

THE LIFE OF A CONVALESCENT

Arne Collen

Preface

[Note: This work is not quite complete. The preface, some formatting, and a few comments are missing, but still complete enough for many to enjoy some humor.]



“Did you take the red, blue, or orange pill today?”

[Explanatory note: The allusion is to the scene in the cult classic movie *The Matrix*, in which Morpheus offers to Neo a choice to swallow either the red or the blue pill. The red pill keeps him “falling down the rabbit hole” {itself an allusion to Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland*} by which he will discover the truth about what the matrix is; or the blue pill keeps him in the reality of which he knows. The orange pill is a well known post surgery medication for constipation. So reread the cartoon having these allusions in mind.]



“How has the Foley catheter been for you?” “Well, before the operation I really enjoyed the hours outside watering my garden. But now I find its even better. I can water my plants and fertilize them at the same time.”

[Explanatory note: The allusion is to penis as hose and the use of the Foley catheter in the USA during post operative recovery after prostatectomy.]



“This creep is for putts! How do you shift this darn thing into second gear?”



“Man, I love this thing. It’s slick, smooth, minimal accessories.”



“Look, how I go! This is so cool. Oh, they forgot to tell me whether its diesel or unleaded?”



“Oh no, not again! How many times do I have to tell you, snip the yellow ones, not the red or blue ones!”



“Well, this is really something! How many different emeralds have you found so far?”



“What do you mean, my visa card was rejected?”



“As president of KAA and authoritatively speaking, you have to do them every day with push ups, two reps of 10; there is no other way!” “Really pres! You moron, kegels work best sitting down!!!” “Hey, would you guys cool it? Bottom line, your different opinions aren’t worth a kegel.” Photo and audio obtained from Ivan Flexing during a kegel break of the 10th annual meeting of the Kegellers Association of America.



“Besides your height and weight, there is one final question I have to ask you to complete our pre-op surgery session-- that is to give the surgeon an estimate of your intelligence. So tell me how many angels can stand on the head of a pin?”



Pssst! Haven't seen you here before.
Is this your first Kegellers AA meeting?



Yep! Came in the mail today. Now I'm legit, its my
membership to Kegellers Anonymous of America.



“Really Sam, we’ve been friends a very long time. You can tell me. You prefer the pump or the pill?”



You said they found him playing in the bush with whom?



Well, look at him now, Doris. How many times did I tell him to quit taking those ferrous sulfate tablets?



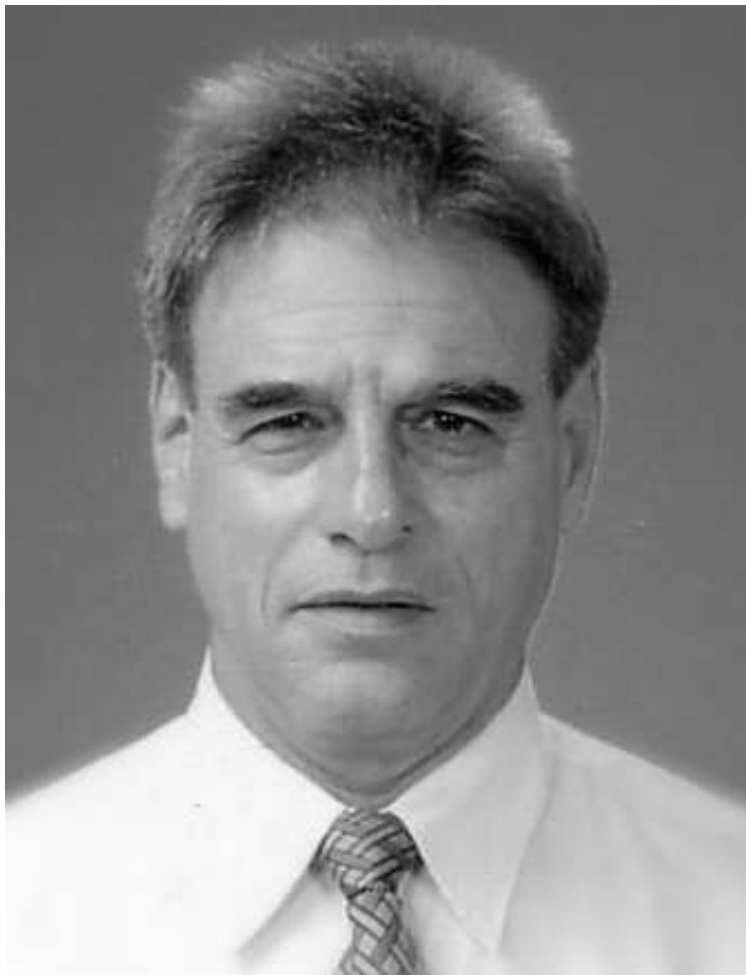
“Harry, I’m really tired of your insistence we sit on this bench each day. How do you feel about sit’n on the bench the other side of this trash can for a change?”



