

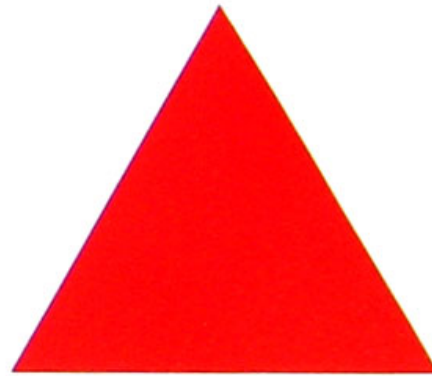
PICTURE THIS

HOW PICTURES WORK

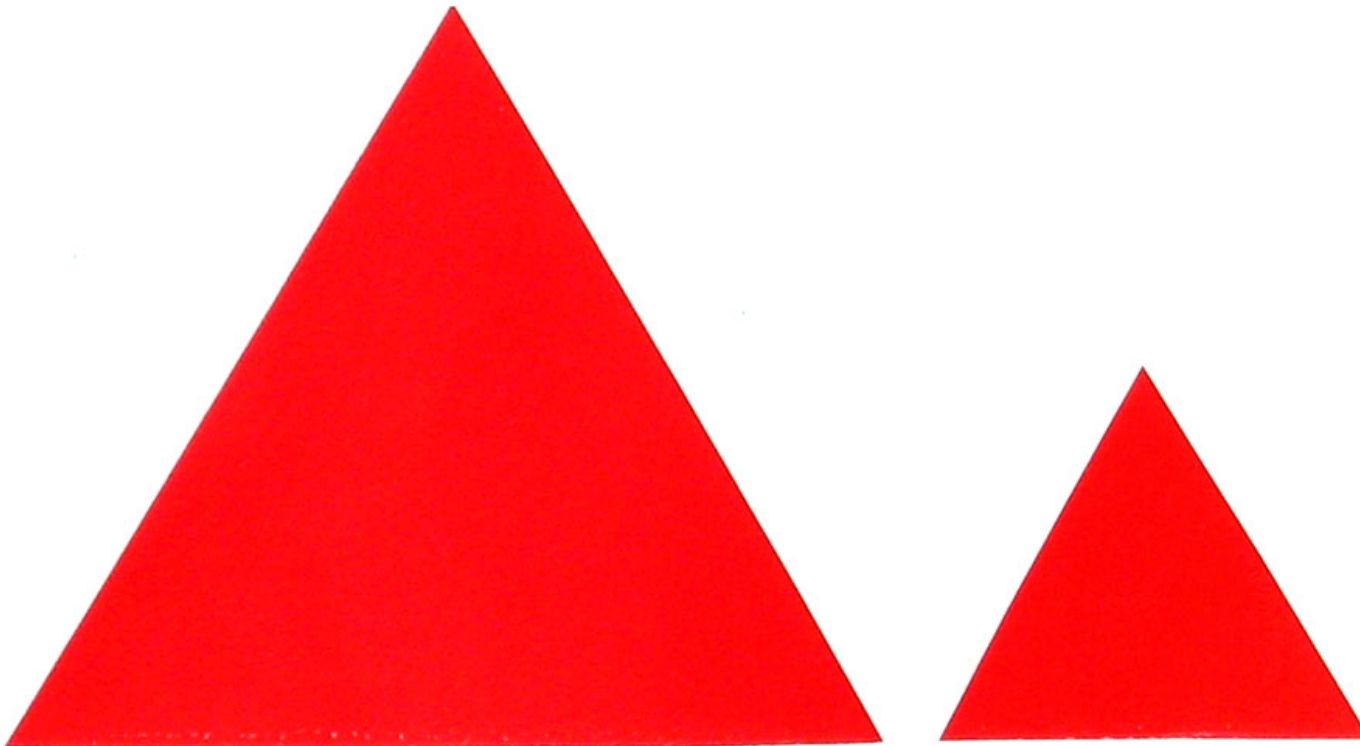
by Molly Bang

Extracted from:

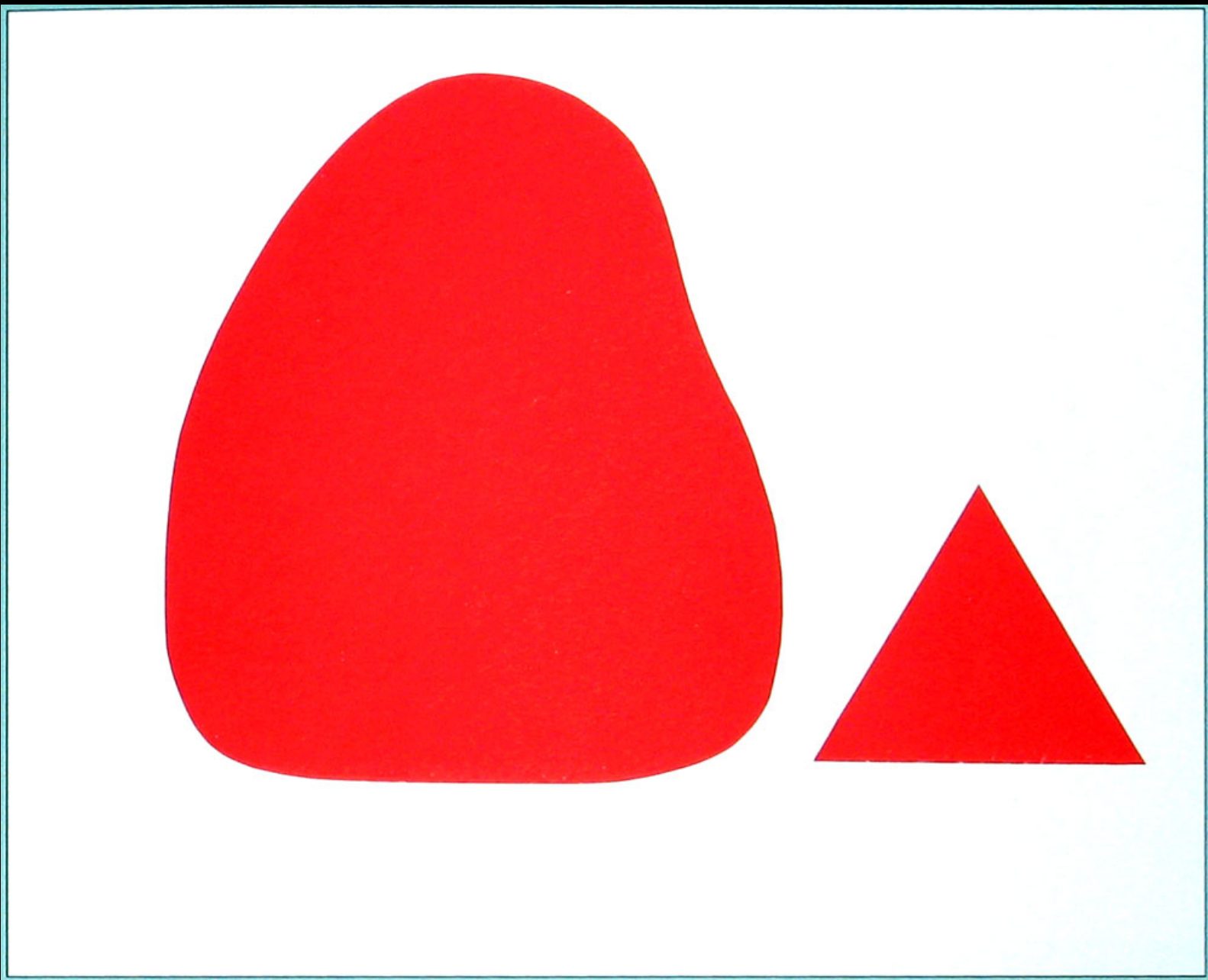
http://www.nhsdesigns.com/graphic/quiz-tests/archives/q01_picture-this-quiz.php



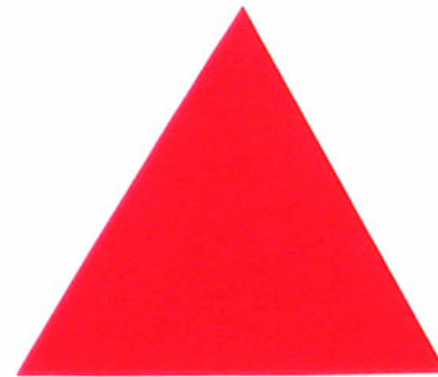
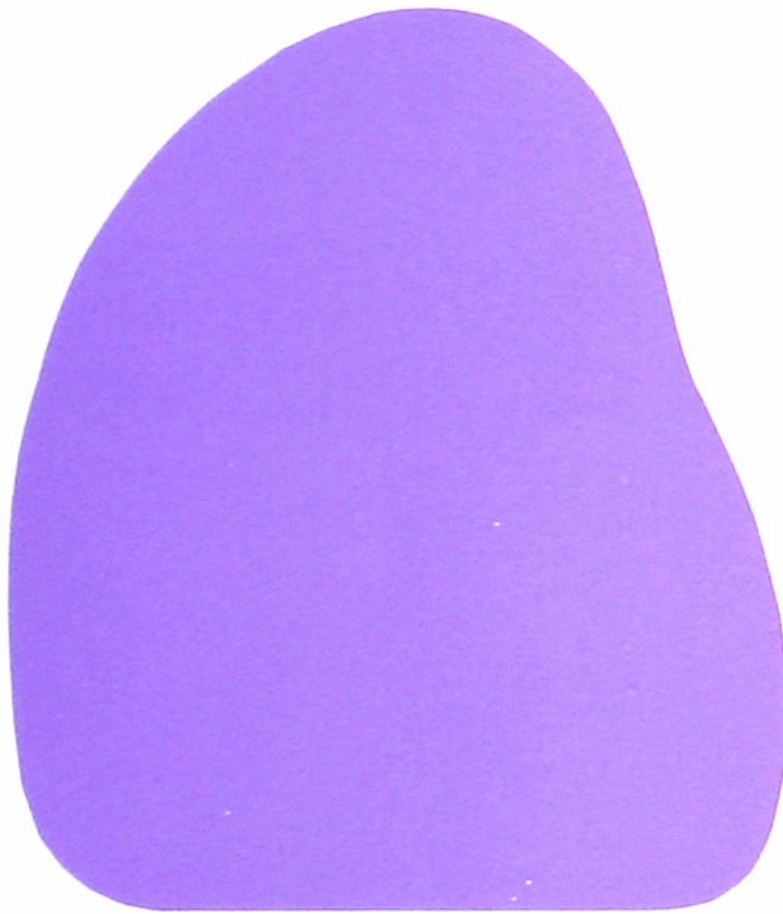
Do I feel anything for this shape?



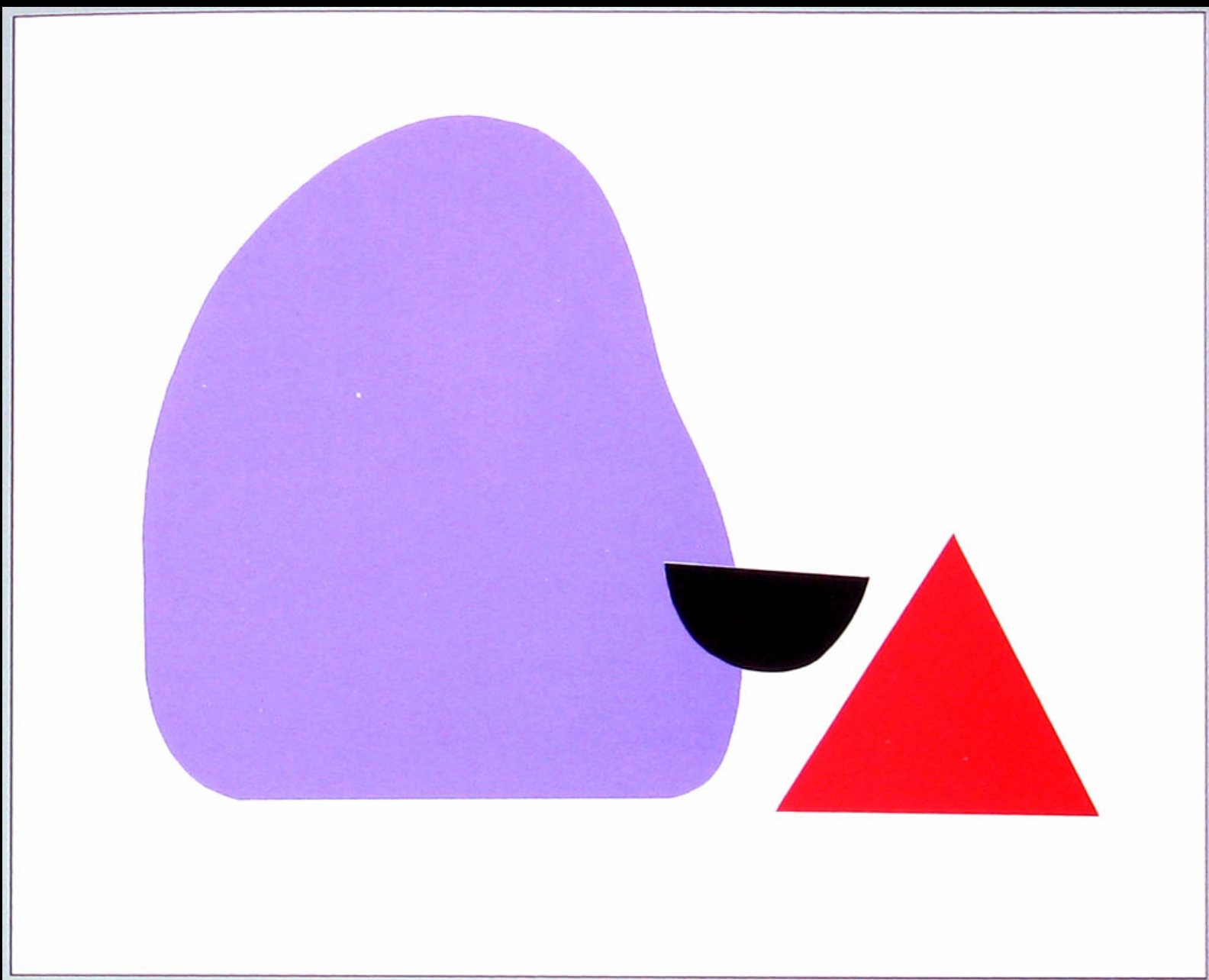
How can I make her feel less overwhelming and more huggable?



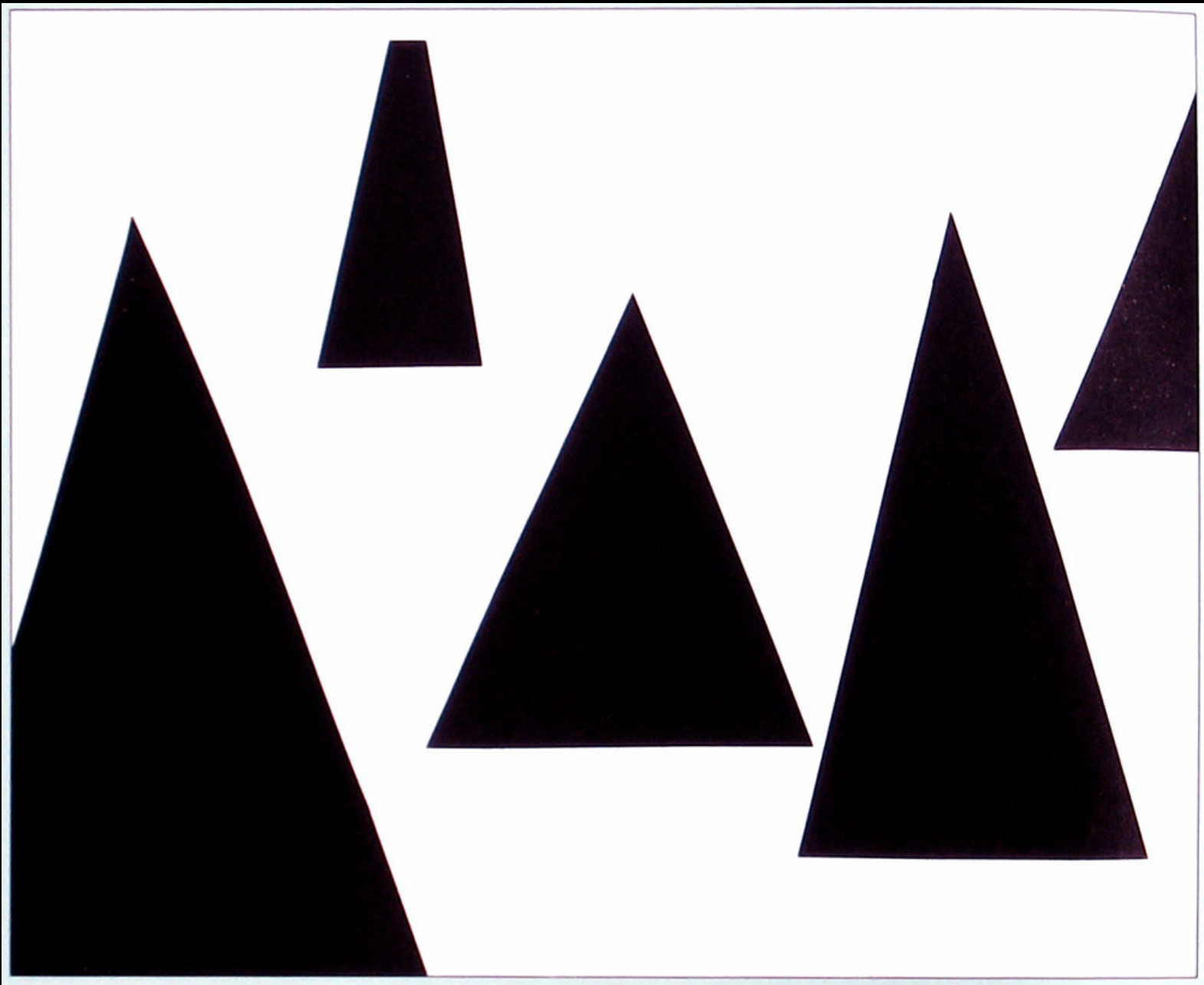
How can I keep her large but give Little Red Riding Hood prominence in the picture?



