

As I Lay Dying

by William Faulkner

5 to Hal Smith

1 DARL (1)

10 JEWEL and I come up from the field, following the path in single file. Although I am fifteen feet ahead of him, anyone watching us from the cotton-house can see

frayed deshilachado

The path runs straight as a plumb-line, worn smooth by feet and baked brick-hard by July, between the green tows of laid-by cotton, to the cotton-house in the centre of the field, where it turns and circles the cotton-house at four soft right angles and goes on across the field again, worn so by feet in fading precision.

laid-by: stored for later use

suave adj. 1 (of a person, esp. a man) smooth; polite; sophisticated. Afable, amable fino, cortés, diplomático / zalamero. 2 (of a wine etc.) bland, smooth. suave 1. adj. Liso y blando al tacto, en contraposición a tosco y áspero. 2. Blando, dulce, grato a los sentidos. 3. V. espíritu, manjar suave. 4. fig. Tranquilo, quieto, manso. 5. fig. Lento, moderado. 6. fig. Dócil, manejable o apacible. Aplícase, por lo común, al genio o natural.

chinking: (Am. English) material used to fill the spaces between logs in a building of logs

shimmer shine with a tremulous or faint diffused light. Reluciente, centelleante, radiante.

titilar 1. intr. Agitarse con ligero temblor alguna parte del organismo animal. 2. Centellear con ligero temblor un cuerpo luminoso. Relucir desumbrar 1. tr. Ofuscar la vista o confundirla con el exceso de luz. 2. fig. Dejar a alguien confuso o admirado. 3. fig. Producir gran impresión con estudiado exceso de lujo.

pale» es cognado y significa 'claros' cuando va con color como 'pale blue'; pero en los demás casos como aquí es mejor 'pálido' o 'falto de color

a cigar-store Indian: (Am. English) flat figure of an Am. Indian, cut out of plywood and used to advertise cigars

the bluff: a perpendicular piece of rock or ground upright, peñasco, risco

stanchion: support, soporte, montante, puntal

chips : slivers of wood

adze:a cutting tool with a curved blade set at right angles to its handle

When I reach the top he has quit sawing. Standing in a litter of chips, he

is fitting two of the boards together. Between the shadow spaces they are yellow as gold, like soft gold, bearing on their flanks in smooth undulations the marks of the adze blade: a good carpenter, Cash is. He holds the two planks on the trestle, fitted along the edges in a quarter of the finished box. He kneels and squints along the edge of them, then he lowers them and takes up the adze. A

good carpenter. Addie Bundren could not want a better one, a better box to lie in. It will give her confidence and comfort. I go on to the house, followed by the

Mientras Agonizo

de William Faulkner

tr. de Javier Coy

X

X

1 DARL

JEWEL y yo salimos del campo siguiendo el sendero en fila india. Aunque voy cinco metros delante de él, cualquiera que nos observe desde el cobertizo del algodón verá el roto sombrero de paja, medio deshecho, de Jewel sobresalir una cabeza por encima de la mía.

El sendero, alisado por pies y recocado, igual que adobe por julio, corre derecho como tirado a cordel por entre las hileras verdes de algodón preparado hasta el cobertizo del algodón del campo, donde se tuerce y rodea el cobertizo formando cuatro ángulos de suaves vértices, y vuelve a atravesar el campo, alisado por muchos pies con precisión que se va desvaneciendo.

El cobertizo del algodón es de ásperos troncos de entre los que hace tiempo que cayó la argamasa. Cuadrado, con la rota techumbre de una sola vertiente, se encorva como una desolada ruina deslumbrante bajo el sol, con una ventana alargada en cada una de las dos paredes, una frente a otra, que dan al sendero. Cuando llegamos a él, giro y sigo el sendero que lo rodea. Jewel, cinco metros detrás de mí, y mirando al frente, entra de una zancada por la ventana. Mirando todavía al frente, con sus ojos claros como madera incrustados en su cara de madera, cruza el cobertizo de cuatro zancadas con la rígida gravedad de un indio de muestra de un estanco**, que fuera vestido con un mono remendado y estuviese dotado de vida de cintura para abajo, y de una sola zancada atraviesa la ventana de enfrente y sale de nuevo al sendero justo cuando yo doblo la esquina. En fila india y separados por cinco metros y ahora Jewel delante, seguimos sendero arriba hacia el pie de la escarpada cuesta.

La carreta de Tull está junto al manantial, atada al poste, con las riendas enrolladas en el pescante. En la carreta hay dos asientos. Jewel se para en el manantial y coge la calabaza de la rama del sauce y bebe. Me adelanto y remonto el sendero; empiezo a oír la sierra de Cash.

Cuando llegó arriba ha dejado de serrar. De pie, parado entre un montón de virutas, ensambla dos tableros. Entre los espacios en sombra son amarillos como el oro, como oro blando, mostrando en sus flancos las suaves ondulaciones de las huellas de la azuela: ¡qué buen carpintero es Cash! Mantiene las dos tablas en el banco, ajustando los bordes para que formen una cuarta parte de la caja. Se arrodilla y enfila su superficie, luego los deja y coge la azuela. Buen carpintero. Addie Bundren no podría desear otro mejor, ni una caja mejor donde descansar. Le proporcionará confianza y comodidad. Sigo a la casa acompañado del

Darl (1)

In this section, Darl's unspoken thoughts as he walks towards the house are recorded; he notices many things in his environment, for instance, that, although he is walking ahead of his brother Jewel, anyone watching them from the house would still be able to see Jewel's head. We deduce from this that Jewel must be much taller than Darl.

** Los estancos, o su aproximado equivalente (cigarstore), se solían anunciar al público por medio de una talla de madera, en tamaño natural, de un indio con sus adornos de plumas, colocada a la puerta del establecimiento.

En lenguaje coloquial, wooden indian, o «indio de madera», llegó a emplearse a principios del siglo XX como sinónimo de persona muy callada, o incluso estúpida.

COMMENTARY: The words in this section are unspoken thoughts, none of them going beyond the possible limits of Darl's vocabulary. It is significant that Jewel is the very first word in the section, for we later discover that Darl is obsessively jealous of him.

When he thinks 'anyone watching us from the cotton-house can see Jewel's frayed and broken straw hat a full head above my own', we realise that Darl is revealing his concern with how Jewel and he are regarded in a wider context, especially by Addie.

The second and third paragraphs of the section show Darl's acute observation of all the particulars of his world; there are mathematical images, 'a plumb-line', 'circles', 'four soft right angles' and 'square', and the whole passage gives an impression of preciseness of observation. The description of Jewel creates an image of rigidity, with references to 'a wooden face' and 'the rigid gravity of a cigar-store Indian'.

As Darl approaches the house, he notices Tull's wagon and Cash cutting wood. These, we realise later, both relate to Addie's impending death. Darl is not disturbed by the fact that Addie can hear and see the preparations for her own burial, in fact he thinks 'Addie Bundren could not want a better box to lie in. It will give her confidence and comfort.'

The section ends with Darl hearing the noise of the adze: 'Chuck Chuck Chuck'.

The wide spacing of the words represents the pauses between the noises, an indication of how Faulkner tries to get close to the actual experience of the character.

Chuck Chuck Chuck Chack Chack Chack
of the adze. de la azuela.

5 2 X 2
CORA (1) CORA

Opossum: any mainly tree-living marsupial of the family Didelphidae, native to America, having a prehensile tail and hind feet with an opposable thumb

** Mamífero marsupial de tamaño mediano o pequeño y aspecto que recuerda a la rata; las extremidades tienen cinco dedos y las de atrás el pulgar oponible; la cola es prensil, lisa y desnuda. Es mamífero nocturno y omnívoro, que hace nido en los árboles y su preñez dura trece días.

10 SO I saved out the eggs and baked yesterday. The cakes turned out right well. We depend a lot on our chickens. They are good layers, what few we have left after the **possums** and **such**. Snakes, too, in the summer. A snake will break up a hen-house quicker than anything. So after they were going to cost so much more than Mr. Tull thought, and after I promised that the difference in the number of eggs would make it up, I had to be **more careful** than ever because it was on my final say-so we took them. We could have stocked cheaper chickens, but I gave my promise as Miss Lawington said when she advised me to get a good breed, because Mr. Tull himself admits that a good breed of cows or **hogs** pays in the long run. So when we lost so many of them we couldn't afford to use the eggs ourselves, because I could not have had Mr. Tull chide me when it was on my say-so we took them. So when Miss Lawington told me about the cakes I thought that I could **bake** them and earn enough at one time to increase the net value of the flock the equivalent of two head. And that by saving the eggs out one at a time, even the eggs wouldn't be costing anything. And that week they laid so well that I not only saved out enough eggs above what we had **engaged to sell**. to bake the cakes with, I had saved enough so that the flour and the sugar and the stove wood would not be costing anything. So I baked yesterday, more careful than ever I baked in my life, and the cakes turned out right well. But when we got to town this morning Miss Lawington told me the lady had changed her mind and was not going to have the party after all.

55 "She ought to taken those cakes anyway," Kate says.

"Well," I say, "I reckon she never had no use for them now."

65 "She ought to taken them," Kate says. "But those rich town ladies can change their minds. Poor folks can't."

70 Riches is nothing in the face of the Lord, for He can see into the heart. "Maybe I can sell them at the bazaar Saturday," I say. They turned out real well.

"You can't get two dollars a piece for them," Kate says.

75 "Well, it isn't like they cost me anything," I say. I saved them out and swapped a dozen of them for the sugar and flour. It isn't like

CONQUE ayer recogí los huevos y preparé el horno. Los bollos me salieron muy bien. Dependemos mucho de nuestras gallinas. Son buenas ponedoras; las pocas que nos dejan las **zangüeyas** ^{animales perjudiciales a la caza menor, como la zorra, el gato, morpís, el ptilano, etc.} y **alimañas** así. También las serpientes, en verano. Una serpiente se cuela en un gallinero más rápido que nada. Conque después de que nos costaran mucho más de lo que creía Mr. Tull, y después de prometerle yo que pagaríamos la diferencia con los huevos que pusieran, tengo que andarme con mucho **más cuidado** que nunca, porque fue por mí «de acuerdo» final por lo que las compramos. Podríamos haber comprado unas gallinas más baratas, pero yo estuve de acuerdo cuando Miss Lawington me aconsejó que las comprásemos de buena raza, porque el propio Mr. Tull admite que una buena raza de vacas o **cerdos** a la larga compensa. De modo que como nos hemos quedado sin tantas no nos atrevemos a quedarnos con los huevos para nosotros, porque no podría soportar los gruñidos de Mr. Tull, pues si las compramos fue por mí. Conque cuando Miss Lawington me habló de los bollos pensé que podría **hacerlos** yo y ganar lo suficiente de una vez como para aumentar el valor neto del corral en el equivalente a dos gallinas. Y que echando un huevo menos cada vez, incluso los huevos no me costarían nada. Y esta semana pusieron tantos que no sólo ahorré bastantes más huevos de los que **pensaba vender**, con los que hacer los bollos, además había ahorrado los bastantes como para que la harina y el azúcar y la leña del horno me salieran por nada. Conque preparé los bollos ayer, con más cuidado que nunca en mi vida, y los bollos me salieron muy bien. Pero cuando fuimos esta mañana al pueblo Miss Lawington me dijo que la señora había cambiado de idea y al final no iba a celebrar la fiesta.

—De todos modos debiera quedarse con los bollos —dice Kate.

—Claro —digo yo—, aunque para mí que ahora ya no le hacen falta.

—Debiera quedarse con ellos —dice Kate—. Pero estas señoras ricas del pueblo pueden cambiar de idea. Los pobres, no.

La riqueza no es nada delante del Señor, pues Él ve dentro de los corazones. —A lo mejor el sábado los puedo vender en el mercadillo de la parroquia —digo—. Me salieron bien de verdad.

—No sacarás ni dos dólares por cada uno —dice Kate.

—Bueno, es como si no me hubieran costado nada —digo yo.
^{Los he ido apartando poco a poco} **Los cogí en el corral** y cambié una docena por el azúcar y la harina. Es como si

Cora (1)

In this section we find the spoken and unspoken words of Cora Tull, a neighbour of the Bundrens. She is sitting by Addie's bed, keeping the dying woman company but following her own train of thought. When her thoughts eventually turn to the dying Addie they conflict with her spoken words. She says that Addie will soon be well enough to bake cakes, but she believes that Addie will die.

COMMENTARY: This section demonstrates the effectiveness of Faulkner's technique, for we see how the unspoken thoughts of the character reveal that character's personality and how they flow around and away from the immediate environment of the character. **Cora is exposed as a woman of limited vision, liable to think long and hard on the small incidents of her life and to think of them in a passive way. This passivity is encouraged by Cora's religious beliefs and the only time that her vocabulary goes beyond the narrowly colloquial is when she thinks of God**, using the language which the preacher must use, such as 'eternal and everlasting salvation'. Cora's passivity and limited responses contrast sharply with those of Darl, two of whose sections appear either side of Cora (1). They also contrast sharply, in their **acceptance of the world as it is**, with the feelings of the woman beside whose bed Cora sits, feelings revealed in Addie's only section in the book.

Cora uses the language of religion in an incantatory way, the long words providing a soothing chorus against which the hardships of life may be set and diminished. Religion has also given Cora an idea of how other people should behave and we sense that she does not altogether approve of the Bundrens. She talks of Addie's 'blindness', something which is made more explicit in Cora's later sections but which obviously implies some sort of **moral judgement on Addie**. More generally, Faulkner successfully creates the **atmosphere of the sick room in this section, with Cora sitting in silence most of the time, thinking her own thoughts and only occasionally becoming aware of those around her**. The words which are actually spoken are sporadic and infrequent, thus heightening the sense of time hanging heavily for those who sit by Addie's bedside.

the cakes cost me anything, as Mr. Tull himself realizes that the eggs I saved were over and beyond what we had engaged to sell, so it was like we had found the eggs or they had been given to us.

“She ought to taken those cakes when she same as gave you her word.” Kate says. The Lord can see into the heart. If it is His will that come folks has different ideas of honesty from other folks, it is not my place to question His decree.

“I reckon she never had any use for them,” I say. They turned out real well, too.

The quilt is drawn up to her chin, hot as it is, with only her two hands and her face outside. She is propped on the pillow, with her head raised so she can see out the window, and we can hear him every time he takes up the adze or the saw. If we were deaf we could almost watch her face and hear him, see him. Her face is wasted away so that the bones draw just under the skin in white fines. Her eyes are like two candles when you watch them gutter down into the sockets of iron candle-sticks. But the eternal and the everlasting salvation and grace is not upon her.

“They turned out real nice,” I say. “But not like the cakes Addie used to bake.” You can see that girl’s washing and ironing in the pillow-slip, if ironed it ever was. Maybe it will reveal her blindness to her, laying there at the mercy and the ministration of four men and a tom-boy girl. “There’s not a woman in this section could ever bake with Addie Bundren,” I say. “First thing we know she’ll be up and baking again, and then we won’t have any sale for ours at all.” Under the quilt she makes no more of a hump than a bar would, and the only way you can tell she is breathing is by the sound of the mattress shucks. Even the hair at her cheek does not move, even with that girl standing right over her, fanning her with the fan. While we watch she swaps the fan to the other hand without stopping it.

“Is she sleeping?” Kate whispers.

“She’s just watching Cash yonder,” the girl says. We can hear the saw in the board. It sounds like snoring. Eula turns on the trunk and looks out the window. Her necklace looks real nice with her red hat. You wouldn’t think it only cost twentyfive cents.

“She ought to taken those cakes,” Kate says.

I could have used the money real well. But it’s not like they cost me anything except the baking. I can tell him that anybody is likely to make a miscue, but it’s not all of them that

los bollos no me hubieran costado, pues el propio Mr. Tull comprende que los huevos que ahorré eran muchos más de los que pensábamos vender, conque era como si hubiéramos encontrado los huevos o nos los hubieran dado.

—Debiera quedarme con esos bollos, X pues te los encargó ella—dice Kate.

* El señor ve dentro de los corazones. Si es su voluntad que unas personas tengan ideas sobre la honradez distintas que otras, no me toca discutir sus designios.

—Para mí que nunca los necesitó —digo—. *Pero me salieron ricos de verdad.

Tiene la colcha subida hasta la barbilla, con todo el calor que hace, y sólo las dos manos y la cara destapadas. Está apoyada en la almohada, con la cabeza erguida de modo que pueda mirar por la ventana, y nosotros oímos a Cash* cada vez que coje la azuela o la sierra. Si fuéramos sordos, con sólo mirarle la cara a ella casi podríamos oír a Cash, verle. Tiene la cara tan consumida que los huesos se le dibujan debajo de la piel como líneas blancas. Sus ojos son igual que dos velas a las que ves derretirse en los soportes de un candelabro de hierro. Pero la salvación eterna y perdurable y la gracia no han descendido sobre ella.

—Me salieron ricos de verdad —digo—. Pero no como los bollos que solía hacer Addie. — Se puede ver cómo lava y plancha esa chica fijándose en la funda de la almohada, si es que la ha planchado alguna vez. Puede que eso hiciera a Addie consciente de su ceguera: estar allí tumbada a merced de cuatro hombres y una marimacho—. No hay mujer en estos contornos capaz de amasar como Addie Bundren —digo—. Si se levantara y amasase otra vez, lo sabríamos enseguida porque las demás no venderíamos nada.

Debajo de la colcha no abulta más que una tabla, y el único modo de saber que respira es oyendo el crujió de las [58] hojas** del jergón***. Ni siquiera se le mueve el pelo que tiene pegado a la cara, ni con esa chica de pie, a su lado, dándole aire con el abanico. Mientras miramos se pasa el abanico a la otra mano sin dejar de moverlo.

—¿Duerme? —susurra Kate.

—Está mirando a Cash, allá abajo —dice la chica.

Podemos oír la sierra en la tabla. Sueña como a ronquido. Eula vuelve el tronco y mira por la ventana. El collar le queda bien de verdad con el sombrero rojo. Nadie pensaría que sólo le costó veinticinco centavos.

—Debiera haberse quedado con esos bollos —dice Kate.

Habría empleado el dinero bien de verdad. Pero es como si no me hubieran costado nada, excepto el cocerlos en el horno. Puedo decirle que cualquiera puede cometer un error, pero que no todos son capaces de

* El punto y aparte no da la dimensión que son palabras no dichas de Kate pero sí pensadas por ella. Habría que dejar comillas.

Si arriba pone punto y coma, ¿por qué no aquí?

Demasiado descriptivo y nada sugestivo.

gutter 1 (de una casa) canalón; (on roof) canaletta f, canalón m desagüe 2 (en la calle) alcantarilla, cuneta: someone was lying in the gutter, alguien estaba tendido en la cuneta 3 (los) barrios bajos (lowest section of society) the el arroyo, desagüe: (before n) the ~ press la prensa sensacionalista

real nice: (col.) really nice

laying yaciendo

tom-boy girl: a girl who behaves like a boy, virago, hombruna

mattress shucks: (Am. English) the straw or springs in the mattress

** Las hojas secas de las mazorcas de maíz, que se usan como relleno de los colchones en las zonas rurales.
*** Colchón de paja, esparto o hierba y sin bastas.

a miscue: a mistake

can get out of it without loss, I can tell him. It's not everybody can eat their mistakes, I can tell him.

5 Someone comes through the hall. It is Darl. He does not look in as he passes the door. Eula watches him as he goes on and passes from sight again toward the back. Her hand rises and touches her beads lightly, and then her hair. When she finds me watching her, her eyes go blank.

3

DARL (2)

15 PA and Vernon are sitting on the back porch. Pa is tilting snuff from the lid of his snuff-box into his lower lip, holding the lip outdrawn between thumb and finger. They look around as I cross the porch and dip the gourd into the water bucket and drink.

25 "Where's Jewel?" pa says. When I was a boy I first learned how much better water tastes when it has set a while in a cedar bucket. Warmish-cool, with a faint taste like the hot July wind in cedar trees smells. It has to set at least six hours, and be drunk from a gourd. Water should never be drunk from metal.

35 And at night it is better still. I used to lie on the pallet in the hall, waiting until I could hear them all asleep, so I could get up and go back to the bucket. It would be black, the shelf black, the still surface of the water a round orifice in nothingness, where before I stirred it awake with the dipper I could see maybe a star or two in the bucket, and maybe in the dipper a star or two before I drank. After that I was bigger, older. Then I would wait until they all went to sleep so I could lie with my shirt-tail up, hearing them asleep, feeling myself without touching myself, feeling the cool silence blowing upon my parts and wondering if Cash was yonder in the darkness doing it too, had been doing it perhaps for the last two years before I could have wanted to or could have.

orifice: round hole, opening

my parts: my genitals

splay outstretch, estirar, spread outward 60 awkwardly / biselar, achafanar
1 spread out; broad and flat 2 turned outwards in an awkward manner 3 to spread out; turn out or expand 4 (Vet. science) to dislocate (a bone) 5 a surface of a wall that forms an oblique angle to the main flat surfaces, esp. at a doorway or window opening 6 enlargement (Pies planos)

brogans: coarse shoes of untanned leather

hack 1 n. 1 corte 2 *pey* & *hum* (periodista) gaceticillero 3 (caballo) jamelgo 11 v. tr. cortar a hachazos. to hack sthg/sb to pieces, hacer trizas algo/a alguien 111 vi Inform piratear

fling throw or hurl (an object) forcefully, enérgicamente

75 I fling the dipper dregs to the ground and wipe my mouth on my sleeve. It is going to rain before morning. Maybe before dark. "Down to the barn," I say. "Harnessing the team."

salir de él sin pérdidas, puedo decirle. No todo el mundo puede comerse sus errores, puedo decirle.

Alguien atraviesa el zaguán. Es Darl. No mira dentro cuando pasa delante de la puerta. Eula le observa fijamente mientras él sigue y se pierde nuevamente de vista por la parte de atrás. Levanta una mano y se toca levemente las cuentas del collar; después el pelo. Al darse cuenta de que la miro, se le turba la vista.

DARL

PA and Vernon están sentados en el porche de atrás. Padre se echa rapé**, de la tapa de la caja en el labio inferior, manteniendo el labio estirado hacia fuera entre pulgar e índice. Levantan la vista cuando cruzo el porche y meto la calabaza** en el cubo de agua y bebo.

—¿Qué es de Jewel? —dice padre. Cuando era pequeño me enteré por primera vez de cuánto mejor sabe el agua cuando ha pasado un buen rato en un cubo de cedro. Fresquita, con un leve sabor parecido al olor del viento caliente de julio en los cedros. Tiene que pasar seis horas por lo menos, y hay que beberla con calabaza. El agua nunca se debe beber con nada de metal.

Y de noche todavía sabe mejor. Entonces muchas veces me quedaba tumbado en el jergón, en el zaguán, esperando hasta oír que todos se habían dormido para levantarme y volver al cubo. Estaba oscuro, la quieta superficie del agua era un orificio redondo en la nada, donde antes de agitarla y despertarla con el cacillo a veces veía una estrella o dos en el cubo, y hasta puede que en el cacillo, antes de beber, una estrella o dos. Después de eso crecí, me hice mayor. Entonces esperaba hasta que todos se hubieran ido a dormir para poderme tumbar con los faldones de la camisa levantados, y les oía dormir, y me notaba sin necesidad de tocarme, sentía el frío silencio alrededor de mis partes y me preguntaba si Cash estaría también allí fuera, en la oscuridad, haciendo lo mismo, y si lo habría estado haciendo los dos últimos años antes de que yo hubiera deseado o podido hacerlo.

* 1. Trepar, subir a lo alto. 2. Engarabatar, hablando especialmente de los dedos entumecidos (hinchados) por el frío. salidos, deformados de mala manera; los dedos retorcidos y doblados y engarabitados*, los meniques sin nada de uña, por trabajar tan penosamente en la humedad con zapatos hechos en casa cuando era niño. Junto a su silla están sus zapatones. Parece como si los hubiera cortado con un hacha embotada a partir de un lingote de hierro. Vernon ha estado en el pueblo. Nunca le había visto ir al pueblo en mono. Por su mujer, dicen, que también daba clase en la escuela, antes.

Tiro al suelo el agua que sobra y me seco la boca con la manga. Va a llover antes de que vuelva a ser de día. Puede que antes de que oscurezca. —Ha bajado a la cuadra —digo—. A enjaezar el tiro.

Darl (2)

This section consists largely of the unspoken and unverballed thoughts of Darl. It begins as he goes to take a drink from the gourd. When Anse asks, 'Where's Jewel?', Darl has already started on a train of thought relating to previous experiences of drinking from the wooden bucket. He follows this train of thought to its end before replying to his father's question with 'Down to the barn. Harnessing the team', and this reply immediately leads him into another train of thought in which he imagines in detail a scene between Jewel and the horse.

** Polvo de tabaco que se consumía aspirándolo por la nariz. Su efecto inmediato se traducía en fuertes estornudos que despejaban la cabeza.

** En el original, *gourd*: recipiente para líquidos fríos que se obtenía vaciando una calabaza y dejándola secar.

COMMENTARY: Darl's imaginative construction of the scene between Jewel and the horse is a sign of how obsessed he is with his brother. The image which he creates of Jewel and the horse is highly poetic and many of the words used are far beyond the probable reach of Darl's vocabulary and are, therefore, unverballed. What the character himself has at this moment is a visual image of the events and that image is translated into words by the author. Of course, the image is not purely visual, so there are some words in the paragraphs following Darl's reply to his father which do in fact belong to Darl himself, 'Down there . . . the pasture'. When we get to 'Then Jewel is . . . limberness of a snake', we are in the realms of Darl's visual image as translated by Faulkner. There has been a marked change in Darl's image of Jewel from Darl (1), where he saw him as rigid. Here he is seen as being as supple as a snake.

[Darl] is ambivalent in his feelings towards Jewel; the unverballed image is beautiful, yet Darl dislikes Jewel and the horse which is an emblem of his difference from the rest of the family. This confused attitude is later explained when we see that Darl suffers because Addie refused to give him her love, giving it to Jewel instead. But Darl has a highly developed sense of beauty and Jewel possesses beauty in the shape of the horse and in his mastery of the animal, so Darl both admires and is jealous of his brother.

