

A ladder with a twist (300)

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The title "a ladder with a twist" and the usage of exactly four colors, two of which always appear next to each other, were meant to give clues towards this problem being about encoding information in DNA. A google search of the phrase "encoding text into DNA" yields some schemes used to convert between DNA and text. The one used in this problem was to let each pair of colors represent a bit. Yellow and blue (in DNA, a pair of complementary bases) represented 0, while cyan and red (the other pair of complementary bases) represented 1. Using this scheme, one has to go through the whole image, detect the color of each square and convert that color to a bit, and interpret each sequence of 8 bits as a character to get the flag.