

# THE MARXIST IN HEAVEN

A play for Theatre  
By Hattie Naylor

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I would like to dedicate this play to: the unknown female aged 23 who committed suicide by throwing herself off a Foxconn building in Shenzhen, China in 2013, to Víctor Hugo Daza who died at 17 when he was shot whilst demonstrating against the privatization of the city's water supply in Cochabamba, Bolivia, (2000) and for the 117 piece workers who died in the fire in Dhaka, Bangladesh at a fast-fashion factory in 2012.

I would also like to dedicate this play to Brett Davies for the inspiration with a little help from Woodie Guthrie and Joe Hill, and all Union reps around the world who continue to fight the good fight.

## **CAST**

*This is a **non-genre specific**, non-racially specific, non-people with and without disability specific play, i.e. any part can be played by any person of any orientation, genre, and with disability etc. This applies to all roles including the Angels and God. Disability is present in Heaven where the play is set, and its representation is to be encouraged within casting. All names including Valerie are male or female. Heaven is inclusive. Bob is likewise a male or female role. Occasionally the direction refers to she or he but this is only for grammatical reasons. The Angels are **not** dressed as Angels, **UNTIL** the finale, allowing for a fabulous visual treat at the end of the play. ‘...’ denotes an interruption which should begin at least two words before the dots in the previous line. The musical tracks, their length, where they begin, are specific and carefully chosen and are very much part of the play and are not to be deviated from. The **MULTITUDE** refers to any character that is not an Angel or God, and can include infinite and additional cast members with non-speaking parts.*

## **CAST**

**VALERIE**  
**BOB**  
**NANAEL**  
**HOFNIEL**  
**MURIEL**  
**MICHAEL**  
**RIVER**  
**FARA**  
**BAILEY**  
**AYO**  
**CHEN**

**CHANDRA**  
**KEANU**  
**JADE**  
**UMUT**  
**RAZ**  
**XU**  
**DAZA**  
**MIGHTY METATRON**  
**GOD**

## Scene 1

*VALERIE is TERRIFIED and in panic. NANAEL is seated and is reading 'Hello' magazine and barely looks up. NANAEL is used to this panic and is very bored.*

VALERIE           What? Where? This? What?  
                      How? Where? Where? Where!!!?

*NANAEL without looking up nonchalantly turns a page.*

                      So I was on my bike.  
                      On my bike, cycling. Yeah. I was cycling.  
                      And then. And then.

*NANAEL continues to read.*

                      It goes black.  
                      And then I'm here. I'm here.  
                      With, with. You. Whoever you are.  
                      Do I know you?

*NANAEL looks up, thinks about the question, and then answers.*

NANAEL:           No.

*And goes back to the magazine.*

VALERIE           O.k. *(with mounting panic)*  
                      So, I'm on my bike. I'm cycling along.  
                      And, and. And then I'm. I'm.

NANAEL:           Dead?

VALERIE           I'm cycling along. It goes black. And then. I'm.

NANAEL:           Dead.

VALERIE:           I'm cycling and then I'm..

*NANAEL makes a hand gesture across the throat to suggest 'dead'. VALERIE takes this in and continues.*

VALERIE            *(with anger)* I'm cycling along. It's a great day, the sun's out and everything is great apart from the political system we live in. And then. And. Then I'm.

*NANAEL makes a more grotesque version of someone dying.*

That's not possible.

NANAEL: *(Indifferent)* If you say so.

*NANAEL goes back to reading.*

VALERIE            I can't be can I, because I'm here.

NANAEL: *(Reading magazine)* You got me there.

VALERIE            Yeah, here talking to you.

NANAEL:            Right?

VALERIE:            Talking to you. *(Pause. On the edge of tears. Valerie has just died!)*  
So, I'm on my bike, I'm on my bike!!!

*Silence. Valerie unable to continue.*

NANAEL: *(Not looking up)* Yeah it's a bit tough.

VALERIE:            What is?

NANAEL:            Dying?

*Beat.*

VALERIE:            I was on my bike! I was on it! And then.

*Silence. Valerie looks towards Nanael in hope of help/guidance/sympathy even.*

NANAEL:            This isn't really my job.

