

Twentieth-Century Fiction
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Lecture - 34
Mrs. Dalloway – Part 5

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unending, his future.

He was not old, or set, or dried in the least. As for caring what they said of him – the Dalloways, the Whitbreads, and their set, he cared not a straw – not a straw (though it was true he would have, some time or other, to see whether Richard couldn't help him to some job). Striding, staring, he glared at the statue of the Duke of Cambridge. He had been sent down from Oxford – true. He had been a Socialist, in some sense a failure – true. Still the future of civilisation lies, he thought, in the hands of young men like that; of young men such as he was, thirty years ago; with their love of abstract principles; getting books sent out to them all the way from London to a peak in the Himalayas; reading science; reading philosophy. The future lies in the hands of young men like that, he thought.

A patter like the patter of leaves in a wood came from behind, and with it a rustling, regular thudding sound, which as it overtook him drummed his thoughts, strict in step, up Whitehall, without his doing. Boys in uniform, carrying guns, marched with their eyes ahead of them,





So, hello and welcome to this NPTEL course entitled Twentieth Century Fiction where we are looking at Mrs Dalloway by Virginia Woolf. So, in this section we will take a look at certain selected passages from the novel. We will pay special focus on these passages and connect those passages to some of the broader issues which we have dealt with already in this novel.

So, one of the interesting characters in Mrs Dalloway is someone called Peter Walsh and we are told about Peter Walsh that he had been a formal lover of Clarissa Dalloway, who is the protagonist, the notional protagonist of this Novel and Peter Walsh of course, has spent a lot of time in India, the Colony of India and now he is back to Britain and this is after the first world war, and he finds himself in in London that he cannot recognize anymore, that he cannot integrate anymore. So, in some sense Peter Walsh represents the end of the empire, the ending empire.

So, to speak because as we know that this is also the time where the English Imperialism and the evils of English Imperialism were sort of coming to an end. The First World War

had essentially made Britain bankrupt and the Second World War completed that process entirely. So, by the time the Second World War ended, Britain's colonies were more or less freed because Britain could not manage the colonies, it was more or less becoming a bad business for them.

Now, Walsh we are told that you know he has been various things and he has also been a bit of a failure, because he had dabbled in a series of things without being anything in its entirety. Now and this is a passage that we will see in some in some sense it will, it's an aspirational passage, it sees Peter Walsh as Peter Walsh aspiring to be something that he has not been able to achieve in his life

And it is also a very interesting scene from the perspective of masculinity studies, because it shows him as an old enervated, exhausted, disillusioned man gazing at young men who are sort of setting out to be the empire builders and he is looking at them from a cynical position from a position of exhaustion, from position of disillusion. So, this is the passage which we should study in some details and this should be on your screen. He had been a socialist in some sense of failure true, still the future civilization lies he thought in the hands of young men like that.

So, he is looking at the young men coming down in London and they are sort of marching, and presumably boy scouts, marching down the streets of London. So, the future civilization lies he thought in the hands of young men like that, of young men that such as he was 30 years ago, with their love of abstract principles, getting books sent out to them all the way from London to a peak in the Himalayas reading science, reading philosophy. The future lies in hands of young men like that he thought.

So, again it's very masculinist kind of gaze at civilization, where civilization is something which can only be controlled and manned essentially by young men is something that he retains from his from his life in the colonies and we are also told that he had been a socialist at some point, which is; obviously, quite absurd and bizarre, because being a socialist he has also been the part of the empire building process. So, in that sense one can make some interesting connection between Peter Walsh, the fictional figure Peter Walsh and let us say more historical and more real figures such as George Orwell.

Who had also been a socialist at some point, but I mean he had been a socialist throughout, but he had also been essentially an agent of the empire. He had been someone who was stationed in Burma as some of you would know and he had also been instrumental in the empire machinery and in some sense. So, socialism and the empire location they go hand in hand, notionally they are opposites of each other.

