

Elsa Beskow



Then the first guests started arriving, the Cornflower leading the way with the Barley Boys.
Behind her came Marguerites, Poppies and Clover, Hedge-Roses,
Baby's Slipper and Timothy, Camomile and Wild Chervil, Bindweed, Harebells, Buttercups, Speedwell and Ragged Robin,
Vetch and Wild Pansies — so many, it was almost impossible to count them.
The bees and the bumblebees buzzed, the crickets played and the harebells tinkled.

From The Flower's Festival





Elsa & Catharina

Tove Jansson, creator of the Moomin family and Finland's most widely known author, recorded her views about Elsa Beskow:

"One day I was passing a bookshop when I suddenly stopped as my eye caught something I recognized. A glimpse of something important that had been lost but that was present here, shyly incorporated into a cacophony of colourful children's books.

What caught my eye was Elsa Beskow's *Flower's Festival* which I had adored when I was little. It was one of those much-loved books that are read so intensely that they fall apart and are abandoned when one becomes a teenager and terribly grown-up and literary! The sight of the book made me very excited and I immediately thought of *Mrs Chestnut Flower* who was so pretty and whose sons rode out into the world.

As I entered the shop to purchase the book the memory of *Mrs Chestnut Flower* became increasingly clear. I remember how white she was against the dark green of the leaves with a thunderstorm rumbling behind a diffuse horizon which suggested the path out into the world where there were fierce breezes and galloping horses.

When I had bought the book I opened it at the right page. She was just as white and beautiful as before, but there were none of the dark elements that I remembered. The leaves were light green, the sky was pale blue and there was no hint of bad weather. I was not disappointed.

But I started to wonder. I looked through all of Elsa Beskow's books, trying to find the key to the enchantment that was still present. All her illustrations were sublimely simple and honest. There was no trace of make-believe for its own sake, no other effects than the magic of making large things small and small things gigantic.

Elsa Beskow does not make use of the storyteller's privilege of painting the lawn blue and filling the forest with animals that do not exist. Rather, she concerns herself with reality and lets her story take place there. Suddenly I realized how wonderful it was to be able to recognize my own forest, my own ditch, my own meadow, my own blueberry plants, and I was filled with admiration for an artist who dared to paint a yellowy-green bush with pink roses and to insist that the sky really is pale blue.

True, there were other artists who painted rose-bushes when one was little, but one passed them by.

Elsa Beskow allows the child a wide margin for its own reflections and fantasies.

Her books are pure and straightforward and so children will continue to love them throughout the ages and to relax in them when childhood has ended.

Elsa Beskow is often very serious with a sort of mild gravity which would not dream of trying to alter the beauty of the earth that she describes.

I am grateful that she was as careful as this.

She recreated, in spite of everything. She recreated us so that we ultimately did not just see but learnt to contemplate and to understand."

(Excerpted from 'Sagan inom verkligheten — den ärliga Elsa Beskow', BLM 1959.)

Elsa Beskow was born in southern Stockholm in 1874. There were five children in the family. Her father died when she was 15 and her mother took the children to live with her unmarried siblings who shared the same household. Elsa's aunts and uncle became the models for *Aunt Green*, *Aunt Brown*, *Aunt Lavender* and *Uncle Blue*.

From 1892 to 1895 Elsa studied to become an art teacher and it was at this time that she started illustrating children's stories. She married Natanael Beskow, a clergyman and artist. They lived with their six sons in Djursholm, north of Stockholm, and the family often provided inspiration for characters and locations in her stories. Elsa Beskow's first book *Tale of the Little, Little Old Lady* is based on stories that her grandmother told her

and was published in 1897. To this day it remains a classic story that most children have read.

Her stories and her illustrations were a dominant influence in the world of children's books for more than fifty years. Her books have been translated into more than twenty languages and many of today's children's authors and illustrators have been inspired by her art.

