



WILLIAM FAULKNER

The Sound and the Fury

WILLIAM FAULKNER'S WORKS

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MOSQUITOES (1927)
SARTORIS (1929) [FLAGS IN THE DUST (1973)]
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UNCOLLECTED STORIES OF WILLIAM FAULKNER (1979, POSTHUMOUS)



INTERNATIONAL

THE SOUND AND THE FURY

The corrected text



William Faulkner

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Publisher's Note

This edition of *The Sound and the Fury* follows the text as corrected in 1984. The text is based on a comparison—under the direction of Noel Polk—of the first edition and Faulkner's original manuscript and carbon typescript. An editor's note on the corrections follows the text.

The Appendix to *The Sound and the Fury* was originally written for *The Portable Faulkner*, edited by Malcolm Cowley, and published in 1946 by The Viking Press.

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April Seventh, 1928.

Through the fence, between the curling flower spaces, I could see them hitting. They were coming toward where the flag was and I went along the fence. Luster was hunting in the grass by the flower tree. They took the flag out, and they were hitting. Then they put the flag back and they went to the table, and he hit and the other hit. Then they went on, and I went along the fence. Luster came away from the flower tree and we went along the fence and they stopped and we stopped and I looked through the fence while Luster was hunting in the grass.

“Here, caddie.” He hit. They went away across the pasture. I held to the fence and watched them going away.

“Listen at you, now.” Luster said. “Aint you something, thirty three years old, going on that way. After I done went all the way to town to buy you that cake. Hush up that moaning. Aint you going to help me find that quarter so I can go to the show tonight.”

They were hitting little, across the pasture. I went back along the fence to where the flag was. It flapped on the bright grass and the trees.

“Come on.” Luster said. “We done looked there. They aint no more coming right now. Les go down to the branch and find that quarter before them niggers finds it.”

It was red, flapping on the pasture. Then there was a bird slanting and tilting on it. Luster threw. The flag flapped on the bright grass and the trees. I held to the fence.

“Shut up that moaning.” Luster said. “I cant make them come if they aint coming, can I. If you dont hush up, mammy aint going to have no birthday for you. If you dont hush, you know what I going to do. I going to eat that cake all up. Eat them candles, too. Eat all them thirty three candles. Come on, les go down to the branch. I got to find my quarter. Maybe we can find

one of they balls. Here. Here they is. Way over yonder. See.” He came to the fence and pointed his arm. “See them. They aint coming back here no more. Come on.”

We went along the fence and came to the garden fence, where our shadows were. My shadow was higher than Luster’s on the fence. We came to the broken place and went through it.

“Wait a minute.” Luster said. “You snagged on that nail again. Cant you never crawl through here without snagging on that nail.”

Caddy uncaught me and we crawled through. Uncle Maury said to not let anybody see us, so we better stoop over, Caddy said. Stoop over, Benjy. Like this, see. We stooped over and crossed the garden, where the flowers rasped and rattled against us. The ground was hard. We climbed the fence, where the pigs were grunting and snuffing. I expect they’re sorry because one of them got killed today, Caddy said. The ground was hard, churned and knotted.

Keep your hands in your pockets, Caddy said. Or they’ll get froze. You dont want your hands froze on Christmas, do you.

“It’s too cold out there.” Versh said. “You dont want to go out doors.”

“What is it now.” Mother said.

“He want to go out doors.” Versh said.

“Let him go.” Uncle Maury said.

“It’s too cold.” Mother said. “He’d better stay in. Benjamin. Stop that, now.”

“It wont hurt him.” Uncle Maury said.

“You, Benjamin.” Mother said. “If you dont be good, you’ll have to go to the kitchen.”

“Mammy say keep him out the kitchen today.” Versh said. “She say she got all that cooking to get done.”

“Let him go, Caroline.” Uncle Maury said. “You’ll worry yourself sick over him.”

“I know it.” Mother said. “It’s a judgment on me. I sometimes wonder.”

“I know, I know.” Uncle Maury said. “You must keep your strength up. I’ll make you a toddy.”

“It just upsets me that much more.” Mother said. “Dont you know it does.”

“You’ll feel better.” Uncle Maury said. “Wrap him up good, boy, and take him out for a while.”

