

"ETERNAL ENGAGEMENT"

by

David Sloma

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FADE IN:

EXT. THE NETHERWORLD - TIMELESS

Below is Hell, a firey pit spouting demons and flames. Above is Heaven, a lovely domain of angels and light. Connecting them is a spectral roadway in-between the stars in outer space. Angels and demons play tug of war with humans. Earth hangs far in the distance.

In the middle is a little shanty town. The sign reads "Purgatory city limits. Population ???". There is a lone nightclub here. A neon sign on the roof of the club proclaims this the "In-between Lounge".

Outside the club are parked fiendish motorbikes with horns on them to one side of the door, and big harps and golden staffs on the other side.

INT. IN-BETWEEN LOUNGE - TIMELESS

A comedian in a tacky suit, big side burns, big sunglasses, MR TONY CLIFFARD, JR. is on stage performing in this nightclub in Purgatory.

The mixed audience of angels, alter boys, monks are on one side of the room drinking pop, tea, and milk, and the demons, ruffians, and scary characters are on the other side drinking booze, smoking and cavorting with the hot girls.

Tony taps the microphone. There's a drummer, PETE, on stage with him. Pete has a small pair of fluffy wings and a halo attached to a baseball cap. A nametag on his t-shirt reads "Pete".

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

Hello? Is this thing on? I'm still kinda new around here, but it's an honor to be playing Purgatory. Still getting used to this being dead thing.

(beat)

The upside is, I don't have to worry about getting old any more, but my credit card company doesn't know I'm dead. I got a bill collector in the afterlife hounding me now! And let me tell you, the interest is hell!

Pete does roll and hits the cymbals.

The demons smile and clap.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

Hell.

(beat)

I was a bad guy on Earth, so  
that's probally where I'm headed  
anyway when this gig is up.

Tony paces around, puffs on his cigarette.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

So, a priest, a rabbi, and a  
Buddhist goes into this bar...

(looks around)

Oh, wrong joke for this crowd, I  
guess.

Tony points at the priests and angels. The mic FEEDS BACKS.

Silence. One of the demons hits an altar boy on the head.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

(adjusts the mic)

What a dead crowd.

Pete hits a drum roll.

A ruffian throws a plastic water bottle at Tony.

Some of the audience chuckles.

RUFFIAN

Go back to the other side!

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

(adjusts tie)

The jokes don't get any easier,  
folks! And, I'm now officially out  
of smokes! The beast is about to  
be unleashed!

Tony stubs his smoke out, underfoot.

Some of the demons smile at this.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

(to Pete)

Got a smoke?

SAINT PETER

Nope.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
Story of my life.

Tony turns back to the mic.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
(to audience)  
How many of you think that God  
created the universe in seven  
days? Huh? Put up your hands.

Tony raises his hand and looks out at the audience. The hands  
of the angels and priests and good guys go up.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
I got news for you - he pulled an  
all-nighter on the sixth day.

Peter does a drum roll, shaking his head in disgust.

A BRIGHT LIGHT FLASHES AND THUNDER CRACKS.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
Oh, shit!

We see GOD, a small dwarf woman dressed in white, sitting  
alone in the audience. Demons and the dark crowd scatter from  
God, while the angles and good folks bow down before her.

GOD  
Tony, watch the language.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
God? You're a dwarf? A she-dwarf?

Tony snickers.

GOD  
I am anything I choose to be, Tony.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
(shrugs)  
Sorry about that, it was just a  
joke.

GOD  
Tony Cliffard, Jr., Comedian.  
Didn't do very well on Earth, did  
you? Well, you have all eternity  
to practice.

The angels and demons laugh.

God raises her hand and everyone goes silent.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

I'm having a tough time, actually,  
but I guess you know that already?

GOD

Of course, I know all! I am the  
creator! The first and last -

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

Ya, well, can you create me  
another smoke, I'm all out?

Tony looks over to the drummer, who just shakes his head.

GOD

I'm not here to cater to your base  
desires. If you want to get into  
Heaven, you're going to have to at  
least want to mend your ways.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

I wouldn't want to be in any  
Heaven that'd have me as a member.

(beat)

Hey, Peter! - that was a joke!

The drummer does a limp, late, drum roll.

The angels and good folks look at Tony in shock. The devils  
and bad folks laugh.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

(to Pete)

Great timing pal!

The drummer looks to Tony with daggers in his eyes.

PETE

Careful, I got pull around here!

Pete throws down his sticks and storms off.

God walks over to Tony.

GOD

Tony, St. Peter is doing you a great favour sitting in on the drums, don't give him a hard time.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

Sure, God, whatever you say.

