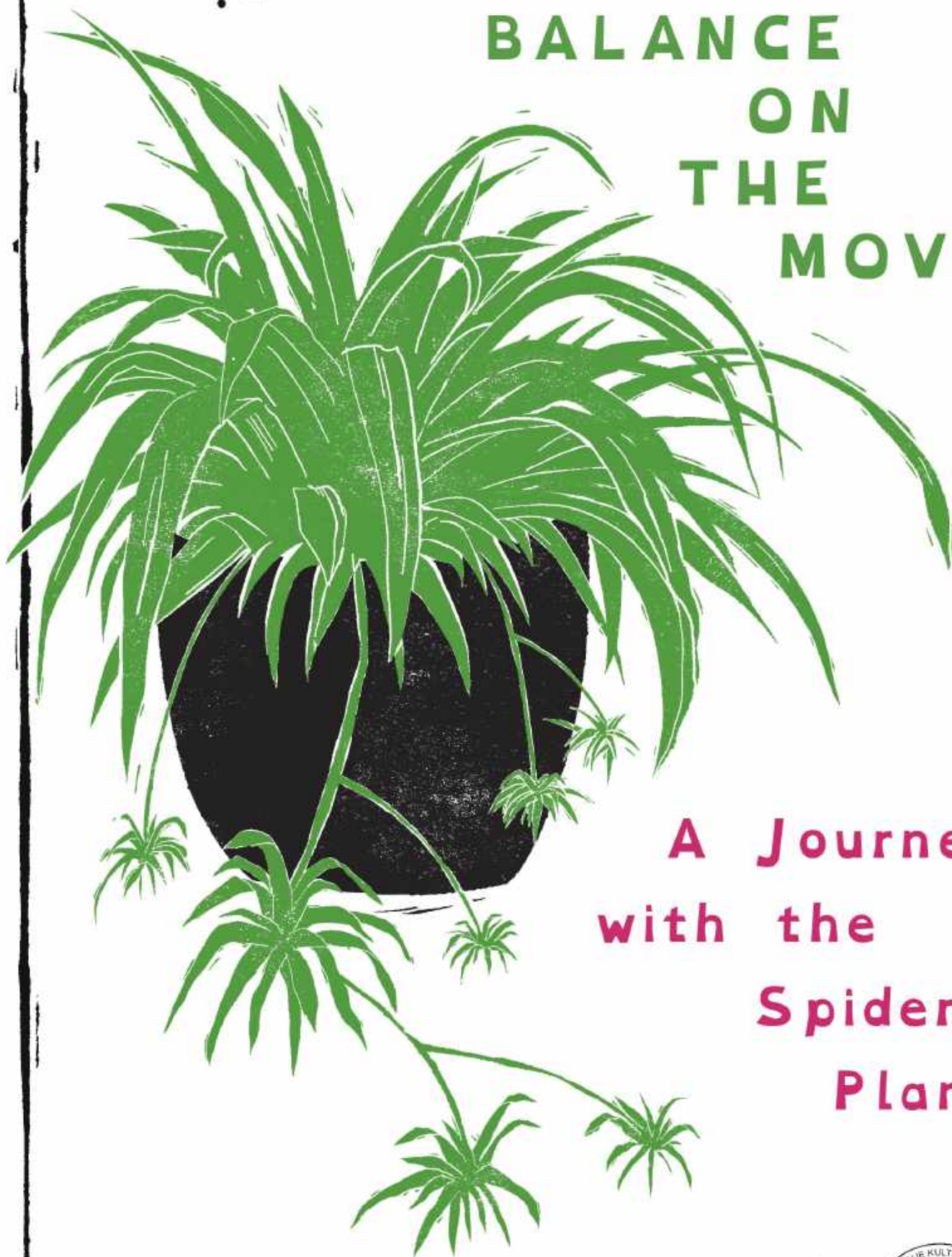


PLANTING
STORIES[®]

5/11

BALANCE
ON
THE
MOVE



A Journey
with the
Spider
Plant



Co-funded by
the European Union



KULTUR
Nest e.V.



INTRODUCTION

This small booklet, called "zine" for its hands-on creation process and easy and open distribution, is part of a bigger collection of 11 zines created within the "Planting Stories Pathways - Self Directed Learning Pathways" project thanks to the collaboration of KulturNest e.V. Germany and Tilia Association, Croatia.

This fun-to-use zine is filled with simple activities, reflections, and ideas inviting readers to connect with plants and, through this process, to themselves.



Each reader is free to explore their relationship with plants in their own way and pace.

There is no right or wrong way to work with the zine and you are free to accept or skip any invitation you want.

It can be printed as a booklet on any ordinary printer and A4 or A3 paper by selecting the booklet option from the printing settings, and used whenever it feels right, whether there is a single plant or a green corner available.



For the full range of Planting Stories educational materials and for more information on the background of the zine and how to use them, please scan this QR code.



GETTING READY

Next to this printed or digital version of the zine, there are some other elements you would need for this journey.

- The Spider plant, of course!

In case you have another plant next to you, don't worry! It is also ok.

- Something to write and draw.

Some uninterrupted time set aside for you.

How much? It depends on you, as everyone likes to learn at a different pace. Perhaps set aside 20 minutes at first, or a full hour if you can.