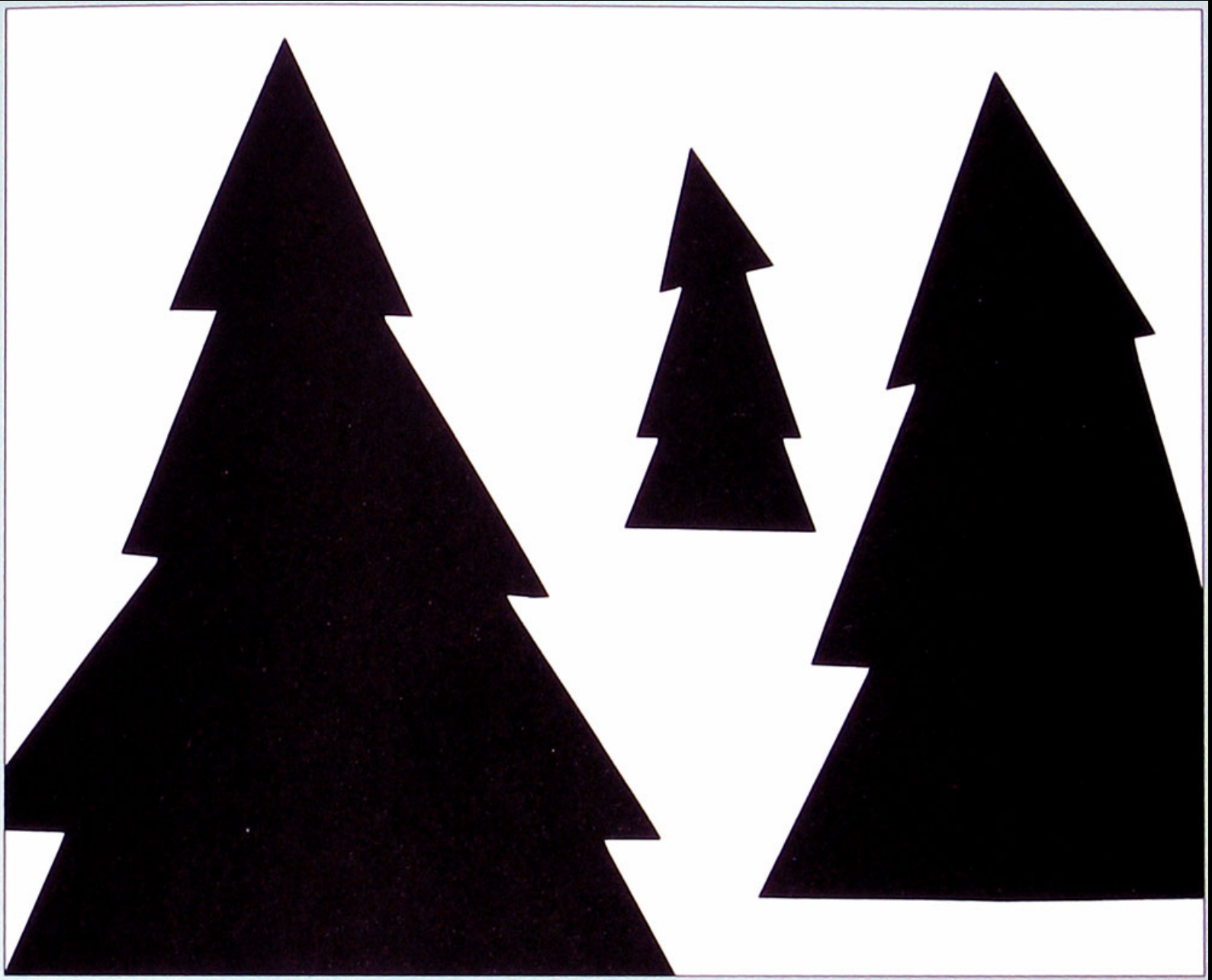
What do I feel about the mother now?



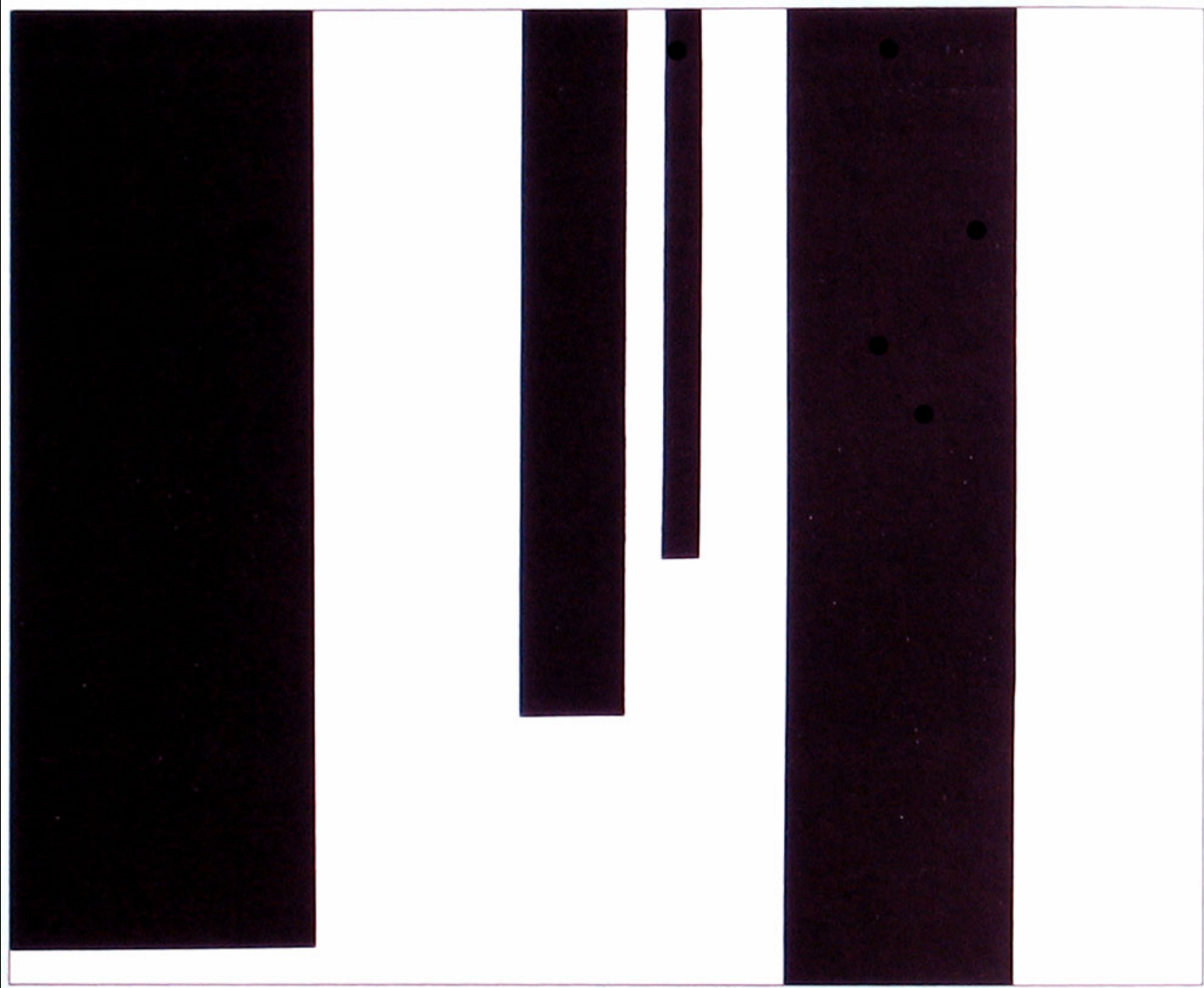
It has shown some of the ways that **shapes** and **colors** affect us emotionally.



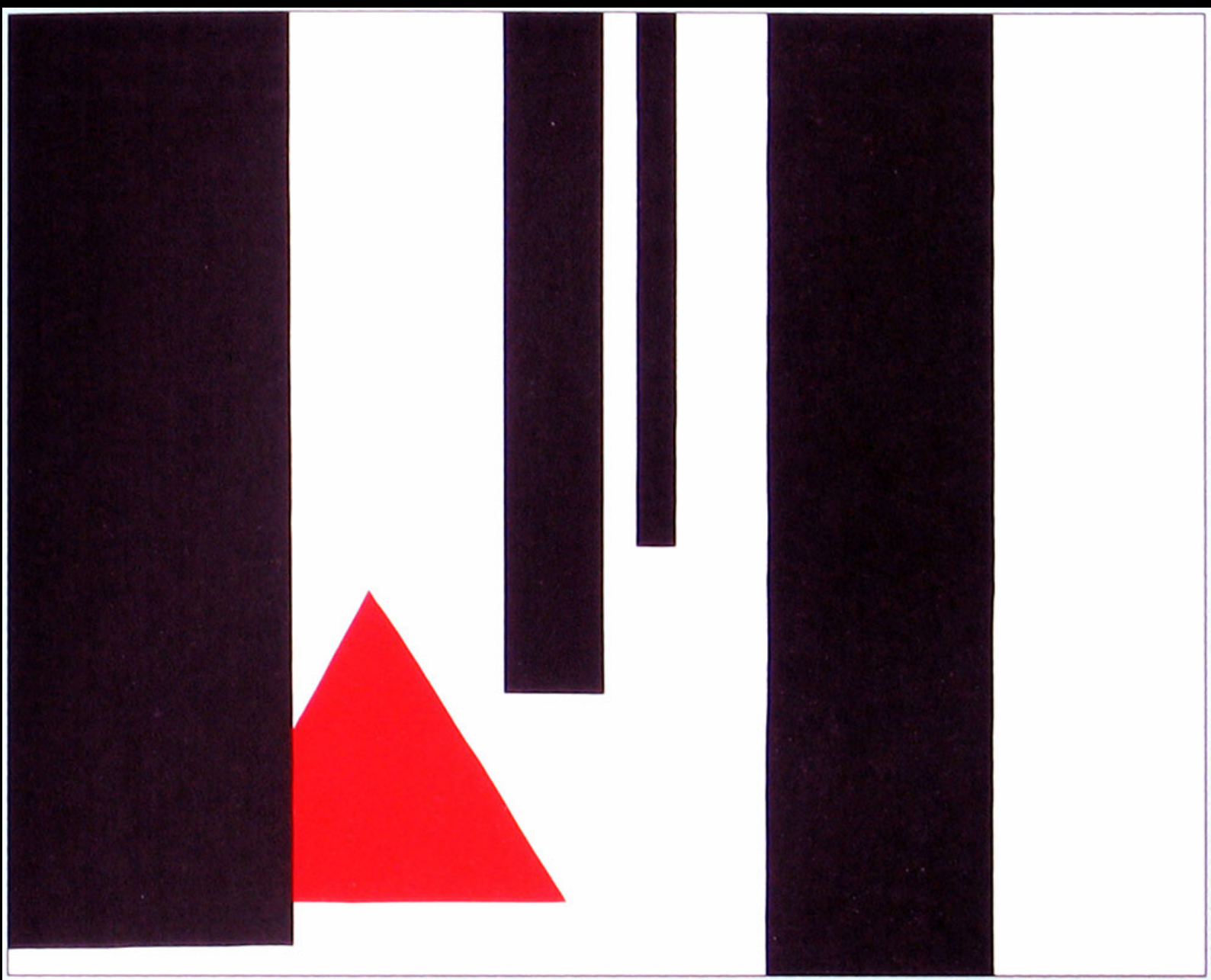
I wanted to stay as simple as possible.



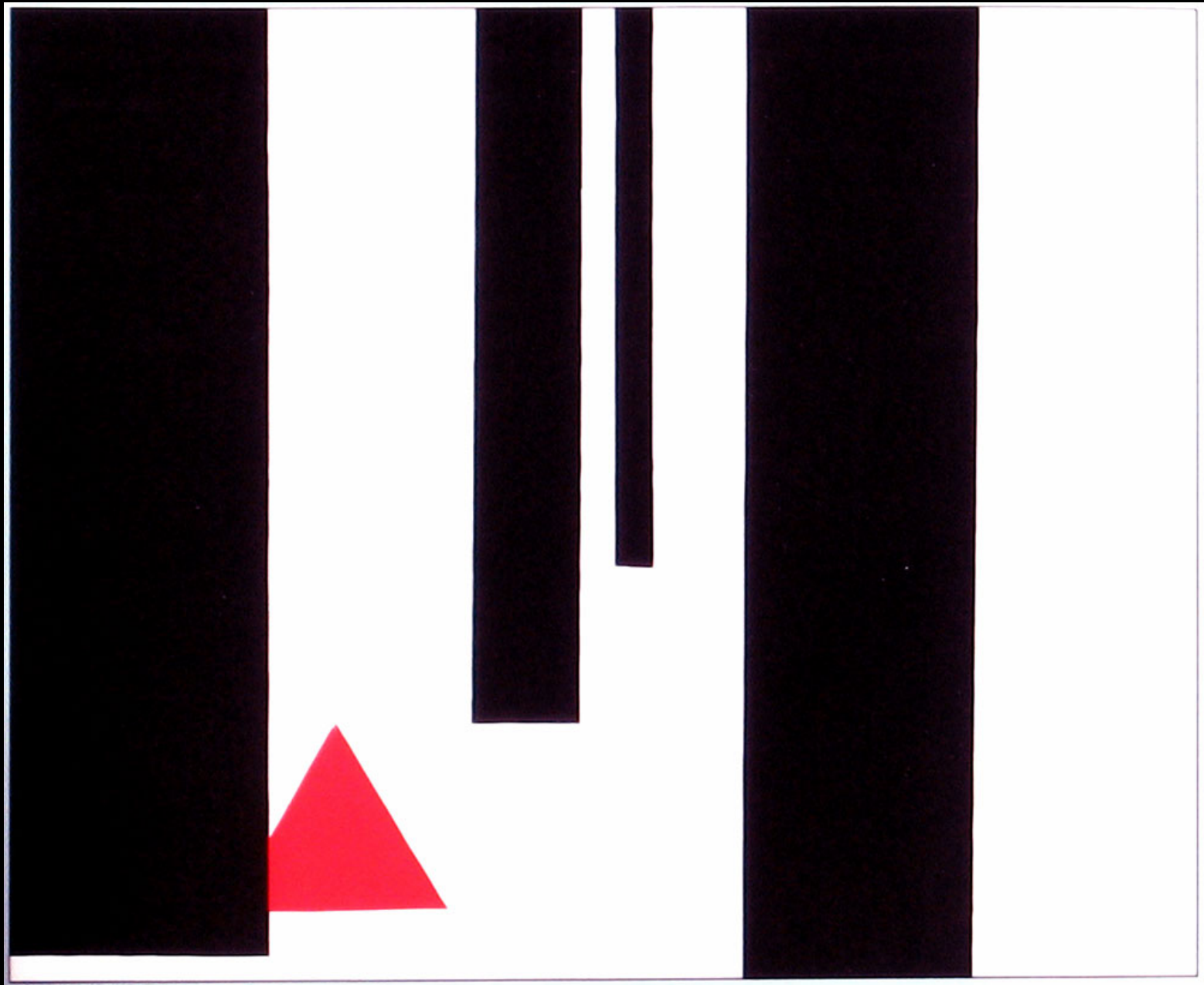
But these are too close to the shapes of
Little Red Riding Hood and her mother.



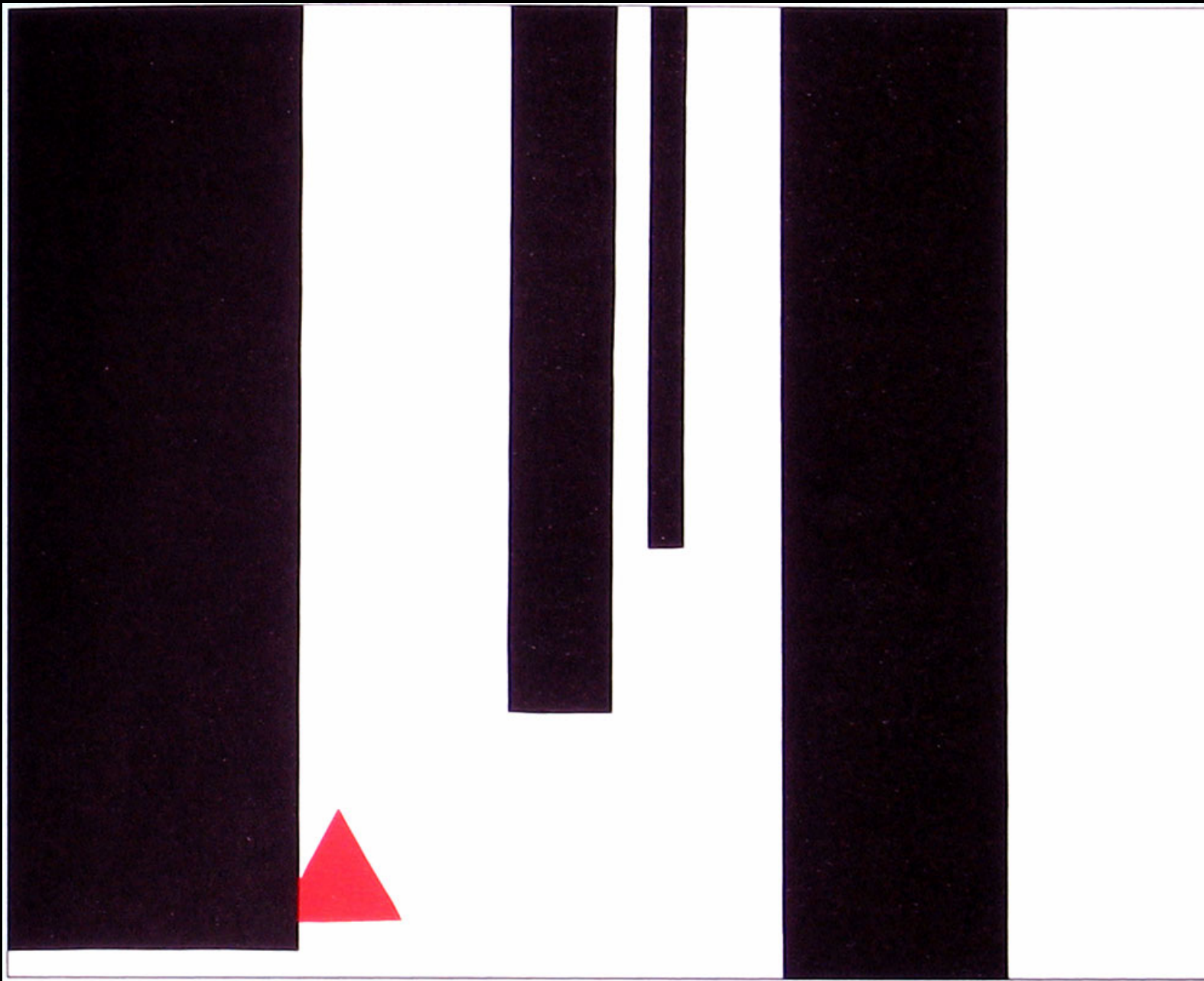
This sense of **depth** is accomplished simply by arranging the pieces so that the thinner they are, the higher up on the page their bases are placed.



