

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
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Mrs. Dalloway (1997)

Marleen Gorris

OVERVIEW

Auteur The film adaptation of Virginia Woolf's novel *Mrs. Dalloway* was directed by Marleen Gorris, the first woman director to be awarded an Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film for her movie *Antonia's Line* (1995). Born in the Netherlands in 1948, Gorris began her drama studies at the University of Amsterdam and gained a master's degree in drama from the University of Birmingham. She started her career as a scriptwriter in her 30s. Her directorial debut, *A Question of Silence* (1982), was given a coproduction grant by the Dutch Government and addressed some strong feminist views against patriarchal norms. The film won the Golden Calf Award for Best Feature Film (1982) at the Netherlands Film Festival and the Grand Prix at the Créteil International Women's Film Festival (1994). Following the international triumph of her film *Antonia's Line* in 1995, which won her the Best Direction award, Gorris has acquired a renowned reputation for directorial excursion into feminist themes as well as character-driven storytelling. The masterly and detailed adaptation of *Mrs. Dalloway* makes for another significant milestone in her career in that she has showcased her talent to translate from such rich wells of literature into captivating cinematic renditions for wide audiences. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, she focuses on such modernist issues of sexual identity, a theme not as prominently explored in the original novel. However, the modern woman's search for identity is a general theme in Gorris's other works. Woolf's hallmark stream of consciousness is creatively transposed into filmic techniques of the internal voices of the characters between the past and the present in altering flashbacks and time transitions that skirt the one-day flow of the story. *Mrs. Dalloway* was a triumph of filmmaking, winning positive reviews from critics and audiences alike. Gorris won international honors and awards for the film, including the *Evening Standard* British Film Award.

Film The film was produced by First Look Pictures, Bayly/Paré Productions, in collaboration with Bergen Film & TV. Gorris worked with the English actress and screenwriter Eileen Atkins. The film features a voice-over narration to convey the inner monologues and streams of consciousness of the characters, and that enables the audience to listen in on Clarissa's most intimate thoughts and emotions. The detailed visuals are intricate, and the cinematography provides vivid pictures of the characters' reflections and interior experiences. Vanessa Redgrave plays Clarissa Dalloway delving into a single day in her life as she prepares for an evening party. The production team put in a lot of work to showcase 1920s London in detail, conducting research on the time period and bringing it to life both on screen and in the streets of Westminster to produce an accurate depiction of the era. The cast was carefully chosen, and the film's visual approach evokes the atmosphere of the time. The film garnered attention for its detailed portrayal and performances, with Vanessa Redgrave's role as Clarissa at its centre.

Background *Mrs. Dalloway* features a distinguished cast led by Vanessa Redgrave. The film was troubled by financial struggles as Eileen Atkins and her husband, Bill Shepherd invested their own personal funds in the film's production. Despite the difficulties of translating Woolf's intricate storytelling technique, the film received praise for its use of effective flashbacks when Clarissa Dalloway debated whether to marry the reliable and dependable but unexciting politician Richard Dalloway. Compared Stephen Daldry's alternate adaptation of *The Hours* (2002), which explores Woolf's influence on three women from various times, *Mrs. Dalloway* is praised for its realistic portrayal of Woolf's work and sympathy for its characters.

SYNOPSIS

In the upscale London of 1923, socialite Clarissa Dalloway gets ready for a party she is hosting later that night. Mrs. Dalloway walks through Hyde Park down Bond Street to buy the flowers herself for her “perfect” party. The film takes place within a single day, mostly focusing on Clarissa’s thoughts as she moves between past and present.

As she walks through London, she reminisces about her youth and her close friendship with Sally Seton. Their relationship is depicted through a kiss shared between Clarissa and Sally; a scene added in the film showing their close bond.

Clarissa is reminded of her past romance with Peter Walsh by the intercut of the tragic story of a war veteran Septimus Warren, who suffers from severe post-traumatic stress and commits suicide when his unfeeling doctor suggests putting him in an asylum.

