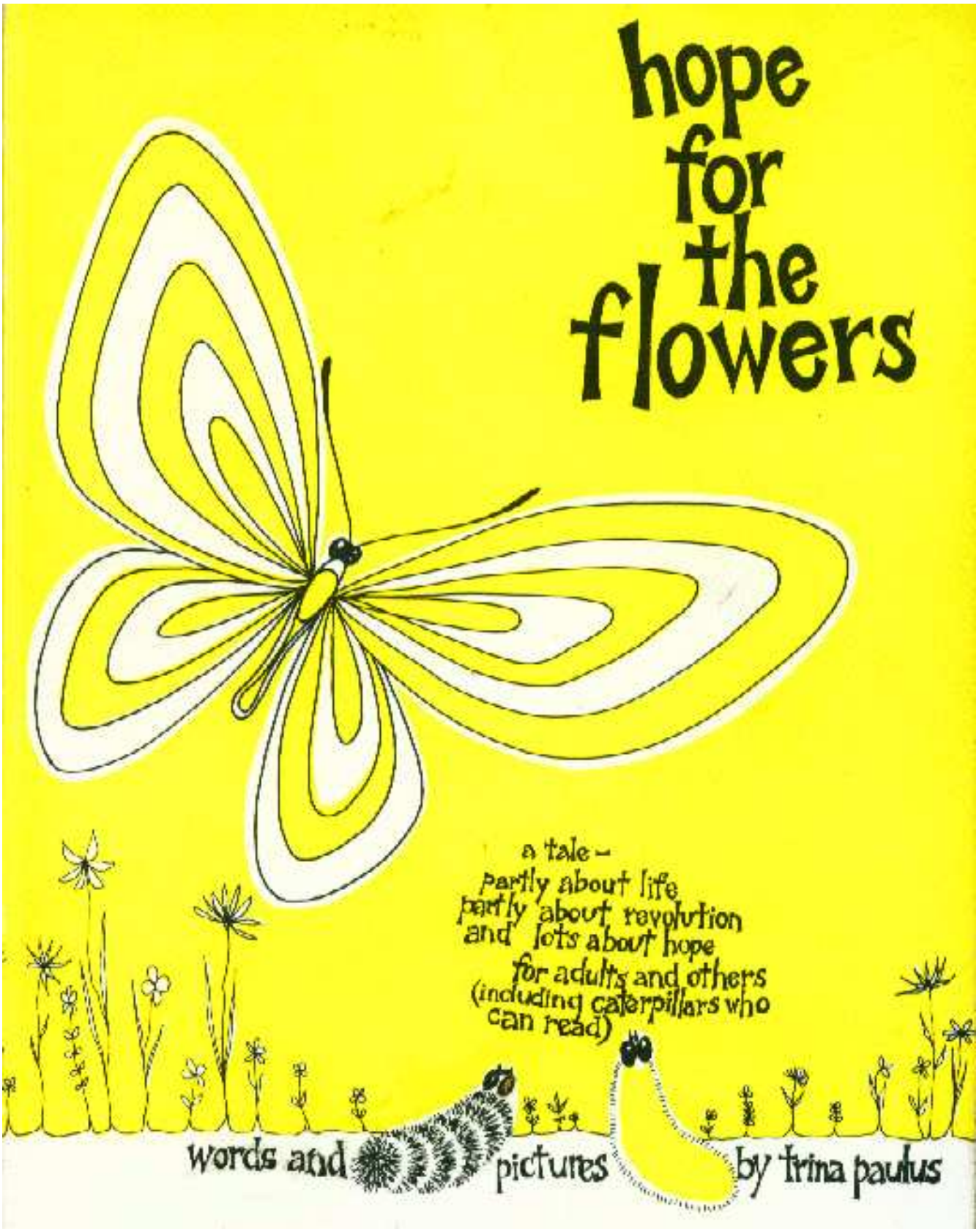
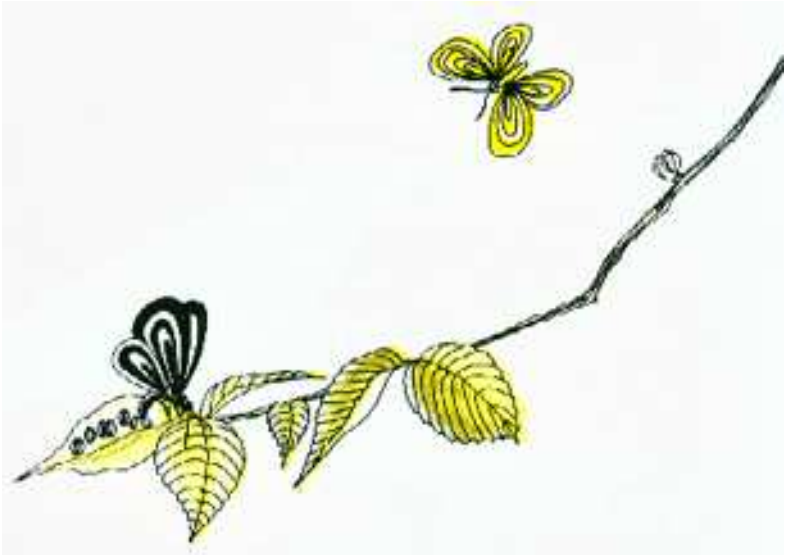


A different sort of book
For everyone
Except for those who have
given up completely
(and even they might secretly enjoy it)

HOPE FOR THE FLOWERS

words and pictures by Trina Paulos

(1972)



HOPE FOR THE FLOWERS

Trina Paulos



A tale….
Partly about life
Partly about revolution
And lots about hope
For adults and others
(including caterpillars who can read)





Many thanks
To everyone
All over the world
Who has helped me
Believe in the butterfly.

This is the tale
Of a caterpillar
Who has trouble
Becoming what
He really is.

It is like myself – like us.

Love



Trina

To the "more" of love – the real revolution



And my father who believed in it.

CHAPTER 1



Once upon a time
A tiny striped caterpillar
Burst from the egg
Which had been home
For so long.
"Hello world," he said.
"It sure is bright out here in the sun."



"I'm hungry," he thought
and straightaway began to eat
the leaf he was born on.
And he ate another… and another….and another.
And got bigger…and bigger….and bigger….

Until one day he stopped
Eating and thought,

"There must be more to life
that just eating and
getting bigger.

"It's getting dull."





So Stripe crawled down
From the friendly tree
Which had shaded and
fed him.

He was seeking more.

There were all sorts of new
things to find. Grass and dirt
and holes and tiny bugs –
each fascinated him.

But nothing satisfied him.

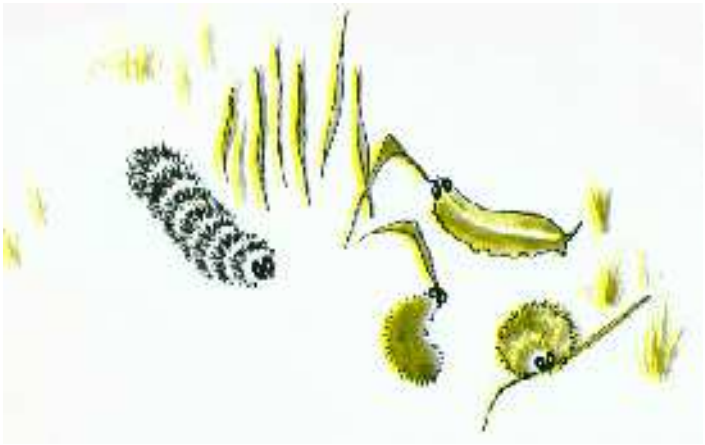


When he came across some
other crawlers like himself he
was especially excited.

But they were so busy eating
They had no time to talk –

Just as Stripe had been.

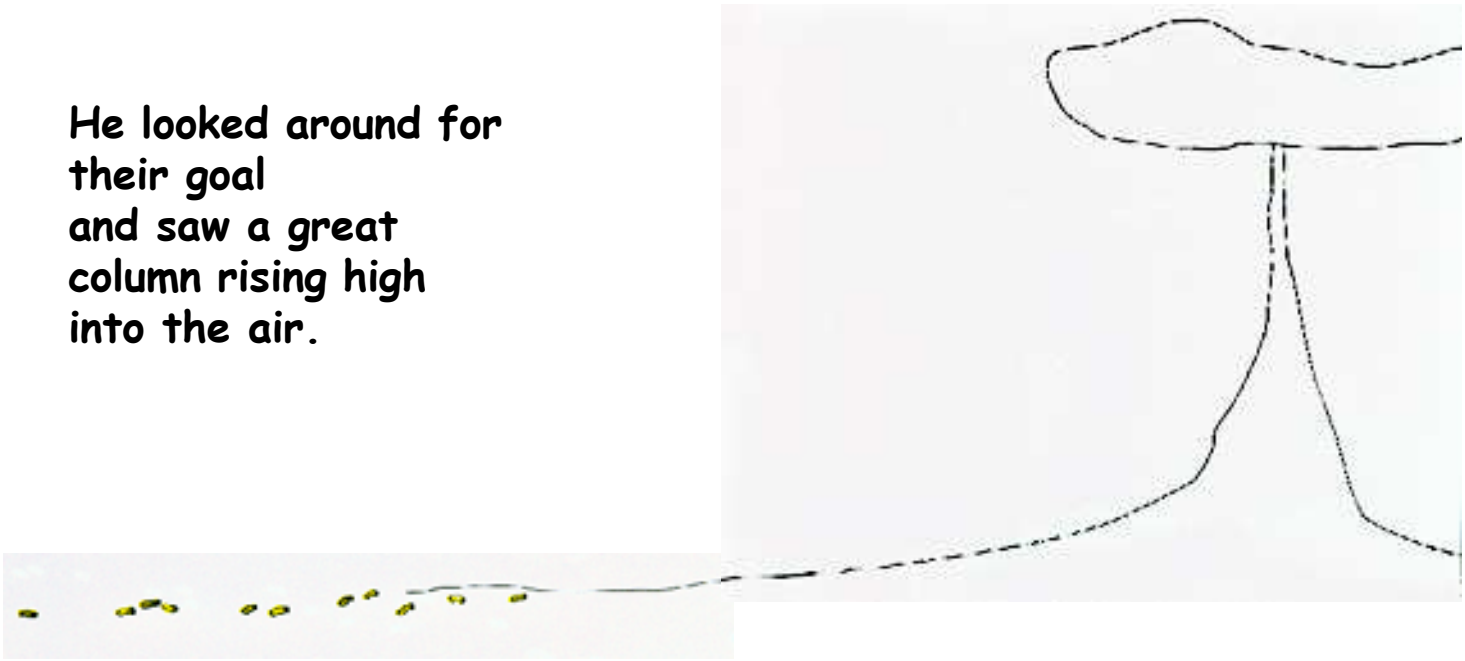
"They don't know any more
about life than I do," he sighed.





