

# ***POSSESSION*** ***A Romance***

## **Structural Analysis**

**Beatrice Del Sal**  
**Caterina Sguassero**  
**A.S. 2010 -2011**

# Chapter One

## Function

The function of the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter is to introduce the subject of the romance: Roland's research of a possible love story between R.H. Ash and Christabel LaMotte.

## Focus

Quotations, letters, Roland's research

## Characters

Roland and Val, R.H. Ash and Christabel LaMotte

## Setting

In the present: one day in September 1986, during the morning Roland found t two drafts of a R.H Ash's letters in the reading room of the London Library

## Language

The writer uses a lot of quotations: it is a juxtaposition of a Victorian – like style of writing and contemporary use of language

# Chapter Two

## •Function:

The function of the chapter is to introduce Roland's life and personality.

## •Focus:

The writer wants to make the reader aware about Roland's past and present life. He is in competition with Fergus Wolff.

## •Characters:

James Blackadder, Mortimer Cropper, Val, Fergus Wolff

## •Setting :

In the past: the writer talks about Roland life, family, research about R.H. Ash, studies (1978 graduation at Prince Albert College and a PhD in 1985 in London) and works at the British Museum.

In the present: in the evening of a day of September 1986, at his and Val's house in London

## •Language:

The language used is contemporary language, except for two quotations:

- from Robert Graves
- from R.H. Ash *Ragnarök*





# Chapter Three

## •Function:

**Roland's research starts from this chapter. He finds out important pieces of information to continue his research about a possible Ash-LaMotte love story**

## •Focus

Letters, Crabb Robinson's diary, "who was Christabel LaMotte?"

## •Characters

Roland, Val, Blackadder, Paola (Blackadder assistant), Fergus Wolff who introduced to Roland Leonora Sterne and Maud Bailey

## •Setting

Dr William's Library, British Museum

## •Language

The language used is mainly contemporary English, except for a quotation from R.H. Ash *Ragnarök* and two taken from Crabb Robinson's diary. They reveal something new to Roland about Ash's affair.



# Chapter Four

- **Function:**

To presents the collaborative efforts of the two characters.

- **Focus:**

Roland's emotions about Maud.

- **Characters:**

Roland, Maud, Christabel

- **Setting:**

Lincoln University, Lincoln Library, Maud's home

- **Language:**

Changes according to the quotations.

It is Victorian-like style in Blanche's diary and in the fairy tales and contemporary when it deals with Roland and Maud's thoughts and actions.



# Chapter Five

**Function:** it explains Maud and Roland's discovery of Christabel's tomb and home.

They find Ash's letters to Christabel, too.

**I Focus:**

Quotations, letters, Roland and Maud's research

**Characters:**

Roland and Maud, R.H. Ash, Christabel LaMotte, sir George and his wife.

**Setting:** the cemetery where Christabel is buried and her home

**Language:**

There are some quotations in the text but the chapter mainly uses a modern English.



# Chapter Six

## **Function:**

**It introduces Mortimer Cropper.**

## **Focus:**

it focuses on Mortimer's life, studies, thoughts and personality.

## **Characters:**

Mortimer Cropper

**Setting:** the hotel in which mortimer is accomodated.

## **Language:**

The writer uses contemporary language.

The narration is mainly focussed on Mortimer's thoughts and actions.

There are no quotations.

**The chapter is an extended description of Cropper's character.**



# Chapter Seven

## Function:

**To concentrate the reader's attention on Ash and Ellen's relationship**

Roland analyses Ash's wife, Ellen's diary. It is guarded by Beatrice Nest. Ellen had read The Fairy Melusina, by C. LaMotte, in 1872 and made an entry to this effect. Roland finds Ellen admiringly describing The Fairy Melusina as truly original, etc., Unexpected attitude regarding a woman who may have been Ash's mistress. Ellen believes she has at least not prevented her husband's genius, even if she has not facilitated it. Back home, Roland finds a letter from Joan Bailey permitting him and Maud to review the letters they hold.

## Focus:

Ellen's Diary and *The Fairy Melusina* (quotations), Joan Bailey's letter

## Characters :

Roland, Beatrice Nest (large-breasted Fafnir, guarding her hoard of Ellen Best Ash's papers, which she has been charged with editing on the advice of her mentor), Mortimer Cropper, Val

**Setting:** In the past-> London (where Mrs Nest studied), The British Museum;

In the present-> British Museum, Mortlake, Roland's house

## Language

There are several quotations from Ellen's diary and one from one of LaMotte's works. Language is quite articulated.



# Chapter Eight

## Function

**Roland and Maud go over the letters in Sir George Bailey's cold library.**

## Focus

The focus of the chapter is **to concentrate the reader's attention on C. LaMotte's letters** found by Maud and Roland in Sir George Bailey's house.

