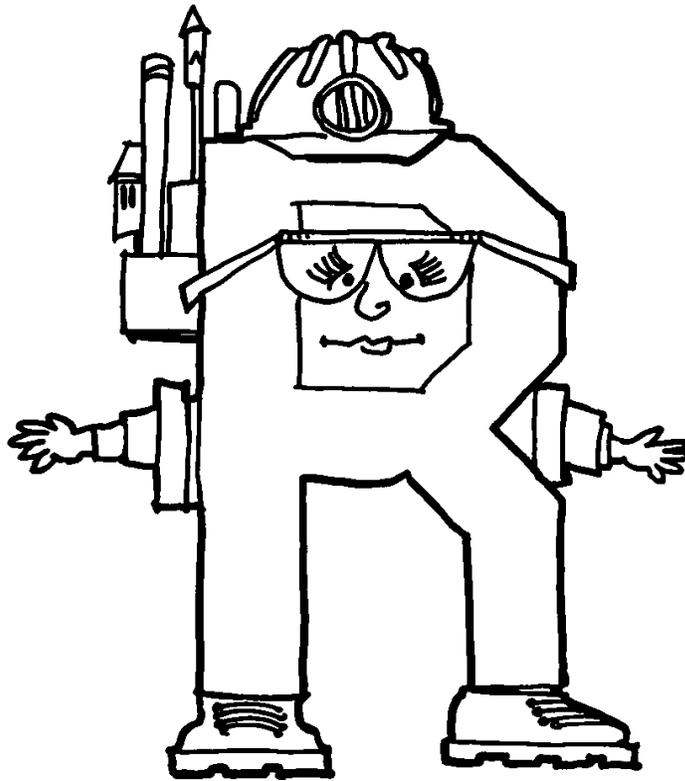


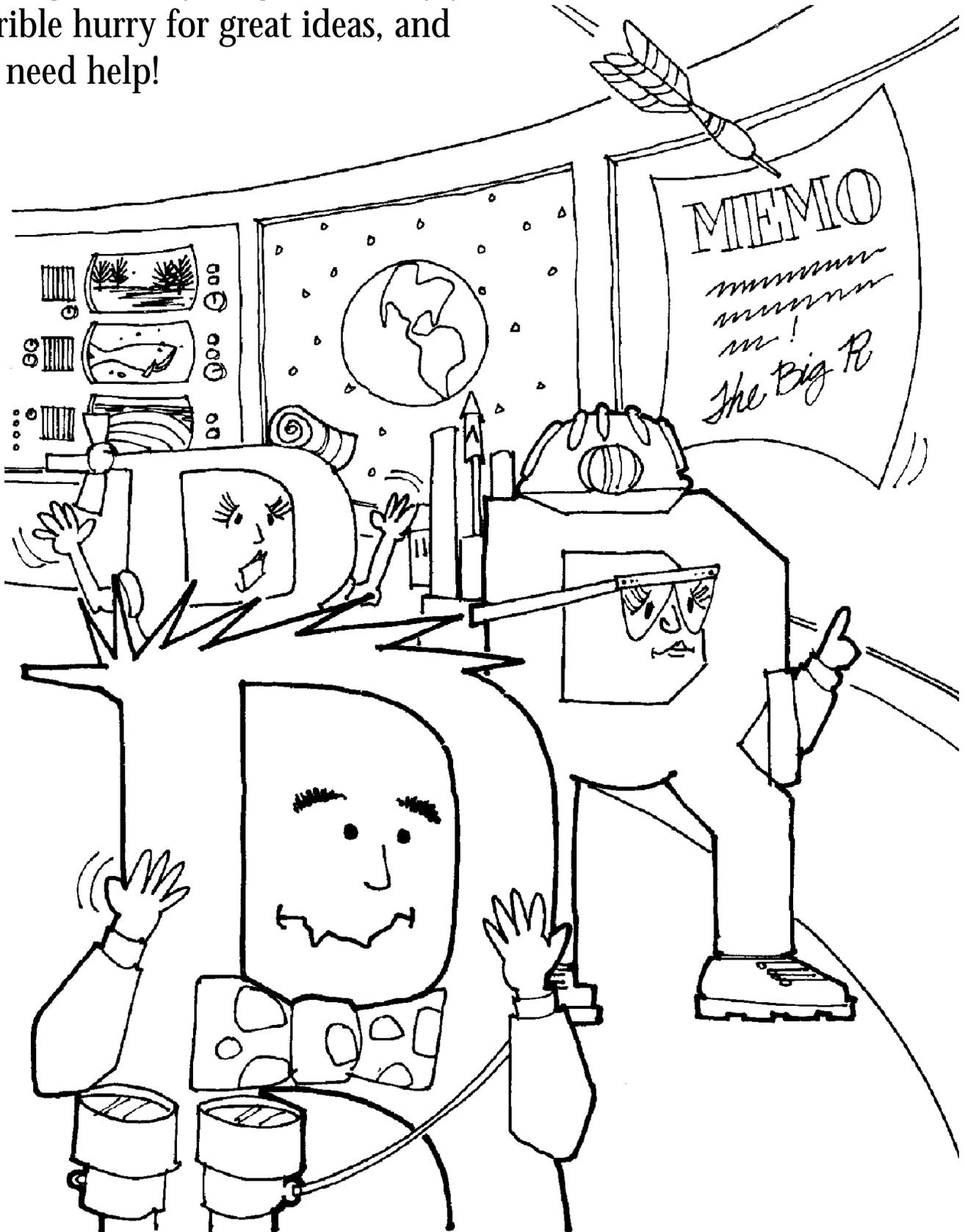
BOOK
3

Rrready, Set,
Recycle!



Big Trouble from the Big R

