



## THRIFT

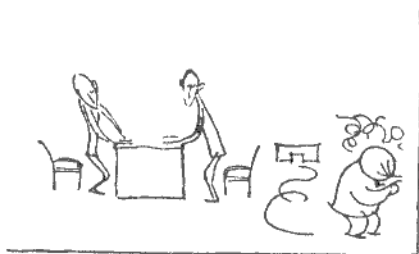
Nobody can be lucky all the time;  
so when your luck deserts you in some fashion  
don't think you've been abandoned in your prime,  
but rather that you're saving up your ration.



## CAPACITY

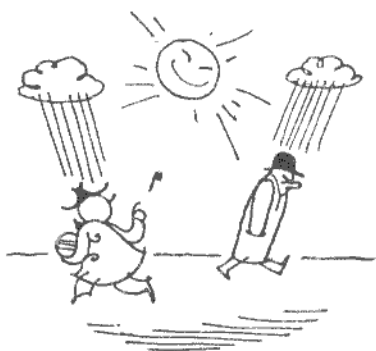
A contribution to the psychology of disappointment

Some people live  
in a dream of what'll  
allow them to  
live their dream:  
they solemnly hold out  
a half-pint bottle  
and ask for  
a pint of cream.



## THAT WEARY FEELING

Do you know that weary feeling  
when your mind is strangely strangled  
and your head is like a ball of wool  
that's very, very tangled;  
and the tempo of your thinking  
must be lenient and mild,  
as though you were explaining  
to a very little child.



## ONE'S OWN WEATHER

You're squandering  
    spleen on your brothers,  
and wasting  
    good self-pity too,  
if you think  
    that there's sun on the others  
whenever it's  
    raining on you.



## TWO PASSIVISTS

Eradicate the optimist  
who takes the easy view  
that human values will persist  
no matter what we do.

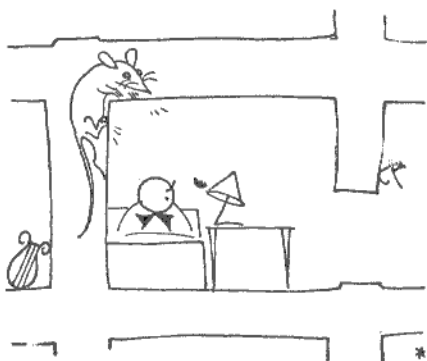
Annihilate the pessimist  
whose ineffectual cry  
is that the goal's already missed  
however hard we try.



## THE CENTRAL POINT

A philosophistry

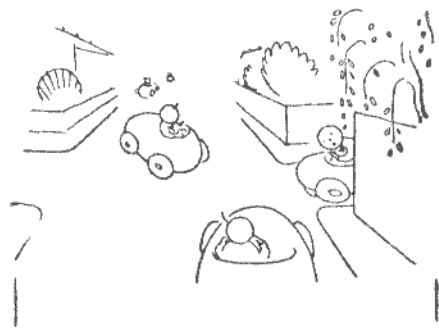
I am the Universe's Centre.  
No subtle sceptics can confound me;  
for how can other viewpoints enter,  
when all the rest is all around me?



## MOUSE AND MAN

A relativistic grook on co-existence

A human being sharing with a mouse.  
Each thinks himself the master of the house.  
In fact, of course, each occupier's place is  
the other's insulating interspaces.

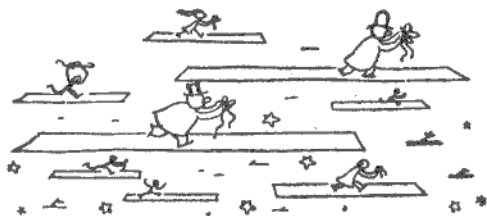


## THREE FACTS ABOUT TRAFFIC

Three facts, quite easy,  
should be known to all  
would-be arrivers  
who set out on wheels:

that roads are greasy,  
safety margins small,  
and fellow-drivers  
fellow imbeciles.





