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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

Abbie Phillips Walker

How the Buttercup Became Yellow

Long, long ago, the story went that all flowers were white and that they each gained their color through some magical power. For example, the little Daisy with its yellow center got its golden hue when the wicked elves pelted the little Fairies with sunbeams. The Daisy was very proud of its yellow eye and thought it looked perfect with its pure white edge. One day, she looked out over the field where she grew up and saw little White Cups growing everywhere around her.

"There's too much white on this field," she said to the other Daisies. "Our beautiful white edges would look much better if the White Cups were golden."

"But maybe the White Cups don't want to be golden," her sisters said.

"Oh, but we do, dear Daisies," all the White Cups said in unison. "We've always wanted a beautiful golden color like your eyes, but we thought you didn't want us to have that color too because we live in the same field."

"Oh, we'd love that," said the little Daisy, "and I'm sure the fields will look much more beautiful with you in a golden color with white. Besides, that would be advantageous for both of us. So we'll both benefit from the change."

"But who will help us change our color?" asked the White Cups.

The Daisy thought long and hard, and eventually said, "You might be able to convince the Goblins to color you. The most important thing is that they really do it. They're such odd fellows, if they thought they could bother the Fairies, they'd do it quickly and immediately. But if we were to ask them to make you golden so we all look prettier, they'd probably just laugh and run away."

"Why can't we make them think they'll make the Fairies angry if they make us golden?" the White Cups asked. "Then we're sure to find a way to get them to do it."

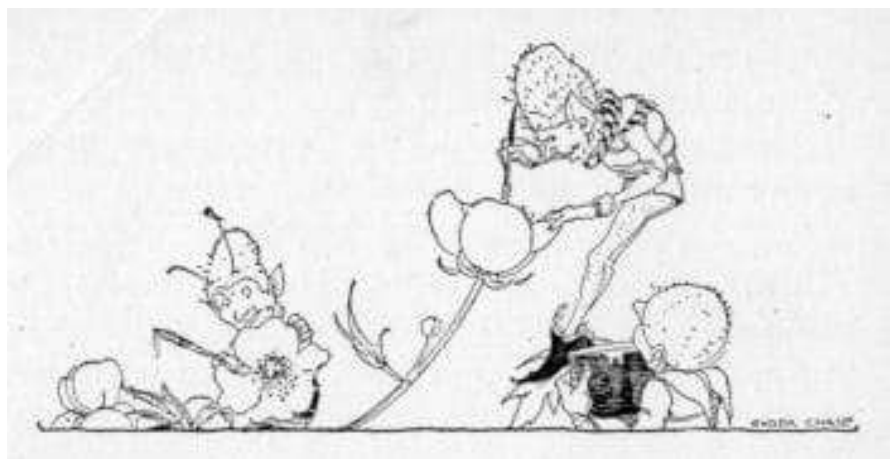
"That would be just right," said the Daisy, "but how do you plan to do that?"

"We'll ask the Fairies when they come to frolic in the fields tonight," said the White Cups.

That night, when the Fairies flew over the field, the White Cups called to them and told them what they wanted.

"Oh, that will be beautiful," said the Fairy Queen. "And we can easily fool the Goblins."

The Fairy Queen gathered her Fairies around her and whispered so



softly that the field flowers couldn't hear what she was saying, but they heard the Fairies laughing as they flew away. Each Fairy then landed on a little White Cup and began whispering:

"We love you, little White Cups, Our Lady's of the field
We will watch over you and protect you from all
danger You are still so much more beautiful than the
Daisy with her yellow eye so bright You are like a
waxen blossom in the pale moonlight"

They whispered the couplet over and over again as they leaned forward and kissed the cups. Then, every now and then, here and there, the Goblins emerged from the forest, skipping and jumping like leaves in the wind.

"Look, there they are," they said when they saw the Fairies. "Listen and hear what they're singing."

When the goblins heard the beautiful love song of the fairies for the little white cups, they kicked each other's heels and laughed hard, each putting a small finger next to their nose and winking at their brothers. They ran back to the forest, but the fairies continued to whisper their song, while the little daisy watched with her yellow eye, wondering how her cousin, the white cup, would get the color he so desired. Gradually, the goblins returned from the forest, but this time they carried bags over their shoulders and crept through the grass cautiously.

The fairies had seen them the whole time, but of course, they pretended not to see them, and when the goblins were close, the Fairy Queen said:

"Come, my children, leave your most beloved flower for tonight. You can come back tomorrow."

As they flew away, they looked back and in the moonlight, they saw the goblins working hard at every little white cup.

When the morning sun awoke, it opened its sun eyes wide, for everywhere in the field between the daisies, it saw little golden cups nodding happily to their cousins with golden eyes.

The next night, when the fairies flew through the fields, they saw the golden cups. "You are more beautiful

than ever," they said to the golden cups, "and we will now call you 'our golden cups', but you will have to remain known as buttercups, or else the goblins will discover our trick and turn you white again."

The buttercups thanked the fairies warmly and told them that they would like to be "their golden cups" when they held a banquet and that they would never let the goblins know that the fairies had fooled them. So since then, they bloom among the daisies in the fields and are called buttercups, but they know that they are the little golden cups for the fairies. The goblins always wonder why the fairies seem so happy when they fly near the buttercup and see that the color has changed.



But the fairies are too wise to let the goblins know how they fooled them. And for the buttercups, it is sometimes difficult not to tell how they got the color they wanted when the little goblins scurry around trying to disrupt their plans.

But the Fairy Queen has taught them that "silence is golden," and they know that their Queen is always right.