Clarissa’s party is overshadowed by the return of her old suitor, Peter, whom she has not seen for 30 years since she decided to engage in a safe, comfortable marriage to a successful upper-class politician, Richard Dalloway.

The film culminates with the evening party, where the characters’ stories intersect. Clarissa interacts with the guests and thinks about her past choices. The story concludes with Clarissa at her party, contemplating her life.

CHARACTERS

Mrs. Dalloway (Vanessa Redgrave): An older, high-society woman in post-World War I London

Young Clarissa Dalloway (Natascha McElhone): Energetic and idealistic, with intense friendships and romantic relationships

Sally Seton/Lady Rosseter (Sarah Badel) & Young Sally (Lena Headey): Clarissa’s close friend from her youth

Peter Walsh (Michael Kitchen) & Young Peter (Alan Cox): Clarissa’s former lover who has recently returned to London from India

Richard Dalloway (John Standing): Clarissa’s husband, a conservative politician

Septimus Warren Smith (Rupert Graves): A shell-shocked war veteran struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Clarissa Dalloway

Clarissa is a contemplative, unsatisfied, and empathic character who regularly reflects on her past, analyses her life choices, and shows genuine empathy for others.

Reflective – Clarissa constantly recalls her past, especially her youth and friendships. For example, while she walks through London to buy flowers, she remembers her younger self and her close relationship with Sally Seton. The voice-over discloses her thoughts and reflects her internal monologue, while the camera cuts to flashbacks from her past, focusing on her concerned glance and capturing the depth of her reflections.

Dissatisfied – Despite her apparent feelings of fulfilment, Clarissa frequently questions her life decisions. During her conversations with her previous lover, Peter Walsh, she thinks about her decision to marry Richard for stability rather than love. Her gaze frequently shifts away. Her tone grows tense as she discusses her marriage.

Empathetic – At the party, Clarissa is deeply affected when she hears about Septimus's death. Her once lively expression turns sombre, and she becomes momentarily lost in thought. Clarissa has exceptional ability to empathize and take the viewpoint of others, especially evident in her reaction to Septimus' suicide.

Septimus Warren Smith

Septimus, a war veteran, grapples with severe post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). He has intense hallucinations, frequently seems to be disconnected from reality, and finally kills himself out of desperation.

Traumatized – While walking in the park, Septimus has a vivid hallucination of his friend Evans, who died in the war, is calling out to him. The camera shakes slightly to convey his disoriented, unsettled and unsteady perspective, and the background noise fades into a high-pitched ringing. He shouts out: "The whole world is clamouring. 'Kill yourself!' 'Kill yourself!'" And Septimus clutches his head in his hands, his eyes are unfocused and wide with fear, his body is trembling as he shouts, "Evans! Don't come back!" The camera captures the intensity of his panic attack, illustrating the depth of his trauma.

Disconnected – Septimus often appears distant, disconnected and lost in thought. In a scene at his home, he stares blankly out of the window at one end of the room, barely acknowledging his wife, Rezia, who is sitting on his other side, quietly trying to talk to him. The camera focuses on his vacant expression. Then, Septimus starts talking to Rezia about the nature of life and humanity, and the camera lingers on his face again, now observed from the other side – the light is strong on one side of his face, casting shadows that highlight his intense, thoughtful expression. He says, "There is no crime. There is no death. The birds are singing it in Greek." His voice is almost calm, quiet yet uncanny, and his eyes seem to gaze into infinity.

Desperate – Septimus's desperately commits suicide. . We see him by an open window, staring at the sharp fence below. The camera fixes on his fearful and resolved face. He mutters, "Mr. Warren-Smith! You want my life? I'll give it to you." In a swift, desperate motion, he leaps out of the window, the shot following him down into frame. The camera then shows us the sharp spikes of the wrought iron fence below.

Sally Seton

Sally Seton is Clarissa's childhood friend who had a significant impact on her life and choices, representing freedom and youthful idealism.

