

The Ant and the Chrysalis



As told by Myrna Estes
Illustrated by Erin Vaganos



An ant befriends an unusual, silent creature hanging from a branch in the forest. When the creature vanishes, what will the ant discover in its place?

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Aesop's
**The Ant and the
Chrysalis**

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Starfall Education Foundation

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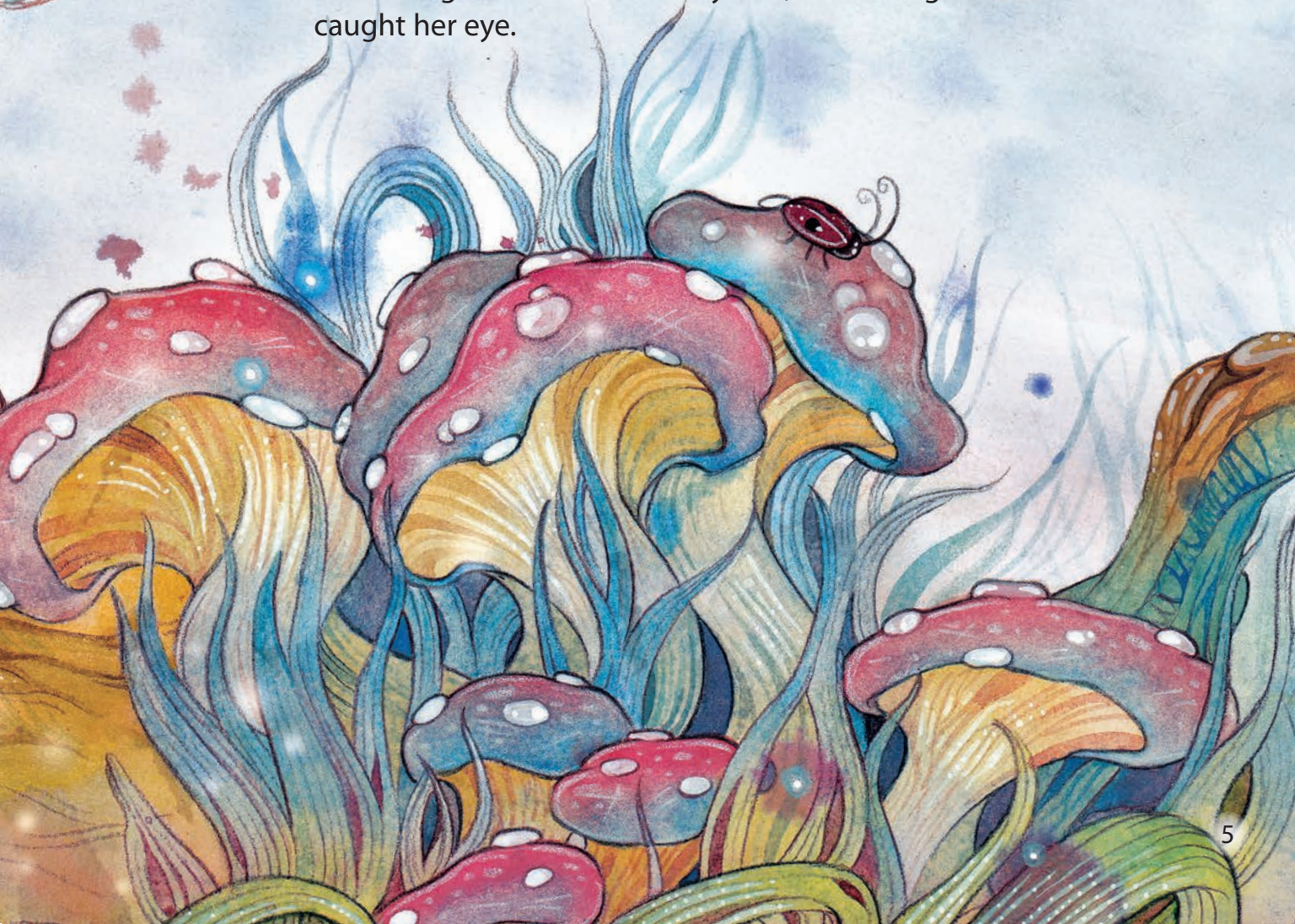
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One warm spring day, an ant strolled through the woods looking for food. She poked around under a log. She nibbled on a few leaves. She peered over rocks.

