

AUTUMN LEAVES

2020



Robert Middleton

As our friend Paula Stewart wrote a few days ago, "Boy, do we need humor" - and she lives in the USA, so she knows.

With or without Trump, autumn is a melancholy time of year, especially as we get older - fortunately, it's also a time when fond memories come crowding back to comfort us for the darker and shortening days - and, in 2020, for what has been and continues to be a tough year.

Autumn songs reflect this nostalgia - their lyrics more poetic than most popular songs. One of the most haunting is *September song* by Kurt Weill for the 1938 Broadway musical production *Knickerbocker Holiday*.¹

<p>But it's a long, long while From May to December And the days grow short When you reach September</p> <p>And I have lost one tooth And I walk a little lame And I haven't got time</p>	<p>For the waiting game</p> <p>And the days turn to gold As they grow few September, November And these few golden days I'd spend with you These golden days I'd spend with you ...</p>
---	---

In 1945, the Hungarian-French composer Joseph Kosma wrote music for the Roland Petit ballet *Le Rendez-vous*. One of the instrumental themes became the beautiful song *Les Feuilles Mortes*, for which Jacques Prévert wrote the lyrics.²

<p>Oh, je voudrais tant que tu te souviennes, Des jours heureux quand nous étions amis, Dans ce temps là, la vie était plus belle, Et le soleil plus brûlant qu'aujourd'hui.</p> <p>Les feuilles mortes se ramassent à la pelle, Tu vois je n'ai pas oublié.</p>	<p>Les feuilles mortes se ramassent à la pelle, Les souvenirs et les regrets aussi, Et le vent du nord les emporte, Dans la nuit froide de l'oubli. Tu vois, je n'ai pas oublié, La chanson que tu me chantais....</p>
--	--

An equally nostalgic version in English was written by Johnny Mercer in 1950. *Autumn Leaves* has since become a jazz standard and has been recorded more than a thousand times.³

¹ Nat King Cole on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=boAssCYMbZQ>.

² Yves Montand on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xo1C6E7jbPw>.

³ Mercer original on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6e1-2yxQPs>.

<p>The falling leaves drift by the window The autumn leaves of red and gold I see your lips, the summer kisses The sunburned hands I used to hold</p> <p>And soon I'll hear old winter's song Since you went away the days grow long</p>	<p>But I miss you most of all my darling When autumn leaves start to fall</p> <p>Since you went away the days grow long And soon I'll hear old winter's song But I miss you most of all my darling When autumn leaves start to fall</p>
--	--

In 1966, Phil Ochs wrote *Changes* (sung by Gordon Lightfoot on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MmrZdVM7Vo0>):

Green leaves of summer turn red in the fall
To brown and to yellow they fade
And then they have to die
Trapped within the circle time parade of changes

Any mention of autumn leaves must also include *Pauvre Ruteboeuf*, one of Léo Ferré's best songs, in which he combines verses from *La Complainte de Ruteboeuf* et *La Griesche d'Yver* by the thirteenth century poet Ruteboeuf (1230-1285). You can hear Léo Ferré singing it in 1956 on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o3zqKZiLDmg>.

<p>Que sont mes amis devenus Que j'avais de si près tenus Et tant aimés Ils ont été trop clairsemés Je crois le vent les a ôtés L'amour est morte Ce sont amis que vent me porte Et il ventait devant ma porte Les emporta.</p>	<p>Avec le temps qu'arbre défeuille Quand il ne reste en branche feuille Qui n'aille à terre Avec pauvreté qui m'atterre Qui de partout me fait la guerre Au temps d'hiver Ne convient pas que vous raconte Comment je me suis mis à honte En quelle manière</p>
---	---

So, despite the autumn blues, please enjoy this companion to *Easter Egg Nuts in May*, *June Moon* and *July Butterfly* - it will soon be *Christmas Puddingtime*.

~ Robert Middleton 2020

Cartoons from *The New Yorker*

e-mail robert@middleton.ch

Visit my website www.pamirs.org

All editions of *Christmas Pudding* etc. can be found on
<http://www.pamirs.org/Christmas-Pudding.htm>

COVID capers



m.e.menair



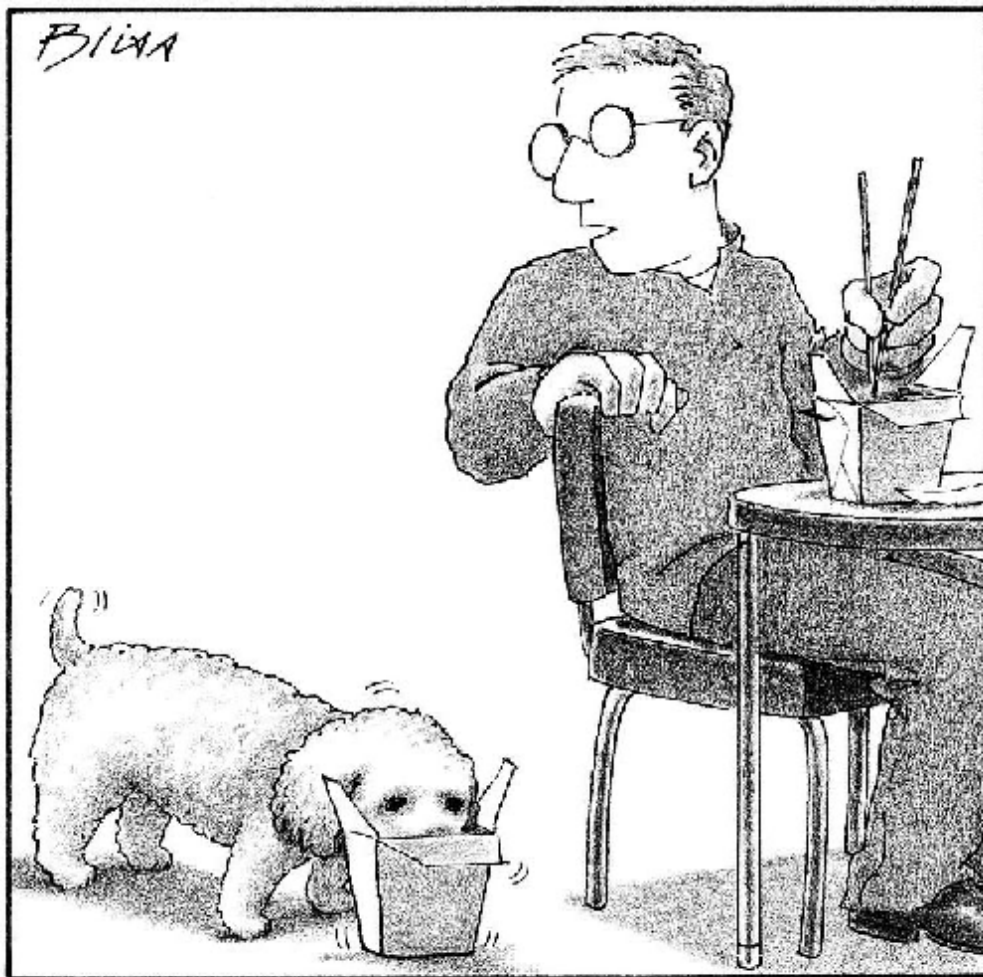
"Don't bother."



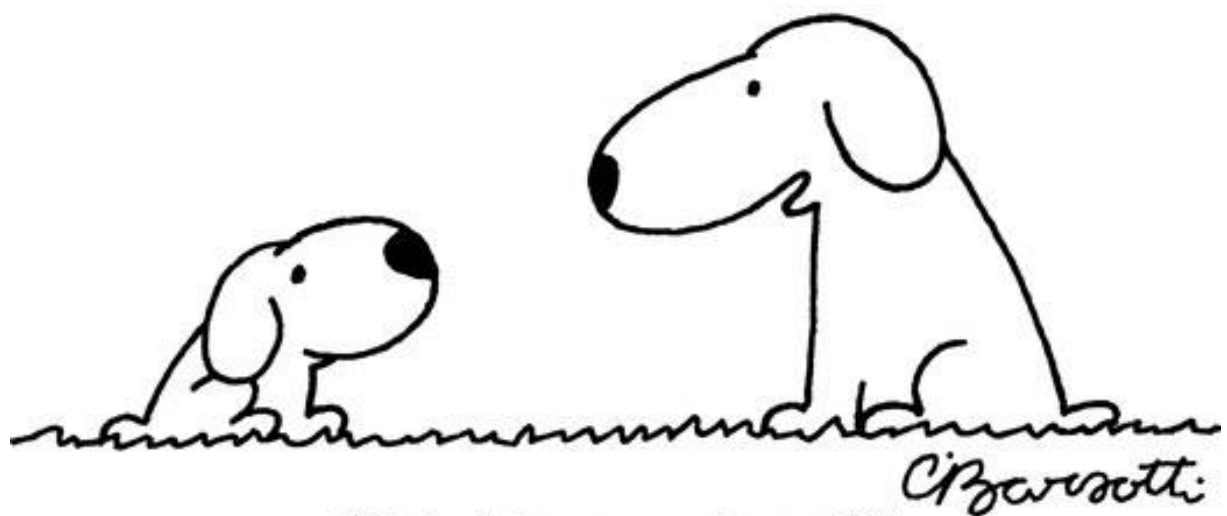
"This calendar has the number of days it feels like."



