



Goblin Market

by Christina Rossetti

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Morning and evening¹
Maids² heard the goblins **cry**³:
“Come buy our **orchard**⁴ fruits,
Come buy, come buy:
Apples and **quinces**⁵,
Lemons and oranges,
Plump **unpecked**⁶ cherries,
Melons and raspberries,
Bloom-down-cheeked⁷ peaches,
Swart⁸-headed **mulberries**⁹,
Wild free-born **cranberries**¹⁰,
Crab-apples¹¹, **dewberries**¹²,
Pine-apples, blackberries,
Apricots, strawberries;—
All **ripe**¹³ together¹⁴

In summer weather,—
Morns¹⁵ that pass by,
Fair **eves**¹⁶ that fly;
Come buy, come buy:
Our grapes fresh from the vine,
Pomegranates¹⁷ full and fine,
Dates and sharp **bullaces**¹⁸,
Rare pears and **greengages**¹⁹,
Damsons²⁰ and **bilberries**²¹,
Taste them and try:
Currants²² and **gooseberries**²³,
Bright-fire-like **barberries**²⁴,
Figs²⁵ to fill your mouth,
Citrons²⁶ from the South,

¹ both liminal times of day

² maid – young woman, damsel, virgin

³ to cry – (in this case) shout, hawk

⁴ orchard – cultivated (not ‘wild’)

⁵ quince – (*Cydonia oblonga*) pear-like fruit used to make preserve

⁶ unpecked – that have not been pecked by birds (and are therefore ‘virgin’)

⁷ bloom-down-cheeked – fresh and fuzzy

⁸ swart – dark

⁹ mulberry – (*Morus nigra*) a dark purple fruit

¹⁰ cranberry – (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*) type of red berry

¹¹ crab-apple – (*Malus sylvestris*) very small type of apple

¹² dewberry – (*Rubus caesius*) type of blackberry

¹³ ripe – (of fruit) mature

¹⁴ this would have been miraculous in the 19th Century

¹⁵ morn – (poetic) morning

¹⁶ eve – (poetic) evening

¹⁷ the word has three syllables here “poumgranits”

¹⁸ bullace – (*Prunus domestica insititia*) wild plum

¹⁹ greengage – type of green plum

²⁰ damson (plum) – (*Prunus domestica*) type of small plum

²¹ bilberry – deep-blue/black berry, European blueberry

²² currant – (*Ribes*) berries that can be red, black or white

²³ gooseberry – (*Ribes grossularia*) yellowish-green berry

²⁴ barberry – (*Berberis*) acidic lozenge-shaped red berry

²⁵ fig – (*Ficus carica*) purple fruit with brown flesh

²⁶ citron – (*Citrus medica*) type of big lemon

Sweet to tongue and **sound**²⁷ to eye;
Come buy, come buy.”

Evening by evening
Among the **brookside**²⁸ **rushes**²⁹,
Laura **bowed**³⁰ her head to hear,
Lizzie **veiled**³¹ her blushes:
Crouching close together
In the cooling weather,
With clasping arms and cautioning lips,
With tingling cheeks and finger tips.
“Lie close”, Laura said,
Pricking up³² her golden head:
“We must not look at goblin men,
We must not buy their fruits:
Who knows upon what **soil**³³ they fed
Their hungry thirsty roots?”
“Come buy”, call the goblins
Hobbling down³⁴ the **glen**³⁵.



“Oh”, cried Lizzie, “Laura, Laura,
You should not **peep**³⁶ at goblin men.”
Lizzie covered up her eyes,

²⁷ **sound** – healthy, wholesome
²⁸ **brookside** – next to a stream
²⁹ **rush** – (*Juncaceae*) reed, river plants
³⁰ **to bow** – lower, incline
³¹ **to veil** – cover, hide
³² **to prick up** – raise
³³ **soil** – earth
³⁴ **to hobble down** – limp down, descend inelegantly
³⁵ **glen** – (*Scots*) valley
³⁶ **to peep** – look in a furtive or illicit way

Covered close **lest**³⁷ they should look;
Laura **reared**³⁸ her **glossy**³⁹ head,
And whispered like the **restless**⁴⁰ **brook**⁴¹:
“Look, Lizzie, look, Lizzie,
Down the **glen**³⁵ **tramp**⁴² little men.
One **hauls**⁴³ a basket,
One **bears**⁴⁴ a plate,
One **lugs**⁴⁵ a golden dish
Of many pounds weight.
How fair the vine must grow
Whose grapes are so **luscious**⁴⁶;
How warm the wind must blow
Through those fruit **bushes**⁴⁷.”
“No”, said Lizzie, “No, no, no;
Their offers should not **charm**⁴⁸ us,
Their evil gifts would harm us.”
She **thrust**⁴⁹ a dimpled finger
In each ear, shut eyes and ran:
Curious⁵⁰ Laura chose to **linger**⁵¹
Wondering at⁵² each merchant man.
One had a cat’s face,
One whisked a tail,
One **tramped**⁴² at a rat’s pace,
One crawled like a snail,
One like a wombat **prowled**⁵³ obtuse and
furry,
One like a **ratel**⁵⁴ **tumbled hurry skurry**⁵⁵.
She heard a voice like voice of doves
Cooing all together:
They sounded kind and full of loves
In the pleasant weather.