## VITA BREVIS

A lifetime  
is more  
than  
sufficiently long  
for people  
to get  
what there is of it  
wrong.



## ASTRO-GYMNASTICS

Do-it-yourself grook

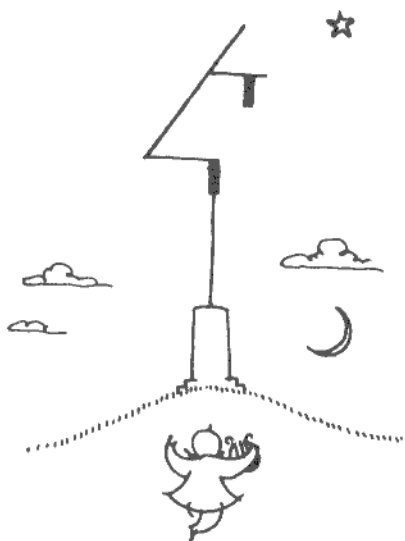
Go on a starlit night,  
stand on your head,  
leave your feet dangling  
outwards into space,  
and let the starry  
firmament you tread  
be, for the moment,  
your elected base.

Feel Earth's colossal weight  
of ice and granite,  
of molten magma,  
water, iron, and lead;  
and briefly hold  
this strangely solid planet  
balanced upon  
your strangely solid head.



## TWIN MYSTERY

To many people artists seem  
undisciplined and lawless.  
Such laziness, with such great gifts,  
seems little short of crime.  
One mystery is how they make  
the things they make so flawless;  
another, what they're doing with  
their energy and time.



## DRAWING NEAR

To Saul Steinberg

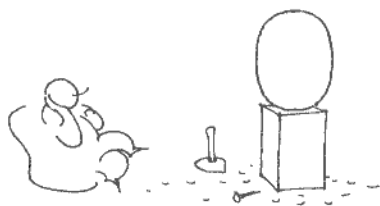
You draw  
the near things  
nearer  
by making  
clear things  
queerer.



## THOUGHTS AND THINGS

I concentrate on  
the concentric rings  
produced by my pen  
in the ink.

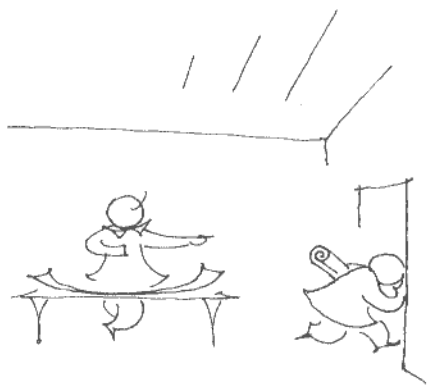
The thing that distinguishes  
thoughts from things  
is that thoughts are harder  
to think.



## LAST THINGS FIRST

Solutions to problems  
are easy to find:  
the problem's a great  
contribution.

What is truly an art  
is to wring from your mind  
a problem to fit  
a solution.



## ON BEING ONESELF

Good-resolution grook

If virtue  
can't be mine alone  
at least my faults  
can be my own.



## UNPLUMBED DEPTHS

Grook on philo-sophistical and other -isms

Philo-sophisticism  
with hypnotic  
effect affects  
the boobies that abound:  
being so bottomlessly  
idiotic  
that even they  
can see it is profound.





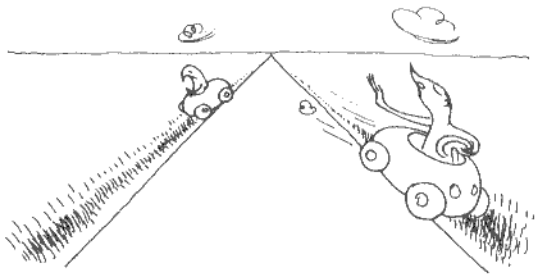
## ORIGINALITY

Original thought  
is a straightforward process.  
It's easy enough  
when you know what to do.  
You simply combine  
in appropriate doses  
the blatantly false  
and the patently true.



## WISDOM IS –

Wisdom is  
the booby prize  
given when you've been  
unwise.



