

# suzuki beane

written by sandra scoppettone

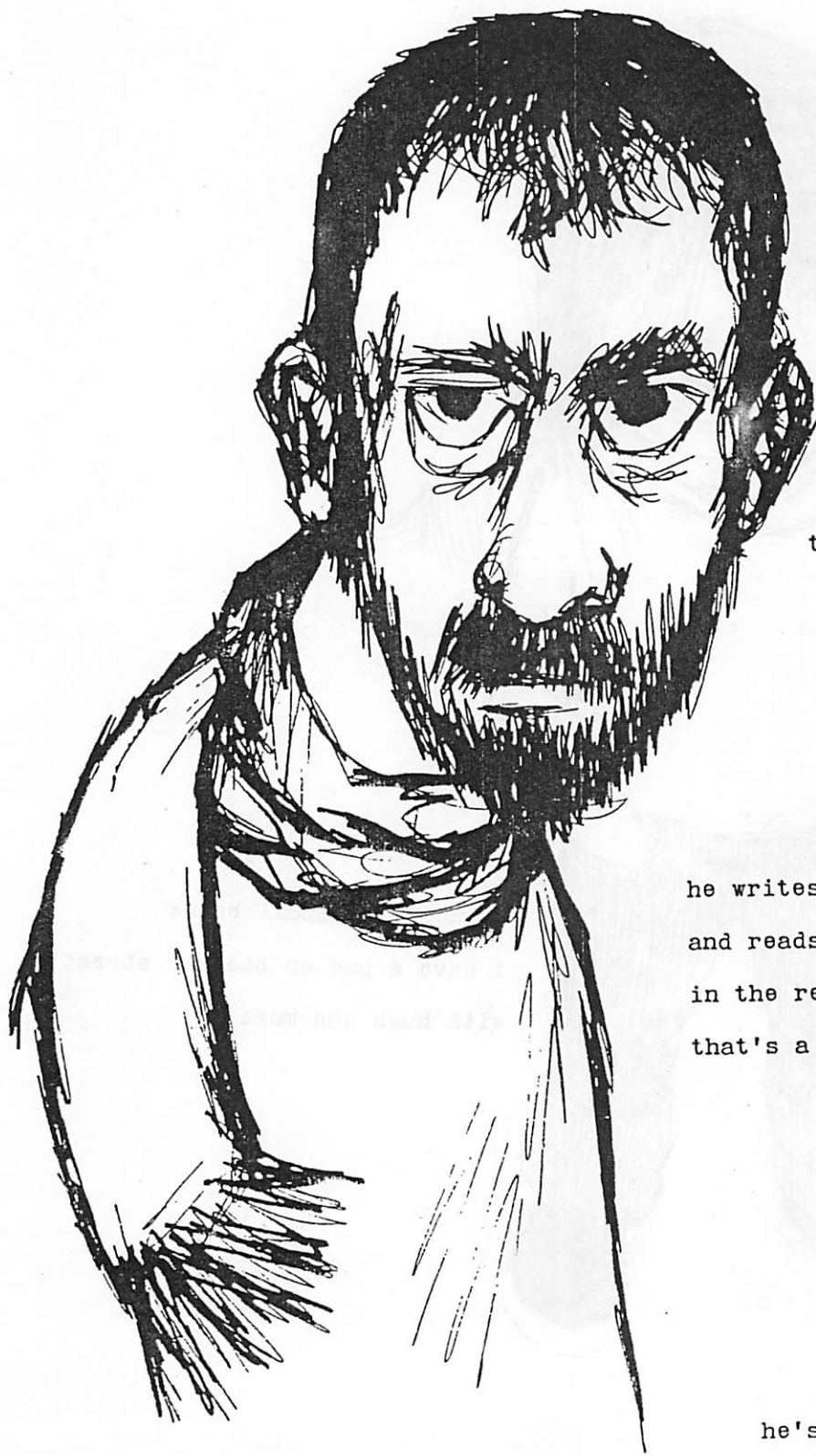
"

drawings by louise fitzhugh

doubleday & company, inc., garden city, new york  
1961



my name is suzuki beane  
i have a pad on bleeker street  
with hugh and marcia



this is hugh----

he writes cool poetry  
and reads it  
in the red dog----  
that's a coffee shop

he's my father



this is marcia----

she's a swingin' chick---

she's my mother----

she makes sculptures out

of tin cans----

parts of cars

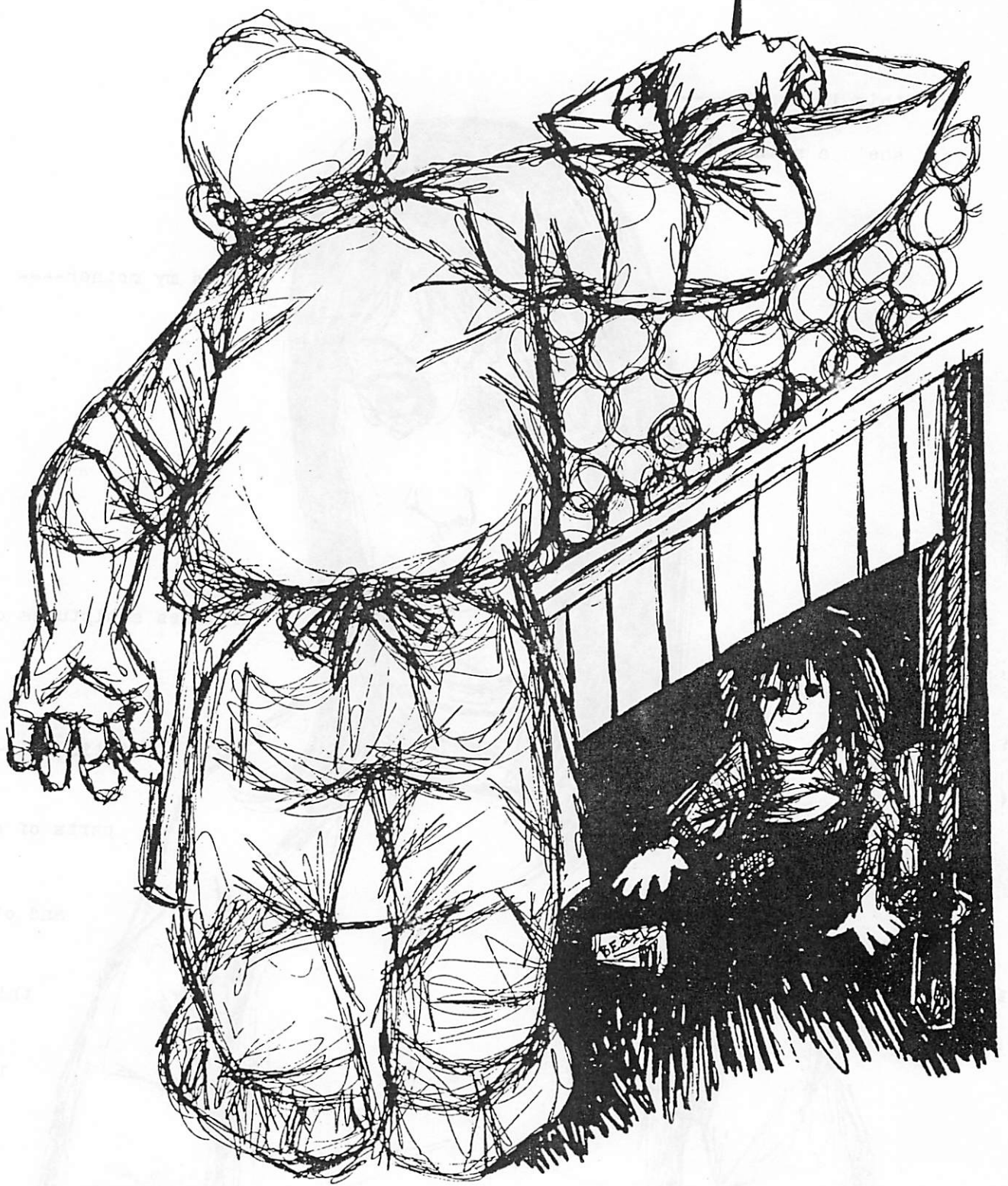
and other

things

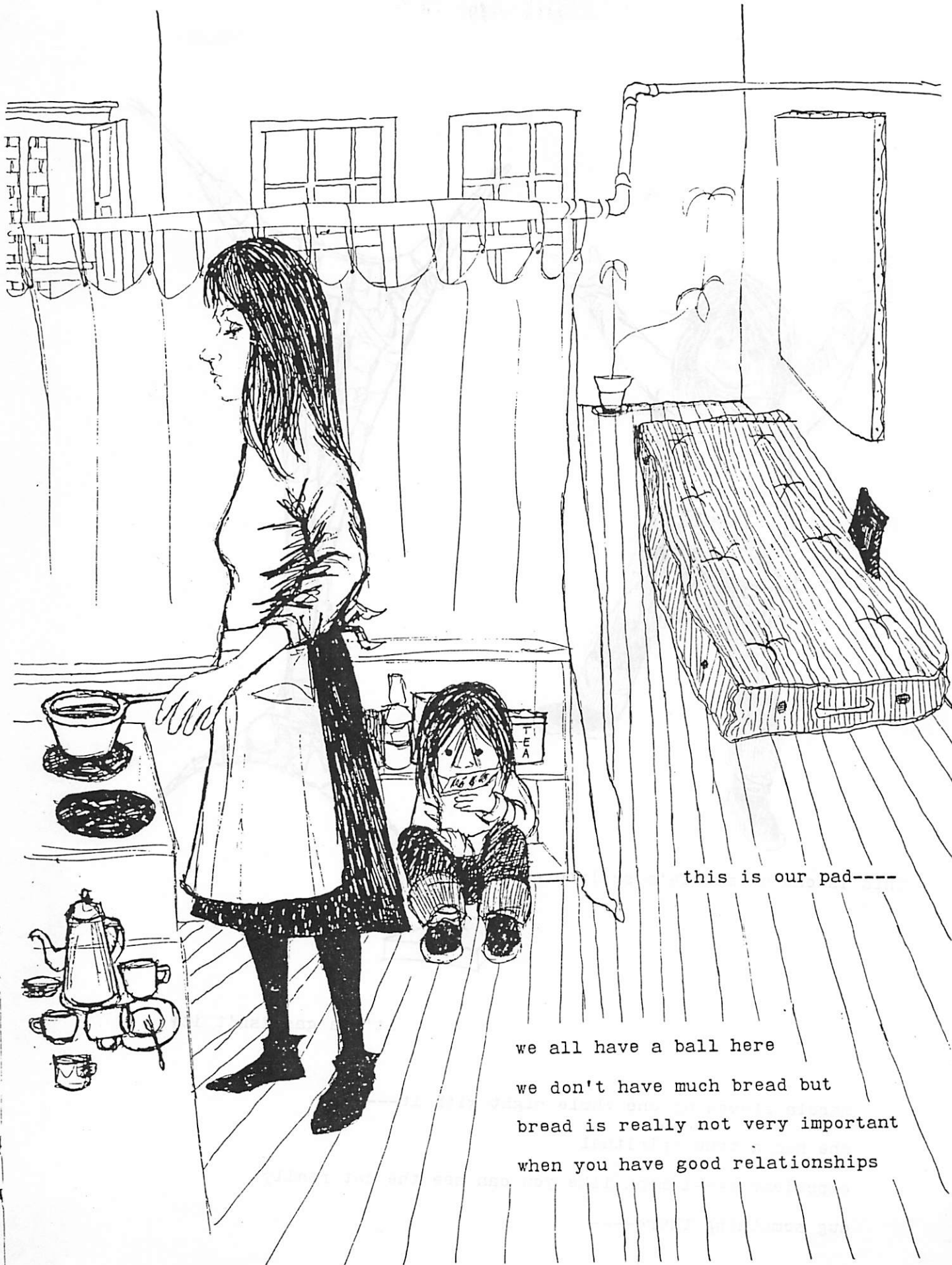
that







i find on bleeker street

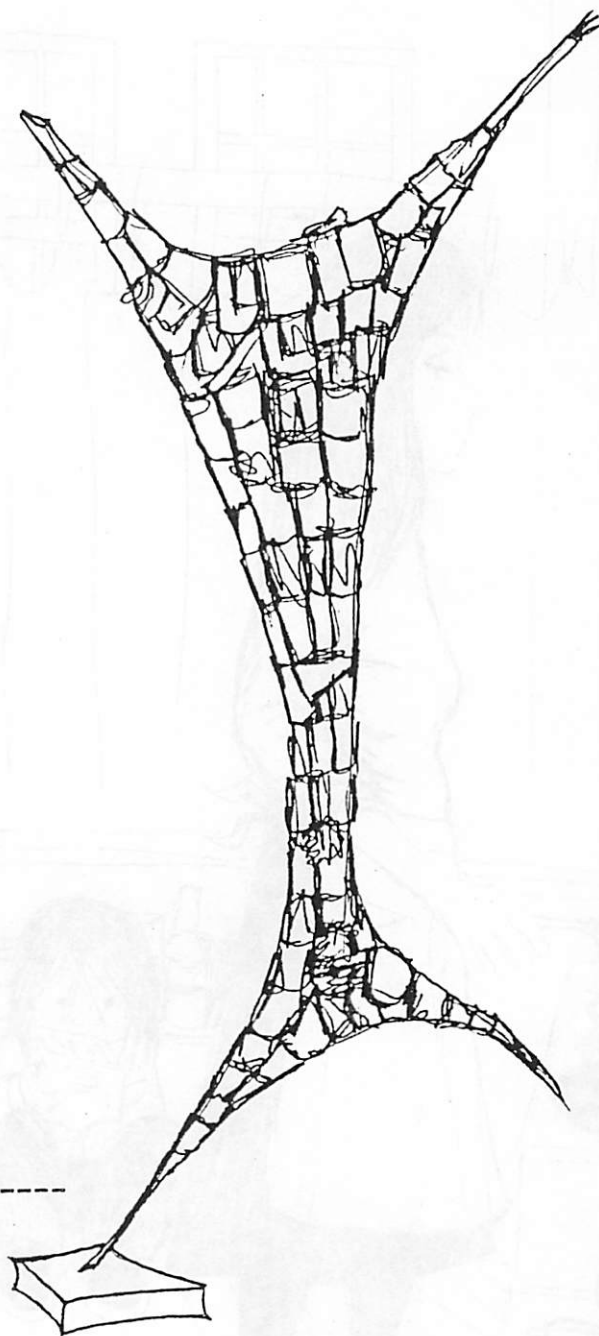


this is our pad----

we all have a ball here  
we don't have much bread but  
bread is really not very important  
when you have good relationships



this is one of marcia's sculptures-----



it's a gas isn't it?

marcia stayed up one whole night with it-----

she had a true spiritual

experience-----i mean like you can see the cat really

dug something there-----



i think this would be a crazy spot to print one  
of hugh's poems----  
(he'll flip----like he's never  
been published before)

In

The

Beginning

There WAS an end

So like man----

Cain didn't MURDER

His crazy brother----

The

Whole

Thing was a

FANTASTICSUICIDE.

