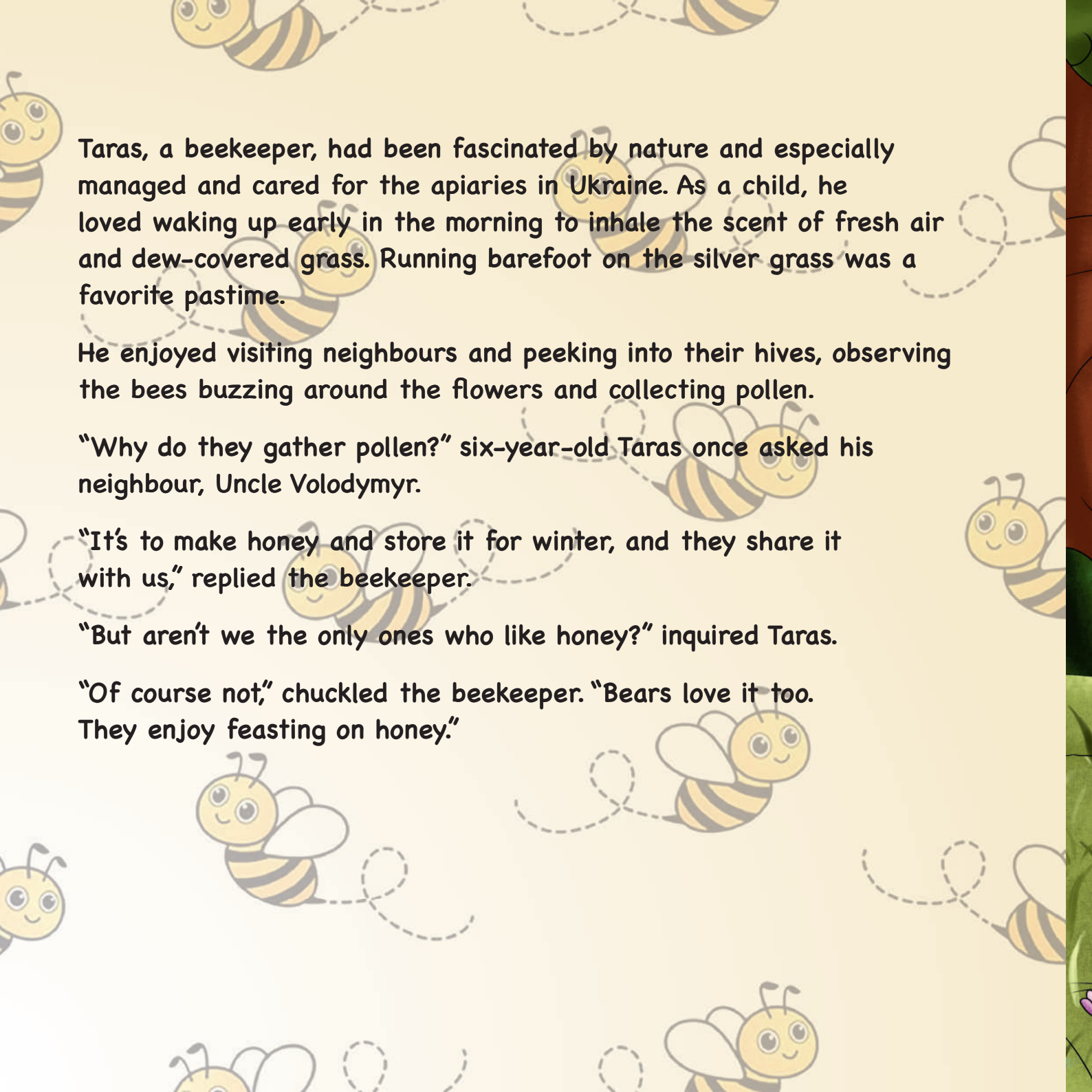


ALICE ADAMS

Brave Bee Berry



Taras, a beekeeper, had been fascinated by nature and especially managed and cared for the apiaries in Ukraine. As a child, he loved waking up early in the morning to inhale the scent of fresh air and dew-covered grass. Running barefoot on the silver grass was a favorite pastime.

