

# MY LAST DUCHESS

Starting from the title the intelligent reader is hit by the word “last” referred to the duchess. It means that the duchess is the last and there wouldn’t be more. Before the word last there is “my” that means the text refers to something very close to the poet.

Below the title there is an important information about the setting. Ferrara is an Italian city situated in Emilia Romagna in which lived Alfonso d’Este, duke of Ferrara. The information about the setting give the reader indirectly another information about the time: the period is the Renaissance.

My last Duchesse is a dramatic monologue, so the speaking voice is different from the poet.

Start from the first line, the reader understand that the speaker is showing someone a paint on the wall, in particular a fresco of the duchess. He introduce her telling that “she is looking as if she were alive”. This means that she is died.

He also explain his feelings now on see her: that paint is for him a wonder. Indirectly the speaker is telling the reader that the relation with the duchess was different when she was on life.

In the third line he introduces an information about who has done the fresco: Frà Pandolf.

In a way or in an other the speaker addresses the way the watcher looks at the fresco, telling him to sit down.

In addition, an important thing is that the duke underlines that the way the ladies looks at the duke was the same she looks at everybody. This means that he has got a great consideration about the fresco, he is very jealous about it.

So the intelligent reader is able to understand that apparently the monologue speaks about this fresco, but in reality what comes to surface is the personality of the duke. In fact the repetitive sound of “I” is an assonance that focuses totally the attention on the speaker and not on the objective of the speaker.

The “poor” man had proved bad feelings before she died, just because she was a young girl who had to marry an old man, and so he couldn’t expect that she had eyes only form him because she had many other interests.

The duke has a patronizing attitude, he is obsessed with the picture, he is jealous, he is self-centered.

To be more clear, he focus the point on the way the duchess looked: she looked everybody in the same way, and also him. With this way of show the speaker is confusing the duchess figure.

In the line 19th the speaker provides that he has hit her and so she his died in this way. He was to much obsessed by her manner that he had to murder her in the way he could have her forever and only for him. The duchess’ smile was so strenuous for hime that he had to reproduce it on the fresco.

Now she his always watching him.

After this exposition of the paint that lose the authenticity because it’s a deification of the death, the poet introduce an information about the watcher: he is someone led from a girl’s father to bring on the purpose of marry.

The personality of the speaker is another time put into light thanks to the last lines in which he shows the figure of a horse dominated by Neptune: this will be the girl’s life in the case she will marry him.