

Eco-story

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# Pino Bellavista's

## three dreams

**Pino Bellavista was a great butterfly collector.**

He would catch them in a net and stick them to glass plates using a special glue which didn't ruin the delicate colours of their wings. Sometimes he would place them inside clear plastic envelopes which he bought at the stationer's.

He paid great attention to catch just one butterfly per type, but there are so many types of butterfly that Pino Bellavista had thousands of envelopes and thousands of glass plates at home to show off proudly to friends and acquaintances.

Every day, Pino dusted personally his collection, which was scattered in every room in his apartment. He wouldn't let anyone else touch his precious collection.

He would always say *"Look but don't touch!"*.

The colours were very beautiful. Not as beautiful as when the butterflies were in the meadows and could fly over the flowers, but bright and vivid enough to make everyone Pino Bellavista showed his treasure to exclaim *"Oh"* and *"Ah"*.

And if anyone ever murmured *"poor butterflies"*, Pino would shrug and look the other way.

There was one thing that our collector just could not accept: his collection lacked the **Esperidea Vitrea**.

### **What was so special about this butterfly?**

Ah, a truly extraordinary quality: while all butterflies are admired for the patterns and colours of their wings, the Esperidea Vitrea is completely transparent, which is why it is so hard to find.

Bellavista had searched for it in every way possible, close to home and in the farthest reaches of the world, but without success.

One night early in spring, Pino Bellavista dreamed he was reading a book entitled **“The great planetary guide to butterflies that no one has ever found”**. The book explained that, because butterflies usually have colours that help camouflage them in the environment they live in, it was highly likely that the Esperidea Vitrea was near the Pole, where everything is as clear as ice, merging with the crystals of frozen snow.

So once again, he decided to go in search of this very rare specimen which was still missing from his collection.

### **He set off for the Far North.**

After a long journey, he came to a village of fishermen, where he found an interpreter.

*“I’m seeking the invisible butterfly”* said Pino Bellavista to the fisherman in charge.

And after the interpreter had translated his words, the fisherman in charge asked:

*“And what are that net and those envelopes for?”*

*“The net is to catch the butterfly and the envelopes are to put it in”* explained the interpreter.

The man must be mad, thought the fisherman, shaking his head.

Then he pointed to a dot on the horizon.

*“Down there, where there was once a great expanse of ice”* he said

*“now there is only mud: perhaps the butterflies the man seeks are there, but they aren’t invisible”*.

Pino Bellavista travelled to the melting glacier and thought he could see butterflies he’d never seen before but they were the colour of the earth, as if they had lost all transparency and had sadly adapted to the environment.

In actual fact they weren’t butterflies at all, they were only shimmering light reflected off the melting ice: the *Esperidea Vitrea* wasn’t there.

In observing those dull colours, so different from those to be admired in his collection, Bellavista felt terribly disappointed and returned sadly home.

Shortly afterwards though, he dreamed of reading **“The world atlas of butterflies never seen”** and discovering, in his dream, that the *Esperidea Vitrea* might be in a particular **African forest**.

Pino Bellavista decided to make another journey and, facing dangers and challenges, he parachuted into the forest he had seen in the atlas in his dream.

He landed in a clearing in the middle of a village and once again had the good fortune of finding an interpreter.

*"I'm seeking the invisible butterfly"* said **Pino Bellavista** to the interpreter.

*"I will take you to the village's best hunter"* replied the interpreter.

When Bellavista asked the hunter if he had ever seen the invisible butterfly, the hunter thought, this man sounds mad. But he didn't say it out loud, because the people of that village were all very well-mannered and respectful.

So instead, he said: *"Come with me"* and accompanied the visitor to a clearing just outside the village.

*"Not so long ago there were tall grasses and trees here, along with a stream and many, many butterflies, but as you can see, now there is only dry land and the butterflies have gone, so perhaps this is where the invisible butterfly lives"*

*"Oh no!"* murmured **Pino Bellavista** *"Another disappointment...the Esperidea Vitrea can't possibly live in this desert..."*

Once again, our collector returned sadly home, having decided the time had come to stop thinking about the transparent butterfly.

But he couldn't forget that expanse of ice that was melting and that desert that was swallowing up the grass, as if the world were sick.

Then one night, he dreamed that an *Esperidea Vitrea* flew in through the window and came to rest on his nose. In his dream, he opened his eyes and realised that he could see the silver of the streams, the waves of the sea and the majesty of the mountains, the wonderful colours of the fish, flowers and fruit, through the butterfly's transparent wings.

*"Now I know where the *Esperidea Vitrea* lives"* exclaimed **Pino Bellavista** as soon as he awoke, "It's in the air that we breathe, in the water of the springs, in the glaciers, plants and animals, and in all the wonders that live on the earth. And it's through its transparent wings that we see all the beauty around us!"

Pino got rid of the nets, plastic envelopes and special glue. He had realised that he needed to do something very different. He planted lots of flowers in the garden and, when summer came, Pino Bellavista's house became a world full of colourful, living butterflies.

This is the story of butterflies and a butterfly collector but, if you read carefully, you'll see that it also talks about how the life of a butterfly depends on the environment. If there are no plants and flowers, if there is no water, if it's too hot or too cold, the butterflies disappear.

## DOES THIS APPLY ONLY TO BUTTERFLIES?

And there's another question in the story.

How should we behave towards the environment and the species that inhabit it? The *Esperidea Vitrea* is an imaginary butterfly, but its transparent wings are meant to suggest that we should see the world not to be "taken" (as Pino does as a collector) but to be "lived with" (as he does when he plants flowers).

What do you think?

Colour me

