



## Teaching Fairy Stories with Dr. Junius Johnson

### Lesson 5: Christina Rosetti, "Goblin Market"

#### Outline:

##### Goblin Market by Christina Rosetti

- Soften the blow of doing poetry by doing something with a fantastical theme.
- The goblin market is a traveling fairy market where they try to get you to eat their food.
- Don't eat the food in fairyland because you can never leave!
- The poem is for the purpose of tempting humans to their own destruction.
  - The one (Laura) who says we should not look at them, is the one who is looking.
  - "Who knows upon what soil they fed their hungry, thirsty roots." The land confers upon the fruit grown there something of its character (we can see this with wine in our own world).
  - Why should fairy food be bad for humans? It is not made for us.
  - She really means come close, we'll look together.
    - Curiosity is one of the things that leads to perdition. To linger is to remain in the space of temptation, that's why you have to flee. These are clear signs that Laura is opening her heart up to sin.
  - When someone wants you to pay with a part of your body, that's bad.
    - She dropped a tear rarer than pearl. She knows it is not just a piece of hair when dealing with goblin men, it is surrendering a part of your soul.
    - This is a good image to show our students. It seems like maybe she knew.
  - Challenging your reading is not a problem, it is an opportunity to go further in.
  - A paradox: I (Laura) ate my fill, yet my mouth waters still. The mouth is where desire lies. Point the students to Edmund's Turkish delight in The Chronicles of Narnia.
  - There is an image of the beautiful sisterly bond. They are on the same path, but they are about to diverge greatly.
    - Desire is a wound of the heart. If we're not careful with our desires they will lead us to places of destruction.
    - How critical it is to learn to desire the right things? How dangerous it is to give in even for a moment to our basest desires (to act against wisdom)?
    - No amount of regret will rescue you from the consequences of your actions.



- Laura is now idle, and will not eat. It is a sign of wealth and gluttony to choose not to eat. Without eating though, life wastes away. Laura only has a taste for fairy food.
- Think again of Edmund and Turkish delight in *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*.
- Lizzie could not stand to watch her sister suffer alone.
- This poem is also about purity, innocence, and virginity.
  - Lizzie goes and finds the goblins.
  - Accepting someone's hospitality in Greek epics is a good thing, but this is a bad crowd.
  - One maiden standing against a sea of goblins stands unmoved.
  - "Evil people worn out by her resistance."
  - Resistance is stronger than all of the anger and ire that Hell can bring to bear.
  - "Eat me, drink me, love me." The connection to Christ is clear here.
  - Lizzie's love turns her into a sacrament for her sister.
  - Fruit forbidden takes you back to the Garden of Eden.
- Our lives are haunted by goblins.
- Now Laura says she hates the same fruit. The new fire is the healing, which is a sister's love.
- It is not enough to stop sinning, you have to repent.
- Is it death or is it life? It is life out of death, or resurrection.
- It is all about sisterly love.