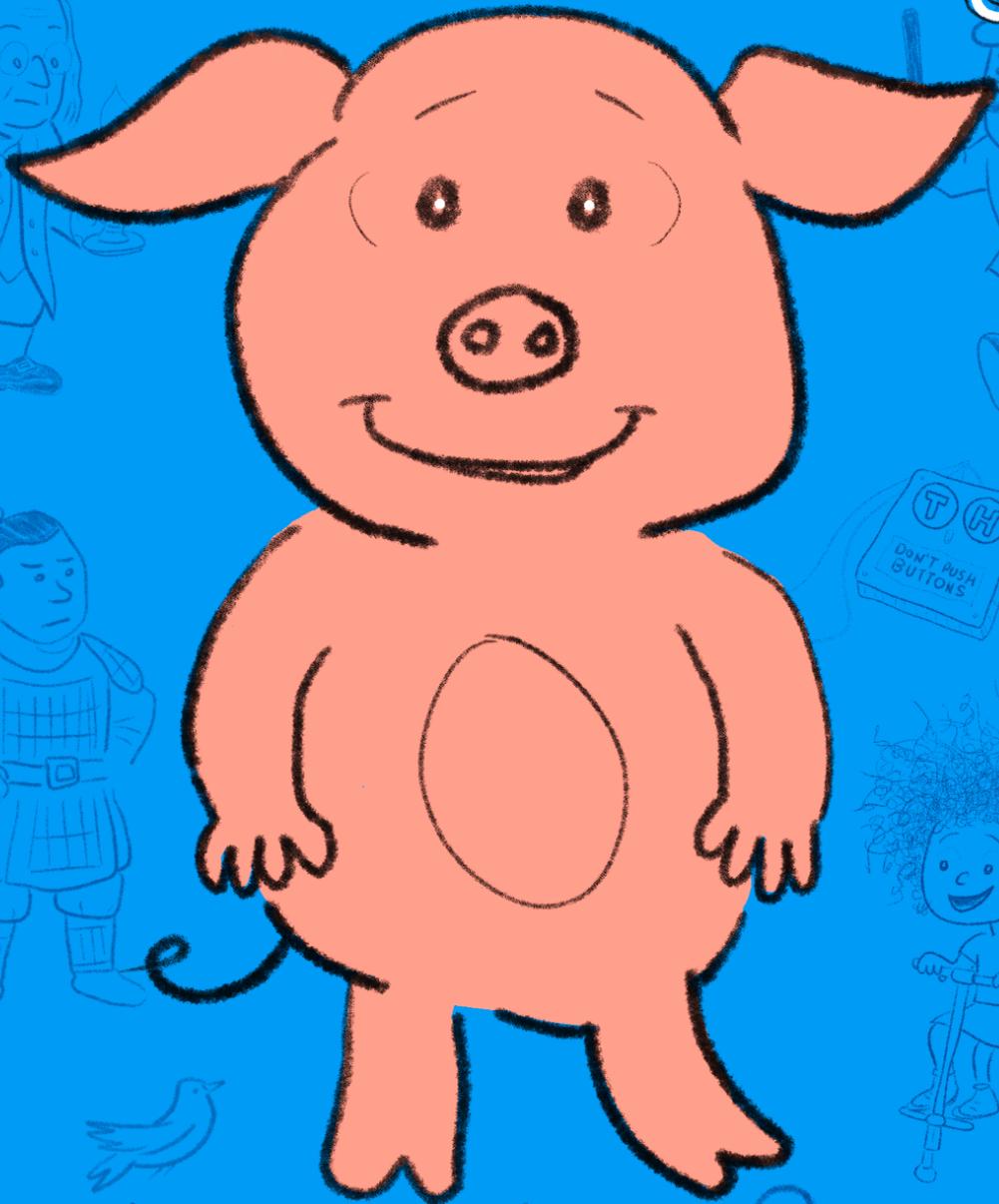


Puey

The Time Traveling Pig

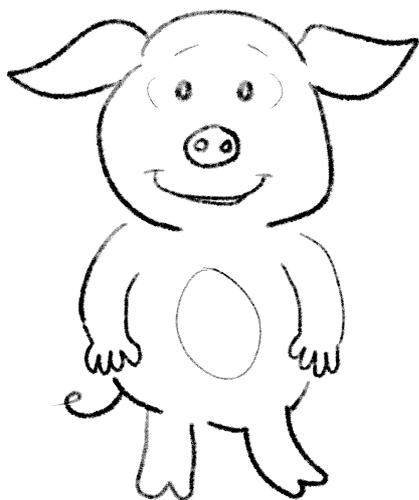


Written and drawn by Puey
and Mark O. Beckwith

Puey, The Time-Traveling Pig

Written and Illustrated by *PUEY* and Mark O. Beckwith

Chapter 1 – The Box Talks



Hi.

I'm Puey.

Yeah, I'm a pig.

I like to draw in my diary about my adventures. And I had a tail-twisting adventure I want to tell you about. And if you have a minute, I'll show you my pictures too.

Before I get to my crazy journey, let me tell you a little about me. After all, this book has MY name on it. Ha!

I live on a street called *Slow Down*. Not really—but it should be, because that's what all the signs say. Maybe my street should be called *Whoa-Whoa Way*. But no—it's just Maple Leaf Lane.

I have a friend, Merrily, who moved in next door a while back. She's ten and a half—WAY older than me, 'cause I'm only nine. She's got a lot of hair—like, a whole JUNGLE of it. I guess that might be her superpower—Humungo Hair. She should be called Curl Girl! She could hide a cat in that crazy 'do. I think my superpower is that I



smell GOOD—like burritos or pizza. Whoops, I don't mean *I* smell like food, I mean I'm good at smelling pizza baking in a restaurant blocks away from my house.

By the way, if you feel like coloring in my drawings, go ahead. I'm kind of orange-pink, not bubblegum pink. More like if you mashed a carrot with a peach. But color me any way you want. Merrily's color is sort of like if you mixed strawberry, vanilla, and chocolate milkshakes together. I bet she'd laugh if she heard me say that. We tease each other a lot. Like sometimes she calls me Pooley instead of Puey. Funny, but POOEY? Eww, that's gross. It's easy to get my name right if you say it, squishing the letters P-U-E really fast. Try it.

You know, Merrily is super chill because she doesn't care that I'm not like everybody else. She says having a pig for a friend is way cooler than just hanging out with another kid.

