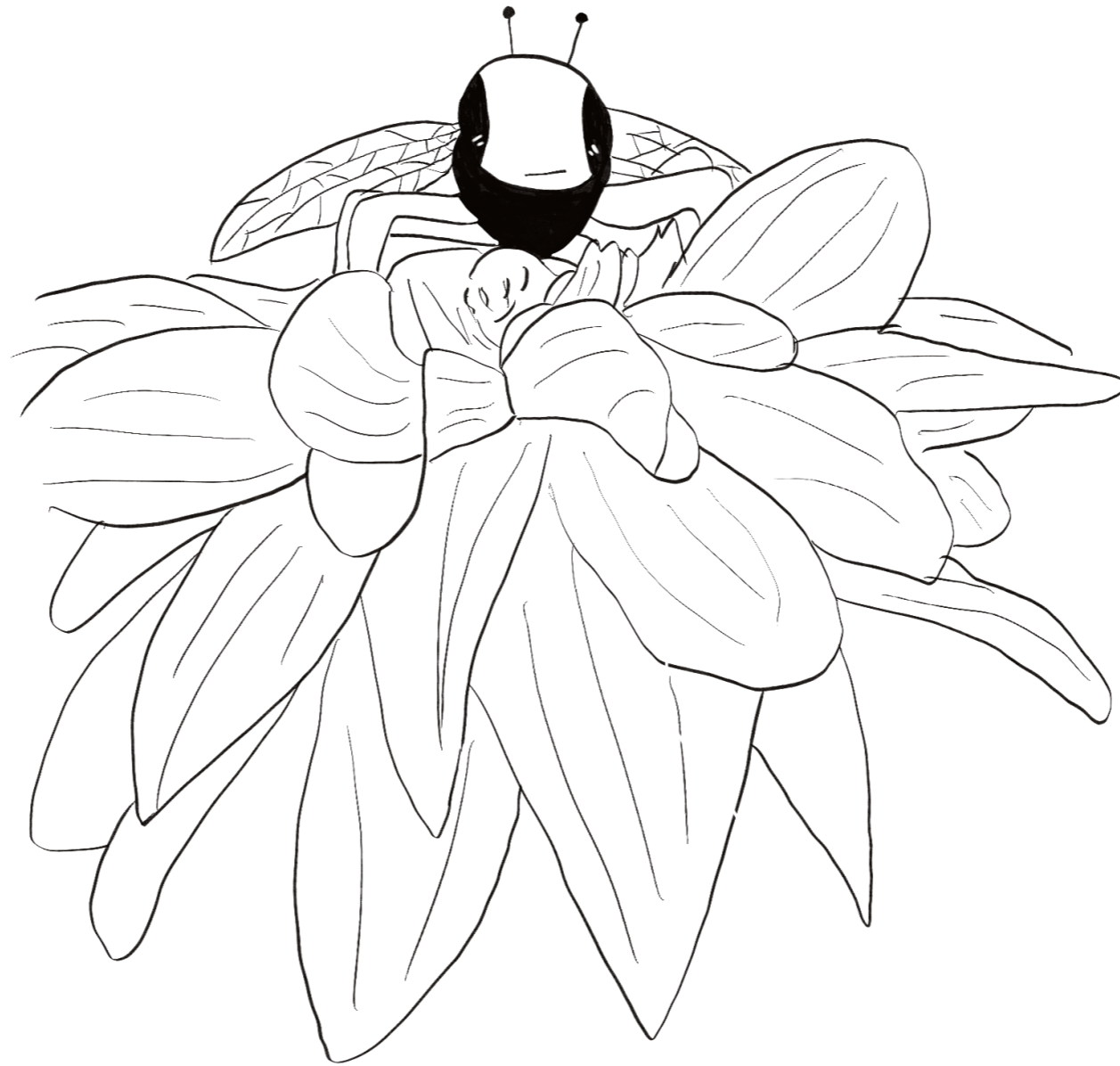
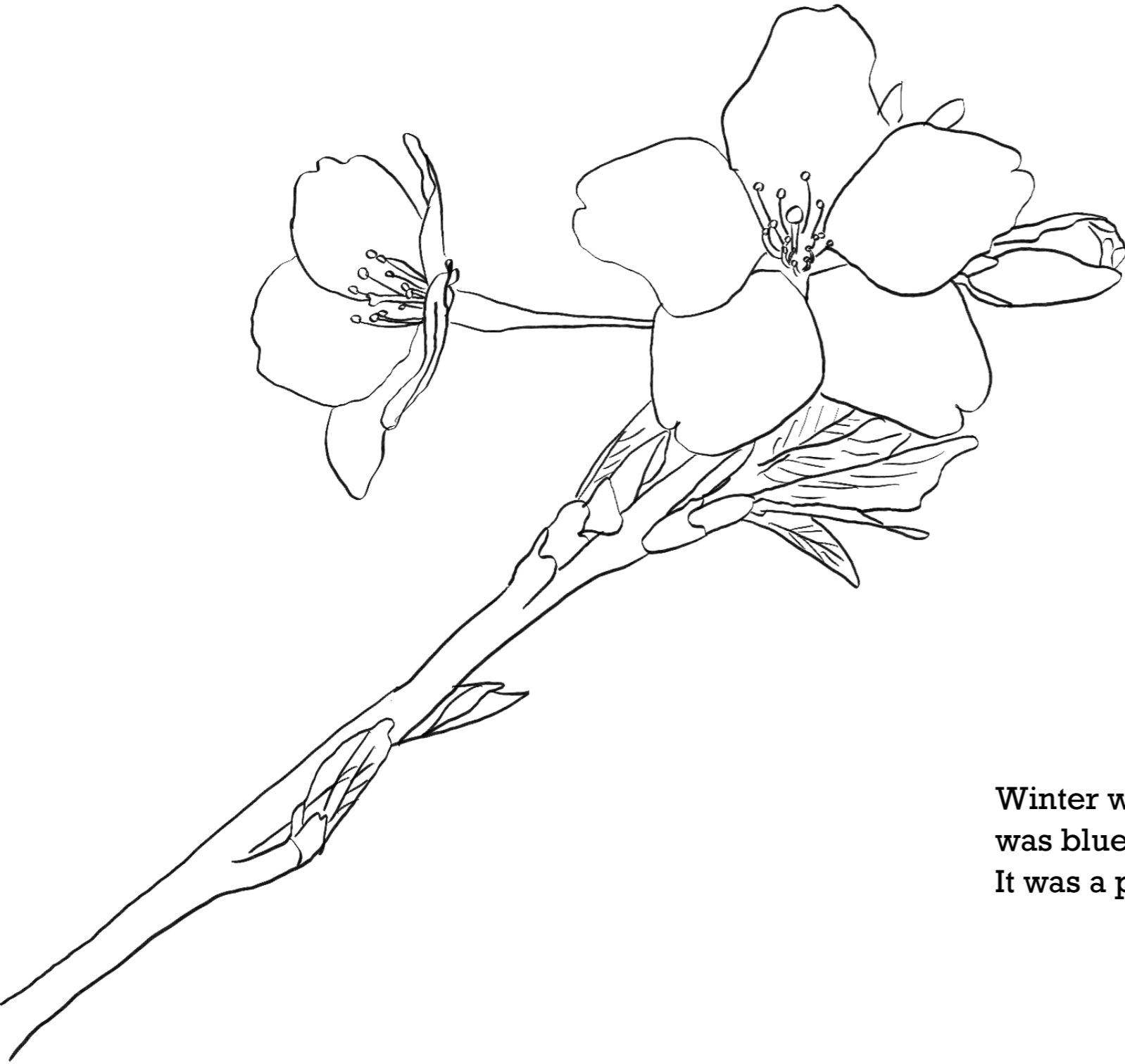


