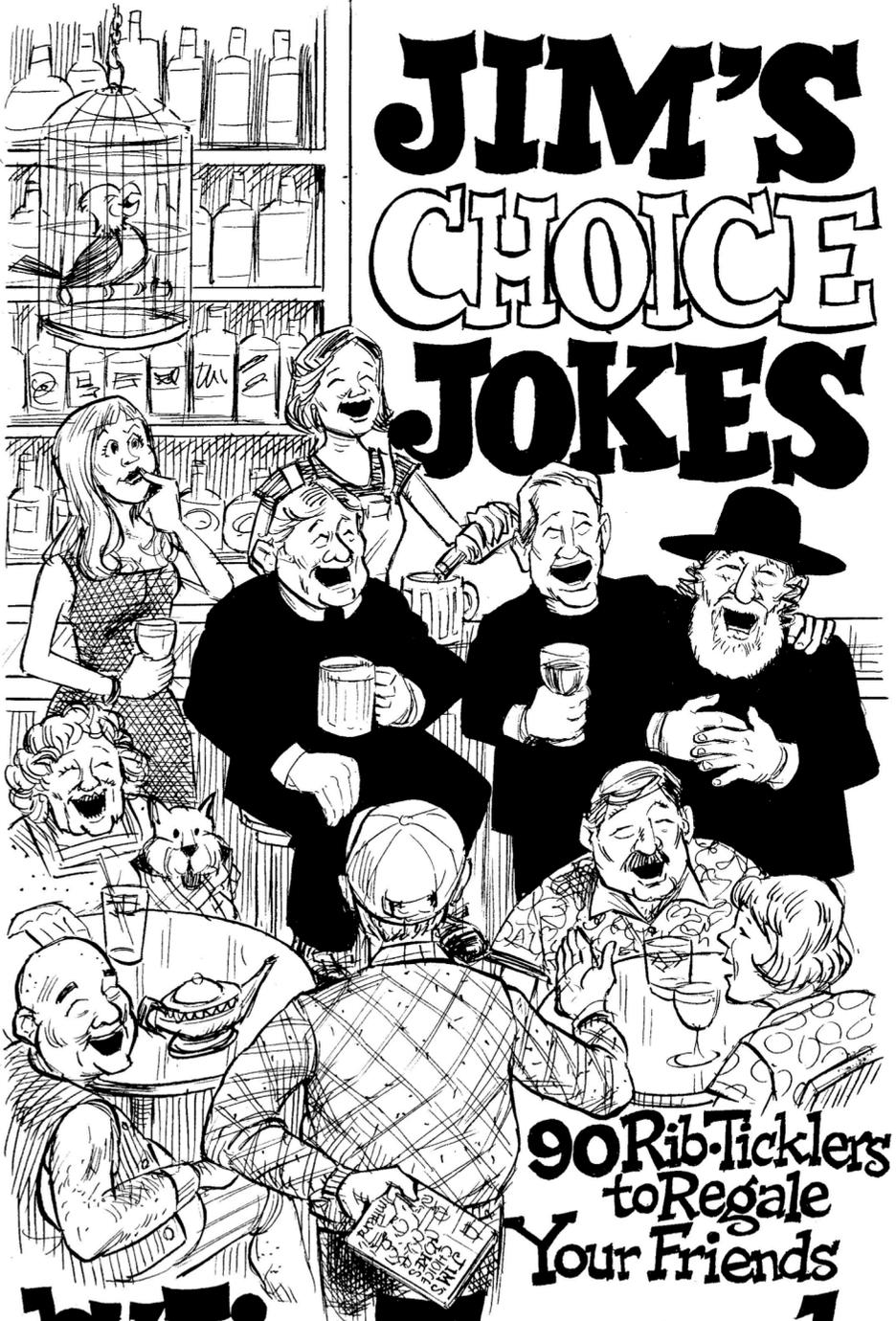


# JIM'S CHOICE JOKES



90 Rib-Ticklers  
to Regale  
Your Friends

by Jim Freund

AZAR

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                  | <u>PAGE</u> |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| INTRO .....                      | 1           |
| ANIMALS .....                    | 5           |
| LAWYERS .....                    | 11          |
| ACCOUNTANTS .....                | 13          |
| DOCTORS/NURSES .....             | 14          |
| PSYCHIATRISTS .....              | 16          |
| MEN OF THE CLOTH/RELIGIONS ..... | 18          |
| HEAVEN .....                     | 22          |
| GENIES .....                     | 24          |
| “DUMB” JOKES .....               | 27          |
| GETTING BACK .....               | 32          |
| NATIONALITY .....                | 34          |
| CANNIBALS / SAVAGES .....        | 36          |
| POLICE .....                     | 38          |
| GOLF .....                       | 40          |
| OLDSTERS .....                   | 43          |
| HUSBANDS AND WIVES .....         | 46          |
| FAMILY .....                     | 55          |
| SOME OTHERS .....                | 58          |

---

Cover illustration by my talented long-time collaborator, Joe Azar

## JIM'S CHOICE JOKES

Let's face it – this is one tough world out there in 2017. All that stuff going on in Washington and around the country, all the violence, all those international brouhahas.

And octogenarians like me also have to cope with the occasional brain freeze, the less supple limbs, the fear of what may lie ahead . . . .

So, I asked myself, what's the antidote for all this? And one answer came to me loud and clear – humor. Nothing else – at least in the short run – is as effective in making all this other negative stuff temporarily palatable.

Now, it would be great if we each had the rare facility of coming up with uproarious remarks on the spot. But even those of us who pride ourselves on our sense of humor may not be creative enough to pull that off.

So what we need is a stockpile of well-remembered jokes to tell – the kind that will hopefully convulse our listeners, while enhancing our reputation for wit. And if you agree that this would be desirable, well, you've come to the right place.

In addition to jokes that have long been favorites of mine, I've combed through countless selections from joke books\* and selected 90 of them that made me laugh.

---

\* *These include Milton Berle's Private Joke File; Man Walks into a Bar (Stephen Arnutt); The World's Greatest Collection of Clean Jokes (Bob Phillips); Just Great Jokes (Peter D.); and 101 Foolproof Jokes to Use in Case of Emergency.*

I hope you'll feel the same way about them, although I realize that everyone's sense of humor differs, and another set of jokes might appeal more to some of you – but for those jokes, you'll have to do your own research.

I'll confess here to being a big fan of off-color jokes, which I find to be the funniest around. But just as you can't tell one of those unless you know that everyone listening will be receptive, I've kept them out of this article. I will say, though, that much of the humor I find amusing is edgy, waggish, mischievous, irreverent – what have you – and a number of the situations are sexual; but hopefully, there's nothing in here that will make anyone really cringe.

A number of the jokes indicate a nationality or ethnic background of one or more of the principals. If you can mimic an appropriate accent, that's a real plus – but it's not required in telling the story, provided it's clear to the listener which character is speaking. And if you like the joke but are reluctant to use that particular nationality or ethnicity, you can usually change it to your liking and still get a good laugh.

There are thousands of one-liners out there, many of which are amusing, but I've stayed away from those in here. The jokes I've included tell a little story, and for that you need some context and generally some dialogue – all of which makes for more extended situations.

But for this batch of 90, I've stripped most down to the essentials. Among other things, this makes them easier to memorize. I wouldn't dare discourage you from appropriate embellishment if that's your thing; but I suggest not making the joke last too long, by adding non-essential detail, which detracts from the impact and may diminish the listener's

attention – except, of course, if you’re a joke-teller who’s really good at your craft.

An accomplished joke-teller can get away with a joke that has a somewhat predictable ending/punch line, since the listeners are enjoying the experience of being led along the way. But for those of us who aren’t that skillful, generating a hilarious reaction requires a surprise twist at the end – and that’s the kind I’ve chosen. What you want to hear the listener say (after he or she stops laughing) is, “I had no idea where that one was going. . . .”

Good jokes can produce different kinds of laughs. We strive for a guffaw, of course, but sometimes it’s just a chuckle, occasionally a wince or lateral shaking of the head. The key is whether there’s a grin on the listener’s face – if so, you’ll know you’ve scored.

In an attempt to make these jokes accessible for telling, I’ve rewritten a number of them from how they appear in a joke book. That style may be okay for reading the joke, but telling it is a different story – and so I’ve modified them to be better conveyed orally. Also you’ll notice that I sometimes put ellipses (. . . .) before the punch line – that’s to encourage you to pause and then deliver it full-blown.

My sense of the dynamics of joke-telling is that you can’t just whip one out, unrelated to the discussion, seemingly from nowhere. To be really effective – to make people regard you as creative, not just a bore – the joke ought to apply to the subject that’s currently on the table. Relevance is crucial – and for that, some advance planning is requisite.

