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Bee 2 Be

Abstract

There comes a time in everyone's life when the "Birds and the Bees" talk comes up. Whether rain or sunshine, it is a pivotal moment in one's development. It's the Achilles heel ready to be punctured, the balloon waiting to pop at a baby shower. While this may be true, it's an ode to passion. The realities you never even knew about become available, ready to grab. But what happens to the birds and the bees? Is it the fantasy that everyone thinks? It can be, but how often does it happen? "Bee 2 Be" is a story that takes a deeper dive into the marginalized voice prevalent in the grand tale of the Birds and the Bees. It is a think-piece exploring the messages of finding your voice, sensuality, and the human condition. Targeted toward the youth making big transitions, it challenges discipline and moral standing.

Part 1

It was the first day of Bee 2 Be Academy. The queen has been raving to me about this day for months. It was finally time for this larva to flourish into a bodacious bee. I'd worked since my childhood for this moment. "The illustrious Bee 2 Be Academy strives to develop gifted larvae into polished pillars of the Hive." Repeating this motto, I was astonished that I qualified for the program. The queen woke me up to the biggest breakfast anyone could dream of. Pollen fresh from South Africa, coated with aged nectar from the Himalayas. As I ate my food, I thought about all of the possibilities I had after academy. This baby bird can finally leave the cage and be everything I dreamed of.

Ready for my first day, I was ready to change the game. The queen told me to put my best foot forward, and things would fall in line. I wore my best abdomen gear matched with eyes full of ambition. It wasn't until I stepped into the Academy that I knew it wasn't what I hoped. My Superman turned out to be Lex Luther. I was succumbed to the standard of excellence where there was no fluidity, no creativity. To be a "polished pillar of the Hive" was just another cue to be like every other bee. Collecting pollen, protecting the hive. I wanted to be so much more. Soaring far and wide to the unspoken lands of the ancient valleys and underwater cities, I would be free. Life outside the Hive fascinated me, but I didn't know what frees the bird from the cage. This pulsing sensation already separated me from my peers. It was the only thing I could think about in my Fundamentals to Wax Structures class. The passion turned to lust and developed into a deeper construction of isolation.

The baby bird could no longer leave the cage. If anything, it got locked as I got to academy. Nobody talked to me, and everyone already had friends before academy started. I felt so powerless, worthless if I may. Did they think they were better than me? Am I not good enough to be here? No no, I worked to be here. I had to show them. I'll think of something that makes them see me, something that makes me stand out. I couldn't figure out what it was, but I knew something must be done.

The bird withered into the cage.

Part 2

I was lonely until I met Olethros. Sweet like honey, it was something about him that connected us. After my bad day at the Academy, I went outside of the Hive near the Hornet Burrow. Filled with ecstasy and fermented honey, the Burrow was the land of Terabithia. The

magical environment made larvae like me fly high like never before. I saw the bee I could become, and I loved it. The queen couldn't know I was there though. She told me about the pipe dreams they sold, and that it was better to take the traditional way to be free. That traditional way being Bee 2 Be Academy. She didn't believe in me and my dreams of flight, but you know who did? Olethros.

There was comfort in knowing him. The sacred relationship we had was my sunken place, but I needed it. Did I really like Olethros, or did I just find him necessary to move through? Everything in my life became a question. But while Olethros was there, nothing mattered. Venting my thoughts to Ole, he brought me to a new fascination.

Olethros said I should cut my stinger. As a matter of fact, he could do it for me. When he first told me that, I tore into laughter in the Burrow. "Me? Without a Stinger? You must be on ferm (fermented honey)!" Living without a stinger? It quite literally isn't possible. I heard the tales of people who lived without their stinger; they were nothing better than the Grinch in Whoville. They're washed away to be nothing but wasted potential. But there was something about it that wanted me to know more. Maybe being stingerless was better.

But I can't. I can't bring myself to do it. Already outside with Ole, it was becoming too late to back out. I made this commitment. I'll prove to the larvae in the academy I can be whatever they said I can't. Then they'll respect me. Everyone who shuts me down will then bow to me and my stingerless reign. I'll start a new pillar of the Hive, one that larvae thought only lived in dreams. They needed the freedom I sought; they just didn't know it. Maybe being the Grinch of the Hive wasn't so bad after all. Nonetheless, I wouldn't. I knew my dreams only

pushed through so far. Ole was ready, but I'm here perplexed, ready to risk it all. Scared and confused, it began.

It seemed simple at first. Ole would just remove the stinger, and that would be that. I wanted my stinger though. It was a part of me I realized I didn't want gone. My stinger is what makes me real. I didn't have comfort in my abdomen I couldn't see my beauty. So, you know what, I'm going to keep it. I could be who I wanted with my stinger, that wasn't the problem. "Ole, I think it's best if"- the sound of a swift rip pierced my thoughts. It was worse than humans destroying the Hive.

I couldn't fathom what was going on. The crashing sensation of losing my stinger was a pain I wasn't used to. Rushing thoughts of the Queen telling me everything I could have been haunted me. I never wanted to let her down, I never wanted to do this. I didn't even get through my first week of Bee 2 Be Academy. What was it for? Who was it for? I felt like I had given up my dream of everything I once wanted. Nobody respects a Bee without a stinger, they're not strong enough. I probably couldn't even graduate from the Academy. The motto I lived by couldn't save me.

Hmph. Guess I didn't want it bad enough. I didn't deserve to work besides the Queen.

Everything was now over.

Part 3

Drowning in disillusionment, I wanted to take everyone's stingers. I mean, if I lost mine then shouldn't everyone else? They want everyone to be all the same anyway. When I expected

for my wings to flourish and set me free from the cage, the lock doubled on it instead. The bird now seamlessly wallows in the cage waiting for someone or something to set it free.

I never saw Olethros again. I thought it was my fault, the way I freaked out not having my stinger. All he wanted to do was help me reach my highest potential. He was my Achilles heel, and I was incomplete without him. He got to walk away, while I wallowed in the fermented honey I harvested. Occasionally I wonder where he is, if he still hangs out at the Burrow, or if he's on to those same underwater seas and ancient valleys. He used to be the one who got away, but I found out it was me. Away from it all, I finally found the key to the cage.

I was the key. Beauty and passion were flowing within me, waiting to be seen. Living without a stinger taught me so much about myself that I didn't even think was there. I can still shine bright being myself, and I didn't need to fit in with any other larvae. But most importantly, I can be free. It was time to take the locks off the cage and finally soar.

When I got back to the Academy, everyone was flabbergasted. Nobody thought it was possible, but I felt better than ever. All the myths about no stingers were just a tool to keep bees typical. Predictable. Whatever. My newfound sense of identity helped me flourish into the bee I now became. So, I did it. It was time I truly faced my reality and soared in the sky. I didn't tell anybody, but I went to the Hornet Burrow one last time. Ole wasn't there, so I knew it was my sign. I said my goodbyes to the Queen and the Academy then headed to the valley. It was my first stop on the quest of Beehood.

The bird is free, and the bee can finally see.