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1. Map the External Plot.

1. Peter Walsh, asleep in the park, wakes up and recollects a memory he was dreaming about– his affair with Clarissa from his time at Brouton, the conclusion of their affair, and the beginnings of Clarissa’s relationship with Richard Dalloway.
2. A child runs into Lucrezia’s legs, and the perspective switches from a focus on Peter Walsh to Lucrezia and Septimus Smith. Septimus is currently talking to himself.
3. Lucrezia starts to walk with Septimus to see Sir William Bradshaw.
4. Peter Walsh gives change to a beggar at Regent’s Park.
5. Clarissa Dalloway finishes mending her dress; she sets it on her bed.
6. Lucrezia and Septimus arrive at Sir William Bradshaw’s, they see his impressive motorcar.
7. Sir Bradshaw claims that Septimus must be taken to a home for the mentally unstable. Septimus commits suicide.
8. Clarissa Dalloway’s party begins, everyone eats.

2. What does Woolf mean by 'Conversion' and 'Proportion' ? If they are 'goddesses', why are they also villains?

In mentioning 'proportions' and 'conversions' when describing the powerful Sir William Bradshaw, Woolf refers to Bradshaw's capability to connect with and influence individuals through his charismatic personality. Through 'proportions', Sir Bradshaw exercises his ability to relate to individuals on several social fronts— such as maintaining groups of individuals that are equals (respect), and those that strive to be equals (admiration). Although this can empower individuals such as Bradshaw to pioneer great social change which improves the human condition by uniting a scattered society, it also makes the influenced masses susceptible to the inconsistency of their leader's opinions (i.e. unwanted 'conversions', which refer to one individual changing others' perspectives through methods of persuasion and influence). Unlimited exercise of conversions can lead to herd mentality, and a general reduction in critical thinking— both of which hinder society from understanding the plight of complex individuals such as Septimus.

3. Explain the workings of Septimus's mind. What compels his final act in this section?

One of the earliest characters introduced in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* is Septimus Warren Smith, a young war veteran and husband to Lucrezia Smith. Prior to his involvement in the European war, Septimus was a man whose life was driven by a passion for remarkable works of literature (Shakespeare, etc.), second only to his love for a lecturer by the name Isabel Pole; it was driven by the urge to preserve his current, enjoyable way of life. This very urge compelled him to voluntarily join the fight for England in World War I, and led to Septimus experiencing the war-induced loss of a dear friend and fellow soldier, Evans. This loss brought about a dramatic change in Septimus' once optimistic mindset, and purpose completely disappeared from his life. As we witness in his indifferent behavior towards his wife and changed interpretation of literature, the war-induced death that Septimus faced permanently distorted his perception of humanity and life into one that is perpetuated by a numbing state of pessimism.

Upon his return from the War, Septimus enters an unfulfilling and tragic marriage with his wife Lucrezia. His marriage to Rezia, a woman who still takes pleasure in the ordinary elements of life such as appreciating superficial beauty, intimate relationships, and raising children, is a situation that highlights Septimus' newfound indifference towards life. "Far away he heard her sobbing, he heard it accurately, he noticed it distinctly... But he felt nothing." (Woolf 90). Whereas the expected human reaction to the suffering of a loved one would be exercising sympathy, Septimus' complete lack of a reaction towards the grief of his wife speaks to his depressed state of mind; it suggests that the intensity of the loss of his friend, Evans, has possibly desensitized Septimus to sorrow, and contributed to his current miserable mentality.

As Septimus continues spiraling into a vicious cycle of depression, self-worthlessness, and hatred, he exhibits particular hostility towards his interpretation of *human nature* (which possibly represents an embodiment of the lack of compassion within society). We recognize fragments of this hateful mentality

in his bleak post-war interpretation of Shakespeare, “How Shakespeare loathed humanity... this was now revealed to Septimus. The secret signal which one generation passes... to the next is loathing, hatred..” (Woolf 88). When compared to his flexible pre-war perception of literary works, “...devouring Shakespeare, Darwin, *The History of Civilisation*, and Bernard Shaw.” (Woolf 85), which was driven by an inextinguishable curiosity, he has certainly adopted a pessimistic presumptuousness (rather than an open-minded approach) in comprehending the ideas discussed by these notable authors. Assuming that his interpretation of literature is heavily influenced by his overall state of mind, we can confidently infer that Septimus’ post-war outlook towards his own existence has evolved into one characterized by depression and antipathy.

Rezia, having noticed the suffering of her husband, consults a psychiatrist, Sir William Bradshaw, for assistance; the Bradshaw resolves that Septimus must be taken to a rehabilitation facility that would be fit to attend to his mental needs. Septimus appears confused as to why such uprooting is necessary, and he ponders what could have invoked such a response from the psychiatrist, “But what was his crime? He could not remember it.” (Woolf 98). Clearly, Septimus sees no error, no abnormality, in his current mindset; he likely feels extremely trapped as the forenamed entity of *human nature* prevents those who wish to diagnose him from truly understanding his mental situation (even as they attempt to blindly enforce ineffective resolutions, such as confinement to a “home” or mental facility). Thus, Septimus’ final act, suicide, could have solely been an attempt to escape this forced prescription, to be liberated from the reaches of ignorant human nature.