

MARIAN SELDES *performs*

Away in a Hollow



*a story in rhyme
for children*

written by
Donald Corren

music by
Dennis Deal

illustrations by
Richard W. Prouse



proudly presents

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Written by
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Music by
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Illustrations by
RICHARD W. PROUSE

Produced by Glen Roven
Executive producers Ira Yuspeh and Mitch Yuspeh
Mastered by Ira Yuspeh



Portrait of Marian Seldes by Louise Peabody

MARIAN SELDES is among the First Ladies of the American Theatre. She debuted on Broadway in 1948 in Robinson Jeffers' adaptation of *Medea* directed by John Gielgud, and last appeared there in 2007 in Terrence McNally's *Deuce*, opposite Angela Lansbury. Along the way, she appeared in over 85 productions, and was nominated for five Tony Awards, winning on her first nod for Edward Albee's *A Delicate Balance*. Ms. Seldes was long associated with Albee, appearing also in his *Tiny Alice*, *Three Tall Women*, and *The Play About The Baby*. She co-starred in several other landmark New York productions including *Equus*, *Father's Day* (Drama Desk Award), *Painting Churches* (Outer Circle Critics Award), and *Deathtrap* (for which she appeared in every one of the 1,809 Broadway performances, earning her the Guinness Book of World Records status as "Most Durable Actress."

She also had an extensive career in movies, television and radio, playing everything from Emily Brontë in the 1952 TV movie, *Our Sister Emily* (1952), to Lucas McCain's dead wife in *The Rifleman* (1958) to First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt in *Truman* (1995) to Big's mother on *Sex and the City* (1998). She worked extensively in radio where from 1974 to 1982 she was heard regularly on the CBS Radio Mystery Theater.

Ms. Seldes taught acting at The Juilliard School from 1967 to 1991, where her students included Oscar winners William Hurt, Kevin Kline and Robin Williams, Emmy winners Kelsey Grammer and Laura Linney, and Tony winner Patti LuPone. In 1991 she was inducted into the Theatre Hall of Fame, and in 2010 received a Tony Lifetime Achievement Award. "All I've done is live my life in the theater and loved it," she said at that time. "If you can get an award for being happy, that's what I've got."

Marian Seldes passed away in 2014 having enjoyed a 60-year career in the theatre.



DONALD CORREN (Writer) is an actor/writer living in New York City. Trained at Juilliard, he has appeared extensively off-Broadway and in regional productions across the country. On Broadway he co-starred opposite Judy Kaye in the original production of *Souvenir*, and in Harvey Fierstein's landmark *Torch Song Trilogy*. For several seasons he was seen as Forensic Tech Medill on NBC's *Law & Order*, and currently plays Dr. Kurian on Syfy's *Z Nation*. Writing credits include *Martha Stewart Living TV*, Lifetime's *Celebrity Weddings*, and The 2002 Salt Lake Winter Olympic Games for which he wrote the nightly medals ceremony.



DENNIS DEAL (Composer) is best known for his stylish musical send-up, *Nite Club Confidential*, which he brought to New York, Boston, Los Angeles and London. He had his *New England Suite* performed by the New Haven Symphony, created a Cole Porter show for Manhattan Transfer redhead Cheryl Bentyne, and directed and scored *An Evening with Scott Bakula* at Fords Theater. Mr. Deal has arranged theater music for such luminaries as Lynn Redgrave, Elaine Stritch, Anthony Perkins, Dolores Gray, Chita Rivera, Ann Miller, Nell Carter, Blossom Dearie, Alan Arkin, and Katherine Hepburn.