Laura stretched her **gleaming**⁵⁶ neck
Like a **rush**²⁹-imbedded swan,
Like a lily⁵⁷ from the **beck**⁵⁸,

³⁷ **lest** – in case
³⁸ **to rear** – raise
³⁹ **glossy** – shiny, shining
⁴⁰ **restless** – agitated, opposite of ‘tranquil’
⁴¹ **brook** – stream
⁴² **to tramp** – walk, march
⁴³ **to haul** – pull, lug
⁴⁴ **to bear** (bear-bore-borne) – carry
⁴⁵ **to lug** – pull, haul
⁴⁶ **luscious** – succulent, desirable
⁴⁷ **bush** – shrub, plant, small tree
⁴⁸ **to charm** – mesmerize, fascinate
⁴⁹ **to thrust** (thrust-thrust-thrust) – force, push, insert
⁵⁰ **curious** – over-inquisitive
⁵¹ **to linger** – loiter, remain/stay in a place
⁵² **to wonder at** – marvel at, be fascinated by
⁵³ **to prowl** – move in a menacing way
⁵⁴ **ratel** – (*South African*) honey badger
⁵⁵ **to tumble hurry skurry** – advance in a precipitous uncoordinated way
⁵⁶ **gleaming** – shining
⁵⁷ **lilies are a symbol of purity**
⁵⁸ **beck** – stream, brook⁴¹

Like a moonlit poplar branch,
Like a vessel at the launch
When its last restraint is gone.

Backwards up the mossy **glen**³⁵
Turned and **trooped**⁵⁹ the goblin men,
With their **shrill**⁶⁰ repeated cry,
“Come buy, come buy.”
When they reached where Laura was
They stood **stock still**⁶¹ **upon**⁶² the **moss**⁶³,
Leering⁶⁴ at each other,
Brother with **queer**⁶⁵ brother;
Signalling each other,
Brother with **sly**⁶⁶ brother.
One set his basket down,
One **reared**³⁸ his plate;
One began to **weave**⁶⁷ a crown
Of **tendrils**⁶⁸, **leaves**⁶⁹, and rough nuts
brown
(Men sell not such in any town);
One **heaved**⁷⁰ the golden weight
Of dish and fruit to offer her:
“Come buy, come buy”, was still their cry.
Laura **stared**⁷¹ but did not **stir**⁷²,
Longed⁷³ but had no money:
The whisk-tailed merchant **bade**⁷⁴ her taste
In tones as **smooth**⁷⁵ as honey,
The cat-faced purred,
The rat-faced spoke a word
Of welcome, and the snail-paced even was
heard;
One parrot-voiced and **jolly**⁷⁶
Cried “Pretty Goblin” still for “Pretty
Polly;”—
One whistled like a bird.

⁵⁹ to troop – march

⁶⁰ shrill – high-pitched, piercing

⁶¹ stock still – completely immobile

⁶² upon – on

⁶³ moss – small flowerless green plant that grows in wet places

⁶⁴ to leer – look lasciviously

⁶⁵ queer – (in this case) strange

⁶⁶ sly – devious, duplicitous

⁶⁷ to weave (weave-wove-woven) – make

⁶⁸ tendril – vine, appendage of a climbing plant

⁶⁹ leaves – foliage

⁷⁰ to heave – drag, haul, lug

⁷¹ to stare – look fixedly

⁷² to stir – move

⁷³ to long – desire

⁷⁴ to bid sb. (bid-bade-bidden) – ask sb. to

⁷⁵ smooth – mellifluous

⁷⁶ jolly – cheerful, happy



But **sweet-tooth**⁷⁷ Laura spoke **in haste**⁷⁸:
“Good **folk**⁷⁹, I have no coin;
To take **were to purloin**⁸⁰:
I have no copper in my purse,
I have no silver either,
And all my gold is on the **furze**⁸¹
That shakes in windy weather
Above the **rusty**⁸² **heather**⁸³.”
“You have much gold upon your head,”
They answered all together:
“Buy from us with a golden curl.”
She **clipped**⁸⁴ 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,
Stronger than man-rejoicing wine,
Clearer than water flowed that juice;
She never tasted such before,
How should it **cloy**⁸⁵ with length of use?
She sucked and sucked and sucked the
more
Fruits which that unknown **orchard**⁸⁶
bore⁸⁷;

⁷⁷ **sweet-tooth** – of sb. who likes sugary food and drink

⁷⁸ **in haste** – impetuously, precipitously

⁷⁹ **folk** – people

⁸⁰ **were to purloin** – would be stealing

⁸¹ **furze** – gorse bush, a bright yellow wild plant

⁸² **rusty** – reddish-brown

⁸³ **heather** – (Ericaceae) wild plant that grows on acidic terrain

⁸⁴ to clip – cut with scissors

⁸⁵ to cloy – become distasteful/nauseating

She sucked until her lips were **sore**⁸⁸;
 Then **flung**⁸⁹ the emptied **rinds**⁹⁰ away
 But **gathered up**⁹¹ one **kernel stone**⁹²,
 And **knew not was it**⁹³ night or day
 As she turned home alone.



