

Southcrop Forest

Lorne Rothman

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Reviewed by Ian McCurley (age 14) for Reader Views (8/08)

The story begins when Auja, a young oak tree in Southcrop forest, discovers mythical talking caterpillars called runes in her branches. Due to the fact that humans are slowly destroying Southcrop forest, the trees decide to send the rune, named Fur, to the north. With him, they send their greatest discovery. It is something called Southcrop vision which gives the trees the ability to use each other's senses. Fur, a single being emerged from a colony of caterpillars, has a very slim chance of actually reaching his destination. He will have to face large threats (storms, cars and lakes) and small threats (birds, wasps, flies, sickness and many others which may not seem daunting to you or me but are extreme threats to caterpillars). On top of all that, he may change into a chrysalis before he has done his job. With only the guidance of the trees to aid him, he must bravely face an increasingly dangerous world.

Lorne Rothman is a Canadian author with a background in zoology which strongly influences his work. Though the book includes many scientific facts, they are expressed in a way perfect for younger children, not teens as he indicates this book is for. His writing style is good but a little choppy. "Southcrop Forest" is for younger readers, ages 8 to 12, who like bugs and nature.