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## Prosthetic Gods

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PROSTHETIC GODS

by

Taylor C. Cronin

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for a Degree with Honors  
(Mass Communication)

The Honors College

University of Maine

May 2018

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## ABSTRACT

Freud describes us as “prosthetic gods,” or creatures of free will and choice. This aspect of human nature is an important part of what makes us inherently human. It is, unfortunately, part of the human condition to struggle with the paradox of free will and human agency versus the idea of fate and destiny. Addiction intensifies this struggle by removing control from individuals’ lives, pushing them down the path of destruction. Without the idea of control, that part of what makes us human is gone.

The process of writing, editing, casting, and performing a play highlights this same struggle, in a sense. It allows for an individual to create their vision while having them know that the vision will take on a life of its own. So, in an attempt to exemplify what it means to be a Prosthetic God, I wrote and directed a one-act play with this title. The story touches on sensitive themes such as alcoholism, grief, domestic violence, and human agency. It is a universal story about losing faith and learning how to redeem oneself.

I assembled a production team of student designers to fulfill the tasks of stage management, lighting design, costume design, and sound design. I held auditions on March 6th, with callbacks the following day. We began rehearsing after Spring Break. Many rehearsals consisted of character-building exercises and script analysis to help develop a greater understanding of the show in order to provide a clear and accurate portrayal of the story. The play was performed on April 20th, 21st, and 22nd in the Al Cyrus Pavilion Theater.

“God, grant me the serenity to  
accept the things I cannot change,  
courage to change the things I can,  
and wisdom to know the difference”

— Serenity Prayer

*Dedicated to my father, Timothy Cronin— the man who provided me  
with the wisdom to know the difference.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION</u> .....	1
i. Human Condition.....	1
ii. Important Themes Within the Play.....	2
iii. The Role of Playwright/Director as Prosthetic God.....	4
ii. Personal Importance of this Story.....	6
<u>CHAPTER II: THE WRITING PROCESS</u> .....	7
i. History of the show.....	7
ii. Synopsis of <i>Prosthetic Gods</i> .....	9
iii. Editing Process.....	10
iv. Writing Conclusion.....	12
<u>CHAPTER III: THE DIRECTING PROCESS</u> .....	13
i. Casting.....	13
ii. Constructing the Characters.....	15
iii. Blocking.....	18
iv. Challenges.....	19
iv. Directing Conclusion.....	19
<u>CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION</u> .....	21
i. Performances.....	21
iii. Summary.....	23
References— Works Cited	
Appendix A: Final Script	
Appendix B: Show Poster	
Appendix C: Audition Notice	
Appendix D: Audition Signup Sheet	
Appendix E: Audition Contract	
Works Cited	
Author’s Biography	

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Human Condition

The sun rises in the east and sets in the west. The moon controls the ocean's tides. There are many different races and religions that make up mankind. These are all truths that we as a society have come to understand. These truths can stem from scientific research and be considered fact, while other truths have come from deep within us through years of philosophical thought and debate. These innate truths govern how we live and interact with one another, and are characteristics that make human beings different from any other life form.

The question as to what makes us specifically human is one that has been debated by scholars for centuries. At what point did our basic survival instincts turn into the pursuit of higher knowledge? When did the Age of Enlightenment begin? Immanuel Kant defines enlightenment as "man's emergence from his self-imposed nonage. Nonage is the inability to use one's own understanding without another's guidance. This nonage is self-imposed if its cause lies not in lack of understanding but in indecision and lack of

courage to use one's own mind without another's guidance”(Kant p.1). Human beings have an innate need to learn, to better themselves. It is all a part of the human experience.

Sigmund Freud discussed his understanding of human nature in his work, *Civilizations and Its Discontents*. It is in this text where the term “prosthetic gods” originated: “Man has, as it were, become a kind of prosthetic god. When he puts on all his auxiliary organs, he is truly magnificent; but those organs have not grown on him and they still give him much trouble at times,”(Freud p.19). What was a prosthetic god? The term confused me. It intrigued me. It inspired me.

In a way, Kant and Freud shared similar ideas. They believed that in order to better one’s self one had to take control of their own destiny. A person could no longer rely on others for guidance or blame others for their mistakes. They needed to use their own understanding of the world to reach enlightenment. Freud’s prosthetic gods are creatures of free will and choice, that must use their human agency to become enlightened.

#### Important Themes Within the Play:

Human Agency: The idea of human agency is a central part of my play’s narrative. Kant claims that to achieve enlightenment one must “[h]ave courage to use your own understanding,”(Kant p.1). The divide between the belief in destiny and free will is a large and dangerous one. Every person in their lifetime must take on the task of deciding whether they have free will or if they have a predetermined fate.

In an article published by Psychology Today, *Loss, but not absence, of control – How choice and addiction are related*, author Adi Jaffe Ph.D. discusses the connection between addiction and self-control. He claims that “some people quit, even without help,” and this “suggests [that] because some people do stop using, it can't be said that there is a problem with any individuals' capacity to stop”(Jaffe). Loss of control and addiction are not directly related, proving that human agency and free will are innate.

My protagonist, James Creen, is under the assumption that he is a victim of fate. With every negative thing that has happened to him in his life, he loses the hope that he can have control over anything at all. He blames God for his addiction and loss of control. He cannot come to terms with the fact that everything is under his control. It is God who teaches him that rather than having no control whatsoever, he is the only person that can make decisions about how to live his life.

Connection with the Divine in relation to Alcoholism: There have been claims that Alcoholics Anonymous is a religious movement, rather than a program for sobriety. These ideas stem from the mention of a higher power within the Twelve Step Program. The program focuses on a higher power, often referred to as God, in many of their teachings. Members of the program make the “decision to turn [their] will and [their] lives over to the care of God as [they] understand Him,” (“Higher Power”). The program wants every person to define their own higher power, whether that be God or some other unforeseen force, like the universe. It allows the inclusion of people from all religions and beliefs from all over the world. The AA program claims that the benefit of using a

higher power is such that those people seeking recovery may have some force greater than themselves to rely on when they feel alone.

In rehearsals, we came to the conclusion that James Creen was not a religious man. He was not introduced to religion until meeting his wife, Susan. He would go to church on special occasions with his family, but never felt a connection with the Divine. James is forced to accept the fact that there is a higher power when it confronts him. The reason that the play refers to the higher power as God and not, say a magical rock, is because of the familiarity James has with Christianity. His feelings about the existence of God relate directly to Susan and Amelia, and it is that tie that allows his higher power to manifest as God. The show would have been completely different had the Creen family been Buddhist.

#### The Role of Playwright/Director as Prosthetic God

While thinking of the things that make me the person that I am, theatre is always right at the top of that list. For as long as I can remember, theatre has been the thing that I have been most passionate about. With thirty acting credits under my belt and thousands of hours logged in rehearsals and performances, I have gained a great deal of experience on the stage. I have always loved acting. Performing in front of a crowd and truly becoming another character has helped me feel more comfortable in my own skin. Theatre has allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of myself and helped me to accept who I am.

