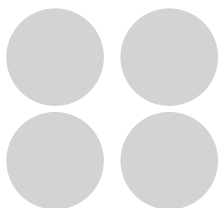




# What is a Letterform



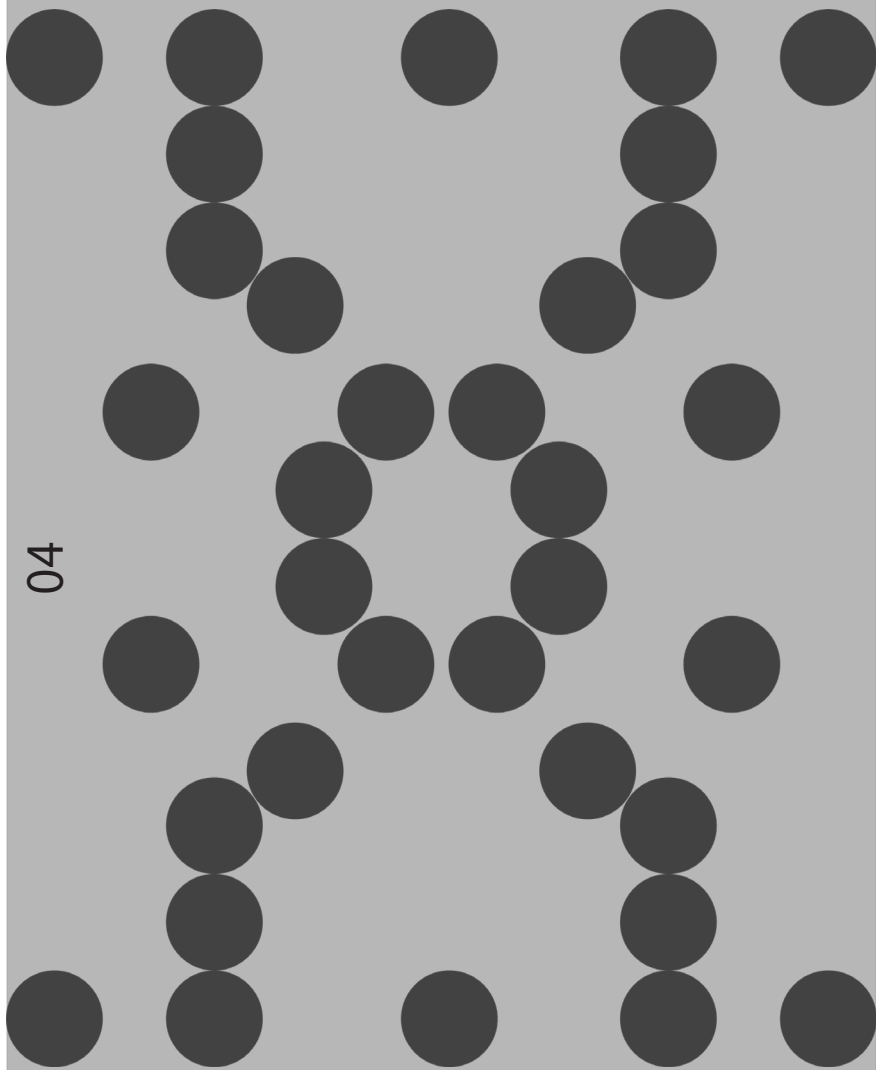
Letterform refers not simply to a letter as a linguistic symbol, but to the specific visual shape through which that letter appears. In typography, palaeography, calligraphy, and epigraphy, a letterform describes the concrete manifestation of an otherwise abstract character. While a character or grapheme exists as an abstract unit of language — a letterform is the particular way that “A” is visually constructed, written, printed, carved, or displayed.

This distinction is important because the same abstract letter can produce countless different letterforms. A capital “A” written in Helvetica, handwritten with a brush pen, engraved in Roman stone inscriptions, or rendered as a three-dimensional digital model all represent the same grapheme, yet each possesses a different letterform.

So letterforms often extends beyond readability alone. It involves examining how letters occupy space, how they are perceived visually, and how form influences interpretation. A letterform can function simultaneously as linguistic information and as visual image. Under certain conditions, the visual qualities of the letterform may even dominate its linguistic role, causing the letter to be experienced less as readable text and more as shape, structure, texture, or spatial object.

A letterform  
is a  
(*UNIT*)  
that can be

Recognised  
Distinguished  
and  
Mapped to  
meaning



04

# Recognised

[01]



# Distinguished

05

[02]



# Mapped to meaning

[03]

Recognition refers to the ability of a form to be identified as a letter.

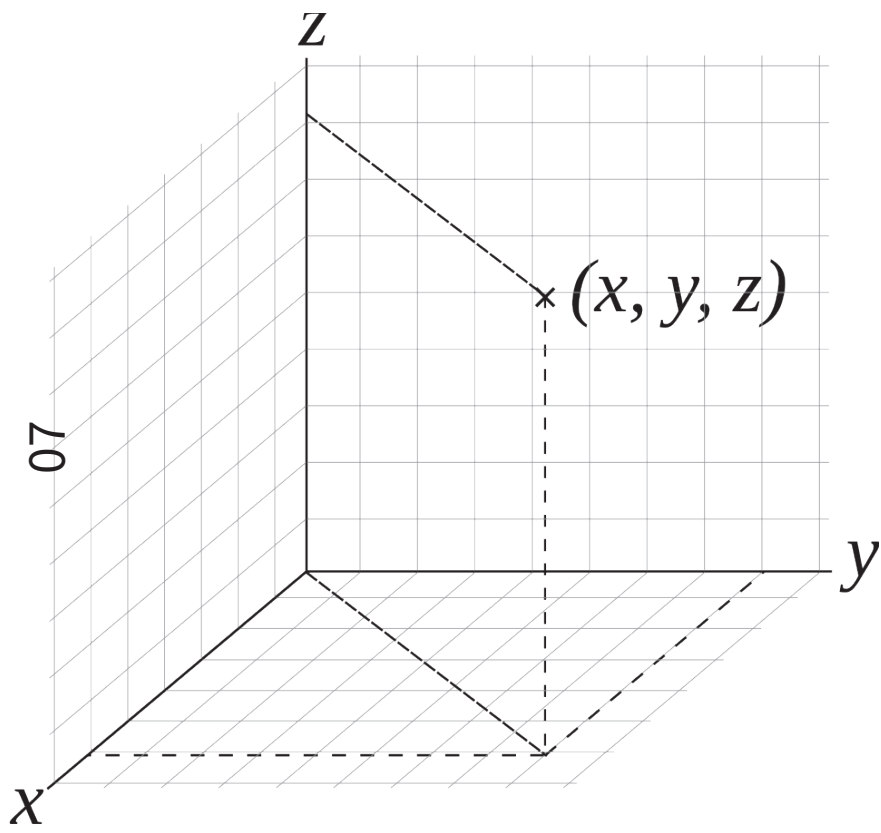
Before language can be understood, the reader must first recognise the presence of a familiar visual structure. This process often occurs immediately and unconsciously under stable viewing conditions, allowing the letter to function as a readable sign rather than an abstract shape.

**Distinction refers to the ability of a letter to remain visually separate from other letters.**

A letter can only operate within a writing system when its form maintains enough difference to avoid confusion with surrounding forms. Reading therefore depends not only on recognition, but also on the continuous differentiation between one character and another across sequences of text.

Meaning refers to the process through which a recognised and distinguishable form becomes connected to language.

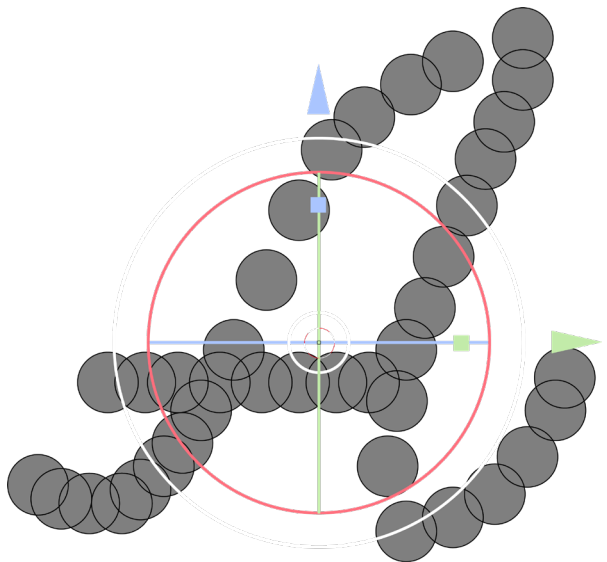
Once a letter is identified and differentiated, it can begin to operate as part of a linguistic system, allowing the reader to move beyond visual perception toward interpretation and understanding. Under stable conditions, this transition from form to meaning often appears automatic.



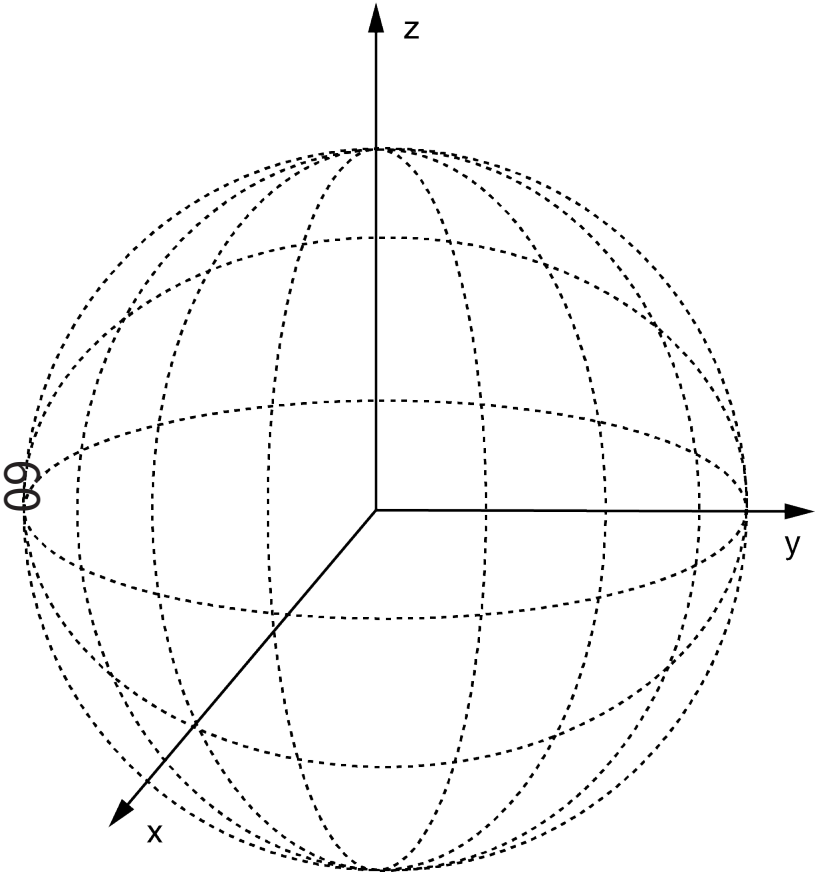
In this system, the letter is no longer treated as a graphic pattern, but as a spatial structure that can be observed from different positions. The frontal view is only one possible condition of appearance, rather than the natural or final state of the letter.

The letter is constructed within a three-dimensional coordinate system. Its form is not fixed as a single frontal image, but generated through spatial rotation across the X, Y, and Z axes.

Changes in angle do not simply distort the letter, they reorganise the conditions through which the letter becomes recognisable. What appears on the page is therefore not the letter itself, but a projection produced under a specific viewing condition.



# X0Y0Z0

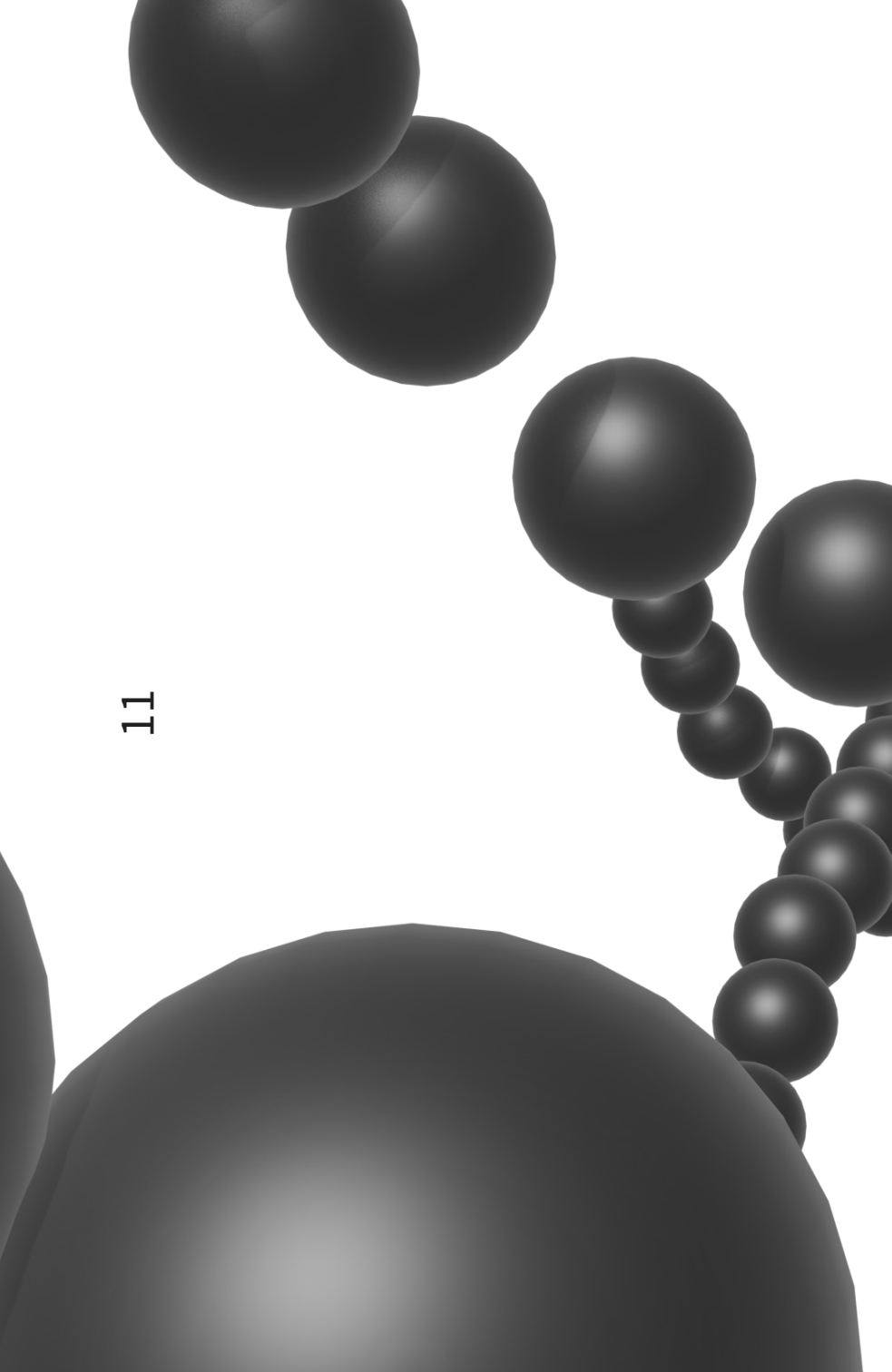


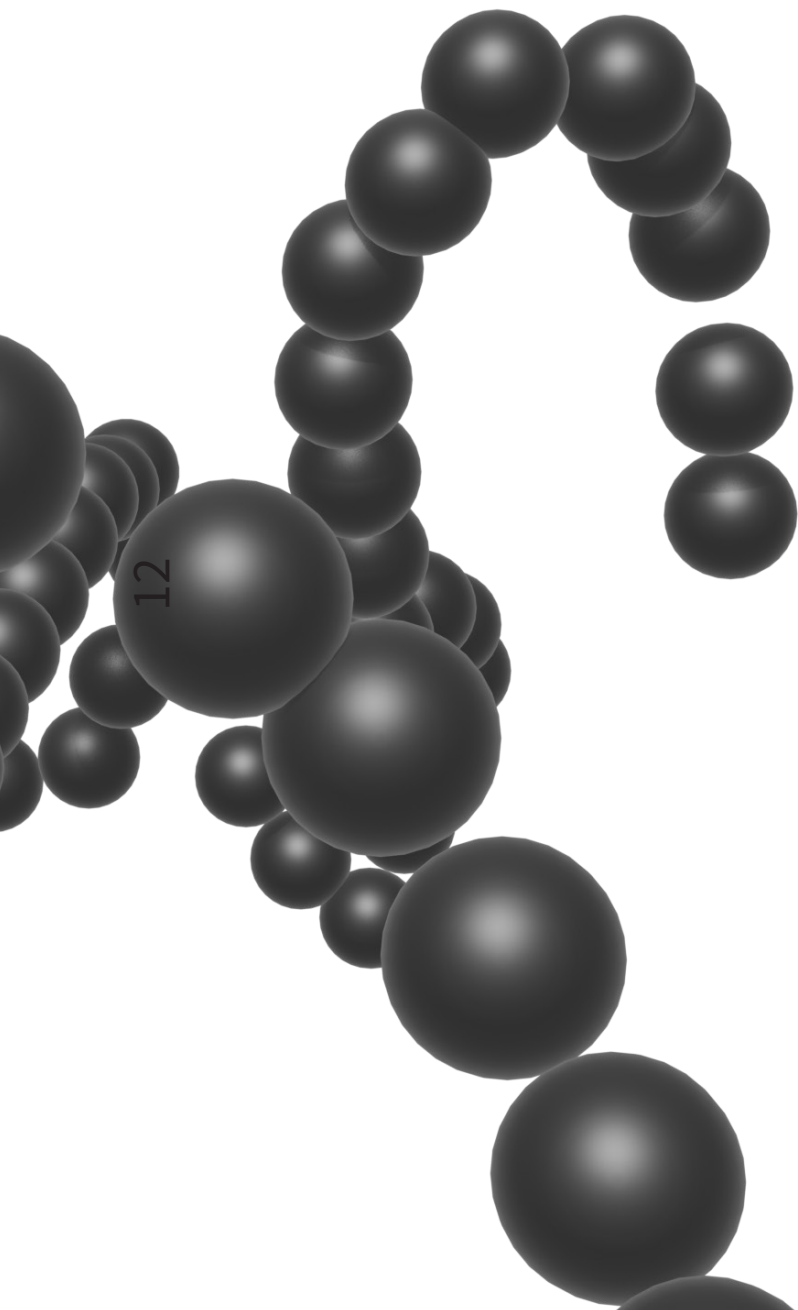
X0Y0Z0 represents the baseline condition of the type system. The values "0, 0, 0" indicate that no rotational transformation has been applied across the X, Y, or Z axes within the three-dimensional coordinate structure.

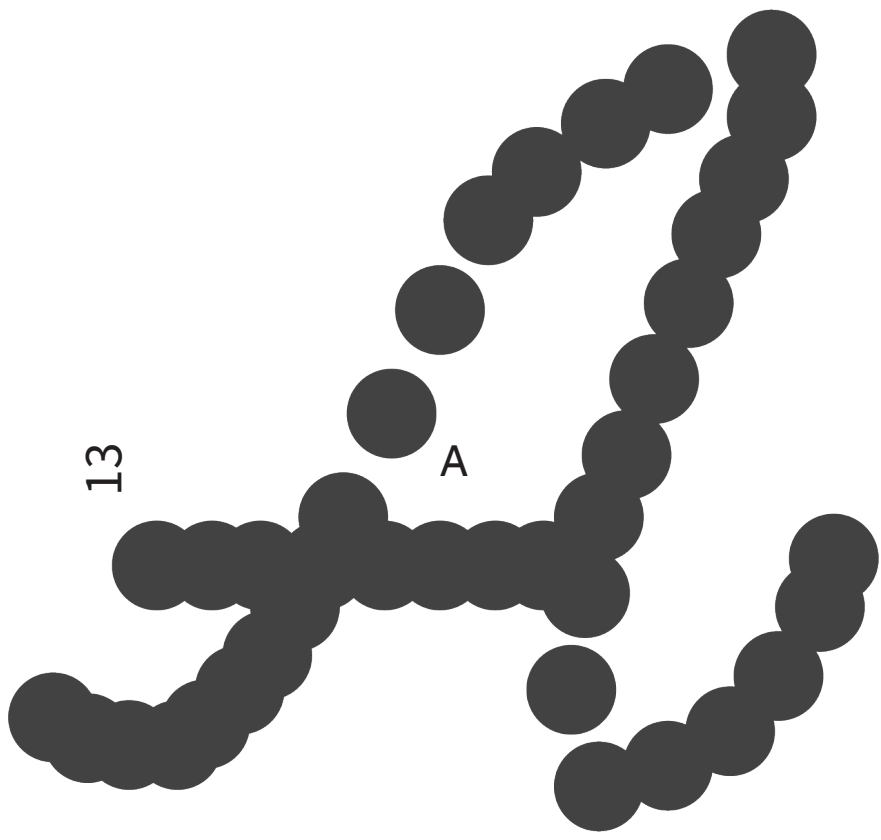
Constructed within a 3D coordinate structure, the letterforms remain positioned at a frontal viewing angle without rotation across the X, Y, or Z axes. As a result, the characters preserve a stable and recognisable relationship to conventional typography.

Rather than functioning as a final form, X0Y0Z0 operates as a reference state from which subsequent spatial transformations emerge. It establishes the default conditions of recognition, legibility, and orientation that support continuous reading.

This version acts as the visual and perceptual anchor against which later distortions and shifts in viewing conditions can be measured.

