

SATAN'S VICTORY

By

QASIM ANSARI

CHARACTERS

The Archangel Gabriel
Satan / Lucifer

**(For the reader, a / indicates overlapping dialogue, a _ is an interruption)*

Int. Pub

The stage is an empty pub, very similar to a traditional English drinking tavern. It has a pool table in the middle along with a dartboard on the left wall. The lights have not come on yet.

A man enters the dark pub. He is wearing a dark suit and has a glass of a single malt scotch in his left hand. He makes his way to a lonely seat by the dartboard.

As he does so, there is the sound of a judge's hammer crashing down three times. We then hear the sounds of a Jewish wedding ceremony, a Christian hymn and then finally an Islamic call to prayer all spliced together in one continuous stream. They are drowned out by the sounds of people screaming and then of guns firing and bombs exploding. A baby's cries are the final sound. It begins to die down to leave us in silence for a few moments.

The lights begin to slowly give life to the set to reveal the man sitting by the dartboard facing us. He is SATAN, a young man dressed in a crisp black suit; he has slick black hair and is clean shaven. He begins to talk to us.

Satan So heavenly; nothing quite like a single malt. I have been told that the best way to enjoy it is by putting one ice cube, just one. Apparently it helps to release the dormant flavours; any more would simply dilute it. And when you drink it, it must be slowly; swash it a little in your mouth and then swallow. If only life was this easy to enjoy. Sadly unlike a scotch it seldom gets better with age.

Pause. He takes a few sips of his drink.

Please excuse my manners, I have not introduced myself. I am Satan. Some of you might know me as Lucifer but that is my old name. Satan is who I am now. It means 'The Opposer'. And that is what I have become. I opposed the creation of Adam and Eve along with their gift of free will. The Bible claims that I corrupted them but that is not true; they chose to be corrupted. All the evil in the world is blamed on me and all the goodness is God's doing; what a load of bollocks! The truth is that there is no good or evil in the human world, only intentions. And you are masters of your own destiny; you decide what path this world takes. I knew it would be hard, heck, I warned God about this but would he listen? No, no, no, NO! He wouldn't be God then would he? I mean don't you people ever get sick and tired of his silence? I'm sure some of you pray quite religiously, maybe a few of you

even say a word to me ever now and again, but do you ever get an answer? Think about that next time you pray. Because the truth is, **you** are in control of this world. God has been silent for centuries. He has left you in charge. All he and I can do is watch. Well, sometimes I do more than just watch!

A second person enters the pub from the right. She is, a young woman dressed in a crisp beige suit; her hair is well groomed well kept. She is the ARCHANGEL GABRIEL. Satan continues to enjoy his single malt, his back to Gabriel who walks slowly towards him.

Satan Always makes me laugh how you Angels never have a drink. It's hardly a sin really. But then of course I forget what it's like not to need a drink, or a piss or a shag. Does it not ever bother you? Haven't you ever wanted to make love?

Gabriel What you speak of are human functions Lucifer; how can I envy that which I do not understand, desire or require? I may look female but am neither a man nor a woman.

Satan rises from his chair and turns to face Gabriel, drink still in hand.

Satan Shame really, you are seriously missing out. Gosh, you look gorgeous. Here on Earth you would definitely get plenty of attention. I might throw a pass at you myself. Cheers!

He downs the whisky and places the glass on a nearby table.

Gabriel You call me to a pub knowing full well that I cannot have a drink and then talk about sex. How very comical, you must be pleased with yourself.

Satan Easy there woman; I did not choose this location to mock your limitations. I just thought that you might like the idea of meeting somewhere less like home. And I wanted to see you.

Gabriel You have certainly grown accustomed to the ways of mankind. You use their language and indulge in their sinful / acts

Satan Sinful acts? Come now Gabriel, they are only sins depending on interpretation. To be more specific, HIS interpretation of the world_

Gabriel I know no other way_

Satan Of course you don't. You never bothered to open your mind to the possibilities I offered you.

Gabriel You were once one of us Lucifer_

Satan Yes, one of you: serving the Lord for an eternity, forever in his service without question; like a butler under the employment of a wealthy billionaire with too much time on his hands. Reminds me of that comic book character, what's his name, Alfred from Batman. That's all you are Gabriel: a rich man's servant.

Gabriel Why did you summon me here?

Satan Two reasons, firstly I wanted to discuss a proposition. Secondly, today marks exactly 25,000 years since Adam and Eve were cast out of Heaven.

Gabriel Please don't remind me, makes me feel so old. But a game of pool would be appropriate to mark this occasion.

Satan Excellent.

They both move towards the pool table. Satan takes out a fifty pence piece from his pocket.

Satan *(Holding the coin up to Gabriel)* Ah! Good old capitalism. Now that was something even I never foresaw for mankind. That was the work of the Knights Templar, a very noble bunch those guys. You call it, heads or tails.

Gabriel Heads.

Satan tosses the coin into the air, catches it and flips it over.

Satan Tails. I think I will break. By the way, your backside is looking rather splendid these days. Have you been working out?

Gabriel Please grow up.

Satan places the coin into the slot and collects all the balls and places them into the triangle. Arranging them into the necessary formation he removes the triangle and takes aim with his cue. He breaks.

Gabriel 25,000 years; it flowed by faster than I could ever imagine. Eternal life is something I seldom regret being given. These poor souls barely have any time on Earth.

Satan Yes indeed. Mortality is one of the banes of their existence. None of these humans last long enough to make a decisive change.

Gabriel You seem angry Lucifer.

Satan Not angry, just frustrated.

