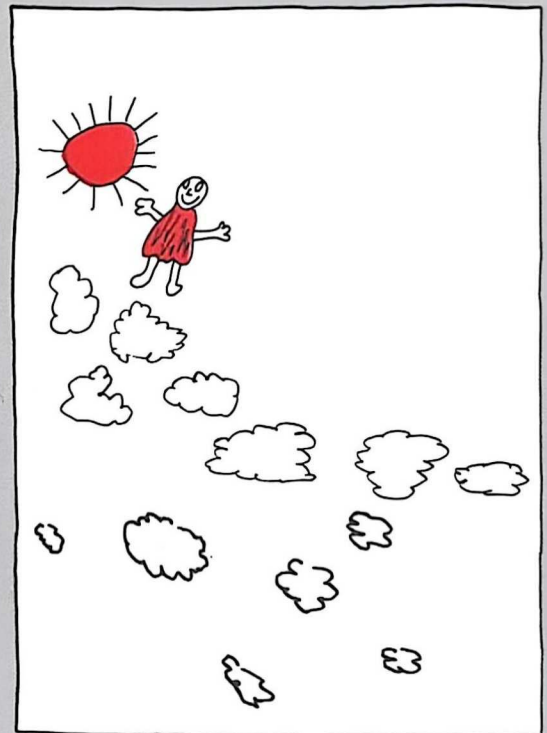
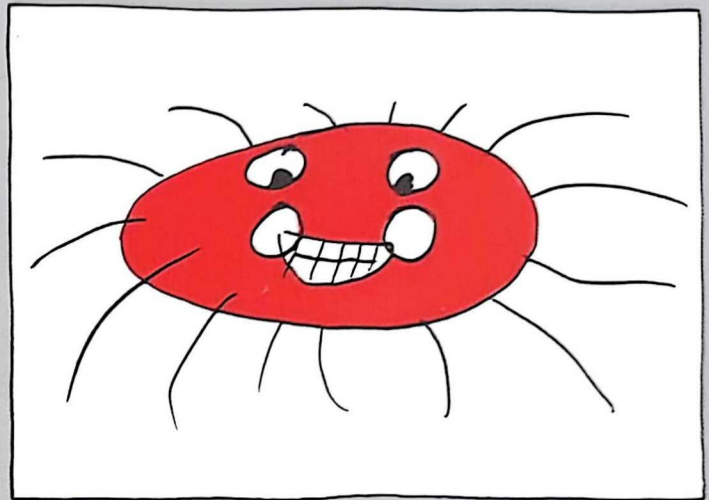
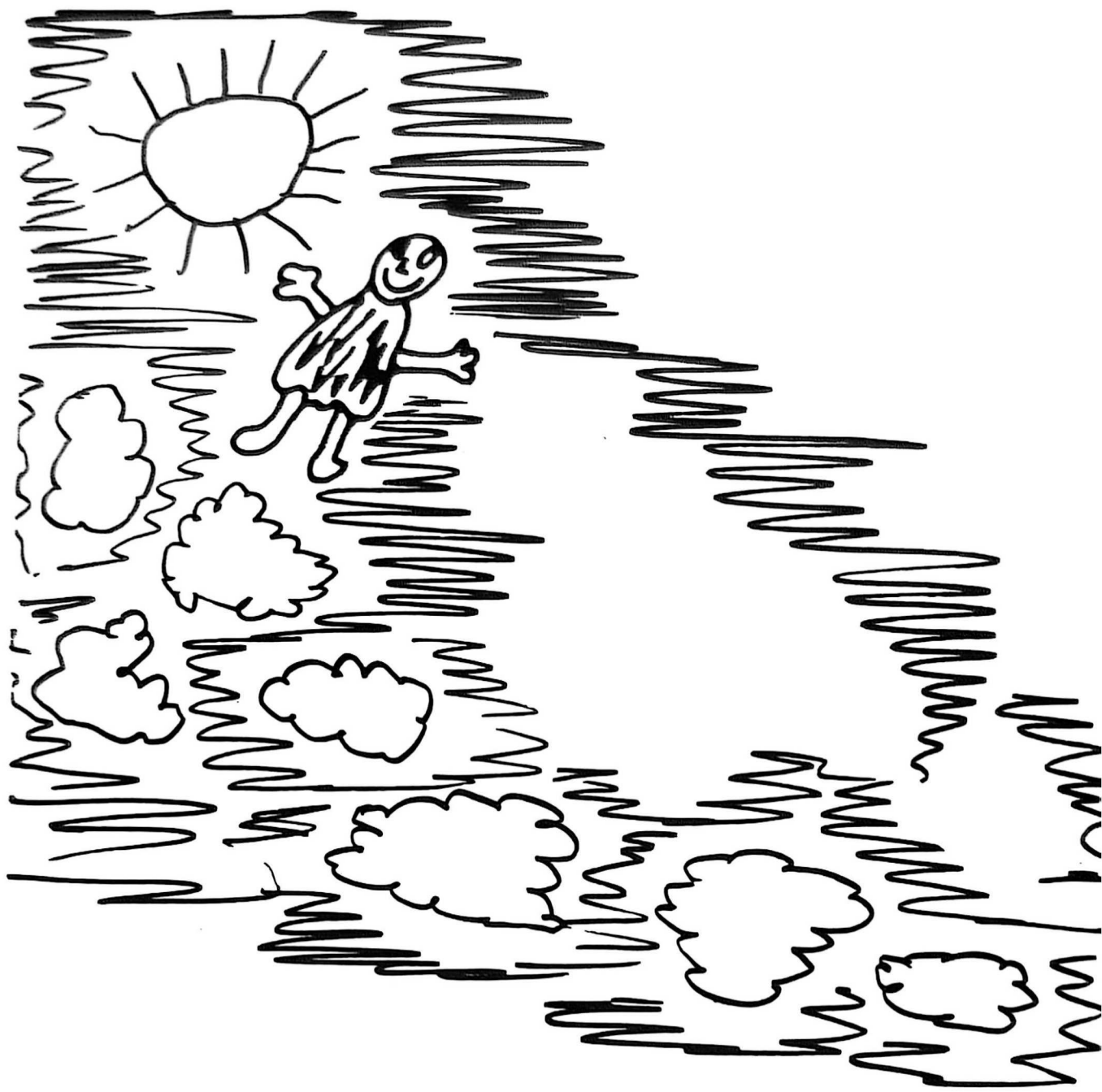


# CHILDRENS' PICTURES OF GOD.







CHILDREN'S PICTURES OF GOD

V. Peter Pitts

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This book is dedicated to Steve Wieting, Chuck Clemence, Ruth Ratliff, and Sue Schmidt, without whose help I could never have accomplished this task. This book is also dedicated, of course, to God, without whose existence there would be no book to be written.



## PREFACE

In the Fall of 1974 I set out on a quest to discover a picture of GOD. However, I did not approach rabbis, gurus, priests, bishops, philosophers, ministers, or theologians. If I had, it is certain I would have received a lot of words, but *no* pictures. Adults, I have found, are most unimaginative in depicting GOD. Instead, I went to the true experts—children—and I began my quest.

With their great imagination and clarity of vision, children can say more to us about GOD in one picture than adults can say in volumes of words. Having collected over six hundred pictures of GOD from children six-to-nine years old, I can make one main generalization: children are both extremely impressionable and perceptive. Very little that is taught them in Sunday School escapes their notice. Each picture of GOD is unique. Yet, in some way, each also reflects the formal theology of the church or synagogue from which it came. The children have proven to me that the old adage, “We *all* believe in the *same* GOD anyway!” is shallow and misleading.

As I put together the pictures for this book, I thought of all the weekends my wife and friends and I spent sitting on kindergarten-size chairs, with our knees to our chins, watching the children draw their pictures of God. Some looked puzzled. Some cried when they couldn’t think of what to draw, or how to draw it. Eyes darted from side to side or scanned the walls. Lips pursed, feet fidgeted and, in the midst of the scratching sounds of Number Two lead pencils, came the unmistakable sound of Number Two lead pencil erasers rubbing away stray lines. Some students hesitated. Others rushed into their task with incredible enthusiasm.

When we requested the children to draw pictures of God, we were met by a variety of sounds, ranging from total silence to expressions such as, "Oh, no!" or "I can't do that!" or "Oh, boy!" or "I don't know what to draw!" or "I'm done! (handing me a blank sheet of paper)" or other miscellaneous grunts, groans, and expressions of delight. As you will see in the pictures, some students enjoyed drawing the pictures. We were, in fact, met by few protests.

I wish I could have sat in on some of the class discussions which followed our visits. The Sunday School teachers and the clergy were very helpful both in setting up the picture drawing sessions and in evaluating and interpreting the results of the study. Some Sunday School teachers remarked that they were going to make picture drawing a permanent part of their curricula.

We visited a total of twenty-one churches and synagogues throughout a four-state area in the Midwest. The pictures in this book were drawn by children in Mormon, Mennonite, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Jewish, and Unitarian-Universalist congregations. The parents of the children signed permissions slips allowing me to conduct my research. A number of publications have ensued, including my Master's Thesis, which has a title long enough to confuse anyone. This book (thank goodness!) is not intended either to analyze or to confuse. It is intended to delight, amuse, and stimulate one's natural curiosity about the form and nature of GOD.

The pictures in this book are all actual pictures of GOD drawn by children in Sunday School situations. Because some pictures were drawn too lightly or too small to reproduce effectively, I have taken the freedom to darken lines, to center or enlarge pictures, and to delete obvious erasures or attempted erasures. However, I have made every effort to preserve the original form and content of each of the pictures.

The actual text of this book was not written by the children who drew the pictures. Instead, it is my attempt to make the pictures flow together as smoothly as possible.

My apologies to those children who, in looking through this book, may say: “I didn’t mean that GOD looked like \_\_\_\_\_, or was doing \_\_\_\_\_.” We interviewed some of the children but, for the most part, I have inferred meanings from the pictures themselves.

Since my quest began, I have developed a great respect for and awe of children’s theological abilities. Adults can learn much from the simplicity and spontaneity of children. But, even more than that, I have developed an appreciation for the religious denominations within which the children I have studied are growing up. Each of us has our own idea of whom GOD is. Any piece of paper is both too small and too large to capture GOD with a Number Two lead pencil. It appears my quest will never end . . . thank GOD!

V. Peter Pitts (Editor)  
Wartburg College  
Waverly, Iowa



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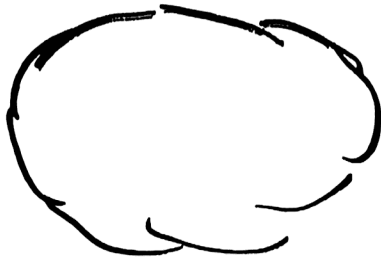
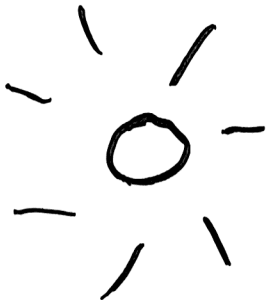
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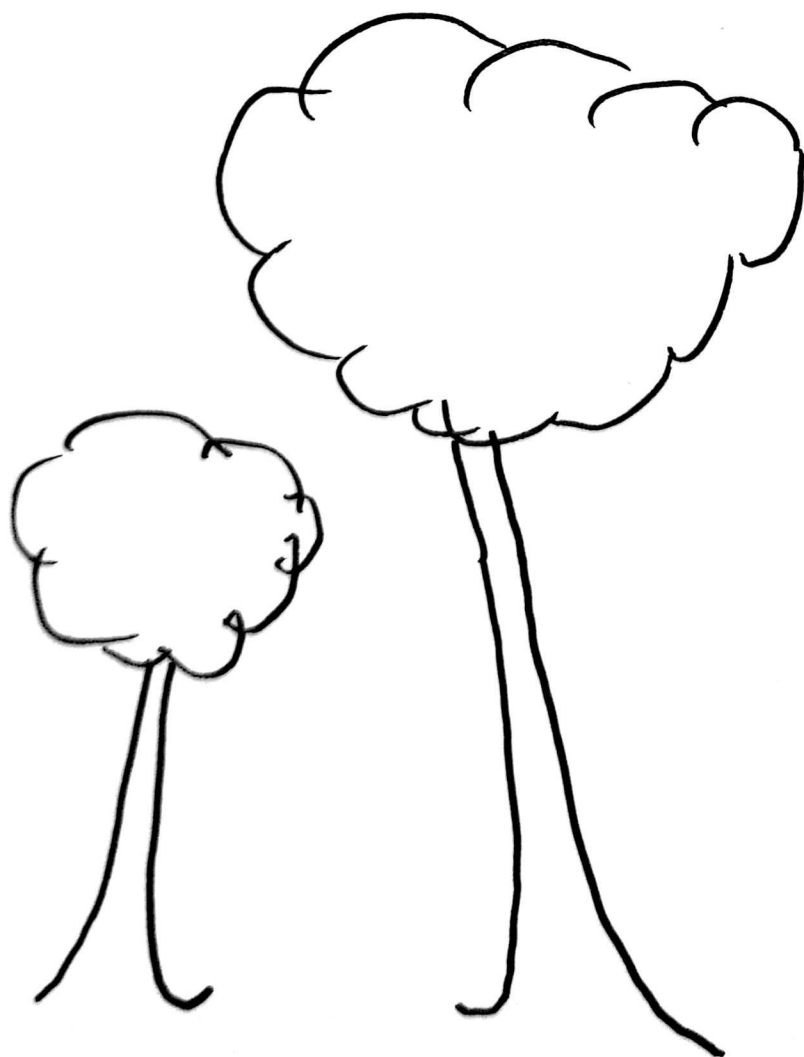
1.

What Does God  
Look Like?

God looks  
a



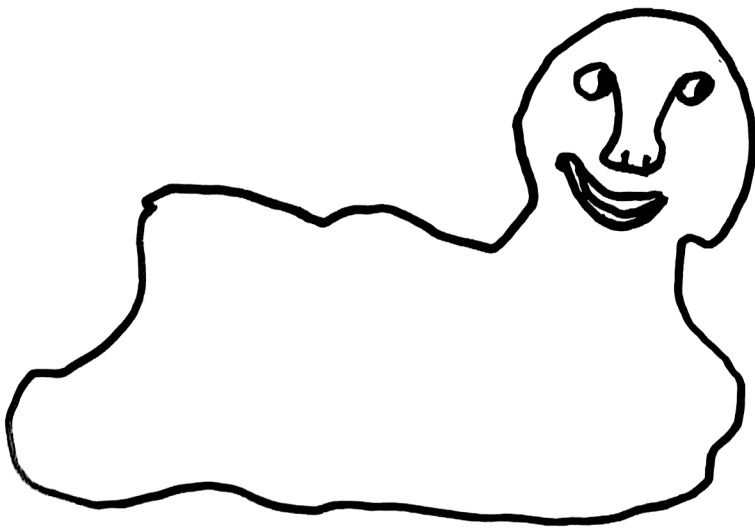
like:  
little  
bird...



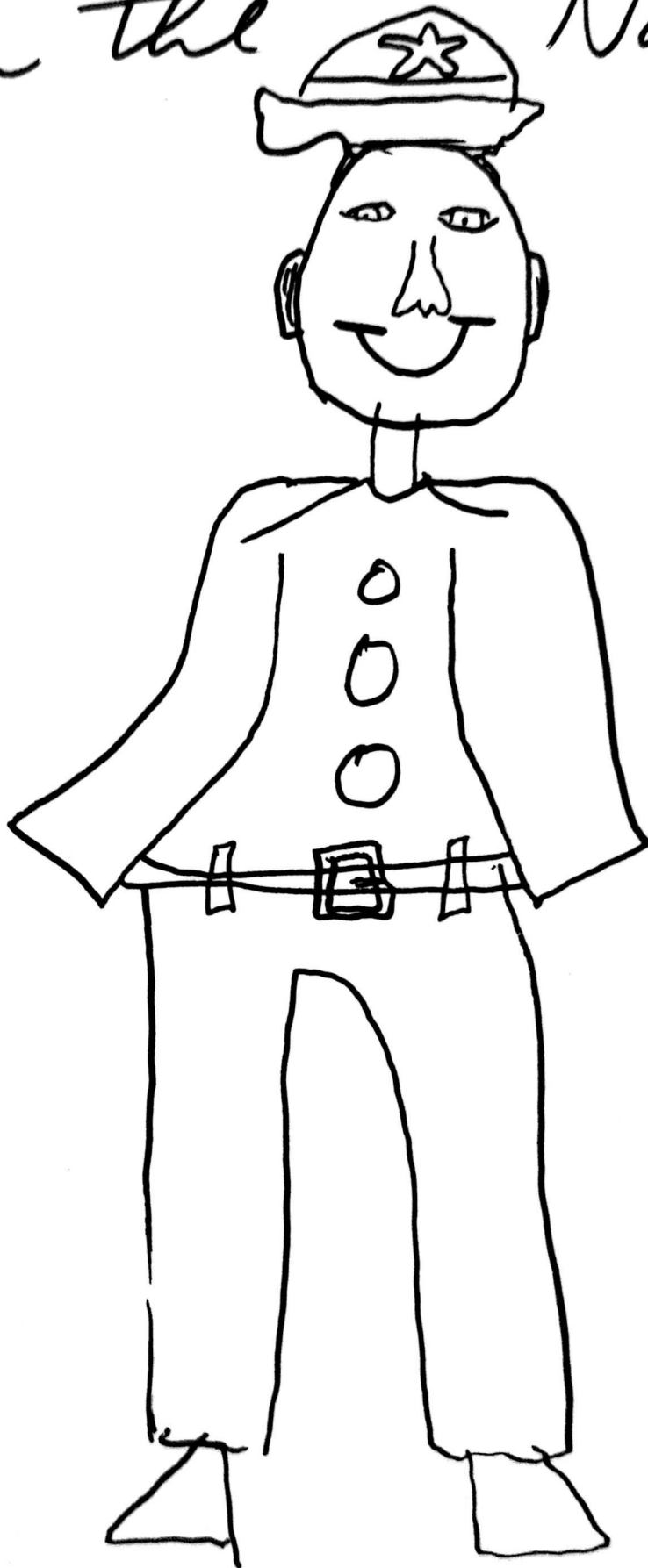
... my big brother  
in college ...



... a little  
lamb...



...My big brother  
in the Navy.



... the Catholic  
Priest ...



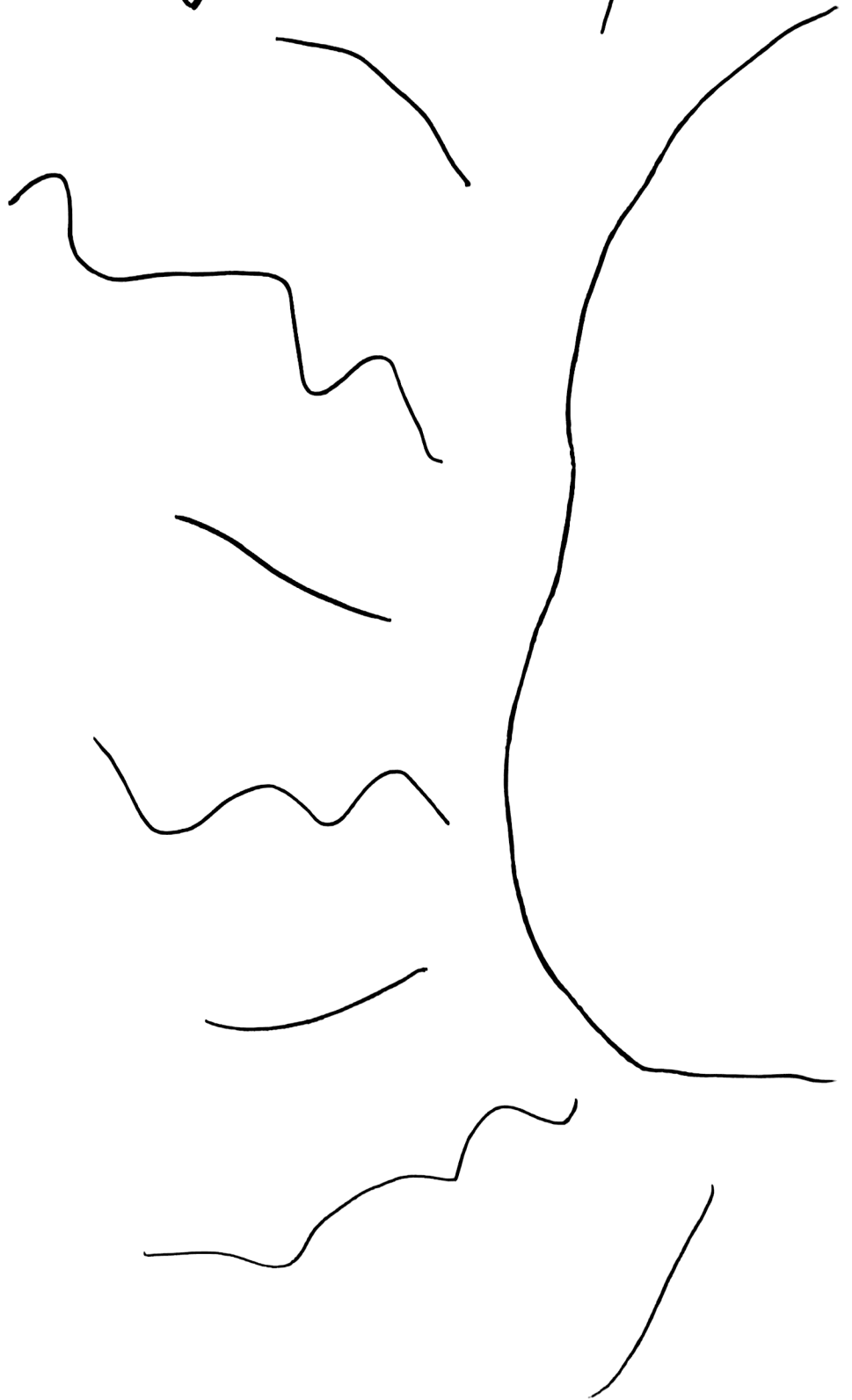
... a pilgrim ...



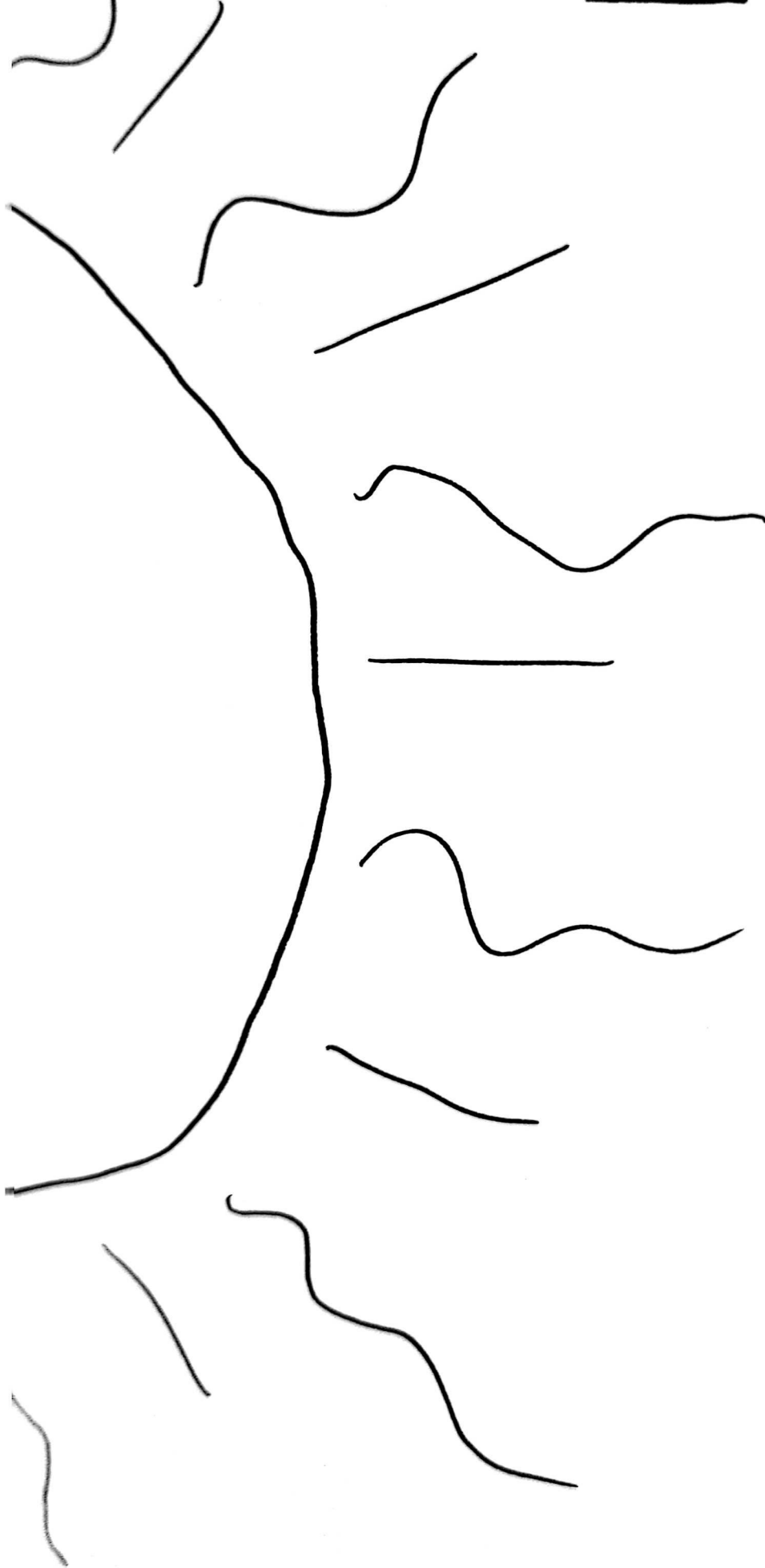
an old man  
with a cane...



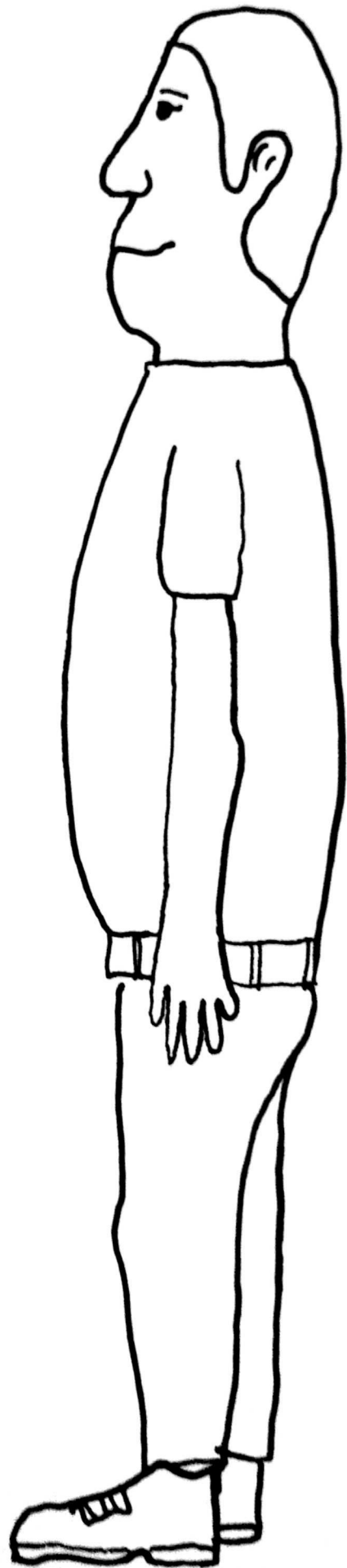
...the sun, became  
powerful...



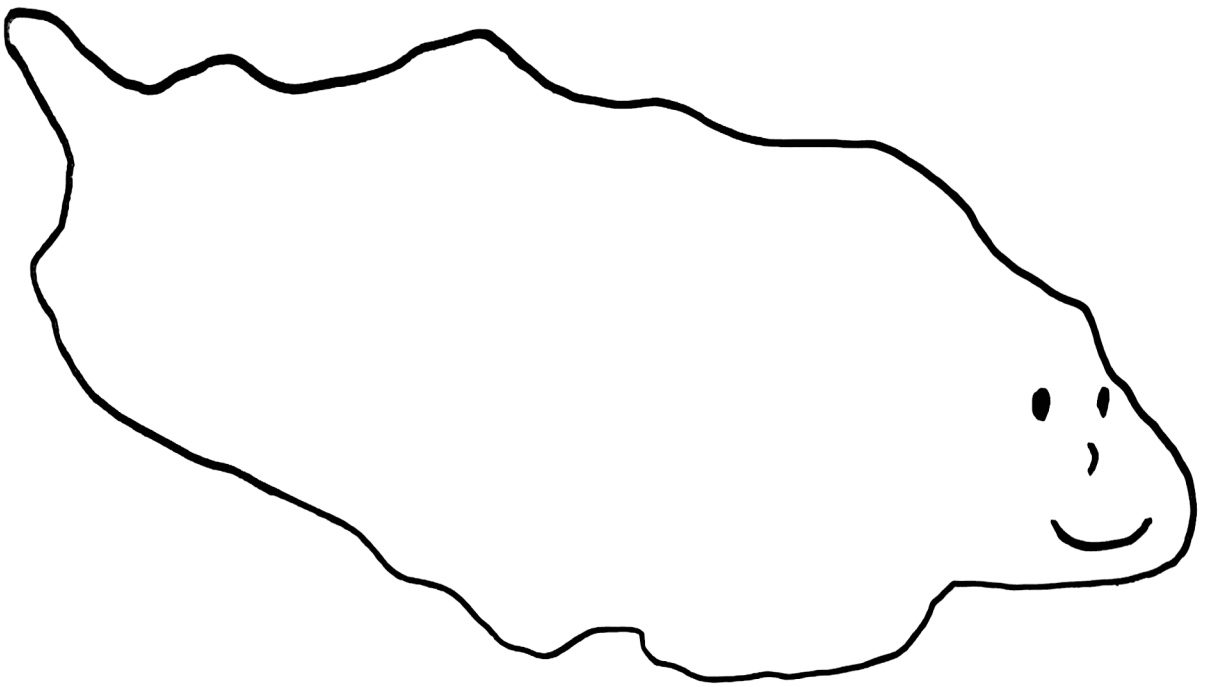
God is so



... my  
dad ...



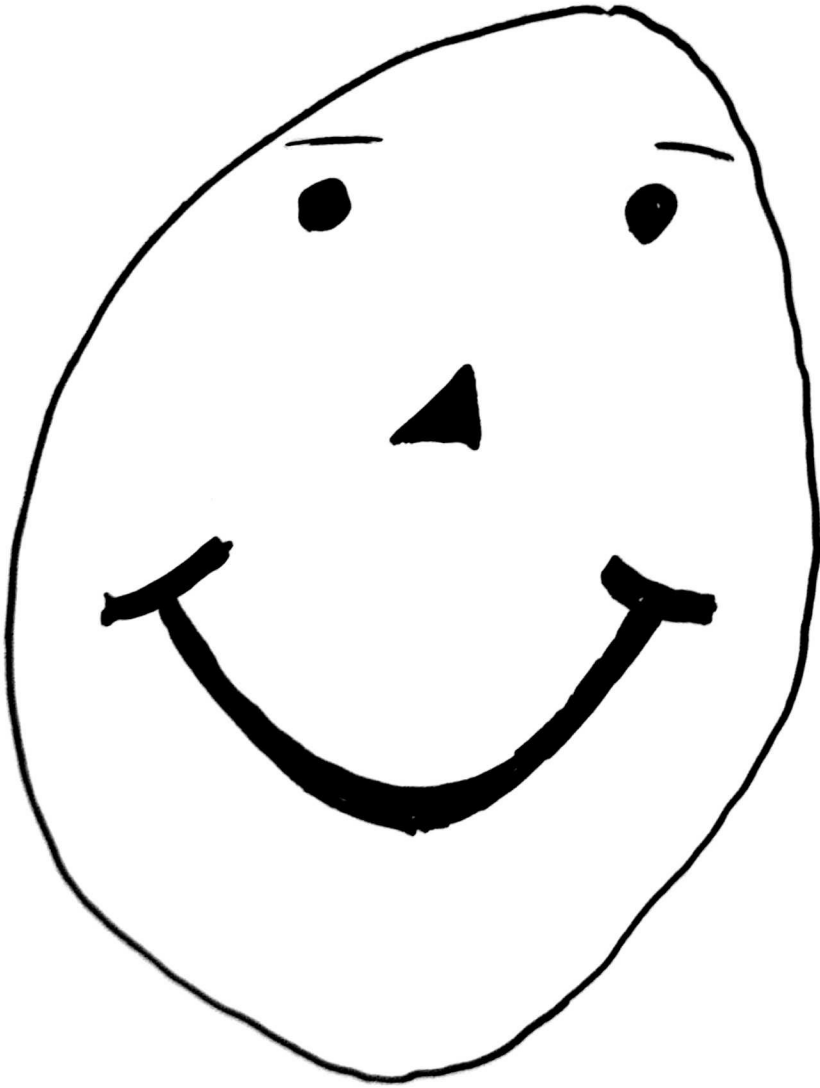
... a big, fluffy  
cloud...



... an angel ...



... a "Smiley Button" ...

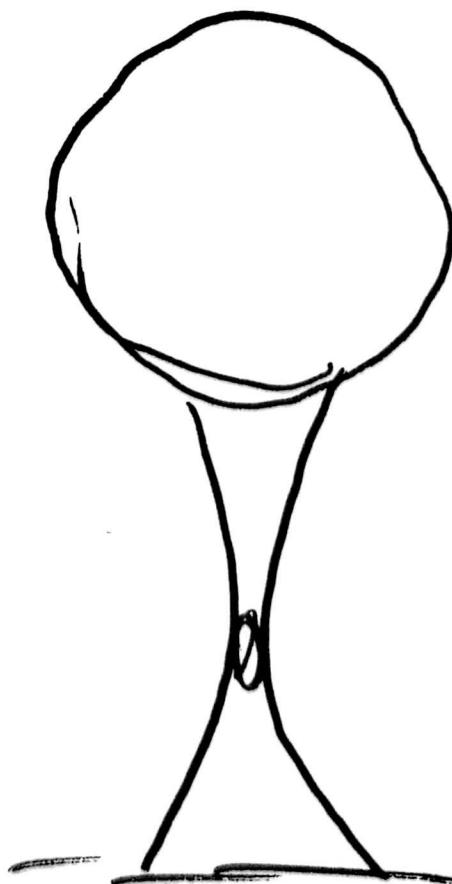


... my little sister...

