

The Funniest People in Families,

***Volume 4:
250 Anecdotes***

David Bruce

**Dedicated with Love to
Rex, Brenda, and Carey**

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This is a short, quick, and easy read.

Anecdotes are usually short humorous stories. Sometimes they are thought-provoking or informative, not amusing.

Educate Yourself

Read Like A Wolf Eats

Be Excellent to Each Other

Books Then, Books Now, Books Forever

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Dedicated to Carl Eugene Bruce and Josephine Saturday Bruce

My father, Carl Eugene Bruce, died on 24 October 2013. He used to work for Ohio Power, and at one time, his job was to shut off the electricity of people who had not paid their bills. He sometimes would find a home with an impoverished mother and some children. Instead of shutting off their electricity, he would tell the mother that she needed to pay her bill or soon her electricity would be shut off. He would write on a form that no one was home when he stopped by because if no one was home he did not have to shut off their electricity.

The best good deed that anyone ever did for my father occurred after a storm that knocked down many power lines. He and other linemen worked long hours and got wet and cold. Their feet were freezing because water got into their boots and soaked their socks. Fortunately, a kind woman gave my father and the other linemen dry socks to wear.

My mother, Josephine Saturday Bruce, died on 14 June 2003. She used to work at a store that sold clothing. One day, an impoverished mother with a baby clothed in rags walked into the store and started shoplifting in an interesting way: The mother took the rags off her baby and dressed the infant in new clothing. My mother knew that this mother could not afford to buy the clothing, but she helped the mother dress her baby and then she watched as the mother walked out of the store without paying.

My mother and my father both died at 7:40 p.m.

Chapter 1: From Advertising to Crime

Advertising

- In 1982, MCI produced a TV commercial that made fun of AT&T's commercial in which a mother begins crying because her grown-up son called "just because I love you." In the MCI commercial, a mother begins crying after her son calls. Why? She says, "Have you seen our long-distance phone bill?" At a conference, the advertising company suggesting doing a version of the commercial in which the mother would say that the "greedy, blood-sucking monopoly had drained the family resources." The then-chair of MCI, Bill McCowan, liked the idea, but suggested that they come up with a stronger word than "blood-sucking."¹

- Edsel Ford of the famous Ford family had the ability to recognize good advertising, and he had the ability to make up his mind quickly. He once read five full-page ads for the Ford Motor Company, then said, "I think they will do all right. I have one change I'd like to suggest. In one of the advertisements, I see you use the word 'perfect.' I think it would be better to say 'correct.' Nothing is perfect."²

Alcohol

- Late in life, Sir Wilfred Lawson disliked alcohol and supported legislation against drinking. However, when he was a university student he had a barrel of beer in his room. Unfortunately, this was against the rules and he was called up before the university authorities, where he made the case that he was drinking the beer under doctor's orders so he could become stronger. As proof that he was indeed becoming stronger, he said, "When the barrel came, I could not move it an inch; but now I find that I can quite easily roll it around the room."³

- Dodger pitcher Preacher Roe drank too much one night, and when the designated driver dropped him off at his home, Preacher was singing as loudly as he could. The next day, he told the designated driver that he was surprised that his wife had woken up when he came home — after all, he had remembered to take off his shoes before coming into his house.⁴

- Travelers must often be problem solvers. While traveling in Russia, Betty Clabaugh (the sister of Doris Jadan, wife of tenor Ivan Jadan) knew that she shouldn't drink the water. Therefore, she brushed her teeth with champagne.⁵

Animals

- Children's book author Peg Kehret and her husband, Carl, volunteer at a Humane Society. One day, they met Daisy, a six-month-old Cairn terrier (just like Toto in *The Wizard of Oz*), and fell in love with her. However, they already had a cat and a dog, so they thought that they ought to go home and discuss whether to adopt Daisy. Actually, they didn't have to go home to make their decision. They talked it over for a few minutes in the parking lot, and then they adopted Daisy. Now, when Daisy gets in her doggie bed to go to sleep, Peg sings her a doggie lullaby — something they both enjoy.⁶

- In the early years of the 20th century, an old man lived in McLeansboro, Illinois. He desperately wanted to get married, and he kept track of all the eligible females in town, and proposed marriage to them one by one, being rejected each time. To one woman, he tried to sweeten the offer of marriage, saying, "I'll tell you what. If you'll marry me, I'll buy you a Shetland pony." (The bribe didn't work; the old man remained unmarried.)⁷

- Albert McDennis, a law-abiding citizen in New York City, was walking his dog, and in accordance with city pooper-scooper laws, he cleaned up his dog's waste and put it in a bag. Unfortunately, a man mugged him. Fortunately, the mugger demanded the bag, which Mr. McDennis quickly handed over. Later, Mr. McDennis said, "He must be New York's dumbest mugger."⁸

- Michael Thomas Ford's Uncle Dick maintained a graveyard for family pets. For each dearly departed pet, he fashioned a tombstone, on which he wrote such epitaphs as these: "MUFFIN 1960-1966: CATS HAVE NINE LIVES; HE GAVE UP AFTER SIX" and "AMY 1970-1984: A FAST DOG, BUT THE CAR WAS FASTER."⁹

- When comedian Jack Benny was a kid, he was practicing his violin when a passing dog stopped and began howling mournfully. Jack's father tolerated the noise for a few minutes, then asked his son, "Can't you play some piece the dog doesn't know?"¹⁰

- An epitaph at the Aspen Hill Cemetery for Pets in Rockville, Maryland, says, "Major. Born a dog. Died a gentleman."¹¹

April Fools Day

- In 1868, William Pinkerton, the son of famous detective Allan Pinkerton, arrested four members of the bank-robbing Reno Gang on the day before April Fools Day and put them in jail. That night, the gang members kicked a hole in the wall and escaped, leaving this message over the hole they had made: "APRIL FOOL."¹²

Authors

- Children's book author David A. Adler started creating early in his life by telling Susan, his youngest sister, stories when she was young. What was her favorite story? It was a story about a girl who did something unusual — she planted flowers in her shoes. In addition to storytelling, he wrote articles he published in his own newspaper; unfortunately, he sold only one copy — to his parents. After Mr. Adler grew up and had been teaching for a while, Donnie, a two-and-a-half-year-old nephew, visited him and asked him question after question, not even waiting to hear the answer to a question before asking another question. After Donnie's visit, the grown-up Mr. Adler wrote down some of Donnie's questions, which became the genesis of Mr. Adler's first book, *A Little at a Time*. Of course, some books are harder to write than other books, and when Mr. Adler has trouble writing, he looks at a sign that hangs over his writing desk: "DON'T THINK! JUST WRITE!"¹³

- Jean Lee Leeuwen, a writer of children's books, tends to involve her family in her writing. For example, Bruce, her husband, is a mechanical engineer. When she needed to write about a cat trap in a book she wrote about mice, he designed one. In addition, she observed the antics of her children, David and Elizabeth, and when she had enough stories about them, she put them in some stories starring Oliver and Amanda Pig. David contributed in other ways as well. He advised her about food fights and football, and as a grown-up professional photographer, he photographed her for *Growing Ideas*, her short autobiography for young children. A benefit of having her as his mother is that David can list on his resume that he is the original of Oliver Pig.¹⁴

- Family and storytelling are very important to children's book author and illustrator Patricia Polacco. When she and her brother were children, their Ukrainian grandmother, aka their

babushka, told stories in front of the fireplace, an activity she called “firetalking.” These stories were of magic and mystery, and always one of the children would ask, “Bubby, is that a true story?” Always, she would reply, “Of course it’s true — but it may not have happened.” This firetalking still continues in Ms. Polacco’s family today, and often Ms. Polacco is the one first taking a turn at firetalking and then replying to the usual question, “Of course it’s true — but it may not have happened.”¹⁵

- When J.K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter books, was very young, she told a made-up story to her younger sister, Dianne. J.K.’s story was about a little girl named “Di” who was rescued by a family of rabbits after she fell down a rabbit hole. The family of rabbits fed little Di strawberries. Young Dianne enjoyed hearing the story, but she was annoyed when J.K. would change one of the details or add something different. Therefore, in order to keep all the details consistent when she told the story to her sister, J.K. wrote down the story.¹⁶

- After Betty Friedan’s book *The Feminine Mystique* became a best seller, she celebrated by buying a dishwasher and new clothes — and by hiring a crew to paint her living room bright purple.¹⁷

Birth

- At the 1924 Olympic Games in Paris, Bill Havens of Arlington, Virginia, was favored to win a medal as part of the U.S. Rowing Team. However, he discovered that his wife was pregnant and was scheduled to give birth at the time the Olympic Games would be held. Friends and family urged him to go to the Olympics, but he decided to be with his wife when she gave birth, and so he passed up his chance to win an Olympic medal. In 1952, he received a telegram from the Olympic Games in Helsinki, Finland. The telegram said, “Thanks for waiting around for me to get born in 1924. I’m coming home with the gold medal that you should have won.” Frank Havens, Bill’s son, had won the gold medal in a rowing event: the singles 10,000-meter canoeing race.¹⁸

- When ballerina Maria Tallchief was giving birth to Elise, her daughter, her labor pains were intense and she moaned with pain. Her husband, with a straight face, said to her, “Now, Maria, tell me when it hurts.” During a pause in the contractions, she laughed.¹⁹

Children

- In 1994, 15-year-old Brandy, aka Brandy Norwood, hit it big with her self-titled debut album, which sold millions of copies. However, she had been singing long before that, making her solo debut at age two in her church in Brookhaven, Mississippi, then singing in her bedroom in front of an audience of dolls. At age 14, she auditioned for Atlantic Records, a major record label. The crowd of VIPs at the audition talked while she was singing, so she told them, “You’re being rude.” They quieted down, she sang, and her singing won her a contract — and her first album made both her and Atlantic Records a lot of money. Brandy had her mother to take care of her while she was a young singer. In 1995, when Brandy was 16, she started touring with the group Boyz to Men, a quartet, and she liked Boyz to Men member Wanya Morris. However, Brandy’s mother let it be known that Mr. Morris had better wait until Brandy was 18 years old to ask her out; otherwise, Boyz to Men would quickly become a trio. No fool, Mr. Morris waited until Brandy was 18 years old, then he asked her out.²⁰

- When children’s book author Patricia McKissack was growing up, sometimes one of her grandmothers, whom she called Mama Sarah, told her scary stories in the twilight. Sometimes, of course, young Patricia and other kids would be playing in the twilight — a time they called “The Dark Thirty.” Why did they call it by that name? Because they knew that they had thirty minutes to get home before it grew dark enough for monsters to come out of hiding. As an adult, Ms. McKissack wrote the Newbery Honor Book *The Dark Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural*. Mama Sarah was very proud both of her granddaughter and because her granddaughter had dedicated the book to her. One of her grandfathers told young Patricia stories about a young heroine who had her name: Pat. This young heroine could outwit foxes and catch the wind and do other marvelous things. As an adult, Ms. McKissack wrote the books *Flossie and the Fox* and *Mirandy and Brother Wind*. She says that it’s easy to tell where the ideas for those books came from.²¹

- Children’s book author George Ella Lyon says that she was a “wordful child” when she was growing up. According to her family, she started talking before she started walking. When she was four years old, her family took a trip to San Francisco, where they stayed at the Pickwick Hotel. Her father held her up so she could see the streets of San Francisco, but what she remembers about the view is the big hotel sign bearing the word “PICKWICK.” As soon as she could, she began to write. She remembers her first poem. To write the poem she used her imagination to picture a magic bicycle; in fact, she says that she used her imagination so much that “my eyeballs hurt.” Of course, she was a normal child who loved words but also loved other things. For example, at eight years of age she and a friend started a cat rescue service. When a cat or a kitten was missing, they would climb trees and search attics to find it.²²

- Notre Dame football coach Knute Rockne was a family man. One day Billy, his young son, came into the Rockne home very dirty from hours of play. Knute asked his son, “How old are you?” Billy replied, “I’m seven years old.” Knute then said, “I don’t believe it. No boy could get *that* dirty in only seven years!” Knute once promised young Mary Jeanne, his daughter, “something for your neck” for her birthday present. Of course, she immediately thought of a necklace, but when she came home one day with a dirty neck after playing outside, Knute joked, “Now I know what to give you for your neck — a cake of soap.” And in 1930, Jackie, his four-year-old, kicked a football. Unfortunately, he kicked it in the living room and shattered a chandelier. Knute told the boy, “That’s good, son. You kicked that ball well.”²³

- Even when Bettye Naomi Goldstein was a very young girl, she was a very good organizer. For example, she organized the Gummy-Gummy Club and the Baddy-Baddy Club at school. Members of the Gummy-Gummy Club chewed gum at the same time, even during class, where gum was not allowed. Members of the Baddy-Baddy Club did naughty things, such as “accidentally” dropping a book on the floor during class. When the principal learned about the Baddy-Baddy Club, he told Bettye, “You have a talent for leadership.” He also suggested that she find a better way to use it. She did. As Betty Friedan, she became one of the co-founders of the National Organization of Women.²⁴

- When children’s book author and illustrator Karla Kuskin was four years old, she had a lot of toys and clothes and a very messy room. One day, her annoyed mother told her to clean up her room, so young Karla shoved everything (toys, clothes, desk, chair, table, and lamp; in fact, everything except her bed) into her closet. (It was a large closet.) Then she shut the closet door and called her mother to see her clean room. Karla exclaimed, “See how neat my room is!” Her mother laughed, delighting young Karla.²⁵

- While R.C. “Rudy” Gorman was in the 1st grade, he liked to draw with crayons. One day, his teacher looked at his artwork and, shocked, she asked him what he had drawn. He said that he had drawn a lady. This was true, but the lady wasn’t wearing any clothing. His teacher spanked him, and then she sent him home to show the drawing to his mother. Rudy’s mother looked at it, then she spanked him, too. As an adult, Mr. Gorman became an important artist whose artworks, including nudes, are in great demand.²⁶
- Children sometimes play games that we may prefer that they not know enough to play. For example, Katherine Seligman raised her son and daughter in the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco. One day, her four-year-old son sat on the curb and told her, “I’m pretending I’m homeless.” Actually, most of their neighbors have been very good, although the neighborhood does have transients and she has had to teach her children whom it’s OK to talk to and whom they should avoid.²⁷
- When she was very little, granddaughter Kaulini was the best-ever critic of children’s book author and illustrator Thomas Locker. Whenever he showed her a painting he had created, she would look at it and say, “Oh, wow!” And whenever he showed her a book he had created, she would look at it and say, “Oh, wow!” By the way, you can see photographs of Thomas Locker and his best-ever critic in Mr. Locker’s short autobiography — written for children — *The Man Who Paints Nature*.²⁸
- John Waters, aka the Prince of Puke, is the movie director of such cult gross-outs as *Pink Flamingos*. As a child, he played Car Accident, a game in which he wrecked his toy cars, then made up dialogue for the bloody and screaming and dying imaginary people in the cars and for the bystanders: “OH, MY GOD, THERE’S BEEN A TERRIBLE ACCIDENT!” He once pleaded to his mother, “*Please* take me to the junkyard!” She did.²⁹
- Geoff Hilton, a young family friend of science fiction writer Anne McCaffrey, was noted for insulting Barbara, his sister. At a dinner during which Geoff had steadily been insulting Barbara, Anne said, “But, Geoff, we all know that the English insult only those they really love.” Geoff thought this over for a moment, then turned to his sister and said, “Barbara, dear, have I told you how *marvelous* you look?”³⁰
- When choreographer George Balanchine was a child growing up in Russia, sugar was expensive and so his mother bought little candy, and the little candy she did buy, she kept locked up and doled out one piece at a time. This may have led to Mr. B’s sweet tooth as an adult. According to Mr. Balanchine, “I used to say to myself, ‘When I grow up, I am going to eat as much sugar and candy as possible.’”³¹
- While in high school, oceanographer Jacques Cousteau was bored, so he broke 17 windows. The high-school authorities were unimpressed by his explanation for his misdeed — he said that he had wanted the windows to look like they had been shot out by a band of marauding cowboys. His parents immediately sent him to a strict boarding school where he matured and improved his grades.³²
- Erma Bombeck used to lie to her librarian. When Ms. Bombeck was a small child, she often went to the public library and filled up a bag with books to take home and read. Whenever the librarian warned her that a book was too old for her, Ms. Bombeck would lie and say that it was for her mother. Later in life, Ms. Bombeck said that she never regretted lying to the librarian.³³