We Won't Bother Them





Winter was over. It was nice and warm, the sky was blue with puffy clouds, and the sun was bright. It was a perfect day to play outside.

Only Jane didn't want to play outside.

"There's too many bees outside," she told her mom. "I don't want to get stung."

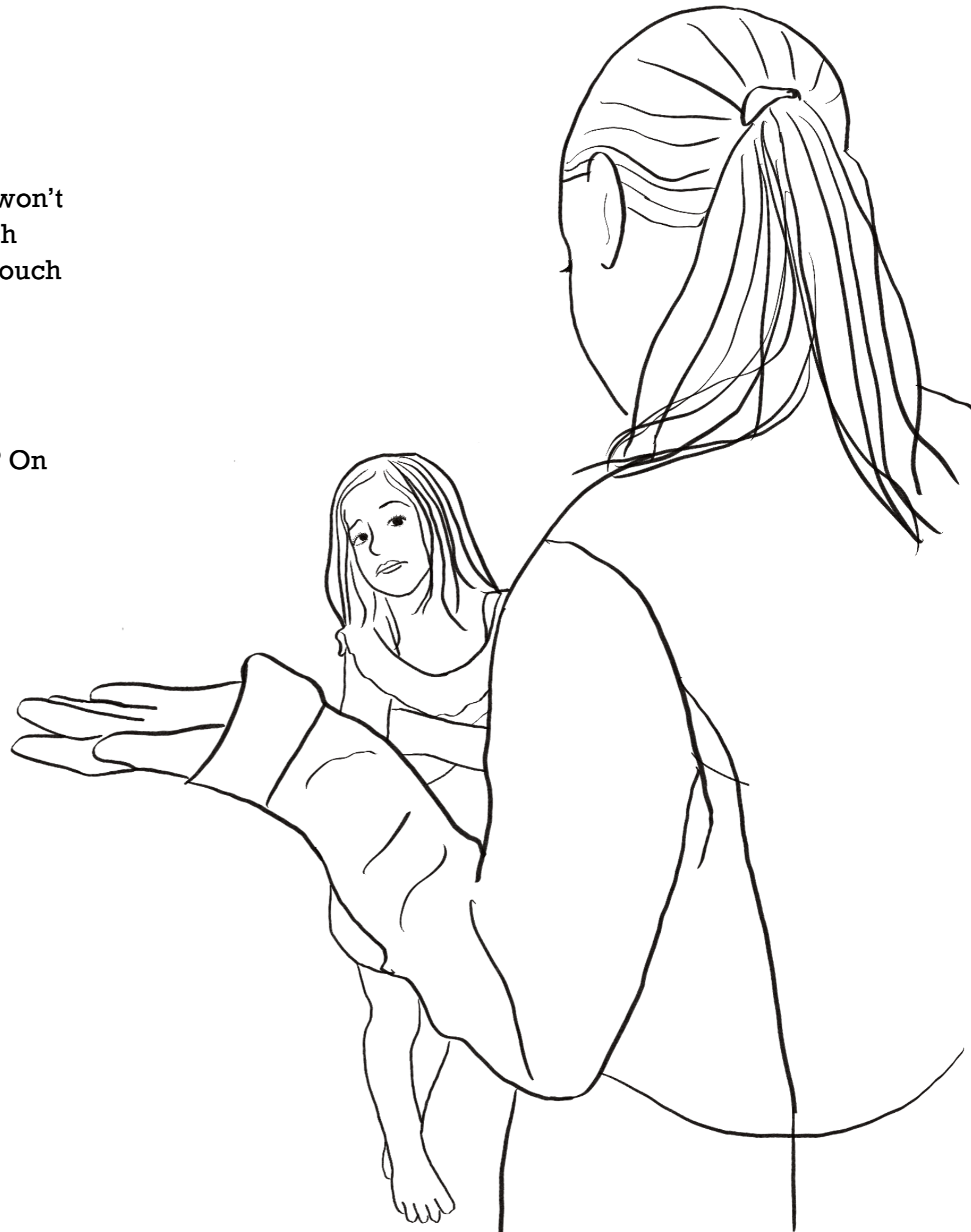


Her mom sighed. "Sweetie, remember- they won't bother you if you don't bother them. Just watch where you're walking and check before you touch things and you'll be fine."

Jane shook her head.

"So you want to stay inside the house all day? On this beautiful day?!" her mom asked.

Jane nodded. She was scared of bees.



The air was warm and the flowers were so colorful and smelled so fresh. It was a perfect day to collect nectar.



