

# 1

When it was time to name their firstborn a husband and wife began to quarrel. She wanted to name him after her father; he wanted to name him after his. They finally went to the rabbi to settle their dispute.

“What was the name of your father?” the rabbi asked the husband.

‘Abijah.’

‘And what was your father’s name?’ he asked his wife.

‘Abijah.’

Then what’s the problem?” said the confused rabbi.

“You see, rabbi,” said the woman, “my father was a scholar and his father was a horse-thief. How can I allow my son to be named after a man like that?”

The rabbi thought hard about the problem which was indeed a delicate one. He did not want one party to feel it had won and the other that it had lost. So he finally said, “This is what I suggest you do. Call the boy Abijah. Then wait and see if he becomes a scholar or a horse-thief, and you will know after whom he was named.”

# 2

Two women friends met after many years.

“Tell me,” said one, “What happened to your son?”

“My son? The poor, poor lad!” sighed the other. What an unfortunate marriage he made—to a girl who won’t do a stitch of work in the house. She won’t cook, she won’t sew, she won’t wash or clean. All she does is sleep and loaf and read in bed. The poor boy even has to bring her breakfast in bed, would you believe it?”

“That’s awful! And what about your daughter?”

“Ah—now she’s the lucky one! She married an angel. He won’t let her do a thing in the house. He has servants to do the cooking and sewing and washing and cleaning. And each morning he brings her breakfast in bed, would you believe it? All she does is sleep for as long as she wishes and spends the rest of the day relaxing and reading in bed.”

# 3

A little girl was dying of a disease from which her eight-year-old brother had recovered some time before.

The doctor said to the boy, “Only a transfusion of your blood will save the life of your sister. Are you ready to give her your blood?”

The eyes of the boy widened in fear. He hesitated for a while, then finally said, “OK, doctor. I’ll do it.”

An hour after the transfusion was completed the boy asked hesitantly, “Say, doctor, when do I die?” It was only then that the doctor understood the momentary fear that had seized the child: he thought that in giving his blood he was giving his life for his sister.

## 4

At the funeral of a very wealthy man a stranger was seen mourning and weeping as loudly as the others.

The officiating priest walked up to him and asked. "Are you perhaps, a relative of the deceased?"

"No."

"Then why are you crying?"

"That's why."

*All grief—no matter what the occasion —is for the self.*

## 5

A saleswoman sold a brightly coloured pair of trousers to a lad who seemed delighted with his purchase.

The next day he was back to say he wanted to return the trousers. His reason, "My girlfriend does not like them."

A week later he was back again, all smiles, and wanting to buy the trousers. "Has your girl changed her mind?" asked the saleswoman.

"Nope," said the young fellow. "I've changed the girl."

## 6

A teacher observed that one of the little boys in her class was pensive and withdrawn.

"What are you worried about?" she asked.

"My parents," he replied. "Dad works all day to keep me clothed and fed and sent to the best school in town. And he's working overtime to be able to send me to college. Mom spends all day cooking and cleaning and ironing and shopping so I have nothing to worry about,"

"Why, then, are you worried?" "I'm afraid they might try to escape."

## 7

A man offered to pay a sum of money to his twelve-year-old daughter if she mowed the lawn. The girl went at the task with great zest and by evening the whole lawn had been beautifully mowed—well, everything except a large uncut patch of grass in one corner.

When the man said he couldn't pay the sum agreed upon because the whole lawn hadn't been mowed, the girl said she was ready to forego the money, but would not cut the grass in the patch.

Curious to find out why, he checked the uncut patch. There, right in the centre of the patch, sat a large toad. The girl had been too tender-hearted to run over it with the lawn-mower.

*Where there is love, there is disorder.*

## 8

An old woman in the village was said to be receiving divine apparitions. The local priest demanded proof of their authenticity. "When God next appears to you," he said, "ask Him to tell you my sins which are known to Him alone. That should be evidence enough."

The woman returned a month later and the priest asked if God had appeared to her again. She said He had. "Did you put the question to him?"

"And what did He say?"

"He said. 'Tell your priest I have forgotten his sins.'

*/s it possible that all of the horrible things you have done have been forgotten by everyone*

*- except yourself?*

## 9

When an eight-year-old girl spent her pocket money to buy her mother a gift, her mother was grateful and happy for a mother and house-wife generally gets much work and little appreciation.