## Characters

Roland, Maud, Christabel LaMotte, Mr. Ash, Lady and Mr. Bailey

## Setting

Seal Court

## Language

The chapter is structured according to quotations taken from Christabel and Ash' work. Thus the style is especially a Victorian – like style, except some parts of narration, where the omniscient narrator juxtaposes a contemporary style and explains some parts of the works and Maud and Roland's life at Seal Court. The narrator quotes two letters, Maud has received by Fergus Wolf and Leonora Sterne.





# Chapter Nine

Christabel La Motte's *The Treshold* is quoted.





# Chapter Eleven

Randolph Henry Ash's poem Swammerdam is quoted.



# Chapter Twelve

**Function:** to create suspense

Maud and Roland have gone to Bethany in Richmond where Christabel had lived.

Maud suspects LaMotte accompanied Ash to North Yorkshire in June 1859 on his natural history expedition (it explains a possible relation between Ash's journey -1859- and Blanche Glover's death -1860)

Letter from Blanche Glover to Ellen Ash.

**Focus:** Ash's letters to Ellen, Ellen's journal

**Characters:** Roland, Maud, Val, Beatrice Nest, Fergus

**Settings:** Bethany in Richmond in April 1987, Val's house, Beatrice Nest's house, and 2 days after in Museum Street

**Language :** use of quotations (LaMotte's poem, Ash's letters, Ellen's journal)



# Chapter Thirteen

**Function:** to revive the clear connection between Ash and LaMotte

**Roland and Maud spend five days in Yorkshire**

**visiting the places of Ash's journey**

Maud and Roland read the Melusina by LaMotte and conclude that the places described are the ones in Yorkshire.

Maud is wearing a **jet hair brooch** by a 1861 artist of : she has inherited the brooch from Christabel.

**Focus:** investigation by Roland and Maud about the possible journey of Ash and LaMotte

**Characters:** Roland and Maud

**Setting:** Yorkshire ("The Hoff Lunn Spout Hotel")

**Language:** Quotations ( Ash's Ragnarök, Leonora Sterne's account of Christabel's landscape in the Melusina, Cropper's account of Ash's Yorkshire journey), narration, dialogues



# Chapter Fourteen

**Function:** Conviction of LaMotte's presence in Yorkshire with Ash

Ash's letter to Ellen. Maud and Roland go to Boggle Hole.

**Focus:** investigation

**Setting:** Yorkshire

**Characters:** Maud and Roland

**Language:** quotations (LaMotte's Melusina, Ash's letter to Ellen), dialogue, narration and descriptions.



# Chapter Fifteen

Function:

to explain Christabel and Randolph Ash's relationship and  
to narrate their journey to Yorkshire

Setting:

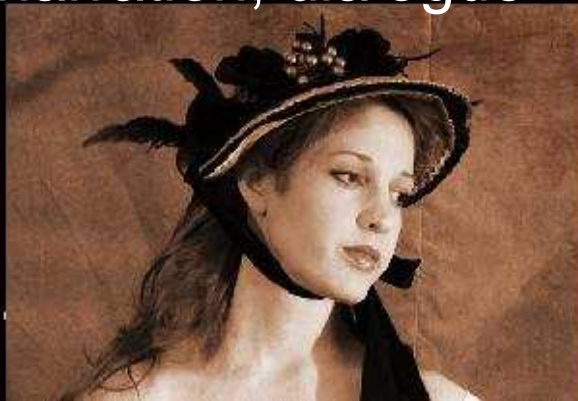
Yorkshire, 1859

Characters:

R.H. Ash and Christabel LaMotte

Language:

description, narration, dialogue





# Chapter Sixteen

## Quotation from LaMotte's The Fairy Melusine

A young man falls in love with a beautiful woman (**the Fairy Melusine**), but she is half woman and half snake.

They get married but he promises not to watch her on Saturdays.

The man is curious: he tries to watch her. Unfortunately, he discovers **she is half snake.**





# Chapter Seventeen

**Function:** introduction of Fergus and Cropper's intentions

Fergus Wolff is looking for Roland and Maud and goes to Val's

Fergus tells Blackadder and Cropper about some letters discovered by Roland and a possible connection between Ash and LaMotte

**Setting:** in the present, the British Museum

**Characters:** Mortimer Cropper, Fergus Wolff, Blackadder, Val

**Language:** contemporary language, narration and dialogues



# Chapter Eighteen

**Function:** to make the plot progress

**Discovery of Christabel's stay in France.** Maud and Roland decide to go to Brittany.

Maud reads Blanche's suicide note: Blanche gives away her jet Friendship brooch from CLM.