Free-Spirited – In a flashback, young Sally impulsively kisses Clarissa by a fountain without thinking, illustrating her free-spirited nature. There is a lively, playful atmosphere and strong moonlight throughout the scene.

Sally's bold and unconventional nature is captured by her carefree laugh and the astonished yet delighted expression on young Clarissa's face.

Influential – Sally and Clarissa are sitting close together and having a serious conversation in a quiet moment by the fountain. Sally's eyes flare with conviction as she talks passionately about the limitations of marriage. She says, "Marriage is a catastrophe for women." Clarissa pays close attention, obviously impacted by Sally's strong views. The depth of their relationship and Sally's influence on Clarissa's opinions are captured by the camera's emphasis on their faces.

Realistic – Sally, who is now older and more conventional, shows up at Clarissa's evening party. She talks about having a stable life and her five children. Her expressions are captured when the camera lingers on her face. Clarissa's inner voice observes Sally's changes in appearance and lifestyle, emphasizing how different it is from her youthful, free-spirited days.

Peter Walsh

Peter Walsh is Clarissa's former lover who is back in London after an extended stay in India. His conversations with Clarissa highlight his still-passionate, jealous, and restless personality, and his continuing devotion and unresolved affections for her.

Passionate – In a garden scene, Peter confronts Clarissa in an impassioned manner. He holds her hands and declares, "I want us to be everything to each other." Clarissa, overwhelmed, responds, "You want so much of me, Peter. I just can't do it!" Peter is sobbing and his face is filled with emotion as he talks how much he loves Clarissa; his voice is trembling. This scene demonstrates Peter's intense personality and his desire for a close relationship with Clarissa. Even 30 years later, Peter talks about his unresolved emotions with Clarissa at her evening party, questioning why Clarissa never married him.

Jealous – Peter is first apprehensive about going on the boat excursion, but he eventually accepts when Clarissa gives him a special invitation. Peter keeps a tight eye on Clarissa and Richard's interactions as they float around the lake. His eyes track everything they do, and his face becomes taut. His clenched fists and stiff posture are captured on camera, emphasizing his uneasiness and jealousy as he observes Clarissa and Richard's intimacy. Later at Clarissa's party, Peter also exhibits envy when he talks about Richard. In a dimly lit room, Peter asks Clarissa about her marriage, his eyes narrowing and his voice takes on a bitter tone. The scene brings his jealousy and repressed sentiments to light.

Restless – When Peter visits Clarissa after many years, Peter anxiously plays with his pocket knife. The camera focuses on his restless hands, showing his difficulty to remain motionless. Clarissa's inner voice comments on this familiar habit, noting how it reflects Peter's restless soul, unsettled spirit and never-ending quest for meaning and purpose.

Richard Dalloway

Richard Dalloway, Clarissa's husband, is an upper-class politician who has grasped the reins of success, material comfort and stability, providing her a secure life ordered by convention and societal expectations. He also contributes to her sense of confinement and unfulfilled potential. His character provides a contrast to Clarissa's more introspective, reflective and passionate nature.

Dependable – We see Richard preparing to go to work. Dressed in an elegant suit, he adjusts his tie in the mirror, picking up his briefcase from the hallway table. The camera follows him checking his watch, kissing Clarissa on the cheek, and leaving the house. His actions are deliberate and the calm. His meticulous behaviour and their home's serene, organized atmosphere demonstrate his dependability and consistency.

Supportive – In a tender moment, Richard surprises Clarissa with a bouquet of flowers when he returns home. As he gives her the flowers, the camera focuses on his kind grin and the warmth in his eyes. Feeling moved, Clarissa accepts the flowers and smiles gently. This scene highlights Richard's supportive nature, showing his affection for Clarissa through little, simple, caring actions.

Understanding – When Richard learns that Peter Walsh has arrived, he calmly remarks, "If Peter is here, Clarissa must know." The camera shows Richard's thoughtful and contemplative expression, indicating that he is aware of Clarissa's previous relationship with Peter. Richard later sees Clarissa and Peter dancing together during the party. The camera captures his calm, composed demeanour, and he nods approvingly, letting them to enjoy the moment. This moment demonstrates Richard's secure, confident

and considerate personality highlighting his comprehension and acceptance of Clarissa's previous relationships.

