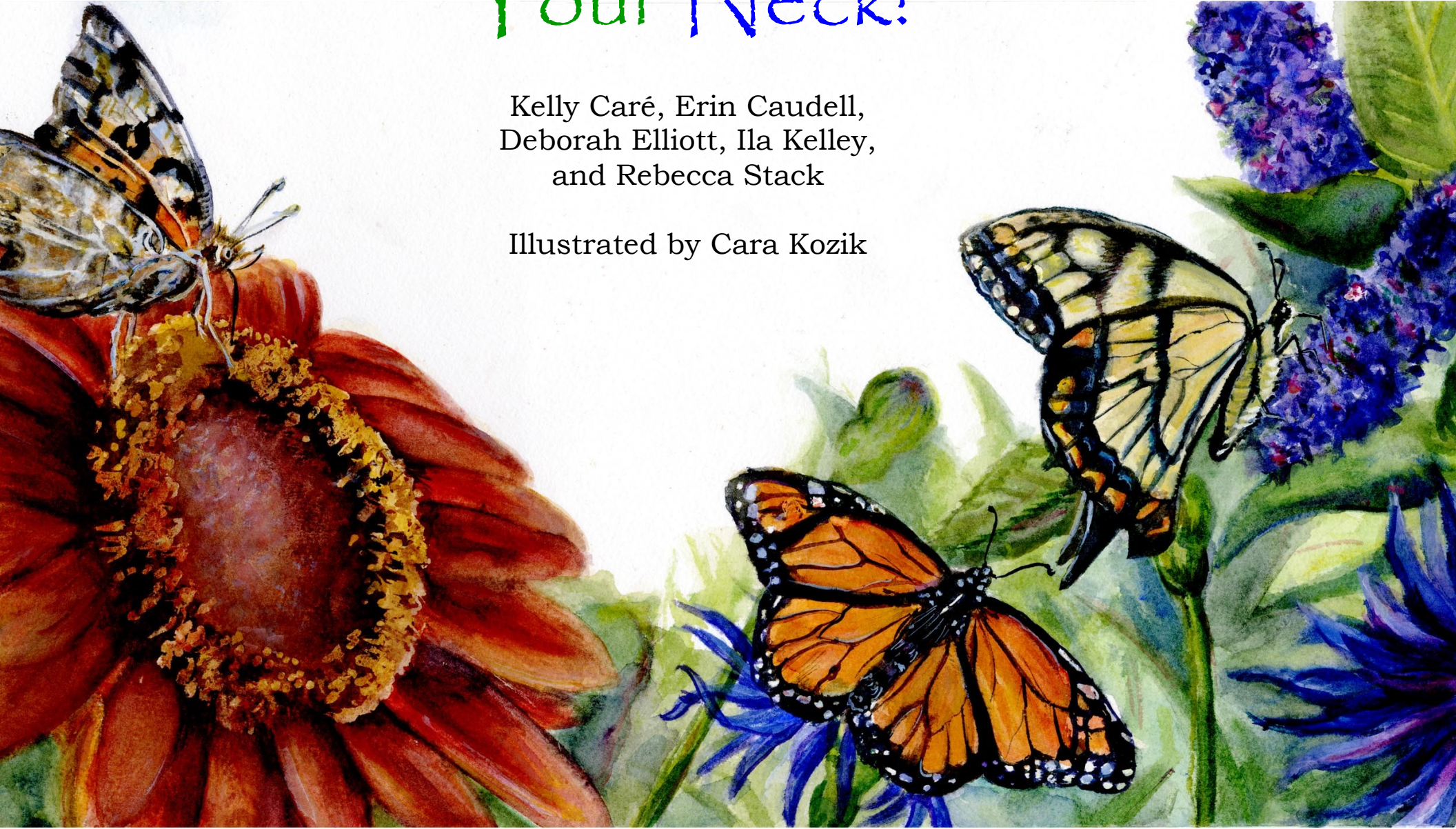


Hugs Around Your Neck!

