

Pictures / Design
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Steven Sims

11 - 5296

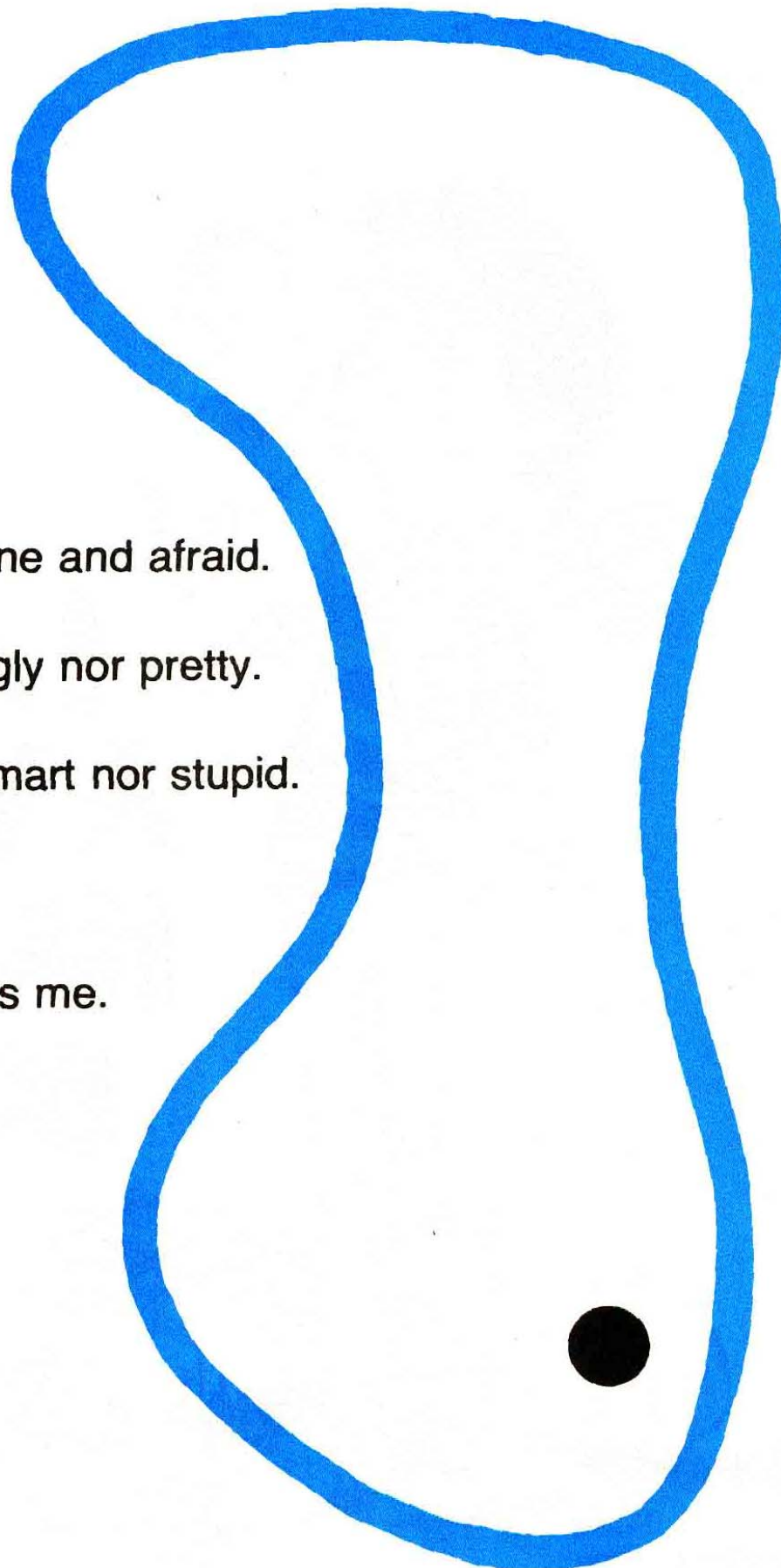
Here I am, alone and afraid.

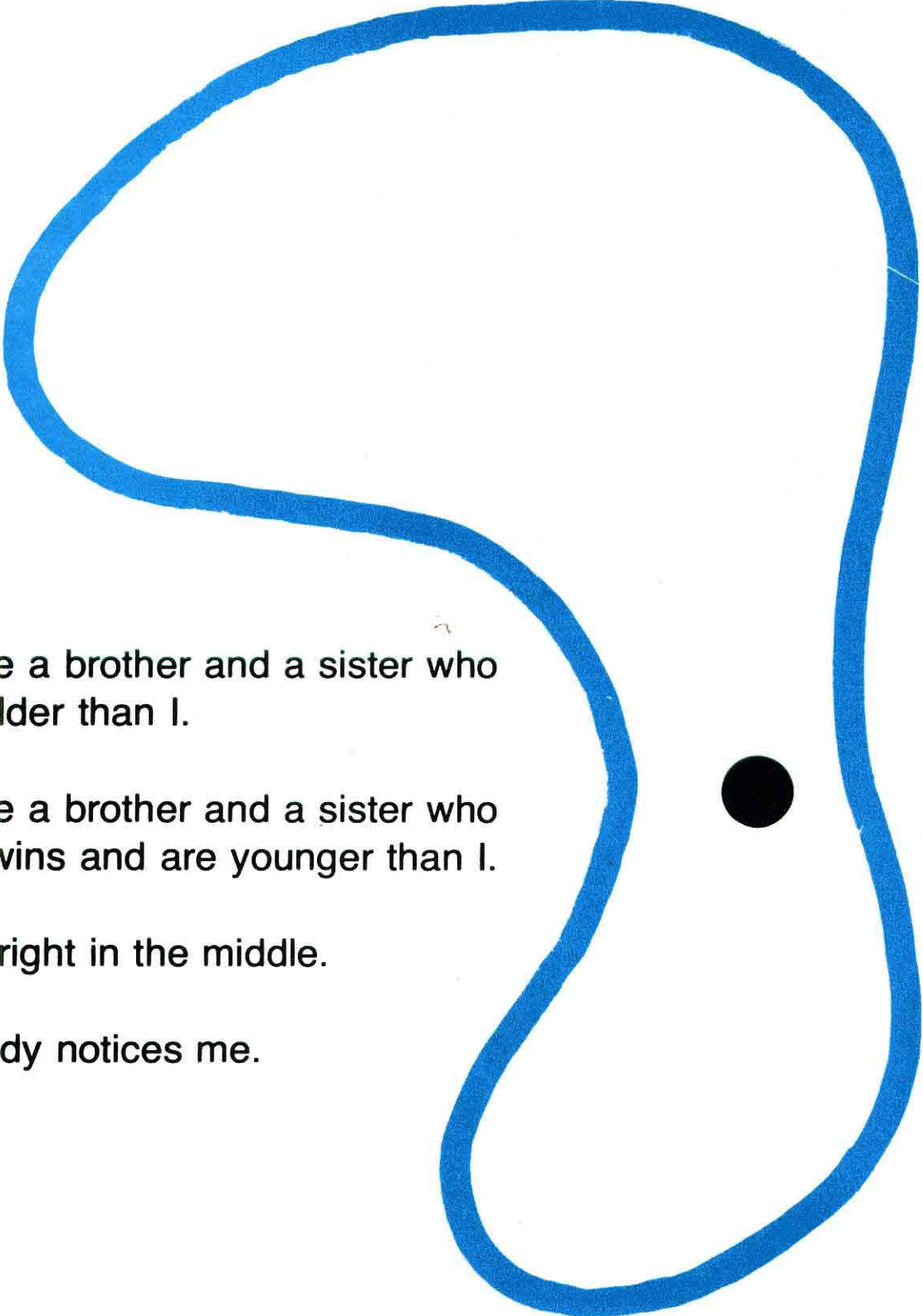
I am neither ugly nor pretty.

I am neither smart nor stupid.

I am alone.

Nobody notices me.





I have a brother and a sister who are older than I.

I have a brother and a sister who are twins and are younger than I.

I am right in the middle.

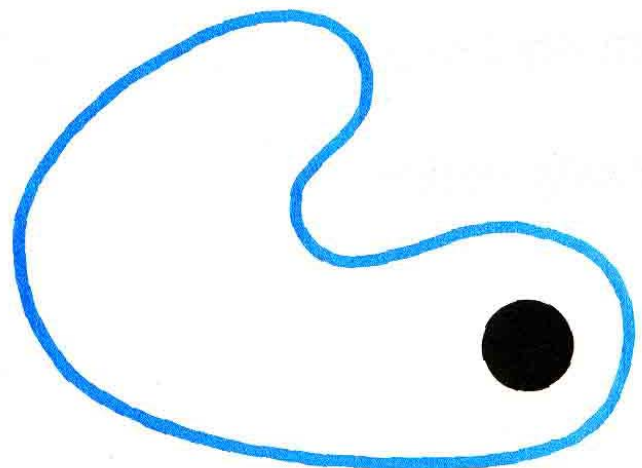
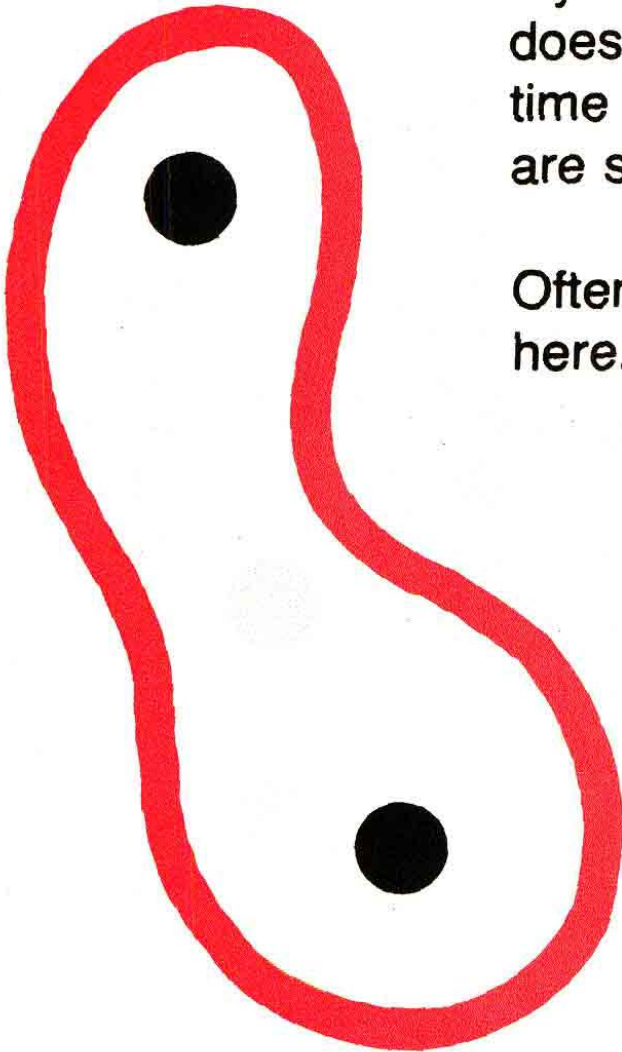
Nobody notices me.

