

Radio play: Whoppers! Bees Will Be Bees

CHARACTERS

In the World:

COLONEL DIGBY.....a 704-year-old whopper-
THROCKMORTON.....teller
GEORGE BINSLEY.....a failed banker

In the Story:

HANK DONGLEDUNGLE.....a boy turned bee
KICK.....his best friend
MISERABLE OLD MAN
A RESENTFUL BEE
REVEREND SNAVELY-GLOVER.....a thin ill ancient vicar
HANK'S MA
THEODORIC HUMSHAUGH.....a farmer
AN UNFORTUNATE WASP
SERGEANT BEETYOUUP.....of the bee police
FOREMAN BEE
LOST BEE
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN BEE
CLERK OF THE COURT BEE
JASPER DWAIN WUZZABOOM.....a wasp with criminal
intentions
PSYCHIATRIST BEE

SCENE 1

GRAMS DURING INTRODUCTION WE HEAR DUKE ELLINGTON'S 'TAKE THE TRAIN'.

FX FADE DOWN MUSIC. BRING QUICKLY UP SOUND OF CHOO-CHOOING OF TRAIN, HUBBUB OF PASSENGERS, THROCKMORTON IS BREEZING QUICKLY DOWN THE AISLE.

THROCKMORTON: 'Underneath the mango tree my honey...' Good morning, sir. How are you? Have you lost a bunion, madam? I found this one in the buffet car.

WOMAN: Errrh!

THROCKMORTON: (INNOCENTLY) Not yours, then.

THROCKMORTON: (CLOSE, OVERSEEING THIS, QUICKLY, EXCITED) That's me there! On that stupid train! I'm going to Vallyvostock to wrestle a herd of particularly bad tempered mammoths. Well, to tell the truth, I'm on my way to Bury St. Edmonds to strangle a bishop. (SIGHS WITH ADMIRATION) Aren't I handsome?

THROCKMORTON: (ON TRAIN) This seat taken, is it?

GEORGE: (FROM BEHIND A RUSTLE OF NEWSPAPER, IRRITATED) Don't think so.

THROCKMORTON: Colonel Digby Throckmorton.

GEORGE: (RELUCTANTLY) Good morning.

THROCKMORTON: Would you like to play cards?

GEORGE: No thank you.

THROCKMORTON: Billiards?

GEORGE: (ANGRILY SHAKING NEWSPAPER) I'm reading about the crisis, if you don't mind.

THROCKMORTON: (DISAPPOINTED) Oh! (SUDDENLY EXCITED) Ooooooh, a tunnel!

FX

ACOUSTIC OF TRAIN GOING THROUGH TUNNEL

THROCKMORTON: (IN TUNNEL, LAUGHS WITH GLEE) I do so like tunnels!
Don't you? I'm 704-years-old you know. (MORE SERIOUS) I
had a thousand and twelve nephews once upon a time.
Nearly all dead now.

GEORGE: Tragic.

THROCKMORTON: Goodness, no. They were all horrible. Especially on your
side of the family.

GEORGE: But we're not related. We've just met.

THROCKMORTON: What are you sticking your nose into my business for
then?!! Damned cheek!

SPOT/FX

GEORGE HAS BEEN DRIVEN MAD. HE JUMPS UP AND DOWN ON THE
SEAT LIKE A FURIOUS CHILD, THE TWANGING OF THE SEAT'S
SPRINGS

GEORGE: Tell me a story!!! I WANT YOU TO TELL ME A STORY!!!
About the bees! The bees!

THROCKMORTON: All right, hold your horses.

SPOT/FX

THE DISTANT WHINNEY OF A MAD HORSE

GEORGE IS WHIMPERING, SUCKING HIS THUMB AS THROCKMORTON
COMMENCES HIS TALK....

SCENE 2

FX

EXTERIOR ACOUSTIC. IN BACKGROUND, THE TWITTERING OF
BIRDS. IN FOREGROUND, THE BUZZING OF BEES, TO AND FRO
LIKE CARS ON A MOTORWAY

IN THE 'BEE STORY' THROCKMORTON AND GEORGE SPEAK, NOT
FROM THE TRAIN, BUT CLOSER, DIRECTLY TO US...

THROCKMORTON: (REPEATS THE WORD, SAVOURING IT) Bees! Beezzz! Bease!
Beeeeeeeeees! (A PAUSE) B-eee-zzz! What was this story
about again?

GEORGE: (NOT SURE) Bees?

THROCKMORTON: Beeeess, of course. (SUDDENLY LAUNCHES IN) My nephew
Hank...his real name was Shirley, but we called him
Hank...and his best friend, Kick, so called because he
ate a lot of potatoes...were crouched down in the middle
of the most charming country lane. This was...what:
1894. No, I tell a lie, it was a week last
Thursday...no, 1894...no, three years ago come Wednesday
fortnight. Do you know what they were doing?

GEORGE: Nope.

THROCKMORTON: They were torturing a bee!

FX THE BEE BUZZING ANGRILY, THE BOYS CHUCKLING WICKEDLY

KICK: Squish him, go on!

THROCKMORTON: Of course, we didn't have them when I was a boy.

GEORGE: Bees?

THROCKMORTON: Potatoes. (BACK TO HIS STORY) They had him under a
stick, were just about to squish him...when a miserable
old man jumped out of a tree...

FX SOUND OF THE MISERABLE OLD MAN JUMPING OUT OF THE TREE
AND RUNNING UP THE LANE

MISERABLE OLD Here, what are you doing?

MAN:

HANK: Who cares?

KICK: We're just playing. Buzz off.

MIS. OLD MAN: You are killing that innocent beast!

HANK: It's nowt but a bee, you stupid old nit!

KICK: (DELIGHTED AT HIS JOKE) It's nowt but a nit, you stupid old bee!

HANK AND KICK CHUCKLE TOGETHER

MIS. OLD MAN: Release it, I command you!

HANK: Buzz off, you, or I'll squish it good and proper!