He enjoyed visiting neighbours and peeking into their hives, observing the bees buzzing around the flowers and collecting pollen.

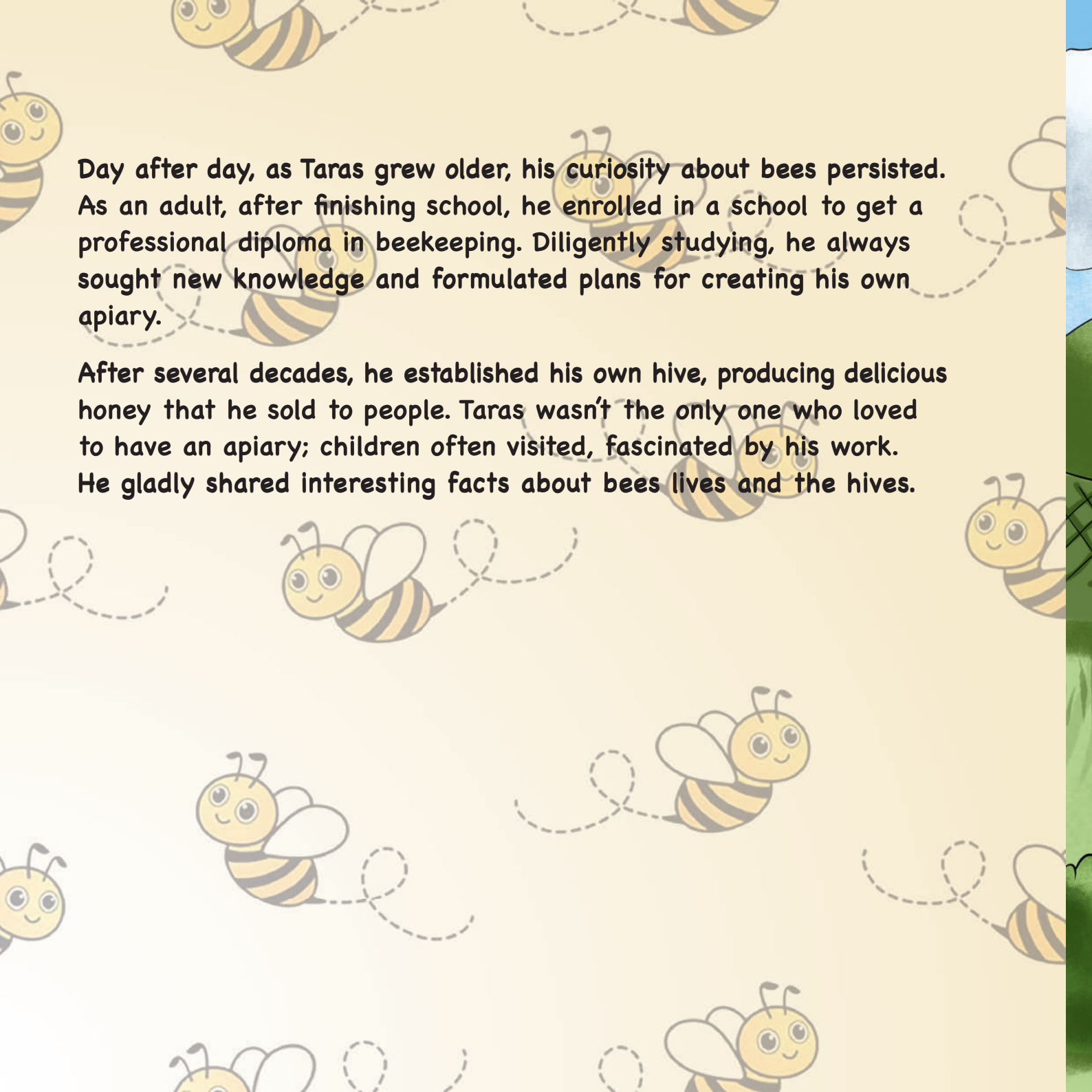
"Why do they gather pollen?" six-year-old Taras once asked his neighbour, Uncle Volodymyr.

"It's to make honey and store it for winter, and they share it with us," replied the beekeeper.