Uncle Maury went away. Versh went away.

“Please hush.” Mother said. “We’re trying to get you out as fast as we can. I don’t want you to get sick.”

Versh put my overshoes and overcoat on and we took my cap and went out. Uncle Maury was putting the bottle away in the sideboard in the diningroom.

“Keep him out about half an hour, boy.” Uncle Maury said. “Keep him in the yard, now.”

“Yes, sir.” Versh said. “We don’t never let him get off the place.”

We went out doors. The sun was cold and bright.

“Where you heading for.” Versh said. “You don’t think you going to town, does you.” We went through the rattling leaves. The gate was cold. “You better keep them hands in your pockets.” Versh said. “You get them froze onto that gate, then what you do. Whyn’t you wait for them in the house.” He put my hands into my pockets. I could hear him rattling in the leaves. I could smell the cold. The gate was cold.

“Here some hickeynuts. Whooey. Git up that tree. Look here at this squirl, Benjy.”

I couldn’t feel the gate at all, but I could smell the bright cold.

“You better put them hands back in your pockets.”

Caddy was walking. Then she was running, her booksatchel swinging and jouncing behind her.

“Hello, Benjy.” Caddy said. She opened the gate and came in and stooped down. Caddy smelled like leaves. “Did you come to meet me.” she said. “Did you come to meet Caddy. What did you let him get his hands so cold for, Versh.”

“I told him to keep them in his pockets.” Versh said. “Holding on to that ahun gate.”

“Did you come to meet Caddy,” she said, rubbing my hands. “What is it. What are you trying to tell Caddy.” Caddy smelled like trees and like when she says we were asleep.

What are you moaning about, Luster said. You can watch them again when we get to the branch. Here. Here’s you a jimson weed. He gave me the flower. We went through the fence, into the lot.

“What is it.” Caddy said. “What are you trying to tell Caddy. Did they send him out, Versh.”

“Couldn’t keep him in.” Versh said. “He kept on until they let him go and he come right straight down here, looking through the gate.”

“What is it.” Caddy said. “Did you think it would be Christmas when I came home from school. Is that what you thought. Christmas is the day after tomorrow. Santy Claus, Benjy. Santy Claus. Come on, let’s run to the house and get warm.” She took my hand and we ran through the bright rustling leaves. We ran up the steps and out of the bright cold, into the dark cold. Uncle Maury was putting the bottle back in the sideboard. He called Caddy. Caddy said,

“Take him in to the fire, Versh. Go with Versh.” she said. “I’ll come in a minute.”

We went to the fire. Mother said,

“Is he cold, Versh.”

“Nome.” Versh said.

“Take his overcoat and overshoes off.” Mother said. “How many times do I have to tell you not to bring him into the house with his overshoes on.”

“Yessum.” Versh said. “Hold still, now.” He took my overshoes off and unbuttoned my coat. Caddy said,

“Wait, Versh. Cant he go out again, Mother. I want him to go with me.”

“You’d better leave him here.” Uncle Maury said. “He’s been out enough today.”

“I think you’d both better stay in.” Mother said. “It’s getting colder, Dilsey says.”

“Oh, Mother.” Caddy said.

“Nonsense.” Uncle Maury said. “She’s been in school all day. She needs the fresh air. Run along, Candace.”

“Let him go, Mother.” Caddy said. “Please. You know he’ll cry.”

“Then why did you mention it before him.” Mother said. “Why did you come in here. To give him some excuse to worry me again. You’ve been out enough today. I think you’d better sit down here and play with him.”

“Let them go, Caroline.” Uncle Maury said. “A little cold wont hurt them. Remember, you’ve got to keep your strength up.”

“I know.” Mother said. “Nobody knows how I dread Christmas. Nobody knows. I am not one of those women who can stand things. I wish for

Jason's and the children's sakes I was stronger."

"You must do the best you can and not let them worry you." Uncle Maury said. "Run along, you two. But dont stay out long, now. Your mother will worry."

"Yes, sir." Caddy said. "Come on, Benjy. We're going out doors again." She buttoned my coat and we went toward the door.

