## Judging Incorrectly

## You see the shadows of the mountains that look like men. (Judges 9:36)

**And forget not hospitality toward strangers;**

**For thereby some were worthy to entertain angels unawares.**

***(Hebrews 13:2)***

**A zealous art student went to a gallery and spent a bewildering hour looking over various abstract works. She was finally attracted to a painting consisting of a black dot on a field of white and farmed in brass. “How much for this?” she asked. “That’s the light switch,” she was told. *(Comedy World)***

**A young father, obviously flustered, was pushing a baby carriage down the street. Loud wails kept coming from the buggy. “Easy now, Albert,” the father said quietly. “Control yourself, Keep calm.” Another howl. “Now, now, just keep your temper. We’ll soon be home.” A grandmother-looking woman stopped to look at the scene. “I really must congratulate you,” she gushed. “There aren’t many young parents who show such patience with babies. You know just how to reassure him.” She patted the moppet on the head and cooed, “What’s bothering you, Albert?” “No, no,” the father interrupted, “his name’s Johnny. I’m Albert.” (Catholic Digest)**

**On New Year’s Eve, a lady stood up at the local pub and said it was time to get ready for the celebration. At the stroke of midnight, she wanted every husband to be standing next to the one person who made his life worth living. The bartender was almost crushed to death. *(The American Legion Magazine)***

**A woman who loves candy was given a big box wrapped in the paper of a famous chocolate firm. She said to her husband, “You've got to save me from myself. Put it in the freezer.” Six months later, she had an urge for chocolate. “Please,” she said to her husband, “get the chocolate out of the freezer. I've got to have some.” Her husband went to the freezer, got the gift-wrapped package and handed it to her. When she opened it, she found a book, frozen stiff. (Alex Thien, in Milwaukee Sentinel)**

**The blood in the famous shower scene in Alfred Hitchcock’s Psycho was in fact Hershey’s chocolate syrup. *(Noel Botham, in The Ultimate Book of Useless Information, p. 20)***

**“It’s a bad world in which to be an almost-50-year-old virgin, unemployed, with frizzy hair, midriff bulge, and a figure like a spinster teacher from the 1940s,” said Amy Wilentz in the Los Angeles Times. That accurately describes Susan Boyle, a graying, frumpy woman from a small Scottish town who seemed destined to live out her years in lonely obscurity. But then she “began to sing.” When Boyle last week performed a rousing rendition of “I Dreamed a Dream” from Les Miserables on a British talent show, her piercingly beautiful voice stunned the slack-jawed judges and touched the hearts of everyone who heard her. Since then, her performance has been viewed more than 100 million times on YouTube, and now there’s talk of a record contract and world tour. This is not just a show-business story, said Sarah Lyall in The New York Times. Boyle has become an instant heroine to millions of woman “who cheer her triumph over looks-ism and ageism.” (The Week magazine, May 1, 2009)**

**The other day I went to the local religious book store where I saw a “Honk if you love Jesus” bumper sticker. I bought it and put it on the back bumper of my car, and I'm really glad I did. What an uplifting experience followed! I was stopped at the light of a busy intersection, just lost in thought about the Lord, and didn't notice that the light had changed. That bumper sticker really worked! I found lots of people who love Jesus. Why, the guy behind me started to honk like crazy. He must really love the Lord because pretty soon he leaned out his window and yelled, “Jesus Christ” as loud as he could. It was like a football game, with him shouting, “Go, Jesus Christ, Go!!!” Everyone else started honking too, so I leaned out my window and waved and smiled to all those loving people. There must have been a guy from Florida back there because I could hear him yelling something about a sunny beach, and I saw him waving in a funny way with only his middle finger stuck up in the air. I had recently asked my two kids what that meant. They kind of squirmed, looked at each other, giggled, and told me that it was the Hawaiian good luck sign, so I leaned out the window and gave him the good luck sign back. A couple of the people were so caught up in the joy of the moment that they got out of their cars and were walking towards me. I bet they wanted to pray, but just then I noticed that the light had changed, and I stepped on the gas. It's a good thing I did, because I was the only car to get across the intersection. I looked back at them standing there. I leaned out the window, gave them a big smile, and held up the Hawaiian Good Luck sign as a drove away. Praise the Lord for such wonderful folks! (401st Bomb Group Association newsletter)**