So, I’ve made some efforts throughout to describe how a certain joke could be relevant to particular situations likely to

arise. Memorize the ones you like best, try them out on a spouse or good friend, and you'll be all set if and when the suitable time arrives.

Actually, you can help that time arise by subtly turning the conversation in a certain direction, letting it flow for a while – so no one will recall how it originally got there – and then, emphasizing the relevance, interject your joke. . . . “That reminds me of the story . . . .”

And although these jokes were not included with oratory in mind, at least some of them are usable to warm up the audience at the beginning of a speech or emcee stint.

Finally, here's some good advice on joke-telling from one of the masters, Milton Berle.

“First, you have to believe you'll get laughs. If you don't brainwash yourself into believing your talent, you won't get the desired reaction. People who start the telling of a story with a caveat, a statement of their inability to tell a story, will not tell it well. Why should they make liars of themselves?”

And he reminds us that our delivery must reflect our pleasure at telling it – “Hey, I like this one.”

So now let's turn to the jokes, which I've organized by topic (as listed in the table of contents), for you to use when the conversation turns in that direction.

## ANIMALS

Animals come up in conversation often – especially around my house – so you ought to have a few animal jokes in your quill. As I sifted through the multiple ones that abound, it became clear that in most cases they were more about the guy interacting with the animal than about the animal itself.

So don't limit yourself to telling one of these when the subject of animals comes up – it may be quite pertinent to something else. For instance, here's one using elephants (although it could be about anything bulky, like a large refrigerator) that you can work into a conversation about negotiation or salesmanship.

\* \* \*

*Two businessmen meet in a restaurant. The initiator of the lunch says, "I have a good deal for you. When I was in Florida, I went to the town where the circus stays during the winter. I happened to pick up an elephant. I could let you have it for a hundred dollars."*

*The other businessman sips his martini and says, "What am I going to do with an elephant? I live in a small condo. I don't have room for my furniture. I can't squeeze in an end table. So now I'm going to buy an elephant?"*

*The first businessman says, "I could let you have three of them for two hundred."*

*"Okay, now you're talking . . . ."*

\* \* \*

In contrast to that one – where the seller is the shrewd businessman – in this next joke it's the bird who has the smarts, having mastered a pro bettor's mindset. I've also heard this one told using a dog instead of a bird, but I prefer the bird – a creature (think parrot) who has been known to utter recognizable words from time to time.

\* \* \*

*On Easter Sunday, a man remarks to his visitors that he has a bird that's able to sing "Easter Parade." His friends laugh at him.*

*But wait – the man is willing to bet money. His cynical friends give him 2-to-1 odds, putting up a hundred dollars against his fifty.*

*Taking the bird out of the cage, he pets it gently and says, "Sing." The bird doesn't open its beak. He asks it to sing again. Not one note. He demands that the bird sing. Not one note. No matter what he does, the bird won't sing.*

*The man pays off on his bet. After his friends leave, he grabs the bird and says, "I may cook you tonight. Why the hell didn't you sing?"*

*The bird replies, "Take it easy. Just think of the odds we'll be able to get this winter with 'White Christmas. . . .'"*

\* \* \*

Here's another involving money, which features an owner who isn't too bright about business matters. This works well when the subject being discussed is truthfulness or how we sometimes emphasize the wrong element in our decision-making.

\* \* \*

*A man sees a sign in front of a house, "Talking Dog for Sale." He rings the bell, and the owner takes him to the back yard where the dog is chained to a post.*

*"Can you talk?" asks the man.*

*"Yep," says the dog. "I discovered this first at a young age. Then I worked for the CIA, sitting in rooms with spies and world leaders, because no one expected a dog to be eavesdropping. I was one of their most valuable spies eight years running. Then I did undercover security work, mostly listening to suspicious characters and uncovering some incredible dealings, I was awarded many medals. Later I married, had some puppies, and now I'm retired."*

*The man is amazed. He asks the owner how much he wants for the dog.*

*"Ten dollars," replies the owner.*

*"That's an awfully low price for such an amazing dog," says the man. "Why on earth are you selling him – and so cheap?"*

*The owner replies, "Because he's such a damn liar."*

\* \* \*

The next one – a recent favorite of mine – works best if someone in the conversation has

- Talked about the bond between dog and owner, or
- Raised the issue of whether dogs communicate with each other, or
- Discussed the grooming of dogs, or
- Speculated on what goes on in a vet's office.

\* \* \*

*Two dogs – a small one and a big one – find themselves together in a vet's office and strike up a conversation.*

*The big dog asks the small dog, "What are you in for?"*

*The small dog replies : "I was a bad dog. I bit a little girl who was harassing me. and for that they're going to put me to sleep . . . . How about you?"*

*The big dog says, "I mounted my mistress and took unforgivable liberties with her."*

*The small dog asks, "So are they going to put you to sleep or just neuter you?"*

*The big dog answers, "Neither. As a matter of fact, I'm here for a facial and a pedicure."*

\* \* \*

A recurring setting for jokes is a desert isle, where everything is reduced to the basics. (There are other desert isle jokes in the Golf and Genie sections.) Here's one where the sex drive takes hold of a desperate guy.

\* \* \*

*A man found himself on a deserted island with a strange dog. After several days, a female dolphin swam into the lagoon that the island curled around. Like a sexy woman, the dolphin flickered her eyes and moaned soft sounds.*

*The man became fascinated with the dolphin and started to wade into the water. But the dog jumped between him and the dolphin, barking ferociously, baring its sharp teeth.*

*Day after day, at all hours, the man tried to go to his lady dolphin, only to be met by the dog's teeth glistening and ready to tear him to shreds.*

*The months passed. One morning, a beautiful young woman washed ashore. Her lovely body was framed by what little was left of her dress.*

*Thrilled at the site of a male sharing her island, she purred to him in a sexy voice, "I'm the answer to your prayers. I'll do anything for you."*

*The man said, "Great! Will you hold this damn dog . . . ."*

\* \* \*

I'll conclude the "Animals" section with this beaut, which illustrates how crucial it is to always have a ready retort when you're expecting to face an obstacle. (I've heard this set in a plane-boarding milieu, but with all the airport security nowadays, I don't think it rings as true as in the restaurant.) Just make sure you really explode with feeling on the last line, to emphasize your fake bewilderment.

\* \* \*

*Two men try to get into a restaurant, but both have their dogs with them – a Labrador and a Chihuahua. Each is refused entry by the doorman.*

*The two men put on dark glasses to try again. "Can you let me have a table?" asks the man with the Labrador. "I know I have a dog, but I'm blind and this is my guide dog."*

*The man is let in by the doorman.*

*Now, the second man tries his luck. "I'm blind – can you let me have a table for me and my guide dog?" he asks.*

*"That's not a guide dog," says the doorman. "That's a Chihuahua."*

*"A Chihuahua?!" shouts the man. "That's what those bastards gave me – a Chihuahua?!"*

\* \* \*

## LAWYERS

Being one, I don't initiate lawyer jokes, of which there are plenty – almost none of which stress any positive qualities of the profession. I once chaired a seminar at an ABA meeting that I built around a dozen lawyer jokes, each of which emphasized some unflattering supposed trait of lawyers – leading an all-star panel of top lawyers in a debate over whether we deserved such opprobrium. (The verdict, you'll be happy to hear, was that although we weren't perfect, the stories were quite over the top.)

Anyway, even if you're a lawyer, you ought to have one or two lawyer jokes around to use when someone else starts in. Here are two that made me laugh – both dealing with financial matters.

\* \* \*

*The city miser was on his death bed. His last request was to be alone with his lawyer, doctor, and priest.*

*"I know I'm going to die," he told them, "and I'd like to take my money with me. So I'm giving each of you \$150,000, and I want each of you to make sure the money gets into the coffin."*

*Within 24 hours, he died. A few days after the funeral, the priest – overflowing with guilt – confided to the other two that he only put \$100,000 back into the coffin.*

*"I'm glad you brought it up," said the doctor, "because I've also been feeling guilty. I only put back \$80,000 back."*

*"You two should be ashamed of yourselves," stormed the lawyer, "stealing money like that. Am I the only honest person here? Here look at this," he said, pulling out his bank account ledger. "I wrote a check to him for the full \$150,000."*

Here's the one I like best. By the way, if you enjoy the joke but don't want a lawyer to be the wise guy, you can substitute someone else, like a private investigator. That's true of most of these jokes, which may be made more palatable to you with a different cast.

