

Throughout the novel of captain corelli's mandolin

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



'Human nature was fundamentally irrational to the point of insanity.' How is this exemplified in Captain Corelli's mandolin, and what is the role of madness generally in the novel. Throughout the novel of Captain Corelli's mandolin, there have been numerous occasions where the presence of ones insanity has taken over the characters central emotions and influences peculiar behaviour in the form of madness. To the disapproval of the audience and the other characters, the role of madness has become de Bernieres technique of foreshadowing the outcome of the characters who are deemed as 'possessed' which leads to the inevitable gloom of death.

Within the novel there are three main characters which suffer from the plague of madness; Francesco, Mandras and Carlo, although it can be argued that there are many other characters within the novel who can be seen as just as mad. Madness within the novel is expressed through many different factors, these factors are what trigger characters to encounter the condition which in return sets that characters fate. The first encounter of madness within the novel comes in the form of a battered and bruised Francesco.

Through the early phases of introducing Francesco, de Bernieres presents the character as a courageous young Italian soldier, Carlo's dearest friend and loyal in serving for his country during the Second World War. The audience is quick to accept Francesco as a good person through the diary entries of Carlo; however it becomes apparent that the destructive and brutal nature of war combined with the harsh climate leads Francesco into losing a grip on reality.

This is apparent in his letters to his mother which reads " I came into this war in a state of innocence, and I leave it so utterly wearied that I am contented to die. this quote reveals Francesco's discontent with serving in the Italian army and marks his first step into insanity. As the novel progresses, so does the deterioration of Francesco's mind as it leads him into his death. " I reached Francesco and saw that the side of his head had been blown away. The pieces of skull were grey and were coated in membrane and thick blood. " Francesco's death comes about due to his insanity as he progresses into enemy territory unarmed. Through the use of his death, de Bernieres is able to depict a picture on his views on war, which suggests that ultimately war is wrong and leads to the death of innocent people.

A Marxist interpretation can also be added to this as it shows how the power of the ruling-class is able to dominate those inferior to them. " For the bureaucrat, the world is a mere object to be manipulated by him. " We can relate this quote to Francesco as his actions and behavior is premeditated and controlled by those superior to himself. Insanity it seems, is a focal point in de Bernieres' writing as the novel contains many characters who fit underneath the profile. However, there are some characters which can certainly be seen as withholding the trait, but in a less obvious manner.

A possible character with such nature would be Carlo. Despite his common appearance with the audience, we can note of such incidents which would certainly be considered insane. A point which would reveal this would be his relationship with Francesco and Antonio. Carlo's judgment of protecting a loved one may at first seem like a valiant and loyal thing to do, but if we

observe the people which Carlo is 'protecting' then we may perhaps change our minds. Carlo's relationship with Francesco starts off as seeming innocent and harmless, until we discover that Francesco is unaware of Carlo's true intentions behind caring for Francesco. I stood up and faced the Greeks. Offering myself to their guns. " This act can be seen as heroic for saving a loved one, but it is repeated later in the novel but this time it is to save Captain Corelli. " Carlo stood unbroken as one bullet after another burrowed like white-hot parasitic knives into the muscle of his chest. " Carlo's acts of saving another ones life can certainly be seen as an act of insanity and personally I believe that Carlo's unwise decisions are what ultimately lead to his death.

With the inclusion of Carlo within his novel, it can be said that de Bernieres is making a statement which would have been highly controversial during the time at which the novel was based on. Carlo's homosexuality would have certainly caused him to be removed from the army as during the 1940's homosexuality was considered an act of insanity. This also fits in with the link between Carlo and insanity. As well as war, it is noticeable in de Bernieres' novel that it is also the loss of a loved one which leads the beholder into torment and madness.

A character which fits this situation is Mandras. Whilst being away from his fianci?? Pelagia serving in military duty, Mandras suffers heavy losses as he is the only remaining survivor of his entire unit. Left for dead Mandras had to face the tormenting climate in a bid to return home to his beloved Pelagia, to only return unrecognized and unloved. This leaves Mandras in a state which

he feels betrayed and becomes shell shocked and mentally disturbed.

Mandras' behavior is presented to the audience as insane and like Francesco his fate becomes inevitable. " Kosmas!

Nionios! Krystal! He cried, and waded out into sea. " This is the point where de Bernieres demonstrates a change in character in Mandras, despite being an unlikeable person for committing atrocities this is the part in the novel where Mandras seems like the only sane person in the island of Cephalonia. In my opinion, Mandras' decision to commit suicide reveals a side to him which the audience has not know of him before. It is a point in the novel at which Mandras is at long last at peace, together with his dolphins and the ocean, the few things which Mandras loved.

In conclusion I believe that Insanity is explored through different means within the novel. De Bernieres clearly reveals how there can be several reasons behind the development of the mental condition, while Mandras and Carlo had both died due to the fear of losing a loved one. Francesco had ended his life due to the grief and unjust actions of the war. These deaths of young characters reveal how the destructive nature of war can end all hope and ambition within a nation.