MIS. OLD MAN: Please boys: do try, if you will, to see this situation from the bee's point of view.

FX (THEY GIGGLE) THE BEE STRUGGLING WITH A DESPERATE BUZZ

MIS. OLD MAN: (WITH A SUDDEN COLD AUTHORITY IN HIS VOICE, SLOW)
Release the bee...or I shall MAKE YOU see things from a bee's point of view. I shall turn you into bees.

THEY BLOW RASPBERRIES AND GIGGLE

HANK: (THROUGH HIS LAUGHTER) Squishy-squish-squish-squishsquish!

MIS. OLD MAN: So be it my young sirs...(MUMBLES A SPELL)
Ooodoodoodoopadaddadda... ooodoodoodoopadaddadda...
whizzy-whizzy-whoosh-whoosh.

FX THE TINKLE OF CHIMES IN A WINDOW, A TOILET BEING FLUSHED, A PARROT SQUARKS

KICK: Here, Hank...

HANK: What is it, Kick, my old stomper?

KICK: Your face looks all funny. You've got hundreds of eyes.

HANK: Never have.

KICK: Have.

HANK: Haven't!

KICK: Have!

HANK: Haven't!!! You have. YOU'VE got hundreds of eyes, not me! Buzzzzzz....!

KICK: I've got TWO eyes! TWO!!!! Buzzzzzz.....!

HANK: Hundreds of eyes! And a horrible chewy mouth full of hair! And stalks growing out of your head.

KICK: (REALIZES IT'S TRUE) Eughrrr!

HANK: But who gave you that ace orange pullover?

KICK: (A WORRIED TREMBLE IN HIS VOICE) Same fella that gave you that extra pair of legs.

HANK: (REALIZING WITH SAD RESIGNATION) Oh! (IN A SMALL WORRIED VOICE) Kick....?

KICK: Uh-huh.

HANK: He has, hasn't he?

KICK: Lookszzzz like it.

HANK: (TAKING OFF AS HE SAYS THIS) He's turned us into beezzzzzz.....

FX HANK'S 'beezzzzzz...' TURNS INTO A BEE'S FLIGHT, BUZZING TO AND FRO, HE CALLS AS HE SWOOPS PAST:

HANK: (SWOOPING ABOVE US FROM LEFT TO RIGHT) Whoooooooooooo! Cummon, Kick. Buzz yer wings!

FX WE STAY ON THE GROUND WITH KICK, CONSTIPATED SOUND EFFECTS FROM HIM AS HE TRIES TO START HIS WINGS, HANK, MEANWHILE FLIES UP AND AROUND AND PAST, WHOOPING JOYFULLY

HANK: My what outta your what?

FX STUCK TOGETHER THEIR BUZZING PUTTERS OUT, THEY INTO A SPIN, THEY YELL 'Arrrrrrrhhhh!!!!', THEIR CRASH IS LIKE THAT OF A HORSE, HAVING BEEN SHOT FROM A CANNON, LANDING IN A FOREST OF DRY TWIGS FROM WHICH CRACKED CHINA CUPS WERE HANGING

MIS. OLD MAN: (LAUGHING)

KICK: You okay, Hank? Hank?

HANK: (COMING TO) Are we on the ground?

KICK: We're on the ground.

HANK: (MOANS, WORRIED) Something's snapped off. Don't know what it is.

SPOT/FX HE SHAKES IT, IT SOUNDS LIKE A BAG OF LAMB CHOPS

KICK: Oh, that's nothing. You don't need that.

HANK: You've got one.

KICK: I'll snap mine off, shall I, then we're equals.

SPOT/FX HE SNAPS OFF THIS INESSENTIAL ORGAN; A SOUND LIKE CELERY BEING TWISTED IN TWO

KICK: There!

HANK: You're a real pal, Kick.

MIS. OLD MAN: (LAUGHING RIGHT OVER THEM)

HANK: What's so funny, you old nit!

MIS. OLD MAN: (HIS VOICE GIGANTIC, ALL-PERVADING NOW, PROUD AND SURPRISED AT HIS MAGICAL PROWESS) I said I would, and I did, didn't I though!

KICK: Let's get him!

HANK: Yeah, let's gerrim!

FX THEIR BUZZING STARTS UP LIKE MOTORBOATS AT THE BEGINNING OF A MOTORBOAT RACE

MIS. OLD MAN: (RUNNING OFF IN FRIGHT) Erghhh! Eurghhh! Help! Bees! Mad bees!

FX/SPOT THE SOUND OF THE OLD MAN RUNNING OFF THROUGH BRACKEN, SNAPPING DRY TWIGS, HIS TROUSERS BEING TORN BY BRAMBLES

HANK: Stingers out!

KICK: Stingers out! Go for his nose!

HANK: His what?

MIS. OLD MAN: (CRYING IN MID-DISTANCE AS HE RUNS) Not my nose! Please! Anything but that!

KICK: His bum then!

MIS. OLD MAN: No! No! (HE FALLS OVER A BRIDGE INTO A RIVER)
Arrrrrrrrrrrrhhhhhhhhhh!

FX A HUGE SPLASHY SPLASH, AS SPLASHY AS AN ELEPHANT FALLING INTO A SWIMMING POOL FROM A GREAT HEIGHT

SCENE 3

FX AFTER THE SPLASHING: BUZZING APPROACHING FROM THE DISTANCE, THE BOY-BEES HOVER

HANK: Where'd he go?

KICK: He's under the water.

HANK: Drowned, is he?

KICK: Naw...there he is, look. He's holding his breath.

HANK: We'll wait till he comes up then and get his nose.

KICK: Yer on.

FX SUDDENLY A HEAVY BUZZ BESIDE THEM

HANK: Is it just me or can you hear a buzzing sound?

RESENTFUL BEE: (IN A DEEP, SINISTER, SLOW, HONEY-THICK VOICE) Hello, boyzzzz. Remember me-zzzzzzz.

KICK: Oh, great, Hank! It's another bee.

