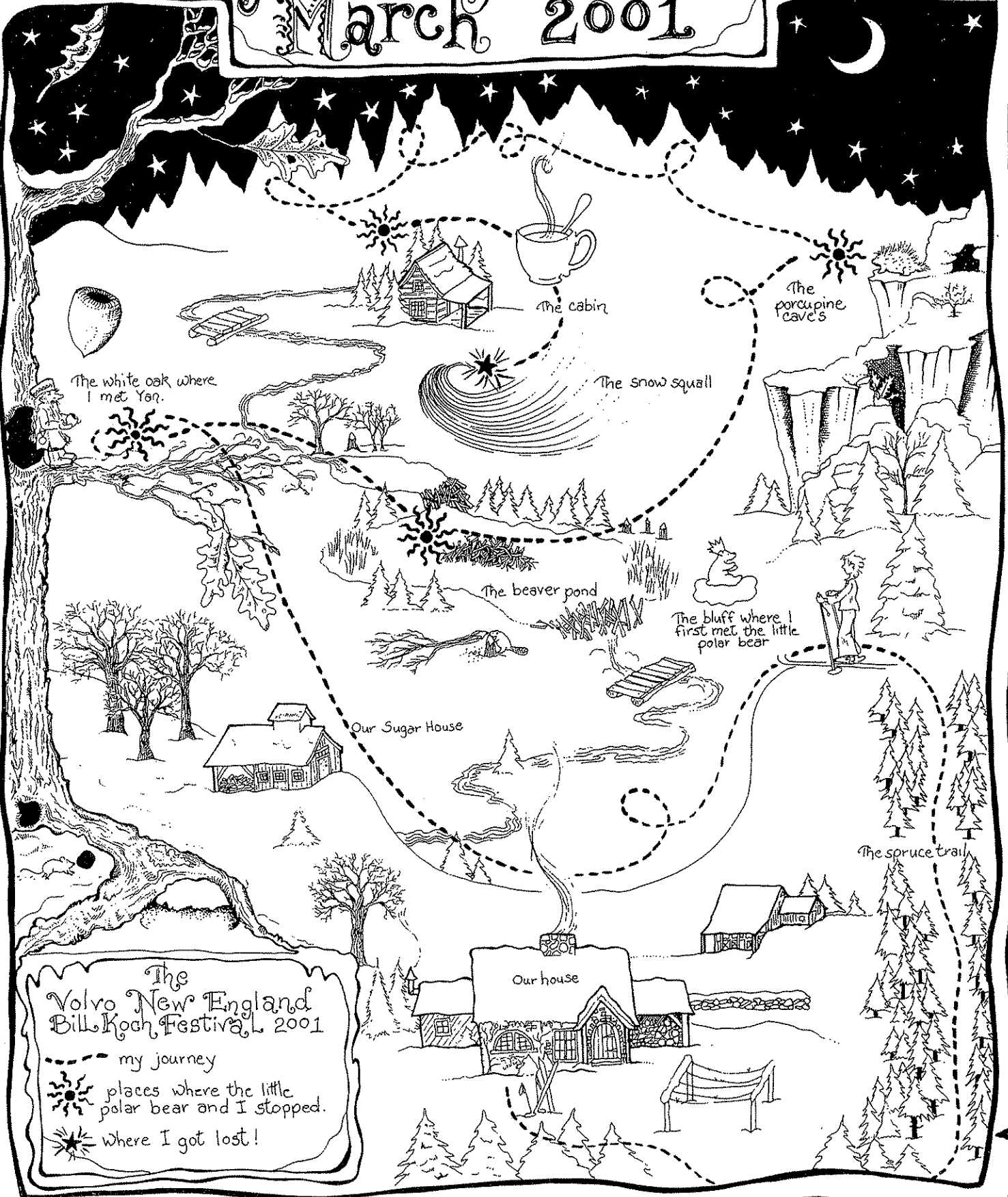


# A Map of My Adventure

## March 2001

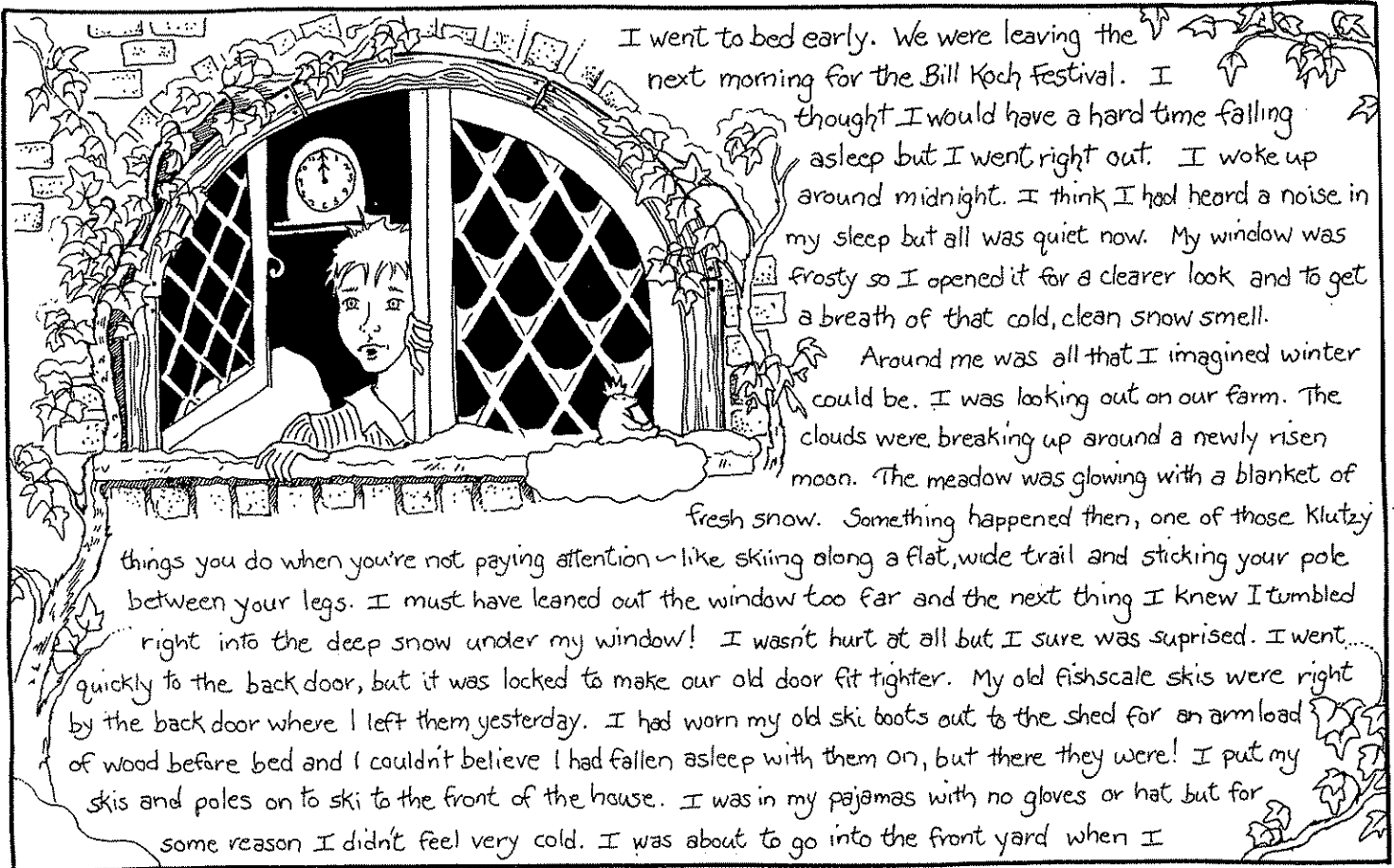


The Volvo New England Bill Koch Festival 2001

--- my journey

☀ places where the little polar bear and I stopped.

☀ where I got lost!



