



Summer Stories

By Enid Blyton

The Little Butter-Dishes



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Once upon a time there was a flower that grew in the fields in June, called *Ranunculus bulbosus*. It was a pretty little flower, deep yellow and cup-shaped, but nobody took much notice of it because it had such an awkward name.



Nobody wanted to go and pick a bunch of *Ranunculus bulbosus*! It sounded ugly and ridiculous.



Now, one day the field mice were most excited because Her Royal Highness, the fairy queen, was coming to lunch on the bank where they had their home. They ran about among the yellow *Ranunculus bulbosus*, and planned what they would give the queen to eat.



‘The whitest bread, coked by Mrs Badget,’ said one.

‘The purest honey, made by the honey bees!’ said another.

‘The finest cakes, baked by Mowdie Mole!’ said a third –
and so, little by little, the lunch was planned.



The day came. The small mice scurried here and there, laying the table on the sunny bank. Mrs Badger's bread was as white as the hawthorn blossom. The honey was as yellow as the sun. the cakes were topped with tiny cherries and looked delicious. Everything was ready!



The queen arrived. She nodded graciously to all the excited mice, and sat down to eat. For she had come a long way and was hungry. She looked around the table and smiled. 'White bread, new honey and cherry cakes!' she said. 'Just what I love! But there is no butter.'



‘Butter!’ cried everyone, in a flurry. ‘Butter! Of course – there is no butter!’

‘I have some butter,’ whispered a furry rabbit. ‘But our butter-dish is cracked.’

‘I haven’t a butter-dish at all,’ said Mrs Badger.



‘Mine is stained and old,’ said Mowdie Mole. ‘But hurry, rabbit, and get the butter – we shall soon think of something to put it in for the fairy queen!’



The mice hurried here and there trying to find a dish – and at last, in despair, one of them snapped off some of the yellow heads to the *Ranunculus bulbosus* flowers and carried them to the table. Each one was big enough to take a small pat of butter!



The queen was delighted with the quaint butter-dishes. She helped herself to pat after pat of butter, and admired the little golden dishes.

‘They shine like pure gold,’ she said. ‘You have polished them beautifully. What lovely dishes they are!’



‘Well, Your Majesty,’ said a truthful mouse, ‘they are not really butter-dishes. They are the heads of a common flower we grow here, called *Ranunculus bulbosus*. Such an ugly name for a pretty little flower!’



‘Indeed, it is!’ cried the queen. ‘I will give the little golden cups another name that all the children will love! You may have three guesses, fieldmice!’

Well, they had their three guesses, but nobody guessed right!



‘You sillies!’ cried the queen. ‘I shall call them buttercups, of course! You gave me the little cups to hold my butter – so what could be a better name?’

It was a good name, wasn’t it! only very learned people call the little flowers *Ranunculus bulbosus* – but to everybody else they are just the golden buttercups.





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