Kelly Caré, Erin Caudell,
Deborah Elliott, Ila Kelley,
and Rebecca Stack

Illustrated by Cara Kozik



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APPLEWOOD

THE CHARLES STEWART MOTT ESTATE

Hugs Around Your Neck!

Written by Kelly Caré, Erin Caudell,
Deborah Elliott, Ila Kelley,
and Rebecca Stack

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In loving memory of Sarah Elizabeth Warner

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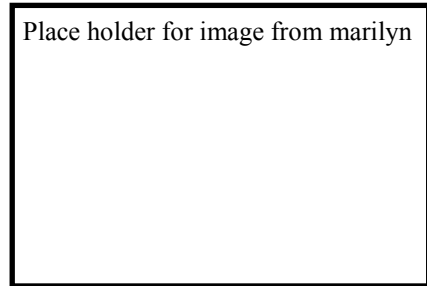
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This publication supports the Ruth Mott Foundation's mission and the values and conduct of its founder Ruth Rawlings Mott that inspire us to be welcoming, inclusive, egalitarian, treat everyone with respect and dignity, act with kindness and good humor, promote civic hope and pride, encourage personal responsibility, practice prevention, and maintain the "long view."

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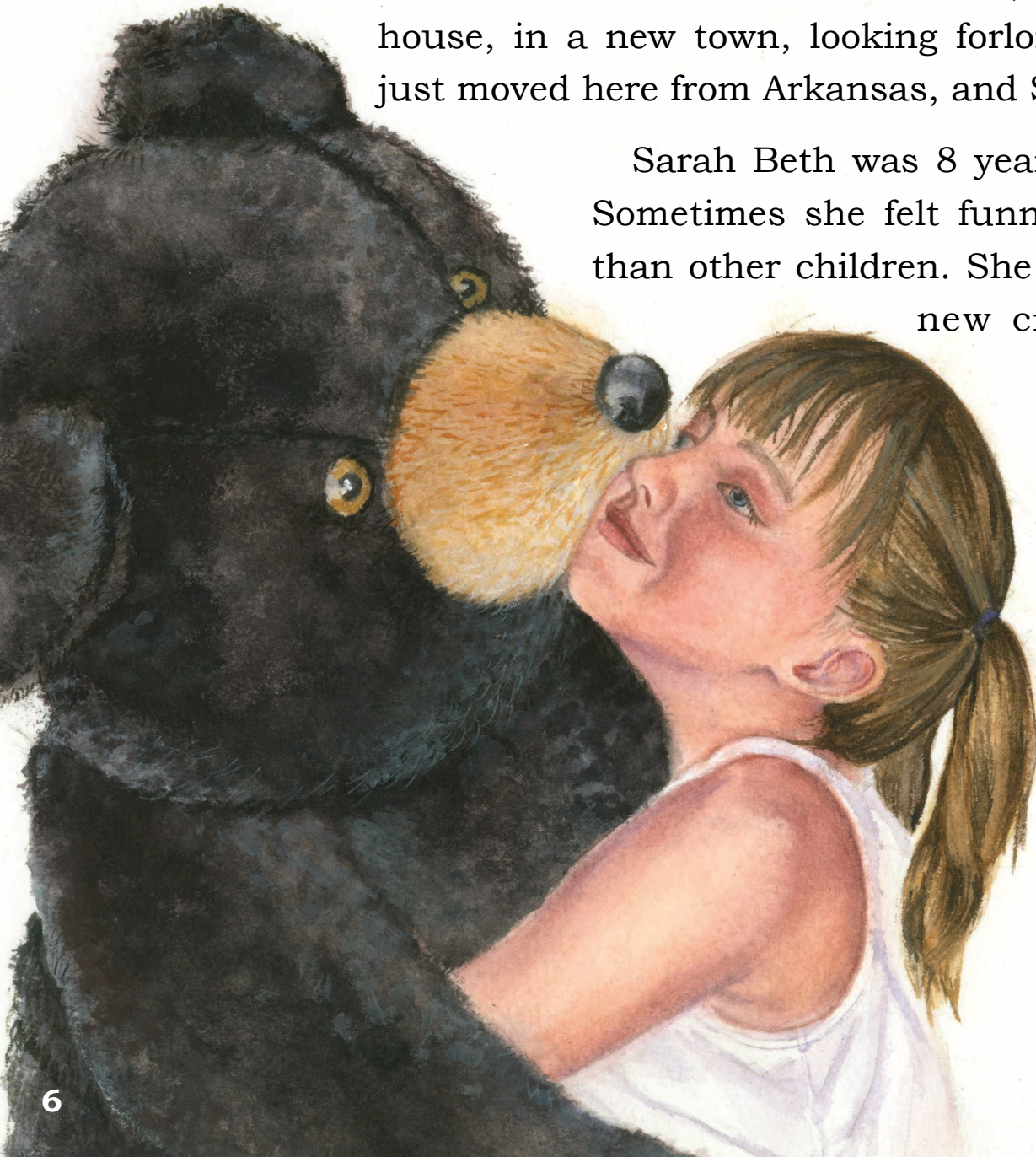


