

Maligula and Hornwald's Third Day

By Ed Coonce

Maligula sat on a thin yellow branch, flexing his thorax and occasionally bzzzzpling his wings. He watched the patio directly below, wary and waiting for any unsuspecting foodstuff that might wander by.

He was hungry.

As hornets go, Maligula was pretty much center-of-the-road. He'd hatched, dried out his wings, then flew off to find something to sting and eat. He'd been looking for the last couple of days. Of course, he'd been born only three days back, but those were the facts of hornet life.

His friend Hornwald flew up and perched beside him.

"Wassup, M?"

"Nuttin', jus' chillin'."

"Have you eaten?"

"Nope, still lookin'."

"Well." said Hornwald. "I have." He bared his stinger, proudly pointing out the semi-solid guts and gore that still clung to the primary barb. "See that? Ladybug! And it was great!"

Maligula didn't say anything, just glowered and bzzzzpled his wings a bit faster.

"You stoked, H?" he ventured.

"Yeah man! I'm stoked!" Hornwald raised his wings and yelled "Woo-Hoo!"

That was it. Maligula didn't want to hear any more. That rat bastard. He moved toward Hornwald, bzzzzpling his wings at full speed. "Stoke this, H!" He took a wild swing at Hornwald, who jumped back, surprised.

"Whoa, whoa, whoa, man! Get a grip! What's your problem, M?"

"You got your precious ladybug, I haven't got diddley, and you just rubbed it in my face!"

"Look, man, I'm sorry. Hey, why don't you let me help you?"

"Well..." Maligula didn't finish. The patio door beneath them opened and three year old Amanda toddled out, her blonde curls ablaze in the sun.

"Wow! M, looka that!"

Maligula stared, unbelieving, his stinger fully extruded. So much food, so little time.

Hornwald took the lead. "C'mon, follow me!"

The hornet duo revved their wings to maximum bzzzzp! and flew down towards Amanda, just as her

mom walked out onto the patio.

“Whoa!” yelled Hornwald. They aborted their attack and flew onto a potted plant nearby, evaluated the situation, and prepared to strike. “You take the big one, I’ll take the little one.”

“I’m stoked now!” exclaimed Maligula, his stinger throbbing with excitement.

They didn’t see the rolled up magazine descending on them until it was too late. Maligula bzzzzped! his wings, Hornwald tried to leap sideways, but it was no use. Both were flattened in one gargantuan blow, and lay at the edge of the patio until Adam and Charlie, two ant-brothers, carried them off, exulting at their own dumb luck and congratulating one another on their considerable food gathering skills.

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