

“Heaven’s Gate”
by Austin Che & Eddie Leung

INT. AIRPLANE—NIGHT—FAVORING MILO MINDERBINDER

It is dark in the plane. Nothing can be seen. We HEAR voices SCREAMING out from the dark.

VOICE 1

(hysterically yelling)

The plane’s going down! Everybody jump!

VOICE 2

Don’t forget your parachutes!

MILO

turns on a flashlight, gets his parachute pack, and opens it.

MILO’S POV

A piece of paper falls out of the open bag.

INSERT OF PAPER

Paper reads: “What’s good for M &M Enterprises is good for the country.”

MILO

Doh!

There is a flash of light.

CUT TO:

HEAVEN

It is very bright. Milo walks into view.

The GUARDIAN then walks to meet Milo. The guardian is in white robes, sandals, and has a halo overhead.

GUARDIAN

Where do you think you’re going?

MILO

My name is Milo Minderbinder. Who are you, where am I and do you want any chocolate-covered cotton?

GUARDIAN

I am the Guardian of the Gates of Heaven, you are at the Gates of Heaven, and I am guarding these gates. You are dead, and you and your chocolatey cotton are not entering these gates.

MILO

takes out some money and hands it to the Guardian.

GUARDIAN

Where does a dead man get money?

MILO

Oh. I met someone claiming to be the devil on my way up here, and I sold half of my soul.

GUARDIAN

takes money

GUARDIAN

Okay. Thanks for the bribe. Now find some other gate to enter.

MILO

Mr. Guardian of the Gates of Heaven. You drive a hard bargain. Let's make a deal. You let me in and I'll sell eggs to everyone. Fresh eggs are difficult to come by these days.

GUARDIAN

I can't eat any eggs. I'm watching my cholesterol, you know, so why should I help you?

MILO

Because what's good for Milo Minderbinder is good for heaven.

GUARDIAN

You have been deemed unworthy of heaven.

MILO

What? Whose in charge here?

GUARDIAN

Are you questioning the authority of heaven?

MILO

Yes.

GUARDIAN

Oh. We haven't had one of those in awhile. This should be fun.

MILO

What? What about the eggs?

GUARDIAN

snaps his finger, and there is a flash of light.

CUT TO:

INT. COURT OF LAW

Milo and Guardian are wearing suits. The only thing in courtroom is a judge's bench. The only thing that can be seen from this bench is an extremely bright light.

VOICE

All rise. The honorable, almighty, supreme, you know who presiding. This session of Heavens Court is now called to order.

GUARDIAN

Milo Minderbinder. You have been deemed unworthy of entry into heaven. How do you plead?

MILO

Is this all really necessary?

GUARDIAN

Fine. Take all the fun out of it. The State of Heaven calls forth Exhibit A. Lights please.

A flash of light.

CUT TO:

INT. MESS HALL

TWO SHOT—MILO and YOSSARIAN

YOSSARIAN

Why do you care about how much fruit I take?

MILO

You see, Yossarian, I became mess officer while you were in the hospital and a letter like this giving you the right to as much fruit as you want could ruin any mess officer in the world. Well, what do you want with the fruit? Do you sell it?

YOSSARIAN

I give it away.

MILO

To who?

YOSSARIAN

To anyone who wants it.

MILO

Lets out a long, melancholy wail and staggers back. Mops sweat from face. Tug at mustache, body trembling.

YOSSARIAN

I give a great deal of it to Natelly who takes it to an old man and woman and a bunch of other girls with nice fat thighs. The girls sell it all on the black market and use the money to buy flashy costume jewelry and cheap perfume. And the old man uses his share to buy raw whiskey and dirty pictures.

MILO

Costume jewelry! How much are they paying for cheap perfume? Is there much of a market in Rome for dirty pictures?

YOSSARIAN

Forget that. You should worry about your new chef putting soap in the food.