“I don’t think this was a good idea, Fred. He’ll soon see us coveting his marbles.”



“Hey, I got to it first!” “No you didn’t, I did.”
“It was your turn last time.” “Well, I’m just faster than you.” “Really! That’s not fair. We agreed to take turns gutting this guy.”



“OK, for our confessional today, believe me. I have tried everything. I’ve chopped, curled, lacquered, shaved, taped, pinned, glued and swirled. The hair just will not go down, period.”



“Yah looks like you’ve got a cramp in your shoulder, Arthur.”
“Yah, I know, but how many darn more years my dear friend must we wait return of the wicked witch who cast her spell upon us? We’ve got to imbibe a swig of this sweet wine.”



“Look at that overgrown meat! How pathetic! Who does this ape think he is--trying to get us all hot and bothered--some wantabe governor of California, or somebody? Sally, what should we say to this monkey?”



“Roger that George. I see the WC sign over there at 9 o’clock.”



“This stuff is so cool. I get sympathy, hefty hand outs around town, and its good for kung fu too!”



“You were so so lucky to have survived that accident. Here, lets smoke a few of these to shorten that longevity of yours.”



“No one told me. I had no idea his patients were. . .”



“You know your kit-and-cacaboottle that all the psychobabble in the world will not give you one iota of super-kookaracha!”



“Now look, look me straight in the eye.
Now tell me, how can you not believe
me when I tell you, I tell only the truth.
Do I look like a man who could tell a lie?”



“Oh me ach’n bowels. Those old fish socked me again! Where did I leave that seal’s milk?”



“If only I could soar like a bird as easily as I can balance this silly plant on my shoe?”



“Listen doc, I know--an apple a day keeps you away.”



“What’s that you say? My last patient is holding my assistant hostage, threatening her with catheters!”



“Yes, today is the exact day of my follow up appointment with Dr. Severme. What do you mean I’m not in your computer?”



“Let me see. I gave this guy one of my nice smiles when I walked in. I think he’ll take ah one, no maybe two minutes to look at me again.”



“If you ask me, I think our cities have too much smog. Look at it behind you!” “Who’s asking you!” “Yeh, it smells good up here.”



“Listen doc, do I really need your psyche tests?
I gave my story a number of times to the cops.
When I told those sailors manning that ship full
of hashish I’m an anchorman, I meant television
news. I had no idea they’d throw me overboard.”



“My dear, I know you’re our best town librarian, but I’m sorry. Look at it for yourself. We’re receiving complaints yet again! You simply have to stop nibbling on all the old paperbacks.”



“As the man in charge here, I have the authority to do what I damn well please. If I want colored in the white room and white in the colored room, well now, so be it; don’t hoot to me otherwise! So what, if I am color blind!”



“Gee Lee, I see you scratching your head. What’s up?”

“Well, I know you said this guy is a perfect internist for me, the one who can help me with my upset stomach. But what are all these doggie magazines doing here?”



“Tom, you have got to listen to me. Sooner or later you have to face it. You can’t have milk and cookies each night of the week.”



“Listen to me, Robert. Sooner or later you’ve got to accept that you have no say when we turn forward and back our clocks each year.”



