

METAMORPHOSIS

Animated short by

Lisa Amistad-Lauengco

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

POV from corner of a green blurry image. Slowly the image starts to clear, it's a garden and it's in full bloom; flowers, bees, and butterflies clearly indicates - spring.

A lemon tree brimming with yellow fruit stands majestic above everything else, including a decent single floor bungalow.

CHIRPING sound echoes around the quaint place. We follow the preppy CHIRP, pass the roses, pass the ornamental shrubs, then towards the lemon tree, closer then higher until, alas.

It's a round robin, busy building a nest, weaving beak-picked small branches and dried grass into its masterpiece.

From the cottage we hear a beautiful HUM of the nursery rhyme Rock a Bye Baby, it's a woman's voice and it's angelic.

EXT. GARDEN / INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

From the lemon tree, we move closer to the cottage's wide and open window.

The HUM of Rock a Bye Baby continuous to serenade the place.

Finally, we see the face of ALICE, 35, she is of mixed race. Her curly hair held in place by a head band, her hazel eyes radiates a combination of green and brown, light freckles dot her face, and she is wearing a white sun dress.

She looks peaceful, knitting something in pink.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

We maintain the same angle peering at Alice from the window.

Alice sits in a rocking chair, her belly fully round.

A pink rolled rayon yarn sits in a clear plastic container to her left.

To her right is a tiny circular table, on top of which stands a tea pot, a teacup, and a small chocolate cake within a tiny saucer.

She grabs the teacup, takes a sip then looks out the window.

She takes in the view and smiles. She closes her eyes and inhales deep.

She opens her eyes once more, then pauses for a beat.

At first, we think she's starring directly at us. Her eyes shrink into two tiny slits.

She puts the pink knitted cloth and the knitting needle on top of the round plastic container to her left. Supporting her heavy weight with the arm chair, she stands up.

Alice takes easy steps towards -- us.

EXT. GARDEN / INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

We slowly back up as Alice approach the window, backing up as far away as possible until we're hidden behind an ornamental bush.

CU on Alice.

Alice stops. Eyes still fixated at us.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Our view slightly adjusts to Alice's focus. The blurry ornamental plant gets clearer. Slowly --

Gorging at the lush leaves, we see a beautiful round and robust green caterpillar. It's covered in white, black, and yellow specks. A cute button like antennae points outwards, away from its round head.

EXT. GARDEN / INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Our view adjusts again. The insect gets blurry --

CU ON ALICE.

She is smiling. Marveling at this wonder of nature.

Pleased with the view, Alice walks back to her rocking chair.

INT. LIVING ROOM / EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Alice pulls the rocking chair closer to the window, then she grabs the knitting kit, then she drags the table.

Alice finally sits down. She watches closely at the round caterpillar.

She gives one more warm smile then picks up her knitting kit. She resumes knitting, HUMMING the tune of Rock a Bye Baby while she does.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The image of Alice sitting, knitting, looking at the caterpillar extends to days. The only way we can tell is from the color of the blouse she's wearing and the size of the item she's knitting.

As time move forward --

Alice's blouse turns to moss green. Knit increases in size.

Her blouse turns to sky blue. Knit grows more.

Her blouse turns to beige. She holds the pink knit up, it's a baby cover.

EXT. GARDEN / INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sun dips in the horizon. The sky turn bloody orange.

Alice gets up from her seat and walks to the window. She takes one hard look at the caterpillar, still eating as usual.

She smiles then closes the window.

INT. LIVING ROOM / INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The house is silent and dim. We wait in the corner of the living room, right where Alice usually sits. Her rocking chair still, waiting, right in front of us.

We hear keys JIGGLING in the kitchen door.

POV. The door slides open. It's -- Alice.

She immediately sets her grocery bag on the kitchen counter then skips towards us.

INT. LIVING ROOM / EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Alice slides the window panel sideways. She immediately checks on the caterpillar. Still there.

We hear RUSTLING sound from the kitchen. We turn to that. Alice keeps her focus on the caterpillar.

INT. LIVING ROOM / INT. KITCHEN - DAY

POV. We see someone behind the kitchen counter. The head hidden by the overhead cabinet. It looks like a man's figure.

We turn our attention back to the garden.

INT. LIVING ROOM / EXT. GARDEN - DAY

The tiny insect has doubled in size and the leaves of the plant, well, it's half gone.