Then one day
Stripe saw some
crawlers really
crawling.

He looked around for
their goal
and saw a great
column rising high
into the air.

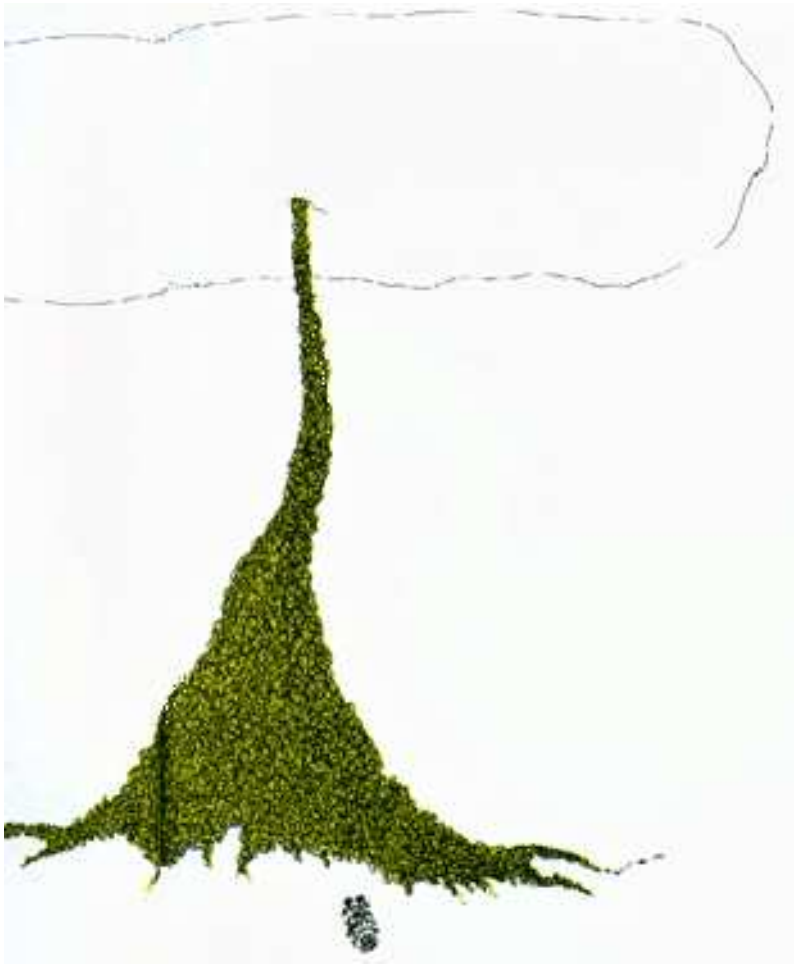


When he joined them he discovered….

….the column was a pile of squirming, pushing caterpilalrs –

a caterpillar pillar.





It appeared that the caterpillars were trying to reach the top – but the top was so lost in the clouds that Stripe had no idea what was there.

He felt new excitement – like sap rising in the spring.

"Maybe I'll find what I'm looking for."



Full of agitation Stripe asked a fellow crawler:
"Do you know what is happening?"
"I just arrived myself," said the other. "Nobody has time to explain; they're so busy trying to get wherever they are going up there."

"But what's at the top?" continued Stripe.

"No one knows that either but it must be awfully good because everybody's rushing there. Goodbye, I've no more time!"

He plunged into the pile.

Stripe's head was bursting with the new drive. He couldn't get his thoughts together.

Every second another crawler passed him and disappeared into the pillar.

"There's only one thing to do."

He pushed himself in.



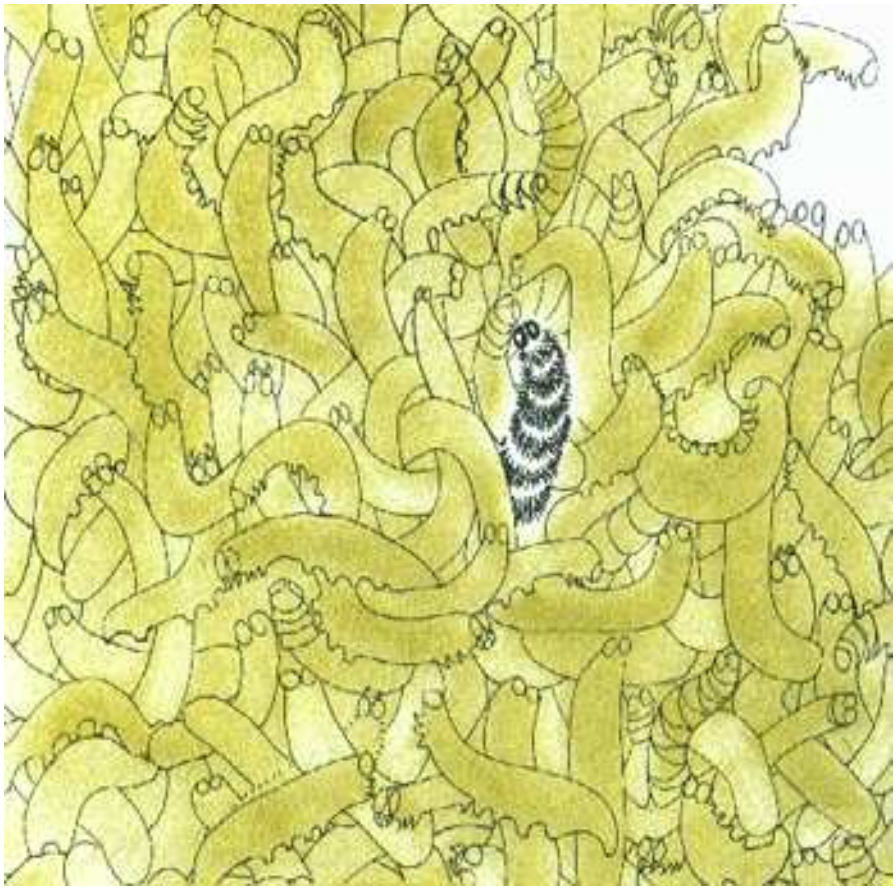
CHAPTER 2



The first moments on the pile were a shock.

Stripe was pushed and kicked and stepped on from every direction.

It was climb or be climbed….



No more fellow caterpillars on Stripe's pile –

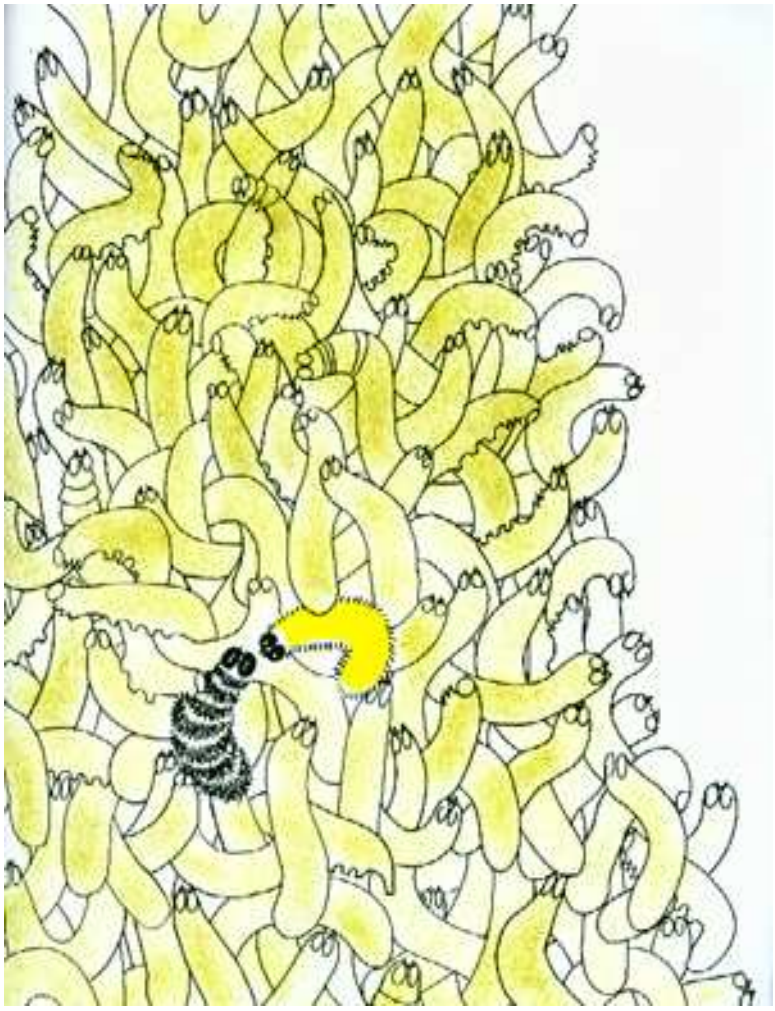
They became only threats and obstacles which he turned into steps and opportunities.

