

# Captain corelli's mandolin essay sample



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Throughout the novel of Captain Corelli, Louis de Bernieres skilfully uses different forms of narratives in order to communicate a particular theme or depict a certain character. Chapter 11, 'Pelagia and Mandras' consists of a dual narrative in which both Pelagia and Mandras are present. Within this specific chapter, Captain Corelli carries out the clever and sophisticated representation of women through the characterisation of Pelagia, her internal thoughts and the different situations and actions she is faced to cope with.

The lexis, to begin with, is extremely detailed and assists in portraying the characterisation of Pelagia alongside conveying a range of issues which were sensitive to society during the world war two. The use of nouns such as 'water vapour' and layers of 'wind' alongside the dynamic verbs 'drift' and 'travel' by Pelagia demonstrate the fact that she is intrigued by natural processes and she possesses the ability to think and interrogate nature, as a result illustrating high levels of intellectual which were found to be eccentric of a young Greek lady during the world war two. Her description of Mandras through the use of the abstract nouns 'joke', alongside the use of the adjective 'witty', clearly demonstrates the fact that perhaps he is not socially and intellectually suitable for her.

Pelagia continues to affront Mandras's intelligence and express her concerns through the use of the declarative "He's not a serious fellow, and it gives me doubts". This further illustrates the fact that she is quite a diversion from the norm in terms of intellectual and characterisation of women in the late 19th century. The fact that Mandras is not socially and intellectually suitable for Pelagia is further stressed through the use of the interrogative "You have to

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be able to discuss things with a husband, don't you?" This also gives a deeper insight into Pelagia's aptitude and the way in which this contrasts with Mandras's lack of social intellect.

Likewise, by the use of the interrogatives: ' And why, sometimes does the wind blow one way and the clouds travel in another?' and ' What I want to know is, why did God make it too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter?' a supplementary insight is given into Pelagias' thirst for knowledge and the fact that someday she wishes to become a doctor like her father. This also illustrates the fact that times are changing and society is developing for the better. Declaratives such as ' I could just sit here for hours watching the clouds unfolding about the summit of the mountain' are used in order to gain insight into Pelagia's inner thoughts and feelings, thus emphasising the fact that there is more to life for a woman than constantly performing tedious household rituals.

Through the use of abstract nouns, Pelagia describes how it would be a ' shame' to marry without a dowry and this would be going against the ' custom', and would even go to the extents of marrying a ' foreigner', thus illustrating the fact that her roots play an important role alongside the fact that she does not wish to go against society's rulings for a traditional Greek lady. The adjective ' busy' is used to create an image illustrating the way in which women in the early 19th century were expected to act. This is used in contrast to the adjective ' sick' which describe the way Pelagia feels emphasising the fact that she is fed up of her everyday rituals such as ' bringing' water into the house and ' grinding mice' and therefore craves something new in life, like becoming a doctor.

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To reveal how women were constantly stereotyped, Pelagia describes through the use of dynamic verbs how men think that during female gatherings all women do is talk about 'cooking' and 'sewing', which is not the case at all. This also suggests that a woman's sexual feelings and any other desires were to be repressed and that they have been labelled to act in a particular manner.

The use of interrogatives such 'you can't go against the custom, you just can't, even if the customs stupid, and what will Mandras' family say?' and 'how am I to bear the shame?' once again emphasise the fact that Pelagia is extremely worried about what people in the village would say about her to the extent that she is terrified of going against her tradition in order to save her reputation as a respectable doctor's daughter.

Detailed sentence structures such as 'I'll stay here a little longer though, because Papas won't be coming breakfast for another ten minutes and the important thing is to look busy when he turns up' once again through Pelagias' inner thoughts accentuate the fact that women in the early 19th century were expected to act in a certain way in order to maintain an impressionable upon others. This is further stressed by the use of the declarative 'I'm sick of grinding up mice' which represents Pelagia in such a way that she speaks for all Greek women in the sense that they crave and deserve more in life when compared to sitting at home and performing household chores and rituals. The use of the declarative 'you're almost clever enough to be my daughter' by Dr Iannis illustrates the fact that Pelagia's high levels of intellect contradicts that of a typical Greek lady, however her gender prevents her from elevating in society.

