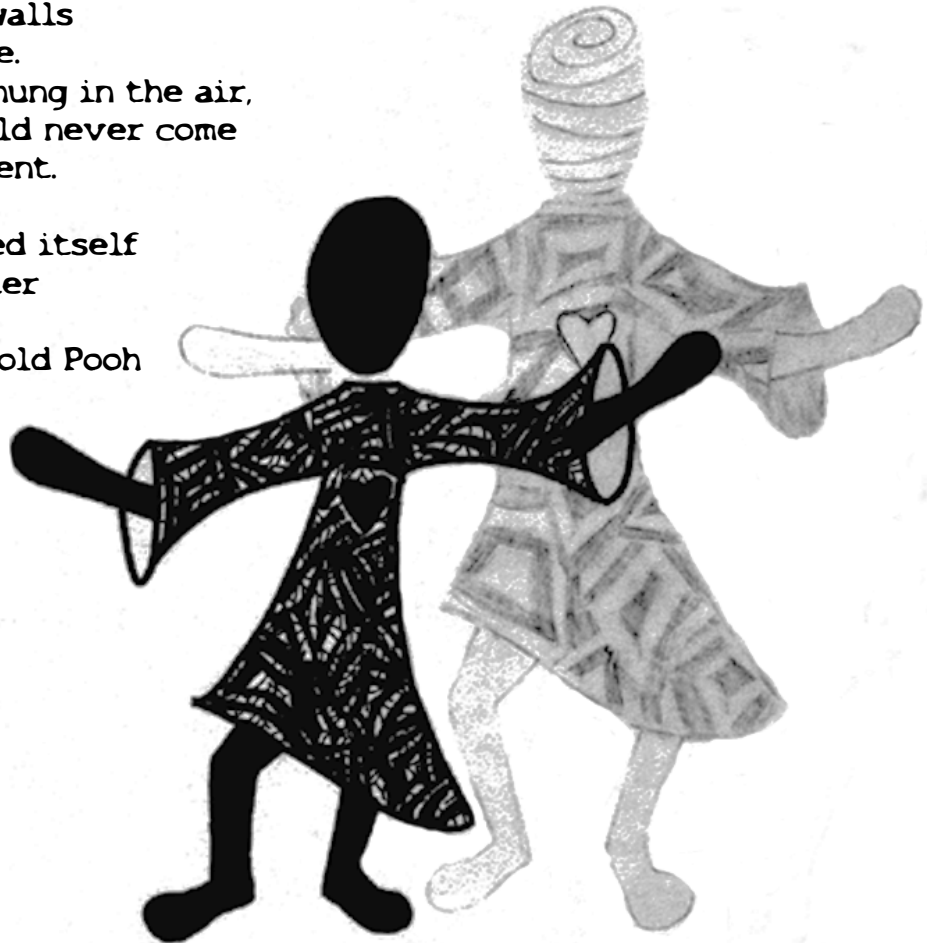


Pooh, Age Eleven

by Elizabeth Daniel

Pooh told me yesterday
that his life will end in suicide.
he said this as his laughing eyes
surveyed mine.
his carefully shaved head
relaxed in relief I had never seen in him.
he jerked unconsciously,
and looked off into the distance
that ended abruptly across the room.
and I saw
recognition twitching in his nose,
as he
stared at the brown walls
surrounding the space.
an easy irreverence hung in the air,
like a storm that would never come
but was always imminent.
its angry thunder
restlessly transformed itself
into the foggy laughter
of children.
and the eleven-year-old Pooh
lost his ancient
expression
and returned
to himself.
I watched
as he smiled
and walked away.



—Elizabeth Daniel, at this writing, was a senior at Vanguard Preparatory School in Waco, Texas. As a high school student, she volunteered at an after-school program for at-risk youth near an urban development project. Pooh is one of the friends she made there.

The art on this page is by Rebecca Ward, an art student at the University of Texas in Austin.
(from the “Peace Soup” page in *Baptist Peacemaker*, Volume 21 Number 2, Summer 2001)