

Title: *'The Actor'*

Writer: JC Zondi

Log line: You win again

One Paragrapher: Our worse enemies are ourselves

Statement of intent: At home my mother sells booze (liquor); At times I find myself watching these people who drink daily, every day and I wonder what is going on in their minds? These men, they wake every day at 5 am in the morning to drink their lives away until 9pm and repeat the cycle, every day. Their stories vary, some emotional, some political, physical and even psychological. Based on these narratives, I thought why not create a play, a perspective of these men who swim in alcohol.

Synopsis

Nkosi "The king" Nkabinde is a washed-up actor, who can no longer remember who he is. He sits and watches his life through a beer bottle, he watches it, as it slowly disappears.

Genre

- One Hander (Drama and Comedy)

Characters

Nkosi "The king" Nkabinde, in his early 30s. He is a man who looks like he has lost everything and given up on life itself. He is constantly drunk. He is man who feels when he is sober, he remembers things he wants to forget. Nkosi is or was an actor.

Chapter I

“Life, camera, action”

(The stage/theatre opens up with a man, looks to be in his early 30's. He is sitting on a crate of beer. On his far right are couple of beer bottles, couple being an understatement. We sense there is a lot of focus. Then after a long silence, he stands up and looks at the audience.)

The character: I...I live amongst you. Waiting like a predictor. I am faceless. I am meaningless and thoughtless. But I am despised and hated. But then I put on a face...wear a human face. And then I am respected, valued and appreciated. I am I...

(There is pause. He looks dumbstruck. He squeezes his eyes. He hits his head)

Nkosi: Fuck!!!! Damnit!!! Fuck! Fuck! *(He reaches for one of the beer bottles and takes a huge gulp)*. I am I... I am what?

(Pause. As if reflecting on self)

I really have fallen from the top. There was a time... *(laughs)* fuck, I am an actor!

What is an actor, you ask? Well according to Michael Douglas an Actor is a God. Yes, a God, on stage, the actor is God, because what does God do, he or she if you preferred, creates. God creates life were none existed. An actor does the same thing? He/she gives life to characters, places and things. As actors we are gods! People should respect us! Not... *(He takes another sip)*. Where was I? You *(Pointing at audience member)* where was I? *(Waits for response)*.

Yes, people should respect us! Should kneel before us? But no, we are treated like garbage. You should be throwing money at me right now? Panties and bras but look at you! Look at you! Sitting there waiting. What are you waiting for? I can't even remember my god damn lines!

(There is a long pause. He goes to sit down. He looks at the bottle in his hand).

Nkosi: I don't even like to drink *(Under his breath. Then he begins to sob)*. You win again you old bastard. That's 4 to you and zero to me!

(Pause again)

I'm sorry guys, I don't seem to be myself today, I... I don't think I can tell you my story today. I am not feeling well. Well to be honest; I am kind of drunk. If I try to tell you, I'll keep forgetting my lines and it's just horrible.

(He stands to walk away. Then he stops.)

'THE ACTOR' – by JC Zondi

Instructions: The following tasks are designed to help directors and teachers with the production of the actor. Each task is tailored to each chapter or section of the play to help with the development of the work. Educators/directors can use these activities for each week of the production.

Chapter 2 – 'Becoming the character'

Group task: Engage in group scenes from the chapter. Discuss character development and how mistakes influence a character's evolution.

1. Act out a scene, showcasing these invisible rules and regulations that Nkosi speaks of in the beginning of this chapter.
2. Judging from this chapter, what do you think was Nkosi's biggest mistake that landed him in the position he is in now?
3. Recreate the scene from when Nkosi transitions into the character of his mother, to the end of the chapter. Coming up with your own lines, create an opposite reaction and a new experience of childhood for Nkosi
4. Imagine **a household with a mother who has a drinking problem**, what kind of adults are her children likely to grow up and become? In your **groups** depict a short scene that showcases your prediction. Be creative!
5. What is your opinion on the power play surrounding women making more money than men in the household?