

Laughter

by [Jean Keskulla](#) in the [November 14, 2006](#) issue

When I'm reading a joke out loud
from a new joke book, I hear
my voice start to falter, from laughter,
almost to weep, from laughter,
the way my sister's voice did as a child
or a woman, especially if somebody
made a bathroom joke; and my father's
voice did, when he wasn't just poking
fun at someone, when he found
something *really* funny; slapstick
got him laughing that way, sometimes.
A laughter beyond words, maybe
beyond grief. As I hear myself
laughing like them, with them,
I say: a laughter beyond death.