**My boss, a plumbing, heating and air-conditioning contractor, bought a canoe and strapped it to the pipe rack on one of our vans so he could take it to his lakefront cottage the next day. In the usual morning rush of assignments to various job sites, a plumber was sent out in that same van, canoe and all. The plumber stopped off for a quick cup of coffee to go, explaining, “I'm on my way to repair a leak.” As he headed back to the van, an awed voice behind him said, “That must be some leak!" (Linda Tomczyk, in Reader's Digest)**

**In Iran are weavers who dunk their new carpets in the river, then leave them in the streets to be trampled for awhile. Trick is to whip them into antique condition for higher prices. (L. M. Boyd)**

**Children are very adept at comprehending modern statistics. When they say, “Everyone else is allowed to,” it is usually based on a survey of one. *(Paul Sweeney, in The Quarterly)***

**“Chow looks wonderful,” I told the mess sergeant, a large, intimidating man. “I’d like seconds.” “You’ll get the same as everyone else,” he growled as he chucked food in my tray. “Now move it!” After finishing the edible portion of my meal, I dumped the rest in the garbage, accidentally tossing out my silverware. While leaning into the trash can to look for my knife and fork, I felt a tap on my shoulder. It was the mess sergeant. “It’s all right, son,” he said. “You can grab seconds.” (Scott Pope, in Reader’s Digest)**

**In Sully, Iowa, a man whose wife announced she had removed the decorations from their Christmas tree and asked if he could finish the task spent 20 minutes wrestling the tree through the house, out the door and to the curb where the next day, the garbage man took it. That night, his wife asked where he had put the tree and he said the curb, at which point she exclaimed: “You what? I paid $200 for that tree! It was artificial.” (Doug Peppers, in Bloomington-Normal, IL The Pantagraph, 1997)**

**Woman: “Earl, looks like he’s deep in thought.” Grandma: “Appearances can be deceiving.” Woman: “Oh?” Grandma: “He accidentally super glued his fingers to his chin.” (Brian Crane, in Pickles comic strip)**

**Along the shore of South-West Africa, penned between volcanic mountains and the pounding Atlantic, lies one of the oldest, most savage deserts on earth. Geographers call this area the Skeleton Coast, because the beaches are littered with the bones of so many foundered ships. To its few residents it is the Forbidden Territory, because no one may enter without permission or leave without being X-rayed. Neither name quite does it justice, for beneath these desolate sands lie some of the richest deposits of gem diamonds in the world. *(Rona\ld Schiller, in Reader’s Digest)***

**A doctor came into a hospital room and told the patient’s husband to wait outside while he examined his wife. A few minutes later the doctor came out and asked a nurse’s aide if she could get him a pair of pliers. She did, and he went back into the patient’s room. Five minutes later he came out and asked for a screwdriver. When he came out a third time and asked for a hammer, the anxious husband demanded to know what was wrong with his wife. “I don’t know yet,” the doctor said. “I can’t get my bag open.” (Executive Speechwriter Newsletter)**

**One morning my oldest daughter, a high-school senior, asked to borrow one of my skirts. A few minutes later, I was doubly flattered when her 15-year-old sister wanted to wear my jeans and a sweater. Standing on the porch waving good-bye, I overheard oohs and aahs as the girls and my clothes piled into a friend's car. Later, though, I learned it was School Spirit Week. That day's assignment was to dress like a nerd. (Linda Jeffrey, in Reader's Digest)**

**Farming looks mighty easy when your plow is a pencil and you’re a thousand miles from the cornfield. (Dwight D. Eisenhower)**

**After completing a course to become an emergency medical technician, I was ready to put my new skills to the test. Driving along the highway, I saw a man lying beside his vehicle. I stopped, grabbed my medical kit and ran to his side. “I’m an EMT,” I said. “Do you need help?” “Sure,” he answered. “Can you change a flat tire?” *(Mary Beth Schmutz, in Reader’s Digest)*  
Bob was going to a party and was in such a hurry he forgot his false teeth. He turned to the guy next to him at the party and said, “I forgot my false teeth.” So the guy reached into his pocket and pulled some out. Bob tried them on and said, “No, these are too loose.” The guy pulled out another pair, which were too tight. The third pair fit, and Bob wore them for the best of the party. At the end, Bob said: “Where is your office? I've been looking for a good dentist for a long time.” The guy said, “I'm not a dentist. I'm an undertaker!” (Rocky Mountain News)**