Now to my adventure!



Merrily and I were wandering through a junkyard — you know, like a giant garbage dump — just looking for anything interesting or fun. You'd be surprised at the cool stuff people toss out. In the distance, I could hear a noisy bird squawking as it searched for food scraps. It was almost like it was asking us, "Hey! What are YOU two doing in our trash pile?"

Merrily was on the other side of a pile of tires and held up a long metal thing shaped like a big "T."

"Hey, POOEY!" she shouted. I hollered back, "Ha-ha, Betty Beehive. My name is PUEY." I know that calling people nicknames can be mean, but since we're friends we do it to make both of us laugh.

She said, "Hey, later, let's try bouncing on this pogo stick I found behind a broken toilet!"

I called back, "Okay!" and thought, I just hope the bouncing stick doesn't stink like that TOILET.

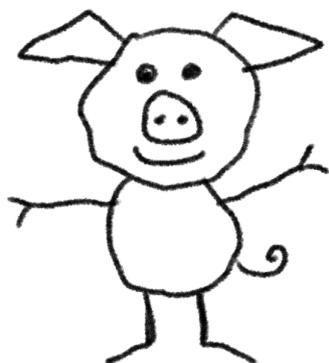
Merrily started bouncing on the pogo stick. Her hair flopped even more than she did. I bet that cat hiding in her hair was having a wild ride. Ha—just kidding. After about three bounces, the metal foot bar snapped off



and—boom!—down she went. I ran over to help her, but she popped up as if she were still bouncing and smiled. I think Merrily's made of rubber.

I chuckled and said, "Not sure I want to bounce on that thing."

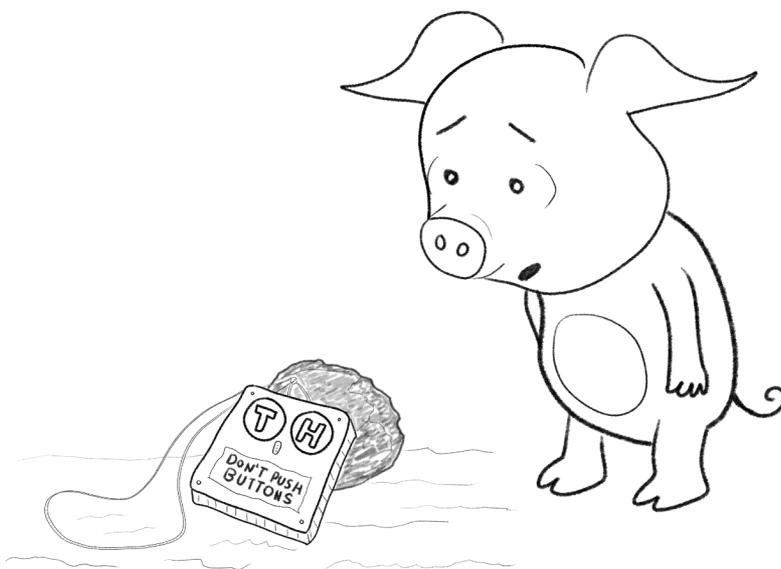
"PUEY..." (She said my name extra loud so I'd know she was saying it right this time.) "Puey, we should never be afraid of failure. It's okay to mess up. It just means you're gonna try again and do it better."



I figured she was right. I remember the first self-portrait I drew, about five years ago. I've gotten better since then. Now they could hang my stuff in a MUSEUM. Ha!

She said, "I'm gonna fix this bouncy stick. Bye!" Then, suddenly, Merrily rushed away, carrying the pogo stick over her shoulder like it was a sword and she was off to battle.

I went back to my junkyard treasure search. I saw a dirty old pink shoe. Nope. A mud-brown teddy bear with one eye missing. Nope. A cracked blue bowling ball, and a giant mountain of black car tires that smelled like stinky feet. NOPE. NOPE.



Then I spotted something leaning against a rock.

It was a dusty, crusty green plastic box with two big red control buttons. Not just red, but bright fire-engine red. One button was marked with a letter **T** and the other with an **H**.

The box didn't have a screen, so I knew it wasn't a phone or a tablet. A skinny string loop dangled from the top. Then I thought, *Since it's not a phone, maybe I can wear it as a hipster necklace, or more like, a PIGSTER necklace.*



So I hung it around my neck and said to myself, “What a HANDSOME pig.”

I looked at the box closely. Below the two buttons was this old piece of light brown tape with the words “DON’T PUSH BUTTONS” written on it. Hmm. Like that’s going to stop me.

I didn’t touch the buttons right away. I’m a pretty patient pig. But after a minute, I was still curious,

so I gave it a tiny, little poke.

Suddenly the box blinked a few times and made a noise that sounded like an electronic BURP.

Then I don’t know why, but I talked to the box.
“Hello, strange green pad,”

Then it spoke in a freaky electronic voice—or actually, it talked in rhythm. Kind of like a rap!

*“Hello, piggy pink,
You seem kind of strange.
And despite what you think,
Pad is not my name.”*

My mouth opened wide in surprise. “Wow, a box that RAPS!”

And it replied, “Wow, a pig that TALKS!”

I said, “You’re funny. What’s your name?”

“Bob,” it replied.

“Shouldn’t your name be BOT, like a robot?”

“No.”

“Okay... Bob. My name is Puey.”

“Greetings, Puey.

“Puey, I noticed the girl you were speaking to earlier. She had a pogo stick. Did you know the pogo stick was invented in 1920?”

I answered, “Oh, okay. You seem to know random stuff about history.”

“You’d be surprised,” he said.

I asked, “Are you AI?”

“Yes and no. I’m really...”



I interrupted, “My teacher said I should be careful with artificial intelligence chatbots. Should I throw you back in the junk pile?”



I was proud of myself for knowing that big word—*intelligence*. I’m INTELLIGENT enough to know the word intelligence. Ha.

Bob the Box rhymed:

*“It is true what you hear
About bots with a voice;
You may leave me here—
It’s completely your choice.”*

Then, he changed the subject.