- You can complete the zine in one go or work through it slowly, coming back to learn again when you have the time
- Your curiosity :)

What else would make you feel more at ease?
You can think about how you are dressed, how you
sit/lay down or stand, the lighting of the space,
the time of the day that suits you best...

STARTING THE JOURNEY

How ready do you feel?



I am ok
to go on



I don't feel
like starting
now



I have
everything I
need and I look
forward to read
the next pages

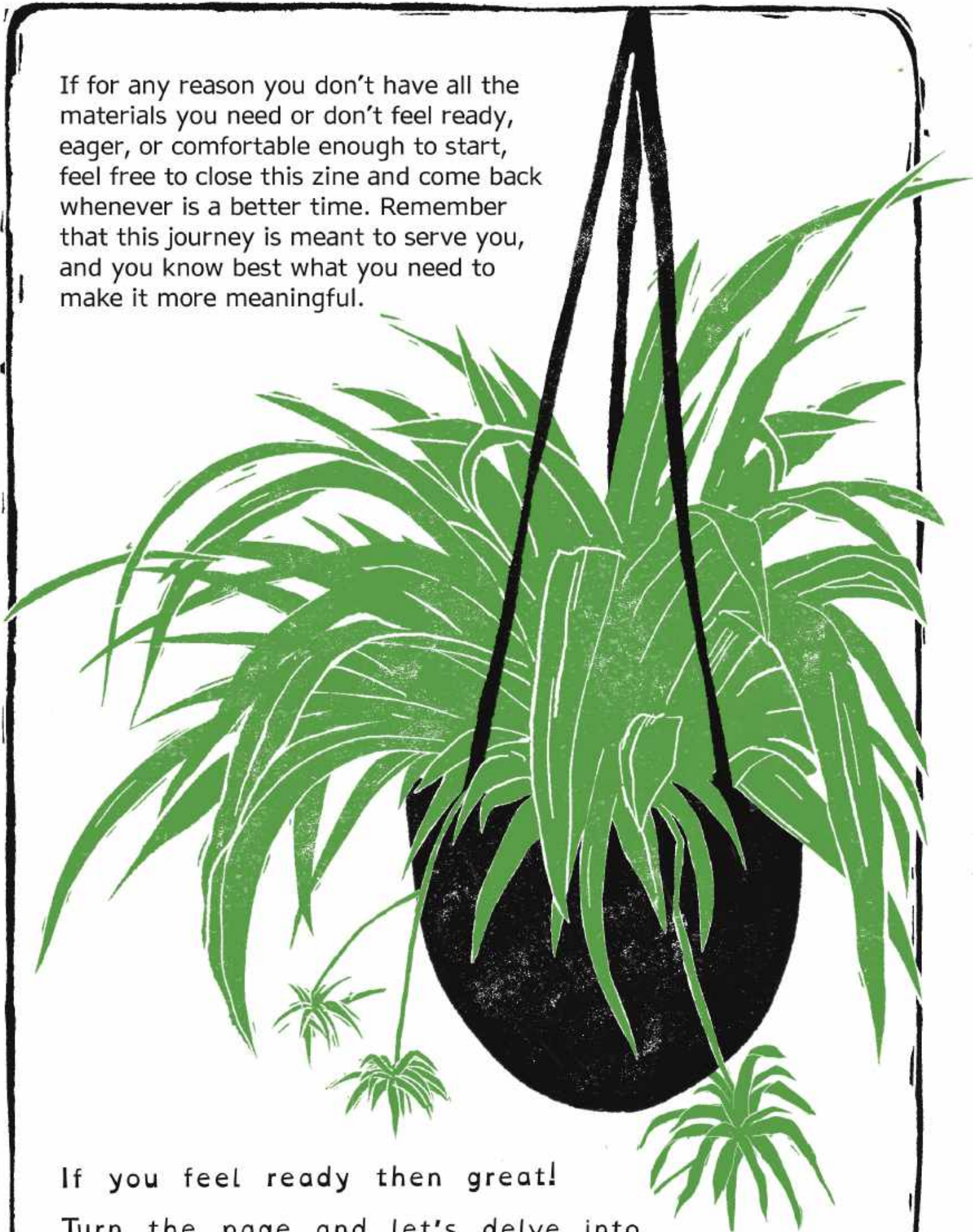
How curious do you feel?

Place a dot or another sign of your preference in the space below.

You may feel not so
interested to know
more about the plant,
feeling far away from
this form of life.

Or maybe you are very
eager to learn new stuff
about the plant, ready to
look and touch the leaves
and stems of the plant.

If for any reason you don't have all the materials you need or don't feel ready, eager, or comfortable enough to start, feel free to close this zine and come back whenever is a better time. Remember that this journey is meant to serve you, and you know best what you need to make it more meaningful.