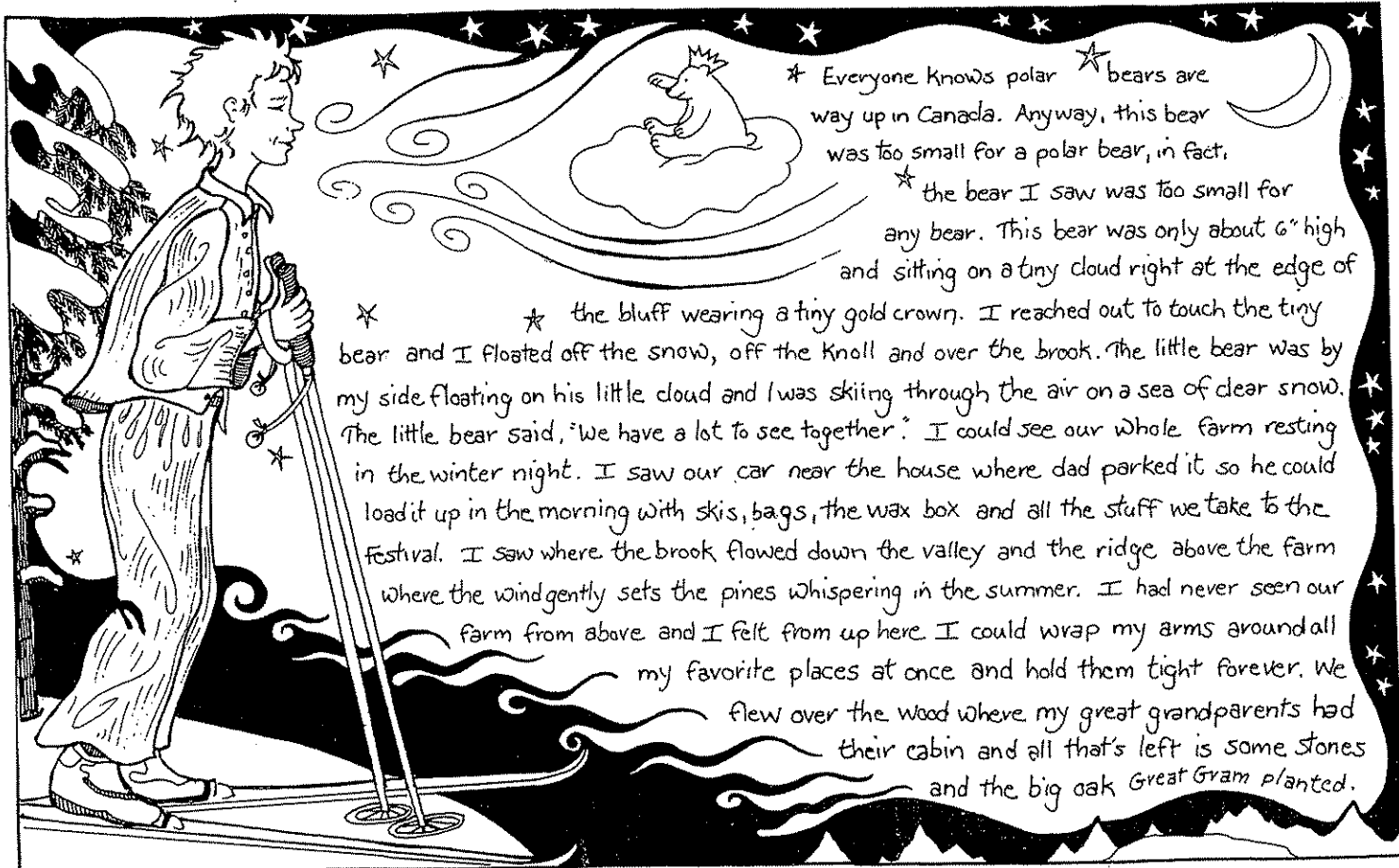
I went to bed early. We were leaving the next morning for the Bill Koch Festival. I thought I would have a hard time falling asleep but I went right out. I woke up around midnight. I think I had heard a noise in my sleep but all was quiet now. My window was frosty so I opened it for a clearer look and to get a breath of that cold, clean snow smell.

