

**ETERNALLY YOURS** - Keith Davidson 613.722.9230

FADE IN:

A BLACK ABYSS

A distant SCREAM OF PANIC grows louder as an ancient elevator car plummets down through dark, oily clouds.

MAYOR GIMBLE (O.S.)  
Up! I said up!

It plunges toward a foreboding orange glow far below.

IN THE ELEVATOR

Pressed into the corner, sweat pours off MAYOR GIMBLE's terrified face. The Muzak fails to soothe his nerves.

Holding a clipboard, is KATE YOUNG, 30ish. Drab grey uniform, hair tucked under her cap, she'd look pretty if she wasn't so despondent. Her uniform crest reads: PURGATORY DELIVERY SERVICE.

The Mayor lunges for the controls. Only two buttons -- a halo and a pitchfork. His finger stabs the halo like a jackhammer.

IN THE BLACK ABYSS

Brakes SCREECH. Sparks fly. The elevator hits ground with a THUD.

IN THE ELEVATOR

Kate steps over the squirming Mayor and yanks open the door. A blast of heat hits them.

MAYOR GIMBLE  
Okay, okay. I confess! I embezzled  
a few bucks. Maybe a little fraud.  
And I expropriated that land from the  
old widow.

KATE  
It's an elevator, not a confessional.

MAYOR GIMBLE  
Well it's not like I killed anybody!

Kate steadies herself, then steps out into the red glow.

KATE  
This way, Mayor Gimble.

MAYOR GIMBLE  
A little compassion wouldn't hurt!

But she doesn't care. He reluctantly follows her out.

INT. ENTRANCE TO HELL

Kate tentatively approaches the red-hot Gates of Hell.

The Mayor slows at a cutout of the Devil holding a pitchfork three feet off the ground -- "YOU MUST BE TALLER THAN THIS TO ENTER."

Behind it, a huge sign: "NO PRAYING, NO HARP-PLAYING, NO ICE CREAM..." He scans down to the bottom -- "...AND NO MIMES!"

The gates rumble open. Kate takes a deep breath, then leads him in. She clips on a VISITORS PASS, covering her crest. The gates SLAM behind them with a fiery explosion.

INT. TUNNELS

Guardians, in the same uniform as Kate, escort the recently deceased onto ancient escalators descending into darkness.

CHEERY VOICE ON PA SYSTEM  
...TV evangelists, floor 6...  
Politicians, floor 7...

They step onto an escalator and begin their descent.

CHEERY VOICE ON PA SYSTEM  
Lawyers, floors 8, 9, 10, 11, 12...

The escalator deposits them at the end of a short line.

KATE  
At least you won't have to wait long.

But turning the corner, they see the line is miles long.

Wilting in the heat, Kate lights up at the sight of a lemonade stand ahead. Then she sees the SOLD OUT sign. Of course.

LATER

They finally near the front of the line. Ahead, a roller coaster type ride leads into the darkness. Kate spots DAVID at the entrance podium. She steadies herself.

Sporting a Hawaiian shirt under his red polyester leisure suit, David is a charismatic, fun-loving hell carny.

The Guardian at the head of the line tosses his invoice onto David's podium. Among the clutter of devil-themed toys is a framed picture of Kate, looking incredibly happy.

As the politician squeezes into a tiny roller coaster car, David reaches for the three large levers for the three sets of tracks -- red, green and gold.

DAVID  
Democrat or Republican?

POLITICIAN #1  
Republican.

David pulls the red switch. The car rumbles down the red track. It suddenly veers off and plunges into a fiery pit. He SCREAMS.

DAVID  
(to nobody in particular)  
Why are they always surprised?

David catches a glimpse of Kate behind the Mayor. He shrugs it off -- it couldn't be her. POLITICIAN #2 steps boldly forward.

DAVID  
Democrat or Republican?

POLITICIAN #2  
Democrat.

David smiles. The Democrat grins back and hops into the car. David's hand hovers over the green switch, teasing him...

He finally pulls it. The Democrat relaxes.

The car rumbles down the green track. But a trap door springs open, and one very surprised Democrat plummets into the flames. His SCREAM is cut off as the door swings shut.

DAVID  
Like there's a difference.

