

MUNDUS

A tragedy in two acts

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Based an original idea

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CHARACTERS

MUNDUS - Billionaire property developer determined to "fix the country"

EVE - Mundus's ex-wife and mother of Eee, Mun and Ngud

EEE - Mundus's elder son

MUN - Mundus's younger son

NGUD - Mundus' beautiful daughter

KILLIGREW - A newsman who follows and reports on Mundus as Mundus campaigns

OTHER PLAYERS

The scenes with these players are to be video taped before production and displayed on a large TV screen during the show.

Pundits - 4 media commentators

Citizens - 5 or 6 - men and women

The Deplorables - same players as citizens

The Audience - is a major "character" in the play - acts as voters and as rally attendees.

SETTING AND TIME

The play can be set in any time period and in any locale. The set is essentially bare. Props are few: desk, chair, airline seats, a large door.

SCENE BREAKDOWN

One scene flows into another. Mundus is on stage at all times.

- Mundus in his Tower contemplating his "move" into politics
- Mundus decides to campaign for President
- Mundus invites Killigrew along
- Mundus and Eee make a deal for Eee to run the family business as long as Ngud joins the campaign.
- Mundus on the campaign trail
- Mundus wins
- Mundus betrays his voters
- The Deplorables kill Mundus and Ngud

PLAYWRIGHT BIO:

Vian Andrews is a Canadian residing in the west coast city of Vancouver. Since graduating from University, where he studied drama, in 1973. Later, Mr. Andrews took a law degree at the University of British Columbia and after graduation pursued a career in law and business. He left business in 2011 and is now writing full time.

Plays:

The Dream of Richard, King

The Penis Dialogues

WopSong: Tune & Echo

Shot! A murder mystery

MUNDUS

The Long Trial of Adam and Eve (currently in writing)

Novels:

The Land of Is

The Summit of Us

The Shunk

Screenplays:

The Treasures of Percy Lancelot

Shot! A murder mystery

Rock of Ages

Tranquility

I, Dragon (TV Series)

FADE IN:

ACT ONE

MUNDUS NOVIANS, a big, bluff man in his 60s sporting great plumes of flame red hair. He wears a good suit, but his tie dangles below his belt like an unweighted pendulum. As he talks he parades to and fro along the high windows of his office overlooking The City talking to the gods in a loud mumble.

MUNDUS

Oh, yes. I, I am awake in the drear hours when the city is still atwinkle with yesterday's light. Down there in the wet streets, ambulances call out the dead, news pushers deposit their latest alarums, street sweepers and garbage trucks ply the streets and avenues scrubbing at the muck and mire. The homeless turn in their muddy blankets upon the subway grates, their stomachs rumbling the rusty rails of dying dreams. But, I? I am here, held aloft in my gold redoubt by gilded girders and kept safe and un-buffed by winds that blow up and out of the hinterland's river of lies, as I watch it flow to the betraying sea that is this City. All is broken. But, I am ready to work a fix, for I am a man who can cut Human nature at the joint.

He returns to his desk and pulls up the handset of an over-large dial phone.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

(loudly)

Get me Tom Killigrew.

A few chimes and noises penetrate Mundus' office.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

He's a fool is Killigrew, but a useful tool.

(beat)

Killigrew! It's Mundus.

(beat)

As per our deal, I have a scoop to deliver. Oh, yes, Killigrew, the biggest scoop of all. Huge.

(MORE)

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Can't talk about it on the phone.
Come to the Tower. If you're not
here when I'm ready to talk I'll
give it to some other superman. As
per our deal, Killigrew.

He hangs the phone up and paces in front of his desk mumbling
to himself. Suddenly, he points to the heavens and exclaims

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Oh yes, you will have your
comeuppance!

Unseen by Mundus, Mundus' two sons, **EEE** and **MUN**, enter
carefully from center stage left as Mundus retreats to his
very large, clean desk in front of a large, wide screen
hanging behind that displays photos of Mundus with the rich
and powerful.

MUN

He's not sleeping, Eee. He never
leaves his office. He's pacing
again; talking to himself again.

EEE

He caught a glimpse of his old
man's face in the windows there and
he's bargaining for another chance
at youth. But don't worry about
him, Mun, worry about the The
Business.

From downstage right in a golden light, enter Mundus' ex-
wife, **EVE**, and his daughter from Eve, **NGUD**, both in gowns,
both beautiful, haughty and haut couture, but Ngud wears a
particularly inscrutable face. Eve's white fingernails are
extraordinarily long.

NGUD

He doesn't remember the names of my
children, mother.

EVE

But, he remembers the names of all
his enemies. Look at him there,
all a-thrum and twitching. He's
got another project. We'll all go
sleepless soon enough.

NGUD

Whatever it is, I'm going to help
him.

Eee's ear is cocked in the direction of Eve and Ngud.

EVE

Beware, Ngud. He'll clutch you even tighter than you now permit and pull you into the never-never with the boys, into Mundus dreams and Mundus schemes.

Eee walks over with Mun trailing. Mun kisses his mother on the cheek, eliciting a weak smile.

EEE

Mother, what a surprise.

EVE

I'm making my last delivery, Eee.

EEE

Oh?

NGUD

I thought I might tell father...and you and Mun, of course.

EEE

What?

NGUD

That I am ready to join The Business.

MUN

(delighted)

Father will be ecstatic!

Eee is not pleased.

EEE

So, you'll park your children with nannies? Is that fair to them?

EVE

As for me, I'm done and finished with my mothering.

MUN

Well, not really, mother. Not really?

EVE

Don't you remember boys, that day I dropped you here at the Tower? Here Mundus, I said, the boys are men now. Yours to do with as you wish.

(MORE)

EVE (CONT'D)

It was the last thing he wanted, or so he thought. He rattled the windows with his noisy protestations but the windows held as they always do and I stood my ground. And then, true to form, the mighty Mundus wailed like a baby and shivered every prism on the crystal chandelier.

Waaaaaaaghhhhhhhhh!

Waaaaaaaghhhhhhh!

(beat)

Then your father punched his little fists into the roiled air above his flaming head and stomped his feet on the unsurprised carpet threads.

(beat)

When his anger-squinted eyes opened once again I was gone, and you were cowering against the door I locked shut behind me.

(beat)

But, it's worked out well, don't you think? You fit right in.

Mundus looks up from his desk and grunts. Mundus stands and watches Eve with a knitted brow. Eve kisses Ngud on the cheek and moves center left into the shadows as Mundus watches.

EVE (CONT'D)

(to Ngud)

My darling, be ever so careful.

Give your heart but not your soul.

Mundus sees Eee and Mun who are skulking in the shadows.

MUNDUS

Boys!? Is that you?

Eee and Mun make a fast exit stage right, then Mundus sees Ngud.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Ngud? Come. Come here girl.

As she walks toward him, he comes around his desk to greet her. He pulls her awkwardly close and attempts a kiss on the lips which she deflects to a cheek.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Look at you. So beautiful. So smart.

NGUD

Father...

MUNDUS

Eee and Mun should have been here by now? The day's half done. Hah! Your brothers want to run The Business. That's what Eee says. Well, he doesn't say it. But he's chomping on the silver spoon I stuck in his mouth like a thoroughbred's bit. Too clever by half that one. But, Mun, you know, sweet boy. He just comes out and says it. Father, he says, one day - he means when I'm gone - one day, one day Eee and I will run The Business.

(beat)

He wants me to be proud of him, of them. He's happy to wait til I'm gone. He's a good boy. But, Eee? He's too much like me. What he wants, he wants now!

Ngud turns away and walks to the wall of pictures and memorabilia behind his desk. Mundus realizes she has something on her mind.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

What is it, Ngud?

Eee and Mun stride in from upstage left.

EEE

She wants to join The Business, father.

MUNDUS

(surprised and pleased)
Really? Really?

Ngud, frowns at Eee but nods "yes" at Mundus.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Oh, my boys. This is great news!
Great news. The best news!

He embraces her tightly to which she submits stiffly while throwing angry eye darts at Eee. She breaks Mundus' embrace then he throws his arms around Eee's and Mun's shoulders.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

I have always told you boys, timing
is everything in business. In fact
it is...? Mun?

MUN

Everything in life!

Mundus slaps Mun on the shoulder.

MUNDUS

Right! So now, with you three by
my side I can carry the Mundus
brand to The Country.

EEE

(concerned)

What do you mean, father?

MUNDUS

I mean, it's perfect timing!

Reporter, Tom Killigrew, walks in from the back of the
theatre auditorium and stands in front of center stage
looking up.

KILLIGREW

Mundus!

Mundus ambles away from his kids and moves toward center
front to gaze out over the audience where he spies Killigrew.

MUNDUS

Killigrew!

He waves at Killigrew and gestures for him to come up to the
office. Killigrew mounts the stage and walks toward Mundus.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

(abruptly)

More later. Go! I have to talk to
Killigrew. Go. Go.

He shoos them offstage and when they are safely out of sight
he draws Killigrew closer.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Just in time, Killigrew. I was just
about to call Kent over at the
Daily Planet.

KILLIGREW

Your call surprised me Mundus. It has been a long time since you last abused me.

MUNDUS

Because of the last piece you wrote about me? I am not that small-minded, Killigrew.

Mundus puts his arm around Killigrew's shoulder.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

You are a worthless piece of crap, Killigrew. Slime under my boot. You are ambiguously something or other, an in-between spectre of a human being, an unprincipled, convictionless son of a bitch. But you care about The Country. In your own way you do. I like that, even when you try to drag me down to your disgusting bottom-feeder level. And you have readers. I know your numbers. There's not a number I don't know including the last number of Pi. Which is 3, by the way. But, you? You have good numbers too. Lots of readers. And you care. You care. So, as much as I like Kent, I'm going to give you the scoop?

KILLIGREW

Care to say what it is?

MUNDUS

I want you on the plane with me. Follow every step I take.

KILLIGREW

Where to, Mundus?

MUNDUS

To the Presidency.

KILLIGREW

What?

MUNDUS

The Presidency. So, I can fix The Country.

KILLIGREW

Why?

MUNDUS

As I said, we need to fix The Country. It's busted and broken and no politician will do what must be done to put it right.

Mundus walks to the windows overlooking the audience and beckons Killigrew to join him.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Look out there, Killigrew. It's sad. So sad.

KILLIGREW

How?

MUNDUS

How what?

KILLIGREW

...are you going to fix The Country?

Mundus puts his hands on Killigrew's shoulders and stares into his eyes.

MUNDUS

I'm going back to basics. To our fundamental nature.

Killigrew walks away and ponders what he has just learned, his back to Mundus.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

What do you think, Killigrew?

KILLIGREW

(turning to Mundus)

It is a scoop, Mundus. I grant you that.

Killigrew jumps down off the stage in front of the audience and walks quickly away.

MUNDUS

Get the word out. Big headlines. The biggest!

Killigrew strides up the auditorium aisle and out the rear doors while Mundus paces.

As the stage begins to darken Mundus goes back to his desk and paces around it. Then he walks to center stage.