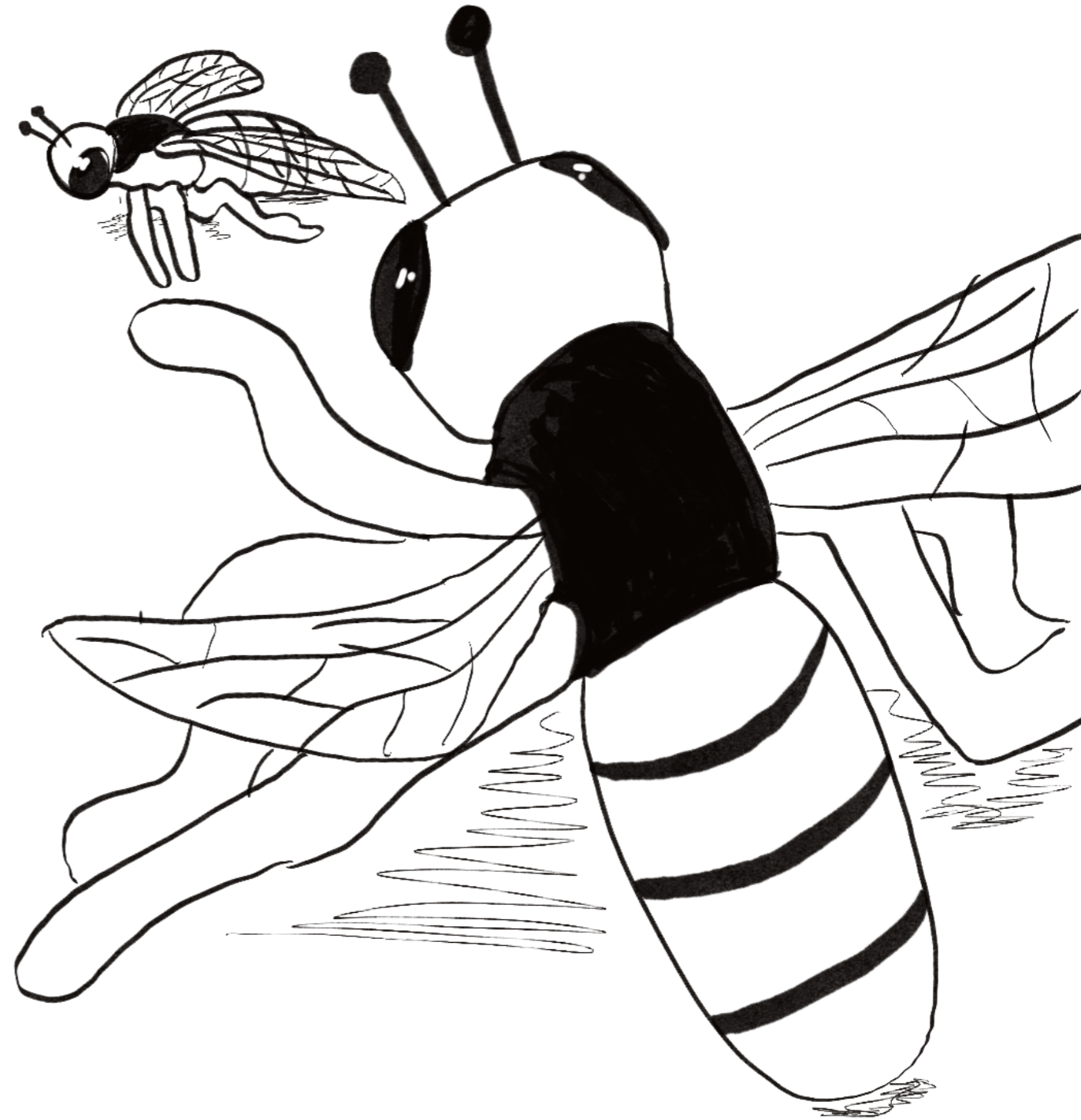
Only Bree didn't want to collect nectar. "There's too many kids outside," she explained to her mom. "I don't want to get squished."

Her mom sighed. “Honey, remember- they won’t bother you if you don’t bother them. Just be careful where you land. Don’t land on the grass or on things they like to touch and you’ll be fine.”

Bree shook her head.

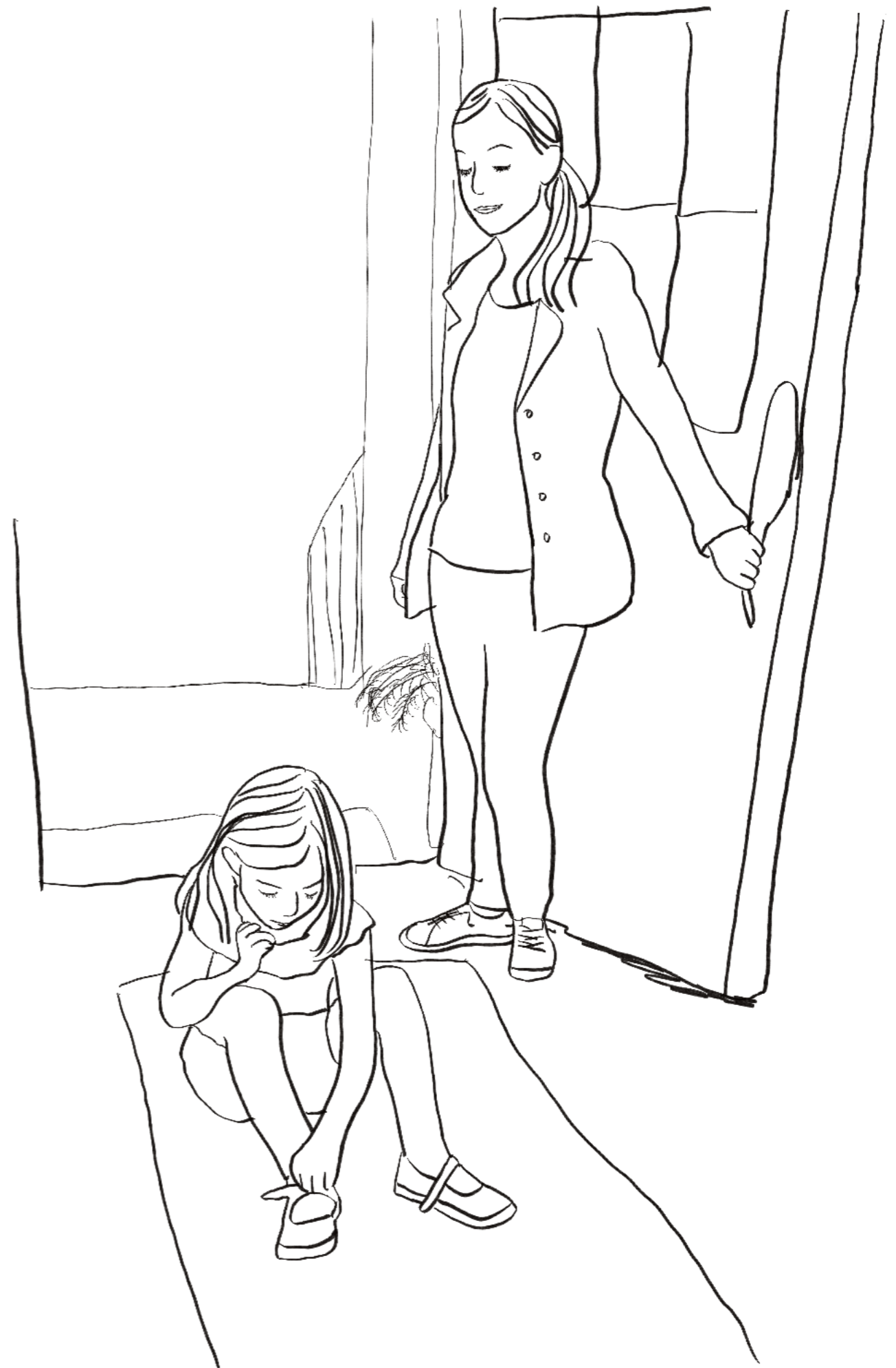
“So you want to stay inside the hive all day? On this beautiful day?” her mom asked.