Sir Bailey discovers the letters have got a great value

**Setting:** Ash's factory, Women's Studies Resource Centre, Maud's house

**Characters:** Maud, Leonora Sterne, Blackadder, Sir George Bailey, Cropper, Paola, Blanche, Roland

**Language:** quotations (Christabel's poems about gloves, Blanche's writings, letters from a French student of women's writings about the arrival of Christabel in France), narration



# Chapter Nineteen

**Function:** narration of Christabel life in Brittany by her relatives

Maud and Roland are aboard a ship to France.

They meet with Dr. Ariane Le Minier in order to view Sabine de Kercoz's papers. They read Sabine's journal: It begins in October 1859. By Christmas, it is becoming apparent that Christabel is pregnant. On April 30, Christabel goes missing for 2 days. On May 8, she returns, no longer pregnant.

**Focus:** Sabine's papers

**Setting:** on a ship to France

**Characters:** Maud and Roland, Dr. Ariane Le Minier

**Language:** quotations (Sabine's de Kercoz's

City of Is and her papers), dialogue and narration





# Chapter Twenty

Function: **to create suspense**

Focus: Cropper's attempt to read Sir George's letters

Characters: Cropper, Sir George, Blackadder, Mrs Patel, Leonora, Shushila, Ash, LaMotte

Settings: a City church

Language: quotation (LaMotte's poem/The Great Ventriloquist)

# Chapter Twenty-one 21

## **Quotation:**

Mummy Possest written by  
Randolph Henry Ash

**Language used:** poetry



# Chapter Twenty- two

## **Function:**

to introduce the relationship between Euan and Val and to describe the beginning of characters' competition to come into possession of the documents.

**Focus:** Val and Euan's relationship

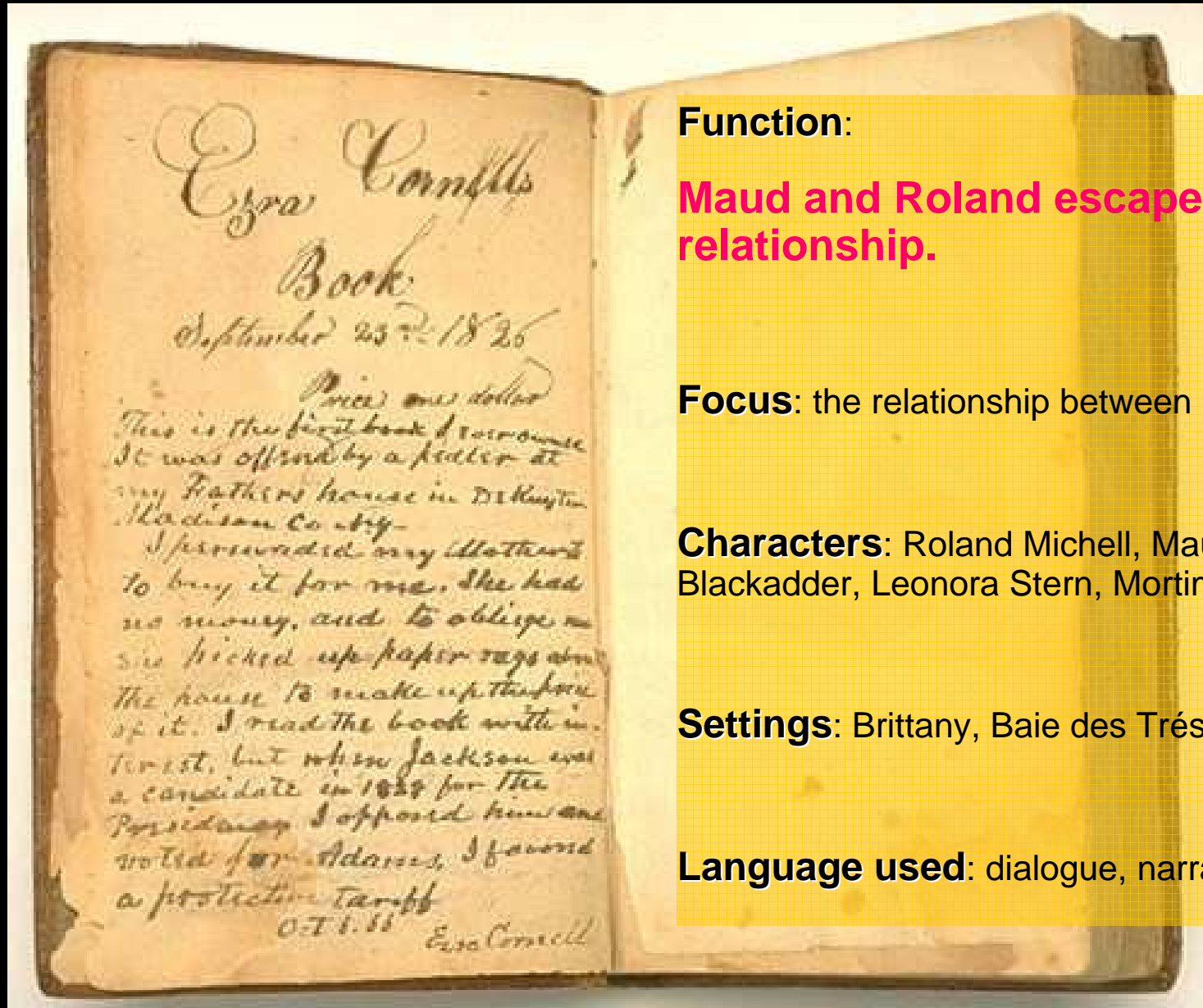
**Characters:** Val, Euan MacIntyre, Toby Byng