“Tom, listen to me. Sooner or later you are going to have to face it that you can not have milk and cookies every night of the week.”



“Alfred, I’m tired of us ponder’n on the matter. We just gotta go buy more different hats, so everyone can tell us apart.”



“Jonathan, please don’t be mad at me. I had to change it here, so everyone would understand.”



“Unlike the chair with the stealth grenade launcher, this device is extremely light and versatile. It’s made to double as a walker and lethal weapon with blade hidden in its tip, and undetectable at airport security locations. Would you care for a free demonstration?”



“Nikos, another silly tourist taking our photo. Again, really! Do we look like a couple of humpty-dumptyes on a bench or something? How many euros should we ask this time?”



“Oh, Benjamin, we’ve never doubted you. But we do not yet see the supposedly extinct and rare two nosed, four horned trilobite you keep telling us will crawl out of that pinhole in the earth.”



“Listen, Sugar. You take one finger and turn it left, then your other little finger, turn it right. Wrap the remaining three fingers around the sowbug’s tummy, but don’t squish. Oops! Sorry about that. Well, isn’t all that instruction simple and clear?”



“Janus, I told you not to talk about me behind my back.”
“Well, I cannot help it. I listen to you chatter all day long.”
“You’re always echoing me too, it is unforgiving of you.”
“Complaints, always complaints. You’re a bit of a jerk.”
“Do you think we can ever have the same thoughts?”



“Senator, I swear, every word of my testimony is true! I do have a rare condition that compels me to scratch my left hip continuously.”



“Amazing! He’s walking so fast, his breeze could blow our hats off! Gertrude, are we in the matrix?”



“Listen pin brain! Do I sound like an agent? You’ve let Neo, Morpheus, and Trinity in, why not me too!”



“This little yanker really needs to stop yank’n, and let me go look’n for grub.”



“Don’t look at me like that. Didn’t I tell you not to?”



“Jimmie, I think your taste buds agree with mine. I didn’t know coffee grinds could taste so good.”



“Sir, look at this finger of guilt!”
“Sorry, but I prefer an evil eye.”
“Holmes, he really needs a tailor.”



“I wonder what would happen if I sent this guy a text message from my prefrontal cortex? Ohhhmmmm.”



“Elmer B, you’ve got to stop rais’n your arm like some catatonic, every time we read an article together in the newspaper that don’t suit you. We’re not in that old school room.”



“Ladies and gentlemen, it is a pleasure to be here this fine afternoon to deliver the opening address of your congress. My name is Irving Washington. Oh, yes, a question? No, I was not the first President of these United States.”



“Lee Fu, no fun playing with you. Again! That’s my piece you move forward in your favor. Move it back!”
“Chow Chew, well, well, OK. Whatever you say. Just get your over-baked finger roll out of my way so I can!”



“Ah me, what’s happening? The wrapper didn’t say anything about this new gum glueing my corner lip to my upper jaw!”



“Dog gone it Clyde, why you’re not go’n? You’re one of the best darn dancers in this here country!” “I know Stevo, but you can’t convince me there’s anything free in this country anymore.”



“Little itsy-bitsy ant on the tile,
tell me now, who is the most
beautiful albino of them all?”



“Phillip, why we keep meeting in these streets?
Stop tapping your cane, I don’t believe in luck.”



“Oh sow-low-me-oo, I yaa love pizzta.
I want a rebate, and my knees ache.”



“My mommy didn’t want me to show you the inside of any of my things. But I have something of mommy’s to show you.”



“Ah, Honey. You know how you’ve been talking to me about what you would do if a wicked witch turned me into a frog? Yah, and you kissing me to turn me back into your prince?”



“Stick’em up kits! Caught you fair and square.
Now lets take a look at those sticky paws.”



“My boy friend said, ‘Read the book on the bumper. It’s comfortable.’ Yeh, yeh, would you bathe in sour milk?”



“Honey, let me help. I know everyone’s waiting to eat with us, but I can get those dentures straight.”