Bree nodded. She was terrified of kids.



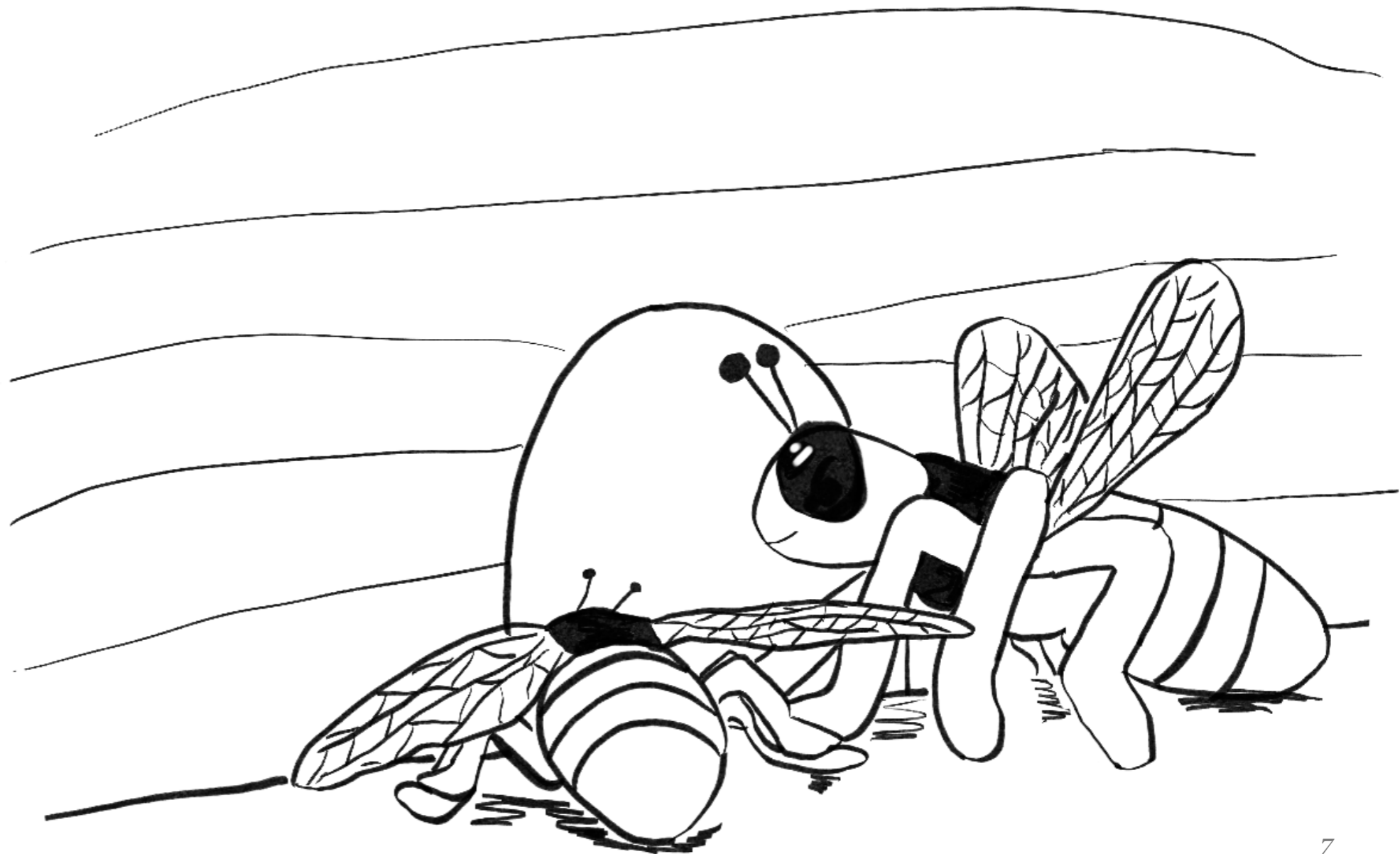
“Jane, we’re going outside,” her mom said firmly.
“I’ll go with you. We’ll wear our shoes, we’ll watch
where we step, and we’re going to have fun. You’ll
see.”

Jane reluctantly put on her shoes and followed her
mom outside.



“Bree, we’re going outside,” her mom said firmly.
“I’ll go with you. We’ll be careful where we land,
and we’re going to collect a lot of yummy nectar.
You’ll see.”

Bree reluctantly warmed up her wings and
followed her mom outside.





Jane looked around nervously. She didn't see any bees. Yet. She picked up a ball and began to toss it while her mom watched. After a few minutes, she started having a little bit of fun.



Bree looked around nervously. She didn't see any kids. Yet. She spotted a flower and flew down to it while her mom watched. After a few minutes, she started collecting a little nectar.



Jane threw the ball up into the air. She was so focused on the ball, she didn't look to see where her feet were going.

Bree spotted a flower low on the grass. She was so focused on collecting, she forgot to check for kids.



Jane's shadow landed on Bree. Bree looked up. "A KID!!!!!!" she buzzed in a panic. "MOM! THERE'S A KID! IT'S GOING TO SQUISH ME!" Bree flew in all directions trying to find her mom.

Jane heard the buzzing noise and saw a bee flying right in front of her. "A BEE!" She screamed. "MOM!!! THERE'S A BEE! IT'S GOING TO STING ME!" She flailed her arms in all different directions.



All Jane could hear was the
buzzing sound of the bee's wings.