But they are also tells something about the socialism in Britain at that point of time. And also the very masculinist idea of socialism – it's about all about young men staying in the Himalayas, reading books sent to them, reading books about science, reading books about philosophies. So, the entire notion of knowledge, the entire notion of civilization is very very masculinist and that that masculinist gaze by Peter Walsh is something that we are seeing over here and that is obviously, being critiqued and we see the masculinist gaze in terms of medical science and in the figures of, let us say Holmes and Bradshaw the two figures; the two medical figures in this novel.

They also have, they also embody that masculinist gaze at the empire, the masculinist gaze at proportion, classification, control and coercion. So, everything must have a proportion, everything must have a classification, everything must be classifiable, everything must be coercive, everything must be coerced into something. So, you know, that becomes part of the masculinists framework ok.

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marched, their arms stiff, and on their faces an expression like the letters of a legend pritten round the base of a statue praising duty, gratitude, fidelity, love of England.

It is, thought Peter Walsh, beginning to keep step with them, a very fine training. But they did not look robust. They were weedy for the most part, boys of sixteen, who might, to-morrow, stand behind bowls of rice, cakes of soap on counters. Now they wore on them unmixed with sensual pleasure or daily preoccupations the solemnity of the wreath which they had fetched from Finsbury Pavement to the empty tomb. They had taken their vow. The traffic respected it; vans were stopped.

I can't keep up with them, Peter Walsh thought, as they marched up Whitehall, and sure enough, on they marched, past him, past every one, in their steady way, as if one will worked legs and arms uniformly, and life, with its varieties, its irreticenees, had been laid under a pavement of monuments and wreaths and drugged into a stiff yet staring corpse by



A patter like the patter of leaves in a wood came from behind, and with it a rustling, regular thudding sound, which as it overtook him, drummed his thoughts, strict in step, up Whitehall, without his doing, Boys in uniform, carrying guns, marched with their eyes ahead of them, marched, their arms stiff, and on expression on their faces an expression like the letters of legend written down the base of a statue praising duty, gratitude, fidelity, love of England right.

So, again this is very very hyper nationalist, hyper masculinist kind of nationalism where all the young boys marching down to this Whitehall, wearing a uniform and also wearing an expression on their faces which smirk, which was so smacking philosophy, gratitude, fidelity and nationalism. So, everything put together, make them into some kind of ideal march of masculinity that Peter Walsh is watching, observing with admiration from a distance. It is thought Peter Walsh, beginning in to keep step with them, a very fine training. but they did not look robust. They were weedy for the most part, boys of sixteen, who might, tomorrow, stand behind bowls of rice, cakes of soap and counters.

Now, they wore on them unmixed with sensual pleasure or daily preoccupations the solemnity of the wreath which they had fetched from the Finsbury Pavement to the empty Tomb. They had taken their vow. The traffic respected it, vans were stopped. Now what this novel does, it just gives you these pictures of masculinity, these embodiments of masculinity and then deconstructs those models and it is exposes to you as readers the fragility of these constructs.

So, we can see the fragility even in the very masculinist spectacle, that Peter Walsh is experiencing or these boys in uniform, but at the same time if you look closely enough Peter Walsh realizes that they do not do not look robust or something fragile or something weedy, something tired, something undernourished, malnourished about these boys. And also look at the way in which the whole idea of sensual pleasure is seemed to be a corrupting influence.

So, you know it's very essentially saying that you know the touch of the female is a contamination, the touch of marriage is a contamination. So, these boys who are presumably virgin, presumably people who have not had the contamination of sensual pleasures, they are still ideal men, they are still ideal boys, who are not sort of fallen into domesticity, fallen into you know marriage, fallen into domestic duties, which are all

seen as you know effects of you know feminizing influences which make the boys effeminate and weak.

So, again the whole gaze is very very masculinist, is very offensively patriarchal in that sense. The whole idea of this big, strong, fresh virgin boys you know untouched by marriage, untouched by the woman is something which was celebrated. This is very much part of the boy scout package that we saw as you know informing the masculinity of the empire and that is something which Peter Walsh is experiencing over here with admiration also with a degree of concern.