\* \* \*

*The Godfather, accompanied by his attorney, meets with his accountant. The Godfather says to the accountant, "Where's the three million bucks you embezzled from me?"*

*When the accountant doesn't answer, the Godfather pulls out a gun and says, "If you don't tell me where it is, I'll shoot you in the head and splatter your brains against the wall."*

*The attorney interrupts. "Sir, the man is a deaf-mute, but I can interpret for you." The attorney, using sign language, asks the accountant where the three million dollars is.*

*The accountant signs back to him. "The... money... is... hidden... in... a... suitcase... behind... the... shed... in... my... backyard."*

*"Well, what did he say?" asks the Godfather impatiently.*

*The attorney replies, "He says he doesn't think you have the guts to pull the trigger. . . ."*

\* \* \*

## ACCOUNTANTS

You need to have at least one accountant joke. What you often hear, taking an unwarranted dig at the ethics of the profession, is a story that involves several candidates for a company position, who have to answer the question, "How much is two plus two?" – and, after some straightforward "four" answers by the other candidates, the accountant says to the interviewer, "Did you have a particular number in mind?"

But here's a less familiar one that I like better, calling into question (again, unwarranted) the brainpower of the profession.

\* \* \*

*A convention to prove that accountants aren't stupid is set up in a massive stadium. Accountants from all over the world watch as the emcee asks the first volunteer, "What is 15 plus 15?"*

*After 20 seconds the volunteer says, "Eighteen." Everyone is a little disappointed, but the accountants in the audience start yelling, "Give him another chance! Give him another chance!"*

*The emcee says, "Well I guess we can give him another chance. What is five plus five." After 30 seconds the volunteer says, "Ninety?"*

*Everyone is crestfallen, but the accountants who are present again start yelling, "Give him another chance! Give him another chance!"*

*The emcee says. "Okay! One last chance. What is two plus two?" The accountant ponders this carefully and after a minute says, "Four."*

*The accountants in the audience start yelling, "Give him another chance! Give him another chance!"*

## DOCTORS / NURSES

I'm sure you already have in your arsenal a few of the countless doctor jokes that make the rounds – perhaps something like this one.

\* \* \*

*A doctor calls a plumber in the middle of the night. "Why are you calling me at this hour?" says the plumber.*

*"Look, it's an emergency," says the doctor. "If it was the other way around, you'd expect me to come out, wouldn't you?"*

*"Okay," says the plumber. "What's the problem?"*

*The doctor replies, "The toilet's broken."*

*The plumber says, "Give it two aspirins and call me again in the morning."*

\* \* \*

In this tale, the nurse delivers the message.

\* \* \*

*The nurse smoothed the blankets to make the patient more comfortable and said. "Mr. Kemp, see if you can smile and look happy for the doctor when he comes in."*

*The patient replied, "I'm not going to smile. I feel miserable."*

*The nurse said, "Couldn't you manage a little smile for the doctor's benefit? He's so worried about your case."*

Here's a doctor joke you might not have heard. (But don't tell it at a doctor-oriented joke session or you'll give away the punch line.)

\* \* \*

*An artist asks the gallery owner if there has been any interest in his paintings.*

*"I have good news and bad news," the owner replies.*

*"Tell me the good news first," says the artist.*

*"The good news is that a gentleman did inquire about your work and wondered if it would appreciate in value after your death. When I told him it would, he bought all 15 of your paintings."*

*"That's wonderful," the artist exclaims. "What's the bad news?"*

*The owner replies, "The gentleman was your doctor. . . ."*

\* \* \*

This one, featuring a very precise nurse, still makes me chuckle.

\* \* \*

*"I'm really worried," says a nervous hospital patient to his nurse. "Last week, I read about a man who was in a hospital because of heart trouble and he died of malaria."*

*"Relax," replies the nurse. "This is a first-rate hospital. When we treat you for heart trouble, you die of heart trouble."*

## PSYCHIATRISTS

You need a few shrink jokes, since the conversation so often tends in that direction. Here's one I've told for years in an off-color dentist version.

\* \* \*

*"Mr. Gerber," the psychiatrist said. "You're all better now. Your treatment is over."*

*"Oh, Doctor, I can't believe it. You're incredible. I could hug and kiss you."*

*"Please don't do that. Actually, we shouldn't even be lying here on the couch together."*

\* \* \*

For this next story, you may want to identify the therapist as female, although my version leaves the gender open.

\* \* \*

*A young man took therapy for ten years. The shrink then told him, "You're finished. You don't need me anymore."*

*The young man left but phoned a week later. "Doctor, I can't be out there alone. I depend on you – you're a mother to me."*

*"I'm not your mother. You don't need me to mother you. . . . By the way, where are you now?"*

*"I'm having breakfast."*

*"What kind of breakfast?"*

*"Black coffee, that's all."*

*"You call that a breakfast. . . . ?"*

Here's my favorite psychiatrist joke, about the shrink's most difficult case, with an unexpected ending. Remember, though, to pause at the four dots, so as to emphasize that wonderful last line.

\* \* \*

*Two psychiatrists were at a convention conversing over a drink. One asked the other, "What was your most difficult case?"*

*The other replied, "I had a patient who lived in a pure fantasy world. He believed that an uncle in South America was going to die and leave him a fortune.*

*"All day long he waited for a letter to arrive from an attorney. He never went out, he never did anything, he merely sat around and waited for this fantasy letter from this fantasy uncle.*

*"Did that go on for a long time?"*

*"I worked with this man for eight years."*

*"And what was the result?"*

*"It was an eight-year struggle – every day for eight years – but I finally cured him. . . . And then that stupid letter arrived. . . .*

\* \* \*

## MEN OF THE CLOTH/RELIGIONS

Some of the best jokes have a religious flavor or involve priests, ministers and rabbis. You may prefer to stay out of this area initially, but at least you ought to be able to land a counterpunch if someone else starts in.

These first two, admittedly, do exhibit a degree of cynicism about men of the cloth.

\* \* \*

*In a small community there were four churches. A newcomer went to one for Sunday services. He could see, when the plate went around, that the congregation wasn't too supportive.*

*After the service, the newcomer said to the minister, "Your church isn't doing too well, is it?"*

*The minister answered, "Not too well – but, thank God, the other three are also in trouble."*

\* \* \*

*Four men of the cloth were chatting. The rabbi confessed, "I like ham once in a while."*

*The Baptist minister said, "I take a few belts of Scotch every day."*

*"Me," the priest said, "I have a girlfriend."*

*Reverend Swanson of the Lutheran church said, "I love to gossip . . . ."*

\* \* \*

Catholic confessionals proliferate in the joke world.

\* \* \*

*A Catholic teenager confesses to an affair with a girl, but refuses to name her.*

*“Was it Mary Jones?” the priest asks. “No,” says the boy.*

*“Was it, by any chance June Carter?” “No.”*

*“How about Teresa Smith?” “No”*

*“Well, son,” says the priest, “For your penance, say 50 Hail Mary’s and leave half your pocket money in the poor box.”*

*Outside, the boy’s friends ask what happened.*

*“Not bad,” he says – a \$5 fine and three great leads.”*

\* \* \*

You can use this one to critique someone’s chattiness.

\* \* \*

*John joins a monastery and takes a vow of silence – he can say only two words every seven years. After the first seven years, the elders summon him to ask for his two words. “Cold floors,” he says. They nod and send him away.*

*Seven more years pass. They bring John back in and ask for his two words. He says, “Bad food.” They nod and send him away.*

*Seven more years pass. They bring John in for his two words. “I quit.”*

*“That’s not surprising,” one of the elders says. “You’ve done nothing but complain since you got here.”*

\* \* \*

Catholic-Jewish interaction is often good for a laugh.

\* \* \*

*A young Jewish lad enters Notre Dame to play football. At the end of the season, he returns home and runs into his rabbi.*

*The rabbi asks, "Are they trying to convert you at South Bend?"*

*The young man said, "Of course not, Father."*

\* \* \*

Here are two more Jewish ones I like – the first, a real oldie.

\* \* \*

*A Jewish woman is sitting next to a businessman on a plane.*

*"Are you Jewish?" she asks. "No, I'm not," he replies.*

*"But you must be Jewish," says the woman. "No, I'm not."*

*"Admit it, you're Jewish," says the woman.*

*"Okay," he says, "Just to make you happy – yes, yes, I am Jewish."*

*"Funny," says the woman, "you don't look Jewish."*

\* \* \*

*An usher is stationed at the temple door to check for tickets the Jewish members have bought for their New Year service.*

*A man comes to the door. The usher says, "Where's your ticket?" The man says, "I don't have one, but I must talk to my brother."*

*"You need to have a ticket" the usher insists. "It's very important for me to talk to my brother," the man says.*

*The usher relents. "All right, go in and find him – but don't let me catch you praying!"*

Here's one involving a swami that you can use when you want to comment on someone who hasn't lived up to his billing.

