

- Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?
 Of labour you shall find the sum.
 15 Will there be beds for me and all who seek?
 Yea, beds for all who come.

1858

1862

Goblin Market

- Morning and evening
 Maids heard the goblins cry:
 "Come buy our orchard fruits,
 Come buy, come buy:
 5 Apples and quinces,
 Lemons and oranges,
 Plump unpecked cherries,
 Melons and raspberries,
 Bloom-down-cheeked peaches,
 10 Swart-headed mulberries,
 Wild free-born cranberries,
 Crab-apples, dewberries,
 Pine-apples, blackberries,
 Apricots, strawberries;—
 15 All ripe together
 In summer weather,—
 Morns that pass by,
 Fair eves that fly;
 Come buy, come buy:
 20 Our grapes fresh from the vine,
 Pomegranates full and fine,
 Dates and sharp bullaces,
 Rare pears and greengages,
 Damsons¹ and bilberries,
 25 Taste them and try:
 Currants and gooseberries,
 Bright-fire-like barberries,
 Figs to fill your mouth,
 Citrons from the South,
 30 Sweet to tongue and sound to eye;
 Come buy, come buy."

- Evening by evening
 Among the brookside rushes,
 Laura bowed her head to hear,
 35 Lizzie veiled her blushes:
 Crouching close together
 In the cooling weather,
 With clasping arms and cautioning lips,
 With tingling cheeks and finger tips.
 40 "Lie close," Laura said,

1. Bullaces, greengages, and damsons are varieties of plums.

Pricking up her golden head:
 "We must not look at goblin men,
 We must not buy their fruits:
 Who knows upon what soil they fed
 Their hungry thirsty roots?"
 45 "Come buy," call the goblins
 Hobbling down the glen.
 "Oh," cried Lizzie, "Laura, Laura,
 You should not peep at goblin men."
 50 Lizzie covered up her eyes,
 Covered close lest they should look;
 Laura reared her glossy head,
 And whispered like the restless brook:
 "Look, Lizzie, look, Lizzie,
 55 Down the glen tramp little men.
 One hauls a basket,
 One bears a plate,
 One lugs a golden dish
 Of many pounds weight.
 60 How fair the vine must grow
 Whose grapes are so luscious;
 How warm the wind must blow
 Thro' those fruit bushes."
 "No," said Lizzie: "No, no, no;
 65 Their offers should not charm us,
 Their evil gifts would harm us."
 She thrust a dimpled finger
 In each ear, shut eyes and ran:
 Curious Laura chose to linger
 70 Wondering at each merchant man.
 One had a cat's face,
 One whisked a tail,
 One tramped at a rat's pace,
 One crawled like a snail,
 75 One like a wombat prowled obtuse and furry,
 One like a ratel² tumbled hurry skurry.
 She heard a voice like voice of doves
 Cooing all together:
 They sounded kind and full of loves
 80 In the pleasant weather.

Laura stretched her gleaming neck
 Like a rush-imbedded swan,
 Like a lily from the beck,^o
 Like a moonlit poplar branch,
 85 Like a vessel at the launch
 When its last restraint is gone.

small brook

Backwards up the mossy glen
 Turned and trooped the goblin men,

2. South African mammal resembling a badger (pronounced *ray-tell*).

With their shrill repeated cry,
 90 "Come buy, come buy."
 When they reached where Laura was
 They stood stock still upon the moss,
 Leering at each other,
 Brother with queer brother;
 95 Signalling each other,
 Brother with sly brother.
 One set his basket down,
 One reared^o his plate;
 One began to weave a crown
 100 Of tendrils, leaves and rough nuts brown
 (Men sell not such in any town);
 One heaved the golden weight
 Of dish and fruit to offer her:
 "Come buy, come buy," was still their cry.
 105 Laura stared but did not stir,
 Longed but had no money:
 The whisk-tailed merchant bade her taste
 In tones as smooth as honey,
 The cat-faced purr'd,
 110 The rat-paced spoke a word
 Of welcome, and the snail-paced even was heard;
 One parrot-voiced and jolly
 Cried "Pretty Goblin" still^o for "Pretty Polly;"—
 One whistled like a bird.