## THE OPPOSITE VIEW

For many system-shoppers it's  
a good-for-nothing system  
that classifies as opposites  
stupidity and wisdom,

because by logic-choppers it's  
accepted with avidity:  
stupidity's true opposite's  
the opposite stupidity.

# HERE IT IS



Here's good old Earth –  
– what a dear little star!

Here's U.S.A. –



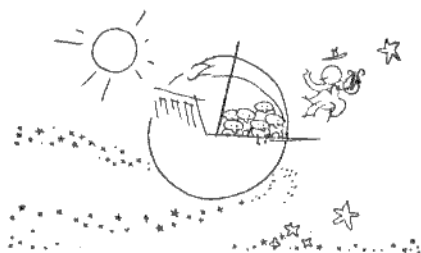
– here's U.S.S.R.

Washington  
is over here –



– and Moscow's  
over there.

What an ugly face  
for such a lovely World to wear!

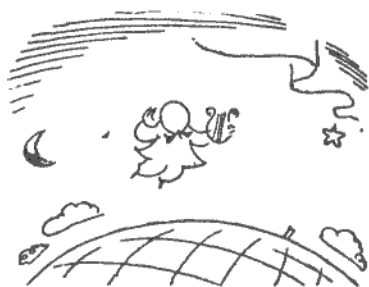


## PROSPECTING THE SUMMIT

A grook about parlour games

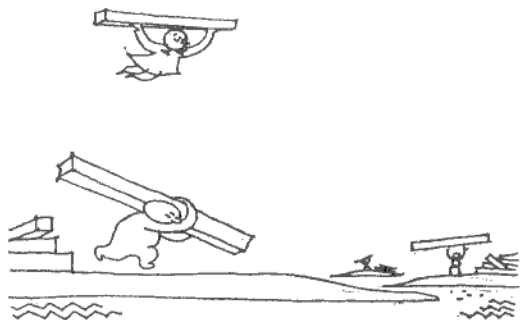
Those who've been making the week go by  
trying to work out exactly whom, with  
what reservations, and how, and why,  
who would (or wouldn't) remain in the room with,

ought to consider, anent their doom,  
a further point they can play the goat with,  
viz.: to discover exactly whom  
who might (or mightn't) be in the same boat with.



## UNDERTONE

One must admire the cool deliberation with which they talk of thermonuclear power: as if the very earth's disintegration will also be forgotten in an hour.



## BRIDGING MATERIALS

Is there a mote in your neighbour's eye?

Bridge-builder, leave it alone!

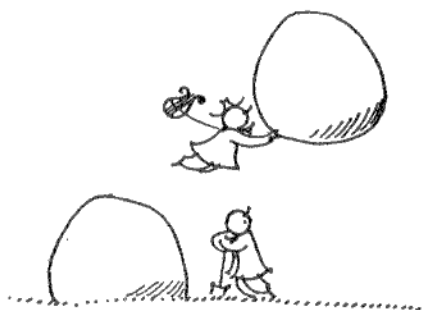
Humanity's bridges can only be built  
of the beams in your own.



## ONLY HOPING

Only hoping isn't what  
gives us strength to cope.  
Let us only hope; but not  
only only hope.





## WANTING TO BE ABLE TO

'Impossibilities' are good  
not to attach that label to;  
since, correctly understood,  
if we wanted to, we would  
be able to be able to.



## WHO IS LEARNED?

A definition

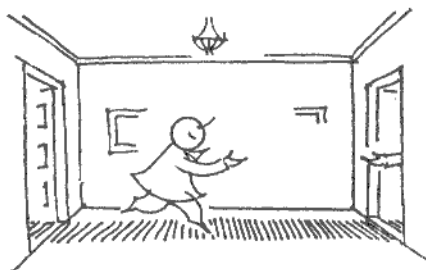
One who, consuming midnight oil  
in studies diligent and slow,  
teaches himself, with painful toil,  
the things that other people know.



## THE EGOCENTRICS

People are self-centred  
to a nauseous degree.

