

The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds:

Volume 4

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Educate Yourself

Read Like A Wolf Eats

Be Excellent to Each Other

Books Then, Books Now, Books Forever

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Dedicated to My Uncle Reuben Saturday

When he was a young man, my mother's brother Reuben wanted to escape from poverty and lard sandwiches, so he tried to run away from it. He stole a car so he could drive up north where he hoped to find opportunity, but he got caught and ended up on a Georgia chain gang for several months. In a chain gang, prisoners are shackled every few feet by the ankles to a long length of chain to keep them from escaping. They work in the hot sun while shackled to the chain, and when they sleep, they are shackled to the bed. No freedom, hard work, hot sun, no pay, bad food, and some mean guards.

When my uncle got released from the chain gang, he hitchhiked up north. He did what a lot of people trying to escape from poverty do: He drifted. He drifted from town to town, seeking opportunity and not finding it. He worked when he could, but the jobs were temporary and low pay. My uncle slept rough often, and he was hungry often. Once, when he was completely broke and completely hungry, he saw a restaurant with a buffet and went inside and asked to speak to the manager. He said, "I am very hungry, I don't have any money, and I would appreciate it very much if you would give me any food that the restaurant is going to throw away. I will be happy to wait by the rear entrance until you are ready to throw away food."

The manager told him to sit down at a table, and then the manager went to the buffet, loaded a big plate high with food, and gave it to him free of charge.

One way out of poverty is to get a good job, and my uncle got out of poverty by getting a job working with sheet metal.

My uncle's work ethic helped him. His employer sent him to California to do some special sheet-metal work, and the people in California wanted to keep him there. They explained that their California employees liked to come to work late, leave early, and take many days off. It was difficult to get someone who would show up and do the work they were supposed to do and were paid to do.

My uncle was also good with money. He got married, bought a house, and raised six children. Each time he made a mortgage payment, he paid extra money so he could pay off the mortgage faster.

If there was a sale on food, he bought lots of it. For example, if there was a sale on peanut butter, two jars for the price of one, he would buy twelve jars and sometimes go back the next day and buy six more jars.

If you went in his pantry — a closet set aside to store food — you saw that it was packed with food. If you went in his kitchen, you saw that he had taken off the doors of the high cabinets in which he stored food so that he could see the food. If you went in his bedroom, you saw that he had all the regular bedroom furniture, but he also had lots of shelves he had installed. The shelves were loaded with things that he had bought on sale that he knew his family could use: food (of course), light bulbs, toothpaste, toilet paper, etc. His bedroom looked like a warehouse.

Once he made a bad purchase: he bought a case of baked beans. Beans are beans, but the sauce they came in can taste good or bad, and the sauce these beans came in tasted bad. His kids told him, "Dad, throw those beans away! They're awful!"

But when you grow up poor, you don't throw beans away. For a long time, whenever my uncle and his family ate baked beans, they ate a mixture of one can of good baked beans and one can of bad baked beans.

My uncle's kids never had to eat lard sandwiches.

PREFACE

The doing of good deeds is important. As a free person, you can choose to live your life as a good person or as a bad person. To be a good person, do good deeds. To be a bad person, do bad deeds. If you do good deeds, you will become good. If you do bad deeds, you will become bad.

To become the person you want to be, act as if you already are that kind of person. Each of us chooses what kind of person we will become. To become a good person, do the things a good person does. To become a bad person, do the things a bad person does. The opportunity to take action to become the kind of person you want to be is yours.

This book is a collection of stories of good deeds. Most of them I have encountered in my reading of books, then retold in my own words. A very few come from other sources. This book is organized by topic. Many people in the arts, in religion, and in everyday life have done good deeds, and I am happy that such people exist in this world.

I hope that you enjoy reading this book, and I hope that you are inspired to do some good deeds of your own.

INTRODUCTION

Light a Candle

The disciples of a Hasidic Rabbi complained about the presence of the forces of darkness in the World. The Rabbi counseled them to take brooms and sweep out the darkness. They tried to sweep out the darkness, but they were unsuccessful. Next he advised his disciples to shout away the darkness. They tried to shout away the darkness, but they were unsuccessful. Finally he advised his disciples to meet the challenge of darkness by lighting a candle. Each of his disciples lit a candle and the darkness was gone.¹

CHAPTER 1: COMEDIANS

The Golden Rule

Paul Krassner remembers comedian George Carlin as a very kind man. Occasionally, Mr. Krassner would perform in Los Angeles, and Mr. Carlin would send a limo to pick him up and would let him stay in his home. When Mr. Krassner opened for Mr. Carlin at the Warner-Grand Theater in San Pedro, California, the two hung out together in Mr. Carlin's dressing room. Mr. Krassner was also able to see Mr. Carlin interact with fans: "I watched as he continued to be genuinely gracious with every fan who stopped by. If they wanted his autograph, he would gladly sign his name. If they wanted to be photographed with him, he would assume the pose. If they wanted to have a little chat, he indulged them with congeniality." Mr. Krassner said to Mr. Carlin, "You really show respect for everybody." And Mr. Carlin replied, "Well, that's just the way I would want to be treated."²

"Well-Played, Anonymous Ticket-Finder"

On Saturday, April 12, 2008, Jon Sorak of Park Forest and his significant other, Melinda, were looking forward to seeing Jerry Seinfeld at the Chicago Theater in, of course, Chicago. They ate dinner at Harry Caray's, then took a few photographs on State Street, and then found out that their tickets were missing. Mr. Sorak realized that the tickets had probably fallen out of his pocket when he had taken his camera out, so they searched for the tickets in that area but did not find them. They then talked to a security officer at the Chicago Theater, who directed them to the Will Call office, and their tickets were handed to them. Mr. Sorak says, "In a city where scalping is the norm, someone was honest and kind-hearted enough to [turn in the tickets]. Our thanks and prayers to this Good Samaritan." Movie critic Richard Roeper, who wrote about this good deed in his blog, adds, "Well-played, anonymous ticket-finder."³

"Alas, Poor Yorick"

When improvisational comedian Del Close died, he left this provision in his will: "I give my skull to the Goodman Theatre, for a production of *Hamlet* in which to play Yorick, or for any other purposes the Goodman Theatre deems appropriate." However, when he died, Charna Halpern, his partner at ImprovOlympic, was unable to get his head, and therefore Ms. Halpern had his entire remains cremated. She ended up buying a skull from the Anatomical Chart Company in Skokie, Illinois. To make the skull as much like Mr. Close's as possible, she pulled out several of its teeth before presenting it to Robert Falls, the artistic director of the Goodman Theatre. Mr. Falls keeps the skull on one of his bookshelves, and no one is bothered by the truth of whose corpse it originally belonged to. According to Kim "Howard" Johnson, author of a biography of Mr. Close titled *The Funniest One in the Room: The Lives and Legends of Del Close* (Chicago Review Press), "The attitude of most of Del's friends is that if it wasn't originally Del's skull, it is now."⁴

A Promise to Help Each Other

As young adults studying acting at Juilliard in New York City, Robin Williams and Christopher Reeve became friends, and they promised that they would come to each other's aid if either of them needed help. Of course, Mr. Williams became a famous comedian and actor, and Mr. Reeve became a famous actor who was best known for playing Superman in a series of big-

budget movies. Mr. Reeve also started competing in equestrian events, and he was severely injured in a fall at one of these competitions. Mr. Reeve had good insurance, but even good insurance may run out when an accident is severe, and Mr. Reeve's accident was severe, putting him in a wheelchair for the rest of his life and forcing him to rely on a breathing tube. Mr. Williams, as he had promised, came to Mr. Reeve's aid, spending hundreds of thousands of dollars each year for Mr. Reeve's medical expenses and care.⁵

Staying Faithful

Country comedian Jerry Clower grew up in the South at a time when white people thought they were better than black people. He grew up racist, but he changed. One of the reasons he changed was the behavior of a black man he worked with. Both he and the black man sold fertilizer, and they got to talking together about their families. The black man's wife was mentally ill and had been in a mental institution for 25 years, but he had remained faithful to her for those 25 years. Mr. Clower says, "I don't know whether I could be faithful for 25 years to a lady after the doctor told me she wasn't ever going to get out of the mental institution."⁶

A Coffee Cup Suspended in Mid-Air

Comedian Danny Thomas received his greatest compliment from Mike Todd, who was in a nightclub while Mr. Thomas was performing. Mr. Todd had lifted his coffee cup from his saucer when Mr. Thomas went into the dramatic part in his "Ode to the Wailing Lebanese." Mr. Todd felt it was inappropriate to put the coffee cup to his lips at such a dramatic moment, and he was afraid that he would make a noise if he set the coffee cup back down. So he held the coffee cup suspended in mid-air for three minutes, until the dramatic part was over.⁷

Putting Down a Racist

In 1946, British comedian George Formby and Beryl, his wife, went on tour in South Africa. There, they entertained black audiences and even embraced adorable (and adoring) black children. Because South Africa was following the segregationist policy of apartheid, Daniel François Malan, who was then the leader of the South African National Party, became angry at the non-racist actions of George and Beryl. When he complained about how George and Beryl were acting, Beryl told him, "P*ss off, you horrible little man."⁸

Starting Your Own Peace March

Comedian Bertice Berry and her cousin once traveled to a peace march, but they couldn't find it. At first, they started to get upset, but then they decided to have their own peace march. The two of them started marching, chanting, "We want peace. We want peace." Quite a few people came up to them—they were also looking for the peace march. Ms. Berry says, "I found out that a lot of people looking for peace are simply lost. We're all lost. And once we find each other, there will be a lot of power in coming together and working for change. But we have to do it in humor and in love."⁹

Defending the Comedians

Enrico Banducci, owner of the hungry i, a club that nurtured rising comedians, was also the club's bouncer and a fierce defender of the comedians who worked there. Anyone who heckled a comedian was quickly given their money back and thrown out—in groups if necessary.

Comedian Irwin Corey remembers Mr. Banducci telling a group of hecklers, “You noisy bunch of mothers! ... Have respect for the acts or don’t come here!” He once fought a couple of lumberjacks who wanted to fight him, and he once threw out an entire audience.¹⁰

Nurturing Women

For a book, Susan Horowitz interviewed Lucille Ball, Carol Burnett, Phyllis Diller, and Joan Rivers. Of course, her friends asked her what these celebrities were like in real life. She says that they were all nurturing women—Lucy fed her tea and cookies, Carol gave her a big lunch, Phyllis gave her a huge fruit basket to take home, and Joan cooked scrambled eggs and made toast for her.¹¹

“Hey, Are You That Nut on TV?”

Early in her career, Carol Burnett volunteered to work with handicapped children at New York University’s Medical Center. Every week for the next four years—until she left for Hollywood—she volunteered there. The first time she volunteered, she found it difficult because many of the children were terribly deformed. A boy with no arms or legs recognized her and asked, “Hey, are you that nut on TV?” Ms. Burnett replied, “Sure, I’m that nut. But do you mind calling me Carol?”¹²

Good Scotch

Lou Costello could be very generous. Glen Adams created still photographs that were used to publicize Abbott and Costello movies. He once said he liked some Scotch that Mr. Costello was serving him; when he returned to his car, he found a case of the brand of Scotch he had praised. Another time he said he liked a shirt that Mr. Costello was wearing. As a gift, Mr. Costello sent him a dozen of the shirts. After that, Mr. Adams was very careful not to praise things when he was around Mr. Costello.¹³

Helping an Injured Man

When comedian Jimmy Durante’s longtime friend and partner Lou Clayton was severely injured in a serious automobile accident, racking up medical bills of \$70,000 (a lot of money now and much more over six decades ago), Jimmy took out personal loans to help pay Mr. Clayton’s medical bills, his first wife (Jeanne) sold valuables from her safe-deposit box to help pay Mr. Clayton’s medical bills, and the Durantes’ housekeeper (a wonderful woman named Maggie Arnold) offered to work without being paid so that the money thus saved could be used to help pay Mr. Clayton’s medical bills.¹⁴

An Insensitive Practical Joke

Comedians Eddie Cantor and Bert Williams and some other Ziegfeld Follies stars were invited to eat at the home of fist-fighter Jack “Twin” Sullivan, who unfortunately played an insensitive practical joke on Mr. Cantor, who was Jewish. Mr. Sullivan served pork chops, which everyone but Mr. Cantor ate. Seeing that Mr. Cantor wasn’t eating his pork chops, which of course as an observant Jew who kept kosher, Mr. Cantor would not do, Mr. Sullivan offered to bring him a sandwich. However, the sandwich was made out of ham, which of course Mr. Cantor did not eat. Mr. Sullivan then offered Mr. Cantor eggs, but when he brought the eggs out to Mr. Cantor, they were covered with bacon and bacon grease. At this point, Mr. Williams felt that

the joke had gone far enough, so he revealed that he had brought a present for Mr. Cantor. The present turned out to be a sirloin steak that Mr. Williams cooked for him in the kitchen. Of course, the joke was insensitive, but to Mr. Sullivan's credit, he did invite a Jew to eat in his house at a time when much prejudice against Jews existed. In addition, he invited Mr. Williams, an African-American comedian, to eat in his house at a time when many public restaurants would not have allowed Mr. Williams or any other black person to eat there. By the way, one day Mr. Williams walked into a bar and ordered a drink. The bartender told him that the price would be \$50—an even more exorbitant price in the early 20th century than it is now. Mr. Williams, a highly paid entertainer, put \$500 on the counter and said, "I'll take 10 of them."¹⁵

“Hi, Jay Leno’s Teacher”

Comedian Jay Leno once wanted to do something special for Hattie Hannigan, an English teacher he had studied under while attending Andover (Massachusetts) High School. He gave her a videotape, on which 16 Hollywood stars, including Arnold Schwarzenegger, Debbie Reynolds, and Linda Gray, sent her greetings.¹⁶

Super-8 Movies for a Celebrity

B-movie actor Bruce Campbell, star of the *Evil Dead* movies, started his acting career in Super-8 movies that he made with a bunch of his friends in high school. As an apprentice in summer stock, he met star comedian Tommy Smothers and invited him to view some of the Super-8 movies. Mr. Smothers accepted the invitation—to Mr. Campbell's amazement—and had a great time laughing at the movies. Later, he even sent \$500 so Mr. Campbell and his friends could make more movies.¹⁷

Keeping an Ex-Star Under Contract

Charles Chaplin and Edna Purviance made many silent films together, but after he directed her in the 1923 drama *A Woman of Paris*, she stopped starring in his films. Nevertheless, although she seldom appeared in his films, he kept her under contract as a way to help her financially. She did appear in small roles in his movies *Monsieur Verdoux* (1947) and *Limelight* (1952).¹⁸

A Fan from San Diego

Comedian Flip Wilson received a letter from a teenaged girl in San Diego who told him that her mother was a big fan of his, so he decided to drive to San Diego and surprise them. The girl's mother answered the door, and shocked, asked, "Flip Wilson, what are you doing here?" Flip explained that her daughter had written him a letter, and they had a nice 20-minute chat.¹⁹

CHAPTER 2: SPORTS

A Nice Hot Cup of Tea

Many people knew and liked tennis star Arthur Ashe, ranging from celebrities such as Bryant Gumbel to his next-door neighbor, an elderly woman who set a kettle of water on the stove whenever he returned home from a tennis match so they could sit and have tea together.²⁰

Telegrams of Condolence

Shohei Baba was an amazingly popular pro wrestler in Japan and a very honest businessman. When he died of cancer in 1999, so many telegrams of condolence were sent to his family and to his business office that the main Japanese telegraph company was forced to close after running out of paper.²¹

An Appetizer Instead of a Full Meal

Sportswriter Jim Murray once wrote that a lifeguard “would rather lose his life than a customer’s.” As evidence to back up this assertion, he tells about lifeguard Dale Strand, who in 1953 saw a shark swimming in circles around two girls. Mr. Strand saved the girls’ lives by grabbing the shark’s fin and tail and holding on as the two girls made it safely to shore. Mr. Strand kept the shark from getting the full two-course meal it was after, but the shark did get an appetizer: a chunk of Mr. Strand’s thigh.²²

Free Thanksgiving Turkeys for Life

The rival baseball teams of Keene and Hinsdale (both of New Hampshire) hated each other. In an 1898 game played at Keene, Hinsdale player Alfred G. Doe batted against Keene pitcher Bill Griffin. Mr. Griffin threw the ball and hit Mr. Doe in the ribs, then Mr. Doe threw the bat at Mr. Griffin. Mr. Doe and Mr. Griffin were fighting when Mr. Doe suddenly became aware that several angry Keene fans were starting to come after him, so he ran clear out of the ballpark. Being a sprinter, he outdistanced the angry mob, but he was growing tired when he spied a house with the front door wide open. (This was before air conditioning and daily TV crime horror stories.) He ran through the open door and convinced the lady of the house, Mrs. Tom Finan, to let him hide from the angry mob there. Afterward, for many years, Mr. Doe sent Mrs. Finan a turkey just before Thanksgiving.²³

Visiting Leo the Lip

Playing a visit to someone in the hospital can cheer him or her up—so can a joke. Baseball manager Leo “The Lip” Durocher and umpire Tom Gorman had some memorable arguments on the diamond, but they got along well off the baseball field. Once, Mr. Durocher was in the hospital, so Mr. Gorman gave him a call. They talked for a while, then Mr. Durocher said, “The troubles we’ve had. You’ve chased me out of so many games. The fights. The arguments. I never expected you to call me. It’s unbelievable. I told everybody at the hospital about you. This really pleases me. Let me ask you something, Tom. Why did you call me?” Mr. Gorman joked, “Leo, I wanted to see if you were dying.”²⁴

“Hey, Kid. You’re Pressing Too Hard”

When Cal Ripken, Jr., first joined the Baltimore Orioles, he was not a star baseball player. In fact, he played so poorly that he wondered if he had what it took to make it in the major leagues. The player who turned things around for him was not even a Baltimore Oriole—it was Reggie Jackson, who was then a California Angel. During a pause in a game, Mr. Jackson told Mr. Ripken, “Hey, kid. You’re pressing too hard. Don’t try to be Babe Ruth. Just be yourself. Do what Cal Ripken can do.” Mr. Ripken thought about it, and the next day he got two hits. (Mr. Jackson, sitting in the visitors’ dugout, gave him a thumb’s-up sign.) And the day after that, he got two more hits. And in the days that followed he became a star.²⁵

Giving Up a Home Run on Purpose

During the Jim Crow days, African-American George “Mule” Suttles was playing against the Tigers, the local black baseball team, in Claybrook, Arkansas. A white man with a gun ordered Mr. Suttles either to hit a home run over the fence or to find a hole in the fence and run away through it. The pitcher for the Tigers noticed what was going on and did what he had to do to ensure that Mr. Suttles did not get shot. He threw Mr. Suttles’ favorite pitch, and Mr. Suttles hit a home run over the fence.²⁶

The Only Candy He Got

Babe Ruth got into trouble when he was a boy, and so he had to go to St. Mary’s Industrial School for Boys. He worked in the shirt factory, and the money he earned he spent on candy at a little store on the school premises that was open for an hour in the evening. Babe used to buy a hatful of assorted candies, then pass it around to the boys who lacked parents and friends. One such boy was Lou Leisman, who for two years received candy from Babe. That was the only candy he got.²⁷

“If I Ever Hear that Word in Here Again, This Bat’s Going to Go Across Somebody’s Skull”

Even early in his career, while still in minor-league baseball, African-American Hank Aaron won a lot of games with his bat. However, as all players do, he occasionally messed up, and whether he messed up or not, he often got abuse from racist fans—and sometimes from racist teammates. In one game, he booted a ball, a mishap that lost the game for his team. The pitcher for his team said after the game, “You know, you can’t trust a n*gger. When pull comes to tug, they’re going to go in the tank every time.” Jim Andrews, a white player on the team and Hank’s friend, grabbed a bat and hit a locker, then he said, “We got enough aggravation outside. We don’t need it here. I’m just going to say this once and only once: If I ever hear that word in here again, this bat’s going to go across somebody’s skull. I don’t care much what happens to me. It doesn’t happen in here again.” And it never happened again.²⁸