"But aren't we the only ones who like honey?" inquired Taras.

"Of course not," chuckled the beekeeper. "Bears love it too. They enjoy feasting on honey."






Day after day, as Taras grew older, his curiosity about bees persisted. As an adult, after finishing school, he enrolled in a school to get a professional diploma in beekeeping. Diligently studying, he always sought new knowledge and formulated plans for creating his own apiary.

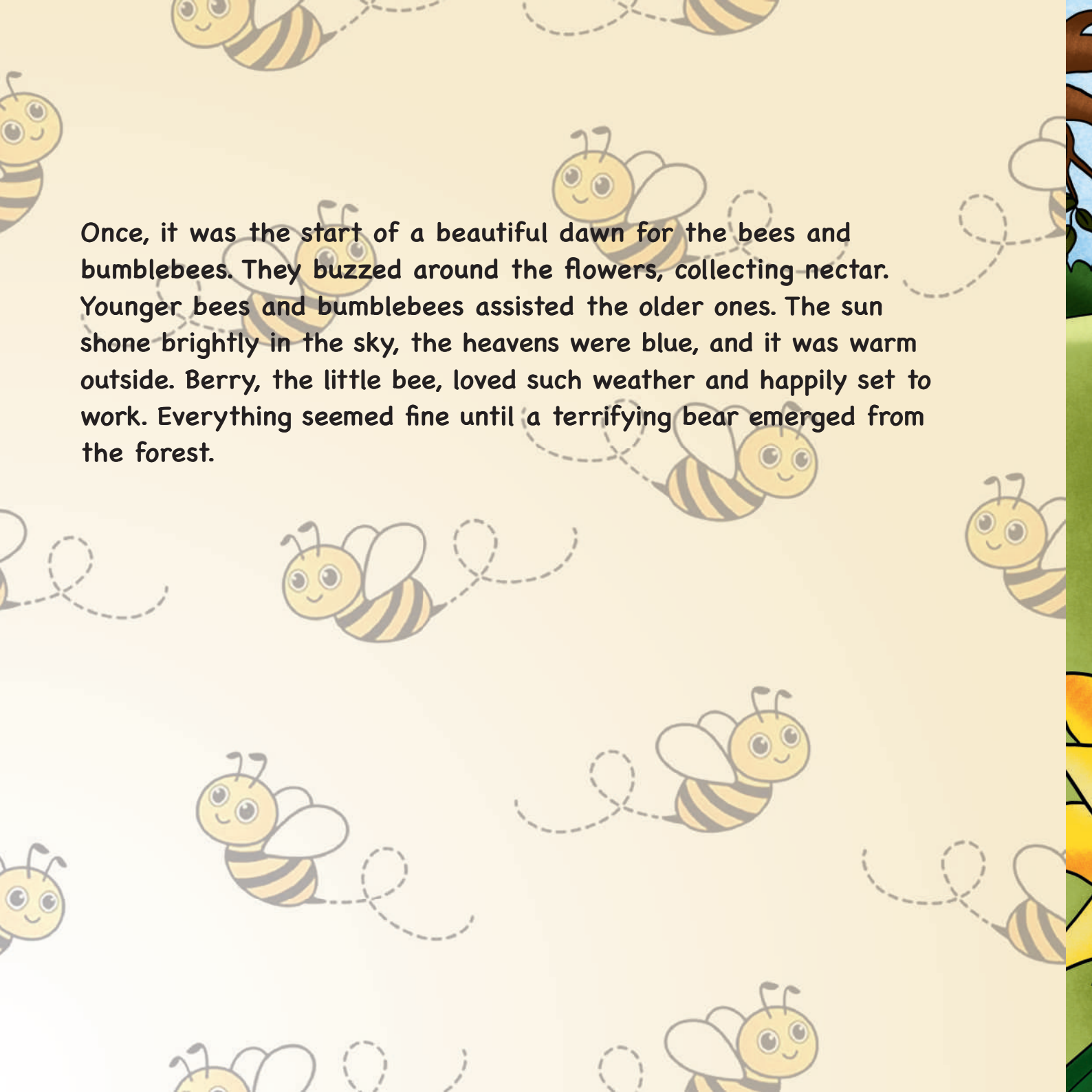
After several decades, he established his own hive, producing delicious honey that he sold to people. Taras wasn't the only one who loved to have an apiary; children often visited, fascinated by his work. He gladly shared interesting facts about bees lives and the hives.






