

Unholy Swap

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. MT PURGATORY - DAY

MT Purgatory -- an exact copy of the Mount Everest -- seen from its foot.

EXT. MT PURGATORY - NEAR TOP - DAY

SUPER: "MT Purgatory with its Seven Sins to be punished."

Just under "Earthly Paradise" -- THREE ENTITIES

GOD -- mild and gentle; SATAN -- wild and mental; KATE BUSH (age 19) in her nightgown -- serene and sensual --

KATE BUSH

(wakes up)

Ehh... where am I? What am I doing here? I'm freezing!

GOD

It seems you're not quite in Heaven and not quite in Hell. And on the question of what am I doing here?...

(looks at Satan)

Hell, what are we doing here?!

Satan shivers.

SATAN

It's cold out here, so let me come straight to the point: let's make a deal.

GOD

The contents of this deal, please?

SATAN

Let's switch places.

God points at Satan and then back at himself.

GOD

You mean me playing you, and you playing me?

He lets it sink in.

GOD (CONT'D)

Oh, Hell!

SATAN

Yes.

GOD

Why?

SATAN

We're going to 'test' mankind and ourselves a bit more. The question being: "can we really change people?"

GOD

What are the precise rules?

Kate has had enough of it. She crumbles to her knees and stands erect.

SATAN

The rules are --

KATE BUSH

STOP, please tell me why I'm here?

GOD

Yes, why is she here?

Satan looks surprised.

SATAN

Because she can end our quarrel once and for all.

GOD

How?

SATAN

She wrote a song --

KATE BUSH

Yes, normally that's what singer-songwriters do.

While Satan makes a holy gesture --

SATAN

You wrote a song called "Deal with God." So I feel a bit offended. It should be: "A deal with the Devil."

KATE BUSH

I was trying to say that a man and  
a woman, like the Devil and God,  
can't understand each other because  
we are a man and a woman...

CUT TO:

INT. MODERN LIVING ROOM - DAY

A man throws his book "Men Are from Mars, Women Are from  
Venus" at a woman while she throws her book "Men Are from  
Venus, Women Are from Mars" at him.

KATE BUSH (V.O.)

... If we could actually swap each  
other's roles,...

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. MT PURGATORY - NEAR TOP

Kate Bush with emphasis --

KATE BUSH

... if we could actually be in each  
other's place for a while, I think  
we'd both be very surprised!

(laughs)

I think it would lead to a greater  
understanding and --

SATAN

A greater understanding... I doubt  
that. It's more like a bigger  
challenge.

(beat)

The challenge being God burning in  
Hell, trying to convert the all-  
time biggest monster to an obedient  
cheap.

(beat)

And me staying in a luxury hotel.  
Me in Seven Heaven, converting a  
Saint to a sinner.

God points at Kate Bush.

GOD

I guess we both agree that she will  
be the judge in this contest.  
Agreed?

SATAN

Agreed! Now you're talking.

A beat.

GOD

And the stakes?

SATAN

The loser will forever be the winner's obedient right hand.

KATE BUSH

And what happens to me after I played judge in this contest? Can I go home then?

SATAN

If you judge well, yes.

KATE BUSH

How long can it take? I'm in!

GOD

Fine then. So Kate, can you give me the monster, the Saint, and the challenges?

Kate Bush makes up the challenges. After she's finished --

KATE BUSH

Read my mind so you can sky write a mental projection of the challenges.

GOD

Done. Look!

GOD-HELL

"Hitler to lovingly run an orphanage consisting of Jews."

SATAN-HEAVEN

"Mother Teresa cursing."

Kate Bush pushes her stopwatch button.

KATE BUSH

Go!

God and Satan leap to Hell and Heaven.

HELL

God tries to convince Hitler.

GOD

Make peace with the orphans. Is that so hard to do?

HITLER

Must I make them rule the world?

GOD

You don't need to; their parents already rule supreme!

HITLER

That sounds racist.

GOD

(proud)

You're learning.

God leaps back to Purgatory.

GOD (CONT'D)

Time?!