115 But sweet-tooth Laura spoke in haste:
 "Good folk, I have no coin;
 To take were to purloin:
 I have no copper in my purse,
 I have no silver either,
 120 And all my gold is on the furze³
 That shakes in windy weather
 Above the rusty heather."
 "You have much gold upon your head,"
 They answered all together:
 125 "Buy from us with a golden curl."
 She clipped a precious golden lock,
 She dropped a tear more rare than pearl,
 Then sucked their fruit globes fair or red:
 Sweeter than honey from the rock.⁴
 130 Stronger than man-rejoicing wine,⁵
 Clearer than water flowed that juice;
 She never tasted such before,
 How should it cloy with length of use?
 She sucked and sucked and sucked the more
 135 Fruits which that unknown orchard bore;
 She sucked until her lips were sore;
 Then flung the emptied rinds away

raised

always

3. Gorse; a wild shrub with thorns and small yellow flowers.

4. Psalms 81.16.

5. Psalms 104.15.

140 But gathered up one kernel-stone,
 And knew not was it night or day
 As she turned home alone.

Lizzie met her at the gate
 Full of wise upbraidings:
 "Dear, you should not stay so late,
 Twilight is not good for maidens;
 145 Should not loiter in the glen
 In the haunts of goblin men.
 Do you not remember Jeanie,
 How she met them in the moonlight,
 Took their gifts both choice and many,
 150 Ate their fruits and wore their flowers
 Plucked from bowers
 Where summer ripens at all hours?
 But ever in the noonlight
 She pined and pined away;
 155 Sought them by night and day,
 Found them no more but dwindled and grew grey;
 Then fell with the first snow,
 While to this day no grass will grow
 Where she lies low:

160 I planted daisies there a year ago
 That never blow.°

You should not loiter so."
 "Nay, hush," said Laura:
 "Nay, hush, my sister:
 165 I ate and ate my fill,
 Yet my mouth waters still;
 Tomorrow night I will
 Buy more:" and kissed her:
 "Have done with sorrow;
 170 I'll bring you plums tomorrow
 Fresh on their mother twigs,
 Cherries worth getting;
 You cannot think what figs
 My teeth have met in,
 175 What melons icy-cold
 Piled on a dish of gold
 Too huge for me to hold,
 What peaches with a velvet nap,
 Pellucid grapes without one seed:
 180 Odorous indeed must be the mead
 Whereon they grow, and pure the wave they drink
 With lilies at the brink,
 And sugar-sweet their sap."

185 Golden head by golden head,
 Like two pigeons in one nest
 Folded in each other's wings,
 They lay down in their curtained bed:

bloom

Like two blossoms on one stem,
 Like two flakes of new-fall'n snow,
 190 Like two wands of ivory
 Tipped with gold for awful^o kings.
 Moon and stars gazed in at them,
 Wind sang to them lullaby,
 Lumbering owls forbore to fly,
 195 Not a bat flapped to and fro
 Round their rest:
 Cheek to cheek and breast to breast
 Locked together in one nest.