Beginning my journey at the University of Maine, I did not plan on being involved in theatre. I had to focus on schoolwork. I had to be able to get a “real” job and

be able to make good money so I would not have to work myself to death like my parents do.

I could not stay away from theatre for long though, and before I knew it I was involved with Maine Masque, the student-run theatre club on campus. Through the club, I learned that I could be involved in theatre even as a non-major. Today, I am now the president of the theatre club, have been in eight productions at the university and declared a minor in theatre.

Choosing to continue theatre through college had been my way of being a prosthetic god. Until college, I relied on my family to tell me what to do, and how to live my life. Despite their strong opinion, I finally made the difficult choice to continue with my passion. I took control over my education and the choices regarding my future, and it allowed me to pursue a fuller and happier life.

When tasked with coming up with a thesis that would be tailored towards my major of Mass Communication, I could not think of anything to do that did not make me want to cry. I knew that if I did, I would be miserable. If I went ahead with a project I was not passionate about, I would not succeed. I knew that I had to do a project that I would enjoy; something that would make me excited, otherwise I would not have been able to go through with the Honors Thesis process.

After seeing friends write and direct their own plays for their thesis projects, and acting in their shows, I was inspired to do the same. I have spent so much time on the stage that I thought it was finally time for me to try another aspect of theatre. I wanted to explore the roles of playwright and a director.

This decision was another taxing one. It was one that I was unsure about for a long time. I knew how challenging it would be to take on a project like this, but I knew I would be doing something that I loved. I decided to throw away my cowardice, per request of Kant and made the decision to become a playwright and director.

### Personal Importance of This Story

The story of *Prosthetic Gods* is greatly important to me. While the story revolves around the topic of alcoholism and the practices of Alcoholics Anonymous, my life has also been greatly impacted by them. As a child of recovering alcoholics, I grew up listening to the stories of other alcoholics and was raised by the influence of the AA philosophy. The testimonies were ingrained in my memory and have made me into the person that I am.

I feel that in today's society, alcohol is glorified. It is *cool* to get drunk and party and that is the only narrative we tend to see. In reality, so many people struggle with alcoholism. I think that it is important to illuminate that other narrative in order to help people realize that they are not alone, and most importantly, they still have choices. If I do not get anything else out of this project, I hope that at least one person will see this play and have been helped in some way.

## CHAPTER II

### WRITING PROCESS:

#### History of the Show

*Prosthetic Gods* has been on a long journey and has gone through many changes. The first edition of the script was created the spring of my sophomore year as the result of my choice to do a creative project for my Honors seminar. We were discussing the idea of human agency after reading Freud's *Civilizations and Its Discontents*, when I first came across my inspiration.

I wrote the phrase "prosthetic gods" in my notebook and soon it became the title of the two page script for my creative project for the class. It was like an act of fate that I was presented with this term, but like James Creen, I made the choice, consciously or not, to use it. I used my own free will to accept what fate had given me.

At that point, the only characters that had been solidified in my mind were Man and God. The man was an alcoholic at rock bottom who received a divine intervention from God, but lacked a back story. *Prosthetic Gods* was in its infancy.

The adolescent years of the show began the Fall of 2016, my junior year. As a theatre minor, I was required to take a course called Play Production, affectionately known as Underdogs. This course outlined the basics of directing for the students with a requirement being to cast and direct a ten-minute show as the final. Every student's

production would premiere at the Underdog Showcase at the end of the semester. We could either choose a play or write one that we would end up directing.

The idea came to me to recycle my previous Honors project and use it for the class. I decided to revisit my original script, and made some edits that transformed the short five-minute show into a more developed ten-minute show.

*Prosthetic Gods* was performed for the first time. It was an incredible experience to see my own work come alive. The initial fears that I had of sharing my work with others and criticism melted away.

I did not care what other people thought. My opinion, in the end, was the only one that mattered and I could not have been happier. It was liberating, feeling like I could take any critique that came my way. The different remarks would not break me down. I could listen to suggestions without feeling as though I were being torn apart. I was able to be proud of my own work no matter what others said.

After the showcase, I thought my script would be retired forever. Over the summer, I sat down to write a new script for my thesis project. However, as hard as I tried, I could not develop a concept that I felt passionately about. I filled many notebooks over the summer, brainstorming possible plot lines but those ideas led to nothing. I was worried that my dream to write and direct a show would not become a reality.

When I got back to school, I heard some of my friends discussing how they were in the same Play Production course that I had taken and it reminded me that I already had a script. I finally realized that I could use this piece that I had been working on for almost two years. Again, I revisited the story of God and Man, and began building the world in

which the story took place. *Prosthetic Gods* transformed again into a nineteen page, one-act play, running at about forty-five minutes. The evolution of this script is something that I am greatly proud of.

Synopsis of *Prosthetic Gods*:

James Creen, a man who has lost his faith in everything, has reached rock bottom. His drinking has destroyed every good thing in his life. His family left, he lost his job, and now he's living on the streets. It isn't until he gets an unexpected visit from his higher power that he finally begins to understand that he is the only person that can redeem himself.

God shows James a series of vitally important “scenes” from his life. These scenes are the key moments in his life that have led him to this point: meeting his wife, the births of his children, the death of his son, and the night he hit his wife. These fixed points within James’ life guaranteed that he would become an alcoholic, lose his job, his family would leave him and he would reach rock bottom. There could not be one point in his life without the one prior to it.

God asks him time and again why is he there, why he is the way he is. James shrugs it off, claiming that he was “just a lousy drunk,” but God presses him, claiming that James himself is the reason. His choices led him down this path. Angered, James blames God. “This is your fault! [...] All of it. You’re the writer of this story. The puppet-master pulling at my strings.

[...] You took my son from me, stole his life and shattered mine. You broke my family,

destroyed me in every possible way. How could I have chosen to act differently? You keep asking why I'm here? Why I am the way I am? It's all because of you. I am what *you* made me to be" (See Appendix A).

God tells James that she made him in her image, that she is a creator but not a puppet master controlling every move he makes. God is just a parent, like he is and only wants what is best for him. God gave humanity freewill and with that freewill they become prosthetic gods, beings that create their own destiny. For the final time, God asks James why?

James swallows his pride and admits the reason why is because he is scared of being consumed by grief and scared of having to live in a world without his son. He admits that he uses alcohol as a way to keep the pain at bay, to numb it, and that he feels that alcohol is the only thing he has control over. He thinks that his family will be better off without him, but God assures him that he can choose to be a better him. Finally satisfied with his answer, God rises to go, leaving James to make his choice to be a better man.

### Editing Process

As discussed in the History of the show section, there have been three different editions of the script. A show that once only entailed a brief conversation on a park bench has evolved into a fully developed plot with multiple characters, and a solid concept.

A major source of my information regarding the practices of Alcoholics Anonymous came from conversations with my father. He would sit down with me and go

through the script and help me achieve an accurate portrayal of the AA teachings. Many of the lines in the show came directly from our conversations. Scene Eight was essentially a retelling of my dad's personal testimony. He said, "I wouldn't trade my worst day being sober for my best day being drunk. When I went to AA, it cut the ball and chain that was holding me back. Now I am able to become the person that God has always intended for me to be." This is almost exactly a line used in Scene Eight. While his relationship with alcoholism is a very private and personal one, his influence can be seen throughout the entire script and I hope that I portrayed his story in a way that would not offend him, but rather, make him proud.