**The fire beetle may have changed the history of the New World. In 1634, when the English were about to land at night on the island of Cuba, they saw many lights. Mistakenly, they believed them to be torches held by Spanish forces already on the island. Deciding that they were greatly outnumbered, the English withdrew and sailed on. What they probably observed were the glowing lights of fire beetles. (Francine Jacobs, in Nature's Light)**

**A manager quarreled with the umpire on every call he made, until a foul was hit into the stands in the sixth inning. Immediately afterward a woman was carried out on a stretcher. The umpire asked the manager if the ball had hit the woman. “No,” yelled the manager, “you called that one right, and she fainted.” (Joe Garagiola, in Baseball Is a Funny Game)**

**DNA “switches:” A new insight into genes: When scientists first began decoding the human genome in the late 1990s, they were surprised to discover that 98 percent of the DNA was “junk,” with no apparent purpose. It turns out that they were wrong. New research by an international team of 440 scientists has discovered that most “junk” DNA actually serves as switches that turn genes on or off – a finding that could lead to entirely new ways of preventing and treating disease. The presence of DNA switches in every person’s genetic makeup, researchers say, explains why some people who are predisposed to certain diseases get them, while others don’t. A person who inherits a vulnerability to breast cancer, for example, might never develop the disease unless some environmental factor or experience switches the bad gene on. “The whole way that we look at the genetic basis of disease is going to change,” researcher John Stamatoyannopoulos tells NPR.org. The human genome contains at least 4 million of these switches, and scientists are already linking specific ones to multiple sclerosis, asthma, type 1 diabetes, cancer, and mental illness. Figuring out exactly what each switch does could lead to new drug treatments – and will revolutionize medicine. Says leading researcher Ewan Birney, “It’s going to take this century to fill in all the details.” (The Week magazine, September 21, 2012)**

**Several friends and I were commiserating about how difficult it is to get our kids to eat healthful foods. Maria told us about the time she sent some cookies made with bran, carob and other wholesome ingredients to school in her daughter’s lunch. The little girl came home that afternoon and said, “Mom, you have to make some more of those cookies!” Thrilled, Maria said, “Oh, you really liked them?” “No,” her daughter replied, “but the other kids did, and one of them gave me a Twinkee for them!” (Linda Noble Lemond, in Reader’s Digest)**

**My boss is a workaholic who’s more likely to be found stuck behind her desk than on a treadmill. So when she declared, “I really have to make it a point to get to the gym tonight,” I was thrilled. “Good for you!” I cheered. “Yeah,” she said, “I have to cancel my membership.” (Maryann Serri, in Reader’s Digest)**

**For months I hinted that I needed a new wedding ring, since I had developed an allergy to gold. On my birthday, while I was gardening, my husband asked me for gift suggestions. I held my hand up and said, “Well, you’ll notice that my hands are bare.” Later that evening I opened my present with enthusiasm. “Happy birthday,” he said, as I unwrapped a new pair of gardening gloves. (Diana Ryan, in Reader’s Digest)**

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*The English explorer Martin Frobisher created a gold fever in England in 1578 when he returned from Baffin Island with 200 tons of glittering gold ore. Great preparations were made for getting more and more gold, but it turned out that the ore was merely iron pyrite (“fool's gold”). It was eventually crushed and used for road repair. (Isaac Asimov's Book of Facts)**

**All that is gold does not glitter; not all those that wander are lost. (J. R. R. Tolkien, in The Fellowship of the Ring)**

