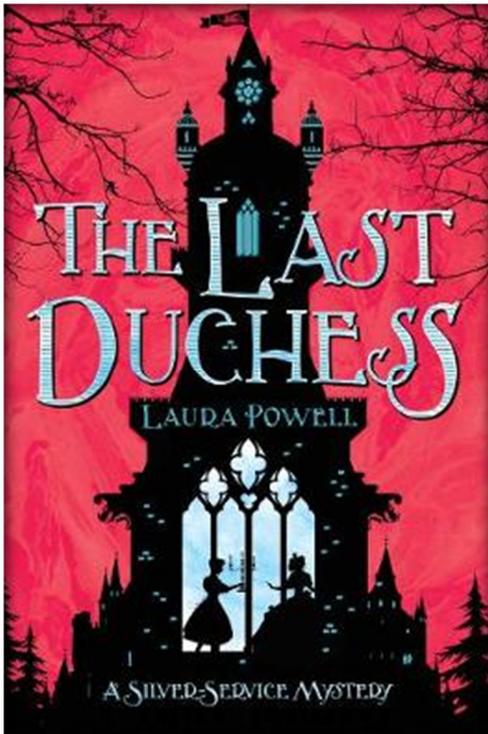


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## LoveReading4kids Reader reviews of **The Last Duchess** by Laura Powell

Below are the complete reviews, written by the LoveReading4kids members.



**Emma Corden, age 11**

***Honestly, 'The Last Duchess' is the best book that I have read in quite a while I absolutely loved it!***

*'The Last Duchess' is by far my favourite book that you have sent me. I really enjoyed it and found it a really good read. My favourite part was near the end where Pattern threw the cleaning fluids at the dragon man to stop him from coming to rule the secretive land. I also liked the fact that it was quite a quick read but it was still amazing. So I would totally recommend this book to anyone who will listen and I am sure they'd love it too.*

**Holly Wilkins, age 13**

***This is a great book - full of mystery, mischief and crime.***

*Pattern is an orphan who is sent to Mrs Minchin's Academy of Domestic Servitude, but soon she is requested to go and serve the Grand Duchess.*

*The Grand Duchess has a history of thinking that people are out to kill her, so Pattern and the Grand Duchess form an unlikely friendship and go on lots of mysterious adventures together.*

*I loved this book because the two girls work together to solve a crime and Pattern shows her loyalty to the Grand Duchess.*

*This is a quick read and I would rate this book four and a half out of five stars.*

**Jenna Welch, age 12**

*'The Last Duchess' is a fantastic book and is a really creative piece of writing. I love the author Laura Powell and have read lots of books by Powell and this is by far the best. However I wouldn't recommend it for anyone under the age of ten because it scared me and I'm twelve. I enjoyed the book because even though there were bits that really scared me it wasn't scary all of the time, it is definitely a book to read. **I especially enjoyed the bits of welsh in it because I speak welsh and the combination of the two languages and cultures worked really well.** Yet Powell really captured the nature of each of the separate cultures and still kept them separate so you could identify the difference. **I loved this book and have already started to read it again** because it was so good. The plot was so elaborate yet easy to understand but you couldn't see what was coming or you thought you did and it would take a surprising turn and throw you.*

**Kitty Sidaway, age 9**

***'The Last Duchess' is a thrilling tale jam packed with excitement, adventure and mysteries...***

*What lives under the castle?*

*Where are the children?*

*and what happens at the rock? '*

*'The Last Duchess' is a good tale for 11+ as some parts can get confusing. At first when I started reading the book I found it hard to get in to, but I'm glad I did and by the end my eyes were glued to the pages. So don't put the book down in the first few chapters as things can get more interesting and way more intense and scary. You are sure to love this book if you are in to adventures.*

**Sidney Greenslade, age 13**

***'The Last Duchess' is a thrilling and suspenseful read which tells the tale of Pattern, a 13 year old servant who realises that being employed to be invisible is far more deadly than it seems...***

*'The Last Duchess' is the mysterious and thrilling tale of Pattern, a young servant-in-training who finds herself working for the Grand Duchess of Elffinberg. Pattern is a 13 year-old orphan girl who lives at Miss Minchin's Academy of Domestic Servitude and works hard. One day she is told that the*

*Grand Duchess of Elffinberg requires her services, despite her not yet having qualified. Packed off to a strange and beautiful land to live in a foreboding castle, Pattern finds herself wondering why Elffinberg has no problems, has never warred with another country and seems so peaceful. Surely it's too good to be true? However, Pattern has no idea of quite how dangerous Elffinberg really is...*

*'The Last Duchess' was an exciting and intriguing read. Although I found it a little slow at the beginning, I discovered that once Pattern had arrived in Elffinberg things really picked up. I loved the surprising twists in the tale, and I really could picture myself in Pattern's place, wondering how long it was until something frightening and dark happened. I really enjoyed the final few chapters particularly, which were full of action and suspense. I really liked this story, and I will certainly recommend it!*

