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## APPENDICES

### 1. The Poem *My Last Duchess*

#### *My Last Duchess*

By Robert Browning

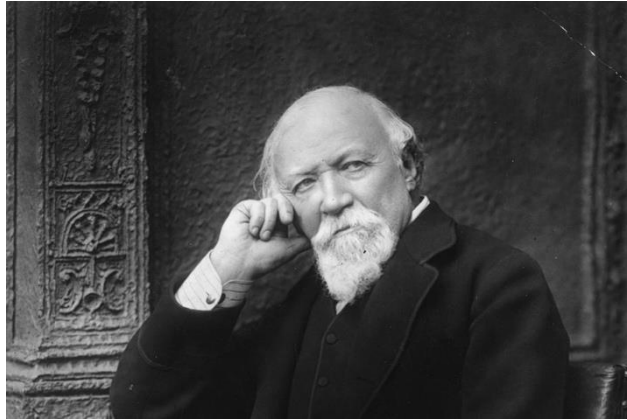
*Ferrara*

*That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,  
Looking as if she were alive. I call  
That piece a wonder, now; Fra Pandolf's hands  
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.  
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said  
"Fra Pandolf" by design, for never read  
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,  
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,  
But to myself they turned (since none puts by  
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)  
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,  
How such a glance came there; so, not the first  
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not  
Her husband's presence only, called that spot  
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek; perhaps  
Fra Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps  
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint  
Must never hope to reproduce the faint*

*Half-flush that dies along her throat." Such stuff  
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough  
For calling up that spot of joy. She had  
A heart—how shall I say?— too soon made glad,  
Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er  
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.  
Sir, 'twas all one! My favour at her breast,  
The dropping of the daylight in the West,  
The bough of cherries some officious fool  
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule  
She rode with round the terrace—all and each  
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,  
Or blush, at least. She thanked men—good! but thanked  
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked  
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name  
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame  
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill  
In speech—which I have not—to make your will  
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this  
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,  
Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let  
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set  
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse—*

*E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose  
Never to stoop. Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt,  
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without  
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;  
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands  
As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet  
The company below, then. I repeat,  
The Count your master's known munificence  
Is ample warrant that no just pretense  
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;  
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed  
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go  
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,  
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,  
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!*

## 2. Biography of Robert Browning



Robert Browning (1812-1889) was an influential English poet known for his dramatic monologues and exploration of complex psychological themes. Born in Camberwell, London, Browning showed literary talent early and was largely self-educated. He gained recognition with his early works like "Pauline" (1833) and "Paracelsus" (1835), but his reputation solidified with "Men and Women" (1855), which included poems like "My Last Duchess" and "The Bishop Orders His Tomb."

Browning's poetry often delved into the minds of his characters, revealing their inner conflicts and moral dilemmas. He married fellow poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning in 1846, and they moved to Italy where they lived until her death in 1861. Browning's later works, including "The Ring and the Book" (1868-1869), brought him critical acclaim and established him as a major Victorian poet.

His writing style was marked by rich language, intricate syntax, and a keen interest in exploring the depths of human nature. Browning's influence extended to the modernist poets of the 20th century, who admired his use of dramatic monologue and exploration of subjective experience. He died in Venice in 1889 and was buried in Westminster Abbey, London, leaving behind a legacy of innovative poetry that continues to be studied and appreciated today.

Browning received much of his early education from his father, who taught him Greek, Latin, French, and Italian. He was largely home schooled and showed a talent for writing poetry from a young age. His early works, such as "Pauline" (1833)

and "Paracelsus" (1835), though not widely recognized at the time, displayed his ambition and talent.

However, it was Browning's collection "Men and Women" (1855) that brought him considerable acclaim. This collection included some of his most famous poems, such as "My Last Duchess," "Andrea del Sarto," and "Fra Lippo Lippi." These poems are notable for their use of dramatic monologue, a form Browning mastered, where a speaker reveals their character and motivations through their own words.

In 1846, Browning married fellow poet Elizabeth Barrett, despite her frail health and her father's objections. They moved to Italy, where Browning found inspiration for many of his later works. Elizabeth Barrett Browning's death in 1861 deeply affected him, and he returned to England with their son, Robert Wiedemann Barrett Browning.

Browning's later works include the epic poem "The Ring and the Book" (1868-1869), based on a true murder trial in Rome. This work, consisting of twelve dramatic monologues, further cemented Browning's reputation as a master poet. His poetry explores themes such as love, jealousy, the nature of art, and the complexities of human relationships.

Robert Browning's writing style is characterized by his rich use of language, complex syntax, and profound exploration of the human psyche. He influenced many later poets, including T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, who admired his innovative use of dramatic form and psychological insight.

"My Last Duchess" is one of Robert Browning's most famous poems, published in 1842 as part of the collection "Dramatic Lyrics." It is a dramatic monologue spoken by the Duke of Ferrara, a character based on Alfonso II, Duke of Ferrara, in the 16th century. The poem reveals the Duke's narcissistic and controlling nature as he discusses a portrait of his late wife (the "last Duchess") with a visitor. Through the Duke's words, the reader learns of his jealousy, his obsession with control, and his role in the Duchess's demise. "My Last Duchess" exemplifies Browning's skill in creating complex characters and exploring themes of power, possession, and the darker aspects of human relationships.