

# THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

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Produced by Al Haines.

FLOWERS OF PARNASSUS—IV.

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

[image]

*"The blessed Damozel leaned out."*

**THE BLESSED DAMOZEL  
BY DANTE GABRIEL  
ROSSETTI. WITH  
ILLUSTRATIONS BY PERCY  
BULCOCK**

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**ILLUSTRATIONS.**

["The blessed Damozel leaned out"](#) . . . Frontispiece

[Heading](#)

["Surely she leaned o'er me"](#)

["We two will stand beside that shrine"](#)

”And I myself will teach to him”

”Herself shall bring us, hand in hand”

”And laid her face between her hands”

Tailpiece

[image]

*Heading*

I.

The blessed Damozel leaned out  
From the gold bar of Heaven:  
Her blue-grey eyes were deeper much  
Than a deep water, even.  
She had three lilies in her hand,  
And the stars in her hair were seven.

II.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,  
No wrought flowers did adorn,  
But a white rose of Mary's gift  
On the neck meetly worn;  
And her hair, lying down her back,  
Was yellow like ripe corn.

III.

Herseemed she scarce had been a day

One of God's choristers;  
 The wonder was not yet quite gone  
     From that still look of hers;  
 Albeit to them she left, her day  
     Had counted as ten years.

## IV.

(To *one* it is ten years of years  
     . . . Yet now, here in this place,  
 Surely she leaned o'er me,—her hair  
     Fell all about my face . . .  
 Nothing: the Autumn-fall of leaves.  
     The whole year sets apace.)

[image]

*"Surely she leaned o'er me."*

## V.

It was the terrace of God's house  
     That she was standing on,—  
 By God built over the sheer depth  
     In which Space is begun;  
 So high, that looking downward thence,  
     She could scarce see the sun.

## VI.

It lies from Heaven across the flood  
     Of ether, as a bridge.  
 Beneath, the tides of day and night  
     With flame and blackness ridge

The void, as low as where this earth  
Spins like a fretful midge.

## VII.

But in those tracts, with her, it was  
The peace of utter light  
And silence. For no breeze may stir  
Along the steady flight  
Of seraphim; no echo there,  
Beyond all depth or height.

## VIII.

Heard hardly, some of her new friends,  
Playing at holy games,  
Spake, gentle-mouthed, among themselves,  
Their virginal chaste names;  
And the souls, mounting up to God,  
Went by her like thin flames.

## IX.

And still she bowed herself, and stooped  
Into the vast waste calm;  
Till her bosom's pressure must have made  
The bar she leaned on warm,  
And the lilies lay as if asleep  
Along her bended arm.

## X.

From the fixt lull of heaven, she saw  
Time, like a pulse, shake fierce  
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove,  
In that steep gulph, to pierce

The swarm: and then she spake, as when  
 The stars sang in their spheres.

XI.

"I wish that he were come to me,  
 For he will come," she said.  
 "Have I not prayed in solemn heaven?  
 On earth, has he not prayed?  
 Are not two prayers a perfect strength?  
 And shall I feel afraid?"

XII.

"When round his head the aureole clings,  
 And he is clothed in white,  
 I'll take his hand, and go with him  
 To the deep wells of light,  
 And we will step down as to a stream  
 And bathe there in God's sight.

[image]

*"We two will stand beside that shrine."*

XIII.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,  
 Occult, withheld, untrod,  
 Whose lamps tremble continually  
 With prayer sent up to God;  
 And where each need, revealed, expects  
 Its patient period.

XIV.

”We two will lie i’ the shadow of  
That living mystic tree,  
Within whose secret growth the Dove  
Sometimes is felt to be,  
While every leaf that His plumes touch  
Saith His name audibly.

XV.

”And I myself will teach to him—  
I myself, lying so—  
The songs I sing here; which his mouth  
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,  
Finding some knowledge at each pause  
And some new thing to know.”

XVI.

(Alas! to *her* wise simple mind  
These things were all but known  
Before: they trembled on her sense,—  
Her voice had caught their tone.  
Alas for lonely Heaven! Alas  
For life wrung out alone!

[image]

”*And I myself will teach to him.*”

XVII.

Alas, and though the end were reached?



Was *thy* part understood  
 Or borne in trust? And for her sake  
 Shall this too be found good?—  
 May the close lips that knew not prayer  
 Praise ever, though they would?)

## XVIII.

”We two,” she said, ”will seek the groves  
 Where the lady Mary is,  
 With her five handmaidens, whose names  
 Are five sweet symphonies:—  
 Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,  
 Margaret, and Rosalys.

## XIX.

”Circle-wise sit they, with bound locks  
 And bosoms covered;  
 Into the fine cloths, white like flame,  
 Weaving the golden thread,  
 To fashion the birth-robcs for them  
 Who are just born, being dead.

## XX.

He shall fear haply, and be dumb.  
 Then will I lay my cheek  
 To his, and tell about our love,  
 Not once abashed or weak:  
 And the dear Mother will approve  
 My pride, and let me speak.

[image]

”*Herself shall bring us, hand in hand.*”

## XXI.

'Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,  
 To Him round whom all souls  
 Kneel—the unnumber'd solemn heads  
 Bowed with their aureoles:  
 And Angels, meeting us, shall sing  
 To their citherns and citoles.

## XXII.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord  
 Thus much for him and me:—  
 To have more blessing than on earth  
 In nowise; but to be  
 As then we were,—being as then  
 At peace. Yea, verily.

## XXIII.

"Yea, verily; when he is come  
 We will do thus and thus:  
 Till this my vigil seem quite strange  
 And almost fabulous;  
 We two will live at once, one life;  
 And peace will be with us."

## XXIV.

She gazed, and listened, and then said,  
 Less sad of speech than mild;  
 "All this is when he comes." She ceased;  
 The light thrilled past her, filled  
 With Angels, in strong level lapse.  
 Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.

[image]

*"And laid her face between her hands."*

XXV.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their flight  
 Was vague 'mid the poised spheres.  
 And then she cast her arms along  
 The golden barriers,  
 And laid her face between her hands,  
 And wept (I heard her tears).

[image]

*THE END*

\* \* \* \* \*

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