

# Week 9 Day 3: *Mrs Dalloway*

ENGL201: Introduction to Modernism

# Class Schedule

- Housekeeping: Switch around readings
- Women in *Mrs Dalloway*
- Siegfried Sassoon
- Septimus Smith

# Housekeeping

- Mapping Assignments and next round of Blogs and Responses to be returned Tuesday
- Switch Class 1 and Class 3, Week 10
  - Keep response papers the same!
  - Let me know **specific things** you'd like to work on in Writing Workshop



# Women in *Mrs Dalloway*

- Read:
  - 135-138
  - 109-112



Paintings: Mabel Frances Layng

# Siegfried Sassoon (1886-1967)

- English poet, novelist, and soldier
- Decorated for bravery on the Western front
- Wrote “A Soldier’s Declaration” and read it to the House of Commons in 1917
- Admitted to a military psychiatric hospital



I am making this statement as an act of wilful defiance of military authority because I believe that the war is being deliberately prolonged by those who have the power to end it. I am a soldier, convinced that I am acting on behalf of soldiers. I believe that the war upon which I entered as a war of defence and liberation has now become a war of aggression and conquest. I believe that the purposes for which I and my fellow soldiers entered upon this war should have been so clearly stated as to have made it impossible to change them and that had this been done the objects which actuated us would now be attainable by negotiation.

("Soldier's Declaration," 1917)

3rd Batt: Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

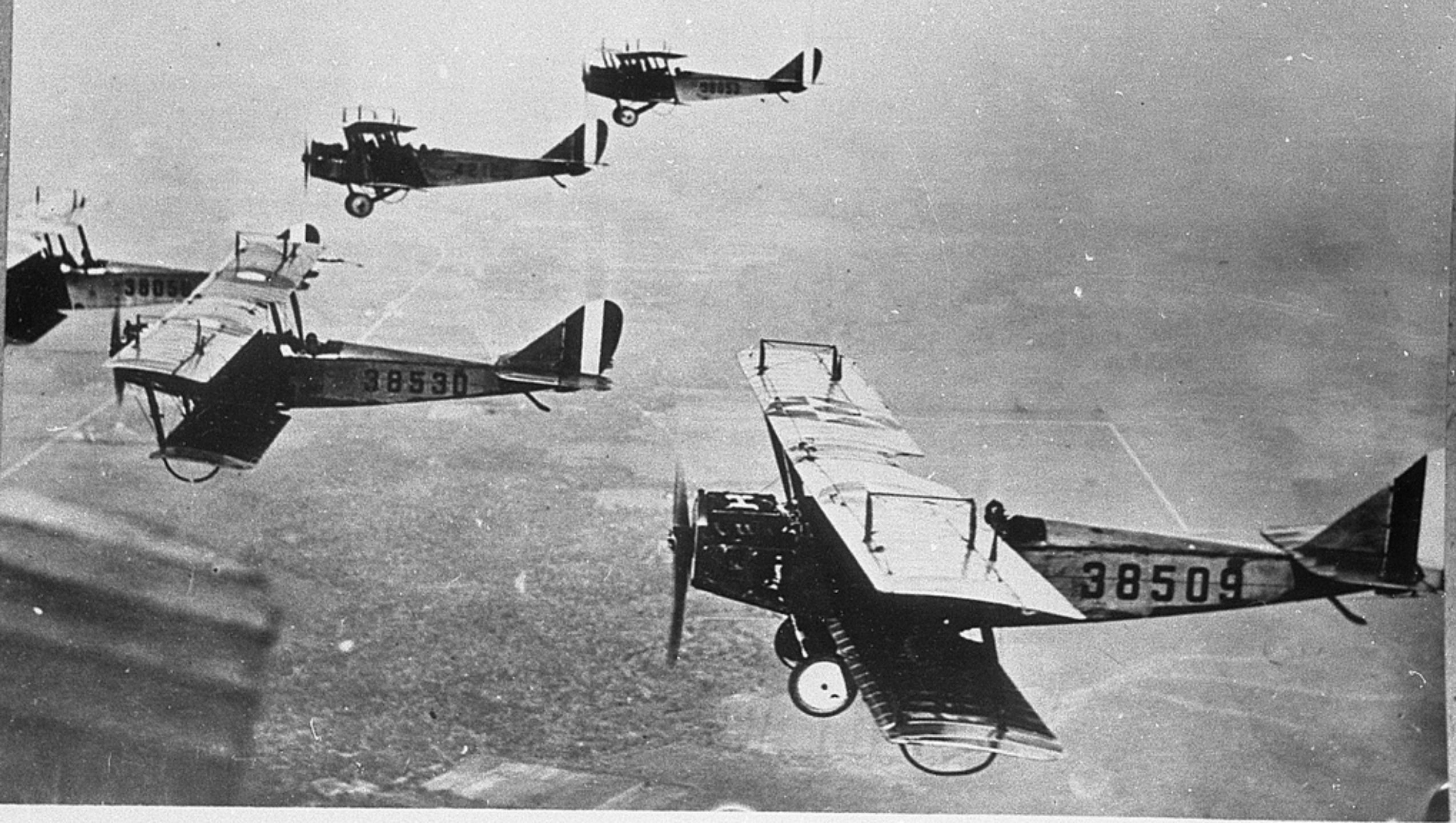
July, 1917.