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with its varieties, its intricacies, had been laid under a pavement of monuments and wreaths and drugged into a stiff yet staring corpse by discipline. One had to respect it; one might laugh; but one had to respect it, he thought. There they go, thought Peter Walsh, pausing at the edge of the pavement; and all the exalted statues, Nelson, Gordon, Havelock, the black, the spectacular images of great soldiers stood looking ahead of them, as if they too had made the same renunciation (Peter Walsh felt he too had made it, the great renunciation), trampled under the same temptations, and achieved at length a marble stare. But the stare Peter Walsh did not want for himself in the least; though he could respect it in others. He could respect it in boys. They don't know the troubles of the flesh yet, he thought, as the marching boys disappeared in the direction of the Strand – all that I've been through, he thought, crossing the road, and standing under Gordon's statue, Gordon whom as a boy he had worshipped; Gordon standing lonely with one leg raised and his arms crossed – poor Gordon, he thought.



Ok, I cannot keep up with them, Peter Walsh thought, as they marched up Whitehall, and sure enough, on they marched, past him, past everyone, in a steady way, as if one will worked legs and arms uniformly, and life, with its varieties, its intricacies, had been laid under a pavement of monuments and wreaths and drugged into a stiff yet staring corpse by discipline right.

So, again the whole idea of something sepulchral or corpse like is something which is suggested by this discipline. So, there is something morbid about this discipline. It's not entirely something, which is celebrated and celebratory, there is something also morbid about it as well. And the whole idea of the legs and arms marching uniformly as one organism, what it also proves, also shows quite spectacularly, is the lack of agency of

any individual. So, no individual can break the march, no individual can break the routine and break the order right.

So, everyone is marching together as one organism as one body and that embodiment of masculinity as a as a spectacle is important for us. There they go. One had to respect it; one might laugh, but one had to respect it, he thought. There they go, thought Peter Walsh, pausing at the edge of the pavement; and all the exalted statues, Nelson, Gordon, Havelock, the black, the spectacular images are great soldiers stood looking ahead of them, as if they too had made some renunciation Peter Walsh felt Peter Walsh felt he too had made it, the great renunciation trampled under the same temptations, and achieved at length a marble stare.

But the stare Peter Walsh did not want for himself in the least; though he could not respect it, though he could respect it in others. He could respect it in boys. They do not show that do not know the troubles of the flesh yet, he thought, as a marching boys disappeared in the direction of the strand - all that I have been through, he thought, crossing the road, and standing on a Gordon statue, Gordon whom as a boy he had worshipped; Gordon standing lonely with one leg raised and his arms crossed- poor Gordon, he thought.

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And just because nobody yet knew he was in London, except Clarissa, and the earth, after the voyage, still seemed an island to him, the strangeness of standing alone, alive, unknown, at half-past eleven in Trafalgar Square overcame him. What is it? Where am I? And why, after all, does one do it? he thought, the divorce seeming all moonshine. And down his mind went flat as a marsh, and three great emotions bowled over him; understanding; a vast philanthropy; and finally, as if the result of the others, an irrepressible, exquisite delight; as if inside his brain by another hand strings were pulled, shutters moved, and he, having nothing to do with it, yet stood at the opening of endless avenues, down which if he chose he might wander. He had not felt so young for years.

He had escaped! was utterly free — as happens in the downfall of habit when the mind, like an unguarded flame, bows and bends and seems about to blow from its holding. I haven't felt so young for years! thought Peter, escaping (only of course for an hour or so) from being precisely what he was, and feeling like a child who runs out of doors and sees as he



Now what we see; obviously, is a gaze of cynicism. So, he is someone who is just returned from the colonies, and it's a bit like Marlow in heart of darkness right. He has

come back with a knowledge of nothingness, he has come back with a knowledge of disillusionment and he is looking at the boys who obviously, do not have the knowledge yet who are still very idealistic and he is looking at them with admiration, but also a degree of pity, also a degree of you know concern.

Because you know and again the very masculinist thing is important for us to understand, you know the whole idea of these boys being contaminated by the flesh. Flesh of course, is feminine, flesh of course, is contaminating and that is something which is going against masculinist; the pure manly moral that he is admiring. And also all these different figures mentioned Nelson, Gordon, Havelock, the great soldiers of the empire. So, to speak.