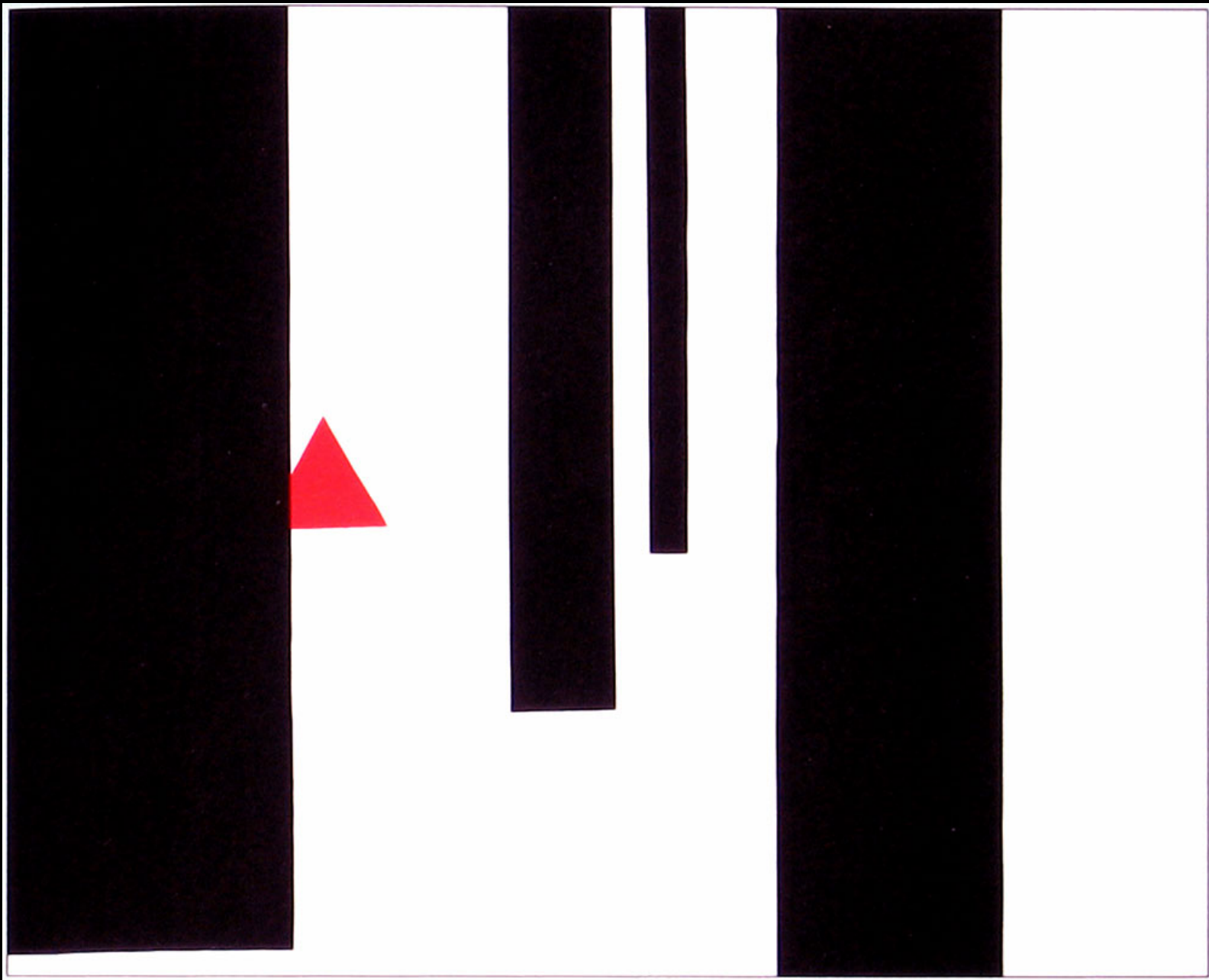
What can I do to Little Red Riding Hood—ONLY to the triangle—to make the picture feel scarier?



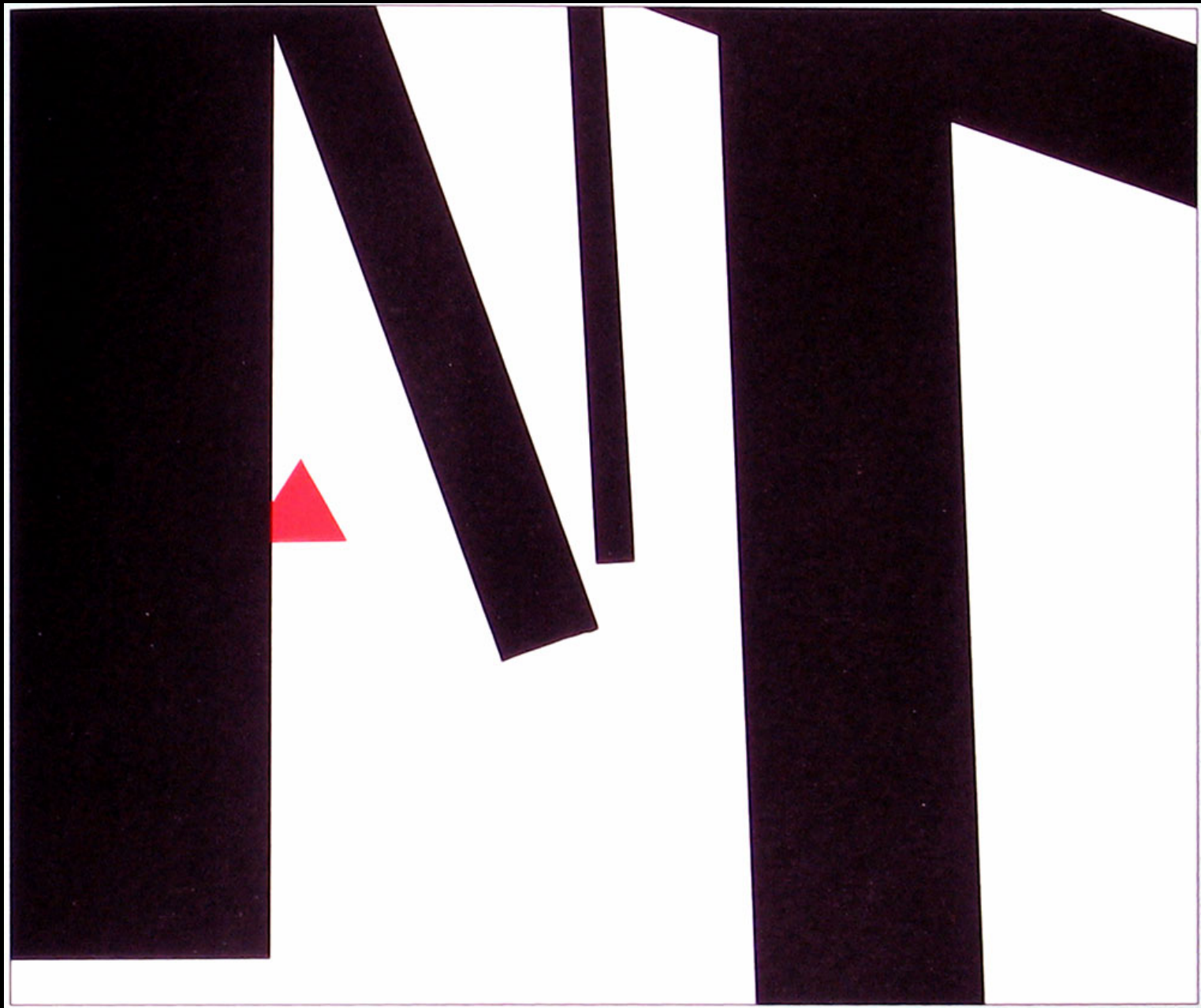
Why does it feel scarier when she is proportionally smaller?



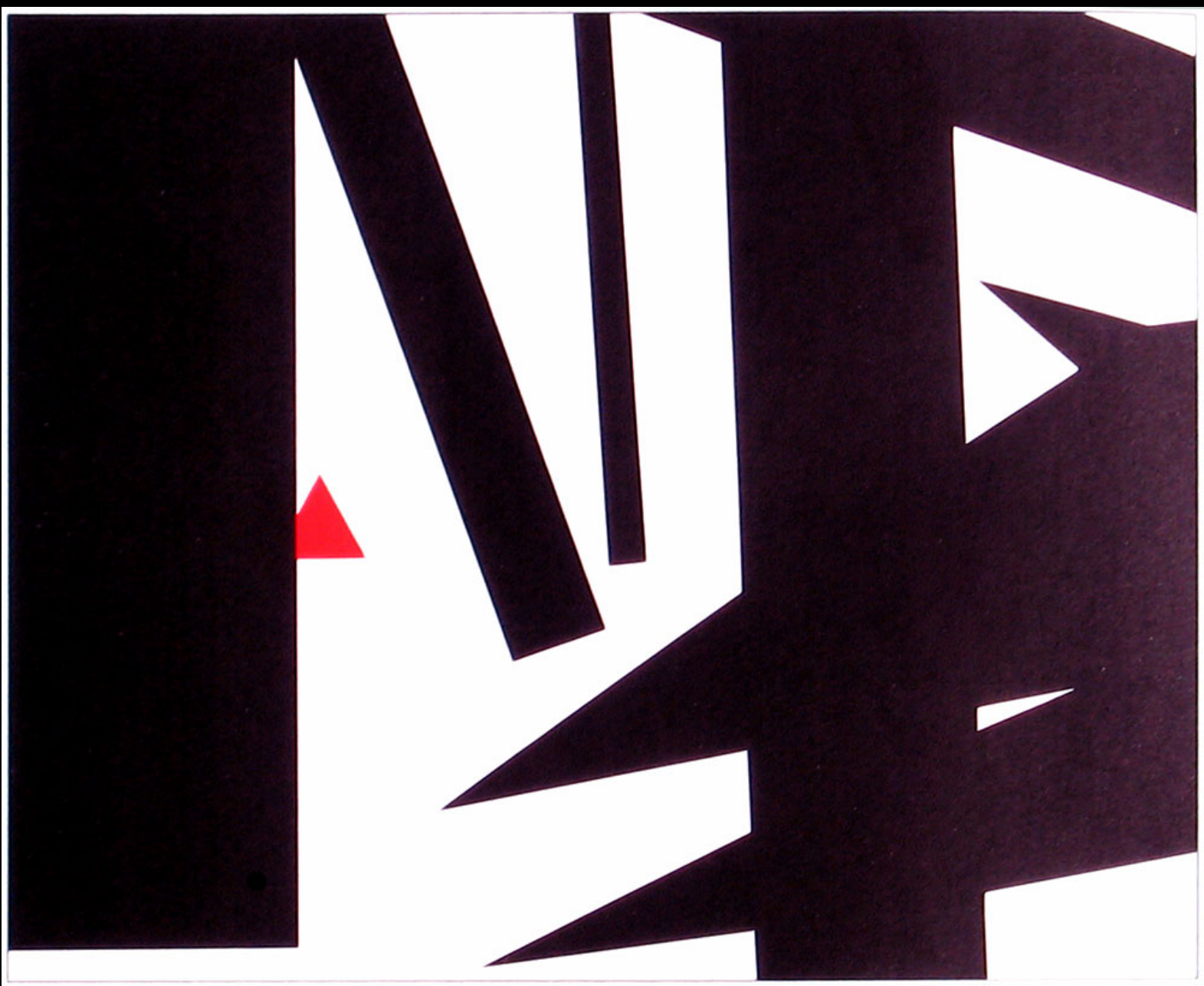
I need to make room for the wolf...



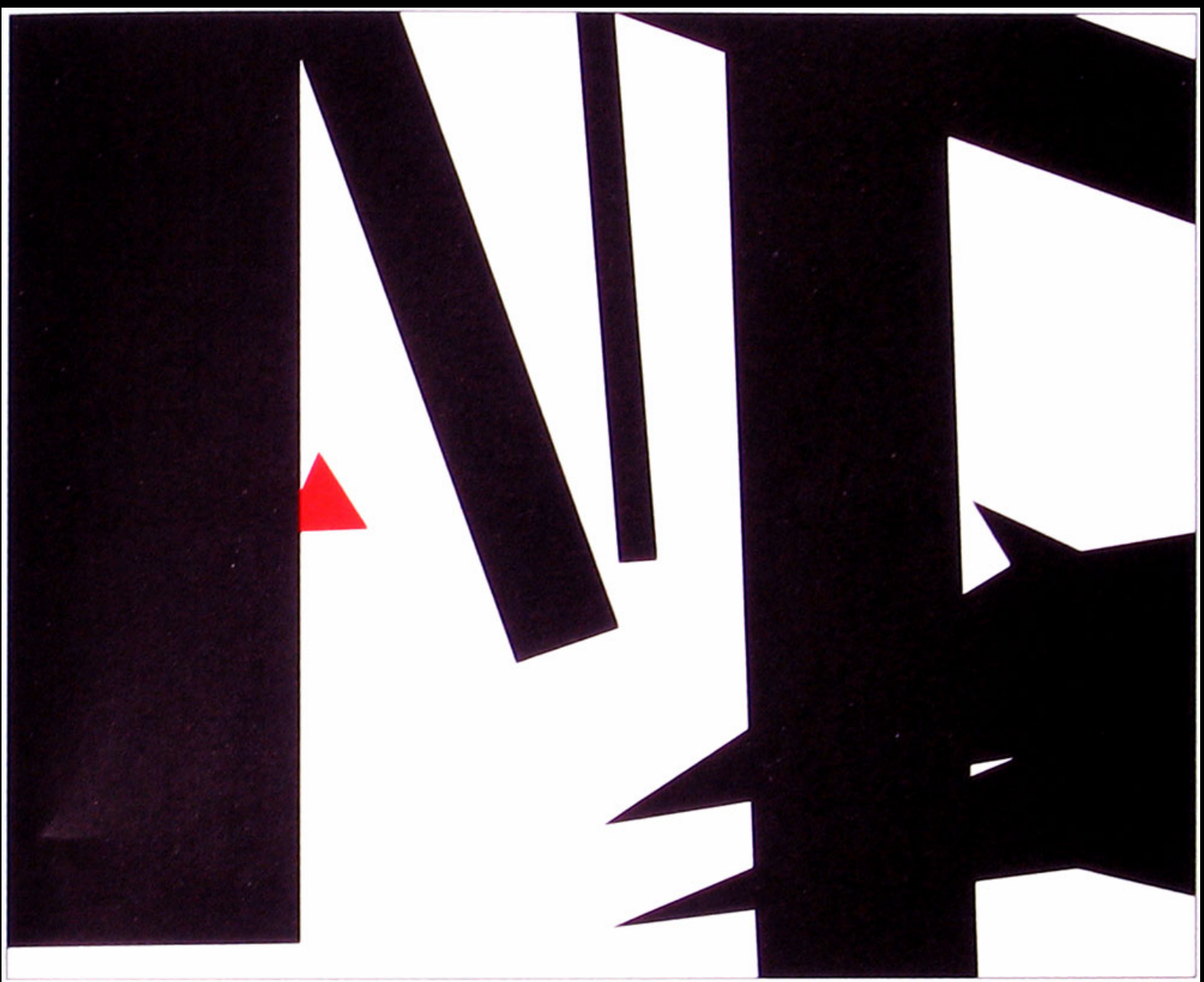
But the picture didn't feel as scary as before. Why not?
How can I make the trees feel more threatening?



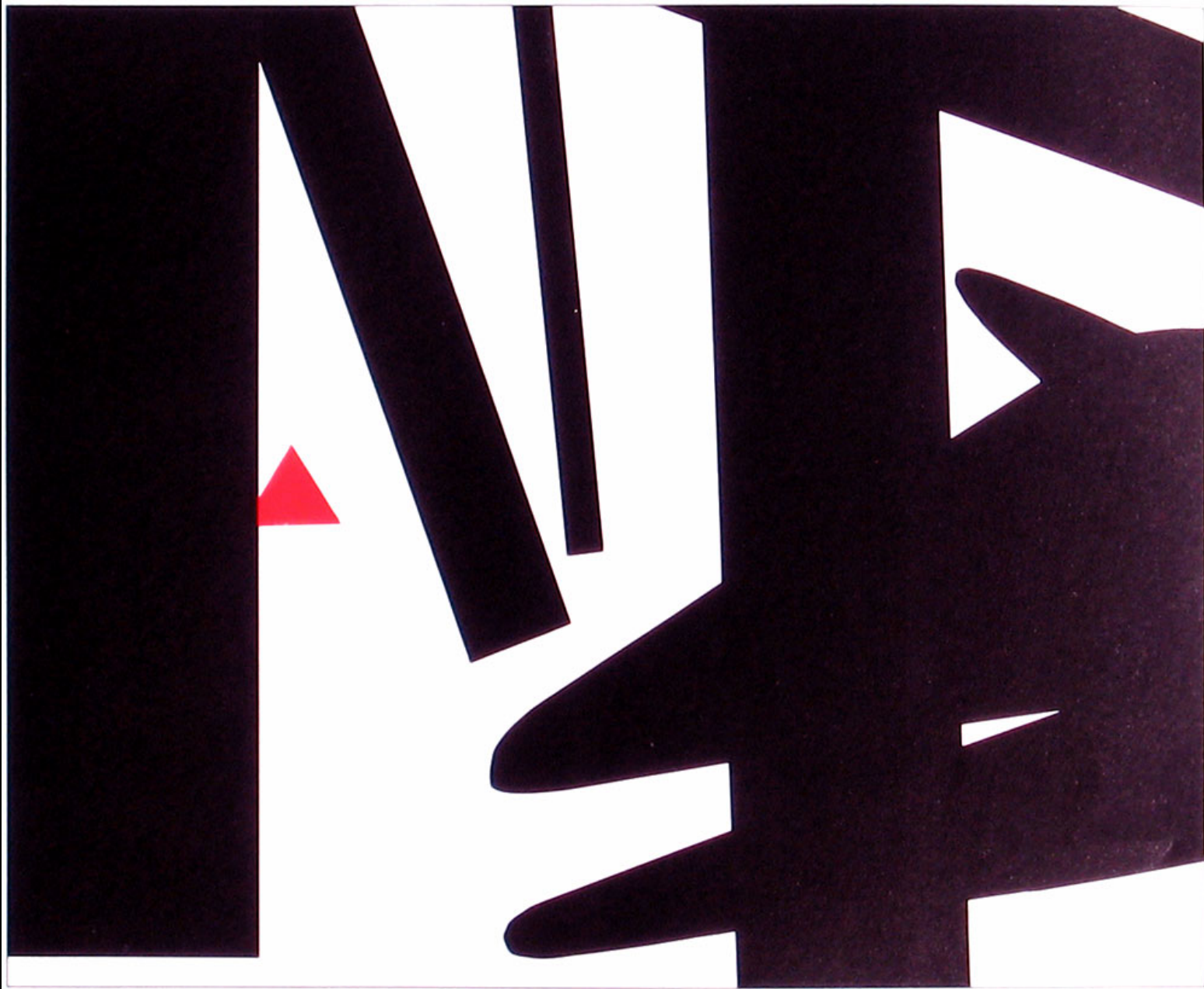
Diagonal lines give a feeling of movement or tension to the picture.