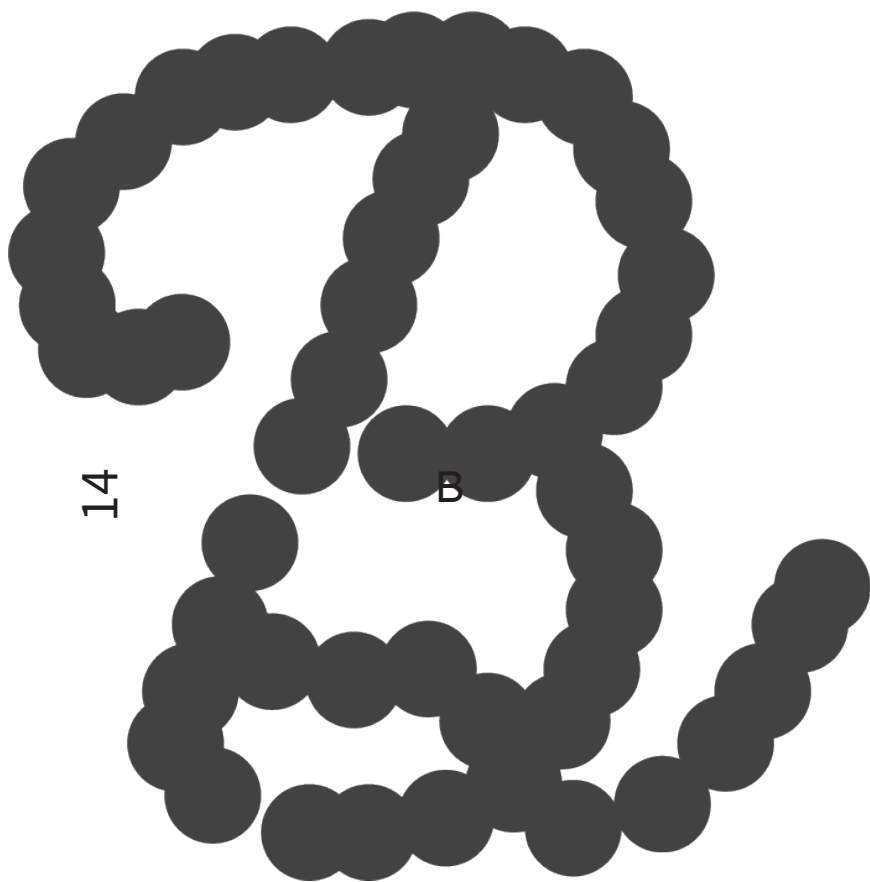






13

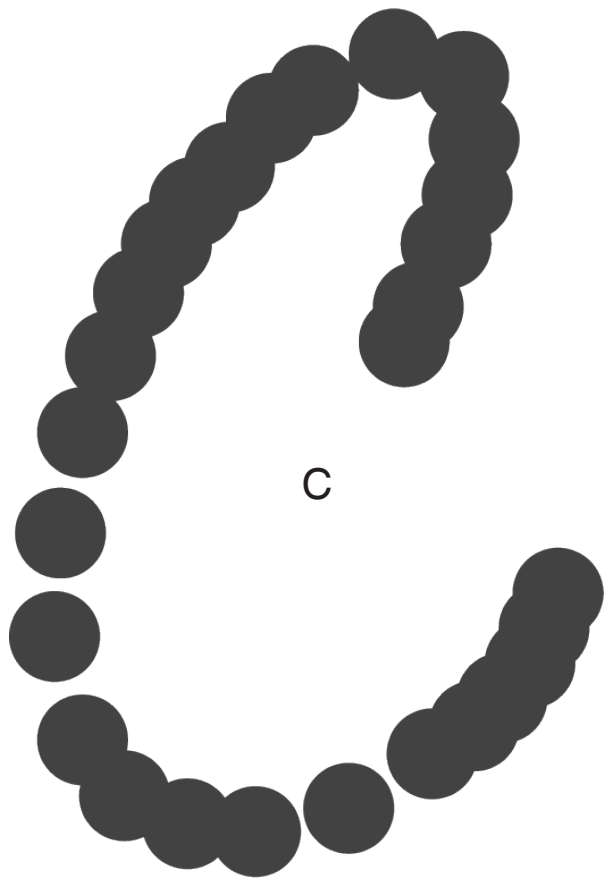
A



14

B

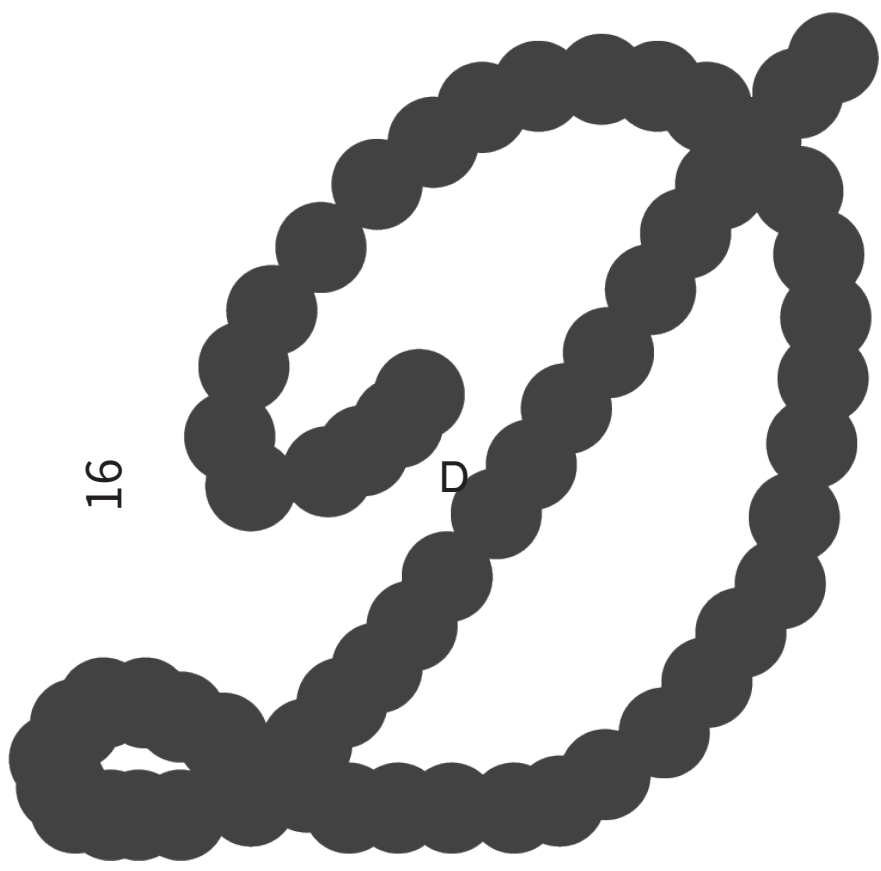
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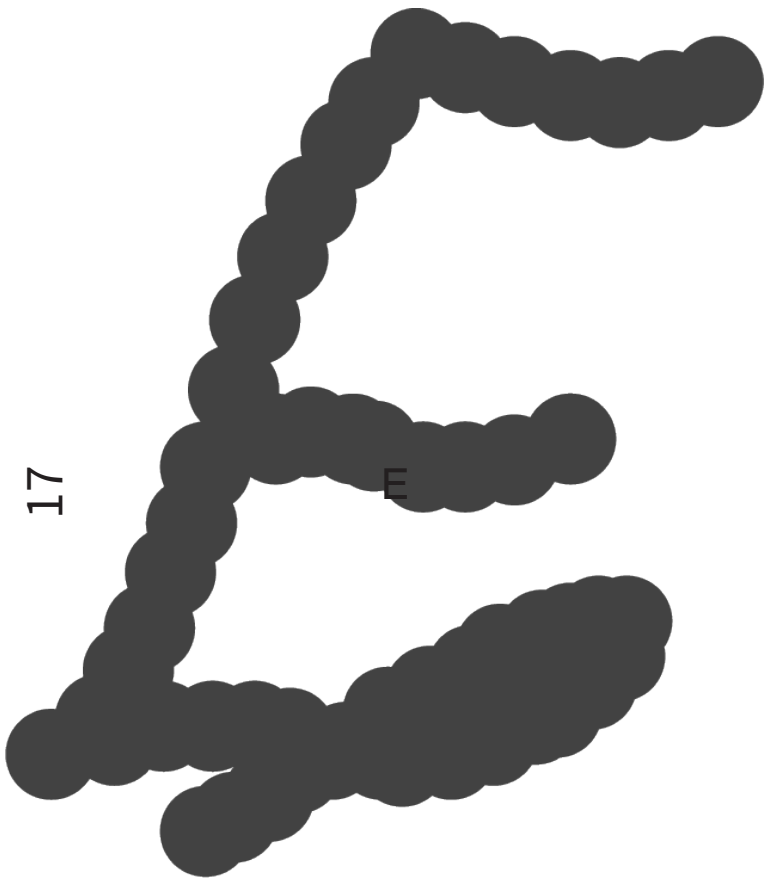


C

16

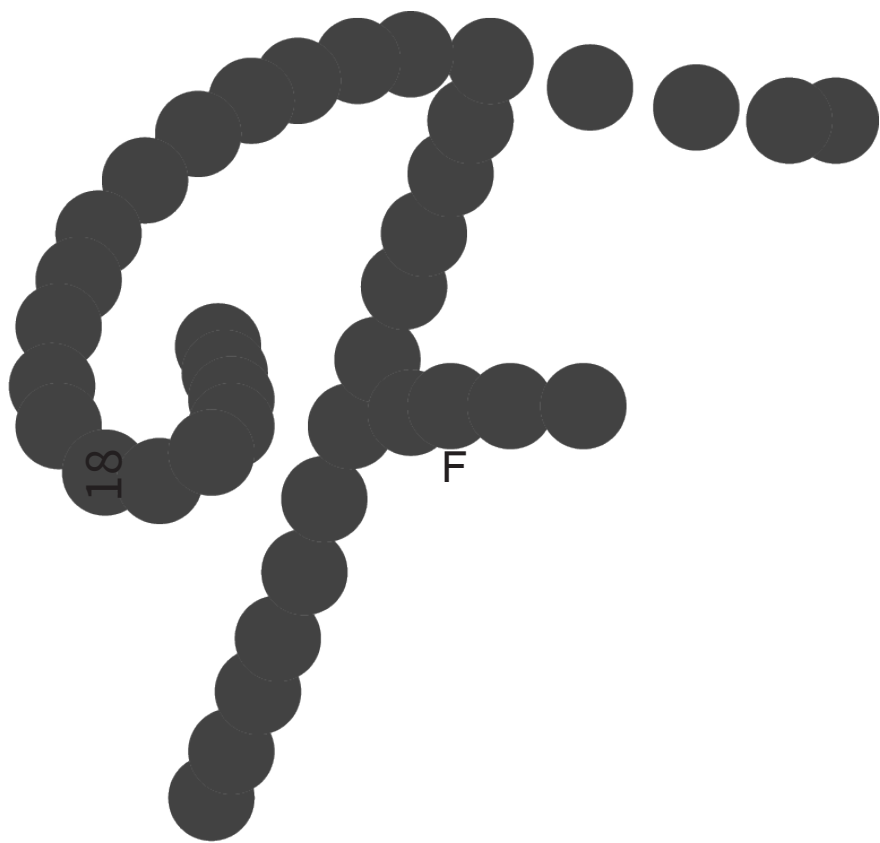
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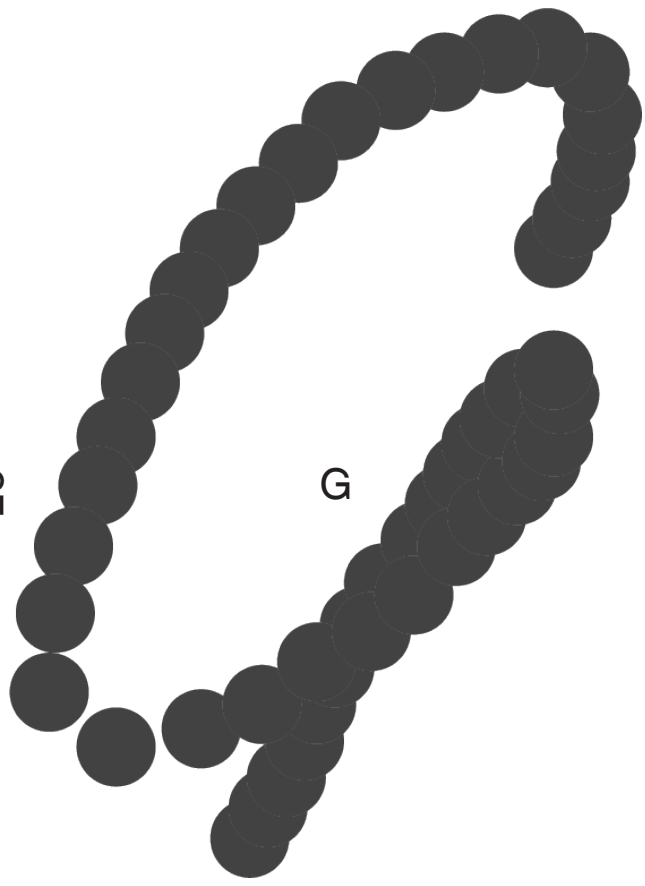


17

E

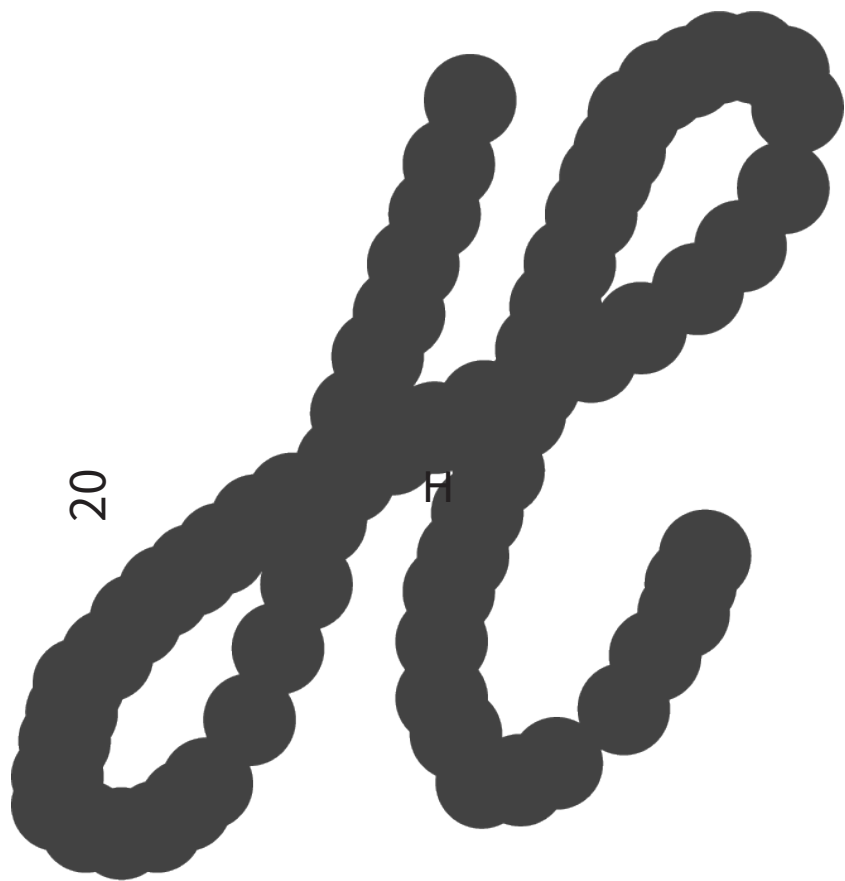


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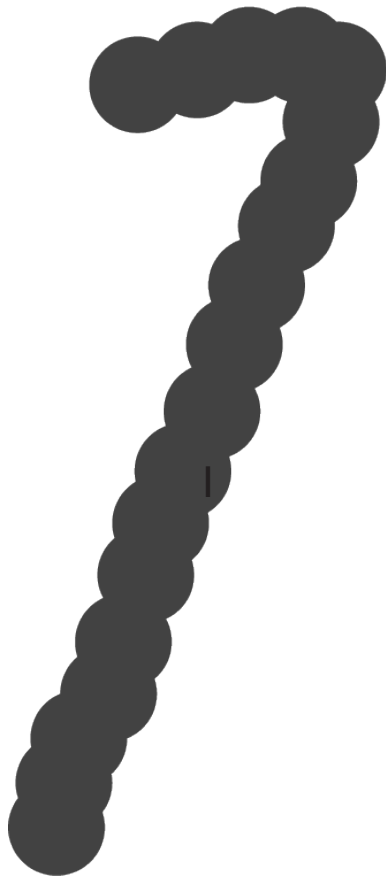


G

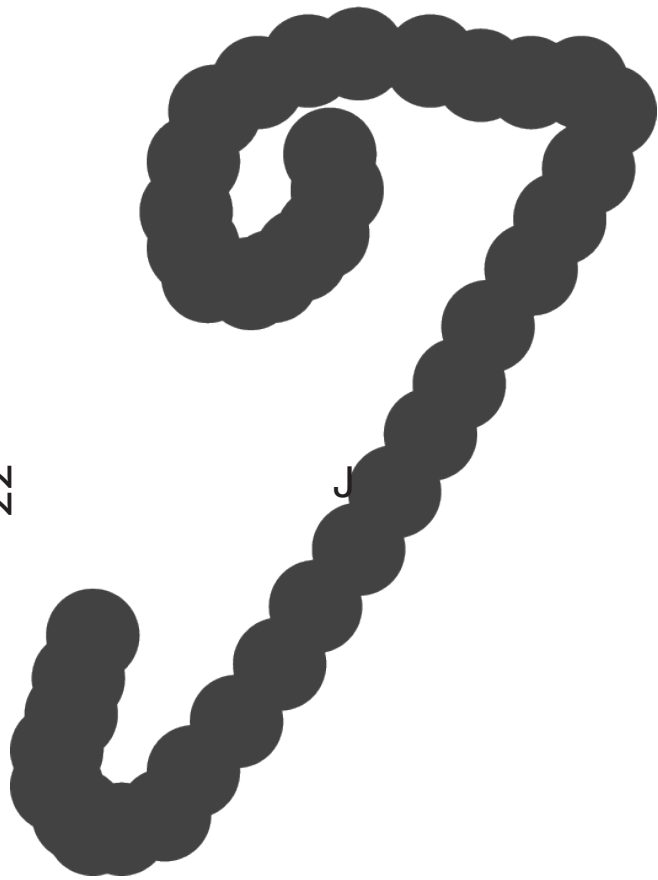
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H

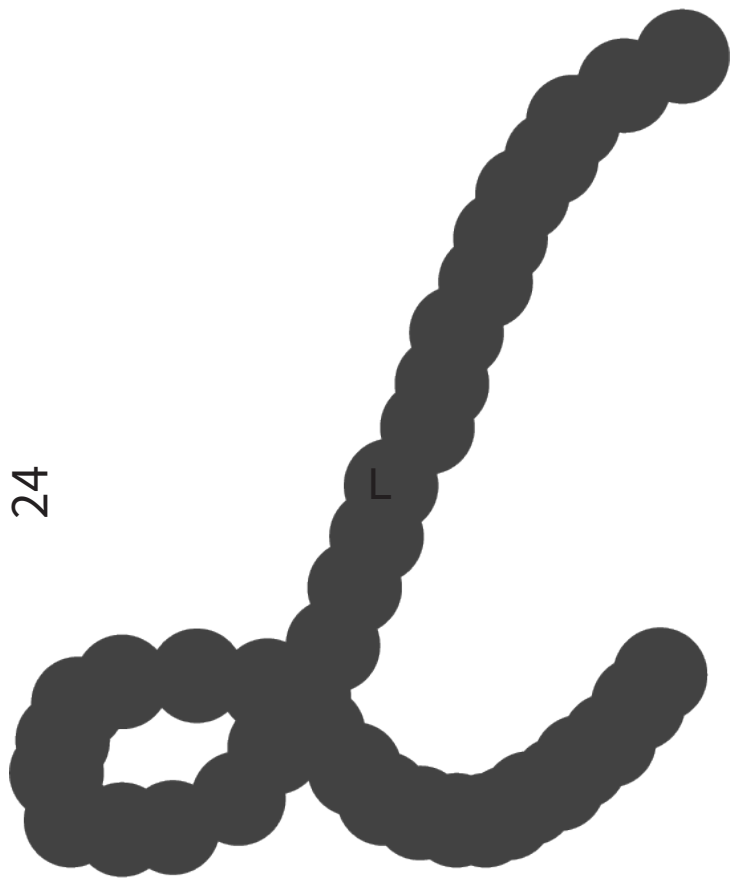


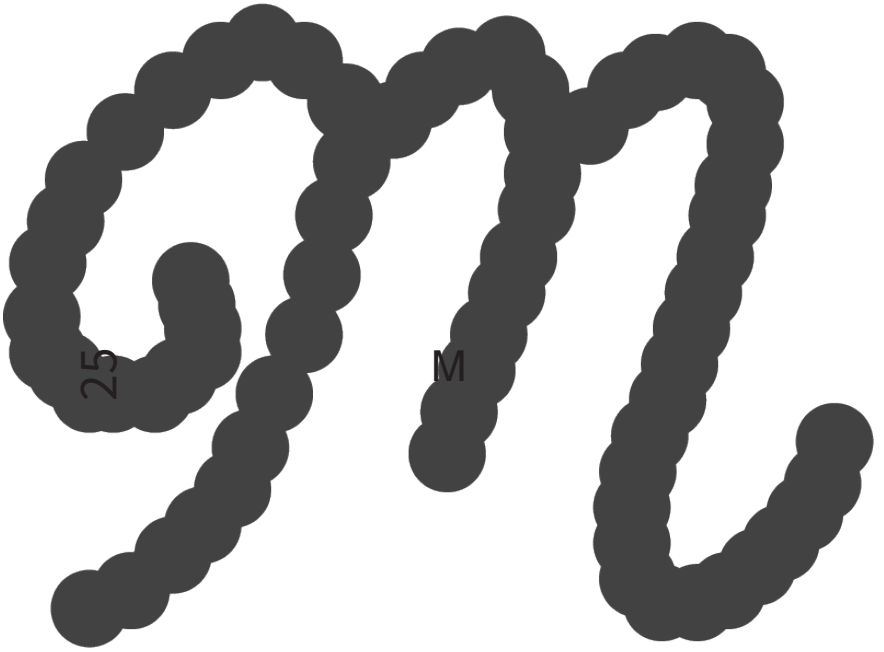
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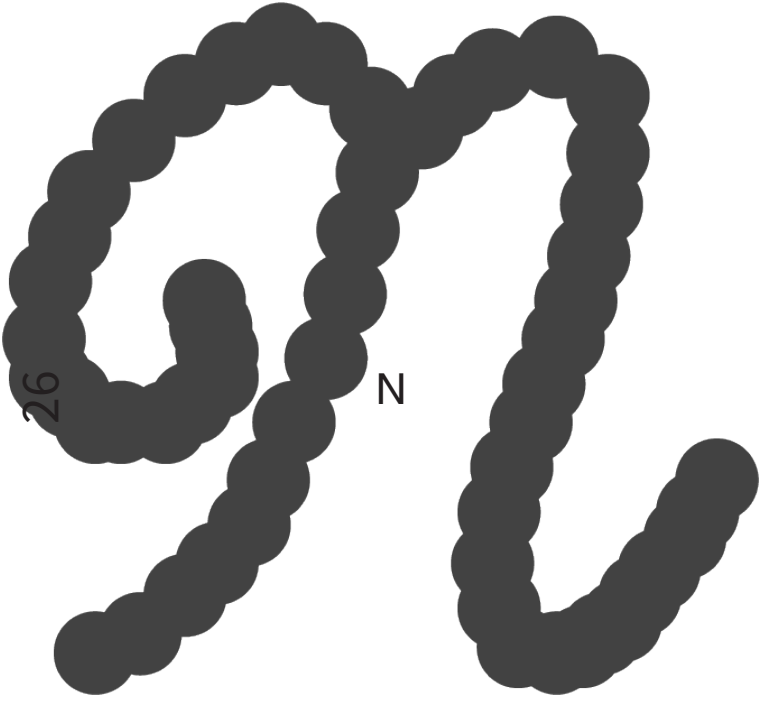




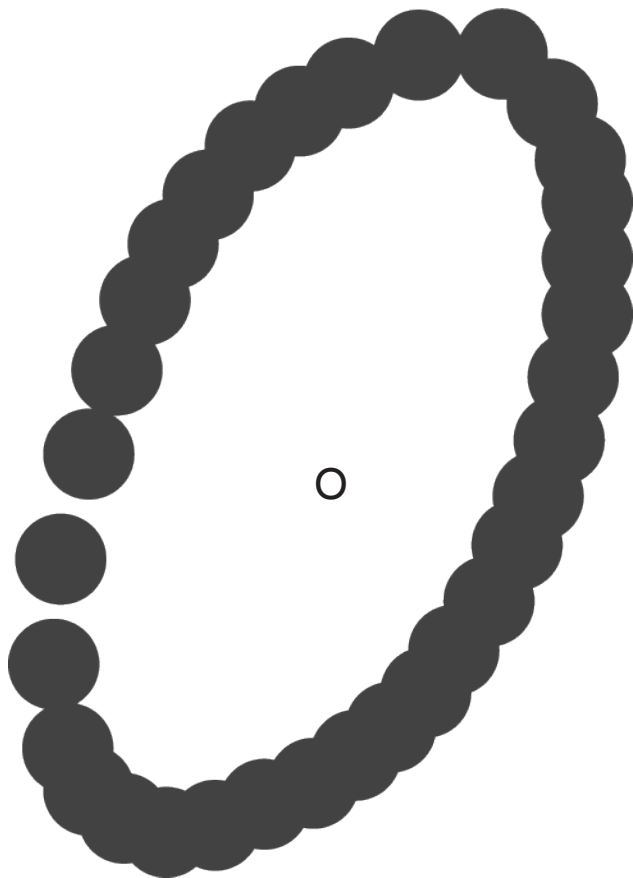
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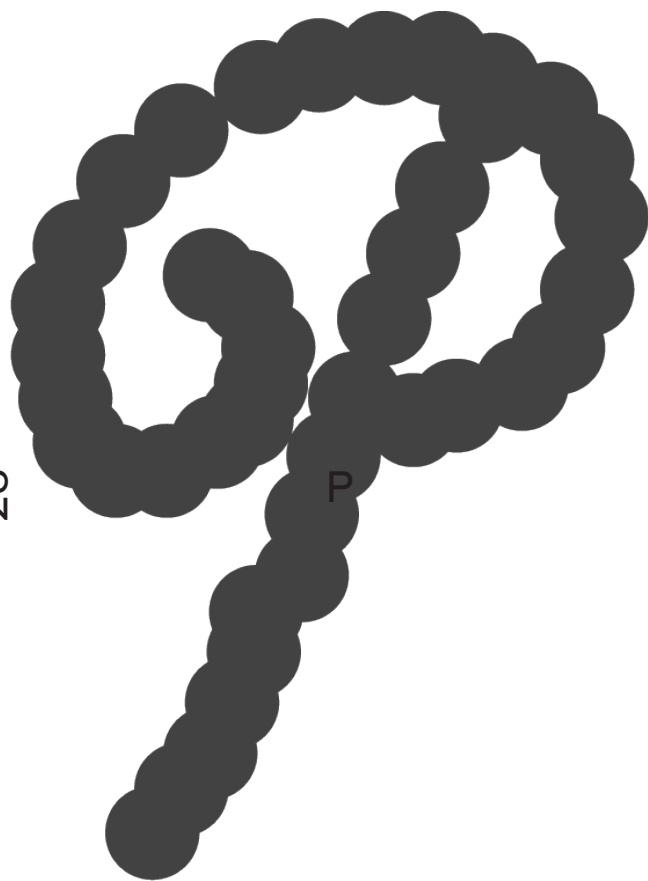


