**ENGLISH WRITTEN TEST II TERM II FORM 2LSCA**

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| **THE PRIORESS**  There also was a Nun, a Prioress,  Her way of smiling very simple and coy.  Her greatest oath was only “By St Loy!”  And she was known as Madam Eglantyne.  And well she sang a service, with a fine  Intoning through her nose, as was most seemly,  And she spoke daintily in French, extremely,  After the school of Stratford-atte-Bowe;  French in the Paris style she did not know.  At meat her manners were well taught withal;  No morsel from her lips did she let fall,  Nor dipped her fingers in the sauce too deep;  But she could carry a morsel up and keep  The smallest drop from falling on her breast.  For courtliness she had a special zest,  And she would wipe her upper lip so clean  That not a trace of grease was to be seen  Upon the cup when she had drunk; to eat,  She reached a band sedately for the meat.  She certainly was very entertaining,  Pleasant and friendly in her ways, and straining  To counterfeit a courtly kind of grace,  A stately bearing fitting to her place,  And to seem dignified in all her dealings.  As for her sympathies and tender feelings,  She was so charitably solicitous  She used to weep if she but saw a mouse  Caught in a trap, if it were dead or bleeding.  And she had little dogs she would be feeding  With roasted flesh, or milk, or fine white bread.  And bitterly she wept if one were dead  Or someone took a stick and made it smart,  She -was all sentiment and tender heart.  Her veil was gathered in a seemly way,  Her nose was elegant, her eyes glass-grey;  Her mouth was very small, but soft and red,  Her forehead, certainly, was fair of spread,  Almost a span across the brows, I own;  She was indeed by no means undergrown.  Her dock, I noticed, had a graceful charm.  She wore a coral trinket on her arm,  A set of beads, the gaudies tricked in green,  Whence hung a golden brooch of brightest sheen  On which there first was graven a crowned A,  And lower, Amor vincit omnia | **LA MONACA DI MONZA**  **….**  e vide una finestra d'una forma singolare, con due grosse e fitte grate di ferro, distanti l'una dall'altra un palmo; e dietro quelle una monaca ritta. Il suo aspetto, che poteva dimostrar venticinque anni, faceva a prima vista un'impressione di bellezza, ma d'una bellezza sbattuta, sfiorita e, direi quasi, scomposta. Un velo nero, sospeso e stirato orizzontalmente sulla testa, cadeva dalle due parti, discosto alquanto dal viso; sotto il velo, una bianchissima benda di lino cingeva, fino al mezzo, una fronte di diversa, ma non d'inferiore bianchezza; un'altra benda a pieghe circondava il viso, e terminava sotto il mento in un soggolo, che si stendeva alquanto sul petto, a coprire lo scollo d'un nero saio. Ma quella fronte si raggrinzava spesso, come per una contrazione dolorosa; e allora due sopraccigli neri si ravvicinavano, con un rapido movimento. Due occhi, neri neri anch'essi, si fissavano talora in viso alle persone, con un'investigazione superba; talora si chinavano in fretta, come per cercare un nascondiglio; in certi momenti, un attento osservatore avrebbe argomentato che chiedessero affetto, corrispondenza, pietà; altre volte avrebbe creduto coglierci la rivelazione istantanea d'un odio inveterato e compresso, un non so che di minaccioso e di feroce: quando restavano immobili e fissi senza attenzione, chi ci avrebbe immaginata una svogliatezza orgogliosa, chi avrebbe potuto sospettarci il travaglio d'un pensiero nascosto, d'una preoccupazione familiare all'animo, e più forte su quello che gli oggetti circostanti. Le gote pallidissime scendevano con un contorno delicato e grazioso, ma alterato e reso mancante da una lenta estenuazione. Le labbra, quantunque appena tinte d'un roseo sbiadito, pure, spiccavano in quel pallore: i loro moti erano, come quelli degli occhi, subitanei, vivi, pieni d'espressione e di mistero. La grandezza ben formata della persona scompariva in un certo abbandono del portamento, o compariva sfigurata in certe mosse repentine, irregolari e troppo risolute per una donna, non che per una monaca. Nel vestire stesso c'era qua e là qualcosa di studiato o di negletto, che annunziava una monaca singolare: la vita era attillata con una certa cura secolaresca, e dalla benda usciva sur una tempia una ciocchettina di neri capelli; cosa che dimostrava o dimenticanza o disprezzo della regola che prescriveva di tenerli sempre corti, da quando erano stati tagliati, nella cerimonia solenne del vestimento. ……. |

**ACTIVITY**: In an argumentative text format, **write a comparative analysis** of the two nuns with reference to the overall effect and the strategies used in the two characterisations.

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The present work is meant to compare the characterisation of “the Prioress” and “La Monaca di Monza”. The comparison between the two characterisation highlights the differences and similarities between the two characters.

Firstly can be compared the characterisations’ global effect on the readers. Both the two characterisations create a negative effect on the readers for different causes.

The negative effect created by the characterisation of the prioress is the result of irony, the macro-strategy used by the poet in this characterisation. Irony, which is a figure of speech, consists in telling something to mean its exact contrary. Irony in this characterisation is meant to ridicules and reduce of importance the prioress, to criticize her. Indeed, even if she is a Nun, she wants to appear as a lady and, trying to reach her goal, she creates herself an artificial characterisation including features typical of court ladies. For this reason she is more interested in her appearance than in humility, poverty and the Christian dome values, going in contrast with the woman’s idea of the middle ages.

Irony is the result of a mixture of strategies: Social status, body language, the Nun’s way of speaking, the Nun’s actions, the nun’s attitudes and eating style, the Nun’s appearance and relationship with animals.

Also the “La Monaca di Monza” ‘s characterisation creates a negative idea of the character in the reader’s mind, but it isn’t the result of irony. Indeed the negative idea conveys by the mixture of different strategies used by the narrator to cerate the character: The setting and slow up, the overview, the dressing style, the appearance and the body language.

In both characterisations there’s the use of the strategy of appearance, but it characterises the Nuns’ beauty in different ways. While in the prioress the expression “Her nose was elegant, her eyes glass-grey; Her mouth was very small, but soft and red” makes the reader understand the prioress is interested in take care of her appearance and gives to it a lot of importance, to be similar to a lady, In “La Monaca Di Monza” the fact that her beauty is characterized and highlighted by the narrator with the adjectives “sbattuta, sfiorita e scomposta” makes the reader think the Monaca’s beaty is out of place, neglect and ruined.

Later on the intelligent reader understand that also the strategy of body language is used in both characterisation, also in this case with a different effect. Indeed, while the prioress’ body language is connoted with the expression “Her way of smiling very simple and coy”, conveying to the reader a positive idea of the character that seams kind, the Monaca’s body language is characterised by the fact that she scans with arrogance who she found in from of her, giving at the reader in a first impact a negative idea of her.

Another similarity can be found in the nuns’ dressing style: indeed, being both Nun, they wear a black and white veil. The contrast between the colour black and white of the Monaca’s veil is already used to connote her inner contrast, while in the prioress doesn’t create this idea (therefore there’s a difference also in the use of this strategy).

**COMPETENCES**

**L4 - Utilizzare una lingua straniera per scopi comunicativi ed operativi**

L4c. Descrivere in maniera semplice esperienze ed eventi, relativi all’ambito personale e sociale

L4d. Utilizzare in modo adeguato le strutture grammaticali

L4f. Scrivere brevi testi di interesse personale, sociale o professionale