**BONNY BARBARA ALLEN**

The ballad is organized in eight stanzas of four lines each(quatrine). The rhythm of the ballad is quick and fast and pushes the reader to go on. The function of the first stanza is an introductory one. It says when the ballad is set, which is autumn. This is important because helps the reader to create a mental image of what happened. Autumn is a reference to the period of life that comes before death. The expression “The green leaves were a-falling”(line 2) creates an that refers to death. The first stanza also introduces the protagonists: Sir John Graeme, who is an aristocratic, and Barbara Allen, who instead doesn’t belong to aristocracy, but is a common person. The second stanza is composed both by narration and dialogue. On the narrative side, it tells that Sir John sent his men to the place where Barbara lives. The reference to town and country underlines that Sir John belongs to aristocracy, while Barbara was a girl belonging to the common class. The dialogue part of the stanza between Barbara and John’s men express the hurry of the Sir. In this part are also used some dialect terms and this underlines once more the social difference between the two protagonists. The function of this second stanza is to oppose two settings: the town and the place where Barbara lives. The reason of this choice is to highlight the social difference between John, his men and Barbara. Indeed they speak in dialect. The dialogue anticipates Sir John’s men urgent message, so the reader is curious to find out the reason of such a hurry. The third stanza develop the theme of the second one, but it’s focused on the female character, who denies the urgency of the message in the second stanza. You can see that right from the start, where the repetition of “hooly”(line 9) underlines this concept. The stanza explain how the love of John for Barbara is not corresponded by her, and this can be noticed when she says him “Young man, I think you’re dying”(line 11). She uses a really direct way to express while talking to John, and it seems quite sarcastic, as typical of common people. In first two lines of this third stanza there’s also an opposition to the first two of the second stanza. In the second stanza it is written “He sent his men down through the town To the place where she was dwelling”(lines 5-6), while in the third one it is written “O hooly hooly rose she up, To the place where he was lying”(lines 9-11). This opposition underlines the difference of social position of the two protagonists: John’s men have to go down, while Barbara has to go up. The fourth and the fifth stanzas are composed by dialogues parts, which follows the dialogue between the two protagonists. Here we discover the reason of the hurry of Sir John: he is very sick and is dying. Although this, Barbara keeps denying his attentions, as she keeps with her direct and quite sarcastic way to talk to him. We also discover another important information: the reason why Barbara doesn’t care about John. She says that John slighted her during a particular occasion when he drank a lot of wine. The sixth stanza is composed by two parts: a narrative one and a dialogue one. The narrative side shows John turning his face to the wall, like he was giving up to convince Barbara to love him, and die. In the dialogue part John uses some French terms and this evidences the social difference between them. John also says “be kind to Barbara Allen”(line 24) and this underlines that although she denies his love, he will keep loving her, even in death. The last two stanzas has a narrative function: we see Barbara leave John, since he’s dead. The line “sighing said, she could not stay”(line 27) suggest she only now realizes that she loved about John, but it late. The expression “ every jow that the dead-bell geid, It cry’d, Woe to Barbara Allen”(lines 31-32) underlines how she felt bed while going away, because she refused the man she loved.