**Funerals & Coffins**

**195: Deceased people whose ashes will be shot into space in rockets this spring, including James Doohan, who played Scotty on Star Trek. $5,300: Highest price charged by Space Services Inc. for the trip – less than the average terrestrial funeral costs. *((Time, March 6, 2006)***

**This guy’s father dies, so he goes to the undertaker and tells him he wants the best of everything for his father and he won’t cheap out on anything. The man gets really sick the day of the funeral, however, and is unable to attend. The next day he receives a bill for $16,000. He pays it, no questions asked. The next month he receives another bill for $165. He figures it’s just a little supplementary bill for something that was left off the first one, so he pays it. The following month, another bill for $165 arrives, so he calls up the undertaker and says, “I keep getting these bills for $165. I thought I paid for the funeral already.” The undertaker says, “Well, you said you wanted the best for your father, so I rented him a tux.” (Tidbits of Denver)**

**A funeral service was being held in a church for a woman who had just passed away. At the end of the Service, the pall-bearers were carrying the casket out when they accidentally bumped into a wall, jarring the casket. They heard a faint moan. They opened the casket and found that the woman was actually still alive. She lived for ten more years and then died. A ceremony was again held at the same church and at the end of the ceremony, the pall-bearers were again carrying out the casket. As they walked, the husband cried out, “AND WATCH OUT FOR THAT WALL!” (Tidbits)**

**Can’t afford the above apartment? Try this, spotted in the Buffalo (New York) News: “Casket – metal, split-top, slightly used, very comfortable, never buried.” *(Michelle Figgins, in Reader’s Digest)***

**After I’m dead I’d rather have people ask why I have no monument than why I have one. (Cato the Elder)**

**Grandmother: “More than 60 people are coming to Aunt Marian's farewell, Elly. Those who aren't billeted with family are staying at the Riverside Inn. The service will be at the Botanical Gardens and thereception at the Masonic Hall. Music and flowers and refreshments are taken care of.” Daughter: “This doesn't sound like a memorial service -- it sounds more like a celebration!” Elly: “It is.” *(Lynn Johnston, in For Better Or For Worse comic strip)***

**Planting a family garden would be a goodcharacter-building experience for our five children, I determined, but the trip to the nursery was a nightmare. They insisted on seeing every plant in the five-acre warehouse, squabbled over who got to push the shopping cart and complained when another child chose the same color petunias. Home again, I ranted and raved to my patient husband. “All I want,” I concluded in exasperation, “is peace, quiet and beautiful flowers.” “I understand,” he intoned calmly. “I believe they call that a funeral.” (D'Ann Jones, in Reader's Digest)**

**Winston Churchill planned his own funeral, we are told--a funeral that took place in St. Paul's Cathedral in London. He included many of the great hymns of the church and used the eloquent Anglican liturgy. At Churchill's direction, a bugler positioned high in the dome of St. Paul's, intoned after the benediction the sound of “Taps,” the universal signal that says the day is over. But then came a most dramatic turn. As Churchill had instructed, as soon as “Taps” had been played, another bugler, placed on the opposite side of the dome, played the notes of “Reveille”: “It's time to get up! It's time to get up! It's time to get up in the morning!” That was Churchill's testimony that at the end of history, the last note will not be “Taps;” it will be “Reveille.” These bones shall rise again! (LectionAid)**

**Costco is now offering discount caskets on its Web site, including the “In God’s Care” casket and the “Mother” casket, both for $924.99. Buyers can preorder before their deaths, but no returns are accepted. (New York Post, as it appeared in The Week magazine, February 3, 2006)**

**Hector: “So how was that guy's funeral you went to?” Second man: “Awesome! There was the most beautiful girl there! I'm telling you, Hector, she was supreme! It may have been the best two hours of my life! Except for the death thing.” Hector: “Yeah. Why do they always have to drag that into funerals?” (Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman, in Zits comic strip)**

**During a funeral, the organist played a beautiful rendition of Bach’s “Sheep May Safely Graze” as the casket was carried out of the church. After the service, the minister complimented him on his performance. “Oh, by the way,” the minister asked, “do you know what the deceased did for a living?” “No idea,” said the organist as he began packing up. The minister smiled. “He was a butcher.” (Peter Lunn, in Reader’s Digest)**

**Nothing is dead. Men feign themselves dead, endure funerals and mournful obituaries, and there they stand, looking out the window, sound and well in some new disguise. *(Ralph Waldo Emerson)***

**During a funeral service, someone says to another: “Say! Isn't that eulogy the same as his resume?” (The Clergy Journal cartoon)**

**A new business was opening and one of the owner’s friends wanted to send flowers for the occasion. They arrived at the new business site and the owner read the card; it said “Rest in Peace.” The owner was angry and called the florist to complain. After he had told the florist of the obvious mistake and how angry he was, the florist said, “Sir, I’m really sorry for the mistake, but rather than getting angry you should imagine this: somewhere there is a funeral taking place today, and they have flowers with a note saying, ‘Congratulations on your new location.’” (Tidbits)**