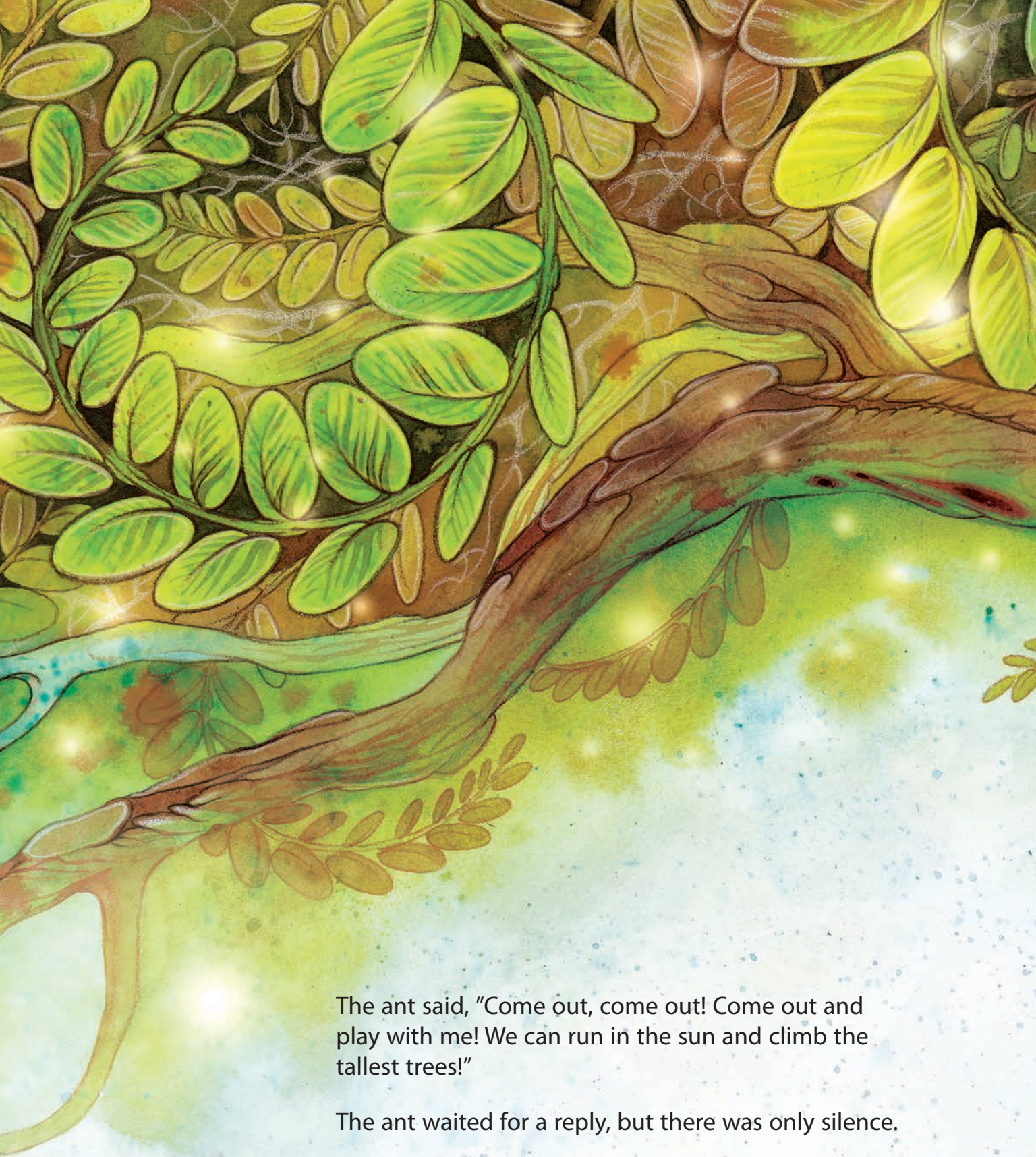
As she began to climb a nearby tree, something unusual caught her eye.





The *something* looked like a dull lumpy sack dangling from a branch. Suddenly, the sack wiggled. Astonished, the ant cried, "I think there is a creature trapped inside!"





The ant said, "Come out, come out! Come out and play with me! We can run in the sun and climb the tallest trees!"

The ant waited for a reply, but there was only silence.







The ant didn't know it, but she wasn't talking to a creature trapped inside of a sack, she was talking to a chrysalis.

The chrysalis heard the ant's words but could not answer. It wiggled and thought, "Please wait for me! I'm busy growing and changing."



The ant returned the next day. She was curious about this strange creature trapped in a sack who wiggled but never spoke.

“What are you?” she questioned.

“Aren’t you hungry?” she asked.

“Don’t you want to come out and play?” she inquired.
“If you did, we could play together.”