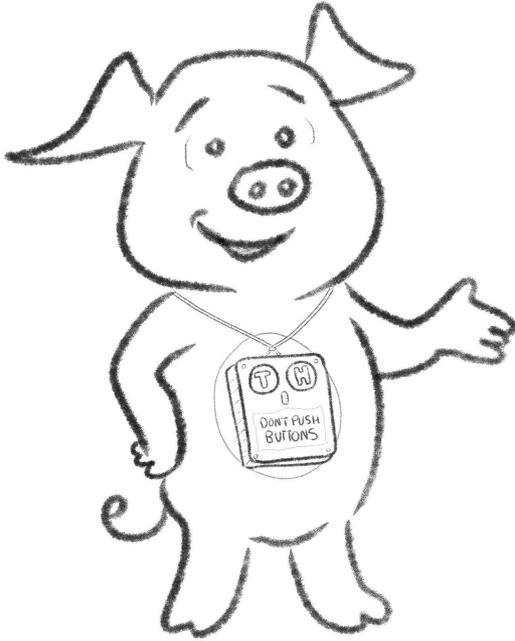
“Now, are you ready to TRAVEL?”

“Huh?” I said.

And you’ll never guess what happened next.

And maybe don't tell anybody about this because they won't believe you. Honestly, I hardly believed it myself.

Chapter 2 – Squeals on Wheels



I'm glad you kept reading.
Otherwise, I'd just be mumbling
to myself.

Where was I? Right. I was
talking to you about the mystery
BOX.

Then Bob spoke in this rhyme.

*“Time in the past
Rolls like a ball
But if you go fast
Try not to fall!”*

I had no idea what he was rapping about.

I said, “Sounds like we’re going somewhere, but—”

FLASH!

A bright white light blasted my eyes like someone shoved a flashlight in my mouth.

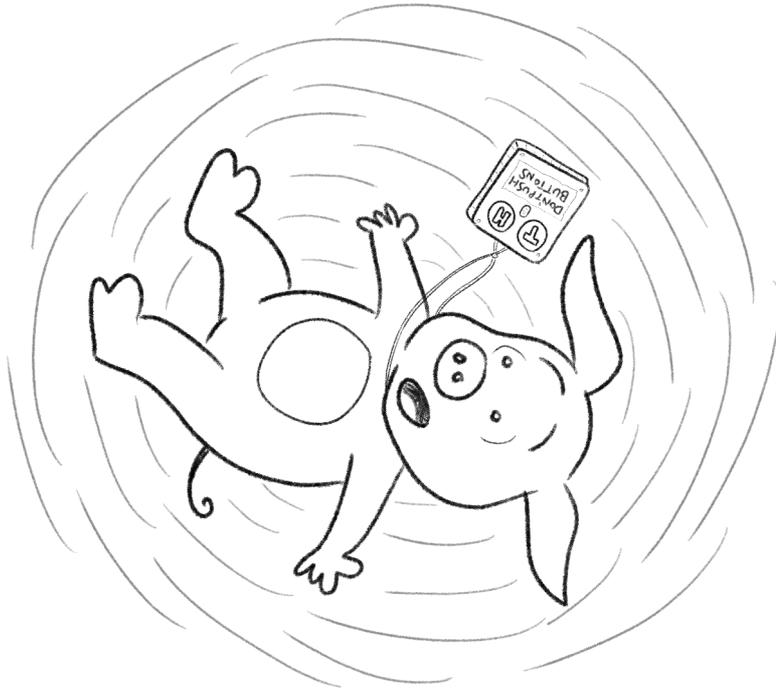
Then I heard a loud digital **BUUURP** sound!

Weird.

Suddenly, I was spinning around.

My ears were flapping like flags in a windstorm.

I stopped spinning and then **WHAM!**



My tushy smacked against something hard. I was on a BICYCLE seat!

Not just any bicycle. The bike was super tall with a GIANT front wheel.

It was already moving. I tried pedaling, but my feet didn't even reach the pedals. Yeah, I know—I've got short legs. I couldn't stop. I screamed, "Oinkety-doinkety!" That's what I yell when I'm freaking out.

I was zooming downhill—faster and faster.

“Whaaaa!”

A lady in a long purple dress standing to the side pointed at me and yelled, “Hey, young chap! Get control of that penny-farthing!”

I had no idea what she meant, but I was pretty sure I was going to crash.



I ZIPPED past more women in fancy, flowery hats and a man wearing a round hat that looked like a pipe. One lady's hat was so big, I almost bumped it with my handlebars. It was like I was in the land of giant HATS! Crazy how I notice all this stuff while screaming.

Then a horse snorted at me as if HE were telling me to slow down.

I wobbled.

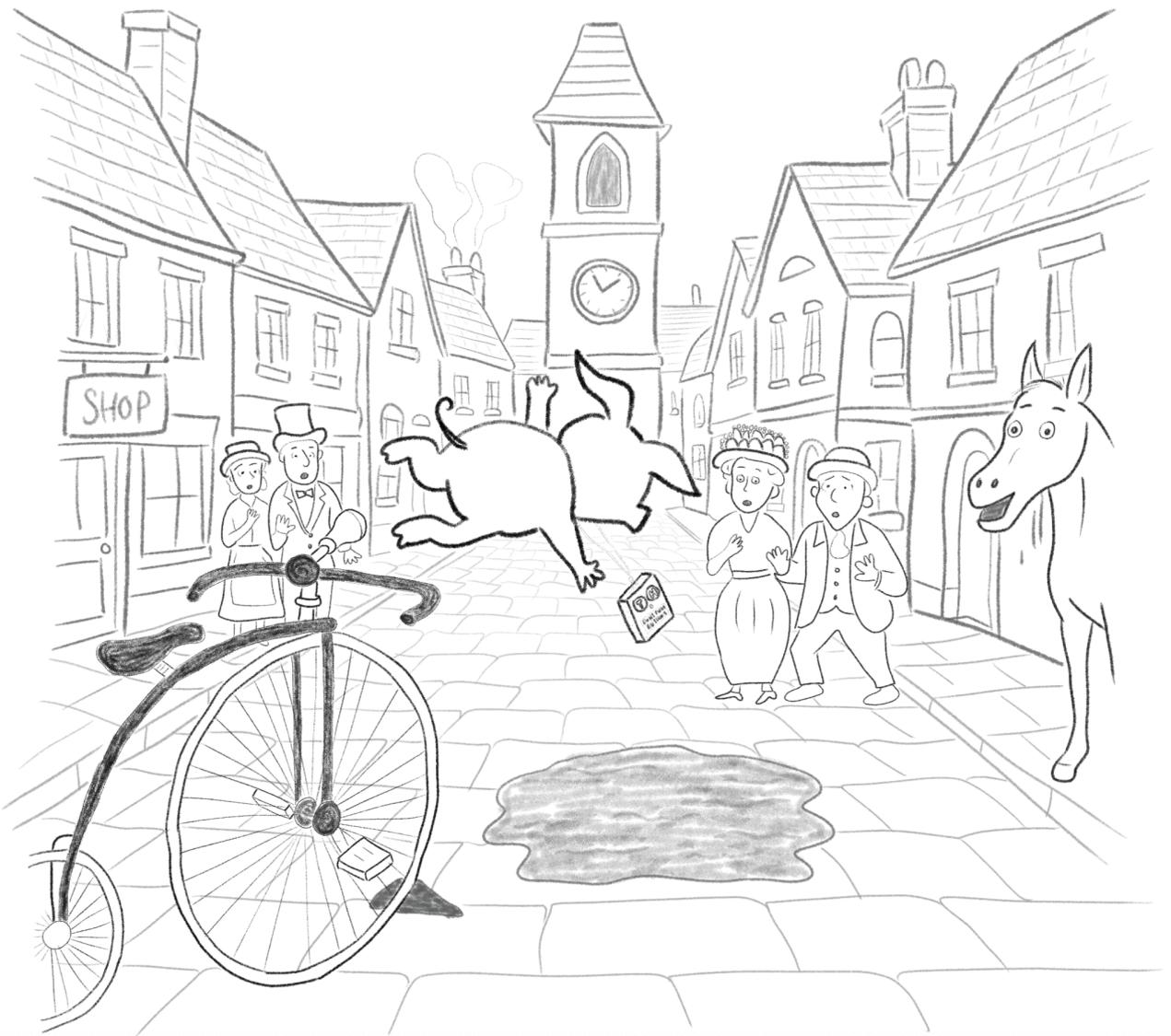
I swerved.

