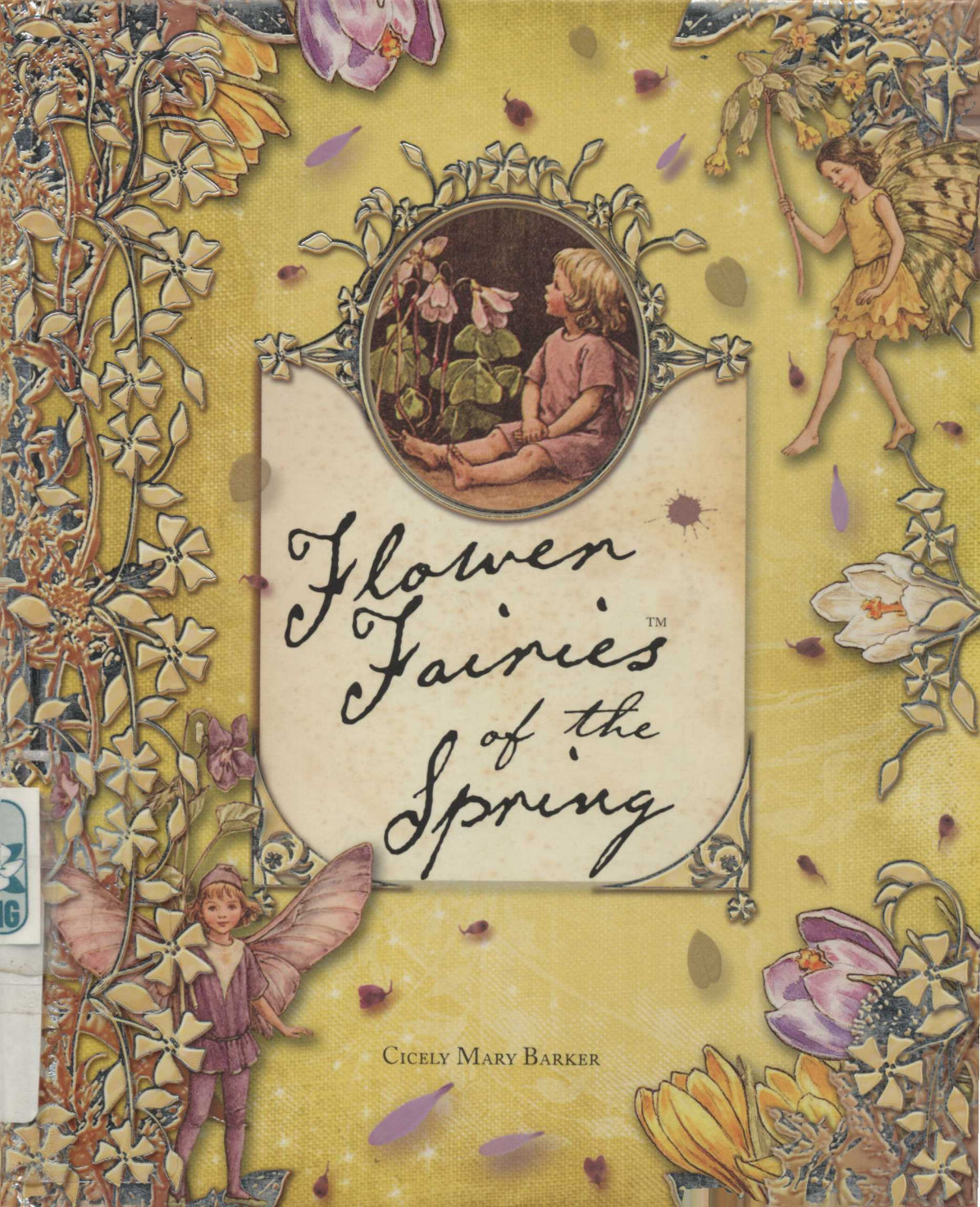
Flower Fairies™ of the Spring
Cicely Mary Barker

Flower Fairies of the Spring

CICELY MARY BARKER

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SPRING MAGIC

The World is very old;
But year by year
It groweth new again
When buds appear.

