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Queen Bee

A Short Play

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Characters:

Levi: A Landscaper, twenties to thirties

Beatrice: A Bee Keeper, twenties to thirties

Time and Place:

Springtime, The Hoover Dam

Synopsis:

Levi, a neurotic nerd, has arranged the perfect picnic date at the Hoover Dam, but Bee Keeper Beatrice ruins it all when she arrives to conduct her science experiment. Although the date and the experiment do not go as planned, these two misfits find love in this Mr. Bean-like romantic comedy.

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Levi sets up a picnic at the Hoover Dam. From afar, Beatrice writes observations in her notebook.

BEATRICE

April 23rd Hoover Dam. Sixteen hundred hours. Mildly attractive, well-dressed male has occupied the coordinates where the next procedure in apiary experiment number nine is scheduled to take place and I think he's planning to stay.

LEVI

She should be here any second... or minute... or actually, fifty-one minutes ago, but who's counting right? A little romance is worth the wait. I have red wine, hope I don't spill it on my shirt. Raisons, covered in dark chocolate. Ladies love chocolate, love it. I have a double decker egg yolk sandwich made with mustard, not mayonnaise. This is her favorite snack. I've even arranged the pickles in the shape of a heart! And to set the mood: *(A love song plays)* Perfect. This date will be absolute perfection. Wait a second. Stop the music! *(The music stops)* Are eggs poultry? Chickens lay eggs, chickens are poultry. I've accidentally overlooked wine etiquette. Red wine with beef. White wine with poultry. A monster mistake! But white wine's not passionate, red is passionate white is just protocol. What wins? Protocol or passion, passion or protocol?!

BEATRICE

Behavior is anxious, clumsy, meticulous. Appears to possess all qualities of a well-rounded male counterpart. Let's get a closer look.

Beatrice looks through her binoculars and walks toward Levi. In route, she smushes the sandwich.

LEVI

You stepped on *the sandwich!*

BEATRICE

Bad spot for a picnic.

LEVI

What? Why, what's wrong?

BEATRICE

It's a dam, not a park.

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LEVI

I love this dam.

BEATRICE

Picnics belong in parks.

LEVI

Nevada parks are irrigated with gray water. But this dam is the perfect place for a romantic rendezvous because we are surrounded by freshwater, river water. Water that gives life. Water that powers Nevada, Arizona, Southern California! If these turbines stopped turning, life as we live it would shrivel up. Pools would go empty, ice cubes would melt, people would sweat. And if you sit here, on this patch of cement, you can feel it all turning beneath you. The vibration is quite stimulating.

BEATRICE

Here?

LEVI

Yes.

BEATRICE

Ooo!

LEVI

And last but not least, there is a chapel, right here, inside the dam. They call it *The Dam Chapel*. The Head Engineer will conduct your ceremony for fifty bucks!

BEATRICE

Fascinating. (*Writes*) Postpone apiary experiment. Man's obsession with "romance" poses as a façade for reproductive desires. Stats: Mid-twenties, six one, one seventy-five¹. Talks. A lot. -Rare trait for his gender. Next step: Test his integrity.

LEVI

I brought a fifty- just in case.

BEATRICE

Is it true, about gray water irrigating our parks?

¹ Director may alter these stats to reflect the actual measurements of the actor cast as Levi.

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LEVI

That is a fact. Gray water is often confused with sewage water. Of course it was sewage water, but it's been cleaned.

BEATRICE

What's your source?

LEVI

I do landscape.

BEATRICE

What's your forte?

LEVI

I lay sod.

BEATRICE

And your name?

LEVI

Levi Hirsch

BEATRICE

(Writing) Subject from here forward to be called Levi the Landscaper. Do you xeriscape Levi?

LEVI

I specialize in seed. Seeding the sod that goes in the lawns.

BEATRICE

That's a weird job.

LEVI

What do you do?

BEATRICE

I'm a beekeeper. I'm here conducting an experiment.

Beatrice pulls out a jar that has some rocks and a bee in it.