Helping an Opposing Player Get a Home Run

On April 26, 2008, Western Oregon faced Central Washington in a softball game. Up to bat for Western Oregon was Sara Tucholsky, who played in the outfield occasionally and who had only three hits in 34 at-bats that season. In the 0-0 game she hit a home run with two players on base. Excited—make that *really* excited—Sara missed first base and turned back to tag the base. That’s when her knee gave out, and she crumpled to the ground in pain. Of course, Western Oregon coach Pam Knox wanted Sara to get the home run: “It’s her only home run in four years. I didn’t want to take that from her, but at the same time, I was worried about her.” Obviously, the Western Oregon players couldn’t pick Sara up and carry her around the bases. According to the umpires at the game, the Western Oregon players and their coaches weren’t allowed to even touch her while she was an active runner. Therefore, because Sara was obviously injured and unable to run the bases on her own power, it seemed that the only option was to put a substitute runner on first base and have what should be a three-run home run recorded as a two-run single. Just then, opposing player Mallory Holtman, who played first base, said, “Excuse me, would it be OK if we carried her around and she touched each bag?” Mallory, holder of many, many offensive records for Central Washington, also wanted Sara to get credit for her first-ever home run. Therefore, Mallory and fellow Central Washington player Liz Wallace, a shortstop, carried Sara around the bases, letting Sara gently touch each

base. After the game, which her team lost because of Sara's home run, Mallory explained, "Honestly, it's one of those things that I hope anyone would do it for me. She hit the ball over her fence. She's a senior; it's her last year. ... it's the right thing to do. She was obviously in agony." The game was played at Central Washington. What did the spectators think about this selfless act? They cheered in a standing ovation. Western Oregon coach Pam Knox said, "There wasn't a dry eye anywhere in the stadium after that. That was one of the most amazing things that I have ever seen in softball, and it says so much about Central Washington and the kids that they have." By the way, after the game, the umpires learned that they had misinterpreted the rules of the game. According to the 2008 NCAA softball rule book, "If an injury to a batter-runner or runner prevents her from proceeding to an awarded base, the ball is dead and the substitution can be made. The substitute must legally touch all awarded or missed bases not previously touched" (page 105, rule 8.5.3.2). Therefore, a substitution could have been made and Sara would have gotten her home run. This, of course, does not change the selfless nature of the act by the Central Washington players.²⁹

An Ambassador of Politeness

During the Munich Olympics, swimmer Mark Spitz always wanted to eat the same breakfast: eggs and hot cereal. The waiters soon learned his preference, so they began to prepare a tray for him before he even arrived at the cafeteria. Unfortunately, this meant that Mr. Spitz' breakfast was always cold by the time he got it. Mr. Spitz said later, "I didn't have the heart to return it as the waiters were beaming because of their own thoughtfulness. After all, we were supposed to be ambassadors, too."³⁰

An Error in the Scoring

At the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal, Canada, Margaret Murdock appeared to have won the gold medal in the small-bore rifle competition by out-scoring fellow American Lanny Bassham, 1,162 points to 1,161 points. However, the Olympic officials discovered an error in the scoring. One judge had recorded a 9 instead of a 10 for Mr. Bassham. Now the two were tied at 1,162 points apiece. More drama ensued. The tiebreaker awarded the gold medal to Mr. Bassham, leaving the silver for Ms. Murdock. However, Mr. Bassham felt that since the two scores had been equal, Ms. Murdock deserved to stand at the top of the podium with him. At the awards ceremony, he clasped her hand and helped her to the top of the awards podium, and they stood together as the "Star-Spangled Banner" played. Mr. Bassham said afterward, "I wanted to show that I felt that her performance equaled mine. There was no way she deserved to stand lower while the anthem was played."³¹

Help in Winning a Gold Medal

Vince Matthews was able to win a gold medal in the 400 meters at the 1972 Olympic Games in part because of a bank in New York, where he lived. The U.S. trials for the Olympics were held in Eugene, Oregon, and Mr. Matthews did not have the money to go there. Fortunately, the New York bank, which wanted to remain anonymous, gave \$700 so that Mr. Matthews and another athlete could go to Eugene, Oregon. A high school also helped Mr. Matthews win the gold medal. Boys High School, which was close to where Mr. Matthews lived, had a good field to train on, so Mr. Matthews would climb three fences—one 15 feet high and the other two seven feet high—to get to the field and train. Officials at Boys High School were aware that

Mr. Matthews was not a vandal, so they chose to ignore the situation and let him train on their track.³²

Racing to Save Two Lives

At the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, Korea, high winds made sailing dangerous. In fact, Singapore teammates Joseph Chan and Shaw Her Siew were thrown into the water and injured in a competition. Sailing in a different race nearby was Canadian Lawrence Lemieux, who immediately stopped racing to win a medal and instead started racing to save two lives. He first hauled Mr. Chan aboard, then sailed to rescue Mr. Siew. After rescuing the two men, victory was impossible for Mr. Lemieux, but he finished 22nd out of 32 boats. The authorities decided to award Mr. Lemieux second place for this, the fifth race of a seven-race competition because he was in second place when he started his dramatic rescue. All competitors agreed that this was fair. Unfortunately, Mr. Lemieux did not win a medal at the Olympics; however, at the ceremony for the medal winners, the President of the International Olympic Committee told Mr. Lemieux, “By your sportsmanship, self-sacrifice, and courage, you embody all that is right with the Olympic ideal.”³³

Giving Back to Society

In 1980, speed skater Eric Heiden won five gold medals in individual events at the Winter Olympic Games in Lake Placid, New York. This made him the most marketable athlete of that Olympics, and he could have spent the rest of his life making a living as a sports celebrity. However, he made a few endorsements that he considered tasteful, then he devoted himself to something more important than cashing in on his fame. He attended Stanford University as a pre-med student, and in 1991 he graduated from Stanford Medical School. Today, he is a practicing orthopedic surgeon like his father before him. He says, “Now I’m giving back to society, doing something important. I’m now what I consider a productive person in our society.” These days, Dr. Heiden occasionally loses track of the locations of his gold medals. One was missing for a while until he found it in a closet, buried under some clothing.³⁴

Cops for Kids

When she was a teenager, speed-skater Bonnie Blair had a problem. She wanted to go to the Olympics, but the skating rink in her hometown—Champaign, Illinois—was too small for her to properly train on. The nearest big rink was in Milwaukee—too far away for her father to be able to afford to send her there to train. Fortunately, she had heard about a program called Cops for Kids, and she spoke to the head police officers to see if she would qualify for their help. One officer remembers, “We had no idea what speed-skating was, but we told her, ‘You skate. We’ll raise the money.’” They did exactly that, selling candy, washing cars, and holding bake sales—and raising \$7,500 for her to start training in Milwaukee. Ms. Blair did make it to the 1984 Olympics, and she finished 8th in the 500-meter speed-skating event. But she kept training, and kept competing, and in future Olympics she earned five gold medals in speed-skating. (By the way, when she first started skating as a toddler, her family could find no skates in her size, so she wore her regular shoes inside the skates.)³⁵

“It was Better Than Being Well”

In 1988, Ekaterina Gordeeva suffered a stress fracture in her foot and had to stop figure skating until she healed. Her skating partner (and future husband, and fellow Olympian) Sergei

Grinkov knew that she missed the feeling of gliding on the ice, so he picked her up and skated with her around the ice rink. Ekaterina said later, “It was better than being well.”³⁶

Standing Up for a Judge

At the 1976 Olympics, Canadian judge Suzanne Francis placed Canadian figure skater Toller Cranston first in the free-skating event. This appeared to be national bias because most of the other judges placed the British figure skater first. However, Ms. Francis felt that the British figure skater’s program was simpler than Mr. Cranston’s and she judged the way she felt—and ended up being suspended for it by the International Skate Union (ISU). Mr. Cranston stood up for this judge. An ISU official became very upset because Mr. Cranston refused to sign up for an ISU tour through Europe. According to the official, the ISU regarded Mr. Cranston as the best free skater in the world, and it had used Mr. Cranston’s name to sell the tour. Mr. Cranston said to the ISU official, “If I’m the best free skater in the world, why have you suspended my judge?” Mr. Cranston did not go on the ISU tour.³⁷

The Team of Destiny Gets Unexpected Help

The 1960 United States Olympic hockey team is known as the Team of Destiny. No one expected the team to win gold, but it did, defeating two teams favored to win: the Canadian team and the Soviet team. In the title game, they played the Czech team, but by then they were tired. After two periods, the Americans were down 4-3, and now they were exhausted. Suddenly, they got help from an unexpected source: Nikolai Sologubov, the Soviet team captain. He walked into their locker room at halftime and in broken, difficult-to-understand English, advised the players to breathe oxygen. They did, and then they scored six straight goals in the fourth period to the Czech team’s none to put away the game and win the gold.³⁸

“I Helped Send the Millers to Barcelona”

In 1992, the people of the great state of Oklahoma performed a remarkable good deed. Oklahoma’s Shannon Miller was going to participate (and, as it turned out, star) in the Barcelona Olympic Games. Unfortunately, her family did not have the money to go to the Games to watch her. Several fundraisers were set up for the Miller family, and many Oklahomans ended up wearing T-shirts that said, “I helped send the Millers to Barcelona.” The end result: Shannon’s parents, Ron and Claudia, and her siblings, Tessa and Troy, went to Barcelona. In fact, way too much money was raised for them, and the extra money was donated to the Oklahoma Special Olympics.³⁹

“I Will Be the First to Sign the Letter”

At the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico, where she was known as the “Bride of Mexico,” gymnast Natalya Alexandrovna Kuchinskaya won gold on the beam and bronze in the all-around competition. After retiring from competition, she became a gymnastics coach for small children in Kiev. The gymnastics facilities were overcrowded, and so one of her co-workers wrote a letter asking that the overcrowding be remedied by constructing new facilities. A question then arose—who would be willing to sign the letter? Ms. Kuchinskaya said, “I will be the first to sign the letter.”⁴⁰

Small, But Tough

Gymnasts tend to be small, but very tough. As a teenager working at McDonald's, Kurt Thomas noticed a strange-looking man harassing a woman at the counter. Mr. Thomas knocked him out with one punch. When the police arrived, they asked who had hit the man, and Mr. Thomas confessed. The police then looked Mr. Thomas over—he was 5-foot-3 and weighed 115 pounds at the time—and laughed.⁴¹

“I was Loyal to Them Because They were Honest and True to Me”

Minnesota Vikings quarterback Duante Culpepper was adopted at birth by Emma Culpepper, who had already raised 14 other adopted children. Ms. Culpepper adopted Duante at the request of his birth mother, Barbara Henderson, who was serving a prison sentence for armed robbery. Ms. Culpepper raised Duante well, and he started playing pee-wee football, then moved into higher forms of organized football. In the 7th grade, he started playing at wide receiver but quickly was moved to quarterback after he demonstrated his strong arm. The team's quarterback threw a football that went over Duante's head and then bounced 30 yards downfield. Duante ran after the football, scooped it up, then threw it—on the fly—back to the quarterback. Of course, Duante played well in high school, but his grades looked as if they would keep him out of college, and many of the big football colleges that had been recruiting him started to ignore him. Fortunately, a recruiter at the University of Central Florida, in Orlando, came up with a way for Duante to get his gpa up. Duante started retaking classes in order to get a better grade, even though that meant that he, as a senior, had to sit in some freshman courses. It worked, Duante got his gpa up, and the big football colleges started to pay attention to him again. So where did he play his college football? At the University of Central Florida. Mr. Culpepper said about the college's recruiters, “They really helped me get my act together in high school, so I wanted to reward them and pay them back. I was loyal to them because they were honest and true to me.” Mr. Culpepper also stayed loyal to another person who was honest and true to him. When he signed a contract to play professional football with the Vikings, he bought Emma Culpepper a new house in a good neighborhood. He said, “I could never repay her for all that she has done for me. I was just so happy that I could do something that would make a difference in her life. She had worked so hard to take care of so many people, and it felt great to know that now I could take care of her for the rest of her life.”⁴²

“That's It. Pack Your Bags. Get Your Books. You're Coming with Me”

Frank “Moose” Machinsky was a very good football player and a very mediocre student. He played at Ohio State University for Coach Woody Hayes, who valued both education and football—but education more than football. Mr. Machinsky had a good time at the beginning of his student years at Ohio State; he drank lots of beers and chased lots of skirts, and his grades showed what he was concentrating on. Coach Hayes drove his car to Mr. Machinsky's fraternity, and he told Mr. Machinsky, “That's it. Pack your bags. Get your books. You're coming with me.” Mr. Machinsky lived with Coach Hayes until he brought his grades up; each night, Coach Hayes checked over Mr. Machinsky's homework and tutored him when needed. Coach Hayes worked harder than he worked Mr. Machinsky. Once Mr. Machinsky got up at 3 a.m. to go the bathroom, and he heard the sound of a film projector coming from Coach Hayes' room. Mr. Machinsky says, “I could hear that damned projector going at three o'clock in the morning. He was doing film in the middle of the night!”⁴³

Following Mother's Teaching

As a player for the Chicago Bears, Chris Zorich invited a few children to attend Chicago Bears home games at his expense. After the game, he treated them to dinner at Planet Hollywood. He did this as a result of growing up poor and having to stand in line to get free food. His mother, a wonderful woman, supported him on \$250 a month in public assistance money. Mr. Zorich says, “Besides teaching me to always give my best effort, my mom taught me to help others who are deserving and in need. Without her inspiration, love, and support, I would never have had the opportunity to graduate from Notre Dame and become a Chicago Bear.” These days, Mr. Zorich does much charitable work through his own nonprofit organization: the Christopher Zorich Foundation.⁴⁴

Being Nice to Fans

Walter Payton was a Chicago Bears superstar who liked his fans and who did many good deeds. Jill, the young daughter of Joseph Weintraub, was standing at the checkout counter of a store so she could pay for some cosmetics she wanted to buy. Suddenly, a huge arm reached out and handed the checkout person enough money to pay for her purchases. She turned around and saw that the arm belonged to Mr. Payton. Later, Jill fell in love with a Chicago Bears fan named Michael. Seeing Mr. Payton again by accident, she approached him and asked if he would telephone and talk to her boyfriend. Mr. Payton agreed, and after convincing Michael that he was in fact Walter Payton, Mr. Payton and Michael had a good talk. (By the way, Jill and Michael later got married.)⁴⁵

“Who are They? Lawyers?”

After Nate “Tiny” Archibald played for the Boston Celtics, he stayed active in the inner city and did good deeds as the recreation director for the Harlem Armory Shelter. Once, he got six free tickets from the New Jersey Nets, which he gave to some residents of the shelter. All of them dressed nicely in suits and ties for the game, and afterward Tiny took them down to the Nets dressing room to meet the members of the team. One of the players asked Tiny about the people he was with: “Who are they? Lawyers?”⁴⁶

Being Helped While in Poverty

NBA star Allen Iverson grew up poor. At times, he had to wear shoes continually in his family’s home because raw sewage could sometimes be found (and smelled) on the floor of the two-room apartment where his family and 13 cousins, aunts, and uncles lived. At times, teachers, coaches, and a school secretary gave him money so that he would be able to buy food to eat. Allen and his family were evicted from their home when he was 14 years old. His mother and sisters were forced to move into a shelter, and Allen moved in with Gary Moore, his high-school football coach. Mr. Moore made Allen make his own bed and do his homework each day. Allen got in trouble when he was 17 years old at a bowling alley when a brawl broke out, and he was sentenced to three years in prison. However, Allen was ordered released from prison after four months, although the judge would not allow him to play organized sports until he had graduated from high school. Fortunately, while in prison he met Sue Lambiotte, a tutor. Even after he was released from prison, he went to her house to study so he could graduate from high school and play organized sports in college. For six months, he studied at her house six hours a day, five days a week. On the day he passed his last exam and earned his graduation, she held a special graduation ceremony for him: he and she were the only ones at the special graduation ceremony. Later Allen’s conviction was overturned because

of insufficient evidence to justify a finding of guilty. Of course, Allen became a basketball star at Georgetown University, where John Thompson coached him, and he turned pro early—an easy decision to make because he became a millionaire by playing in the NBA and so he could help his family, who had been so poor for so long. Mr. Iverson has worked hard to become a success, and he had help to do so.⁴⁷

Bill Bush: Unselfish Player

Bill Russell played for unselfish teams during his career, including the Celtics of Boston and the Dons of the University of San Francisco, a small Jesuit school. At the beginning of the 1954-1955 season, the USF Dons played well, but lost to powerful UCLA, 47-40. Before a rematch with UCLA, USF player Bill Bush said, “Teammates, I have an announcement. I’m first string. But I believe if you put Hal Perry in my spot we will be a better team.” Giving up a starting position is definitely unselfish, but in addition to that, Mr. Bush was white and Mr. Perry was black, and at the time much prejudice existed against blacks. The coach, Phil Woolpert, made the switch and the team benefited. Mr. Bush made his contribution by coming off the bench, and the USF Dons won the NCAA Tournament for the first of two consecutive national championships. (By the way, in the rematch with UCLA, USF won, 56-44.)⁴⁸

Visiting a Stroke Victim

For many years, Dave Bing played basketball for the Detroit Pistons. One day, the man who kept the team records for the Pistons, Morris Moorawnick, had a stroke. Although the two men had been acquaintances for years, they were not especially close. Nevertheless, Mr. Bing paid Mr. Moorawnick a visit in his hospital room. Afterward, Mr. Moorawnick said, “He’s that kind of person. I would expect that of Dave Bing.”⁴⁹

Sponsoring a Reading Contest

In 1995, Chicago Bulls professional basketball player Scottie Pippen sponsored a reading contest for over 80 children. He treated the 33 winners to a pizza party and to tickets to a Chicago Bulls game. In addition, he signed the children’s favorite books.⁵⁰

Twenty Mothers

Heavyweight boxing champion Joe Louis was generous with his money, giving much away to charities, including Detroit’s Phyllis Wheatley’s Home for Old Ladies. Mr. Louis once said, “They all call me ‘son.’ That gives me around twenty mothers.”⁵¹

Good Deeds Throughout Life

When Joe Louis started making money as a fighter, he was very generous. He bought his numerous siblings and stepsiblings clothing and wristwatches. He bought toys for the students at the local elementary school he had attended. In addition, he gave the city of Chicago a check for \$270: the amount that his stepfather had gotten in relief checks during the Great Depression. Mr. Louis continued his generosity throughout his life. While he was serving in the Army at the same time he was heavyweight champion, he discovered that some of his fellow African-American soldiers could not afford to buy tickets to one of his fights; therefore, he spent \$3,000 of his own money to buy them tickets.⁵²

CHAPTER 3: AUTHORS

Making an Author Feel Important

James Herbert, writer of such novels as *Creed*, knows celebrity photographer Richard Young, whose work appears in many celebrity-conscious newspapers and magazines. Mr. Herbert occasionally attends film premieres and parties where real celebrities are present, and he says that Mr. Young “always takes the trouble to photograph me just to make me feel important.” Mr. Young does this even though both he and Mr. Herbert know that the newspaper and magazine photo editors are never going to print Mr. Herbert’s photograph.⁵³

“Ample Security”

In 1895, African-American poet Paul Laurence Dunbar wanted to publish his first book of poems, but the publishing house of the religious organization United Brethren declined to do that unless he could give them \$125 or had “ample security” for the money. Back then, \$125 was a lot of money, and Mr. Dunbar had neither that much money nor ample security for that much money. Fortunately, the business manager of the company, William Blacher, saw how dejected Mr. Dunbar looked, and so he gave his personal guarantee to the company that the \$125 would be repaid; therefore, Mr. Dunbar’s book of poetry—*Oak and Ivy*—was printed. Also fortunately, a number of Mr. Dunbar’s friends from high school gave him their support. Mr. Dunbar personally sold copies of his book at work and to friends, and two weeks after receiving the copies of his book, he was able to give the publishing house the \$125 he owed it. After all, he had sold *all* of the copies of his book!⁵⁴

A Kind Friend of the Family

After Ralph Waldo Emerson died on April 27, 1882, Louisa May Alcott, author of *Little Women*, eulogized him, remembering how his kindness had greatly helped the impoverished Alcott family when she was growing up. He used to visit the Alcotts and leave money for them that he hid behind a candlestick or under a book on a table. He also sometimes helped them to get housing or lent money to her father.⁵⁵

Helping Others

In February of 1938, floods struck the San Joaquin Valley. To help people, author John Steinbeck worked with Tom Collins, who managed a camp for people who had migrated to California during the Great Depression to look for work. Together, they found a mother and her children. The mother was near starvation because she had given all the food to her children. Mr. Steinbeck walked two miles to a store to buy food for the mother and her children. Some public health nurses who had visited the area had left because they felt that the problem was too big for their efforts to make much improvement. Mr. Steinbeck disagreed with this view, saying that “the argument that one person’s effort can’t really do anything doesn’t seem to apply when you come on a bunch of starving children and you have a little money.” In 1939, a university student asked Mr. Steinbeck what was his philosophy of life. Mr. Steinbeck replied, “I don’t like people to be hurt or hungry or unnecessarily sad. It’s just as simple as that.” (In 1940, Mr. Steinbeck did another good deed after being awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Fiction for his masterpiece, *The Grapes of Wrath*. The Pulitzer Prize included a cash

award of \$1,000, and he gave all of the money to another writer to help him in his career: Ritch Lovejoy.)⁵⁶

A Surprise for a Tailor

Beatrix Potter once heard of a tailor who needed to finish an elegant coat so that he could deliver it the next morning. Unfortunately, he was exhausted from working on the coat and went home to sleep before he could finish his work. Fortunately, he was a good master and his apprentices worked on the coat all night as a surprise for him. When the tailor returned to his shop the next morning, he discovered that the coat was finished except for one buttonhole. In the buttonhole was a piece of paper bearing this message: “No more twist.” (Twist was a special thread used for finishing buttonholes.) Ms. Potter visited the tailor shop, took notes, and made the story into a children’s book: *The Tailor of Gloucester*. (In Ms. Potter’s story, some friendly mice finish making the coat, except for one buttonhole.)⁵⁷

A Good Person in Whom to Confide

Lesléa Newman, lesbian author of *Heather has Two Mommies*, worked with gay Beat poet Allen Ginsberg when she attended Naropa Institute’s Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics. One of her duties was to help Mr. Ginsberg answer his mail. She would read each letter out loud, he would listen, and then together they answered each letter. Ms. Newman says, “What impressed me was the way he considered every piece of mail of equal worth, whether it was from an important editor, a senator, or a farm boy in Kansas who thought he might be gay and didn’t know who else he could confide in.” Mr. Ginsberg, of course, was a good person to confide in. Later, he came to Ms. Newman’s adopted hometown—Northampton, Massachusetts—in order to read his poetry publicly, and he asked her, “So who are you into now, boys or girls?” By this time, she was out of the closet, and when she told him that, Mr. Ginsberg hugged her and told her, “I’m happy for you.” Ms. Newman says, “Since my own father, born the same year as Allen, hadn’t had such a joyful response, I greatly appreciated his gesture.”⁵⁸

Helping a Mentally Ill Friend

Poet Ezra Pound suffered from mental illness late in his life, and he began to sympathize with fascists. During World War II, he lived in Italy and spoke out in favor of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. When Italy fell to the Allies, Mr. Pound was arrested and put on trial for treason. Mr. Pound’s attorney came to E.E. Cummings, a poet and friend of Mr. Pound’s (and definitely not a fascist sympathizer), to ask for help. Mr. Pound’s money was under the control of the U.S. government, and his wife’s money could not be taken out of England due to wartime restrictions. Mr. Cummings had \$1,000 that he had earned from selling a painting, and he gave the money to Mr. Pound’s attorney, saying that he (Mr. Cummings) didn’t need the money. Actually, Mr. Cummings did need the money. His wife had big medical bills due to rheumatoid arthritis, and Mr. Cummings rarely earned money from painting. Mr. Pound was found to be too mentally unstable to be tried, and he was committed to a mental hospital, from which he was eventually released.⁵⁹

“Out of All the Letters Your Entire Class Sent, I Was the ONLY Author Who Wrote Back?”