**Settings:** Newmarket

**Language used:** narration, dialogue



# Chapter Twenty- three



**Function:**

**Maud and Roland escape and love relationship.**

**Focus:** the relationship between Roland and Maud

**Characters:** Roland Michell, Maud Bailey, James Blackadder, Leonora Stern, Mortimer Cropper

**Settings:** Brittany, Baie des Trépassés

**Language used:** dialogue, narration

# Chapter Twenty - four

## Function:

**the characters decide that the letters under dispute belong to Maud**

**Focus:** discussion about copyright and ownership of documents. Cropper wants to keep a pack in Ash's grave

**Characters:** Maud Bailey, RolandMichel

, Val Roland, Euan MacIntyre, Toby Byng, Beatrice Nest

**Settings:** in Lincoln, October

**Language used:** dialogue, narration



# Chapter Twenty - five

**Function:** to explain the reader the relationship between Randolph and Ellen and the death of Randolph's life.

**Focus:** on Ellen Ash's Journal and - in flashback

**Characters:** Ellen Ash, Ash Randolph Henry, Blanche Glover

**Setting:** Ash's house, 27° November 1889

**Language used:** use of quotations (Ellen's Journal/Cropper's book/LaMotte's letter), narration (flashback), dialogue





# Chapter Twenty- six

**Function:** To explain Roland's intentions

**Focus:** Roland's feelings and unexpected success

**Characters:** Roland Michell

**Setting:** Val's home (also the garden)

**Language used**

quotations

(Ash's "The Garden of Proserpina,  
Blackadder's letter),

dialogue, description.



# Chapter Twenty- seven

## Function:

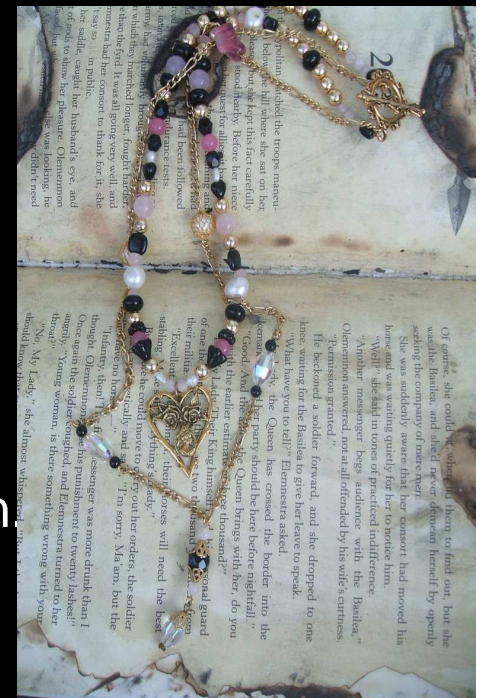
to make clear who the letters belong to and how Roland found the two letters.

**Focus:** the ownership of the letters

**Characters:** Roland Michell, Maud Bailey, Euan MacIntyre, Val, Blackadder James, Leonora Stern

**Setting:** Beatrice Nest's house

**Language used:** quotations (from Ash's poem), dialogue, narration



# Chapter Twenty- eight

**Function:** the unhappy end of Cristabel and Ash's love story

**Focus:** content of the box found in Ash's grave, the finish of the research.

**Characters:** Cropper Mortimer, Hildebrand Ash, Ash, Roland Michell, Maud Bailey, Leonora Stern, Blackadder James, Beatrice Nest

**Setting:** Hodershall, Ash's grave, 1 a.m., 15<sup>th</sup> October

**Language used:** quotation ( LaMotte's letter to Ash)





# POSTSCRIPT 1868

## Function

**Randolph knew about the existence of his daughter May.**

**Truth cannot always be said or written**

**Focus:** the meeting between Randolph and his daughter

**Characters:** Ash, May

**Setting:** in a meadow, on a hot May day

**Language used:** narration, dialogue