



AIRPLANES IN THE GARDEN

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Calder / Quiel

By Joan Z. Calder
Illustrated by Cathy Quiel



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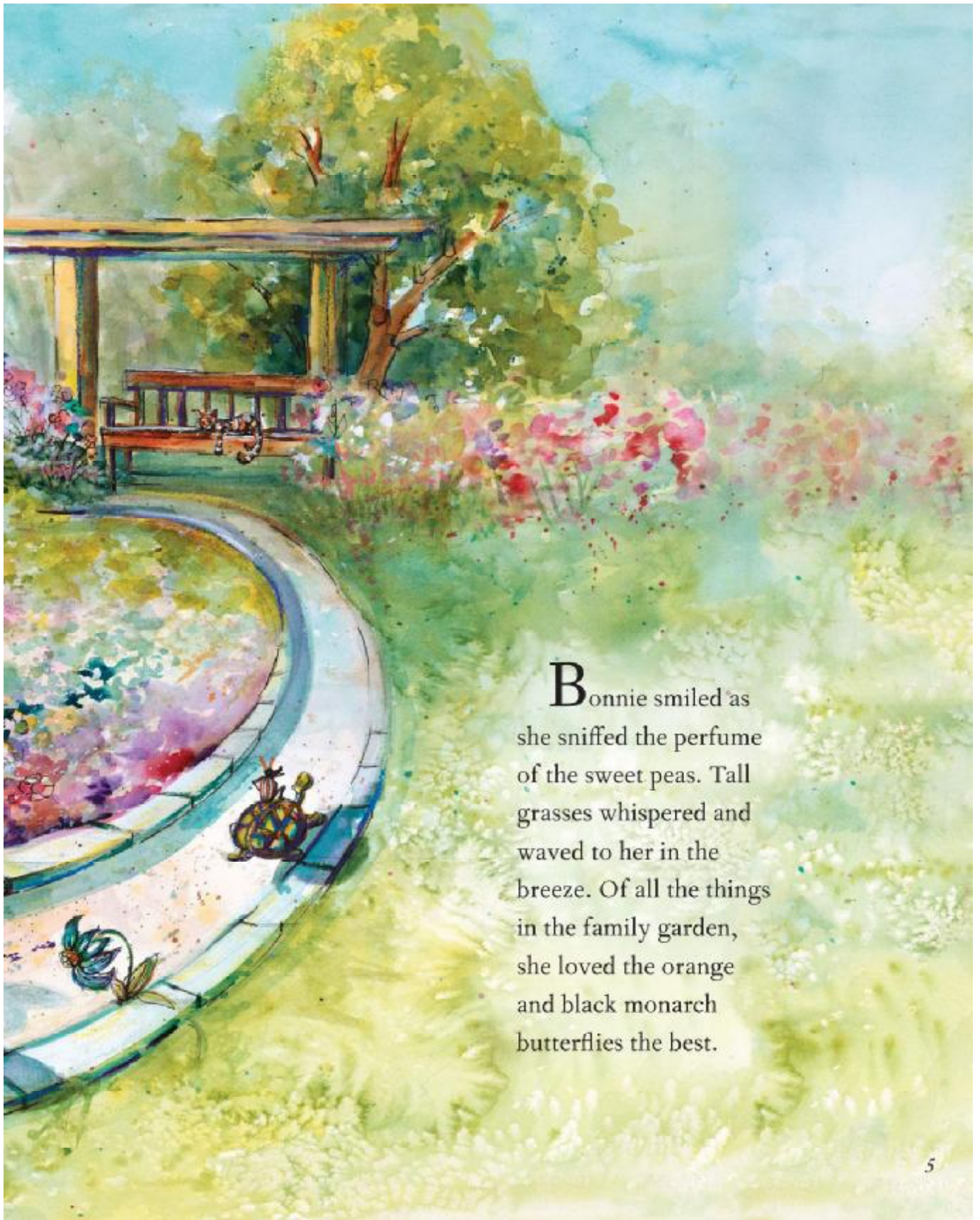


