

GOD - THE UNTOLD STORY  
An original stage-play.  
By  
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## The Story of God - the Untold Story

In the beginning...

Many, many years ago, in the almost ancient past, in a time known as the 1970's, a father read to his son every night from a book entitled 'Bible Stories for Children'. This in itself is not especially extraordinary – millions of fathers over the centuries have read the same stories to their children. What was slightly odd was the fact that the father in question had no religious beliefs and was simply reading these Biblical tales because he believed they were 'great stories'.

The young boy (who you have probably guessed by now was me) listened to these stories with great enthusiasm and not a little confusion. To a child's sense of pedantic logic, a wrathful, jealous God punishing his followers for minor perceived transgressions seemed to be somewhat bizarre and quite frankly, often plain terrifying.

Many, many years later and I still found myself puzzling over the character of this Old Testament God and I began imagining how things must have seemed from His perspective. I began to imagine Him as a thwarted idealist, a father whose children had continually disappointed him - as an all too human figure who had suffered betrayal and frustration. I was working on a comedy sketch show called the313show and one of our recurring characters was a super cheerful chat show host called Binty O'Reilley. I would like to be able to say that the idea of having God appear as a guest on a chat show was divinely inspired, but to be honest, I can't remember how the idea originally came to me. I wrote a five-minute sketch which would eventually become the opening of the play and arranged to film it. The only problem was that the actor who was going to play God didn't show up. At the time I did not appreciate the irony of a literally absent God. I was (not entirely reluctantly) forced to don a white robe, put flour in my hair and 'play God' myself.

Out of this experience grew the idea of writing a full-length play in which God is interviewed and gives His version of the edited highlights of the Old Testament. I must confess that the idea of writing such a thing was massively daunting. I mean who did I think I was, attempting to rewrite stories that have been the foundation for so much of western culture and formed the basis for three of the world's major religions? Not only that, but I would be writing as the actual 'voice of God', which is about as presumptuous and egotistical as it is possible to be. I scribbled a few lines every now and again, but consistently delayed starting any serious writing. The subject matter just seemed too overwhelming. I also had the sneaking suspicion that by tackling the Bible I was inviting disaster. The image of the vengeful God from my childhood memory loomed all too large in my imagination. Eventually, my more rational (or foolhardy) self won out and I determined to write 'God – The Untold Story'. What's the worst that can happen? I asked myself. I was soon to find out....

Eating the Forbidden Fruit

So... I had decided to rewrite the Old Testament (arguably the most famous and revered book ever written) and retell it in the voice of God (arguably the most famous and revered 'character' ever written about.) Thinking back, it may not have been the most sensible idea

to write a comedy play with the potential to offend several billion people and also possibly seriously annoy the Ultimate Divine Being. I reassured myself that burning heretics at the stake is no longer common practice and that God (if He/she exists) has hopefully developed a sense of humour by now and would not choose to inflict a series of Biblical plagues upon me.

I am relieved to report that so far, I have yet to be stoned by an angry mob or tortured by the Spanish Inquisition (they do still exist!). However, things did get quite 'difficult' during the period I was writing 'God – The Untold Story'. At the risk of sounding overly melodramatic, some of the highlights of my fall from grace included; losing my sight for a week, near organ failure and a phone call from my GP in which I was told 'No need to worry but you might have a brain tumour.'" In other noteworthy incidents I was forced to close down my production company, my father was made temporarily homeless due to the incompetence and indifference of the property company and lawyers I had instructed to sell his house, and I found myself in the unfortunate position for the first time in my life of not being able to pay the bills. There were numerous other mini-disasters, major betrayals and slight calamities, but I will save those stories for another time.

Despite being defiantly un-superstitious, I did begin to feel that maybe, just maybe I was a little bit cursed in an almost Biblical sense. Fortunately, I never had to suffer an eruption of painful boils or a plague of locusts (so far).

On the plus side, the unfortunate situations I found myself in did allow me to very much focus on my writing and also allowed me to understand 'God' as a character who has fallen on hard times; forgotten and abandoned by His followers and lost in a universe which no longer made sense. I began to perceive God as a somewhat tragic figure, raging in Lear like despair, struggling to be understood by those closest to him and determined to once again become relevant and to resume control of His own destiny.

God needed to stage a comeback and I needed to write a comedy stage play about it...

Jason

London, 2018

Act I

SCENE 1 - [THE STUDIO]

A cosy sofa in a TV studio for daytime TV show 'Top o' the Mornin' with super smiley host, Binty O'Reilly. Binty beams at the audience.

BINTY

Thanks to Deidre for those top tips on getting your muffins nice and moist, and now we have a very special guest on today's 'Top o' the Mornin', ladies and gentlemen please give an extra warm welcome to God.

Enter God. He gives Binty an awkward kiss and sits next to her.

BINTY (CONT'D)

Top o' the mornin' to you, God.

GOD

Top o' the mornin' to you Binty, it's really great to be here.

BINTY

So, God, we haven't really seen much of you lately, what have you been up to?

GOD

Well, taking it a bit easy for a change, really. Been on quite a few sightseeing trips, done a bit of decorating, and my wife and I have really gotten into gardening recently.