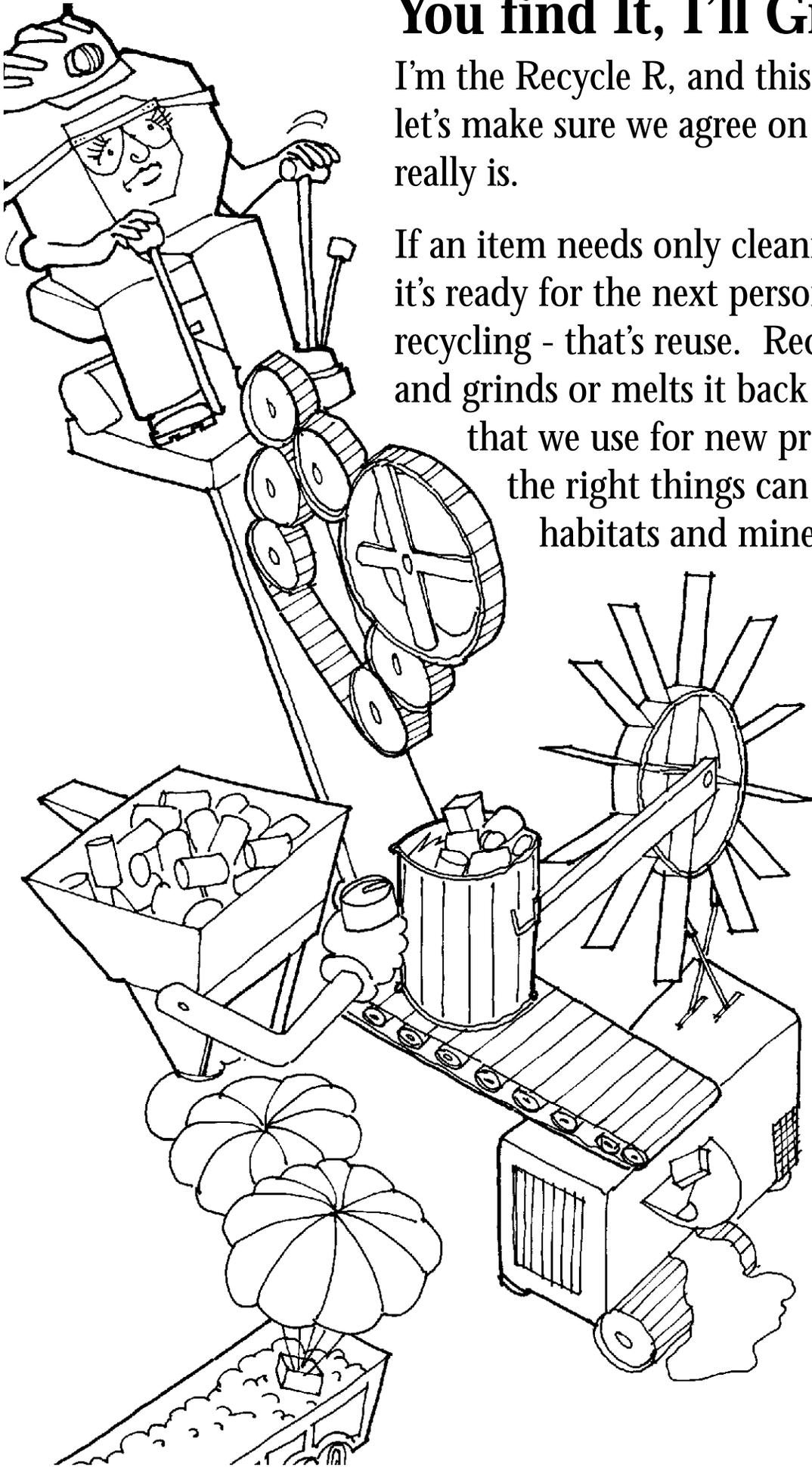
Hi! We're the Three R's. We have to report back to our boss, the Big R. She wants to know from us how people could be reducing, reusing and recycling more, fifty years from now. She's in a terrible hurry for great ideas, and we need help!



