

LITTLE LONGTAIL
IN
SAIGON

Betty Baker Spohr

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Saigon, Vietnam

FOREWORD

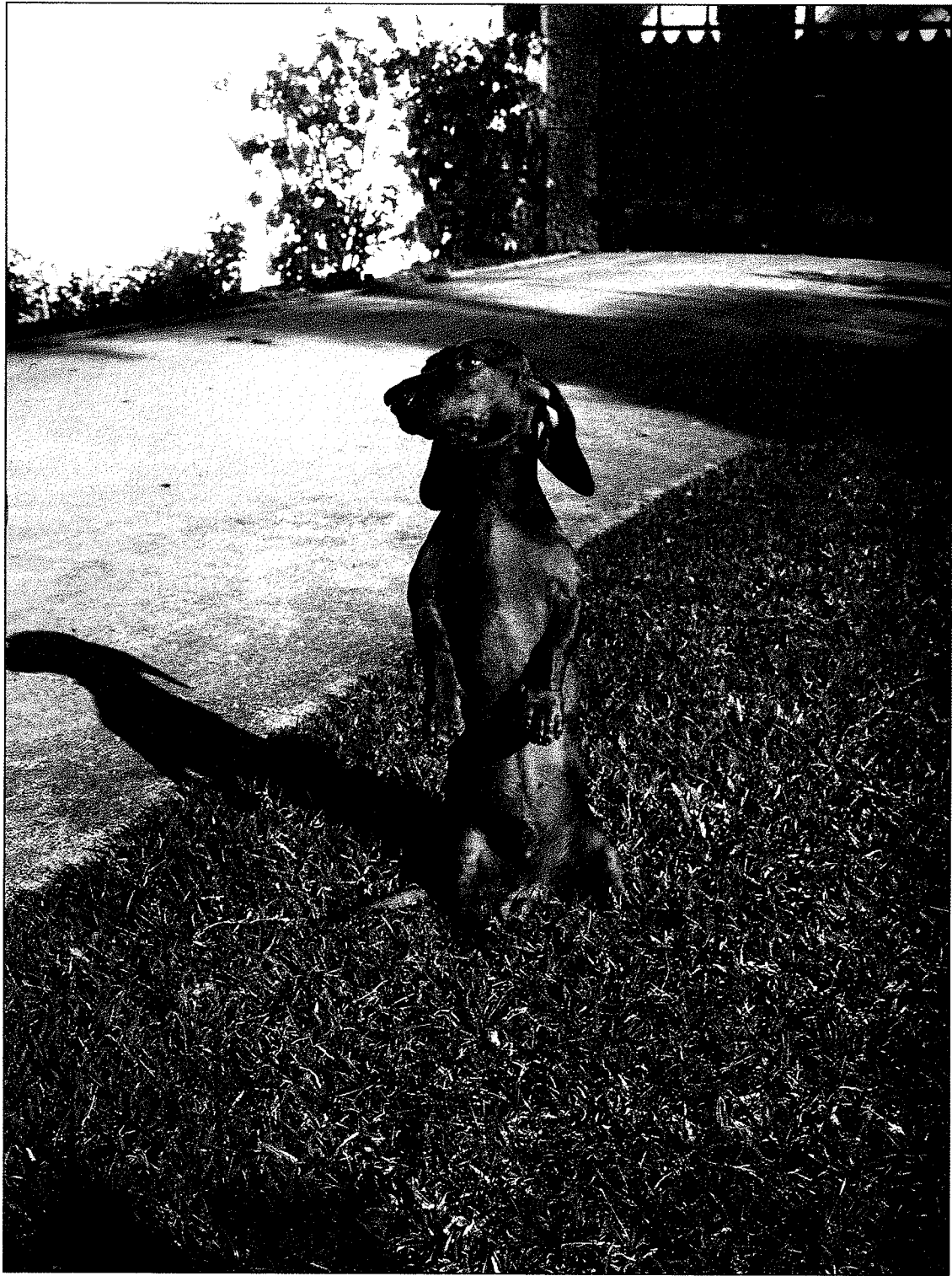
Betty Baker Spohr is a remarkable and talented lady. Not only has she created a story using real characters of her own family, but in her drawings she has captured the emotions of that family, their love for their little Dachshund, and their panic when he disappears. She has the uncanny ability even to portray the happiness of the little dog, and his sadness when he has to search for a new family. As a backdrop to her story, she illustrates a realistic Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) and its ambience, as it was when she lived there in the mid-1960's.

I happened to have lived in Saigon at the same time, and had the privilege of knowing not only Betty, but all the characters in her story, including Little Longtail. I can verify that her depiction of each character and each scene is realistic, demonstrating an enormous amount of insight on her part. Any child should be delighted with this book, but it is far more than a children's book; it is a history book and a memoir book, of a Saigon that remains indelible in the memory of those who were there at the time.

To Betty, who has remained my close friend throughout all the years since those days of Little Longtail, you have my greatest admiration!

Doris Gracy

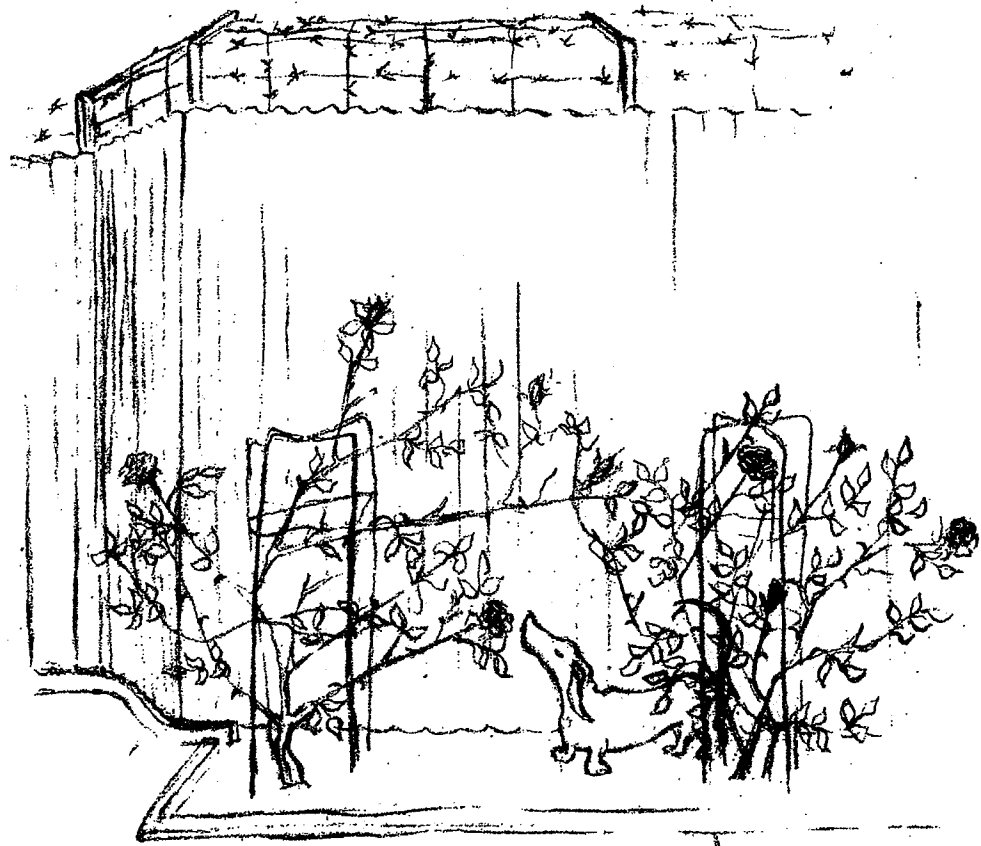
2008



Tabby, the real "Little Longtail"



Little Longtail loved the big, white house in Saigon where he lived.



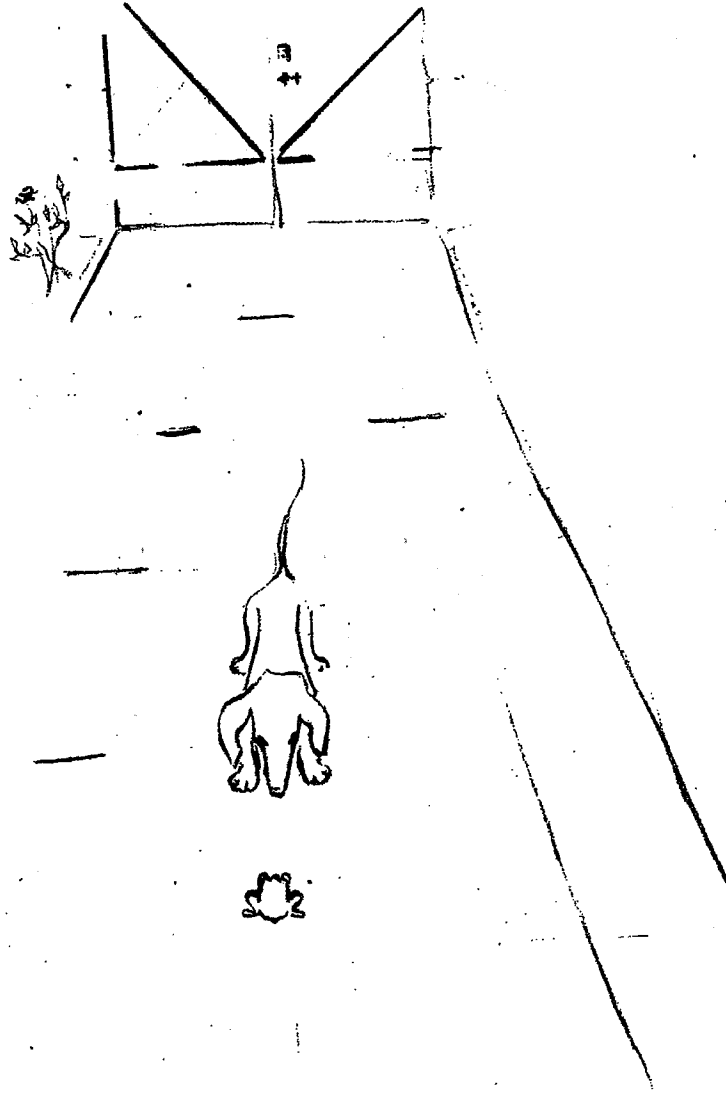
He loved the smell of the roses.