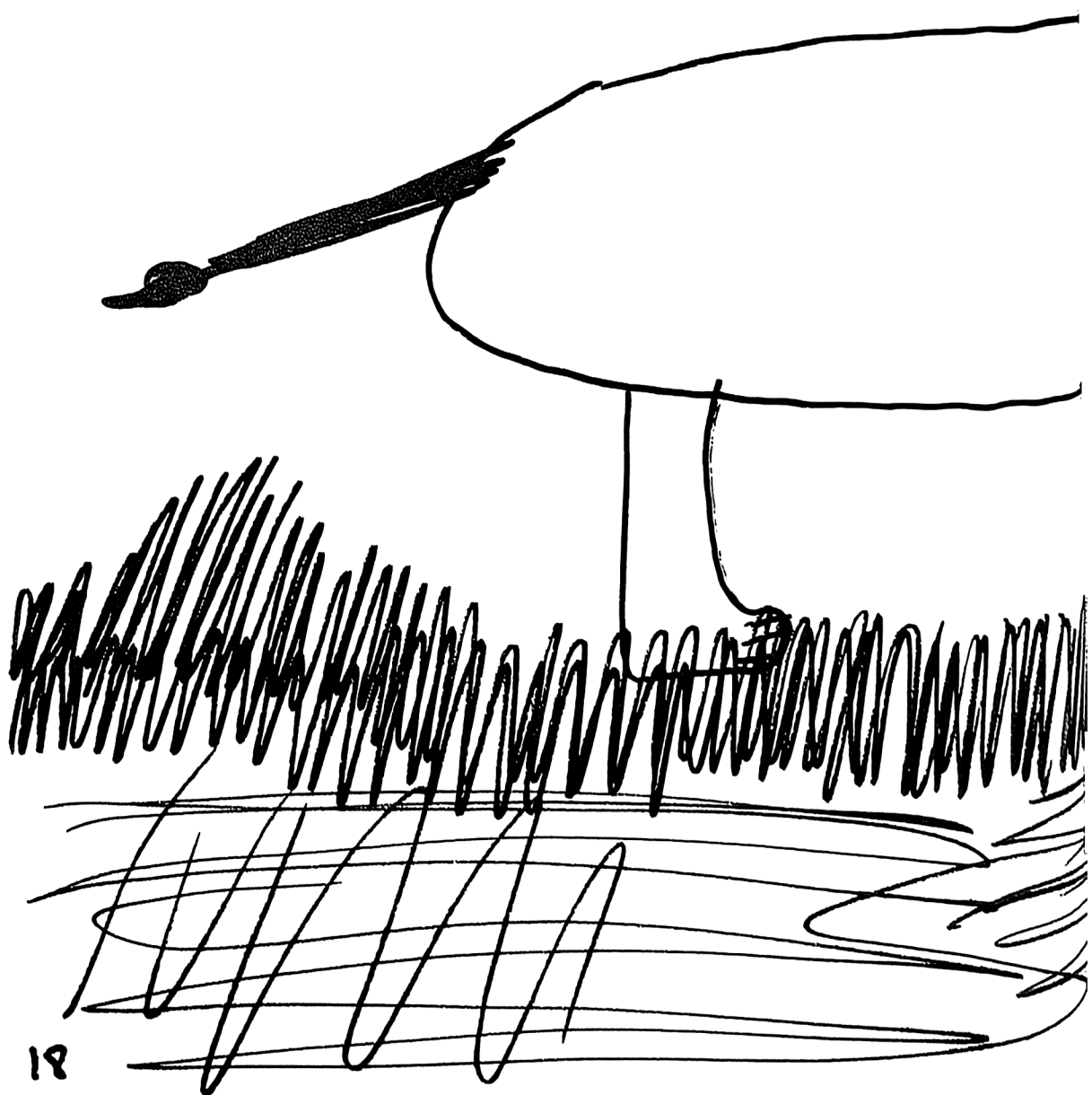


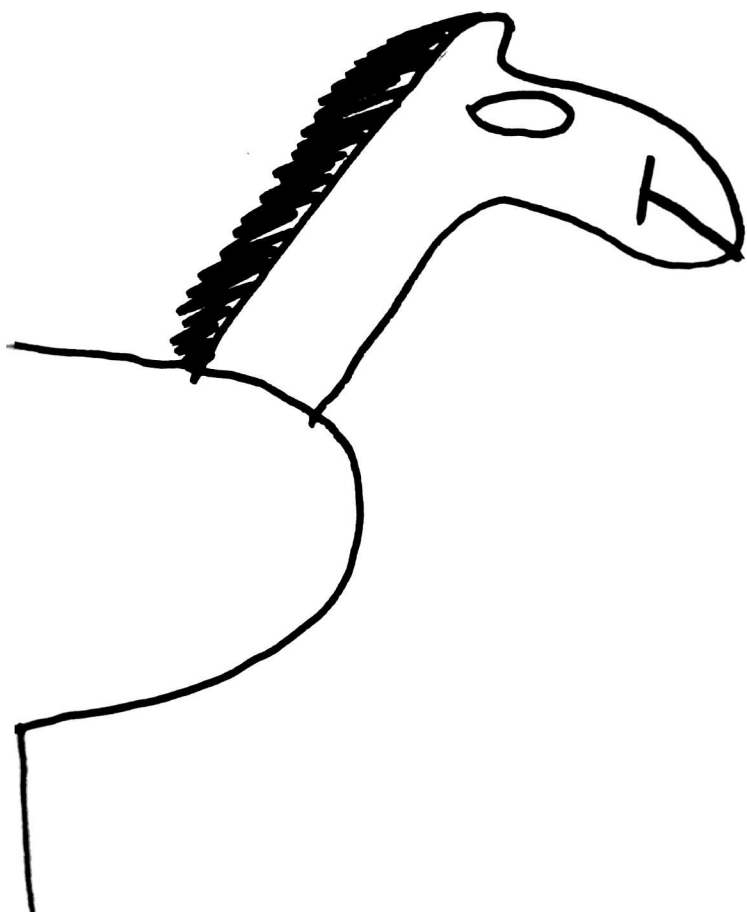
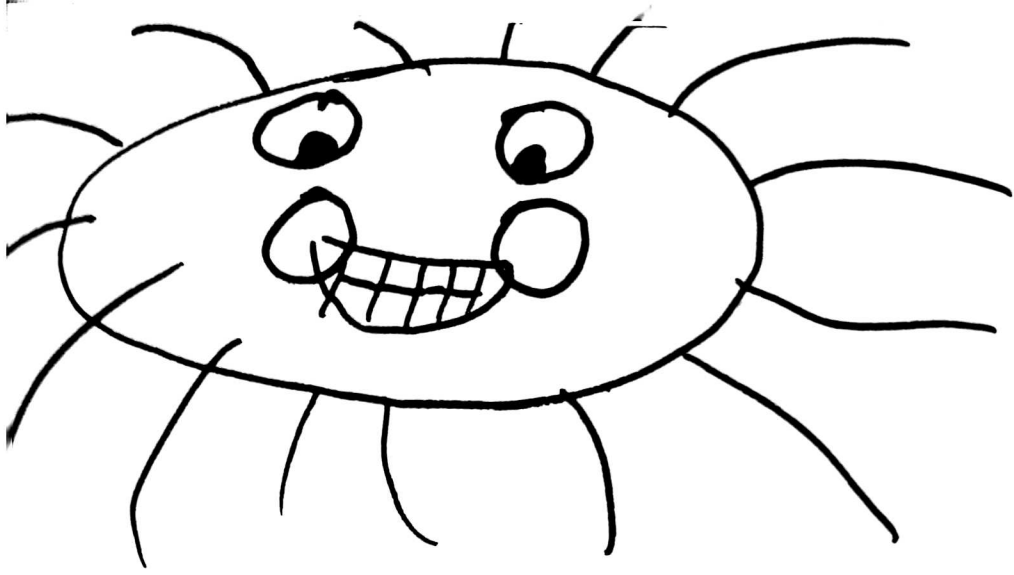
... my mother,  
because God is  
so nice to me...

God



... or maybe God  
just looks like  
a horse!







2.

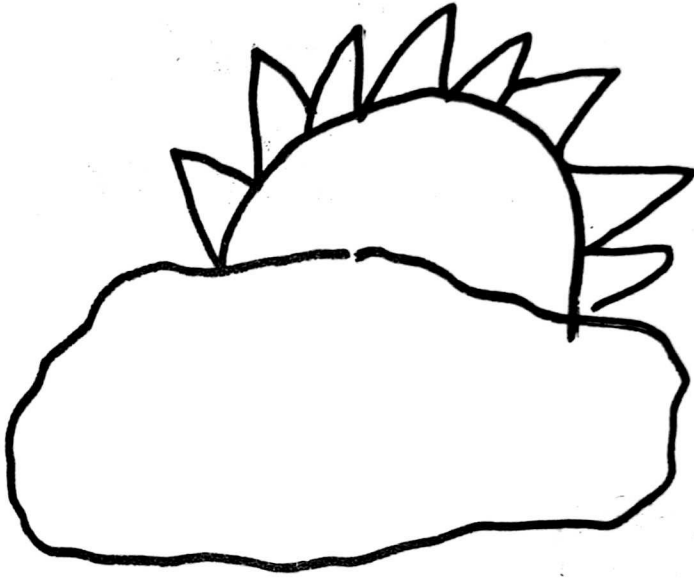
Where Does God  
Live?



God lives:

on a cloud,  
way up in the sky...





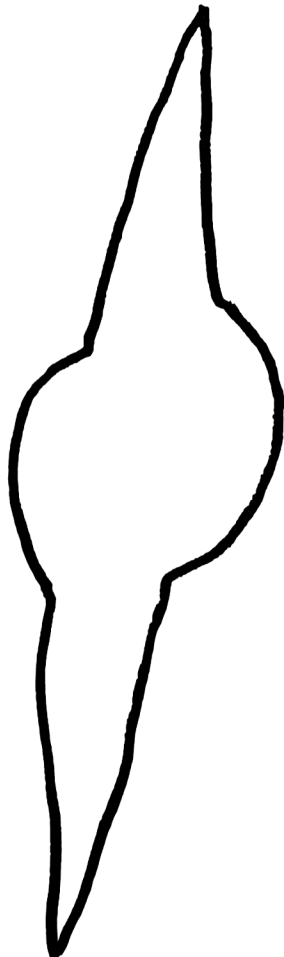
... on e  
everyth  
a long,





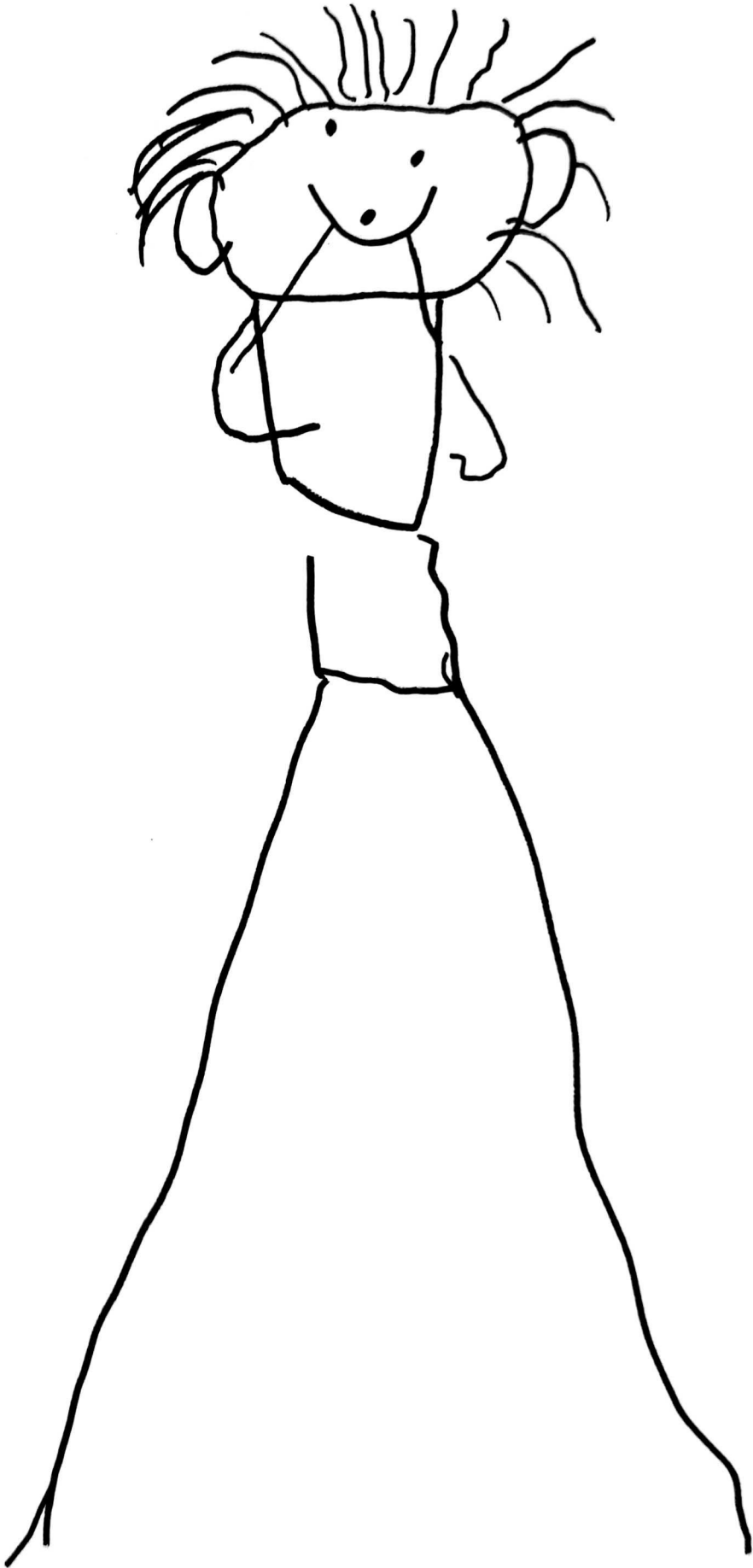
h with  
he made  
g time ago...

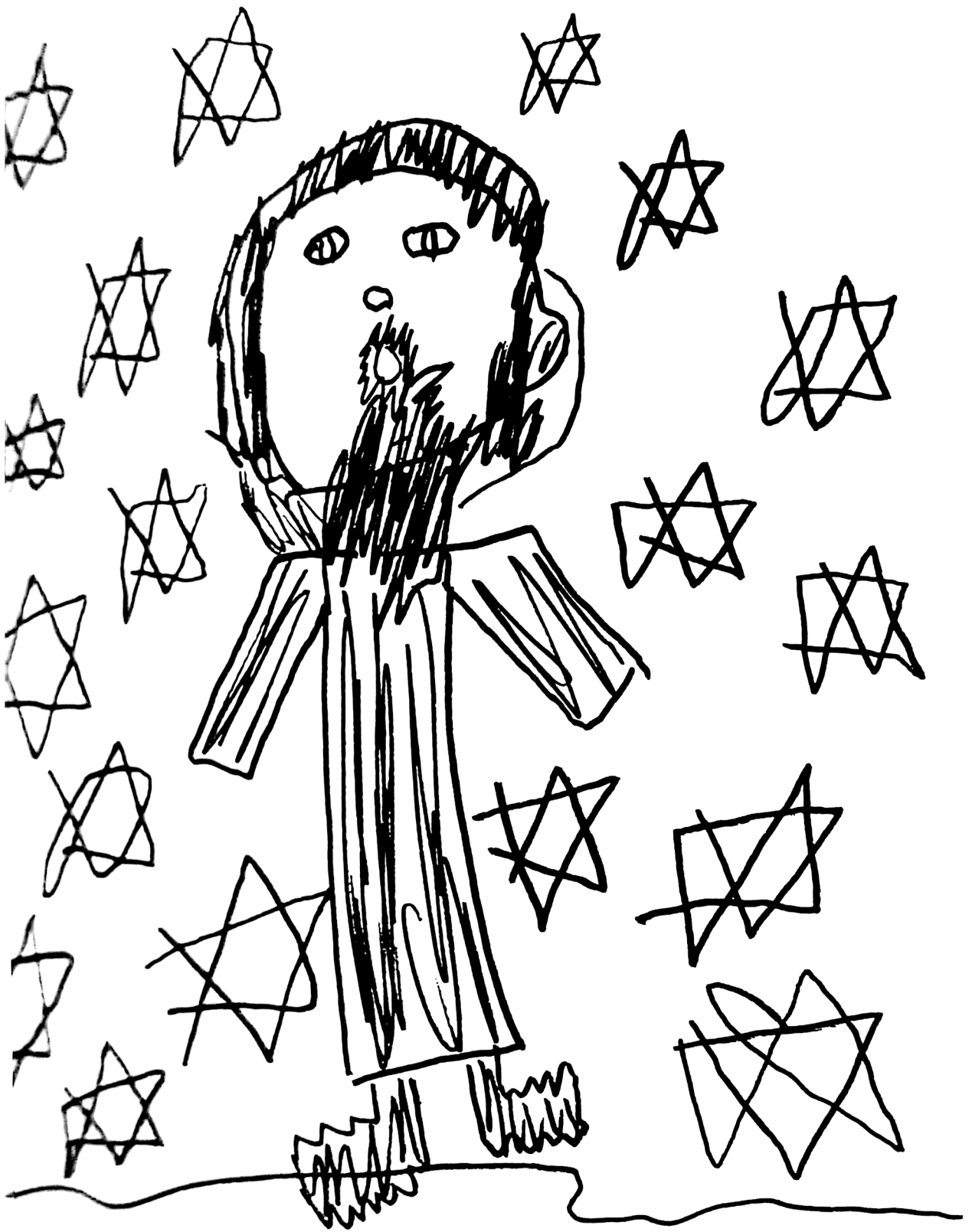
... with his son  
out among the  
galaxies, way out  
in space...





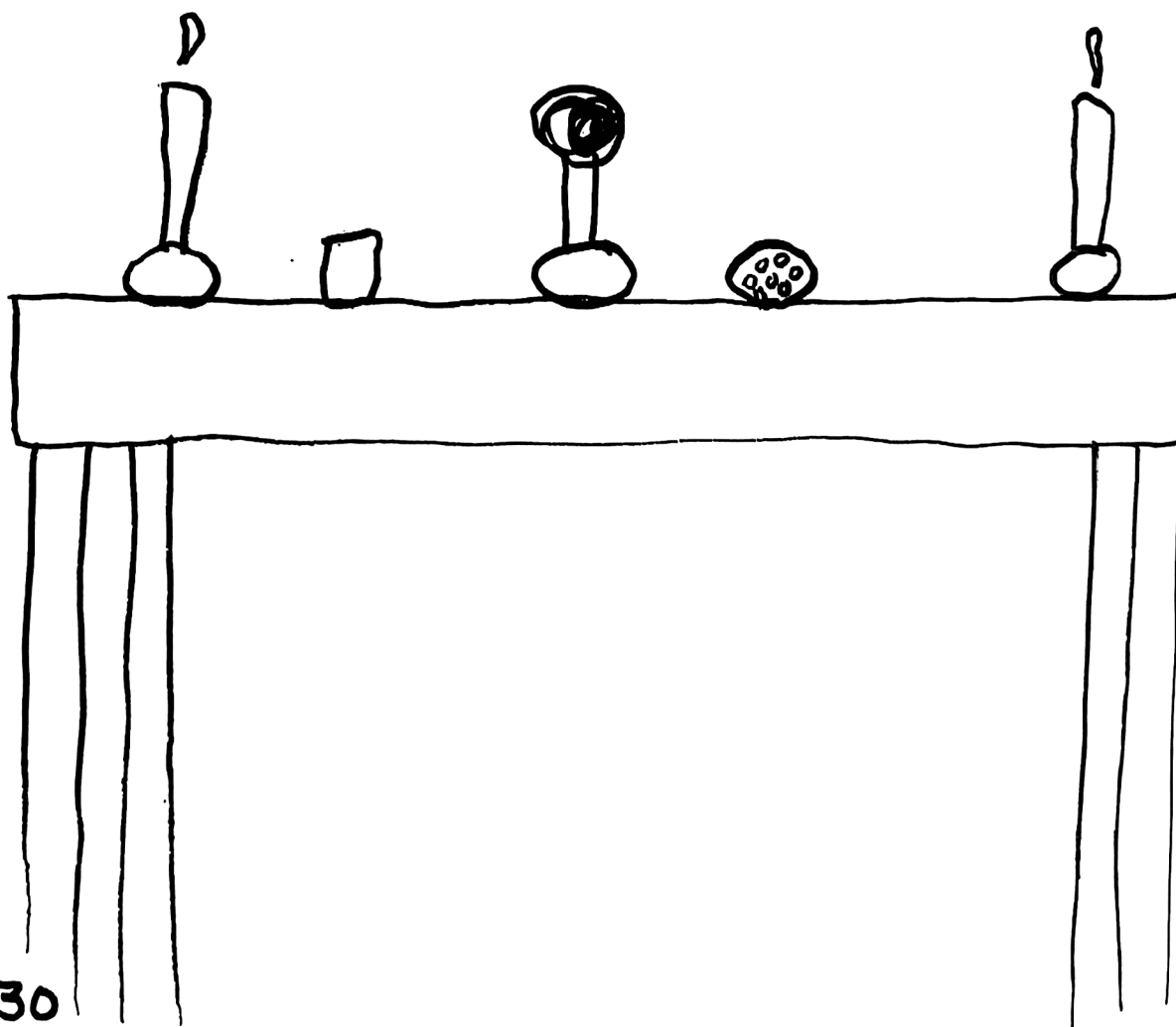
... on top of a  
big mountain...





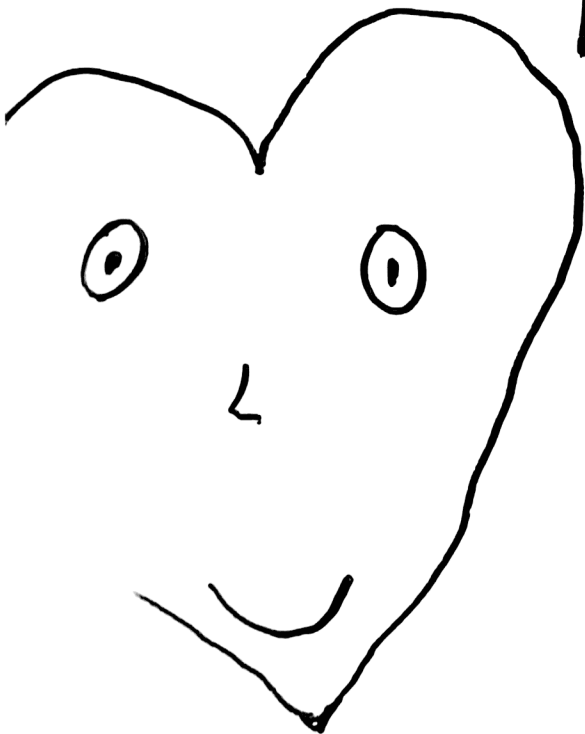
out among the  
stars...

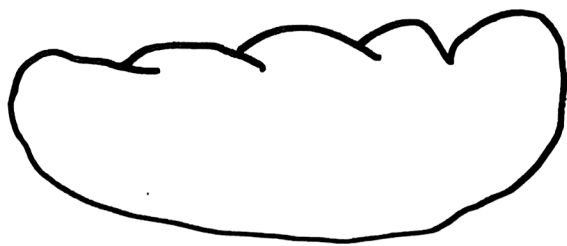
... in the  
sacraments...



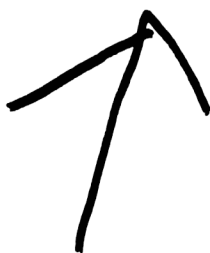
... in my heart...

God is in your  
Heart if you love  
him.



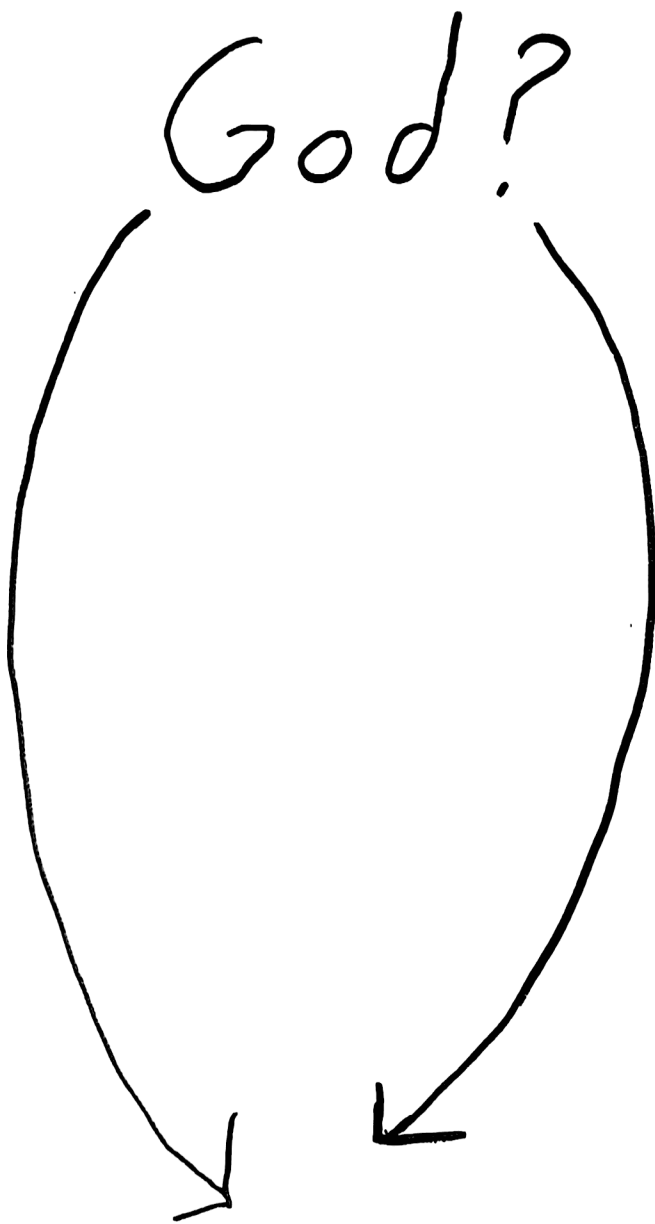


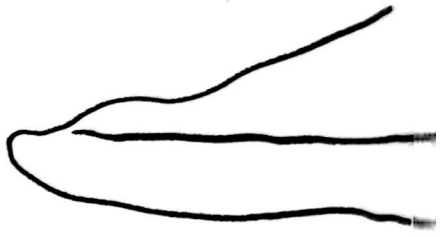
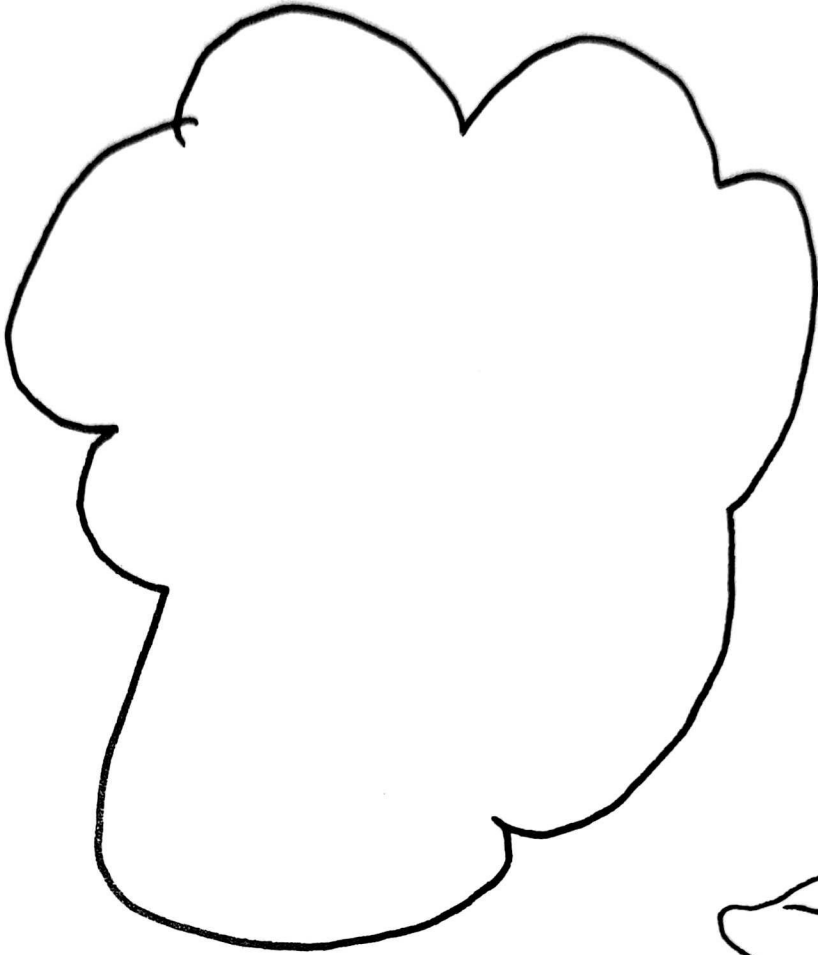
G-d (Heaven)



... in a place  
called heaven ...

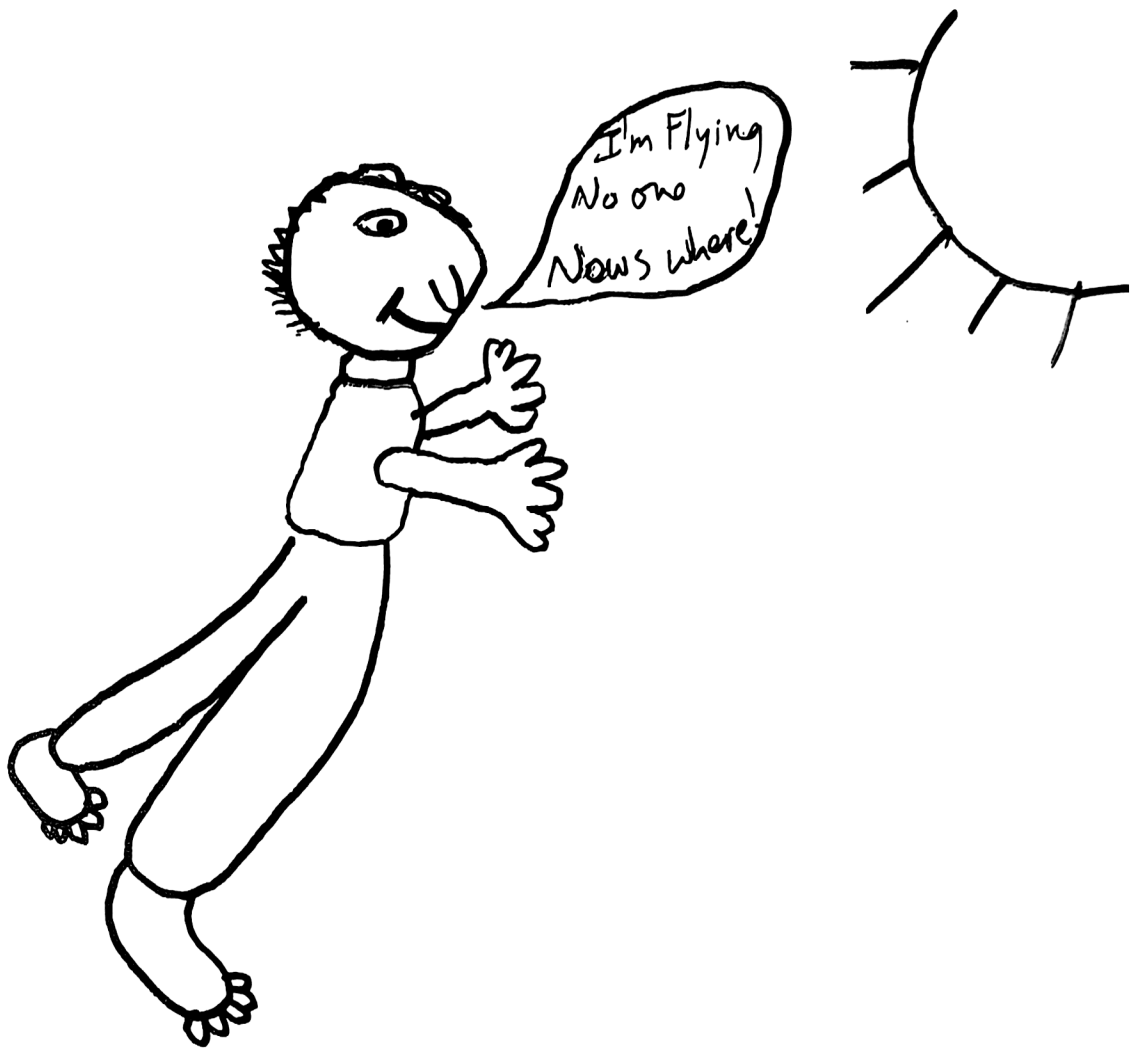
.. in between  
everything else...





... everywhere !! ...