The final wave of edits came from the cast members themselves during rehearsals. Whenever we would come across an inconsistency, usually with dates, or some awkward wording, I would work with them to find a better way to phrase something. I paid close attention to how the actors would say their lines, if they matched the text or not. This took a great deal of time, but I preferred the way they did it and made the changes accordingly and that made this process into a collaborative effort.

The act of it shifting from my own personal project to a collaborative project, tested my ability as a Prosthetic God. The changes that were made were out of my control. My own personal work was no longer my own, and I had to accept it. It made me realize that I must "accept the things I cannot change." I had to make that choice to let fate take its course.

## Conclusion

My act of free will, choosing to write this play about free will and human agency, led me down a path that I would have never imagined. I never thought that I would have been able to write a play. When I began writing this play, there were many doubts in my head. I did not consider myself to be a writer. I could not create a story that people would want to listen to. I had nothing to bring to the table. These insecurities were something that I had to overcome. If I let the thoughts linger too long, I would become discouraged and lose the desire to work. My insecurities made finishing the script an extreme challenge. My mentality was that if I never finished it, I would never have to justify to someone its “awfulness.”

Sharing the first finished copy was a nightmare. I procrastinated sending the script out for days before I finally had no choice. I felt vulnerable. I was allowing others into my thoughts and ideas, a place that I usually reserve for myself and a few trusted friends. The pressure that I felt to have others like my piece was extreme. The idea of someone thinking that it was stupid or boring would send me into a panic.

I had to find a way to calm my anxiety and the best way that I found was to just power through it. The process became easier as time went on, and others’ making comments and suggestions felt less like “personal attacks” against me and my writing. I began to hear them more as a way to help me succeed. Writing this script helped to improve my writing skills, as well as to overcome some of my greatest anxieties. I am now able to call myself a playwright, a title that most people will never have in their lives, and it feels extraordinary.

## CHAPTER III

### DIRECTING PROCESS

#### Casting

I prepared for the auditions by creating an audition notice (see Appendix C), a signup sheet (Appendix D), and an audition contract sheet (Appendix E). On Tuesday, March 6th, I held auditions in Minsky Recital Hall, and had fourteen students come audition for me. Being on the other side of the casting table was a strange experience. I was in a whole new world, and I felt like an imposter. It was up to me to decide who would be a part of the show. The people auditioning were there to impress me. A whole new level of doubts crept into my mind. Why should I be able to judge these auditions? What authority do I have to make that call? These doubts were all I could think about until the audition night, but as soon as I sat down at the table, I was ready. I made my choice. I was ready to use my power of choice to create my vision.

I tried to recall every audition that I have ever done so as to present the correct mannerism and proper decorum that a director is supposed to portray. I found myself mimicking my high school drama teacher, Mr. Long. He would do everything in his power to make everyone feel comfortable and welcome. He would guide students into

giving amazing performances in a way that made them feel like they were doing it all on their own. I wanted to be able to exude the same sense of confidence as a director and in the end, the “fake-it-till-you-make-it” method paid off. I ended up enjoying myself! After the last audition, I sat in the hall alone trying to commit the moment to memory, and to record the experience in my notes. I wanted to enjoy every last second until I had to sit down and actually cast the show.

I initially did not think that I was going to need to have a callback, but after the preliminary auditions, I was proved wrong. I had so many talented people that could have played multiple roles that I could not decide. I ended up calling back eleven out of the fourteen for a second round of auditions. I had the actors read with one another to get a good sense of compatibility. There were three different versions of the cast list that I could have gone with, but in the end I arrived at the list below, because of the dynamic chemistry between Natali and Byrne. Having the roles of God and James solidified allowed for every other character to fall into place.

### **Cast List**

James Creen — Peter Natali

God — Emilia Byrne

Susan Creen — Katie Dube

Amelia Creen — Angelina Buzzelli

Marcus Riggs — Tom Adams

Waitress — Caitlyn Rooms

### Constructing the Characters:

The rehearsal process began with read-throughs of the play and table work that consisted of discussion establishing a cohesive understanding of plot points and characters. I wanted every actor to provide a character analysis to show their clear understanding of the character. I wanted to make sure that everyone had a clear understanding of the play so that they would be able to give a clear portrayal of it and that nothing would look muddy. It was difficult for me to give up my control over the characters that I had created, but I had to allow my cast to make them their own, to discover things that even I did not know about them. In the end, allowing them to make choices about the characters improved the show greatly.

In my research, I found a list of character development questions assembled by Troy University's Department of Theatre and Dance. The questions were organized by different categories: physical qualities, social qualities, psychological qualities, moral qualities, and play qualities. The article claimed the questions were "important tools to unlock the character process for the actor"("CHARACTER...").

This exercise was first introduced to me while performing in another show, *The Party*. It personally helped me understand my character and allowed for me to play the role with more certainty. I wanted to have my actors feel the same certainty so I decided to try it with them. I began with having my actors find a comfortable spot to lie down and relax. I then turned out the lights and we did some deep breathing before I listed off the questions. It was important for them to be in this relaxed state so as to, almost hypnotically, absorb the thoughts about their characters into their subconscious minds.

While in the state of deep relaxation, I was able to guide them through the minds of their characters and to gain a deeper and certain understanding of them. The entire exercise took around forty minutes to complete, giving each actor plenty of time to reach their answers.

The question exercise proved to be very effective, as I saw them make leaps and bounds in their portrayals. With a clear image and understanding of their characters, they began trying different things that added a whole new level of intensity to the production.

The rehearsal process continued, and we tried different exercises to establish relationships with one another. I wanted to solidify the image of the family within the play, and how they were before versus after the trauma. We spent a rehearsal discussing this issue, and came to the consensus that before the accident, James and Amelia had been as close as could be. They had a special bond that stemmed from their love of music. We determined that the accident occurred while the family was returning home from Amelia's recital. James was driving, and Jack was the only one hurt. We discussed the concept of guilt and how each character felt that they were to blame for the accident. It was interesting for me to see how the actors crafted their own interpretations of the scene. Amelia said that she was to blame because they were returning from her recital. James felt the blame because he was driving and did not see the other car. Susan did not really feel blame, but was overwhelmed with survivor's guilt, more so than the others. Fleshing out these details of the accident allowed the actors to access that source of sorrow, making the later scenes in the play that much more intense.

Other exercises we did to build the characters included focusing on balance, physicality and vocal intensity. I wanted my actors to appear more centered and grounded on stage, so I came up with an idea that made them all feel a bit confused. The balance activity stemmed from an activity I use as a ski instructor. I began by having them stand on one foot and finding their center, then the other foot. Finally, I had them stand balanced and centered on two feet. Before they had the chance to react, I pushed them on the shoulder to test their stability. Some were brick walls, while others had the stability of a newborn fawn. We continued the activity throughout the rehearsal process until I was not able to push them over.