Animal Antics



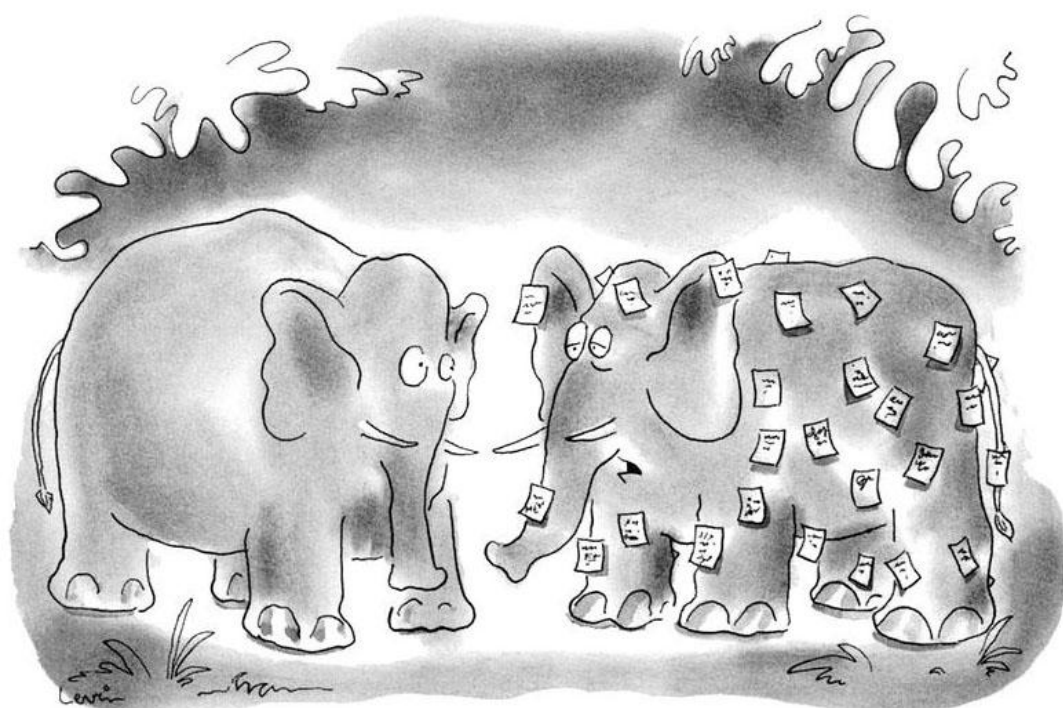
"Save some for Mommy, Princess."



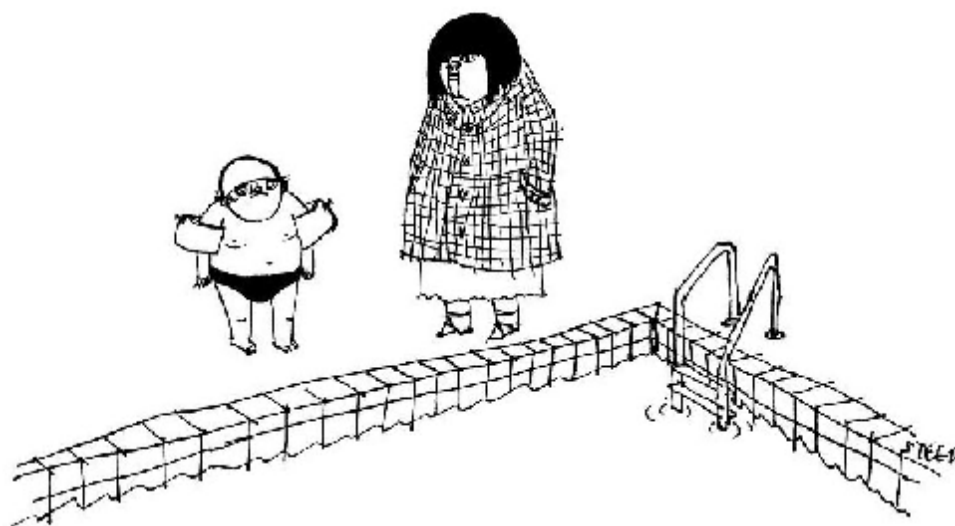
"Cute is whatever you can get away with."



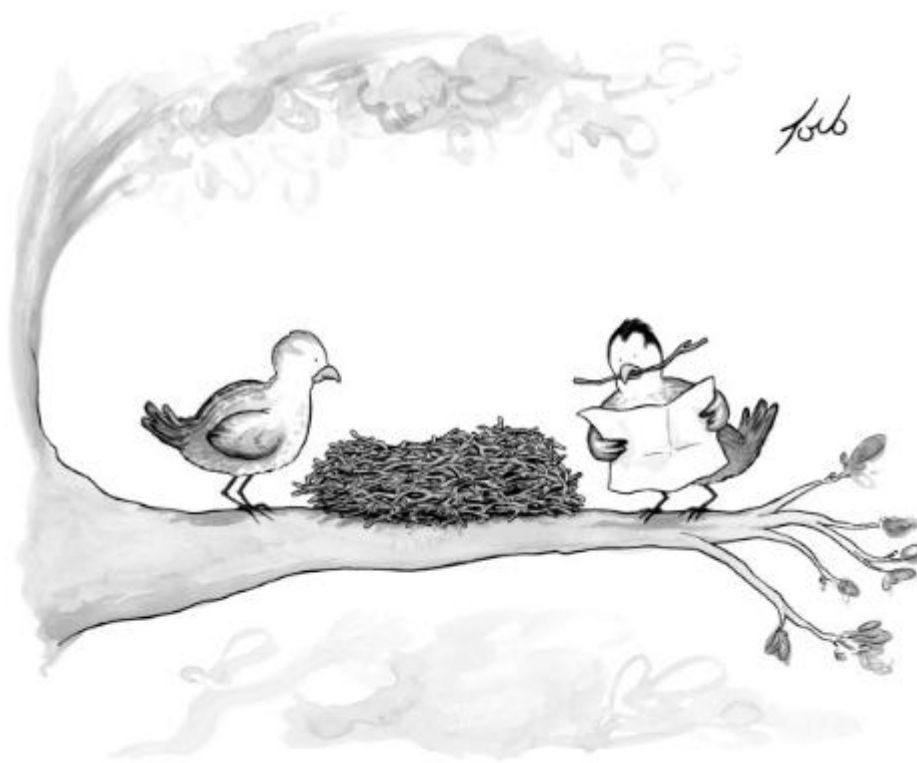
"She was a rescue."



*"As I get older, I find I rely more and more
on these sticky notes to remind me."*



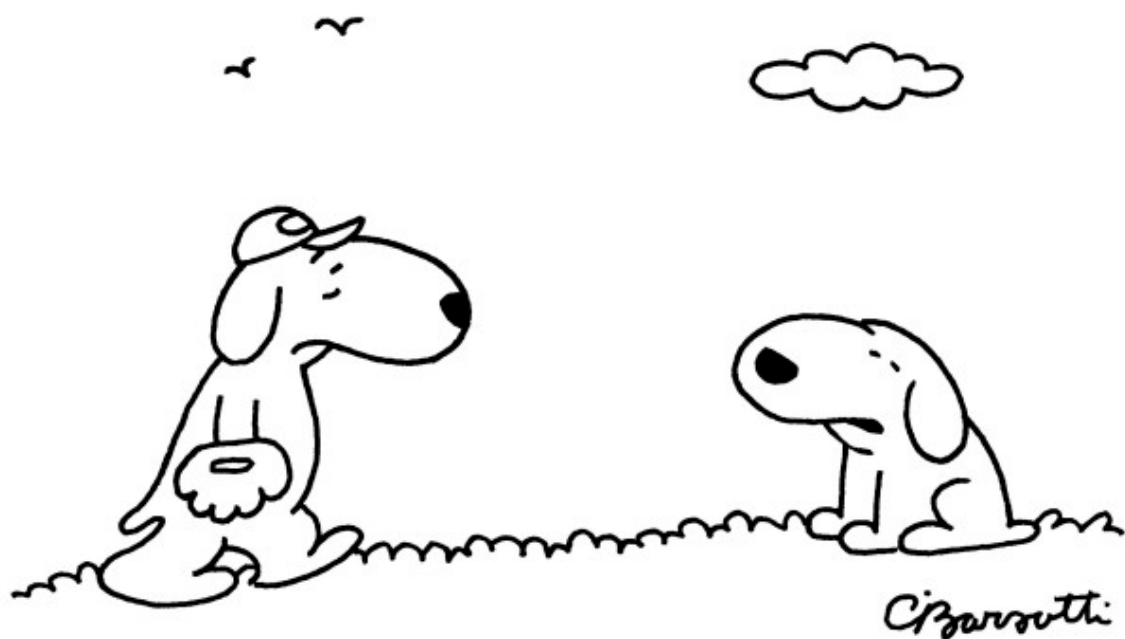
"It's not as deep as it looks—that's only a baby giraffe."