The World is very old,
And sometimes sad;
But when the daisies come
The World is glad.

The World is very old;
But every Spring
It groweth young again,
And fairies sing.

CMB

THE SONG OF THE CROCUS FAIRIES

Crocus of yellow, new and gay;
Mauve and purple, in brave array;
    Crocus white
    Like a cup of light,—
Hundreds of them are smiling up,
Each with a flame in its shining cup,
By the touch of the warm and welcome sun
Opened suddenly. Spring's begun!
Dance then, fairies, for joy, and sing
The song of the coming again of Spring.

CNB

THE SONG OF THE COLT'S-FOOT FAIRY

The winds of March are keen and cold;
I fear them not, for I am bold.

I wait not for my leaves to grow;
They follow after: they are slow.

My yellow blooms are brave and bright;
I greet the Spring with all my might.

CMB.

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THE SONG OF THE CELANDINE FAIRY

Before the hawthorn leaves unfold,
Or buttercups put forth their gold,
By every sunny footpath shine
The stars of Lesser Celandine.

CMB.

THE SONG OF THE WILLOW-CATKIN FAIRY

The people call me Palm, they do;
They call me Pussy-willow too.
And when I'm full in bloom, the bees
Come humming round my yellow trees.

The people trample round about
And spoil the little trees, and shout;
My shiny twigs are thin and brown:
The people pull and break them down.

To keep a Holy Feast, they say,
They take my pretty boughs away.
I should be glad—I should not mind—
If only people weren't unkind.

Oh, you may pick a piece, you may
(So dear and silky, soft and grey);
But if you're rough and greedy, why
You'll make the little fairies cry.

(This catkin is the flower of the Sallow Willow.)

THE SONG OF THE WINDFLOWER FAIRY

While human-folk slumber,
The fairies espy
Stars without number
Sprinkling the sky.

The Winter's long sleeping,
Like night-time, is done;
But day-stars are leaping
To welcome the sun.

Star-like they sprinkle
The wildwood with light;
Countless they twinkle—
The Windflowers white!

("Windflower" is another name for Wood Anemone.)

CMB.

THE SONG OF THE DAISY FAIRY

Come to me and play with me,
  I'm the babies' flower;
Make a necklace gay with me,
Spend the whole long day with me,
  Till the sunset hour.

I must say Good-night, you know,
  Till tomorrow's playtime;
Close my petals tight, you know,
Shut the red and white, you know,
  Sleeping till the daytime.

CMB.

THE SONG OF THE DANDELION FAIRY

Here's the Dandelion's rhyme:
    See my leaves with tooth-like edges;
Blow my clocks to tell the time;
    See me flaunting by the hedges,
In the meadow, in the lane,
    Gay and naughty in the garden;
Pull me up—I grow again,
    Asking neither leave nor pardon.
Sillies, what are you about
    With your spades and hoes of iron?
You can never drive me out—
    Me, the dauntless Dandelion!

THE SONG OF THE DAFFODIL FAIRY

I'm everyone's darling: the blackbird and
starling
Are shouting about me from blossoming
boughs;
For I, the Lent Lily, the Daffy-down-dilly,
Have heard through the country the call to
arouse.
The orchards are ringing with voices
a-singing
The praise of my petticoat, praise of my
gown;
The children are playing, and hark! they are
saying
That Daffy-down-dilly is come up to town!

CMB.

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THE SONG OF THE DOG-VIOLET FAIRY

The wren and robin hop around;
    The Primrose-maids my neighbours be;
The sun has warmed the mossy ground;
Where Spring has come, I too am found:
    The Cuckoo's call has wakened me!

THE SONG OF THE PRIMROSE FAIRY

The Primrose opens wide in spring;
    Her scent is sweet and good:
It smells of every happy thing
    In sunny lane and wood.
I have not half the skill to sing
    And praise her as I should.

She's dear to folk throughout the land;
    In her is nothing mean:
She freely spreads on every hand
    Her petals pale and clean.
And though she's neither proud nor grand,
    She is the Country Queen.

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THE SONG OF THE LADY'S-SMOCK FAIRY

Where the grass is damp and green,
Where the shallow streams are flowing,
Where the cowslip buds are showing,
    I am seen.