- Teenage boys sometimes try to appear macho. Brett, the son of Quaker humorist Tim Mullen, once dressed in an getup that included a shirt that was open to his waist and a chain from which was suspended a macho medallion which resembled a razor blade. Martha, his sister, looked at him and said, “O.H.O.C.” Brett asked what that meant, and Martha replied, “One Hair On Chest.”³⁴
- Jerry Mathers was eight years old when he auditioned for a role in the TV series *Leave It to Beaver*. During the audition, he squirmed around a lot, and when the show’s producers, Bob Mosher and Joseph Connelly, asked what was wrong, he said, “I gotta go to my Cub Scout meeting.” They liked the boyishness of the answer and hired him as the Beaver.³⁵
- As a child, computer pioneer Grace Hopper was inquisitive. One day, her mother discovered that Grace had taken apart all seven alarm clocks in the house. Grace explained that she had taken apart one alarm clock to see how it worked, but she couldn’t get it back together, so she had taken apart another one, and so on until all seven alarm clocks lay in pieces.³⁶
- Football and basketball referee Ike Craig of Libertyville, Illinois, liked to tell this story about his son, who stood up to a bully. His son told the bully, “I’m not afraid of you, but if I fight you, my Dad will find out and I’ll get a spanking.” The bully asked, “How will he find out?” Mr. Craig’s son replied, “He’ll see the doctor going to your house.”³⁷
- When she was eight years old, Marjorie Weinman Sharmat, author of the children’s book *Gila Monsters Meet You at the Airport*, became a journalist. She and a friend snooped on their neighbors so they could write and publish *The Snooper’s Gazette*, which achieved a circulation of exactly four: her parents and her friend’s parents.³⁸
- On June 18, 1983, Sally Ride became the first American woman in space. As a child, she had visited Disneyland when it sold tickets marked with various letters — the letter “E” was used for the most exciting rides. After being launched into space, Ms. Ride told Mission Control, “This is definitely an ‘E’ ticket.”³⁹
- When he was six years old, child prodigy John von Neumann joked with his father — in Greek! He enjoyed reading, and he refused to get a haircut unless his mother let him take a history book to the barbershop. As an adult, he created the “architecture” that allows computers to store programs.⁴⁰
- When photographer Margaret Bourke-White was married to author Erskine Caldwell, they worked together on a book titled *You Have Seen Their Faces* and dedicated it to Patricia. Patricia didn’t really exist — she was the daughter they hoped to have together but never did.⁴¹
- According to comic Sam Levenson, kids used to believe that if you bought chocolate boy babies instead of chocolate girl babies, you got more chocolate.⁴²

Christmas

- Perhaps the best TV series ever to be cancelled after its first year is *My So-Called Life*, which starred a 14-year-old Claire Danes. Its Christmas episode (“So-Called Angels”) featured a homeless gay teen who is discovered by Angela (Claire Danes’ character) after he has been beaten. The gay teen character is named Rickie Vasquez, and he is played by Wilson Cruz, whose life shared some similarities with the character. For example, Mr. Cruz is gay, and he was kicked out of his home after coming out to his family at Christmas because he wanted to

be an out actor on *My So-Called Life*. This story does have a happy ending because his father saw the episode. As Mr. Cruz tells the story, “Two months (after shooting), when it aired, my father saw it on TV. We hadn’t spoken for a year. He called me after watching it. This episode is the reason why I have a relationship with my father today. I came out to my parents because of the show, and the thing that brought me back together with them was the show.”⁴³

- Broadway producer Florenz “Flo” Ziegfeld loved Patricia, his only child, and he bought her whatever he thought would make her happy. One day, Morris Schlesinger, the owner of a Shubert theater, told him that he had seen a special toy in a department store window. Mr. Ziegfeld and Mr. Schlesinger went to the department store to look at the “toy,” but it turned out to be an advertising display that was not for sale: a life-size figure of comedian Charlie Chaplin dressed as the Tramp with baggy pants, too-tight coat, cane, and oversized shoes. Although it was not for sale, Mr. Ziegfeld asked the department store manager, “How much?” The manager named a price of \$650, an exorbitant figure in the early 20th century. Mr. Ziegfeld paid the money and gave the life-size figure to Patricia for Christmas.⁴⁴

- Many women find themselves under stress during the Christmas season, and many women have found unusual, but effective, ways of dealing with that stress. Linda Blair, a psychologist, recommends getting out of the house for at least half an hour each day during the Christmas season. For example, exercising for half an hour away from your house is a good way to relieve stress. Of course, you can do other things with that half hour. Ms. Blair says that “one year I spent my half hour shouting, ‘I hate this situation.’ I came back to my in-laws with a huge smile on my face. I don’t know what they thought I’d just done.”⁴⁵

Clothing

- When Tomie dePaola’s mother, Flossie, was growing up, she and her favorite cousin, Mabel, would go swimming in the ocean. However, Mabel liked to go swimming without any clothes on, so she and Flossie would find a deserted spot on the beach and wade deep into the water. Mabel would take off her bathing suit under water, give it to Flossie to hold onto, swim naked for a while, then return to Flossie. Tomie, who was in the 2nd grade, liked hearing stories about Mabel. He once asked his mother, “Did you ever think about tricking Cousin Mabel and going back to the beach with her bathing suit?” Tomie’s mother replied, “Are you kidding? She would have killed me!” However, Tomie’s mother may have thought about doing exactly that, because she laughed and laughed when she answered Tomie’s question.⁴⁶

- Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827) was a Swiss educator and reformer, but he was very careless about the way he dressed. One day, poorly dressed as usual like a beggar, he was arrested by a police officer who thought that he was a tramp and possibly dangerous. The police officer took Mr. Pestalozzi before a judge, who recognized him and greeted him warmly. Of course, the police officer was embarrassed, but Mr. Pestalozzi gave him some money and told him, “You have done your duty.”⁴⁷

- Back in the old days, people were very sensitive about things that seem very innocent today. Quaker humorist Tom Mullen remembers his grandmother hanging up the family laundry on a clothesline. She used to hang the underwear inside pillowcases to hide it from inquisitive eyes.⁴⁸

Crime

- Fashion maven Janet Charlton opened a clothing store — where she gleefully tormented shoplifters. Whenever she caught a shoplifter, she would handcuff the guilty person to the desk in her office, then ask the guilty person for twice what the shoplifted item was worth. If the guilty person did not have the money, she would allow the guilty person one telephone call to contact someone who would bring over the money. If the guilty person was not able to call someone who would bring over the money, she would call the police, and when the police took the guilty person away, she would yell at the guilty person in the street: “CRIME DOESN’T PAY!”⁴⁹

- Some people are very honest. In Fort Wayne, Indiana, police wanted to see how honest the citizens were, so they put a new TV set in a car with an unlocked door, then hid and kept watch over the car for a couple of weeks. A police officer reported, “People walked past the car, looked at the TV, opened the door, put the lock button down, closed the door, and walked on. Nobody tried to take the TV.”⁵⁰

Chapter 2: From Dance to Flowers

Dance

- When Balanchine ballerina Allegra Kent was in the 7th grade, she shocked her classmates by asking a boy to dance with her at a school party. He said yes, making her very happy, because he moved well, and she liked always to have good dance partners. Years later, in 1985, when she was a famous ballerina, she wrote, “I’ve danced with Mikhail Beryshnikov, Erik Bruhn, Edward Villella, Peter Martins, Jacques d’Amboise, and David McCrea.” The first five names belong to famous dancers; the sixth name belongs to the boy she danced with in the 7th grade.⁵¹

- Teenage girls can be incredibly smart. For example, comedian Lewis Black attended both his junior and his senior proms in high school. For each prom, he had a different date. For each prom, he started going with the girl shortly before the prom, and she dumped him shortly after the prom. Mr. Black says, “Coincidence? I think not.”⁵²

Death

- Because of bans on gay marriages, even gays and lesbians in committed relationships run into problems. For example, Dana and Kelsey were in a committed lesbian relationship for 17 years — a relationship that ended only with Kelsey’s death from cancer. Kelsey’s parents had disowned her for many years, but in her final weeks of life they arrived on the scene and ordered the hospital to ban Dana from seeing Kelsey, despite Kelsey’s wish to see her. Fortunately, because of a kind night shift, Dana was able to sneak into Kelsey’s hospital room at night and visit her. When Kelsey died, her parents went to the home of Dana and Kelsey and took away Kelsey’s possessions — and Dana’s. However, Dana was able to get revenge on Kelsey’s parents for the way they had treated her. When the hospital telephoned Dana about paying tens of thousands of dollars of medical debt not covered by Kelsey’s insurance, Dana replied, “I’m not family. You need to call Kelsey’s parents.”⁵³

- A woman lost all of her material possessions, and she was ordered to appear before the King. She was worried about what the King would say to her, and she asked three friends to go with her when she appeared before the King. The first friend said that he would not go with her to see the King. The second friend said that he would go with her to the palace, but that he would not go with her inside the palace to see the King. The third friend said that he would go with her to see the King and that he would plead for the King to show kindness to her. In this parable, the woman is a human being who has died and so has lost all her material possessions. The first friend symbolizes her wealth, which will not go with her after she dies. The second friend symbolizes her family, who will go with her only as far as her gravesite. The third friend symbolizes her good deeds, which will plead for her before God.⁵⁴

- Bahlool the wise fool once visited a foreign cemetery, where he was surprised to see that all the gravestones seemed to show that all the people buried there had lived very short lives. However, a resident of the foreign land explained that in his land a headstone listed only the years that the person had been happy, not the years that the person had been alive. Bahlool thought a moment, and then he said, “If I die in this land, please make sure that my headstone says that I was born, then I immediately was buried.”⁵⁵

- When Rabbi Zusya was dying, he was afraid even though he knew that God is loving and merciful. He told his students, “When I stand before the Throne of Judgment, I am not worried that God will ask me, ‘Why were you not a Moses?’ After all, I am not Moses. I am not worried that God will ask me, ‘Why were you not an Isaiah?’ After all, I am not Isaiah. However, I am worried that God will ask me, ‘Zusya, why were you not Zusya? Why didn’t you live up to the best that Zusya could have been?’”⁵⁶

- During 1902, James McNeill Whistler was very ill — so ill, in fact, that a London newspaper thought he had died and so it printed his obituary. Mr. Whistler wrote a letter to the newspaper, correcting the errors in his obituary and saying that reading it had greatly improved his health.⁵⁷

Education

- When comedian Lewis Black was a junior at the University of North Carolina, he took his first class in playwriting. As part of the class, each student wrote a one-act play and read it in front of the class. The professor of the class was very old, but he was also very intelligent. Mr. Black noticed that the professor always fell asleep after the first few pages of a play were read out loud, but that the professor always woke up in enough time to hear the last few pages of the play being read out loud. Mr. Black also says that the professor would always “give an absolutely insightful interpretation of the work and how to improve it.” This was mystifying, until Mr. Black figured out that beginning playwrights always made the same kinds of mistakes. Because Mr. Black and his fellow students were beginning playwrights, they were making mistakes that the professor had seen many, many times before. Mr. Black says about the professor, “The guy was always on target.”⁵⁸

- The first time Maria Tallchief taught ballet to children, she decided never to do that again. Due to illness, her friend Elise Reiman asked her to take over a class, and she agreed. All of the children looked adorable, but as she was beginning the first exercise, one of the adorable children raised her hand and asked to go to the bathroom. Ms. Tallchief let her, and immediately another adorable child raised her hand and asked to go to the bathroom. Again, Ms. Tallchief let her, and immediately all of the adorable children had to go the bathroom and the studio was empty of students. When the children came back — slowly, and not in a group — they and she knew that she had lost control. Whenever Ms. Tallchief asked them to do something, they replied, “But Miss Reiman says we should do it this way.” Ms. Tallchief swore that that would be the last time she taught ballet to children — but years later, fortunately for ballet, she relented.⁵⁹

- Elizabeth, the young daughter of Lynn Caine, author of the non-fiction book *Widow*, had wanted a Mickey Mouse watch for quite some time, and when they visited Disneyland, she finally got one. Unfortunately, very quickly she ruined the watch when she jumped into a swimming pool while wearing it. Her mother was angry and yelled at her. Later, when Elizabeth was remembering the vacation, she said, “We went to California, and my mama screamed at me for about two hours and threw my watch at me.” Disappointed, Ms. Caine asked her, “Elizabeth, is that all you remember about California? We were there four days. You have the choice of remembering that I screamed at you for two hours or thinking about some of the other things — didn’t anything make you happy?” Elizabeth then talked about quite a few nice things that had happened on the vacation.⁶⁰

- Kevin Jennings, the founder and executive director of the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network (GLSEN), was one of the United States' first gay teachers to come out of the closet. In school, he wore a marriage ring because he and his partner had exchanged rings. His students asked about the ring, and he told the truth. However, afterward his students kept his response a secret, as if he had said something bad about himself. This bothered Mr. Jennings, so he made a speech to the entire school and came out publicly. The response was incredibly positive. Students hugged him, and he says, "I felt like a celebrity." Unfortunately, his life as a student in high school was quite different. As the school "fag," he was called names and occasionally beaten up.⁶¹

- When J.K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter books, was nine years old, she moved to a new home and started attending a new school. Her new teacher gave her a math test to see what she knew; unfortunately, young J.K. had not yet studied fractions, and the test included fractions. Her new teacher seated students according to how smart she thought they were; the students she thought were smart sat on her left, and the students she thought were dumb sat on her right. Since J.K. had not done well on the math test, her new teacher thought she was dumb and seated her accordingly. J.K. says, "I was as far right as you could get without sitting in the playground." However, J.K. studied and soon she moved to a seat on the teacher's left.⁶²

- If you think of Knute Rockne, you think of football at Notre Dame, where he was first a player and then a coach. However, he did things other than play football (and run track) while getting his Fighting Irish education. For example, did you know that he was in the college band? Anyone playing in the band got \$200 knocked off his tuition, so Knute started playing the flute. He would practice in his room, which he shared with his friend Charles "Gus" Dorais (also a football player), but when Gus got tired of hearing Knute practice and felt that he deserved a break, he would hide Knute's flute. In addition, Knute performed in theater, often playing female roles such as a society lady and a shop girl.⁶³

