LITTLE LINE

Grace Cavalieri
Illustrated by Mary Ellen Long
To all the children
There was a little line who tho he was small wished to stretch his body like other lines he saw
whose very magic from their spinnings...
caught up their endings with their beginnings
into a perfect circle "O". Everyone has his dream, don't you know.
“O the many things one could be
those lines which are not shaped like me.
Circles can travel foot in hand
to places and be back again.
Circles can be happy things
mirrors
lights
wedding rings
suns and moons
leopard spots
cookies
hoops
lemon drops
wheels and balls and marbles too
but half a circle will not do."
Anything is what one could be
if a line could only see

how to grow and turn
and wiggle until his toes could reach his giggle.
Little Line would try and try
and try
and try
and try.

He'd dig his feet in for a start
and stretch and stretch and stretch

his little heart.
Like a bird which wouldn’t stop singing
Like a bell which couldn’t stop ringing
the wish to be another way was the wish which came to stay.
Each try to circle became a miss
until his arc doubled
and turned into this.
O sadness without end which one can see,
now Little Line would always look like this to you and me.
He jumped up high in tries to bend and turn and puff and round his ends.
But Alas! He fell down that much more... becoming flatter than he was before.
One sad day he fell on to a drain...a puddle edge left by the rain
The warming sun shone brightly down...lighting Little Line upon the ground.
Sun sparkled a mirror right off of him
and sparkled bright shapes of a great many things.
A leaf’s edge...
O Little Line thought,
"why I can see
some pretty things
which look like me."
Leaves...
Leaves are bright and green outside.
Leaves float to earth their leafy ride
down and down
to the ground.

"why what great fun it could be
to slip on to a shape like me."
Little Line began to know all the beauty
that the sun could show.

Sun sparkled on a child’s tear
a pebble by the ocean’s pier...
so smooth the almond shapes we know which make
some lovely things to grow.
And farther from our watching eye
the earth's VERY PATH through the dark sky.
Little Line thought with a full heart
of all the stars caught in such arcs.
He thought of all the beautiful things which were not round,
that beauty was in the things we found.
And that though we wish for what others are perhaps we will be more special...by far.