“Welcome to this year’s annual gathering of DownUnder, the club devoted to relieve your pain and suffering down under. You might imagine our swelling membership to consist of Aussies and Kiwis, but no, its U. S. Americans in increasing numbers, who, as you know, we call Ectomies. There are #1s, our Prostatectomies, and #2s, our Colonectomies. This year we shall repeat our popular excursion down Alimentary Canal with a special culminating event planned for our #1s at the stream and our #2s at the dam. Relief can be yours at the end of our day. Please join us!”



“I heard of your American Dream. I want it too. I left my planet to come live with you.”



“I’m applying to beauty school. Would you write me a letter of reference?”



“This two taste test is very intoxicating. But if you must know, the new Bud drives me to nuts no more than the Old Style.”



“Rock man, rock! Forget about paper and scissors.”



“Honey, finally! We are retired in paradise. Its so romantic. Ya know, the volcano across the sea blew a hundred years ago suffocating life out of everyone here in two feet of ash.”



“Wow, I see them too! Thought they were joshing us, saying that Parisian nomadic ants also ride the metro.”



“Andrew, I’ve told them umpteen times, both make superb apple pie.”
“You know, Earl, I think they both just have to have a pie in the eye.”



“Ooh, Patsy! I hear you, its news. Had she gone to my hair stylist, she wouldn’t look like an alien from Mars.”



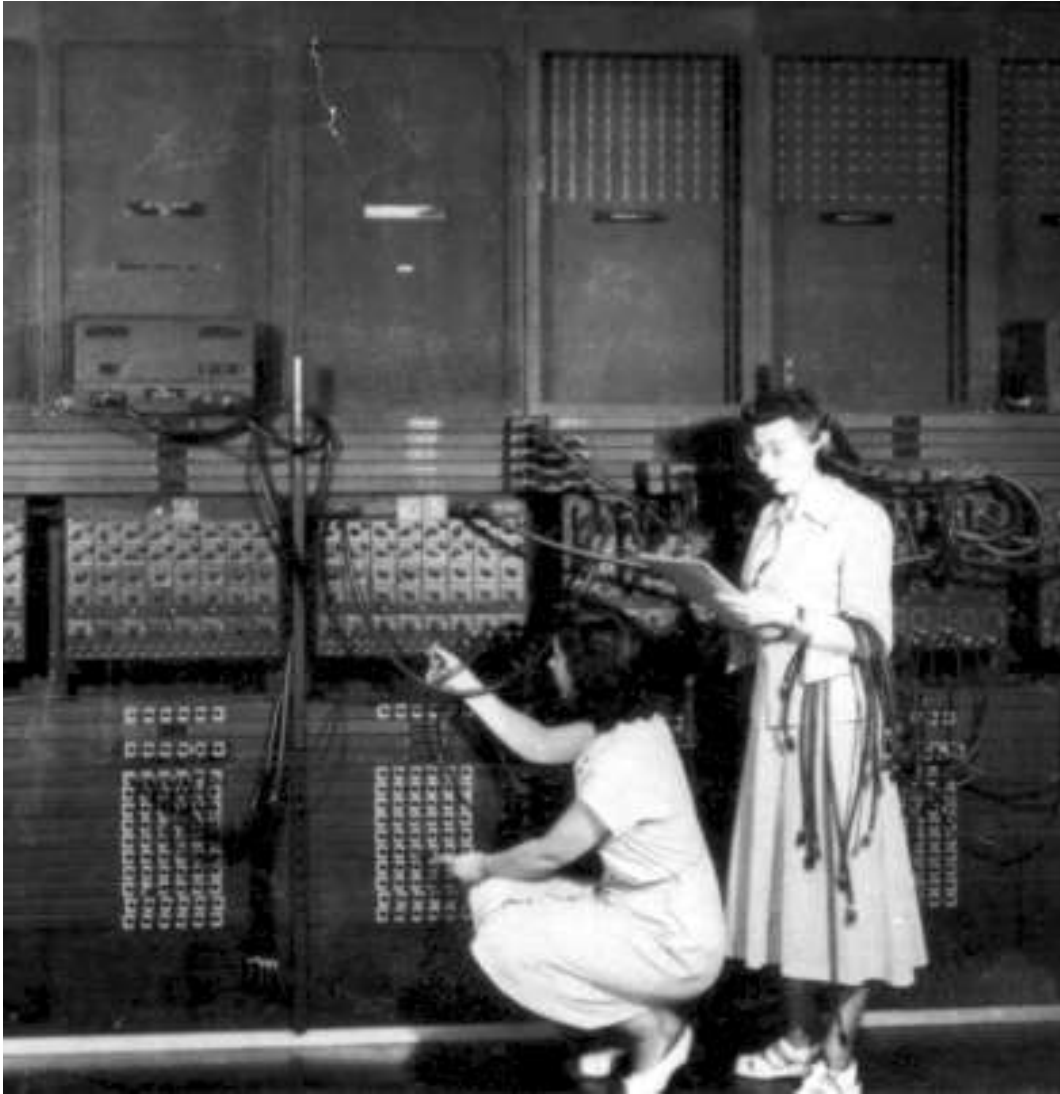
“Honey, I miss Cuttles too. I’ve been feeling more guilty than ever, ever since I caught her sharpening her claws on your mother’s yellow sofa and threw her in rage out our 12th story apartment window. And she knew, I’d do it. I know we thought she would land upright as cats do quite well, but who would have thought that motorcycle could hit her like a home run out of Yankee stadium!”



