he hated the idea of drawing attention to himself and raising questions in the minds of his neighbors. For instance, if he had once been into an inn for a drink, he felt obliged whenever he passed the inn to do the same, however little he wanted a glass of beer, because he felt the landlord would ask himself—Why doesn’t he drop in? Is he offended? Doesn’t he like the beer? Is he short of money?—so if he did not want a drink he avoided passing the inn, often having to make a long detour.


Did you know? Paul Cezanne played second cornet in an orchestra for which Emile Zola was flautist.

One day he was repairing the light fixture above the face bowl in the bathroom. He asked me to hold one of his hands and to grip the faucet of the bathtub with my other hand. I did this. Then he licked the index finger of his free hand and stuck it up into the empty socket where the lightbulb had been. As the electricity passed through him and into me and through me and was grounded in the faucet of the bathtub, my father kept saying, "Pal, I won’t hurt you. I won’t hurt you." If I had let go of the faucet, both of us would have died. If I had let go of his hand, he would have died.


Brian Aldiss: When childhood dies, its corpses are called adults.

Charlotte Whilton: Whatever women do they must do twice as well as men to be thought half as good. Luckily, this is not difficult.
Juan Gris was the only person whom Picasso wished away. The relation between them was just that... Later when Juan died and Gertrude Stein was heart broken Picasso came to the house and spent all day there. I do not know what was said but I do know that at one time Gertrude Stein said to him bitterly, you have no right to mourn, and he said, you have no right to say that to me. You never realized his meaning because you did not have it, she said angrily. You know very well I did, he replied.


It is not a bad feeling when you're knocked out," he said. "It's a good feeling, actually. It's not painful, just a sharp grogginess. You don't see angels or stars; you're on a pleasant cloud. After Liston hit me in Nevada, I felt, for about four or five seconds, that everybody in the arena was actually in the ring with me, circled around me like a family, and you feel warmth toward all the people in the arena after you're knocked out. You feel loveable to all the people. And you want to reach out and kiss everybody—men and women—and after the Liston fight somebody told me I actually blew a kiss to the crowd from the ring. I don't remember that. But I guess it's true because that's the way you feel during the four or five seconds after a knockout."

Floyd Patterson, quoted by Gay Talese in Joyce Carol Oates and Daniel Halpern, editors, Reading the Fights (New York: Holt, 1988).

On the chest of a barmaid in Sale
Were tattooed the prices of ale,
And on her behind,
For the sake of the blind,
Was the same information in Braille.

Anon.

Albert Einstein: If A equals success, then the formula is A equals X plus Y plus Z. X is work. Y is play. Z is keep your mouth shut.


Groucho Marx: I never forget a face, but in your case I'll make an exception.

John F. Kennedy (at a dinner for 49 Nobel Prize laureates): I think this is the most extraordinary collection of talent, of human knowledge, that has ever been gathered at the White House—with the possible exception of when Thomas Jefferson dined alone.

Below: Bird dog by Nancy Hopkins.
not so dots large dressed dots, big sizes, less laced, less laced diamonds, diamonds white, diamonds bright, diamonds in the in the light, diamonds light diamonds door diamonds hanging to be four, two four, all before, go go go go go go go go, go. Go go. Not guessed. Go go.


Suzanne Gordon: To be alone is to be different, to be different is to be alone.

Anon: A teacher is somebody for whom teaching is more difficult than it is for other people.


Rodney Dangerfield: At certain times I like sex—like after a cigarette.

The Pansy. The Chimpansy.

Carola Giedion [wife of Sigfried Giedion] and Sybil Moholy [wife of L. Moholy-Nagy] were sharing a flat for a while, and Sybil had received a book from [Marcel] Breuer which, when opened, was found to be Mein Kampf. It was worse than a poor joke, she and Carola were furious and threw it away with the rubbish.

Breuer arrived soon after, apparently happy at being away from Nazi Germany, only to find two furious dames attacking him with no mercy. When he could get a word in he explained that, in order to get some of his money through German Customs, he thought it would be a bright idea to interleave their leader's great book with banknotes. They would surely not examine it with any great care.