The screen behind the desk flutters and presents an image of a rising moon.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Night again. Deplorable night.

(beat)

When I was a boy, The Country was a right or wrong place, a good or bad place, a day or night place, a place where the suburbs my father built pushed back the vast unknown that spread forever under the light of an always rising sun. Before men like him, braver men slashed through the thickets of their doubts and drove hard to pierce the very belly of the land. Some died at the hands of evil's yelping forces, and now lay buried in the abiding myths that give us all a righteous pride. That was our country - square and plumb and new. Oh, how I envy the men who took such great chances out there in the bewilderment.

Mundus comes to the front of the stage and prowls as he talks.

Here in the City, when night falls, red-eyed rats scuttle the surfaces of our dank underworlds and belfried bats break-out of their churches to feast on fireflies in the florescent air. City dogs are set to barking at the prowling din while they scrounge for scraps. In truth, I do not need to be brave here in my Tower - high above it all. I can stay here in my pile of gold and pretend I don't give a damn.

(beat)

But out there, back then, out there in what used to be the skulking Indian lands, to the sound of drums beating in the throats of frogs, the nighthawks and owls readied their claws and beaks for murder. Moon-howling wolves cried out their immemorial dreams and sharpened their teeth for the bloody morrow.

(MORE)

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

In that wild nature a man had to be
brave and bold even to get through
the long night's hours.

Stopping at front and center, Mundus looks into the audience
and speaks directly to them.

Tomorrow dawns *our* new day - with
Killigrew's revelation: how Mundus'
is now awake to his long-ignored
duty to you, The People. How
Mundus has found his courage and
will not sleep until he has come
down from his Tower to lead you out
of this electric nightmare into the
unafraid sunlight that illuminates
all the shit our enemies have shat
and spread upon our country.

(beat)

Spin faster world and give us
morning. Give us our new frontier.

Mundus retreats to his desk, sits, pulls a large leger out of
the desk drawer which he peruses with a smile. Tiring, he
finally puts his head down on his crossed arms and sleeps.

Four Pundits sitting together appear on the screen behind
him.

PUNDIT 1

News out of the City...

PUNDIT 2

Rumours are flying...

PUNDIT 3

Tower builder, Mundus Mundus

PUNDIT 4

Will bring his business skills...

PUNDIT 2

To the Presidency.

PUNDIT 1

Or is it just another Mundus stunt?

PUNDIT 3

Stay tuned.

The screen flickers then goes to grey snow.

From above, whispers, then more whispers building and
building into a white noise.

Killigrew enters stage front left and turns to the audience. As the screen displays the headline: "MUNDUS SEEKS PRESIDENCY", voices are heard poking through a cloud of loud whispers: "Mundus Runs"; "Game Changer", "Mundus Means Business". Morning light rises across the stage. Street noises mingle with the voices.

Eee emerges from the right back area and takes a position a few feet to Mundus's right. Mun emerges from the left back area and takes a position a few feet to the left of Mundus. Eve and Ngud appear right front - across the stage from Killigrew. All are looking at Mundus until Killigrew speaks.

KILLIGREW

(to the audience)

Years ago, young Mundus mused that he would one day run for President. Not all young dreamers make prophets of themselves. But here we are.

Eve takes Ngud's hands.

EVE

Come away with me while you still can.

Eve gently runs her long-nailed hand down Ngud's cheek.

EVE (CONT'D)

Darling... It's not too late.

Mundus raises his head, sees the parade of headlines on the screen, shakes off the fatigue that still grips him, looks around the room, then stands and leans forward on his fists.

MUNDUS

Good work, Killigrew.

KILLIGREW

The first blast of news is out.

MUNDUS

What are the media saying?

KILLIGREW

Everything. Nothing. But nothing, like a white-out blizzard, is nothing.

MUNDUS

Our first press conference today.

KILLIGREW

You'll put on a show. Of course.

MUNDUS

It's time to shock the body
politic, Mundus style.

Eee steps closer to Mundus. Mundus sees him and moves toward him. Mun crosses in front of the desk and joins Eee and Mundus.

Killigrew walks across the stage to interview Eve and Ngud.

MUN

Congratulations, father!

He shakes his father's hand.

MUNDUS

And you, Eee? Did I surprise you
too?

EEE

What about The Business, father?

Mundus walks behind his desk, grabs the ledger and puts in in the drawer which he closes with a loud bang. He sits and looks alternately at Mun and Eee who now sit on opposite corners of the desk facing their father.

KILLIGREW

(to Eve)

When you were married to him, did
Mungus ever say he wanted to be
President?

EVE

No comment.

KILLIGREW

(to Ngud)

They say your father counts on you.

EVE

(speaking for Ngud)

No comment.

KILLIGREW

More than either of your brothers.

EVE

(to Ngud)

No comment.

NGUD

Yes. I suppose that's true.
But...

EVE

No comment. No comment. No
comment.

EEE

(to Mundus)
The Business, father? The
Business.

Killigrew hears the question posed by Eee. He moves over to them, followed by Ngud.

KILLIGREW

(to Mundus)
The Business, Mundus?

MUNDUS

It runs itself. I set it up that
way.

EVE

(loudly)
Like the gods set up Sisyphus with
a mountain and a rock.

Startled by Eve's proclamation, everyone turns and stares at her.

MUNDUS

Leave us Killigrew.

KILLIGREW

Your answer, Mundus?

Killigrew moves to get closer to Mundus but Eee and Mun cut him off then force him back.

MUNDUS

(to Killigrew)
Press Conference today, Killigrew.
Front row seat for you. Camouflage
yourself.
(to Eee)
He's a good man. On our side.

Killigrew spots Eve and strides quickly toward her. She sees him coming and attempts a fast exit but not before turning to Killigrew.

EVE

No comment.

Eve exits.

Killigrew stops then turns to the audience.

KILLIGREW

(to the audience)

The end of their marriage was sordid. She has much to say about the beast Mundus, the brute Mundus, the boor Mundus, the lout Mundus, the con Mundus, the philanderer Mundus, but, for the sake of their children... No comment. For the sake of their children - and the few million that was wired to an offshore bank account as soon as they signed the divorce papers and after she signed the spike-heeled confidentiality agreement... No comment. She grew the children from birth 'til she could put them, still malleable, into the hands of their father. She would liked to have saved Ngud, but headstrong, star-bright Ngud thought she should, in some way, replace her mother at her father's side. So, Eve disappeared inside the very small print of that vile contract where, even between the lines, her grief and grievances cannot be read. No comment. Amen.

Mundus steps forward away from the kids, sees Killigrew, then goes to Ngud and takes her hand, gesturing to the boys to follow. He takes them front and center with Ngud still holding his hand standing on his left. Mun stands to her left one step back, and Eee takes a position to Mundus' right one step back.

MUNDUS

I am at the height of my powers.
The Mundus brand knows no bounds.
I have triumphed over all my
enemies and made liars of the
naysayers. I made them pay; earned
their respect. Who says "no" to me
and to the means and methods by
which we do our business?

EEE

No one.

MUNDUS

Who doubts our killer instincts?

MUN

No one.

MUNDUS

Who would dare deny us the chance
to help The People?

Ngud shakes-off her father's hand and takes a step back.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

(impatiently)

Ngud? Who will deny us? Who will
get in our way?

NGUD

(to the audience)

Hardly a soul.

Mundus turns to Ngud and holds her chin as he looks in her eyes wondering about her equivocation. She holds his angry gaze.

MUNDUS

(to Ngud)

I like how the doctors I paid for
raised the bones of your cheeks and
put a pretty nose there.

(putting his finger on her
nose)

Right there.

Ngud stands erect and refuses eye contact. Mundus walks around her looking at her figure.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

They made you look like a real
woman. You must be grateful for
that at least?

EEE

Father!

Hearing Eee's reproach, Mundus leaves the kids and walks back to his desk and sits. Eee walks back, Mun follows, but Ngud, upset by her father's intimidation, moves off to the side where she watches them.

Eee paces in front of Mundus' desk.

EEE (CONT'D)

You see the problem, father?

(beat)

We stood together at the press conference.

MUNDUS

Yes! Yes! Together. A grand alliance. Mundus and his brilliant, beautiful children.

EEE

That is the problem.

MUN

I was so proud, Eee. Weren't you proud, Ngud?

Ngud remains inscrutable.

EEE

Of course, I was proud, but, think. Think! it is precisely our unity that will undermine the campaign.

MUNDUS

Trust me son. The People love a smiling family in a frame.

EEE

The People yes, but the Mundus brand is The Business and you cannot pull The Business into your politics.

MUNDUS

We are indivisible, Eee. It's a fact.

MUN

Eee may have a point, father.

MUNDUS

Shut it, Mun!

EEE

Mun and I, and now Ngud, are neck deep in The Business. If you pull us onto the campaign trail our strength will prove a fatal weakness. Defeat will stock the Mundus brand.

MUNDUS
 Defeated!?! When was I ever
 defeated?
 (beat)
 Ngud! Come.

Mundus rises from his desk and comes round to meet Ngud.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)
 What do you say? Leave The Country
 in a mess or stay and run The
 Business?

NGUD
 I think politics will kill you.

MUNDUS
 But? There's a but there...

NGUD
 That's what I think.

MUNDUS
 I'm on the ballot. Damn you
 daughter. Decision made.

EEE
 You need to separate yourself from
 The Business.

MUNDUS
 I am The Business.

Eee takes Mundus aside.

EEE
 (confidentially)
 Father, hear me out. What you have
 always said is true. Politics is
 all posture and appearances.

MUNDUS
 It is. It is.

Eee turns to Ngud and Mun.

EEE
 (to Ngud and Mun)
 Leave us.

Ngud stares at Eee but he shoos them away insistently.

NGUD
 C'mon Mun, let's leave them to it.

Ngud and Mun exit center right. Mundus looks uncomfortable.

MUNDUS

I would feel better if she were here. Since your mother abandoned me, Ngud's counsel is...

EEE

I can speak for her and Mun.

Mundus and Eee stand facing one another, the old man looking at his younger self.

EEE (CONT'D)

You want to be President.

MUNDUS

Yes.

EEE

Of The Country.

MUNDUS

Yes.

EEE

To fix it.

MUNDUS

I can do that. Who better?

EEE

So, let us run The Business.

MUNDUS

You're not ready.

EEE

I am ready. How could I not be? I have learned from the best.

MUNDUS

Me?

EEE

Yes.

MUNDUS

You would run The Business?

EEE

As a cypher. It runs itself, remember?

(beat)

(MORE)

EEE (CONT'D)

You can become the President,
father but only if appearances...
You know what I mean?

MUNDUS

I get your point. Yes.

EEE

So?

Mundus nods.

EEE (CONT'D)

You can't be seen to run The
Business while you fix The Country.

MUNDUS

I could do both.
(angrily)
Do you think I can't?

Angered, Mundus stomps around like a Minotaur. Eee moves out of his way and stands behind the back corner of Mundus' desk.

EEE

Of course you could, father. But,
your winning strategy will be a
public display of great self-
sacrifice.