RESENTFUL BEE: I bee a big bumbler-bee-zzzzzzzzzzzzz with a beezzzzz in eeeeeees bonnet-zzzzz.

HANK: (WHISPERS) Kick, it's him...him that we were squishing before.

KICK: Oh-O.

HANK: (WITH SICKLY LAUGHTER, TO RESENTFUL BEE) We'd love to stay for a chat, but I promised my Uncle Digby I'd wash his Irish Wolfhound for him.

KICK: ...and I'm playing cricket in the swimming baths at half-past.

RESENTFUL BEE: Oh, but youzzzz can't bee going yet-zzzzz.

HANK: No?

RESENTFUL BEE: I haven't done horrible thingzzzzzz to youzzzz yet. Horrible painful thingzzzzzzzzzzzz.

HANK: (WHISPERS TO KICK) I think we'd better buzz off.

KICK: (WHISPERS BACK) We'd better had.

THEY EACH DO A SICKLY LAUGH IN THE RESENTFUL BEE'S DIRECTION

HANK: BUZZ OFF, KICK!!!!!!

FX IMMEDIATELY ON HANKS'S ORDER THE BEE-BOYS ZOOM OFF FOR ALL THEY'RE WORTH. A SWIFT SPINNING BUZZ....

RESENTFUL BEE: (LEFT BEHIND, SAYS SLOWLY WITH ICY DETERMINATION) I bee coming after youzzzzzz. I'll bee right behind youzzzzzzzz.

FX THE RESENTFUL BEE STARTS UP HIS MOTOR AND ZOOMS AFTER LIKE A HELICOPTER. AS HE REACHES THE DISTANCE: CLOSE, THE MISERABLE OLD MAN SURFACES FROM THE WATER WITH A HUGE GASP....

MIS. OLD MAN: (DRIPPING, GASPING) Have they gone?

SCENE 4

GRAMS/FX BRING UP 'THE FLIGHT OF THE BUMBLE BEE' STARTING AT ITS NORMAL SPEED BUT GETTING GRADUALLY FASTER AND FASTER. THE BOY-BEES FLY WITH A WHOOSH OF WIND, BUZZING AT FULLEST POSSIBLE BUZZ

SCENE 5

HANK: (CALLING ABOVE THE BUZZ) We're going too fast. I can't see where I'm going!

KICK: (ZOOMING PAST US) He's right behind!!!!

FX THE RESENTFUL BEE'S HEAVY BUZZ IS SUDDENLY UPON US

RESENTFUL BEE: (SLOW BUT SURE) I bee right bee-hind. This bee me and I bee right bee-hind.

HANK: (CALLING BACK) We didn't mean it!!! We're sorry!!!

RESENTFUL It bee too late for that, it bee.

BEE:

FX THE BEE-BOYS ARE PANTING WITH EXHAUSTION. THEIR WINGS CREAK

HANK: I can't fly no further. I'm running out of petrol.

FX A RUNNING-OUT-OF-PETROL PHUTTING IN HIS BUZZING

KICK: Just another mile, Hank. There's a fête at the church today. We can hide in someone's pocket. Maybe the vicar will swat our fat friend for us.

SCENE 6

FX THE HUMAN BUZZ OF HUMANS AT A FÊTE, CLINK OF GLASSES, CHATTER AND POLITE LAUGHTER

HANK'S MA: (APPROACHING) You've a lovely day for it, Vicar.

REV. SNAVELY-(A THIN ILL ANCIENT VOICE) My barometer said rain. A **GLOVER:** lesson, no doubt, that we must put our trust in the Lord... (A VICARISH CHUCKLE) ...and not barometers.

FX THE SUBTLE SOUND OF BUZZING AND PANTING

Can I hear a bee?

HANK'S MA: You must meet my brother, Vicar. Colonel Throckmorton. He was here a moment ago wrestling with an enormous dirty dog.

REV. SNAVELY-Two bees, I'm sure.

G:

HANK'S MA: He's 704-years-old, you know.

FX LOUDER BUZZING OF BEES...THE SOUND OF BEES BUZZING UNDER A CARPET!

REV. SNAVELY-704. That's very old for a dog.

G:

HANK'S MA: No, my brother. He's 704.

REV. SNAVELY-Poor man. He must be even more decrepit than me.

G:

HANK'S MA: Oh, he's nothing like you, Vicar. He's as strong as a brontosaurushorse and not the least bit senile.

REV. SNAVELY-(DISAPPOINTED) Oh.

G:

SCENE 6

THROCKMORTON:(CLOSE, TO GEORGE AND US) Shall I tell you a secret about the vicar? (WHISPERS) In 1962 he had too much wine at a wedding reception, woke up the next morning upside-down in the font without a hair left on his head. Ever since, he's worn a horrible yellow wig that looks like an undercooked omelette.

FX UNDER-THE-SHEETS TYPE ACOUSTIC:

KICK: (IN A HUSHED WHISPER) Where are we?

HANK: Shhhhh! We're hiding-zzzzzzz.

KICK: But where?

HANK: Up there looks like an undercooked omelette, except it's all hairy. Down here...

SPOT/FX (STAMPS HIS FEET, MAKING SOUND LIKE THE TAPPING OF A SPOON ON A SOFT-BOILED EGG)

...looks like a huge egg of some sort. Anyway, it's an ace hiding place. That angry bee will never find us here. Never! Never in a million years!

SCENE 7

FX THE HEAVY BUZZ OF THE RESENTFUL BEE CIRCLING THE VICAR'S HEAD

RESENTFUL BEE: I bee here. This bee me and I bee here, I bee-zzzzz. You bee hiding under that vicar's wig....I knowzzzzzzzzz.....

REV. SNAVELY-(IN A FLAP, JUMPING ABOUT) Oh! Oh! Bee gone! You devilish thing you! Bee gone!

FARMER HUMSHAUGH: Stand still, Vicar. There's a bee on your nose. I'll whack him for yer.