If you feel ready then great!
Turn the page and let's delve into
the world of plants :)

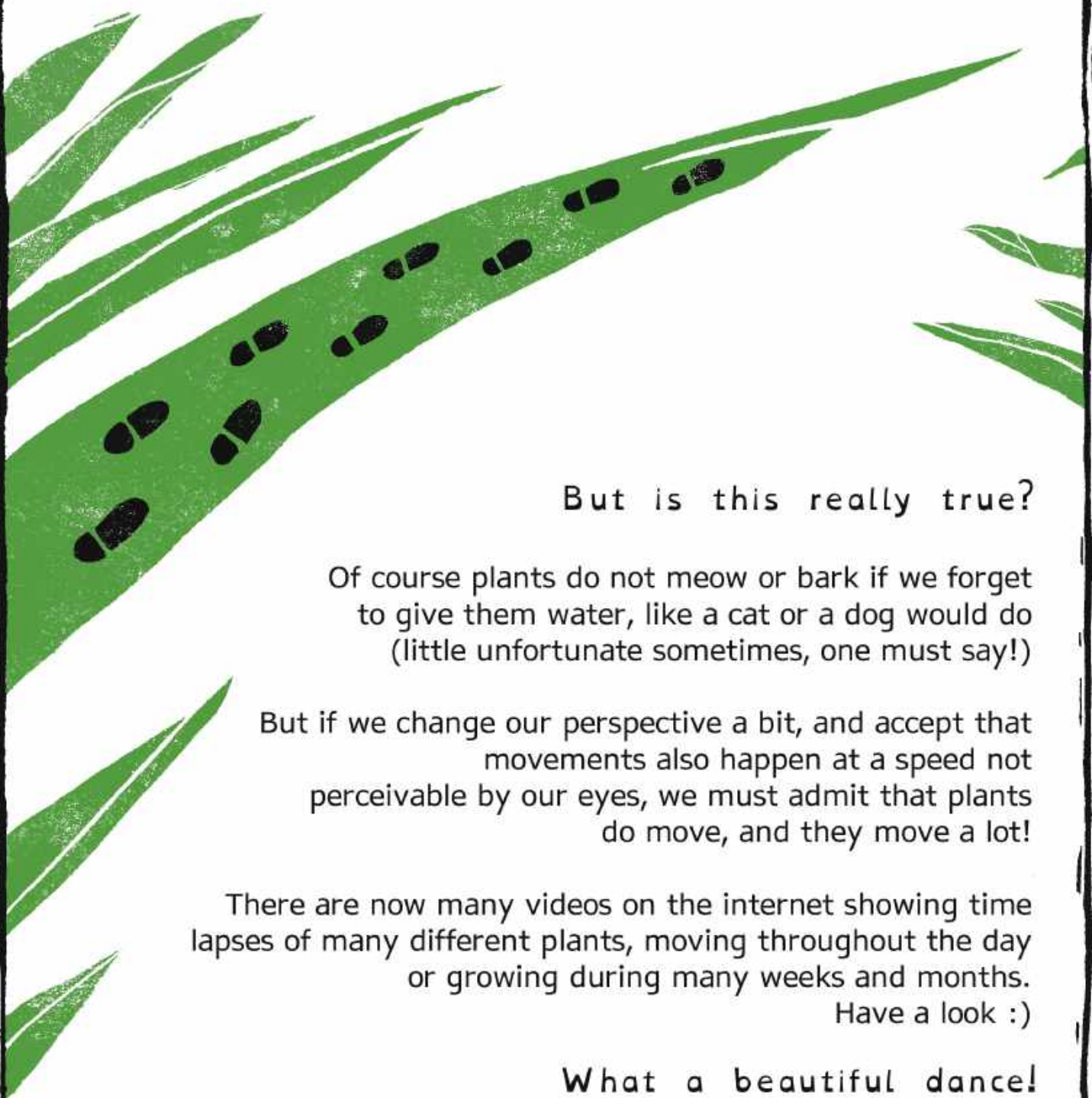
ON THE MOVE

But wait... do plants move?

It is obvious that plants do not run, jump, walk or lift their arms to drink or eat (which arms after all?).

This is one of the main differences between plants and animals.

We seem to be pretty sure: plants are static beings.



But is this really true?

Of course plants do not meow or bark if we forget to give them water, like a cat or a dog would do (little unfortunate sometimes, one must say!)

But if we change our perspective a bit, and accept that movements also happen at a speed not perceivable by our eyes, we must admit that plants do move, and they move a lot!

There are now many videos on the internet showing time lapses of many different plants, moving throughout the day or growing during many weeks and months.
Have a look :)

