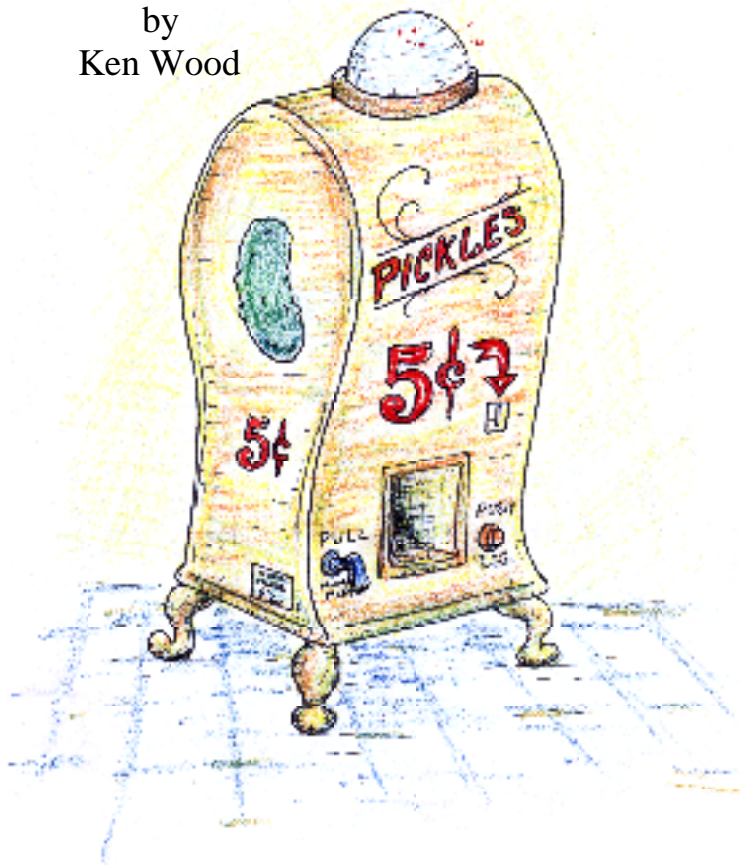


The Pickle Machine  
by  
Ken Wood

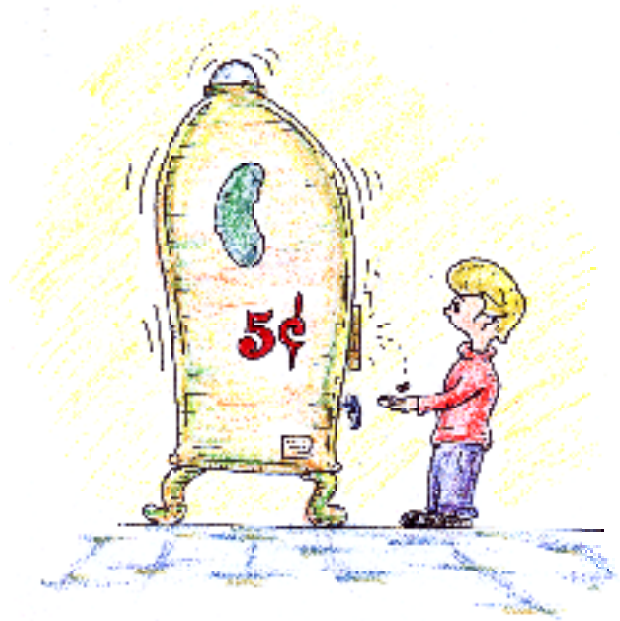


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I put a nickel in a pickle machine.

It wiggled and jiggled...



and out popped a bean.

It seemed really mean  
of that pickle machine  
to give me a bean for my nickle.



But I still could be clever.  
I pulled on the lever  
That was clearly marked  
“PULL IF NO PICKLE.”

The pickle machine made a rattle and wheeze  
And out of its door dropped some crackers and  
cheese.



Now, crackers and cheese will most usually please;  
It's a treat that I normally care for.  
But I put in my nickel  
And I wanted my pickle  
'Cause a pickle is what I was there for.

I grabbed on the lever  
And pulled harder than ever.  
I wasn't about to give up!  
I stepped back and waited,  
a bit agitated...