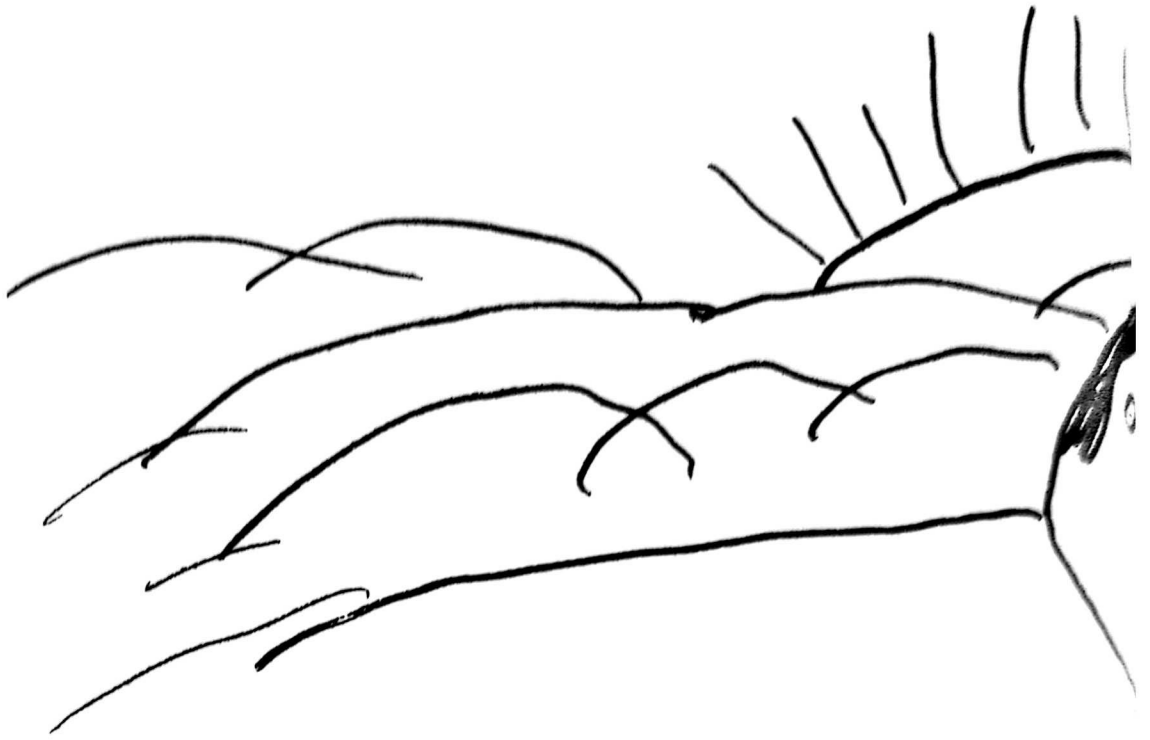




... or maybe  
no one even  
knows where!

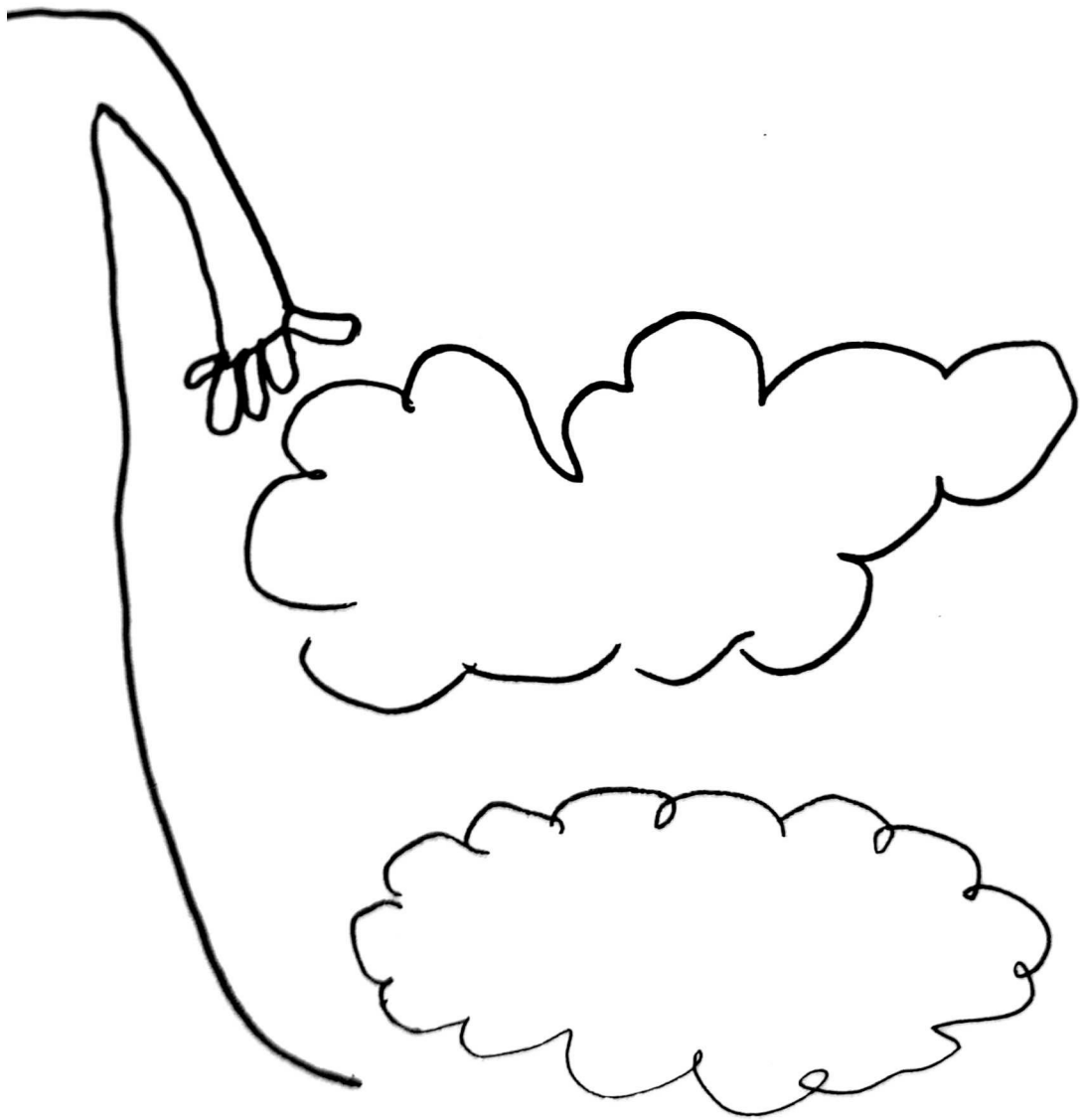
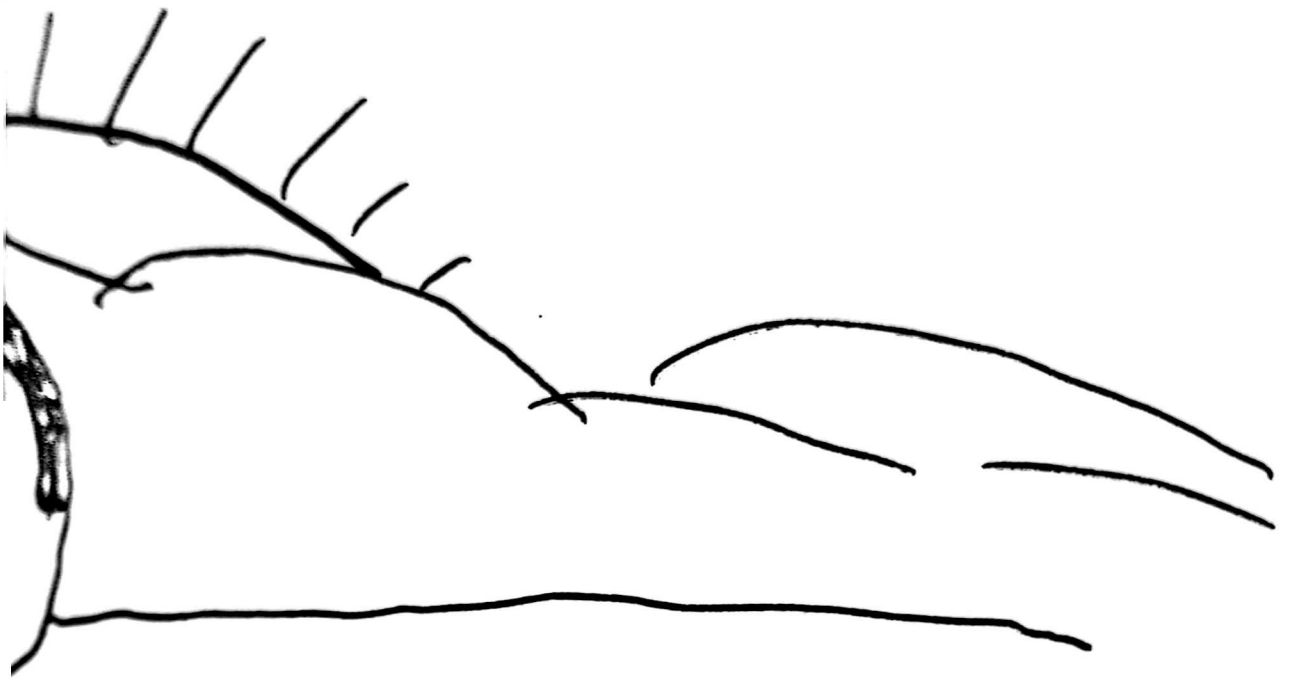
3.

What Does God  
Do all Day Long?

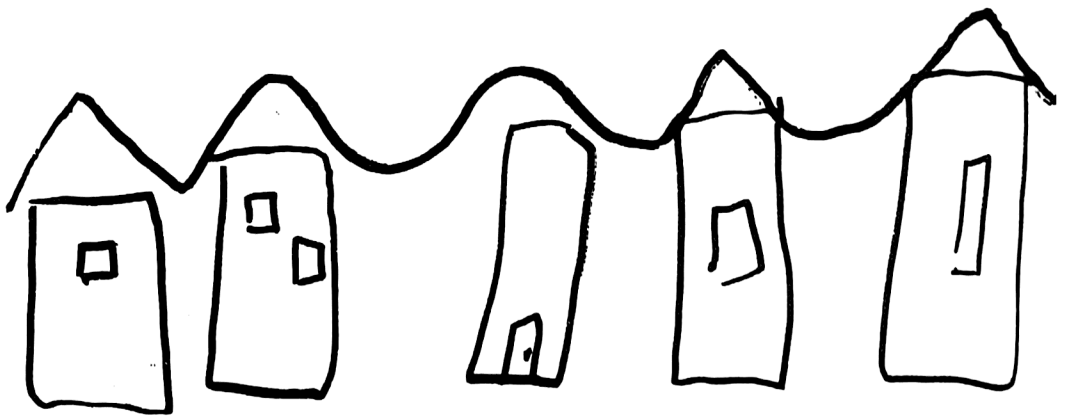
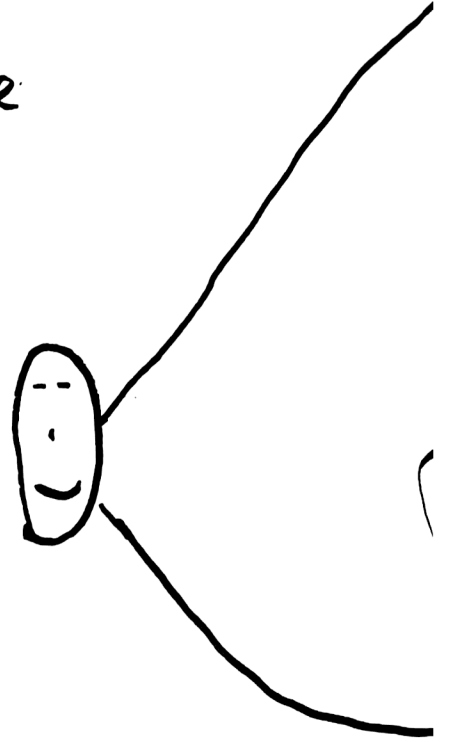


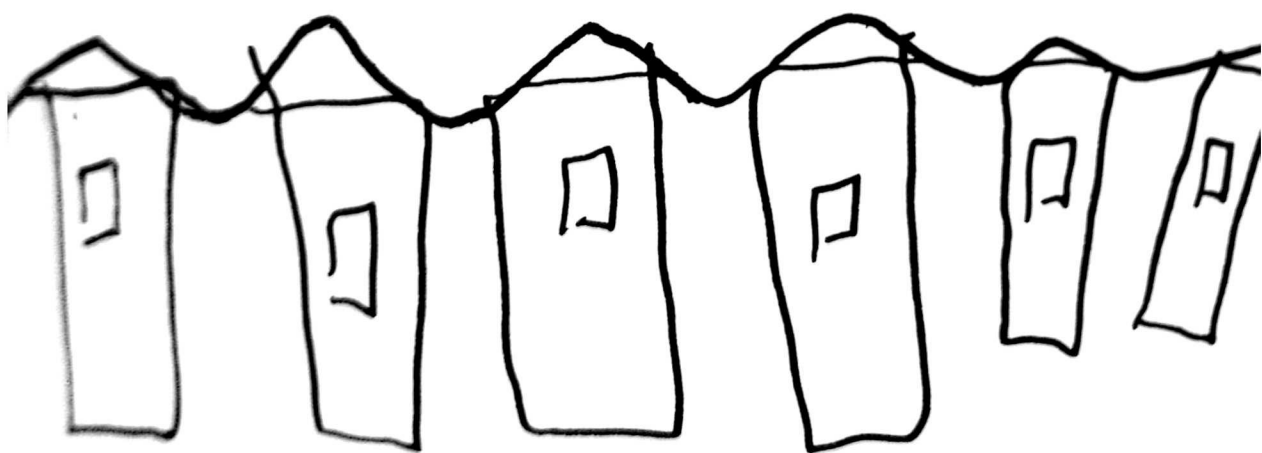
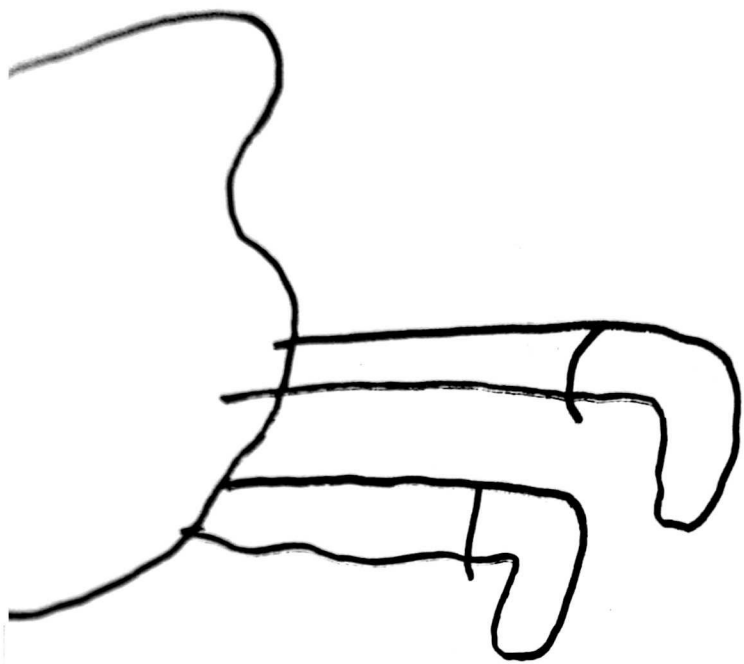
4:54 A.M. - God  
gets out of bed  
and makes the  
sun come up!





After the sun comes  
up, God flies over  
all of our houses  
to make sure  
we all get  
up on time!

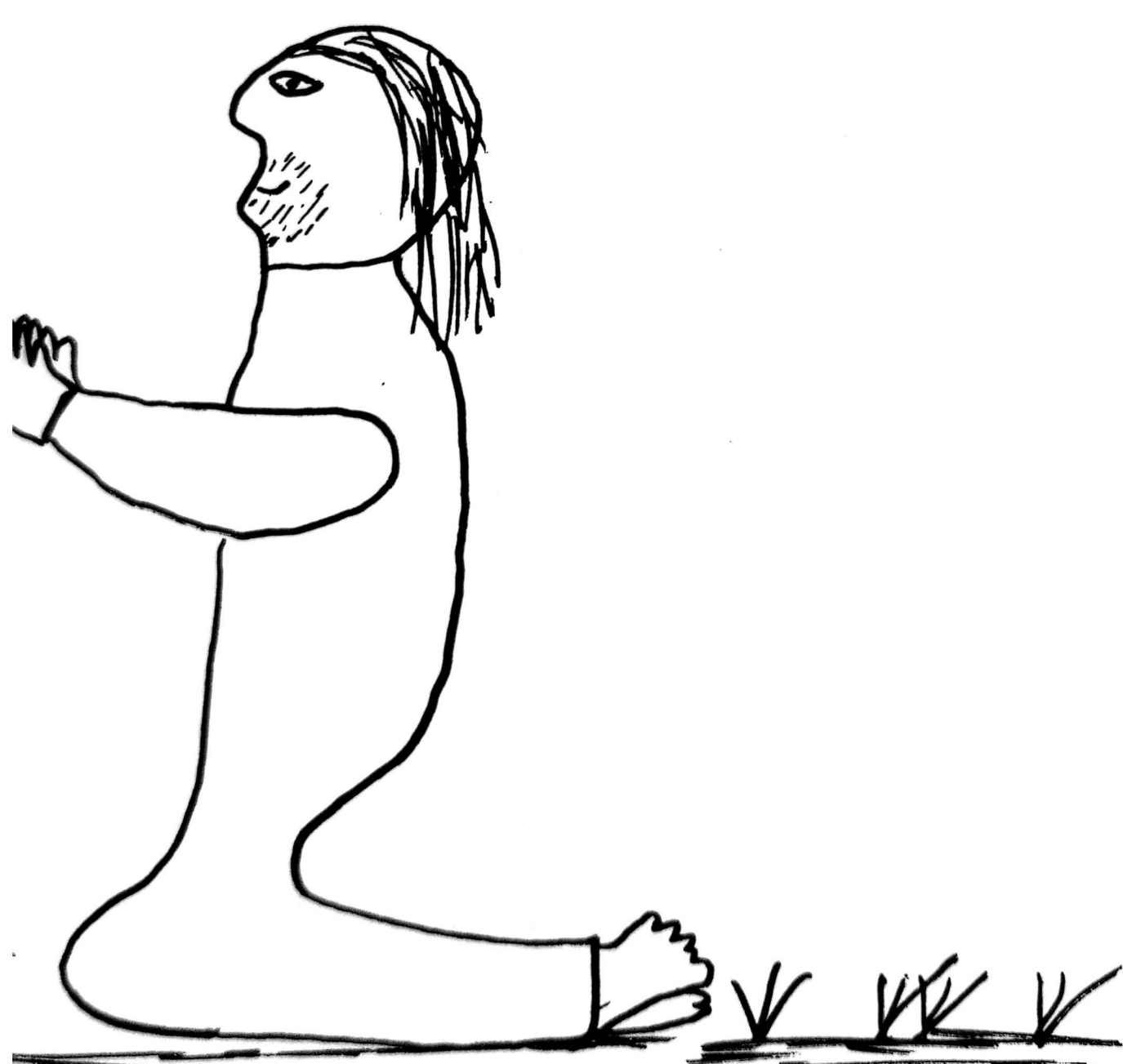




Before he shaves in the  
God kneels down in  
and prays for all



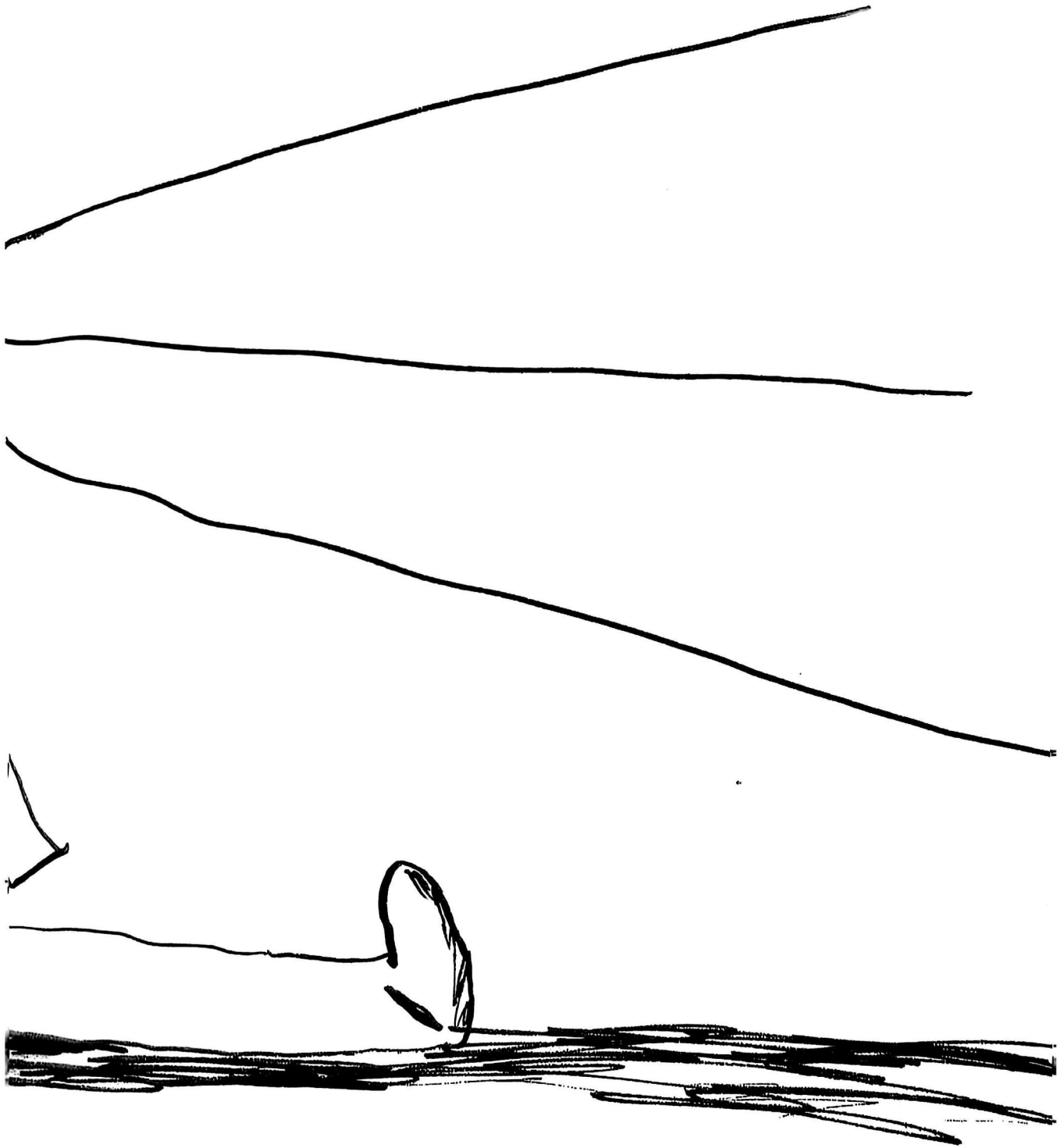
morning,  
as garden  
is people!

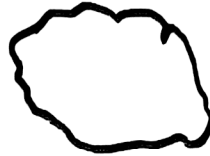
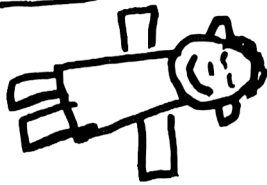


During the rest of the  
does lots of good  
God watches us..



lay, God  
things:

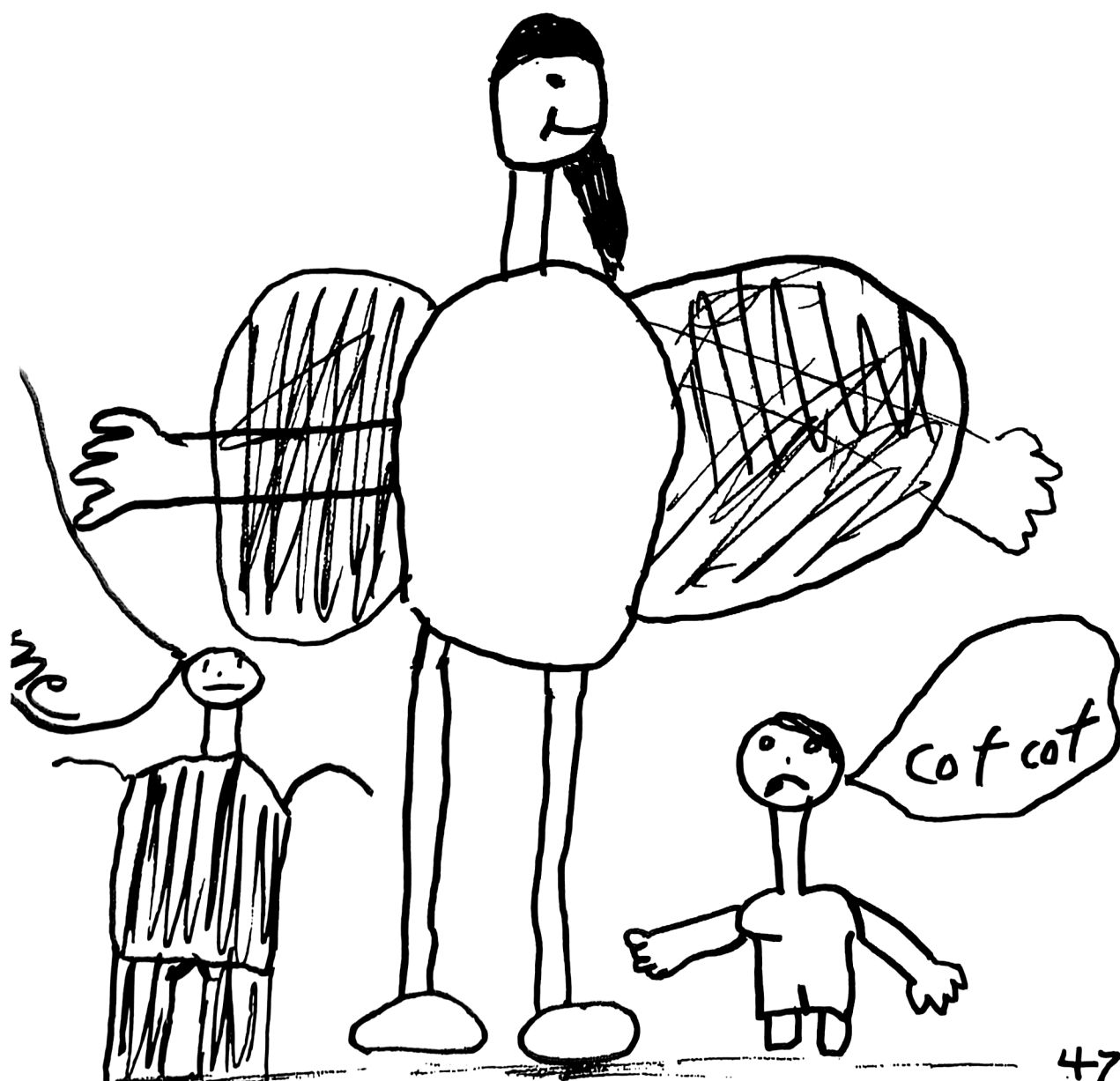


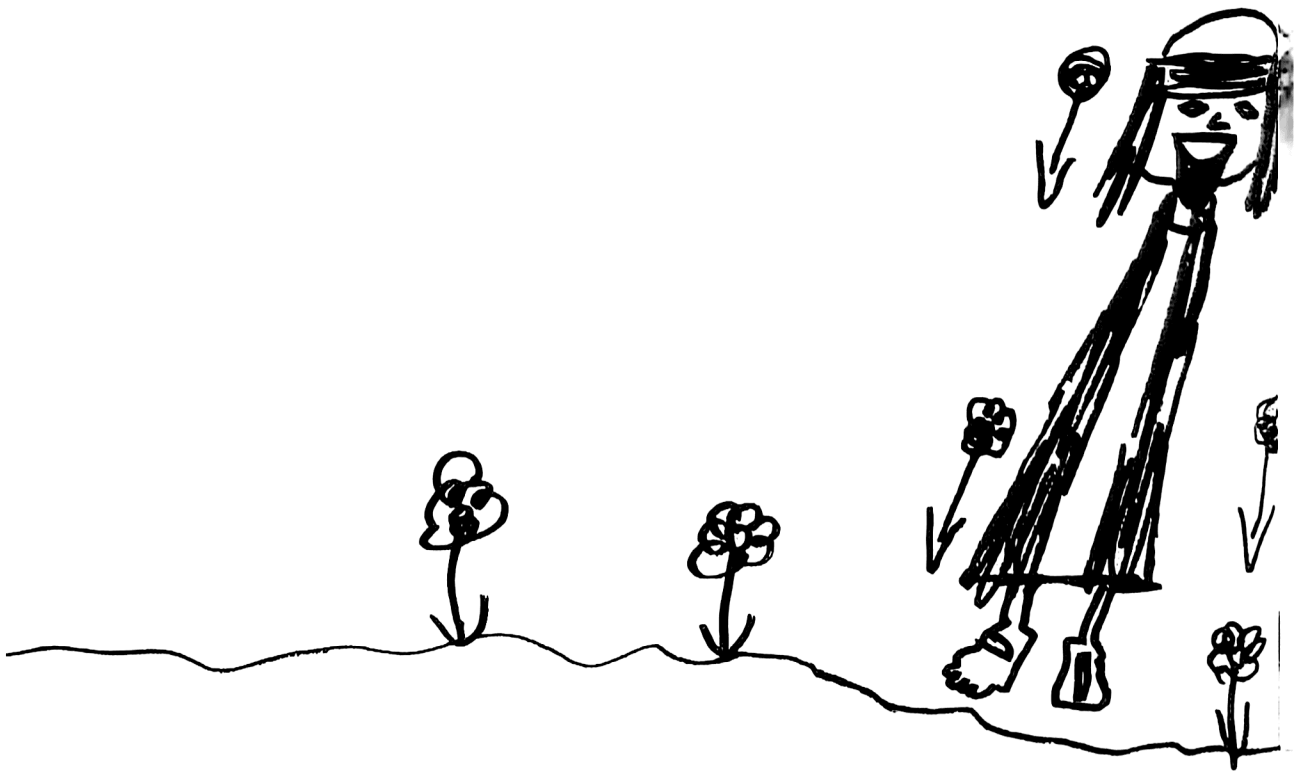
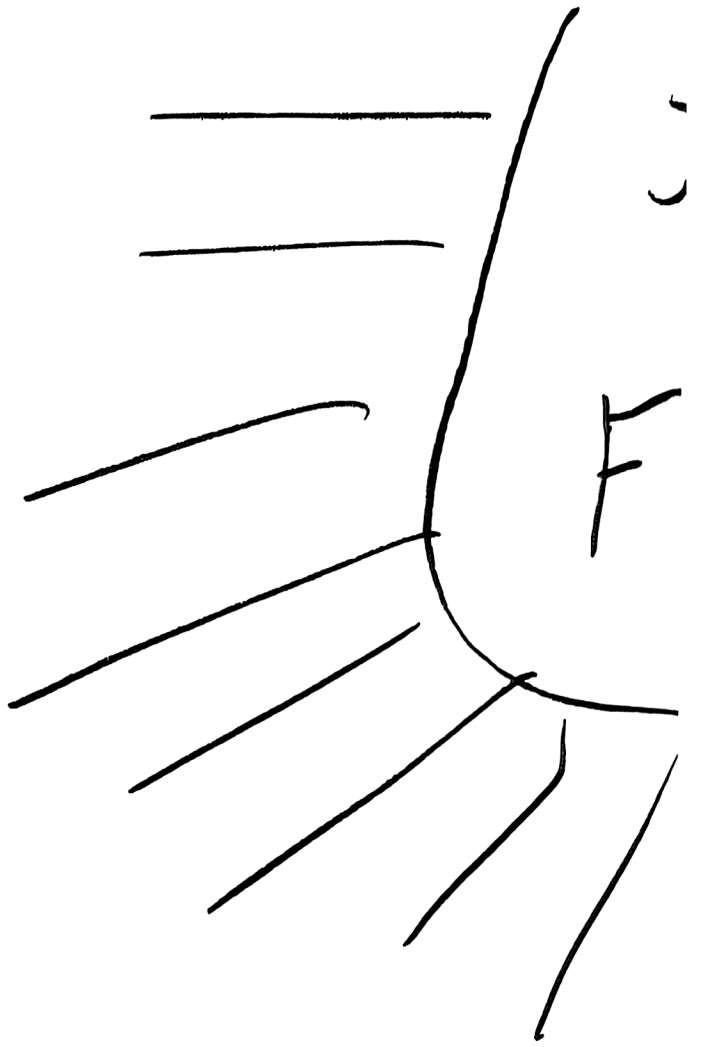


... God watches over  
all the little animals.