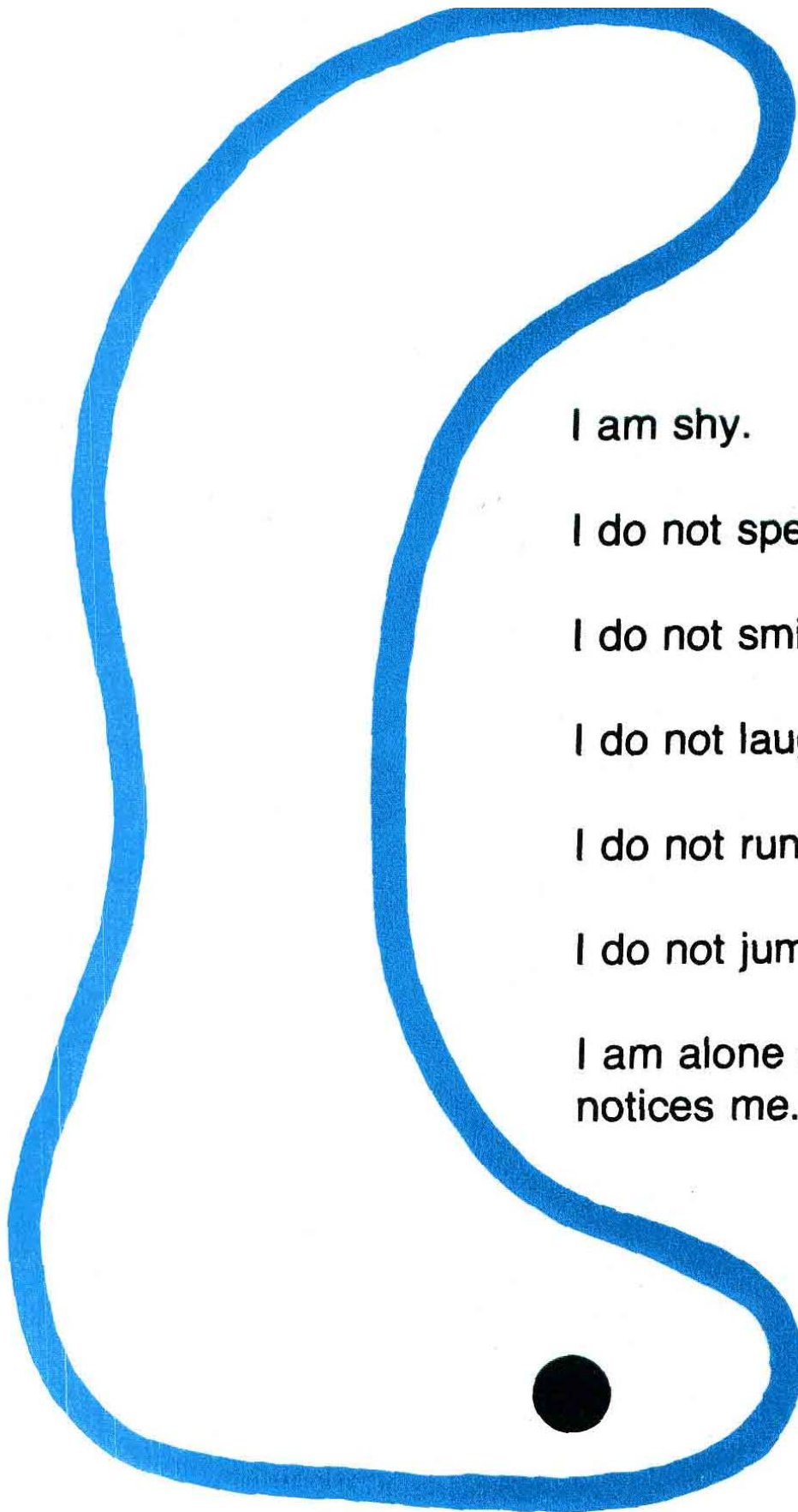
My parents are always busy.

My father earns a lot of money to dress us, to feed us, to make repairs in the house which is very old.

My mother cleans, cooks, shops, does laundry, and spends a lot of time taking care of the twins who are still babies.

Often my parents forget that I am here.





I am shy.

I do not speak.

I do not smile.

I do not laugh.

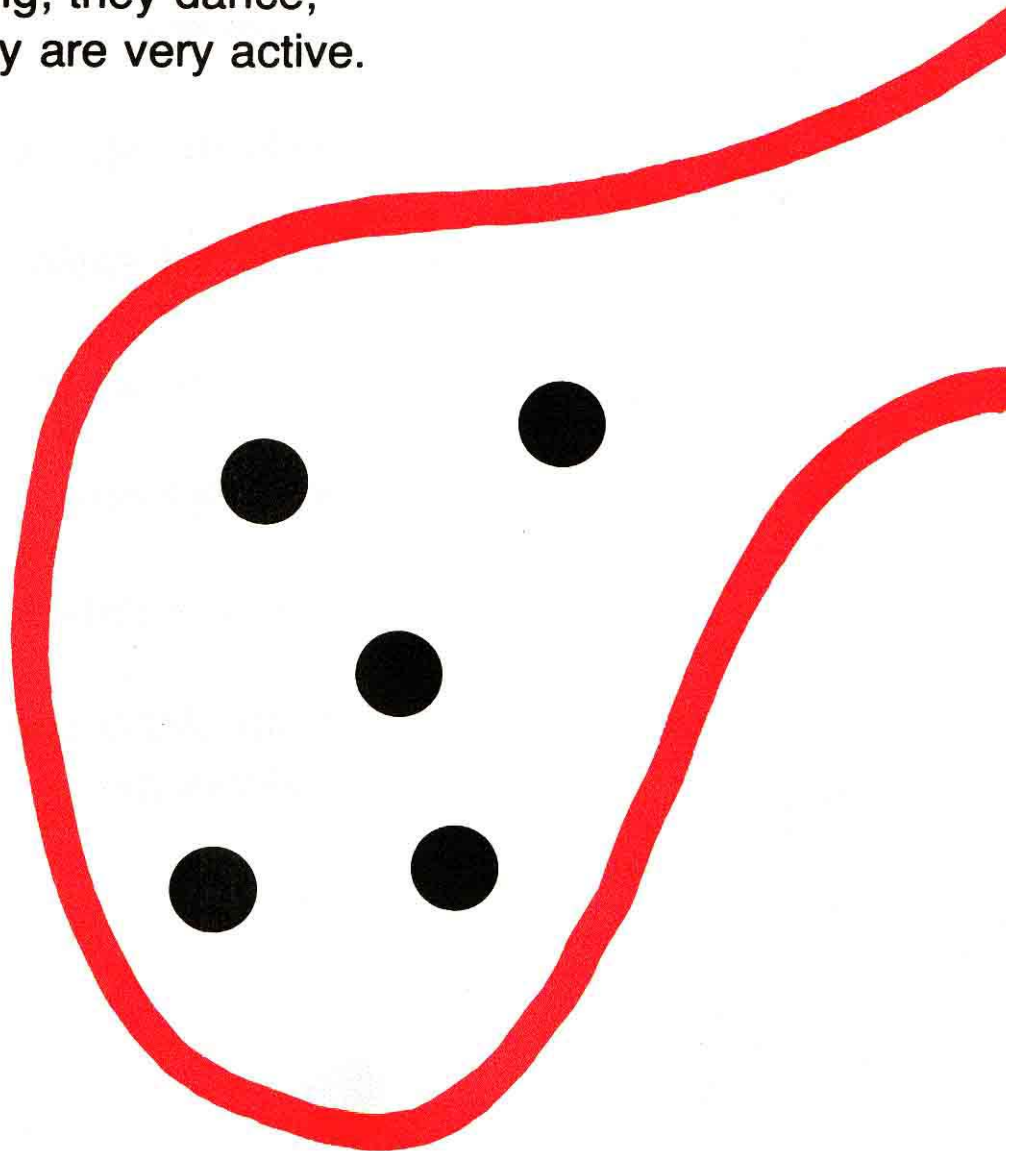
I do not run.