Taras established an apiary for the little bee Berry, and her large family. Berry was happily living with her mom, dad, and younger brothers, along with many other bees who lived with them in the hive. They all used to collect nectar from flowers and turn it into honey for winter supplies. Innocent bees did not know that humans or even animals would collect this honey and enjoy it throughout the year and sometimes even longer.





Once, it was the start of a beautiful dawn for the bees and bumblebees. They buzzed around the flowers, collecting nectar. Younger bees and bumblebees assisted the older ones. The sun shone brightly in the sky, the heavens were blue, and it was warm outside. Berry, the little bee, loved such weather and happily set to work. Everything seemed fine until a terrifying bear emerged from the forest.



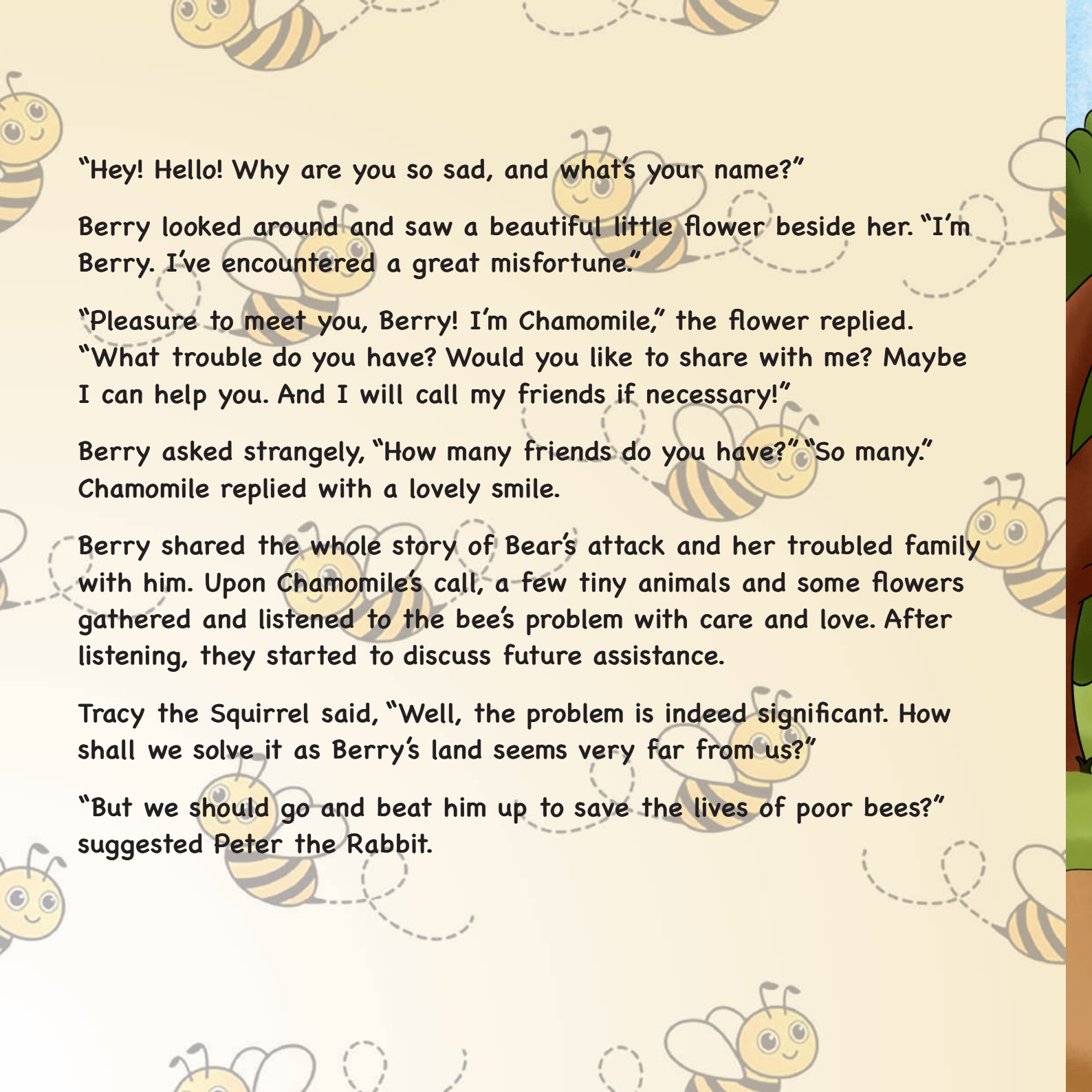


The bear roared and attacked the hives. Berry and her brothers, frightened, hid among the bushes and trees to protect themselves from the bear. The older bees confronted the beast, engaging in a fierce battle. The younger ones, not willing to wait, joined the fight as well. The unexpected aggressiveness of the unwelcome guest agitated and terrified the little insects.

The small bees stung the bear with their tiny stingers, buzzed around him, and hummed near his ears, but the bear proved to be more agile and powerful. He swatted them away with his paws and trampled them. The heavy furs of the bear had made him strong, and the little pricked could not harm him from the start. The battle had to come to an end as there were very few bees left, and the bear also got tired of fighting with this tiny creature. Only a handful of insects survived. The little Berry looked around their hives; there were ruins, and her brothers lay trampled in various places. The remaining bees flew away in search of new homes and help.