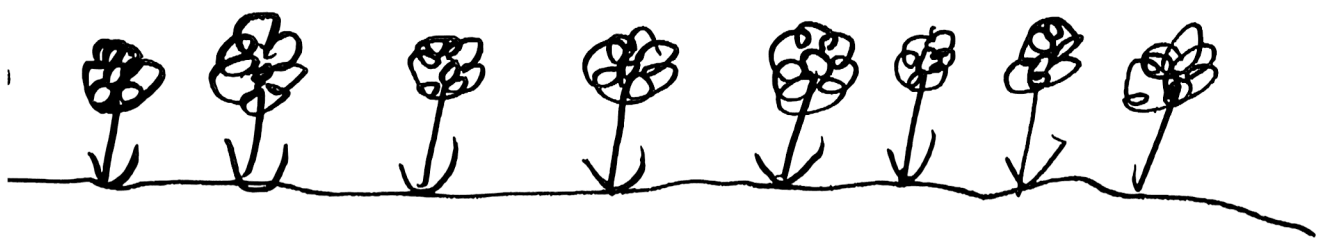
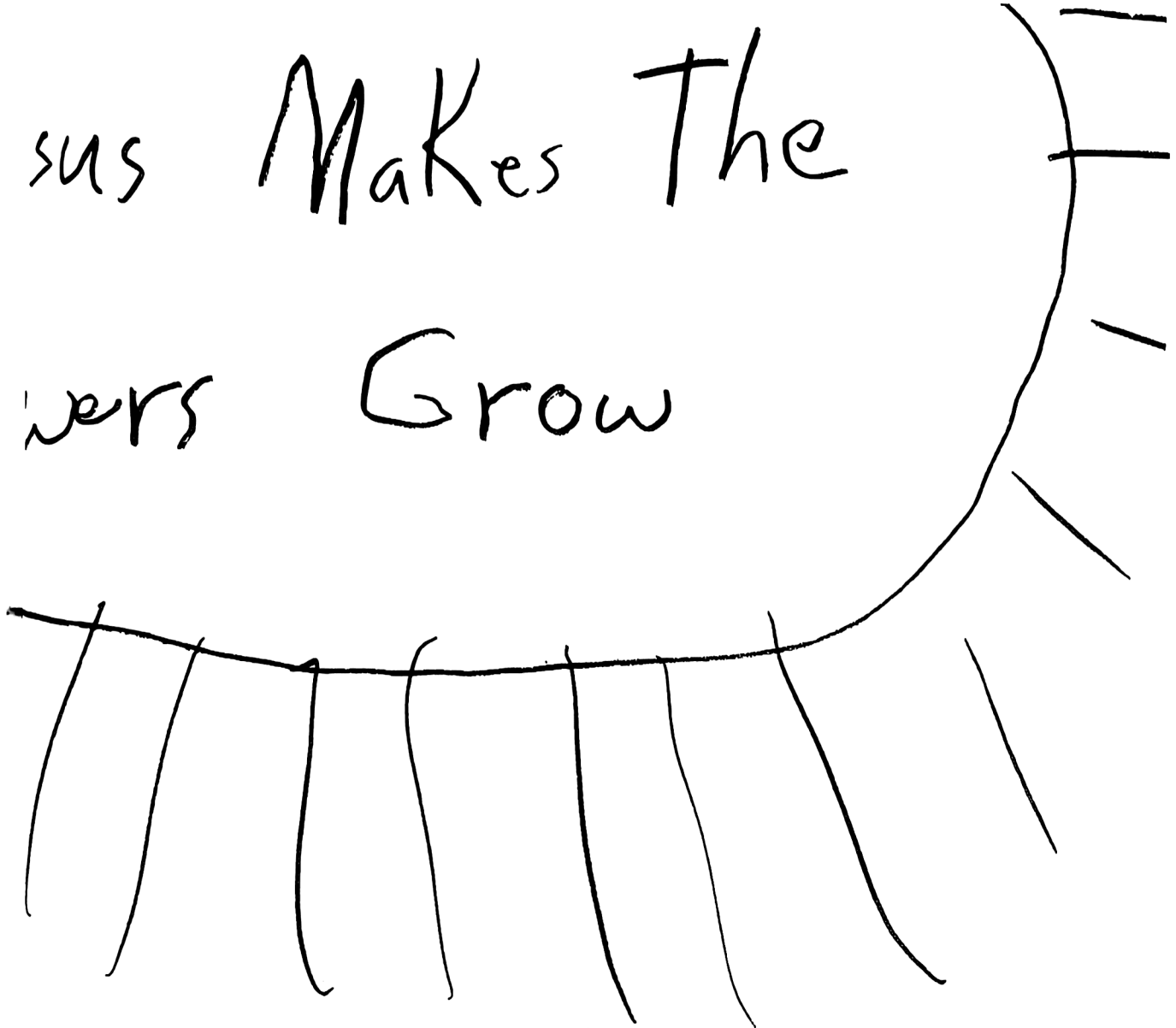
... God makes sick  
people feel better...

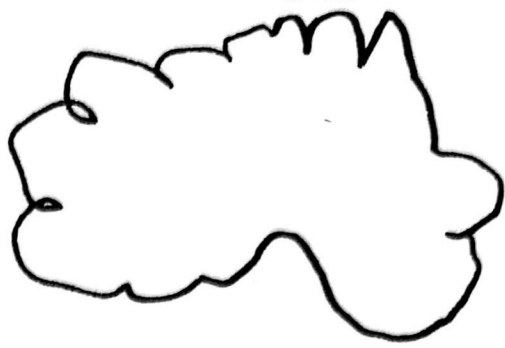
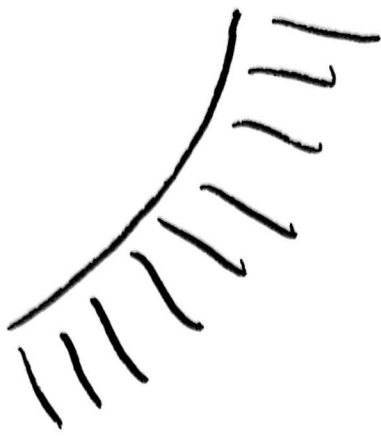




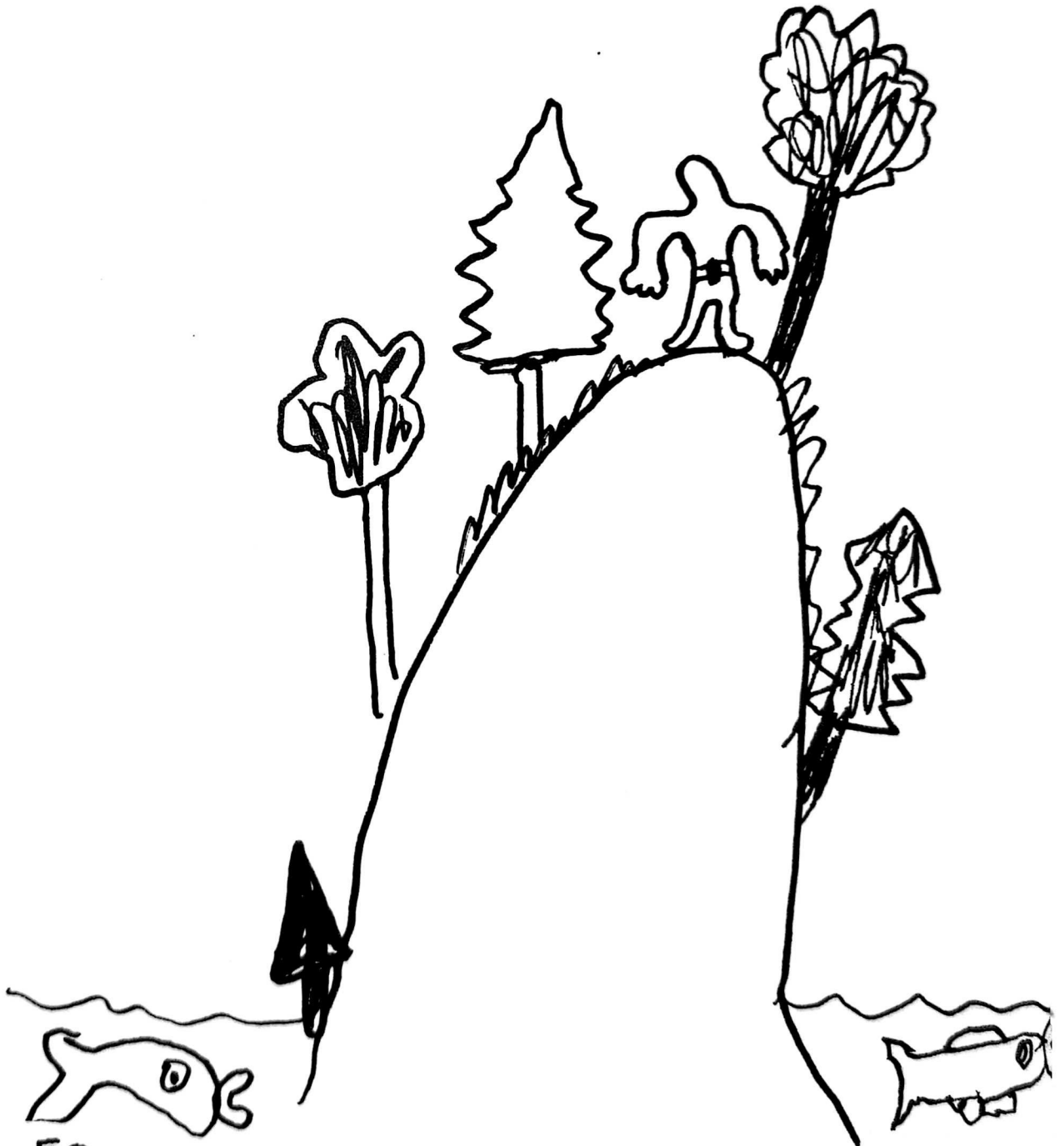
sun Makes The

Plants Grow



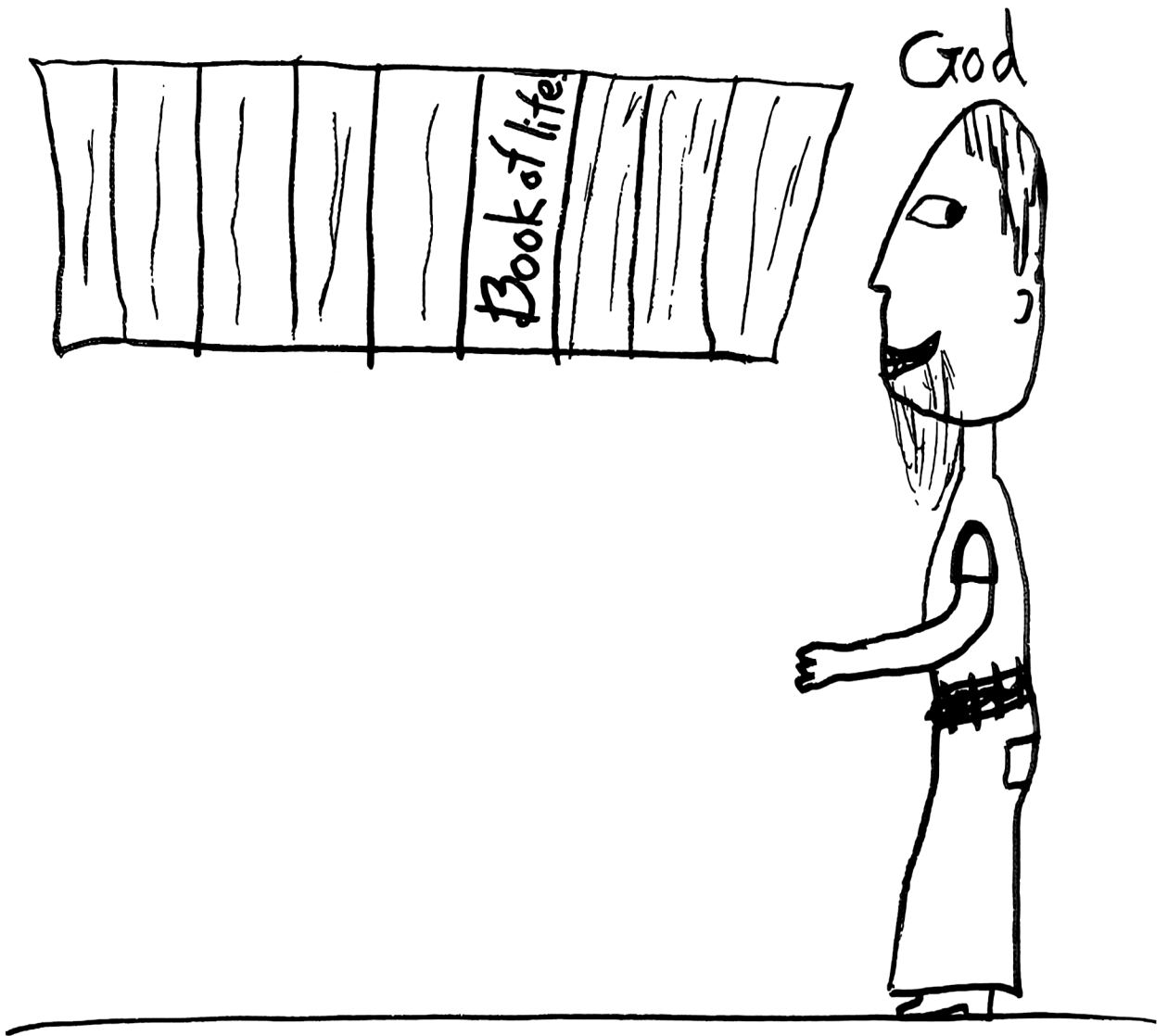


... climbs big  
hills...



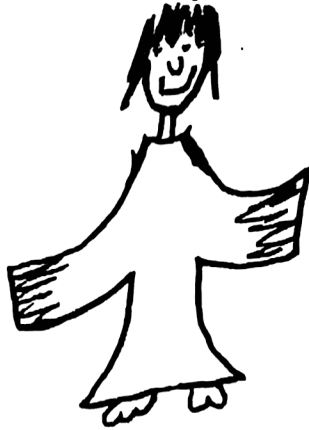
... he tends his  
Sheep....





... writes the names of  
people in the Book

Angel

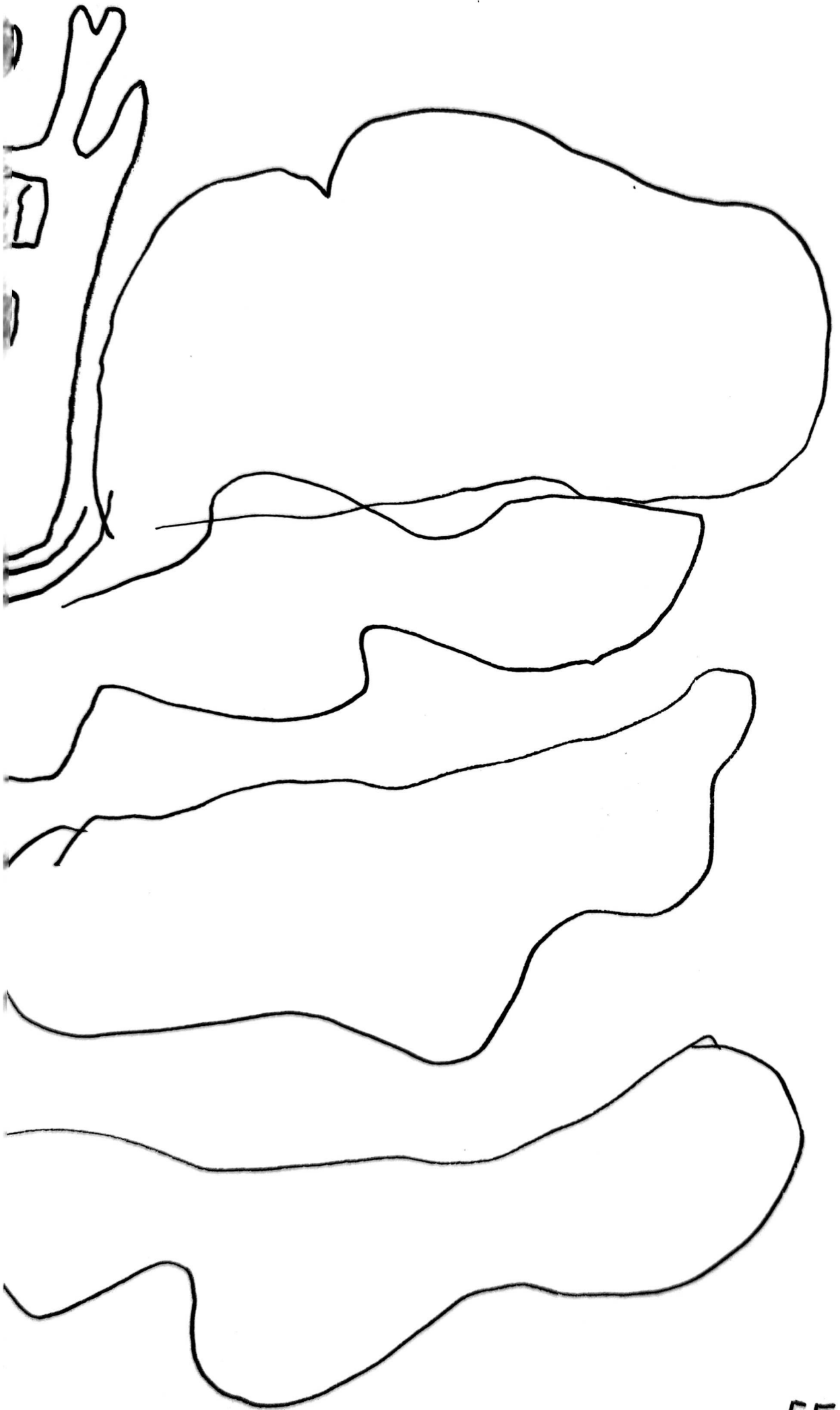


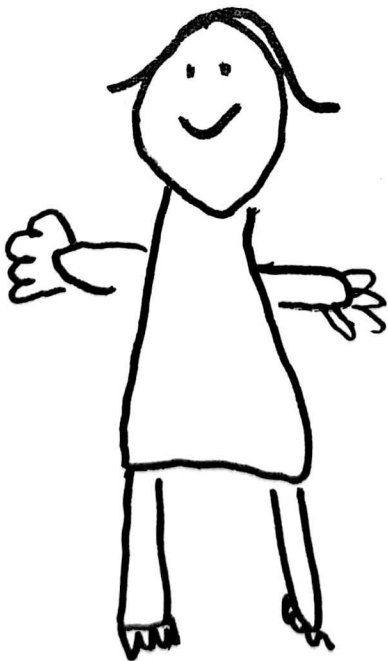
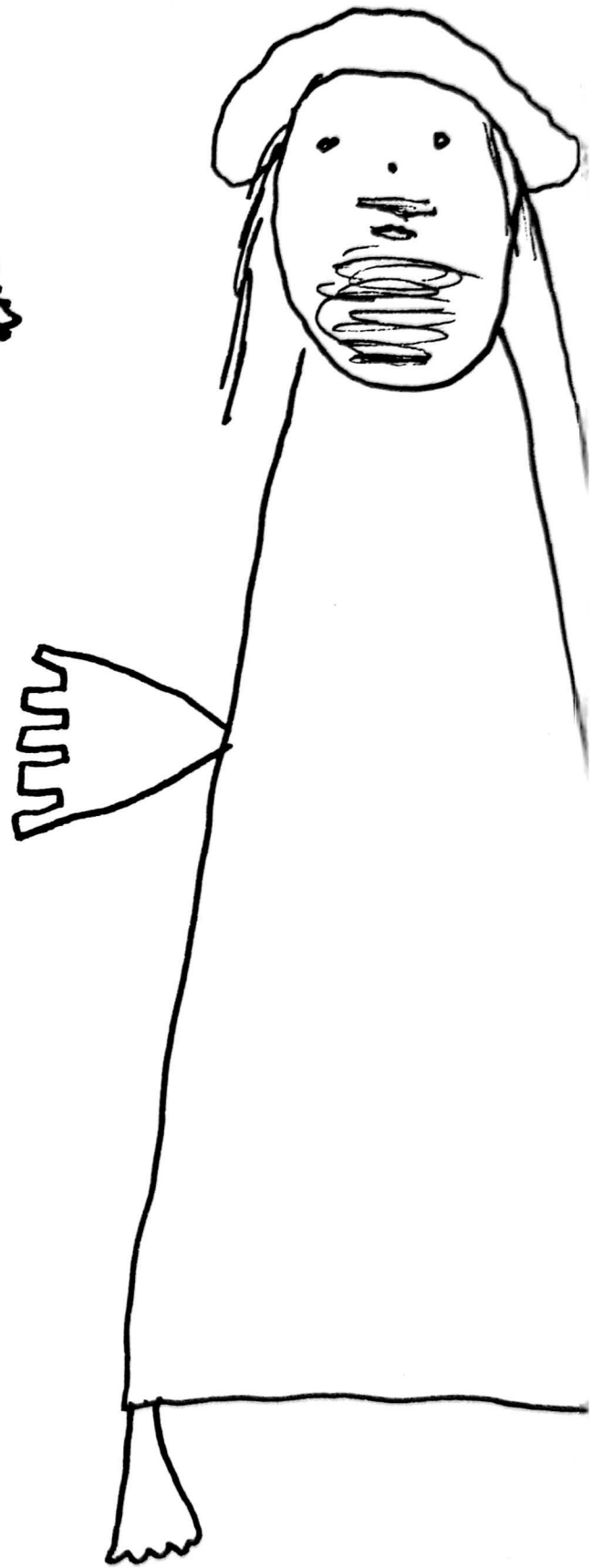
---

all the good  
Life ---



... takes a sun bath...

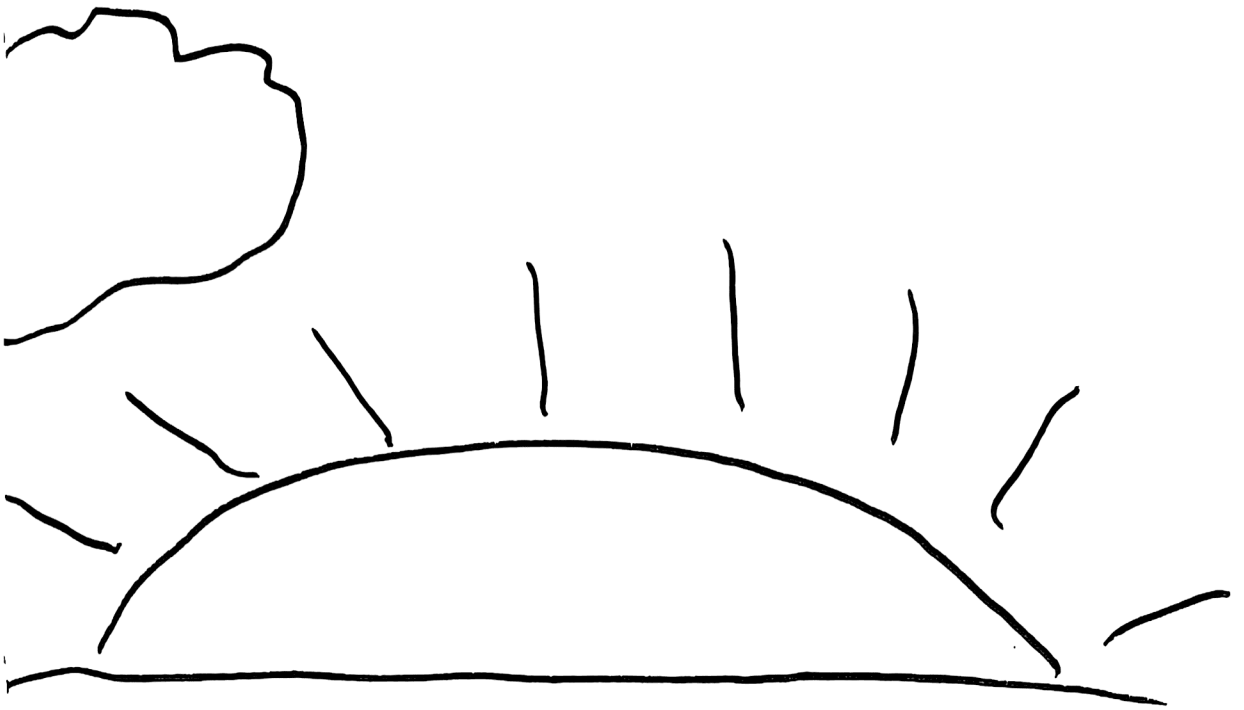




... after dinner, God  
goes for a walk  
with his  
wife &  
kids ...







... 8:42 P.M. - God  
brings the moon  
out and makes  
the sun set!



4.

What Does  
God Wear?



God wears lots of  
different things,  
and looks especially  
good in verticle stripes...



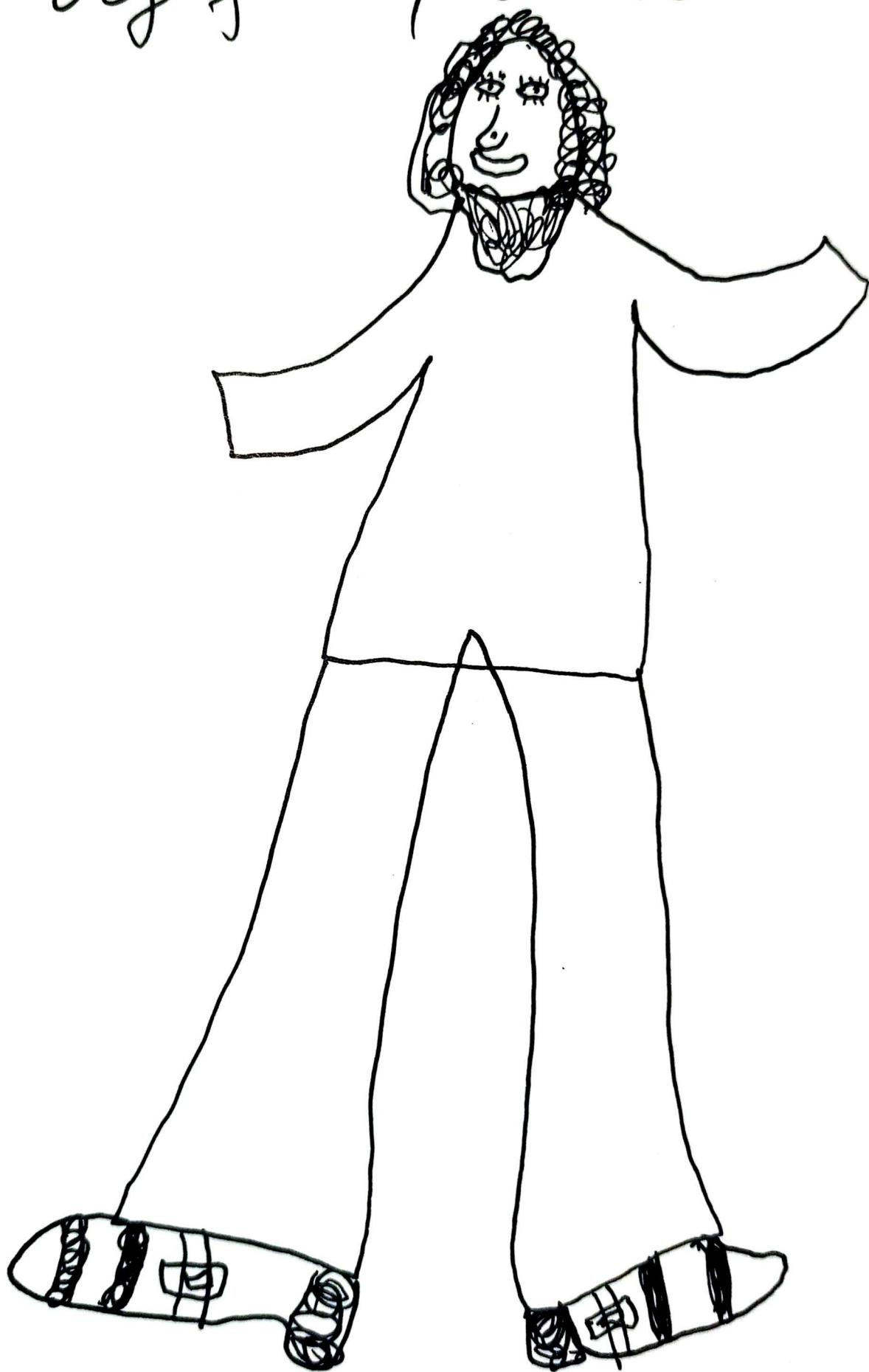


... diagonal stripes ...

... all kinds of stripes!



God sometimes wears,  
big fancy shoes...!!



or sandals ...



... but most of the time  
he just paints his  
toenails!



God can wear  
clothes fit  
for a king...

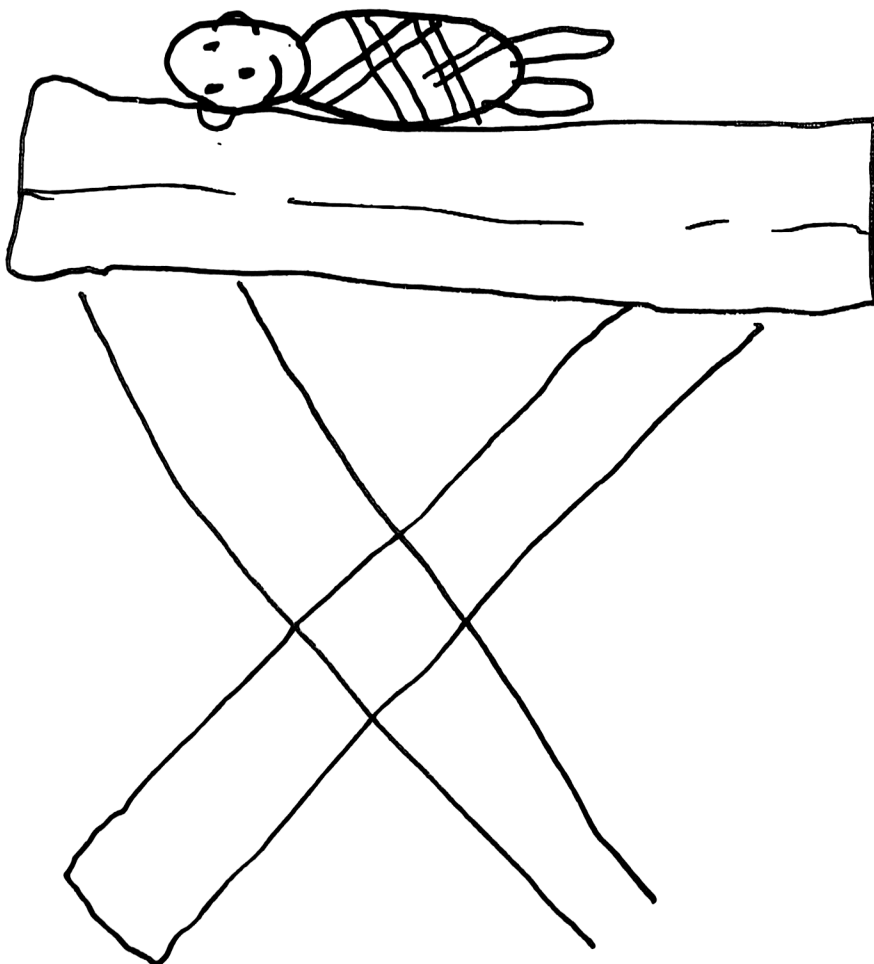


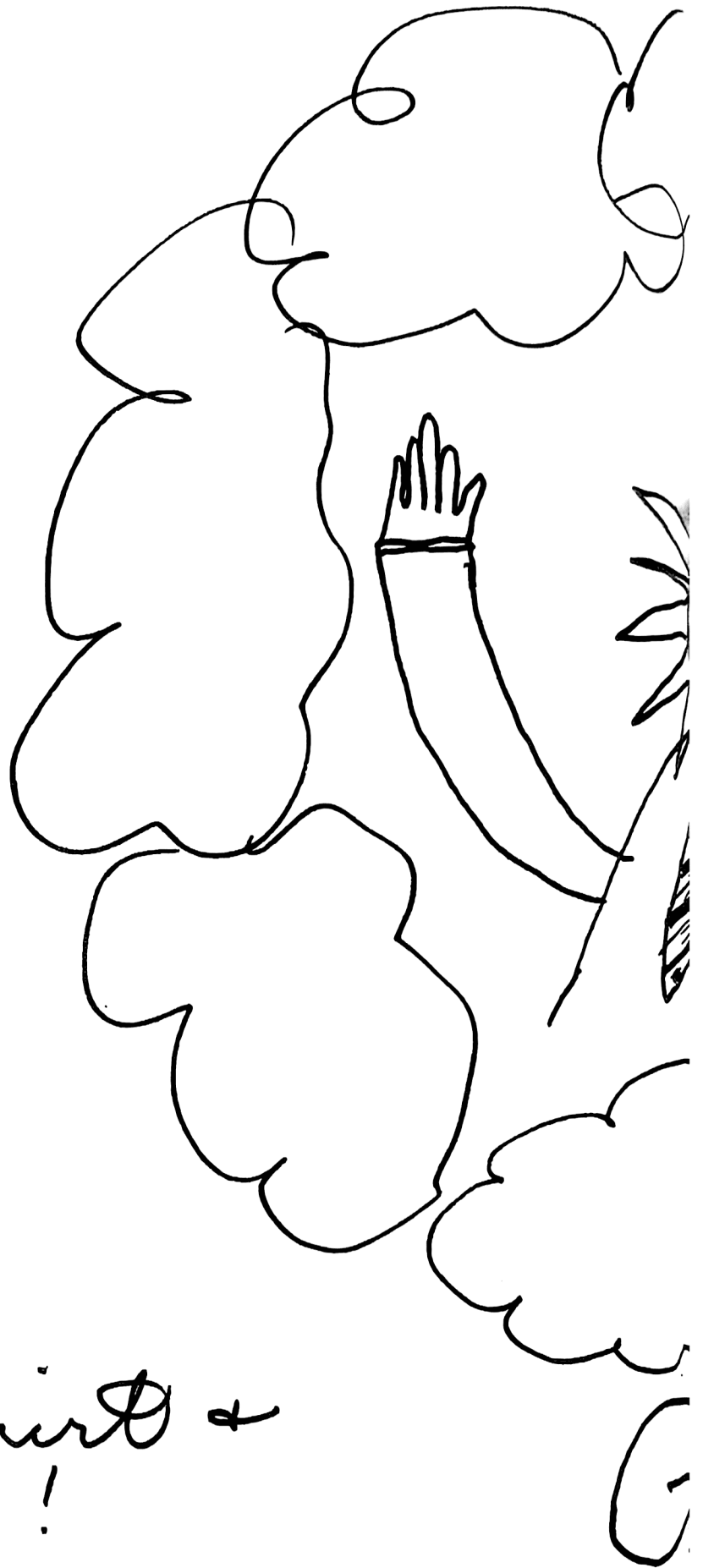
... or can  
dress just  
like us!

god

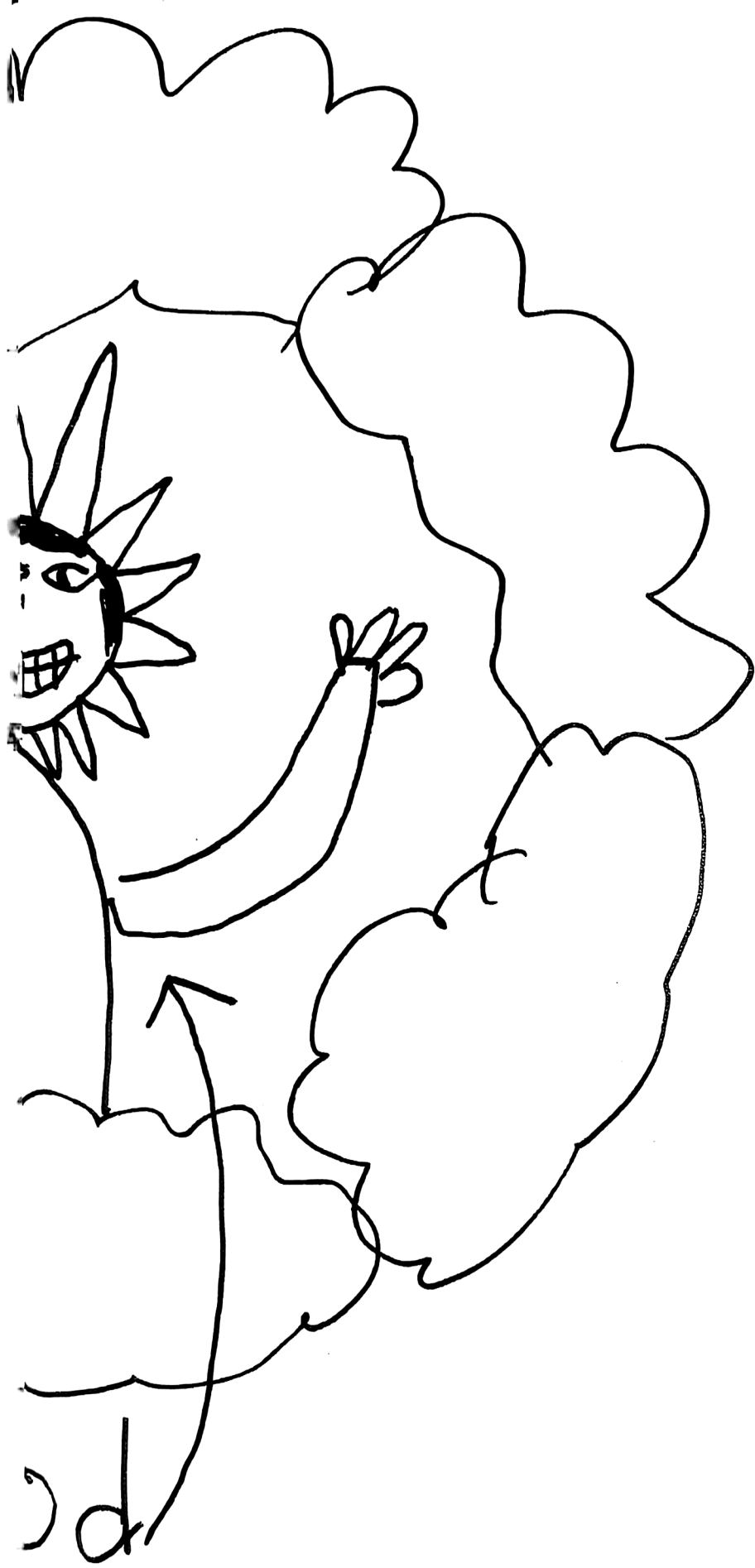


God can wear  
swaddling clothes...





