THE TICKET OFFICE

(Original author unknown; considerably modified by DH)

Roles: of ticket collector & passenger can be male or female. The TC acknowledges 'other people' entering with the correct ticket during the conversation.

Props: a cross-shaped ticket; the Person's false ticket

Ticket Collector (TC): Tickets, please. Thank you, madam! Go straight in; you're expected…

PERSON: *[Walking in, looking around and bumps into the TC]* I say, I'm terribly sorry. Is this really Heaven?

TC: No sir, not quite. This is the ticket office. I have to make sure that everyone has the right ticket before that person is allowed into Heaven.

PERSON: *[Puzzled]* I didn't know you had to have a ticket to get in! I thought that everyone was allowed in who did his best and tried to lead a good life! When did all this business about needing a ticket start?

TC: The requirement was there from the beginning of time, sir. You can't get in without having the right ticket, I'm afraid.

PERSON: I see. *[Thinks and nods]*… Well, that makes sense; we don't want any old riff-raff to be let into Heaven, do we! I'll have a single ticket then, please—just one way *[laughing]*. I shan't need a return ticket!

TC: Sorry, sir, but there aren't any tickets available here. You have to hand in your free ticket that was a gift when you lived on earth. I just check to make sure that your ticket is valid and, if it is, I can let you in.

PERSON: Well, where can I get one of these 'free' tickets?

TC: As I said, sir, tickets are only issued on earth during your lifetime.

PERSON: I say! That's a bit awkward. I seem to have [stutters], er, lost mine *[searching pockets]*. Can I go back to earth and get another one?

TC: No, sir, I'm afraid not. [Checks another person's ticket and nods] That's fine, madam, please go straight in, you're expected.

PERSON: *[Digging into an inside pocket]* Hang on! I think I may have found one after all!

TC: That's very good news, sir. May I see it, please?

PERSON: Yes, here it is *[Hands over the ticket]*

TC: *[Reading aloud]* 'This is to certify that the bearer of this ticket has nearly always tried to live a good life, worked quite hard, gone to church on Christmas morning & helped his neighbour by cutting her lawn occasionally'

PERSON: *[Looking sheepish]* Well, look, I tried to be good most of the time! Some of the time! Well, all right, maybe I did mess up; but I did my best!

TC: Did you try to love God and other people, instead of always thinking about yourself? Were you kind & generous? Did you give to those in need?

PERSON: *[Trying to sound convincing]* Yes, yes! I put some money in the Salvation Army collection every year. I even opened the door for attractive ladies and smiled at babies! *[Pauses]* Mind you, I got fed up with that idiot neighbour of mine. He was such a boring old git…*[Mutters & voice trails off]*

TC: Sorry, sir, but even if you tried really hard to do the right thing—most of the time—you don't have the right ticket. *[Checks another person's ticket]* That's fine, sir, go straight in, you're expected.

PERSON: [*Agitated]* But this is an outrage! I'm as good as the next man!

TC: *[Waving the paper]* I'm afraid this ticket isn't valid.

PERSON: Isn't valid! It must be! There must be some mistake! Look at all the good things I tried to do! Okay, so I did a lot of wrong things as well… *[Trying to* l*ook 'holy']* but I always had the best intentions!

TC: I'm afraid the 'good deeds & best intentions' ticket expired when you did! *[Checks another person's ticket]* That's fine, madam, please go straight in, you're expected.

PERSON: Expired when I did? What do you mean? *[Looking puzzled]* Look, you must have some spare tickets around here somewhere! I'll buy one from you. Name your price. I'll give you twice what it's worth! *[Fumbles in pocket]*

TC: *[Patiently]* As I've told you, sir, I don't sell tickets. In fact, no one ever sold a ticket. They were given as a free gift. The price was already paid.

PERSON: Given away! *[Resentfully]* Then how come I didn't get one?

TC: Perhaps you didn't ask for one! *[Checks a ticket]* That's fine, sir, go straight in, you're expected.

PERSON: *[Looking in annoyance at the person who has just walked in]* Hey, how come these people are allowed in and not me?

TC: Because they all had the correct ticket.

PERSON: Here, let me look at one of those tickets *[Grabs a ticket, which is in the form of a cross, and reads aloud]* 'This is to certify that the bearer of this ticket has accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, and is free from all sin'.

TC: *[Helpfully]* Perhaps you have a ticket like that somewhere, sir?

PERSON: *[Miserably]* No, I definitely haven't got one of those.

TC: Then I'm sorry, sir. You had your opportunity for the free gift of salvation when you were still alive. It's too late now.

PERSON: *[Hopefully]* Look, couldn't you just sneak me in through a side entrance. I'll make it worth your while!

TC: I'm very sorry sir, but there is only one entrance door to Heaven. Perhaps you'll have more success downstairs… *[They both stare 'down'… TC sadly, the Person with horror*]