

Chrysalis

Written By

Miles Millikan

[milesmillikann@gmail.com](mailto:milesmillikann@gmail.com)

424-270-5805

120 Boylston Street

Boston, MA 02116

CAST OF CHARACTERS

SISYPHUS, *is very good at pushing his boulder*

CATERPILLAR, *is not his boulder*

\*A note: How constantly Sisyphus is pushing his boulder up the hill is up to you. Sometimes he may stop to say something, maybe he says it while he's pushing. Maybe he stops pushing it after the first line and never starts up again. Your call.

\*\*Another note: Whether the caterpillar's actions are in response to Sisyphus or just independent is up to you.

ACT I

*Sisyphus is pushing his  
boulder up his hill.*

*He notices a caterpillar next  
to him.*

SISYPHUS

Oh. Interesting.

When I said interesting I said that because,  
well I mean look at it all, it's weird to see  
you here.

Because I mean...I'm Sisyphus. I'm like this  
Greek myth. Tortured and layered and...you've  
heard about me. I don't need to lecture you.  
But what I'm saying is...You're just a  
caterpillar...No no, not like *just* a  
caterpillar. I don't want to make it sound  
like being a caterpillar isn't enough.

Jesus, listen to me. I must sound like such  
an egotistical dickhead. "Oh look at me, I'm  
a myth that you must have heard of and you're  
*only* a caterpillar? And you expect *me* to  
speak to you? To give you my attention?"

No. Fuck. No, I was just making fun of myself  
there. That isn't like what I'm actually  
thinking or anything. If anything I think  
it's remarkable that a caterpillar made it  
all the way down here. It's not exactly  
habitable conditions in the underworld. But  
to be fair I'm a bit biased. Being kept  
prisoner and everything.

If you want me to leave you be, feel free to  
say. Obviously I wouldn't be offended if you  
needed your own space. Lord knows I've needed  
that at times. But it's been a while since  
I've really spoken to someone like this. And  
it seems like you're listening. I don't  
expect you to respond, so if you're stressing  
out like "Oh no, Sisyphus is gonna hate me

because I'm not holding up my end of the conversation" I don't think that. You're just a caterpillar--not just! You are a caterpillar who made it down into the underworld and who parked himself--herself?....themselves down next to me and my stone. And that's pretty impressive honestly. You're a pretty special caterpillar. Yeah, you're pretty remarkable. That's all.

Hm.

Lemme ask you something. Does what I'm doing seem stupid? I mean it's pointless, we know this.

*The caterpillar eats a leaf.*

Oh my god, I am so fucking sorry holy shit, yeah sorry. Do you want to know where like food is? I know the parts pretty well.

*The caterpillar stops eating.*

Right. There's a really like luscious bunch of leaves--one might even be able to call it a bush--um over there.

*The caterpillar continues eating what they were eating. Then they go to where Sisyphus pointed and they eat there. It's good leaves.*

Right? I know. I'm mean I'm Sisyphus but even to me that bush looks good.

I should stop making jokes.

Well, to clarify, that wasn't fully a joke. It was partially true. Not that I was going to eat the bush, but I've looked at it and gone "wow, that is a really...delicious looking bush." Yeah.

Do you think....Do you think, and you can say

no, but do you think I could possibly try the bush? You can totally say no, I don't wanna make you feel weird or anything.

*The caterpillar relaxes near the bush.*

Is that a yes? I don't wanna misread any signals, but just like that's what I'd do if I was a caterpillar and Sisyphus asked me if he could eat from his bush. Probably. I'm that's a really specific circumstance. Okay, I'm gonna slowly do it, and if at any point you feel uncomfortable with it just let me know, okay?

*Sisyphus stops pushing his rock.*

*Sisyphus goes over and eats from the bush.*

This is gonna sound weird, but it's not half bad. Like I know it may sound like I'm just like trying to win you over, but obviously I'm not, just like it taste better than I remember leaves tasting. I mean are there better tasting leaves than others? Obviously.

I mean all that I'm saying is like we have pies and hot dogs and eggplants--whatever the fuck an eggplant is--and like all of those are really good, but they taste like *different* than the others. I'm saying are there leaves that taste different like that?

*The caterpillar comes over and eats the leaf Sisyphus is holding.*

Well, excuse me. I don't remember offering my leaf.

*The caterpillar eats more ferociously.*

Okay okay! You want it?

*Sisyphus stands and dangles  
the leaf. Begins running  
around, making the caterpillar  
chase after him.*

You want the leaf? You want to grow big and strong, do ya? Look at you go! I didn't know caterpillars could do that. Here, can you get to me? Holy shit I guess you can do that too. That's impressive. I don't even know if I can do that. Woah! You are far more capable than I thought. Weird thing to say, but you know what I mean. Wow, look at you go. You're incredible. Wow you're really incredible. I don't know the last time I got to see something that was this beautiful. Thank you. I love you. Yeah? Yeah?! Oh my god wow. Wow. Wow. Wow. Thank you. Not something to really thank. Like "Thank you for loving me, it was a forced action so it mustn't be easy."

I just...thanks.

