

The Badger and the Honey Guide



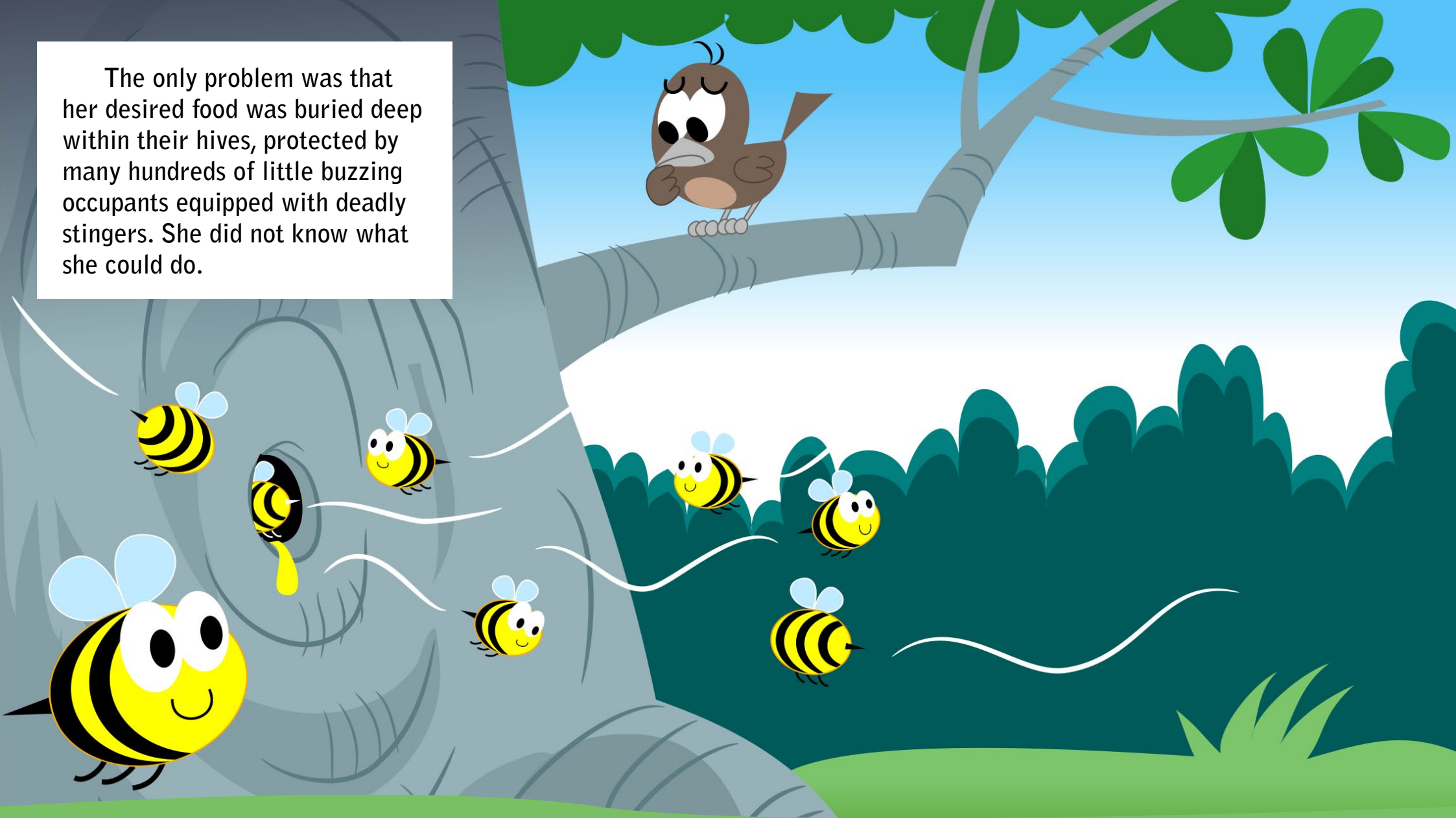
Once upon a time, long, long ago, in a great big forest, there lived a sad little bird and a honey badger. Though these two creatures were very different, their Creator had given them both

one thing in common—an attraction to bees' nests. The little bird was sad because, although she knew

where many swarming hives were located throughout the forest, she was never able to get to the goodies inside.

How she longed to feast upon the delicious beeswax that the bees stored their honey in.

The only problem was that her desired food was buried deep within their hives, protected by many hundreds of little buzzing occupants equipped with deadly stingers. She did not know what she could do.



One sunny morning the little bird sat atop a branch overhanging one of the largest hives she had ever seen. She sat there watching the bees as they flew in

and out of the old trunk that served as their home, trying to devise a plan. But the more she thought about it, the more hopeless it seemed.

The hive was sealed, with only a small opening for the bees to get in and out. Even if she could get close, the sting of the bees

would finish her off before she could eat anything. "No use enjoying a beeswax meal if it will be my last!" she chirped.



Just then, a honey badger came waddling by. He, too, had a passion for the honeycomb. He loved to suck all the delicious honey from it to the last drop. He readily raided the homes of bees, whenever he could find one. Honeycomb was his treasured and favorite delight.

What a find I have today, he gloated as he eyed the

same beehive protruding from the trunk. Setting his eyes on a section of the hive, he prepared to attack.

Fearlessly he stormed

towards the hive, ripped off a large portion, and made off with his delight in no time. Angry at the intrusion, the bees began to sting him

wildly, but, to the bird's surprise (for she was watching all), their stings did not seem to faze the badger in the least. He had no fear of the bees, for they could not harm him.

Just then, the bird thought of a plan. *Surely, if I can show the badger where he can find more honey, he will give me a share of the profits also. That way we can both help each other.*

The bird flew down to where the badger was finishing off the last of his treasured sweetness. "Those bees make pretty good stuff, don't they?" she chirped up.

"You're telling me!" the badger replied, licking his lips. "I just wish I could find it a little more often."

"Well, I think I can be of help," the little bird replied. "You see, I know where there are lots of hives, which means lots of honey."

"You do?"





"Sure! You see, bees also produce my favorite food, beeswax and larvae*, and I can easily detect them when they are around.

But the problem is that I can't get into the hive without the bees getting at me first. I noticed you don't have a problem with that."

"Ah, yes, those bees can never bother me. You see, I have a bee-proof coat.

"The only place they can get me

is on my nose, but even then it is just a tickle." He let out a laugh.

"Which is what makes my plan so

perfect," the bird declared.

"What plan?" the honey badger asked, curious to know what she had in mind.

"Well, it's like this: I can find the hives and show you where they are, and then you can do the job of opening the honeycomb. Then you can have the honey, and once the bees are scattered, I'll finish off the rest."

"I couldn't have thought of a better idea myself," cried the honey badger. "I think we're going to be the best of friends."

And so started an amazing partnership between the little bird, who became known as the honey guide, and the honey badger. From that day

on, whenever a honey guide would lead a badger to the site of a hive, in return he would always leave her a share in appreciation for her help.

Moral: Working together as a team produces the best results.

Text from "STEPS, Character Building: Working Together."
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