KATE BUSH

(pushes stopwatch button)

Your time is 2 minutes 33 seconds.

HEAVEN - SAME

Satan interrogates Mother Teresa.

SATAN

I heard you had an affair with the Pope. You met him at his private pool when he was bud naked.

MOTHER TERESA

I only have one love, God almighty.

SATAN

You're good not falling into my trap of you saying... eh... you know... eh... so what's the word again?

MOTHER TERESA

Goddamn!

SATAN

Thanks, that's all I need to know.

Satan leaps back to Purgatory.

SATAN (CONT'D)

Time?!

KATE BUSH

(pushes stopwatch again)

It's 2 minutes 41 seconds... God wins this contest!

SATAN

But that's impossible!

(beat; depressed)

I want a rematch.

GOD

As always.

SATAN

I have to go to Base Camp, drink a beer or two. Kate, I would like you to join us before you go home.

KATE BUSH

OK, but only if you let me finish my story --

No response.

Kate gets some warm cloth, and they put on their climbing gear: shoes, crampons, and oxygen masks.

As part of a rope group -- with Satan in front, God in the middle, and Kate Bush at the back -- they decent through moderately angled snow slopes.

Kate Bush abruptly halts a few meters above the MESSNER STEP; a 12 m rock wall at 8,760 M.

With a euphoric look on her face, she throws away her oxygen mask and sits down to enjoy the view.

KATE BUSH (CONT'D)

Where was I? O yes -- a greater understanding.

(beat)

(MORE)

KATE BUSH (CONT'D)

We were told that if we kept the title "Deal with God" that it wouldn't be played in the religious countries and that generally, we might get it blacked purely because it had 'God' in the title... That's why I called the song "Running up that hill."

God gazes at the top of the mountain.

GOD

It's not a hill but a mountain. And we're not going up, but down. We're not running either; lack of oxygen, you know. Get up before we all die here.

KATE BUSH

So why do you both keep running around the bush then? Talk to me. What do I get out of this, except my life?

GOD

You'll --

SATAN

I will be your agent and make the deals with your record company.

Kate Bush steps up close to Satan and looks him straight into the eyes.

KATE BUSH

Can I write my own songs?

SATAN

Yes.

KATE BUSH

Hm -- no deal! May I ask you a real favor?

GOD

Don't do that; in return, he'll take your soul.

Kate Bush takes another look at Satan.

KATE BUSH

He can't do that. He still owes me a real favor.



She turns to God.

KATE BUSH (CONT'D)  
I judged his little contest you  
know. That should count for  
something.

SATAN  
What do you want?

KATE BUSH  
We all seem to love the number  
seven, so let me save seven souls.

SATAN  
Pf... why not.

Step by step, they decent the MESSNER STEP -- secured by the  
fixed ropes. They pass REINHOLD, who hangs beside them on an  
old rope. He's frozen cold, but his eyes still wander around.

Satan Points at Reinhold --

SATAN (CONT'D)  
Some don't even make it past the  
first step.

After mastering the Messner Step, an extremely exposed knife-  
edge ridge leads them to the SOUTH SUMMIT (8,750 M.).

SUPER: "Terrace 7 - Lust"

Satan points at a pool filled with lava.

SATAN (CONT'D)  
Here they are smothered in fire and  
brimstone. How do you want to save  
someone without burning your hands?

KATE BUSH  
Why don't they burn to ashes?

SATAN  
Because they have to feel pain  
until God and I decide if their  
soul goes to Heaven or Hell.

KATE BUSH  
(to God; pointing at a  
girl)  
Please pull that LITTLE GIRL out of  
the pool?

God pulls her out.

LITTLE GIRL  
Thanks, mam.

KATE BUSH  
Why did those men throw a sweet  
little girl like you into the fire?

LITTLE GIRL  
They think I'm naughty.

KATE BUSH  
Are you?

LITTLE GIRL  
I'm not sure mam.

A beat.

KATE BUSH  
What is your name?

LITTLE GIRL  
ANGEL, but they call me Case 38.

KATE BUSH  
Why?