"Are you going to take that baby out without his overshoes." Mother said. "Do you want to make him sick, with the house full of company."

"I forgot." Caddy said. "I thought he had them on."

We went back. "You must think." Mother said. *Hold still now* Versh said. He put my overshoes on. "Someday I'll be gone, and you'll have to think for him." *Now stomp* Versh said. "Come here and kiss Mother, Benjamin."

Caddy took me to Mother's chair and Mother took my face in her hands and then she held me against her.

"My poor baby." she said. She let me go. "You and Versh take good care of him, honey."

"Yessum." Caddy said. We went out. Caddy said,

"You needn't go, Versh. I'll keep him for a while."

"All right." Versh said. "I aint going out in that cold for no fun." He went on and we stopped in the hall and Caddy knelt and put her arms around me and her cold bright face against mine. She smelled like trees.

"You're not a poor baby. Are you. Are you. You've got your Caddy. Haven't you got your Caddy."

Cant you shut up that moaning and slobbering, Luster said. Aint you shamed of yourself, making all this racket. We passed the carriage house, where the carriage was. It had a new wheel.

"Git in, now, and set still until your maw come." Dilsey said. She shoved me into the carriage. T. P. held the reins. "Clare I dont see how come Jason wont get a new surrey." Dilsey said. "This thing going to fall to pieces under you all some day. Look at them wheels."

Mother came out, pulling her veil down. She had some flowers.

"Where's Roskus." she said.

"Roskus cant lift his arms, today." Dilsey said. "T. P. can drive all right."

"I'm afraid to." Mother said. "It seems to me you all could furnish me with a driver for the carriage once a week. It's little enough I ask, Lord

knows.”

“You know just as well as me that Roskus got the rheumatism too bad to do more than he have to, Miss Cahline.” Dilsey said. “You come on and get in, now. T. P. can drive you just as good as Roskus.”

“I’m afraid to.” Mother said. “With the baby.”

Dilsey went up the steps. “You calling that thing a baby.” she said. She took Mother’s arm. “A man big as T. P. Come on, now, if you going.”

“I’m afraid to.” Mother said. They came down the steps and Dilsey helped Mother in. “Perhaps it’ll be the best thing, for all of us.” Mother said.

“Aint you shamed, talking that way.” Dilsey said. “Dont you know it’ll take more than a eighteen year old nigger to make Queenie run away. She older than him and Benjy put together. And dont you start no projecking with Queenie, you hear me. T. P. If you dont drive to suit Miss Cahline, I going to put Roskus on you. He aint too tied up to do that.”

“Yessum.” T. P. said.

“I just know something will happen.” Mother said. “Stop, Benjamin.”

“Give him a flower to hold.” Dilsey said. “That what he wanting.” She reached her hand in.

“No, no.” Mother said. “You’ll have them all scattered.”

“You hold them.” Dilsey said. “I’ll get him one out.” She gave me a flower and her hand went away.

“Go on now, fore Quentin see you and have to go too.” Dilsey said.

“Where is she.” Mother said.

“She down to the house playing with Luster.” Dilsey said. “Go on, T. P. Drive that surrey like Roskus told you, now.”

“Yessum.” T. P. said. “Hum up, Queenie.”

“Quentin.” Mother said. “Dont let ”

“Course I is.” Dilsey said.

The carriage jolted and crunched on the drive. “I’m afraid to go and leave Quentin.” Mother said. “I’d better not go. T. P.” We went through the gate, where it didn’t jolt anymore. T. P. hit Queenie with the whip.

“You, T. P.” Mother said.

“Got to get her going.” T. P. said. “Keep her wake up till we get back to the barn.”

“Turn around.” Mother said. “I’m afraid to go and leave Quentin.”

“Cant turn here.” T. P. said. Then it was broader.

“Cant you turn here.” Mother said.

“All right.” T. P. said. We began to turn.

“You, T. P.” Mother said, clutching me.

“I got to turn around some how.” T. P. said. “Whoa, Queenie.” We stopped.

“You’ll turn us over.” Mother said.

“What you want to do, then.” T. P. said.

“I’m afraid for you to try to turn around.” Mother said.

“Get up, Queenie.” T. P. said. We went on.

