The Boy and the Honeybees
Aysel Banu YAVUZAL

The Boy and the Honeybees

Aysel Banu YAVUZAL

On a bright Saturday morning, eight-year-old Malik stood at the edge of a buzzing garden. His warm brown skin glowed in the sun, and his curly black hair bounced as he leaned closer. He wore his favorite mustard-yellow t-shirt and blue denim overalls. In his hands, he carried a small cardboard model of a hive, painted with tiny bees. Today, he would see real honeybees for the first time.

A friendly beekeeper named Mr. Chen waved Malik over to a wooden hive. "Ready to meet my honeybees?" he asked. Malik nodded, his large dark brown eyes wide with wonder. He watched bees fly in and out, their fuzzy golden-brown bodies catching the light. "They never stop moving!" Malik said, his gap-toothed smile shining. "What are they all doing?"

Mr. Chen pointed to the busy bees. "Each bee has a special job," he explained. "They live in a colony, a big family that works together." Malik thought about his own classroom, where everyone had jobs too. He pulled out a small notebook and began to sketch the bees. "I want to learn everything," he said, his round cheeks flushed with excitement.

Mr. Chen opened the hive gently. Inside, thousands of bees crawled over golden honeycomb. "See the big one?" he whispered. "That's the queen." Malik stared at the largest bee, her glossy amber-gold body twice the size of the others. A tiny crown-like marking on her head made her look royal. She moved calmly, and the other bees seemed to respect her.

"The queen lays all the eggs," Mr. Chen said. "She keeps the colony growing." Malik watched as worker bees gathered around her, cleaning and feeding her. "She doesn't do it alone," Malik noticed. "Everyone helps her." Mr. Chen smiled. "Exactly. A good leader cares for everyone, and everyone cares for her." Malik wrote 'queen' in his notebook and drew a little crown.

Next, Mr. Chen showed Malik the worker bees. They were small and fuzzy, with black stripes and clear wings. Some carried tiny drops of nectar; others had yellow pollen dusted on their legs. "Workers do many jobs," Mr. Chen said. "They gather food, clean the hive, and feed the babies." Malik watched them zip from flower to flower, amazed at how busy they were.

"How do they know what to do?" Malik asked. Mr. Chen pointed to a bee dancing in a circle. "That's a waggle dance! It tells the others where to find flowers." Malik giggled. "They talk by dancing!" He tried a little dance himself, and Mr. Chen laughed. "They cooperate," Mr. Chen said. "Each job helps the whole colony." Malik nodded, understanding dawning.

Then Mr. Chen showed Malik the drones, the male bees. They were a little bigger than workers, with big eyes and no stingers. "Drones don't gather food," Mr. Chen said. "But they help keep the hive warm and ready to protect the queen." Malik frowned. "So they have a job too?" "Everyone does," Mr. Chen replied. "Even small jobs matter."

As Malik watched, a worker bee struggled to carry a heavy drop of nectar. Two other workers flew over and helped lift it. Together, they carried it into the hive. "They're helping each other!" Malik exclaimed. His dark brown eyes sparkled. "Just like when my class cleans up the art supplies." Mr. Chen nodded. "Teamwork makes everything easier."

Malik spent the whole morning learning about the colony. He saw bees fanning their wings to cool the hive, and others guarding the entrance. "They all work together to keep their home safe and happy," Mr. Chen said. Malik thought about his classroom. "We could be like a colony," he whispered. He opened his notebook and started planning a model.

Back at school on Monday, Malik brought his cardboard hive model to class. He had painted it bright yellow and added tiny bees made of clay. Mrs. Lee, his teacher, smiled warmly. Her silver-grey hair was tucked behind one ear, and her green eyes sparkled behind her glasses. "What do you have there, Malik?" she asked, holding her pointer stick.

Malik stood proudly in front of the class. His yellow shirt and overalls were bright, and his freckles seemed to dance as he spoke. "This is a honeybee colony," he said. "The queen lays eggs. The workers gather food and clean. The drones help keep the hive warm. Everyone has a job, and they all cooperate." He pointed to each bee with a small stick.

Mrs. Lee asked, "How is a colony like our classroom?" Malik grinned, his gap-toothed smile wide. "We all have jobs too! Some of us water plants, some feed the fish, some help clean. When we work together, our classroom is happy and safe, just like the hive." His classmates clapped, and Mrs. Lee beamed with pride.

Mrs. Lee praised Malik's hard work. "You've shown us that cooperation makes a strong community," she said. "Just like the honeybees, we all play a part." Malik felt a warm glow in his chest. He looked at his model and remembered the busy bees. He knew that even small jobs mattered, and that teamwork was the sweetest thing of all.

That afternoon, Malik's class decided to create their own classroom colony. They made a chart with jobs for everyone: line leader, plant waterer, book organizer, and more. Malik was chosen as the 'queen bee' for the week, helping others with their tasks. He wore a paper crown and smiled, remembering the real queen bee and her calm, caring ways.

As the school day ended, Malik looked at his hive model one last time. He thought about the honeybees and how they all worked together. He knew that he would always remember the lesson of the colony: when everyone cooperates, the whole community thrives. With a happy heart, he packed up his model and headed home, ready to share his story with anyone who would listen.