

Fanny Crosby

And Her Great Love for Jesus

On March 24, 1820, Fanny Crosby was born to Christian parents in a humble home in New York State, USA.



CONGRATULATIONS, MRS. CROSBY! YOU'RE THE MOTHER OF A BEAUTIFUL BABY GIRL.

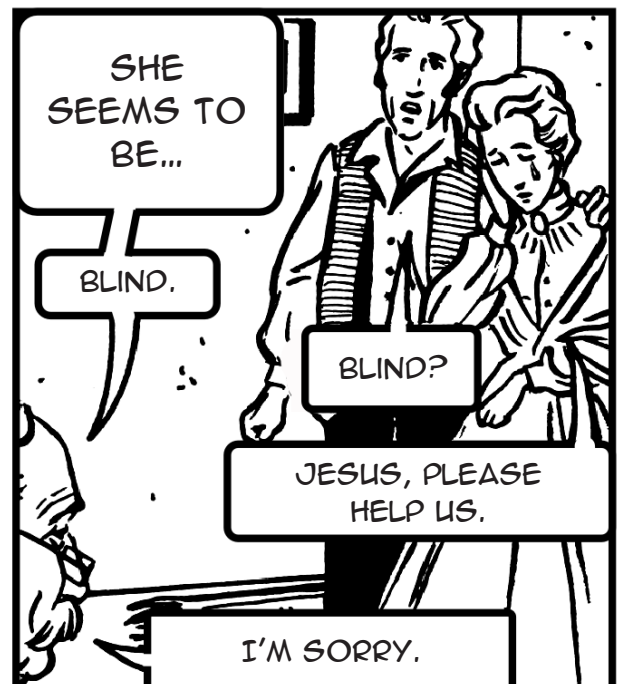
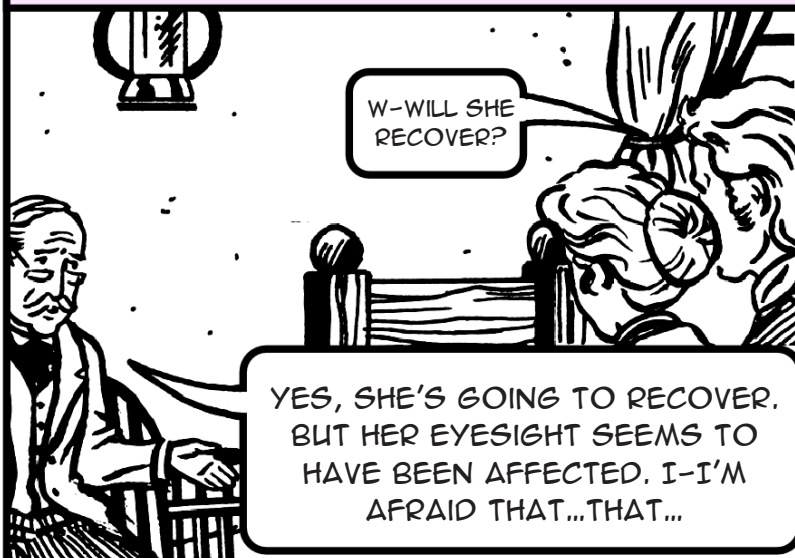


MAY THE GOOD LORD BLESS THIS CHILD AND USE HER LIFE FOR HIS GLORY.


AMEN.



But when Fanny was only six weeks old, she became very sick.




One year later the Crosbys suffered another tragedy. Fanny's father was suddenly taken ill.




PLEASE DON'T WEEP FOR ME, DEAREST. I WILL SOON BE WITH JESUS! MY ONLY CONCERN IS FOR YOU AND FANNY.

MY DARLING, DON'T WORRY. YOU KNOW THAT GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF US.



PLEASE ASK MY MOTHER TO COME AND LIVE WITH YOU. MOTHER CAN HELP YOU TAKE CARE OF FANNY.



PLEASE TAKE ... TAKE GOOD CARE OF HER.... SHE'S SUCH A ...

SPECIAL CHILD....



OH! DEAR JOHN!

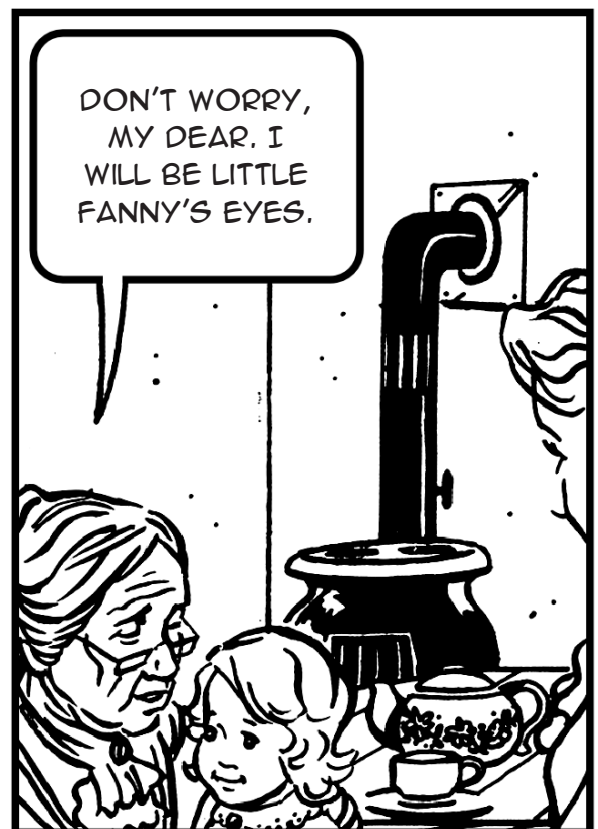
After her father's death, Fanny's grandmother came to live with them.