Another fun exercise that I came up with involved the importance of vocal intensity. The first time we went through the scene, I instructed them to shout every single line at the same level. We then went back and did the same scene but at a whisper volume. Finally the third time through, I let them do it regularly and influenced them to shake it up a bit. They tried different lines at different levels resulting in a more dynamic scene scape.

The final fun exercise that I came up with involved the importance of physicality, and how a character's physicality affects the actor's portrayal of the character. I had my stage manager, Libbey, assign each of the cast members different animals to act out. Then they had to go through the scene completely in character while physically embodying that animal. I then had to figure out what animal they were. This activity stemmed from my work as a camp counselor. I would play games like this with my campers, and I felt that it would be a fun way to enhance the importance of physicality.

In this scenario, one could claim that I was playing God. I put my actors in a different situation to help them realize an ultimate goal, much like God did to James within the play. My act of providing them with these different situations allowed them to make their own choices about how to react. In the end, it proved to be successful. I saw my actors adjust their character's physical awareness and make more choices regarding it.

### Blocking

The Pavilion Theater is an intriguing place to have a show. The space is so different from any other on campus, allowing for interesting blocking choices, but also guaranteeing many challenges. The basic blocking of the show revolves around the park bench, that has been placed upstage center, as well as the surrounding stage. I wanted to utilize as much of the space as possible, so I incorporated the vomitoria, the entrances to section beneath the audience, and the pathway leading up to the booth. We set basic blocking and throughout the rehearsal experience added more and more detail to it.

A scene that was particularly difficult to block was Scene Seven. The writing called for the actor playing Susan to mime a fight. If done poorly, the scene would look cheesy, and that was not the tone that I wanted. In order to combat that issue, I had the actor playing James improvise the other side of the fight, adding in lines to fill the void. We spent a great deal of time choreographing the fight itself to make sure that it would look realistic while remaining safe. We fine tuned the punch and practiced the fight sequence over and over until it became muscle memory for Susan, so that she could do it alone. In the end, we decided that the full fight sequence with James looked so good that

we wanted to include it. We ended up adding it in as James's memory of the blackout returning. The addition to the scene was the cherry on top, creating a intense and sorrowful climax of the story.

### Challenges

From the very beginning, I knew that it would be difficult to direct my own work. I would have to become detached from it. I had a bias that I could not control. Being the writer of the play automatically created an expectation in my head, and I did not want that preconceived notion of what I thought the play should be to hinder my actors' creativity. I wanted them to be able to make choices and bring ideas to the table, so at the very beginning of rehearsing, I told them to try things and ask questions when something I did as a director was confusing.

### Conclusion

If you had asked me three years ago if I thought that I would ever direct a play, let alone write it, I would have laughed. I never would have thought that my choices would lead me down this path of doing this project. The concept of writing and directing a play seemed so far beyond my capabilities that it was nothing more than a pipe dream.

I learned a great deal about myself throughout this process. I did not think that I would enjoy directing as much as I do. Creating a vision of a show with the help of a fantastic cast and crew was an extraordinary feeling. Now, I am no longer just an actor. I am a director, too.

I have also learned so much about directing and the technical aspects of theatre. It was very strange having to convey my ideas to a team of designers and have them ask for

my approval of things. It would always take me a minute to remember that it was my call. I was acting as God and as a prosthetic god. I had to guide my cast and help them build this world, but I also had to let them use their own free will to decide how to portray their characters. I had to let go of my own preconceived notions of the play to allow it to become what it is today. I had to allow fate to take its course.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION:

#### Performances

Throughout the span of the weekend, we had about 140 people come see the show, with about 40 on Friday, 47 on Saturday, and 53 on Sunday. In my opinion, that is a fairly large turnout, and I would consider that a success. It was thrilling to see the Pavilion packed with people who were excited to see my work. We were fortunate enough to not experience any noticeable technical difficulties. There were a few dropped lines, here and there, but overall, the show went extremely well.

*Prosthetic Gods* was my child. Throughout the process, I had to watch my baby grow, and I worried about it every step of the way. I could only guide it and nurture it, but in the end, choices were made by the actors and designers that were out of my control. They used their own human agency to make choices that made the show what it was, that made it so much more powerful.

On the first night of performances, I sat and watched from the front row, and I realized that I was completely powerless. My work as the playwright and director was done. My play was its own entity. All I could do was sit back and enjoy the show. It was

challenging to let go of my child and watch it take its metaphorical first steps into the real world. Throughout the first performance, I was nervous and completely tense, hoping that scene changes would go smoothly and that light/sound cues would be called correctly. It was as if I was holding my breath for the entire forty-five minute show. After everything went smoothly and I realized that everything was going to be okay, I was able to relax and enjoy the final two performances.

It was truly an honor to be able to direct this incredible group of people, and I am so proud of what they were able to do. They wowed the audience every night with their incredible performances, as evident from all the positive feedback we received at every talk back. Audience members seemed to feel completely engaged throughout the show and were able to become emotionally invested in the story. We received a few interesting questions during the talkback, including questions about my inspiration behind the story, why God was a woman, and if I would ever extend the script or write a sequel. Hearing these questions from the audience proved to me that they were engaged with the story, that they enjoyed it and had become invested in it. It was rewarding to hear people discuss my show. Overall, the feedback about the performances was extremely positive.

They were multiple people who came up to me after the show claiming that they had cried throughout the performance. In a way, that is one of the biggest compliments I could have received. The fact that my work was able to elicit such a response proves to me that it was a job well done.

## Summary

To become enlightened, one must use the knowledge they have attained throughout their life to make their own choices. One must realize that they are an agent of free will. This journey has been a taxing one, but it has helped me realize what I am capable of, and how much I can do if I have faith in myself. This project has helped me understand what it means to be a prosthetic god, and will serve as a reminder that I am the writer of my own story, as well as the director. I know that there will be challenges ahead, and I will have to discern whether they are within my control or not. Hopefully, I will have the wisdom to know the difference.

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APPENDIX A

# Prosthetic Gods

A One-Act Play by Taylor Cronin

## Cast

James Creen.... *A middle-aged alcoholic man*

God .... *A well-dressed businessperson*

Susan Creen. . . . *Ex-Wife of James*

Amelia Creen. . . . *Daughter of James*

Marcus Riggs. . . *Friend and co-woker of James*

Waitress. . . *Server at Pete's Pub*

## SCENE I

*The setting is a city at night. A man enters SL carrying a bottle of liquor. He is slurring, a song.*

**JAMES.** *(Stumbles on stage overly inebriated, slurring a song, clothes in disrepair, hair and beard long and shaggy. He circles the bench in front of him and drops down asleep on it. Time passes, indicated by shifting light and sounds of the city. He wakes up and begins his daily routine of begging for spare change. Lights indicate another passing of time and he ends on his bench at dusk. He pulls out a bottle of Captain Morgan from his pack and begins to drink. He looks up at a building and sighs.)*

*Goddammit. (He takes a swig from his bottle and begins to tell his story to the audience as if they were his drinking buddy.)* You know, this wasn't always my life. I use to have a suit and tie job, a beautiful wife, Susan. A daughter, Amelia. *(Pause.)* And a son. Jack... I had everything. I was the friggin' king of the world. Now it's all gone. Just me now. Well, me and the Captain. *(James sighs and sits down on the bench.)* Ah, God help me... *(A well-dressed businessperson carrying a briefcase enters. They pass the man on the bench and glance at him while walking by, but before exiting they stop and reach into their pocket. They pull out a wallet and give the man a TEN dollar bill.)* Thank you, Ma'am.

