



THE HONEY THIEF

By David Cyril

Dazzling Day

It all started on a dazzling sunny day.

The vibrant colours of the flowers, its lovely fragrances and the sweet chirping of the birds made the first day of summer spectacular. However, deep in the forest, it is always mysterious and dark, as the towering trees, like a canopy, blocks out most of the day light. The thin and smooth bark of these trees is home to many creatures both big and small.

In one of the trees, was a humongous hive, where countless bees lived along with their families.



The Queen Bee

One can never comprehend how busy life is for everyone.

Every living creature in this universe is busy in their own world.

So were the bees that lived in this hive, they were always busy doing their difficult tasks.

There was the one and only Queen bee who sat on her magical throne with all her majesty, while all the worker bees got the nectar from the flowers and helped to prepare their tasty honey.

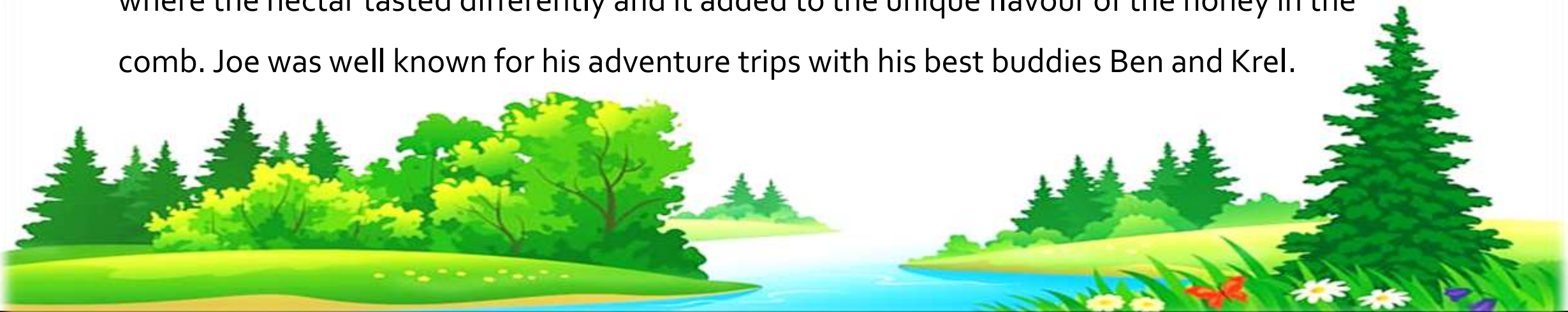
The Queen Bee is proud to have all the power to rule her hive while the worker bees and drones bow down to carry out her demands and orders.



Adventurous Joe



Along with all the bees, there lived a bee named Joe. Joe was a young, lively, adventurous little bee who worked tirelessly to collect nectar like the rest of his family. However, unlike the rest of them, instead of considering his task like a job, he brought excitement to his work. He would take deviations from his normal route for collecting nectar and fly far into the woods. He discovered a variety of flowers, near the rivers and streams, where the nectar tasted differently and it added to the unique flavour of the honey in the comb. Joe was well known for his adventure trips with his best buddies Ben and Krel.



Buddy Bees

Joe, Ben and Krel were best friends since their childhood.

They have joined Joe in many of his adventure trips and they always looked forward to having those trips when they had a break from work.

The trio shared the same chamber at night, had lots of fun and laughed at the crazy things they have done together.

Ben was a little older than Krel and Joe. Krel was the youngest and the craziest amongst them.



Ben & Krel

As the eldest and experienced bee in the group, Ben was mature in his ways and actions. He gave a lot of thought before he set out for any activity. Krel, on the other hand, would go wild and euphoric on their adventure trips and at times went missing in the forest.



At times, he did not follow direction from the older bees or his best buddies. This often would get him into trouble and land him in the Queen Bee's office. Joe and Ben always found some reasons to get Krel escape from his eminent punishment.

But amidst all of their adventurous trips and problems, Joe, Ben and Krel remained best buddies forever.



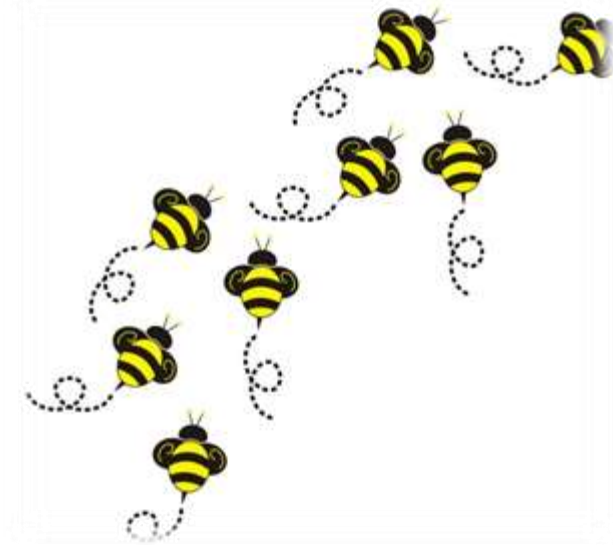
Panic Alarm

While everyone was busy with their work, Joe was fast asleep that lovely summer morning. He was having an amazing dream when suddenly a big alarm woke him up.