\* \* \*

*A young man wanted to know the meaning of life. Hearing that a Swami in Nepal knew the answer, the young man sold off all of his property and journeyed to Nepal.*

*He traveled through the harshest land, eating the most basic foods and sleeping on the bare ground before arriving at the foot of the high mountain atop which the Swami lived.*

*The young man climbed the mountain. His feet were blistered and bloody, but he kept going and finally reached the top.*

*Approaching the Swami, the young man asked, "Swami, what is the meaning of life?"*

*The Swami replied, "Life is a bowl of fruit."*

*"And...?"*

*"There's no 'and,' my son. Life is a bowl of fruit."*

*The young man said, "Swami, I sold my worldly possessions, I traveled through all kinds of rough terrain, I suffered – and all you can say is, 'Life is a bowl of fruit?'"*

*The swami said, "All right. Life is not a bowl of fruit."*

\* \* \*

## HEAVEN

Lots of jokes take place in heaven, with the protagonists at the Pearly Gates being quizzed by St. Peter. You need one or two of these to make a point, such as how henpecked we guys are.

\* \* \*

*A shipment of husbands arrived in heaven. To speed up the processing, St. Peter said, "I want all the husbands who acted like mice in their homes on earth to form a line on the right. Those who were kings in their own castle, step to the left."*

*The men went to their places. The line of henpecked husbands stretched beyond the horizon. Only one man stood in the other line.*

*St. Peter asked, "Are you sure you belong on the macho line?"*

*"I don't know, but this is where my wife told me to stand . . ."*

\* \* \*

Here's a short commentary about causes of death, where the punch line comes out of nowhere.

\* \* \*

*Three women up in heaven are talking about how they died.*

*Woman #1 says: "I died of the big 'C,' cancer."*

*Woman #2 says: "I died from the big 'H,' a heart attack."*

*Woman #3 says: "I died from the big 'G,' gonorrhoea."*

*Woman #1 retorts: "You can't die from gonorrhoea."*

*Woman #3 replies: "You can if you give it to Santino."*

In this one, God communicates from heaven to earth.

\* \* \*

*The anguished rabbi went on a ten-day fast, spending his days in total prayer. After a week, the Lord spoke to him.*

*“My friend,” said the Lord, “why are you so troubled?”*

*The rabbi said, “My son is about to become a Christian.”*

*To which the Lord replied, “YOUR son . . . !”*

\* \* \*

As demonstrated here, there’s always a hidden catch...

\* \* \*

*A famous Hollywood director dies and goes to heaven. St. Peter meets him at the Pearly Gates and reports that God would like the director to make one last movie.*

*The director demurs. “I’m tired of making movies.”*

*“Listen,” says St. Peter, “We’ve got Ludwig Van Beethoven to compose the score and Leonardo da Vinci to do the designs. Thomas Edison is behind the camera, and Will Shakespeare has agreed to write the script. The budget is \$100 million. This could be a fantastic movie.”*

*The director, now duly impressed, is ready to sign on to the project. “By the way,” he asks St. Peter, “who’s the star?”*

*St. Peter takes a deep breath and replies, “Well, you see, God’s got this girlfriend. . . .”*

## GENIES

There's a popular joke genre that involves finding an old lamp and rubbing it, producing a genie who offers wishes.

\* \* \*

*An Englishman, a Frenchman and an American have been stuck on a desert island for years when they suddenly find a lamp on the beach, out of which a genie pops and gives them each a wish.*

*"I wish I were back home in London," says the Englishman, and in a flash – Poof! – he's gone to join his countrymen.*

*"I wish I were back home in Paris," says the Frenchman, and in a flash – Poof! – he's gone to join his countrymen.*

*"Oh, it's lonely on the island now," says the American. "I wish my two friends were still here with me."*

*– Poof! – Poof! –*

\* \* \*

One type of genie (or fairy with a wand) joke is where the wish is granted, but it turns out to be not what was expected. Use it when you want to make the point, "Be careful what you wish for."

\* \* \*

*A married couple, both 60 years old, were celebrating their 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary. During the party, a fairy appeared out of nowhere to congratulate them and grant each of them a wish.*

*The wife wanted to travel around the world. The fairy waved her wand and Poof! – the wife had tickets in her hand for a world cruise.*

*Next, the fairy asked the husband what he wanted. He said, "I wish I had a wife 30 years younger than me."*

*The fairy picked up her wand and Poof! – the husband was 90.*

Here's another to use for unforeseen consequences.  
(This time the genie is in a bottle.)

\* \* \*

*Two Irish guys are out in a boat, fishing in a lake. The first guy reels in his line and sees that he's snagged an old bottle. A genie pops out and promises to grant him one wish.*

*"Turn the lake into beer," the guy says. The genie goes "Poof!" and the lake turns to beer.*

*The wisher turns proudly to the other guy. "How about that?"*

*His pal says, "You jerk. Now we've got to piss in the boat."*

\* \* \*

This next one is more thought-provoking than funny.

\* \* \*

*Having lost every penny in a casino, a man walks out and decides to end his life in the ocean. As he nears the water's edge, he sees something flicker in the sand. The shiny object is a dime. A voice says to him, "Go back to the casino."*

*Back in the casino, he puts the dime in a slot machine and hits a fifteen dollar jackpot. The voice says, "Go to the blackjack table," where he plays for ten minutes and amasses fifty dollars. The voice moves him on to roulette, then to the dice table.*

*An hour later, he's winning ten thousand dollars which he's about to pocket when the voice says, "Let it ride." Dutifully, he rolls the dice again, but this time he loses everything.*

*The voice says, "You can go back to the ocean now."*

Here's one I recently came across, where the process gets a little mean-spirited toward my profession . . . .

\* \* \*

*A man finds an odd-looking bottle, rubs it, and a genie appears. "For releasing me from the bottle, I will grant you three wishes," says the genie.*

*"Hey, that's great," says the man.*

*"But there's a catch" says the genie. "For each of your wishes, every lawyer in the world will receive or do double what you ask for."*

*The man's first wish is for a Ferrari. Poof! A Ferrari appears in front of him.*

*"Now, every lawyer in the world has been given two Ferraris," says the genie. "What is your next wish?"*

*"I could really use a million dollars," replies the man. Poof! One million dollars appears at his feet.*

*"Now, every lawyer in the world is two million dollars richer," the genie reminds him. "What is your third wish?"*

*The man thinks about this for a while and then says, "Well, I've always wanted to donate a kidney. . . ."*

## “DUMB” JOKES

A big category of jokes involve people who do or say dumb things. Sometimes the joke links it to a nationality (Poles suffer here, as does the Irishman in the second joke below) or to a personal feature (e.g., blondes), but many can be told linkless.

\* \* \*

*About an hour after the flight begins, the pilot announces, “Ladies and gentlemen, I’m afraid we’ll have to slow down, because of the loss of our number-one engine.”*

*A few minutes later, the second engine goes out and a similar announcement is made, with the plane slowing down even more. Then the third engine fails.*

*A passenger turns to the man next to him and says, “If that last one goes, we’ll be up here all night!”*

\* \* \*

*A man walks up to the counter and asks for a plate of potatoes. The woman attendant says, “Oh, you must be from Ireland.”*

*The man is furious, “What sort of stereotypical remark is that? If I walked in here and asked for haggis, would you assume I was Scottish?”*

*“Well, no,” she replies. “And if I asked for some chow mein, would you think I was Chinese?” Again, “No, I suppose not.”*

*“So why assume I’m Irish when I ask for a plate of potatoes?”*

*“Because this is a hardware store.”*

\* \* \*

On the other hand, you do need some national identification for this one – but not necessarily limited to the nationalities that I heard being used.

\* \* \*

*A Yank, an Englishman, and an Irishman from Galway had been captured by the enemy and were about to face a firing squad.*

*The Yank came up with an idea of how to escape. “Let’s distract them. When they start aiming, yell something. They’ll start looking around, and the guy who created the ruckus will be able to get away.”*

*The Yank was put against the wall. As the officer-in-charge started to count, the Yank pointed in the distance and yelled, “Tornado!”*

*The firing squad looked to where he’d pointed, and meanwhile the Yank disappeared into the woods.*

*The Englishman was now set against the wall. As the count started for him, he yelled out, “Flood!”*

*The soldiers looked for cascading water. In a moment, the Englishman was gone.*

*The Irishman was lined up. The squad started to aim and count off. The Irishman yelled, “Fire!”*

\* \* \*

For sportsmen, here's both a hunting and a fishing tale.