Responding to students' letters can be a good deed. Children's book author Barbara Park was once flattered in a Texas classroom when a student told her that out of all the authors the students had written to for an assignment, she had been the only author who had written back. Wanting to hear the flattering news again, Ms. Park asked, "Really, you mean, out of all the letters your entire class sent, I was the ONLY author who wrote back?" The student replied, "Yes, all the other authors were dead."⁶⁰

Sharing the National Book Award

In 1974, poet Adrienne Rich was awarded the National Book Award for *Diving into the Wreck*; however, she declined to accept the award by herself. Instead, she insisted that two other writers—fellow nominees Alice Walker and Audre Lorde, both of whom were African Americans—also be given the National Book Award. This helped show her recognition of how important a community of women is—it is more important than an individual. Together, the three women writers wrote a speech in which they accepted the "award in the name of all women whose voices have gone and still go unheard in a patriarchal world [...]."⁶¹

An Impressive Present

African-American writer Alice Walker married Mel Leventhal, a white, Jewish civil rights lawyer. While they were living in Jackson, Mississippi, Mr. Leventhal used his legal expertise to do such things as desegregate Jackson's schools. In addition, he helped bring about the removal of "Whites Only" and "Colored" signs in restaurants, and he helped make it possible for blacks to vote. Of course, he had many good reasons for doing such things, including a personal reason. He wanted to give their six-year-old, biracial daughter, Rebecca, a racially safe Mississippi as a present for her birthday.⁶²

Studying at Spelman College

As a young woman, Alice Walker, author of *The Color Purple*, wanted to attend Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia, but she didn't have the money to travel there. Fortunately, her neighbors took up a collection and raised \$75 so she could buy a bus ticket.⁶³

Sharing at an Airport

After 9-11, things went wacky in the United States, with elderly women being forced to partially disrobe at security checkpoints at airports due to fear that old ladies may be terrorists. And, of course, no one could take liquids in carryon luggage on board planes because liquid—even if it is a bottle of port wine or of limoncello lemon liqueur—is thought by people with power—such as politicians and airport security guards—to be capable of being an ingredient in explosives. Even absurd regulations, however, do give rise to the chance to do good deeds. Columnist Mark Morford, a man of wit and intelligence and a vigorous writing style, once made the careless mistake of putting a bottle of very good port wine in his carryon luggage. Of course, airport security found it, but the security guard did Mr. Morford the very good deed of allowing him to drink some of the wine before boarding the plane. No, this was not a chugging session; Mr. Morford had an hour and a half to take a few sips—or more—of the wine. He drank half of the bottle, then he offered the rest to an elderly man to take home. It turned out that the elderly man had never tried port wine, but he was willing to give it a try: "Well, sure. I'll try some of that. What the h*ll. Thanks very much." And a friend of Mr. Morford's mother returned from a vacation in Italy, carrying a bottle of limoncello lemon liqueur in her carryon

luggage. Again, the liquid was forbidden, and rather than toss it, she headed for the women's restroom, the only place available to drink some of it. There she found a woman literally shaking because of fear of flying, and she offered some of the limoncello lemon liqueur to her. Together, they drank most of the bottle, with the results that the fear-of-flying woman became sufficiently liquored up that she could board the plane, and that the friend of Mr. Morford's mother had an interesting story to tell for the rest of her life.⁶⁴

Coming Through in a Big Way

When Bangor, Maine, needed a new baseball stadium for Little Leaguers to play in, its most famous resident, horror writer Stephen King, came through in a big way. He donated \$1 million for the construction of the stadium, which Bangor residents called the Field of Screams after its completion in 1993. The stadium is so nice that a minor-league baseball team asked to rent it, but the offer was politely declined because the stadium is for the use of children only.⁶⁵

Declining to be Bribed

Some reporters do a very good deed by uncovering corruption—and by declining to be bribed. In addition to being a very talented writer of such short stories as “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge,” Ambrose Bierce was a hard-hitting journalist for the *San Francisco Examiner*. One of the targets of his wrath was big railroads that sought deferments on government loans despite making lots of money. One executive, whose railroad was seeking a deferment on a \$75 million government loan, tried to bribe Mr. Bierce to keep him quiet. However, Mr. Bierce told the executive, “My price is seventy-five million dollars. If, when you are ready to pay, I happen to be out of town, you may hand it over to my friend, the Treasurer of the United States.”⁶⁶

A Red Rose

At New York University, Judy Blume took a course in how to write from children's author Lee Wyndham. The course must have been effective, because Ms. Blume soon sold a story to a children's magazine. To celebrate the sale, Mr. Wyndham gave her a red rose during a class.⁶⁷

Gaining Freedom Legally and Permanently

As an escaped slave, abolitionist Frederick Douglass was in danger of having his freedom taken away from him. However, a group of English abolitionists contributed enough money to pay his former master for him and so Mr. Douglass gained his freedom legally and permanently.⁶⁸

Overcoming Racism

Benson Blankenship was the older brother of Tom Blankenship, who was the main basis for Mark Twain's character Huckleberry Finn. One day, Benson discovered an escaped slave hiding in a swamp. A reward of \$50 was offered for the slave, and \$50 was a fortune to Benson; however, he brought food to the runaway and did not turn him in. Unfortunately, eventually racist white men found out about the escaped slave, they chased him, and he drowned while trying to avoid capture. Mark Twain himself grew up in a racist society, and as a result he was racist, but he managed to reform himself. He paid for several black students to attend college, including Warner Thornton McGuinn, one of the first blacks to get a degree

from Yale Law School. Mr. Twain also paid the expenses of black artist Charles Ethan Porter to study art in Paris.⁶⁹

Helping a Dying Ex-President

When Ulysses S. Grant was dying of cancer of the throat, he knew he needed money to provide for his family after he died. Mark Twain came to the rescue. He had recently become a publisher, and he agreed to pay Mr. Grant the huge royalty of 20 percent for his memoirs, much more than authors usually received. In July 1885, only three days after he had completed the second volume of his memoirs, Mr. Grant died. His family received more than enough money to take care of their needs, collecting over \$400,000 from the sale of his book.⁷⁰

“To Advise, to Comfort, to Sympathize in All Their Joys and Sorrows”

Arthur Llewelyn Davies and Sylvia du Maurier Llewelyn Davies were the parents of five boys whom James M. Barrie befriended, and on whom in part he based his character of Peter Pan. Mr. Barrie was a great friend of the entire family. When Arthur suffered from cancer, it was Mr. Barrie who paid the medical bills, and who took care of the family after Arthur died. And after Sylvia died, a letter was found in which she had written, “J.M.B. I know will do everything in his power to help our boys—to advise, to comfort, to sympathize in all their joys and sorrows.” With Sylvia’s death, Mr. Barrie became the guardian—and the sole support—of Arthur and Sylvia’s five boys.⁷¹

The Arrival of a Truckload of Toys

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Meyer Berger was known for his good deeds. Once, he wrote an article about a school for blind children. Shortly afterward, a truckload of toys arrived for the children. The director of the school was sworn to secrecy regarding the identity of the gift-giver, but after Mr. Berger interviewed people in need, financial aid always seemed to fall in their path.⁷²

“Little Sister, I Understand”

African-American *griot* (storyteller) Mary Carter Smith is known for her good deeds. As a teacher in inner-city Baltimore, Maryland, and as a Vacation Bible school teacher, Ms. Smith has come in contact with children who need some extra help. She has taken children to stores to buy them new shoes, she has given their mothers money to pay rent, and when Yvette Hector’s son died, she put her arm around Ms. Hector and said, “Little sister, I understand,” and she gave her money to help with the funeral bill.⁷³

How Many Radios?

In 1949, at age 12, young people’s author Peg Kehret got polio and was paralyzed from the neck down for a while. Her roommate while she was so badly paralyzed was a young boy named Tommy, who needed an iron lung to breathe for him. Peg had a radio, and they listened together to *The Lone Ranger*, something Tommy enjoyed very much. Eventually, Peg improved so much that she was able to go to a different hospital (the one she and Tommy were in handled only the acute cases), but she left behind her radio so that Tommy could listen to *The Lone Ranger*. She told Tommy, “My parents can bring me my radio at home.” This was a lie because Peg didn’t have another radio at home. No one had come to visit Tommy while she

was his roommate because his parents lived so far away, and since her parents often visited her, she figured that Tommy needed to hear *The Lone Ranger* much more than she did. Eventually, Peg did get well, she walked again, and she returned home to her family.⁷⁴

“For the Dogs. Spend It on the Dogs”

When Gary Paulsen decided to run the Iditarod, a 1,049-mile dog sled race in Alaska, he needed money. Many people living in the town of Bemidji, Minnesota, decided to help him. People raised money for him through holding potlucks and raffles, and many people simply handed him money. One woman gave him \$10 and said, “For the dogs. Spend it on the dogs.”⁷⁵

Russian Royalties

As the author of over 200 books, Gary Paulsen finally does not have to worry about money, and he does make good use of the money that he is now earning. For example, many of his books have been translated into Russian, and he uses his royalties from those books to support a Russian orphanage.⁷⁶

Taking Care of a Kitten

When children’s book author Gary Paulsen was a boy, each summer he worked on farms, where he got to know many useful farm dogs of the collie type. One dog named Rex helped take care of the farm animals and farmer’s children and patrolled the farmyard constantly to make sure that everything was right, and when something was not right, he took care of it. For example, he killed a skunk that was trying to get into the chicken coop. One day, Gary followed Rex around to see what he did. One of the things Rex did was to watch the other animals as they were being fed. For example, at milking time, the farmer poured milk into an old pail lid to feed the cats. Rex noticed that one kitten wasn’t strong enough to get to the milk—the bodies of the other cats were blocking his way. Therefore, Rex cleared a place for the kitten and made sure that it was able to drink some of the milk.⁷⁷

Writing the First Harry Potter Book at Nicolson’s Café

While writing the first Harry Potter book in Edinburgh, Scotland, J.K. Rowling frequently sat for hours in cafés, scribbling on sheets of paper as she carefully nursed a cup of espresso and a glass of water. Some cafe owners didn’t want her to stay for hours in their cafés because she bought only one cup of coffee, but the staff of Nicolson’s Café—which was partly owned by her brother-in-law—welcomed her despite her lack of money. They even let her use napkins to write on when she ran out of her own paper.⁷⁸

Oscar Wilde

During his time as a prisoner, author Oscar Wilde performed a good deed by paying the fines of three children who were in prison because they had poached rabbits.⁷⁹

CHAPTER 4: ART

“If You Must Retaliate—Be Sure You Miss”

Turkish boys persecuted photographer Yousuf Karsh by throwing stones at him and stealing his only playthings: marbles. Of course, this made him angry, and he told his mother, “From now on, I am the one who will carry stones.” Mothers are often compassionate. Karsh’s mother told him, “My son, they do not know what they are doing. However, if you must retaliate—be sure you miss.”⁸⁰

Kindness in Youth and Old Age

When artist Wayne Thiebaud (born in 1920) was young, he got a job washing dishes at a restaurant on the Long Beach boardwalk. Soon, he was promoted to cook. Unfortunately, his boss expected him to mix pancake flour with the ground beef so the ground beef would go further. Rather than give diners something different from what they had ordered, Wayne quit his job. Mr. Thiebaud retained his kindness in his old age. In 2005, Susan Goldman Rubin wanted to write a book about him and his art, and she stopped in at LeBaron’s Fine Art gallery, which Mr. Thiebaud’s son, Paul, owns and operates. Fortunately, Mr. Thiebaud stopped by the gallery, and she was able to talk to him for a while. Unfortunately, she forgot to ask the questions she had written down on a piece of paper just in case previous to their meeting. Fortunately, Mr. Thiebaud made a cassette tape for her, on which he recorded the answers to her questions.⁸¹

Stopping Harassment

Jack Kirby drew many, many superheroes for Marvel Comics and for DC Comics, and he was occasionally a hero in real life. A young man named Mark Evanier once worked in a business that sold comic-book-related mail-order merchandise. Eventually, he quit, and when he quit, the man who ran the business harassed him, saying that he had been stealing from the business and was going to jail. Of course, this troubled Mr. Evanier, and Mr. Kirby knew that something was troubling him, so Mr. Kirby asked him what was wrong. After hearing the story, Mr. Kirby telephoned the man who had been harassing Mr. Evanier and told him, “If you ever bother Mark again, I’ll come down there and punch your godd*mn face in.” Then he told Mr. Evanier, “Come on. Let’s have Roz make us some coffee.” Roz was Mrs. Kirby, a woman who once said, “Tell Jack that after he finishes saving the universe again, he has to take out the trash in the kitchen.” By the way, after Mr. Kirby’s death, Mr. Evanier wrote a book about Mr. Kirby that he titled *Kirby: King of Comics*.⁸²

Stevenm and His Grandmother

Tomie dePaola wrote and illustrated *The Quicksand Book* at the request of a boy who signed his name Stevenm. The boy lived in Hawaii, and because his grandmother was a librarian, he thought that she would know Mr. dePaola personally. She did know enough to find out Mr. dePaola’s address, and so she sent him a letter that Stevenm had written asking for information about quicksand. Mr. dePaola dedicated the book to “Stevenm and his grandmother.” After the book was published with Mr. dePaola’s text and illustrations and instructions for making quicksand, a telegram arrived at the publishing company, Holiday House, saying, “Stevenm is ecstatic and is whipping up a batch of quicksand and the dedication has me swinging from a cloud.”⁸³

Displaying a Painting

A young man named Bernhard Gillam wanted to be an artist, so he obtained a photograph of Henry Ward Beecher, then painted Mr. Beecher's likeness. Visiting Mr. Beecher's house, he presented him with the painting. Mr. Beecher liked the painting so much that he did the very good deed of having it exhibited in the show window of a popular store in Brooklyn. Other people saw the painting and asked Mr. Gillam to paint their portraits. Because of the great amount of business, Mr. Gillam kept raising his price from \$15 to \$25 to \$50 to \$75 per portrait—very good money in the 19th century. Eventually, Mr. Gillam became a famous cartoonist for newspapers and magazines.⁸⁴

Who are Consistently Generous?

Al Capp, creator of the comic strip *Li'l Abner*, grew up in New Haven, Connecticut. When he was a young man, he and a friend started walking to a grocery store to buy cigarettes. As usual, they stuck out their thumbs to see if they could get a ride. A car stopped, the driver said that he was going to Baltimore, and the two young men thought, "Why not?" They spent a couple of weeks on the road, quickly using up their money to buy hamburgers and being forced to rely on the kindness of strangers for food. They found that truck drivers were consistently generous—the truck drivers not only gave the boys a lift, but usually also gave them a meal at a diner.⁸⁵

Paying His Way Through Life

The older Al Capp wanted to pay his way in life. As the cartoonist who created *Li'l Abner*, he was a major celebrity and his fans wanted his autograph. Mr. Capp used to deliberately and illegibly scrawl his name on checks so people would cash the checks and not keep them because of his signature.⁸⁶

Never Contradict an Admirer

After Eugene Zimmerman became a famous 19th-century cartoonist, some people mistakenly thought that they had known him in his youth. For example, a Civil War veteran told him that he had seen him as a child drawing pictures on the sidewalk with chalk, and that he had known then that young Eugene would grow up to be famous. Mr. Zimmerman knew that the veteran's recollection was inaccurate and that he must have seen another child drawing pictures, but he did not tell the veteran. Mr. Zimmerman writes in his autobiography, "I never contradict an admirer when he recalls events in my early life. It is tragic to shatter romances that have been cherished for years, so I let it go at that."⁸⁷

CHAPTER 5: MUSIC

A No-Evictions Policy

Quite a few jazz musicians, including those among the greats, fall onto hard times in their old age—and even when they are young. When jazz journalist Nat Hentoff was a young man with his first child on the way, he worried about money, and he asked a jazz musician, "How do you make a living?" The jazz musician shrugged and said, "I wait for the phone to ring." These days, the Jazz Foundation takes care of many musicians who are about to be evicted or who lack medical insurance. For example, in March of 2008, a construction crane fell in New York City, and 92-year-old Jane Jarvis, who played with many jazz greats, including Roy Eldridge, Lionel Hampton, Benny Powell, and Clark Terry, and who played the popular "Mexican Hat

Dance” at Shea Stadium—had to evacuate her apartment. Benny Powell and studio musician Ann Ruckert called the Jazz Foundation, and the foundation paid for a hotel room for Ms. Jarvis to stay at until she could move back into her apartment. According to the Jazz Foundation, “Not one musician in eight years has ever gone homeless who came to us before being evicted.”⁸⁸

Friends Forever

Jason Mizell attended a tough school in New York City: Andrew Jackson High. One day, a fight broke out and a kid pulled a gun and started shooting, wounding another kid named Wendell Fite in the leg. Mr. Fite remembers, “Nobody noticed I was hit. Everybody else had gone down the hall, and I’m lying there with this guy [with a gun] coming at me, and then I look up and I see Jason. He came back and lifted me up and dragged me out of there. We were friends forever from there on out.” Later, Jason Mizell became better known as Jam Master Jay, part of the hip-hop group Run-DMC, and Wendell Fite became better known as DJ Hurricane, the DJ for the Beastie Boys.⁸⁹

Giving Back to the Neighborhood

Jason “Jay” Mizell, aka Jam Master Jay of Run-DMC, was quite the dandy in high school. He wore Lee jeans, black-and-white shell-toed Adidas sneakers, a black velour hat complete with a feather—and he always made sure that the color of his shirt matched the color of his shoelaces. However, eventually he grew tired of changing the shoelaces in his sneakers each morning, so he started to wear sneakers without any shoelaces. After all, he reasoned, “It matches—no shoelaces matches with everything!” After he became famous, he remained very much the same, choosing to live in a modest home in his hometown of Hollis, Queens, and choosing to give back to the community. Frequently, he allowed local musicians to use his Merrick Avenue recording studio free of charge. On many Saturdays, if he was not touring, he could be found in a neighborhood park teaching kids how to play basketball or chess. Jay made his mother proud—although when he was a kid, she worried about him. One day, he met a friend by accident on Hollis Avenue. Unfortunately, the friend had just burgled a house. Also unfortunately, a police car arrived on the scene. The friend ran; Jay was arrested and spent a few days in a tough juvenile detention center. Not wanting his mother to worry about him, he told her that the stay in the detention center had been fun. Most unfortunately of all, this attempt to make his mother feel better failed horribly. Convinced that her son was becoming a hardened criminal, she cried.⁹⁰

