



The Meeting on the Turret Stairs

Frederic William Burton, 1864. Size 95,5x 60,8.
Watercolour and gouache on paper.

Analyse the painting, first on your own, following the guideline... then you may check on the web to find out more about the artistic movement

1. **Comment upon the title and the date. Deduce the artistic movement and the period.**

The scene takes place on stairs . The names of the characters sound from the Middle-Ages. We may guess that it will be a story of lovers ; the stairs convey secrecy or a hidden meeting .
1864 belongs to the Victorian period . It comes after the romantic movement but there are romantic characteristics in the painting.

2. **Fill in the grid: Voir grille dessous**

Description	Element depicted	Technique used / artistic device used (How?)	Produced effect / interpretation (What for?)
Place	The stairs , in the corner / recess ; small window; closed space	Intimate/liminal space There is no way out /exit A dead end	It is a transition in the passage ; A dead end ; it is the end of their illegitimate love story
	The corner is really dark	Darkness is associated to death , sadness, sorrow	pain , the impossibility to escape their fate , tragic undercurrent
Characters	Couple /lovers , the woman is dressed like a princess ,the man is a knight (helmet,sword,chain mail) Dressed in red and blue , there is a blue wrapping on the man's leg .	Strength , manliness It reflects the woman's dress ; the woman has a red ribbon reflecting the mans tunic	he is ready to fight it conveys their complicity,unity,love
	He is holding her arm and kissing it . she is turning her back on him ;	It is a farewell scene	she doesn't want him to leave it conveys sadness , despair
	their faces are hidden , they have the same position		they share the same emotion
	the lady's hand	Delicate hand	it shows vulnerability , refinement
Layout	couple	Point of focalization	
Colours	bright colours	Contrast	wealthy family
Light:	light on the characters surrounded by darkness		tragic undercurrent of the scene
Movement	the position of the foot of the knight	He is going down stairs	he is leaving ; he is descending to the darkness
	the garments the ribbon of the woman and the lower part of the tunic	The movement is in the shape of a S	it symbolises a snake and sin ; the man is descending into hell ;

Accessories	the rose on the floor ,the ribbon	The rose is withered	forbidden love the end of their love
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3. Using the grid, draw your conclusions on the painting. What did the artist convey?

The emotions are implied in the details of the painting and the feelings are conveyed through the attitude of the characters, the setting and the atmosphere.

The couple is a pair of star-crossed lovers (lovers whose relationship is doomed to failure).