Lizzie met her at the gate⁹⁴
 Full of wise **upbraidings**⁹⁵:
 “Dear, you should not stay so late,
Twilight⁹⁶ is not good for **maidens**⁹⁷;
 Should not **loiter**⁹⁸ in the **glen**⁹⁹
 In the **haunts**⁹⁹ of goblin men.
 Do you not remember Jeanie,
 How she met them in the moonlight,
 Took their gifts both **choice**¹⁰⁰ and many,
 Ate their fruits and wore their flowers
 Plucked from **bowers**¹⁰¹

⁸⁶ **orchard** – enclosed terrain planted with fruit trees
⁸⁷ **to bear** (bear-bore-borne) – (in this case) produce
⁸⁸ **sore** – chaffed, irritated
⁸⁹ **to fling** (fling-flung-flung) – throw, hurl
⁹⁰ **rind** – tough skin of some fruit
⁹¹ **to gather up** – pick up, take
⁹² **kernel stone** – stone in a fruit, pith
⁹³ **knew not it was** – she didn’t know if it was
⁹⁴ **a liminal place**
⁹⁵ **upbraidings** – reprimands, chastisements
⁹⁶ **twilight** – dusk, nightfall. **A liminal time of day**
⁹⁷ **maiden** – damsel, virgin
⁹⁸ **to loiter** – linger, stay/remain in a place wasting time
⁹⁹ **haunts** – territory, domain
¹⁰⁰ **choice** (adj.) – excellent, superior
¹⁰¹ **bower** – garden, arbour, grotto. **However, the context suggests the possibility that ‘bower’ refers to Jeanie’s bedroom, in which case the**

Where summer ripens at all hours?
 But ever in the noonlight
 She pined and **pined away**¹⁰²;
Sought¹⁰³ them by night and day,
 Found them no more, but **dwindled**¹⁰⁴ and
 grew grey;
 Then fell with the first snow,
 While to this day no grass will grow
 Where she **lies low**¹⁰⁵:
 I planted daisies there a year ago
 That never **blow**¹⁰⁶.
 You should not **loiter**⁹⁸ so.”
 “Nay, hush,” said Laura:
 “Nay, hush, my sister:
 I ate and ate my fill,
 Yet my mouth **waters**¹⁰⁷ still;
 To-morrow night I will
 Buy more;” and kissed her:
 “**Have done with**¹⁰⁸ **sorrow**¹⁰⁹;
 I’ll bring you plums to-morrow
 Fresh on their mother twigs,
 Cherries worth getting;
 You cannot think what figs
 My teeth **have met in**¹¹⁰,
 What melons icy-cold
 Piled on a dish of gold
 Too **huge**¹¹¹ for me to hold,
 What peaches with a velvet **nap**¹¹²,
Pellucid¹¹³ grapes without one seed¹¹⁴:
 Odorous indeed must be the **mead**¹¹⁵
Whereon¹¹⁶ they grow, and pure the wave
 they drink
 With lilies⁵⁷ at the **brink**¹¹⁷
 And sugar-sweet their **sap**¹¹⁸.”

plucking of flowers is a pretty clear reference to the loss of virginity.

¹⁰² **to pine away** – lose vigour and gradually die
¹⁰³ **to seek sb.** (seek-sought-sought) – try to find sb.
¹⁰⁴ **to dwindle** – decline, lose vitality
¹⁰⁵ **to lie low** (lie-lay-lain) – (in this case) be buried, be interred
¹⁰⁶ **to blow** (blow-blew-blown) – (archaic) bloom, produce flowers
¹⁰⁷ **to water** – salivate
¹⁰⁸ **have done with** – stop worrying about
¹⁰⁹ **sorrow** – sadness
¹¹⁰ **have met in** – (in this case) bitten
¹¹¹ **huge** – enormous, gigantic
¹¹² **nap** – hair-like texture
¹¹³ **pellucid** – clear and translucent
¹¹⁴ **seedless (i.e. cloned) grapes are a 20th-century phenomenon, possible following the advances on Gregor Mendel.**
¹¹⁵ **mead** – (in this case) meadow, field
¹¹⁶ **whereon** – on which, in which
¹¹⁷ **brink** – water’s edge
¹¹⁸ **sap** – plant secretion, juice



Golden head by golden head,
Like two pigeons in one nest
Folded in each other's wings,
They lay down in their curtained bed:
Like two blossoms on one stem,
Like two flakes of new-fall'n snow,
Like two **wands**¹¹⁹ of ivory
Tipped¹²⁰ with gold for **awful**¹²¹ kings.
Moon and stars gazed in at them,
Wind sang to them lullaby,
Lumbering owls **forbore to**¹²² fly,
Not a bat **flapped**¹²³ **to and fro**¹²⁴
Round their rest:
Cheek to cheek and breast to breast
Locked together¹²⁵ in one nest.