\* \* \*

*Two hunters are out in the woods. One falls to the ground, his eyes rolled back in his head. He doesn't seem to be breathing. The other guy whips out his cell phone and calls 911, gasping, "My friend is dead! What can I do?"*

*The operator, in a calm soothing voice, says: "Just take it easy. I can help. First, let's make sure he's dead."*

*There is a silence, then a shot is heard. The guy's voice comes back on the line. "Okay, now what?"*

\* \* \*

Here's the fishing one. Be sure you stop briefly at the first punch line to let it sink in, before going to the second.

\* \* \*

*Two men out fishing in a boat are having great luck. In fact, they catch so many fish they have to go back early.*

*"This is great," says the first man. "We should mark the spot so we can come here again."*

*"You're right," says the second man, who dives over the side and paints a big "X" on the bottom of the boat . . . .*

*Now they head for land. But as they're about to dock, the first man says to the second, "I just thought of something. What if we don't get the same boat tomorrow?"*

\* \* \*

Here's one that's a natural for a blonde – sorry, girls, but I don't know if you could tell it any other way.

\* \* \*

*On a plane bound for New York, the flight attendant approaches a blonde sitting in first class and asks her to move to economy, since she doesn't have a first-class ticket.*

*The blond replies, "I'm blond, I'm beautiful, I'm going to New York, and I'm not moving."*

*The flight attendant asks the co-pilot to speak with her. He does, but again she replies, "I'm blonde, I'm beautiful, I'm going to New York, and I'm not moving."*

*The co-pilot then asks the captain what he should do. The captain says, "I'm married to a blonde – don't worry, I know how to handle this."*

*He goes and whispers in the blonde's ear. She immediately jumps up and runs back to the economy section.*

*"What did you say?" asks the flight attendant.*

*"I just told her the first-class section wasn't going to New York."*

\* \* \*

Here's my favorite of this genre.

\* \* \*

*At the height of the Battle of Britain, an English pilot was shot down. Because of the camaraderie of men who fly, he was treated with great kindness by the Luftwaffe and his many wounds were attended to immediately.*

*After examining him, the German doctor said, "Lieutenant, I'm afraid I have terrible news for you. I must amputate your right arm."*

*The pilot answered, "If you must, you must, sir. However, I would appreciate it if on your next bombing raid, you'd be kind enough to drop my arm over England."*

*The request was carried out. A few days later, the German doctor said, "I have dreadful news – your left arm has advanced gangrene and must be taken off."*

*The pilot made a request similar to the first, and his left arm was dutifully tossed out over England on the next raid.*

*Several days passed. The German doctor then reported that the right leg was in trouble and would have to go. The pilot said, "If it must, it must. But please throw my leg out over England."*

*The German doctor studied him for a moment and said, finally, "Lieutenant, are you trying to escape?"*

\* \* \*

## GETTING BACK

There's a category of revenge-type jokes, where someone does something awful to the protagonist, who then works out a way to get back at his tormentor.

This first one takes place in a bar.

\* \* \*

*A shy guy goes into a saloon and sees a beautiful woman sitting at the other end, of the bar. Gathering up his courage, he goes over to her and asks tentatively, "Um, would you mind if I chatted with you for a while?"*

*She responds by yelling, at the top of her lungs, "No, I won't sleep with you tonight!"*

*The entire bar is now staring at them, and the man, hopelessly embarrassed, slinks back to his seat.*

*After a few minutes, the woman walks over to him and apologizes. "I'm sorry if I embarrassed you. You see, I'm a graduate student in psychology, and I'm studying how people respond to embarrassing situations."*

*To which he responds, at the top of his lungs, "What do you mean, \$200?!"*

\* \* \*

Well what do you know – the second one also takes place in a bar.

\* \* \*

*Mike is sitting at the bar staring at his drink. A big truck-driver sits down next to him, reaches over to grab Mike's drink and downs it in a single swig.*

*Mike starts crying. Touched by this, the truckdriver tells him he only kidding and will buy him another drink.*

*Mike says that it isn't the drink he's crying about, but rather he's been reflecting on the worst day of his life.*

*The truck driver asks "What happened to make this such a terrible day?"*

*Mike says, "I was late for work today, and my boss fired me. I left work to drive home and found my car was stolen, so I took a cab home.*

*"When we arrived, I realized my wallet was in the car, so I went into my house to get money to pay the cab driver. I found my wife in bed with my best friend. I grabbed some money and took the cab back to this bar.*

*"And while I'm sitting here, thinking about ending it all, you come in and drink my poison. . . ."*

\* \* \*

## NATIONALITY

National stereotypes are often used in humor. You have to be careful here as to who's in your audience. For instance, Jews can tell Jewish jokes, but they're not always so receptive to one coming from a gentile.

Let's start with a tale from our own American backyard.

\* \* \*

*The Lone Ranger looked up at the hills to the west and said to Tonto, "There's a big war party of Sioux on the top of that hill."*

*Tonto said, "We will go to the east."*

*The Lone Ranger said, "There are Pawnees approaching from the east."*

*"We will go south, Kemo Sabe."*

*"Osages."*

*"North?"*

*"It looks like a million Blackfeet in the north . . . . Tonto, what if they attack us? What will we do?"*

*Tonto started to mount up, saying, "What do you mean 'we,' white man?"*

\* \* \*

The Scots are said to be thrifty, which provides the necessary backdrop here.

\* \* \*

*Mrs. MacTavish was very sick. The only light in the room, coming from a tiny candle, showed the pallor of her complexion. "I don't think I'll make it through the night," she whispered to her husband.*

*"I've got to go back to my chores," Mr. MacTavish said. "But if you feel yourself slipping, be sure to blow out the candle."*

\* \* \*

Here's one – would you believe – featuring Vikings.

\* \* \*

*The Viking longboat glided through the water. The first three rows of oarsmen were erect, their oars powerful in the water.*

*The oarsmen of the second three rows were also energetic and disciplined as their oars worked the waves smartly.*

*The last three rows of oarsmen seemed to be cut from a different cloth. These men looked worn out, more dead than alive, and totally listless.*

*As land was sighted, the chief gave orders for the invasion. "Yonder is an English village. You men in the first three rows will pillage it. You in the middle will burn and stamp it out."*

*Before the chief could go on, a man in the third segment said to his seatmate, "Don't tell me we have the rape detail again!"*

\* \* \*

## CANNIBALS / SAVAGES

There are some good jokes involving cannibals and other savages; and although the subject doesn't come up too often, you still ought to be prepared.

This first one is usable in certain husband-wife or father-son situations.

\* \* \*

*A cannibal king and his son were hunting in the jungle. After a while they came to a small waterfall, under which a beautiful young girl was bathing.*

*Her body glistened in the sun. Her curves hugged the droplets of water that bathed her dark skin.*

*The son said, "Ah, Pop, we've finally found breakfast. I'm starved."*

*The king said, "We will not eat her."*

*"You're kidding. I'm famished."*

*"No, we will not eat her. I will crawl up to her. When I capture her, we'll go home and eat your mother."*

\* \* \*

Here's my favorite savages joke – a tale that one of the best joke-tellers I've ever heard dramatizes so well. It fits right in whenever the subject on the table is voluntary choice.

\* \* \*

*Two explorers are captured by savage natives. The chief says to one of them, "You have choice of fate – oompahgalah or mushi-mushi."*

*The first explorer mulls it over. Oompahgalah sounds terrible to him, so he says, "I'll take mushi-mushi."*

*With that, the natives form a double line. The explorer is forced to run the gamut with each native stabbing him with a sharp blade or piercing him with long sharp lances. As he makes it to the end of the line, he keels over and dies.*

*The chief now turns to the second explorer and asks, "Which do you choose?"*

*The second explorer, having been forced to witness his colleague's terrible ordeal, figures that the alternative can't be that bad and says, "I choose oompahgalah."*

*The chief says, "Fine" and turns to the tribe: "Men, he has chosen oompahgalah . . . . But first, we do mushi-mushi!"*

\* \* \*

## POLICE

Cops appear in jokes sometimes, especially when they stop a car to write a ticket. There's often an alibi by the driver involved in these situations. In the first case, the alibi provided to the policeman isn't too helpful.

\* \* \*

*A man is arguing with his wife while driving through town. A cop pulls him over.*

*The cop says: "Are you aware that you ran a red light back there?"*

*The man says, "You must be mistaken – when I went through the intersection, the light was green. Right, dear?"*

*The wife says, "To be honest, it was red."*

*The man turns angrily to his wife: "What the hell is wrong with you? Are you a total idiot?"*

*The wife says: "No, I'm not."*

*The cop says to her, "Is he always this nasty?"*

*The wife says, "No, officer – it's only when he's had too much to drink."*

\* \* \*

But here's one that features an ingenious tactic.

