

Buttercup Gold and Other Stories

Buttercup Gold and Other Stories by Ellen Robena Field is a charming collection of tales and poems celebrating nature, childhood innocence, and timeless moral lessons.

The Little New Year

On a chilly morning, Maurice awoke to a peculiar knocking at his window. Despite the moon's glow, frost obscured the view. Upon inquiry, a voice announced itself as the New Year, seeking Maurice's aid to distribute blessings. Hesitating due to the cold, Maurice was eventually persuaded, meeting a young, rosy-cheeked boy outside, whose cart displayed "Love" and "Kindness."

Together, they ventured to an old shanty, the residence of an old man employed by Maurice's family, to deliver their gifts. This initial stop underscored the New Year's message; every individual craves recognition and kindness, irrespective of age. Maurice and the New Year busied themselves, arranging a warm meal, clothing, and wood for the man, emphasizing the importance of compassion and support in the community. Through this adventure, Maurice learned the value of extending kindness beyond familial circles and the joy of helping others, embodying the New Year's spirit of renewal and care for all.

How the Raindrops and Sunbeams Helped

Mother Nature, observing her world awaken from its slumber, decided it was time for her children—the plants, birds, butterflies, and all of life—to begin their busy summer endeavors. Recognizing that some of her charges needed a nudge to rouse from their rest, she called upon her trusted helpers, the Sunbeams and Raindrops, to assist in the awakening process. Addressing them affectionately as her dear helpers, Mother Nature penned a message, tasking them with the duty of dressing her plant children and awakening the broader natural world for the season's tasks ahead. This included signaling the birds to return from their southern retreats and nudging the butterflies from their cocoons, alongside preparing the soil for the clover beds vital for the honey makers.

Directed to the Sunbeams residing at Blue Sky Park, and the Raindrops from Cloud Land, this call to action was promptly heeded. Their departure was marked by the sun's hearty laughter, a sound so delightful that it prompted Grandma, residing in a nearby farmhouse, to consider moving her geraniums outside, deceived by the warmth that signified the arrival of spring. However, a timely intervention by a Raindrop, delivering a playful yet cautionary drop upon her nose, advised a brief delay. This encapsulated the unpredictability of the season's transitional whims—sunshine followed by rain, in a playful yet purposeful dance.

As the Sunbeams and Raindrops commenced their work with a shared understanding of their important role, the effects of their labor began to materialize. The Raindrops' rhythmic tapping gently nudged the sleeping flowers awake while the Sunbeams' warm embrace assured and encouraged growth. The once dormant trees shed their winter coats under the soft beckoning of the breezes, heralding a period of renewal and bloom. This synergy between Sunbeam and Raindrop, under the watchful eye of Mother Nature and her affectionate summons, orchestrated the awakening of the great brown house where the flowers dwell, signaling the onset of a season marked by growth, vibrancy, and life's unending cycle.

A Child of Spring

In this enchanting segment of "Buttercup Gold and Other Stories," we are introduced to a poetic and whimsical depiction of the spring season, personified as a lovely maiden named April. Through vibrant and evocative language, the chapter paints a picture of April as a delicate and joyful presence, enriching the natural world with beauty and life. She roams the lush landscapes, her arms laden with the first blooms of the year—snowdrops, violets, and daffodils. Her connection with Mother Nature is deep, allowing her to commune with birds and awaken the slumbering elements of the earth, from brooklets to breezes. April is depicted as a tender soul whose occasional sadness is chased away by the kisses of sunbeams, highlighting the fleeting and precious nature of spring.

Following this poetic introduction, the narrative transitions to "Mr. Frog's Story," a charming tale set by a bustling garden brook. The narrator encounters Mr. Frog, who greets them with a "kerchunk," a friendly salutation in frog language. Mr. Frog shares his fascinating life story, tracing his journey from a tiny black egg in a globe of jelly to his current form. This tale provides a playful yet educational glimpse into the transformation process of frogs, from floating eggs to swimming tadpoles that eventually grow legs and lose their tails, becoming the familiar creatures that inhabit our gardens. Through Mr. Frog's narrative, the story emphasizes themes of growth, transformation, and the wonder of nature's life cycles.

Together, these stories weave a tapestry of nature's marvels, from the renewing force of spring embodied by April to the personal evolution of Mr. Frog. The chapter captures the essence of wonder that nature instills in all who take the time to observe its changes and cycles, serving as a reminder of the beauty and continual renewal that surrounds us.

