

Dear parents,

At Bayer, we have been committed to animal health and protection of the environment for many years. This book is intended to help children understand the role that honey bees play in conserving our flora and fauna.

Dear children,

Do you also like eating honey? You probably know that honey comes from bees, but do you know what else bees do for us? Where do they live? These and many other questions are answered when Toby meets Mr. Bumble, the beekeeper.

We hope you enjoy reading “Toby and the Bees”!

Masthead

Concept, Editorial & Realization: | Artwork:
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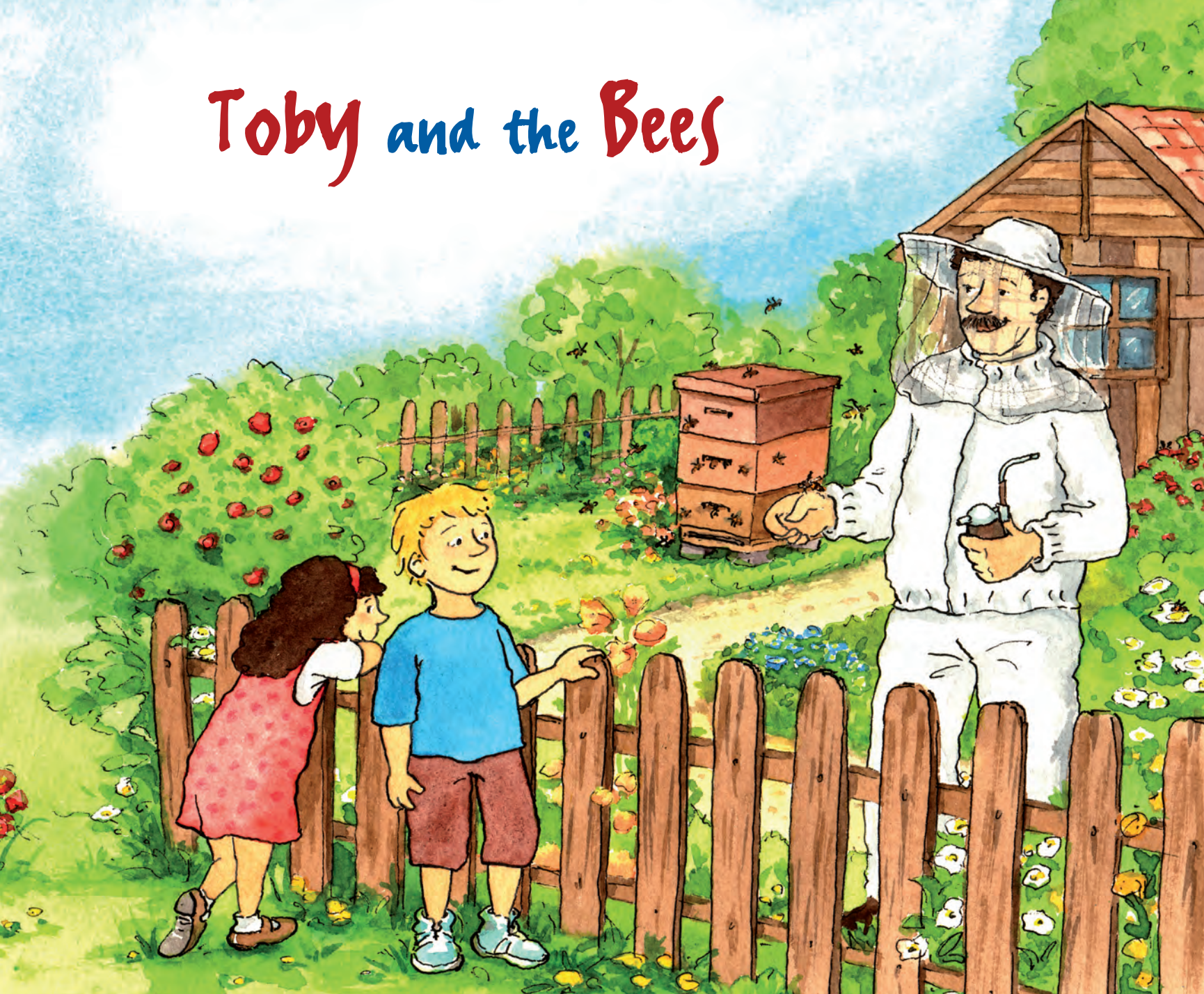
Alfred-Nobel-Str. 50
40789 Monheim am Rhein
Germany

