

Rastko Ćirić

PING PONG
BALLS CRACKER

& other useless objects



PING-PONGBALLSCRACKER



BOOK NINE

Already published:

HANDY ZOO

COMMON LIFE ANATOMY

OGRES & BOGIES MANUAL

SOPHISTICATED BONDAGING MANUAL

TELEPHONE JOKES

THAT (by Milenko Mihajlović)

INVISIBLE AND POORLY VISIBLE

ANIMAL SPECIES

FAIRY CHESS

Editor Nikola Šindik
Consultant Benoit Junod

©Rastko Ćirić 1973/ 1998

Rastko Ćirić

PING-PONG
B A L L
CRACKER

& other useless objects

METAPHYSICAL OBJECTS

»The handleless axe without a blade« (Lichtenberg)

A device made by an unsuccessful inventor always provoke laughter, but that is not its aim. People reacts that way by surprise, as the expected effect didn't come up.

It seems that the first "useless" objects, deliberately designed by the use of absurd to change someone's way of thinking, were made by the surrealist artists in the beginning of the 20th century. Frenchman Marcelle Duchamp fixed a bicycle wheel upside-down to a chair. It was quite an useless construction, one of the first "objects" in the 20th century art. The next famous object was funny as well: as a present to the celebrated composer Eric Satie, the American Man Ray fixed a row of nails to the smooth surface of an iron. "By adding this simple element, the former identity of the iron was canceled, and it became the symbol of nonsense and uselessness, a classic example of a disturbing effect provoked also by other similar creations by Man Ray. We are delighted by the witty humour and confused by the radical change of identity produced by such a small intervention." (R. Penrose: Man Ray). Ray told us that he, after that, really "ironed" a dress using his device, asking one black girl to dress it up: "It was exciting to watch her dance in these rags!".

The famous objects were also the "Fur Breakfast" - the teacup coated inside with a fur, designed by the Swiss artist Meret Oppenheim in 1938, the shoes with toes on the Rene Magritte's painting from 1937, Picasso's "Bull's Head" consisted of a bicycle seat and a handle bar, Dall's melted watches, useless machines of Francis Picabia and Jean Tinguely, soft objects by Claes Oldenburg, tooth brush with teeth instead hair - a satirical object by Jasper Jones from 1959, and many other surrealistic visions.

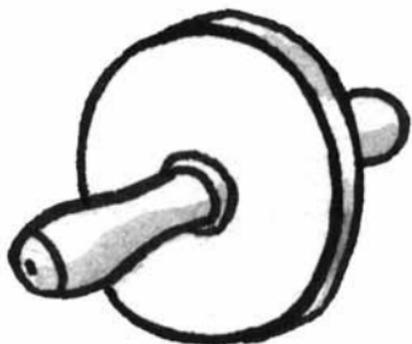
Yet the old Greek philosophers dealt with the paradox (remember those of Zenon), but it seems that the visual paradox is the 20th century's product. Bosch's phantasmagorical structures of beings with objects could be considered as precestors of the surrealist's absurd objects, although it seems that they were combinations of a certain symbols whose true meaning was lost.

Since 1962, in each James Bond movie, Mr. Q - the head inventor of the British secret service, would present to the self-controlled Mr. Bond several clever and witty inventions. During the Sixties, the Italian comic strip artist Jacovitti "filled up" the frames of his comics with different absurd objects, and French cartoonist Roland Topor published his surrealist drawings. Many other artists published their paradoxal thoughts as well. Maybe the most extreme example was French author Jacques Carelman who published his first book with drawings of useless objects (*Catalogue d'objets introuvables*) in 1969, and the second in 1976. Some craftsmen, inspired by those drawings, made real objects in solid material, which were presented at a visited exhibition in the Louvre in 1972. Out of hundreds Carelman's creations let us mention the famous bag for carrying cats, the rifle with waving barrel for hunting cangaroos, and the toilet bicycle seat.

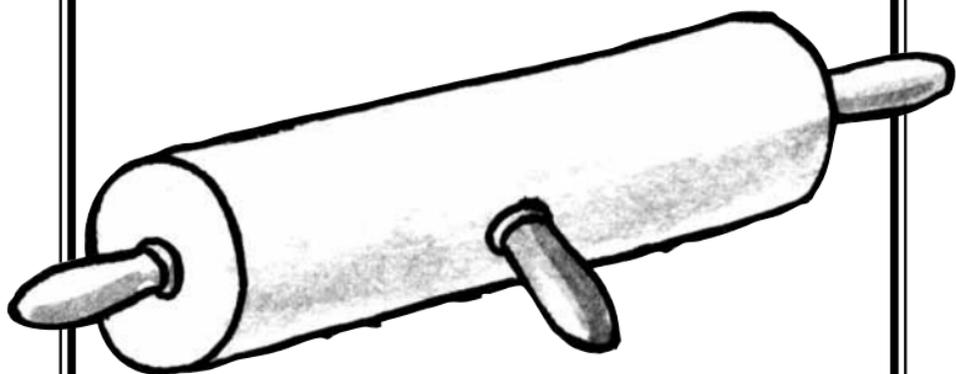
In Serbia, a number of such a drawings were published by Radoslav Zečević (in the *Serbian Slang Dictionary* by D. Andrić), Jugoslav Vlahović and others whose art poetics were based mainly on paradox.