The Mayor's face drops to the floor. Kate pushes him forward.

DAVID  
(thrilled)  
Katie?

She can barely look at him. He tries to mask the hurt.

DAVID  
Ha! I knew you'd end up down here eventually. What'd you do, tell 'em how to run things up there?

She tries to get a word in, but he keeps interrupting.

DAVID

Well don't you worry. You've got me to look after you now. Just like old times. We'll have a grand old...

He trails off as she taps her VISITORS pass. His heart sinks.

DAVID

Oh.  
(forced happiness)  
Well, let me look at you.

He steps from behind the podium, discretely turning her picture face down. He gives her the once-over, liking what he sees.

DAVID

Mmmm, heaven's been good to you.

KATE

Well, actually I --

DAVID

No, no... you can hardly notice those extra pounds.

She realizes what he's up to, but he gets to her anyway.

DAVID

So how've you been?

KATE

Just fine, David. Look, I just --

DAVID

Me too. Thanks for asking. C'mon, let's have a drink and catch up.

KATE

Oh, all right. One drink.  
(looks at the Mayor)  
What about him?

DAVID

Democrat or --

MAYOR GIMBLE

Independent!

A tense moment as he waits to see if his bluff will work. David gives a slow nod of admiration, then pulls the gold lever. The cars head for a glowing golden rail leading up. Harps play.

The Mayor gleefully hops into a car. It rumbles down the track toward the golden glow. But it suddenly veers left and plunges into the fiery pit. The Mayor lets out one final SCREAM.

DAVID  
Nice try, though.

But his smile fades under Kate's condescending look.

DAVID  
What? They're politicians, Kate.  
When I pull those levers, I'm striking  
a blow for all the little people  
who've ever been screwed over by these  
lying, corrupt, self-serving crooks.  
Believe me, I enjoy sending  
politicians to the fiery pits.

KATE  
Maybe just a little too much.

DAVID  
A guy's entitled to have a little fun  
down here. You remember fun?

She resents the crack.

INT. TUNNEL

They reach a door with a red neon sign -- HELL'S BELLS BAR.  
Kate hesitates wary. David strips off his jacket.

DAVID  
Better put this on. Some of the guys  
like to tear wings off things.  
(noticing)  
Where are your wings?

She can't look him in the eye.

DAVID  
You mean you didn't sneak down from  
heaven? You've been stuck in  
purgatory all this time?  
(off her nod)  
Well why on Earth didn't you visit me  
sooner?

KATE  
Listen, David... My sentence is up in  
six days.

DAVID  
(feigning happiness)  
Then you will be getting your wings.  
We can drink to that.

No response. He looks into her eyes, but she turns away.

INT. HELL'S BELLS BAR

Gothic décor. So hot the walls sweat. Under a "KARAOKE EVERY NIGHT!" banner, a lounge lizard croaks out a grating "Feelings."

David and Kate are seated at the bar with a motley assortment of barflies nursing foul-looking drinks.

KATE

God, turn up the air conditioning.

Pulling off her cap, her hair cascades over her shoulders. She undoes a few buttons. David is captivated. SAMUEL, the bartender, slams a drink in front of him, breaking the spell.

SAMUEL

One Flaming Martyr.

The swizzle stick is a man on a cross, on fire.

SAMUEL

And a Snapple.

He sneers with contempt. She gulps down the drink.

DAVID

Okay, maybe I haven't gone to church in a while, but I always thought purgatory was just a sentence some people had to serve before they get into heaven.

KATE

It's not automatic, you know.

DAVID

I'm sure you're worried for nothing.

KATE

(distraught)

One of the clerks in the Judgement Room is sweet on me. He slipped me word that the deliberations weren't going well. It looks like I'm going to be sent down here.

Stunned disbelief from David. And a flicker of hope.

DAVID

What makes you think I can help?

KATE

I kinda thought you'd be running things down here by now. You always knew how to play the angles.

DAVID  
I'm not sure whether to be flattered  
or insulted.

KATE  
I didn't know where else to turn.  
You know I couldn't survive here.

DAVID  
It's not so bad on the upper level.

KATE  
Please, David. You're my only chance.