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I have seen and endured the sufferings of the troops and I can no longer be a party to prolong these sufferings for ends which I believe to be evil and unjust. I am not protesting against the conduct of the war, but against the political errors and insincerities for which the fighting men are being sacrificed.

On behalf of those who are suffering now, I make this protest against the deception which is being practised upon them; also I believe my help to destroy the callous complacency with which the majority here at home regard the continuance of agonies which they do not understand and which they have not enough imagination to realise.





Septimus was one of the first to volunteer. He went to France to save an England which consisted almost entirely of Shakespeare's plays and Miss Isabel Pole in a green dress walking in a square. There in the trenches the change which Mr. Brewer desired when he advised football was produced instantly; he developed manliness; he was promoted; he drew attention, indeed the affection of his officer. (86)









“Intern them all.”

(Emmeline Pankhurst,  
according to Sylvia Pankhurst)



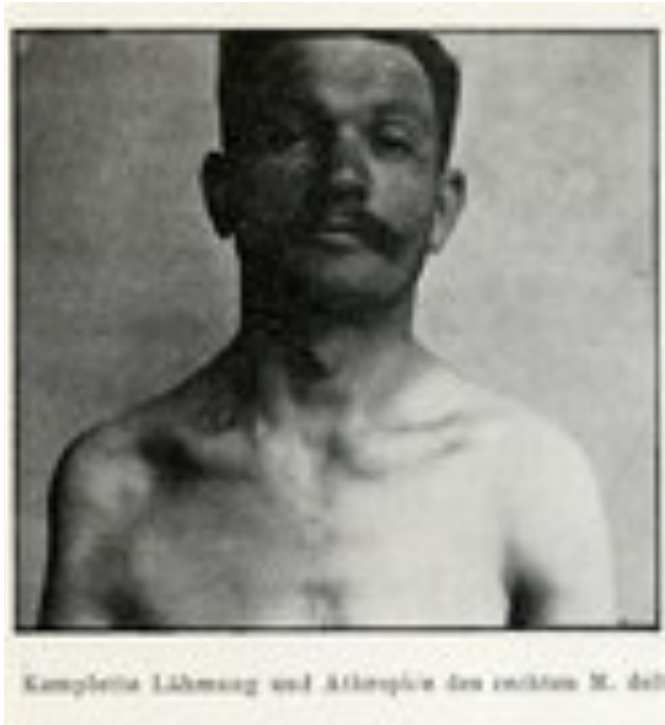
# Diagnoses

- Shell shock
- Neurasthenia
- Schizophrenia

# Style

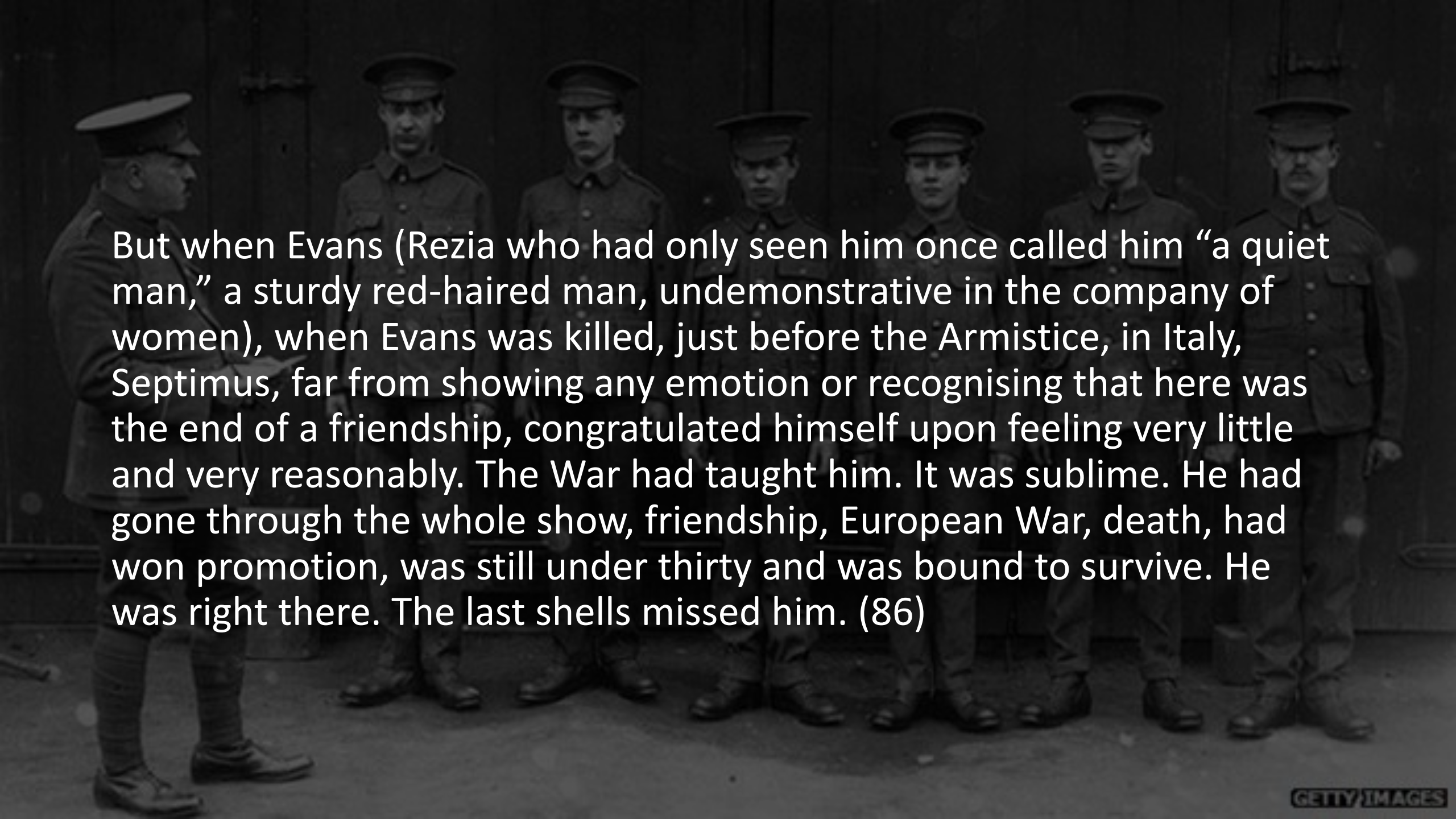
- Paranoia
- Apophany





So, thought Septimus, looking up, they are signalling to me. Not indeed in actual words; that is, he could not read the language yet; but it was plain enough, this beauty, this exquisite beauty, and tears filled his eyes as he looked at the smoke words languishing and melting in the sky and bestowing upon him in their inexhaustible charity and laughing goodness one shape after another of unimaginable beauty and signalling their intention to provide him, for nothing, for ever, for looking merely, with beauty, more beauty! Tears ran down his cheeks. (22)

In the thought of my thought is the great house with labouring houses in the house of human skin with a balcony of seals. The ordinary is supreme though there is a little awkwardness in the milk of ovation and evocation. ("The Possessions," 759)