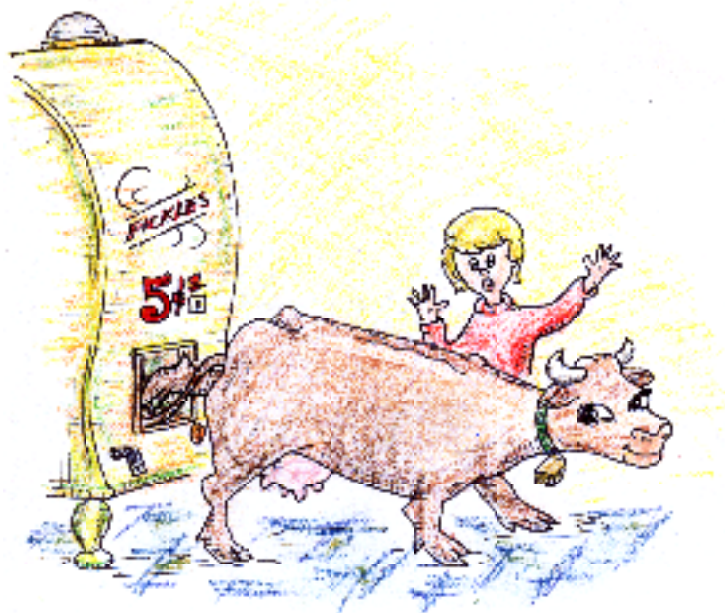


And out jumped a brown spotted pup!

Well, the puppy was cute and I liked him a bunch,  
But I still really wanted a pickle for lunch.

So I grabbed with my fist  
And I gave it a twist  
With all that my strength would allow.  
The machine made a moan,  
Then a puff and a groan...





And out stepped a big Jersey Cow!

Across from the lever marked

“PULL IF NO PICKLE”

I saw a push button marked

“PUSH IF NO NICKEL.”

So I pushed... to see what it would do.

First it didn't do a thing,

Then a bell began to ring...



And out sprang a tall kangaroo!

From all that I'd seen  
Of this pickle machine,  
I was sure that it must be my fault.  
I held the knob down...

And out bounced a clown,

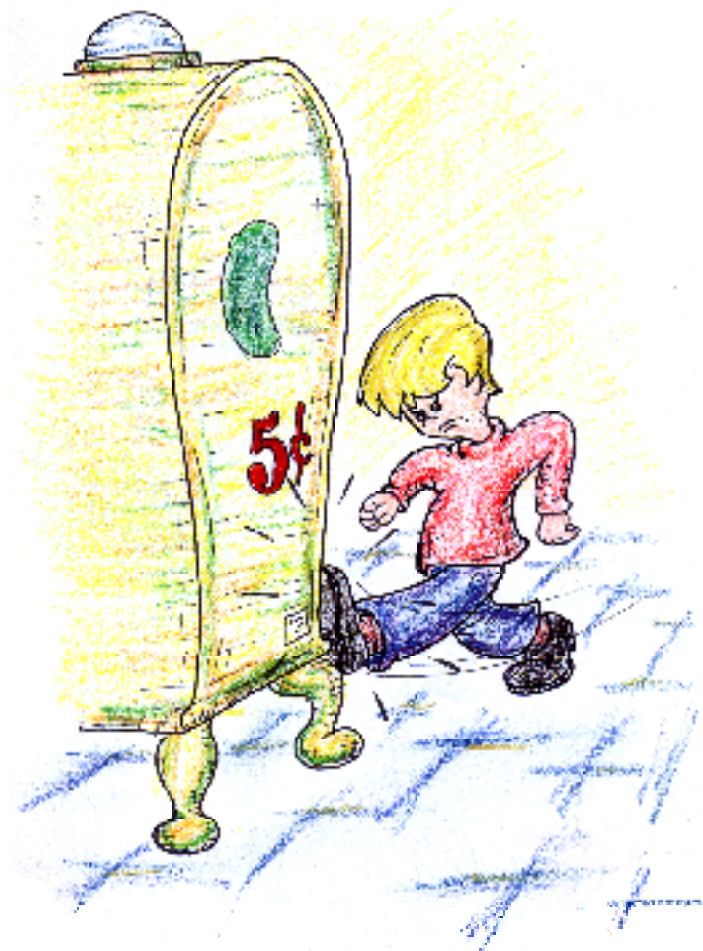


Who flipped with a fine somersault!