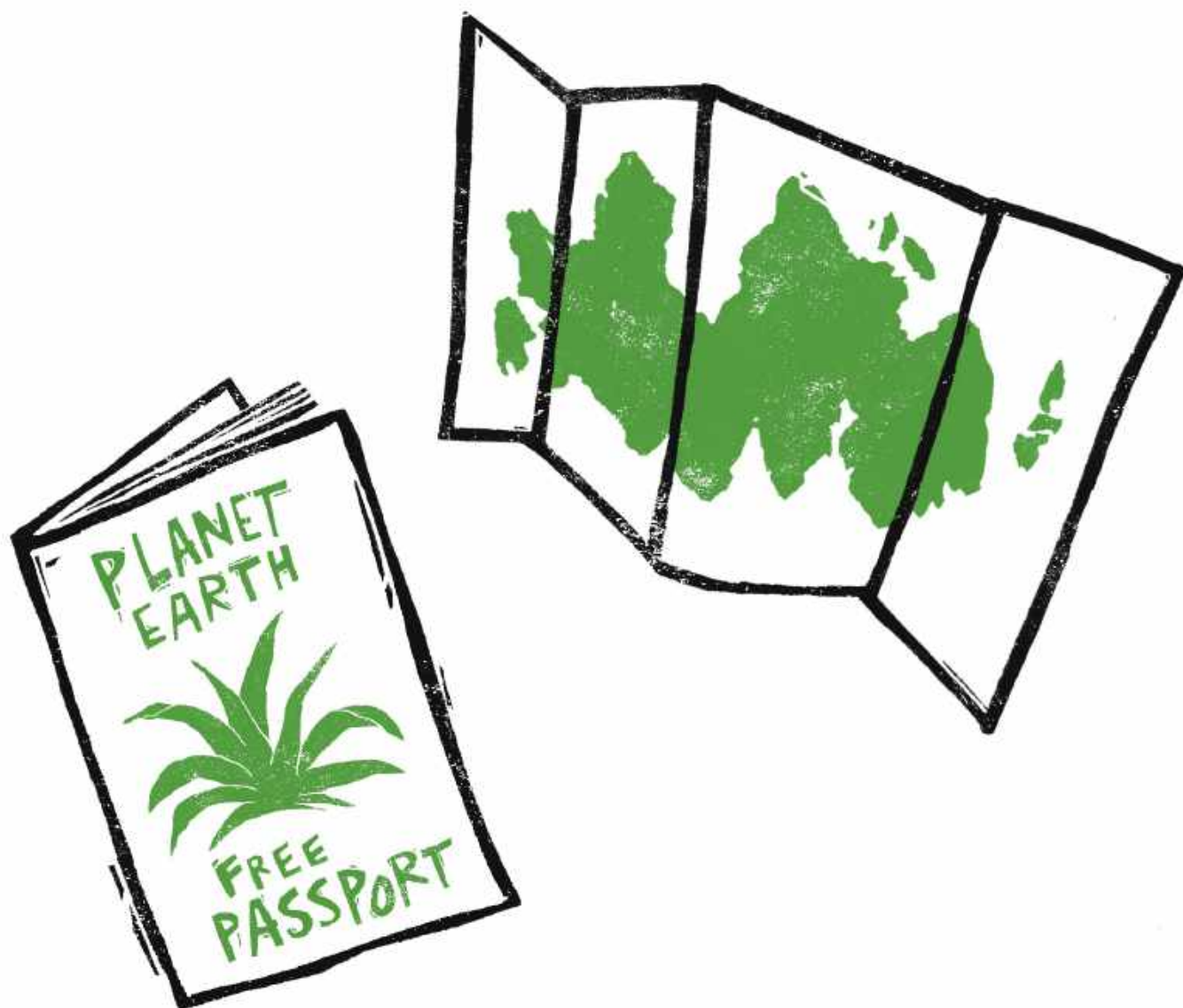
What a beautiful dance!

What plants actually can't do is to move from the place they were born.

At least not as a single plant, because as a community, plants do move and migrate through generations, nomad and adventurous beings in search for new territories.

They have always done so, and they will keep doing it.

Because movement and migration are natural strategies of life.



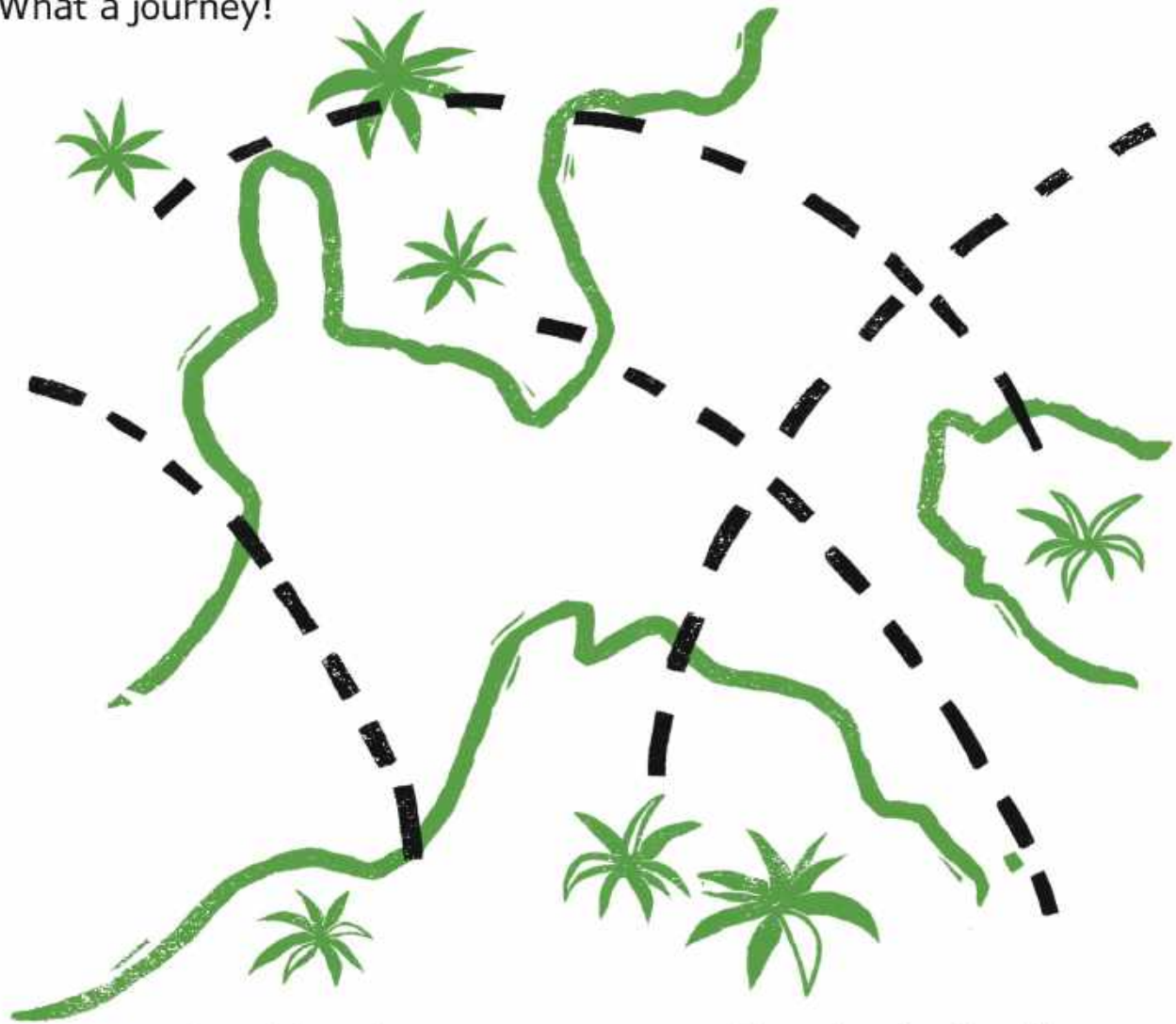
In the following pages we will follow the journey of a Spider plant.

