

Butterfly Song Trail

by Sandra Rippetoe © 2020



Once upon a time in the Land of Nature’s Rhyme and Reason
a kind girl named Vlinder endured terrible teasing.

People poked and made fun – they wanted her to cry –
‘cause butterfly shaped tears dropped out of her eye.

No one understood why. Was she born that way?
Her parents were both gone. They weren’t there to say.

A long time, this repeated. Bullying . . . then, tears.
Vlinder decided to leave to escape all the jeers.

Once she got out of town, she heard a quiet song.
It was barely a whisper, “Maybe I don’t belong . . .”

She looked up and down for the tiny voice forlorn
and spotted a butterfly with a wing slightly torn.

“Hello sweetie!” said Vlinder, “What a surprise!
Your shape is the same as the tears in my eyes!”

“You do belong somewhere. I heard your song’s words.
Where are the others? I see only birds.”

“They’ve gone on ahead to look for host plants
which we need to live. Without them, we can’t . . .”

“With my tattered wing, I don’t fly as fast.
It’s harder to find plants than it was in the past.”

“I’m a red admiral. I need the weed, nettle.
No other will do. That’s where I must settle.”

“My good friend, Monarch – she must have milkweeds.
She searches all day to find what she needs.”

“Don’t forget swallowtail. She seeks a pawpaw tree
to continue her cycle . . . a full life, you see!”

“If I don’t find nettle, things will go wrong.
All I’ll leave behind is my little song.”

“I’ll help you find it!” Vlinder picked up her friend.
Tears filled up her eyes. She hoped wings could mend.

What happened next is shocking, I confess.
Who could have known?! No one, I guess . . . !

Where her tear hit the ground a nettle plant grew.
Another teardrop fell, and then there were two!

“I’m home at last!” the red admiral said.
“I can lay my eggs! My babies will be fed!”

And so it came to be, Vlinder's purpose discovered.
Butterflies found her – they perched and they hovered.

Vlinder cried many tears: happy, sad, and knowing.
Butterflies kept singing. Host plants kept growing.

Please try to imagine this beautiful place
with thousands of butterflies! They danced with such grace.

People heard about Vlinder and her magical tears.
And butterflies that sing?! Word spread far and near.

Now all come to see those winged rainbows sail
where her teardrops fell on Butterfly Song Trail.