Berry cried bitterly to see her family members in pain, but she was strong-willed. She didn't allow herself to cry for long and decided to seek help and assistance from a foreign land. Days and nights passed, and the little insect finally achieved her goal, flying over fields, woods, meadows, seas, and oceans. At last, she landed in a lovely nearby meadow. The long journey had exhausted Berry, so she stayed in a field. She was taking a rest there when she heard a voice from somewhere.





"Hey! Hello! Why are you so sad, and what's your name?"

Berry looked around and saw a beautiful little flower beside her. "I'm Berry. I've encountered a great misfortune."

"Pleasure to meet you, Berry! I'm Chamomile," the flower replied.

"What trouble do you have? Would you like to share with me? Maybe I can help you. And I will call my friends if necessary!"

Berry asked strangely, "How many friends do you have?" "So many." Chamomile replied with a lovely smile.

Berry shared the whole story of Bear's attack and her troubled family with him. Upon Chamomile's call, a few tiny animals and some flowers gathered and listened to the bee's problem with care and love. After listening, they started to discuss future assistance.

Tracy the Squirrel said, "Well, the problem is indeed significant. How shall we solve it as Berry's land seems very far from us?"

"But we should go and beat him up to save the lives of poor bees?" suggested Peter the Rabbit.





Everyone laughed.

"No," Berry replied, "we've already fought and could not protect ourselves."

"So what should we do then?" asked Chamomile.

And all of them began to think.

After a short while, the bee exclaimed, "I've got it!" Everyone looked at Berry with curiosity.

"Here's the plan: Let me gather honey from other bees here, and we'll go to my home in Ukraine. We'll treat the bear with honey. Perhaps if he tastes honey he hasn't tried before, he'll feel better. When he is busy with the delicious treat, then we will all attack him to regain control of our meadow."

"Great idea!" said Peter the Rabbit with joy.

"You're brilliant, little bee!" supported Chamomile.

And so, they decided to follow Berry's plan.