Sarah Elizabeth Warner at age 7 with her father.

Sarah Beth and her best friend, China Bear, sat inside their new house, in a new town, looking forlornly out the window. They had just moved here from Arkansas, and Sarah Beth had not met anyone.

Sarah Beth was 8 years old and very tall for her age. Sometimes she felt funny that she was so much taller than other children. She wondered what the kids in this new city would be like and if they would tease her.

At least she could always count on China Bear to be her friend, but right now China Bear needed to be cheered up.





“Do not be sad, China Bear. It will be okay. I promise. Here are hugs around your neck to make you feel better,” Sarah Beth said as she hugged her furry friend.

“I miss our old house, too, but look—the sun is shining. I feel like exploring. Let’s go outside! My toes are just itching to feel the nice, green grass out there!”



“I know! Let’s make the yard into a magical garden! I will get my ribbons and some paint. Come on, you can help!” she told China Bear as she excitedly gathered her things.

Sarah Beth and China Bear looked around their new backyard. There was a fence with a gate and a garden that someone had started. It had not been cared for in a long time. “I know just what this yard needs!” Sarah Beth declared.

“First, we need to pull these weeds,” she said as she reached down.

“Are you sure that is a weed?” China Bear asked with a worried look on his face. Suddenly, he noticed something move near Sarah Beth. “Oh my! What is that!?” he exclaimed as he pointed.

“Oh, China Bear, it is the most beautiful butterfly! I wish I knew what kind it is. Look at the way it flutters around those flowers! Golly! There is another one! And another!

You know what? Our magical place is a butterfly garden!” Sarah Beth smiled as she watched the butterflies glide from flower to flower.



“How do we get them to stay here?” China Bear wondered.

Looking at the ribbons in her hand, Sarah Beth answered, “Maybe some bright, beautiful colors will do the trick!”

Sarah Beth and China Bear got to work. They weeded and painted for most of the day, and their work did not go unnoticed!

“Hey! What-cha doin’ in there?”

Sarah Beth heard a boy’s voice from the other side of the fence. She peeked over the top and was very surprised to see three faces looking up at her.

“Hello! My name is Sarah Beth. Would you like to come in and see what we have been doing?”

“Well, okay,” the boy said as Sarah Beth opened the gate for them. “I am Lyle, and these are my friends Ki-lee and Cecelia. We live down the street.”







“Nice to meet you,” Sarah Beth said politely. “This is my good friend China Bear. He has been helping me in the garden,” she said as she pointed to the bear who sat on the stump inside. “Come on in.”