The girl seemed to have understood this for she said, "It's because you work so hard, mother, and no one appreciates it."

The woman said, "Your father works hard too."

Said the girl, "Yes, but he doesn't make a fuss about it."

## 10

A guru asked his disciples how they could tell when the night had ended and the day begun.

One said, "When you see an animal in the distance and can tell whether it is a cow or a horse "

"No.'-' said the guru.

"When you look at a tree in the distance and can tell if it is a neem tree or a mango tree."

"Wrong again." said the guru.

"Well then, what is it?" asked the disciples.

"When you look into the face of any man and recognize your brother in him; when you look into the face of any woman and recognize in her your sister. If you cannot do this, no matter what time it is by the sun it is still night."

## 11

It intrigued the congregation to see their rabbi disappear each week on the eve of the Sabbath. They suspected he was secretly meeting the Almighty, so they deputed one of their number to follow him.

This is what the man saw: the rabbi disguised himself in peasant clothes and served a paralysed Gentile woman in her cottage, cleaning out the room and preparing a Sabbath meal for her.

When the spy got back the congregation asked, "Where did the rabbi go? Did he ascend to heaven?"

"No." the man replied, "he went even higher."

## 12

The family was gathered at dinner. The oldest boy announced he was going to marry the girl across the street.

"But her family didn't leave her a penny," objected his father.

"And she hasn't saved a cent," added mother. "She doesn't know a thing about football." said junior. "I've never seen a girl with such funny hair," said sister. "All she does is read novels," said uncle.

"And such poor taste in the choice of her clothes," said aunt.

"But she isn't sparing of the powder and the paint," said grandma.

"True," said the boy. "But she has one supreme advantage over ail of us."

"What's that?" everyone wanted to know.

"She has no family!"

## 13

A family of five were enjoying their day at the beach. The children were bathing in the ocean and making castles in the sand when in the distance a little old lady appeared. Her grey hair was blowing in the wind and her clothes were dirty and ragged. She was muttering something to herself as she picked up things from the beach and put them into a bag.

The parents called the children to their side and told them to stay away from the old lady. As she passed by, bending down every now and then to pick things up she smiled at the family. But her greeting wasn't returned.

Many weeks later they learnt that the little old lady had made it her lifelong crusade to pick up bits of glass from the beach so children wouldn't cut their feet.

## 14

There was once a priest so holy that he never thought ill of anyone.

One day he sat down at a restaurant for a cup of coffee which was all he could take, it being a day of fast and abstinence, when, to his surprise, he saw a young member of his congregation devouring a massive steak at the next table.

"I trust I haven't shocked you. Father," said the young fellow with a smile.

"Ah! I take it that you forgot that today is a day of fast and abstinence," said the priest.

"No, no. I remembered it distinctly."

"Then you must be sick. The doctor has forbidden you to fast."

"Not at all. I'm in the pink of health."

At that, the priest raised his eyes to heaven and said, "What an example this younger generation is to us. Lord! Do you see how this young man here would rather admit his sins than tell a lie?"

## 15

Two Irish navvies were working on the road outside a house of prostitution.

Presently the local Protestant minister came along, pulled down his hat and walked into the building. Pat said to Mike, "Did you see that? What can you expect? He's a Protestant, isn't he?"

Soon after a rabbi arrived on the scene. He pulled his collar up and walked in too. Said Pat, "What a terrible example for a religious leader to give his people!"

Finally, who should pass by but a Catholic priest. He drew his cloak around his head and slipped into the building. Said Pat, "Now isn't it a terrible thing, Mike, to think that one of the girls must have taken ill?"

## 16

A wealthy farmer burst into his home one day and cried out in an anguished voice, "Rebecca, there is a terrible story in town—the Messiah is here!"

"What's so terrible in that?" asked his wife. "I think it's great. What are you so upset about?"

"What am I so upset about?" the man exclaimed. "After all these years of sweat and toil we have finally found prosperity. We have a thousand head of cattle; our barns are full of grain and our trees laden with fruit. Now we will have to give it all away and follow him."

"Calm down," said his wife consolingly. "The Lord our God is good. He knows how much we Jews have always had to suffer. We had a Pharaoh, a Haman, a Hitler—always somebody. But our dear God found a way to deal with them all, didn't He? Just have faith, my dear husband. He will find a way to deal with the Messiah too."