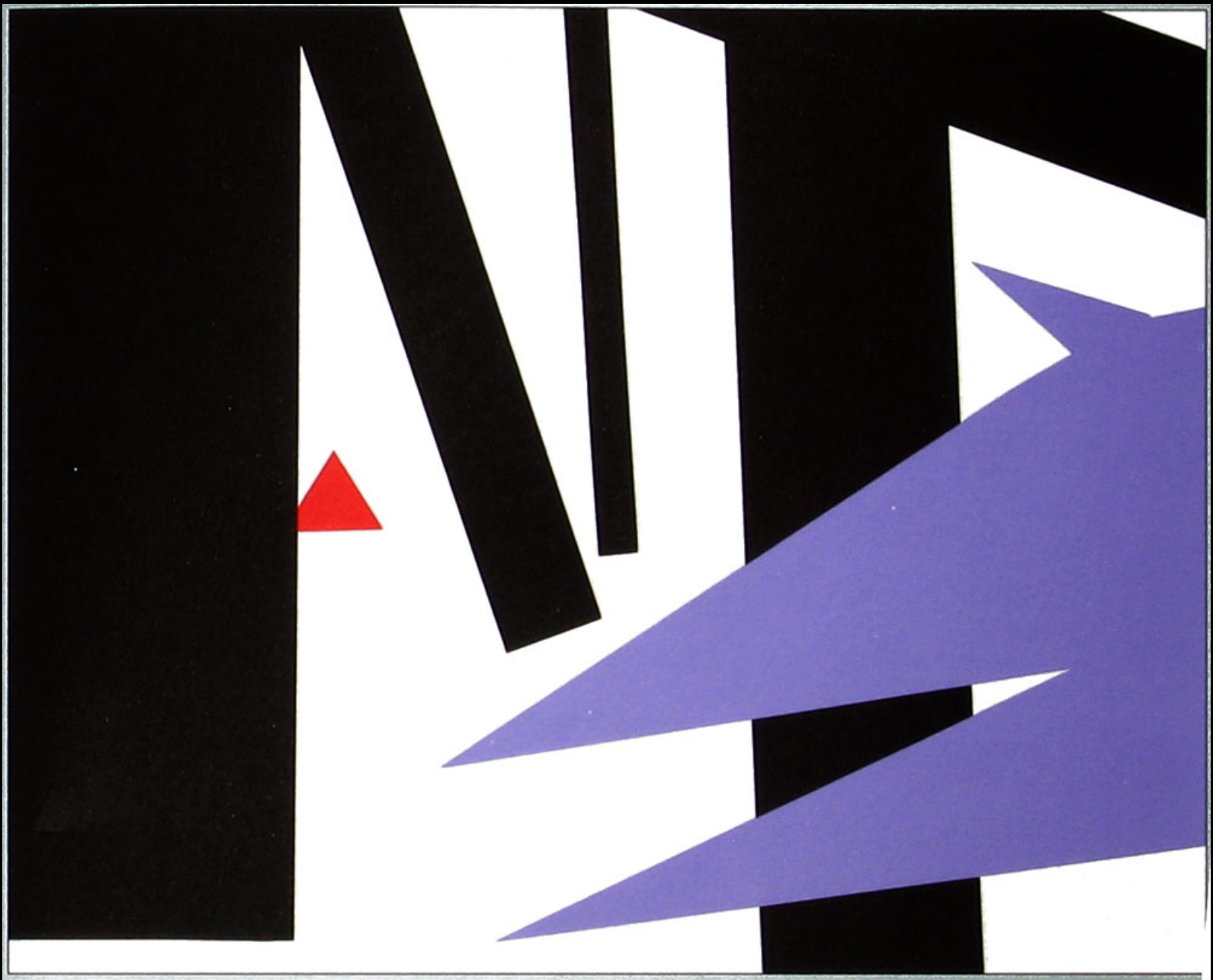
Why do these triangles look so scary?



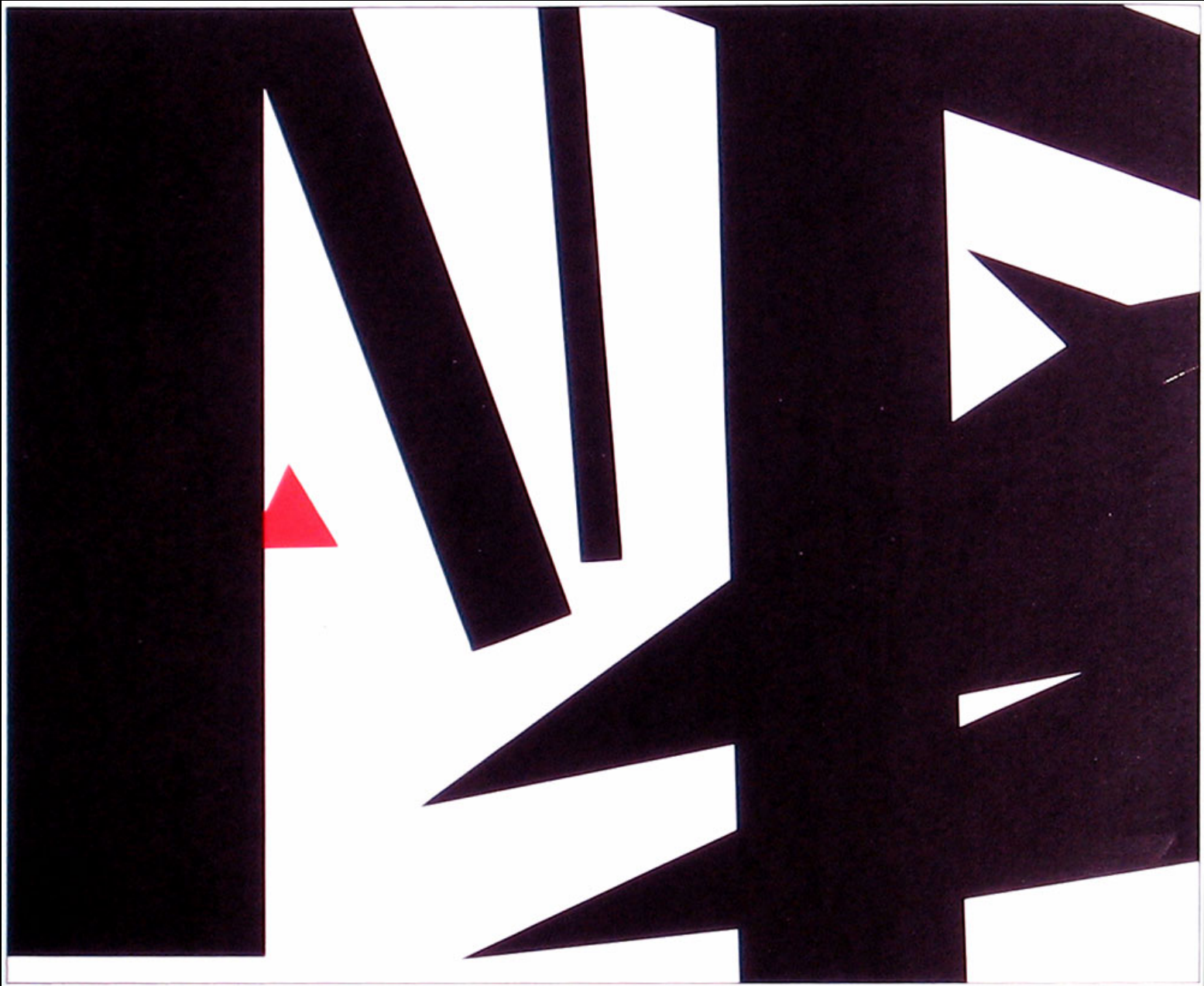
I feel very differently when the wolf is made much smaller,



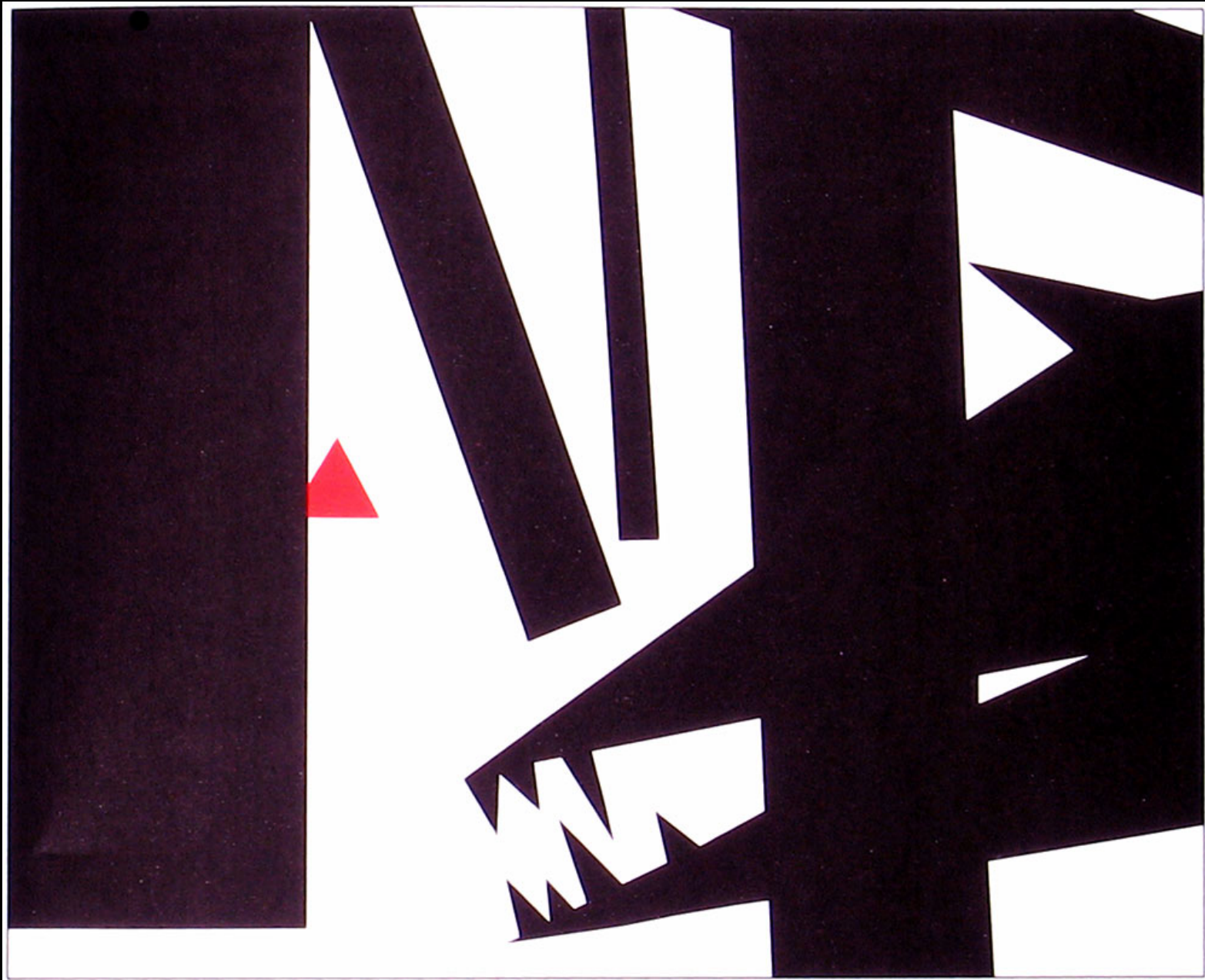
or the points are changed to curves,



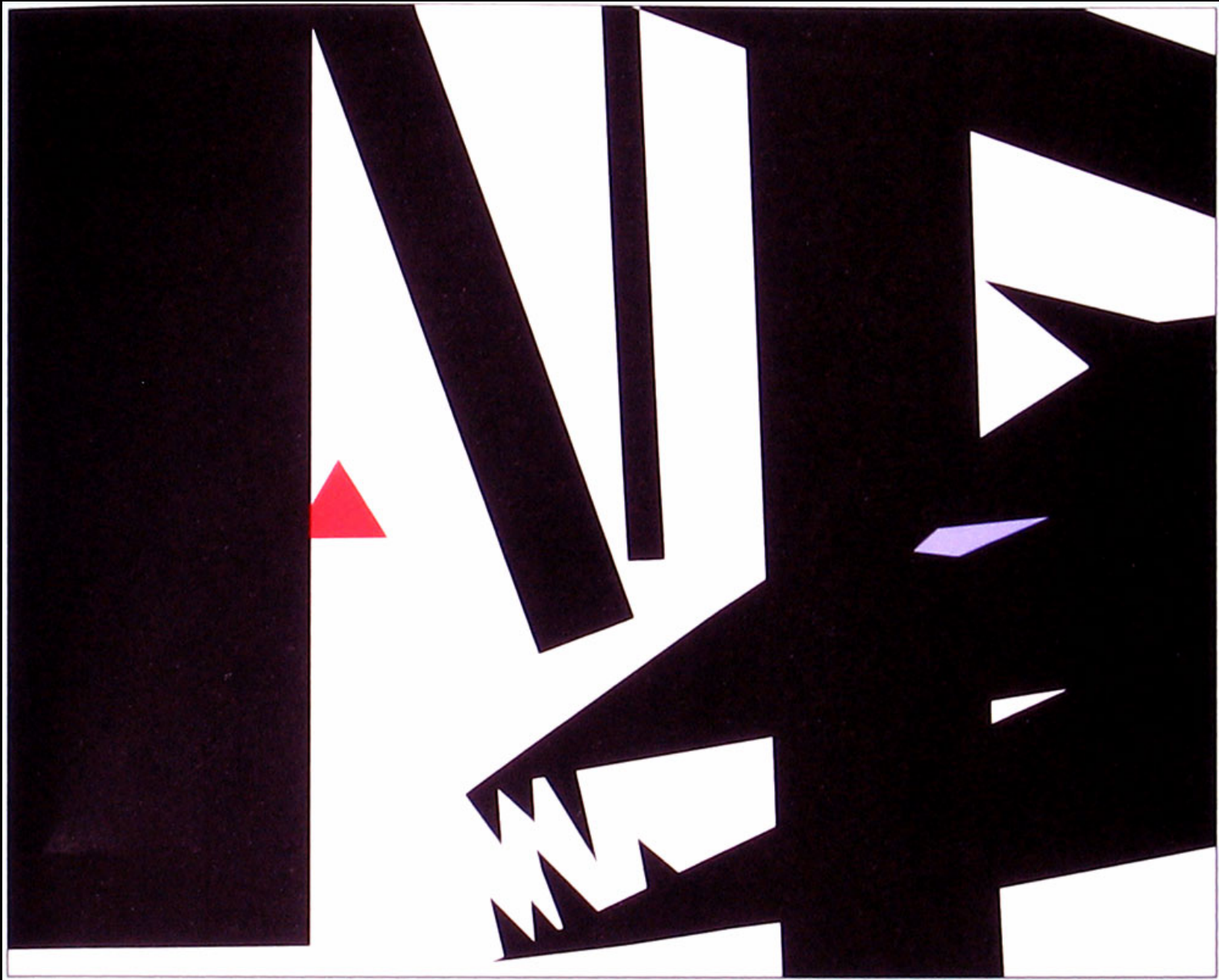
or the wolf is made from a paler color.



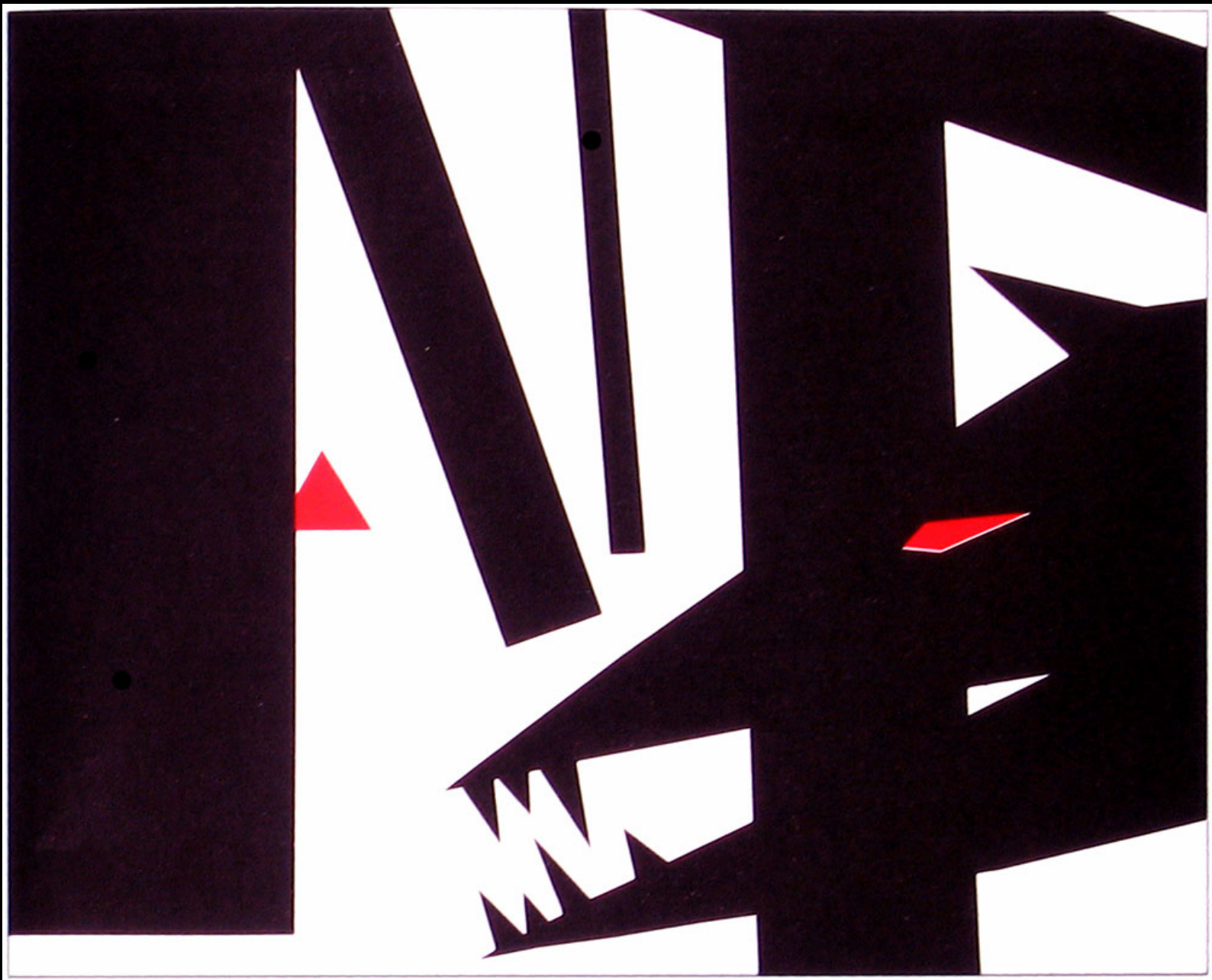
What are the features of wolves that make them so frightening to us?