beecare@bayer.com
www.beecare.bayer.com



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Toby and the Bees



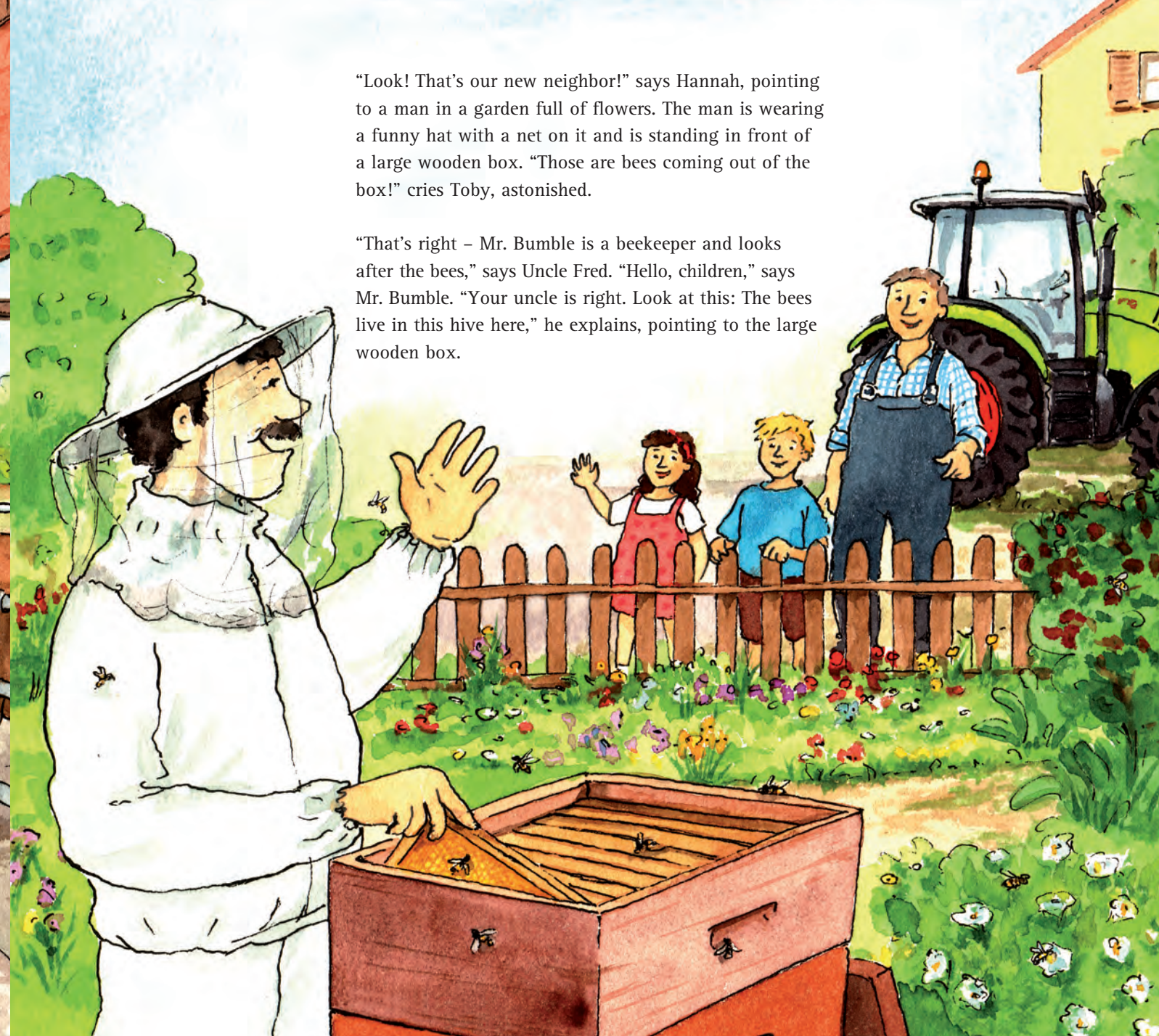
It's springtime and, like last year, Toby is visiting his uncle on the farm. "Finally, I'm on holiday!" squeals Toby. He can hardly wait to see his favorite cow, Emmy, again. When Toby arrives at the cowshed, Uncle Fred, Toby's cousin Hannah, and even Emmy the cow are waiting for him.