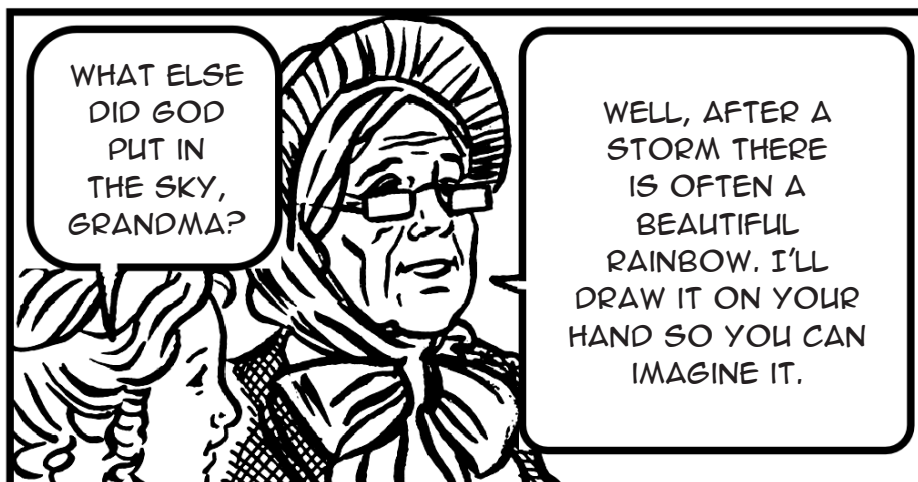
WHAT A DARLING LITTLE GIRL!

GA'MA!

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR COMING.



As Fanny grew, her grandmother spent much time with her, telling her about the beauties of God's creation. Together they would explore the woods and listen to the birds, or sit on top of a hill.



SIT ON MY LAP AND I'LL TELL YOU THE STORY OF NOAH, AND HOW GOD MADE THE FIRST RAINBOW AS A SIGN THAT HE WOULD NEVER AGAIN COVER THE EARTH WITH A FLOOD.



Fanny liked the times that her grandma told her stories from the Bible best of all.

THE STORIES ARE SO BEAUTIFUL, GRANDMA! OH, HOW I WISH I COULD READ THEM TOO.



FANNY, I HAVE A SPLENDID IDEA!

SINCE YOU CAN'T SEE TO READ THE VERSES IN THE BIBLE, I'M GOING TO HELP YOU MEMORIZE THEM.



OH, YES PLEASE, GRANDMA! THEN I CAN HAVE THE BIBLE WITH ME ALWAYS.



Soon Fanny had learned many verses, Psalms, and Proverbs, and the whole book of Ruth by heart.

On her eighth birthday.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DEAR FANNY!



THANK YOU, MAMA! MAY I HELP LIGHT THE CANDLES, PLEASE?

OH, IF GOD WOULD GRANT ME ONE WISH FOR NEXT YEAR, IT WOULD BE THAT I COULD SEE!



MY SWEET ONE, SO MANY TIMES WE'VE PRAYED FOR YOUR EYESIGHT. ALTHOUGH NOW YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY GOD HAS LET THIS HAPPEN, ONE DAY YOU SURELY WILL.



DID YOU KNOW, FANNY,
THAT MANY FAMOUS
PEOPLE OF THE PAST WERE
BLIND, LIKE JOHN MILTON?
HE WAS A GREAT POET THAT
LIVED IN THE SEVENTEENTH
CENTURY.

REALLY?

IN FACT, MANY OF THE WORLD'S
MOST FAMOUS PEOPLE HAD
SERIOUS HANDICAPS. BEETHOVEN
COMPOSED SOME OF HIS
GREATEST SYMPHONIES AFTER HE
BECAME DEAF.

IT'S A MASTERPIECE!
WHAT A GENIUS! WHAT
DEPTH OF FEELING.

WHY DOESN'T HE TURN
AROUND WHEN WE CLAP?

HE DOESN'T
KNOW THAT WE
ARE APPLAUDING.
REMEMBER, HE'S
NOW DEAF.

YOU SEE, FANNY,
SOMETIMES WHEN GOD
HAS ALLOWED ONE GIFT TO
BE LOST, HE GIVES US A
BETTER ONE.

YES,
GRANDMA.

The next day.

GOOD
MORNING,
MOMMY!

GOOD MORNING,
FANNY! YOU LOOK
HAPPY!