I honked the funny-sounding horn on the handlebars.

I squealed as pigs do.

I squealed again.

Then the big front wheel hit a rock. The bike stopped, and I flipped like a pancake next to a pool of SYRUP. Well, it was actually a puddle of water.



Lying on the ground, the big wheel still turned. It creaked almost like it was LAUGHING at me. I'm sure that horse was laughing too.

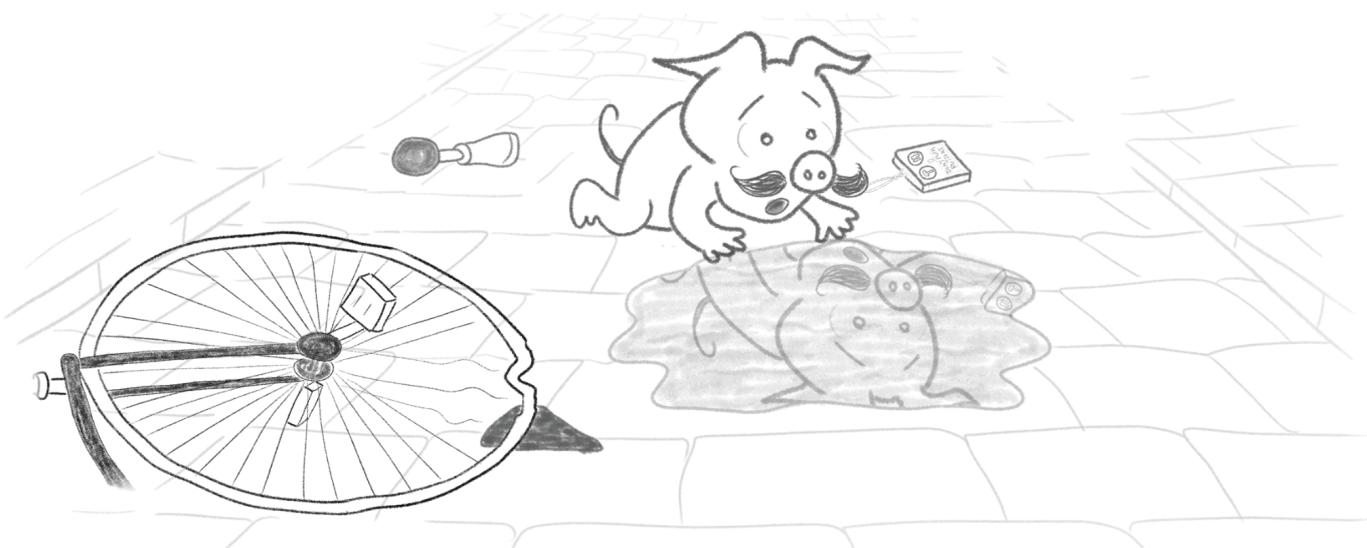
It was a good thing Bob the Box was still tied around my neck, or he would've flown off and smashed.

I patted my body. I wanted to make sure I was okay and I didn't get hurt. I seemed okay. I didn't break my arm, or my leg, or my big nose.

That's when I felt something strange.
A long, hairy thing under my snout.

“What is—oh, NO WAY!”

I looked down and there was my face, reflected in the puddle of water, and—you aren't going to believe this—a big black mustache was hanging under my nose.



How could that be? I'm NINE years old.

I twitched my lip and the mustache wiggled. I thought, “What a handsome pig.”

I asked the box, “Hey Bob, where am I?”

Bob spoke in rhythm,

*“You’re in London town
It’s 1892
Now get off the ground
And try to blend in too.”*

Bob’s kind of bossy. Oh well.

Let’s see, I’m a pig. How do I blend in? I stood up and thought, “I guess this mustache will have to do. Ha!”

And I definitely didn’t understand what Bob meant by 1892. Was that an address in London town?

I had more questions, but just then I heard a whistle in the distance.

Bob chimed in again:

*“That constable
looks mad,
We need a safer
place to be.
So before things
turn bad,
Push the button
with the T!”*

I didn’t even have time to ask what a constable was. But an old-timey policeman with a shiny badge, blue coat, and a



big black stick was running my way. WHY?

I just did what Bob said and hit the button with the letter T.

And then—**BAM!** Bright light. Giant burp.

Here we go again.

And why always a burp?



As we spun again, I thought,

“My lesson learned, life’s like riding a giant bike. Sometimes you’re going too fast, totally out of control, and then you might crash. But then I remembered what Merrily said about failing—you can still get up, shake it off, and keep going.”

Then I thought,

“That was amazing how my mustache disguised me. I fit right in.”