"So glad you're here!" says Uncle Fred, pleased. Toby laughs because Emmy is licking his hand: that's her way of saying "Hello". "She likes you," smiles Hannah and takes Toby by the hand. "Come with me. I've got something to show you!" exclaims Hannah, and she runs behind the cowshed with Toby in tow.



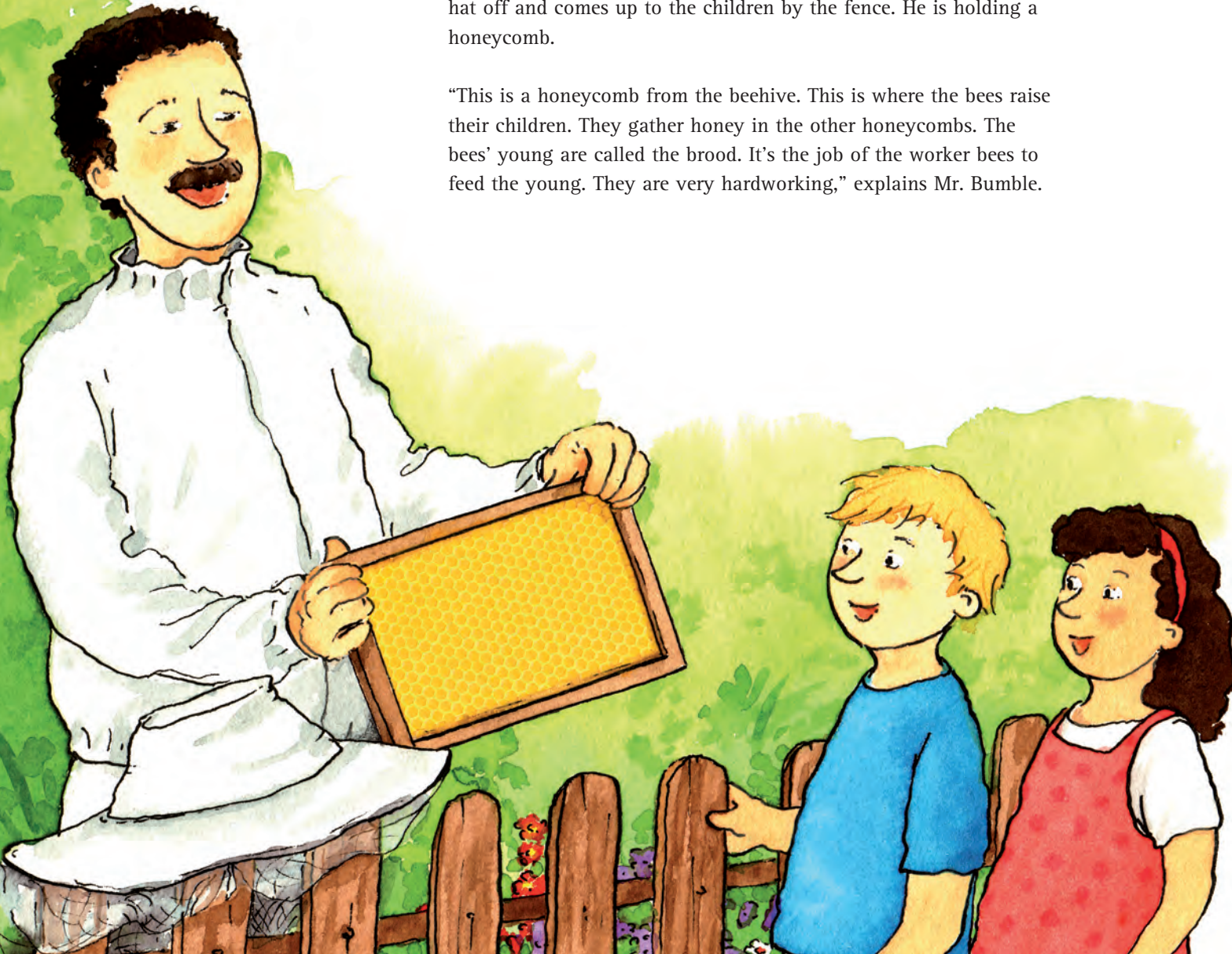
"Look! That's our new neighbor!" says Hannah, pointing to a man in a garden full of flowers. The man is wearing a funny hat with a net on it and is standing in front of a large wooden box. "Those are bees coming out of the box!" cries Toby, astonished.

