M1: Rossetti revision

1. Zoe: Goblin Market
2. Anna: Memory
3. Lily: Maude Clare
4. Rachel: Ladies dressed in muslin
5. Lucy: The World
6. Alana: An Apple Gathering
7. Dori: A Christmas Carol
8. Ellie: Remember
9. Amber: Passing and Glassing
10. Rose C: Babylon the Great
11. Fabienne: Up hill
12. Rose H: Twice
13. Gina: As froth on the face of the deep
14. Dori: May
15. Maddie: A birthday
16. Hollie Echo
17. Alana: At home
18. Ellie: Piteous my rhyme is
19. Lily: A Helpmeet for him
20. Anna: Our Mothers lovely women pitiful
21. Lucy: What would I give?

Write about 4 poetic techniques. Select from:

* Narrative voice
* Characterisation
* Time/chronology
* Setting
* Form (structure) eg Petrarchan sonnet
* Rhyme/rhythm
* Symbolism/imagery
* Dialogue/speech

Explain how the technique has been used, evaluate its effect (relate to the message/purpose of the poem) and explore how/by what Rossetti has been influenced (historical, political, social context, biographical influences, earlier writers, particularly poets etc)

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| Title of poem: Babylon the great | Date |  |
| Narrative technique identified | Relevant quote/s | Evaluation of technique, how it has been used, meaning and context/influence. |
| 1Form- Petrarchan sonnet | desire’, ‘fire’, ‘lusts’, ‘red’Overall structure | Rosetti constructed the poem in the form of a Petrarchan sonnet, which is ironic as they are usually about love (romanticism), whereas this is about sexual desires which can be implied as being viewed as immoral by many within society. Rosetti challenges this expectation as she explores a woman’s sexual power and promiscuity and how this can be seen as threatening to men- in Victorian England society, this was frowned upon as men felt they had the ultimate power through their masculinity. Challenging typical topics of romance and innocent/moral love usually accompanied by this sonnet form. Challenging societal expectations.  |
| 2Symbolism/imagery | ‘panther lusts in lair’‘wanton hair’‘scarlet vest and gold and gem and pearl’‘set on fire’ | Animalistic imagery presents the woman as threatening (viewed to be threatening to a man’s masculinity in Victorian England), and unpredictable, as she ‘lusts’ ‘for blood’. Presented as an evil presence, as she is identified with a dangerous and mysterious animal. Metaphor for female promiscuity and its power. Demonstration of seductive beauty and the evil that lingers behind it- femininity accentuated by ‘wanton hair’, however this symbol also highlights the promiscuity behind the ‘fair’ appearance, as the woman is sexually open and powerful.Imagery of beautiful and wealthy possessions ‘scarlet vest’, ‘gold’, ‘gem’, ‘pearl’ implies the woman is wealthy and is not a prostitute with very little money. Affluent and therefore respectable woman assumed by men and society to hold the illusion of ‘fair’ and sexually submissive, however the woman is powerful with sexual desire, possessions and ‘lust’- challenging societal expectation. Very rich and luxurious imagery. Lexical field of red is used to symbolise the woman’s sexual desire, power and threat/danger.’Fire’ imagery is used perhaps to imply a religious link to hell and how women with this sexual desire should be punished and condemned for their sins (despite men not having to face the same punishments)- a religious reading. A feminist reading however would suggest that Rosetti is portraying the woman embracing the depiction of the uncontrollable nature and power of fire, and identifying with it. |
| 3Narrative voice | she’, ‘her’‘gaze not upon her’ | Onlooker, observing the woman. Narrative voice could be society/men and how they view the sexual woman. Implications of a warning can be found, as the narrative voice tries to advise against people within society/men from ‘gaze’ing at her. Repetition of this, portraying the string message that is continued throughout the sonnet. Woman enticing men with alluring beauty and mystery, however it is revealed that her sexual ‘desire’ and promiscuity is threatening and therefore powerful- this could be a feminist reading and message, as many critics have argued that Rosetti was a feminist herself. ‘Gaze’ has connotations of fascination and intense engagement-sexual implications |
| 4Characterisation | ‘foul is she’, ‘fair’, ‘filth’, ‘scarlet vest’, ‘her heart lusts not for love’ | The woman is described as wealthy with ‘scarlet vest and gold and gem and pearl’. Repetition of ‘and’ signals a growing list, very luxurious and elaborate detail to the woman’s appearance. Likely to be a woman of power as she has very vibrant and expensive possessions/clothing. The woman is open about her sexual desire, as she openly wears a piece of clothing that symbolises sex and lustful desire- this contrasts to how the narrative voice sees her as it implies she deceives people with her ‘fair’ appearance- Rosetti could be challenging how society expects a woman of likely high class and wealth to not be sexually promiscuous. ‘foul’ and ‘filth’ are used in association with the woman, despite her obvious status within society and expensive appearance, open sexual desire seen as posing a threat to men (potentially) as it is presented as having negative connotations in societies view. |