27



o

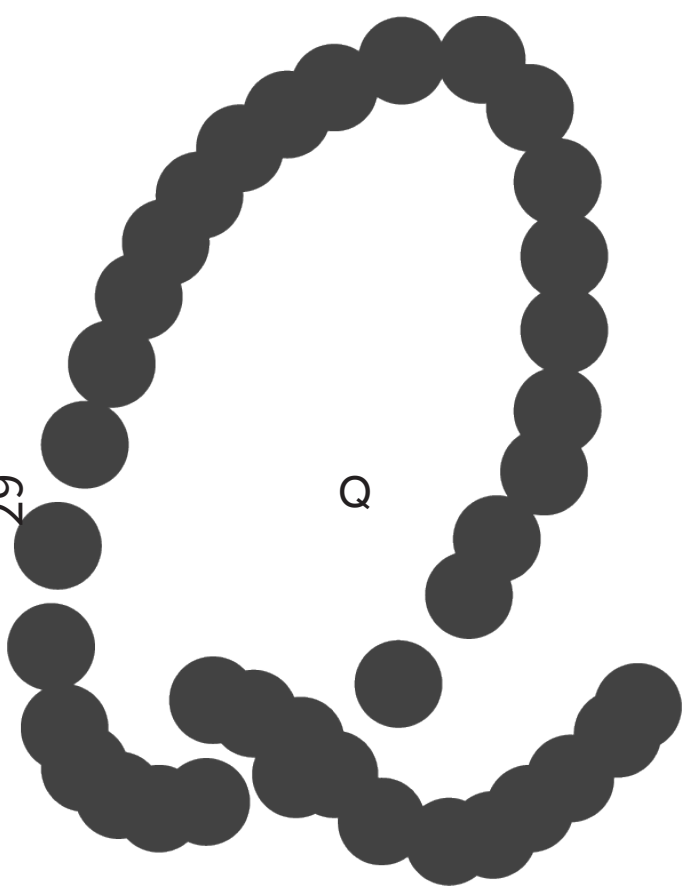
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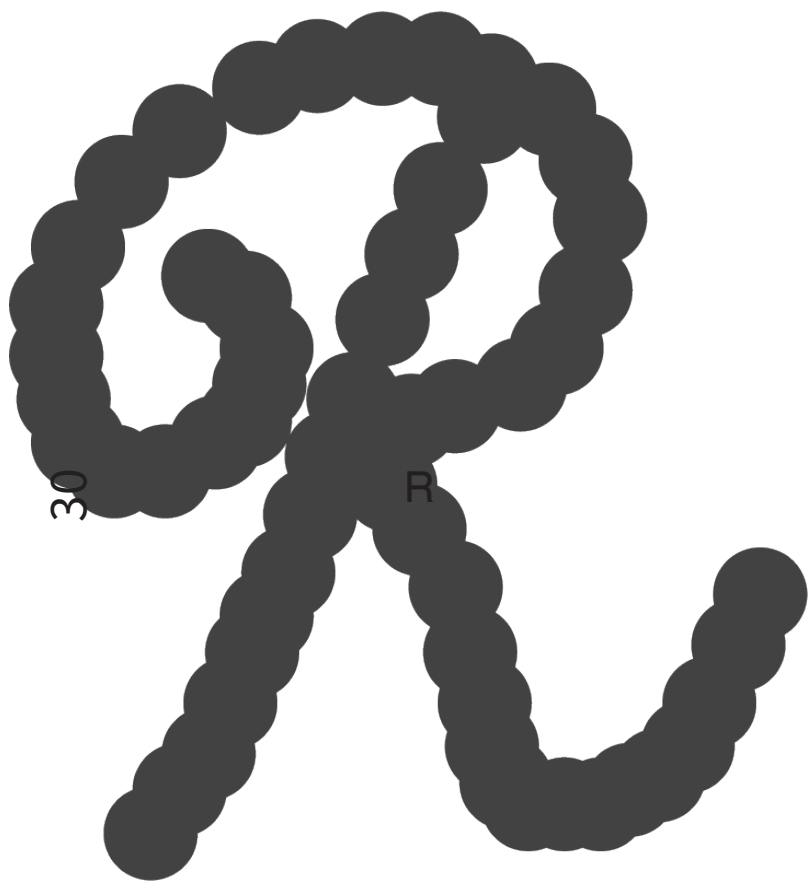


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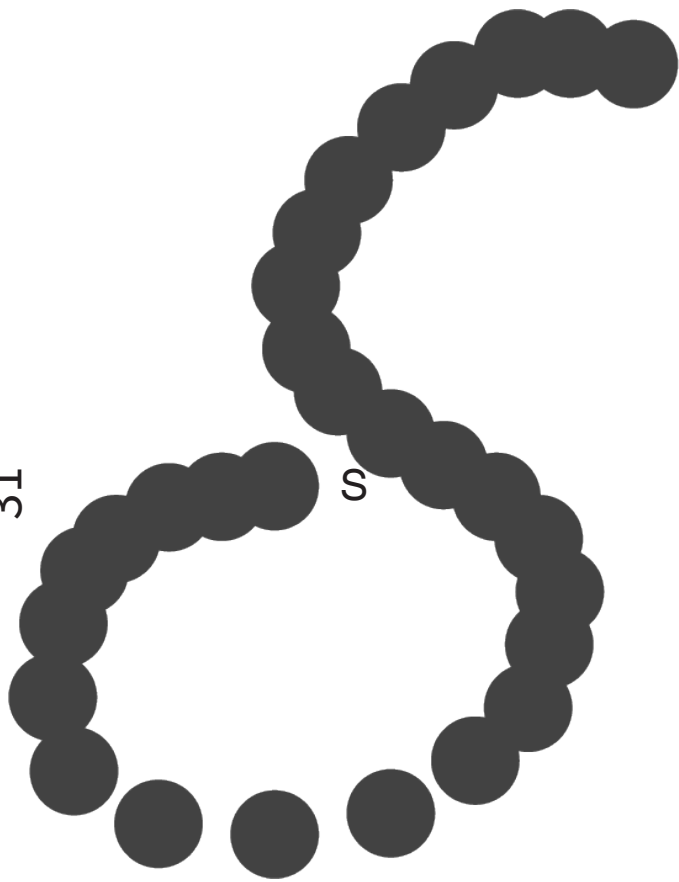
29

Q

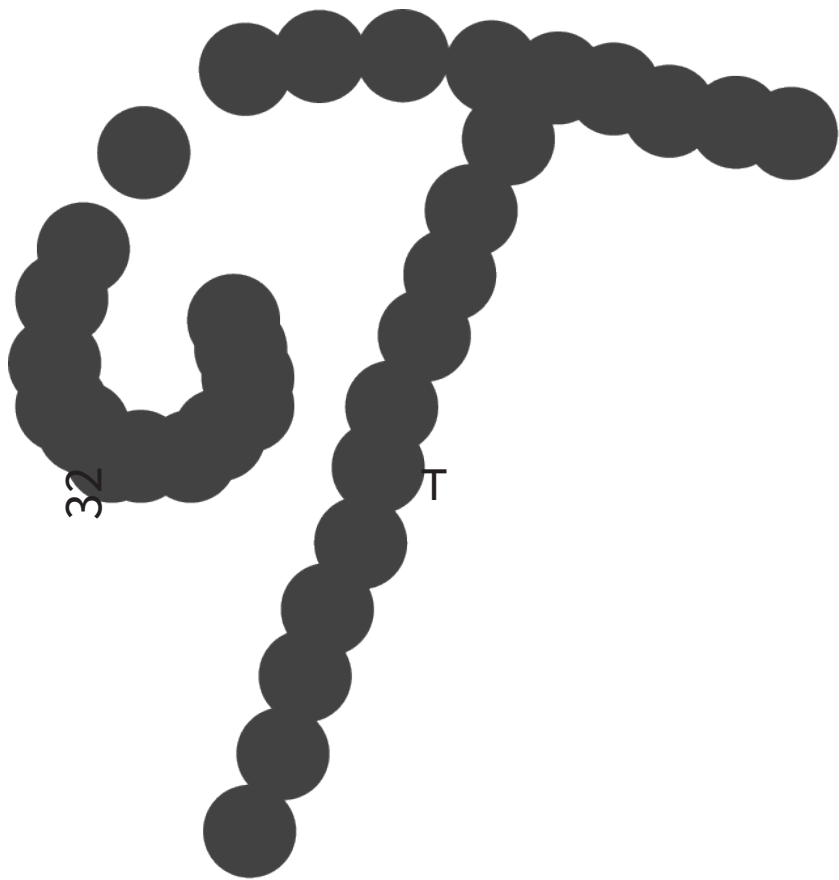


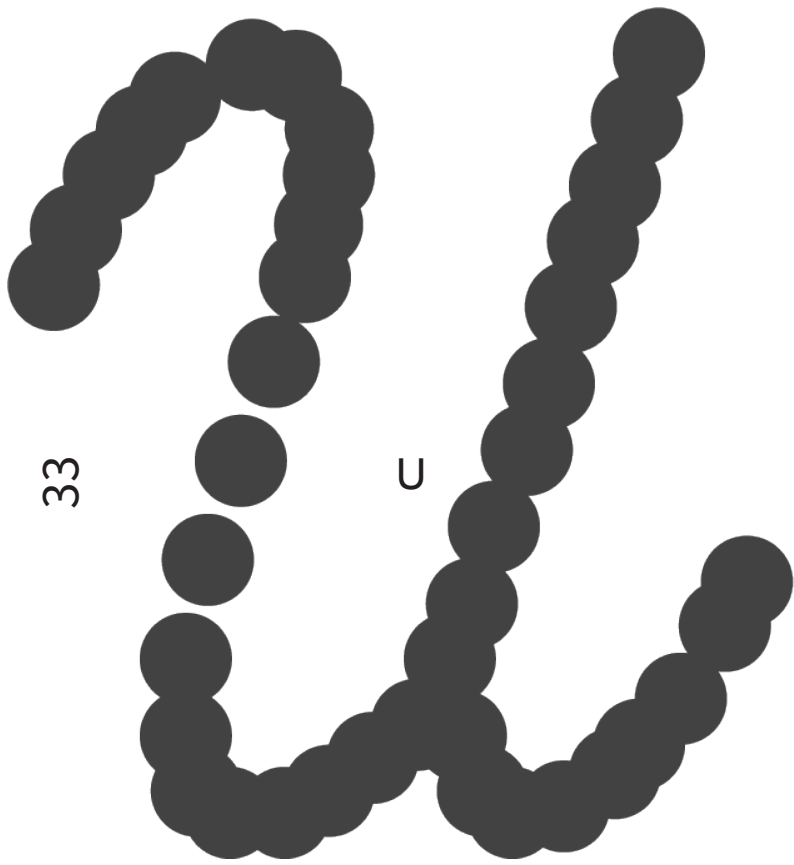


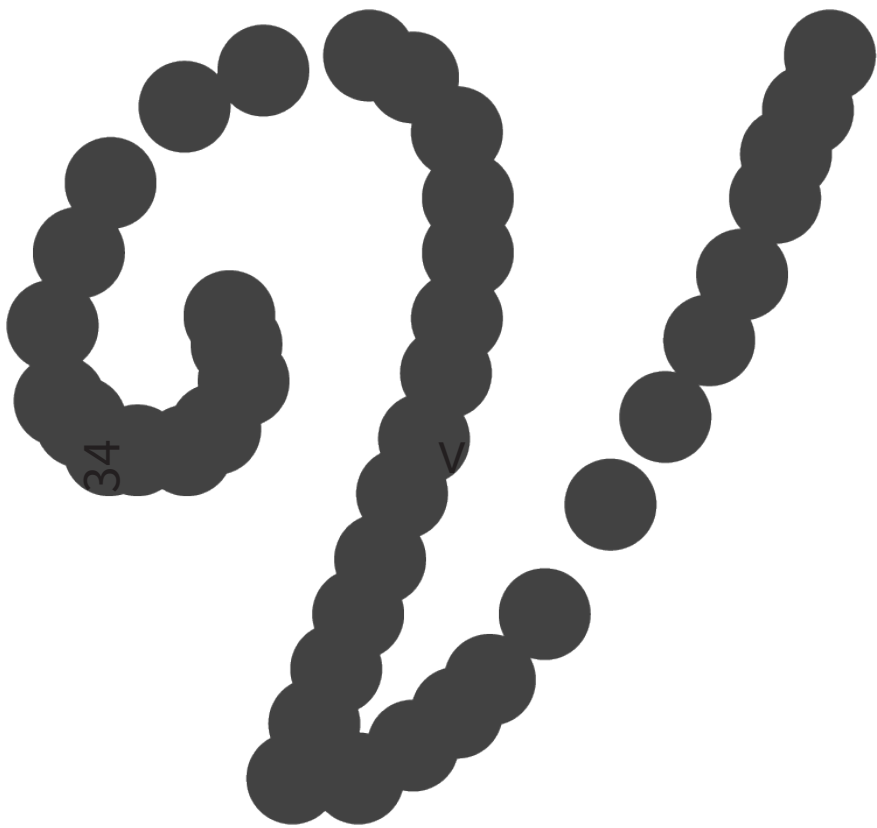
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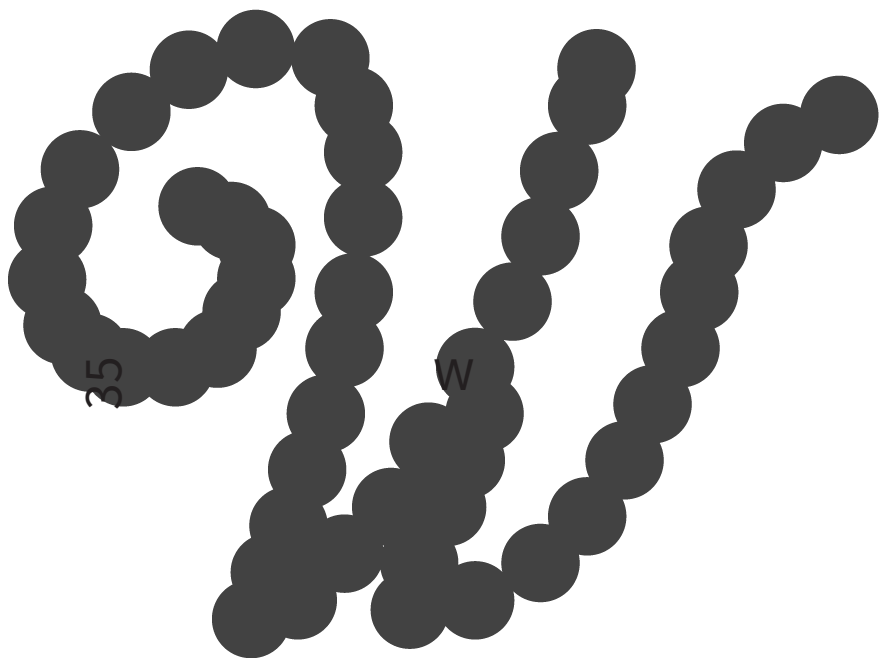


