I am challenging those who serve him with hypocrisy. He is not the problem. He gave to everyone, especially his servants to do well, but...

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*(interrupting)*

...he is infallible, but we are not. Damn it! I already told you if God wants to speak to someone, it should be me, his humble servant!

**HAROLD**

Sorry, guys. I'm going to leave you specialists of God to iron out your differences. I don't want to be part of a fight between childhood friends. I have to finish the laptop.

**ADRIAN**

Stay, please!

**HAROLD**

I don't need to stay here.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Let him go this son of a bitch.

**HAROLD**

What did you call me?

*HAROLD approaches PASTOR MICHEL and wants to grab him by his shirt, but ADRIAN intervenes. Pastor shouts for help, enter his guards.*

**HAROLD**

I'm not going anymore. I'll stay right here.

**ADRIAN**

You are so naughty a pastor.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Jesus, when furious, scattered people who dealt in front of the temple.

**ADRIAN**

For God's sake! You are not Jesus. You are PASTOR MICHEL.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*(starts jumping)*

Out from here, you evil spirit! Lord, bless this house. Bless my brother Adrian, let them not fall into this trap.

**ADRIAN**

I don't even recognize you anymore.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

What are you talking about?

**ADRIAN**

I am talking about your way of life. You don't encourage people by acting like a criminal.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*(furious)*

He will break him the way he did Egyptians when they enslaved Israel.

**ADRIAN**

You don't even believe in what you are talking about. If you consult the holy books of the Egyptians, they will tell you another side of the story.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

The Bible is the only book which tells the truth.

**HAROLD**

What about the Koran, the Tanhak, the Tipitaka, the Vedas and the Kojiki?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You, again?

**HAROLD**

My dear friend, everyone tells stories in their way. That is strange.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

God does not recognize those books.

**HAROLD**

Why?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

They have rejected his son, Emmanuel.

**HAROLD**

Did they?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Everyone has to accept my son, Emmanuel, but they did not. They take him like a simple prophet. Sending him to the earth was an expiatory sacrifice, the lamb who has to free the world of its sin. And the salute comes from him.

**HAROLD**

Like a father, who has two children, but only loves one.  
Reminds me of the story of Isaac and Esau.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

God likes testing his people. It is the best way to know  
if they still believe in him.

**HAROLD**

That is ridiculous. Does he like playing with people's  
lives? I can't believe that.

**ADRIAN**

You are getting wrong. God is not the one to blame.

**HAROLD**

Observing them dying?

**ADRIAN**

He created the life for a purpose, not for destroying  
people.

**HAROLD**

If he created life for a purpose, why end it before it  
can fulfil that purpose?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

He recognizes that he allowed the evil, but it does not  
mean he did it. Human beings need to be punished. They  
are all like children. You have to shake them a little  
before they listen to you.

**HAROLD**

Including you!

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Did you start again? I will break your neck.

**ADRIAN**

Can't you two behave like adults? I am fed up to be your  
baby all the time.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

He's corrupting you. My God! Can't you see that?

**ADRIAN**

I don't need your help. I am big enough to take care of myself.

*HAROLD opens his bag. He takes three small plastic cups and a bottle of wine. He pours wine into the cups.*

**HAROLD**

I suggest peace now. Let's forget everything for a while. Cheers!

*PASTOR MICHEL stands away from the bottle of wine.*

**ADRIAN**

Chill out! It is, after all, just a drink.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You know that God's servant does not drink alcohol.

**ADRIAN**

You are completely wrong.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Am I?

**ADRIAN**

Give me your Bible.

*PASTOR MICHEL refuses to give the Bible to ADRIAN, but ADRIAN grabs it, there is a tug of fighting, with ADRIAN. ADRIAN wins and opens it.*

**ADRIAN**

The first letter of Paul to Timothy says 'No longer drink water exclusively, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.' And you know that during a party, Jesus turned water into wine. So

what is the problem if you are Jesus' followers?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

At that time, the wine did not contain alcohol.