LEVI

That is one fat bee!

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BEATRICE

It's a queen; she's mated.

LEVI

A bun in the oven!

BEATRICE

A what in the where?

LEVI

The queen is pregnant.

BEATRICE

Duh. I don't know *why* you're talking about *food*. She mated with some drones and now she's storing sperm in her spermathica. This sperm must last her a lifetime. It's her duty to make the larva. And it's the worker bee's duty to feed her the royal jelly.

LEVI

Is that the kind with seeds in it? I love the kind with seeds in it. Can this prince get some peanut butter with his royal jelly?

BEATRICE

Royal jelly is like breast milk. The queen gets it all her life, which lets her mature into the only reproductive female in the colony.

LEVI

So she's got to do all of the...

BEATRICE

For the whole colony.

LEVI

That's no way to treat a queen!

BEATRICE

I didn't make the rules.

LEVI

Her self-esteem's probably shot.

BEATRICE

Take it up with Mother Nature.

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LEVI

That's a lot of responsibility.

BEATRICE

The welfare of the colony depends on her. That's the basis of my experiment. How's your experiment going? When's your counterpart due to arrive?

LEVI

..Fifty-seven minutes ago.

BEATRICE

She's unreliable.

LEVI

Maybe she made a wrong turn.

BEATRICE

And directionally challenged.

LEVI

Maybe she's at the wrong place.

BEATRICE

Maybe she's at the *other* Hoover Dam.

LEVI

Shut up.

BEATRICE

Sorry, but your date does not have desirable traits.

LEVI

Those are wonderful traits because I like to wait, I'll wait all day, I am good at waiting.

BEATRICE

Fascinating...(Writing) A patient man. What a phenomenon. I hypothesize that said counterpart will *not* show up. What will he do in her absence? Will he survive unscathed?

LEVI

This is actually a perfect opportunity to salvage her very special double decker egg yolk sandwich. (*He picks up the sandwich.*) It's no use. She'll have to eat mine.

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BEATRICE

But aren't you hungry?

LEVI

Have you ever heard of chivalry?!

BEATRICE

Fascinating. (*Writes*) A man normally carries a strong sense of survival, and would consume one to five sandwiches himself.

LEVI

My duty is to feed her and I failed. She can never know. I can never let her see the sandwich.

BEATRICE

I'll destroy the evidence.

Beatrice starts to eat the sandwich.

LEVI

She can't see you either. She could have already saw you and stormed away in a fit of jealousy! This can't be, you have to go.

BEATRICE

I don't eat and run.

LEVI

You can walk.

BEATRICE

It's bad for digestion.

LEVI

According to who?

BEATRICE

The Surgeon General.

LEVI

He's a quack.

BEATRICE

Got any mayo?

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LEVI

Do you mind?

BEATRICE

No. How about Miracle Whip, you got any Miracle Whip?

LEVI

I don't eat Miracle Whip, no one knows how they make it!

BEATRICE

Egg yolks and oil -the same as mayonnaise except with artificial zip. Now margarine is the condiment to watch out for. Its molecular makeup is only two hydrogens away from plastic. If you leave a stick of margarine outside, animals won't touch it. Not even the bees.

LEVI

I don't care!

BEATRICE

You shouldn't care.

LEVI

I don't!

BEATRICE

Unless you eat margarine.

LEVI

Get out of my spot!

BEATRICE

I like this spot.

LEVI

There's a spot over there!

BEATRICE

This spot vibrates.

LEVI

Look, Bee Lady!

BEATRICE

My name is Beatrice!

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LEVI

You've ruined everything!

BEATRICE

If this is about the sandwich...

LEVI

I don't care about the very special double decker egg yolk sandwich! Enjoy it. But please, leave me alone!

BEATRICE

Fascinating. (*Writes*) Realization is slowly dawning on Levi. His date won't show. He's on the verge of self-destruction and it's far too dangerous to leave him alone. But still, he has got to know the truth. Levi, you have officially been stood up.

