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My Planet

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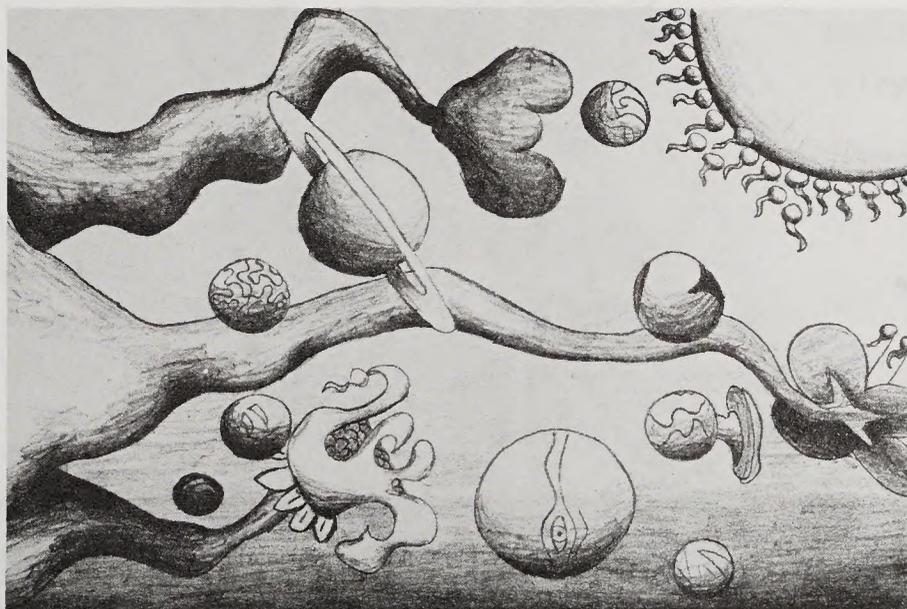
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One Sea-Monkey, Two Sugars

My next door neighbor is a sea-monkey. The only reason I knew this was because his mute son came over one day with a sign around his neck that said, "Can I please borrow your lawn mower?" I thought it was some silly joke, so I told him to get his dad. He came back a little bit later, holding a small plastic aquarium-type thing. I told him before to bring over his dad, not some little plastic aquairum. He pointed at the aquarium. I moved in closer and examined it a bit better. Inside was a lone, swimming sea-monkey. I was puzzled. I had no clue what to do, so I just stared at it. And all of a sudden, a tiny, munchkin-like voice said, "Can my son please borrow your lawn mower, sir? He needs to cut our lawn. It's very bushy right now." I was, as I'm sure you could guess, completely amazed at such a thing. I couldn't figure out where the voice came from exactly, so I examined the aquarium even closer. On the sides were two little speakers. The munchkin voice spoke again, "Sir, please don't stare at me. I'm a paranoiac, as my son could tell you." I looked up at the son, expecting him to magically speak. He didn't though, but hung around his neck was a brand new sign that said, "My dad is paranoid." I shook my head in understanding before going into the garage for the lawn mower. The mute-boy followed me, nodding and smiling like a madman. I wheeled the lawn mower over to him. He suddenly started fumbling with the lawn mower and the aquarium, trying desperately to manipulate them both. I went to help him, but the aquarium slipped out of his (and my) hands, crashing upon the driveway, spilling his dad onto the concrete. The mute-boy held his hands to his face, resembling the painting by that famous Scandinavian painter. The sign around his neck said, "Pick up my dad, sir! Put him in water so he won't die!" I carefully picked up his dad with the tweezers in my swiss army knife, being cautious not to squash him. I then held my other hand underneath the tweezers in case I accidentally let go of him, then ran through the front door of my house. I glanced around, hoping to find a glass of water. A mug of coffee appeared in the corner of my eye. "How can I live with myself," I thought to myself as I gently plopped his little sea-monkey father into it. The mute-boy shook my hand wildly and graciously. Now, whenever he comes over to borrow the lawn mower, I don't even bother asking him to bring his dad over. I just let him have it.

-Curt Clendenin



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