**ADRIAN**

Rubbish! Wine has contained alcohol since the beginning of the universe. Tell me, if the wine did not contain alcohol that time, how come people were sometimes drunk?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

In another letter of Paul to Timothy, it says 'They must not drink the alcohol.'

**ADRIAN**

Who says?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Leaders of the church.

**ADRIAN**

Can you, please, give me the chapter?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*(hesitating)*

Hmm...Hmm... I will give it to you another day.

**ADRIAN**

The chapter in reality says that 'Deacons likewise must be dignified, not addicted to too much wine.' You see, all you pastors omit that voluntarily.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

We don't.

**ADRIAN**

Yes, you do.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You misinterpret the Holy Scripture.

**ADRIAN**

Let me tell you a little story. This happened during a wedding party in the North of France. While the pastor was there, everyone one had to drink orange or apple

juice. No one could dance as the music was religious.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Stop lying Adrian.

**ADRIAN**

I am not. When the pastor left the party, it was a stream of alcohol and then the music changed rhythm. It was kind of when the cat is away, the mouse will dance. Is it not an example of the hypocrisy which occurs in most of your church? Are you sure the Almighty approves of this kind of attitude?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You are lying.

**ADRIAN**

I did not finish yet. He took off his clothes and lay on the bed. Some minutes later, the woman, her husband and some friends came in. They found him naked, they started beating him, and then they sent him out naked in the street. Some Indian people gave him some clothes. The husband took the bottle of wine and whisky to the pastor. Do you know what happened? The pastor did not even take reprehensive decision. He protected his member.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

How do you know that?

**ADRIAN**

I have my sources.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

How come I have never heard that story?

**ADRIAN**

You are a pastor. They wouldn't tell you that.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You don't need to stick with that guy in criticizing God's servant who...

**ADRIAN**

What is saying is true. You mercilessly raise poor members'

money to make yourself rich.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

That is not fair, Adrian. I am your friend. You can't accuse me like that. You are one of us.

**ADRIAN**

Well! I am not anymore.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You have to rebuke yourself.

**ADRIAN**

If I don't tell you that, no one will do it. I am helping you and at the same time giving you the opportunity to correct your vice.

*PASTOR MICHEL's mobile phone rings. He hesitates to pick then picks up.*

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Yes, I understand. It is a matter of urgency. Good fifteen minutes is good. I will see you later.

**ADRIAN**

What is the problem?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Nothing important. Just a little business.

**ADRIAN**

Are you sure you are not hiding something from me?.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I have never lied to you before, Adrian. I will not start today.

**ADRIAN**

Hope that you did not put yourself in the trouble.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Me, in the shit? No. It can't happen. I will be back. I have to bless someone in my office.

**ADRIAN**

Why are you in rush, pastor?

*Exit the PASTOR MICHEL without answering.*

**ADRIAN**

*(to himself)*

I can stake my life on it. He is not telling me the truth. I am sure that he is in trouble.

**HAROLD**

I told you the man wasn't cool. He is hiding something. I am sure he has no honest plans. He is also a womanizer.

*Suddenly the voices of PASTOR MICHEL and a WOMAN are coming off stage. The adult female is sexually moaning. ADRIAN and HAROLD become quiet.*

**VOICE OF PASTOR MICHEL**

You will see the impossibilities being made possible. Every blockage barrier has become technical for you. Everything you are looking for, you will get it. I want you to put up your hands so I can anoint you with oil so that the work of God can be confirmed today.

*ADRIAN and HAROLD at each other.*

**HAROLD**

What is happening?

**ADRIAN**

He's praying. I told you he is a man of God.

**HAROLD**

I'm going to see what's happening in there. It's too intense and spiritual for me.

*HAROLD goes to peep through the door. ADRIAN holds him back, but he escapes his grasp and gently opens the door.*

**VOICE OF PASTOR MICHEL**

Say amen in the name of Jesus.

