



BY TONY KHOO

FUNNY
STORIES



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I am a fictitious writer, like most writers, is happiest when I work. I have unstable working habits, and can go for weeks without much production, then suddenly I see a whirlwind of productivity that lasts a long time and takes up most of the waking time. mine. In the midst of those production wars, I often read a lot, mostly contemporary fiction, an activity that serves as a reusable fuel that I seem to need. I like to be stimulated and key by other people's novels; The best of them reminds me of how powerful the novel is.

MANY FUNNY STORIES OF THE WORLD

Introduction

This comic book is for everyone. You will have a happy time when fully enjoying this comic book. Sometimes, we neglect many funny and surprising situations in our daily life due to busy and stressful work. It hides and takes away a lot of laughter making people happy and joyful. The simple things, smiles and love are always inside us and around us, which is the great thing that the God and the Creator have given us.

239 funny stories and situations in all parts of the world will make a small contribution to sending love, happiness, joy and health to everyone and every family!

I would like to send a bright smile to everyone by my respect for life and I hope to share and double the bright smile, joy and happiness for everyone.

Each bright smile will make us healthy.

Each bright smile will make us happy.

Each bright smile will make us happy and full of energy.

Each bright smile will help us come closer to each other.

Each bright smile will make us successful and more confident in life.

A bright smile filled with energy and positive thoughts will help us immerse ourselves in the endless universe within ourselves.

A bright smile filled with energy will help us stay away from the doctor.

Let's laugh loudly and enjoy funny stories. The important thing is that let's enjoy them with crazy laughter in your own way JJJJJ

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Just smile!

I had asked my parents for a portrait of themselves, and after several years they finally had their picture taken by a professional photographer. When they gave me my copy, I was pleased to see that my usually serious-looking father was smiling.

“How did he get Dad to smile?” I asked my mother.

“He,” Mom replied, “was a she!”

No More!

A businessman was having a tough time lugging his lumpy, over-sized travel bag onto the plane. Helped by a flight attendant, he finally managed to stuff it in the overhead bin. "Do you always carry such heavy luggage?" she sighed.

"No more," the man said. "Next time, I'm riding in the bag, and my partner can buy the ticket!"

Control?

When our daughter, Carolyn, was a freshman at the University of Pennsylvania, my husband called her frequently to make sure she was all right. He liked to phone on Saturday night, because it was date night.

One Saturday, about 10:45 P.M., he called her room and was relieved when she picked up the phone. "Oh, honey," he said, "I'm so glad you're back in your dorm."

"Dad," replied Carolyn, "I'm just getting ready to go out!"

A terrible mistake!

My son, while a teaching assistant at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, had an important appointment after class one day. He put on a white shirt, a tie and a conservative dark suit. As he was leaving his apartment, he noticed his mouse trap had a victim. Holding the trap carefully out in front of him, he walked to the dump. A professor happened by, took in the situation and asked, "What time is the funeral?"

Just lucky!

My husband, Chet, a prospective juror, was being grilled by the defense attorney. The lawyer asked a series of questions about personal brushes with the law, everything from arrests to minor violations, and Chet answered each, "No."

"You mean to tell me," scoffed the lawyer, "that you've never even had a traffic ticket? In other words, you consider yourself an exemplary citizen?"

"No," Chet replied coolly, "just lucky."

Instant effect!

One very mild day, the windows in school were wide open. My eighth-grade music was enthusiastically belting out the chorus to the song "Sloop John B": "Let me go home, I want to go home. Well, I feel so broke up, I want to go home".

Our singing was interrupted by a first-grader from the room below, who handed me a note from her teacher, "Dear Anne, "it said. "Could you please switch to another song? My little ones are crying to go home, and it's only one o'clock!"

In a restaurant

Once I was in a French restaurant that had enough stars to qualify as a minor constellation. The wine came cradled in the tuxedoed arms of a waiter who looked down his considerable nose and presented the bottle with a condescending, "Monsieur?" My host, a cosmopolite who was immune to the hauteur of waiters with accents, ignored the proffered dollop and requested the cork. I half-expected him to sniff it, but with a bold look at the wine steward, he raised the cork and put it in his ear, "Sounds good," he said, nodding sagely, "Pour it".

A terrific waitress!

It was my first job, and I was determined to be a terrific waitress. I would serve my customers efficiently and cheerfully, as I would like to be treated.

The restaurant wasn't busy, and I was able to give the couple seated at table my complete attention. We chatted amiably as I took their order, and I soon served them their meal. Then I stood across the room, delighted when they waved at me. I waved back.

We kept up this friendly interchange until the man got up and came over. "Would you bring us some silverware?" he asked.

Accident after drinking!

Late one night, after an evening of drinking, Smitty took a shortcut through the graveyard and stumbled into a newly dug grave. He could not get out, so he lay at the bottom and fell asleep. Early next morning the old care-taker heard moans and groans coming from deep in the earth. He went over to investigate, saw the shivering figure at the bottom and demanded, "What's wrong with you, that you're making all that noise?"

"Oh, I'm awful cold!" came the response.

"Well, it's no wonder," said the care-taker, "you've gone and kicked all the dirt off you!"

Surprised!

Henry and Mary had just got married, and everybody was enjoying their wedding party. There was plenty to eat and plenty to drink, and everybody was getting very merry, when a very thin, very young man came into the room. He looked at Mary sadly and accusingly, walked slowly towards her, kissed her lovingly and said, "Why did you do it?"

Then he walked to the door and disappeared.

Nobody had ever seen the young man before - not even Mary.

Custom

Mrs. Smith was looking out of her window, when she saw a truck and a big car hit each other. She ran out to help. There was only one man in the truck and one woman in the car, and neither of them was hurt, but the car was damaged.

The lady looked very white and her hands were shaking, so Mrs. Smith invited her into her house and gave her some tea. She was a pleasant woman of about 50 years old. She drank the tea and soon looked much better. Then she said to Mrs. Smith, "Have you got a telephone, please? I would like to telephone my husband. We have kind of custom - whenever I have an accident with the car, I telephone him."

No ticket!

On Saturday mornings, our cinema shows films for children. One such morning, an old man took his grandchildren to the cinema. At the door, there was a list of the prices of tickets, but he could not see any price for tickets for adults for Saturday mornings. The only price which was shown for that time was for children's tickets, so he asked the lady who was selling the tickets how much it was for adults.

"Adults!" she said, "No, we don't have prices for tickets for adults for our Saturday morning films. Any adult who is brave enough to go in there to see films like that - and with all those children - can go in free!"

A compelling answer!

As a registered nurse on an open-heart surgery team, I'm sometimes summoned to the hospital for emergencies. Called in for a chest trauma at two o'clock one morning, I threw on my clothes and was dismayed to find that my husband, a casket salesman, had parked his station wagon behind my car. With no time to waste, I jumped in the station wagon and sped toward the hospital, only to be pulled over by a police car.

When I told the officer why I had been speeding, he gave me a warning and turned to go, but suddenly stopped. It was then I remembered there was a casket in the back. The officer looked at me expectantly.

"It's my husband's."

Silly!

Mr Robinson worked in an office. Every morning, he had breakfast with his wife at half-past seven, read his newspaper, drank a cup of coffee and then left his house at 8 o'clock to go to catch his train to town.

One morning, he was still sitting comfortably at the breakfast table and reading his newspaper at five minutes past eight. He did not seem to be in a hurry and asked his wife for another cup of coffee.

"Another cup?" she asked. "But aren't you going to the office today? Have you got a holiday?"

"The office?" he said and looked up from his newspaper very surprised. "I thought that I was at the office!"

A kind driver!

The lights were red, so my taxi had to stop. When they changed to green again, an old lady was slowly crossing the street in front of the taxi, so of course the driver waited. But as soon as the driver of the car behind saw the green light, he began to blow his horn.

My taxi-driver calmly opened his door, got out, pointed to the driver's seat which he had just left, and said to the man who was blowing the horn, "Sir, you get into my taxi and drive over her. I always feel so uncomfortable when I drive over old ladies."

Letters!

Tom was only seven years old, so when he went off to camp with a lot of other small boys one summer, his mother thought that he might be unhappy, and arranged for all his aunts and his grandmother and all his other relatives to write to him, so that he would get a letter every day while he was away from home.

Well, of course he did not write to anybody while he was at the camp. A few days after he came back home, his mother saw him looking at some papers and asked him what they were.

“Oh,” he said, “they are the letters I got while I was at the camp. I did not have time to look at them while I was there.”

Buying glasses

An old lady who lived in a village went into town one Saturday, and after she had bought fruit and vegetables in the market for herself and for a friend who was ill, she went into a shop which sold glasses. She tried one pair of glasses, and then another pair and another, but none of them seemed to be right. The shopkeeper was a very patient man, and after some time he said to the old lady, "Now, don't worry, madam. Everything will be all right in the end. It isn't easy to get just the right glasses, you know."

"No, it isn't," answered the old lady. "And it is even more difficult when you are shopping for a friend."

Second wife

A rich man and his wife went into a shop to buy a bracelet. Neither of them was very young. They looked at a lot of beautiful bracelets, and after half an hour there were two which they liked very much, but they had not yet been able to choose between them. One of them was very expensive; and the other was quite a lot cheaper.

Of course, the shopkeeper wanted to sell them the more expensive one, because then he would get more money from them, so he said to the lady, "Oh, go on. Spend his money. If you don't, he will only spend it on his second wife."

For several seconds nobody said a word, and then the lady said angrily, "I am his second wife!"

Olives

Olives are about the same size as grapes, but they taste very different. Some are bitter, some are sour, and some are very salty. Men and women eat them with drinks before a meal, but children usually do not like them at all.

Mr. Grey was drinking beer and eating olives when his small son Tommy came in. He saw that his father liked the olives very much, so he said, "May I have one, Father?"

"Yes," answered his father, "Take one and try it."

Tommy took one. He thought it tasted terrible.

He watched his father take another and eat it. He could see that he was enjoying it, so Tommy tried another olive-but that was just as terrible as the first.

"You are taking all the good ones," he cried, "and leaving the bad ones for me!"

Signed by himself!

A man heard that a certain government department wanted a clerk, so he wrote and asked for the position. But while he was waiting for an answer, a friend of his introduced him to the head of the department, who at once gave him the job.

Several months later, while the man was working in the department, he got a letter which had been sent on to him from his old address. This letter said:

“Dear Sir,

We are sorry to have to tell you that we cannot offer you work in this department because we do not think that you would be able to do the job successfully.

Yours faithfully,”

The man laughed, but when he looked at the letter more carefully, he saw that he had signed it himself!

To lose weight

"I'm so depressed and I can't get any dates," the 300-pound man told his minister. "I've tried everything to lose weight.

"I think I can help," said the minister. "Be dressed and ready to go tomorrow at 8 a. m."

Next morning, a beautiful woman in a skintight exercise suit knocked on the man's door. "If you can catch me, you can have me," She said, as she took off. He huffed and puffed after her.

This routine went on every day for the next five months. The man lost 115 pounds and felt confident that he would catch the woman the next day. That morning he whipped open his front door and found a 300-pound woman in a jogging suit waiting for him. "The minister said to tell you," she began, "that if I can catch you, I can have you."

Who want to know?

One evening, there was a big dance at the hotel in our town. One of the guests at the dance was a man of about forty who thought he was so handsome that every girl who saw him would fall in love with him. At the beginning of one of the dances, he saw a pretty young woman who was standing beside an older lady at the edge of the dance-floor. He went up to the girl and asked her to dance. She had seen him dancing before, so she knew that he was a good dancer, and as she too liked dancing, she accepted.

After they had danced several dances together, the man led her into the garden and said, "Do you tell your mother everything that you do?"

"Of course not," she answered sweetly, "She does not mind what I do now. But my husband always wants to know!"

Without glasses

Helen's eyes were not very good, so she usually wore glasses. But when she was seventeen and she began to go out with a young man, she never wore her glasses when she was with him. When he came to the door to take her out, she took her glasses off, and when she came home again and he left, she put them on.

One day, her mother said to her, "But Helen, why do you never wear your glasses when you are with Jim? He takes you to beautiful places in his car, but you don't see anything."

"Well, Mother," said Helen, "I look prettier to Jim when I am wearing my glasses and he looks better to me too!"

The last train

It was a few days before Christmas, so when the office closed at half past five, most of the young men and typists stayed and had a party. They ate and drank, danced and sang songs, and nobody wanted to go home. But Joe had a wife at home, and lived quite a long way from the city. Every few minutes he looked at his watch, and at last, when it was very late, he began to leave.

“Joe!” shouted his friends, “Are you leaving? Why don’t you stay and enjoy the party?”

“I am not leaving,” said Joe, “I am only going down to the station to miss the last train back home. I will be back here in a few minutes.”

“I forgot to post them”

It was two weeks before Christmas, and Mrs. Smith was very busy. She bought a lot of Christmas cards to send to her friends and to her husband's friends, and put them on the table in the living-room. Then, when her husband came home from work, she said to him, “Here are the Christmas cards for our friends, and here are some stamps, a pen and our book of addresses. Will you please write the cards while I am cooking the dinner?”

Mr. Smith did not say anything, but walked out of the living-room and went to his study. Mrs. Smith was very angry with him, but did not say anything either.

Then a minute later he came back with a box full of Christmas cards. All of them had addresses and stamps on them.

“These are from last year,” he said, “I forgot to post them.”

No more roses

Mrs. Williams loved flowers and had a small but beautiful garden. In the summer, her roses were always the best in her street. One summer afternoon, her bell rang, and when she went to the front door, she saw a small boy outside. He was about seven years old, and was holding a big bunch of beautiful roses in his hand.

“I am selling roses,” he said, “Do you want any? They are quite cheap. Five pence for a big bunch. They are fresh. I picked them this afternoon.”

“My boy,” Mrs. Williams answered, “I pick roses whenever I want, and don’t pay anything for them, because I have lots in my garden.”

“On, no, you haven’t,” said the small boy, “There aren’t any roses in your garden - because they are here in my hand!”

No mistake

One day, Mr. Robinson saw a lady in the street with ten children. He was very surprised because all the children were wearing the same clothes- white caps, dark blue coats and grey trousers.

“Are all those children yours?” he asked the mother.

“Yes, they are,” she answered.

“Do you always dress them in the same clothes?” asked Mr. Robinson.

“Yes,” answered the mother, “When we had only four children, we dressed them in the same clothes because we did not want to lose any of them. It was easy to see our children when they were among other children, because they were all wearing the same clothes. And now, when we have ten, we dress them like this because we do not want to take other children home too by mistake. When there are other children among ours, it is easy to see them, because their clothes are different.”

Poor or stupid?

It was a beautiful spring morning. There wasn't a cloud in the sky, and the sun was warm but not too hot, so Mr. Andrews was surprised when he saw an old gentleman at the bus-stop with a big, strong black umbrella in his hand.

Mr. Andrews said to him, "Are we going to have rain today, do you think?"

"No," said the old gentleman, "I don't think so."

"Then are you carrying the umbrella to keep the sun off you?"

"No, the sun is not very hot in spring."

Mr. Andrews looked at the big umbrella again, and the gentleman said, "I am an old man, and my legs are not very strong, so I really need a walking-stick. But when I carry a walking-stick, people say, "Look at that poor old man", and I don't like that. When I carry an umbrella in fine weather, people only say, "Look at that stupid man."

Not suitable

Mrs. Jones was still cleaning the house when her husband came back from work. She was wearing dirty, old clothes and no stockings, her hair was not tidy, she had dust on her face, and she looked dirty and tired. Her husband looked at her and said, "Is this what I come home to after a hard day's work?"

Mrs. Jones's neighbour, Mrs. Smith, was there. When she heard Mr. Jones's words, she quickly said goodbye and ran back to her house. Then she washed, brushed and combed her hair carefully, put on her best dress and her prettiest stockings, painted her face, and waited for her husband to come home.

When he arrived, he was hot and tired. He walked slowly into the house, saw his wife and stopped. Then he shouted angrily, "And where are you going this evening?"

An important telephone call

Mrs. Jones was waiting for an important telephone call, but she had no bread in the house, so she left the baby at home and said to his five-year-old brother, "I am going to the shops, Jimmy, and I will be back in a few minutes."

While she was out, the telephone rang and Jimmy answered, "Hello," said a man, "is your mother there?"

"No," answered Jimmy.

"Well, when she comes back, say to her, "Mr. Baker telephoned"."

"What?"

"Mr. Baker. Write it down. B-A-K-E-R."

"How do you make a B?"

"How do I make...? Listen, little boy, is there anybody else with you? Any brothers or sisters?"

"My brother Billy is here."

"Good, I want to talk to him, please."

"All right." Jimmy took the telephone to the baby's bed and gave it to Billy. When their mother came back, she asked, "Did anyone telephone?"

"Yes," said Jimmy, "a man. But he only wanted to talk to Billy."

“Love”

A man had some work to do in Switzerland, so he said goodbye to his wife at the airport, got into an aeroplane and left. After ten days, his work in Switzerland was finished, so he bought a ticket for his journey back home, and then went to the post-office to send a telegram to his wife. He wrote the telegram, gave it to the clerk and said, “How much will this cost?”

She told him, and he counted his Swiss money. He had not got quite enough.

“Take the word “love” off my telegram,” he said, “and then I will have enough money to pay for it.”

“No,” the girl said. She opened her handbag, took the money for the word “love” out of it and said, “For the word “love”, I will pay the money. Wives need that word from their husbands. “

Make by himself

It was a small factory, and there was nowhere to eat near it, so the workmen took food from their homes and ate it in the factory at midday.

One of the workmen always had fish sandwiches. Every day, he took one of them out of his bag, bit it, and then threw all the sandwiches angrily away.

At last, one day one of the workmen said to him, "But, Bill, don't you like fish sandwiches?"

"No," said Bill, "I hate them".

"Then why does your wife make them for you every day? There are lots of other nice things for sandwiches, tell your wife, and she will make other sandwiches."

"It isn't as easy as that," answered Bill, "I haven't got a wife. I make the sandwiches myself."

“I am wearing my trousers”

Billy was four years old and he was a very bad boy. Every day after lunch, his mother took him to his bedroom and put him on his bed to rest for an hour, but Billy never slept and usually he made a lot of noise and got off his bed every few minutes.

One afternoon, Billy's mother put him on his bed and then went to her bedroom to do some sewing. After ten minutes, she heard a noise so she went to Billy's room. He was not there, but his trousers were lying on his bed.

She looked in the other rooms upstairs, but he was not there either, so she went to the top of the stairs and shouted down angrily, “Are you running about down there without your trousers?”

“No, madam,” answered a man's voice, “I have brought your vegetables - and I am wearing my trousers.”

Uninvited guest

It was Christmas, and there was a big party in the house. Guests came and went, but the party continued. Then the bell rang. Several people shouted, "Come in!" and a small man opened the front door and came in. Nobody knew him, but the host went to meet him and took him to the bar for a drink. The man sat there happily for an hour and a half and drank. Then suddenly he stopped and looked at his host. "Do you know," he said, "nobody invited me to this party. I don't know you, I don't know your wife and I don't know any of your guests. My wife and I wanted to go out in our car, but one of your guests' cars was in front of our gate, so I came here to find him - and my wife is waiting in our car for me to come back!"

When falling down

Mr. Jones was very fond of climbing mountains. So one year, he went to Switzerland for his holidays. After he had climbed some easy mountains, he decided one day to climb a more difficult one but he did not want to go up it alone, so he found a good Swiss guide, who had often climbed that mountain.

At first, it was not a difficult climb, but then they came to a place which was not so easy. The guide stopped, turned round and warned Mr. Jones. "Be careful here," he said, "This is a dangerous place. You can easily fall, and if you do, you will fall straight down a very long way. But," he continued calmly, "if you do fall here, don't forget to look to the right while you are going down. There is a quite extraordinarily beautiful view there -much more beautiful than the one you can see from here."

Tell a lie

The telephone rang and our new secretary, Miss Simpson, answered it.

“May I speak to Mr. Calder please?” a voice said.

“Who is speaking please?” Miss Simpson asked.

“Mr. Alan Bright,” the voice said. Miss Simpson put her hand over the mouthpiece and spoke to Mr. Calder. “It’s Mr. Alan Bright, sir,” she said, “He wants to speak to you.”

“What, again!” Mr. Calder exclaimed. “He wants to sell us those new typewriters, doesn’t he?”

“Yes, sir,” Miss Simpson said, “He called yesterday.”

“And he rang up five times last week. We don’t need new typewriters. I told him that yesterday,” Mr. Calder said.

“What shall I say, sir?” Miss Simpson asked.

“Say that I’m not in my office,” Mr. Calder said crossly.

Miss Simpson spoke into the receiver. “Mr. Bright,” she said, “I’m afraid you can’t speak to Mr. Calder now. Mr. Calder says that he’s not in his office”.

Abet

While walking through the park, we stopped by the pond to watch some children who were sailing model boats. There were so many boats in the pond that morning that quite a few people had gathered on the banks to see them.

Suddenly, someone shouted, "There's a man in the pond!" We looked up and sure enough, a man's head could just be seen on the other side of the pond. The man appeared to be swimming vigorously and was coming straight towards us.

"He must be crazy," a young man said, "I wouldn't dive into that pond for a fortune. And anyway, it must be freezing cold."

The brackish water of the pond was certainly not inviting. As it was still early March, the water must certainly have been very cold.