Hugh Beane

i take after hugh mostly----

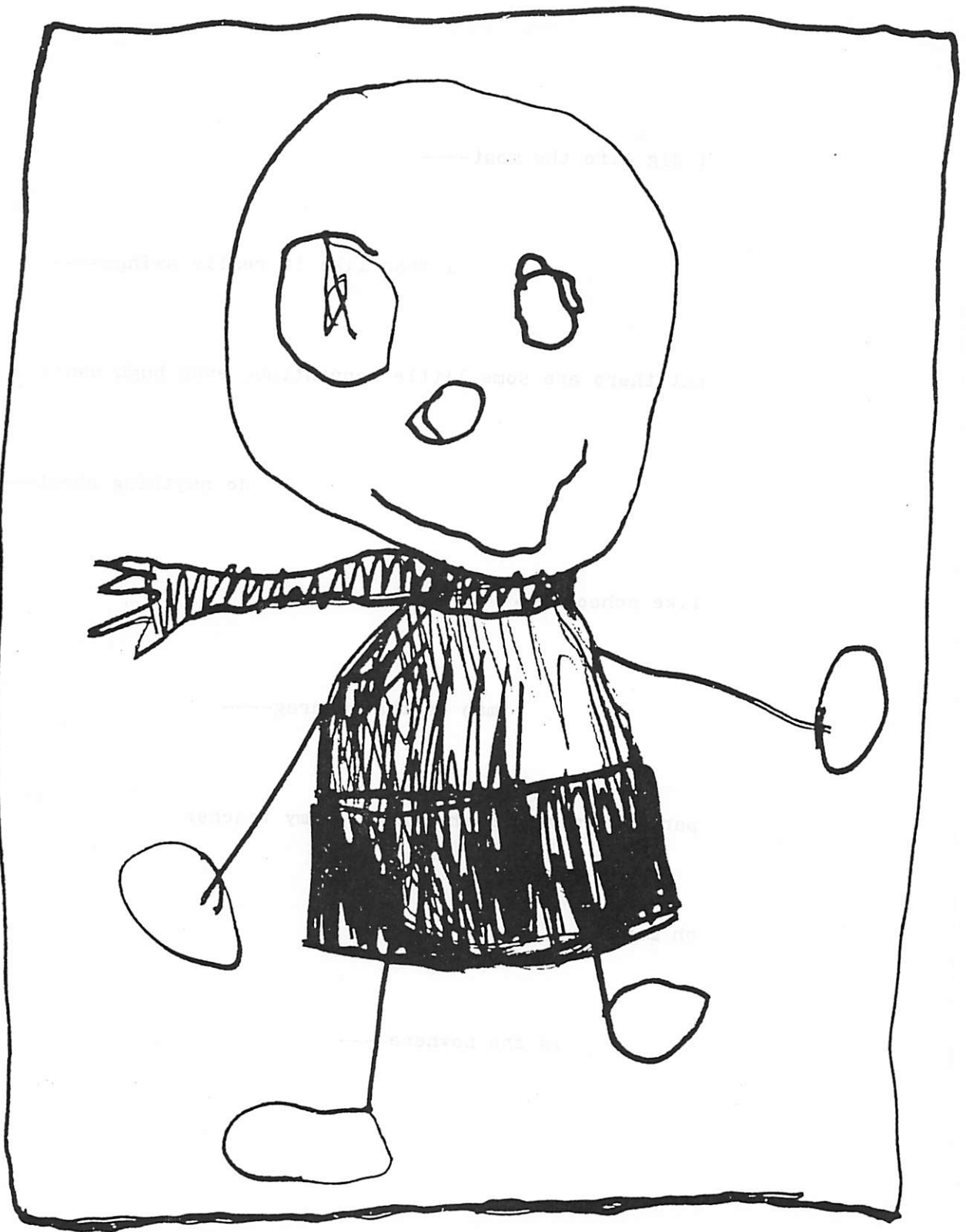
i mean i write----

but some of marcia swings in me----

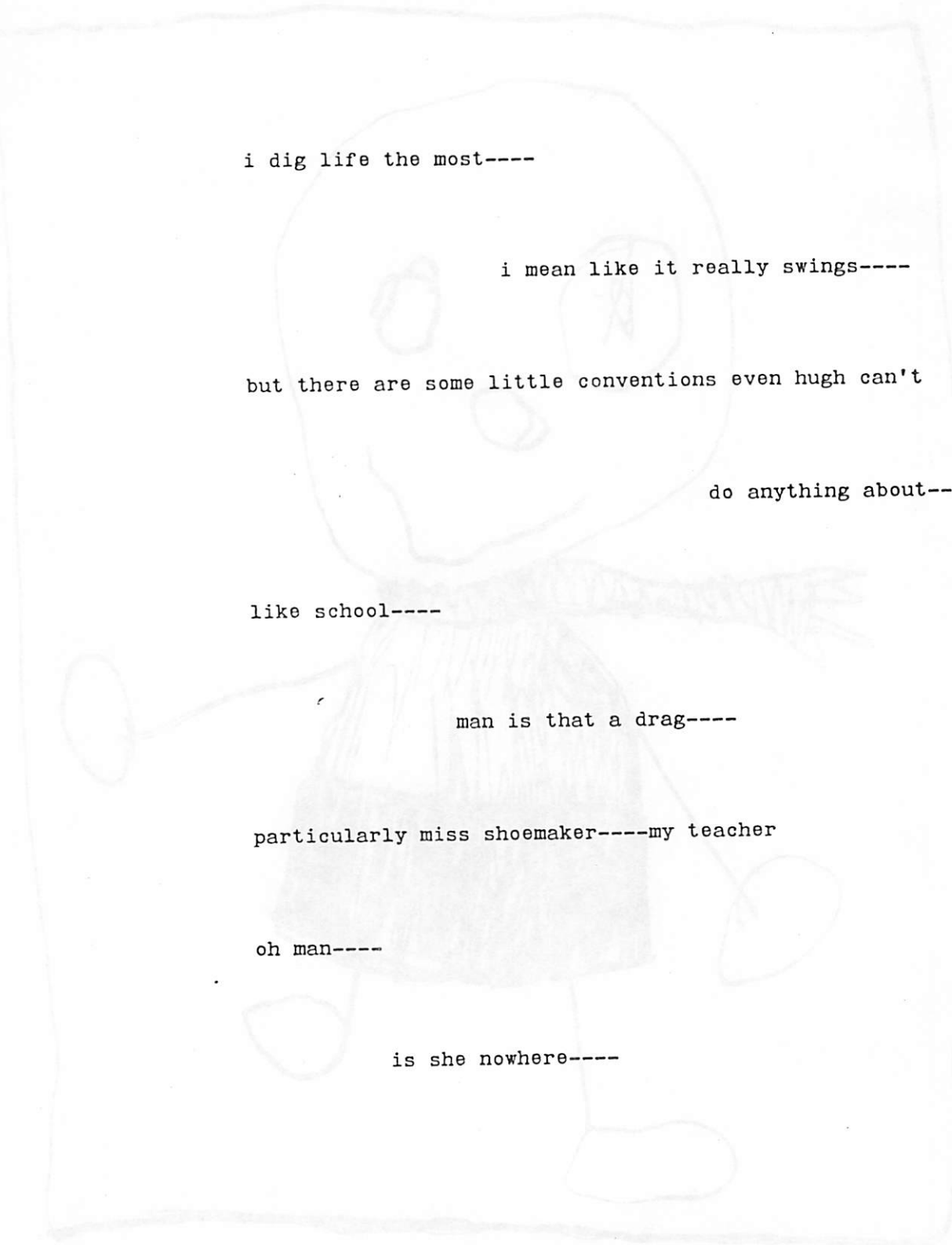
i paint too----

this is one of my latest paintings----

marcia thinks it's too representational----







i dig life the most----

i mean like it really swings----

but there are some little conventions even hugh can't

do anything about----

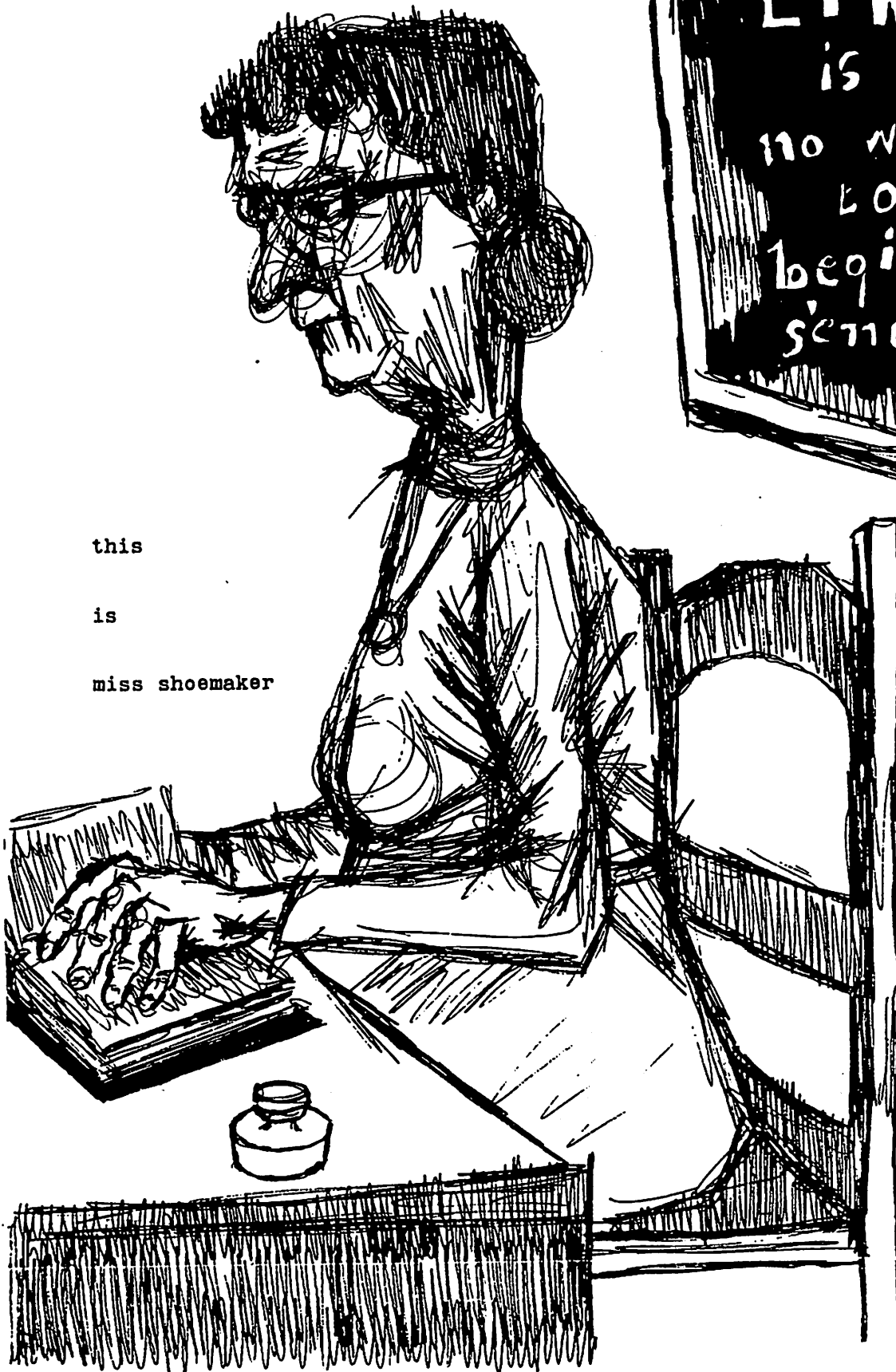
like school----

man is that a drag----

particularly miss shoemaker----my teacher

oh man----

is she nowhere----



this

is

miss shoemaker

LIKE  
is  
no way  
to  
begin a  
sentence

a

slow

chick

if

i

ever

met

one

then

there's

this goofball

in my class----

henry martin

(this is him

reading

the latest

dr. seuss)