(beat)

We want you to win, father. Mun
and I, but, especially Ngud.

MUNDUS

(pointing to the chair)
You want to sit there!

EEE

The Country needs you. Everyone
knows it.

Eee comes around to his father and puts his hand on Mundus' shoulder.

EEE (CONT'D)

No one is taking The Business from
you, father. Even to me you are
Mundus. Mundus! But, for the sake
of your brand, for the sake of The
Business, you need to convince the
Media that you are stepping away,
to focus on the deepest needs of
The People.

Mundus softens. The lights begin to dim.

EEE (CONT'D)

While you're gone, Mun and Ngud and
I will...

MUNDUS

No. No. No! I want her with me.
Out there.

EEE

Yes! Yes! Brilliant father!

MUNDUS

She is so sane and sensible.

EEE

But, does she want to go?

MUNDUS

You talk to her, Eee. If she
doesn't agree, it's a deal breaker.

EEE

If you don't win, you step right
back in. Agreed?

Eee sticks out his hand to close the deal with a handshake.
Mundus, temporarily soothed, shakes hands. Eee exits center
left.

Mundus, emotionally drained after the day's events, sits on
the corner of his desk with his hands on his knees. The
lights dim as night comes on.

The sound of whispering voices again, running like a audio
ticker tape. "Mundus severing ties", "Boys to run Business",
"Focus on Campaign", "Daughter campaigning". Very tired,
Mundus lays down on the desk to nap.

Presently, as the whispers die out, Ngud enters from front
right, and sees her sleeping father. She quietly moves
toward him and smooths his hair.

NGUD

Oh father, father, I confess
My unbounded love for you is
Like a mother's love for a sad,
Angry and defiant child whom
The laughing gods did curse and
bless.

Then she moves to center stage.

(MORE)

NGUD (CONT'D)

My love is full of awe and fear
 At who you are and what you've
 done,
 For here among your fellow man
 You raised your name into the sky
 To sneer at those very gods above.

You have become your mighty self.
 But me? I've kept your name
 attached
 To mine and so my husband feels
 His face and name lay buried
 In the bosom of your power.

My children live, but do not live
 In the shadow of your Tower,
 Where, in the games of childhood
 We play, I breed my pride in them,
 But not my searing pains of doubt.

Mundus stirs and shakes himself awake with a grunt.
 Disoriented, Mundus throws his legs over the front edge of
 the desk and sits. Then he stands and after gaining a surer
 footing walks on stiff legs to front and center.

Ngud looks back at her father with concern, but exits center
 left.

MUNDUS

(to the audience)

Do you dream of a better world?
 How can you not? Even, if for you,
 a better world would arrive too
 late, you think of your children
 and your children's children living
 in that different place. It is a
 hot and hurting hope. I know it.
 I have children. I have children!

(BEAT)

The sun will rise - there in the
 east - and the grip you thought you
 had on your waking thoughts will
 loosen. All you saw and heard in
 the bright darkness of your sleep
 will rise in the morning light and
 become a vapor. But, your gut,
 your gut! holds the memory of your
 ancient desire for peace and
 happiness, the shedding of hard
 care, for golden love.

(beat)

(MORE)

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

You want to be admired, don't you, to have such munificence that you can bestow good fortune on family and friends and through them reach the millions whose desperation anchors us to a grim reality? All of us lifted up and out. You don't want to be fucked over by the powers that be; bled dry by the tax man; kept mum and numb in your disbelief and doubt.

(beat)

That is our politics. Freedom to do as we wish and as we want.

Morning light comes into Mundus' office. He pulls himself up, and fills himself with his daytime energy. He turns and walks to front right, then stops and speaks to the audience again.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Look, I am going out on the hustings this very day. Killigrew will come with me to be a witness. And my daughter, Ngud, too, to carry the torch with her old, dear father.

(beat)

Listen, if you want to hear the cock crowing as dawn breaks on our great country, instead of the buzz and rattle and clanging to which you have become accustomed, come with us.

The sound of a 747 sounds over Mundus' head. Eee, guiding Mun to Mundus' desk with his hand on Mun's elbow enter from stage right back. The sound of the plane grows louder as they talk until Eee is shouting to be heard. Mundus looks back at the boys.

EEE

The Business is in bad shape, Mun.

MUN

You keep saying that. How can that be?

Eee pulls a big ledger from the top drawer of Mundus' desk. He brings it around and opens it.

EEE

See here, Mun. Father has dangerously over-leveraged our assets. He's been kiting cheques, taking write-offs here and claiming phony profits there. These properties are underwater; these are crumbling into dust. It's all here in the secret Mundus ledger.

MUNDUS

(to the audience)
He doesn't understand what he's looking at.

MUN

What are we going to do?

EEE

(yelling)
Save him from himself.

The jet roars louder as though coming in for a landing. A hard wind blows on Mundus' face and Mundus turns into it, opening his arms to receive it straight on.

MUN

(screaming)
Save him?

The sound of the airplane dies out.

EEE

(overloud)
And ourselves.
(beat)
I'll take the big chair. You.
Well, you do as I tell you and all will be well.

Killigrew joins Mundus as Eee and Mun exit at stage left center. Mundus beckons Killigrew to join him. Mundus leads him to front and center; Eee and Mun, then Ngud come up behind them.

MUNDUS

We're out in The Country now. Look at that. A tree.

KILLIGREW

With a bird in it.

A man and woman in casual clothes carrying a "Mundus for President" banner stride out to meet them, holding the banner high between them.

WOMAN GREETER

Oh, there you are, there you are.

MALE GREETER

Mundus himself on this very soil.

The male greeter extends his hand to shake Mundus' hand, but Mundus recoils. Thinking better, Mundus takes the hand and gives it a quick, weak shake.

WOMAN GREETER

Did you enjoy your flight, Mr. Mundus?

MUNDUS

(warming up)

Have you met my daughter? Ngud.

WOMAN GREETER

A pleasure, a real pleasure, dear. You are even more beautiful than those magazines make you seem.

MALE GREETER

Meetings all arranged, Mr. Mundus. At the arena. Hundreds...

MUNDUS

Hundreds?

MALE GREETER

Hundreds and hundreds Mundus. Everyone knows The Country needs fixing. They've come from far and wide. They saw you on the news.

WOMAN GREETER

Oh we are in terrible shape. Terrible. Terrible. A good fixing is what we need.

MALE GREETER

Do for The Country what you did for your business...

MUNDUS

(to Killigrew)

You see, Killigrew. They have an appetite for Mundus.

(MORE)

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

They are hungry for something new
and different.

MALE GREETER

Well, follow us, Mr. Mundus.

WOMAN GREETER

This way. This way.

As they walk, more people with signs and banners and T-Shirts
join them.

Killigrew walks to front and center and faces the audience
and reports from the arena with one hand cupped over an ear.

KILLIGREW

You can tell by the boisterous
crowd behind me that The People out
here in The Country have an
appetite for something new and
different and that's exactly what
Mundus is giving them. But does he
have what it takes to win this
election? Everyone I talk to
around here says "yes", but let's
leave it as a "maybe" for now.
It's a big country and we are a
long way from election night. Stay
tuned.

(to audience members)

Are you tuned-in madam? Sir?

Light rises on Mundus and Ngud. As the crowd in front of
Mundus and Ngud divides and exits to either side, Killigrew
jumps off stage and walks up the aisle and exits. Ngud walks
to center stage looking quizzically into the audience.

Mundus gloats a bit under a soft spotlight then sees Ngud.
He too steps down then walks up behind her. The Pundits
appear on the screen.

MUNDUS

They loved you.

(beat)

They loved me more because of you.
We are a winning strategy.

Eee and Mun enter from back left.

PUNDIT 1

Well, there is no question, Mundus
is upsetting apple carts...

PUNDIT 2
Everything upside down.

PUNDIT 3
I was in touch with a high ranking staffer on the opposition's side today...

PUNDIT 4
Are they panicking yet?

PUNDIT 3
He says they're not worried. Not at all.

PUNDIT 1
They should be.

PUNDIT 3
He's plunging into a deep well of despond.

They all keep blathering and arguing inaudibly until they fade out.

NGUD
(to Mundus)
I am exhausted, father. And I haven't seen my husband or children for weeks.

MUNDUS
The Country is so big.

She turns to face him.

NGUD
Tomorrow I must go back to the City.

He quickly takes her hand.

MUNDUS
A few more days we can both go home for a visit.

Eee calls out from across the stage.

EEE
(loudly)
Father!

NGUD
I am going home.

EEE
 (louder)
 Father!

Mundus holds his hand up to Eee to shut him up.

MUNDUS
 You can't, Ngud. The People love
 you. Expect you to be by my side.

EEE
 (loudly)
 A question. About The Business.

Mundus looks at Eee and Mun.

MUNDUS
 (to Ngud)
 You can't go. You'll stay here.

Mundus walks a few steps toward, Eee while Ngud, with great sadness, exits stage center left. Mundus and Eee again stand and face one another at about 8 feet distance.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)
 What is it, Eee?

EEE
 (to Mun)
 We just have to keep him in the
 loop from time to time.
 (to Mundus)
 I have tidied up a little problem
 with the properties.

MUNDUS
 Well, then. Good boy. Did Mun
 help?

EEE
 Practically did it himself.

MUN
 Did it your way, father.

MUNDUS
 Good boy, Mun.

MUN
 The People love you father.

EEE

The media may be barking with teeth bared, but The People are waving at you from their porches.

Mundus turns away from his boys and is startled and to see Ngud gone. The boys exit.

MUNDUS

The People will learn to hate the media as much as we do.

(beat)

Ngud!

Mundus walks shakily around for a few seconds looking for Ngud, but she is nowhere to be found.

The Pundits appear on the screen again.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

(bellowing)

Killigrew!

(beat)

Killigrew!

PUNDIT 1

He's very tired. Very.

PUNDIT 4

Ngud went back to the city. May not come back.

PUNDIT 3

The boys are making a break for freedom.

PUNDIT 2

Shit is being stirred-up. The opposition has found out some very bad things about Mundus.

Killigrew makes his way through the audience and climbs on stage at front center and, slightly out of breath and a bit wobbly, approaches Mundus.

MUNDUS

Killigrew!

KILLIGREW

I'm a bit drunk, Mundus. What do you want?

MUNDUS

The truth.

KILLIGREW

You seek the truth from a drunk
reporter? What else did you think
you'd get?

Killigrew puts his arm around Mundus shoulder and walks him to the front of the stage. Killigrew points at various audience members as he talks and walks Mundus along in front of them.

KILLIGREW (CONT'D)

It's true, some think you're too
old for the game of politics.

MUNDUS

Do you?

KILLIGREW

Yes, of course.

The Pundits nod.

KILLIGREW (CONT'D)

Some, think you're a narcissistic
bastard.

The Pundits nod.

MUNDUS

I am doing this for The People.

KILLIGREW

So you say.

(beat)

Some think you don't have the
temperament for the job.

The Pundits nod.

MUNDUS

I have the best temperament.