So, they become the signifiers of masculinity of the empire masculinity which Peter Walsh is trying to emulate. But also, while he is also emulating it, he is also concerned, he is also completely aware of the fact that, this is a completely an experience of disillusionment that, he is going to be disillusioned at some point and he knows these boys that he is watching now, will also be disillusioned. So, he is like it's like two different time zones looking at each other. So, the boys what Peter Walsh used to be thirty years ago. They also respect Gordon this way that he used to thirty years ago right, and that kind of a gaze from one temporal order to another temporal order is something which is very symbolic in this particular scene.

But he is also someone Peter Walsh, he is also someone who has been through it and he has been through the entire experience of being disillusioned, and now he has come back as a cynical man; a fragmented man, a completely alienated man and cannot connect himself with the metropolis as such ok. And this is what we saw, what we see right away in the in the passage following: and just because nobody yet knew he was in London, except Clarissa, and the earth, after the voyage, still seemed an island to him, the strangeness of standing alone, alive, unknown, at half-past eleven in Trafalgar Square overcame him.

What is it? Where am I? And why, after all, does one do it? He thought, the divorce seeming all moonshine. And down his mind went flat as a marsh, went flat as a marsh, and three great emotions bowled over him; understanding; of vast philosophy; a vast philanthropy; and finally, as if the result of the others, an irrepressible, exquisite delight;

as if inside his brain by another hand strings were pulled, shuttles moved, and he, having nothing to do with it, yet he had stood with the opening of endless avenues, down which if it chose he might wander. He had not felt so young for years.

Now it's obviously, a very interesting alchemy of emotions at play, because in one hand there is a degree of alienation, an existential alienation, where he is asking these very fundamental questions what is it? Where am I, and you know why does one do it? So, why take the trouble of going through the entire empire process and come back if that renders you so hollow in the end, right.

So, again this is where he is a bit comparable with the Marlow figure in heart of darkness. But at the same time now that is back in the colonies, now that he is back in a metropolis, he seems, he experiences a sudden flash of happiness and this flash of happiness, this flash of knowledge is something which makes him elevated and he said over here, he had not felt so young for so many years you know.

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about to drop from its holding. I haven't felt so young for years: thought Peter, escaping (only of course for an hour or so) from being precisely what he was, and feeling like a child who runs out of doors, and sees, as he runs, his old nurse waving at the wrong window. But she's extraordinarily attractive, he thought, as, walking across Trafalgar Square in the direction of the Haymarket, came a young woman who, as she passed Gordon's statue, seemed, Peter Walsh thought (susceptible as he was), to shed veil after veil, until she became the very woman he had always had in mind: young, but stately; merry, but discreet; black, but enchanting.


Straightening himself and stealthily fingering his pocket-knife he started after her to follow this woman, this excitement, which seemed even with its back turned to shed on him a light which connected them, which singled him out, as if the random uproar of the traffic had whispered through hollowed hands his name, not Peter, but his private name which he called himself in his own thoughts. "You," she said, only "you," saying it with her white gloves and her shoulders. Then the thin long cloak which



So, this is something which is making him very very young, coming back to the whole idea of London, but at the same time this is a very deceptive happiness as you can see, because he is also feeling very alienated, he is also very very disconnected with the realities around him and he is almost like a stranger and, so his own experience of London, his whole knowledge of London has been essentially deterritorialized right.

So, this deterritorialization of London is something which he is experiencing, this defamiliarization of London is something which he is experiencing over here ok.


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singled him out, as if the random uproar of the traffic had whispered through hollowed hands his name, not Peter, but his private name which he called himself in his own thoughts. "You," she said, only "you," saying it with her white gloves and her shoulders. Then the thin long cloak which the wind stirred as she walked past Dent's shop in Cockspur Street blew out with an enveloping kindness, a mournful tenderness, as of arms that would open and take the tired –

But she's not married; she's young; quite young, thought Peter, the red carnation he had seen her wear as she came across Trafalgar Square burning again in his eyes and making her lips red. But she waited at the kerbstone. There was a dignity about her. She was not worldly, like Clarissa; not rich, like Clarissa. Was she, he wondered as she moved, respectable? Witty, with a lizard's flickering tongue, he thought (for one must invent, must allow oneself a little diversion), a cool waiting wit, a darting wit; not noisy.