They single-minded approach really helped and Stripe felt he was getting much higher.

But some days it seemed he could manage only to keep his place.

It was especially then that an anxious shadow nagged inside. "What's at the top?" it whispered.

"Where are we going?"



On one exasperated day Stripe
couldn't stand it any longer
and actually yelled back:

"I don't know, but there's no time
to think about it!"

A little yellow caterpillar he was
crawling over gasped:

"I was just talking to
myself," Stripe mumbled.
"Its really isn't important –
I was just wondering
where we were going?"



"You know," Yellow said,
"I was wondering that myself
but since there is no way to find out I
decided it wasn't important."
She blushed at how silly this sounded –
quickly adding, "No one else seems to
worry about where we're going so it
must be good."
But she blushed again.
"How far are we from the top?"

Stripe answered gravely,
"Since we're not at the bottom and not
at the top we must be in the middle."

"Oh," said Yellow, and they both began
climbing again.

But now Stripe had a new feeling.
He felt bad.
He had lost his singlemindedness.
"How can I step on someone I've just
talked to?"



Stripe avoided Yellow as much as possible, but one day there she was, blocking the only way up.

"Well, I guess it's you or me," he said, and stepped squarely on her head.

Something in the way Yellow looked at him made him feel just awful about himself.

Like: no matter what is up there - it just isn't worth it."



Stripe crawled off Yellow and whispered, "I'm sorry."



And Yellow began to cry:

"I could stand this life hoping in what was ahead until I met you talking to yourself that day. Since then my heart hasn't been in it – but I don't know what to do."

"I didn't know how badly I felt about this life until now. Now when you look at me so kindly, I know for sure I don't like this life. I just want to do something like crawl with you and nibble grass."

Stripe's heart leapt inside.
Everything looked different.
The pillar made no sense at all.

"I would like that too," he whispered.
But this meant giving up the climb –
a hard decision.



"Yellow dear, maybe, we're close to the top.
Maybe if we help each other we can get there quickly."

"Maybe," she said.

But they both knew this wasn't what they wanted most.

"Let's go down," Yellow said.
"Okay." And they stopped climbing.

They clung to each other as masses of caterpillars crawled over them. The air was terrible but they were happy with each other and made a big ball so nobody could step in their eyes and stomachs.



They did nothing at all for what seemed a long time.

Suddenly they didn't feel anything crawling over them.

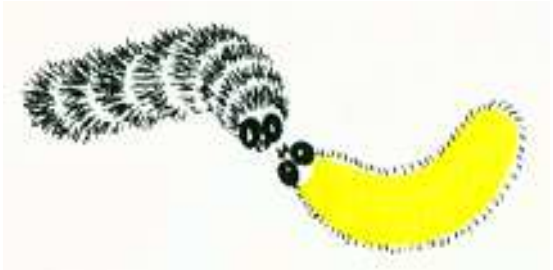
They unrolled and opened their eyes.

They were at the side of the caterpillar pillar.



"Hi stripe," said Yellow.
"Hi Yellow," said Stripe.

And they crawled off into some fresh, green grass to eat and take a nap.







Just before they fell asleep Stripe hugged Yellow.

"Being together like this a sure different from being crushed in that crowd!"

"It sure is!"

She smiled and closed her eyes.

CHAPTER 3



So Yellow and Stripe
romped in the grass
and ate
and grew fat
and loved each other.

They were so glad
not to be fighting
everybody
every moment.



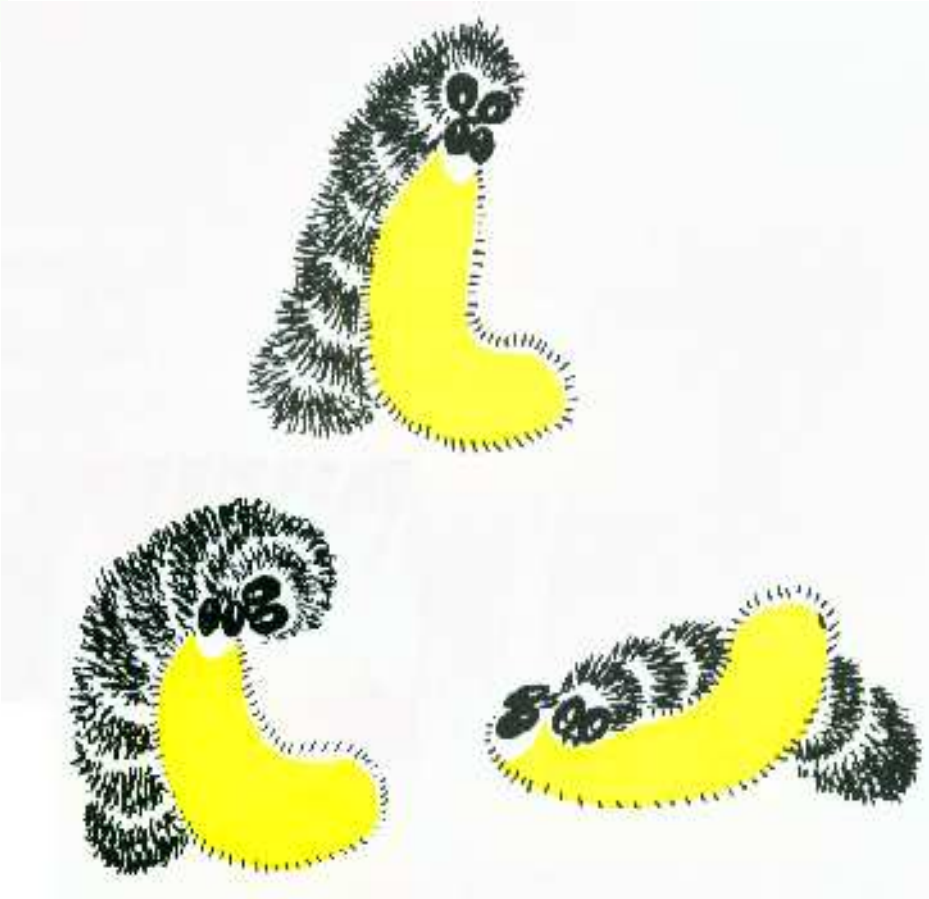
It was like heaven for a while.

But as time passed even hugging each other seemed a little boring.

Each know every hair of each other.

Stripe couldn't help wondering,

"There must be still more to life."





Yellow saw how restless he was and tried to make him extra happy and comfortable.

"Just think how much better this is than that awful mess we have left," she said.

"But we don't know what's at the top," he answered.

"Maybe we were wrong to come down. Maybe now that we've rested the two of us could make it to the top."



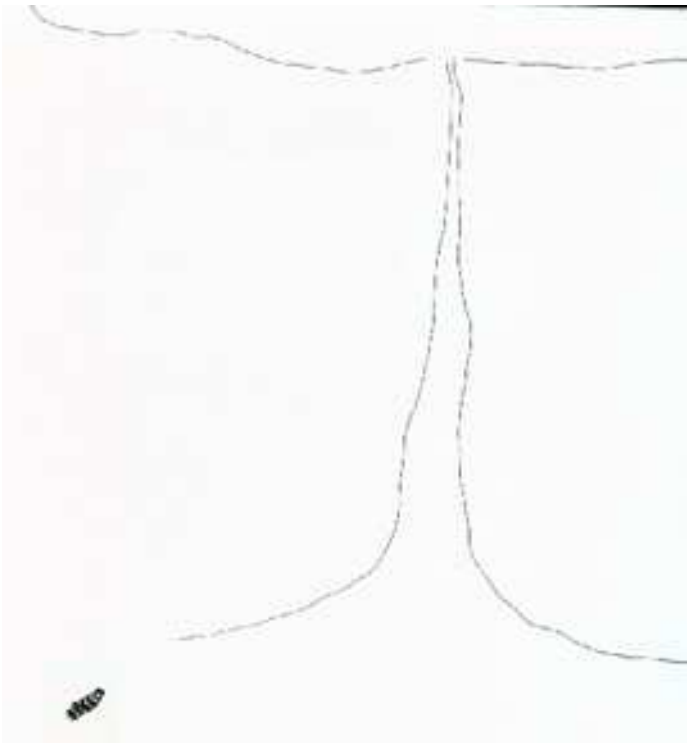
"Dear Stripe, please," she begged.

"We can have a nice home and we love each other and that's enough. It's much more than all those lonely climbers have."

She was so sure, Stripe let her convince him.

But only for awhile ——————





Stripe's hankering for the climbing life worsened. The pillar haunted him. He crawled there regularly, looking up and wondering.

But the top remained clouded.

One day at the pillar, three thuds startled Stripe.

Three big caterpillars had fallen from someplace and smashed.

Two seemed dead but one still wiggled.

Stripe whispered, "What happened?"

"Can I help?"

He made out just a few words.
"The top….they'll see….
Butterflies alone…"

The caterpillar died.





Stripe crawled home and told Yellow.

They were both very sober and quite. What did the mysterious message mean?

