

“in crime writing the criminal is always presented as remorseless and without guilt”.

Paragraph 1: *Porphyria's lover*

Browning uses the form of a dramatic monologue to portray the story of a lover who becomes paranoid of Porphyria and decides to kill her. The criminal in 'Porphyria's lover' can be seen to be presented without remorse and guilt.

“I found a thing to do”- the calmness around the act shows a lack of remorse or guilt. It's not reflected upon with regret nor is the murder a moment of passion and anger but is a casual affair and act. The lack of any emotive language when describing the murder, further emphasises the lack of any guilt and remorse felt. This poem shows a man being in control and using his power in a negative way and Browning could be using the poem to comment on society at the time. The poem shows the situation of women at the time; the lack of control and power women had. A woman's focus was meant to be family and they did not have the same rights as men, e.g. they couldn't vote or own property. The narrator's lover is at the mercy of the cold and controlling man who views her as a possession, to be used for his own needs- killing her is purely a “thing to do”. Furthermore, the line “and yet God has not said a word!” shows how the narrator, rather than feeling remorse, he feels a sense of pride as he thinks he's gotten away with the murder as “God has not said a word”.

Paragraph 2: *The laboratory*

A crime is not committed, only planned and imagined and yet the narrator is excited at even the thought of the crime and shows no remorse or guilt. Throughout the poem the narrator is excited by the plans and takes an avid interest in making the poison. “Grind away, moisten and mash up thy paste, pound at thy powder- I am not in haste”. The narrator seems to want to savour every moment, saying she's “not in haste”. The poison and process of making it is described in a detailed way, showing the excitement and manic of her behaviour. “You call it a gum? Th exquisite blue, sue to taste sweetly”

Paragraph 3: *My Last Duchess*

The poem follows the narration of the Duke who is conveying his story revolving the Duchess. The Duke shows no remorse, and this is especially evident through the Duke's portrayal of the victim in a negative light. “She had a heart- how shall I say? - too soon made glad, too easily impressed [...] her looks went everywhere”. The Duke tries to paint the Duchess negatively and seems to try to remove himself of any blame for his actions. He still continues to paint her negatively even after her death showing the lack of remorse he feels. By the end of the poem the reader finds out the Duke is finding another wife, emphasising the lack of guilt and remorse he feels.

Paragraph 4: *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*

Wilde's interpretation of the criminal is much different to the portrayal of criminals previously describes. If the criminal is seen to be the murderer then it can be argued that he is remorseful and Wilde reinforces this through the poem as it describes the struggle prisoners face, thus making him someone who can be pitied.

“The poor dead women whom he loved”- there's not much focus on the victim, but when there is, it's reiterated that his crime was a mistake, a crime of passion, so pity can be felt for the murderer. The murderer is described as “wistful”, further showing his remorse as he accepts his situation. However, if society is deemed the criminal, as Wilde paints them, then they're remorseless and without guilt due to the punishments they enforce on prisoners and the lack of accountability for their actions. “We tore the tarry rope to shred with blunt and bleeding nails”.