- Wise people believe in conquering haste. One day, martial arts student Joe Hyams was in the office of Master Han when a letter that Master Han had been eagerly looking for arrived. Mr. Hyams expected Master Han to tear open the letter and begin reading it immediately, but Master Han put the letter aside and continued talking to him. The following day, Mr. Hyams congratulated Master Han on his self-control. Master Han replied, "I did what I would have done had I been alone. I put the letter aside until I had conquered haste. Then when I set my hand to it, I opened it as though it were something precious."⁶⁴

- As you would expect, teachers are good thinkers. A visitor whom a teacher wanted to impress visited her class, and the teacher succeeded in impressing the visitor, since wherever she asked a question, all of the students in her class raised their hands and whoever the teacher called on to answer the question knew the correct answer. However, the teacher did employ a trick. All of the students had received instructions before the visitor arrived: If they knew the answer, they were to raise their right hand, and if they did not know the answer, they were to raise their left hand.⁶⁵

- When James McNeill Whistler was at West Point, he was a much better artist than he was a soldier. In fact, he may deliberately have gotten himself thrown out of West Point. During a chemistry oral exam, he was asked to explain the properties of silicon. He said, "Silicon is a gas ...," then the instructor stopped him — and failed him. Years later, Mr. Whistler joked, "If silicon had been a gas, I might have been a major general."⁶⁶

- Charlie Brown of *Peanuts* seldom got respect. *Peanuts* creator Charles M. Schulz once had a “Charlie-Brown” moment. When his high school planned a reunion, Mr. Schulz’s name was placed on a list of “missing” people, although he was world famous. None of his schoolmates thought that the Charles M. Schulz they had gone to school with could be the famed creator of *Peanuts*.⁶⁷
- A young boy once asked school librarian Anne Betts for a book about whores. Surprised, Ms. Betts asked why he wanted a book like that. The boy explained that his 8th grade teacher wanted him to do research on that topic. Ms. Betts sent the teacher a note, and the teacher sent back a note explaining that he wanted the boy to do research on the Roman poet Horace.⁶⁸
- Mary Carter Smith’s grandmother raised her and often told her as Mary was growing up, “Child, learn that book. Nobody can take that away from you.” Young Mary learned her lesson well. When her grandmother told her to go to bed, Mary immediately got under the covers — with a book and a flashlight. As an African-American adult, Ms. Smith became a *griot* (storyteller).⁶⁹
- Thurgood Marshall engaged in mischief when he attended grade school, and as a punishment he sometimes had to stay after school and memorize a portion of the Constitution of the United States. By the time he graduated, he had memorized the entire Constitution. This came in handy later when he was appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court.⁷⁰
- A student once asked Professor Charles T. Copeland of Harvard, “Is there anything I can do to learn the art of conversation?” Professor Copeland answered, “Yes, there is one thing. If you will listen, I will tell you.” Following a period of silence, the student said, “I am listening.” Professor Copeland replied, “You see! You are learning already!”⁷¹
- The late Herman Kahn was a brilliant mathematician who had the ability to concentrate on more than one thing. In high school, a teacher once caught him reading a science fiction magazine during a lecture and so thought that he was ignoring the lecture, but he was able to repeat the lecture — word for word — back to the teacher.⁷²
- Neil Armstrong received a Navy scholarship that allowed him to attend Purdue University. He was excited and raced home to tell his mother. She was so excited that she injured herself, breaking a toe when she dropped a jar of preserves on her foot. Later, Mr. Armstrong became the first man to walk on the Moon.⁷³
- Elaine Garzarelli’s mother wanted her and her siblings to get good educations. To ensure that the children could study and read in quiet, she used to hang a “Do Not Disturb” sign on the front door. As a grownup, Elaine became known as the “Wizard of Wall Street” because of her financial forecasting abilities.⁷⁴
- Students frequently begin preparing to leave the classroom before the bell for dismissal actually sounds. This habit annoyed Shakespeare scholar George Lyman Kitteredge of Harvard, who once told his students, “Just a minute, gentlemen. I still have a few pearls to cast.”⁷⁵
- When photographer Margaret Bourke-White was in high school, she wasn’t allowed to chew gum. Therefore, she chewed gum away from her house, and she left the chewing gum on a telephone pole at night so she could retrieve it the next day and chew it some more.⁷⁶

- Like other college students, when Isaac Newton headed off to school (in his case, Cambridge University), he purchased necessary supplies. He bought ink, a notebook, a lock for his desk, a pound of candles — and perhaps most important, a chamber pot.⁷⁷
- As a 13-year-old, future writer Charles MacArthur spent hours locked in the bathroom reading the novels of Walter Scott and Charles Dickens. He read them there because his religious family regarded “promiscuous reading” as sinful.⁷⁸
- Educators can cuss in educated ways. A shop teacher hit his thumb with a hammer, then yelled, “Grand Coulee.” Asked why he had yelled that, he replied, “Grand Coulee is the biggest dam in the United States.”⁷⁹
- Harvard Law School professor Alan M. Dershowitz, a practicing attorney with controversial opinions, frequently gets hate mail — some of which he posts on his office door so students can read it.⁸⁰
- “Sensei” is the name given to a teacher of the martial arts. The name comes from two words: “Sen” meaning “before,” and “sei” meaning “born.” Thus, your teacher is one who is born before you.⁸¹
- A young Catholic schoolchild requested that his A for an assignment be raised to an A+. When the Sister asked why he wanted an A+, he replied, “Because that’s how good I am.”⁸²

Fans

- Isaac Asimov became a science fiction fan early in his life, and after receiving his first library card he used to walk home from the library carrying three science fiction books. He would carry one book under his right arm, and a second book under his left arm. The third book he would hold open in both hands, so he could read it as he walked. Later, he wrote such science fiction books as *I, Robot*, and in his lifetime he published more than 500 books!⁸³
- Children’s book author Peg Kehret occasionally gets letters from children, and she likes the ones that come from her fans. The letters that are signed “Your #1 fan” or that include a list of books by Ms. Kehret that the child has read she tries to promptly answer. Unfortunately, occasionally a letter will come from a child who wants her to write back, but the child did not include a return address.⁸⁴
- As a young man, Brazilian novelist Paulo Coelho idolized Argentine novelist Jorge Luis Borges. Mr. Coelho even made a trip to see Mr. Borges, and he did see but not speak to Mr. Borges. He could have spoken to the great writer, but he thought, “Idols don’t speak,” so he left.⁸⁵

Fathers

- Comedian Jerry Seinfeld loves his family. In 2007, he says about Sasha, his six-year-old daughter, “A daughter is God’s greatest gift to a man. Why? Because they never don’t want to kiss you.” Of course, he loves his sons, too, but he admits, “There’s something a little girl brings out in a dad that nothing else does.” As a dad with a loving wife, he believes in eating health-giving foods; in fact, his wife, Jessica, authored a cookbook titled *Deceptively Delicious*, which is about making health-giving foods taste good. According to Mr. Seinfeld, “Chocolate disguises everything — even cauliflower.” Of course, despite being a family man,

he still has an edge, and he still finds ways to rebel. For example, he says, “One of the things I like to do is correct spelling and complete sentences while texting — that’s my rage against the machine.”⁸⁶

- At the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona, Spain, Derek Redmond was injured while running in a semi-final of the 400-meter race. He wanted to finish the race despite the major pain he felt, so he struggled to continue. His father, Jim Redmond, was in the stands, but he came out onto the racetrack and told his son, “Look, you don’t have to do this.” Derek replied, “Yes, I do.” His father then said, “Well, if you’re going to finish this race, let’s do it together.” Jim helped his son to finish the race, and they crossed the finish line together.⁸⁷

- Bill Lee, filmmaker Spike Lee’s father, was a jazz musician who refused to compromise his art. He played acoustic stand-up bass and refused to play the electric Fender bass, even though it was more popular and would have gotten him more jobs to support his family. Spike said while making his film *Mo’ Better Blues*, “Everything I know about jazz, I know from my father. I saw his integrity, how he was not going to play just any kind of music, no matter how much money he could make.”⁸⁸

- Scout leaders need to be aware of the effects that divorce and living in a single-parent family have on children. One Girl Scout troop had a father-daughter dance, but because the Scout leaders were aware that some of the girls in the troop came from divorced or single-parent families, they let the Girl Scouts invite anyone they wanted to invite. One of the Girl Scouts invited her uncle, and another Girl Scout invited her older brother.⁸⁹

- H. Allen Smith was born in McLeansboro, Illinois, where his father had grown up. When his father had been a young man, McLeansboro had been the home of an undesirable element — rowdies who fought a lot and drank a lot. Mr. Smith once asked his father if he had been one of the town rowdies. “H*ll, no,” his father replied. “I was a respectable citizen. But I could lick anybody my size, and I could outdrink all of them.”⁹⁰

- British comedian Paul Whitehouse thought that he would appear in a Harry Potter film, so he told his daughters about it, and of course one daughter told her friends. Unfortunately, Mr. Whitehouse’s part was cut, and so his daughter’s friends thought that she had been fibbing. This made his daughter angry. In addition, his very youngest daughter got angry, complaining, “How dare they do that? Daddy’s a very good actress.”⁹¹

- Sid Caesar’s father wanted him to become a musician and not be forced to work in a restaurant. One day, his father came home carrying a saxophone and told him, “Sidney, you’re going to learn the saxophone.” Sid asked, “Why?” His father answered, “Because someone left one in the restaurant.”⁹²

- Theodor Geisel, aka Dr. Seuss, was inspired by his father, who had once held a world record for marksmanship at 200 yards. Mr. Geisel even framed and hung a target that his father had shot at during a competition. Mr. Geisel explained, “That target reminds me to reach for excellence.”⁹³

- As part of his research on evolution, Charles Darwin studied barnacles. He thought about barnacles for hours each day, and his office was filled with barnacles. His children began to regard such behavior as normal, and one of his sons asked about a neighbor, “Where does he do *his* barnacles?”⁹⁴

Flowers

- When theatrical impresario Florenz Ziegfeld fell in love with actress Billie Burke, he went to a florist and bought every flower there, including a few orange trees that were not for sale but had been intended for display use only. He ordered everything to be delivered to Ms. Burke, then sat back and waited for her to call him. She never called. Finally, after a week had passed he called her. It turned out that his telephone had been busy when she had tried to thank him for the flowers, so he had a special telephone installed for her calls only. Yes, later they got married, and yes, Mr. Ziegfeld continued to have a special telephone to be used only for communicating with his beloved wife.⁹⁵

- When children's book author and illustrator Will Hillenbrand was growing up, he pulled the petals of a daisy off to see if a little girl named Jane loved him: "She loves me, she loves me not" The last petal told him that little Jane loved him, so he went to her home, rang the doorbell, and waited until the door opened. When the front door opened, revealing a dark interior (because Will was standing in bright sunlight) behind a screen door, he triumphantly exclaimed, "YOU LOVE ME!" Unfortunately for Will, when his eyes adjusted so he could see the interior of the house, he realized that the doorbell had not been answered by little Jane — it had been answered by her grandmother.⁹⁶

- Jacob August Riis did much to help the poor, and his book titled *How the Other Half Lives* let wealthier people learn about the poor living conditions of the poor. Mr. Riis was able to rear his children outside the slums, in an area with fresh air and flowers. His children used to pick daisies and ask him to take the flowers to "the poors," as the children called them. Mr. Riis gave the flowers to children who barely knew what a flower was.⁹⁷

- Actress Paulette Goddard was once bothered by the unwanted attentions of a would-be suitor. Hearing that the man had asked her servants what her favorite flowers were, she told them, "Tell the idiot I adore white violets. He'll never find any, so I won't have to bother to thank him."⁹⁸

Chapter 3: From Food to Husbands and Wives

Food

- Ralph Nader’s mother used to give her children chickpeas as a snack, and she used to scrape the sugary frosting off of birthday cakes before giving them a piece. In addition, because she didn’t know what hot dogs were made of, she never fed her kids hot dogs. At her household, kids were expected to eat what was on their plates, whether they liked it or not. If a kid ever objected and asked why he or she had to eat something, her standard answer was this: “Because it’s good for you.” She also had a number of stories to go with certain foods. If one of her children didn’t want to eat a food with lots of vitamin C, for example, she would tell the child a story about sailors who got sick with scurvy until they learned that lemons would prevent the disease. And if telling a story about why a certain food was healthy to eat didn’t convince a child to eat something, she would look the child in the eyes, and ask, “What does your tongue have against your heart, lungs, liver, and kidneys?”⁹⁹
- When he was a child, future heavyweight champion Joe Louis would wash the floor to help out his mother. Of course, sometimes he got into trouble. One day, he was entrusted with carrying a lunch his mother had made to a field where she was doing farm work. On the way there, Joe made a mistake and peeked into the basket. He saw a baked chicken leg, which he quickly transformed into a baked chicken bone. By the time he reached the field, he had eaten much of the lunch. His mother punished him, and later Joe said, “I cried some mean tears, but my stomach was happy.”¹⁰⁰
- For a while, the young daughter of John Conwell did not want the different kinds of foods she ate to touch. Therefore, at meals she would often have three or four plates: a plate for meat, a plate for vegetable number one, a plate for vegetable number two, and a plate for dessert. She would eat all the food off the first plate, then eat all the food off the second plate, and so on. Mr. and Mrs. Conwell decided to try to break her of this preference, so they took her to a nice restaurant. Their daughter ordered a peanut butter and jelly sandwich — “on three plates, please.” Fortunately, eventually she grew out of this preference.¹⁰¹
- After Steve Wozniak, one of the founders of the Apple Computer Company and a true pioneer of the personal computer industry, graduated from the University of California at Berkeley with an engineering degree on June 14, 1986, he and some friends and family celebrated by going out for pizza pie. As a joke, a friend pushed some pizza into Mr. Wozniak’s face. A newspaper photographer was present, and the next day a photograph appeared in the paper with the caption, “Stephen Wozniak — Computer Pie-In-Ear.”¹⁰²
- In the early day of World War II, Tomie dePaola, who was in the 2nd grade, heard a lot about hoarders: people who bought lots of things they thought would be rationed soon. For example, young Tomie heard about a wife who made her husband buy 50 pounds of sugar to hoard in the basement. However, because of the humidity, the sugar became hard, like a rock. Each night, the husband would go into the basement and chip off a piece of sugar to put into his tea.¹⁰³
- In many ways, things are better today than they were in the good old days. Lois Addy, born 1892, remembered that her father would sometimes invite friends home for supper, even though there were no telephones and he couldn’t call his wife. Back then, to get supper when

you had unexpected company, you had to kill a chicken, pluck it, and cook it. Getting supper would take two hours.¹⁰⁴

- John Howard, a man who did much to reform the horrible conditions of jails in Europe in the 18th century, was a kind man. He used to go to his garden each morning just as the bread cart went by, buy a loaf of bread, toss it into his garden, then call to his gardener, “Harry, see if there is something for you there, among the cabbages.”¹⁰⁵

- At a party at artist Neysa McMein’s studio, actress Helen Hayes was sitting quietly in a corner when a man she had never seen before came up to her, held out a bag of nuts, and asked, “Want a peanut?” She took a few, and the man said, “I wish they were emeralds.” The man was playwright Charles MacArthur, whom she later married.¹⁰⁶

- Calvin Klein TV commercials sometimes featured beautiful models filled with existential angst. Boston Market Market, a fast-food restaurant chain, parodied these commercials by showing thin models walking on a beach as they agonize about how they could “fill this empty void of emptiness.” Of course, Boston Market had the solution — eat something.¹⁰⁷

- Pierre Curie, the husband of Marie (they won the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1903), paid little attention to what he ate. At dinner, Marie once asked him if he had liked his lamp chop. He replied, “I haven’t tasted it yet” — and then he looked at his plate and saw that it was empty.¹⁰⁸

- James Marshall, author/illustrator of such children’s books as *The Stupids Step Out* and *Miss Nelson is Missing!*, had one eccentricity when he was a child. He hated toast, so rather than eat it, he hid it — in his closet were hidden stacks of toast.¹⁰⁹

- In ancient Jerusalem, Jews would put a flag in front of their door to indicate that a meal was being served at that time and that anyone who was hungry could join the family for the meal.¹¹⁰

Friends

- Working together, friends Steven Jobs and Stephen Wozniak created Apple Computer. It was Mr. Jobs who came up with the name. He remembered a very happy time he had spent in Oregon picking apples. Mr. Jobs also created the company logo: an apple with a bite taken out of it. Mr. Wozniak was also pretty good at coming up with names. When he went back (after having dropped out earlier, and after having left Apple) to the University of California at Berkeley, the world-famous computer genius was seldom recognized because he used a pseudonym at school: Rocky Raccoon Clark. (“Rocky Raccoon” is the title of a song by the Beatles, and Mr. Wozniak was married to athlete Candice Clark.) The two also had other talents. Believe it or not, at Apple Computer Mr. Jobs would sometimes inspect the Macintosh computer factory — after first donning a white glove! And after retiring from Apple Computer, Mr. Wozniak expanded his Los Gatos, California, home. Among other attractions, it has a limestone cave with such attractions as replicas of dinosaur tracks, fossils, cave paintings, rock carvings, and crystal formations. According to Mr. Wozniak, “The whole house has to be for kids as well as adults. Kids just love secret places.”¹¹¹

- Creative people are often funny, as these stories about the friends of J. Bryan III, who is himself creative, show: 1) Donald Ogden Stewart sent his son a letter on his 14th birthday. The letter said: “Dear Dee-Dee: The time has come for you to learn about the flowers and the bees.