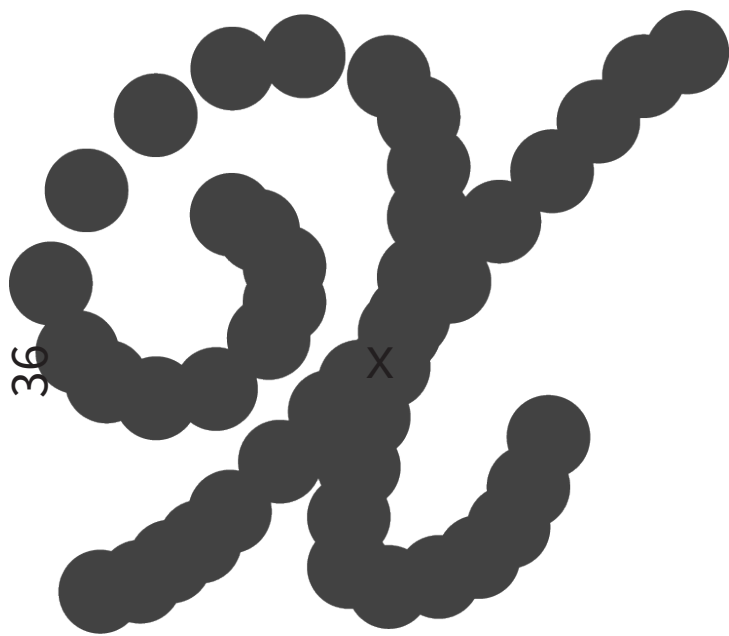
S







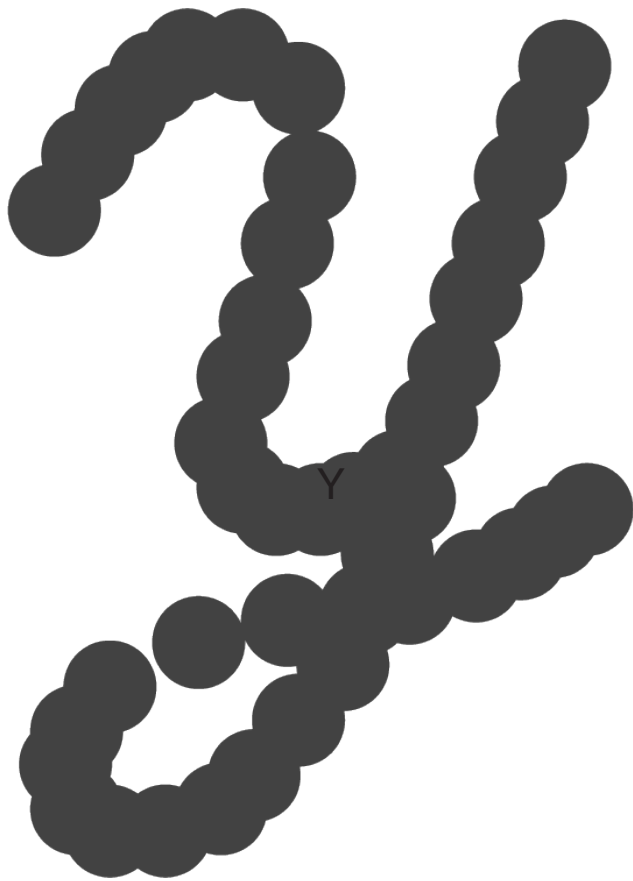




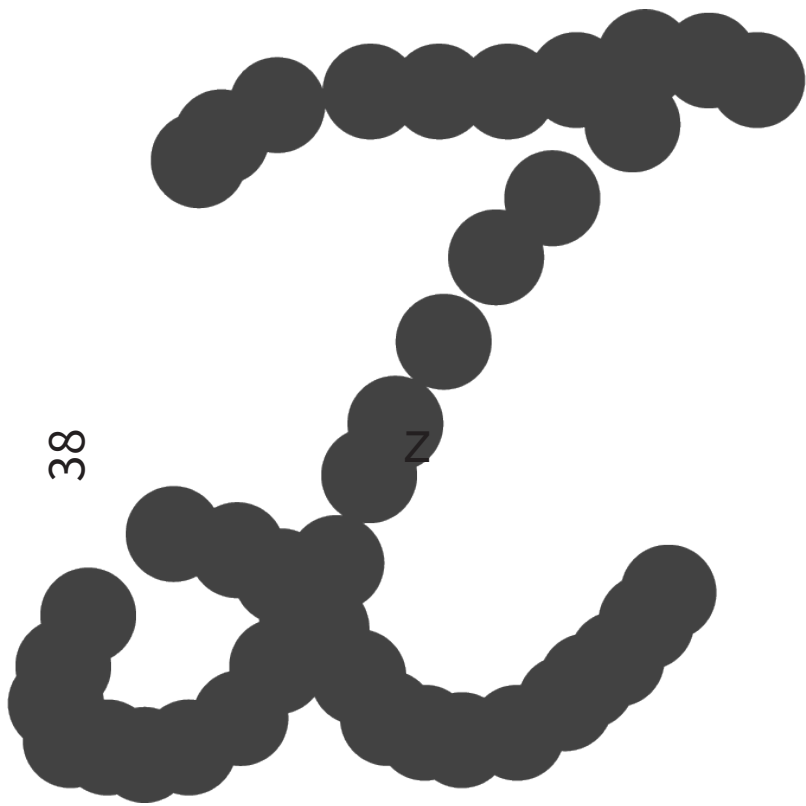
36

X

37

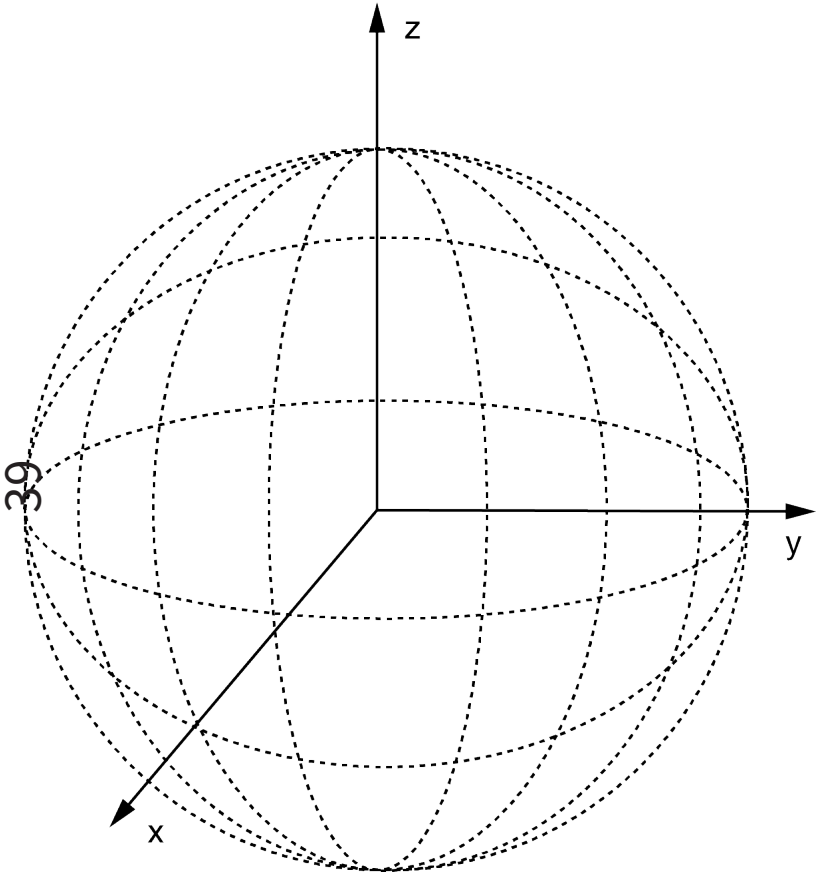


38



2

# X0Y0Z150

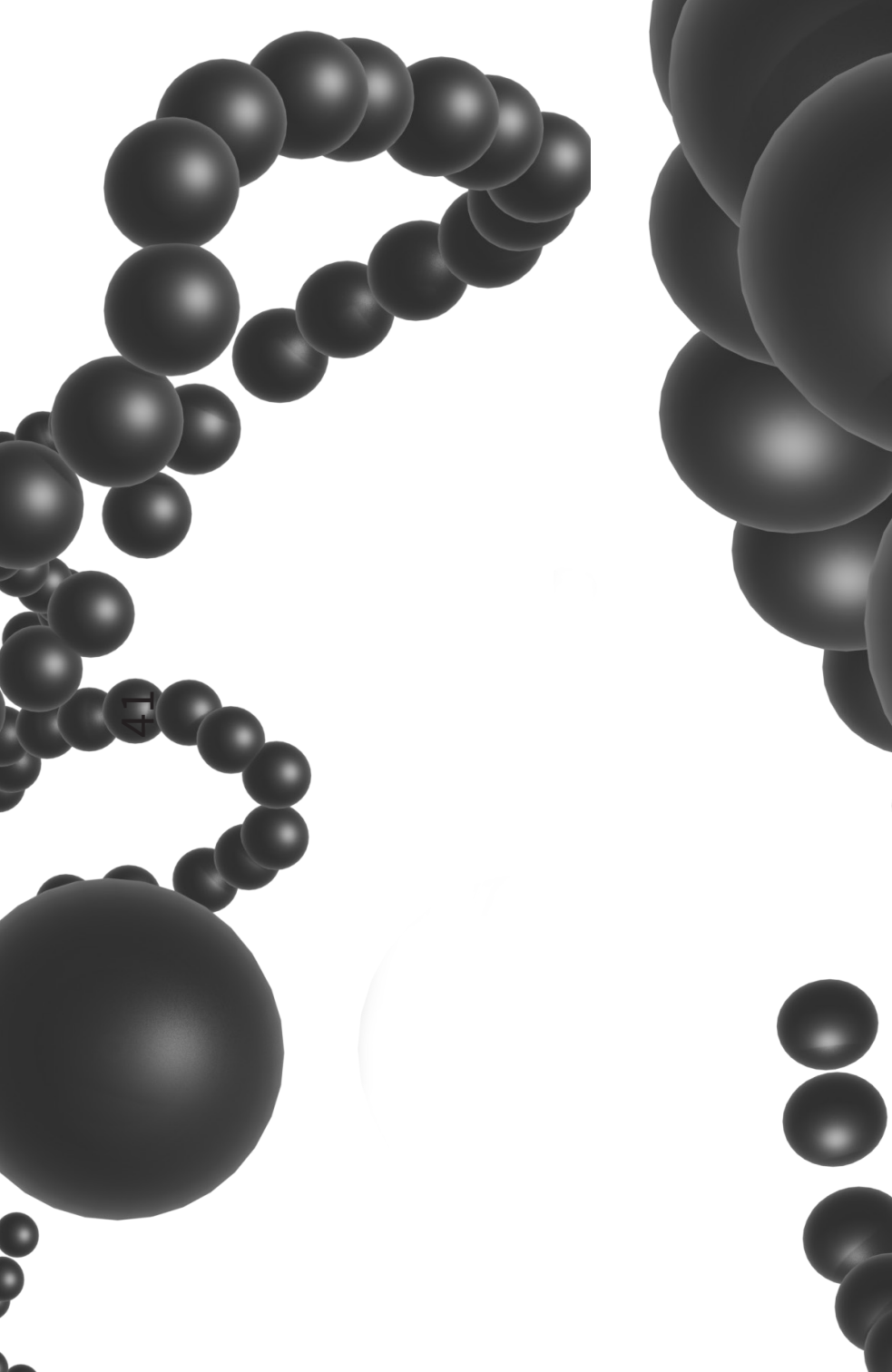


X0Y0Z150 introduces a rotational shift within the viewing condition of the type system. The values "0, 0, 150" indicate that no rotation has been applied along the X and Y axes, the letterform is rotated 150 degrees along the Z axis within the three-dimensional coordinate structure.

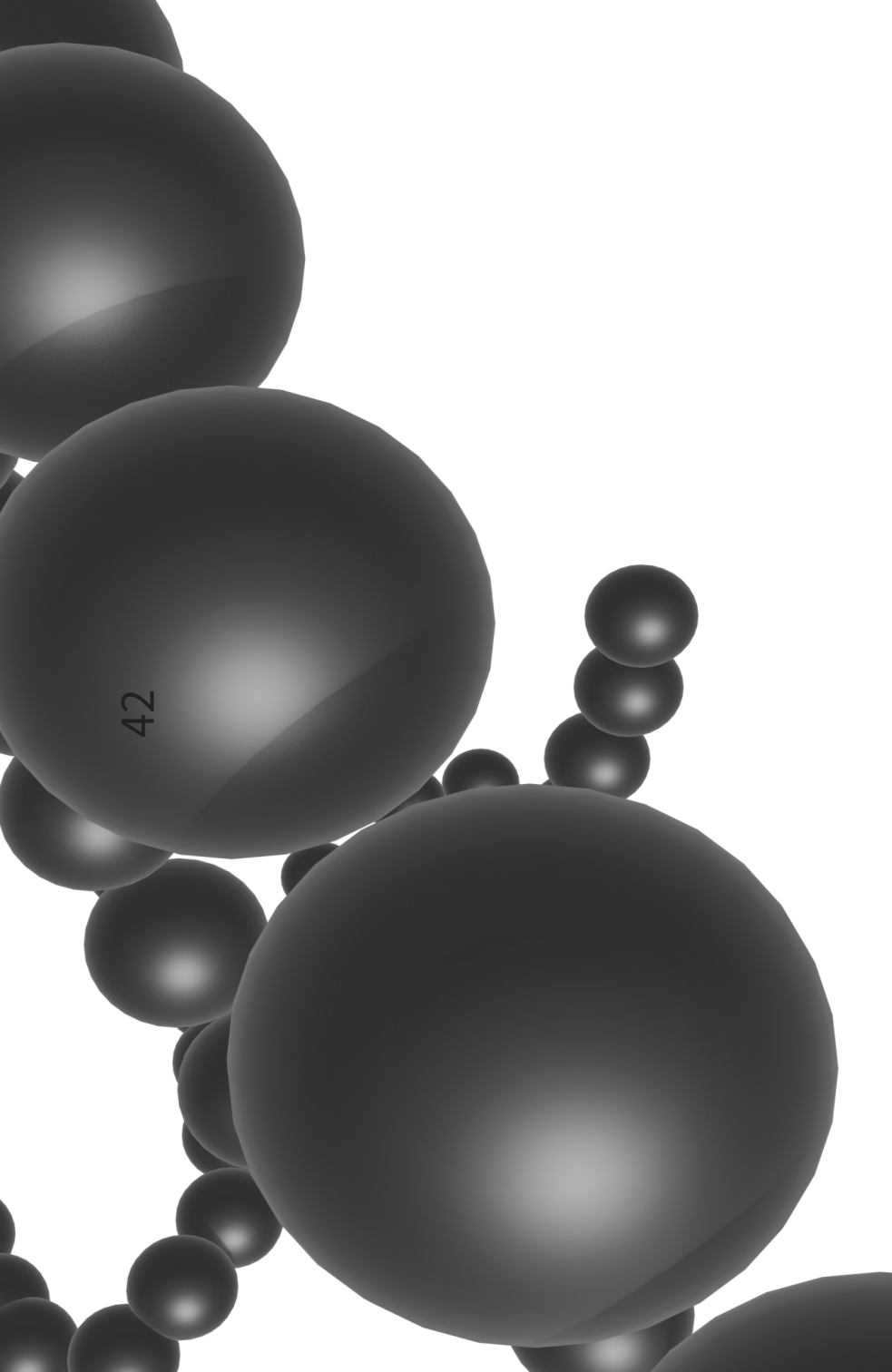
While the underlying three-dimensional structure of the letters remains unchanged, the forms are rotated 150 degrees along the Z axis, disrupting the stable frontal orientation established in X0Y0Z0. The letters remain partially recognisable, yet reading begins to slow as the viewer oscillates between recognition and visual interpretation.

At this stage, the typeface no longer operates purely as a transparent linguistic medium. Instead, the visual structure of the letter becomes increasingly visible, exposing the dependency of readability on orientation and spatial alignment.

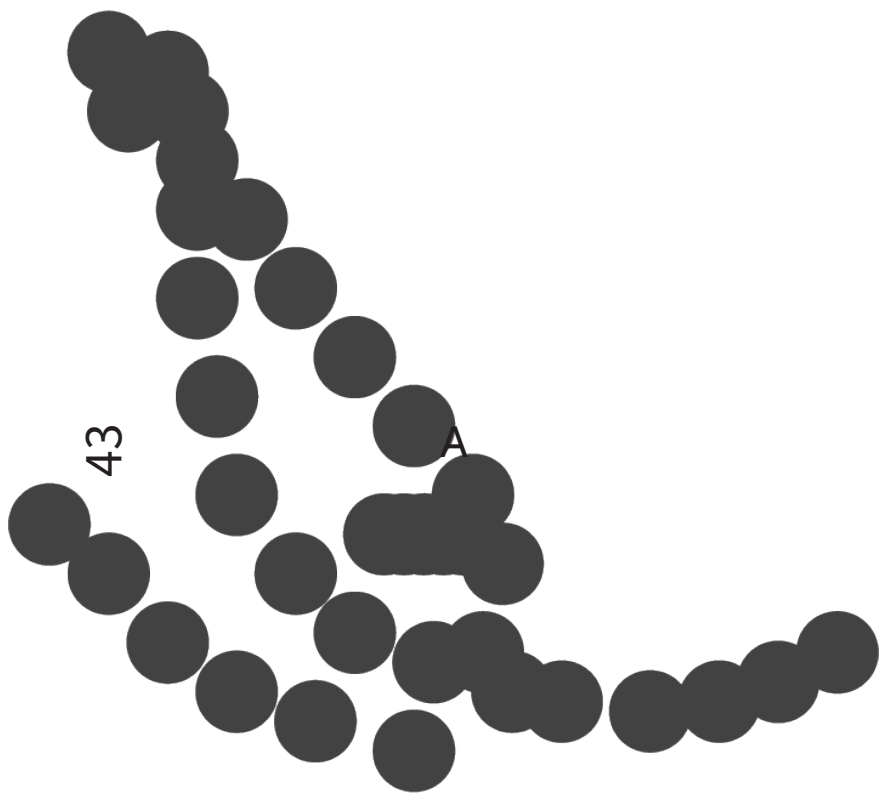
X0Y0Z150 therefore marks a transitional condition in which the letter starts to shift from a readable sign toward a perceptual object.

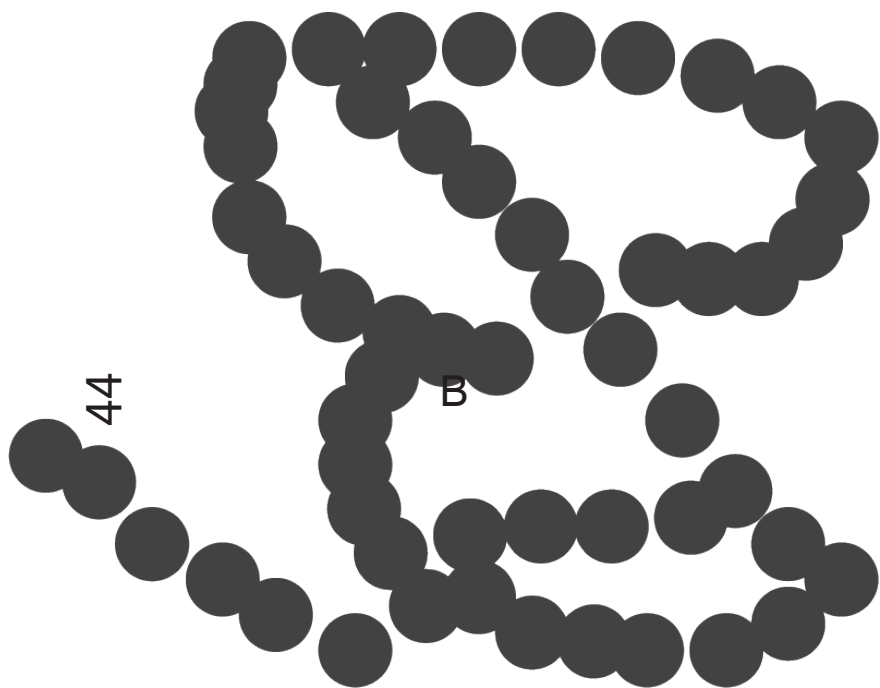


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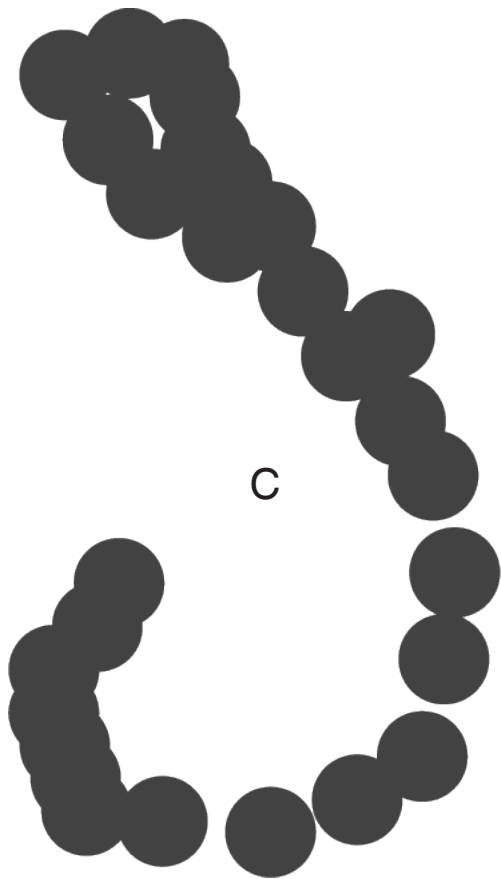


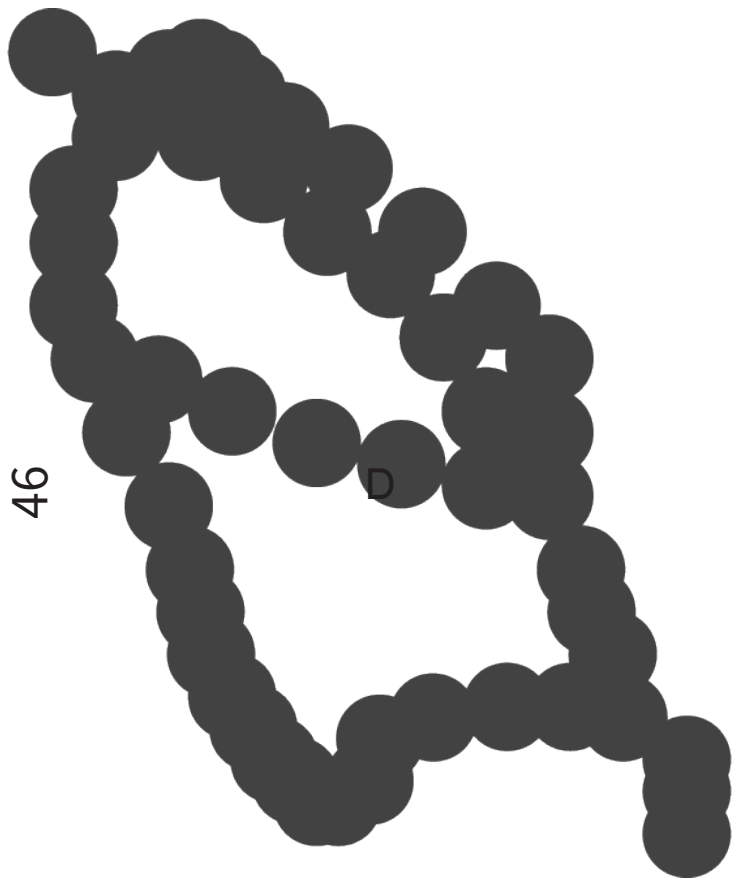
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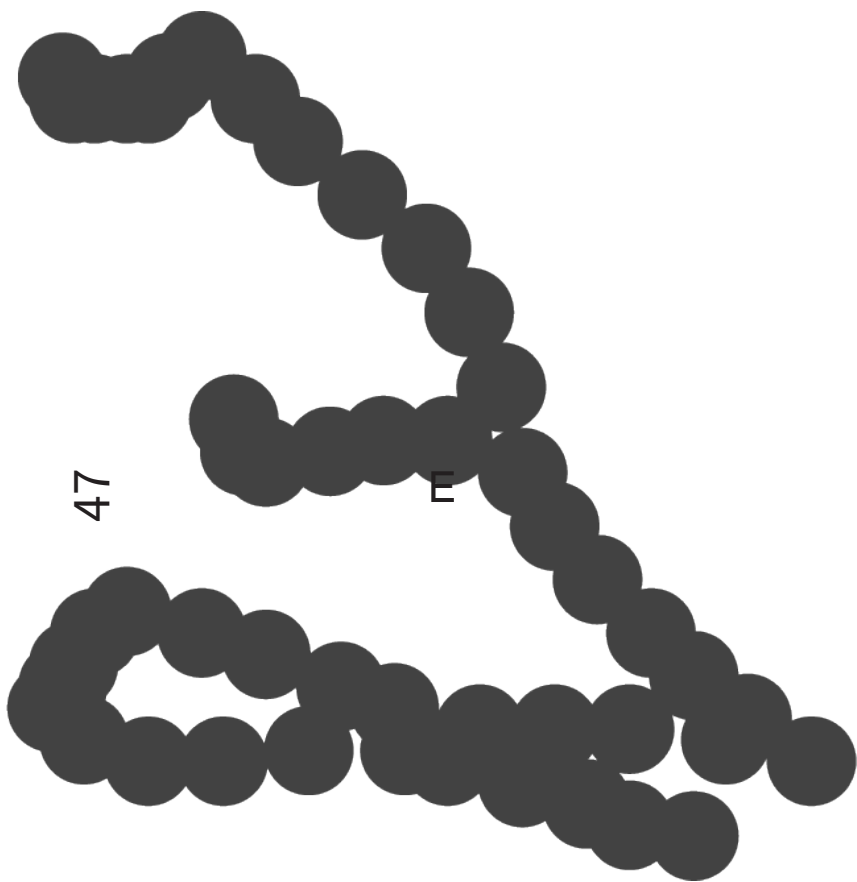
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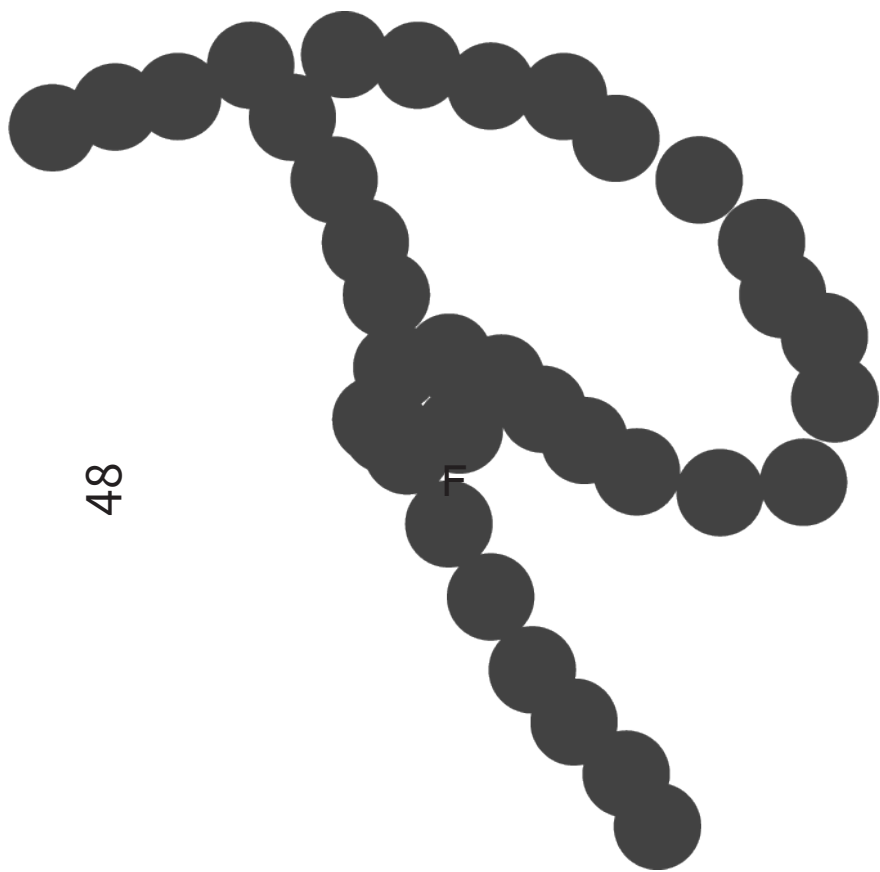




46

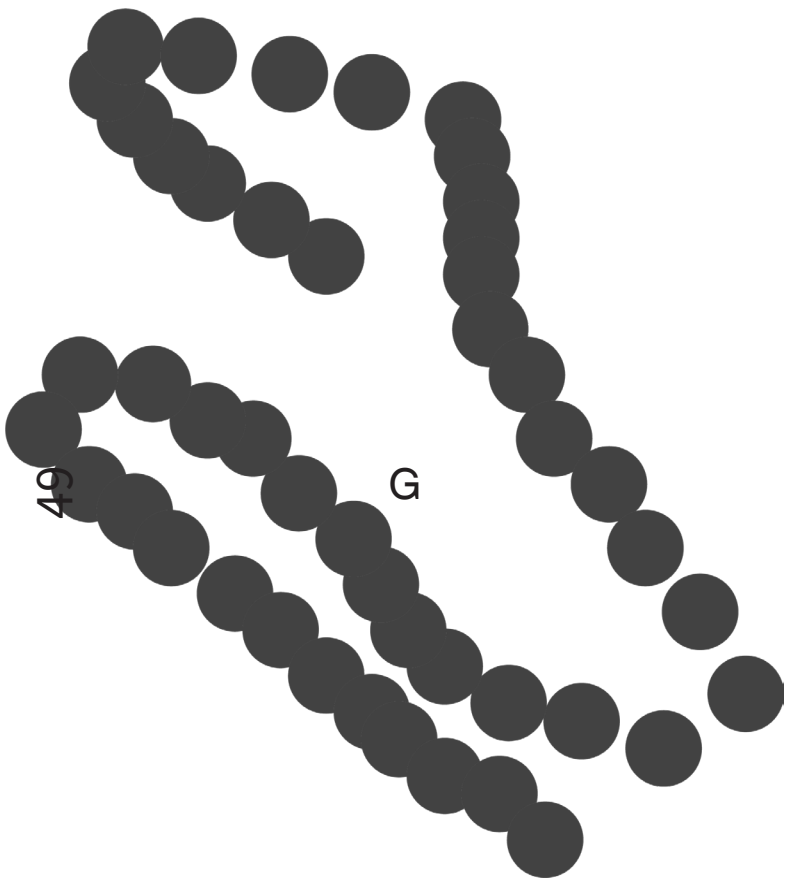
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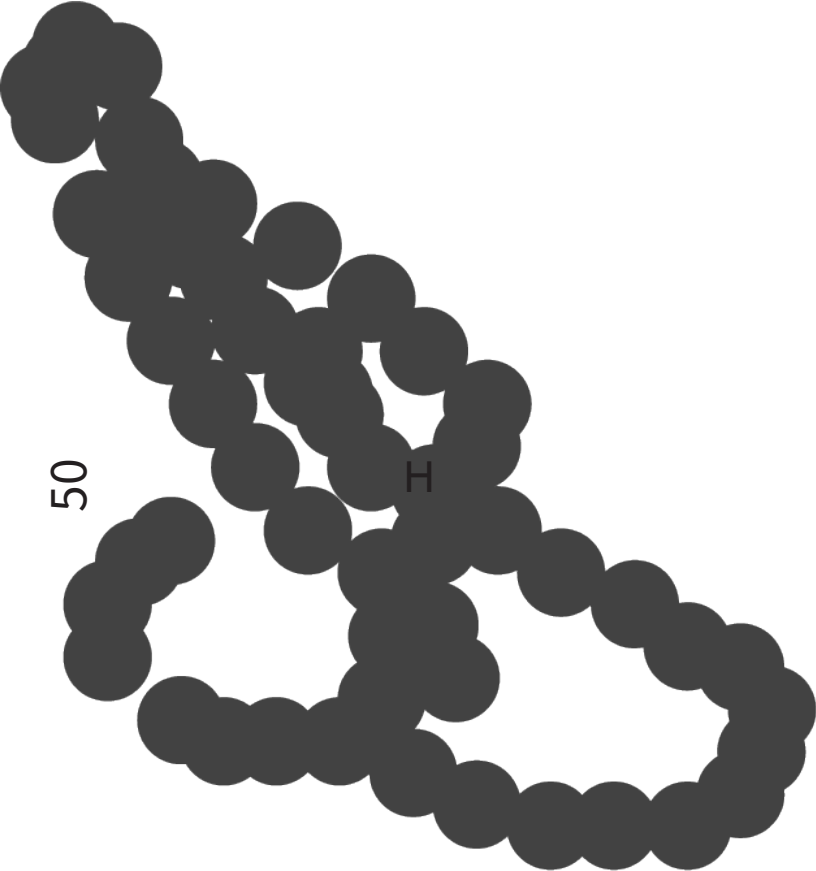