“I just know Dilsey will let something happen to Quentin while I’m gone.” Mother said. “We must hurry back.”

“Hum up, there.” T. P. said. He hit Queenie with the whip.

“You, T. P.” Mother said, clutching me. I could hear Queenie’s feet and the bright shapes went smooth and steady on both sides, the shadows of them flowing across Queenie’s back. They went on like the bright tops of wheels. Then those on one side stopped at the tall white post where the soldier was. But on the other side they went on smooth and steady, but a little slower.

“What do you want.” Jason said. He had his hands in his pockets and a pencil behind his ear.

“We’re going to the cemetery.” Mother said.

“All right.” Jason said. “I dont aim to stop you, do I. Was that all you wanted with me, just to tell me that.”

“I know you wont come.” Mother said. “I’d feel safer if you would.”

“Safe from what.” Jason said. “Father and Quentin cant hurt you.”

Mother put her handkerchief under her veil. “Stop it, Mother.” Jason said. “Do you want to get that damn looney to bawling in the middle of the square. Drive on, T. P.”

“Hum up, Queenie.” T. P. said.

“It’s a judgment on me.” Mother said. “But I’ll be gone too, soon.”

“Here.” Jason said.

“Whoa.” T. P. said. Jason said,

“Uncle Maury’s drawing on you for fifty. What do you want to do about it.”

“Why ask me.” Mother said. “I dont have any say so. I try not to worry you and Dilsey. I’ll be gone soon, and then you ”

“Go on, T. P.” Jason said.

“Hum up, Queenie.” T. P. said. The shapes flowed on. The ones on the other side began again, bright and fast and smooth, like when Caddy says we are going to sleep.

Cry baby, Luster said. Aint you shamed. We went through the barn. The stalls were all open. You aint got no spotted pony to ride now, Luster said. The floor was dry and dusty. The roof was falling. The slanting holes were full of spinning yellow. What do you want to go that way, for. You want to get your head knocked off with one of them balls.

“Keep your hands in your pockets.” Caddy said. “Or they’ll be froze. You dont want your hands froze on Christmas, do you.”

We went around the barn. The big cow and the little one were standing in the door, and we could hear Prince and Queenie and Fancy stomping inside the barn. “If it wasn’t so cold, we’d ride Fancy.” Caddy said. “But it’s too cold to hold on today.” Then we could see the branch, where the smoke was blowing. “That’s where they are killing the pig.” Caddy said. “We can come back by there and see them.” We went down the hill.

“You want to carry the letter.” Caddy said. “You can carry it.” She took the letter out of her pocket and put it in mine. “It’s a Christmas present.” Caddy said. “Uncle Maury is going to surprise Mrs Patterson with it. We got to give it to her without letting anybody see it. Keep your hands in your pockets good, now.” We came to the branch.

“It’s froze.” Caddy said. “Look.” She broke the top of the water and held a piece of it against my face. “Ice. That means how cold it is.” She helped me across and we went up the hill. “We cant even tell Mother and Father. You know what I think it is. I think it’s a surprise for Mother and Father and Mr Patterson both, because Mr Patterson sent you some candy. Do you remember when Mr Patterson sent you some candy last summer.”

There was a fence. The vine was dry, and the wind rattled in it.

“Only I dont see why Uncle Maury didn’t send Versh.” Caddy said. “Versh wont tell.” Mrs Patterson was looking out the window. “You wait here.” Caddy said. “Wait right here, now. I’ll be back in a minute. Give me the letter.” She took the letter out of my pocket. “Keep your hands in your pockets.” She climbed the fence with the letter in her hand and went

through the brown, rattling flowers. Mrs Patterson came to the door and opened it and stood there.

Mr Patterson was chopping in the green flowers. He stopped chopping and looked at me. Mrs Patterson came across the garden, running. When I saw her eyes I began to cry. You idiot, Mrs Patterson said, I told him never to send you alone again. Give it to me. Quick. Mr Patterson came fast, with the hoe. Mrs Patterson leaned across the fence, reaching her hand. She was trying to climb the fence. Give it to me, she said, Give it to me. Mr Patterson climbed the fence. He took the letter. Mrs Patterson's dress was caught on the fence. I saw her eyes again and I ran down the hill.

