

The Schmooze Stories with a Yiddish Twist

REMEMBERING DORIS ROBERTS

by

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DORIS ROBERTS, the mom on “Everybody Loves Raymond” died at age 90.

In Yiddish, we might call her a “kokhlefel”--which is worse than a “kibitzer.” According to Rabbi Benjamin Blech, a “kibitzer only butts in verbally.” A “kokhlefel” does something to “stir things up” a little. What is usually accomplished? The participant got deeper into hot soup.

Ray Romano, who played Roberts’ son, shared his emotional reaction to the tragic news: “Doris Roberts had an energy and a spirit that amazed me. She never stopped. Whether working professionally, or just nurturing a young (“yung”), green comic (“komiker”) trying to make it as an actor, she did it all with such a grand love for life and people and I will miss her dearly.”

Remember when Robert’s future wife, Amy, gives a rousing speech (“droshe”) to Ray, Debra and Ray’s parents, on the joy of wedlock? “Robert and I are getting married, and I want us to be honest (“orntlekh”) and trusting, and I hope those feelings will only get stronger the longer that we’re together (“tsuzamen”).”

Ray says, “Wow.”

Debra says nostalgically, “Yeah. Remember when we were that stupid!”

What advice (“eytse”)/comments would Doris Roberts (Marie Barone) give to brides and grooms? She once said of her own TV marriage,

“We might fight but we’re OK with each other. You know why? We’ve endured. We have been through it all. And now [hesitates]

Frank replies, “We’re waiting for death.”

Which of the following comments would reflect the attitude of Marie Barone? Answer “Yes” or “No.”

1. Every bride (“kale”) is beautiful (“sheyn”).
Yes No
2. Marriage is a struggle to accept family members for who they are, no matter how unnerving or impossible they might be.
Yes No
3. Never tape over the wedding video.
Yes No
4. Eat, eat my child. Look how thin you look.
Yes No
5. Every bride should have a “knippel”---money tied in the corner of a handkerchief.
Yes No
6. If you think that after you’re married you’re going to watch the same amount of sports as before, just stop reading now. You think you’re gonna get married and still watch all your sports! What do you think, you have superpowers?
Yes No
7. NEVER do what Jerry Seinfeld did: He attempted to gift his folks a Caddy (Cadillac), causing them to miss the early bird special and lose the condo presidency.
Yes No
8. When you get married, the man becomes the bug (“zhug”) killer. Women assume men aren’t squeamish.
Yes No
9. Anytime you make a commitment to somebody (“emetser”), you are

bound to run into problems. For better or worse, that's the vow."

Yes No

10. Buy a home ("heym") near your in-laws; they'll be so much help.

Yes No

11. You want some real marriage advice? I'm going to give you the secret ("der sod") now. There's gonna be yelling. There's going to be anger. Don't fight it. You keep your head down ("arop") and you plow through.

Yes No

12. The parents ("tate-mame") of the bride and groom should never meet at a fancy restaurant ("restoran"). Tensions will rise. The two families shouldn't be allowed in the same state."

Yes No

13. To daughter-in-law two weeks after the honeymoon: "Listen, nobody ("keyner nit") has received thank you notes for their wedding gifts."

Yes No

Yes No

14. To daughter-in-law: After returning from the honeymoon ("honik-khoydesh"): Go move the luggage. YOU be the better person.

Yes No

15. Never make a tofu turkey (indik) for Thanksgiving.

Yes No

16. Never answer a question--with a question.

"Ma, did I tell you that your soup was delicious?"

"And the meatballs you didn't like?"

Yes No

17. When you daughter-in-law comments that you haven't stopped in for two days, never say, "You didn't wonder if I was lying dead somewhere?"

Yes No

18. The parents of the bride and groom should never meet at a fancy restaurant. Tensions will rise. The two families shouldn't be allowed

in the same state.

Yes No

19. Never admit that you like one daughter-in-law better than another.

Yes No

20. "Geb a kuk" (Give a look) at my recipe for meatballs; it's "vunderlekh."

Yes No

21. Be glad that I'm not like the mother of Neil Armstrong. When he took his first step on the moon he asked, "Ma, Ma, what did you think?" His mother was unimpressed. "A gedule, a big deal," she sniffed. "Mit gelt ken men altsding dergreykhn - with money you can do anything."

Yes No

22. To daughter-in-law: Everything inside the front door is your responsibility. All outside chores, especially the car, belong to your husband ("der man").

Yes No

23. To daughter-in-law: The best time to tell Hubby something that might upset him is while he's driving. (Eda Suzanne)

24. Ignore any e-mails that begin.....

Dear Mother-in-law ("Shviger"),

I don't need you to

teach me how to

handle my children,

I'm living with one of

yours and he needs a

lot of improvement.

(Note: The yiddish word meaning "to improve" is "farbesern.")

Yes No

25. To the newlyweds: "You're no Mike and Molly."

Yes No

26. Never date a girl who eats flies. She's not the one!

Yes No

ANSWERS:

According to Marjorie Wolfe, Doris Roberts/Marie Barone was capable of saying ALL OF THE ABOVE comments.

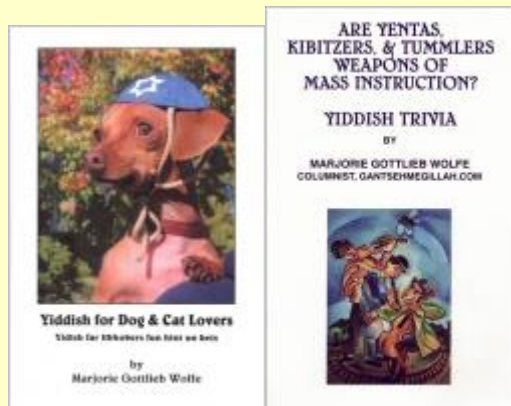
Nos. 6, 7, and 8 were said by Ray Romano.

No. 9 was said by Patricia Heaton (Debra).

No. 12 is also "yes." When Debra's pretentious parents meet the Barones, Ray yells at his in-laws: "You like to make jokes about 'herbs' that nobody gets and you go to 'France' and you go to [banging silver-ware] 'Somp' and you go to some basement in the Village....."

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Marjorie Gottlieb Wolfe is the author of two books:



"Yiddish for Dog & Cat Lovers" and "Are Yentas, Kibitzers, & Tumblers Weapons of Mass Instruction? Yiddish Trivia." To order a copy, go to her website: MarjorieGottliebWolfe.com

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