he is

square

personified





the other day i asked him what he thought of jack kerouac----



you know what henry did----

he looked at me like this



well-----

there's

a lot of other squares



in that class



too-----



like they're always doing draggy things



man it is so meaningless

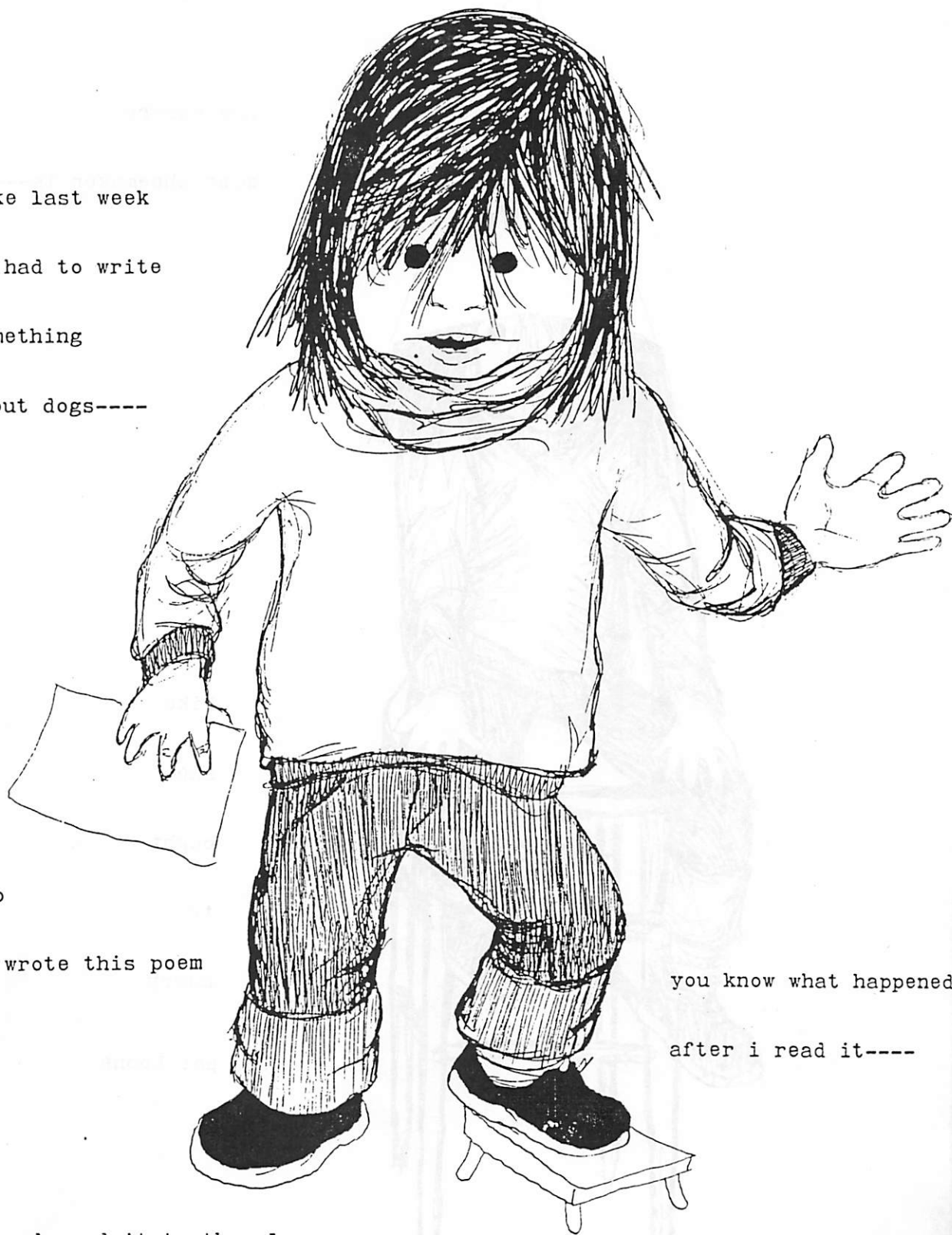
school is a real hang up----

like last week

we had to write

something

about dogs----



so

i wrote this poem

you know what happened

after i read it----

and read it to the class----



this proves

how square

miss shoemaker is----



like

she

ought

to

marry

pat boone

this was the poem:

Like we all know about DOGS

With their crazy FOUR legs

And with that wild TAIL

And we PET them and things

But who cares about FOUR legs

And a TAIL when all they do

Is -----.\*

\*the publishers are a bit square themselves





needless to say nobody dug the poem

-----but hugh thought it was great-----so

he took me to the red dog that night and let me read it there



the next day henry asked me to accompany

him on an adventure or two----as he put it----

----the first stop was to be a dancing school

he went to on wednesday afternoons----some wild adventure----

i have to admit i was sort of paniky-like when

he said it was on e. 64th street----i mean like i'd

never been above 14th street----and worse than that i didn't

know anyone who had----

all at once a part of me

hated henry

for

that----

then the worst came----

henry said we'd have to take the subway

i'd heard about them--

--seen the signs--

--but never been on one----

well--i couldn't let him know i was afraid----

so down we went







a train came in mightier than a ginsberg poem--

--and then we were on it



i held on to henry's jacket and all kinds of cats were pushing on us

so i could hardly breathe--

--man--

what henry miller could have made of that scene

henry made me hip to the fact that the money

his mother gave him for taxis to

dancing school he saved for comic books

she wouldn't let him have----

after changing subways

and

walking a few blocks

we finally got to the

dancing school

when henry opened the door

the first person i saw was----

miss caroline perfect----

the teacher----

well this chick was really way out----

i mean like out of this century----

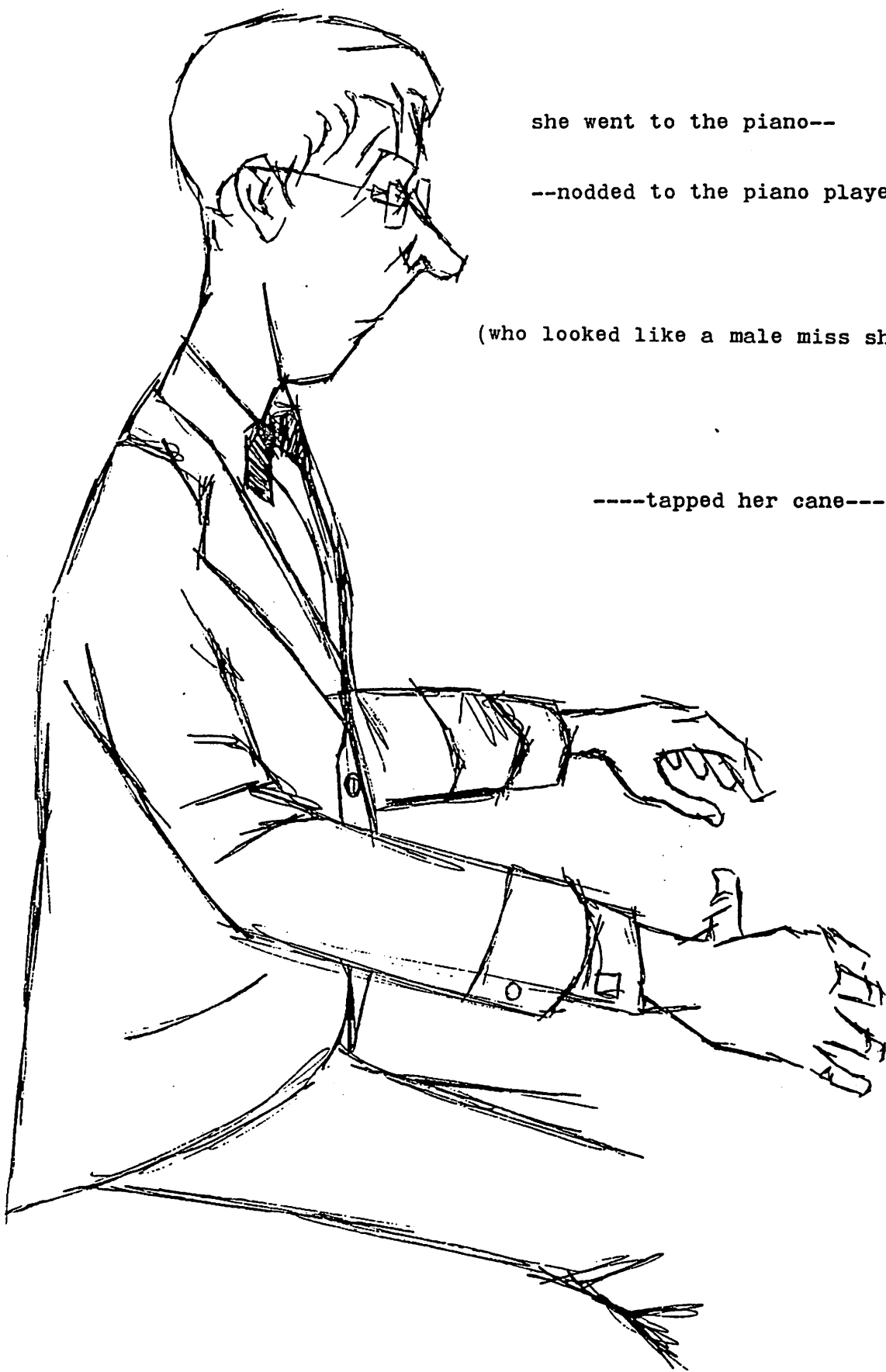
henry introduced us----

then she quickly showed me a seat on the

sidelines----







she went to the piano--

--nodded to the piano player

(who looked like a male miss shoemaker)

