

Milkweed Butterflies

There once was a caterpillar
That chomped and chewed
He squirmed and crawled
And oh how he moved.

He chewed his way out
Of the egg where he grew
And turned right around
And ate the shell, too.

He chewed up a leaf
Of his milkweed home
Down to the midrib,
Then started to roam.

He found a place
Where he could rest.
He'd eaten so much
He split his vest.

Off came his skin.
He laid it aside,
Then kept on stuffing
More milkweed inside.

Milkweed for breakfast,
Milkweed for lunch,
Milkweed for supper
He chewed and he crunched.

Again he knew
As he chewed and he crunched
He'd burst his belly
As he moved and munched.

Tender, green milkweed
His tummy could take.
No other leaves
He'd tolerate.

The more he ate
The fatter he grew.
He'd split his skin
And get a brand new.

Finally one day
All tired and stuffed
He started to spit
Out sticky white fluff.

He stuck it to
A sturdy, strong place.
Then hooked into
The silky, white lace.

Then he hung in a "J"
From that silky spot
And rested and waited
And wondered a lot.

Then this wonderful,
Wiggly worm,
Went limp and quiet
And didn't squirm.

How funny his feelers!
How strange his head!
How limp and awful!
He almost looked dead!

Then out of the larva
A chrysalis came.
It wiggled and squirmed.
It wasn't the same.

It hooked a cremaster
Into the silk.
Then hung very quiet
From the pad it built.

It was green and dotted
With shiny gold.
A lovely sight
For all to behold!

Inside the shell
Things changed more too.
A monarch was formed
And grew and grew.

From green and gold
To orange and black
The chrysalis changed.
It started to crack.

Out came the monarch.
It hung and dried
Its lovely wings
And stretched them wide.

Then high in the sky
By breezes blown
He sailed above
His milkweed home.

A smell so sweet
Drew him back to the ground.
The milkweed was blooming.
Pink flowers he found.

He drank of the nectar.
Then to his delight
A monarch maiden
Came into his sight.

Then both flew up
Into the sky
And said in this patch
We'll live by and by.

We'll raise our family
With milkweed so sweet
Milkweed's the best
For monarchs to eat.

Loretta Kuse