He loved the sweet gardenia smell.



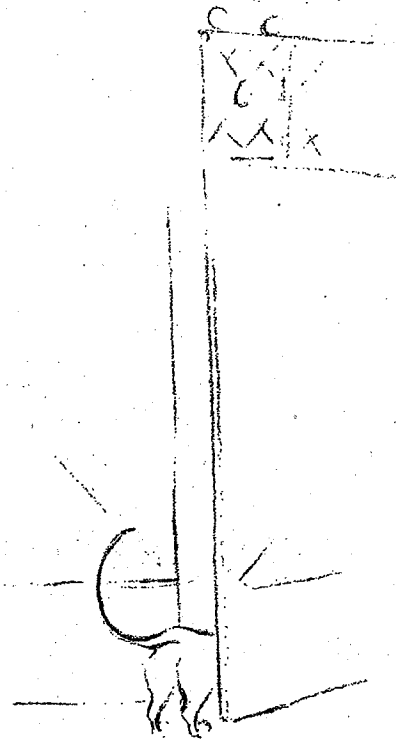
He loved the warm kitchen smells.



Yes, he was quite content never to go outside the gate.

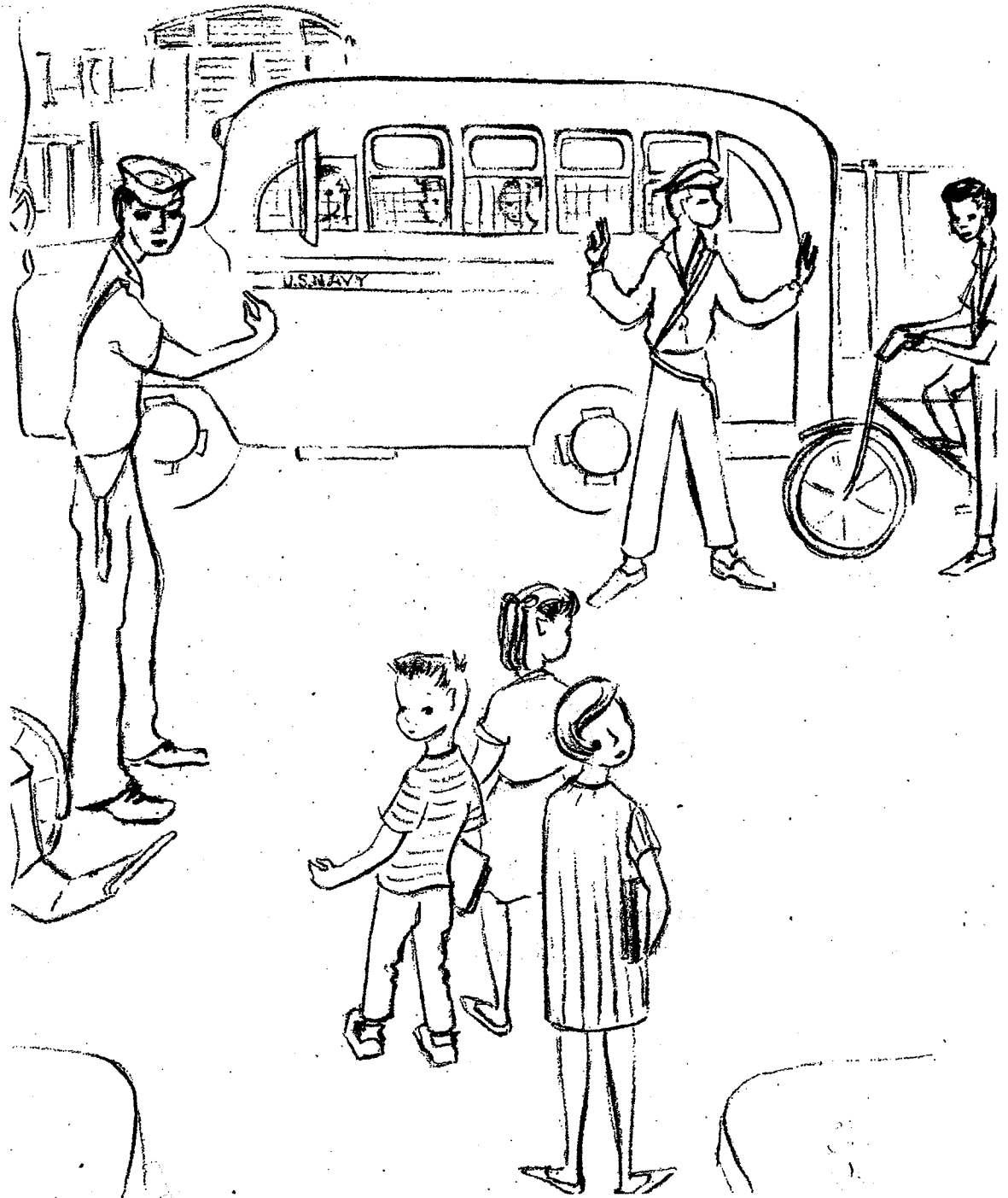


But the children went out.