After a short time, the man approached the bank. The water was very shallow, so he walked the last few yards. We were astonished to see that he was fully dressed.

"Nice swim?" the young man asked.

"Nice swim, my foot!" the man remarked irritably, "It's freezing. I did it for a bet!"

Responsible

A judge was working in his room one day when a neighbour ran in and said, "If one man's cow kills another's, is the owner of the first cow responsible?"

"It depends," answered the judge.

"Well," said the man, "your cow has killed mine."

"Oh," answered the judge, "Everyone knows that a cow cannot think like a man, so a cow is not responsible, and that means that its owner is not responsible either."

"I am sorry, Judge," said the man, "I made a mistake. I meant that my cow killed yours."

The judge thought for a few seconds and then said, "When I think about it more carefully, this case is not as easy as I thought at first." And then he turned to his clerk and said, "Please bring me that big black book from the shelf behind you."

Help

I am staying at the Royal Hotel. This morning, I walked past a room on the first floor. Suddenly, I heard a woman's voice. "Help!" the woman shouted.

Then I heard a man's voice. "Don't move or I'll shoot you!" the man shouted angrily.

"Please don't shoot me," the woman cried.

The man laughed. Then I heard a shot!

I knocked at the door loudly. "Come in," the woman said softly.

I rushed into the room. "What's the matter?" I asked the woman, "Can I help you?"

"Who are you?" the woman asked angrily.

"I heard a shot" I said. "Are you all right?"

The woman laughed. "Of course I'm all right," She turned to the man, "Put your gun in your pocket," she said.

"What's happening?" I asked.

"We're not quarrelling," the man said, "We are actors. We are learning our parts."

A thief

When Mr. Jones went to a restaurant one day, he left his coat near the door. There was nothing in the pockets of the coat when he left it, so he was very surprised when he took his coat after his meal and found the pockets full of jewellery!

There was a waiter near the door, so Mr. Jones said to him, "Somebody has made a mistake. He has put some jewellery in my coat. Take it, and when he comes back, give it to him". The waiter took it and went away. Suddenly another man came in with a coat just like Mr. Jones's. "I am sorry," said this man, "I made a mistake. I took your coat and you have got mine. Please give me my coat and jewellery" Mr. Jones answered, "I gave the jewellery to the waiter. He will give it to you."

Mr. Jones called the manager of the restaurant, but the manager said, "We have no waiters here. We only have waitresses. ""You gave the jewellery to a thief!" shouted the other man, "I shall call the police!" Mr. Jones was frightened and paid the man a lot of money for the jewellery.

Steak

At a quarter to six, Mrs. Alison heard her husband park the car outside the house and immediately went out to speak to him.

“What’s the matter, darling?” he asked. “You look upset.”

“I’ve made a terrible mistake, Jim,” she said. “Mrs. Johnson rang me up about half an hour ago. We got talking and then without thinking, I asked her and her husband to come and have dinner with us this evening.”

“Well, that’s nothing to get upset about!” Mr. Alison said. “We should have a pleasant evening. We haven’t seen the Johnsons for ages.”

“I’d like them to come,” replied Mrs Alison, “but I’ve just discovered there’s hardly any food in the house. You didn’t by any chance remember to buy some steak? I asked you to get some on your way home from work three days ago.”

“Steak?” Mr. Alison said. “Good heavens, yes. I remember now. As a matter of fact I did get some. You ought to have reminded me about it. It’s in the boot of the car. It’s been there for the past three days!”

Quickly

Mrs. Black was having a lot of trouble with her skin, so she went to her doctor about it. He could not find anything wrong with her, however, so he sent her to the local hospital for some tests. The hospital, of course, sent the results of the tests direct to Mrs. Black's doctor, and the next morning he telephoned her to give her a list of the things that he thought she should not eat, as any of them might be the cause of her skin trouble.

Mrs. Black carefully wrote all the things down on a piece of paper, which she then left beside the telephone while she went out to a ladies' meeting.

When she got back home two hours later, she found her husband waiting for her. He had a big basket full of packages beside him, and when he saw her, he said, "Hello, dear. I have done all your shopping for you."

"Done all my shopping?" she asked in surprise, "But how did you know what I wanted?"

"Well, when I got home, I found your shopping list beside the telephone," answered her husband, "so I went down to the shops and bought everything you had written down."

Of course, Mrs. Black had to tell him that he had bought all the things the doctor did not allow her to eat!

Sleeping

Before she left, Mrs. Soames gave last minute instructions to the babysitter, a young girl of seventeen. The girl had never done baby-sitting before and Mrs. Soames was a little anxious.

“Make yourself comfortable,” Mrs. Soames said, “I’ve prepared a tray of food for you. It’s on the table. You can, of course, listen to the radio or look at the television, but don’t have it on too loud because you might wake our little boy. Sound carries terribly in this house. If the boy wakes up, go to his room and stay there for a few minutes. He’ll go back to sleep immediately. Anyway, he’s four years old, so you shouldn’t have any trouble. My husband and I will be back at about eleven o’clock.”

Mr. and Mrs. Soames returned rather later than they had expected. A light was still on in the living-room and the television could just be heard. Mrs. Soames went to the living-room immediately and came out again a moment later holding the boy.

“What was he doing there?” Mr. Soames exclaimed, “He’s wide awake.”

“He was looking at the television,” Mrs. Soames said.

“Where’s Carol?” Mr. Soames asked.

“She’s still in the living-room. She’s fast asleep!”

“That’s it!”

A certain poet had written a play, and arrangements were being made to perform it. Of course, the poet was asked to give his advice on the scenery, the lighting, and all the other things that help to make a play successful, and he proved to be a very difficult man to please, as he had his own very definite ideas of how each scene should look.

In one of the scenes in the play, it was necessary to produce the effect of a wonderful sunset, which the young lovers watched together before singing one of their great love songs.

The theatre electricians worked very hard to produce this sunset effect. They tried out all kinds of arrangements and combinations of lights - red lights, orange lights, yellow lights, blue lights, lights from above, lights from behind, lights from the front, lights from the sides - but nothing satisfied the poet, until suddenly he saw exactly the effect that he had been dreaming of producing ever since he had written his play.

“That’s it!” he shouted excitedly to the electricians behind the stage.

“That’s just right! Keep it exactly like that!”

“I’m sorry, sir,” answered the chief electrician, “but we can’t keep it like this.”

“Why ever not?” asked the poet angrily.

“Because the theatre is on fire, sir,” answered the chief electrician. That’s what’s producing the effect you can see now!”

Not qualify

Mr. Brown was at the theatre. He had got his ticket at the last moment, so he had not been able to choose his seat. He now found that he was in the middle of a group of American ladies, some of them middle-aged and some quite old. They obviously all knew each other well, as, before the curtain went up on the play they had come to see, they all talked and joked a lot together.

The lady sitting on Mr. Brown's left, who was about sixty years old, seemed to be the happiest and the most amusing of the American group, and after the first act of the play, she apologized to him for the noisiness of her friends. He answered that he was very glad to see American ladies so obviously enjoying their visit to England, and so they got into conversation. Mr. Brown's neighbour explained what they were doing there.

"You know, I have known these ladies all my life," she said, "We all grew up together back in our home town in the United States. They have all lost their husbands, and call themselves the Merry Widows. It is a sort of club, you know. They go abroad every summer for a month or two and have a lot of fun. They always go everywhere together. I have wanted to join their club for a long time, but I didn't qualify for membership until the spring of this year.

Pension

From Ernest's point of view, the interview was going very well indeed. Six days before, he had applied for a job with a small business company and now he was being interviewed by one of the directors. The advertisement had invited applications from ambitious young men who would be willing to travel abroad at short notice if necessary and who would not mind working irregular hours. Ernest had taken great pains not to say anything silly and the director seemed to be most impressed.

"You say, you're not married Mr. Reeves," the director said.

"No, sir," Ernest answered, "I'm getting married next June, but I'm sure my future wife won't have any objection to my keeping irregular hours."

"I see from your application form you have worked as a salesman for two years. Why do you wish to change your job now?"

"I found the work too dull, sir," Ernest answered.

"That's a refreshing change," the director said, "Most young men these days seem to want dull jobs. The first question young men ask me is whether the job I'm offering carries a pension. They want to retire before they start!"

"Does the job carry a pension, sir?" Ernest asked anxiously.

Parcels

Mr. and Mrs. Davies had left their Christmas shopping very late. There were only a few days more before Christmas, and of course the shops and streets were terribly crowded, but they had to get presents for their family and friends. So they started out early one morning for the big city, and spent several tiring hours buying the things they wanted in the big shops.

By lunch-time, Mr. Davies was loaded down with parcels of all shapes and sizes. He could hardly see where he was going as he and his wife left the last shop on their way to the railway station and home. Outside the shop, they had to cross a busy street, made even busier than usual by the thousands of people who had come by car to do their last-minute Christmas shopping.

Mr. and Mrs. Davies had to wait for the traffic lights to change, but as Mr. Davies could not see in front of him properly, he gradually moved forward into the road without realizing it. Mrs. Davies saw this and became worried. Several times, she urged her husband to come back off the road, but without success. He could not hear her because of the noise of the traffic.

Finally, she shouted in a voice that could be heard clearly above all the noise, "Henry! If you intend to stand in that dangerous position a moment longer, give me the parcels!"

Catch

Mrs. Baker's sister was ill. She had someone to look after her from Monday to Friday, but not at the weekend, so every Friday evening Mrs. Baker used to go off to spend the weekend with her at her home in a neighbouring town. But as Mr. Baker could not cook, she had arranged for her sister to come over and spend the weekend looking after him at their home.

This meant that Mr. Baker had quite a busy time when he came home from work on Friday evenings. First, he had to drive home from the railway station. Then he had to drive his wife to the station to catch her train. And then he had to wait until his sister's train arrived, so as to take her to his house.

Of course, on Sunday evening, he had to drive his sister to the station to catch her train back home, and then wait for his wife's train, so as to bring her home.

One Sunday evening, he had seen his sister off on her train and was waiting for his wife's arrival when a porter, who had often seen him at the station, came over and spoke to him.

"You are having a lot of fun," he said, "But one day, one of those women is going to catch you with the other, and then you will be in real trouble!"

Operation

Dick was a clever boy, but his parents were poor, so he had to work in his spare time and during his holidays to pay for his education. In spite of this, he managed to get to the university, but it was so expensive to study there that during the holidays he found it necessary to get two jobs at the same time so as to earn enough money to pay for his studies.

One summer, he managed to get a job in a butcher's shop during the daytime, and another in a hospital at night. In the shop, he learnt to cut meat up quite nicely, so the butcher often left him to do all the serving while he went into a room behind the shop to do the accounts. In the hospital, on the other hand, he was, of course, allowed to do only the simplest jobs, like helping to lift people and to carry them from one part of the hospital to another. Both at the butcher's shop and at the hospital, Dick had to wear white clothes.

One evening at the hospital, Dick had to help to carry a woman from her bed to the place where she was to have an operation. The woman was already feeling frightened at the thought of the operation before he came to get her, but when she saw Dick, that finished her.

"No! No!" she cried, "Not my butcher! I won't be operated on by my butcher!" and fainted away.

Change place

The women's college had a very small car park, and as several of the teachers and students, and many of the students' boyfriends, had cars, it was often difficult to find a place to park. The head of the college, whose name was Miss Baker, therefore had a special place in the car-park for her own small car. There were white lines round it, and it had a notice saying, "Reserved for Head of College".

One evening, however, when Miss Baker got back to the College a few minutes before the time by which all students had to be in, she found another car in her parking space. There were two people in it, one of her girl students and a young man. Miss Baker knew that the young man would have to leave very soon, so she decided to ask him to move his car a bit, so that she could park hers in the proper place for the night before going to bed.

As the young man's car was close to the railings, Miss Baker had to drive up beside it on the other side, where the girl was sitting. She therefore came up on this side, opened her own window and tapped her horn lightly to draw attention to the fact that she was there. The girl, who had her head on the boy's shoulder, looked around in surprise. She was even more surprised when she heard Miss Baker say, "Excuse me, but may I change places with you?"

Out of petrol

On Sundays, father takes us for a drive into the country. We enjoy this very much. Last Sunday, we got up very early. We sat in the car and waited for father. At six-thirty, mother and father were ready. Father sat behind the wheel and started the engine. The car didn't move.

"That's funny," father said, "It was all right yesterday". He tried again, but the car didn't move.

"There isn't any petrol in the tank!" my brother Jimmy said.

"You're right, Jimmy!" father answered.

"I'll go and get some petrol from the garage," Jimmy said.

"It's half past six," my mother said, "The garage is shut."

"What shall we do?" I asked.

"We can go back to bed and get up at nine o'clock," father said. Mother and father went back to bed, but Jimmy and I stayed in the car. "We're not going to sleep." we said.

Suddenly, father knocked at the window of the car. "Wake up, children," he said, "It's nine o'clock."

Reason

In many seaside towns, there are telescopes on the sea-front so that people who want to look at the view or at ships on the sea can do so more easily. You have to put a coin in before you can use the telescope, and after a few minutes you have to put in another coin if you want to continue using it.

One day, Mr. Brown was on holiday in a sea-side town which had telescopes like this, and he was walking along the sea-front when he saw two sailors looking through one. First one was looking, and then the other, and they were taking turns to put in another coin from time to time.

Mr. Brown was rather surprised to see sailors using the telescope, because he thought that they would have had enough of looking at the sea while they were on their ship. Then he thought that they might perhaps be looking for their own ship on the sea, but that seemed improbable to him. How could sailors not know where their ship was?

Then, Mr. Brown suddenly realized that they were not looking at the sea at all. The telescope was pointed at the beach, and they were looking along it slowly and carefully. Mr. Brown wondered whether they had lost something.

Suddenly the sailors left the telescope and went off at a fast rate, so Mr. Brown stopped wondering and continued his walk.

It was not until half an hour later that he found out what the two sailors had been searching for with the telescope. He met them again, each with a very pretty girl on his arm.

Notes

Mrs. Jones was very fond of singing. She had a good voice, except that some of her high notes tended to sound like a gate which someone had forgotten to oil. Mrs. Jones was very conscious of this weakness, and took every opportunity she could find to practise these high notes. As she lived in a small house, where she could not practise without disturbing the rest of the family, she usually went for long walks along the country roads whenever she had time, and practised her high notes there. Whenever she heard a car or a person coming along the road, she stopped and waited until she could no longer be heard before she started practising again, because she was a shy person, and because she was sensitive about those high notes.

One afternoon, however, a fast, open car came up behind her so silently and so fast that she did not hear it until it was only a few metres from her. She was singing some of her highest and most difficult notes at the time, and as the car passed her, she saw an anxious expression suddenly come over its driver's face. He put his brakes on violently, and as soon as the car stopped, jumped out and began to examine all his tyres carefully.

Mrs. Jones did not dare to tell him what the noise he had heard had really been, so he got back into his car and drove off as puzzled as he had been when he stopped.

Fighting

Johnny was four years old, and his favourite game was cowboys and Indians. He had a cowboy suit and a belt with two guns, and spent most of his time pretending to be fighting Indians.

One day his mother took him in a train for the first time. Of course, he wore his cowboy suit and carried his two guns. He had seen a film of an attack by Red Indians on a train in the Wild West, so his mother was not surprised when he began playing at cowboys and Indians in the train. But when he wanted to open the window wide so that he could shoot out of it, she thought this too dangerous, and allowed him to have it open only at the top, so that he could shoot out of it if he stood up, but could not fall out.

He was playing happily, hiding behind the curtain, suddenly stepping forward, firing a shot out of the window and then quickly stepping back again, when he suddenly gave a cry, fell back on to the seat, and lay there with his chin resting on his chest and his arms hanging loosely beside him. Of course, his mother was frightened. She thought that something from outside the train must have hit him as he stood at the window. She shook the child gently, but he made no movement, and his eyes rolled in his head.

His mother was now very worried indeed. She picked Johnny up in her arms to go and find help but just then he lifted one of his arms with great effort, pointed to his chest and said in a weak whisper, "Pull the arrow out, will you?"

Experiments

The science teacher believed very strongly in practical work as a means of teaching science effectively, and she wanted her pupils' parents to see how well their children were learning by her methods. She therefore arranged for all the parents to come and see the results of one of the children's experiments on a Saturday evening, when all of them were free.

The children had been studying the growth of plants, and they had planted four pots of beans a few weeks before. They had put poor soil in one pot, to see what effect this would have on the growth of the beans in it, and good soil in the other three pots. Then they had put one of the pots in the dark for several days, and had given a third pot no water for the same length of time.

At the end of the lesson on Friday afternoon, the teacher put little notices on the four pots: "The beans in this pot were planted in poor soil." "This pot has been kept in the dark for four days." "These beans have had no water for four days." "These beans have had good soil, plenty of light and regular water." Then the teacher went home.

When she arrived on Saturday evening, half an hour before the parents were due to come, she found this note beside the pots.

"We read your notes to the school servant and thought we would help him, so we water all the plants, changed the earth in the one with poor soil, and left the light on above the one that had been left in the dark for four days. We hope that the plants will now grow better.

Your friends,

The Boy-Scouts."

Guilty

George had stolen some money, but the police had caught him and he had been put in prison. Now his trial was about to begin, and he felt sure that he would be found guilty and sent to prison for a long time.

Then he discovered that an old friend of his was one of the members of the jury at his trial. Of course, he did not tell anybody, but he managed to see his friend secretly one day. He said to him, "Jim, I know that the jury will find me guilty of having stolen the money. I cannot hope to be found not guilty of taking it-that would be too much to expect. But I should be grateful to you for the rest of my life if you could persuade the other members of the jury to add a strong recommendation for mercy to their statement that they consider me guilty."

"Well, George," answered Jim, "I shall certainly try to do what I can for you as an old friend, but of course I cannot promise anything. The other eleven people on the jury look terribly strong-minded to me."

George said that he would quite understand if Jim was not able to do anything for him, and thanked him warmly for agreeing to help.

The trial went on, and at last the time came for the jury to decide whether George was guilty or not. It took them five hours, but in the end they found George guilty, with a strong recommendation for mercy.

Of course, George was very pleased, but he did not have a chance to see Jim for some time after the trial. At last, however, Jim visited him in prison, and George thanked him warmly and asked him how he had managed to persuade the other members of the jury to recommend mercy.

"Well, George," Jim answered, "as I thought, those eleven men were very difficult to persuade, but I managed it in the end by tiring them out. Do you know, those fools had all wanted to find you not guilty!"

Hobby

The class teacher thought that hobbies were very important for every child. She encouraged all her pupils to have one, and sometimes arranged for their parents to come and see the work they had done as a result.

One Friday morning, the teacher told the class that those of them who had a hobby could have a holiday that afternoon to get the things they had made as parts of their hobbies ready for their parents to see the following afternoon.

So on Friday afternoon, while those of the pupils who had nothing to show did their usual lessons, the lucky, ones who had made something were allowed to go home, on condition that they returned before five o'clock to bring what they were going to show, and to arrange it.

When the afternoon lessons began, the teacher was surprised to see that Tommy was not there. He was the laziest boy in the class, and the teacher found it difficult to believe that he had a hobby. However, at a quarter to five, Tommy arrived with a beautiful collection of butterflies in glass cases. After his teacher had admired them and helped him to arrange them on a table in the classroom, she was surprised to see Tommy pick them up again and begin to leave.

"What are you doing, Tommy?" she asked. "Those things must remain here until tomorrow afternoon. That's when the parents are coming to see them."

"I know they are coming then," answered Tommy, "and I will bring them back tomorrow; but my big brother doesn't want them to be out of our house at night in case they are stolen."

"But what has it got to do with your big brother?" asked the teacher, "Aren't the butterflies yours?"

"No," answered Tommy. "They belong to him."

"But Tommy, you are supposed to show your own hobby here, not somebody else's!" said the teacher.

"I know that," answered Tommy, "My hobby is watching my brother collecting butterflies."

Glass door

One thing that has always impressed me about the Palace Hotel is the long line of glass doors at the entrance. The last time I stayed there, I got a surprise because some workmen were sticking ugly bands of gold tape on the glass doors.

“What are you doing that for?” I asked one of the workmen. “You will spoil the appearance of the building!”

“We’ve been ordered to stick this tape,” a workman answered, “because so many people try to walk through these doors. Last year several residents were seriously injured and five of the doors were broken.”

“I don’t believe it,” I said, “Anyone can see a glass door. Why, that’s the first thing you notice about this building.”

“You’d be surprised at the number of people who don’t even notice that these doors are made of glass,” the workman answered.

“I’ve never heard of such nonsense!” I exclaimed.

Suddenly, there was a loud crash a few yards away from us. Sure enough, an unfortunate visitor had walked straight into one of the glass doors! He was rubbing his forehead and staring angrily at the glass door in front of him.

“You see what I mean!” the workman said.

Two white mice

The manager of a small building company was very surprised to get a bill for two white mice which one of his workmen had bought. He sent for the workman and asked him why he had had the bill sent to the company.

“Well,” the workman answered, “you remember the house we were repairing in New-bridge last week, don’t you? One of the things we had to do there was to put in some new electric wiring. Well, in one place we had to pass some wires through a pipe thirty feet long and about an inch across, which was built into solid stone and had four big bends in it. None of us could think how to do this until I had a good idea. I went to a shop and bought two white mice, one of them male and the other female. Then I tied a thread to the body of the male mouse and put him into the pipe at one end, while Bill held the female mouse at the other end and pressed her gently to make her squeak. When the male mouse heard the female mouse’s squeaks, he rushed along the pipe to help her. I suppose he was a gentleman even though he was only a mouse. Anyway, as he ran through the pipe, he pulled the thread behind him. It was then quite easy for us to tie one end, of the thread to the electric wires and pull them through the pipe.”