THE JOURNEY OF THE SPIDER PLANT

With long leaves and curious offsets, Spider plants are a great example of plant's capability to move and, if we look at the history of the plant, even more so.

The place of origin of the spider plant is in the tropical and southern area in Africa. From there, the plant has migrated, travelling thousands of kilometres and becoming naturalised in other parts of the world, including Western Australia and Bangladesh.

What a journey!



The *Chlorophytum comosum*, Spider plant's scientific name, is easy to grow and is resilient, which also made this plant a very common houseplant at all latitudes of our planet.

From one specific place on earth, Spider plants are now at home all over the world.

Following the movements and migrations of the Spider plant, it might be interesting now to reflect on your story.

What are the small and big movements
of your life?

You can trace lines throughout the space to visualise
the path(s) of your life.

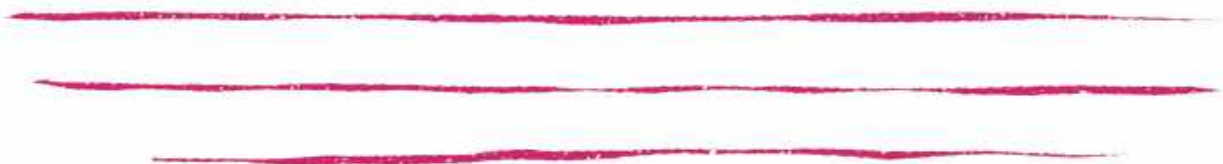
In doing so, lines can cross over each other and create complex
or simple patterns.

Don't worry about the result.

There are no right or wrong outcomes.

When you feel ready,
look at the drawing as you would look at a plant.
What do you see? What shapes and dynamics?

You may write down your reflection or simply move
forward to another page.