Around me was all that I imagined winter could be. I was looking out on our farm. The clouds were breaking up around a newly risen moon. The meadow was glowing with a blanket of fresh snow. Something happened then, one of those klutzy

things you do when you're not paying attention - like skiing along a flat, wide trail and sticking your pole between your legs. I must have leaned out the window too far and the next thing I knew I tumbled right into the deep snow under my window! I wasn't hurt at all but I sure was surprised. I went quickly to the back door, but it was locked to make our old door fit tighter. My old fishscale skis were right by the back door where I left them yesterday. I had worn my old ski boots out to the shed for an armload of wood before bed and I couldn't believe I had fallen asleep with them on, but there they were! I put my skis and poles on to ski to the front of the house. I was in my pajamas with no gloves or hat but for some reason I didn't feel very cold. I was about to go into the front yard when I

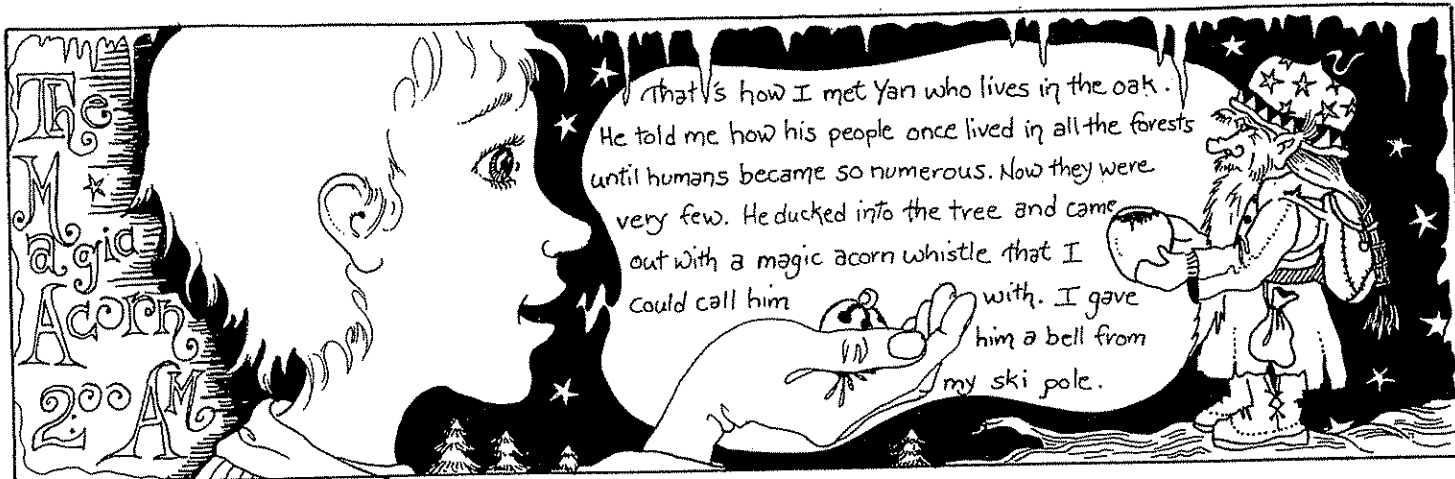
turned down the hedgerow towards the woods. Something was drawing me on. The moon and starlight were lighting my way and the air smelled like a Christmas tree as I started down the spruce trail. Mom and Dad and I make trails in the fall as we get in firewood. We lay out every trail with an eye for skiing, we all love to ski. Especially on our farm. The old spruce trail ends on an open knoll overlooking the brook, sugar house and sugarbush where we tap trees for maple syrup. Thick branches were laced tightly together on both sides, the knoll ahead was brightly lit. I had to ski out there - I'm glad I did.