RICHARD W. PROUSE (Illustrator) is a member of United Scenic Artists whose scenic work has appeared on Broadway for over 25 years in such original productions as *The Book of Mormon*, *Something Rotten*, *Hairspray*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *The Color Purple*, *Grand Hotel*, *Lend Me A Tenor*, *The Will Rogers Follies*, *Guys and Dolls*, and *Beauty and the Beast*, to name only a few. Other work includes an exclusive line of art dolls, original clothing and portraiture. Richard's studio is in Rhinebeck, NY, where he creates original backdrops for sale and rent at www.selectbackdrops.com

A NOTE ON THE STORY

AWAY IN A HOLLOW is a cautionary tale for youngsters of all ages. The idea was hatched in the early 70's in Berkeley, California – ground zero of the self-help revolution – when, during a boistrous lunch, my friend Kevin Malony and I became besotted with the notion of a caterpillar trying too hard to become a butterfly. Our paths diverged soon after but the idea continued to intrigue me, and I began developing it into a narrative poem. Midway through writing, I began to hear it voiced by Marian Seldes, my acting teacher at Juilliard. This was before the audiobook explosion, so it never occurred to me to have her record it. Then in 1988, I listened to my first audiobook and was thoroughly hooked. Soon after, I asked Marian to record *Away in a Hollow*, not knowing if there was a market for it but wanting at last to marry the words with the voice I'd heard in my head. She graciously agreed, and we spent hours at the studios of Tapestry Productions – generously provided by its owner, Paul Fisher – getting it down on tape. Yes, tape. Her performance was sublime - everything I'd imagined, and more. This inspired me to ask my friend Dennis Deal to write “a little incidental music.” He listened to Marian's recording, got hooked, and proceeded to write an entire score. At this point Broadway scenic artist Richard W. Prouse joined the party, illustrating the story with original watercolors.

Away in a Hollow has been in my heart for 40 years – my entire adult life – and I offer my sincerest thanks to Kevin, Marian, Paul, Dennis, Richard, and now Glen Roven for making it possible for me to develop it fully and share it with you.

– Donald Corren



Away in a hollow
Flung far from the breeze,
Beneath the blue sky
And the great cypress trees,

Beneath spreading branches
Of bottom-most green,
On the dark forest floor
Where the sun's never seen,

Where dampness and darkness
With never a sound
Are spread like a blanket
To cover the ground,

And ferns sweetly dripping
With overhung musk
Keep watch in a peaceful
Perennial dusk,

The tiniest village
Lies hidden from view,
Set like a diamond
Amid the wood-hue,

And here, 'neath a mushroom log,
Sunken from sight,
Flanked by thick sage
In the mock-shadow night,

Where hardly a breath of wind
Whispers or sighs
Is where caterpillars
Become butterflies.

So guarded it is –
And to such a degree –
That no man has seen it,
And that includes me!

No children, no parents,
No kitten, no pup –
Not anyone EVER
Has seen it close up.

But that needn't stop you,
One sees what one sees.
So close both your eyes,
And look right through the trees.

Look! There it is!
Yes, it looks black as night –
But look! Look again...
It's aglow with the light

Of daisies and dandelions –
Daffodils, too –
Which look like the sun
And can shine like it, too.

Daisies that shine?
Do you think I'm confused?
No, sunlight can always be
Stored and re-used,

And here, where so few sunbeams
Ever arrive,
Each living thing grabs one
And keeps it alive,

Absorbing it quickly
Before it can fade,
Then slowly releasing
Through petal and blade.

So daisies glow yellow,
While berries on vines
Cast light redder far
Than the reddest of wines.

And buttercups, irises –
Yellows and blues –
All radiate bloomshine
And glow in their hues.



Though all seems as still
As an egg in its nest,
If you listen quite hard,
If you listen your best

You'll begin to hear faintly
As though far away
The sounds of a village
Uncommonly gay -

The peeling of laughter,
Some shouting, a song,
The tinkling of bells,
And before not too long



A toast being raised
And the passing of jugs,
The tapping together
Of little clay mugs,

Topped by more laughter
And "Hip-Hip Hooray!!!"
Celebrating one more
Caterpillary day.





A Caterpillar! What a
Curious creature!
A bug to be sure,
But with one magic feature:

When born, it's a crawler,
A thing of the night;
But then it transforms...
It grows wings, it takes flight,

And gently ascends
Through the dark forest lair,
Up past the treetops
To clean open air.