48

F

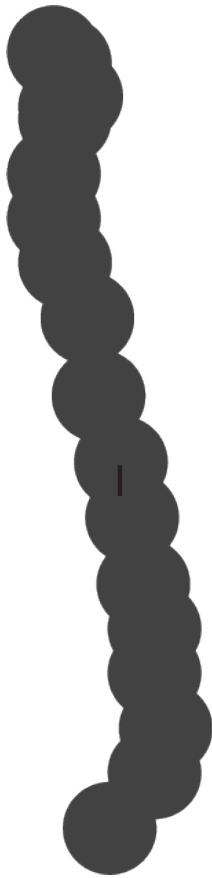




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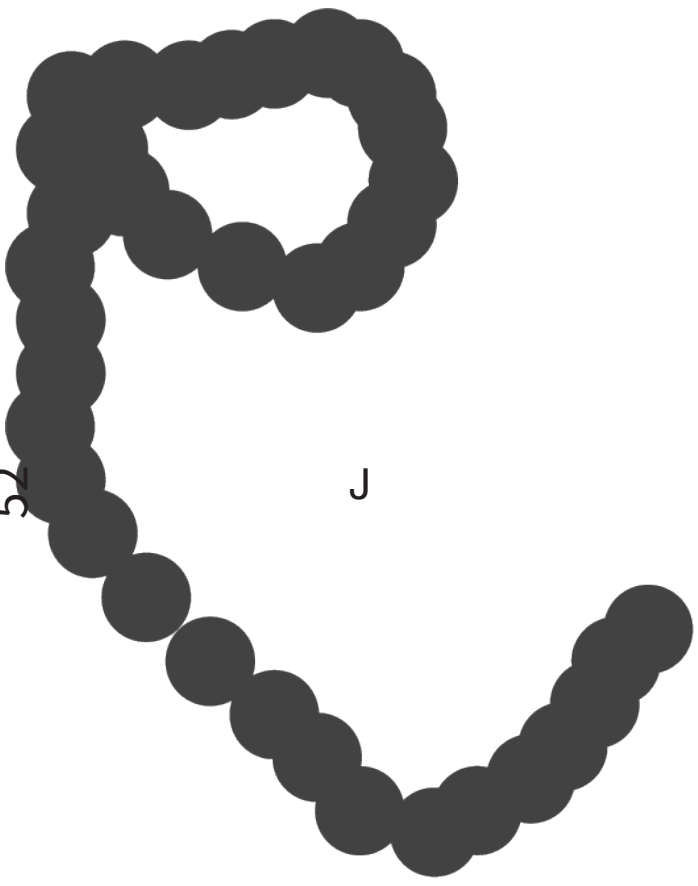
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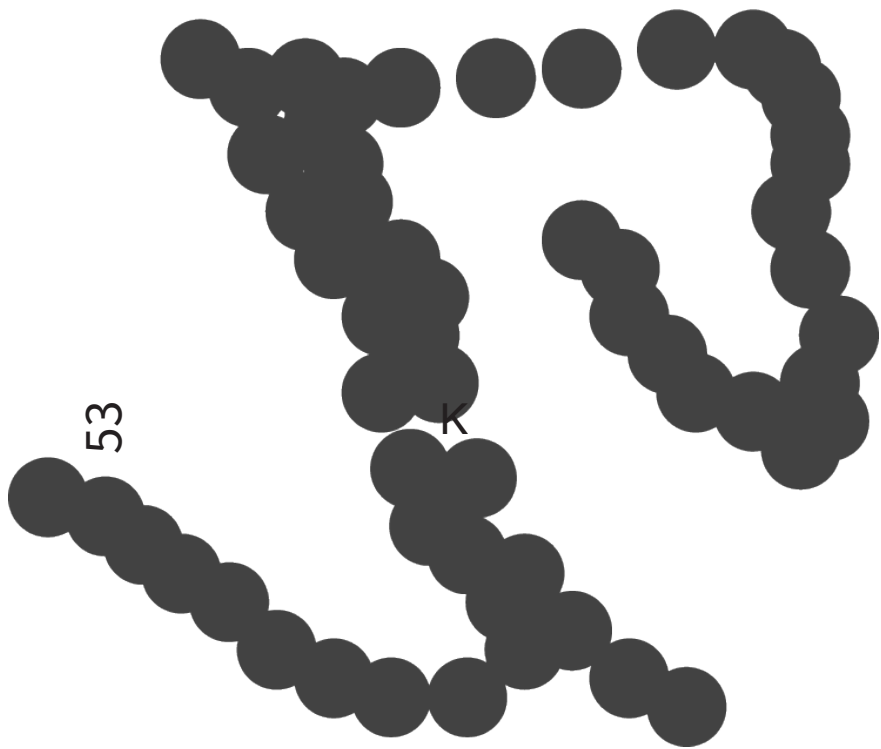
51



52

J

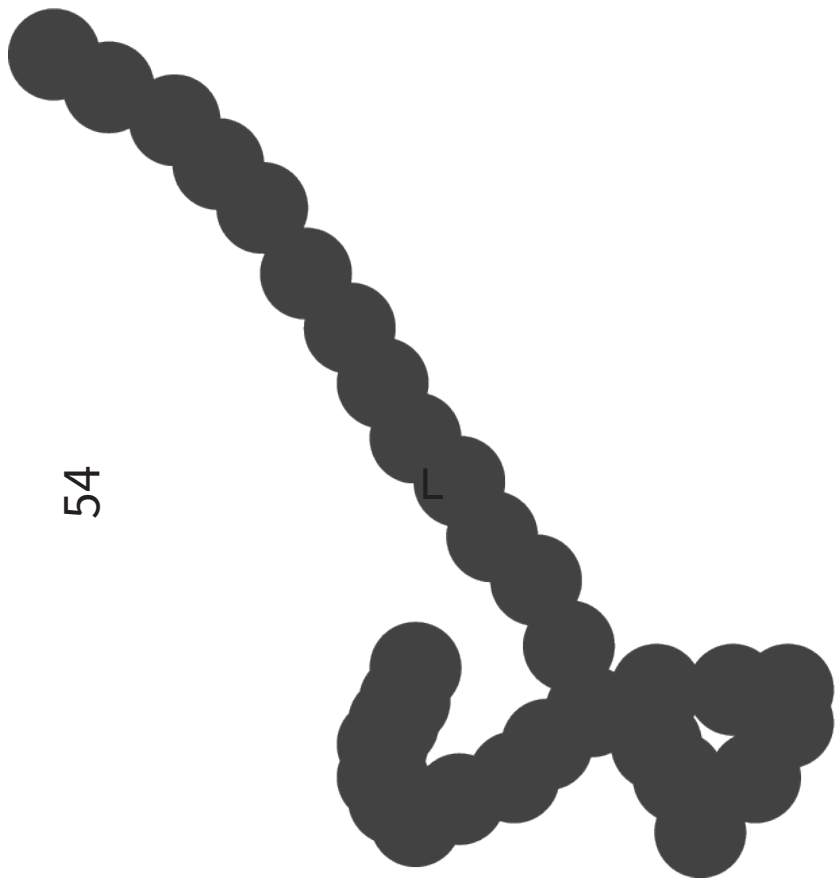


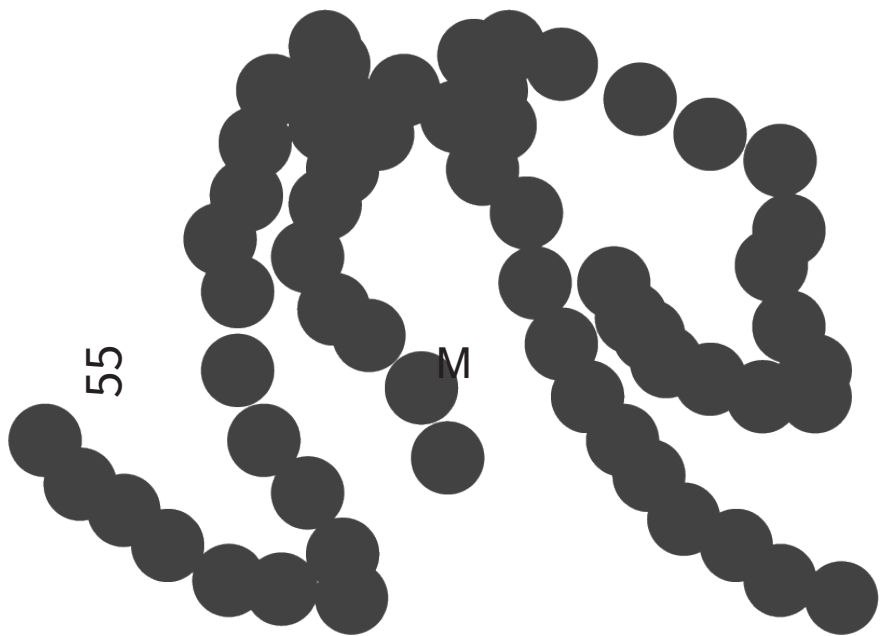


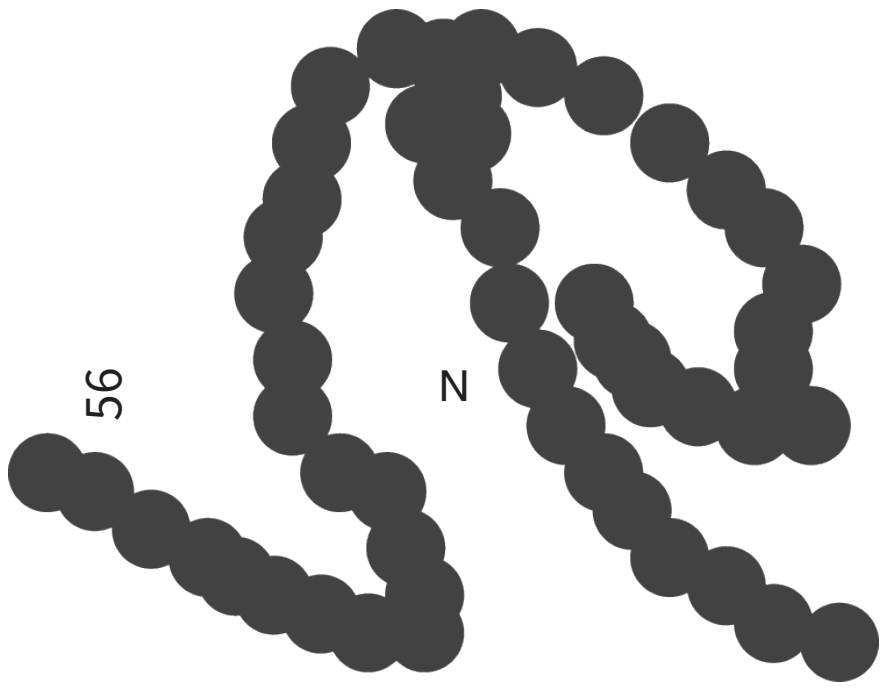
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k

54

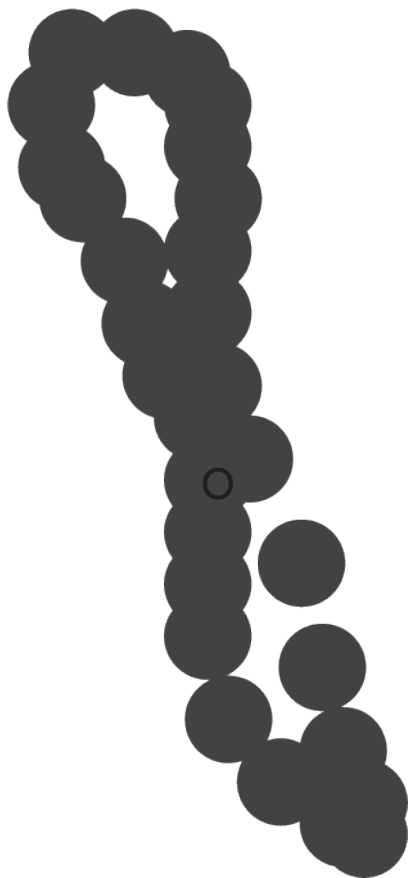




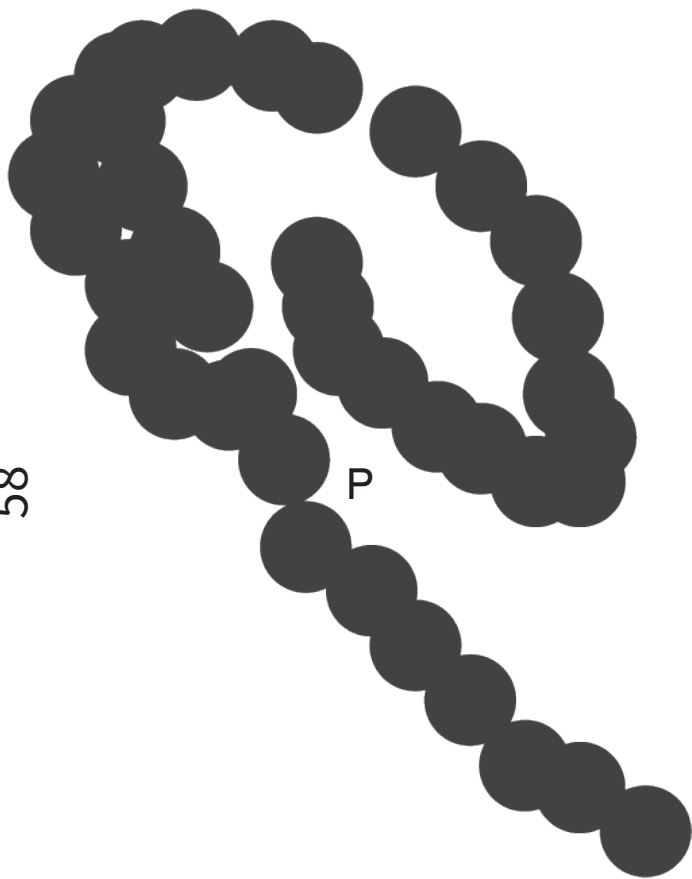


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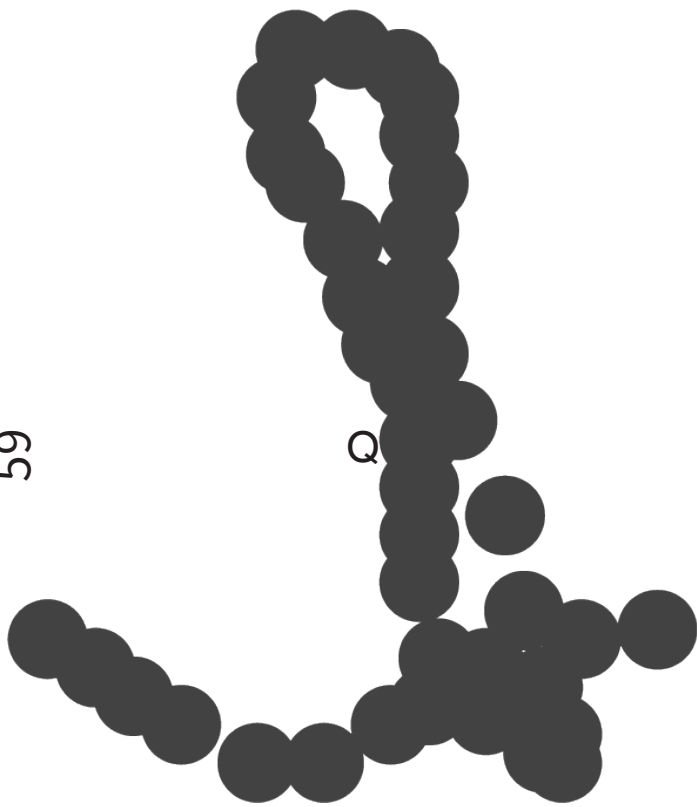
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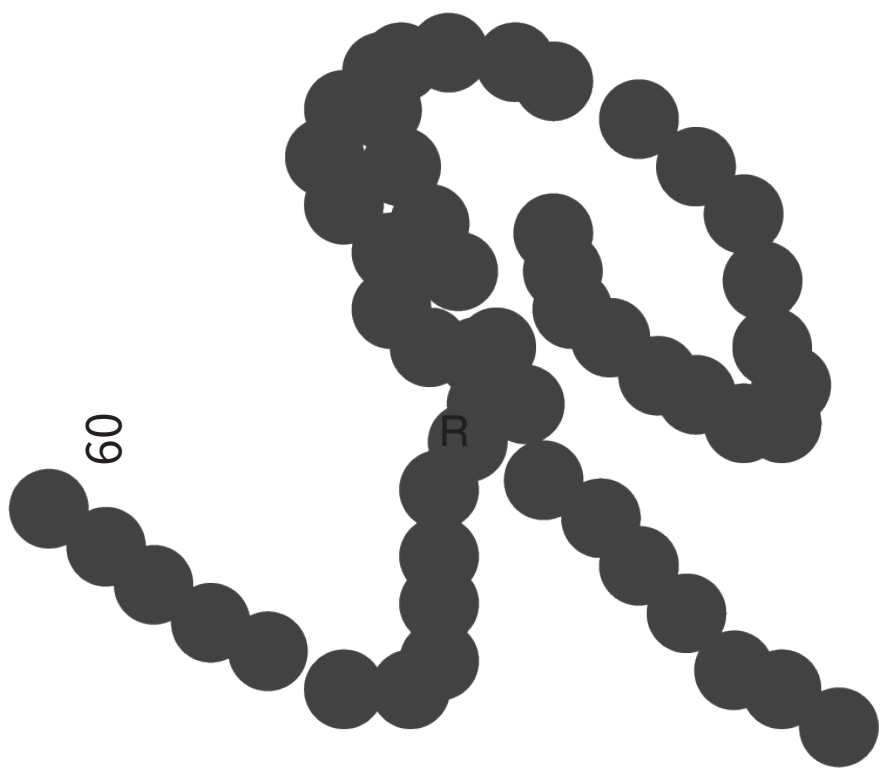