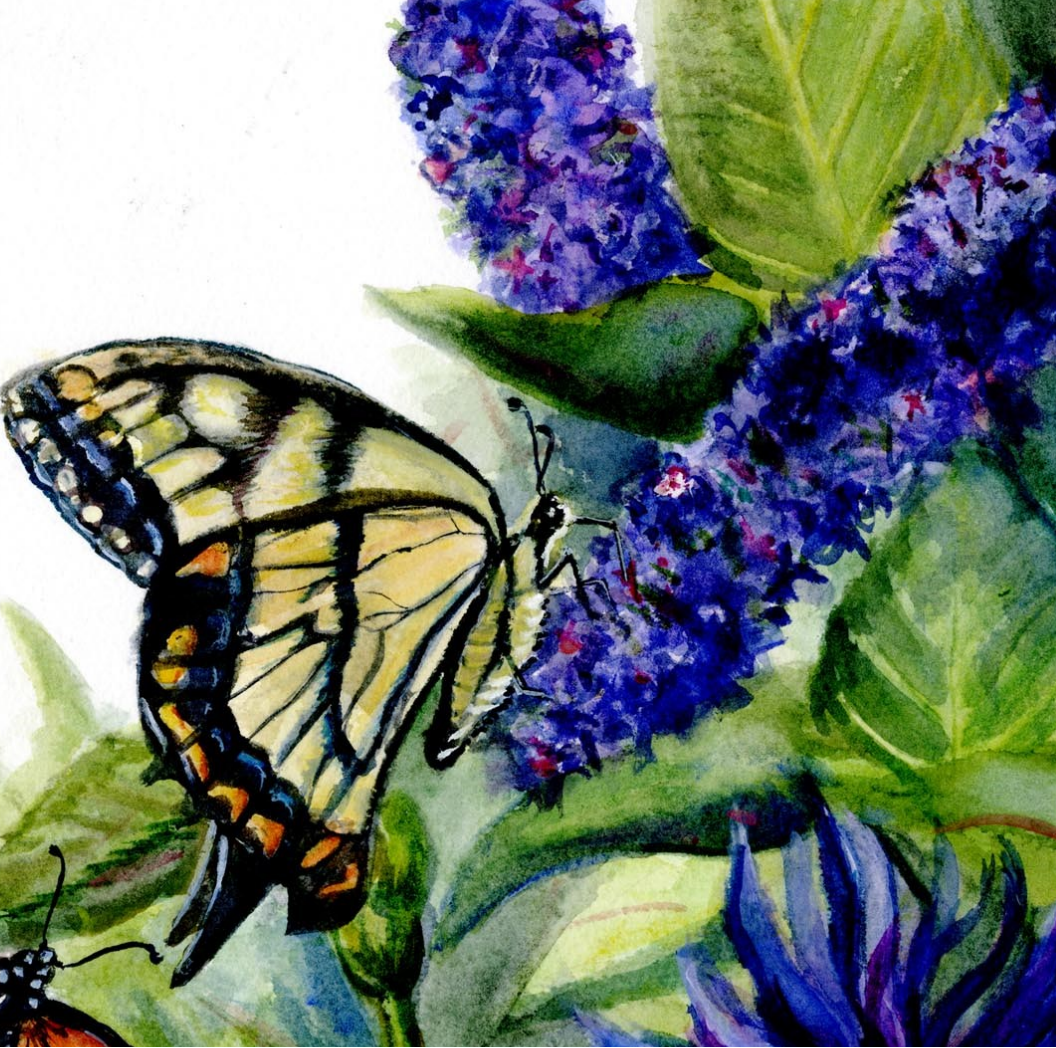
“We just moved here from Arkansas,” explained Sarah Beth.

“You sound like my cousins who live down south. They have accents, too,” said Lyle.

“Very cool,” said Ki-lee. “My Grandma is from South Korea, but I have never visited the south before.”

“I drove through Arkansas with my mom and dad before. We were on our way to Mexico to visit family,” exclaimed Cecelia. “Their accents sound different too.”

Sarah Beth laughed. “To me it sounds like the three of you have accents.” The other children joined in with Sarah Beth’s giggles, realizing their differences would not keep them from becoming friends.



Just then Cecelia, Ki-lee, and Lyle were stopped with surprise by what they saw in Sarah Beth's backyard.

The fence was painted bright orange and purple with colorful ribbons streaming from the top. There were red, yellow, pink, purple, and orange flowers in many shapes and sizes with butterflies visiting many of them.

"Welcome to our butterfly garden!" Sarah Beth looked around proudly.

"Wow!" raved Cecelia.

"I love it!" said Lyle.

"What a beautiful Swallowtail butterfly!" Ki-lee exclaimed while pointing to the butterfly flying by.