Seeing her fear and vulnerability, David softens.

DAVID  
Look, the last thing I want is for you  
to end up down here making my after  
life miserable. So don't you worry,  
I'll get you your wings.

Relief courses through Kate.

DAVID  
Let's see now... That mayor you  
brought down... Where was he from?

KATE  
(checks her clipboard)  
Wilton Corners, Iowa. Why?

David steps to a monitor at the bar and punches in commands.  
The Karaoke singer disrupts his concentration, so he reaches over  
and yanks a lever. The singer disappears through a trap door.  
David hits some keys and data scrolls up on the screen.

DAVID  
Okay... Now, it says here there are  
three people running for the vacant  
office. Let's see... Walter Wallis...

A chubby, bitter face fills the screen -- Walter Wallis.  
A red pitchfork flashes over top of it. BEEP. BEEP. BEEP.

DAVID  
Whoa. Too late for his soul.  
Next up, Abigail Crabtree...

Her gnarly face appears on the screen. David jumps.

DAVID  
(skimming her data)  
Mad as a hatter. And batting  
cleanup... Adam Smith. Aha!

Encouraged, he punches some keys, and the monitor briefly becomes a window into --

A QUAINC COUNTRY KITCHEN

Sweet AUNT RUBY, 50s, pulls a pie from the oven and smells it. It's heavenly.

ADAM SMITH, a wholesome hunk in a scout leader uniform, gives her a peck and takes the pie into the parlour, where he's swarmed by adoring Boy Scouts.

AT THE BAR

David goes to work on Kate.

DAVID

And that fine young man is about to have temptation knocking on his door. Maybe have his very soul corrupted.

KATE

Wait a minute. You're not seriously thinking I should try to save a soul?

DAVID

(checks the monitor)  
Wow, talk about fate! The election is December 24th.

He looks up at the Advent calendar. The tiny windows are open up to December 18th, revealing scenes from Dante's Inferno.

DAVID

Six days from now. Just in time for you.

KATE

(suddenly sceptical)  
What a coincidence. And an election on Christmas Eve? With a Boy Scout leader? Foul.

DAVID

Look, if I wanted to string you along, don't you think I'd have come up with something a little more believable?

He looks sincere enough.

KATE

Yes, you always were a good liar.

He feigns offence. She double-checks the data on the monitor.

KATE  
 But it's not like I can just go back.  
 (hopeful)  
 Can I?

DAVID  
 It's been done. I'd have to pull a  
 few strings... call in some favors...

KATE  
 Say I did. What would I have to do?

DAVID  
 Simply prevent this Adam Smith  
 character from losing his soul in the  
 next six days.

KATE  
 How?

DAVID  
 Samuel?

Samuel pulls out the massive "BOOK OF RULES" and drops it on the  
 bar with a resounding THUD. David leafs through it.

DAVID  
 Let's see now... losing a soul...  
 How many sins is that?

Samuel starts to answer, but a sharp look from David silences him.  
 David scans down the page.

DAVID  
 ... Politician... Here we are.  
 Six sins. If he commits six sins by  
 election day, he'll lose his soul.  
 Prevent that and St. Peter will have  
 to let you in.

Dubious, she looks to Samuel for confirmation.

SAMUEL  
 House rule -- save another person's  
 soul and you win your wings.

He nods to a poster behind him. A grimy man leaning on a shovel  
 stares wistfully heavenward. "SAVE A SOUL & STOP SHOVELLING COAL."

David types furiously as they talk.

KATE  
 Are we talking venial sins or mortal  
 sins?

David stares blankly.

KATE

Venial sins are the little ones - lying, swearing, being dishonest... The things you get time in purgatory for. Mortal sins -- murder, suicide and adultery -- are the ones that get you sent directly to hell. But then you'd know all about that.

He doesn't let her see how much that shot hurt.

DAVID

Just to keep it simple, let's say any of those sins you just mentioned. Murder, suicide, adultery, lying and other acts of dishonesty. You just stop him from running up a total of six.

The computer spits out a tiny contract with absurdly small print. He holds it out, tempting her. She hesitates.

DAVID

Look, if you're coming down here anyway, you've got nothing to lose. And everything to gain.