GOD

What's the matter, Tony? I sense a lot of anger in you.

God looks up at Tony.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

Damn right I'm angry! I was starting to get my life on track, then I'm dead! Things were starting to come together for me!

GOD

You were forty-three. I wasn't seeing much progress.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

(grinning)

Hey, you're kind of cute for God.

Tony bends down and tries to kiss God, but she smacks him.

GOD

Some just never change!

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

Ow!

Tony sits down on the edge of the stage.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

I'm sorry. I'm a jerk. I was never a believer when I was alive.

GOD

I offer your soul perfect peace in paradise for eternity. What more could you want?

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

Hey, can I see Elvis now? He's dead, right?

GOD  
(cutting Tony off)  
Despite all your faults, you have  
a good heart.

The bad crows giggles and jeers.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
Can't you to send me back to my  
life on Earth! Heaven is not my  
idea of fun, being cooped up  
forever with some saints and shit!  
Jeezus!

God rolls her eyes.

GOD  
At this rate, you ain't gonna make  
it.

The demons laugh.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
Sorry.

GOD  
Each human has their allotted  
time. I can't go changing my plans  
for everyone who asks.

Tony pouts, looks down.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
Ya, I know! Heard it all in Sunday  
school!

Tony puts his head in his hands.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
At least I can't sin too much in  
Heaven. No more booze and women.  
Can't cheat on my wife anymore,  
and I do feel bad about that. I  
was into the sauce, what can I  
say? She doesn't deserve that.  
(beat)  
I miss her.

GOD  
You want to see her now?

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
Huh? What do you mean...?

GOD  
I could make it happen just like  
that!

God snaps her fingers.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
No! Please!

GOD  
Are you sure?

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
Yes! Don't bring her here before  
her time, ok?! Just let her be.

God smiles down.

GOD  
She misses you too.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
God?

GOD  
Yes?

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
I think I'd rather go to Hell.  
There's more action there, and I  
think I really deserve it, anyway.  
I've made some big screw-ups in my  
life. I don't think Heaven is my  
kind of place- no offence.

The lights turn to red. SATAN appears in a cloud of smoke and  
rock n' roll cranked up to eleven! The demons hoot and holler  
and gather around Satan.

SATAN  
Hello Tony!

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
What the hell?

SATAN  
Precisely! Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!



God stares Satan down.

GOD  
(to Satan)  
This one's mine!

SATAN  
We'll see about that. His fate  
still hangs in the balance.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
Is this really happening?

Tony throws some water on his face.

GOD  
Tony, you have to make a decision.

SATAN  
That's right! Who do you think  
would be more fun to hang out with  
for eternity, huh? Some boring  
priests and nuns? On some little  
fluffy clouds? Or with me, his  
Infernal Majesty and the rock and  
roll gang! We got all the stars!  
And you should see the women we  
get down there Tony! They are  
smokin' hot!

Satan points to the side of the stage and a from out of a  
cloud of smoke, a bunch of hot women appear in miniskirts  
and heels - like the Robert Palmer girls, but these ones have  
horns on. They carry guitars and dance in time to a loud rock  
song.

Satan hands Tony a beer.

SATAN  
We've got bottomless beer mugs,  
Tony! And hot wings every day!

God holds her hand up and the music stops. The girls stand  
bored, holding their guitars limply.

God grabs the beer from Tony.

GOD  
I'll take that.

The beer disappears in a cloud of smoke in God's hands.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

What the?

SATAN

Hey, this is not your joint!

GOD

(to Satan)

You do remember the Purgatory Agreement?

(reciting from memory)

"No gifts or bribes are to be given to the subject; they must make a true and fair choice on their own where they want to spend eternity".

Satan puts a couple of cigarettes in his mouth, then puts his finger up to it, which produces a flame. He puffs on them, and gives one to Tony.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

Hey, thanks!

SATAN

Don't pay attention to her. She's dead and everyone knows it.

Satan and the demons laugh.

GOD

Don't bring the extenstionalists into this one! I've got representatives from all the major religions here if you want to fight that way!

Satan shakes his head no.

GOD

Didn't think so.

SATAN

Dante said Hell was the separation of the soul from God, Tony. But we do pretty fine for ourselves, don't we gang?

The demons jump up and down, hollering and clapping. The girls wink at Tony and lick their lips.

SATAN

See, Tony? Don't believe what they told you in Sunday School.

Satan waves a pointy finger around.

SATAN

Just say the word, Tony. I'll take you down with me and you'll have the time of your afterlife. No clouds, no harps, no scantomionious bullshit. Just good times, Tony! You can party forever!