She moved; she crossed; he followed her. To embarrass her was the




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darting wit; not noisy.

She moved; she crossed; he followed her. To embarrass her was the last thing he wished. Still if she stopped he would say "Come and have an ice," he would say, and she would answer, perfectly simply, "Oh yes."

But other people got between them in the street, obstructing him, blotting her out. He pursued; she changed. There was colour in her cheeks; mockery in her eyes; he was an adventurer, reckless, he thought, swift, daring, indeed (landed as he was last night from India) a romantic buccaneer, careless of all these damned proprieties, yellow dressing-gowns, pipes, fishing-rods, in the shop windows; and respectability and evening parties and spruce old men wearing white slips beneath their waistcoats. He was a buccaneer. On and on she went, across Piccadilly, and up Regent Street, ahead of him, her cloak, her gloves, her shoulders combining with the fringes and the laces and the feather boas in the windows to make the spirit of finery and whimsy which dwindled out of the shons on to the pavement as the light of a lamp goes wavering at night



So, what we should do as readers of Mrs Dalloway, is that we should make these connections between all these returning figures; Peter Walsh and Septimus Smith they; obviously, return from two different zones, Peter Walsh is coming back from the colonies, he is not traumatized in a way that Septimus Smith is, but there is a degree of disconnect that he too faces. The degree of disconnect is; obviously, lesser compared to

Septimus, because Septimus also has a very medical situation, a very you know a cognitive situation which is informed by trauma. He has repeated experiences or encounters of trauma and guilt in survivors guilt.

And you know the whole experience of violence that has had in the trenches, which is; obviously, much more than Peter Walsh in terms of the horror, but there is a degree of hollowness in both these characters which are which is comparable. So, they are both essentially hollowed out characters ok, and that is something which we must pay you know some attention to ok.

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It was awful, he cried, awful, awful!

Still, the sun was hot. Still, one got over things. Still, life had a way of adding day to day. Still, he thought, yawning and beginning to take notice – Regent's Park had changed very little since he was a boy, except for the squirrels – still, presumably there were compensations – when little Elise Mitchell, who had been picking up pebbles to add to the pebble collection which she and her brother were making on the nursery mantelpiece, plumped her handful down on the nurse's knee and scudded off again full tilt into a lady's legs. Peter Walsh laughed out.

But Lucrezia Warren Smith was saying to herself, It's wicked; why should I suffer? she was asking, as she walked down the broad path. No; I can't stand it any longer, she was saying, having left Septimus, who wasn't Septimus any longer, to say hard, cruel, wicked things, to talk to himself, to talk to a dead man, on the seat over there; when the child ran full tilt into her fell flat and burst out crying.



So, now we come to the other side, skip a little bit and we come to again, Lucrezia and Septimus, and look at the other kind of alienation that they are facing, because we have already already spoken about how Lucrezia Smith, who is; obviously, Italian, she feels like an outsider to London, in London, and Septimus is also now sadder because of his trauma. So, there are different degrees of outsider-ness that we see being experienced across this metropolis ok.

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to talk to a dead man, on the seat over there; when the child ran full tilt into her, fell flat, and burst out crying.

That was comforting rather. She stood her upright, dusted her frock, kissed her.

But for herself she had done nothing wrong; she had loved Septimus; she had been happy; she had had a beautiful home, and there her sisters lived still, making hats. Why should SHE suffer?

The child ran straight back to its nurse, and Rezia saw her scolded, comforted, taken up by the nurse who put down her knitting, and the kind-looking man gave her his watch to blow open to comfort her – but why should SHE be exposed? Why not left in Milan? Why tortured? Why?

Slightly waved by tears the broad path, the nurse, the man in grey, the perambulator, rose and fell before her eyes. To be rocked by this malignant torturer was her lot. But why? She was like a bird sheltering under the thin hollow of a leaf, who blinks at the sun when the leaf moves; starts at the




And of course, Lucrezia Warren Smith was saying to herself, this should be on the screen. It's wicked: why should I suffer? She was asking, as she walked down the broad path. No; I cannot stand any longer, she was saying, having left Septimus, who was not Septimus any longer, to say hard, cruel, wicked things, to talk to himself, to talk to a dead man, on a seat over there; when a child ran full tilt into her fell flat and burst out crying.

