

## OPEN, SAYS ME

*(Dramatically.)* "Open, Sesame!" Did you ever wonder how the robbers in *Arabian Nights* chose the words that opened their treasure cave? I mean, why "Sesame"? Why not "Open, Spaghetti!!"? Or "Open, Corn Dog!"? Or "Open, Falafel!"? Why did they choose a food word, anyway? Wouldn't it have been simpler to say "Open, Large Underground Rock Deposit in the Middle of the Sandy Desert!"? *(Pause.)* Maybe not. But if I'd been the robber in charge of the cave door code, I would have picked something a little tougher to crack. Something like "Opennnnnnn, You Goshdarned Useless Yoww-Roww-Argle-Bargle-Grumble-Yabba-Dabba-Nogood-Lousy-Piece-of-Dime-Store-Junk!" That's what my dad says when our garage door opener doesn't work. It always seems to open after that.

## WHEN YOU WISH UPON A STAR

*(Sings.)* "When you wish upon a star." Don't you just love that song? I wonder what it would be like to actually *be* on a star. To exist as a tiny particle of matter way out in space. Since stars are made up of burning gas you'd have to be something lighter than gas, some kind of cloud, maybe. That would be cool! Because if you were a cloud, you could float anywhere. All through the universe! And then you'd look down at kids here on Earth, and you could see them making their wishes, and you could maybe even hear the wishes, too. And maybe — if you were really way-way-way out there in the universe — you would have met God or at least some friendly angels who could help you make somebody's wish here on Earth come true.

## HOW ABOUT MAUVE?

tales,  
land.  
ot of  
cra-  
Why  
ried  
Miss  
mom  
Blue  
ade  
pty  
hoe  
the

*(Holding hand over eye, turning knob as if on a television, repeating.)* I'm adjusting the tint on the world. Everything today is looking a bit too green. Yesterday everything was too grey. So I'm going to make it more, hmmm . . . let's see, how about mauve? *(Turns knob.)* Hold on. Excellent! The world is now officially mauve! Hmmm. I wonder, how do you *think* mauve? Or *feel* mauve? Or *talk* mauve? Uh-oh, something's wrong. *(Hand over eye.)* All the lilacs look brown now. *(Turns knob.)* And the purple people-eaters are becoming yellow yam-snackers. And my friend Violet has turned into my friend Rose! *(Turns knob.)* Oh, no! What have I done!?! I've destroyed the tint balance of the entire world!

## UNSOLVED NURSERY RHYMES

So you think nursery rhymes are just innocent kiddie tales, eh? Well, I call them “unsolved mysteries” from Fairy Land. Just what made Georgie “Porgy”? Peter Piper put a lot of effort into picking pickled peppers. Why? How did the cradle that rocked get up on the treetop in the first place? Why didn’t the black sheep have a bag for the little boy who cried in the lane? Was he allergic to wool? Personally, I think Miss Muffet was more scared of the curds and whey her mom packed for lunch than any old spider. And Little Boy Blue blowing his horn all the time — that’s probably what made Jack and Jill fall down the hill and knock Humpty Dumpty off the wall right into the old woman who lived in a shoe and had so many children she couldn’t get them all into the car to go shopping for a bigger shoe to live in.

## SHIP IN A BOTTLE

*(Gazing around at the distant horizon.)* Wow! I'm on a ship! An old wooden clipper ship with wide white sails, and we're sailing in a big blue ocean filled with . . . pink bubbles! Pink soap bubbles far as the eye can see! That's because the ship is in a bottle. And the bottle is in a bathtub. Wonder how I got here? Wonder where we're sailing to! Wonder if this bathtub is on a ship that's in a bottle that's in another bathtub? *(Crouches.)* Look out! It's a sea monster! A fifty-foot-high yellow duck, and it's coming toward us! Man the life boats! Trim the mainsail! Anchors aweigh!