"There's always one annoying piece left over."



"I don't really know how to tell you this, sweetheart, so I'm just going to come right out and say it: Your goldfish ran away."



"Give it up—Frisbee is your game."



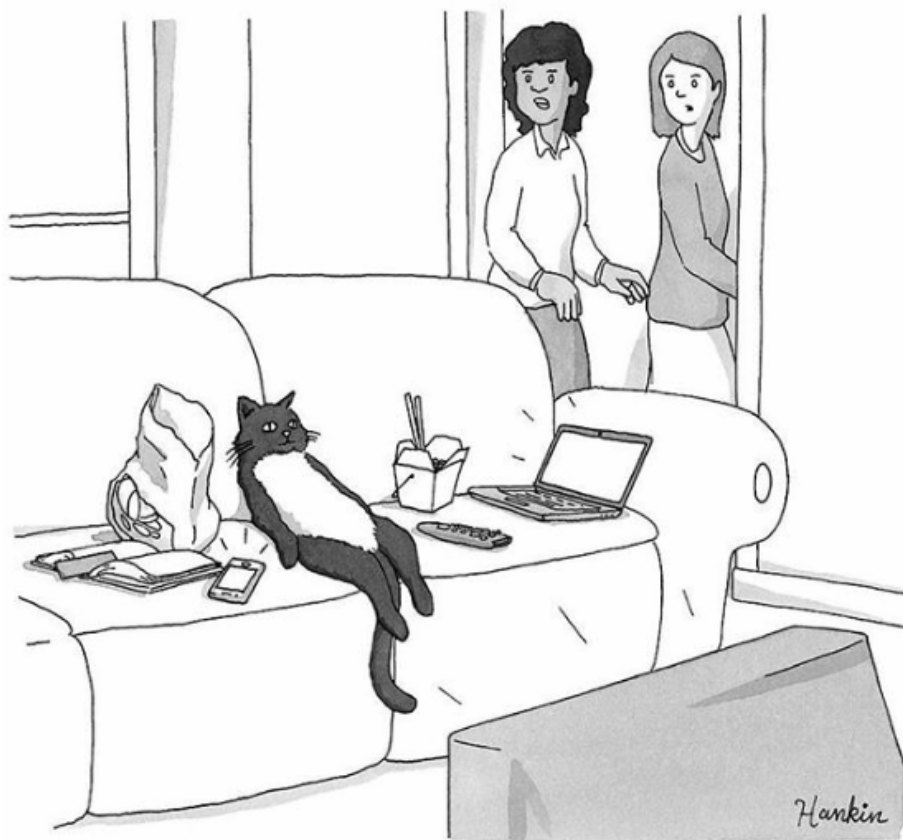
"By the way, I'm taking off the first two weeks in August."



"How else would I keep my solar panels in the sun all day?"



"I have a couple of other projects I'm excited about."



"He's an indoor cat."

Office Life - didn't you miss it?



"I'm really glad I don't work on this floor."



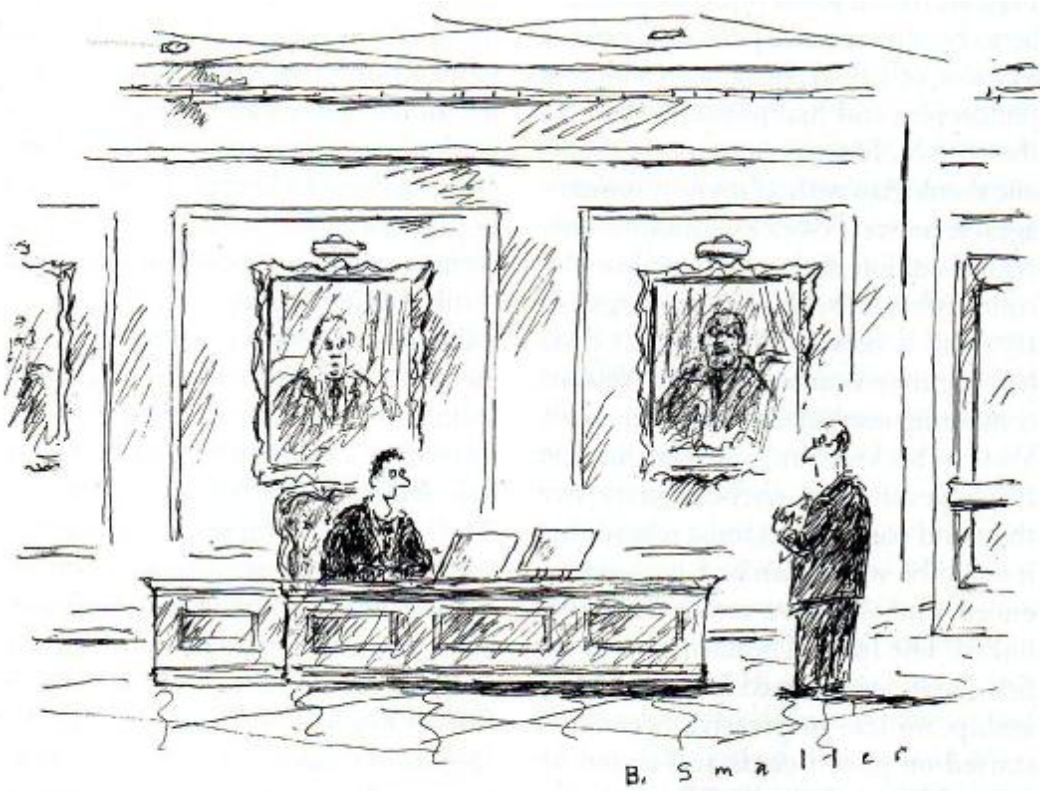
"I can't just switch gears and be smart."



"I know you're not a quitter, Pete—in fact, that's the main reason I have no choice but to fire you."



"I wish I had a salary that disgusted people."



"It's not nepotism if I'm the best son for the job."



"Plan B is firing whoever came up with Plan A."



"Just because they all work from home now doesn't mean I don't still keep an eye on them."



"I know we didn't accomplish anything, but that's what meetings are for."

Doctors (please stay healthy)



C. Barrett

*"All these years, and you haven't listened
to a damn thing I've said, have you?"*



ms/revens

*"I'm going to send you to someone who's not
afraid of doing a little harm."*



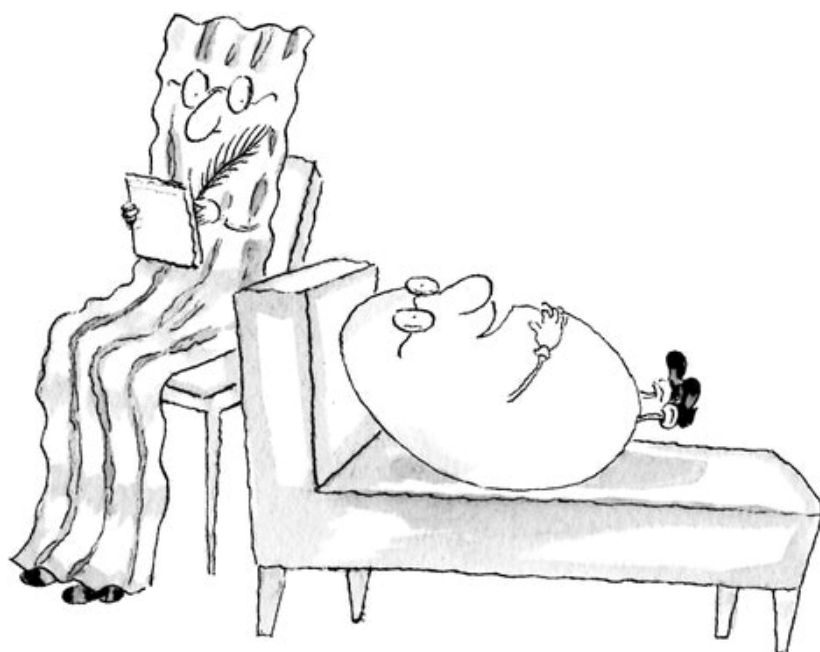
"I love spring days when we get to work outdoors."



"Worse than a cold. It's a common cold."