*The voice of the woman is not heard by the audience.*

**VOICE OF PASTOR MICHEL**

I pray for you that the ticket for Dubai is coming. That man is coming. I see it coming. The ticket is coming, that man is coming. You will have everything you want.

*HAROLD sees PASTOR MICHEL having sexual intercourse with a woman. He turns to ADRIAN*

**HAROLD**

Oh my God! They're shagging.

**ADRIAN**

Can't you use another word?

**HAROLD**

What word?

**ADRIAN**

You could say they are making love.

**HAROLD**

Making love is too sweet. I can't say that. Anyway, they are not making love because he does not love her. He's just taking advantage of her. Wait a bit! I know that girl. She is the one I saw with him in the cinema. Adrian, come and look.

**ADRIAN**

Maybe he is blessing her.

**HAROLD**

You can't be serious. You have to see him in action.

*ADRIAN Looks with HAROLD.*

**HAROLD**

Do you know that girl?

**ADRIAN**

*(whispering)*

Yes, it is Bernadette. She is in the choir.

**HAROLD**

My God, Adrian. You have to quit.

While they are watching, PASTOR MICHEL comes to open the door and they go back quickly to their respective places. *PASTOR MICHEL enters with the sweat on his face. He is wiping it.*

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Oh my God! The devils who possessed this woman were really strong. In the name of God, they all left.

*ADRIAN and HAROLD look at PASTOR MICHEL without saying a word. PASTOR MICHEL looks at them too.*

**PASTOR MICHEL**

What? Why are you looking at me like that?

**ADRIAN**

You tell us.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Tell you what?

**ADRIAN**

We saw you making love to a woman.

*PASTOR MICHEL sits on the chair before ADRIAN.*

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I can't believe it's coming from you, Adrian.

**ADRIAN**

Oh! Do you prefer me to keep quiet?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Is that man is still here?

**ADRIAN**

It is not him the problem. We need to talk.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

What do you want to talk about?

**ADRIAN**

What is the mortal sin between refusing the Lord's word and committing the fornication?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Why this question?

**ADRIAN**

You know why I am asking this question.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I don't know what you are talking about.

**ADRIAN**

Come on, Pastor Michel! You know that very well.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

If you need something, I told you I am ready to help.

**ADRIAN**

I don't want anything from you, PASTOR MICHEL. I just want the truth.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I am your friend.

**ADRIAN**

You can't corrupt me. I refuse to be an accomplice. One day, all the money you receive from the church members will put you in trouble. Everything will blow up on you.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I don't do anything illegal. Second of the Corinthians chapter nine and verse six says 'But as to this, he that sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and he that bountifully will also reap bountifully'.

**ADRIAN**

Why most of you pastors are cons? They use these kind of verses to con their members. Pity for those members who give ten per cent of their salary every month!

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I don't con church members. Besides, members freely give money for the Lord.

**ADRIAN**

Does the Lord need the money? Look at you, pastor, Michel. The television channel which supposes to be for the church community belongs to you. You have a nice car bought with the church money. I also heard that you own some hotels back home. You show off yourself when you send some packs in the third world.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I do what the Lord asks me to do. What exactly is the problem?

**ADRIAN**

Have you no shame when you receive money from poor people on welfare? You oblige them to pay ten percent of their money. Let me do the calculation for you. Hundred forty-seven pounds, time ten, divide two hundred.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

It is only fourteen pounds seventy pence. So what is the problem? May I remind you that most of them have three to five children and they receive child benefit and child tax credit?

**ADRIAN**

They also give money every Sunday.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Adrian! They just give one pound.

**ADRIAN**

All these years, I thought I knew you. Tell me about the three and a half million you collected for the church complexes? I heard that you build luxury flats with that money.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Eh Adrian! It is me, pastor, Michel, your friend. I did not change.