It does seem unlikely
But nevertheless
It happens – they're butterflies!
Who'd ever guess?

But here's what's so curious,
Here's what's so strange:
The caterpillars
Never speak of this change.

They don't second-guess
What the future might hold.
They're happy to crawl
Through the leaves and the mold

With never a thought
To what each knows at heart,
That soon it will go through
The Change and depart.

For each knows whenever
The time comes to go,
Whatever it is they should know
They'll just know.

They know of their promise
Beyond earthly things –
They know that within them
Are waiting their wings.

But that's for tomorrow,
Today, they're still bugs,
And live life as slow moving,
Earth crawling slugs,

And home is the hollow
In darkness, unseen,
And each is content,
Unconcerned and serene.



Of course, that's not always
The case. There are some
Who can't think of anything
But what's to come.

They're always unhappy,
Complaining and crying!
They don't do a thing
But look forward to flying.

These poor caterpillars think
Crawling's a zero.
And one case in point
Is young Beeore, our hero.

Quite early on in his life
Beeore found
He didn't much care
For his life on the ground.

"So awful," he thought,
"When you think of the seas,
The snow on the mountains,
The birds in the trees!

"There's such endless beauty
Out there to be found,
And here I am, stuck,
Just a bug on the ground."

He hated the hollow
With all of his spleen.
He hated the darkness,
The dampness, the green.

"It's ugly, it's dark,
And there's no place to go!
Oh, why was I born
With a body so slow?"

His railings increased
And his restlessness soared.
He grew up to be
Unrelentingly bored.

Nothing he did would
Diminish his sorrow
That joy was found elsewhere
And always tomorrow.

And life was just that –
He had made his decision.
But then Beeore had
His Spectacular Vision.

Now, first let me tell you
That this is the Rule:
The Vision's not spoken
Nor studied in school.

It's not something read
In a history book.
It's there to be Seen
When the time comes to Look;

And when that time comes,
Be they three or thirteen,
The Vision arrives
And the Vision is Seen.

It dances before them
And swirls through their dreams.
It sings in their ears,
"All is not what it seems."

A Vision of staggering
Color and light
Of the sun, of the sky,
And of heavenly flight.

Well, Beeore had his vision
Late, as expected.
But that didn't alter
The change it affected.

His shift was tremendous,
His feelings intense –
The more he considered,
The more it made sense.

"Of course this old forest
Is boring and dry!
Why should I feel good here?
My home is the sky!

"This hollow's a stop-over,
Someplace to wait.
I'm destined for flight
And oh, boy, I can't WAIT!"



His life overnight
Gained ambition and drive.
Something had captured him,
Made him alive.

He purchased a textbook
Called LEARNING YOUR WINGS
(Instructions on various
Butterfly things)

And readied himself
For cocooning and flight
Determined that he'd
Metamorphosise right.

His anticipation
Submerged him in waiting,
Completely removed
From his friends' celebrating.

The village would vibrate
With work and with play
While Beeore sat studying
Day after day.

And while caterpillary
Life bustled by,
He sat on his rock
And prepared for the sky.

Now, one fine Spring day
(One not too long ago)
Our Beeore was reading
When up from below

Came a shout, and as
Visits to Beeore were rare,
His book dropped, his eyes popped,
He stammered, "Who's there?"

"Who's there? Why it's me!"
And then up with a smile
Crawled a wise caterpillar
He'd know quite a while.

He was older than Beeore,
And twinkling with joy.
"How goes it? Enjoying
Your view here, my boy?"

"I suppose," Beeore sighed,
"But there's so much to cover.
I've read 'How to Glide'
And this week, 'How To Hover.'

"I've studied and studied -
I think I can fly
But I really won't rest
Till I give it a try."

His friend chuckled, "Beeore,
You sit here all day
While life in this hollow
Slips slowly away.

"You read and you plan
And you study your book
While life's all around you,
If you'd only look."

"What life?" Beeore snorted,
THIS life? Don't be square!
I've looked, it's a bore!
Now I want to prepare."