The manager paid the bill for the white mice.

“After you”

Jack was young, rich, and fond of girls. He hardly ever did any work, and spent most of his time enjoying himself.

One summer, he bought a big motor-boat. As soon as it was ready to go to sea, he telephoned to one of the girls he had met somewhere, and invited her for a trip in his new motor-boat. It was the first of many successful invitations of this kind.

The way Jack used to invite a girl for a trip in his boat was like this: he would begin by saying, “Hello, Laura (or whatever the girl’s name was). I have just bought a beautiful new motor-boat, and I would like to take you out for a trip in it.”

The girl’s answer was usually cautious, because everybody in that part of the country knew Jack’s reputation with girls. She would say something like this: “Oh, really? That’s nice. What name have you given to the boat?”

Jack would then answer, “Well, Laura, I have named it after you.”

Of course, the girl would feel very proud that Jack had chosen her name for the boat out of the names of all his many girl-friends, and she would think that Jack must really love her. She would therefore be quite willing to accept his invitation to go for a trip in his motor-boat.

It would not be until she got down to the harbour and actually saw the boat that she would understand how cleverly Jack had tricked her.

Because there in neat gold letters on the boat she would see its name - “After You.”

Problem

The doctor told Uncle Fudd that If he ran five miles a day for 300 days, he would lose 75 pounds. At the end of 300 days, Uncle Fudd called the doctor to report he had lost the weight, but he had a problem.

“What’s the problem?”, asked the doctor.

“I’m 1500 miles from home”.

First word

I came home from work one day to find my wife, JoLynn, cradling our six-month-old daughter and repeating “Da-da, Da-da”. How sweet, I thought to myself, for her to choose *Daddy* as our baby’s first word.

Several weeks later, JoLynn and I were wakened by a small voice crying, “Da-da.”

Turning over to go back to sleep, my wife said, “She’s calling you, dear”.

Work every time!

When my five-year-old nephew, Bobby, had locked himself in the bathroom and wouldn't come out, his mother called the fire department. Within minutes, a firefighter was running up the stairs with an axe. He asked the child's sex and then yelled sternly through the bathroom door, "Come out of there, little girl!"

With that, Bobby marched out to confront the fireman, who exclaimed, "Works every time!"

Which way?

“This house,” said the real-estate salesman, “has both its good points and its bad points. To show you I’m honest, I’m going to tell you about the disadvantages-there is a chemical plant one block south and a slaughterhouse one block north.”

“What are the advantages?” inquired the prospective buyer.

“The good thing about it,” said the agent, “is that you can always tell which way the wind is blowing.”

Pilot's drinking

A jet ran into some turbulent weather. To keep the passengers calm, the flight attendants brought out the beverage carts.

"I'd like a soda," said a passenger in the first row. Moving along, the attendant asked the man behind her if he would like something.

"Yes, I would," he replied, "Give me whatever the pilot is drinking!"

Change clothes

On Okinawa, a group of airmen decided to spend the afternoon at the beach. One didn't wear his swimming trunks, assuming he could change there. When he found no changing facilities, he ducked back in the car to put on his suit. Then he noticed a woman on the beach looking at him intently. She continued to stare as he struggled into his swim suit. Irritated that his privacy had been invaded, he approached the woman and asked, "Do you always watch people while they're changing clothes?"

"Do you always change clothes in other people's cars?" she retorted.

Flowers

When my father was a lieutenant stationed at Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo, Calif., he met my mother, and they fell in love. Dad had a single red rose sent to her every day. This went on for several weeks.

Soon after their wedding, Dad went to the same florist and requested an inexpensive bouquet of flowers. "Oh, lieutenant," the florist replied, "you must have gotten married!"

After 20 years

Ted has been worried all the week. Last Tuesday, he received a letter from the local police. In the letter, he was asked to call at the station. Ted wondered why he was wanted by the police, but he went to the station yesterday and now he is not worried any more. At the station, he was told by a smiling policeman that his bicycle had been found. Five days ago, the policeman told him, the bicycle was picked up in a small village four hundred miles away. It is now being sent to his home by train. Ted was most surprised when he heard the news. He was amused too, because he never expected the bicycle to be found. It was stolen twenty years ago when Ted was a boy of fifteen!

A hat

Halfway through a party we were giving, I remembered that my husband, Brad, had Marine Reserve duty the next morning. I decided to quickly starch his cap. Stretching the cap on a metal form, I painted it with starch and put it in a preheated oven to dry. However, I forgot to turn off the oven, so the cap became scorched on top.

The next morning, the cap went unnoticed as the officer in charge of inspection was much shorter than my husband. Later in the day, when Brad walked indoor, he automatically removed his cap. An officer stopped him, looked at the cap, shook his head and asked, "Hot outside, Marine?"

Free

George had worked for the Bank of Ruritania for ten years and was still only a clerk. He was not satisfied with his position and wanted to find something better, but he also did not want to lose his position in the bank before he had got another one, so he prepared a letter about himself, with the words "HELP! I AM A PRISONER OF THE BANK OF RURITANIA!" in big letters across the top, and sent it to several big companies, asking them for a job.

A few days later, one of these letters came into the hands of George's chief at the bank. Someone had given it to him at his club. The next morning, George's chief asked him to come into his room and said, "George, I have some very good news for you. The Bank of Ruritania is setting you free!"

Target

At Marine boot camp, our platoon was completing its second day of live firing at the rifle range. My buddy Paul had forgotten to make sight adjustments for his M1 rifle, and all his shots hit low and in front of his 300-yard target. Our highly annoyed drill instructor pulled Paul to his feet and stood nose-to-nose with him. "If I was out there at 300 yards," he screamed, "do you think you could hit me?"

"Sir," Paul replied, "this private would sure burn up all his ammunition trying, sir!"

A patient

While Gilbert was in hospital, he asked his doctor to tell him whether his operation had been successful, but the doctor refused to do so. The following day, the patient asked for a bedside telephone. When he was alone, he telephoned the hospital exchange and asked for Doctor Millington. When the doctor answered the phone, Mr. Gilbert said he was inquiring about a certain patient, a Mr. Gilbert. He asked if Mr. Gilbert's operation had been successful and the doctor told him that it had been. He then asked when Mr. Gilbert would be allowed to go home and the doctor told him that he would have to stay in hospital for another two weeks. Then Dr. Millington asked the caller if he was a relative of the patient. "No," the patient answered, "I am Mr. Gilbert".

How?

The lights were red, so the old man stopped his car and waited for them to change to green. While he was waiting, a police car came up behind him, hit his car hard in the back and stopped.

There were two policemen in the police car, and they were very surprised and glad when the old man got out of his car and walked towards them without any trouble after such an accident. He was over 70 years old.

The old man came to the door of the police car, smiled kindly, and said, "Tell me, young man, how do you stop this car when the lights are red and I am not here?"

Familiar

While serving as captain at Air Force Base in Texas, I spotted a man in civilian clothes sitting in the officers club and was convinced I had seen him before. Thinking that perhaps we had been stationed together at another base, I introduced myself and asked him where he'd been assigned in the past. He gave me his name and reeled off about nine different Bases. None jibed with any place I'd ever been stationed. Perplexed, I thanked "Bill" and returned to my table still certain I knew him from somewhere. Later, when I was leaving the club, it dawned on me why Bill seemed so familiar; his picture was hanging in the entryway. He was the base commander.

Dangerous?

A man always went to the same bar at the same time every day and asked for two glasses of beer. He drank them and then asked for two more.

One day, the man behind the bar said to him, "Why do you always ask for two glasses of beer? Why don't you get one big glass instead?"

The man answered, "Because I do not like to drink alone. I drink with my friend".

But a few days later, the man came in and asked only for one beer.

"Oh," said the barman, "has your friend died?"

"Oh, no," said the man. "He is very well. This beer is for him. But I have stopped drinking beer. My doctor doesn't want me to drink any more because it is dangerous for me."

Losing way

Mrs. Brown's old grandfather lived with her and her husband. Every morning, he went for a walk in the park and came home at half past twelve for his lunch.

But one morning, a police car stopped outside Mrs. Brown's house at twelve o'clock, and two policemen helped Mr. Brown to get out. One of them said to Mrs. Brown, "The poor old gentleman lost his way in the park and telephoned us for help, so we sent a car to bring him home." Mrs. Brown was very surprised, but she thanked the policemen and they left.

"But, Grandfather," she then said, "you have been to that park nearly every day for twenty years. How did you lose your way there?" The old man smiled, closed one eye and said, "I didn't quite lose my way. I just got tired and I didn't want to walk home!"

Major

Soon after I received my gold major's leaves, my little girl Kymberli and I were in a crowded room with three two-star generals. "Daddy, who's that man?", she asked me, pointing to the first.

"He's a general," I whispered.

When she asked me about the second senior officer, I told her he, too, was a general. Glancing at the similar uniform of the third man, Kymberli inquired, "And I suppose he's a general, too?" I assured her that he was.

"Daddy," she said in loud voice, much to my chagrin, "when men get real old, do they all become general?"

"No", sweetheart, interjected one general, "Some men stay majors all their live!"

Why not?

Mrs. Andrews had a young cat, and it was the cat's first winter. One evening, it was outside when it began to snow heavily. Mrs. Andrews looked everywhere and shouted its name, but she did not find it, so she telephoned the police and said, "I have lost a small black cat. Has anybody found one?"

"No, madam," said the policeman at the other end, "But cats are really very strong animals. They sometimes live for days in the snow, and when it melts or somebody finds them, they are quite all right." Mrs. Andrews felt happier when she heard this. "And," she said, "our cat is very clever. She almost talks."

The policeman was getting rather tired. "Well then," he said, "don't you put your telephone down? Perhaps she is trying to telephone you now."

Photographs

The police in the big city were looking for a thief. At last they caught him. But while they were taking photographs of him-from the front, from the left, from the right, with a hat, without a hat-he suddenly attacked the policemen and ran off. They tried to catch him, but he got away.

Then a week later the telephone rang in the police-station, and somebody said, "You are looking for Bill Cross, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, he left here for Waterbridge an hour ago".

Waterbridge was a small town 150 kilometres from the city. The city police at once sent four different photographs of the thief to the police in Waterbridge.

Less than twelve hours later they got a telephone call from the police in Waterbridge. "We have caught three of the men," they said happily, "and we will catch the fourth this evening, we think."

Clean

An old lady in an aeroplane had a blanket over her head and she did not want to take it off. The air hostess spoke to her, but the old lady said, "I have never been in an aeroplane before, and I am frightened. I am going to keep this blanket over my head until we are back on the ground again!"

Then the captain came. He said "Madam, I am the captain of this aeroplane. The weather is fine, there are no clouds in the sky, and everything is going very well." But she continued to hide.

So the captain turned and started to go back. Then the old lady looked out from under the blanket with one eye and said, "I am sorry, young man, but I don't like aeroplanes and I am never going to fly again. But I'll say one thing," she continued kindly, "you and your wife keep your aeroplane very clean!"

Right wing

A young air force officer had a very beautiful wife. Early each morning, he left his house and went to the airport, and an hour later his wife always left the house too, with a big white towel, and went for a walk on the beach.

Her husband always flew over every morning, and when she saw his aeroplane, she held the white towel high above her head. When her husband saw it, he made either the left wing or the right wing of his aeroplane go down. The left wing meant, "I will be busy tonight and won't be home." The right wing meant, "In eight hours I will be holding you in my arms."

One morning, he flew over with eight other aeroplanes, and his left wing went down. Before his wife had time to feel sad about this, all the other aeroplanes flew over, and each of them turned its right wing down.

Mistake

At the beginning of the First World War, John Robinson was a soldier in the army. He went to France with a lot of other soldiers, and lived in a cold, wet, muddy camp. The rain came into his tent, there was mud and water on the floor, and the food was not good.

Then he became an officer and went to work in the army in Paris. He lived very pleasantly there in a warm house, had very good food, and enjoyed himself.

After some months, he met one of his old friends from the camp.

“You made a big mistake when you left our camp,” said this friend.!

“Oh?” said John Robinson, “Why?”

“Well,” said the soldier, “the week after you left, they put wood floors in our tents!”

A chair

A man was travelling abroad in a small red car. One day, he left the car and went shopping. When he came back, its roof was badly damaged. Some boys told him that an elephant had damaged it. The man did not believe them, but they took him to a circus which was near there. The owner of the elephant said, "I am very sorry! My elephant has a big, round, red chair. He thought that your car was his chair, and he sat on it!". Then he gave the man a letter, in which he said that he was sorry and that he would pay for all the damage.

When the man got back to his own country, the customs officers would not believe his story. They said, "You sold your new car while you were abroad and bought this old one!"

It was only when the man showed them the letter from the circus man that they believed him.

Five months

The Second World War had begun, and John wanted to join the army, but he was only 16 years old, and boys were allowed to join only if they were over 18. So when the army doctor examined him, he said that he was 18.

But John's brother had joined the army a few days before and the same doctor had examined him too. This doctor remembered the older boy's family name, so when he saw John's papers, he was surprised.

"How old are you?" he said.

"Eighteen, sir," said John.

"But your brother was eighteen, too," said the doctor, "Are you twins?"

"Oh, no, sir," said John, and his face went red, "My brother is five months older than I am."

Actor or doctor?

A small talking dog was a big success when it came to our theatre. It told jokes, sang songs and did a lot of other funny things on the stage.

But while it was singing one of its songs, a bigger dog came into the theatre, stopped, listened for a few moments and then ran up and jumped on to the stage. The small talking dog tried to get away, but the bigger dog caught it by the skin of its neck and carried it off the stage. Just as the two animals were disappearing behind the curtains at the side of the stage, the small talking dog said, "I am sorry about this, everybody! This is my mother. She doesn't want me to be an actor. She wants me to become a doctor".

A signal

One day, a big ship hit a smaller ship while they were both going from England to America. The smaller ship was badly damaged, and had to be taken back to England, where a judge had to decide who was to blame for the accident.

Several of the people who had seen the big ship hit the smaller one said that, a few seconds before the accident, the big ship had sent a signal to the smaller one. The judge was puzzled by this, so he said, "Who sent this signal?"

A young signalman came forward and said, "I did, sir."

"Oh?" said the judge, "And what signal did you send to the other ship?"

The young signalman's face went red as he answered, "Good luck on your voyage."

Where?

One night, there was a heavy snowstorm, and in the morning Mr. Smith's garden was full of deep snow. Mr Smith wanted to take his car out, so he paid a man to clean the path from his garage to his gate. He said to this man, "Don't throw any snow on that side, because it will damage the bushes in my garden; And don't throw any on the other side, because it will break my fence. And don't throw any into the street, or the police will be angry." Then Mr. Smith went out.

When he came back, the path was clean and the snow from it was not on the bushes, or the fence, or the street. Mr. Smith was very pleased until he opened the garage to get his car out! The garage was full to the top with all the snow from the path, and his car was somewhere under it all!

Changing the tyre

A man was mending a street lamp when he saw a pretty young woman and three children get into a car which was in the garden of a house near him. He saw that the car had a flat tyre and tried to warn the woman, but it was too late-she was already driving the car out of the garden and into the busy street. When she had got there, she stopped the car at the side of the street, got out and looked at the flat tyre. The children stayed in the car. Very soon, another car stopped, and the driver offered to help her. The young woman accepted his offer, and the man changed the tyre for her.

When she had thanked him and he had gone, she drove the car back into the garden, got out with the children and went back to her work in the house-with clean hands.

Electric motor-car

A man was trying to build an electric motor-car. He worked in an office in the town during most of the week, but on Saturdays and Sundays, he stayed at home in the country and worked on his electric car. Every Monday, he told his friends at the office about his work on the car, but his news about it was never very good. Then at last, one Monday morning, he came to the office and said to his friends, "I have done it! I have driven from my home to here by electricity!"

His friends were all very glad. "How much did it cost to get here by electricity?" they asked.

"Three hundred and two pounds," he answered, "Two pounds for the electricity, and three hundred pounds for the electric wires from my house to the car".

Happy

Peter's uncle lived in the country. Once Peter went to stay with him for a few weeks. Whenever they went for a walk or for a drive in the car and they passed somebody, his uncle waved. Peter was surprised, and said, "Uncle George, you know everybody here. Where did you meet them all?"

"I don't know all these people," said his uncle.

"Then why do you wave to them?" asked Peter.

"Well, Peter," answered his uncle, "when I wave to someone and he knows me, he is pleased. He continues his journey with a happier heart. But when I wave to someone and he doesn't know me, he is surprised and says to himself, "Who is that man? Why did he wave to me?", So he has something to think about during the rest of his journey, and that makes his journey seem shorter. So I make everybody happy."

Wake up

Mr. Jones was very angry with his wife, and she was very angry with her husband. For several days they did not speak to each other at all. One evening, Mr. Jones was very tired when he came back from work, so he went to bed soon after dinner. Of course, he did not say anything to Mrs. Jones before he went upstairs. Mrs. Jones washed the dinner things and then did some sewing. When she went up to bed much later than her husband, she found a piece of paper on the small table near her bed. On it were the words, "Mother. Wake me up at 7 a.m. Father".

When Mr. Jones woke up the next morning, it was nearly 8 a. m. and on the small table near his bed he saw another piece of paper. He took it and read these words: "Father. Wake up. It is 7 a. m. Mother"

Not

Old Mr. Black loved shooting bears, but his eyes were not good any more. Several times he nearly shot people instead of bears, so his friends were always very careful when they went out shooting with him.

One day, a young friend of his wanted to have a joke, so he got a big piece of white paper and wrote on it in very big letters "I AM NOT A BEAR". Then he tied it to his back and went off. His friends saw it and laughed a lot.

But it did not save him. After a few minutes Mr. Black shot at him and knocked his hat off.

The young man was frightened and angry. "Didn't you see this piece of paper?" he shouted to Mr. Black. "Yes, I did," said Mr Black. Then he went nearer, looked carefully at the paper and said, "Oh, I am very sorry. I did not see the word NOT."

Five pounds

Three people were walking along a street, first a big man, then a pretty woman, and then an old gentleman. The first two went round a corner. Suddenly the gentleman saw a piece of paper on the ground. He picked it up. It was five pounds. A few seconds later, the young woman came back. She was crying. "I have dropped five pounds," she said.

"Don't cry", said the gentleman. "Here it is." The young woman thanked him and went away. After a few seconds, the big man came back. He was looking for something. Suddenly a window opened and a small man looked out. "I saw five pounds fall from your pocket," he said, "but that man gave it to a young woman." The big man was very angry. The gentleman was frightened and gave him another five pounds. When he had gone, the young woman came back to get her one pound sixty seven pence, and the small man came out to get his.

Taxi drivers

Two rich ladies were sharing a taxi and talking about the high cost of going anywhere by taxi.

One of the ladies said, "Taxis are terribly expensive these days. The owners get a lot of money for nothing."

"Yes," said the other lady, "and the drivers get such big tips that they soon become rich. They ought to be ashamed of themselves." One of the ladies was smoking a cigarette. After a minute or two, she said to the other lady, "Can you see an ashtray in this taxi? There isn't one on my side."

"No," said the other, "there isn't one on this side either. Driver! Where is the ashtray in this taxi? Why haven't you got one?"

The driver, who had heard everything the ladies had said, answered, "Oh, just drop the ashes on the carpet I have a servant who comes in and cleans three days in the week!"

Television

The air hostess was in the small kitchen at the back of the aeroplane preparing the trays for lunch when a little old lady came and spoke to her. "Could you please tell me," she asked, "where the ladies' lavatory is in this aeroplane?"

"Yes, madam," said the air hostess and smiled, "It is right at the other end of the aeroplane-at the front".

The little old lady went too far. She walked all the way to the front of the aeroplane, opened the door in front of her, and saw the captain of the aeroplane and the other officers. They were all busy at their work and did not see her. She went out again, shut the door and returned to the air hostess.

"Oh, didn't you find it, madam?" the girl asked her.

"Yes, I did," said the little old lady, "But there are four men in the ladies' lavatory watching television".

Only one sound

The soldiers had been marching up and down in the square for an hour while their officer shouted orders, and they were all tired, hot and unhappy.

They were marching towards a big building, when they suddenly realized that the officer had not left himself enough time to give the order to turn round or to stop, so they were going to march straight into the wall. The soldiers smiled happily as each of those in the front line decided at the same time to walk straight ahead. There was a loud noise as they hit the wall one after another.

But before any of them had time to smile again, the officer shouted, "If you men had been in a really straight line, I would have heard only one sound when you hit that wall!"

Demonstration

A crowd of people were standing in the street. They were looking at a new car. The car was outside a showroom. It was a new model and many people wanted to see it. A salesman noticed the crowd and came into the street.

"It's a beautiful model, isn't it?" the salesman said.

"It certainly is," a man agreed, "Is it automatic?"

"Oh yes", the salesman answered proudly, "There aren't any gears in this car. You press your foot down and drive away. It's very easy to drive. Even a woman can drive it without any difficulty."

"I didn't like that remark," a woman said.