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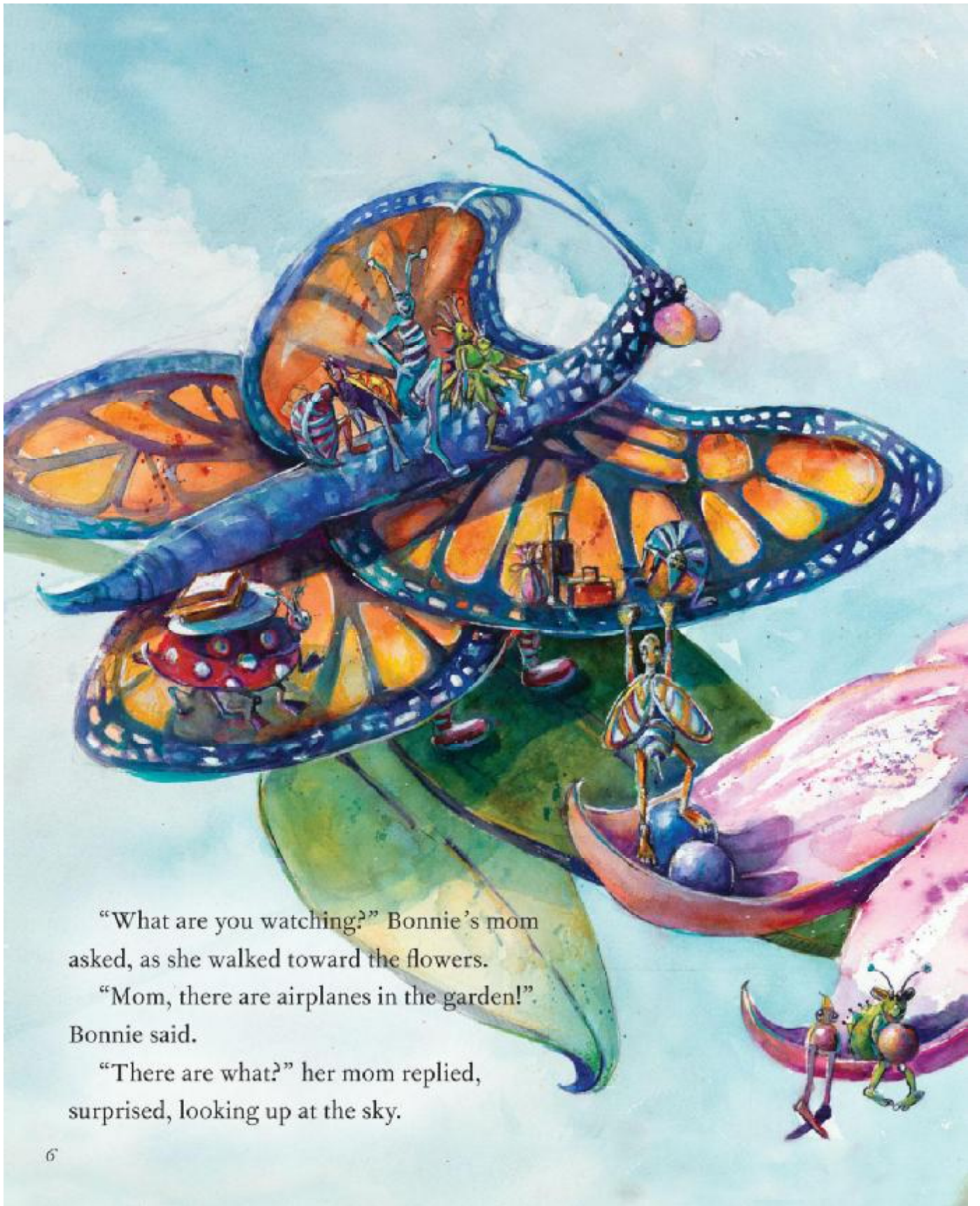