SPOT/FX A THWONK, A VICARISH CRY FROM THE VICAR, THE CRASH OF PLATES, SPOONS AND A SLURP OF TRIFLE

FARMER HUMSHAUGH: Sorry, Vicar. Don't know me own strength.
(A MOAN FROM THE VICAR)

HANK'S MA: I don't like to say this, Vicar, but your hair has flown away.

REV. SNAVELY-(CRESTFALLEN) So I see...and correct me if I'm wrong, but am I not sitting in the trifle?

FX THE ANGRY WOOF OF AN IRISH WOLFHOUND. A LAST STRANGLED CRY FROM THE VICAR

SCENE 8

THROCKMORTON:(TO GEORGE AND US) What place is the most dangerous place in all the world for a bee?

GEORGE: Middlesborough.

THROCKMORTON:No.

GEORGE: Err...Clacton-on-Sea.

THROCKMORTON:No.

GEORGE: Errr...Oh, I know!

FX A HOLLOW ACOUSTIC, LIKE THE INSIDE OF A DRUM:

KICK: (WHISPERS) Now where are we?

HANK: (SOFTLY, AMID SLURPS) Hey, this gooey stuff tastes great-zzzz. Shoot yer tongue into it! Mmmmmmmmmmmmmmm-strawberrieszzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz!

(KICK SLURPS HORRIBLY WHILE HANK MUSES)

HANK: (SOFTLY, TO HIMSELF) That must have been the vicarage window we flew through...then where did we go?

KICK: (A LITTLE LOUDER) No more worries now-zzzz. Our angry friend got hisself well and truly squished. Should we feel sorry for him, now that we're bees as well? Yes, I'm sorry for him. Are you sorry for him, Hank?

HANK: NO!!!!

KICK: (EATING DISGUSTINGLY) Mmmmm, I love being a bee! You can eat really disgustingly!

HANK: (TO HIMSELF, WITH GROWING REALIZATION) Oh, no. Oh, no. Kick... (KICK CONTINUES EATING) Kick....Ohhhhh!
(SHOUTS, FILLING THE JAR WITH HIS ECHO) WE'RE IN A JAM-JAR!!!!!!

KICK: NO! No! Help! HELP!

HANK: How could we have been so stupid! IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT!!!!

KICK: My fault?!

HANK: You're better at being a bee than I am.

KICK: (TEARFULLY) I was enjoying it more, that's all. I don't like this, though.

FX A WEAK HALF-BUZZ THAT IS ALSO A SNEERING MOAN COMES FROM NEARBY

HANK: There's somebody over there.

FX THEY HURRY OVER, MAKING SLURPY STICKY FOOTSTEPS

KICK: Looks like a wasp to me.

UNFORTUNATE WASP: (THE SHARP VILLAINOUS VOICE OF AN OBVIOUSLY CROOKED SOLICITOR) I can't see. My eyes are all jammed up. Are you brothers of mine?

HANK: We're boys.

KICK: Bees, actually. Bee-boys, anyway. Or boy-bees. That's Hank, he's a boy-bee. I'm Kick; I'm a bee-boy.

HANK: (ANGUISHED) We must be turning into bees inside our heads, or we wouldn't have been so daft as to get stuck in here.

KICK: Nonsense. It's a mistake anyone could make.

UNFORTUNATE WASP: No, he's right. You're daft. I know that you're daft because I'm daft too. I am, daft. I'm daft. I'm always getting stuck in these places. Now I'm stuck for good.

SPOT A GRUFF MANLY VOICE SHOUTS FROM ABOVE, AS IF THROUGH A MEGAPHONE, ECHOING IN THE JAR

SERGEANT BEETYOUUP: Hoi! Hoi! You two workers! This is Sergeant Beetyouup of the Bee Police. Here I am. At the hole in the lid.

KICK: Oh, yeah. We can see you.

SGT. BEETYOUUP: What did the Queen tell you about jam-jarzzzzzzzzzzzz? Eh? Eh? Buzz up here this instant or I'll bee inside beside yerzzzzzzzzzzzz!

HANK: What about him?

SGT. (SCATHINGLY) Leave him to stew. He's a wasp.

BEETYOUUP:

FX THE BOY-BEES GET THEIR BUZZES GOING

HANK: (CALLING SADLY AS HE FLIES AWAY) So long, wasp. I hope everything turns out all right for you.

UNFORTUNATE WASP: (CALLS WEAKLY, CONTRITE AND PATHETIC) Tell Wuzzaboom I'm sorry, if you see him, will yazzz?

HANK: (HIGH UP, DISTANTLY) Wuzzaboom, got it.

SCENE 9

THROCKMORTON: (CLOSE, STORYTELLING) So Sergeant Beetyouup of the Bee Police took my nephew Hank and his friend Kick with him as he flew around his beat.....

SGT. (CALLS WHILE FLYING, IN BACKGROUND) Mind how you buzz.

BEETYOUUP: Mind how you buzz.

THROCKMORTON: ...rounding up other bees who'd got themselves into trouble, got lost, or somehow forgot they were bees.

SGT. Mind how you buzz. Evening all.

BEETYOUUP:

THROCKMORTON: Yes, it was evening, and the sun was an orange ball tangled in the hedgerows...and the windows of the church were flashing with orange as if the church was full of orange juice. It would have been time for Hank and Kick to go home for tea, to tell their sisters of the adventures they'd had that day, to sleep and dream in their own beds. But worker bees do not sleep. They work. Day and night and always until they drop. Is this your bunion by any chance?

GEORGE: Erm, no. I can still feel mine.

THROCKMORTON: They flew halfway up the church steeple and through the mouth of the gargoyle. (A LOUD WHISPER) They were in a hive... (BRING IN SOUND OF A TRILLION BEES BUZZING, TALKING IN UNISON) ...a huge icky-sticky, orangey-waxy place, a city of bees, with more corridors than all the buildings in London put together. And bees, wherever you looked, wherever you stood, wherever you went. Bees! Bease! Buzzy-buzzy-Beezzzzzz! Bees!