58



59

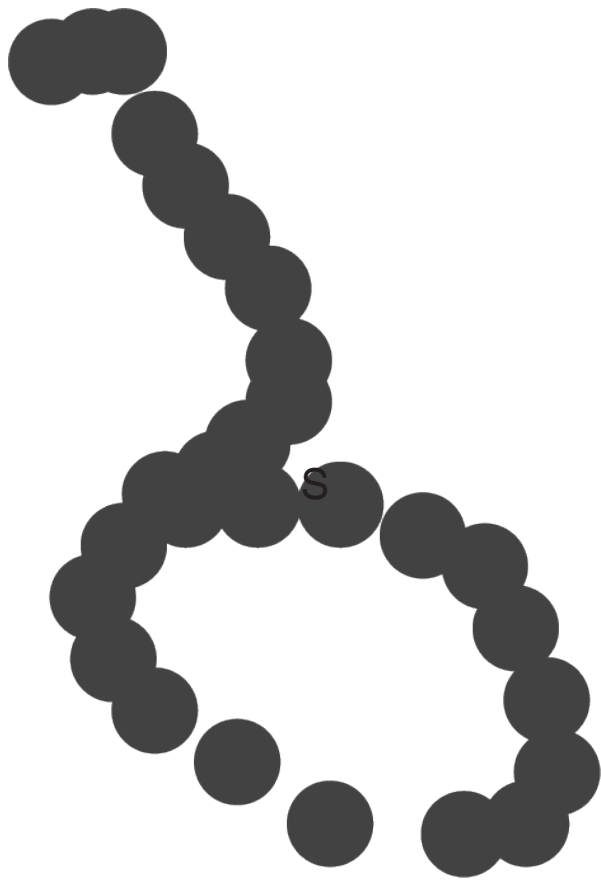


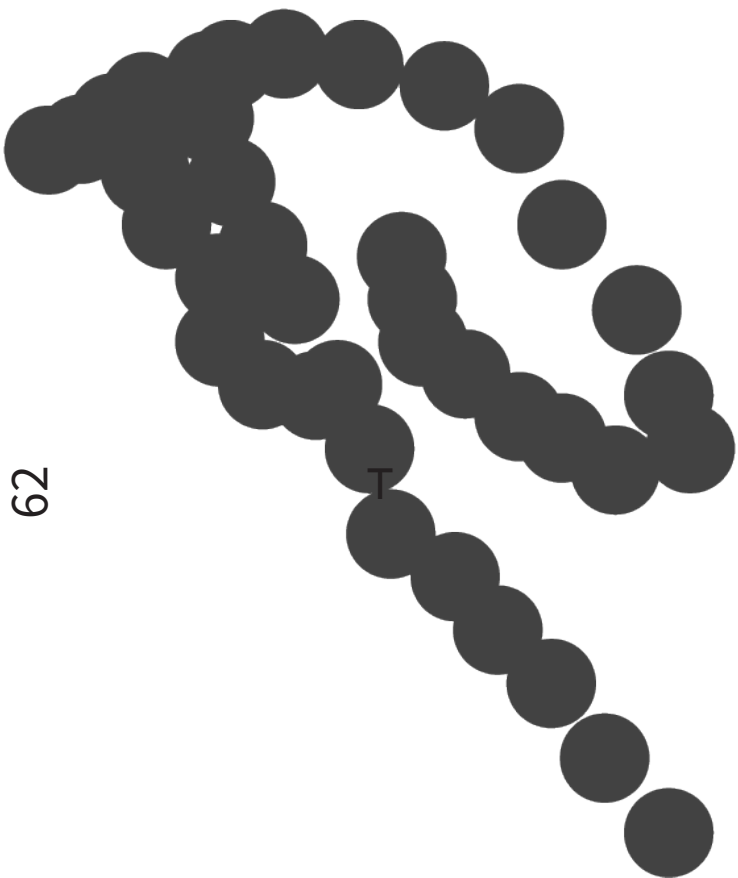


60

R

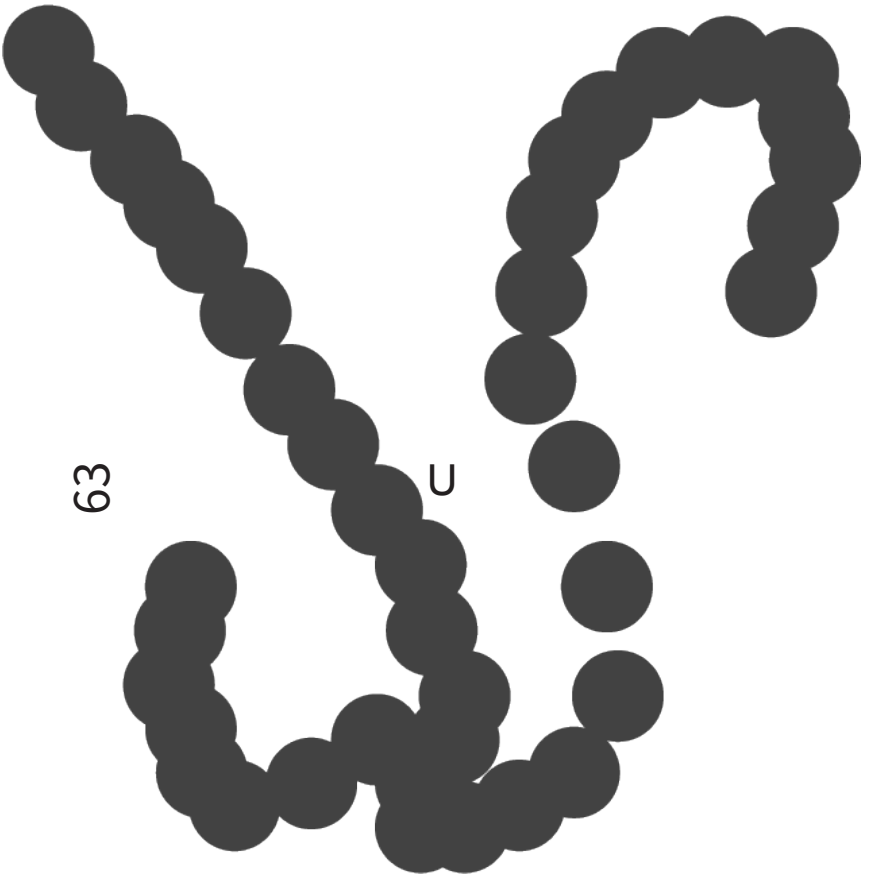
61





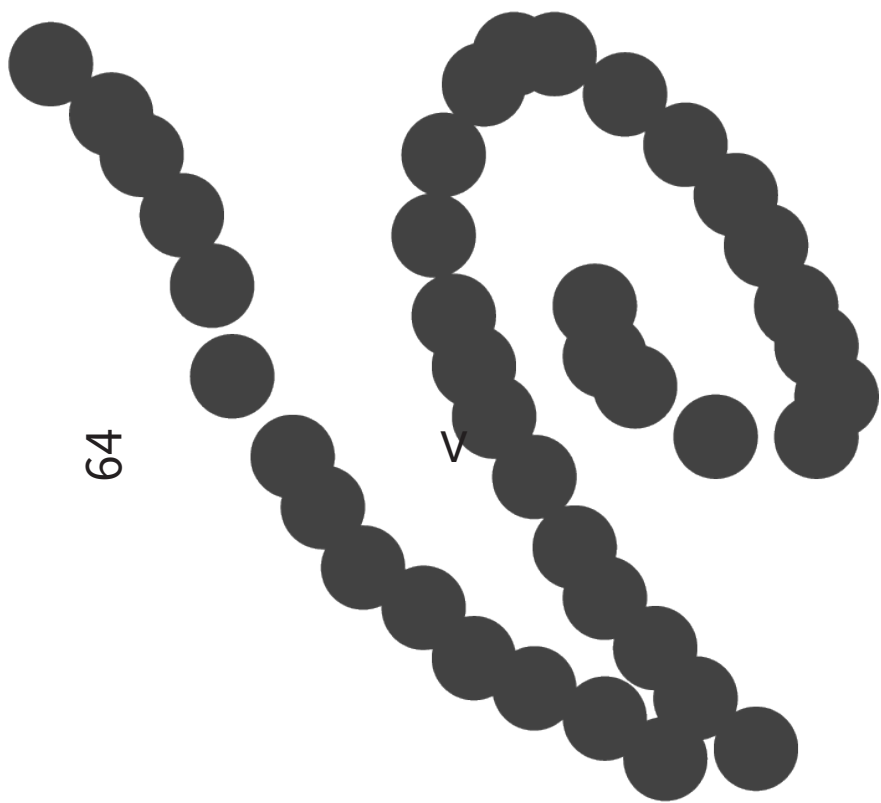
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T



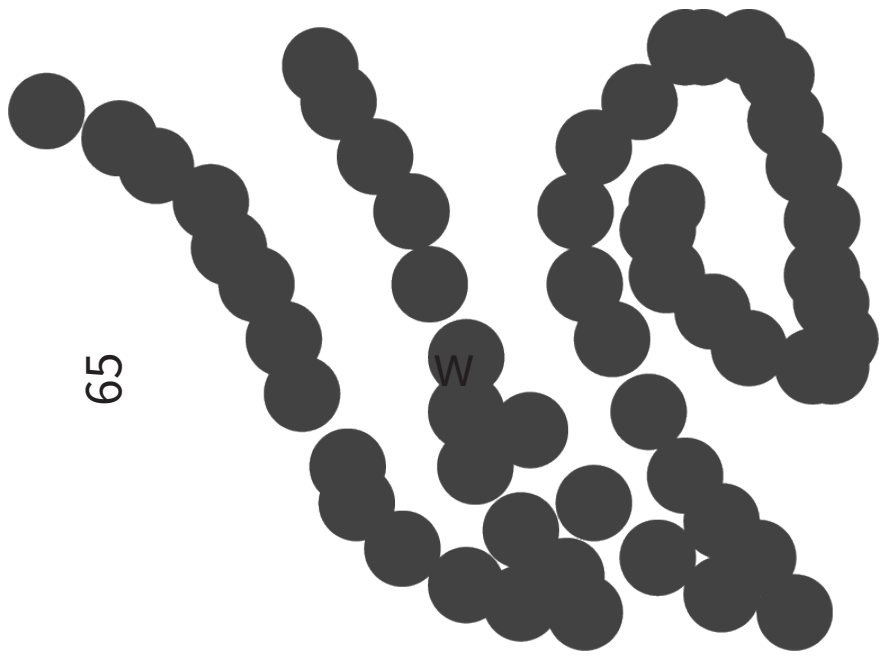
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U



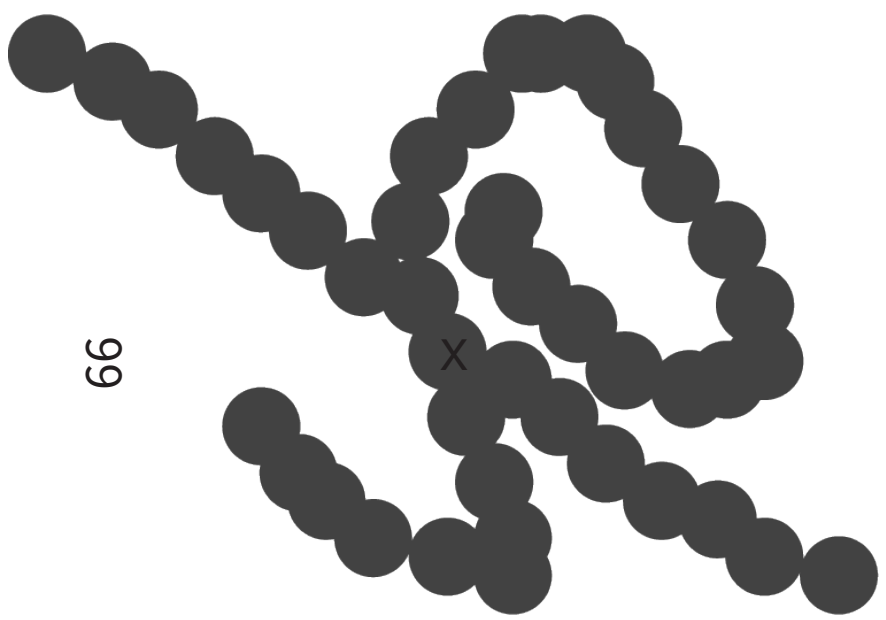
64

v



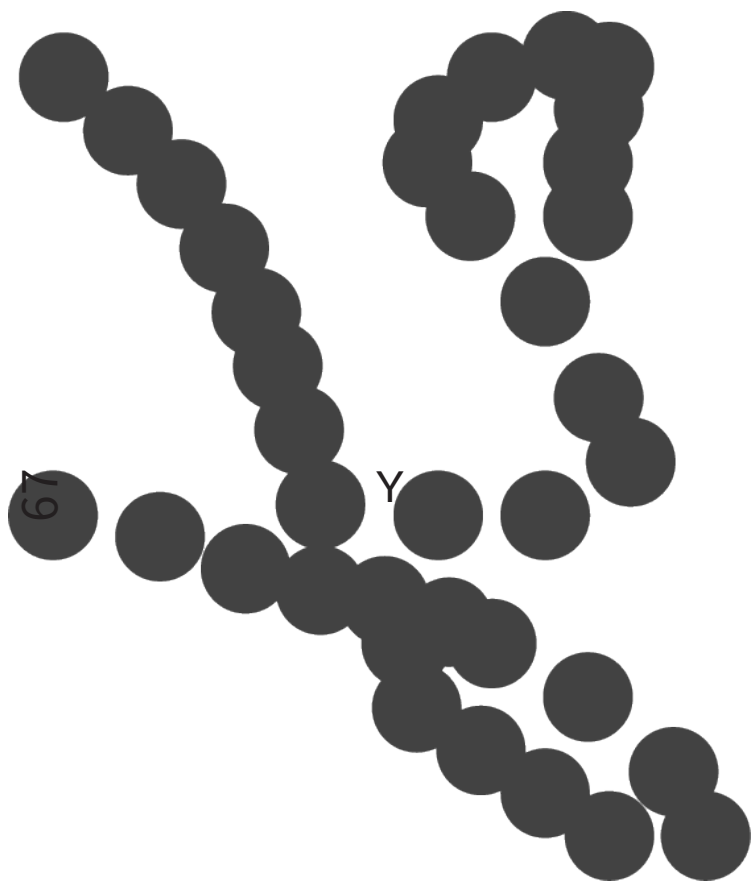
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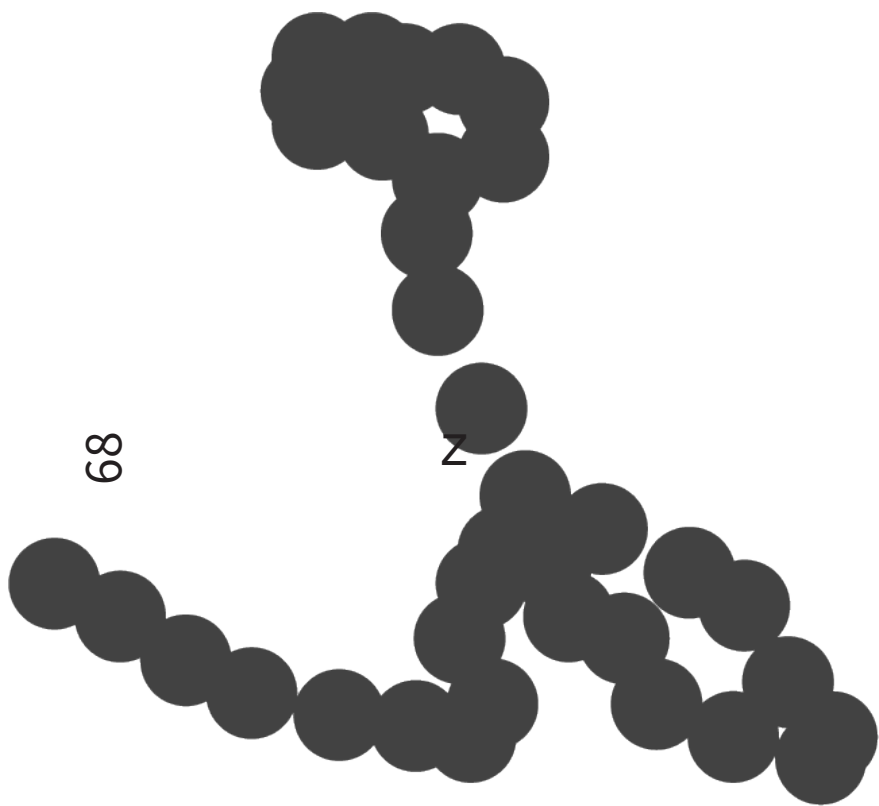
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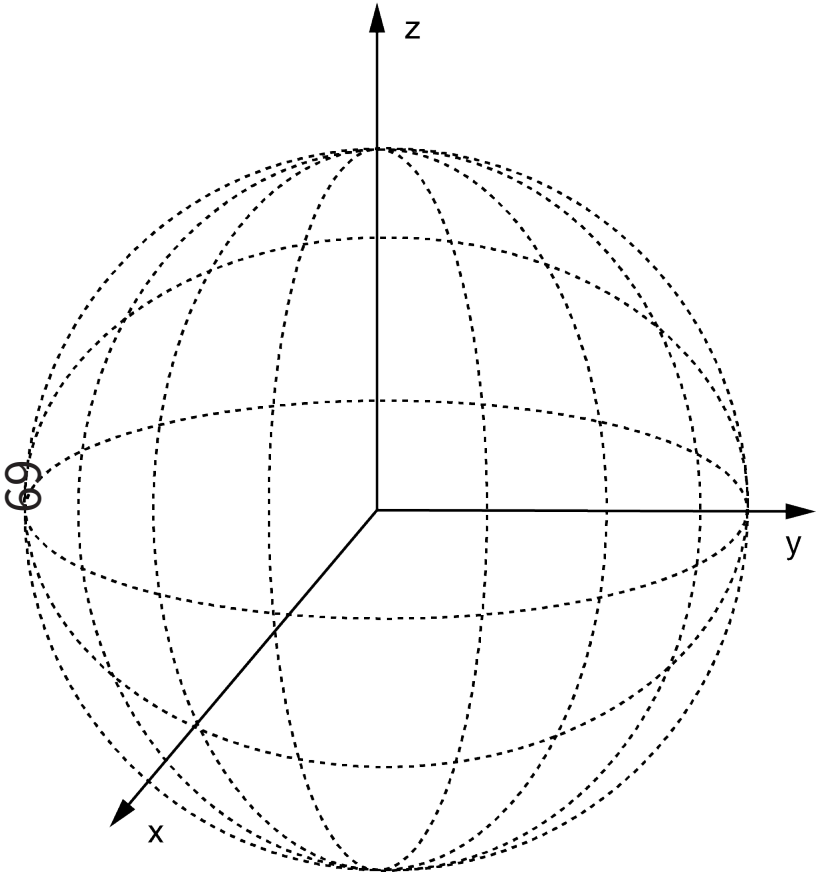
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X





# X30Y60Z150

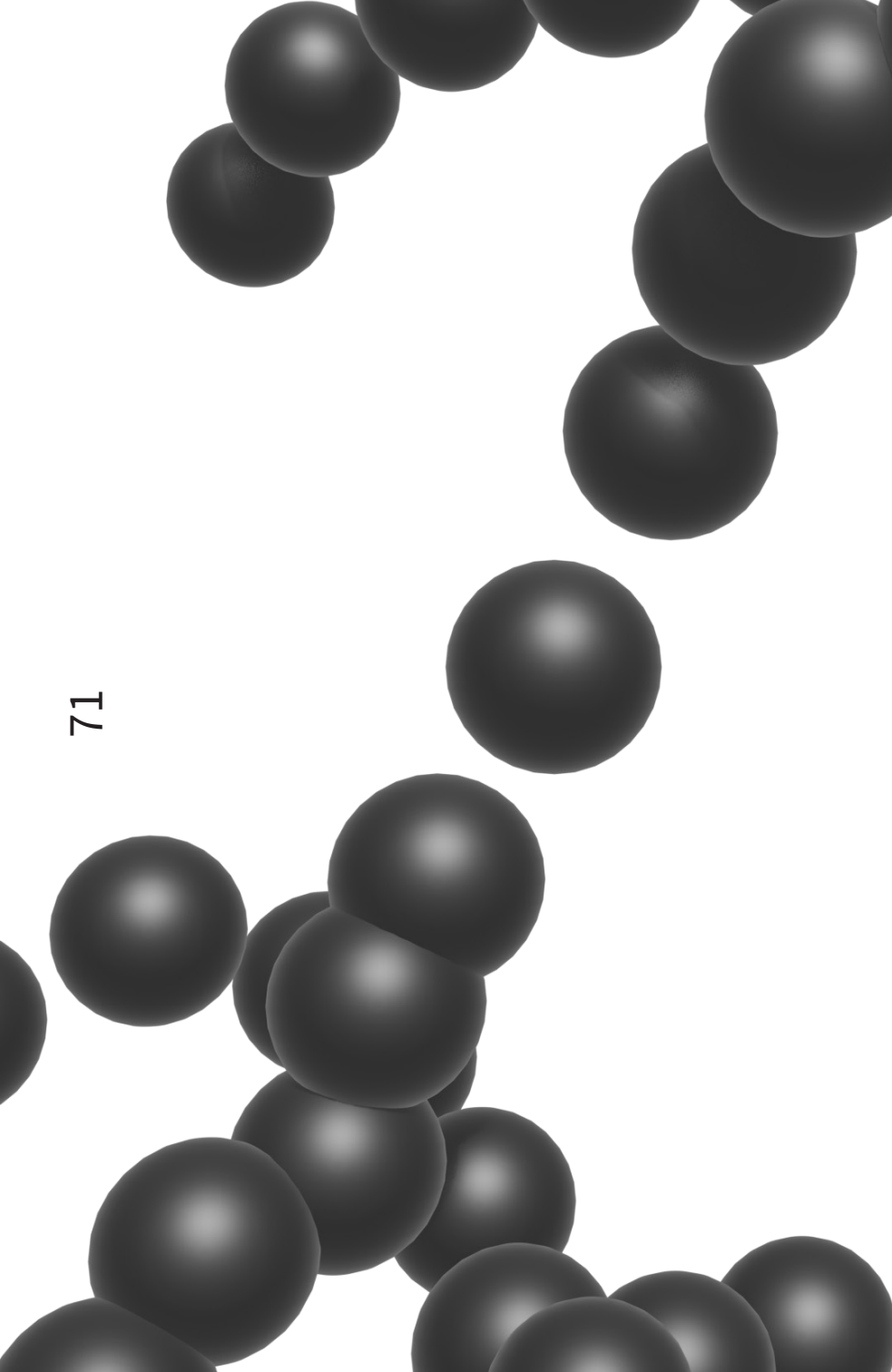


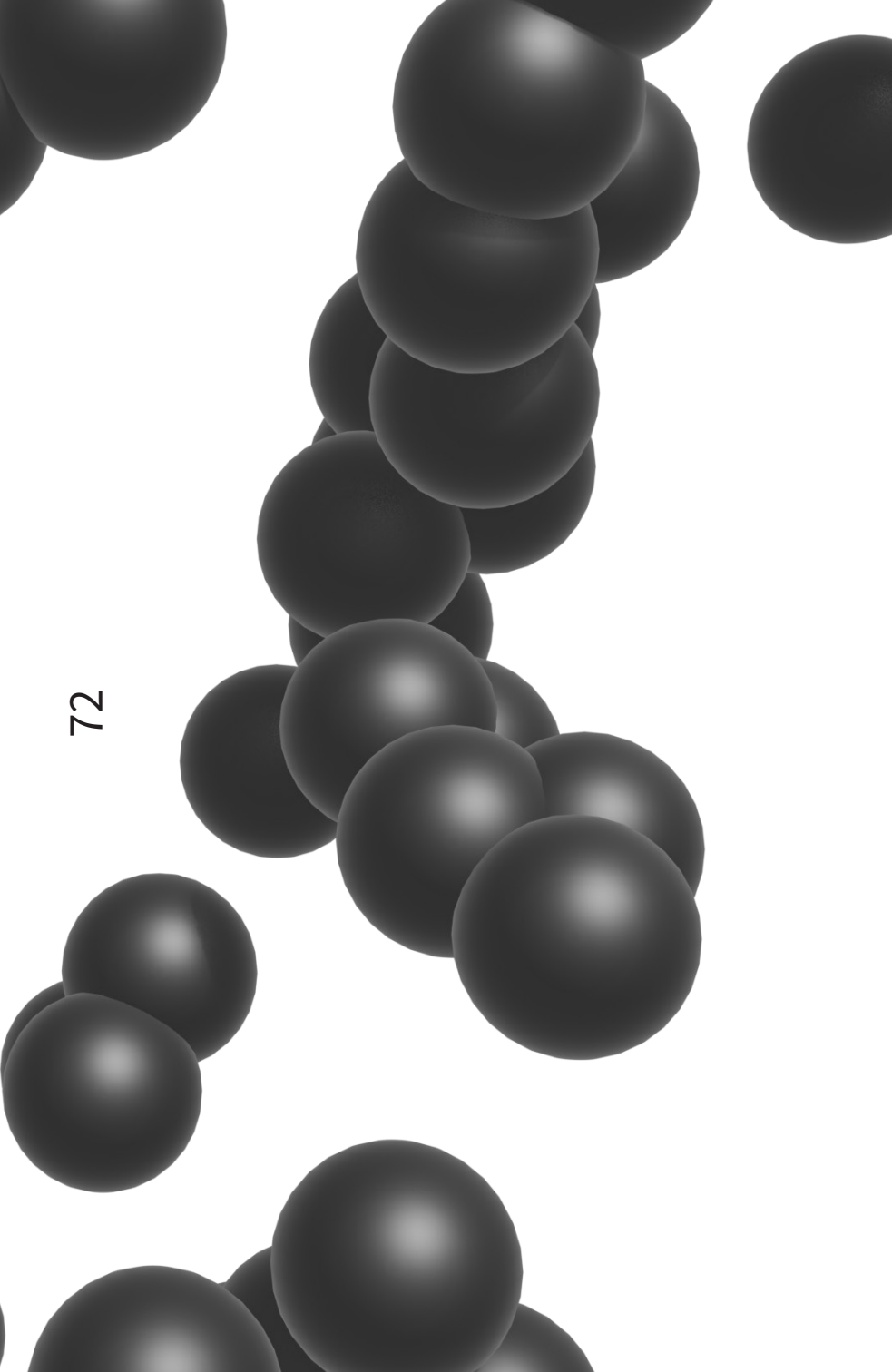
X30Y60Z150 represents the furthest displacement from the stable viewing condition established in X0Y0Z0. The values "30, 60, 150" indicate that the letterform is rotated 30 degrees along the X axis, 60 degrees along the Y axis, and 150 degrees along the Z axis within the three-dimensional coordinate structure.

Through simultaneous rotations across the X, Y, and Z axes, the letterforms begin to lose their conventional orientation and structural familiarity. Recognition becomes unstable, and the reader can no longer rely on automatic reading processes to interpret the characters.

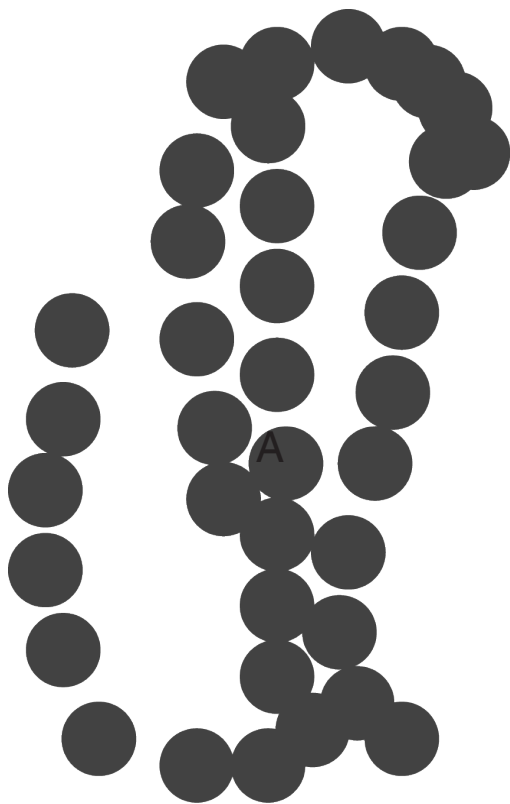
At this stage, the letters exist in a threshold condition between language and image. Certain forms remain partially identifiable, while others collapse into abstract spatial configurations. Rather than functioning as transparent carriers of meaning, the characters foreground their own construction, surface, and dimensionality.

