Marc Simpson and Forrest Fuehrer-Botdorf

Mr. Stebbins

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Argus

By Alexander Pope

This poem is about a man named Ulysses who comes home from a war. He is unrecognized by almost everyone. He comes home “poor, old, disguised, [and] alone” (Pope, 3). This war has put some wear and tear on Ulysses and he has nothing left than his dog. His dog, just as poorly kept and old as the owner, is the only one who recognizes him as the dog “crawl’d to meet, / (‘T was all he could) and fawn’d a kiss’d his feet” (Pope, 15-16). The dog seems to symbolize the fate of the owner. The war affected Ulysses so greatly that no one knew who he was. No one cared for Ulysses in the war, and it obviously showed by his look. His dog was the same way, no one cared for him while his owner was away at the war. Ulysses’ dog dies but it not only because of the overwhelming factor of seeing his owner again, it’s because of his poor health and how no one cared for him. This may foretell Ulysses’ death, for the war affected Ulysses similarly as the dog was affected by having no one to care for it. The dog also recognizes Ulysses as his “lord” and the dog’s final look before death is his “lord”. So Pope is predicting that Ulysses will see the lord before his final breath.

Works Cited

“Argus Alexander Pope.” *Bartleby.com*. 2011. Web. 06 Feb. 2012.

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