Early in the morning
When the first **cock**¹²⁶ 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**¹²⁷ the house,
Kneaded¹²⁸ cakes of whitest wheat,
Cakes for **dainty**¹²⁹ mouths to eat,
Next **churned**¹³⁰ butter, whipped up cream,
Fed their **poultry**¹³¹, sat and sewed;
Talked as modest **maidens**⁹⁷ should:
Lizzie with an open heart,
Laura in an absent dream,

¹¹⁹ **wand** – baton, rod

¹²⁰ **tipped** – capped, topped

¹²¹ **awful** – (in this case) inspiring awe, magnificent, awesome

¹²² **forbear to** (-bear/-bore/-borne) – decide not to

¹²³ **to flap** – (in this case) fly

¹²⁴ **to and fro** – backwards and forwards, back and forth

¹²⁵ **locked together** – embracing

¹²⁶ **cock** (UK English) – rooster (US English)

¹²⁷ **to set to rights** (set-set-set) – tidy

¹²⁸ **to knead** – make

¹²⁹ **dainty** – small and pretty

¹³⁰ **to churn** – (in this case) make

¹³¹ **poultry** – chickens

One content, one sick in part;
One **warbling**¹³² for the mere bright day's
delight,
One **longing for**¹³³ the night.

At length slow evening came:
They went with **pitchers**¹³⁴ to the **reedy**¹³⁵
brook⁴¹;
Lizzie most placid in her look,
Laura most like a leaping flame.
They drew the gurgling water from its deep;
Lizzie plucked purple and rich golden flags,
Then turning homeward said: "The sunset
flushes
Those furthest **loftiest**¹³⁶ **crag**¹³⁷;
Come, Laura, not another **maiden**⁹⁷ **lags**¹³⁸.
No **wilful**¹³⁹ squirrel wags,
The beasts and birds are fast asleep."
But Laura **loitered**⁹⁸ still among the
rushes²⁹
And said the bank was steep.

And said the hour was early still
The dew not fall'n, the wind not chill;
Listening ever, but not catching
The customary cry,
"Come buy, come buy,"
With its iterated **jingle**¹⁴⁰
Of sugar-baited words:
Not for all her watching
Once discerning even one goblin
Racing, whisking, tumbling, hobbling;
Let alone the herds
That used to **tramp**⁴² along the **glen**³⁵,
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**⁹⁸ longer at this
brook⁴¹;
Come with me home.
The stars rise, the moon bends her arc,
Each **glowworm**¹⁴¹ **winks her spark**¹⁴²,

¹³² **to warble** – sing

¹³³ **to long for** – be desirous of

¹³⁴ **pitcher** – big jug

¹³⁵ **reedy** – covered in reeds (= river grass)

¹³⁶ **loftiest** – highest

¹³⁷ **crag** – rocky peak

¹³⁸ **to lag** – linger, loiter

¹³⁹ **wilful** – obstinate

¹⁴⁰ **jingle** – melody

¹⁴¹ **glow-worm** – insect that emits light

¹⁴² **to wink her spark** – shine intermittently

Let us get home before the night grows dark:
 For clouds may gather
 Though this is summer weather,
Put out¹⁴³ the lights and **drench** us **through**¹⁴⁴;
 Then if we lost our way what should we do?"



Christina Rossetti

Laura turned cold as stone
 To find her sister heard that cry alone,
 That goblin cry,
 "Come buy our fruits, come buy."
 Must she then buy no more such **dainty**¹²⁹
 fruit?
 Must she no more such **succous**¹⁴⁵ pasture
 find,
 Gone deaf and blind?
 Her tree of life drooped from the root:
 She said not one word in her heart's sore
 ache;
 But peering **thro'**¹⁴⁶ the **dimness**¹⁴⁷, **nought**
discerning¹⁴⁸,
Trudged¹⁴⁹ home, her **pitcher**¹³⁴ dripping
 all the way;
 So crept to bed, and lay
 Silent till Lizzie slept;
 Then sat up in a passionate **yearning**¹⁵⁰,

¹⁴³ to put out (put-put-put) – extinguish
¹⁴⁴ to drench sb. through – soak sb. completely
¹⁴⁵ succous – (archaic) succulent, juicy
¹⁴⁶ thro' – through
¹⁴⁷ dimness – darkness
¹⁴⁸ nought discerning – unable to see anything
¹⁴⁹ to trudge – walk without vigour
¹⁵⁰ yearning – desire

And gnashed her teeth for **balked**¹⁵¹
 desire, and **wept**¹⁵²
 As if her heart would break.