**GOD.** *(Nods and smiles. Turns to go, but hesitates.)* I hope you don't mind my asking, but why are you here?

**JAMES.** Got nowhere else to go.

**GOD.** Okay. But, why?

**JAMES.** Well, 'cause I lost my job. Then my wife and kid left because of my drinking.

**GOD.** *Why?*

**JAMES.** What the hell do you mean why? Why are you asking me so many goddam questions?

**GOD.** Hey, I'm not asking for my sake, but for your own. Do you *really* know the answer?

**JAMES.** Who the hell do you think you are, anyway? Some almighty being who's all holier than thou?

**GOD.** (*Laughs.*) More or less.

**JAMES.** All right, listen here, lady. Why don't you just get lost?

**GOD.** Some paths that we are destined to travel down cannot be discovered without getting lost. Life is not about the ultimate destination, but rather the entire journey. Getting lost is a part of life. It is all part of the human existence.

**JAMES.** All right. Whatever you say. (*Takes a swig from the bottle.*)

**GOD.** However, if a person is not centered, their life becomes unbalanced and falls out of orbit. Everyone holds a different idol at their center. For some, it is their families or careers. Others will orbit around— well, different things...

**JAMES.** I have no clue what you're talking about. You're some *goddamn* nut job, aren't you?

**GOD.** Then all it takes is for their center to be shaken, doesn't take much. They may lose their job or their wife might leave and take the kids and their whole world falls apart.

Their orbit loses control, destruction overtakes them and destruction is what they leave in their wake.

**JAMES.** All right, I don't know who the hell you think you are or on what authority you think you have to comment on my life, but you must be out of your *goddamn* mind if you think I'm going to sit here and have you preach at me!

**GOD.** You really have to stop doing that.

**JAMES.** Doing what?

**GOD.** Taking my name in vain. It hurts!

**JAMES.** Your name? *(Pause.)* What, God? You're saying *you're* God?

**GOD.** Were you expecting Morgan Freeman? I'm God. The one and only... Well depending on what you believe in.

**JAMES.** Well damn, you really are crazy. *(Begins to walk away but is stopped in his tracks.)*

**GOD.** Your name is James Creen. You were born March 14, 1974. 11:21 PM. St. Joseph's Hospital. Boston, Massachusetts. Six pounds and three ounces. Small, but you were a premie. About three weeks early—

**JAMES.** All right. Enough. How could you possibly know all that?

**GOD.** I'm all-knowing, remember?

**JAMES.** This is insane. No. No, *you're* insane.

**GOD.** Your first dog was Tucker. He only had three legs. You had a turtle named Shelly. Not a very clever name, but hey, you were just a kid. Oh and your imaginary friend, Bob! Again, you really weren't that creative but—

**JAMES.** Enough! Just stop! There is no way you could have known any of those things... How do you know those things?

**GOD.** Because I *am* God.

**JAMES.** What.... Why are you— What? I— I don't... I can't believe this... It's finally happened. I've officially gone insane. That's it. I'm just crazy! When I close my eyes you'll be gone. *(Long pause as James clenches his eyes shut.)*

**GOD.** *(Clears throat.)* James?

**JAMES.** Dammit. *(Reopens eyes.)*

**GOD.** Why don't we sit down? *(Gestures for them both to sit. They do.)* I can tell you're... a bit overwhelmed.

**JAMES.** *(Takes a big, long swig from the bottle.) (Choking.)* All good.

**GOD.** All right, so why don't we start over. Hello, I'm Christ. *(Extends hand.)*

**JAMES.** *(Shakes hand.)* James. *(Pause.)* Okay... Christ. So I guess the Christians were right.

**GOD.** Everyone is right in their own way. I go by many names. You may know me as Allah, Elohim, Jehovah, Krishna, or even "The Universe." I am the higher power that you identify most with. Whether that higher power be a spiritual figure, like Jesus Christ or even a magical rock, God by any other name is still God.

**JAMES.** Jesus Christ...

**GOD.** Yes?

**JAMES.** No, I mean... Sorry. I just need a minute to digest all this.

**GOD.** That's okay, take all the time you need.

**JAMES.** *(Sighs.)* Okay... God... So umm, what's up? Why are you here talking to me while there are so many other things going on in the world that could use your attention?

**GOD.** Well, James, I was just passing through and you looked like you were in pretty rough shape. It's not often that I interfere with humans, but you looked like you needed the help.

**JAMES.** But why me? I'm nobody. I don't deserve this divine intervention.

**GOD.** Sometimes it is those who deserve it the least that need it the most. Now, are you ready?

**JAMES.** Ready for what? *(God snaps.) (Blackout.) (End of Scene I.)*

## SCENE II

*The scene switches to a sort of play-within-a-play.*

*They are at Pete's Pub. James is sitting at a bar next to Marcus Riggs.*

*Riggs and the rest of the bar are frozen.*

**JAMES.** What the Hell?

**GOD.** The setting is Pete's Pub, May 18th, 1995. You're getting a drink with your friend from work, Marcus Riggs. He has some exciting news to tell you. Okay now get into character. And let's take it from the top of the scene! *(God snaps and everything comes to life.)*

**MARCUS.** I just can't believe it, Jim! I mean, it feels like yesterday we were starting out as interns and now look at us!

**JAMES.** *(Looks to God confused. GOD motions for him to go with it.)* Uh, yeah sure...

**MARCUS.** Oh, come on. Don't be like that. Just because I'm technically your boss now, doesn't mean we can't still hang out. Don't be weird about it.

**JAMES.** No, Marcus, I'm happy for you. I just, I'm a little out of it right now, sorry.

**MARCUS.** No problem man. And don't worry. You'll be next.

**JAMES.** Mhm...

**WAITRESS.** Here you go guys, two Rum and Cokes. Let me know if you need anything else.

**GOD.** *(As if reading stage directions.)* They both drink in awkward silence. A woman enters the pub and sits down on the opposite side of the room. The waitress approaches her and takes her order.

**WAITRESS.** Hi, there. Welcome to Pete's. I'll be your waitress this evening. Will there be anyone else joining you?

**SUSAN.** No, it's just me for tonight. Thanks.

**WAITRESS.** Okay. Do you need a minute to look over the menu or are you all set to order?

**SUSAN.** I'm all set. Could I get a water and a BLT, please?

**WAITRESS.** Sure thing.

**SUSAN.** Thanks.

*(The waitress exits leaving Susan alone. She pulls a notebook from her bag and starts looking over her notes from work.)*

**MARCUS.** Do you know her?

**JAMES.** Uh, no. She just looks like someone I used to know.

**MARCUS.** Well, you must know some good-looking people. She's hot.

**JAMES.** Hey, shut up!

**MARCUS.** Why? What's the problem?

**JAMES.** Nothing... Never mind.

**MARCUS.** Little tense are we? Well if you don't get over there soon, I'm going to.

**JAMES.** *(God snaps fingers and the scene around them stops.)* What the Hell is going on?! How is this happening? This isn't some Christmas Carol type shit, is it? Bringing me back through time to see my biggest mistakes?