"That's right – Mr. Bumble is a beekeeper and looks after the bees," says Uncle Fred. "Hello, children," says Mr. Bumble. "Your uncle is right. Look at this: The bees live in this hive here," he explains, pointing to the large wooden box.



"In a hive?" says Toby, amazed. "Yes. That's what the bees' house is called," laughs Mr. Bumble. "There are as many bees living in a beehive as there are people in a small town." Mr. Bumble takes his hat off and comes up to the children by the fence. He is holding a honeycomb.

"This is a honeycomb from the beehive. This is where the bees raise their children. They gather honey in the other honeycombs. The bees' young are called the brood. It's the job of the worker bees to feed the young. They are very hardworking," explains Mr. Bumble.

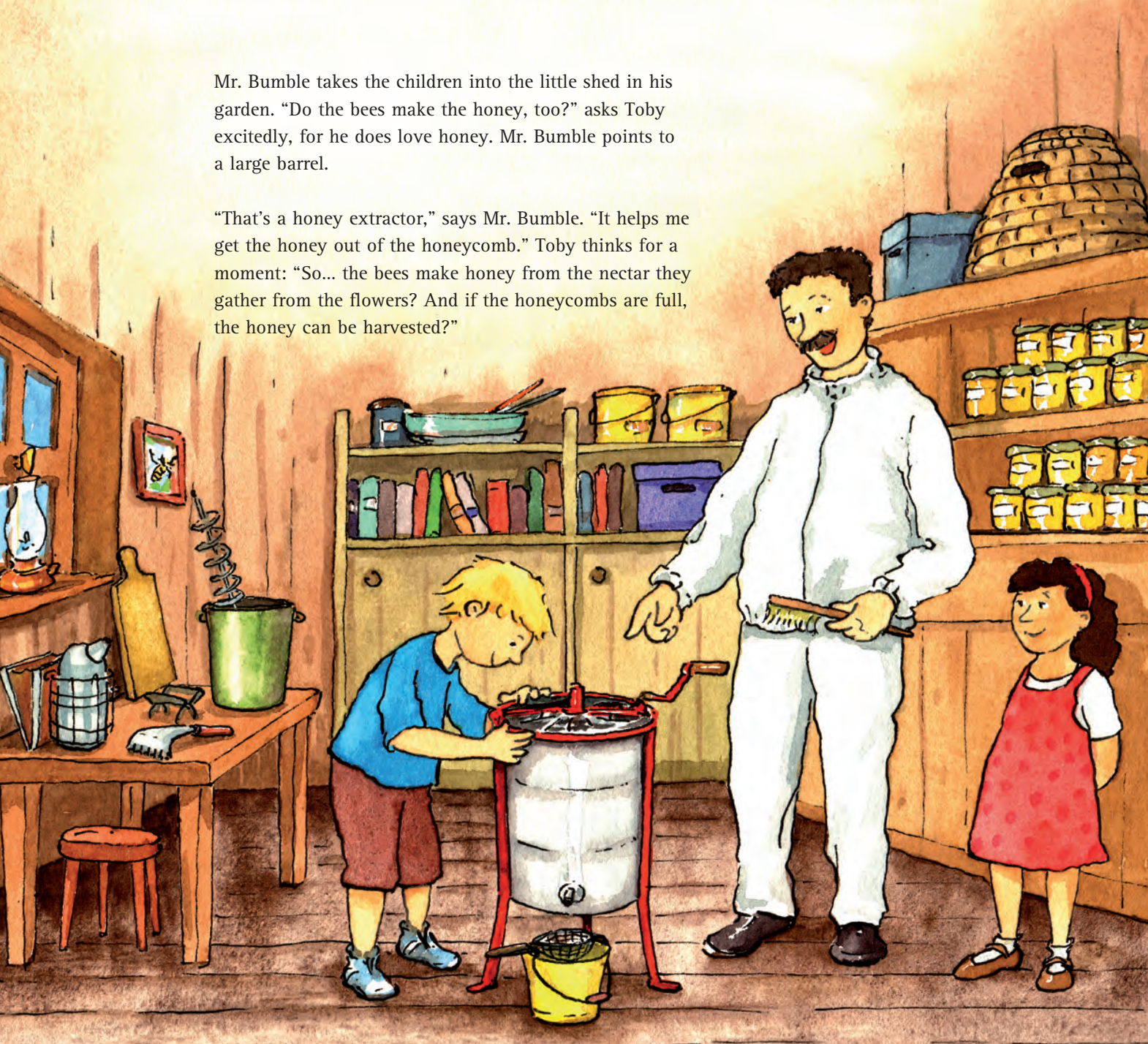


Hannah marvels at the angular holes in the honeycomb. "That's so pretty! Did the bees make them?" she asks. "That's right," says Mr. Bumble. "The worker bees make the honeycombs out of wax. The queen bee can then lay her eggs in the cells. That's what the little holes in the honeycomb are called." "Oh wow! A real queen!" beams Hannah.

Mr. Bumble explains that the queen bee is the mother of the other bees in the beehive. Then he says: "Flowers are very important for the worker bees. The worker bees fly to the blossoms to gather nectar and pollen. That's how they feed the brood."

Mr. Bumble takes the children into the little shed in his garden. "Do the bees make the honey, too?" asks Toby excitedly, for he does love honey. Mr. Bumble points to a large barrel.

"That's a honey extractor," says Mr. Bumble. "It helps me get the honey out of the honeycomb." Toby thinks for a moment: "So... the bees make honey from the nectar they gather from the flowers? And if the honeycombs are full, the honey can be harvested?"



"I see you would make a good beekeeper!" laughs Mr. Bumble, and he shows Toby a jar of honey. "There are a lot of good things in honey that help you stay healthy," the beekeeper explains. "And all that comes from the flowers?" Toby asks.

"Yes, it does. And the more flowers a bee visits, the more honey we can harvest," says Mr. Bumble. Toby stares at the jar of honey greedily and licks his lips. "Mmm... I hope we have bread and honey for breakfast tomorrow," he thinks to himself.





"If honey keeps us healthy, does that mean that the bees never get ill?" asks Toby thoughtfully. Mr. Bumble shows the children a book about bees and says, "Even bees sometimes become ill."

"Tiny creatures called mites also live in the beehive. If there are too many of them, the bees become ill. The mites are very small and can hardly be seen. But because I understand beekeeping, I can still see that the mites are there."