"They aint nothing over yonder but houses." Luster said. "We going down to the branch."

They were washing down at the branch. One of them was singing. I could smell the clothes flapping, and the smoke blowing across the branch.

"You stay down here." Luster said. "You aint got no business up yonder. Them folks hit you, sho."

"What he want to do."

"He dont know what he want to do." Luster said. "He think he want to go up yonder where they knocking that ball. You sit down here and play with your jimson weed. Look at them chillen playing in the branch, if you got to look at something. How come you cant behave yourself like folks." I sat down on the bank, where they were washing, and the smoke blowing blue.

"Is you all seen anything of a quarter down here." Luster said.

"What quarter."

"The one I had here this morning." Luster said. "I lost it somewhere. It fell through this here hole in my pocket. If I dont find it I cant go to the show tonight."

"Where'd you get a quarter, boy. Find it in white folks' pocket while they aint looking."

"Got it at the getting place." Luster said. "Plenty more where that one come from. Only I got to find that one. Is you all found it yet."

"I aint studying no quarter. I got my own business to tend to."

"Come on here." Luster said. "Help me look for it."

"He wouldn't know a quarter if he was to see it, would he."

"He can help look just the same." Luster said. "You all going to the show tonight."

“Dont talk to me about no show. Time I get done over this here tub I be too tired to lift my hand to do nothing.”

“I bet you be there.” Luster said. “I bet you was there last night. I bet you all be right there when that tent open.”

“Be enough niggers there without me. Was last night.”

“Nigger’s money good as white folks, I reckon.”

“White folks gives nigger money because know first white man comes along with a band going to get it all back, so nigger can go to work for some more.”

“Aint nobody going make you go to that show.”

“Aint yet. Aint thought of it, I reckon.”

“What you got against white folks.”

“Aint got nothing against them. I goes my way and lets white folks go theirs. I aint studying that show.”

“Got a man in it can play a tune on a saw. Play it like a banjo.”

“You go last night.” Luster said. “I going tonight. If I can find where I lost that quarter.”

“You going take him with you, I reckon.”

“Me.” Luster said. “You reckon I be found anywhere with him, time he start bellering.”

“What does you do when he start bellering.”

“I whips him.” Luster said. He sat down and rolled up his overalls. They played in the branch.

“You all found any balls yet.” Luster said.

“Aint you talking biggity. I bet you better not let your grandmammy hear you talking like that.”

Luster got into the branch, where they were playing. He hunted in the water, along the bank.

“I had it when we was down here this morning.” Luster said.

“Where bouts you lose it.”

“Right out this here hole in my pocket.” Luster said. They hunted in the branch. Then they all stood up quick and stopped, then they splashed and fought in the branch. Luster got it and they squatted in the water, looking up the hill through the bushes.

“Where is they.” Luster said.

“Aint in sight yet.”

Luster put it in his pocket. They came down the hill.

“Did a ball come down here.”

“It ought to be in the water. Didn’t any of you boys see it or hear it.”

“Aint heard nothing come down here.” Luster said. “Heard something hit that tree up yonder. Dont know which way it went.”

They looked in the branch.

“Hell. Look along the branch. It came down here. I saw it.”

They looked along the branch. Then they went back up the hill.

“Have you got that ball.” the boy said.

“What I want with it.” Luster said. “I aint seen no ball.”

The boy got in the water. He went on. He turned and looked at Luster again. He went on down the branch.

The man said “Caddie” up the hill. The boy got out of the water and went up the hill.

“Now, just listen at you.” Luster said. “Hush up.”

“What he moaning about now.”

“Lawd knows.” Luster said. “He just starts like that. He been at it all morning. Cause it his birthday, I reckon.”

“How old he.”

“He thirty three.” Luster said. “Thirty three this morning.”

“You mean, he been three years old thirty years.”

“I going by what mammy say.” Luster said. “I dont know. We going to have thirty three candles on a cake, anyway. Little cake. Wont hardly hold them. Hush up. Come on back here.” He came and caught my arm. “You old looney.” he said. “You want me to whip you.”

“I bet you will.”