Santa Barbara, California





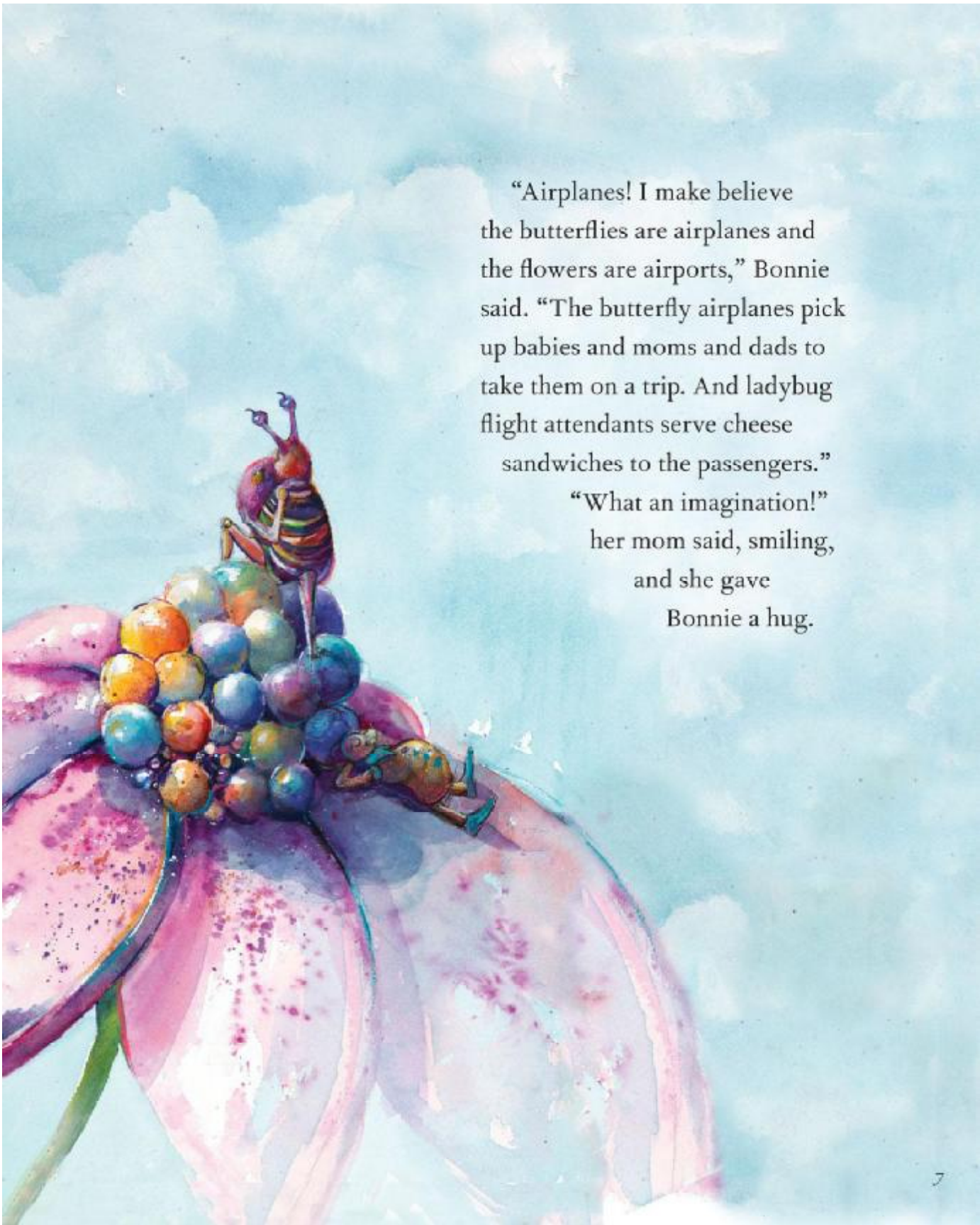
Bonnie smiled as she sniffed the perfume of the sweet peas. Tall grasses whispered and waved to her in the breeze. Of all the things in the family garden, she loved the orange and black monarch butterflies the best.



“What are you watching?” Bonnie’s mom asked, as she walked toward the flowers.

