

Caterpillars in love.

by Khaver Siddiqi

Outside it was raining.

The pitter-patter of raindrops created an orchestra of monotonous sounds, all the same yet uniquely different. Rain is of course God's way of telling us that details matter. And Mrs Caterpillar believed that details mattered a lot.

Her small dining room was all decked out and decorated. She looked out the window, the rain had washed the dirt away from the leaves of her Tree Home. And inside she was fast busy with setting up lunch. She checked on the phytophagous stew, her spiracles told her that it was almost done. A bit more on the stove would do the trick.

There was a knock at the door. Thunder and lightening could not make her tremble or jerk one bit, but this knock on the door made her jump off her prolegs. "Wh... Who is it?" her tiny nasal pitched voiced trembled.

"It is I!" the voice boomed like the thunder, through the door.

"I who?" Mrs Caterpillar slithered closer to the door, peeping through the peephole with her stemma. Upon visual inspection, she discovered that it was Mr Earthworm standing outside in the rain.

"Oh Mr Earthworm," Mrs Caterpillar gasped, opening the fasts on her door, "come inside, you'll catch a cold!"

As the door opened, the much darker and slicker oligochaeta slithered into the lepidoptera home. "I see you have such a nice place here, Mrs Caterpillar." Though he said it, it was quite an ironic statement, considering that earthworms don't have organs like eyes

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that interpret the visual spectrum of things, like Mrs Caterpillar's Kitchen.

Mrs Caterpillar's cheeks blushed a dark shade of green upon hearing that compliment. "I'm just a simple housewife, I mean..."

Mr Earthworm cut off Mrs Caterpillar by wrapping his mucus covered body around her. "Hush my dear," he cooed, "such humility is beyond a creature of your vicious beauty."

Mrs Caterpillar sighed, feeling cold sticky mucus around her thorax and abdomen.

"What's the meaning of this?!" the sharp voice shouted over the pitter patter of the rain. There, by the doorway of the living room stood Mr Caterpillar in his pajamas. His head was contorted with rage.

The earthworm relaxed his body grip around Mrs Caterpillar, whose prolegs almost gave away with the shock and horror of seeing her husband at the doorway. "Oh honey! Its not what it looks like!"

Mr Caterpillar jerked his head and thorax back, and then whipped it forward in a whiplash maneuver, shoving Mrs Caterpillar onto her stove, her phytophagous stew splashing all over her kitchen floor — completely wasted.

"I'm not talking to you, you slut!" Mr Caterpillar roared, the rage caused all of his 4000 muscles to flex, creating a ripple like effect all over his body.

"Kinky," muttered Mr Earthworm.

Three of Mr Caterpillar's stemmata looked at Mr Earthworm, a stare that would put holes through walls. "What did you say, you shit-dwelling, fertilizer-eating, scum?"

Mr Earthworm grinned a toothless, mouthless grin. "No wonder your wife loved being with me. You Lepidoptera are all alike. Cold, calculative, mechanical. All your wife wanted was love and trust me," as the earthworm spoke it curved and rolled into a spiral, its other end started to throb and pullulate, "I gave her lots... and lots!" He then bellowed a vicious laugh and outside the thunder crackled. It was a moment straight from one of those Indian soaps. Multiple close ups, cheesy orchestra and all. Worst of all, Mr Earthworm could not change the channel, because this ridiculous and pathetic soap was what his life had become.

The earthworm laughed and laughed — and then he started to choke on his own froth of blood. Behind him Mrs Caterpillar had plunged a large kitchen knife straight through its back. She twisted and jerked the knife, screaming, "I hate you!" Instantly, Mr Caterpillar also charged the earthworm. Both caterpillars ravaged the hurt and slashed earthworm. Between the two caterpillar bodies, they had over eight thousand muscles — muscles that if converted to human muscle could bend and contort steel.

They thrashed around the kitchen, obliterating the table, pans, pots, spoons, knives, forks, plates, prongs, flying everywhere — an orgy of stainless steel plethora.

And then finally, it was over. The lifeless corpse of the earthworm lay in the middle of the desolate kitchen.

"We'll get a new one," assured Mr Caterpillar.

Mrs Caterpillar tried desperately to hold the tears back — but she could not. “Oh honey,” she sobbed and heaved, “If it wasn't for me this would not have happened.”

Outside the sun broke through the rain clouds, and as the sunlight spilled in through the kitchen window, there was earthworm blood and phytophagous stew everywhere.

Mr Caterpillar smiled, “Its okay now... it's over.”

And as the couple consoled one another, unbeknownst to them, the earthworm's body started to undulate. From where the wounds lay gaping open, new skin and mucus started to form. Nerves started to develop, layers of membrane re-attached themselves. A faceless face formed on the end where there was stump on the body and Mr Eathworm was reborn.

“You shits!” the voice of the earthworm screeched like a newborn child. Both caterpillars were shocked, they grabbed each other.

“Now I'm going to make the both of you suffer!”

The earthworm grabbed a kitchen knife and lunged towards the caterpillar couple — a shadow blocked the light in the kitchen and instantly the door smashed open as a giant beak pierced through, gaped open and swallowed the earthworm whole. A rush of air from wings caused a gale force wind to push both the caterpillars through from the kitchen, to the living room.

Both the caterpillars stood up in their living room staring at where their kitchen door used to be, watching the woodpecker as it flew away into the horizon and disappeared.

Mrs Caterpillar looked at her husband, who looked at her. “Let me help you clean up this mess.”

For the first time in a very long time, Mrs Caterpillar smiled at her husband.

Fin.