Down there fooling with that horse. He will go on through the barn, into the pasture. The horse will not be in sight: he is up there among the pine **seedlings**, in the cool. Jewel whistles, once and shrill. The horse snorts, then Jewel sees him, glinting for a **gaudy** instant among the blue shadows. Jewel whistles again; the horse comes dropping down the slope, stiff-legged, his ears **cocking** and **flicking**, his mis-matched eyes **rolling**, and fetches up twenty feet away, **broadside on**, watching Jewel over his shoulder in an attitude kittenish and alert.

"Come here, sir," Jewel says. He moves. Moving that quick his coat, bunching, tongues swirling like so many flames. With **tossing mane** and tail and **rolling eye** the horse makes another **short curvetting rush** and stops again, feet **bunched**, watching Jewel. Jewel walks steadily toward him, his hands at his sides. Save for Jewel's legs they are like two figures carved for a tableau savage in the sun.

When Jewel can almost touch him, the horse stands on his hind legs and **slashes down** at Jewel. Then Jewel is enclosed by a **glittering maze** of hooves as by an illusion of wings; among them, beneath the upreared chest, he moves with the **flashing limberness** of a snake. For in instant before the jerk comes on to his arms he sees his whole body earth-free, horizontal, **whipping snake-limber**, until he finds the horse's nostrils and touches earth again. Then they are rigid, motionless, terrific, the horse back-thrust on stiffened, quivering legs, with lowered head; Jewel with dug heels, shutting off the horse's wind with one hand, with the other patting the horse's neck in short strokes **myriad*** and caressing, cursing the horse with obscene ferocity.

They stand in rigid terrific **hiatus**, the horse trembling and groaning. Then Jewel is on the horse's back. He flows upward in a **stooping swirl** like the **lash** of a whip, his body in mid-air shaped to the horse. For another moment the horse stands **spraddled**, with lowered head, before it bursts into motion. They descend the hill in a series of **spine-jolting jumps**, Jewel high, **leech-like** on the **withers***, to the fence where the horse **bunches to a scuttering halt again**.

"Well," Jewel says, "you can quit now, if you got a-plenty."

Inside the barn Jewel slides running to the ground before the horse stops. The horse enters the **stall**, Jewel following. Without looking back the horse kicks at him, slamming a single

Bajó a divertirse con ese caballo. Cruzará la cuadra hasta el prado. El caballo no está a la vista: está allá arriba entre los **brotos** de pino, a la sombra. Jewel silba, una vez y estridentemente. El caballo resopla y entonces Jewel lo ve: brilla durante un instante **magnífico** entre las sombras azules. Jewel vuelve a silbar; el caballo va hacia él ladera abajo, las patas rígidas, las orejas **erguidas** y **agitándose**, los desiguales ojos **desorbitados**, y se para a unos diez pasos, **de costado**, mirando a Jewel por encima del hombro en actitud juguetona y alerta.

—Venga acá, señor mío —dice Jewel. El caballo se mueve. Su piel recorrida por rápidos temblores, lenguas que se arremolinan como otras tantas llamas. Agitando crin y cola y **poniendo los ojos en blanco**, el caballo emprende otra **breve** **carrera**, se vuelve a detener, patas bien **asentadas**, y observa a Jewel. Jewel avanza decidido hacia él, las manos en la cadera. A no ser por las piernas de Jewel, son como dos figuras talladas para un grupo salvaje al sol.

Cuando Jewel casi le puede tocar, el caballo se alza sobre los cuartos traseros y **se deja caer** encima de él. Entonces Jewel queda rodeado por un **laberinto resplandeciente** de cascos igual que una ilusión de alas; entre ellos, debajo del pecho alzado, se mueve con la **relampagueante flexibilidad** de una serpiente. Durante un instante, antes de que la sacudida le llegue a los brazos, Jewel ve todo su cuerpo en vilo, horizontal, **serpenteando fulgurante**, hasta que agarra las ventanas de la nariz del caballo y se aferra nuevamente a tierra. Entonces los dos se quedan rígidos, inmóviles, terroríficos; el caballo apoyado en las patas traseras, tiesas y temblorosas, con la cabeza baja; Jewel con los talones clavados, tapando el resoplar del caballo con una mano, con la otra acariciándole el cuello, dándole **golpecitos cariñosos**, mientras le insulta con obscena ferocidad.

Permanecen en un **vacío** rígido y terrorífico: el caballo temblando y gimiendo. Luego Jewel está montado en el caballo. Cabalga cuesta arriba, como un **torbellino**, como el **coletazo** de un látigo, con el cuerpo en el aire continuando el del caballo. Durante otro momento el caballo queda **despatarrado**, con la cabeza baja, antes de lanzarse a la carrera. Descienden por el cerro con una serie de saltos y sacudidas de lomo, Jewel erguido, agarrado como una **sanguijuela a la cruz del caballo**, hasta la cerca donde el caballo **vuelve a interrumpir su precipitada carrera**.

—Bien —dice Jewel—, ya puedes rendirte, si es que ya tienes bastante.

Dentro de la cuadra Jewel se deja caer al suelo a toda prisa antes de que el caballo se pare. El caballo entra en el **pesebre** con Jewel detrás. Sin mirar atrás, el caballo le suelta una coza, alcanzando con uno

This sense of beauty is also evident when Darl finds the water in the wooden bucket redolent (perfumado) of 'hot July wind in cedar tree smells'. Even within the limits of his unspoken vocabulary he emerges as a character with an almost lyrical love of the minute things in his world. His world is not, however, wholly beautiful and his sensitive nature must also confront much that is ugly. When he begins to return from his memories of past evenings, he becomes aware of his father. The imagery ceases to be beautiful and shades into the grotesque and misshapen. 'Pa's feet are badly splayed, his toes cramped and bent and warped, with no toenails at all on his little toes.'

It is this awareness of the grotesque possibilities of his world which eventually drives Darl to try to destroy his mother's stinking corpse when it is housed in Gillespie's barn.

The gap between Anse's question and Darl's reply in this section is filled with Darl's thoughts. We may assume that Darl would not in actuality have taken so long to answer. Faulkner creates the delay to show that a fleeting moment of time may contain a great deal of thought. Where, in Cora's section, time seemed to hang heavily, here it moves with a rapidity which reflects the difference between Darl's questing temperament and Cora's passive one.

limber 1 *adj.* 1 lithe, agile, nimble. 2 flexible. Ágil, flexible; **he's very limber for his age**, está muy ágil para su edad *limber up* vi entrar en calor *limber up* (sports) vi hacer precalentamiento v. (usu. foll. by up) 1 tr. make (oneself or a part of the body etc.) supple. 2 intr. warm up in preparation for athletic etc. activity. **limber 2** *n.* the detachable front part of a gun-carriage, consisting of two wheels, axle, pole, and ammunition-box. Armón de artillería v. 1 tr. attach a limber to (a gun etc.). 2 intr. fasten together the two parts of a gun-carriage.

gaudy 1 tastelessly or extravagantly bright or showy.

flick mover rápidamente

curvetting: leaping, by a horse, with the forelegs together then the back legs raised before the forelegs have touched the ground

curvetting haciendo corvetas, swirling,

glitter : brillo, oropel, tinsel, sparkle, glint; relucir, centellear, fulgir, fulgente, centelleante, chispeante,

snake-limber: (neologism) as supple as a snake

hiatus: break, a moment frozen in time

spraddled: with legs outstretched

leech-like: clinging like a leech (an insect known for its tenacity)

withers: ridge between the shoulder blades of a horse

scuttering: scurrying, hasty

stall

1 (= stable) establo *m* (= manger) pesebre *m* (for single horse etc) casilla *f* 2 (in market) puesto *m* (in fair) caseta *f*, casilla *f* 3 (British) (theatre) the stalls el patio de butacas 1 parar; calar 2 (+ person) entretener 1 [car] pararse [plane] perder velocidad 2 (= delay) andar con rodeos; esquivar

crop-toothed: with teeth shortened (presumably by filing down)

hoof into the wall with a pistol-like report. Jewel kicks him in the stomach; the horse arches his neck back, **crop-toothed**; Jewel strikes him across the face with his fist and slides on to the trough and mounts upon it. **Clinging to** the hay-rack he lowers his head and peers out across the stall tops and through the doorway. The path is empty; from here he cannot even hear Cash sawing. He reaches up and drags down hay in hurried armfuls and crams it into the rack.

pussel-gutted: (Am. col.) fat, overfed

15 “Eat,” he says. “Get the goddamn stuff out of sight while you got a chance, you **pussel-gutted** bastard. You sweet son of a bitch,” he says.

20

4
JEWEL (1)

IT'S because he stays out there, right under the window, hammering and sawing on that goddamn box. Where she's got to see him. Where every breath she draws is full of his knocking and sawing where she can see him saying See. See what a good one I am making for you. I told him to go somewhere else. I said Good God do you want to see her in it. It's like when he was a little boy and she says if she had some fertilizer she would try to raise some flowers and he taken the **bread-pan** and brought it back from the barn full of **dung**.

dung: manure

buzzards: birds of prey

And now them others sitting there, like **buzzards**. Waiting, fanning themselves. Because I said If you wouldn't keep on sawing and nailing at it until a man can't sleep even and her hands laying on the quilt like two of them roots dug up and tried to wash and you couldn't get them clean. I can see the fan and Dewey Dell's arm. I said if you'd just let her alone. Sawing and knocking, and keeping the air always moving so fast on her face that when you're tired you can't breathe it, and that goddamn adze going One lick less. One lick less. One lick less until everybody that passes in the road will have to stop and see it and say what a fine carpenter he is. If it had just been me when Cash fell off of that church and if it had just been me when pa laid sick with that load of wood fell on him, it would not be happening with **every bastard in the county** coming in to stare at her because if there is a God what the hell is He for. It would just be me and her on a high hill and me rolling the rocks down the hill at their faces, picking them up and throwing them down the hill, faces and teeth and all by God until she was quiet and not that goddamn adze going One lick less. One lick less and we could be quiet.

5

DARL (3)

75

WE watch him come around the corner and mount the steps. He does not look at us. “You ready?” he says.

de los cascos la pared con un estampido como de pistola. Jewel le da patadas en el estómago; el caballo arquea el cuello, enseñando los dientes; Jewel le golpea la cara con el puño y se desliza hasta la artesa y se sube encima de ella. **Pegándose al** montón de heno, agacha la cabeza y mira por encima de los tabiques del pesebre hacia la entrada. El sendero está desierto; desde aquí ni siquiera puede oír a Cash serrando. Se estira y _____ llena apresuradamente, a manos llenas, el comedero.

—Come —dice—. Lléname esa hinchada panza mientras puedas, cabrón, _____ hijo de la gran puta —dice.

JEWEL

POR qué se tiene que quedar ahí afuera, justo debajo de la ventana, clavando y serrando esa maldita caja. En donde ella le vea. Donde cada bocanada que ella aspire esté llena de su martillar y serrar. Donde ella pueda verle diciendo: Mira. Mira qué buena es la que te estoy haciendo. Yo ya le dije que se fuera a cualquier otro sitio. Le dije: Santo Dios, ¿es que quieres verla dentro de ella? Es como cuando era niño y ella dijo que si tuviera un poco de abono intentaría cultivar unas flores y él cogió la **cesta del pan** y se la trajo llena de **estiércol** de la cuadra.

Y ahora los demás ahí sentados, como **buitres**. Esperando, abanicándose. Porque yo dije: ¿Es que no puedes dejar de serrar y clavar sin parar? No dejas dormir a nadie. Y las manos de ella encima de la colcha como dos de esas raíces [62] retorcidas que tratas de lavar y nunca consigues que queden limpias. Veo el abanico y el brazo de Dewey Dell. Le dije que si nunca la iba a dejar en paz. Serrando y martillando, y haciendo que el aire se mueva siempre tan deprisa por delante de su cara que cuando estás cansado ni lo puedes respirar; y esa maldita azuela repitiendo: Ya queda menos. Ya queda menos. Ya queda menos, hasta que todos los que pasan por el camino se paren y lo vean y digan: Qué buen carpintero es. Si hubiera sido yo y no Dash el que se cayó de aquella iglesia y si hubiera sido yo y no padre el que se accidentó con aquella carga de leña que le cayó encima, no vendría a verla **cualquier hijo de puta de la comarca**, porque si hay Dios para qué demonios existe. Sólo estaríamos yo y ella en la cima de un cerro y yo echaría a rodar piedras cerro abajo contra sus caras, y las subiría y se las tiraría otra vez cerro abajo, caras y dientes y todo, por Dios, hasta que se estuviese tranquila y esa maldita azuela no dijera: Ya queda menos. Ya queda menos, y estaríamos tranquilos.

DARL

LE vemos doblar la esquina y subir los escalones. No nos mira.
—¿Listos? —dice él.

Jewel (1)

Jewel has only one section in the book, but it is revealing, consisting of his unspoken thoughts. He resents Cash sawing the wood outside Addie's window, constantly reminding her of her impending death and he resents the others sitting around waiting for her to die. He imagines himself and his mother isolated on a hill, rolling rocks down on anyone who tries to intrude upon their solitude.

COMMENTARY: The brevity of Jewel's section underlines his general taciturnity. Until now, we have seen Jewel only through the eyes of Darl, two conflicting images of rigidity and suppleness. Here, Jewel emerges as an embittered man, sensitive as none of the others are to his mother's feelings.

When Jewel talks of the others as 'buzzards', we sense the bitterness he feels on behalf of his mother, aware that their presence must be a constant reminder to her that she is about to die. At the end of the section, his resentment takes a more generalised form and we realise, when he imagines himself alone with Addie on top of a hill, how profound his dislike of the rest of the world is and how closely he sympathises with his mother, 'it would just be me . . . was quiet'.

This is an image full of violence, eloquent of deep resentment, and of isolation. It suggests to the reader that Jewel has over the years built up this hatred of his family and this bond with his mother. Later in the book, he proves the depths of his feelings for Addie by selling his horse and by risking his life in the fire to save her corpse. The section shows us Jewel's personality and gives us the first indication of the crucial and powerful role played by Addie Bundren in shaping the personalities of her sons.

Darl (3)

This section consists largely of the words overheard by Darl as the family take the wagon and set off to collect some wood, thus risking being absent when Addie dies. In the early part of the section, the words which Darl overhears are supplemented by his own unspoken thoughts, so that the spoken words are put in the context of Darl's opinion of

hitched up: having the horses or mules harnessed to the wagon

“If you’re **hitched up**,” I say. I say “Wait.” He stops, looking at pa. Vernon spits, without moving. He spits with decorous and deliberate precision into the **pocked** dust below the porch. Pa rubs his hands slowly on his knees. He is gazing out beyond the crest of the **bluff**, out across the land. Jewel watches him a moment, then he goes on to the pail and drinks again.

pocked: marked with holes

mislike: (Am. col.) dislike

“I **mislike** undecision as much as ere a man,” pa says.

hump: deformity of the spine

“It means three dollars,” I say. The shirt across pa’s **hump** is faded lighter than the rest of it. There is no sweat stain on his shirt. I have never seen a sweat stain on his shirt. He was sick once from working in the sun when he was twenty-two years old, and he tells people that if he ever sweats, he will die. I suppose he believes it.

“But if she don’t last until you get back,” he says. “She will be disappointed.”

Vernon spits into the dust. But it will rain before morning.

“She’s counted on it,” pa says. “She’ll want to start right away. I know her. I promised her I’d keep the **team** here and ready, and she’s counting on it.”

“We’ll need that three dollars then, sure,” I say. He gazes out over the land, rubbing his hands on his knees. Since he lost his teeth his mouth collapses in slow repetition when he **dips**. The **stubble** gives his lower face that appearance that old dogs have. “You’d better make up your mind soon, so we can get there and get a load on before dark,” I say.

dips: dips his head to drink water

stubble: growth of facial hair

cañón: 6. Lo más recio, inmediato a la raíz, del pelo de la barba.

ain’t: (col.) is not

“Ma **ain’t** that sick,” Jewel says. “Shut up, Darl.”

“That’s right,” Vernon says. “She seems more like herself to-day than she has in a week. Time you and Jewel get back, she’ll be setting up.”

“You ought to know,” Jewel says. “You been here often enough looking at her. You or your folks.” Vernon looks at him. Jewel’s eyes look like pale wood in his high-blooded face. He is a head taller than any of the rest of us, always was. I told them that’s why ma always whipped him and petted him more. Because he was **peakling around the house more**. That’s why she named him Jewel I told them.

peakling: (neologism) wandering weakly

“Shut up, Jewel,” pa says, but as though he is not listening much. He gazes **out across** the land, **rubbing his** knees.

“You could borrow the loan of Vernon’s team and we could catch up with

—Si has **enganchado** el caballo —digo yo. Digo—: Espera.

Se para, mirando a padre. Vernon escupe, sin moverse. Escupe con correcta y deliberada precisión en el polvo **picado de viruelas** del pie del porche. Padre se restriega lentamente las manos en las rodillas. Mira a algo que está más allá de la cresta del **farallón**, por encima del campo. Jewel le observa un momento, luego sigue hasta el cubo y vuelve a beber.

—**Me revienta** la indecisión como a cualquiera —dice padre.

—Eso significa tres dólares —digo yo. La camisa está [63] más descolorida en la **joroba** de padre que en el resto. No hay ni una mancha de sudor en su camisa. _____

Una vez, cuando tenía veintidós años, se puso malo por trabajar a pleno sol y cuenta a la gente que si volviera a sudar, se moriría. Supongo que se lo cree.

—Pero si ella no dura hasta que volváis —dice—. Le molestaría mucho.

Vernon escupe al polvo. Pero lloverá antes de que vuelva a ser de día.

—Ella cuanta con eso —dice padre—. Querrá ponerse en marcha inmediatamente. La conozco. Le prometí que tendría el **tiro** aquí y preparado, y cuenta con ello.

—Entonces necesitaremos esos tres dólares, seguro —digo. Él mira por encima del campo, frotándose las manos en las rodillas. Desde que se quedó sin dientes la boca se le hunde en lentas repeticiones cuando **traga**. Los **cañones de la barba** dan a la parte de abajo de su cara ese aspecto que tienen los perros viejos—. Será mejor que se decida enseguida, así podríamos ir allí y traer una carga antes de que oscurezca —digo.

—Madre **no está** tan grave —dice Jewel—. Cállate, Darl.

—Es cierto —dice Vernon—. Hoy parece mejor que en toda la semana. Para cuando tú y Jewel volváis, estará levantada.

—Eso usted lo sabrá —dice Jewel—. Se ha pasado mucho tiempo aquí mirándola. Usted y los suyos.

Vernon le mira. Los ojos de Jewel parecen madera clara en su cara rubicunda. Nos saca la cabeza a todos los demás, siempre nos la ha sacado. Les dije que por eso le pegaba madre más y le mimaba más. Porque **era el más enfermizo de la casa**. Por eso le llamaron Jewel, joya, les dije. [64]

—Cállate, Jewel —dice padre, pero como si no hubiera prestado demasiada atención a lo que decíamos. Mira **por encima** del campo, **se frota** las rodillas.

—Podrías pedirle prestado el tiro a Vernon y podríamos salir a vuestro encuen-

the speaker.

COMMENTARY: In this section Darl’s powers of precise observation are used to record with apparent accuracy the actual words spoken by his father, himself, Vernon, Tull and Jewel. The personalities of the various speakers are implicit in the words which they use. When, for example, Anse hesitates and then says ‘I mislike undecision as much as ere a man’, the words are empty. The words spoken by Jewel also expose his basic nature. We have already seen him distressed by the sound of the adze in *Jewel (1)*. It is consistent, therefore, to find that Darl recalls Jewel repeatedly trying to register a protest against the noise and ‘the buzzards’. Darl also notices that Jewel cannot bring himself to say the word ‘coffin’. This tells us something not revealed in Jewel’s own section, namely that Jewel does not want to acknowledge that his mother is dying and cannot bear to utter the word ‘coffin’ which would set the seal of death on the proceedings.

Thus in this section we see Anse successfully deceiving himself and insisting that he wants to do his best for Addie and we see Jewel trying to deceive himself by refusing to acknowledge that his mother is dying. The recorder of both these deceptions is Darl, whose role in this particular interaction is to advocate that they should take the wagon and go, leaving Addie alone. He has clearly analysed the weak points of his father’s character, playing on Anse’s love of money, and he also tries to hurt Jewel by reminding him that Addie is very ill. This jealousy of his brother is an ever-present aspect of Darl’s outlook.

At the end of the section Darl notices that the physical layout of the house leads to an apparent separation between the voices and the speakers from whom they emanate, ‘As you enter the hall, they sound as though they were speaking out of the air about your head’. As the book progresses such sensitivity to his environment proves to be a burden to Darl. His world becomes increasingly odd and so his experience of it, coming to him through his finely attuned senses, also becomes increasingly odd.

you," I say. "If she didn't wait for us."

tro —digo yo—. Si ella no nos espera.

"Ah, shut your goddamn mouth,"
Jewel says.

—Cierra esa maldita boca —dice
Jewel.

ourn: (Am. col.) our own one

"She'll want to go in **ourn**," pa
says. He rubs his knees. "**Don't ere a**
man mislike it more."

—Querrá ir en el **nuestro** —dice pa-
dre. Se frota las rodillas—. Nada me re-
ventaría más.

don't ere a man mislike: (Am. col.)
no man ever disliked

"It's laying there, watching Cash
whittle on that damn . . ." Jewel says.
He says it harshly, savagely, but he
does not say the word. Like a little
boy in the dark to **flail** his courage
and suddenly **aghost** into silence by
his own noise.

—Estar ahí tumbada, viendo a Cash
cepillando esa maldita... —dice Jewel.
Lo dice áspera, salvajemente, pero no
llega a pronunciar la palabra. Como un
niño en la oscuridad para **darse valor**
que, de repente, calla **aterrorizado** por
su propia voz.

whittle v. 1 tr. & (foll. by at) intr. pare (wood etc.) with
repeated slicing with a knife. 2 tr. (often foll. by
away, down) reduce by repeated subtractions.
reducir poco a poco

flail (=mayal 1. m. Palo del cual tira la caballería
que mueve los molinos de aceite, tahonas y
malacates. 2. Instrumento compuesto de dos pa-
los, uno más largo que otro, unidos por medio de
una cuerda, con el cual se desgrana el centeno
dando golpes sobre él.)

flail a threshing-tool consisting of a wooden staff with
a short heavy stick swinging from it. **Batir, sacu-
dir, desgranar con un mayal**
1 tr. beat or strike with or as if with a flail (mayal=
dos palos unidos por cuero). 2 intr. wave or swing
wildly or erratically (went into the fight with arms
flailing).

"She wanted that like she wants to
go in our own wagon," pa says. "She'll
rest easier for knowing it's a good
one, and **private**. She was ever a
private woman. You know it well."

—Ella lo quiso así, igual que quiere
ir en nuestra carreta —dice padre—. Des-
cansará más tranquila si sabe que está
bien hecha, y es **suya**. Siempre fue una
mujer muy **suya**. Lo sabéis bien.

"Then let it be **private**,"
Jewel says. "But how the hell
can you expect it to be——"
He looks at the back of pa's head, his
eyes like **pale** wooden eyes.

—Entonces dejemos que se salga con la **suya**
—dice Jewel—. Pero cómo demonios
sois capaces de esperar que sea... —
m i r a l a n u c a d e p a d r e ;
sus ojos como madera **clara**.

sho: (Am. col.) surely, certainly

"**Sho**," Vernon says, "she'll hold
on till it's finished. She'll hold on
till everything's ready, till her own
good time. And with the roads like
they are now, it won't take you no
time to get her to town."

—**Claro** —dice Vernon—,esperará
hasta que esté terminada. Esperará hasta
que esté todo preparado; hasta el momen-
to adecuado. Y con los caminos tal y
como están ahora, no os supondrá mu-
cho tiempo llevarla hasta el pueblo.

fixing up to: (Am. col.) preparing
to

"It's **fixing up to rain**," pa says. "I
am a luckless man. I have ever been."
He rubs his hands on his knees. "It's
that darn doctor, fiable to come at
any time. I couldn't get word to
him **tiff** so late. If he was to come
to-morrow and tell her the time was
nigh, she wouldn't wait. I know her.
Wagon or no wagon, she wouldn't
wait. Then she'd be upset, and I
wouldn't upset her for the living
world. With that family burying-
ground in Jefferson and them of her
blood waiting for her there, she'll be
impatient. I promised my word me and
the boys would get her there quick as
mules could walk it, so she could rest
quiet." He rubs his hands on his knees.
"No man ever misliked it more."

—Va a llover —dice padre—. Soy
un hombre sin suerte. Siempre lo he
sido —se frota las manos en los panta-
lones—. Es ese maldito médico, viene
cuando le apetece. No le pude avisar
hasta muy tarde. Si viniera mañana y
le dijera que había llegado el momen-
to, ella no esperaría. La conozco. Con
carreta o sin carreta, ella no esperaría.
Quedaría toda trastornada y yo no que-
rría trastornarla por nada del mundo.
Con esa tumba de la familia en
Jefferson y [65] todos los de su sangre
esperándola allí, se impacientará. Le di
mi palabra de que yo y los chicos la lle-
varíamos allí todo lo deprisa que an-
den las mulas; así descansará tranquila
—se frota las manos en las rodillas—.
Nada me reventaría más.

"If everybody wasn't burning hell
to get her there," Jewel says in that
harsh, savage voice. "With Cash all day
long right under the window,
hammering and sawing at that ——"

—Si no os estuviérais quemando la
sangre todos por llevarla allí —dice
Jewel con esa voz áspera, salvaje—. Con
Cash todo el santo día justo debajo de la
ventana, clavando y serrando esa...

"It was her wish," pa says. "You
got no affection nor gentleness for
her. You never had. We would be
beholden to no man," he says, "me
and her. We have never yet been,
and she will rest quieter for
knowing it and that it was her own
blood sawed out the boards and
drove the nails. She was ever one
to clean up after herself."

