

FORCE

of



NATURE

A NOVEL OF RACHEL CARSON

by **Ann E. Burg**

art by **Sophie Blackall**

Scholastic Press  **New York**

Text copyright © 2024 by Ann E. Burg
Art copyright © 2024 by Sophie Blackall

All rights reserved. Published by Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., *Publishers since 1920*. SCHOLASTIC, SCHOLASTIC PRESS, and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc.

The publisher does not have any control over and does not assume any responsibility for author or third-party websites or their content.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without written permission of the publisher. For information regarding permission, write to Scholastic Inc., Attention: Permissions Department, 557 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

While inspired by real events and historical characters, this is a work of fiction and does not claim to be historically accurate or portray factual events or relationships. Please keep in mind that references to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events, or locales may not be factually accurate, but rather fictionalized by the author.

The quote on pages 282-283 comes from Rachel Carson's acceptance speech after receiving the John Burroughs Medal in 1952, awarded for her excellence in nature writing. It appears in *Lost Woods: The Discovered Writing of Rachel Carson* (pg. 94), edited and with an introduction by Linda Lear, Boston, Beacon Press (posthumous, 1998)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication
Number: 2022043699

ISBN 978-1-338-88338-1

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

24 25 26 27 28

Printed in Italy 183
First edition, March 2024

Book design by Marijka Kostiw



FIELD NOTE

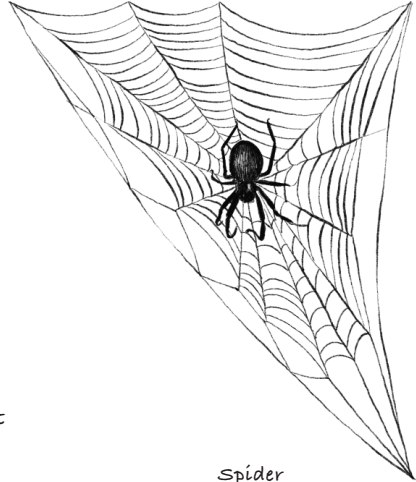
This morning, I put on
my warmest sweater
and Robert's old rain boots.
It rained last night and, except
for the raindrops
that plop from wet branches,
the world is hushed and peaceful.

A wonderful rainy-day smell
soaks the earth.

In the corner of the porch,
a spider sits in her shimmering web.
Around me, piles of dark, drab
leaves sparkle.

Rain battered down the milkweed
but I watch
a chunky woolly bear caterpillar
nibble out from under
his wide-leaf umbrella.

The secrets of nature are everywhere!



Spider

It's still winter, but already
Mamma is making plans
for this year's garden.
She read that we should
surround the garden
with marigolds and mint
if we want to keep rabbits
from munching
our lettuce and broccoli.

Now when I pull out the crabgrass
and dandelions,
I'll listen, look and *smell*.



There's been no word from *St. Nicks*,
but Papa was surprised to find
another letter from Robert.
This letter is full of dreadful stories
about a strange illness
sickening the soldiers
and turning their faces blue.

One soldier complained of a headache
and died three hours later!
Avoid crowds, Rachel, and don't spit,
Robert writes.

I'm eleven years old.
The farthest I go
is the orchard, woods
and school if I'm not sick.

As for spitting,
ladies never spit!