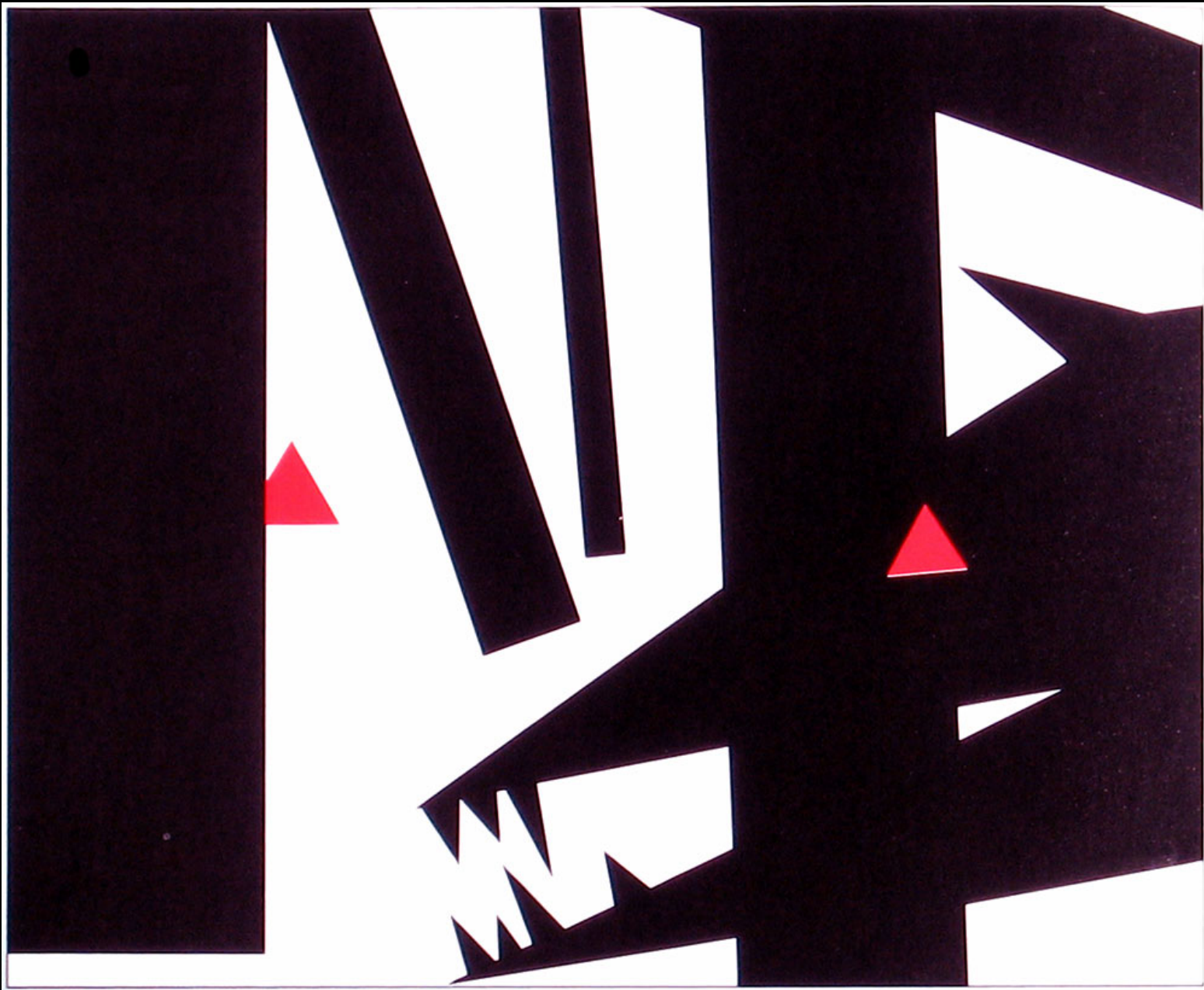
What else does the wolf need in order to look more wolfish?



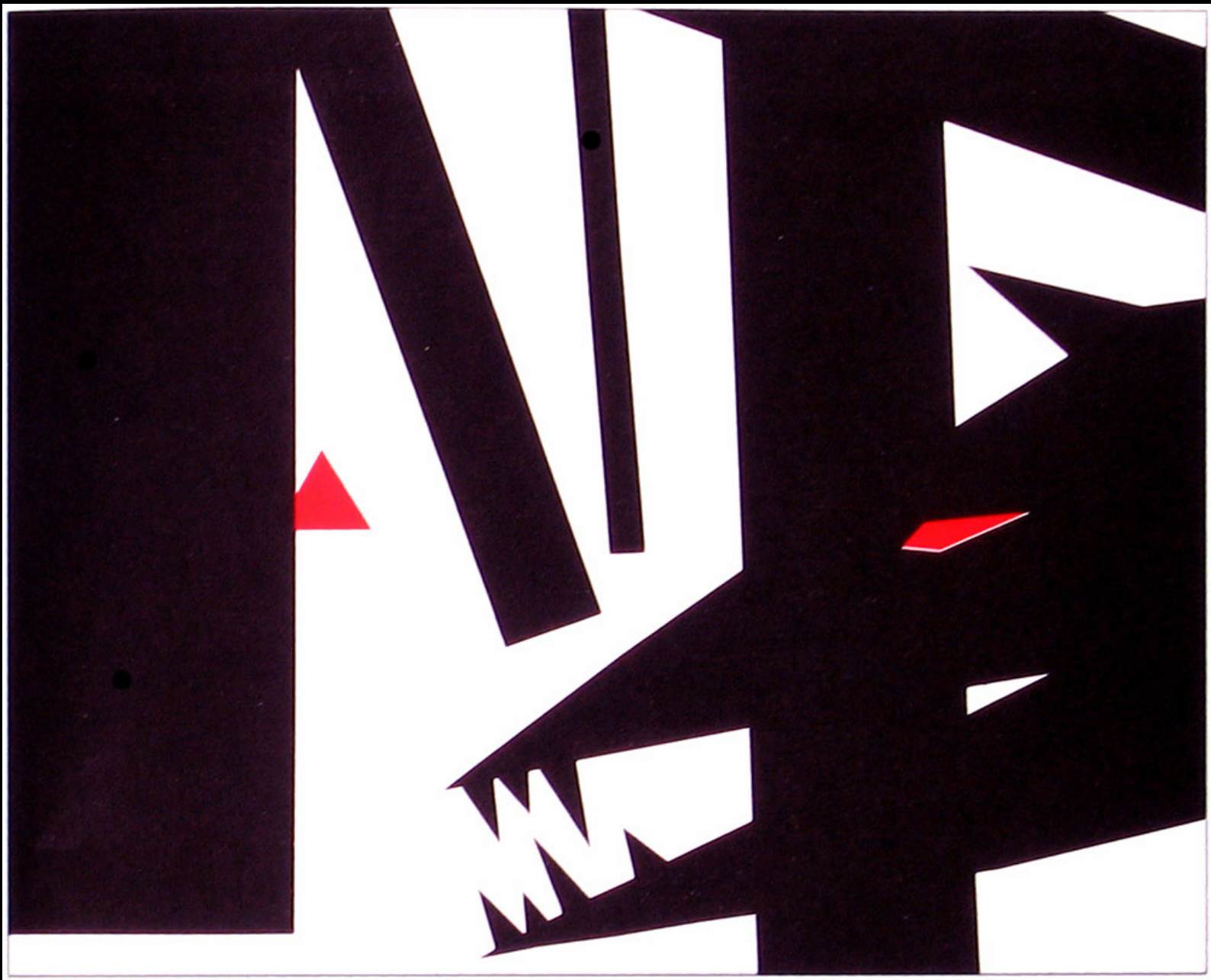
But even though wolves' eyes are often pale blue, it didn't look right.



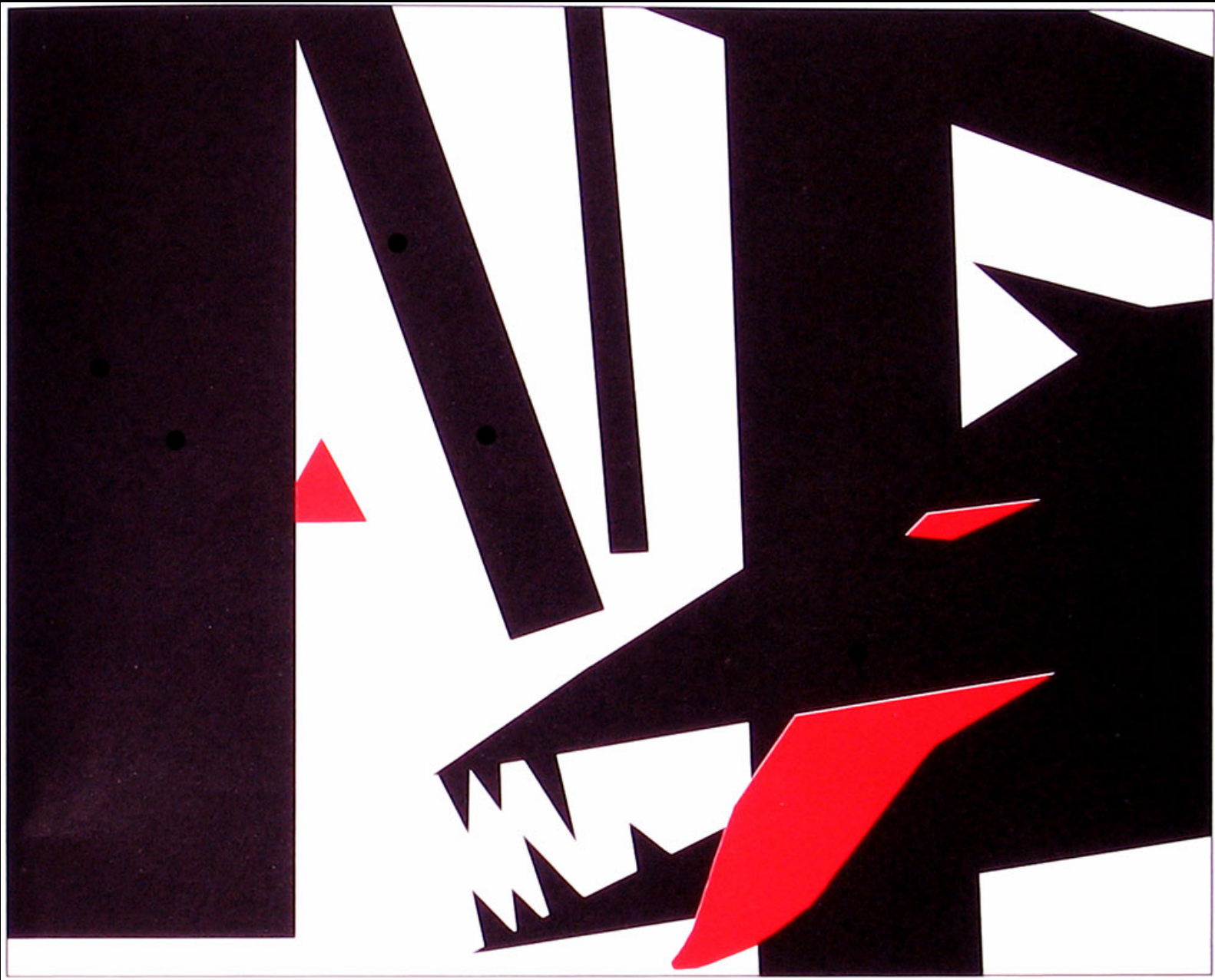
What happens if the eye is made exactly the same color and shape as Little Red Riding Hood?



The picture feels very different, and yet all that has changed is the shape of the eye.



What feature could I add to the wolf to make it yet more frightening?



When two or more objects in a picture have the same color, we associate them with each other.



Why does the picture feel more threatening?



What has happened now that the teeth are white?

THE PRINCIPLES

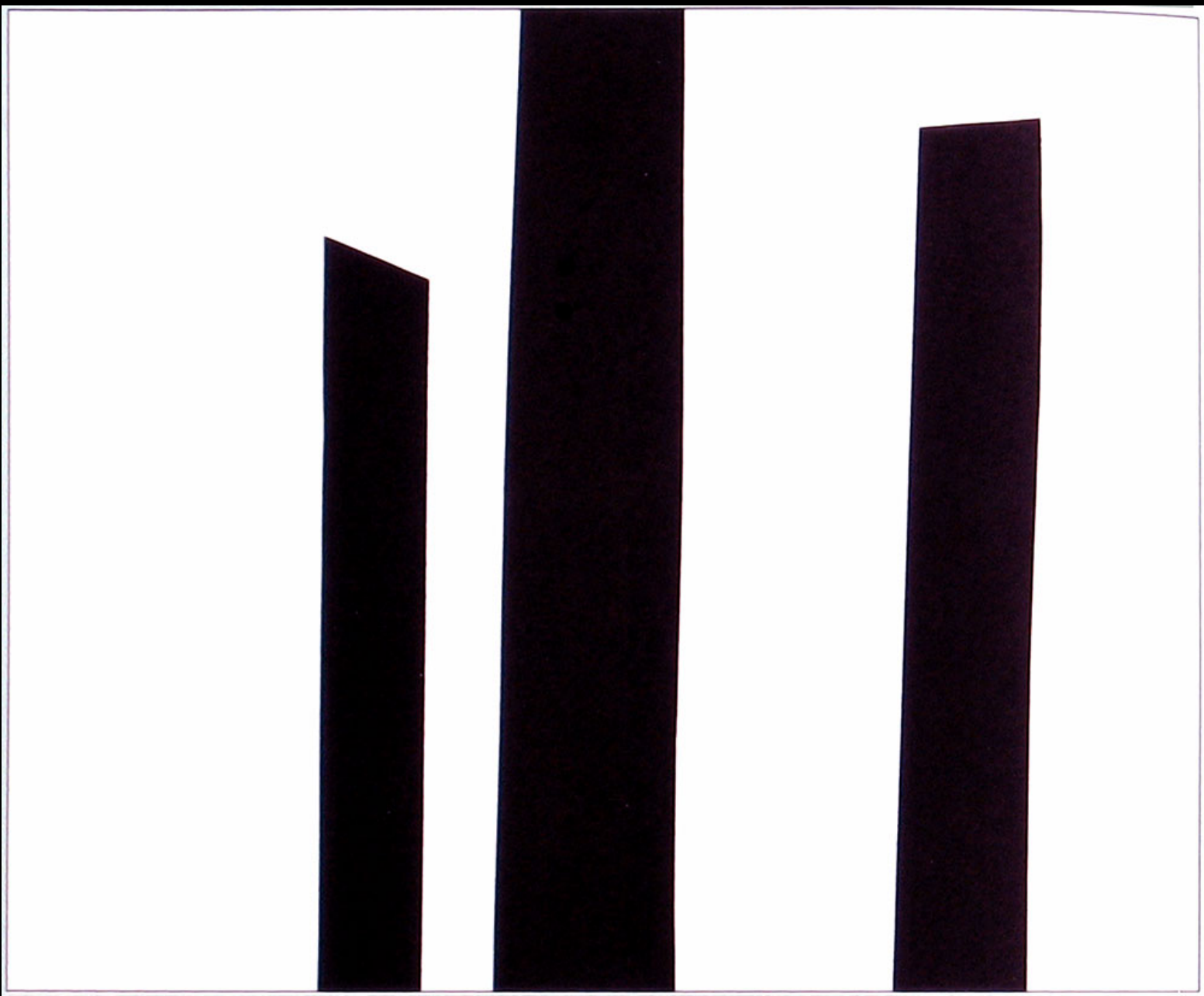
Picture This by

Molly Bang

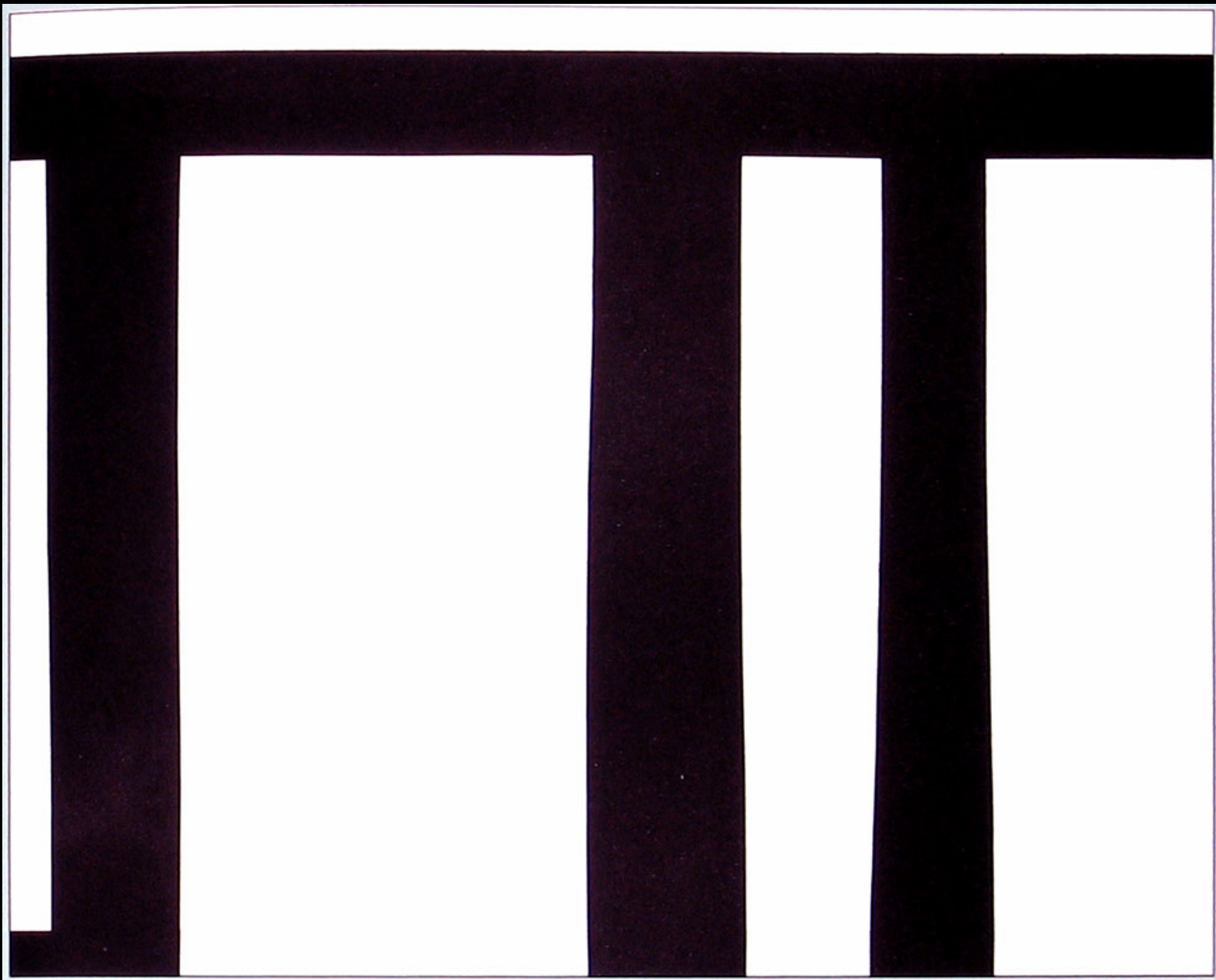




1. Smooth, flat horizontal shapes give us a sense of stability and calm.



2. Vertical shapes are more exciting and more active.



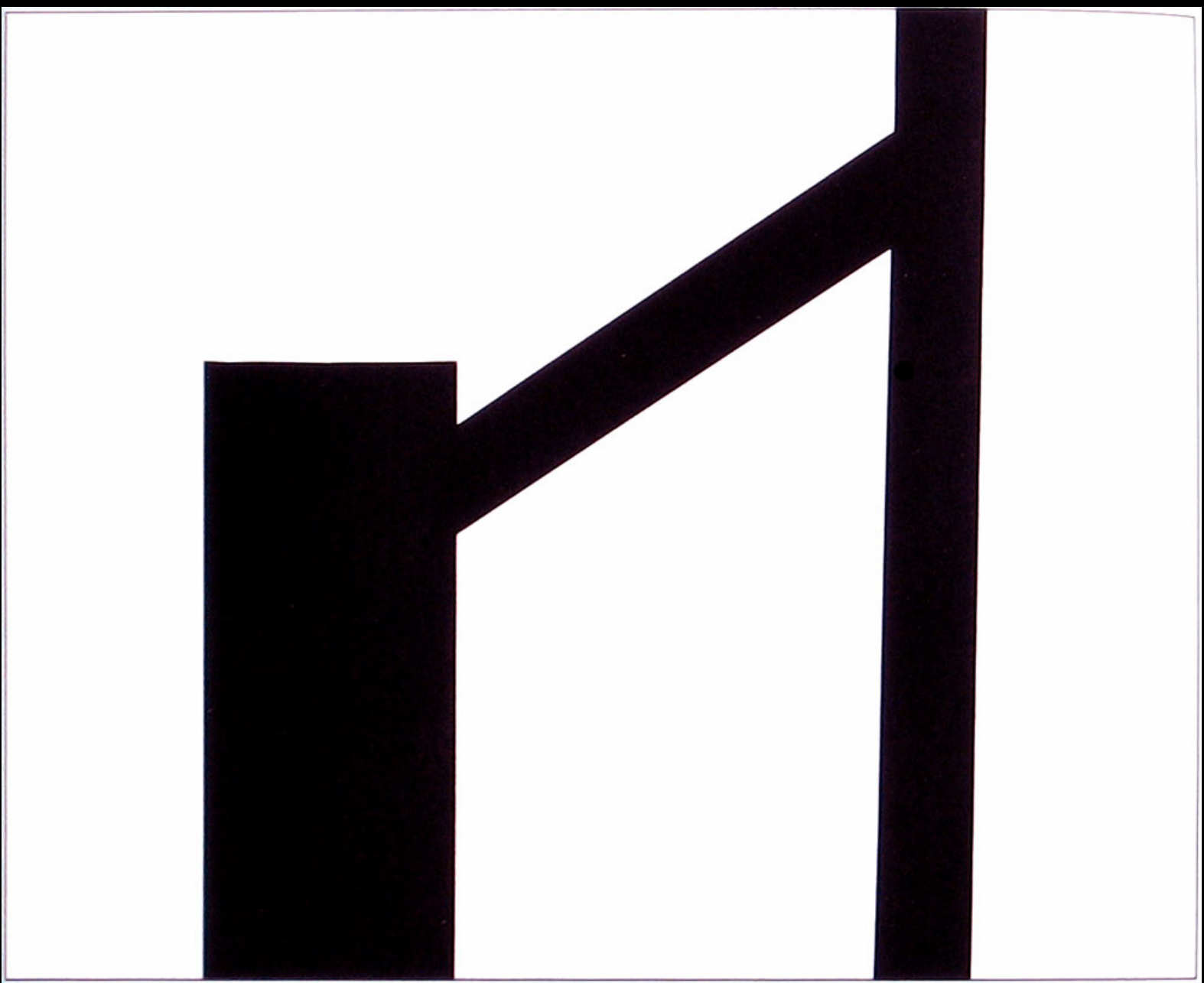
If a horizontal bar is placed across the top of a row of verticals,
stability reigns again.