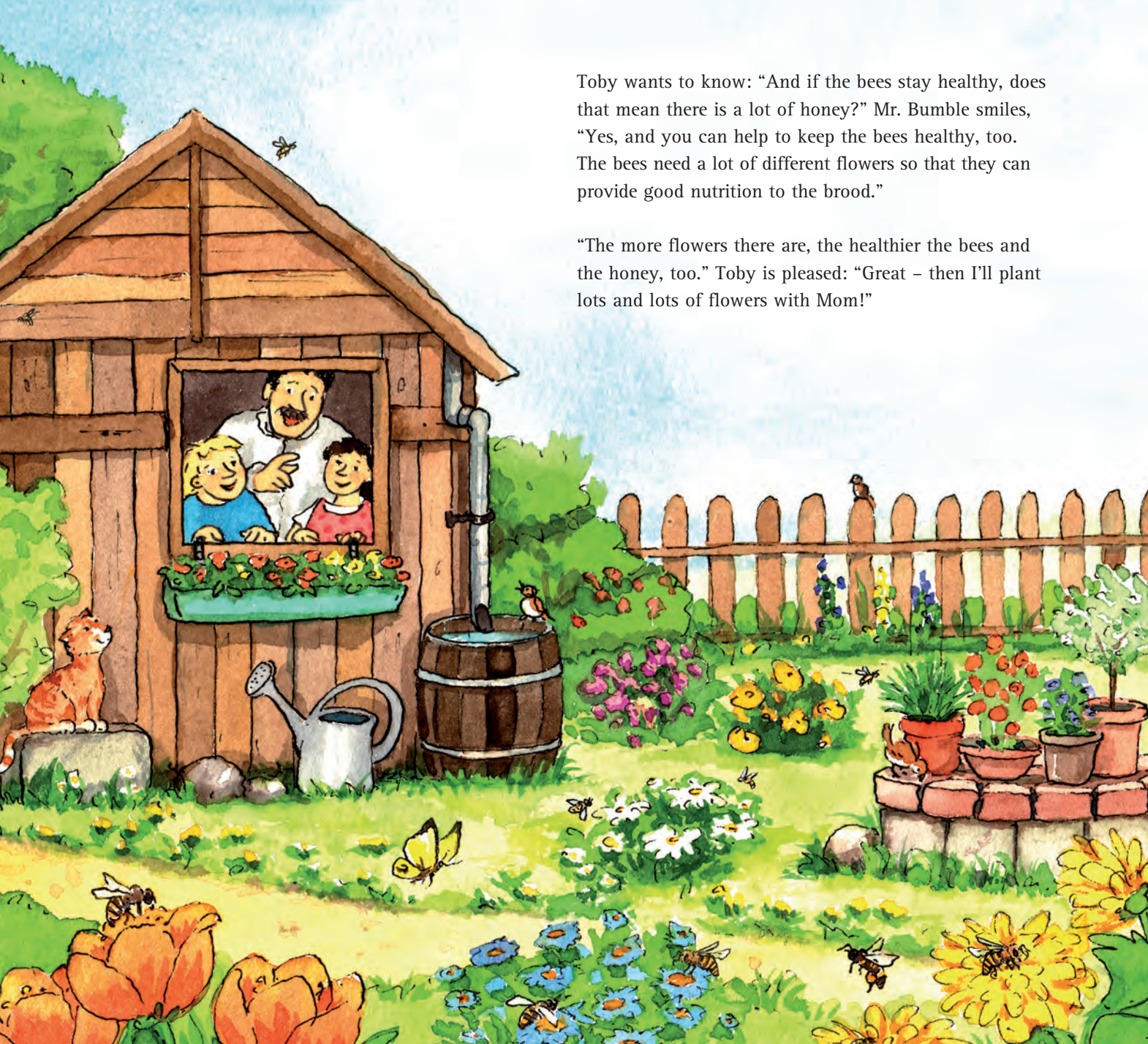


The children are horrified. "The poor bees!" they both exclaim in unison. "Not to worry," says Mr. Bumble. "The bees can be protected from the mites. I put some special medicine in the beehive that the mites don't like."

"The bees spread the medicine around with their feet and the mites go away. If the mites aren't there any longer, they can't make the bees ill."

Toby wants to know: "And if the bees stay healthy, does that mean there is a lot of honey?" Mr. Bumble smiles, "Yes, and you can help to keep the bees healthy, too. The bees need a lot of different flowers so that they can provide good nutrition to the brood."

"The more flowers there are, the healthier the bees and the honey, too." Toby is pleased: "Great – then I'll plant lots and lots of flowers with Mom!"



When Toby gets back home a few days later, he runs straight into the garden. He grabs a spade and his father's big straw hat. His mother asks him, "Toby, don't you want any breakfast?"

"Later!" cries Toby excitedly. "First I want to plant a whole lot of flowers for the bees!" His mother is astonished, and Toby explains earnestly, "It's really important for the bees, Mom. Oh and by the way, you know what – when I grow up, I'm going to be a beekeeper."

