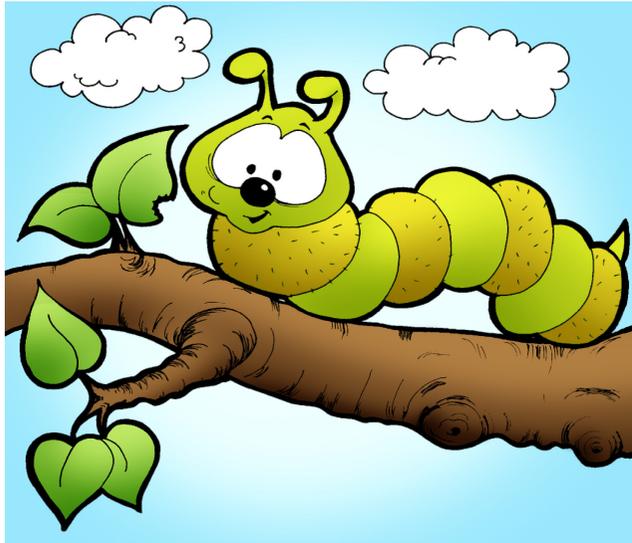


# The River and the Caterpillar



*“Oh, how I wish that I could  
fly  
Up there amongst the trees  
And like the bird, from place  
to place  
I’d glide along with ease.  
But, alas, I’m forced to travel  
In my earthbound, weighted  
way,*

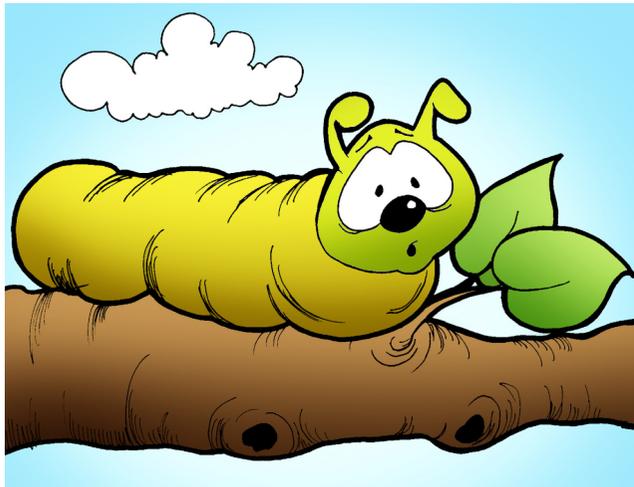


*Upon a branch that overhung  
A river’s sparkling flow,  
A caterpillar inched along,  
He seemed to go so slow.  
He lifted up his hairy neck  
To view a wondrous sight  
A bird that soared upon the  
breeze,  
So carefree in its flight.*

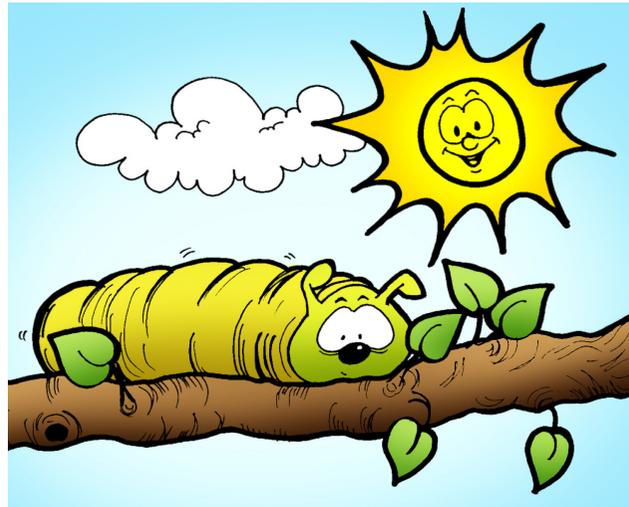


*Amid the jeers and laughter  
Of those who stop to say,  
‘Oh, look at him, a hairy  
worm,  
Who crawls upon his tum—  
A creature of the lowest  
form;  
I’m glad that I’m not one.’”*

And so, discouraged with his  
life,  
He stopped to gloom and  
pout.



When, suddenly, from inside of  
him,  
Some silky threads came out.  
“Oh my,” he sighed, “what is  
this now?  
More troubles I must bear?  
A sticky coat is covering me.