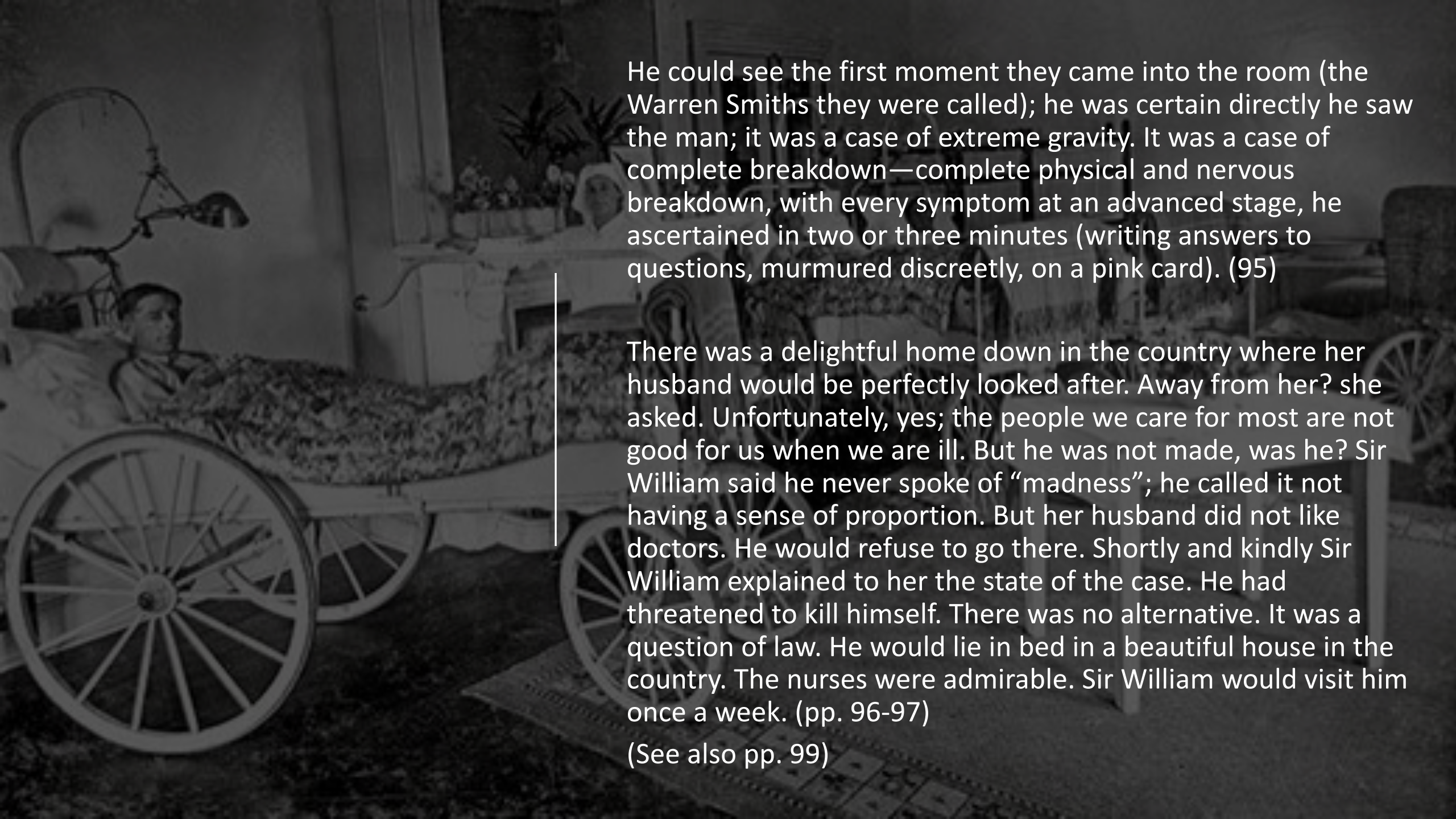


But when Evans (Rezia who had only seen him once called him “a quiet man,” a sturdy red-haired man, undemonstrative in the company of women), when Evans was killed, just before the Armistice, in Italy, Septimus, far from showing any emotion or recognising that here was the end of a friendship, congratulated himself upon feeling very little and very reasonably. The War had taught him. It was sublime. He had gone through the whole show, friendship, European War, death, had won promotion, was still under thirty and was bound to survive. He was right there. The last shells missed him. (86)



When the damned fool came again, Septimus refused to see him. Did he indeed? said Dr. Holmes, smiling agreeably. Really he had to give that charming little lady, Mrs. Smith, a friendly push before he could get past her into her husband's bedroom.