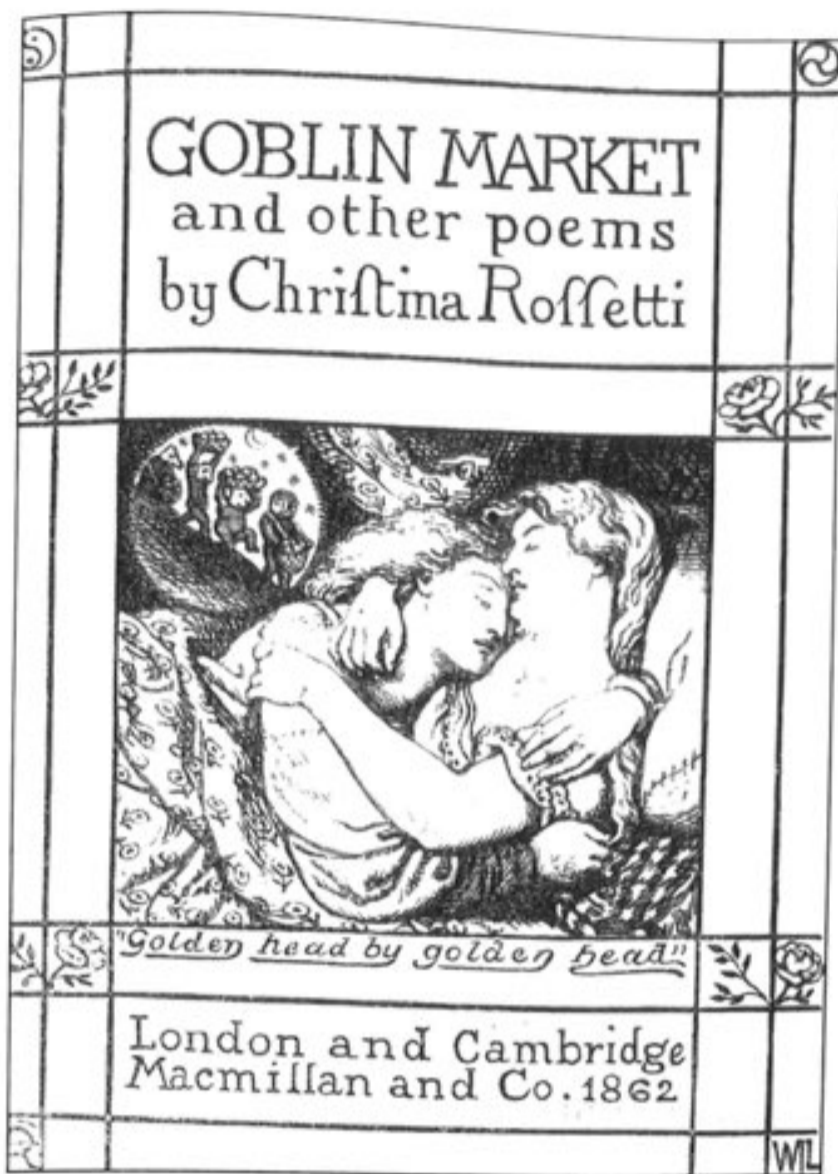
awe-inspiring

Early in the morning
 200 When the first cock crowed his warning,
 Neat like bees, as sweet and busy,
 Laura rose with Lizzie:
 Fetched in honey, milked the cows,
 Aired and set to rights the house,
 205 Kneaded cakes of whitest wheat,
 Cakes for dainty mouths to eat,
 Next churned butter, whipped up cream,
 Fed their poultry, sat and sewed;
 Talked as modest maidens should:
 210 Lizzie with an open heart,
 Laura in an absent dream,
 One content, one sick in part;
 One warbling for the mere bright day's delight,
 One longing for the night.

215 At length slow evening came:
 They went with pitchers to the reedy brook;
 Lizzie most placid in her look,
 Laura most like a leaping flame.
 They drew the gurgling water from its deep;
 220 Lizzie plucked purple and rich golden flags,^o
 Then turning homewards said: "The sunset flushes
 Those furthest loftiest crags;
 Come, Laura, not another maiden lags,
 No wilful squirrel wags,
 225 The beasts and birds are fast asleep."
 But Laura loitered still among the rushes
 And said the bank was steep.

irises

And said the hour was early still,
 The dew not fall'n, the wind not chill:
 230 Listening ever, but not catching
 The customary cry,
 "Come buy, come buy,"
 With its iterated jingle
 Of sugar-baited words:
 235 Not for all her watching
 Once discerning even one goblin



Goblin Market. This frontispiece is one of the two illustrations that Dante Gabriel Rossetti provided for his sister's first volume of poetry in 1862.

Racing, whisking, tumbling, hobbling;
Let alone the herds
That used to tramp along the glen,
240 In groups or single,
Of brisk fruit-merchant men.