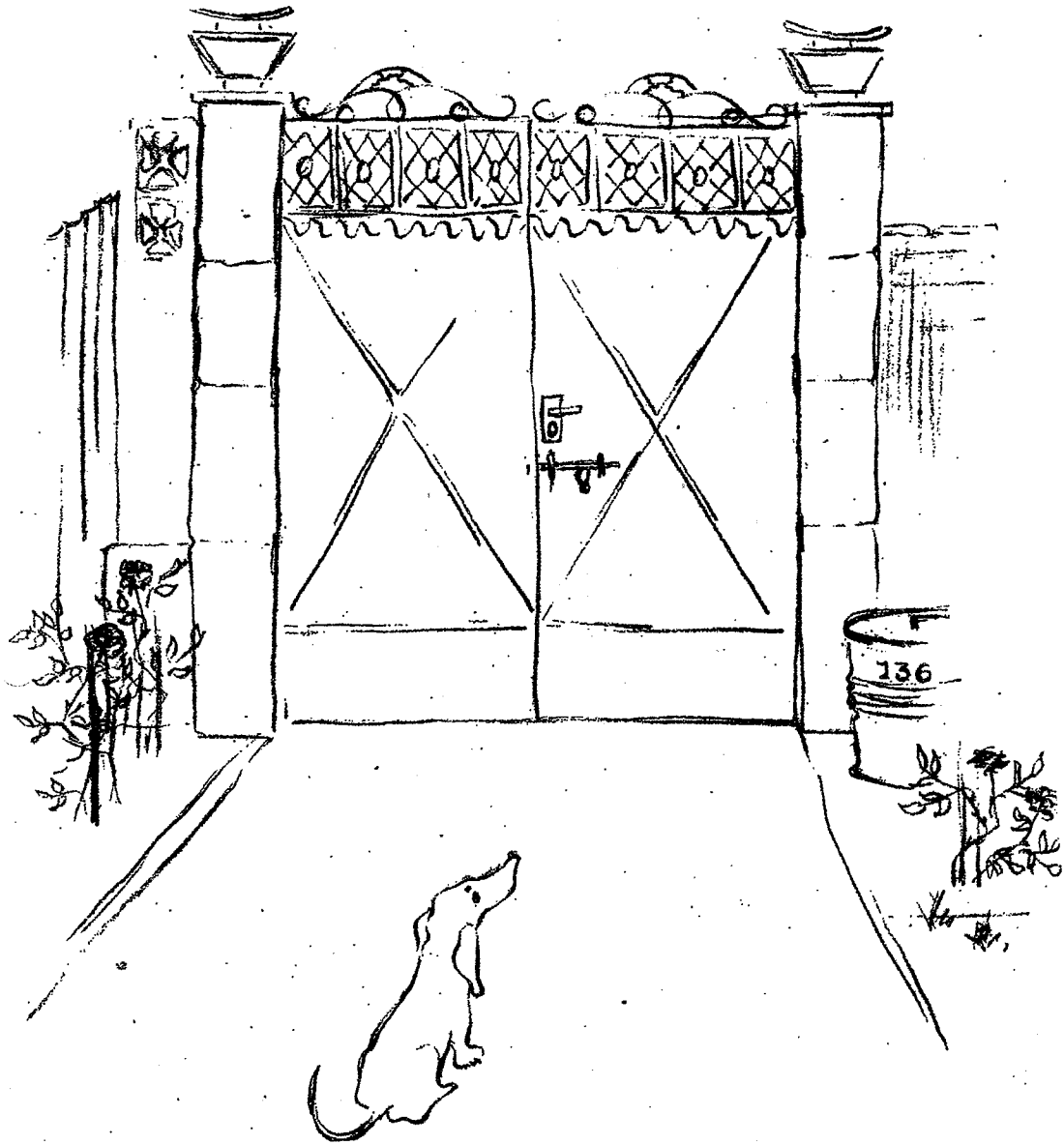


Every day

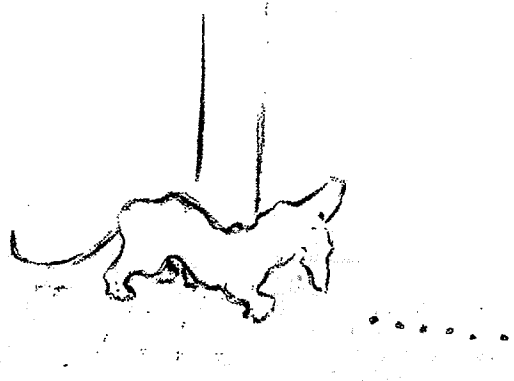
he watched them . . .



... get on a big gray bus
and go off.



Everyday he waited for them to come home.



Then one day

everything

changed:

• • • • •

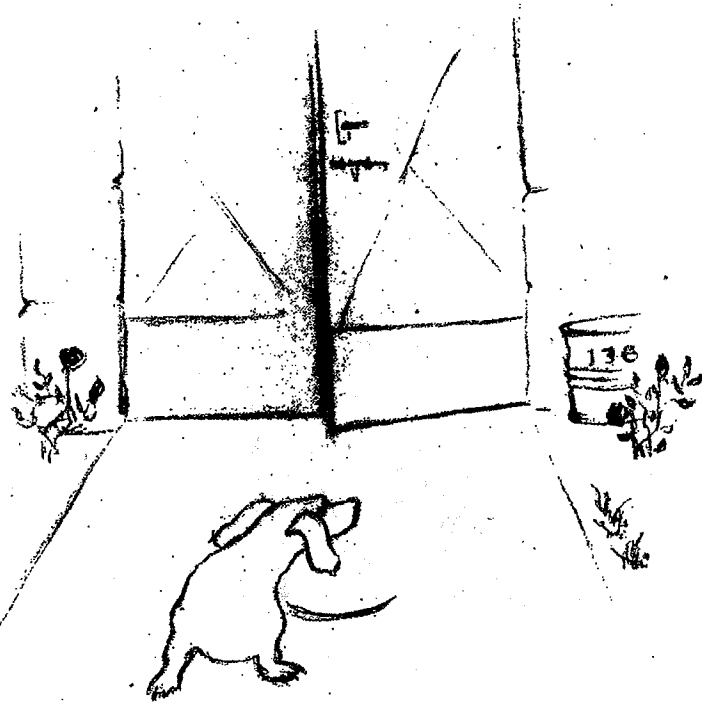


Little Longtail heard Daddy tell Mommy that all the American ladies and their children would have to go home to America. Daddy didn't say anything about dogs.

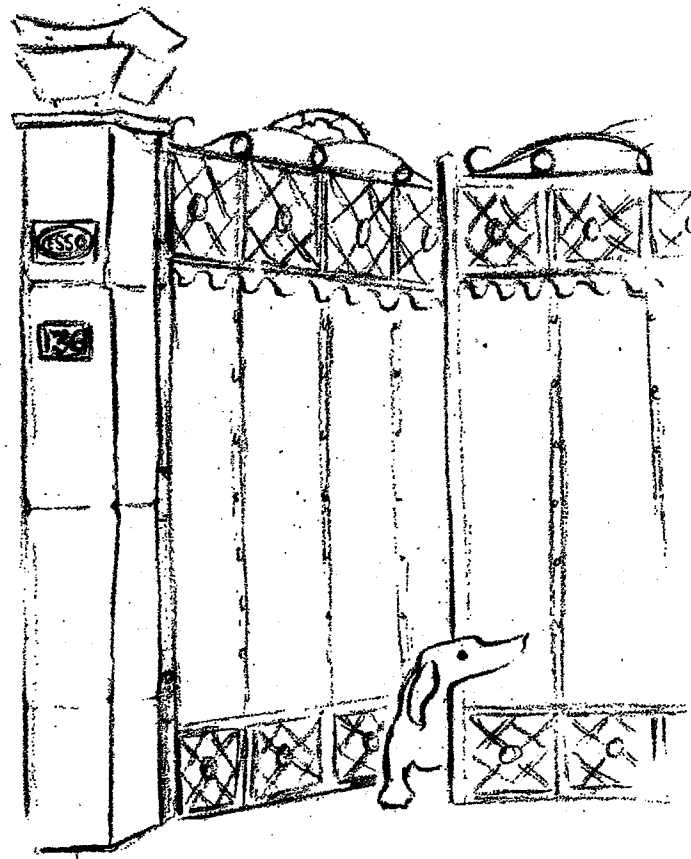
What would Little Longtail do without his family?



He didn't like it a bit, but
he guessed he'd just have to



.... go find another family



Out the big gate he went



.... past the funny building with Faculté de Droit marked on the gate. He thought that meant "Law School," but his French wasn't very good, and he was in too much of a hurry to ask.



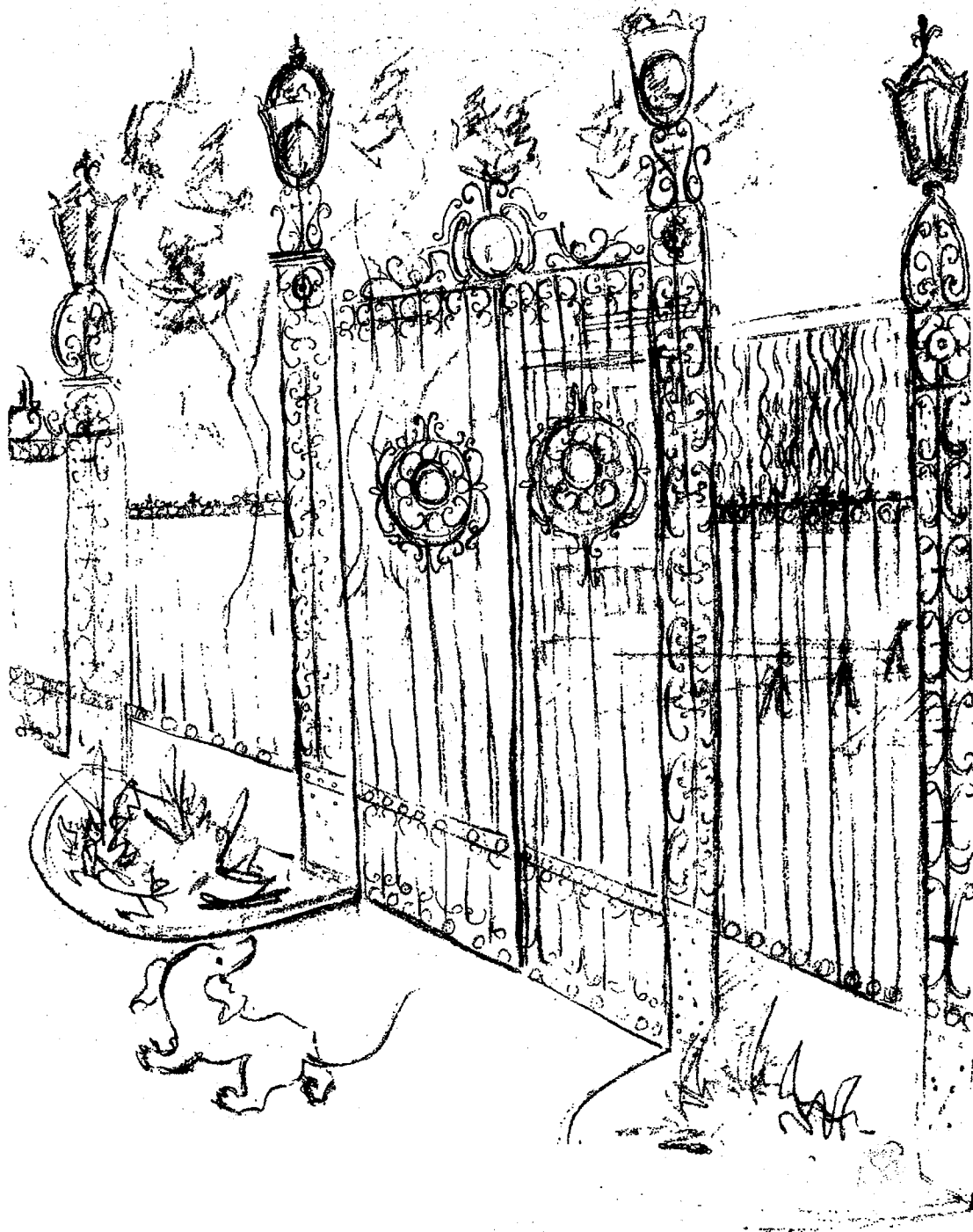
He saw the big cathedral, but it wasn't Sunday,
so he went on by.



