



The Queen



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Author: Samira Sidany
Illustrator: Hanan El-kararje



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Nectar, the queen bee, hated this song. She had been listening to it through her whole childhood - the entire sixteen days it took for her to grow from an egg to a larva into a pupa.

“Dear little queen, go to sleep
to wake up early and lead the bees.”



Her babysitters sung it to her while they were feeding her royal nectar, while they were cleaning her and, of course, right before she went to sleep. Every bit of her - from the top of her antennae, out to her wings and down to her six legs - just couldn't listen to the song one more time. She had had enough.



“Is this how I’m going to spend the rest of my life?” Nectar muttered. “The only way I can ever leave the hive is for a honeymoon or to lead my thousand family members to a new hive.”

She watched the worker bees as they laughed and danced under the sun. She saw them inhale the lovely smell of lavender. She envied them as they came back to the hive and told their friends about the flowers they’d visited. “They go out and play all day, while all what I do is lay eggs.” Nectar thought and thought.



She was consumed by the idea of running away. She thought to herself, with a twinkle in her eye, “There are so many wonderful things to see and do and I’ll discover them all.” But Nectar, with her unique Queen Bee scent, couldn’t just sneak off. Everyone would know it. She’d have to find a way to act natural and leave without any other bees following her. In the middle of the big hive, she announced, “My dear honey bees. I shall leave you today in search of a mate and when I return, I’ll lay my eggs and enlarge the beehive.”



“Goodbye your Majesty and good luck! May you have a happy honeymoon. Your scent shall keep us company until you’re back.” The worker bees wept and sobbed as they bid the queen goodbye, but Nectar the Queen had her plans. She thought, “This the last you’ll see or smell me of me! You’ll soon find a new queen to lead you while I enjoy darting between almond trees and strawberries.” Then she waved a royal wave, beat her wings and was off.



She flew and flew and enjoyed the wonderful sights and savored the delicious scents all around her. She danced and danced till she was hungry and tired. Nectar could have kicked herself as she thought, “Oh my goodness! I can’t believe I left on a journey like this without taking any food with me. And I’m the only one that can’t make honey!”



She decided to go back to the beehive, grab some honey and run away again. She looked around. Should she fly towards the sun or the opposite way? Did she fly to the right or to the left? She couldn't remember anything that would help her remember where the beehive was. She didn't go to that training session. It's not her job anyway. She turned around and started flying away.



She wondered if there were any clues to remind her how to get back home.



A lovely smell tickled her antennae and made her drool. It was the delicious smell of honey. She knew it right away.

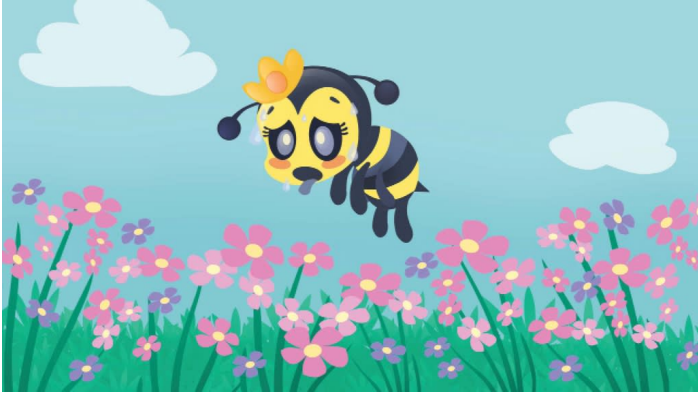


“Yummy!” Nectar shouted. Then she shot ahead like an arrow to go eat some. She was sure that the child wouldn’t mind. Besides, it was her friends who made this honey in the first place. Nectar buzzed as she came closer, until she saw the child’s mother hurrying towards her son with a big towel in her hand.

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She waved with the towel in the air to shoo Nectar away. Nectar was terrified and took off like a rocket. She was quite offended as she said, "What is this all about? All that for a spoonful of honey that we made with our very own bodies?!"



Nectar kept losing energy because she hadn't eaten for so long. She flew slowly until she smelled the scent of her favorite plant.



She yelled, "Lavender! I must be near my beehive!" She hugged the flowers of the lavender plant and rested on its soft leaves before continuing on...



She felt some small vibrations that gradually grew stronger and stronger.



All of a sudden, she saw a tractor on its way to cut down all the lavender, one after the other until it she reached her.



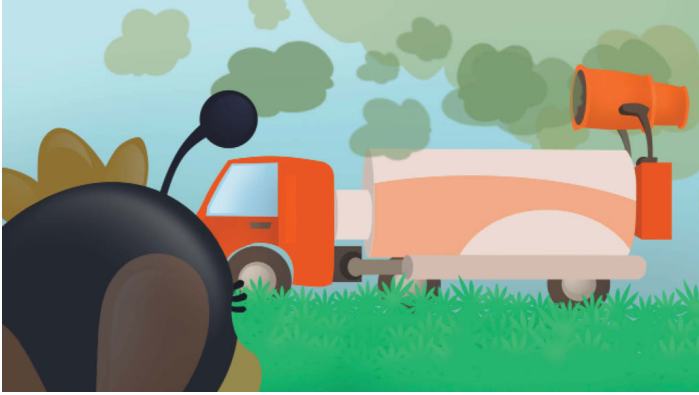
“Oh no!” she screamed and flew away as fast as her wings could carry her.



By a miracle, she survived but all the heat and smoke from the tractor smoke had hurt her. Now Nectar could hardly fly. Her tummy was growling so loudly and the smoke had made her chest hurt more with each breath she took. She hung head as she flew but when she looked up, she saw her beehive! She shouted, "Hive, sweet hive!" She was so excited and headed straight for the hive.



As she happily flew home, she smelled a terrible odor. As she drew near, she found millions of insects flying away as they screamed, "Insecticides, insecticide! Run for your lives!"



The insecticide truck was spraying insecticide everywhere.



Suddenly she remembered the safety training she took in the royal hive. She said, "I'll have to get to the beehive. There's no time and the worker bees won't do anything without their queen." Nectar shouted, "To the beehive!"

Instructions



She took off like a rocket until she finally caught the scent of her beehive. The workers also smelled her and some of them went out to welcome her. As soon as she saw them, she danced emergency evacuation dance. The news spread quickly and everyone was ready for immediate evacuation of the beehive.



The bees left in a great swarm, guided by their queen. And when bees all come together, they are unstoppable.



The bees voted to move their beehive far away from towels, tractors and insecticides. They worked hard to build it and get it ready.



Nectar proudly said, "Rescue missions are much more exciting than having fun collecting nectar and making honey and I rescued my own colony. Mission accomplished!"



THE END