

Small Allison

you lived
Bruce
Helen

START

SMALL ALISON. They're for showing tomorrow in class.

BRUCE. What's this?

SMALL ALISON. (*Bursting with pride.*) Okay, so: This is a keystone because Pennsylvania is the Keystone state.

BRUCE. This square?

SMALL ALISON. That's Beech Creek, see? That's the bridge, that's the ford, that's the creek, school, the Fun Home, our house, Aunt Jane and Uncle Randy's house—

Bruce points.

That's Germany!

(*Getting an idea.*)

Ooh, I know.

She draws in a new part.

John, Christian, me. See? Floating in bubbles because we're not born yet—

BRUCE. Okay, that's interesting but let me show you how you can make it better. This is visually confusing; you've got about ten different drawings so you can't really see any of them. Pick one.

SMALL ALISON. But this is a cartoon and in a cartoon there's all different parts.

BRUCE. But we can make it better than a cartoon.

SMALL ALISON. I like cartoons.

BRUCE. Sure, cartoons are fun but I'm showing you here how to do something substantial and beautiful. Listen to me, you have the potential to become a real artist. Do you know that? You do. But that means you have to learn the craft, you have to study the rules. Let's talk about composition. You've got too much going on here. Pick one area.

SMALL ALISON. The Keystone State.

BRUCE. That's too much. Watch this.

He takes her pad and starts a new drawing.

I'm going to draw our mountains. See that? How I'm shading them? That gives them dimension.

BRUCE. *(cont.)*

~~*Make this part look rugged...*~~

~~*Hm mm*~~

~~*Allegheny Plateau...*~~

~~*This dark shaded stripe bum bum bum is the front*~~

~~*Paint the long ridges and valleys below*~~

~~*Hm mm*~~

SMALL ALISON. I want the whole state.

BRUCE. *(Cross.)* I'm explaining to you that you can't do that.

SMALL ALISON. Let me try.

BRUCE. Alison, this is the way it should look.

SMALL ALISON. But I liked the way mine was.

BRUCE. *(Losing his temper.)* But you cannot do it like that unless you want to ruin it. I am trying to teach you something important.

HELEN. *(Coming in from the other room.)* Bruce, it doesn't matter. It's a drawing.

BRUCE. What do you mean it doesn't matter? She's taking it to school. She's showing it in class. You know what, never mind. You want to take a half-baked mess to school, you want to embarrass yourself like that it's fine with me. Do what you want.

SMALL ALISON. *(Holding the drawing out to him.)* No, I like the one you did, Daddy.

END

Alison takes the drawing from Small Alison's outstretched hand and studies it.

ALISON.

Make this part look rugged...

Mm mm

Allegheny Plateau...

This dark shaded stripe bum bum bum is the front

Paint the long ridges and valleys below

Mm mm

Our town is this...dot.

She begins to draw her own version of this map:

Quick dashes mark the property ends

Beech Creek, a rope that turns and bends