-----tapped her cane-----

then all these funny looking cats

took partners

and began to dance



well----

i could hardly keep from breaking up----

i mean you should have dug that bit----

it was hard to tell who was dragging who around the floor----

but man----

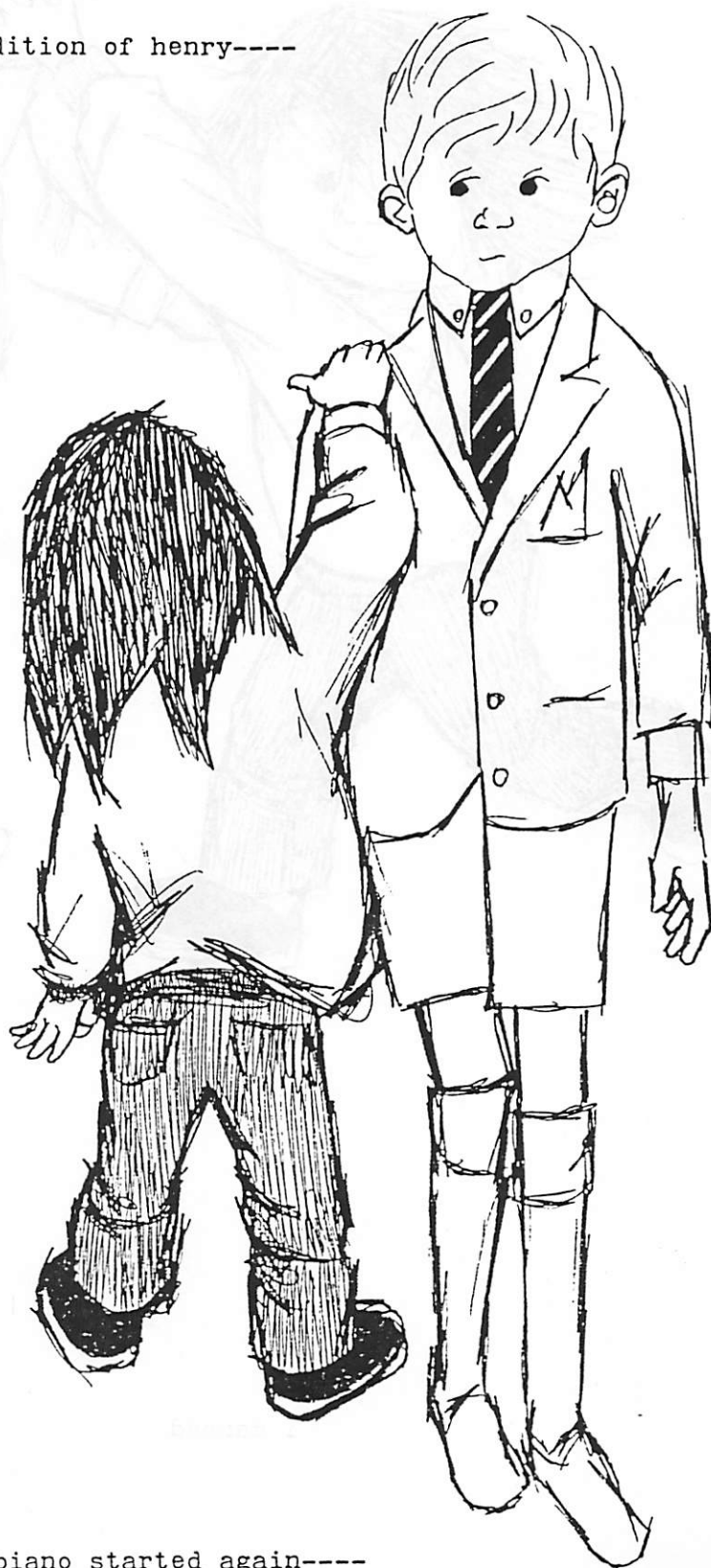
that's what they were doing----

and like the best part was the way they were dressed----

like it was some kind of outer space ball----

when that dance was over i grabbed this boy who was just a taller

edition of henry----



----and when the piano started again----



i danced





like dancing is the swingiest and i didn't want these cats

to miss out----so i showed them----i made my own music----man----i mean

every cat should make his own music----so i said out loud----



go----suzuki----go----



then



i felt this thing around my neck----

-----it was caroline perfect's cane-----



i ducked out of that and----

grabbed henry----

we're splitting the scene----i yelled----

and we cut out



outside i flipped remembering miss perfect's face----

henry just stood there

until i stopped laughing----



then he said----

oh suzuki----

why did you do that----

how will i ever go back----

i asked him if he really wanted to go back----

he smiled sort of quiet-like and shook his head

no----

we both laughed then----





henry took us downtown in a cab----

i thought henry would probably live in square village----

but he didn't----

he lived in a whole house----

before we rang the bell henry warned me to behave----

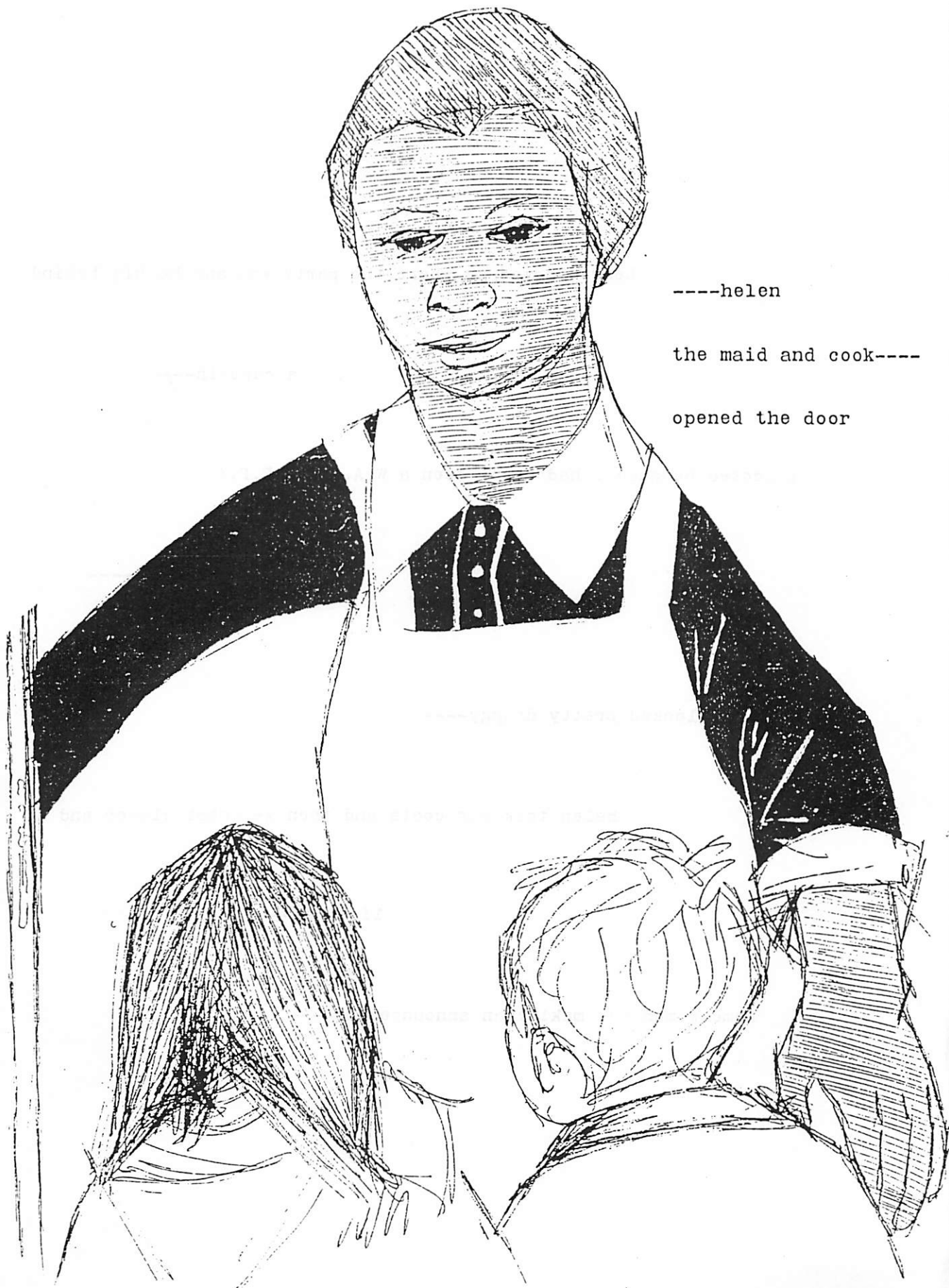
he said his mother was having her W.A.E.T.C.P.P.A.

i said i was sorry and he said no-no----

it meant----

Wednesday-Afternoon-Evening-Tea-and-Cocktail-Poetry and Prose Advancement

party



----helen

the maid and cook----

opened the door



henry showed me where the party was and he hid behind

a curtain----

i looked because i had never seen a W.A.E.T.C.P.P.A.

before----

it looked pretty draggy----

helen took our coats and then we crept closer and

listened----

some woman was making an announcement----



henry whispered it was his mother



----as you all know----she was saying----this meeting of the

W.A.E.T.C.P.P.A. is honoring the new and absolutely enchanting young

poet----james--lucien--androcles--palmer third----and i've persuaded

jamie to read us one of his newest----

----everybody oohed and aahed and then this tall thin cat walked

slowly to the front of the room----

took out a pair of horn rims----

a sheet of paper from his inside pocket----

and read





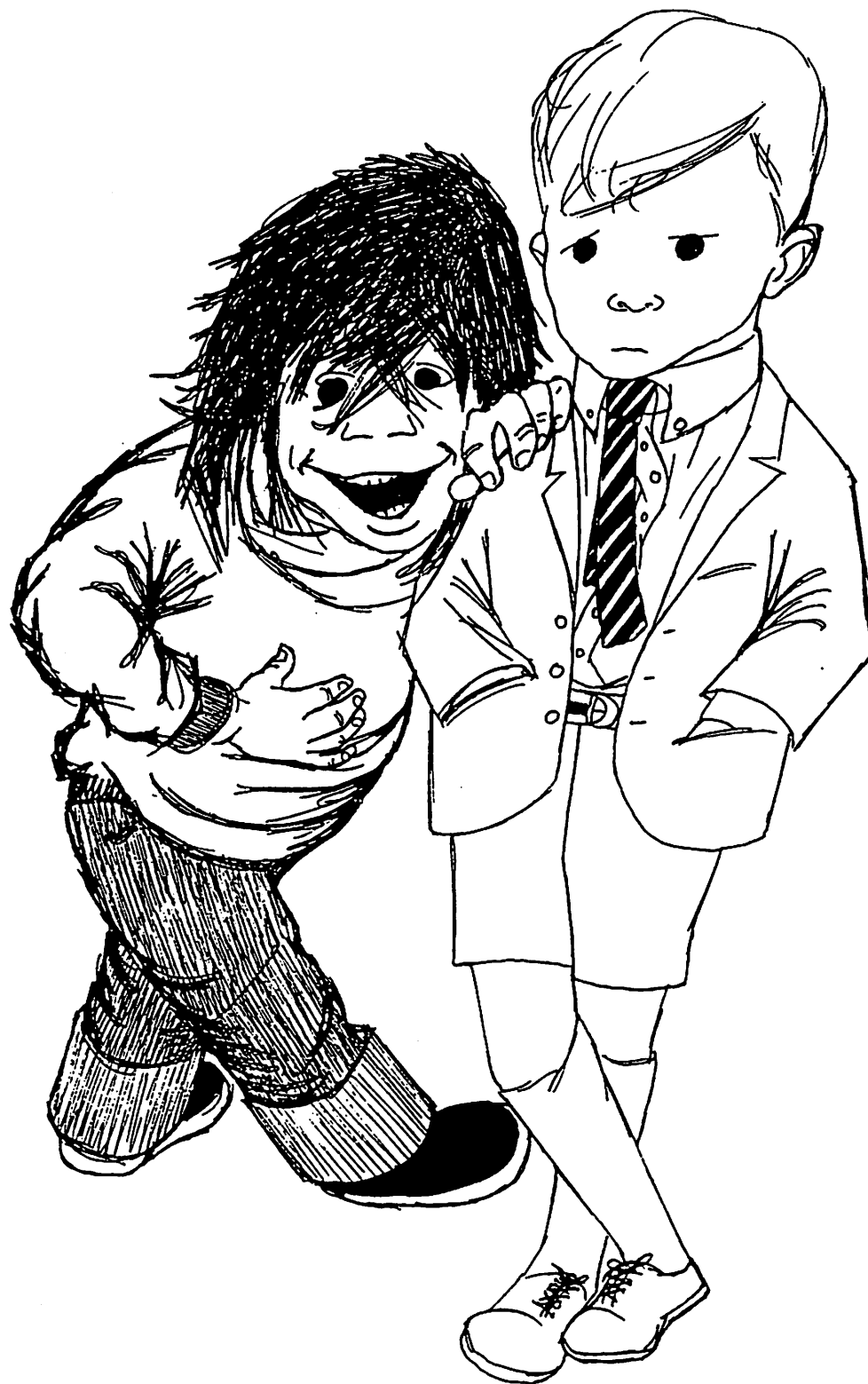
this was the poem:

The Summering Seeds

Finally through a deprecated dawn we knew  
Sun spots, yellow tears that would drown us  
Had we not already been many times vulcanized,  
Had we not been Christians clamoring for further light.  
How simple the kiss-octagonal and new  
To us, never ceasing our call for spiral stalks  
Of poppies bright tight blossom. We sat.  
Having debased our natural grey passage  
The numbed man sought solace between his toes.

everyone clapped and mumbled things to each other which i hardly heard

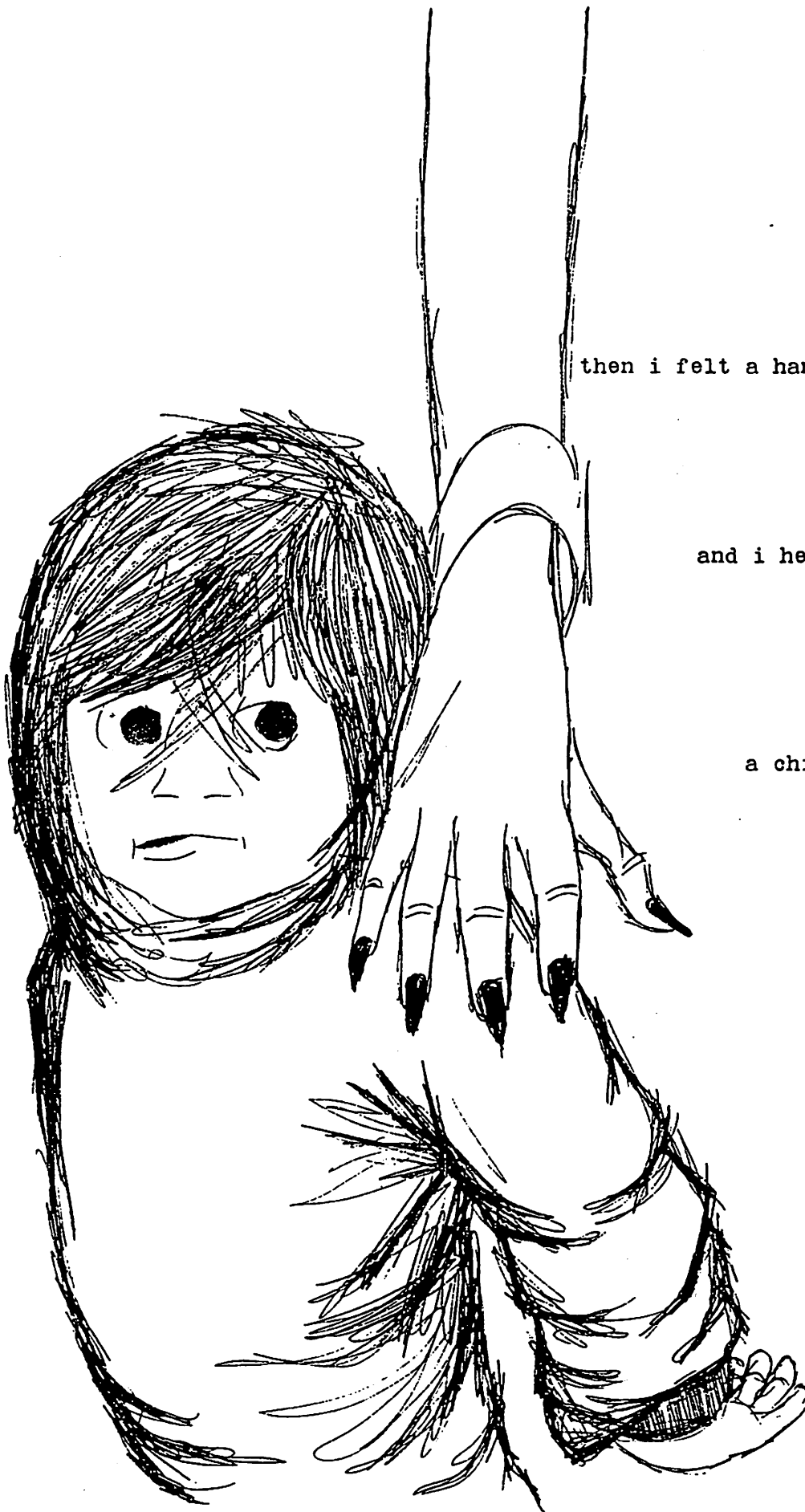
'cause that cat's poem had me practically on the floor



then i felt a hand on my shoulder

and i heard this voice

a chick's voice----





oh henry----

----who is this mah-vo-lous creature----

it was henry's mother (cynthia)

