

**Title:** Deceptive Depictions in "Children's" Literature: the Paradox of Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market"

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Since the first publication of Christina Rossetti's poem "Goblin Market" in 1862, illustrators have chosen to depict the whimsical and fantastical aspects of Laura and Lizzie's journey.

Although the illustrations have rendered this poem a work of children's literature, the poem's dark undertones — the temptations of the flesh, the fall of a woman, sexual assault, and incest — implicitly comment on the difficulties of women in the Victorian Era. According to Carina Chocano, women of this time were expected to be "angels of the house," which she defines as "pious, submissive, domestic, and pure" (Chocano xviii). Through the juxtaposition of Laura's and Lizzie's temptation and mortal peril as well as the gendering of characters, Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market" reveals that temptation comes from both external societal forces and the inner turmoil of wanting to resist the forced standards of the "angel of the house."

Despite these dark themes, the poem has become a work of children's literature. By prioritizing this genre, the powerful commentary on Victorian society is replaced with a didactic moral: "For there is no friend like a sister / In calm or stormy weather" (Rossetti). This project addresses the paradox of "Goblin Market," the influence of illustrations including the recent edition illustrated by Omar Rayyan, and the tensions that arise when analyzing this poem through the lens of children's literature.

## Works Cited

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