Then I thought,

“I really need one of those funny-sounding honking horns like the one on that bike.”

Chapter 3 – A Tall Wall

FLASH.

BUUURP. I was still spinning.

And then I stopped.

This time I landed face-first on something cold and hard.
“OWWWW, my snout!”

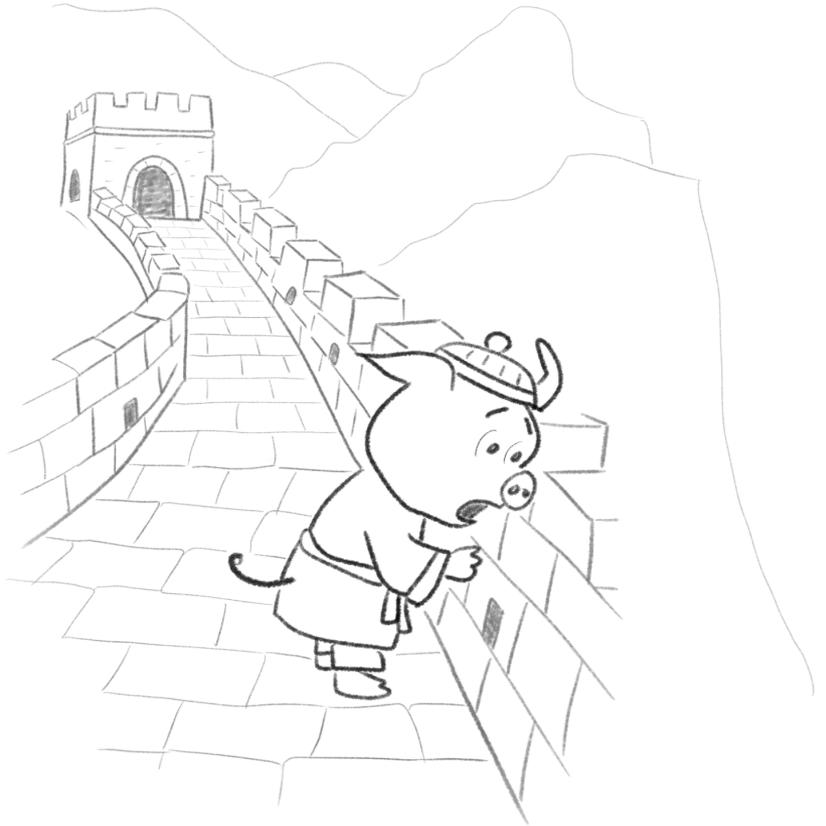
Now I was lying on stone.

I raised my head, looked around, and saw a giant gray rock wall stretching in both directions like a dragon’s spine.

Behind me—tall towers.
In front of me—mountains.
And below...
WHOA! Don’t look down.

I was on top of this humungous wall!

I felt my lip and the mustache was gone.
Darn, I liked that mustache.



But I noticed I was wearing a long red robe that itched my neck. A cloth belt. And a funny little curved hat.

“Bob?” I whispered. “Why am I dressed like this?”

Bob’s voice said softly:

*“You are on a great wall of stone
In China, 500 years ago
But beware, you’re not alone
The enemy lurks below.”*

CHINA? FIVE HUNDRED YEARS AGO?

“What kind of trips are you taking me on, Bob?”

A voice shouted behind me in a strange language I didn’t understand. He sounded serious. No—SCARY.



I spun around. A tall man in armor, his long black hair tied back neatly, pointed at me.

“What’d he say?” I asked my box buddy hanging around my neck.

“He asked if you are the Smoke Signal Master. I recommend you nod.”

I smiled and nodded... SLOWLY.

The man handed me rolled-up paper. I think it’s called a scroll. I sniffed it. It smelled kind of like leaves or tree bark.

I didn’t know they had paper 500 years ago.

I unrolled the scroll, hoping for instructions. Nope. It was covered in curly squiggles that could have been words... or maybe a secret code. I



That's what it said. I think.

nodded like I understood, hoping nobody would ask me to read it out loud. But really, I was pigpie-puzzled.

The man motioned for me to follow. I waddled behind him through a narrow stone hallway and then up steep steps that led to the top of a tower.

Up there, the wind was blowing hard. My hat almost flew

off TWICE. I saw another tower far off in the distance—maybe two miles away.

Another soldier spoke in that same mysterious language.

“He wants to know if you know the procedure,” Bob whispered.

“DEFINITELY,” I said, hoping to sound as confident as possible.

“Totally. Affirmative.” I really didn’t know what he was talking about.

The man pointed to a platform with a small pit in the center. Next to it was a bundle of firewood and some straw.

Bob rapped:

*“One puff of smoke,
Means the enemy’s near.
That’s what he spoke—
But just to be clear:
That two puffs of smoke,
Means enemy’s gone.
It’s true, not a joke—
Do not get this wrong.”*

“OINKETY-DOINKETY! I thought this was going to be fun, dude.”

Bob said nothing.



I looked around for something to start a fire. In the dark shadows at the back of the tower, I spotted a small wooden door.

But before I even touched it, my snout twitched. *Hmm... what’s that smell?* Smoky and sweet. My nifty nose had come in handy.

was coming from behind the little door. It creaked as I slowly opened it.

I sniffed again. The scent

Inside were shelves with barrels. One of them had a symbol on the side of it that looked like a dragon breathing fire. A fuse was sticking out the top. On the wall, a torch burned.

“Perfect,” I said.

I grabbed the torch, puffed out my chest, and saluted myself.

“Uh-huh. Smoke Signal Master, reporting for duty.”

I rolled the barrel outside while holding the torch, then lit the fuse.

Bob started to vibrate, but too late.

BOOM.

CRACKLE.

SSSSS-POP!

The sky lit up with
flashing colors.

Green and gold
spirals!
Red explosions!
Crackling stars and
screaming
whistles!

“That’s... not
SMOKE!” I
squealed, ducking
as a fireball zipped
past my ear.
Soldiers were
shouting things that
Bob translated as,



“WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!” And, you know, I couldn’t blame them for screaming.

Other soldiers ran up the stairs.

Bob spoke way too calmly, “The enemy is coming.”

A messenger ran up from below.

Bob said, “He’s asking what happened.”

I said, “We’re... we’re... we’re celebrating a special occasion?”

Bob translated from the messenger, “What are you celebrating?”