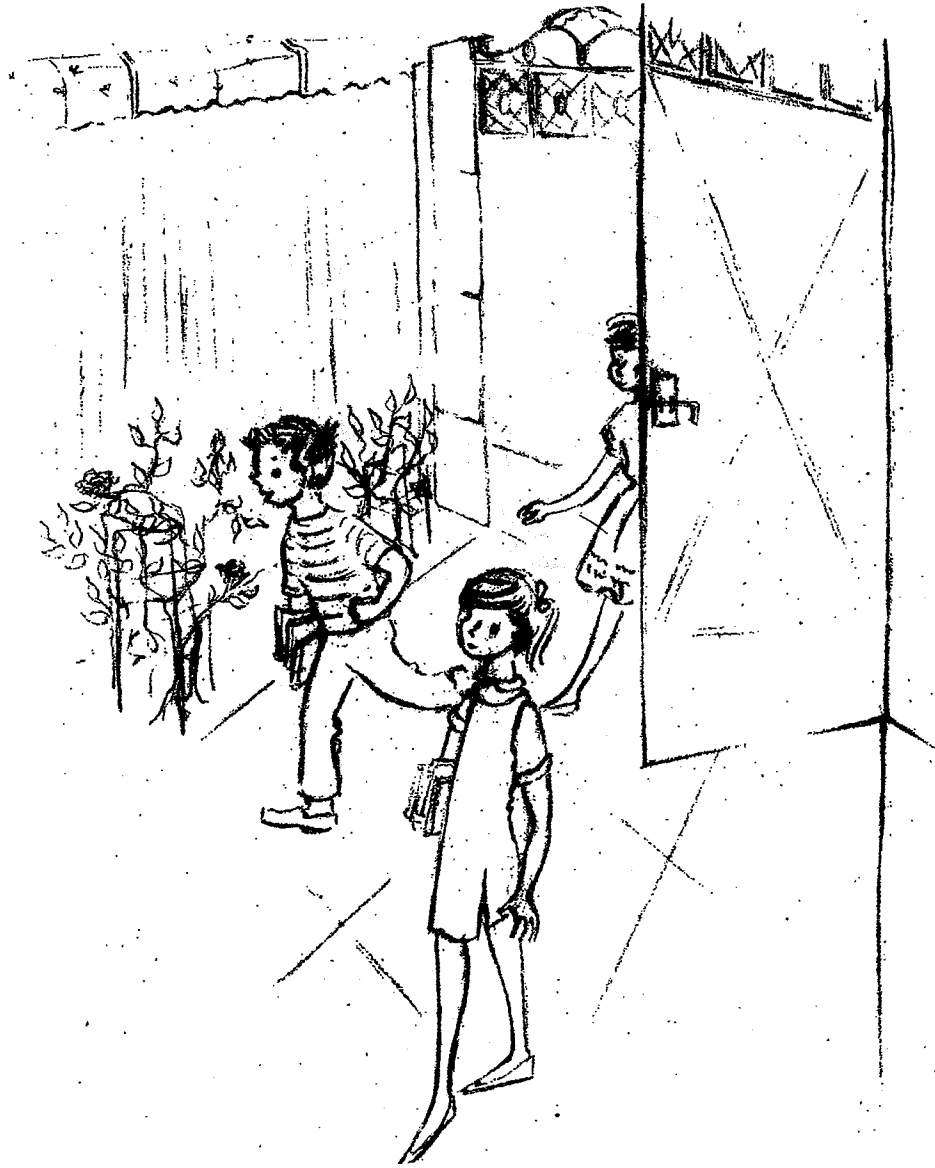
On he went into the market.
My, how he wanted to stay.
There were so many lovely meats to smell.
But his Vietnamese was worse than his French,
and he didn't think anybody there would want to be his
family.



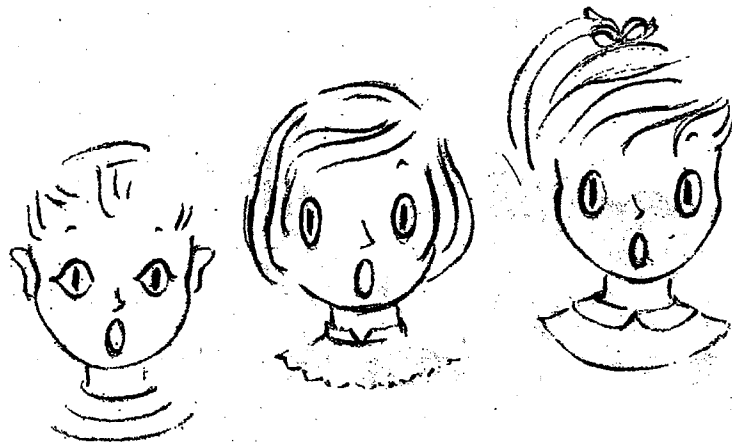
Outside the market were more wonderful smells. There were lots of lovely ladies in Ao Dais, too, but no family to belong to.



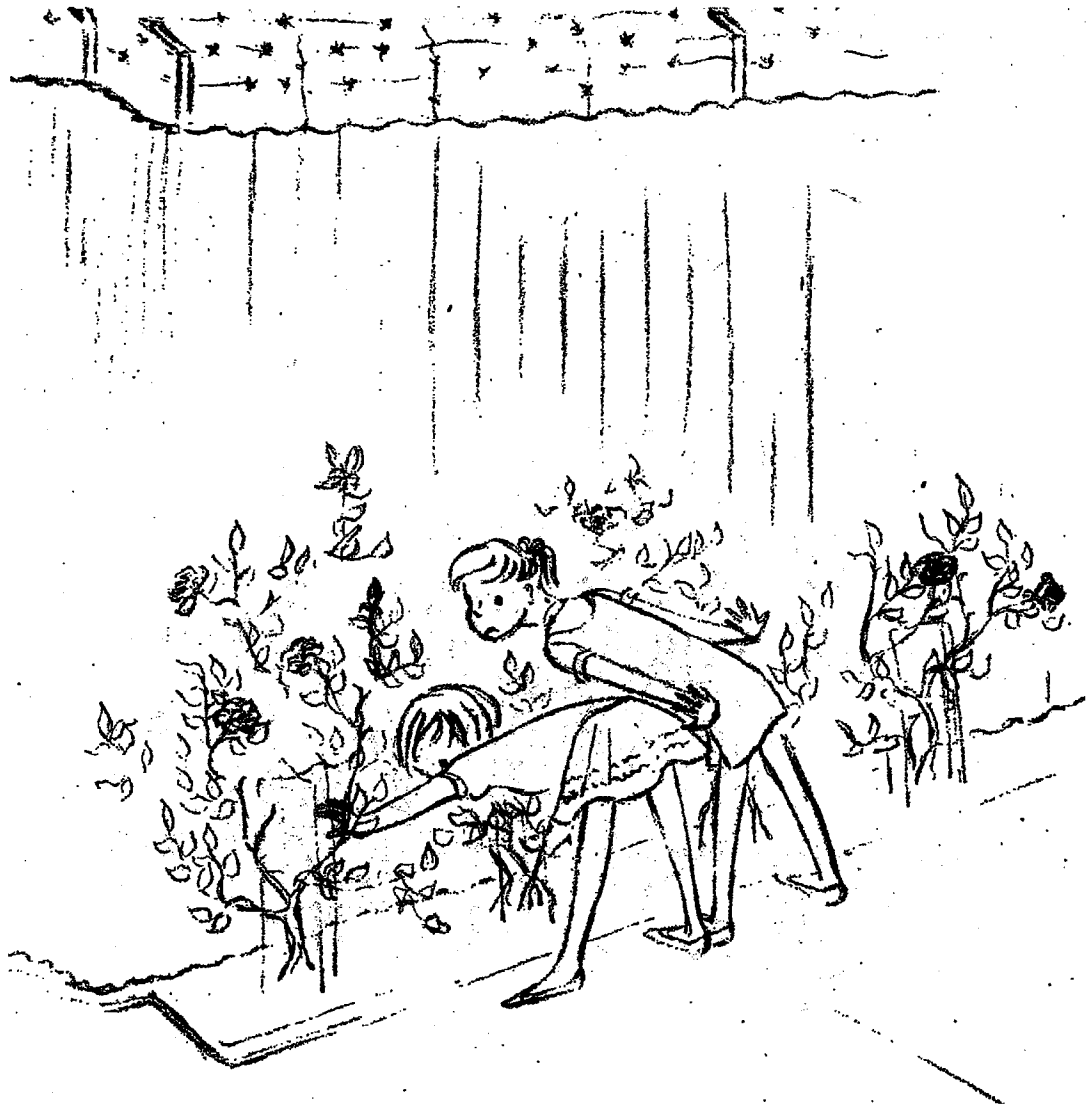
He looked in at the old Palace.
He saw a lot of workmen making it into a museum.
There wasn't any family there.



