

HUNGER STRIKES

An elderly couple are sitting watching television when the old man decides that he is hungry for some ice cream.

'Darling, I'm going to head to the kitchen and get myself a dish of ice cream. Do you want some, too?'

'Yes please, sweetheart, sounds good. But you better write down what you're going out there for or else you'll forget,' replies his wife.

'I will not!' retorts the old man. 'In fact, tell me what you want on it and I'll remember that, too.'

'OK,' says the old lady, 'I'll have chocolate sauce on mine. But I'm willing to bet you will forget.'

The old man heads out to the kitchen and disappears for about twenty or thirty minutes. Finally he emerges, carrying a plate of scrambled eggs.

'See, I told you you'd forget!' exclaims the old woman triumphantly.

'What do you mean? What did I forget?' demands her husband.

'You fool,' says the old dear. 'You forgot my bacon!'

SENIOR PRAYER

Grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked anyway, the good fortune to run into the ones I do and the eyesight to tell the difference, amen.

FLUCK IT!

Not a lot of people know that the English film actress Diana Dors was actually called Diana Fluck. When the blonde bombshell was asked by her hometown to open their annual fête, the local vicar was called upon to introduce her to the crowd by her real name. Naturally, the vicar was somewhat nervous as the big day approached, and his nerves grew and grew until finally the moment was upon him. According to local legend, the vicar concluded his introductory speech with the words, 'And now, here she is, the woman the whole world knows as "Diana Dors", but whom we will always remember as our own Diana Clunt . . .'

STAGE PRESENCE

The internationally famous film actor Dustin Hoffman is perhaps best known for his roles in *The Graduate* and *Midnight Cowboy*, but he once took to the stage in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, in which he played the part of Willy Loman. Frank Rich, theatre critic for *The New York Times*, must surely have been suffering a chronic senior moment when he wrote in a review: 'I was overwhelmed by the tragic smallness of Dustin Hoffman's Willy.'

'Age doesn't matter, unless you're a cheese.'

– BILLIE BURKE, ACTRESS

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

An elderly gentleman was invited round to the house of an old married couple he was friendly with for dinner one evening. He was impressed by the way that the husband called his wife by many endearing nicknames: 'honey', 'sweetheart', 'petal', 'love', 'precious', 'darling', among many others. The couple had been married for over fifty years, but were clearly still very much in love. When the wife was in the kitchen, the man leaned over and said to his host, 'I must say, I think it's wonderful that, after all these years, you still call your wife by these loving names.' His host sighed. 'I have to tell you the truth,' he said. 'I forgot her name about ten years ago.'

SPEECH THERAPY

The following is an example of how a senior moment can affect the high and mighty just as easily as common folk.

One day, George Salmon, a nineteenth-century Regius Professor of Divinity at Trinity College, Dublin, brought with him to church a sermon that he had already preached to his congregation the year before. Undaunted by this oversight (or just too ashamed to admit that his memory wasn't as good as it once was), he is said to have explained the repetition away by reasoning that at least half the congregation was probably not present when he had first preached the sermon, and that therefore the words would be brand new to them; that a quarter of the congregation, despite having

heard it before, would probably not mind hearing it a second time; and that the final quarter of the congregation who had heard it the first time, would no doubt not remember they had and therefore, like the first quarter, would not mind hearing it again.

Now that's how to dig yourself out of a mess!

UNIVERSITY CHALLENGED

The annual Oxford/Cambridge Boat Race is one of the most famous sporting events in the world. Commentating on the event in 1949, John Snagge uttered the immortal words: 'I don't know who's ahead – it's either Oxford or Cambridge.'



TILL MEMORY LOSS DO US PART

Blonde movie star Doris Day was walking in Beverly Hills one day when she was stopped by a man. Thinking that he was a fan, Day greeted him politely and continued on her way.

'Don't you remember me?' the man shouted after her.

'No,' the actress replied. 'Should I?'

'Well, you didn't have that many husbands,' retorted her second husband, saxophonist George Weidler.

BURNT OFFERINGS

The author James Joyce grew so blind in his old age that his handwriting became almost illegible. In the *Ulysses* manuscript, the Circe episode was so undecipherable that the husband of Joyce's typist mistook the pages for scrap paper and threw them into the fire. Not a very happy day for English literature . . .

DOGGY ESCALATORS

One day, Melanie Warner, who lives in Brighton with her husband and two children, decided to take her elderly, rather cantankerous grandmother on a shopping trip to London. Her grandmother, who in her youth had worked for a local newspaper checking grammar and spelling for the reporters, had been feeling a little depressed of late owing to her increasing years. A shopping trip

would be just the ticket . . . or so Melanie thought. They caught the train into the centre of London, with Melanie deciding that the best way to get to Oxford Street was to take the Underground. Marshalling her grandmother through the ticket hall, Melanie was approaching the escalators with her grandmother in tow, when suddenly the old woman came to a halt.