"For what?" asked his friend.
"What - for WHAT?? Don't you
know?"
Beeore asked in amazement.
"You can't be THAT slow!

"To prepare for the freedom
From fo-re-sty things!
To prepare for the freedom
That comes with our wings.

"To fly to the magic
Way up in the blue!
Well - when that time comes
Guess who'll know what to do?!"

"Ah-ha!" said the crony,
"So, that's what you think?"
His eyes crinkling gently,
Resisting a wink.

"You think magic only
Exists in the sky?
You don't think it's down here,
And passing you by?"

"Down here?!" Beeore snorted,
"What? Down on the ground?!"
"That's right," said his friend,
"If you'd just look around.

"There's beauty here, too,
And there's friendship and love.
You don't really know
What you're rising above.

"You don't look around you,
You don't sniff the breeze,
You don't hear the secrets
Told under these trees.



"We crawl, little friend,
And we live on the ground.
We're not butterflies
Till Life turns us around."

Beeore's eyes narrowed.
He asked, "Are you through?
If so, I've still pages
Of reading to do."

The friend said, "You know,
You'd be happy today
If you didn't spend time
In that fool-hearty way."

"Thanks," Beeore sneered,
"For the words from the wise.
But we'll see who stays on the
Ground, and who flies!

Pray, don't let me keep you,"
He said with a frown,
"From whatever it is
That you do on the ground."

The old friend smiled sadly
But made no reply.
He knew there was nothing
To say but goodbye.

And Beeore, who barely
Could mutter "Good Day,"
Watched as his only friend
Slithered away.





Just at that moment
He heard from the Square
A growing excitement
Alive in the air.

"Oh, drat! There they go again,
Mucking about!
Some caterpillarious
Nonsense, no doubt.

"I really can't concentrate,
Not when I'm near them.
I'll go inside where
I'll be sure not to hear them."

And slamming his door
With a terrible jerk
He locked himself in
To continue his work.

* * *

All through the forest
So quiet, so still,
A faint, restless rustle
Was rising until

With no scattered whisper,
With no spoken word,
Without an arm raised
And without a voice heard,

The Message was seen
As if written in light,
And clear as mid-day
On that magical night.

Their Caterpillarian Moment
Was here.
Together they knew it
And rose without fear,

And with not a trace
Of their silence betrayed
Began their macabre
Caterpillar parade.

From out of their doorways,
From under the logs,
From out past the willows
In green swampy bogs,

From mosses, from flowers,
From under the rocks,
From all through the forest
They gathered in flocks.



And there in the square
Of the hollow that night,
Surrounded by bloomshine,
Enveloped in light,

With sweet clover scents
In the still forest dark,
They all came together
In silence to mark

This wonder of wonders,
Yet whispered by none:
This moment when dying
And birth become one.

They stood for a moment
Their silence complete.
Then quietly one began
Tapping his feet.

First one, then another,
So seizing their chance
To share in one more
Caterpillary dance

They spun about finally
Bursting with noise,
All laughing their sorrows,
All crying their joys!

Celebrating together
The life they had known –
Farewells, before each
Would retire, alone.

Then one by one, breaking off
Under the Moon,
Each settled, soon spinning
The wond'rous Cocoon.

The garment God gave them
To work the disguise -
When donned, caterpillars,
When shed, butterflies.



Soon all were asleep
In the mosses and clover.
The magic was working,
The Moment was over.

"Ah, quiet!" said Beeore,
And poking his head
Through his doorway, he sighed
With relief as he read:

""A Butterfly aspirant
Always includes
Restrains in his careful
Selection of foods.

""Chronic indulgence -
Beginners please note -
Will lead to less wing spread
And lack-luster coat.

""And' - My, it's grown quiet.
Where did they all go?
This place was a madhouse
A moment ago.

""And' - Why, what's this?
What a peculiar thing!
Stuffed like a pillow
And hung like a swing.

"'And' - Wait! Wait a minute!
Oh, no! Where's the book?
Was it page seventeen?
I'm too nervous to look.