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The mentioning of Chrysoula plays a significant role in illustrating the fact that Greek women in the early 19th Century were represented as socially unaware and uneducated. This is cleverly portrayed through the use of the abstract nouns in which Chrysoula saw her period of menstruation as a horrific 'secret' and 'disease'. The abstract nouns 'rage' and 'distress' experienced by Dr Iannis alongside the adjectives 'sad' and 'desperate' used to describe Chrysoula create a dramatic effect by placing emphasis upon the young girls 'loathsome' tragedy. This is further stressed upon through the use of the hyphenated modifier 'rat-poison', which draws our attention towards Pelagias' shocking reaction. Biblical references to the 'bible' also illustrate the fact that menstruation was considered as sinful by Greek women in the early 19th century, as a result demonstrating their lack of knowledge and social awareness.

Pelagias' feisty character, which is portrayed through the use of adjectives such as 'naked' which she uses in defence of herself when her father, Dr Iannis refuses to provide her with a dowry, allows her to deal with issues and situations she is faced with as a young Greek woman. She proves to be extremely witty when she uses the abstract noun 'joke' to describe Mandras in comparison to herself, which suggests the fact that perhaps he is not suitable for a lady of high intellectual as herself. The fact that Pelagia is portrayed as a symbol that society is progressing and women are gaining much higher stature is illustrated through the use of interrogatives in which Pelagia questions the Greek tradition: 'And where is it written down that women have to carry water when men are stronger?'

Throughout the chapter, various sexual connotations illustrated by Pelagia towards Mandras have been portrayed in such a way that she is committing a terrible sin. The abstract noun 'secret' is constantly used by Pelagia in a sense that none must find out about her inner sexual feelings and desires towards Mandras. Her fear of being found out is stressed through the use of dynamic verbs, which illustrate her fear of being 'locked' up by women in the village and the fact that they will 'throw' stones at her if they found out.

The verb 'wish' has been repeatedly used which as a result places emphasis upon her longing for Mandras, and the fact that even the clouds are witnessing her 'blushing'. The use of adjectives such as 'sluttish' and 'whore' are used by Pelagia in which she describes how people must portray her for possessing such sexual desires and thoughts. This as a result places a great deal of emphasis upon the fact that such thoughts which Pelagia possesses should not be expected of any other Greek lady in the 19th century, thus representing her as a diversion from the norm. This is further stressed through the use of declaratives such as 'O, I am blushing' and 'I am stupid' which illustrate the fact that Pelagia is extremely ashamed of the way in which she feels to such an extent that she begins to question her intellectual.

In addition to the above, metaphorical devices such personification: 'It is as if every drop has a secret to share with his brother, and so they rise up out of the sea and huddle together and drift along in the breeze, and the clouds change shapes as the drops hurry from one confidante to another, whispering' place impact and give an insight to Pelagias inner thoughts and demonstrate her worry of being caught for possessing sexual for Mandras to <https://assignbuster.com/captain-corellis-mandolin-essay-sample-essay-samples/>

such an extent that she fears even they are talking about her: 'They are saying, I saw Pelagia and Mandras kissing.

The use of similes such as 'Kokolios' penis is curved sideways like a banana' create a contradiction by illustrating the fact that women are stereotyped to such an extent that men are unaware of the sexually repressed feelings possessed by women.

Whereas on the other hand, the simile 'shakes her like a dog shakes a rabbit' is used by Pelagia to create an effect by stressing the extent to which the lack of social awareness possessed by women in the early 19th century provokes anger in educated individuals like her father Dr Iannis.

The use of phonological devices such as parallelism is used at the beginning of the chapter in which Pelagia fears what nature must think of her: 'They are saying, I can see sitting on the privy, and she doesn't even know we are talking about her. They are saying I can see Pelagia and Mandras kissing'.

The use of such parallelism stresses Pelagia's fear and worry which emphasises the fact that such feelings were to be repressed and not felt. The use of repetition such as 'I wish you were here Mandras' is utilised in such a way that it becomes apparent that she desires him but in a secret way that must not be known by anyone else.

In conclusion, it can be made obvious that Louis de Bernieres' representation of women is extremely clever and sophisticated and this is successfully portrayed in a series of ways. The character of Pelagia as a witty and unique young Greek woman is used as a contradiction of what women in the early

19th century should be like and this is successfully illustrated throughout the entire novel.