"I'm sorry, madam", the salesman answered. "I didn't notice you. Anyway, I was only joking."

"Give us a demonstration," the woman said, "Drive a few yards".

The salesman smiled with pleasure. He got into the car and started the engine. Then he pressed a button and the car suddenly went backwards. There was a loud crash and the car went through the window of the showroom.

Greenhouse

It was two o'clock in the morning and it was very dark. Mr Thompson woke up his wife. "Irene," he called softly, "the baby's crying."

Mrs Thompson sat up in bed and listened. "That's not the baby, Jim," she said, "It's a cat!"

"It can't be," her husband said, "I'll go and look."

Mr Thompson got up and went to the window. "You're right, Irene," he said, "There's a cat in the garden. Listen to it!"

"You must stop it, Jim," Mrs Thompson said, "That cat will wake up the baby."

"What can I do?" Mr Thompson asked, "It's very cold. I'm not going into the garden."

"Throw a shoe at it," his wife suggested.

"I can't do that," Mr Thompson answered.

"Why not?" his wife asked. "Can't you see it?"

"I can see it very well," Mr Thompson said, "But I can't throw a shoe at it. It's sitting on my greenhouse!"

Wrong street

As one approaches some crossroads, one comes to a sign which says that drivers have to stop when they come to the main road ahead. At other crossroads, drivers have to go slow, but they do not actually have to stop (unless, of course, there is something coming along the main road); and at still others, they do not have either to stop or to go slow, because they are themselves on the main road.

Mr. Williams, who was always a very careful driver, was driving home from work one evening when he came to a crossroads. It had a "Slow" sign, so he slowed down when he came to the main road, looked both ways to see that nothing was coming, and then drove across without stopping completely.

At once, he heard a police whistle, so he pulled into the side of the road and stopped. A policeman walked over to him with a notebook and pencil in his hand and said, "You didn't stop at that crossing."

"But the sign there doesn't say "Stop", "answered Mr Williams. It just says "Slow", and I did go slow."

The policeman looked around him, and a look of surprise came over his face. Then he put his notebook and pencil away, scratched his head and said, "Well, I'll be blowed! I am in the wrong street!"

The worst day

Before the last war, officers in the navy had a lot more freedom when their ship was in port than they have nowadays. They were expected to lead a busy social life, and to take an active part in sport ashore. It was therefore rather difficult for them to find time to do all their other duties.

Usually, all the officers in a ship used to have a regular meeting together once a week to receive orders from their captain, make reports and discuss any business that had to be discussed, such as who should represent the ship in the next football match.

One such meeting was being held on board a ship one day, and after the regular business had been completed, the time came to discuss the date of the next meeting. Friday of the next week was suggested, and so was Monday of the week after, but both of them interfered with somebody's arrangements for the weekend, and in the end it was generally agreed that the meeting should be held on Wednesday, as this would be the least likely day to interfere with anybody's convenience, since it was right in the middle of the week.

As the officers were leaving, however, one of them was heard to say, "Wednesday is the worst day, because it interferes with two weekends!"

Self protection

Some young soldiers who had recently joined the army were being trained in modern ways of fighting, and one of the things they were shown was how an unarmed man could trick an armed enemy and take his weapon away from him. First one of their two instructors took a knife away from the other, using only his bare hands, and then he took a rifle away from him in the same way.

After the lesson, and before they went on to train the young soldiers to do these things themselves, the two instructors asked them a number of questions to see how well they had understood what they had been shown. One of the questions was this: "Well, you now know what an unarmed man can do against a man with a rifle. Imagine that you are guarding a bridge at night, and that you have a rifle. Suddenly you see an unarmed enemy soldier coming towards you. What will you do?"

The young soldier who had to answer this question thought carefully for a few seconds before he answered, and then said, "Well, after what I have just seen, I think that the first thing I would do would be to get rid of my rifle as quickly as I could so that the unarmed enemy soldier couldn't take it from me and kill me with it!"

The clock

The war had begun, and George had joined the air force. He wanted to be a pilot, and after some months he managed to get to the air force training school, where they taught pilots to fly.

There, the first thing that new students had to do was to be taken up in a plane by an experienced pilot, to give them some idea of what it felt like. Even those who had travelled as passengers in commercial airline planes before found it strange to be in the cockpit of a small fighter plane, and most of the new students felt nervous.

The officer who had to take the students up for their first flight allowed them to fly the plane for a few seconds if they wanted to and if they were not too frightened to try, but he was always ready to take over as soon as the plane started to do dangerous things.

George was one of those who took over the controls of the plane when he went up in it for the first time, and after the officer had taken them from him again. George thought that he had better ask a few questions to show how interested he was and how much he wanted to learn to fly. There were a number of instruments in front of him, so he chose one and asked the officer what it was.

The officer looked at him strangely for a moment and then answered, "That is the clock."

A notice

Mr. Robinson had to travel somewhere on business, and as he was in a hurry, he decided to go by air. He liked sitting beside a window when he was flying, so when he got on to the plane, he looked for a window seat. He found that all of them had already been taken except for one. There was a soldier sitting in the seat beside this one, and Mr. Robinson was surprised that he had not taken the one by the window; but, anyhow, he at once went towards it.

When he reached it, however, he saw that there was a notice on it. It was written in ink and said, "This seat is reserved for proper load balance. Thank you." Mr. Robinson had never seen such a notice in a plane before, but he thought that the plane must be carrying something particularly heavy in its baggage room which made it necessary to have the passengers properly balanced, so he walked on and found another empty seat, not beside a window, to sit in.

Two or three other people tried to sit in the window seat beside the soldier, but they too read the notice and went on. Then, when the plane was nearly full, a very beautiful girl stepped into the plane. The soldier, who was watching the passengers coming in, quickly took the notice off the seat beside him and in this way he succeeded in having the company of the girl during the whole of the trip.

Teaching English

My cousin, John, is a university student. Last year, he went to Italy and stayed there for two months. I was surprised that John was able to have such a long holiday because he never has any money.

“How did you manage it, John?” I asked, “I thought you were going to stay for two weeks.”

“It was easy,” John answered, “I got a job.”

“A job!”, I exclaimed, “What did you do?”

“I gave English lessons to a grocer,” John answered, “His name is Luigi. We have become great friends.”

“But you’re not a teacher,” I said.

“I told Luigi I couldn’t teach,” John explained, “But he insisted on having conversation lessons. He wanted to practise his English. He has a lot of American customers, so it is important for him to speak English. I spent three hours a day talking to him. In return he gave me a room, three meals a day and a little pocket money”.

“Did your pupil learn much English?”, I asked.

“I don’t know,” John said, “but I learnt a lot of Italian!”

A spade

Night had come. There had been a big battle that day, and our army had taken the enemy's front line and then advanced half a mile beyond it. We were now in a trench which the enemy had dug as a last line of defence, and we could hear them digging themselves a new trench from which to face us in the morning. They dug in the stony soil all night, and by the morning we could see only the tops of their caps and their spades as they threw the earth out.

In our trench, several of our soldiers spent the time after daylight had come shooting at the enemy caps and spades to see if they could hit any of them.

One of the enemy soldiers, who seemed to be a sportsman, joined in our game. He would suddenly put his spade up, keep it there for a few seconds to see whether one of us could hit it, and then pull it down quickly again. Next time he would put it up in rather a different place. A number of our soldiers shot at it whenever it came up, but none of them seemed to succeed in hitting it.

Then there came a time when the spade remained down for much longer than usual. We thought that the soldier might have been stopped from playing this game by an officer, or that he might have gone off for a meal or something. But just when we thought that we would not see his spade again, it came up once more, for the last time-very slowly, and with a bandage tied around it.

ON THE MAP

The Robinsons were expecting guests for dinner. The guests, who were all colleagues of Mr. Robinson, were due to arrive at six-thirty. It was a quarter past seven but they still hadn't appeared.

"I wonder what has happened to them," Mrs. Robinson asked her husband, "Did you tell them how to get here?"

"Of course I did," Mr. Robinson replied, "I sent them detailed instructions and enclosed a sketch-map."

"Perhaps they had an accident," Mrs. Robinson suggested, "Were they coming by car?"

"As far as I know," Mr. Robinson said.

Suddenly the telephone rang and Mrs. Robinson ran to answer it. "Bill!" she called, "You're wanted on the phone!"

Mr. Robinson picked up the receiver.

"Is that you Bill?" a voice said, "I'm sorry we're late. We've lost our way. We took a wrong turning about ten miles back. I'm ringing from a public call-box in a small village."

"What's the name of the village?", Mr. Robinson asked.

"That's the trouble," the voice said, "We don't know. This village doesn't seem to be marked on the map."

The joints

When a big ship is in very rough sea, it has to be able to bend a little, otherwise it may break in two. If one end of the ship is on the top of one huge wave, and the other end is on the top of another, with the middle of the ship hanging in between, or if one huge wave comes up under the middle of the ship, leaving the two ends hanging, the ship's own weight will break its back if it is quite stiff.

To make a big ship elastic enough to avoid this danger, it has joints where the sections of the ship come together above the water-line, and these joints open and shut slightly as the waves lift one section of the ship or another. This is enough to save the ship from breaking into pieces.

One day, a sailor was walking along a passage-way in a big ship during a storm when he was surprised to see a boy sitting comfortably in a chair at the end of the passage-way, which was opposite one of the ship's joints. The boy had a bag of nuts beside him, and every time the ship was lifted by a wave and the joint opened, he put a nut in it. As the ship came down again, the joint closed and cracked the nut, gently but firmly. The boy then took it out and put the next one in as the joint opened again.

Shooting

My uncle is a keen sportsman. He often goes shooting during the weekend and usually comes home with a bag full of birds. Last Sunday evening, he came home earlier than usual. He didn't say anything when he came in. He threw his bag on the table and sat by the fire. He looked tired and cross.

"Didn't you have a good day, dear?" his wife asked.

"What do you think?", he answered crossly and pointed at the bag. "Look at this bag! There's only one bird in it and it cost me a lot of money!"

"Weren't there any birds?", my aunt asked kindly.

"Hundreds of them!" my uncle said, "But I spent the day arguing with a farmer."

"What happened, dear?" she asked.

"I shot my first bird at five o'clock this morning. Soon afterwards, I aimed at another one and fired. But I don't know what happened. I think I slipped because I didn't shoot the bird. I hit a cow and killed it. The farmer who owned it got very annoyed with me. I argued with him for hours and in the end I had to pay him £50!"

Bullfight

When Alec returned to work last Monday, Bob asked him how he had spent his holiday.

“You went to Spain, didn’t you?” Bob asked.

“That’s right,” Alec answered, “Three weeks in the sun and now I’ve got a year’s work ahead of me. Still, I must say I enjoyed myself. I went swimming every day and I even saw a bullfight.

“Did you?” Bob said, “How was it?”

“Very funny, really,” Alec answered.

“I’ve never thought of a bullfight as being funny,” Bob remarked.

“Well, this one was,” Alec replied, “The bullfighter was a showman. He arrived at the ring in a helicopter. The helicopter circled round the ring a few times and then the bullfighter landed by parachute. He landed almost in the middle of the ring, just a few yards away from the bull. He was dressed in a splendid costume.”

“That must have been very impressive”. Bob said.

“I suppose it was,” Alec answered, “The trouble was that the poor man didn’t know much about bullfighting. The bull went after him before he even managed to get his parachute off. He spent most of his time in the air!”

Wonderful rack

George and his friend Peter were fond of deer hunting, and whenever they had a free day during the deer-hunting season, they took their guns and went off into the forest.

One Saturday, they were sitting on a log eating their sandwiches and drinking their coffee when they saw a man walking through the snow towards them. He was dressed in deer-hunting clothes, but he had no gun with him. When he got nearer, the two friends saw that he was following a deer's track in the snow. They were both very surprised to see a man tracking a deer without a gun, so when he reached them, they stopped him and asked him whether anything was wrong and whether they could help him. The man sat down beside them, accepted a cup of coffee and told them his story.

Like them, he had gone out deer-hunting that morning with a friend. They had seen a deer with very big horns, and had followed it for some time. Then he had fired at it, and it had fallen just where it stood. He and his friend had run over to examine it, and he had said to his friend, "This deer's horns will make a wonderful rack for my guns when I get it home." He had then arranged his gun in the deer's horns and stepped back a few yards to see exactly how they would look as a gun rack on the wall of his study. He had been admiring the effect when the deer had suddenly jumped up, shaken itself and raced away, carrying his gun firmly stuck in its horns.

Tins of ice

An American warship once paid a visit to a port in a hot country where the British navy had a base, and the captain of the British base invited the officers of the American warship to a party ashore.

Now, Americans like their drinks to have plenty of ice in them, even in a cold climate, but at the time of the warship's visit to the British base, it was generally known that the British hardly ever had ice, even in the hottest countries. The captain of the American ship did not want to have to drink warm drinks at the British party, but it would have been very impolite to refuse the British captain's invitation, so the American captain accepted, but, an hour before the party was due to begin, sent a small boat ashore to his host with several large tins of ice from the warship's refrigerators.

When the American officers went ashore for the party, they were looking forward to having plenty of ice in their drinks. They were therefore very surprised when, on their arrival, they were served drinks with no ice in them at all. They thought that the servants might perhaps not yet have had time to unpack the ice that had been sent from the ship, but the party continued, and still there was no ice. Of course, the American officers were too polite to ask what had happened to the ice that they had sent.

When the party at last came to an end, the American captain thanked his British host for the pleasant party. Then the secret of the ice came out. The British captain thanked the American captain for it and said, "It allowed me to have the first really cold bath I have had in this place."

Sweet

Five tourists walked slowly across the airfield where a very small aircraft was waiting for them. The plane was used on local flights and had only two engines. The passengers got into the plane and sat down.

“Fasten your seat-belts please,” the air hostess said.

An old lady turned to the air hostess. “Please help me with this belt,” she asked, “I have never been on an aeroplane before and I feel rather nervous.”

“Don’t worry,” the air hostess said kindly, “These planes are the safest in the world.”

Then the hostess went round with a tray of sweets. She offered a sweet to each of the passengers. “Take one of these,” she said to the old lady, “It will help you to swallow.”

Suddenly, the plane began to shake and rattle. It moved quickly down the runway and slowly climbed into the air. When the plane was in the air, the hostess went to the old lady again. “Didn’t the sweet help you to swallow?” she asked.

“No, I’m afraid it didn’t,” the old lady answered, “But it took my mind off the plane. May I have another one please?”

Which one?

When sailors are allowed ashore after a long time at sea, they sometimes get drunk and cause trouble. For this reason, the navy always has naval police in big ports. When sailors cause trouble, the naval police come and deal with them.

One day, the naval police in one big seaport received an urgent telephone call from a bar in the town. The barman said that a big sailor had got drunk and was breaking the furniture in the bar. The petty officer who was in charge of the naval police guard that evening said that he would come immediately.

Now, petty officers who had to go and deal with sailors who were violently drunk usually chose the biggest naval policeman they could find to go with them. But this particular petty officer did not do this. Instead, he chose the smallest and weakest looking man he could find to go to the bar with him and arrest the sailor who was breaking the furniture.

Another petty officer who happened to be there was surprised when he saw the petty officer of the guard choose this small man, so he said to him, "Why don't you take a big man with you? You may have to fight the sailor who is drunk."

"Yes, you are quite right," answered the petty officer of the guard. "That is exactly why I am taking this small man. If you saw two police-men coming to arrest you, and one of them was much smaller than the other, which one would you attack?"

Advice!

Some boys join the navy when they are quite young, and are then given a course of training as sailors. It is a long course, both on land and at sea, and during it the boys study things like mathematics and science as well as learning to tie knots, fire guns, and do other practical things.

One of the important things they are taught is, of course, how to swim. In the old days, many sailors were unable to swim, but nowadays it is rare to find one that cannot.

At one school for sailor boys, the swimming instructor was very good. He had never had a boy whom he had failed to teach to swim by the time the course ended. One year, however, there was one particular boy on the training course who seemed quite unable to learn to swim. The instructor tried giving him extra lessons, he tried throwing him into the pool at the deep end, and he tried holding him up with a rope tied to the end of a fishing rod while he attempted to swim, but he had no success at all, whatever he did. In the end, as the time drew - near when the course was due to end, he had to admit defeat.

One day, he called the boy aside after the swimming lesson and said to him, "John, I have tried very hard to teach you to swim, but I have failed - for the first time in my life. Now I want to give you a piece of advice. Listen carefully."

"Yes, sir," answered the boy.

"Well," the instructor went on, "if you are ever in a ship and it sinks, just jump over the side into the sea, go right down to the bottom and run to the shore as fast as you can. That is the only way you will save your life."

Shadow!

The soldiers had just moved to the desert, and as they had never been in such a place before, they had a lot to learn.

As there were no trees or buildings in the desert, it was, of course, very hard to hide their trucks from enemy planes. The soldiers were therefore given training in camouflage, which means ways of covering something so that the enemy cannot see where it is. They were shown how to paint their trucks in irregular patterns with pale green, yellow, and brown paints, and then to cover them with nets to which they had tied small pieces of cloth.

The driver who had the biggest truck went to a lot of trouble to camouflage it. He spent several hours painting it, preparing a net and searching for some heavy rocks with which to hold the net down. When it was all finished, he looked proudly at his work and then went off to have his lunch.

But when he came back to the truck after he had had his meal, he was surprised and worried to see that his camouflage work was completely spoilt by the truck's shadow, which was growing longer and longer as the afternoon advanced. He stood looking at it, not knowing what to do about it.

Soon an officer arrived, and he too saw the shadow, of course. "Well," he shouted to the poor driver, "what are you going to do about it? If an enemy plane comes over, the pilot will at once know that there is a truck there."

"I know, sir," answered the soldier.

"Well, don't just stand there doing nothing!", said the officer.

"What shall I do, sir?" asked the poor driver.

"Get your spade and throw some sand over the shadow, of course!" answered the officer.

French

The soldiers had just arrived in France. None of them could speak any French, except Harry, who boasted that he knew the language very well. The other soldiers did not really believe him, because they knew that he was always boasting about something, and that what he said about himself was seldom true.

For some days, the soldiers were all kept in camp, so they had no need or opportunity to speak any French. But then the day came when they were allowed to leave for the weekend.

“Now we can see whether you really speak French or not,” they said to Harry.

“All right,” Harry answered, “Come with me, and I will show you.”

About ten minutes after they had left the camp, they saw a pretty girl of about twenty on the other side of the road. They would all have liked to speak to her, but of course none of them knew any French except (perhaps) Harry.

“Now is your chance to show us whether you can really speak French, Harry,” said one of his friends, “Go and speak to that girl.”

“All right,” Harry answered, and he crossed the road, smiled, bowed politely to the girl and started to speak to her. He had said only a few sentences when the girl’s face turned red and she smacked his face angrily and walked off.

Harry crossed the road to his friends again, his face all smiles, and said, “There you are! I told you I could speak French, didn’t I?”

Three questions

King Frederick, the Great of Prussia, had a very fine army, and none of the soldiers in it were finer than his Giant Guards, who were all extremely tall men. It was difficult to find enough soldiers for these Guards, as there were not many men who were tall enough.

Frederick had made it a rule that no soldiers who did not speak German could be admitted to the Giant Guards, and this made the work of the officers who had to find men for them even more difficult. When they had to choose between accepting or refusing a really tall man who knew no German, the officers used to accept him, and then teach him enough German to be able to answer if the King questioned him.

Frederick sometimes used to visit the men who were on guard around his castle at night to see that they were doing their job properly, and it was his habit to ask each new one that he saw three questions: "How old are you?", "How long have you been in my army?", and "Are you satisfied with your food and your conditions?". The officers of the Giant Guards therefore used to teach new soldiers who did not know German the answers to these three questions.

One day, however, the King asked a new soldier the questions in a different order. He began with, "How long have you been in my army?" The young soldier immediately answered, "Twenty two-years, Your Majesty." Frederick was very surprised. "How old are you then?" he asked the soldier. "Six months, Your Majesty," came the answer. At this Frederick became angry. "Am I a fool, or are you one?" he asked. "Both, Your Majesty," the soldier answered politely.

Change

The first person I saw as soon as I returned from my holidays was my grandfather. He opened the front door for me and stood there, looking me up and down in amazement.

“Whatever’s the matter with you?” he asked.

I went straight into the living-room and sank exhausted into an armchair. I was hard put to explain my appearance. I was pale, unshaven, dirty and tired out after my journey.

“I’ve been travelling on the Balkan Express,” I mumbled weakly, “and I haven’t eaten a thing for over eighteen hours. As I didn’t get a seat, I spent most of my time in the corridor where I was nearly trampled to death.”

“The Balkan Express!” my grandfather exclaimed, “When, I was a young man, that was a wonderful train. There was a permanent dining-car and you could get some of the best food and wines in Europe.

I can even remember a time when a gypsy orchestra was employed to play to the passengers during meal-times.” He looked me up and down again, then added with a sigh, “You couldn’t beat the old Balkan Express for comfort.”

“Times have changed, grandfather,” I said sadly.

“Judging from your appearance, my boy,” he answered, “they’re changed for the worse. Now you go and have a nice hot bath, and I’ll get you something warm to drink.”

How?

It was a very wide river, with many great curves in it, and in one of these there lived a large number of wild pigs. Nobody could remember how they had got there, but they managed to live through floods, fires, ice and attacks by hunters.