You find It, I'll Grind It

I'm the Recycle R, and this is my book. First, let's make sure we agree on what recycling really is.

If an item needs only cleaning or repair before it's ready for the next person, that's not recycling - that's reuse. Recycling takes trash and grinds or melts it back into raw materials that we use for new products. Recycling the right things can save energy, animal habitats and minerals.



Machines are Picky Too

And you know what? Recycling factories can't take everything either!

Caps on milk jugs and soda bottles, for instance. Caps and lids don't melt the same as bottles and jars. Take'em off and throw'em in the trash! And when I put out my glass for recycling, you won't find any mugs or cakepans or mirrors or window panes!

All those are big trouble at the glass furnace.

What's recyclable changes from time to time, so I always read the latest recycling brochure when it comes in the mail.

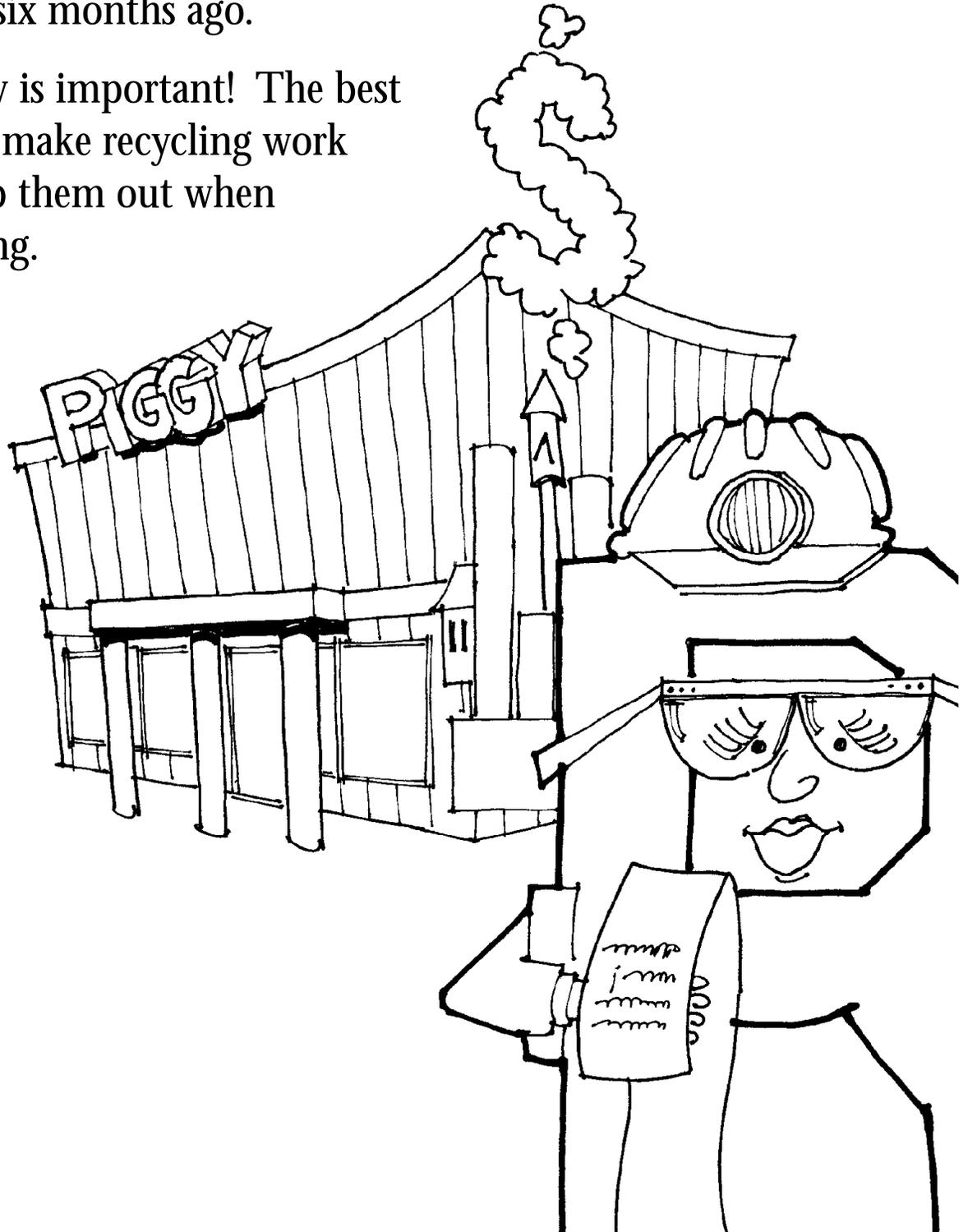


Garbage: Shop Till It Drops

Let's see. I need milk, bread, eggs, cookies, recyclables, and more cookies! That means I look for packaging that I know I can recycle in my city.

I also look for labels that talk about 'post consumer' recycled content. It means I could be buying back the same glass I put into the recycling bin six months ago.

What you buy is important! The best factories can't make recycling work unless we help them out when we go shopping.



Doing What Comes Nature-ly

Animals know all about recycling, even if they aren't going to win any spelling contests about it.