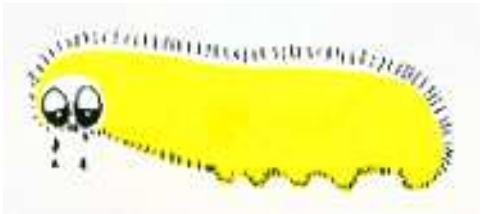
Had the caterpillars fallen from the very top?

Finally, Stripe announced:

"I've got to know. I must go and find out the secret of the top."
And more gently, "Will you come and help me?"

Yellow struggled inside.
She loved Stripe and wanted to be with him.
She wanted to help succeed.

But ———————— she just couldn't believe that the top was worth all it asks to get there. She wanted to get "up" too; the crawling life wasn't enough for her either.



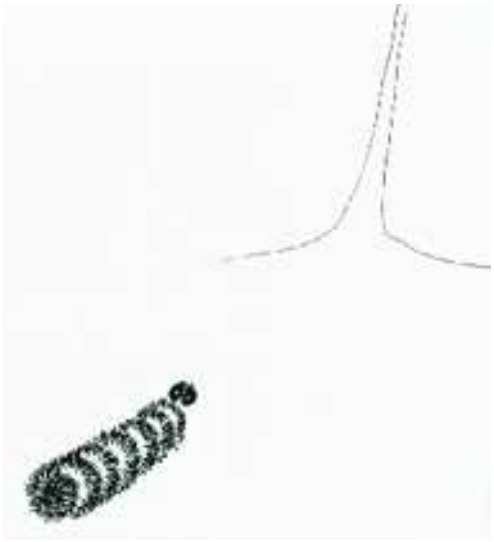
She also had to admit that it looked like the pile was the only way to do it.

Stripe seemed to sure that Yellow felt ashamed not to agree. She also felt stupid and embarrassed since she could never put her reasons into words that his kind of logic would accept.



Yet somehow, waiting and not being sure was better than action she couldn't believe in.





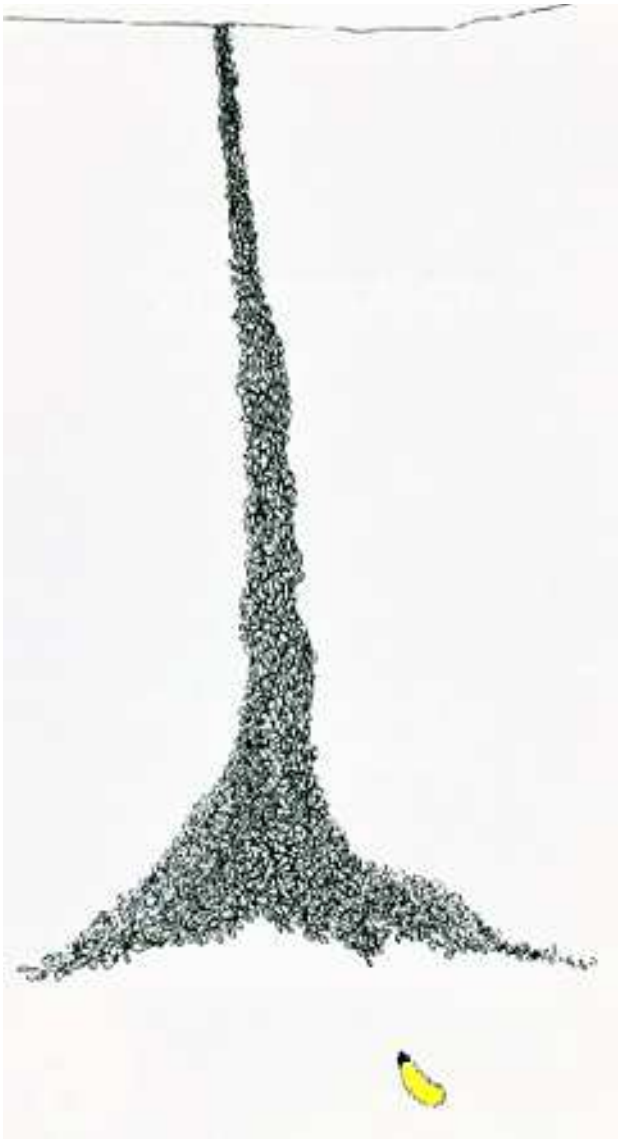
She couldn't explain, she couldn't prove anything – but for all her love she couldn't go with Stripe.

She just knew climbing was a wrong way to get high.

"No," she said, heartsick.
And Stripe left her for his climb.



CHAPTER 4



Yellow was desolate without Stripe.

She crawled daily to the pile looking for him and returning home at night sad, but half relieved that she never saw him. If she had, she feared she might plunge after him knowing that she shouldn't.

She felt like doing something, anything, rather that this uncertain waiting.

"What in the world do I really want? she sighed.

"It seems different every few minutes."

"But I know there must be more."

Finally she became numb and wandered away from everything familiar.



One day a grey haired caterpillar hanging upside down on a branch surprised her.

He seemed caught in some hairy stuff.

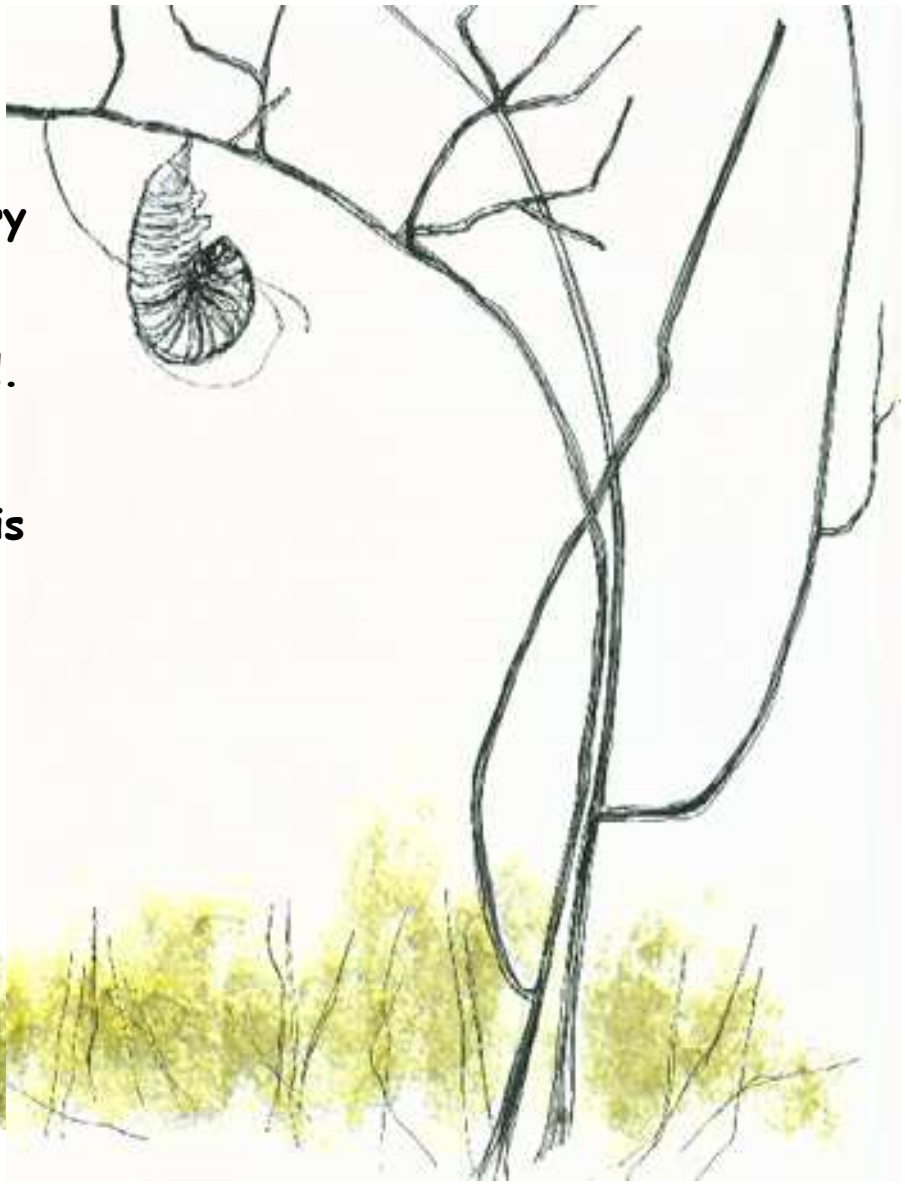
"You seem in trouble," she said. "Can I help?"

"No, my dear, I have to do this to become a butterfly."

Her whole inside leapt. "Butterfly – that word," she thought.

"Tell me Sir, what is a butterfly?"





"It's what you are meant to become. It flies with beautiful wings and joins the earth to heaven.

It drinks only nectar from the flowers and carries the seeds to love from one flower to another."

"Without butterflies the world would soon have few flowers."





"It can't be true!"
grasped Yellow.

"How can I believe
there's a butterfly
inside you or me
when all I see is
a fuzzy worm?"





"How does one become a
butterfly?" she asked pensively.

