

THE BUMBLEBEE

When I was a child our family used to go on some great camping trips. Every summer we'd pack up the car and head off for two weeks to somewhere beautiful. That's about all I can tell you about the places we visited because I don't remember much about them. My short little history being what it was, I was a frightened little girl when it came to being away from home, unless we were going to visit my grandmother, because she was family and that was home too. Heading off into the wilds in a vehicle that could break down and render us stranded was an entirely different matter. To me at age seven (pick any age under 15), the possibility that we would never see home again once we pulled out of the driveway was all too real. No parental assurances that all would be well were the least bit reassuring. It didn't help that my Dad couldn't resist the call of a muddy dirt track full of potholes as long as it somewhat resembled a road. I realize now that I spent most of my time on those trips managing my anxiety. It wasn't so bad that it was outwardly visible, but for two weeks I felt unsafe away from home and couldn't wait to get back. I wasn't much interested in taking in the scenery.

One day in my email I received a quotation by Mary Kay Ash, the founder of Mary Kay Cosmetics. My friend is a "Mary Kay Lady" and had told me about the bumblebee being their symbol of belief, possibility and prosperity. I understood more when I read the quote: "Aerodynamically the bumblebee shouldn't be able to fly, but the bumblebee doesn't know that, so it goes on flying anyway."



In the afternoon of the same day I got the email, I went outside to sit on my patio and enjoy the sunshine. At that time in my life I was going through a rocky period of transition which had begun a year before with some difficult health problems. Having rested enough to restore my body, my mind and soul were still grappling with uncertainty about which direction to go in next. The only thing I knew for sure was that I didn't want to deplete myself again. I had started a project at home for which I had lofty goals that seemed too big and too far away. I loved the vision they were going to get me to, but I wondered if they would ever be within reach. I was thinking about that as I was sitting outside amongst my flowers.

Enter the bumblebee, right on cue. Just in front of me was one of my window boxes filled with bright pink lobelia. I sat absolutely mesmerized and watched that bumblebee go to one flower, then the next, and the next, and the next. He didn't miss one, and let me tell you, the box was brimming. He never went to the same one twice. He moved with a perfectly consistent speed. He was methodical. He worked at slow buzz. His fuzzy, rotund yellow and black body looked great against the pink. When he was done he was done. He lifted off and swooped away. I watched him go and could almost feel his weight.

It's a funny thing, how bumblebees talk to you. As I sat watching him I had a thought occur to me and that thought was this: "One step at a time." And here I thought he'd come to collect pollen.

In the moments after that thought, my goals were no longer so distant. They had suddenly become reachable. I could believe. They were possible. Don't get me wrong, my uncertainty had not been erased. Oh no. That was not his work. It was mine. I still wavered but I never forgot the bumblebee and what he said to me.

It took me two or three years to understand the depth of his message. He did no more than leave it with me and I have no doubt he left knowing his job had been completed. Being a carrier of Divine wisdom, he would have known it would mature in its own time.

The second half of it, which I could not comprehend at the time of delivery, is this: achieving goals is not so much about doing what I need to do to get things done as it is about being the person I need to be. If I am safe and secure and happy in who I am, then the doing is easy. I become a bumblebee. That's just a fact.

It has been a long way from those summer vacations to today. The only way to pry open the closed doors of that scared little girl's heart has been to go one step at a time. That's what it's all about. That's the goal. That will always be the goal. I get it.