\* \* \*

*A police officer pulls a woman over. "Is there a problem, Officer?" she asks.*

*"Ma'am, you were speeding. Could I see your license?"*

*"I'm sorry," says the woman. "I don't have one. I lost it four times for drunk driving."*

*"Hmmm," says the officer. "Can I see your registration?" "Nope," says the woman. "Can't do that either. I stole this car, killed the owner, and put his remains in the trunk."*

*The horrified officer calls for backup and within minutes five police cars circle the woman. A police chief slowly approaches, clasping a gun. "Ma'am," he says, "open the back of the car, please." She does so, but the trunk is empty.*

*"Is this your car, ma'am?" asks the chief. "Yes," she says. "Here's the registration, and here's my license."*

*"Ma'am, this is a puzzle," says the chief. "My officer told me you didn't have a registration or license, that you stole this car, and that you'd murdered the owner."*

*"I don't believe it!" says the woman. "Next you'll tell me the lying bastard said I was speeding too . . . ."*

\* \* \*

## GOLF

Maybe it's because I don't play golf that I don't tell golf jokes very often. But it's a plentiful source of humor, and when someone else trots out his own golf story, you should be prepared.

Here's the classic joke to illustrate the self-absorption of golfers.

*A member of the foursome dropped dead on the fifth hole. Later, when one of the other players returned home, he was asked by his wife if he'd had a nice day.*

*He answered, "It was terrible. We played, then we had to drag him. Then we played and dragged, played and dragged. . . ."*

\* \* \*

A familiar motif in jokes is the good news/bad news dichotomy, which can be worked into the golf category.

\* \* \*

*A golfer finishes a round of golf, goes into the clubhouse, and encounters a Swami who's telling fortunes for \$50.*

*The Swami looks into his crystal ball. "I have good news and bad news – what do you want first?"*

*"Give me the good news first."*

*"I can see that there are many golf courses in heaven, much better than any you've played on earth. And you will shoot every round under par."*

*"That's great – now what's the bad news?"*

*"You have an 8:30 a.m. tee time tomorrow morning."*

Here's one that illustrates the golfer's love for the game. Make sure you use the specific word "around" in her last line.

\* \* \*

*An avid golfer was marooned on an island. One day, sitting on the beach, he saw a beautiful blonde in a black wetsuit emerge from the water and slither over to him.*

*She asks, "How long have you been marooned here?"*

*"Five years" he says.*

*"After five years, I guess you'd really enjoy a cigarette."*

*"I sure would. Don't tell me you have cigarettes."*

*"I do" – and she opens a zipper in the arm of her wetsuit, takes out a pack of cigarettes, and they have a smoke.*

*"I also figure that after five years you'd enjoy a stiff drink."*

*"I sure would. Don't tell me you also have booze."*

*"I do," and she opens a zipper on the leg of her wetsuit, pulls out a flask of scotch, and they have a drink.*

*"After five years," says the blonde in a sexy tone, "I assume you'd love to play around."*

*"I sure would."*

*The blonde starts, ever so slowly, to open the zipper that runs straight down the entire front of her wetsuit.*

*"Don't tell me you also have a set of golf clubs down there!"*

\* \* \*

And now, here's my favorite in this genre, where the ending comes out of nowhere.

\* \* \*

*A woman asks her husband, "If I died, would you get married?"*

*The husband replies, "I don't know."*

*"Well, if you did, would you let your new wife drive my car?"*

*"Probably."*

*"Would you let her wear my clothes?"*

*"I don't know, I might."*

*"Would you let her use my golf clubs?"*

*"No."*

*"Why not?" asks the wife.*

*"Because," replies the husband, "she's a lefty."*

\* \* \*

## OLDSTERS

When you get to octogenarian status like me, you find yourself telling a lot of oldster jokes, highlighting some of the foibles of aging. Whatever your age, you should be ready with an appropriate joke when the right time comes.

So, for instance, those senior moments of forgetfulness can be a ripe target for flights of fancy.

\* \* \*

*A widower and a widow have been friends for years. Finally, the day comes when the widower decides it's time to pop the question. He takes the widow out to dinner, gathers up his courage, and at last says, "Will you marry me?"*

*The widow answers promptly, "Yes. Yes, I will." The meal ends, and they go to their respective homes.*

*The next morning, the widower has a problem. He knew he'd asked the question but couldn't recall whether she'd replied "yes," or "no". With trepidation, he decides to call her on the phone.*

*"This is kind of embarrassing," he says. "But when I asked if you would marry me, what did you say?"*

*The widow answers, "Why, I said, 'Yes, yes I will' – and I meant it with all my heart." Then she continues, "Actually I'm so glad you called, because I just couldn't remember who had asked me . . . ."*

\* \* \*

While we're on the subject of oldster romance, here are two interchangeable jokes that emphasize (at least in the world of jokes, if not in real life) the supposed attraction women of advanced age feel to the possibility of an affair.

\* \* \*

*Two elderly ladies are sitting together in a coffee shop. "What are your plans for tonight?" asks one.*

*The other answers, "I have a date with Al Kemp."*

*"Al Kemp? He's an animal. He'll get you up to his place, tear off your dress, and make fierce love to you."*

*"I'm glad you told me. I'll wear an old dress."*

\* \* \*

*A little old lady sits next to an old man on a park bench. She asks him, "Are you a stranger here?"*

*The man replies, "Sort of. I used to live here years ago."*

*"So, where have you been?" asks the old lady.*

*The old man says, "In prison – for murdering my wife."*

*"Really?" says the old lady. "So you're single . . . ."*

\* \* \*

Some of these intersect with death, which isn't too funny a subject in the real world – but this one, focusing on the spousal dynamic, is one of my favorites.

\* \* \*

*An elderly man lies dying in his bed. He suddenly smells the aroma of his favorite chocolate chip cookies wafting up the stairs.*

*He gathers his remaining strength, lifts himself from the bed and with labored breath, staggers down the stairs and makes it to the kitchen.*

*There, spread out upon racks on the kitchen table and counters, are literally hundreds of his favorite chocolate chip cookies.*

*He instantly realizes that it's a final act of love from his devoted wife – seeing to it that he leaves this world a happy man.*

*Mustering one painful final effort, the old man propels himself toward the table, landing on his knees. He reaches out a withered hand toward a tray of cookies, when “Whack!”—his hand is suddenly struck with a spatula.*

*“You stay out of those,” says his wife. “They’re for the funeral.”*

\* \* \*

## HUSBANDS AND WIVES

The biggest contributor to funny jokes, in my view, are husband and wife stories, which are easy to work into almost any conversation. They go both ways – either the wife or the husband comes out on top – and those I’ve chosen stand about even.

Some good ones (as the first five here and the last one under Oldsters) revolve around death. Somehow this otherwise taboo subject is more accessible in the spousal context.

\* \* \*

*Four men are playing gin rummy. One of them loses a hand that costs him two thousand dollars. His head falls to the table from the shock – he’s dead.*

*Another player volunteers to tell the man’s wife that her husband won’t be home for dinner, or indeed ever again. She answers his knock on the door.*

*The player says, “Your husband lost two thousand at gin.”*

*The wife says, “Let him drop dead!”*

*“He did.”*

\* \* \*

*An old couple die in an accident and are transported to heaven. The wife is amazed at the beauty of the place, and the peace and the contentment she feels. Her husband, on the other hand, is furious.*

*“What’s the matter?” she asks. “Don’t you like it here?”*

*“Of course I like it,” snaps the husband. “And if it wasn’t for your damn health foods, I’d have been here twenty years ago.”*

Here's a husband who appears to be more satisfied with the circumstances.

\* \* \*

*The boss was sympathetic when Otto asked for the day off to attend his wife's funeral and granted permission quickly.*

*A week later, Otto asked the boss for another day off.*

*The boss asked, "Why?"*

*Otto said, "I'm getting married."*

*"Your wife has only been dead a week."*

*"I don't hold a grudge long"*

\* \* \*

Here's a husband who looks ahead.

\* \* \*

*A woman's coffin is being carried by pallbearers down the aisle and out of the church, when it accidentally knocks against a small protruding corner of the wall. The pallbearers hear a low moan from inside, the casket is thrown open, and it reveals that the woman is still alive.*

*She lives for another five years. When she dies, the funeral is in the same church, and the pallbearers again carry her coffin down the aisle. As they get close, the woman's husband shouts out, "And this time, watch out for the damn wall"*

The next scene takes place in a cemetery.