Well, that clown was sure funny

But I wanted my money

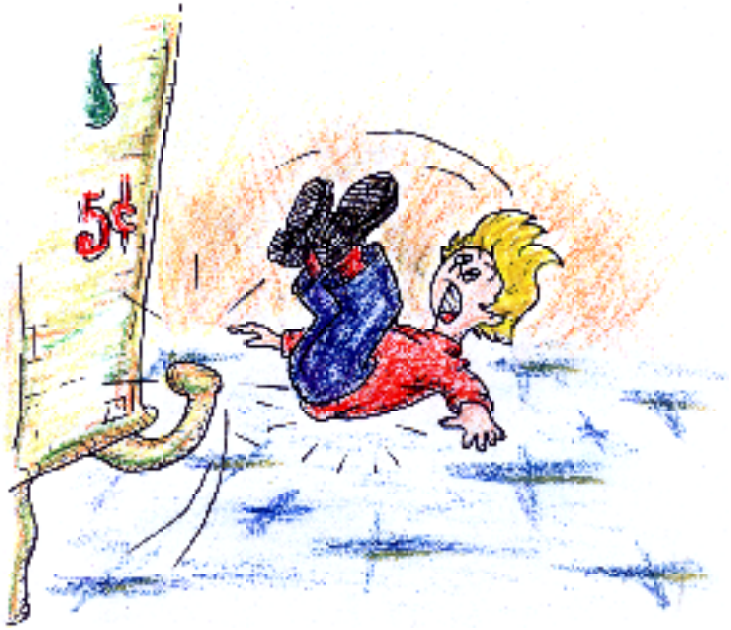
So I kicked the machine with my shoe!



But it kicked me right back

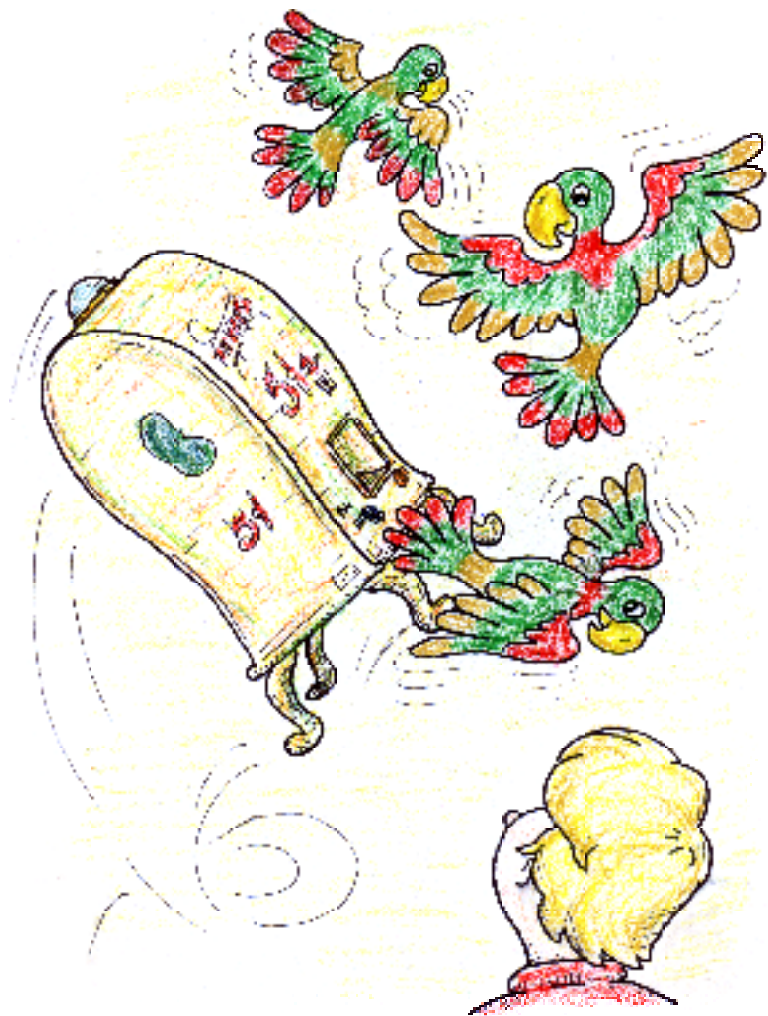
And I fell with a SMACK!





(I guess that was a dumb thing to do.)

Then the pickle machine  
Made a lurch and a lean  
And it lept up and looped all around.  
Three parrots flew out  
And fluttered about  
Before it fell back to the ground.



I was not going to take it!

I took hold to shake it!



And I shook it with all of my might!

The machine started thumping  
And buzzing and bumping  
And flashing a spinning red light.