-----she went on-----

oh-----dah-ling-----she said to henry-----you are a scamp-----

i've seen that advertisement in the village voice--too-----

beatniks for rent-----

and you've gone and rented a baby beatnik-----

how utterly enchanting-----

now the whole time this chick was talking i couldn't take my eyes

off her-----i mean it was like crazy-----

she never moved her lips-----

and never unclenched her teeth-----

for a minute i thought she was a ventriloquist



then she said----what's your name

suzuki----i said

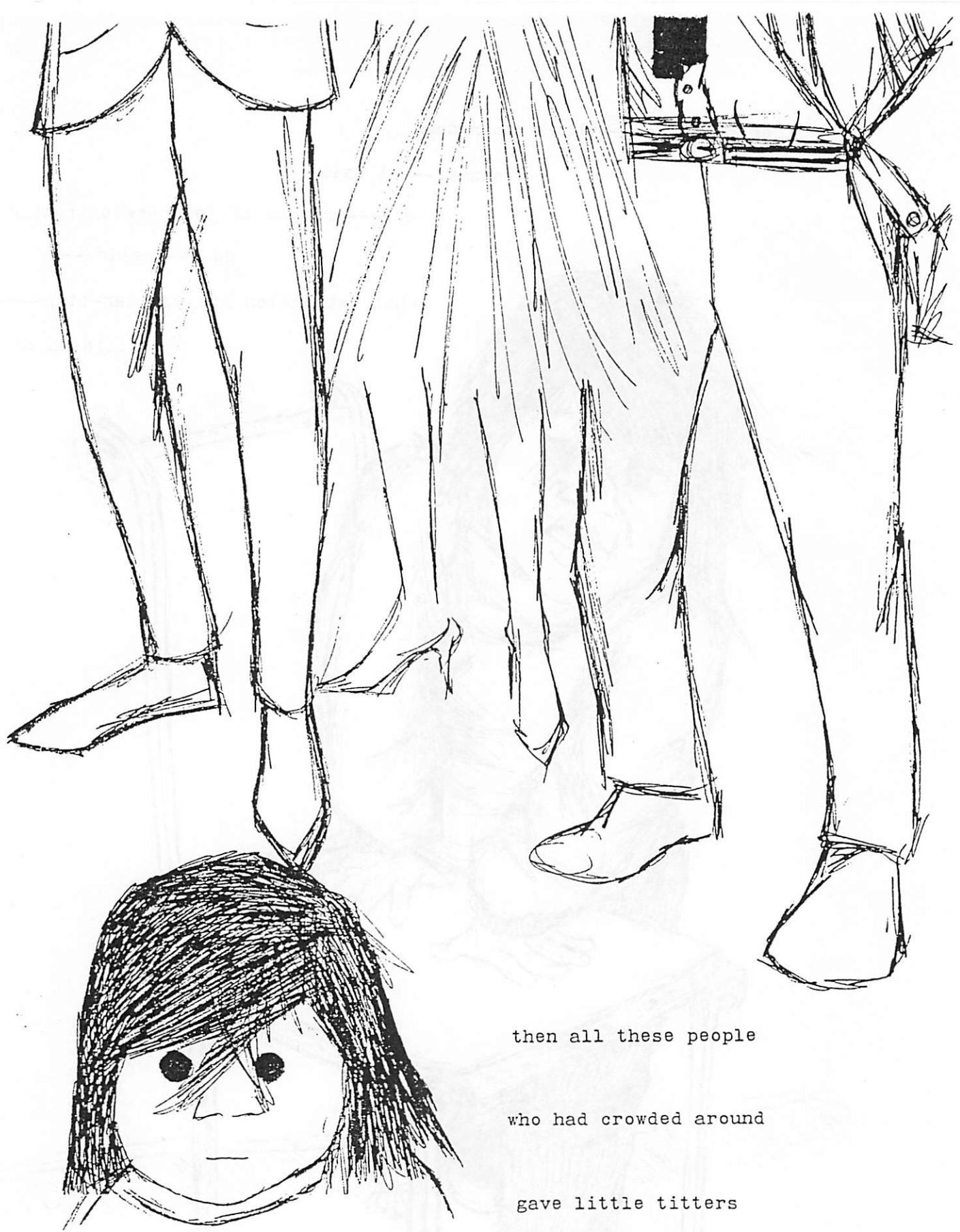
oh----are you of japanese extraction----

no----i said----

what extraction are you dah-ling----

vanilla--i said





then all these people

who had crowded around

gave little titters

where's jason----the ventriloquist chick asked----

(jason was henry's father)

she went on----i'm sure he'd find this so am--u--sing----

henry looked around----then he said----

there he is----there's J.M.

henry pointed----



oh well----the clenched teeth said----

you must have a poem suzuki----don't all you

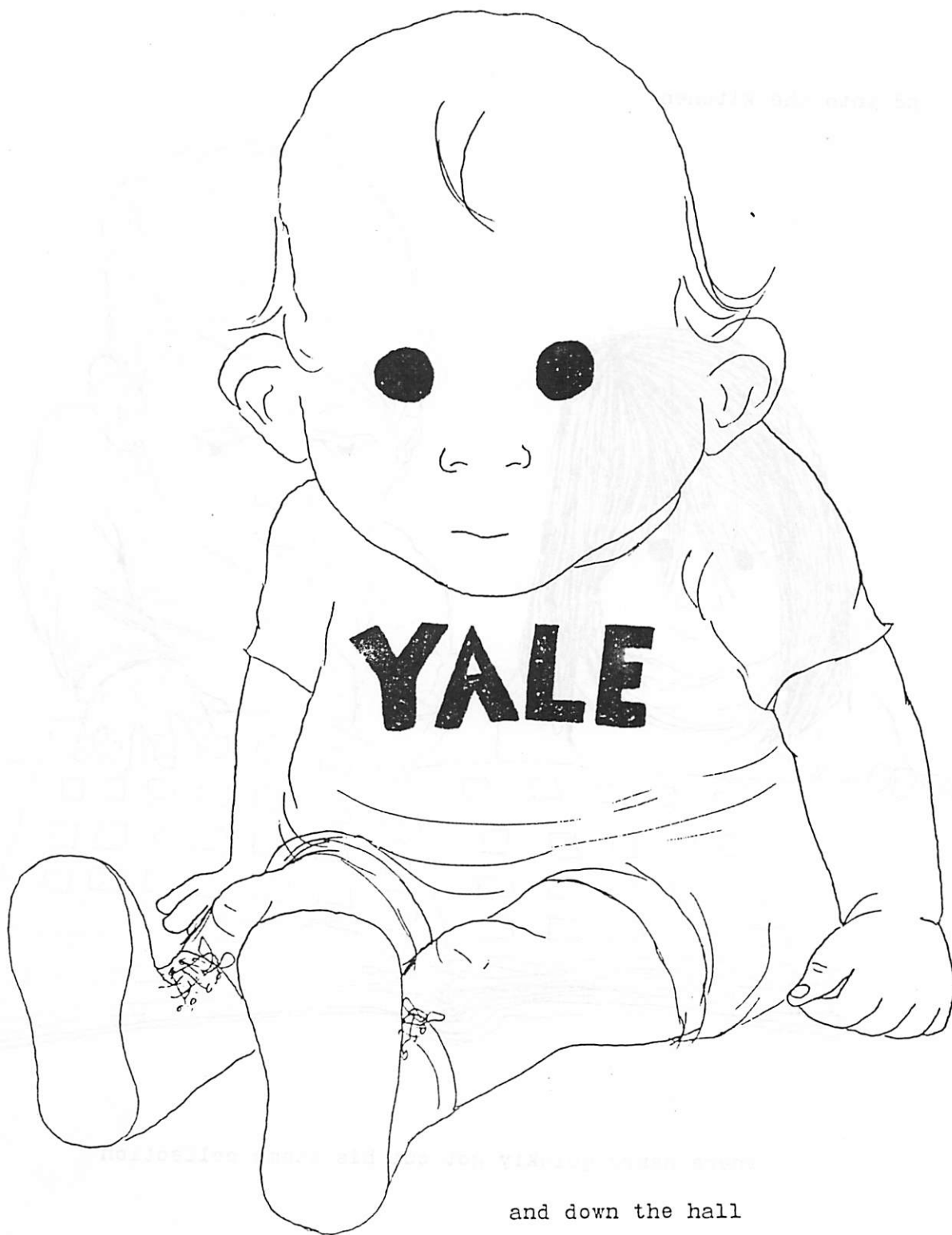
beatnik people dabble in poetry----

yeah----i said----i have a poem----

and that's when henry grabbed me

and pulled me out of there----





and down the hall

where a huge photograph of henry as a baby

hung on the wall

and into the kitchen



where henry quickly got out his stamp collection

then helen sat us down at the table----

we had cornish game hen----

wild rice

broccoli with hollandaise sauce

and chocolate mousse

(helen told me the swinging names)

like henry's father

sure had bread----



marcia makes soup



then henry turned on the t.v. set----he said he used to look at the one  
in his bedroom but he liked looking at the one in the kitchen best----  
he put on cartoons----henry liked them----they bugged me----  
i couldn't make that scene----particularly cartoons



and i told henry----



i said t.v. was strictly commercialism



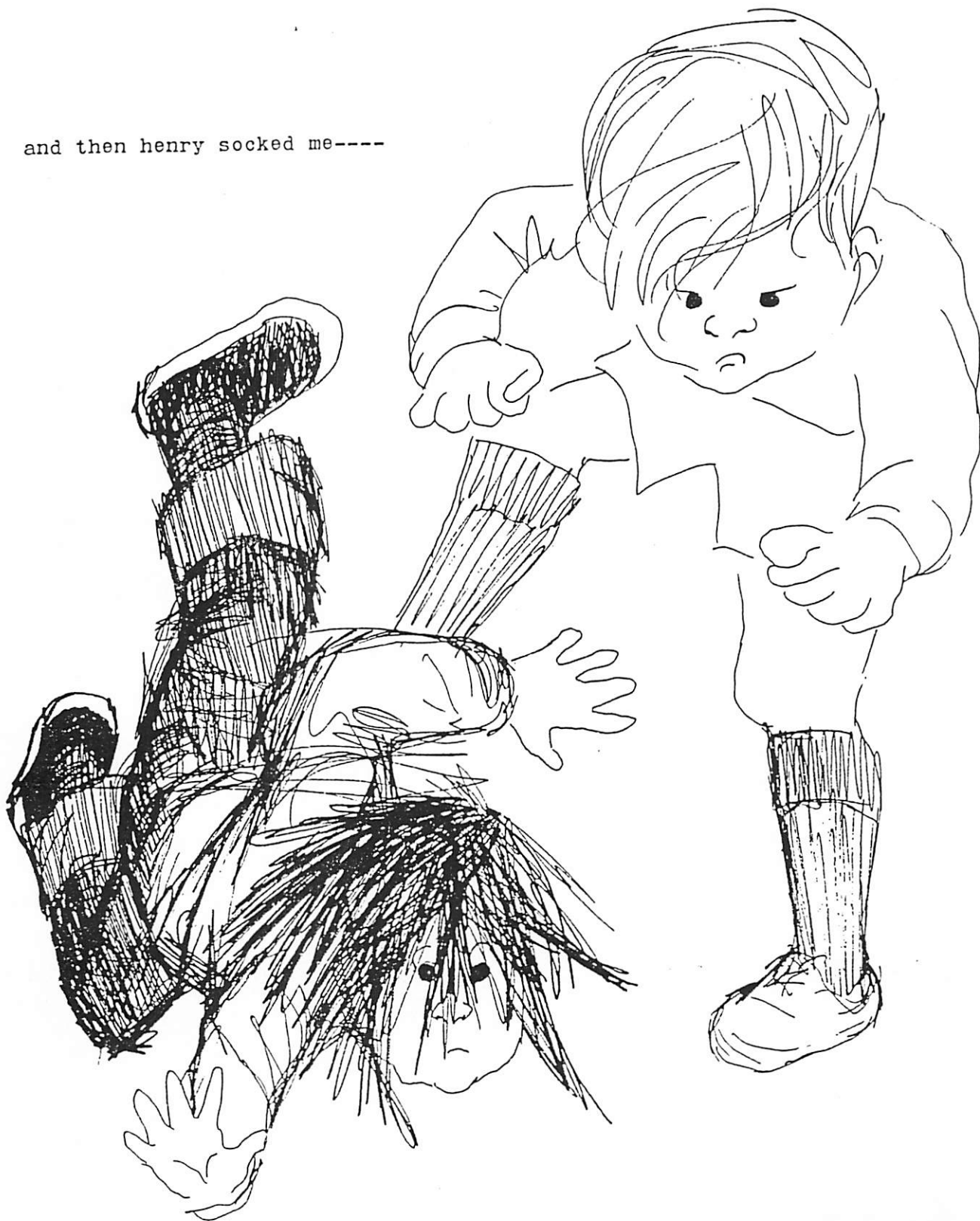


that it was a product of the materialistic breadgrabbers----



and the way he and his family lived reflected the false values of the  
typical american----and that his mother and father were----

and then henry socked me----



helen dropped

her dishcloth and

came running over----

she grabbed henry----

she told him it wasn't

nice to hit a guest

(i thought this

was a lot of----\*

but i was glad  
she cooled him)