The children came home.



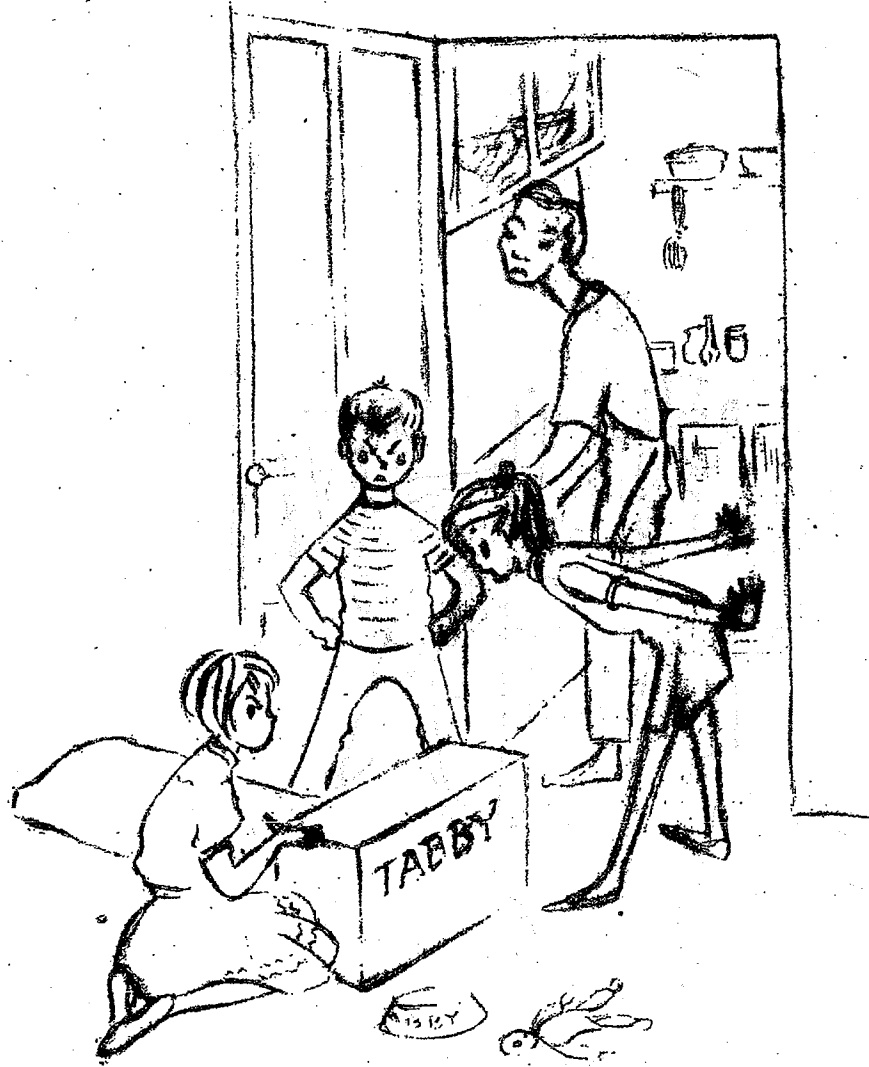
WHERE WAS LITTLE LONGTAIL?



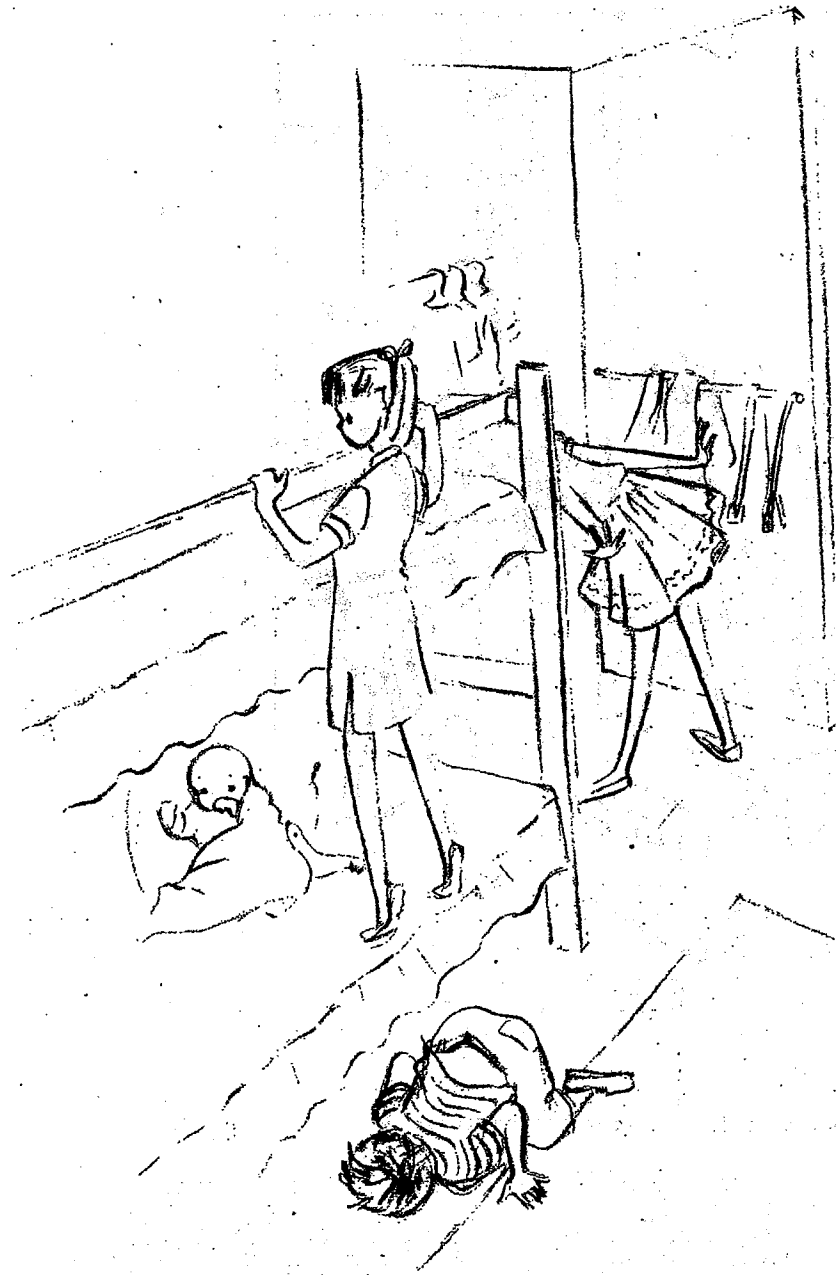
He wasn't digging in Daddy's rose bushes.



He wasn't under the gardenia bushes where he liked to lie.



He wasn't in his bed by the kitchen.



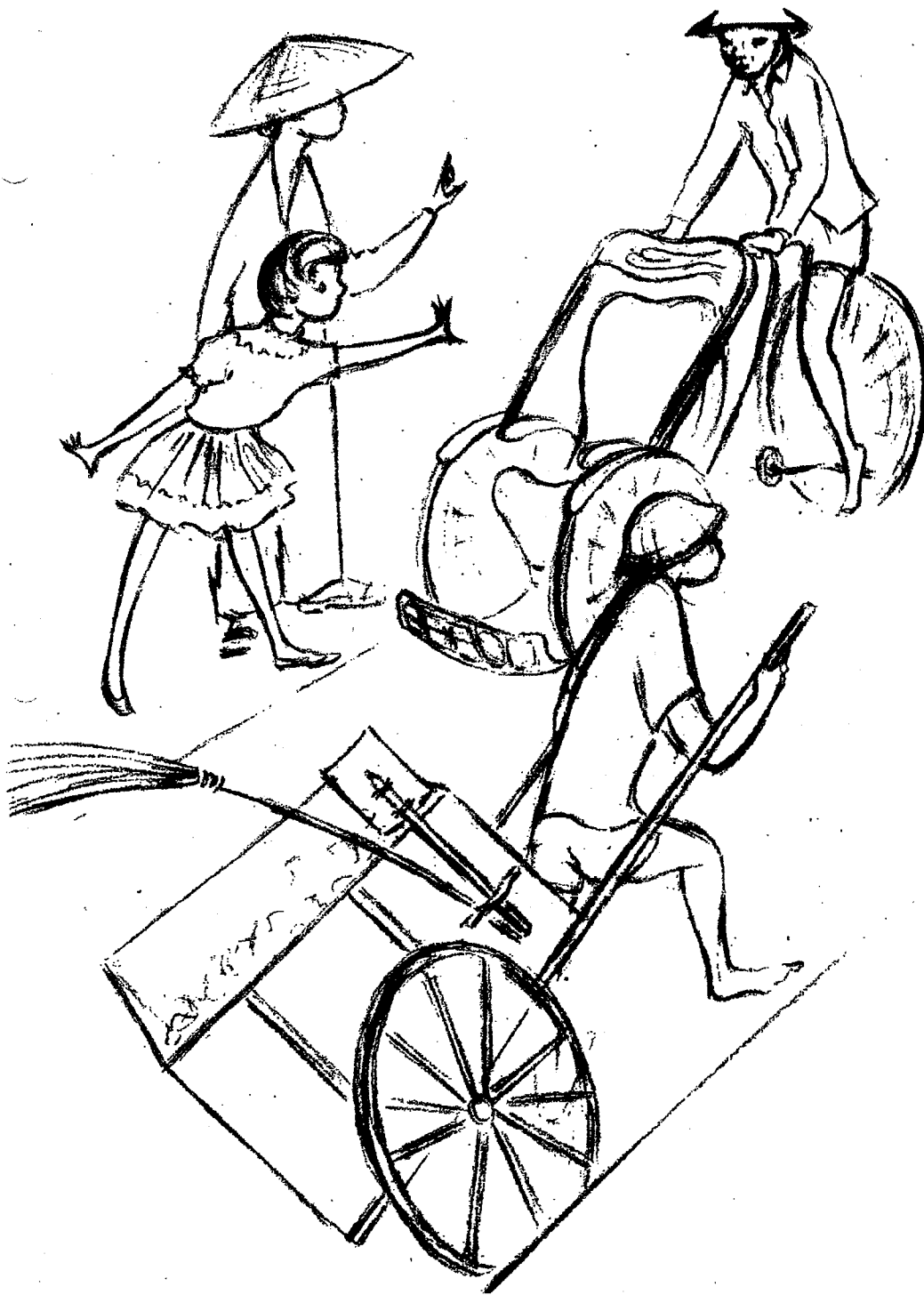
They looked in Deborah and Kathy's room.
Kathy's baby doll, Miss Peeps,
and her toy seal, Wally, were there,
but no Little Longtail.