The Lily Sisters

In "The Lily Sisters," a tale unfolds within a majestic palace belonging to a Great King, a place distinguished by its turquoise and opal ceilings and lush, velvety green carpets. Here, three little sisters adorned in green, alongside many other children, under the nurturing guidance of Dame Nature, engage in their assigned duties for the King, learning the value of performing loving work in anticipation of his approval and rewards.

Despite the idyllic setting and the companionship of cheerful Sunbeam children and playful raindrops from Professor Rain's school, one sister's persistent dissatisfaction casts a shadow over their existence. Unlike her content and hardworking sisters, this lily allows envy and impatience to mar her interactions and isolate her from the joyful activities that bond the others, earning the adoration of all for the two amiable sisters.

The narrative reaches its climax when the Great King, recognizing the diligent efforts and pure hearts of the two good sisters, decides they are worthy of receiving their white robes and golden crowns. This moment of transformation is heralded by the Sunbeam children, who thrill the palace's inhabitants with their radiant arrival and prepare the sisters for their crowning, replacing their green attires with white robes and adorning them with golden crowns. This act of fulfillment also serves as a poignant lesson for the discontented sister, who realizes too late the consequences of her choices and fades away in regret.

The tale concludes on a celebratory note, with Madam Wind and the Bird family orchestrating a grand concert in Maple Tree, marking the joyous occasion. The story encapsulates themes of diligence, patience, and the intrinsic rewards of goodness under the watchful eye of a figure of authority, represented by the Great King, and the nurturing guidance of nature, embodied by Dame Nature. Through the contrasting fates of the sisters, the narrative emphasizes the value of embracing one's responsibilities with a positive spirit and the inevitable regret that follows neglect and envy.

Nature's Violet Children

In the sunny woods, a colony of violets thrived on a hill, awakening to spring's call after a winter under snow. Their bliss was interrupted when Ruth, a little girl searching for wildflowers, decided to pluck them to take home, despite their silent protests. At her house, placed in a vase by an open window, the violets struggled with homesickness and considered giving up, drooping sadly. Above them, a canary sang encouraging tunes, urging them to brighten up despite their sorrow. The violets questioned how they could be joyful away from their native woods, but the bird shared its own plight of being caged and unable to return to the freedom of the wild. It emphasized the value of making the best of their situation by blossoming and spreading joy, highlighting its own choice to sing and cherish happiness in confinement. This tale from the sunny hill in the woods mirrors a lesson on resilience, the importance of adapting, and finding reasons to be cheerful amidst unfamiliar circumstances. It blends the natural elements with human and animal characters, crafting a narrative that emphasizes hope, adaptation, and the quest for joy despite challenges. Through the violets' journey from the wild to a domestic setting, and their interaction with the canary, a broader message on the value of positivity and impact on others' happiness unfolds, set against the backdrop of nature's cycle and the innocence of childhood exploration.

Five Little Indian Brothers

In the heartwarming tale "Five Little Indian Brothers" from "Buttercup Gold and Other Stories," we journey into the lives of five inseparable siblings dwelling in Farmer Lane's barn. These brothers, alongside many others, led a secluded yet joyful existence, their play confined within the barn's vast expanse. Their adventures often concluded at a corner crack through which they glimpsed the external world, a view predominantly filled with Farmer Lane tilling the soil, heralding the advent of spring.

One day, their lives took an unexpected turn when they were scooped up into a wooden measure, joining several of their counterparts. Confusion and speculations ran amok among them, with conjectures about embarking on a journey. Amidst uncertainty, they found solace in their faith, believing in a divine oversight that would guide them through the unfolding mystery.

Transported into Farmer Lane's plowed fields, each brother was placed into the nurturing embrace of the earth, marking the beginning of a transformative sojourn. The darkness of their new abode initially overwhelmed them, but the acquaintance of an earthworm and its stories brewed a concoction of hope and anticipation for what lay ahead. Promises of divine care and a forthcoming new life fueled their spirits.

As days melded into nights, nature's elements converged to catalyze their metamorphosis. Rain and sunlight invigorated them, igniting an inner dance that broke them free from their confinements. Emerging with newfound vigor, they unrolled their leaves towards the sun and dug roots into the earth, embarking on their mission to nourish and grow.