Day after day, night after night,
 Laura kept watch in vain
 In **sullen**¹⁵³ silence of exceeding pain.
 She never caught again the goblin cry:
 "Come buy, come buy;"—
 She never **spied**¹⁵⁴ the goblin men
Hawking¹⁵⁵ their fruits along the **glen**³⁵:
 But when the noon **waxed**¹⁵⁶ bright
 Her hair grew thin and grey;
 She **dwindled**¹⁰⁴, as the fair full moon **doth**
turn¹⁵⁷
 To **swift**¹⁵⁸ **decay**¹⁵⁹ and burn
 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,
 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
 False waves in desert **drouth**¹⁶⁰
 With shade of leaf-crowned trees,
 And burns the thirstier in the sandful
 breeze.

She no more swept the house,
 Tended the **fowls**¹⁶¹ or cows,
 Fetched honey, **kneaded**¹²⁸ cakes of wheat,
 Brought water from the **brook**⁴¹:
 But sat down **listless**¹⁶² in the **chimney-**
nook¹⁶³
 And would not eat.

¹⁵¹ balked – frustrated
¹⁵² to weep (weep-weep-weep) – sob, cry
¹⁵³ sullen – bad-tempered, resentful
¹⁵⁴ to spy – spot, see
¹⁵⁵ to hawk – sell (in an itinerant way/shouting)
¹⁵⁶ to wax – increase in size
¹⁵⁷ doth turn – turns
¹⁵⁸ swift – rapid
¹⁵⁹ decay – decline
¹⁶⁰ drouth – drought
¹⁶¹ fowls – farm birds, poultry
¹⁶² listless – lethargic
¹⁶³ chimney-nook – recess next to the fireplace



Tender Lizzie could not bear
To watch her sister's **cankerous care**¹⁶⁴
Yet not to share.
She night and morning
Caught the goblins' cry:
"Come buy our **orchard**⁸⁶ fruits,
Come buy, come buy,"—
Beside the **brook**⁴¹, along the **glen**³⁵,
She heard the **tramp**¹⁶⁵ of goblin men,
The yoke and stir
Poor Laura could not hear;
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**¹⁶⁶
Fell sick and died
In her **gay**¹⁶⁷ prime,
In earliest winter time
With the first glazing **rime**¹⁶⁸,
With the first snow-fall of crisp winter time.

Till Laura **dwindling**¹⁰⁴
Seemed knocking at Death's door:
Then Lizzie **weighed**¹⁶⁹ no more
Better and worse;
But put a silver penny in her purse,
Kissed Laura, crossed the **heath**¹⁷⁰ with
clumps of **furze**⁸¹

¹⁶⁴ **cankerous care** – corrosive suffering

¹⁶⁵ **tramp** (n.) – (in this case) walking, marching

¹⁶⁶ **for joys brides hope to have** – because of having

^{sex}

¹⁶⁷ **gay** – (in this case) carefree

¹⁶⁸ **rime** – frost

¹⁶⁹ **to weigh** – ponder, consider

At **twilight**⁹⁶, **halted**¹⁷¹ by the **brook**⁴¹:
And for the first time in her life
Began to listen and look.

Laughed every goblin
When they **spied**¹⁵⁴ her **peeping**³⁶:
Came towards her hobbling,
Flying, running, leaping,
Puffing and blowing,
Chuckling¹⁷², clapping, crowing,
Clucking and gobbling,
Mopping and mowing,
Full of airs and graces,
Pulling **wry**¹⁷³ faces,
Demure grimaces,
Cat-like and rat-like,
Ratel⁵⁴ and wombat-like,
Snail-paced in a hurry,
Parrot-voiced and whistler,
Helter skelter¹⁷⁴, hurry skurry,
Chattering like magpies,
Fluttering like pigeons,
Gliding like fishes,—
Hugged¹⁷⁵ her and kissed her:
Squeezed and **caressed**¹⁷⁶ her:
Stretched up their dishes,
Panniers¹⁷⁷, and plates:
"Look at our apples
Russet¹⁷⁸ and **dun**¹⁷⁹,
Bob at our cherries,
Bite at our peaches,
Citrons²⁶ and dates,
Grapes for the asking,
Pears red with **basking**¹⁸⁰
Out in the sun,
Plums on their twigs;
Pluck them and suck them,
Pomegranates, figs."—