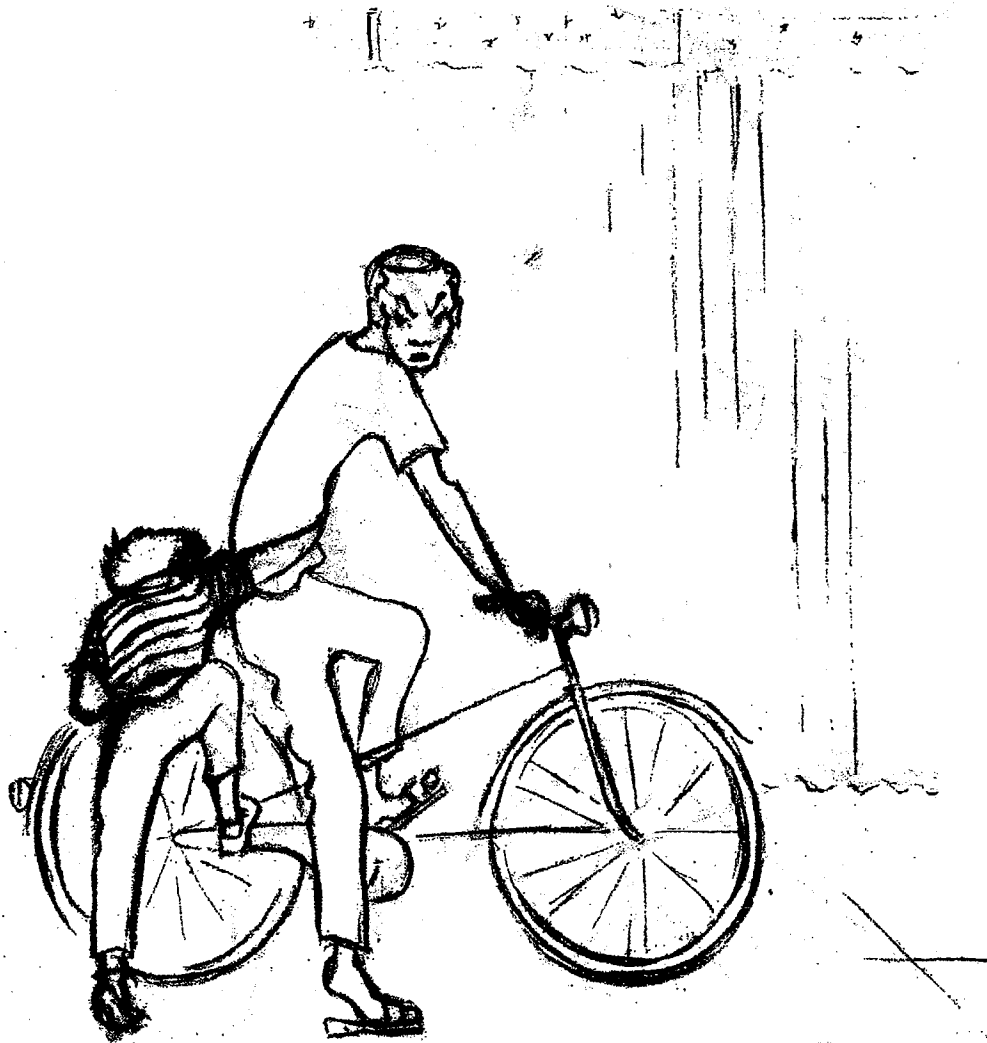
They looked in Tucker's room.
All of Tucker's models and army men were there,
but no Little Longtail.



Deborah went in a taxi with the amah, Tchi Hai, to look for him.



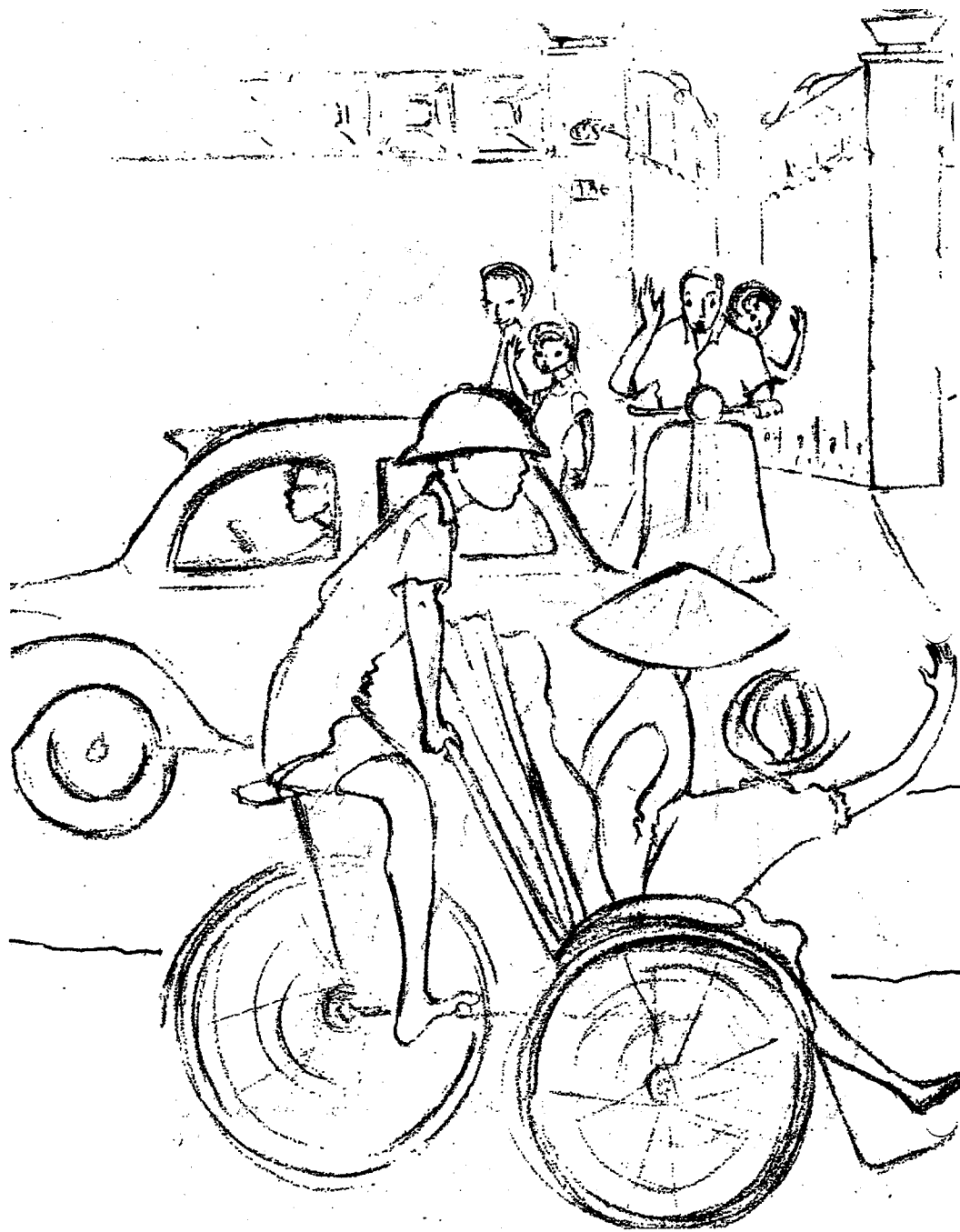
Kathy went in a cyclo with Tchi Phi, another amah, to look for him.