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***

**A young man from a famous family was about to graduate from high school. It was a custom in that affluent neighborhood for the parents to give the graduate an automobile. Bill and his father had spent months looking at cars, and the week before graduation they found the perfect car. Bill was certain that the car would be his on graduation night. Imagine his disappointment when, on the eve of his graduation, Bill's father handed him a gift-wrapped Bible! Bill was so angry, he threw the Bible down and stormed out of the house. He and his father never saw each other again. It was the news of his father's death that brought Bill home again. As he sat one night, going through his father's possessions that he was to inherit, he came across the Bible his father had given him. He brushed away the dust and opened it to find a cashier's check, dated the day of his graduation, in the exact amount of the car they had chosen together. (Beckah Fink)**

**During my brother’s wedding, my mother managed to keep from crying until she glanced at my grandparents. My grandmother had reached over to my grandfather’s wheelchair and gently touched his hand. That was all it took to start my mother’s tears flowing. After the wedding, Mom went over to my grandmother and told her how that tender gesture triggered her outburst. “Well, I’m sorry to ruin your moment,” Grandmother replied, “but I was just checking to see if he was still alive.” (Tidbits)**

**Grass is always greener on the other side, till you have to mow it. (Anthony Klco, in Catholic Digest)**

**In our parish one of our older ushers was hard of hearing. One Sunday he greeted a newcomer and proceeded to nod politely as she spoke to him, while at the time, leading her down the aisle to a pew. After Mass the newcomer commented to another usher on how considerate the old gentleman was and on how he enjoyed the service. “But,” she continued, “I already attended worship at my own church down the street.” The usher asked the woman why, if that was the case, she had stopped by for Mass in the first place. “I only wanted to tell someone about the car in the parking lot,” she told the second usher. “It has its lights on. (Paul Christian, in Catholic Digest)**

**A college basketball coach was shaving. His wife called upstairs to tell him that Sports Illustrated was on the phone. The coach was so excited he nicked his face shaving. Eagerly seeking recognition for himself and his school he fell down the stairs. Staggering to the phone breathlessly he said, “Hello.” The voice at the other end said, “Yes, sir. I'm happy to tell you that for only 75 cents per week you can receive a one-year's subscription.” (Paul Harvey)**

**Every day after work my friend Ty went home and crashed on the couch, where he watched TV and ate until he fell asleep. Deciding it was my duty to convert him to a healthier life-style, I encouraged him to start working out. After listening to weeks of my pestering, Ty called me, complaining of a pulled back muscle. Pleased that he’d finally engaged in some physical activity, I asked him how it happened. “Well,” he said, “the TV remote was on the other side of the couch.” (Joseph R. Demers, in Reader’s Digest)**

**In Copenhagen, Denmark, after worried passersby saw employees inside a bank holding their hands in the air, someone called the police. When officers arrived, they found the workers were taking yoga lessons. (Herm Albright, in Catholic Digest)**

**When the couple arrived at the airport in England, the wife, a British citizen, headed to the British passport line, while her American husband stood in the foreigners’ line. When the customs officer asked the purpose of his visit, the man replied, “I’m on my honeymoon.” “That’s interesting,” the officer said, looking around. “Most men bring their wives with them.” (Rocky Mountain News)**

**Brave scientists in Paris launched an unmanned hot-air balloon in 1873. It came down 12 miles away in the village of Gonesse. Locals attacked it with pitchforks, rolled it to imprison whatever might he inside, and lashed it to a horse to be hauled off into the woods where it couldn't hurt anybody. (L. M. Boyd)**

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***

**A humpback whale releases air bubbles as it swims around a school of herring. The bubbles make a sort of corral fence, because the herring don't try to swim through them. The whale dives and comes up in the middle. With a mouthful. (L. M. Boyd)**

**Humpback whales catch fish in a net of bubbles. A whale swims under the fish and squirts out a circle of bubbles from its blowhole. The fish stay inside the circle, and the whale then swallows them. (The Diagram Group, in Funky, Freaky Facts, p. 135)**

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***

**A man crawling up a hillside after being involved in a one-car accident near Troy, Montana, was then shot and seriously wounded when hunters mistook him for a grizzly bear. (Bill Flick)**

**My 13-year-old identical twin sons were scheduled to perform at their school’s Bach recorder competition – Peter first and David last. After 1 ½ hours of often shrill “music,” David stepped up to complete the program. Seeing David at the microphone, a parent behind me leaned over to another in the audience and said, “Oh, no! They’re starting all over again!” (Carol J. Miller, in Reader’s Digest)**