“Oh! So that is what it is!” said Sarah Beth. “Do you know what the other ones are?”

“I think that orange and black one is a Monarch,” Ki-lee answered.

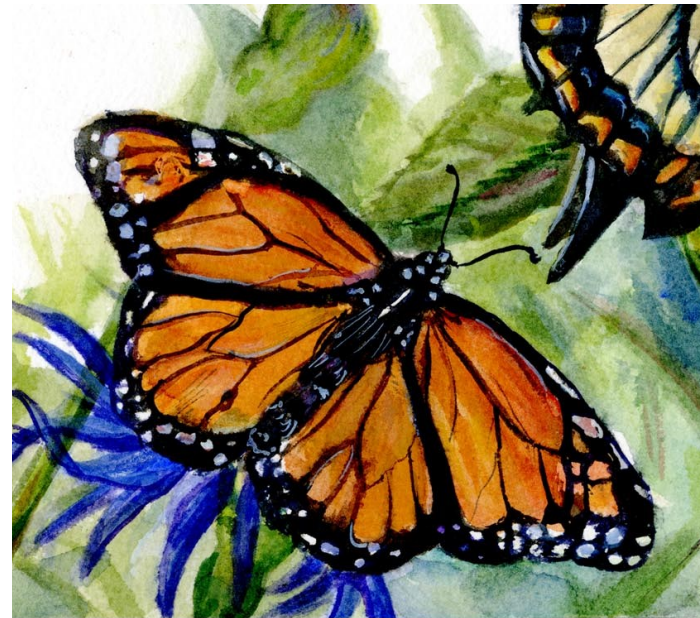
“Did you know Monarchs lay their eggs on that plant with the orange flowers? My Mom told me it is called Butterfly Weed!” said Cecelia.

“Hey, let’s look for some caterpillars. They should be eating the leaves,” said Lyle.

They all bent over the Butterfly Weed and found that something had been munching its leaves. Suddenly, Sarah Beth saw a black, white, and green striped creature with horns crawling on a leaf.

“There is the caterpillar!” cried Cecelia. “Wow! It sure is eating a lot!”

“My Aunt Carmelita told me all about Monarchs when I visited her last December in Mexico,” explained Cecelia. “Once a Monarch hatches from an egg, it turns into a caterpillar. The caterpillar has to eat a lot because then it becomes a pupa before it turns into a beautiful butterfly!”







“How does your aunt know so much?” asked Ki-lee.

“These butterflies fly to Mexico for the winter, and that is where my aunt lives. Isn’t that cool?” said Cecelia.

“Let’s look for some eggs,” Ki-lee suggested.

Lyle turned over one leaf and then another. Finally, on his third leaf he discovered eggs. “Hey, I think I found some!”

“Let me see,” said Ki-lee.

“Are they sort of yellow?” Cecelia asked.

“Yes,” replied Lyle.

“They must be Monarch eggs because they lay their eggs under leaves. Then when the eggs become caterpillars, they will eat the leaves.” Cecelia declared.

“Hey everyone—look at this!” exclaimed Ki-lee. Everyone tiptoed over to see a Painted Lady butterfly sitting on a flower. It was orange and black like the Monarch but had a different design on its wings. “Look how it’s sipping nectar. My teacher told me that its mouth is called a proboscis,” Ki-lee explained.

“A what?” Sarah Beth asked.

“A Pro-BOS-kiss,” Ki-lee answered. “It’s like a straw. Just like the ones we use to drink our milk at lunch.”