They will keep on about themselves  
while I'm explaining me.



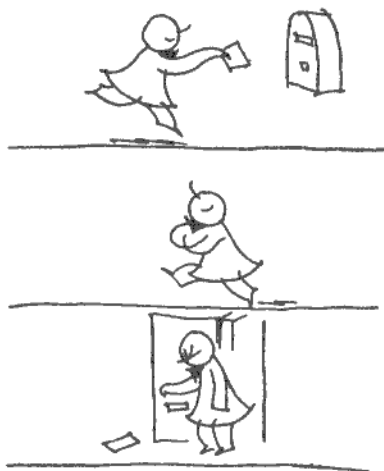
## EVERYBODY'S WORTH KNOWING

It's some sort of comfort  
to get the gist  
of certain impertinents  
I could list –  
so that you know what you  
haven't missed.



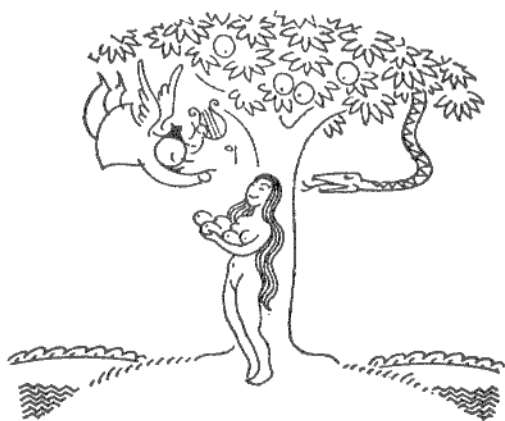
## GROOK ABOUT FAITH, HOPE, ETC.

She gave me hope,  
she gave me love,  
    with bounty unalloyed.  
But what she had of faith,  
alas,  
    she gave to Freud.



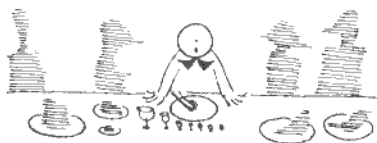
## THE CIVILIZED ART

Two types that had far better  
leave to their betters  
the civilized art  
of exchanging letters  
are those who disdain  
to make any response,  
and those who infallibly  
answer at once.



## IN PRAISE OF ABUNDANCE

I love excess  
of fruitfulness.  
Let other fools  
pay more for less.



## THE FIRST PRINCIPLE OF GASTRONOMY

There's a rule for proper doses  
in the dinner-eater's lore:  
one should stop the filling process  
while one still has room for more.

And if someone at the table  
had reminded me before –  
Hallelujah! I'd be able  
to absorb a little more.

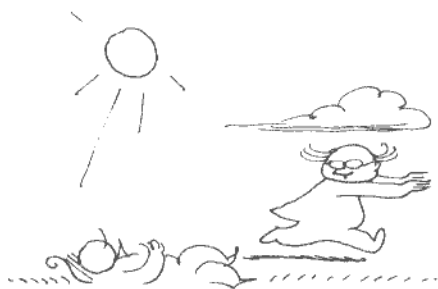




## HANDSOME IS –

Portrait-grook

He's gallantry personified;  
in fact  
his brochures ought to read:  
**SATISFACTION GUARANTEED –**  
or your virginity returned  
intact.



## IDLE FELLOW

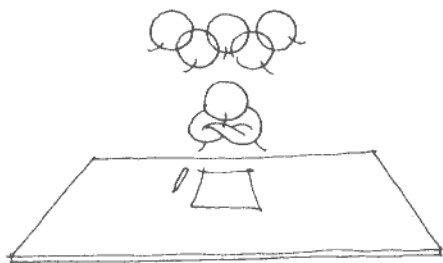
Portrait-grook

Professor Blooby doesn't see the fun  
in what his fellow-men call relaxation.  
He isn't ignorant of how it's done,  
but lacks the necessary application.



