

Who Gets In?  
Mike Fedel  
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props:

a gate/trellis  
a string of pearls hanging from it  
a tone that can be used to bleep out words

personnel:

voiceover narrator  
1 male actor  
at least 2 female actors

SUGGESTION: if using a small gate, hand-held, ACTOR can put it in front of his face and 'swing' it open as people arrive and knock.

NARRATOR: Inclusion. Who gets in, who doesn't. It's always been a vexing problem. [voice over continues while the action below happens]

*The actor walks onstage carrying the gate. Looks around for a place to put it. No place is quite right. Walks around a few times, finally settles into a spot, holds up the gate. Adjusts it a little bit. Looking around, waiting. After a minute, starts tapping his foot slowly, waiting and bored. [This activity should run through most of the voiceover below.]*

NARRATOR: The problem shows up in all different kinds of organizations. It shows up in schools. In exclusive restaurants and even sometimes at NASCAR events. [pause] Well, not so much at NASCAR events, but you get the point. One of the places you might not expect it to show up is in Heaven. But guess what?

*Actor turns to the congregation with a big grin.*

NARRATOR: Yes, even in Heaven. At the Pearly Gates.

*Actor points at the pearls and then at the gate.*

NARRATOR: This is the story of a few hours in the life of the Pearly Gates.

*ACTRESS1 wanders onstage. Looking around a little lost, but spots the gates and heads over to them.*

NARRATOR: It was a warm summer evening in August when a young lady found herself at the Gates. Now, we could probably learn a lot about things if we knew how she got there but that isn't the point of the story. Sometimes you just don't get to know those kinds of things. Sometimes, those kinds of things are...

*ACTRESS1 and ACTOR look up disapprovingly, motion "get on with it" and NARRATOR stops.*

NARRATOR: Sorry. So, she found herself at the Gates and stopped politely in front of them waiting to hear her fate.

*ACTRESS1 stands in front of the gate, folds her hands in front of her, stands smiling eagerly.*

NARRATOR: What she heard surprised her. [authoritative voice. ACTOR pantomimes along.] I'm very sorry to tell you this, young lady, but you cannot come in. [girl shows some distress] You are not wearing any shoes. We have a very firm policy here. No shirt, no shoes, no salvation.

*ACTOR waves her off. She exits stage with head down. ACTRESS2 is wandering onstage from the other direction. Looking around a lot, but it's not cleared if she is scared, excited, or lost.*

NARRATOR: Not much later that same day, another young lady made her way to the Gates, wild with anticipation. Well, maybe not wild, but at least filled with anticipation. OK, anticipating. But, to her surprise, what she heard stopped her in her tracks.

He looked her over, stroked his chin, then shook his head sadly. He told her that he had incontrovertible evidence that she had lived for nearly three years in a house with an overgrown lawn. There were very strict rules in Heaven about keeping up both one's room and the surrounding clouds and sky. He could not take a chance that those behaviors might follow her into Heaven. She had to go.

*ACTRESS2 walks offstage, shaking her head and clearly puzzled.*

NARRATOR: Now, this went on for several hours. Only two people made it into Heaven during that time. One was a dog trainer from Cleveland and the other was one of the janitors at an elementary school in Salt Lake City. Nobody is quite sure how they got through, but they did.

*ACTRESS1 and ACTRESS2 (or some pair of ACTRESSES if more are available) wander onstage, holding hands, looking around, puzzled but anticipating a positive result.*

NARRATOR: It was toward the end of a long, busy day when the pair arrived at the Gates.

*ACTOR tenses up as they get closer, shakes his head and rolls his eyes.*

NARRATOR: Without a second thought, he started shaking his head 'no'. One of the women asked him what the problem was. He smiled and told her that he could not let the two of them in because they were too tall.

*One of the couple looks out at the audience, puzzled.*

NARRATOR: The two women shook their heads, said that was idiotic. He answered [authoritative voice] well, not just that, but we have evidence that the two of you actually attended services at a Buddhist temple while on vacation

in Burma.

*Both look at the audience, stunned, then look back at him, cross their arms and shake their heads 'no'.*

NARRATOR: His next comment was that they did not follow the rules outlined in Chapter 15 of Acts. The women gave him puzzled looks and he paraphrased to them [authoritative voice] *It is necessary to circumcise them* [back to own voice] and you have clearly not been circumcised.

*ACTRESSES loud to him - very much "in his face"*

ACTRESSES: Ya think?!

NARRATOR: One of them went on to explain to him that the whole point of that chapter of Acts was to repudiate...

*ACTOR's face screws up - the big word confuses him. The actress backs up a few words.*

NARRATOR: ...was to explain that those rules no longer applied. The other woman spoke up and asked how could it be that he didn't know this. After all, St. Peter - the Keeper of the Pearly Gate - was also the one speaking in Acts Chapter 15.

*Everyone pauses. The ACTOR hangs his head and mumbles something under his breath.*

ACTRESS1: Could you repeat that?

*ACTOR mumbles under his breath again.*

ACTRESS2: [louder] What?

NARRATOR: [as ACTOR pantomimes along] Much to their surprise, he announced that he was not in fact St. Peter but was Reverend [beep] of the [beep] Bible [beep] [beep] Jesus [beep] [beep] Incorporated.

Evidently, St. Peter had wanted to take a break and had asked the Reverend to step in and 'cover' for him for a few hours. The Reverend said he'd been glad for the chance to 'tighten a few things up around here' and hoped St. Peter would take a hint from him when he

returned.

*The women move in closer and wrestle (easily) the gate out of his hand(s). ACTRESS1 takes it and walks a few feet away across the stage.*

NARRATOR: The women explained to him that it wasn't likely that St. Peter was going to take his advice. They'd run into him on the road a little earlier and he explained that he'd been hearing strange reports about the Reverend's behavior. They were going to take over for a while and he was free to head back to Heaven and go about his business.

He was quite shocked - he expected he'd be expelled when outed. Now, here he was being welcomed into Heaven. He thought perhaps it was time to go back and reread that section of Acts. Maybe he'd even sign up for a Disciple's Bible Class next time it came around.

*ACTRESS2 takes ACTOR by the arm and walks him into Heaven.*

NARRATOR: The Reverend was escorted into Heaven by one of the women, while the other kept watch at the Gates, waving warmly toward the newcomers, welcoming them in one by one for the rest of St. Peter's short vacation.

THE END