LEVI

Not again!

BEATRICE

(*Writing*) Subject is taking it well...I think.

Levi hits himself over the head with a loaf of bread

BEATRICE

Look on the bright side, more sandwich for you!

LEVI

I'll never eat again.

BEATRICE

Starvation does a number on the metabolism.

LEVI

Why must you be so...scientific!

BEATRICE

Why must you be so sensitive?

LEVI

I loved her!

BEATRICE

Prove it.

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LEVI

I held her hand at the shark exhibit, and I, I liked it.

BEATRICE

But she's failed to reciprocate! It doesn't make any sense to be sad -it doesn't add up! There are plenty of females looking to fulfill their carnal desires. You have positive attributes; find a female to reciprocate!

LEVI

It's no use. I will never love again! This is my vow of celibacy.

BEATRICE

But I made you a pie chart. It's based on appearance, behavior and intellect. Then I ranked you in each category. Look how high you scored.

LEVI

You gave me a ten on appearance and approachability? Does the scale go to one hundred?

BEATRICE

The scale goes to ten.

Beatrice hands him her notebook.

LEVI

(Reading) "Mildly attractive, well-dressed man" Wow! You're a really good writer. I like that, that's nice. You're nice. Let's have wine, let me serve you some delicious red wine.

BEATRICE

Fascinating. *(Writing)* He's forgotten already. If this man can survive in the absence of his female, I'm confident in the survival of my colony after the absence of their queen! But what was the catalyst for change?

LEVI

Would you do me the honor of joining me on the Dam Tour?

BEATRICE

I ... ah ...I have work to do. Piles and piles of work.

LEVI

It only lasts an hour and a half.

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BEATRICE

Gee I don't know gee I... I'm not ready for that kind of commitment it's well... it's like this experiment I did in high school. Do you see that water line in the rocks over there?

LEVI

The bathtub ring surrounding the lake?

BEATRICE

Exactly. Commitment affects people in the same way evaporation affects the lake and that line shows a significant depletion of the water supply due to evaporation.

LEVI

Are you saying I'm the lake?

BEATRICE

Not exactly.

LEVI

I am not the lake.

BEATRICE

Bear with me.

LEVI

People pee in the lake.

BEATRICE

Don't get literal.

LEVI

And I don't like to be peed on! (*Embarrassed*) It's only happened once or twice.

BEATRICE

Excuse me Levi the Landscaper! I have an experiment to do.

Beatrice grabs her bee jar and cocks back her arm to throw it over the edge of the Hoover Dam.

LEVI

What are you doing?

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BEATRICE

I've got to get a running start.

LEVI

Those rocks will make it sink.

BEATRICE

That's why they're in there.

LEVI

She'll die if you throw it.

BEATRICE

I want her to die.

LEVI

You can't kill the queen!

BEATRICE

It's just a bee!

LEVI

You're a murderer!

BEATRICE

I know what I'm doing.

LEVI

What about the colony?

BEATRICE

Don't worry about it!

LEVI

You're a mass murderer!

BEATRICE

Give it up PETA man! The experiment is on queen substitution. Will the colony accept a fully mated foreign queen? I'm helping Bee Keepers who lose their queens to extraneous circumstances! She's being sacrificed for a greater good. Say goodbye Levi.

LEVI

NOOOOOOOOOO!!!!

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BEATRICE

What is it?!

LEVI

Can I pet her?

BEATRICE

...If you want. And be careful.

LEVI

Don't you worry.

BEATRICE

Use your pointer.

LEVI

Hold still Queeny.

BEATRICE

She'll come to you.

LEVI

Look, she likes me scratching her fuzzy little bee back.

BEATRICE

Fascinating! (*Writes*) I've finally found him. All my life I've searched for a man who is brave enough to pet a bee and now that I've found him-

LEVI

OUCH!!!

Levi yanks his hand from the jar and runs frantically in circles.

LEVI

I'm stung I'm stung I'm ALLERGIC!!!

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