KILLIGREW

Even those who know you think you
are dangerously impulsive.

The Pundits nod. Killigrew drinks from his flask.

Killigrew pulls a flask out of his inside jacket pocket and unscrews the top. He offers it to Mundus who turns it away. Killigrew takes a big swig, and recaps it.

MUNDUS
 (facing the Pundits)
 I am decisive.

KILLIGREW
 Oh yes, you are decisive Mundus.
 Grant you that. Decisive as teeth
 in a neck.
 (beat)
 And, Mundus... A very few are
 wondering aloud... I say this in
 the spirit of speaking the truth.
 (beat)
 No. Better not.

MUNDUS
 Speak, Killigrew.

KILLIGREW
 Some have wondered aloud... They
 wonder if you might be fucking
 Ngud.

Mundus steps back.

MUNDUS
 She's my daughter.

KILLIGREW
 I merely repeat what is being
 assumed in many quarters.

MUNDUS
 If she were not my daughter...
 Well... She is a beauty.

Mundus glares menacingly at the Pundits who quickly disappear
 behind a headline "Father and Daughter Very Close".

The sound of a crowd at a rally sounds, but quietly at first.

KILLIGREW
 How about some truth from you,
 Mundus? Why do you want all of
 this?

Mundus walks nearer to front center and gazes out over the
 audience with the sound of wild cheering rising in the arena
 air. The screen displays a wild arena crowd.

MUNDUS
 Do you hear that Killigrew? There
 are tens of thousands in the arena
 tonight.

(MORE)

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

More banging on the doors to get
in. Tens of millions watching on
TV. And you're questioning
motives. Hah!

Ngud, Eee and Mun enter and take a position at center left.
Eve enters center right and stands looking at Mundus and her
children.

Killigrew spots Eve darts over to her, but Eve shakes her
head gesturing "no comment". Killigrew smiles and exits.

Mundus moves closer to center front then speaks to the
audience as if to the crowd. He raises his arms to quiet
them and speaks as the volume decreases.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

(pointing to Eee and Mun,
then Ngud)

My boys are in The City.

(beat)

Daddy's girl is here tonight.

Ngud steps forward. A spot falls uncomfortably on her, but
misses the boys.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Proud. So proud.

MUN

(yelling while clapping)

Love you dad!

MUNDUS

He's a good boy.

The crowd sounds die out. Ngud steps forward and stops about
10 feet behind Mundus. Eee follows her and takes a position
behind her.

EEE

He doesn't trust us.

NGUD

He doesn't trust you.

EEE

You think he trusts pity in the
guise of love?

Ngud walks to her mother looking for support against Eee.

EVE

He trusts no one.

MUNDUS

(loudly)

Thank you! Thank you all for coming! God bless our beautiful country.

EEE

(to Ngud)

The God card is now his ace of hearts.

Mundus backs away from the front of the stage. Mun calls from where he stands.

MUN

Bravo, father!

Mundus turns to Mun.

MUNDUS

Are you and Eee taking care of The Business, Mun?

Mun gives a thumbs up.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

(to the audience)

I am filled with the spirit of The People.

Eee returns to stand with Mun.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Run The Business, but, by God, boys, don't fuck it up.

Eee takes Mun by the elbow and they exit.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Wave to The People, Ngud.

She turns on a smile and waves wanly.

As Mundus walks toward Ngud he sees Eve. Before Mundus reaches Ngud, Eve strides toward him; Mundus retreats to his desk, and Eve follows. They take positions facing on either side of the desk, both leaning on their fists, each glaring at the other. Night begins to descend.

EVE

Ravelled in your delusions.

MUNDUS

I plucked you out of nowhere.

EVE
And threw me back.

MUNDUS
Paid you more than you are worth.
Paid for you silence. So be silent!
Paid you to be invisible. Be
invisible!

Mundus stands straight.

EVE
Eee and Mun now occupy your Tower.

MUNDUS
Like puppies in a box.

EVE
They are growing teeth Mundus.
But, what do I care about what men
do to men?
(beat)
Send Ngud home to her children and
her husband.

Mundus moves to the front of the desk, moving toward Eve threatening her, startling Ngud who turns and moves toward them both.

MUNDUS
You turn her mind against me.

EVE
Hah! Can't you see, you old fool,
she is as stubborn and stupid in
her devotion to you as I once was.

Eve moves back. Ngud freezes. Mundus looms over Eve and then begins to walk slowly around her, while she holds her place.

MUNDUS
I want you gone.

EVE
I am gone.

Mundus stops in front of her and grabs her chin with his hand.

MUNDUS
Gone forever!

EVE

You frighten me not a bit. Not
ever and not now.

Mundus raises his fist above her head. Eve rears back and raises her clawed hands and snarls like a cat. Ngud rushes to them and gets in between - pushing her father back.

NGUD

(to Eve)
Mother, go.

Ngud faces Mundus as Eve steps back into the shadows of center left and then exits into darkness.

MUNDUS

(confused)
Ngud?
(beat)
You're here. I thought you went
back to the City.

Ngud escorts her father back to the desk, then helps him sit.

NGUD

You must rest, father.

MUNDUS

Yes. Yes. But you must stay. You
will stay?

NGUD

Until you sleep.

He grips her wrist hard. She winces.

MUNDUS

(insistently)
You will stay the long night
through otherwise I will not sleep.

Angry, she looks hard into his eyes willing him to release her wrist. He is unable to withstand the look she gives him so he finally lets her go.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

What we're doing. So, important.
So important.

Ngud caresses his head until he is laying down.

NGUD

I will come back in a few days.
Now, sleep.

She turns her back on him and takes a step toward center stage. He half sits up.

MUNDUS

They love us, Ngud. Out here in
The Country.

NGUD

Sleep, father.

Again, he lays down on the desk in a foetal position facing front and sleeps. Once he is asleep, Ngud moves to center stage. A light comes up on Eve still watching in the shadows.

NGUD (CONT'D)

Oh, mother, not for me, the hate
That consumed you in its flame
Or the pain of those betrayals
That had you wailing in the Tower
Bearing the burden of his shame.

I stood between you then and there
And heard the terrifying voice
That fell down upon on my face
While you curled up in your silence
And disappeared without a trace.

I was left to love my father
In the only way I could -
By allowing him to mold me
By his money and his madness
Into my bloodless womanhood.

Morning breaks. Killigrew enters front right and listens to Ngud. Eve exits.

I made my father pay for love
And for all that I surrendered
At the dark altar of his will
By staying high above the fray
Where there is no blood to spill.

KILLIGREW

You're in it though, aren't you?
In the middle of the fight. You're
in it because you and Mundus are
intertwined like some weird
caduceus.

Killigrew walks to Ngud.

KILLIGREW (CONT'D)

Would you like to tell The People
what it's really like out here on
the road with Mundus? Give me the
exclusive interview.

NGUD

No comment.

Ngud exits center right as Killigrew watches, smiling.

Act 2

At the opening of Act 2, Killigrew is standing where he was when Ngud left the stage at the end of Act 1. Mundus still sleeps on the desk behind him in an early morning light.

KILLIGREW

We have been in The Country for a almost a month now. Mundus' campaign is gaining momentum. With each new stop along the way, the crowds get larger, noisier, angrier. On more than one occasion Mundus has been accompanied by his daughter, Ngud. Like her mother, who divorced Mundus a few years ago when Mundus took-up with yet another long legged, younger model, Ngud casts a calm and glamorous light on Mundus' raucous, raw and crude personae - crude pumped up from the deepest deposits of his ancient wounds.

The morning light starts to rise. Mundus wakes to a start, grunts, then throws his legs over the side of the desk and stands. He throws his head around and shakes the last of his sleep from his body, then puts his hands on the edge of the desk and with his back to the wall, he waggles his ass.

KILLIGREW (CONT'D)

Ngud has returned to the City so Mundus will carry the show to one small town after another; take himself to a few county fairs; kiss more than a few ugly babies, smile on the red-faced farmers and their church-supper wives while he wonders how their naked daughters might taste when their denims are piled by the side of his selfish bed. Tonight and every night, he'll rouse the locals by pouring the shit they call-out to him right back into their very ears, but transmogrified into a simple song. Circulus inextricabulus. Amen.

Mundus stirs, rises and swings his legs over the front of the desk.

MUNDUS

Is that you Killigrew?

Mundus walks toward Killigrew, and meets him front and center. They both look out over the audience.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Look at that Killigrew. Not even noon yet and the crowd is growing. Everyone said my campaign was a long shot. But, I know how to read The People. I know what they want. I know what they don't want. They want to see a mighty shaking-up; they don't want more of the same. So, Mundus comes amongst them. Comes now when the hated elites stay in The City, gone quiet with mute perplexity.

Eee enters carrying rolled blueprints and makes his way to Mundus' desk with Mun following.

KILLIGREW

Things to do, Mundus. Adio.

Killigrew jumps off the stage in front of the audience, and with deadlines in mind rushes to the right and exits.

Facing toward the audience, Eee unrolls the blueprints and holds them open with a hand on either side, looking intently at them. Mun stands off to the side.

Mundus prowls along the front of the stage quietly muttering his campaign slogan, now and again casting a determined look at the audience. At stage left he stops and looks back at Eee and Mun.

EEE

We'll strip out half the gold trim on this new building. More.

MUN

He won't go for that.

EEE

It's the only way to bring it in on time and under budget. Got to do it.

MUN

He'll bring a big thumping fist down us, Eee.

EEE

Fait accompli, Mun. If we have to strip all the gold out of The Tower and melt it down to pay our bills, we'll do it.

As the sound of a tumultuous crowd rises slowly, Mundus hears the boys. He's angry and concerned and decides to do something about Eee's power grab. He walks toward them menacingly but at about the half way point hears an announcer introducing him.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

(wrestling match style)

And now, ladies and gentlemen, all the way from the City... Give a warm country welcome to the man who is going to fix The Country, to your next President...

Mundus turns and faces the audience, then looks at the boys again. He can't resist the opportunity to go before a cheering crowd. A strong spotlight beams down behind him between he and the audience.

ANNOUNCER

Munduuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuus!

Mundus pulls himself up, straightens his tie and steps into the circle of light and walks with seeming confidence to the front center of the stage. Behind him the screen displays a large and noisy arena crowd.

Eee rolls up the blueprints, lays them into Mun's outstretched arms and exits purposefully stage back left with Mun following like an abused dog.

Mundus points and smiles at various audience members, then claps his hands at them.

MUNDUS

We're messed-up in our heads aren't we? Our brains have been fucked over. We don't know what to think anymore. We don't know how to think anymore. We're in a dream and the gods of the dream only allow us to watch, not act. But, for our flickering eyes, we are paralyzed and powerless, no longer citizens of our own lives. Oh, in our dreams, we may encounter beauty and wonder;

(MORE)

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

we may fly or float within the adoring and happy spirit of ourselves; we may encounter friends and lovers, and smiling children, a tender wife or husband; the clean hands of equity may hand us flowers to delight us or a glass of cold water to quench our thirst; we may be given a road upon which we will want our happy journey to continue into the never-never. It is like the old country of a life we might have had and should have had and want to have and could have, but for the realities of the coming dawn, when the gods of the dream turn us over to our own kind.