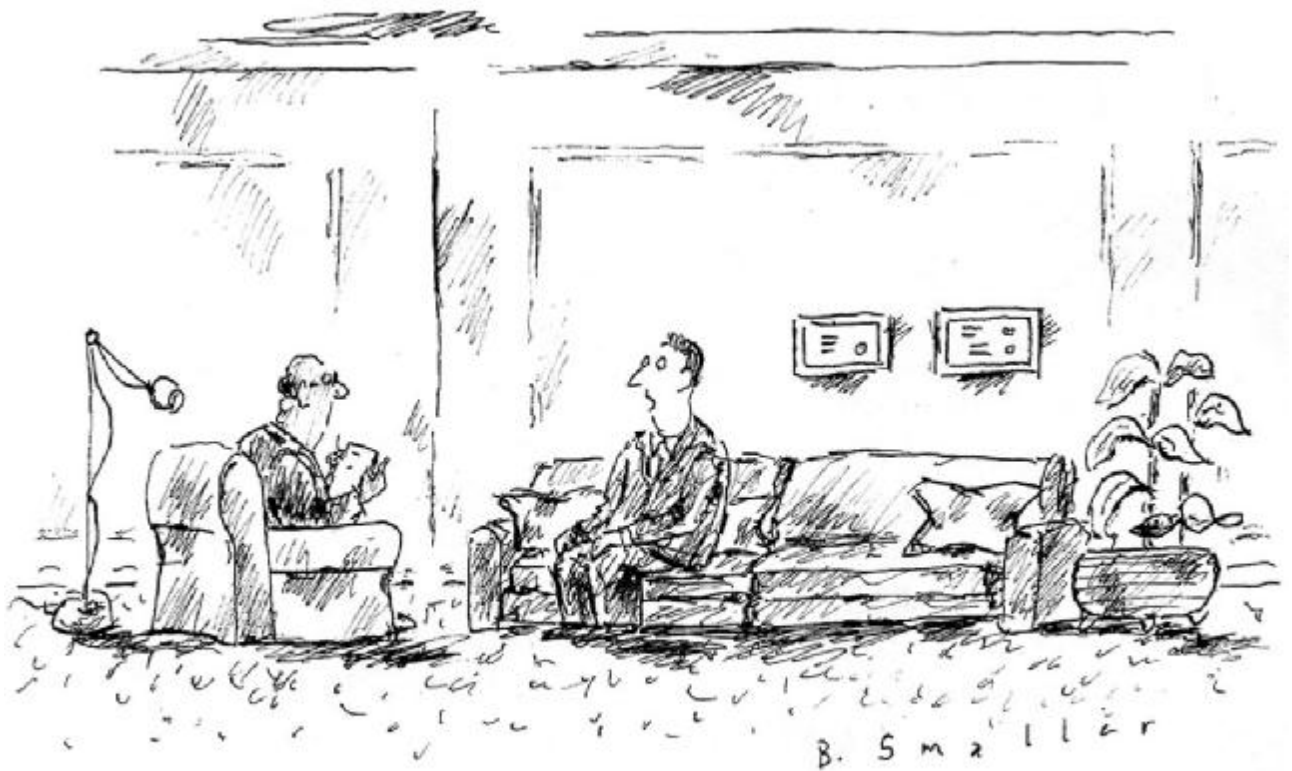


"Just as I suspected. These things make everything louder."

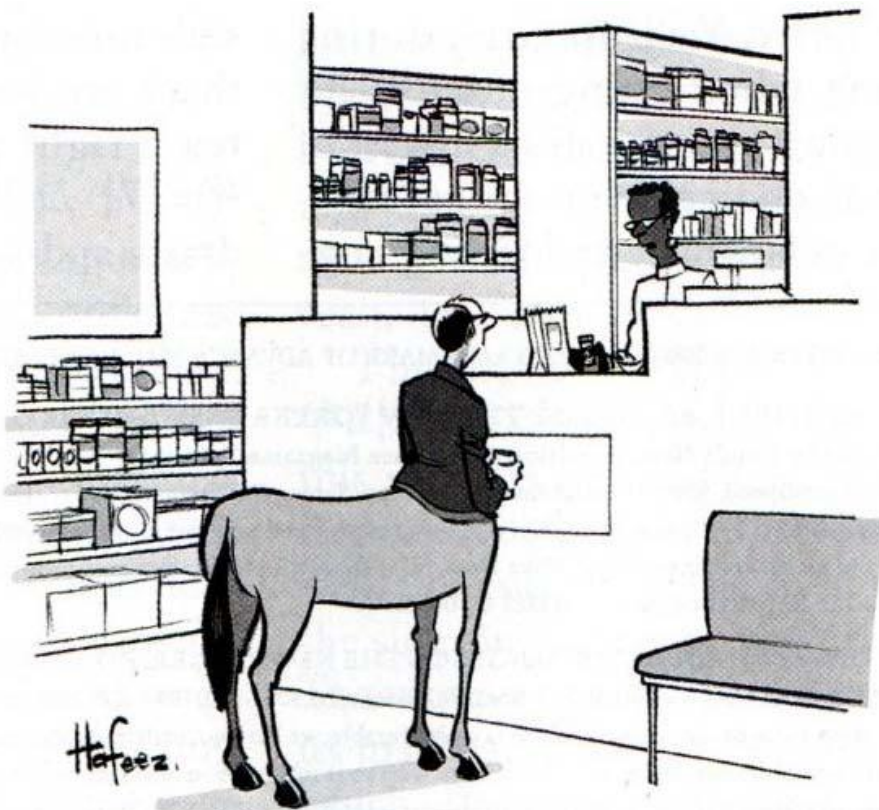


Victoria Roberts

"Easy for you to say—you're cured!"

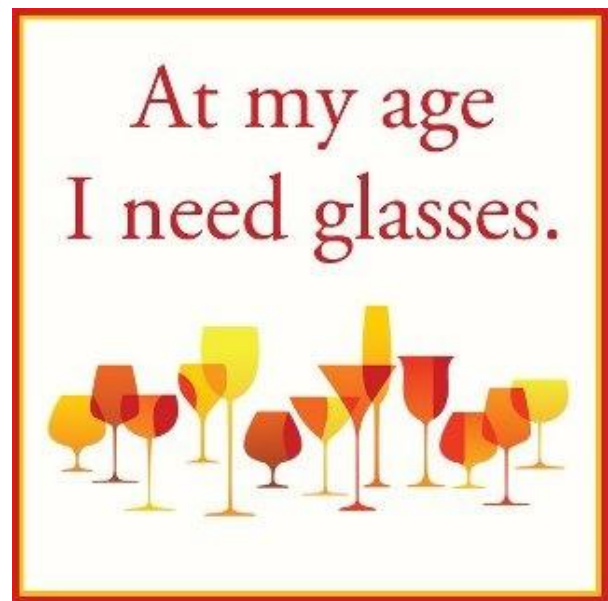


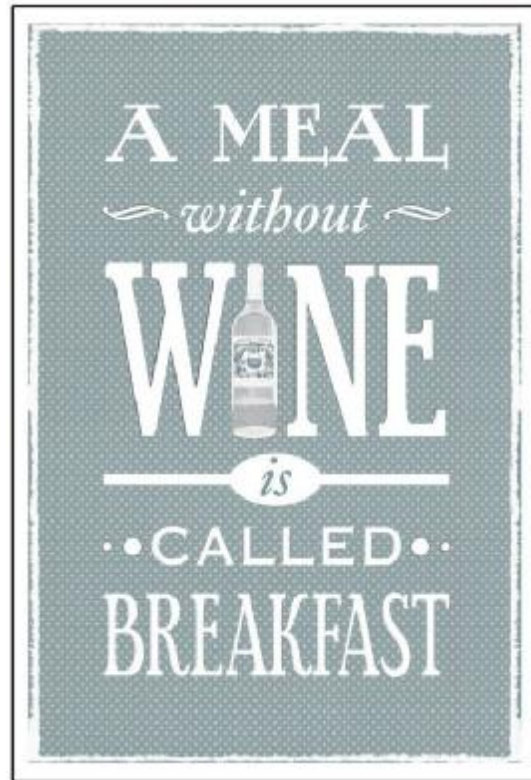
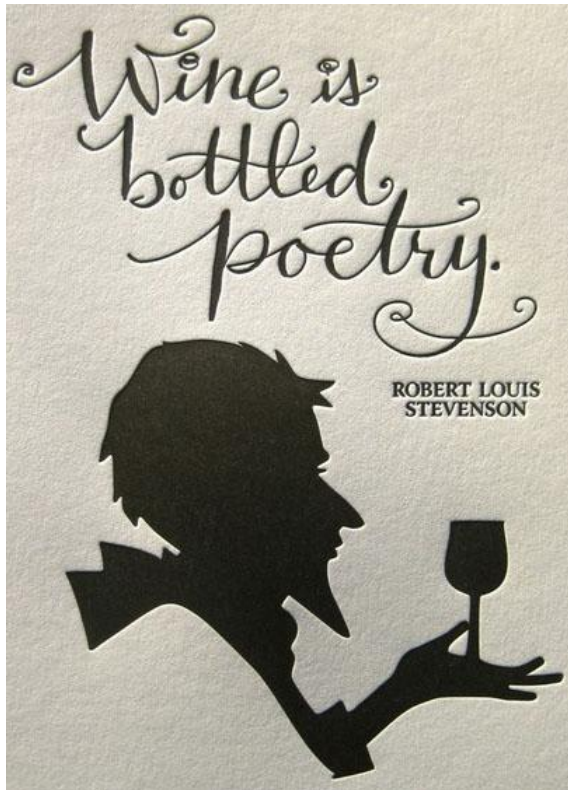
*"O.K., maybe I need to change my life, or maybe
you could just tweak my medication."*



"Looks like you're already familiar with the side effects."

