

Is there anybody in there?
By Jerry Peterson
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It's the eternal question: Does the light stay on in the refrigerator after you close the door?

The eternal question that gnaws at you only at night, when you're hungry, when you want a snack and a PB&J sandwich just isn't going to do it.

There's cheese in the fridge – Swiss and six-year-old Brick – and pastrami, garden tomatoes ready for slicing, eggplant, kiwi fruit, papaya, roast beef and sauerkraut, red bell peppers and jalapenos, and peta bread from Fosdal's Bakery in Stoughton . . . now you can make a sandwich with all that that would pale the best Subway can do.

You reach for the door handle, but stop when you hear a voice:

“Raise you five cucumber chips.”

Huh?

“See your five and raise you five more.”

Voices? From inside my refrigerator?

“With what I got, that's too rich for me. I'm out.”

“Chickenheart.”

“Hey!”

Maybe I shouldn't have eaten that Brie. It did have some fuzzy stuff on it.

“Nyah-nyah-nyah-nyah.”

“Just for that, I'll raise you all I got . . . twenty-six, no, twenty-seven cucumber chips.”

“All right, big mouth, I'll see ya. Whatcha got?”

Omigod, my Kenmore's haunted.

You whip open the door and there before you, on the middle shelf, sit three bottles of salad dressing – Russian, Sweet Vidalia Onion, and Ranch – and squirt bottles of Heinz ketchup and French's yellow mustard. And they're sitting around a strawberry-rhubarb pie piled high with raw cucumber slices, each bottle holding a handful of lettuce-leaf playing cards – the Bicycle brand.

The mustard bottle swivels toward you, and you see an angry expression on its label. And you hear the words, “Do you mind?” And you see the cap flip up, and the bottle huffs . . . and you get splatted, drenched with mustard.

You slam the door and holler, “Mabel!”

“What?”

You leap two feet in the air because she's right behind you and you didn't know she was there.

“Yernotgonnabelievethis.

Ourrefrigerator'shauntedbycondimentbottlesplayingpokerforcucumberchips.”

She gives you the hairy eyeball that says *yeah right*, opens the door, takes out a bottle of Aquafina and goes back upstairs to bed.

But she . . . and you reach for the handle to peek inside, and a voice from in there says, “Don't do it.”