**ADRIAN**

People should give voluntarily. And the money has to be kept in the church community account for expensive and helping members. You put it in your pocket. Look at your car, your dress and your jewels. You even have body guards. Did Jesus have body guards?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Yes, his apostles. Didn't you read that Peter cut one of the soldiers' ears?

**ADRIAN**

I also know that Jesus did not like it.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I don't approve all of the bad actions of my bodyguards. They

are there to protect me. There are lots of competitions in our world.

**ADRIAN**

You mean in the world of false church ministers?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I am not one of them. I hold a degree in the Bible High education. My ministry comes from Nazareth.

**ADRIAN**

I am sure from there you learn how to scam members, particularly women.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I am a pastor, but I need to eat, pay my rent and my expenses.

**ADRIAN**

Have you told Job that? *(Pause)* I did not think so.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Would you denounce me?

**ADRIAN**

No. You will do it by yourself.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

No way!

**ADRIAN**

Yes, way.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I will lose everything, my members, my church, my television channel.

**ADRIAN**

God will appreciate it.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

We are in the jungle, Adrian, don't you see? You have to eat people before they eat you.

**ADRIAN**

Oh my God! Harold was right. I defended you when he told me that you are not the one I was thinking you are. You are so heartless.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Are you even listening to your gay friend?

**ADRIAN**

You see. You are not even able to understand what I keep telling. Harold is not a gay. He is far better than you.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

He is an evil spirit and a womanizer.

**ADRIAN**

Are you not? After Harold saw you with a girl, I tried to find some information. The girl's name is Bernadette. Everyone knows that you go out with her. She is not the only one. Rumour says you are sleeping with more than five young women from the church. Do you know the silly thing? They started being jealous of each other.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I don't have time for gossips.

**ADRIAN**

Small talk? I wouldn't be so sure if I was you.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

They are all liars. Some members of my church want to put me down and take my place. Be sure my friend, it won't happen. I am God. I am like Moses. I transmit commandments, and they obey.

**ADRIAN**

That is what I was talking about. Everything is about you. You think you are the centre of everything. That is too bad for a man who is claiming to be a God's servant.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I am a human being, you know.

**ADRIAN**

Your church members trusted you.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Many times, I gave you the opportunity to join me, but you have never accepted.

**ADRIAN**

You know me, pastor, Michel. I am not like that. I don't have the money, but I will not do such things.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You are a very stubborn man I have ever known.

**ADRIAN**

I am not a stubborn person. I just want to be honest.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Honest people don't become rich.

**ADRIAN**

Thank you, God's servant.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Why thanks me?

**ADRIAN**

You've given me the answer I was looking for.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

What answer?

**ADRIAN**

To become rich, you have to con people. Whatever the means. Well! Being a church minister gives you the opportunity to ruin the most vulnerable. I now understand the reason why God permits bad people to get everything.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I am not a bad guy. You are wrong. I regard myself as a 'conduit of God'. I help to find their passion, to cure impotency and infertility, help them to hold an advanced career and I make them even wealthy.

**ADRIAN**

That is why you use magic to impress your members?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Come on, Adrian. Join me.

**ADRIAN**

No. All my life I always try to do the right thing and do as many good works for people as possible without needing anything in return. But it seems like no matter how much good I do, I only receive bad karma in return. Other people I know who do bad things are prospering and I am still where I was five years ago. They get a lot, because they don't care who they hurt to get it. I hope that they will receive their

punishment one day.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Maybe not in this life, but next time around, they will be born as a dew worm or some such and some guy will come along and use them as bait on a hook.

**ADRIAN**

It's a joke for you, isn't it? This is the reason, I am really starting to question myself about God and the religion.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

In the near future, everything will be fine.

**ADRIAN**

When? In the paradise? What became of the friend who had the ambition to make a great career in education? Where is this friend who was ready to help when people had problems?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I am the same person. I suggested to pay for you your booking fees so you can work with me, but you refused. You are an intelligent man, Adrian. Stop your madness. You will not change the world. The world will remain as it is.

