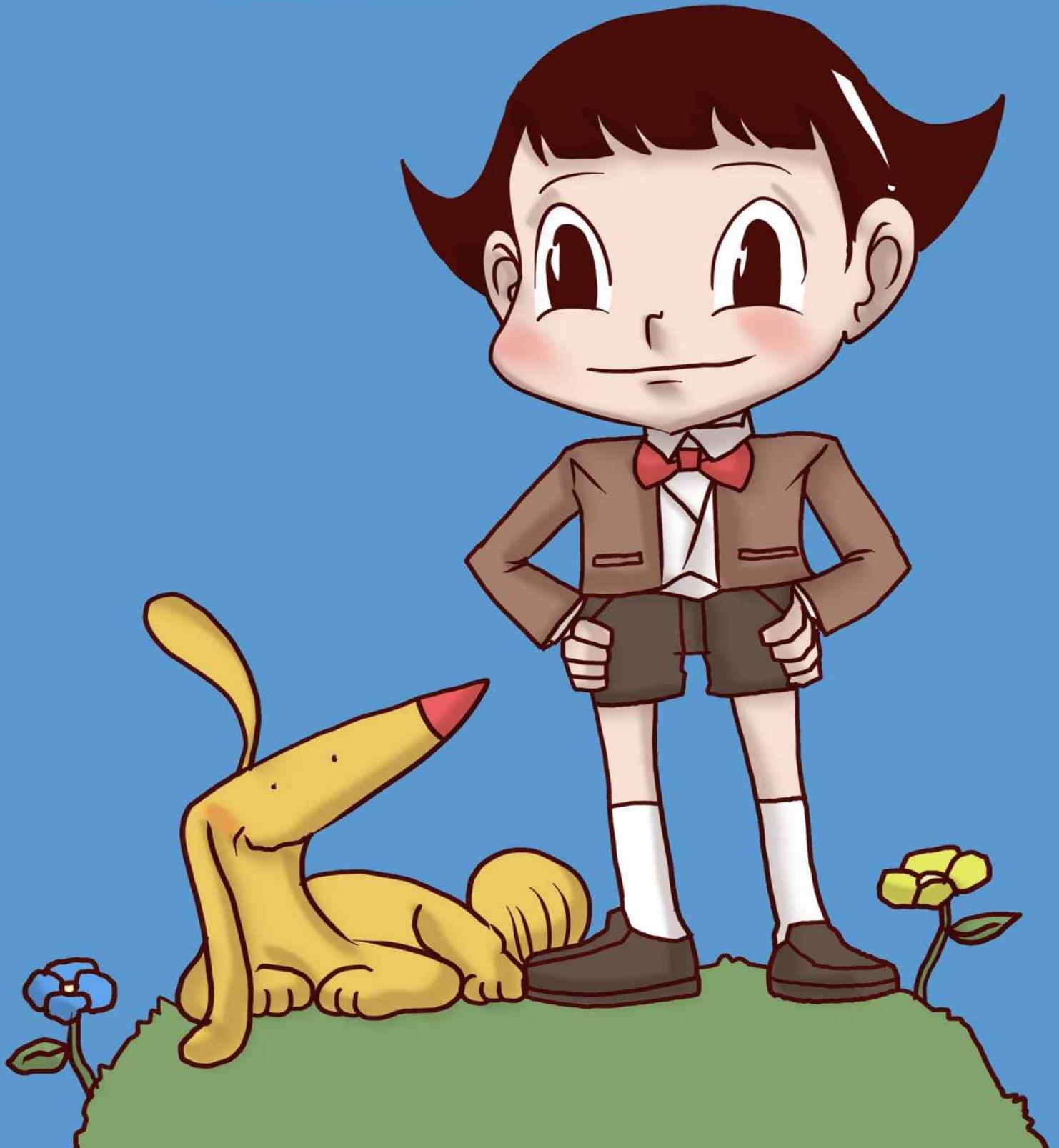


# Curious Thomas Edison

## Invents X-ray



# **Tinkering Thomas Edison: Boy Inventor**

## **Scarlet's Fever**

by

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with

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“What are you two doing out there, Tommy?” asked Mrs. Edison through the open kitchen window. It was a nice spring day in Port Huron, Michigan. Tommy Edison and his faithful dog, Scarlet, were lying in the grass under a shade tree in the backyard.

