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Jokes: Philosophical Thoughts on Joking Matters

By Ted Cohen

University Of Chicago Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 112 pages. Abe and his friend Sol are out for a walk together in a part of town they haven't been in before. Passing a Christian church, they notice a curious sign in front that says 1, 000 to anyone who will convert. I wonder what that's about, says Abe. I think I'll go in and have a look. I'll be back in a minute; just wait for me. Sol sits on the sidewalk bench and waits patiently for nearly half an hour. Finally, Abe reappears. Well, asks Sol, what are they up to? Who are they trying to convert? Why do they care? Did you get the 1, 000? Indignantly Abe replies, Money. That's all you people care about. Ted Cohen thinks that's not a bad joke. But he also doesn't think it's an easy joke. For a listener or reader to laugh at Abe's conversion, a complicated set of conditions must be met. First, a listener has to recognize that Abe and Sol are Jewish names. Second, that listener has to be familiar with the widespread idea that Jews are more interested in money than anything else. And finally, the...



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