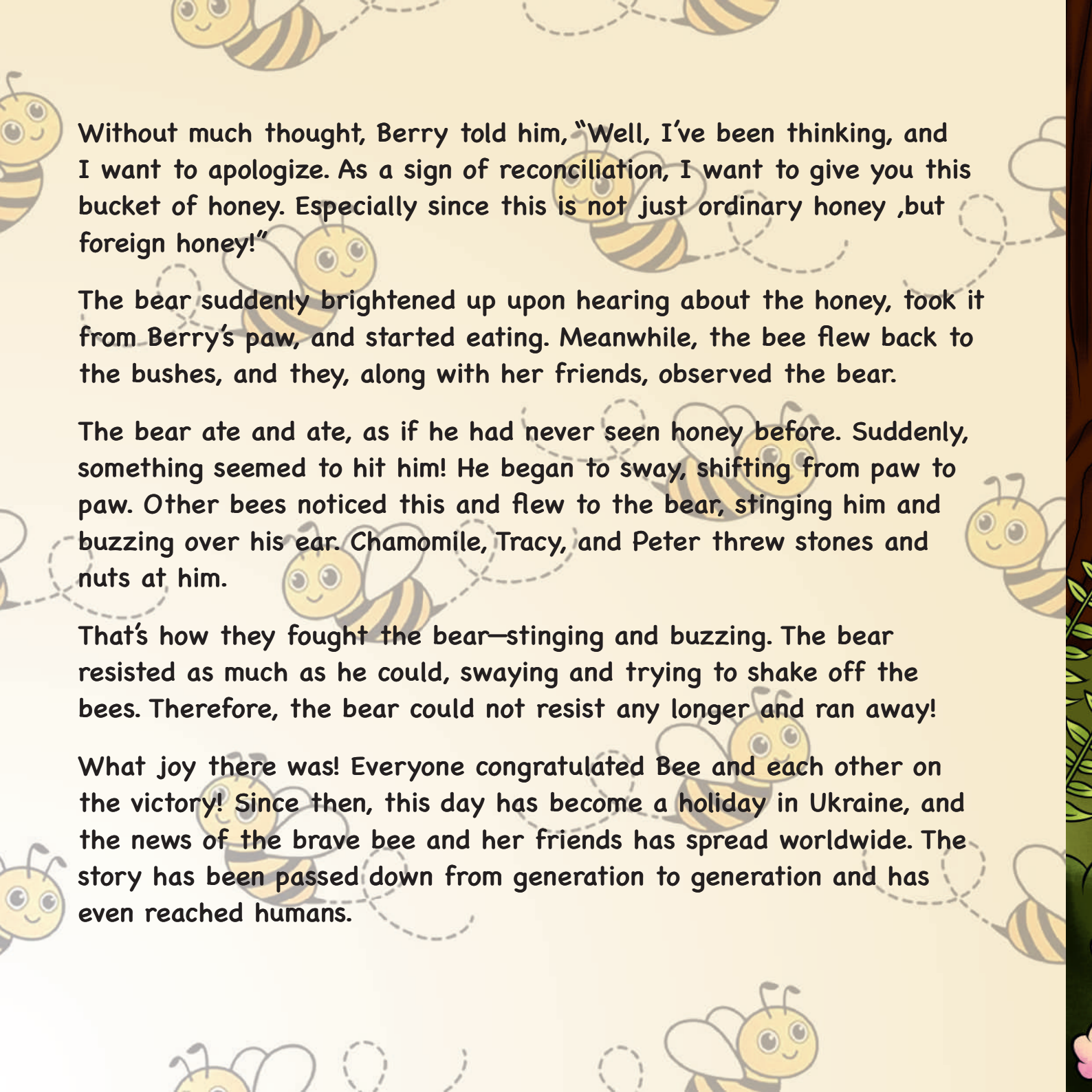
The next day, all the animals gathered honey in big leaves from some beehives and went with Berry to her home in Ukraine. The Chamomile's friends were charmed by the landscapes of this wonderful country, and it strengthened them to help their tiny friend Berry.

Berry met with her brothers and parents and introduced them to her British friends. They hid in the bushes so the bear wouldn't notice them. Everyone sat quietly, and the little bee flew to the bear with a bucket of honey. Peter and Tracy helped her place the honey-leaves bucket in a safe place.

"Hello, brother Bear!" Berry said to him:

The bear looked at her and gruffly replied, "Hello! What do you want?"





Without much thought, Berry told him, "Well, I've been thinking, and I want to apologize. As a sign of reconciliation, I want to give you this bucket of honey. Especially since this is not just ordinary honey, but foreign honey!"