As a high school student, during 1973 and 1974, I also have joined the absurdomania, publishing some fiftiesh drawings of useless "articals" in the "Čik" magazine. In this booklet there is a choice of some 30 objects, out of which some were never published.

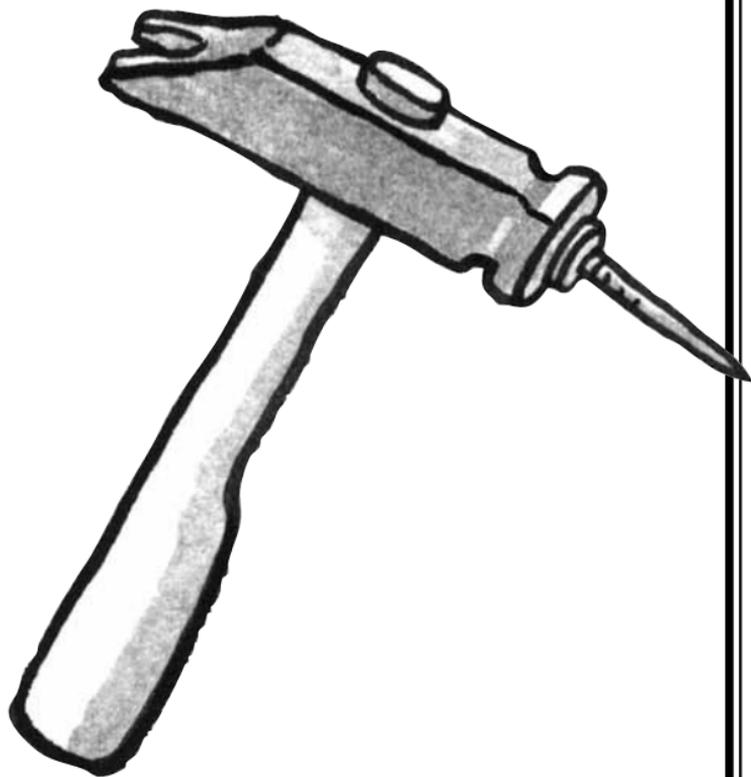
Author



ROLLING PIN FOR NOODLES



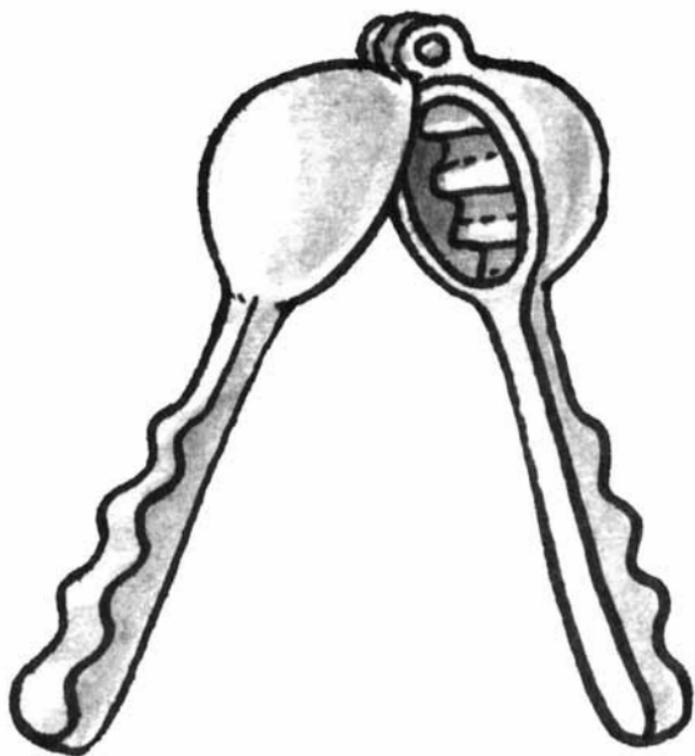
ROLLING PIN WITH A BRAKE