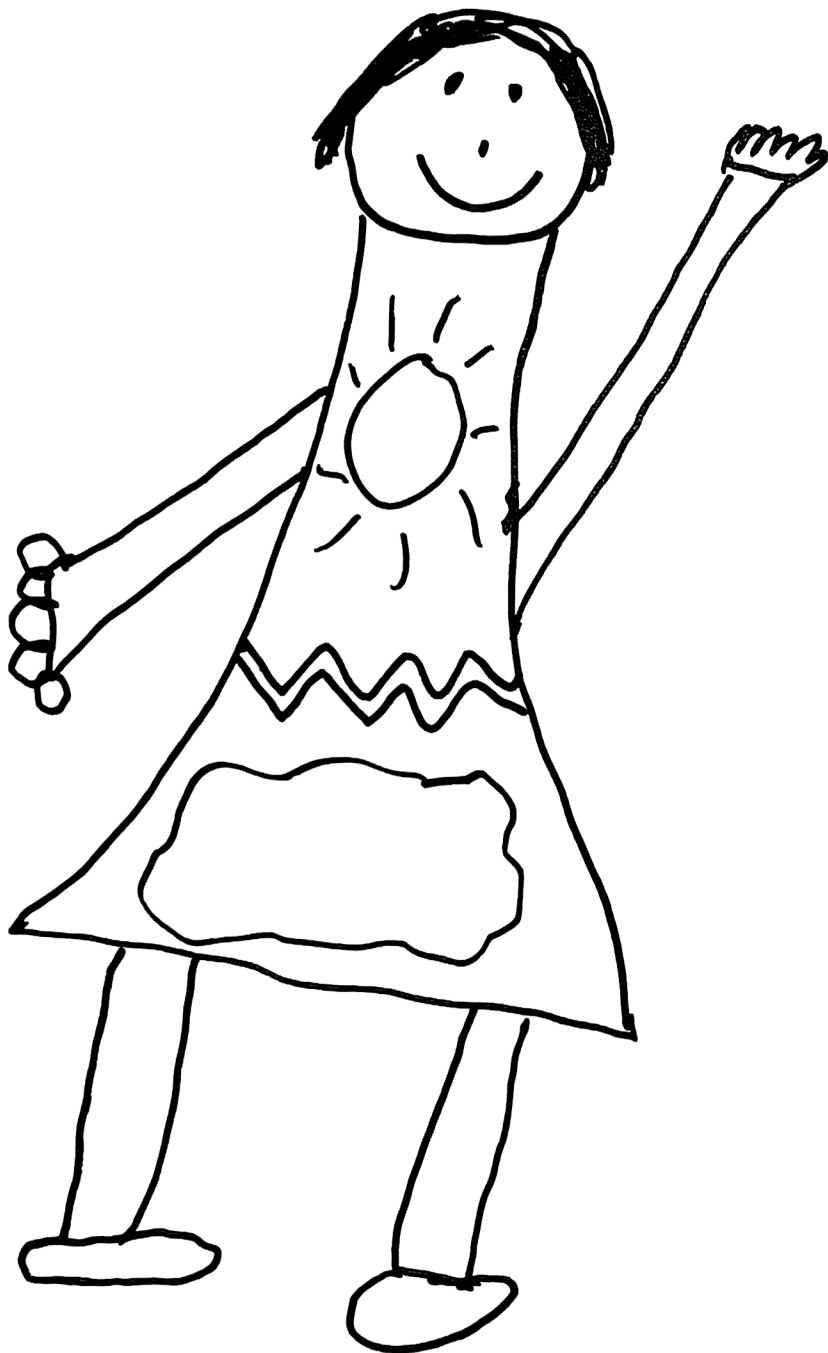
...or a shirt +  
a tie!



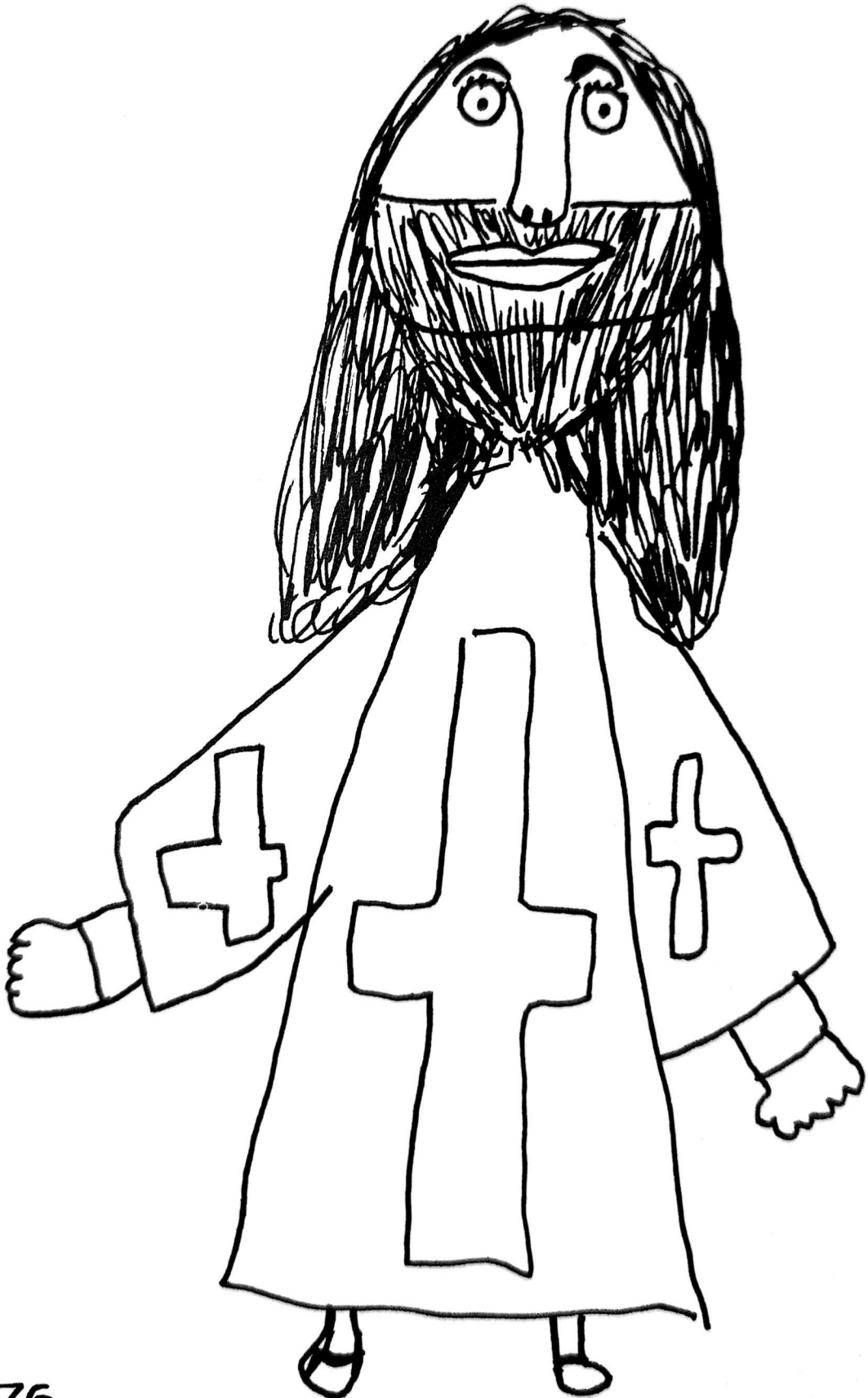
God can dress like  
an angel . . .



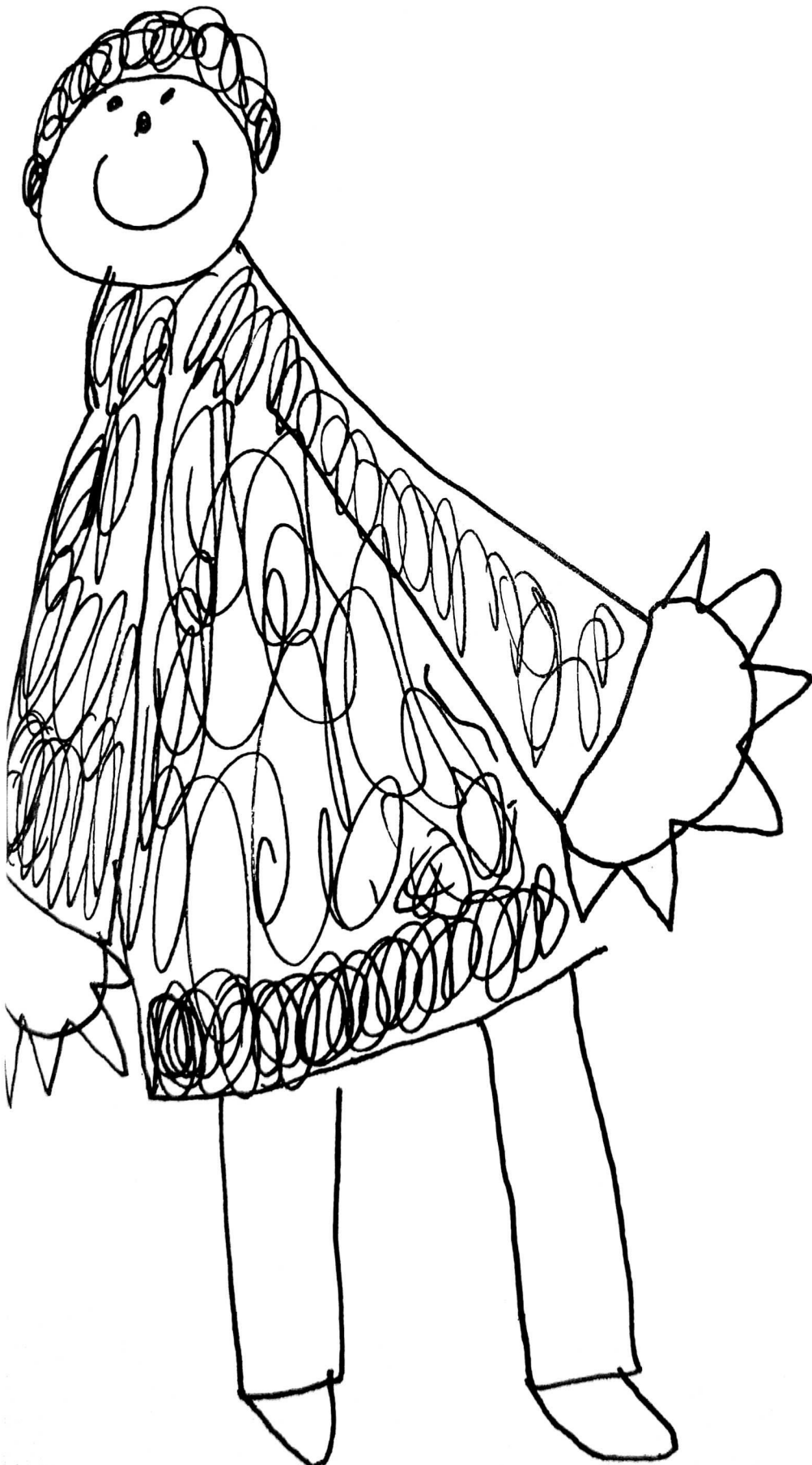
... an indian ...



... a minister ...



or an Eskimo!



God can feel comfortable  
in  
a tunic...

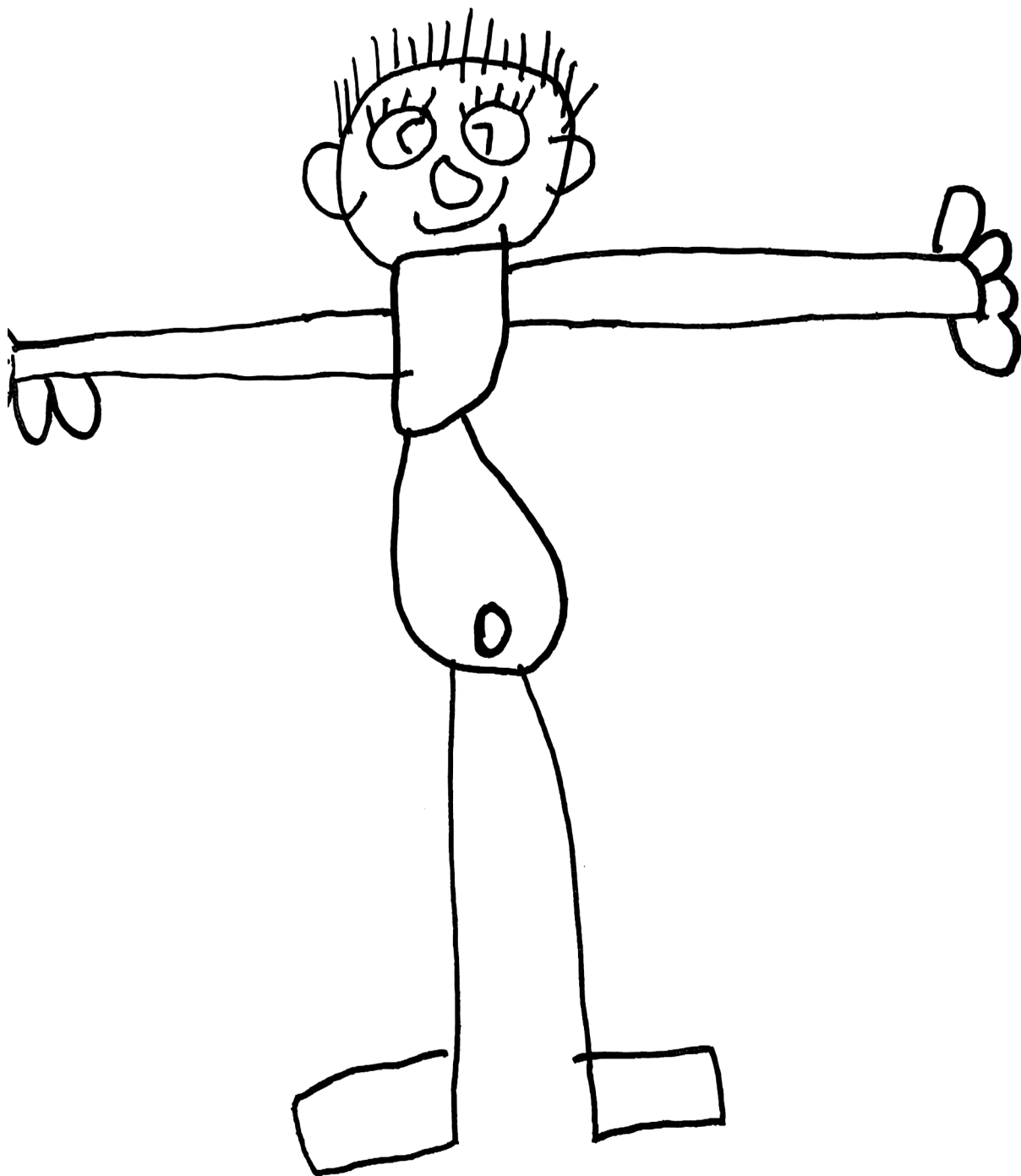


a Cardigan sweater...





... just a sheet ...



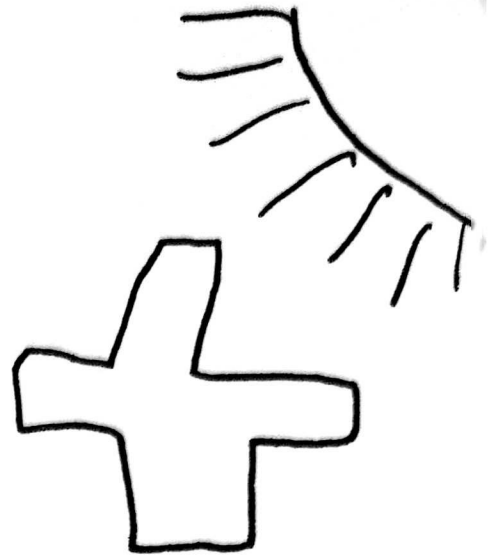
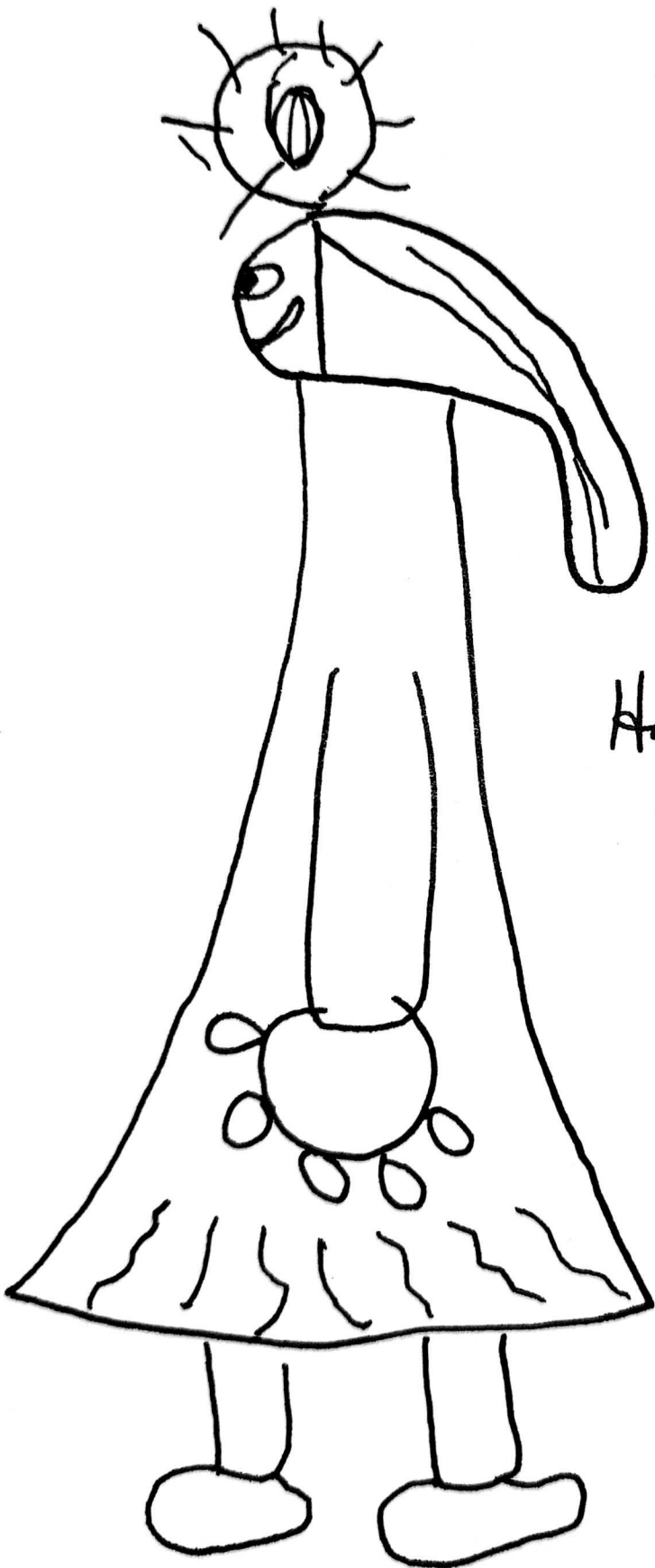
or nothing at all!

Haloes are a very  
important part of  
God's wardrobe.  
Haloes can be  
simple....



... or fancy





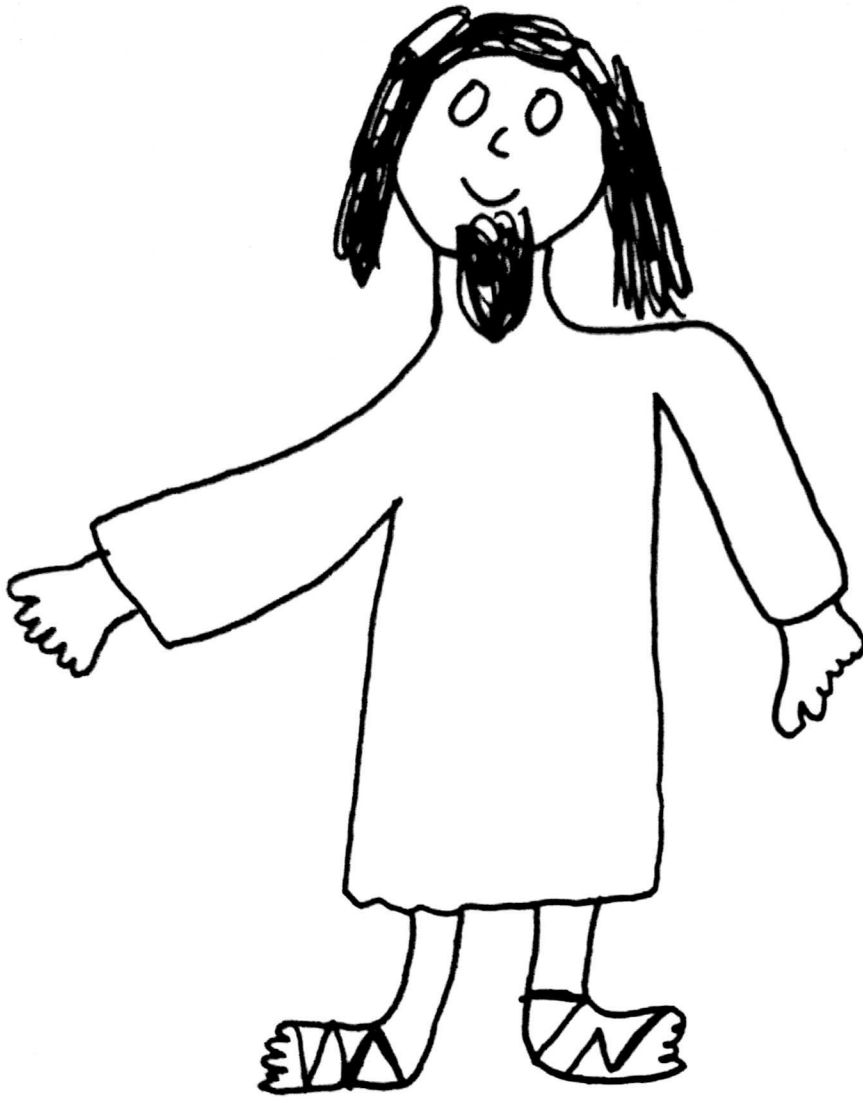
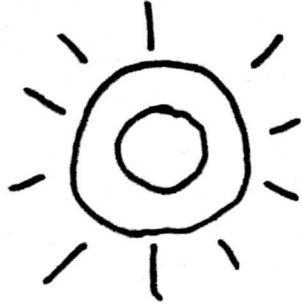
Haloes can  
be big...



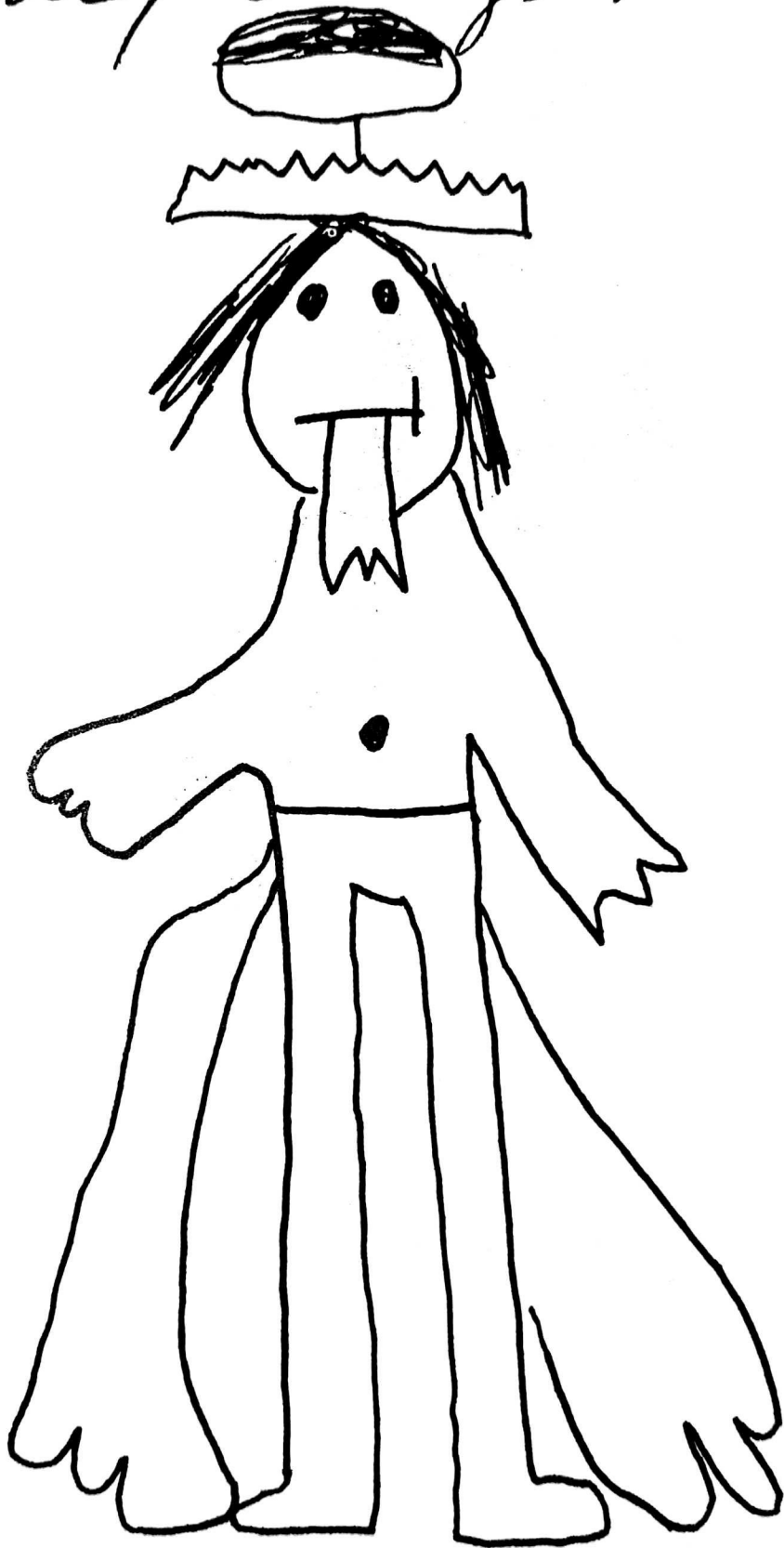
Sometimes haloes  
are attached ...



some are not  
attached...



... some are even  
worn with other  
fancy things!

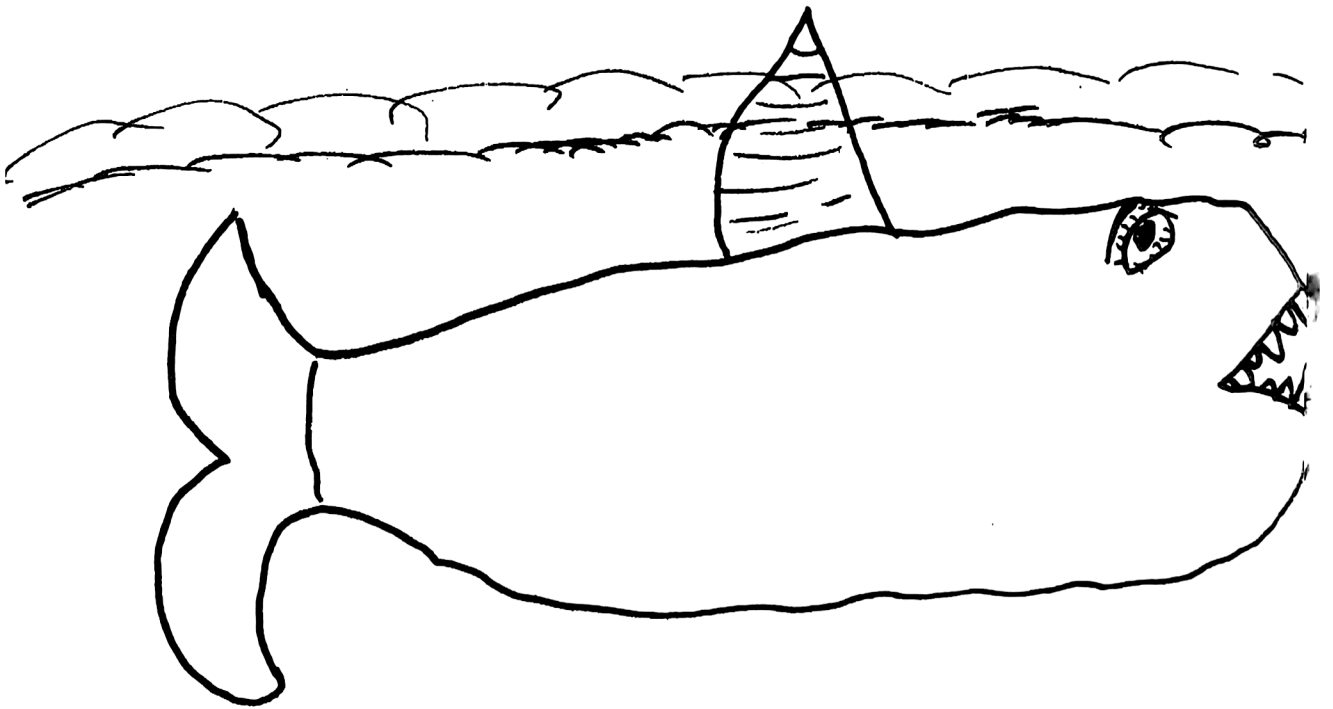


5.