(beat)

And then there are the other dreams, terrifying dreams.

(beat)

Do you have those dreams, sir?
Madam?

(beat)

Let me tell you this. Even though I sleep as little as I can, I can still get pulled into the dangerous un-light. Some hand comes out of a sleeve whose cuff is fastened by a diamond flashing a murderous intent. It pulls me off my feet, throws me down on the marbled floor of hell. A fierce body looms over me, yells at my boyhood self: "Mundus you stupid, stupid boy! Stupid, stupid boy!" His fists come down on my head finding the bone I cannot cover with my arms and the face that is larger than my hands can hide. "I will straighten you out, boy!" he promises, as the kicks come at my ribs and guts. And then, I hear her come at last, knowing the fight has gone out of the dragon who has used all his fire on me. She comes at last with her shrill, drunken, self-protective voice. "That's enough. That's enough". And the dragon slinks off into the shadow where he lives. And she says, "Get up. Get up. You're not dead.

(MORE)

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

You had it coming." And what do I say to that? I say, "I'll show you! I'll show you!"

Mundus steps back from the stage and backs up toward his desk.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Our country is broken and I am going to fix it. No one will call us stupid any more or beat up our little selves.

He turns and walks to his desk where he pulls the ledger out of the desk drawer, which he reads, growing more and more angry as he does.

Mun enters nonchalantly reading a newspaper, the front page with a banner headline: "MUNDUS BACK IN THE CITY" also streaming across the screen. He strolls by the desk muttering to himself as he reads, so absorbed he does not see his father.

Mundus rises behind the desk and leans forward on his knuckles.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Mun! Idiot son!

Mun spins around and almost jumps out of his skin when he sees Mundus.

MUN

Father!

Mundus comes around the desk carrying a ledger and grabs Mun by the ear while he shakes the ledger above his head.

MUNDUS

Where are the old accounts?

Mun point to the ledger in Mundus' hands.

Mundus let's Mun's ear go and uses both hands to look at the ledger.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

These are not my numbers. Not my numbers!

Mundus squeezes and twists Mun's ear again and Mun drops to his knees in pain. Eee enters from back right.

EEE

I've been tidying them up, father.

Mundus lets go his grip on Mun and glares at Eee.

MUNDUS

On whose authority?

EEE

(cooly)

On your authority.

(beat)

Do you not remember, father?

You're church, I'm state.

MUNDUS

What are you saying?

EEE

Separation of powers. As agreed.
You run for President. I run The
Business.

MUNDUS

As I left it. With my advice.

Nothing done without my consent.

(sotto voce)

On the hush, hush. Our secret.

Mundus holds up the ledger again.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

I wove a tangled web. On purpose.
You think I didn't know what I was
doing? For fifty years, Eee.
Fifty!

Eee takes the ledger out of Mundus' hands and walks around the desk and sits in Mundus' chair then puts the ledger back in the top drawer.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

EEE

What I think is best. Just as you
would do if you were sitting here.

Mundus races around to the back of the desk.

MUNDUS

Get out! Get out of that chair!

Eee looks up at him. Mundus spins the chair around until the back is facing him and then tips it so Eee is forced out. With great agility, Eee lands on his feet and steps away quickly. Mundus sits in the chair.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Hah! My chair.

Eee goes round to the front of the desk.

EEE

(to Mun)

Get Ngud.

As Mun exits center left, Mundus uses his feet to guide the chair from around the back of the desk to Eee at center stage. He holds tightly to the arm rests.

MUNDUS

You do this while I am out there
sacrificing myself to the great
cause of The People.

Eee steps a few feet away. Mundus pedals along in the chair to follow him.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Your job, your only job is to
protect The Business. As it is. As
is!

Eee steps away again.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Protect it even from you, you
stupid, stupid boy!

While Mun and Ngud enter from back right Eee moves again and once again Mundus follows.

NGUD

Father! We thought you were in The
Country.

MUNDUS

Are you so surprised to see me?
Did you think I would not learn of
your misdoings?

Mundus stands and walks to Ngud. Eee reclaims the chair and rolls it back to the desk and sits. Mun follows and stands to Eee's side.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

The boys are putting all at risk.

NGUD

But, isn't it you, who has risked
all by coming here?

EEE

Here is business, out there
politics.

MUN

As we all agreed.

MUNDUS

I caught him red-handed. He's
messaging with the books. Cutting
new deals. Selling assets it took
me a lifetime...

EEE

Selling off liabilities, father.
Getting a good price for them too.

Eee picks up the ledger, puts it in the desk drawer which he
closes with a bang then locks with a key he pulls from his
pocket.

Mundus takes Ngud aside.

MUNDUS

(whispering)

We can't trust your brothers. It's
my business. You know that. You
kids are along for the ride. I've
made millionaires of you all. Made
celebrities of you. You
especially, Ngud, now true heroine
of The People.

(beat)

Now, let's pull the old switcheroo
on that little prick.

NGUD

Eee is on your side, father. We
all are.

MUNDUS

I'll put you in charge. Oh,
wouldn't that pull Eee's pickle
from the vinegar?

He brushes her cheek with his hand tenderly.

NGUD

Let's tell the media you came home to visit the family.

MUN

Appearances, father.

NGUD

Come to my house tonight. Have dinner with my family.

MUNDUS

Your house? No. No. No. But, a visit. Good idea. Let's have everyone here at The Tower. I'll invite Killigrew so he can testify that all is well.

EEE

I have to say no to that idea. Too much at risk for both sides.

Mundus takes Ngud aside.

MUNDUS

(to Ngud)

I'll tell you why I am really here, Ngud. Mention not a word of this to Eee and Mun.

Mundus takes her by the elbow to center front.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Even after you abandoned me out there under the weight of all my promises, the crowds grew and grew. Ask Killigrew. He's seen it all. But, Ngud.

(whispering)

It's... It's... It's so hard out there, Ngud, without you. Killigrew says I am close to winning... But, terrible things are being said about me that might bring me down to my knees. Awful things. But, with you by my side... Killigrew promises we will not lose. He says we cannot lose!

Mundus takes her by the shoulders and tries to engage her eyes, but she averts.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

You will come with me.

Ngud steps back and turns her back on her father.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

How can my daughter deny me my
victory? Your mother is in your
ear isn't she? Spiter and biter!

NGUD

No.

MUNDUS

Your husband then? He doesn't want
you dressed-to-kill on the campaign
trail. He wants you naked in his
bed. Should his desires trump your
father's?

NGUD

How dare you, father.

MUNDUS

Your children, then. How selfish
of you to stand in the way of them
having a President as their
grandfather, the Mundus face on
every coin and bill. If you let
them speak for themselves they
would tell you that they would pay
pots of gold for such a legacy.

NGUD

Stop it!

Eee sees his father's temperature rising. He comes around to
the left side left of the desk ready to intervene. Mun moves
to the right side of the desk and both keep a steady eye on
Mundus and Ngud.

MUNDUS

It will open doors for them; induce
envy in all who come to know them.
It will put steel in their
backbones and silver in their
pockets. They won't remember that
you were not there to cut the
crusts off their bread, or wipe the
jam from their cheeks. But, oh
yes, Ngud, they will remember that
you were there for The Country,
bestowing your grace on The People
while I clobber them with all the
truths they hoped to hear.
Granddaddy Mundus, the greatest
ever President of The Country.

Ngud turns toward Mundus with a steely gaze.

NGUD

I am staying here, father, with my family.

With great composure she begins walking further to center right.

MUNDUS

Ungrateful girl! You will do as Mundus says. You all will.

Mundus lumbers toward Ngud as she exits, but Eee and Mun cut him off and hold him from going further. Ngud moves to front left and watches the rest of the scene from there.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

That lovely face of yours was carved by doctors I paid for! You were such a homely girl. Ugly like your mother! Ugly to the bone! I made you beautiful!

Killigrew enters at left front and watches. Ngud rushes to center left.

MUN

She loves you, father. We all love you. We want you to win. We do.

EEE

Get back to your campaign, father. Go fix The Country.

MUNDUS

So you can steal The Business?!

EEE

So you can achieve true greatness.

MUN

You'll be our President, father.

EEE

Most powerful man on planet earth.

Eee spots Killigrew.

EEE (CONT'D)

Ah, look who's here. Mr. Media himself, with his stock of pens, single turbine of the rumour mill, and singular generator of the fake news that electrifies the nation, Killigrew himself.

MUN

(to Mundus)

Eee and I will smooth things over with Ngud. All will be well, father. We'll see to it.

EEE

Worry not, Mun. What father remembers is a study in forgetting.

Killigrew walks toward Mundus as Eee and Mun exit center right.

KILLIGREW

All well, Mundus. Family? The Business?

MUNDUS

The Business? How would I know? Church and state, remember?

(brightening)

I'll have a good night's rest here in The Tower. It's just what I need, Killigrew, before I go back out there.

Mundus steps toward center front and looks out over the audience, with some fear on his face that he doesn't want Killigrew to see.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

We fly out first thing to land God knows where.

KILLIGREW

Ngud coming along?

MUNDUS

In spirit.

KILLIGREW

'Til tomorrow then.

Killigrew exits front left. Mundus walks behind his desk and rattles the top drawer which Eee has now locked, eliciting a roar from Mundus.

MUNDUS

God damn you, Eee!

Mundus drops heavily in his chair and as the light goes down on him, leans back and soon nods off.

Ngud walks carefully toward Mundus to be sure he is asleep.

NGUD

I will go with you then. Do as you wish to show I love you but do not ask for gratitude.

She walks back to center stage.

NGUD (CONT'D)

I am the daughter, mistress, wife
Of my father, master, mate
Who, as a nursing child, was seized
By a vicious need for love
No woman can consummate.

But, I am become the spirit
Who, upon the stages of his world,
Brings a blond and blinding beauty
When his secret hurts are hurled
Into the faces of the crowd.

I have made my life a sacred
Sacrifice to him so he can sit
Upon his Tower throne and rail
At all the wise, still laughing
gods
Who refuse to set him free.

The luxury bestowed on me
As I escort him now on Earth
Pays for my wont of learning
The lesser ways of mortal men
On the planet where he's burning.

The stage is quiet until the sound of gathered voices off rise. Ngud exits.

As dawn arrives, six supporters enter carrying Mundus' banners and signs from front right chanting Mundus' name. The largest banner blares "Fix the Country", others just have Mundus' name. A swastika can be seen on one of the supporter's signs.

Two protestors, their voices raised in opposition, enter from center left and move toward Mundus' desk rousing Mundus who shakes off his sleep, then stands, then hearing the protestors voices and seeing them steps back in fear.

PROTESTOR 1
You are a national disgrace!

PROTESTOR 2
You violate both time and space!

PROTESTOR 1
Ugly words spew from your face!

PROTESTOR 2
White man's rights your only case!