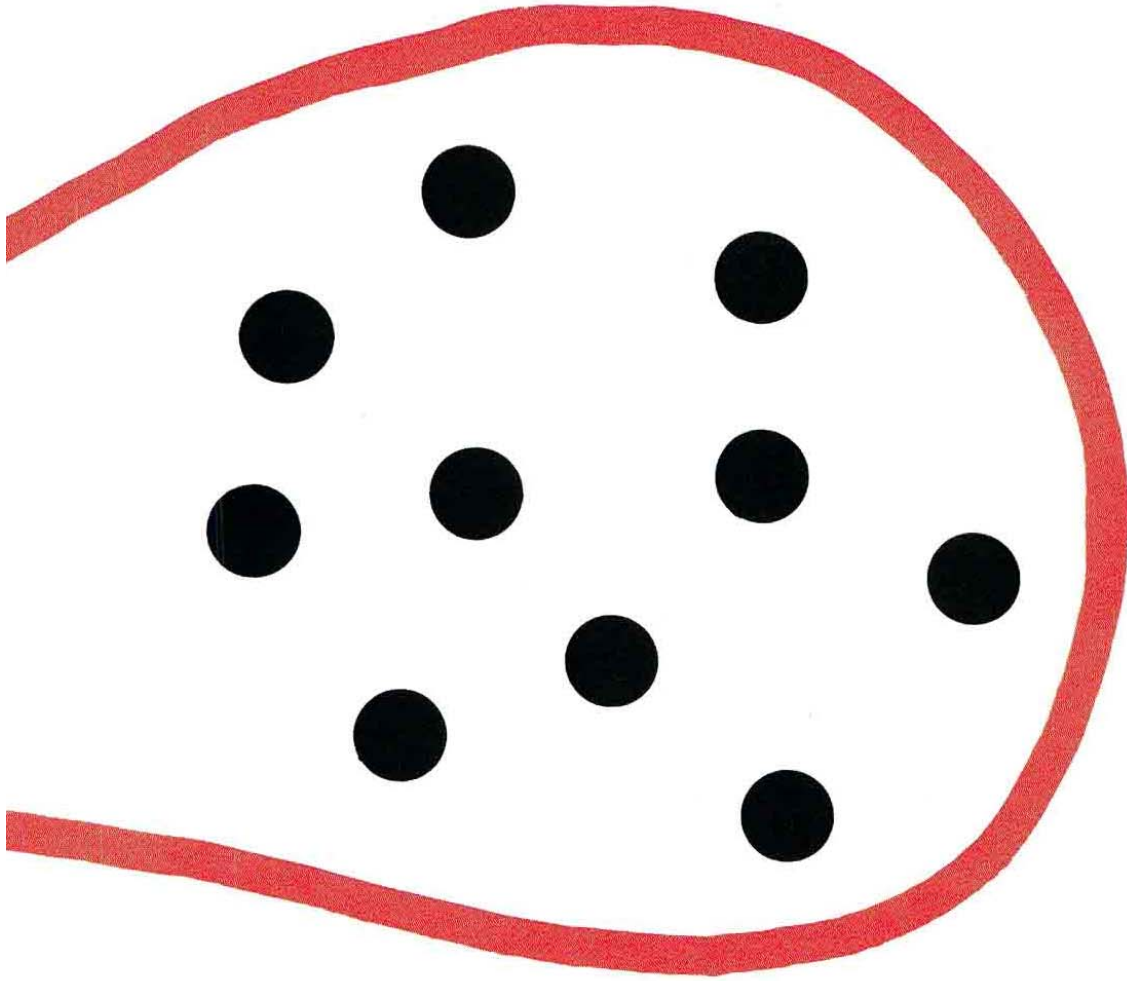
I do not jump.

I am alone and nobody
notices me.

At school, all the other students
have a lot of fun.

They shout; they fight; they
play; they sing; they dance;
they run; they are very active.



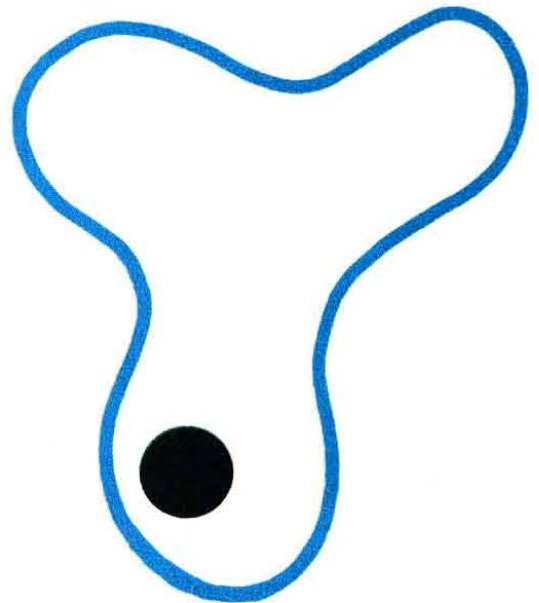


I am silent.

I stay alone in a corner.

**The other students don't
laugh at me.**

They just don't see me.



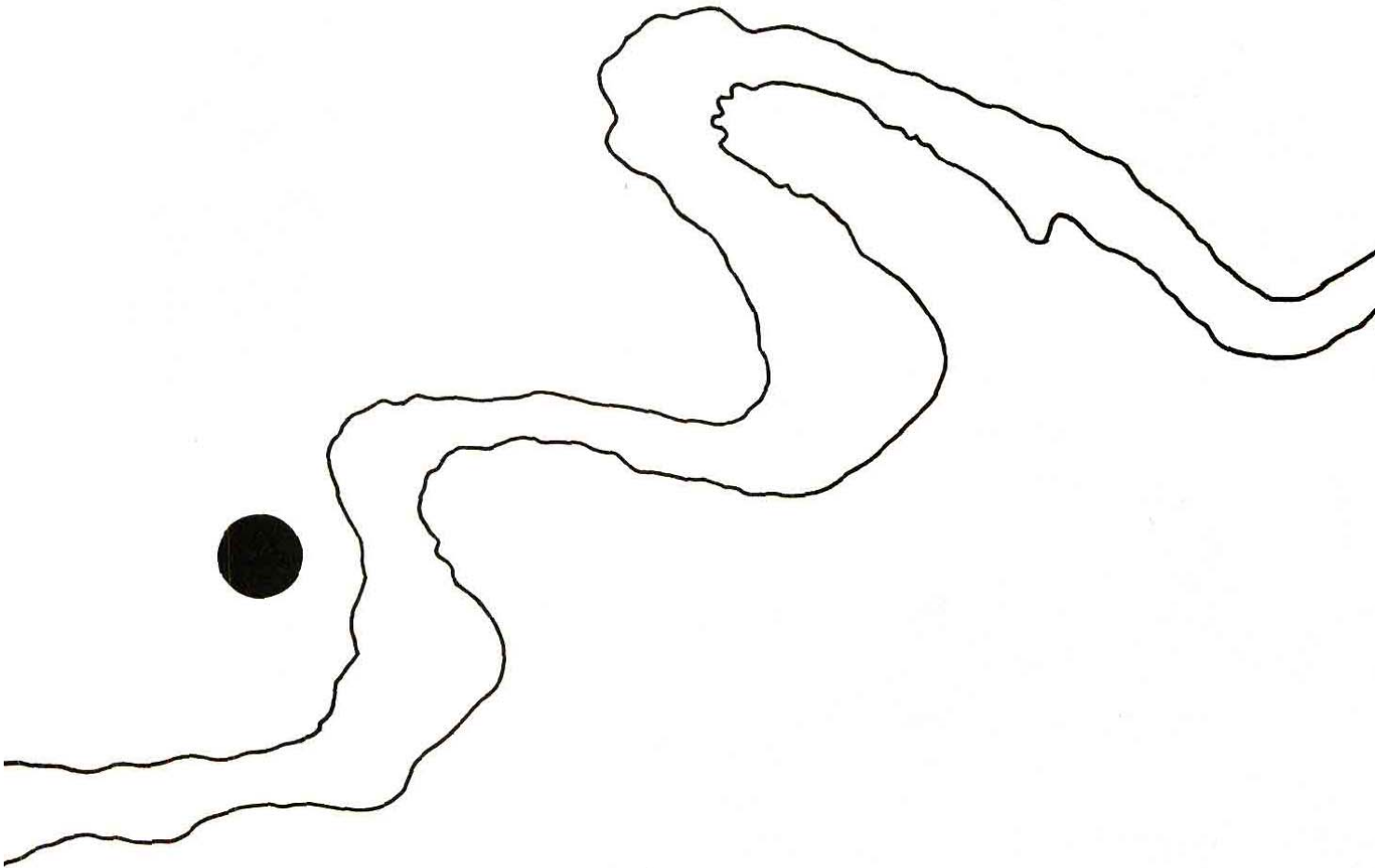


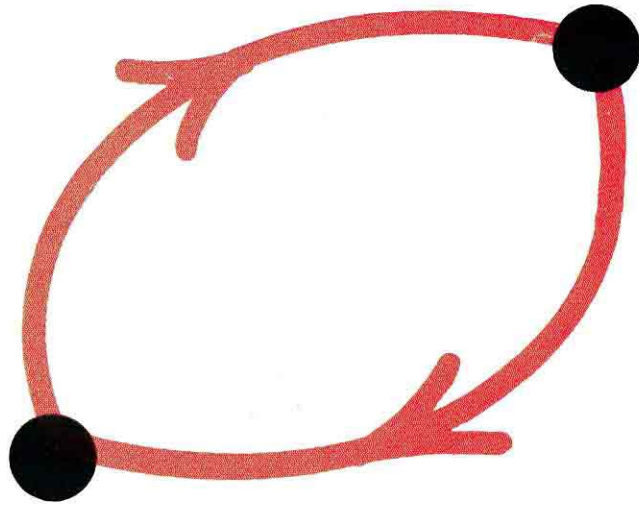


Last Sunday, I was walking
along a little river in back of
my parents' garden.

I was alone; I was thinking.

I met nobody.





Suddenly a squirrel jumped in front of me.

He was eating a nut.

His dark eyes were shining.

He looked at me in a friendly way.

I was happy and I spoke to him.

He listened carefully and he smiled.

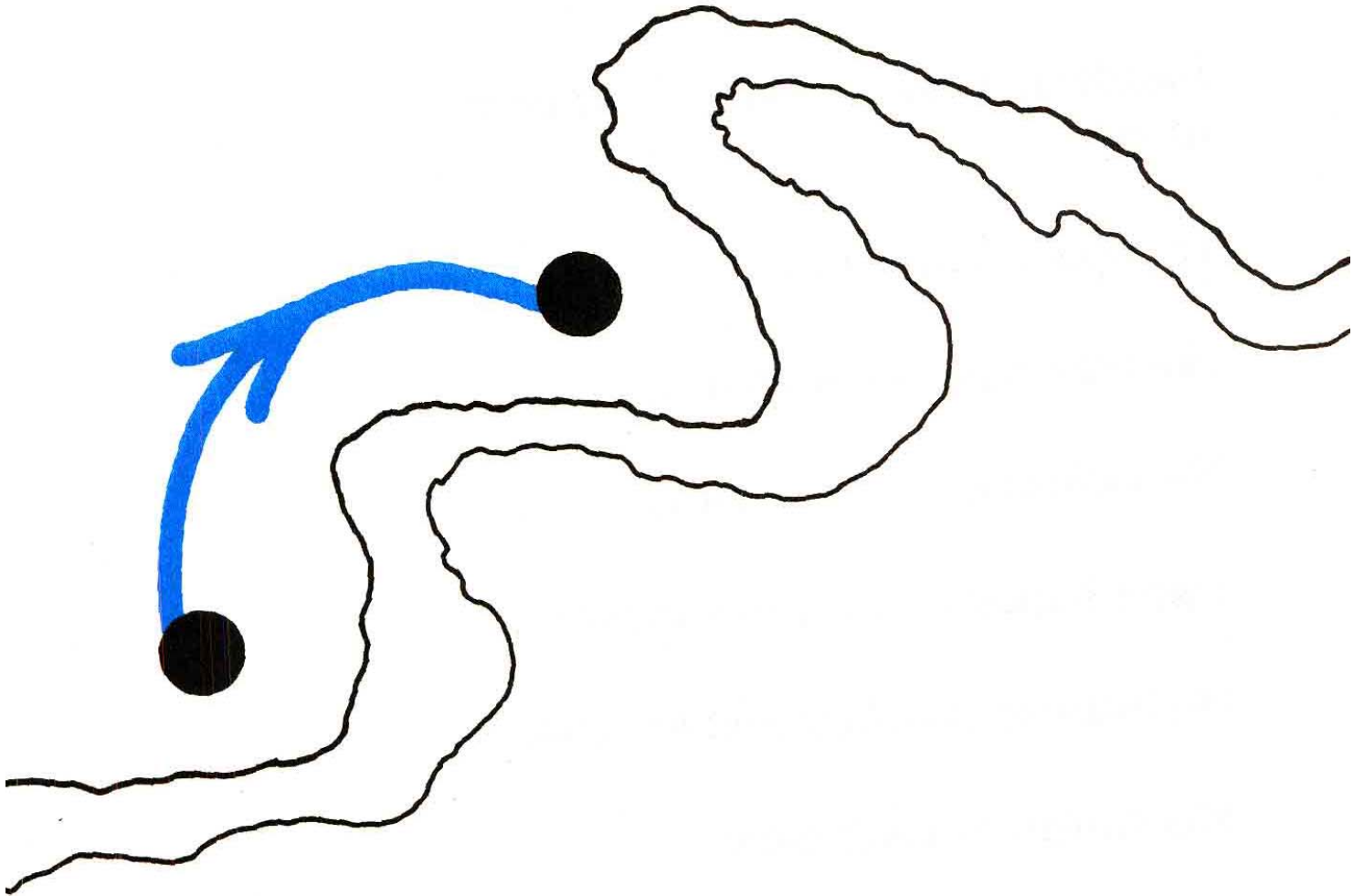
We smiled at each other.