Famous People God  
looks Like

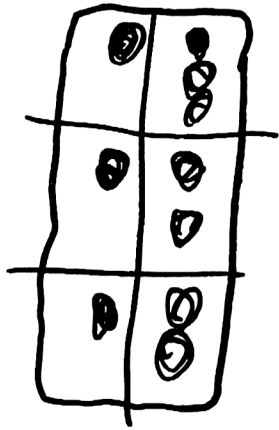
THE JAWS GOD

LAWS

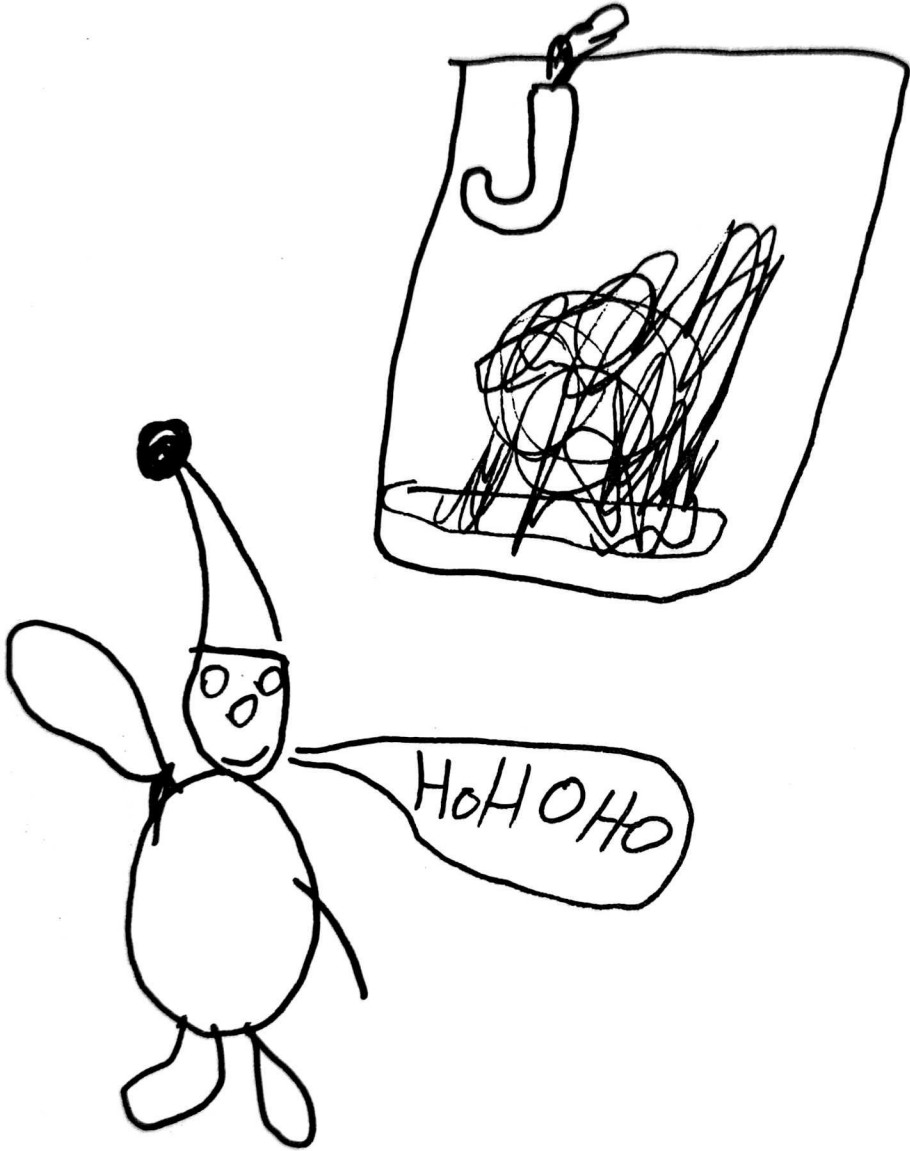




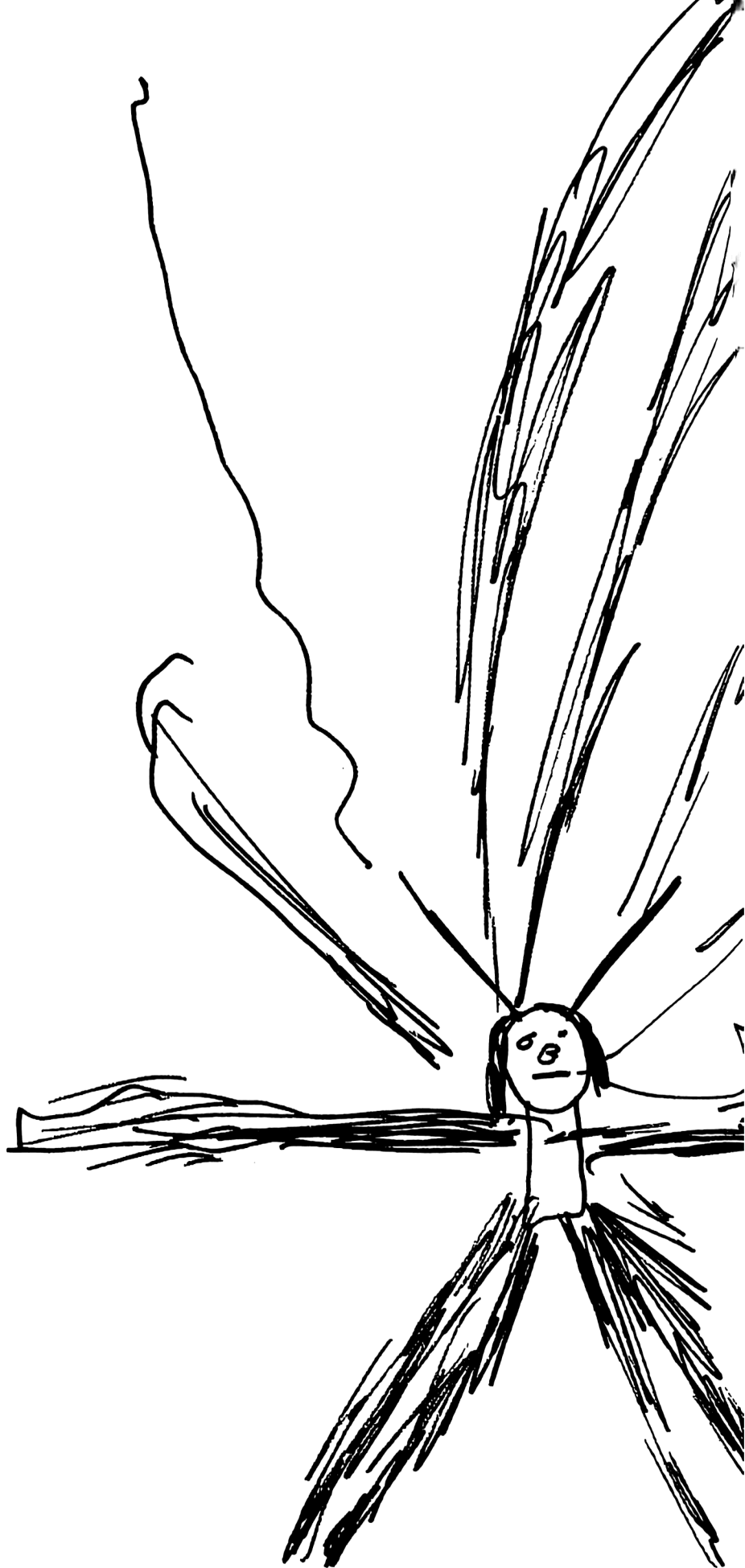
# THE SANTA CLAUS



GOD

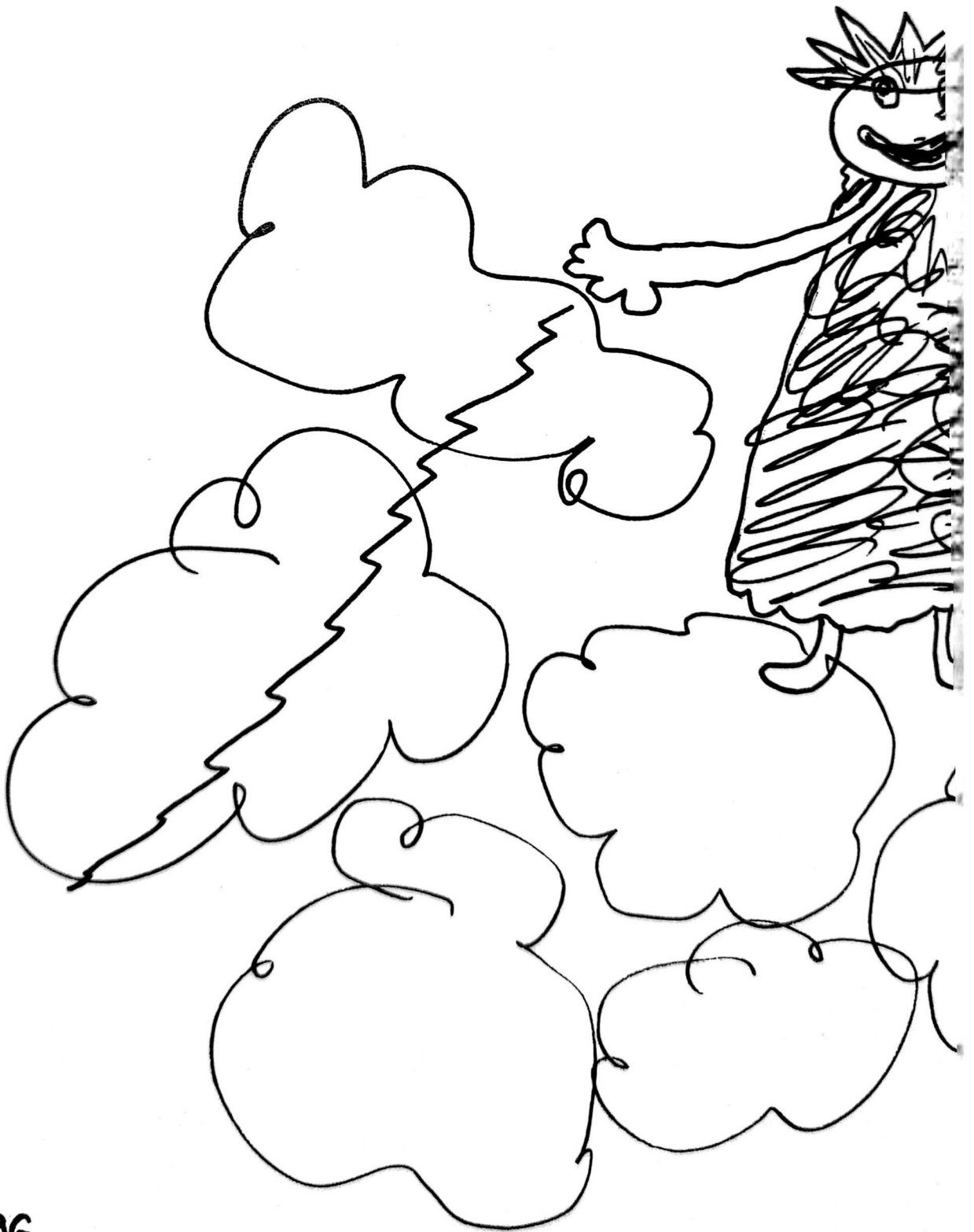


# THE SPIDER MAN GOD

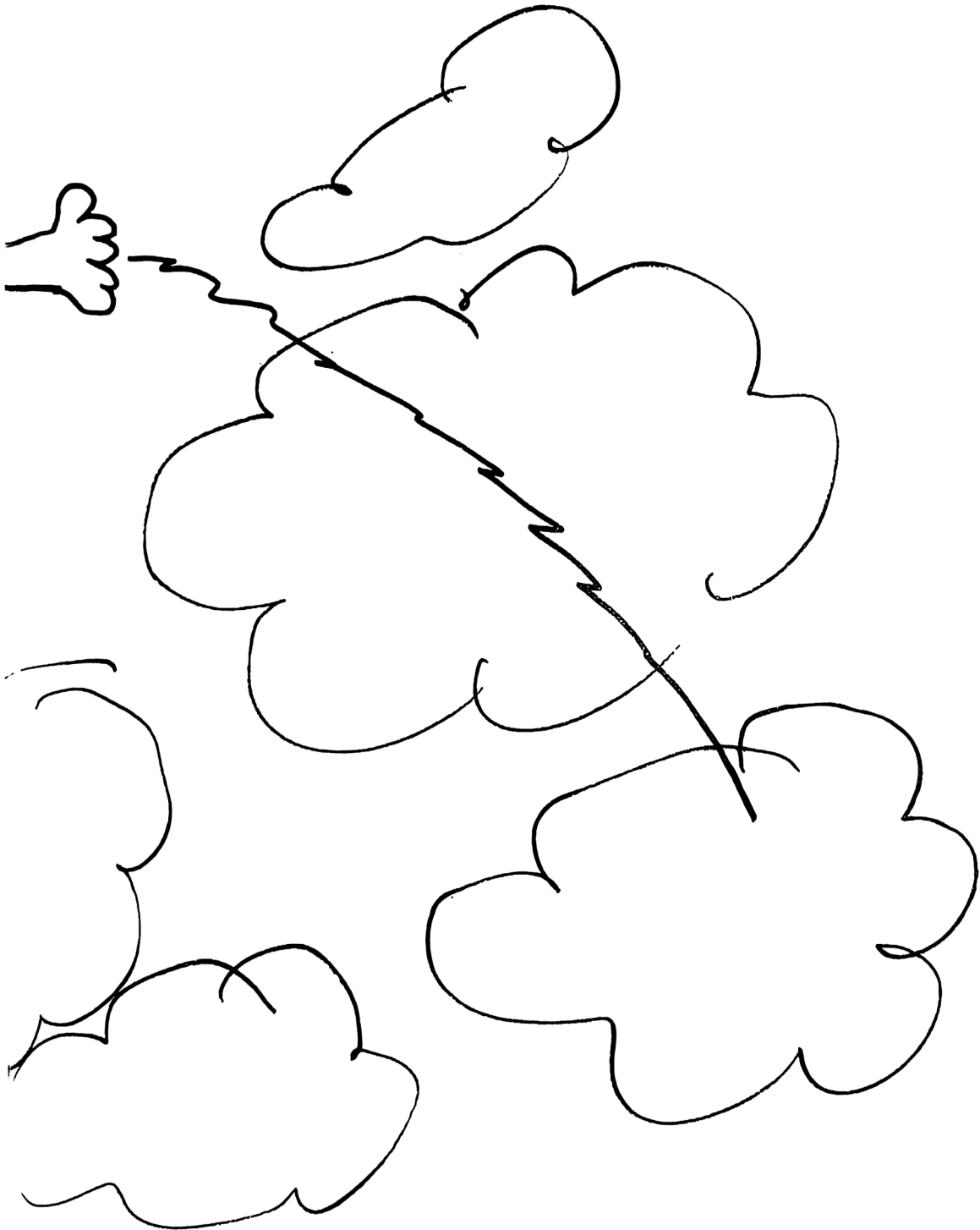




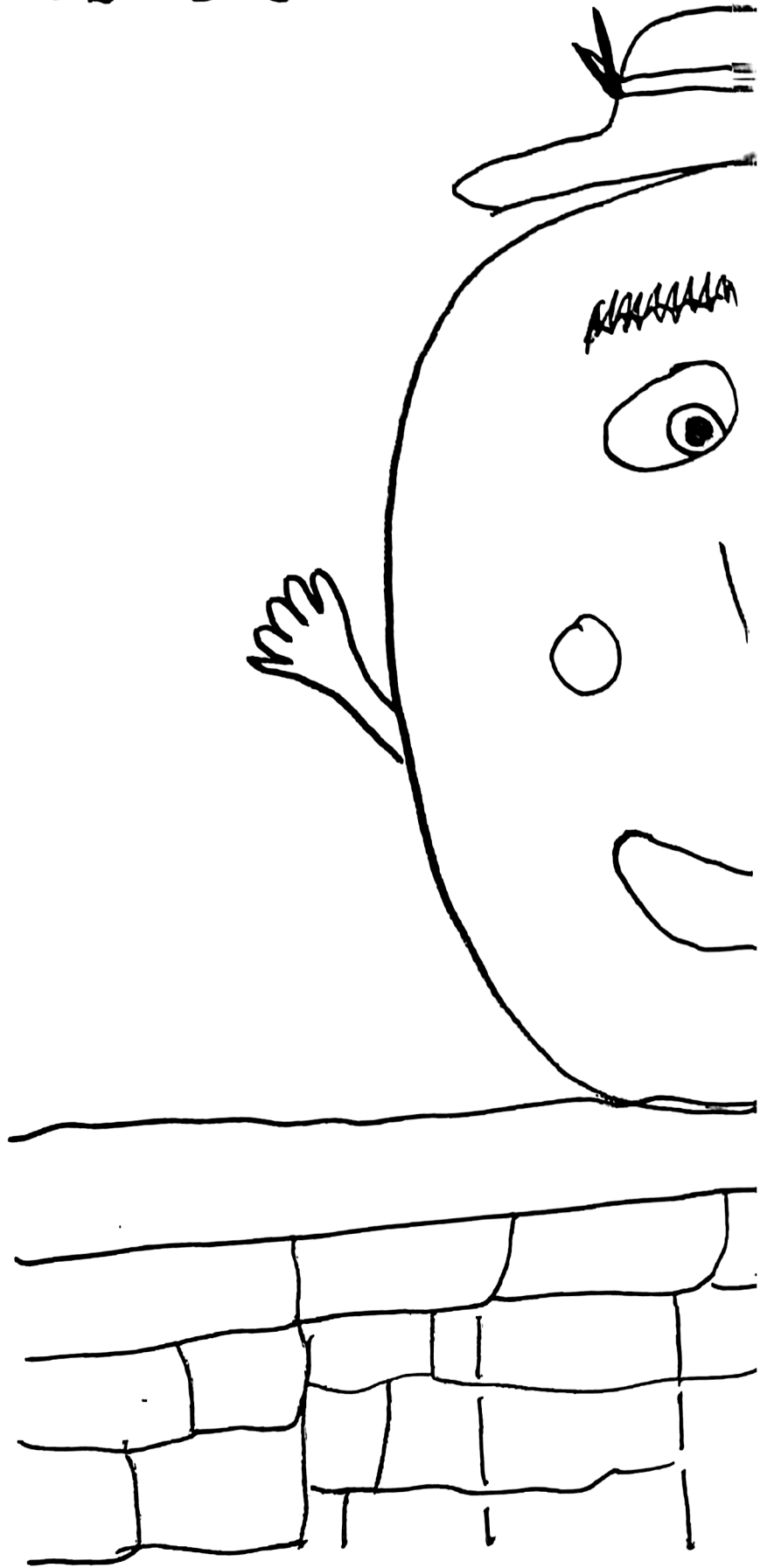
# THE STATUE



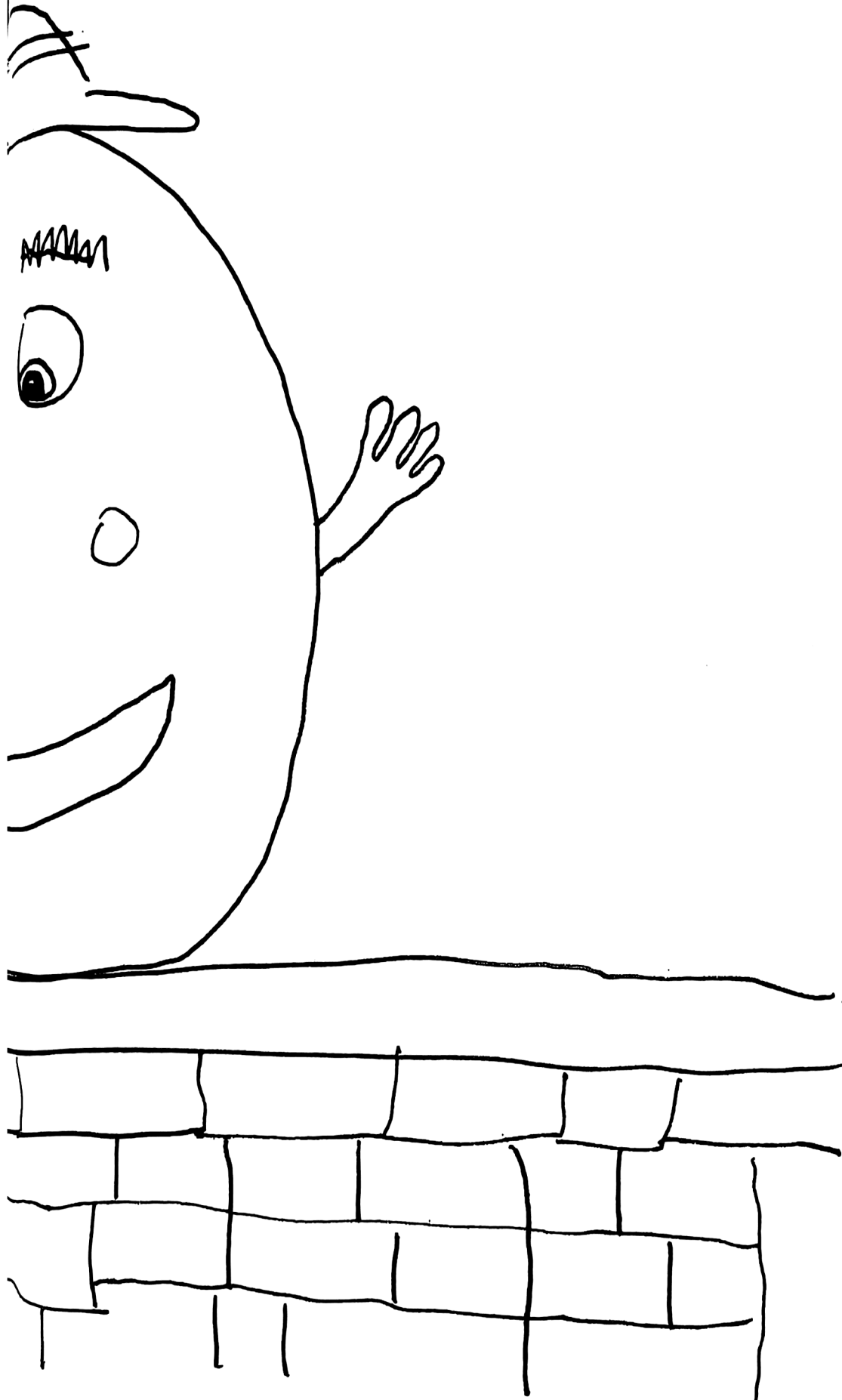
F LIBERTY GOD



# THE HUMPTY DUMP



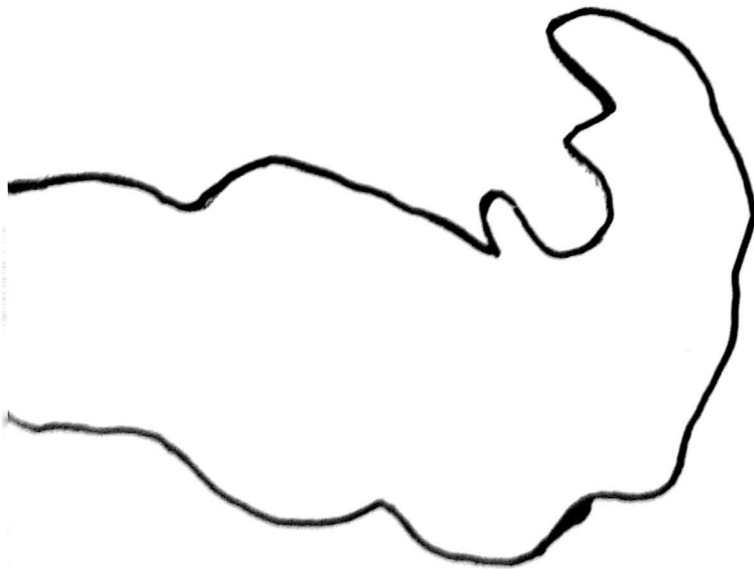
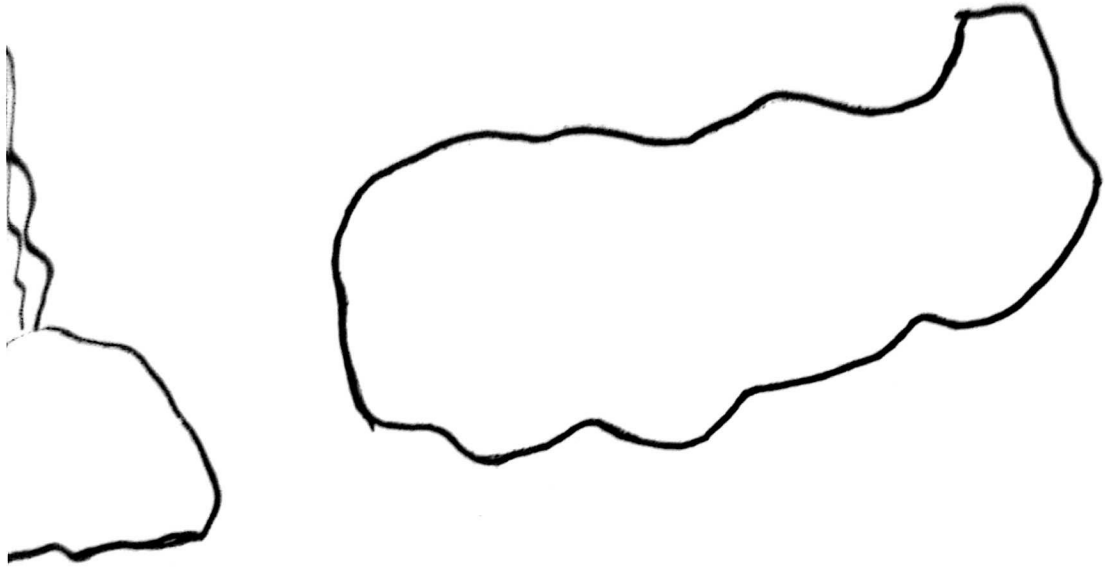
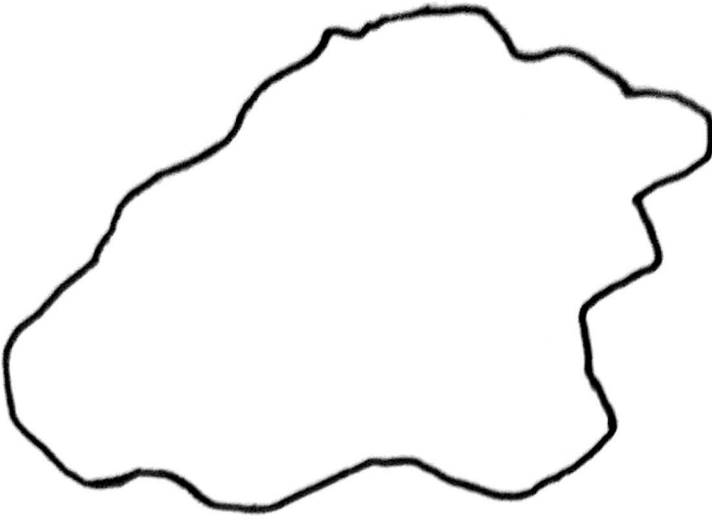
Y GOD