Food and Drink - Enjoy (with as much moderation as you can manage)





"I want to see other hallucinations."



DRUNK AND ORDERLY



"Oh great. All we've got to eat are fish."

God and Co.



"What is the name of your first pet?"



"Blasphemy, yes, but it was funny."



"Switching to drones has made having to be everywhere at once much more manageable."



"Did Jesus create these locally?"



"You've been randomly selected for additional screening."



"It's new. We place them in an endless video conference with everyone they couldn't stand in life."



"It says here that you gave a lot of money to both parties and neither expected nor received anything in return. Very nice, but we'll have to put you in the crazy section."



"Are these the Top Ten Commandments?"

Kids (did you get used to them being at home?)



"Another great thing about believing in Santa—no thank-you notes!"



"Well, the children are grown up, married, divorced, and remarried. I guess our job is done."



*"Mrs. Hammond! I'd know you anywhere
from little Billy's portrait of you."*



"All I ask is a chance to ruin my life in my own way."



"A man can't fully enjoy golf until he has a family of his own to avoid."



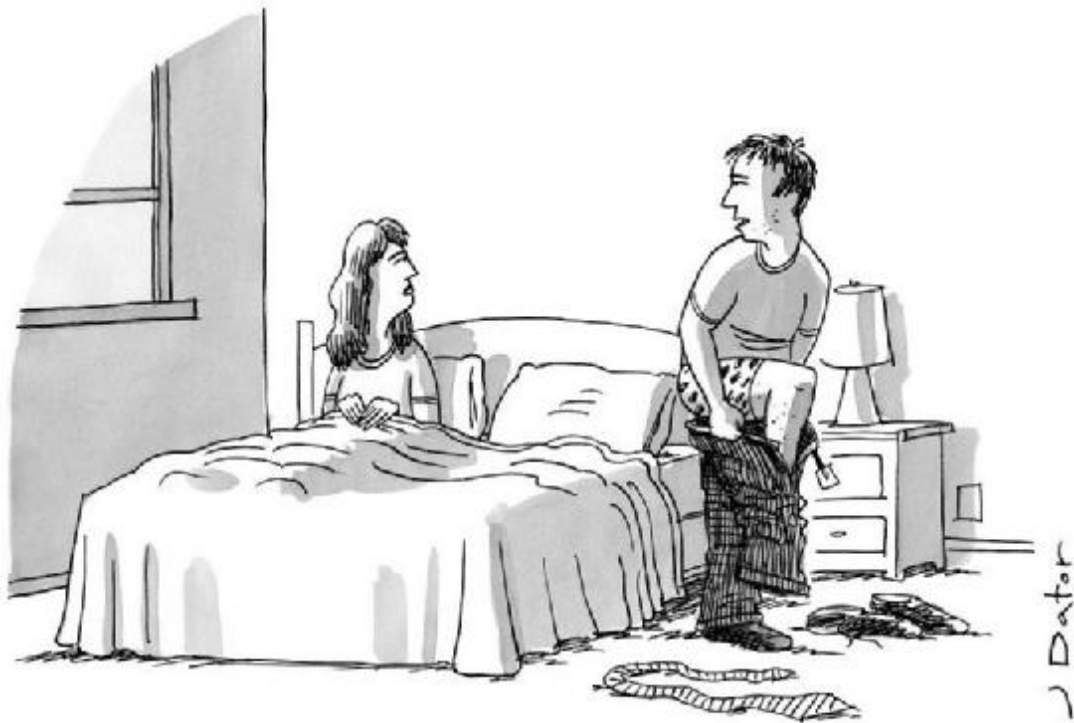
"I do support your right to free speech—I just don't support your tone."



"Stop fact-checking my story."



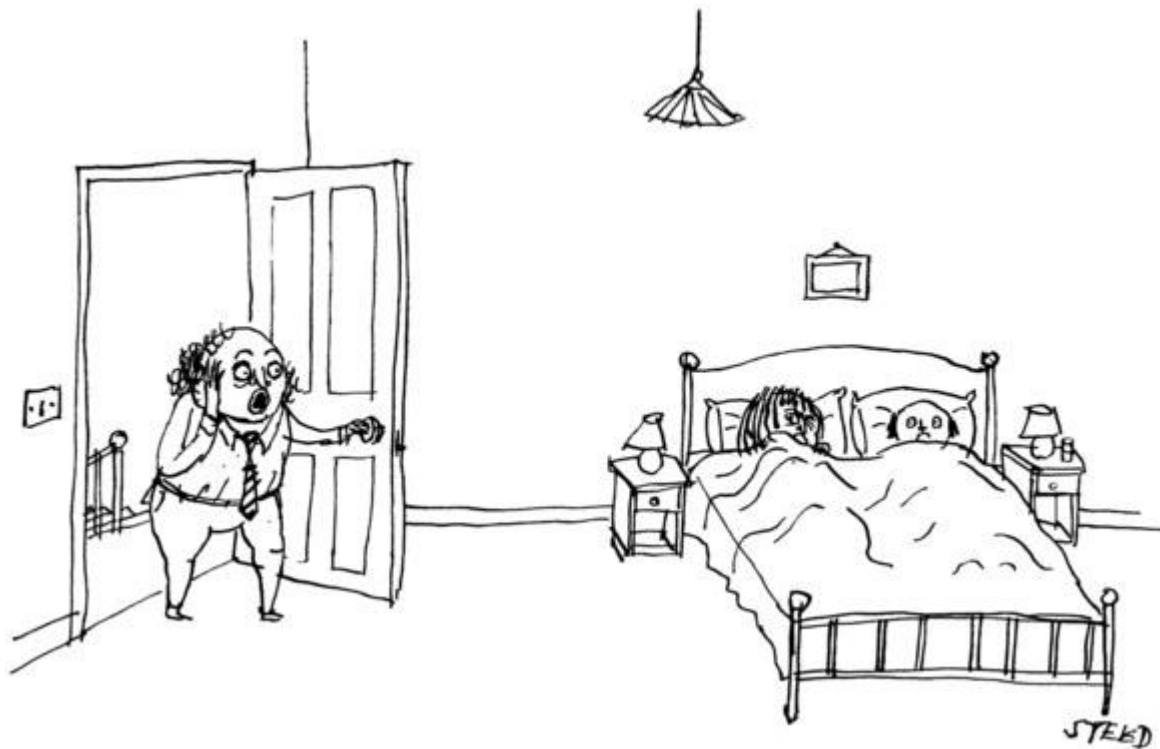
Marriage and Love (we need all we can get)



"Look, you seem nice, and I don't want to hurt your feelings, but I was really drunk when we met, got married and bought this house."



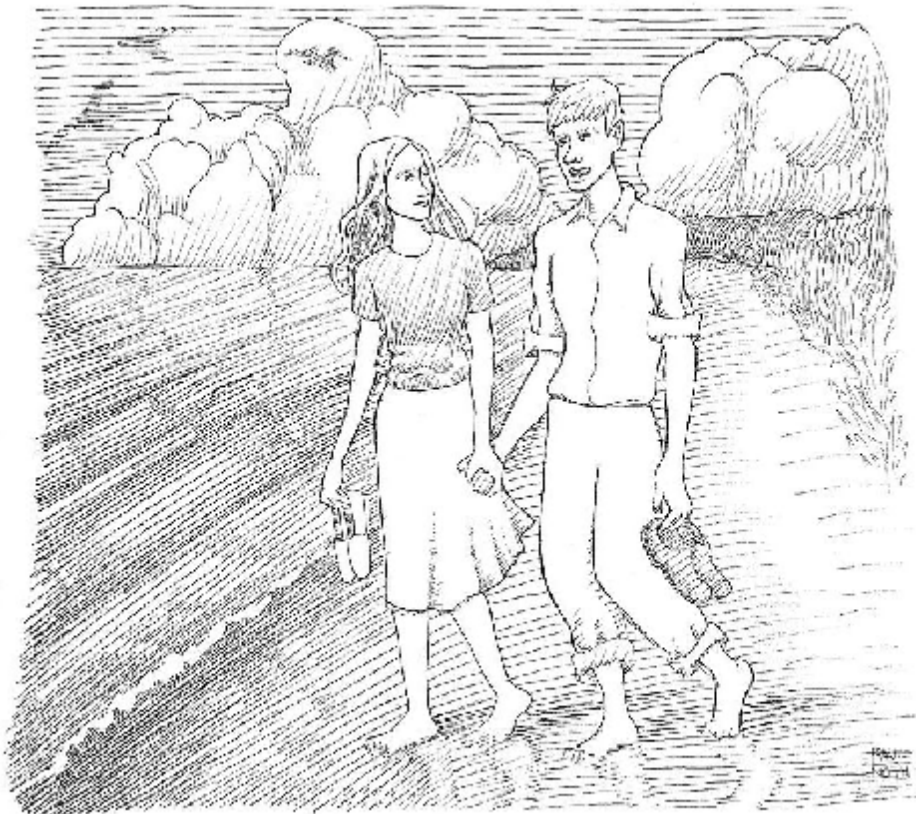
"It's less a funeral and more a celebration of his death."