There was immediate pandemonium, all rushed down, hoping the rubbish had not yet been taken away. When they found the book, all was forgiven.


Wisdom...is made up of paradoxes and contradictions, of shifts, compromises, transformations, adaptations, adjustments, balancings, calculated blindness, artful avoidances, premeditated foolishnesses, cultivated simplicities! It is made up of the suppressions of curiosity, of the suppressions of cleverness, of narrowings down, diggings in, bankings up, not to speak of a cautious, guarded, tentative, gingerly use of reason.


Anon: A designer is somebody for whom designing is more difficult than it is for other people.
our institute in Princeton we sometimes organize meetings which are announced as Shotgun Seminars. A Shotgun Seminar is a talk given by an Institute member to a volunteer audience. The subject of the talk is announced a week in advance, but the name of the speaker is not. Before the talk begins, the names of all people in the room are written on scraps of paper, the scraps of paper are put into a box, the box is ceremoniously shaken and one name is picked out at random. The name picked out is the name of the speaker. The unbreakable rule of the seminar is that nobody whose name is not in the box may listen to the talk. This rule ensures that everybody does the necessary homework. The audience is ready to argue and contradict whenever the speaker flounders. Anybody who has not given serious thought to the subject of the seminar had better not come.


In New York I asked him [Marcel Breuer] what were the basic ideas that made the Bauhaus important. His reply was strange. "Nothing," he said, "but the coincidence of a group of people happening to come together at the same time."


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**Question:** Why did Robin Hood rob only the rich?

**Answer:** Because the poor had no money.

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Above: Illustration by Craig McKay on "Why Wild Animals Make Poor Pets."

"The first star I met was Gene Autry's dumpy sidekick in the floppy hat, Smiley Burnette. I was about thirteen when he came to town for a show at the Princess Theatre. You could buy a picture of him for a dollar or pay a dollar to have your picture taken with him. Smiley hooked his arm around my shoulders and posed me for the camera, but when I asked him to sign my autograph book he snarled, "I don't autograph nothing but the pictures for sale."


Thomas Mann: A writer is somebody for whom writing is more difficult than it is for other people.
id I ever tell you my Theory of Universities? Like most institutions, each one is similar to a vat of molasses—slow and sluggish. If something goes wrong in one part, it spreads out and covers it up; if you try to make a dent in it, it oozes into the mark you think you’ve made. If you try to wade through it too quickly, you collapse from exhaustion; and if you try to beat it by plunging in and flailing away, you drown.”

She was laughing. “But if you heat molasses it gets thin and moves quickly.”


A hundred tiny horses are carved artfully into a spoon, then it is a useless spoon and not art. A mosaic, like an oil painting, is meant to be seen and not eaten. If the mosaic is beautiful, however, then it is art. Decorative art is when the stork brings a garland instead of a rectangle. You can sit, lie, sleep, or stand on a rug. Nonetheless a rug can be sublime art. In such a case I would advise you to sit on something else.


An artist is somebody for whom making art is more difficult than it is for other people.
essons seldom distressed me, but I remember an evening when I was in despair, attempting to memorize the principal parts of Latin deponent verbs, in one of those moods which occur at all ages when the mind seems numb. My mother found me near to tears. She knew no Latin, but she devised mnemonics for me, the more absurd the more easily retained. "Molior, to contrive," she said. "Remember the mole contrives to make a hole." I have never forgotten it.


Anon: Two of every one people in this country are schizophrenic.

"Have you not sometimes felt in the past, Bertie, that, if Augustus had a fault, it was a tendency to be a little timid?"

I saw what she meant.

"Oh, ah, yes, of course, definitely."

I remembered something Jeeves had once called Gussie. "A sensitive plant, what?"

"Exactly. You know your Shelley, Bertie."

"Oh, am I?"


Thomas Szasz: People often say that this or that person has not yet found himself. But the self is not something that one finds. It is something that one creates.

Lorraine Hansberry: The thing that makes you exceptional, if you are at all, is inevitably that which also makes you lonely.
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Anna Mary Robertson Moses (Grandma Moses): Painting's not important. The important thing is keepin' busy.