# THE WIZARD OF OZ



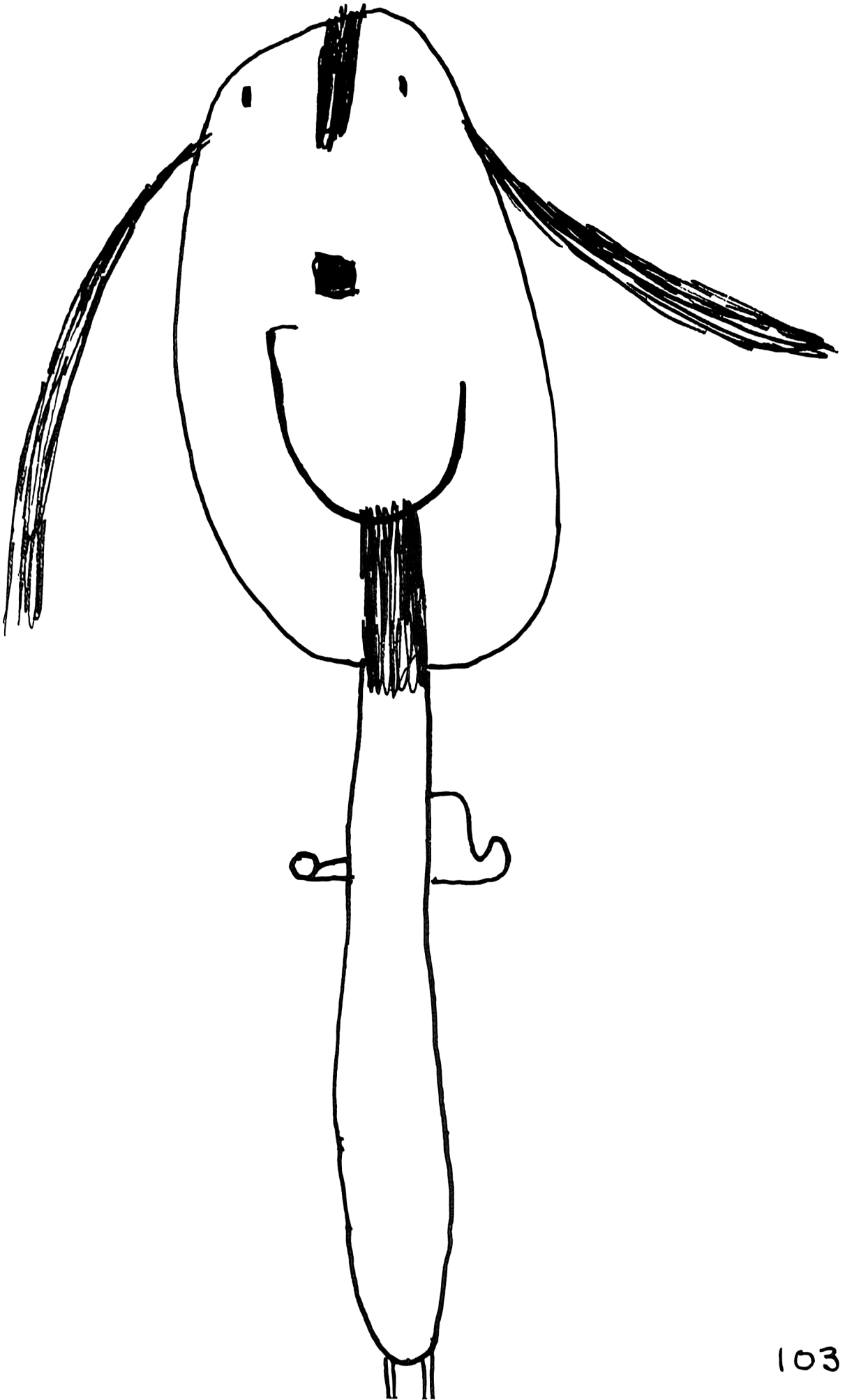
**GOD**



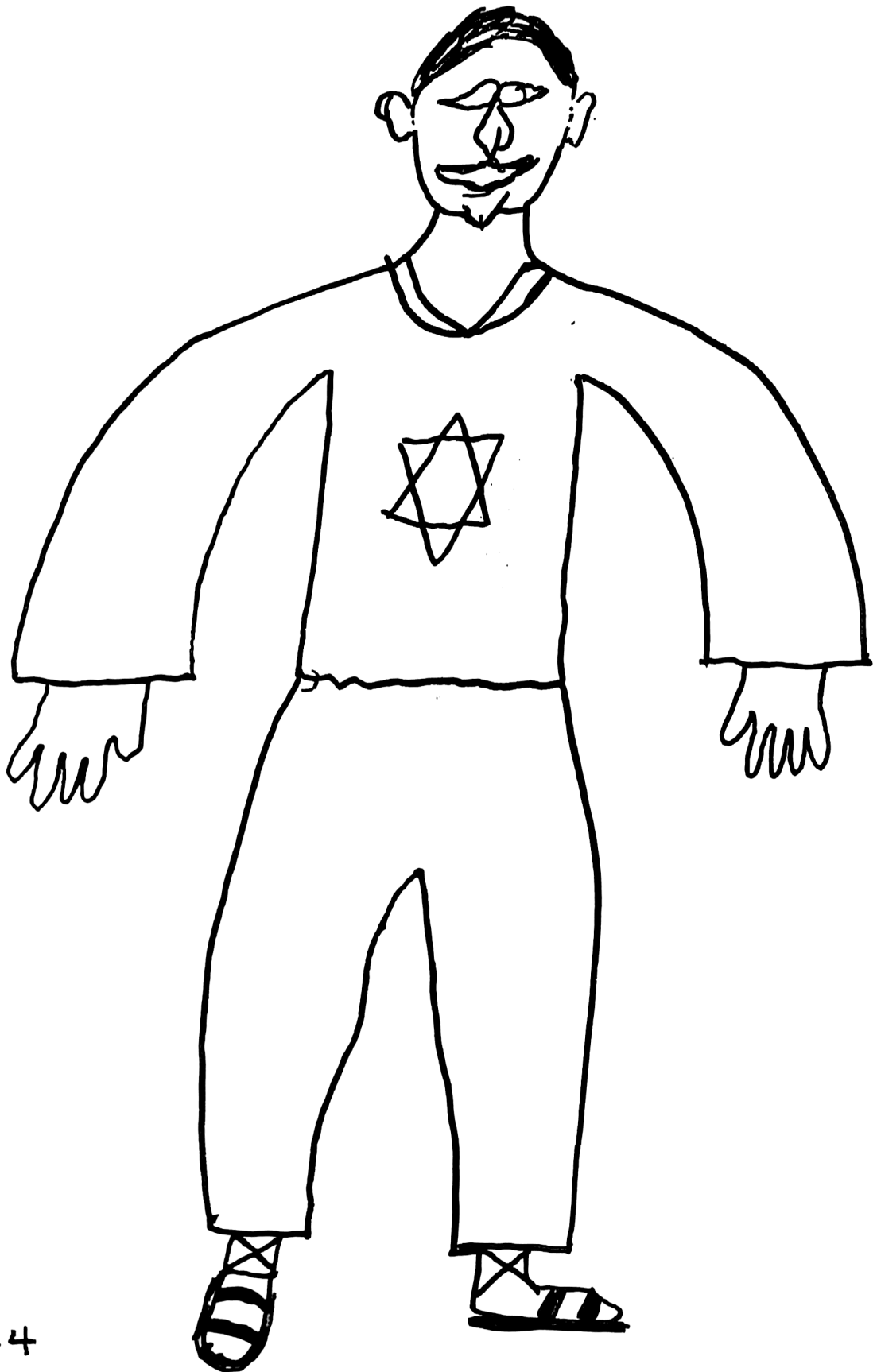
THE MOSES GOD



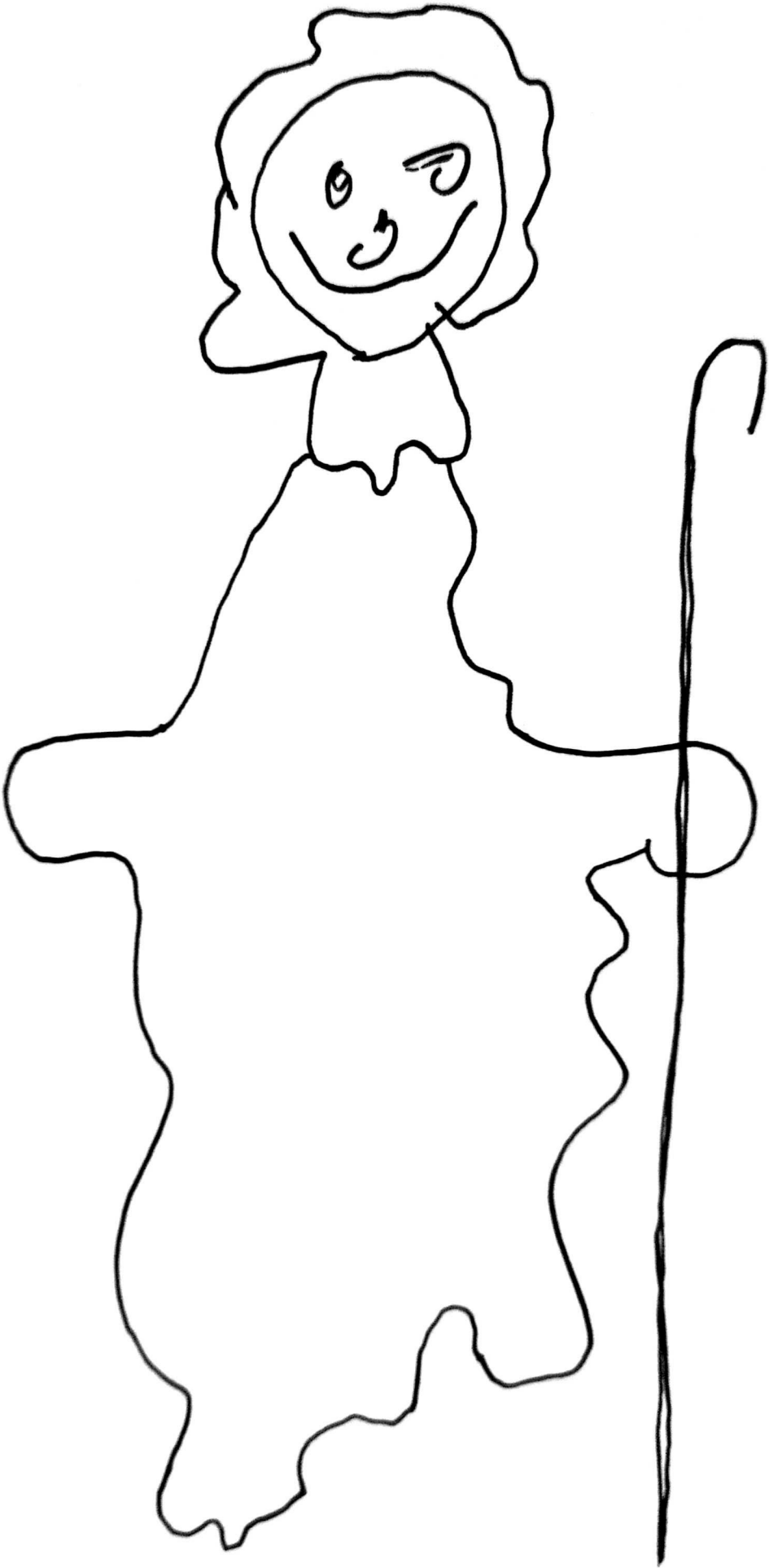
# THE SNOOPY GOD



# THE SUPERMAN GOD



THE  
LITTLE BO PEEP  
GOD



# THE CASPER THE



# HOST<sub>GOD</sub>

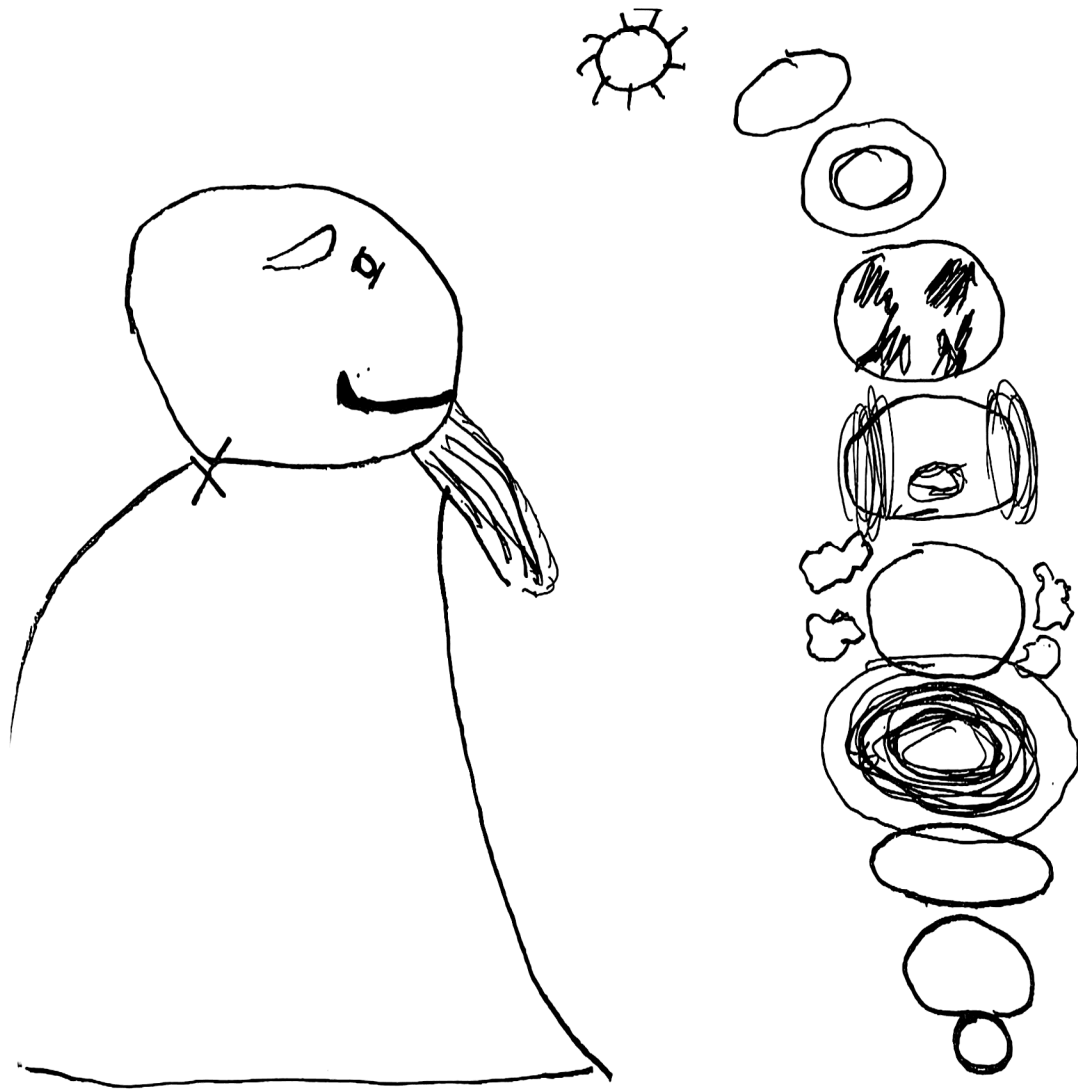




6.

The Biblical God



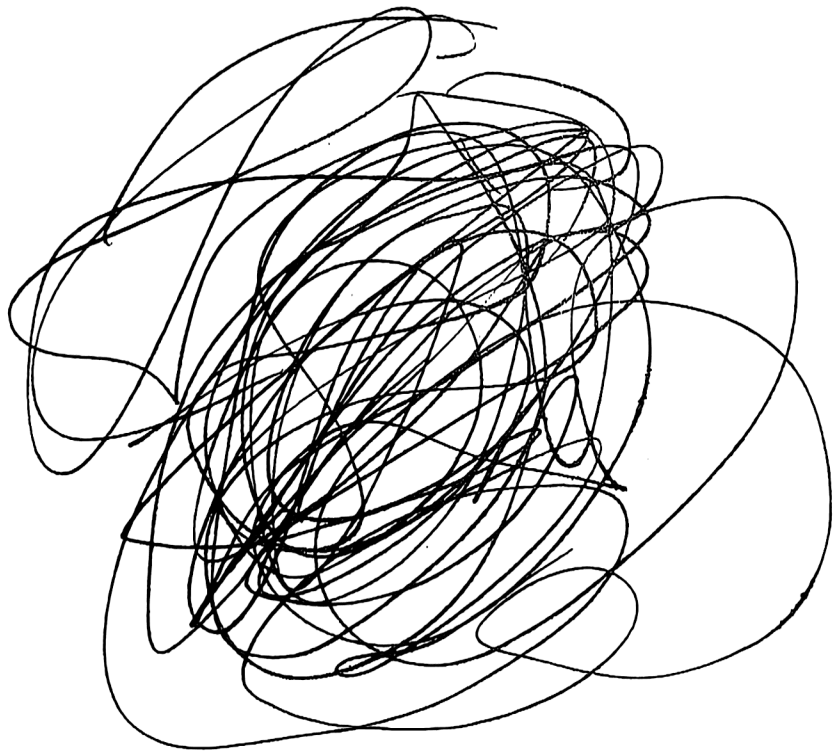


**I**N THE BEGINNING  
GOD CREATED THE  
HEAVENS  
AND  
THE EARTH.

— Genesis 1:1

**N**OW THE EARTH  
WAS  
A FORMLESS  
VOID...

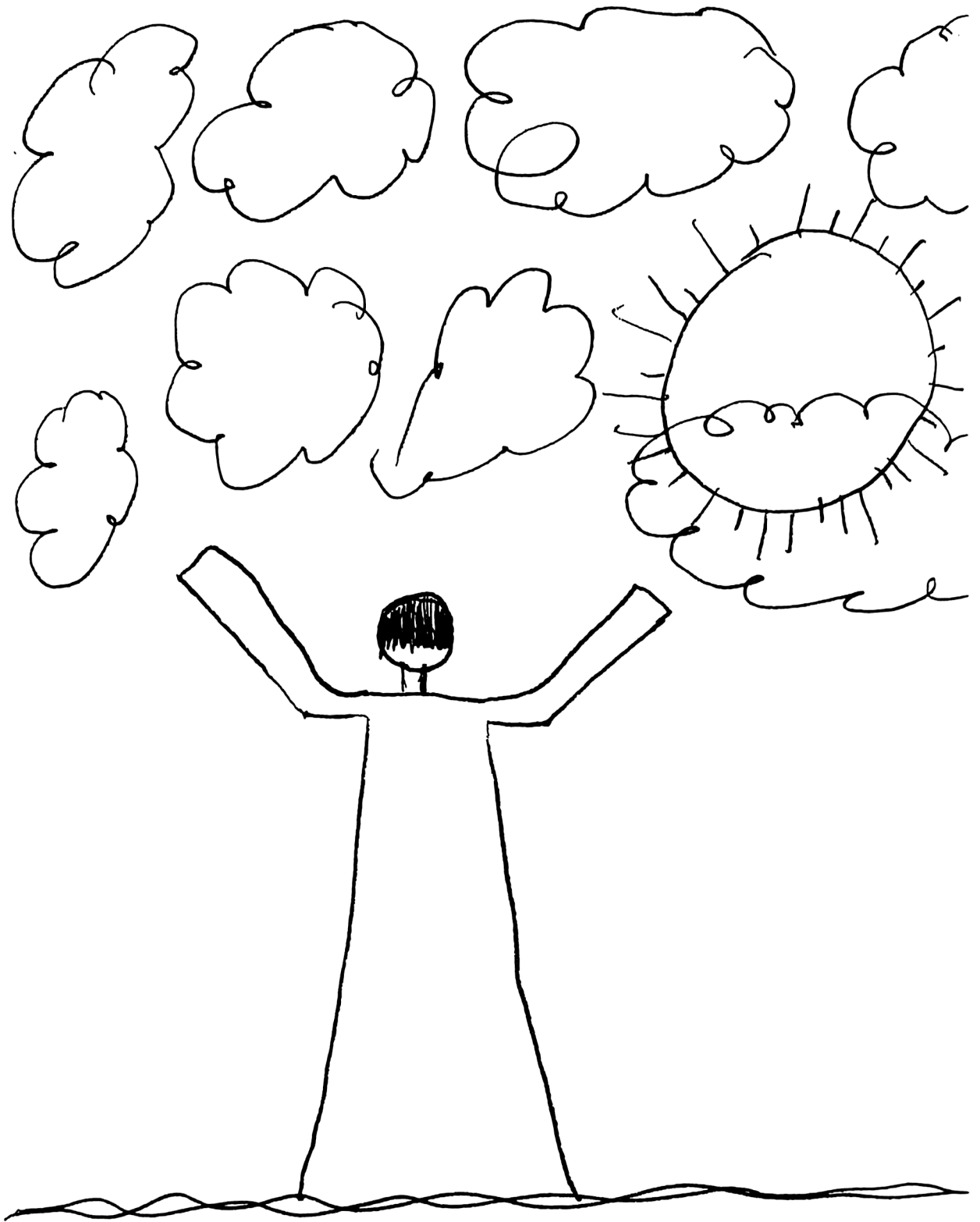
— Genesis 1:2



THERE WAS DARKNESS  
OVER THE DEEP AND  
GOD'S SPIRIT  
HOVERED OVER  
THE WATER.

-Genesis 1:2

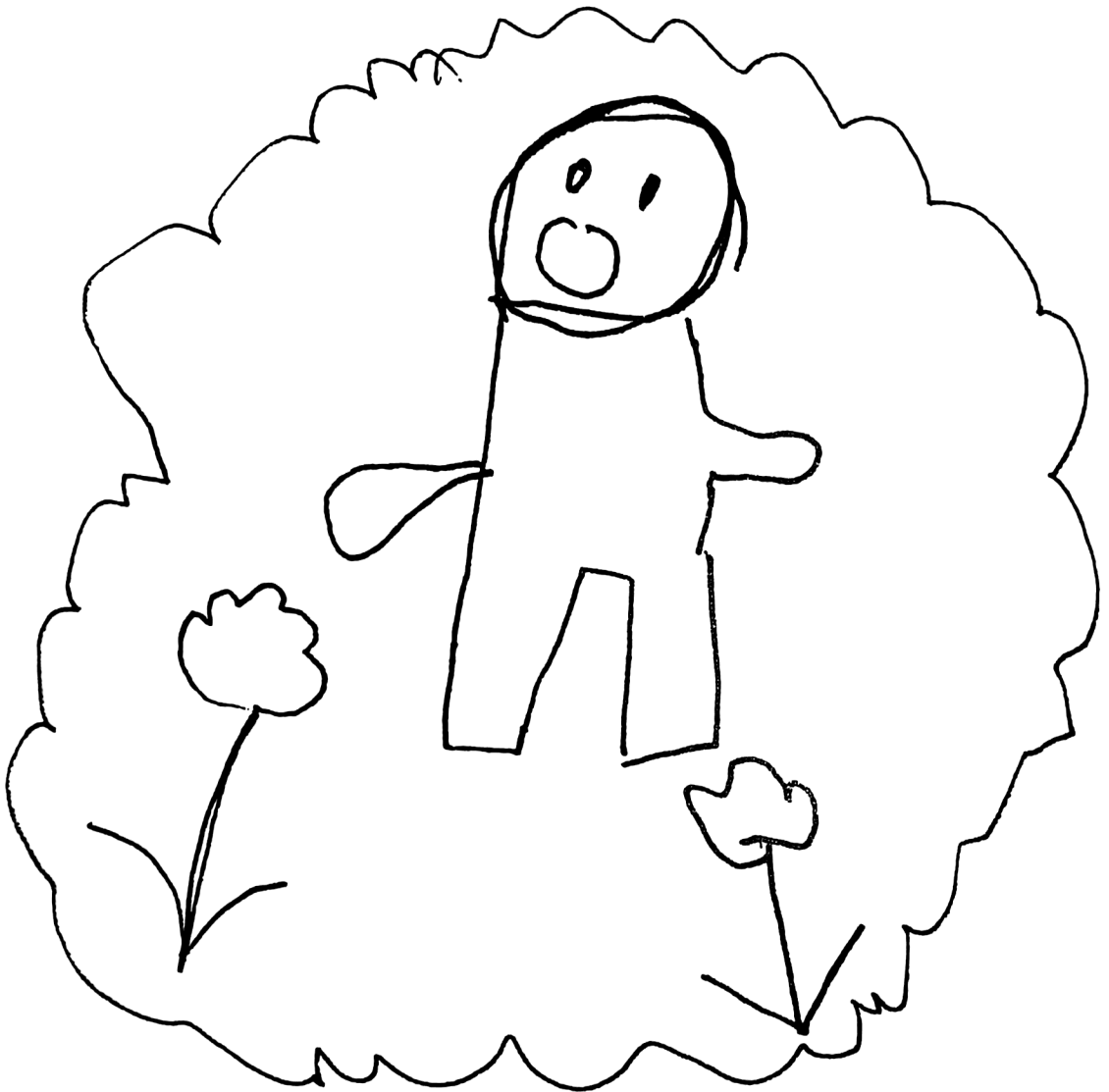




**G**OD SAID "LET THERE  
BE LIGHT," AND  
THERE WAS  
LIGHT.

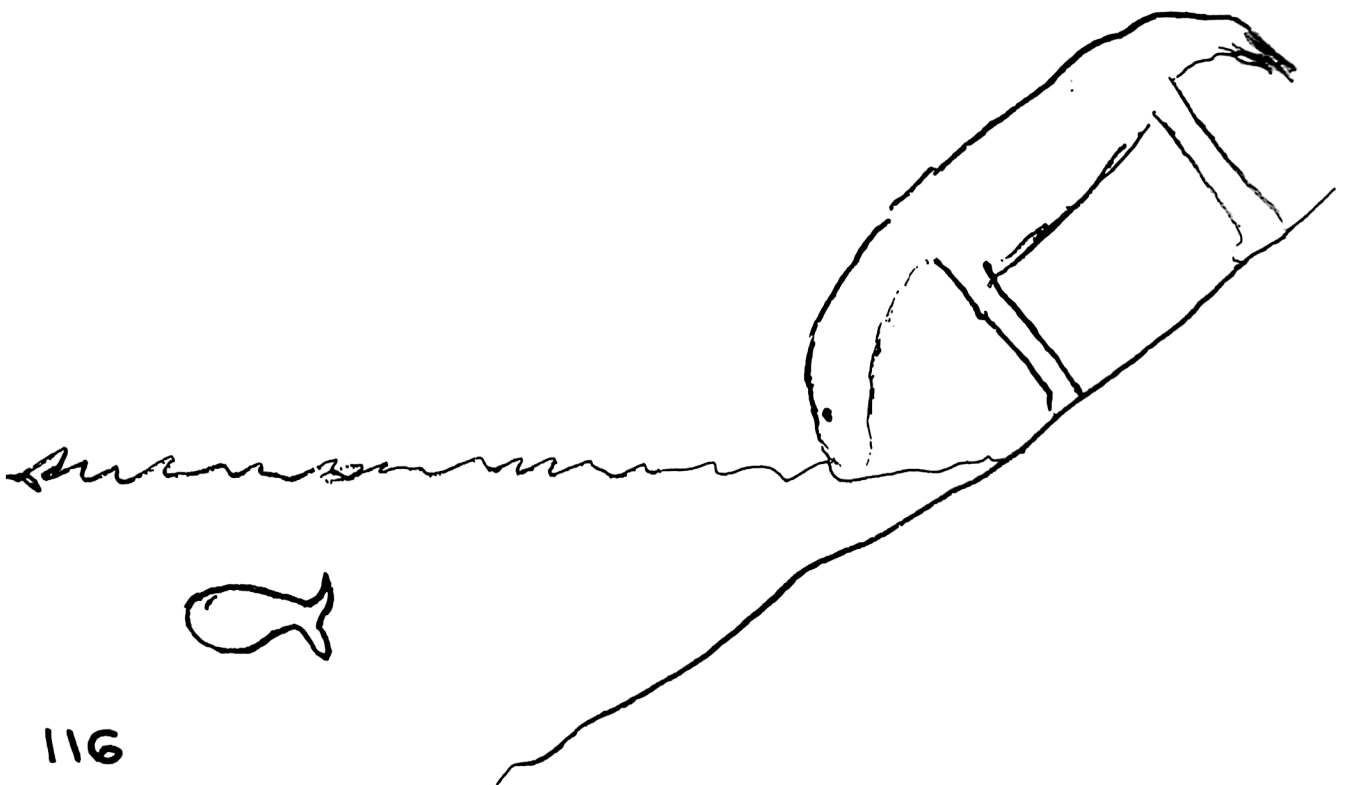
**G**OD SAID "LET THE EARTH  
PRODUCE VEGETATION: SEED-  
BEARING PLANTS..."

- Genesis 1:11-12

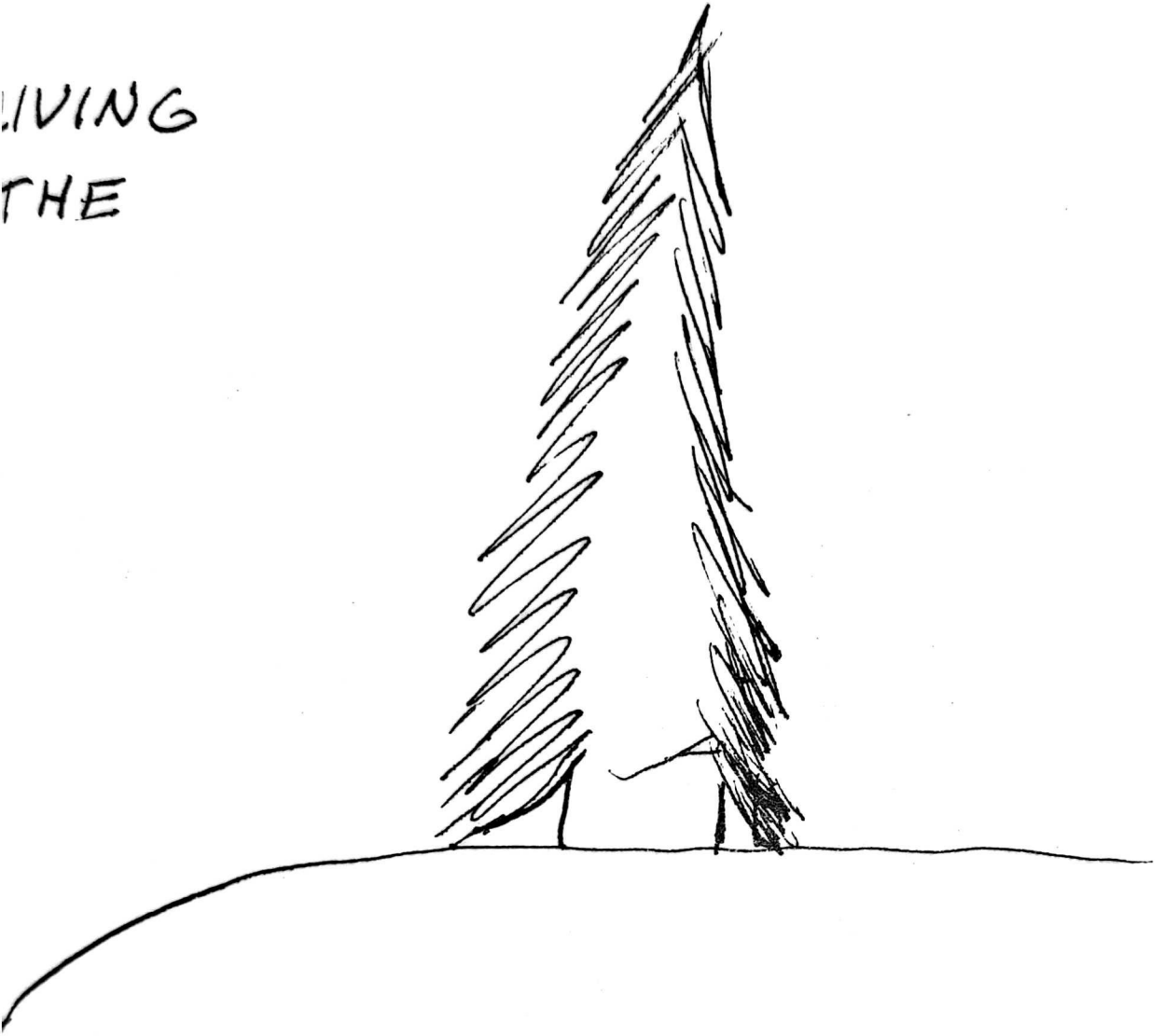


**G**OD SAID "LET THE  
WATERS TEEM WITH  
CREATURES, AND... LET  
EARTH PRODUCE  
EVERY KIND OF  
LIVING CREATURE..

- Genesis 1:20,24



LIVING  
THE



**G**OD SAID "LET US MAKE  
IMAGE IN THE LIK



MAN IN OUR OWN  
NESS OF OURSELVES... "

- Genesis 1:26





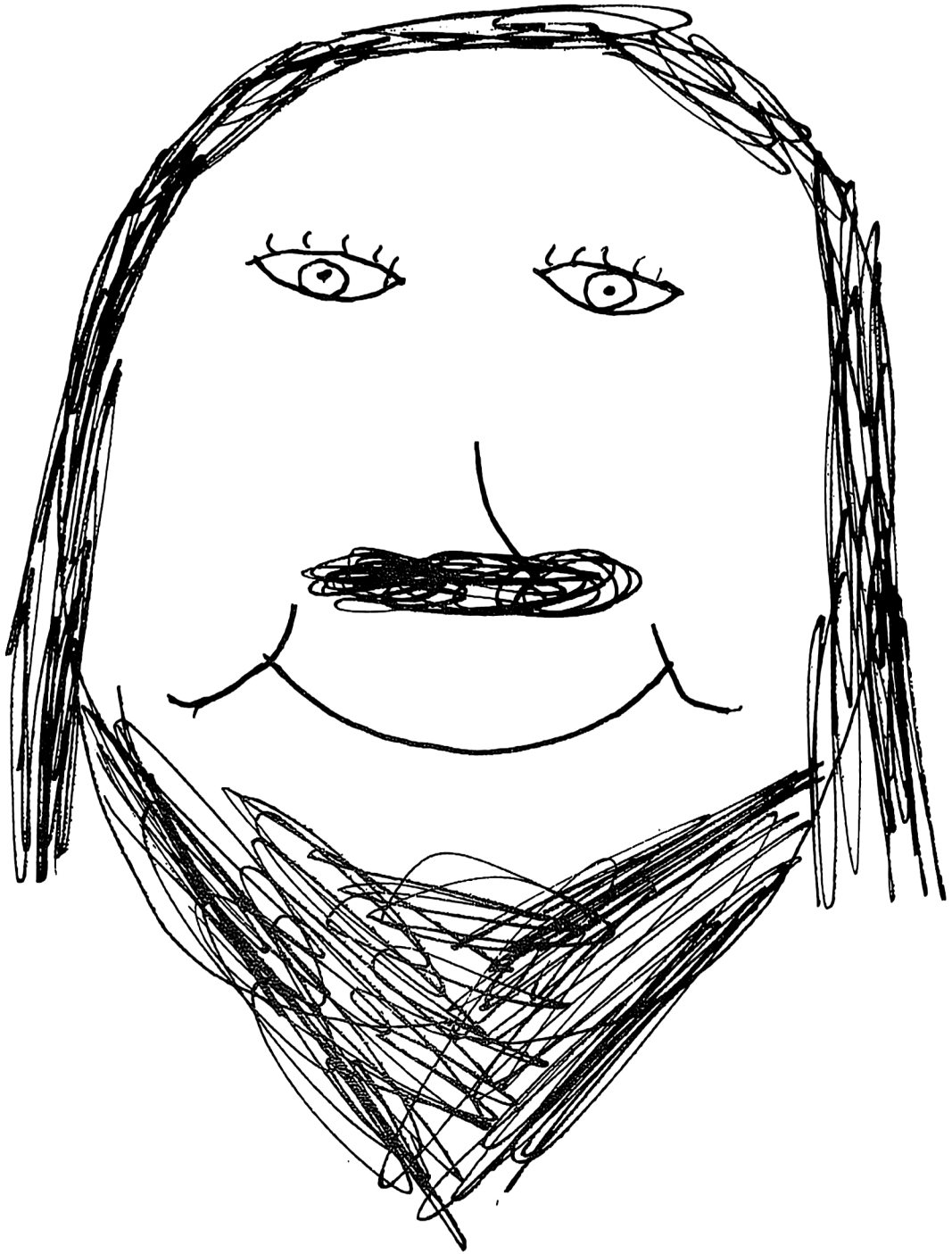
**G**OD SAW ALL HE HAD  
MADE AND INDEED IT  
WAS VERY GOOD.

**T**HE ANGEL OF YAHWEH  
APPEARED TO MOSES IN  
THE SHAPE OF A FLAME  
OF FIRE COMING FROM  
THE MIDDLE OF  
A BUSH...

- Exodus 3:2, 4



God!



**A**ND GOD SAID TO  
MOSES,  
"I AM WHO I AM."

- Exodus 3:14

**Y**AHWEH CAME DOWN ON  
THE MOUNTAIN  
OF SINAI, ON THE  
MOUNTAIN TOP, AND  
YAHWEH CALLED MOSES  
TO THE TOP OF  
THE MOUNTAIN...

- Exodus 19:20

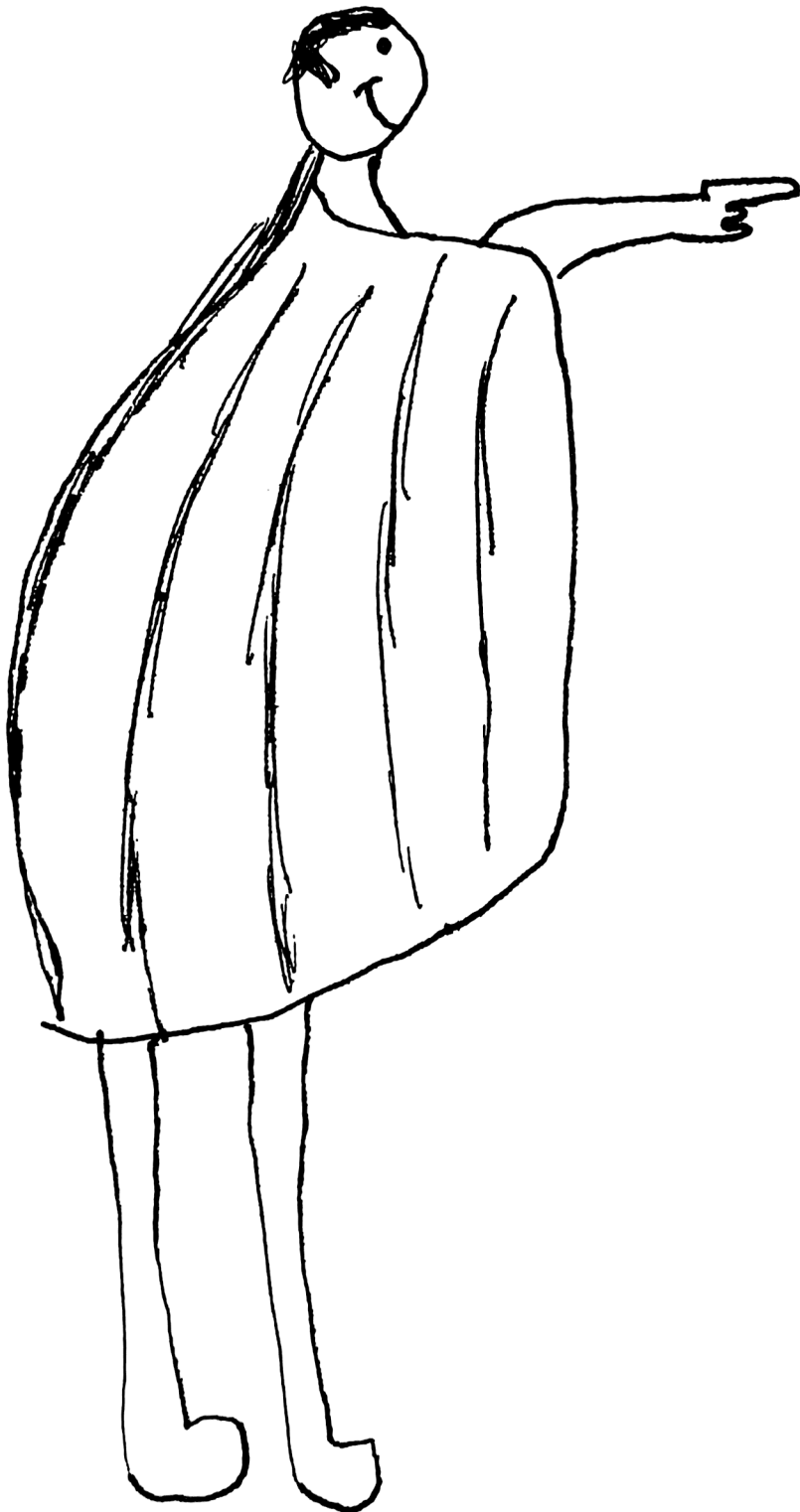




**G**OD... DID NOT FORSAKE  
THEM IN THE WILDERNESS  
THE PILLAR OF CLOUD  
DID NOT LEAVE THEM...

**T**HIS IS THE  
FINGER OF GOD...

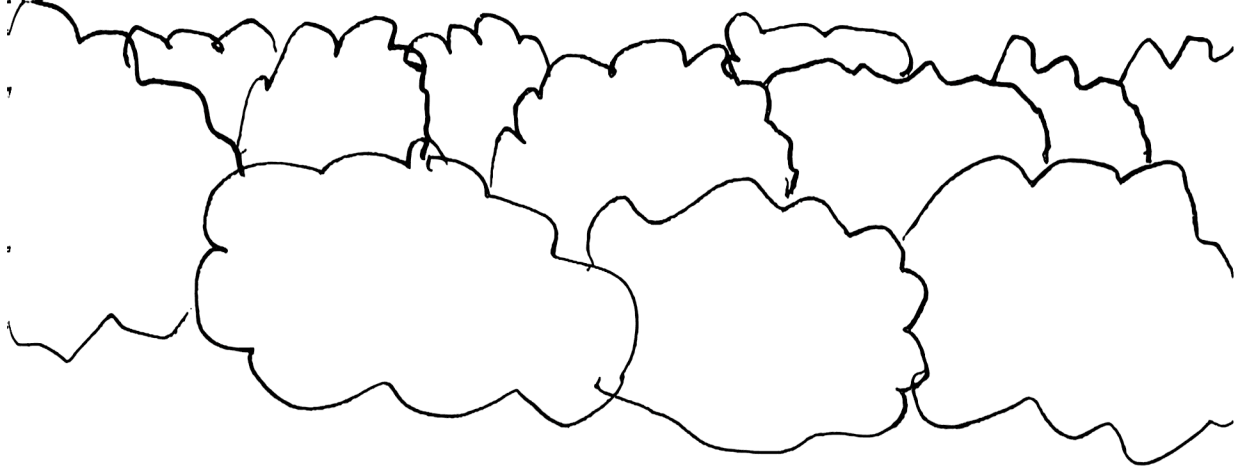
*- Genesis 8:19*





**I**F IT IS THROUGH THE FINGER OF  
GOD THAT I CAST OUT DEVILS, THEN  
KNOW THAT THE KINGDOM OF GOD  
HAS OVERTAKEN YOU.