There is a gentleman bee and a lady bee, though I don't know which is which. As for the flowers, we get ours from Plaza Florists. So much for *that*. Affectionately, Daddy." 2) Marc Connelly once inscribed one of his books, "To Joseph Bryan III, whose friendship and the purchase of this book have made me richer." 3) Corey Ford's estate was called Stoneybroke, because it had been so expensive to build. On the estate was a birdbath with a towel rack complete with tiny HIS and HER towels. 4) Finis Farr once accepted an invitation to a New Year's Eve party with this telegram: "DELIGHTED. I TAKE A SIZE 7 1/4 IN LAMPSHADES."¹¹²

- Punk rocker Patti Smith was always ambitious. Before becoming famous with her first album, *Horses*, Ms. Smith was starting to make a name for herself in New York City as a poet and a rocker. After one of her performances, Bob Dylan visited her backstage. A photographer took a few photographs of him, and then Ms. Smith pushed Mr. Dylan aside and jokingly told the photographer, "Take my picture." Mr. Dylan made a praying motion to Ms. Smith, and then he left. Of course, later Ms. Smith thought that she had acted like a jerk to Mr. Dylan and "that guy will never talk to me again." However, a photograph of Mr. Dylan with his arms around Ms. Smith appeared on the cover of the *Village Voice*, and soon afterward Ms. Smith saw Mr. Dylan on the street. He had a copy of the *Village Voice* cover, and he joked to Ms. Smith, "Who are these two people? You know who these people are?" Then he smiled at Ms. Smith, and she knew he wasn't mad at her.¹¹³

- Brazilian novelist Paulo Coelho makes a lot of money, and early in his life he made a lot of money through writing songs. The first time he made a lot of money, he made it in a hurry. He didn't have money to eat out or to go to a movie, and when he went to check his bank account, he found that \$40,000 had been deposited in it because of his songwriting royalties. One of the first things he did when he started to become famous was to get rid of his old hippie friends and acquire new, exciting friends. This turned out to be a mistake. When he stopped making a lot of money after losing his job at an international record company, his new friends didn't call him and of course the old friends he had jettisoned didn't call him, either. Mr. Coelho went on to make new piles of money, but he remembered to make a major effort to keep his old friends.¹¹⁴

- When he was growing up, John Waters, later known as the Prince of Puke as a result of directing such cult gross-outs as *Pink Flamingos*, sometimes had scary friends. Two friends were David Lochary (who constantly changed the color of his long hair) and his girlfriend, Roxanne. Roxanne's extreme fashions terrified Mr. Waters' mother, but she said about David, "I like David. He's the only lady you've ever brought home." Another friend was Pat Moran, whose husband, Maelcum Soul, accepted the fact that she and Mr. Waters, who is gay, are very, very close, and whoever marries Pat gets John as part of the pact. In fact, Mr. Waters says that Mr. Soul "even sends me candy for Valentine's Day."¹¹⁵

- Author Quentin Crisp used to know a homeless woman called The Countess who lived in a large trunk in a graveyard. She had a change of clothes, a portable stove, and some plates, cups, and saucers, and she used to entertain friends who would sit on broken gravestones. Despite being homeless, her manner was regal, and she liked to entertain invited friends only. If someone were to knock on her trunk without being invited to visit her, she would open the trunk and say, "You have not made an appointment. I am seeing no one today."¹¹⁶

- Swedish filmmaker Ingmar Bergman tended to work with the same 18 people over and over, and he always hired a hostess, who brewed coffee and baked pastries and made the set homey. At Cannes, film director David Lean once compared notes with Mr. Bergman, asking him, “How large a crew do you use?” Mr. Bergman answered, “I always work with 18 friends.” Mr. Lean marveled, “That’s funny. I work with 150 enemies.”¹¹⁷

- Dorothy Parker and Elsa Maxwell once lunched with a pretentious man who was determined to put Ms. Maxwell down. The man said that he was a friend of the painter Augustus John, then he said to Ms. Maxwell, “Of course, I don’t suppose you know whom I’m talking about.” Ms. Parker replied, “Oh yes, she does. But they’re such great friends she calls him Augustus Jack.”¹¹⁸

- When Dorothy Parker gave a party after moving into a new apartment, her friend the humorist Frank Sullivan gave her a house-warming gift of a package of used coffee grounds, egg shells, and lemon peels, explaining, “There’s nothing like garbage to make a house a home.”¹¹⁹

Gays and Lesbians

- In 1983, during Thanksgiving weekend, Catholic parents Casey and Mary Ellen Lopata discovered that their oldest son, Jim, a sophomore in college, was lonely. He told his mother, “Mom, I’m lonely. I’m lonely for another man.” This was how Mary Ellen realized that her son was gay, and she told him that his being gay didn’t matter and that she loved him. He asked, “Then why are you crying?” She replied, “I don’t know.” His father didn’t know what to say to him. He asked, “Are you sure?” and “Can you change?” Then he remained silent, wondering if his oldest son could be gay and still be a Catholic. As it turned out, Casey and Mary Ellen Lopata took a long time — nine years — to be comfortable while being open about having a gay son, but eventually they did become comfortable. In addition, they rejected neither their son nor their religion. In fact, Mary Ellen wrote a book titled *Fortunate Families: Catholic Families with Lesbian Daughters and Gay Sons* about Catholics learning to be open about having gay children. Together, she and her husband founded a group called Fortunate Families to help Catholic parents with gay children. Casey and Mary Ellen Lopata believe that their family has been fortunate in having a gay son, and they believe that having a gay son has made them better Catholics.¹²⁰

- The TV series *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, which aired on Bravo, opened up a lot of eyes — and minds. Many straight viewers of the series became aware that gay people can be very likeable; after all, the five stars of the series were and are very likeable. Kyan Douglas, the grooming expert, has received many, many letters about how grandmothers and grandfathers and Republicans watch the show, and so, he says, “I knew that we had some sort of impact on a part of society that just normally wouldn’t have been exposed to gay people at all.” Jai Rodriguez, the culture expert, has heard from a young gay man whose family was very religious and at first didn’t care for gay people. However, they started watching and enjoying the *Queer Eye* series, and that made it easier for the young man to tell his family that he was gay. Of course, the show has had benefits for its stars. In addition to becoming famous celebrities, they have been able to come out of the closet in a global way, including to all their family relatives. Ted Allen, the food expert, says that the series “was a real gift for my mother because none of my relatives will ever again ask her why I’m not married or don’t have a girlfriend.”¹²¹

- Tim Gill is a gay business executive of the company that manufactures Quark XPress. He found coming out very difficult. While attending college in Boulder, Colorado, he walked into the Boulder Gay Liberation office, said “Hi,” then “Hello,” and then he “just shook for ten minutes.” Fortunately, the man in the office managed to calm him down. Like many other gay men of the time, Mr. Gill saw a psychiatrist. At this time, 1972, homosexuality was no longer considered aberrant, so the psychiatrist told him, “Well, if you want to change, I will help you. Otherwise, we just have to work on your parents.”¹²²
- Gene is a gay man who is married and has two children; his wife, from whom he is separated, and his children all support him. His wife is his best friend, and when his son met at his high school a new girl who was curious about homosexuals and wanted to meet some “gay guys,” his son knew exactly what to do. He invited her to his house so she could meet his father, Gene.¹²³
- Celebrated effeminate homosexual wit Quentin Crisp was more or less accepted by his family, although they sometimes sent him letters with this salutation: “Dear Sir or Madam — cross out which does not apply.” Something similar happened in a law court when the clerk sneered at him and said, “You are a male person, I presume.”¹²⁴
- While in college, humor writer Ellen Orleans went to see a therapist because she didn’t feel romantic with men. The therapist suggested that she make a date with a man, so she did — but the man she asked out was gay. (The gay man’s lover wasn’t threatened by the date — he knew that Ms. Orleans was a lesbian even before she did.)¹²⁵
- Lesbian stand-up comedian Judy Carter wore her freedom-ring necklace to a store, where one of two men behind a counter said, “I like your necklace.” This was a safe way for him to come out to her, while still remaining closeted to his boss.¹²⁶

Golf

- Golfer Tommy Bolt had a ferocious temper, which sometimes led to him smashing his golf clubs and occasionally other things. During one tournament, he kept his temper under control. However, at one point an announcement alerted everyone that he had hit the pin. Hearing this, his wife asked, “With what — the club or the caddie?”¹²⁷
- Phil Baker, a Jewish comedian, once started to play golf at a club that had a restricted clientele — which meant, no Jews allowed. The assistant manager of the golf course told him, “Sorry, Mr. Baker — we’re restricted.” He replied, “Can’t I at least play nine holes — my wife is a Gentile.”¹²⁸

Good Deeds

- If you become a soldier, you will be issued ID tags, aka dog tags. Their purpose is to help identify your corpse if you are killed in such a way that your features are not recognizable or if your corpse is not buried right away and so your features become unrecognizable. ID tags are a wonderful invention because they allow your family to know that you are dead instead of wondering and wondering whether you are alive or dead — a fate even worse than knowing that you are dead. During World War I, the Germans were fighting the French during the spring offensive of 1916. Some German soldiers in Melchior Baptist’s platoon discovered two French soldiers who had been lying unburied for two or three months due to the fighting and due to their hidden location. The Germans pitied the families of the dead French soldiers, so they took

the ID tags from the soldiers' corpses before burying them. At the time, the German and the French lines were very close together, and sometimes only 10 yards separated them. The Germans threw the ID tags to the French line. Later, the French threw back a thank-you note.¹²⁹

- In her book *Shelter Dogs: Amazing Stories of Adopted Strays*, children's book author Peg Kehret tells the story of Ivan, a dog adopted from an animal shelter by Taj Brumleve, who is legally deaf and who wanted to train her own hearing-aid dog to do such things as let her know when the telephone or the doorbell was ringing. It's a good thing she adopted Ivan to take care of her and Alexandra, her hearing-impaired daughter. One day after she had put Alexandra to bed, Taj lay on the couch to take a nap. She woke up when Ivan — a big dog that weighed 60 pounds — climbed on her chest. When she woke up, she discovered that the room was filled with smoke. As soon as Taj woke up, Ivan went upstairs, woke up Alexandra, took her shirtsleeve in his mouth, and led her downstairs. Taj, Alexandra, and Ivan all got out of the house safely, a neighbor called 911, and fire fighters put out the fire. The American Red Cross gave Ivan an award, and at the award ceremony Ivan wore a vest and a bow tie. At the award ceremony, Taj said, "The lesson that should come out of this is that if you love your animals, they will love you."¹³⁰

- When Albert Schweitzer was a youth, he was very good at hitting targets with a stone thrown from a slingshot. One day, a boy in a group of his friends told him to hit one of the birds that were in a tree nearby. However, immediately a church bell began to ring and the birds flew away. As an adult, Mr. Schweitzer wrote, "The music drove the commandment into my heart, 'Thou shalt not kill!' It was one of the great experiences of my childhood and life." This led to his reverence for life. His wife greatly loved him. When he met Helene Breslau, he had already the ambition of going to Africa and opening a hospital, which would involve great hardships. He told Helene of these hardships, but she said merely, "I will take a training course in nursing, and then you won't be able to go without me." The two, physician and nurse in addition to being husband and wife, did go to Africa, and they opened a hospital.¹³¹

Halloween

- Back when *Tucson Weekly* columnist Tom Danehy was in high school, he and some other guys played a Halloween trick on a friend. All together, they decided to dress in costumes on Halloween for school. But after the friend left, they decided not to. The next day, the friend showed up dressed as a pirate, while Tom and the other guys were dressed normally. The following year, they got together and decided again to get dressed up in costumes on Halloween for school. The friend didn't want to be fooled again, so he showed up for school in normal clothing. Of course, Tom and the other guys were dressed in costumes. As Tom says, "There's nothing like squeezing two gotchas out of the same gag." And one Halloween while he was in college Tom told a friend with a beard to spray the beard with Right Guard deodorant so he could go to a costume party as an armpit. By the way, one Halloween his wife made a very inventive costume for their son. She cut a rectangular area out of the front of a cardboard box that fit over their son's head. She then covered the rectangular area with gauze, and she put a glow stick in the cardboard box so it looked like a glowing computer screen. Next, she attached a realistic-looking keyboard to the cardboard box. Finally, she gave their son a toy ax, completing his outfit as a computer hacker.¹³²

- Illustrator Bill Morrison was very much into Batman when he was a kid, and he liked to run around his neighborhood wearing his Sears catalog Batman costume, which was vastly superior to the Batman costumes sold at dime stores. Unfortunately for young Bill, a mother in his neighborhood was an excellent seamstress, and she made absolutely perfect Batman and Robin costumes for her two sons, so the costumed Bill felt like he had to hide whenever those two boys were playing in their perfect costumes. Later, when he was an adult, he bought an expensive — \$300! — deluxe Batman costume that came in handy when his sister wanted him to take Justin, her young son — for whom she had made a Robin costume — treat-or-treating on Halloween. The event was a success. Mr. Morrison says, “With my cape down, I made a pretty good Batman. To Justin, I was Batman.”¹³³

- Lesbian humorist Garbo participated in a gay and lesbian bowling league where one Halloween she saw a drag queen bowling in three-inch stiletto heels. This is definitely against bowling alley rules, but the manager didn’t say a word — this drag queen was *big*. Garbo herself bowled on an all-lesbian team called the “Girl Gang,” but when a gay friend named Ron joined them, they offered to change the team’s name. As it turned out, they didn’t have to change their name — Ron thought that it was accurate.¹³⁴