VALERIE            You're reading Hello magazine.

NANAEL:            I mean *this* isn't.

VALERIE: This?

NANAEL: I'm covering.

VALERIE For who?

NANAEL: Well they're late.

VALERIE: I can't be here, this isn't here or real because I'm a Marxist you see and here, if I'm dead, and I'm only saying 'if', because obviously, I'm not because I'm here talking to you, 'if', well here, doesn't exist because there is no after-life, heaven or hell and I know this, I KNOW this because I'm a Marxist and we are atheists and don't believe in guff.

NANAEL: *(groaning)* Oh. What was that word you just said?

VALERIE: Heaven?

NANAEL: *(sighing)* No a word after that?

VALERIE: Hell?

NANAEL: *(sighing)* No.

VALERIE: Guff.

NANAEL: No.

VALERIE: Marxist?

NANAEL: Yeah, that one.

*Nanael gets up.*

I don't know how you got in.  
I better go and tell him.

VALERIE: Him?

NANAEL: Her then?

VALERIE: Him or her?

NANAEL: Doesn't matter here does it, him, her, it's all the same.

VALERIE: And who is him, her?

*Nanael ignoring Valerie.*

NANAEL: Where is your..

*BOB explodes onto the stage, rushing on.*

BOB: Guide! Sorry, so sorry, I was just finishing a blow dry.

*BOB bows to NANAEL. NANAEL barely acknowledges him, and exits.*

*(whispered/ mouthed) Sorry.*

VALERIE A guide?

BOB: Yes everyone has one. But you can call me Bob.

VALERIE Right. *(referring to NANAEL)* And who was that?

BOB: Nanael.

VALERIE Nanael?

BOB: They're a Principality.

VALERIE: What's that?

BOB: Or maybe a higher tier, they might have been promoted.

VALERIE: But what is a Principality?

*BOB makes the BSL sign for 'halo'.*

VALERIE: Is that the international sign for halo?

BOB: Lower Order.

VALERIE: Lower Order?

BOB: Lower Order in The Great Angelic Order. It's in tiers.

VALERIE: What?

BOB: Principalities and Archangels are at the bottom with Angels. Then it goes to the second tier which is Virtues, Powers, and Dominions and then above that is your Thrones, and of course your Cherubim and then Seraphim at the top.  
*(new thought)* If you can get chosen...

VALERIE: Chosen.

BOB: Yeah if you're like well good, you can be chosen. Sometimes, if you're like really, really good, you don't have to go in at the bottom, you can go like straight in at the top.

VALERIE: Right.

BOB: I'm hoping to get chosen one day.

*BOB repeats the BSL sign and then points to himself and smiles.*

VALERIE: *(Incredulous)* As an Angel.

BOB: Yeah. You can help me if you like.

VALERIE: How?

BOB: There's a feedback form.

VALERIE: Ok. *(Beat)* I get you, I get you. Who put you up to it?

BOB: No one.

VALERIE: Was it our new union rep?

BOB: No. *(Beat.)* What sort of conditioner do you use? Your hair looks very limp.

VALERIE: What?

BOB: So, Valerie. It's a nice name.

VALERIE: Who told you my name?

BOB: They told me.

*Repeats the BSL for halo. Beat.*

VALERIE: So, I was on my bike and.

*FX loud disco – the introduction to ‘SEPTEMBER’ by Earth, Wind, and Fire. All cast members enter (apart from Angels and God) and dance with exuberance. The music is too loud to hear any dialogue but BOB clearly shouts at VALERIE to dance. VALERIE awkwardly begins to dance towards the end. The music lasts for **exactly 30 secs** and then abruptly (with no fade!) ends. All the cast slowly exit, smiling as they do so and chatting.*

VALERIE: What was that?

BOB: Thirty second disco. We love it.

VALERIE: Who’s we?

BOB: *(announcing)* ‘The Great Multitude of Heaven’. Keeps the world spinning.

VALERIE: What!?

BOB: The world rotating.

*Beat. Valerie is on the edge of tears again, confused and afraid.*

VALERIE: I’m finding this all just really upsetting now.

