“One, two, three,” Tom said, as he counted the flies in his bedroom.

“Tom, don’t eat food in your room, please,” his mom put her hands on her hips and tried not to lose her temper. “I’ve told you tons of times! You always leave your bedroom in such a mess; you should clean it up!”
Tom looked around his room.

His stuff was scattered everywhere, from the bed right to the door.

A few stray white bread crumbs lay on the floor.

It wasn’t a bedroom to be proud of. Tom didn’t care what his room looked like though.
He picked up some bread from the floor and ate it on his bed.

Suddenly, he heard a tiny voice say, “Don’t eat it, it has germs.” Tom looked around his room wondering where the tiny voice had come from.

He didn’t find anyone so he kept eating the bread.
But something happened.

Tom found himself becoming smaller and smaller, he ended up as small as an ant.

His bed became bigger and bigger, bigger than an ocean.

Tom tried to jump to the floor, but the floor was too far for him.

It was like he was stuck in the middle of the ocean.
“Do you need help?” the tiny voice spoke again.

“Who are you? Where are you?” Tom asked.

“Lift your head, please; I’m sitting near the window.”

“Oh, my!” Tom cried out.

He found a huge spider sitting on her web; the spider was busying wrapping up a fly.
“How can you help me?” Tom asked.

The spider dropped a line of web in front of Tom. “Grab the line and I’ll put you on the windowsill.”

“You’re not going to eat me, right?” Tom asked, feeling scared.

“No, we’ve been friends for a long time,” the spider said. “Because flies love your place, I’ve moved inside as my job’s to catch flies.”
Tom climbed up the line of web and pulled the line taut.

The spider dragged the line upward.

Tom closed his eyes and held his breath.

He felt like he was riding a roller coaster at a park, but it wasn’t fun anymore.
“Here we are,” the spider cheered.

Tom opened his eyes and found that he was standing on the windowsill.

“Since your room is too messy, I need to clean it up. I suggest you should go to visit the home of the ant tonight,” the spider said.

“But it’s still too high from the floor,” Tom felt hopeless.
The spider didn’t hear him and left.

A soft wind blew at nightfall. Tom could smell the flowers in the air. But at the moment, Tom felt so depressed and lonely.

“Welcome to my home,” a bee’s head peeped out from a flower and she rolled her eyes at Tom.

“Your home?” Tom felt curious.

“My name is Little Dot.” Little Dot flew over Tom’s head and said, “I know you, you’re Tom. I’ve seen you several times in your yard before.”
Little Dot used her feet and lifted Tom up.

Tom felt a strong wind against his face, and saw the flowers like big lanterns swaying under him.

Little Dot flew high and low to avoid the leaves.

Finally, Little Dot stopped in front of a rock and knocked on the door.
“This is your home?” Tom looked up and down the rock, it looked like a castle.

“Yes, usually we build our home in rock crevices and hollow trees, which we believe are appropriate for our colony.” Little Dot explained.

Another bee opened the door, and let them inside.

“Oh, your home is just like a huge storage area,” Tom saw the bees arranging their belongings into boxes one by one.
All the bees were very busy.
Some were cleaning the boxes.
Some were carrying the honey.
Some were splashed water around the room.

“We really need water, as it helps keep our home cool and allows the nurse bees to give raw honey to our babies,” Little Dot explained.
Tom looked around, and was shocked by what he saw. In their home, everywhere was very clean and tidy. Also, the smell was really sweet.

“We’ve three huge rooms in our home,” Little Dot showed Tom around. “This room is our storage room; we put our products here, such as honey and pollen.” Tom saw a lot of boxes with labels on.

The boxes were all neatly arranged in lines.
“This is our baby room,” Little Dot guided Tom to another bigger room in the center.

“Please be quiet,” a nurse bee came out and put her finger to her mouth. She stared at Tom, “Who's he?”

“Nice to meet you!” Tom said and smiled, but the nurse bee grabbed his arm and smelt him, “We need to clean him in case he has any germs!”
“No, I don’t have any germs,” Tom cried and struggled.

He tried to run away, but the nurse bee asked someone else to catch him.

Tom ran very fast, not even turning around and looking back once.

He could hear the bees shouting.
Finally, Tom found an empty box and climbed inside.