Then one day, a stranger came to the nearest village and asked where he could find the wild pigs. Somebody told him, and he went off. He had no weapons with him, and the village people wondered what he was going to do with the pigs.

When he came back a few months later and said that he had caught all the pigs, the villagers were still more surprised, but some of the men agreed to go with him when he asked for help in bringing the pigs out. They wanted to see whether he was telling the truth.

They soon discovered that he was. All the pigs were inside an enclosure which had a fence round it and a gate in one of its sides.

“How did you do it?” they asked the stranger,

“Well, it was quite easy really,” he answered, “I began by putting out some Indian corn. At first, they would not touch it, but after a few weeks, some of the younger pigs began to run out of the bushes, take some of the corn quickly, and then run back. Soon all the pigs were eating the corn I put out. Then I began to build a fence round the corn. At first it was very low, but gradually I built it higher and higher without frightening the pigs away. When I saw that they were waiting for me to bring the corn each day instead of going and searching for their own food as they had done in the past, I built a gate in my fence and shut it one day while they were all eating inside the enclosure. I can catch any animal in the world in the same way if I can get it into the habit of depending on me for its food.”

Exactly

A certain hunter had found a piece of forest where there were plenty of animals to hunt. The only trouble was that the place was very difficult to get to.

He returned from his first visit to the place in late autumn, and could not get back until the snows melted in the following spring. Then he went to the pilot of a small plane, who earned his living by carrying hunters over parts of the country where there were no roads and no railways, and asked him to take him back to his favourite piece of forest.

The pilot did not know the place, so the hunter showed it to him on the map. "But there is nowhere to land there, man!" said the pilot. "I have flown over that part of the country on my way to other places, and I know that we can't land anywhere between this river and these mountains."

"I thought you were a wonderful pilot," said the hunter, "Some of my friends said you could land a plane on a postage stamp."

"That's right," answered the pilot, "I can land a plane where nobody else can. But I tell you there is nowhere to land in the place you are talking about."

"And what if I tell you that another pilot did land me there last spring?" said the hunter.

"Is that true?" asked the pilot.

"Yes, it is. I swear it."

Well, this pilot could not let himself be beaten by another, so he agreed to take the hunter.

When they reached the place, the hunter pointed out a small spot without trees in the middle of the forest, with a steep rise at one end. The pilot thought that there was not enough room to land there, but the hunter said that the other pilot had done so the year before, so down went the plane. When it came to the rise, it turned right over onto its back. As the hunter climbed out, he smiled happily and said, "Yes, that is exactly how the other pilot managed it last time."

A lion tamer

A novice lion tamer was being interviewed. "I understand your father was also a lion tamer," the reporter queried.

"Yes, he was," the man replied.

"Do you actually put your head in the lion's mouth?"

"I did it only once," said the new tamer, "to look for Dad."

Reservation

At the Lake Hotel where I worked in downtown Chicago, the official maxim was “Give the customers what they want.” Our ability to meet that goal was tested one day when a large tour group overwhelmed the registration area.

One impatient man bullied his way through the crowd, banged his fist on the front desk and demanded, “I want a room that faces the ocean!”

In a voice that all could hear, the young clerk answered, “Certainly, sir. Atlantic or Pacific?”

Their card

My husband and I maintain both joint and separate credit-card accounts. As I fumbled in my purse one day looking for the right card to pay for some purchases, I explained to the salesclerk that I had “my” card, “his” card and “our” card.

“That’s okay,” he replied, “As long as you don’t have “their” card.”

Right row

“I beg your pardon,” said the man returning to his seat in the theatre,
“but did I step on your toes when I left?”

“You certainly did!”, answered the annoyed patron. ,

The man turned to his companion. “Honey, come on,” he said, we’re in
the right row!”

The ending

While in school, I worked part-time in a bookstore. When one customer was returning a recently purchased book, I asked for her name, address and the other information required on a refund slip. Then we came to the last question.

“Reason for return?” I asked.

Her matter-of-fact reply: “I didn’t like the ending.”

Feed

My mother often feeds pigeons in the park near her home in Portland, Maine. One day, as she fed the growing flock surrounding her, a man came over to her. "While you're feeding perfectly good bread to the birds," he told mother angrily, "there are people starving in Africa." Mother, never one to back down from a fight, looked him in the eye and said, "I'm sorry, but I can't throw that far."

Number Five

Frank believed that five was his special number. He was born on May 5, had five children and lived at 555 East 55 Street. At the track on his 55th birthday, he was surprised to find a horse named Numero Cinco running in the fifth race. So five minutes before the race, he went to the fifth window and put five thousand down on Numero Cinco.

Sure enough, the horse finished fifth.

Closer

I was attending an outdoor music concert with a young man I'd recently begun dating. Standing at the back of the crowd, we wrapped our arms around each other, swaying to the music. After a particularly romantic song, my date turned to face me. With a loving smile he said, "I wish we were closer..."

Totally thrilled, I looked into his eyes and whispered, "Do you mean our houses or our friendship?"

Puzzled, he replied, "... to the stage."

Sell

An 84-year-old retired stockbroker was admitted to our hospital's intensive-care unit, suffering from a peptic ulcer and shock from internal hemorrhage. As intravenous lines were started and fluid in-fused, his vital signs improved rapidly. The nurses dramatically announced the blood-pressure readings, starting at the shock level of 60 and increasing to "70...80...90..."

There was no doubt about the patient's successful recovery when, in the midst of their intonations, he suddenly yelled, "When it gets to 110-SELL".

Private

Last week, I went to the theatre. I had a very good seat. The play was very interesting but I did not enjoy it. A young man and a young woman were sitting behind me. They were talking loudly. I got very angry because I could not hear the actors. I turned round. I looked at the man and the woman angrily. They did not pay any attention. In the end, I could not bear it, I turned round again. "I can't hear a word!" I said angrily.

"It's none of your business," the young man said rudely, "This is a private conversation!"

Courage

I teach a course on assertive behavior. At the conclusion of one session, I was heartened to hear many of the men say they'd found the courage to ask someone for a date. But my satisfaction was undermined when five men told me privately that they should not have wasted their time in my workshop. I was puzzled until I ran into a female class member later that day.

"Thank you for teaching such a worthwhile course," she told me, "Five men have asked me out recently, and thanks to your advice, I had the courage to say no."

Dinner

Many years ago, an English family were living in India. One evening, an important Indian officer came to visit them. It got later and later, and he still did not go, so his hostess invited him to have dinner with them. But she had very little food in the house, so she quickly went to the kitchen and spoke to her Indian cook. He said, "It is all right. You will have a very good dinner."

When they all sat down to eat, the lady was very surprised, because there was a lot of very good food on the table.

After the dinner, the hostess ran to the kitchen and said to the cook, "How did you make such a good meal in half an hour?"

"I did not make it, madam," he said, "I sent one of the servants to the Indian officer's house, and he brought back the Indian officer's dinner."

Argument

Dad always enjoyed a good argument. So did his children. After supper, we'd have fun sparring until tempers grew heated. Then Dad would smile and say, "Come outside and tell me that," and we knew it was time to stop.

This pattern was so ingrained that when my 15-year-old sister, Nora, went to visit our cousins in Kansas, she jumped headfirst into an argument with teenage cousin Clement. When their discussion seemed to be getting out hand, she said, "Come outside, and tell me that." He went.

Nora bent over and drew a line in the dust. Pointing to it, she said, "See that line?"

Clement nodded.

"Step over it," Nora challenged.

He did, and she hugged him, saying, "Now you are on my side."

Why?

The ladies' club always had a meeting every Friday afternoon and someone came to talk to them about important things. After that, they had tea and asked questions.

One Friday, a gentleman came and talked to the club about food. "There is not enough food in the world for everybody," he said, "More than half the people in the world are hungry. And when they get more food, they have more babies, so they never stop being hungry. Somewhere in the world, a woman is having a baby every minute, day and night. What are we going to do about it?" He waited for a few seconds before he continued, but before he began to speak again, one of the ladies said, "Well, why don't we find that woman and stop her?"

Name

A man wanted to sell his old horse, so he took him to the market. Because the horse was old, nobody wanted to buy him, but at last a young man stopped in front of him and said,

“How old is he?”

“He is twenty-one years old,” said the older man.

“How long have you had him?”.

“I have had him for nearly nineteen years.”

“And what is his name?”

“I don’t know. But I call him Tom”.

Solder

The head of our electronics-design lab was in a bad mood, and it became worse when he found a roll of acid-core solder on our supply shelf. “This kind of solder is not suitable for electronics work!”, he lectured, and tossed it into a wastebasket.

A technician who had not been present for this episode later noticed the solder in the trash and returned it to the supply shelf. When the boss spotted it, he launched into an even louder tirade than before, flinging the solder out our second-floor window.

The tension in the room had just begun to ease when there was a knock on the door. “Did you guys lose this?” asked a maintenance man, handing the roll of solder to our boss.

Hat

One day a lady walked into a hat shop. The shopkeeper smiled and said, "Good afternoon, madam."

"Good afternoon," the lady answered, "There is a green hat with red flowers and blue leaves on it in your window. Will you please take it out of there".

"Yes, madam", the shopkeeper said, "I will be very pleased to do that for you." Usually, ladies looked at a lot of hats before they chose one, and the shopkeeper got very tired. "Good," he thought, "I will sell this hat very quickly - and it has been in my window for a very long time."

"Do you want it in a box, madam," he asked, "or will you wear it?"

"Oh, I don't want it", she answered, "I only wanted you to take it out of your window. I pass your shop every day, and I hate to see the ugly thing there!"

The dress

One day, Mrs Jones went shopping. When her husband came home in the evening, she began to tell him about a beautiful cotton dress. "I saw it in a shop this morning," she said, "and..."

"And you want to buy it," said her husband, "How much does it cost?"

"Fifteen pounds."

"Fifteen pounds for a cotton dress? That is too much!"

But every evening, when Mr Jones came back from work, his wife continued to speak only about the dress, and at last, after a week, he said, "Oh, buy the dress! Here is the money!". She was very happy.

But the next evening, when Mr Jones came home and asked, "Have you got the famous dress?". She said, "No."

"Why not?", he said.

"Well, it was still in the window of the shop after a week so I thought, "Nobody else want this dress, so I don't want it either"."

Post-office box

When you have a post-office box, the postman does not bring letters to you, but you go to the post-office and get your letters and parcels from your box. The box is locked, and you have the key, so the letters are quite safe.

One day, the headmaster of a school wrote to the post-office and asked for a post-office box for his school. He soon got an answer. It said, "We will give you a post-box in one month."

Three months later, the headmaster wrote to the post-office again and said, "Why haven't we got a post-office box yet?"

This was the answer from the post-office:

"Dear Sir,

We gave you a post-office box two months ago and wrote to you then to tell you. Here is the key to your box. You will find our letter to you in it."

A present

My great-aunt Joyce is known for her off-beat taste in gifts. Every year, she has given family handcrafted kitchen utensils, so we were not surprised to receive a strange present from her one holiday: a long, wooden, oddly shaped ladle. To spare her feelings, we used it every time she came to visit.

A few months ago, she joined us for dinner. We were using the ladle and commenting on how creative she is in her choice of gifts. “Nonsense!” Aunt Joyce said, “You’re much more creative than I am; I’d never have thought of using a shoehorn to serve stew.”

Honest

The whole village soon learnt that a large sum of money had been lost. Sam the local butcher, had lost his wallet while taking his savings to the post-office. Sam was sure that the wallet must have been found by one of the villagers, but it was not returned to him. Three months passed, and then one morning, Sam found his wallet outside his front door. It had been wrapped up in newspaper and it contained half the money he had lost, together with a note which said: "A thief, yes, but only 50 per cent a thief". Two months later, some more money was sent to Sam with another note: "Only 25 per cent a thief now!". In time, all Sam's money was paid back in this way. The last note said: "I am 100 per cent honest now!"

A telephone call

Mrs. Jones's telephone number was 3463, and the number of the cinema in her town was 3464, so people often made a mistake and telephoned her when they wanted the cinema.

One evening, the telephone bell rang and Mrs. Jones answered it. A tired man said, "At what time does your last film begin?"

"I am sorry," said Mrs. Jones, "but you have the wrong number. This is not the cinema."

"Oh, it began twenty minutes ago?", said the man, "I am sorry about that. Goodbye."

Mrs. Jones' was very surprised, so she told her husband. He laughed and said, "The man's wife wanted to go to the cinema, but he was feeling tired, so he telephoned the cinema. His wife heard him, but she didn't hear you. Now they will stay at home this evening, and the husband will be happy!"

Change voice

Mr. and Mrs. Brown lived in a small house near London with their child. Sometimes, Mr. Brown came back from work very late, when his wife and the child were asleep, and then he opened the front door of his house with his key and came in very quietly.

But one night, when he was coming home late, he lost his key, so when he reached his house, he rang the bell. Nothing happened. He rang it again. Again nothing happened - nobody moved inside the house. Mr. Brown knocked at the bedroom window, he spoke to his wife, he shouted, but she did not wake up. At last he stopped and thought for a few seconds. Then he began to speak like a small child. "Mother!" he said, "I want to go to the lavatory!". He spoke quite quietly but at once Mrs Brown woke up. Then he spoke to her, and she opened the door for him.

Watch

Once, when Hayes was a boy, his mother went out for a picnic. Before she went, she said to him, "Hayes, while I am away, stay near the door, and watch it all the time." She said this because there were a lot of thieves in their town.

Hayes sat down beside the door. After an hour one of his uncles came. He said to Hayes, "Where is your mother?"

"At a picnic," he answered.

"Well," said the uncle, "we are going to visit your house this evening. Go and tell her!"

His uncle then went away, and Hayes began to think. "Mother said, "Watch the door all the time!" and Uncle said, "Go and tell her!"

He thought and thought, then at last, he pulled the door down, put it on his back and went to his mother with it!

The carpet

We have just moved into a new house and I have been working hard all morning. I have been trying to get my new room in order. This has not been easy because I own over a thousand books. To make matters worse, the room is rather small, so I have temporarily put my books on the floor. At the moment, they cover every inch of floor space and I actually have to walk on them to get in or out of the room. A short while ago, my sister helped me to carry one of my old bookcases up the stairs. She went into my room and got a big surprise when she saw all those books on the floor. "This is the prettiest carpet I have ever seen," she said. She gazed at it for some time then added, "You don't need bookcases at all. You can sit here in your spare time and read the carpet!"

Why not?

An artist had a small daughter. Sometimes, he painted women without any clothes on, and he and his wife always tried to keep the small girl out when he was doing this. "She is too young to understand," they said.

But one day, when the artist was painting a woman with no clothes on, he forgot to lock the door, and the little girl suddenly ran into the room. Her mother ran up the stairs after her, but when she got to the top, the little girl was already in the room and looking at the woman. Both her parents waited for her to speak.

For a few seconds the little girl said nothing, but then she ran to her mother and said angrily, "Why do you let her go about without shoes and socks on when you don't let me?"

An artist

An artist went to a beautiful part of the country for a holiday, and stayed with a farmer. Every day, he went out with his paints and his brushes and painted from morning to evening, and then when it got dark, he went back to the farm and had a good dinner before he went to bed.

At the end of his holiday, he wanted to pay the farmer, but the farmer said, "No, I do not want money, but give me one of your pictures. What is money? In a week, it will all be finished, but your painting will still be here."

The artist was very pleased and thanked the farmer for saying such kind things about his paintings.

The farmer smiled and answered, "It is not that. I have a son in London. He wants to become an artist. When he comes here next month, I will show him your picture, and then he will not want to be an artist any more, I think."

Why not yet?

Mr. Andrews had a new telephone number. Before he got it, it was the number of a shop. The shop now had a new number, but a lot of women did not know this, so they still telephoned the old one.

At first, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews always said, "We are sorry. You have the wrong number. The shop has a new one now."

But women still continued to telephone them to ask for things, so after some time, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews began to answer them like this:

"Good morning, madam. What do you want us to send you today?" They thought, "Perhaps they will stop telephoning us when they don't get their things." But this did not help Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, because now women began to telephone them more and more, and say angrily, "Where are my things? They have not come yet! Why haven't you sent them yet?"

Vegetables

Mrs. Brown had a small garden behind her house, and in the spring she planted some vegetables in it. She looked after them very carefully, and when the summer came, they looked very nice.

One evening, Mrs. Brown looked at her vegetables and said, "Tomorrow I am going to pick them, and then we can eat them."

But early the next morning, her son ran into the kitchen and shouted, "Mother, Mother! Come quickly! Our neighbour's ducks are in the garden and they are eating our vegetables!"

Mrs. Brown ran out, but it was too late! All the vegetables were finished! Mrs Brown cried, and her neighbour was very sorry, but that was the end of the vegetables.

Then a few days before Christmas, the neighbour brought Mrs. Brown a parcel. In it was a beautiful, fat duck, and on it was a piece of paper with the words, "Enjoy your vegetable!"

Where?

Mr. Jones and Mr. Brown worked in the same office. One day, Mr. Jones said to Mr. Brown, "We are going to have a small party at our house next Wednesday evening. Will you and your wife come?"

Mr. Brown said, "Thank you very much. That is very kind of you. We are free that evening, I think, but I will telephone my wife and ask her. Perhaps she wants to go somewhere that evening." So Mr. Brown went to the other room and telephoned. When he came back, he looked very surprised.

"What is the matter?" said Mr. Jones, "Did you speak to your wife?" "No," answered Mr. Brown, "She wasn't there. My small son answered the telephone. I said to him, "Is your mother there, David?" and he answered, "No, she is not in the house". "Where is she then?" I asked. "She is somewhere outside". "What is she doing?" "She is looking for me"."

A mouse - trap

Mrs. Williams is very proud of her house because it is always clean and tidy. But one day, while she was sweeping the carpets, she saw a little mouse run across her dining-room floor! She had always told other people that mice are found only in dirty houses, so she was terribly ashamed when she saw a mouse in her own house. She quickly called her daughter and said to her, "A terrible thing has happened! I saw a mouse in our dining-room a few minutes ago. We must catch it at once! Go down to the village shop and buy a mouse-trap - but, whatever you do, don't tell anybody what it is for!"

Busy

It was half-past eight in the morning. The telephone bell rang and Mary went to answer it.

“Hello, who’s that?”, she asked.

“It’s me-Peter.

Peter was a friend of Mary’s eight-year-old brother, Johnny.

“Oh, hello, Peter. What do you want?” said Mary.

“Can I speak to Johnny?”

“No,” said Mary, “you can’t speak to him now. He is busy. He is getting ready for school. He is eating his breakfast. Grandmother is combing his hair. Sister is under the table, putting his shoes on. Mother is getting his books and putting them in his school bag. Goodbye, I’ve got to go now. I have to hold the door open. The school bus is coming.”

Long hair

John liked to wear his hair very long. Some of his friends thought that it looked like a girl's hair, but they never made jokes about it, because John was a big, strong young man, and he did not think jokes about his hair funny.

John always went to the barber's twice a month to have his haircut and washed, and one day the barber said to him, "Now why don't you let me cut most of this hair off and make your head tidy? Nobody would recognize you if I did that, I am sure."

John said nothing for a few seconds, and then he said, "Perhaps you are right-but I am sure that nobody would recognize you either if, you did that to my hair."

Not to be too late

A pretty, well-dressed young lady stopped a taxi in a big square, and said to the driver, "Do you see that young man at the other side of this square?"

"Yes," said the taxi-driver. The young man was standing outside a restaurant and looking impatiently at his watch every few seconds.

"Take me over there," said the young lady.

There were a lot of cars and buses and trucks in the square, so the taxi-driver asked, "Are you afraid to cross the street?"

"Oh, no!" said the young lady, "But I am three-quarters of an hour late. I said that I would meet that young man for lunch at one o'clock, and it is now a quarter to two. If I arrive in a taxi, it will at least seem as if I have tried not to be too late."

Monkey

A young lion came to a small zoo in Europe. In the next cage was a tired, old lion, which did nothing except lie about and sleep. "Lions ought not to behave like that!", the young lion said to himself, so he roared at all the visitors and tried to break the bars of the cage.

At three o'clock, a man brought a big piece of meat and put it in the old lion's cage. Then he put a bag of nuts and two bananas in the young lion's cage.

The young lion was very surprised. "I don't understand this," he said to the old lion. "I behave like a real lion, while you lie there and do nothing, and look what happens!"

"Well, you see," said the old lion kindly, "this is a small zoo. They haven't got enough money for two lions, so in their books you are here as a monkey."

A bill

A beautiful and very successful actress was the star of a new musical show. Her home was in the country, but she did not want to have to go back there every night, so she rented an expensive flat in the centre of the city, bought some beautiful furniture and hired a man to paint the rooms in new colours.

It was very difficult to get tickets for her show, because everybody wanted to see it, so she decided to give the painter two of the best seats. She hoped that this would make him work better and more willingly for her. He took the tickets without saying anything, and she heard no more about them until the end of the month, when she got the painter's bill. At the bottom of it were the words: "Four hours watching Miss Hall sing and dance: £3," with this note: "After 5 p. m. I get fifteen shillings an hour instead of ten shillings."

Pictures

One day, a lady saw a mouse running across her kitchen floor. She was very afraid of mice, so she ran out of the house, got in a bus and went down to the shops. There she bought a mouse-trap. The shop-keeper said to her, "Put some cheese in it, and you will soon catch that mouse."