This alarm was no drill. Joe jumped up from his bed and rushed to the meeting point.

The Queen Bee appeared angry and announced to the crowd of bees that honey from ten of their reserve honey jars was missing.

Apparently, someone had stolen it !



Angry Queen

The crowd of bees could not believe their ears and were shocked. Everyone was buzzing and talking to each other.

The Queen Bee shouted, “ I need someone to investigate this matter and find out as soon as possible who is responsible for this unpardonable theft .” The Queen Bee pointed at Joe and said “ Joe, I want you to figure out where the honey is gone.

You can get help from anyone, but I need results as soon as possible.”

Joe half-heartedly accepted and decided to find out who the culprit was, with the help of his buddies Ben and Krel.



Investigation Begins

All three of them got together to devise a plan. First and foremost, they started to investigate the scene of the crime, to get some clues.

Joe decided to search the main area and advised Krel and Ben to check the surrounding two chambers. Joe reminded them to look for any unusual markings, any items that the thief may have dropped, any stains etc.

All they found was that the thief may have sneaked in and out through the windows, as the doors in the honey chambers always remain closed. As it was getting late, they decided to stay in the honey chamber for the night and guard the rest of the honey jars.



Spy Bees

They were disappointed as none of the clues led them to the thief.

It was getting darker, they were beginning to get worried, and they eventually fell asleep, as they were too tired of the search for clues.

The following day, a spy bee reported to the Queen that he found Joe and friends fast asleep in the chamber. The Queen Bee was raging with anger when she heard that.

She summoned Joe, Ben and Krel to meet her at the official chamber.

Ben had a strange feeling that the queen summoned them after knowing about their sleep in the chamber the previous night, when they were supposed to stay awake.

But, Joe and Krel felt that Queen was only looking for updates.



Trouble Again



When Joe and his friends arrived at the private chamber, the Queen Bee asked them if they had any leading clues and shouted at them saying, “I have let you in the honey chamber to investigate and get me results and not to sleep.” Ben, replied to the queen

“Your Majesty, we were not sleeping, but pretending to sleep, so as to trick the thief and to catch them red-handed .” Queen was delighted to hear that they were working hard on solving the case and allowed them to continue the investigation.

Getting out of the queens chamber, Joe and his friends were determined to find the thief by staying awake that night.



Shimmering Honey Jars

They went into the chamber and decided to hide in a corner quietly, waiting for the intruder to come in for the honey. As usual, Krel was the first one to sleep. Joe and Ben, however tried hard not to wink, but could not hold their sleep too long.

Later on during the night, Joe heard a strange sound and when he opened his eyes, he could not believe what he saw.... The Honey Jars shimmered and looked spooky. Joe decided to wake Ben and Krel to show them the scary sight. When they saw the spooky honey jars , Krel screamed 'Ahhhhhhhhh'!!! which made the spooky light in the honey jars to split and flash out like lightning through the window.



Are they Fireflies?



Joe, Ben and Krel were in shock. It took sometime to calm down and think of what had happened few minutes before their eyes. Joe broke the silence and asked, “ Ben, did you feel that the intruders in our chambers just flew like fireflies?”

Ben said , “Yes Joe, it could be them trying to steal our honey and it’s the light of fireflies in the honey jars that made it appear so spooky.” Krel agreed to what his buddies said “Now that we know who the robbers are, we should try and catch them.”

The buddies got all excited and started thinking of how to make a trap for the fire flies.

After a long discussion they finalised on a great plan.

