



## Shopping

**Music:** None

**Content and Purpose:** A slightly humorous look at how people are willing to accept stuff without considering what it really means.

**Cast:** 2 people, Assistant (A), and Customer (C)

**Props:** None

**Starting positions:** A shop, behind the counter is an assistant who, although very 'helpful' and 'smiley' she does not act in a 'cheesy' way. In fact there is almost something sinister about her. She is whistling a carefree, happy tune.

*A customer enters. He nods an acknowledgement. She smiles. He is clearly browsing. Pause.*

A: Can I help at all sir?

C: Just having a look round, thanks. *(He continues, then mimes picking something up)*

A: Very nice that one, sir.

C: Yes. *(Puts it back, mimes choosing another 'object')* How much is this one?

A: Ten pounds sir

C: There's a lot isn't there?

A: We aim to give our customers maximum choice, sir.

C: I didn't realise there were so many...

A: What sort of religion were you looking for, sir?

C: *(worried)* Religion? No! Religion...no I was just after more a sort of belief...actually.

A: Oh I see! Forgive me sir...not everyone's cup of tea is it? Religion. Mainly for the religious eh?

C: Yes...I suppose...

A: May I ask you a question, sir?

C: Of course.

A: What sort of thing were you after? We do an excellent line in the tooth fairy.

C: What?

A: Belief in the tooth fairy – for the little ones you understand. An excellent gift for the more inquisitive child.

C: I was thinking more for me actually.

A: Oh I see, sir. Forgive me. *(she finds an object)* Well how about this one, sir? A relatively new package.

C: *(interested)* Really? What is it?

A: Nothing.

C: What?

A: A belief in nothing. For the discerning atheist.

C: How can you believe in nothing? What kind of belief is that?

A: *(Puzzled)* Well, it's this kind of belief sir. The full package. It's very popular – comes with it's own meaningless book and blanket of depression. *(She sees the look on the customers face and hastily picks up another object)* Or what about this sir – much more perky and optimistic. You see the luminous, fluffy wrapping. It does my heart glad, sir...I don't mind telling you...my heart glad!

C: Well that sounds much more like it

A: Of course it is sir, much more like it. Shut your eyes sir.

C: What?

A: Shut your eyes, sir.



- C: Really?
- A: (*Firmly*) Really. (*Customer does so*) Take a deep breath of the sweet smelling air (*Customer takes deep breath*) prepare for a life of happiness and enchantment...prepare for a life of charming care free ease...prepare for everything.
- C: (*Opens eyes*) Everything?
- A: A belief in everything. What a wondrous thing. Everything you've heard is true. The earth is round, aeroplanes exist, bunny rabbits talk, her from No 42 is having an affair...
- C: Hold on!
- A: The moon is made of green cheese, Chelsea are the best, Elvis was a girl...
- C: Now wait a minute. Elvis was a girl! Bunny rabbits talk!
- A: Yes sir (*Puts her hand to ear in an exaggerated gesture*) Can you here them? Chatting with the vegetables and fairy trolls that live in the bottom of my garden. They sing to me, do they sing to you sir?
- C: This is insane (*He goes to leave, the assistant stops him*)
- A: Yes sir, of course it is sir! If you believe it's insane then it is! Of course it is. But if I believe it's insane then it is! Of course it is. But if I believe it to be true then it is true. That's the beauty of this package...it suits everyone.
- C: Well it doesn't suit me. I wanted something real. I want something real, something I can believe in truly...not some fairy tale everything's lovely in toy land belief. I want the truth.
- A: The truth sir? I don't quite follow.
- C: (*Exasperated*) The truth, you know.
- A: I'm sorry sir...people usually just come in and take what they like. What do you like sir?
- C: Look, it's not a question of what I like, it's a question of which of these are right. Which of these are real?
- A: Well, they're all real, sir. So they must all be true. We can't discriminate, that would make us narrow-minded sir. Nasty, arrogant little people, like those mathematicians who say 2 plus 2 equals 4. Oh, the arrogance of it, makes me sick.
- C: Well, they can't all be true. (*Picks up an object*) I mean look at this...
- A: (*Reads*) England exists. Yes, sir.
- C: And now this...
- A: (*Picks up another object*) England has never existed it is merely imagined in the mind of Doris Perkins. Yes sir.
- C: There you see. They contradict each other.
- A: It exists for Doris sir...so it must be true.
- C: Why? Isn't it possible that she could be wrong?
- A: Beg pardon
- C: Wrong. Incorrect. Mistaken...wrong!
- A: Well, I suppose it's possible...but does it really matter?
- C: Well of course it does. What if I believe in this (*Picks up an object off the shelf at random*).
- A: There is no such thing as life after death.
- C: Yes. What if I believe that and then die and discover there's a heaven and a hell and my whole life has been lived completely wrong?
- A: Oh you don't want to think about that, sir. Not very nice thought.
- C: No, it's not very nice, but what if it's true?
- A: Nasty little Christian belief, sir. Very old fashioned.
- C: But what if it's true?
- A: Everything's true, sir.
- C: No it isn't. Don't you understand? Don't you question anything?
- A: Ours is not to question why, sir?
- C: Well of course it is. That's why we've got minds. To question, to find out what's true.
- A: Perhaps you'd like to try our pick and mix selection. Make your own up...bit of Buddhist meditation, cargo cult expectation, choose our Hindu god of the month...anything you want!
- C: I don't want to make my own up. I want the reality.



A: Everything's real, sir...if you want it to be.

C: I'm going.

A: Yes sir. If you believe you're going then you are, sir.

C: Goodbye (*exits*).

A: But if I believe you're staying then you are (*becoming like a machine, talking to thin air*).

Glad you could stay sir. Yes, sir. Glad you could stay. So glad you could stay. Thank you for staying. What's that you say, sir. Belief, yes...would you like a particular one, or do you want the lot?