Mundus supporters cross the stage then circle up toward the protestors and thread between them and Mundus' desk then turn toward them in a line and, using the rhythmic chant of riot police, use their banners and signs to force the protestors back.

Mundus moves in behind his supporters and then finds a place in the middle of their ranks where he can seem brave and in control and points his finger at the protestors.

MUNDUS
Get them out of here!

One of the protestors dares to move forward wagging his finger at Mundus and yelling.

PROTESTOR 1
Never Mundus! Never Mundus! Never
Mundus!

PROTESTOR 2
Con man Mundus! Sexist Mundus!
Racist Mundus!

MUNDUS
Get them out of here!

Two of Mundus' supporters charge at the Protestor, one strikes him with his fist, the other whacks him with a sign. The protestor collapses on one knee, but, with the other protestor's help, manages to get back up as the supporter line moves forward pushing the protestors front and center. Once there, they teeter on the edge of the stage trying to hold their ground, but ultimately are forced off. Two of the supporters jump off after them and chase them off right.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)
That's how to do it! Chase away
those who say no to Mundus. To say
no to change is almost treason.

Mundus affectionately puts his hand on one supporter's head and then another. Both exit front left up through the audience.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Bless you. Bless you.

Using a two hand grip, he shakes the hands of two other supporters who then exit right.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

(calling after them)

We'll fix The Country. But, I need your help. Get others to join our movement.

He pulls a pen from his suit coat pocket to sign his autograph on the signs of the remaining supporters who then exit.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

(calling after them)

Ah, a deep red blood is flowing through the heart of The Country - pumping for Mundus.

Mundus follows him and stops a few feet short of front and center. Killigrew enters front left.

KILLIGREW

And they came out by their thousands to pack arenas to hear the great man holler his slogan and throw his taunts in the appalled faces of the opposition.

MUNDUS

The first time I stood in front of a crowd during this campaign, I spoke from my heart. I did. You were there Killigrew and saw with your own eyes. The People cried out for more of me.

KILLIGREW

Before Mundus appeared upon the pulpit, a righteous man of the cloth would first appear and assure The People that God was in the room and had pre-approved every word that Mundus would speak. Nemo me impune lacessit. Amen.

MUNDUS

I don't know what the hell I said - something about the fuckers who've ruined The Country, probably. Yes. Exactly that. The hoots and the hollers and the "you get 'em Mundus" calls from every part of that wild arena hit my ears like the crack of a home run bat.

KILLIGREW

And unbeliever Mundus like this God so much, he confirmed to the loud applause of all, that if God were here with them, he could not also be in the City where the ridicule of the rich was echoing in the rafters of empty churches, synagogues and temples.

MUNDUS

They liked what I said so much I repeated it. I said "the fuckers who have ruined this country have been stealing money from your pocket," and everyone in the room - except the opposition's withered plants - got on their feet and once on them, stayed there.

KILLIGREW

For the first time in his long life he was filled with the spirit of magnanimity. He pointed to the one black man in a sea of white faces and said "There's my black man. There's my black man." And to loud applause that black man buckled as though there had been a laying on of hands and he fell back into a garden of pale fingers and was then lofted into martyrdom for Mundus' cause.

MUNDUS

They didn't hear a word I said. But, oh, I had a lot more to say so I said it. Loud and clear, so even The People back in The City who have sneered at me from the day I dug the foundations of The Tower would hear me. But the truth can cut and so I provoked howls of outrage in The City.

KILLIGREW

And then, looking into the horizonless distance, he promised The People he would build a wall around them a million miles high and a million miles wide, wherein everyone would feel Mundus' mighty and magical embrace.

MUNDUS

Howls! But, they were the howls of The City's guilty elites, not anyone who wants this country fixed.

(pointing to someone in the audience)

And that guy there told that woman over there that Mundus was on her side, so she told him and her and her and so on. I am like a virus the Pundits said. Wildfire.

KILLIGREW

And I, an atheist, always at the service of the godless, knew not what to say as I began turning on the outer edges of the Mundus' vortex, near to drowning in duplicity.

The sound of Mundus' campaign plane rises. Ngud exits.

The stage goes completely black behind him while Mundus' desk and chair are removed. Two airplane seats are set at about center right diagonally facing front left. Mundus raises his arms as wings. Killigrew walks wearily to the upstage seat, sits and pulls on an eye mask.

MUNDUS

(yelling boastfully)

You see that Killigrew!? I am flying!

Storm clouds play across the screen with the odd crack of thunder while the sound of the plane diminishing to nothing, Mundus turns from the audience and walks back to center stage as the lights come up, joyously clicking his heels as he does.

Killigrew now asleep holds an empty glass precariously in one hand.

As Mundus sits he gives Killigrew a hard tap or two on the knee that makes Killigrew wince.

KILLIGREW

You're too happy, Mundus.

He peels off his mask.

MUNDUS

The thing is, Killigrew, there are people down there who had lost all hope. Ordinary people like us.

Mundus stands and bends down a little as though under the low ceiling of an airplane. He points out a window on one side. The screen displays an image of an abandoned farm.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

It doesn't matter if they live in the sticks...

He turns to the other side and points out another as the screen displays a picture of a boarded-up small town main street.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

...or in some small town...

He points out another window as the screen displays an image of drug users shooting up in an urban ghetto.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

...even in the busted cities.

An image of a devastated ghetto appears on the screen.

KILLIGREW

Spare me, Mundus. I've been on the road with you for a few weeks now. I got the message.

Killigrew stands up, and carrying his glass, comes to Mundus.

He edges around Mundus as though they are both stuck in a narrow aisle and comes out on the audience side facing the audience as he steps away from Mundus toward front left.

MUNDUS

The media man thinks he got the message. Not by half.

Killigrew sidles to front right holding his glass above his head and wagging it as a "whatever" gesture and goes to front left where, looking back to make sure Mundus does not see him drinking his own booze, he pulls out a flask from his jacket and pours a stiff shot into the glass.

The lights inside the cabin flicker and the plane bounces almost knocking Mundus off his feet, but he keeps his footing as the shaking diminishes somewhat.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Courage Killigrew. It's a bit of turbulence. All that hot air over the prairies rising into the cold night sky. It'll shake you 'til you think all your seams will split and everything you have and are will be flung-out into the plunging darkness.

The lights flicker again and the plane shakes. Killigrew is trying to hold his drink steady in front of him.

KILLIGREW

(to the audience
confidentially)

Dear God in heaven.

Mundus and Killigrew feel another violent shake. Killigrew drops his glass and falls to his hands a knees.

KILLIGREW (CONT'D)

Lord have mercy!

MUNDUS

C'mon Killigrew, stand up and ride it out like a man or get strapped-in.

Mundus walks confidently back to his seat and sits. The lights hold steady, the plane settles.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

I lost all fear of death long ago. I've been shaken to the root. I mean really shaken. Back in the early days of The Business, oh yes, yes, yes. I thought I was going to lose everything.

Killigrew gets to his feet and when he realizes the turbulence has ended, he pulls out his flask and takes a long swallow of his drink and looks down at Mundus who reclines his seat, sits back and closes his eyes.

KILLIGREW

The bankers had you by the scrotum, Mundus. They could have sent you crying back to the suburbs to build bungalows for the working poor just like your dear old dad in those golden days you are so fond of remembering.

MUNDUS

(tiring)

My father taught me a lot, but those greedy banker bastards finished my schooling. You might be drowning in choppy seas, but if there's a chance of a payback, they'll throw the life preservers. Hell, some of them will jump in, pull you back to the boat, hoist you up, then row you back to shore.

Mundus finds Killigrew's eye mask and puts it on, then falls back against the seat. Killigrew walks to front and center as Mundus falls asleep.

KILLIGREW

And so it was that Mundus used his bankers' bitter credit to build his Tower of gold, and why it is that now, having succeeded at last on the foundation of their regretted trust, he thinks he can fix The Country - a deterministic man in a probabilistic universe where the odds are never good.

(beat)

One noisy day and fraught night merged with another as Mundus made his progress around The Country stirring-up The People, lambasting the elites, excoriating the politicians, skewering the bankers, shoving white-hot shivs up the butts of the media.

(beat)

I don't know who the hell he thought I was. His friend? Hah!

(beat)

(MORE)

KILLIGREW (CONT'D)

There were people lining-up everywhere to see and hear him, and so he, great exploiter of opportunities scarce apprehended by lesser mortals, would go almost on a moment's notice, crisscrossing the land in the emblazoned Mundus' jet.

(beat)

The strings he pulled to make it all happen turned his politics into a cat's cradle of obligation, an instrument upon which he would nonetheless pluck the High C of his contempt for anyone who was not on his side. All, that is, except Ngud, his great white hope and living template of the busty blonds he loves to fuck.

(beat)

And then the specifically and privately aggrieved brought their weeping selves to Mundus' tent. I felt we were turning in a great circle, but an ever tightening circle. We The Country, I mean.

Killigrew exits, stage right center. Three women carrying Mundus signs enter separately at different points and stop.

MOTHER 1

Mr. Mundus.

MOTHER 2

Mr. Mundus.

Mundus strips off the eye mask and sees the three women. He stands up and walks toward them while the airline seats are removed and two large doors (The Tower doors) are set upstage.

MOTHER 1

A yellow skinned man raped my girl.

MOTHER 2

A swarthy man stole my child.

MOTHER 3

A brown skinned man killed my son.

Mundus puffs up.

MUNDUS

Never again. Never again. I
promise you.

The women begin a chant "Kidnapped, raped and killed" that is loud at first but quietens to a whisper as the scene plays out.

The four pundits appear on the screen.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

When I was a boy, in that place
where my father built his little
castle in the back of beyond, there
was a high white fence around our
garden. And there, singing songs -
to a black version of our God, I
guess - our black maid whose name I
have long forgotten - but she was a
black maid, I remember that - would
hang a line of loud white sheets to
dry, and I was safe, for nothing
touched them where they marched in
the summer breezes, but the drying
warmth of the blessed fire of our
suburban sun.

The four pundits appear as talking heads on the screen.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

And inside that fence my father
built, everyone was safe.

PUNDIT 1

Mundus says he'll build a fence.

PUNDIT 3

To keep the brown, the yellow and
the swarthy out.

Two down-at-heels steelworkers in hard hats enter front right and stare at Mundus. The men take off their hats and smash them together. Startled Mundus turns to face them.

STEELWORKER 1

They and they...

STEELWORKER 2

...they took our jobs away.

MUNDUS

I'll bring them back. I'll make
them pay.

Adding their chant to the women's chant, men chant "They took our jobs" as the smack their helmets, loudly at first then with a quiet, rhythmic anger as the scene plays out.

PUNDIT 2

Mundus says there'll be jobs for all.

PUNDIT 4

We'll all be working inside his wall.

Three citizens enter from back left carrying a Mundus banner. Mundus spins around to see them,

CITIZEN 1

Those them out there - they'll bomb our malls...

CITIZEN 2

They hate us for the God we love.

CITIZEN 3

They hate us for the life we live.

MUNDUS

We wear the white hat; they wear the black.

