

Scenario

Hale-Bopp

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An exploration of delusion. I'm interested in exploring what happens when the Heaven's Gate members confront a reality at variance with their theology.

The use of flashbacks allows telling the story in a non-linear fashion while maintaining our focus. There are three acts. The first centers around the 1975 failed appearance of Bo's promised "celestial transportation." The second latches onto the Rancho Santa Fe events. The third act revolves around a (probably apocryphal) "ground crew" reunion with a reincarnated Applewhite at the site of Indian ruins in the Southwest.

We use the "movie treatment" that the Heaven's Gate members wrote to portray their beliefs in a reality-neutral manner.

[The theatre darkens. Lights swirl. A cosmic wind. A voice.]

VOICE: Close your eyes and listen.

You have heard of me. I come from the beyond.

You have seen me. My marker blazes in the sky.

You know what I will say, but your mind has hidden it.

The end of ages is nigh. Open your eyes.

[In the theatre space, a solar system. Planets move. A comet appears near earth. A supernova rocks the space.]

On Earth, the chosen await.

[The swirl of vortices pulls space away and leaves an ocean-front. Night. A group of black-clad Total Overcomers stares in formation at a bright star near Polaris. Armbands. A purple cloth spread on the ground. They move in unison. The leader apart from the group.]

BO: This is the night.

PEEP: Bo?

BO: Can't you feel it? The wind...

PEEP: Bo, can we talk?

BO: *[He turns surprised.]* Of course. But you don't even need to say anything. Your vibrations...

PEEP: I don't think you're reading the vibrations right, Bo.

BO: Perhaps. There's much I have to learn. *[He stares down, then up at the heavens.]* I'm not matured yet, not yet ascended. But tonight. Tonight. They'll crack me open, Peep. Let out the Next Level, discard the human mind. I'll be free.

PEEP: Bo, look at me.

BO: I don't want to. I see human, not beyond.

PEEP: Look at me. *[He does.]* We've been together a long time, Bo.

Have you ever...

Haven't you ever...

BO: *[With great child-like simplicity.]* What?

PEEP: We've been together a long time.

BO: We have. You've stood by me.

PEEP: Could I ever be... *[She stops.]*

BO: You will, Peep. You will. Both of us. *[She looks up.]*

Tonight they'll come. That star is going to keep getting brighter and brighter until we'll be in the air, and free. Together. With the students. All of us, flying free from Earth and its problems.

PEEP: *[Softly.]* That's not what I meant.

Might I not be...

Couldn't I be...

Isn't there something more than friendship here, Bo?

BO: *[His face lights up.]* Yes.

PEEP: Yes?

BO: I hadn't thought that way before.

PEEP: And now?

BO: You're right. I'd been blinded. The Luciferians...

PEEP: Bo. *[She moves to hug him. He backs away.]*

BO: No. That's a trial, but I must be stronger than ever. I've been so blessed.

PEEP: Bo?

BO: I have an Older Member to lead me.

PEEP: Who?

BO: *[Kneeling at Peep's feet.]* The UFO has come. The Older Member has arrived.

[Quickly getting up and crossing to the students.] It's over. Snap out of it. The UFO has come in a different form. I just had a revelation. *[A reverent glance at Peep.]* I don't understand it all yet. My human mind is still confusing the Next Level. Maybe everything's changed. I don't know. I'm going to think about it.

[He darts off stage, then returns to grab a confused Peep and drag her with him. A car off-stage. The puzzled students turn in sync to look at each other, then to look down. They are confused. Those at the edges wander off.]

[The night closes in on them. Others leave. Darkness.]

[Interior of a spaceship. Pluto is through the view-screen. We are approaching the Polar Entrance.]

VOICE: The spaceship piloted by the Older Member approaches Pluto, in preparation for descent into the planet's inner core.

[As we descend, the voice of John M. Craig is heard.]

CRAIG: Mary, I've gone to meet the spaceship because the end of the world is coming. I'll fly back to pick you up before I leave. Applewhite and Nettles have shown me the way through Heaven's Gate.

[We see now that it is Craig piloting the older member's shuttle. We also see Craig's body laying center stage, covered by cloth and wearing sneakers. The two images coexist; then the spaceship fades from view and we are left in a room filled with bodies.]