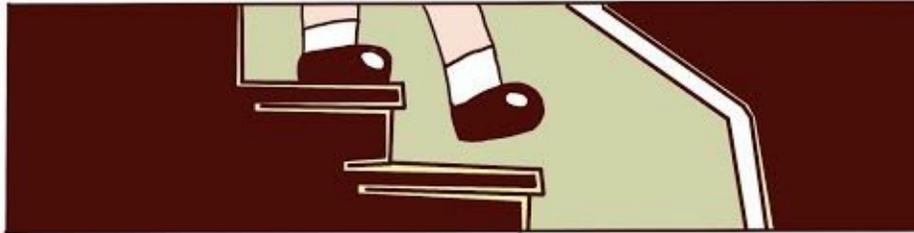
“I don’t think Scarlet feels well, Mom,” answered Tommy. “She’s just laying here and I can hear her tummy rumbling.”

“Well, we can’t take her to see Dr. Scott until next week. He is out of town. If she’s not feeling better by then, we’ll set up an appointment.”



As the day wore on, Scarlet seemed to get worse. She didn't want to play. She didn't want to eat. And she felt hot, like she had a fever.

Tommy became more worried and didn't want to wait until next week to take her to see Dr. Scott. "Don't worry, Girl. I'll figure out how to make you feel better!" he told Scarlet.



Tommy left Scarlet in the shade of the tree. He went down basement where his secret laboratory was located. The only other people in the whole world who knew about it were his mom and dad. In the center of the lab, a huge table was covered with tools, wires, chemicals, and all kinds of cool stuff that Tommy used to invent things. The walls were lined with shelves filled with pieces and parts of his inventions. Some of them worked, and some of them didn't. One thing was certain, though; Tommy never threw anything away since he might need something for another invention some day.



“Now, how do I make Scarlet feel better?” Tommy muttered to himself. “I know she has a tummy ache, because I can hear it rumbling.”

Just then, Tommy remembered that the last time he had a tummy ache, his older sister Marion made it feel better by giving him a sip of her root beer.

“MOM!” Tommy yelled upstairs, “DO WE HAVE ANY ROOT BEER?”

“NO!”

“Then I guess I’ll have to make some,” he thought. “How hard can it be?”



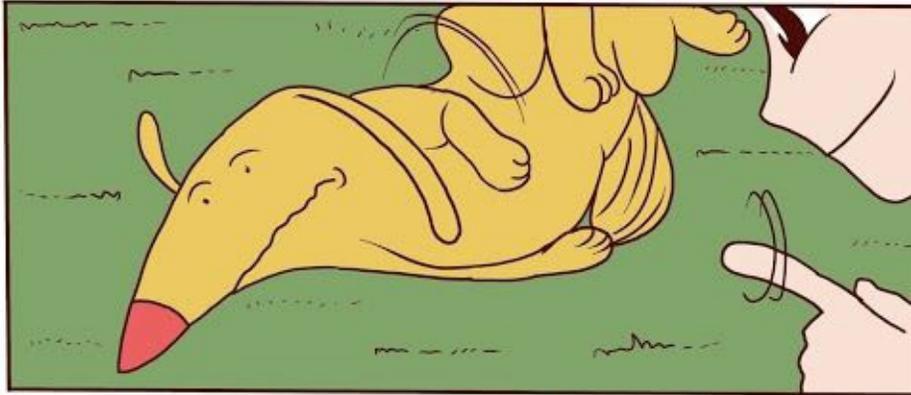
Tommy went outside and dug up an old root from beside the shed. Next, he grabbed a bottle of soda water from the kitchen and returned to his lab. He soaked the root in the soda water for about 10 minutes, and then tasted his own homemade root beer...

“EWWWWWWW! This tastes like dirty water!” he groaned. “NOW I HAVE A TUMMY ACHE TOO!”

He called it quits for the day.



The next day, Tommy was ready to try something else. He knew Scarlet's tummy was rumbling. He decided that if he could build a device to help him hear what was going on in her tummy, he could determine what was wrong with her. He picked through the pieces and parts on the shelves... then **LIGHTNING STRUCK!** He had an idea! He found a big tin funnel and attached a dented tin cup which he had used on some of his camping trips.



He took his new invention – which he named The Tummygraph - outside to test it on Scarlet. “Roll over, Girl,” he said. “I want to use the Tummygraph I invented to hear the rumbling in your belly. Then I can give you a diagnosis and help you feel better!” Scarlet gave out a little whimper. She didn’t want to disappoint her friend, so she slowly rolled onto her back so he could listen to her tummy. He gently placed the cup end of the Tummygraph on Scarlet’s belly and put his ear up to the funnel to listen...