MILO

I don't want anything like that happening while I'm in charge. You see what I hope to do is give the men in this squadron the best meals in the whole world. That's really something to shoot at, isn't it? If a mess officer aims at anything less, it seems to me, he has no right being a mess officer. Don't you agree? (p. 65)

Yossarian turns and speaks privately to camera.

YOSSARIAN

I see a simple, sincere face that is incapable of subtlety or guile. It is the face of a man of hardened integrity who could no more consciously violate the moral principles on which his virtue rests than he could transform himself into a despicable toad. Of course, one of these moral principles is that it is never a sin to charge as much as the traffic can bear. He's really patriotic, too.

MILO

We're at war and there's no use complaining about the number of missions we have to fly. If the colonel says we have to fly fifty-five missions, we have to fly them. And you can't keep running in to the hospital every time something happens you don't like. No, the best thing to do is fly the missions. It's our duty. (p. 66)

Yossarian continues speaking to the camera only.

YOSSARIAN

Oh, and that syndicate of his sounds pretty cool, too.

MILO

You can leave it in the syndicate and watch it grow. The syndicate I'd like to form someday so that I can give you men the good food you deserve. And every man will have his share. (p. 68)

A flash of light.

CUT TO:

INT. COURT OF LAW

GUARDIAN

Milo, although you were the only one who had been gullible enough to volunteer for it, the position of mess officer was a sacred trust to you. You really wanted the best for all the men. Not to mention how patriotic you were. You had so much potential for a great life dedicated to helping others, and serving fresh eggs. But you were already quite obsessed with making a profit when you could. (p. 61-68)

MILO

But I did serve fresh eggs (for my eggs are the freshest) and I made a profit while I was at it. All for the syndicate.

GUARDIAN

No one is questioning your abilities, Milo. But we don't need any more cooks up here. We do care, however, about how you have lived your life. Do you remember cornering the Egyptian cotton market?

MILO

That was a once in a lifetime opportunity and I was pretty shrewd to grab the chance when I had it. (p. 270) But I was a stupid idiot for purchasing the entire stock of Egyptian cotton that no one wanted. It was, however, a good deal for I was able to get a good contract with the Germans. (p. 264)

GUARDIAN

You mean the contract to bomb your own squadron.

MILO

My business was on the verge of collapse.

GUARDIAN

Did you think about all those that would be wounded or killed? Aren't they your friends?

MILO

They're my friends, my countrymen, my comrades in arms. A fellow never had a better bunch of buddies. Do you think I'd do a single thing to harm them if I didn't have to? (p. 263)

GUARDIAN

But you did harm them. You put your business above the lives of Yossarian, McWatt and the rest of the squadron. You are a disgrace to your squadron, to the human race, and you would be a disgrace to us.

MILO

But it's not against the law to make a profit, is it? (p. 272) Everyone supported me once they saw the profit that I had made and after I made a few donations in the name of the syndicate. Everybody, of course, owns a share. Even the government supported me, and since the government is the people, there really is no reason for anyone to complain. (p. 266)

GUARDIAN

How about the dead men in the squadron? Have they no right to complain?

MILO

(emotionally)

It's terrible. It really is terrible. But it would have become even worse if the mess halls hadn't agreed to buy my cotton. (p. 270) Can't you see it from my point of view? (p. 263) What's good for the syndicate is good for everyone.

GUARDIAN

Do you think about anything besides your syndicate? Do you think about anything but profit? How can you betray your government, your country, and your friends? How can you be so simple-minded? Your dedication, your patriotism, and your hard-work are all nullified by your greed and twisted logic. You are like a chocolate covered rotten egg. All sweet and gooey on the outside, but stinky and yellow on the inside.

MILO

People like me though. I make money for everyone, because everyone has a share.

GUARDIAN

But who pays? Let me remind you of a conversation you had with Colonel Cathcart.

GUARDIAN

snaps his finger, and there is a flash of light.

CUT TO:

INT. ARMY HEADQUARTERS

Looks like a simple office. COLONEL CATHCART is talking to Milo. (p. 382-384)

CATHCART

You have earned many distinctions for yourself. You're just like I am—*indispensable!* Milo, you can't fly sixty-four more missions. You can't even fly one more mission. The whole system would fall apart if anything happened to you. Milo, I forbid you to fly any more combat missions.