He held his breath and waited for the bees to go away. After a while, Tom stretched his head out and found no bees around him.

He jumped outside and walked to the corner.

He found the biggest room, which was about three times bigger than the other rooms.

But it was dark. He couldn’t see anything inside.
Tom entered the room on tiptoe.

Unaware, Tom heard something crack, he seemed to have stepped on something.

“Who’s there?” the voice was so angry.

A huge bee showed up in front of Tom. This bee had a larger belly and stronger legs than all the other bees.
“Hey, who let you into my home? This is my room. I’m the queen and it’s my sleeping time,” she said in an arrogant voice.

The bees running after Tom heard the queen’s voice. They all came to her room and waited outside.
“I brought him to our home,” Little Dot said with a trembling voice, “It’s too cold outside; please just let him sleep over for one night.”

“Shut up!” the queen snapped sounding annoyed. “You know our rules; we don’t like strangers. You two will need to be punished.”

The queen turned her body around, “Take them to the storage area.”
The other bees came over and dragged Little Dot and Tom to the storage area and put them inside.

Tom felt sorry for Little Dot.

“Sorry, I didn’t mean to bring you any trouble,” Tom said.

“Don’t blame yourself,” Little Dot said, “We can stay together and have a lot of fun. By the way, I’m a worker bee, working is my life.”
The storage area was a bit cold and wet. But Tom quite liked the place.

“The surface is really smooth,” Tom touched the wall gently.

“We, the worker bees started to paint our home.” Little Dot said proudly, “We covered the wall by using a thin layer of propolis. This can prevent the wall from the harmful germs.”
Little Dot put on some gloves and started to clean the boxes.

“Why do you build so many boxes?” Tom asked.

“Our boxes is called honeycomb by human. They are to be used to store nectar, pollen, water, honey and our babies in,” Little Dot said. “The boxes are so important for our survival; we need to store lots of honey for the winter.”
“Why are the boxes a hexagonal shape?” Tom wanted to take one of them and reached out to touch one of the boxes.

“Don’t touch it!” Little Dot said. “We can build honeycombs from squares or circles, but the hexagon is the strongest.”
Tom suddenly realized that he hadn’t eaten for a long time, he felt so hungry.

His stomach started growling.

“Usually we don’t allow any eating of the food from storage,” Little Dot said, opening one of a box. “We collect the sugary juice from the heart of flowers to make honey.”
After eating, Tom wanted to help Little Dot to clean the storage area.

Tom felt so guilty because he didn’t know how to clean. He never did it by himself at home.

He felt so clumsy.

Finally, he spilled honey from a box that he was cleaning. The strong sweet smell flooded out into the whole home.
The alarm bell started to ring.

Tom saw an army of bees running out like little soldiers with arms.

“Something’s going wrong, Tom, hurry!” Little Dot dragged Tom to the corner.

“What happened? What are they doing?” Tom asked.

“The guard bees always protect our home. They can sting intruders and also emit a scent to warn us of potential danger.”
Little Dot jumped up onto a shelf and looked outside.

“Oh no! It’s a honeyguide. It can find our home by its advanced sense of smell.”

“That’s the reason you wanted me to clean up to get rid of the sweet smell. All I did was make it worse by breaking the box,” Tom said.

All at once, Tom felt everywhere around him shaking like there was an earthquake.

He was knocked to the floor. Little Dot tried to catch him but failed.
Tom jumped up on his feet and followed Little Dot outside, as he was running he slipped over and lay on the ground.

He saw the honeyguide flip its wings and insert its beak into the rock crevice.

Little Dot stung the bird’s head bravely, and then she tried her best to lift Tom from the floor.
Finally, Little Dot dropped Tom on the flower outside of Tom’s home.

From far away, Tom could see the bee’s home.

It looked like an abandoned castle, which toppled down to the ground.
Tom felt so sorry for Little Dot’s suffering.

He felt ashamed of himself.

“It’s not your fault. The smell is so strong that the bird can find us very easily,” Little Dot said.

“What about your home?” Tom worried.

“It’ll be rebuilt soon. We’re very strong,” Little Dot tried to show Tom her muscles but failed and laughed.
“I’m very weak; I will die after stinging someone.” Little Dot closed her eyes. “A worker bee’s life is very short. But it has a lot of meaning when I’ve a friend like you Tom, see you tomorrow.”