Dainty as a fairy's frock,
White or mauve, of elfin sewing,
'Tis the meadow-maiden growing—
    Lady's-smock.

CMB

THE SONG OF THE LARCH FAIRY

Sing a song of Larch trees
  Loved by fairy-folk;
Dark stands the pinewood,
  Bare stands the oak,
But the Larch is dressed and trimmed
  Fit for fairy-folk!

Sing a song of Larch trees,
  Sprays that swing aloft,
Pink tufts, and tassels
  Grass-green and soft:
All to please the little elves
  Singing songs aloft!

CMB

CMB.

THE SONG OF THE BLUEBELL FAIRY

My hundred thousand bells of blue,
  The splendour of the Spring,
They carpet all the woods anew
With royalty of sapphire hue;
The Primrose is the Queen, 'tis true.
  But surely I am King!
    Ah yes,
  The peerless Woodland King!

Loud, loud the thrushes sing their song;
  The bluebell woods are wide;
My stems are tall and straight and strong;
From ugly streets the children throng,
They gather armfuls, great and long,
  Then home they troop in pride—
    Ah yes,
  With laughter and with pride!

(This is the Wild Hyacinth. The Bluebell of Scotland is the Harebell.)

THE SONG OF THE STITCHWORT FAIRY

I am brittle-stemmed and slender,
But the grass is my defender.

On the banks where grass is long,
I can stand erect and strong.

All my mass of starry faces
Looking up from wayside places,

From the thick and tangled grass,
Gives you greeting as you pass.

(A prettier name for Stitchwort is Starwort, but it is not so often used.)

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THE SONG OF THE WOOD-SORREL FAIRY

In the wood the trees are tall,
Up and up they tower;
You and I are very small—
Fairy-child and flower.

Bracken stalks are shooting high,
Far and far above us;
We are little, you and I,
But the fairies love us.

CMB

THE SONG OF THE SPEEDWELL FAIRY

Clear blue are the skies;
My petals are blue;
As beautiful, too,
As bluest of eyes.

The heavens are high:
By the field-path I grow
Where wayfarers go,
And "Good speed," say I;

"See, here is a prize
Of wonderful worth:
A weed of the earth,
As blue as the skies!"

(There are many kinds of
Speedwell: this is the Germander.)

THE SONG OF THE LORDS-AND-LADIES FAIRY

Here's the song of Lords-and-Ladies
(in the damp and shade he grows):
I have neither bells nor petals,
like the foxglove or the rose.
Through the length and breadth of England,
many flowers you may see—
Petals, bells, and cups in plenty—
but there's no one else like me.

In the hot-house dwells my kinsman,
Arum-lily, white and fine;
I am not so tall and stately,
but the quaintest hood is mine;
And my glossy leaves are handsome;
I've a spike to make you stare;
And my berries are a glory in September.
(BUT BEWARE!)

(The Wild Arum has other names beside Lords-and-Ladies, such as Cuckoo-pint and Jack-in-the-Pulpit.)

CMB

THE SONG OF THE COWSLIP FAIRY

The land is full of happy birds
And flocks of sheep and grazing herds.

I hear the songs of larks that fly
Above me in the breezy sky.

I hear the little lambkins bleat;
My honey-scent is rich and sweet.

Beneath the sun I dance and play
In April and in merry May.

The grass is green as green can be;
The children shout at sight of me.

THE SONG OF THE HEART'S-EASE FAIRY

Like the richest velvet
(I've heard the fairies tell)
Grow the handsome pansies
within the garden wall;
When you praise their beauty,
remember me as well—
Think of little Heart's-ease,
the brother of them all!

Come away and seek me
when the year is young,
Through the open ploughlands
beyond the garden wall;
Many names are pretty
and many songs are sung:
Mine—because I'm Heart's-ease—
are prettiest of all!

(An old lady says that when she was a little girl the children's name for the Heart's-ease or Wild Pansy was Jump-up-and-kiss-me!)

CMB.

THE SONG OF THE MAY FAIRY

My buds, they cluster small and green;
The sunshine gaineth heat:
Soon shall the hawthorn tree be clothed
As with a snowy sheet.