Queen of Country Music, aka the Book Lady

Dolly Parton grew up impoverished. Her father was an illiterate but practical man, and he didn’t have any money to give to the doctor who delivered her, so he gave him a sack of corn meal that he had made from corn he had grown. Dolly sang from an early age, and even created a toy microphone from an empty tin can placed on top of a stick pushed into the crack between a couple of boards on the porch. She got her look—cheap (her word, not mine)—from a child’s idea of glamour. She admired the inexpensive glamour of the dyed-blonde town prostitute, and she copied her look. For years, she worked with Porter Wagoner, but being ambitious, she eventually decided to go off on her own. He sued her, and the split cost her a reported \$1 million. But when he got into tax trouble, she bought the rights to his songs for hundreds of thousands of dollars, and once he was out of tax trouble, she returned the rights to

him—without charge. Her Dollywood is a place where gays can go—gays make up a portion of her fan base. An important charity she started is the Imagination Library. She chooses an impoverished area, and then gives all the children in that area a hardback book of his or her own each month from their birth until they are five years old. The charity started in Tennessee, but has since expanded across the United States, including all Native American reservations, and Canada and Great Britain. As of 2008, she had given away over 11 million books. To most people, Dolly is the Queen of Country Music. To many, many children, she is the Book Lady.⁹¹

“Dizzy and Giddy with Hope”

Songwriter Jim White almost did not become a recording artist, although he was intrigued when he had the chance to record his songs. He talked about the opportunity with a trusted friend, who asked him, “Do you think that these songs that you wrote might be helpful to others?” Mr. White replied, “No,” but the friend told him, “Well, you’re wrong. The songs you wrote will help people. Not all people, but certain people. If you want to be of service to people who are in some way lost like you are, then go be a musician.” Just a few months after the release of his first album, he heard from a lesbian whose child had been in a coma. Mr. White says, “The doctors had informed her there was little chance that her child would pull through and told her to prepare for its death.” Each day, the woman and her partner listened to one of Mr. White’s songs, “A Perfect Day to Chase Tornados.” He describes the song in this way: “It’s a song I wrote when I was seriously contemplating killing myself. It’s about not only standing and facing your fears, but aggressively denying their power over your life and circumstance.” The lesbian couple listened to that song many times on the way to the hospital to be with their child, and after a month the child came out of the coma. Mr. White respects the couple’s courage in not giving up, and he says, “The idea that a song I wrote in some small way helped them muster up that courage to fight such a fight makes me dizzy and giddy with hope for my purpose here on this earth.”⁹²

Saving on Taxi Fares

Before Cary Grant became Cary Grant—he was named Archibald Leach at birth—he was in demand as an escort (in a social, not a sexual, sense), although he was still impoverished. Once, he was recruited to take opera singer Lucrezia Bori to a dinner party. A kind person, she sensed his poverty, and so she insisted that she wanted to walk to and from the dinner party. They did, and she was able to save him the money he would have spent on taxis.⁹³

Motivating the Musicians

While in a rage at the musicians of his orchestra, conductor Arturo Toscanini would sometimes stomp on expensive watches and ruin them. Such actions revealed the Maestro’s state of mind and motivated the musicians. A friend once presented him with several inexpensive watches to stomp on as needed—the Maestro was pleased with the gift.⁹⁴

Tea for Two

When he was in his 90s, British conductor Sir Adrian Boult was no longer able to walk, so if he ever needed to travel, his chauffeur would pick him up and carry him to and from the car. Once, Sir Adrian traveled to meet the Queen Mother in order to receive some documents from her. When Sir Adrian reached the Queen Mother’s residence, he decided that he didn’t want to

get out of the car, so he said, “It would be better for everyone were the documents to be brought out to me.” No problem. The Queen Mother brought the documents to him, as well as some footmen with a table, a chair, and a silver tray bearing food and tea. The Queen Mother sat on the chair, Sir Adrian remained in the back seat of his car, and they proceeded to have tea together.⁹⁵

In Defense of “Stumblebums”

In Chicago, critic Claudia Cassidy once called the visiting Met performers “a bunch of stumblebums” because some of the Met’s principal singers were absent. Ever loyal to the Met and its performers, Sir Rudolf Bing cancelled all of the remaining Met appearances in Chicago.⁹⁶

Kindness from a Competitor

In 1971, Plácido Domingo asked to cancel two performances of *Don Carlo* at the Metropolitan Opera so he could sing two special performances of Giuseppe Verdi’s *Requiem* at La Scala. In his presence, Rudolf Bing telephoned Richard Tucker to see if he would be willing to take over the performances. Mr. Bing’s telephone had a speaker that allowed anyone in his office to hear the conversation, so he told Mr. Tucker, “Just be careful what you say now, because one of your competitors is in my office.” Without hesitation, Mr. Tucker replied, “I have none.” (He also very kindly agreed to take over the performances.)⁹⁷

A Hungover Soprano

After soprano Leslie Garrett won the Cleethorpes Cup at the Cleethorpes Festival, her father took her to a pub to celebrate. While her father wasn’t watching, Ms. Garrett drank a concoction known as a Blue Country, consisting of a pint of Guinness and a shot from every bottle in the bar. The next morning, she woke up with a hangover—unfortunately, she needed to audition that afternoon for a grant that would pay for her college education. Desperate for help, she attended a warm-up session with her voice teacher. However, her voice teacher saw that she had a hangover and was unable to sing well, so she told Ms. Garrick, “You’ve ruined your chances—I hope you’re proud of yourself.” Ms. Garrick went to the audition alone, where a kind receptionist noticed how haggard she looked. The receptionist invited her to lie down, and she moved Ms. Garrick’s audition time to last, giving her the maximum amount of time to recover. The time for rest worked, and Ms. Garrick recovered her voice and sang superbly, thus saving her college education and her future career as a principal soprano with the English National Opera.⁹⁸

No Food, and a Dark Apartment

As a young voice student, soprano Rita Hunter was frequently without money. One evening, she was sitting in her apartment. She had no food, as it was the day before payday. In addition, the apartment was dark—she had no coins for the electricity meter. Fortunately, some friends came by and asked, “Why didn’t you tell us?” They put coins in the meter and bought her some fish and chips. Each week thereafter, they gave her a small box of groceries. In addition, the owner of her apartment realized that she needed food, so she would give her a small bag of reject pastries each day from the bakery below the apartment.⁹⁹

The Swedish Nightingale

Jenny Lind, the 19th-century singer known as the Swedish Nightingale, once went for a walk in her native country and asked a villager for some water. The villager, a woman whose life was obviously difficult, gave her a drink, and they started to talk. After some minutes, the woman began to talk about the famous celebrity Jenny Lind, and she asked her visitor if she had ever heard her sing. Ms. Lind replied, “Yes. I, too, am a singer, and if you like, I will sing you one of Jenny’s songs.” After singing the song, she gave the woman £5 and said, “Now, you, too, may say that you have heard Jenny sing.”¹⁰⁰

“Long Live Piccaver!”

On June 2, 1937, Herr Simon Rosenheck, a fan of English tenor Alfred Piccaver, became overly enthusiastic at a performance of *Tosca* at the Vienna State Opera and called out loudly, “Bravo!” and “Long live Piccaver!” For this offense, he was arrested and charged a fine. Mr. Piccaver himself paid the fine for him.¹⁰¹

An Extra Rehearsal

After Florence Page Kimball had suffered two strokes and was dying, she wanted to hear Leontyne Price sing in *Madama Butterfly*. Obviously, Ms. Kimball was unable to attend a performance, so Ms. Price suggested—and the Metropolitan Opera agreed—that she sing at an extra onstage orchestra/singers rehearsal just so Ms. Kimball could hear her.¹⁰²

Music Lessons—or Food?

As a young student of voice, Italian baritone Tito Gobbi had a little money—enough money to pay for food, or enough money to pay for voice lessons, but not enough money to pay for both food and voice lessons. Because he was so dedicated, he used his money to pay for voice lessons. Fortunately, his voice teacher, tenor Giulio Crimi, noticed that his young student was becoming thinner and thinner, so he refused to accept payment for his lessons until Mr. Gobbi could afford to pay him.¹⁰³

“Surely All These People Can’t be Deserving!”

Frequently, people wrote appeals for charity to opera singer Enrico Caruso. According to his wife, Dorothy, he never turned down any of these requests, and he mailed out check after check. She once said to him, “Surely all these people can’t be deserving!” Mr. Caruso replied, “You are right, but can you tell me which is and which is not?”¹⁰⁴

Repaying Kindness

Dimitri Andreevich Usatov recognized Feodor Chaliapin’s great potential as a bass singer, so he gave him free voice lessons and made sure he received a small grant of money and enough food and suitable clothing. Mr. Chaliapin was with him only a year, but he never forgot Mr. Usatov’s kindness. After Mr. Usatov died, Mr. Chaliapin financially supported his widow until she died.¹⁰⁵

Buying Kids Candy

Johannes Brahms once saw some poorly dressed children eagerly looking through the window of a candy shop. He took them inside and bought them whatever they wanted.¹⁰⁶

Losing His Teeth

For a while, jazz musicians King Oliver and Louis Armstrong played together, but Mr. Armstrong eventually left the band and surpassed Mr. Oliver. In his old age, Mr. Oliver developed gum disease and lost his teeth—and therefore lost his ability to play the cornet. To help him out, Mr. Armstrong sent him money until April 10, 1938, when Mr. Oliver died.¹⁰⁷

A Home-Cooked Meal—for 20 People

During the Great Depression, gospel singer Mahalia Jackson saw a line of people waiting to get soup at a kitchen in Chicago. She thought for a moment and realized that although she was far from being rich, she had money in her pocket and good food at her home, so she invited the people waiting in line to her home for a meal. She cooked ham hocks, neck bones, rice, cornbread, and string beans for about 20 people. Thereafter, when she saw people standing in line for soup and she had the money to buy food to feed them, she invited them to her place for a home-cooked meal.¹⁰⁸

Relieving Poverty

Even as a youngster, folk singer Joan Baez was determined to do something to relieve poverty. When she was in the fourth grade, she went around collecting money from her parents and friends so that she could buy the poorest girl in her class a new dress, new shoes, new socks, and a new hair ribbon.¹⁰⁹

Honor the Earth

The Indigo Girls occasionally go on an Honor the Earth tour that mixes musicianship with activism. In 1993, their first Honor the Earth tour, which went to only three cities, raised nearly \$70,000 for Native American grassroots organizations. In addition, the group raised consciousness about an environmental cleanup of radioactive soil that was needed in Alaska at the Point Hope Native American village. Music fans sent thousands of postcards to Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt, resulting in the cleanup of the village by the Environmental Protection Agency.¹¹⁰

Reforming to Fight Cystic Fibrosis

A couple of bands that were popular in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, in the 1980s, reformed in the 2000s for an important cause: to raise money for cystic fibrosis. The impetus was that Allie, the 2-year-old daughter of trombonist/singer John Plymale of the Pressure Boys, was diagnosed with the disease. Quickly, Mr. Plymale began to use his music to raise money to combat the disease. He put together the compilation album *Songs For Sixty-Five Roses* to benefit the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. He also got his old band together to perform at benefit concerts. The band the Sneakers was happy to reform and to open at the benefit concerts, also. Chris Stamey of the Sneakers said that “we are thrilled to be a part of this benefit in particular. Allie is such a sweetheart.” A posed PR photo shows young Allie with the Pressure Boys—she is holding her hands over her ears.¹¹¹

“I Thought I’d Better Come Take Care of Everything Else”

Blues singer Bessie Smith was black, and her manager, Frank Walker, was white. When Mr. Walker's son became very ill, Ms. Smith arrived at his house, although she was supposed to be performing on the road. She announced to Mr. Walker's wife, "I'm Bessie Smith. You've got enough to do just taking care of your boy, so I thought I'd better come take care of everything else." She did the shopping, cooking, and cleaning until the Walkers' son was healthy again.¹¹²

Buying a Tombstone for Bessie Smith

In 1937, the great blues singer Bessie Smith died. She was buried near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, without a tombstone to mark her grave. In 1970, people became aware that Ms. Smith lay in an unmarked grave when Barbara Muldow, a black woman, wrote a letter to a Philadelphia newspaper. Two women each gave half the money for a tombstone to be put on Ms. Smith's grave. One woman was Juanita Green of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; the other was blues-rock singer Janis Joplin.¹¹³

"We're Hungry"

Early in his music career, Buddy Holly and his band didn't make much money, and they ran out of food. Desperate, he called a friend who owned a restaurant and said, "We're hungry." The friend allowed them to eat at the restaurant in return for playing live there each Friday. In addition, he paid them a little money.¹¹⁴

CHAPTER 6: DANCE

Dancing with Handicaps

Children with physical handicaps want to dance, too. Joann Ferrara helps make that possible with her Dancing Dreams ballet program in Queens for children with such handicaps as cerebral palsy or Erb's palsy. She teaches the children, some of whom cannot stand on their own, how to dance, and she creates a recital at which they can dance in public. Volunteers hold the children by the waist as they make arm movements and dance. The program is very good physical therapy for the girls; in 2007, a little girl named Abbey worked hard to be able to lift her left arm well so she could dance. Also in 2007, a little five-year-old girl named Monica had a special surprise for her father. He was in the audience for the recital, and she stood for the first time on her own, with no support except for a cane.¹¹⁵

Not Staying

During the days of legal segregation in the United States, black singer Marion Anderson telephoned to make reservations to stay at the Algonquin Hotel in New York City. Over the phone, the hotel clerk did not know that Ms. Anderson was black, so he made the reservation. However, when she showed up at the hotel, her reservation was not honored simply because of her race. Modern dance pioneer Martha Graham was staying at the Algonquin at the time, and when she learned how the hotel employees had treated Ms. Anderson, she was incensed. She told the manager that she was leaving, why she was leaving, and that she would never again stay at the Algonquin.¹¹⁶

"Sit Down with Me, Here"

Martha Graham could be a caring human being with the dancers in her company. During a 1930s tour, a dancer in her company received news that her father had died. Ms. Graham told the dancer, “Sit down with me, here,” then she held the dancer as the dancer spoke about her father and wept.¹¹⁷

Not Sitting Back

Arthur Mitchell decided to start the Dance Theatre of Harlem after the assassination of Martin Luther King to make sure that African-Americans had opportunities in the dance world. He had been commuting to Brazil to start up a national ballet company there, but he started thinking: “I asked myself, why are you going to Brazil with all this turmoil happening here at home? You’re like everyone else—you see the problems, but you sit back and do very little to help.” Mr. Mitchell thereafter did not sit back.¹¹⁸

Stretching Minds

Anna Pavlova was always interested in stretching her mind, and she wanted members of her dance company—many of them teenaged girls—to also stretch their minds. In Italy, she returned to her hotel after touring the local art and old buildings, and she was shocked to see some of her dancers playing cards. She immediately ordered some cars, and took the dancers with her on a sightseeing tour. At the theater that evening, she asked her dancers how they had spent the afternoon—most of the dancers replied that they had slept, again shocking Ms. Pavlova, who wondered why anyone would miss the opportunity to see Italy. After the dancers explained that rehearsals left little time for sightseeing and that sightseeing could be expensive, Ms. Pavlova rearranged the time for rehearsals so that her dancers would have the afternoons free. In addition, she offered to pay the expenses for sightseeing provided the dancers would give her an account of what they had seen and their impressions of it. In Egypt everyone was given a day off from rehearsal to visit the Sphinx and the Pyramids.¹¹⁹

Trying to Pay Her Advertising Bills

In 1919, Anna Pavlova danced in Liege, Belgium. To get publicity for her performances, she advertised in the newspapers; however, after the performances, when her staff went to the newspapers to pay her advertising bills, they declined to accept any money, saying, “Pavlova has done so much for the national appreciation of art that we simply cannot bring ourselves to accept money from her.”¹²⁰

Purple: An Unlucky Color?

Many people in the arts have superstitions. For example, ballerina Alexandra Danilova thought that purple was an unlucky color and so she hated to receive purple flowers at her curtain calls. Remarkably, while she was dancing with Alicia Markova, she never received purple flowers. Later, she discovered that Ms. Markova would examine the flowers ahead of time. If the flowers for Ms. Danilova were purple and the flowers for Ms. Markova were not purple, she would switch the cards so Ms. Danilova would not receive the purple flowers.¹²¹

Shelter in a Life-Threatening Blizzard

Black entertainers Olivette Miller and her troupe arrived in Sioux Falls, North Dakota, during a life-threatening blizzard. They had previously made arrangements for lodgings, but when the

lodging manager saw that they were black, the manager reneged on the contract and told them to find lodgings elsewhere. They appealed to the great dancer Bill Robinson, aka Mr. Bojangles, for help, and he called the president of the Pennsylvania Railroad and made arrangements to have the train's dining and drawingroom cars heated and staffed for Olivette Miller and her troupe.¹²²

CHAPTER 7: TV AND MOVIES

WALL-E Dedication

If you watch the credits of the 2008 Pixar movie *WALL-E*, you will see that the film is dedicated to Justin Wright (1981-2007). From birth Mr. Wright suffered from a severely defective heart, and he got a heart transplant at age 12. He liked to draw, and he and his doctor visited Pixar together. When he was in college, he became an intern at Pixar, and then he worked there as a storyboard artist. Unfortunately, he suffered a heart attack and died in March of 2008, a little before *WALL-E* was released. Now his name will live at least as long as people watch *WALL-E*.¹²³

“Well, I’ll Never See that Horse, But I Love that Guy, Anyway”

Eric Roberts acted in *It’s My Party*, a movie in which he had a number of flashback scenes with a white horse. The horse’s name was Silk, and it was a gift to Mr. Roberts from Wayne Newton, whom Mr. Roberts had helped to be cast in the movie *Best of the Best 2* and had become friends with. After Mr. Newton gave Mr. Roberts the horse, but it had not yet been delivered, Mr. Robert heard on the news that Mr. Newton owed \$7 million in back taxes. He immediately thought, “Well, I’ll never see that horse, but I love that guy, anyway.” Of course, he had underestimated Mr. Newton, as many people do. A month later, he received a telephone call asking him where the horse should be delivered. He arranged a spot for her at the equestrian center in Los Angeles, and very quickly the mare arrived. Why had it taken a month for the horse to arrive? Mr. Newton had taken the time to have her bred. Soon, she gave birth to a male colt that Mr. Roberts named Sagan (after Carl Sagan).¹²⁴

“A True Friend and a Great Love”

Harrison Ford has done rather well for himself financially, making a reported \$100 million for each decade he has been acting. To make that much money, an actor can’t make independent films, and he has never made an independent movie. In fact, he has said, “I simply have no particular yearning to do the same work for less money.” His first wife was Mary Marquardt, who had been a cheerleader in his high school. Their marriage failed eventually, and today she has multiple sclerosis. He has not abandoned her, and he provides for her, including financially. Ms. Marquardt says, “Harrison has been a true friend and a great love. He has stood by me quietly, asking for nothing in return, through my darkest days.”¹²⁵

A Second Chance to Make an Acceptance Speech

At the 2008 Academy Awards, a low-budget Irish film titled *Once* won a Best Song Oscar for “Falling Strongly.” Glen Hansard made a wonderful short speech in which he urged the audience to make art, but Markéta Irglová’s speech was unheard because music started playing. In an act of great sensitivity, Oscars host Jon Stewart brought Ms. Irglová back on stage so she

could make her speech and urge the audience to dare to dream. Mr. Stewart then joked that when the two Oscar winners were backstage, Mr. Hansard had wanted the two Oscars to kiss. Ms. Irglová objected, “They’re both guys,” and Mr. Hansard argued, “But it’s Hollywood.”¹²⁶

Communist Sympathizers? Or Good-Deed Doers?