—Fue su voluntad —dice padre—. No
sientes ningún afecto ni dulzura por ella.
Nunca lo sentiste. No queremos tener que
agradecerle nada a nadie —dice—, ni
yo ni ella. Todavía no lo tenemos que
agradecer, y ella descansará tranquila sa-
biéndolo; y que sea uno de su propia san-
gre el que sierre las tablas y clave los cla-
vos. Siempre fue de las que lo dejan todo
limpio antes de irse.

beholden: indebted

beholden to no man estar en deuda con nadie

"It means three dollars," I say. "Do
you want us to go, or not?" Pa rubs
his knees. "We'll be back by
to-morrow sundown."

—Eso significa tres dólares —digo
yo—. ¿Quiere que vayamos a no? —pa-
dre se frota las rodillas—. Estaremos de
vuelta mañana al ponerse el sol.

awry-haired: (neologism) with hair untidily ruffled

“Well . . .” pa says. He looks out over the land, **awry-haired**, mouthing the snuff slowly against his gums.

—Bueno —dice padre. Mira hacia el campo; el pelo **enmarañado**, mascando el tabaco lentamente con las encías desdentadas.

5 “Come on,” Jewel says. He goes down the steps. Vernon spits neatly into the dust.

—Vámonos —dice Jewel. Baja los escalones. Vernon escupe limpiamente en el polvo.

10 “By sundown, now,” pa says. “I would not keep her waiting.”

—Hasta que se ponga el sol, entonces —dice padre—. No quiero que tenga que esperar.

Jewel glances back, then he goes on around the house. I enter the hall, hearing the voices before I reach the door. Tilting a little down the hill, as our house does, a breeze draws through the hall all the time, upslanting. A feather dropped near the front door will rise and brush along the ceiling, slanting backward, until it reaches the downturning current at the back door: so with voices. As you enter the hall, they sound as though they were speaking out of the air about your head.

Jewel echa un vistazo atrás, luego rodea la casa. Yo entro en el zaguán, oyendo las voces antes de alcanzar la puerta. Ladeándose un poco cerro abajo, como hace nuestra casa, una brisa sopla todo el tiempo en el zaguán arriba. Una pluma que cayera cerca de la puerta de delante se levantaría y rozaría el techo, oscilando hacia el fondo, hasta alcanzar la corriente que da vueltas alrededor de la puerta de atrás: lo mismo las voces. Cuando entras en el zaguán, suenan como si estuvieran hablando en el aire por encima de tu cabeza. [66]

6 CORA (2)

CORA

30 IT was the sweetest thing I ever saw. It was like he knew he would never see her again, that Anse Bundren was driving him from his mother's death-bed, never to see her in this world again. I always said Darl was different from those others. I always said he was the only one of them that had his mother's nature, had **any natural** affection. Not that Jewel, X
40 the one she laboured so to bear and **coddled** and petted so and him flinging into **tantrums** or sulking spells, inventing devilment to devil her till I would have **frailed** him time
45 and time. Not him to come and tell her good-bye. Not him to miss a chance to make that extra three dollars at the price of his mother's good-bye kiss. A Bundren **through and through**, loving nobody, caring for nothing except how to get something with the least amount of work. Mr. Tull says Darl asked them to wait. He said Darl almost begged
55 them on his knees not to force him to leave her in her condition. But nothing would do but Anse and Jewel must make that three dollars. Nobody that knows Anse could have expected
60 different, but to think of that boy, that Jewel, selling all those years of self-denial and down-right partiality—they couldn't me: Mr. Tull says Mrs. Bundren liked Jewel the
65 least of all, but I knew better. I knew she was **partial** to him, to the same quality in him that let her put up with Anse Bundren when Mr. Tull said she ought to poisoned him—for three
70 dollars, denying his dying mother the good-bye kiss.

FUE la cosa más bonita que he visto jamás. Fue como si él supiera que no la volvería a ver nunca; que Anse Bundren le estaba alejando del lecho mortuario de su madre y nunca la volvería a ver en este mundo. Siempre dije que Darl era distinto a los demás. Siempre dije que era el único de ellos que tenía el carácter de su madre, que sentía afecto ____ por ella. No ese Jewel, por quien tanto padeció para traerlo al mundo y sintió y **mimó** tanto y él siempre cogiendo **rabetas** o enfurruñándose, inventando diabluras para endemoniarla; yo le habría **sacudido** una y otra vez. No será él quien venga a decirle adiós. No será él quien desperdicie la ocasión de ganar tres dólares de más por darle un beso de adiós a su madre. Un Bundren **de cabo a rabo**; a nadie quiere, de nada se preocupa a no ser de cómo conseguir algo con la menor cantidad de trabajo posible. Mr. Tull dice que Darl les pidió que esperaran. Dijo que Darl casi les suplicó de rodillas que no le obligasen a apartarse de ella en tal estado. Pero nada podría impedir que Anse y Jewel dejaran de ganar esos tres dólares. Nadie que conozca a Anse esperaría otra cosa, pero pensar que ese chico, Jewel, vende todos esos años de abnegación y de la más completa predilección (no me engañan: Mr. Tull dice que a Mrs. Bundren el que menos le gustaba de todos era Jewel, pero yo estoy mejor enterada. Sé que **sentía debilidad** por él, que veía en él la misma cualidad que le permitía soportar a Anse Bundren cuando Mr. Tull dijo que ella le debería envenenar), por tres dólares, negándole a su madre moribunda el beso de adiós.

Why, for the last three weeks I have been coming over every time I could, coming sometimes when I shouldn't have, neglecting my own family and duties so that somebody would be with her in her last moments

Porque durante las tres últimas semanas he estado viniendo siempre que podía, a veces viniendo cuando no debía, descuidando a mi propia familia y mis obligaciones para que estuviera alguien con ella en sus últimos momentos y así

Cora (2)

This section consists of Cora's observations as Darl and Jewel prepare to leave the farm, her self-congratulatory thoughts and, with a sudden alteration in the time-scale, some recollections of a time after Addie has died.

COMMENTARY: This section has three main features. Firstly, it underlines the disparity between appearance and reality; secondly, it gives the reader an insight into Cora's self-satisfied 'Christian' character and, thirdly, it abandons the normal chronological ordering of events.

The first feature is particularly obvious in relation to Darl. In the immediately preceding section, *Darl (3)*, he tried to force Jewel to leave the farm. Yet Cora chooses to believe that it is Anse and Jewel who are driving Darl away from his dying mother. The second aspect, Cora's **smugness**, (complacency, suficiencia) is apparent in both what she says and what she thinks. She is convinced that her code of conduct is the right one and she judges people according to how far their conduct departs from her standard. At the same time, she is convinced that she is not smug about her goodness 'not that I deserve any credit for it'. On the basis of her standards, Cora disapproves of the Bundrens, thinking it wrong that they should refuse to bury Addie with the other members of the family at New Hope. According to Cora, Addie's body is being taken to Jefferson not because Addie wishes to be buried there but because the family want to get rid of her. Cora's reliance on arbitrary standards when assessing other people does tend to lead her to misinterpret their motives and their characters.

However, not all of her analyses of the Bundrens' situation are wrong; Faulkner leaves the reader to separate the correct from the incorrect

tantrum *n.* an outburst of bad temper or petulance (*threw a tantrum*). rabetas, pataletas, berrinche

frailed: (Am. English) punished

partial Los adjetivos *partial* y *parcial* comparten la idea de *incompleto* y, en sentido ético, *injusto*, *prejuiciado*, pero *partial* se usa además para *aficionado*, *afectionate*, *fond*, *kind*, *attached*.

the Great Unknown: a euphemism for what lies beyond death

and she would not have to face the **Great Unknown** without one familiar face to give her courage. Not that I deserve credit for it: I will expect the same for myself. But think God it will be the faces of my loved kin, my blood and flesh, for in my husband and children I have been more blessed than most, trials though they have been at times.

She lived, a lonely woman, lonely with her pride, trying to make folks believe different, hiding the fact that they just suffered her, because she was not cold in the coffin before they were carting her forty miles away to bury her, flouting the will of God to do it. Refusing to let her lie in the same earth with those Bundrens.

"But she wanted to go," Mr. Tull said. "It was her own wish to lie among her own people."

"Then why didn't she go alive?" I said. "Not one of them would have stopped her, with even that little one almost old enough now to be selfish and stone-hearted like the rest of them."

"It was her own wish," Mr. Tull said. "I heard Anse say it was."

"And you would believe Anse, of course," I said. "A man like you would. Don't tell me."

"I'd believe him about something he couldn't expect to make anything off of me by not telling," Mr. Tull said.

"Don't tell me," I said. "A woman's place is with her husband and children, alive or dead. Would you expect me to want to go back to Alabama and leave you and the girls when my time comes, that I left of my own will to cast my lot with yours for better and worse, until death and after?"

"Well, folks are different," he said.

I should hope so. I have tried to live right in the sight of God and man, for the honour and **comfort** of my Christian husband and the love and respect of my Christian children. So that when I lay me down in the consciousness of my duty and reward I will be surrounded by loving faces, carrying the farewell kiss of each of my loved ones into my reward. Not like Addie Bundren dying alone, hiding her pride and her broken heart. Glad to go. Lying there with her head **propped up** so she could watch Cash building the coffin, having to watch him so he would not **skimp** on it, like as not, with those men not worrying about anything except if there was time to earn another three dollars before the rain came and the river got too high to get across it. Like as not, if they hadn't decided to make that last load, they would have loaded her

skimp: use too little wood or other material

no tuviera que encarar lo Desconocido sin una cara familiar que le diera valor. Y no es que yo merezca que se me premie por ello: espero que hagan lo mismo [67] conmigo. Pero gracias a Dios tendré cerca las caras de los que quiero, los de mi sangre y mi carne, pues gracias a mi marido y mis hijos he sido más feliz que la mayoría, aunque a veces haya habido problemas.

Addie vivía, era una mujer solitaria, a solas con su orgullo, tratando de hacer que la gente creyera otra cosa, ocultando el hecho de que los suyos se limitaban a soportarla; porque no se había enfriado en el ataúd y ya habían recorrido sesenta y cinco kilómetros para enterrarla, menospreciando la voluntad de Dios al hacerlo. Negándose a dejarla descansar en la misma tierra que esos Bundren.

—Pero ella quería ir —dijo Mr. Tull—. Era deseo suyo descansar entre los de su familia.

—¿Entonces por qué no se fue en vida? —dije yo—. Ninguno de ellos se lo habría impedido, ni siquiera el pequeño que ya casi es lo bastante mayor como para ser tan egoísta y duro de corazón como los demás.

—Era deseo suyo —dijo Mr. Tull—. Se lo oí decir a Anse_____.

—Y tú creerías a Anse, claro —dije yo—. Un hombre como te gustaría ser a ti. No me digas.

—¿Por qué no iba a creer una cosa de la que él no espera sacar nada por decir-la? —dijo Mr. Tull.

—No me digas —le dije—. El puesto de una mujer está al lado de su marido e hijos, viva o muerta. ¿Esperarías que yo quisiera volver a Alabama y dejarte a tí y a las chicas cuando me llegue la hora, después de que los dejé por propia voluntad para vivir contigo en lo bueno y en lo malo, hasta la muerte y después?"

—Bueno, la gente no es igual —dijo él.

Eso espero. He tratado de vivir rectamente ante Dios y los hombres, para honrar y **animar** a mi cristiano marido y querer y respetar a mis cristianos hijos. De modo que cuando deje esta vida consciente de mis obligaciones y del pago que merezco estaré rodeada de los rostros de los que me quieren, llevándome como recompensa el beso de adiós de todos a los que quiero. No como Addie Bundren que muere sola, escondiendo su orgullo y su corazón destrozado. Contenta de irse. Allí tumbada con la cabeza **en [68] alto** para poder ver a Cash fabricándole el ataúd, obligada a vigilarle para que **no haga una chapuza**, con esos hombres que no se preocupan de nada excepto de si tendrán tiempo de ganar otros tres dólares antes de que llueva y el río crezca demasiado para poder cruzarlo. Si no hubieran decidido llevar esa última carga, lo mismo hubieran sido capaces de haberla cargado en la carreta encima

analysis, a process which forces the reader to concentrate on the situation of the characters and so encourages him to have a deeper understanding of the Bundrens.

The third aspect of this section is the abandonment of the linear measure of time so that Cora is apparently sitting with the still living Addie yet can, in her thoughts, remember a time *after* Addie has died. In a situation where memory, not strict chronology, rules, the character remembering a past event relives it as though it were happening in the present. So, when Cora thinks of her vigil by Addie's bed, then she is 'living' at that time; when she thinks of her conversation with Tull after Addie's death, then she is 'living' in that later moment. The order in which the moments appear is dictated not by any considerations of linear time but by the order in which the character remembers them.

skimp 1 *tr.* (often foll. by *in*) supply (a person etc.) meagrely with food, money, etc. 2 *tr.* use a meagre or insufficient amount of, **stint** (material, expenses, etc.). 3 *intr.* be parsimonious
skimp: use too little wood or other material; economizar: *to skimp on fabric/work/food* escatimar tela/trabajo/alimento
skimpy meagre; not ample or sufficient, insignificant, insuficiente
adj. scanty, ligera
n. colloq. a small or scanty thing, esp. a skimpy garment. ligera de ropas

into the wagon on a quilt and crossed the river first and then stopped and give her time to die what Christian death they would let her.

5

Except Darl. It was the sweetest thing I ever saw. Sometimes I lose faith in human nature for a time; I am assailed by doubt. But always the Lord restores my faith and reveals to me His bounteous love for His creatures. Not Jewel, the one she had always cherished, not him. He was after that three extra dollars. It was Darl, the one that folks say is queer, lazy, **pottering** about the place no better than Anse, with Cash a good carpenter and always more building than he can get around to, and Jewel always doing something that made him some money or got him talked about, and that near-naked girl always standing over Addie with a fan so that every time a body tried to talk to her and cheer her up, would answer for her right quick, like she was trying to keep anybody from coming near her at all.

It was Darl. He come to the door and stood there, looking at his dying mother. He just looked at her, and I felt the **bounteous** love of the Lord again and His **mercy**. I saw that with Jewel she had just been pretending, but that it was between her and Darl that the understanding and the true love was. He just looked at her, not even coming in where she could see him and get upset, knowing that Anse was driving him away and he would never see her again. He said nothing, just looking at her.

“What you want, Darl?” Dewey Dell said, not stopping the fan, speaking up quick, keeping even him from her. He didn’t answer. He just stood and looked at his dying mother, his heart too **full** for words.

7

DEWEY DELL (1)

THE first time me and Lafe **picked on down the row**. Pa **dassent** sweat because he will catch his death from the sickness so everybody that comes to help us. And Jewel don’t care about anything he is not **kin** to us in caring, not **care-kin**. And Cash like sawing the long hot sad yellow days up into planks and nailing them to something. And pa thinks because neighbours will always treat one another that way because he has always been too busy letting neighbours do for him to find out. And I did not think that Darl would, that sits at the supper table with his eyes gone further than the food and the lamp, full of the land dug out of his skull and the holes filled with distance beyond the land.

We picked on down the row, the woods getting closer and closer and

de una colcha y cruzar el río y luego detenerse y darle tiempo a que muriera de muerte tan cristiana como hubieran decidido dejarle tener.

Excepto Darl. Fue la cosa más bonita que haya visto jamás. A veces pierdo la fe en la naturaleza humana durante cierto tiempo; me asalta la duda. Pero el Señor siempre me devuelve la fe y me revela su bondadoso amor hacia sus criaturas. Pero no Jewel, al que ella siempre quiso tanto; él no. Sólo iba detrás de esos tres dólares de más. En cambio tuvo que ser Darl ése del que la gente dice que es raro, perezoso, que **pierde el tiempo** por ahí igual que Anse, al contrario de Cash, un buen carpintero y siempre con más trabajo del que puede, y Jewel que siempre hace cosas que le proporcionen dinero o da que hablar, y esa chica medio desnuda que siempre anda encima de Addie con un abanico de modo que cada vez que alguien trata de hablar con ella y animarla, contesta en su lugar a toda prisa, como si tratara de impedir que se le acerque nadie.

Tuvo que ser Darl. Vino hasta la puerta y se quedó allí, mirando a su madre moribunda. Se limitó a mirarla, y yo noté nuevamente el **bondadoso** amor del Señor y su **misericordia**. Vi que [con] Jewel sólo aparentaba, pero que lo que había entre ella y Darl era comprensión y auténtico amor. Se limitó a mirarla, ni siquiera se acercó adonde ella le pudiera ver y sobresaltarse, sabiendo que Anse le iba a llevar lejos y nunca la volvería a ver. No dijo nada, se limitó a mirarla.

—¿Qué quieres, Darl?—dijo Dewey Dell, sin dejar de abanicar, hablando muy deprisa, apartándole incluso a él. El no contestó. Se limitó a estar allí de pie y mirar a su madre moribunda, con el corazón demasiado **abrumado** para palabras. [69]

DEWEY DELL

La primera vez que yo y Lafe recogíamos algodón surco abajo. Padre no quiere sudar porque se pondrá malo y morirá así que todos nos vienen a ayudar. Y a Jewel no le importa nada ni le importamos nosotros sus **parientes**, no le **importa su familia**. Y a Cash le gusta serrar los días largos y cálidos y tristes y amarillos y convertirlos en tablas y clavarlos a algo. Y padre cree que los vecinos siempre se portarán unos con otros del mismo modo porque siempre ha estado demasiado ocupado dejando que los vecinos trabajen por él para averiguarlo. Y creí que Darl tampoco se enteraría, sentado a la mesa con la mirada perdida más allá de la cena y la lámpara, llena del campo que se saca del cráneo y con las órbitas de los ojos llenas de lejanía de más allá del campo.

Recogíamos algodón surco abajo, los árboles y la sombra secreta acercándose

potter 1 *v.* (US **putter**) 1 *intr.* **a** (often foll. by *about, around*) work or occupy oneself in a **desultory** (unmethodical) but pleasant manner (*likes pottering about in the garden*). **b** (often foll. by *at, in*) dabble (chapotear) in a subject or occupation. 2 *intr.* go slowly, dawdle, loiter (*pottered up to the pub*). 3 *tr.* (foll. by *away*) **fritter** (waste) away (one’s time etc.).

fritter : waste, dissipate, (desperdiciar, malgastar) waste (money, time, energy, etc.) triflingly, indiscriminately, or on divided aims

desultory adj. 1 going constantly from one subject to another, esp. in a half-hearted way. 2 disconnected; unmethodical; superficial. Inconstante, intermitente, inconexo, irregular, poco metódico, intermitente, variable, voluble, inconstante, errático, inconstante, irrelevante, tedioso, pointless, boring, diáfuso

picked down the row: picked cotton from a row of cotton plants
dassent: (Am. col.) dare not

care-kin: (neologism) not related to the rest of the family in feeling

Dewey Dell (1)

This section begins with Dewey Dell recalling the day on which she was picking cotton with someone called Lafe and when she allowed him to make love to her. She believes that it was not her responsibility, because she had decided to make love only if her sack was full when they reached the end of the row. She then begins to think of Darl, who has not said anything to her but who, she senses, knows what she has done. Darl himself then enters the sick-room.

COMMENTARY: By this stage in the novel, the reader is beginning to see certain events and observations recurring in sections belonging to different characters. This is natural enough, for the world of the Bundren family is a small one and different people are liable to record and reflect on the same things. In these unspoken thoughts of Dewey Dell’s we see that she believes her father’s story

the secret shade, picking on into the secret shade with my sack and Lefe's sack. Because I said will I or won't I when the sack was half-full because
5 I said if the sack is full when we get to the woods it won't be me. I said if it don't mean for me to do it the sack will not be full and I will turn up the next row but if the sack is full, I
10 cannot help it. It will be that I had to do it all the time and I cannot help it. And we picked on toward the secret shade and our eyes would drown together touching on his hands and
15 my hands and I didn't say anything. I said "What are you doing?" and he said "I am picking into your sack." And so it was full when we came to the end of the row and I could not help
20 it.

And so it was because I could not help it. It was then, and then I saw Darl and he knew. He said he knew
25 without the words like he told me that ma is going to die without words, and I knew he knew because if he had said he knew with the words I would not have believed that he had been there and saw us. But he said he did know
30 and I said "Are you going to tell pa are you going to kill him?" without the words I said it and he said "Why?" without the words. And that's why I
35 can talk to him with knowing with hating because he knows.

He stands in the door, looking at her.

40 "What you want, Darl?" I say.

"She is going to die," he says. And old **turkey-buzzard** Tull coming to watch her die but I can
45 fool them.

"When is she going to die?" I say.

"Before we get back," he says.

50 "Then why are you taking Jewel?" I say.

"I want him to help me load," he
55 says.

8

TULL (1)

60 ANSE keeps on rubbing his knees. His overalls are faded; on one knee a serge patch cut out of a pair of **Sunday pants**, wore ironshlick. "No man mislikes it more than me,"
65 he says.

"A fellow's got to **guess ahead** now and then," I say. "But, come long and short, it won't be no harm done
70 neither way."

"She'll want to get started right off," he says. "It's far enough to Jefferson at best."

75

"But the roads is good now," I say. It's fixing to rain to-night, too. His folks buries at New-Hope,

cada vez más; recogíamos copos hacia la sombra secreta en mi saco y en el saco de Lefe. Porque ¿lo haré o no lo haré?, dije cuando el saco estaba medio lleno, porque si el saco está lleno, dije, cuando lleguemos a los árboles no será por mi culpa. No dependerá de mí, dije, si no lo hago sino de si el saco no está lleno y tengo que dar la vuelta y coger el surco siguiente pero si el saco está lleno, no lo podré evitar. Será que lo tenía que hacer todo el tiempo y no lo podía evitar. Y recogíamos algodón hacia la sombra secreta y nuestros ojos se hundían juntos al tocarse sus manos y mis manos y yo sin decir nada. Dije: «¿Qué estás haciendo?» —y él dijo: « Recogiendo en tu saco.» Y así éste estaba lleno cuando llegamos al final del surco y no lo pude evitar.

Y así fue porque no lo pude evitar. Fue entonces, y entonces vi a Darl y lo sabía. Dijo sin decir palabra que lo sabía igual que me dijo sin decir palabra que madre se moría, y me di cuenta de que lo sabía porque si hubiera dicho con palabras que lo sabía yo no habría creído que había estado allí y nos vio. Pero dijo que lo sabía y yo [70] dije: «¿Vas a contárselo a padre, lo vas a matar?» —sin decir palabra lo dije y él dijo: «¿Por qué?» —sin decir palabra. Y por eso es por lo que puedo hablar con él que lo sabe y al que odio porque lo sabe.

Está en la puerta, mirándola.

—¿Qué quieres, Darl? —digo.

—Se va a morir —dice él.

Y ese viejo **buitre** de Tull viene a verla morir, pero puedo engañarlos a todos ellos.

—¿Cuándo se va a morir? —digo.

—Antes de que volvamos —dice él.

—¿Entonces por qué te llevas a Jewel? —digo yo.

—Quiero que me ayude a cargar —dice él.

TULL

ANSE sigue restregándose las rodillas. Tiene el mono descolorido; en una rodilla un remiendo de sarga cortado de unos pantalones de los domingos, lustroso por el uso.

—No hay hombre al que le reviente más que a mí —dice.

—Un individuo tiene que **barruntar** las cosas de vez en cuando —digo yo—. Pero, pase lo que pase, en ningún caso será nada malo.

—Ella querrá ponerse en marcha inmediatamente —dice él—. Jefferson está bastante lejos en el mejor de los casos.

—Pero ahora los caminos están bien —digo yo. Además parece que esta noche va a llover. Además los parientes de Anse es-

that if he sweats he will die. The idea has already been mentioned by Darl, who does not believe the story.

Dewey Dell's sexual encounter with Lefe takes place against a background of brothers and a father who seem to be wholly preoccupied with their own affairs. Jewel is seen here, as elsewhere, as remote from the family, Cash as only being concerned with sawing, Anse with avoiding work and Darl with inscrutable thoughts. Yet, after she has had intercourse, Dewey Dell realises that Darl knows what she has done, 'he said he knew without the words like he told me that ma is going to die without the words'. This unspoken communication between Dewey Pell and Darl may be no more than a figment of Dewey Dell's imagination, but it is equally possible that in this close and closed family circle Darl would be able to sense that his sister had a guilty secret and so would know without anything being said. Dewey Dell resents this intrusion into her privacy, so when Darl appears at the door of the sickroom (the same moment as recorded in *Cora* (2) immediately before) the exchange which takes place is hostile. By putting together pieces from *Darl* (3), *Cora* (2) and *Dewey Dell* (1) the reader begins to see that Darl is taking revenge on his mother, insisting that they go to collect the wood so that Addie will have to die without the presence of Jewel whom she loves and of whom Darl is so jealous.

Tull (1)

This section consists of Tull's unspoken thoughts about the Bundrens and his conversations with the people around him as they sit waiting for Anse to decide whether or not the wagon should be sent to collect wood and so risk Addie's death occurring in the absence of Darl and Jewel. When he and his family at last mount their wagon to depart, they begin to discuss the possible repercussions of Addie's death and Tull notices that there is a storm brewing.

COMMENTARY: The sense of time hanging heavily on the hands of those who await Addie's death is as strong here as it was

turkey-buzzard: a bird of prey

Sunday pants: (Am. English) trousers kept for special occasions

barruntar. 1. Prever, conjeturar o presentir por alguna señal o indicio.
barrunto 1. indicio, sospecha, noticia, inkling, suspicion, doubt, hope, desire, indication, conjecture, reason. Asomo, atisbo, augurio.

too, not three miles away. But it's just like him to marry a woman born a day's hand ride away and have her die on him.

He looks **out over** the land, rubbing his knees. "No man so mislikes it," he says.

"They'll get back in plenty of time," I say. "I wouldn't worry none."

"It means three dollars," he says.

"Might be it won't be no need for them to rush back, **noways**," I say. "I hope it."