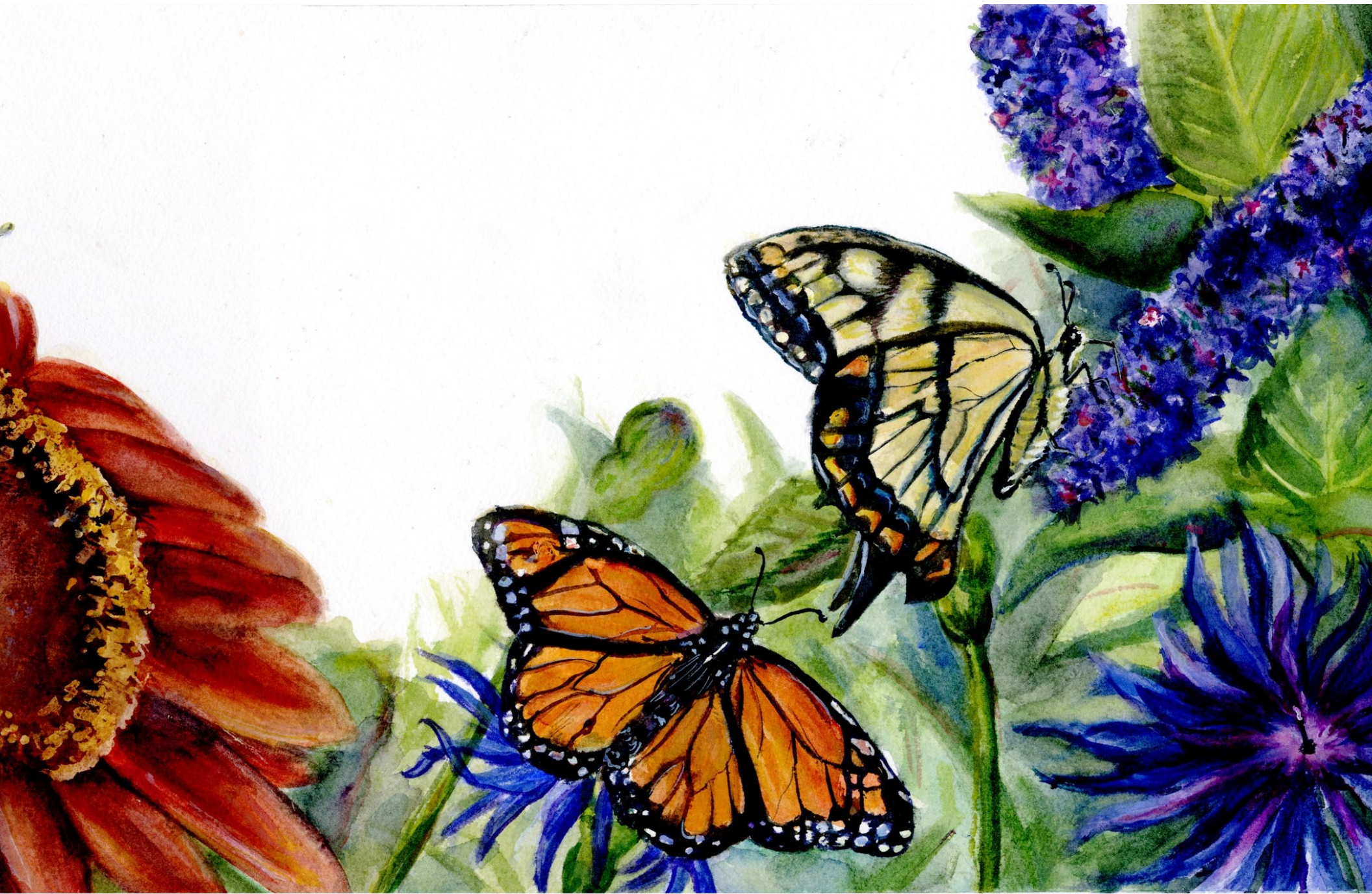
“I wonder what nectar tastes like?” Cecelia pondered.

“It must be good!” Ki-lee said.

“Don’t you remember, Ki-lee? The teacher said that butterflies taste with their feet!” Lyle reminded her proudly.

“With their feet?” Sarah Beth asked as she wiggled her toes in the soft, green grass.





Just then the back door opened. “My goodness! Haven’t you been busy, Sarah Beth. It looks like a rainbow came to visit!” Sarah Beth’s mother exclaimed.

“It’s a butterfly garden!” the four new friends shouted in unison.

“Mother, look! Our garden has everything—bright flowers for nectar and yummy leaves for caterpillars to munch. Do you like the fence we painted? It will keep everything safe and sound.” Sarah Beth told her mother.