“Mom, there are airplanes in the garden!” Bonnie said.

“There are what?” her mom replied, surprised, looking up at the sky.



“Airplanes! I make believe
the butterflies are airplanes and
the flowers are airports,” Bonnie
said. “The butterfly airplanes pick
up babies and moms and dads to
take them on a trip. And ladybug
flight attendants serve cheese
sandwiches to the passengers.”

“What an imagination!”
her mom said, smiling,
and she gave
Bonnie a hug.



“Do you know butterflies land on blossoms to drink nectar with their long tongues?” Bonnie’s mom asked.

“Oh, that’s like when I use a straw to drink milk.” Bonnie said.

“Yes, and look at this, Bonnie,” her mom said, pointing to a white dot on the underside of a milkweed leaf. “A mama monarch laid this egg. It will take about thirty days for the egg to change into a butterfly. First the egg will hatch and grow into a white, black, and yellow striped caterpillar that looks like a little tiger with black wiggly tentacles on both ends.”

“How funny!” Bonnie giggled.



“Then the caterpillar will turn into a beautiful orange and black butterfly,” her mom explained. “The changing from an egg, to a caterpillar, to a butterfly is called complete metamorphosis. “Met a MORRR fa *what?*” tried Bonnie. Then she looked at the milkweed plant and said, “I’m going to call this ‘the-plant-that-grows-butterflies.’”



Each day, Bonnie checked to see if the egg had turned into a caterpillar yet. Four days later, she saw something move on the-plant-that-grows-butterflies.

Bonnie called, "Mom, Dad, look what I found!"

Bonnie's mom and dad hurried to find her in the garden, her nose almost touching the milkweed. A caterpillar, so small she could barely see it, wriggled on the leaf.



Then she found another. And another. Tiny caterpillars covered the-plant-that-grows-butterflies.

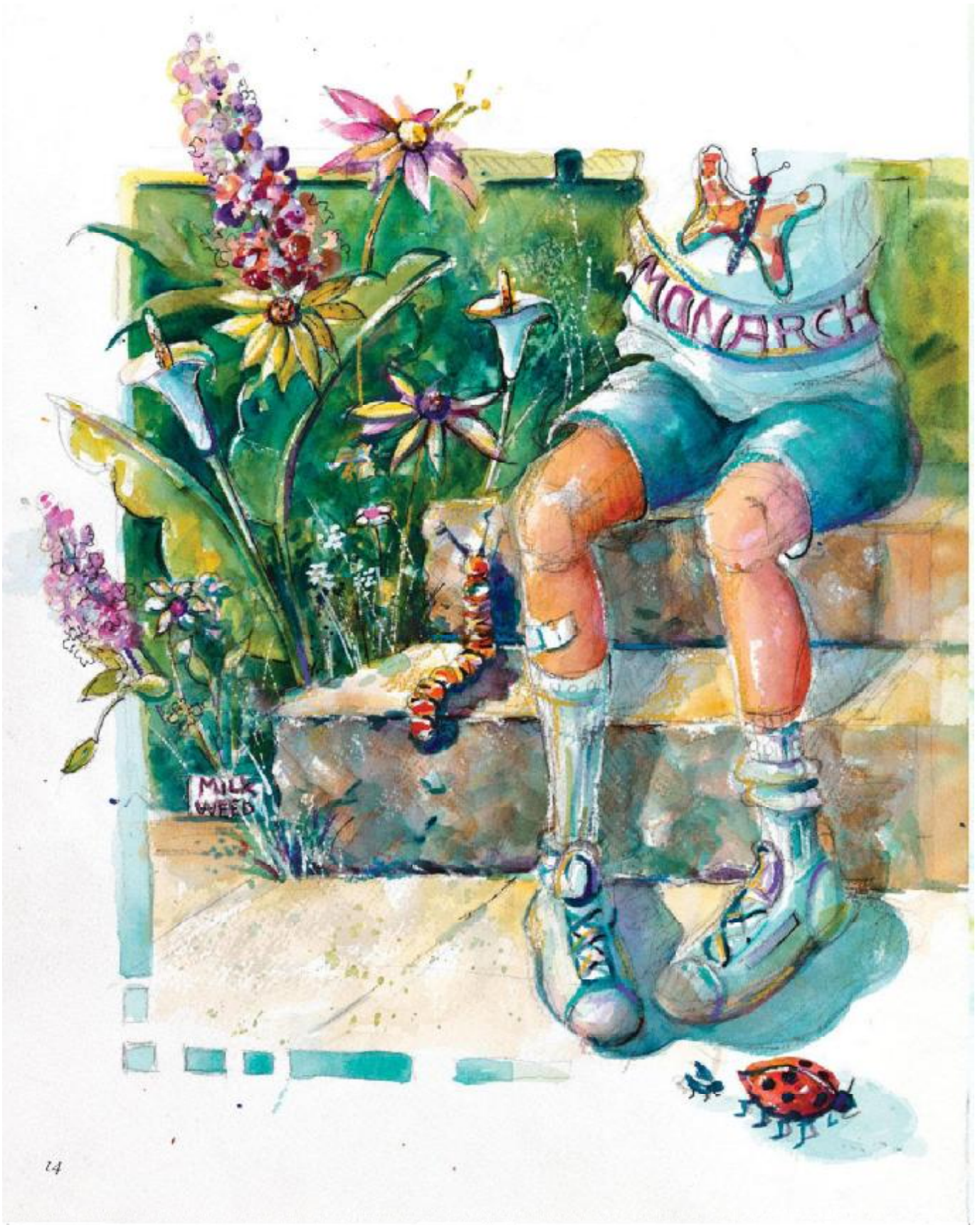
“Hmm,” Bonnie said excitedly, “I guess we will have lots of airplanes in our garden.”