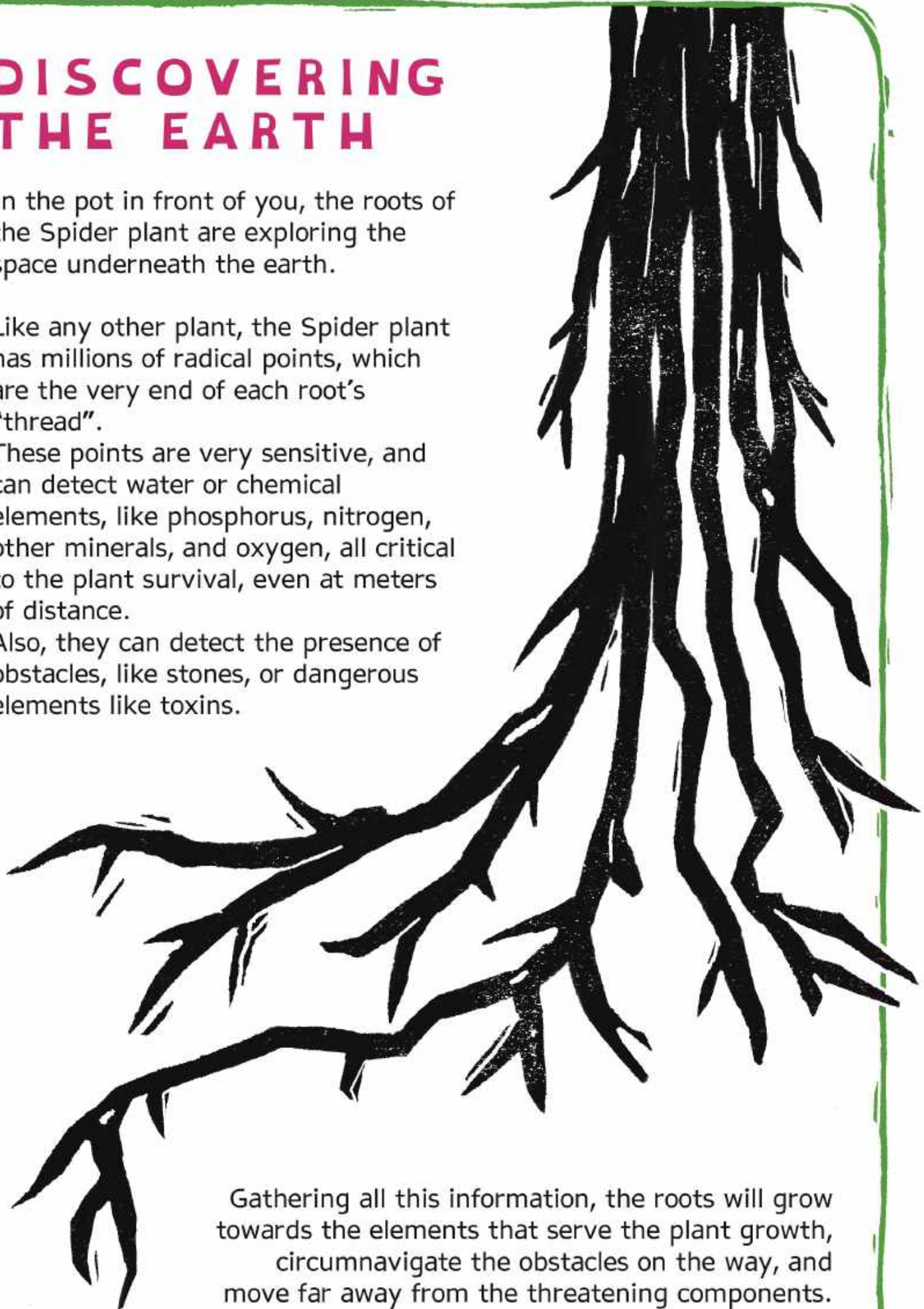
DISCOVERING THE EARTH

In the pot in front of you, the roots of the Spider plant are exploring the space underneath the earth.

Like any other plant, the Spider plant has millions of radical points, which are the very end of each root's "thread".

These points are very sensitive, and can detect water or chemical elements, like phosphorus, nitrogen, other minerals, and oxygen, all critical to the plant survival, even at meters of distance.

Also, they can detect the presence of obstacles, like stones, or dangerous elements like toxins.



Gathering all this information, the roots will grow towards the elements that serve the plant growth, circumnavigate the obstacles on the way, and move far away from the threatening components.

After reading all these different strategies of the roots, how would it be to use this as a metaphor for you?

What elements are you leaving behind?

What obstacles are you overcoming?

What are you looking forward to encountering
in your path?

Draw a map of these elements and of the
strategies you employ.

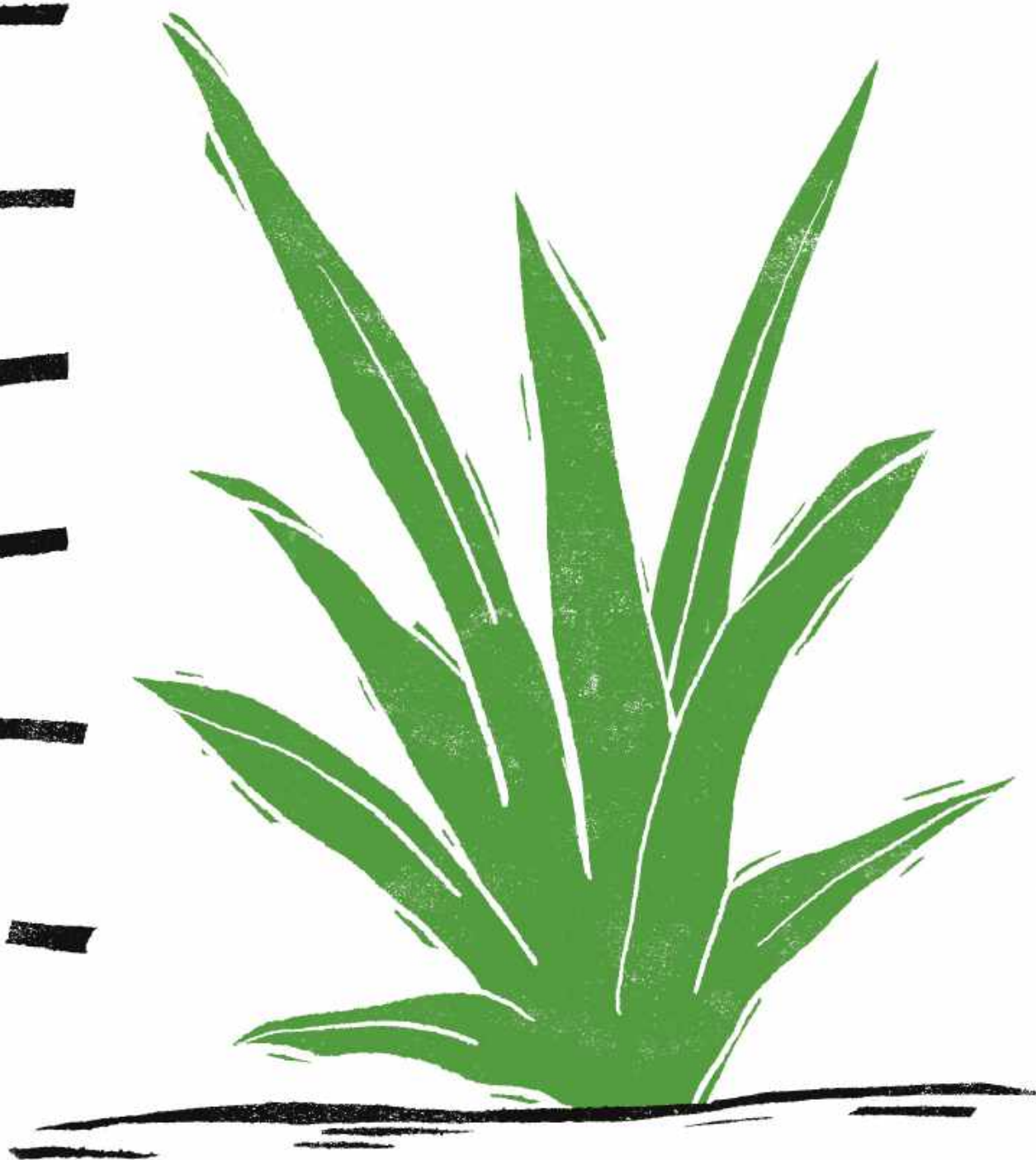
Whenever you feel complete, look at the images above.
Take a moment to acknowledge them and write down a word
or a sentence to close this exercise.
Then move to another page.



