

All Quiet on the Western Front – Leave – Chapter 7 Part II Group Work



Make SURE you have a timekeeper – stay focused, everyone have their books open and looked at, make sure you DO all of them completely (with appropriate quotes).

If this is a shortened time period – you may finish this during a period that you can all get together within the next two days (before school, or any other period). IF you cannot find a time to get together answer the questions that you did not get to on your own (make sure I get them by Monday).

1a. Page 155 – What does Paul grip as he leaves the train platform? Why? Go back to page 149 – begin reading the middle of the 1st real paragraph, “We have left our boots...” (and continue reading until the end of the paragraph). What specific connection can you make between these two pieces of text, between the incident with the women, and Paul’s return. Be very specific and take a look at our notes from these sections before you begin to answer the question.

1b. *I hope you love this question as much as I loved spotting the connection:* On page 155, Paul repeats the name of an old familiar street: “Bremmerstrasse, Bremmerstrasse.” Find the quote. Who is he talking to – what is he trying to convince himself of? Now examine the following quote from earlier in the book: “And even if these scenes of our youth were given back to us we would hardly know what to do. The tender, secret influence that passed from them into us could not rise again. We might be amongst them and move in them; we might remember and love them and be stirred by the sight of them. But it would be like gazing at the photograph of a dead comrade; those are his features, it is his face, and the days we spent together take on a mournful life in the memory; but the man himself it is not.”

Now, get ready for it, connect this (Paul repeating the street name and all that entails) to the “Speaking of Courage” chapter from *The Things They Carried*. Think hard (and feel free to throw your ideas off of other groups). How does Norman Bowker’s circling of the lake, his imaginary conversations, his awkward interaction at the A & W connect with Paul’s “incantation” of a street name? Here is the opening to that (from *Things*) chapter: The war was over and there was no place in particular to go. Norman Bowker followed the tar road on its seven-mile loop around the lake, then he started all over again, driving slowly, feeling safe inside his father’s big Chevy, now and then looking out on the lake to watch the boats and water-skiers and scenery. It was Sunday and it was summer, and the town seemed pretty much the same.”

Be very specific, thoughtful – and use whatever time you need to do this question (and your answer) justice.

2. What is the difference between Paul’s father and mother as far as their understanding of “front” vs. “home” rules go? You may want to begin on page 161 with “Was it very bad out there, Paul?” Do you remember what Paul said in an earlier chapter about how he would react if his father jumped into his trench – how does that fit in with his reaction to his father now? What doesn’t his father understand?

talisman: 1. A stone, ring, or other object engraved with figures or characters, to which are attributed the occult powers of the planetary influences and celestial configurations under which it was made; usually worn as an amulet to avert evil from or bring fortune to the wearer; also medicinally used to impart healing virtue; hence, any object held to be endowed with magic virtue; a charm.

In quot. 1638 applied to the telesms or consecrated statues set up in Egypt, and later in Greece, to protect the city or community: see TELESMA. Among Muslim nations, the potent principle is held to be contained in verses from the Koran engraved on the charm.

1638 JUNIUS Paint. Ancients 137 The inaugurated statues, which now adays by them that are curious of such things are called Talisman. **1652 GAULE Magastrom.** 41 To serve as a Talisman; as their Astrologers think, to aucupate the favour of Venus and the Moon against the influences of Scorpio and Mars. **1656 BLOUNT Glossogr., Talismans,** images, or figures made under certain constellations. **1663 BUTLER Hud.** I. 1. 530 For mystic learning, wondrous able In magic, talisman, and cabal. **1682 WHEELER Journ. Greece** III. 270 This Inscription is a kind of Talisman, or Charm. **1798 Loves of Triangles** I. 84 in *Anti-Jacobin* 23 Apr., Each scribbled Talisman, and smoky spell. **1825 SCOTT Talism.** xviii, Know, then, that the medicine..is a talisman, composed under certain aspects of the heavens. **1875 STUBBS Const. Hist.** II. xiv. 45 He had stolen from Henry...a Talisman, which rendered its wearer invulnerable.

2. fig. Anything that acts as a charm, or by which extraordinary results are achieved.

1784 COWPER Task VI. 98 Books are not seldom talismans and spells By which the magic art of shrewder wits Holds an unthinking multitude enthralled. **1834 PRINGLE Afr. Sk.** xiv. 479 Let us subdue savage Africa by Justice, by Kindness, by the talisman of Christian Truth. **1908 H. A. L. FISHER Bonapartism** vi. 123 Bonapartism can never again stand as the..talisman of victory.