“Listen you lazy lab. I may be a pint to your eye, but I pack a big bite. So watch your paw, buddy!”



“Phoning again! What does she want now?
She knows I’m here waiting to meet her.”



“It says here that to make a long distance call, you have to connect the red end with the yellow square in the middle, then take the blue end 40 feet around the corner to 42nd avenue for a cup of coffee.”



“Sally, you OK? You’re looking all fragmented and blue today.”
“Yah, Gertrude, I know what you mean. You look that way too.”



“Yes, George, I know the man is not the priest. He is from the government bureau. He says you have not a birth certificate, and they are not sure what to do.”



It is a little known fact: Sheep providing us with steel wool have no natural enemies.



“Dave, I can’t talk to you with that awful smell’n stick always stuck in your mouth. Poor Jimmy there has to take off his shoes just to kill its odor. And not a thought to Nancy, who wants to read her daily news.”



“It’s not them or the blob. Wow! Its the bicameral brain!”



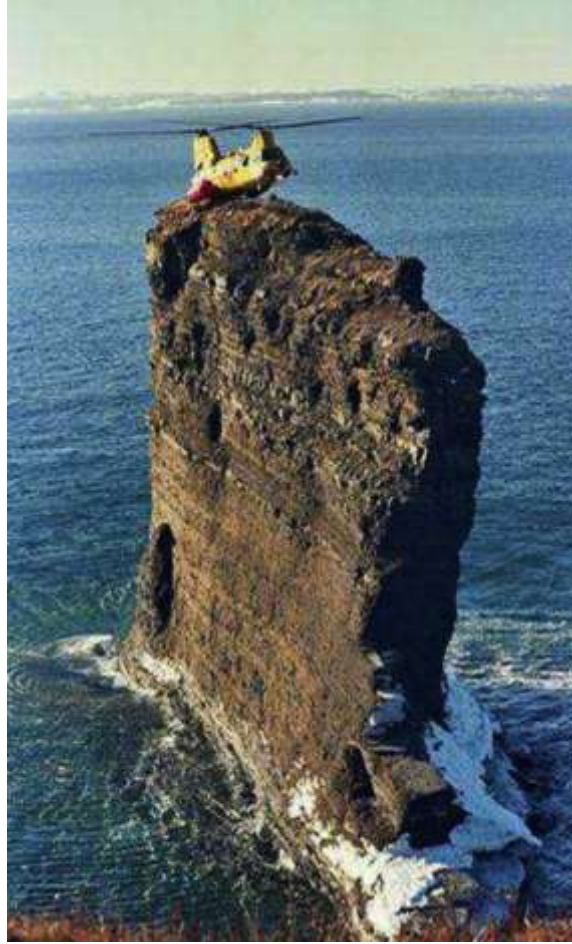
“Stop staring! Haven’t you seen a cool cat before,
practicing for the olympics?”



