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Emerging From The Chrysalis

By Melissa Johnson

Just when the caterpillar thought the world was over, it became a butterfly. (unknown)

I moved to Colorado in 2006, hot on a trail of golden synchronicities. It defied all logic, really-this new path-and it didn't sit well with my left-brained world. Still, I couldn't ignore the signs. They were everywhere.

Having felt the first seismic tremors shaking the foundations of my life, I was looking for answers: What did it all mean? Where was I going? Would I be okay? Everything felt upside down. I felt the need for big change; but what? A lifelong passion for writing and helping others burned hot in my soul, but how could I parlay my law degree into a life of creativity outside-of-the-box? I was hearing a call of purpose, faint, at first, then louder; but I was afraid to listen because any change would create a domino effect in my life-geographically, financially, and emotionally. What if I got it all wrong?

Curiously, I found myself searching the Internet for

mountain homes. Peaks and valleys have always inspired me. That's when I saw it-an ad on Craig's List for a beautiful mountain home in Golden, Colorado. It simply said: YOU WILL FALL IN LOVE . . . and I could see from the photos that I would, while writing my first book

in one of those sunny rooms. It was in my price range, too. But where the heck is Golden, Colorado? I wondered. Overwhelmed, I put it aside.

The next day, during a random conversation with a practical stranger, this man said to me, "Your opportunity for 2006 is GOLDEN." What? Later that afternoon, I went online to order my first real set of paints, and when I clicked on the

link for "acrylics," a huge tube of paint filled the screen imprinted with the brand name GOLDEN. My whole body straightened with awareness. The next day, as I sat patiently in my window seat, waiting for our plane's departure to NYC, I saw a very large truck parked exactly beside of my window with the words "GOLDEN TRANSPORTATION" painted on its side. Later, when I

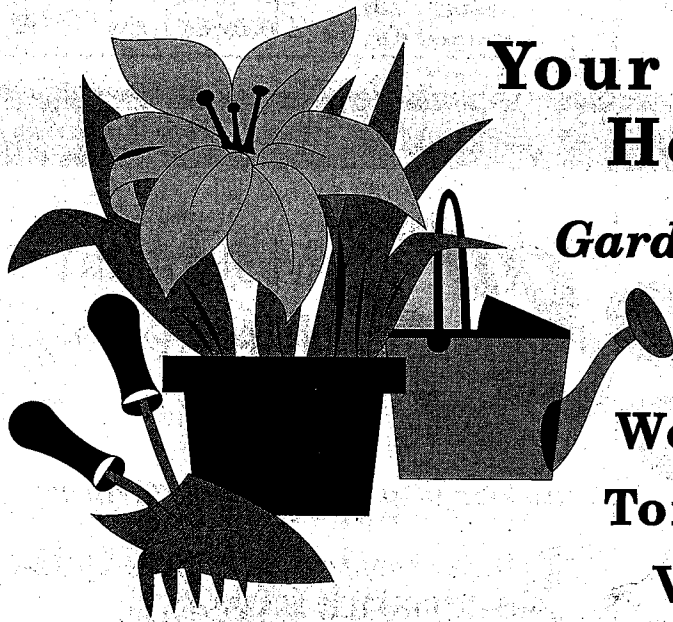


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checked my e-mail, I found that I was now, mysteriously, a subscriber to an e-newsletter for writers and artists called the "GOLDEN THREAD." And by week's end, I arrived home to find a package from my grandmother in the post, containing a piece of her antique china with the words "GOLDEN HEIRLOOM" painted on the bottom. On and on it went for more than a month-golden synchronicities at every turn-meaningful only to me; until, finally, I said out loud, "Okay, okay-I hear you." The next day, I called the realtor. And a month later, I flew to Colorado to look at property.



I didn't buy the house in Golden-the energy felt all wrong-but I did find the most amazing place just beyond the town limits of Nederland. I knew it was for me; this land as my creative muse. And I was right. Within a few months I had quit my job, moved to Colorado, and completely reorganized my life; starting all over again, in spite of the inconvenience of change.

And while the past three years have been challenging-fears naturally arise during intense periods of growth and change-I have also been excited and inspired in ways that I never knew possible, expanding my world again and again; writing, photographing wildlife, painting, volunteering, creating, connecting with myself, nature and the spirit world. Inspiration is a wonderful instrument of change. Through it, the mind expands in every direction, breaking all self-imposed boundaries and limitations, and brings

with it the sweet taste of freedom.

This is why my friend Karen calls my house a chrysalis; I can't think of a better metaphor.

Consider the life of a butterfly. From an egg that's the size of the head of a pin hatches this furry little caterpillar.

When the time is right, without any promises of safety or guarantees of survival, she follows the call of her DNA and moves into the darkness of her self-made chrysalis. Then her real drama begins, as her tissues completely break down and reorganize multiple times, moving between different consistencies of goo, before finally

restructuring into a beautiful butterfly. Assuming she survives this phase, which can take as long as several months, she will break through her chrysalis to freedom. Still,

(Continued on next page.)




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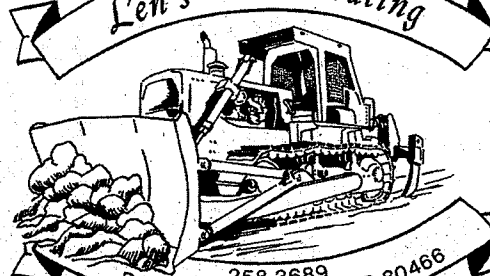
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Highlander Wisdom

she must find a place to dry her wings in the sun because they're paper thin and wet from being wrapped so tight in the cocoon. But there's good news: Studies show that the more a butterfly struggles when emerging from the chrysalis, the longer its life span. And when you consider that the average life of an adult butterfly is two weeks, every second counts.

Transformation is serious business! It has been said that the vast majority of what we are is impossible to see or touch, and that our willingness to transform-to move beyond our form into something greater-is the key to living our best life. When things aren't working and we've outgrown our skin, or a greater purpose reveals itself, we hear the mysterious call to step into the unknown-to trade

all that we are for what we might become. That can be painful and scary, but incredibly rewarding.

Like the caterpillar, I have followed the calling of my heart into worlds unknown. And, more often than not, I have found a trail of sparkling

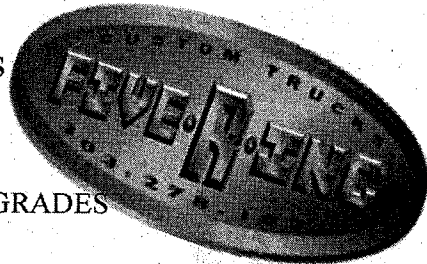
synchronicities pointing me this way and that, supporting my thoughts and actions, like road signs on a long journey.

This June marks the beginning of my fourth year in Colorado. And as I look out from my mountain perch I see that each choice, each move, each soulful longing and new pursuit has brought me one step closer to the freedom that I cherish. Now, having grown into new levels of myself, once again, I hear the call . . . as I emerge from the chrysalis.

Melissa is a writer, photographer, artist and lawyer. Read more on her blog at www.HeartLaw.blogspot.com, or visit her website at www.MelissaEJohnson.com.



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