ANGEL  
I killed 38 people including my  
parents. I have to kill people I  
like. Can't stop myself. Don't get  
me wrong. I love them.

KATE BUSH  
I'm going to look for some real  
nice parents that will give you a  
chance to redeem yourself.

ANGEL  
(smiles sardonically)  
That would be fine mam.

It gets dark when they continue their way down the mountain.  
Angel -- still burning -- lights the way from behind.

Descending a ridge, the group faces a series of imposing rock  
steps that force them into waist-deep snow, to arrive at THE  
BALCONY (8,400 M.).

SUPER: "Terrace 6 - Gluttony"

People are force-fed rats, toads, and snakes. When they see  
the illustrious group walk up to them, they all start to  
shout: "Pick me-Pick me."

Kate Bush can't choose what soul to save until she hears a --

MANLY VOICE

FUCKING HELL, I told them the meat  
should be well done.

KATE BUSH

Is that really you?

Kate Bush focuses her eyes on a naked man wearing an apron.

It's GORDON RAMSAY.

GORDON RAMSAY

I don't know what you mean with  
"really" Kate, but the food really  
sucks here.

KATE BUSH

Leave the rat. I want you to cook  
for us at Base Camp. Join us!

After (12 hours) descending through moderately angled snow  
slopes the group reaches THE SOUTH COL (7,920 M.).

SUPER: "Terrace 5 - Greed"

Several enormous cauldrons with oil are placed throughout the  
Terrace. People are boiled alive in oil.

Above all other cries and pleas for help --

DONALD TRUMP

Give me some of my money so I can  
buy myself out of here?

Satan points at a cauldron.

SATAN

Bear in mind that it's the most  
luxurious boiling oil that money  
can buy, but it's still boiling.

DONALD TRUMP

(looks at Kate Bush)

Please get me out of here? I'm a  
rich man. I can give you half my  
fortune!

KATE BUSH

Don't be so greedy. Be happy with  
what you have. I hate materialistic  
people...

While making a holy gesture --

KATE BUSH (CONT'D)  
Be rich in body and soul.

DONALD TRUMP  
How can I be rich when I can't  
spend my money; that's kind of  
difficult in here, don't you think.

KATE BUSH  
(to God)  
Do you have any money?

GOD  
No, don't need to.

KATE BUSH  
(to Satan)  
And You?

Satan pulls out his trouser pockets --

SATAN  
No, do you have any idea what it  
costs bribing politicians?

KATE BUSH  
(to Donald Trump)  
You're a very lucky man -- you can  
buy us dinner.

DONALD TRUMP  
Do they accept a credit card?

SATAN  
Sure, we're almost in Hell.

They scramble over a section of interlayered marble,  
phyllite, and semi schist, which requires about 100 meters of  
rope for traversing it.

Continuing over an anvil shaped rib of black rock. Fixed  
ropes assist the climbers in scrambling over this snow  
covered rock band to arrive at a SMALL LEDGE (7,470 M.).

SUPER: "Terrace 4 - Sloth"

PARIS HILTON stands on the edge of a snake pit.

PARIS HILTON  
(to Kate Bush)  
Please save me?!

KATE BUSH  
Why ask me? I'm not God.

PARIS HILTON  
(harsh voice)  
Rumor goes fast here. Word is that  
you want to save seven souls.

KATE BUSH  
Yes, that's my plan.  
(beat)  
Are you a mind reader?

Paris Hilton pulls her dumbest grimace --

PARIS HILTON  
No, not me but someone else.

KATE BUSH  
Who?

PARIS HILTON  
For God's sake, are you stupid? You  
lazy brains. You're good for  
nothing!

KATE BUSH  
Yes, that about summons it up...

Kate Bush pushes the girl over the edge.

KATE BUSH (CONT'D)  
(into the pit)  
... I mean why you're here!

Satan also has a glimpse.

SATAN  
And down it goes, where it ends  
nobody knows.

The group descends the Lhotse face on fixed ropes to ADVANCED  
BASE CAMP (6,500 M).