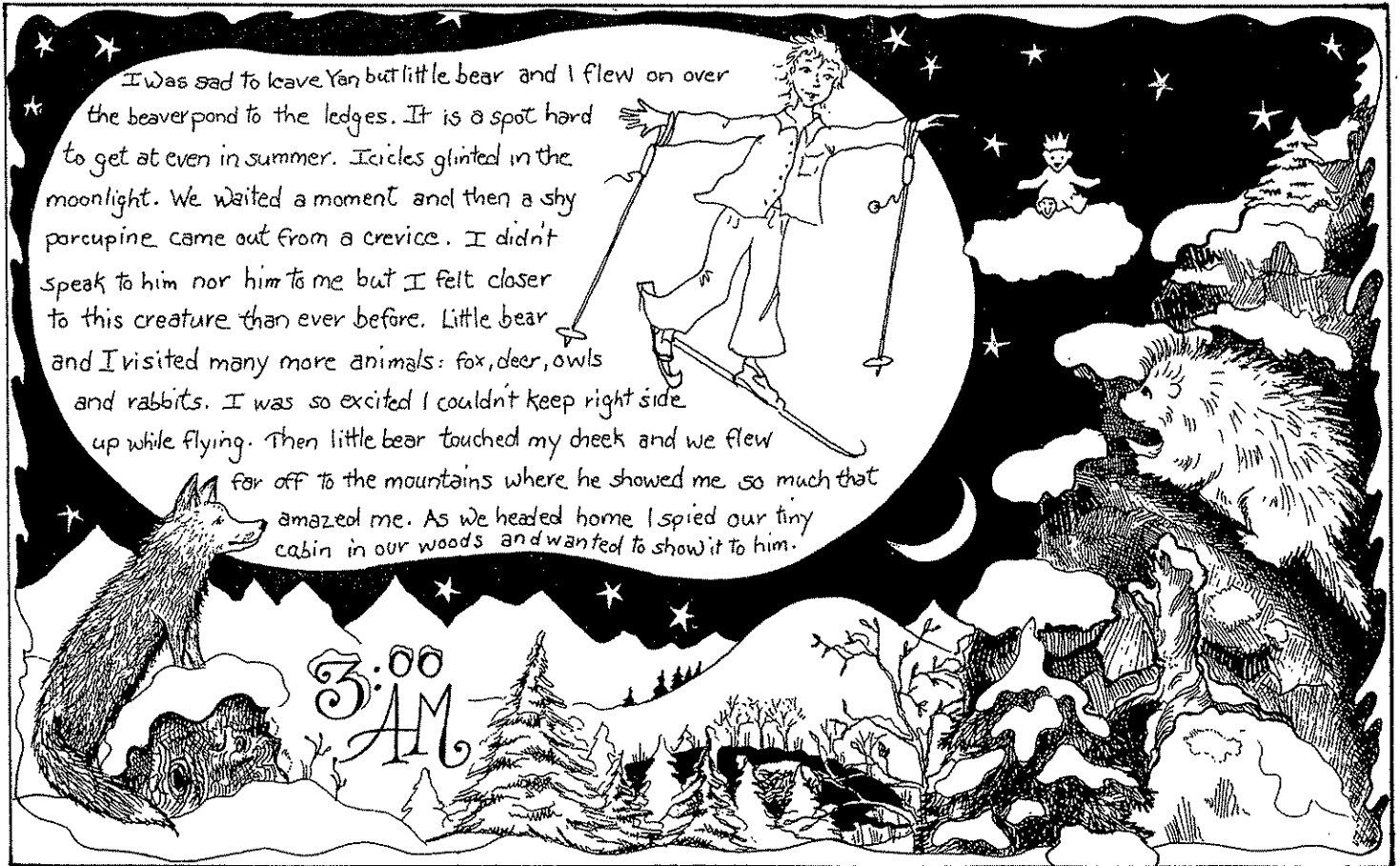
\* Everyone knows polar bears are way up in Canada. Anyway, this bear was too small for a polar bear, in fact, the bear I saw was too small for any bear. This bear was only about 6" high and sitting on a tiny cloud right at the edge of

\* the bluff wearing a tiny gold crown. I reached out to touch the tiny bear and I floated off the snow, off the knoll and over the brook. The little bear was by my side floating on his little cloud and I was skiing through the air on a sea of clear snow. The little bear said, "We have a lot to see together." I could see our whole farm resting in the winter night. I saw our car near the house where dad parked it so he could load it up in the morning with skis, bags, the wax box and all the stuff we take to the festival. I saw where the brook flowed down the valley and the ridge above the farm where the wind gently sets the pines whispering in the summer. I had never seen our farm from above and I felt from up here I could wrap my arms around all my favorite places at once and hold them tight forever. We flew over the wood where my great grandparents had their cabin and all that's left is some stones and the big oak Great Gram planted.



