

Personification

(Greek προσωποποιία, prosopopoeia, from *prosōpon*, ‘a face, a person’ and *poiein*, ‘to make’)

A figure of speech in which **inanimate objects** or abstractions **are given human qualities** or are represented as possessing human form.

Consider the following two examples:

O beware, my lord, of jealousy!
It is the green-ey'd monster which doth mock
The meat it feeds on.
—Iago in Shakespeare's *Othello* 3.3.165-67

In *Mirror* by Sylvia Plath, for example, the mirror—the “I” in the first line—is given the ability to speak, see and swallow, as well as human attributes such as truthfulness:

I am silver and exact.
I have no preconceptions.
Whatever I see I swallow immediately
Just as it is, unmisted by love or dislike.
I am not cruel, only truthful—