"She's a-going," he says. "Her mind is set on it." It's a hard life on women, for a fact. Some women. I mind my mammy lived to be seventy and more. Worked every day, rain or shine; never a sick day since her last **chap** was born until one day she kind of looked around her and then she went and taken that lace-trimmed nightgown she had had forty-five years and never wore out of the chest and put it on and laid down on the bed and pulled the covers up and shut her eyes. "You all will have to look out for pa the best you can," she said. "I'm tired."

Anse rubs his hands on his knees. "The Lord giveth," he says. We can hear Cash a-hammering and sawing beyond the corner.

It's true. Never a truer breath was ever breathed. "The Lord giveth," I say.

That boy comes up the hill. He is carrying a fish **nigh** long as he is. He slings it to the ground and grunts "Hah" and spits over his shoulder like a man. **Durn nigh** long as he is.

"What's that?" I say. "A hog? Where'd you get it?"

"Down to the bridge," he says. He turns it over, the under-side caked over with dust where it is wet, the eye coated over, humped under the dirt.

"Are you aiming to leave it laying there?" Anse says.

"I aim to show it to ma," Vardaman says. He looks toward the door. We can hear the talking, coming out on the draught. Cash, too, knocking and hammering at the boards. "There's company in there," he says.

"Just my folks," I say. "They'd enjoy to see it, too."

He says nothing, watching the door. Then he looks down at the fish laying in the dust. He turns it over

tán enterrados en New Hope, ni a cinco kilómetros de distancia. Pero sólo a él se le ocurre casarse con una mujer que ha nacido a un día largo de camino y que encima tenga que morirle.

Mira hacia el campo, restregándose las rodillas.

—No hay hombre al que le reviente tanto —dice.

—Volverán con tiempo de sobra —digo—. Yo no me preocuparía nada.

—Es que supone tres dólares —dice él.

—Puede que no necesiten volver a toda prisa, en ningún caso —digo—. Eso espero.

—Se está yendo —dice él—. No piensa en otra cosa.

Es dura la vida para las mujeres, por cierto. Para algunas mujeres. Recuerdo que mi madre vivió hasta los setenta años y pico. Trabajaba todo el santo día, con lluvia o con sol; nunca estuvo enferma desde que le nació el último **crío** hasta que un día hizo que miraba a su alrededor y luego fue y cogió aquel camisón adornado con encaje que hacía cuarenta y cinco años que tenía y nunca había sacado del arca y se lo puso y se metió en la cama y se tapó con la ropa y cerró los ojos. «Ahora todos tendréis que cuidar de papá lo mejor que podáis» —dijo—. «Estoy cansada.»

Anse se restriega las manos en las rodillas. —El Señor nos lo dio —dice. Oímos a Cash martillar y serrar pasada la esquina.

Es cierto. Nunca se ha dicho nada más cierto.

—El Señor nos lo dio —digo.

Ese chico sube el cerro. Trae un pez **casi** tan grande como él. Lo tira al suelo.

—Aj —gruñe y escupe por encima del hombro como un hombre. **Condenado, casi** tan grande como él.

—¿Qué es eso? —digo—. ¿Un cerdo? ¿De dónde lo sacaste?

—De allá abajo, junto al puente —dice él. Le da la vuelta; la parte de abajo tiene una costra de polvo donde está húmedo; el ojo tapado, hinchado bajo el polvo.

—¿Es que piensas dejarlo ahí tirado? —dice Anse.

—Voy a enseñárselo a madre —dice Vardaman. Mira hacia la puerta. Oímos la conversación, viene con la corriente de aire. A Cash también, martillando y clavando las tablas—. Ahora tiene compañía —dice.

—Sólo son mis parientes —digo yo—. También les gustará verlo.

No dice nada y mira la puerta. Luego baja la vista hacia el pez que yace en el polvo. Le da la vuelta con el pie

in *Cora (I)*. Like Cota and Darl, Tull has time to observe in detail the world around him. Although many of the details are repeated from section to section, some belong specifically to individual characters.

Tull's unspoken observation that the fish caught by Vardaman seems to be 'hiding into the dust like it was ashamed of being dead, like it was in a hurry to get back hid again' is a simple one, yet it is also prophetic of what happens in Vardaman's section.

Collectively, the Tull family share a view of the Bundrens, believing that they are held together by Addie. As they ride away, the Tulls imagine each of the sons seeking a wife to replace the lost mother. In a sense, they are right in assuming that Addie is central but, as the book shows, she is central in a far more subtle and complicated way than any that the Tulls might suspect.

noways: (Am. English) in no way

nigh: near, nearly

gouge 1 a chisel with a concave blade, used in carpentry, sculpture, and surgery, b an indentation or groove made with or as with this. Gubia 2 *US colloq.* a swindle.
1 tr. cut with or as with a gouge. creuser à la gouge (bois). (escarbar con gubia) 2 tr. a (foll. by out) force out (esp. an eye with the thumb) with or as with a gouge. b force out the eye of (a person). 3 tr. *US colloq.* swindle; extort money from. (US. sl.) refaire, estamper, soutirer, extorquer, se sucrer. estafar, swindle

with his foot and prods at the eye-bump with his toe, **gouging** at it. Anse is looking out over the land. Vardaman looks at Anse's face, then at the door. He turns, going toward the corner of the house, when Anse calls him without looking around.

"You clean that fish," Anse says.

10

Vardaman stops. "Why can't Dewey Dell clean it?" he says.

15

"You clean that fish," Anse says.

"Aw, pa," Vardaman says.

20

"You clean it," Anse says. He don't look around. Vardaman comes back and picks up the fish. It slides out of his hands, smearing wet dirt on to him, and flops down, dirtying itself again, **gap**-mouthed, **goggle-eyed**, hiding into the dust like it was ashamed of being dead, like it was in a hurry to get back hid again. Vardaman **cusses** it. He cusses it like a grown man, standing a-straddle of it. Anse don't look around. Vardaman picks it up again. He goes on around the house, **toting** it in both arms like an armful of wood, it overlapping him on both ends, head and tail. 35 **Durn nigh** big as he is.

goggle-eyed: (Am. col.) with staring eyes

cusses: (Am. col.) curses

toting: (Am. col.) carrying

Anse's wrists dangle out of his sleeves: I never see him with a shirt on that looked like it was his in all my life. They all looked like Jewel might have give him his old ones. Not Jewel, though. He's long-armed, even if he is **spindling**. Except for the lack of sweat. You could tell they ain't been nobody else's but Anse's that way without no mistake. His eyes look like pieces of burnt-out cinder fixed in his face, looking out over the land.

spindling: (Am. English) long and thin, like a spindle

50 When the shadow touches the steps he says "It's five o'clock."

Just as I get up Cora comes to the door and says it's time to get on. Anse reaches for his shoes. "Now, Mr. Bundren," Cora says, "don't you get up now." He puts his shoes on, **stomping** into them, like he does everything, like he is hoping all the time he really can't do it and can quit trying to. When we go up the hall we can hear them clumping on the floor like they was iron shoes. He comes toward the door where she is, blinking his eyes, kind of looking ahead of hisself before he sees, like he is hoping to find her setting up, in a chair maybe or maybe sweeping, and looks into the door in that surprised way like he looks in and finds her still in bed every time and Dewey Dell still a-fanning her with the fan. He stands there, like he **don't aim to** move again nor nothing else.

don't aim to: (Am. English) do not intend to

75

"Well, I reckon we better get on," Cora says. "I got to feed the chickens." It's

y le pincha el globo del ojo con el dedo gordo, **barrenándose**lo. Anse está mirando hacia el campo. Vardaman mira la cara [72] de Anse, luego a la puerta. Se vuelve, dirigiéndose hacia la esquina de la casa, cuando Anse le llama sin mirarle.

—Limpia ese pescado —dice Anse.

Vardaman se para.

—¿Es que no lo puede limpiar Dewey Dell? —dice.

—Límpialo tú —dice Anse.

—Padre, es que... —dice Vardaman.

—Que lo limpie —dice Anse. No le mira. Vardaman vuelve y coge el pescado. Se le escurre de entre las manos, manchándose de barro húmedo, y cae al suelo, manchándose todavía más, la ____ boca, los **ojos saltones**, y se esconde en el polvo como si le avergonzara estar muerto, como si tuviera prisa en volver a esconderse. Vardaman lo **insulta**. Lo insulta como un hombre hecho y derecho, a caballo encima de él. Anse no mira. Vardaman lo vuelve a coger. Se aleja rodeando la casa, **agarrándole** con las dos manos como a una brazada de leña mientras el pescado asoma por ambos extremos, cabeza y cola. **Maldito, casi** tan grande como él.

Las muñecas de Anse le asoman por las mangas. En toda mi vida nunca le he visto con una camisa que pareciera suya. Todas parecen como si Jewel le hubiera dado las suyas viejas. No son de Jewel, con todo. Es largo de brazos, como si estuviera **dando un estirón**. Y no están sudadas. Puedes asegurar que no han sido de nadie más que de Anse sin equivocarte. Sus ojos parecen dos carbones quemados y clavados en su cara, y miran hacia el campo.

Cuando la sombra alcanza los escalones dice: —Son las cinco.

En cuanto me levanto Cora sale a la puerta y dice que es hora de ponerse en marcha. Anse alcanza sus zapatos.

—Oiga, Mr. Bundren —dice Cora—, no se levante ahora.

Se pone los zapatos, **haciendo fuerza**, como lo hace todo, igual que si todo el tiempo pensara que no lo iba a poder hacer y tendrá que dejar de intentarlo. Cuando llegamos al zaguán les oímos andar pesadamente por el suelo como si fueran unos zapatos de hierro. Va hacia la puerta [73] donde está ella, guiñando los ojos, como adivinando lo que va a ver antes de verlo, igual que si esperara encontrársela levantada, en una silla, tal vez barriendo, y mira adentro de ese modo asombrado en que suele hacerlo y se la encuentra todavía en cama y Dewey Dell todavía abanicándola con el abanico. Se queda allí como **si no tuviera intención** de volverse a mover ni de nada.

—Bueno, para mí que será mejor que nos vayamos —dice Cora—. Tengo que echarles de comer a las gallinas.

fixing to rain, too. Clouds like that don't lie, and the cotton making every day the Lord sends. That'll be something else for him.
 5 Cash is still **trimming** at the boards. "If there's ere a thing we can do," Cora says.

"Anse'll let us know," I say.

10 Anse don't look at us. He looks around, blinking, in that surprised way, like he had wore **hisself** down being surprised and was even
 15 surprised at that. If Cash just works that careful on my barn.

hisself: (Am. col.) himself

"I told Anse it likely won't be no need," I say. "I so hope it."

20 "Her mind is set on it," he says. "I reckon she's bound to go."

"It comes to all of us," Cora says.
 25 "Let the Lord **comfort** you."

"About that corn," I say. I tell him again I will help him out if he gets into a tight, with her sick
 30 and all. Like most folks around here, I done **holp** him so much already I can't quit now.

holp: (Am. col. help

35 "I aimed to get to it to-day," he says. "Seems like I can't get my mind on nothing."

"Maybe she'll hold out till you are laid by," I say.

40 "If God wills it," he says.

"Let Him comfort you," Cora says.

45 If Cash just works that careful on my barn. He looks up when we pass. "Don't reckon I'll get to you this week," he says.

'taint: Am. col.) it is not

50 "'**Tain't** no rush," I say. "Whenever you get around to it."

We get into the wagon. Cora sets
 55 the cake-box on her lap. It's fixing to rain, sho.

"I don't know what he'll do," Cora says. "I just don't know."

60 "Poor Anse," I say. "She kept him at work for thirty-odd years. I reckon she is tired."

65 "And I reckon she'll be behind him for thirty years more," Kate says. "Or if it ain't her, he'll get another one before cotton-picking."

70 "I reckon Cash and Darl can get married now," Eula says.

"That poor boy," Cora says. "The poor little **tyke**."

"What about Jewel?" Kate says.

"He can, too," Eula says.

Va a llover, además. Nubes como esas no engañan, y el algodón haciéndose día a día como Dios manda. Otra cosa que le dará que hacer. Cash todavía **ajusta** los tablonés.

—Si hay algo que podamos hacer —dice Cora.

—Ya nos lo dirá Anse —digo yo.

Anse no nos mira. Pasea la vista a su alrededor, guiñando los ojos, de ese modo asombrado, como si estuviera destrozado por la sorpresa y le asombrara estarlo. Si Cash por lo menos trabajase con ese mismo cuidado en mi granero...

—Ya le dije a Anse que probablemente no sea necesario —digo—. Eso espero.

—Se la ha metido en la cabeza —dice él—. Para mí que está decidida a irse.

—A todos nos llegará la hora —dice Cora—. Que el Señor le **dé resignación**.

—A propósito de ese maíz —digo.

Le vuelvo a decir que le ayudaré si se encuentra en un apuro, con ella enferma y todo. Como la mayoría de la gente de por aquí, le he **ayudado** tantas veces que ahora no puedo dejar de hacerlo.

—Tenía intención de haber ido hoy —dice él—. Parece como si no pudiera pensar en nada.

—Puede que ella dure hasta que usted lo tenga listo —digo yo.

—Si Dios lo quiere —dice él.

—Que Él le dé resignación —dice Cora.

Si Cash por lo menos trabajase con ese cuidado en mi granero... Levanta la vista cuando pasamos. [74]

—No creo que pueda ocuparme de lo suyo esta semana —dice.

—No hay ninguna prisa —digo—. Cuando te venga bien.

Subimos a la carreta. Cora se pone la caja de los bollos en el regazo. Va a llover, seguro.

—No sé qué será de él —dice Cora—. No lo sé.

—Pobre Anse —digo yo—. Ella le ha dado trabajo durante más de treinta años. Creo que está cansada.

—Y yo creo que ella va a seguir detrás de él otros treinta años —dice Kate—. O si no sigue, ya se buscará él otra antes de la recogida del algodón.

—Para mí que Cash y Darl podrían casarse ya —dice Eula.

—Ese pobre chico —dice Cora—. Ese pobre **granujilla**.

—¿Y qué pasa con Jewel? —dice Kate.

—También podría —dice Lula.

tyke, 1 a small child, especially a boy, fry, nestling, child a young person of either sex; «she writes books for children»; «they're just kids»; «tiddler' is a British term for youngsters» 2 peasant, barbarian, boor, churl, **Goth**, tike a crude uncouth ill-bred person lacking culture or refinement 3 a mongrel, perro mestizo, chucho

tied down: (married)

rattle hacer sonar como una carraca; batir o sacudir con ruido; desatinar, atolondrar, atarantar, aturdir, aturrullar, correr, proferir, articular rápidamente; (mar.) atar con rébenques. - v. *intr.* zurri(a)r, matraquear, rechinar, sonar, quachapear, zangolotearse, repiquetear, charlatanear, paritotear; (mec.) ratar, moverse o funcionar con ruido desapacible: *to rattle away*, parlotear; rodar a distancia, haciendo ruido; *to rattle down* (mar.) arreglar los flechastes.

s. rechin(ad)o, rechinamiento, zumba, zurrido; sonajero, sonajillas, matraca; carraca; bramadera; cascabel del crótalo; parla, charla; (in *the throat*), estertor; *rattlebrained*, *rattle-headed*, *rattle-pated*, ligero de cascos, casquivano; voluble, voltario; *rattlehead*, *rattlepate* o *rattleskull*

rattle
I n. 1 (juguete) sonajero (de serpiente) cascabel (para fiestas) matraca 2 ruido (de tren, carro) traqueteo (de cadena, monedas, llaves) repiqueteo

II v. tr. 1 (llaves, monedas) hacer sonar 2 familiar desconcertar, poner nervioso: she gets rattled over nothing, se pone nerviosa por nada

III vi (tren) traquetear: the train rattled past, el tren pasó traqueteando (metal) repiquetear (ventana) vibrar

“Humph,” Kate says. “I reckon he will. I reckon so. I reckon there’s more gals than one around here that don’t want to see Jewel **tied down**. Well, they needn’t to worry.”

“Why, Kate!” Cora says. The wagon begins to **rattle**. “The poor little tyke,” Cora says.

It’s fixing to rain this night. Yes, sir. A rattling wagon is mighty dry weather, for a Birdsell. But that’ll be cured. It will for a fact.

“She ought to taken them cakes after she said she would,” Kate says.

9

ANSE (1)

DURN that road. And it fixing to rain, too. I can stand here and same as see it with second-sight, a-shutting down behind them like a wall, shutting down betwixt them and my given promise. I do the best I can, much as I can get my mind on anything, but **durn** them boys.

A-laying there, right up to my door, where every bad luck that comes and goes is bound to find it. I told Addie it wasn’t any luck living on a road when it come by here, and she said, for the world like a woman, “Get up and move, then.” But I told her it wasn’t no luck in it, because the Lord put roads for travelling: why He laid them down flat on the earth. When He aims for something to be always a-moving, He makes it long ways, like a road or a horse or a wagon, but when He aims for something to stay put, He makes it up-and-down ways, like a tree or a man. And so he never aimed for folks to live on a road, because which gets there first, I says, the road or the house? Did you ever know Him to set a road down by a house? I says. No you never, I says, because it’s always men can’t rest till they gets the house set where everybody that passes in a wagon can spit in the doorway, keeping the folks restless and wanting to get up and go somewheres else when He aimed for them to stay put like a tree or a **stand of corn**. Because if He’d a aimed for man to be always a-moving and going somewheres else, wouldn’t He a put him longways on his belly, like a snake? It stands to reason He would.

Putting it where every bad luck **prowl**ing can find it and come straight to my door, charging me taxes on top of it. Making me pay for Cash having to get them carpenter notions when if it hadn’t been no road come there, he wouldn’t a got them; falling off of churches and lifting no hand in six months and me and Addie slav-

—Bueno —dice Kate—. Creo que lo hará. Eso creo. Creo que hay más de una chica de por aquí a la que no le gustaría ver a Jewel **amarrado**. Bueno, no se deben preocupar.

—¡Vamos, Kate! —dice Cora. La carrreta se pone a **chirriar**—. El pobre granujilla —dice Cora.

Va a llover esta noche. Sí, señor. Incluso una carrreta Birdsell*6 chirría cuando el tiempo está muy seco. Pero eso se arreglará. Seguro que sí.

—Podría haberse quedado con los bollos después de decir que los quería —dice Kate. [75]

ANSE

CONDENADO camino. Y va a llover, además, puedo quedarme aquí como si viera la lluvia; espesa por detrás de ellos como una pared, espesa entre ellos y lo que he prometido. Hago lo que puedo, hasta donde me da de sí la cabeza, pero esos **condenados** chicos...

Ahí está el camino, justo hasta mi puerta, para que cualquier mal farío de los que van y vienen llegue hasta aquí. Le dije a Addie que no daba ninguna buena suerte vivir junto a un camino; que esté tan cerca. Y ella, como mujer que es, dijo: «Entonces carretera y manta.» Pero lo que yo le decía es que no daba ninguna buena suerte, porque el Señor hizo los caminos para ir de un sitio a otro; ¿para qué, si no, los iba a poner en la tierra? Cuando decide que algo esté siempre moviéndose, lo hace alargado, como un camino o un caballo o una carrreta, pero cuando decide que algo se esté quieto, lo hace que sea de arriba abajo, como un árbol o un hombre. Y por eso nunca le gustó que las personas vivieran junto a un camino, porque, ¿qué es lo primero?, pregunto yo, ¿el camino o la casa? ¿Se sabe que Dios haya puesto alguna vez un camino junto a una casa? pregunto. Nunca jamás, es lo que yo digo, y con todo los hombres no descansan hasta que ponen la casa donde todo el que pase en carrreta pueda escupir en el entrada, manteniendo inquietas a las personas y dándoles ganas de coger y marcharse a otra parte cuando El quería que los hombres se quedaran quietos como un árbol o un **campo de maíz**. Pues si hubiera querido que el hombre estuviera siempre moviéndose y yendo de un sitio a otro, ¿no lo hubiera hecho alargado por la tripa como una serpiente? Es lógico que sí, si lo hubiera querido.

Puesta donde cualquier mal farío **que ande por ahí** pueda encontrarla y colarse por mi puerta, y encima los impuestos. Me obligan a pagar porque a Cash se le ocurriera aprender nociones de carpintería cuando si el camino no llegara hasta ahí, no se le habría ocurrido; se cae de las [76] iglesias y no da golpe en seis meses y yo y Addie

Anse (1)

Anse’s section consists of his unspoken thoughts and recollections. The first paragraph is a series of curses, as Anse blames the weather, the road and his sons for his situation. The second, third and fourth paragraphs reveal his unspoken and somewhat superstitious feelings about the road.

COMMENTARY: We have already had several glimpses of Anse and have realised that he is a lazy man who continually shifts responsibility for his **predicament** on to the world around him. This section confirms this impression. His superstitious belief that the road is at the root of all his troubles is both evidence of Anse’s curious brand of simple-mindedness and a comic reflection on the lengths to which he will go to find something to which he can attach blame. He is not at all critical of himself and cannot conceive of the possibility that he might have had something to do with the family’s poverty. Indeed, he says and obviously believes that ‘it ain’t that I am afraid of work; I always fed me and mine and kept a roof above us’.

predicament apuro, aprieto, lio, dilema, trance, situación difícil: *having been robbed on her trip abroad, she was in a real predicament*, como le robaron durante su viaje al extranjero, se encontró en un auténtico aprieto.

predicament n. 1 a difficult, unpleasant, or embarrassing situation, quandary, plight. 2 *Philos.* a category in (esp. Aristotelian) logic.

predicamento prestige, influence, standing, reputation.

merodeando

ing and a-slaving, when there's plenty of sawing on this place he could do if he's got to saw.

igual que esclavos, cuando hay tanto que serrar y él lo podría haber hecho si hubiera podido serrar.

short-headed: reduced the number of people available to work to an unacceptably low level
tends: (Am. col.) attends

5 And Darl, too. Talking me out of him, durn them. It ain't that I am afraid of work; I always have fed me and mine and kept a roof above us it's that they would **short-hand** me just because he **tends** to his own business, just because he's got his eyes full of the land all the time. I says to them, he was all right at first, with his eyes full of the land, because the land laid up-and-down ways then; it wasn't till that ere road come and switched the land around longways and his eyes **X** still full of the land, that they begun to threaten me out of him, trying to short-hand me with the law.

Y Darl lo mismo. Dicen que me desprendan de él, condenados. Y no es que me asuste el trabajo; siempre he dado de comer a los míos y no les ha faltado techo: el caso es que querían **dejarme sin él**, y sólo porque **se ocupa** de sus cosas, sólo porque le preocupa la tierra todo el tiempo. Les digo que al principio iba bien, preocupado siempre de la tierra, porque entonces la tierra se extendía arriba y abajo; no fue hasta que el camino llegó aquí y cambió la tierra _____ y él seguía preocupándose de ella, cuando empezaron a amenazarme con quitármelo por medio de la ley.

hale: drag or draw forcibly. **HAUL, PULL 2:** to compel to go free from defect, disease, or infirmity; **SOUND;** also: retaining exceptional health and vigor <a **hale** and hearty old man> synonym see **HEALTHY**

Making me pay for it. She was well and **hale** as ere a woman ever were, except for that road. Just laying down, resting herself in her own bed, asking **naught** of none. "Are you sick, Addie?" I said.

Me lo han hecho pagar. Ella era una mujer sana y **fuerte** como la que más, la culpa es del camino. Ahí está tumbada, descansando en su propia cama, sin decirle **nada** a nadie.

—¿Estás mala, Addie? —le dije.

"I am not sick," she said.

—No, no estoy mala —dijo ella.

30 "You lay you down and rest you," I said. "I knowed you are not sick. You're just tired. You lay you down and rest."

—Quédate echada y descansa —dijo yo—. Sabía que no estabas mala. Que sólo estabas cansada. Quédate echada y descansa.

35 "I am not sick," she said. "I will get up."

—No estoy mala —dijo ella—. Me voy a levantar.

"Lay still and rest," I said. "You are just tired. You can get up to-morrow." And she was laying there, well and hale as ere a woman ever were, except for that road.

—Estate quieta y descansa —dijo yo—. Sólo estás cansada. Puedes levantarte mañana —y allí seguía tumbada; una mujer sana y fuerte como la que más; la culpa es del camino.

45 "I never sent for you," I said. "I take you to witness I never sent for you."

—A usted nunca le he mandado llamar —dijo yo—. Es usted testigo de que nunca le he mandado llamar...

"I know you didn't," Peabody said. 50 "I bound that. Where is she?"

—Ya sé que no —dijo Peabody—. Ni lo dudo. ¿Y ella, dónde está?

"She's a-laying down," I said. "She's just a little tired, but she'll——"

—Se ha echado —dijo yo—. Sólo está un poco cansada, pero...

outen: (Am. col.) out of

55 "Get **outen** here, Anse," he said. "Go set on the porch a while."

—**Salga** de aquí, Anse —dijo él—. Vaya a sentarse al porche un momento.

And now I got to pay for it, me without a tooth in my head, hoping 60 to get ahead enough so I could get my mouth fixed where I could eat God's own **victuals** as a man should, and her **hale** and well as ere a woman in the land until that day. Got to pay for being put to the need of that three dollars. Got to pay for the way for them boys to have to go away to earn it. And now I can see same as second sight the rain shutting down betwixt us, a-coming up that road like a **durn** 70 man, like it wasn't ere a other house to rain on in all the living land.

Y ahora me lo hacen pagar, a mí que no tengo ni un diente en la boca y esperaba levantar cabeza lo suficiente para que me arreglaran la boca y poder comer como Dios manda, y era una mujer sana y **fuerte** como la que más hasta [77] aquel día. Las voy a pagar todas juntas por necesitar esos tres dólares. Las tengo que pagar porque los chicos se tengan que ir a ganar por ahí fuera. Y ahora puedo ver igual que si lo adivinara la lluvia espesa entre nosotros, apareciendo por ese camino como un hombre **endemoniado**, como si no hubiera otra casa en todas estas tierras encima de la que llover.