FX A TRILLION BEES BUZZING AND TALKING.....

SCENE

10

FX THE BUZZING IS MORE DISTANT

SGT. Found this daft-looking bee stuck in a dog's ear,
BEETYOUUP: Foreman.

LOST BEE: (PIPING UP IN BACKGROUND) This isn't my hive, I'm sure.
Ours is much tidier.

SGT. And these two workers had themselves stuck in a jam-jar
BEETYOUUP: in the vicarage.

FOREMAN BEE: (TOUCHED WITH YORKSHIRE) Jam-jar! Don't you listen to
nuffink the Queen tells yerzzzzzzz?!!!

HANK: Look, this is a mistake. We're not bees at all.

KICK: (WHISPERS TO HANK) Cummon, Hank. Let's bee bees for a
while. There's nothing wrong with beeing a bee.

HANK: (CALLS WITH HUMAN POMPOSITTY) My friend and I aren't
bees. We're not bees.

LOST BEE: I'm not a bee neither. I'm a pigmy hippopotamus.
(CHUCKLES LIKE A LUNATIC)

FOREMAN BEE: He with you?

HANK/KICK: We never saw him before.

KICK: Look, what my friend says is true, we're not bees, but we don't mind....

HANK: Yes we do! We're not Beezzzzzz!

FOREMAN BEE: Youzzzz all pigmy hipplypratigrouses, then?

HANK: Don't be silly....we're...

FOREMAN BEE: (FURIOUS AND SHOCKED) Silly! Silly! You hear that, Sergeant Beetyouup!

SGT. (UNBELIEVING) Naw, I couldn't have heard what I thunked

BEETYOUUP: I did.

FOREMAN BEE: (MORE CONFUSED AND HURT THAN ANGRY) I bee the Foreman, see. I'm not a Drone, I bee the Foreman. A Foreman can't bee silly. All this, huge bee-autiful hive you seezzzzzz around yerzzzzzz, I bee its Foreman.

SGT. He's the Foreman.

BEETYOUUP:

FOREMAN BEE: That bee right. The Foreman.

KICK: Excuse me, Mr. Foreman, but if I worked really hard at being a bee could I bee Foreman like you one day? I'd like to bee just like you.

FOREMAN BEE: You can't bee the Foreman! I'm the Foreman. (ASIDE TO SERGEANT BEETYOUUP) He wants to bee Foreman!

LOST BEE: You're not the Foreman! The Foreman's got a pink moustache!

FOREMAN BEE: (STUTTERS) Bee-bee-bee-bee-bee....I'll show youzzzz who bee the Foreman!!!! Sergeant!

SGT. Foreman!

BEETYOUUP:

FOREMAN BEE: Take these three hippyfatusnasties down to the grub department.

LOST BEE: (WHISPERS) We've had it now!

HANK: Have we?

LOST BEE: It bee horrible down there, it bee. (LAUGHS INSANELY)
Hot and sticky and the chewing sends you
buzzyclonkmy.....heeeee.....heeeeezzzzzzzz.....

SGT. BEETYOUUP: (TAKING THEM AWAY) Buzz along now, workers. Buzz along.

SCENE

11

GRAMS/FX A QUICK SNATCH OF ARTHUR ASKEY SINGING HIS 'BEE' SONG. BRING UP SOUND OF THE BUZZING HIVE, THEN OVER THAT, TAKING IT AWAY, THE SOUND OF BEE-GRUBS CHEWING, CLOSE. IT IS A SOUND LIKE A HORSE CHEWING HONEY-SOAKED NEWSPAPERS UNDERWATER

HANK: (EXHAUSTED) Don't they ever stop eating??!!!

KICK: They're the future of the hive, Hank. The Foreman has given us a great responsibility. We must do our best.

FX A HEAVE OF EFFORT FROM KICK AS HE THROWS A SPLASH OF GRUB-FOOD AT A GRUB

HANK: I want to bee a boy again. I want to be by myself in my room with a book that I can stop reading to squash a bee on my windowpane. THAT BUZZING!!! IT WON'T NEVER STOP!!! IT WON'T NEVER!!!!

KICK: Stop complaining and put your back into it. The grubs are hungry. (THROWS MORE FOOD IN) That makes 47 helpings I've given it since it last burped.

FX IT BURPS AGAIN

HANK: (MISERABLY, WHILE HEAVING FOOD IN) I want to be myself again. I want to play cricket. I want knees with scabs on.

KICK: (ENTHUSIASTICALLY, ANOTHER HEAVE AND ANOTHER SPLASH) One helping. (TRYING TO GET HANK INVOLVED) Hank! Hank! Betya I can reach fifty helpings before it burps again. (HEAVES OF EFFORT, SPLASHES) One helping! Two! Helpings! Three helpings! Four! Five! ha-ha! This is the life! Eight helpings! Nine helpings!

FX IT BURPS

HANK: (FULL OF RESENTMENT) It burped.

KICK: Didn't not!

HANK: Burped!

FX IT BURPS AGAIN

HANK: It burped again!

KICK: Didn't never! It was that one there! (GETS BACK TO WORK) Ten helpings! Eleven helpings! 12 helpings! Cummon, Hank! Get to work! You want the Foreman to be proud of uzzzzz, don't you?

HANK: I hate the Foreman! I hate the Foreman! He's a bee!

KICK: You get to work this minute or I'll show you the sharp end of my stinger.

HANK: Oh, yeah? I've got a stinger too, somewhere.

KICK: Cummon Hank, there's 8,643 grubs in here and they've all got to be fed.

HANK: (GIVES IN) All right, all right.

FX A NEARBY HUNGRY BEE-GROWL. A FARAWAY ONE. A LITTLE TUNE OF BEE-GROWLS WITH RARE BURPS ACCOMPANYING

SCENE

12

FX

SOMEWHERE DOWN THE CORRIDOR: A TRUMPET FANFARE. AS THE QUEEN APPROACHES SHE REASSURES THE RANKS OF BEE-GRUBS

QUEEN: Hello, all my babies. Hello. How amusing you all are. I'm very amused. Couldn't bee more amused. Hello, babies.