Tom couldn’t take his eyes off his little bee friend.

He didn’t know how long he stayed there until he felt the night wind blow his hair again.
The next morning, Tom woke up and found himself asleep on the ground.

He thought of his little bee friend.

Tom searched everywhere, under all of the flowers.

Finally, he saw a tiny figure around the corner.

Little Dot’s body was stiff, withered and cold.

Tom picked a leaf and covered the Little Dot’s body.

He cut a small box into a hexagonal shape, and put Little Dot inside.
Tom went back inside his home, as soon as he stepped inside he changed back to his normal size again.

He started to clean his room.

He arranged his belongings in closet neatly, like Little Dot had taught him.

In honor of his friend Little Dot, Tom built a scarecrow outside the bees’ home.

From that moment on, no birds or other animals dared to close to their home.
The spider moved out, because without all the flies to catch she lost her job.

But she felt very happy to live outside the window and watch her friend, Tom.
About the author

The author Yan Li always loves to write about humans beings and nature. Opening up nature to our children has many benefits. Embracing nature can show children the inner workings of life, and bring understanding and concern for our environment.

Children can also learn about love, friendship, self-sacrifice, and tolerance, and appreciate small things from exploring nature. In social insect colonies, worker bees devote their whole lives to work as gardeners and protect their hives and larva. Beetles have the greatest physical strength and act as the cleaners for nature.

Because Yan Li’s book is written in two languages, English and Chinese, it is also a great choice for the language-learners. Her other books for children include: If a bird can’t fly, The small world, Let’s sing you home, I’m the night king, Tree of life and What’s the best costume.
“一，二，三，”汤姆在他的房间数着飞来飞去的苍蝇。

“汤姆，请不要在你的房间吃东西。”他的妈妈叉着腰站在门口强压怒火，“我告诉你很多次了！你的房间总是这么乱，你应该打扫干净！”
汤姆环顾他的房间，他的东西扔得到处都
是，从床上一直到地上。不仅如此，地上还
有吃剩的面包屑。这可真不是一个值得夸耀
的房间，但是汤姆根本不在乎。
汤姆从地上捡起一些面包坐在床上吃起来。

突然，他听到一个细微的声音，“别吃，上面有细菌。”

汤姆四处张望寻找声音的来源。

他什么也没有看到，继续吃着他的面包。
但是，奇怪的事情发生了。

汤姆发现自己越变越小，小得像一只蚂蚁。

他的床却越变越大，大得像一片海洋。

汤姆想努力跳到地上，但是地板离他是那么遥远。

他就像被困在海洋中间。
“你需要帮 忙吗?”那个细微的声音问他。

“你是谁?你在哪?”汤姆问。

“请抬头,我就坐在窗 户附近。”

“哦!”汤姆叫起来。

他看见一只巨大的蜘蛛坐在网上,

她正 着包裹一只苍蝇。
“你怎么帮我？”汤姆问。

蜘蛛抛下网上的一只丝在汤姆的面前。

“抓住丝，我会把你拽到窗台。”

“你不会吃了我吧？”汤姆非常害怕。

“不会，我们是朋友已经很久了。”蜘蛛说。

“因为苍蝇喜爱你的地方，所以我只好也搬到这里。”
汤姆爬到线上并把线拉紧。
蜘蛛把线往上拉起。
汤姆闭紧双眼屏住呼吸。
他感觉就像在游乐场做过山车一样，
但是这次一点也不好玩。
“我们到了”蜘蛛欢呼着。

汤姆睁 开眼睛发现他正 站在窗 台上。

“因为你的房间太乱了，我需要去清理一下。我建议你 今晚去参观一下蚂蚁家。”蜘蛛说。

“但是从这里去地面还是太高了。”汤姆感觉没有希望。
可是蜘蛛没有听到汤姆的话就离开了。

轻柔的风在傍晚吹起，汤姆能闻到空气中花香。

但在这一刻，汤姆却感到如此的无助。

“欢迎到我家光临。”一只小蜜蜂从花丛中冒出来，她转动着大眼睛看着汤姆。

“你家？”汤姆好奇地问。

“我叫小点儿！”小点儿飞到汤姆的头上。“其实我早就认识你了，汤姆。我在你家的院子里看到你好几次。"
小点儿用她的脚将 汤姆拉起。
汤姆在半空中，风吹过他的脸庞。他看到花就
像一盏盏 灯一样在他的脚下摇曳着。
小点儿为了躲过树枝飞得忽高忽低。
最后，小点儿停在了一处岩石前敲门。
“这是你的家？”汤姆上下打量着，它可真像个小城堡。