“Wow! The Tummygraph sure does make everything sound LOUDER,” he exclaimed, “but that still doesn’t help me know what’s wrong with Scarlet.”

Tommy was very disappointed. But as he sat looking at the Tummygraph... LIGHTNING STRUCK AGAIN! That’s how it worked with Tommy. He was always having ideas suddenly pop into his head. “I could use the Tummygraph to make music louder so more people could hear it!”

But that invention (do you know what it was called?) would have to wait. Making Scarlet feel better was the only dilemma he wanted to solve that day.

He sat down under the tree next to his dog, stroked her fur, and concentrated really hard.



Would you believe it? LIGHTNING STRUCK Tommy for the third time that day. If he couldn't HEAR what was wrong with Scarlet's tummy, he needed to invent something that would let him SEE what was wrong!

"This invention will be amazing! Everyone will love it! Doctors and veterinarians could use it to look inside all of their patients!"

But there was also another reason Tommy wanted to invent this machine...



## NICK TESLA!

Nick Tesla lived down the block he liked to solve problems by inventing new things just like Tommy did. He constantly tried to build stuff bigger or faster or more amazing than anything Tommy could invent. And sometimes he did. Other times, Tommy's inventions would be better.

Nick had worked really hard to invent a machine that could look inside people, and he had one that worked. But Tommy had some ideas to make the machine even better, and Scarlet would be his inspiration!



With Nicky Tesla around (Nick hated it when people called him Nicky!), Tommy would have to be very careful who knew about his invention. He snuck back down into his lab and locked the door behind him. Again, he started picking through parts and pieces on the shelves. He searched for anything that might help him see what was in Scarlet's tummy. The first thing he found was an old pair of his father's glasses. After that, everything started to come together for Tommy.



For the next two days, Tommy only left his lab to eat and sleep. He worked tirelessly at his invention. He combined different pieces of glass with different chemicals. Tommy had bottles and bottles of chemicals in his lab. And on every bottle, he wrote the word POISON – even though they weren't poison – just to keep nosy people away from them.



After two days of hard work, Tommy was able to use his invention to look at the bones in his hand! It was one of the most amazing things Tommy had ever seen. At one point, Tommy even thought he might have invented a machine that would make people invisible! He was ready to use it to look inside Scarlet's tummy! Since he didn't want anyone (especially Nick Tesla) to find out what he had invented, he decided to call it "The X Machine". Later he would change that to X-Ray Machine. He couldn't wait to try it out on Scarlet and finally determine the cause of her rumbling tummy.