**Olivia Shaw, age 11**

***'The Last Duchess' is an unlikely combination of darning stockings, serving a suspicious Duchess, and a house sized Dragon! I would recommend it to readers aged 11 and up.***

*'The Last Duchess' is a book about Pattern, who was found as a baby as the lonely survivor of a ship wreck. She was taken in to Mrs Minchin's Academy of Domestic Servitude to become a lady's maid. Pattern travels to Elffinheim and the book tells the story of how she tries to gain the trust of her new mistress, the Duchess. There are adventures on the way. A child goes missing, and the remains of his clothes are found charred and burnt. She has her book "The Duties of a Lady's Maid" to help her through the adventures, which is quoted at the start of every chapter. This book is a good read for those who like historical adventure books.*

**Amina, age 10**

***This book has a little twist to it but I'll let you find out what that twist was. It was a cross between a fiction book and halfway to real life but not quite there yet. I loved it, it was magic.***

*This Book was a mythical fantastical story. Lauren Powell made it sound like it was real. I love that they were both a bit awkward socially. It really fitted into the story. It was a magical book with powers to get me to keep turning the page and keep reading. I would have kept reading this book all night if it wasn't for*

my mum and dad. Lots of people will love it I'm sure. If they don't then I still loved it 1000000 times more.

### **Amelie Weeks**

***This is a gripping tale of a mystery, secrets and friendship.***

*I really enjoyed reading 'The Last Duchess' and I would highly recommend it to others. The main reason why I enjoyed it so much is that I really like the style that it is written in and the story is full of excitement and fear which makes it a great book. I thought the characters and the setting really interesting to read about because they are so strange and intriguing.*

*I thought this book was good for the 9-12 year old children. The story in the book is quite scary in places, but mostly the story is easy to follow and easy to read. If you like historical fiction and adventure, then this is a great book to read. I liked the fact that it is mostly realistic but with some magical things included into the story.*

*I really enjoyed this book and I recommend it to anyone who likes this sort of book.*

### **Niamh Howson, age 11 - Red Maid's Junior School**

***I found the book endlessly gripping once I got into it. Sometimes I couldn't put it down. This book is very mysterious and intense.***

*'The Last Duchess' is about a girl called Pattern. She's rising through the ranks at Mrs Minchin's Academy of Domestic Servitude, but she is sent to Elffinberg Castle to serve as Lady's maid to the lately orphaned Grand Duchess. Pattern sews up all of the Grand Duchess' clothes and tidies her room, but one day the Grand Duchess starts talking in her sleep about Elffin's dragon trying to kill her. She is ill and frail, to her uncle she is a worthless Grand Duchess so he starts to take over her role as leader of Elffinberg. The two girls go on many adventures to try and stop the Grand Duchess's uncle. Despite their differences the girls forge a friendship that could last forever. But the Elffinberg's bane is about to awake. The two girls start to get mischievous. **I found the book endlessly gripping once I got into it. Sometimes I couldn't put it down. This book is very mysterious and intense.***

*You can follow Red Maid's Junior School on Twitter: @redmaidsschool*

**Sue Wilsher - Teacher**

***An exciting detective story where legend mingles with evil deeds and all is solved by an orphaned lady's maid.***

*Although young, thirteen year old, Pattern is already 'destined to go far'- far, that is, in the world of domestic service. However, the plans Mrs Minchin (of Mrs Minchin's Academy of Domestic Servitude) might have for her are disrupted when she is selected to go to the small and very secretive Duchy of Elffinberg as lady's maid to the Grand Duchess herself.*

*Pattern is 'a waif and stray'; her parents drowned at sea when she was a mere baby and Elffinberg was their homeland. She finds herself in a completely different world, serving a young, paranoid mistress in a shambolic castle. As an unlikely friendship develops between them, Pattern discovers that all is not as it should be in this new and strange land.*

*The Last Duchess is a 'detective story' with a difference. Legends of the country mingle with evil deeds which are all untangled by an orphaned maid servant who is gentle on the surface, but resilient and loyal through and through. Her gentle and unassuming character really grows on the reader as she steadfastly serves her unpredictable mistress and doggedly investigates the mysterious events surrounding her.*

*The story builds to a satisfying conclusion with a twist at the end to keep the reader- and Pattern – on their toes! The final chapter makes it clear that Pattern's talents as a detective will take her on to other challenges which I look forward to reading!"*

<http://www.northsomersetteachersbookaward.com/>

You can follow Sue on Twitter: @Scoobiesue2

**Erica Motoc, age 11**

***Laura Powell is a phenomenal author and I would recommend it to anyone who adores a brilliant read.*** This book has given me great pleasure to read as it is exciting and jam-packed full of adventure. 'The Last Duchess' is brilliant and I almost cried when finished the book as it was so creative and original. ***Laura Powell is a phenomenal author and I would recommend it to anyone who adores a brilliant read.*** There is tension and drama, which, personally I like in a good book. The ending was a must.