"My wife! Her new husband!"



"You should try taking more naps yourself. Sleep is free."



"I can't wait to see what you're like online."



"You should never engage in unsupervised introspection."

Modern Living - we need a reboot



"It's free, but they sell your information."



"Here's where all the worries of the world have been seeping into your home."

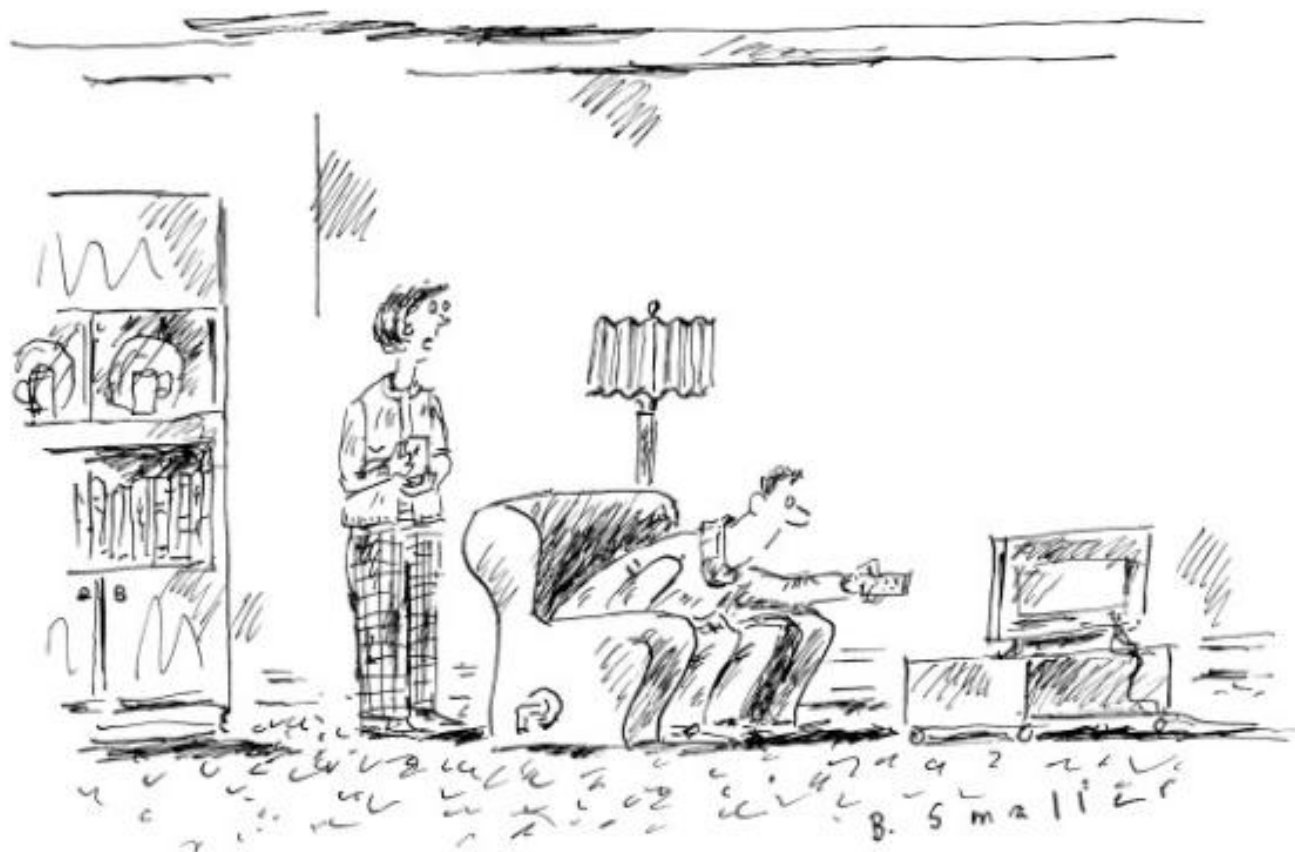




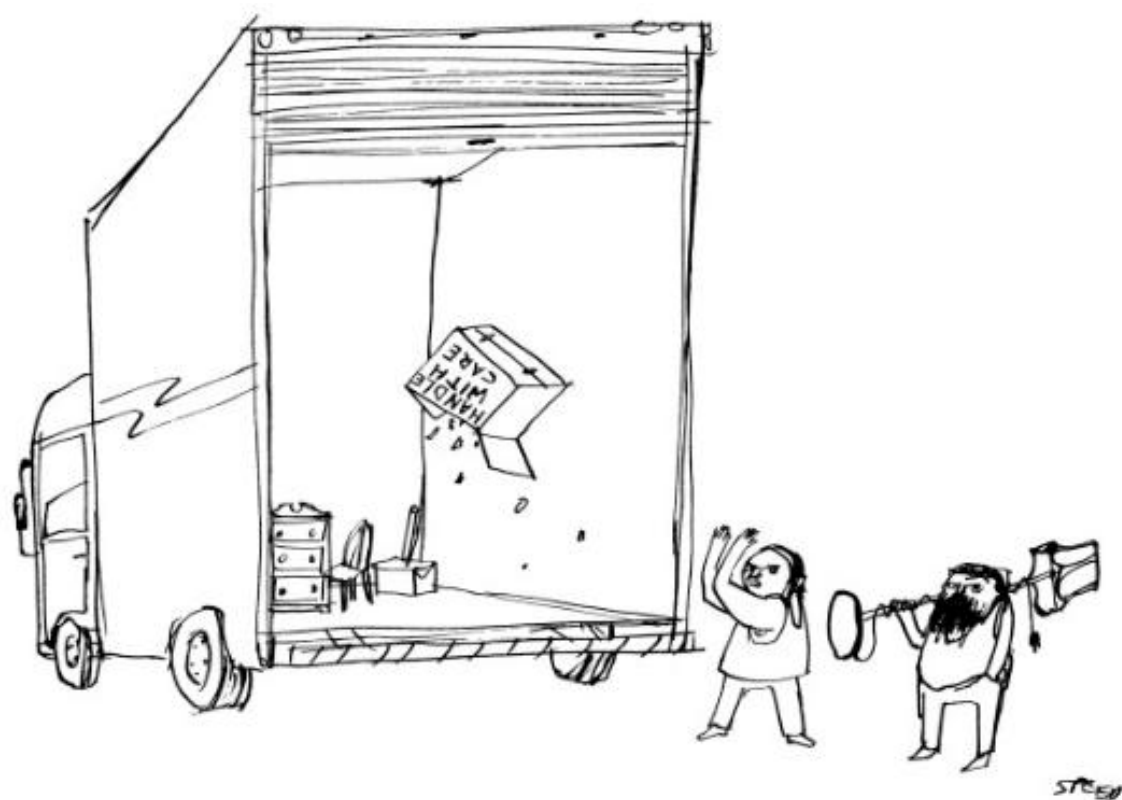
"Refresh my memory—why do we meet once a week?"



"There I go—still writing 'B.C.' on my checks."



