
Nobel Prizewinner

An American Nobel prize-winner in Physics was giving his acceptance speech in Stockholm. He described how, a couple of months before, he and his wife had been driving through the Arizona desert. They came to a scruffy, run-down petrol station in the middle of the desert and stopped for petrol.

The attendant came out to help them – a lank and dirty man in filthy overalls and broken shoes. When the wife saw the man, she jumped out of the car and flung herself into his arms. They embraced passionately while her husband filled up the car himself. (He said nothing, as he could not trust himself to speak).

When they drove off, his wife blowing kisses to the man left behind, her husband asked for an explanation. She told him that she had known the man when they were both students. Indeed, they had nearly got married.

“Ah! How different your life would have been if you’d married him,” said the physicist.

“Oh, I don’t know,” she replied. “If I’d married him, perhaps he would have won the Nobel Prize.”

adopted from `100 Favourite After-Dinner Stories

scruffy = vergammelt, verlottert

run-down = heruntergekommen, elend

lank = schlank, mager, glatt

to embrace = umarmen

physicist = Physiker

Nobel Prize

Any of the prizes (five in number until 1969, when a sixth was added) that are awarded annually by four institutions (three Swedish and one Norwegian) from a fund established under the will of Alfred Bernhard Nobel. Distribution was begun on Dec. 10, 1901, the fifth anniversary of the death of the founder, whose will specified that the awards should annually be made “to those who, during the preceding year, shall have conferred the greatest benefit on mankind” in the fields of physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature, and peace. The additional award, in economic science, was set up in 1968 by the Bank of Sweden, and the first award was given in 1969.

A Clever Fellow

One day Mr Cox, an American, arrived at London airport. It was the first time he was in Europe. Mr Cox did not want a room in a hotel, because it was too expensive for him. He wanted a cheap room in a small boarding house. So he bought a newspaper and looked in the advertisements for a room. He found one. The advertisement said that the room was quiet, sunny, large and cheap. The boarding house was 11, Garden Lane. Mr Cox went there and rang the bell. A lady opened.

“Excuse me, madam,” he said, “would you like to buy some insect-spray. It kills every insect in a very short time.

“No, I don’t need any,” was the answer.

“But madam, it’s the best insect-spray in the world. It kills . . .”

“I tell you, young man, I don’t need any insect-spray. In my house there are no insects whatever.”

“Okay,” said the American, “I’ll take the room.”

adopted from ‘Read! Think! Answer!’

boarding house = a house where you can have a room and meals for money

advertisements = information in newspapers about vacant rooms, jobs, film shows, and so on

A Crying Joke

Two Irishmen, bosom-friends, travelling through the country, stopped at a small inn for dinner. Upon the table was a large cup of mustard. Pat, thinking the contents were custard or a sweet of some kind, took a spoonful of it in his mouth, upon which the tears flowed down his cheeks; but wishing to have his friend Jimmy caught in the same trap, he said nothing of the mistake he had made.

Jimmy, seeing the lachrymose state of his friend, said: “Pat, what are you crying about?”

“I was thinking of my father who was hanged twenty years ago,” he replied.

Soon after, Jimmy took a spoonful of the mustard, and as the tears started down his cheeks, Pat, in *his* turn, said:

“What are you crying for?”

“By St. Patrick, I’m thinking what a pity it was you were not hanged the same day as your father.”

adopted from ‘Now tell it again’

inn = Gasthaus, Wirtshaus, Herberge

mustard = Senf

custard = Vanillesoße

lachrymose = weinerlich, tränenreich

A Scandal In The Family

A young Irishman whose family was scattered pretty well over the English-speaking portion of the globe emigrated to America. Soon after his arrival in New York he paid a visit to the Bronx Zoo. He halted in front of a cage containing one of the largest kangaroos in captivity. After watching the curious creature for some time in awed silence, he hailed a keeper.

“What’s that thing?” he asked.

“That,” said the keeper in his best professional manner, “is a marsupial, a mammal that carries its young in a pouch on its breast, lives on roots and herbs, can jump twenty feet at one leap, is able to knock a human being down with a kick from either hind leg, and is a *native* of Australia.”

“For the love of Heaven!” cried the Irishman, bursting into tears. “My sister’s married to one of them!”

adopted from ‘Now tell it again’

to scatter = zerstreuen, verbreiten

to halt = stehen bleiben, anhalten

captivity = Gefangenschaft

curious = neugierig, ungewöhnlich, eigenartig

awe = Ehrfurcht, Scheu

awed silence = ehrfürchtige Stille

to hail = jdm zurufen

marsupial = Beuteltier

mammal = Säugetier

pouch = Beutel, Tasche

leap = hier: Sprung

hind = hinter, Hinter-

native = **native inhabitants** = die Einheimischen, Einheimischer, Eingeborener,
auch: heimische Tier- und Pflanzenart

native of Germany = gebürtige(r) Deutsche(r)
