

Outside a small Macedonian village close to the border between Greece and strife-torn Yugoslavia, a lone Catholic nun keeps a quiet watch over a silent convent. She is the last caretaker of the site of significant historical developments spanning more than 2,000 years.

When Sister Maria Cyrilla of the Order of the Perpetual Watch dies, the convent of St. Elias will be closed by the Eastern Orthodox Patriarch of Macedonia. However, that isn't likely to happen soon as Sister Maria, 53, enjoys excellent health. By her own estimate, she walks 10 miles daily about the grounds of the convent, which once served as a base for the army of Attila the Hun.

In more ancient times, a Greek temple to Eros, the god of love, occupied the hilltop site.

Historians say that Attila took over the old temple in 439 A.D. and used it as a base for his marauding army.

The Huns are believed to have first collected and then destroyed a large gathering of Greek legal writs at the site. It is believed that Attila wanted to study the Greek legal system, and had the writs and other documents brought to the temple. Scholars differ on why he had the valuable documents destroyed - either because he was barely literate and couldn't read them, or because they provided evidence of democratic government that did not square with his own notion of rule by an all-powerful tyrant.

When the Greek church took over the site in the 15th Century and the convent was built, church leaders ordered the pagan statue of Eros destroyed, so another ancient Greek treasure was lost. Today, there is only the lone sister, watching over the old Hun base. And that's how it ends: No Huns, no writs, no Eros, and nun left on base.

The Mann Act (an actual U.S. law and the only part of this story which is true) prohibits the transporting of women across state lines for purposes of prostitution.

A marine biologist was studying porpoises. He found a certain type that would stay alive forever, but only if fed a certain type of seagull. As you can imagine, the biologist searched far and wide to maintain a supply of seagulls.

One night he was out on the seashore with a gunny sack about half-full of seagulls when he came across a lion that had escaped from the state zoo. As he went to step across it, he was immediately arrested by the FBI. The charge? Transporting gulls across a state lion for immortal porpoises!

A dentist had his office in a high-rise building. There was a bar in the lobby run by

Dick, the bar tender. Every day after work the dentist would stop in at the bar and order an almond daiquiri. The bar tender came to know this routine and would have the drink ready each day.

One day there was no almond flavoring, so the bar tender used hickory instead. The dentist walked in, sat down and tasted the drink. He said, "Is this an almond daiquiri, Dick?" "No, it's a hickory daiquiri, Doc."

NASA has been launching Holstein cows into low-earth orbit. Its known as the herd shot round the world.

When planning to remodel its lobby space, a wealthy corporation decided to install a real fancy salt-water aquarium. All went well until the day when the animals were being installed.

The job foreman was going down the checklist to make sure that all the animals were present and accounted for. When the call went out for the anemones, none were to be found. As the foreman's anger rose, a worker said, "Oh, I forgot. The supplier was out of anemones, but sent these imported palm fronds instead."

The foreman inspected the fronds. They were excellent, first-rate fronds. His anger cooled. He said, "With fronds like these, who needs anemones?"

A guided tour was making its way through the Pyrenees Mountains where the Basque people live. One tourist noticed that all the houses had four, five, six even seven doors. He asked the tour guide, "Why so many doors?" "Because you wouldn't want to put all your Basques in one exit."

Frank Loesser (pronounced "lesser") gained his fame as the composer of "Guys and Dolls," a smash Broadway play and later a movie starring Frank Sinatra and Marlon Brando. Few people know that Frank had a twin brother, Richard, who was a scoundrel and a ne'er-do-well. He was know as the Evil of Two Loessers.

Harold was married to Laraine for 20 years. As sometimes happens, Harold fell in love with a co-worker, a lady named Clearly. But Harold was a devoted husband. He could only worship Clearly from afar.

One day Laraine unexpectedly died. Harold was grief stricken until it dawned on him, "I can see Clearly now. Laraine is gone."

A piece of string went into a bar and asked for a drink. The surly barkeep replied, "We don't serve your kind here. Get out!"

Once on the street the string was overcome with anger. He flung himself on the ground, twisting, turning and yelling, until he tied himself in a knot. In the process his two ends became frayed.

His confidence returned and he entered the bar and ordered a drink. When the drink was served the bartender said, "Aren't you that piece of string that was just in here?"

"I'm afraid not."