PUNDIT 1

Mundus promises to send his drones.

PUNDIT 2

We'll fry their meat, they'll keep their bones.

ALL

In God we trust and Mundus too.

Mundus turns and faces all three groups again and then makes his way to front and center, head in hands while everyone else exits leaving a profound silence as they march.

MUNDUS

I have never felt so much love.

Killigrew walks in from the back of the theatre and stands in front of the stage.

KILLIGREW

You struck a chord, Mundus, right there in the muddled, middle ground.

Killigrew mounts the stage and joins Mundus.

KILLIGREW (CONT'D)

But your constant thumping on
nostalgia's tribal drum vibrated
too loud and long and reached the
ears of those who dwell in the
fiery lairs of The Country's very
armed and truly dangerous.

Fierce men and women, some wearing motorcycle vests with a dragon emblem on the back, some with tatoos, some branded with swastikas or symbols of white nationalism, some with shaven heads, one carrying a Confederate flag, many with hand guns or rifles, many with Mundus signs, emerge from across the back of the stage and march heavily to center of an increasingly dark stage, where firelight flickers against the backdrop.

MUNDUS

The Deplorables?

KILLIGREW

Yes. And, to win this election you
need their vote.

MUNDUS

These people?

KILLIGREW

These people. But beware, any
provocation or betrayal these
people will gut you like the bottom-
feeding catfish you just might be.

The Deplorables split into two groups, one moving left and the other right, both bending around Mundus and Killigrew.

Ngud and Eve enter at back left, and worriedly look on.

KILLIGREW (CONT'D)

Duty calls, Mundus. Reports to
file.

Killigrew jumps off the stage and exits. Mundus moves up stage but The Deplorables form a circle around him. The stage darkens but Mundus is illuminated by image of rising fire that appears on the screen.

MUNDUS

(fearfully)

What do you want from Mundus?

Every Deplorable goes down on one knee, all looking up to Mundus. They begin a rhythmic pounding on the floor using gun butts, helmets, bats or hands.

Ngud, now afraid for her father, leaves her mother's side as Eve tries to hold her back and walks in behind him. He is not aware she is there until she takes his hand and begins smiling, campaign style, at The Deplorables, all of whom look on her with pleased astonishment.

Mundus turns fearfully at the center of the group, looking for a way to break out. Then it dawns on him they are looking to him as their leader.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

My hate of the elites is like your own.

The Deplorables stomp their feet and bang their polls of their signs on the floor.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

I stand upon this platform for The People.

The Deplorables stomp their feet and bang the poles of their signs on the floor.

Ngud walks to the side of her father but Mundus does not know she is there. The Deplorable women are fascinated by Ngud.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

I will keep the yellow, brown and swarthy out.

DEPLORABLES

Mundus! Mundus!

MUNDUS

The blacks? The blacks. We set them free. We'll just let them be. We've done enough to set them free.

DEPLORABLES

Mundus!

MUNDUS

The Christian God is the God of us.

DEPLORABLES

Mundus!

MUNDUS

In all our guns we trust! Our
bullets too!

The Deplorables rise and raise their guns and rifles.

DEPLORABLES

(very loud)
We must! We must!

Mundus now quite unafraid and excited by the Deplorable's adulation, walks around the inner circle with Ngud following him, putting his hands on people's shoulders, shaking hands, pinching cheeks, etc.

MUNDUS

Return now to the places where
you're from and talk old Mundus up.
Say, I am your friend.

The Deplorables disperse and exit noisily but as they do the women touch Ngud's dress and hair, and lean in to smell her. They seem pleased, but Ngud is revolted.

Mundus, now feeling the weight of his dubious alliances, and drops to his knees, head in hands. Ngud stays at center stage, head hanging in shame. Eve steps towards her but stops short. Ngud turns toward her. Mundus does not react as she speaks.

NGUD

Oh, mother, see in my ascent,
The goddesses I travel with
And see now how I am lifted
While I climb upon their stares
Into an air rarified by myth.

Ngud turns to face the audience.

NGUD (CONT'D)

And there, my golden tresses stream
Through the dream of my sad
countrymen
To distract them from their cares
For I am their new Liberty
From the blasted plinth set free.

With her heads in her hands, Eve exits. Ngud moves to the side. Mundus rises from his knees, bewildered.

MUNDUS

Was that another dream?
(beat)
Or my new reality?
(MORE)

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

(beat)

I am familiar with the ordinary anger of ordinary people because it is like my anger. Their anger wants a better, fairer world. It wants less trouble. It wants respect. It craves for love.

(beat)

But who are those people who pound their plowshares into swords, who forge their righteous indignation into guns, who look for battles where their battle cries make sense, who will sacrifice themselves to causes paranoid and crazy, commit murder on civility itself, and swim the bloody rivers of those causes down to death? How have I, Mundus, become their Caesar?

NGUD

Father.

MUNDUS

Ngud!

A bit stooped and more aged now, he rushes to her and begins kissing her face and hand. Then he goes down on one knee in front of her and holds her tight to him.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Ngud. Oh, darling, have you come at last?

NGUD

Father, please.

She pulls him up with some difficulty.

MUNDUS

(making light)

But, why are you here? To tell me the boys destroyed The Business?

NGUD

(smiling)

The Business is doing very well, father.

MUNDUS

I'll put it back together again. Once this is over.

NGUD
 You will be pleased with all
 they've done.

Ngud walks away from Mundus, her back to him. The lights
 come up.

NGUD (CONT'D)
 We are all worried about you,
 father.

He walks toward her and she turns and faces him.

MUNDUS
 You have been worried?

NGUD
 We have all been worried.

MUNDUS
 But you. You...?

He puts his hands on her shoulders and looks her in the eye.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)
 Ngud... I... Say not a word of
 this, not to your brothers, not to
 your mother, not to anyone.

She pulls away and steps back from him.

NGUD
 What should I not say, father?
 That you are afraid?

MUNDUS
 No.

NGUD
 That you are afraid? Say it.

MUNDUS
 Yes.

NGUD
 Say it.

MUNDUS
 I am afraid. Yes.
 (beat)
 What have I done, Ngud? I came
 down from The Tower. I sacrificed
 The Business.
 (MORE)

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

I flew out of the City to the farthest reaches of The Country. I stood amongst The People. Good people, Ngud. They told me, "You are right, Mundus". We live in a broken country; a busted empire." And I saw all around me the clutter of discarded things, fields of rusted cars and trucks, mountains of debris, ditches full of unwanted stuff, birds of prey circling endless wastelands, detritus blowing down the gutters, all the tossed-away, no-longer-proud possessions that choke our once pristine waters. And out there too, along every route and way into every city and every town, thickets of back-lit brands pulling The People out of the roar of incessant traffic onto the roasting tarmac of their parking lots where they could be led into air conditioned squalor to shove sawdust food and sugared drink into their never-empty bellies.

NGUD

But underneath all of that...?

MUNDUS

A post card beauty.

NGUD

And how will your promised land be different?

MUNDUS

I can promise them a sounder sleep and dreams of better days ahead. But their good feelings come at my high cost, Ngud. Sleep does not come to me, for even under the light of stars and moon, the road to power winds through an utter darkness wherein The Deplorables make their bivouac. There they load their guns, hone their blades and sharpen the paranoid arguments of their benighted fellowship.

NGUD

But you promised them no more or less?

MUNDUS

That is the truth! And, yet I have
become their Trojan horse.

The Pundits pop-up suddenly on the screen. Killigrew runs in from back right and comes down behind Ngud and Mundus.

KILLIGREW

Mundus! Mundus!

MUNDUS

Killigrew.

Killigrew turns to watch the Pundits. Ngud and Mundus do too.

PUNDIT 1

We can now forecast that Mundus...

PUNDIT 2

When he announced he was running...

PUNDIT 3

No one thought he had a chance.

PUNDIT 1

Some of us did.

PUNDIT 4

Well, now he's President.

Mundus puts his hands to his face.

MUNDUS

No. No. No. No.

The Pundits continue silently talking but are soon displaced by a headline: "MUNDUS ELECTED PRESIDENT". The doors upstage swing open and Eee, followed by Mun, stride-out toward Mundus and Ngud full of a hard self-assurance.

EEE

Father! Well, father you have done
it! Congratulations are in order.

Eee grabs Mundus' hand and shakes it vigorously, til Mundus pulls away.

MUN

Superb job, father. Well done!

MUNDUS

My boy...

Mundus attempts to draw Mun into an embrace but Mun keeps him at bay with a hand shake.

KILLIGREW

The People voted for you in their millions.

EEE

As expected.

KILLIGREW

But, The Deplorables put you over the top...

MUNDUS

As I feared. As I feared.

(to Ngud)

They are not our kind of people.

EEE

They are not *our* kind of people, father, but they are *your* kind...

NGUD

(angry)

Eee.

EEE

No worries. President Mundus wields all the power he ever wished for now, maybe even over life and death.

(to Mun)

Come along Mun, work to do.

Eee and Mun walk toward the doors with Mundus following. Before he can catch up, the boys exit through the doors and pull them shut with a loud bang. Hurt, Mundus turns to Ngud who is walking away toward center right.

MUNDUS

(to Ngud)

You are The Country's first lady now. You're needed here.

She stops with back to him still.

KILLIGREW

Oh, there's a twist.

Two male and two female supporters of Mundus enter pushing a large rickety, throne-like chair with wheeled casters that they role before them. Once stopped, they stand around it waiting for Mundus to sit.

The supporters lead Mundus to the chair and make him sit. He sees Ngud start walking away again. He stands.

MUNDUS

(to Ngud)

Come sit in this chair!

KILLIGREW

Not a prize she wanted, Mundus.

MUNDUS

(to Killigrew)

Leave us, Killigrew. Good friend, hah! Your work is done and I no longer wish to hear your snarks.

Ngud comes to Mundus, but will not sit in the chair. She leads Mundus to it again and sits him down.

KILLIGREW

My work is done? You misunderstand my purpose. You can't unfriend me, for I am no friend.

(beat)

You're in the zoo now, Mundus, where I spectate around the clock. You can shove your big baboon's ass against the bars of this un-gilded cage. You can send your screeches echoing skyward, you can swing on your barkless tree - do whatever it takes to outdraw all the other beasts who do our politics. No worries, say your sons and so, for a time, you'll seem a happy ape because you know how to gather crowds and keep them awed. You believe in the ratings game and the charismatic force and the show of shows and the simple words that make a slogan. But, beware, beware. For what I have come to see these many months is a broken man, and a broken man cannot fix a broken anything. He's on the heap himself.

Mundus rises from his chair and makes a threatening move toward Killigrew, but Killigrew laughs then jumps down in front of the stage and walks away, turning once to look back at Mundus.

Ngud goes to Mundus who though defiant, is pained by Killigrew's declaration.

MUNDUS

Far from broken, Killigrew. Now
get you gone.

KILLIGREW

I will continue to report.

Exit Killigrew.

MUNDUS

False news! False news!

NGUD

Calm yourself, father. Killigrew
is gone.