RELATIONSHIPS

Marriage The film presents a nuanced portrayal of marriage, highlighting both its comforting and confining aspects. Clarissa's marriage to Richard Dalloway is depicted as stable but emotionally distant, causes her to think back on her prior relationships and what might have been. Clarissa is prompted by Peter to consider the life she has created and to consider the decisions she has made. In her mind flow, as young Clarissa, she attempts to explore other options with Peter. The final connection within the film is between Clarissa and her husband, Richard Dalloway. Despite their long marriage, Clarissa struggles with emotions of discontent and a yearning for the passion she once experienced. This aspect of the film explores issues of gender roles and the constraints of marriage, contrasting the stability of Clarissa's life with her internal sense of unfulfillment. The relationship between Septimus and Rezia includes the most damaging type of marital strain: that caused by mental illness, as evidenced by Rezia's loneliness and her desperate attempts to support Septimus. These relationships are diverse and demonstrate the different dynamics in marriages.

Friendship The central theme of the film is the friendship, but most notably through Clarissa's friendship with Sally Seton and Peter Walsh. We see the flashbacks to old summers during which young Peter courted young Clarissa, and perhaps young Sally courted her, too. Peter's return brings out unresolved feelings, adding layers to the friendship that has endured in the meantime. Clarissa faced a choice between the thrilling unpredictability of Peter, which was a risk, and the profound but also risky connection with Sally. Ultimately, she opted for the safety and stability with marrying Richard Dalloway, in an act that young Peter disparagingly called choosing "a fool, an unimaginative, dull fool." At the end, Clarissa and Peter pair up with Richard and Sally in the final dance. All seems to have been reconciled between these lifelong friends, highlighting the enduring bonds that have survived the passage of time and the complexities of their individual lives.

Sexuality Sexuality is another of the themes deployed – Clarissa's relationships with Sally Seton and Peter Walsh. The young Clarissa's relation with Sally is intense and emotionally fraught; their kiss is symbolic of lesbian attraction, and also suggests a depth of connection and unopened romantic potential. Clarissa's decision to choose a more conventional and comfortable life with Richard is shown to come with considerable cost, and her reflections on her relationship with Sally reveal her internal conflict and the societal pressures that influenced her decisions. Sally, once a symbol of freedom and rebellion, ultimately settles into a traditional middle-class life with a husband and five children, mirroring the societal expectations of women at the time.

Romantic Relationships / Love Romantic relationships are an important plot point in the story, and encompass the range of Clarissa's feelings towards her friends Sally, Richard, and Peter. The relationship between Clarissa and Peter Walsh is full of passion, but also seems intellectually — even emotionally — fulfilling, yet she ultimately chooses the stability and security offered by Richard. Her relationship with Sally Seton is fuelled with a sense of intensity and emotional attraction entirely different than it is with Peter; their kiss expresses a profound bond and unfulfilled romantic potential. Clarissa's marriage to Richard is comfortable, but lacks the passion she once felt for Peter and the romantic energy she felt with Sally. These diverse relationships reflect the human experience of negotiating various forms of romantic attraction and connection and highlight the complexity of love and desire in Clarissa's life.

THEMES

Society

Class and Social Status The film explores the class system in 1920s Britain. The main character, Clarissa Dalloway, belongs to the upper class, living a life of privilege and hosting elaborate parties. Yet, the film also sheds light on the challenges faced by other characters from different social backgrounds,

like Septimus Warren Smith, a war veteran struggling with mental issues. The stark difference between Clarissa's lifestyle and Septimus's difficult circumstances underscores the rigid class divisions and the varying levels of social mobility during that period. His story runs alongside Clarissa's, bringing out themes of health struggles and societal pressures and expectations.