In 1952 she was awarded the *Nils Holgersson Prize* for her lifework and today there is a prize for children's authors in her name.

The stories of Elsa Beskow have been interpreted by designer Catharina Kippel, who has used 'visual quotations', or details, from the original stories and brought into her work. Catharina has been collaborating with Design House Stockholm since the beginning, and is the designer behind much of our bestselling dinnerware. She has studied pottery and glassblowing in Sweden as well as ancient ceramic firing techniques in Japan, and has a master's degree from *Konstfack*, the University College of Arts, Crafts, and Design in Stockholm. Since 1995, Catharina runs her own studio in *Gustavsberg's* old porcelain factory, and her work is represented at *Nationalmuseum* in Stockholm and the *Porcelain Museum* in Gustavsberg.

"Like many others I have grown up with *Aunt Lavender*, *the Little, Little Old Lady*, *the Morel Troll* and all the other fantastic characters of Elsa Beskow's fairy tales. It was a wonderful feeling to daydream about these worlds, and I still feel the same excitement when I think about them. One of my favourite books when I was a child was *Woody, Hazel & Little Pip* by Elsa Beskow. My dog, a playful boxer puppy, ate a part of the book, but I kept reading it over and over again. It's still kept in my parent's home in Lund in southern Sweden."

The Elsa Beskow collection is the result of a collaboration between the Beskow heirs, publishers Bonnier, and Design House Stockholm. The first collection was released in 2013 and was an immediate international success.



Mugs /Cookie Jar



Mug, Uncle Blue



Mug, Pyrola



Mug, The Strawberry Family



Mug, Dandelions



Mug, Mr & Mrs Cucumber



New! Mug, Cornflower



Mug, Baker



Mug, Clown*
* 10% of the retail price of this item is donated to will be donated to Barncancerfonden — The Swedish Childhood Cancer Foundation.



Mug, King Winter



Mug, Hare



Mug, Little Willow



Mugs, Three Lasses. Set of 3.



Mugs, Aunts Green, Brown & Lavender. Set of 3.



Cookie Jar, Baker

Mugs With Handle



Mug with handle, Uncle Blue



Mug with handle, Pyrola



Mug with handle, The Strawberry Family



Mug with handle, Dandelions



Mug with handle, Mr & Mrs Cucumber



Mug with handle, Aunt Green



Mug with handle, Aunt Brown



Mug with handle, Aunt Lavender



Mug with handle, Baker



Mug with handle, King Winter



Mug with handle, Hare



Mug with handle, Little Willow

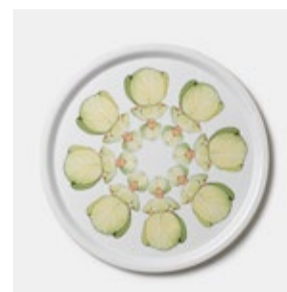


New! Mug with handle, Cornflower

Trays /Mulled Wine Mugs



Round tray, Dandelions



Round tray, Mrs Cabbage



Round tray, Radish



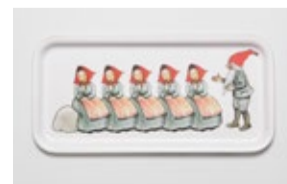
Round tray, Hare



Round tray, The Strawberry Family



Tray 13×28 cm, King Winter



Tray 13×28 cm, Elf Family



Tray 20×27 cm, Mrs Cabbage



Tray 20×27 cm, Radish



Tray 20×27 cm, Uncle Blue



Tray 20×27 cm, Pyrola



Mulled wine mugs, King Winter. Set of 2.



Mulled wine mugs, Elf Family. Set of 2.

Bowls /Card With Envelope



Bowl, Zebra*

* 10% of the retail price of this item is donated to will be donated to Barncancerfonden — The Swedish Childhood Cancer Foundation.