Ngud leads him to his chair and helps him sit again. Mundus'
supporters exit.

MUNDUS

Calm myself, hah! We have work to
do. We have to fix The Country.
Just as I promised.

NGUD

But you cannot build a wall.

MUNDUS

Build a wall? Of course, not. I'm
not insane. I'm not insane.

NGUD

But, your promises to The People...

MUNDUS

The People, The People, oh yes. I
count on their forgiveness. They
are a murmuration. My flock will
move with me when I turn my wings
to take The Country where we need
to go. Wait 'til I tweet the
Mundus song of self-reliance and
tell them to fix The Country on
their own. They'll be delighted to
have such power in their hands.

Eve enters, but is not yet visible to Mundus or Ngud.

EVE

(to Mundus)

And those others, Mundus?

MUNDUS
 (to Ngud)
 What's that you said?

NGUD
 Nothing, father.

EVE
 (to Mundus)
 Those others who will not suffer
 your inevitable betrayal.

Mundus stands and walks carefully to front and center and looks out trying to penetrate the darkness.

MUNDUS
 And yet on the morrow I must
 legislate and tax the conscience of
 The People.

The Pundits appear on the screen again.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)
 (to the audience)
 I will pass a law to save us from
 the burning sun and rising seas.

PUNDIT 1
 As we reported, Mundus first days
 in office...

MUNDUS
 (to the audience)
 I will pass a law to stay the flow
 and flood of humankind.

PUNDIT 2
 A fiasco each and every day.

MUNDUS
 (to the audience)
 I will pass a law to put an end to
 love and sex and motherhood and the
 mixing of the races.

PUNDIT 3
 Surrounded by his acolytes...

MUNDUS
 (to the audience)
 I will pass a law to free us from
 the prison of ourselves and put an
 end to human pain.

PUNDIT 2

Who were unable to find either
words or language for his
statutes....

PUNDIT 4

Furious Mundus cast his hand
wrought thunderbolts in all
directions...

MUNDUS

By all the gods above, my
government will do my bidding.

(beat)

But do not blame your President if
the gods on whom I call fail to
heed my supplications, do not read
their failure as my own.

The Pundits laugh among themselves, sometimes uproariously.

PUNDIT 3

Evoking laughter.

PUNDIT 1

A mocking laughter.

PUNDIT 3

As we reported...

A headline marches across the screen: "MUNDUS BREAKS ALL HIS
PROMISES".

EVE

The Deplorables have an irony-
deficient taste for blood, Mundus.
Yours, it seems.

Mundus leaps to his feet and spins around searching for Eve.

MUNDUS

Who is there?

NGUD

Father, there is nobody here but
me. I have not said a word.

Mundus walks close to Ngud and puts his ear near her lips.

MUNDUS

Your voice is a voice of silence.
I have heard it too often not to
know it.

(MORE)

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

But, I hear the voice of your
mother, oh, yes, yes, her voice...
ventriloquized through you...
always insults and sharp rebukes.

NGUD

I have not said a word.

EVE

(to Ngud)

A word now might change our
history.

The ominous noise of a mob is heard offstage.

MUNDUS

Say what you will. I am strong
enough to hear it. Say it. Say
it. Say that you do not love me.

NGUD

I say I love you as a daughter
should.

MUNDUS

What, as a kind of friend? What
good's a friend?

NGUD

This friend would say, have
courage, Mundus. Stare down the
dark forces that you have conjured
in your politics.

MUNDUS

They are an overwhelming force.

NGUD

Your daughter and your friend calls
you out your mighty self. Builder
of The Tower. Father of our
dynasty. The People's chosen man.

MUNDUS

It is time for you to grasp the
underlying truth, Ngud. I killed
my father with my ambition. I
crossed the river he could not
cross and built our Tower and from
my golden perch I looked down at
him and scorned all and any who had
doubted me.

(MORE)

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

But one day, feeling restless,
irritable and discontented and
unable to do the work at hand I
watched a storm blow in. It hit
with such a force a window
shattered and allowed the wicked
wind to rove The Tower while I
danced in the roar it made. And
when I danced to the window ledge
another bolt of lightening struck
and illuminated the domes of our
far off government, gilded not by
gold but by a power indescribable.
And therein, I saw the most
powerful man on earth, content
amidst the brazen storm.

NGUD

And so you set a goal...

MUNDUS

No, I did not set a goal! The
little gods who run my inner
workings flashed a revelation.
That is my chair.

NGUD

And so it is....

MUNDUS

(holding his head)
But, I am not free of them. The
will not let me be.

EVE

He means, he has grown bored again
and there is no room for him on
Mount Olympus.

NGUD

How can you not be content? How
can you not be content?

The mob sounds grow closer and louder.

MUNDUS

You hear them? You hear them come?

NGUD

Stare them down. Drive them away.

Mundus shrivels at the sound of the oncoming Deplorables.

NGUD (CONT'D)

Father, where is your courage?

MUNDUS

(astonished)

What?!

EVE

The better question, Mundus, dear,
is where is your shame? But, I did
my best with her. Time for me to
go.

Eve exits to the rising sound of the mob.

Mundus grabs Ngud's shoulders roughly and fixes her with his
stare.

MUNDUS

(to Ngud)

Question not my courage, girl.

(to the audience)

In the City, they were all against
me, everyone. But did my courage
ever waiver? Did my efforts ever
lack for zeal? You think I was not
brave and bold in all I did? That
it was not a righteous thing to
take up my sword to slay the
dragon? Under the amused eye of
their mean-fucker God I showed them
what Mundus - Mundus alone -
could do.

NGUD

The Deplorables are in the streets.
Where is your Minister of War?

Yelping and other loud noises are heard off stage. Mundus
flinches. He swings around, rushes to Ngud and takes her by
the hand, pulling her roughly toward The Tower doors.

MUNDUS

Come. Come with me.

He pulls on the door handles but they are firmly locked. He
shakes the doors, but when they do not yield, he pounds on
them with his fists.

Two more armed Deplorables, a man and a tough looking,
bedraggled young woman both wearing motorcycle vests with a
dragon emblem on their backs, enter center left.

Frantic, Mundus pulls Ngud with him as he dashes to front and center stage, but Ngud pulls away and stays at center.

Three more armed Deplorables enter at various points, a woman and two men wearing the same biker vest.

Mundus almost runs off the stage but catches himself and before falling off the stage, regains his balance. Once settled he looks over his shoulder at the gathering Deplorables and then back at the audience. Ngud watches her father.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

(directly to the audience)

Look at you. You, The People, now sit in judgement. When once your voices rose together, rose up out of the community of your broken dreams, rose up for Mundus, you now sit there in the dumb, dark quiet, some of you stunned, some of you hissing and seething behind your pursed lips, some of you, no doubt, saying a silent prayer - wishing to God that Mundus would leave the stage forever - some of you mulling your pity for this old man, like a candy. Hah!

(beat)

Oh, look at your faces now.

(beat)

It is a shock, isn't it, when the force of a distant charisma, a figure on a stage or screen, a god or devil in a dream, comes down to the dirt you walk on every day and looks you in the eye, deigns to speak to you, dares you to spit your insults into his very face? You sir. You say I broke my promises. You. You there. You and you.

(beat)

But, did you not break your promise to me? You there. When you realized that fixing this Country was on you and not on Mundus, did you not withdraw your love, and add him to your pile of regret and woe?

The armed men and women steal a little closer, watching out for witnesses on either side and behind them.

The three armed people spread out. The man in the middle goes down on his belly with his rifle held in both hands in front of himself.

Eee and Mun open the Tower doors and stare out. Mun tries to get around Eee to help his father, but Eee holds him back.

Eve enters from front right and looks on. Together, the Deplorables take a threatening step toward Mundus. The young woman, carrying an unseen pistol walks up behind Ngud.

Ngud takes a step toward her father but stops when Mundus begins to speak again.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

I won that chair! Me, little, stupid Mundus, made of dragon fire and drunk desire. But, I do not give a damn for that seat of little power. I would have more!

Ngud takes another step toward Mundus and this time reaches out her hand to him. He gestures to her to stop then turns back to the audience.

Eve enters and stands in the midst of The Deplorables.

Three of the armed men aim their guns at Mundus and hold steady with him in their sights.

EVE

He would inhabit all time and space. Oh, what a man!
(pointing at the audience)
And where we now converge at evil's nothing point, he'll make his move.

Eee steps out of the door and takes two steps with Mun following.

EEE

(to Mun)
We will have to do business with these people Mun.

He leads Mun back into the Tower and pulls the doors shut behind them. Eve watches them, then exits.

The three armed people shoot Mundus. Gunshots ring out. Mundus throws up his arms as if crucified and holds there before he falls to his knees, mortally wounded and staring dreamily at the audience.

All The Deplorables in a hurry except the young, bedraggled, pistol-carrying woman standing a few feet away from Ngud.

Ngud rushes to her father. He reaches up to take her hand.

MUNDUS

Come down with me into death.

He tugs at her arm so she almost falls toward him. She resists, but he has her in his grip.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

Down with me. Down with me. Down
with me.

Mundus drops further on his haunches, still holding onto Ngud. She lessens her resistance thinking he is loosening his hold as he dies.

Suddenly he yanks at her and she falls to her knees close to his body.

The Deplorable young woman seems alarmed and takes steps toward them.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

A kiss from my beloved before I
die.

Ngud, crying, nods and kisses him on his brow.

MUNDUS (CONT'D)

(loudly and angrily)
A fucking kiss!

Mundus reaches up and grabs her hair and forces her lips to his. Breaking away from him, she stands, wipes her mouth and looks down with loathing at her father.

Mundus looks up at her with a self-satisfied smile, and eases himself to his back. He dies.

Ngud straightens herself and regains her footing. The young woman takes another step toward Ngud.

Ngud, takes a position front and center close by Mundus' chair.

NGUD

I left behind the flame of love
Because the way was lit for me
Now in my burning self I trust
To cast my own light where I soar
Above the gravity of lust.

(MORE)

NGUD (CONT'D)

The rage of women flies with me
 To the cold heart of distant space
 Where I can mock the noise from
 Earth
 With opaque and smiling silence
 On my sculpted, made-up face.

DEPLORABLE WOMAN

You are too beautiful.

The Deplorable woman raises her pistol and points at Ngud's back. A shot rings out. A bloom of blood appears on Ngud's abdomen. She realizes she too is mortally wounded. She struggles to the chair and uses it to hold herself up.

The young woman, with the dragon emblem turned to the audience, turns and walks slowly to upstage right and exits.

NGUD

I soar, oh yes, I soar, above.
 I soar above all hate and love,
 I soar through heaven and through
 hell,
 I soar up here alone.

NGUD (CONT'D)

I soar above his empty throne,
 and soar where all the far-flung
 stars play-out their cosmic part.
 I soar upon the rippled winds of
 space and time. But even yet I
 listen for the boom and echo
 Of his embittered heart. I soar
 Out of my pains of misplaced love.
 I soar.

She slumps in the chair and dies.

FADE TO BLACK