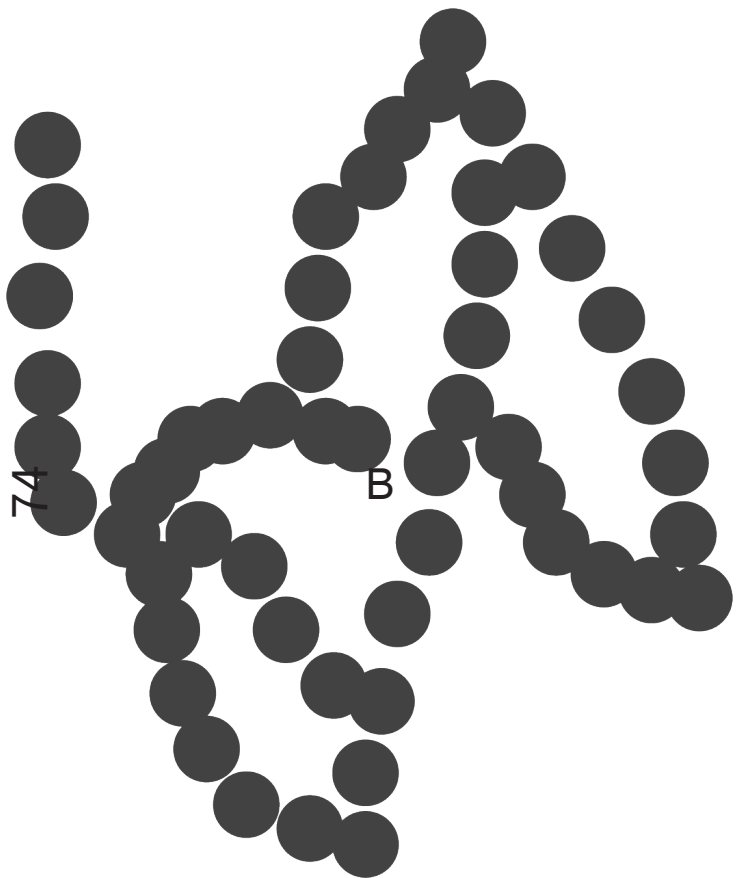
X30Y60Z150 shifts the role of typography from linguistic communication toward visual perception.

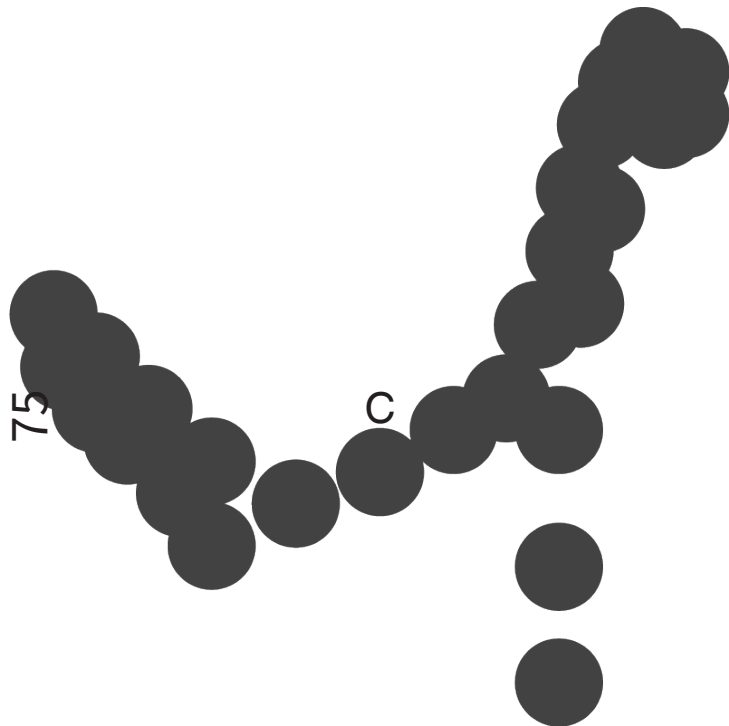




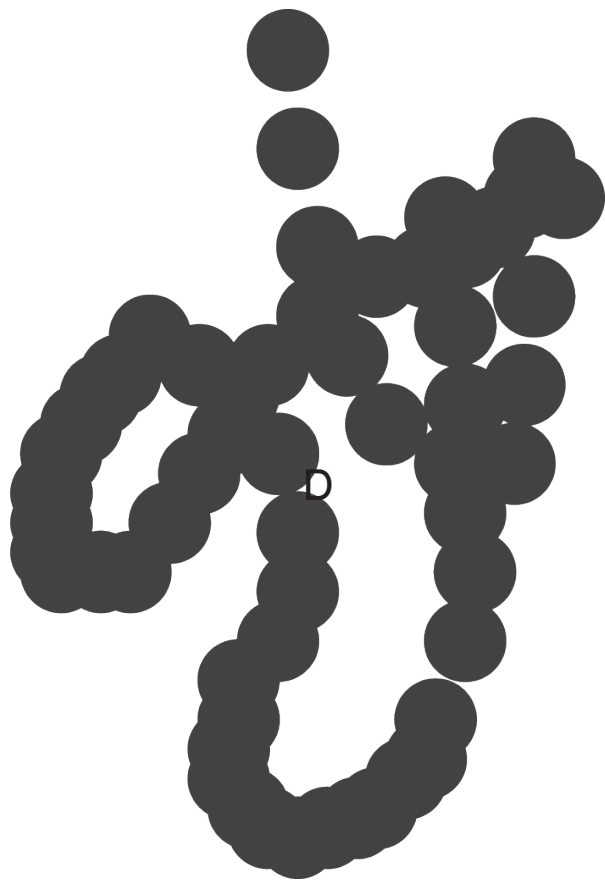
73





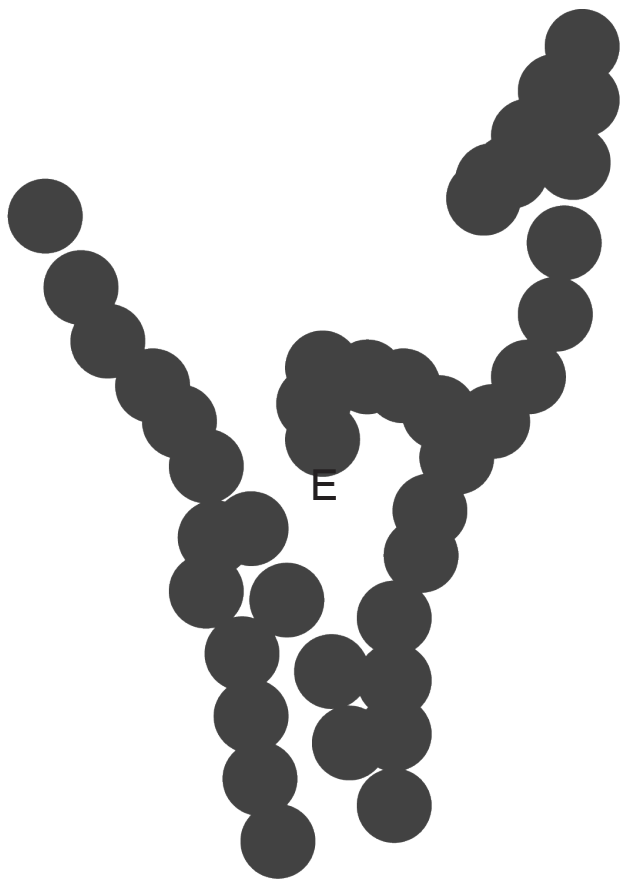


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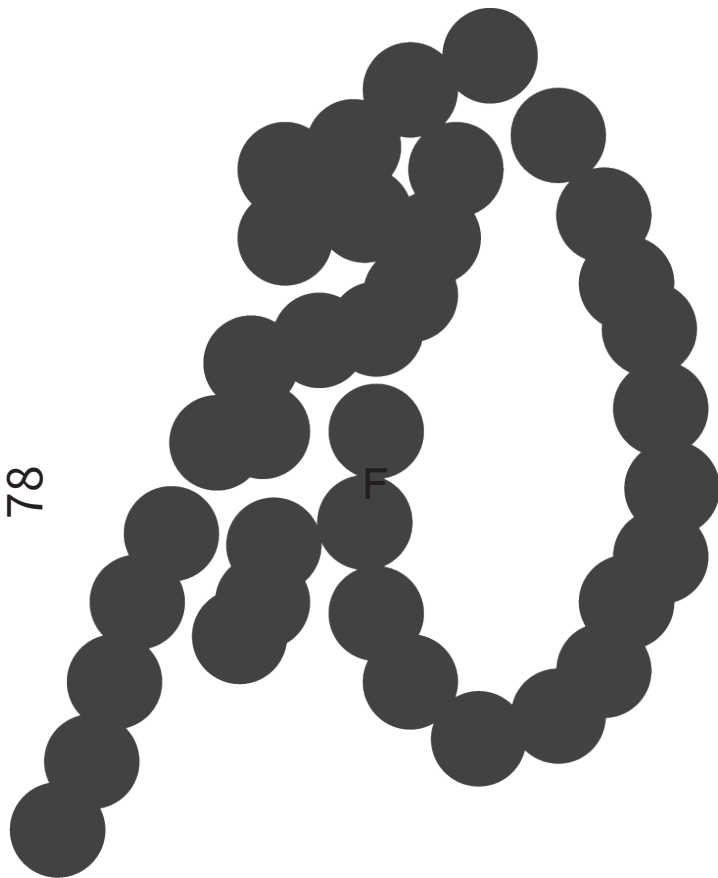


5

77



78

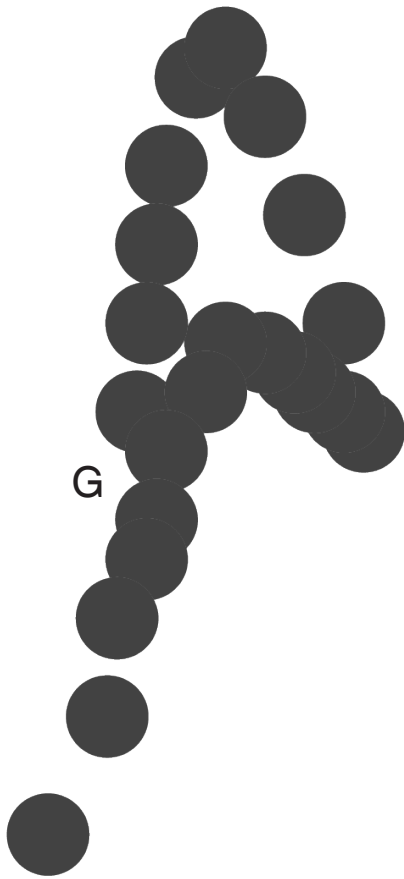


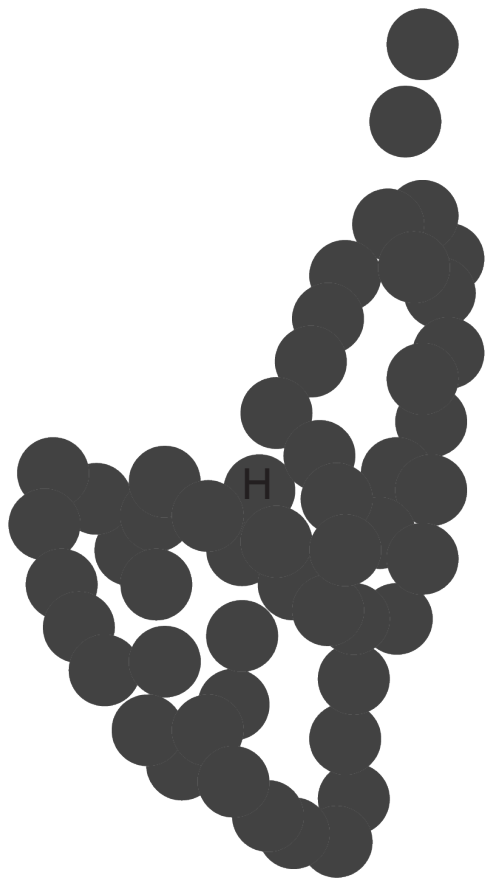
F

79

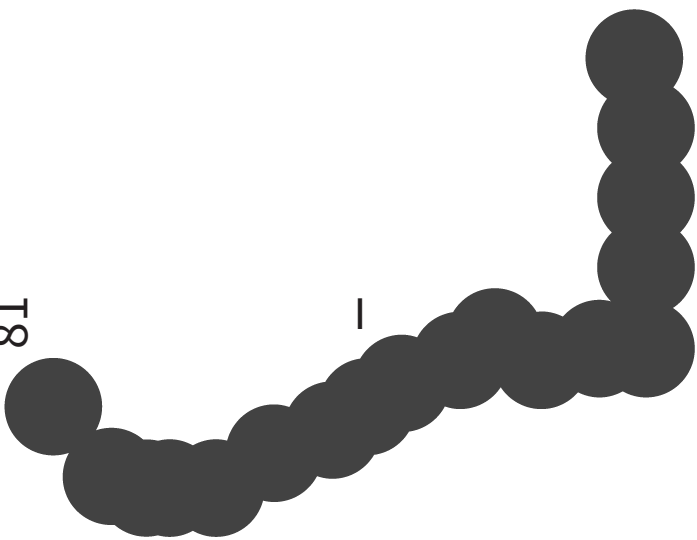


G

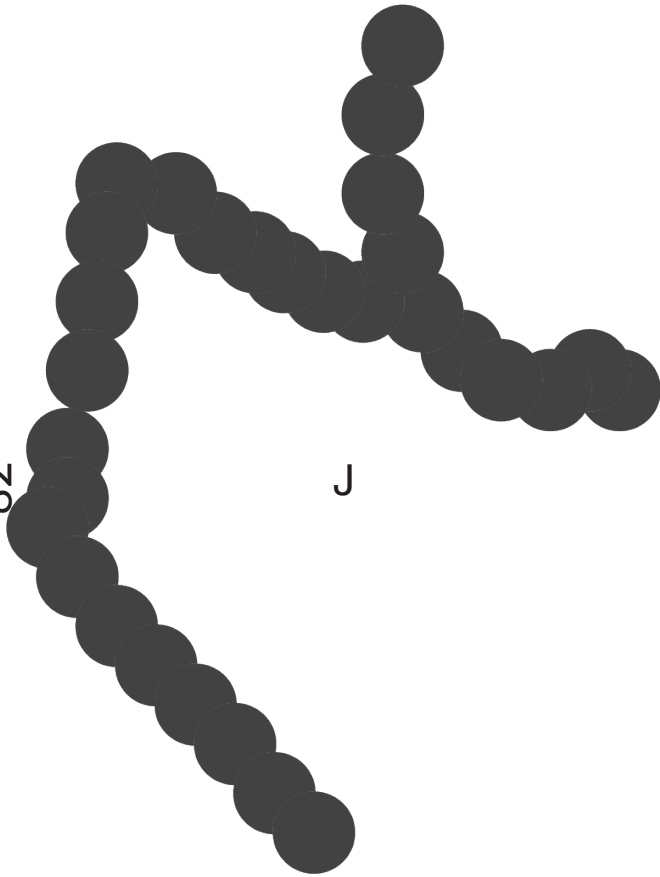




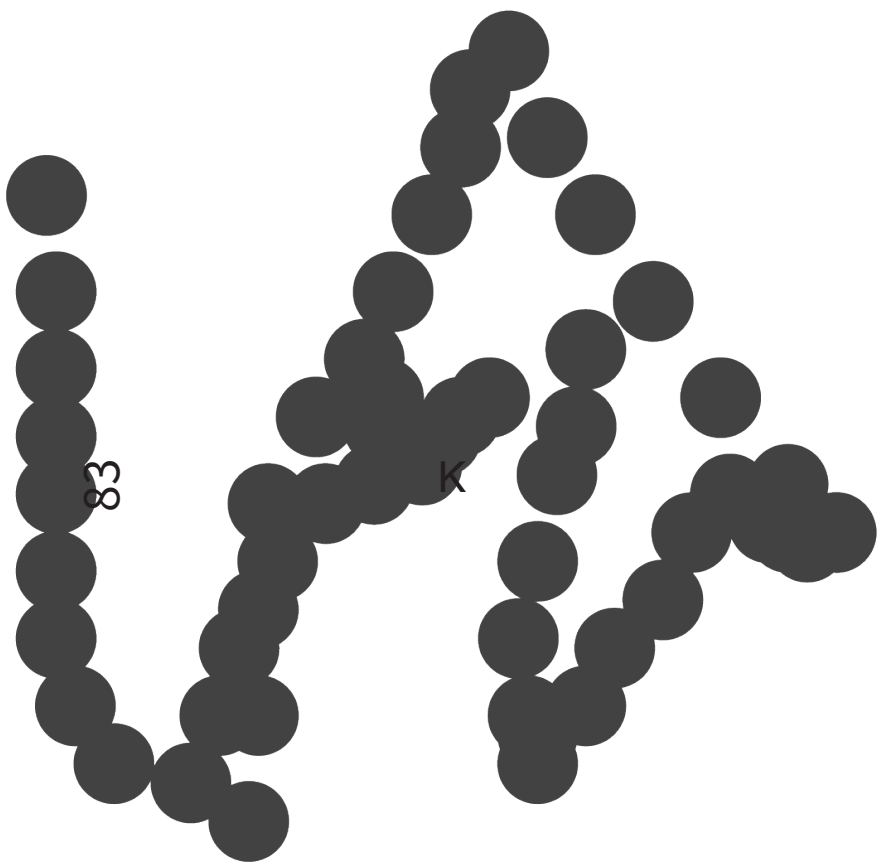
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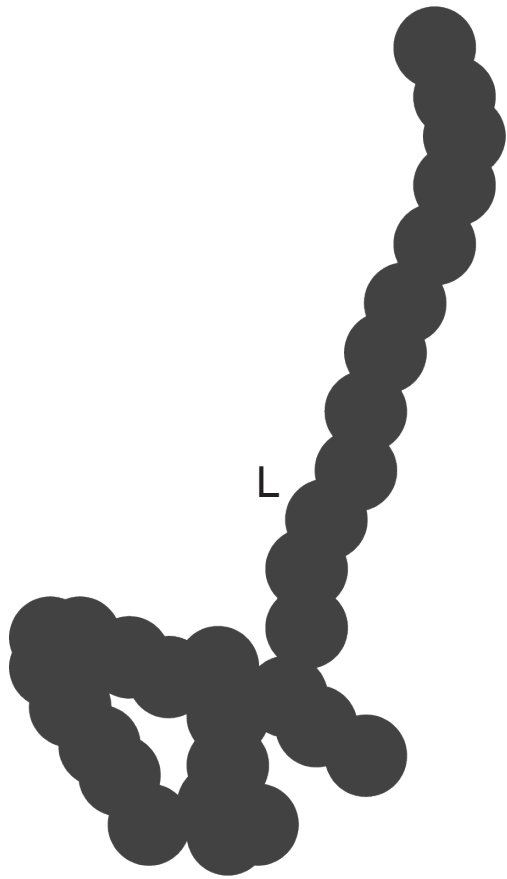
82

