

Maggy

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A butterfly but a little different

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It is always a party for all the inhabitants of this jungle when the sun sets. They sigh with relief because it is now getting a bit cooler.

The joy is short-lived, however, because a warm, moist blanket forms on the treetops, making life below oppressive. The inhabitants sigh again. Life seems to be all sighs in the vast, green heart of the Earth. But appearances are deceptive, because life is exciting and something happens every day. Screaming monkeys for example. It is about nothing because they loudly announce that there is a birthday party. Which is not so

special because every day there is a monkey's birthday in the largest monkey family in the world. And they dance until they drop or are eaten by animals that are hungry and/or irritated, dazed from eating fermented fruit. You can easily catch a drunk monkey with your eyes closed.

This is how the monkey population is maintained and how to prevent there being too many of these screaming creatures.

The oppressive humidity slowly dissolves and a wind blows from the sea. The temperature drops and the almost full moon slowly

rises above the dense foliage and with its blue light changes the forest into a fairy tale.

It seems so peaceful and friendly now but that is a mistake because the night means danger, because there has to be food.

Because it is much too hot for that during the day. If you are not careful you can easily be on the menu of a hungry hunter like the monkey. A lesson for every inhabitant because in the Amazon rainforest of South America with its 6.7 million square kilometers, finding food is of vital importance. A river with a thousand tributaries flows right through it.

And of course, the search for food does not always go well and mistakes are sometimes made. That such a mistake can be fatal is the risk of hunting. You learn from it.

But there are animals that make the same mistake over and over again. Fools.

As a predator, you obviously need excellent technique and a well-fitting camouflage. The snow-white owl misses both of them and looks down to see if there is anything tasty hopping around. A nut is clamped between its beak. This beautiful animal stands out because of its beauty and its cat-like eyes, each looking in a different direction.

And then, by accident, or simply because the owl is clumsy, the nut falls from its beak and lands with a loud thud on the ground and bounces in the bushes on the head of a mouse that was hiding there. With a bump on its head and red ears, it immediately runs away. Unfortunately, the creature chooses the wrong direction. The mouse stumbles over a branch and comes to a stop right in front of the mouth of a snake. They look into each other's eyes for a moment. And with a lightning-fast reaction, the snake's mouth slams shut. The reptile is angry, hisses a few curse words and then curls up. The mouse is missing a piece of

its tail but has crawled safely into a hole.

The commotion that is caused by this is noticed by the other animals, who prick up their ears and then spread a warning in their own language.

Watch out! There's a robber nearby. Isn't that funny? After all, the forest is almost entirely made up of robbers.

The message spreads like wildfire and even silences the hysterically screaming monkeys for a moment. But that doesn't last long, much to the annoyance of the panthers who are still taking

a nap. They have a terrible aversion to monkeys.

Before they know who or what it is, other troublemakers are there to disturb the peace. This time, it's not the monkeys.

The cross-eyed white owl turns its head in the direction from which the sound came and sees two large wild boars with nine small gray piglets behind them running wildly past, making the ground shake like an earthquake.

A little later a tenth piglet follows, which is strikingly and differently from the others pink with two black ears. The animal is behind her family because she keeps stopping to sniff something. Now she has

discovered something she cannot resist and opens her mouth wide . At the moment she wants to bite her enormous mother, or father, appears, who shouts angry cries. The piglet understands the text immediately and follows the enormous piglet in fright and disappointment and joins the group again a little later, which resumes its journey and thunders through the forest with destruction.

Then the peace returns for a moment and the monkeys cautiously make another attempt to announce the birthday. They know that somewhere a grumpy panther has climbed a tree and is lurking.

The darkness brings life to the place and every animal and insect does what it has to do.

To survive.