“I is done it. Hush, now.” Luster said. “Aint I told you you cant go up there. They’ll knock your head clean off with one of them balls. Come on, here.” He pulled me back. “Sit down.” I sat down and he took off my shoes and rolled up my trousers. “Now, git in that water and play and see can you stop that slobbering and moaning.”

I hushed and got in the water *and Roskus came and said to come to supper and Caddy said,*

It’s not supper time yet. I’m not going.

She was wet. We were playing in the branch and Caddy squatted down and got her dress wet and Versh said,

“Your mommer going to whip you for getting your dress wet.”

“She’s not going to do any such thing.” Caddy said.

“How do you know.” Quentin said.

“That’s all right how I know.” Caddy said. “How do you know.”

“She said she was.” Quentin said. “Besides, I’m older than you.”

“I’m seven years old.” Caddy said. “I guess I know.”

“I’m older than that.” Quentin said. “I go to school. Dont I, Versh.”

“I’m going to school next year.” Caddy said. “When it comes. Aint I, Versh.”

“You know she whip you when you get your dress wet.” Versh said.

“It’s not wet.” Caddy said. She stood up in the water and looked at her dress. “I’ll take it off.” she said. “Then it’ll dry.”

“I bet you wont.” Quentin said.

“I bet I will.” Caddy said.

“I bet you better not.” Quentin said.

Caddy came to Versh and me and turned her back.

“Unbutton it, Versh.” she said.

“Dont you do it, Versh.” Quentin said.

“Taint none of my dress.” Versh said.

“You unbutton it, Versh.” Caddy said. “Or I’ll tell Dilsey what you did yesterday.” So Versh unbuttoned it.

“You just take your dress off.” Quentin said. Caddy took her dress off and threw it on the bank. Then she didn’t have on anything but her bodice and drawers, and Quentin slapped her and she slipped and fell down in the water. When she got up she began to splash water on Quentin, and Quentin splashed water on Caddy. Some of it splashed on Versh and me and Versh picked me up and put me on the bank. He said he was going to tell on Caddy and Quentin, and then Quentin and Caddy began to splash water at Versh. He got behind a bush.

“I’m going to tell mammy on you all.” Versh said.

Quentin climbed up the bank and tried to catch Versh, but Versh ran away and Quentin couldn’t. When Quentin came back Versh stopped and hollered that he was going to tell. Caddy told him that if he wouldn’t tell, they’d let him come back. So Versh said he wouldn’t, and they let him.

“Now I guess you’re satisfied.” Quentin said. “We’ll both get whipped now.”

“I dont care.” Caddy said. “I’ll run away.”

“Yes you will.” Quentin said.

“I’ll run away and never come back.” Caddy said. I began to cry. Caddy turned around and said “Hush” So I hushed. Then they played in the branch. Jason was playing too. He was by himself further down the branch. Versh came around the bush and lifted me down into the water again. Caddy was all wet and muddy behind, and I started to cry and she came and squatted in the water.

“Hush now.” she said. “I’m not going to run away.” So I hushed. Caddy smelled like trees in the rain.

What is the matter with you, Luster said. Cant you get done with that moaning and play in the branch like folks.

Whyn’t you take him on home. Didn’t they told you not to take him off the place.

He still think they own this pasture, Luster said. Cant nobody see down here from the house, noways.

We can. And folks dont like to look at a looney. Taint no luck in it.

Roskus came and said to come to supper and Caddy said it wasn’t supper time yet.

“Yes tis.” Roskus said. “Dilsey say for you all to come on to the house. Bring them on, Versh.” He went up the hill, where the cow was lowing.

“Maybe we’ll be dry by the time we get to the house.” Quentin said.

“It was all your fault.” Caddy said. “I hope we do get whipped.” She put her dress on and Versh buttoned it.

“They wont know you got wet.” Versh said. “It dont show on you. Less me and Jason tells.”

“Are you going to tell, Jason.” Caddy said.

“Tell on who.” Jason said.

“He wont tell.” Quentin said. “Will you, Jason.”

“I bet he does tell.” Caddy said. “He’ll tell Damuddy.”

“He cant tell her.” Quentin said. “She’s sick. If we walk slow it’ll be too dark for them to see.”