For ten days Bonnie watched her two favorite caterpillars grow bigger and bigger. “You are Sergio,” she named the one with one short tentacle. “And you are Stanley,” she said, grinning at the larger caterpillar as he climbed up a leaf.

Sergio and Stanley mowed down the edges of milkweed leaves the way Bonnie ate corn on the cob, row after row. They ate so much that soon only a few ragged leaves were left on the plant.



MILK
WEED

The next morning when Bonnie went to check on Sergio and Stanley, she did not find them on the-plant-that-grows-butterflies. She did not find them near her favorite rock or under the sweet peas. She searched under the big yellow flowers. No Sergio. No Stanley.



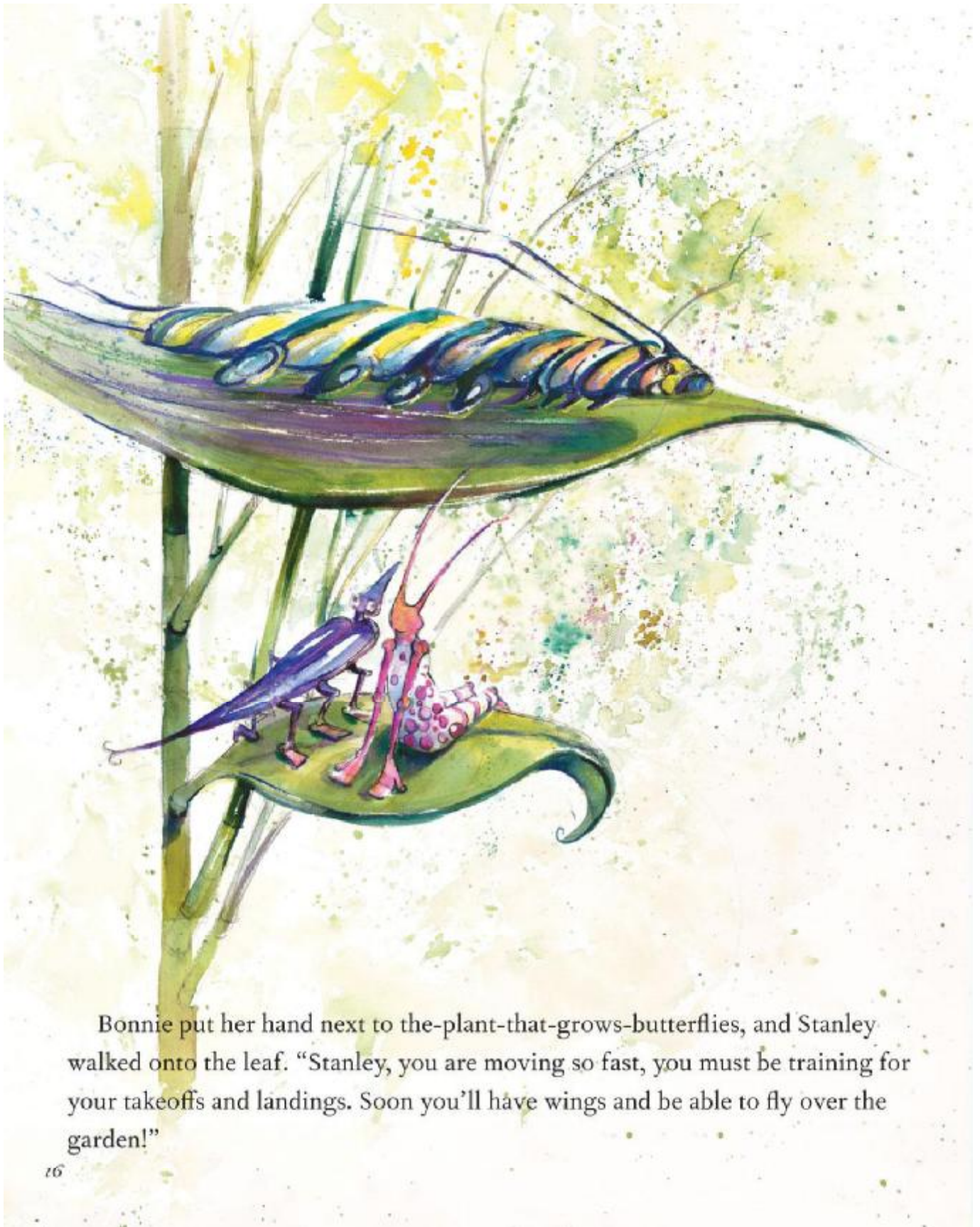
“Mom, Dad, Sergio and Stanley have disappeared,” she said sadly. “I can’t find them anywhere.”

All day, Bonnie wondered where Stanley and Sergio had gone. She sat near the mostly eaten milkweed and wiped a tear from her cheek. Then she looked down and saw a caterpillar making its way up the steps.



“Stanley, is that you? Please be careful! If you walk on the steps, you might get SMUUUSHED.” She put her hand beside him, and Stanley crawled up. Bonnie laughed when she felt Stanley’s six legs tickle her hand. “Thank you for being here. I love you.”





Bonnie put her hand next to the-plant-that-grows-butterflies, and Stanley walked onto the leaf. “Stanley, you are moving so fast, you must be training for your takeoffs and landings. Soon you’ll have wings and be able to fly over the garden!”



Seventeen days after finding the monarch eggs, Bonnie saw a caterpillar hanging upside-down from the flowerpot outside her bedroom window.

“Wow, this must be Stanley! He looks like the letter J,” Bonnie told her mom and dad. “He came back to be close to me.”



By the next day, Bonnie and her dad were looking at a new Stanley. "Stanley turned into a chrysalis," her dad said. He had turned from a J into a green bundle with dots of glistening gold. "He is inside the chrysalis rearranging himself to become a butterfly."

Is Sergio somewhere rearranging himself, too? Bonnie wondered.



Bonnie spent hours in front of the flowerpot, watching the bright green of the brand new chrysalis turn into a beautiful blue-green gem eight days later.



She could hardly wait. It was almost thirty days since her mom showed her the eggs on the milkweed. And now she could see the orange and black butterfly wings through the shell of the chrysalis. *How could a butterfly's wings be stuffed into such a small space*, Bonnie thought to herself.