- While growing up, Janet E. Hersh wore a nurse’s costume for Halloween; after Halloween, she kept the costume. Whenever anyone was ill, she ran to put on her costume and pretend to be a nurse. As a grown up, she became Janet E. Hersh, RN.¹³⁵

Husbands and Wives

- C.S. Lewis, aka Jack, had a famous marriage to Joy Gresham. The two married when she was on what was thought to be her deathbed, but she had a remission of her cancer and they were able to live and love happily together for a few years. Ms. Gresham was a remarkable woman. The two occasionally walked on their own land, with Ms. Gresham carrying a “garden gun” that she used to scare birds away from the vegetables in the garden. One day as they were walking, they came across a young man with a bow and arrows. Mr. Lewis said, “Excuse me. This is private land, and you really shouldn’t be here. Would you please leave?” The young man responded by drawing his bow and pointing an arrow straight at them. Mr. Lewis immediately stepped in front of his wife to protect her, but she said, “God d*mn it, Jack, get out of my line of fire!” Mr. Lewis moved out of her line of fire, and she aimed the gun straight at the threatening trespasser — who immediately fled.¹³⁶

- In 1965, President Lyndon Baines Johnson groomed Thurgood Marshall to be the first African-American Justice to sit on the United States Supreme Court by making him Solicitor General. In 1967, an opening appeared on the Supreme Court, and President Johnson scheduled a meeting with Solicitor General Marshall. Mr. Marshall told his wife, Cissy, that he thought he would be nominated to sit on the Supreme Court, but when President Johnson told him that news at the meeting, he managed to look surprised and said, “Wait till Cissy hears this! Is she ever going to be shocked!” Hearing this, President Johnson allowed Mr. Marshall to use a speakerphone to call Cissy and tell her the news. Mrs. Marshall answered, and not knowing she was on a speakerphone, she immediately asked, “Did we get the Supreme Court appointment?” President Johnson laughed.¹³⁷

- At one time, an Arabic would-be bridegroom would tell the father of the woman whom he wanted to marry that he was going to steal a bull from him. The man would then steal a bull, butcher it, cook a feast, and invite the family he wanted to marry into to come and share the

feast. At that time, he would tell his prospective father-in-law that the meat served at the feast came from the prospective father-in-law's own bull. The stealing of the bull was a test of the prospective bridegroom — if he succeeded in stealing the bull, he was virile and courageous enough to make a good son-in-law. Of course, the prospective bridegroom would get help from the woman he wanted to marry, and the woman's father was frequently negligent in looking after the bull at opportune times for the prospective bridegroom.¹³⁸

- Antoine Lavoisier, the founder of modern chemistry, was 28 years old when he married 14-year-old Marie Paulze on December 16, 1771. A wealthy relative of her father had wanted Marie to marry a man whom she hated. To escape the pressure from the wealthy relative, her father had asked Mr. Lavoisier to marry his daughter. Although this was an arranged marriage to which Marie had agreed partly to escape marriage with another man whom she considered “a fool ... and an ogre,” the marriage was happy. Marie assisted her husband in his scientific work, created the drawings that illustrated many of his experiments, and even learned English in order to translate his scientific writings into that language.¹³⁹

- On May 12, 1956, Dodger Carl Erskine pitched against the New York Giants. His wife, Betty, was doing the ironing at home while listening to the game. Mr. Erskine pitched well in the 1st through 4th innings, and since Betty was superstitious she decided to keep on ironing the same tablecloth because she thought that ironing something else might change her husband's luck. She kept ironing the same tablecloth through the end of the 9th inning, and her husband kept pitching well. At the end of the game, the tablecloth was not scorched, and the opposing team had not made a run or even a hit. Mr. Erskine points out, “That's teamwork.”¹⁴⁰

- Isidor Straus, founder of New York City's Macy's Department Store, and his wife were on board the *Titanic* when it sank on April 15, 1912. Mr. Straus realized that the *Titanic* did not have enough lifeboats to save all of its passengers and crew. Instead of taking up space that could be used to save a different person, he decided to stay on board the *Titanic*. He urged his wife to get on board a lifeboat, but she told him, “We have been living together for many years. Where you go, I go.”¹⁴¹

- Author Peg Bracken knows a woman who was tired of both her husband and housekeeping, so she left her husband, leaving behind a note explaining that she wanted a divorce. The following day, she returned home to get a few clothes, only to discover that her husband was worried sick about her, because he hadn't found the note. She couldn't remember where she had left the note, so they searched for it, and as they searched for it, they got friendly and stayed married.¹⁴²

- John Glenn and his wife, Annie, had an unusual way of saying goodbye whenever he was leaving on a dangerous mission. Mr. Glenn would tell his wife, “I'm going down to the corner drug store to buy some gum.” Mrs. Glenn would reply, “Well, don't take too long.” They said this just before Mr. Glenn left to become a fighter pilot in the Pacific during World War II, and they said it again just before Mr. Glenn became the first American astronaut to orbit the Earth.¹⁴³

- Johnny Carson blamed his first divorce on comedian Red Skelton, who told jokes as he assumed the persona of two seagulls: Heathcliff and Gertrude. Mr. Carson wrote those jokes, and the only way he could write the jokes was to act like a seagull. He stood in front of a

mirror, crossed his eyes like Mr. Skelton did, and looked silly. His first wife divorced him, saying, “I took you for better or worse, but not for a couple of seagulls.”¹⁴⁴

- Jimmy Durante’s second wife was Margie Little. For their first date, he went to her apartment, turned down the lights, and began to play a record, saying, “One of my pals has been telling me a fella should have soft lights and sweet music when he goes callin’.” Ms. Little was touched by Jimmy’s romantic views — until the record player began blasting Jimmy’s version of “sweet music”: Al Jolson belting out “Swanee.”¹⁴⁵

- Fred “Sonic” Smith taught his wife, punk poet Patti Smith, how to play the guitar at night while their children slept; unfortunately, Patti learned slowly. Fred and Patti did a lot of affectionate joking during the lessons. After playing a song badly, Patti would sometimes tell her husband, “I can’t wait to tell people that my teacher is Fred ‘Sonic’ Smith,” and he would reply, “Don’t do that, Patricia.”¹⁴⁶

- Norma Jeane Mortensen was a child bride. She was only 16 years old when she married Jim Dougherty, who was four years older than she, in 1942. Mrs. Dougherty sometimes played with the children on her block, and she was the only wife whose husband shouted for her to come home when it got dark. Later, Mrs. Dougherty became famous as movie star Marilyn Monroe.¹⁴⁷

- In 1952, after his tour of duty in Korea was over, Neil Armstrong went back to Purdue University and finished earning his degree. While there, he met Janet Shearon, but he didn’t ask her for a date until several months later. After he married her, she explained, “He is not one to rush into anything.” (Later, Mr. Armstrong became the first man to walk on the Moon.)¹⁴⁸

- When Sally Ride married fellow astronaut Steven Hawley, she wore informal clothing. Instead of a white wedding dress, she wore blue jeans and a rugby shirt. (She also kept her own name: Dr. Sally K. Ride.) Dr. Ride made it into space before her husband, but he wasn’t jealous. Instead, just before she blasted off, he called to tell her, “Sally, have a ball!”¹⁴⁹

- When Allan Pinkerton, who later became a famous private detective, fell in love with Joan Carfrae in his native Scotland, he asked her to go to North America with him. She responded by singing him a love song, the words of which told him that she would indeed go with him. They were married and set sail for North America.¹⁵⁰

- Sometimes long-married people don’t listen to each other. Peg Bracken’s mother once asked her father, “You remember Jim Byrnes?” Her father replied, “Yes, he went to California.” She said, “No, he died.” He replied, “Well, I knew it was someplace nice.”¹⁵¹

- African-American major league baseball player Bob Gibson’s second wife was a white, blonde woman named Wendy. At a gathering of baseball people, Wendy looked around, then told her husband, “We’re the only black couple here.”¹⁵²

- At one time, actress Shelly Winters was engaged to be married to actor Farley Granger, but they decided not to get married because of a matter of life and death. According to Ms. Winters, “We would have killed each other.”¹⁵³

- John Custis hated being married to his wife, Fidelia. When he died, his tombstone stated that although he was 71 years old, he had lived only seven years — the years he had been an adult bachelor.¹⁵⁴

- Mrs. Albert Einstein was once asked if she understood her husband's theory of relativity. She replied, "No, but I understand my husband and I know he can be trusted."¹⁵⁵

Chapter 4: From Illnesses to Practical Jokes

Illnesses

- As an infant, Wilma Rudolph was sickly and she did not begin to toddle until she was four years old, but even then, bad luck struck. She suffered from scarlet fever and double pneumonia, and when she began to recover, her family discovered that the illnesses had damaged the nerves of one of her legs. She began to undergo treatment at a clinic, her family massaged her legs for hours each day, and at age six she could hop a short distance. Eventually, the hard work paid off. She began to walk, then she began to run, and at the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome, she won three gold medals in track — the first American woman ever to do so.¹⁵⁶

- Henri Landwirth was very ambitious. He worked in a New York City hotel, and he studied hotel management. He once bribed a night accountant with a bottle of whiskey. Why? Not to get out of work. Instead, Mr. Landwirth wanted to do the night accountant's work for him. Mr. Landwirth ended up learning every job in that New York City hotel. He became very wealthy, and he founded Give the Kids the World in 1985. This hotel and recreation complex in Florida gives a fun experience to kids with life-threatening illnesses and to the kids' families.¹⁵⁷

Language

- As a young man, long-nosed Jimmy Durante (later a famous comedian) studied with an Italian music teacher who loved a much younger woman who knew English but not Italian. Since Mr. Durante knew both languages, he was put to work translating the teacher's passionate letters from Italian to English, and translating the young lady's replies from English to Italian. Somehow, the young lady found out what Mr. Durante was doing, and she fancied that she might be in love with him. Unfortunately, when she saw him, Mr. Durante says, "She took one look and dropped me out of her afflictions." (Mr. Durante occasionally misused words, often with humorous and wise intent; the expected word would be "affections.")¹⁵⁸

- In his performance piece *Freak*, stand-up comic John Leguizamo speaks about a heavily exaggerated version of his parents, who left Latin America to come to the United States and who he says learned English by watching TV. According to Mr. Leguizamo, his mother used to say things such as, "Chock full of nuts is the heavenly coffee, they're creepy and they're cookie, that ... that ... that's all, folks." Then his father would say (in Spanish), "Woman, what the h*ll did you just say?" She would reply (in Spanish), "How should I know? I'm speaking English."¹⁵⁹

- Fred Terry, the husband of Ellen Terry, enjoyed swearing in the company of men, but he did not swear while in the company of ladies. Once he felt it was his duty to speak to a young actor who had been swearing in the Green Room Club and urge him to use a better kind of language. The young actor was unconvinced and said, "I seem to remember, sir, that I have sometimes heard you use fairly strong language in the Club yourself." Mr. Terry responded, "God all bl**dy mighty! I'm the f**king President!"¹⁶⁰

- Is it possible to know the exact time that you grew up? Yes, and a friend of book reviewer Matt Rudd knows exactly that. He was in a bar in Casablanca, and he started talking to a pretty woman, hoping to captivate her with his long hair, salty language, and fascinating — at least to

him — life. The pretty woman was not captivated. She listened to him for a while, and then she told him, “Why are you swearing so much? Is it because you think it makes you sound grown up?” She left, and Mr. Rudd’s friend grew up.¹⁶¹

Marriage

- Comedian Margaret Cho is strongly in favor of gay marriage. At a rally she met a man who had been married for two days to his partner, a male whom he had been with for a long time. The man told her, “There really is something about wedded bliss.” His eyes filled with tears, and he did not explain what he had said, but he didn’t need to — Ms. Cho, who has a heterosexual marriage, understood. Ms. Cho says about the two married men, “They had glimpsed only the very beginnings of married life, and the taste of it was so deliciously sweet. There can be no wrong here. The way we love can no longer be considered perverse.”¹⁶²

- The great actor Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree was not faithful to his wife and sired many children with other women, a fact of which she was well aware. After returning home one evening, she discovered him dining *tête á tête* with the young and very handsome male actor Esmé Percy. She teased him by saying, “The port’s on the sideboard, Herbert, and remember it’s adultery just the same.” Once, when her husband was late, she said, “Ah, Herbert, late again? Another confinement [birth] in Putney?”¹⁶³

Mishaps

- Lucrezia Bori of the Metropolitan Opera had many admirers, including one distinguished-looking gentleman who never spoke to her although he was always present on the pier when she embarked on a ship to go to Europe or when she disembarked from a ship on her return to the United States. One day, he started walking towards her, obviously ready to speak to her for the first time. Unfortunately, he was jostled and fell from the pier into the ocean. Dripping wet, after he was fished from the ocean, he left the pier, and she never saw him again.¹⁶⁴

- A young woman who had a cold was invited to a dinner party. Knowing that she would need some Kleenex tissues at the party, she stuffed a couple of tissues into her cleavage. Sure enough, she needed a tissue during dinner, and during dessert, she needed another one. So she started fumbling around in her cleavage, only to become aware that the party had grown silent. Looking up, she saw that the host and guests were staring at her, so she blurted out, “I know I had two when I came in.”¹⁶⁵

- Actor Robert Morley wrote a book titled *Robert Morley’s Book of Bricks* about people’s most embarrassing moments. In it, he included a tale told him by the leader of a Brownie troop. A man exposed himself to her troop, so she called the police, but when they asked for a description of the man, she was forced to admit that she hadn’t looked at his face.¹⁶⁶

- A deaf woman was watching a favorite soap opera, eagerly reading the captions to learn the shocking secret the episodes had been leading up to for months. Suddenly, an emergency bulletin came on the screen, covering up the words to the captions.¹⁶⁷

Money

- When Navajo artist R.C. Gorman was in the United States Navy as a young man, he needed extra money. Many of the sailors had calendars featuring drawings of beautiful women by an artist named George Petty, so Mr. Gorman spread the word that he would use photographs of

the girlfriends and wives of the sailors and draw their heads on top of a beautiful body similar to those drawn by Mr. Petty. He charged enlisted men \$2 for a drawing — officers paid \$7. Business was brisk.¹⁶⁸

- Neil Simon is perhaps the most financially successful playwright ever, with a long string of hits. For his first play, *Come Blow Your Horn*, he took \$500 of his mother's money and invested it in his play, saying, "I'm going to make you an angel." His first play was a big hit, and his mother made a lot of money. Thereafter, he made sure his mother was an investor in all his other hits, making his mother well off.¹⁶⁹

- When lesbian comedian Judy Carter was shopping for a wedding ring for her girlfriend, the jewelry store saleslady said, "He'll love this!" Ms. Carter replied, "*He?* I'm not marrying a *man*." Absolutely unfazed, the saleslady said, "Of course you're not." According to Ms. Carter, this "just goes to show that most people don't care who we're sleeping with as long as the check doesn't bounce."¹⁷⁰

- Some teenage boys walked into a library, and one of the boys told the librarian about a student group holding an event, then requested a donation. The boy had made the student group sound so wonderful that the librarian gave him the donation he had requested. After the boy and his friends left, the librarian discovered that she had made a donation to a kegger beer party.¹⁷¹