'What's the matter?' Melanie asked, fearing her grandmother was about to tell her that she wasn't feeling well enough to continue.

'We can't go on the escalators,' her grandmother replied.

'Nonsense,' said Melanie. 'There's no problem. Hold my hand and you'll be fine.'

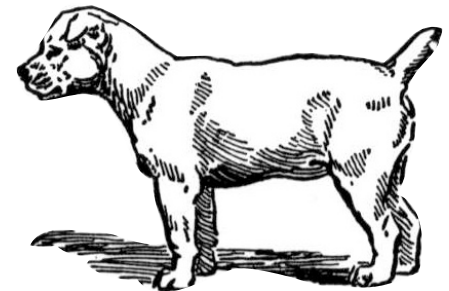
'No, no, no,' her grandmother was adamant. 'Look at the sign, Melanie. Look at the sign.'

Melanie peered in the direction that her grandmother was pointing, only to see that there, on one side of the escalator, was a small printed notice bearing the words: 'DOGS MUST BE CARRIED ON THE ESCALATORS'

'We haven't got one,' Melanie's grandmother whispered.

Melanie, stifling her laughter, and not willing to point out that you didn't have to carry a dog every time you used the Underground, guided her grandmother to the stairs.

'On the way back we'll take a taxi, eh? It might be easier, mightn't it?' she said between giggles.



YOUTH OFFENDER

Most people are used to making silly mistakes and suffering the consequences, but sometimes when a senior moment strikes you, it is others who take the fall. This was the case when one young boy was summoned to appear before Bradford magistrates for driving offences. It transpired that the child, far from being a reckless driver, was in fact a law-abiding eleven-year-old.

Someone within the Bradford police force had suffered a senior moment, an explanation which the boy's father subsequently described as 'unbelievable'. However, as we all know, senior moments can strike at any time and, unlike Victor Meldrew, we *do* believe it!

A PLEASURABLE MEMORY

The poet Samuel Rogers was not only noted for giving large literary breakfasts and dinners, but also for his famous poem 'Pleasures of Memory', upon the publication of which a friend of Rogers came up to him and said, 'Lady X is dying to be introduced to the author of "Pleasures of Memory".'

'Pray let her live,' replied Rogers, crossing the room and approaching the lady.

'Mr Rogers, madam, author of "Pleasures of Memory",' his friend said, introducing the pair.

'Pleasures of what?' the woman asked.

MEDICAL MAYHEM

Nancy Metcalfe had never liked hospitals, so when she was informed that she needed an operation to remove her appendix, she was less than thrilled. Nevertheless, Nancy was in great pain and, with the threat hanging over her that her appendix might burst at any moment, she was only too grateful when she was rushed into the operating theatre.

Afterwards, everything seemed to be fine. Nancy spent two days in hospital recuperating, then went home, where she spent a further few days in bed before returning to work.

However, after a couple of weeks, Nancy started complaining of strange pains in her side, along with a general feeling of malaise. She went to her GP, who referred her to the hospital for X-rays. Only then was it discovered that the surgeon who had operated on her appendix, together with the attending nurses, had, while suffering a group senior moment, left a small medical instrument inside their patient. Nancy was rushed back into surgery, and, luckily for everyone involved, made a quick and full recovery.



IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER

The Irish poet and dramatist William Butler Yeats was fifty-four when his daughter, Anne, was born. Once, when Yeats and Anne got off a bus round the corner from where the family lived, Yeats turned and, not recognizing Anne for a moment as she approached the house, asked vaguely, 'Oh, and who is it you wish to see?'

NANNY STATE

During the police investigation into the murder of Sandra Rivett, the nanny of Lord Lucan's children, police came across a lady in Belgravia during their house-to-house enquiries. On hearing that Lucan had killed Rivett after having mistaken her for his wife, the woman replied: 'Oh dear, what a pity. Nannies are so hard to come by these days!'

MANEATER

Two old ladies, Hester and Ethel, were rocking in their chairs on the nursing-home porch. Hester said, 'Ethel, do you remember the minuet?'

Ethel replied, 'Oh God, I don't even remember the ones I slept with.'

DEAF EARS

One morning, a policeman pulled over an elderly driver on the M5 and said, 'My God, didn't you realize that your wife fell out of your car over five miles back?'

'Thank God!' said the driver.

'What do you mean, "Thank God"?' exclaimed the policeman in shock.

'Well, I thought I'd gone deaf,' replied the old gentleman.

DOCTOR'S ORDERS

According to an article that appeared in the *London Evening Standard* back in 1975, a doctor, whilst suffering from a seriously bad senior moment, threw all the drugs in his surgery into a large bucket and placed said bucket in the waiting room with this notice attached:

'HELP YOURSELVES.
PLEASE DON'T
BOTHER ME.'

Even when the General Medical Council reprimanded the doctor for serious misconduct, he didn't seem in the slightest bit bothered, replying that his treatment of his patients was no less random than that given out by other doctors!