# MY TALKING TOOTHBRUSH

for  
new  
it's  
say  
this  
has  
last  
ow  
ay  
tar  
are  
sp-  
art

*(Squeezing toothpaste onto a toothbrush.)* Is that enough? You'd like a little more? No? *(Turns on faucet and puts toothbrush under water.)* Wssshhhhh! Too cold for you? *(Adjusts faucet.)* How is that? Okay, here we go! *(Raises toothbrush to mouth.)* Oh, excuse me. I was just talking to my toothbrush. Well, of course it talks back. Doesn't yours? My toothbrush tells me lots of cool things. Where to brush, naturally, and get all the food particles away from my teeth and gums. And it tells me how good my smile looks. *(Smiles widely.)* Did you know it is impossible to smile on the outside without feeling better on the inside? When you are lonely, a smile is the shortest distance between two people. And you are never fully dressed in the morning unless you are wearing a smile. So you better have a good strong smile ready to go, because all through the day you are going to want to show it to lots of people. *(Cocks ear to toothbrush.)* What was that? Quit talking and start brushing? Okay! *(Brushes vigorously.)*

## SHOWER HEAD

Step right up, ladies and gentlemen, and gather round for a look at the greatest invention of the century! It's the new Super Duper Adjustable Power Shower Head! And it's adjustable, did I mention it was adjustable? What? You say you already have an adjustable shower head? Not like this one! The Super Duper Adjustable Power Shower Head has a setting for Sun Shower. All of a sudden a big bright blast of sunshine pours out onto your face! And there's the Snow Shower setting. Zing! You can hear jingle bells all the way to grandma's house! There's a setting for Moon Shower, Star Shower and Meteor Shower — alien spaceships are optional. Of course, my favorite is the Jelly Shower in raspberry, grape and kiwi marmalade. What a great way to start the day! Breakfast in the shower!



## POPSICLES IN THE DESERT

really  
I lis-  
thing.  
shut.  
at the  
pider  
Once  
mil-  
Well,  
hair  
u're  
ver  
al!

*(Studiously working calculator.)* Hi. I'm figuring how many Popsicle sticks it takes to cover the Sahara Desert. Well, not exactly. I read in the newspaper that the Sahara Desert is the biggest desert in the world — three and a half million square miles. That's a lot of sand. And it's getting bigger every year. That means the people who live there have less land to grow crops and less water to drink. Pretty soon, no one will be able to live there at all. My plan is to make a very large garden hose that the United Nations can use to spray water all over the Sahara Desert and make it come alive again. I can't talk my parents into buying me that much garden hose, but I could use the Popsicle sticks to be a scale model. And who knows? Maybe with the leftover Popsicles we could solve another environmental problem — how to keep the polar ice caps from melting.



## ANIMALS SLEEPING

I like walking in the woods. Though mostly I don't really walk but find a comfy place to sit. And then I listen. I listen to all the animals sleeping. I can hear them breathing. I can hear their hearts beating. Their eyes fluttering shut. Ssshhh, listen! There's a turtle sleeping nearby, maybe at the end of that log. And over there, some funnel-web spider babies are snoozing in their cocoon inside that tree. Once I came upon a big huge anthill this high all filled with millions of sleeping ants. Ever hear a million ants snoring? Well, it sounds a lot like your grandpa dozing in his easy chair after dinner, only without the burping. Sometimes, if you're really quiet, you can hear some animals dreaming. Ever wonder what a porcupine dreams about? Ssshhh, listen!

## MARSHMALLOWS ARE THE WAY TO WORLD PEACE

If I were president, people would use marshmallows for money. Marshmallows would be our national currency. That means every time you went to work, you would get paid with a big bag of marshmallows. And every time you needed to buy something, you would pay for it with marshmallows. When you got on a bus or train, you would give the conductor a little string of mini-marshmallows and get a littler string of mini-micro-marshmallows back as change. When you bought groceries or toys or went to a movie or stayed at a motel, you would pay for it with marshmallows. And people would wear big comfy marshmallow packs to carry their marshmallows when they went out, and they would keep their marshmallows in marshmallow banks and buy marshmallow stocks and bonds at the Marshmallow Stock Exchange, and they would only vote for politicians who promised to plant more marshmallow trees in the national parks. And that would stop crime and war. Because you wouldn't need to steal anything except marshmallows, and how many marshmallows can one person have in their house, anyway, before they have to give them away or eat them? And if one country did try and fight a war, how could they have room for their tanks to drive and planes to fly and soldiers to march with all the roads and cities all filled up with marshmallows? If you ask me — and maybe you should — I think marshmallows are the way to world peace.