

EMPTY SHELLS
Copyright 2013, Paul Spite
For one time use by churches, all other rights reserved

As the lights come up, the scene is that of children's classroom on one end of the stage. In front is a desk, behind which sits a school teacher. Behind the class is a Sunday School teacher behind a lectern. Across the stage, unlit and immobile, are disciples and Mary, standing before the open door of a tomb.

Teacher: Our word for today is "metamorphosis." It is the process some life forms undergo while changing into a drastically different life form. It is one of the true miracles of nature. Can any one think of an example of this? *(Janie's hand flies up)* Janie?

Janie: A tadpole becoming a frog?

Teacher: Very good! Anyone else? *(Amber's hand goes up)* Amber?

Amber: A frog becoming a prince? *(The class bursts into laughter)*

Teacher: *(Hushes the class)* Oh honey! Don't we all wish? *(Dan's hand goes up)* Dan?

Dan: A caterpillar becoming a butterfly!

Teacher: That's the one I was hoping to hear. Because, ... I brought something in to show you! A cocoon! *(Holds up the cocoon)* How many of you know the purpose of a cocoon? *(Amber's hand rises)* Amber?

Amber: *(Hesitantly)* To protect the caterpillar while he's changing?

Teacher: Correct! At first, it looks like the caterpillar has actually died.

At this point the S.S. Teacher joins her voice in unison with the school teacher. The next lines they say together. As both are speaking, all children rotate their chairs until they face the S.S. Teacher.

Both teachers: He's wrapped up tightly, totally out of sight. Everyone thinks he'll never be seen again.

The S.S. Teacher continues on alone.

S.S. Teacher: But inside, unseen, a miracle is occurring. A transformation is taking place. A whole new form of life coming into being.

Josh: But no one could see that. Or even guess it. Weren't the disciples really sad?

S.S. Teacher: Yes, Josh. They were totally heartbroken.

At this point, Janie stares at the tomb, chin on hand, as though daydreaming. As the teacher finishes speaking, light comes up on that scene and the class becomes very still.

Disciple 1: *(Broken)* What will we do now?

Disciple 2: What can we do? He's gone!

Disciple 1: He said he was the Christ! How could he be dead?

Mary: Maybe he isn't! Remember what he said about rebuilding the temple? Well, it's been three days and ... Look! ... The tomb! It's empty!

Disciples all rush to the open door of the tomb, look in ...

Disciple 2: You're right! He is gone.

At this point, the school teacher's voice blends with the voice of Disciple 2. As both speak, light on tomb scene fades away. Children rotate chairs back to face the school teacher in front.

Both: With nothing inside, it is just a hollow shell. Everything's different. Because it actually held life, the empty shell takes on a whole new meaning.

Teacher: *(Speaks alone now, holding up the cocoon)* Now we see cocoons as a symbol of new life. New beginnings. Hope taking flight. This is why, when you find them, you should treasure them. They can be special in your life. Okay?

Janie: Okay!

Teacher: *(Turns to set cocoon on desk)* Not bragging or anything, but that one's really a beauty. I'd challenge anyone to find one bigger or more beautiful. *(Janie's hand goes up. The teacher is very surprised)* Janie?

Janie: I know one that's both.

Teacher: *(Eyebrows raise)* Oh?

Janie: The empty tomb of Jesus. A whole new life form came out of it. Wasn't that neat?

Teacher: I'm sorry, Janie. We can't talk about that here.

Here the lights go down and the sketch ends.