“I dont care whether they see or not.” Caddy said. “I’m going to tell, myself. You carry him up the hill, Versh.”

“Jason wont tell.” Quentin said. “You remember that bow and arrow I made you, Jason.”

“It’s broke now.” Jason said.

“Let him tell.” Caddy said. “I dont give a cuss. Carry Maury up the hill, Versh.” Versh squatted and I got on his back.

See you all at the show tonight, Luster said. Come on, here. We got to find that quarter.

“If we go slow, it’ll be dark when we get there.” Quentin said.

“I’m not going slow.” Caddy said. We went up the hill, but Quentin didn’t come. He was down at the branch when we got to where we could smell the pigs. They were grunting and snuffing in the trough in the corner. Jason came behind us, with his hands in his pockets. Roskus was milking the cow in the barn door.

The cows came jumping out of the barn.

“Go on.” T. P. said. “Holler again. I going to holler myself. Whooey.” Quentin kicked T. P. again. He kicked T. P. into the trough where the pigs ate and T. P. lay there. “Hot dog.” T. P. said. “Didn’t he get me then. You see that white man kick me that time. Whooey.”

I wasn’t crying, but I couldn’t stop. I wasn’t crying, but the ground wasn’t still, and then I was crying. The ground kept sloping up and the cows ran up the hill. T. P. tried to get up. He fell down again and the cows ran down the hill. Quentin held my arm and we went toward the barn. Then the barn wasn’t there and we had to wait until it came back. I didn’t see it come back. It came behind us and Quentin set me down in the trough where the cows ate. I held on to it. It was going away too, and I held to it. The cows ran down the hill again, across the door. I couldn’t stop. Quentin and T. P. came up the hill, fighting. T. P. was falling down the hill and Quentin dragged him up the hill. Quentin hit T. P. I couldn’t stop.

“Stand up.” Quentin said. “You stay right here. Dont you go away until I get back.”

“Me and Benjy going back to the wedding.” T. P. said. “Whooey.”

Quentin hit T. P. again. Then he began to thump T. P. against the wall. T. P. was laughing. Every time Quentin thumped him against the wall he tried to say Whooey, but he couldn’t say it for laughing. I quit crying, but I couldn’t stop. T. P. fell on me and the barn door went away. It went down the hill and T. P. was fighting by himself and he fell down again. He was still laughing, and I couldn’t stop, and I tried to get up and I fell down, and I couldn’t stop. Versh said,

“You sho done it now. I’ll declare if you aint. Shut up that yelling.”

T. P. was still laughing. He flopped on the door and laughed. “Whooey.” he said. “Me and Benjy going back to the wedding. Sassprilluh.” T. P. said.

“Hush.” Versh said. “Where you get it.”

“Out the cellar.” T. P. said. “Whooey.”

“Hush up.” Versh said. “Where bouts in the cellar.”

“Anywhere.” T. P. said. He laughed some more. “Moren a hundred bottles lef. Moren a million. Look out, nigger, I going to holler.”

Quentin said, “Lift him up.”

Versh lifted me up.

“Drink this, Benjy.” Quentin said. The glass was hot. “Hush, now.” Quentin said. “Drink it.”

“Sassprilluh.” T. P. said. “Lemme drink it, Mr Quentin.”

“You shut your mouth.” Versh said. “Mr Quentin wear you out.”

“Hold him, Versh.” Quentin said.

They held me. It was hot on my chin and on my shirt. “Drink.” Quentin said. They held my head. It was hot inside me, and I began again. I was crying now, and something was happening inside me and I cried more, and they held me until it stopped happening. Then I hushed. It was still going around, and then the shapes began. Open the crib, Versh. They were going slow. Spread those empty sacks on the floor. They were going faster, almost fast enough. Now. Pick up his feet. They went on, smooth and bright. I could hear T. P. laughing. I went on with them, up the bright hill.

At the top of the hill Versh put me down. “Come on here, Quentin.” he called, looking back down the hill. Quentin was still standing there by the branch. He was chunking into the shadows where the branch was.

“Let the old skizzard stay there.” Caddy said. She took my hand and we went on past the barn and through the gate. There was a frog on the brick walk, squatting in the middle of it. Caddy stepped over it and pulled me on.