EXT. GARDEN / INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Alice wears a red top. She has a basket of clean clothes next to her.

She folds the garments one by one as she watches the caterpillar eat. The caterpillar's skin has turned into a darker hue almost looking like the branch itself. The ornamental plant is about stripped-naked down to the branches.

INT. LIVING ROOM / INT. KITCHEN - DAY

POV by the window. We can see Alice making lunch in the kitchen. It's dim outside.

We hear RAIN fall heavy in the garden.

Alice panic's and hurries towards the window.

INT. LIVING ROOM / EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Alice tries hard to find the insect from the branches of the ornamental plant.

She panics, is it gone?

Suddenly a movement.

There it is, gorging on a few more leaves left in one branch.

Alice SIGHS.

INT. LIVING ROOM / EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Tea at hand and prepping to continue with her knitting, Alice peaks at the caterpillar first. It's in a stand still.

This scares her.

She sets her tea down and leans forward, sticking her face out the window and observes. We observe as well.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

The caterpillar assumes a hanging position.

Suddenly we see a hand extend outwards from underneath us, we follow it. It's Alice's hand, trying to catch the caterpillar.

We change our angle and from there we realize, she is simply too far from the caterpillars position.

Instead of falling though, the caterpillar's body curls upwards, and while it does, a hard dirty-white shell develops from its head all the way to its feet that's still attached to the branch. This takes a good few seconds, then as if the world stopped --

We are left with a chrysalis hanging silently in the air.

CU on Alice.

She is wide eyed. Lips curled to an O shape.

INT. LIVING ROOM / EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Alice sits in her rocking chair, knitting something yellow this time. She takes quick glances at the hanging chrysalis outside.

It moves. She stops.

She drops everything, stands up and leans forward. She tries hard not to blink.

CU ON MORPHING CHRYSALIS

The chrysalis cracks open and we see something yellow inside it.

The yellow thing champions it's way out of the chrysalis, pushing the bottom part out of the way.

The chrysalis erupts and a weird looking insect with a crinkly wing and an abnormally large abdomen comes to view.

CU ON ALICE

She cringes. One of her brows rise up to her forehead.

CU ON INSECT

The insect takes a few steps and dangles itself from the branch making sure its wings are in appropriate opposite directions, then it starts to pump.

Like a worm it moves fluid out of its abdomen and into its wings. Pump, pump, pump.

CU ON ALICE

Alice's eyes grow wide, then wider, then it looks like it's about to pop out of its socket. But then she stops. Then --

She smiles.

CU ON BUTTERFLY.

What stands in front of us is a beautiful yellow butterfly with black and white specks scattered all over its wings.

The butterfly steps a few distance from its old shell and starts to flap its wings, once, twice, then multiple times.

Right then we hear a WHOOSH. Then --

A robin lands on the branch.

CU ON ALICE

Her eyes wide open.

CU ON THE ROBIN AND THE BUTTERFLY

The robin observes the butterfly, bobbing its head sideways, backwards, and forward, closely watching the recently metamorphosed insect.

CU ON ALICE

She looks like she is about to scream.

She extends her hands outward, trying to stop the --

The robin snatches the butterfly with its beak then flies away.

INT. LIVING ROOM / EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Alice braces on the window using both of her hands for support.

She leans forward then starts looking around for the predator.

She can't find it.

Then, we hear a wild CHIRPING sound coming from the lemon tree.

CU ON ALICE

Her head snaps toward the sound.

CU ON LEMON TREE

The robin is high up in the lemon tree, then -

CU ON ROBIN'S NEST

Two chick heads bob up and down. The CHIRPING CRY resonates in the garden like a shrill voice asking for help.

One of the chicks grab the butterfly from its mother's mouth and swallows it in one gulp.

CU ON ALICE

Her face more shocked than earlier.

Then we hear a LOUD RUSHING SOUND, like water breaking.

Then we hear a man SCREAM.

INT. LIVING ROOM / INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Alice turns her head towards the kitchen.

LARRY, her husband, 37, White, curly ginger hair, stands by the kitchen entryway. He is shocked, staring at something below Alice's legs.

Alice looks down only to see a pool of murky liquid covering the floor she stands on. Her water just broke.

Then we hear a LOUD THUD.

Immediately Alice raises her head only to find her husband lying on the floor, unconscious.

CU ON ALICE

She sighs and rolls her eyes.

THE END.