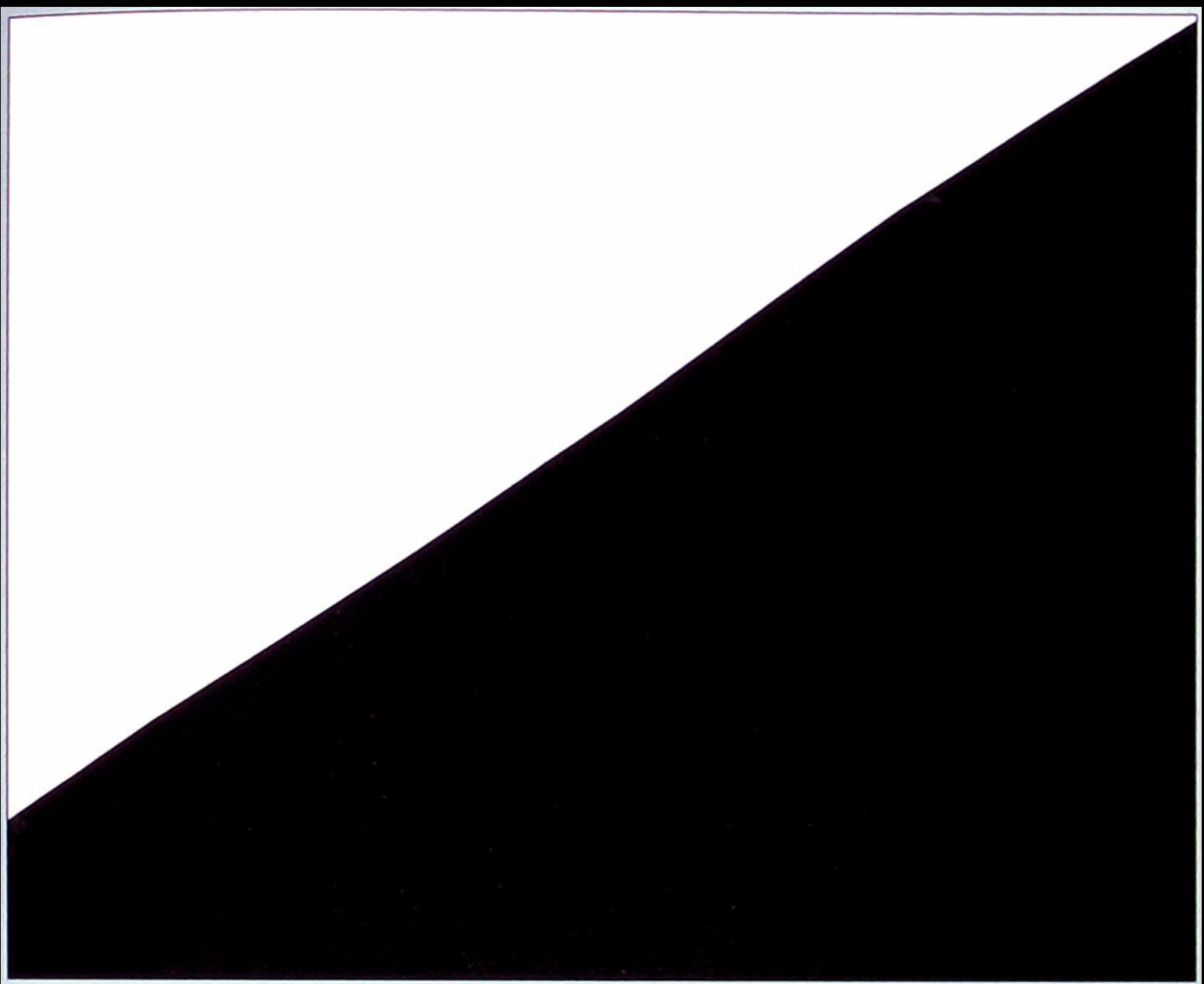
3. Diagonal shapes are dynamic because they imply motion or tension.



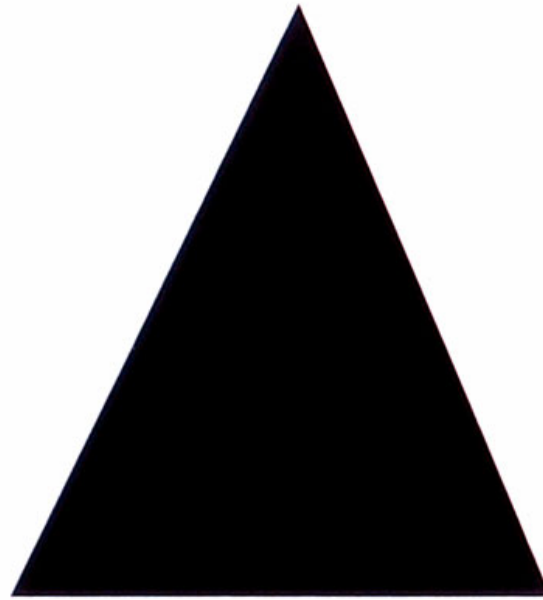
Diagonals in pictures often tie a vertical and horizontal together as a much more stable unit.



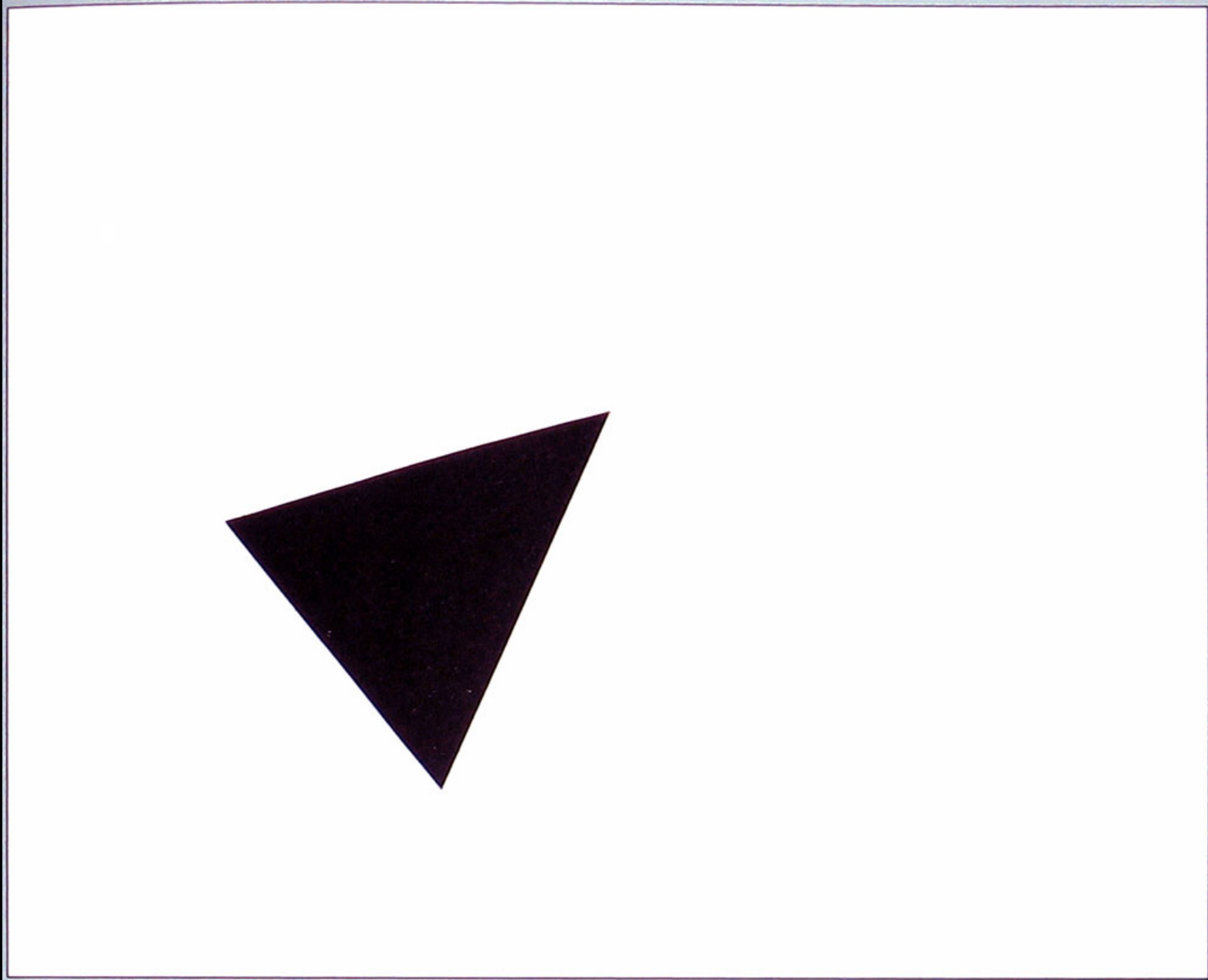
These diagonal buttresses are under great tension.



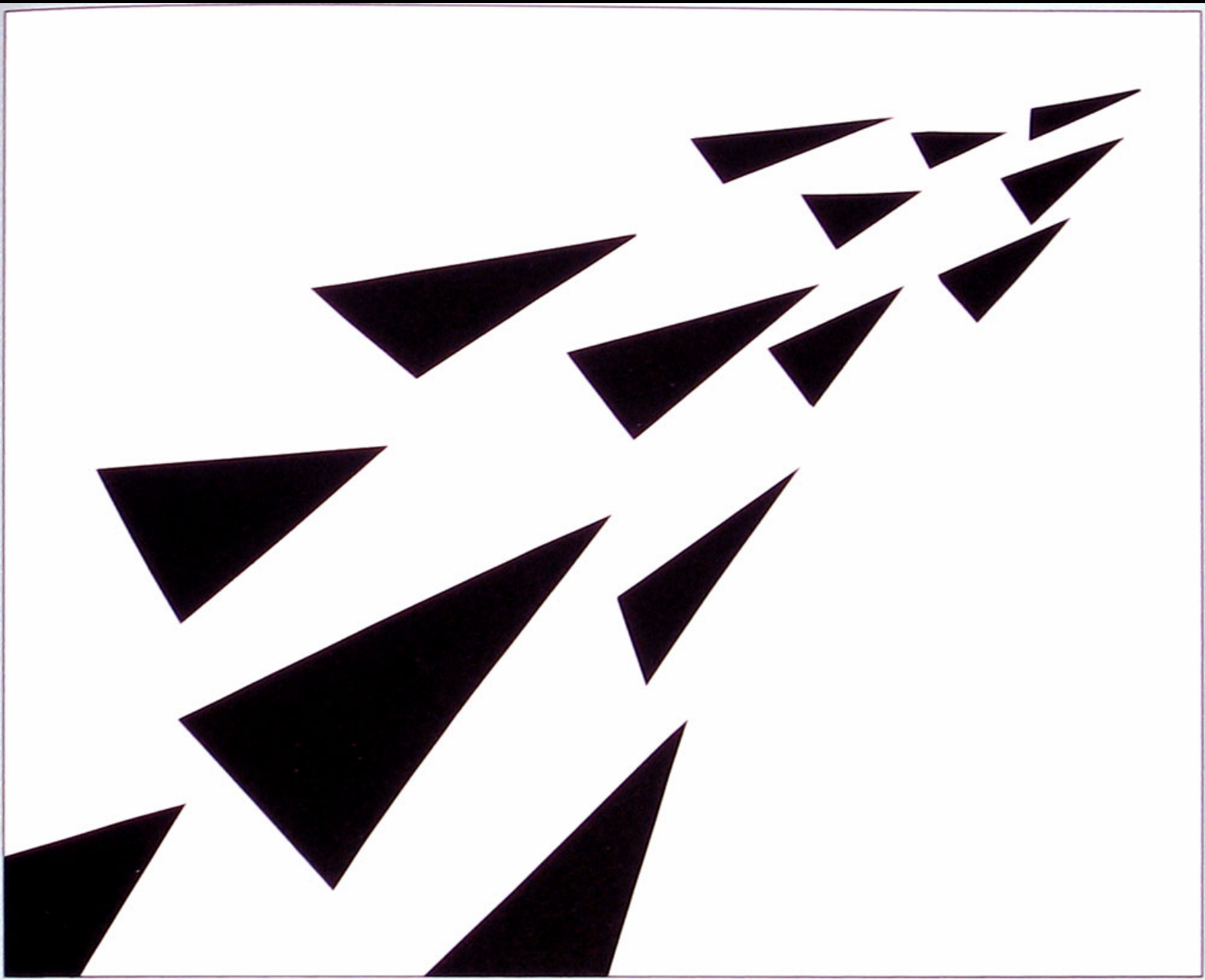
Mountains, slides, waves:
All of these are diagonals in movement or in tension.



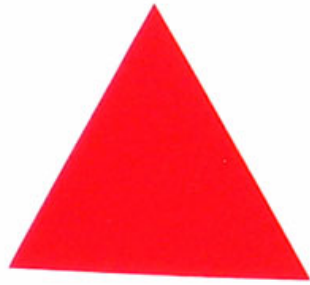
A triangle placed on a flat base gives a feeling of stability.



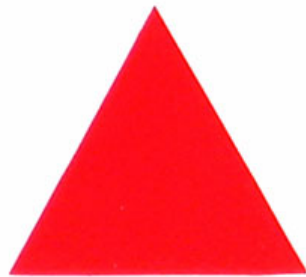
The same triangle placed on a diagonal gives a sense of movement.



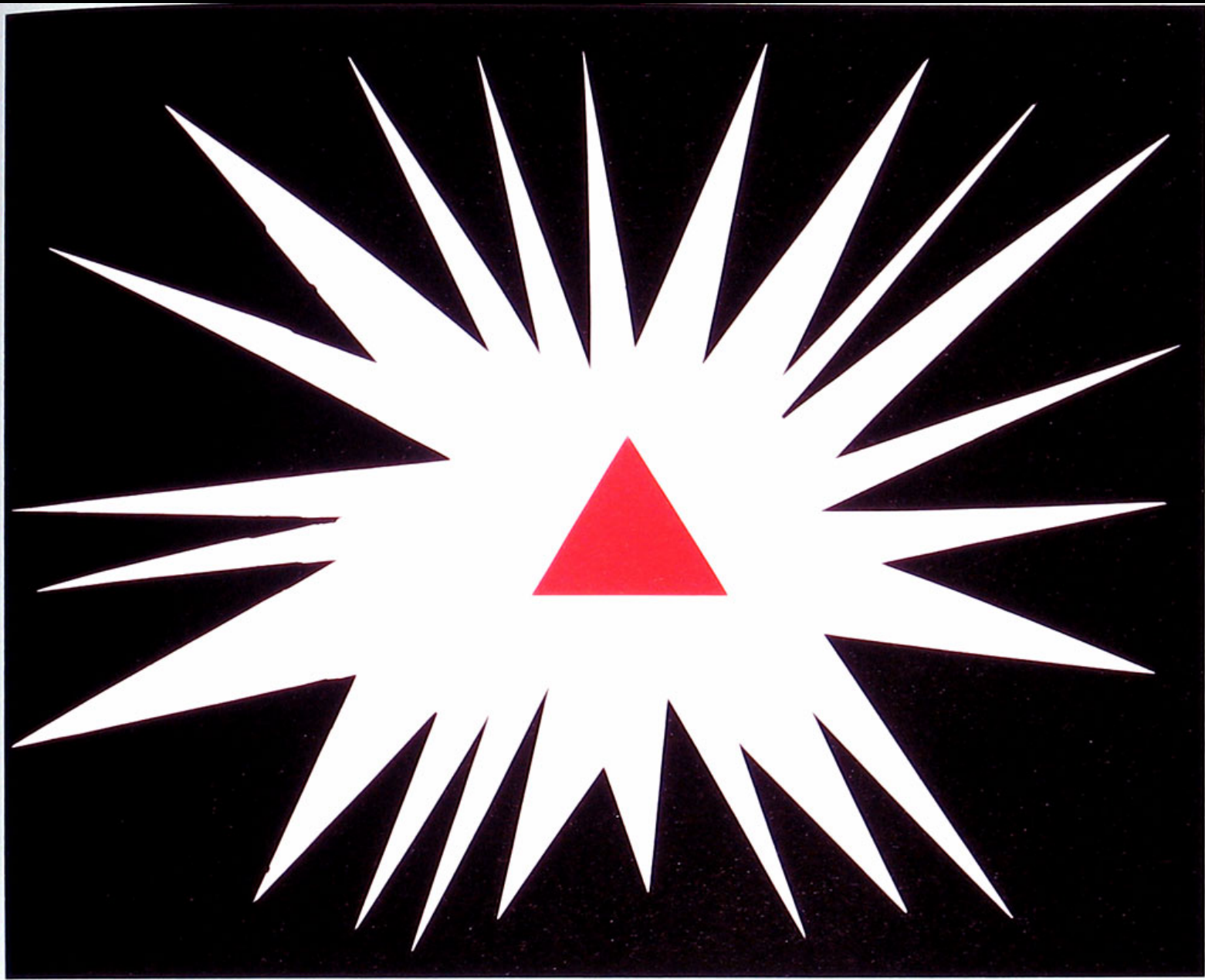
What increases the sense of movement even more in this picture?