**GOD.** Where do you think Dickens got the idea?

**JAMES.** *(Mutters to himself.)* I swear to God if Tiny Tim shows up...

**GOD.** I'm not showing you your biggest mistakes. I'm showing you the key moments in your life that have led you to this point. Like this one, the major moment that started you down this path. This was the night you met Susan. You saw her from across the pub and couldn't take your eyes off of her.

**JAMES.** *(Crosses to frozen Susan, studying her face.)* Yeah... Wait, meeting my wife made me this bum?

**GOD.** Not quite, but your decision to talk to the pretty girl in the pub was one that opened the door to the possibility of you becoming one. It took you awhile to work up the courage, but after a few shots and some pressure put on by Marcus, you felt like you could do anything.

**JAMES.** I would have done anything to impress her that night. I knew that she was the one as soon as I saw her.

**GOD.** You ready to meet her again?

**JAMES.** What? *(God snaps.)*

**SUSAN.** Oh! I didn't see you there. You startled me.

**JAMES.** Sorry about that. I didn't mean to—

**SUSAN.** Don't worry. It's fine. More my own fault, really. Too distracted by my work.

**JAMES.** I hope I'm not bothering you. I just wanted to come over and introduce myself because I saw you were eating alone... I'm James.

**SUSAN.** Well, that's sweet. Hello, James. I'm Susan.

**JAMES.** Uh, nice to meet you...

**SUSAN.** Would you like to sit down?

**JAMES.** Yeah, that'd be nice.

**GOD.** The two of you talked for the rest of the night and before long your initial attraction grew into something deeper and more profound. This love story would lead you down the path to the hardest time of your life. *(God snaps.) (Blackout.) (End of Scene II.)*

## SCENE III

*The scene begins back on the bench.*

*God and James retake their previous positions.*

**GOD.** So, tell me James Creen, why are you here on this bench, chatting it up with God instead of with that beautiful wife of yours?

**JAMES.** I already told you. She left me. I guess I was a bad husband and father. Just a lousy drunk.

**GOD.** Well yes, but you never told me why you were those things.

**JAMES.** I don't know. Isn't that your doing?

**GOD.** You're blaming me?

**JAMES.** No, it's just that—I don't know. Aren't you supposed to have some big plan for our lives etched out in the stars or something like that? Destiny. You're the puppet master pulling all the strings.

**GOD.** That's what you think? That you don't have human agency? That nothing matters because I have already written out your every move in the stars? Oh, Jimmy you sure do have a lot to learn. Time for the next scene. *(God snaps. Susan pushes a baby carriage on stage and stands over it looking in adoringly.)* The setting is Amelia's nursery, September 17, 1998. She's five days old. You and Susan are putting her to bed.

**JAMES.** *(Looking into the carriage.)* Oh, my God, she was so small. Look at her, she's perfect.

**SUSAN.** I can't believe we finally got her to sleep.

**JAMES.** I know. At least we know her lungs are fully developed. That tiny thing sure can screech.

**SUSAN.** I just can't believe how beautiful she is. I could watch her sleep forever. We didn't do too bad, did we?

**JAMES.** I think we did a great job. *(To God.)* This is a nice moment. We were really happy at this point. We were our own perfect little family, oblivious to the rest of the world. *(To Susan.)* She has your eyes.

**SUSAN.** And your big nose.

**JAMES.** Don't worry. She'll grow into it... I love you, Amelia.

**GOD.** *(Snap. Susan pushes the carriage offstage leaving the two alone.)* You were such a proud father. From the moment she was born you were beaming with pride. You adored that little girl. Every breath she took and every smile that spread across her sweet face filled you with so much joy. You watched her grow and worried every step of the way. You loved being a father.

**JAMES.** I know.

**GOD.** You didn't think you were going to be able to experience that joy again of your baby's first breath. But then Jack came along. *(Susan walks across the stage with another baby in her arms. James watches, hypnotized.)* You finally had a little boy to love. *(James crosses to them.)*

**JAMES.** My boy, Jack.

**SUSAN.** The doctors didn't think we could have another baby.

**JAMES.** After years of trying, we just gave up.

**SUSAN.** We didn't give up. We just came to terms with the fact that we were a family of three.

**JAMES.** Maybe you came to terms with it, but to me, it always felt like something was missing.

**SUSAN.** Amelia would always ask why we didn't have another baby. She wanted a sibling so badly.

**JAMES.** More than us, it seemed like.

**SUSAN.** Remember what we would tell her? Why would we want another baby when we already had a perfect one? It hurt so much to not be able to give her the thing she wanted most.

**JAMES.** But we did. It may have taken some time but we were finally able to give her a brother. I remember right before she turned ten you showed us the positive test. I couldn't believe it. She said that was the best birthday gift ever.

**SUSAN.** He was a gift to all us. Jack Michael Creen, you were born May 9th, 2008, at 2:34 in the morning. You're our little miracle boy.

**JAMES.** He made our family complete. *(Susan kisses James and exits.)*

**GOD.** Everything was perfect.

**JAMES.** It was perfect. Our kids were smart, talented, beautiful. Susan and I had great jobs. We had a great house. We were the perfect family.

**GOD.** If you had such a perfect life why are you here now?

**JAMES.** I told you.

**GOD.** Yes. They left you. You were a bad husband. You were a drunk. You have told me that over and over again... but why? What led you down this path? What moment in your life made you this man? Why are you here?

**JAMES.** You know why!

**GOD.** Yes... I do. Now, I'm sorry, but it's time for you to face it.

**JAMES.** No. Not again... Please. (*God snaps.*) (*Blackout.*) (*End of Scene III.*)

## SCENE IV

*The scene begins with James, Susan, and Amelia*

*at Jack's funeral. There is a small headstone in front of them.*

**GOD.** The setting is March 5, 2014. Webster's Cemetery.

**SUSAN.** He should be here with us right now.

**JAMES.** (*To God.*) Please. Please don't make me go through this again.

**SUSAN.** He should be standing right here, holding my hand, with a beautiful smile spread across his face. Not in the ground.

**JAMES.** (*To God.*) Losing Jack was the worst day of my life.

**GOD.** Susan begins to break down. Amelia comforts her, trying to remain strong.

**AMELIA.** It's okay, mom. (*Tears welling up.*) He's with Grandma and Grandpa. They'll look after him, right Dad?

**GOD.** Amelia looks to her father for reassurance. For comfort. But only gets a blank, dead stare.

**AMELIA.** Dad? Dad, say something.

**GOD.** You said nothing. Your mind was blank. Your heart was shattered. You shut down completely. Leaving Amelia and Susan to mourn alone.