¹⁷⁰ **heath** – moor, area of uncultivated terrain

¹⁷¹ **to halt** – stop

¹⁷² **to chuckle** – laugh quietly

¹⁷³ **wry** – ironic, sardonic

¹⁷⁴ **helter-skelter** – impetuously, chaotically

¹⁷⁵ **to hug** – embrace

¹⁷⁶ **to caress** – stroke

¹⁷⁷ **pannier** – big basket for carrying food

¹⁷⁸ **russet** – reddish-brown

¹⁷⁹ **dun** – greyish-brown

¹⁸⁰ **to bask** – lie, be exposed



“Good folk”, said Lizzie,
Mindful of¹⁸¹ Jeanie:
 “Give me much and many: —
 Held out her apron,
Tossed¹⁸² them her penny.
 “Nay, take a seat with us,
 Honour and eat with us,”
 They answered **grinning**¹⁸³:
 “Our feast is but beginning.
 Night yet is early,
 Warm and dew-pearly,
 Wakeful and starry:
 Such fruits as these
 No man can carry:
 Half their bloom would fly,
 Half their **dew**¹⁸⁴ would dry,
 Half their flavour would pass by.
 Sit down and **feast**¹⁸⁵ 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:
 So without **further**¹⁸⁶ **parleying**¹⁸⁷,

¹⁸¹ **mindful of** – remembering

¹⁸² **to toss** – throw

¹⁸³ **to grin** – smile

¹⁸⁴ **dew** – (in this case) juiciness

¹⁸⁵ **to feast** – dine

¹⁸⁶ **further** – any more

If you will not sell me any
 Of your fruits though much and many,
 Give me back my silver penny
 I **tossed**¹⁸² you **for a fee**¹⁸⁸.”—
 They began to scratch their **pates**¹⁸⁹,
 No longer wagging, purring,
 But visibly **demurring**¹⁹⁰,
 Grunting and snarling.
 One called her proud,
Cross-grained¹⁹¹, uncivil;
 Their tones **waxed loud**¹⁹²,
 Their looks were evil.
 Lashing their tails
 They **trod**¹⁹³ and **hustled**¹⁹⁴ her,
 Elbowed and **jostled**¹⁹⁵ her,
Clawed¹⁹⁶ with their nails,
 Barking, mewling, hissing, mocking¹⁹⁷,
Tore¹⁹⁸ her gown and **soiled**¹⁹⁹ her
 stocking,
Twisted²⁰⁰ her hair out by the roots,
Stamped²⁰¹ 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**²⁰² in a flood,—
 Like a rock of blue-veined stone
 Lashed by tides **obstreperously**²⁰²,—
 Like a **beacon**²⁰³ left alone
 In a **hoary**²⁰⁴ **roaring**²⁰⁵ sea,
 Sending up a golden fire,—
 Like a fruit-crowned orange-tree
 White with blossoms honey-sweet
Sore beset²⁰⁶ by wasp and bee,—
 Like a royal **virgin**²⁰⁷ town
 Topped with **gilded**²⁰⁸ dome and spire

¹⁸⁷ **parleying** – conversation, negotiation

¹⁸⁸ **for a fee** – in payment

¹⁸⁹ **pate** – head

¹⁹⁰ **demurring** – hesitating

¹⁹¹ **cross-grained** – uncooperative, perverse

¹⁹² **to wax loud** – become louder

¹⁹³ **to tread** (tread-trod-trodden) – step on

¹⁹⁴ **to hustle** – jostle, mob

¹⁹⁵ **to jostle** – push

¹⁹⁶ **to claw** – scratch

¹⁹⁷ **mocking** – ridiculing, trying to humiliate

¹⁹⁸ **to tear** (tear-tore-torn) – rip

¹⁹⁹ **to soil** – dirty

²⁰⁰ **to twitch** – pull

²⁰¹ **to stamp** – tread, step forcefully

²⁰² **obstreperously** – noisily, violently

²⁰³ **beacon** – lighthouse, flame used as a signal

²⁰⁴ **hoary** – greyish white

²⁰⁵ **roaring** – noisy and turbulent

²⁰⁶ **sore beset** – severely attacked

²⁰⁷ **virgin** – unconquered

²⁰⁸ **gilded** – golden

Close **beleaguered**²⁰⁹ by a fleet
Mad²¹⁰ to **tug** her standard **down**²¹¹.



One may lead a horse to water,
 Twenty cannot make him drink.
 Though the goblins **cuffed**²¹² and caught
 her,
 Coaxed and fought her,
 Bullied and **besought**²¹³ her,
 Scratched her, pinched her black as ink,
 Kicked and knocked her,
Mauled²¹⁴ and **mocked**²¹⁵ her,
 Lizzie **uttered not a word**²¹⁶;
 Would not open lip from lip
Lest²¹⁷ they should **cram**²¹⁷ a mouthful in:
 But laughed in heart to feel the drip
 Of juice that **syrrupped**²¹⁸ all her face,
 And **lodged**²¹⁹ in dimples of her chin,
 And streaked her neck which **quaked**²²⁰
 like **curd**²²¹.
 At last the evil people,