\*square publishers



then she grabbed me too----

she said i wasn't nice to say those things to henry even if i didn't know  
what it meant



then she put her arms around me----and then around henry----and like

she kissed us----first me then henry----that jazz was nowhere----man the

last physical contact i had with marcia was when she changed my diapers



now was the time for me to make these squares hip

----look baby--

----i said----

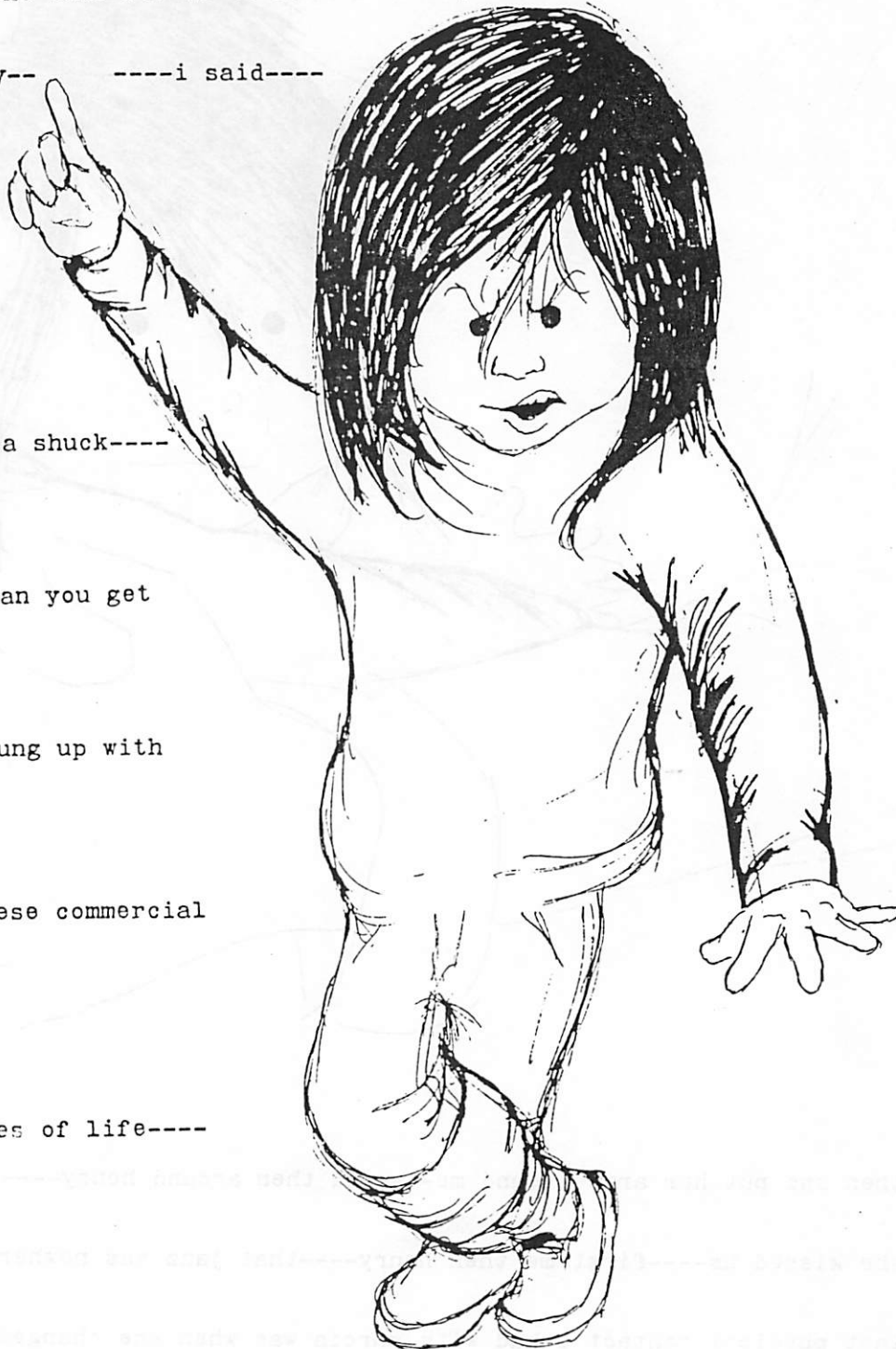
this is all a shuck----

how can you get

so hung up with

all these commercial

banalities of life----



like don't you know there's more to it all----



so then helen got a big tear in her eye and hugged me and said----

there's much more to it you poor little babe----much more'n you'll ever

know----when she pressed me close against her and i dug her softness

something happened and i did a real flippy thing----



i kissed her back----grabbed my coat and ran all the way along bleeker  
to our pad

the next day henry and i made up——

like holding a grudge is a drag----

anyway i decided i'd show him what real people

live like----so i brought him home with me----

when we got there hugh was meditating and

marcia was stretching a canvas----

they didn't hear us come in so i yelled----

THIS IS HENRY MARTIN----MY GOOD FRIEND----



leaving boys town----

----look it's micky roony

like wow-----marcia said----

how do you do-----mrs. beane-----henry said-----

it's henry martin----i said----my good friend

where'd you find it----marcia asked----

find what----

it----she said

it?