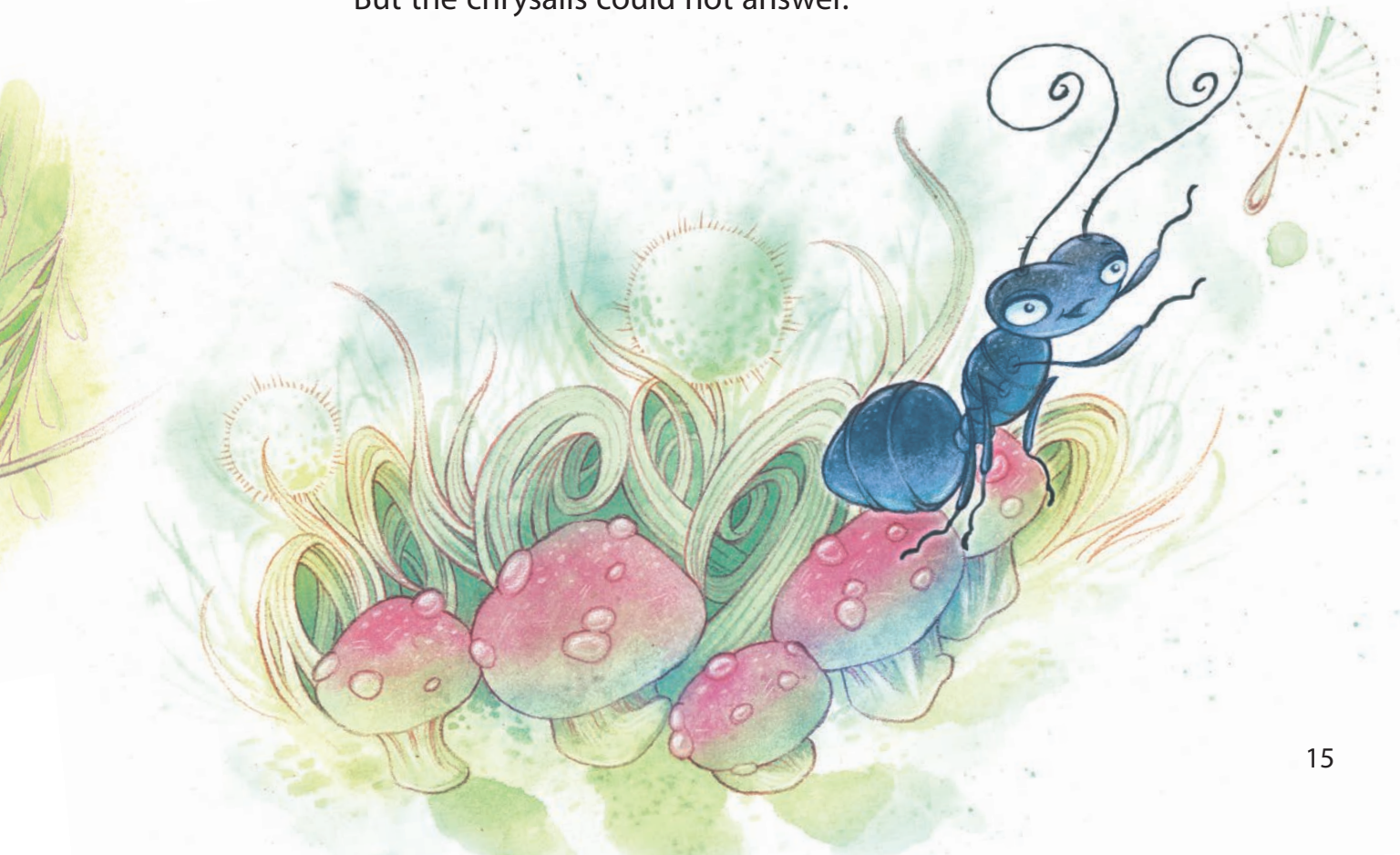
But alas, the chrysalis could not answer. It wiggled and thought to itself, “Please wait for me! I’m busy growing and changing.”