James Cagney and several other actors were accused of being Communist sympathizers in 1940 because of some financial contributions they had made. Mr. Cagney responded to the allegations by saying, “We are accused of contributing to radical causes. When you are told a person is sick or in need, you don’t ask him his religion, nationality, or politics.”¹²⁷

Many Good Deeds by a Strong-Willed Actress

While traveling to a remote location, a Paramount movie electrician survived an airplane crash although he lost his leg. Paramount promised the electrician that he would always have a job with them, but a few years and a change in department heads later, the electrician was laid off. Actress Carole Lombard immediately went to see Paramount’s Ernst Lubitsch, saying, “I know you don’t know about this, Ernst, but” Quickly, the electrician was rehired, and he kept on working at Paramount long after Ms. Lombard died in an airplane crash. Another good deed Ms. Lombard did was to protect young starlets against the roving hands of a particular photographer, whom celebrity photographer John Engstead identifies vaguely as “the fresh photographer at Sennett’s.” He once tried to rove his fingers on Ms. Lombard’s body, and she punched him twice—hard. No more roving hands on Ms. Lombard’s body—and no more roving hands on the bodies of the starlets who requested that Ms. Lombard accompany them on photo shoots with this particular photographer. Here’s yet another good deed done by Ms. Lombard. Occasionally, a wardrobe girl would forget an item of clothing that Ms. Lombard was supposed to wear in a scene. Whenever that happened, Ms. Lombard would protect the job of the wardrobe girl by saying it was her fault and not the wardrobe girl’s fault that the item was missing.¹²⁸

Contacting A Hit Man

Can a hit man do a good deed? Yes. When actress Angelina Jolie was a young actress enrolled in film school in New York, she became depressed and decided to hire a hit man to murder her, believing that if she committed suicide directly it would be harder on her family and friends. However, when she contacted the hit man, he advised her to wait a month and then call him if she still wanted his services. One month later, Ms. Jolie was no longer depressed, and she did not call the hit man.¹²⁹

Many Kindnesses

Frank Sinatra was often incredibly generous. When Bela Lugosi, star of *Dracula*, died impoverished, it was Mr. Sinatra who paid for his funeral. When actor Lee J. Cobb had been ill, spending time in a hospital, he was worried about paying his hospital bill, but he found out that it had already been paid—by a man he didn’t even know: Frank Sinatra. Mr. Cobb made a telephone call to ask, “Mr. Sinatra, we’ve never met, but I understand you have covered my hospital costs. Why?” Mr. Sinatra replied, “Because I like your films.” Of course, Mr. Sinatra loved his children. When Nancy, his daughter, turned 30, he gave her a birthday present: a package containing \$1 million. One day, he stood up to movie star John Wayne because he felt that Mr. Wayne had insulted a friend of his: the singer Gordon McRae. The occasion was a

charity event in the 1950s. Jack Warner, head of Warner Brothers, wanted Mr. McRae to sing and bid \$1,000 for that privilege. Mr. Wayne did not want Mr. McRae to sing and bid \$2,000 for that privilege. John Wayne was physically a lot bigger than Frank Sinatra, but Mr. Sinatra let him know exactly what he thought of Mr. Wayne's joke. (By the way, Mr. Sinatra enjoyed drinking, and he occasionally got a hangover. He once said, "I feel sorry for people who don't drink. When they wake up in the morning, that's as good as they're going to feel all day.")¹³⁰

Protecting Children

Actress Meryl Streep and her friend Wendy Gordon became concerned about pesticide residue on food when she realized that the guidelines concerning how much pesticide residue was safe for human beings to consume were for adults. Children were not even considered when the guidelines were issued. Largely because of their efforts, in 1996 President Bill Clinton signed the Food Quality Protection Act, which considers the safety of children in determining how much pesticide residue is allowable on fruits and vegetables. According to President Clinton, the act gives "parents the peace of mind that comes from knowing that the fruits, the vegetables, the grains that parents put down in front of their children are safe."¹³¹

A Klingon Death Howl

Avril Storm Bourbon, a professional costumer, plays the half-Klingon, half-Irish K'Lannagh O'Sullivan at *Star Trek* conventions. One of her friends, Chuck, took *Star Trek* seriously, and he knew every word to every Klingon song ever performed on *Star Trek*. After Chuck died, Avril and some of Chuck's friends who enjoyed dressing as Klingons showed up for the funeral. They didn't wear costumes, but they received permission from Chuck's mother to perform a Klingon Death Howl after most mourners had left. The Death Howl began softly, then grew very loud, ending in a scream. Some family members joined in, feeling that it was a very appropriate way to express their feelings.¹³²

"Consider It Payment Deferred"

Joe Franklin used to give a lot of handouts to old vaudevillians and other old-time entertainers who needed it. When they would protest that they didn't need charity, he would tell them, "Consider it payment deferred," then he would explain, "If I had been alive to see you at the height of your stardom, I would have spent at least this amount going to your shows. Consider this what I would have paid if I had had the chance."¹³³

Giving Recognition Where Recognition is Deserved

One kind of good deed consists of ensuring that people get the recognition they deserve. The cast of TV's *Ugly Betty* appeared at a fundraiser in 2007, and somehow new cast member David Blue was overlooked when members of the cast were introduced. Longer established cast member Christopher Gorham took action and introduced Mr. Blue, who says, "[T]hat goes to show you, on set and off, how great this cast is because they care about each other, they support each other, and they're incredibly talented and hard working."¹³⁴

Helping Her Parents

When Oprah Winfrey became rich and famous, she wanted to help her parents. She bought her mother a condominium and gave her a generous allowance so that she could retire. However,

her father was more difficult to buy gifts for, since he insisted he had everything he needed. Eventually, she was able to buy him a new set of tires for his truck and a big-screen TV for his barbershop so he and his customers were able to watch *The Oprah Winfrey Show* in style. She also got him tickets for the October 1987 Mike Tyson-Tyrell Biggs boxing match. Much later, she finally got him to accept another gift—a light-blue Mercedes-Benz sedan.¹³⁵

A Gift of a Sign

During the 1960s, Ernie Anderson played the popular horror-movie host Ghoulardi on Cleveland, Ohio, television. Among his good deeds was to lend his face to an advertisement that said, “Don’t Jay Walk! Live Longer!” While out driving with a friend, the two came across a bus bearing the sign on its side. It was the first one they had seen, so Mr. Anderson decided that he had to have it. Therefore, he boarded the bus and kept the driver laughing while his friend dismantled the sign and put it in the car. Mr. Anderson then got in the car and they drove to the television station. When they reached the lobby, they found a gift for Mr. Anderson—a sign just like the one they had stolen.¹³⁶

CHAPTER 8: THEATER

“No Collections in My Company. Never”

Richard Mansfield, the great 19th-century actor, took care of the members of his acting company. Once, the members of his company were taking up a collection for one of them. Mr. Mansfield found out about the collection and said, “No collections in my company. Never. Return every cent. Pay all the bills and charge them to my account.”¹³⁷

A Gift for New York

In October 2001, Meryl Streep needed to plan a Broadway excursion for her youngest daughter, Louisa, and some of her friends, all of whom were still depressed after the 9-11 terrorist attacks. She ended up taking them to a matinee of *Mamma Mia!*, which features the music of Abba. Ms. Streep remembers, “The first part was really wordy, and then ‘Dancing Queen’ started up. And for the rest of the show they were dancing on their chairs and they were so, so happy. We all went out of the theatre floating on the air. I thought, ‘What a gift to New York right now.’” She sent the cast a thank-you note, and seven years later she starred in the movie version of the play.¹³⁸

A Permanent Home for the Rose Theater

Actress Judi Dench won an Oscar for her performance in *Shakespeare in Love*. She was impressed with the set of the Rose Theater, and rather than letting it be destroyed, she begged for it, and paid the storage fees while searching for a permanent home for it. Eventually, the set ended up at the site of the old Collins Music Hall, which is located at Islington Green in North London.¹³⁹

Music for Steerage Passengers

Shakespearean actress Julia Marlowe was capable of great kindness. In 1903, she traveled to Europe, and during the sea voyage she was very concerned about the passengers in steerage.

Once, she hired the ship's band to play for the passengers there.¹⁴⁰

Passing Forward a Letter

Edward Craig, the son of the actress Ellen Terry, once performed a great kindness for actor John Gielgud. Mr. Gielgud was going through a time of trouble, and so Mr. Craig wrote him a letter and enclosed a handwritten sympathetic note by Ellen Terry, which many years previously she had written to him when he was going through a time of trouble. Mr. Gielgud much appreciated this gesture.¹⁴¹

“Come, Let's Go Visit the Poor”

Because he spent his entire life in theater, director Tyrone Guthrie knew many old actors and actresses who were no longer capable of working. Once, he told his friend John Gibson, “Come, let's go visit the poor.” Then he and Mr. Gibson set off to visit the old actors and actresses, to whom Mr. Guthrie gave money—something he did on a regular basis.¹⁴²

Free Shoes for Actors

Conrad Kenson was an actor who knew the importance of good shoes in his profession. He was also wealthy, and when he died he left \$250,000 to the Actors' Fund so that actors could go to a Thom McCann store and get a paid-for pair of shoes. Mr. Kenson once said, “An actor cannot hold his head up if his heels are run-down.”¹⁴³

Selling a Painting

Edwin Forrest, a famous 19th-century actor, did many good deeds. One winter, he found an ill, impoverished man shivering in the cold. Mr. Forrest wrapped him in his overcoat and got help for him. On another occasion, a poor woman tried to sell him a painting. Mr. Forrest suspected that it was the only thing of value she had, so he took the woman and her family, put them in a comfortable apartment—at his expense—and hung the painting on one of the apartment's walls.¹⁴⁴

“First Time I've Helped Applaud Myself”

English celebrity Joyce Grenfell frequently entertained in hospitals. Once, she went to the bedside of a badly stricken patient who was humming a folk song. She recognized the song and sang it for the patient. Then she took the patient's hands and gently clapped them together, saying, “First time I've helped applaud myself.”¹⁴⁵

CHAPTER 9: EDUCATION

Involved in the Community

In 1966, Nat Hentoff wrote a book titled *Our Children are Dying* about P.S. 119, a Harlem elementary school in New York City. Mr. Hentoff is interested in educational successes as well as educational failures, and an educational success was the principal of P.S. 119, a white Jewish man named Elliott Shapiro who was involved in the community even outside of school hours. For example, when he learned that two houses in the neighborhood lacked heat, Mr. Shapiro let the agent of the owner know that unless the houses' heating systems were fixed, he and other teachers would form a picket line in front of the houses and give the owner lots of bad publicity. As you would expect, very quickly the houses had heat again. Mr. Elliott says, "Our school has to have an organic relationship with the community. If the staff tries to take action on housing or other problems in the neighborhood, that indicates to the community that there is hope. Then the parents come alive! In any case, what happens in the street affects our children."¹⁴⁶

Beloved Teachers

Artists Josef and Ani Albers escaped the Holocaust and came to the United States, where they taught at Black Mountain College in North Carolina. When summer arrived, they had no money for travel. Knowing that, ten of their students, who loved these artists and teachers, invited them to be their guests and spend one week each with the students' families.¹⁴⁷

Getting By Without Funding

All too often, funding is not available for school libraries. One student, Mitchell Nesheim, took action. To get books for his Mount Shasta (CA) High School Library, he wrote an article for local media in which he posted the names of authors whose books the library wanted and whose books were required or recommended for courses. He then asked the readers of the article to look on their bookshelves for books by those authors and to consider donating them to the school library. This is a great idea because all too many of us have books that we will never reread, but that other people would be happy to read.¹⁴⁸

CHAPTER 10: FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Fall Down the Waterfall

When Lindsay Petroff and her family moved to a new home, she and her two sisters wanted a clubhouse and play set. Their father loved carpentry, and one morning Lindsay woke to the banging of a hammer. She opened her window and called, "Dad! Are you doing what I think you are doing?" He called back, "Maybe!" She knew then that he was building a clubhouse, and she wanted to come outside right away, but it was way too early, and he made her go back to bed. Lindsay remembers, "It was like Christmas morning when you wake up at 4 a.m. and your parents make you go back to sleep." Eventually, Lindsay and her sisters were able to go outside, and her father finished the clubhouse—and the monkey bars, the slide, the swings, etc. Lindsay says, "After it passed my dad's tests, we were unleashed and we played for hours and hours. It was better than Christmas, Easter, and the Fourth of July combined. We were so

excited we even slept in it that night.” One of the games Lindsay and her two sisters played was called “Fall Down the Waterfall.” In this game, one sister was on the slide holding on while the other sisters poured buckets of water down the slide, making it slippery. Eventually, of course, the child would slide down, ending up in a muddy puddle. Later, their father remodeled the clubhouse, adding such amenities as a balcony. Still later, Lindsay and her sisters grew up and no longer played in the clubhouse and play set, which sat unused in the back yard. Eventually, their father dismantled the clubhouse and play set, which he took to the yard of another family with young children but not much money and reassembled. Lindsay says, “Every now and then, when I look out to the backyard, I get a pang of sadness at the empty spot where it used to be, but I’m glad someone else has the chance to make wonderful memories with it as well.”¹⁴⁹

Service Animal on Duty

Don and Janet Burlison have a farm in North Carolina, and they noticed that their pet miniature horse, Twinky, had the gentleness and patience of guide dogs that are used to help blind people. Therefore, they decided to see if they could train their miniature horses to act as guide horses for blind people. Their idea worked, and Dan Shaw, a blind man who lives in Ellsworth, Maine, with his wife, received Cuddles, the first guide horse to be trained by the Burlisons. Cuddles stands only 24 inches tall. While working, she wears a harness that Dan holds on to, and she wears sneakers on her hoofs so she doesn’t slip on floors or damage them. She also wears a blanket that bears this message: “DO NOT TOUCH. Service Animal on Duty.” Cuddles lives inside the house and is housebroken. When she needs to go to the bathroom, she goes to the door and starts neighing. Cuddles is able to take Dan across streets, on escalators, and even onto trains, and she once pushed Dan safely out of the way of a bicycle. Even wild horses can become guides, although not for human beings. When a wild horse goes blind, a horse with sight often becomes its guide and protector.¹⁵⁰

An Icy Rescue

In the winter of 1995, the weather was so cold that over four inches of ice formed on a small lake in Indiana, making it safe to walk on. However, a few warm days in February melted some of the ice, making it dangerous to walk on. Unfortunately, 12-year-old Josh Mitchell didn’t realize that, and he decided to take a short cut to a friend’s house by walking across the semi-frozen lake. He fell through the ice, and a dog named Levi, the pet of Denise and George Hammond, saw him and started whining. George heard the whining, investigated, and saw Josh floundering in the icy water. He ordered, “Levi, fetch!” Levi ran out onto the lake, jumped into the water, and allowed Josh to hold on to him. Meanwhile, George and Denise brought Levi’s 20-foot leash out to the lake and tried to throw it to Josh, but the leash was too short. Because she didn’t know how long Levi could keep Josh afloat, Denise went out on the ice, knowing that although she weighed less than her husband, she would probably fall through the ice. In fact, she did fall through the ice four feet away from Josh. She kept breaking the ice until she could reach Josh, then she kept him afloat. George called Levi, and Levi came out of the water. Two neighbors brought an extension ladder out to the lake and pushed it to where Denise and Josh were. Denise pushed Josh up on the ladder and then climbed up on the ladder herself. The ladder distributed their weight across a large area of the ice so that they didn’t fall through, and they reached the shore. Denise fainted when she reached the shore, but paramedics took care of her and Josh and took them to the hospital, where they quickly recovered from their ordeal. Of course, Josh and his parents were grateful to Levi and the

Hammonds, and they sent them gifts: bones for Levi, a big bouquet of flowers for Denise, and a gift certificate to be used at a pet store.[151](#)

Socks the Cat

In 1992, Cassandra and John Craven took Jane, their two-year-old daughter, and Socks, their pet cat, along on a vacation to the Adirondack Mountains. While Jane was in a clearing, a black bear suddenly came and grabbed her in its jaws. Socks the cat came to the rescue, jumping onto the bear's head and scratching at its eyes. The black bear released Jane and started clawing at Socks, who jumped off the bear's head and fled with the black bear in hot pursuit. Jane was fine, although the bear's teeth had torn her clothing. Two hours later, Socks the cat showed up, safe and sound and winner of the match—Cat: 1, Bear: 0.[152](#)

“Why Did You Kill Christ?”

British actor and broadcaster David Kossoff loved his father, who was a very loving man. One day, when David was eight, he and his father were accosted by a very large workman, who knew that they were Jews and who yelled at them, “Why did you kill Christ?” David's father gently asked, “Why are you so unhappy?” The workman started crying, and David's father ended up taking the workman with him and David to have tea with David's aunt.[153](#)

Writing Many Cheerful Letters in Advance

While African-American actor/singer Paul Robeson was in England appearing in a play, his wife, Essie, stayed in the United States. She became ill and learned that she needed surgery. Not wishing to alarm her husband at a critical point in his career, she wrote several happy, chatty letters to him, then she gave the letters to a friend. The friend mailed one letter a day, so that Mr. Robeson thought that things were fine at home. (Essie did recover, and they had a long married life together.)[154](#)

Comforting a Dying Father

Amelia Earhart's parents were divorced. A week before her father died, Ms. Earhart visited him. He often inquired about his former wife and his other daughter, and to comfort him, Ms. Earhart faked telegrams to him from both of them.[155](#)

Two Gifts to Show Appreciation

Famed scientist Albert Einstein once received a letter from an Idaho farmer who had named his son Albert. The father requested that Mr. Einstein send some words for baby Albert. Mr. Einstein did exactly that, writing, “Nothing truly valuable arises from ambition or from a mere sense of duty; it stems rather from love and devotion towards men and objective things.” The father was very happy with the reply. He sent Mr. Einstein a photograph of baby Albert—and a big sack of Idaho potatoes.[156](#)

Gay and Lesbian Outreach to Elders

Winn Cottrell, an elderly lesbian, is becoming increasingly forgetful. Fortunately, the Gay and Lesbian Outreach to Elders (GLOE) in San Francisco has assigned a “Friendly Visitor” to her. The Friendly Visitor helps Ms. Cottrell with such chores as cooking, cleaning, and paying bills.[157](#)

Cheering Up a Crying Parent

Single-parent households often have money problems. The mother of Sakeeya and Nakeeya ran into money problems when she was laid off because the college where she worked had its budget cut. Sakeeya, the older daughter, sometimes saw her mother crying, so to cheer her up she would make cards saying that she loved her.¹⁵⁸

An Azeri Helping an Armenian

Julie-Anna Asriyan is an Armenian girl who went to New York City with her family to escape from prejudice in other countries. For a while, she lived in Azerbaijan, where great hostility existed between the Armenians and the Azeris. Once, a group of Azeris who wanted to hurt or kill Armenians stopped her grandfather and asked him if he was Armenian. Fortunately, an Azeri friend of his saved his life. The Azeri friend told the hostile Azeris, “Leave him alone.” But the hostile Azeris said, “Why are you defending him? He’s Armenian!” So the Azeri friend lied, “No, he’s not. He’s Azeri—I’ve known him for years. There are no Armenians around here. Go on home.” The hostile Azeris believed him and left.¹⁵⁹

Starting a Rest Home

As a conductor of the Underground Railroad, escaped slave Harriet Tubman helped over 300 people gain their freedom. Even after the Civil War, she continued to do good deeds. When she was old, she used her house as a rest home for elderly, impoverished blacks.¹⁶⁰

“The Most Dangerous Woman” in the United States

Many of the people who have won the Nobel Peace Prize have been hated. People loved Jane Addams because she founded Hull House, a settlement house that served many impoverished citizens of Chicago. However, they hated her when she became a pacifist during World War I. Because of her pacifism, Theodore Roosevelt called her a “silly, vain old maid” and the Daughters of the American Revolution expelled her. After the war was over, she worked to provide food to children who had suffered from the war—including German children. In return for these efforts, she was called “the most dangerous woman” in the United States. Nevertheless, Ms. Addams won the 1931 Nobel Peace Prize.¹⁶¹

CHAPTER 11: CHRISTMAS

A Gift of a Song

Dee Snyder is best known as the lead singer of the heavy-metal group Twisted Sister, although he is active in many other projects. His wife once asked him to write a Christmas song for her, and although most people don’t think of heavy-metal lead singers writing Christmas records since they are more likely to be associated with Satanism than Christianity, as a Christmas present for her he wrote “The Magic of Christmas Day (God Bless Us Everyone).” He recorded it, but with someone else singing. An engineer at the recording session liked the song and asked for a copy, which Dee happily gave him. Time passed, and the engineer became a very important record producer. One day the very important record producer telephoned Dee and said, “Dude, are you sitting down?” Dee was sitting down, and the very important record producer said, “Celine Dion wants to record your Christmas song.” Dee replied, “Does she

know who wrote it?” She didn’t, so Dee said not to tell her because “All she’d do is go, ‘Hey, Satan wrote a Christmas song! GET OUT OF HERE!’” Dee is grateful that Celine recorded his song: “You gotta love that. And it’s the gift that keeps on giving: it’s the second biggest selling Christmas album in history! At our house, we call her Saint Celine. Her recording of that song came at a really great time for us, when we really needed some economic boosting.”¹⁶²

A Christmas Dinner

One December when young people’s author Bruce Coville was growing up in Phoenix, New York, his father pulled the car out of the driveway, but instead of driving the family to a relative’s house, he headed toward town, telling his wife and children that he had learned that one of the boys in his Cub Scout pack was probably not going to have much of a Christmas dinner because his family was having hard times. Bruce’s father bought some boxes of groceries and delivered them to the boy’s family so that they could have a good Christmas dinner. Bruce says, “That incident has become one of my most cherished Christmas memories, something that stands out when all the gifts and the feasts have blended into a blur of getting and forgetting.”¹⁶³

A Long-Past Holiday Season

After serving a conviction on a narcotics charge, jazz singer Billie Holiday got out of prison on March 16, 1948. She immediately began to rehearse with pianist Bobby Tucker for a show at Carnegie Hall, staying at his mother’s house. When she entered the house for the first time, she started weeping because Mr. Tucker’s mother had kept her Christmas tree up and lit it for her although the holiday season was long past.¹⁶⁴

“Dear Santa, I’m an Orphan”