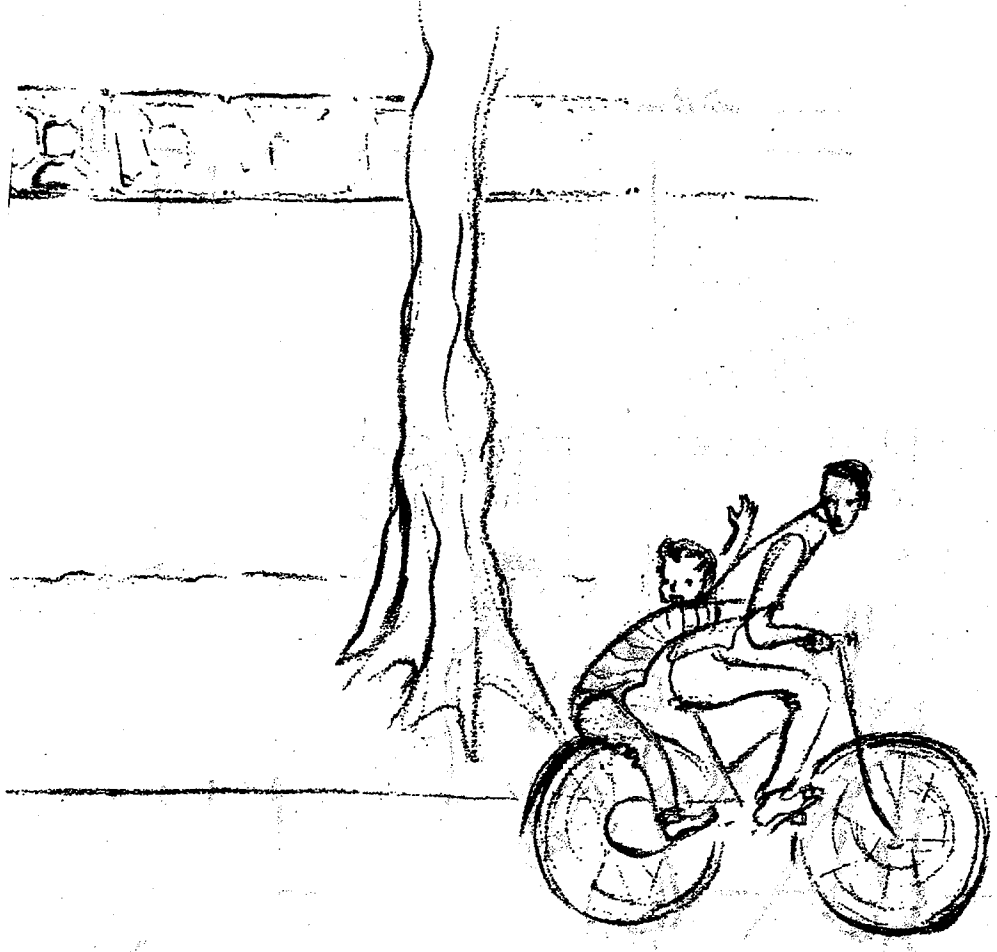
Tucker went with Kinh, the cook, on the back of his bicycle to look for him.

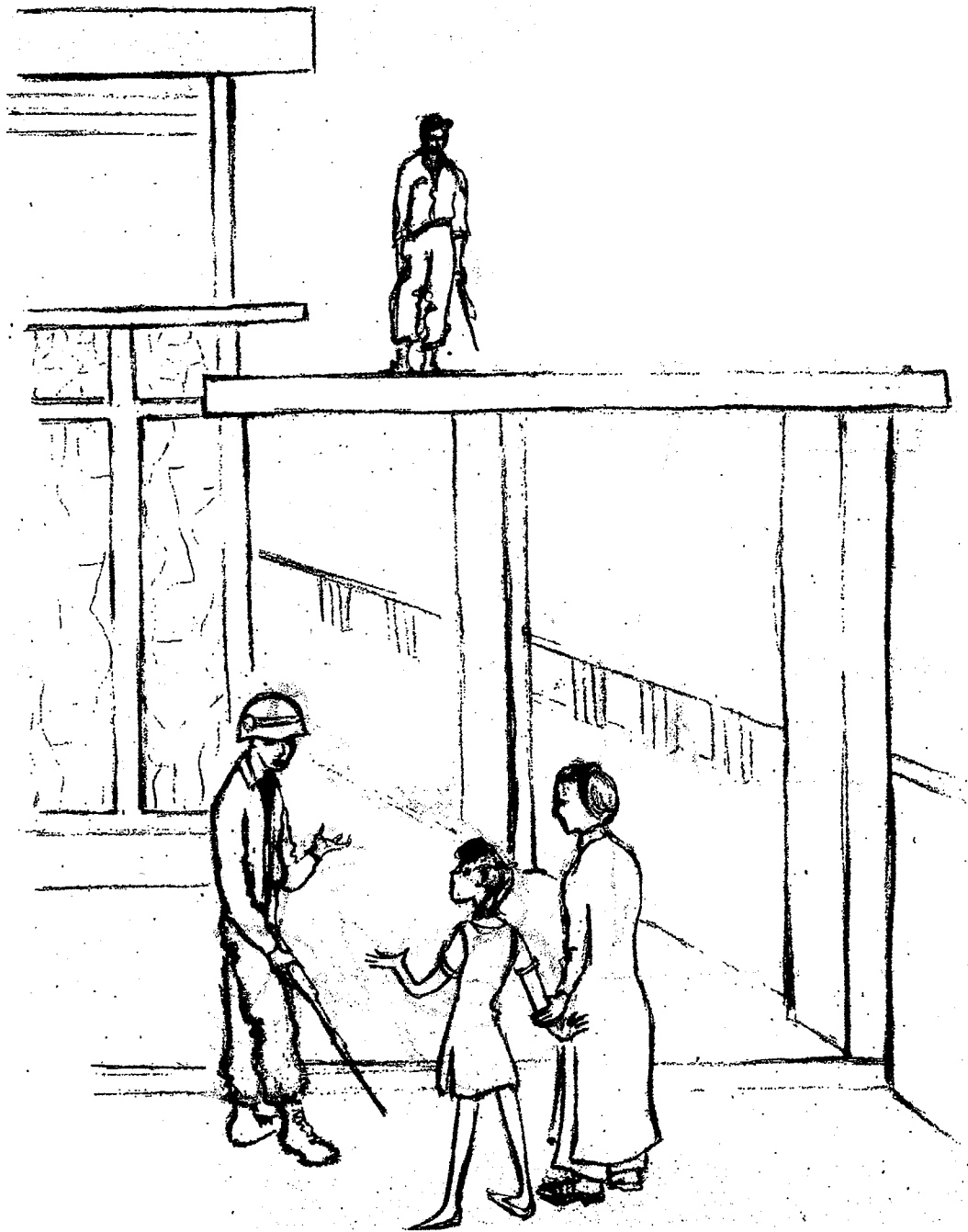


Mommy went with Daddy on the scooter to look for him.