He waves it tantalizingly in front of her. She mulls it over... then grabs it. She signs it before she can change her mind.

David grabs the OFFICIAL SEAL OF HELL off a shelf.

SAMUEL

Hey, you're not allowed to --

Samuel grabs his arm and they struggle. David tries to stamp the contract-- it THUMPS the bar beside it. THUMP -- another miss.

Anticipating the next hit, Kate slides the contract over. THUMP -- bull's-eye. The contract crackles, branded with a fiery 666.

INT. BOSS' OFFICE

A huge portrait of Lucifer fills the wall. Red skin, rippling muscles, huge horns. He'd look more menacing if he wasn't posing in flamboyant golf attire, leaning on a putter.

At the desk below, the BOSS pores over paperwork. Crammed into a tight red jumper, wild red hair, she's quite a sight.

An ALARM sounds on her security panel -- HELL'S BELLS BAR. Her eyes narrow into venomous slits as she looks at the ceiling.

INT. HELL'S BELLS BAR

David blows on the smoking contract. Kate snatches it away.

KATE  
Thanks, David. Wish me luck.

DAVID  
Sure you won't stay? They've got a  
pretty good Gilligan's Island dinner  
theater.

KATE  
Tempting, but no.

She plants a kiss on his cheek, which he relishes, then she's off.  
But as she reaches the door, she stops, held in place by a SONG.  
David is at the Karaoke machine, singing.

DAVID  
Heaven, I'm in heaven,  
And my heart beats so that I can  
hardly speak...

Her face softens, caught in the spell of a sentimental memory.  
She reluctantly turns back to David. With a winsome smile, he  
radiates charm, really selling the song.

DAVID  
... And I seem to find the happiness  
I seek,  
When we're out together, dancing cheek  
to cheek.

Kate waivers. The song starts to draw her back in. She struggles  
against it -- and finally breaks the spell.

KATE  
Goodbye, David.

And she's gone.

DAVID  
See you soon, Katie.

SAMUEL  
I really wish you'd stop singing that  
song. Oh, I could be wrong but I  
think your calculations are a bit off.

DAVID  
Math wasn't my best subject.

SAMUEL  
Really? Bet it wasn't ethics either.  
Knowing you, there's a catch. Right?

DAVID  
 (a devious grin)  
 Only that the Boy Scout has to win.

SAMUEL  
 Oh, have a heart, David.

DAVID  
 What, you think I'm just going to sit  
 back and watch her get into heaven  
 while I'm stuck here for eternity with  
 the scum of the Earth?  
 (realizing everyone)  
 (is glaring at him)  
 No offence, fellas.

The Barflies grumble and return to their drinks.

SAMUEL  
 Boozing, gambling, adultery...  
 You should take to this place like a  
 duck takes to orange sauce. You're  
 just not making an effort to fit in.  
 Get out and mingle.

DAVID  
 Better stock up on the Snapple.  
 In six days she'll be down here  
 suffering with the rest of us.

SAMUEL  
 Jesus, what did she ever do to you?

DAVID  
 She married me.

Samuel stares at David, trying to read him.

SAMUEL  
 Oh my god. You're still stuck on her,  
 aren't you? That's what this is all  
 about.

From David's expression, Samuel knows he's right.

SAMUEL  
 If you really cared for her, you  
 wouldn't bring her down here.

DAVID  
 Oh, c'mon, it's no worse than LA.  
 Not at this level. I'd take care of  
 her. She could be a trustee, like us.  
 Besides, she wouldn't be happy in  
 heaven. Not without me.

SAMUEL  
You're delusional.

DAVID  
It's a second chance, Samuel.  
You don't get a lot of second chances  
once you're dead.

Samuel sees the earnestness on David's face.

SAMUEL  
Well... I guess as long as you don't  
get in trouble for this.

DAVID  
Trouble? I'm already in hell.  
What could happen?

The Barflies grab their drinks and scatter. David and Samuel  
look around, expecting disaster. Nothing happens.

SAMUEL  
You're right. What could happen?

Again they wait expectantly. Still nothing. Everyone relaxes.

DAVID  
Who'd have thought. So, anyway --

The ground opens up and David plummets into a hole, SCREAMING.