“It’s my BIRTHDAY!” I lied. It was all I could think of to say.

More soldiers were running toward the tower.

Bob buzzed,

*“Push the T so we can flee,
Or they will lock up you and me!”*

I SLAPPED the red T button on Bob the Box.

FLASH.

BURP.

The Great Wall disappeared.

*As we spun through time, I told myself,
“Lesson learned: If you don’t know what something is... maybe don’t set it on fire.”*

“Just a thought.”

“Well, I guess I shouldn’t set anything on fire.”

“My friend Merrily will laugh about this when I tell her.”

Chapter 4 – A New Friend Named Ben

This time, I landed with a **SPLASH!**

My tender tootsies landed in a mud puddle. EWW. Yeah, sometimes I can be a pretty prissy pig. Try saying “pretty prissy pig” five times really fast. Ha.

Cold gray rain poured from the sky, but for once my nose wasn’t dripping like a bathroom shower.



“Wow,” I hollered.
“Where did this
HUGE hat on my
head come from?”

I tilted the big black
three-cornered hat
back on my head
and thought it was
pretty cool how it
kept my face from
getting wet.

I heard a beep.
“Bob, what’s
happening?”

His voice mixed
with a scratchy
noise:

*“There’s only a
moment or two*

Till my battery drains away

*If that happens, me and you
In THIS place we'll stay."*

"Nice poem, Bob," I said. "But what does that mean?"

He replied, "If my battery goes dead, we can't go home."

My eyes went wide, "Forever? Stuck here for... FOREVER?"

Bob hummed and sputtered, which I think meant, "Yes."

Through the downpour, I saw a lit candle inside a reddish brick building. "Well, I don't want to float away with all the rain out here. Let's figure this out INSIDE." I mumbled.

"By the way Bob, pigs swim pretty good—doggy paddle-style. And I swim just as good as a dog, so I call it PIGGY-paddle. I think it's partly because of my plump, pudgy belly. Ooo, I like the sound of that. I'm proud of my pretty, plump, pudgy, porky paunch. Ha!"



Bob said, "I swim pretty well."

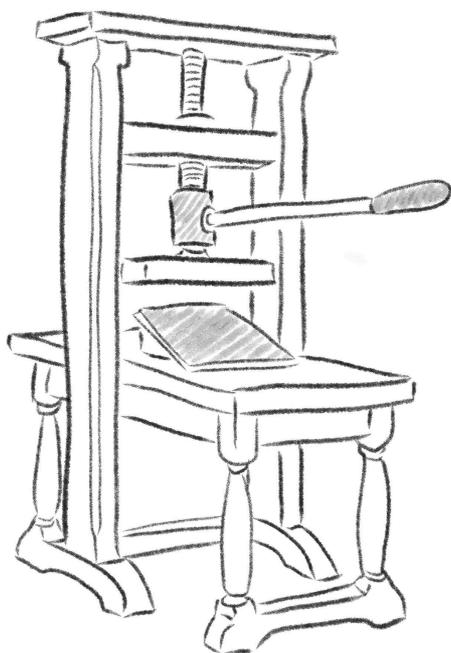
"You do?"

Bob replied, “No. I don’t swim. I was correcting your grammar. You should have said, ‘I swim pretty *well*.’”

“Thank you, bossy Bob,” I said with an eye-roll.

I pushed open the heavy wooden door. It creaked louder than my hungry stomach. That reminded me I haven’t had pizza in a while. Pizza is my absolute FAVORITE food. But I had to stay focused on Bob’s battery problem.

I tiptoed inside. My wet feet left smudges on the wooden floor. The room smelled musty and looked like a museum. Strange gadgets were scattered all over the tables—glass jars with shiny sticks poking out. There was a humongous wooden machine in the corner with metal gears and levers.



“Whoa,” I whispered. “Bob, is that a WOODEN robot?”

“No,” Bob whispered back. “That is a printing press that prints newspapers.”

“A printing what for printing what?”

“A printer for printing the news on big sheets of paper called a newspaper,” Bob explained.

I stared at it. “You’re telling me that huge clanky thing... is just to print words on paper? Couldn’t they just, like... print it from their laptop or just read it on their

phone?”

Bob sighed,

*“Folks received their news,
But cell phones, they had none.
No techie tools to use,
In 1771.”*

“Cheezles!” I kinda knew that but I was still mind-boggled. Before I could ask how people back then checked out social media, a loud man’s voice BOOMED from the shadows.

“WHO GOES THERE?”



I flinched and my hat flopped down over my eyes. I was a little spooked at first.

Out stepped a man with stringy gray hair and round glasses, wearing a dark brown coat. The candle made his face look like he was about to tell a ghost story.

He squinted at me. “What a peculiar-looking fellow you are.”

Hmm... I wonder if he's talking about my nose or my ears. Which made me wonder what that man would like with a pig nose and ears.

I pushed my hat up. “Uh... thanks? You too.”

“My name is Benjamin,” he said, smiling faintly. “And who might you be?”

“P-P-Puey,” I stuttered.

“P-P-Puey,” he repeated. “You speak with an accent. Are you FRENCH?”

“No, I’m not *French*, but I’m *drenched!* Ha.”

He laughed too. “I may have to write about you. My readers enjoy a clever rhyme.”

By the way, I don’t think Benjamin was making fun of that one time I stuttered. I think he thought *P-P-Puey* was my actual name. Hysterical.



Then he noticed Bob dangling from the string around my neck. “And what is that CURIOUS little box?”

“Oh, this?” I tried to shove Bob behind my back. “It’s, uh... my TEA WARMER. Totally normal.”

“Tea warmer?” Benjamin tilted his head.

“Yep. Heats up tea... or hot chocolate. Patent pending.”

Benjamin blinked. “Patent... pending?”

“Uh, yeah,” I said quickly. “It means... um... really important, top-secret stuff.”

Benjamin rubbed his chin and thought about what I said. “Ah. A novel term. I must write that down as well.”

Bob BEEPED three tones to remind me about his low battery problem, and Benjamin’s eyebrows shot up.

“Your heating invention makes music?”

Bob beeped a little more.

Benjamin leaned closer. “Why, that’s marvelous! Is that Bach? Or perhaps young Mozart?”

“Uh... yeah! Greatest hits. On shuffle,” I blurted.



“Puey, you speak in the most fascinating way. If you’re not French, are you from the Orient?”

“The what?” I asked. I didn’t understand, but just then, Benjamin REACHED out to touch Bob.

