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LOUIS PHILLIPS
New York, New York

In his excellent book on formula jokes, Jokes (Delacorte, 1983),
Paul Dickson comments that What's the Difference? jokes, a blend
of conundrum and pun, can be found in very old joke books. Some
of the examples below are homonymic in nature; others reverse the
first and last parts of the name; yet others are spoonergrams.

What is the difference between

music by Camille Saint-Saëns and a stupid skeleton?
   One is a Danse Macabre, the other is a macabre dance
   a lock on a liquor cabinet and a top base stealer?
   One is a brew lock, the other is a Lou Brock
   a pacifist and the author of On the Beach?
   One will never shoot, the other is Neville Shute
   a house of ill repute and the author of Les Fleurs du Mal?
   One is a lair of bawdy, the other is Baudelaire
   the capital of Louisiana and a knavish conductor?
   One is Baton Rouge, the other is a rogue baton

a certain 1947 movie and curses by the Rosemary's Baby heroine?
   One is the Foxes of Harrow, the other are the hexes of Farrow
   a doorman and a fashion designer?
   One closes doors, the other adores clothes
   martial law and a person who has no mongrel dogs?
   One has a curfew, the other has few curs
   a common herb and a Confederate general doing his grammar?
   One is parsley, the other is Lee parsing
   a priest's white robe and the capital of New York?
   One is any alb, the other is Albany
   extreme fright and a naughty girl?
   One is acute shock, the other is a cute shocker
   the number thirteen and a sleepy pastry cook?
   One is a baker's dozen, the other is a dozing baker
   a twin with a scar and the author of Tom Sawyer?
   One is a marked twin, the other is Mark Twain
   a person who saves his paycheck and a former Cubs player?
   One banks earnings, the other is Ernie Banks
   a goof-off and a stable boy?
   One horses around, the other is around horses

THE APPLE-SAUCE CHRONICLES

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Superman and a baker with day-old bread?
One is a man of steel, the other is a man of stale

a sacred place and the heroine of Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm?
One is a temple, surely, the other is Shirley Temple

a dentist and the female lead in Star Wars?
One fishes for caries, the other is Carrie Fisher

a United Nations diplomat and a bachelor?
One is UN-attached, the other is unattached

the letter F and the gold statue of Prometheus in New York?
One is at the center of Rockefeller, the other at Rockefeller Ctr

shrimp fried in a beer batter and an antique piece of furniture?
One is dipped in ale, the other is Chippendale

a composition by Khachaturian and a teetotalling moron?
One is the Sabre Dance, the other is a sober dunce

a person with amnesia and a long-distance runner?
One has a lapse of memory, the other a memory of laps

a pool player starting a game, and a lucky casino gambler?
One banks the break, the other breaks the bank

a rug in front of an entrance and a bullfighter?
One is a doormat, the other is a matador

a Brooklyn Bridge salesman and a Vogue magazine illustrator?
One is a Can artist, the other is a Conde artist

Although not mentioned by Dickson, the juxtaposition of two appropriate movie titles for a hypothetical double feature is a common type of formula wordplay. A related gambit consists of hypothetical movie titles with appropriate actors or script-writers.

The Grapes of Wrath / The Wild Bunch
The Girl on the Front Page / Libelled Lady
Follow Me Quietly / Hush Hush Sweet Charlotte
Swingtime / The Hanging Tree
The Lady Vanishes / Grand Illusion
The Elephant Man / The Ugly American
Hurricane / Gone With the Wind
Earthquake / California Split
The Iron Man / The Iron Maiden / The Magnet
Hair / Shampoo
Who Done It? / The Servant
I’ll Cry Tomorrow / Moscow Doesn’t Believe in Tears
Easter Parade / It Happened on Fifth Avenue
Victor Victoria / Hey Boy! Hey Girl!
Giant / You’re a Big Boy Now
Caesar and Cleopatra / Made For Each Other
Broken Arrow / I’ll Fix It!
Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner? / The Iceman Cometh
Second Honeymoon / Brideshead Revisited
Rear Window / I’ll Be Seeing You