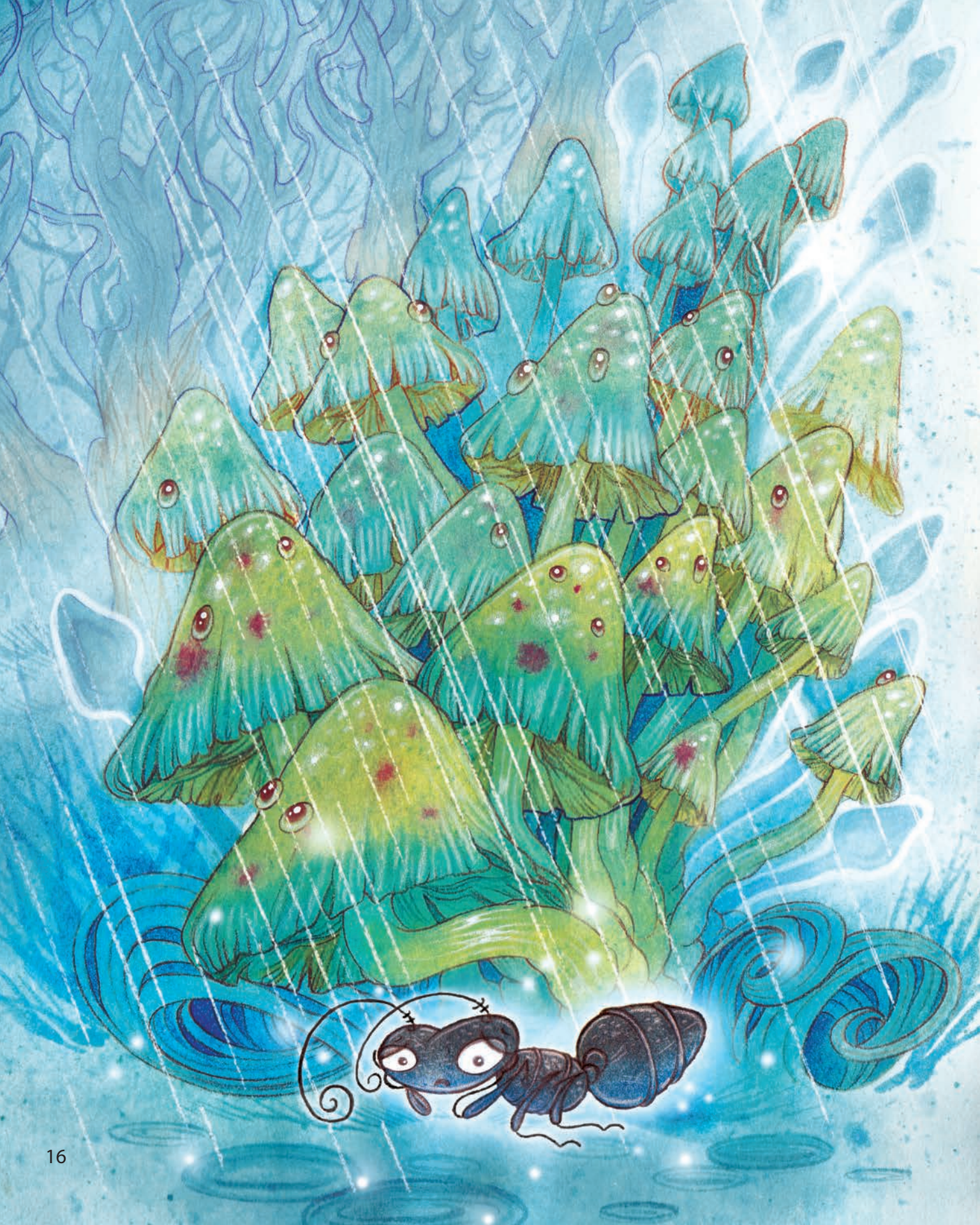




The ant visited the chrysalis faithfully, day after day. She would tell about her adventures, tempting the creature to join her.

But the chrysalis could not answer.





The ant got discouraged by the silence and didn't return for a few days. She gathered food and climbed trees like the other ants, but she felt lonely.

She missed having someone to talk to. She wondered if the creature was safe. She returned to the chrysalis to try again.





Upon her return, the ant found an empty sack hanging from the branch where the chrysalis had been!

She questioned the empty sack, "What did you have trapped inside?"

She asked, "How did it get out?"

She inquired, "Where, oh where, did it go?"







Just then a shadow fell across the ant. She looked up and saw a spectacular butterfly. All the colors of the rainbow shone through its paper-thin wings.

"Who are you?" asked the ant.

The butterfly replied, "I was once the creature hanging from that branch. I could not speak to you because I was growing and changing. I am finished at last. Now, faithful friend, let's go on an adventure together!"





With that, the ant climbed onto the butterfly's back and away they flew!



About the Author

Myrna Estes lives on a little farm in Lenox, Massachusetts, where she loves waking up at dawn, going to her barn, and feeding her wonderful old horse, John. After that her chores continue—she feeds the wild birds, rabbits, and any other critter that comes along! Myrna taught first grade for many years, always playing her guitar and singing with the kids. Her students' favorite song was "The Little White Duck." Now Myrna has four white ducks on her farm! "Music and animals are a very important part of my life," she says. "They make every day a happy one!"

About the Illustrator

Erin Vaganos grew up barefoot deep in the backwoods of northern Pennsylvania where she collected fossils and feathers and pressed leaves, netted dragonflies and lightning bugs, tiptoed over fallen trees across sparkling streams, and even kissed a bear! She now lives with her two best friends—her husband Anthony and dog Juno—in an apartment so crowded with books that she uses them as furniture.