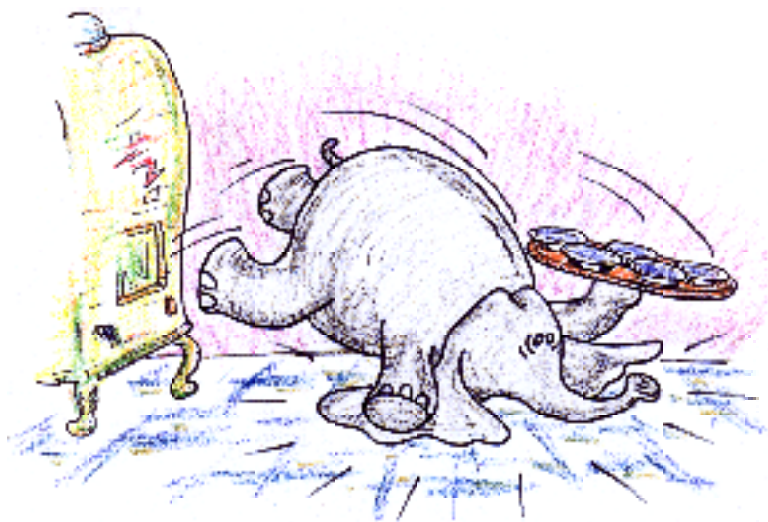
It jumped off the ground  
And bounced all around



'Til it puffed up to three times its size.

My eyes nearly popped out.





An elephant flopped out!...

With a tray full of blueberry pies!

As a rule I don't cry

Over blueberry pie.

I suppose it's worth more

than a pickle's worth.

But my voice shook the air

With a wail of despair

'Cause I wanted my favorite nickel's worth.

I stood there perplexed

And frustrated and vexed

When a little green



creature peeked out



at me.



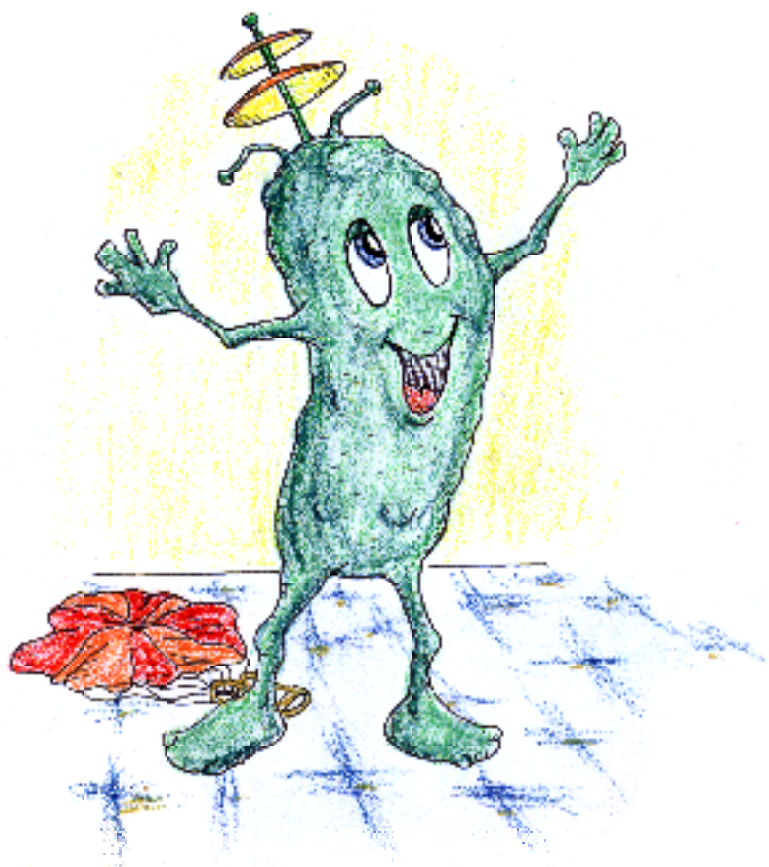
Then he popped out the door,

Floated down to the floor,

And he looked up and said  
“Please don’t shout at me.”

“My name is Gleeder,  
And I am the leader  
of this Great Outer Space Expedition.

This is my ship



From the planet of Glip,  
And to visit your world is our mission.”

“We thought it was wise  
To land here is disguise  
So there’d be no excitement about it.  
The machine you see here





Seemed a splendid idea,  
But in actual fact, now I doubt it.”

“This fine kangaroo  
Is part of the crew,

And so is the cow  
and the elephant too.”