²⁰⁹ **beleaguered** – under siege

²¹⁰ **mad** – (in this case) desperate

²¹¹ **to tug sth. down** – pull sth, down

²¹² **to cuff** – slap, hit

²¹³ **to beseech** (beseech-besought-besought) –
 implore

²¹⁴ **to maul** – savage, attack

²¹⁵ **to mock** – ridicule, try to humiliate

²¹⁶ **to utter not a word** – say nothing

²¹⁷ **to cram** – force, push

²¹⁸ **to syrrup** – coat, cover

²¹⁹ **to lodge** – (in this case) accumulate

²²⁰ **to quake** – tremble

²²¹ **curd** – coagulated milk

Worn out²²² by her resistance,
Flung²²³ back her penny, kicked their fruit
 Along whichever road they took,
 Not leaving root or stone or shoot;
 Some **writhed into**²²⁴ the ground,
 Some dived into the **brook**⁴¹
 With ring and ripple,
 Some **scudded**²²⁵ on the **gale**²²⁶ without a
 sound,
 Some vanished in the distance.

In a smart²²⁷, ache, tingle,
 Lizzie went her way;
 Knew not was it night or day;
Sprang up²²⁸ the bank, **tore thro**²²⁹ the
furze⁸¹,
Threaded²³⁰ **copse**²³¹ and **dingle**²³²,
 And heard her penny jingle
 Bouncing in her purse,—
 Its bounce was music to her ear.
 She ran and ran
 As if she feared some goblin man
Dogged²³³ her with **gibe**²³⁴ or **curse**²³⁵
 Or something worse:
 But not one goblin **scurried after**²³⁶,
 Nor was she pricked by fear;
 The kind heart made her windy-paced
 That urged her home quite out of breath
 with **haste**²³⁷
 And inward laughter.

She cried, “Laura”, up the garden,
 “Did you miss me?
 Come and kiss me.
Never mind²³⁸ my bruises,
Hug¹⁷⁵ me, kiss me, suck my juices
 Squeezed from goblin fruits for you,
 Goblin pulp and goblin **dew**¹⁸⁴.

²²² **worn out** – exhausted

²²³ **to fling** (fling-flung-flung) – toss, throw, hurl

²²⁴ **to writhe into** – wriggle into, disappear under

²²⁵ **to scud** – (in this case) run away

²²⁶ **gale** – (in this case) wind

²²⁷ **in a smart** – hurting, painfully

²²⁸ **to spring up** (spring-sprang-sprung) – ascend
quickly

²²⁹ **to tear through** (tear-tore-torn) – run through,
race across

²³⁰ **threaded** – (in this case) through

²³¹ **copse** – thicket, small group of trees

²³² **dingle** – dell, wooded valley

²³³ **to dog** – torment

²³⁴ **gibe** – insult

²³⁵ **curse** – malediction

²³⁶ **to scurry after** – pursue, follow

²³⁷ **haste** – celerity, hurry

²³⁸ **never mind** – ignore

Eat me, drink me, love me;
 Laura, **make much of**²³⁹ me;
 For your sake I have **braved**²⁴⁰ the **glen**³⁵
 And **had to do with**²⁴¹ goblin merchant
 men.”



Laura **started from**²⁴² her chair,
 Flung her arms up in the air,
 Clutched her hair:
 “Lizzie, Lizzie, have you tasted
 For my sake the fruit forbidden²⁴³?
 Must your light like mine be hidden,
 Your young life like mine be wasted,
Undone²⁴⁴ in mine undoing,
 And ruined in my ruin,
 Thirsty, **cankered**²⁴⁵, goblin-ridden?”—
 She **clung about**²⁴⁶ her sister,
 Kissed and kissed and kissed her:
 Tears once again
 Refreshed her shrunken eyes,
 Dropping like rain
 After long **sultry**²⁴⁷ **drouth**¹⁶⁰;
 Shaking with **aguish**²⁴⁸ fear, and pain,

²³⁹ **to make much of** (make-made-made) – pamper, spoil

²⁴⁰ **to brave** – endure, suffer

²⁴¹ **to have to do with** (have-had-had) – interact with

²⁴² **to start from** – jump out of (in surprise)

²⁴³ **obvious Biblical reference**

²⁴⁴ **undone** – ruined

²⁴⁵ **cankered** – infected, corrupted

²⁴⁶ **to cling about** (cling-clung-clung) – embrace

²⁴⁷ **sultry** – hot and humid, tropical

²⁴⁸ **aguish** – feverish, sickly

She kissed and kissed her with a hungry
 mouth.

Her lips began to scorch,
 That juice was **wormwood**²⁴⁹ to her tongue,
 She **loathed**²⁵⁰ the feast:
Writhing²⁵¹ as one possessed she leaped
 and sung,
Rent²⁵² all her robe, and **wrung**
Her hands²⁵³ in lamentable haste,
 And beat her breast.
 Her locks **streamed**²⁵⁴ like the **torch**²⁵⁵
Borne²⁵⁶ by a **racer**²⁵⁷ at full speed,
 Or like the **mane**²⁵⁸ of horses in their
flight²⁵⁹,
 Or like an eagle when she **stems**²⁶⁰ the light
 Straight toward the sun,
 Or like a caged thing freed,
 Or like a flying **flag**²⁶¹ when armies run.