I can't get anywhere!”  
And so beyond his will or wish,  
He spun himself a room;  
And in the darkness, fastened  
tight,  
He slept in his cocoon.

The river sighed and thought,  
“Hairy worm, your hardship's a  
mere trifle  
For I know what you'll be-  
come,

I've often seen the cycle.  
But look at me, and there  
you'll see  
What sadness really means,  
For no children play or splash  
in me—  
Too shallow are my streams.”  
Just then from off the river's  
bend,  
A beaver took a swim  
With fresh-cut branches in his  
mouth  
Depositing them in.





*And so the branches stayed;  
At last upon the very top,  
The beaver put in place*



*The river swelled. "What is this  
mess?*

*You're blocking up my flow.*

*I'll wash it all away,*

*I must stay pure, you know."*

*But again, the beavers brought  
more limbs*

*And anchored them in place*

*Branches upon branches;*

*It was a mighty race.*

*The river flowed with all its force*

*To wash the sticks away,*

*But the beavers just would not  
give up,*

*The branch that held within its  
limbs*

*The caterpillar's case.*

*The river grumbled all the while,*

*"My flow's been interrupted,*

*And I'm swelling up so big and*

*fat,*

*I feel like I am glugged!"*

*From high above the sun smiled  
down*

*Upon the wooden dam,  
And warmed the sleeping  
caterpillar*

*Inside his silken strands.*

*As days went by, at last he woke*

*And saw a speck of light*

*And struggled through the  
opening*

*With every bit of might.*

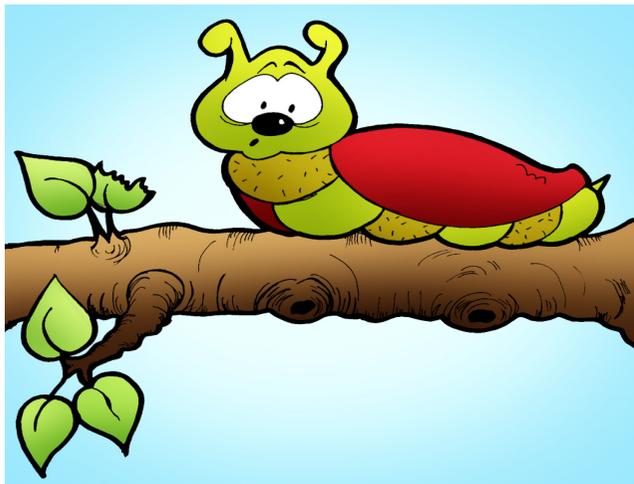
*Oh, such pain—the hole was small*

*He barely made it through—*

*But once outside he noticed  
something*

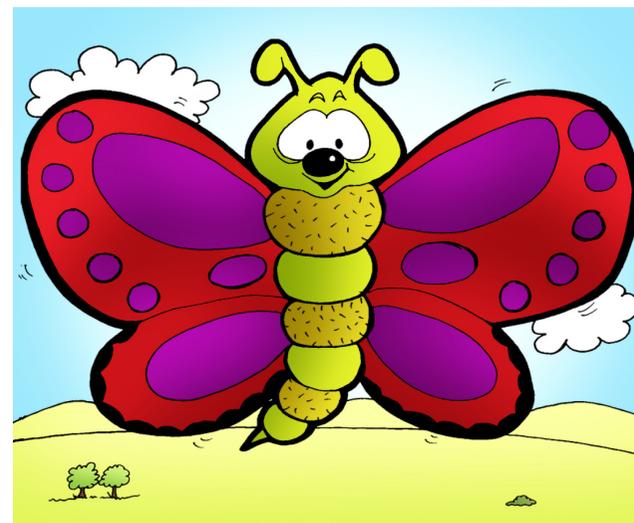
*Wonderful and new!*





*“What are these?” he gasped,  
As he waved them in the  
breeze,  
And suddenly took to flight,  
Reaching for the trees.  
The creatures gazed upon his  
wings,  
Which shone in brilliant color,*

*For there upon his sides,  
Two splendid forms  
unfolded,  
Something that he’d never  
seen before,  
That in the dark was molded.*



*“I’m flying,” he cried out for  
joy,  
And looked about in wonder.  
And there below, the river,  
Now a brimming, shining pool*

*In which the children laughed  
and played,*



*Said, “I have now learned  
too,  
That difficulties and problems,  
At which we do protest,  
May be God’s way of bringing  
us  
A life that’s truly blessed.”*