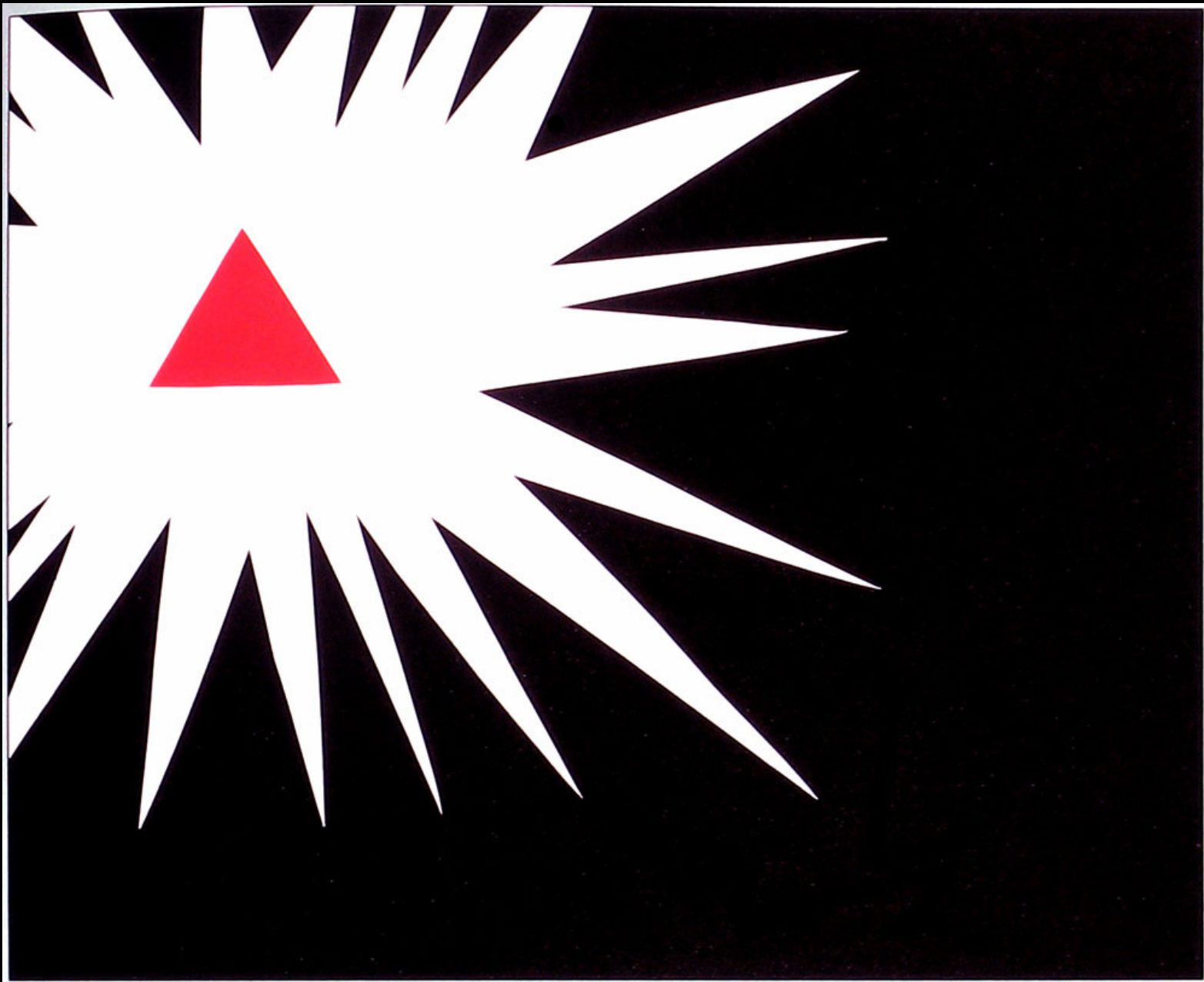
4a. The upper half of a picture is a place of freedom, happiness, and triumph; objects placed in the top half often feel more “spiritual.”



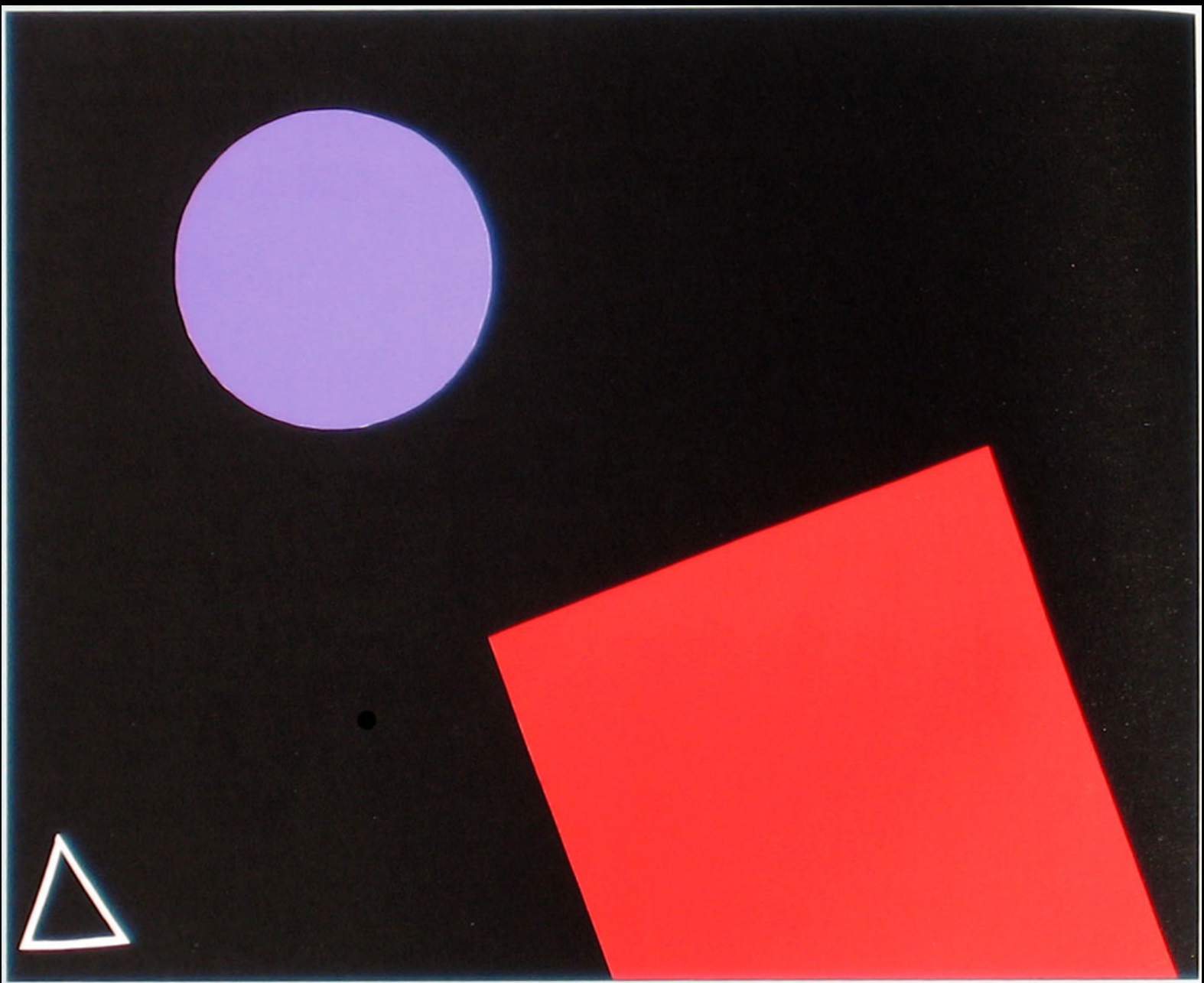
4b. The bottom half of a picture feels more threatened, heavier, sadder, or constrained; objects in the bottom half also feel more grounded.



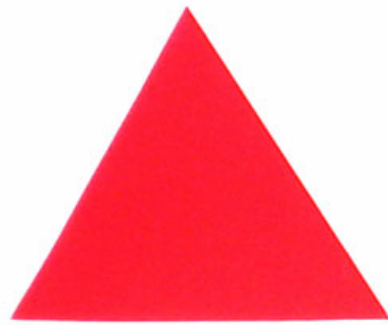
5. The center of the page is the most effective “center of attention.”
It is the point of greatest attraction.



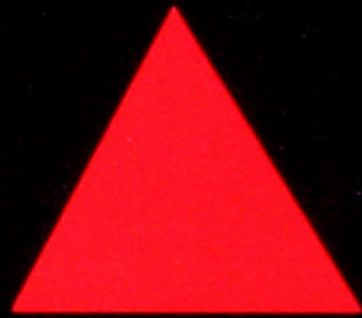
What happens when the focus of attention is shifted away from the center of the page?



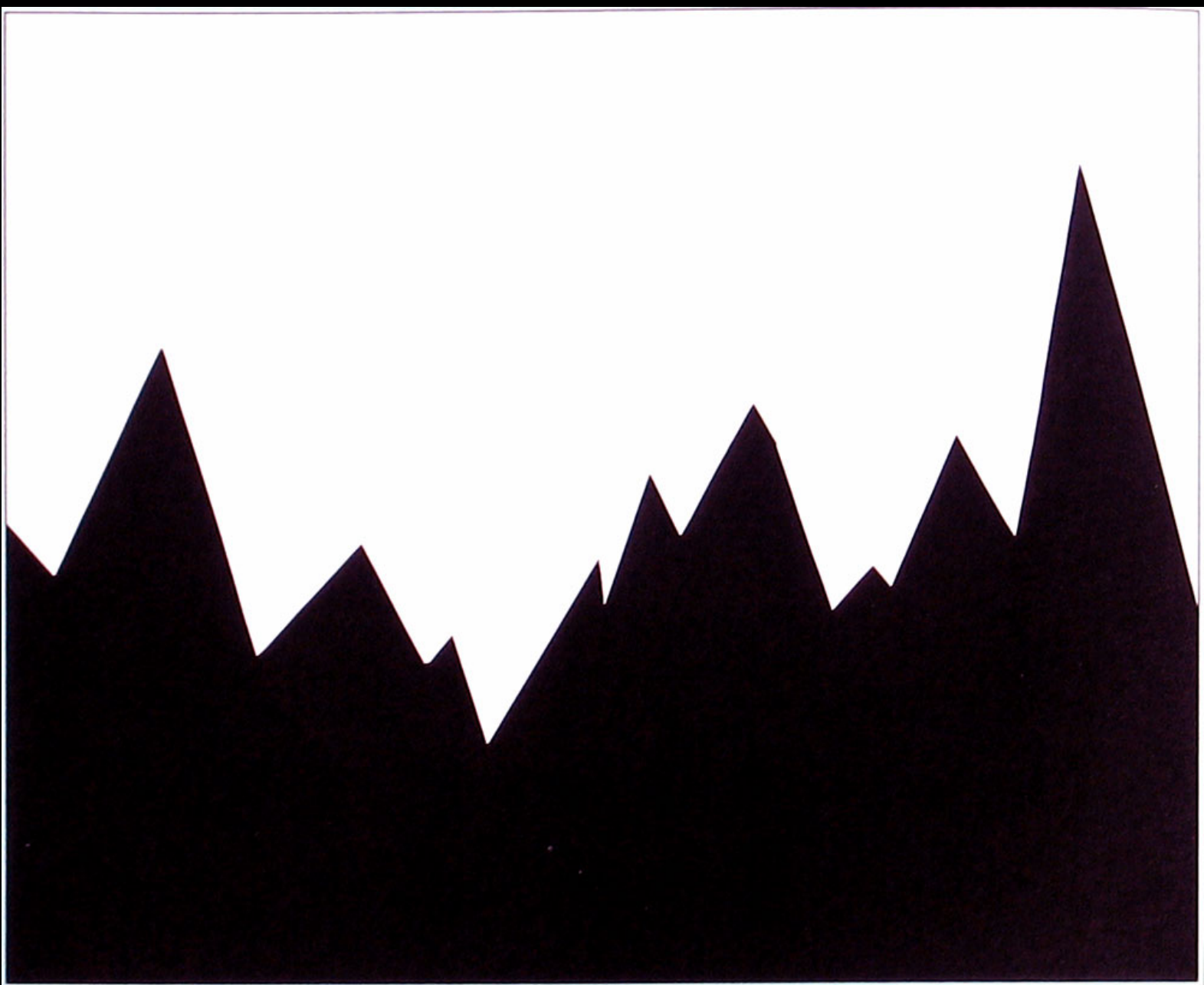
The edges and corners of the picture are
the edges and corners of the picture-world.



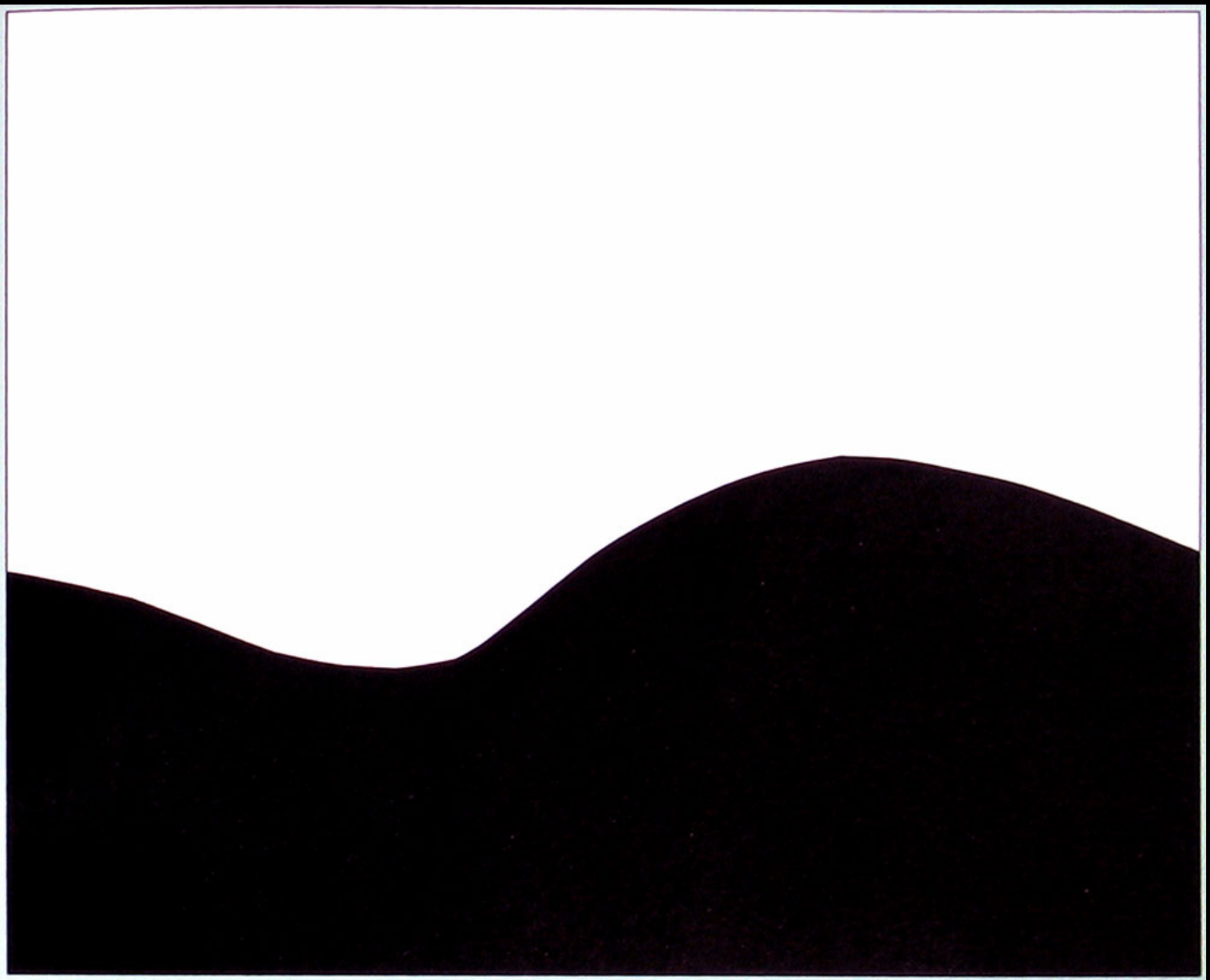
6. White or light backgrounds feel safer to us than dark backgrounds because we can see well during the day and only poorly at night.



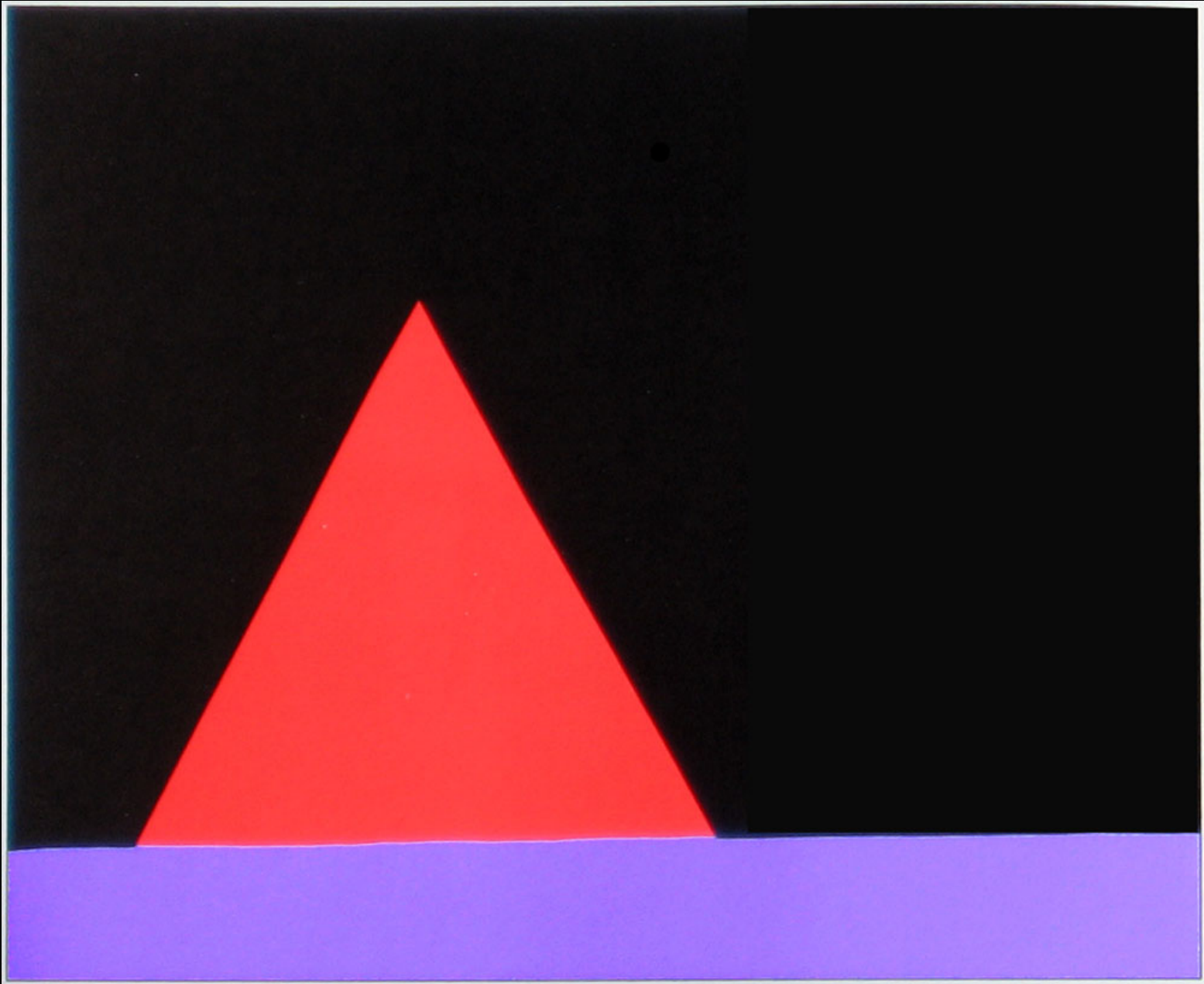
We associate red with blood and fire.
What things in nature are either black or white?



