

Kevin! [The Musical]



When a cast member proclaimed that “honestly, the second half is even worse than the first”, I thought that was quite simply impossible. But it wasn’t worse – both were god-awful.

You would never imagine when watching a musical that a technical difficulty immediately at the start of the show would be a highlight, but as the only part of the performance where no one was on stage and nothing was happening, it is a strangely stand-out moment. Because despite a two-hour (plus ten-minute overrun that entirely unnecessary, and quite frankly, ridiculous) runtime, *Kevin! [The Musical]* is entirely devoid of quality, skill or self-awareness which holds the single role of making everything else at Fringe look so much better.

Kevin! [The Musical], a musical that isn’t so much about Kevin as about Chase in Act One and regretting you didn’t leave at the interval in Act Two, spends most of its time bounding from one overused trope to another, from a *Truman Show* loop of time marking the regularity of life in the town, to the ‘bully vs nerd’ storyline and the use of a dark stranger leading to an unhinged consequence at the school (if you’re going to copy *Heathers*, at least don’t give the JD character a JD-inspired long coat). Piece of advice – when you write an original script, get someone who’s not your mate to edit it, or even read it, and we can all be saved the pain.

The cast’s performances are as varied as keys in which they sing, with the few who offer good moments significantly bumping up the talent average. Emily Elle Watts as Betty and Myome Mortimer-Davies as Mrs Sanders do their scenes and songs justice, giving a pretty good performance when on-stage and helping to salvage the more promising moments from the dying embers. Also notable is Jonathan Worrall as Chase, who does a genuinely disturbingly good job at embodying a character who is a creep and littered with self-obsession over his new roommate, that even I was uncomfortable seven or eight rows back.

Technically, the show is fine. Lighting and costume is unremarkable but decently-fitting (on the rare occasion that a cast member hits their spot so is actually illuminated), the use of space is alright, even with far too many audience entrances, and the soundtrack is largely inoffensive. The notable downfall in the technical department comes from sound but seeing as this meant I couldn’t always hear the pitchy drones of a musical cast who can’t sing, maybe this was a good thing. And given that at several points half the cast have decided they can’t be bothered to sing the lyrics anymore, you have to ask yourself if a musical can be defined as such when only a couple of the cast choose to sing it.

The only factor saving this show from being one star worthy is the simple fact that at no point do the cast throw a slur in for good measure (although there’s a couple of lines which could certainly be considered borderline). *Kevin! [The Musical]* is, sadly, a comedy that’s not funny, a musical without good music, a play without good acting and

a fever dream that's gone too far. Over an hour longer than it needs to be and filled with so many clichés it hurts, this production struggles from its very first seconds and never recovers, and is, unfortunately, not worth your time this Fringe.