Swift²⁶² fire **spread**²⁶³ through her veins,
 knocked at her heart,
 Met the fire smouldering there
 And **overbore**²⁶⁴ its lesser flame;
 She **gorged on**²⁶⁵ 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
 Which an earthquake **shatters down**²⁶⁶,
 Like a lightning-stricken mast,
 Like a wind-uprooted tree
 Spun about,
 Like a foam-topped **waterspout**²⁶⁷
Cast down²⁶⁸ **headlong**²⁶⁹ in the sea,
 She fell at last;

²⁴⁹ **wormwood** – like bitter poison

²⁵⁰ **to loathe** – hate, detest

²⁵¹ **to writhe** – squirm

²⁵² **to rend** (rend-rent-rent) – tear apart

²⁵³ **to wring one's hands** (wring-wrung-wrung) –

²⁵⁴ **to stream** – (in this case) flow like a flame

²⁵⁵ **torch** – Olympic torch

²⁵⁶ **to bear** (bear-bore-borne) – carry

²⁵⁷ **racer** – runner

²⁵⁸ **mane** – long neck hair

²⁵⁹ **flight** – fleeing, escaping, running away

²⁶⁰ **to stem** – reduce, diminish

²⁶¹ **flag** – (in this case) standard

²⁶² **swift** – rapid

²⁶³ **to spread** (spread-spread-spread) – propagate

²⁶⁴ **to overbear** (-bear/-bore/-borne) – conquer

²⁶⁵ **to gorge on** – devour, eat voraciously

²⁶⁶ **to shatter sth. down** – cause sth. to collapse

²⁶⁷ **waterspout** – whirlwind at sea

²⁶⁸ **cast down** – collapsing

²⁶⁹ **headlong** – head first, precipitously

Pleasure past and anguish past,
Is it death or is it life?

Life out of death.
That night long Lizzie watched by her,
Counted her pulse's **flagging**²⁷⁰ **stir**²⁷¹,
Felt for her breath,
Held water to her lips, and cooled her face
With tears and fanning leaves:
But when the first birds **chirped**²⁷² **about**
their eaves²⁷³,
And early **reapers**²⁷⁴ **plodded**²⁷⁵ to the
place
Of golden **sheaves**²⁷⁶,
And dew-wet grass
Bowed in the morning winds so brisk to
pass,
And new buds with new day
Opened of cup-like **lilies**²⁷⁷ on the stream,
Laura awoke as from a dream,
Laughed in the innocent old way,
Hugged Lizzie but not twice or **thrice**²⁷⁷;
Her **gleaming locks**²⁷⁸ showed not one
thread²⁷⁹ of grey,
Her breath was sweet as May
And light danced in her eyes.

Days, weeks, months, years
Afterwards, when both were wives
With children of their own;
Their mother-hearts **beset with**²⁸⁰ fears,
Their lives bound up in tender lives;
Laura would call the little ones
And tell them of her early prime,
Those pleasant days long gone
Of not-returning time:
Would talk about the **haunted**²⁸¹ **glen**³⁵,
The **wicked**²⁸², quaint fruit-merchant men,
Their fruits like honey to the throat
But poison in the blood;
(Men sell not such in any town):
Would tell them how her sister stood

²⁷⁰ **flagging** – weak, faltering

²⁷¹ **stir** – (in this case) beat

²⁷² **to chirp** – tweet, sing

²⁷³ **about their eaves** – under their roof

²⁷⁴ **reaper** – harvester. **As Death is often called 'the (Grim) Reaper' this reference is ironic.**

²⁷⁵ **to plod** – walk slowly

²⁷⁶ **sheaf** – bundle of harvested corn

²⁷⁷ **thrice** – x3, three times

²⁷⁸ **gleaming locks** – shining hair

²⁷⁹ **thread** – (in this case) strand (of hair)

²⁸⁰ **to be beset with** – afflicted by, tormented by

²⁸¹ **haunted** – eerie, spooky, ghostly

²⁸² **wicked** – evil, malicious

In **deadly peril**²⁸³ to do her good,
And win the fiery antidote:
Then joining hands to little hands
Would **bid them cling together**²⁸⁴,
“For there is no friend like a sister
In calm or stormy weather;
To cheer one on the tedious way,
To fetch one if one **goes astray**²⁸⁵,
To lift one if one **totters down**²⁸⁶,
To strengthen **whilst**²⁸⁷ one stands.”



²⁸³ **deadly peril** – mortal danger

²⁸⁴ **bid them to cling together** – ask them to embrace

²⁸⁵ **to go astray** (go-went-gone) – choose an
erroneous direction

²⁸⁶ **to totter down** – fall over

²⁸⁷ **whilst** – while, when