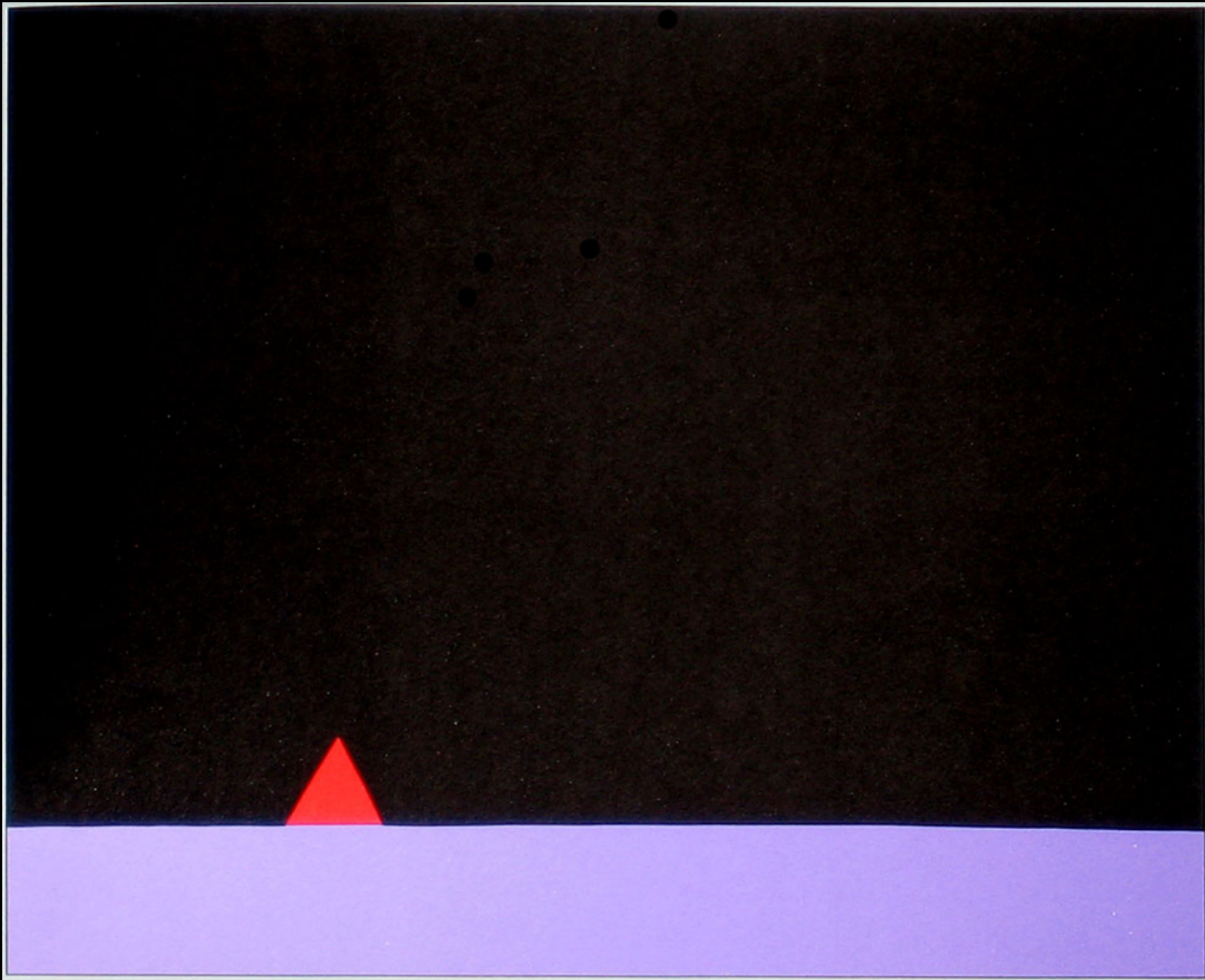
7. We feel more scared looking at pointed shapes;
we feel more secure or comforted looking at rounded shapes or curves.



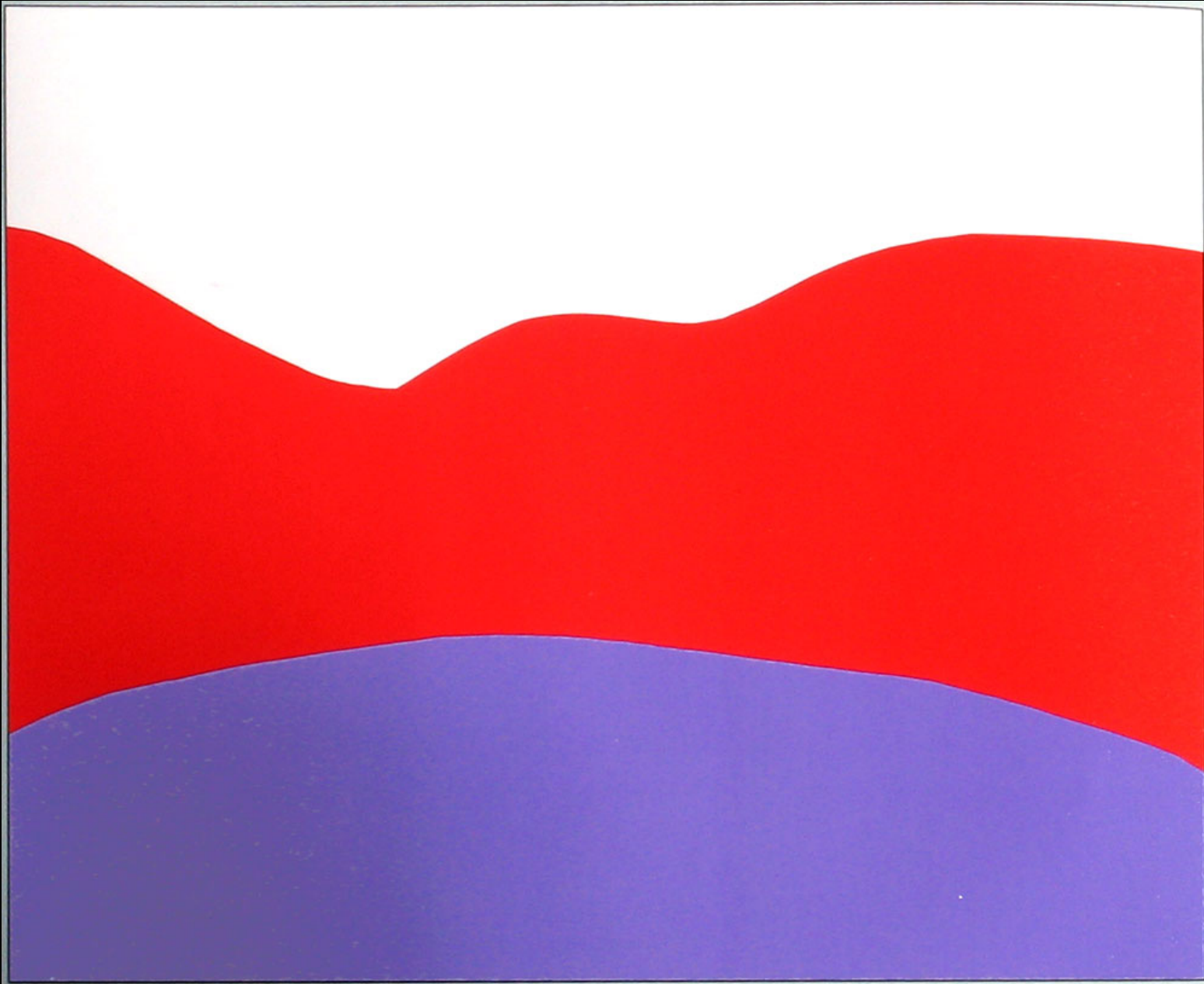
Curved shapes embrace us and protect us.



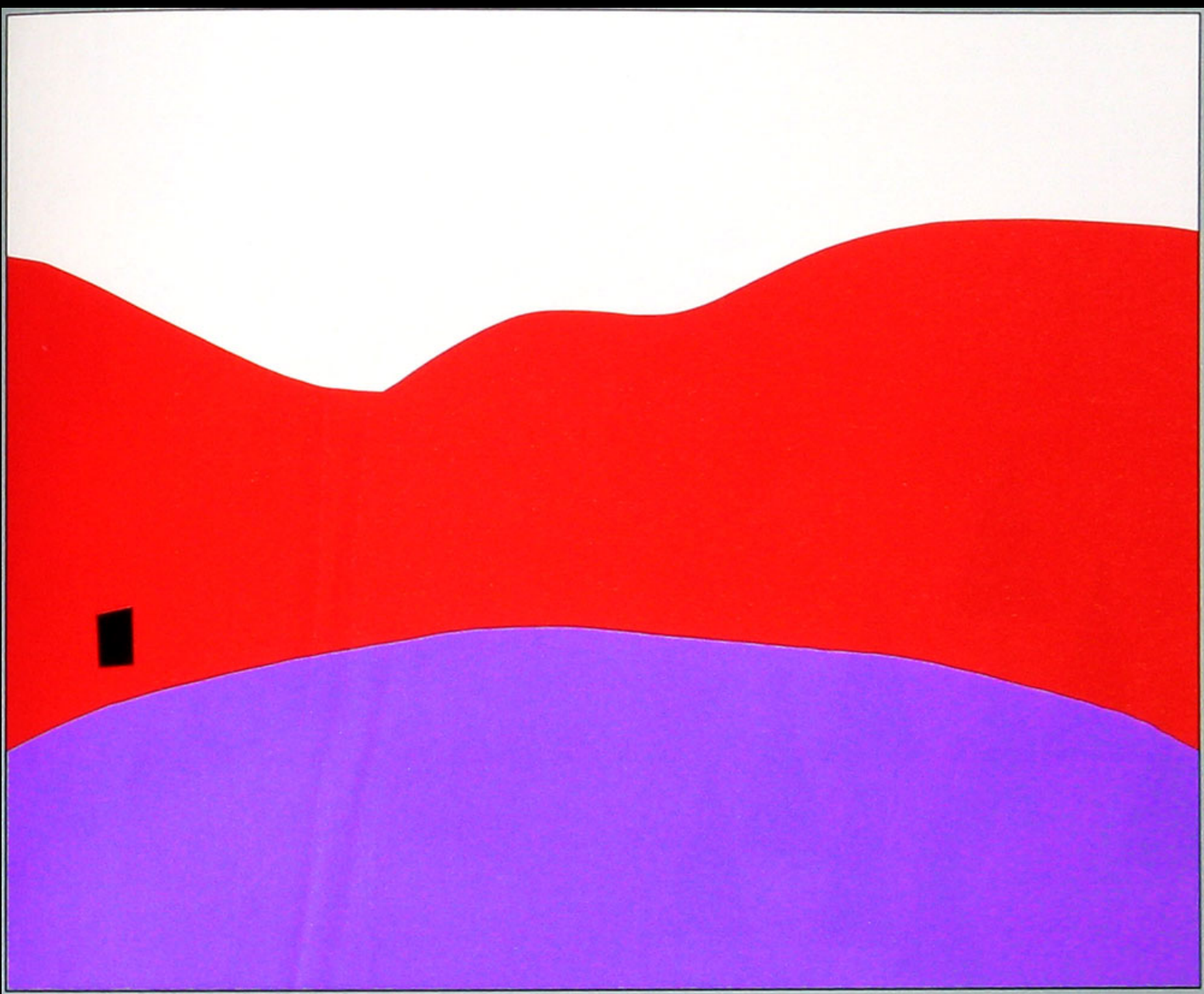
8. The larger an object is in a picture, the stronger it feels.



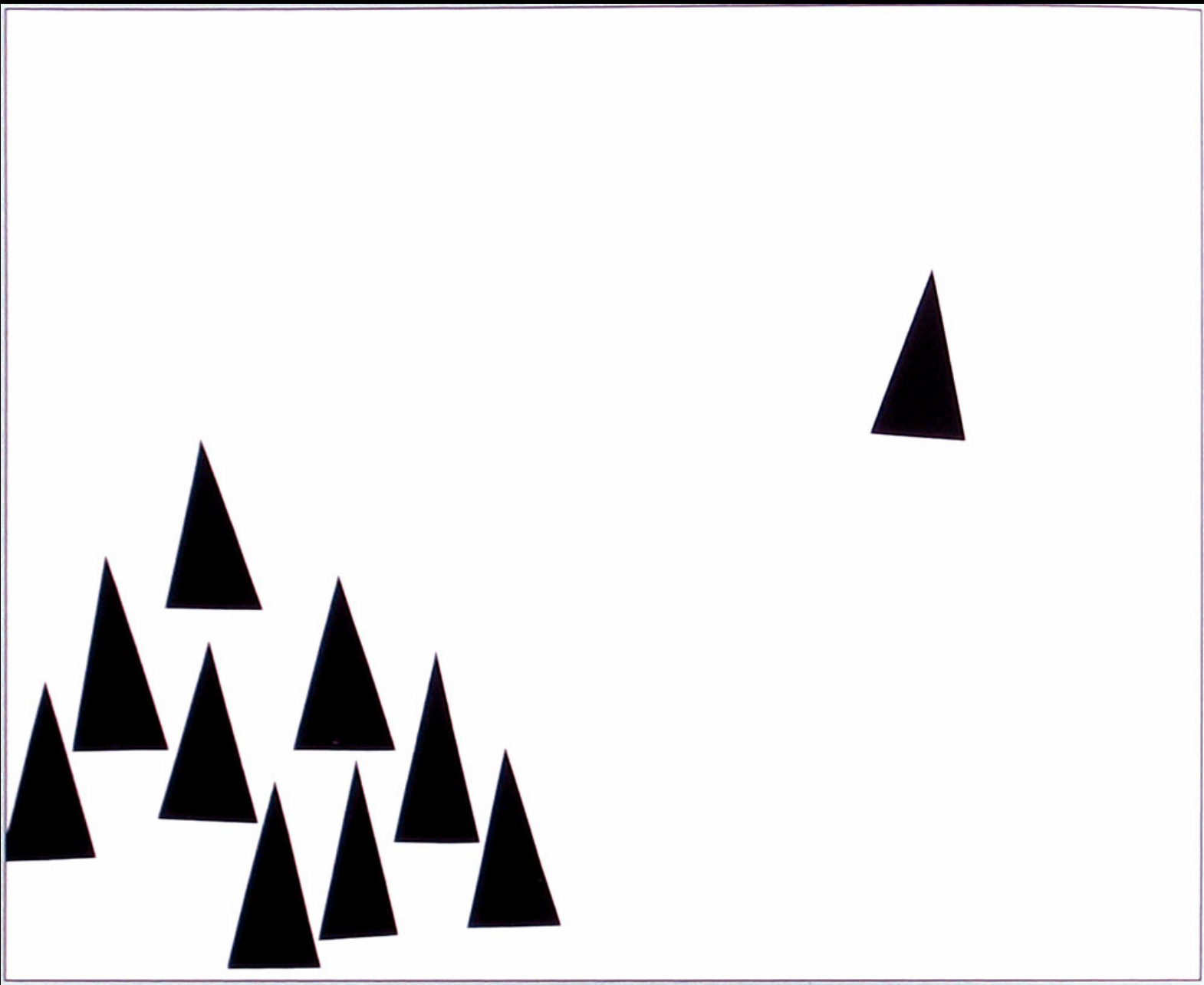
The same figure appears much more vulnerable if it is made very small.



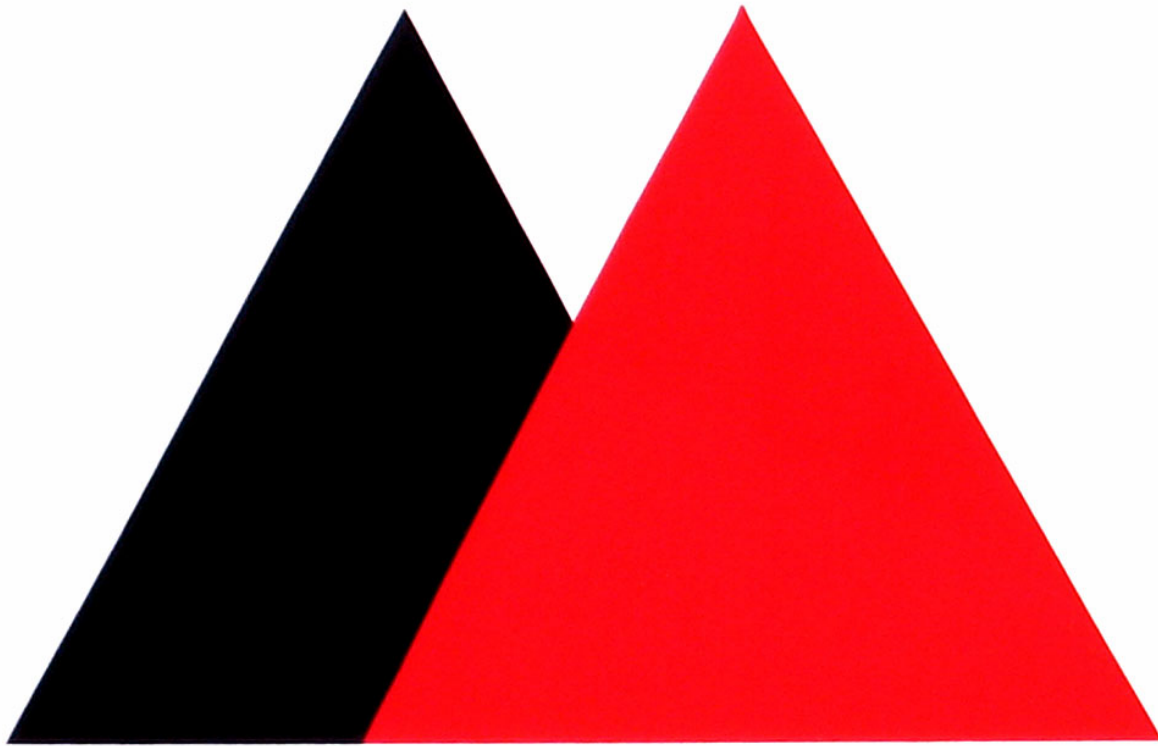
The picture contains a space all its own.
We exist outside the picture until...



...our eyes fix on and “capture” an object inside it like a prey—
but the prey in turn draws us to itself inside the picture space.



Space isolates a figure, makes that figure alone, free, and vulnerable.



The overlapping object “pierces” or “violates” the space of the other, but this also joins them together into a single unit.