*The caterpillar moves to right  
behind Sisyphus's rock and  
begins cocooning.*

Yup, that is my boulder. Weird thing, this guy. I've been pushing it up this hill for practically forever and even though humans are masters of adaptability...Like if you put us in cold weather for long enough--I'm talking years--that can become our new warm, right? We are constant adapters, but I have not really ever adapted to this fucking boulder. It's just like....UGH it's so fucking heavy some days. You know?

*The caterpillar is cocooned.*

Oh.

Oh. Are you okay?

Dumb question, you're cocooning, it's natural. But you are, uh...kind of right

behind my rock. Which is fine, that's where you're cocooning, but....yeah I can make it work.

*Sisyphus goes back to pushing his stone.*

Just that whenever my rock rolls down I'll have to stop it before it hits you. But that's fine. Like I can do that. Don't stress about it.

See? I can manage that.

I've always been curious what it's like to cocoon. Same thing with bears hibernating. Like you obviously know what sleep is like, but then are these long periods of sleep where this massive shifts happen. Well, I guess for bears they just sleep and lose all their weight, but you turn into this...thing. That's awesome.

That's awesome for you.

It is hard to tell your reactions to the things I say when you're in there.

Do you think of me weirdly now? Not that you should, or there'd be any reason. I just feel like you think of me differently for some reason. Correct me if I'm wrong.

Your silence really sounds like the opposite of affirmation right now.

And by the opposite of affirmation I mean that like it feels like you do think of me badly. And I'm just inconveniencing you with my pushing this boulder. And that feels shitty, honestly.

And not to make you feel shitty, but like you are in this weird place, like physically in this weird place for me. Like I wanna let you relax and do your thing, but you're literally

right here. So, it's hard to let you do your thing!

Oh wow. Sorry that was so aggressive of me. And shitty. And--oh my god I am so sorry that was so fucked up of me. I'll just give you your space. That's my bad.

Sorry.

Okay, I realize I'm being stupid and you probably don't even hear me or care about me, but I think that you did at one point and now it's just weird between us. I might be reading too much into that, but. It's weird, right? And I think it's because of when I blew up at you before, but it might not be. Like if it isn't, say something.

Woah, did you see that? That was just cool.

Pushing a rock. Pushing a boulder. Up and down. Up and down. That's my theme.

Did you know Albert Camus wrote an essay about me? Yeah, *the* Albert Camus. You're a caterpillar and have no idea who Albert Camus is. Of course. Well he's this fucking philosopher, right? And he read my story and read how everyone is like "Sisyphus is the most tragic person of all time," and so Camus was like "No, fuck that. I say he's happy." I say he's happier than many of you. Because he has a purpose. He knows what he does, and he knows what he's good at and he knows who he is. And I like that. One must imagine Sisyphus happy. That's how he ends it. One must imagine Sisyphus happy. One *must*. Imagine me happy.

I must.

Can I be real with you? It just feels like you don't like me and I was just a nuisance to you this whole time and that feels shitty. Like I'm just this guy who takes up space. I

am more than that.

I have this problem of thinking I'm a god. I mean can you *blame* me?! I'm a myth people talk about in philosophy classes. People write essays and books and plays about me! There is so much attention on me all the time and I thought I found something beautiful and soft about this hard world! In this world filled with rocks I found a caterpillar. A caterpillar who is soft and squishy and fun. Fun! And that made me happy. And I know to you I'm just another hard rock in the world that you're trying to turn soft. And one day you probably will turn it all soft. It'll all be pink and squishy and bouncy and it'll smell like strawberries and cream and it'll feel like butterfly kisses on your cheek and.....I just think you hate me and I don't know why and it hurts. Honestly it just hurts. And so....fuck you. I don't hate you-- I *don't* hate you, but fuck you. You threw me away like I was nothing, like none of what we did ever even happened, like even before it got like crazy and felt like stars exploding--before that it feels like even that casual stuff didn't happen for you. And that fucking hurts. It fucking sucks.

*Sisyphus kicks the cocoon.*

So...

*He hits it more. More and more. Ad-libbing lines of frustration and pain and loneliness.*

*Sisyphus, with great effort picks up his boulder, holds it above him and drops it on the cocoon. It practically bounces off the cocoon, but there is a deafening thud.*

Oh my god.

*Sisyphus sits alone.*

*Suddenly, the cocoon cracks open. Light spills out of it like a choir of dancing angels in their first recital. The sounds of a rebirth, a resurrection.*

*Out of the cocoon rises the butterfly. Beautiful, large, and godly. Lights glisten off of their body. Winds blow, lights from the heavens glare.*

*Sisyphus stands and walks to stand apart from the butterfly. It's a magnificent sight.*

*The butterfly comes towards Sisyphus and kisses him on the cheek.*

*In that kiss the following dialogue is conveyed, but not said:*

**BUTTERFLY**

Your boulder has rolled for so long, you watching it go. You have let it play over and over. While your muscles strain the boulder's excitement builds. It can't wait to roll down that hill each and every time. And you do that for it. You allow it to play. You are soft.

*A butterfly flies away.*

*One must imagine Sisyphus happy.*