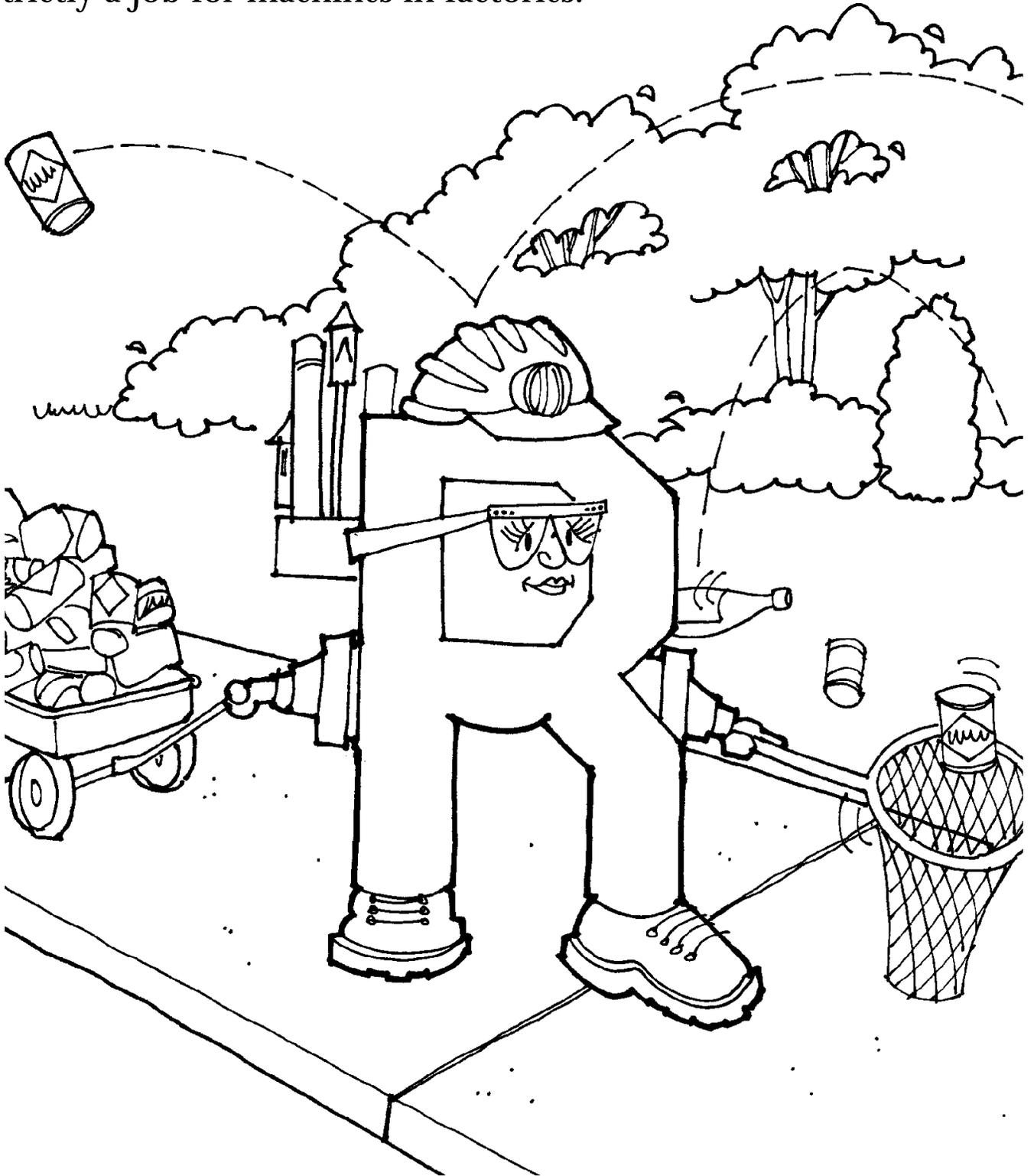
When a tree falls down, plants and animals begin recycling it into nice, fresh dirt. There's plenty of work for termites, moss, lichens, beetles and worms. The job might take fifty years, but they keep at it till the tree is gone.



Keep Your Trash Out of Our Trees, Please

Nature can't handle everything, though. Even the toughest termites in town can't recycle your cans and bottles into dirt. If the animals could, I'd bet they'd throw our litter right back at us.