Till Lizzie urged, "O Laura, come;
I hear the fruit-call but I dare not look:
You should not loiter longer at this brook:
245 Come with me home.
The stars rise, the moon bends her arc,
Each glowworm winks her spark,
Let us get home before the night grows dark:
For clouds may gather
250 Tho' this is summer weather,
Put out the lights and drench us thro';
Then if we lost our way what should we do?"

Laura turned cold as stone
To find her sister heard that cry alone,
255 That goblin cry,

"Come buy our fruits, come buy."
 Must she then buy no more such dainty fruit?
 Must she no more such succous^o pasture find,
 Gone deaf and blind?
 260 Her tree of life drooped from the root:
 She said not one word in her heart's sore ache;
 But peering thro' the dimness, nought discerning,
 Trudged home, her pitcher dripping all the way;
 So crept to bed, and lay
 265 Silent till Lizzie slept;
 Then sat up in a passionate yearning,
 And gnashed her teeth for baulked desire, and wept
 As if her heart would break.

juicy, succulent

Day after day, night after night,
 270 Laura kept watch in vain
 In sullen silence of exceeding pain.
 She never caught again the goblin cry:
 "Come buy, come buy;"—
 She never spied the goblin men
 275 Hawking their fruits along the glen:
 But when the noon waxed bright
 Her hair grew thin and gray;
 She dwindled, as the fair full moon doth turn
 To swift decay and burn
 280 Her fire away.

One day remembering her kernel-stone
 She set it by a wall that faced the south;
 Dewed it with tears, hoped for a root,
 Watched for a waxing shoot,
 285 But there came none;
 It never saw the sun,
 It never felt the trickling moisture run:
 While with sunk eyes and faded mouth
 She dreamed of melons, as a traveller sees
 290 False waves in desert drouth
 With shade of leaf-crowned trees,
 And burns the thirstier in the sandful breeze.

She no more swept the house,
 Tended the fowls or cows,
 295 Fetched honey, kneaded cakes of wheat,
 Brought water from the brook:
 But sat down listless in the chimney-nook
 And would not eat.

Tender Lizzie could not bear
 300 To watch her sister's cankerous care
 Yet not to share.
 She night and morning
 Caught the goblins' cry:

"Come buy our orchard fruits,
 Come buy, come buy:"—
 305 Beside the brook, along the glen,
 She heard the tramp of goblin men,
 The voice and stir
 Poor Laura could not hear;
 310 Longed to buy fruit to comfort her,
 But feared to pay too dear.
 She thought of Jeanie in her grave,
 Who should have been a bride;
 But who for joys brides hope to have
 315 Fell sick and died
 In her gay prime,
 In earliest Winter time,
 With the first glazing rime,
 With the first snow-fall of crisp Winter time.

320 Till Laura dwindling
 Seemed knocking at Death's door:
 Then Lizzie weighed^o no more *evaluated, considered*
 Better and worse;
 But put a silver penny in her purse,
 325 Kissed Laura, crossed the heath with clumps of furze
 At twilight, halted by the brook:
 And for the first time in her life
 Began to listen and look.

Laughed every goblin
 330 When they spied her peeping:
 Came towards her hobbling,
 Flying, running, leaping,
 Puffing and blowing,
 Chuckling, clapping, crowing,
 335 Clucking and gobbling,
 Mopping and mowing,⁶
 Full of airs and graces,
 Pulling wry faces,
 Demure grimaces,
 340 Cat-like and rat-like,
 Ratel-and wombat-like,
 Snail-paced in a hurry,
 Parrot-voiced and whistler,
 Helter skelter, hurry skurry,
 345 Chattering like magpies,
 Fluttering like pigeons,
 Gliding like fishes,—
 Hugged her and kissed her,
 Squeezed and caressed her:
 350 Stretched up their dishes,
 Panniers, and plates:

6. Grimacing, making faces.

"Look at our apples
 Russet and dun,
 Bob at our cherries,
 355 Bite at our peaches,
 Citrons and dates,
 Grapes for the asking,
 Pears red with basking
 Out in the sun,
 360 Plums on their twigs;
 Pluck them and suck them,
 Pomegranates, figs."—

"Good folk," said Lizzie,
 Mindful of Jeanie:
 365 "Give me much and many:"—
 Held out her apron,
 Tossed them her penny.
 "Nay, take a seat with us,
 Honour and eat with us,"
 370 They answered grinning:
 "Our feast is but beginning.
 Night yet is early,
 Warm and dew-pearly,
 Wakeful and starry:
 375 Such fruits as these
 No man can carry;
 Half their bloom would fly,
 Half their dew would dry,
 Half their flavour would pass by.
 380 Sit down and feast with us,
 Be welcome guest with us,
 Cheer you and rest with us."—
 "Thank you," said Lizzie: "But one waits
 At home alone for me:
 385 So without further parleying,
 If you will not sell me any
 Of your fruits tho' much and many,
 Give me back my silver penny
 I tossed you for a fee."—

390 They began to scratch their pates,
 No longer wagging, purring,
 But visibly demurring,
 Grunting and snarling.
 One called her proud,
 395 Cross-grained, uncivil;
 Their tones waxed loud,
 Their looks were evil.
 Lashing their tails
 They trod and hustled her,
 400 Elbowed and jostled her,
 Clawed with their nails,

Barking, mewling, hissing, mocking,
 Tore her gown and soiled her stocking,
 Twitched her hair out by the roots,
 405 Stamped upon her tender feet,
 Held her hands and squeezed their fruits
 Against her mouth to make her eat.

White and golden Lizzie stood,
 Like a lily in a flood,—
 410 Like a rock of blue-veined stone
 Lashed by tides obstreperously,—
 Like a beacon left alone
 In a hoary roaring sea,
 Sending up a golden fire,—
 415 Like a fruit-crowned orange-tree
 White with blossoms honey-sweet
 Sore beset by wasp and bee,—
 Like a royal virgin town
 Topped with gilded dome and spire
 420 Close beleaguered by a fleet
 Mad to tug her standard down.

One may lead a horse to water,
 Twenty cannot make him drink.
 Tho' the goblins cuffed and caught her,
 425 Coaxed and fought her,
 Bullied and besought her,
 Scratched her, pinched her black as ink,
 Kicked and knocked her,
 Mauled and mocked her,
 430 Lizzie uttered not a word;
 Would not open lip from lip
 Lest they should cram a mouthful in:
 But laughed in heart to feel the drip
 Of juice that syruiped all her face,
 435 And lodged in dimples of her chin,
 And streaked her neck which quaked like curd.
 At last the evil people
 Worn out by her resistance
 Flung back her penny, kicked their fruit
 440 Along whichever road they took,
 Not leaving root or stone or shoot;
 Some writhed into the ground,
 Some dived into the brook
 With ring and ripple,
 445 Some scudded on the gale without a sound,
 Some vanished in the distance.

In a smart, ache, tingle,
 Lizzie went her way;
 Knew not was it night or day;
 450 Sprang up the bank, tore thro' the furze,

Threaded copse and dingle,
 And heard her penny jingle
 Bouncing in her purse,
 Its bounce was music to her ear.
 455 She ran and ran
 As if she feared some goblin man
 Dogged her with gibe or curse
 Or something worse:
 But not one goblin skurried after,
 460 Nor was she pricked by fear;
 The kind heart made her windy-paced
 That urged her home quite out of breath with haste
 And inward laughter.

She cried "Laura," up the garden,
 465 "Did you miss me?
 Come and kiss me.
 Never mind my bruises,
 Hug me, kiss me, suck my juices
 Squeezed from goblin fruits for you,
 470 Goblin pulp and goblin dew.
 Eat me, drink me, love me;
 Laura, make much of me:
 For your sake I have braved the glen
 And had to do with goblin merchant men."