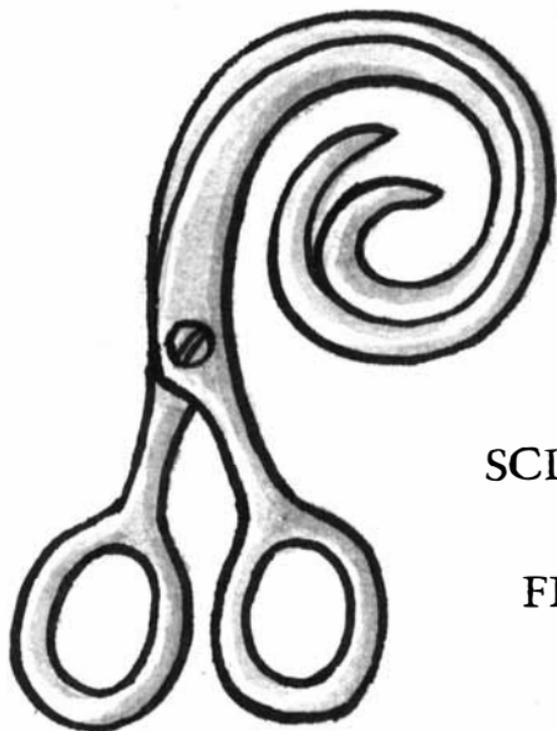
NAIL WITH A BUILT-IN
HAMMER

WATERING CAN FOR
FLOWER-STAMPING





PING-PONG BALL CRACKER



SCISSORS
FOR
FREAKS

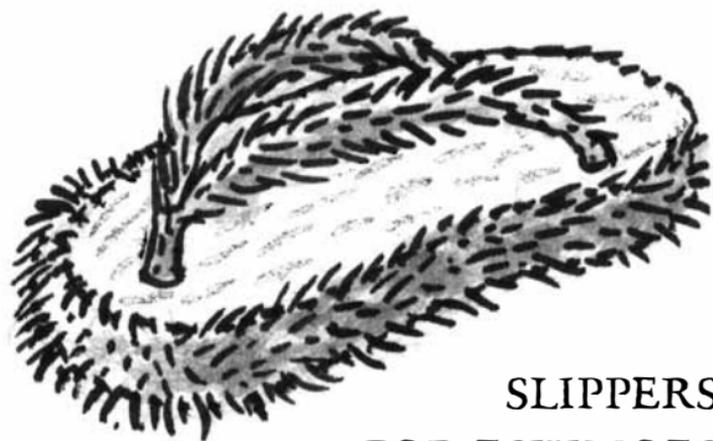




SCISSORS FOR FREAKS

/ PART 2





SLIPPERS
FOR ESKIMOES



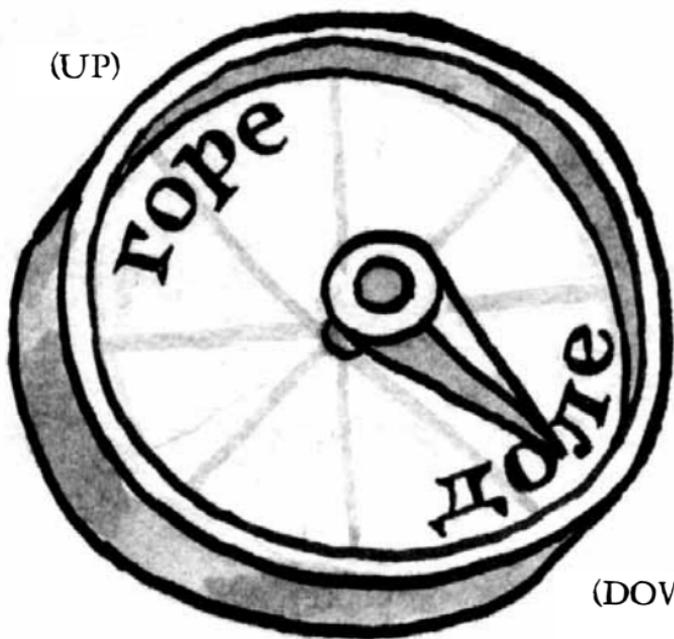
HIGH-HEEL
FIN

SHOE-HORN FOR
GLOVES



SHOE-HORN
FOR EAR PICKING

(UP)

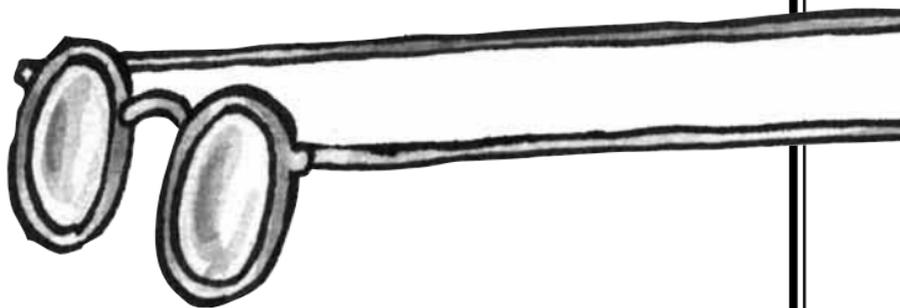


(DOWN)