SENSING THE SPACE

From the soil, starting with tiny and thin sprouts, the Spider plant grows tufts that can slowly grow in number of leaves and height reaching up to 60 cm.

Moving from the center, the long and narrow leaves of the Spider plant spread out in all directions, descending also many meters and finding new spaces to call home.



Having in mind these characteristics of the Spider plant leaves, you may now wonder about your reality.

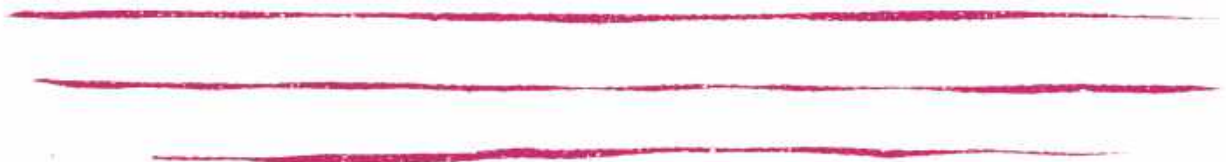
What do you see in your surroundings?

What spaces and directions do you want to
explore?

What elements would you like to grow?

Write or draw your answers.

After you are finished, look at the entire picture or constellation of words. Take a moment to reflect on their meanings and then move to the following page.



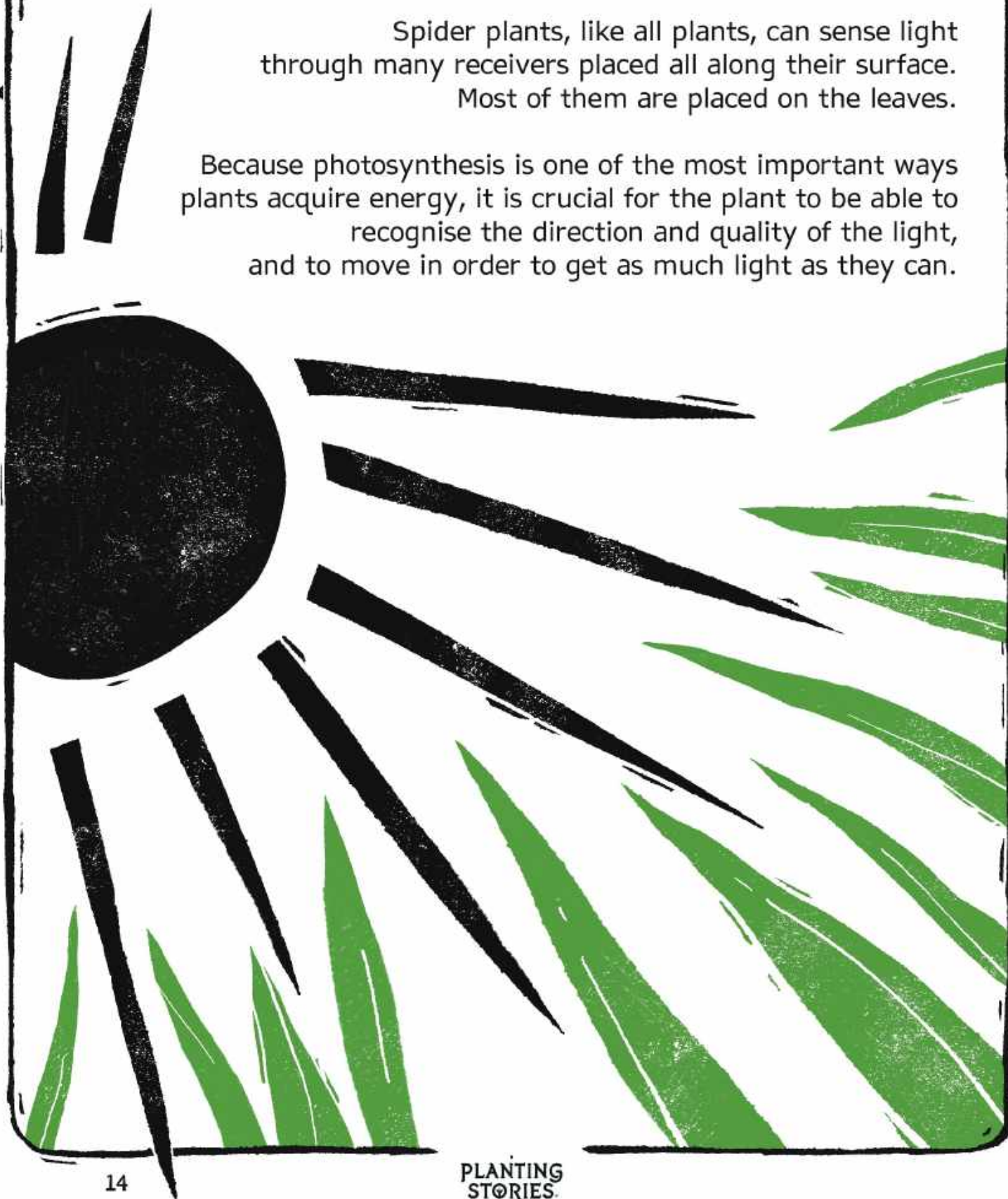
SEEING THE LIGHT

Look at your Spider plant, sitting in a pot on the window shelf or hanging from the ceiling.

In order to thrive, the plant needs sunlight.

Spider plants, like all plants, can sense light through many receivers placed all along their surface. Most of them are placed on the leaves.

Because photosynthesis is one of the most important ways plants acquire energy, it is crucial for the plant to be able to recognise the direction and quality of the light, and to move in order to get as much light as they can.



As we have seen, plants are very sensitive to light.
What if we use it as a metaphor?

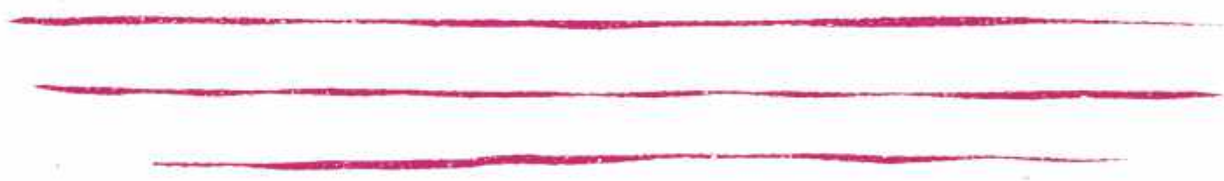
What brings light and brightness to your days?

What do you need to feel good and energetic?

What can you reach out to in order to feel
nurtured?

Having in mind these questions, look at the plant and draw the
leaves that resonate most with you.

After you finish the drawing, have a moment
to take in the image and add words or sentences to it.
Then follow the process on the next page.



NEW BEGINNINGS

Sometimes, from the crowded tuft of leaves, a thin stem will branch out, growing up to 75 cm.

From this stem, one day a small delicate white flower will appear.



Following the inflorescence, the so-called spiderettes appear, small offsets of the main plant that weigh the stem down in a strong arch.