When Eddie Cantor was eight (he later became a famous comedian), he wrote in answer to a newspaper contest awarding Christmas presents to whoever wrote the best letter. Eddie wrote, “Dear Santa, I’m an orphan. I have no mother or father. I live with my grandmother who is very poor. I have no warm clothes. I would like a pair of rubber boots, an overcoat, and a sled. That is all I want for Christmas.” Christmas came, and that was all. Eddie sat on his front stoop, hating everything, especially the newspaper that sponsored the contest. Finally, at the end of the day, a *New York Journal* truck drove up and Eddie got his Christmas presents and became a fan of William Randolph Hearst. As an adult, Mr. Cantor became a famous comedian and an eager participant in raising money for charity. In his book *This Way*, Miss George Jessel tells a story that illustrates his friend Eddie Cantor’s prowess at raising money for charity: “Once upon a time, in a little village, there was a group in the market place, talking of strong men. One, to show his prowess, took an orange, squeezed it to nothingness in one movement, and got a glass of orange juice. Then Cantor took what was left of the orange, and he squeezed it, got two quarts of orange juice and sixty dollars in cash.”¹⁶⁵

“I’ve Got Enough”

Opera soprano Emma Albani once sang at a free Christmas dinner given to impoverished newsboys in New York. At the dinner and concert, a small boy listened to Ms. Albani intently, ignoring the plate of food placed before him. A woman asked the small boy why he was not eating, and he replied, “I can’t eat—I’ve got enough.”¹⁶⁶

CHAPTER 12: HOLOCAUST

A Hidden Child

Isaac Sztrymfman endured much after the Nazis invaded France in 1940. His Jewish family lived in occupied France, and soon his father was taken away. Later, Isaac and his mother tried to escape to free France, but they were captured and put in prison. Fortunately, his mother was able to bribe a French jailer to take Isaac away to a hospital, where Isaac and other Jewish children pretended to be ill in order to avoid deportation to a concentration camp. Isaac was taken first to a friend of the family, but she declined to take him because her husband had been arrested and she was afraid. He was then taken back to the apartment building where his family had lived and left with the concierge. The concierge, unfortunately, was an anti-Semitic and soon after the person who had delivered Isaac had left, she started screaming, "I won't have a Jew in my house," and chased him into the street. There, he sat crying until a woman named Héna, who was also a Jew, found him and took care of him until she could place him with a kind woman in the country to keep him safe. There he remained a hidden child of the Holocaust until the war ended. Isaac and Héna both survived the Holocaust, but his parents did not. Eventually, Meyer and Bella Millman adopted Isaac. He took their name, and as Isaac Millman he became a famous author and illustrator of children's books.¹⁶⁷

A 17-Year-Old Hero

Lots of bad things happened on November 9, 1938: *Kristallnacht*, a famous night when anti-Semites attacked Jews and destroyed Jewish property. However, a few good things happened as well. A nine-year-old boy named Manfred Fulda, who later became a Rabbi, remembers the terrible sounds of destruction in the streets. Fortunately, a 17-year-old boy named Felix, who was the son of a Catholic couple who lived in the apartment upstairs, came into their apartment. He saw that the Jewish family was frightened, and so he told them, "Don't worry. I'm here now. And I'm not like the rest of them." He put on his Hitler Youth uniform, and then he showed himself at a window. Whenever the destructive anti-Semitic mob got close to the building, he shouted at them, "This house has been sold to Aryans. Any damage you will do, you will be responsible for. There are no more Jews here." Rabbi Dr. Manfred Fulda says, "The mob moved on, and so we were saved by this young man who proved with his heroic courage that he really was different from all the rest of them."¹⁶⁸

The Flag with Fifty-Six Stars

As World War II was winding down, the Nazis knew that they had lost the war, and the prisoners in concentration camps hoped to stay alive long enough to be freed. At Mauthausen, prisoners knew that their day of liberation was drawing near. Many of the Nazi guards disappeared, and the American troops drew near. Some prisoners at Mauthausen prepared a gift for the American troops. They scoured the camp for red, white, and blue cloth, and they created a homemade American flag. The flag was made with love, but it did contain an error. Instead of 48 stars (the United States had 48 states at the time), the flag had 56 stars because the prisoners, making the flag from memory, guessed incorrectly how many stars the American flag displayed. No problem. On May 6, 1945, Colonel Richard R. Seibel arrived at Mauthausen, and the prisoners presented him with the flag. Colonel Seibel remembered, "I thanked them and thanked them." He also ordered that the homemade flag be flown over

Mauthausen. Today, the flag is at the Simon Weisenthal Center in Los Angeles, California. The flag is a present from the late Colonel Seibel's son, Peter. Famed Nazi hunter Simon Weisenthal was a prisoner at Mauthausen.¹⁶⁹

Jobs for Jews

During the 1930s, anti-Semitism in Germany grew enormously, and German scientists who were Jewish lost their jobs. Ernest Rutherford, who was born in New Zealand and who won the 1908 Nobel Prize for Chemistry, helped his German Jewish colleagues. He became the head of the Academic Assistance Council, which was later renamed the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning. Between 1933 and his death on October 19, 1937, Mr. Rutherford helped find jobs for refugees from Germany. He helped 507 refugees find permanent jobs, and he helped 308 refugees find temporary jobs.¹⁷⁰

Bravery for a Jew

Marguerite Mulder of the Netherlands hid Jews in her home during World War II, an act that was very dangerous. If the Jews were found, not only would they be killed, but often the would-be rescuers would also be killed. Not everyone was as brave as Ms. Mulder. When her brother-in-law was asked if he would hide a Jew for a few days, he replied, "I don't want to die for a Jew."¹⁷¹

Saving Odette

On July 16, 1942, Henri and Marie Chotel saved the life of seven-year-old Odette Meyer when the French rounded up Jews in Paris. Marie distracted the police while Odette hid. Henri, a member of the French underground, left work to take Odette to safety. He held her hand and walked her to the subway despite the large number of German soldiers present, telling her, "Remember, look at your feet and keep walking. If anyone calls you, don't answer. Don't look up. Don't answer." They made it to the subway and met a Gentile woman and some other children. The Gentile woman took the children into the countryside to hide them from the Nazis. Odette survived the Holocaust, and she says, "If I had not been saved by this man and woman, I know precisely what my fate would have been. I would have ended up in the gas chamber at Birkenau."¹⁷²

Warning Girls Against Dr. Mengele

Eva Hecht survived Auschwitz. She entered Auschwitz when she was 16 years old, and she and the other 1,200 female inmates in Barracks #9 were looked after by a red-haired, 20-year-old Slovakian woman named Alice, who warned them not to fall for the tricks of Dr. Josef Mengele. Dr. Mengele would enter the barracks, and he would ask the ill and the pregnant to step forward, saying that he would give them the medical treatment they needed. However, anyone who stepped forward was sent instead to the crematoria, where their ashes escaped Auschwitz by rising with the heat through the chimney. Whenever any girls fell for the tricks of Dr. Mengele, Alice would beat them and tell them, "To you, nothing matters anymore! Tonight, you will escape through the chimney!" Alice was not a sadist. Alice was actually doing a good deed—she beat these girls to impress upon the other girls that they must not fall for the tricks of Dr. Mengele. She frequently told the girls, "Each day you survive this hell, you are one day closer to freedom."¹⁷³

Speaking Out Against the Nazis

Some people spoke out publicly against the Nazis, even in Nazi Germany. In August 1941, the Catholic bishop of Muenster, whose name was Clemens August, Count von Galen, gave a sermon in which he spoke against the Nazis' practice of killing people with mental and/or physical handicaps. In the sermon, the good bishop spoke about "obligations of conscience" and stated that all must oppose the taking of innocent life—even if it meant losing your own life in the pursuit of what is morally right.¹⁷⁴

Danish Heroes #1

During the Holocaust, when the Danes learned that their fellow Jewish citizens were to be deported by the occupying Germans to concentration camps, they took action and spread the word of the danger. For example, ambulance driver Jorgen Knudsen went through a telephone book and circled every name that sounded Jewish, then drove to their homes to warn them. Such actions alerted the Jews to go into hiding, and the Danes then smuggled them to neutral Sweden and safety. Thousands of people helped in hiding and rescuing the Jews. For example, doctors "discharged" all their patients with Jewish-sounding names and then "admitted" the same patients under Christian-sounding names. Some people, of course, were would-be informers, but the Danes left messages telling them that informing on the Jews would be dangerous to the informers' lives.¹⁷⁵

Danish Heroes #2

The entire nation of Denmark acted heroically during World War II. After learning that the Nazis who were occupying Denmark were planning to round up all the Jews there, the Danes prevented the Jews' deaths by sailing them to Sweden, a neutral country. According to rescuer Jørgen Kieler, the Danes were able to save the Jews because of several factors. First, Georg Duckwitz, a German naval attaché who was disgusted by the Nazis' treatment of Jews, learned of the Nazis' plan to round up all the Jews. Stationed in Copenhagen, Mr. Duckwitz passed the information on to Danish political leaders, who put the early warning to good use. Second, Sweden, a neutral country where the Jews would be safe because the Nazis didn't want to anger it into joining the Allies' side, was nearby. Third, Denmark has a long coastline that the Nazis were unable to guard. Fourth, and most important, the Danish people acted, risking their own lives to save the lives of other people.¹⁷⁶

Using the Dead to Save the Living

Could a British POW in Auschwitz save the lives of Jews? Yes. Major-Sergeant Charles Coward was a brave man. He was a liaison with the International Red Cross, a position that helped give him access to things he could use to bribe Nazi soldiers. He once traded valuables for the corpses of three Jews so he could use them to save the lives of three Jews. Here's how it worked. Each day Jews who could no longer work were marched from Auschwitz to Birkenau to be murdered. Some of these Jews died along the way, and their corpses were collected later. Major-Sergeant Coward had three Jews pretend to die and lie by the road, and then he arrived and gave them civilian clothing so that they could escape into the forest. He and fellow POW "Tich" Keenan then left the three Jewish corpses that he had bribed a Nazi for along the road; that way, the Nazis would not know that any Jews were missing. Major-Sergeant Coward did this over and over.¹⁷⁷

SCHINDLER WAY

Abraham Zuckerman is one of the more than 1,300 Jews rescued by Oskar Schindler during the Holocaust. In 1949, Mr. Zuckerman and his wife moved to the United States, where in New Jersey he began to develop real estate. He says, “The first thing we did in every development was to name a street after Oskar Schindler.” In the book *The Triumphant Spirit*, a photograph by Nick Del Calzo shows Mr. Zuckerman posing with a street sign that says, “SCHINDLER WAY.”¹⁷⁸

“They Cried Bitter Tears for Us”

Helen Tilles, a native of Vienna, Austria, was a prisoner at the Bergen-Belson concentration camp for a while. Eventually, she left to go to a work camp. After staying a while at the work camp in Venusberg, Germany, she was again moved. A train took her and other prisoners—all of whom were in open cattle cars—to various camps, none of which would take them in. Half of the 500 women prisoners died. In Czechoslovakia, people pitied them and came to the train to give them soup and bread. Ms. Tilles says, “They cried bitter tears for us.” Eventually, Ms. Tilles and the other surviving prisoners arrived at Mauthausen concentration camp, where shortly afterward those who survived were liberated.¹⁷⁹

Can Cutting Off Someone’s Toes Be a Good Deed?

Can cutting off someone’s toes be a good deed? Yes. During the Holocaust, Werner Reich was imprisoned at the concentration camps of Auschwitz, Birkenau, Mauthausen, and Theresienstadt. Just before the Soviets liberated Auschwitz, Mr. Reich was forced to march to Mauthausen. On the way, his toes froze and then developed gangrene. A fellow prisoner who was a doctor used a razor blade to amputate the infected toes. Mr. Reich says, “He saved my life.”¹⁸⁰

Feeding the Hungry

Before the Holocaust, Leopold Mendlovic’s parents fed hungry people at their own family’s table in Czechoslovakia, although they had nine children of their own to feed. The young Leopold noticed that the impoverished people sometimes stank. Leopold says, however, “My parents ... were very accepting and never said a word.” Leopold managed to escape death at the hands of the Nazis during the Holocaust, but his parents died in the gas chambers at Auschwitz.¹⁸¹

Disobeying Direct Orders

In Lithuania, Japanese diplomat Sempo Sugihara helped thousands of Jews escape from the Nazis, although he had to disobey direct orders to help them. The Jews had obtained permits to enter various countries, but they needed travel visas to get to those countries. Mr. Sugihara issued thousands of travel visas that allowed the Jews to travel across Japan to get to where they would find safety. Three times the Japanese government ordered Mr. Sugihara to stop issuing travel visas, and three times he ignored the orders and continued to issue travel visas. As a result of his not obeying direct orders, he lost his job and was ostracized by other Japanese. Today, a memorial in his honor is located at Yaotsu, Japan.¹⁸²

CHAPTER 13: RABBIS

Two Deaths

Rabbi Daniel Smith witnessed two deaths that were very different from each other. He was called out in the middle of the night to see a dying woman, who told him, “Rabbi, they tell me I am dying, and I want you to make sure that my daughter does not get my mink coat.” The woman also told him about her other valuables, including jewelry, and she told him that she did not want her daughter to get those, either. Of course, the good Rabbi was shocked and told her, “Madam, you don’t want a Rabbi. You want a lawyer!” She replied, “I know, but no lawyer would come out at this time of night.” In the morning, the woman saw a lawyer, and then she died. The other death was that of a woman who was estranged from much of her family, and she felt guilty because of this. The good Rabbi suggested that she talk both to God and to the members of her family and ask for forgiveness. The woman did just that, praying to God and talking in person to the living members of her family as well as talking mentally with the deceased members of her family. The woman was expected to die in a day or two, but she lived three more weeks. Rabbi Smith says, “When she died, she was at peace. In her death she had become fully alive. Those three weeks have remained a precious source of wonder for her family and for me. It is so rare for a Rabbi to feel really useful.”¹⁸³

Hand Over a Good Deed?

R. Levi Yitzhak was a good host in a simpler age of long ago, and when he entertained visitors in his home, he would bring in straw for them to sleep on. A friend saw him and asked why he didn’t hire a man to bring in the straw rather than doing all that hard work himself. R. Levi smiled and replied, “You want me to hand over the good deed to someone else—and pay him as well?”¹⁸⁴

Passover Beans

Certain foods are supposed to be purchased to celebrate Passover properly. During a year of famine, food was so expensive that Rabbi Isaac Elhanan Spektor of Kovno decided to allow poor Jews to celebrate Passover with beans, a food that is normally questionable on Passover. However, the good Rabbi said, “I also will eat beans this Passover, so the poor people won’t feel any guilt.”¹⁸⁵

Clearing a Path Through the Snow

R’ Chaim of Volozhin owned a pair of heavy boots of the type that peasants wore. People wondered why he needed them until one winter morning, he was seen in the snow using the boots to break a path for his students to use when walking to the yeshivah [school].¹⁸⁶

“Can I Borrow \$10, Please?”

Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach did many good deeds in his life, including giving much money directly to the homeless. Once, one of the good Rabbi’s friends witnessed him handing out \$10 bills to each of two dozen homeless men. Unfortunately, Rabbi Shlomo ran out of money before reaching the last man. He turned out his pockets, looked through all his papers, but could not find any money. Just then, he saw his friend and called to him, “Holy brother

Mendel, it's a joy to see you. You came just in time. Can I borrow \$10, please?" After Rabbi Shlomo died, Rabbi Dr. Abraham Twerski, an eminent Hasidic psychiatrist, said about him, "The greatest story that can be told about Shlomo Carlebach is that a collection had to be taken up to pay for his funeral expenses. He died penniless. His entire life was in service of people; he gave all his money away."¹⁸⁷

Saving a Housemaid from Embarrassment

The son of R. Hayyim of Zans, R. Baruch, was the Rabbi of Gorlitz. One day, a young housemaid came to his house and asked him what she should prepare for the evening meal of the people she worked for. Of course, this is the kind of question that a Rabbi is not usually asked to answer, but R. Baruch answered the question, telling the housemaid exactly what to prepare for the evening meal. The housemaid thanked him, left, and then prepared the evening meal that the Rabbi had told her to prepare. The companions of the Rabbi were surprised both at the question of the housemaid and at the Rabbi for answering the question, so R. Baruch explained what must have happened. The housemaid had asked the woman of the house what to prepare for the evening meal, and the woman of the house, annoyed at the question or the housemaid for some reason or other, had flippantly answered, "Go ask the Rabbi." The housemaid, who was young and naïve, had done just that. Rather than laughing at the housemaid, which would have embarrassed her, R. Baruch had answered her question.¹⁸⁸

CHAPTER 14: RELIGION

Setting Up a Kitchen

A famine occurred, forcing the peasants in the area to flee starvation. Many peasants traveled out of the famine-stricken area by walking along a road, begging as they went. Seeing the peasants' need, Zen master Kokan set up a kitchen along the road, preparing simple but nourishing food and offering it free to the fleeing peasants.¹⁸⁹

Money for New Clothes

Zen master Yamaoka, tutor to the Emperor, wore old clothes. The Emperor gave Yamaoka money and told him to buy new clothes, but Yamaoka showed up for the next tutoring session still wearing old clothes. When the Emperor asked him what had happened to the money that he had given him to buy new clothes, Yamaoka explained that yes, he had spent the money on new clothes, but he had bought new clothes for needy children because they were not as rich as he was.¹⁹⁰

The Buddha and Alms

A samurai without a master came to the temple of Eisai and asked for alms because he and his family were starving. Eisai depended for his food on the generosity of others, so he had no food to spare, but he remembered that he had a statue of the Buddha. Taking the statue, he gave it to the samurai and told him to sell it and use the money to ward starvation off from himself and his family. One of Eisai's disciples, however, regarded the giving away of the statue as sacrilege. Eisai told him, "I've merely put the Buddha's mind, which is full of love and mercy, to use, so to speak. Indeed, if the Buddha himself had heard that poor samurai, he'd have cut off a limb for him!"¹⁹¹

“Death is Common to All People”

The most famous Buddhist story is that of a woman named Kisa Gautami, whose child had died. She begged the Buddha to bring her child back to life, and he told her, “I can help you. Bring me a mustard seed, but it must be given you from a person whose family has never known death.” The woman searched for such a person, but was unable to find one. She returned to the Buddha and said, “I know now that I am not alone in my grief. Death is common to all people.” She was able to grieve for her child, then return to living her life, which is something that all of us must do.¹⁹²

Angels with No Waists

Lionel Blue, author of *A Taste of Heaven*, remembers the good deeds of his Jewish grandmother in the East End of London before World War II. On Thursday night, she would wake him and take him with her on good-deed expeditions. In the letter-boxes of poorer families than her own, she would put small packages, which contained money and food. That way, the poorer families could better celebrate the Sabbath. Mr. Blue writes, “They were given at night so that giver and receiver would never meet, and neither would feel obligation or shame.” His grandmother was not the only one who did this, for sometimes they met other grandmothers making their own good-deed expeditions. Later, when he saw a picture of an angel, he was disbelieving. He writes that the angels whom he saw in his own life “were Semitic, rheumatic and had no waists.”¹⁹³

A Neighbor in the World to Come

In a dream, Rabbi Joshua ben Ilem learned that his neighbor in Paradise would be Nanas, the meat dealer. Curious, he went to Nanas to learn what good deeds Nanas had done to be worthy of Paradise. However, Nanas told the good Rabbi that all his time was taken up by work and by caring for his aged parents, who were feeble and had to be fed and washed. Hearing this, Rabbi Joshua told Nanas, “I will be happy to have you as a neighbor in Paradise.”¹⁹⁴

“Bigotry in Any Form is an Affront to Us All”

In 1964, Martin Luther King, Jr., visited Harlem, where he was disturbed when he heard some anti-Semitic comments. He responded to the anti-Semitism by saying, “I solemnly pledge to do my utmost to uphold the fair name of Jews. Not only because we need their friendship, and surely we do, but mainly because bigotry in any form is an affront to us all.” On March 25, 1968, near the end of his life, Reverend King spoke in the Catskill Mountains of New York at an annual meeting of the Rabbinical Assembly. The Rabbis greeted Reverend King by singing the civil rights anthem “We Shall Overcome”—in Hebrew!¹⁹⁵

Muslims Risking Their Lives for a Jewish Book

The Sarajevo Haggadah is a 14th-century, illustrated Hebrew manuscript that does not look impressive until you open its pages. Geraldine Brooks, who wrote a novel titled *People of the Book* about how the manuscript survived disastrous events throughout the centuries, says, “It’s very small, maybe 12-by-6; maybe not even that big. It’s a ratty-looking thing. You wouldn’t look twice at it. The cover is old and worn out and discolored, ... and you think, ‘The fuss is about this?’ And then you open it, and boom! There’s just this explosion of color and richness and imagination.” Even though *People of the Book* is a novel, some of its characters are based

on real people, and of course, some of its events actually occurred. For example, at the risk of losing his life Islamic scholar Dervis Korkut smuggled the ancient codex out of a library past a Nazi general during World War II. In addition, Ms. Brooks points out that during the Bosnian war, “The Bosnian National Library was burned down, a shocking crime. ... They deliberately shelled the library. It was gutted, just like the Oriental Institute, a repository of ancient, rare manuscripts—Turkish, Persian, Slavic.” Still, the Sarajevo Haggadah survived because Muslim librarian Enver Imamovic had rescued it and hidden it in a bank vault. The Sarajevo Haggadah, a Jewish work used during Passover, has survived only because of the action of some brave and caring Muslims.¹⁹⁶