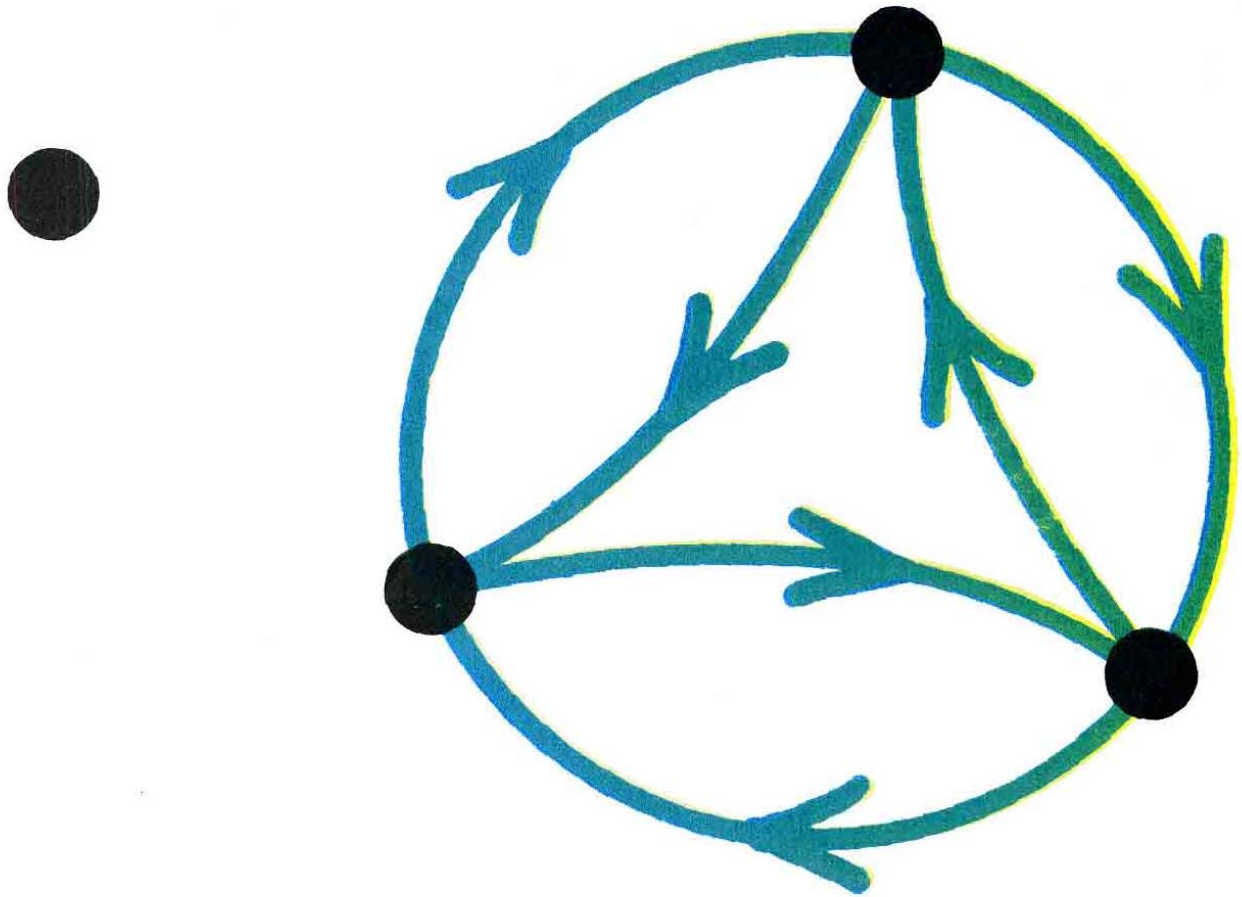
I was very happy.

I shouted:

“I have a friend. I am no longer alone.”

I danced and sang along the river and my friend followed me.



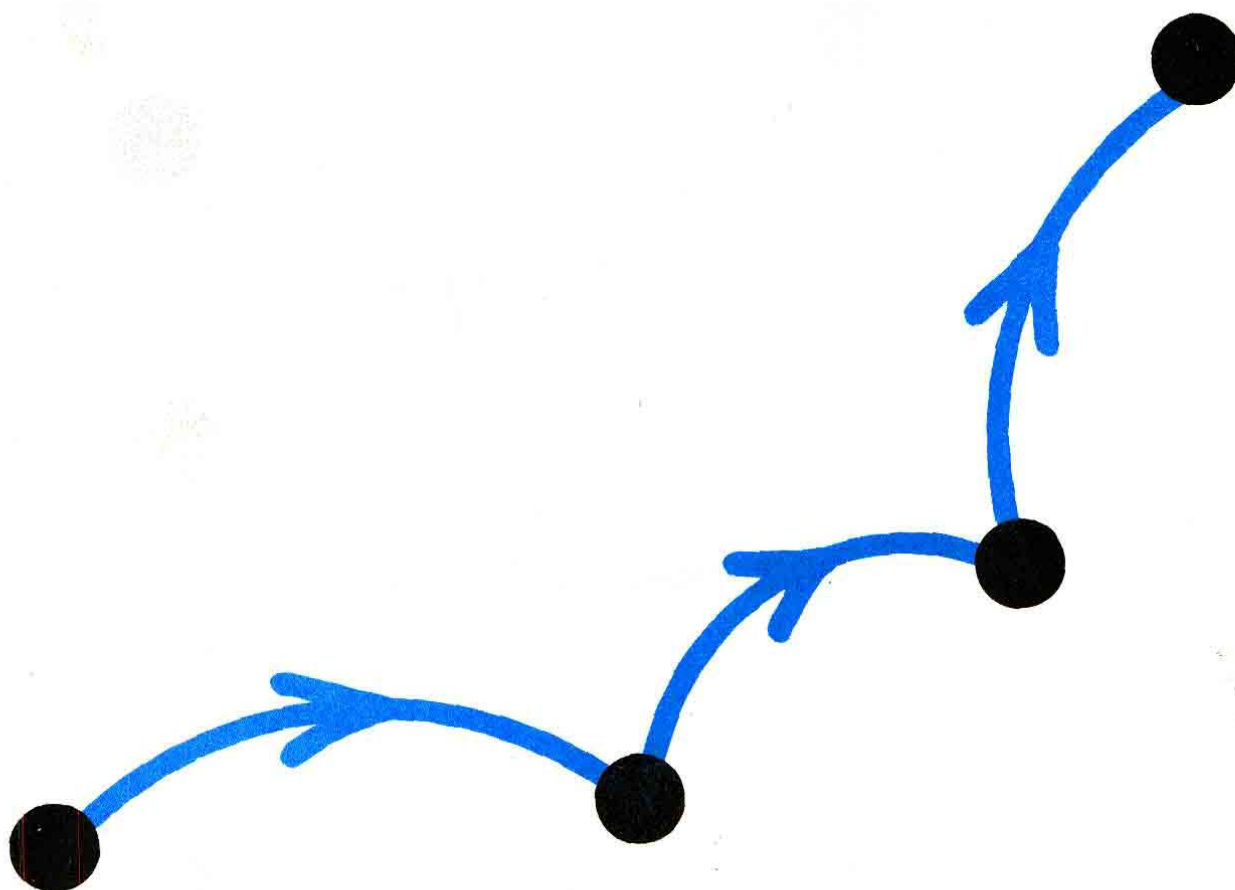


Attracted by my song, two birds answered me by whistling.

The three of us were talking to each other.

My friend, the squirrel, listened and smiled.

I went on walking and running, followed
by my three friends.