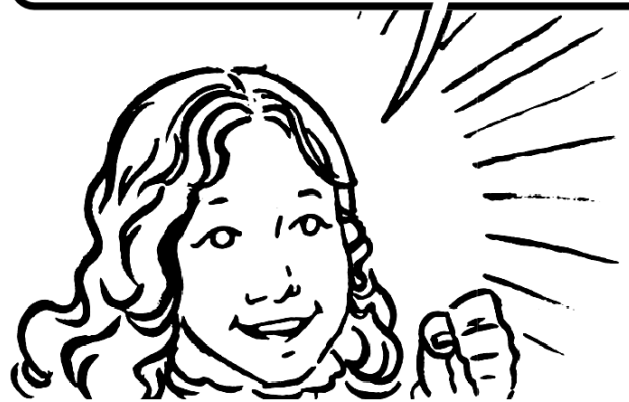
MOMMY, LAST NIGHT I WAS THINKING ABOUT WHAT GRANDMA SAID
ABOUT BEETHOVEN AND JOHN MILTON, THE POET, AND I DECIDED
TO COMPOSE A POEM. WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR IT?

OH, THAT'S SWEET.
YES, PLEASE,
DEAR!

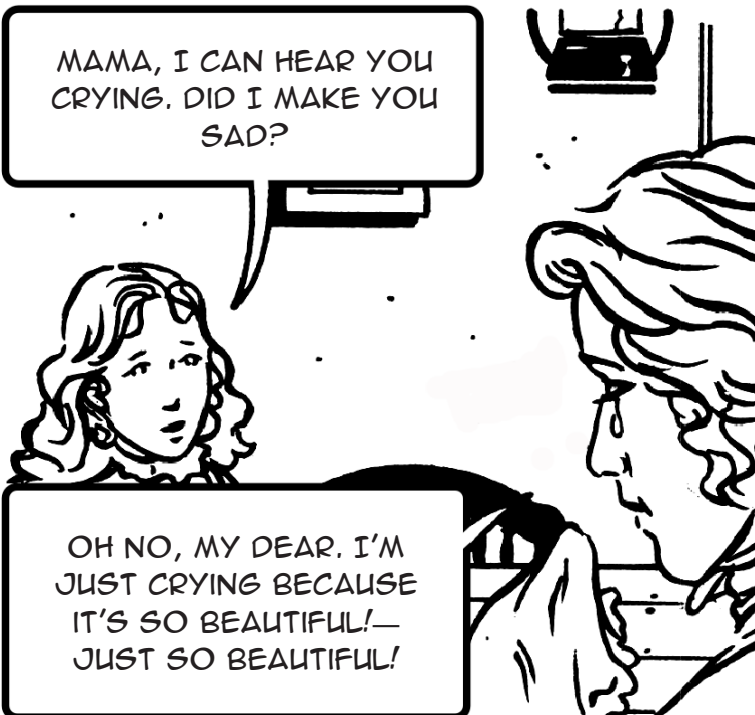
*O, what a happy soul I am,
Although I cannot see,
I am resolved that in this world
Contented I will be.*



*How many blessings I enjoy
That other people don't.
To weep and sigh because I'm blind,
I cannot, and I won't!*



MAMA, I CAN HEAR YOU
CRYING. DID I MAKE YOU
SAD?



OH NO, MY DEAR. I'M
JUST CRYING BECAUSE
IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL!—
JUST SO BEAUTIFUL!

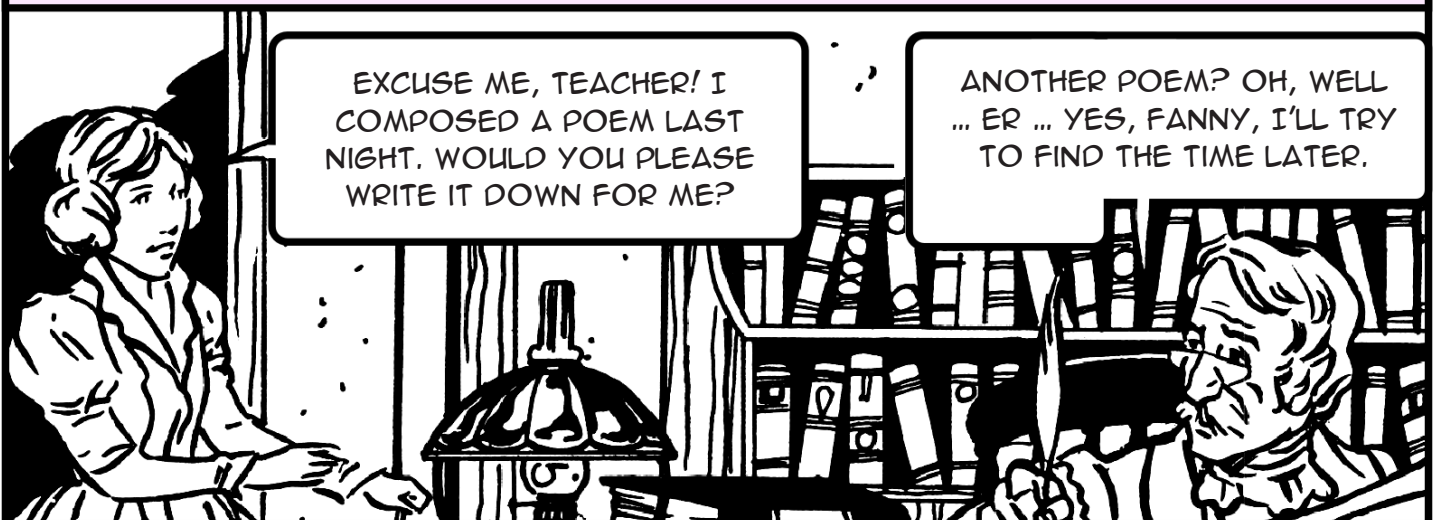
MAMA, LAST NIGHT I PROMISED
GOD THAT I WILL NEVER AGAIN BE
BITTER ABOUT MY BLINDNESS, BUT
RATHER ACCEPT IT AS A SPECIAL
GIFT FROM HIM.