“是的，通常我们把家建在岩石的缝隙里或者空心树里。这些地方我们觉得非常适合安家。”

另一只蜜蜂给他们开门。

“哇，你的家就像巨大的储藏室一样。”汤姆看着小蜜蜂

们将他们的东西收拾到一个又一个箱子里。
所有的蜜蜂都非常忙。

一些在清理箱子。

一些在搬运蜂蜜。

一些在给房间泼水。

“我们非常需要水，水可以让我们的家保持凉爽，

这样有利于保育员喂新鲜的蜂蜜给我们的宝宝。”

小点儿说。
汤姆四处看着，非常惊讶蜜蜂的家居然这么干净和整洁。尤其是房间里还飘着甜甜的味道。

“我们有三个大的房间。”小点儿带着汤姆四处看起

来，“这间房间是我们的储藏室，我们将产品放在这

里，像蜂蜜和花粉。”

汤姆看到很多箱子上都有标签。

箱子整齐地一排排的摆放着。
“这是我们的育儿室，”小点儿带着汤姆去了另一间更大的房间。

“请保持安静，”一只保育员蜜蜂正好出来，将手指放在她的嘴上示意。她看到汤姆很惊讶“他是谁？”

“很高兴认识你！”汤姆微笑地说，但是保育员一把拽过他的胳膊

闻了闻，“我们需要给他做清理，以免有细菌。”
不用，我没有细菌。”汤姆边叫着边想挣脱。

可保育员蜜蜂叫来了其他的蜜蜂来捉他。

汤姆使劲地跑，甚至不敢回头看。

他能听到蜜蜂们在向他叫唤着。
zuì hòu  tāng mǔ fā xiàn le yì zhī kōng hé zì bǐng pà dào le lǐ miàn

最后，汤姆发现了一只空盒子并爬到了里面。

tā bǐng zhù hū xī déng dài mì fēng men lǐ kāi

他屏住呼吸等待蜜蜂们离开。

guò le yī huì tāng mǔ chū tóu chá kàn měi yǒu mì fēng zài zhōu wéi le

过了一会儿，汤姆伸出头查看，没有蜜蜂在周围了。

tā cóng hé zi lǐ tiào chū lái zǒu dào le wū jiǎo

他从盒子里跳出来走到了屋角。

tā fā xiàn le yī gè zuì dà de fáng jiān dà yuē yǒu qí tā fáng jiān sān bèi dà

他发现了一个最大的房间，大约有其他房间三倍大。

zhè lǐ fēi cháng hēi àn

这里非常黑暗。

tā shén me yě kàn bù jiàn

他什么也看不见。
汤姆蹑手蹑脚地走进房间。
不知觉地，他踩到了什么，发出了声响。
“谁在这？”有人愤怒地问。
比起其他的蜜蜂，这只蜜蜂有着巨大的腹部和更壮的腿。
“喂，谁让你到我的地盘来的？这是我的房间，我是皇后，现在是我的睡眠时间。”她傲慢地说。

其他追赶汤姆的蜜蜂听到皇后的声音，都跑到她的房间这边并等在外面。
“是我把他带到我们的家，”小点儿吓得哆嗦，“外面太冷了，请让他在这过一个晚上。”
“闭嘴！”皇后生气地打断了小点儿的话。“你知道我们德规定，我们不欢迎陌生者。你们俩个都得受惩罚。”
皇 后转过身体想了想，“把他们带到储藏室去。”
其他的蜜蜂跑过来拽着小点儿和汤姆去储藏室，并把他们关在了里面。