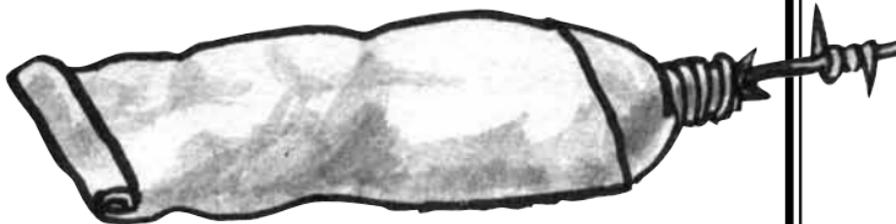
COMPASS FOR ALPINISTS

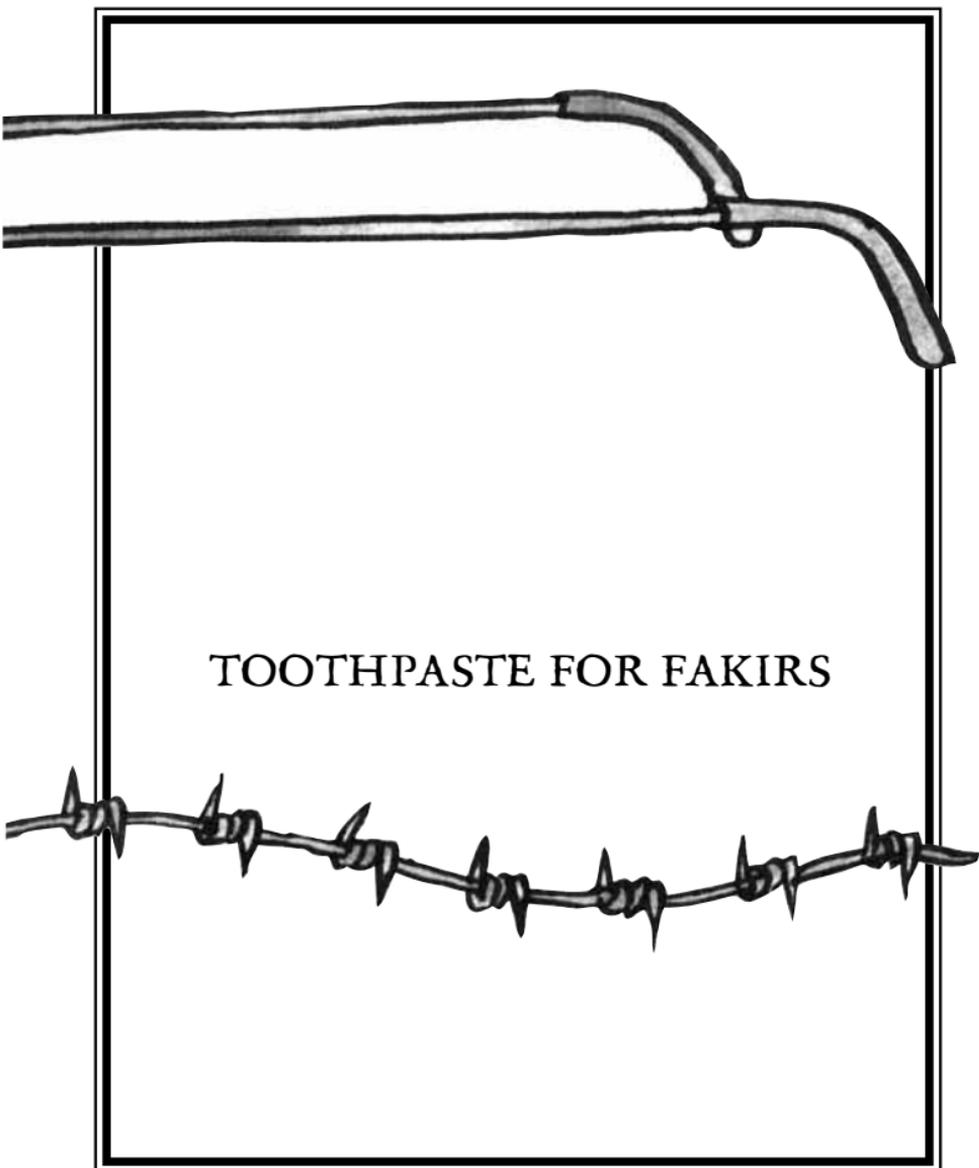
STYROPOR KILO-WEIGHT

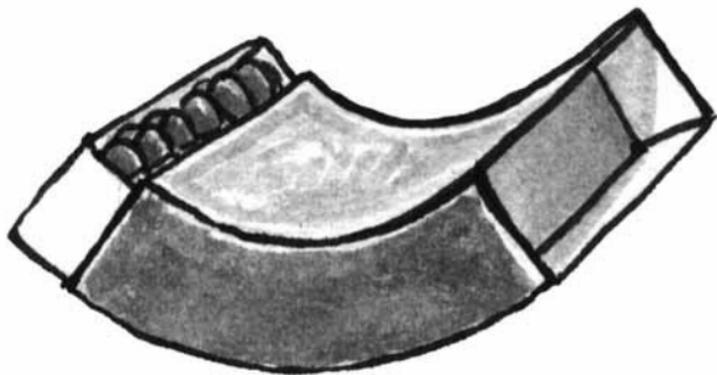




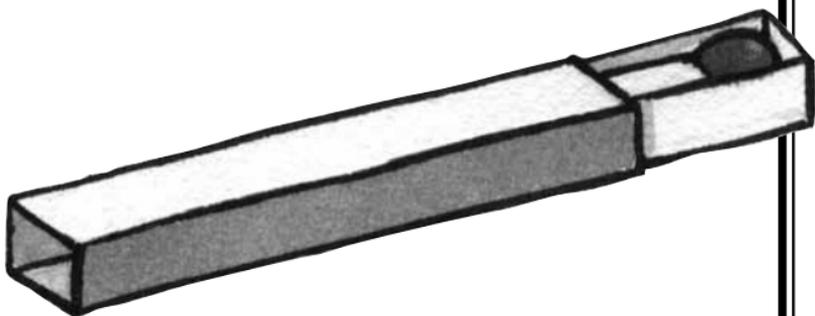
GLASSES FOR LONGSIGHTED