**SUSAN.** He's gone. He's gone. He's gone.

**AMELIA.** Come on, mom. Let's go. It's going to be okay. Come on.

**GOD.** And as if from thin air, a bottle appeared in his hands. (*God holds out the liquor bottle. James physically makes the decision to take the bottle.*) The bottle wakes him from his comatose state and he stares at it inquisitively, wondering how a drink could numb this sickening, soul-shattering, pain he felt. He lifts the bottle to his lips and takes the path altering, center shaking, sip. (*God snaps.*) (*End of Scene IV.*)

## SCENE V

*Music plays. In a sort of “drunken montage,” outside of space and time, lights shift, bringing us outside of reality. James is confronted by the people he loved most in his life. He ruins the relationships he has with his friends and family. Marcus enters.*

**MARCUS.** I know how hard these past couple years have been on you and your family. As your friend, you should know I will always be there for you whenever you need me... But as your boss, it's my job to tell you how your drinking is negatively affecting your work. You come in late, if you even bother to come in at all. You've shown up drunk multiple times. The work you have done has been mediocre at best. I can't imagine how it must feel to lose a child, but drinking yourself to death isn't going to help. I'm sorry... We're going to have to let you go. You need to get some help, Jim.

*“Montage” continues. Marcus exits while James takes another swig from the bottle.*

*He sits down on the bench and continues drinking. Amelia enters and confronts her father.*

**AMELIA.** You missed my recital. My last performance before graduation. You said you would be there. You promised. I don't know why I believed you... I guess I just hoped that you would see how important it was to me. I hoped you wouldn't let me down... Again. But here you are, sitting at home drunk like always. Too plastered to realize how much it hurts me and mom to see you drink yourself to death. Why won't you just get up and do something?! Please, just look at me! Dad, don't you care about us at all? *(His gaze remains down.)* Fine. But remember, you did this to yourself.

*Amelia exits, not looking back. Susan crosses the stage without saying a word. She looks broken. She looks at James with pain-filled eyes. Before exiting she stops and turns around to face him.*

**SUSAN.** *(Pointed.)* You're not the only one who misses him. *(She exits.)*

*The montage ends and the music fades.*

*Lights shift bringing us back to reality.*

*(End of Scene V.)*

## SCENE VI

*God sits next to James on the bench.*

**JAMES.** The thought of him being gone was too much. I had to do something to numb the pain.

**GOD.** Numbing the pain doesn't fix the injury. You may not feel it now, but you are still broken. You need more than alcohol to heal this type of wound.

**JAMES.** I can't do this anymore. Why are you torturing me?

**GOD.** I'm not torturing you, James. I'm trying to help you understand.

**JAMES.** Understand what?

**GOD.** You need to be able to answer that for yourself.

**JAMES.** God dammit! *(Pause.)* Please. Please, just tell me. I'll do anything to get you to stop. Just tell me what to do!

**GOD.** You still don't get it do you? I can't tell you— *(Pause.)* You're so close, James. Think.

**JAMES.** I'm trying.

**GOD.** Try harder! *(Pause.)* Okay, it's time for me to show you one last thing. *(God snaps.) (Blackout.) (End of Scene VI.)*

## SCENE VII

*The scene opens with Susan sitting at the kitchen table.*

*James takes in the scene but is confused.*

**SUSAN.** Where have you been?

**JAMES.** *(To God.)* Wait, I don't remember this one. Where are we?

**SUSAN.** *(As if replying to something James said.)* This is the third night this week you've come home drunk.

**JAMES.** *(To God.)* When did this happen?

**SUSAN.** Stop yelling! Amelia's asleep! I need you to calm down.

**JAMES.** *(To God.)* What is going on?

**GOD.** The setting is the Creen household, April 3, 2016. The night before they left.

**SUSAN.** *(Acts as if her arm is grabbed and is in pain. James should be nowhere near her.)* Ow, James, you're hurting me!

**JAMES.** What?

**GOD.** The night you hit her. You came home late from work. You had been drinking at Pete's Pub.

**SUSAN.** Let go of me! *(Reacts as if she is slapped across the face. She falls to the ground and cries.)*

**JAMES.** Oh my God, Susan! *(James rushes to her and tries to help her up.)*

**SUSAN.** No! Get away from me. Stop it.

**GOD.** Amelia runs in after hearing the fight and rushes to her mother's side.

**AMELIA.** Mom! Are you okay? *(To James.)* Get away from her! How could you do this? I hate you! Mom, come on, get up. We're leaving. *(They exit in a hurry.)*

**JAMES.** Susan! Amelia! Wait! *(To God.)* What the HELL was that? I never hurt my wife. I loved her. This is just something you made up to scare me. To teach me a lesson. You know that's sick. I would never do that to her.

**GOD.** Sober you, maybe.

**JAMES.** You mean I got so drunk that I blacked out and beat my wife? *And I have no recollection of it.*

**GOD.** Yes, James.

**JAMES.** Oh, my God. No. *(James remembers the fight. The lights shift and scene rewinds to the fight between James and Susan only James is now in the scene.)*

**SUSAN.** Where have you been?

**JAMES.** I don't have fucking time for this.

**SUSAN.** This is the third night this week you've come home drunk.

**JAMES.** So fucking what?

**SUSAN.** Stop yelling! Amelia's asleep! I need you to calm down.

**JAMES.** Don't tell me what to do.

**SUSAN.** Ow, James, you're hurting me!

**JAMES.** Yeah? What are you gonna do about it?

**SUSAN.** Let go of me! *(James pulls Susan's arm and she falls to the ground and cries.)*

**JAMES.** Aww, Susan. I'm sorry.

**SUSAN.** No! Get away from me. Stop it.

**AMELIA.** Mom! Are you okay? *(To James.)* Get away from her! How could you do this?

I hate you! Mom, come on, get up. We're leaving. *(They exit in a hurry.)*

**JAMES.** *(Chases them out.)* Hey! Get back here! *(Once he reaches his previous position the lights snaps out of the memory.)* No, no, no. No. This is your fault!

**GOD.** James...

**JAMES.** All of it. You're the writer of this story. The puppet-master pulling my strings.

**GOD.** I may be the writer of this story, but you're the director. You made every decision on your own. The story may have already been written, but as the director, you provided your own interpretation of it. You made your own choices.

**JAMES.** You took my son from me, stole his life and shattered mine. You broke my family, destroyed me in every possible way. How could I have chosen to act differently? You keep asking why I'm here? Why I am the way I am? It's all because of you. I am what you made me to be.

**GOD.** I made you in my image. I gave you your free will to do as you wished. I am a creator, but not your puppet-master. I'm just a parent. Like you. Loving my children to no end. I can guide you and nurture you, but in the end, you have complete control over your life. You're like— (*looking for the right word.*) like a Prosthetic God. You can create and destroy. You can love and hate. You can make choices. You are an extension of me. A part of myself that I cannot control. You take my place when I can not be there. You are your own puppet-master. Every person is.

(*Pause.*) So I will ask you one final time, why are you here?