KICK: Hank!

HANK: (A HEAVE OF EFFORT, A SPLASH) This thing's had 62 helpings and still wants more.

KICK: (COULDN'T BE MORE IMPRESSED) It's the Queen! She's coming this way. The Queen!

HANK: What Queen's this?

KICK: OUR Queen!

HANK: Queen Elizabeth the Second?

KICK: No! OUR Queen. OURS.

FX

THE QUEEN APPROACHES. HER WINGS BUZZ THE TUNE OF 'GOD SAVE THE QUEEN'

QUEEN: Ah, two loyal worker bees. (AS IF MEETING THEM ON A ROYAL WALKABOUT)

KICK: (MUTTERS AWESTRUCK) Oh, your Majesty, this is such an honour, such a deep honour....

QUEEN: And what do you do?

HANK: We feed the maggots.

QUEEN: (HIGHLY OFFENDED) MAGGOTS!!!!

FX

A BEE-GRUB BURPS IN THE BACKGROUND

KICK: (LIKE URIAH HEEP) He means the bee-autiful bouncy bee-grubs, marm. We chuck them their nectar-balls, the little darlings, to make them big and strong and sting-y.

QUEEN: (DELIGHTED) Oh how amusing of you. Carry on...keep up the good work. (IN SUDDEN DISTRESS) Oh! Oh! Are there any spare cells in this corridor?

KICK: Yes indeedy, marm. There are 43 vacant cells down there on the left.

QUEEN: (AS SHE HURRIES AWAY) Oooh! Ooooooh!!! (STOPS EXHAUSTED) Oooh, I'll never make it. You'll have to help me.

SPOT/FX

THE BOY-BEES HURRY OVER

KICK: Of course, marm.

HANK: (THOROUGHLY DISGUSTED) Euggghhhhhhhh!!!! What's that coming out of her?!!!

KICK: She's laying eggs, you nit! (IN A DITHER) Oh, marm, what can we do to help? Your Majesty! Oh, your Majesty!

HANK: That means more of these horrible things for us to feed!

QUEEN: Oh, Oh, Oh....I feel another coming on. Take...erm, I'll call him Albert - I call them all Albert you know, after myself...take Albert and put him in a vacant cell.

HANK: (RELUCTANTLY) Yes, marm.

SPOT/FX

THE UNMISTAKABLE SOUND OF A FOOTBALL BEING KICKED DOWN A WET CORRIDOR

QUEEN: (BRUSQUELY) DON'T KICK HIM!!!! CARRY HIM!!!! Oh! Oh! Oh! Here it comes! Ooooooooh!!! (WITH AN EXCITED SIGH) Oh, I'm so amused. It's a girl-Albert.

FX THE GIRL-ALBERT MAKES NEWBORN BABY-BEE SQUEAKS

KICK: (AS IF CATCHING A PRIZE PIG) I've got it. A future Queen!!! She's almost as beautiful as yourself, marm.

QUEEN: Nobody's as beautiful as me...oh, yes, she's a corker, isn't she (SIGHS SLEEPILY) Queen Albert the 91st.....

KICK: Hank! Give me six hands with our future Queen, will youzzzzzzzz, Hank. She's massive!

SCENE

13

SPOT/FX THE BEE-BOYS' EXHAUSTED EFFORT-SOUNDS AS THEY DRAG THE EGG TO AN EMPTY CELL. THEY SOUND LIKE THEY ARE DRAGGING A SACK OF POTATOES UP A STICKY ESCALATOR. THE BABY BEE SQUEAKS. THE SOUND OF A SACK OF POTATOES BEING STUFFED INTO A TELEPHONE BOX, THE BABY BEE'S SQUEAK HAS A NOTE OF CONCERN. CHEWING CONTINUES IN THE BACKGROUND.

HANK: It'll never fit.

KICK: Push! Push!

SPOT THE SOUND OF A SACK OF POTATOES FALLING INTO A LARGE THREE-QUARTERS-EMPTY JAR OF HONEY. THE BEE-BOYS PANT, OUT OF BREATH

HANK: Phew! I've never been so exhausted in all my life.

WUZZABOOM: Psssssssssssst!

KICK: What was that?

HANK: This egg, it must have a puncture in it!

WUZZABOOM: Nope, it's me. Here, look. Psssssssssssssst!!!

HANK: Hello.

KICK: Who are you?

SPOT/FX SIX WASPS GIGGLE MALEVOLENTLY AT THE BEE-BOYS' SHOULDERS, MAKING A BUZZING SOUND THAT SPELLS OUT WUZZZZZZZZABOOOOOM

WUZZABOOM: (IN A SHARP, SINISTER BUT INGRATIATING WASPISH VOICE)
Youzzz couldn't, could yerzzzzz, be nice and wasply and tell a pal where "SHE" is, could yerzzzzzzzz???

HANK: The Queen, you mean?

WUZZABOOM: "HER", yeahzzzzzz.

KICK: Are you carrying any identification?

HANK: She's just down the corridor on the left having a little rest.

WUZZABOOM: Very wasply of yer, thankzzzz. (GRUFFLY OVER HIS SHOULDER THE WASPS) Cummon, youzzzzz, quick march.

SPOT OFF THEY MARCH

KICK: They didn't show me any identification. And they look more like wasps than bees to me.

HANK: Wait a mo, Kick, I'll just have a word with them.
(DASHING AFTER THE DEPARTING WASPS) Excuse me! Excuse me!

WUZZABOOM: WHAT YOU WANT??!!

HANK: You're not Wuzzaboom are you, by any chance?

WUZZABOOM: (DEEPLY SUSPICIOUS) Might be.

HANK: I've a message from a daft friend of yours I met in a jam-jar. He says he's sorry.

WUZZABOOM: (INGRATIATING AGAIN) Tish-tosh! Look, erm, yer doesn't mind if me and some of my stripes (THE WASPS CHUCKLE EVEN MORE WICKEDLY) toddles along and kidnaps....errr....has a few friendly words with yer Queen, doeszzzzzzz yer?