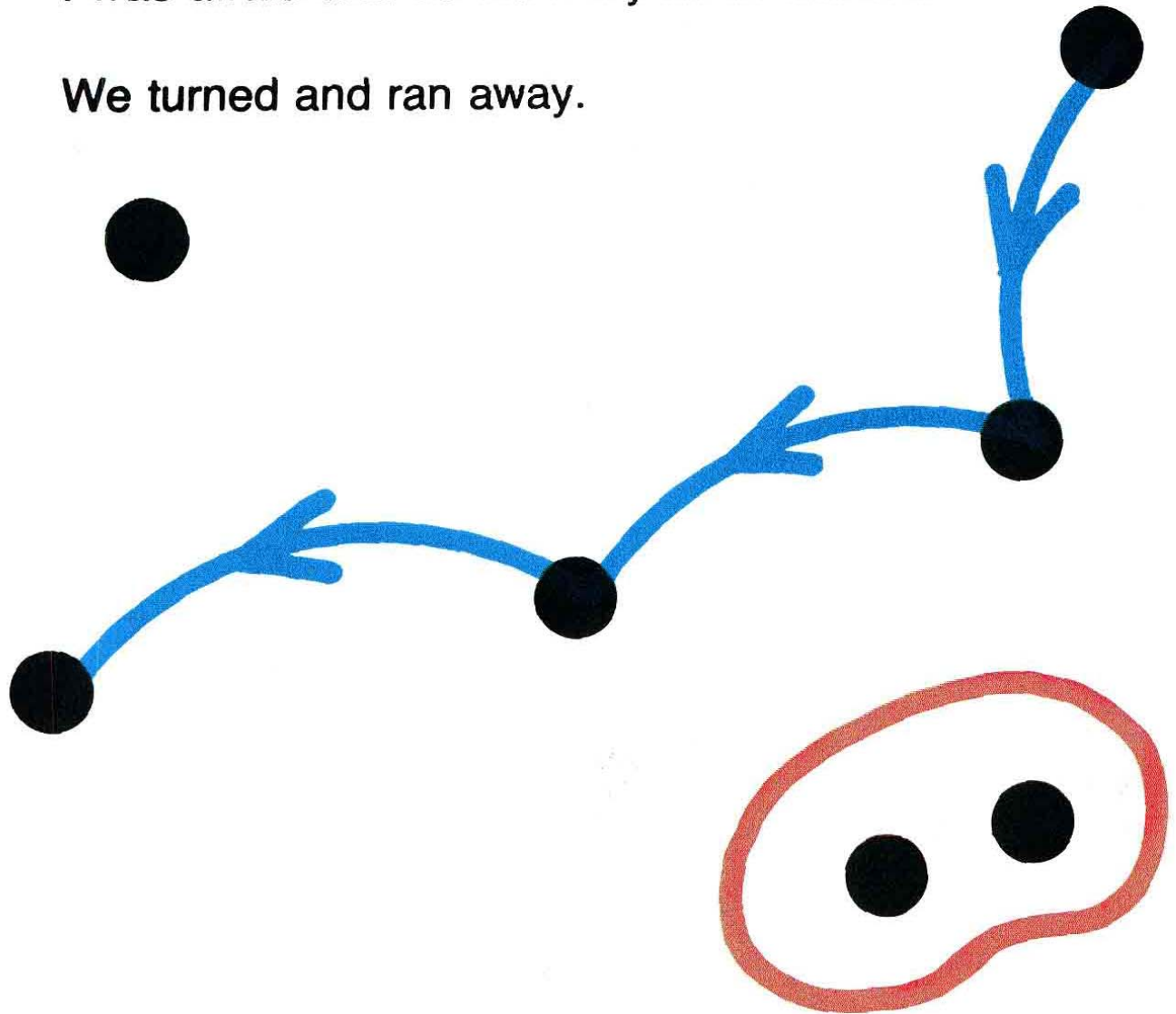
We were near a village.

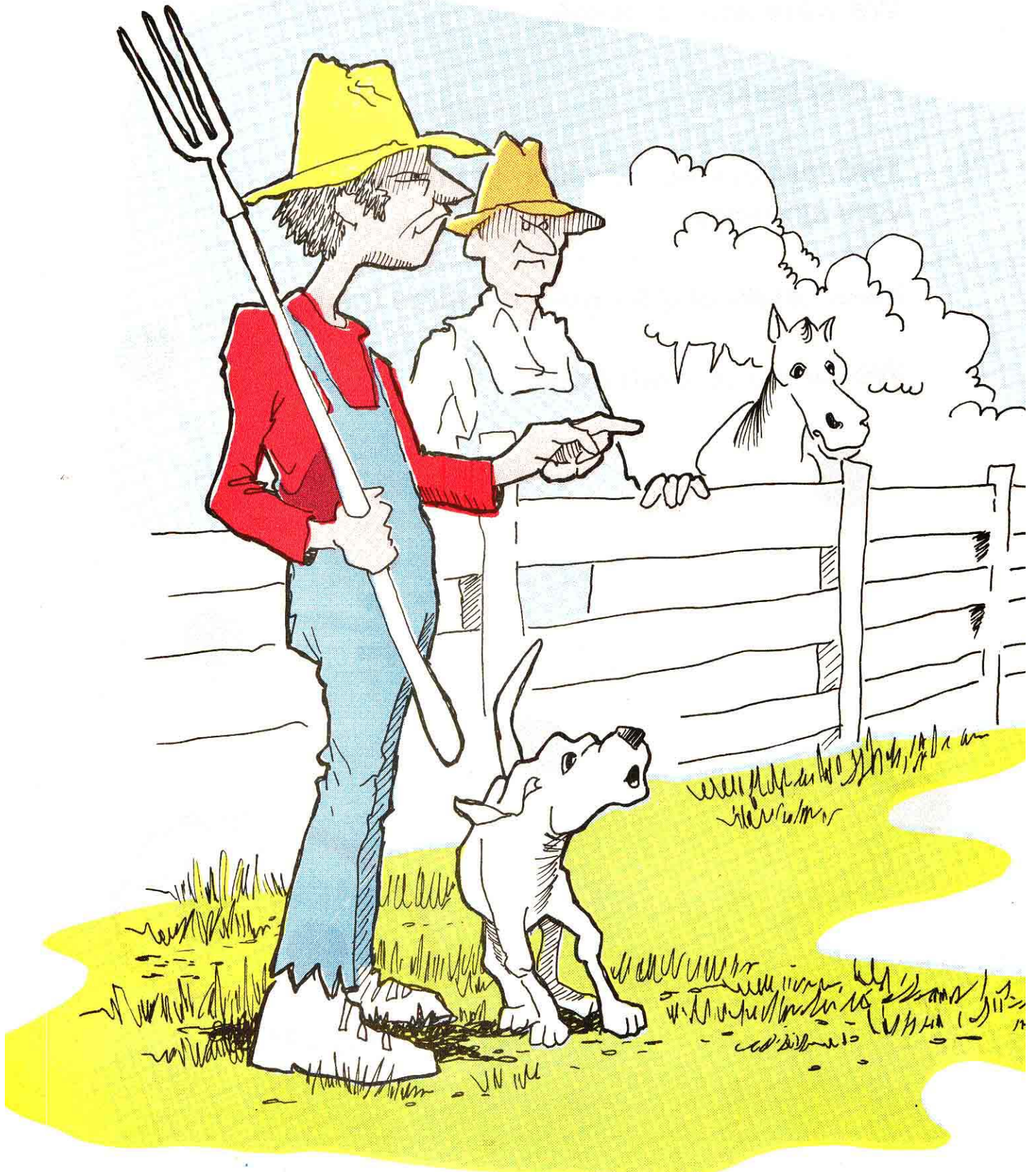
A dog barked.

Two farmers were looking at the four of us very strangely.

I was afraid and so were my three friends.

We turned and ran away.







We went through a small forest.

It was very quiet.

We walked very carefully.

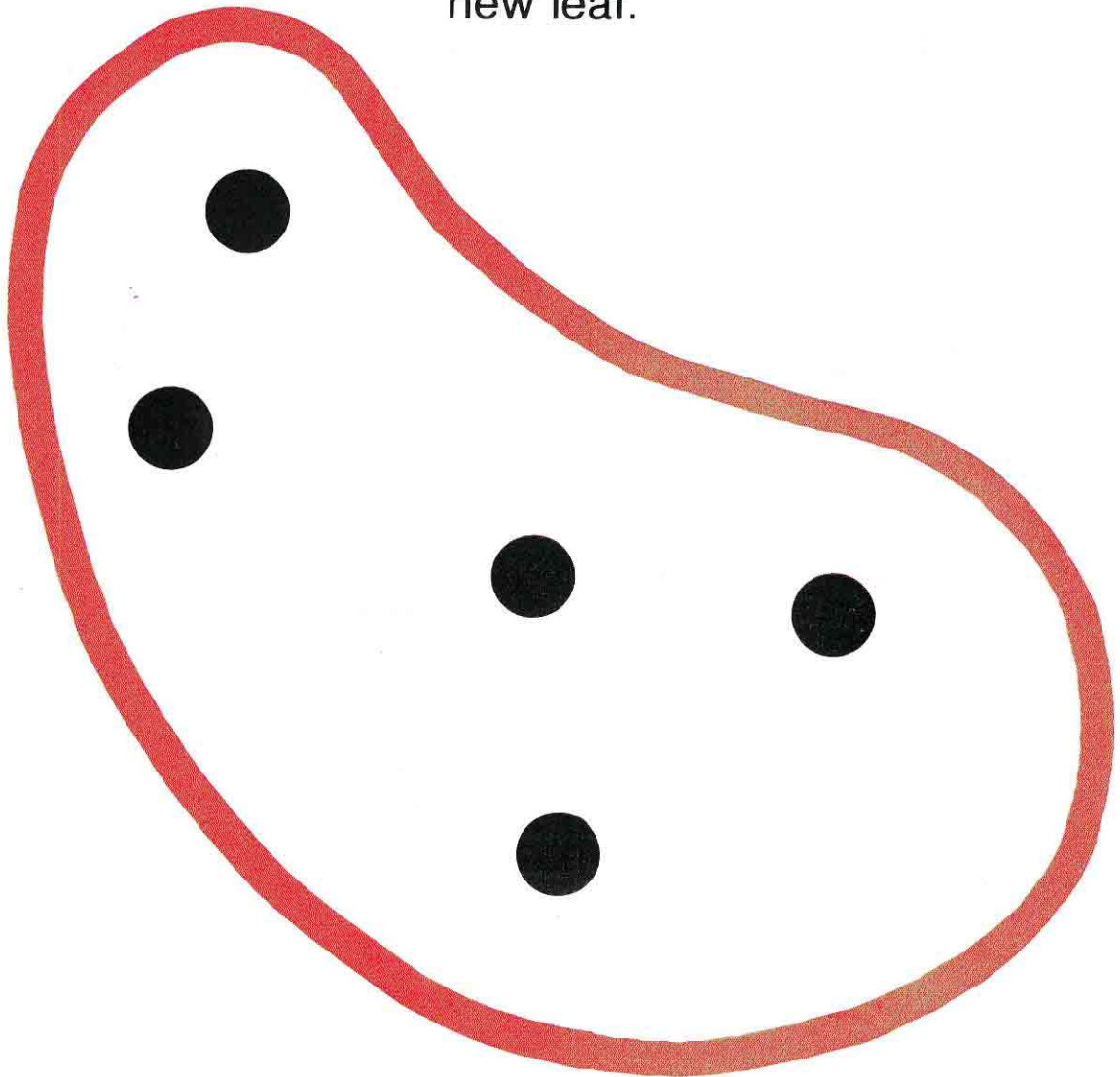
Under a tall oak tree, I found
a little rabbit with a broken leg.