**A husband was in big trouble when he forgot his wedding anniversary. His wife told him, “Tomorrow there better be something in the driveway for me that goes zero to 200 in two seconds flat.” The next morning the wife found a small package in the driveway. She opened it and found a brand new bathroom scale. Funeral arrangements for the husband have been set for Saturday. *(Charlie Hufford, in The Saturday Evening Post)***

**The boss says to the woman during her job interview: "And as a full-time employee, Ruth, you're entitled to 15 percent off all caskets and embalming supplies." (*John McPherson, in Close To Home comic strip)***

**The funeral directors of the mortuary where I am a receptionist were asked by a grieving family if they could place a golf club in the casket alongside their uncle, who had been an avid golfer. “Of course,” was the answer. On the day of the funeral, as the pallbearers descended the steps toward the hearse, a loud rattling and rolling came from the coffin. “Sounds like a pinball machine,” murmured one startled director. Later, a family member of the deceased came to the chapel office to apologize. At the last minute, they had decided to place in the casket, along with the club, a half-dozen golf balls.” *(Shirley Thompson, in Reader's Digest)***

**Three fishing buddies die in a car crash and find themselves at the gates of heaven. Before allowing them in, St. Peter asks, “When you are in your casket and friends and family are mourning, what would you like to hear them say about you?” The first fellow says, “I would like to hear them say I was a great father and a faithful husband.” He is admitted. The second fellow says, “I would like to hear that I was a sober, hard worker who was kind to all people.” He is admitted. “What would you like them to say at your funeral?” St. Peter asks the last man. Says the man, “I would like to hear, ‘Look! He's moving!’” *(Rocky Mountain News)***

**No matter how rich or famous you are, the size of your funeral will depend on the weather. (Lewis Grizzard)**

**They say such nice things about people at their funerals that it makes me sad to realize that I’m going to miss mine by just a few days. (Garrison Keillor)**

**In her earlier days, the Swedish-born actress and her family lived in a funeral parlor in Wilmette, Illinois, where her mother worked as a receptionist. Her father, Gustav, an electrician, was very ill at the time and was not able to work, creating financial and housing problems for the family. Ann-Margret slept in the mourning room, usually next to a casket. Despite this lugubrious beginning, the actress has brightened the movie screen in movies such as Bye Bye Birdie. (Ed Lucaire, in Celebrity Setbacks, p. 76)**

**If my mind dies before my body must I attend the funeral? (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

**The only reason I might go to the funeral is to make absolutely sure that he's dead. (Anthony Sampson)**

**Veteran Pillsbury spokesman Pop N. Fresh died Wednesday of a severe yeast infection. He was 71. Dozens of celebrities turned out for his funeral, including Mrs. Butterworth, the California Raisins, Hungry Jack, Betty Crocker, and the Hostess Twinkies. The graveside was piled high with flours, as longtime friend Aunt Jemima delivered the eulogy, describing Fresh as a man who “never knew he was kneaded”. Fresh rose quickly in show business, but his later life was filled with turnovers. He was not considered a smart cookie, and wasted much of his dough on half-baked schemes. Still, even as a crusty old man, he was a role model to millions, Fresh is survived by his second wife. They have two children and one in the oven. (Rebecca Jones, in Rocky Mountain News)**

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**Not long after I resigned as pastor of a small community church, the phone rang. “Is the reverend there?” a man asked. I explained that I was a minister though not the current pastor. “You’ll do,” he said. The man wanted to know which Scripture verses applied to funeral services. I gave him several references, and he jotted them down. “What about the ‘ashes to ashes, dust to dust’ part?” he asked. I read it to him slowly. Then, intending to offer him some sympathy, I inquired, “And who is the deceased?” “My daughter’s rabbit,” he replied. *(Fred Firstbrook, in Reader’s Digest)***

**We would rather do business with 1,000 al-Qaida terrorists than a single American. - sign at a funeral home in Philadelphia. *(The American Legion magazine)***

**The man who was dead for 3 days! Sai Baba (1856-1918) of Shirdi, India, was pronounced dead in 1886, with both circulation and breathing stopped completely. As preparations for his funeral were being made 3 days later, it was observed that he was breathing – and he lived another 32 years. (Ripley’s Believe It or Not!: Book of Chance, p. 213)**

**In Shakespeare’s day, many a gentleman in mourning even wore black to bed – black nightshirt, black nightcap. (L. M. Boyd)**

**There were those in Greece in the 5th century B.C. who held a track meet as a funeral ceremony. Soldiers killed in war, particularly, were so commemorated. With races mostly, and also some wrestling matches. (L. M. Boyd)**

**The trouble with funerals is that they usually mean very little to the guest of honor. (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

**I did not attend his funeral, but I wrote a nice letter saying I approved it. *(Mark Twain)***

**Wal-Mart has begun to sell caskets on its website, at prices that undercut those charged by funeral homes. Prices range from $999 for the “Mom Remembered” model to $3,199 for the “Sierra Bronze” deluxe model. *(Associated Press, as it appeared in The Week magazine, November 13, 2009)***

**One evening my husband and I were talking about our wills. I asked him, if he should go first, what funeral arrangements he would like. He told me he wanted to be cremated and have his ashes scattered over Catalina Island. “Why Catalina?” I asked. “Because I’ve never been there before.” *(Sylvia Anderson, in Reader’s Digest)***

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