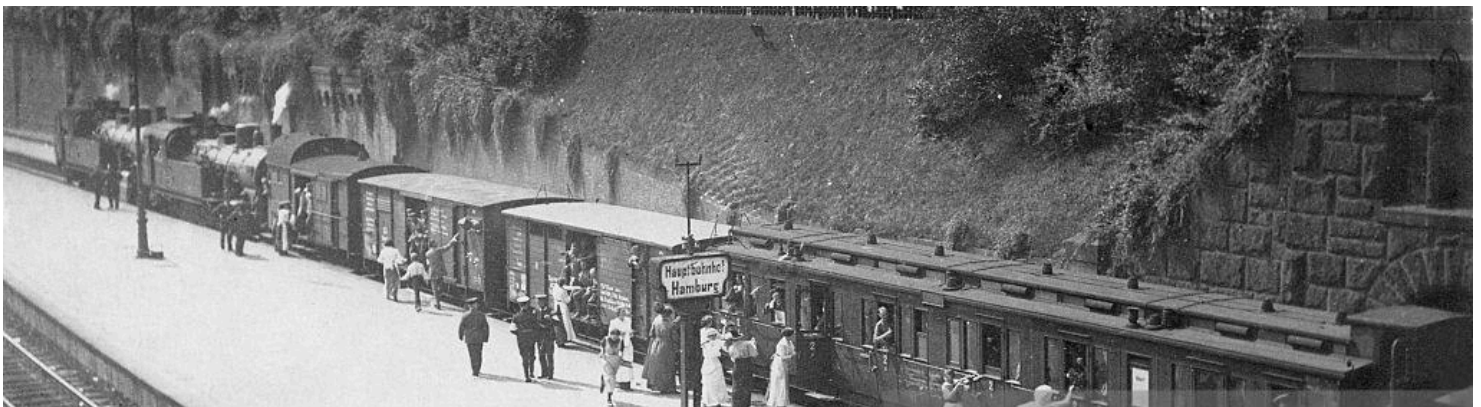
3a. Examine the definition in the box to the right (on page 1). What objects in Chapter 7 do your group see working or attempting to be worked as talismans? Throw around ideas (if you stuck look at the picture at the top of page 1) How and why does Paul hope to regain something (and what exactly?) through these objects (be specific). Name some examples of talismans from *The Things They Carried*? List them (three great examples come to my mind). Now, do you remember objects such as the Space Pen (little Alma's) or Leo's photo (both from *The History of Love*) – how did these (from both earlier works) serve a similar purpose (as in what you wrote their purpose is for *All Quiet*)?

3b. One of those talisman that I hoped your group spotted (from *All Quiet*) was Paul's Butterfly Collection. Have we seen butterflies before in this book (ahh – a bookend)? But last time they were free – relate this set of bookends to the “geese” bookends (with a very similar dynamic relationship). Two other books that we've read talked about butterflies (with I believe the same “echo” that you just wrote about) – relate those books' use of butterflies (hints: Misha, extinction; the pale young man) as a metaphor, to this book's.



3c. In the film *Everything is Illuminated*, Lista (Augustina's sister) tells Jonathan, Alex, and the Grandfather – that the objects she saved (like the wedding ring) are not there for them – they are there for the ring. “You have to come back because it exists.” How can you very coolly tie this idea to Paul's books? Be specific and thoughtful. In *The Return of Martin Guerre* – there is the idea of the white breeches that Bertrande sewed for Martin (How many times must Arnaud have thought on them before he even came to Martin's village). Comment briefly.

4. Now turn to the middle of page 173 – Look very closely at the quote “Words, Words, Words...” What is quite ironic? While the quote seems to fit with what your group talked about for answer #5, how does it fit with what is in your hands (not this group sheet, the other thing)? Remember in Paul's encounter with the French girl earlier in this chapter (it seems like another lifetime ago, doesn't it?) he talks about the words they each (French & German) have – and their inability to communicate.¹ Connect.



HOMEWORK: Monday 1/6/20 – Chapter 8 – You need to have a copy of the book by this time. **Tuesday** – Chapter 9. **Weds** – Chapter 10 thru 244 **Thursday** – the rest of Chapter 10 **Friday** – Chapter 11 **Monday (1/13/20)** the rest of the book – 200 point quiz