- When Charles Darwin set sail around the world as a naturalist on the *Beagle*, his father gave him an allowance. Remembering that as a student he had sometimes run out of money, Charles remarked that he would have to be clever to overspend his allowance on a ship in the middle of the ocean. His father replied, "They tell me you are very clever."¹⁷²

- Charles McClure is a judge in juvenile court in Leon County, Florida. Once, a juvenile offender said that he didn't have any money to pay restitution to the victims of his crimes. Judge McClure noticed that the juvenile offender was wearing a wristwatch, so he forced the juvenile offender to hand it over to the court.¹⁷³

- A seven-year-old Catholic schoolchild taught by a Sister of Notre Dame found it difficult to return library books on time, and so he eventually accumulated overdue library book fines totaling \$1. The child looked sad as he paid the fine, and said, completely seriously, "Now I won't be able to buy my new car when I'm 16."¹⁷⁴

- Mary Tyler Moore wasn't out to get rich when she joined the cast of *The Dick Van Dyke Show* as Robert Petrie's wife, Laura. She told executive producer Sheldon Leonard that she wanted the TV series to last long enough for her to buy "a new set of drapes."¹⁷⁵

- Erma Bombeck scored a notable success with her book *If Life is a Bowl of Cherries, What am I Doing in the Pits?* — the paperback rights sold for \$1 million. When a reporter asked her what she had done to celebrate, she replied, "I didn't do my laundry for three days."¹⁷⁶

Mothers

- Susie Essman plays the foul-mouthed Susie Greene on the HBO comedy series *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. Her tirades, which are many, are filled with profanity delivered in many original and colorful ways — she rivals the foul-mouthed Jay of Jay and Silent Bob fame in her talent for profanity. She uses this talent of hers in real life; in fact, her family uses "Susie Greene" as

a verb. For example, while she and her 16-year-old daughter were walking on Broadway, a creep grabbed her daughter's bottom. Ms. Essman says, "Oh, he got so Susie Greened, I can't even tell you — I went crazy on him!" After proper and just revenge had been exacted on the creep, her daughter said to her, "Y'know, you just Susie Greened him." Ms. Essman replied, "Let that be a lesson for you! You Susie Greene anybody who ever does that to you!"¹⁷⁷

- Families with two mothers sometimes get interesting reactions from other people. Amie K. Miller and her partner, Jane, adopted and are raising a daughter named Hannah, who is four years old. Hannah's family gets some attention from children her own age, one of whom, Annika, asked Amie, "How come Hannah has two moms?" Amie replied, "Well, I guess she's just lucky." Annika's mother's reaction was interesting. She told Annika, "I wish you had two moms. That would be great." Amie has heard this often, and she explains the comment in this way: Most people believe that "having two women as parents means fewer socks lying on the floor, more help with the dishes, and less complaining about sitting up with the kid at night." And yes, she and Jane do share childcare, although their home does sometimes have socks lying on the floor and dishes sitting in the sink.¹⁷⁸

- When Ralph Nader was in the 8th grade, one of the boys in his class said about a girl in their class, "What a pig." The girl — who was friendly and whom everyone liked, at least until the onset of testosterone in this young male — heard him and was hurt. All young Ralph could think about was what his deeply moral mother would have told the boy, "I believe it's you." In this particular situation, that sentence means, "There's nothing wrong with that girl. But there is something wrong with you." Whenever Ralph or one of his siblings acted in a base manner, their mother would tell him or her, "I believe it's you."¹⁷⁹

- The mother of Theodor Geisel, aka Dr. Seuss, was very encouraging to her son. He once showed her a drawing he had made of an animal with enormous ears. He told her that the animal was called a "Wynnmph," and his mother said that of course that was the animal's name and that his drawing of it was wonderful. In addition, his mother encouraged him to read and play piano as well as draw and actually used his love of reading to bribe him to practice his piano lessons. When he played well, she took him to a bookstore and let him pick out a book for her to buy for him.¹⁸⁰

- When comedian Margaret Cho's mother went to the hospital, she left a treasure map for Margaret, showing where her jewelry was hidden around the house. For example, some pieces of jewelry were wrapped in tissue paper and placed in a coffee can, and other pieces of jewelry were hidden in other places around the house. Ms. Cho says that her mother was hiding jewelry as if a war was going on, and she is quick to add that yes, during President George W. Bush's administration, a war was going on.¹⁸¹

- After making it big in show business, Bill Dana bought a fancy home with a fancy kitchen, then showed it to his mother, who looked at everything, especially the fancy kitchen with its numerous electric appliances, and said, "That's very nice." The next day, he got a gift from his mother — a big box of Manischewitz canned goods and a can opener, along with a note that said, "In case, darling, you should blow a fuse."¹⁸²

- Children's book author Joan Lowery Nixon had two daughters, one of whom loved to read and one of whom loved to roller skate. Kathy got straight A's in English, and Maureen would have gotten A's in roller-skating if such an activity was graded in school. One day, Ms. Nixon

asked Maureen, “Don’t you like to read, sweetheart?” Maureen replied, “I do, and I would read a lot if I could read while I’m roller skating.”¹⁸³

- The mother of Alma Reed, the agent of Mexican artist José Clemente Orozco, believed in the supernatural. She once had Mr. Orozco make a wish, then she performed a reading and told him that his wish would not come true. “That is bad — very bad,” Mr. Orozco said. “I wished for peace and for happiness for all humanity.”¹⁸⁴

- Comedian Milton Berle’s mother was very proud of him. Whenever he paged her in a hotel, she would answer the telephone loudly, so other people would hear: “Hello, is this my son, Milton Berle?”¹⁸⁵

Music

- As a child, future heavyweight champion Joe Louis sometimes fought other children in the streets. His mother wanted him to stay busy and stay out of trouble, so she bought him a violin and made him take violin lessons, something for which he had no aptitude. Of course, many of the people around him teased him about the violin. One day, Golden Gloves champion Thurston McKinney invited him to spar for a few rounds. At first, Mr. McKinney was able to hit Mr. Louis at will, but Mr. Louis got mad and hit Mr. McKinney — hard. Mr. McKinnon shook it off, then advised Mr. Louis, “Man, throw that violin away!” Mr. Louis did get rid of the violin. Another kid teased him once too often about it, so he broke it over the kid’s head.¹⁸⁶

- At age six, Lucrezia Bori, who later sang at the Metropolitan Opera, made her debut singing on a public stage. Even at that young age, she had a sense of authority. The conductor started the music before young Lucrezia was ready to sing, so she walked to the edge of the stage and told him, “Stop! Begin again!” He did, and now that she was ready, young Lucrezia sang.¹⁸⁷

Names

- Even when she was a young girl, Johanna Hurwitz wanted to be a writer. One of her favorite books was Johanna Spyri’s *Heidi*. She used to put something over part of the cover of the book so that “Johanna” was visible and “Spyri” was hidden. That way, she could see her first name on the cover of a book, and she could dream about what it would be like to see both of her names on the cover of a book. Of course, Ms. Hurwitz’s dream did come true and she did get to see both of her names on the covers of some books because she became the writer of such children’s books as *Aldo Applesauce* and *Russell Sprouts*.¹⁸⁸

- Nicolas Cage’s name at birth was Nicolas Coppola, but he changed it when he became an actor because when he went to a casting office the people auditioning him wanted to talk about such films as *The Godfather* and *Apocalypse Now*, which had been made by his famous uncle, Francis Ford Coppola. By the time they had finished talking about his famous uncle and the audition started, Mr. Cage had forgotten his lines. By the way, Mr. Cage’s son is named Kal-El — which is Superman’s birth name.¹⁸⁹

- Marilyn Monroe’s real name was Norma Jeane Mortensen. When her acting career required a more glamorous name, she chose “Monroe” because it was her grandmother’s last name. Movie producer Ben Lyon chose “Marilyn” because he liked and respected the movie actress Marilyn Miller. Later, when Marilyn Monroe married playwright Arthur Miller, she had the same first and last name as the actress who had been the inspiration for her first name.¹⁹⁰

- When Florence Bascom studied geology at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, in the 1890s, professors thought that the presence of a woman student in the classroom would be distracting to the male students, so they made her sit behind a screen so the male students couldn't see her. Ms. Bascom, the first American woman geologist, later became known informally as the "Stone Lady."¹⁹¹

- When Ohio University student Kate Krushinski was in middle school, she had a German teacher whose last name was "Ball." Of course, in middle school many students call their male teachers "Mister" and address them by their last name. However, the German word for "Mister" is "Herr," and the German teacher made his students address him by his first name because he did not want them to call him "Herr Ball."¹⁹²

- Yee Ching Wong was born in China, but when she started attending a Catholic school in Hong Kong, the nuns asked her father to choose a new English name for her. He looked at several names on a list and chose "Flossie" — the name of a recent typhoon that had struck Hong Kong. As an adult, Flossie Wong-Staal co-discovered the HIV virus, which causes AIDS.¹⁹³

- When he was a child growing up in Scotland, Andrew Carnegie raised rabbits. On Saturdays, he wanted other children in the neighborhood to help him find clover and other food for the rabbits. He got the help he wanted by promising to name baby rabbits after the children who helped him.¹⁹⁴

- Humorist Ellen Orleans brought a new cat home. She named it Amanda, but it ignores its name and comes only when you call "Kitty, Kitty." Therefore, its unofficial name is "Amanda Kitty, Kitty."¹⁹⁵

Parties

- Parties can be innovative. Etiquette expert Grace Fox knows a woman who gave a boiled lobster dinner party shortly after moving. Since she still hadn't unpacked everything, her guests sat on crates. Spread around the room were candles in wine and beer bottles — the candlesticks were still packed away. In addition, the paper napkins — which had been purchased shortly before the dinner, were for a children's party. Everyone was amused by the party and had a great time.¹⁹⁶

- Andrew Tobias and his significant other, Charles Nolan, gave good parties. Music mogul David Geffen once told Mr. Tobias, "You know what I like about your parties? Everyone's employed."¹⁹⁷

Practical Jokes

- Before Charles M. Schulz created the comic strip *Peanuts*, a friend and co-worker at the correspondence art school Art Instruction Schools, Inc., tried to play a practical joke on him. He created and placed a fake parking ticket on Mr. Schulz's car, then pointed it out to him through one of the windows at work. Mr. Schulz was upset, but the joke backfired on his friend. The friend was going to tell him at lunch that the parking ticket was fake, but by then a real meter maid had been by and given the friend a real parking ticket. Mr. Schulz did not get a parking ticket because the meter maid saw the fake ticket on his car and thought that it was real.¹⁹⁸

- While attending Harvard, Robert Benchley and a friend pulled a notable practical joke. At Louisburg Square, they knocked on the door of an elegant house and when the maid answered, Mr. Benchley said, “We’re here for the davenport.” The maid asked, “Which one?” Looking past her, Mr. Benchley pointed and replied, “That one.” They then removed the davenport, carried it across the square, and knocked on the door of another elegant house. When the maid answered, they said, “We’re here to deliver the davenport. Where do you want it?” The maid pointed to the sitting room, and Mr. Benchley and his friend left it there.¹⁹⁹
- While Steve Wozniak was attending the University of Colorado at Boulder, he enjoyed playing practical jokes. For example, he built a frequency jammer that looked like an ordinary ink pen. He would go into the television room where a lot of students were watching something exciting like the Kentucky Derby, then at an exciting point in the program — as when the horses were crossing the finish line — he would disrupt the program so that the TV screen went blank.²⁰⁰
- A high school student had a habit of walking into his first class of the day and throwing his books on top of his desk. As a prank, a couple of his friends stayed after class one day and removed all the screws from his desk. It was still standing upright, but of course as soon as the student walked into the room the next morning and threw his books on the desk, it collapsed.²⁰¹
- This is one of the best practical jokes I have ever heard about: There is (or used to be) a restaurant in Denver, Colorado, where a statue of a naked man wearing nothing but a fig leaf is placed in the ladies room. Beside the statue is a sign saying, “Caution: Do not touch figleaf.” Whenever a lady touches the figleaf, a bell rings inside the restaurant.²⁰²
- As a boy, Isaac Newton played a practical joke when he flew a kite at night with a paper lantern, illuminated by a lit candle, tied to its tail. Neighbors were “wonderfully affrighted” by the strange light.²⁰³

Chapter 5: From Pregnancy to Work

Pregnancy

- Anne Jackson was offered a role in a movie titled *The Journey*. She pointed out that she was newly pregnant, but director Anatole Litvak replied, “Exactly what we want for the character. You’ll play E.G. Marshall’s pregnant wife.” Of course, they knew that Ms. Jackson’s small pregnant stomach would grow into a big pregnant stomach as time passed, so early in the filming of the movie Ms. Jackson wore an inflatable belt so that her stomach would be the same size throughout the movie. Eventually, Mr. Litvak told her that her stomach was too big. Ms. Jackson smiled and replied, “That’s me.” Then she added about the inflatable belt, “I’m not wearing the d*mn thing.”²⁰⁴
- Rock critic Evelyn McDonnell, author of *Mamarama: A Memoir of Sex, Kids, and Rock’n’Roll*, has led an interesting life, both as a young person and as a married, pregnant person. During her first wedding, which she describes as “anarcho-feminist,” she wore a gorilla mask while playing the wedding march on an electric guitar. While she was pregnant following her second marriage, she referred to her womb, which of course was filled with quickening life, as a mosh pit.²⁰⁵

Prejudice

- Prejudice against gays and lesbians can begin at a very young age. When lesbian mother Linda Villarosa’s daughter was in the 4th grade, a male classmate learned that her parents were both lesbians, so he called her family “sick and disgusting.” Ms. Villarosa’s daughter came home crying and told her about the incident. Immediately, Ms. Villarosa emailed her daughter’s teacher about the incident. The story has a happy ending. The school principal met with the boy and his mother, and the principal was able to give Ms. Villarosa’s daughter a letter of apology. The daughter’s teacher then showed a film by Debra Chasnoff titled *That’s a Family*. Ms. Villarosa writes, “With its upbeat music and bright and shiny families of all stripes — including single-parented, adoptive, mixed-race and lesbian and gay — the film was the perfect warm-and-fuzzy antidote to the kid’s poisonous hate speak. Afterward, my daughter was the first one to raise her hand and talk — proudly — about her family.”²⁰⁶
- At age 14 Larry Doby, the second African-American athlete to integrate major league baseball, moved to Paterson, New Jersey. In Paterson, prejudice existed, but also a lack of prejudice existed. He played sports in high school, and sometimes he and some friends, including white friends, would go to a movie together, but at the movie they would have to split up. Blacks sat in the balcony, while whites sat downstairs. But when his high school football team won the state championship, and everyone on the team except for Larry was invited to play a game in Florida, his teammates voted not to accept the invitation to play in Florida.²⁰⁷

Problem-Solving

- Financial expert Andrew Tobias holds two degrees, including an MBA, from Harvard, yet he had trouble getting his new (2007) iPhone to ring, although it would vibrate. Living part-time in New York City, he went to the Apple store on Fifth Avenue and 59th Street to get help — after, of course, doing everything he could to get the phone to ring, including pressing a button

on the side that eventually he thought was not a button but possibly an infrared receptor. At the Apple store, he asked a floater — an Apple employee standing around being helpful while holding a clipboard — for help, in addition to offering the floater some peanut M&Ms just to be friendly. As Mr. Tobias tells the story, “He took the phone, shifted the ‘infrared receptor’ down an eighth of an inch to the ‘on’ position — turns out, it’s not a button you push (or an infrared receptor), it’s a thing you slide — and the problem was solved.” When Mr. Tobias reaches this part of his story, he adds, “I am an idiot.” (By the way, this is a true story, although of course Mr. Tobias is mistaken when he says that he is an idiot, as all of us who have combated technology know.)²⁰⁸