**JAMES.** (*Really thinks about this. Then finally...*) I'm here because I was scared. I still am. (*Pause.*) After Jack died, the pain consumed me. Everything was out of my control. I never thought I would be able to escape that feeling. I thought it would drown me. I was scared that I would die along with him.

**GOD.** Okay. Good. So...?

**JAMES.** (*Choked up.*) So I clutched to the thing that I knew could control that pain, even if it was only for a moment. Every part of my life would bring up that pain. I couldn't

deal with it anymore, so I had to stay numb to it. Alcohol became my focus, my center, the thing that I orbited around. I pushed away my family when they needed me the most. I hurt them. I lost everything because I was scared.

**GOD.** Now that's the answer I was looking for.

**JAMES.** Maybe they're just better off without me.

**GOD.** Better off without *this* you. You can be this you or you can be a *better* you.

**JAMES.** How do I become a better me?

**GOD.** That's up to you. I can't make your choices for you. Remember you're a Prosthetic God. (*God checks watch and rises, brushes herself off and begins to walk away.*)

**JAMES.** That's it?

**GOD.** (*Pauses and turns back.*) I will always be here to help you. All you need to do is ask. (*God exits.*) (*Blackout.*) (*End of Scene VII.*)

## SCENE VIII

*The scene opens with James standing behind a podium.*

*He looks more put together than the last time we saw him.*

*He has on clean clothes and his hair is more tamed.*

*He is at an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting and it is one year anniversary of sobriety. He is addressing the crowd.*

**JAMES.** Hi... My name is James and I'm an alcoholic. Yeah, um, this is my first anniversary of being sober and I'm feeling pretty good about it. I was lost.... for a long time. I lost my six-year-old son in a car accident almost five years ago. We were hit by a drunk driver. Now most people would probably swear off the stuff, but it was the only thing that kept me from drowning in sorrow. I was numb for years. I shut out my wife and daughter who were grieving like I was. They needed me but I wasn't there for them. I lost my job and then they left me. I had been living on the streets for a while and had lost all hope of ever feeling happy again. But thanks to a friend, my higher power, I was able to realize that I can choose what type of life I live. I decided to take my life back into my own hands by turning my will over to the care of my higher power, my God. I came here one year ago today and it seemed like the best first step. I'll admit it, I felt powerless. My life had become unmanageable, but by turning my will over to the care of God, the things that I had lost are now slowly coming back to me. I know it's going to take a lot more work, but I wouldn't trade my worst day being sober for my best day being drunk. When I came to AA, it cut the ball and chain that was holding me back. Now I am able to become the person that God has always intended for me to be. So I guess I'll finish up with this little prayer if that's all right. The Serenity Prayer. *(Pauses to collect himself.)* "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference. Amen." *(Lights fade to black.) (End of Scene VIII.) (End of Show.)*

**PROSTHETIC  
GODS**

Written and directed by  
Taylor Cronin

**Al Cyrus Pavilion Theater**

**April 20th, 21st, at  
7:30pm & April 22nd,  
at 2:00pm**

**\*DISCLAIMER\***  
This production  
contains **VIOLENT**  
and **MATURE**  
content. Viewer  
discretion is  
advised.

**Thank you to the  
University of  
Maine School of  
Performing Arts  
and Maine  
Masque for their  
support  
throughout this  
project.**

APPENDIX C

**OPEN AUDITIONS FOR**

# **PROSTHETIC GODS**

Written and Directed by:  
TAYLOR CRONIN

**Tuesday, March 6th 6:00p-9:00p**  
Al Cyrus Pavillion Theater

Actors are encouraged to bring a prepared one-minute,  
dramatic monologue. Cold readings will also be seen.  
Sides will be made available upon request.

Rehearsal Dates: March 19th — April 19th  
Show dates: April 20th, 21st, 22nd

**Sign up for a 10-minute time slot in the School of Performing  
Arts main office.**

Please contact Libbey Masse (Stage Manager, [libbey.masse@maine.edu](mailto:libbey.masse@maine.edu)) or Taylor Cronin  
([taylor.cronin@maine.edu](mailto:taylor.cronin@maine.edu)) with any questions.

APPENDIX D

# “PROSTHETIC GODS” Audition Sign-up Sheet

Please contact Libbey Masse (Stage Manager, [libbey.masse@maine.edu](mailto:libbey.masse@maine.edu))  
o or Taylor Cronin ([taylor.cronin@maine.edu](mailto:taylor.cronin@maine.edu)) with any questions.

<b>Tuesday, March 6th</b>	<b>Name and Email</b>
<b>6:00-6:10</b>	
<b>6:10-6:20</b>	
<b>6:20-6:30</b>	
<b>6:30-6:40</b>	
<b>6:40-6:50</b>	
<b>6:50-7:00</b>	
<b>7:00-7:10</b>	
<b>7:10-7:20</b>	
<b>7:20-7:30</b>	

<b>Tuesday, March 6th</b>	<b>Name and Email</b>
<b>7:30-7:40</b>	
<b>7:40-7:50</b>	
<b>7:50-8:00</b>	
<b>8:00-8:10</b>	
<b>8:10-8:20</b>	
<b>8:20-8:30</b>	
<b>8:30-8:40</b>	
<b>8:40-8:50</b>	
<b>8:50-9:00</b>	

\*If unavailable to meet at any time listed above please email either Libbey or Taylor.

# *Prosthetic Gods*

## Audition Contract

**Rehearsal Dates: March 19th-April 19th**

**Performance Dates: April 20th-22nd**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(As it would be in the program)

Local Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Height: \_\_\_\_\_ Year in School: \_\_\_\_\_ Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Prior Theater Experience:

Special Skills:

Please list conflicts that would affect your availability for rehearsal weekdays and weekend:

(March 19th-April 22nd)

Please list your class schedule for this Spring on the back of this form.

IF NOT CAST, I WOULD LIKE TO HELP WITH (PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

MAKEUP\_\_\_ COSTUMES\_\_\_ PROPS\_\_\_ PUBLICITY\_\_\_ SET\_\_\_  
STAGE CREW\_\_\_ PROGRAMS\_\_\_ LIGHTING\_\_\_ SOUND\_\_\_ ASM\_\_\_

By signing this contract you agree to attend rehearsals and performances punctually as well as to put forth full effort towards the completion of this production.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your interest in *Prosthetic Gods* and Good Luck

## AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Taylor Cronin was born on August, 22nd 1996 to loving parents, Tim and Cheryl Cronin. She has a younger brother, named Timmy with whom she shares many of the same passions. She is a fourth-year Mass Communication Major with minors in Theatre and Spanish. She has a strong passion for theatre and would someday like to become a theatre teacher. Taylor is the president of the student-run Theatre Club, Maine Masque, and has participated in many productions put on by the School of Performing Arts. Her love for theatre can only be rivaled by her love for skiing. Taylor works as a ski instructor at Shawnee Peak Ski Area in Bridgton, Maine, where she teaches children ages four to twelve the fundamentals of skiing. She is a member of many colligate Honors Societies, including Phi Beta Kappa, Golden Key, Phi Kappa Phi, Lambda Pi Eta, and Alpha Psi Omega. She has a love for learning and strives to do her absolute best at everything she does.