Gender Roles The film delves into gender roles of the era, highlighting the limited opportunities and high expectations imposed on women. Despite her status, Clarissa wrestles with a sense of unfulfillment, dissatisfaction and longing for past passion. The film depicts how marriage constraints and conventional societal norms affect women, contrasting Clarissa's life with that of Sally Seton, who rebels against gender expectations with her more rebellious and free-spirited nature. The film explores Clarissa's emotional relationship with Sally and how it influenced her life choices, touching on themes of friendship and identity. Despite her free spirit, Sally eventually settles into a more traditional middle-class existence with a husband and five children, demonstrating how cultural influences and societal pressures affected women's choices at that time. The portrayal of Septimus's dedicated and concerned wife, Lucrezia Warren Smith, highlights the hardships that women endure in a patriarchal culture.

Psychology

Mental Health The film explores how post-war Britain treated mental illness and how doctors understood shell shock. As Woolf's novel also suggests, the tragedies of World War I had an impact on every aspect of society. Suicide is also an implicit theme of the story. During a post-traumatic stress disorder trauma trance, Septimus Warren Smith, a shellshocked war veteran, fights a desperate battle against the images of war that continue to haunt him following five years after the war. In the opening scene, Septimus delusionally watches his friend blown up in the war. Septimus's suicidal fate highlights the lack of social understanding and support for those with mental health issues in the early 20th century, as well as the sociological framework of stigma that accompanies mental illness. His tragic fate serves as a poignant commentary on the societal neglect and stigma associated with mental illness. The film's narrative plays out the contrast between Septimus's psychic struggle – and Clarissa's philosophical ruminations on existence and consciousness– in a way that starkly conveys the realities of psychological distress. Septimus commits suicide under a vague diagnosis of insanity. His relationship with his wife, Rezia, and the effect of his mental breakdown on their marriage are poignantly depicted, emphasizing the harsh realities of mental illnesses on relationships.

The opening scene of the film depicts Clarissa's internal monologue that explores the effects of her dilemma as well as emphasizing her existential crisis and disillusionment with life: "Those ruffians the Gods shan't have it all their own way. Those gods who never lose a chance of hurting, thwarting ... and spoiling human lives ... are seriously put out if all the same, you behave like a lady. Of course, now I think there are no Gods and there's no one to blame. It's so very dangerous to live for only one day." This passage mirrors Septimus's own haunted experiences, and though they do not fully know one another, there is an unseen connection and sense of identification between them: both have seen the hideous face of living.

Sharp fence rails are a recurrent metaphor throughout the film, signifying the inevitable risks in life. After learning about Septimus's suicide, Clarissa delivers a touching monologue that effectively conveys this concept: "That young man killed himself, but I don't pity him. I'm somehow glad he could do it, throw it away. It's made me feel the beauty, somehow feel ... very like him, less afraid." Despite never meeting him, she profoundly empathizes with his despair: "Your parents just handed to you, but life is... to be lived right through to the end. We must walk it serenely. But in the depths of my heart, there's been an awful fear ... sometimes that I couldn't go on ... without Richard, sitting there calmly reading the *Times* ... while I crouched like a bird and gradually revived. I might have perished."

Change

Past / Memories The theme of past and memories is intricately woven throughout the film. Clarissa often reminisces about her past, particularly her youth and friendships. These memories are triggered by various events in the present day, such as Peter Walsh's return and her preparations for the evening party. The film uses flashbacks to show young Clarissa's moments with Peter and Sally, emphasizing the lasting impact of these relationships on her present self. As Clarissa reflects on her life choices, the

memories of her past reveal her internal struggles and the societal pressures that influenced her decisions. These reflections highlight the passage of time and the enduring influence of past experiences on the present.

Passage of Time One of the predominant themes – memory and the past – weaves itself through the film. Clarissa is constantly looking back, thinking about what life was like when she was younger, or what her friendships were like. As Clarissa considers her life choices, memories from her past reveal her personal battles as well as the cultural forces that shaped her decisions. This shows how past experiences shape present identities. These recollections are prompted by significant moments such as Peter Walsh's return and preparations for her party. The contrast of the past and present emphasizes the inevitability of change and the passage of time. Seasoned with the same realistic portrayal of Clarissa, Septimus's war experiences plague him, he can't move past this trauma and it afflicts him so much it leads to his death.