- Friends and business partners Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield faced a problem when their Ben and Jerry’s ice cream company got so big that it threatened Haagen-Dazs, which was owned by Pillsbury, famous in part for the advertising character the Pillsbury Doughboy. Ben and Jerry wanted groceries to stock Ben and Jerry’s ice cream, but Haagen-Dazs decided that it would not do business with any distributor that did business with Ben and Jerry’s. To solve the problem, Ben and Jerry created a new company motto: “What’s the Doughboy Afraid Of?” This motto appeared on pints of Ben and Jerry’s ice cream, on T-shirts, on buses in Boston, and so on. Jerry even traveled to Pillsbury headquarters in Minneapolis, MN, where for a week he held a sign saying, “What’s the Doughboy Afraid Of?” Eventually, Haagen-Dazs backed down and began to do business with distributors that did business with Ben and Jerry’s.²⁰⁹

- When children’s book author Verna Aardema was growing up, she would go to her secret place in the cedar swamp in back of her house for two reasons: to escape from having to do the dishes and to make up stories. Her ability to make up stories served her well. When she became the mother of a finicky eater named Paula, she started to make up “eating stories” in an attempt to get her young daughter to eat. She mailed the idea for an eating story to a publisher, and soon she had her first published book. Later in life, when she was really busy she would sometimes disappear into her office after a meal. Her husband calls that “going to the swamp,” because he has to do the dishes just as Verna’s sisters had to do the dishes when she disappeared into the swamp so she could make up stories.²¹⁰

- In the year 2007, the makers of Silly Putty celebrated the 50th anniversary of the introduction of this famous toy with one moving part. As part of the celebration, they held a contest for the “Silliest Uses for Silly Putty.” Judith D. of Norwich, Connecticut, wrote: “End an unbearable date by making a swollen gland with Silly Putty and excusing yourself because you’re not feeling well.” And Ron F. of Library, Pennsylvania, wrote, “I used Silly Putty to take a fingerprint off my truck that was broken into. They caught the culprit and a few weeks later, I got all my stuff and a reward.”²¹¹

- A group of 7th grade boys took their first gym class of the school year, and then they were shocked to learn that they were supposed to take a shower. Because they were entering puberty, they were very conscious of their bodies and didn’t want to get undressed, although the gym teacher insisted they had to take a shower. Suddenly, the water in the shower began running, and the boys figured that if one guy could get undressed and take a shower, so could they. They undressed and went into the shower, where they saw a boy taking a shower — still dressed in his gym shorts.²¹²

- A deaf married couple arrived at a motel late at night. The wife turned in for the night, but the husband drove to a store for some supplies. Returning to the motel, the husband couldn’t

remember which room he and his wife were staying at, and unfortunately, the motel office was closed. However, he was able to quickly solve this problem. He leaned on his car horn, awakening almost all of the people staying at the motel. Soon, lights were on in every room — except the room where his deaf wife was sleeping soundly.²¹³

- While attending Harvard, Robert Benchley and two friends saw a terminal at Harvard Square for a recently completed subway. They decided to inspect the terminal, but they were stopped by a guard who said that they couldn't go inside the terminal without a pass. Mr. Benchley pulled a piece of paper and a pencil from his pocket and wrote, "Please pass these three nice boys, Robert C. Benchley." The guard accepted the pass and allowed them to go inside.²¹⁴

- Author Peg Bracken knows a woman who enjoys snooping. Sometimes, she will go up to a house that looks interesting, knock on the door, and say, "Does Mrs. J. Robinson Higbee live here?" While the door answerer tries to figure out who Mrs. J. Robinson Higbee is and where she might live, the woman sneaks looks at the decor of the interior.²¹⁵

- At age 16, while on a European tour with the New York City Ballet, Allegra Kent exhibited excellent problem-solving and acting skills. When chocolate ice cream cake was served at a party, she wandered from group to group, eating three pieces of the cake while pretending that each piece was her first piece.²¹⁶

- As a youngster, filmmaker Spike Lee was smaller than other children, which made him a target for bullies. One day, some bullies told him that they would be waiting for him after school. To avoid being beaten up, Spike talked his teacher into allowing him to leave school early.²¹⁷

- Geneticist Barbara McClintock did some research during the winters in Central and South America, where she learned Spanish. To ensure that she didn't forget Spanish while she was back in the United States, she used to watch Spanish-language television shows.²¹⁸

Proposals

- Fashion designer Coco Chanel had a famous affair with the Duke of Westminster, but eventually he married another woman, leading to speculation about who had broken off the affair: Coco Chanel or the Duke of Westminster. Ms. Chanel claimed that she had turned down the Duke's proposal of marriage by saying that she did not want to give up her name. After, all, she said, "There have been several Duchesses of Westminster — but there is only one Chanel!" Of course, Ms. Chanel was very good at supplying a memorable quotation when she wanted. During her career, she dressed many celebrities in her fashions. One day, she was asked, "Who do you dress?" Ms. Chanel replied, "Ask me rather whom I don't dress."²¹⁹

- Artist Alice Dehaven telephones her boyfriend when she is coming home, and in September of 2006 he let her know that he had a surprise for her. Actually, he had two surprises for her. The first was ice cream — a delicious treat they hadn't had for a while. She wasn't expecting the second surprise, but he then asked her what was wrong with her finger. Nothing was wrong with her finger — except that it lacked an engagement ring, which he then put on her finger before asking, "Will you marry me?" (The answer was yes, and they got married.)²²⁰

Public Speaking

- Introductions are important, whether in books or in public speaking. Author Peg Kehret once spoke in a juvenile detention center library before an audience of 12 teenage juvenile delinquents, all of whom were wearing orange jumpsuits. Clearly, they were not interested in her or in what she had to say, so she needed to think of something that would grab their attention immediately. She opened her talk with this sentence: “I once got a brand-new car for writing only 25 words.” This grabbed their attention, and she was not lying. She then told them about entering a contest — “In 25 words or less, please complete the statement, ‘I like Kraft Macaroni and Cheese Dinner because’” — and winning a Honda Civic. The boys became interested in other things she had to say, and three boys even borrowed her books from the library after her talk. Later, the librarian told her, “Our last speaker left in the middle because the boys were so rude.” Ms. Kehret says that she is glad that she did not know that before she started speaking.²²¹

Sex

- When Sara was 10 years old, her parents got divorced, which she took hard. Both parents started dating other people quickly, and both parents started having new significant others sleeping over. One morning, she came home from a friend’s house earlier than she was expected, and she saw a man in her mother’s bed. Sara started crying, but her mother convinced her that she had slept on the couch. Sara was young enough to believe her then, but a few years later regarded that explanation as “pretty hilarious.” Her father was more open with her. She didn’t have her own bed at his home, so when he had a girlfriend sleep over, he simply told her, “You’re sleeping on the couch tonight.” Sara says, “I understand about those kinds of arrangements.”²²²

- British comedian Tim Brooke-Taylor knows a man who got a blind date at Cambridge. Feeling lucky that day, the man stopped at a pharmacy and bought some contraceptives. That night, he met his blind date — she was the pharmacist who had sold him the contraceptives. (Mr. Brooke-Taylor emphasizes that this happened not to him, but to a friend of his.)²²³

- Art Linkletter was famous for his interviews of little children. On his *House Party* TV show, he once asked a little girl what her parents did for fun. “I don’t know,” she said. “They always lock the door.”²²⁴

Telephones

- Columns in rural American newspapers early in the 20th century detailed such local items of interest as who had invited the preacher to dinner and what they served. In the early days of the telephone, when party lines were common, gathering news was easy. The reporter simply listened in on telephone conversations and wrote everything of interest down.²²⁵

- Geneticist Barbara McClintock lived simply and didn’t even have a telephone until she was in her eighties. Her family felt that she should have a telephone in case of emergency, and she finally got one — but on the condition that they would not call her.²²⁶

Travel

- Famed photographer Yousuf Karsh once took a portrait of the crew of Apollo XI, which included astronaut Neil Armstrong, the first man to walk on the Moon. Afterward, of course, the crew of Apollo XI went on a worldwide goodwill tour. Mr. Karsh was well traveled, and Mr. Armstrong asked him many questions about England, France, and other countries. Finally,

Mr. Karsh said, “You have just been to the Moon! Why are you so interested in these mundane places?” Mr. Armstrong replied, “To tell you the truth, that is the only place I’ve been to.”²²⁷

- When the mother of science fiction writer Anne McCaffrey died, she was cremated, as was her wish. Ms. McCaffrey was then living in Ireland, but she wanted to take her mother’s ashes back home to the United States, so she loaded the urn into an old camera bag of her son’s and got ready to travel. When Gigi, her daughter, asked if she could carry anything, Ms. McCaffrey handed her the camera bag, and when Gigi asked what was in it, she replied, “Mother.” Gigi was so astonished that she almost dropped the bag.²²⁸

- When traveling, Peg Bracken met a woman who liked to travel but whose husband didn’t. Therefore, before the woman took off for a 30 days’ journey, she would pre-cook 30 dinners and freeze them for her stay-at-home husband.²²⁹

War

- During World War I, Russian soldiers took Waldo Bahmann and two other German soldiers prisoner on September 2, 1916. The Russians treated the Germans well, and a Russian officer asked each German soldier for the address of his relatives, saying that he would send the addresses to his parents, who lived in Petrograd, and they would send the addresses to the Red Cross, who would let their families know that they were alive. The Russian officer said, “Then your dear ones will not have such prolonged fear and anxiety, for nothing is more terrible than the report ‘missing.’” In 1918, after Mr. Bahmann had returned home after being released from captivity, he looked through some of his mother’s documents, and he found a postcard from Russia that announced that he had been captured, but was in good health in Russia. Mr. Bahmann’s mother had received the postcard before the Red Cross had gotten around to him, so the source of the information had to be the Russian officer’s parents.²³⁰

- Even during a war, it is possible to respect the environment. The Israeli tank commander Major General Abraham Yaffee did not want to harm the rare wild flowers in a field; therefore, he ordered an encampment to move away from the field so that the flowers would not be trampled. In addition, he once stopped his tank and halted its fire so that a cream-colored courser, a rare bird, would have time to move out of the way.²³¹

Weddings

- During the early 20th century, Jewish families in the Ukraine followed the custom of having the eldest daughter marry first, followed by the next-eldest daughter, and so on. When the two daughters of Yosel Polevoi fell in love at the same time, Mr. Polevoi decided to have his eldest daughter, Ruchel, marry first, followed by the marriage of his other daughter, Manya, one week later. The reason he gave for the two marriages not being held at the same time was, “Let no one say that Yosel Polevoi married off both daughters at once to save a few rubles.” However, the real reason was that he did not wish to deprive his eldest daughter of the honor of being married first.²³²

- In the Soviet Union, cosmonauts were regarded like rock stars are in the United States. Famed photographer Yousuf Karsh went to the Soviet Union to take portraits of many famous Soviets. The young woman who served as his interpreter was unimpressed by most of the famous people whom Mr. Karsh photographed, but when he photographed cosmonaut Yuri Alexeyevich Gagarin, who was both unmarried and the first man in space, she wore a new

blouse, her hair was freshly done, and her nails were newly polished. She also asked Mr. Gagaron, “Is there a wedding in the offing?” Mr. Karsh interpreted that question as really asking, “Are you still available?”²³³

- Mexican artist José Clemente Orozco married on his 40th birthday, an event that shocked his mother, who had assumed that he would never get married because he had a very serious personality. In fact, Mr. Orozco arrived late for the wedding. His mother had fainted at the realization that the wedding was actually going to take place!²³⁴
- Philippe, oceanographer Jacques Cousteau’s son, married an American model named Janice Sullivan who spoke no French. As a wedding present, Mr. and Mrs. Cousteau gave their son’s new wife a crash course so she could learn to speak French in six weeks.²³⁵

Work

- In 1919 appeared an advertisement that many people of the time felt was disgusting. The ad showed a woman dancing with a man. Of course, one of her arms is held in the air, and the reader finds out that the ad is for a deodorant for women. By modern standards, the ad is quite tame — we moderns don’t find the idea that women perspire shocking. However, in 1919, when the ad appeared in *Ladies’ Home Journal*, 200 people cancelled their subscriptions in protest. In addition, some young women told the man who wrote the copy — James Young — that they would never talk to him again because the ad insulted women. Still, the ad was very effective in increasing the sales of deodorant.²³⁶
- Ben Cohen of Ben and Jerry’s is a true original. While he and his friend Jerry Greenfield were attending Sanford H. Calhoun High School in Merrick, New York, Ben was outraged when he discovered that the toilet stalls in the boys’ bathrooms did not have doors. He even wrote an essay for the school newspaper, titling it “WSSIP,” which stands for “We Shall Sit in Peace.” Unfortunately, the essay was censored and did not appear in the school newspaper. Later, before co-founding Ben and Jerry’s, he worked as a security guard, a job at which he wore a gun holster — which he kept empty.²³⁷
- In 2007, at age 81, actor Dick Dyke starred in the mystery movie *If Wishes Were Horses* on the Hallmark Channel. The movie also featured Barry, Mr. Van Dyke’s son, as well as Shane, Mr. Van Dyke’s grandson. Of course, Mr. Van Dyke has a very good reason for giving work to his young relatives. He points out, “I found that one way to see my children is to give them work.” Also of course, members of the Van Dyke family do see each other outside of work, although family get-togethers happen mainly at holidays. As Mr. Van Dyke says, “They have very busy lives, these young people.”²³⁸
- Financial author Andrew Tobias, who is gay, once appeared on a panel discussion with the theme “If Only,” during which he told the story of Eddy. Eddy was a lawyer who wanted to get involved in gay activism, so he called a meeting with his boss and told him that he was gay. His boss’ only reaction was, “Duh,” which to Mr. Tobias is the same as saying, “Of course you’re gay, we don’t care that you’re gay, we love you, you do good work, get out there and march for your civil rights.” Mr. Tobias concluded his presentation by saying, “If only everyone reacted this way.”²³⁹
- While in high school, Michael Thomas Ford took a career test that required him to answer questions, then plot two lines on a graph. The place where the two lines overlapped was

supposed to tell him his perfect career. However, when Mr. Ford plotted the two lines, they overlapped in the one part of the graph in which no careers were listed. Classmates were told that they should be physicians, police officers, letter carriers, etc. Mr. Ford was told nothing. Eventually, he made his own career — he became a writer.²⁴⁰

- Actors Eli Wallach and his wife, Anne Jackson, once appeared on TV in a light comedy called “Lullaby” on the program titled *Play of the Week*. Afterward, TV mover-and-shaker David Susskind told them, “I think ‘Lullaby’ can be developed into a series. I’ll own a third, you’ll own a third, and the network will own a third. And if it’s successful, your children will never have to work again.” Eli and Anne discussed the offer, and Anne asked, “Why shouldn’t the children work?” The two decided they didn’t want to do the series.²⁴¹

- Classical dancer Erik Bruhn used to hire a cleaner to come and do his housekeeping, but things did not always work out as planned. For one thing, he would pile his dirty dishes in the sink, but after a while, and before the cleaner came to wash the dishes, he would wash them himself. Why? Mr. Bruhn explains, “Because I can’t stand to see dirty dishes.”²⁴²