It was not until Fanny was fifteen that her mother had saved enough money for her to be able to study at the Institute for the Blind in New York. It was there that she began to write more poetry.

EXCUSE ME, TEACHER! I
COMPOSED A POEM LAST
NIGHT. WOULD YOU PLEASE
WRITE IT DOWN FOR ME?

ANOTHER POEM? OH, WELL
... ER ... YES, FANNY, I'LL TRY
TO FIND THE TIME LATER.



At first her teachers and friends tried to discourage her.

IF I THOUGHT, I
MEAN—KNEW—THAT
A WORD OF MINE...

THINKING UP MORE
POETRY? REALLY,
FANNY, WHAT'S THE
POINT?

I MEAN, WHAT
GOOD WILL
THEY EVER DO
ANYONE?

OH DEAR! MAYBE
THEY'RE RIGHT. I'M
JUST WASTING MY
TIME.

Then one day a doctor came to examine the students.

FANNY, IT SAYS HERE THAT
YOU LIKE TO WRITE POEMS.
I'D VERY MUCH LIKE TO
HEAR ONE.

YOU WOULD? WELL ... ER ... THIS
ONE IS CALLED, WELL, I DON'T
HAVE A NAME FOR IT YET. ...

*... If I knew that a word of mine,
A word not kind and true,
Might leave its trace
On a loved one's face,
I'd never speak harshly,*

Would you?

*If I knew that the light of a smile
Might linger the whole day through,
And lighten some heart
With a heavier part,
I wouldn't withhold it.
Would you?*

YOU HAVE A REAL POETESS HERE, MR. CLEVELAND!
YOU SHOULD GIVE HER EVERY POSSIBLE
ENCOURAGEMENT. YOU WILL HEAR GREAT THINGS
FROM THIS LADY ONE DAY.

OH, THANK YOU,
DOCTOR! I'VE FELT
FOR A LONG TIME THAT
POETRY WRITING IS TO
BE MY CALLING. I JUST
NEEDED SOMEONE TO
ENCOURAGE ME IN IT.



This praise and encouragement was just what Fanny needed.

The school principal, Mr. Grover Cleveland,
offered his help.



FANNY, I'D
LIKE TO HELP
YOU BY
WRITING YOUR
POEMS DOWN
FOR YOU.

THANK YOU!
I COMPOSED
ANOTHER 40.

FORTY POEMS?! YOU
MEAN, ALL AT ONCE?!
IN YOUR MIND?
WITHOUT WRITING
THEM DOWN?

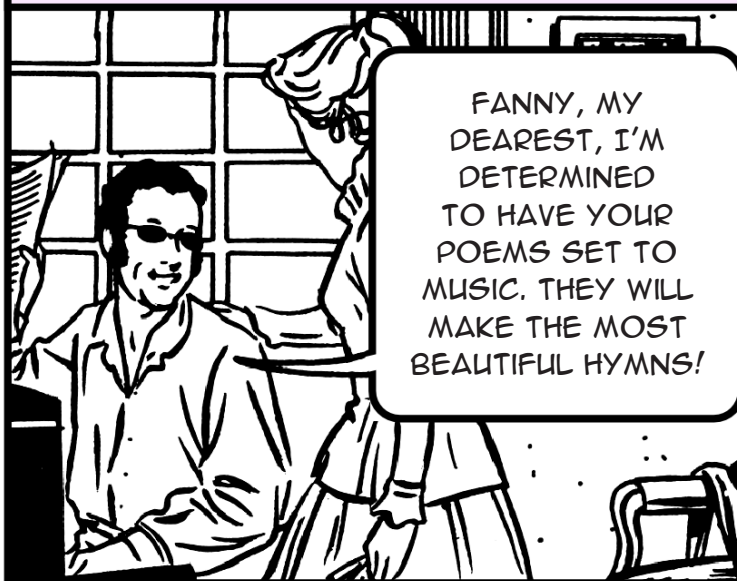
YES. GOD
ALLOWED ME TO
LOSE MY SIGHT,
BUT HE GAVE ME
OTHER GIFTS, LIKE
A GOOD MEMORY.

YOU'RE A REMARKABLE YOUNG
WOMAN, FANNY! I PROMISE TO
HELP YOU ALL THAT I CAN.



Fanny Crosby spent twenty-three years at the Institute, first as a student, and then as a teacher. She married a blind singer named Alexander Van Alstyne.

God gave them a little baby who soon went to be with Jesus.