"'In Springtime, the aspirant
Wraps, where he'll stay
Till fully developed.
See Diagram A.'

"A cocoon? Is it time?
No one told me. Land's sake!
I'm the last caterpillar
For miles still awake!

"Well, let them desert me,
That crawl-happy zoo.
I'll out-butterfly them all
When we come to.

"I sure didn't study
And read myself blind
And plan every move
Just to get left behind.

"Cocooning? It's nothing!
Right here... Chapter One.
A quick bit of weaving,
A lock, and I'm done."

And keeping an eye
On the book's illustration
He spun himself quite
An ingenious creation.

Attention to detail
Was startling and grand:
A Triumph, complete
With its own matching stand.



"Voila!" he exclaimed
As he lovingly eyed it.
He crawled in, and found
That he just fit inside it.

"But what of the book?
There's no room!" Beeore cried.
And try though he did
There was no room inside.

"Well, I've read it all,
So I guess I'm OK.
Here's to you, woods!"
And he tossed it away.

"Good night, ugly forest,
You musty old sty,
You bastion of boredom,
Goodnight and GOODBYE!!"

And gleefully chuckling
He shut himself in
To sleep through the change
That at last would begin.

* * *

So, all were wrapped tight
And the still forest waited
And watched, as its children
Were each re-created.

Now, Caterpillarian
Legend will state
That their metamorphosis
Never comes late.

It's timed to the season
And worked out just right,
From when they start sleeping
To when they take flight.

The greens all grow darker,
The blooms more pronounced,
The air slightly warmer
Since Spring was announced.

Yes! Deep into May
With the summer so near,
That's when the new butterflies
Start to appear.

A matter of weeks
While the wood changes hue;
A nap, to awake
Something totally new.

And just at this moment
Our sleepers were stirred;
Just at this moment
Their re-birth occurred.

A wriggle, a quiver,
A pressing, a tear –
The glorious labor
Of struggle towards air.

A crack, an antennae,
Another, a head,
A breathful of life,
Leaving nature's warm bed.

Then slowly unfolding,
Still moist from the birth,
Their wings – such a sight! –
Like God's presence on earth.

Exploding with color.
Precise in design.
Astounding. Resplendent.
Celestial. Divine.

A spread, then a flutter,
A short, easy hop,
A light lift to bloomshine
Then, landing a-top,



An easy descent,
Slowly, gently adjusting.
A time spent in testing.
And trying. And trusting.

The others were gliding now
Learning to hover,
When Beeore began
To emerge from his cover.

Quiet? Not Beeore.
For try though he might
He couldn't climb through it;
He'd spun it too tight.



The weave was so solid,
The fabric so thick
That his flight to escape
Was like crawling through brick.

The stand, though ornate
And the pride of his work,
Collapsed, and he fell
To the ground with a jerk.

"Oh, BOTHER!!," he cried,
As he lay on his back
Careening, cocooned,
And tied up like a sack,

Managing finally
To make a small tear,
He ripped and he punched
Till his lungs felt fresh air.

Now his arms, now his legs,
Head, back, and wing.
"Boy, am I glad
To get out of THAT thing!

"Made it! Oh, boy!
Let me see... Yes! They're here!
'One large to the front
And two small to the rear.'"

His wings. Yes, he found them!
And brilliant they were.
A beautiful sight
Was our friend, to be sure.



"Well, time is a wasting
And I want to FLY!
A test run or two
Then right up to the sky!"

He paused for a moment
To check what he'd learned,
Gave each wing a jerk,
Seemed contented, then turned,

And finding a suitable
Clearing of space
He ran for a take-off...
...and fell on his face.

Astounded, embarrassed,
And thrown for a loop,
He prayed that his flop
Went unseen by the group.

"I can't understand it.
I've followed each stage;
Read every instruction,
Not skipping a page."

He stopped, he considered...
Then tried this instead:
He ran off a rock...
...and fell right on his head.