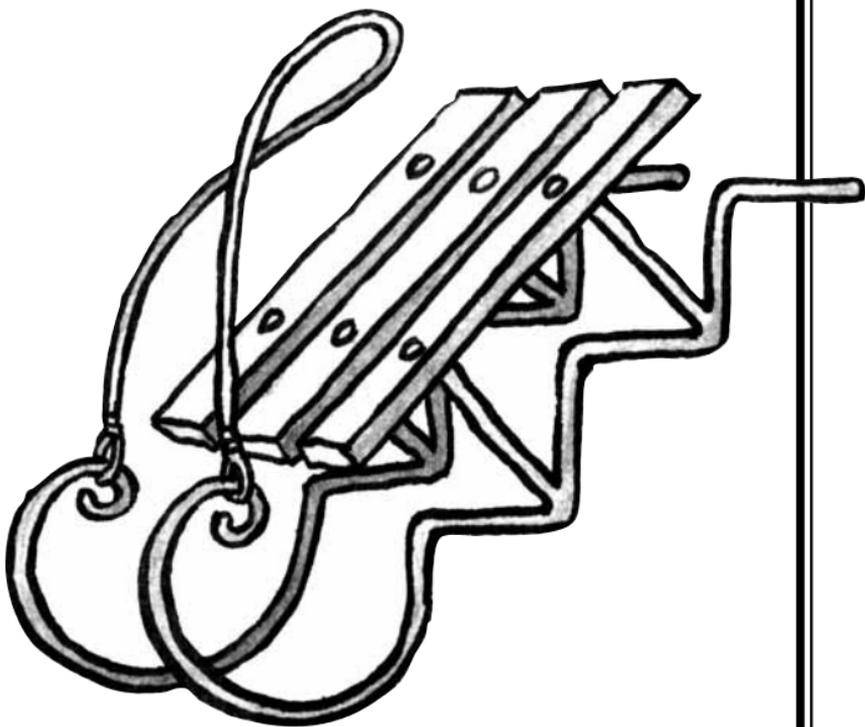




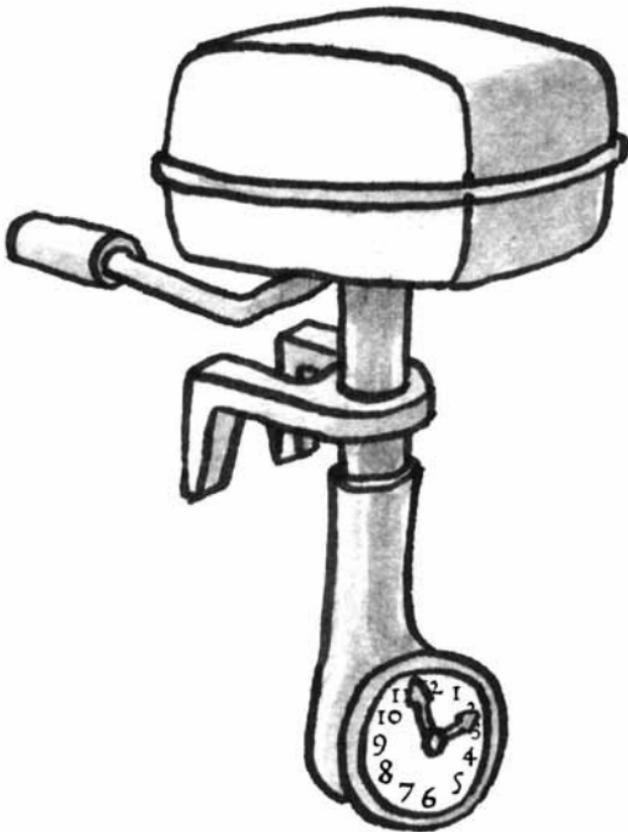
ROCKING MATCHBOX



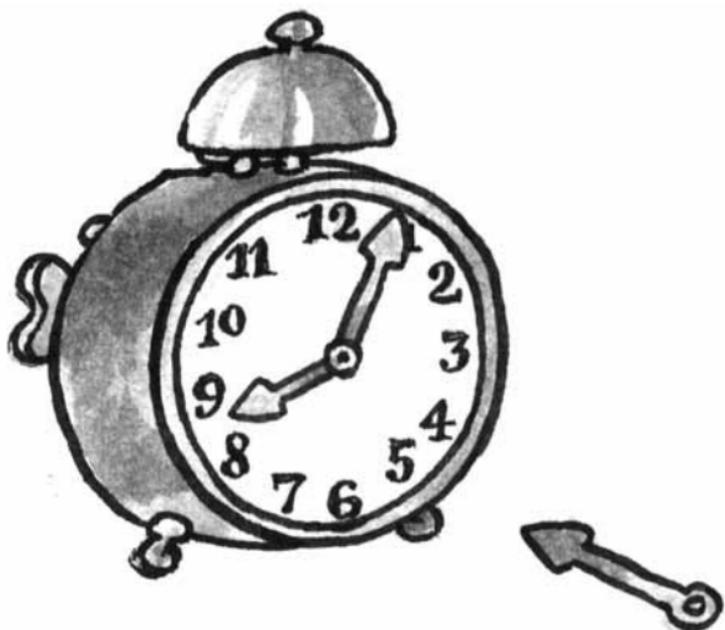
ONE-MATCH-BOX



STAIRSLEDGE



OUTBOARD ENGINE FOR
VERY SLOW SAILING



THREE-HAND ALARM-CLOCK
(The third points where the clock is)