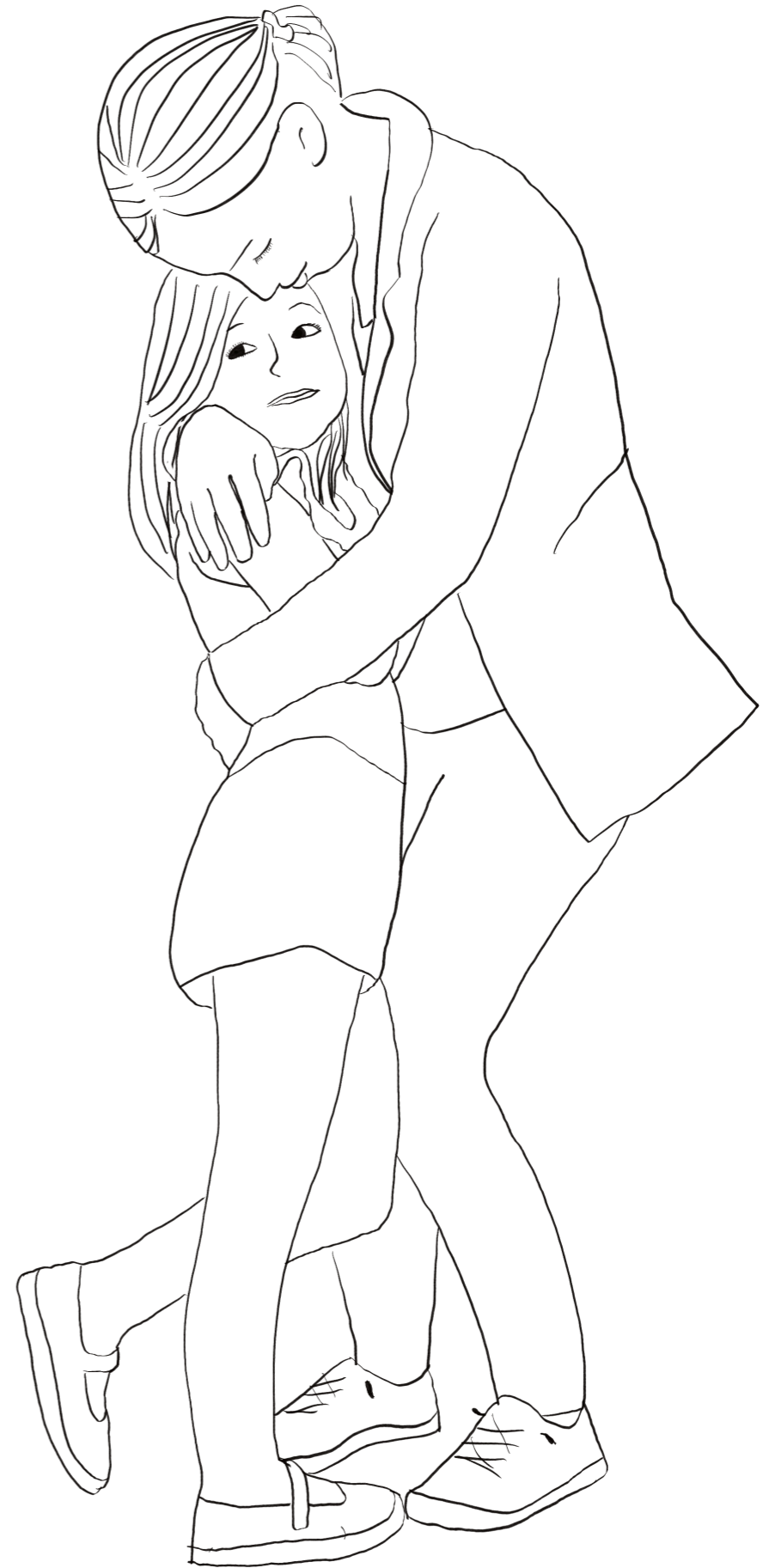
All Bree could focus on were
the huge hands and feet.

“I think it’s chasing me!” they both yelled at the same time.

Bree finally saw her mom and flew to her as fast as she could. Jane saw the bee fly away and ran to her porch as fast as she could.

“I don’t like bees!” Jane whined. “I wish there weren’t any bees at all!”

“No, Jane, we need bees,” her mom hugged her. “If we didn’t have bees, flowers wouldn’t grow and we wouldn’t have enough fruits or vegetables. They are very important helpers.”



Jane looked doubtful.