**While vacationing in the Hawaiian Islands, I visited the World War II memorial atop the sunken U.S. battleship Arizona, a monument to those who died in the attack on Pearl Harbor. On board, I slipped on a stairway and injured my thumb. Back home, with the thumb still not healing properly, I called my doctor for an appointment. When I was asked the nature of my illness, I thought I'd give the background and began, “I was injured at Pearl Harbor.” “Well,” the nurse interrupted. “It took you long enough to report it!” (Elmer M. Simms, in Reader's Digest)**

**Durian is known as the "King of Fruits." The delicacy is popular in Southeast Asia and grows in tropical rainforests, but it has gotten a bad rap in the West due to its stinky smell. The flesh is said to taste like cheese, almonds, garlic, and caramel all at once. Its appearance is also imposing, for its hard outer shell is covered in spikes. But durian is considered one of the world's most nutritious foods, full of protein, fiber, vitamins, and minerals. The plant has also been used in traditional Malaysian medicine to reduce fevers and treat jaundice. (The Daily Chronicle)**

**Doctor while weighing Earl on the scale says to him: “Earl, I’m very impressed. You’ve lost a lot of weight since the last time I saw you. How did you accomplish that?” Earl: “My wife took all the keys I wasn’t using anymore off my key ring.” (Brian Crane, in Pickles comic strip)**

**When two lovebirds appear to be kissing, they are actually grooming each other with their bills to keep clean and neat. *(The Daily Chronicle)***

About 80 percent of the new jobs created in Gov. Rick Perry’s Texas since 2007 went to newly arrived immigrants, half of whom were in the country illegally, according to a new report by the Center for Immigration Studies. The employment rate for native-born Texans actually declined over that period. *((NationalReview.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 7, 2011)*

**Servant: “Remember that nice couple I told you about who never argue or fight?” Lady: “Yes!” Servant: “Well, this is Helga and Hagar, who live right down the road from that couple!” (Dik Browne, in Hagar the Horrible comic strip)**

**After completing a course in organic gardening, I couldn’t wait to start planting. My husband took our three children on a weekend canoe trip, so I could have two uninterrupted days. The first one I spent preparing the soil, shaping it into four large raised beds. As I stood resting on my hoe, admiring my work, I noticed a neighbor eyeing me curiously. “I’m starting a garden,” I explained. “Oh,” he said, sounding relieved. “I thought you’d just buried your family.” (Betty Carter, in Reader’s Digest)**

**You have no idea how big the other fellow’s troubles are. (B. C. Forbes, Scottish journalist)**

**The owner visits his factory and is shocked to see a man leaning against a wall, drinking coffee. “How much do you make?” he demands. “Eighty dollars a day,” is the reply. The owner hands him $80 and says, “Get out, and don’t come back!” Two minutes later the foreman comes in and asks, “Where’s the delivery man who was just here?” (Tom Darby, in One to One)**

**A man pulled into a crowded parking lot and rolled down the car windows to make sure his dog had fresh air. Concerned that the puppy might try to wriggle out the window in an attempt to follow him, he walked to the curb backward, pointing his finger at the car and saying, “Now you stay. Do you hear me? Stay! Stay! The driver of a nearby car gave him a strange look and suggested, “Why don’t you just put it in park?” (Catholic Digest)**

**A newspaper photographer out in Los Angeles was called in by his editor and told of a fire that was raging out in Palos Verdes, a hilly area south of Los Angeles. His assignment was to rush down to a small airport, board a waiting plane, get some pictures of the fire, and be back in time for the afternoon edition. Breathlessly, he raced to the airport and drove his car to the end of the runway. Sure enough, there was a plane waiting with the engines all revved up, ready to go. He got aboard, and at about 5,000 feet, he began getting his camera out of the bag. He told the fellow flying the plane to get him over the fire so he could take his pictures and get back to the paper. From the other side of the cockpit there was a deafening silence. Then he heard these unsettling words: “Ah . . . aren't you the instructor?” (King Duncan's Treasury of Dynamic Humor)**

