

wake up – it's time
for your sleeping pill

ROBERT S. SWIATEK



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This book is dedicated to my siblings:
Fr. Nicholas (once known as Tom,)
Ken and Pat.

also by Robert S. Swiatek

***The Read My Lips Cookbook:
A Culinary Journey of Memorable Meals***

Don't Bet On It – a novel

***Tick Tock, Don't Stop:
A Manual for Workaholics***

for seeing eye dogs only

***This Page Intentionally Left Blank
– Just Like the Paychecks of the Workers***

I Don't Want to be a Pirate – Writer, maybe

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Introduction

Sometime in the early 1980s, I finished writing a book about the English language, *You've Got My Word*. It dealt with words, phrases, expressions and clichés in a humorous light, pointing out the difficulty involved because of all the bizarre rules as well as the easily forgettable exceptions to them. I was somehow convinced that English may be the most challenging of all languages. Someone coming to this country from a foreign land and not familiar with it soon comes to the realization that English is no picnic, even if they have wine and cheese and a basket to put them in. The dictionary and makeup of the language are enough to drive anyone crazy.

Once my manuscript was complete, I felt it was missing something and as a result was never published. In fact, it was never even sent to my agent. Nonetheless, it wasn't forgotten and shortly thereafter, I began a folder of material I found for a book on the dumb things that people say and do. I put the words, "(What) Was I Thinking" on the outside of the folder and from time to time added material that was appropriate.

A few years later – sometime in the 1990s – I started a PC folder with more of the same contents, and in the year 2004, while home recovering from surgery, I decided that I had enough material in those two packets for a book. When I was done, the result was my 2005 book, *for seeing eye dogs only*, which also had a few bits from *You've Got My Word*, since they fit right in. It may have taken a few years, but because of circumstances, I soon realized that despite the book being complete, there was more material available for another similar book.

Much of the material of the 2005 book came from observations, everyday occurrences, newspapers and books I read as well as emails that others sent me. My new folder seemed to be overflowing so much that less than two years

later, I had what was very close to a sequel, which I decided to call, *wake up – it's time for your sleeping pill*. At the same time I decided that I would incorporate some of the book that I had written in the 1980s into this work.

The result is a book on the three “L’s: language, laughter and lunacy. In early 2007, I submitted the manuscript to the Indie Excellence 2007 Book Awards and in a few months was notified that the book was a finalist, along with my book on the environment, *Take Back the Earth* as well as my second book on work, *This Page Intentionally Left Blank – Just like the Paychecks of the Workers*. Because of this submission, it has taken a few months to bring this book into print. There were a few other difficulties I faced – including what every writer encounters regarding making a book better by never ending revisions – which I won’t get into.

Over the years, people continue to say and do dumb things – but they can be very funny. I guess you could call those occurrences comatose calamities. No one is exempt, not even writers. When I think about the first book I published, I can only conclude that *The Read My Lips Cookbook* points out that I too was missing intelligence, as illustrated by some of my adventures in the kitchen. As I pointed out in these books on the subject, this was merely a temporary lapse. In some ways, I could be excused since I was learning and could pass this information on to others as well as give readers a few chuckles at the same time.

As you can tell, I choose book titles on their appropriateness as well as potential appeal to readers. You may not be able to tell a book by the cover, but the title and cover can be the difference between someone buying the book or passing it by. I hadn’t thought about the title I chose for my 2008 book in this way before, but somehow the word *sleeping* in the title may well describe some of the people who made it into the book, since many humans seem to be in a state approaching unconsciousness. As of the end of the

year 2007, I had already amassed some more instances of elevators that don't go to the top so that it shouldn't be too long before another book of this type gets published. My guess is the year 2009. The title I'm thinking of using is *here's your free gift – send \$10 for shipping*.

I really am convinced that a great sense of humor can help you live longer, prevent heart attacks and high blood pressure, and even shorten the recovery period after surgery. It can relieve stress and that's why laughter is such great medicine. It can also make your life a bit better at work as well as at home, with all the challenging situations that arise. Our lives are so hectic that without humor, we seem to have little hope. We need to laugh at ourselves and all that's going on.

I need to thank all those who emailed me the truckload of gems – those who send old stuff or anecdotes that are crude, racist and obscene and just not funny, please fill up someone else's mailbox – as well as those who were participants in all those actions so that I could include them in this work. That last word may not be appropriate as I had a great deal of fun doing it. What more can you ask when you need not direct people to send material when the lunacy and laughs show up by themselves? Granted, all the contributions have to be sorted, incremented, supplemented, pureed, collated and edited into a worthwhile venture. However, that's a task that I didn't mind doing.

My decision to make *wake up – it's time for your sleeping pill* slightly different from my 2005 book had to do with the idea of sequels. First of all, in general, they never are as good as the original and they're too hard to sell. However, many of the ideas and subjects found in *for seeing eye dogs only* remain. This book is longer and I hope – notice I didn't use that word, *hopefully* – you'll get as many laughs as the 2005 work, which even as I write this, people are saying is hysterical.

wake up – it's time for your sleeping pill is intentionally not capitalized in the same way that my first book on baffling behavior wasn't. Besides being written to entertain and enlighten readers, it is also an attempt to illustrate the connection between humor and intelligence. You will still be burdened with plenty of putrid puns as well as other examples of the lunacy of language that should put a smile on your face.

I have included some more quotes, signs, bumper stickers and stories of criminals-in-training as well as young intelligence and the religious stuff, which readers raved about in *for seeing eye dogs only*. I close the book in the same manner as the aforementioned book with ludicrous questions, reflective of the wit of Steven Wright. Perhaps I should have said, "to be continued." Naturally, there are a few new things, and I have more to say about corporate crooks and the political scene – only because of events during the last few years in our nation's capital. As long as there's material, you might as well use it. I tried to follow the same guidelines to spare embarrassment to the players as well as avoiding litigation, but I walked along the edge of the cliff a bit more than the 2005 book, without falling off.

The craziness of the title should be obvious, but this is not a book about health care. Granted, there is a chapter on "Medical brilliance," which should point out the fact that doctors, nurses and hospital administrators have their mental moments. From your experience, I'm sure you know that. I hope you get a few laughs about the time a laboratory gave me a FIT, which can be found in that same chapter.

I repeat the words on the home page of my web site – with a minor modification – "Humor is the best medicine and it's available even without a referral." Here's to good health and plenty of laughs.

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