**ADRIAN**

I am not trying to change the world, but I would like to stop people like you. Two years ago, a ten-year-old girl was sent back to Africa accused of witchcraft. I asked you if you were involved, you said you were not.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Are you investigating of me now?

**ADRIAN**

I want my friend back.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

It is too late. I can't give up on everything I worked for.

**ADRIAN**

For God's sake, you did not work hard for that. You are simply stealing money from your own members.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I thought I would take a stab from someone else, but coming from you, I am very disappointed.

**ADRIAN**

Don't reverse the situation. I am not the one you have to blame. You have to blame yourself because you chose this path. I can't understand why the religion, in general, is full of hypocrisy. People who see themselves as religious hold some values, but fail to realize what those values mean.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Do you believe you hold the monopoly of morals?

**ADRIAN**

You are the pastor. I heard talking about your judicial setbacks with your solicitor. That is strange you are hiding it to me.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Everything is fine. Why should I hide something from you?

*PASTOR MICHEL's mobile phone rings incessantly. He does not pick up.*

**ADRIAN**

Why don't you answer your phone? Any trouble my dear pastor?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

No.

*PASTOR MICHEL mobile phone rings again. He puts off the call.*

**ADRIAN**

Why can't you pick up the call? You are a pastor. You suppose to show a good and irreproachable example.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

For what are you blaming me? I serve my God every day.

**ADRIAN**

By flirting with church members? By not being tolerant? By being a hypocrite?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Why am I listening to you anyway?

**ADRIAN**

Do you really think I was born yesterday? It is true, I did

not want to believe it when I heard everything, but now my eyes are opened.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I can't get it anymore. You are becoming crazy. I will be back when you finish with your frenzy. Damn it, I already told you they are all gossips.

**ADRIAN**

Gossips, huh!

*PASTOR MICHEL mobile phone rings again. He picks up and exits.  
ADRIAN's mobile phone rings.*

**ADRIAN**

Yes, dad. I am here. Of course, yes. Something is just bothering me. Tell me something. I have been deceived by my pastor, the son of papa Leon. Do you remember him? Not only is he sleeping with church members, he is also taking advantage of the church money. I heard that he built more than two villas there. The bad thing is, he's denying everything.

*Offstage, the pastor is praying loudly.*

**ADRIAN**

I know he is human and can be weak, but he needs to give an example. I did not see him, but I heard him. Of course, not. I am not becoming an atheist. I always trust in God, but I start hating all those pastors who work for money and forget the principle of honesty. I attempted to speak to him, only he is denying all the facts. I am not quitting God, only I don't desire to be a church member anymore.

**ADRIAN**

Pastor Michel!

**ADRIAN**

Pastor Michel! I am quitting.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Pardon me?

**ADRIAN**

I am leaving.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

May I wait for you tomorrow?

**ADRIAN**

I said I quit your church. I don't want to work for you anymore.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You have no right to do this to me. You can't quit the Lord.

**ADRIAN**

I am not quitting the Lord, but your church.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Why?

**ADRIAN**

Don't do like you don't know what is happening, pastor.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

At least this son of a bitch is gone.

**ADRIAN**

Can you hear yourself what you are saying?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

He is doing everything to separate us. Can't you see that?

**ADRIAN**

No. You are doing everything to separate us. Not him. You are exactly like Gregory Ivan Hawkins, Yamata Kyoto!

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Gregory Ivan, Yamamoto. What is it all about?

**ADRIAN**

It is Yamata. No Yamamoto. They are like you. They don't respect God. They abuse their church members.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

So what? We are all human beings. We can make mistakes. We pray every day because we want to stop making mistakes, but it is not easy. Now can we change the conversation?

**ADRIAN**

Why? That is bothering you?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

We need to chat about something positive like God blessed our church. We now have three and a half million in our account.

**ADRIAN**

Is it the only thing which interests you?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Of course, not. How can you say that?