Canceling a Banquet

In 1972, Mother Teresa won the Nobel Peace Prize, but she startled officials by asking that the customary celebratory banquet be cancelled and that the money that would have been used for the banquet be given to her to help poor people in India. As she had requested, the banquet was cancelled, and \$6,000 was given to Mother Teresa. She used that money, plus the \$192,000 Nobel Peace Prize, plus \$72,000 contributed by Norwegians, to build homes for poor people in India.¹⁹⁷

“They’re Sure a Nice Bunch of Fellows”

Francis Cardinal Spellman once invited five very wealthy Jewish leaders to lunch, which he picked at. One of the wealthy Jews, Bernard Baruch, asked what was bothering him, and Cardinal Spellman replied, “I spent \$250,000 yesterday for a piece of property in Harlem where the kids could play and keep off the streets,” then he said that he didn’t have the money to pay for the property. Mr. Baruch immediately pledged \$50,000, and the other four wealthy Jews also pledged \$50,000 each, and so the property was paid for. Cardinal Spellman said after the lunch, “They’re sure a nice bunch of fellows.”¹⁹⁸

“Go to My Granary”

Such modern innovations as Welfare and Social Security in the United States keep many people from starving to death and from having to beg for food. In the old days, things were much different. Jean-Marie Vianney (1786-1859), aka the Curé d’Ars, helped many beggars. Once, a woman with five children and no way to feed them or herself asked him for alms. He told her, “Go to my granary, and take from it as much corn as you are able to carry away with you.”¹⁹⁹

The Leper Priest

Father Damien is famous as the leper priest. In 1873, Father Damien began working with the lepers who had been settled on Molokai so they would be away from healthy people. He found a lawless society there, with prostitution and killings. Following one killing, police arrived to investigate, but the lepers ran toward them and rubbed their ulcerous wounds on the police officers’ bodies. The police fled. Immediately, Father Damien set about bringing order and civilization to the leper colony. He first cleaned the unused church and began to hold services. He built a small presbytery. He erected a fence around the lepers’ graveyard to keep wild pigs from digging up the bodies in shallow graves and eating them. He learned from a medical doctor who had leprosy how to dress wounds and perform amputations, and he provided much medical care to the lepers. He built a system of pipes to bring clean water into the colony so

that water would not have to be carried to the colony in rusty cans. He built schools and houses. And he built hundreds of coffins, including many for children. Father Damien himself contracted leprosy; he died of leprosy on April 15, 1889. Today, effective treatment exists for leprosy.²⁰⁰

“The Walls Won’t Catch Cold”

Robert Bellarmine, a Jesuit during the Middle Ages, was very generous. His apartment was sparsely furnished so that he would have more money to give to the poor, and he even had the draperies in his apartment made into clothing that he gave to the poor. When he took down his draperies, he remarked, “The walls won’t catch cold.”²⁰¹

Concern for Their Souls

Lucretia Mott, a Quaker, once discovered that people were stealing from her apple orchards. Being concerned for the souls of the thieves, she placed a large basket of apples by her front door along with a sign that bore these messages: “Thou shalt not steal” and “Help thyself.”²⁰²

CHAPTER 15: WAR

“Back to Headquarters”

During the Nazi occupation of Denmark during World War II, Inger Peschcke-Køedt and a few of her friends bicycled past some Nazi bunkers near Hornbaek. Near the Nazis was a garbage dump that stank. Ms. Peschcke-Køedt held her nose, and the Nazis realized that she was insulting them. She protested that she was holding her nose because of the garbage, but the Nazis knew that she was lying. Her friends called the Danish police to say that the Nazis had detained her, and soon a Danish police officer arrived and said, “I’m here to pick up Inger Peschcke-Køedt.” The Nazis handed her over to the Danish police officer, who whispered to Ms. Peschcke-Køedt, “Don’t say anything.” Then he said loudly so that the Nazis would hear him, “Back to headquarters.” However, in the police car he asked her for her address, then dropped her off at her home, and said, “Next time, be more careful.”²⁰³

Paper Cranes

At 8:15 a.m. on August 6, 1945, Sadako Sasaki was just a little girl playing with her big brother, Masahiro, in Hiroshima. At that time the United States dropped the A-bomb on the city, and by the end of December of that year over 140,000 people had died. Over the years, many more would die of illnesses caused by the radiation of the bomb. Sadako survived the initial blast of the A-bomb, but in 1954 she was diagnosed with A-bomb illness and entered the hospital. In August she received a gift: a string of paper cranes that some high school students in Nagoya had made for her. The nurse told her that the paper cranes were lucky, and supposedly if you folded 1,000 paper cranes, your wish would come true. Sadako folded over 1,000 paper cranes, but paper cranes are no match for radiation sickness, and she died. However, paper cranes can be a powerful symbol for peace—something that is often believed to be much better for children than war. Of course, this is a lesson that is learned in every war, then forgotten, only to be learned again in the next war. Japanese schoolchildren raised money for a Children’s Peace Monument in Hiroshima’s Peace Memorial Park. The message at the base of the monument says this: “This is Our Cry / This is Our Prayer / For Building Peace in

the World.” At the top of the Children’s Peace Monument is a statue of a young girl holding high a very large folded crane.²⁰⁴

Treating “Crippled” Soldiers to a Meal in a Restaurant

During World War I, Anna Rosenberg volunteered in the Recreation Department of an Army hospital. As part of her job, she telephoned people to ask if they would take a soldier to dinner in a restaurant. Quickly, she learned that most people preferred to treat a soldier on crutches. Therefore, often she would set up a dinner, then tell a soldier with healthy legs to borrow crutches from the hospital before going to the restaurant.²⁰⁵

Very Good Deeds During Very Bad Times

Even during very bad times, very good things can happen. When Budapest, Hungary, was under siege near the end of World War II, 15-year-old Christine Arnothy, her parents, and a few other families lived in the cellar of a building that was occasionally bombed. These families took in a young man and a young woman who were the only survivors in their group. A Hungarian soldier named Pista helped take care of the families by finding food for them; he also did other good deeds for the families, such as finding a priest to say Mass. In addition to saying Mass for them, the priest heard their confessions and gave them advice. Christine told him, “I don’t want to die, Father. I am only fifteen, and I am horribly afraid of death. I want to go on living.” The priest replied, “The fate of our bodies matters very little. The death we fear so much is only a deliverance: the moment when the soul escapes from its bodily prison to enter into eternity. And God loves us so much, my child! He welcomes us with infinite love!” In addition, the priest married the young man and the young woman, who loved each other very much. Despite the severe hardships and the severe privations—including lack of food—of the families living in the cellar, one person gave the young married couple a glass of wine and another person gave them an orange. The young married couple did not keep the orange but gave it to a mother to feed her child. Pista also searched for food to feed the child. He died when a mine went off, but his sack was taken to the cellar. When the mother opened the sack, she found three cans of condensed milk and exclaimed, “Milk for my baby! He won’t die of hunger!”²⁰⁶

A Suicide Mission

During World War I, a young British airman drove the entertainers in the show *Tabs* nuts because his loud laugh came at all the wrong moments. However, a zeppelin appeared over London and started bombing the city. The British airman stopped the zeppelin by taking a plane without permission and piloting it straight into the zeppelin, breaking it in half. His suicide mission saved many lives.²⁰⁷

Food for a Deserter

At the Chicago Lyric Opera in 1964, a number of people, including theatrical guru Danny Newman, opera singer Régine Crespin, Louis Bruder (Ms. Crespin’s husband), and conductor Bruno Bartoletti discussed their experiences in World War II. Mr. Bruder talked about how he had been forced to join the German army, although he regarded himself as French, being a native of Alsace-Lorraine. In 1944, as the Germans retreated from Italy, he deserted, hiding himself in a church bell tower in a small town that was located near Florence. Fortunately,

some teenaged boys helped him by bringing him food and wine. Hearing this, Mr. Bartoletti said, “Bruder, I was one of those kids!” The two men wept together.²⁰⁸

A Bow to the Enemy

In October of 1916, World War I was being harshly fought. The Germans were fighting the Russians south of Kowel, and dead and dying and wounded were strewn everywhere. A wounded Russian lay near the Germans, who could hear him moaning; however, because of the fighting no Russian could rescue the wounded man, and no German could take him prisoner, so he lay there, wounded and moaning. Eventually, the Germans were forced back from their positions, and silence fell on the battlefield. The Germans were astonished when two Russian soldiers, who were not even medical personnel, walked out into No Man’s Land—perfect targets for German bullets. However, it was obvious that they were looking for the wounded man. Impressed by the Russians’ courage, the Germans held their fire. Eventually, the Russian soldiers found the wounded man. They bowed to the German soldiers, then took the wounded man off the battlefield. Kurt Pantlen, a German soldier who witnessed the event, is proud that no Germans fired on the Russians, despite the heavy fighting that had occurred earlier.²⁰⁹

“Is the Pig Dead?”

In Germany, Ilse Baumgart, a Jew, worked for the German air force, but in an unguarded moment, a coworker discovered how she felt about Adolf Hitler. During her rest break, the coworker woke her up from a nap to tell her about an assassination attempt against Hitler. Only half awake, she asked, “Is the pig dead?” Her coworker immediately informed their boss what she had said. The boss met with her, said that he was going to have her arrested, then said that he was leaving for 15 minutes. Realizing that he was deliberately giving her a chance to escape, she did. Fortunately, she found a rescuer, Gitta Bauer, who took her into her home and helped her survive the war.²¹⁰

Supporting the Republic

During the Spanish Civil War, artist Pablo Picasso supported the Republic and opposed the Fascists. He sold many works of art to raise money to help refugees and to feed children in Barcelona and Madrid. To support the Republic, he spent between 300,000 and 400,000 francs—a sum that equaled ten years’ salary for someone making a good living in Paris at the time.²¹¹

“Don’t You Suppose That They Have Hurt Me, Too?”

During World War I, opera singer Emma Calvé sang for wounded French soldiers in a hospital that also cared for wounded German prisoners-of-war. One French soldier asked if he could open a door that led to the prisoners’ ward, so that the wounded German POWs might also hear her and enjoy her singing. Ms. Calvé was reluctant at first, saying, “No! No! I could not sing for them! They have hurt me too much!” But the French soldier, whose right arm was missing, replied, “How about me? Don’t you suppose that they have hurt me, too?” Ms. Calvé decided to let him open the door so that the wounded German POWs could also hear her.²¹²

CHAPTER 16: AIDS AND MEDICINE

Fighting Against Evil

Elizabeth Glaser, the wife of actor Paul Michael Glaser of *Starsky and Hutch* fame, acquired the HIV virus in a blood transfusion after giving birth. Not knowing she had the virus, she passed it on as she breastfed Ariel, her daughter, and when she became pregnant for a second time she passed the virus to Jake, her unborn son. Ariel was the first to get sick and be identified as having AIDS. After discovering that her daughter had AIDS, Ms. Glaser used to sit in her car and scream at God, “I hate you for letting Ari get sick! I hate you for making this my life!” Unfortunately, her life got worse. The entire family was tested, and she learned that both she and her son were HIV-positive. Wanting to fight back, she became an activist advocating AIDS research, and she spoke about AIDS at the 1992 Democratic National Convention. Ms. Glaser died in 1994.²¹³

“Give Me One Dollar”

Actress Sharon Stone raises money for the American Foundation for AIDS Research. Of course, she knows people who can make big donations of money to the foundation, but she also knows people who aren’t making big bucks. To people with small salaries who are wondering what they can do to help, she says, “Give me one dollar.” According to Ms. Stone, lots of people working together, doing what they can with what they have, although it seems little, will make progress toward solving this major medical problem.²¹⁴

HIV-Positive as a Result of Hemophilia

Ryan White became HIV-positive as a result of his hemophilia, and he faced prejudice when other people learned that he had AIDS. Other children called him “faggot,” “homo,” and “queer,” although he wasn’t gay, and they sometimes wrote obscenities on his school locker. In addition, someone slashed the tires on his family’s car, and someone shot a bullet through his family’s living room. (Fortunately, no one was hurt.) Because of the prejudice and the danger that they faced, Ryan and his family moved from Kokomo, Indiana, to Cicero, Indiana. In Kokomo, Ryan had been forced to sue in order to be permitted to go to school, but in Cicero, the principal of his school made him feel welcome and educated the other students about AIDS. Being made to feel welcome raised Ryan’s spirits and improved his health, and he soon became a nationally known spokesperson on AIDS issues before dying of AIDS on April 8, 1990. One of the people singing at his funeral was Elton John, who had become a friend during Ryan’s illness.²¹⁵

A Beautiful Trait of Humanity

During the Battle of the Somme in 1916 during World War I, casualties were heavy on both sides (over 1 million people were killed or wounded during the battle), but even during the heavy fighting acts of mercy occurred. For example, many German wounded of the 180th Württemberg Infantry Regiment were lying on the battlefield. Because of the heavy fighting, no one was able to get the wounded to safety and medical care until the 20th Red Cross Reserve Company decided, at the risk of their own lives, to try. English pilots saw what they were trying to do, and they flew low over the 20th Red Cross Reserve Company, circling them. Because the English airplanes were flying so low and so close to the 20th Red Cross Reserve Company, the artillery of the Allies had to stop firing. Many ambulances arrived and started to carry off wounded Germans, and soon all of them reached safety. Fritz Dietrich says, “This

beautiful trait of humanity in the English could be observed again and again during the entire Battle of the Somme.” In addition, sometimes German soldiers helped English air force personnel. In 1918, some German prisoners of war in England were working while English airplanes flew overhead. Unfortunately, one of the English airplanes crashed near the prisoners of war, who rushed toward the burning airplane and managed to pull out one of the Englishmen on board before he was burned to death. Unfortunately, they were unable to save the other Englishman in the burning airplane. The English newspapers praised the heroic actions of the German prisoners of war, and the British commander rewarded them with money—and the main German hero with a gold watch.²¹⁶

“I Was Your Patient”

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Army nurse Mildred Irene Clark heard the bombs exploding and called Schofield Station Hospital to ask, “What in the world is going on?” The reply was, “I don’t know, but it sounds awful.” Ms. Clark quickly got dressed, not even stopping to brush her teeth, and hurried to the hospital, where she was one of only three anesthetists. On the way there, she saw planes in the sky, and she thought, “What in the world are those apples on the planes for?” Of course, the big red circles on the planes weren’t apples; instead, the symbol of the Rising Sun identified the planes as Japanese. Ms. Clark stayed at the hospital for three weeks, working, working, and saving lives. Even after World War II, she stayed in the Army, and in 1963 she became chief of the Army Nurse Corps. In 1964, she needed to give a speech in Detroit. When she arrived at her hotel, she was astonished to find awaiting her both a truly luxurious suite and a truly huge bouquet of flowers. The hotel manager explained why: “You don’t remember me, Colonel Clark, but I remember you. On the 7th of December, 1941, I was your patient.”²¹⁷

Volunteering to Get a Shot

When Jonas Salk, working with many other scientists, developed a vaccine for polio, they first tested it on animals. It then needed to be tested on human beings, including children, who were the most likely to contract the disease. Of course, children can be very afraid of getting a shot, and some of the children participating in the study started crying. William Kirkpatrick, who worked at the D.T. Watson Home near Pittsburgh, a home for children with disabilities, did the very good deed of volunteering to get the first shot of vaccine so that he could show the children that getting the shot did not hurt. On July 2, 1952, he became the very first person to be inoculated with the polio vaccine developed by Dr. Salk and others. By the way, Dr. Salk did not want the vaccine to be named after him. He thought that a better name would be the Pitt vaccine because he had started working on the vaccine at the University of Pittsburgh Medical School. Of course, people were grateful that a vaccine to stop the deadly disease polio had been developed. A merchant in Hohokus, New Jersey, painted the words “THANK YOU, Dr. Salk” on his shop window. Teachers had their young students write thank-you letters to Dr. Salk. (Actually, the fame that came to Dr. Salk was a bit much. When he became engaged to Françoise Gilot, the media annoyed them. To protect their privacy, they announced that they would be married on a certain day, but they actually got married the day before the announced date.) Albert Sabin later developed another polio vaccine that supplanted the Salk vaccine. Humanity is deeply grateful to both men for saving so many lives.²¹⁸

Good Deeds and Smallpox

Dr. Edward Jenner did an enormous service for Humankind by discovering a vaccine that was effective against smallpox. He devoted much time and effort to publicizing the benefits of the vaccine, living on his savings to do so until his savings ran out. Some friends advised him to appeal to King George III for a grant to reward his service to Humankind and to allow him to continue to publicize the benefits of the vaccine. In recognition of Dr. Jenner's services, King George III awarded him two grants: one for £10,000 in 1802, and one for £20,000 in 1806. Other people recognized Dr. Jenner's service to Humankind. Napoleon Bonaparte of France warred against England, and France held captive two physician friends of Dr. Jenner, who wrote Napoleon that although France and Great Britain were at war, "the sciences are never at war." In the letter, Dr. Jenner requested that Napoleon set his friends free. Napoleon responded, "We can't refuse that man anything"—and gave the friends safe transport back to England. Dr. Jenner vaccinated many, many people against smallpox. In the backyard of his home was a one-room hut in which he vaccinated people free of charge every Thursday morning. People called the one-room hut the Temple of Vaccinia.²¹⁹

The Fight Against Yellow Fever

Dr. Walter Reed led the fight against the deadly yellow fever by proving that mosquitoes spread the disease. To do that, he needed heroic volunteers. Two people, Dr. James Carroll and Dr. Jesse William Lazear, volunteered. They allowed mosquitoes that had bitten yellow fever patients to bite them. Both contracted yellow fever. Dr. Carroll survived, but with a damaged heart. Dr. Lazear died. Some other, later volunteers were offered money, but declined it. Two men, Private John R. Kissinger and Mr. John J. Moran, said, "We volunteer solely for the cause of humanity and in the interest of science. The one condition on which we volunteer is that we get no compensation for it." Both men contracted yellow fever, but recovered.²²⁰

Activism for Causes

Rocky Twyman is an activist, a community organizer, and a church choir director. He is also a public relations consultant. With these talents, he knows how to draw attention to causes, some whimsical, and some serious. One of his more whimsical causes was attempting to have Oprah Winfrey nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 2005. This attempt failed. A cause that was more serious was attempting to do something about the high cost of gasoline in 2008. He did this by staging pray-ins at gasoline stations around the United States. The prayer was simple: "God, deliver us from these high gas prices." This activism seems whimsical, but it does have a serious element. Mr. Twyman points out, "I've seen Him work miracles in my life. He told us that all we need to do is ask and believe. He can do it, and he will do it, but we have to ask him to do it." According to Mr. Twyman, "God is the only one we can turn to at this point. Our leaders don't seem to be able to do anything about it. The prices keep soaring and soaring." Of course, when politicians become aware of events such as gas-station pray-ins, they are more likely to take action. Mr. Twyman also believes that the public needs to take some action as well; for example, he says, "People have to walk more, leave those cars at home, and carpool, man. We have to become more practical." A very serious cause is persuading African-Americans to become donors of bone marrow. He took up this cause in 1995 because a friend of his died from leukemia; the friend was unable to find a match for his bone marrow—a match might have saved his life. Mr. Twyman has organized many bone marrow drives, often in churches, and he estimates that the drives have resulted in 14,000 more potential donors of bone marrow.²²¹

“I Will Build You a Shrine”

When Danny Thomas was trying to become a successful comedian, he prayed to St. Jude for help, and he promised, “I will build you a shrine where the poor, helpless, and hopeless may come for comfort and aid.” He kept his promise by founding the St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, which opened in 1962. Located in Memphis, Tennessee, it serves children suffering from serious diseases such as Hodgkin disease, leukemia, sickle-cell disease, and many others. At St. Jude, no one pays for their treatment. Insurance pays part of the cost, and whatever medical expenses insurance does not cover are paid by the hospital and by an organization that Mr. Thomas founded to raise funds for the hospital: the American Lebanese Syrian Associated Charities.²²²

“I Wouldn’t Do That for \$1 Million”

A woman once was cleaning the sores on the body of her friend. An observer said, “I wouldn’t do that for \$1 million.” The woman replied, “Neither would I.” (All of us ought to be thankful that there are nurses who through a sense of service are willing to do these things in behalf of complete strangers for sums of money much less than \$1 million.)²²³

CHAPTER 17: POLITICS

Three Good Deeds

Goh Chok Tong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore, has been the recipient of good deeds during his life. In 1971, he visited the People’s Republic of China, where he and some friends wanted one day to buy some biscuits (the American term is cookies) from a vendor. They had only foreign money and no Chinese money, and so they were unable to buy the biscuits. Fortunately, an elderly woman saw that they were disappointed because they could not buy the biscuits, and she bought the biscuits for them. In Seoul, Korea, in the 1970s, he was waiting for a friend and getting wet in a slight shower of rain. A Korean woman shared her umbrella with him, although they could not speak each other’s language. In 1976, in Singapore, a Marine Parade resident noticed that Mr. Tong was perspiring heavily, so he bought him a packet of sliced ginseng, saying that it would improve his health.²²⁴

Helping Martin Luther King, Jr.