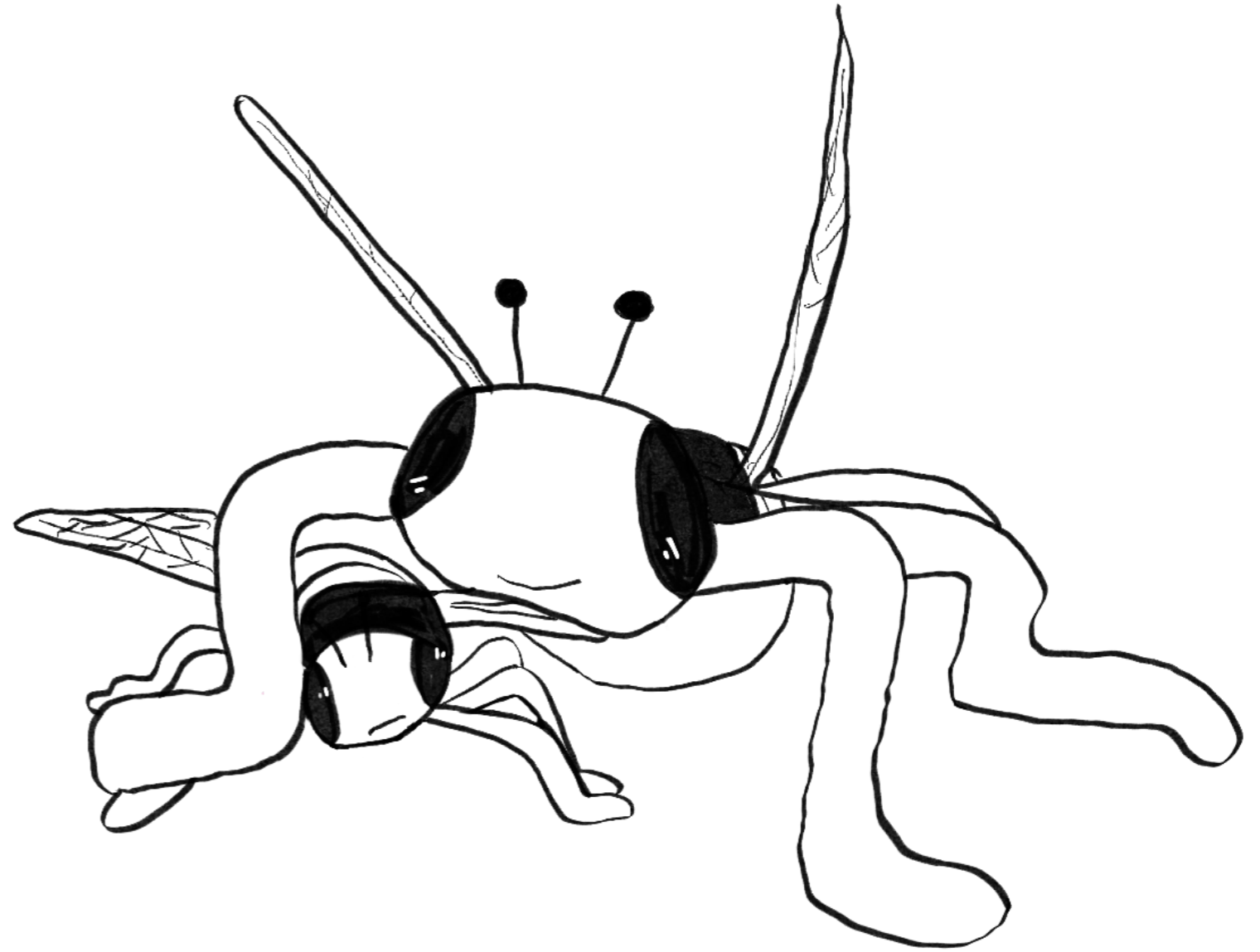




“It’s true! Also, all bees want to do is work. They only sting if they think they are in danger. So we give them space and try not to accidentally step on them or put our hands on them.

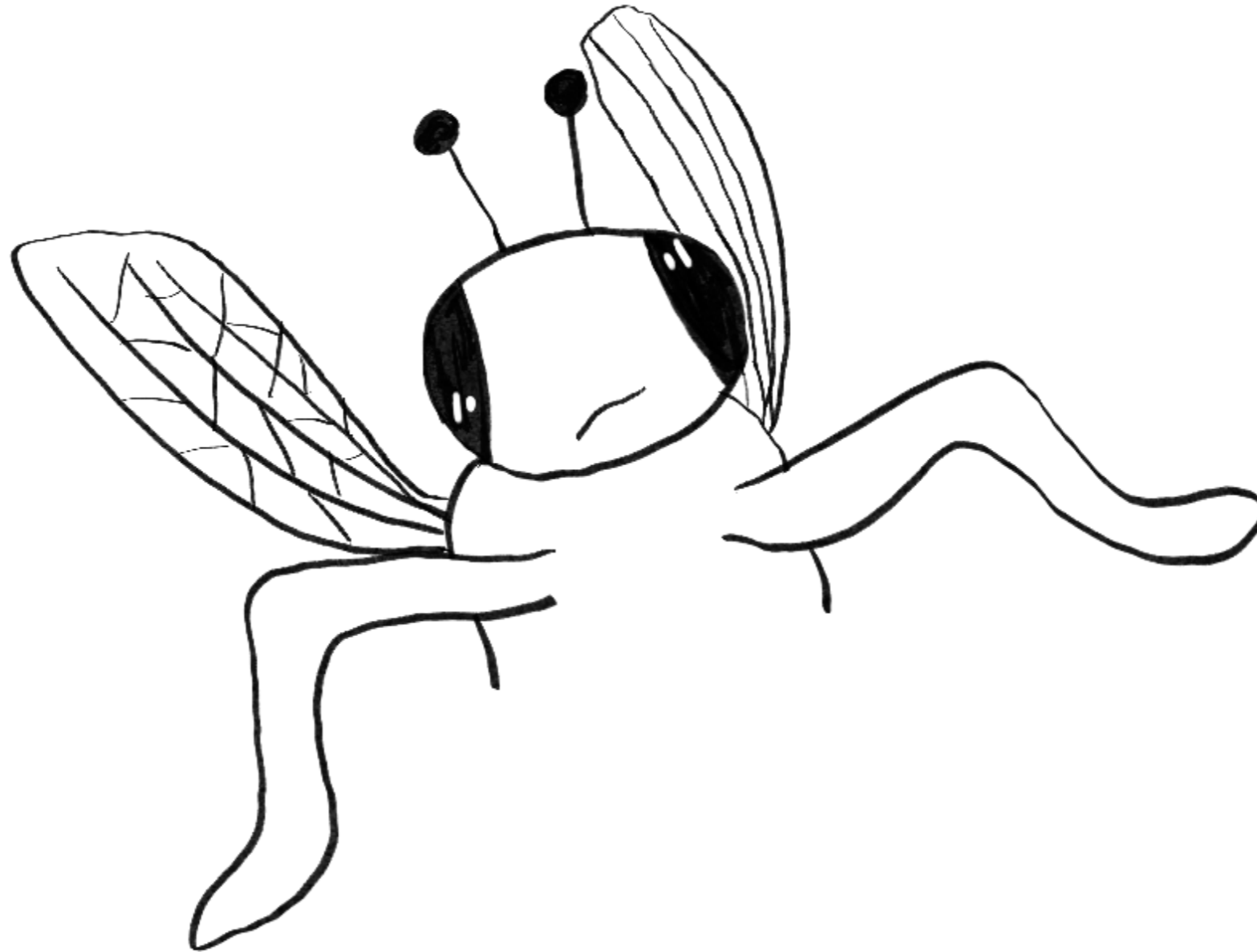
I’m sure that bee wasn't trying to sting you just now. It was only trying not to get stepped on.”

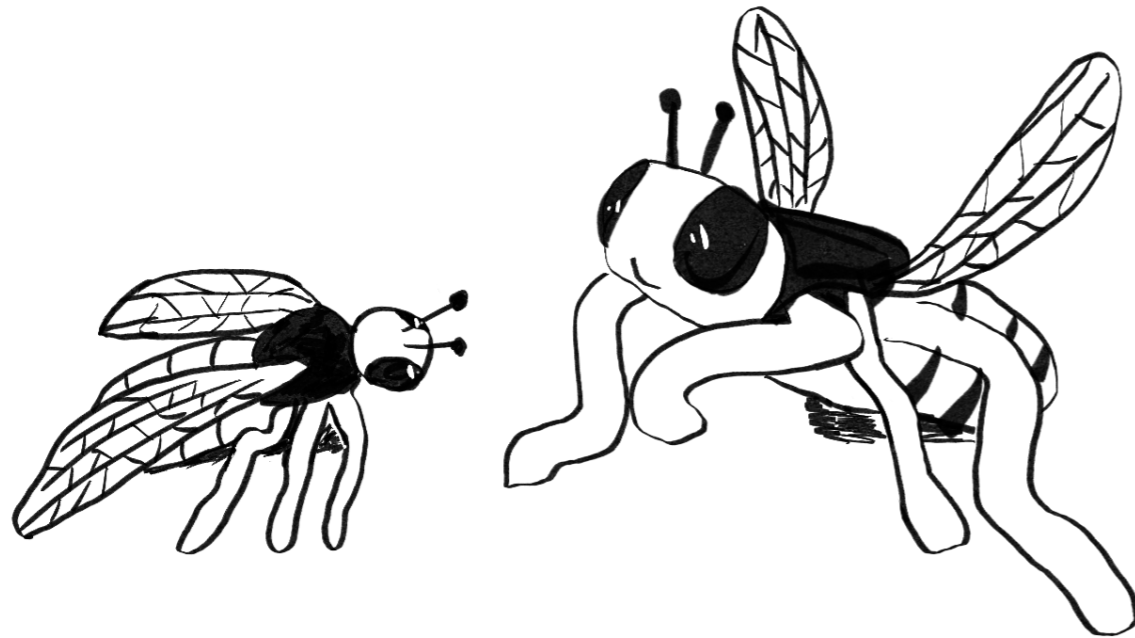
“I don’t like kids!” Bree droned. “I wish there weren’t any kids at all!”