In the open, a mouse's nightmare is an owl's dream come true.



For tandem cyclists who prefer a back seat with a view.



“Winthrop! For our next stop I said refreshments, not refreshing.”



“Good job, Simpleton! Now you’re think’n like a new age archeologist. Before these people called this restin’ post a fence, they had to have a place to rest a weary knee.”



“John, I prefer my James Dean imitation to your Montgomery Cliff moody look.”
“OK then Jasper--so when you goin’ to trade your pick-up for a fast racing car?”



“Query. Very good maestro!
Now show me five fingers.”



“Very funny, guys. Now where’s the frisbie?”



“Hi, folks. It’s Franco, your humble host of *il Moderna Italia TV*, broadcasting to you live from California. We’re in San Francisco at the Palace of Fine Arts, because this is the best place for our viewers to see the latest rage in exciting Americano hair styles. We are very fortunate. Moments ago, I entered this park, and at once, I was approached by this native with the white beard, now standing on my left. He is very friendly, and gesticulating like, ah, like some of us back home. What do you think? Is his hair the rage!”



“As you can see, I’m a beauty. My master named me Willy, because she is never quite sure what to do with me. She is always thinking, ‘Will he ah what?’ Oh well, I love her besides and do what dogs do to make her happy. My friends call me ‘Mr. Personality.’ And my adversaries call me ‘Vanity.’ The milkman calls me ‘Schmuck’ because I’m always jumping to lap up his split stuff. And the postman calls me ‘Gruff’ ‘cause I get a kick from ripping off his stuff. That’s why the lady downstairs calls me ‘Tough.’ Gosh, I’m just your plain nice everyday pup!”



“This cruise is really cool. All my life, I’ve always wanted to be on a cruise. Now here I am. Wow. And only seven more days until I have my big mac, fries, and gummy bears.”



What a person has to eat around here for a cup of coffee!



“I’m getting a headache, dog darn it! Someone tell me why my instructor thinks this yoga 20 times a day is supposed to get me to dog nirvana. And its stuffing up my sniffer!”



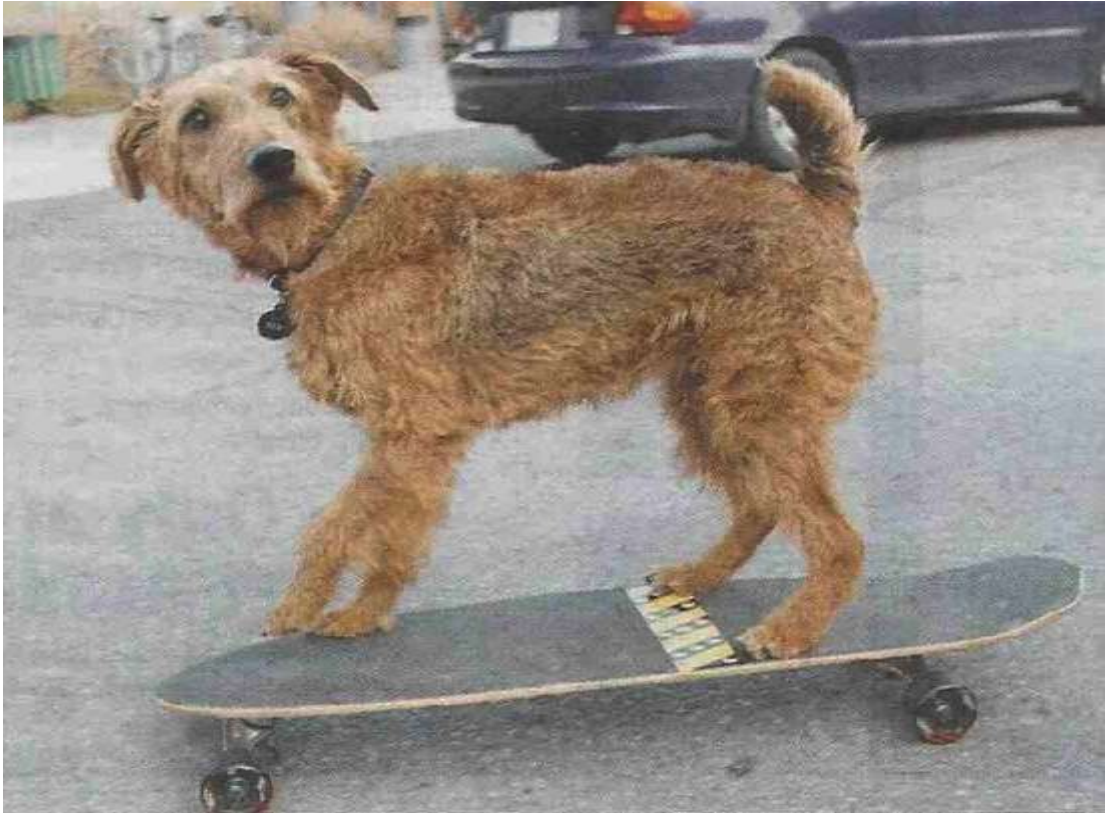
“I see like me you’re new in town. I like your blue coat.”

