

A practical criticism of chapter 20 of captain corelli's mandolin

[Experience](#), [Anger](#)



Louis de bernii?? res wrote this chapter in the third person narrative, nonetheless, the narrator does not indicate to us who this 'wild man of the ice' actually is. We assume that he indeed does know who this man is. The opening of the chapter is quite an idyllic picture created by Pelagia with her mention of seeing, 'Her first butterfly of the year,' which gives the reader a sense of bliss as well as Pelagia.

However, this idyllic picture is shattered in the second chapter as she saw, 'There was a stranger seated at the kitchen table,' she described the man as, 'A most horrible and wild stranger who looked worse than the brigands of childhoodtales. ' This particular sentence indicates to the reader a sense of foreboding. Although, we later find out that this man is Mandras, now neither Pelagia nor we have any idea. This then proves a scenario than many people dread and some can even relate to, coming home and finding a strange in your home.

This is a nightmare situation, and although we do not have a detailed description of Pelagia's feelings, the reader would have a good idea of how she felt at that moment. In a way, this is clever by de bernii?? res as he is leaving the reader to become Pelagia and feel the feelings she is feeling. Although, this is only one interpretation of this section, it does seem like an intention of de bernii?? res as he does not go into a lot of detail about Pelagia's feelings now, but in other parts of the book, he does.

Following this, de bernii?? res shows us the state that Mandras is in, he uses a lot of very descriptive and quite gruesome images created of Mandras', 'Suppurating wounds,' and the, 'reek of rotting flesh. ' These images help to

create an image of how Mandras may have appeared to Pelagia and do help to prove the fact of why he is unrecognisable to Pelagia. De Bernii?? res has given us a lot of information about Mandras at this point and Pelagia sees very uneasy and she can only say that her, 'Father's out,' which indicates her level of diffidence.

We can also see from Mandras' speech that because of his physical pain he is projecting a sense of mental instability. This could be evident from his short sentences and his bad language. He comes a point of almost breaking down where he is accusing his perpetrators as, 'Bastards, Bastards,' but Pelagia, although appalled, seems to try and be sensible and not try anything untoward, by just asking him to leave, in not so many words. From this Mandras begins to talk very quickly and he seems very uncomfortable until finally he asks Pelagia to look at his hands.

He then, 'Held them up to her, palm outwards in the gesture that would normally be an insult,' which showed Pelagia the extent of the injuries he had been subject to, which may have made her feel sorry for him. On the other hand, it may just have made her feel unwell. After this, Mandras again begins with his quick-paced narrative. He begins by talking about the way, 'The ice screams. It shrieks. ' This could be a failure of communication of the part of Mandras and an idea of his mind playing tricks on him. This would highlight what the war had done to Mandras, and shows us the situation he was in.

It also specifies the kind of physical torture he must have endured. There is also a point that he may have been subject to extremely cold weather and may have lost his fingers to frostbite. This would explain this section of the chapter quite clearly. The sentences are very abrupt and every sentence is almost self-contained. Due to the fact that the sentences are short and sharp and as the sentences are disjointed we can clearly see the madness of Mandras. Following this section, we can see that Pelagia is beginning to get desperate, this desperation is evident in the tone of voice she uses.

She wants him to leave and pleads with him. This may or may not be an indication of sorrow and tearfulness. However, when she pleads for him to leave, it does seem to provoke a reaction in Mandras. This reaction is the first response that she has received from him, this could prove to Pelagia that maybe he is not a, 'Wild man,' and that he is probably a man. On the other hand, Pelagia still has no idea who he is and why he is here in her kitchen. As a result, the narrator then has decided upon the introduction of Psipsina. This is very important and is probably the turning point of the chapter.

There is a sudden change in atmosphere and this is an indication of reality being restored. This is introduced by firstly, the realisation that, 'At least Psipsina remembers me. ' This is a very revealing sentence as it brings Pelagia's thought to a different place. It makes her wonder who this man actually is. Pelagia knows how, 'Psipsina was afraid of strangers,' and this begged the question from her about, 'how did this ghastly ruin know her

name? ' Although these questions seem inconsiderate, she suddenly had a thought of maybe this was her beloved Mandras.

This may have seemed like a very good guess, but it also may have been something she was always thinking in the back of her mind. Although she kept calling him, 'ghastly,' and, 'wild,' she may have been only saying these things to try and block out the truth. This could be described as a manipulation of her mind and could be a disguise for her anger towards Mandras. This anger would be because Mandras went and got badly injured, which is an idea that some people adopt as it could be a reckless thing for them to do.

In this case it could also be that Pelagia was calling him so many different things to block out any possibility of it being Mandras. When Mandras realises that Pelagia has recognised her, he describes how he has, 'got lice,' and how he, 'Shat himself when a bomb fell,' which specifies how maybe all he wants is to be with her, but he does not want to subject her to all the troubles he has been victim to. This provides an answer as to why he did not to tell her who he was straight away.

Subsequent to finding out about Mandras, Pelagia then begins questioning him about why, 'You never wrote to me,' which is an accusation that Mandras can only answer truthfully by telling Pelagia that he, 'Can't write. ' This is a new idea introduced by de bernii?? res and does make Pelagia think of why he had not tried other things like, 'couldn't someone else have written for you? ' We now see an element of Pelagia as a young immature girl and

Mandras as a mature person. Where before Pelagia had realised it was Mandras, these roles were reversed.

The maturity of Mandras could be associated with the things he has faced in war, and now that he is able to talk, he begins to apologise and explain.

Mandras is further depicted by the narrator as, 'An infinity of fatigue,' which is connected with his eyes, but could well be a generalisation for his whole body at this moment. We see his frailty being embellished as, 'He tried to steady his cup to drink, failed, and put it down on the table.' This reminds us simply that he is severely injured even though he is now talking instead of the painful silence and very disjointed sentences spoken earlier in the chapter.

Furthermore, this provokes Pelagia to ask about the letters she had sent to him. Mandras, 'Fumbled inside his clothing and drew out a huge and bedraggled packet bound together with tripwire.' It showed to Pelagia that he had indeed received the letters, but he then stated that he, 'Couldn't read them,' which would have made Mandras seem very inferior, but he now seems more powerful and this illiteracy does not seem to dumb him down that much. However, Pelagia then tries to take control by not reading the letters to Mandras when he asked her to, 'Even if it's too late. This creates a sense of longing and makes us have pity toward him, but rather than Pelagia pitying him, she takes control by saying that she will read them, 'Later.' This is ironic as later Mandras forces her to read them to him, which gives he may think gives him back his control. However, the fact that Pelagia can read and he cannot still gives her the power over him. After all this has gone on

Mandras simply fondles Psipsina and thinks that, 'Only the animals know me. ' Yet, it seems that Pelagia does know take pity of him as she sits with him and comforts him at the end of the chapter.

The way Mandras, 'Buried his face in his hands and began to rock like an injured child,' does point to a very scared and lonely position. People who want to shut themselves out form the world and live in a world of their own adopt this position. Therefore, Pelagia notices this and tries to comfort him, and maybe succeeds in letting Mandras know that she will be there for him. This would have made him feel that he is not alone and even though he is physically repulsive, Pelagia is more interested in his feelings more.