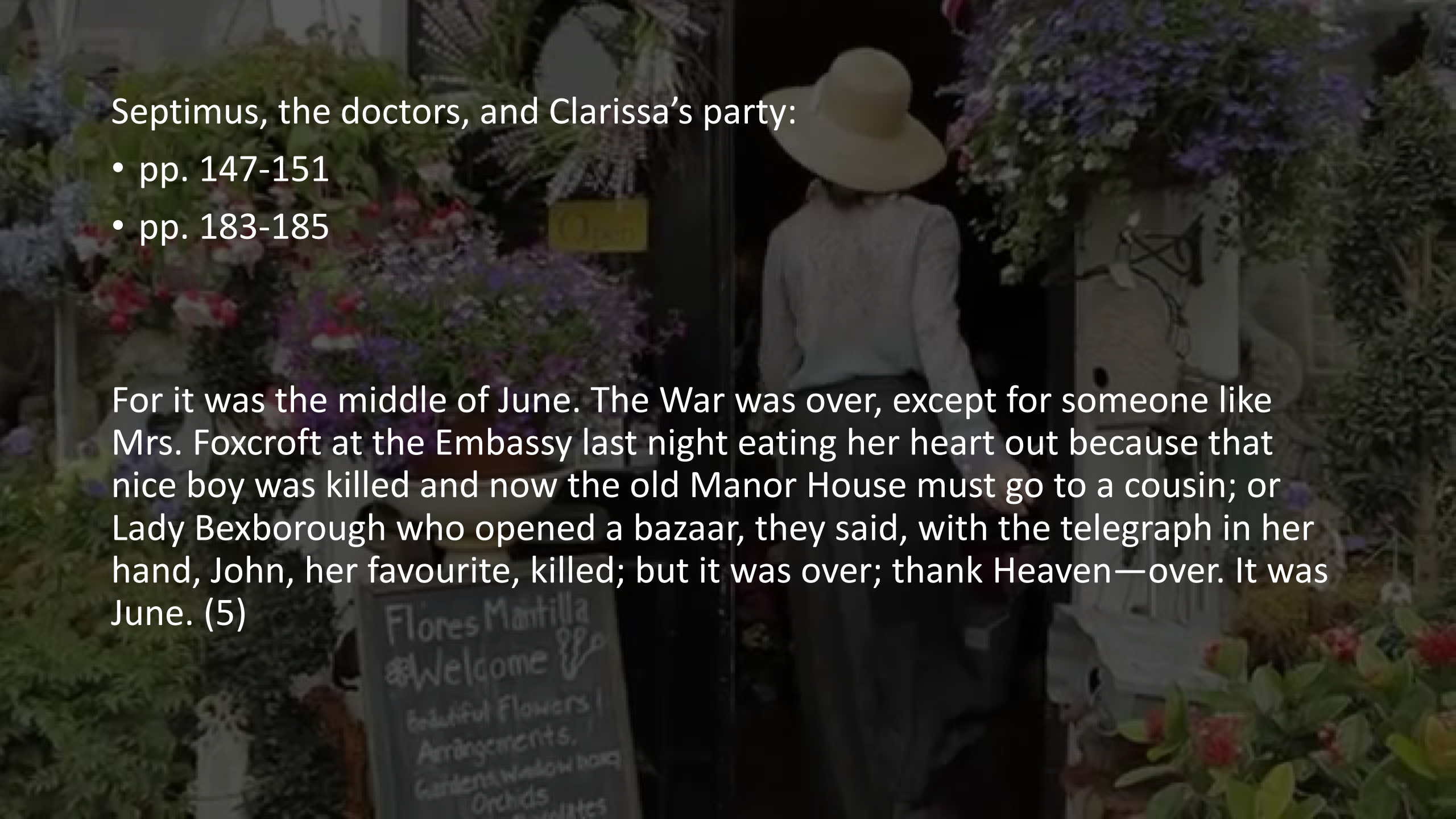
“So you're in a funk,” he said agreeably, sitting down by his patient's side. He had actually talked of killing himself to his wife, quite a girl, a foreigner, wasn't she? Didn't that give her a very odd idea of English husbands? Didn't one owe perhaps a duty to one's wife? Wouldn't it be better to do something instead of lying in bed? For he had forty years' experience behind him; and Septimus could take Dr. Holmes's word for it—there was nothing whatever the matter with him. And next time Dr. Holmes came he hoped to find Smith out of bed and not making that charming little lady his wife anxious about him. (92)



He could see the first moment they came into the room (the Warren Smiths they were called); he was certain directly he saw the man; it was a case of extreme gravity. It was a case of complete breakdown—complete physical and nervous breakdown, with every symptom at an advanced stage, he ascertained in two or three minutes (writing answers to questions, murmured discreetly, on a pink card). (95)

There was a delightful home down in the country where her husband would be perfectly looked after. Away from her? she asked. Unfortunately, yes; the people we care for most are not good for us when we are ill. But he was not made, was he? Sir William said he never spoke of “madness”; he called it not having a sense of proportion. But her husband did not like doctors. He would refuse to go there. Shortly and kindly Sir William explained to her the state of the case. He had threatened to kill himself. There was no alternative. It was a question of law. He would lie in bed in a beautiful house in the country. The nurses were admirable. Sir William would visit him once a week. (pp. 96-97)

(See also pp. 99)



Septimus, the doctors, and Clarissa's party:

- pp. 147-151
- pp. 183-185

For it was the middle of June. The War was over, except for someone like Mrs. Foxcroft at the Embassy last night eating her heart out because that nice boy was killed and now the old Manor House must go to a cousin; or Lady Bexborough who opened a bazaar, they said, with the telegraph in her hand, John, her favourite, killed; but it was over; thank Heaven—over. It was June. (5)