This ensures that the Spider plant babies can reach the ground and take root.

A new beginning is there...

Think about what caught your attention in the story of the stem and the flower of the Spider plant.

Try to visualise these answers as leaves, offsets, flowers or any other image appears to you.

Drawings can overlap and create new meanings.

Which roots are you ready to grow?

Which flowers can you see coming?

When the work is complete, look at it with caring eyes.
You may note down your reflection or move to the next page.

FINAL REFLECTION

Take a moment to observe the plant once more, not focusing on a single aspect now, but on the whole presence.

What do you notice?



Recall the journey
you underwent in the previous pages.

Each step that brought you here.

What is your takeaway after
closing this process?

EARTH

Earth was my home.
I came from the rain of my father.
I grew from the soil of my mother.

My sprouts spoke the language of the native seeds,
And while memories nurtured my roots,
Gentle rhymes took care of my leaves.

One day the winds came by,
Whispering many secrets,
Screaming unknown stories.

I did not know their meanings,
But I packed my roots,
And filled the luggage with my hopes.

Pollen I became.
My gaze searching through the fog,
My wishes feeding on the sun.

Long I wandered with clouds and swallows.
Under their wings I rested,
Flying nests of *why* and *how*.

Then, the dawn surprised me with new voices:
Dancing, swirling, soft companions,
Other travellers in the sky.

We watched the horizon getting closer,
Over thousand and thousands lands.
Fields of *maybe*, rivers of *could be*.

I watched this geography beneath me
And chose the landing for my journey:
I joined gravity in the fall.

On the ground, my feet now tremble slightly.
I breathe in acceptance,
I breathe out gratitude.

I meet the forest;
On my left, barks full of courage,
On my right, fronds full of future.

I have a blossom in my chest,
The petals tickling up my throat.
Earth is my home.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THIS JOURNEY OF GROWTH AND CONNECTION.



Check for other resources at:

<https://www.kulturnest.org/socio-cultural/planting-stories>
or udruga-tilia.hr/plantingstories

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