*Valerie is on the edge of tears again, confused and afraid.*

BOB: *(Beat)* Come on, it’ll get better. It’s your induction next.

VALERIE: My what?

BOB: Your induction, you’ll feel better after that. Really its very wonderful here, just a bit confusing at first.

VALERIE: *(overwhelmingly sad and confused)* I was on my bike.

BOB: (*gently*) We're you.

VALERIE: I was going to join a picket line.

BOB: Come on.

VALERIE: At an Amazon fulfilment centre. I think I hit a tree.

BOB: I know.

VALERIE: You do?

BOB: Of course. (*BOB takes Valerie's hand and leads VALERIE off looking at Valerie's hair.*)  
What conditioner did you say you use?

VALERIE: (*very sad*) I didn't.

BOB: Are you from the no conditioner school of hair washing?  
Brave. Maybe a little too brave. It's very dry.

*An Angel (NB not in their kit) enters carrying a tray of sandwiches.*

BOB: Have you ever thought of using Argan oil?

VALERIE: No, what's that.

BOB: It's for dry hair.

*VALERIE refuses a sandwich. BOB takes one and eats. Angel exits.*

BOB: The hospitality in Heaven is always excellent. Though  
there's usually crisps. Mmhmm. These are delicious.  
'Heavenly.' Cheese! Not hungry?

VALERIE: There wasn't a vegan option..

BOB: Cheeeeseee!!

VALERIE: Cheese isn't vegan.

BOB: It is in Heaven. Everything's vegan in Heaven. I love cheese.

*HOFNIEL enters looking at his smartphone, He is listening to music (which we never hear) through headphones. BOB does the BSL sign for halo, and bows, encouraging VALERIE who also awkwardly bows. HOFNIEL does not notice.*

VALERIE:           Who's this?

BOB:               Hofniel. He's an

*Bob makes the BSL sign for halo and mouths 'Angel'. Hofniel takes his headphones off and hands them to Bob.*

HOFNIEL:         So fam.

*Bob puts the headphones on and nods his head in time with the music.*

                      What's app?

VALERIE:         I was on my bike..

HOFNIEL:         Shoot, bruv. You say it how it is.

*Bob takes the headphones out and hands them back to Hofniel.*

BOB: *(referring to music through headphones)* Excellent.

*Hofniel goes back to looking at the phone, searching for another track.*

VALERIE:         Is this a trick?

HOFNIEL: *(not looking up)* Awesome.

VALERIE:         Did someone put you up to it?  
                      It's our new union rep isn't it? She looks like a joker.

HOFNIEL: *(not looking up or listening)* Sure thing. Yeah. Yeah. I get you fam.

*Hofniel puts the headphones on and holds up a hand to silence Valerie. We wait till Hofniel's head is bobbing up and down, then they take the headphones out and hand them to Bob. Bob takes them and listens.*

VALERIE:         I knew it. Where is she? Ok. The games up.  
                      You can come out now.

HOFNIEL: *(still not listening)* Sure thing, I'm down there with you bruv.

VALERIE: Down where?

HOFNIEL: Viva da Revolutionary.

VALERIE: What?

BOB: *(referring to music through headphones)* Excellent.

HOFNIEL: *(agreeing)* Pounding watts. *(looking for another track on his phone)*  
You're trocking, fam.

VALERIE: Trocking? Fam?

HOFNIEL: *(not looking up or listening)* Sure thing. Yeah. Yeah. I get you.

VALERIE: Do all Angels talk like this?

HOFNIEL: Picked it up from the kids din I? Like I'm down with them.

VALERIE: It doesn't sound patronizing?

HOFNIEL: Cool it bruv. Allow it. You're the man, woman. Whatever.

VALERIE: I am *(whatever sex they are)* a man/a woman!

HOFNIEL: It's no fuss here fam. You need to relax.

BOB: Yeah relax.

VALERIE: I AM RELAXED! *(Pause, takes a breath)*  
So, if, let's suppose, if, this is Heaven.

HOFNIEL: The peak.

VALERIE: 'The peak'. Why am I here then?

HOFNIEL: Coz you're trocking's well sick...

VALERIE: If this isn't a trick.