I'LL MISS CUDDLING HIM IN MY ARMS! BUT I KNOW THAT HE'S SAFE IN THE ARMS OF JESUS NOW!

THE LORD GAVE ME THIS POEM FOR OUR DEPARTED LITTLE ONE.

*Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on His gentle breast,
There by His love o'ershaded
Sweetly my soul shall rest!
Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe from corroding care,
Safe from the world's temptations,
Sin cannot harm me there!¹*

¹ "Safe in the Arms of Jesus" was to become one of Fanny's best-known hymns.



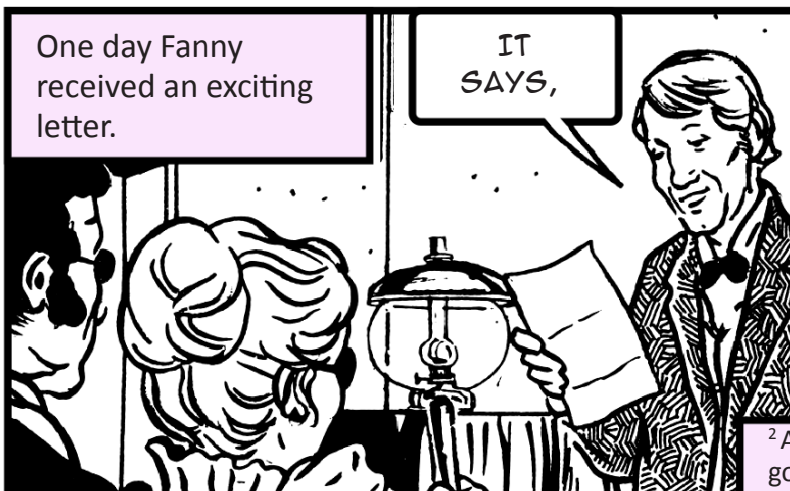
One day Fanny received an exciting letter.

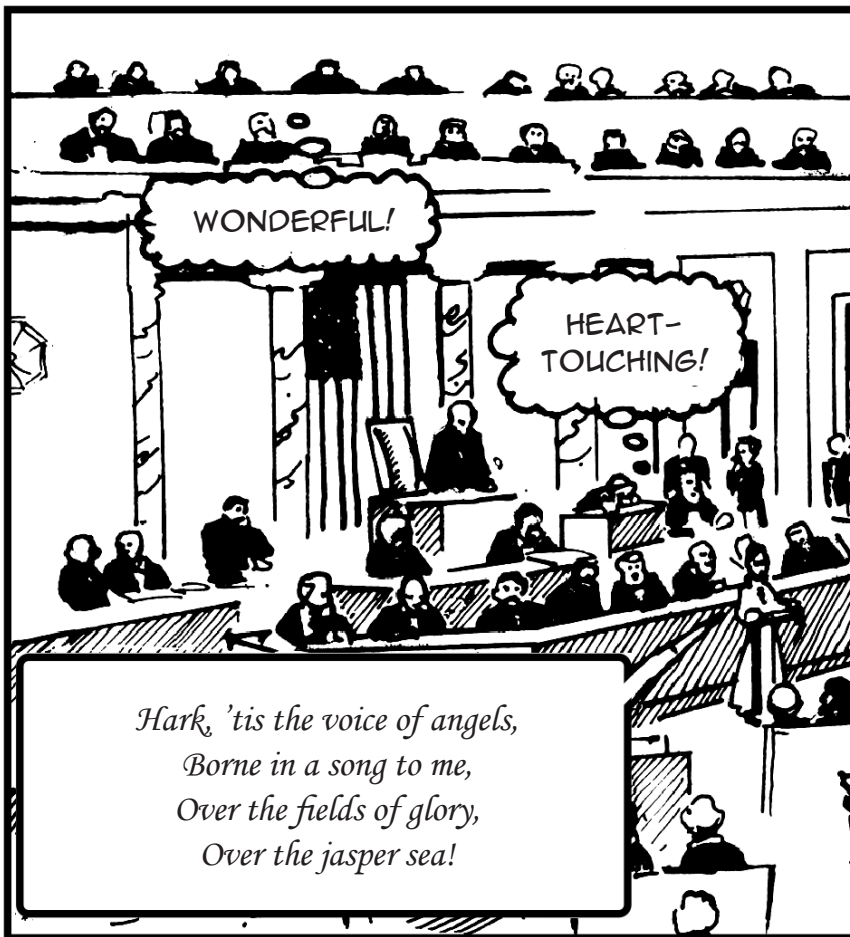
IT SAYS,

*My dearest Fanny,
When I left the Institute, I went into politics and am now a congressman.² I've arranged for you to recite your poems before the U.S. Congress. Please come!*

*Your dear friend,
Grover Cleveland*

² An important member of the United States' government.





As the congressmen listened to her beautiful poetry, many had to wipe away their tears.

*Hark, 'tis the voice of angels,
Borne in a song to me,
Over the fields of glory,
Over the jasper sea!*

BEAUTIFUL!

ON BEHALF OF THE U.S. CONGRESS, I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR INSPIRING US ALL WITH YOUR WONDERFUL POEMS! IT'S AMAZING HOW YOU'VE MANAGED TO OVERCOME YOUR HANDICAP.