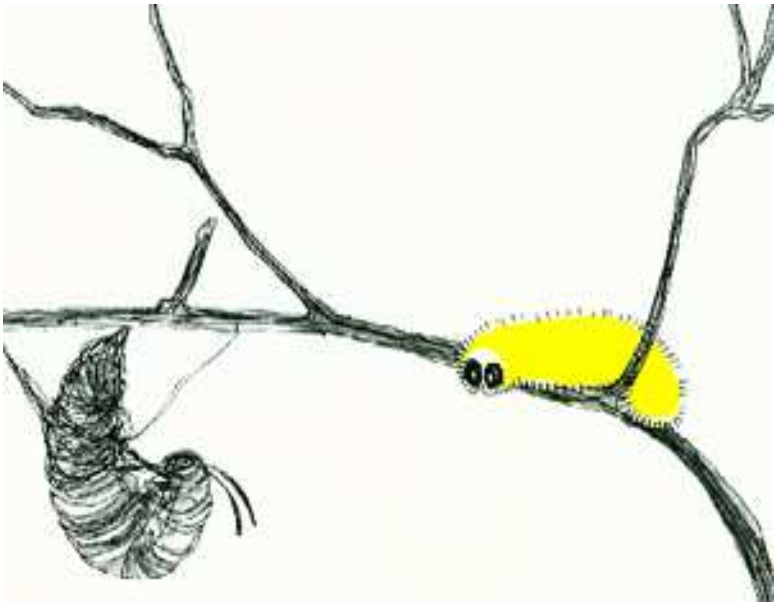
"You must want to fly so much
that you are willing to give up
being a caterpillar."

"You mean to die?" asked Yellow,
remembering the three who fell
out of the sky.

"Yes and No," he answered.

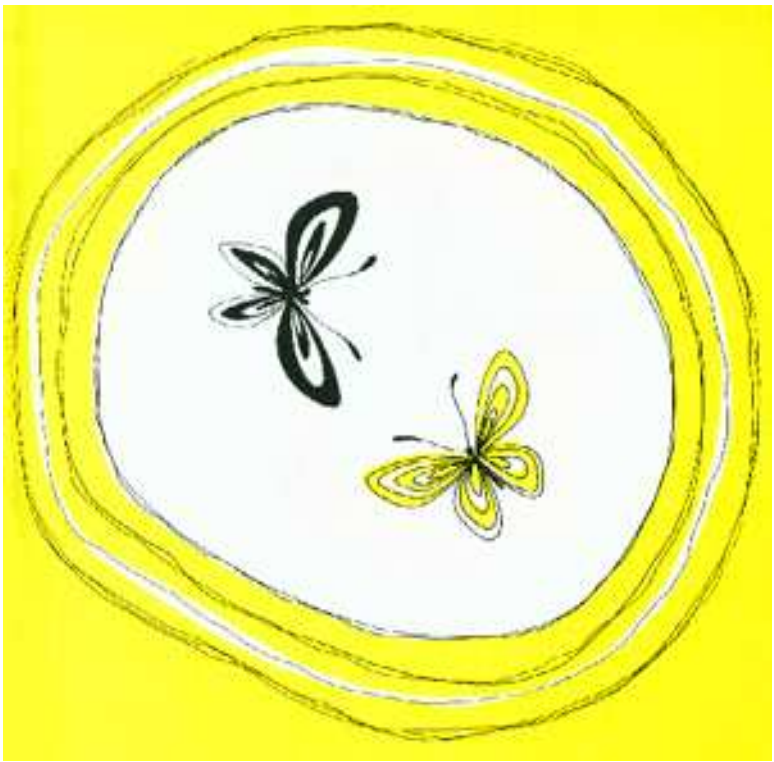
"What looks like you will die but
what's really you will still live.
Life is changed not taken away.
Isn't that different from those
who die without ever becoming
butterflies?"

"And if I decide to become a butterfly," said Yellow hesitantly. "What do I do?"
"Watch me. I'm making a cocoon.
"If looks like I'm hiding, I know, but a cocoon is no escape.
"It's an in-between house where the change takes place.
"It's a big step since you can never return to caterpillar life.
"During the change, it will seem to you or to anyone who might peek that nothing is happening – but the butterfly is already becoming.
"It just takes time!"



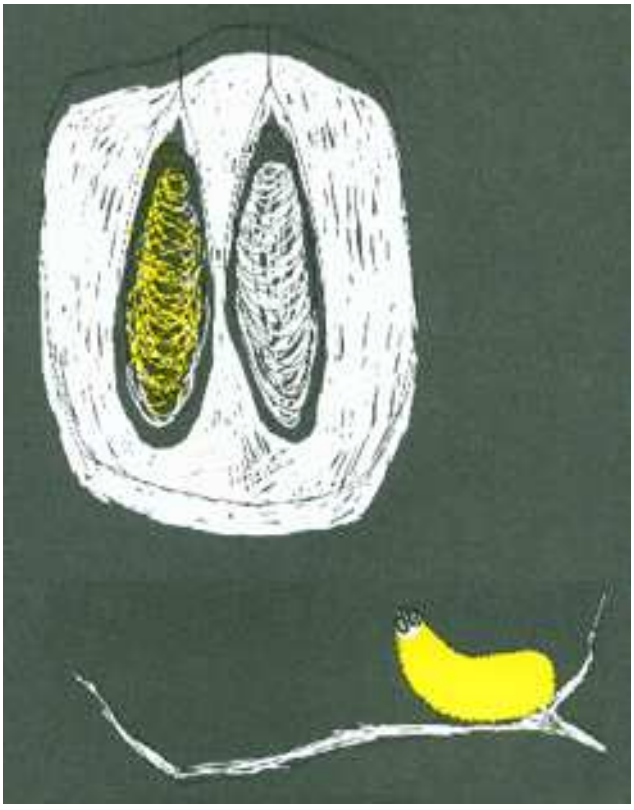
"And there's something else!

"Once you are a butterfly, you can really love – the kind of love that makes a new life. It's better than all the hugging caterpillars can do."



"Oh, let me go and get Stripe," Yellow said. But she sadly knew he was far into the pile to possibly reach.

"Don't be sad," said her new friend. "If you change, you can fly and show him how beautiful butterflies are. Maybe he will want to become one too!"



Yellow was torn in anguish:

"What if Stripe comes back and I'm not there? What if he doesn't recognize my new self? Suppose he decides to stay a caterpillar?

"At least we can do something as caterpillars – we can crawl and eat.
We can love in some way.
How can two cocoons get
together at all?
How awful to get stuck in a cocoon?"

How could she risk the only life she knew when it seemed so unlikely she could ever be a glorious winged creature?

What did she have to go on?

- Seeing another caterpillar who believed enough to make his own cocoon.
- And that peculiar hope which had kept her off the pillar and leapt within he when she heard about butterflies.



The grey-haired caterpillar continued to cover himself with silky threads. As he wove the last bit around his head he called:

"You'll be a beautiful butterfly – we're all waiting for you!"



And Yellow decided to risk for a butterfly.

For courage she hung right beside the other cocoon and began to spin her own.

For courgae she hung right beside the other cocoon and began to spin her own.

"Imagine, I didn't even know I could do this. That's some encouragement that I'm on the right track. If I have inside me the stuff to make cocoons – maybe the stuff of butterflies is there too."

CHAPTER 5

Stripe made much faster progress this time. He was bigger and stronger since he had taken time out. From the beginning he determined to get to the top.

He especially avoided meeting the eyes of other crawlers. He knew how fatal such contact could be.

He tried not to think of yellow.

He disciplined himself neither to feel nor to be distracted.





Stripe didn't seem just "disciplined"
to others – he seemed ruthless.
Even among climbers he was special.

He didn't think he was against
anybody. He was just doing what
he had to if he was to get to the top.

"Don't blame me if you
don't succeed! It's a
tough life. Just make
up your mind," he would
have said had any
caterpillar complained.

Then one day
he was near
his goal.



Stripe had done well but when light finally filtered down from the top, he was close to exhaustion.

At this height there was almost no movement. All held their positions with every skill a lifetime of climbing had taught them. Every small move counted terribly.

There was no communication. Only the outsides touched. They were like cocoons to one another.

Then one day Stripe heard a crawler above him saying,

"None of us can get any higher without getting rid of them."

Soon after, he felt tremendous pressure and shaking.
Then came screams and falling bodies.
Then silence; lots more light and less weight from above.

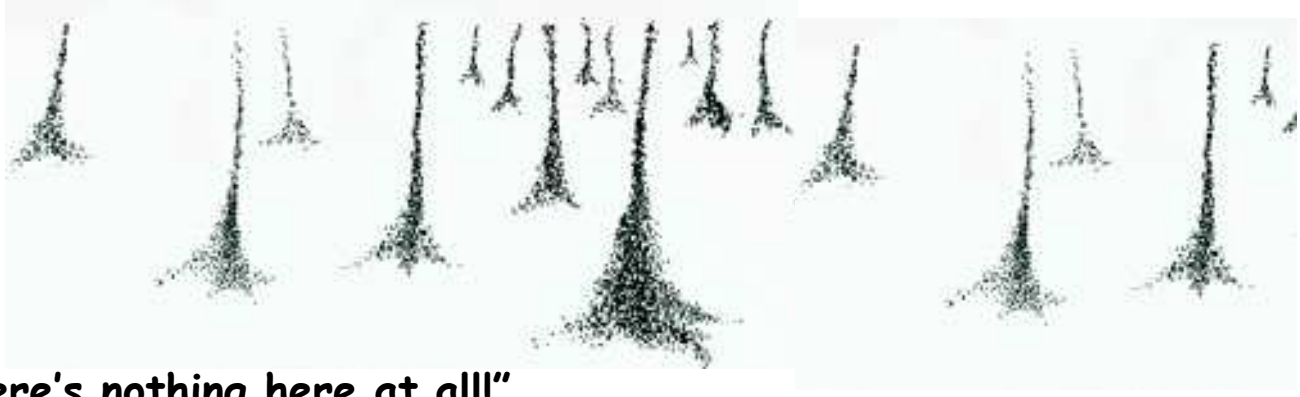
Stripe felt awful with this new knowledge. The mystery of the pillar was clear.