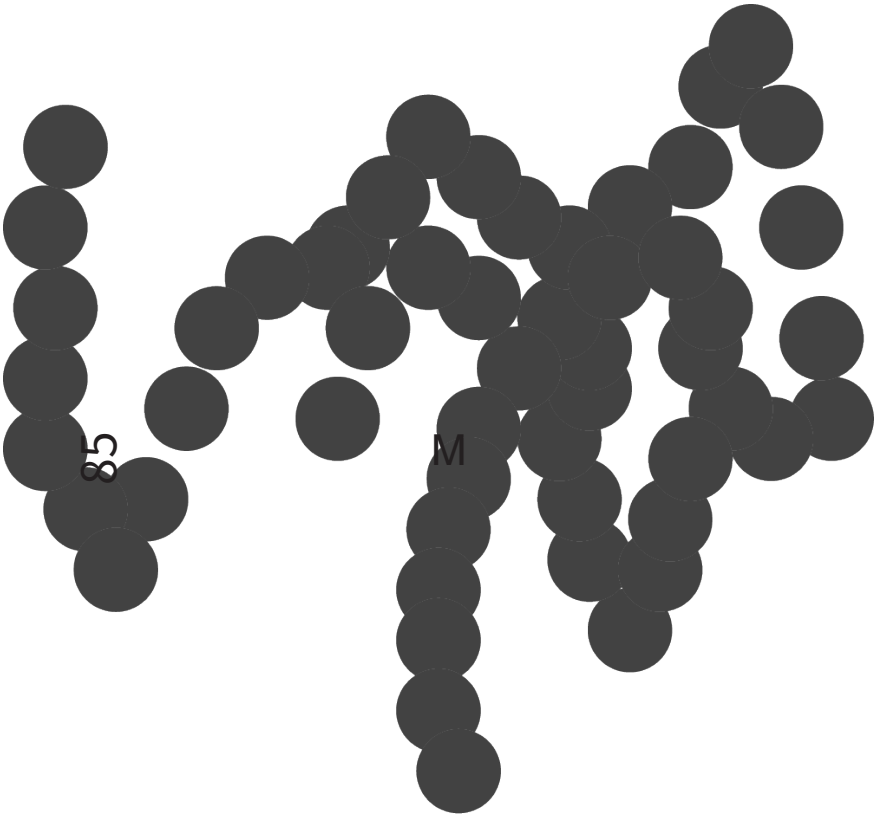


J



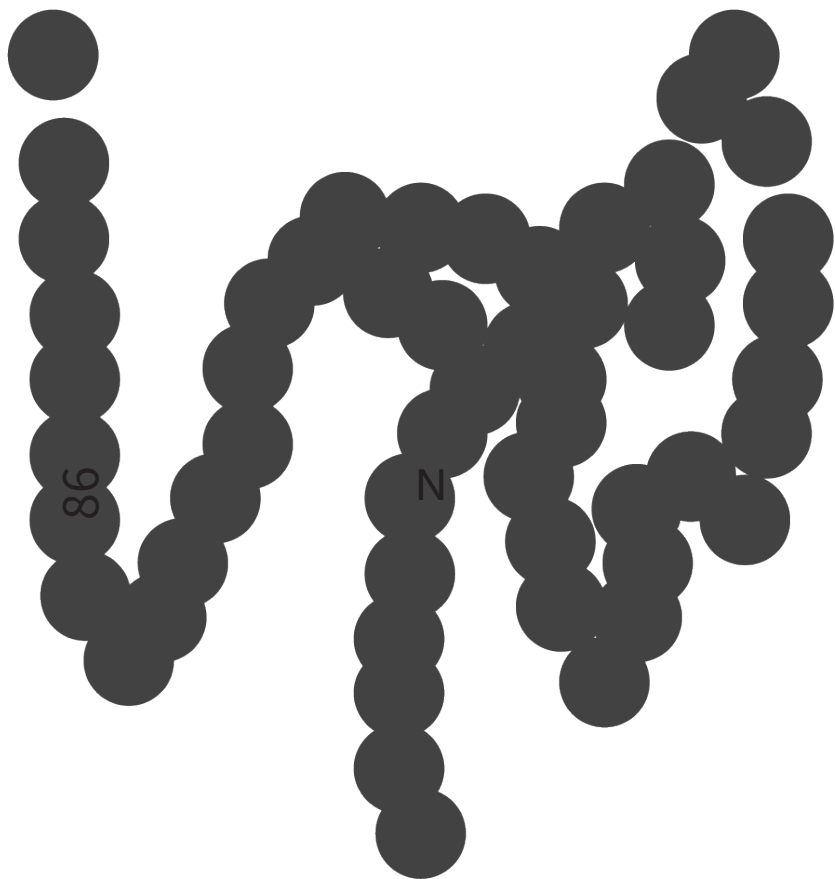
84



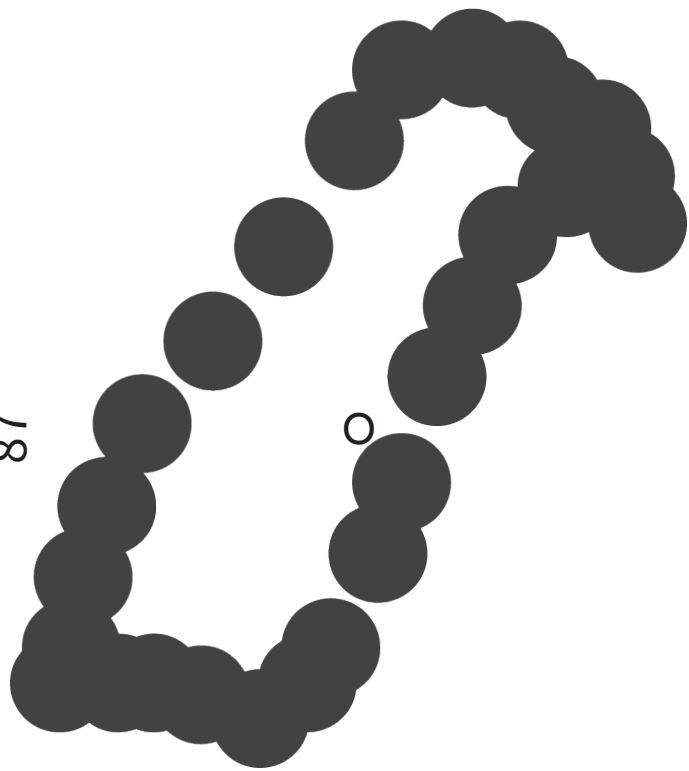


58

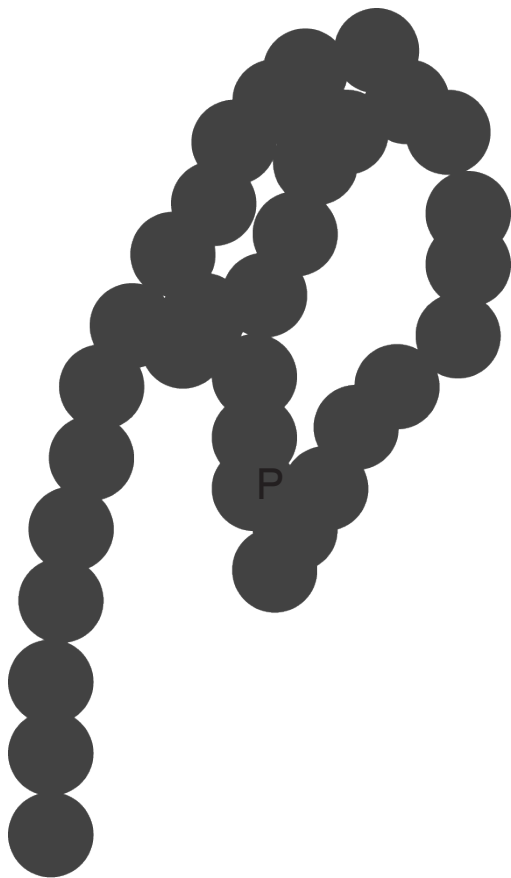
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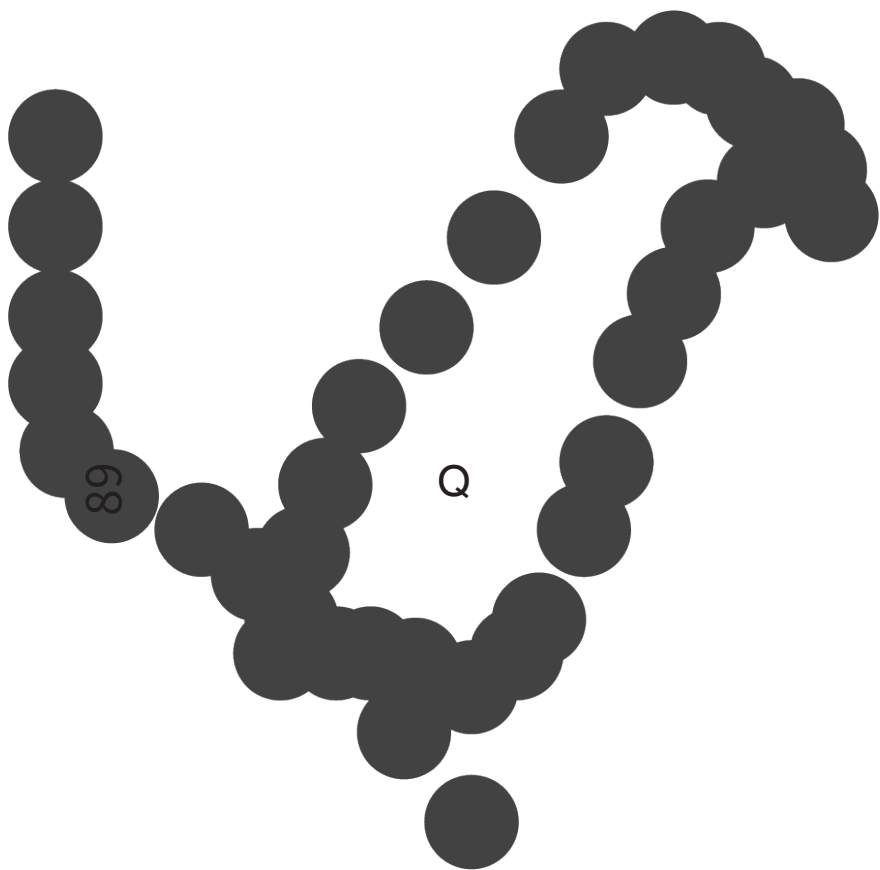


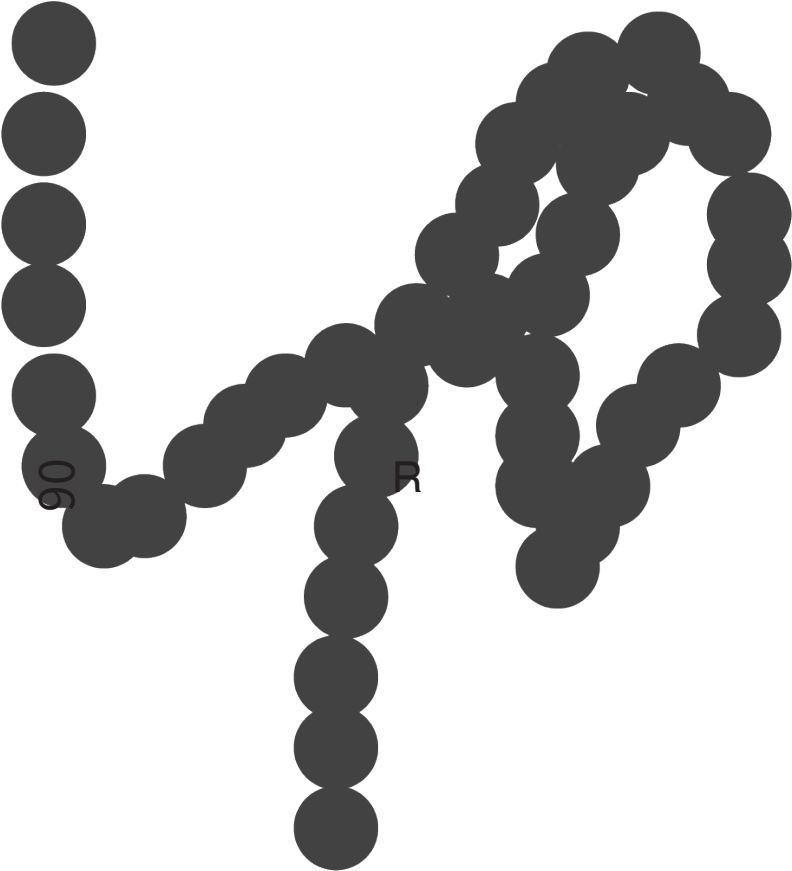
87



88

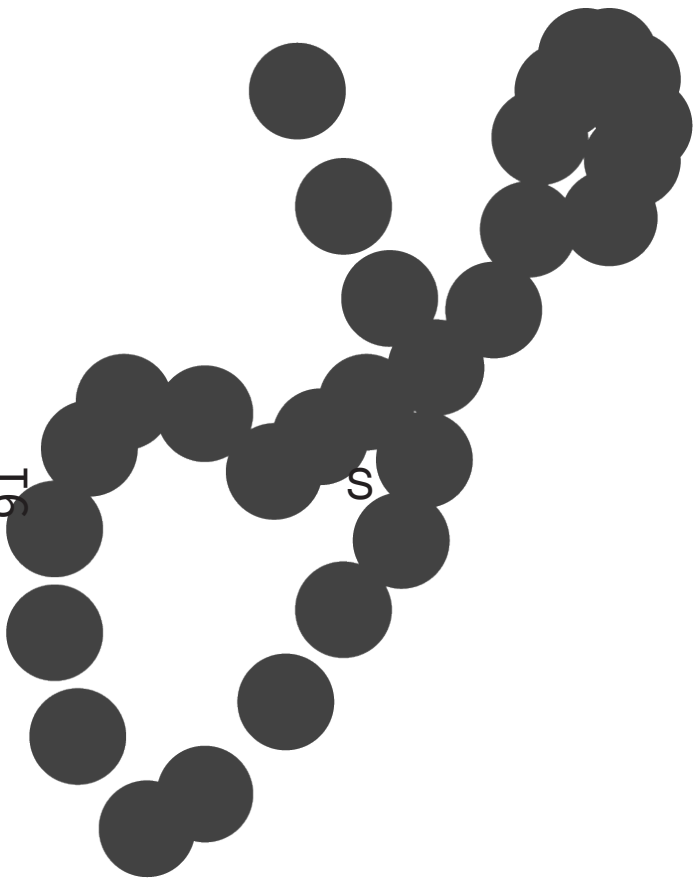




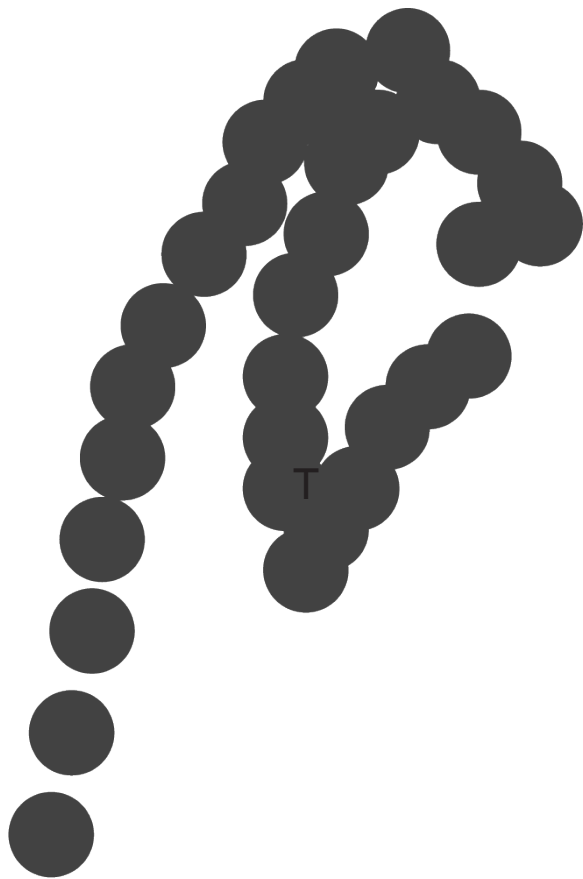


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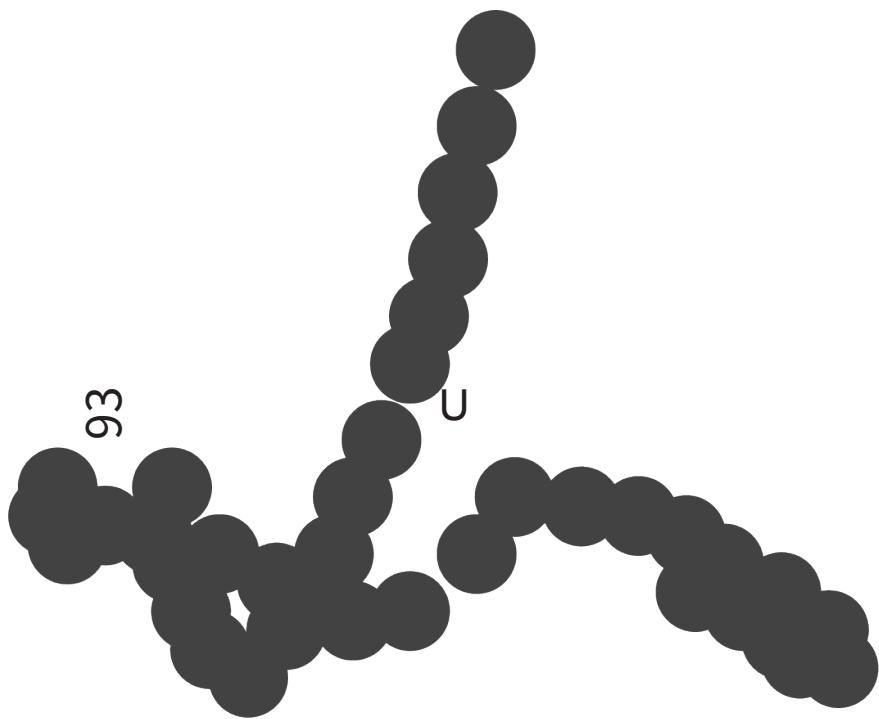
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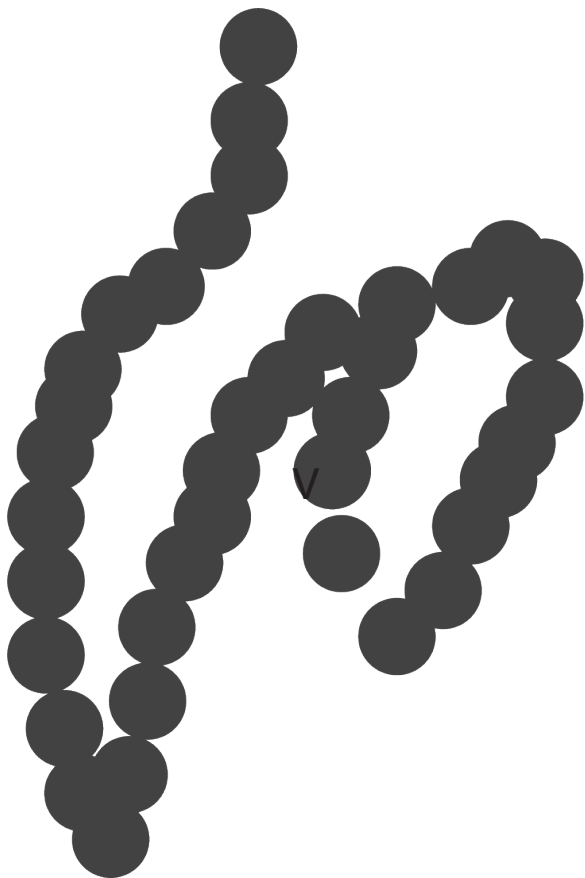


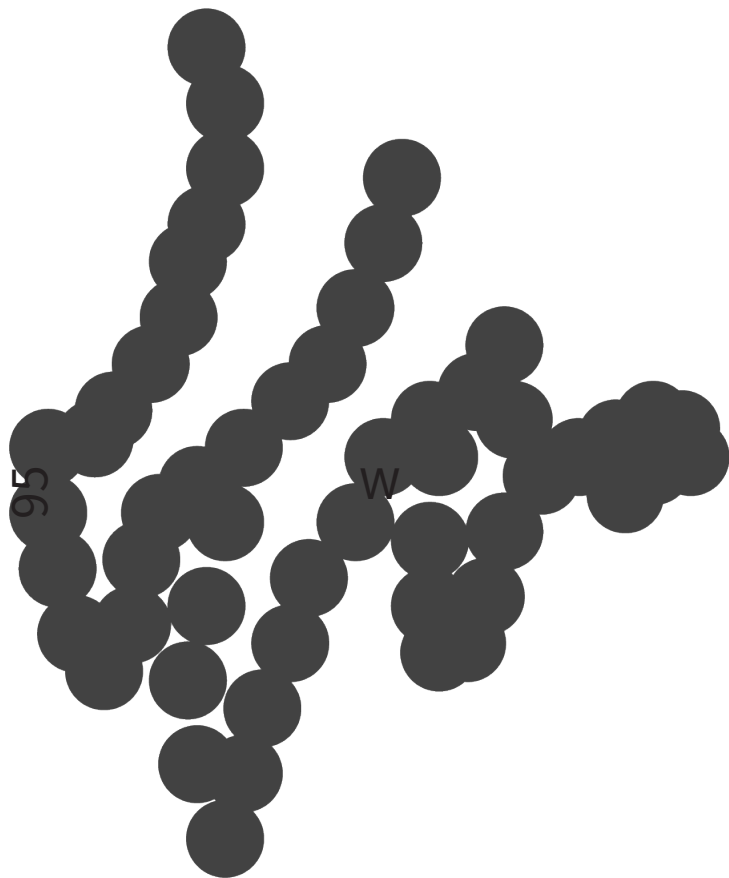
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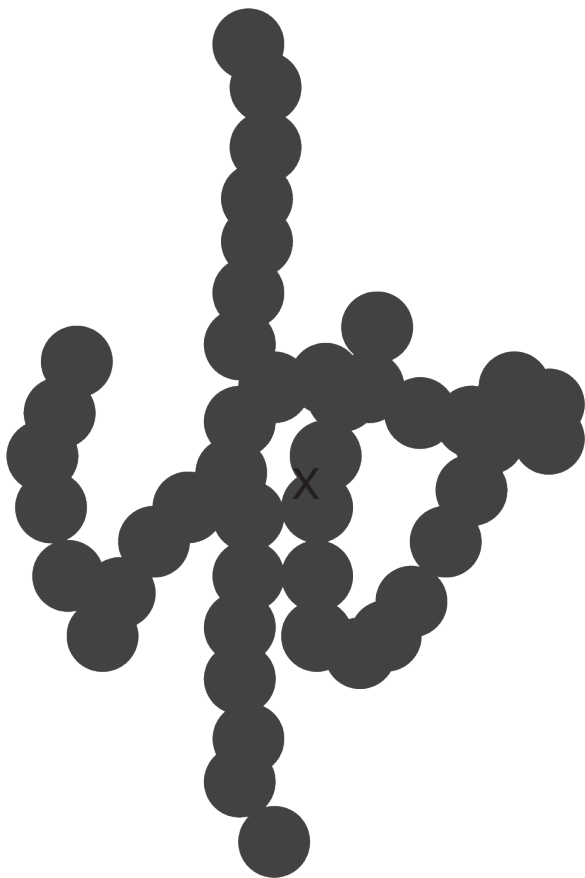
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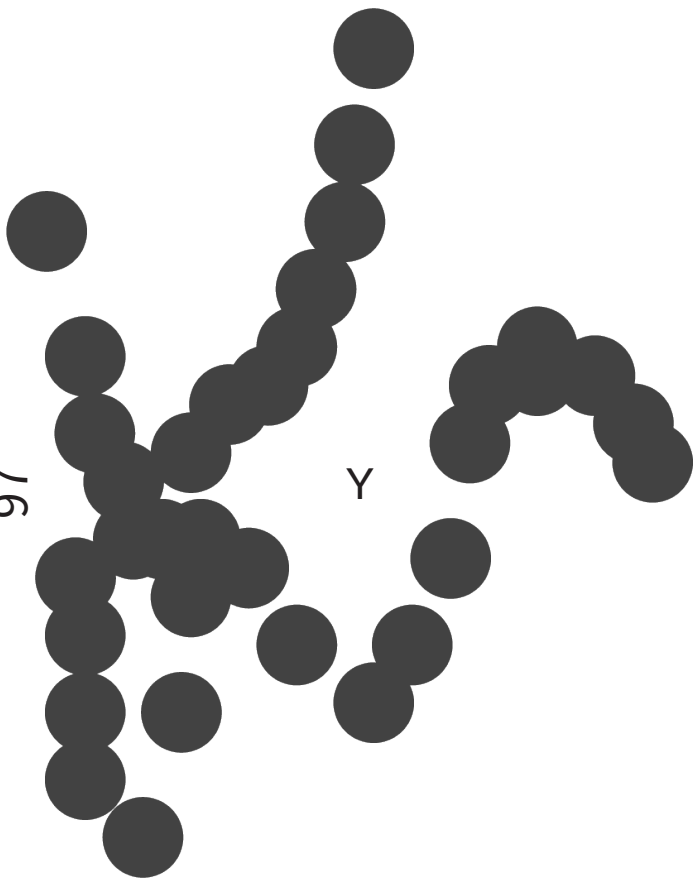




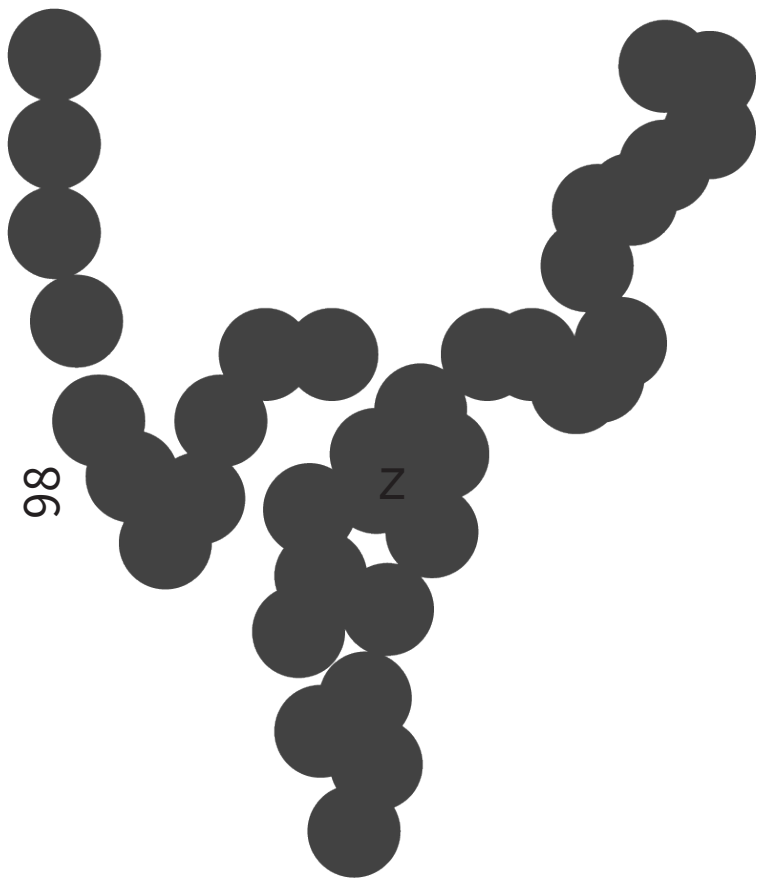
96



97



Y



When does  
a  
letterform  
become  
form



69



A letterform does not disappear when it becomes difficult to read. It remains present, but its role begins to shift.

When recognition slows down, the letter no longer works only as a linguistic sign. Its surface, direction, proportion, and spatial construction become visible. The viewer begins to look at the letter before reading through it.

In this condition, the letterform exists between two states. It is not fully text, but not simply image. It is a form shaped by the conditions under which it appears, and by the moment in which recognition begins to fail.

The letter is therefore not fixed at the point of design. It is continually produced through viewing, orientation, distance, and interpretation.