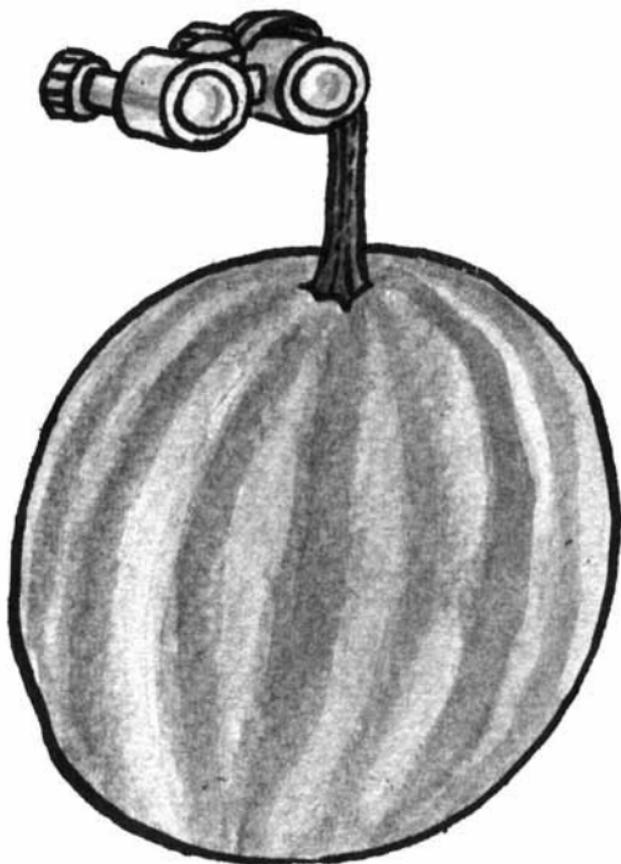


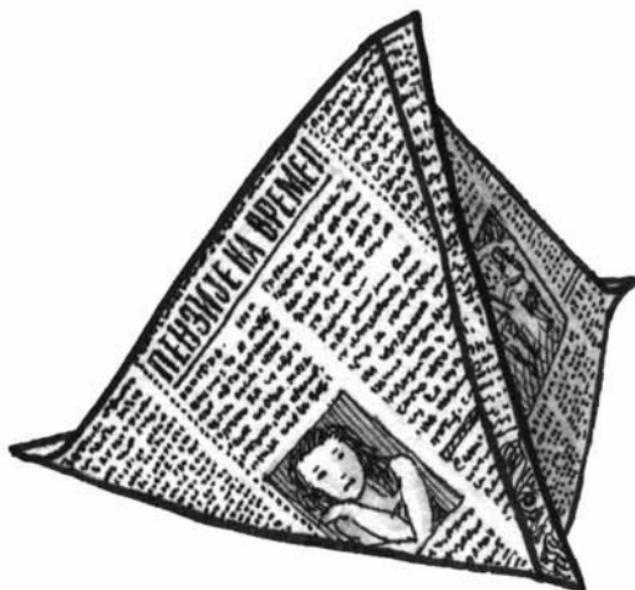
TOILET SEAT WITH A VIEW



FAMILY COAT-HANGER

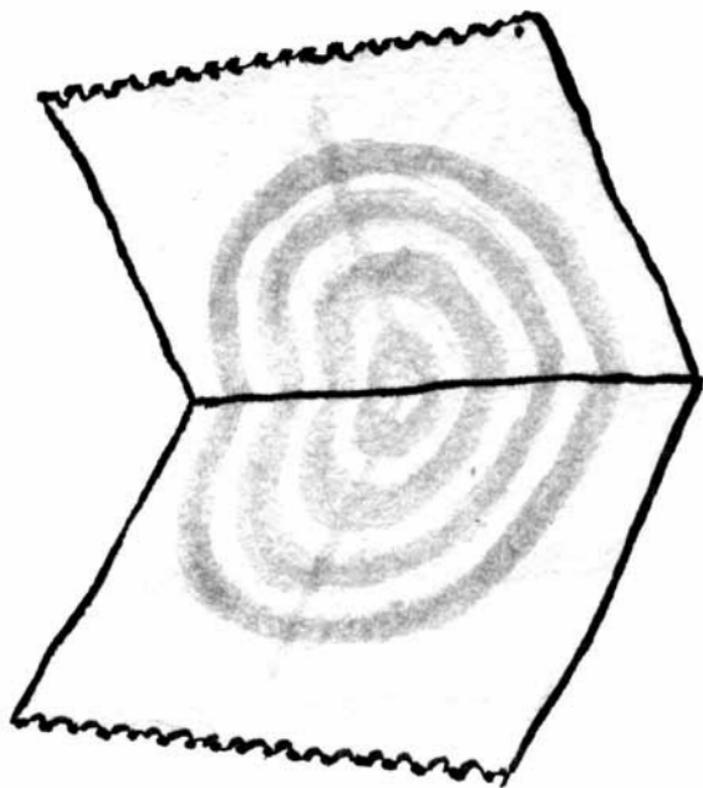
THEATRE WATERMELON

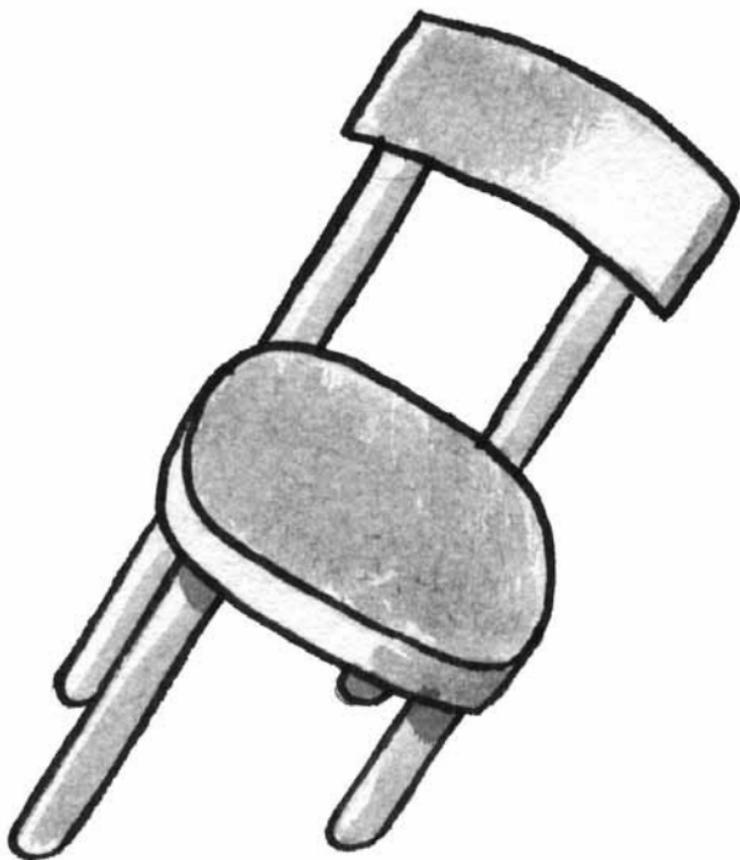




TETRAPACK NEWSPAPER

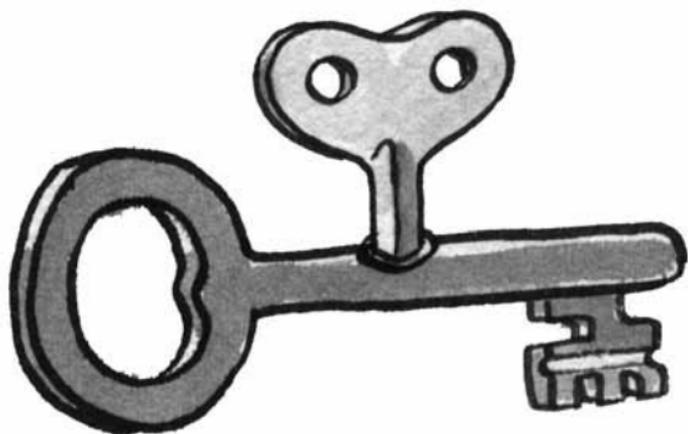
TOILET-PAPER
WITH A TARGET





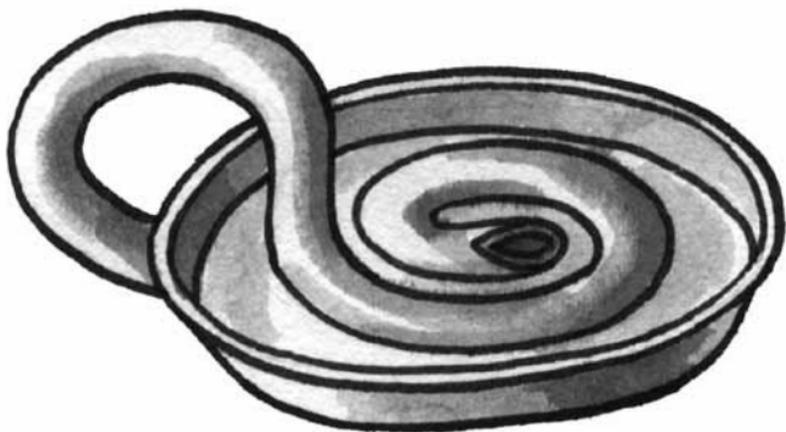