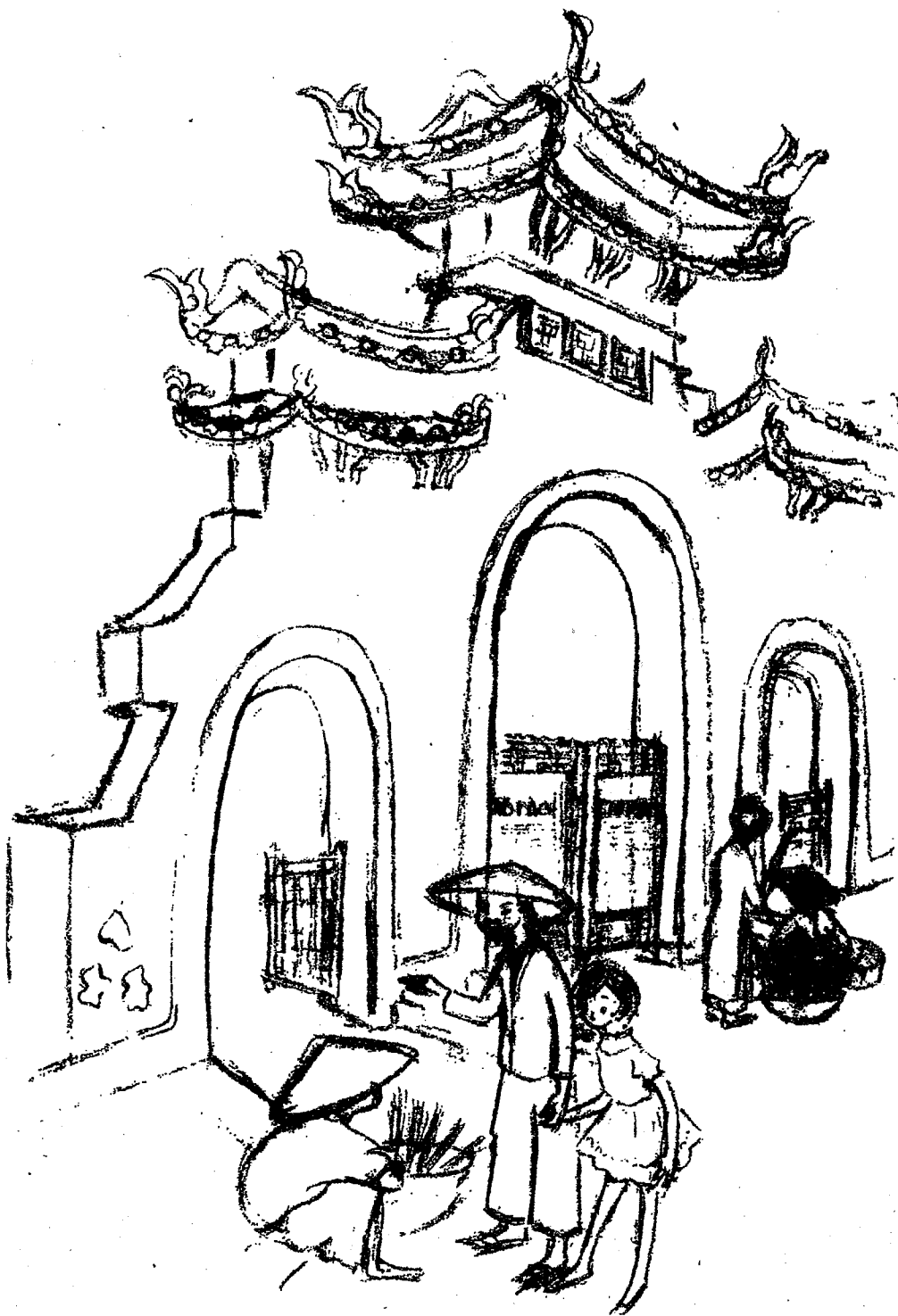


“Good luck!” they called to each other, and off they all went





Debbie went all the way out to the
American Community School.
The guards were still there.
But Little Longtail wasn't.

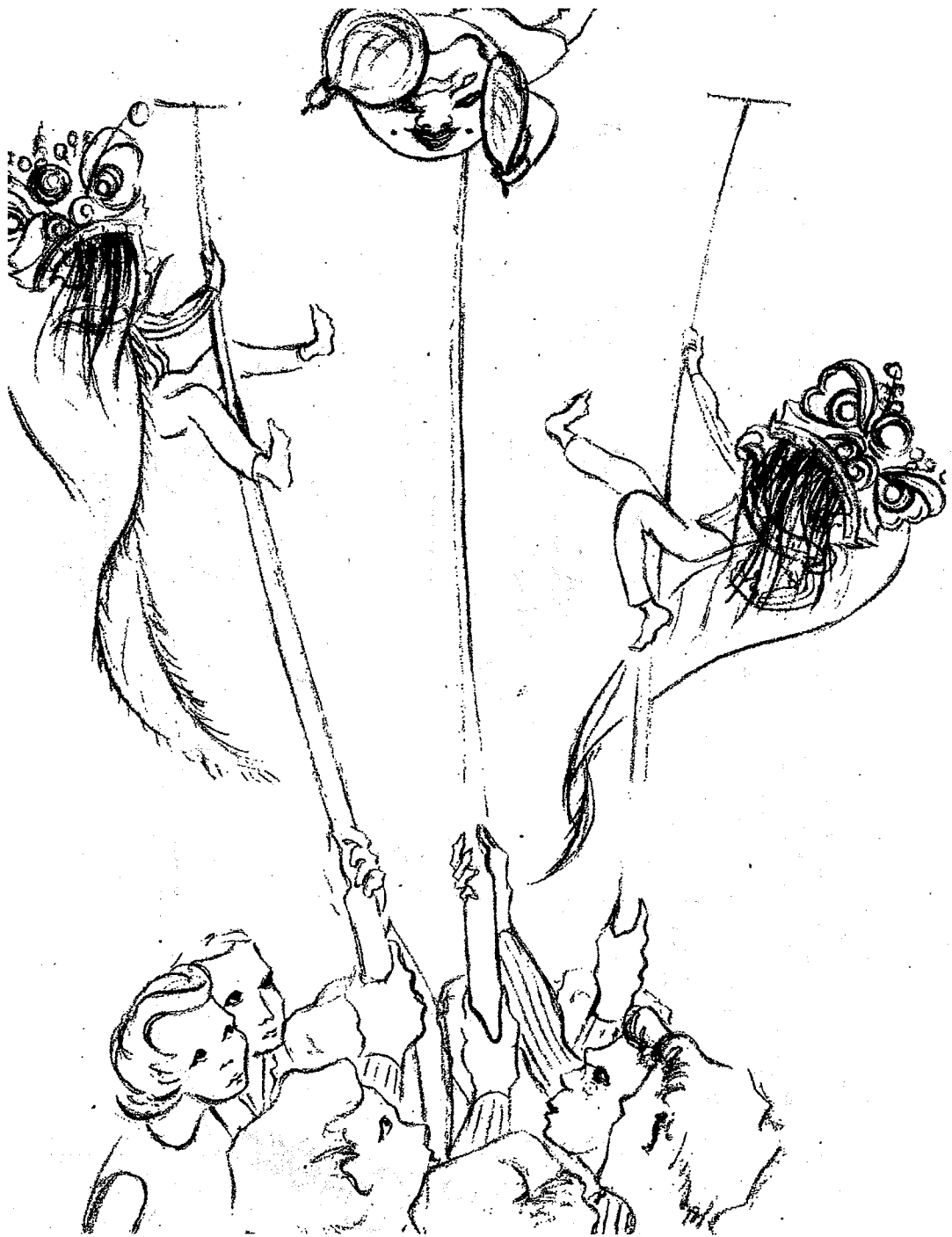


Kathy went to the Lan Ong Pagoda. She saw lots of incense sellers, but no Little Longtail.

Mommy and Daddy went out to Cholon.

They got caught in a dragon dance,

but they couldn't find Little Longtail.



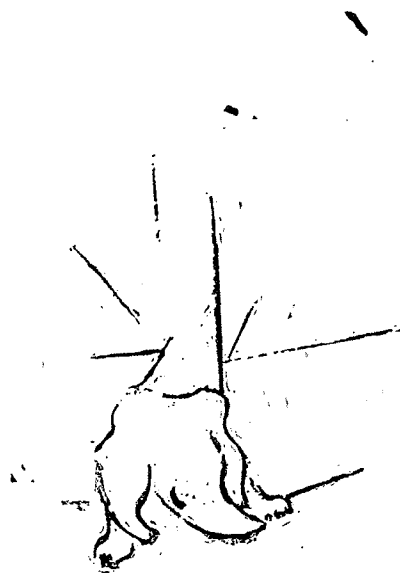


Tucker went around the corner to Rickey's house
(because that's the only place in town
he knew how to get to).
Little Longtail wasn't there, either.

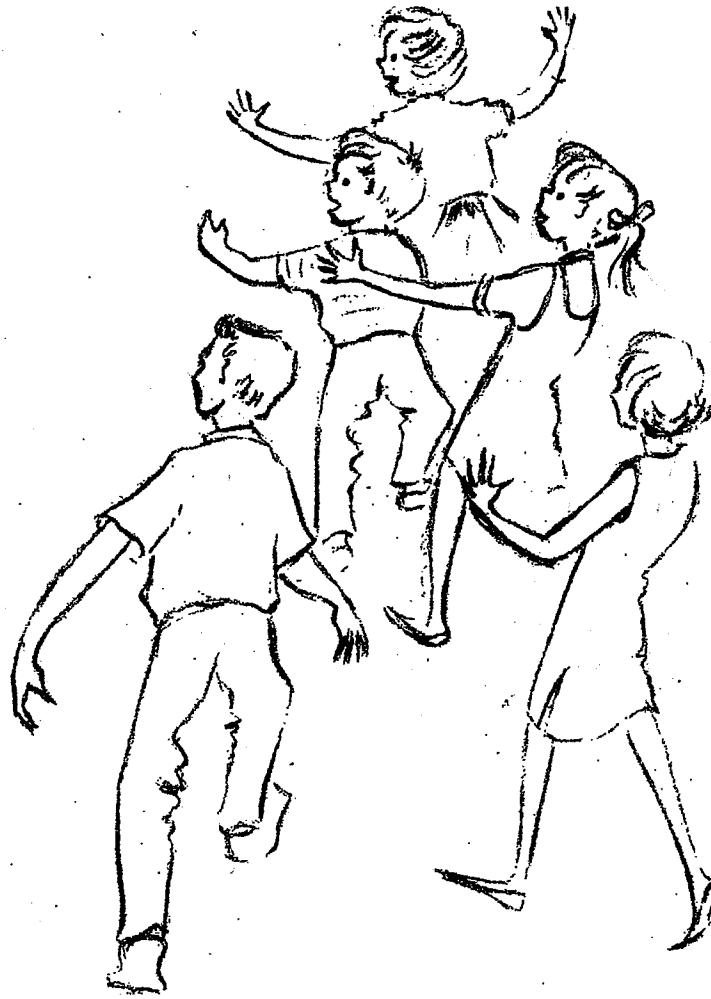


Back home they felt sad as sad could be. They were
SURE they'd never see Little Longtail again.

Then



.... there was Little Longtail.
He looked sadder than they felt.



They all ran to hug him at once.



He begged them not to stop being his family.
They told him not to worry any more
because



.... he was going to go to America with them!

THE END