

The comfort of bees

This is the story of a hidden queen
And this is the story of things unseen
This the story of halo's and honey
This is the story of sad and funny
This is the story of Joe the Sweep
And this is the tale of Betty Whistle
And this is the yarn of Lenny Travel
And this the tale of a very tall boy
who loves to ride
a small wooden horse,
And of course,
this is the tale of an ancient buzz
heard in the bustle of a village of shops
in the realm of the blooming field.

The Queen and the bees watch over
the shopping centre, guardians....

Above you, unseen, another world.
The roof does more than stop the rain.
Let us now consider
what we cannot comprehend

Queen:
Can you sense it?
Pause yourself; check-in on your
bodies rippling wisdom. Wait.
Slow-ease yourself into
the day that you're in.
Call it ScienceGodFlukeLuck,
but,
how-ever you frame your meaning
you find yourself in the realm of miracle.
There I said it - the M word.
Please don't run in fear of a sermon
Please don't flock in hope of salvation. But,
Can you sense it?

There it is - sixty thousand bees,
flicking tiny-tense wings at - wait for it -
two hundred beats per second.
No need to count.
I will do the math of this miracle:
12million beats per second.
Blink. There it is again -
12millon beats - every second.
Bow down, cry out, open your mouth in awe.

The Queen introduces each character.

Joe the sweep works as a cleaner in the
shopping centre.

Mid-twenties. Long dark hair. Wears the
regulation red-shirt of the staff.

Black large-flared trousers are the cause of
much joking - his colleagues say he doesn't
need a cleaning brush, that his trousers do all
the work.

Joe is always seen with his large red cleaning
brush.

Joe has finished University and has decided to
get a job doing something important - cleaning
up. Joe is writing an epic poem about the
shopping centre. He has lots of time to compose
as he works.

Queen:

This is the man who many write off,
because of the work he does.

This is the man who finds precious lost things
- earrings, keys, hearing aids, money,
a passport.

This is the man I call the keeper of neglected
corners...

Look twice at this man - he shapes your world
and cares for what you take for granted.

The tiny cracks are his domain.

Joe can sense the bees above.

He has no name for what he senses.

But, he takes
comfort in their ancient presence

The Queen looked on and the bees moved their
wings, at 200 beats per second.
Everyday miracles.

Betty the whistle is a seventy-year-old woman
who is a daily visitor to the shops.
She has poor eyesight and wears thick-lensed
spectacles. Betty is always seen wearing her
signature outfit - a green bobble hat and a big
brown overcoat. Betty smiles a lot, but it is a
sad smile. Betty likes to whistle - in her day she
was a beautiful singer and a grade 8 pianist.
Betty whistles quietly as she sits in the
shopping centre, slowly turning the wedding
ring on her finger.

Queen:

We see you, Whistling Betty
- the honey-bees see you.

We see your lonely smile.
We feel your husband-grief,
for what you had and lost.

We hear you, Whistling Betty –
the honey-bees hear you
We hear the songs you whistle,
all those fragments from across the years
from your childhood up to now..

We'll Meet Again
Strangers in the Night
Yesterday
Help
Send in the Clowns
Sweet Caroline
Take a Chance on Me
Toxic

(The Britney tune you learnt
from your grand-daughter)

The Queen looked on and the bees moved their
wings, at 200 beats per second.
Everyday miracles.

A very tall boy who loves to ride a small wooden
horse. We never find out the boys' name – he is
fourteen, six-foot-three, clad all in black sports
gear, with a distinctive blonde fringe that covers
his eyes, his blue eyes. The rest of his head is
shaved, as is the fashion he follows. He is a tall
boy with a blonde fringe. He stands out. He is
called a trouble-maker. He is called this because
he stands out in a crowd. He is blamed for
'being there'. The boy loves to ride on the small
wooden horse that goes around and around in a
circle. He is not trying to break the horse. He is
regularly told by security to move on.

Queen:

The question mark that is
the very tall boy with the floppy fringe
who loves to ride a small wooden horse
The boy who gets the blame
The boy who has a name –
troublemaker is his name!

The boy who rides
around and around,
too big for his horse,
currently off-course
looking for direction
given only fierce corrections
No! and Stop! are what he hears
Sing, my bees into his ears:

Yes & Go
Yes & Go
Yes & Go
Yes & Go
Yes & Go

The Queen looked on and the bees moved their
wings, at 200 beats per second.

Everyday miracles.

Lenny Travel is a fifty-year-old man who comes
to the shopping centre once a week for his
prescription. Shaved head, large grey beard,
well-tended. Always dressed in practical hiking/
outdoor wear. If he didn't smile so much, he
could be mistaken for the 'baddie' in a prison-
break drama. Lenny is happy to catch the eye
of passers-by. Lenny spent many years defusing
bombs around the world. Walks with a limp, the
result of a cycling injury. Since his accident,
Lenny has travelled the world, raising money
for Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors without
Borders).

Queen:

Let us talk of Lenny Travel
Who many people can't unravel.
When his face wears no smile
People want to run a mile.
Lenny's face is creased and hairy
Without a smile he looks quite scary
But when he grins, people stare
At this face glowing care
Where have you gone to find such hope,
You limping bearded philanthrope?

Oh, village of the Blooming Field
Let us move your fixed impressions
Let us sing you hope that freshens
Let us comfort your depressions,
Go deeper than
outward expressions
You are more than your possessions
You are more than first conceptions
You are more than your professions
You are more than your transgressions
This is our Bee-Confession:
You are loved in this recession

Refrain

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