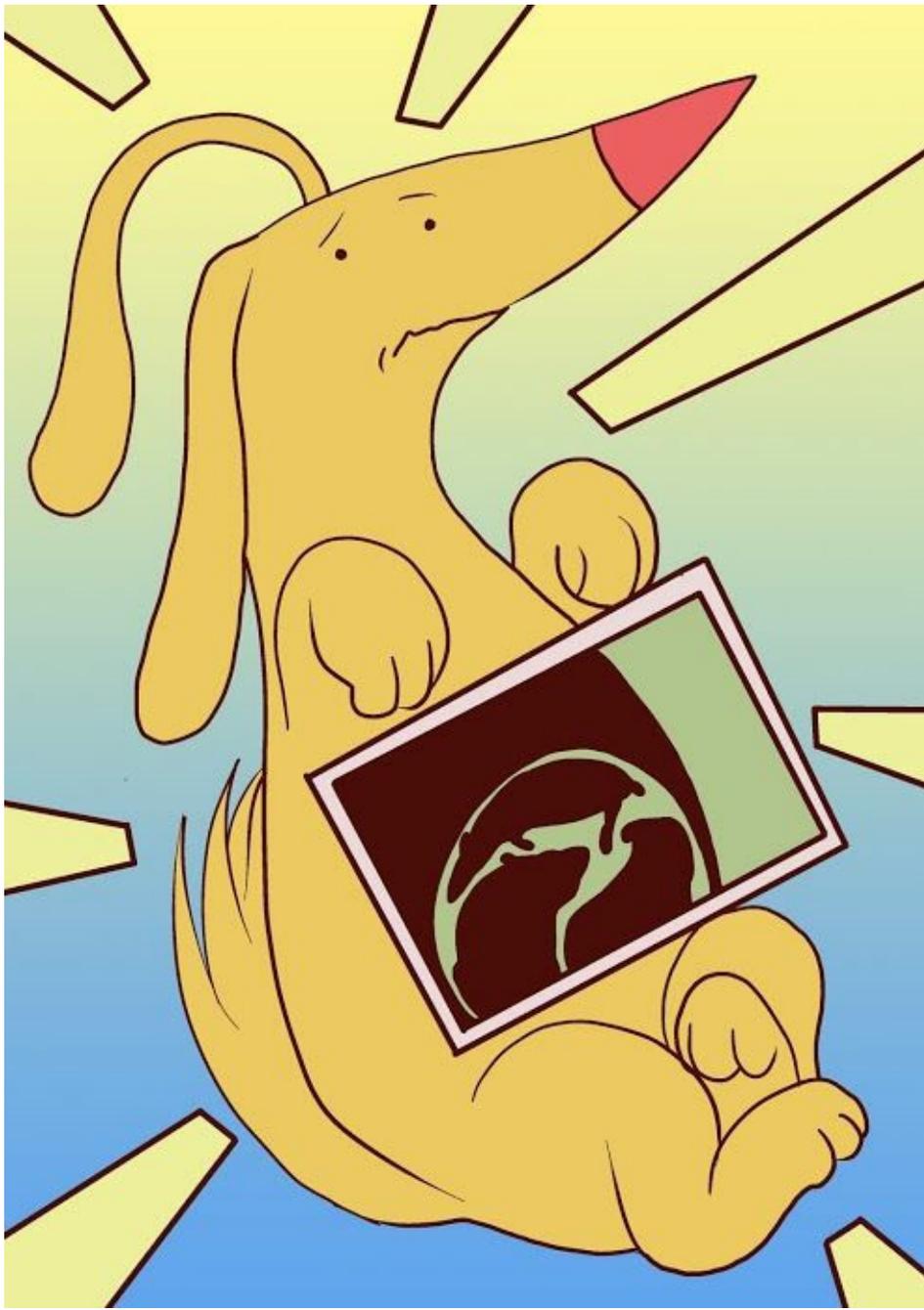


Carefully, he put Scarlet under the machine and turned it on. He turned knobs, flipped switches and slid levers. The machine made a lot of noise, and gave off a funny smell that Tommy blamed on the dog.

When all the necessary adjustments had been made, Tommy held his breath and slowly looked into The X Machine...

It worked!

Tommy saw immediately what was making Scarlet's tummy rumble, and it was incredible...



SCARLET WAS HAVING PUPPIES!



Tommy ran to tell his mother what he had discovered. “MOM! Scarlet is having puppies!” he yelled as he ran. His mother followed him down into his laboratory and saw the picture of the puppies through the amazing machine Tommy had invented. “You’re going to be a mommy, Girl,” his mother whispered, gently stroking Scarlet’s head. “Tommy, perhaps we should move her out of your laboratory and upstairs where she will be more comfortable.” They took Scarlet upstairs and laid her down on the dog bed they kept on the floor in the front parlor. They even gave her an extra blanket to make sure she was comfortable.



The next morning, Tommy awoke and ran downstairs to check on Scarlet. But when he reached the parlor, her dog bed was empty! He searched the rest of the house, but could not find Scarlet anywhere. “Mom, have you seen Scarlet?” he asked. “Not since very early this morning, dear,” she replied. “Perhaps she’s outside.” Tommy raced outside and looked in all Scarlet’s favorite places. First he checked the base of the oak tree. Nothing. Then he searched the vegetable garden. Nothing. Next he checked down by the stream. There was only one other place she could be... in the bushes behind the shed.



There she was!

And nestled next to Scarlet were three, tiny, newly-born puppies!

Tommy had never seen anything so cute. There were two girl puppies and one boy puppy. The girl puppies had reddish-brown fur just like Scarlet, but the boy puppy was all white with a reddish-brown tail. That was the one that Tommy wanted to keep.

He started thinking of a name for his new friend.

And then – LIGHTNING STRUCK!

And he named his puppy Root Beer.



## **THE REAL THOMAS EDISON'S LABORATORY**

*When Thomas Edison was about 11 years old, he really did have a laboratory in the basement of his house. He spent so much time there, that his father actually paid Thomas to come out of the lab and read. He received a penny for every novel or history book he read. Thomas saved all the money his father gave him for reading, and bought more supplies for his laboratories and inventions. He marked his bottles with the word "poison" to keep nosy people out of them.*

*Thomas Edison invented the Phonograph in 1877. It was the first machine to record and playback sound.*