While Martin Luther King, Jr., was on trial for his civil-rights activities, officials discovered a suspended sentence on a traffic violation, and they used it to sentence him to six months of hard labor in a tough state prison. Only pressure by John F. Kennedy, then running for President, and his brother, Robert Kennedy, kept Dr. King from going to jail immediately. Instead, bowing to political pressure from the Kennedys, the judge allowed Dr. King to post bail until the matter could be cleared up.²²⁵

Accepting the Untouchables

In 1915, Mahatma Gandhi founded the Satyagraha Ashram (“ashram” means “monastery”) in Ahmedabad in Gujarat, India. At the ashram, which was supported by contributions, he taught many students. Among his beliefs was that the caste system of Hinduism was wrong and that the Untouchables ought to be treated better. Gandhi had the opportunity to act on his beliefs

when an Untouchable family asked to join the ashram. Gandhi welcomed them, although a wealthy, high-caste Hindu immediately stopped supporting the ashram financially. Other financial contributions dried up, and some people even threatened to forcibly drive away the Untouchables, but Gandhi continued to welcome the Untouchables and the ashram survived.²²⁶

Honoring a Fallen Soldier

Native Americans have endured much prejudice in the United States. John Rice is a Native American who died fighting for the United States in the Korean War; nevertheless, Memorial Park, a cemetery in Sioux City, Iowa, did not want him buried there. Therefore, President Harry Truman ordered that Mr. Rice be honored with burial in Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.²²⁷

“I am Commander-in-Chief of the Army”

President Abraham Lincoln once saw a soldier standing guard duty outside on a bitterly cold day. Taking pity on the soldier, President Lincoln told him that he could stand guard just as well inside as outside, and that he should go inside and warm himself. However, the soldier said that his orders were to stand guard outside. President Lincoln then said, “It occurs to me that I am Commander-in-Chief of the army, and I order you to go inside.”²²⁸

Denouncing Religious Discrimination

When Ulysses S. Grant was President, the government of Romania encouraged physical attacks against the Jews living within its borders. President Grant responded by appointing a Jew named Benjamin Franklin Peixotto to serve as the American consul in Bucharest, Hungary. He also gave Mr. Peixotto a signed presidential letter that denounced religious discrimination. These actions greatly reduced violence against Jews in Romania.²²⁹

“I Can Forgive”

From the Vietnam War is a famous photograph of a naked nine-year-old girl running from a village that has been bombed—she was burned badly by the flames. As an adult, Kim Phuc is a woman who still has nightmares about the bombing. She says, “Even when I see the picture, I can’t imagine why they did it to children, to innocent people. The children didn’t do anything. Why did they have to suffer? The war happened, but in the past. I want to say to the pilot, ‘We have to love each other.’ I can forgive.”²³⁰

Repaying a Good Deed with a Good Deed

In 1961, singer Nat King Cole appeared on the same day at the presentation to Los Angeles society of his daughter, Cookie, and at a dinner given by President John F. Kennedy. Mr. Cole appeared at the President’s dinner, then went to the hotel for the debutant party. The coming-out party was already special, but was made even more special when President Kennedy made an unscheduled appearance to greet all the debutants and especially Cookie, who felt like she would faint. President Kennedy said that he made the appearance for a good reason: “It is the least that an itinerant President can do to repay a favor Nat King Cole has just done for me by appearing at my dinner.”²³¹

Saving the Pyramids

In 1964, a crisis faced the ancient Egyptian temples at Abu Simbel. The Aswan dam had been constructed, and waters were rising in the dam's reservoir. After a few years, the ancient temples would be covered up. The Egyptian government asked for help in solving the problem, and soon a team of international experts was on the job. They decided to move the ancient temples. They cut them into pieces (some of the pieces weighed thirty tons!), then reassembled them on the same cliff, but two hundred feet higher. The project took four years, but the temples were saved.²³²

CHAPTER 18: MISCELLANEOUS

“There is No Way in Hell I’m Getting in the Elevator with That Man”

When Ohio University student Haley Butler visited London, she saw and enjoyed the musical *Wicked*, although she attended the musical alone despite having promised her parents that she would not go out alone at night. On her way back to her hotel, she noticed that a strange man was following her. She tried to get away from him, but he kept on following her. In the subway, she needed to take an elevator to get to ground level, but she thought, “There is no way in hell I’m getting in the elevator with that man. He’s going to rape me. He’s going to rape me, and then kill me.” She was making a major effort not to cry when the elevator door opened, and a man in the elevator looked at her, saw how frightened she was, and even though he had never seen her before, said, “Oh my gosh! How are you? I can’t believe I ran into you!” Haley knew that she had never seen this new man before, but she replied, “I’m great! It’s so good to see you.” The strange man who had been following Haley left, and Haley said, “You saved me. That guy was following me, and I didn’t know what to do!” The new man responded, “I know. I could tell by the look on your face! You seemed so frightened.” The new man even walked her to her hotel just to ensure that she would be safe. (Some men can be very helpful in situations like this. Comedian Jay Leno once noticed a woman being harassed by a man, so he went over and pretended to be the woman’s boyfriend and chased the harasser away.)²³³

Drawing Attention to Violence Against Women

Activism is a good deed when it draws attention to important issues. The YWCA is concerned about violence against women. It sponsors A Week Without Violence, which advocates what its name suggests. During the week many people wear T-shirts bearing this slogan: “Imagine 604,080 seconds, 10,080 minutes, 168 hours, 7 days without violence.” In addition, women all over the country pass out to men cards bearing this message: “The next time you see or hear one of us in trouble, pay attention. We can’t stop violence by ourselves.” Many men listen to the women and keep the cards.²³⁴

Sentencing a Wife-Beater

Creative sentencing is not new, and it can be effective. Judge Roy Bean, the Law West of the Pecos, once ordered a wife beater to be chained close to Bruno, the judge’s pet bear. The bear wasn’t close enough to do any actual life-threatening damage, but it was plenty close enough to greatly scare the wife beater.²³⁵

Heroism of a Guide Dog

On September 11, 2001, computer technician Omar Rivera, who is blind, and his guide dog, Salty, were on the 71st floor of the north tower of the World Trade Center when an airplane controlled by terrorists slammed into the 96th floor. Omar felt heat and smelt smoke, and he heard glass breaking. Lots of confusion ensued, and Omar thought that he would not get out of the building. He decided to give his guide dog a chance to make it out of the building, so he undid the dog's lead and told Salty to go. In the confusion, they were separated briefly, but Salty returned to Omar and nudged his leg. Omar held on to Salty's harness and they started down 71 flights of stairs. On the way down, they met co-worker Donna Enright, and Omar held onto her shoulder with one hand while holding onto Salty's harness with the other hand. With their help, Omar made it out of the building not long before it collapsed. Both Donna and Salty were his "angels," Omar says, adding about his guide dog, "I knew for certain he loved me just as much as I loved him. He was prepared to die in the hope he might save my life." The British government awarded the Dickin Medal to three dogs that were at the World Trade Center that day. One dog was a police dog named Apollo; the other two were guide dogs. Roselle helped her owner down from the 78th floor. The third dog, of course, was Salty.²³⁶

An International Animal Rescue

Athens, Greece, is very far from Athens, Ohio, but both communities have newspapers with the same name: *The Athens News*. In this age of the Internet and of e-mail, a letter intended for the Greek newspaper occasionally ends up getting sent to the American newspaper, and no doubt vice versa. One of these letters resulted in an international rescue of six stranded dogs. On June 26, 2008, *The Athens News* in Ohio received a letter from a South African named Tim Munton, who while sailing in the Corinth Gulf had come across some dogs stranded on a Greek island named Dhaskalio Island in the uninhabited group of islands called Nisoi Alkonidhes. No fresh water was available on the island, but the dogs had survived, apparently by eating seagulls and their eggs. Mr. Munton left 25 liters of fresh water for the dogs and a sign asking people in passing boats to also leave fresh water for the dogs. This letter was printed in *The Athens News*, a twice-weekly newspaper, on July 3, and Melissa Luna, who is an attorney for the Center for Student Legal Services in Athens, Ohio, read the letter and took action. She researched several animal-rescue groups in Europe and contacted them, sending them information that included a scanned copy of Mr. Munton's letter to *The Athens News*. The London-based Greek Animal Rescue, a Danish organization called Greaske Hunde, and World Animals Shelter Foundation in The Netherlands pooled their money so that three of their representatives—Nafsika Corneliou, Mary Sarika, and Tina Panoutsopoulos—could go to Dhaskalio Island on July 5 and pick up the dogs, which were in fact rescued, and while thin, were in good health.²³⁷

"There's No Way There's Anybody Alive in There!"

In Oak Park, California, on December 22, 1994, a fire broke out at a residence. The Sacramento Fire Department received an alarm at about 1:30 a.m. and hurried to the scene. When the fire fighters arrived at the burning house, they immediately heard, "There's a baby inside! You've got to help!" The baby was named Daishna, and she was only 23 months old. Captain Tim Adams went to the window of the room where the baby was supposed to be, and he looked inside. Immediately, he thought, "There's no way there's anybody alive in there!" He was wrong—he heard the baby scream. Captain Adams crawled inside the room without

his SCBA (Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus) because he had no time to get it. He got on the floor and crawled forward through the smoke toward the screams. Eventually, he reached out a hand through the smoke and his fingers went in the baby's mouth. He grabbed Daishna and headed back to the window and jumped out before the room was totally engulfed in flames. Daishna received treatment at the UC Davis Medical Center, and after two days she was released. For saving Daishna's life, Captain Adams received the Gold Medal of Valor. His father, Ernest Adams, had won the same medal in 1963 for saving the lives of three children inside a burning apartment building.²³⁸

Touching the Heart

While in school, K.I. Sudderuddin took a class trip to a remote area in Bangladesh. He wrote a letter home, and then he walked to a post office to buy a stamp and mail the letter. Unfortunately, when he arrived at the post office, he discovered that he had dropped the letter somewhere. Unable to find it, he assumed that the letter was lost forever. However, when he returned home, he discovered that his family had received and enjoyed the letter. A kind villager had found it, bought a stamp for it, and posted it. K.I. Sudderuddin says, "An act of kindness, no matter how small, touches the heart in a way time cannot dim."²³⁹

The Imperial Court of New York

In New York is a charitable organization of gay and transgendered people—including men who dress like women. The organization's name is the Imperial Court of New York, and its motto is "Do good and look fabulous."²⁴⁰

Wisely Using Influence

Edmond de Rothschild (1845-1934) was immensely wealthy and immensely powerful, and he knew how to use his influence. Once a young man came to him, bearing a letter of introduction and seeking a position in his banking firm. Rothschild took the young man out to lunch, engaged him in conversation, and touched his arm in public. Then he told the young man that he did not have a position open, but he had done as much for him as he could. Later that day, the young man entered another banking establishment, where marked attention was paid to him, and whose president asked if he had been the young man dining with Rothschild. When the young man said that he was, and that he was seeking a position in banking, he was immediately offered a job.²⁴¹

"This is My Big Chance!"

Kyle Zimmer is the president of First Book, an organization that gives books to young children who could not otherwise own books. Many of the children are very appreciative of the books they receive. One young child bounced around from one homeless shelter to another, but the one possession that the child fought to keep was a book he had been given by First Book. In addition, Mr. Zimmer once gave a book to a child who smiled, then said, "This is my big chance!"²⁴²

"Someone Has To"

Rosemary, one of British columnist Michele Hanson's friends, noticed a young homeless woman on the street, trembling with cold, and begging for money to buy a hot cup of tea. A

kind person, Rosemary bought the young homeless woman tea and food and even took her shopping—until the young homeless woman tried to shoplift meat. Rosemary then took the young homeless woman home so she could sleep in a bed. While the young homeless woman was sleeping, Rosemary tried to find a shelter that would take her—but Rosemary had no luck due to a lack of adequate social services. Eventually, Rosemary had to leave, so she worked very hard to wake up the young homeless woman. Rosemary begged, “Wake up, wake up. Please wake up. Why won’t you wake up?” Finally awake, the young woman replied, “Because it’s a bed.” Later, Rosemary discovered that the young homeless woman had stolen her new camera. Would Rosemary take another person like the young homeless woman home again? The answer is yes. Why? She says that someone has to.²⁴³

Sleeping in Public

Occasionally, people fall asleep in church. Rev. Graydon H. Pittman, pastor-emeritus of the First United Methodist Church in Emporia, Kansas, is gracious when that happens. He says, “When I see a man go to sleep in church, I thank God that he at least has the ability to relax.” Another speaker who also witnesses audience members occasionally go to sleep is Dr. R.W. Wood of Johns Hopkins University. He often lectured at the Royal Society in London, and an old man always fell asleep during his lectures. When the old man died, he left the Royal Society \$150,000 in his will, explaining that whenever he suffered from insomnia, he would cure himself by going to hear a lecture at the Royal Society.²⁴⁴

Activism and Good Deeds

Abbie Hoffman did good deeds by being active in the pursuit of civil rights and peace for all. He went to the South as one of the Freedom Riders in Mississippi to help register blacks to vote. In a small town, he was once stopped by a Mississippi police officer and given a ticket for running a red light. According to Mr. Hoffman, that particular town didn’t even have a traffic light. Mr. Hoffman could use humor to make a point. The Pentagon is in the shape of a pentagram, which is a symbol of evil. In perhaps their best deed, Mr. Hoffman and his friends once formed a huge circle around the Pentagon and performed a mass exorcism.²⁴⁵

Trying to Prevent the Great Depression

On October 24, 1929, the stock market took a plunge. The prices of stock went steadily lower and seemed about to create a panic among stock investors and speculators. Five big bankers held an emergency meeting and decided to do what they could to shore up the prices of stocks, so they pooled money together to buy stocks. Richard Whitney, the vice president of the New York Stock Exchange, took the bankers’ money and bought 10,000 shares of U.S. Steel for \$10 more than the stock market’s price. He also bought other big-company stocks at prices above the going rate. This worked—for a while. However, a few days later, on October 29, the stock market crashed and started the Great Depression.²⁴⁶

“We’ve Got a Live One!”

After a bomb exploded in front of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, emergency squads rushed to the rescue. These heroes searched for survivors, even though what was left of the building was unstable and could collapse at any minute. One person found alive was Priscilla Sayers, who had lain buried under a pile of rubble for five hours, praying that someone would rescue her. Another person found alive was Dana Bradley.

She was trapped in the basement, and falling debris had completely crushed one of her legs. To get her out, physicians had to amputate the crushed leg below the knee. That was bad enough, but they could not give painkillers to Ms. Bradley lest it send her into shock. She endured terrible pain as her leg was amputated, but she lived. The last person to be found alive was 15-year-old Brandy Liggons. A rescue dog found her foot sticking out of the debris, and a rescue worker shouted, "We've got a live one!" She was rescued and taken to a hospital, where her injured spleen was removed. While she was in the hospital, talk show host Oprah Winfrey visited her. Ms. Winfrey told her, "Brandy, if you can survive this, you can survive anything."²⁴⁷

Declining to Escape

African-American Ned Huddleston, a Wild West outlaw, had a good side. Deputy Sheriff Joseph Philbrick of Wyoming surprised and arrested him, but ran into trouble trying to take him into town. His horse bolted, throwing Mr. Philbrick to the ground, then his horse knocked down an incline the buckboard carriage on which Mr. Philbrick and Mr. Huddleston were riding. Rather than escaping, Mr. Philbrick calmed the horse, righted the buckboard carriage, and drove the unconscious Mr. Philbrick into Rock Springs, Wyoming, where he turned himself in at the jail. At the trial, Mr. Philbrick testified as a character witness about the care that Mr. Huddleston had taken of him, and the jury found Mr. Huddleston innocent.²⁴⁸

Running a Soup Kitchen

During the Great Depression, soup kitchens sprang up everywhere to feed hungry people. Not all the soup kitchens were run by organized charities; some were run by private individuals. In Chicago, gangster Al Capone ran one of the biggest soup kitchens.²⁴⁹

CONCLUSION

The Shortest and Easiest Way to Serve God

A seeker after truth once asked a wise person how to seek God. The wise person replied, "The ways to God are as many as there are created beings. But the shortest and easiest is to serve others, not to bother others, and to make others happy."²⁵⁰

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APPENDIX B: FAIR USE

§ 107. Limitations on exclusive rights: Fair use

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APPENDIX C: 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 Dance*, *Homer's Iliad: A Retelling in Prose*, and *William Shakespeare's Othello: A Retelling in Prose*.

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

APPENDIX D: SOME BOOKS BY DAVID BRUCE

Good Deeds

The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 1

The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 2

The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 3

The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 4

Retellings of a Classic Work of Literature

Arden of Faversham: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The Alchemist: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The Arraignment, or Poetaster: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Bartholomew Fair: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The Case is Altered: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Catiline's Conspiracy: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The Devil is an Ass: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Epicene: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Every Man in His Humor: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Every Man Out of His Humor: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The Fountain of Self-Love, or Cynthia's Revels: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The Magnetic Lady, or Humors Reconciled: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The New Inn, or The Light Heart: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Sejanus' Fall: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The Staple of News: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's A Tale of a Tub: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Volpone, or the Fox: A Retelling

Christopher Marlowe's Complete Plays: Retellings

Christopher Marlowe's Dido, Queen of Carthage: A Retelling

Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus: Retellings of the 1604 A-Text and of the 1616 B-Text

Christopher Marlowe's Edward II: A Retelling

Christopher Marlowe's The Massacre at Paris: A Retelling

Christopher Marlowe's The Rich Jew of Malta: A Retelling

Christopher Marlowe's Tamburlaine, Parts 1 and 2: Retellings

Dante's Divine Comedy: A Retelling in Prose

Dante's Inferno: A Retelling in Prose

Dante's Purgatory: A Retelling in Prose

Dante's Paradise: A Retelling in Prose

The Famous Victories of Henry V: A Retelling

From the Iliad to the Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose of Quintus of Smyrna's Posthomerica

George Chapman, Ben Jonson, and John Marston's Eastward Ho! A Retelling

George Peele's The Arraignment of Paris: A Retelling

George Peele's The Battle of Alcazar: A Retelling

George Peele's David and Bathsheba, and the Tragedy of Absalom: A Retelling

George Peele's Edward I: A Retelling

George Peele's The Old Wives' Tale: A Retelling

George-a-Greene: A Retelling

The History of King Leir: A Retelling

Homer's Iliad: A Retelling in Prose

Homer's Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose

J.W. Gent's The Valiant Scot: A Retelling

Jason and the Argonauts: A Retelling in Prose of Apollonius of Rhodes' Argonautica

John Ford: Eight Plays Translated into Modern English

John Ford's The Broken Heart: A Retelling

John Ford's The Fancies, Chaste and Noble: A Retelling

John Ford's The Lady's Trial: A Retelling

John Ford's The Lover's Melancholy: A Retelling

John Ford's Love's Sacrifice: A Retelling

John Ford's Perkin Warbeck: A Retelling

John Ford's The Queen: A Retelling

John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore: A Retelling

John Lyly's Campaspe: A Retelling

John Lyly's Endymion, The Man in the Moon: A Retelling

John Lyly's Galatea: A Retelling

John Lyly's Love's Metamorphosis: A Retelling

John Lyly's Midas: A Retelling

John Lyly's Mother Bombie: A Retelling

John Lyly's Sappho and Phao: A Retelling

John Lyly's The Woman in the Moon: A Retelling

John Webster's The White Devil: A Retelling

King Edward III: A Retelling

Mankind: A Medieval Morality Play (A Retelling)

Margaret Cavendish's The Unnatural Tragedy: A Retelling

The Merry Devil of Edmonton: A Retelling

The Summoning of Everyman: A Medieval Morality Play (A Retelling)

Robert Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay: A Retelling

The Taming of a Shrew: A Retelling

Tarlton's Jests: A Retelling

Thomas Middleton's A Chaste Maid in Cheapside: A Retelling

Thomas Middleton's Women Beware Women: A Retelling

Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker's The Roaring Girl: A Retelling

Thomas Middleton and William Rowley's The Changeling: A Retelling

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William Shakespeare's 11 Tragedies: Retellings in Prose

William Shakespeare's 12 Comedies: Retellings in Prose

William Shakespeare's 38 Plays: Retellings in Prose

William Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV, aka Henry IV, Part 1: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's 2 Henry IV, aka Henry IV, Part 2: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's 1 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 1: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's 2 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 2: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's 3 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 3: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's All's Well that Ends Well: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's As You Like It: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Coriolanus: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Cymbeline: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Hamlet: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Henry V: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Henry VIII: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's King John: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's King Lear: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Love's Labor's Lost: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Macbeth: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Measure for Measure: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Merry Wives of Windsor: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Othello: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Pericles, Prince of Tyre: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Richard II: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Richard III: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Tempest: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Timon of Athens: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Twelfth Night: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Two Gentlemen of Verona: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Two Noble Kinsmen: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale: A Retelling in Prose

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The Coolest People in Books: 250 Anecdotes

The Coolest People in Comedy: 250 Anecdotes

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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

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