“No, Bree, we like the humans helping us,” her mom snuggled against her. “If we didn’t have humans, we wouldn’t have our favorite garden to visit. We’d have to travel farther to find enough nectar.”

Bree looked doubtful.



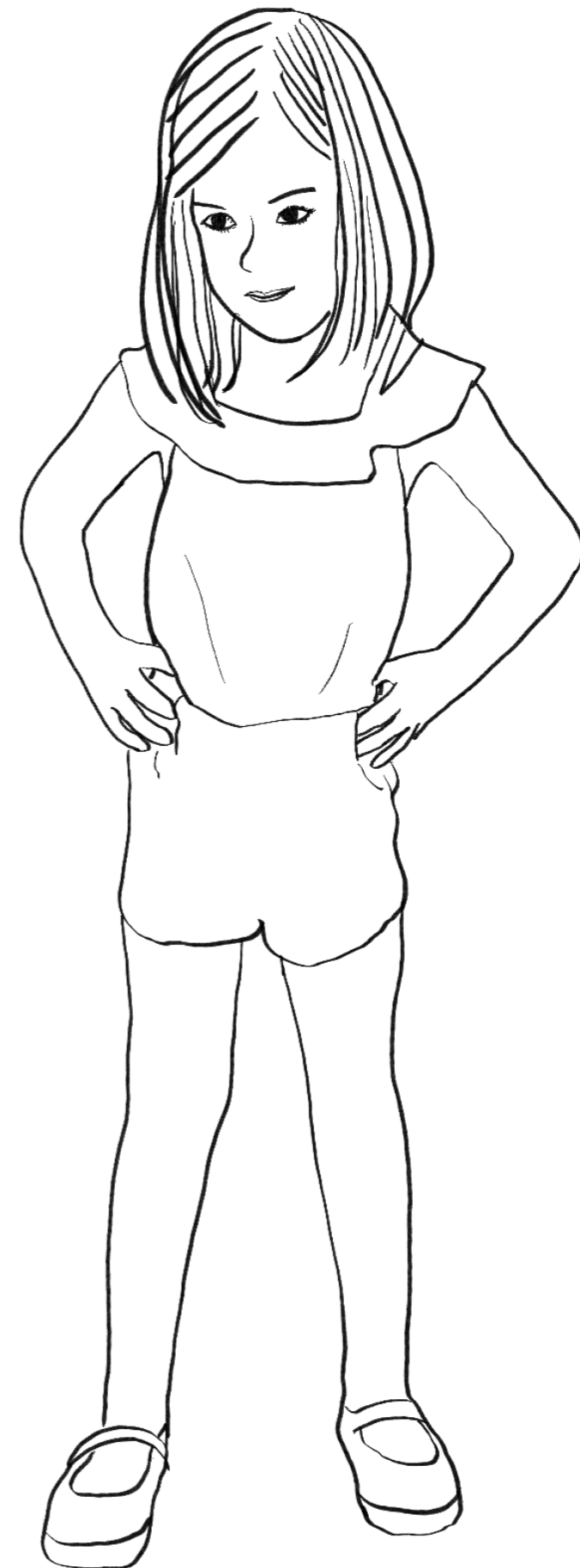


“It’s true! Also, all kids want to do is play. They only squish us if they don’t see us. So we give them space and try to stay off the grass or things they touch, like railings or the playground.

I’m sure that kid wasn’t trying to squish you just now. It didn’t see you down on the grass.”

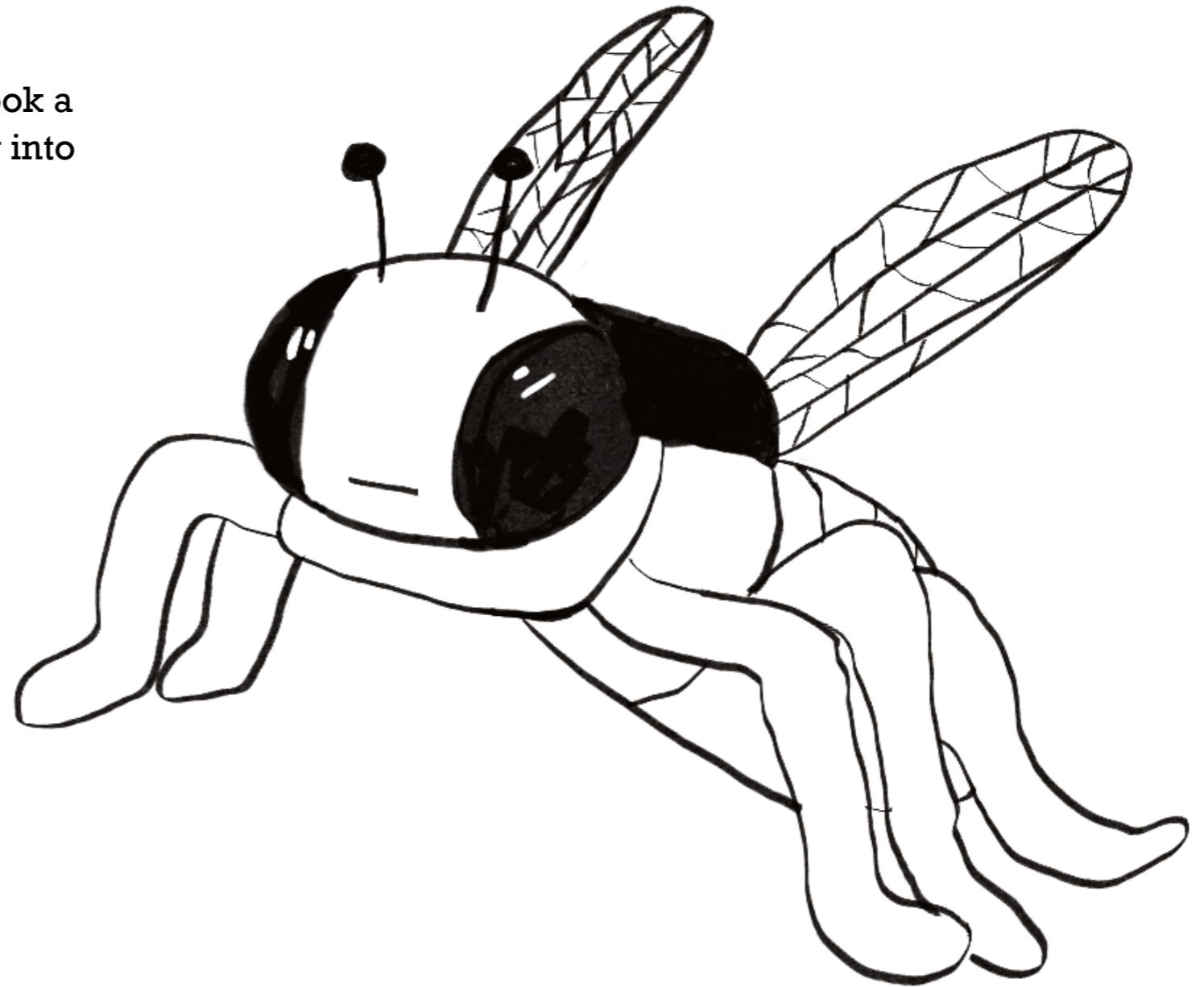
“Let’s go back outside and if we see a bee, we’ll remind ourselves the bee is only there to work,” Jane’s mom said. “And remember that it’s a good thing to see a bee working- that means more fruits and vegetables will be growing soon. We won’t bother them and...”