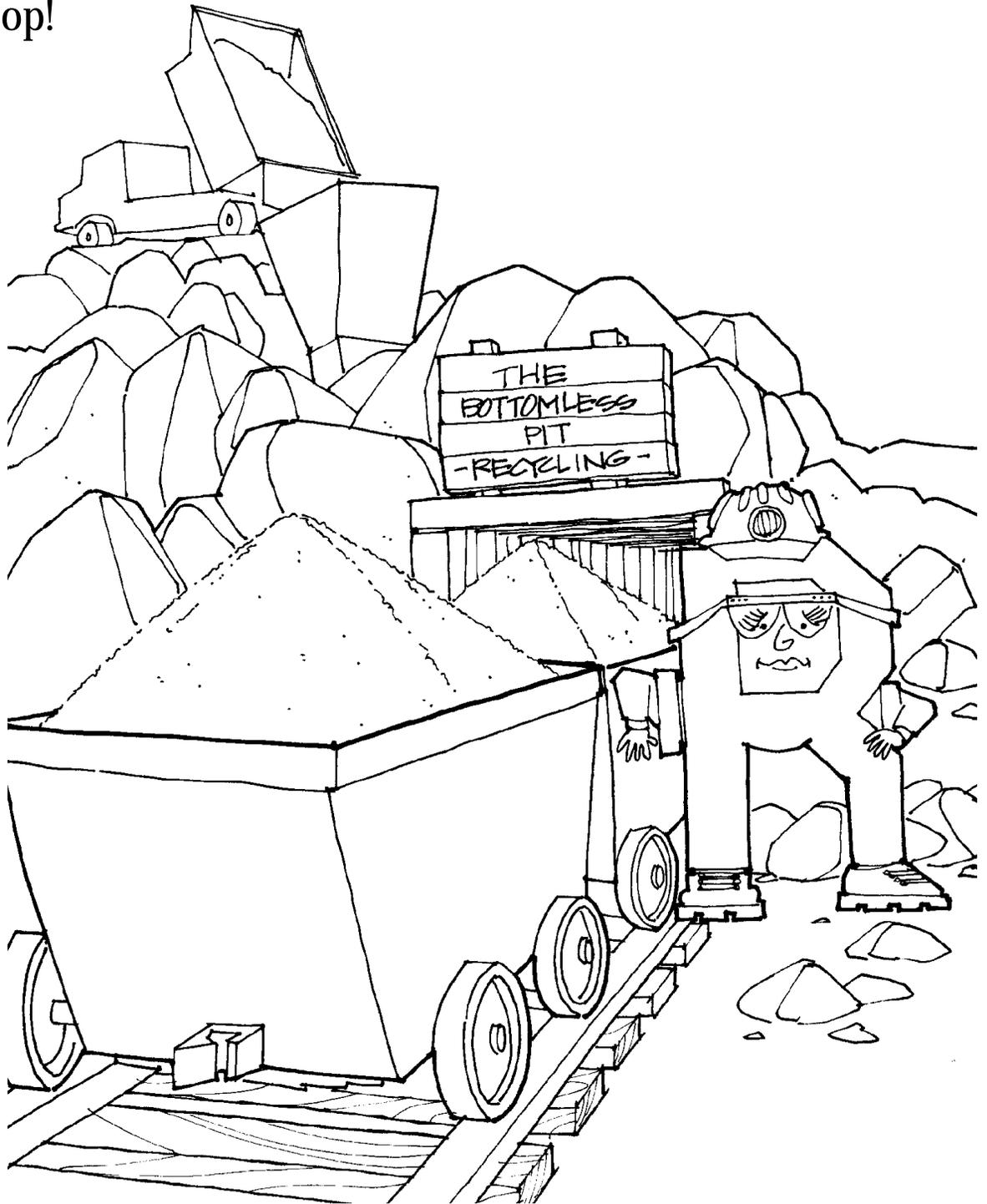
Grinding up our old paper, plastic, metal and glass into raw materials is strictly a job for machines in factories.



Mine Your Own Business

Have you ever heard of a bottomless cup of coffee? At a restaurant, it means the waiter or waitress will come by and fill up the cup before it's empty.

The cans, boxes, bottles and paper that we turn in for recycling are like ore from a bottomless mine. It's nice to know that the recycling mine will never run out - as long as we keep closing the recycling loop!



Deep Thought

So that's what recycling is. We recycle a little more than a quarter of all our trash now. The Big R wants the best possible ideas on how we can recycle even more fifty years from now. Here's a few I thought of.

How about a giant motorized stomping boot that comes down the street and flattens all the cans in my recycling bin? Or push-buttons on old appliances that makes all the non-recyclable parts fly off? Or

trees that shed their leaves on command, directly into a yardwaste bag?