Identity and Self-Discovery Throughout the film, characters grapple with their sense of self and their place in society. Clarissa herself is thinking about herself, her past loves with Sally and Peter, and the woman that she might have existed instead of Mrs Dalloway which reveals her ongoing quest for identity and fulfilment. She reflects on how practically everyone refers to her as Mrs. Dalloway: "You're not even Clarissa anymore." She is somewhere in-between her two identities; as Mrs. Dalloway and young Clarissa.

Septimus' fight with his mental health is also a path of self-discovery, but hampered by his inability to connect his wartime memories with his present existence. The film depicts these excursions with respect, emphasizing the complexity of identity creation and the influence of cultural expectations. As a result, the film ends with a moving moment of self-realization and acceptance, emphasizing the themes of memory, identity, and the passage of time.

Discussion Questions

1. How do Septimus' interactions with the medical establishment reflect societal attitudes towards mental health during that era?
2. How do the characters' choices, particularly those of Clarissa and Sally, reflect the tension between personal freedom and societal expectations?
3. How does Clarissa's contemplation of Septimus's suicide and her own life choices contribute to the film's exploration of mortality and the meaning of life?

SCENES

A Morning in Post-War London Clarissa is adjusting her hat and coat in front of a vintage mirror. The soft morning light fills the room and the distant sounds of London seep through the open window. Clarissa's reflection shows a contemplative expression as she prepares for her day. As she walks, Clarissa's inner voice echoes: "Those ruffians the Gods shan't have it all their own way. Those gods who never lose a chance of hurting, thwarting ... and spoiling human lives ... are seriously put out if all the same, you behave like a lady. Of course, now I think there are no Gods and there's no one to blame. It's so very dangerous to live for only one day."



PETER

First Kiss Scene Between Young Clarissa and Peter Young Clarissa is gripping the ropes while swinging., Peter approaches her as she swings back and forth. He gently stops the swing and leans in close to her. Peter smiles and says, “You’re so sentimental, Clarissa!” to which Clarissa responds with a playful, “And you’re impossible!” Subsequently, Peter and Clarissa kiss for the first time. The background is a calm, wooded area with a large tree and greenery, emphasizing the intimacy of the moment.



Peter and Clarissa’s Emotional Conversation Peter and Clarissa are having an intense conversation in a wooded area. They stand close to each other on a path surrounded by tall trees, creating an intimate and secluded setting. Peter, dressed in a light-colored suit, expresses his desire for a deep and all-encompassing relationship with Clarissa. He speaks passionately about wanting to continue being in love, quarreling, and making up. Clarissa, wearing a white dress with delicate details, listens but feels overwhelmed. She tells Peter that he demands too much from her: “But Peter, you want so much from me! You leave me nothing to myself. You want every little bit of me!”. Peter, visibly emotional, replies, “Well, I do! I want us to be everything to each other.” Clarissa, appearing thoughtful and slightly reserved, retorts, “But that sounds so suffocating!”, leading Peter to a moment of frustration.



Peter and Clarissa’s Painful Farewell Peter and Clarissa are saying their final farewell. Peter, filled with anguish, asks Clarissa if she has come to an understanding with Richard Dalloway. Clarissa, looking troubled, admits that it is difficult for her: “He makes me feel safe.” Peter accuses Richard of offering her a “perfectly beautiful safe prison” filled with flowers and elegant antique furniture, where she would never have to think again. When Peter cries that he loves her, Clarissa says, “Richard will leave me room, room to breathe.” Peter, frustrated, calls Richard “an unimaginative, dull fool.” In a moment of finality, Peter declares, “So, it’s no use. This is the end?” Clarissa, with tears in her eyes, apologizes, saying, “I’m sorry, Peter.” As Peter cries out her name repeatedly.