**ADRIAN**

God servants don't have to act like that. You know what, I need answers.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

God loves you, Adrian. Through the Bible, he provides enough answers. Maybe you should talk to your father. The bible says 'Everything you ask will be given to you.'

**ADRIAN**

I know God exists. My problem is why he can't stop his servants committing sexual crimes and abusing women.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Are you blaming me for something?

**ADRIAN**

Are you blaming yourself for something? You said you did not abuse that woman in your office. So what is your problem?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I don't like the way you said it.

**ADRIAN**

Why?

Enter HAROLD.

**HAROLD**

I told you. They all act weird.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

*(to HAROLD)*

Shut up. *(To ADRIAN)* I will kill you gay friend.

**HAROLD**

I heard you. I am not a gay.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

He is not a gay. I already told.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Why is he corrupting?

**HAROLD**

Is he your dad? (To the PASTOR) Remember! I am repairing your fucking laptop. Stop being weirdo.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You are fired, you fucking gay.

**ADRIAN**

I quit.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Why?

**ADRIAN**

Because you fired him.

*ADRIAN starts going towards the door. PASTOR MICHEL follows him.*

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Please, Adrian. Don't go. We can arrange it.

*ADRIAN stops and Looks at PASTOR MICHEL.*

**ADRIAN**

Arrange what?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Please for our friendship's sake sit down a bit.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I can help you to find a good job. I have good friends who can help. You will get a good salary. I need you in the church Adrian. Please, stay.

**ADRIAN**

Thank you very much for the offer, but I can't. I don't have any more time for the church. I have to concentrate on my studies.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I will pay for your studies.

**ADRIAN**

No pastor, Michel. Do you think all is about the money? Emmanuel can take my place. He's a good guy.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I just don't have any confidence in him.

**ADRIAN**

*(ironic)*

Didn't Jesus say you have to trust each other?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

He worked for me sometimes ago, but he wasn't honest. I need an honest man like you.

**ADRIAN**

What I am doing here is illegal.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

God will understand because you are doing his work. Your God has to be in the first place. *(Pause)* What I am offering you will help you in your studies. I am sure you need something.`

*PASTOR MICHEL takes money from his wallet.*

**ADRIAN**

I can't, PASTOR MICHEL.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Please Adrian!

**ADRIAN**

No, pastor.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

As you wish!

**ADRIAN**

My last advice as a friend is for you have to give up.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Give up? I already told you, I can't do that. After what I have been through by building this Church you are asking me to stop. What do you want to do after that?

**ADRIAN**

Find a proper job.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Do you want to do a kitchen porter, cleaning? Stop it Adrian.  
I can't lose all my privileges.

**ADRIAN**

Then one day you will be in trouble. And don't come to me.

*PASTOR MICHEL mobile phone rings. He checks it and goes into his office.*

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Don't go yet, please. We need to discuss.

**HAROLD**

Where is he going again? What's wrong with him? I don't understand why religious people act like witches.

**ADRIAN**

Maybe he went to check it or something else. He is so preoccupied.

**HAROLD**

Eh! This guy has a hell of a Jeep. It must have cost a fortune. Where does he get the money from?

**ADRIAN**

I don't know. Ask him.

**HAROLD**

Why do you keep saying 'ask him'?

**ADRIAN**

You are always asking me questions about him.

**HAROLD**

You said you know him better.

*Enter the PASTOR MICHEL.*

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I am in the shit. I am in the shit. I am in the shit.

*ADRIAN and HAROLD Look at each other*

**ADRIAN AND HAROLD**

How shit?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Very deep shit!

**ADRIAN**

I told you. I told you. I told you.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Stop repeating you told me. Have you ever made a mistake? You suppose to help me.

**ADRIAN**

How can I help you if you were hiding the truth from me?

**HAROLD**

What did you tell him?

**PASTOR MICHEL**

Shut up. It is not your business. You better take care of your escort business.

**HAROLD**

Who told you that? (*Looks at ADRIAN*) You. I will kill you.