THANK YOU, MR. CLEVELAND! BUT REALLY IT IS NO HANDICAP.

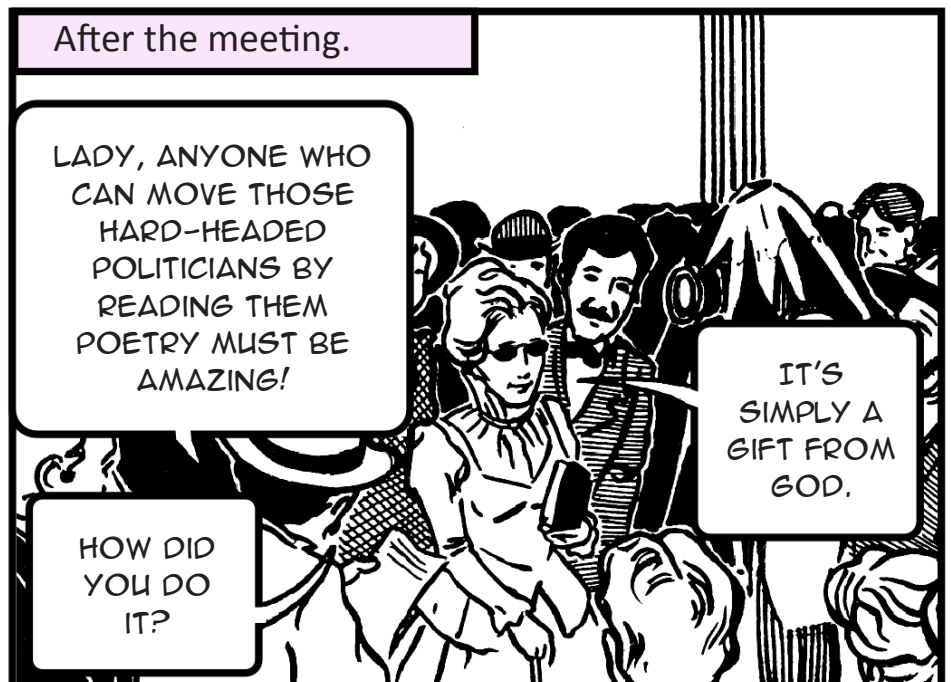
I AM THANKFUL FOR MY BLINDNESS, BECAUSE IT GIVES ME SO MUCH TIME FOR PRAYER AND QUIET THOUGHT. THERE WILL BE TIME ENOUGH IN HEAVEN FOR ME TO SEE EVERYTHING!



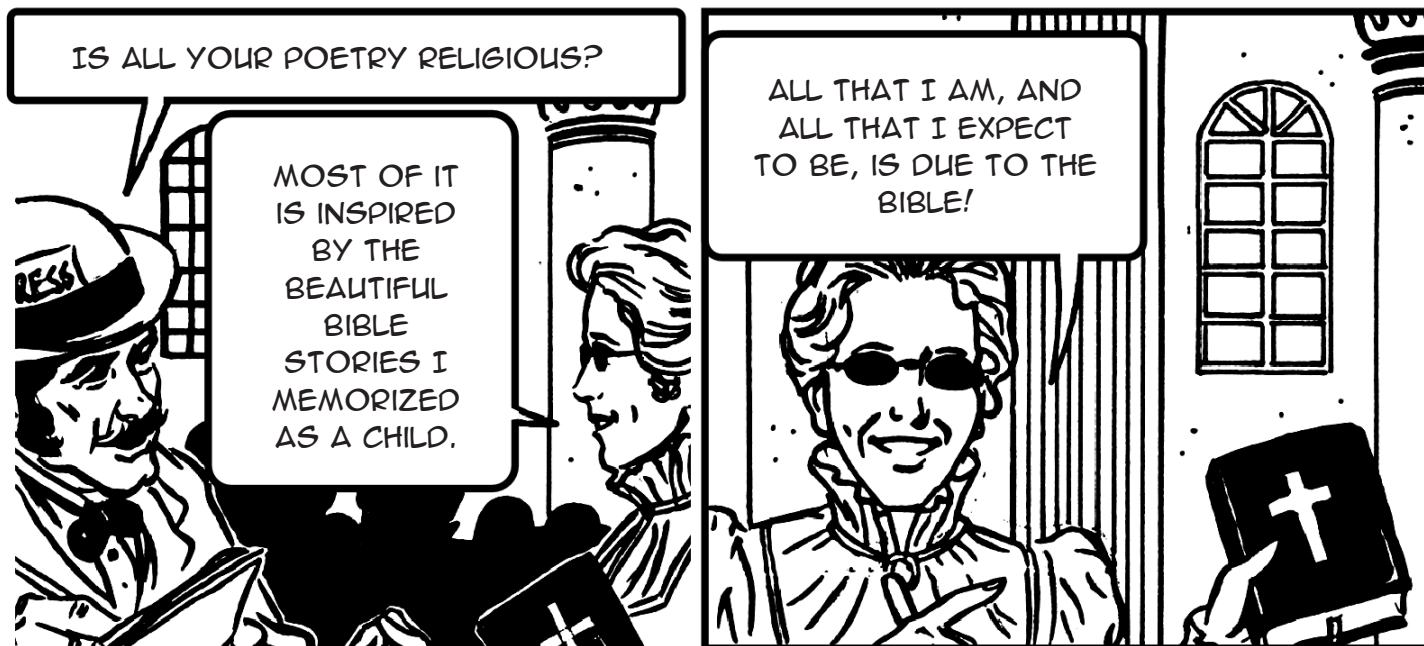
After the meeting.