“DON’T!” I yelled, but it was too late.

He rubbed his thumb along Bob’s smooth surface. “This material... it’s neither wood, glass, nor any polished metal I’ve known. What is it?”

I answered without thinking, “It’s plastic. I mean, it’s FANTASTIC!”

I remembered my teacher telling my class that plastic wasn’t invented until the early 1900s, so I lied again, “Uh... it’s super-waxed... TURTLE shell!”

I didn’t like lying. I’m an honest pig. But I knew that, in this situation, if I didn’t fib, there would be a big, big problem.

Benjamin’s eyes twinkled. “Remarkable. And these buttons are engraved with T and H. What do they signify?”

I was sweating now. “Uh... T is for TEA. And H is for... HEAT.”

Benjamin nodded, slowly.

Trying to pull Bob away from Benjamin, I backed up—right into a tall bookshelf causing it to wobble.

CRASH!



A bunch of books fell to the floor in a heap. A couple of them hit me on the head. OUCH!

Chapter 5 – Shock The Box

Benjamin rushed over. “CAREFUL! These books are precious. My friends and I lend them out so that others can read them—if they fail to return them, they must pay late fees.”



I picked up a book and thought to myself, *Late fees? Uh... I may not be able to return this anytime soon. Like... maybe in 300 years? That's, like, a million dollars in late fees!*

Benjamin plucked the book from my hands. “You may borrow this one if you like. *Gulliver’s Travels* by Jonathan Swift. I read it when I was a young man. It’s about a traveler who visits strange lands. You might find it... appropriate.”

I thought, “More appropriate than you might think.”

“Uh, no thanks,” I said, pushing it back. “But cool title.”

I asked, “Mr. Benjamin, with all these books and that giant printing machine, you must really like things written on paper.”

He smiled. “With the written word, the doors to wisdom are never shut.”

Then it got kinda WEIRD—Benjamin sang a song like an opera singer.

*“If you’re mad, get it out, you can vent
Write it down, write it down, write it down*



*Even write to a president
Write it down, write it down,
write it down*

*With pencil or with ink
Any way if you think
You have things to say
It's okay, don't delay, write it
down*

*To get ideas out of your head
Write it down, write it down,
write it down
Something interesting your*

*teacher said
Write it down, write it down, write it down*

*A dream last night in bed
A recipe for bread
Good ideas
But no one will know it until you write it down*

Your words may change the course of human events..."

I couldn't help myself—I finished his rhyme with this:

"Just like the Declaration of Independence!"

Benjamin paused, gave me a curious look, and then he finished his song.

*So write it down
Write it down
Write it down
Write it down*

Write it down
Write it down
Write it down
Write it down
Write it down”

I imagined Ben singing and dancing that song in a Broadway show. Ha!

Then Benjamin suddenly looked back at Bob.

“Please, P-P-Puey. That heating apparatus... it could CHANGE the world. Show me how it works.”

Thinking it would change the world a lot more than he imagined, I hugged Bob to my chest.

“No, it’s just a... tea warmer. Nothing more than that.”

Benjamin reached out. “May I press one of the buttons?”

“**NO!**” I squealed. “That button is Highly Dangerous! H stands for HIGHLY DANGEROUS.”

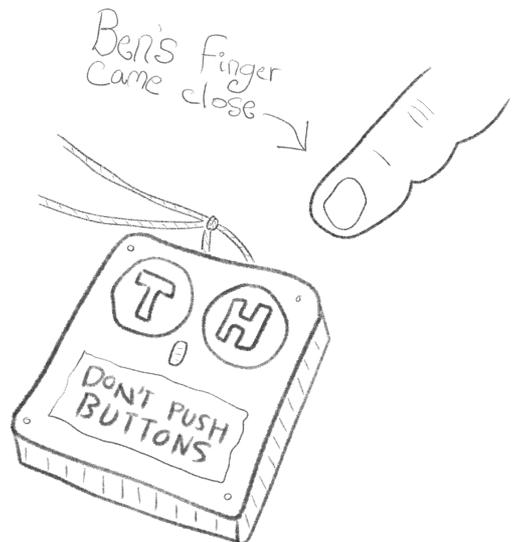
“But did you not say that H stood for Heat?” he questioned.

“Yes, H stands for highly hazardous *heat*...that could hurt. So H also could mean hurt.”

Benjamin gave me a funny look.

Bob buzzed quietly so only I could hear.

“My battery will be dead



*In seconds at this pace.
It's something you will dread—
Stuck in this time and place.”*

I had to get Benjamin to stop staring at Bob, so I blurted out, “Uh... what’s that thing over THERE?” and pointed at a glass jar with a yellowish metal rod sticking out.



Benjamin turned toward it. “Ah! That, my young friend, is a Leyden jar. It was invented by a German scientist a few years ago. It can store the electricity I catch from lightning. I can explain the whole theory to you... but first, excuse me a moment—I need to fetch a KITE.”

Then Ben walked through a door into another room.

I wondered what my friend Merrily would think about the gadgets in this room. She likes this sort of thing. I wished she was here.

Bob’s voice cut in. “Puey, that jar may help our situation. GRAB IT!”

“But Ben said something about electricity. Is it safe?” I asked.

Bob rhymed,

*“It’s hard to conceive,
That you’d think I’d lie.
Can you just believe?
It couldn’t hurt to try.”*

Not wanting to offend Bob, I reached out and grabbed the metal stick—

ZAAAAAP!

“OUCH!”



It felt like I’d just plugged my tail into a TOASTER. My hat shot into the air, flipped, and landed back on my head upside down. My ears popped out like two bullhorns. Trust me on this—DON’T ever try that at home.

“Bob!” I shouted. “YOU SAID IT WAS SAFE!”

Bob rhymed,

*“Forgive my faulty theory
Of electricity
But you should be leery
Before agreeing with me.”*

I squealed,
“Oinkety-doinkety!
What-the-hog does that
MEAN?”

“Even smart boxes like me—and smart *humans*—can be wrong. Trust your OWN judgment. If something smells rotten, don’t eat it.”

I groaned. “I think I’m the one smelling right now—like burnt bacon! Next time, I’ll think twice before believing what a plastic box says.”