## A DIPLOMATIC COMPROMISE

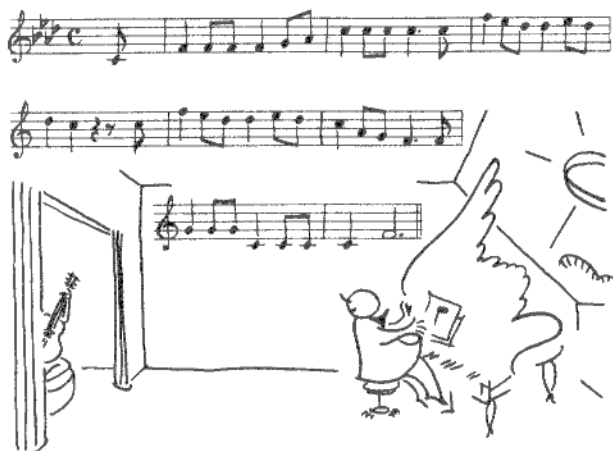
A fellow I know  
can get mountains to move  
and all opposition  
appeases:  
he preaches what God  
cannot help but approve,  
and does  
what the Devil he pleases.



## POLYMANIA

Clearly the Fates  
were in one of their spins,  
and what became me  
was intended as quins.

So all my sublime  
aspirations are vain,  
with five of me kneading  
our thoughts in my brain.



## NOVELTY

For me there is something ineffably new  
in every new moment's arising;  
and even the things I habitually do  
have qualities new and surprising.

There's nothing that happens that happened before  
in exactly that way in its life.  
When you're playing the piano, it's rather a bore;  
but it's nice when you're kissing your wife.



## REVELATION AT MIDNIGHT

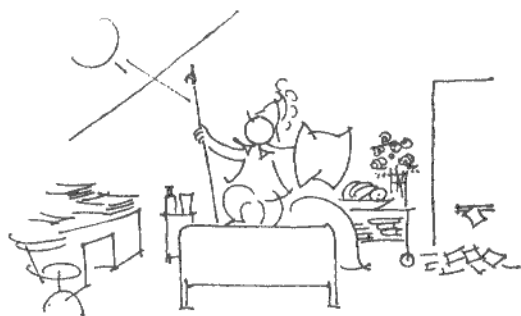
Infinity's taken  
by everyone  
as a figure-of-eight  
written sideways on.

But all of a sudden  
I now apprehend  
that eight is infinity  
standing on end.



## NUMBERS

A number will find  
fulfillment enough  
in knowing its mind  
and doing its stuff.



## INFLUENZA CLASSICA

*'O Varus, Varus, give me back  
my legions!'*

*Augustus Caesar.*

With a head that aches severely  
and with weeping nose and eye  
I lie helplessly extended at full length;  
and like old Augustus – nearly –  
I beat my breast and cry:  
'O Virus, Virus, give me back my strength!'





## REMEDIES' REMEDIES

Pills are useful  
against ills  
and against  
too many pills.



## WE DO OUR BEST

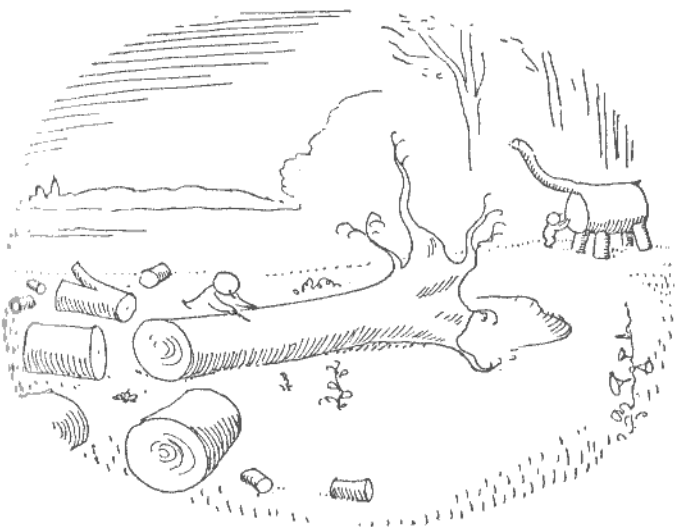
Or do we?

