

Marriage, California Style

by Jack Swenson

My wife and I got married standing at a counter in the County Clerk's office at Lake Tahoe. Out the window we could see the parking lot and, across the street, the Bijou Moonlight Laundromat.

I told the lady who married us that I had wanted to find a drive-in wedding chapel. The Clerk, a cheery and accommodating lady, told me to drive my truck around to the back of the building, and she would marry us in the parking lot. I said, no, where we were was fine.

While the Clerk was reading the words, a young couple came into the office behind us. After I kissed the bride, the county official asked the young folks to step up; they were next. The young man blurted, "No, no. I just came in for a fishing license!" He was a tall, beefy kid; the girl looked at him with disgust.

Afterwards we popped into the Sports Book at Harrah's. I made a bet on a non-winning sprinter who was stretching out to a mile. He finished dead last. I found a couple of nags I liked in a race at Hollywood Park, so I boxed them in an exacta, but they finished one-three, so I was out another ten bucks.

As we were leaving the casino, we ran into a friend and his wife, a welder named Jimmy whom I met at a Juice Church meeting I attend Friday nights. His face beaming, Jimmy told us that he and his lady just got married. "I thought you were already married," I said. "We were," Jimmy said. "We just decided to do it all over again."

As we walked through the parking lot I said that I thought what they did was a good idea. "How about we come back in a year?" I said. Kat said let's see how it goes.

We picked up some things at a nearby Safeway; we ate our wedding supper in our room at the inn. We had bread and cheese, Kalamata olives, pate, and a couple of cupcakes that served as our wedding cake. Then we got into our costumes and went to bed. Kat wore a filmy white nightgown, and I wore white silk briefs with a little black bowtie on the waistband in front and a black tail split like a morning coat in back.