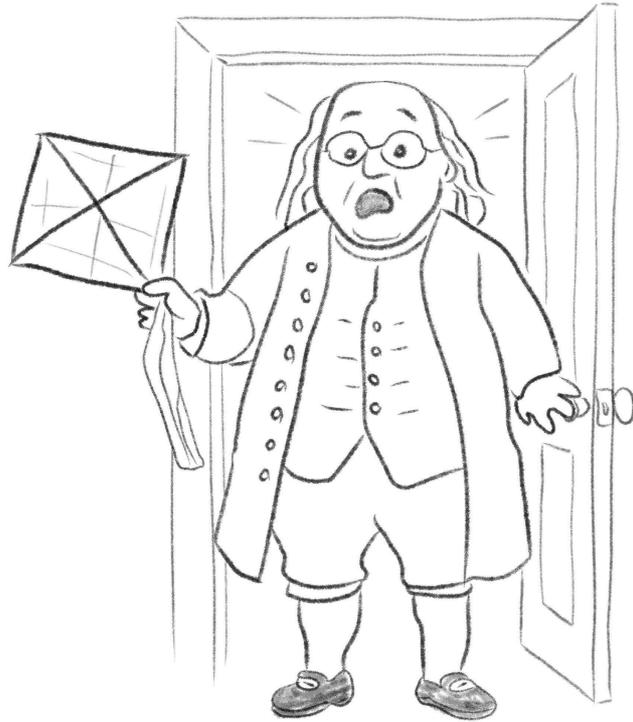
Benjamin reappeared in the doorway, holding a large white silky kite. His mouth dropped open when he saw my upside-down hat, my ears sticking out, and smoke steaming off my face.

“My goodness!” he blurted out. “What on Earth happened here?”

I shrugged my shoulders.

Meanwhile, I felt Bob the Box getting warm and I realized that since I was holding Bob, that electric zap shot right through him TOO!

Then Bob hummed loudly.



*“Battery restored,
I’m back on board.”*

Benjamin’s eyes went wide. “Who said that?”

“Uh...” I blurted, thinking fast. “I said it! I said, ‘Back in the store, I was BORED.’”

Benjamin tilted his head to the side. “What an odd thing to say.”

Then I felt a little vibration from Bob, as he whispered:

*“If you no longer wish to roam
Push the H to go home.”*

I stared at the H button.

“Home? HOME? You could’ve mentioned this earlier!”

I slammed the H button.



FLASH! BURP!

Benjamin squinted at me in confusion as I disappeared in the light.

Then his workshop was gone.

As we spun through time, I thought, “Note to self: Lying feels awful... but telling Ben about Bob could’ve changed things forever. Also... I really need to stay away from electric stuff.”

Then I realized, even though he hadn’t said his full name, that wasn’t just any Benjamin. That was the great Benjamin Franklin.

I also wondered what Mr. Franklin thought when I disappeared—and hoped I didn’t upset him.

Then I wondered what Mr. Franklin would look like with a pig nose and ears. Sorry Mr. Franklin. I couldn’t help myself.

Chapter 6 – Upside Down Town

FLASH! BURP!

WHAM!

“Oh no! OH NO!” I screamed. “Time travel has turned the whole world upside down!”

I wasn’t sure if I’d landed in Chillville or on the moon, but I knew one thing—SOMETHING wasn’t right. Bob dangled in the air, barely held



by my ear. My house was in the sky. I'd landed on a TREE BRANCH. At least time travel didn't stick me inside the TREE TRUNK. I tried to wiggle, but all I managed to do was make something creak like it was about to break.

CRACK!

The snap of the branch hit my ears a split second before I tumbled into the prickly rose bush below.

"Oinkety-doinkety!" I squealed. I untangled myself from branches one thorn at a time. "Ouch. Ouch. Ouch. Ouch."



I rolled onto my back in the grass and rubbed my eyes. When I looked up, a little bird fluttered above the tree, squawking at me like it was saying, "Welcome home, pig."

I stood up and brushed myself off, only for an annoying squirrel above to drop an acorn on my head. "Really?"

Then I heard Merrily's voice yell from next door, "Pooley? Pooley?"

When she screamed, "POOEY!" loud enough for the whole neighborhood to hear, it wasn't just gross—it was embarrassing. But that's Merrily. She didn't mean to.

I hollered, "Merrily, it's Puey! And I'm over here—pulling off thorns and getting bonked on the head by falling acorns!"

She hopped over on her repaired bouncing stick.
BOING, BOING, BOING, BOING, BOING.

“You **FIXED** the stick!” I squealed.



“Yep. Just a loose bolt. Hey,” she said, “I haven’t seen you all day. Where’ve you been?”

“Merrily, you’re not going to believe....”

She interrupted me, “What’s that thing hanging from your neck? Oh, you found that at the junkyard. Nice bling.”

I tried to finish, “Yeah, but this box...”

“You wanna try bouncing on my pogo stick?” She asked.

I smiled. “You know what I want to do? I want to ride my BIKE!”

She scrunched her face. “But you can ride your bike anytime.”

“Yeah, but... don’t ask why. I just feel like I need to ride it now. Just to prove I CAN without crashing or being chased by a policeman.”

She laughed. “You’re funny, Pooey.”

“*Puey.*”

Then I ran to my garage, opened the door, hopped on my bicycle, and pedaled.



I wobbled a little... but caught my balance.
I rode in circles around Merrily.

I could feel Bob the Box buzz, almost as if he was asking, “*What are you doing?*”

I stopped—WITHOUT CRASHING—and yelled,
“VICTORY!”

Merrily giggled. “You’re funny, Puey.”

I started to say, “It’s P—”
But then I stopped. She said my name right. Another victory.

“Yeah,” I grinned, “I’m a pretty weird Oinkster.”

And then my stomach growled. I mean, I’d gone *centuries* without a snack. Ha! So I invited Merrily into my house. We sat down and ate gooey golden-brown pizza. A lot.

I started to
tell her
about my
crazy
adventure.
“Merrily, I
rode on a
giant bike.
Then I was
on a giant
wall with
soldiers.
Then I met
Ben
Franklin.”



At first, Merrily scrunched her face, then she laughed, “You’re so funny, Puey.”

Then Merrily looked closely at Bob the Box on the table and reached for it.

“Is this a music player?”

“No, it’s—”

“Oh, T must stand for tunes,” she said—and then she pushed the button before I could stop her.

FLASH! BURP!

I shouted, “NOOOOOOOO!”

The world spun again—this time with Bob, me... and Merrily!



THE END OF BOOK #1

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