LADY, ANYONE WHO CAN MOVE THOSE HARD-HEADED POLITICIANS BY READING THEM POETRY MUST BE AMAZING!

HOW DID YOU DO IT?



IT'S SIMPLY A GIFT FROM GOD.

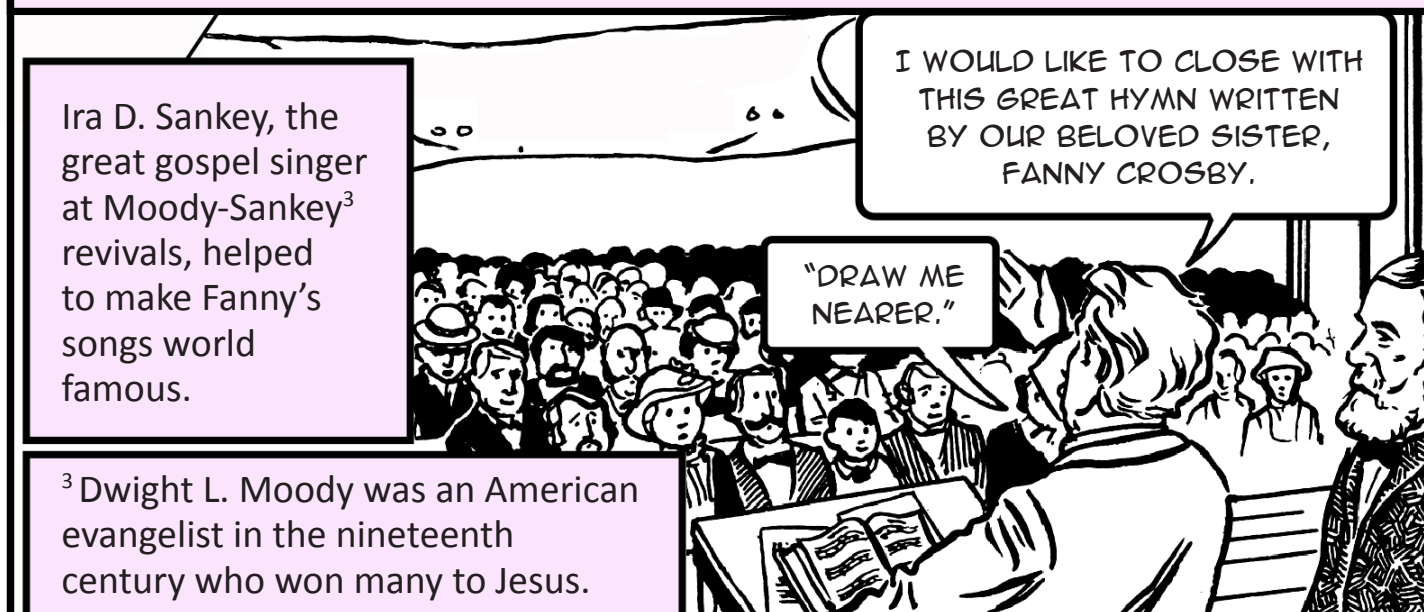


As a result of her visit to Congress, Fanny Crosby made many friends in the government. Later she was thrilled when her friend Grover Cleveland became president of the United States!



The gifted poetess was always busy. When she wasn't writing, she was busy witnessing in missions and churches.

Many of her hymns were inspired by her witnessing experiences, great hymns like "Rescue the Perishing" and "Behold Me at the Door."



Ira D. Sankey, the great gospel singer at Moody-Sankey³ revivals, helped to make Fanny's songs world famous.

³ Dwight L. Moody was an American evangelist in the nineteenth century who won many to Jesus.

*I am Thine, O Lord, I have heard Thy voice,
And it told Thy love to me;
But I long to rise in the arms of faith,
And be closer drawn to Thee.*

*Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
To the cross where Thou hast died;
Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
To Thy precious bleeding side.*



Fanny had a great love for children. They included her in their games, told her of their joys, and came to her for comfort.

HELLO,
CHILDREN!

AUNT FANNY!
PLEASE
COME OUT
AND PLAY
WITH US!

AUNT
FANNY,
YOU'RE OUR
VERY BEST
FRIEND!

AUNT
FANNY,
YOU'RE SO
MUCH FUN
TO TALK TO!