The lady went home with her mouse-trap, but when she looked in her cupboard, she could not find any cheese in it. She did not want to go back to the shops, because it was very late, so she cut a picture of some cheese out of a magazine and put that in the trap.

Surprisingly, the picture of the cheese was quite successful! When the lady came down to the kitchen the next morning, there was a picture of a mouse in the trap beside the picture of the cheese!

Not on Saturdays

Mrs. Robinson always seemed to be ill and unhappy. She often had painful headaches, and medicines did not seem to make her any better, so at last her husband took her to a good doctor.

The doctor examined her carefully and asked her a lot of questions. Then he suddenly put his arms around her and gave her a big kiss. Mrs. Robinson at once looked better and happier.

“You see?”, said the doctor to her husband, “That is all she needs, I suggest that she has the same thing every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday,” and he smiled.

“Well,” said Mr. Robinson, “I can bring her on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but not on Saturdays, because I always go sailing on that day.”

For himself

During the last war, most of the men were fighting or working in factories, so it was very difficult to find men to do other work. The headmaster of a school wanted a gardener, but the only person he was able to get was an old retired farmer.

The old man worked so hard in the school garden that the headmaster became worried. He thought that the old man might get ill or die if he continued like that, so he suggested to him that he should work more slowly and rest more. But the old man continued to work as before. At last the headmaster went to the man's wife and asked her to speak to her husband.

"All right," she answered, "but I don't think it will do any good. You see, he has worked for himself all his life, never for anybody else, so he has just never learnt to work slowly."

Generous

Very few people were coming to eat at the White Rose Restaurant, and its owner did not know what to do. The food in his restaurant was cheap and good, but nobody seemed to want to eat there.

Then he did something that changed all that, and in a few weeks, his restaurant was always full of men with their lady friends

Whenever a gentleman came in with a lady, a smiling waiter gave each of them a beautiful menu. The menus looked exactly the same on the outside, but there was an important difference inside. The menu that the waiter gave to the man gave the correct price for each dish and each bottle of wine, while the menu that he gave to the lady gave a much higher price! So when the man calmly ordered dish after dish and wine after wine, the lady thought he was much more generous than he really was!

Painting a picture

One day, a beautiful young lady went to a famous artist and said, "I want you to paint a picture of me. How much will it cost?"

"Five hundred pounds," said the artist.

"Oh?", said the lady, "That is a lot of money." Then she thought that, as she had a very beautiful body, the artist might be happy to paint her picture more cheaply if she wore no clothes while he was painting it. So she said, "And how much will it cost if you paint me without any clothes on?"

The artist thought for a moment. "One thousand pounds," he then said, "But I shall have to keep my socks on, because my feet get cold; and I shall have to wear something to put my brushes in."

A common mouse

The zoo had big baskets for rubbish, where people who bought ice-creams and other things could throw the papers from Saturday afternoon, Mr. Brown was walking near the the lions and tigers were kept. Usually there were a lot of people round these cages on a Saturday afternoon, but that flay there was nobody there. Mr. Brown was surprised. But he was even more surprised when he saw a crowd around the rubbish basket near the lions' cage.

He went towards the crowd. Most of them were children. He looked over their heads and saw a little mouse, which was running about among the pieces of paper in the basket and looking for bits of food. It was only a few centimetres from the children, but it was not afraid - and the children were more interested in this small, common mouse than in the lions and tigers.

Bag containing money

The police received a report that six men had stopped a van. The van was carrying factory wages and the men had attacked the driver. They had tied him up and had stolen one of the bags. After searching for three hours, the police found the van near the river. The driver was sitting on a bag in the van and his hands were tied behind his back. The thieves had tied a handkerchief round his mouth so that he wouldn't shout. The police climbed into the back of the van and freed the driver, then they asked him what had happened.

"I was stopped soon after I left the bank," the driver explained, "Six men stopped my van and made me drive to the river. "If you shout," one of them said, "We'll shoot you." When I got to the river, they tied me up. Then they threw me into the back of the van. There were two bags in the back and the thieves took one of them."

"How much money did the bag contain?" a police officer asked.

"It didn't contain any money at all," the driver laughed, "It was full of letters. This one contains all the money. I've been sitting on it for three hours!"

A strange doctor

Until a few years ago, only boys could become students at the University of Ruritania. Then the University decided to allow girls in. But one of the lecturers, Dr. Goller, was not at all pleased. He had not wanted to let girl students in.

Dr. Goller always used to begin his lectures with the word, "Gentlemen!" What would he do now? Well, when girl students came to his lectures for the first time, he continued to begin with the word, "Gentlemen!". For him, the girls were just not there.

Then one day, there was only one boy in his class among a lot of girls. For a moment, Dr. Goller did not know what to do. Then he began, "Sir!"

Finally a terrible day came when there were no boys in his class. He came into the room, looked at the sea of girls, said, "Oh, nobody's here today!" turned and went out without giving his lecture.

A string

A young father was visiting an older neighbour. They were standing in the older man's garden and talking about children. The young man said, "How strict should parents be with their children?"

The older man pointed to a string between a big, strong tree and a thin, young one.

"Please untie that string," he said, the young man untied it, and the young tree bent over to one side.

"Now tie it again, please," said the older man. "But first pull the string tight so that the young tree is straight again".

The young man did this. Then the older man said, "There. It is the same with children. You must be strict with them, but sometimes you must untie the string to see how they are getting on. If they are not yet able to stand alone, you must tie the string tight again. But when you find that they are ready to stand alone, you can take the string away."

Masterpiece

“What am I offered for this superb work of art?”, the auctioneer asked. His assistant held up a small, dark picture for us to inspect. The buyers, all local village people, were not impressed by the auctioneer’s description of the picture.

“Do you call that a picture?”, someone asked rudely.

The auctioneer ignored the remark and waited for an offer. I looked at the catalogue. The picture was described as “The Ploughboy” by an unknown artist. Glancing at the picture again, I noticed that it had been coated so heavily with varnish that neither a boy nor a plough was visible.

“Come along,” the auctioneer said impatiently, “I can’t wait all day.”

“Five pence,” someone said.

The crowd laughed. The auctioneer glared at us sternly.

“We’ll have to go on to the next item,” he said.

“Fifty pence,” I said, surprised at the sound of my own voice. It was the highest offer and the picture was mine.

“You may be a lucky man,” the auctioneer said encouragingly, “Who knows there might be a masterpiece under all that varnish!”

Glad

A gay young man, who earned his living as a drummer in a band, had just married, and he and his wife were looking for somewhere to live. They saw a lot of places, but there was always something that one of them did not like about them. At last, however, they found a block of new flats which both of them really liked. However, there was still the problem of whether they should take one of the ground-floor flats, which had a small garden, or one of the upstairs ones.

At last they decided on a first-floor flat -not too low down and not too high up - and moved in. After they had bought furniture, carpets, curtains, and all the rest, they gave a big party to celebrate the setting up of their first home together.

It was a gay and noisy party, as all the host's friends from the band came and played their instruments. The guests danced, sang and practiced on their host's drums.

Soon after one a.m. the telephone rang. The hostess went to answer it in the hall, and after she had finished, came back with a happy smile on her face and said to her husband, "That was the man who has just moved into the flat downstairs telephoning, dear. I am so glad we decided not to choose it. He says it is terribly noisy down there."

A dog

Mr. and Mrs. Brown were going abroad for their holiday. They had a dog called Blackie which they were very fond of, but they could not take him abroad with them, so they looked for a good place to leave him while they were away, and at last found a place which looked after dogs very well while their owners were away. They took Blackie there just before they left for their holiday, and sadly said goodbye to him.

At the end of their holiday, they got back to England very late at night, and as they thought that the place where Blackie was staying might be closed at that late hour, they decided to wait until the next morning before going to get him.

So the next morning, Mr. Brown got into his car and drove off happily to collect Blackie.

When he reached home with the dog, he said to his wife, "Do you know, dear, I don't think Blackie can have enjoyed his stay at that place very much. He barked all the way home in the car as if he wanted to tell me something."

Mrs. Brown looked at the dog carefully and then answered, "You are quite right, dear. He was certainly trying to tell you something. But he wasn't trying to tell you that he hadn't enjoyed his stay at that place. He was only trying to tell you that you were bringing the wrong dog home. This isn't Blackie!"

Stocking

Millie stopped outside a shoe-shop and looked in the window. For some time, she gazed at a pair of fur-lined high boots on display. "They're exactly what I've been looking for," she thought. The boots were unpriced, so Millie decided to inquire how much they cost.

"I'd like to buy a pair of boots like the ones you have in the window," she asked the shop-assistant, "Could you tell me how much they are please?"

As the price was reasonable, Millie decided to try a pair on. The shop-assistant asked her to sit down and brought a pair. While she was helping Millie to put them on, she kept looking at Millie's stockings. Millie was wearing a pair of stockings made of fine white lace.

"Excuse my asking", the shop-assistant said at last, "but where did you get those stockings? We've been trying to obtain stockings like these for some time. They're the very latest fashion and they're in great demand."

"They're pretty, aren't they?" Millie said, "I was given them by my grandmother."

Birthday present

On Saturday morning, the postman delivered a large parcel for Tommy. The parcel contained a birthday present and it had arrived just in time.

Tommy looked at the stamps on the packet. "It's from Uncle Bill," he shouted excitedly. Even though Uncle Bill was in America, he had not forgotten Tommy's birthday. Mother made Tommy promise not to open the parcel until the following day.

"Your birthday's not till tomorrow", she said, "You should open it in the morning together with your other presents."

The next day, father was just as excited as Tommy when they discovered that the parcel contained an electric train set. "Let's go upstairs and put it together," father said.

Tommy remained with his father for about an hour but finally got bored with the train set and went into the living-room to see the rest of his presents.

At about lunch time, Tommy's mother came into the living-room. "Where's your father?", she asked, "I've been looking for him everywhere."

"He's upstairs, Mum," Tommy answered, "He put my train set together this morning and he's been playing with it ever since!"

A sledge

It was Saturday, so Mr. Smith did not have to go to work. It had snowed heavily the night before, and Mr. Smith's young son Bobby had a new sledge, which he was very eager to try out. There was a good slope in a park not far from the Smiths' house, which children often used for their sledges, so Mr. Smith agreed to take Bobby there in the car. They put the sledge in and went off.

When they reached the park, they found that there were already a lot of boys there with their sledges. They were sliding down the slope at great speed, and then pulling their sledges up again for another go.

After a few minutes Mr. Smith noticed that there was one poorly-dressed little boy there who did not have a sledge. This boy had flattened out an old cardboard box, and was sliding down the slope on that. Mr. Smith felt very sorry for this poor boy, and determined to ask Bobby to lend him his sledge a few times.

But before he could catch Bobby to speak to him, he was surprised - and delighted - to notice that several of the older boys in the park were lending the poor boy their sledges. Mr. Smith watched them carefully - and suddenly realized that the bigger boys were not doing this because they felt sorry for the poor boy, but because they enjoyed riding on his cardboard box more than on their expensive sledges. They were actually waiting impatiently for a turn on the flattened cardboard box!

Record

Mrs. Jones was over eighty, but she still drove her old car like a woman half her age. She loved driving very fast, and boasted of the fact that she had never, in her thirty-five years of driving, been punished for a driving offence.

Then one day she nearly lost her record. A police car followed her, and the policemen in it saw her pass a red light without stopping.

When Mrs. Jones came before the judge, he looked at her severely and said that she was too old to drive a car, and that the reason why she had not stopped at the red light was most probably that her eyes had become weak with old age, so that she had simply not seen it.

When the judge had finished what he was saying, Mrs Jones opened the big handbag she was carrying and took out her sewing. Without saying a word, she chose a needle with a very small eye, and threaded it at her first attempt.

When she had successfully done this she took the thread out of the needle again and handed both the needle and the thread to the judge, saying, "Now it is your turn I suppose you drive a car, and that you have no doubts about your own eyesight."

The judge took the needle and tried to thread it. After half a dozen attempts, he had still not succeeded. The case against Mrs. Jones was dismissed, and her record remained unbroken.

The first one

At the time when Bill and Rose married, neither of them had much money, so they were unable to buy a house or flat. For the first few years of their married life, they therefore lived in rented flats. Then Bill's father died and left him some money, so they bought a house. When they moved into it for the first time, one of Bill's best friends sent him a bottle of wine as a present to celebrate his entry into the first house he had owned.

Bill and Rose had a lot of work to do getting their things unpacked, arranging the furniture, getting curtains and all the rest, so they forgot about the bottle of wine. In fact, they put it away in a cupboard without even unpacking it.

Bill and Rose already had two children when they moved into their new house, and a few months later, the third was born. When Rose came home from the hospital with the baby, Bill invited some friends round to celebrate its arrival, and they had a wonderful party, with plenty to eat and to drink.

After the party had been going on for some time, however, Bill found that the wine was finished. Luckily, he remembered the bottle which his friend had given him when they had moved into the new house and which was still lying unpacked in a cupboard somewhere in the house. He found it with some difficulty and brought it into the living-room where his guests were sitting. When he had unwrapped the bottle, he saw a card tied to it, so he took it and read it aloud to the others. It said, "Bill, take good care of this one - it is the first one that is really yours!"

Neighbour

Mr. and Mrs. Jones's flat was full of suitcases, trunks and packed-up furniture. The two of them were busy with pencils and paper, checking their lists of luggage, when there was a ring at the door. Mrs. Jones went to open it, and saw a well-dressed middle-aged lady outside. The lady said that she lived in the flat beside theirs, and that she had come to welcome them to their new home.

The Joneses invited her in, after apologizing for the state of the flat. "Oh, please don't stand on ceremony with me," she answered, "Do you know, in some parts of this town neighbours are not at all friendly. There are some streets - and even some blocks of flats - where people don't know their neighbours - not even their nextdoor ones. But in this block of flats, everybody is friends with everybody else. We are one big, happy family. I am sure that you will be very happy here." The well-dressed lady got a shock when she came to visit the flat the next time, because she found a quite different man and woman in it. Mr. and Mrs. Jones had not had the courage to tell her that they were not the new owners of the flat, who were due to move in the next day, but the old owners, who had lived beside her for two years without her ever having visited them or even noticed their existence."

The lift

“Have you pressed the button?”, Judy asked.

“Yes,” Frank answered, “The lift is coming. Look, it’s at the fourth floor.” Frank pointed at the numbers over the door of the lift.

“It will never come to the seventh floor,” Judy said, “Look, it’s at the third floor now. It’s going down again. We have been here for five minutes. We can’t wait all day. I’m going to walk down the stairs.”

“Well I’m not going to walk down all those stairs,” Frank said.

“I’ll wait for you on the ground floor,” Judy said.

“I’ll be there before you”, Frank replied.

Judy walked down the stairs. She did not hurry. When she reached the ground floor, she looked for Frank. He wasn’t there. She looked at the numbers over the door of the lift. The lift was at the fourth floor. The hall porter was looking at the numbers too, and Judy spoke to him.

“What has happened to the lift?”, she asked.

“It has stopped between the third and fourth floors,” the porter answered. “That’s the third time this morning!”

Business

It was snowing heavily, and the wind was blowing the snow into great piles against the fences at the sides of the road. In some places, the piles were so big that they were beginning to spread right across the road, but as long as cars could keep moving rather fast, they were still managing to get through.

There was one point, however, where there was a sharp bend in the road. There the snow had piled up on both sides, and as cars had to slow down to get round the corner safely, their drivers had to be very skilful to avoid getting stuck.

At last, of course, there was one who was not skilful enough and who let his car stop on the corner. When he tried to start it again, the wheels slipped, and the car finished up deep in the snow and blocking the road.

The next car to reach the corner was in trouble too. The driver had been trying to keep up a good speed to avoid getting stuck, and he did not notice the car blocking the road in front of him until he was almost on top of it. He put his brakes on hard, the wheels of his car locked, and it slid sideways into deep snow.

It was not the last to do this. Car after car came round the corner too fast to stop properly, and finished up in the deep snow at the side of the road. Before long, there were five cars stuck as the snow continued to fall.

At last, a neighbour saw what had happened and telephoned the local garage, which sent a truck to pull the cars out of the snow. The neighbour watched as the garage men pulled them out one by one. When they reached the car which had started all the trouble by getting stuck across the road, the neighbour said to them, "You aren't going to move that one, are you? That's the one that has brought you all this business today!"

A black bear

Mr. and Mrs. Davies were invited to Christmas drinks at a hotel one year. They left their car in the car-park outside and went in. Mr. Davies was proud of the fact that he never got drunk, so he was careful not to drink too much, in spite of his host's attempts to press more and more on him.

During the party, Mrs. Davies found that she had forgotten to bring a handkerchief, so she asked her husband to go out to the car and get her one. He did so, but on his way back to the hotel entrance, he heard a car horn blowing in the car-park. Thinking someone might be in trouble, he went over to the car from which the noise was coming. He found a small black bear sitting in the driving-seat and blowing the horn.

When Mr. Davies got back to the party, he told several people about the black bear, but of course they did not believe him and thought he was drunk. When he took them out to the car-park to show them that his story was true, he found that the car with the bear in it had gone.

There were so many jokes about Mr. Davies's black bear during the following days that he at last put an advertisement in the local paper: "Will anybody who saw a black bear blowing the horn in a car outside the Central Hotel at about 7p.m. on Christmas Day please phone..."

Two days later, Mrs. Richards phoned to say that she and her husband had left their pet bear Honeypot in their car outside the Central Hotel for a few minutes that evening, and that it was quite possible that he had been blowing the horn. Mrs Richards did not seem to think there was anything strange about that. "Honeypot likes blowing car horns," she said, "and we don't mind as long as we are not actually driving the car".

Good idea!

Mr. Hall was a rich business man and lived in a big house beside a beautiful river.

Now, this river usually froze over in winter, and one year it did this very early, so that by Christmas time it was covered with really thick ice. One could walk across it easily, and some brave people had even crossed it in motor-cars with chains on their wheels.

The sight of this ice gave Mr. Hall an idea. He decided to have a big Christmas party on the ice. He would have all the furniture and carpets in his living-room carried out on to the ice, he would have pretty coloured lights hung all around, and they would have a wonderful party. So he sent out invitations to all his important friends, and on Christmas Day, they all began to arrive at his house and then go down on to the ice. They were all in very good spirits and thought that it had been a wonderful idea of Mr Hall's to have a party on the ice, surrounded by the beautiful scenery of that part of the country, but at the same time with all the comforts of armchairs, carpets, servants, good food and plenty of drinks.

The party went on until late at night, and as the last guests said their merry goodbyes. Mr. Hall congratulated himself on a very successful party.

He had drunk rather a lot during the day, so he did not wake up very early the next morning. In fact, it was nearly midday before he got up and looked out of the window at the scene of the previous day's party. What he saw there made him wonder whether he was still asleep and dreaming! He closed his eyes, opened them again-but there was no mistake! The ice had broken up during the night or in the early hours of the morning and had carried all his living-room furniture, carpets and coloured lights out to sea with it!

A conversation

A famous actor often had to travel by train. Of course, a lot of his fellow-passengers used to recognize him on his journeys, and some of them tried to get into conversation with him, but he was usually feeling tired after acting until late the night before, so he did not encourage them to talk to him.

One day, he had just got into the train with all his luggage when a young man came and sat down in the seat opposite him. The young man took out a book and began to read it, while the actor tried to get some sleep in his corner of the carriage.

When he opened his eyes, he found that the young man was looking at him with his mouth open, his book forgotten. The actor shut his eyes and tried to sleep again, but every time he opened them, the young man was looking at him with the same fixed look. At last, he gave up the attempt to sleep, took out a newspaper, put it up in front of him and began to read.

After a few moments the young man cleared his throat and spoke. "I beg your pardon, sir," he said, "but haven't I seen you somewhere before?"

The actor did not answer. He did not even put his newspaper down.

The young man said nothing more for several minutes, but then he tried again: "I beg your pardon, sir," he said, "but are you going to San Francisco?"

The actor put his paper down this time, looked at the young man severely without saying a word, and then put the paper up in front of him again.

This time there was an even longer pause before the young man spoke again. Then he said, in a last attempt to start a conversation with the great man, "I am George P. Anderson of Wilmington, Vermont."

This time the actor put his paper down and spoke. "So am I," he said.

That was the end of the conversation.

An honest government official

The government wanted to put up a big office building in the capital, and had to choose an engineering company to do the work. Several big companies wanted the job, because it would bring them a lot of money if they could get it, but, of course, they could not all have it, so the government had to decide which of them should be the lucky one. They therefore appointed a government official to examine the various companies' offers, decide which were the most suitable, and then advise the Minister of Works which of them to choose.

After some months, the choice was made and work was about to begin when one of the companies which had not been successful complained to the Minister. They said that the official who had been responsible for advising him on the choice of a company to do the work had accepted bribes.

The Minister at once ordered an inquiry into the whole matter, and after a month had proof that the official had indeed taken bribes. He therefore sent for him and asked for an explanation.

The official admitted that he had taken big bribes "But," he said, "I did not just take one from the company to which I recommended that you should give the work. I took a bribe from each company to favour it in my choice of the one to recommend."

"Well, then," said the Minister, "how did you finally make your choice? Did you choose the one that gave you the biggest bribe?"

"Certainly not, sir!" answered the official, deeply hurt that the Minister should accuse him of such dishonesty, "I was very careful to take exactly the same bribe from each of the companies that were trying to get the job".

"Then how did you choose?" asked the Minister.