SEPTIMUS: War Trauma

World War I A battlefield in Italy in 1918 comes to life in Septimus Warren Smith's mind. Septimus constantly relives the moment his friend Evans was blown up by a bomb right before his eyes. This traumatic memory haunts him everywhere, and we repeatedly hear him yell out in pain, reliving the tragic scene: "Evans, don't come!"



Clarissa and Septimus's First Glance Mrs. Dalloway is purchasing flowers for her evening party. As she selects the flowers, a loud explosion is heard, startling everyone around. Clarissa looks out the window, and at that moment, she locks eyes with Septimus. They share a prolonged gaze, conveying a deep, empathetic connection. After their gaze breaks, the florist remarks, "Those awful motorcars," referring to the noise. Clarissa, momentarily shaken, responds to the florist's comment with, "Yes, yes, of course, it was a car," downplaying the moment. The background features a bustling flower shop filled with colourful blooms, creating a stark contrast to the sudden chaos outside.



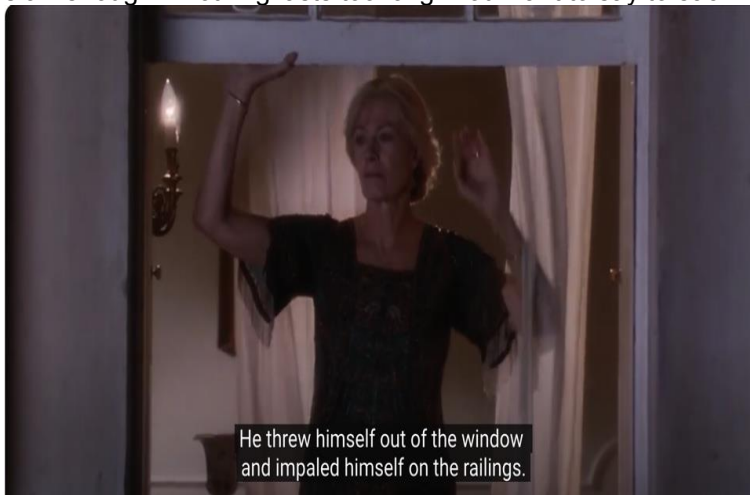
Septimus's Breakdown in the Park Septimus and his wife are sitting in a park. As they sit together, Septimus experiences a severe episode of post-war depression. He speaks in a distressed manner, saying, "There is no crime. There is no death. The birds are singing it in Greek. The whole world is clamouring. 'Kill yourself!' 'Kill yourself!'" His face shows intense anguish, and his wife looks on, deeply concerned. After his wife steps away to see the river, viewers are drawn into Septimus's mind as he hallucinates. He sees his fallen comrade, Evans, running towards him in the park. Suddenly, an explosion occurs, and Evans is blown up. Septimus relives this traumatic memory, shouting, "Make it now ... Make it now ... But there is a God! No one kills from hatred. Evans! For God's sake! Don't come!" His anguish and the vividness of his flashback are starkly depicted against the serene park setting.



Septimus's Suicide Scene Septimus Warren Smith climbs onto the windowsill of his room, preparing to jump. Just before he jumps, he shouts, "Mr. Warren Smith! You want my life? I'll give it to you." He impales himself on the railings.



Clarissa's Contemplation and Resolve with the Empathy for Septimus Clarissa learns about Septimus's suicide from his doctor during her party. The news shocks her. She recounts mentally: "A young man came to you on the edge of insanity... and you forced his soul ... made his life intolerable and he killed himself." As she reflects on the situation, she internally expresses her thoughts: "What makes us go on? What sends roaring up in us ... that immeasurable delight to surprise us? Then nothing can be slow enough... nothing lasts too long. You want to say to each moment: 'Stay!' 'Stay!' 'Stay!'"