\* \* \*

*After placing some flowers on the grave of his departed mother, a man's attention was diverted to an older man kneeling at another grave in the cemetery. The older man seemed to be praying with profound intensity, repeating over and over, "Why did you die? Why did you die?"*

*The first man approached him and said, "Sir, I don't want to interfere with your private grief, but this demonstration of hurt and pain is more than I've ever seen before. For whom do you mourn so deeply? Your wife? A child? A grandchild? Who may I ask, lies in that grave?"*

*The mourner answered, "My wife's first husband . . . . Why did you die? Why did you die?"*

\* \* \*

Enough of death. Here's one, for the guys, that's very much alive and kicking.

\* \* \*

*A husband goes out on the town Friday night and has far too much to drink. When he eventually comes around, he discovers it's Sunday afternoon.*

*He struggles to come up with a good explanation to give to his wife, and finally has a stroke of genius.. He calls home and when she answers, he shouts into the phone, "Darling! Don't pay the ransom! I've escaped!"*

\* \* \*

Okay, now here comes a wife's revenge.

\* \* \*

*The husband, comes home from work, and his wife greets him with, "Honey, the bathroom door is sticking. You have to take it down and plane it." The husband replies, "What do I look like, a carpenter? Call someone and have it fixed."*

*The next day when he comes home, his wife greets him, "Honey, the hallway light doesn't work. I changed the bulb but it still doesn't work." He replies, "So all of a sudden I'm an electrician? Call someone and have it fixed."*

*The very next day, as he walks through the door, his wife says, "Honey, now the kitchen faucet is dripping." He says, "Damn it, now I'm a plumber? Call someone and have all these things fixed."*

*Two weeks go by and the husband says, "Did you ever get those things fixed that were such a problem?"*

*She replies, "Yes, I hired a handyman who fixed them all."*

*"Well, what did it cost us?"*

*"Nothing. He said I could either pay him with sex or I could bake him a cake."*

*"So what type of cake did you make him?"*

*"Who do I look like, Betty Crocker?"*

\* \* \*

Most of these jokes could be happening decades ago, but here's one that has an up-to-date ring to it.

\* \* \*

*A guy receives a text from his neighbor Tim, which reads: "Mark, I'm sorry, I've been feeling guilty and must make a confession to you. I've been helping myself to your wife when you're not around, probably more than you. I know it's no excuse, but I don't get it at home. I can't live with this guilt any longer. I hope you'll accept my sincerest apology. It won't happen again."*

*Mark, feeling a wave of outrage at the betrayal, grabs his gun, goes into the bedroom, and without a word shoots his wife.*

*Moments later, Mark gets another text from Tim that says: "Hope my text didn't cause you any problems. I mistyped 'WIFE.' It should have been 'WIFI.' I promise I'll use Spell Check before sending any more texts."*

\* \* \*

A pair of newlyweds are arguing on their honeymoon. The couple had promised to be open and honest to each other, but the husband still won't tell his inquisitive wife how many sex partners he's had.

"Look," he says, "If I tell you, you'll just get angry."

"No, I won't," she says, "cross my heart and hope to die."

"Okay, then," says the man. "Let me think. There was one... two... three... four... five... *you*... seven... eight..."

Here are two husbands – one resigned, one activist.

\* \* \*

*The scene takes place in a diner. The man says, “Do you serve breakfast here?”*

*The waitress replies, “Sure. What’ll it be?”*

*The man says, “Let me have watery scrambled eggs . . . some burnt toast . . . and a cup of weak coffee, lukewarm.”*

*The waitress replies, “Whatever you say, sir.”*

*“Now, Miss, are you doing anything while that order is going through?”*

*“Why, no, sir.”*

*“Then sit here and nag me awhile . . . I’m homesick . . .*

\* \* \*

*A very seedy-looking bum in rags approached Hogan for a handout. Hogan said, “You’ll only waste the money.”*

*The bum said, “No, I need it for food. I don’t drink, I don’t smoke, and I don’t gamble.”*

*Hogan said, “No? Tell you what – come over to my house and I’ll give you a dollar.”*

*When they arrived at Hogan’s house, Mrs. Hogan opened the door, saw them, and asked, “What’s this about?”*

*Hogan said, “I just wanted to show you somebody who doesn’t drink, smoke or gamble.”*

Hey, guys, be careful with your excuses . . . .

\* \* \*

*A woman is in bed with her husband's best friend. The phone rings, and the friend hears her say, "Uh-huh, sure, wonderful. Okay. Uh-huh. Yep. That's fine. Okay, bye."*

*She turns to her lover and says, "That was John. Don't worry, he won't be home for hours – he's out playing cards with you."*

\* \* \*

For better or worse, for richer or poorer . . . .

\* \* \*

*A man has a check-up, and the doctor finds something seriously wrong. The doctor decides the news is too bad to tell the man directly, so he breaks it to the man's wife.*

*"Your husband is seriously ill," says the doctor. "The only way you can save his life is to offer him a completely stress-free existence. You must not contradict him in any way. He needs to give up his job, so he can concentrate on restful hobbies. He must have three home-cooked meals every day, and live in an environment that is as tranquil, tidy and germ-free as possible."*

*In the car home, the husband says, "So, what's going to happen to me?"*

*The wife answers, "You're going to die."*

\* \* \*

Here's another in the same vein.

\* \* \*

*In the sleeping car on a train, the man in the top bunk and the woman on the bottom don't know each other.*

*In the middle of the night, the man leans over and says, "I'm sorry to bother you, but I'm really cold. I was wondering if you could possibly get me another blanket?"*

*"I have a better idea," replies the woman. "Just for tonight, let's pretend that we're married."*

*"Sounds great to me," says the newly aroused man.*

*"Good" says the woman. "So climb down and get your own damn blanket!"*

\* \* \*

Try this one when the subject is "you get what you deserve."

\* \* \*

*A man wants to find out if both his wife and his mistress are faithful to him, so he sends them on the same cruise. When they come back, he casually asks his wife about the behavior of the passenger he knew to be his mistress.*

*"She was terrible – slept with every man on the ship."*

*The disappointed man then asks his mistress about the passenger he knew was really his wife.*

*"She was a real lady," says the mistress. "She came on board with her husband and never once left his side."*

Here's the definitive word on all this stuff.

\* \* \*

*One day in the Garden of Eden, Eve calls out to God. "Lord, I have a problem, I know you created me and provided this beautiful garden and all these animals, but I'm just not happy."*

*"Why is that, Eve?" came the reply from above.*

*"Lord, I'm lonely, and I'm sick to death of these apples."*

*"Well, Eve, I have a solution. I shall create a man for you."*

*"What's a man, Lord?"*

*"This man will be a flawed creature with many bad traits. He'll lie, cheat and be vain, he'll give you a hard time, but he'll be bigger, faster and will like to hunt and kill things. He will look silly when he's aroused, but he'll satisfy your physical needs. He will revel in childish things like fighting and kicking a ball about, and won't be too smart – so he'll need your advice to think properly."*

*"Sounds great," says Eve. "But what's the catch, Lord?"*

*"Well, you can have him on one condition."*

*"What's that, Lord?"*

*"As I said, he'll be proud, arrogant and self-admiring, so you'll have to let him believe that I made him first . . . . Just remember, it's our little secret . . . . You know, woman to woman."*

\* \* \*

## FAMILY

Husband-wife is best, but there are plenty of other family jokes. Many of them are about the mother-son relationship. Here's one that's prototypical.

\* \* \*

*A gangster finished dinner in a restaurant, walked outside, and was machine-gunned down by two men in a passing car. His blood seeping out of a dozen wounds, the gangster crawled to the corner. Almost unable to breathe, he pushed his way through the door of the first tenement.*

*Slowly, ever so slowly, he crawled up the steps to the apartment where his little old Sicilian mother lived. He managed to knock on the door weakly. His mother opened the door and gasped as she saw her son.*

*In the quietest of whispers, the gangster said, "Mama, Mama."*

*While dragging him inside, his mother replied, "First you eat, then we'll talk."*

\* \* \*

This one illustrates how helpful fathers can be to their sons.

\* \* \*

*A father and his young son are out fishing. The boy says, "Dad, how do boats float?"*

*"I don't know," replies Dad.*

*The boy then asks, "How do fish breathe?" "I don't know," replies Dad.*

*"Why is the sky blue?" asks the boy. "I don't know," replies Dad.*

*"Dad," says the boy, "I hope you don't mind me asking you all these questions."*

*"Of course not," replies Dad. "If you don't ask questions, how will you ever learn anything?"*

\* \* \*

And here's a dad who's really understanding.