**After more than 30 years in the piano-tuning business, I thought I had heard it all. Then I went to adjust the piano strings for a customer who had a carpenter working at her house. Every time he made a trip outside for another tool, he would look in on me. “Hey,” he said finally, “if you like to play the piano so much, you really should take some lessons.” (Connie Vincent, in Reader’s Digest)**

**Patrick J. McGovern, chairman of Computerworld, tells about visiting a monastery in Nepal where handwritten sacred documents are stored on thick stone shelves. Because of the documents’ importance to other monks, who often travel vast distances to read them, a lama said they had plans to copy the tablets. “By hand?” asked McGovern, imagining scribes at work for hundreds of years. “Oh, no,” replied the lama. “We use a Xerox 9200.” (Jack B. Rochester & John Gantz, in The Naked Computer)**

**At a testimonial dinner in his honor, a wealthy businessman gave an emotional speech. “When I came to this city 50 years ago,” he said, “I had no car, my only suit was on my back, the soles of my shoes were thin, and I carried all my possessions in a brown paper bag.” After dinner, a young man nervously approached. “Sir, I really admire your accomplishments. Tell me, after all these years, do you still remember what was carried in that brown paper bag?” “Sure, son,” he said. “I had $300,000 in cash and $500,000 in negotiable securities.” (The Lion)  
  
When I was 8 1/2 months pregnant, I had to return some automotive parts my husband had bought by mistake. At the store, I asked the clerk to point out Bob, the man my husband had dealt with. Told that he was in the back of the building, I waddled over to the group of four men deep in conversation. “Hey!” I shouted. “I'm looking for Bob!” A burly man stepped forward. “Lady,” he said, “I swear I've never seen you before in my life!” (Judy E. Meitzen. in Reader's Digest)**

**A man goes to the track and sees a priest blessing a horse before a race. He quickly goes to the ticket window and bets on that horse. The horse wins. He watches the priest carefully for the next four races, and continues to win, until he has quite a small fortune. He bets it all on the one last race. Before the horse crosses the finish line, however, it drops dead. The man rushes up to the priest and confronts him and demands an explanation. The priest just shakes his head. “That's the problem with you Protestants,” he says. “You don't know the difference between a blessing and the Last Rites.” (Rocky Mountain News)**

**On his first visit to a produce market, an inexperienced shopper saw a man at the watercress stall systematically picking up each tiny carton of cress, peering closely at it, turning it upside down and finally shaking it. Eager to learn something, the new shopper asked if the man would mind divulging the secret of his odd behavior. “Not at all,” he replied. “I'm looking for my car keys.” (A. Instan, in Reader's Digest)**

**On my first day of classes at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, I took a front-row seat in my literature course. The professor told us we would be responsible for reading five books, and that he would provide us with a list of authors from which we could choose. Then he ambled over to the lectern, took out his class book and began, “Baker, Black, Brooks, Carter, Cook . . .” I was working feverishly to get down all the names when I felt a tap on my shoulder. The student in back of me whispered, “He’s taking attendance.” (Shelly Carter, in Reader’s Digest)**

**During a “guest” appearance on NBC's “Today Show,” a reindeer from the nearby Radio City Music Hall's “Christmas Spectacular” shed an antler while on the air after the hot TV lights apparently confused the deer and convinced him spring indeed was here. (Bill Flick)**

**At one time, investigators feared that the saguaro cactus was dying out. Back in the late 1930s, they found many were developing a brown ooze and dying. Not knowing much about saguaros, they thought the plants were diseased. In fact, the investigators saw old specimens suffering the effects of a hard freeze that had occurred several years before. It was just part of the natural process. Despite the hazards of cold weather, brush fires, hungry wildlife, grazing cattle, and humans, the plant is in no danger of extinction. *(Vicky Hay)***

**Driving down the highway one day, I saw this slogan on the back of a well-known trucking company’s vehicle: “We Go That Extra Mile.” Then I noticed another phrase scrawled in the dirt just below it: “Because We Missed the Last Exit!” *(April Johnson, in Reader’s Digest)***

**One day at the post office, I watched a young man stamp a stack of letters and put all but one of them in the mail drop. Then he gazed lovingly at the last one, kissed it and dropped it in the slot. “Girlfriend?” I asked with a smile. “No, a job application,” he replied. I bought him lunch. (Ralph Starkenburg, in Reader’s Digest)**