And that also applies to the apple-green caterpillar that has just escaped death, quickly crawls behind a leaf and waits until the piglet that stinks of mud has disappeared. Shivering with fear and only after a while does the caterpillar dare to go in search of food, because she is hungry. She does not have to search for long because she sits under a young green leaf and nibbles it completely bald. Then the caterpillar sits down in a

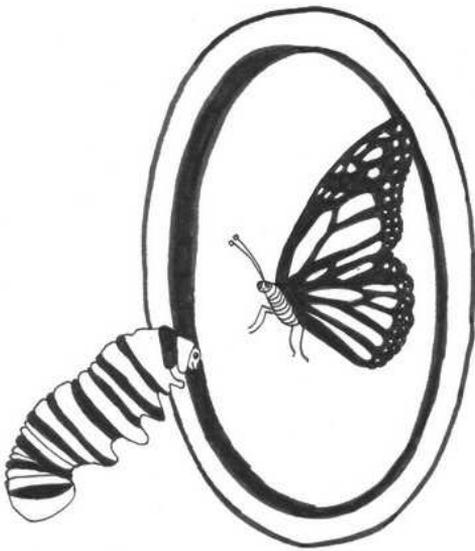
bush with thorns and falls into a very deep sleep.

After a few days the caterpillar is hidden in a woolly bag. This bag is called a cocoon, or pupa. It hangs on very fine threads between prickly leaves and swings gently back and forth.

After about ten days the caterpillar has had enough and wants to go outside but notices that the cocoon is quite strong. After much pressing and pushing it finally tears open and a moment later a whole new creature crawls out. With something on its back that looks like a backpack, two antennas on its head and four hairy legs under a long body.

Huh? Where did the caterpillar go?

Slowly the backpack opens and four moist colorless wings unfold. Two large and two small. The caterpillar has transformed into a butterfly. And after a few minutes the wings start to get color.



Huh? What do I see?

Instinctively, automatically the animal realizes that it must find a hiding place because it is a tasty morsel for predators. And yes, she doesn't have to wait long because there is already one. A bird with white feathers and yellow eyes, which are not quite even, sits on a branch above her and peers down hungrily.

“Ooh - Ooh,” cries the feathered hunter. Food! he thinks and prepares to attack. The helpless butterfly senses the danger approaching and trips to a leaning, moss-covered root. The butterfly is just in cover when with a whistling sound the

snow-white attacker rushes down ... to fall like a stone to the ground. Ouch! That must hurt, thinks the butterfly as she looks the unfortunate owl straight in the eye.

With his feathers in disarray, he shakes his head and flutters away clumsily. A few loose white feathers flutter to the ground.

The butterfly looks after the owl with a smile and thinks to itself: gosh, he's cross-eyed.

'Yoo-hoo, hey, down there, hello?' someone shouts. And:

'Yes, I'm up here!'

I am being called! Thinks the butterfly and looks up to see two butterflies sitting on a branch.

The butterfly tries to get on the same branch and succeeds with great difficulty. She sees an old gray-yellow butterfly and a little one with its eyes closed and snoring.

"Hello, welcome! Yes, I called you," says the gray old butterfly with a friendly smile. The little one sitting next to it wakes up and looks arrogantly the other way.

"What's your name?" asks the old man. And the butterfly looks up strangely and shakes its head questioningly.

'Okay, so you don't have a name yet, well then, I'll call you Maggy .' And without stopping she continued: 'you are a girl

butterfly because you have a nice drawing on your wings. Men are much prettier, but they don't live as long as you. Provided you look out of your eyes and you don't get eaten or get caught in a rain shower while flying.'

Wow! That's a lot of information and Maggy , that's a pretty cool name.

"May I ask you how old I can get if I survive everything?" she asks rudely.

The old butterfly answers with a laugh: 'Well, you can grow to twelve moons.'

The old butterfly introduces herself: 'My name is Trudy.'

"I am a wise butterfly with many flying hours in this world," she says with a hearty laugh. "And I have done my job." She looks disdainfully at the little finder sitting next to her, who looks disinterestedly the other way.

"Huh, what do you mean by work and what are moons?" Maggy asks curiously. She'll ask later what a world is.

'Well,' she says, 'you have to have many children because butterflies are not only beautiful but also very useful. Because if you live like us you must find a boyfriend and lay many eggs because nature, which is all you see around you, needs that