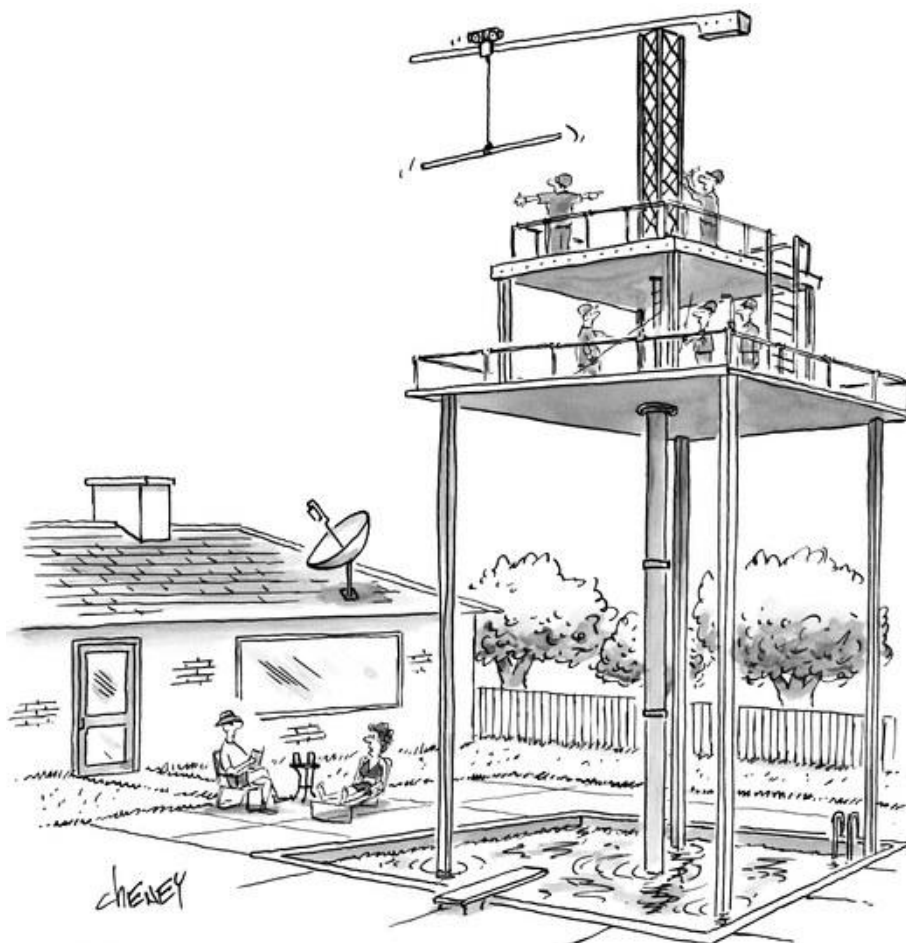
"You know, it's O.K. to skip a news cycle."



"They just put that to make you handle it with care."



"It's not that I love New York. It's just that I hate everyplace else."



"I liked our little pool better before we authorized offshore drilling."

The Military (try to forget them)



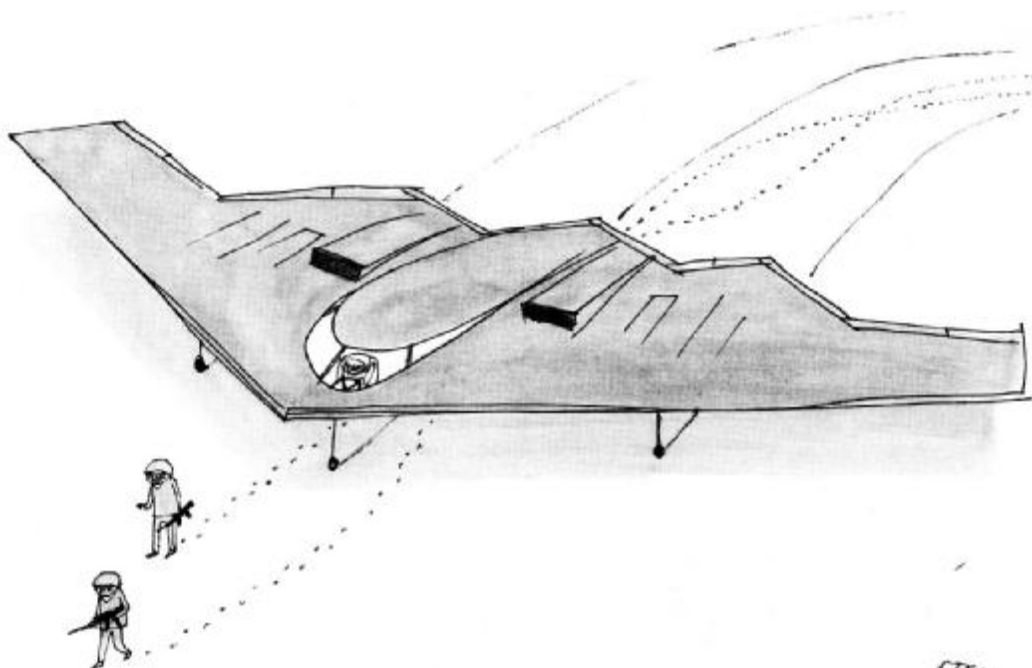
"Sometimes I wonder if we shouldn't have built the wall higher rather than longer."



"I just wonder if yet another pincer movement might be just what they are expecting."



"I don't see this as a rejection of all things French."



"Sh-h-h. I think I hear something."

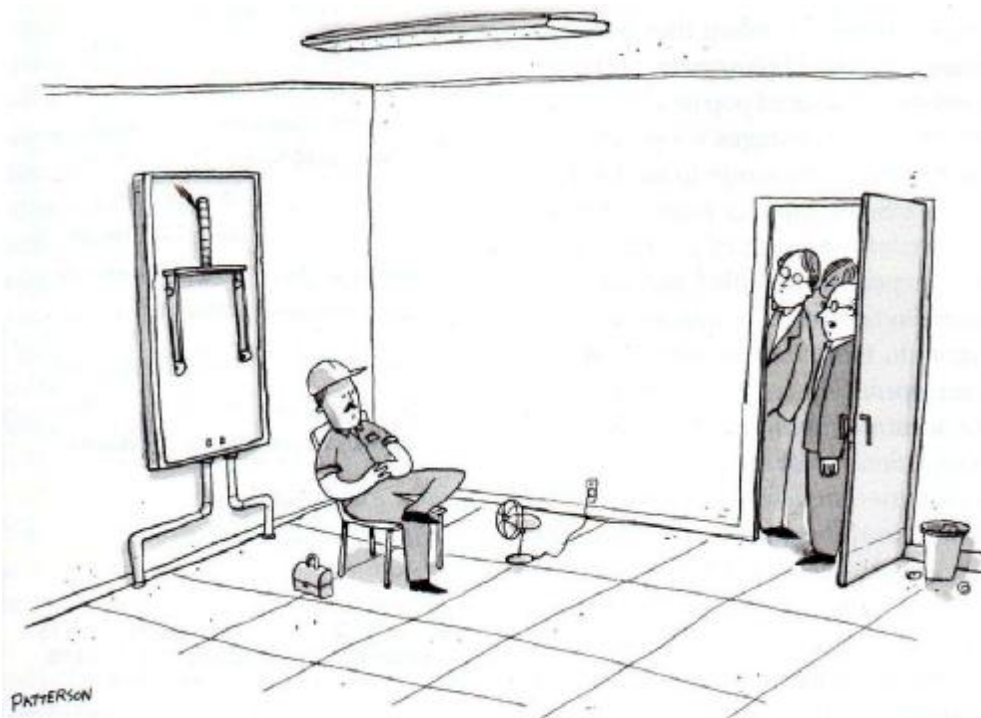
Politics - heaven help us



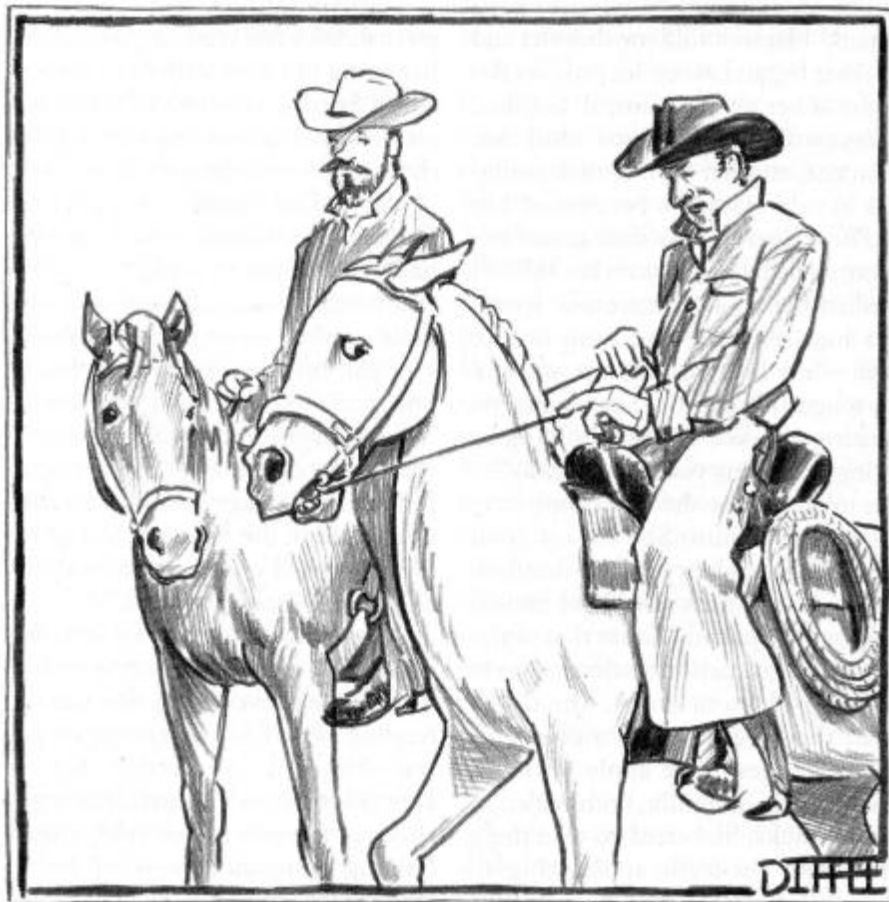
"It's always painful to learn the truth about Santa."