I have heard men **cuss** their luck, 75 and right, for they were sinful men. But I do not say it's a curse on me, because I have done no wrong to be **cussed** by. I am not religious, I

He oído a hombres **renegar** de su suerte, y con razón, pues eran pecadores. Pero no digo que lo mío sea una maldición, porque no he hecho nada malo por lo que se me pudiera **maldecir**. No soy religio-

victuals: food

hale: drag or draw forcibly. **HAUL, PULL 2:** to compel to go free from defect, disease, or infirmity; **SOUND;** also: retaining exceptional health and vigor <a **hale** and hearty old man> synonym see **HEALTHY**

Old Marster: (Am. col.) God

et: (Am. col.) eaten

man-growed: (Am. col.) fully grown, adult

reckon. But peace is my heart: I know it is. I have done things but neither better nor worse than them that pretend otherlike, and I know that Old Marster will cace for me as for ere a sparrow that falls. But it seems hard that a man in his need could be so flouted by a road.

Vardaman comes around the house, bloody as a hog to his knees, and that ere fish chopped up with the axe like as not, or maybe thrown away for him to lie about the dogs et it. Well, I reckon I ain't no call to expect no more of him than of his man-growed brothers. He comes along, watching the house, quiet, and sits on the steps. "Whew," he says, "I'm pure tired."

"Go wash them hands," I say. But couldn't no woman strove harder than Addie to make them right, man and boy: I'll say that for her.

"It was full of blood and guts as a hog," he says. But I just can't seem to get no heart into anything, with this here weather sapping me, too. "Pa," he says, "is ma sick some more?"

"Go wash them hands," I say. But I just can't seem to get no heart into it.

10 DARL (4)

HE has been to town this week: the back of his neck is trimmed, with a white fine between hair and sunburn like a joint of white bone. He has not once looked back.

"Jewel," I say. Back running, tunnelled between the two sets of bobbing mule ears, the road vanishes beneath the wagon as though it were a ribbon and the front axle were a spool. "Do you know she is going to die, Jewel?"

It takes two people to make you, and one people to die. That's how the world is going to end.

I said to Dewey Dell: "You want her to die so you can get to town: is that it?" She wouldn't say what we both knew. "The reason you will not say it is, when you say it, even to yourself, you will know it is true: is that it? But you know it is true now. I can almost tell you the day when you knew it is true. Why won't you say it, even to yourself?" She will not say it. She just keeps on saying Are you going to tell pa? Are you going to kill him? "You cannot believe it is true because you cannot believe that Dewey Dell, Dewey Dell Bundren, could have such bad luck: is that it?"

The sun, an hour above the horizon, is poised like a bloody egg upon a crest of thunderheads; the light has turned copper: in the eye portentous, in the nose sulphurous, smelling of lightning. When Peabody comes, they will have to use the rope.

so, lo reconozco. Pero tengo el corazón en paz: sé que es así. He hecho cosas, pero ni peores ni mejores que los que pretenden otra cosa, y sé que Dios Nuestro Señor se ocupará de mí como de un gorrion que cae. Pero me parece cruel que un hombre en apuros pueda verse tan perjudicado por un camino.

Vardaman viene rodeando la casa con las rodillas llenas de sangre como un cerdo, y como si a ese pez de antes lo hubieran hecho trozos con un hacha, o a lo mejor lo tiró por ahí y mentirá que se lo comieron los perros. Bueno, para mí que no se puede esperar más de él que de sus hermanos mayores. Se acerca mirando la casa, callado, y se sienta en los escalones. —¡Uf —dice—. Estoy muy cansado.

—Vete a lavarte las manos —le digo. Pero no hay mujer como Addie para hacer que anden derechos, sean hombres o chicos: lo tengo que confesar.

—Estaba lleno de sangre y de tripas como un cerdo —dice él. Pero no tengo ánimo para nada, y encima con este tiempo que me consume—. Padre —dice—, ¿está madre peor?

—Vete a lavarte las manos —digo yo. Pero no tengo ánimo para nada. [78]

DARL

HA estado esta semana en la ciudad: la nuca rapada, con una línea blanca entre el pelo y la piel quemada por el sol como una articulación de hueso blanco. No ha vuelto la vista ni una vez.

—Jewel —digo yo. Corriendo hacia atrás, entre los dos pares de inquietas orejas de las mulas, el camino desaparece debajo de la carreta como si fuera una cinta y el eje delantero una devanadera—. Jewel, ¿sabes que se va a morir?

Se necesitan dos personas para hacer-te, y una persona para morir. Así es como el mundo se encamina a su fin.

Le dije a Dewey Dell:

—Quieres que se muera para así poder irte a la ciudad, ¿es eso? —Ella no diría lo que los dos sabemos—. El motivo por el que no lo dices es que si lo dices, aunque sea a ti misma, comprenderás que es verdad. ¿Es eso? Pero sabes que es cierto. Casi puedo decirte desde qué día sabes que es cierto. ¿Por qué no te lo quieres decir, ni a ti misma? —No lo quiere decir. No deja de decir: ¿Se lo vas a contar a padre? ¿Es que lo quieres matar?—. No puedes creer que sea cierto porque no puedes creer que Dewey Dell, Dewey Dell Bundren, pueda tener tan mala suerte, ¿es eso?

El sol, que lleva una hora sobre el horizonte, está suspendido como un huevo ensangrentado encima de una cresta de cúmulos; la luz se ha vuelto cobre: amenazadora para el ojo, sulfurosa para la nariz, huele a relámpago. Cuando llegue Peabody, tendrán que usar la sogá.

Darl (4)

This section contains Darl's unspoken thoughts as he and Jewel ride off on the wagon. He notices the way in which the road appears to run between the ears of the mules, ponders briefly on the mystery of birth and death, thinks of Dewey Dell and the unspoken secret they share and then returns to the present. He registers that the sun is setting and then imagines what is happening back at the farm.

COMMENTARY: By this time, the reader is aware that Darl is likely to record his environment in minute detail and also that he is guilty of putting pressure on other members of the family. When he says to Jewel 'do you know she is going to die', Darl is trying to hurt Jewel, to make him aware that he has left his dying mother behind and that he is not likely to see her alive again.

Darl's reflection on the mystery of birth and death brings Dewey Dell to mind, for to him she is equated with birth. His statement, 'it takes two people to make you and one people to die' is strange but accurate. Darl's use of the word 'people' instead of person might be seen as an early indication that at the end of the book he effectively splits into two separate people. His reactions to the environment are,

bob 1 : to strike with a quick light blow 2 : to move up and down in a short quick movement <bob the head> 3 : to polish with a bob 5 bobsled, bob ride a bobsled; «The boys bobbed down the hill screaming with pleasure» menearse, agitarse, bazucarse= menear o revolver una cosa líquida moviendo la vasija en que está
1 a : to move up and down briefly or repeatedly <a cork bobbed in the water> b : to emerge, arise, or appear suddenly or unexpectedly <the question bobbed up again> 2 : to nod or curtsy briefly 3 : to try to seize a suspended or floating object with the teeth <bob for apples>

bob I verbo intransitivo 1 balancearse en el agua: the boats bobbed up and down, los barcos se balanceaban en el agua 2 cortarse el pelo por encima de los hombros pero cubriendo la nuca II nombre 1 movimiento sobre las olas 2 pelo corto 3 Bob, sobrenombre de Robert 4 GB chelín

pussel-gutted: (Am. col.) fat, overfed

He has **pussel-gutted** himself eating cold greens. With the rope they will haul him up the path, balloon-like up the sulphurous air.

5

“Jewel,” I say, “do you know that Addie Bundren is going to die? Addie Bundren is going to die?”

10

11

PEABODY (1)

has wore: (Am. col.) has worn, has exhausted

WHEN Anse finally sent for me of his own accord, I said
15 “He **has wore** her out at last.” And I said a damn good thing and at first I would not go because there might be something I could do and I would have to haul her back, by God. I
20 thought maybe they have the same sort of **fool ethics** in heaven they have in the Medical College and that it was maybe Vernon Tull sending for me again, getting me there in the nick
25 of time, as Vernon always does things, getting the most for Anse’s money like he does for his own. But when it got far enough into the day for me to read weather sign I knew
30 it couldn’t have been anybody but Anse that sent. I knew that nobody but a luckless man could ever need a doctor in the face of a cyclone. And I knew that if it had finally occurred
35 to Anse himself that he needed one, it was already too late.

fool ethics: (Am. English) foolish moral codes

When I reach the spring and get down and hitch the team, the sun has
40 gone down behind a bank of black cloud like a top-heavy mountain range, like a load of cinders dumped over there, and there is no wind. I could hear Cash sawing for a mile
45 before I got there. Anse is standing at the top of the **bluff** above the path.

“Where’s the horse?” I say.

ketch hit: (Am. col.) catch it

50 “Jewel’s taken and gone,” he says. “Can’t nobody else **ketch hit**. You’ll have to walk up, I reckon.”

“Me, walk up, weighing two
55 hundred and twenty-five pounds?” I say. “Walk up that darn wall?” He stands there beside a tree. Too bad the Lord made the mistake of giving trees roots and giving the Anse Bundrens He
60 makes feet and legs. If He’d just swapped them, there wouldn’t ever be a worry about this country being deforested some day. Or any other country. “What do you aim for me to do?” I say.
65 “Stay here and get blown clean out of the county when that cloud breaks?” Even with the horse it would take me fifteen minutes to ride up across the pasture to the top of the
70 ridge and reach the house. The path looks like a crooked limb blown against the **bluff**. Anse has not been in town in twelve years. And how his mother ever got up there to bear him,
75 he being his mother’s son.

gittin’ (Am. col.) getting

“Vardaman’s **gittin’** the rope,” he says.

Se le ha **inflado la tripa** de tanto comer verdura. Con la sogá tirarán de él sendero arriba; ascenderá como un globo por el aire sulfuroso.

—Jewel —digo—, ¿sabes que Addie Bundren se va a morir? ¿Que Addie Bundren se está muriendo? [79]

PEABODY

CUANDO Anse por fin mandó por mí por su propia voluntad yo me dije: «Al fin **ha terminado** con ella.» Y dije: «Ya era hora», y al principio no me apetecía ir porque a lo mejor era algo que yo podría hacer y, Dios mío, tal vez podría recuperarla. Pensé que a lo mejor en el cielo tienen el mismo tipo de **ética idiota** que en la Facultad de Medicina y que a lo mejor era Vernon Tull el que mandaba otra vez por mí para que llegara en el momento justo, pues Vernon siempre hace esas cosas, mira más por el dinero de Anse que por el suyo. Pero cuando el día avanzó lo suficiente para interpretar las señales que indicaban el tiempo que iba a hacer, comprendí que sólo me podría haber llamado Anse. Comprendí que sólo un hombre sin suerte podría necesitar un médico cuando estaba a punto de empezar un ciclón. Y comprendí que si a Anse al fin se le había ocurrido que necesitaba un médico es que ya era demasiado tarde.

Cuando llego al manantial y me apeo y ato las caballerías, el sol se había escondido detrás de un banco de nubes negras como un macizo de montañas más pesadas por arriba, como una carga de ceniza allí vertida; y no hay viento. Oigo serrar a Cash más de un kilómetro antes de llegar. Anse está de pie en lo alto del **farallón**, encima del sendero.

—¿Dónde está el caballo? —digo.

—Jewel lo pilló y se fue —dice—. Nadie más lo puede **coger**. Para mí que va a tener usted que subir andando.

—¿Andando yo con mis ciento y pico kilos de peso? —digo—. ¿Subir andando a ese maldito despeñadero? —Allí sigue de pie junto a un árbol. Una desgracia que el Señor cometiera el error de dar raíces a los árboles y, en cambio, dar a los Anse Bundren que hizo pies y piernas. Si hubiera hecho al revés, nunca habría que preocuparse de que algún día esta comarca quedase deforestada. O cualquier otra comarca—. ¿Qué intenta que haga? —digo—. ¿Que me quede aquí y que el viento me borre de la faz de tierra cuando estalle esa nube? —Incluso con el caballo me llevaría un cuarto de hora subir por el prado hasta lo alto del risco y llegar a la casa. El sendero parece una rama retorcida lanzada contra el **despeñadero**. Anse hace doce años que no va a la ciudad. ¿Y cómo se las arreglaría su madre para subir allí a parirle, pues es hijo de su madre?

—Vardaman traerá la cuerda —dice.

as usual, lyrical. The sun is likened to ‘a bloody egg upon the crest of thunderheads’, a phrase which clearly belongs to the unverballed as opposed to the unspoken level, the words being too long and erudite to belong to Darl’s own vocabulary.

Peabody (1)

This section contains the unspoken thoughts of Doctor Peabody. He seems to know the family well and takes a tolerant, even a faintly amused, view of their idiosyncrasies. When he reaches Addie’s bedside, Peabody sees at once that she has given up all desire to live. Nevertheless, he demands why Anse did not send for him sooner. He receives no satisfactory answer and at that moment Dewey Dell summons them both back to the sickroom. Peabody feels that Addie does not want him there, and, reflecting on how strange it is that women attach themselves to worthless men, he prepares to leave. Suddenly, Addie speaks for the first time, calling on Cash.

COMMENTARY: Peabody’s section is very useful to the reader, for it lets him see the Bundrens and the background through the eye of an intelligent, humorous outsider, someone who is not bound by religious beliefs like the Tulls. He confirms the notion that Anse is unfortunate, ‘nobody but a luckless man could ever need a doctor in the face of a cyclone’. Peabody also confirms what the reader has by now come to suspect, namely that being married to Anse is not a desirable state for any woman. His **reluctance** (renuencia) to go out to the farm if there is any chance that he might save Addie shows that he feels for Addie’s suffering. Later in the section, in the lines from ‘she has been dead these ten days’ to ‘a tenement or a town’, Peabody puts her death into a more general perspective.

The idea that Addie is finding it difficult to make the transition from the state of being alive to that of being dead ties in with Peabody’s notion that life with Anse must have been a form of living death for her. Peabody also rejects the idea that death is either an end or a beginning, preferring to see it simply as the movement of one individual away from his habitual place. The rest of the world, the ‘tenement or the town’, continues to function and exist, as does the dead individual, albeit in a different place. This notion is prophetic; after Addie’s death we see the continuing evidence that she has been in the ‘tenement’ of the family in the marks she has left on her sons.

Peabody’s section is full of reflections of equal profundity,

After a while Vardaman appears with the ploughline. He gives the end of it to Anse and comes down the path, uncoiling it.

I done already: (Am. col.) I have already

5 “You hold it tight,” I say. “**I done already** wrote this visit on to my books, so I’m going to charge you just the same, whether I get there or not.”

kin: (Am. col.) can

10 “I got hit,” Anse says. “You **kin** come on up.”

I’ll be damned if I can see why I don’t quit. A man seventy years old, weighing two hundred and odd pounds, being hauled up and down a damn mountain on a rope. I reckon it’s because I must reach 20 the fifty-thousand dollar mark of dead accounts on my books before I can quit. “What the hell does your wife mean,” I say, “taking sick on top of a durn mountain?”

25 “I’m right sorry,” he says. He let the rope go, just dropped it, and he has turned toward the house. There is a little daylight up here still, of the colour of sulphur **matches**. The 30 boards look like strips of sulphur. Cash does not look back. Vernon Tull says he brings each board up to the window for her to see it and say it is all right. The boy overtakes us. Anse looks back at him. “Where’s the rope?” he says.

“It’s where you left it,” I say. “But 40 never you mind that rope. I got to get back down that bluff. I don’t aim for that storm to catch me up here. I’d blow too durn far once I got started.”

45 The girl is standing by the bed, fanning her. When we enter she turns her head and looks at us. She has been dead these ten days. I suppose it’s having been a part of Anse for so long that she cannot even make that 50 change, if change it be. I can remember how when I was young I believed death to be a phenomenon of the body; now I know it to be merely a function of the mind--and 55 that of the minds of the ones who suffer the **bereavement**. The nihilists say it is the end; the fundamentalists, the beginning; when in reality it is no more than a single tenant or family 60 moving out of a tenement or a town.

She looks at us. Only her eyes seem to move. It’s like they touch us, not 65 with sight or sense, but like the stream from a hose touches you, the stream at the instant of impact as dissociated from the nozzle as though it had never been there. She does not look at Anse 70 at all. She looks at me, then at the boy. Beneath the **quilt** she is no more than a bundle of rotten sticks.

“Well, Miss Addie,” I say. The 75 girl does not stop the fan. “How are you, sister?” I say. Her head lies **gaunt** on the pillow, looking at the boy. “You picked out a fine

Al cabo de un rato aparece Vardaman con la cuerda del arado. Le da un extremo a Anse y baja por el sendero, desenrollándola.

—Agárrela fuerte —digo—. Ya he anotado esta visita en el libro, conque se la tengo que cobrar, tanto si subo como si no.

—Ya agarro bien —dice Anse—. Puede usted subir.

Que el demonio me lleve si entiendo por qué no lo dejo. Que a un hombre de setenta años, que pesa ciento y pico kilos, le suban y le bajen por una condenada montaña con una cuerda... Supongo que es porque debo llegar a la cifra de cincuenta mil dólares de cuentas sin cobrar antes de dejarlo. — ¿Cómo se le ocurre ponerse mala a tu mujer —digo—, ponerse mala en la cima de una maldita montaña?

—Lo siento mucho —dice él. Ha soltado la cuerda, la ha dejado caer, y se ha vuelto hacia la casa. Aquí arriba todavía hay un poco de luz, del color del azufre _____. Los tabloncitos parecen tiras de azufre. Cash no mira hacia atrás. Vernon Tull dice que lleva cada tabla a la ventana para que las vea ella y diga si están bien. El chico nos adelantaba. Anse se vuelve a mirarle—. ¿Dónde está la cuerda? —dice.

—Donde usted la dejó —digo—. Pero no se preocupe por esa cuerda. Tendré que volver a bajar por esos riscos. No tengo intención de que esa tormenta me coja aquí arriba. Me iba a hacer volar demasiado lejos.

La chica está de pie junto a la cama, abanicándola. Cuando entramos vuelve la cabeza y nos mira. Lleva diez días como muerta. Supongo que como ha sido una parte de Anse durante tanto tiempo ni siquiera puede hacer ese [81] cambio, si eso es un cambio. Recuerdo que cuando yo era joven creía que la muerte era un fenómeno del cuerpo; ahora sé que es meramente una función de la mente... y de las mentes de quienes sufren la **pérdida**. Los nihilistas dicen que es el final; los fundamentalistas, que el comienzo; cuando en realidad no es más que un inquilino o familia que deja una casa alquilada o un pueblo.

Nos mira. Sólo sus ojos parecen moverse. Es como si nos tocaran, y no como la vista o sentido, sino igual que te toca el chorro de una manguera, un chorro que en el instante del impacto se disociara de la boca de la manguera como si no hubiera salido de ella. No mira a Anse en absoluto. Me mira a mí, luego al chico. Debajo de la **colcha** no es más que un manojo de palos podridos.

—Bien, Miss Addie —digo. La chica no deja de abanicar—. ¿Cómo va eso, mujer? —digo. Su cabeza descansa **demacrada** en la almohada y mira al chico—. Valiente tiempocito ha elegido

though of less seriousness and it provides a useful, ironical view of the Bundrens. The Doctor is not simply ironic, however, he also evinces a large measure of human sympathy, feeling concern for the silent Vardaman and for the dying Addie. In the end, Peabody makes a remark which allows the reader to see the Bundrens in a new context, ‘That durn little tyke . . . and brooding image.’ Such things as the repetition of the sound of sawing, the resentment of Jewel by Darl, even the slow indolence of Anse, are seen here against a background of a country where things do move slowly, where everything seems to continue for long periods. Isolated on the bluff, the Bundrens’ world would appear, in the light of this remark by Peabody, to be a little world which mirrors the larger world beyond in the sense that it is a place of slow, almost imperceptible change.

bereave deprive of a relation, friend, etc., esp. by death.
bereavement *n.* sorrow, condolencia, pérdida, Luto, duelo, desgracia, aflicción

time to get me out here and bring up a storm.” Then I send Anse and the boy out. She watches the boy as he leaves the room. She has not moved save her eyes.

He and Anse are on the porch when I come out, the boy sitting on the steps, Anse standing by a post, not even leaning against it, his arms dangling, the hair pushed and **matted** up on his head like a **dipper rooster**. He turns his head, blinking at me.

“Why didn’t you send for me sooner?” I say.

“**Hit** was **jest** one thing and then another,” he says. “That ere corn me and the boys was aimin’ to git up with, and Dewey Dell a-takin’ good **keer** of her, and folks comin’ in, a-offerin’ to help and **sich**, till I jest thought . . .”

“Damn the money,” I say. “Did you ever hear of me worrying a fellow before he was ready to pay?”

“Hit ain’t begrudgin’ the money,” he says. “I jest kept a-thinkin’ . . . She’s goin’, is she?” The durn little **tyke** is sitting on the top step, looking smaller than ever in the sulphur-coloured light. That’s the one trouble with this country everything, weather, all, hangs on too long. Like our rivers, outland: opaque, slow, violent; shaping and creating the life of man in its implacable and **brooding** image. “I knowed hit,” Anse says. “All the while I made sho. Her mind is **sot** on hit.”

“And a damn good thing, too,” I say. “With a trifling—” He sits on the top step, small, motionless in faded overalls. . . When I came out he looked up at me, then at Anse. But now he has stopped looking at us. He just sits there.

“Have you told her **yit**?” Anse says.

“What for?” I say. “What the devil for?”

“Shell know **hit**. I knowed that when she see you she would know hit, same as writing. You wouldn’t need to tell her. Her mind —”

Behind us the girl says, “Paw.” I look at her, at her face.

“You better go quick,” I say.

When we enter the room she is watching the door. She looks at me. Her eyes look like lamps **blaring up** just before the oil is gone. “She wants you to go out,” the girl says.

“Now, Addie,” Anse says, “when he come all the way from Jefferson to git you well?” She watches me: I can feel her eyes. It’s like she was

usted para hacerme venir hasta aquí y qué tormenta nos ha preparado. —Entonces mando a Anse y al chico fuera. Ella sigue al chico con la mirada cuando éste sale del cuarto. Sólo ha movido los ojos.

El chico y Anse están en el porche cuando salgo; el chico sentado en los escalones, Anse de pie junto a un poste, pero no apoyado en él, con los brazos caídos, el pelo revuelto y **desgreñado** como un **pollo mojado**. Vuelve la cabeza, mirándome con ojos semicerrados.

—¿Por qué no me mandó a buscar antes? —digo.

—Por una cosa u otra fui dejándolo —dice—. Estaba ese maíz que teníamos que recoger yo y los chicos, y Dewey Dell la cuidaba bien, y la gente venía, nos ofrecía ayuda, hasta que pensé...

—Maldito dinero —digo—. ¿Ha oído de alguna vez que molestase a un vecino porque no me pagara?

—No trataba de ahorrar dinero —dice—. Sólo pensaba que... ¿Es que se nos va? —el condenado **chico** está sentado en el escalón de arriba y parece más pequeño que nunca a la luz color azufre. Ese es el problema con esta comarca: todo, el tiempo, todo, dura demasiado. Como nuestros ríos, nuestras tierras, opacas, lentas, violentas; modelando y creando la vida del hombre a su implacable _____ imagen. Lo sabía —dice Anse—. Todo el tiempo estuve seguro. Ella no piensa más que en eso.

—Pues hace muy bien —digo—. Una pizca más y... —está entado en el escalón de arriba, pequeño, inmóvil en su mono descolorido. Cuando salí alzó la vista hacia mí, luego hacia Anse. Pero ya ha dejado de mirarnos. Se limita a estar allí sentado.

—¿Se lo ha dicho ya? —dice Anse.

—¿Para qué? —digo yo—. ¿Para qué demonios?

—Ya lo sabrá. Yo sabía que en cuanto le viera a usted, lo sabría igual que si estuviera escrito. No tenía ninguna necesidad de decírselo. Sólo piensa en...

Detrás de nosotros la chica dice:

—Padre.

La miro, a la cara.

—Será mejor que vaya enseguida —digo.

Cuando entramos en el cuarto, está mirando a la puerta. Me mira a mí. Sus ojos parecen lámparas que **chisporrotean** justo antes de que se les termina el aceite.

—Quiere que salga usted —me dice la chica.

—Vamos, vamos, Addie —dice Anse—, si ha venido desde Jefferson para que te pongas buena... —ella me mira: noto sus ojos. Es como si me es-

dipper (cazo) rooster: (Am. English) like a cockerel which has been soaked with water

hit: (Am. col.) it
jest: (Am. col.) just

keer: (Am. col.) care

sich: (Am. col.) such

sot: (Am. col.) set

yit: (Am. col.) yet

hit: (Am. col.) it

matted (of a colour, surface, etc.) dull, without lustre. 1 a border of dull gold round a framed picture. 2 (in full **mat paint**) paint formulated to give a dull flat finish (cf. gloss 1). 3 the appearance of unburnished gold.

— v. tr. (**matted, matting**) 1 make (gilding etc.) dull. 2 frost (glass) (**escarchar**).

matted 1a tr. (esp. as **matted adj.**) entangle in a thick mass (**matted hair**). b intr. become matted. 2 tr. cover or furnish with mats.

matted A adj. 1 **matted** tangled in a dense mass; “tried to push through the matted undergrowth” 2 flat, mat, matt, matte, **matted** not reflecting light; not glossy; “flat wall paint”; “a photograph with a matte finish”

matted adj. (pelo) enmarañado

shoving at me with them. I have seen it before in women. Seen them drive from the room them coming with sympathy and pity, with actual help, and **clinging to** some trifling animal to whom they never were more than pack-horses. That's what they mean by the love that passeth understanding: that pride, that furious desire to hide that **abject** nakedness which we bring here with us, carry with us into operating rooms, carry stubbornly and furiously with us into the earth again. I leave the room. Beyond the porch Cash's saw snores **steadily** into the board. A minute later she calls his name, her voice harsh and strong.

20 "Cash," she says; "you, Cash!"