Modern man  
has the skill:  
he can do  
what he will.  
But alas –  
being man  
he will do  
what he can.



## CHEAP EATERY

Whenever I'm scared by the state of my purse  
I dine at the 'Gold-Digger's Claim',  
where the food is so out of comparison worse  
you forget that the price is the same.



## GREY GIANT

Elephantasy

Felled by the storm  
the beech lies humbled,  
roots in the air  
and leaf-crown tumbled.

Woodmen arrive  
in scarves and parkas  
scrambling about  
the beech tree's carcass,

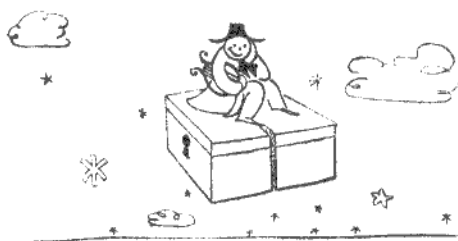
cutting it up,  
with wild irrelevance,  
into spare parts  
for worn-out elephants.



## SIMILARITY

Commutative Law

No cow's like a horse,  
and no horse like a cow.  
That's one similarity  
anyhow.



## THE PARADOX OF LIFE

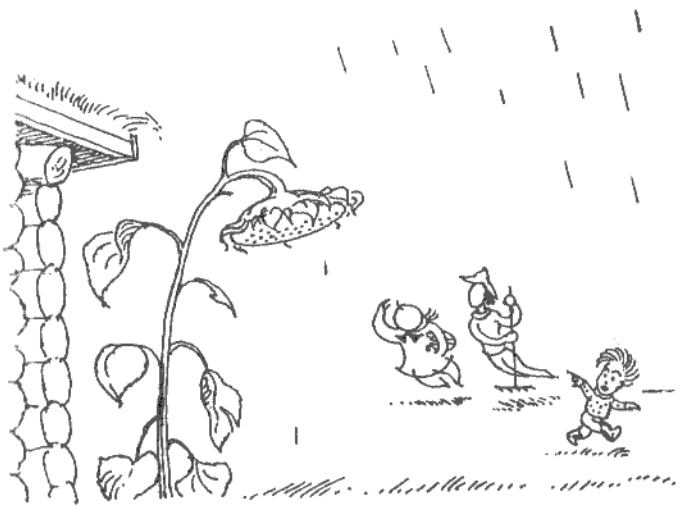
Philosophical grook

A bit beyond perception's reach  
I sometimes believe I see  
that Life is two locked boxes, each  
containing the other's key.



## BUDGETING: THE FIRST LAW

If you want to know  
where your money went,  
you must spend it quickly  
before it's spent.



AH, SUN-FLOWER! WEARY OF TIME . . .

Emblem-grook

Sun-flowers are weeping; winter has begun;  
and even this most sun-besotted flower,  
the very emblem of midsummer sun,  
takes on the likeness of my bathroom shower.





## ON AN ASHTRAY

When your thirst  
and hunger cease,  
may your ashes  
rest in peace.

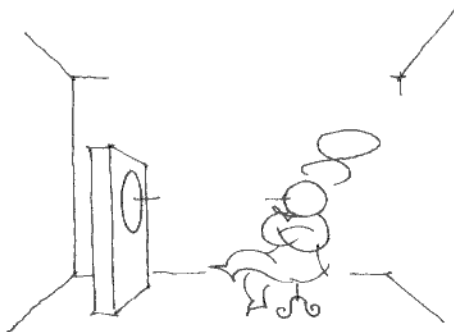


OH BOTHER!

What with one thing  
and another  
people bother.

With a third thing  
and a fourth it  
isn't worth it.





## TIME

Does time exist?  
I gravely doubt it.  
But gosh, what should we do  
without it?



## CANDLE WISDOM

If you knew  
what you will know  
when your candle  
has burnt low,  
it would greatly  
ease your plight  
while your candle  
still burns bright.