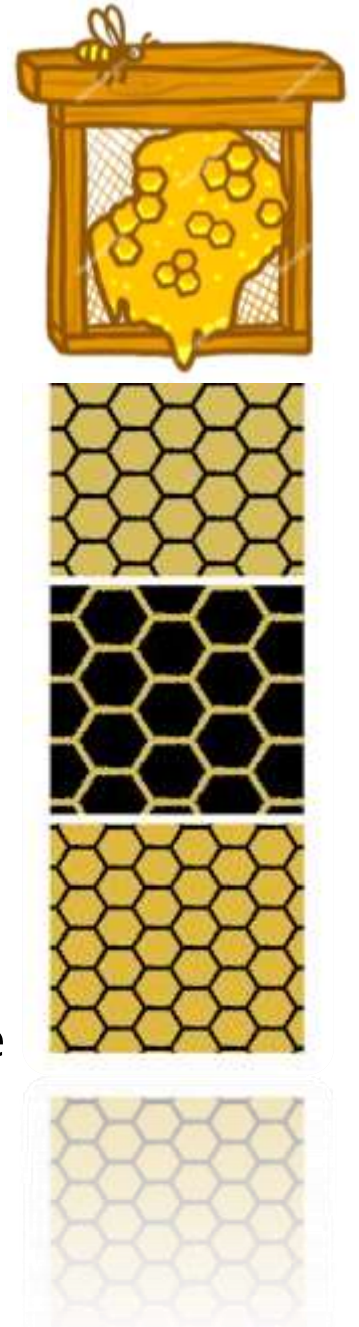


The Trap

Since the fireflies entered and exited through the window, they decided to coat the sticky honeycomb on the windows, so when the fireflies tried to get out through the windows their wings would get stuck to the honey.

Joe, Ben and Krel set many traps in the Honey Chamber and left the main door open, expecting the fireflies to come through it. Krel was assigned to hide behind the door and as soon as the flies flew in, he could shut the door and ring the panic alarm, in case of emergency, to alert fellow bees.

Joe and team decided to take a nap after, setting an alarm to wake up at 7.00 pm and be prepared for the long night.

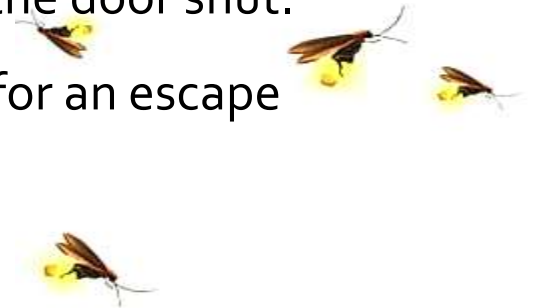


Fireflies are back



As soon as the wake up alarm rang, Joe and friends were up and ready for action. They hid in the chamber, expecting everything to work as planned. Around midnight, Krel heard the buzz, followed by the shimmering light of the fireflies. He quickly alerted Joe and Ben to get ready for the much awaited moment.

To their surprise the fireflies ignored the open door and detoured to the windows instead. The fireflies smartly noticed the gluey windows, and swerved back towards the front door. As soon as they flew into the chamber, Krel who was hiding outside, slammed the door shut. The sound of the door spooked the fireflies and they quickly scattered looking for an escape route.



Surprise Awaits



While some of the fireflies were working on an escape

plan, the rest of the fireflies stuck to their original plan - to steal the honey!!!

When they grabbed the jars of honey, the jars felt heavier than before. But they only had the option to grab and fly at that stage.

Earlier Joe and Krel, replaced the reserve honey jars with the empty ones and filled it with water and pebbles. This was Ben's idea, as he thought making the jars heavier, will make it more difficult for the fireflies to carry, and they will eventually fall into their trap.



Joe and Ben now turned on the lights in the chamber, and shouted “Surrender you are under arrest, for trespassing and theft.”



Trapped Fireflies

The fireflies were clueless, some of them tried to escape, but fell right on to the sticky traps. The others were in fright, and surrendered to the honey jars.

While Ben and Joe started questioning the trapped fireflies, Krel flew to the Queen's chamber to report the good news. The Queen was in delight and announced “Well done bees, now we will go the honey chamber for the verdict.”



THE BEE
AWARD

The Queen soon flew to the honey chamber to see the robbers. The happy Queen rewarded Joe, Ben and Krel with individual jars of reserve honey and honoured them with ‘special bee awards’ for their bravery and commitment.

Questioning continues...



Joe and his friends were delighted that their hard work paid off and the culprit was caught. He realised that the verdict was going to be announced soon by the queen and so had an important question for the fireflies.

With queen's permission, Joe asked the leader of the flies, "Why did you steal our honey, don't you know that it is bad?"

The leader firefly replied softly "Our family and friends ran out of food and are starving for the past week, we had no choice, but hesitantly took your honey." The firefly continued, "We are sorry for what we did and would never do it again, please let us go."



The Final Verdict



They all felt sorry for the fireflies. The Queen, asked Joe and friends. “What do you think, should we give them a moral punishment or let them go, as they plead so?”

Joe, Ben and Krel unanimously requested the Queen to let the fireflies go back to their families and offered to give back their reward of reserve honey to be given to the starving fireflies. The Queen appreciated their noble gesture and announced “Fireflies, you are all free to go, and we are happy to give you the food you need for your family and friends.”

The fireflies thanked the Queen in delight and happily flew to their homes.



Joe, Ben and Krel, the new heroes amongst the bees had a smile as always.

The end...