He looked at me sadly.



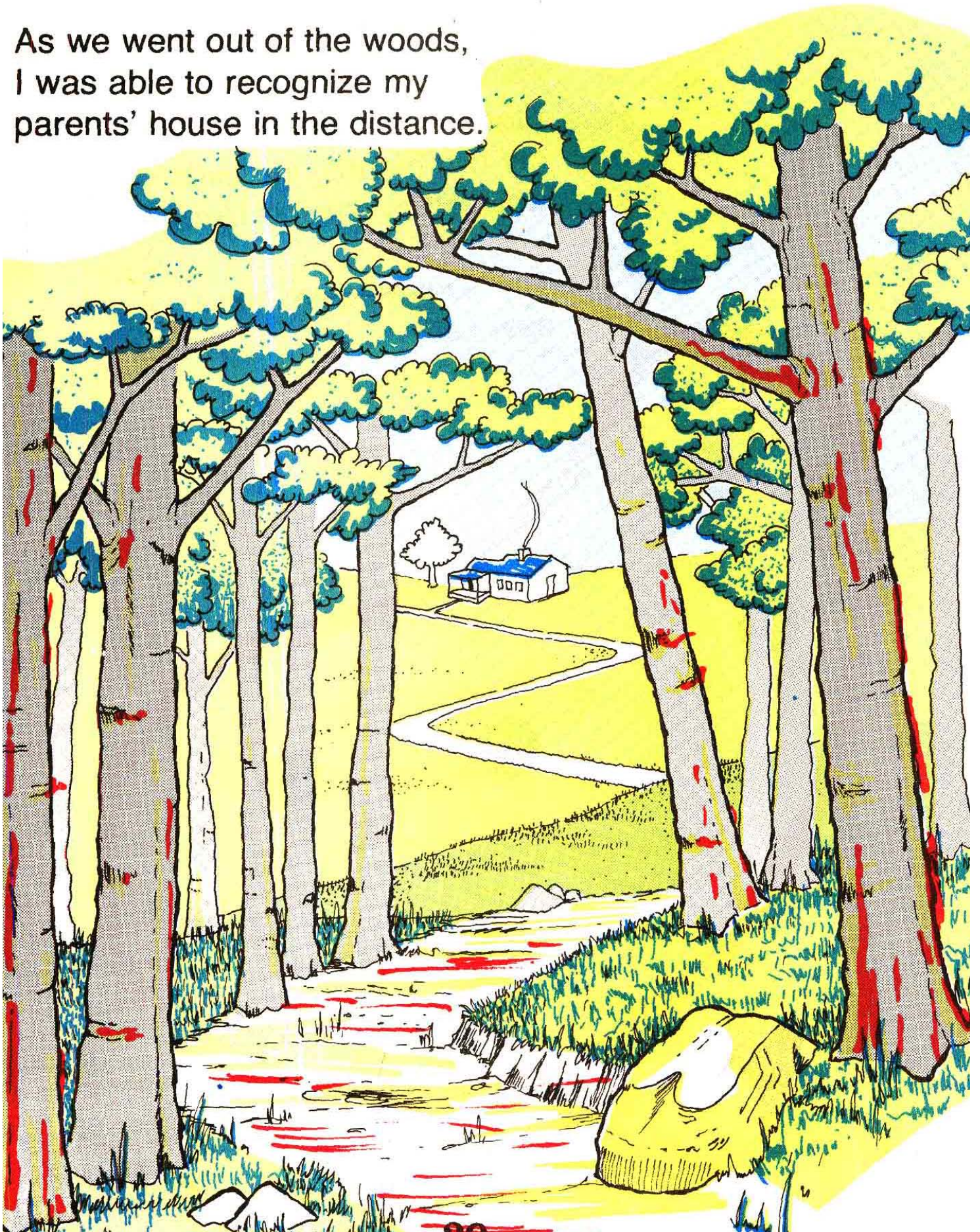
I took him in my arms and
my two friends, the birds,
whistled to comfort him.

The squirrel gave him a
new leaf.



It was getting dark.

As we went out of the woods,
I was able to recognize my
parents' house in the distance.



I ran to the house, with the little rabbit in my arms, and knocked at the door.

My mother was in the kitchen and opened the door.

She was happy to see me again and kissed me lovingly.

The baby twins hugged the poor rabbit and put him in a little box near the oven.

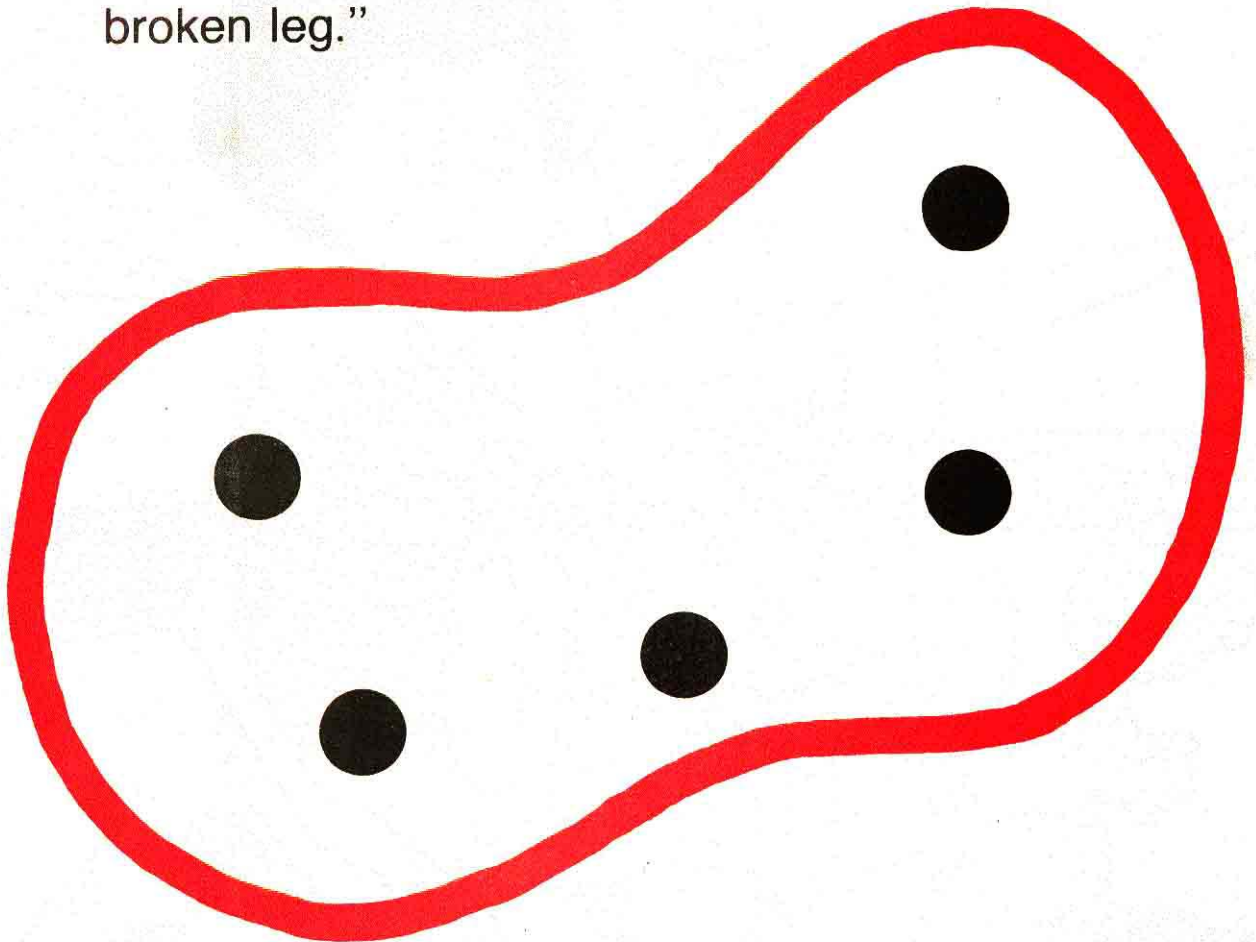
The two birds and the squirrel slept in our garden in a tree near my bedroom window.

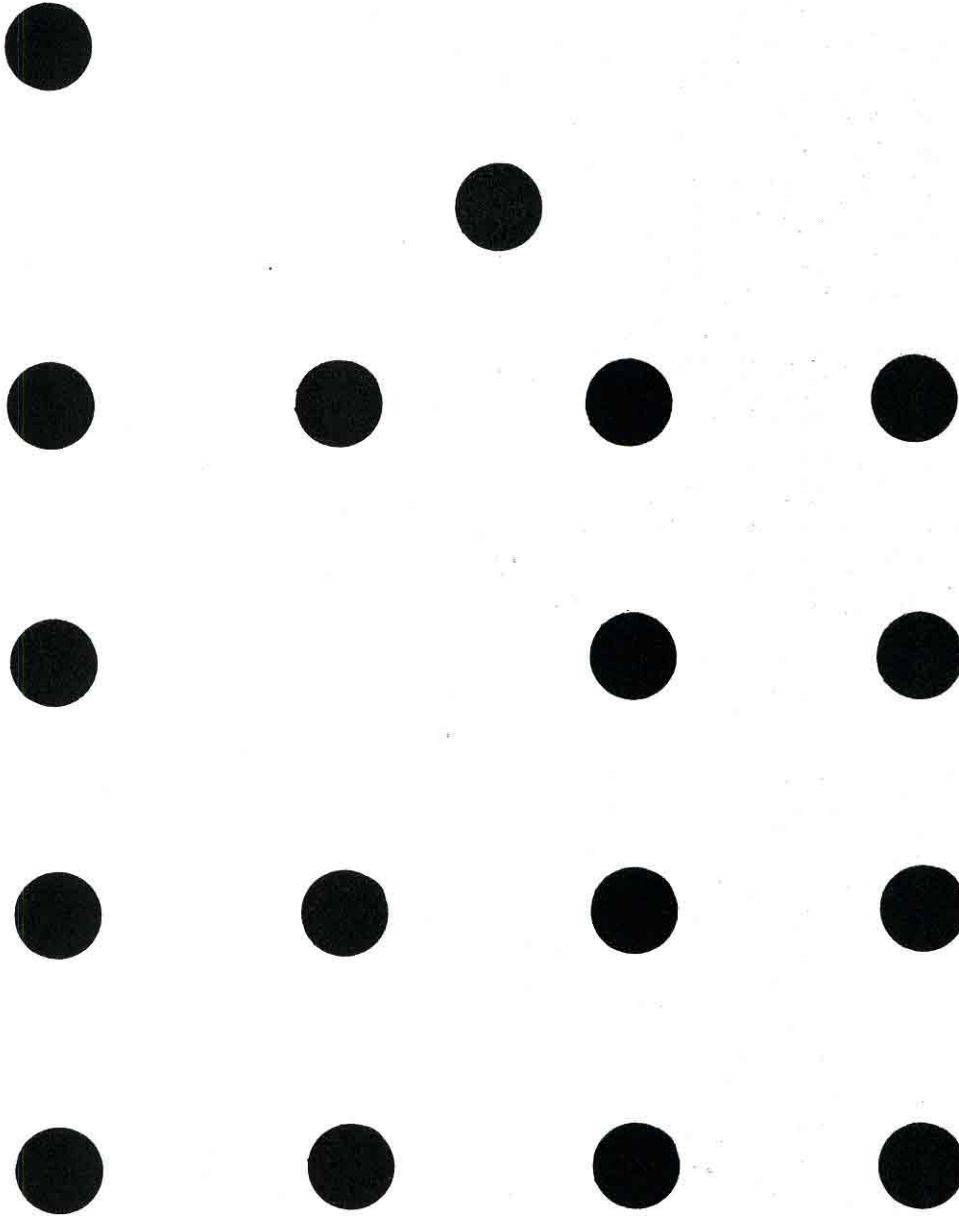




The next day at school, I was happy and I sang:

“I am no longer alone. I have four friends, a squirrel, two birds, and a rabbit with a broken leg.”





I forgot I was shy and I told
the story of my walk to the
students in my classroom.

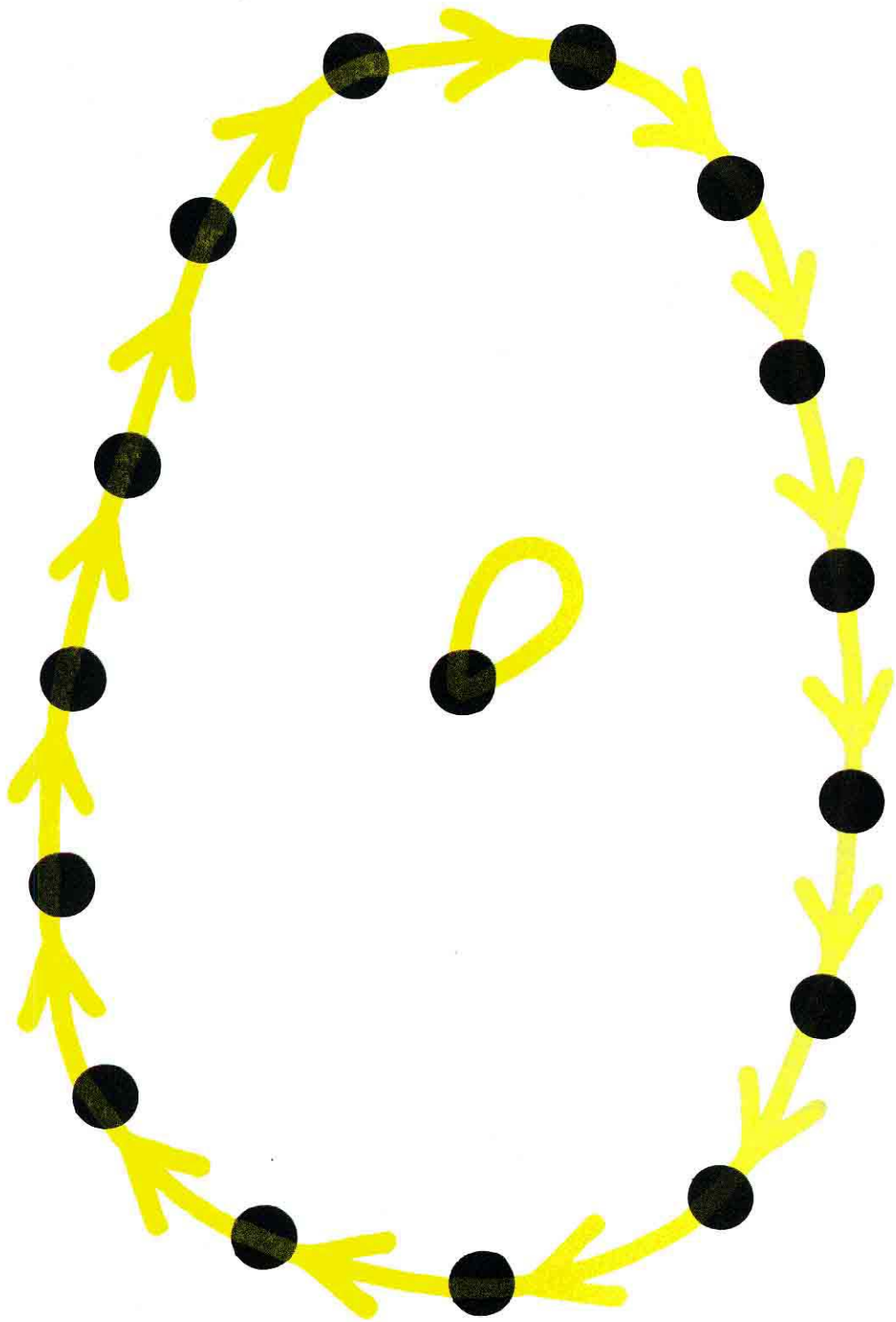
They cheered me.

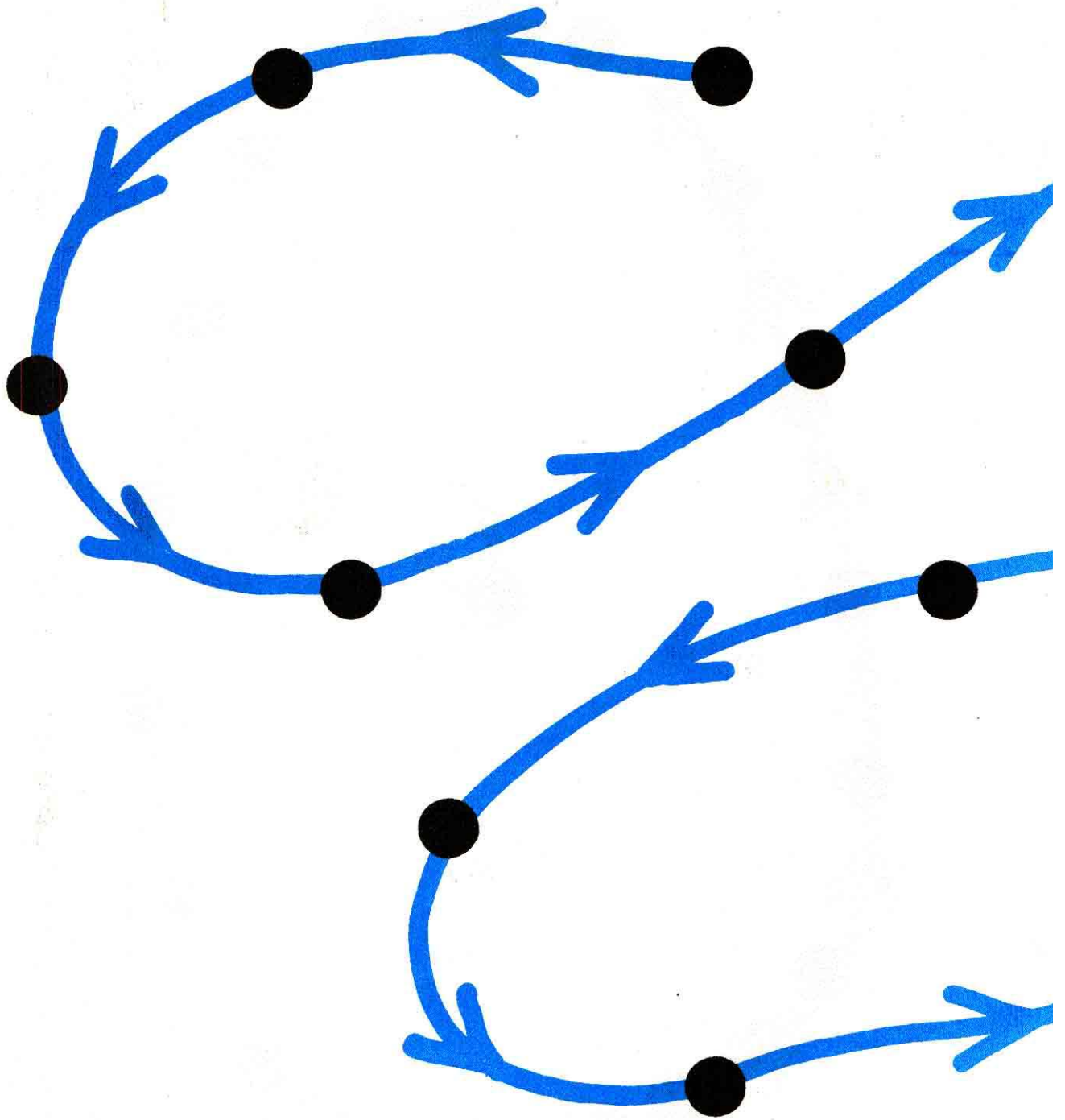
Very excited, they held
hands with each other
and danced around me.

I was in the middle of all
the children; I smiled.