(beat)

What do you say?

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

I...I...

Satan grins.

SATAN

So, you wanna come with me?

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

I'm not sure...

GOD

My son said that whoever comes to me and is cleansed in the blood of the Lamb will have eternal life in Heaven. The choice is still yours, Tony. You will be forgiven for all you sins.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

Ya, and Jim Morrison said "break on through to the other side". So, why don't you go after that Avril Levine girl and leave plain degenerates like me alone!

SATAN

That wouldn't be any fun!

Tony paces back and forth, puffing on his smoke furiously.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
Let me think it over.

He sits on the stool and thinks.

MONTAGE:

God smiles and the angels pray.

Satan hugs the girls, kissing them and fooling around.

A couple of the devils and the angels tussle, fighting. A devil breaks a bottle over an angels's head.

A priests hits a ruffian with a big bible.

END MONTAGE.

Tony stands.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
Ok, I've reached a decision.

SATAN  
Wonderful, Tony! The girls are waiting right here for you!

The girls smile and wave.

GOD  
Are you ready for your eternal peace, Tony? Free from any worry or strife?

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
Umm, well...  
(coughs)  
That's the thing, see. You guys have got things all neatly cut out for yourselves, don't you?

God and Satan look at each other.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.  
On the one side, there's the Heaven thing, with all sweetness and light - enough to give me a cavity.

(more)

TONY CLIFFARD, JR. (cont'd)

Then, there's Hell, the pit of eternal damnation- but with hot chicks and parties all the time. They are both enough to wear a guy out. And, I don't think I'm up to serving you in Heaven God, no offense.

God shrugs, looks a bit hurt.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

Nor I am looking to rule in Hell, as the saying goes - though I don't think that would happen anyway.

Satan polishes his nails.

SATAN

You want me to make you a contract spelling out your powers in Hell? I can do that.

Satan produces a scroll from a puff of smoke. It looks like it's been written in blood.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

No, I don't think I'd trust you.

Satan shrugs.

GOD

(smiling)

I knew you would make the right decision!

God moves towards Tony, who steps back.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

What a minute! Didn't you hear anything I've said? You're both a couple of wingnuts and I'm not going anywhere with you!

(beat)

I like it here! I get to perform my comedic arts, hang out, have a few laughs. I get to check out the new talent coming through here.

(more)

TONY CLIFFARD, JR. (cont'd)

The food's not bad, for a bar, and  
the waitresses are cute.

(beat)

It may not have all the vices a  
guy could want, or perfect peace,  
but it suits me fine. I just  
realized that I'm happy. All I  
need is to be able to do what  
makes me happy -my comedy- and  
I've got that here. When my wife  
finally joins me -no rush there-  
then it will be ok by me.

The devils lose interest and start to mill around. The girls  
take off their guitars and leave.

SATAN

It's not too late to  
reconsider.

Tony picks up the microphone.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

I think it is. I'll hang around  
until my wife gets up here. Then  
we can decide together.

Pete gets back behind the drums.

Satan slinks off and joins the devils at the bar for some  
drinks.

God just stares at Tony.

GOD

I'm afraid that's not going to cut  
it.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

Huh? What do you want? I made my  
choice.

God shakes her head.

GOD

That may be good enough for him,  
but not for me.

God points at Satan and the devils at the bar.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

So, what are you going to do? I'm  
dead already.

GOD

Remember that cranky old God in  
the Bible? I still got it in me,  
so think about what you are doing.

Tony ignores God and picks up the mic.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

(to the audience)

Hello everyone. Thanks for coming  
out. I'm going to begin my next  
set of comedy stylings sure to  
keep you entertained for a long,  
long, time, maybe even for...  
eternity...

(beat)

Why did the chicken cross the road?

(beat)

God only knows!

Satan and the devils moan and groan.

The good folks shake their heads and jeer.

God walks up to Tony.

GOD

You are dead, Tony, but you can  
also be reincarnated as a dung  
beetle.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR.

No, no!

She snaps her fingers and Tony disappears.

GOD

Won't be the first time.

God walks off the empty stage.

Pete does a drum roll.

Everyone laughs.

EXT. IN-BETWEEN LOUNGE - ETERNAL NIGHT

Satan puts a girl on the back seat of his motorbike, and leads the demons, as they tear off on their motorbikes along the spectral highway. God and the angels fly off towards Heaven, past...

EXT. SPACE

The Planet Earth.

EXT. A FOREST ON EARTH - DAY

A dung beetle crawls over a leaf.

TONY CLIFFARD, JR. (V.O.)  
Oh shit!

FADE OUT.