So, you know this whole idea of not being a mother is; obviously, something that she has consumed as part of her womanhood, and that is making her even more, it's affecting her in a very fierce way, you know and she sees children around her and she has a dead husband in front of her. And the deadness of Septimus is very very interesting because; obviously, he is a hollowed out man, he is not the same man as he used to be right. And this whole idea being a different person is something which is very cognitive at the same time almost medical and existential. There is a medico-existential quality about Septimus's difference as a person ok.

So, but for herself she had done nothing wrong; she had loved Septimus, she had been happy; she had had a beautiful home, and there her sisters lived still, making hats. Why should SHE suffer? And so the word she comes with capital letters over here. So, the whole injustice of suffering is being dramatized over here. Why should Lucrezia suffer, she did not plan the war, she did not orchestrate the war, she did not intend the war.


So, why should she suffer the war, because of what has happened to her husband.

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hollow of a leaf, who blinks at the sun when the leaf moves; starts at the crack of a dry twig. She was exposed; she was surrounded by the enormous trees, vast clouds of an indifferent world, exposed; tortured; and why should she suffer? Why?

She frowned; she stamped her foot. She must go back again to Septimus since it was almost time for them to be going to Sir William Bradshaw. She must go back and tell him, go back to him sitting there on the green chair under the tree, talking to himself, or to that dead man Evans, whom she had only seen once for a moment in the shop. He had seemed a nice quiet man; a great friend of Septimus's, and he had been killed in the War. But such things happen to every one. Every one has friends who were killed in the War. Every one gives up something when they marry. She had given up her home. She had come to live here, in this awful city. But Septimus let himself think about horrible things, as she could too, if she tried. He had grown stranger and stranger. He said people were talking behind the bedroom walls. Mrs. Filmer thought it odd. He



And then we come to the image of Septimus. And Septimus; obviously, has been advocated, has been advised to think outside of himself, by Doctor Holmes and Bradshaw, because they look at Septimus's you know alienation as a result of morbid introspection right, something the fact that he introspects all the time, he thinks all the time, he overthinks all the time and as doctors advising him not to think too much, but to play games, to play cricket, play outdoor games, play collective games to make him feel better, to make him feel more connected to the world around him ok. She must go back again to Septimus since it was almost time for them to go to be going to Sir William Bradshaw.

So, William Bradshaw, a Sir William Bradshaw, the knighted doctor is someone who is; obviously, embodying this merciless masculinist medicine or the masculinist medical gaze in Mrs Dalloway to which Virginia Woolf herself was subjected to by someone called George Savage, someone who we know, who can find Virginia Woolf and you know gave her this confinement treatment, she was not allowed to leave the house and she was fed you know meals of milk and bananas to make her gain weight. And everything was very very coercive in quality and the whole idea of you know can find the woman at the home and giving her a diet to make her put on weight.

So, she draws quite heavily, evidently she is drawing very heavily from her experiences with doctors, you know and William Bradshaw and Holmes over here they are extensions of that example, that experience that she herself had. She must go back and tell him, to go back to him sitting there on the green chair under the tree, talking to himself or to the dead man Evans, whom she had only seen once for a moment in the shop. He had seemed a nice quiet man; a great friend of Septimus's, and he had been killed in the War.

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they marry. She had given up her home. She had come to live here, in this awful city. But Septimus let himself think about horrible things, as she could too, if she tried. He had grown stranger and stranger. He said people were talking behind the bedroom walls. Mrs. Filmer thought it odd. He saw things too — he had seen an old woman's head in the middle of a fern. Yet he could be happy when he chose. They went to Hampton Court on top of a bus, and they were perfectly happy. All the little red and yellow flowers were out on the grass, like floating lamps he said, and talked and chattered and laughed, making up stories. Suddenly he said, "Now we will kill ourselves," when they were standing by the river, and he looked at it with a look which she had seen in his eyes when a train went by, or an omnibus — a look as if something fascinated him; and she felt he was going from her and she caught him by the arm. But going home he was perfectly quiet — perfectly reasonable. He would argue with her about killing themselves; and explain how wicked people were; how he could see them making up lies as they passed in the street. He knew all their thoughts, he said; he



But such things happen to everyone. Everyone has friends who were killed in the war. Everyone gives up something when they marry. She had given up a home. She had come to live here, in this awful city. But Septimus let himself think about horrible things, as she could too, if she tried. He had grown stranger and stranger. He said people were talking behind the bedroom walls.