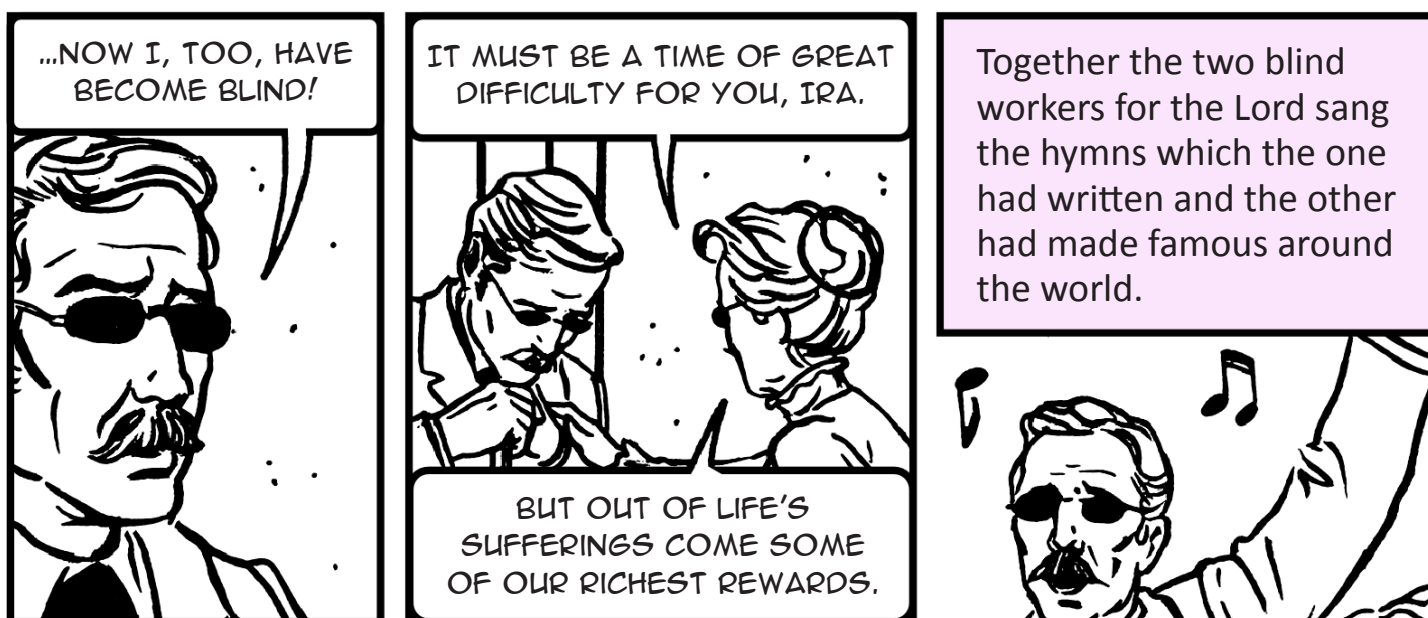
PLEASE,
AUNT
FANNY,
TELL US A
STORY?

I HEAR YOUR
SWEET VOICES
ASK ME THAT
SO MANY TIMES
A DAY! SO I'VE
WRITTEN YOU A
SPECIAL SONG
THAT GOES:

*Tell me the story of Jesus,
Write on my heart every word.
Tell me the story most precious,
Sweetest that ever was heard.*

*Tell how the angels in chorus
Sang as they welcomed His birth.
"Glory to God in the highest!
Peace and good tidings to earth."*

*Tell of the cross where they nailed Him,
Writhing in anguish and pain.
Tell of the grave where they laid Him,
But tell how He liveth again.*



FANNY, I THINK IT'S A GREAT MISFORTUNE THAT THE LORD DID NOT GIVE YOU SIGHT WHEN HE SHOWERED SO MANY OTHER GIFTS UPON YOU!



NOT AT ALL! YOU SEE, PASTOR, GOD HAS THE POWER TO TRANSFORM ALL "MISFORTUNES" INTO GODSENDS.



IN FACT, DO YOU KNOW THAT IF BEFORE BIRTH I HAD BEEN ABLE TO MAKE ONE REQUEST, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN THAT I SHOULD BE BORN BLIND.



BECAUSE WHEN I GET TO HEAVEN, THE FIRST FACE THAT SHALL EVER GLADDEN MY SIGHT WILL BE THAT OF MY SAVIOR, JESUS!



On February 11, 1915, at the age of 95, Fanny Crosby went to be with the Lord. Long before the funeral service began, the church was packed with ministers, statesmen, songwriters, boys and girls.—All of them Fanny's friends!

She had 8,000 published hymns, and many were sung that day.



AND NOW WE'LL SING A HYMN THAT EXPRESSED FANNY'S HEART'S DESIRE, "TO SEE MY SAVIOR FIRST OF ALL!"

*When my life's work is ended
And I cross the swelling tide,
When the bright and glorious morning I shall see;
I shall know my Redeemer
When I reach the other side,
And His smile will be the first to welcome me.*



*Oh, the soul-thrilling rapture
When I view His blessed face,
And the luster of His kindly beaming eye!
How my full heart will praise Him,
For the mercy, love and grace
That prepare for me
A mansion in the sky!*



*Oh, the dear ones in glory,
How they beckon me to come,
And our parting by the river I recall!
To the sweet vales of Eden
They will sing my welcome home;
But I long to see my Savior first of all.*



*Through the gates of the City
In a robe of spotless white,
He will lead me where no tears will ever fall.
In the glad song of ages
I shall mingle with delight;
But I long to see my Savior first of all.*

