

Special Flowers

Blume was worried. It was a hot Sunday morning in August and no one had come to arrange the church flowers yet. In a vase on the altar there were tall, bare flower stalks from last Sunday, and lots of dead petals lay scattered around the vase. It was not pretty, not at all.

When Hoppy and Squeaky arrived to do their Sunday morning inspection of the church, Blume told them about the dead flowers right away.

“Someone always comes to arrange new flowers ready for the morning service” said Hoppy.

“Perhaps the person who should do the flowers is ill or has forgotten” replied Squeaky. “Now people will come to church and have to look at a vase of dead stalks instead of pretty flowers. I wish we could do something about it.”

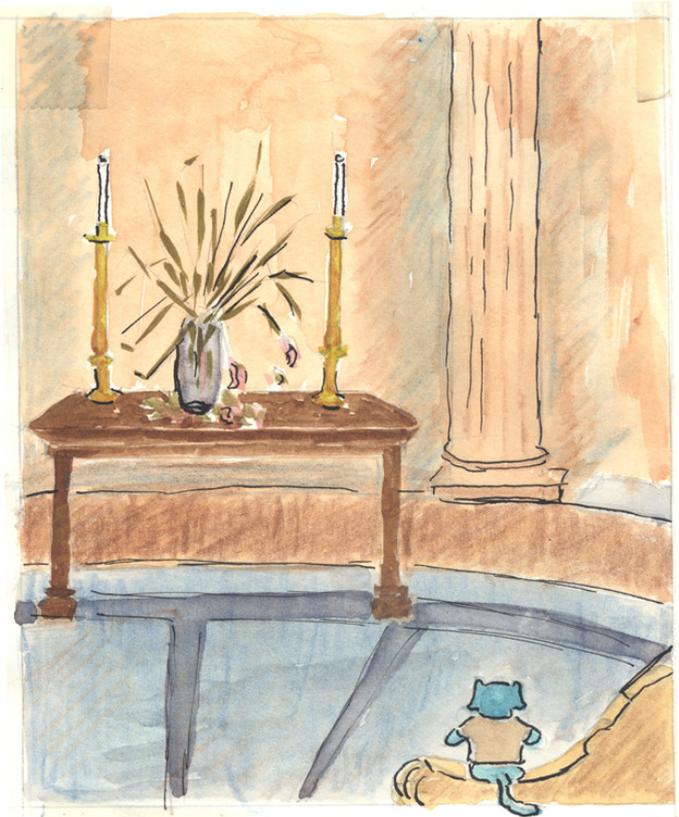
Blume asked if the mice could get flowers from a nearby garden. But they decided that they shouldn't take flowers without asking permission, and anyway they couldn't carry big, tall flowers. The three of them sat sadly in the church, looking at the dead stalks and trying to think of a way to make them look pretty.

Finally Blume said “Last week I heard Emma and her little friends saying they had picked a lot of bright yellow wildflowers from the park across the road and made necklaces with them. She said they were called dandy lions and it was alright to pick them.”

“Of course” said Squeaky excitedly. “No one minds if you pick dandelions and daisies and they have soft, bendy stalks that can be tied and twisted easily. If we could get lots of these flowers, and tie them in bunches onto the tall stalks in the vase they might look like big, bright flowers.”

“It's a good idea” said Hoppy. “But we can't run fast enough to gather them in time.”

“I know” Squeaky said. “Let's ask our blackbird friends to help us. You know the couple nesting in the church garden again this summer. I'm sure they could get their friends and all fly off to gather flowers with their beaks very quickly from the nearby park.”



Soon the air was busy with blackbirds flying to gather dandelions and daisies and even some pink clover, which they brought to a little hole somewhere in the church where Squeaky and Hoppy go in and out. This is a secret entrance of course, even I don't



know where it is. Quickly the mice dragged flowers up to the altar table.

“You climb up onto the vase, Squeaky,” said Hoppy. I’ll tie the flowers into bunches and pass them to you. Here are some long pieces of grass to tie the bunches onto the stalks.”

Blume, who had been pushed to the centre of the church, watched carefully so that he could tell them where more flowers were needed to make it look pretty.

The mice worked very hard indeed, and by 9.00 o’clock the

vase was filled with what looked like lovely, bright yellow, white and pink flowers. Then they carried away all the dead petals. Of course, it wasn't quite like the usual arrangements that people make but it was certainly colorful and lively. When everyone arrived for the service, there were some rather startled comments on the flower arrangement and no one was quite sure what kind of flowers had been used.

“Most unusual” said Mrs Green.

“Remarkably bright” said Mr Clark.

“Very cheerful” said the organist, squinting down from his balcony.

Reverend Andrews smiled when he got up close to the flowers and realized what they were. I think he might even have an idea of what had happened and was



pleased because at the end of his sermon he pointed to the flowers and said, “My friends, no matter how ordinary or plain you may think you are, each one of you has a special beauty, like these wonderful, bright flowers.”