He now knew what had happened to the three caterpillars.

He now knew what must always happen on the pillar.

Frustration surged through Stripe. But as he was agreeing this was the only way "up" he heard a tiny whisper from the top.





"There's nothing here at all!"
It was answered by another:

"Quiet fool! They'll hear you down the pillar. We're where they want to get. That's what's here!"

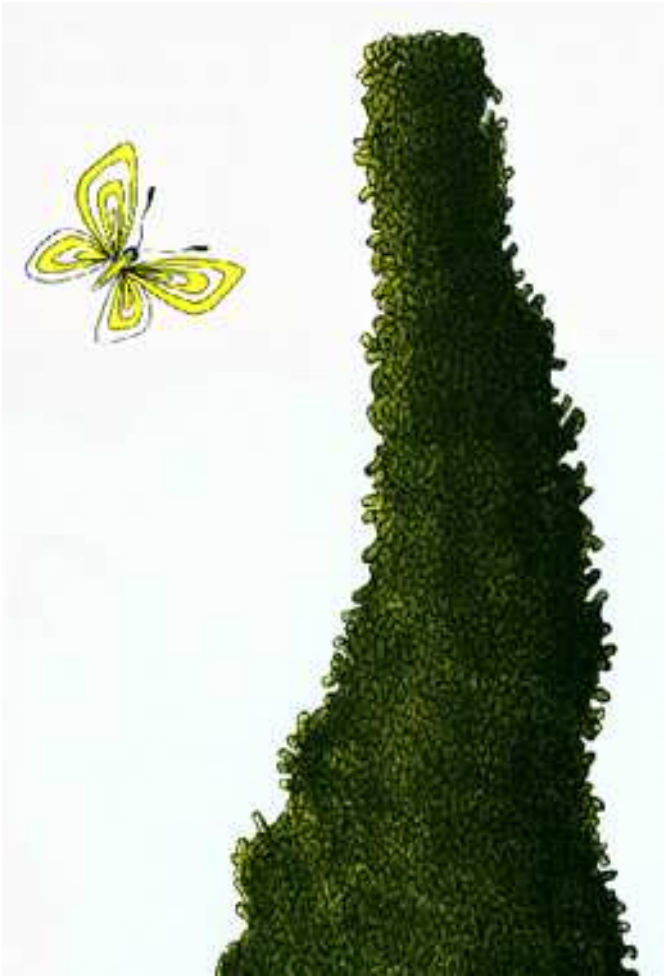
Stripe felt frozen. To be so high and not high at all!
It only looked good from the bottom.

The whisper came again,
"Look over there-another pillar – and there too – everywhere!"

Stripe became angry as well as frustrated.
"My pillar," he moaned, "only one of thousands."
"Millions of caterpillars climbing nowhere!"
"Something is really wrong…
what else is there?"

His life with Yellow seemed so far away.
That wasn't it either – not quite.
"Yellow!" He let her image fill his being.
"You knew something, didn't you? Was it courage to wait?"
"Maybe she was right. I wish I were with her."
"I could go down," he thought. "I'd look ridiculous but maybe it's better than what's happening here."





But Stripe's thought was interrupted by bursts of movement all over his level. Each seemed to be making a last effort to find some entry to the top. But with every push the top layer tightened.

Finally one caterpillar gasped,"Unless we try together nobody will reach the top. Maybe if we give one big push! "They can't hold us down forever!"

But before they could act there were cries and commotion of another kind. Stripe struggled to the edge to see the cause.

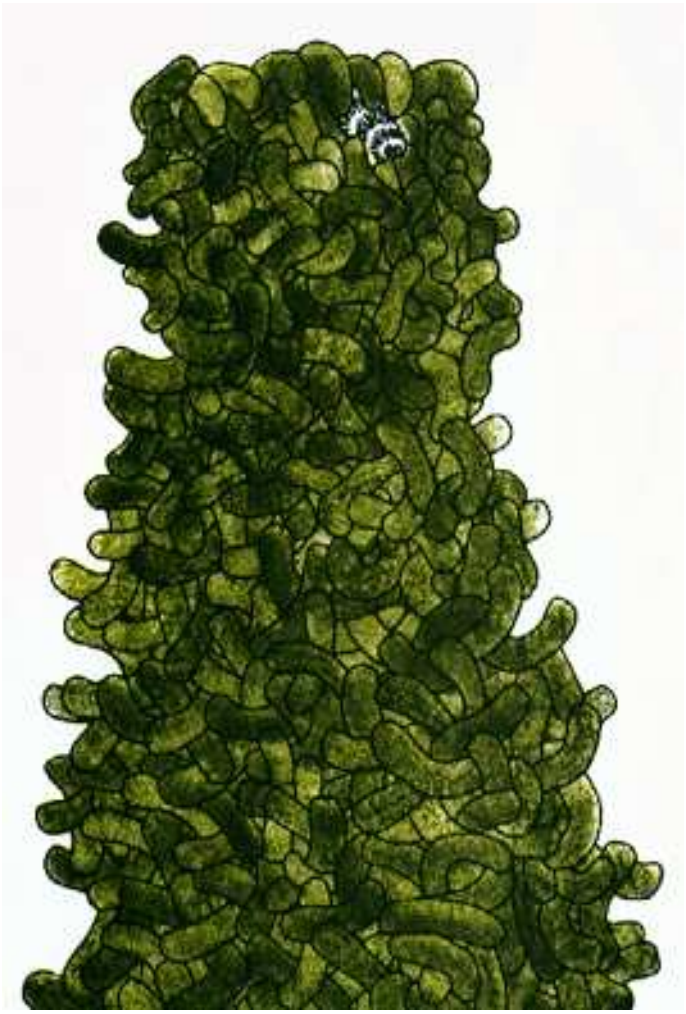
A brilliant yellow winged creature was circling the pillar, moving freely – a wonderful sight! How did it get so high without climbing?



When Stripe poked out his head the creature seemed to recognize him. It extended its legs and tried to grab him.

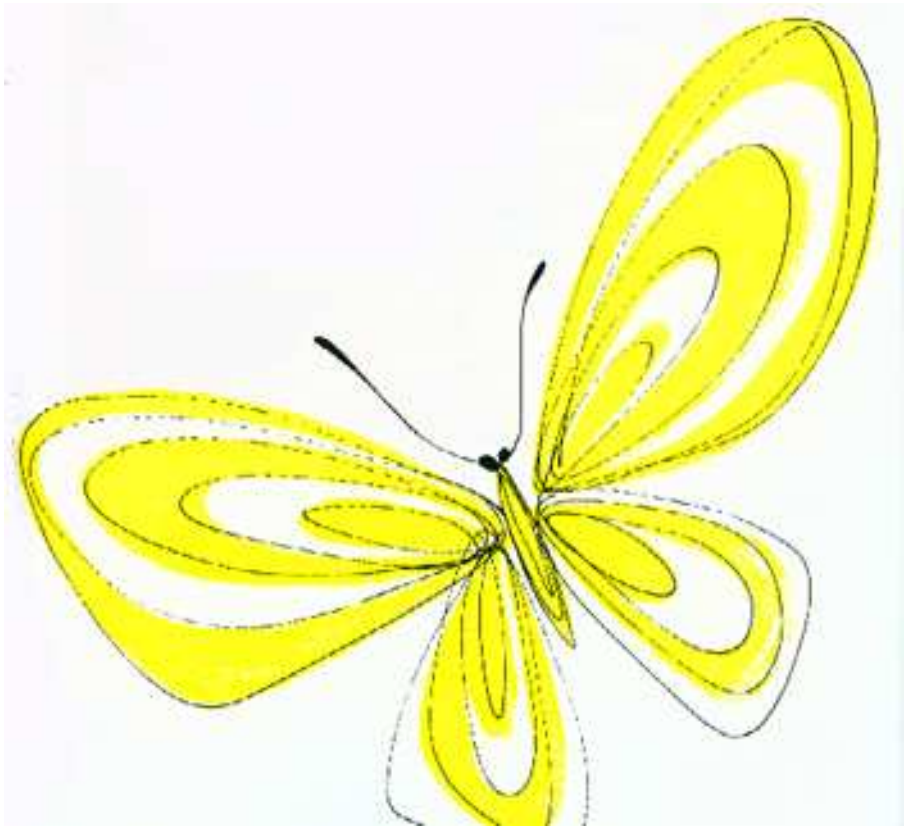
Stripe caught himself just before being pulled out of the pile. The brilliant creature let go and looked sadly into his eyes.

That look activated excitement Stripe hadn't felt since he first saw the pillar. Words from the past returned, "……butterflies alone."



"Is this a butterfly?"
And what did it mean –
"the top ….. they'll see…"?

It was all so strange and yet
like it was supposed to be.
And those eyes with the
look of Yellow.
Could it be…?

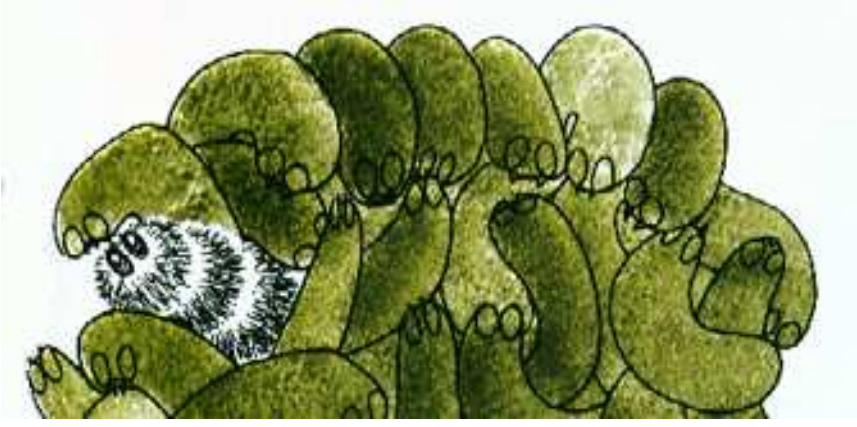




Such impossible thoughts!
Yet the excitement inside
wouldn't stop.

