

Who is Narpan? Narpan is a false penitent encountered by the protagonist of Lull's novel *Blaquerna* in chapter LII. Other than Blaquerna, his family and that of his fiancée Natana (who ends up becoming a nun on Blaquerna's advice), Narpan is the only character to be given a name in the novel.

Why a Group Narpan? Blaquerna teaches Narpan how to do penance –as described in the fragment below– but, for his part, Narpan teaches Blaquerna that, if he knows so much and is such a good adviser, he cannot continue to seek a way to devote to individual contemplation on his own. Blaquerna's joining the abbey where Narpan was causing scandal with his loose lifestyle puts an end to the monk's bad example but also results on the fructification of his own moral and intellectual learning. Thus the abbey houses both Narpan and Blaquerna in their penance and perseverance, and makes possible the completion of collective research endeavours.

From chapter LII

–Fair friend, –said Blaquerna– where is this Sir Narpan of whom thou speakest?

–Sir, –answered the squire– he is near to this place, in an abbey. In that house he has made his dwelling for he went there to do penance, but the penance wherein he lives is like to the penance of the wolf. [...] For in the world he has been a sinner and he has killed many men and committed many sins and he has come to this monastery where he eats and drinks and lies slothfully in bed according to his desire and dwells in great comfort, so that from his life all the monks of that house have bad example and many of them also have envy of him.

–Friend, –said Blaquerna– thinkest thou that if I went to the monastery and dwelt for a space with Narpan I could convert him to a righteous life?

[...]

Narpan answered Blaquerna: –I am in this monastery to do penance for the sins which I have committed in the world from the which I have fled. My squire has left me and for this reason I have need of another. Wherefore if thou wouldst live with me I will require thy work in such wise that you shalt be well recompensed for it.

–Sir, –said Blaquerna– if thou dost penance and I serve thee, it follows that I also do penance, wherefore I will abide with thee for the space of a year in this form and condition, that thou shalt likewise do penance.

Narpan and Blaquerna agreed concerning their undertakings and Blaquerna served Narpan for eight days according to his will, to the end that Narpan might be moved in his mind to love him and give the better credence to his words and also that he himself might be the better acquainted with his customs.

On the eighth day Narpan commanded Blaquerna to kill a goose from among those which he had in the pasture and prepare it for dinner. Blaquerna entered the place wherein were the geese, together with a great multitude of hens and capons, and he found a fox which had entered therein. Blaquerna killed the fox and skinned it wholly, excepting only the tail, and set it to roast, and when Narpan came to table Blaquerna set the fox upon a dish before him. Greatly did Narpan marvel and he enquired of Blaquerna wherefore he had brought the fox and not the goose, for the fox was horrible both to eat and to behold.

–Sir, –said Blaquerna– geese and hens have no enemy as mortal as is the fox and since thou lovest geese and hens it is fitting that you shouldst eat their enemy.

Greatly was Narpan displeased with Blaquerna and he said to him many evil things because he had counselled him that he should eat the fox and had not made ready the goose.

–Sir, –said Blaquerna– even as foxes are opposed to geese and hens, even so are geese and hens and capons and dainty dishes opposed to penance, and as I am bound to thee, to serve thee according to the forms of penance, thou wilt be doing penance if thou dost eat the fox rather than the delightful and delicate meats that thou desirest.

[Ramon Lull, *Blanquerna*, translated from the Catalan with an introduction by E.A. Peers (1891-1952), edited with a chronology and bibliography by Robert Irwin, London – New York: Dedalus Ltd. – Hippocrene Books Inc., 1987(?), pp. 197-200.]