\* \* \*

*A college student wrote a letter home: "Dear folks, I feel miserable because I have to keep writing for money. I feel ashamed and unhappy. I have to ask for another hundred, but every cell in my body rebels. I beg on bended knee that you forgive me. Your son, Marvin . . . P.S., I felt so terrible I ran after the mailman who picked this up in the box at the counter. I wanted to take this letter and burn it. I prayed to God that I could get it back, but it was too late."*

*A few days later he received a letter from his father that said, "Your prayers were answered. Your letter never came."*

There are nasty mother-in-law jokes galore, but here's one where she's trying to be helpful.

\* \* \*

*Bill Carter wired his wife that he'd be home a day earlier than planned. Arriving at the house, he discovered his wife in bed with another man. Bitterly, Carter stormed out of the house, checked into a hotel, and planned a course of action.*

*His thoughts were interrupted by a phone call from his mother-in-law. She believed that there must be a good reason for her daughter's behavior. Carter told her to get lost.*

*The next day his mother-in-law called him again. "Didn't I tell you?" she said, "I just got through talking to your wife. There was a good explanation. She never got your telegram!"*

\* \* \*

This is my favorite grandmother joke. It can be exaggerated and drawn out – but here's the basic stuff.

\* \* \*

*A child, in the care of his grandmother, was playing on the beach, when a tidal wave came along and swept him into the water. Ever alert, the lifeguard dove into the rough water and fought the swells until he reached the child. The lifeguard held the child surely as he managed the difficult swim back to shore. There he administered expert artificial respiration until the boy was finally breathing again.*

*The child's grandmother kissed her most precious grandson and then, turning to the exhausted lifeguard, said, "He had a hat . . . ."*

## SOME OTHERS

There's a category of jokes where the situation builds up to a punch line pun using different words that sound like a phrase you already know in another context. You're unlikely to get a big laugh from one of these – often more like a groan. But you can seem quite clever to your audience. Let me offer two of them – I have a myriad more.

\* \* \*

*John decides life will be much easier if he has a clone. He has one made and sends him to work while he stays home and relaxes. But this backfires one day when the clone comes home and tells John that he (it?) has been fired for making sexual advances to women in the office.*

*John decides he has to get rid of his clone, so he takes it to the top of a tall building and pushes it off. Unfortunately, someone sees John do this, and he's arrested for making an obscene clone fall.*

\* \* \*

*A group of chess enthusiasts are standing in a hotel lobby discussing tournament victories. After an hour, the manager comes by and asks them to go to their rooms.*

*"But why?" they ask, as they move off.*

*"I can't stand chess nuts boasting in an open foyer."*

\* \* \*

Here's a joke you can use to ridicule a guy who pretends he's a big shot.

\* \* \*

*A young businessman had just started his own firm. Sitting there, with his office door open, he saw a man come into the outer office. Wishing to appear busy, the young businessman picked up the desk phone and pretended he had a big deal working. He threw huge figures around and made giant commitments.*

*Finally he hung up and asked the visitor, "Can I help you?"*

*The man said, "Sure. I've come to install your phone."*

\* \* \*

This next one suggests being cautious with loose talk.

\* \* \*

*A young man, new to town, walked into a hotel barbershop and asked for the works. As he was being shaved, he tried to make time with the manicurist – suggesting dinner and dancing.*

*The manicurist said, "I don't think I should. I'm married."*

*The young man laughed. "Ask your husband. I'm sure he wouldn't mind."*

*"Ask him yourself. He's shaving you . . . ."*

\* \* \*

Here are two about mistaken identity, each of which has a surprise punch line.

\* \* \*

*A photographer wants to take some aerial shots of his neighborhood and arranges a flight at the local airport. He's directed to the runway where his plane is waiting for him. He sees a light aircraft with its engine running.*

*He gets in and tells the pilot. "Let's go." The plane taxis down the runway and takes off. "Okay," says the photographer. "If you do a low pass over the bridge, I'll take some pictures."*

*"Why do you want to do that?" asks the pilot.*

*"It's what I do," says the photographer. "I take pictures."*

*The pilot replies, "Y'mean you're not the flight instructor?"*

\* \* \*

*A police officer stops a driver speeding down Main Street. "But officer," the man says, "I can explain –"*

*"Be quiet," snaps the officer. "I'm going to let you cool your heels in jail until the chief gets back."*

*"But, officer, I just wanted to tell you –" says the driver. "And I say keep quiet! You're going to jail!" replies the officer.*

*A few hours later the officer looks in on his prisoner and says, "Lucky for you the chief is at his daughter's wedding. He'll be in a good mood when he gets back here.*

*"Don't count on it," answers the driver. "I'm the groom."*

This lengthy one is akin to the grandmother/lifeguard/“he had a hat” story.

\* \* \*

*A well-dressed man waited in front of a Brooklyn apartment surrounded by a dozen pieces of luggage. Eventually a taxi came along. The driver placed the luggage inside neatly, then drove to the Manhattan dock without hitting a bump.*

*The passenger said, “You’re very gentle. I’m taking a world cruise for the next six months. The taxis in each port will be dismal, with uncouth drivers. Would you like to come along?”*

*“That could run into a fortune.”*

*“I don’t care about the cost, and, I’ll pay all expenses.”*

*The cabbie took up the offer. The gentleman made the arrangements, and the cab was loaded onto the ocean liner.*

*For six months they traveled the world. Dutifully, in each city, the cabbie and his cab disembarked, drove the passenger around, returned to the ship, and went aboard again.*

*The trip ended. They arrived in Manhattan at ten in the evening. The cabbie had left the meter running, as was agreed upon, and it read \$42,653.80. True to his word, the passenger wrote out a check, which included a handsome tip. Then he said, “Okay, now take me home to Brooklyn.”*

*The cabbie said, “Brooklyn at night? Forget it. I always have to come back to Manhattan empty.”*

\* \* \*

For those who pride themselves on efficiency (or those who abhor the whole idea), here's one to use.

\* \* \*

*An efficiency expert was on his way to be buried. As the six pallbearers started to carry the coffin toward the hearse, the lid of the coffin popped open. The efficiency expert sat up and spoke to his nearby family.*

*"I couldn't just lie there – I had to let you know. If you put this on wheels, you could lay off five of the pallbearers."*

\* \* \*

Here's one, akin to those good excuses given to cops for speeding, told in two voices without identification.

\* \* \*

"Catching any?"

"About twenty."

"Nice. Do you know who I am?"

"Nope."

"I'm the game warden."

"Know who I am?"

"Nope."

"I'm the biggest liar who ever fished this lake."

Here's my new favorite outwit-the-cops story.

\* \* \*

*A policeman is staking out a bar looking for drunk drivers. At closing time, he sees a man stumble out of the bar, trip on the curb, and fumble around to find his keys for five minutes.*

*When he finally gets in his car, it takes the man another five minutes just to put the key in the ignition and get underway. Meanwhile, everybody else leaves the bar and drives off.*

*When the man finally pulls away, the policeman is waiting for him. He pulls him over and gives him a Breathalyzer test. The test shows the man has a blood alcohol level of zero.*

*"That can't be right," says the policeman.*

*"Yes, it can," says the man with a chuckle. "Tonight I'm the designated decoy."*

\* \* \*

I'd use this one for candor and also when the topic is food.

\* \* \*

*A man walked into a restaurant in a strange town. The waiter came and asked him for his order.*

*Feeling lonely, he replied, "Meat loaf and a kind word."*

*When the waiter returned with the meat loaf, the man said, "Where's the good word?"*

*The waiter put down the meat loaf and sighed, bent down, and whispered in his ear, "Don't eat the meat loaf."*

\* \* \*

This final one is about celebrity, and its initial version incorporates a very famous name – one who had some renown even back then. If you prefer, though, I give you permission to change the name to any famous person.

\* \* \*

*Some years ago, Harry is in the VIP lounge of a transatlantic airline when he sees Donald Trump, whom he has never met. Harry goes up to him and asks a favor.*

*“I’m meeting an important client here in a few minutes,” says Harry. “Would you mind just passing by and saying hello? It would really impress my client if he thought I knew you.”*

*Mr. Trump agrees to this harmless request, and a few minutes later he spots Harry deep in conversation with his client. He walks up, taps Harry on the shoulder, and says, “Hi, Harry. How you doing?”*

*Harry turns and says, “Buzz off, Trump – I’m busy.”*

\* \* \*

Well, that’s it for now. I’d really enjoy getting feedback on this project, as well as hearing some favorites of yours that I can incorporate in an inevitable second edition.

Laughter – it’s exactly what we need nowadays . . . .

November 2017

Jim Freund