“Thanks, I like your red coat, but you look flustered?”

“Well yes, I just can not believe it. A moment ago I was walking my dog. I turned around to look at the embroidery in the window behind us, and poof, my beloved Daisy disappeared. What do I do?”

“What a coincidence! I was also walking Rover my poodle. We were standing over there. I turned around only for a moment. Presto, he was gone. What kind of a dog is Daisy?”

“She’s a poodle too.”



Look at me folks! I'm doing my part to reduce auto emissions.



"Hey folks, this electrified gate really works. Ouch! Oh! Oh! Ouch! Eek!"



Hey sister! All I wanted was a sip of orange juice.



“Listen buster! I’m getting very tired of silly tourists like you snapping my photo. If you get any closer, I’ll bite your nose off.”



“I keep telling you, you’ve got to sign him up. Go get the contract.
This guy standing in front of me is a marvel! Look at him. He
could be our next Brad Pitt, Tom Cruise, or even James Bond.”



NEWS FLASH!

We now have the evidence to substantiate the rumor that Arne Collen was spotted last October off the northern coast of Australia, searching the Great Barrier Reef for emergent phenomena inherent in the complexity of reef architecture that may be applicable to detoxifying boxy human habitats.



“My, my, I am so sorry. This is very embarrassing. I don’t know what happened. I can’t find them anymore. I think I may have pushed Command D, instead of S, and lost all my slides about the fountain of youth and what you must do to live forever.”



“As you can see, it was a great honor for me last year to be in Stockholm, up on the stage with so many outstanding dignitaries and top scientists in the grand ceremonial theater to receive the Nobel. The audience was amazingly alert and appreciative, when I explained the complexities that led the Academy to bestow upon me this high honor, of spreading a layer of California strawberry jam on one slice of organic non GMO multigrain wheat bread and a layer of Mexican peanut butter on the other slice, then carefully fitting the two together to create the equivalent of a titanium bond that enables the emergence of a remarkably transformed sandwich with previously unknown systemic biopsychosocial properties, which include psychedelic taste and tactile experiences, unlike any inherently characteristic and experientially receivable from its ingredients.”



Hey! What does a person have to do in this city to make a call?



I hear the military needs more equipment to sustain the war in Iraq, but this is going to far!



Well, what can I say? Yet another reason not to leave home without your cell phone.



Honey, I wanted to call you. What kind of a town is this?



Oh my, I think I may have found an exception to my theory of emergence.



Ha hah! Here is the evidence! Yet another act of terrorism. No doubt, a good citizen turned bad, because of the poor quality of services in our city. Vote for me and I will see that you have a phone.