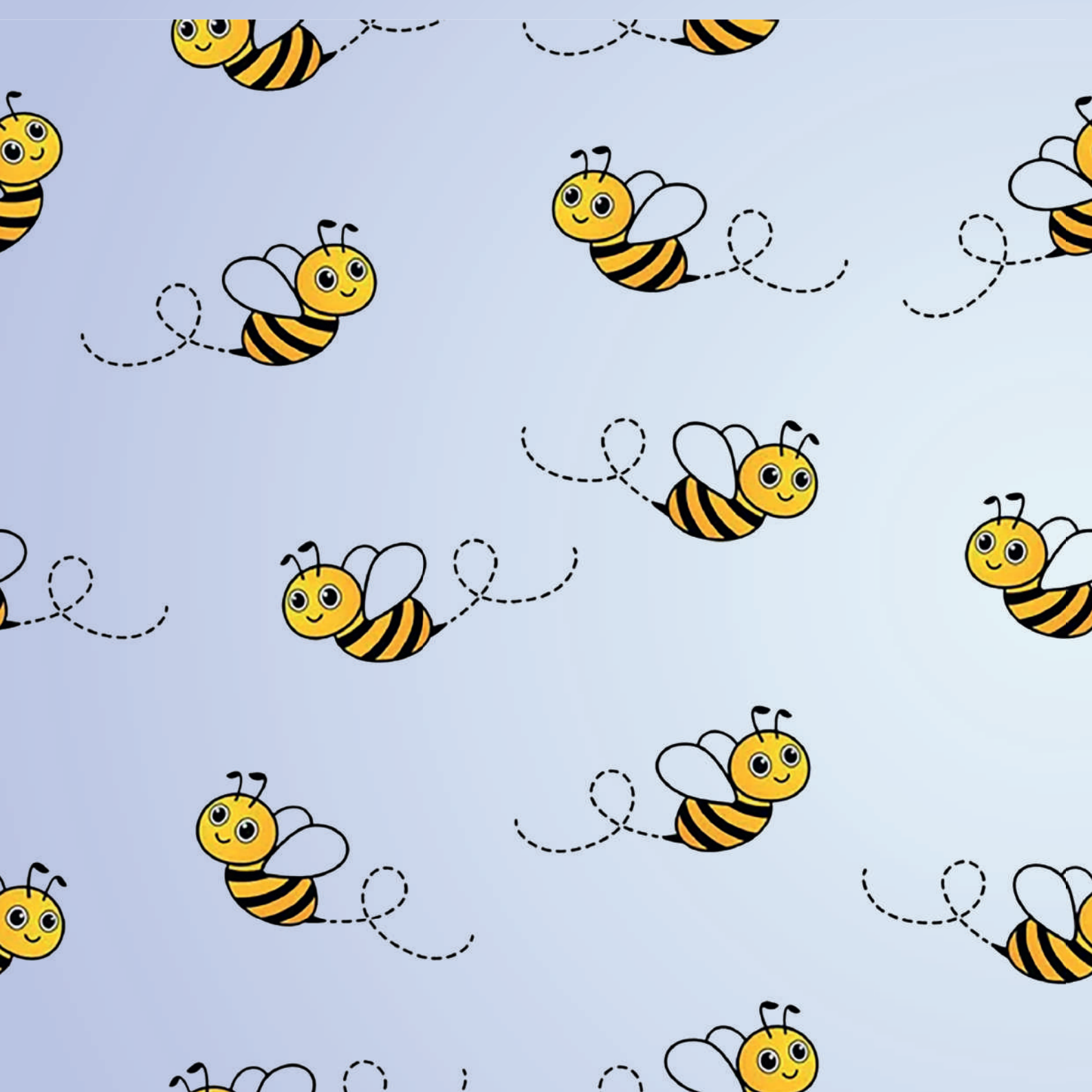
The bear suddenly brightened up upon hearing about the honey, took it from Berry's paw, and started eating. Meanwhile, the bee flew back to the bushes, and they, along with her friends, observed the bear.

