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Hopscotch

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In a Different Voice

Hopscotch *by Elizabeth Oakes*

Throw the rock.
Don't hit the lines.
Jump in the squares.
Pick up the rock.
Bop on home.

Simple rules.
Simple sounds.
Taking turns.
Being careful.

It is a girls' game,
this circumscribed world
of squares with numbers
and an oval called heaven
at the top, a space called
home at the bottom.

We gather on the sidewalk,
use our chalk—we make this
game, Beverly, Patsy, Linda, me.

We play.
Someone reaches heaven
and hops back home,
picks up the rock
while balancing on one foot.

No one thinks of hell.