HANK: Feel free.

WUZZABOOM: (CHUCKLES, MARCHING AWAY WITH HIS WASPS) Wasply, very wasply of yerzzzzzzz.

KICK: What's going on? Did they show you their identification?

HANK: No need. I know who that is. (PROUDLY) That's Wuzzaboom.

KICK: Wuzzawho?

HANK: Boom.

KICK: Boomawuzz?

HANK: Wuzzaboom!!! He's a chief of wasps or something.

KICK: (VERY WORRIED) I think we should alert Sergeant Beetyouup. I'm sure it's against the law for wasps to wander around unescorted in a bee hive. Shall I go or you go?

HANK: (YAWNS) You go.

KICK: You go. I don't know the way.

HANK: Neither do I.

KICK: Oh, I have failed the Foreman! I have failed in all my responsibilities.

SPOT DOWN THE CORRIDOR THE QUEEN IS SCREAMING. SHE IS BEING INTERFERED WITH AND CARRIED OFF

FX A POLICE SIREN AS SERGEANT BEETYOUUP ZOOMS UP. A SWIFT HEAVY BUZZ IN TUNE WITH THE SIREN

SGT. You and You! This bee be Sergeant Beetyouup of the Bee
BEETYOUUP: Police. You're under arrest!

HANK: We never did nothing!

KICK: We did! We failed our gracious Queen!

SGT. Aiding and abetting in the kidnapping of Her Majesty.
BEETYOUUP:
HANK: We never did!

SGT. I have a reliable witness.
BEETYOUUP:
LOST BEE: I saw it all! I saw them talking to the wasps! I realised that they were pointing her out to them, so I ran off for help.

KICK: But we tried to stop the wasps. Really we did.

LOST BEE: Traitors!!!

SGT. Come quietly now, workers, or I shall have to beat you
BEETYOUUP: up.

HANK: (TO KICK) Now how do you like being a bee, eh?

KICK: (WEAKLY) Actually, Sergeant, this bee is incorrect in his assessment of the situation. We tried to help the Queen. We would never hurt her! We love her!

SGT. Shut up your snivelling lies! Traitors!
BEETYOUUP:
SPOT SERGEANT BEETYOUUP MILDLY BEATS THEM UP

HANK/KICK: Ow! Ow! Ow!

FX FADE AS SERGEANT BEETYOUUP SAYS:

SGT. Buzz along quietly now. Buzz along.
BEETYOUUP:

SCENE

14

SPOT/FX

THE SUDDEN BANG OF A GAVEL IN A COURTROOM. THE BUZZ OF BEES IN A COURTROOM

JUDGE BEE:

(HE HAS A COLD) Silence! Or I shall clear the court! (HE SNEEZES)

SPOT

THE COURTROOM GOES A LITTLE QUIETER

That's better. Now...where was I? Bee and Bee, you are charged with aiding and abetting the villainous wasp, Jasper Wuzzaboom...

SPOT

BOOS IN THE COURTROOM, THE JUDGE BANGS HIS GAVEL

...in the kidnapping of our gracious Queen. How do you plead?

HANK:

(SHOUTS FORCEFULLY) Innocent!

KICK:

(WEAKLY) We're innocent!

LOST BEE:

I heard them buzzing with Wuzzaboom...they told him where the Queen was! Wasply traitors!!!!

SPOT

NOISE IN THE COURTROOM, THE JUDGE BANGS HIS GAVEL. KICK BEGINS HIS DEFENCE DURING THE NOISE....

KICK:

It's all a misunderstanding, honestly. If you'll give us another chance I promise we'll try to be just like the rest of you. THIS won't go down on my record, will it? Or I'll never be Foreman, not ever.

HANK:

Look here, your stupid bee court doesn't have no jurisdiction over Kick and me. We're boys, see, not bees. Got it?! And we did tell Wuzzaboom where the Queen was...SO THERE!!!!!!

SPOT HUGE OUTRAGE FROM THE COURT, THE JUDGE WHACKS HIS GAVEL HARD, KICK CONTINUES THROUGH THE NOISE INTO A QUIETENED COURTROOM

KICK: We didn't! WE didn't! He's just answering back! That's all! He's always like this when he gets in trouble, he answers back. He's a good bee, really. Give him, give both of us another chance. We'll not make any mistakes, not when we properly learn the ropes.

HANK: Can't you get it through your squishy heads... We're not really bees.

KICK: No, we're not, not really. But given the chance...

HANK: (TO KICK) Shuttup!!!!

JUDGE BEE: Not Bees?!

HANK: We're boys, your Honour, Human Boys. A smelly old man turned us into bees.

SPOT CONFUSED MURMUR IN THE COURTROOM

JUDGE BEE: (MUTTERS TO HIMSELF) Oh, buzz-buzz-buzz...they are clearly insane.... Mad, mad. Not bees? Their brains are full of jam. They go zubb and not buzz. Dearie me, quite mad.

HANK: (CALLS OUT DEFINITELY) If we are bees how come we know that the capital of Portugal is Madrid!

KICK: (WHISPERS) It's not Madrid. It's Barcelona.

HANK: (YELLS) Barcelona!!!

JUDGE BEE: Barcelona? Barcelona? (WHISPERS ASIDE) Is that a wasp swear-word?

CLERK OF COURT: A particularly rude one, your Honour.

PSYCHIATRIST ...and can return to your rightful place in the swarm.

BEE:

HANK: Every morning for three years you've asked us the same questions. We'll never know the answers!!!! Only a bee would know the answers...and we're not bees!

KICK: (HUMS HIS BUZZING TUNE)

HANK: Kick! Will you shut up that buzzing!

KICK: I'm not buzzing!

PSYCHIATRIST (SHUFFLING HIS PAPERS) Question One: What os the meaning
BEE: of the word Melliferouszzzzz?