"I spent so much time,
So much effort, and now
I can't. And look there!
They already know how!"

The others by this time
Had lit on the trees
Or floated above
On the cool morning breeze.



"How did they learn it?
Not once did I see
Them open the guide book
And study like me!

"Not once did I hear
So much talk as a word
As to what they'd do when
Butterflydom occurred!"

Then getting his bearings
And shaking his head,
He vowed to go back over
All that he'd read.

"Ascendence achieved with the
Forewings spread wide,
Cease beating, relax,
And continue to glide

"As pictured in Diagram
Twenty-four B.'
No, first comes the take-off
And that's Chapter Three!

"Now think, Beeore, think:
'With the wings perched for flight,
Begin a slow movement of...'
NO, that's not right!

"Did I miss a class?
Were there meetings somewhere?
Did everyone plan to
Ditch me in mid-air?"

He looked for the answer,
But none was in sight.
His friends had all gone,
They had all taken flight.

The hollow was still,
There was barely a sound.
"Am I the last one
To be left on the ground?"

"Me, who by rights should have
Been the first-flown?
Am I the last one,
Left behind, all alone?"

"'With special attention
Toward balance of spread,
Spring lightly aloft ...'
I thought that's what it said!

"'Left wing.' No! 'Right wing.'
Oh, somebody please!
Come help me! I'm stranded
Down under these trees!!!"



And then something happened
So wond'rous, so rare –
He felt Someone touch him
Yet no-one was there.

He felt Someone near him,
A voice in the breeze.
"Relax," it said, "Beeore,
You'll get past the trees."

"Who's there?" He looked up,
But he already knew
The way you would know
If it happened to you.

The Voice said, "You'll get
To the sky, to the sun.
You'll not be left down here
The loneliest one.

"But not by a book
Does one learn to ascend.
You can only do that
By trusting, my friend."

The Voice was the wind
And the leaves and the ground;
Its words were the singing
Of each forest sound.

The rustling, the leaning,
The silence between.
The Voice was the breath
Of the breeze through the green.

Beeore asked quietly
When he could dare,
"Is that how the others
Knew not to prepare?"

"Yes," the Voice answered.
"Now, listen and hear:
Relax, little Beeore,
Let go of your fear.

"Trust. No more trying.
Do nothing. Accept."
And Beeore was so overcome
That he wept.

"I wasted my life on the ground,
Now it's gone!"
But all the Voice said was,
"Forgive, and go on.

"You're here now, a butterfly,
Freshly alive.
A new life awaits you.
Accept it... and thrive."

"But, how do I...?"

"Hush, now, forget all you've tried.
The knowledge you're seeking
Is with you, inside."

"But...!" - "Freedom is found
In just one discipline -
To learn to be quiet
And hear what's within.

"Listen now, Beeore.
Just listen and hear.
The secret you search for
Lies in your own ear.

"In your own ear, dear one,
In your own ear...
Listen my little one,
Listen and hear..."

And there in the hollow
That fine summer morn,
That saw this bright new flock
Of butterflies born,

There on that morning
A triumph occurred:
A creature grew quiet,
And listened.
And heard.

He heard what the world said,
What secrets abound
In grasses... in buds...
In the air... on the ground.

He heard the One Song
That the many shapes sing -
The flowers... the insects...
The wind... Everything!

He heard it, and finally
Knew in his heart
That life was a Joy
Of which he was a part.

For quieting finally
And hearing the song
He listened, and heard himself
Singing along.



And yes, Beeore flew
Up away with the breeze,
Beyond the dark woods
And the great cypress trees;

He had, at long last,
The sweet sight of the blue,
But now it was different,
For now Beeore knew

That ground and sky both were one,
Both were a part
Of beauty that dwelt
In the very same heart.

And down on the forest floor,
Under the trees,
Lit by the bloomshine,
Caressed by the breeze,

The hollow, now quiet,
Awaits like old kin
The new caterpillars who,
Soon to move in,

Will sleep and awaken
As time sweetly sighs,
Endlessly tendering
New butterflies.