Gabriel Don't you feel happy with your status as the greatest rebel? None of the Angels would dare do what you have done; stand up and fight our Creator, prove to him that free will is flawed. Many consider you a hero.

Satan Many more think of me as an insane revolutionary. To be honest, for a long time after the day Adam and Eve were exiled from Heaven I was continuously baffled by their fate.

Gabriel Ah yes: the world of mankind to be governed by free will and to be subject to their own vision?

Satan It did certainly sound glamorous at the time. But then there were the restrictions.

Gabriel Ah yes, the pre-conditions of their rule. Here we go again!

Satan They may have been given this world but the restrictions imposed on them were rather harsh. Mankind was to be mortal, their lifespan governed by various factors of / nature

Gabriel A price they paid because of sin.

Satan God can try and use that sin card all he wants but that is no reason to impose restrictions on the entire human race. He did it to mock them, to hamper their ability to rule.

Gabriel You thought their way was better so he gave them the chance to prove it. Killing a rebel like you would hardly fit HIS character. He wanted to prove that HIS way would prevail; that HE was a better ruler than mankind.

Satan I have proven that most of them will more easily chose a sin over a good deed and that free will is the most dangerous gift God could have ever given them. It that way I have succeeded.

Gabriel They have made some progress, quite commendable actually.

Satan Yes, through science they have tried to tackle the problems of mortality. Life spans have increased triple fold in the developed world during the last century. And the introduction of money has overall been successful in giving them something to strive for. But the one thing that infuriates me is religion. All spiritual books are the entitlement solely of mankind? That was not fair. All it has done is fuel their desire for control and power.

Gabriel Surely you could bypass such things?

Satan Come now Gabriel, don't be so pathetically idealistic. Bypassing the Torah was hard enough. And then they bring the Jesus story to disrupt things further. The Bible emphasises this 'Divine Plan' of God to sway humans away from sin. Promising them that heaven shall return, making them pin their hopes on worshipping God and Jesus when all they are doing is giving money to the Church. It is all such a lie. And then there was your little stunt with Muhammad.

Gabriel I was curious to see what affect it would have; the Christians were losing their way and the Jews were being so close-minded.

Satan So you add a spanner to the works! Bringing Islam into this world was a big mistake. It has further divided it. And did it not bother you that God did nothing to stop you from intervening?

Gabriel It is not God's fault that Jews, Christians and Muslims cannot see past their differences and embrace what they have in common. The Christians even went further by trying to rewrite the Bible after the first draft proved outdated.

She misses the black. Satan takes aim for the black but pauses.

Satan Telling three different sects of people that THEIR way is the right one is hardly helping matters. And let's not forget the Hindus, Buddhists and Sikhs not to mention all the other faiths. Humans love to fight over such silly differences.

Gabriel A symptom of free will_

Satan But Gabriel can't you see that God is making fun of all of us with this free will malarkey? He sits their in silence whilst mankind plays this dangerous game of deception. Christians, Muslims, Jews; all of them claim to hold the truth; all of them are equally stubborn in maintaining their beliefs. Does God really have a plan other than to see this world destroyed?

Gabriel The worlds demise must happen at some point. I can't imagine this all going on forever.

Satan But human beings are capable of so much more. If only they united together, saw past all these pathetic differences, they could rule the stars; they could become like us.

Gabriel I can already guess what your proposition is.

Satan I want to make my own intervention. I want to tell these people the truth of their own manipulation. I want them to realise that God is silent and that they hold the key to their own destiny. I want them to know why he gave them free will.

Gabriel I strongly advise you to_

Satan And I want you to join me Gabriel. You and I both know that all God wants now is for this world to end. Countless millennia have been plagued by mankind's darkness. These people were offered a chance to be governed by themselves through politics, economics and science. And they have mutated it with religion. Now religion has become the reason why so many have died.

Both of them now only have the black ball to pot.

Gabriel Religion has been surpassed by economics as the number one reason these humans kill one another. Do not try to deny it. Greed has left them all blind.

Satan stops playing pool for a moment and looks up at Gabriel.

Satan I am making plans to intervene with or without you.

Gabriel That could mean war between Heaven and Hell.

Satan Humans talk about the end of the world in their books; perhaps it is their dark desire. Maybe that was HIS plan all along. I hate his silence. I wish he would explain himself.

Satan has forgotten about the pool game and gets back to taking aim for the black.

Gabriel Do you ever miss HIM?

Satan Not really. I certainly don't miss being an Angel nor do I miss being one of his butlers. I don't really miss heaven either; the idea of perfection just gets makes me vomit these days.

Pause.

There is one thing I do miss.

He takes aim for the black.

You...

He pots the black.

That is the one thing I feel I lost in all of this. You chose HIM over US. Sometimes it is hard for me to understand why because I know that deep down you also question HIS actions. You wouldn't have spoken to Muhammad otherwise. You

wanted to see if God would finally break his silence. And he didn't, he let you do it. All he wants now is for mankind to perish.

Satan looks away, almost about to cry.

Gabriel Lucifer...

Pause.

Gabriel moves towards Satan and puts her hand on his shoulder.

Gabriel I miss you so much sometimes. But understand that I cannot forsake my loyalty to God. I owe him my existence. He started this thing and he intends to finish it some day.

Satan He is not worth waiting around for anymore. Does it not trouble you that he remains silent? Do you even think he is still around?

Gabriel I don't know Lucifer. All I can do is hope and pray.

Gabriel makes her way to the door. She turns to face us and speaks:

That is all we can do; hope and pray that one day God will speak to us once again and tell us what his plan is. He gave humans the world, they gave the world religion. All we can do is watch and wait.

Gabriel leaves the pub. Satan looks down and starts to weep.