MOUNTAIN CHAIR

WIND-UP KEY

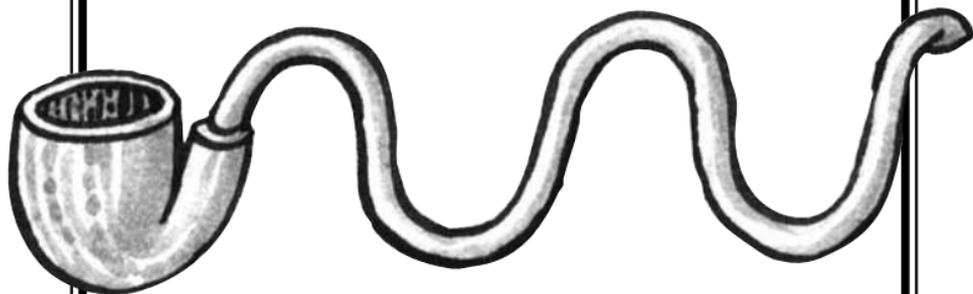


VENTILATION
CORK

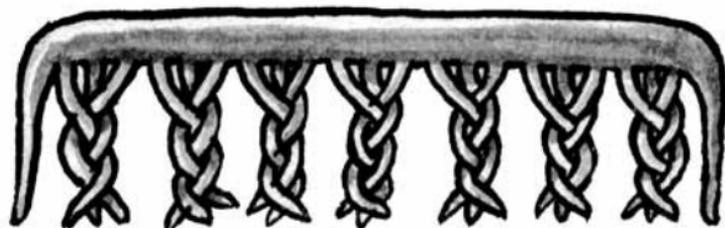




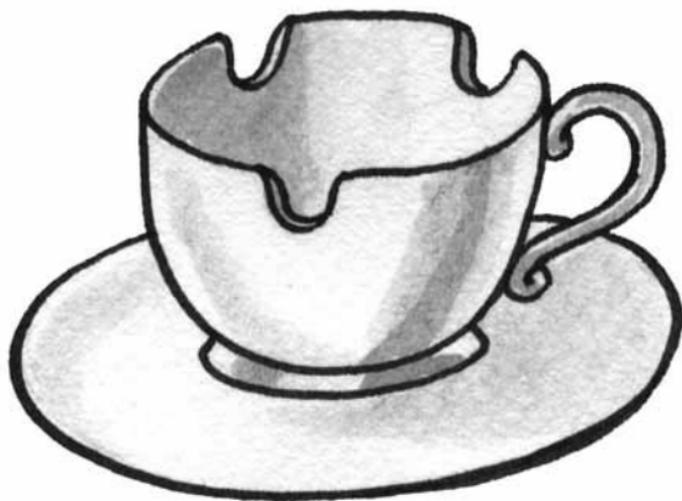
HANDLE-FRYING PAN



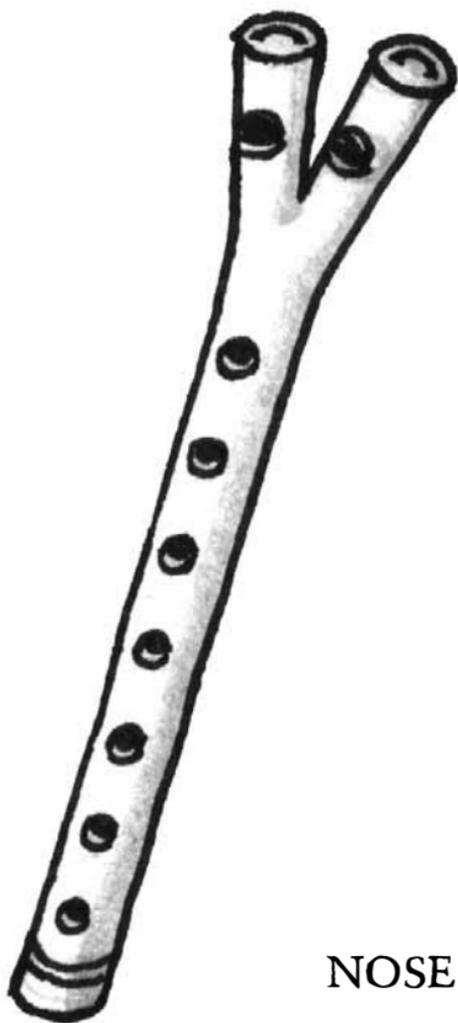
LOCH-NESS PIPE



BRAID COMB



SMOKER'S CUP



NOSE FLUTE

SIAMESE-TWIN GLASSES



BLIND ALLEY

Rastko Ćirić (1955, Gemini), in the beginning of his career (and only then), has belonged to the youngest generation of Belgrade graphic artists. He started to wear glasses during the earliest primary school days. He reached twelve minus in diopter, and from then on, he was minus.

He has been working on nonsense like this, and even bigger idiocies, almost 35 years. His drawers are full of useless things like these.