“Come on, Maury.” she said. It still squatted there until Jason poked at it with his toe.

“He’ll make a wart on you.” Versh said. The frog hopped away.

“Come on, Maury.” Caddy said.

“They got company tonight.” Versh said.

“How do you know.” Caddy said.

“With all them lights on.” Versh said. “Light in every window.”

“I reckon we can turn all the lights on without company, if we want to.” Caddy said.

“I bet it’s company.” Versh said. “You all better go in the back and slip upstairs.”

“I dont care.” Caddy said. “I’ll walk right in the parlor where they are.”

“I bet your pappy whip you if you do.” Versh said.

“I dont care.” Caddy said. “I’ll walk right in the parlor. I’ll walk right in the dining room and eat supper.”

“Where you sit.” Versh said.

“I’d sit in Damuddy’s chair.” Caddy said. “She eats in bed.”

“I’m hungry.” Jason said. He passed us and ran on up the walk. He had his hands in his pockets and he fell down. Versh went and picked him up.

“If you keep them hands out your pockets, you could stay on your feet.” Versh said. “You cant never get them out in time to catch yourself, fat as you is.”

Father was standing by the kitchen steps.

“Where’s Quentin.” he said.

“He coming up the walk.” Versh said. Quentin was coming slow. His shirt was a white blur.

“Oh.” Father said. Light fell down the steps, on him.

“Caddy and Quentin threw water on each other.” Jason said.

We waited.

“They did.” Father said. Quentin came, and Father said, “You can eat supper in the kitchen tonight.” He stooped and took me up, and the light came tumbling down the steps on me too, and I could look down at Caddy and Jason and Quentin and Versh. Father turned toward the steps. “You must be quiet, though.” he said.

“Why must we be quiet, Father.” Caddy said. “Have we got company.”

“Yes.” Father said.

“I told you they was company.” Versh said.

“You did not.” Caddy said. “I was the one that said there was. I said I would ”

“Hush.” Father said. They hushed and Father opened the door and we crossed the back porch and went in to the kitchen. Dilsey was there, and Father put me in the chair and closed the apron down and pushed it to the table, where supper was. It was steaming up.

“You mind Dilsey, now.” Father said. “Dont let them make any more noise than they can help, Dilsey.”

“Yes, sir.” Dilsey said. Father went away.

“Remember to mind Dilsey, now.” he said behind us. I leaned my face over where the supper was. It steamed up on my face.

“Let them mind me tonight, Father.” Caddy said.

“I wont.” Jason said. “I’m going to mind Dilsey.”

“You’ll have to, if Father says so.” Caddy said. “Let them mind me, Father.”

“I wont.” Jason said. “I wont mind you.”

“Hush.” Father said. “You all mind Caddy, then. When they are done, bring them up the back stairs, Dilsey.”

“Yes, sir.” Dilsey said.

“There.” Caddy said. “Now I guess you’ll mind me.”

“You all hush, now.” Dilsey said. “You got to be quiet tonight.”

“Why do we have to be quiet tonight.” Caddy whispered.

“Never you mind.” Dilsey said. “You’ll know in the Lawd’s own time.” She brought my bowl. The steam from it came and tickled my face. “Come here, Versh.” Dilsey said.

“When is the Lawd’s own time, Dilsey.” Caddy said.

“It’s Sunday.” Quentin said. “Dont you know anything.”

“Shhhhhh.” Dilsey said. “Didn’t Mr Jason say for you all to be quiet. Eat your supper, now. Here, Versh. Git his spoon.” Versh’s hand came with the spoon, into the bowl. The spoon came up to my mouth. The steam tickled into my mouth. Then we quit eating and we looked at each other and we were quiet, and then we heard it again and I began to cry.

“What was that.” Caddy said. She put her hand on my hand.

“That was Mother.” Quentin said. The spoon came up and I ate, then I cried again.

“Hush.” Caddy said. But I didn’t hush and she came and put her arms around me. Dilsey went and closed both the doors and then we couldn’t hear it.

“Hush, now.” Caddy said. I hushed and ate. Quentin wasn’t eating, but Jason was.

“That was Mother.” Quentin said. He got up.