BINTY

You're married? We never knew.

GOD

Yes, well we wanted it to be quite a low-key affair. Cleo didn't really want to make a big fuss.

BINTY

Cleo?

GOD

Yes, Cleopatra. A few people said she was far too young for me, but she is history's hottest hottie so I snapped her up as quickly as I could.

BINTY

Wow. So, God. What made you decide to come back after all this time?

GOD

Dawkins.

BINTY

Excuse me?

GOD

Richard Dawkins. I've had enough of the smug twat.

BINTY

The famous scientist?

GOD

(getting worked up) Yes, the self-proclaimed genius of a scientist. I've met real scientific geniuses - Archimedes, Galileo, Tesla. Now, they were proper scientists. This Dawkins he writes a couple of books ripping off a few of Darwin's ideas and then everyone thinks he's so special.

BINTY

But, didn't the theory of evolution prove that we didn't need a God?

GOD

(furious) Who do you think created evolution? Do you have any idea how much time and effort went into that? And then Dawkins flounces along and writes *The God Delusion*. Am I just supposed to sit back and take that kind of abuse? How would you like it if some idiot said they could scientifically prove you didn't exist?

BINTY

I wouldn't like it at all. So, what are you going to do to him? A couple of plagues perhaps?

GOD

(calming down) No, Cleo won't let me do that sort of thing anymore - says it's gets me too excited. Though I did give Dawkins bad breath and dandruff, and... haemorrhoids just as a warning shot, but would he take the hint? No, just goes and sets off the Foundation for Reason and Science to wind me up a bit more. (full rage) Well, I'm not taking it anymore, you hear me Dawkins? I'm going to get seriously Biblical on your ass, you hear me? Proper Old Testament style. You think I'm not real - we'll see how real my fist is when it lands on the side of your face. You want a piece of me? Well, here I am. I'm taking you down, Dawkins. Anytime, anyplace!

BINTY

Um, God?

GOD

Yes?

BINTY

You do seem to have a couple of teeny-weeny anger issues?

GOD

Yes, I know. I'm sorry. It's something I've been working on recently. It's also another reason I have decided to return.

BINTY

Please tell us more.

GOD

Well, Binty, I've noticed that since my retirement rather a lot of people have been literally taking my name in vain, so I decided it was time I set the record straight and gave my version of events.

BINTY

So, you're saying the Bible isn't completely, well the Gospel truth?

GOD

Well most of it's true, but it's not the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

BINTY

So, what is the truth?

GOD

The truth is the story I am about to tell you and it is the greatest story ever told. Yes, greater even than Lord of the Rings, though hopefully a bit shorter.

BINTY

Just a moment, are you saying that God has watched the Lord of the Rings trilogy?

GOD

Yes. The twelve-disc boxset, extended edition. I've also read all the books, including the Silmarillion which everyone else seems to have forgotten about it. Probably doesn't have enough Hobbits in it.

BINTY

So, you were going to tell us the true story of your life?

GOD

Yes, Cleo thought telling my story might help me deal with a few of my issues. He believes the process may prove cathartic. I say 'my story' but really it is the story of us all...

God stands and dramatically exclaims.

GOD (CONT'D)

In the beginning was the Word...

God pauses. There is an awkward silence.

BINTY

Which was?

GOD

Sorry?

BINTY

The word was 'sorry'?

GOD

What word?

BINTY

Sorry.

GOD

For what?

BINTY

You said in the beginning the word was 'sorry'.

GOD

Yes, I see the confusion. Shall we start again? In the beginning was the word and the word was... (sits down) to be completely honest I can't actually remember what the Word was. It was a really, really long time ago, and I wrote it down somewhere and now I can't find the piece of papyrus I wrote it on.

BINTY

Maybe if you try not to think about it, it will just come to you?

GOD

Possibly. Anyway, before the beginning I was alone in the endless darkness for a very, very long time - even though time didn't not yet exist.

BINTY

Didn't that get rather lonely?

GOD

Incredibly lonely, though at the time I had no conception of loneliness as there was nothing to compare it to. I wasn't lonely simply because there was no such thing as not being lonely.

BINTY

It sounds a little bit metaphysical.

GOD

Yes, I suppose, but when you are alone for so long you start to think that way.

BINTY

How long are we talking about exactly?

GOD

Well, if you can imagine infinity times eternity, doubled, you might get some kind of idea.

BINTY

And then you created the Universe in six days. That must have been a very busy week, no wonder you needed a rest on Sunday.

GOD

Yes, I had to create Sunday, just so I could get a bit of a breather. Creating the Universe is a very strenuous and difficult business - one small mistake and you have to start the whole thing from scratch. There were quite a few universes that I had to discard.

BINTY

Really, what did you do with them?

GOD

They are in what I like to call my 'cosmic shed' It's always useful just in case I need any spare parts.

BINTY

And then you created Man on the following Monday morning?

GOD

Yes, and that's where all the trouble started.

SCENE 2 - [THE GARDEN OF EDEN]

Herald enters and unfolds a papyrus scroll.