HANK: Duno! Donno!! Dunno!!! It's a stupid bee question!

KICK: (INNOCENTLY IN A VOICE FULL OF BUZZES) Melliferouszzzzz is an adjective meaning 'forming or producing honey'.

PSYCHIATRIST (DELIGHTED) Correct! Correct!

BEE:

HANK: (AMAZED) How'd you know that? How?

KICK: (BUZZES HIS TUNE)

PSYCHIATRIST Question Two: How many spiracles in a cocoon?

BEE:

KICK: (JUMPING WITH EXCITEMENT) I knowzzzzz! I knowzzzzz!

PSYCHIATRIST Better whisper in my left antenna.

BEE:

FX A BUZZING WHISPER

Correct! Excellent. If you get 43 thousand more questions right I can declare you sane.

QUICK FADE TO SILENCE AND BACK AGAIN

PSYCHIATRIST (AFTER A YAWN) Question 39 thousand nine hundred and
BEE: ninety-nine...who had a Number One with "I'll BEE seeing youzzzzzzzzz! "? (ANOTHER YAWN) yes...

KICK: (WHISPERS AND BUZZES EXCITEDLY)

PSYCHIATRIST Correct!!!! Correct!!!! Sergeant...unlock the door,
BEE: please. Release this bee! He is perfectly sane and
beeish. Congratulations, you can rejoin the swarm!

KICK: All my dreamzzzz have come truezzzzzzz.

HANK: Wait a minute! What's going on?

FX THE CLANKING OF KEYS, CREAK OF A RUSTY DOOR OPENING,
KICK BUZZES OUT, BUZZING HIS TUNE EXCITEDLY

SGT. Very well done. Most impressive. (WHISPERS) I didn't
BEETYOUUP: know half of them questions myself. Ever thought of
joining the Police force?

KICK: Could Izzzzzz? Reallyzzzzzzzz? I'd try my best to bee
just like you, sir.

HANK: (RATTLES THE BARS) Here! Wait! Where you stupid bees
going with Kick? Kick! Kick!

FX KICK BUZZES AWAY, HIS BUZZING LAUGHTER WITH HIS FELLOW
BEEES ECHOES DOWN THE CORRIDOR

HANK: (SHOUTING FROM THE EMPTY CELL, HIS VOICE ECHOING DOWN
THE CORRIDORS) Kick! Kick! You're not a bee! You're a
boy, like mezzzzzz. We're boyszzzzzzz! Boyszzzzzzz!!!!
(HE FLOPS DOWN DEJECTEDLY. WITH GRIT)
I'm me, I'm still me. I'll always be me, even if I'm
locked up in here forever I'll always be me. Poor Kick,
he's not Kick now, he's a bee policeman thinking bee
thoughts with nothing of himself left. What can I do?
What can I do? (A LITTLE CHEERED UP) But maybe it's not
so bad. It's the same for boys in a way. I mean, it's
like growing up: suddenly there's a day when you're not
yourself anymore and you think different thoughts.
(JUMPS UP, RATTLES THE BARS, DESPERATE) I know the
answer to Number Six-thousand-and-forty-eight. Come
back! Come back! Buzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz! I know the answer!
Kick! Sergeant Beetyouup! Buzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz!!! COME BACK!!!

FX AS HANK'S CRIES TRAIL OFF, BRING UP THE SOUND OF THE CHOO-CHOOING TRAIN

GEORGE: Go on, then, what happened?

THROCKMORTON:What happened where?

GEORGE: In the story!

THROCKMORTON:What story?

GEORGE: The one you were telling...about your nephew Hank and the bees. Did he ever get out?

THROCKMORTON:Hank? Goodness, yes. I have him here, with me...now. In this matchbox. I take him with me everywhere.

SPOT/FX HE TAPS THE MATCHBOX, THE ANGRY SOUND OF A BEE TRAPPED IN A MATCHBOX

GEORGE: You're telling me big whoppers! Let's see.

THROCKMORTON:There you are...but be careful, don't make him lose his temper.

SPOT THE SOUND OF GEORGE CAREFULLY OPENING THE MATCHBOX

FX THE BEE ESCAPES

GEORGE: He's got out!

THROCKMORTON:Hank! Hank, my boy! (WHISTLES AS IF TO A DOG) Hank!

GEORGE: Arrrrrrrhhhhhhh! Arrrrrrrhhhhhhh!

THROCKMORTON:Stop making such a fuss, man. It's only a bee. I'm 704-years-old and I've never heard such a fuss.

GEORGE: He's gone down my trousers! Down my trousers!

THROCKMORTON:(WITH INSTANT MILITARY AUTHORITY) Don't move a muscle or he'll sting. You're not moving a muscle, are you?

GEORGE: (TERRIFIED) No.

THROCKMORTON: Now, carefully undo your belt and let your trousers fall down.

GEORGE: Ugh!?

STRANGE WOMAN: (COMING UP TO THROCKMORTON) Here, are you the gentleman who found a bunion?

THROCKMORTON: A bunion! Yes, indeed, madam...I have it here somewhere.... (HE FIDDLES THROUGH HIS POCKETS MAKING AN IMPOSSIBLE CLINKING AND CLANKING SOUND) Ah, here it is.

(A VERY DISCREET SQUEAK)

STRANGE WOMAN: Been looking for it everywhere, I have.

WOMAN:

GEORGE: (SCREAMS HUGELY AND PAINFULLY) ARRRRRRRHHHHHHH!!!

THROCKMORTON: Sting you, did he?

GEORGE: (THROUGH A WHINE) Uh-huh.

THROCKMORTON: Bad luck.

(THROCKMORTON LAUGHS, HIS LAUGHTER GROWING AND GROWING)

FX/GRAMS BRING IN SOUND OF BUZZING SWARM, ANGRY. DUKE ELLINGTON'S 'TAKE THE TRAIN' RISES AND DROWNS THIS

(THROCKMORTON'S LAUGHTER GOES RIGHT THROUGH THE MUSIC AND END CREDITS)

END

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