**The Walnut Creek, California, motorist who was stopped by a traffic cop, was cited for her driving and given two tickets. She drove away, however, with a smile on her face. She was “cited” for courtesy -- for stopping at an intersection to let a man cross the road -- and the tickets were for the theater. Frustrated by impatient, discourteous drivers who cause accidents, the Walnut Creek police traffic patrol offers rewards for exceptional drivers. In the program's first ten months, some 90 courtesy citations were issued. (Associated Press)**

**Pushing a cart down a supermarket aisle, a man passed a woman whose cart carried a 4-year-old girl. As he walked by, he heard the mother saying, “Take it easy, Natasha. It won't be long. We have only three more items to buy.” A few minutes later, he passed the same woman in another aisle. As the little girl looked at the items on the shelves, the woman crooned in a soothing voice, “It's okay, Natasha. We're almost finished. Nothing to get upset about, Tasha dear. We'll be outside in no time at all.” When the man reached the checkout counter, the woman was paying for her groceries. “Excuse me,” he said, “I'd like to compliment you on the way you kept your daughter calm while you did your shopping. I overheard some of the soothing things you were saying to Natasha here to keep her from getting upset.” The woman looked puzzled for a few seconds, then laughed. “You've got it all wrong,” she said. “My daughter's name is Kate. I'm Natasha.” (Rocky Mountain News)**

**About two dozen people were evacuated from Grand Junction’s airport Sunday night after authorities found a suspicious item in a man’s suitcase. Transportation Safety Authority workers spotted a plastic container filled with liquid that had what looked like wires sticking out of it. What was this suspicious item? It turned out to be a water balloon toy. And the wires? Spigots to spray water. The airport opened 45 minutes later, and no charges were filled. *(Rocky Mountain News, January 18, 2005)***

**Whenever things sound easy, it turns out there’s one part you didn’t hear. (Donald E. Westlake, in Drowned Hopes)**

**After waiting two hours for her date, Sarah concluded she’d been stood up. So she changed into pajamas, made some popcorn, and flopped down in front of the TV. Then the doorbell rang – it was her date. He took one look at Sarah and gasped, “You’re still not ready?” (Reader’s Digest)**

**It seems that two visitors were walking along a street in Washington, D.C. They happened to be passing within sight of the Washington Monument at just about the time a janitor nearby was putting trash out to burn. At the point where they were walking, the fire was so situated in their line of vision and it seemed to be at the base of the tall, slender monument. One of the visitors turned to the other, shook his head in mock despair, and exclaimed: “They’ll never get it off the ground!” (Rev. Howard C. Adams, in Pulpit Digest)  
  
A friend of mine awoke one morning to find a puddle of water in the middle of his long-size waterbed. In order to fix the puncture, he rolled the heavy mattress outdoors and filled it with more water so he could locate the leak more easily. The enormous bag of water was impossible to control and began rolling on the hilly terrain. He tried to hold it back, but it headed downhill and landed in a clump of bushes which poked it full of holes. Disgusted, my friend threw out the waterbed frame and moved a standard bed into his room. The next morning, he awoke to find a puddle of water in the middle of the new bed. The upstairs bathroom had a leaky drain. (Kayleen Kennedy, in Reader's Digest)**

**In my early fifties, I attended a large and lavish wedding reception. Going through the receiving line, I noticed that one of the bridesmaids, a stunningly gorgeous young woman, couldn't take her eyes off me. My ego soared. After greeting the bridal couple, I approached the lovely bridesmaid, preparing to turn on the charm. She spoke up first: “Sir, your necktie is hanging in your champagne glass!” (Robert N. Spangler, in Reader's Digest)**

**It is only the shallow people who do not judge by appearances. *(Oscar Wilde)***

**A British woman came home to find her husband in the kitchen shaking frantically with what looked like a wire running from his waist toward the electric kettle. Intending to jolt him away from the deadly current, she whacked him with a handy plank of wood by the back door, breaking his arm in two places. Until that moment, he had been happily listening to his Walkman. *(Noel Botham, in The Best Book of Useless Information Ever, p. 118)***

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***