Artie, a homeless person, was shopping at the local chain grocery store, Albertsons. He saw a dollar bill on the floor at the end of the aisle. As he moved towards it, two people picked it up and walked away.

He was angry. He yelled at them. He chased them. He grabbed them by the neck. Store security was called. It was quite a scene.

The headline in the newspaper read, "Artie chokes two for a dollar at Albertsons."

After Quasimodo's death, the bishop of the Cathedral of Notre Dame sent word through the streets of Paris that a new bell ringer was needed. The bishop decided that he would conduct the interviews personally and went up into the belfry to begin the screening process.

An armless man approached him and announced that he was there to apply for the bell ringer's job. The bishop was incredulous.

"You have no arms! " "No matter," said the man. "Observe!" And he began striking the bells with his face, producing a beautiful melody on the carillon.

The bishop listened in astonishment, convinced he had found a replacement for Quasimodo.

But suddenly, rushing forward to strike a bell, the armless man tripped and plunged headlong out of the belfry window to his death in the street below.

The stunned bishop rushed to his side. When he reached the street, a crowd had gathered around the fallen figure, drawn by the beautiful music they had heard only moments before.

As they silently parted to let the bishop through, one of them asked, "Bishop, who was this man?"

"I don't know his name," the bishop sadly replied, "but his face rings a bell"

The following day, despite the sadness that weighed heavily on his heart due to the unfortunate death of the armless campanologist, the bishop continued his interviews for the bell ringer of Notre Dame. The first man to approach him said, "Your Excellency, I am the brother of the poor armless wretch that fell to his death from this very belfry yesterday. I pray that you honor his life by allowing me to replace him in this duty."

The bishop agreed to give the man an audition, and, as the armless man's brother stooped to pick up a mallet to strike the first bell, he groaned, clutched at his chest, twirled around, and died on the spot.

Two monks, hearing the bishop's cries of grief at this second tragedy, rushed up the stairs to his side. "What has happened? Who is this man?" the first monk asked breathlessly. "I don't know his name," sighed the distraught bishop, but he's a dead ringer for his brother!"

Two vultures board an airplane, each carrying two dead raccoons. The stewardess looks at them and says, "I'm sorry, gentlemen, only one carrion allowed per passenger."

Two boll weevils grew up in South Carolina. One went to Hollywood and became a famous actor. The other stayed behind in the cotton fields and never amounted to much. The second one, naturally, became known as the lesser of two weevils.

Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly, but when they lit a fire in the craft, it sank, proving once again that you can't have your kayak and heat it, too.

A three-legged dog walks into a saloon in the Old West. He slides up to the bar and announces: "I'm looking for the man who shot my paw."

Did you hear about the Buddhist who refused Novocain during a root canal? He wanted to transcend dental medication.

A group of chess enthusiasts checked into a hotel and were standing in the lobby

discussing their recent tournament victories. After about an hour, the manager came out of the office and asked them to disperse. "But why?" they asked, as they moved off. "Because," he said, "I can't stand chess nuts boasting in an open foyer."

A woman has twins and gives them up for adoption. One of them goes to a family in Egypt and is named "Ahmal." The other goes to a family in Spain; they name him "Juan." Years later, Juan sends a picture of himself to his birth mother. Upon receiving the picture, she tells her husband that she wishes she also had a picture of Ahmal. Her husband responds, "They're twins! If you've seen Juan, you've seen Ahmal."

These friars were behind on their belfry payments, so they opened up a small florist shop to raise funds. Since everyone liked to buy flowers from the men of God, a rival florist across town thought the competition was unfair. He asked the good fathers to close down, but they would not. He went back and begged the friars to close. They ignored him. So, the rival florist hired Hugh MacTaggart, the roughest and most vicious thug in town to "persuade" them to close. Hugh beat up the friars and trashed their store, saying he'd be back if they didn't close up shop. Terrified, they did so, thereby proving that Hugh, and only Hugh, can prevent florist friars.

Mahatma Gandhi, as you know, walked barefoot most of the time, which produced an impressive set of calluses on his feet. He also ate very little, which made him rather frail and with his odd diet, he suffered from bad breath. This made him what? (Oh, man, this is so bad, it's good) A super callused fragile mystic hexed by halitosis.

And finally, there was a woman who sent ten different puns to friends, with the hope that at least one of the puns would make them laugh. Unfortunately, no pun in ten did.