- Val Halamandaris’ father, John, was a coal miner, and he did not want his son to be a coal miner when he grew up. Therefore, he often took his sons to a law court so they could see a lawyer arguing a case, and he sometimes also took his sons into the coalmine. Val writes, “It did not take a genius to figure out that one was a better way to make a living than the other.”²⁴³

- Susan, a friend of lesbian humorist Garbo, once went to a job interview wearing dress slacks and blazer. The interviewer looked at her outfit and exclaimed, “Oh, good. All the applicants so far have been those strident, hairy-legged types.” Susan rolled up a pant leg, showed the interviewer a hairy leg, and then she left the office without saying a word.²⁴⁴

- Arthur Fiedler, conductor of the Boston Pops (for popular, rather than pop, music), lived by the personal motto, “He who rests rots.” Long after most people retire, he was still at work bringing music to other people. Of course, one piece of advice that he gave other people was “to make your life’s work something that you really enjoy.”²⁴⁵

- Young Frederik Pohl used to spend his summers on his uncle’s farm. When he wanted to rest from doing chores, he would hide in the attic, where he had discovered a horde of hundreds of science fiction pulp magazines that he read for hours. As an adult, he wrote such books as *Brain Wave* and *The Queen of Air and Darkness*.²⁴⁶

- In 1903, Pierre and Marie Curie were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics. Immediately, reporters came to interview them. At their home, they found the Curies’ six-year-old daughter, Irène, and they asked her where her parents were. She replied, “At the laboratory, of course.”²⁴⁷

- Bruce Degen, author/illustrator of such children’s books as *Jamberry*, used to ride the subway to work, stay at work all day, then come home. Now, he picks up a cup of coffee at home, tells his wife, “I’m off to the office, dear,” and then he walks upstairs.²⁴⁸

- Oprah Winfrey was very young and still in college when she began to work as a co-anchor for the CBS station WTVF-TV in Nashville, Tennessee. She says that she was “the only news anchor in the country who had to be home by midnight.”²⁴⁹

- While working as a messenger, Jerry Della Femina frequently went into advertising offices where he noticed that the workers had their feet on their desks. He thought, “Wow! That’s the business for me. No heavy lifting.”²⁵⁰

Appendix A: Bibliography

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Appendix B: About the Author

It was a dark and stormy night. Suddenly a cry rang out, and on a hot summer night in 1954, Josephine, wife of Carl Bruce, gave birth to a boy — me. Unfortunately, this young married couple allowed Reuben Saturday, Josephine's brother, to name their first-born. Reuben, aka "The Joker," decided that Bruce was a nice name, so he decided to name me Bruce Bruce. I have gone by my middle name — David — ever since.

Being named Bruce David Bruce hasn't been all bad. Bank tellers remember me very quickly, so I don't often have to show an ID. It can be fun in charades, also. When I was a counselor as a teenager at Camp Echoing Hills

in Warsaw, Ohio, a fellow counselor gave the signs for “sounds like” and “two words,” then she pointed to a bruise on her leg twice. Bruise Bruise? Oh yeah, Bruce Bruce is the answer!

Uncle Reuben, by the way, gave me a haircut when I was in kindergarten. He cut my hair short and shaved a small bald spot on the back of my head. My mother wouldn't let me go to school until the bald spot grew out again.

Of all my brothers and sisters (six in all), I am the only transplant to Athens, Ohio. I was born in Newark, Ohio, and have lived all around Southeastern Ohio. However, I moved to Athens to go to Ohio University and have never left.

At Ohio U, I never could make up my mind whether to major in English or Philosophy, so I got a bachelor's degree with a double major in both areas, then I added a Master of Arts degree in English and a Master of Arts degree in Philosophy. Yes, I have my MAMA degree.

Currently, and for a long time to come (I eat fruits and veggies), I am spending my retirement writing books such as *Nadia Comaneci: Perfect 10*, *The Funniest People in Comedy*, *Homer's Iliad: A Retelling in Prose*, and *William Shakespeare's Hamlet: A Retelling in Prose*.

If all goes well, I will publish one or two books a year for the rest of my life. (On the other hand, a good way to make God laugh is to tell Her your plans.)

By the way, my sister Brenda Kennedy writes romances such as *A New Beginning* and *Shattered Dreams*.

Appendix C: Some Books by David Bruce

Anecdote Collections

250 Anecdotes About Opera

250 Anecdotes About Religion

250 Anecdotes About Religion: Volume 2

250 Music Anecdotes

Be a Work of Art: 250 Anecdotes and Stories

The Coolest People in Art: 250 Anecdotes

The Coolest People in the Arts: 250 Anecdotes

The Coolest People in Books: 250 Anecdotes

The Coolest People in Comedy: 250 Anecdotes

Create, Then Take a Break: 250 Anecdotes

Don't Fear the Reaper: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Art: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Books: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Books, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Books, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Comedy: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Dance: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Families: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Families, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Families, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Families, Volume 4: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Families, Volume 5: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Families, Volume 6: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Movies: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Music: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Music, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Music, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Neighborhoods: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Relationships: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Sports: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Sports, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Television and Radio: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Theater: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People Who Live Life: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People Who Live Life, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes

The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds, Volume 1: 250 Anecdotes

The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes

Maximum Cool: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Movies: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Politics and History: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Politics and History, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Politics and History, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Religion: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Sports: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People Who Live Life: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People Who Live Life, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes

Reality is Fabulous: 250 Anecdotes and Stories

Resist Psychic Death: 250 Anecdotes

Seize the Day: 250 Anecdotes and Stories

Notes

[← 1]

Source: Bernice Kanner, *The 100 Best TV Commercials*, pp. 39-40.

[← 2]

Source: Julian Lewis Watkins, *The 100 Greatest Advertisements*, pp. 98-99.

[← 3]

Source: Lewis C. Henry, *Humorous Anecdotes About Famous People*, p. 83.

[← 4]

Source: Carl Erskine, *Carl Erskine's Tales from the Dodger Dugout*, p. 117.

[← 5]

Source: Doris Jadan, *The Great Life of Ivan Jadan*, p. 98.

[← 6]

Source: Peg Kehret, *Shelter Dogs: Amazing Stories of Adopted Strays*, pp. 134-135.

[← 7]

Source: H. Allen Smith, *Lo, the Former Egyptian!*, pp. 172-173.

[← 8]

Source: Donald J. Sobol and Rose Sobol, *Encyclopedia Brown's Book of Strange But True Crimes*, p. 45.

[← 9]

Source: Michael Thomas Ford, *Alec Baldwin Doesn't Love Me*, p. 245.

[← 10]

Source: Art Linkletter, *I Wish I'd Said That!*, p. 55.

[← 11]

Source: Helen Chappell, *The Chesapeake Book of the Dead*, p. 83.

[← 12]

Source: Judith Pinkerton Josephson, *Allan Pinkerton: The Original Private Eye*, p. 85.

[← 13]

David A. Adler, *My Writing Day*, pp. 7, 9-10, 21.

[← 14]

Source: Jean Van Leeuwen, *Growing Ideas*, pp. 9-10, 26, 28, 32.

[← 15]

Source: Patricia Polacco, *Firetalking*, pp. 8, 30.

[← 16]

Source: Joanne Mattern, *J.K. Rowling: Author*, p. 8.

[← 17]

Source: Sondra Henry and Emily Taitz, *Betty Friedan: Fighter for Women's Rights*, p. 56.

[← 18]

Source: Bud Greenspan, *100 Greatest Moments in Olympic History*, pp. 106-107.

[← 19]

Source: Maria Tallchief, *Maria Tallchief: America's Prima Ballerina*, pp. 239-240.

[← 20]

Source: A. Ryan Nerz, *Brandy*, pp. 6, 17.

[← 21]

Source: Patricia McKissack, *Can You Imagine?*, pp. 9-12.

[← 22]

Source: George Ella Lyon, *A Wordful Child*, pp. 4-6, 16, 28.

[← 23]

Source: Arthur Daley, *Knute Rockne: Football Wizard of Notre Dame*, pp. 90-91, 134, 163-164.

[← 24]

Source: Sondra Henry and Emily Taitz, *Betty Friedan: Fighter for Women's Rights*, pp. 11, 13.

[← 25]

Source: Karla Kuskin, *Thoughts, Pictures, and Words*, pp. 14-16.

[← 26]

Source: Spring Hermann, *R.C. Gorman: Navaho Artist*, pp. 23-24.

[← 27]

Source: Katherine Seligman, "Angst and empathy abide in Haight: Magnet for city's refugees home to all." 12 August 2007 <<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2007/08/12/INGQVREOQS1.DTL>>.

[← 28]

Source: Thomas Locker, *The Man Who Paints Nature*, pp. 19, 25-26.

[← 29]

Source: Robrt L. Pela, *Filthy: The Weird World of John Waters*, pp. 2-3. (Yes, "Robrt" is the correct spelling.)

[← 30]

Source: Todd F. McCaffrey, *Dragonholder*, p. 92.

[← 31]

Source: Tanaquil Le Clercq, *The Ballet Cook Book*, pp. 69-70.

[← 32]

Source: Lesley A. DuTemple, *Jacques Cousteau*, pp. 14-16.

[← 33]

Source: Susan Edwards, *Erma Bombeck*, pp. 18-19.

[← 34]

Source: Tom Mullen, *Laughing Out Loud and Other Religious Experiences*, p. 109.

[← 35]

Source: John Javna, *The Best of TV Sitcoms*, p. 28.

[← 36]

Source: Mary Northrup, *American Computer Pioneers*, p. 30.

[← 37]

Source: Sam Molen, *Take 2 and Hit to Right*, pp. 162-163.

[← 38]

Source: Deborah Kovacs and James Preller, *Meet the Authors and Illustrators: Volume Two*, p. 58.

[← 39]

Source: Barbara Kramer, *Sally Ride: A Space Biography*, pp. 9-10.

[← 40]

Source: Mary Northrup, *American Computer Pioneers*, pp. 20, 24.

[← 41]

Source: Emily Keller, *Margaret Bourke-White: A Photographer's Life*, p. 81.

[← 42]

Source: Sam Levenson, *In One Era and Out the Other*, p. 86.

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Source: Christie Keith, "It's a Wonderful So-Called Life." 25 November 2007
<http://www.afterelton.com/TV/2007/11/my_so_called_life>.

[← 44]

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Source: Leonie Cooper, "How not to go crackers this Christmas...." *The Guardian*. 7 December 2007
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/g2/story/0,,2223537,00.html>>.

[← 46]

Source: Tomie dePaola, *Why?*, pp. 78-79.

[← 47]

Source: James F. Cobb, *Heroes of Charity*, pp. 177-178.

[← 48]

Source: Tom Mullen, *Laughing Out Loud and Other Religious Experiences*, p. 73.

[← 49]

Source: Simon Doonan, *Wacky Chicks*, pp. 79-80.

[← 50]

Source: Donald J. Sobol and Rose Sobol, *Encyclopedia Brown's Book of Strange But True Crimes*, p. 69.

[← 51]

Source: Allegra Kent, *Once a Dancer...*, pp. 36-37.

[← 52]

Source: Lewis Black, *Nothing Sacred*, p. 76.

[← 53]

Source: Michael Abernethy, "Queer, Isn't It?: PFLAG: A Piece of Our Hearts." 16 October 2007
<<http://www.popmatters.com/pm/columns/article/49482/pflag-a-piece-of-our-hearts/>>.

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Source: Ronald H. Isaacs and Kerry M. Olitzky, *Sacred Moments: Tales from the Jewish Life Cycle*, pp. 199-200.

[← 55]

Source: Hussain M. Al-Amily, compiler, *The Book of Arabian Wisdom*, p. 64.

[← 56]

Source: Ronald H. Isaacs and Kerry M. Olitzky, *Sacred Moments: Tales from the Jewish Life Cycle*, p. 203.

[← 57]

Source: Avis Berman, *James McNeill Whistler*, p. 89.

[← 58]

Source: Lewis Black, *Nothing Sacred*, p. 121.

[← 59]

Source: Maria Tallchief, *Maria Tallchief: America's Prima Ballerina*, pp. 121-123.

[← 60]

Source: Gay Bryant and Bockris-Wylie, *How I Learned to Like Myself*, pp. 103-104.

[← 61]

Source: Michael Thomas Ford, *Outspoken*, pp. 169, 171-172.

[← 62]

Source: Joanne Mattern, *J.K. Rowling: Author*, pp. 9-10.

[← 63]

Source: Arthur Daley, *Knute Rockne: Football Wizard of Notre Dame*, pp. 34-35, 39.

[← 64]

Source: Joe Hyams, *Zen in the Martial Arts*, p. 23.

[← 65]

Source: Hyman Alpern, *Teachers are Funny*, p. 15.

[← 66]

Source: Avis Berman, *James McNeill Whistler*, p. 19.

[← 67]

Source: Michael A. Schuman, *Charles M. Schulz*, p. 73.

[← 68]

Source: Larry A. Parsons, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the School Library*, p. 19.

[← 69]

Source: Babs Bell Hajdusiewicz, *Mary Carter Smith: African-American Storyteller*, pp. 10. 17.

[← 70]

Source: D. J. Herda, *Thurgood Marshall: Civil Rights Champion*, pp. 10-11.

[← 71]

Source: William R. Gerler, *Educator's Treasurer of Humor for All Occasions*, p. 85.

[← 72]

Source: Dick DeVos, *Rediscovering American Values*, p. 85.

[← 73]

Source: Carmen Bredeson, *Neil Armstrong: A Space Biography*, p. 15.

[← 74]

Source: Laura S. Jeffrey, *Great American Businesswomen*, p. 76.

[← 75]

Source: Lewis C. Henry, *Humorous Anecdotes About Famous People*, p. 93.

[← 76]

Source: Emily Keller, *Margaret Bourke-White: A Photographer's Life*, pp. 12-13.

[← 77]

Source: Margaret J. Anderson, *Isaac Newton: The Greatest Scientist of All Time*, p. 32.

[← 78]

Source: Ben Hecht, *Charlie: The Improbable Life and Times of Charles MacArthur*, p. 27.

[← 79]

Source: Hyman Alpern, *Teachers are Funny*, p. 16.

[← 80]

Source: Hal Drucker and Sid Lerner, *From the Desk Of*, p. 20.

[← 81]

Source: Joe Hyams, *Zen in the Martial Arts*, p. 5.

[← 82]

Source: Mary Kathleen Glavich, S.N.D., *Catholic School Kids Say the Funniest Things*, p. 106.

[← 83]

Source: Claire L. Datnow, *American Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers*, pp. 25, 32.

[← 84]

Source: Peg Kehret, *Five Pages a Day: A Writer's Journey*, pp. 180-181.

[← 85]

Source: Paulo Coelho, *Confessions of a Pilgrim*, pp. viii, 168.

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Source: Carrie Rickey, "While promoting 'Bee Movie,' Jerry Seinfeld keeps processing." 25 October 2007
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Source: Bud Greenspan, *100 Greatest Moments in Olympic History*, pp. 136-137.

[← 88]

Source: Bob Bernotas, *Spike Lee: Filmmaker*, pp. 14, 68-69.

[← 89]

Source: Maxine B. Rosenberg, *Living with a Single Parent*, p. 44.

[← 90]

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[← 91]

Source: Alan Franks, "The last laugh for The Fast Show." *The Times*. 27 October 2007

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