He grew happy.
Somehow he could escape,
he could be carried away.

But as this possibility became real,
something else grew inside.
He felt he shouldn't escape like this.





Looking into the creature's eyes he could hardly bear the love he saw there. He felt unworthy. He wanted to change, to make up for all the times he had refused to look at the other.

He tried to tell her
what he felt.
He stopped struggling.

The others stared at him
as though he were mad.

CHAPTER 6

He turned around and began down the pillar. This time he didn't curl up. He stretched out full length and looked straight into the eyes of each caterpillar.

He marveled at the variety and beauty, amazed that he had never noticed it before.

He whispered to each, "I've been up; there's nothing there."

Most paid no attention; they were too intent on climbing.

One said, "Its sour grapes.
He's bitter. I bet he never made
it to the top."





But some were shocked and even stopped climbing to hear him better.

One of these whispered in anguish, "Don't say it even if it's true. What else can we do?"

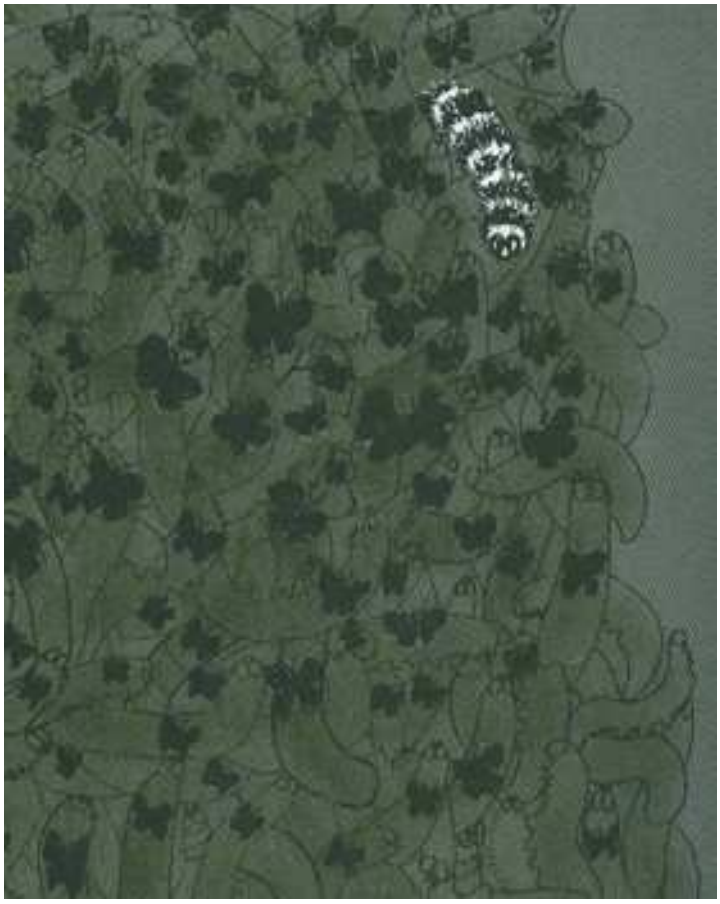
Stripe's answer shocked them all – including himself!

"We can fly!
"We can become butterflies!
"There's nothing at the top and it doesn't matter!"

As he heard his own message he realized how he had misread the instinct to get high.
To get to the "top" he must fly, not climb.

Stripe looked at each caterpillar inebriated with joy that there could be a butterfly inside.





But the reaction was worse than before. He saw fear in eyes. They didn't stop to listen or speak.

This happy, glorious news, was too much to take – too good to be true.

And if it wasn't true?

The hope that lit up the pillar dimmed. All seemed confused and unreal.

The way down was so immensely long.

The vision of the butterfly faded.

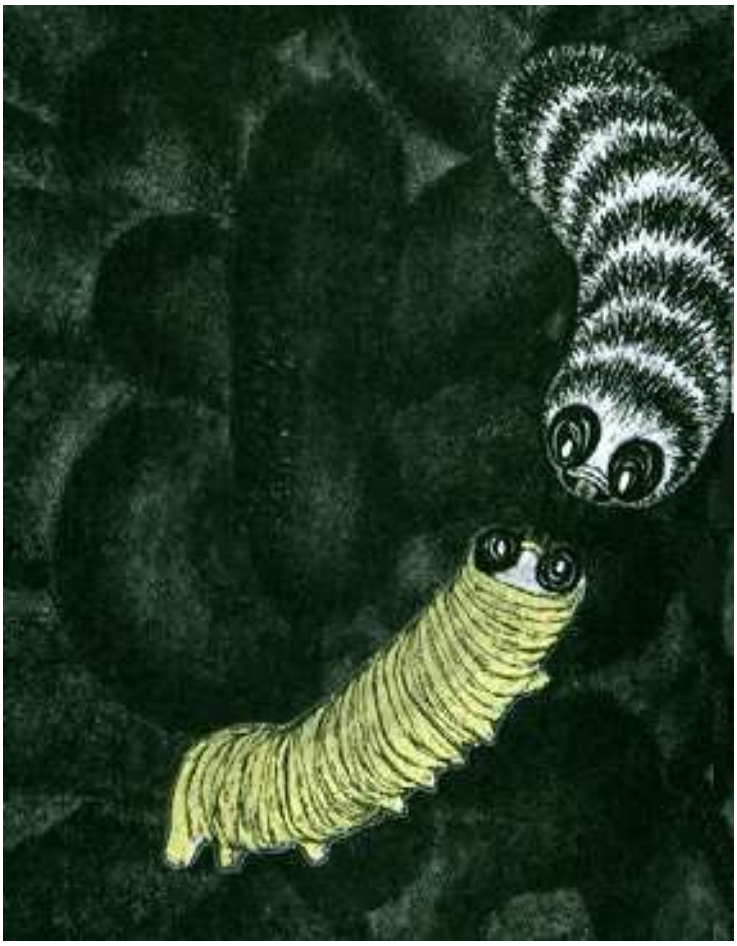
Doubts flooded Stripe,
The pile took on horrible dimensions.

He struggled on – barely – blindly.
He seemed wrong to give up believing seemed impossible.

A crawler sneered, "How could you swallow such a story?
Our life is earth and climbing.
Look at us worms! We couldn't be butterflies inside. Make the best of it and enjoy caterpillar living!"

"Perhaps he's right," sighed Stripe. "I haven't any proof.
Did I only make it up because I needed it so much?"



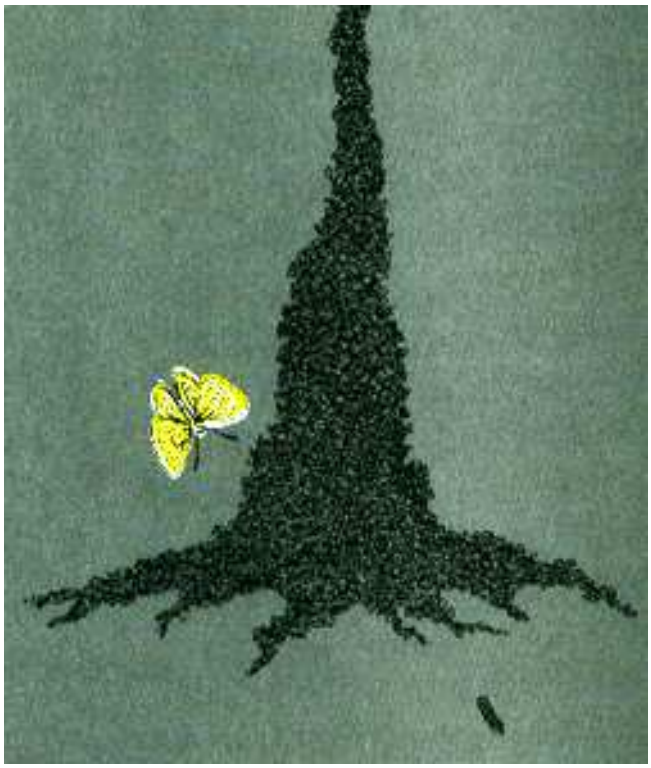


And in pain he continued down searching for those eyes which would let him whisper.

"I saw a butterfly – there can be more to life."

One – day –
finally –

He was down.



CHAPTER 7



Tired and sad, Stripe crawled off to the old place where Yellow and he had romped.