汤姆觉得很对不起小点儿。

“对不起，我并没有想到给你带来这么大的麻烦。”汤姆说。

“不要谴责你自己，”小点儿说，“我们在一起可以做很多好玩的事。另外，我是只工蜂，工作就是我的生命。”
这个储藏室有点阴冷潮湿，但是汤姆非常喜欢这个地方。

“表面好光滑啊，”汤姆轻轻地摸着墙。

“我们工蜂负责粉刷我们的墙面。我们用很薄的蜂胶铺在墙上。这样可以保护墙面，免受细菌的侵害。”
小点儿戴上了手套开始清理箱子。

“为什么你们建了这么多箱子?”汤姆问。

“我们的箱子被人类称为蜂巢。他们是用来储藏花蜜，花粉，水，蜂蜜，还有，我们的宝宝可以睡在里面。”小点儿说，“这些箱子对我们们的生存太重要了。我们需要为漫长 的冬天准备很多蜂蜜。”
“为什么这些箱子是六角形的呢？”汤姆想拿起一个箱子看看。

“不要用手直接碰！”小点儿说。“我们可以将蜂巢建成方形或圆形，但是六角形是最坚固的。”
汤姆突然意识到他已经好久没吃东西了，非常饿。

他的胃开始咕咕的叫起来。

“通常 我们不允许在储藏室里吃东西，”小点儿边说边打开一个箱子。 “我们是采集花中的花蜜来制造蜂蜜。”
喝完了蜂蜜，汤姆想帮小点儿去清理储藏室。
但汤姆并不知道如何做清理，他感觉非常内疚。
他在家里从不做家务，他觉得自己笨手笨脚的。
最后，他还是弄破了一个箱子。
更强烈的气味充满了房间。
警报开始响了。

汤姆看见一群像卫兵一样的蜜蜂跑出来。

可能出了什么事，汤姆，快点。”小点儿拉着汤姆到了屋角。

“发生 什么了?他们要做什么?”汤姆问。

“护卫蜂总是保护我们的家园。他们能蜇入侵者，
并且释放一种特殊的气味来警告我们潜在的危险。”
小点儿跳到了柜子上，向外面看看。

“哦！那是寻蜜鸟，它可以通过它强大的嗅觉发现我们的家。”

“这就是为什么你让我清洁干净，除掉那些气味。但我却把箱子打
破了，让一切更加糟糕。”汤姆说。

突然，汤姆感觉四处像地震一样 晃动。

他摔倒并撞击到地板上。

小点儿想拉住他却没有成功。
汤姆跳起来跟着小点儿跑到外面，他不小心滑倒在了地面上。他看到寻蜜鸟拍动着它的翅膀，将它的嘴插进了岩隙里。小点儿勇敢地蜇了鸟的头，然后她使出全身的力量从地上提起汤姆。
最终，小点儿将汤姆放在他家门前的花上。

从很远处，汤姆还能看到蜜蜂的家。

那里就像一处被遗弃的城堡，翻落在了地上。
汤姆为小点儿的遭遇感到非常难过。

他为自己感到羞愧。

“这不是你的错。蜂巢的味道是如此的强烈，鸟很容易就会发现我们，”小点儿说。

“你的家怎么办？”汤姆忧心地问。

“它将会被重建，我们非常强壮。”小点儿想向汤姆展示她的肌肉，却没有力气了，她笑了起来。
“我是如此的虚弱，在蛰了别人后，我就会死去。”

小点儿闭上了她的眼睛。“一只工蜂的生命 非常短

暂,但是我的生命 有了更多的意义, 因为我有一个像

你这样的朋友。

汤姆，明天见。”

他不知道时间过了多久，直到他感到晚风再次轻抚着
第二天早上, 汤姆醒来并发现自己睡在地上。

他想起了他的小伙伴儿。

汤姆搜寻了每个地方。

最终，在一个角落里，他看到了一个很小的身影。

小点儿的身体变冷了，僵硬了，枯萎了。

汤姆捡起一片树叶盖在了小点儿的身上。

他还做了一个六角形的盒子，把小点儿放在了里面。
汤姆回到了他的家，他也恢复了他原来的样子。

他开始清理他的房间。

他把柜橱里的东西收拾得整整齐齐，就像小点儿教给他的一样。

为了纪念朋友小点儿，汤姆在蜜蜂家门口建了一个稻草人。

从那以后，任何鸟儿和其他的动物都不敢靠近蜜蜂的家了。
蜘蛛也搬离了他的房间，因为没有了苍蝇，她失去了她的工作。但是，她住在窗户外面每天看着她的朋友汤姆，她感到是如此的快乐。
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