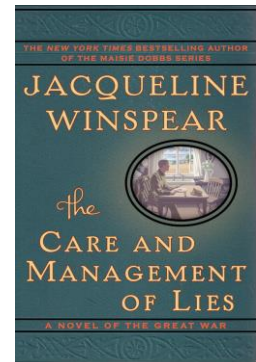


The Care and Management of Lies

Harper

By Jacqueline Winspear

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Questions for Discussion

1. Consider the three epigraphs that begin the novel, one each from the world of literature, politics, and domestic society. How is this representative of the story that follows?
2. What is the effect of beginning most chapters with an excerpt from *The Woman's Book*? What changes when, instead, a military manual is quoted?
3. What effects do the various allusions to other works of literature, in particular those of Charles Dickens, have on the novel?
4. Thea comes to resent her Dickensian name to the point of changing it once she becomes an adult. Why does she do this? What's the effect of re-naming a person or place?
5. Consider the title of the novel. In what ways might lies be important or justified? What might it mean to "manage" them?
6. On Kezia's wedding day, her mother gives her a gift of ten pounds and advises her to always keep "private money" for herself. Why is this important to her? In what other ways is economics involved in the women's struggle for equality?
7. Kezia makes a profound decision to give up the job she loves and become the wife of a farmer. What goes into her decision? How does her life on the farm limit or enhance her independence?
8. Considering her own satisfaction in her life, Kezia wonders if she is being too self-interested. But she is also wary of bartering "character for contentment." How should one balance concern for one's own happiness with a desire to please others?
9. Kezia is described as "a dreamer." What does this mean? In what ways does she prove to be a practical, grounded character? How is her best friend Thea similar or different?
10. What does Edmund Hawkes and his family story bring to the novel?
11. Of what significance is it that in the midst of the war Hawkes struggles to write poetry?

12. In what ways might the small act of throwing a brick through a window in the name of suffrage and the profound violence of the war be similar or different?
13. Discuss the place and role of food in the novel, from the farm to the table.
14. Separated by the war, Kezia writes to Tom extensive descriptions of meals that she might make in his honor. In what ways is this valuable to Tom? To the men in his battalion?
15. What do we gradually learn about Kezia in her lovely descriptions of food?
16. What is the overall effect of including letters as a significant part of the novel?
17. Examine the complex political and emotional experience of having a polite, humble, German prisoner of war on the farm in Kent. How do you feel about Kezia's decision at the end of the novel?