"As an honest government official," answered the man, "I choose the company that I thought would do the work best and most cheaply, of course."

The second year?

In conversation, my adult son Larry expressed concern about my future. Confident in my children's love, I announced, "I'm not going to worry about old age. I have four kids, and I'll just spend three months with each one."

"Yes," Larry replied, "but what are you going to do the second year?"

Perfect girlfriend

In my sociology class at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA., the professor was discussing gender differences. When she asked the women to describe the ideal boyfriend, we began shouting characteristics. After she filled the blackboard with our ideal, she asked the men to describe the perfect girlfriend.

One student spoke on behalf of all the men in the class when he raised his hand and said, "Less demanding".

Bankruptcy!

Three businessmen were having dinner at a club. When it came time to pay the check, each grabbed for it.

“It’s a business expense,” said one.

“I’ll pay,” said the second, “I’m on cost plus.”

“Let me have it,” argued the third.

“I’m filing for bankruptcy next week.”

Minimum a mount

My husband is generally not a very romantic person, so I was rather pleased when on our 23rd anniversary he surprised me with 17 roses. Curious about the odd amount, I asked him if there was a special significance to buying 17 roses rather than the normal one or two dozen.

“No,” he answered, “That was the minimum amount that could be charged.”

Play the piano

After more than 30 years in the piano-tuning business, I thought I had heard it all. Then I went to adjust the piano strings for a customer who had a carpenter working at her house. Every time he made a trip outside for another tool, he would look in on me.

“Hey”, he said finally, “if you like to play the piano so much, you really should take some lessons.”

Lucky

Browsing in a nursery, I overheard a young couple contemplating the purchase of a blooming plant. The wife obviously wanted the plant, and pleaded for her husband's approval. But he was quick to cite the recent demise of a similar flower she had owned. Nodding her head in agreement, she continued down the aisle. When she was a safe distance away from him, I saw the young man lean over the flower pot and whisper, "You don't know how lucky you are."

A present

My daughter, who lived in San Diego, call her dad on the East Coast to wish him a happy birthday. She apologetically said that her gift would be late and small. Then she added, "But someday, it may be the biggest present you ever received."

A few days later, the postman delivered a small cylinder. Inside, ready for planting, was a California Redwood Sapling.

Nice flowers!

My husband's uncle thought he had conquered the problem of trying to remember his wife's birthday and their anniversary. He opened an account with a florist, provided him with the dates and instructions to send flowers along with an appropriate note signed, "Your loving husband."

His wife was thrilled by this new display of attention and all went well until one day, many bouquets later, when he came home, kissed his wife and said offhandedly, "Nice flowers, honey. Where did you get them?"

Again

Two pals are sitting in a pub watching the eleven-o'clock news. A report comes on about a man threatening to jump from the 20th floor of a downtown building. One friend turns to the other and says, "I'll bet you ten bucks the guy doesn't jump."

"It's a bet," agrees his buddy.

A few minutes later, the man on the ledge jumps, so the loser hands his pal a \$10 bill. "I can't take your money," his friend admits, "I saw him jump earlier on the six-o'clock news".

"Me, too," says the other buddy, "But I didn't think he'd do it again!"

The Trans - Siberian Express

Two Russian hunters meet. "I shot a gigantic bear yesterday," says Ivan, "Look at the hide!"

"How do you find such huge bears?", Sergei asks.

"Easy," says Ivan, "You stand in front of a cave and whistle. When the bear comes out, you shoot."

Weeks later the two meet again. Sergei is covered in bandages. "Didn't you follow my advice?", Ivan asks.

"Sure I did. I stood in front of a cave and whistled," Sergei replies. "And what came out?"

"To me," says Sergei, "it looked like the Trans-Siberian Express."

Twice eighteen

A woman was having some trouble with her heart, so she went to see the doctor. He was a new doctor, and did not know her, so he first asked some questions, and one of them was, "How old are you?"

"Well," she answered, "I don't remember, doctor, but I will try to think." She thought for a minute and then said, "Yes, I remember now, doctor! When I married, I was eighteen years old, and my husband was thirty. Now my husband is sixty, I know; and that is twice thirty. So I am twice eighteen. That is thirty-six, isn't it?"

I'm not afraid of you!

Norton had an old shed. It had no windows, so it was very dark, and it was full of old things.

One day, Norton went into this shed to get a ladder, but slipped on something and fell against a big garden fork. The fork hit him on the head and knocked him down. Then it fell on top of him and hit him hard on the left leg. The ends of the fork then went into his long beard. He fought with the fork fiercely, and at last threw it off him, jumped up and ran out of the shed. He was very angry. He had an old sword under his bed, and he now ran and got this. Then he ran back to the shed, opened the door suddenly and shouted in a terrible voice, "All right, come out and fight, you and all the other forks in the world! I'm not afraid of you!"

“Give” and “take”

One of Morgan's friends loved money very much, and never gave anything to anybody. Soon he became rich.

One day, he was walking near the river with his friends when he slipped and fell in. His friends ran to help him and one of them knelt on the ground, held out his hand and said, “Give me your hand, and I will pull you out!” The rich man's head went under the water and then came up again, but he did not give his friend his hand. Again another of his friends tried, but again the same thing happened.

Then Morgan said, “Take my hand and I will pull you out!” The rich man took his hand, and Morgan pulled him out of the water.

“You don't know our friend very well,” he said to the others, “When you say “Give” to him, he does nothing; but when you say “Take”, he takes!”

Stupid?

Lyle wanted to buy some new clothes, so he went to a shop. First, he asked for some trousers and put them on, but then he took them off and gave them back to the shopkeeper and said, "No, give me a coat instead of these".

The man gave him a coat, and said, "This one costs the same as the trousers." Lyle took the coat and walked out of the shop with it. The shopkeeper ran after him and said, "You have not paid for that coat!"

"But I gave you the trousers for the coat," said Lyle, "They cost the same as the coat, didn't they?"

"Yes," said the shopkeeper, "But you didn't pay for the trousers either!"

"Of course I didn't!" answered Lyle, "I did not take them. I am not stupid! Nobody gives things back and then pays for them!"

Don't let him in!

Harley was sitting by a window in his house one day in the middle of winter, when he heard women outside crying. He put his head out of the window, and saw a lot of people coming towards his house. They were carrying a dead man, and the women were crying, "Oh, why are you leaving us to go to a place without light and without a fire and without food? It will be dark there, and you will be cold and hungry. Nobody will look after you, nobody will be kind to you, and nobody will love you there!"

"My God!", said Harley to his wife, "They are talking about our house. They are bringing the dead man here! Quick, lock the door! Don't let him in!"

Where is my cat?

Gary liked fish very much, and when he had enough money, he bought some for his dinner when he went to the market, and took it home. But when his wife saw the fish, she always said to herself, "Good! Now I will invite my friends to lunch and we will eat this fish. They like fish very much".

So when Gray came home in the evening after his work, the fish was never there, and his wife always said, "Oh, your cat ate it! She is a very bad animal! And she gave Gray soup and rice for his dinner".

But one evening when this happened, Gray became very angry. He took the cat and his wife to the shop near his house and weighed the cat carefully. Then he turned to his wife and said, "My fish weighed two kilos. This cat weighs two kilos too. My fish is here, you say. Then where is my cat?"

The seventh

One morning, Nathan left his house with six donkeys to go to the market. After a time, he got tired and got on to one of them. He counted the donkeys, and there were only five, so he got off and went to look for the sixth. He looked and looked but did not find it, so he went back to the donkeys and counted them again. This time there were six, so he got on to one of them again and they all started.

After a few minutes he counted the donkeys again, and again there were only five! While he was counting again, a friend of his passed, and Nathan said to him, "I left my house with six donkeys; then I had five; then I had six again; and now I have only five! Look! One, two, three, four, five".

"But, Nathan" his friend, "You are sitting on a donkey too! That is the sixth! And you are the seventh!"

A lesson

One day, Mason bought a donkey in the market; but while he was taking it home, two thieves followed him. One of them took the rope from the donkey's neck and tied it round his friend's neck. Then he went away with the donkey.

When Mason got home, he turned and saw the young man. He was very surprised. "Where is my donkey?" he said angrily.

"I am very sorry," said the thief, "but once I said some very bad things to my mother, and she changed me into a donkey. But because a good man bought me, I am now a man again! Thank you!"

Mason untied the man and said, "Go! And never say bad things to your mother again!"

The next day, Mason saw the same donkey in the market again! The other thief was selling it.

Mason went to it and said into its ear, "Young man, some people will never learn!"

Poor man

Whenever it rained, water came through Lester's roof, so one day he got his ladder, climbed up on to the roof and began to mend it. It was quite difficult and dangerous work.

While he was up there, he suddenly saw an old man in the street. This man was waving to him. He wanted Lester to come down. Lester thought, "What has happened? What news has this man got for me?" So he climbed down the ladder quickly. Several times he slipped and nearly broke his neck. When he got to the bottom, the old man said, "I am a poor man. Please give me some money."

Lester was very angry, but he said, "Come up". He helped the old man to climb up the ladder and on to the roof. Then he said to him, "I am a poor man too. I have no money for you. And now go down alone. I will not help you."

Pay for work

Every Saturday, Henry went to the market to buy food and other things. He put them in a big basket, but he was old and weak, so he always paid another man to carry the basket home for him. But one Saturday, while he was walking home in front of the man with the basket, the man ran away with it.

The next Saturday, when Henry went to the market again, a friend of his said, "Look, there he is! That man stole your things last week!"

Henry at once hid behind a shop, and stayed there until the man left the market.

His friend was very surprised. "Why did you do that?" he asked.

"Well," said Henry, "that man was carrying my basket when he left me a week ago. He will want me to pay him for seven days work, and that will cost me more than a basket full of things!"

One shirt

One day, when Gray was travelling, he came to a village. The people there said to him, "We have had no rain for three months, and we have no water. Our corn is dying. Please help us! Pray for rain!"

Gray wanted to help these poor people, so he asked for a bucket of water. There was very little water in the village, but each family gave a little, and they filled a bucket and gave it to Gray.

Then Gray took off his shirt and began to wash it. The people were surprised and angry. "That water was for our children to drink, and you are washing your shirt in it!"

But Gray said, "Wait!" He hung the shirt up to dry, and at once it began to rain.

"I have only one shirt," he said to the surprised people, "and when I wash it and hang it up to dry, it always rains."

In the bathroom

One day, when Hall was having a bath, he began to sing. The bathroom was small and had a stone floor, so his song was very beautiful, he thought.

“Oh,” he said, “I sing very well. I will sing to other people too, and perhaps I will become a famous singer, and everybody in the world will want to hear me.”

So after his bath, Hall went up on to the flat roof of the house and began to sing his song very loudly. But he did not like it very much when he sang it there.

A man was walking across the square in front of the house, and when he heard Hall, he said, “What are you doing? You are making a terrible noise. Nobody wants to hear it.”

“Oh, you think so, do you?” answered Hall, “Well, I really sing very beautifully. Come to my bathroom and you will hear me.”

Bad news

One day, Irvin's donkey was ill, so he borrowed a horse from an officer. It was a big, strong animal, and usually nobody rode it except the officer. It tried to throw Irvin off, but he stayed on it. Then it suddenly began to run away with him. He tried to turn it towards his house, and he tried to stop it, but it continued to run the opposite way.

One of Irvin's friends was working in his field and saw him riding very fast towards this friend's house. He thought, "Why is Irvin riding so fast? Perhaps he has some bad news. Perhaps he is riding to my house to give me some bad news!"

He was frightened and shouted to Irvin, "Irvin! Irvin! What is the matter? Where are you going?"

"I don't know!" Irvin shouted back, "This stupid animal hasn't told me!"

The pot

Kent wanted a big pot for a party, so he borrowed one from a neighbour. After the party, he took it back with another small pot inside.

Your pot had a baby while it was with us,” he said.

Of course, the neighbour was very pleased, and when Kent came to borrow the big pot again for another party, he lent it to him very gladly.

This time, Kent did not bring the pot back, so after a few days, the man went to Kent’s house.

“What has happened to my big pot?” he asked, “Why have you not brought it back yet?”

“Oh, the big pot?” said Kent, “It died while it was with us.”

“Died?” said the neighbour angrily, “But pots do not die!”

“Why do you say that?” answered Kent, “When I said, “The pot has had a baby”. You did not say, “Pots do not have babies”, did you?”

Eat, coat!

One day, Lane went to a big dinner party. He was wearing old clothes, and when he came in, nobody looked at him and nobody gave him a seat at a table. So Lane went home, put on his best clothes, and then went back to the party. The host at once got up and came to meet him. He took him to the best table, gave him a good seat, and offered him the best dishes.

Lane put his coat in the food and said, "Eat, coat!"

The other guests were very surprised and said, "What are you doing?"

Lane answered, "I was inviting my coat to eat. When I was wearing my old clothes, nobody looked at me or offered me food or drink. Then I went home and came back in these clothes, and you gave me the best food and drink. So you gave me these things for my clothes, not for myself".

The end world!

One day, the boys of Logan's village said to him, "You have a nice, fat sheep. Will you invite us to a party to eat it with you?"

Logan did not want the boys to eat his sheep, so he said, "It is not fat enough yet."

"But have you not heard?" they said, "The world is going to end tomorrow, so the sheep will never get fat!"

Logan was getting tired of this, so he said, "All right, boys, we will have a picnic tomorrow, and eat the sheep."

So the next morning, they all went to the river, the boys took off their clothes and jumped into the water, and Logan killed the sheep.

When the boys came out, their clothes were not there.

"Where are our clothes, Logan?", they asked.

"Oh," he answered, "I made the fire to cook the sheep with your clothes. You will not need them again. The world is going to end today, don't you remember?"

A letter

A letter to a magazine:

“Dear Sirs,

Last year, I saw an article in your magazine (I think it was in your magazine, but I am not sure) which interested me very much, but I have forgotten what it was. I wrote the name of the article and the magazine in my notebook after I had read it, but I have lost the notebook. I have also lost the magazine which the article was in. Will you please send me another copy of the magazine, if it was your magazine? Thank you very much.

Yours faithfully,

David Williams.

Unlucky!

One winter, Orville had very little money. His crops had been very bad that year, and he had to live very cheaply. He gave his donkey less food, and when after two days, the donkey looked just the same, he said to himself, "The donkey was used to eating a lot. Now he is quickly getting used to eating less; and soon he will get used to living on almost nothing."

Each day, Orville gave the donkey a little less food, until it was hardly eating anything.

Then one day, when the donkey was going to market with a load of wood on its back, it suddenly died. "How unlucky I am," said Orville. "Just when my donkey had got used to eating hardly anything, it came to the end of its days in this world."

Future!

Nelson was cutting a branch off a tree in his garden. While he was sawing, another man passed in the street. He stopped and said, "Excuse me, but if you continue to saw that branch like that, you will fall down with it." He said this because Nelson was sitting on the branch and cutting it at a place between himself and the trunk of the tree.

Nelson said nothing. He thought, "This is some foolish person who has no work to do and goes about telling other people what to do and what not to do."

The man continued on his way.

Of course, after a few minutes, the branch fell and Nelson fell with it.

"My God!" he cried, "That man knows the future!" and he ran after him to ask how long he was going to live. But the man had gone.

A ladder!

There was a big garden near Carlton's house, and it had a lot of fruit trees in it. One day, Carlton saw some beautiful apples on one of them. He went home and got a ladder, put it against the high wall of the garden and climbed up. Then he pulled the ladder up, put it down on the other side, and climbed down into the garden. Just then a gardener came round a corner and saw him.

"What are you doing here?" he shouted.

Carlton thought quickly and then said, "I am selling my ladder."

"Selling your ladder? In somebody else's garden. Do you think I believe such a stupid story?", said the gardener and came towards Carlton with a stick.

"It is my ladder," said Carlton, "and I can sell it where I like. You needn't buy it if you don't want to." And he took his ladder and climbed over the wall again.

Strange

Ali, who was working a long way from home, wanted to send a letter to his wife, but he could neither read nor write, and he had to work all day, so he could only look for somebody to write his letter late at night. At last, he found the house of a letter-writer whose name was Porter.

Porter was already in bed. "It is late," he said, "What do you want?" "I want you to write a letter to my wife," said Ali. Porter was not pleased. He thought for a few seconds and then said, "Has the letter got to go far?"

"What does that matter?" answered Ali.

"Well, my writing is so strange that only I can read it, and if I have to travel a long way to read your letter to your wife, it will cost you a lot of money."

Ali went away quickly.

Don't worry!

An old man died and left his son a lot of money. But the son was a foolish young man, and he quickly spent all the money, so that soon he had nothing left. Of course, when that happened, all his friends left him. When he was quite poor and alone, he went to see Adrian, who was a kind, clever old man and often helped people when they had troubles.

“My money has finished and my friends have gone,” said the young man, “What will happen to me now?”

“Don't worry, young man,” answered Adrian, “Everything will soon be all right again. Wait, and you will soon feel much happier.”

The young man was very glad. “Am I going to get rich again then?” he asked Adrian.

“No, I didn't mean that,” said the old man, “I meant that you would soon get used to being poor and to having no friends”.

Strength

Some of Ervin's old friends were talking about the young people in their town. They all agreed that old people were wiser than young people. Then one of the old men said, "But young men are stronger than old men."

All of them agreed that this was true, except Ervin. He said, "No. I am as strong now as when I was a young man."

"What do you mean?" said his friends, "How is that possible? Explain yourself!"

"Well," said Ervin, "in one corner of my field, there is a rock. When I was a young man, I used to try to move it, but I couldn't because I was not strong enough. I am an old man now, and when I try to move it, I still cannot."

Lucky man

Clark woke up in the middle of the night and saw something white in his garden. It seemed to be moving towards the house.

“That is a thief!” he thought, and he took his gun and shot at him. Then he went back to bed, because he was too frightened to go out of the house in the dark.

The next morning, Clark went out and saw one of his white shirts hanging on the clothes-line in the garden. His wife had washed it the day before and hung it out to dry. Now it had a bullet-hole right through the middle of it.

“My God,” said Clark, “I was lucky last night. If I had been wearing that shirt, the bullet would have killed me!” And he called his neighbours together and asked them to thank God for saving him.

Wait a little!

Davis had lost his donkey. He was going about looking for it everywhere, and while he was looking, he was singing gaily.

One of his neighbours saw him and said, "Hello, Davis. What are you doing?"

"I am looking for my donkey," answered Davis

"Don't you know where it is?" asked the neighbour.

"No, I don't."

"Then why are you singing so gaily? Usually when somebody loses something, he is sad".

"Yes, that is quite true," answered Davis, "But you see, I am not yet sure that my donkey is lost. My last hope is that it is behind that hill over there. If you wait a little, you will hear how I will cry and complain if it is not there!"

Ordinary baby?

Bruce's wife was very ill, and at last she died. After a few months, Bruce married again. His new wife was a widow.

Exactly seven days after he married her, she had a baby.

Bruce at once hurried away to the market and bought some paper, some pencils, some pens and some children's books. Then he hurried back home again with these things and put them beside the baby. His new wife was surprised. "What are you doing?" she said, "The baby won't be able to use those things for a long time. Why are you in such a hurry?"

Bruce answered, "You are quite wrong, my dear. Our baby is not an ordinary baby. It came in seven days instead of nine months, so it will certainly be ready to learn to read and write in a few weeks from now.

Half mad!

Burton put two big baskets of grapes on his donkey and went to market. At midday it was very hot, so he stopped in the shade of a big tree. There were several other men there, and all of them had donkeys and baskets of grapes too. After their lunch, they went to sleep. After some time, Burton began to take grapes out of the other men's baskets and to put them in his.

Suddenly, one of the men woke up and saw him. "What are you doing?" he said angrily.

"Oh," said Burton, "don't worry about me. I am half mad, and I do a lot of strange things."

"Oh, really?" said the other man, "Then why don't you sometimes take grapes out of your baskets and put them in somebody else's baskets?"

"You did not understand me," said Burton. "I said that I was half mad, not quite mad."

Inside the coat

When Everett's first wife died, he married again. His second wife was much younger than he was and they often quarrelled. One evening, when Everett came home very late, his wife said to him, "I cooked your dinner two hours ago. It is quite spoiled now." She was so angry that she gave him a push, and as she was strong, and he was old and weak, he fell down the stairs.

One of Everett's neighbours, who was always eager to know what was happening in everybody else's house, was listening, and when she heard the noise that Everett made when he fell down the stairs, she came to his front door and knocked.

"What has happened?" she said.

"My coat fell down the stairs," he answered.

"But a coat would not make so much noise!" the neighbour said. "Of course it would," answered Everett, "if I was inside it!"

Stupid orders

When Craig was a boy, he never did what he was told, so his father always told him to do the opposite of what he wanted him to do.

One day, when the two were bringing sacks of flour home on their donkeys, they had to cross a shallow river. When they were in the middle of it, one of the sacks on Craig's donkey began to slip, so his father said, "That sack is nearly in the water! Press down hard on it!"

His father of course expected that he would do the opposite, but this time Craig did what his father had told him to do. He pressed down on the sack and it went under the water. Of course, the flour was lost.

"What have you done, Craig?" his father shouted angrily.

"Well, Father", said Craig, "this time I thought that I would do just what you told me, to show you how stupid your orders always are".

Two pages

Mr. Black gave his wife money every Friday evening, but she always spent it before the next Wednesday, so that for the next three days she had none.