12
DARL (5)

25 PA stands beside the bed. From behind his leg Vardaman peers, with his round head and his eyes round and his mouth beginning to open. She looks at pa; all her failing life appears to drain into her eyes, urgent, irremediable. "It's Jewel she wants," Dewey Dell says.

35 "Why, Addie," pa says, "him and Darl went to make one more load. They thought there was time. That you would wait for them, and that three dollars and all . . ." He stoops, laying his hand on hers. For a while yet she looks at him, without reproach, without anything at all, as if her eyes alone are listening to the irrevocable cessation of his voice. 45 Then she raises herself, who has not moved in ten days. Dewey Dell leans down, trying to press her back.

50 "Ma," she says, "ma."

She is looking out the window, at Cash stooping **steadily** at the board in the failing light, labouring on toward darkness and into it as though the stroking of the saw illumined its own motion, board and saw engendered.

"You, Cash," she shouts, her voice 60 harsh, strong, and unimpaired. "You, Cash!"

He looks up at the gaunt face framed by the window in the twilight. It is a composite picture of all time since he was a child. He drops the saw and lifts the board for her to see, watching the window in which the face has not moved. He drags a second plank into position and slants the two of them into their final juxtaposition, gesturing toward the ones yet on the ground, shaping with his empty hand in pantomime the finished box. For a while 75 still she looks down at him from the composite picture, neither with censure nor approbation. Then the face disappears.

tuviera barriendo de allí con ellos. Ya lo he visto antes en las mujeres. Las he visto echar del cuarto a las que vienen con simpatía y piedad, con ayuda efectiva, y **aferrarse a** un insignificante animal para el que nunca fueron más que bestias de carga. Eso es lo que para ellas significa amar por encima de todo: orgullo, ese furioso deseo de esconder esa **abyecta** desnudez que traemos con nosotros, que arrastramos hasta la sala de operaciones, que terca y furiosamente arrastramos de nuevo con nosotros a la tierra. Salgo del cuarto. Más allá del porche la sierra de Cash ronca **con fuerza** en la tabla. Un minuto después, ella dice su nombre, con voz áspera y enérgica.

—Cash —dice—. Oye, Cash. [83]

—
DARL

PADRE está de pie al lado de la cama. Desde detrás de su pierna Vardaman atisba, con su cabeza redonda y sus ojos redondos y la boca que se le empieza a abrir. Ella mira a padre; toda su desfalleciente vida parece derramársele por los ojos, urgente, irremediablemente.

—Es a Jewel a quien quiere —dice Dewey Dell.

—Oye, Addie —dice padre—, él y Darl fueron a traer una carga más. Pensaron que había tiempo. Que los esperarías; y esos tres dólares, además... —se agacha descansando su mano en las de ella. Durante un rato ella todavía le mira, sin reproche alguno, sin ninguno en absoluto, como si sólo sus ojos esperasen el irrevocable cese de la voz de padre. Luego se incorpora, aunque lleva diez días sin moverse. Dewey Dell se inclina, tratando de obligarla a tumbarse de nuevo.

—Madre —le dice—; madre.

Está mirando afuera por la ventana; a Cash inclinado **continuamente** sobre la tabla a la luz del anochecer, trabajando hacia la oscuridad y dentro de ella como si el sonido de la sierra iluminase su propio movimiento, engendrarse tabla y sierra.

—Oye, Cash —grita ella; su voz es áspera, enérgica, e inalterable—. ¡Oye, Cash!

Cash levanta la vista hacia la cara demacrada que enmarca la ventana en el crepúsculo. Es el mismo cuadro de todas las veces desde que era niño. Deja la sierra y levanta la tabla para que ella vea, mirando hacia la ventana en la que el rostro no se ha movido. Alza con esfuerzo un segundo tablón y pone a los dos en su unión definitiva, señalando a los que todavía están en el suelo e imitando con la mano que tiene libre la forma de la caja cuando esté terminada. Durante un rato ella todavía le mira desde su cuadro de la ventana, sin censura, ni aprobación. Luego la cara desaparece.

Darl (5)

In this section, Darl imaginatively reconstructs the scene around his mother's death-bed. He becomes so preoccupied with his imaginings that he scarcely seems to notice either the wagon on which he is travelling or his companion, Jewel.

COMMENTARY: It is tempting to think that Darl intuitively knows when his mother dies, but it is quite likely that he would imagine the scene around her death-bed in precise detail without *knowing* that she is in fact dead. It is easy for him to imagine the reactions of his family to her death as extensions of their habitual patterns of behaviour. The whole scene as he imagines it is convincing because it is based on his observations of his family and on their predictable reactions and customary attitudes.

One observation in this section, 'He (Cash) looks up at the gaunt face framed by the window in the twilight. It is a composite picture of all time since he was a child', stresses the predictability of experience which marks the lives of the Bundrens. It also echoes the significant statement by Peabody about 'things hanging on in this land'.

ABJECT. - Qui inspire l'aversion, le dégoût, la répulsion; qui attire le mépris, l'opprobre.⁸⁴

Abject adj. 1 miserable, wretched. 2 degraded, self-abasing, humble. 3 despicable. Miserable, bestial, vil.

Abjecto 1. adj. Despreciable, vil en extremo. 2. desus. Humillado, abatido. *Acobardado*

She lies back and turns her head without so much as glancing at pa. She looks at Vardaman; her eyes, the life in them, rushing suddenly upon them; the two flames **glare up** for a steady instant. Then they go out as though someone had leaned down and blown upon them.

10 “Ma,” Dewey Dell says; “ma!” Leaning above the bed, her hands lifted a little, the fan stiff moving like it has for ten days, she begins to keen. Her
15 voice is strong, young, tremulous and clear, **rapt** with its own timbre and volume, the fan still moving steadily up and down, whispering the useless air. Then she
20 flings herself across Addie Bundren’s knees, clutching her, shaking her with the furious strength of the young before sprawling suddenly across the
25 Bundren left, jarring the whole bed into a chattering sibilance of mattress shucks, her arms outflung and the fan in one hand still beating with expiring breath into the quilt.

30 From behind pa’s leg Vardaman peers, his mouth full open and all colour draining from his face into his mouth, as though he has by some means
35 fleshed his own teeth in himself, sucking. He begins to move slowly backward from the bed, his eyes round, his pale face fading into the dusk like a piece of paper pasted on a failing wall,
40 and so out of the door.

Pa leans above the bed in the twilight, his humped silhouette partaking of that owl-like quality of
45 **awryfeathered**, disgruntled outrage within which lurks a wisdom too profound or too inert for even thought.

50 “Durn them boys,” he says.

*Jewel, I say. Overhead the day drives level and grey, hiding the sun by a flight of grey spears. In the
55 rain the mules smoke a little, splashed yellow with mud, the off one clinging in sliding lunges to the side of the road above the ditch. The tilted lamber gleams dull
60 yellow, water-soaked and heavy as lead, tilted at a steep angle into the ditch above the broken wheel; about the shattered spokes and about Jewel’s ankles a **runnel** of
65 yellow neither water nor earth swirls, curving with the yellow road neither of earth nor water, down the hill dissolving into a streaming mass of dark green neither of earth nor sky. Jewel, I say.*

70 Cash comes to the door, carrying the saw. Pa stands beside the bed, humped, his arms dangling. He turns his head, his shabby profile, his chin
75 collapsing slowly as he works the snuff against his gums.

“She’s gone,” Cash says.

Se vuelve a tumbar y gira la cabeza sin siquiera mirar a [84] padre. Mira a Vardaman; sus ojos, la vida en ellos, regresa a toda prisa; las dos llamas **chisporrotean** durante un intenso instante. Luego se apagan como si alguien se hubiera agachado y soplado.

—Madre, ¡madre! —dice Dewey Dell, e inclinándose sobre la cama, con las manos un poco levantadas, moviendo todavía el abanico como viene haciendo desde hace diez días, empieza a proferir lamentos. Su voz es sonora, juvenil, trémula y clara, **arrobada** en su propio timbre y volumen, mientras el abanico todavía se mueve enérgicamente arriba y abajo, haciendo susurrar al aire ya inútil. Luego se echa sobre las rodillas de Addie Bundren, la agarra, la sacude con la furiosa energía de los jóvenes antes de desparramarse de repente entre el manojo de huesos carcomidos que dejó Addie Bundren, haciendo crujiir toda la cama con el seco chirrido de las hojas del jergón; sus brazos están extendidos y el abanico todavía se mueve en una de sus manos como sin aliento sobre la colcha.

Desde detrás de la pierna de padre atisba Vardaman, boquiabierto y con todo el color de la cara asomándosele a la boca, como si de alguna manera se hubiera clavado los dientes en su propia carne, chupando. Se aparta poco a poco de la cama, redondos los ojos, pálida la cara que se desvanece en las sombras como un trozo de papel pegado a una pared que se cae, y así sale por la puerta.

Padre inclina sobre la cama en el crepúsculo su silueta encorvada que comparte esa cualidad propia de la lechuga de **plumas ahuecadas** ofendida, que esconde dentro una sabiduría demasiado profunda o demasiado inerte para poder ser comprendida.

—¡Condenados chicos! —dice.

*Jewel, digo yo. El día pasa liso y gris por encima, ocultando el sol con un vuelo de lanzas grises. Bajo la lluvia las mulas humean un poco, salpicadas del amarillo del barro, la de la derecha se agarra con arremetidas deslizando al borde del camino, sobre la cuneta. La leña inclinada brilla amarillo apagado, empapada de agua y pesada como plomo, volcada en un ángulo empinado en la cuneta encima de la rueda rota; entre los radios rotos y entre los tobillos de Jewel corre un **arroyo** amarillento, ni de agua ni de tierra,
X — _____ cerro abajo, disolviéndose en una [85] masa que fluye verde oscuro, ni de tierra ni de cielo. Jewel, digo.*

Cash aparece en la puerta, trae la sierra. Padre está de pie al lado de la cama, encorvado; le cuelgan los brazos. Vuelve la cabeza y muestra su perfil ajado, su barbilla que se hunde poco a poco mientras aprieta el rapé contra las encías.

—Se nos ha ido —dice Cash.

“She taken and left us,” pa says. Cash does not look at him. “How nigh are you done?” pa says. Cash does not answer. He enters, carrying the saw. “I reckon you better get at it,” pa says. “You’ll have to do the best you can, with them boys gone off that-a-way.” Cash looks down at her face. He is not listening to pa at all. He does not approach the bed. He stops in the middle of the floor, the saw against his leg, his sweating arms powdered lightly with sawdust, his face composed. “If you get in a tight, maybe some of them’ll get here to-morrow and help you,” pa says. “Vernon could.” Cash is not listening. He is looking down at her peaceful, rigid face fading into the dusk as though darkness were a precursor of the ultimate earth, until at last the face seems to float detached upon it, lightly as the reflection of a dead leaf. “There is Christians enough to help you,” pa says. Cash is not listening. After a while he turns without looking at pa and leaves the room. Then the saw begins to snore again. “They will help us in our sorrow,” pa says.

The sound of the saw is steady, competent, unhurried, stirring the dying light so that at each stroke her face seems to wake a little into an expression of listening and of waiting, as though she were counting the strokes. Pa looks down at the face, at the black sprawl of Dewey Dell’s hair, the outflung arms, the clutched fan now motionless on the fading quilt. “I reckon you better get supper on,” he says.

Dewey Dell does not move.

“Git up, now, and put supper on,” pa says. “We got to keep our strength up. I reckon Doctor Peabody’s right hungry, coming all this way. And Cash’ll need to eat quick and get back to work so he can finish it in time.”

Dewey Dell rises, heaving to her feet. She looks down at the face. It is like a casting of fading bronze upon the pillow, the hands alone still with any semblance of life: a curled, gnarled inertness; a spent yet alert quality from which weariness, exhaustion, travail has not yet departed, as though they doubted even yet the **actuality** of rest, guarding with horned and penurious alertness the cessation which they know cannot last.

Dewey Dell stoops and slides the quilt from beneath them and draws it up over them to the chin, smoothing it down, drawing it smooth. Then without looking at pa she goes around the bed and leaves the room.

She will go out where Peabody is, where she can stand in the twilight and look at his back with such an expression that, feeling her eyes and

—Se ha ido y nos deja —dice padre. Cash no le mira. ¿Cuánto te falta? —dice padre. Cash no responde. Entra, con la sierra—. Para mí que es mejor que sigas con eso —dice padre—. Tienes que hacerla lo mejor que puedas, mientras los chicos estén de camino —Cash baja la vista hacia la cara de madre. No escucha en absoluto a padre. No se acerca a la cama. Se detiene en medio del cuarto, con la sierra junto a la pierna, los brazos sudorosos ligeramente espolvoreados de serrín, el rostro tranquilo—. Si andas corto de tiempo, a lo mejor mañana viene alguien a ayudarte —dice padre—. Puede que Vernon —Cash no escucha. Está mirando el rostro pacífico y rígido de madre que se desvanece en el crepúsculo como si la oscuridad fuera precursora de la tierra primordial, hasta que por fin el rostro parece flotar desprendido por encima de ella, leve como el reflejo de una hoja seca—. Quedan suficientes cristianos que te ayuden —dice padre. Cash no escucha. Al cabo de un rato se vuelve sin mirar a padre y sale del cuarto. Luego la sierra empieza a roncar de nuevo—. Nos ayudarán en nuestra desgracia —dice padre.

El sonido de la sierra es seguro, competente, reposado, y remueve la moribunda claridad de modo que a cada golpe parece despertar en el rostro de madre una expresión de atención y espera, como si estuviera contando los golpes. Padre baja la vista a su rostro, al pelo negro y lacio de Dewey Dell, a sus brazos extendidos, al abanico cerrado e inmóvil de encima de la colcha borrosa.

—Para mí que es hora de que prepares la cena —dice él.

Dewey Dell no se mueve.

—Venga, vete a preparar la cena —dice padre—. Tenemos que recobrar fuerzas. Para mí que el doctor Peabody tiene hambre, después de la caminata. Y Cash tiene [86] que comer rápido para volver al trabajo y terminarlo a tiempo.

Dewey Dell se levanta apoyándose en los pies. Baja la vista hacia el rostro. Este es como un molde de bronce que se desvanece encima de la almohada; sólo las manos conservan algo parecido a la vida: una inercia retorcida, nudosa; una cierta cualidad consumida, aunque todavía alerta, de la que todavía no sé han ausentado el cansancio ni el agotamiento, ni el trabajo, como si todavía dudasen de la **realidad** del reposo, manteniendo con encorvada y avara vigilancia el cese de lo que saben que no puede durar.

Dewey Dell se agacha y le quita la colcha de debajo de las manos y estira aquella sobre éstas, hasta la barbilla, alisándola, estirándola con suavidad. Luego, sin mirar a padre, rodea la cama y sale del cuarto.

Irà hasta donde está Peabody, donde pueda permanecer en penumbra y mirarle la espalda con tal expresión que él, al notar sus ojos y

actual (En) real, verdadera, efectivo, concreto, auténtico, mismo [very].
actual (Sp) 1. adj. presente, en el mismo momento. 2. Que existe, sucede o se usa en el tiempo de que se habla. Reciente, reinante, palpitante
actuality n. (pl. -ies) 1 **reality**; what is the case [constatación, implementación]. 2 (in pl.) existing conditions.

turning, he will say; I would not let it
grieve me, now. She was old, and sick
too. Suffering more than we knew. She
couldn't have got well. Vardaman's
5 getting big now, and with you to take
good care of them all. I would try not
to let it grieve me. I expect you'd
better go and get come supper ready.
It don't have to be much. But they'll
10 need to eat, and she looking at him,
saying You could do so much for me
if you just would. If you just knew. I
am I and you are you and I know it
and you don't know it and you could
15 do so much for me if you just would
and if you just would then I could tell
you and then nobody would have to it
except you and me and Darl.

20 Pa stands over the bed,
dangle-armed, humped, motionless.
He raises his hand to his head,
scouring his hair, listening to the saw.
He comes nearer and rubs his hand,
25 palco and back, on his thigh and lays
it on her face and then on the **hump**
of quilt where her hands are. He
touches the quilt as he saw Dewey
Dell do, trying to smoothe it up to the
chip, but disarranging it instead. He
30 tries to smoothe it again, clumsily,
his hand awkward as a claw,
smoothing at the wrinkles which he
mude and which continue to emerge
35 beneath his hand with **perverse** X
ubiquity, so that at last he desists, his
hand falling to his side and stroking
itself again, palm and back, on his
thigh. The sound of the saw snores
40 steadily into the room. Pa breathes
with a quiet, rasping sound,
mouthing the snuff against his gums.
"God's will be done," he says. "Now
I can get them teeth."

45 *Jewel's hat droops limp about
his neck, channelling water on
to the soaked tow-sack tied
about his shoulders as,
50 ankle-deep in the running ditch,
he pries with a slipping
two-by-four, with a piece of
rotting log for **fulcrum**, at the
axle. Jewel, I say, she is dead,
55 Jewel. Addie Bundren is dead.*

13

VARDAMAN (1)

60 THEN I begin to run. I run
toward the back and come to the
edge of the porch and stop. Then I
begin to cry. I can feel where the
fish was in the dust. It is cut up into
65 pieces of not-fish now, not-blood
on my hands and overalls. Then it
wasn't so. It hadn't happened then.
And now she is getting so far ahead
I cannot catch her.

The trees look like chickens when
they **ruffle out** into the cool dust on
the hot days. If I jump off the porch I
will be where the fish was, and it all
75 cut up into not-fish now. I can hear
the bed and her face and them and I
can feel the floor shake when he
walks on it that came and did it. That

*volverse, dirá: Yo no me apenaría
tanto. Era vieja, y además estaba en-
ferma. Sufría más de lo que nos ima-
ginamos. Nunca podría curarse.
Vardaman ya es bastante mayor, y tú
puedes ocuparte de todos. Yo trataría
de no apenarme tanto. Creo que es me-
jor que vayas a preparar algo de cenar.
No importa que no sea mucho. Pero ne-
cesitan comer, y ella con la mirada de-
cía: Usted podría hacer mucho por mí
sólo con quererlo. Si usted lo supiera.
Yo soy yo y usted es usted y yo lo sé y
usted no lo sabe y usted podría hacer
mucho por mí con sólo quererlo y si
usted quisiera entonces yo se lo diría
y entonces nadie tendría que saberlo
a no ser usted y yo y Darl*

Padre está de pie junto a la cama, los
brazos caídos, encorvado, inmóvil. Se
lleva la mano a la cabeza, rascándose el
pelo, escuchando la sierra. Se acerca
más y se restriega la mano, palma y dor-
so, en el muslo y la deja descansar en la
cara de madre y luego en **el bulto** de la
colcha donde están sus manos. Toca
la colcha como vio que hacía
Dewey Dell, tratando de alisarla
hasta la barbilla, pero la desarre-
gla. Intenta alisarla de nuevo,
desmañadamente, con mano torpe
como una garra, alisando las arrugas
que hizo él y que continúan
emergiendo bajo su mano con **perverse**
ubicuidad, conque al final desiste, deja
caer la mano a un lado y se la restrie-
ga otra vez, palma y dorso, en el mus-
lo. [87] El sonido de la sierra ronca
constante dentro del cuarto. Padre res-
pira con un sonido tranquilo, rasposo,
mascando el tabaco entre las encías.

—Que sea lo que Dios quiera —dice—
. Ahora podré conseguir la dentadura.

*A Jewel le cuelga el sombrero flácci-
do hasta el cuello, canalizando el agua
hacia el empapado saco de arpillera ata-
do en torno a sus hombros mientras, con
el agua que corre por la cuneta hasta los
tobillos, hace palanca en el eje con un
rebaladizo tronco, usando un trozo de
madero podrido como **punto de apoyo**.
Jewel, digo yo, madre ha muerto, Jewel.
Addie Bundren está muerta*

VARDAMAN

ENTONCES empiezo a correr. Corro
hacia la parte de atrás y llego al borde
del porche y me paro. Entonces me pon-
go a llorar. Noto dónde estuvo el pez, en
el polvo. Ahora está cortado en pedazos
y ya no es pez, y no tengo sangre en las
manos ni en el mono. Entonces no era
así. Eso entonces no había pasado. Y ah-
ora madre me ha tomado tanta delantera
que no la puedo alcanzar.

Los árboles parecen pollos cuando
se revuelcan en el polvo fresco los días
de calor. Si saltara del porche estaría
donde estuvo el pez que ahora está cor-
tado en pedazos y ya no es pez. Distin-
go el sonido, el de la cama, y veo su
cara y las de ellos y noto que el suelo
hace ruido cuando él entró y lo hizo.

Vardaman (1)

This section consists of the
unspoken thoughts of the
youngest of Addie's children as
he strives to come to grips with
the idea that she is dead. He runs
from the house and sees the spot
where Vernon Tull saw him drop
the dead fish. He thinks that the
fish, which he has cut up, is now
'not-fish', a childish way of
describing death.

COMMENTARY: Vardaman
has not so far contributed to the
book but has been glimpsed in
other sections as 'a poor little
tyke'. Here, Faulkner brilliantly
portrays the unreasoning violence
of the child who is suffering a

perverse 1 perverso, malvado, depravado
2 **obstinado**, terco, caprichoso,
contumaz, adverso, contrario

fulcro punto de apoyo de la palanca.

ruffle

— *v. arrugar, agitar, rizar, despeinar encrespar, eri-
zar, descomponer, perturbar, ofender, alisar*

1 *tr. disturb the smoothness or tranquillity of.*

2 *tr. upset the calmness of (a person).*

3 *tr. gather (lace etc.) into a ruffle.*

4 *tr. (often foll. by up) (of a bird) erect (its feathers) in
anger, display, etc.*

5 *intr. undergo ruffling.*

6 *intr. lose smoothness or calmness.*

— *n. arruga, volante fruncido, rizo*

1 an ornamental gathered or goffered frill of lace etc.
worn at the opening of a garment esp. round the
wrist, breast, or neck. ruffled skirt=falda de
volantes:(o pechera o manga de volantes)

2 perturbation, bustle.

3 a rippling effect on water.

4 the ruff of a bird etc. (see ruff 1 2).

5 *Mil.* a vibrating drum-beat.

came and did it when she was all right but he came and did it.

“The fat son of a bitch.”

5

I jump from the porch, running. The top of the barn comes swooping up out of the twilight. If I jump I can go through it like the pink lady in the circus, into the warm smelling, without having to wait. My hands grab at the bushes; beneath my feet the rocks and dirt go rubbing down.

15 Then I can breathe again, in the warm smelling. I enter the stall, trying to touch him, and then I can cry then I vomit the crying. As soon as he gets through kicking I can and then I can
20 cry, the crying can.

kilt: (Am. col.) killed

“He **kilt** her. He kilt her.”

The life in him runs under the skin,
25 under my hand, running through the **splotches**, smelling up into my nose where the sickness is beginning to cry, vomiting the crying, and then I can breathe, vomiting it. It makes a
30 lot of noise. I can smell the life running up from under my hands, up my arms, and then I can leave the stall.

35 I cannot find it. In the dark, along the dust, the walls I cannot find it. The crying makes a lot of noise. I wish it wouldn't make so much noise. Then I find it in the
40 wagon-shed, in the dust, and I run across the lot and into the road, the stick **jouncing** on my shoulder.

jounce bump, bounce, jolt, bounce up and down repeatedly, traquetear, oscilar

45 They watch me as I run up, beginning to jerk back, their eyes rolling, snorting, jerking back on the hitch rein. I strike. I can hear the stick striking; I can see it hitting their
50 heads, the breast-yoke, missing altogether sometimes as they rear and plunge, but I am glad.

“You kilt my maw!”

55

The stick breaks, they rearing and snorting, their feet **popping** loud on X the ground; loud because it is going to rain and the air is empty for the
60 rain. But it is still long enough. I run this way and that as they rear and jerk at the hitch-rein, striking.

kilt: (Am. col.) killed

“You **kilt** her!”

65

I strike at them, striking, they wheeling in a long **lunge**, the buggy wheeling on to two wheels and motionless like it is nailed to the ground and the horses
70 motionless like they are nailed by the hind feet to the centre of a whirling-plate.

I run in the dust. I cannot see,
75 running in the **sucking** dust where the X buggy vanishes tilted on two wheels. I strike, the stick hitting into the ground, bouncing, striking into the

Que entró y lo hizo cuando ella estaba buena. Entró y lo hizo.

—Ese hijo de la gran puta.

Salto de porche y corro. La parte de arriba del granero cae como un ave surgiendo del crepúsculo. Si doy un salto puedo atravesarlo como la señora de rosa del circo y llegar al olor cálido sin tener que esperar. Me agarro al matorral; bajo mis pies, piedras y barro se desprenden hacia abajo.

Luego puedo volver a respirar en el olor caliente. Entro [88] en la cuadra, trato de tocarle, y luego ya puedo llorar; luego vomito los lloros. Puedo en cuanto deja de soltar coces, y luego puedo llorar, puedo soltar los lloros.

—La mató él. La mató él.

La vida le corre debajo de la piel bajo mi mano, le corre por las **manchas**; me echa olor a la nariz donde el mareo está empezando a llorar, a vomitar los lloros, y luego puedo respirar, vomitarlos. Hace mucho ruido. Huelo la vida corriéndome debajo de las manos, por las manos arriba, y luego ya puedo irme de la cuadra.

No lo consigo encontrar. Ni en lo oscuro, ni en el polvo, ni en las paredes lo consigo encontrar. Los lloros hacen mucho ruido. Quisiera que no hicieran tanto ruido. Luego lo encuentro en el cobertizo de la carreta, en el polvo, y echo a correr por el descampado y llego al camino con el palo **dándome saltos** en el hombro.

Me miran mientras corro cuesta arriba, empiezan a dar tirones, reculando; a abrir mucho los ojos, a resoplar, dando tirones de la riendas. Pego. Oigo cómo pega el palo. Veo cómo les pega en la cabeza, en las colleras, y aunque no les alcanza cuando se encabritan y corcovean, estoy contento.

—¡Vosotros matasteis a mi madre!

