

GOOD
THINGS
HAPPEN



BY
ROBERT PRINS

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My earliest memory was when I hatched. I felt like I was going to explode from pressure and pain. I was squeezed in from all sides and my face was pressed hard on something solid. I gnawed at the hard surface with my teeth until, all of a sudden, my head popped out. I almost popped it straight back in except that it wouldn't fit any more. I was hanging upside down and I was miles above the ground. The rest of my body pushed me further and further out of the egg. I grabbed the closest thing I could find. It was a leaf directly above me, blowing in gale-force winds.

Life's not fair. I didn't ask to be dumped on the underside of a leaf miles above the ground in a storm. I hate heights and I get seasick. What a rotten thing to do to me. And where were my parents? They had obviously abandoned me at birth.

I arched my back and was turning to get my bearings when hunger pains hit me; it was the worst hunger possible. I worked my way to the edges of the leaf and instead of clambering my way to the top, I took a bite, and then another and another. I kept on eating. Who knew I could be so hungry? Why was it that no matter how much I ate, I still felt just as hungry? Would these hunger pains never go away?

I crawled to another leaf and kept eating. I ate more and more. I put on weight. Leaves began to bend under me. My beautiful slim figure had gone. I was getting fat. But I couldn't stop eating. I moved from leaf to leaf to satiate my hunger, but nothing worked. Despite almost bursting, I was still hungry.

Wasps tried to attack me. I hid under leaves so they couldn't get me. What an awful life this is. Orphaned at birth, no one to love me, afraid of heights, out in the open weather, always hungry, wasps and enemies out to get me, and only leaves to eat. And I am definitely well overweight – fat even.

I began to feel full, but I needed to eat more. Hunger pains turned into indigestion, but I was driven to eat.

Finally I couldn't eat any more, and I became tired and so sleepy. I had done nothing with my life. What a waste! I spun myself a sleeping-bag and hung from a branch to rest.

Something happened while I slept, because I woke feeling like I was back inside the egg and going to explode again.

I arched my back and the sleeping bag split. I crawled out and stretched.

It was a beautiful day. The sun shone. I wasn't hungry any more. I felt good. I longed for new heights. Then all at once I leaped lightly from the branch and I flew! This was a great day!

I had to conclude that good things happen to caterpillars.

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It's a tough life as an orphan, abandoned at birth, left all alone to fend for yourself while experiencing hunger pains like you have never experienced before. But even when life is awful, good things can happen.

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