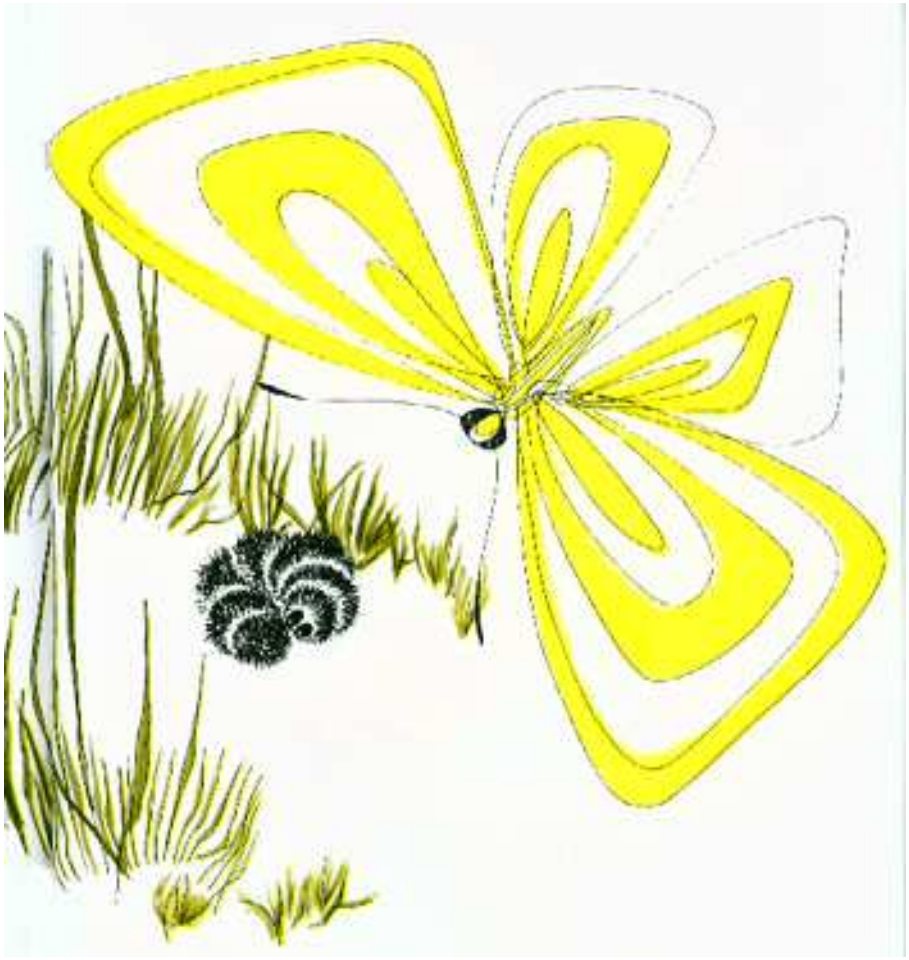
She was not there and he was too exhausted to go further.

He curled up and fell asleep.

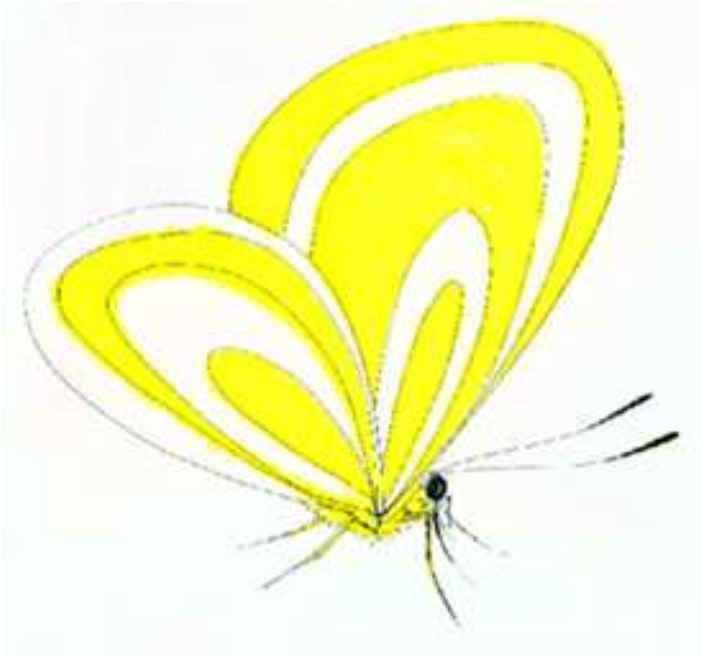


When he finally awoke he found the yellow creature fanning him with wings of light.

"Is this a dream?" he wondered.



But the dream creature acted awfully real. She stroked him with her feelers and most of all looked at him so lovingly that he began to trust that what he had said about becoming a butterfly might be true.



She walked a little distance away, then flew back. She repeated it as if he should follow.

So he did.



They came to a branch from which hung two torn sacks.

The creature kept on inserting her head, then her tail, into one of them.

Then she would fly to him and touch him.

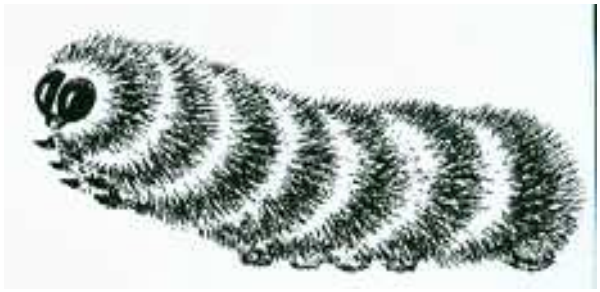




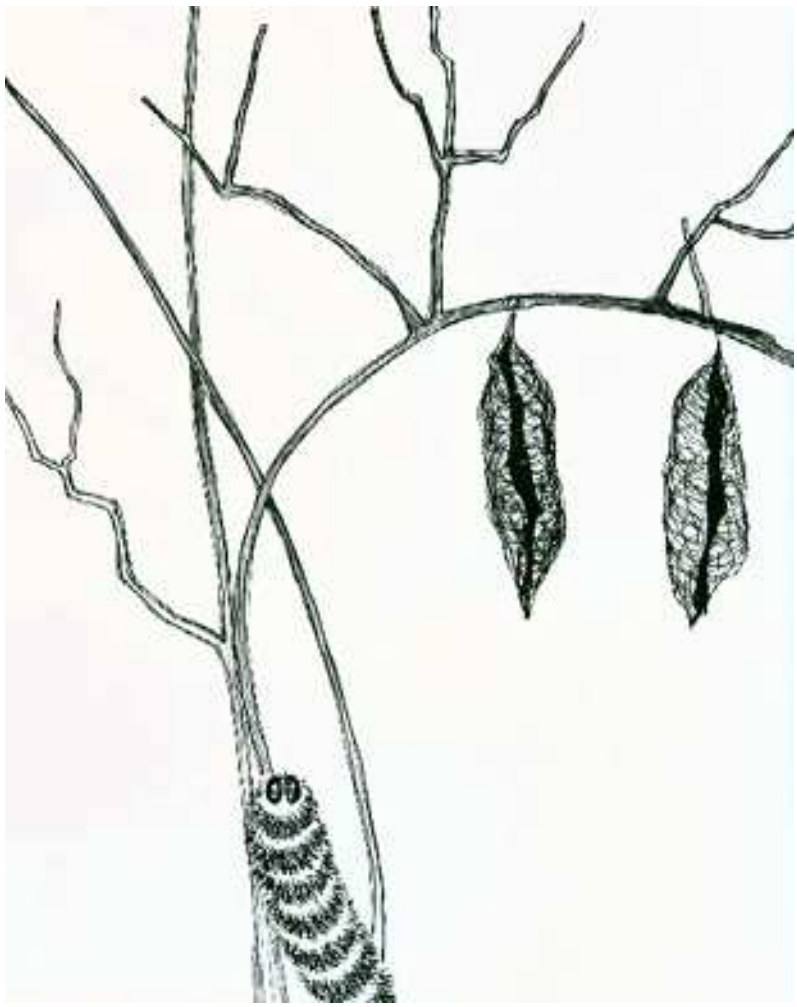
Her feelers quivered and Stripe knew she was speaking.

He couldn't make out words.

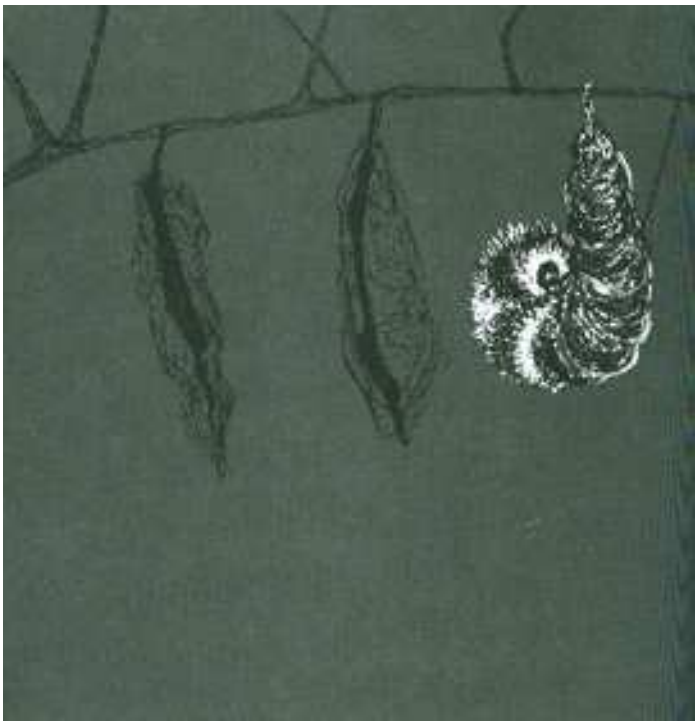
Then slowly he seemed to understand……



….Somehow he knew what to do.



Stripe climbed – again.



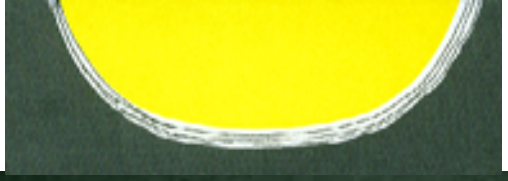


**It got darker and darker
and he was afraid.**

He felt he had to let go of

everything…







…..until one day……





THE END



..... or the beginning