Every Tuesday evening, Mr. Black asked her, "But what did you spend all that money on?" and she always answered, "I don't know."

One Friday, Mr. Black brought home an exercise book and a pencil and gave them to his wife with her money. "Now look!" he said to her, "When you get money from me, write it down on this page, and on the opposite page write down what happens to the money."

When Mr. Black came home the next Tuesday, his wife came to him and showed him the book. "I have done what you told me," she said happily. On one page she had written "Friday, 28th June. I got £18 from John"; and on the opposite page, "Tuesday, 2nd July. I have spent it all."

The reason

“You must have this suit cleaned,” Mrs. Field said to her husband. “It’s very dirty”. She held up a dark suit for him to examine. “Look!” she said, “There are stains on the front and dirty marks round the pockets of your trousers. This suit is so dirty, it will stand up by itself!”

“All right, I’ll take it to the cleaner’s,” Mr. Field answered.

“I can’t understand why you always buy dark suits,” Mrs. Field went on? “Why don’t you buy a few light-coloured suits for a change? Light-coloured suits are much nicer. They will make you look younger, too.”

“Perhaps they will,” Mr. Field said, “But they will get very dirty in London. London air isn’t exactly clean and light-coloured suits will show all the dirt. I’ll have to have them cleaned once a month.”

“That’s better than once a year,” Mrs. Field replied, “Dark suits get just as dirty, but they don’t show it.”

“That,” Mr Field said with a smile, “is why I wear them”.

Without you!

The great liner had anchored some distance from the harbour. The captain had told the passengers that they could visit the port if they wished to, but they must be on board at 5 : 30 as the ship would set sail at 6 o'clock. The ship was far too big to dock in the harbour and all day long local boatmen had been rowing to and from the liner carrying sightseers to the small port.

At about 5 o'clock, Miss Merryweather hired a local boatman to take her back to the ship. The man had asked for \$ 5 which Miss Merryweather thought excessive.

"Either you accept \$ 3, or I shall hire another boatman," Miss Merryweather said firmly.

After a good deal of arguing, the man reluctantly agreed to take her for \$ 3.

When they were about two hundred yards from the liner, the boatman stopped rowing, "is anything the matter?" inquired Miss Merryweather anxiously.

"Nothing at all," the boatman replied, "Either you pay me \$ 5, or you can sit here and watch the ship sail away without you."

No time!

Mr. and Mrs. Williams had always spent their summer holidays in England in the past, in a small boarding-house at the seaside. One year, however, Mr. Williams made a lot of money in his business, so they decided to go to Rome and stay at a really good hotel while they went around and saw the sights of that famous city.

They flew to Rome, and arrived at their hotel late one evening. They expected that they would have to go to bed hungry, because in the boarding-houses they had been used to in the past, no meals were served after seven o'clock in the evening. They were therefore surprised when the clerk who received them in the hall of the hotel asked them whether they would be taking dinner there that night.

“Are you still serving dinner then?” asked Mrs. Williams.

“Yes, certainly, madam,” answered the clerk, “We serve it until half-past nine.”

“What are the times of meals then?” asked Mr. Williams.

“Well, sir,” answered the clerk, “we serve breakfast from seven to half-past eleven in the morning, lunch from twelve to three in the afternoon, tea from four to five, and dinner from six to half-past nine.”

“But that hardly leaves any time for us to see the sights of Rome!” said Mrs. Williams in a disappointed voice.

Whose?

Two tramps were walking along a quiet road. A sorry-looking dog was following them.

“We’ve had a bad day, Joe,” the first tramp said, “We haven’t any money and we can’t get anything to eat.”

“We’ll find something,” the second tramp answered cheerfully.

Suddenly, the tramps saw a car in the distance. It was coming towards them very quickly. Both the tramps moved to one side, but the dog stayed in the middle of the road.

The driver tried to stop the car, but it was too late. The car hit the dog and killed it. The driver got out of the car and went towards the first tramp.

“Poor little dog,” the tramp said sadly.

“I’m terribly sorry, the driver said, “I tried to avoid your dog but I couldn’t. “He took out his wallet and gave five pounds to the tramp.” “Will that be all right?” the driver asked.

“Yes, sir, thank you, sir,” the tramp said. The driver got into his car and drove away.

“Poor little dog,” the first tramp said and put the money into his pocket.

“Whose dog was it?” the second tramp asked.

The government

Just after the last war, people were very willing to give money to help those who had suffered from it. But not everyone who collected money was honest. The newspapers were full of stories of people who had been cheated by men who went from house to house saying that they were collecting for soldiers who had been seriously wounded in the war, or for people who had lost their homes, or for some other noble cause, while all the time they were putting the money they collected into their own pockets instead of using it for the purposes they claimed to be collecting it for.

One day, Mr. Smith came back with another story of this kind. He told his wife that a group of people had collected thousands of dollars for the widow of the Unknown Soldier. Then someone had written to the papers about it, and they had written articles to warn other people. Mr. Smith said that he and his friends at the office had had a good laugh about the story when they had read it in the newspaper.

“Can you imagine anyone being so stupid as to believe that story and give money for the widow of the Unknown Soldier?” he asked his wife.

She looked puzzled at first, but then her face brightened. “Oh, yes! I see now!” she answered. “Of course, the government pays the widow of the Unknown Soldier!”

On Monday

Monday morning is always the worst morning of the week. Everybody is sleepy; every body is bad-tempered; everybody is in a hurry. Last Monday was even worse than usual.

“Hurry up, Dick!” father shouted as he banged on the bathroom door. “I’ve got a train to catch!”

“I’m shaving,” Dick answered, “I’ll be out in a minute.”

“Breakfast’s ready,” mother called from the kitchen. As she got no reply, she came upstairs to see what was going on. “Where’s David?” she asked, “Is he still in bed?” She knocked at his bedroom door loudly. “You’d better get up,” she called, “It’s a quarter to eight. Your breakfast’s getting cold!”.

“I don’t feel like any breakfast,” David mumbled, “I’ll have another five minutes sleep instead.”

Mother was about to go into his room and drag him out of bed when the doorbell rang. She hurried downstairs to open the door, it was the postman.

“Good morning, Mrs Crawford,” he said cheerfully, “It’s a lovely day, isn’t it?”

“You wouldn’t think so if you lived here,” mother answered, “On Mondays this place is like a madhouse.”

Ashamed

Warren never seemed to have enough money to pay his bills, so he always owed money to the shopkeepers in his town. Most of them were patient, understanding men and did not speak to him very often about the money that he owed them, but there was one who was not at all patient, and who was also very fond of money. Whenever this man saw Warren, he reminded him of the money that he had not yet paid him, and he very often did this in front of Warren's best friends, which made Warren feel very uncomfortable, as he did not want his friends to know that he was so poor.

One day, therefore, Warren decided to teach the shopkeeper a lesson. The next time that the man stopped him in the street and began to shame him publicly about his debt to him, Warren said, "Wait a minute. How much money do I in fact owe you?"

"You owe me exactly one hundred and twenty-two liras," answered the shopkeeper.

"Well," said Warren, "if I paid you forty liras this month, another forty next month, and forty more the month after that, how much would I still owe you?"

"You would then owe me two liras, of course", answered the shopkeeper.

"Well, aren't you ashamed of yourself," Warren said, "giving me all this trouble for only two liras?"

Eye test

Last week, I had my eyes tested. “My wife thinks I need glasses,” I explained to the optician, “I know I don’t need glasses. I can see very well.”

The optician tested my eyes. “You ought to wear glasses, sir,” he said, “Come and choose a pair of frames.”

“I can see very well without glasses,” I insisted, “but if you say I need them, I’ll have to have them.”

The optician did not answer me. He showed me some frames. “Choose a pair of these,” he said, “These frames are made of plastic, and these are made of metal. These are tortoise-shell and are rather dear.”

“I’ll have the plastic ones,” I said.

“Do you think they suit you?” he asked and handed me a mirror.”

I reached out for the mirror and missed. It crashed to the floor and broke into a thousand pieces. “I’m very sorry,” I said and blushed.

“It doesn’t matter,” the optician answered, “We lose a lot of mirrors like that.”

“Well,” I said, “I certainly need glasses.”

“You certainly do,” the optician answered with a smile, “Your wife was right.”

Valuable and worthless

Sidney sat drinking coffee and talking with some of his old friends. One of the things they discussed was the difference between one person's sense of values and another's. After some minutes, one of Sidney's friends said to him, "Well, Sidney, you are a wise man, but you have said nothing on this subject yet. What do you consider to be the most valuable thing in the world?"

Sidney answered without hesitation, "I consider advice the most valuable thing in the world."

His friends thought about this for a few moments, and then one of them asked him, "And what do you consider the most worthless thing in the world?"

Again Sidney replied without hesitating for a moment, "I consider advice the most worthless thing in the world."

"Really!" said one of his friends, "You must be joking, Sidney! A minute ago, you said that advice is the most valuable thing in the world, and now you say that it is the most worthless thing in the world! How can it be both the most valuable and the most worthless."

"Well," answered Sidney, "if you think about the matter carefully, you will see that I am not joking, and that I am quite right. When you give somebody good advice, and he takes it, advice is the most valuable thing in the world. But when you give a person advice and he does not take it, it is the most worthless thing in the world".

Enjoy and hate

My brother, Henry, has an excellent job at a bank. I couldn't believe him when he told me that he had decided to give it up. Though I tried to make him change his mind, I failed completely.

"You should reconsider your decision," I said, "You have already spent five years in the bank and you could have a wonderful career. You might become a bank manager by the time you're thirty-five".

"I know," Henry answered, "I've got no complaints with the bank. It's a pleasant job in pleasant surroundings and we keep civilized hours. The bank manager told me that my prospects were excellent."

"Then why do you want to leave?" I exclaimed.

"It's the money," Henry said.

"But you're getting a good salary," I answered.

"I don't mean that," Henry said, "What do I do at the bank? Well, at the moment all I do is to count money. I find it very depressing."

"What's depressing about counting money?" I asked, unable to follow the logic of Henry's argument.

"You don't understand," Henry answered, "I enjoy counting my own money, but I hate counting other people's!"

Good manners

Most of Todd's neighbours were pleasant people, who were always ready to help each other when they were in trouble; but there was one woman who lived in his street who was disliked by everybody because she was always interfering in other people's business, and because she was always borrowing things from people and then forgetting to give them back.

Early one morning, Todd heard a knock at his front door, and, when he opened it, found this woman outside.

"Good morning, Todd," she said, "I have to take some things to my sister's house in the town today, and I have not got a donkey, as you know. Will you lend me yours? I will bring it back this evening."

"I am sorry," answered Todd, "If my donkey was here, I would of course lend it to you very willingly, but it is not."

"Oh?" said the woman, "It was here last night, because I saw it behind your house. Where is it now?"

"My wife took it into town early this morning," answered Todd.

Just then the donkey brayed loudly.

"You are not telling the truth, Todd!" the woman said angrily, "I can hear your donkey. You should be ashamed of yourself, telling lies to a neighbour!"

"You are the one who should be ashamed, not me!" shouted Todd, "Is it good manners to believe a donkey's word rather than that of one of one's neighbours?"

Change?

Mr. and Mrs. Howard recently moved to a new house. The garden had been so neglected that they decided to employ a gardener. One day, when her husband was at work, Mrs. Howard asked a local gardener to come and see the garden. After the man had been over the place thoroughly, Mrs. Howard went out to speak to him.

“How does it look?” she asked.

“It’s been terribly neglected, Mrs. Howard,” the gardener said. “Those rose bushes need pruning. The lawn needs cutting and the hedges need trimming. And as you can see the whole garden’s full of weeds.”

“When can you begin work?” Mrs Howard asked.

“Not until next week, Mrs Howard,” the gardener said. “I’m very busy.”

“Can’t you start on Saturday?” Mrs. Howard asked.

“I’m afraid not,” the gardener replied, “I never work during the weekend. I need a change after working in gardens all the week.”

“I’m sure you do,” Mrs Howard said, “Everyone should have a hobby. What do you do in your spare time?”

“I’ve got a garden of my own,” the man said, “I’m only free to work in it during the weekend.”

April Fool's Day

April 1st is a day on which, in some countries, people try to play tricks on others. If one succeeds in tricking somebody, one laughs and says "April Fool!", and then the person who has been tricked usually laughs too.

One April 1st, a country bus was going along a winding road when it slowed down and stopped. The driver anxiously turned switches and pressed buttons, but nothing happened. Then he turned to the passengers with a worried look on his face and said, "This poor bus is getting old. It isn't going as well as it used to. There's only one thing to do if we want to get home today. I shall count three, and on the word "three", I want you all to lean forward suddenly as hard as you can. That should get the bus started again, but if it doesn't, I am afraid there is nothing else I can do. Now, all of you lean back as far as you can in your seats and get ready,"

The passengers all obediently pressed back against their seats and waited anxiously.

Then the driver turned to his front and asked, "Are you ready?"

The passengers hardly had enough breath to answer, "Yes."

"One! Two! Three!" counted the driver. The passengers all swung forward suddenly - and the bus started up at a great rate.

The passengers breathed more easily and began to smile with relief. But their smiles turned to surprised and then delighted laughter when the driver merrily cried, "April Fool!"

A rope

Reid was friendly with most of his neighbours, but there was one woman who lived in his street whom he had always disliked. She was too interested in other people's business, and too ready to talk about it with others. And she was always borrowing things from her neighbours and then forgetting to return them.

This woman knew that Reid had a new rope in his shed, and one day she came to his door and asked to borrow it.

"Well," said Reid, "before I lend you my rope, I must know what you want it for."

"One of our neighbours is cutting a big branch off the tree in my garden," she answered, "and he needs the rope to pull it down with, so that it does not fall on my roof."

"Hasn't he got a rope himself?" asked Reid.

"No, he hasn't," the woman answered rudely, "Do you think I would have come here to get yours if he had had one?"

Reid said nothing, but went into his house. The woman heard him talking to his wife, and a moment later he came out again. "I am sorry," he said to the woman, "but I cannot lend you the rope just now. My wife is spreading flour on it."

"Spreading flour on it?" the woman cried, "But how can anyone spread flour on a rope? Are you trying to make a fool out of me?"

"Certainly not!" answered Reid, "It is quite easy to spread flour on my rope when I do not wish to lend it to somebody."

An expert cook

Max Roberts is a bachelor. He lives in a small flat in London. Max not only enjoys eating food, he enjoys preparing it as well. His favourite hobby is cooking. He has had so much practice, that he has become an expert cook.

His sister, Anne, called on him last Sunday evening. It was nearly dinner-time and Max was in the kitchen. He was wearing an apron and preparing a meal.

“You will stay to dinner, of course,” Max said.

“I’m starving!” Anne said, “Is there enough food for both of us?”

“I hope so,” Max answered.

Anne lifted the lid of the saucepan. “Mm,” she said, “It smells delicious. What is it?”

“It’s a Mexican dish,” Max said, “Very special.”

“You’ll be a good wife to some lucky woman,” Anne remarked.

“I don’t know about that,” Max answered, “But this dish ought to be good. I’ve been preparing it for five hours.”

“There’s enough food here for ten people!” Anne said as she looked into the saucepan, “Are you expecting company?”

“No,” Max replied, “I was going to eat it all myself.”

Part of the story

Mary was very fond of television, so when she met a young man who worked for a television company, she was very interested and asked him a lot of questions. She discovered that he had also worked for a film company, so she asked him whether there was any difference between film work and television work.

“Well,” answered the young man, “there is one very big difference. If someone makes a mistake while a film is being made, it is, of course, possible to stop and do the scene again. In fact, one can do it over and over again a lot of times. Mistakes waste time, money and film, but the audiences who see the film when it is finished don’t know that anything went wrong. In a live television show, on the other hand, the audience can see any mistakes that are made.”

“I can tell you a story about that. One day, a live television show was going on, and one of the actors was supposed to have been shot. He fell to the ground, and the camera moved somewhere else to allow time for me to run out with a bottle of tomato sauce to pour on to him to look like blood. But unfortunately, the camera turned back to him before I had finished, and the audience saw me pouring the sauce on to the man.”

“Oh, how terrible!” Mary said, “And what did you do?”

“Well,” answered the young man, “our television director is a very strict man. If anyone makes a mistake, he dismisses him at once. So what could I do? I just had to pretend that this was part of the story, and eat the man.”

A respectable professor

Mr. Jones woke early one morning, before the sun had risen. It was a beautiful morning, so he went to the window and looked out. He was surprised to see a neatly dressed, middle-aged professor, who worked in the university just up the road from Mr. Jones's house, coming from the direction of the town. He had grey hair and thick glasses, and was carrying an umbrella, a morning newspaper and a bag. Mr. Jones thought that he must have arrived by the night train and decided to walk to the university instead of taking a taxi.

Mr. Jones had a big tree in his garden, and the children had tied a long rope to one of its branches, so that they could swing on it.

Mr. Jones was surprised to see the professor stop when he saw the rope, and look carefully up and down the road. When he saw that there was nobody in sight, he stepped into the garden (there was no fence), put his umbrella, newspaper, bag and hat neatly on the grass and took hold of the rope. He pulled it hard to see whether it was strong enough to take his weight, then ran as fast as he could and swung into the air on the end of the rope, his grey hair blowing all around his face. Backwards and forwards he swung, occasionally taking a few more running steps on the grass when the rope began to swing too slowly for him.

At last the professor stopped, straightened his tie, combed his hair carefully, put on his hat, picked up his umbrella, newspaper and bag, and continued on his way to the university, looking as quiet and correct and respectable as one would expect a professor to be.

Two bullets

Mr. Richards was quite good at shooting with a rifle, and he had taken part in several competitions in his small town. He had never actually won a prize, but each time he had done well, and once he had come fourth.

Then he had to go to a big city on business for a month, and as he had nothing much to do in the evenings there, he joined the local rifle club, and spent several pleasant evenings shooting there.

The rifle club had a very good first team, which used to take part in a lot of important shooting competitions. One of these took place while Mr. Richards was with them, and of course he went to see it. But one of the members of the club's team suddenly fell ill just before the match, and the captain had to choose somebody else to take his place in a hurry. He had heard that Mr. Richards had taken part in several competitions already, and he had seen for himself at the club that, although he was not really up to the standard of the club's first team, he was quite a good shot. He therefore invited him to take the sick man's place.

Mr. Richards felt greatly honoured to be asked to shoot for such a good team, but he also felt very nervous, because he was afraid of making a fool of himself and letting down his team.

In fact, he was so nervous that he could not keep his hands from trembling while he was shooting, with the result that he did very badly in the competition. When he took his score card to his captain, he said, "After seeing my score, I feel like going outside and shooting myself."

The captain looked at the card for a few seconds and then said, "Well, you had better take two bullets with you if you do that."

Two doors

While Winston was walking home one evening, he met four of his old friends. To be polite, he invited them to come home with him to supper. He was expecting that they would equally politely refuse his invitation, but to his surprise, they quickly accepted and went home with him.

Winston was a poor man, and there was never much food in his house. He knew that there would be very little for supper that night, even for his wife and himself, but he did not know how to get rid of his unwanted guests without being very rude, so he let them come with him as far as his house. But when they were a short distance from his front door, he suddenly rushed forward, opened it, went in, shut it again and then locked it. He found his wife in the kitchen and quickly told her what had happened.

Winston's guests were at first surprised at his unexpected behaviour. Then they thought that he had perhaps gone ahead to make preparations to welcome them into his house. And then, when nothing had yet happened after several minutes, they began to get angry and to bang on the door, calling at the same time for Winston.

After this had gone on for some time, Winston sent his wife to a window to talk to the old men. She told them that Winston was not at home.

"What do you mean, he is not at home, woman?" shouted one of the men, "We came here a few minutes ago with Winston, and we saw him go into the house!"

Winston was now afraid that the noise the old men were making would bring all his neighbours around and that he would be publicly shamed, so he put his head out of the window and said, "Please, gentlemen, what are you making all this noise about? This house has a back door as well as a front one. Perhaps Winston came in through one and went out through the other."

Punish

One day, Wilson was walking quietly along the road when somebody gave him a violent blow on the back of the neck. He looked behind him, and saw a young man whom he had never seen before.

"How dare you hit me like that!" shouted Wilson.

The young man said he had mistaken Wilson for a friend of his and that

he thought Wilson was making a lot of noise about nothing.

This insult made Wilson even angrier, of course, and he at once arranged for the young man to be brought before a judge. There was nothing for the young man to do but to appear before the court.

Now, the judge who heard the case was a friend of the young man's father, and, although he pretended to be quite fair, he was thinking how he could avoid punishing the young man while at the same time not appearing unjust.

Finally, he said to Wilson, "I understand your feelings in this matter very well. Would you be satisfied if I let you hit the young man as he hit you?"

Wilson said he would not be. The young man had insulted him and should be properly punished.

"Well, then," said the judge to the young man, "I order you to pay ten liras to Wilson."

Ten liras was very little for such a crime, but the young man did not have it with him, so the judge allowed him to go and get it.

Wilson waited for him to return with the money. He waited an hour, he waited two hours, while the judge attended to other business.

When it was nearly time for the court to close, Wilson chose a moment when the judge was especially busy, came up quietly behind him and hit him hard on the back of the neck. Then he said to him, "I am sorry, but I can't wait any longer. When the young man comes back, tell him that I have passed my right to the ten liras on to you."

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