O magic sight, the hedge is white,
My scent is very sweet;
And lo, where I am come indeed,
The Spring and Summer meet.

CMB

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FREDERICK WARNE

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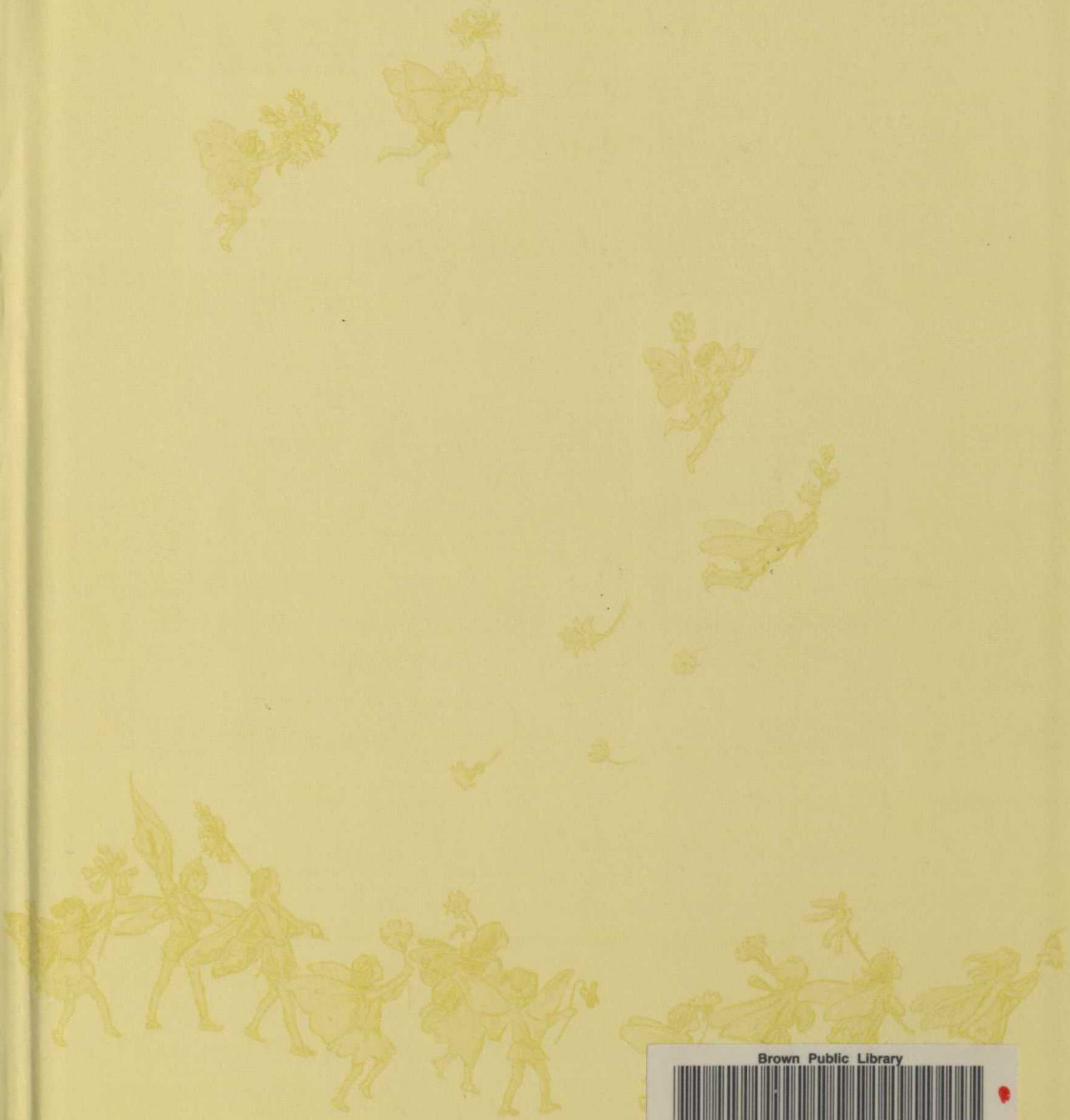

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