475 Laura started from her chair,
 Flung her arms up in the air,
 Clutched her hair:
 "Lizzie, Lizzie, have you tasted
 For my sake the fruit forbidden?
 480 Must your light like mine be hidden,
 Your young life like mine be wasted,
 Undone in mine undoing
 And ruined in my ruin,
 Thirsty, cankered, goblin-ridden?"—
 485 She clung about her sister,
 Kissed and kissed and kissed her:
 Tears once again
 Refreshed her shrunken eyes,
 Dropping like rain
 490 After long sultry drouth;
 Shaking with aguish^o fear, and pain,
 She kissed and kissed her with a hungry mouth.

Her lips began to scorch,
 That juice was wormwood to her tongue,
 495 She loathed the feast:
 Writhing as one possessed she leaped and sung,
 Rent all her robe, and wrung
 Her hands in lamentable haste,
 And beat her breast.

500 Her locks streamed like the torch
 Borne by a racer at full speed,
 Or like the mane of horses in their flight,
 Or like an eagle when she stems⁷ the light
 Straight toward the sun,
 505 Or like a caged thing freed,
 Or like a flying flag when armies run.

Swift fire spread thro' her veins, knocked at her heart,
 Met the fire smouldering there
 And overbore its lesser flame;
 510 She gorged on bitterness without a name:
 Ah! fool, to choose such part
 Of soul-consuming care!
 Sense failed in the mortal strife:
 Like the watch-tower of a town
 515 Which an earthquake shatters down,
 Like a lightning-stricken mast,
 Like a wind-uprooted tree
 Spun about,
 Like a foam-topped waterspout
 520 Cast down headlong in the sea,
 She fell at last;
 Pleasure past and anguish past,
 Is it death or is it life?

Life out of death.
 525 That night long Lizzie watched by her,
 Counted her pulse's flagging stir,
 Felt for her breath,
 Held water to her lips, and cooled her face
 With tears and fanning leaves:
 530 But when the first birds chirped about their eaves,
 And early reapers plodded to the place
 Of golden sheaves,
 And dew-wet grass
 Bowed in the morning winds so brisk to pass,
 535 And new buds with new day
 Opened of cup-like lilies on the stream,
 Laura awoke as from a dream,
 Laughed in the innocent old way,
 Hugged Lizzie but not^o twice or thrice;
 540 Her gleaming locks showed not one thread of grey,
 Her breath was sweet as May
 And light danced in her eyes.

not only

Days, weeks, months, years
 Afterwards, when both were wives
 545 With children of their own;
 Their mother-hearts beset with fears,

7. Makes headway against.

Their lives bound up in tender lives;
 Laura would call the little ones
 And tell them of her early prime,
 550 Those pleasant days long gone
 Of not-returning time:
 Would talk about the haunted glen,
 The wicked, quaint^o fruit-merchant men,
 Their fruits like honey to the throat
 555 But poison in the blood;
 (Men sell not such in any town:)
 Would tell them how her sister stood
 In deadly peril to do her good,
 And win the fiery antidote:
 560 Then joining hands to little hands
 Would bid them cling together,
 "For there is no friend like a sister
 In calm or stormy weather;
 To cheer one on the tedious way,
 565 To fetch one if one goes astray,
 To lift one if one totters down,
 To strengthen whilst one stands."

strange

1859

1862

"No, Thank You, John"

I never said I loved you, John:
 Why will you teaze me day by day,
 And wax a weariness to think upon
 With always "do" and "pray"?

5 You know I never loved you, John;
 No fault of mine made me your toast:
 Why will you haunt me with a face as wan
 As shows an hour-old ghost?

I dare say Meg or Moll would take
 10 Pity upon you, if you'd ask:
 And pray don't remain single for my sake
 Who can't perform that task.

I have no heart?—Perhaps I have not;
 But then you're mad to take offence
 15 That I don't give you what I have not got:
 Use your own common sense.

Let by-gones be by-gones:
 Don't call me false, who owed not to be true:
 I'd rather answer "No" to fifty Johns
 20 Than answer "Yes" to you.