**ADRIAN**

Sorry.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

My little finger! My little finger also told me, you reported me to Adrian I was with a young lady with big butt.

**HAROLD**

Ah! How do you know that? (*He looks at ADRIAN*) How?

**ADRIAN**

Sorry.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

I like my little finger.

**HAROLD**

How come your little finger didn't prevent you from being in deep shit? You know what? I'm happy you're in deep shit.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You are an evil

**HAROLD**

No I'm not, but you are.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

You are because you don't know Jesus.

**HAROLD**

Well! You can ask Jesus to help you out when you go to prison.

**PASTOR MICHEL**

God will be with me.

*Blackout, lights up. The choirs is on stage singing.*

**CURTAIN**

## Synopsis

The religious scepticism is caused by those who pretend to be religious, but do not respect the commandments of God, they claim to love and serving.

This is 'The Challenge.' The Challenge is a comedy of manner. The action takes place somewhere in the United Kingdom. The play has one single space which is a closed space and a real time between seven and nine in the evening.

Adrian as a mature student, who is completing a Master degree in philosophy and religious studies is the central character who is pulled between two people, his neighbour, Harold and his childhood and best friend, Michel who is the pastor of a New African Pentecostal Church. Movingly, the play demonstrates how it is difficult for him to decide the way to act between his long year friendship with Michel and Harold he just known for living in the same building, and the impact this matter will set up conflict within this personal relationship.

## THE AUTHOR'S NOTE

, politics ensues we have a power struggle

It gives rise to a swath of complex issues. Perennials Church faith tainted with capitalism ruining the vulnerable, taxing the poor and its pressures of the modern world. Braced in by fossilised traditions keeping quiet, showing respect, anti-homosexual stances but promiscuous exposes the hypocrisy of the African church, brave new world. Musical hybrid opera with gospel. Wit caustic. Harold the voice of temptation, trickster figure. Adrian tries hard to preserve traditional and genuine moral positions between the rock of his corrupted church and hard place of Harold, tempter extraordinaire and voice of modernity that everything is stories. Harold who swears in the name of his grandmother a stark reminder of the lost mother religions of the past. Blurred line between saints and sinners. Harold exposes the power hungry and the hypocrisy of the church, a soap box modern. Gather together in the name of the GHH gossip, hypocrisy and hatred. Drama is in the slow erosion of Adrian's faith but

is he a winner? Playful human pastor, serious Adrian. Harold is vulnerable when vesting so much in human love. Guard as God political statement that those in power hide behind God to protect themselves. Theocracy/democracy.

Childlike faith challenges the exclusivity of the Bible and Christian faith, even Adrian is duped. Tug of war between the modern and the traditional church who almost come to fisticuffs. Peace brought about by modern mass of wine in plastic cups. Pastor Michael makes up stories to conserve his power.

Attacks tithing. Ultimate challenge not to God but to its intermediaries. God the guard, God Adrian's literal father. Michel turns out to be tempter with promises of protection, money, social mobility. Reversal of fortune he who builds his faith in money, or love of women will be prey to instability, loses friendship.

### **THE DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

*The Challenge is a farcical comedy that focuses on the hypocrisy of how people use religion to fulfil their dreams/desires. Religion is manipulated to man's rather than God's will and many duped by self-proclaimed prophets in the business of religion. The reason this particular work struck a chord was because Times Live newspaper in the 16 September issue reported that 116 people had died in Lagos on September 12, "when a guest house belonging to the Synagogue Church Of All Nations in Lagos -- headed by preacher TB Joshua - collapsed". Many of these parishioners', placing their trust in those they followed, had embarked on a 'pilgrimage' to see a man they had watched on television. (<http://www.timeslive.co.za/Local/2014/11/16/74-nigerian-church-collapse-bodies-back-in-satheit>). I hope the hilarity of 'blind belief' warns of the present rise in the religious exploitation of those who suspend their logic. After all, we are created with the ability to function logically enabling us to evaluate pastors who protest the word of GOD to con people. Canned religion with growing TV audiences and rapidly growing African social media advertising - is not the answer to our social woes. I believe in the power of thought. Knowing is the first step to bringing change to our society. Finally, I would like to thank John N Tshiama, the author of this play, for generously allowing me to present this play this evening.*