El palo se rompe, ellos se encabritan y resoplan, sus cascos _____ fuerte en el suelo; fuerte porque va a llover y el aire tiene ganas de lluvia. Pero todavía falta mucho. Corro de aquí para allá mientras se encabritan y dan tirones de las riendas, pegándoles.

—¡Vosotros la **matasteis!**

Les pego, les pego; ellos giran de una **embestida**, la calesa gira sobre dos ruedas y sigue sin moverse como si estuviera clavada al suelo y los caballos siguen sin moverse como si estuvieran clavados por las patas traseras en el centro de una plancha que gira.

Corro por el polvo. No veo al correr por el polvo **que se levanta** hasta donde la calesa desaparece basculando sobre dos ruedas. Pego, el palo pega al suelo, rebota, pegando en el polvo

shock it cannot understand. Vardaman runs about, finding life in Jewel's horse, remembering death in relation to the fish and striking out at the world in general, especially Peabody. The difficulties Vardaman will have in getting the idea of death into perspective are underlined when we realise that he is still not quite sure of his own status in the world; he feels that the sound of crying is separate from himself, 'the crying makes a lot of noise', and wonders what gives the horse an existence separate from his own, 'an is different from my is'. It is part of Faulkner's strategy that the family, being isolated and of necessity close-knit, should share certain personality characteristics among its members. For example, Darl and Vardaman share the same uneasiness about their own existences and both tend to record experiences as though they, as recorders, were no part of those experiences.

dust and then into the air again and the dust sucking on down the road faster than if a car was in it. And then I can cry, looking at the stick. It is
5 broken down to my hand, not longer than stove wood that was a long stick. I throw it away and I can cry. It does not make so much noise now.

10 The cow is standing in the barn door, chewing. When she sees me come into the lot she lows, her mouth full of flopping green, her tongue flopping.

I ain't a-goin' to: (Am. col.) I am not going to

15 "I ain't a-goin' to milk you. I ain't a-goin' to do nothing for them."

I hear her turn when I pass. When
20 I turn she is just behind me with her sweet, hot, hard **breath**.

"Didn't I tell you I wouldn't?"

25 She nudges me, snuffing. She moans deep inside, her mouth closed. I jerk my hand, cursing her like Jewel does.

"Git, now."

30 I stoop my hand to the ground and run at her. She jumps back and whirls away and stops, watching me. She moans. She goes on to the path and
35 stands there, looking up the path.

maloliente It is dark in the barn, warm, **smelling**, silent. I can cry quietly, watching the top of the hill.

40 Cash comes to the hill, limping where he fell off of the church. He looks down at the spring, then up the road and back toward the barn. He
45 comes down the path stiffly and looks at the broken hitchrein and at the dust in the road and then up the road, where the dust is gone.

50 "I hope they've got clean past Tull's by now. I so hope hit."

Cash turns and limps up the path.

55 "Durn him. I showed him. Durn him."

I am not crying now. I am not anything. Dewey Dell comes to the
60 hill and calls me. "Vardaman." I am not anything. I am quiet. "You, Vardaman." I can cry quiet now, feeling and hearing my tears.

65 "Then hit want. Hit hadn't happened then. Hit was a-layin' right there on the ground. And now she's **gittin'** ready to cook hit."

70 It is dark. I can hear wood, silence: I know them. But not living sounds, not even him. It is as though the dark were resolving him out of his integrity, into an unrelated
75 scattering of components-snuffings and stampings; smells of cooling flesh and ammoniac hair; an illusion of a coordinated whole of splotched

y luego de nuevo al aire y el polvo que se levanta se va camino abajo más de prisa que si fuera un carro. Y [89] entonces lloro mirando al palo. Está roto poco más abajo de mi mano y no es más largo que una astilla lo que fue un palo largo. Lo tiro por ahí y lloro. Ahora ya no hace tanto ruido.

La vaca está asomada a la puerta del granero, rumia. Cuando me ve llegar por el descampado muge con la boca llena de baba verdosa y la lengua babeando.

—No te voy a ordeñar. No voy a hacer nada por ellos.

La oigo volverse cuando paso. Cuando me vuelvo está justo detrás de mí con
X su dulce, caliente, acre ____.

—¿No te dije que no lo haría?

Me empuja, olfateando. Se queja muy adentro, con la boca cerrada. Muevo la mano, amenazándola como hace Jewel.

—Vete.

Dejo caer la mano al suelo y corro hacia ella. Da un salto atrás y se gira y se para, sin perderme de vista. Muge. Se va al sendero y se queda allí, mirando sendero arriba.

Está oscuro dentro del establo, caliente, **oloroso**, callado. Lloro tranquilamente mirando a lo más alto del cerro.

Cash llega al cerro, cojea por donde se hizo daño al caer de la iglesia. Mira abajo, al manantial, luego arriba, al camino, y atrás, hacia el granero. Baja el sendero muy tieso y mira las riendas rotas y el polvo del camino y luego el camino por donde se marchó el polvo.

—Espero que ya habrán dejado bien atrás casa de Tull. Eso espero.

Cash se vuelve y cojea sendero arriba.

—El condenado. Lo he visto. El condenado.

Ya no lloro. No hago nada. Dewey Dell llega al cerro y me llama. «Vardaman.» No hago nada. Estoy callado. «Oye, Vardaman.» Ahora lloro en silencio, noto y oigo mis lágrimas.

—Entonces no había pasado. Entonces estaba ahí mismo, en el suelo. Y ahora lo prepara para cocinarlo.

Está oscuro. Oigo el bosque, el silencio: los conozco bien. Pero ningún sonido vivo; ni siquiera a él. Era como [90] si la oscuridad lo sacara de su integridad convirtiéndose en una dispersión incoherente de elementos: mucosidades y pataleos; olor de carne tibia y pelo apesando a amoníaco; una ilusión de un conjunto coordinado de piel con manchas y

hide and strong bones within which, detached and secret and familiar, an *is* different from my *is*. I see him dissolve—legs, a rolling eye, a
5 gaudy splotching like cold flames— and float upon the dark in fading solution; all one yet neither; all either yet none. I can see hearing coil toward him, caressing, shaping his
10 hard shape—fetlock, hip, shoulder and head; smell and sound. I am not afraid.

“Cooked and *et*. Cooked and *et*.”

15

14

DEWEY DELL (2)

HE could do so much for me if
20 he just would. He could do everything for me. It's like everything in the world for me is inside a **tub full of guts**, so that you wonder how there can be any
25 room in it for anything else very important. He is a big tub of guts and I am a little tub of guts and if there is not any room for anything else important in a big
30 tub of guts, how can it be room in a little tub of guts. But I know it is there because God gave women a sign when something has happened bad.

35

It's because I am alone. If I could just feel it, it would be different, because I would not be alone. But if I were not alone, everybody would
40 know it. And he could do so much for me, and then I would not be alone. Then I could be all right alone.

I would let him come in between
45 me and Lafe, like Darl came in between me and Lafe, and so Lafe is alone too. He is Lafe and I am Dewey Dell, and when mother died I had to go beyond and outside of me and Lafe
50 and Darl to grieve because he could do so much for me and he don't know it. He don't even know it.

From the back porch I cannot see
55 the barn. Then the sound of Cash's sawing comes in from that way. It is like a dog outside the house, going back and forth around the house to whatever door you come to, waiting
60 to come in. He said I worry more than you do and I said You don't know what worry is so I can't worry. I try to but I can't think long enough to worry.

65

I light the kitchen lamp. The fish, cut into **jagged** pieces, bleeds quietly in the pan. I put it into the cupboard quick, listening
70 into the hall, hearing. It took her ten days to die; maybe she don't know it is yet. Maybe she won't go until Cash. Or maybe until Jewel. I take the dish of greens
75 from the cupboard and the bread-pan from the **cold stove**, and I stop, watching the door.

huesos poderosos dentro de la cual, disperso y secreto y familiar, hay un *ser* diferente de mi *ser*. Le veo disolverse—las patas, un ojo muy abierto, manchas alegres como llamas frías— y flotar en la oscuridad en solución que se desvanece; todo uno y sin embargo ninguno; todos los dos pero ninguno. Veo con el oído que se enrosca hacia él, le acaricia, le da su forma definitiva: cernejas, lomo, brazo y cabeza; olor y sonido. No estoy asustado.

—Guisado y **comido**. Guisado y comido.

DEWEY DELL

PODRÍA hacer tanto por mí sólo con quererlo. Sí, podría hacer cualquier cosa por mí. Es como si para mí todo lo que hay en el mundo estuviera metido en un **tonel lleno de tripas**, de modo que uno se maravillaría de que en él hubiera sitio para cualquier otra cosa, por muy importante que fuera. Sí, el mundo es un tonel de tripas grande y yo soy un tonel de tripas pequeño y si en un tonel de tripas grande no hay sitio para ninguna otra cosa importante, ¿cómo puede haber sitio en un tonel de tripas muy pequeño? Pero yo sé que lo hay porque Dios les dio a las mujeres una señal para cuando ocurre algo malo.

Bueno, pues estoy sola. Si al menos lo notara, sería distinto, porque no estaría sola. Pero si no estuviera sola, todos lo sabrían. Y él podría hacer tanto por mí, y entonces yo no estaría sola. Entonces incluso estaría bien aunque estuviera sola.

Le dejaría ponerse entre mí y Lafe, como Darl se puso entre mí y Lafe, y por tanto Lafe también está solo. El es Lafe y yo Dewey Dell, y cuando murió madre tuve que salir más allá y fuera, de mí y de Lafe y de Darl para sufrir [91] porque él podría hacer tanto por mí y no se da cuenta. Ni siquiera se da cuenta.

Desde el porche de atrás no alcanzo a ver el granero. Luego el sonido de Cash serrando llega de esa dirección. Es como un perro que, fuera de la casa, va de un sitio a otro alrededor de la casa, hacia cualquier puerta a la que uno se dirija, esperando entrar. Dijo él: Me preocupa más que a ti y yo dije: No sabes lo que es preocuparse, así que no puedo preocuparme. Lo intento pero no puedo concentrarme lo bastante como para preocuparme.

Enciendo la lámpara de la cocina. El pescado, cortado en trozos **irregulares**, sangra tranquilamente en la sartén. Lo meto rápidamente en la alacena, prestando oído al zaguán, escuchando. Le llevó diez días morir; puede que todavía no sepa que ya le ha llegado la hora. Puede que no quiera irse hasta que venga Cash. O puede que hasta que venga Jewel. Saco el plato de verdura de la alacena y la bandeja del pan del **horno apagado**, y me paro, mirando la puerta.

Dewey Dell (2)

Here we find Dewey Dell's unspoken thoughts as she longingly watches Peabody, wishing that he knew she needs an abortion. Her reflections about the gulf between herself and the Doctor make her aware of the separateness of their existences, and this leads to a more general consideration of the distance between herself and other people.

COMMENTARY: It is apparent that the outwardly placid Dewey Dell has been affected by her mother's death as deeply as Vardaman. Like her brother, she evinces an awareness of the separateness of other people, 'It's because I am alone . . . alright alone', but it is less acute than Vardaman's and hinges on her sense of isolation. The 'he' to whom she refers in these lines is Peabody, who seems to her to have her salvation in his hands but who is oblivious to her needs. In the third paragraph, Dewey Dell repeats the same ideas in a different way, 'he is Lafe and I am Dewey Dell, and when mother died I had to go beyond and outside of me'. The idea of 'going beyond' herself in order to grieve implies that Dewey Dell sees herself as consisting of a complex of feelings centred on her own predicament; to feel anything beyond that predicament involves going beyond the circle that is herself. It is clear from all this that her mother's death has made Dewey Dell feel very isolated, surrounded by men who do not know and can never hope to understand her situation.

Dewey Dell is left, at the end of the section, to face the problems which she cannot really formulate. The cow seems to act as a reminder of her own femininity, both because of its actual sex and because its breath make Dewey Dell aware of her own shape, 'the cow breathes upon my hips and back, her breath warm, sweet, stertorous, moaning'. The world around her is threatening with the coming storm, but it is also as a result of Addie's death, 'dead earth, dead darkness, dead air'. Inside herself, Dewey Dell feels utterly lost, unable to sense whether or not she

tub full of guts: an unpleasant metaphor for a human being, a body containing organs

jagged *adj.* 1 with an unevenly cut or torn edge. 2 deeply indented; with sharp points. Lacerated irregularly. Dentado, mellado, raído, rasgado, irregular.

“Where’s Vardaman?” Cash says.
In the lamp his sawdusted arms look
like sand.

5 “I don’t know. I ain’t seen him.”

“Peabody’s team run away. See if
you can find Vardaman. The horse
will let him catch him.”

10

“Well. Tell them to come to supper.”

I cannot see the barn. I said, I don’t
know how to worry. I don’t know how
15 to *cry*. I tried, but I can’t. After a while
the sound of the saw comes around,
coming dark along the ground in the
dustdark. Then I can see him, going
up and down above the plank.

20

“You come in to supper,” I say.
“Tell him.” He could do everything
for me. And he don’t know it. He is
his guts and I am my guts. And I am
25 Lafe’s guts. That’s it. I don’t see
why he didn’t stay in town. We are
country people not as good as town
people. I don’t see why he didn’t.
Then I can see the top of the barn.
30 The cow stands at the foot of the
path, lowing. When I turn back,
Cash is gone.

I carry the buttermilk in. Pa and
35 Cash and he are at the table.

“Where’s that big fish Bud caught,
sister?” he says.

40 I set the milk on the table.
“I never had no time to cook it.”

turnip greens: the leaves of a root
vegetable used as food; **grelos**

spindling: (Am. English) long and thin,
like a spindle (huso)

45 “Plain **turnip greens** is mighty
spindling eating for a man my size,”
he says. Cash is eating. About his
head the print of his hat is sweated
into his hair. His shirt is blotched
with sweat. He has not washed his
hands and arms.

50

“You ought to took time,” pa says.
“Where’s Vardaman?”

I go toward the door. “I can’t find
55 him.”

“Here, sister,” he says; “never
mind about the fish. It’ll save, I
reckon. Come on and sit down.”

60

minding: (Am. col.) caring about

“I ain’t **minding** it,” I say. “I’m going
to milk before it sets in to rain.”

Pa helps himself and pushes the
65 dish on. But he does not begin to
eat. His hands are half-closed on
either side of his plate, his head
bowed a little, his awry hair
standing into the lamplight. He
70 looks like right after **the maul hits**
the steer and it no longer alive and
don’t yet know that it is dead.

the maul hits the steer: (Am.
English) the wooden-headed
hammer hits the cow

maul to handle roughly. Atacar y malherir, maltratar,
estropear, magullar, destrozar BEAT, BRUISE, MAN-
GLE

75 “You better eat something,” he says.
He is looking at pa. “Like Cash and
me. You’ll need it.”

—¿Dónde está Vardaman? —dice
Cash. A la luz de lámpara sus brazos cu-
biertos de serrín parecen de arena.

—Y yo qué sé. No lo he visto.

—El tiro de Peabody se ha escapado.
A ver si encuentras a Vardaman. El ca-
ballo se dejará coger por él.

—Bueno. Diles que vengán a cenar.

No alcanzo a ver el granero. Dije:
No sé cómo preocuparme. No sé cómo
llorar. Lo intenté, pero no puedo. Al
cabo de un rato llega el ruido de la
sierra, llega a ras del suelo entre
la **oscuridad polvorienta**. Entonces le veo,
arriba y abajo sobre el tablón.

—Entra a cenar —digo—. Avísale —
lo podría hacer todo por mí. Y no se da
cuenta. El es sus tripas y yo soy las mías.
Y yo soy las tripas de Lafe. Eso es. No
consigo entender por qué no se ha que-
dado en la ciudad. Somos gente del cam-
po, no tan buenos como la gente de la
ciudad. No consigo entender por qué no
se quedó. Luego alcanzo a ver la parte
de arriba del granero. La vaca está al pie
del sendero, mugiendo. Cuando me vuel-
vo, Cash se ha ido.

Les llevo la cuajada. Padre y Cash y
él están a la mesa. [92]

—¿Dónde está ese pez tan grande que
pescó Bud, hermana? —dice.

Pongo la leche en la mesa.

—No he tenido tiempo de guisarlo.

—Sólo **nabos verdes** es una comida
demasiado **escasa** para un hombre de mi
tamaño —dice. Cash come. Alrededor de
la cabeza el sombrero le ha dejado una
señal sudorosa en el pelo. Tiene la cami-
sa manchada de sudor. No se ha lavado
las manos ni los brazos.

—Debería haberte dado tiempo —
dice padre—. ¿Dónde anda Vardaman?

Voy hacia la puerta.

—No lo encuentro.

—Ven, hermana —dice él—, no te
preocupes del pez. Para mí que no se es-
tropeará. Ven a sentarte.

—No **me preocupa** eso —digo yo—. Voy
a ordeñar antes de que empiece a llover.

Padre se sirve y pasa la fuen-
te. Pero no empieza a comer.
Tiene las manos medio cerradas
a cada lado del plato, la cabeza
un poco agachada, el pelo re-
vuelto a la luz de la lámpara. Pa-
rece que es un buey **al que le acaban**
de dar la puntilla y ya no vive y sin
embargo no sabe que está muerto.

Pero Cash come, y él también.

—Mejor comes algo —dice. Está
mirando a padre—. Como Cash y yo.
Lo necesitas.

is worrying, unable to know
whether or not she can cry. Her
sneak: final words are ‘I feel like
a wet seed wild in the hot blind
earth’, an image which evokes her
fecundity, her sadness (she lees
herself as wet) and the fact that
the world seems to be
uncomfortable and oblivious to
her troubles, ‘the hot blind earth’.

“Ay,” pa says. He rouses up, like a steer that’s been kneeling in a pond and you run at it. “She would not begrudge me it.”

5

When I am out of sight of the house, I go fast. The cow lows at the foot of the bluff. She nuzzles at me, snuffing, blowing her breath in a sweet, hot blast, through my dress, against my hot nakedness, moaning. “You got to wait a little while. Then I’ll tend to you.” She follows me into the barn where I set the bucket down. She breathes into the bucket, moaning. “I told you. You just got to wait, now. I got more to do than I can tend to.” The barn is dark. When I pass, he kicks the wall a single blow. I go on. The broken plank is like a pale plank standing on end. Then I can see the slope, feel the air moving on my face again, slow, pale, with lesser dark and with empty seeing, the pine clumps blotched up the **tilted** X slope, secret and waiting.

The cow in silhouette against the door puzzles at the silhouette of the bucket, moaning.

Then I pass the stall. I have almost passed it. I listen to it saying for a long time before it can say the word and the listening part is afraid that there may not be time to say it. I feel my body, my bones and flesh beginning to part and open upon the alone, and the process of coming unalone is terrible. Lafe. Lafe. “Lafe” Lafe. Lafe. I lean a little forward, one foot advanced with dead walking. I feel the darkness rushing past my breast, past the cow; I begin to rush upon the darkness but the cow stops me and the darkness rushes on upon the sweet blast of her moaning breath, filled with **wood** and with silence.

50 “Vardaman. You, Vardaman.”

sneak: (Am. English) a person who reveals another’s secrets

He comes out of the stall. “You dum little **sneak!** You dum little sneak!”

55 He does not resist; the last of rushing darkness flees whistling away. “What? I ain’t done nothing.”

durn: (Am. col.) darned (mild curse)

“You **durn** little sneak!” My hands shake him, hand. Maybe I couldn’t stop them. I didn’t know they could shake so hard. They shake both of us, shaking.

65 “I never done it,” he says. “I never touched them.”

My hands stop shaking him, but I still hold him. “What are you doing here? Why didn’t you answer when I called you?”

“I ain’t doing nothing.”

75 “You go on to the house and get your supper.”

He draws back. I hold him. “You

—Eso —dice padre. Se despabila como un buey que ha estado arrodillado junto a la alberca y que se espanta—. Ella no me lo reprocharía.

Cuando ya no me ven desde la casa, echo a correr. La vaca muge al pie del despeñadero. Me empuja con el morro, olfatea, echa una bocanada de aliento dulce y caliente a través de mi vestido, contra mi caliente desnudez; se queja.

—Tienes que esperar un poco. Te atenderé luego —me sigue dentro del granero donde dejo el cubo. Resopla en el cubo, se queja—. Ya te lo dije. Tienes que esperar. Tengo más cosas que hacer de las que puedo atender.

El granero está oscuro. Cuando paso, da una coz a la pared [93]. Sigo. La tabla rota es como una pálida tabla en punta. Entonces alcanzó a ver la ladera, vuelvo a sentir el aire en la cara, lentamente; pálidos donde está menos oscuro, distingo los brotes de pino que salpican de manchas la ladera, en secreto y esperando.

La vaca, en silueta contra la puerta, empuja con el morro la silueta del cubo; se queja.

Luego paso junto al establo. Casi lo he pasado. Escuchó largo rato lo que dice antes de que diga nada y la parte que escucha tiene miedo de que no tenga tiempo de decirlo. Noto que mi cuerpo, huesos y piel, empiezan a separarse y a abrirse a la soledad, y el proceso de interrumpir la soledad es terrible. Lafe. Lafe.

—Lafe —Lafe. Lafe.

Me inclino un poco hacía delante, avanzando un pie con paso muerto. Noto que la oscuridad me pasa rápida por delante del pecho, de la vaca; me pongo a correr hacia la oscuridad pero la vaca me para y la oscuridad me trae la dulce bocanada de su aliento quejumbroso, lleno de **bosque** y de silencio.

—Vardaman. Oye, Vardaman.

Sale del pesebre.

—¡Maldito **soplón!** ¡Maldito soplón!

No se resiste; la última acometida de oscuridad se aleja volando y silbando.

—¿Qué pasa? No he hecho nada.

—¡Maldito soplón!

Mis manos le dan meneos. Puede que no consiga pararlas. No sabía que podían dar unos meneos tan fuertes. Nos dan meneos a los dos al darle meneos.

—Yo no lo hice —dice él—. Nunca los he tocado.

Mis manos dejan de darle meneos, pero todavía lo tengo agarrado.

—¿Qué hacías aquí? ¿Por qué no respondiste cuando te llamaba?

—No estaba haciendo nada.

—Vete a casa y ponte a cenar.

Se echa hacia atrás. Le agarro.

quit now. You leave me be.”

—Estate quieta. Déjame en paz. [94]

“What were you doing down here? You didn’t come down here to sneak after me?”

—¿Qué estabas haciendo aquí? ¿Has venido a espiarme?

5

“I never. I never. You quit, now. I didn’t even know you was down here. You leave me be.”

—No. No. Estate quieta. Ni siquiera sabía que estabas aquí. Déjame en paz.

10

I hold him, leaning down to see his face, feel it with my eyes. He is about to cry. “Go on, now. I done put supper on and I’ll be there soon as I milk. You better go on before he eats everything up. I hope that **team** runs clean back to Jefferson.”

Le tengo agarrado; al agacharme a verle la cara, lo noto con los ojos. Está a punto de llorar. —Anda, vete. Te he puesto la cena y volveré en cuanto ordeñe. Será mejor que vayas antes de que él se lo coma todo. Espero que el **tiro** ya haya llegado hasta el mismo Jefferson.

team: a pair of horses for pulling a wagon or cart

15

“He kilt her,” he says. He begins to cry.

—La mató él —dice. Se pone a llorar.

20

“Hush.”

—A callar.

“She never hurt him and he come and kilt her.”

—Ella nunca le hizo daño y él va y la mata.

25

“Hush.” He struggles. I hold him. “Hush.”

—A callar —se resiste. Le sujeto—. A callar.

30

“He kilt her.” The cow comes up behind us, moaning. I shake him again.

—La mató él —la vaca se nos acerca por detrás quejándose. Vuelvo a darle un meneo.

35

“You stop it, now. Right this minute. You’re fixing to make yourself sick and then you can’t go to town. You go on to the house and eat your supper.”

— Déjalo ya. Ahora mismo. Te vas a poner malo y entonces no podrás ir a la ciudad. Vete a casa y tómate la cena.

40

“I don’t want no supper. I don’t want to go to town.”

—No quiero cenar. No quiero ir a la ciudad.

lessen: (Am. col.) unless

45

“We’ll leave you here, then. **Lessen** you behave, we will leave you. Go on, now, before that old green-eating tub of guts eats everything up from you.”

—Bueno, entonces te dejaremos aquí. O te portas bien, o te dejamos. Anda ya, antes de que ese viejo cubo de tripas comeverduras se coma todo lo tuyo.

50

He goes on, disappearing slowly into the hill. The crest, the trees, the roof of the house stand against the sky.

Echa a andar, y desaparece lentamente en el cerro. La cresta, los árboles, el techo de la casa se destacan en el cielo. La vaca me empuja, quejándose.

55

The cow puzzles at me, moaning. “You’ll just have to wait. What you got in you ain’t nothing to what I got in me, even if you are a woman too.”

—Tendrás que esperar. Lo que tienes dentro no es nada comparado con lo que llevo dentro yo, aunque también seas hembra.

60

She follows me, moaning. Then the dead, hot, pale air breathes on my face again. He could fix it all right, if he just would. And he don’t even know it. He could do everything for me if he just knowed it. The cow breathes

Me sigue, se queja. Luego el aire caliente, muerto, pálido me vuelve a soplar en la cara. Si quisiera, podría arreglarlo todo. Y ni siquiera lo sabe. Podría hacerlo todo por mí si lo supiera. La vaca resopla en mis caderas y espalda su aliento caliente, dulce, **jadeante**, quejumbroso. El cielo se ha

stertorous: (of breathing) making snoring noises, estertóreo

65

upon my hips and back, her breath warm, sweet, **stertorous**, moaning. The sky lies flat down the slope, upon the secret clumps. Beyond the hill sheet-lightning stains upward and fades. The dead air shapes the dead earth in the dead darkness, further away than seeing shapes the dead earth. It lies dead and warm upon me, touching me **naked** through my

posado en la ladera, sobre los secretos brotes. Más allá del cerro relámpagos tiñen la parte de arriba y se desvanecen. Aire muerto envuelve a la tierra muerta en la oscuridad muerta, y fuera de la vista envuelve a la tierra muerta. El aire muerto y caliente pesa _____ sobre mí, y me alcanza por

70

clothes. I said You don’t know what worry is. I don’t know what it is. I don’t know whether I am worrying or not. Whether I can or not. I don’t know whether I can cry or not. I don’t know whether I have tried to or not. I feel like a **wet seed wild** in the hot blind earth.

debajo de la ropa. Yo dije: No sabes lo que es estar [95] preocupado. Yo no sé lo que es. No sé si me preocupo o no. Si puedo o no. No sé si puedo llorar o no. No sé si lo he intentado o no. Me siento como una **semilla silvestre húmeda** encima de la tierra caliente y ciega.