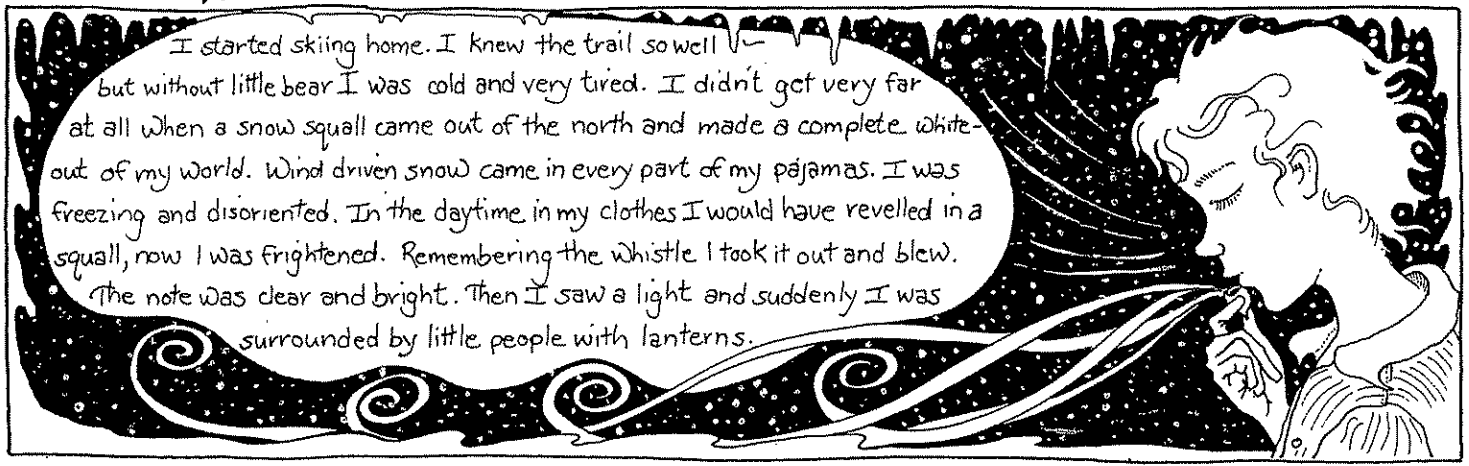
That's how I met Yan who lives in the oak. He told me how his people once lived in all the forests until humans became so numerous. Now they were very few. He ducked into the tree and came out with a magic acorn whistle that I could call him with. I gave him a bell from my ski pole.

The  
Magic  
Acorn  
200 AM



I was sad to leave Yan but little bear and I flew on over the beaverpond to the ledges. It is a spot hard to get at even in summer. Icicles glistened in the moonlight. We waited a moment and then a shy porcupine came out from a crevice. I didn't speak to him nor him to me but I felt closer to this creature than ever before. Little bear and I visited many more animals: fox, deer, owls and rabbits. I was so excited I couldn't keep right side up while flying. Then little bear touched my cheek and we flew far off to the mountains where he showed me so much that amazed me. As we headed home I spied our tiny cabin in our woods and wanted to show it to him.

3:00 AM



I started skiing home. I knew the trail so well but without little bear I was cold and very tired. I didn't get very far at all when a snow squall came out of the north and made a complete white-out of my world. Wind driven snow came in every part of my pajamas. I was freezing and disoriented. In the daytime in my clothes I would have revelled in a squall, now I was frightened. Remembering the whistle I took it out and blew. The note was clear and bright. Then I saw a light and suddenly I was surrounded by little people with lanterns.

My sense of direction was lost in the squall but soon I found myself beneath my window and the little people had disappeared into the snow as fast as they came. I took



off my skis and poles and when I looked up there was little bear. He said he was sorry he left when he did and was worried about me in the squall so he come back. He said he would help me into my window, I looked up to it and when I looked back there was a full size polar bear beside me. I looked in his face and it was little bear just BIG! I climbed on his back and into my room and when I turned round there was little bear on his tiny cloud. "Dont leave", I said. "I never do" said the bear, "you can't always see me but I am out here. All the magic is out here." He waved and drifted off into the snow. Tomorrow we go to Notch-view. On Saturday when I ski out of the stadium he will be there with me. He promised to be there and I'll be looking for him, even if you can't see him I know he'll be there. He is my magic out there. I hope you find yours too.