“That is wonderful!” her mother beamed. “You’ve worked so hard to give the butterflies a lovely home! I think y’all deserve a treat.”

“Mother, these are my new friends, Lyle, Ki-lee, and Cecelia. They live on our street, and they know so much about butterflies!” Sarah Beth said.



“Nice to meet all of you! How does a piece of pecan pie and a lemon cupcake sound? Why don’t you spread out this tablecloth,” Mother said as she handed it to Sarah Beth.

“Woo-hoo!! Lemon cupcakes! Oh, Mother, thank you! And my favorite treat to share with friends is pecan pie!” Sarah Beth shouted happily.

“Excuse me, China Bear. You can sit next to me,” said Sarah Beth as she set him in the soft grass. Mother placed the tray of goodies on the tablecloth and went back inside.

“Here, take both!” Sarah Beth said as she passed out the goodies. The children enjoyed their snack as the butterflies went from flower to flower looking for nectar.

“Gee, what time do you think it is?” Lyle asked. “My mom will be wondering where I am. I better go home.”

“Me, too. But it’s so nice in your garden, Sarah Beth,” Cecelia said. “I don’t want to leave.”

“Yes,” Ki-lee sighed. “I wish I had a butterfly garden.”

“You can come visit mine anytime,” Sarah Beth assured her. “Wait! I have an idea!”

With that she untied three colorful ribbons from the fence and gathered up three flowerpots. Sarah Beth decorated each pot with a ribbon and handed them to her new friends. “Now you can start your own butterfly gardens by planting flowers or plants that they like!” she said.



“Thank you, Sarah Beth! I’m so glad we’re friends!” Cecelia said as she walked to the gate.

“Me, too,” Lyle agreed. “I’m going to make the best butterfly garden! We’ll have a ZILLION butterflies on our street! Thanks!” Lyle called.

“I’ve had such a good time today!” Ki-lee exclaimed. “I can’t wait to start my own butterfly garden. I’ll see you tomorrow! Oh, and you, too, China Bear!”

“How grand! We’ll be waiting in the garden!” Sarah Beth smiled at Ki-lee. “This has been such a magical day. I just know we will always be good friends!” And with that, Sarah Beth threw her arms around her new friend. “Hugs around your neck, Ki-lee! I will see you tomorrow!”





Sarah Elizabeth Warner was born in Arkansas and moved to the Flint area in 1957. She was an ardent supporter of the local arts community and held leadership positions in state and national arts organizations, as well as civic and philanthropic organizations. Sarah was a devoted mother of three sons, who touched those around her with her enthusiasm, compassion, humor, and adventurous spirit. She was especially proud of the artwork that filled McLaren Hospital, a project she helped bring to fruition.

As a personal assistant to Ruth Mott, Sarah brought a graciousness to Applewood: The Charles Stewart Mott Estate that echoed Mrs. Mott's kindness. Applewood's staff fondly remember Sarah's friendship, easy southern accent, and her love for life. Her personality is woven through this story, from the heartfelt phrase

"Hugs around your neck!" that Sarah would say, to the bold colors of the Guatemalan ribbons that she loved, to China Bear—a large stuffed bear that Sarah received as a gift and took in as a member of her family. Her homemade pecan pie was legendary, as was her ability to make others feel comfortable and valued.

Though Sarah lost her fight with cancer, she touched countless people with her zest for life and dignified battle to live it on her own terms. In her memory, a butterfly garden was created at Applewood and dedicated to her in 2001. It is filled with colorful plants, a purple fence adorned with Guatemalan belts, and butterflies made by local artists. Her contributions to Applewood Estate and the Ruth Mott Foundation still live on in our hearts and in the special garden that the butterflies share.





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Hugs Around Your Neck is a story about a girl named Sarah Beth who has just moved to a new town. She makes new friends while hard at work creating a butterfly garden in her backyard.

This short story features themes of cultural diversity, inclusivity, and treating everyone with respect and dignity. Illustrations of butterflies and plants are scientifically accurate making this book a great tool to discuss varying topics in the sciences.