HERALD

And thus the Lord God, made Eden which was a really nice garden, but then He realised all the gardening was taking up too much of His leisure time, so He created Adam out of the dust to mow the lawn and water the plants and also because He was quite lonely and liked having someone to talk to...

Exit Herald.

God gives Adam a tour of the Garden.

GOD

Adam, this is the Garden of Eden

ADAM

What's that?

GOD

That's called grass.

ADAM

Can I eat it?

GOD

No.

ADAM

Why not?

GOD

It just isn't very nice.

ADAM

What's that called?

GOD

That's the sky.

ADAM  
Can I eat it?

GOD  
No.

ADAM  
Why not?

GOD  
It's the sky. You just can't.

ADAM  
What's that?

GOD  
It's my apple, and no you can't eat it.

ADAM  
Why not?

GOD  
Because if you eat it you will die. Do you understand?

ADAM  
What are those two things?

GOD  
They are birds.

ADAM  
What are they doing?

GOD  
Um, they're just being friendly.

ADAM  
And are those two things just being friendly?

GOD  
The bees? Yes.

ADAM  
Why are they being friendly?

GOD  
This is getting a bit awkward. Well, when a male bird or bee sees a female he likes, he puts his...

ADAM  
A female? Can I have one?

GOD

Are you sure you really want one?

ADAM

I want one. I want one. I want one.

GOD

Give me an hour.

ADAM

What's an hour?

God plucks out one of Adam's ribs. Adam yelps in pain.

GOD

Don't worry, you've still got plenty of ribs left.

ADAM

What's a...?

Exit God.

Enter Herald.

HERALD

And so God created Eve, the first woman from Adam's rib, or so He claims - not quite sure how you can make a whole person out of one small rib, or why you would need a rib anyway if you had already made someone out of clay - the whole thing seems a bit odd if you ask me.

Exit Herald.

God reappears with a Bearded Woman.

GOD

So, what do you think? Beautiful, isn't she?

ADAM

I'm not sure I like the stuff around her face.

GOD

The beard? Really? Well, all the other female animals have them.

ADAM

I know... but...

GOD

Okay, okay. Give me a minute.

ADAM

What's a minute?

Exit God.

God returns with Eve. Adam is impressed. Points at Eve's breasts.

ADAM (CONT'D)

What are they?

GOD

Those are breasts. I had a bit of extra clay, so I put them on. I can get rid of them.

ADAM

(quickly)No, they're fine. I wouldn't want you to go to any breasts - I mean trouble.

SCENE 3 -[THE GARDEN OF EDEN]

Enter Herald.

HERALD

So, Adam and Eve lived happily ever after ... only joking, things eventually went pear shaped - or should that be apple shaped?

Exit Herald.

Enter Adam and Eve.

Eve tempts Adam with an apple.

ADAM

Eve, are you sure this is a good idea? I mean, we're onto a pretty good thing here.

EVE

Go on, have a bite. It's really tasty.

Adam eats the apple.

ADAM

Yeah, you're right, it's pretty good.

EVE

You could have saved me a bit. That was the only one.

Sound of cheerful whistling.

God strolls up to Adam and Eve.

GOD

Hello, you two. So, how's life in paradise today?

ADAM

Can't complain. Can't complain.

EVE

Yes, this place really is paradise.

GOD

Glad you like it. Still got some work to do on it. Thinking of putting in some more garden features - maybe a couple of trellises?

ADAM

That would be nice.

GOD

Well, I'm just heading over to the orchard. I'll see you later.

God saunters off.

ADAM

He seems in a very good mood today.

GOD (O.S.)

Where's my apple!!!?

ADAM

Uh oh!

God returns in a rage.

EVE

Hello, again.

GOD

Did you take my apple?

EVE

What's an ap-ple?

GOD

Don't play all innocent with me. That red fruit I told you not to touch.

ADAM

Oh, so that's what an apple is? Yes, I'm afraid we ate it.

GOD

I knew it! I was looking forward to eating that myself. Do you know how annoying that is?

EVE

It was only an apple.

GOD

Yes, but it was my apple and you took it.

ADAM

It was Eve's idea. She insisted.

EVE  
Adam!

GOD  
Is this true?

EVE  
Not exactly, a snake told me to do it.

GOD  
A snake told you to do it? You expect me to believe that? And how exactly did it communicate this idea to you?

EVE  
It spoke to me.

GOD  
So, it was a talking snake?

EVE  
Yes.

GOD  
Well, that's all right. If a talking snake said you could eat my apple.

ADAM  
We said we're sorry. Isn't there any other fruit in the orchard you could have?

GOD  
The only fruit that is left is figs. Do you know how much I hate figs?

EVE  
They're not that bad.

GOD  
Not that bad? They're awful, and you know what - if you're so fond of figs let's see how much you like wearing fig leaves?

EVE  
What?

GOD  
That's right, from now on the two of you are going to be wearing fig leaves.

(thunder & lights)

ADAM  
But, they're really itchy.

GOD

Exactly! Now get out of my garden.

ADAM

You're serious?

GOD

I'm God. Of course, I'm serious.