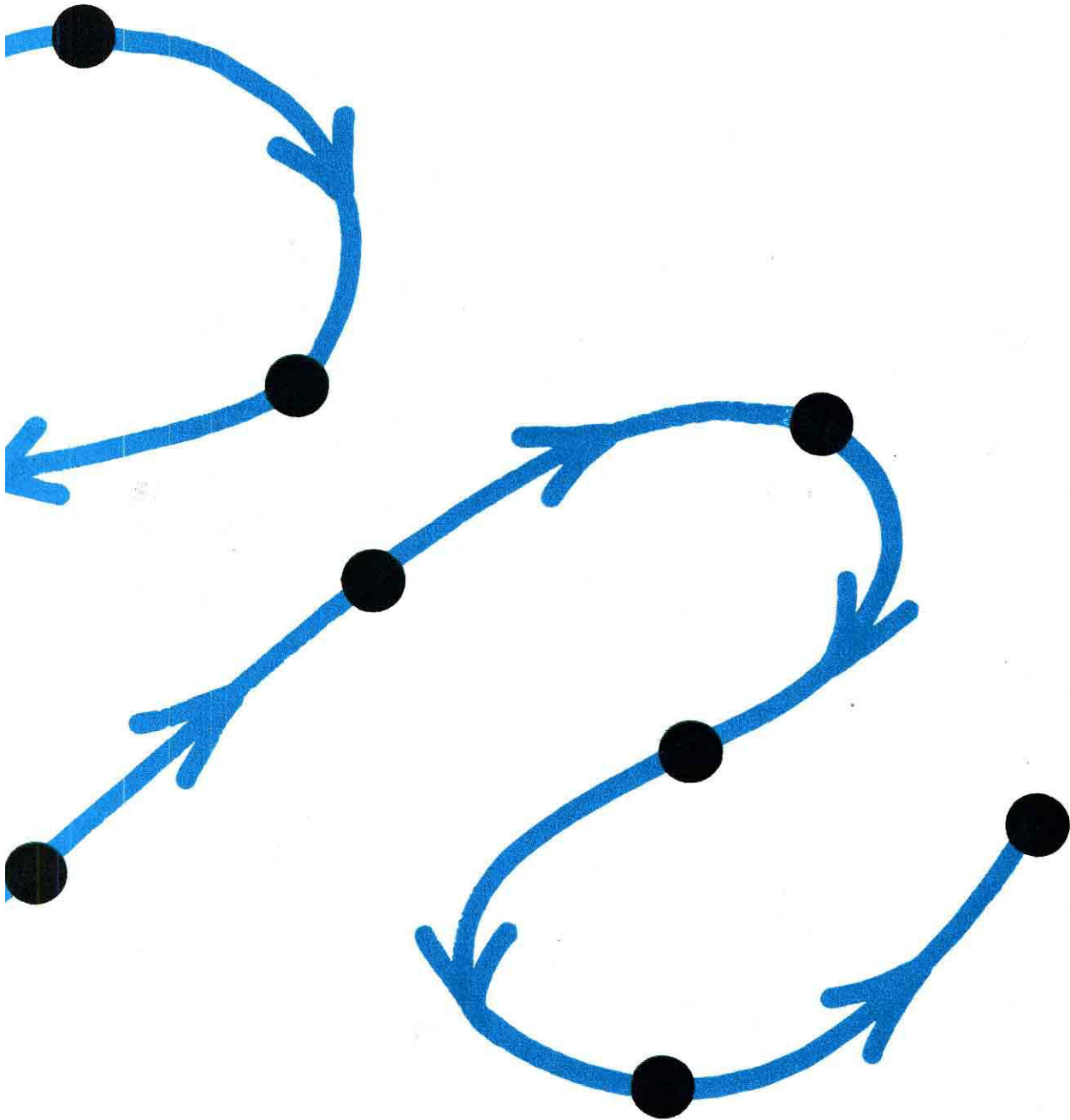
I joined my hands too.

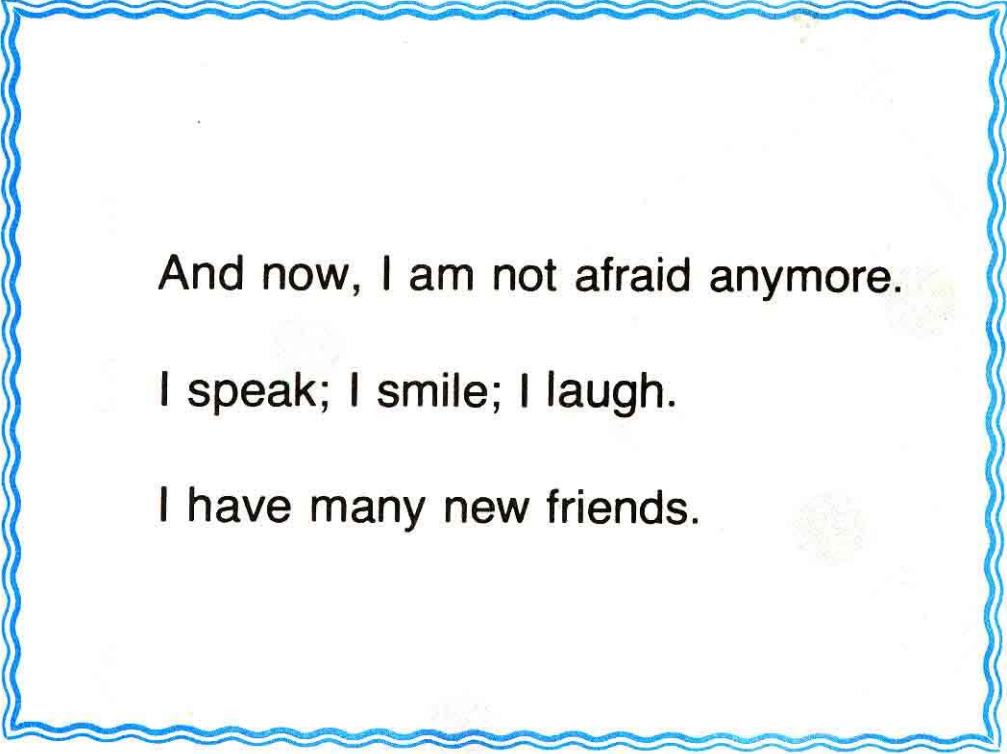
I was very happy.





After school, all the children followed me home to see my new friends.





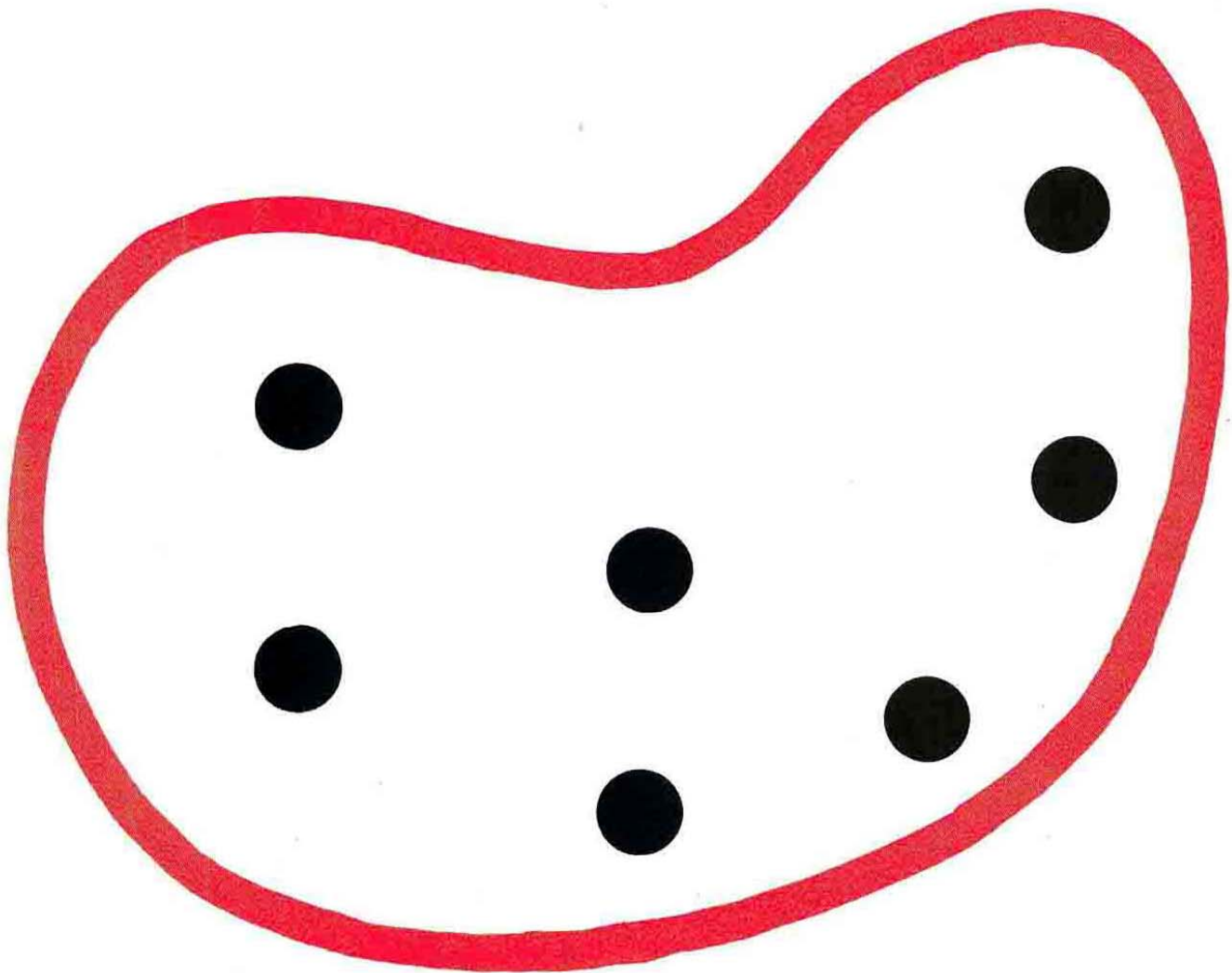
And now, I am not afraid anymore.


I speak; I smile; I laugh.

I have many new friends.

At home, in the middle of my family,

I AM A VERY HAPPY BOY.





"I Am A Very Happy Boy" is a little story about a lonely child - perhaps a typical child. We hear him express his feelings - he is afraid, nobody notices him - or later, he is happy, he is no longer afraid. Young children who are so sensitive to their own developing feelings will empathize with the lonely boy. . . some will identify with him. And, happily, the boy finds in the end that he need not be lonely after all.

With vivid simplicity, the pictures of dots, strings and arrows reinforce the ideas of the story. If you ask about these pictures, a child will point to the squirrel, or count the children at school or show you the farmers. You may be surprised to see how concretely these abstract pictures speak to him. And so, in a very personal way, the young child begins to enter the world of mathematics.

Ann Karmos



Stories by Frederique

Age 5 to 8

The Playful Numbers
81 Roses
I Am A Very Happy Boy
One Out Of Seven
The Happy Puppet
The Old Shoemaker
Two By Two
The Little Dreamer
The Little Donkey
The Magic Box
The Baby Is Born
The Weird Story of 24

Age 8 to 12

Where's My Nose?
Singing Friends
Dancing Friends
The Living Lines
I Am Not My Name
Nabu Wins An Award
The Square Trap
Summer School In The Old Days

Age 10 to 14

The Hidden Treasure
A Very Strange Neighborhood
Election In The Number World
A Valentine Mystery

