

Dangerous Questions

by John Wentworth Chapin

"Dammit, I am good at what I do," Evie slurred, overly loud. Her wings ached.

"You got one job and you do it, Evie. You do it good, the hive thrives. You do it bad, we all die. You want praise? Pfft. We all bust our stingers around here." Shirley stubbed her cigarillo out on a dead chunk of honeycomb. "Be happy. The queen crawls around and squirts out your future all day long. You want that shit job?"

A drone raised his honey-soused mandibles. "Shut your trap about Her Holiness."

"Mind your own beeswax," Shirley warned. Goddamned uppity drones. "You got freedom to fly, at least, doll."

"I'm not complaining, Shirl. Well I am, but not about the work. Why do we do it? We don't see no payoff. No one does, not you, not Her Fatness. We just continue on, year after year, pollen, babies, honey. What's the point?"

"I puke up honey and squeeze wax out of my ass for a living. If I don't work, I don't eat and then we all die. I don't want to die. There's your motivation, babycakes."

Evie stroked her thorax drunkenly. "What if I refused? What if I wanted to sleep in one morning?"

The drone gaped. "She's thinking about herself," he half-whispered.

Shirley eyed the drone warily. She'd have to eat him before he spilled the beans about Evie to the hive.

She'd have to keep her eye on Evie, too.