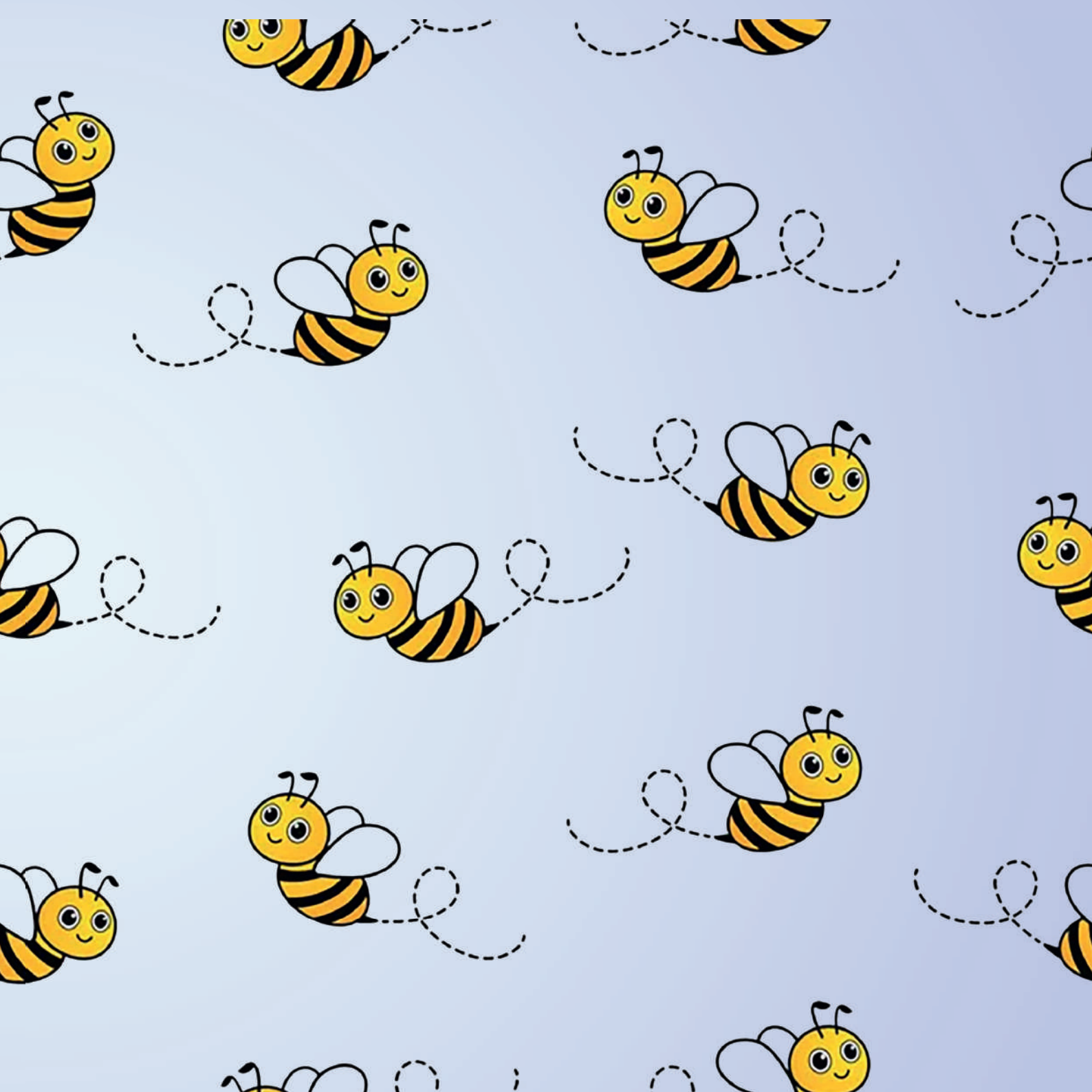
The bear ate and ate, as if he had never seen honey before. Suddenly, something seemed to hit him! He began to sway, shifting from paw to paw. Other bees noticed this and flew to the bear, stinging him and buzzing over his ear. Chamomile, Tracy, and Peter threw stones and nuts at him.

That's how they fought the bear—stinging and buzzing. The bear resisted as much as he could, swaying and trying to shake off the bees. Therefore, the bear could not resist any longer and ran away!

What joy there was! Everyone congratulated Bee and each other on the victory! Since then, this day has become a holiday in Ukraine, and the news of the brave bee and her friends has spread worldwide. The story has been passed down from generation to generation and has even reached humans.







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