Rehearsal's pictures February 2015 to April 2015 at Durban University Court Yard (South Africa)



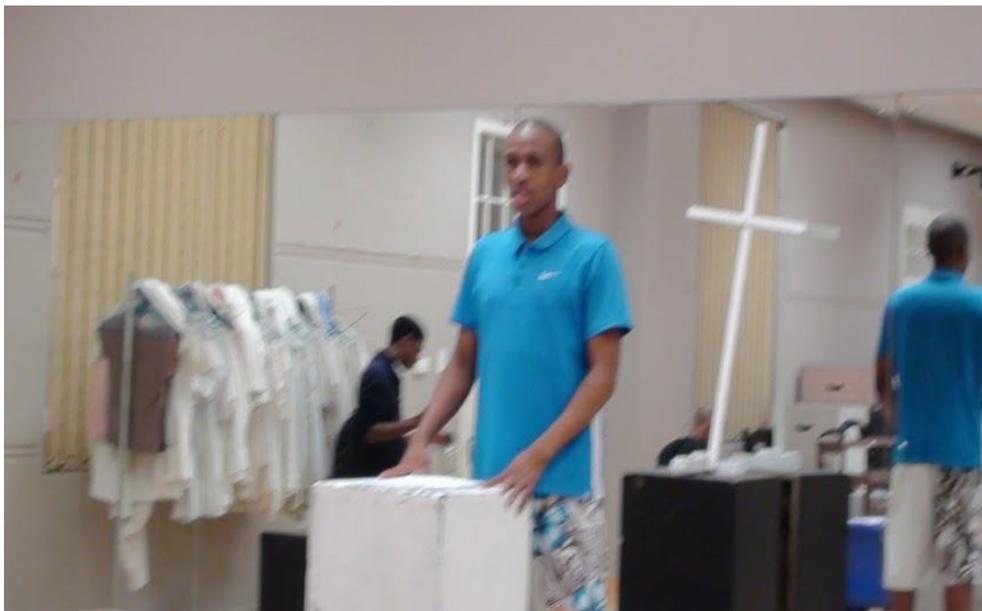
Pic 1



Pic 2



Pic 3



Pic 4

Performance's pictures on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2015, at Durban University Court Yard (South Africa) \* (Copy and paste the link below)

Image 1

[https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B229-7aUJDvhd0xuUXgwY3hqaVE/edit?usp=drive\\_web](https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B229-7aUJDvhd0xuUXgwY3hqaVE/edit?usp=drive_web)

Image 2

[https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B229-7aUJDvhYTRpcWhDZzFEUW8/edit?usp=drive\\_web](https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B229-7aUJDvhYTRpcWhDZzFEUW8/edit?usp=drive_web)

Image 3

[https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B229-7aUJDvhRHdteWs3LTNFaDg/edit?usp=drive\\_web](https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B229-7aUJDvhRHdteWs3LTNFaDg/edit?usp=drive_web)

The video extract of the play (1<sup>st</sup> part)

<https://youtu.be/TQdm14WYSFM>

## AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

*John Tshiama NAMBOMBE, Belgian citizen, born in Central Africa part. Started acting at the age of twelve before studying Drama at the National Institute of Arts. Worked as an actor and director in Kinshasa and Brussels. BA (HONS) in scriptwriting at the University Centre, Doncaster and he completed a MA in Scriptwriting for Screen Media and Stage at the University of South Wales, Newport. May 26<sup>th</sup> 2013, performed as co-lead, in a political play at the Hay-on-Wye festival.*

*Published two plays: "Red is the Royal Blood" in April 2009 and "Question of Honour and Fidelity" in May 2010.*