The siblings' growth was uninhibited, gradually unfurling into towering plants adorned with flowery tassels, a testament to their journey from obscurity to splendor. These tassels, laden with golden pollen, danced atop their summits, narrating a tale of resilience, transformation, and the unyielding bond of family and faith. Through their journey, the five little brothers underscored the magnificence of nature's cycle and the miraculous unfolding of life under divine stewardship.

The Raindrops

In the whimsical world above the Earth, close to the Sky Country, exists Cloudland, home to diligent little beings known as raindrops. Dedicated to their purpose, these droplets are aware of the significant duties assigned by the King of Cloudland. On one particularly warm morning, two spirited raindrops observe the

arid and heated landscape below, deciding to descend to Earthdom to make a positive impact. Rallying their siblings for a communal venture, they embark, transforming their journey into a playful race toward a hilltop, underlining their pursuit with camaraderie and excitement.

Upon their arrival, the raindrops are received with gratitude by Mother Nature. They diligently set about their tasks: revitalizing wilted flowers, replenishing wells by sliding down rooftops, and invigorating the deep-rooted vegetation by seeping into the ground. Their efforts culminate in the creation of a spring, which evolves into a brook that meanders through the landscape, polishing stones and singing merry tunes. This brook eventually joins forces with others, forming a stream that supports the lively eco-system, quenches the thirst of travelers, and propels the mills. The stream's voyage ends as it merges into a river, which, led by the call of the ocean, finds its way to the vast, welcoming embrace of the sea.

The raindrops, now in the ocean, contribute to the rhythm of the waves and the journey of sailing vessels. As the day concludes, they are transported back to Cloudland via a vapor-boat, adorning the evening sky with a resplendent rainbow as a symbol of hope and fulfillment. Their day's work not only revitalizes Earthdom but also leaves behind a powerful message of diligence and the importance of doing one's part.

In the contrasting tale of "Glories," we meet Laura, a young girl feeling the dullness of routine and longing for something new to spark joy. As she lounges in her hammock, lamenting her boredom, she overhears a conversation seemingly directed at her apathy towards the beauty surrounding her. Surprised and curious, Laura discovers the source of these voices: the morning glories adorning her porch. In her new awareness, Laura acknowledges the flowers' beauty and presence, a revelation that transforms her view of her immediate world. The "glories," with their vibrant colors and silent whispers, invite Laura to see the wonder in her everyday surroundings, hinting at the magic of natural beauty that often goes unnoticed.

These stories, woven with themes of appreciation, contribution, and the interconnectedness of all beings, evoke a sense of wonder and the importance of recognizing the impact of even the smallest actions. Through the journey of the raindrops and Laura's awakening, we are reminded to cherish the world around us and to contribute positively, reinforcing the notion that fulfillment comes from appreciating the beauty of the ordinary and the collective effort towards making a difference.

The Babies' Blankets

In the chilly embrace of Earthdom, Mother Nature lamented the coming of Jack Frost, a lively spirit known for his mischievous pranks on nature's offspring. With winter's breath threatening her babies' well-being, she feared the cold's sharp touch upon them, as they were left without blankets to shield them from Jack's playful antics. Observing her concerns, Jack Frost appeared, boasting of his morning's endeavors, which included harassing a wayward aster, relishing in the shivers his presence induced.

Recognizing the urgency to protect her charges from the cold's inevitable grip, Mother Nature decided to appeal directly to Father Winter for assistance. She drafted a letter from her dwelling in Earthdom, dated November 1, 1893, imploring the king for warm blankets to safeguard her babies during their impending slumber, accentuated by the season's deepening chill. She warned of Jack's untimely frolics, emphasizing the need for swift action to preclude any discomfort among her brood. The letter, addressed to King Winter at his frosty throne in the Polar Regions of Cloud-dom, was entrusted to the Autumn Wind, racing northward with hope.

King Winter, amidst his winter preparations and seated authoritatively behind the veil of the North Wind, received Mother Nature's plea with a blend of surprise and concern. The notion that Jack Frost had prematurely ventured to wreak havoc among Earthdom's denizens disquieted him. Acknowledging the gravity of Mother Nature's request and the impending necessity to envelop the land in protective warmth, he summoned Snowflake. With this call to action, he sought to marshal an assemblage of snowflakes, each a

potential bearer of the coveted blankets Mother Nature sought, to stave off Jack Frost's cold embrace and ensure the safe, warm repose of nature's myriad children under the duress of winter's impending dominion.