Bowl, Uncle Blue



Bowl, Dandelions



Bowl, The Strawberry Family



New! Bowl, Cornflower

Kitchen Towels /Christmas Ornaments



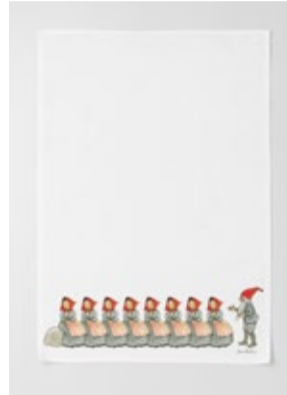
Kitchen Towel, Mrs Cabbage



Kitchen Towel, Little Willow



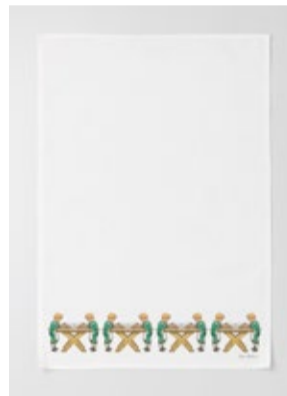
Kitchen Towel, Radish



Kitchen Towel, Elf Family



Kitchen Towel, The Strawberry Family



Kitchen Towel, Peter is Baking



Card with envelope, Uncle Blue



Card with envelope, Hare



Card with envelope, Pyrola



Card with envelope, Little Willow



Card with envelope, The Strawberry Family



Card with envelope, Elf Family



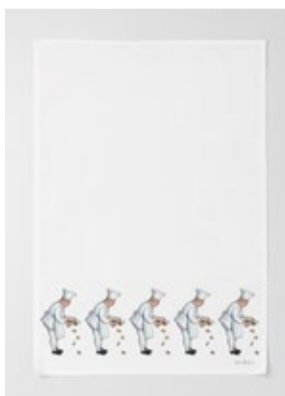
Card with envelope, Dandelions



Card with envelope, King Winter



Kitchen Towel, Dandelions



Kitchen Towel, Baker



Kitchen Towel, King Winter



Christmas ornament ø 11 cm, Peter is Baking



Christmas ornament ø 7.5 cm, Uncle Blue & Co. Set of 3.



Christmas ornament ø 7.5 cm, Little Willow & Co. Set of 3.



Christmas ornament ø 7.5 cm, Owl & Co. Set of 3.



Christmas ornament ø 7.5 cm, Maggie & Co. Set of 3.

Plate/Napkins /Cylinder Boxes



Plate, Swan*

* 10% of the retail price of this item is donated to will be donated to Barncancerfonden — The Swedish Childhood Cancer Foundation.



Napkins, Uncle Blue. Set of 20.



Napkins, Hare. Set of 20.



Napkins, Pyrola. Set of 20.



Napkins, Elf Family. Set of 20.



Napkins, Radish. Set of 20.



New! Cylinder Boxes, Flowers Set of 3.



Napkins, The Strawberry Family. Set of 20.



Cylinder Boxes, Carousel* Set of 3.
* 10% of the retail price of this item is donated to will be donated to Barncancerfonden — The Swedish Childhood Cancer Foundation.



Napkins, Dandelions. Set of 20.

Elsa Beskow is one of Sweden's best-known and most popular authors of children's books. She wrote and illustrated some 40 books which have been enjoyed by children throughout the last hundred or so years.

Elsa Beskow often found inspiration for her stories in her own daily life and the aunts and uncles whom she grew up with provided models for Aunt Green, Aunt Brown, Aunt Lavender and Uncle Blue. In her stories even the flowers and vegetables in the garden at home also turn into living beings.

Designer Catharina Kippel has selected images from Elsa Beskow's tales, emphasizing her sense of humour and her interpretations of nature and human life that are so typical of her. Catharina Kippel's contemporary style of design and the way in which she uses visual images as elements in patterns give a new dimension to the original illustrations. Welcome to Elsa Beskow's world.

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