Comrade X
Dressed to Kill
Breakfast at Tiffany’s
Seven Brides for Seven Brothers
Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice
Which Way Was It?
Applause / Dreamgirls
Do You Take This Man? / The D.L.
Sleepers / Some Came Running
On the Beam / Get Out Your Handkerchiefs
Pfft!!! / You Can’t Take It with You
Bananas / The Big Country
California Split
Rip Van Winkle
The Old Man
Two-Mules-A-Cart
Apocalypse Now
The Story of Robin & His hooded Men in Search of St. Hubert
In Search of Lost Time
Hair, star
Goldfinger
The Blackboard Jungle
Another Pair of Shoes

A Covenant
Oh! Calcutta
Noah and the Whale
The Missing

Maggie, Girl
Cats, stars
Tired Jock
The Discoverers
Betrayal, star
Bound for Glory
The Filling
The Postman

Punning variables is a peculiar
Punning variations on the names of various real or fictional notables is a perennial sport, as illustrated by the following:

MAAT DILLON ancient Western hero from Egypt
DUNE MARTIN number one crooner from the lost planet of Arrakis
MAX PLANKTON physicist lost in the Bermuda Triangle
GENE SARACEN golfer who attacked Christians in the Crusade Open
NATHAN EXHALE "I regret that I have but one breath to give for my country"
HARPOON MARX the most silent person aboard the Pequod
SOLO-MON lonely wise king
ZORROASTER prophet who cuts a Z in your forehead
BINGA CROSBY pygmy singer from Central Africa
GABBAI HAYES Hebrew Western star
FILIBUSTER KEATON long-winded comedian
BIANCA JOGGER runner who uses a breath spray
ERICH FROMMAGE noted writer on the psychology of the big cheese
THE POLYURETHANE OF CAWDOR modern plastic Macbeth
CREMONA LISA violinist with the enigmatic smile
ANN CORIOLANUS Shakespearean burlesque star
DAVID FARRAGO medley of U.S. naval officers
BOBBY COXA hip baseball player
BACHELOR unmarried German composer
LUAU BROCK Hawaiian baseball star who steals feasts
PORCELANA TURNER movie star who fights age spots
BABYLON CHANEY the ancient world's favorite horror actor
DECADES ARNAZ Cuban bandleader who performs every ten years
PHARAOH FAWCETT blonde leader of Egypt
GWEN VERDUN French dancer who achieved notoriety during World War I
HOOPOE old bird who wrote The Raven
FRANK PERDU chicken man lost in France
MAELSTROM THURMOND politician in midst of powerful whirlpool
ROY CAMPANILE Brooklyn Dodgers bell ringer
BUNNY GOODMAN Easter jazz musician
MERCY CUNNINGHAM choreographer who shows great compassion
QUASI QUOMODO hunchback who asks in Latin "What's the matter?"
AMOS AND ANDES famous radio comedy team depicting two blacks lost in South America
LOTO LENYA actress who emcees bingo games
CECIL B. CAMILLE sobbing movie director
MOLE BROOKS underground film maker of comedies
STANNUM MUSIAL the baseball tin man
LAX BARKER loose Tarzan star
BLOIS LANE reporter on the Loire Daily Planet
TOM MX missile cowboy star
EDWARD ALGAE seaweed playwright
SPIRO AGNEAU French lamb-like veep
COMANCHE GUEVERA American Indian revolutionary leader
CARAVAN JOHNSON actor who travels across deserts
THE LOAM RANGER the underground cowboy
ROBOT REDFORD the most handsome of the humanoid actors
STROMBOLI THURMOND volcanic senator
SIGMUND FEUD psychiatrist who promoted conflict
PETE MOROSE sullen superstar
CHIPPENDALE EVANS cowgirl from the last half of the eighteenth century
CORTEX RITTER cerebral cowboy
BUCKY ARDENT passionate shortstop
PLYMOUTH ROCK HUDSON first Pilgrim to make it big in Hollywood
VECTOR MATURE favorite movie star of mathematicians
TOM LASORDID baseball manager with shameful past
SIERRA BERNHARDT mountainous actress of great range

KICKSHAWS

CHARLES W. H. Ashton, Mary}

Collinear Word

Letting A1, A2, . . . , An be a sequence of words, we can define a new sequence by

A1, A2, . . . , An :

Likewise, H1, H2, . . . , Hm can be defined in the same way. Note that the

third column can be disregarded.

If we think of the coordinates of the point Ai in the plane, the

coordinates of the corresponding point in the sequence A1, A2, . . . , An can be disregarded.

Another set of coordinates that can be disregarded is

In this case, we perform a linear transformation to map the points to the

straight line...