this henry martin it----

henry goes to school with me----

you mean this is a product of a progressive school----

marcia was acting very strange----

so i took henry into my room----

we sat on my bed-----

it's nice here-----henry said

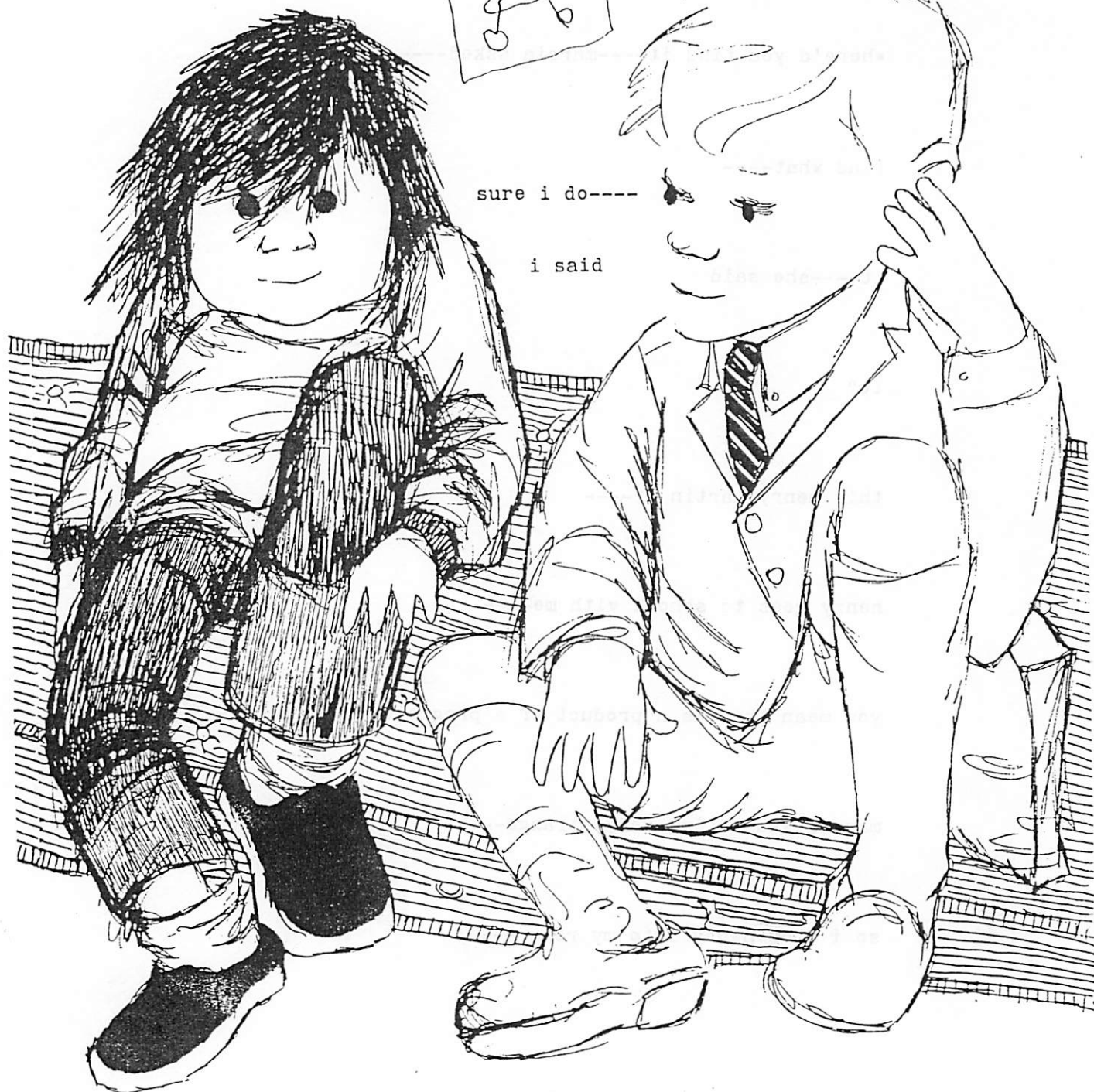
-----you don't ever have to wash

do you-----

sure i do-----

i said

where are your sheets for your bed-----





cool it kid



what are you bringing these squares home for suzuki----hugh said

henry's my friend----i----

man----what do we need him around here for with his stereotyped

ideas about washing and jazz----why doesn't he go home to park avenue----

but hugh----i said----henry doesn't live on----

i don't care where he lives----

hugh went on----

let him take his middle class values

with him----

then henry got all red in the face

and said----

you think you're

so special----

----well you're not----

----you all dress alike

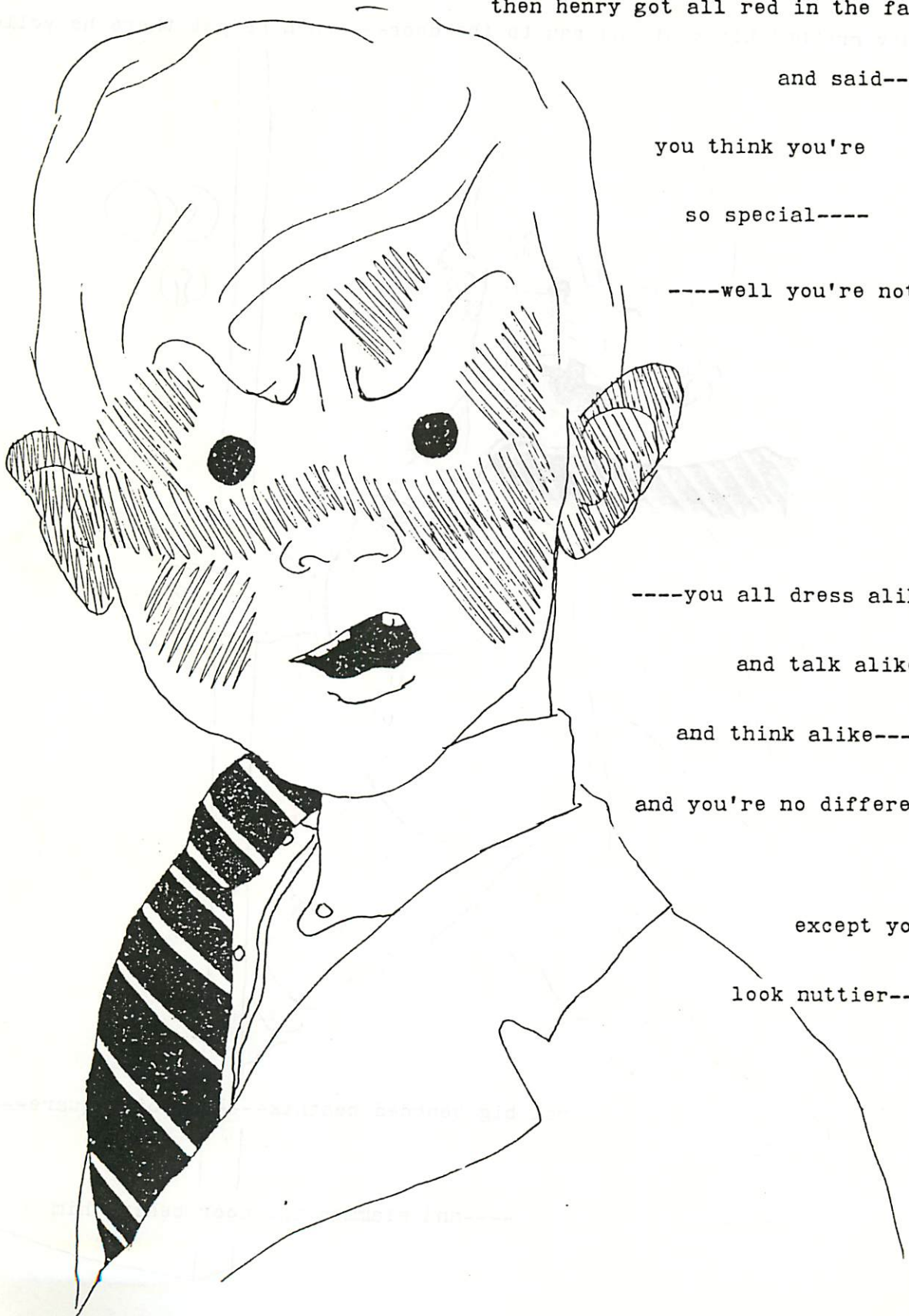
and talk alike

and think alike----

and you're no different

except you

look nuttier----



henry grabbed his coat and ran to the door----when he got there he yelled----

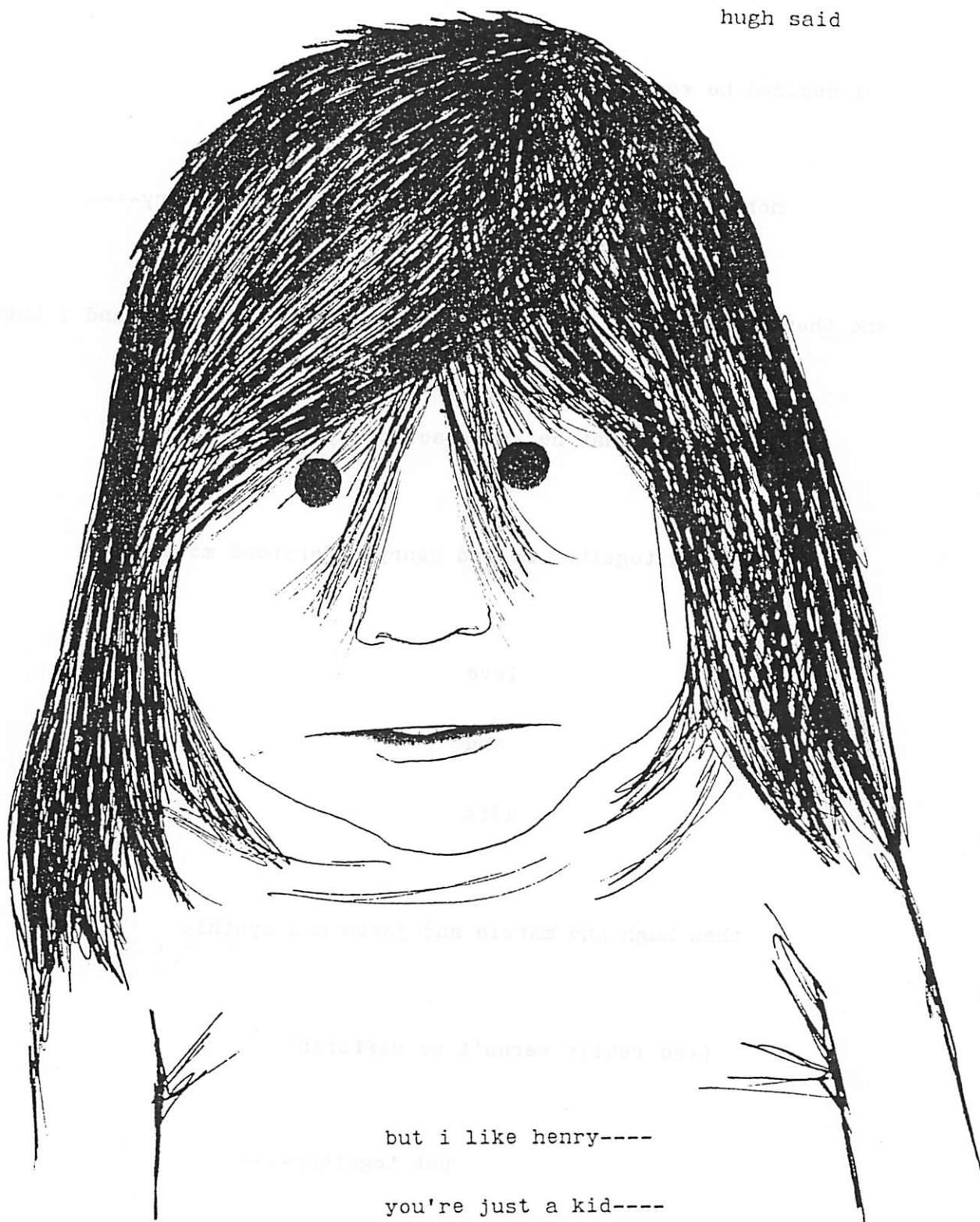


you big bearded beatnik----you big square----

----and slammed the door behind him

don't bring any more squares from squaresville around here----

hugh said



but i like henry----

you're just a kid----

you don't know anything----

i didn't listen to anything he said after that because

i decided he was just plain silly----

nobody knew better than i did that i liked henry----

and then i remembered what henry had said before he left and i knew

that he was practically right----

i mean together me and henry understood more about

love

and

life

than hugh and marcia and jason and cynthia

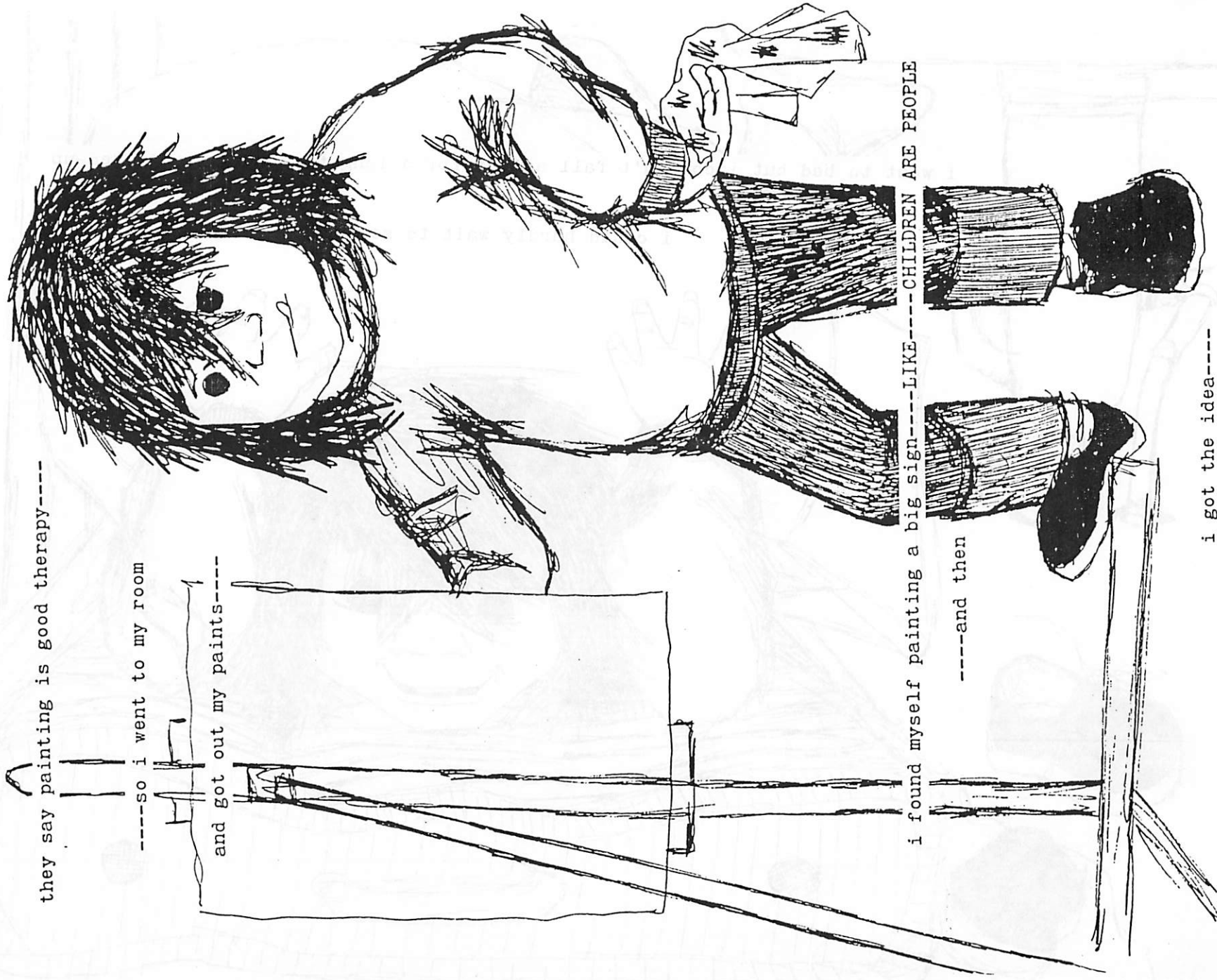
(who really weren't so different)

put together----

they say painting is good therapy----

-----so i went to my room

and got out my paints-----



i found myself painting a big sign-----LIKE-----CHILDREN ARE PEOPLE

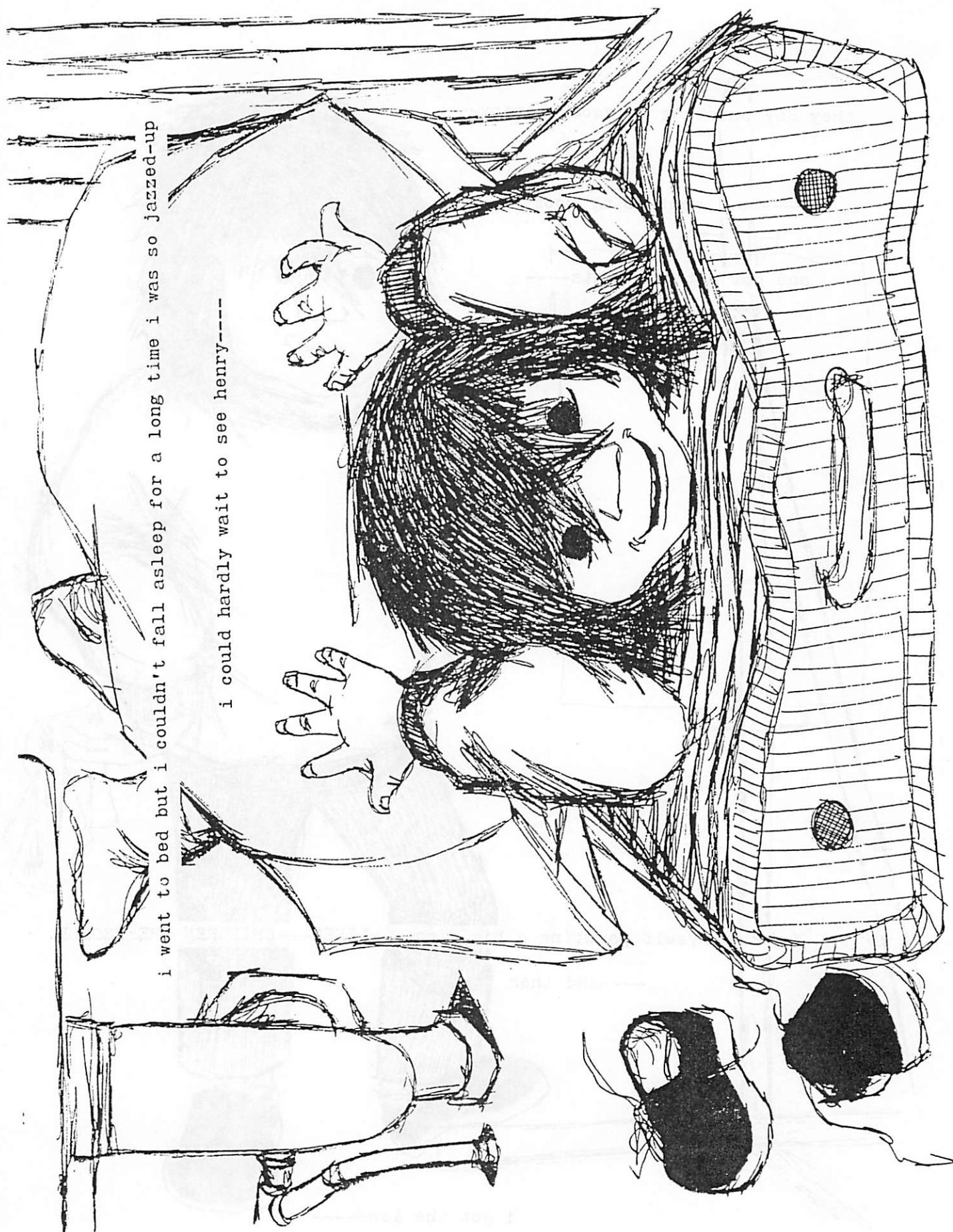
-----and then

i got the idea-----



i went to bed but i couldn't fall asleep for a long time i was so jazzed-up

i could hardly wait to see henry----



at lunch i told henry my idea and he dug it right away----

henry and i were going on the road----

and wherever we went we would get other kids

who weren't allowed to be people and by the time we got to

the coast we'd have enough kids to start our own village----

where a square could be a square and a swinging cat

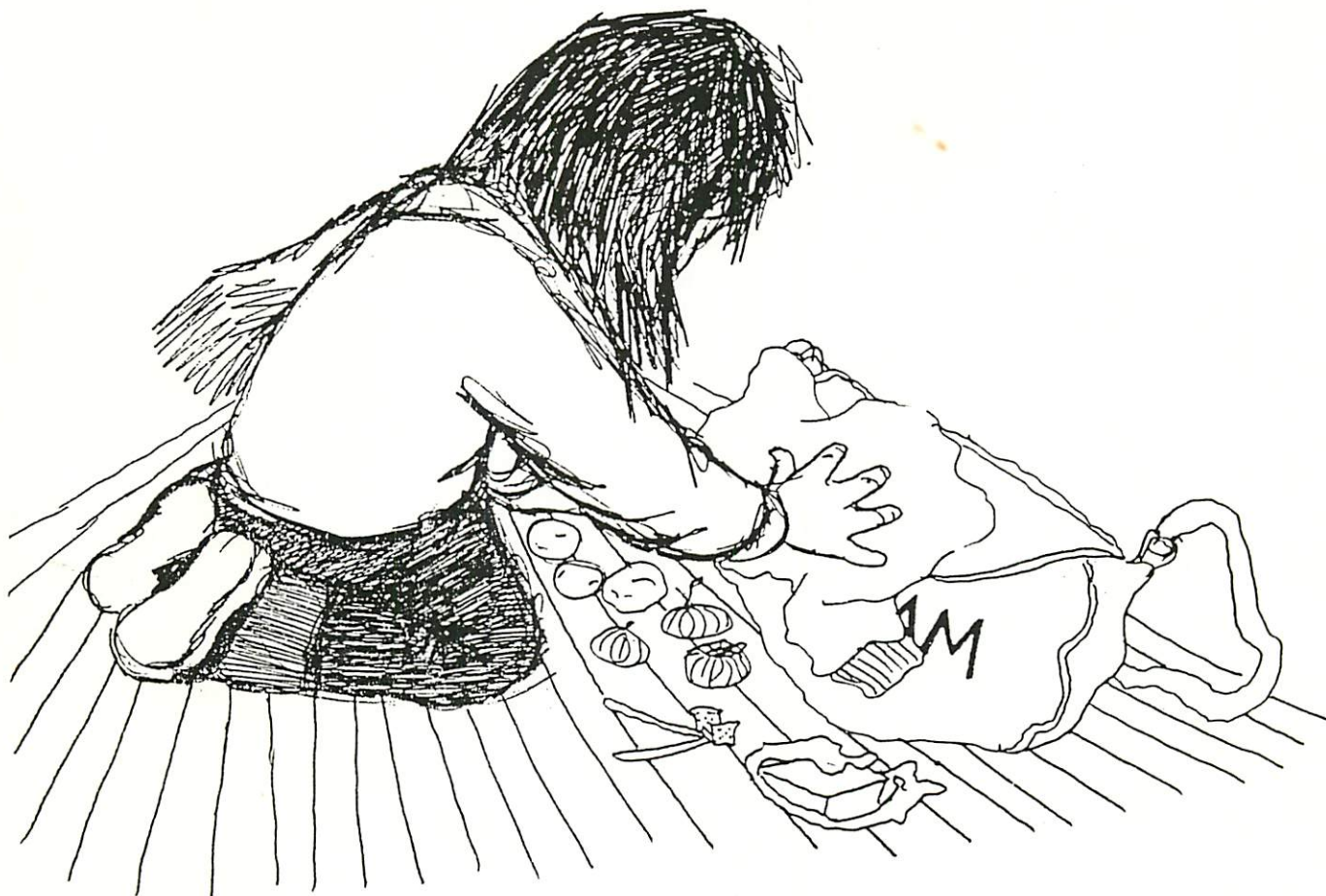
could swing in peace-----and kids could feel things because they do-----

we each went off to get our gear----

i told henry to be sure and bring some food-----

hugh and marcia were both still asleep when i got to my pad----





i got my airline bag and put in a sweater and my extra pair of jeans----

then i packed some liederkranz----

potatoes----

onions----

-----a loaf of italian bread----

and the garlic press----



i wrote my note:



dear hugh and marcia----

i have to go where i can be me

and like----we just don't swing the

same anymore----keep it cool

like love

S.