“The blueberry pie  
Is the fuel supply.  
And the parrots are teaching us  
all how to fly.  
Our pup’s name is Zoom.  
And the clown makes us laugh.



We didn't have room

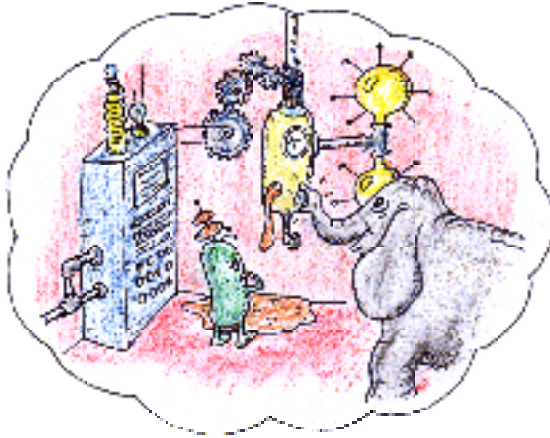
To bring the giraffe."

"Oh yes, thanks for the nickel!

We were losing a trickle

Of Glop through a hole

in the Glup Gear!”



“We thought nothing could save us,  
Then the coin that you gave us  
Plugged it up,

so we're no longer stuck here."

"It's too bad we forgot to bring

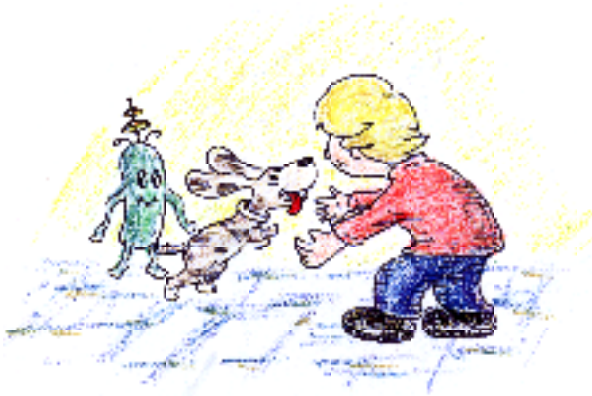
one little pickle,

And we're sad that we cannot

refund you your nickel.

When you surely have saved us from doom!”

”But we’d like to express all our thanks  
and great pleasure,



So I hope you’ll agree to accept  
this small treasure,

Our brown spotted puppy named Zoom.”

“Now we must say ‘Goodbye,’

For it’s homeward we fly;

Our visit has been most delightful.”

Then as quick as a whip,





They squeezed back in their ship

And shot off with a roar somethin' frightful.

Now what I've told to you

Is all perfectly true,

But my Mom thinks I made it all up.

She said puppies will roam,

And he followed me home,

And he actually isn't my pup.

I know there's no proof

That I told her the truth.

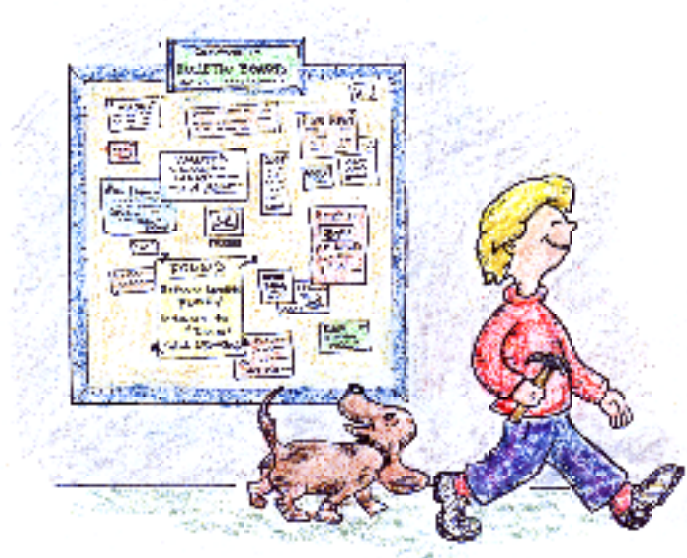
The whole thing sounds like I invented it.



Both Zoom and I

Felt so sad we could cry,  
'Til my Mom had a plan and presented it!

“Of course,” she said,  
“He can’t run in the street.  
He has to have shelter and something to eat.”  
So I promised to feed him and tame him.  
And everything turned out perfectly fine,  
‘Cause I can keep Zoom  
And pretend that he’s mine  
‘Til his real owner comes home to claim him!



The End