MILO

But that's not fair, sir. What about my record? The other men are getting all the fame and medals and publicity. Why should I be penalized just because I'm doing such a good job as a mess officer?

CATHCART

No, Milo, it isn't fair. But I don't see anything we can do about it.

MILO

Maybe we can get someone else to fly my missions for me.

CATHCART

But maybe we can get someone else to fly your missions for you. How about the striking coal miners in Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

MILO

It would take too long to train them. But why not the men in the squadron, sir? After all, I'm doing all this for them. They ought to be willing to do something for me in return.

CATHCART

But why not the men in the squadron, Milo? After all, you're doing all this for them. They ought to be willing to do something for you in return.

MILO

What's fair is fair.

CATHCART

What's fair is fair.

MILO

You'll have to raise the number of missions.

CATHCART

I might have to raise the number of missions again. And this is a good way to get that lousy rat, Yossarian, back into combat where he might get killed.

MILO

Sir, Yossarian's a friend of mine. I owe a lot to Yossarian. Isn't there anyway to make an exception for him?

CATHCART

Oh no, we must never play favorites. We must treat every man alike.

MILO

I'd give everything I own to Yossarian, but since I don't own everything, I can't give everything to him, can I? So he'll just have to take his chances with the rest of the men, won't he?

CATHCART

What's fair is fair, Milo.

MILO

Yes, Sir, what's fair is fair. Yossarian is no better than the other men, and he has no right to expect any special privileges, has he?

CATHCART

No, Milo, what's fair is fair..

A flash of light.

CUT TO:

INT. COURT OF LAW

MILO

Yep. What's fair is fair.

GUARDIAN

Was it fair to betray your friends? Nately and Dobbs were killed and Yossarian could not go home because of your selfishness. (p. 385)

MILO

With all the things I am doing for them, they ought to be willing to do something for me in return. (p. 383)

GUARDIAN

I see. What's fair is fair. So it was fair to have others die for you? Was it fair when you raised the price of food in the mess halls so high that officers had to turn over all their pay just to eat? (p. 377)

MILO

Of course it was fair. They could have chosen to starve if they wanted to. I am a big champion of freedom of choice. (p. 377)

GUARDIAN

Then, you should have no problem with us choosing to end this ridiculous talk now. You have shown yourself to be incapable of change. Though you do not lack good qualities, your selfishness and your blindness to things besides profit makes you a cancerous growth destroying your government, your friends, and your country. In conclusion, your petition for entry into heaven is once again...

MILO

looks happy and begins to walk as if going through gate

GUARDIAN

...denied.

MILO

bumps his head in a barrier that suddenly materializes in front of him.

MILO

Doh!

GUARDIAN

We find that you are unfit to pass through these gates with only half a soul.

MILO

I didn't sell half my soul.

GUARDIAN

You lie.

MILO

I never lie.

GUARDIAN

You lie.

MILO

I only lie when it's necessary. (p. 271)

GUARDIAN

It's nice that you put so much importance on this. As I was saying, you only have half a soul. We can't let you in to heaven, and the devil doesn't want a share in your syndicate. I don't have any more time to waste on you. Figure out where to go yourself.

GUARDIAN

disappears, leaving Milo alone in the middle of nowhere

MILO

This has been pretty bad. Well, let's see if I can find someone to buy my story.

MILO

walks out of view.

PAN LEFT AND RIGHT

CAMERAMAN

Hmm...

PAN UP SLOWLY TOWARDS JUDGE

Ahem.

GOD

PAN DOWN QUICKLY

PAN UP SLOWLY

Ahem. Ahem.

GOD

PAN DOWN QUICKLY

PAN UP VERY SLOWLY

You asked for it.

GOD

CUT TO:

SNOW SCREEN

We HEAR background STATIC noise.

Heaven's Gate

Written and Directed by

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and
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