

A Tale

by Ben Franklin

There was once an Officer, a worthy man, named Montresor, who was very ill. His parish Priest, thinking he would die, advised him to make his Peace with God, so that he would be received into Paradise.

“I don't feel much Uneasiness on that Score,” said Montresor; “for last Night I had a Vision which set me entirely at rest.”

“What Vision did you have?” asked the good Priest.

“I was,” he said, “at the Gate of Paradise with a Crowd of People who wanted to enter. And St. Peter asked each of them what Religion he belonged to. One answered, ‘I am a Roman Catholic.’

‘Very well,’ said St. Peter; ‘come in, & take your Place over there among the Catholics.’ Another said he belonged to the Anglican Church. ‘Very well,’ said St. Peter; ‘come in, & take your Place over there among the Anglicans.’ Another said he was a Quaker. ‘Very well,’ said St. Peter; ‘come in, & take a Place among the Quakers.’

Finally he asked me what my Religion was.

‘Alas!’ I replied, ‘unfortunately, poor Jacques Montresor belongs to none at all.’

‘That's a pity,’ said the Saint. ‘I don't know where to put you but come in anyway; just find a Place for yourself wherever you can.’ ”