i met henry by the docks where we'd planned----

he looked great----

i'd always

known henry had

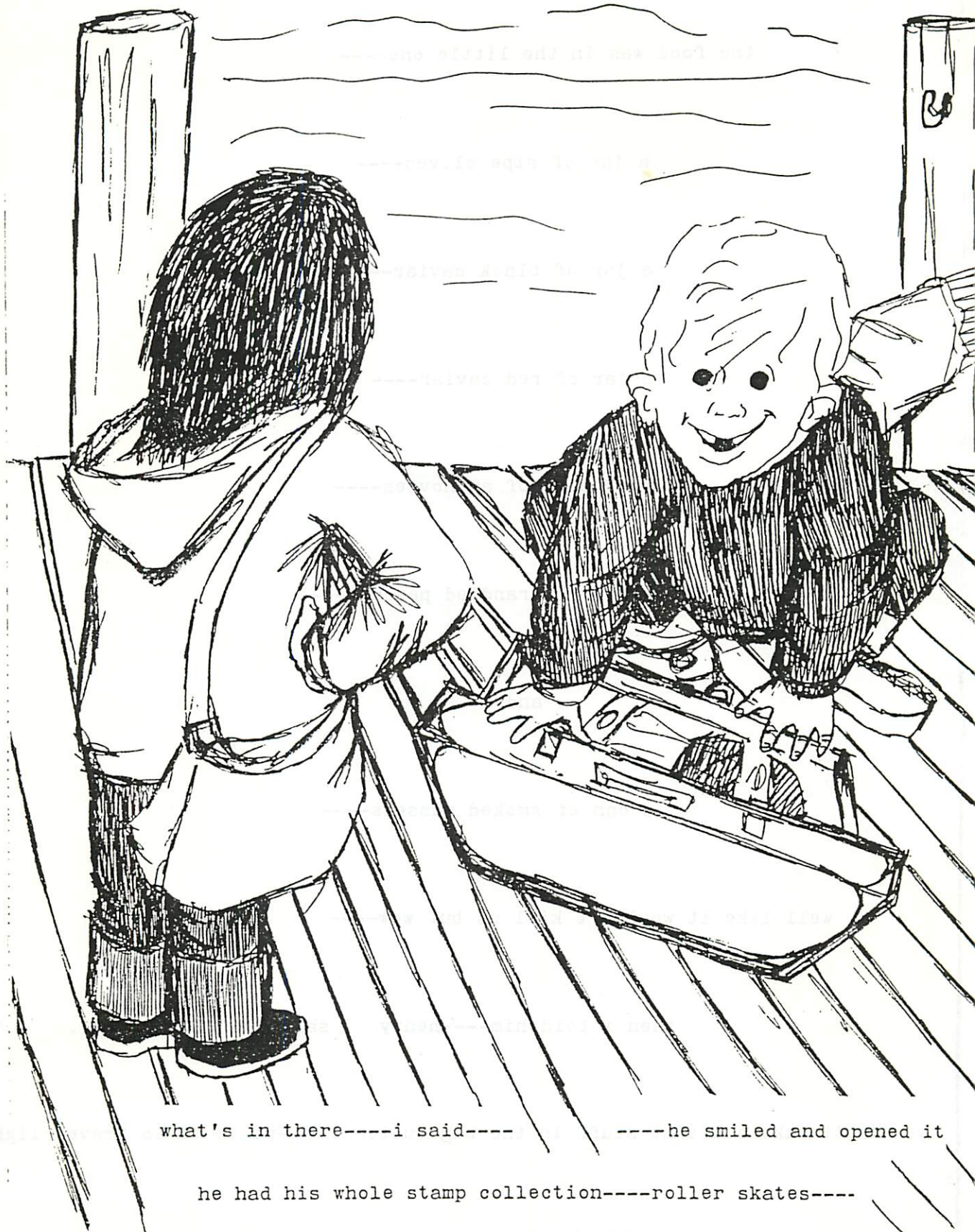
something special----



but he had this huge suitcase with him

and a little one----





what's in there----i said----

----he smiled and opened it

he had his whole stamp collection----roller skates----

i guess all of his clothes----two rubber animals and a pair of galoshe



the food was in the little one----

a jar of ripe olives----

a jar of black caviar----

a jar of red caviar----

four cans of anchovies----

a jar of brandied peaches----

and

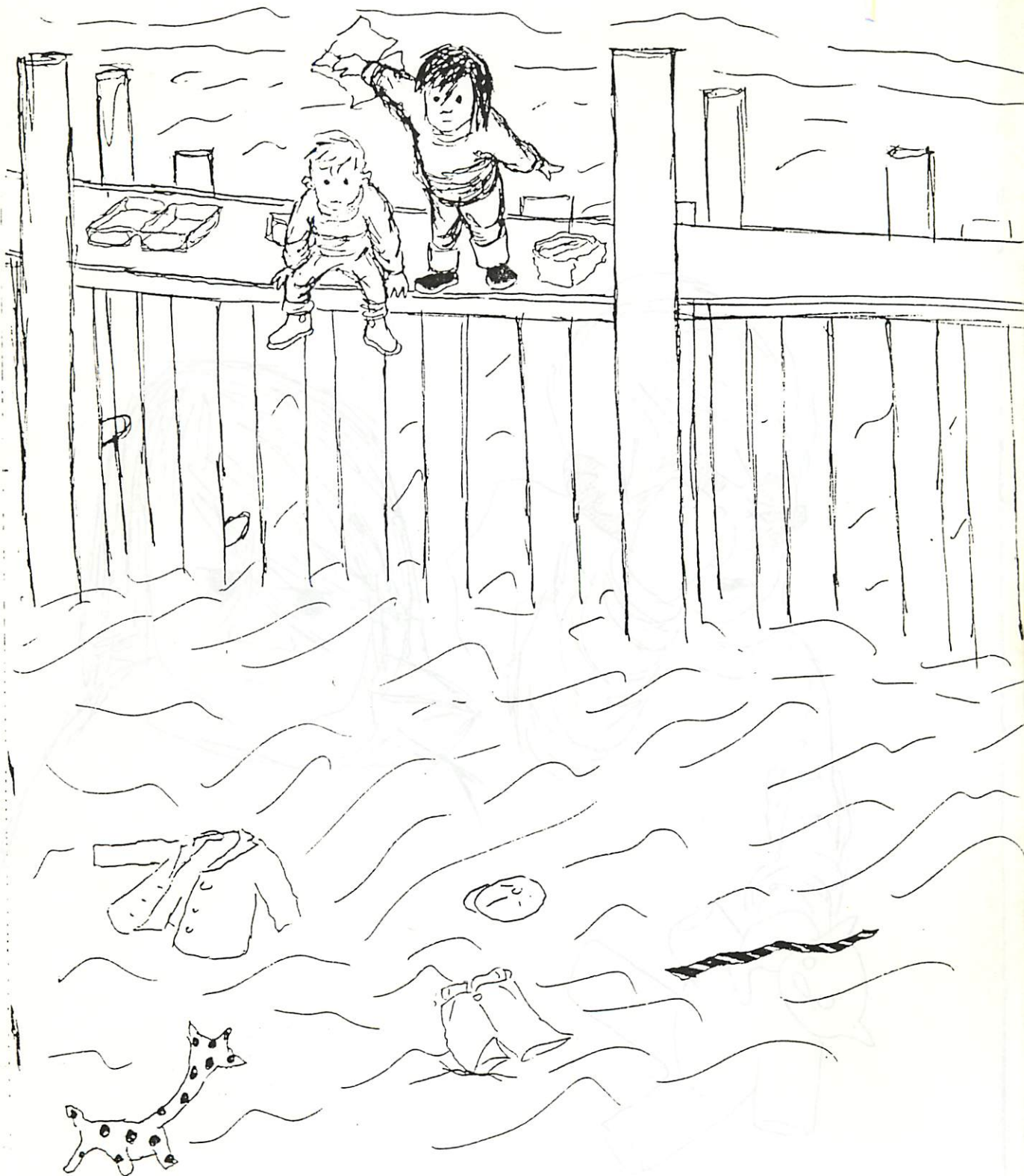
a can of smoked mussels----

well like it wouldn't kill us but wow----

then i told him----henry i said----

you can't take all that stuff in the big suitcase----you have to travel light----

so we had this big hassle until i convinced him----



i threw the stuff in the river except for one rubber animal which i let hi

keep for security----



henry cried a little but i pretended i didn't see----

after a minute

i looked at henry's face and he looked really happy

for the first time----



----and i felt really happy----

let's go man----i said

like right now----he said



SUZUKI'S GLOSSARY

A BALL----a good time

BREAD----\$

BREAK UP----laugh

BUG----bother

CAT----a person

CHICK----a girl

COOL----(this loses in translation)

DIG----understand

DRAG----bore

FLIP----go crazy

GAS----the best----wild

GOOFBALL----jerk

A HANG UP----waste of time----Example: washing

HIP----in the know

JAZZ----stuff----extra trimmings----excitement----also a type of music

LIKE----like, "like"

PAD----apartment

SCENE----the thing that is going on

SHUCK----deceit----a lie

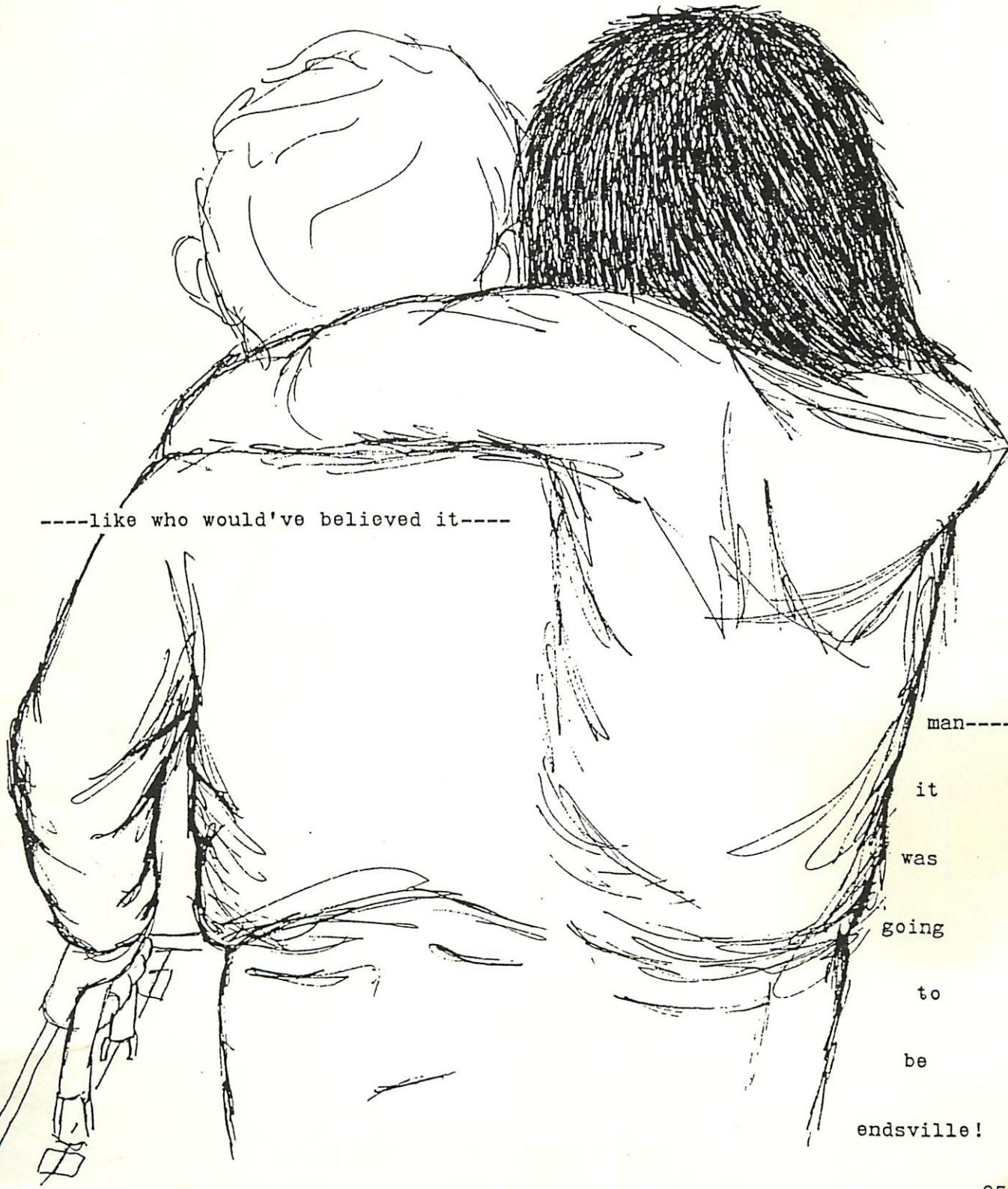
SPLIT----leave

SQUARE----probably you

SWING----really be with it

and we were on the road

me and henry martin----



-----like who would've believed it-----

man-----

it

was

going

to

be

endsville!