SALLY: Homosociality – Attraction - Love

Clarissa and Sally's Intimate Moment The background features a softly lit room with a candle on the windowsill. Clarissa and Sally are in a bedroom, standing in front of a mirror. Sally embraces Clarissa from behind, and they look at their reflections. Sally comments, "You always look so virginal, Clarissa!" to which Clarissa replies, "I am virginal." Sally then asks, "Are you in love with Peter?" Clarissa hesitates and responds, "Oh, love...I don't know." Sally presses further, asking, "But you love me?" Suddenly, Sally playfully undresses.



Clarissa and Sally's Discussion on Marriage The background features a large, stately home and lush greenery. Clarissa and Sally are standing outside, enjoying a sunny day. Clarissa gently touches Sally's face as they talk. Clarissa says, "The men lead such exciting lives ... but their poor wives don't seem to do so well." Sally responds with, "Marriage is a catastrophe for women." Clarissa says, "But it is inevitable, isn't it? Sally ... Will we always be together?" Sally reassures her, saying, "Always! Always! We'll do everything together. We'll change the world! Come on."



Clarissa and Sally's Kiss at the Party Clarissa and Sally share an intimate kiss outside during a party. Clarissa is dressed in an elegant white gown, while Sally wears a striking red dress. They stand close to each other, their faces inches apart, and then they kiss. The background shows the illuminated windows of the house with guests mingling inside, enhancing the contrast between their private moment and the public event. Peter and another man are visible in the background who approach them after the kiss.



REUNION AT THE PARTY

Clarissa and Peter's Emotional Reunion Clarissa and Peter meet again after many years. Peter arrives unexpectedly at Clarissa's home, and their conversation is charged with emotion. As they talk, Clarissa reflects internally and we hear her inner voice: "It's extraordinary how Peter can put me in this state, just by coming here. He looks awfully well." Peter then shares his current situation, "I'm in love, I'm in love with a girl in India." Clarissa asks who she is, and Peter reveals, "A married woman, unfortunately. She's the wife of a major in the Indian Army. She has two young children, a boy and a girl. And it's a bit of a mess. I'm here to see the lawyers about a divorce. She's called Daisy." Peter starts crying and Clarissa comforts him by kissing his head. Finally, Peter asks the poignant question, "Are you happy, Clarissa? Does Richard..."



Clarissa and Sally's Reunion at the Party Sally arrives at Clarissa's party, marking their first meeting in many years. As they embrace, Clarissa's inner voice reflects on the changes she sees in Sally: "Goodness! She didn't look like that when she kissed me by the fountain. How wonderful to see you! How extraordinary to see her again! She's older, she's happier, but less lovely. But, oh, how wonderful that she's come to my party."



Sally and Peter Discuss Clarissa Sally and Peter encounter each other at Clarissa's party and discuss their perceptions of her. Peter, observing Clarissa, expresses his disbelief: "How can she bear him?" Sally responds, noticing Peter's lingering feelings, "It still makes you angry!" Peter, clearly frustrated, says, "Look at her. Intoxicated, while they all are thinking she's brilliant." Sally says, "Don't be too hard on her. After all, parties are a kind of performance. She has to give a performance. It isn't the real Clarissa." Peter, with a note of sadness, concludes, "The real Clarissa was lost years ago." Sally then adds, "I'm sure, if you were alone with her, you'll find the old Clarissa again."



Peter and Sally's Reflections and Confessions In a dimly lit room adorned with bookshelves and armchairs, Peter Walsh and Sally Seton sit across from each other, sharing a moment of reflection and nostalgia. Peter asks, "Why wouldn't she marry me, Sally?" Sally responds thoughtfully, "She was afraid. Maybe she needed someone who found life simple. She certainly cared for you, more than she cared for Richard." Peter, emotional, admits, "Oh, my life isn't simple. My relationship with her wasn't simple. She broke my heart. And you can't love like that twice." Peter questions, "Do you think he's made her happy?" Sally replies, "Who can tell, Peter? All our relationships are just scratches on the surface."



The Final Dance of Old Friends The old friends come together for a dance. Clarissa and Peter, Richard and Sally pair up, moving gracefully around the room.