“They won’t bother us,” Jane finished. She took a deep breath. “Okay. I’ll be brave.” Jane stepped off the porch.



“Let’s go back to work and if we see a kid, we’ll remind ourselves that the kid is only trying to play and have fun,” Bree’s mom said. “And remember that it’s a good thing to live near all the flowers the humans grow in their gardens. We won’t bother them and...”

“They won’t bother us,” Bree finished. She took a deep breath. “Okay. I’ll be brave.” Bree flew into the air.





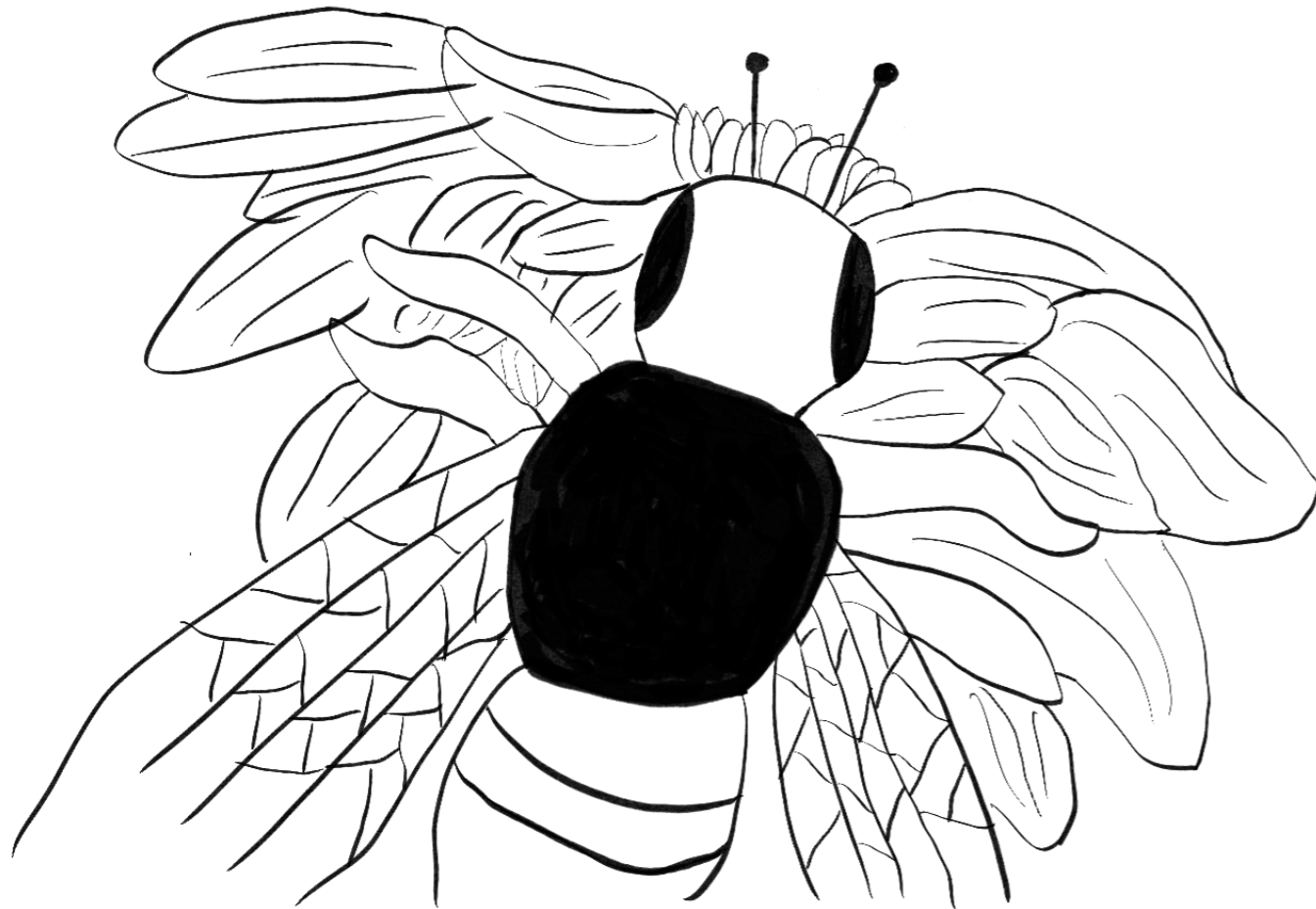
Jane started to color with some chalk.

She saw a bee land on a flower not too far away.
She went back to coloring.



Bree started to collect nectar from a flower.

She saw a kid playing nearby. She went back to collecting.



After a few minutes, Jane realized she was coloring a little closer to the garden. Bree saw a flower a little closer to where the kid was playing. They both moved slowly towards each other. But not too close.

Jane watched the bee working. “Thanks for helping the food grow,” she said quietly.

Bree watched the kid playing. “Thanks for planting the garden,” she buzzed quietly.



Jane played and gave the bee space. Bree worked and gave the kid space. They didn't bother each other. No one got squished and no one got stung.



It was a lovely spring day.





An original story by Lauren Teague
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