So, we have a very good example of the female alienation over here, because the whole focus seems to be Septimus, that he is a suffering soldier, he is someone has been traumatized by the war. But she keeps asking the question everything everyone loses something to the war, everyone has friends who are you know killed on the war. And the whole idea of having Septimus as this person who is somehow more entitled to his trauma, because he suffers it and he had friends who got killed in the war, is something that she finds very very unfair.

So, you know we have different degrees of alienation, different degrees of existential isolation in Mrs Dalloway and the whole masculinist quality which has been critiqued and the critique is also extended for the whole negotiation with trauma, the whole negotiation with suffering. Somehow Septimus's suffering seems to be more noble rather than compared to Rezia's suffering and that is something that she finds very very unfair. Why should his suffering be more noble? Why should his suffering be more glamorous in that sense? Why should his suffering deserve more attention why cannot he move on just like everyone else, because she too has left behind several things, she too has suffered from the war, but she is making an attempt to move on.


So, why cannot he. So, it is very pertinent questions. Questions about fairness and unfairness, especially as a wife who is wronged at so many levels is something that is given voice to in this particular passage ok.


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look which she had seen in his eyes when a train went by, or an ominous — a look as if something fascinated him; and she felt he was going from her and she caught him by the arm. But going home he was perfectly quiet — perfectly reasonable. He would argue with her about killing themselves; and explain how wicked people were; how he could see them making up lies as they passed in the street. He knew all their thoughts, he said; he knew everything. He knew the meaning of the world, he said.

Then when they got back he could hardly walk. He lay on the sofa and made her hold his hand to prevent him from falling down, down, he cried, into the flames! and saw faces laughing at him, calling him horrible disgusting names, from the walls, and hands pointing round the screen. Yet they were quite alone. But he began to talk aloud, answering people, arguing, laughing, crying, getting very excited and making her write things down. Perfect nonsense it was; about death; about Miss Isabel Pole. She could stand it no longer. She would go back.

She was close to him now, could see him staring at the sky, muttering,





And when they got back he could hardly walk. He lay on the sofa and made her hold his hand to prevent him from falling down, down, he cried, into the flames! and he saw faces laughing at him, calling him horrible disgusting names, from the walls, and hands pointing around the screen. Yet they were quite alone. But he began to talk aloud, answering people, arguing, laughing, crying, getting very excited and making her write things down. Perfect nonsense it was; about death; about Miss Isabel Pole, she could stand it no longer. She would go back.

So, we stop at this point today and the whole point is Rezia Smith finds that this is like enough that she can take, more than others she can take and she finds it very very unfair. And as I keep mentioning the different degrees of dislocation Peter Walsh is dislocated, Septimus is dislocated, Rezia is dislocated, Clarissa Dalloway who is supposed to be in her own city as a White British woman, she too feels alienated.

So, this entire novel about different networks, different experiences of alienation and Rezia's alienation is; obviously, manifold, because first of all she is Italian, she has sacrificed everything to come to London, she cannot connect to it anymore. And secondly, she is married to this man, who is a perennial sufferer who is a traumatophilic according to her and she is, she finds it very very unfair that he is the one who is suffering all the time, and he refuses to see her suffering, and now this resolution to go back something that is dramatized, that is articulated over here.

And she finds entire idea of Septimus suffering all the time exhausting for her to take. So, different levels of exhaustion and enervation and dislocation in Mrs Dalloway, we will just continue with this and hopefully wind up in the next couple of lectures.

We stop at this point today; I will see you in the next lecture.

Thank you for your attention.