- Luke 11:20

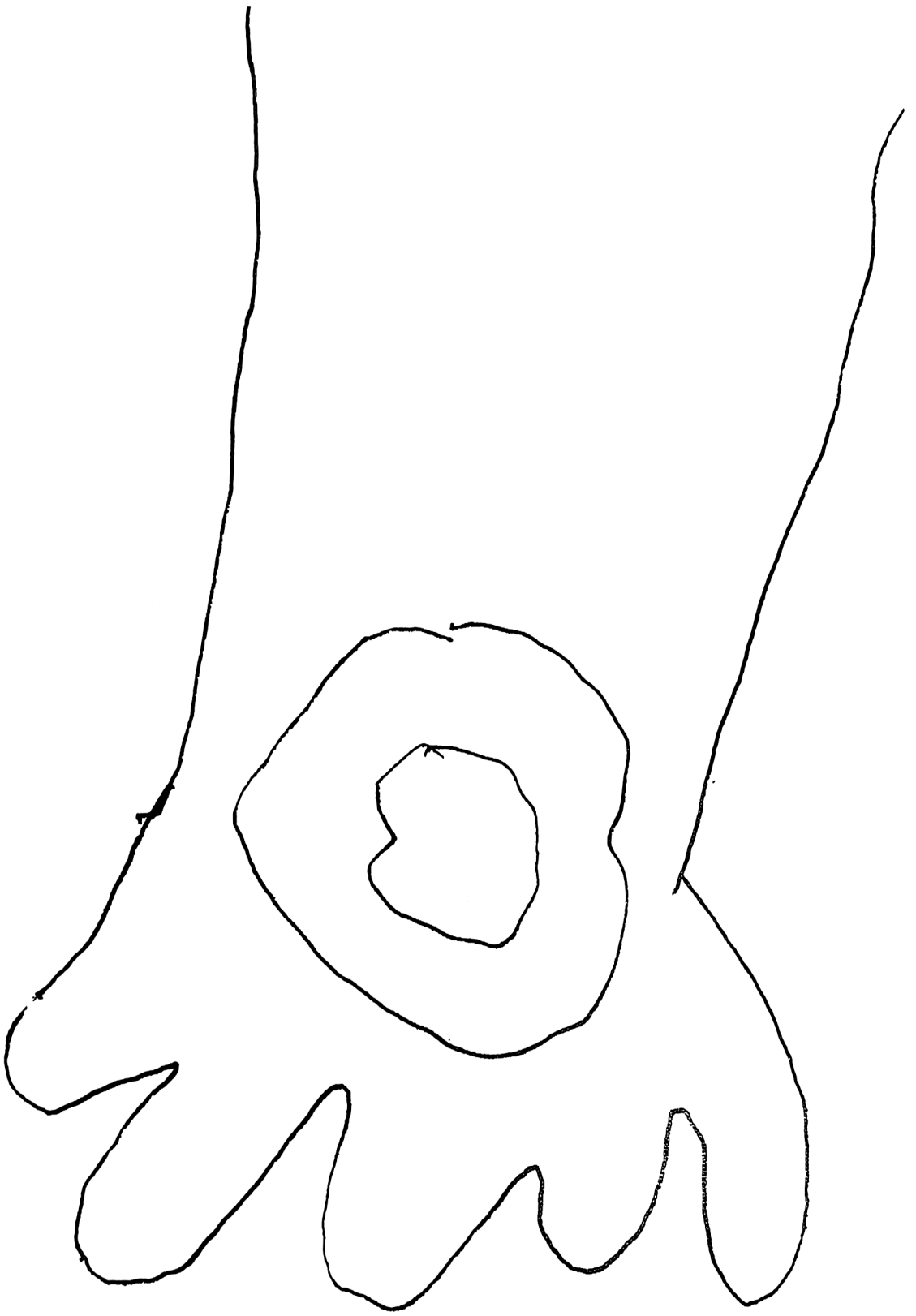


**A** BRIGHT CLOUD  
COVERED THEM WITH  
SHADOW,  
AND FROM THE CLOUD  
THERE CAME  
A VOICE  
WHICH SAID...

-Matthew 17:5



"**T**HIS IS MY SON, THE BELOVED,  
WE ENJOYS MY FAVOR. LISTEN  
TO HIM."



**G**IVE US EACH DAY  
OUR DAILY BREAD...

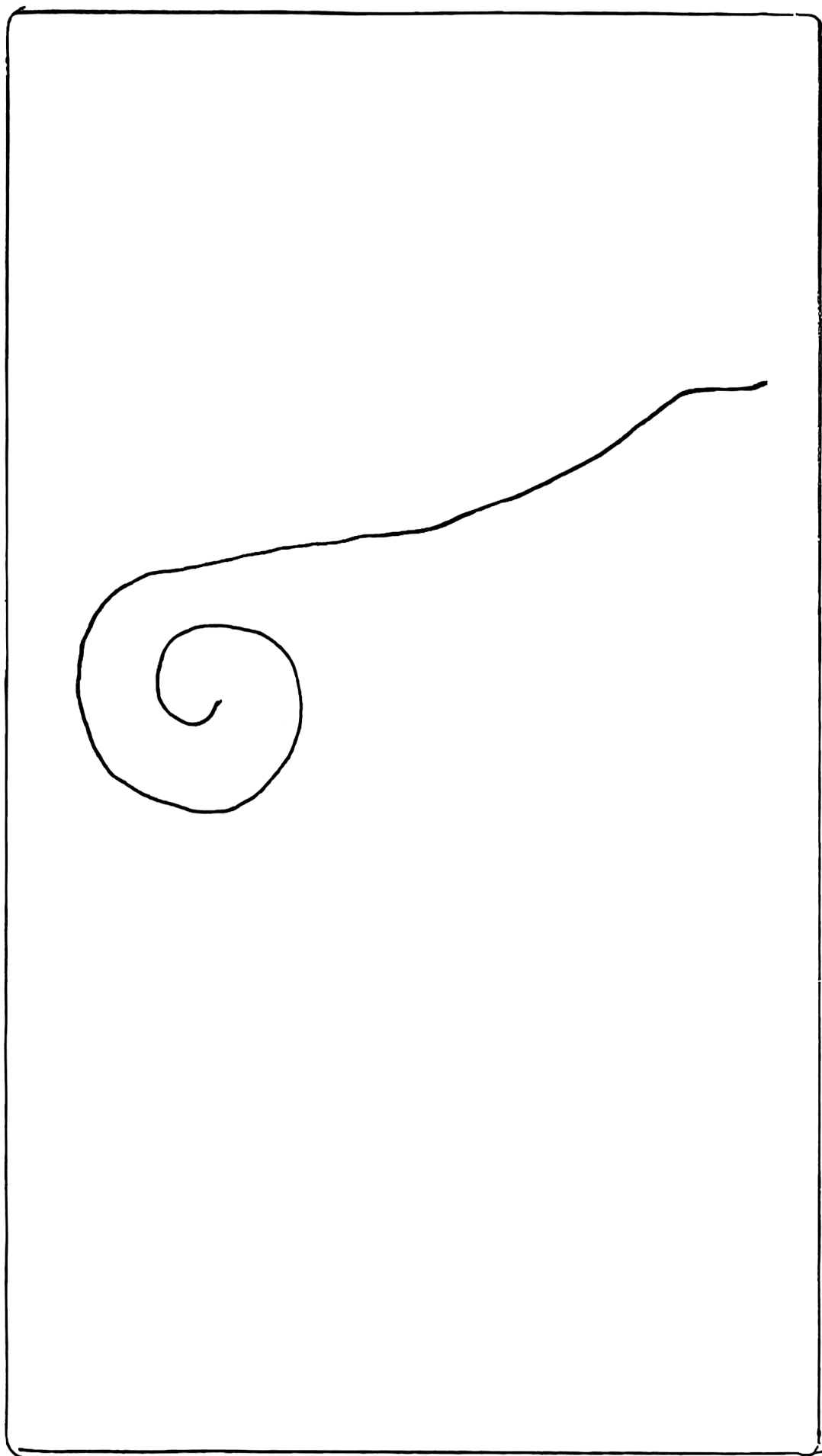
~ Luke 11:3



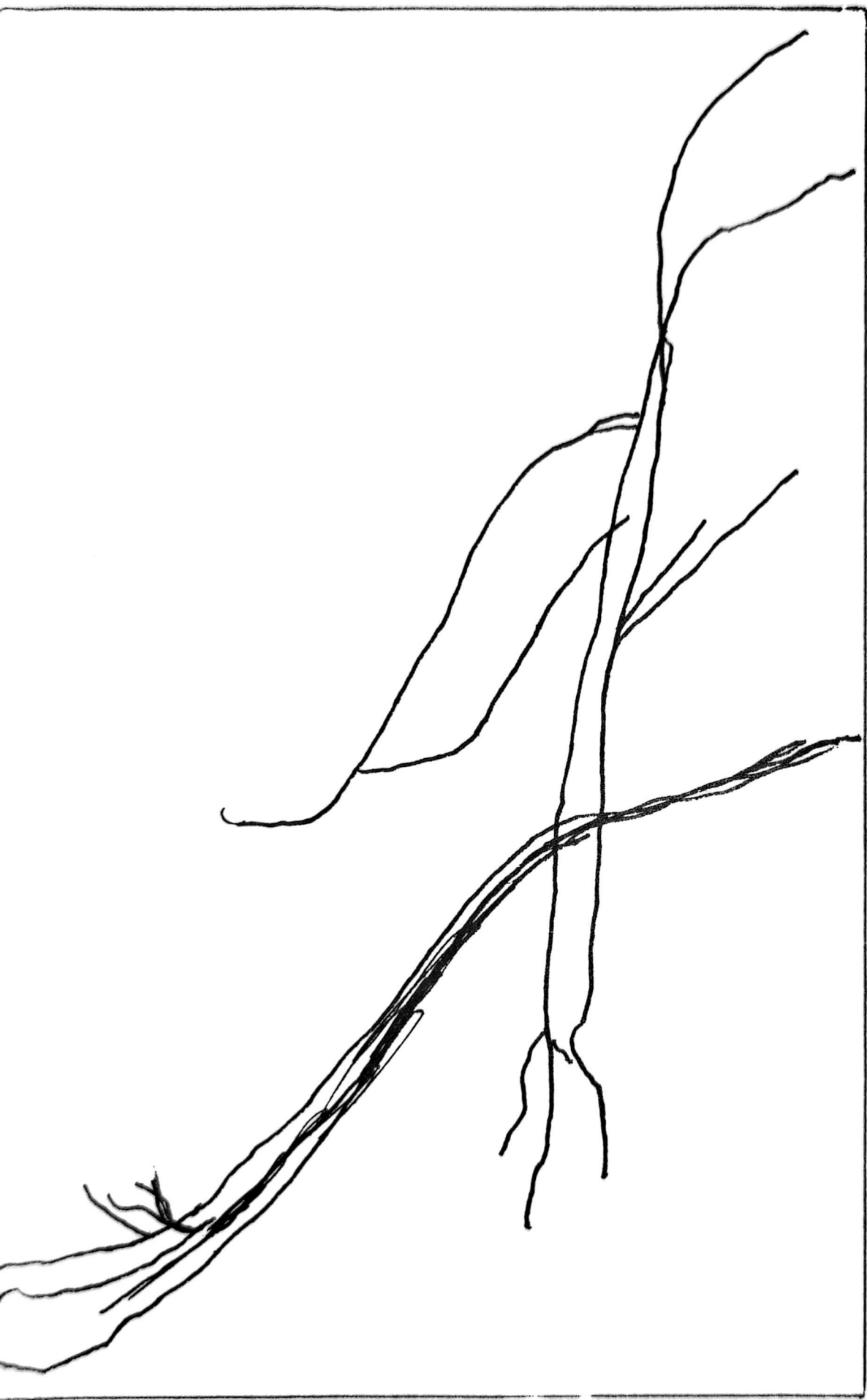
7.

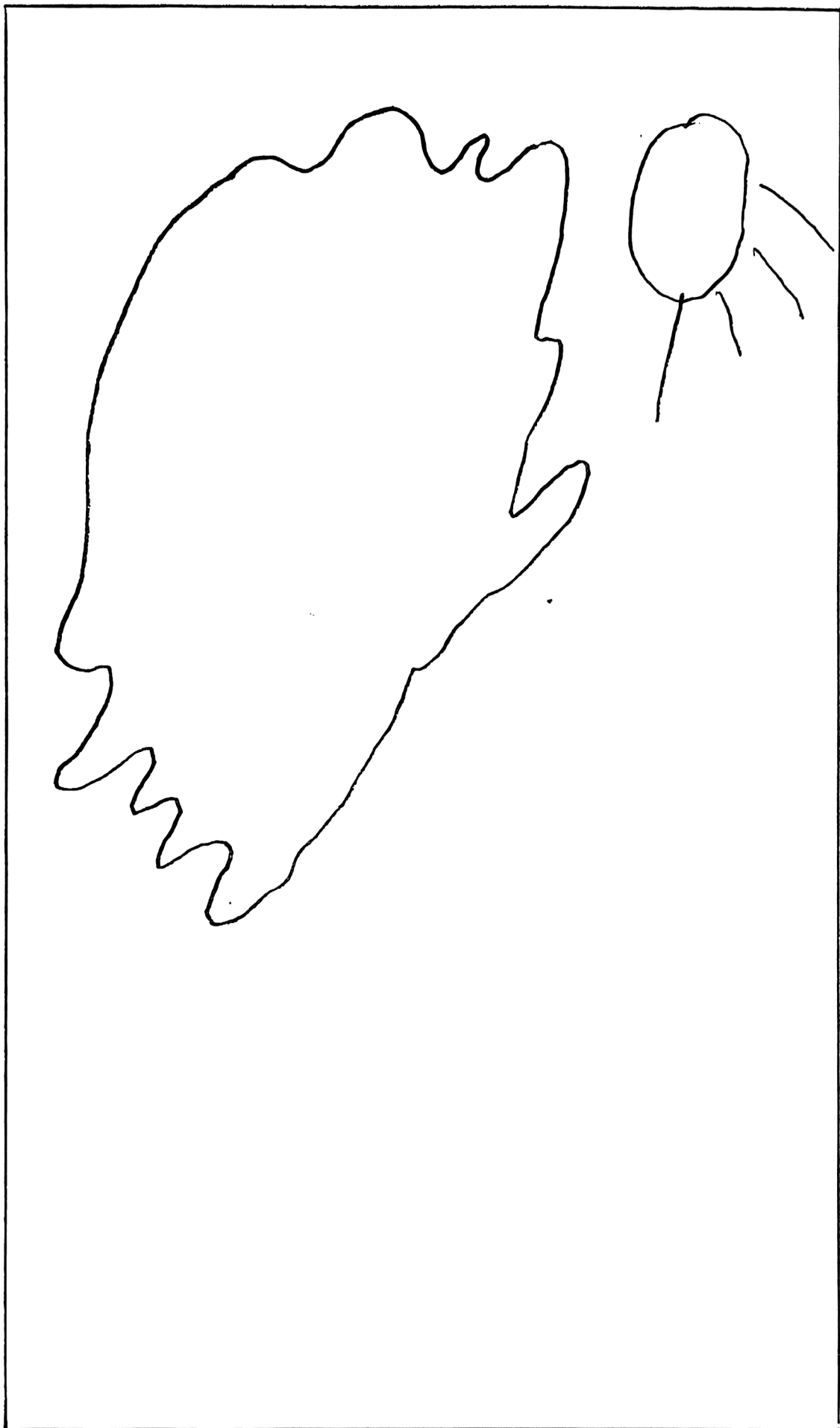
Gods to Ponder

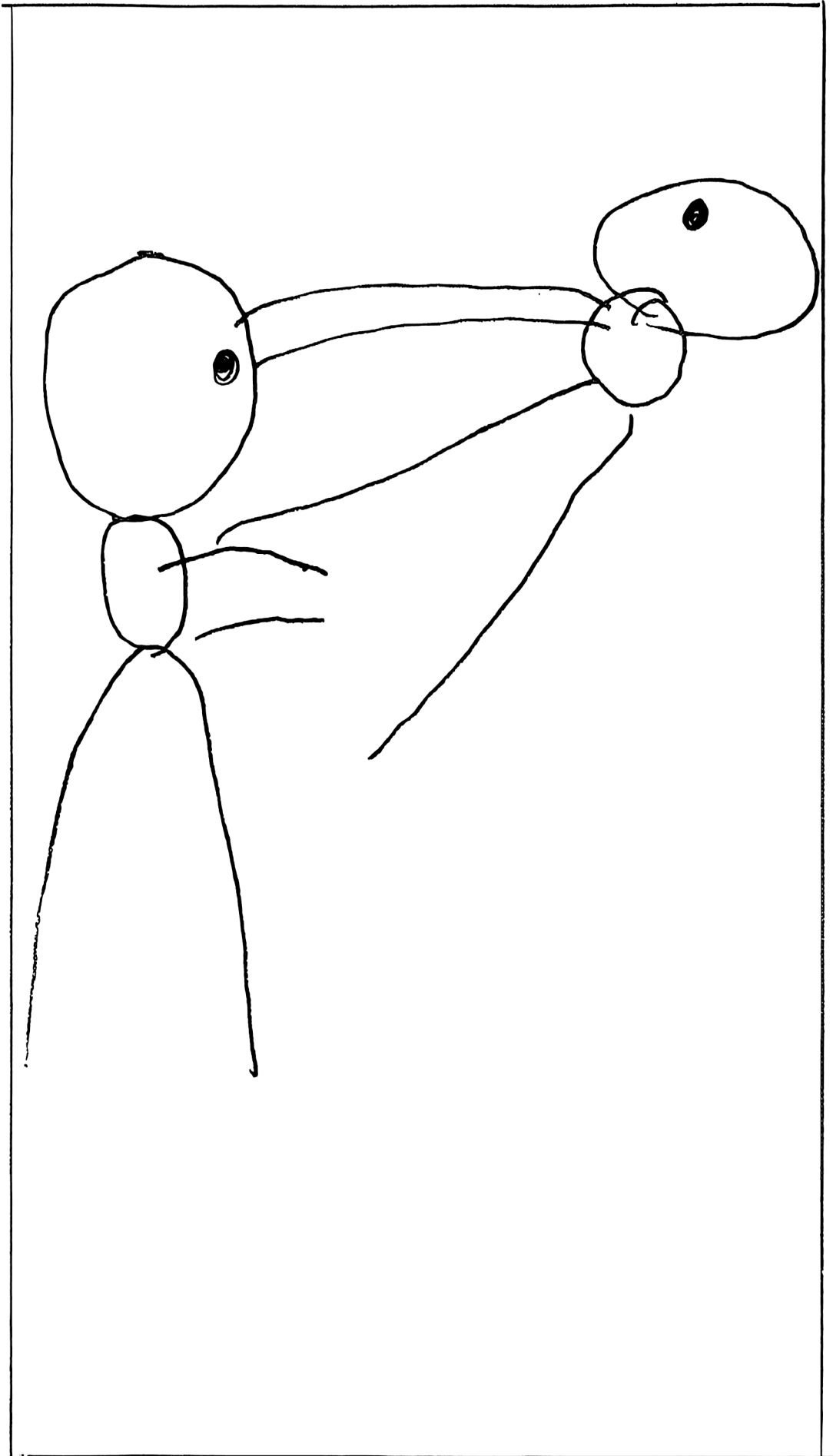




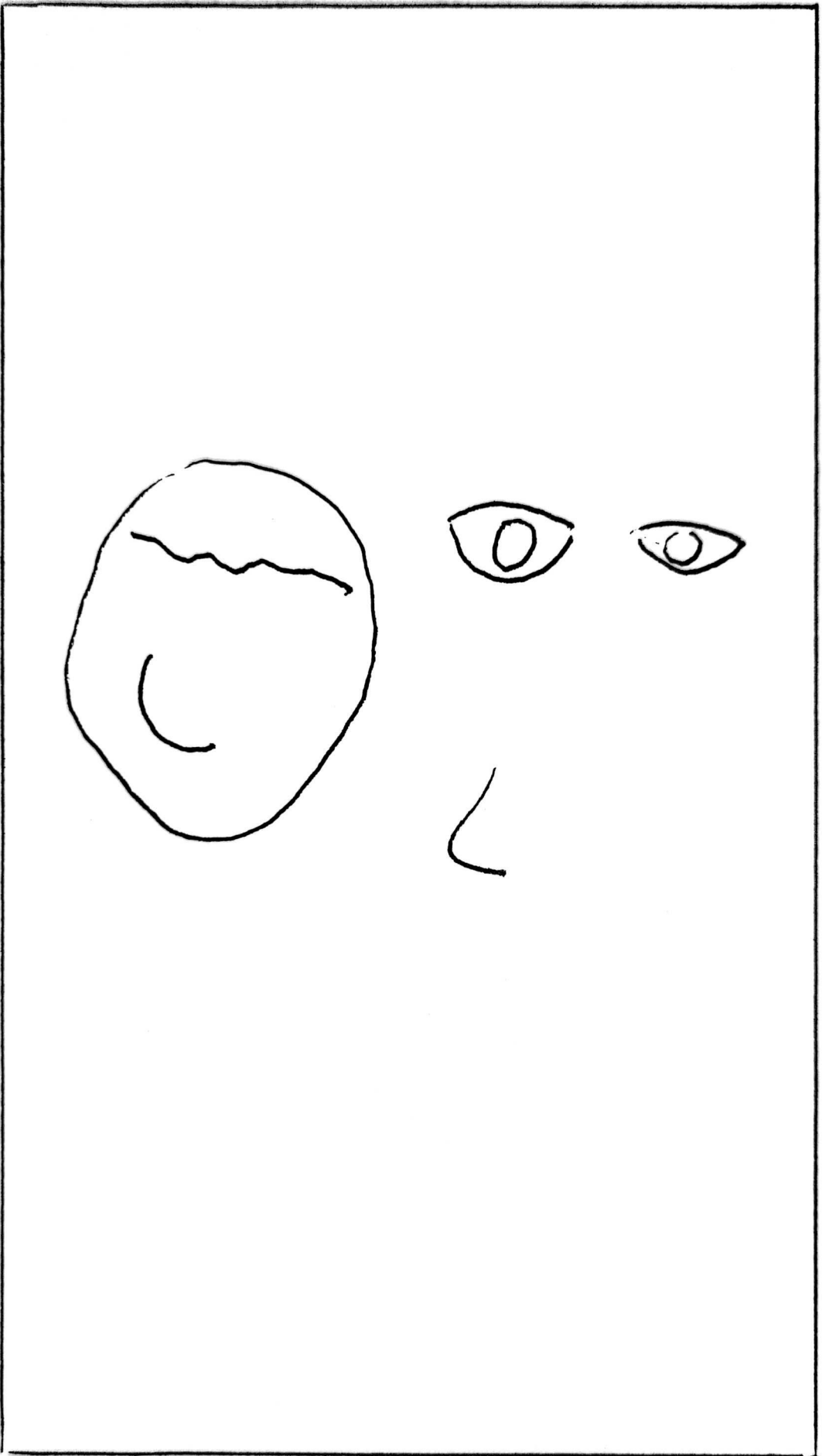




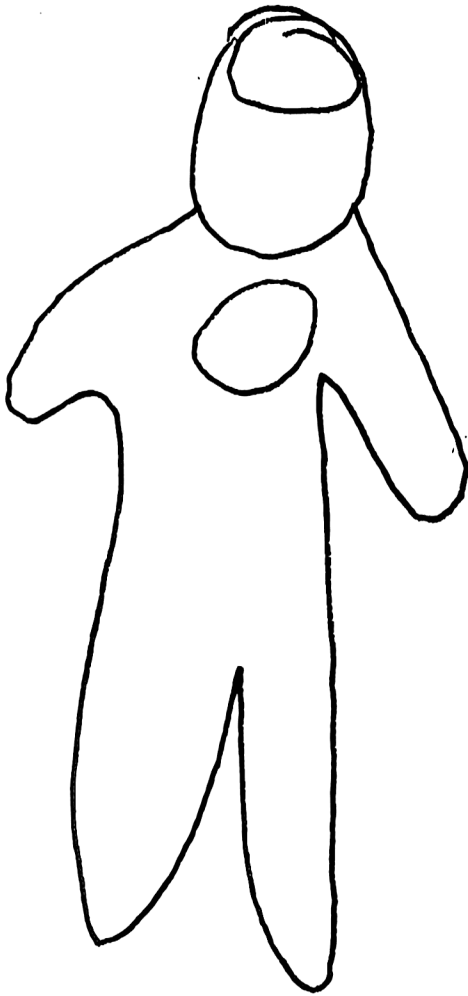






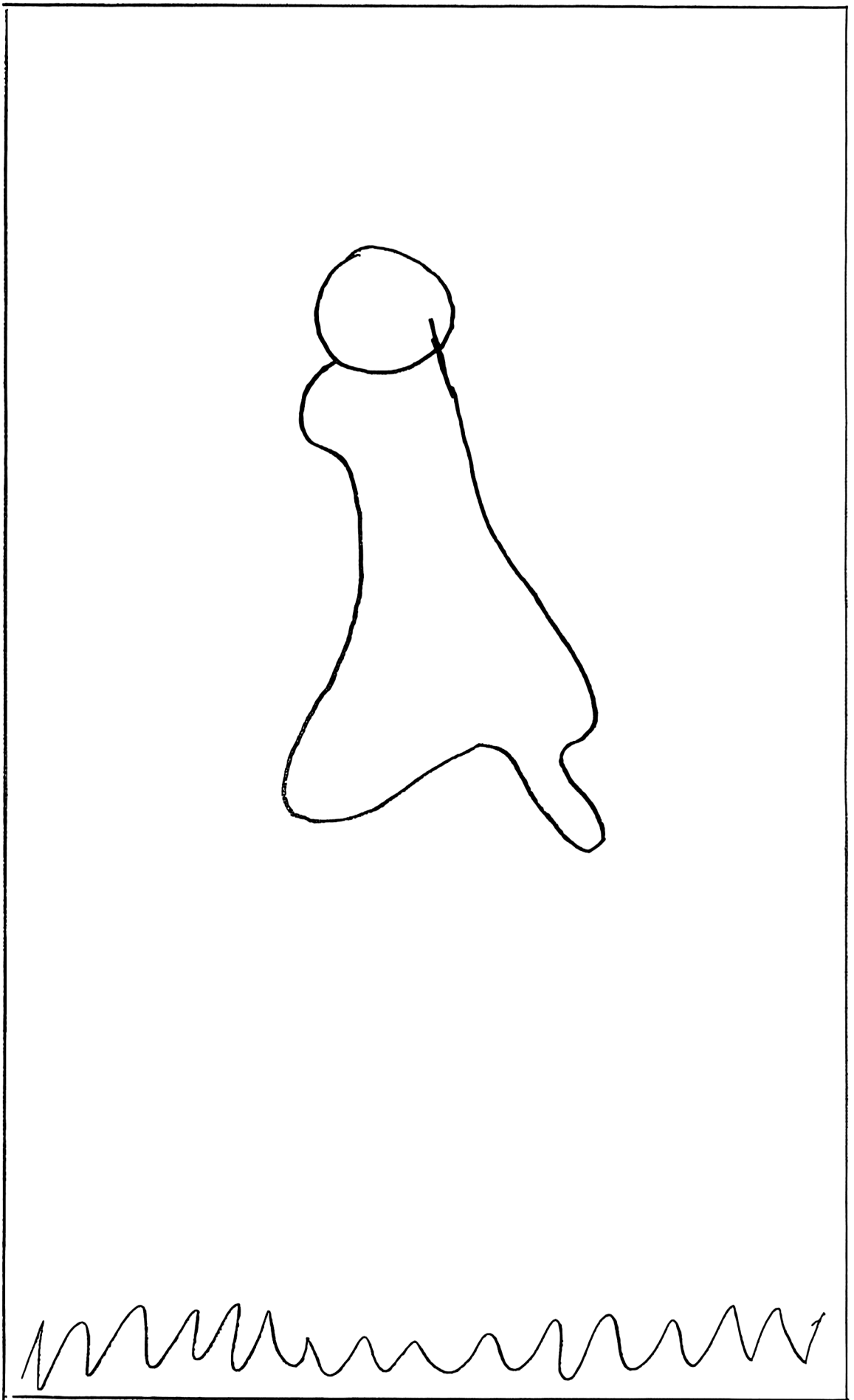


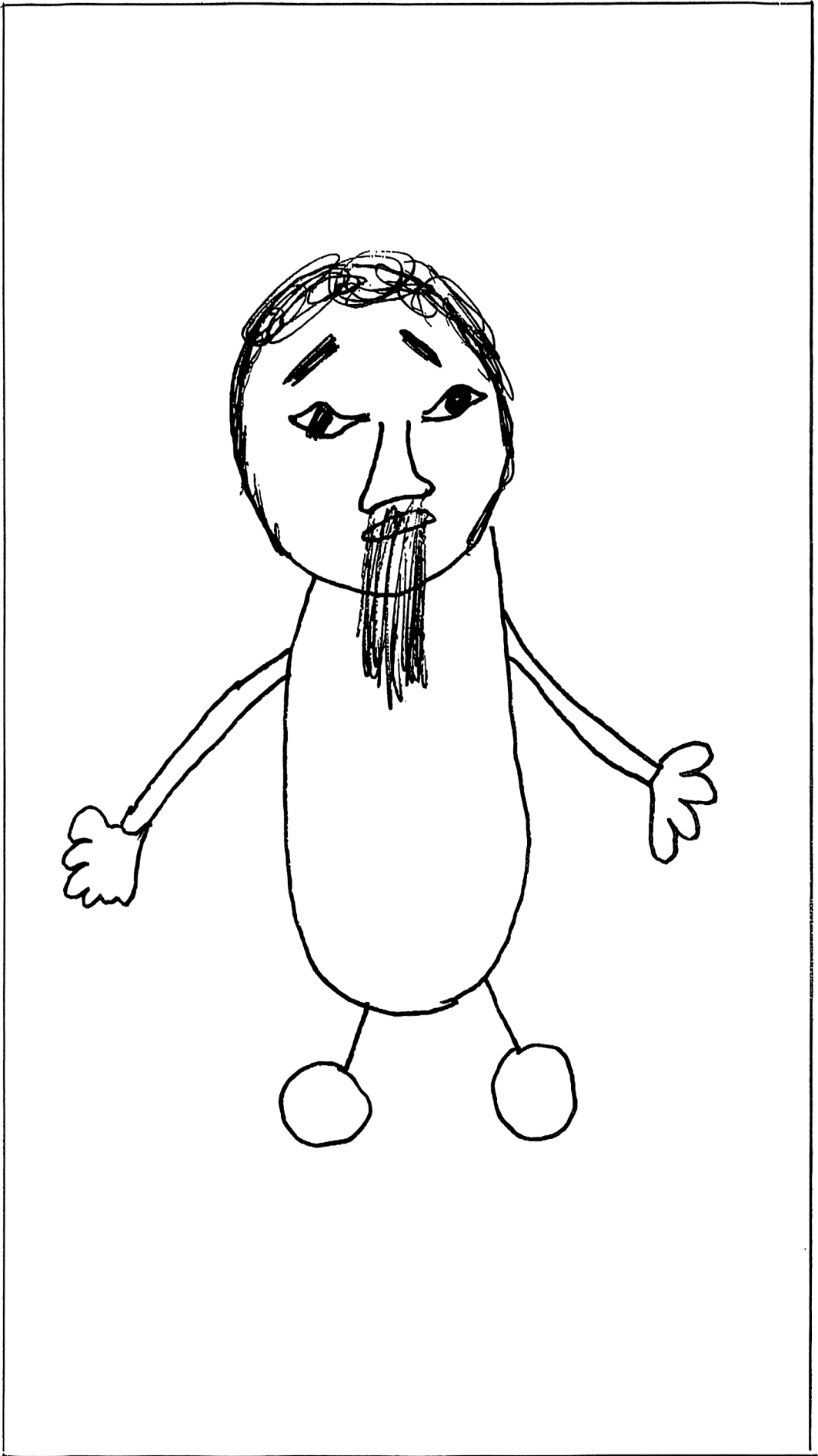


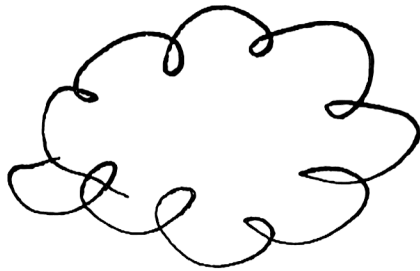
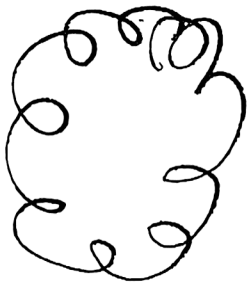


God



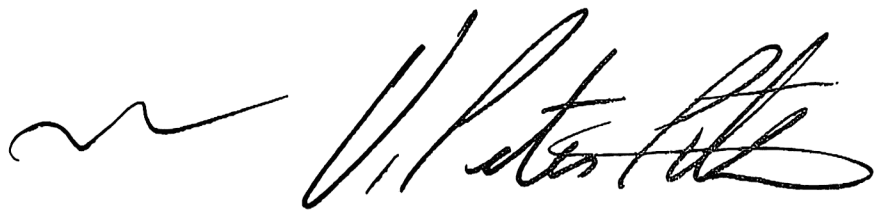






The

End.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "V. Peter Hill". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

WHAT DOES GOD LOOK LIKE?

WHERE DOES GOD LIVE?

WHAT DOES GOD DO ALL DAY LONG?

WHAT DOES GOD WEAR?

FAMOUS PEOPLE GOD LOOKS LIKE

THE BIBLICAL GOD

GODs TO PONDER

Responses to  
“Children’s Pictures of God.”

“A very interesting theme—to far more than active church or synagogue people.”

“You have a truly important, provocative and original book. It has the possibility of great and extensive appeal.”

“I found it delightful.”

“I certainly enjoyed the pictures!”

“I caught my husband looking through the book and he never reads anything but the sports page.”

“Really makes you think!”