"I have only my selfie to blame."



"And that, ladies and gentlemen, is the switch that turns the government on and off."



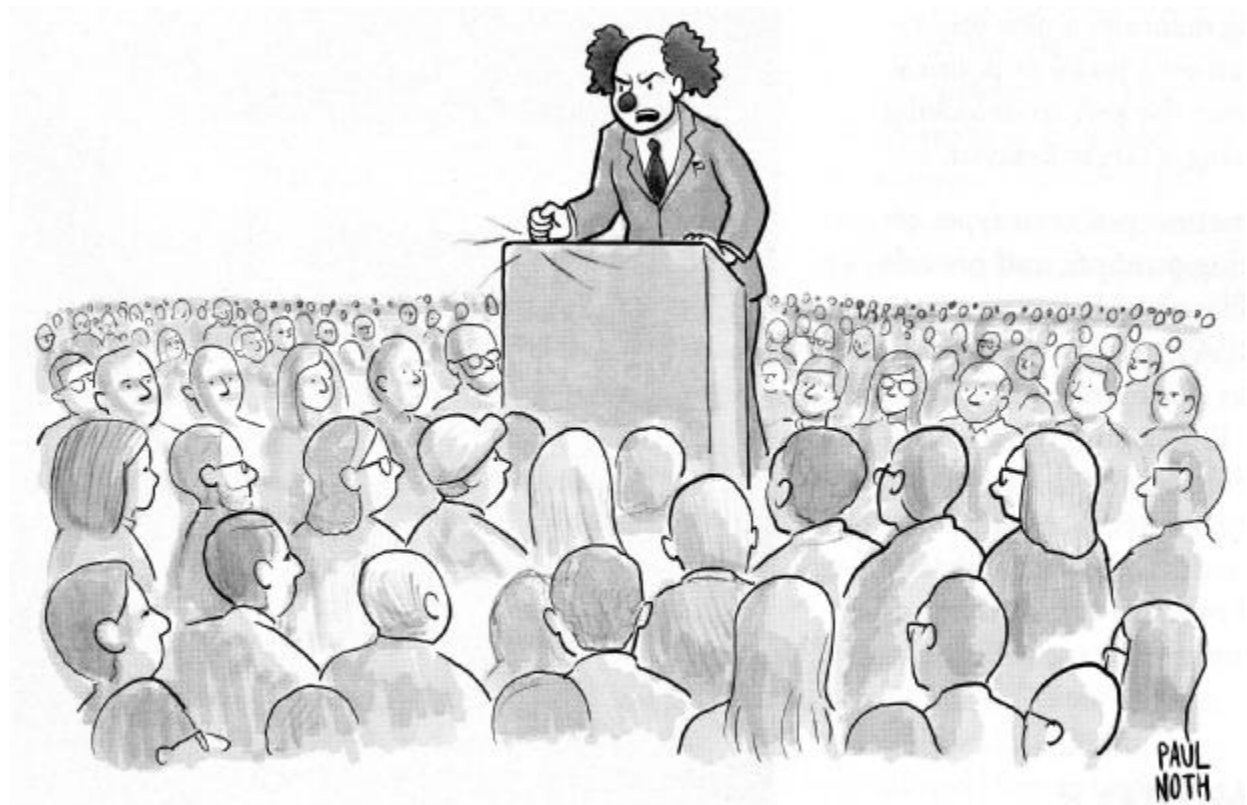
"Quit saying 'President Trump.' You're spookin' the horses."



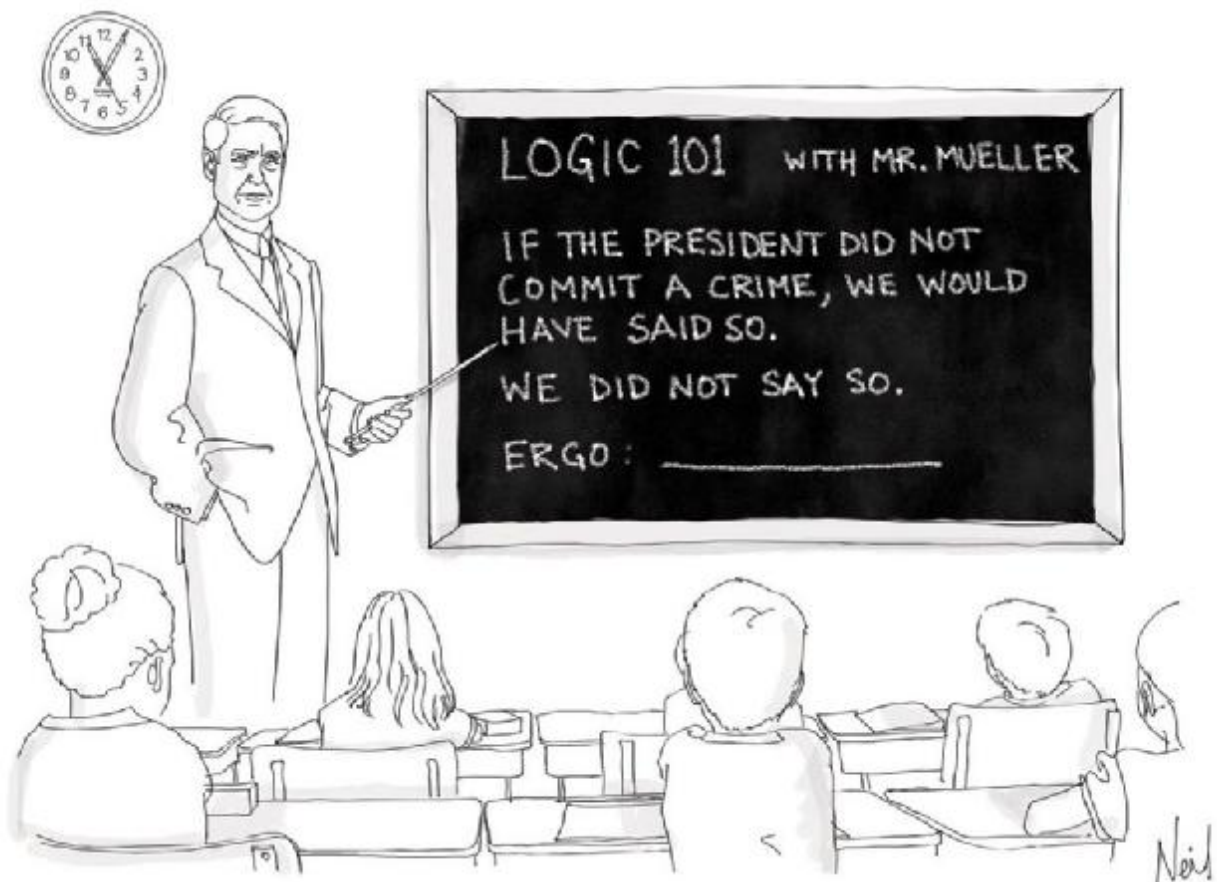
"I'm thrilled that the aspirations of the oppressed might be fulfilled over there but very concerned that it might spread to over here."



"A few minutes ago, God very graciously called to congratulate me."



"Other countries are laughing at us!"



Some Good Advice

1. Stay in touch and be healthy.
2. Send *Autumn Leaves* to all your friends; there will be no print edition.
3. Look up back numbers of *Christmas Pudding Easter Egg Nuts in May, June Moon and July Butterfly* on <http://www.pamirs.org/Christmas-Pudding.htm>
4. Greet everyone with a wave and a smile.
5. Practice random acts of kindness and senseless acts of beauty.
6. And don't forget to take a subscription to *The New Yorker*: <https://www.newyorker.com/>

* * * * *

Alexander Hamilton: "The truth unquestionably is, that the only path to a subversion of the republican system of the Country is by flattering the prejudices of the people, and exciting their jealousies and apprehensions, to throw affairs into confusion, and bring on civil commotion. Tired at length of anarchy, or want of government, they may take shelter in the arms of monarchy for repose and security." *Objections and Answers respecting the Administration of the Government*, August 18, 1792.



"Actually, these aren't bad times to be delusional."