SUPER: "Terrace 3 - Anger"

Inhabitants, hundreds of them -- lie next to each other.  
Beside them a pile of limbs.

SATAN (CONT'D)  
Anger, it's what keeps me alive.  
The reason why those fucked up  
bastards are crying like babies.

DZJENGIS KHAN

Give me back my limbs my lady.

KATE BUSH

With what army do you want to attach your arms and legs to your body? That's if you can even find your own limbs.

DZJENGIS KHAN

You're mocking me, are you mocking me. I'm gonna rip you apart!

KATE BUSH

Yes, dear, that sounds really convincing!

Through a small passageway, they reach a glacial valley that they cross reasonably fast to arrive at CAMP 1 (6,065 M). Just above an icefall:

SUPER: "Terrace 2 - Envy"

Kate Bush looks at a lake where people try to keep their heads above the water. Some hold on to floating pieces of ice.

HERMANN GÖRING sits on an ice floe. While he combs his hair with his fingers, he looks at his reflection on the ice.

KATE BUSH (CONT'D)

(to the condemned)

Who thinks he/she is better, smarter, and more attractive than everyone else?

Hermann Göring raises his hand.

KATE BUSH (CONT'D)

You seem to be staying at the wrong level, you lucky man.

Through crevasses and shifting blocks of ice, they reach the middle of the KHUMBU ICEFALL.

SUPER: "Terrace 1 - Pride"

Kate Bush walks up to Cher who is to be broken on the wheel.

Cher sings:

CHER

If I could turn back time, if I could find a way, I'd --

KATE BUSH  
Do you want to be saved?

CHER  
Yes, but not by you. I hate your  
music.

KATE BUSH  
But I can bring you into my sensual  
world. A world full of stars.

Cher's face turns red.

CHER  
Go to Hell, you witch!

KATE BUSH  
Where's the handle on this  
apparatus? Ah yes, I see...

CHER  
Ah!

KATE BUSH  
Still don't want to come into my  
sensual world?

The group walks the last stretch down the mountain -- passing Ante Purgatory holding the Excommunicated, who behave like condemned; the Lethargic, looking drowsy and sluggish; the Un-Absolved, looking guilty, and the Negligent Rulers, acting like they do not care -- to arrive at --

BASE CAMP (5,150 M)

where hordes of famous people wait to be brought to their destination level.

They're scared of the SCREAMS that come FROM ABOVE.

KATE BUSH (CONT'D)  
Poor folks, they still don't really  
know what awaits them.

SATAN  
But you know?

Kate Bush with a face that starts to lack confidence --

KATE BUSH  
Meaning?

SATAN  
You will join them now.

KATE BUSH  
 But I just walked down this  
 Godforsaken mountain.

A SHORT MONTAGE OF SINS THAT ARE PUNISHED WITH A VOICE-OVER  
 OF SATAN --

SATAN (V.O.)  
 Yes, isn't it ironic?

BACK TO SCENE

Kate Panics.

KATE BUSH  
 Why do you do this to me?

SATAN  
 You brought this on yourself. You  
 killed two souls.

Fighting for her life now --

KATE BUSH  
 I did not kill them. I only got  
 them out of their misery. So in a  
 way, I did save them.

SATAN  
 No, you killed them.  
 (beat)  
 You saved an eleven years old mass-  
 murdering child, a self-proclaimed  
 Übermensch camping at the wrong  
 level, a food poisoner, and the man  
 who's going to pay for the food  
 with a false credit card... You go  
 straight onto the wheel.

KATE BUSH  
 God just won the contest, and now  
 you're nothing more than his  
 obedient right hand. If I ask for  
 it, God will forgive my sins.

God looks puzzled.

GOD  
 Eh...y --



SATAN

Normally yes, but not this time.  
You forget about Pride, meaning:the  
excessive belief in one's abilities  
that interferes with the  
individual's recognition of the  
grace of God.

(points at God)

So where's his grace now?!

KATE BUSH

Please help?!

GOD

I'm sorry, I can't help you  
anymore.

KATE BUSH

(turns to Satan)

Goddamn, you're good.

FADE TO BLACK.