15
VARDAMAN (2)

WHEN they get it finished
5 they are going to put her in it
and then for a long time I couldn't
say it. I saw the dark stand up and
go **whirling away** and I said
"Are you going to nail her up in
10 it, Cash? Cash? Cash?" I got shut
up in the crib the new door it was
too heavy for me it went shut I
couldn't breathe because the rat
was breathing up all the air. I said
15 "Are you going to nail it shut,
Cash? Nail it? *Nail it?*"

Pa walks around. His shadow walks
around, over Cash going up and down
20 above the saw, at the bleeding plank.

Dewey Dell said we will get some
bananas. The train is behind the
glass, red on the track. When it runs
25 the track shines on and off. Pa said
flour and sugar and coffee costs so
much. Because I am a country boy
because boys in town. Bicycles. Why
do flour and sugar and coffee cost so
30 much when he is a country boy.
"Wouldn't you **ruther** have some
bananas instead?" Bananas are gone,
eaten. Gone. When it runs on the track
shines again. "Why ain't I a town boy,
35 'pa?" I said God made me. I did not
said to God to made me in the
country. If He can make the train, why
can't He make them all in the town
because flour and sugar and coffee.
40 "Wouldn't you ruther have bananas?"

He walks around. His shadow
walks around.

It was not her. I was there, looking.
I saw. I thought it was her, but it was
not. It was not my mother. She went
away when the other one laid down in
her bed and drew the quilt up. She went
50 away. "Did she go as far as town?"
"She went farther than town."
"Did all those rabbits and
possums go farther than
town?" God made the rabbits
55 and possums. He made the train.
Why must He make a different place for
them to go if she is just like the rabbit.

Pa walks around. His shadow
60 does. The saw sounds like it is
asleep.

And so if Cash nails the box up,
she is not a rabbit. And so if she is
65 not a rabbit I couldn't breathe in the
crib and Cash is going to nail it up.
And so if she lets him it is not her. I
know. I was there. I saw when it did
not be her. I saw. They think it is and
70 Cash is going to nail it up.

It was not her because it was laying
right yonder in the dirt. And now it's
all chopped up. I chopped it up. It's
75 laying in the kitchen in the
bleeding pan, waiting to be cooked
and **et**. Then it wasn't and she was,
and now it is and she wasn't. And

15
VARDAMAN

CUANDO la tengan terminada, irán
y la meterán dentro, y luego, durante
mucho tiempo, no podré decirlo. He visto
a la oscuridad que se levantaba y se
marchaba haciendo remolinos y dije:

—¿La vas a clavar dentro, Cash?
¿Cash? ¿Cash? —me quedé encerra-
do en el pesebre. La nueva puerta era
demasiado pesada para mí y se cerró
y no podía respirar porque la rata res-
piraba todo el aire. Dije—: ¿Vas a cla-
varla y cerrarla, Cash? ¿La vas a cla-
var? ¿La vas a clavar?

Padre anda por ahí. Su sombra anda
por ahí, por encima de Cash que sube y
baja la sierra sobre la tabla que sangra.

Dewey Dell dijo que tomaremos plátanos.
El tren está detrás del cristal, rojo en-
cima de la vía. Cuando corre, la vía brilla
aquí y allá. Padre dijo que la harina y el
azúcar y el café cuestan mucho. Porque yo
soy un chico del campo por culpa de los
chicos de la ciudad. Bicicletas. ¿Por qué
cuestan tanto la harina y el azúcar y el café
cuando uno es un chico del campo?

—¿No preferirías plátanos en lugar de
eso? —los plátanos se han ido, comidos.
Idos. Cuando corre, la vía brilla otra vez.

—¿Por qué no soy un chico de la
ciudad, padre? —dije. Me hizo Dios.
No le dije a Dios que me hiciera chico
del campo. Si puede hacer el tren, ¿por
qué no hace que todos sean chicos de
ciudad con harina y azúcar y café?

—¿No preferirías los plátanos?

Anda por ahí. Su sombra
anda por ahí.

Eso no era ella. Yo estaba allí, mira-
ba. Lo vi. Cré que eso era ella, pero no
era. Eso no era mi madre. Ella se marchó
[96] cuando la otra se echó en la cama y
estiró la colcha. Se marchó.

—¿Habrás llegado hasta el pueblo?

—Se fue más lejos todavía.

—¿Y todos esos conejos y
zarigüeyas se van tan lejos?

Dios hizo a los conejos y a las
zarigüeyas. Hizo el tren. ¿Para qué va a
hacer un sitio diferente para que vayan
si ella es igual que los conejos?

Padre anda por ahí. Lo mismo su som-
bra. La sierra suena como si estuviera
durmiendo.

Y entonces Cash clava la caja por arri-
ba y ella no es un conejo. Y si ella no es
un conejo y yo no podía respirar en el
pesebre y Cash se pone a clavarla por
arriba. Y si ella le deja es que no es ella.
Lo sé. Yo estaba allí. Yo vi cuando eso
ya no era ella. Lo vi. Ellos creen que sí
es y Cash va a clavar la tapa.

Eso no era ella porque eso estaba
tirado por ahí, entre la porquería. Y
ahora todo está cortado en pedazos. Lo
corté yo. Está en la cocina, sangrando
en la sartén, esperando a que lo cocinen
y se lo **coman**. Entonces eso no
estaba aquí y ella sí estaba, y ahora

Vardaman (2)

This section consists of
Vardaman's unspoken and
unverbalised thoughts as he
watches his mother's body being
put into the coffin.

COMMENTARY: The
confusion in this section indicates
the enormous difficulties
Vardaman is having in trying to
find some shape in his world now
that it no longer contains his
mother. The disorganisation of his
thoughts is reflected in the
breakdown of grammar and
sense. 'Because I am a country
boy because boys in town.
Bicycles. Why do flour and sugar
and coffee cost so much when he
is a country boy'. The thoughts
which crowd in upon him do
contain some sort of perverted
logic. In a separate grouping, we
find thoughts of confinement, of
his own inability to breathe when
enclosed in a small space and of
the problems his mother will
experience in breathing in the
coffin.

From this, he goes on to think
that the object in the bed is not
his mother, 'she went away when
the other one laid down in her bed
and drew the quilt up', and begins
to wonder where his real mother
has gone, whether she has gone
farther than the town. In the final
paragraph, Vardaman links up the
dead fish with his dead mother,
'then it wasn't and she was, and
now it is and she wasn't', trying
all the time to find where she is
and what death means. He seems
to believe that the death of his
mother and the fish are closely
linked and that Vernon Tull, who
saw the dead fish, will be able to
confirm this.

ruther: (Am. col.) would rather

possums: (Am. English) opossums,
small animals

to-morrow it will be cooked and et
and she will be him and pa and Cash
and Dewey Dell and there won't be
anything in the box and so she can
5 breathe. It was laying right yonder on
the ground. I can get Vernon. He was
there and he seen it, and with both of
us it will be and then it will not be.

10

16
TULL (2)**misdoubtful:** (Am. col.) disturbing

IT was **nigh** to midnight and it had
set in to rain when he woke us. It had
15 been a **misdoubtful** night, with the
storm making; a night when a fellow
looks for most anything to happen
before he can get the stock fed and
himself to the house an supper et and
20 in bed with the rain starting, and
when Peabody's team come up,
lathered, with the broke harness
dragging and the neck-yoke betwixt
the off **critter's** legs, Cora says
25 "It's Addie Bundren. She's gone at
last."

lathered: covered in sweat**critter's:** (Am. col.) creature's**mought:** (Am. col.) might

"Peabody **mought** have been to ere
a one of a dozen houses hereabouts,"
30 I says. "Besides, how do you know
it's Peabody's team?"

"Well, ain't it?" she says. "You
hitch up, now."
35

"What for?" I says. "If she is gone,
we can't do nothing till morning. And
it fixing to storm too.

40 "It's my duty," she says. "You put
the team in.

But I wouldn't do it. "It
stands to reason they'd send for
45 us if they needed us. You don't
even know she's gone yet."

"Why, don't you know that's
Peabody's team? Do you claim it
50 ain't? Well, then." But I wouldn't go.
When folks wants a fellow, it's best
to wait till they sends for him, I've
found. "It's my Christian duty," Cora
says. "Will you stand between me and
55 my Christian duty?"

"You can stay there all day
to-morrow, if you want," I says.

60 So when Cora waked me it had
set in to rain. Even while I was go-
ing to the door with the lamp and it
shining on the glass so he could see
I am coming, it kept on knocking.
65 Not loud, but **steady**, like he might
have gone to **sleep thumping**, but I
never noticed how low down on the
door the knocking was till I opened
it and never seen nothing. I held the
70 lamp up, with the rain **sparkling** across
it and Cora back in the hall saying
"Who is it, Vernon?" but I
couldn't see nobody a-tall
75 and around the door, lower-
ing the lamp.

sleep thumping: banging whilst
walking in sleep

He looked like a drowned puppy,

está eso y ella no está. Y mañana lo
cocinarán y se lo comerán y ella será
él, y padre y Cash y Dewey Dell, y en
la caja no habrá nada y así podrá res-
pirar. Eso estaba por ahí tirado en el
suelo. Puedo preguntarle a Vernon. El
estaba allí y lo vio, y eso estará con
nosotros dos y luego no estará.

TULL

ERA **cerca** de la medianoche y ya
estaba lloviendo cuando nos despertó.
Había sido una noche **inquietante**,
amenazando tormenta; una noche en
que uno espera que pase algo antes de
poder recoger el ganado y llegar a casa
y cenar y meterse en cama, con la llu-
via empezando a caer, así que cuando
llega el tiro de Peabody, **cubierto de
espuma**, con los arneses rotos arras-
trando y con el yugo entre las patas del
animal de la derecha, Cora dice: [97]
—Es Addie Bundren. Por fin se ha
ido.

—Peabody **podría** estar en cualquie-
ra de la docena de casas de los alrede-
res —digo yo—. Además, ¿cómo sabes
que es el tiro de Peabody?

—Pero ¿es que no lo es? —dice ella—
. Anda, ve enganchando.

—¿Para qué? —digo yo—. Si Addie
se ha ido, hasta mañana no podemos ha-
cer nada. Amenaza tormenta, además.

—Es mi obligación —dice ella—.
Trae la yunta.

Pero yo no quería.
—Es más sensato que manden por
nosotros si nos necesitan. Todavía no
sabes si se ha ido.

—¿No sabes que es el tiro de
Peabody? ¿Atrevete a decir que no lo es?
Por lo tanto... —pero yo no quería ir.
Cuando la gente necesita a un vecino, es
mejor, según mi experiencia, esperar has-
ta que manden por él—. Es un deber de
cristiana —dice Cora—. ¿Te vas a meter
entre mis deberes de cristiana y yo?

—Mañana, si quieres, puedes pasarte
allí el día entero —digo yo.

Conque cuando Cora me despertó
había empezado a llover. Ni cuando
iba a la puerta con la lámpara y ésta
brillaba en el cristal para que pudiera
ver que me acercaba dejó de llamar.
No fuerte, pero **sin parar**, como si se hu-
biera quedado **dormido mientras llamaba**,
pero no me di cuenta de lo abajo que
llamaban de la puerta hasta que abrí
y no vi nada. Levanté la lámpara y
la lluvia **relucía** delante de ella y de
Cora que, detrás, en el zaguán, decía:

—¿Quién es, Vernon?
Pero al principio no conseguí ver a
nadie en absoluto; no hasta que me aga-
ché y miré la parte de abajo de la puerta,
bajando la lámpara.

Parecía un perrillo ahogado, con su

Tull (2)

This section consists of Vernon
Tull's unspoken thoughts on the
evening of Addie's death. After
midnight, Vernon hears a noise
and finds Vardaman standing
outside, soaking wet and talking
unintelligibly about a fish. Cora
and Vernon take him back to his
home where Vernon is put to work
nailing Addie into her coffin.
Vardaman tries to make it easier
for her to 'breathe' by boring
holes in the coffin lid. After dawn,
Vernon gets home, still upset by
Vardaman's odd behaviour, but
trying to accept Cora's insistence
that Vardaman's behaviour is the
judgement of God on Anse
Bundren but that they, the Tulls,
are so good that no such
judgement will ever be passed on
them.

COMMENTARY: The
impression that Vernon Tull is a
sympathetic man is continued in
this section. Vardaman's distress
upsets him deeply, making him
think about 'the sorrows and
afflictions in this world'. Tull's
attempts at thought, however,
serve only to reveal how limited
he is in his potential for thought.
He relies heavily on the words of
his wife and generally believes
that 'the Lord aimed for him
(man) to do and not to spend too
much time thinking'.

Apart from giving an insight
into Tull's character, this section
shows the reader the outward
effects of the inner turmoil which
we saw in *Vardaman* (2). Having
seen what is going on in
Vardaman's mind, we now see the
little boy set against the back-
ground of other people, people
who fail to understand what he
feels.

in them overalls, without no hat, splashed up to his knees where he had walked them four miles in the mud. "Well, I'll be durned," I says.

5

"Who is it, Vernon?" Cora says.

He looked at me, his eyes round and black in the middle like when you throw a light in a owl's face. "You mind that ere fish," he says.

10

"Come in the house," I says. "What is it? Is your maw——"

15

"Vernon," Cora says.

He stood kind of around behind the door, in the dark. The rain was blowing on to the lamp, hissing on it so I am scared every minute it'll break. "You was there," he says. "You seen it."

25

Then Cora come to the door. "You come right in outen the rain," she says, pulling him in and him watching me. He looked just like a drowned puppy. "I told you," Cora says. "I told you it was a-happening. You go and hitch."

30

"But he ain't said——" I says.

35

He looked at me, dripping on to the floor. "He's a-raining the rug," Cora says. "You go get the team while I take him to the kitchen."

40

But he hung back, dripping, watching me with them eyes. "You was there. You seen it laying there. Cash is fixing to nail her up, and it was a-laying right there on the ground. You seen it. You seen the mark in the dirt. The rain never come up till after I was a-coming here. So we can get back in time."

45

I be durn if it didn't give me the creeps, even when I didn't know yet. But Cora did. "You get that team quick as you can," she says. "He's outen his head with grief and worry."

50

I be durn if it didn't give me the creeps. Now and then a fellow gets to thinking. About all the sorrows and afflictions in this world; how it's liable to strike anywhere, like lightning. I reckon it does take a powerful trust in the Lord to guard a fellow, though sometimes I think that Cora's a mite over-cautious, like she was trying to crowd the other folks away and get in closer than anybody else. But then, when something like this happens, I reckon she is right and you got to keep after it and I reckon I am blessed in having a wife that ever strives for sanctity and well-doing like she says I am.

75

Now and then a fellow gets to thinking about it. Not often, though. Which is a good thing. For the Lord aimed for him to do and

mono, sin gorro, salpicado hasta las rodillas pues había tenido que andar seis kilómetros por el barro.

—Bueno, que me maten... —digo yo.

—¿Quién es, Vernon? —dice Cora.

Me miraba con sus ojos redondos y negros como cuando se lanza un rayo de luz a la cara de una lechuza. [98]

—Tenga cuidado con el pez —dice.

—Entra a casa —digo yo—. ¿Qué pasa? Es que tu madre...

—Vernon —dice Cora.

Seguía más o menos a un lado de la puerta, en la oscuridad. La lluvia golpeaba la lámpara, sonando en ella de tal modo que a cada minuto temía que se rompiera.

—Usted estaba allí —dice él—. Usted lo vio.

Entonces Cora sale a la puerta.

—Ven ahora mismo y quítate de la lluvia —le dice, tirando de él que me miraba. Parecía un perrillo ahogado—. Ya te lo había dicho —dice Cora—. Te había dicho lo que estaba pasando. Vete a aparejar.

—Pero si él no ha dicho... —digo yo.

Me miraba, chorreando en el suelo.

—Me está destrozando la estera —dice Cora—. Vete a traer la yunta mientras me lo llevo a la cocina.

Pero él se soltó, chorreando, observándome sin quitarme ojo.

—Usted estaba allí. Usted lo ha visto allí tirado. Cash lo está preparando todo para clavarla y el pez estaba allí mismo tirado en el suelo. Usted lo vio. Vio la marca que dejó en el polvo. La lluvia no empezó hasta después de venir camino de aquí. Así que puede que lleguemos a tiempo.

the creeps: (col.) an unnerving feeling

a mite: a little, small quantity, pizca [ácaro / chiquillo]

Maldita sea, me dieron escalofríos. De vez en cuando se piensan cosas. En el dolor y tristeza de este mundo; en cómo son capaces de golpear en cualquier parte, como el relámpago. Para mí que hay que confiar mucho en el Señor para estar protegido, aunque a veces creo que Cora es un poquito precavida en exceso, como si tratara de apartar a los demás y estar más cerca que nadie. Pero luego, cuando pasa algo como esto, para mí que tiene razón y hay que hacer lo que dice y para mí que es una bendición tener una mujer que siempre se esfuerza por conseguir la santidad y que me dice cómo obrar bien.

De vez en cuando se piensan cosas. No con demasiada frecuencia, sin embargo. Lo que es una buena cosa. Pues el Señor quiere que obre-

racking: stretching

not to spend too much time thinking, because his brain it's like a piece of machinery: it won't stand a whole lot of **racking**. It's best
 5 when it all runs along the same, doing the day's work and not no one part used no more than needful. I have said and I say again, that's ever living thing the matter with
 10 Darl: he just thinks by himself too much. Cora's right when she says all he needs is a wife to straighten him out. And when I think about that, I think that if nothing but
 15 being married will help a man, he's durn **nigh** hopeless. But I reckon Cora's right when she says the reason the Lord had to create women is because man don't know
 20 his own good when he sees it.

bucket: pail

When I come back to the house with the team, they was in the kitchen. She was dressed on top of
 25 her nightgown with a shawl over her head and her umbrella and her Bible wrapped up in the oilcloth, and him sitting on a up-turned
 30 **bucket** on the stove-zinc where she had put him, dripping on to the floor. "I can't get nothing outen him except about a fish," she says. "It's a judgment on them. I see the hand of the Lord upon this boy for Anse
 35 Bundren's judgment and warning."

"The rain never come up till after I left," he says. "I had done left. I was on the way. And so it was there in the
 40 dust. You seen it. Cash is fixing to nail her, but you seen it."

When we got there it was raining hard, and him sitting on the seat
 45 between us, wrapped up in Cora's shawl. He hadn't said nothing else, just sitting there with Cora holding the umbrella over him. Now and then Cora would stop singing long enough
 50 to say "It's a judgment on Anse Bundren. May it show him the path of sin he is a-trodding." Then she would sing again, and him sitting there between us, leaning forward a
 55 little like the mules couldn't go fast enough to suit him.

"It was laying right yonder," he says, "but the rain come up after I
 60 taken and left. So I can go and open the windows, because Cash ain't nailed her yet."

It was long a-past midnight when
 65 we drove the last nail, and almost dust-dawn when I got back home and taken the team out and got back in bed, with Cora's nightcap laying on the other pillow. And be durned
 70 if even then it wasn't like I could still hear Cora singing and feel that boy leaning forward between us like he was ahead of the mules, and still see Cash going up and down
 75 with that saw, and Anse standing there like a **scarecrow**, like he was a steer standing knee-deep in a pond and somebody come by and

mos y no perdamos demasiado tiempo pensando, porque nuestro cerebro es como una pieza [99] de relojería: no necesita estar **siempre en marcha**. Es mejor cuando funciona siempre igual, cuando hace su tarea diaria y no usa ninguna de sus partes más de lo necesario. Lo he dicho y lo vuelvo a decir, que eso es lo que le pasa a Darl: piensa demasiado. Cora tiene razón cuando dice que lo único que necesita es una mujer que lo enderece. Y cuando pienso en eso, pienso que si sólo el matrimonio puede ayudar a un hombre, este hombre está **casi** perdido. Pero para mí que Cora tiene razón cuando dice que la razón por la que el Señor creó a la mujer es porque el hombre no sabe lo que le conviene aunque lo vea.

Cuando vuelvo a casa con el tiro, estaban en la cocina. Ella se había vestido encima del camisón, y se había puesto un chal en la cabeza, y llevaba el paraguas y la Biblia envuelta en hule, y él, sentado en un **culo** boca abajo encima del fogón, donde le había puesto ella, seguía goteando al suelo.

—No consigo sacarle más que algo de un pez —dice Cora—. Es un castigo de Dios. Veo que Dios ha puesto su mano sobre este chico para castigo y advertencia de Anse Bundren.

—No empezó a llover hasta después de irme —dice él—. Ya me había marchado. Estaba de camino. Y eso estaba allí, en el polvo. Usted lo vio. Cash se prepara a clavarla, pero usted lo vio.

Cuando llegamos llovía con fuerza, y él iba en el asiento entre nosotros, envuelto en el chal de Cora. No había dicho nada más, limitándose a sentarse allí con Cora tapándole con el paraguas. De cuando en cuando Cora dejaba de canturrear lo suficiente para decir: «Es un castigo de Dios a Anse Bundren. Puede que esto le enseñe que no se debe seguir el camino del pecado.» Luego volvía a canturrear, y él sentado entre nosotros, un poco inclinado hacia delante como si las mulas no fueran lo bastante deprisa para su gusto.

—Eso estaba por allí tirado —dice—, pero la lluvia no empezó hasta que cogí y me fui. Conque puedo ir y abrir las ventanas, porque Cash todavía no la ha clavado.

Hacía tiempo que había pasado la medianoche cuando pusimos el último clavo, y casi amanecía cuando volví casa y desuncí el tiro y volví a acostarme; el gorro de dormir de Cora descansaba en la otra almohada. Y que me condene si incluso entonces no parecía que seguía oyendo canturrear a Cora y notando al niño echado hacia adelante, entre nosotros como si fuera delante de las mulas, y todavía veía a Cash dale que dale a la sierra, y a Anse allí de pie como un **espantapájaros**, como un buey que se hubiera hundido hasta el corvejón en un charco y se le acercara

set the pond up on edge and he ain't missed it yet.

al guien y lo sacara al borde y él si-guiera sin reaccionar.

It was **nigh** toward daybreak when
5 we drove the last nail and toted it into
the house, where she was laying on
the bed with the window open and the
rain blowing on her again. Twice he
did it, and him so dead for sleep that
10 Cora says his face looked like one of
these here Christmas masks that had
done been buried a while and then dug
up, until at last they put her into it
and nailed it down so he couldn't
15 open the window on her no more. And
the next morning they found him in
his shirt-tail laying asleep on the floor
like a **felled steer**, and the top of the
box bored clean full of holes and
20 Cash's new **auger** broke off in the
last one. When they taken the lid
off they found that two of them
had **bored** on into her face.

Casi iba a romper el día cuando pu-simos el último clave y llevamos la caja dentro de la casa, donde ella estaba tumbada en la cama con la ventana abierta y la lluvia cayéndo le encima. Dos veces la abrió y estaba tan muerto de sueño que Cora dice que su cara parecía una careta de Navidad que han tenido enterrada y luego la sacaron, hasta que por fin la metieron dentro y la clavaron de modo que él no pudiera volver a dejarla a la intemperie. Y a la mañana siguiente lo encontraron tumbado en el suelo en camisa dormido como un **buey muerto**, y la tapa de la caja llena de agujeros y el **berbiquí** nuevo de Cash roto en el último de ellos. Cuando levantaron la tapa descubrieron que dos de los **taladros** le habían **agujereado** la cara.

felled steer: (Am. English) a dead cow

auger: an instrument for making holes in wood

25 If it's a judgment, it ain't right.
Because the Lord's got more to do than that. He's bound to have. Because the only burden Anse Bundren's ever had is himself.
30 And when folks talks him low, I think to myself he ain't that less of a man or he couldn't a bore himself this long.

Si esto es un castigo de Dios, no es justo. Porque el Señor tiene cosas mejores que hacer. A la fuerza tiene que tenerlas. Porque la única carga de Anse Bundren no ha sido más que él mismo. Y cuando la gente habla mal de él pienso para mis adentros que de haber sido menos hombre de lo que es no habría aguantado tanto.

35 It ain't right. I be durn if it is. Because He said Suffer little children to come unto Me don't make it right, neither. Cora said, "I have bore you what the Lord God
40 sent me. I faced it without fear nor terror because my faith was strong in the Lord, a-**bolstering** and sustaining me. If you have no son, it's because the Lord has **decreed** otherwise in His wisdom. And my life is and has ever been a open book to ere a man or woman among His creatures because I trust in my God and my reward."

No hay derecho. Que me condene si lo hay. Porque que El dijera: Dejad que los niños se acerquen a Mí, no lo arregla tampoco. Cora dijo:

—Te he dado lo que me mandó Dios Nuestro Señor. Lo he afrontado sin miedo ni terror porque mi fe en el Señor era firme, y **me sostuvo** y ayudó. Si no tienes un hijo es porque el Señor, con su sabiduría, ha **decretado** que no lo tengas. Y mi vida es y siempre ha sido un libro abierto para cualquier hombre o mujer, criaturas suyas, porque confío en mi Dios y en mi recompensa.

bolster cabezal *m*; almohadón *m* (con forma cilíndrica) (also **bolster up**) reforzar [+ morale] levantar
1 : a long pillow or cushion
2 : a structural part designed to eliminate friction or provide support or bearing
1 : to support with or as if with a bolster : REINFORCE
2 : to give a boost to <news that bolstered his spirits>

50 I reckon she's right. I reckon if there's ere a man or woman anywhere that He could turn it all over to and go away with His mind at rest, it would be Cora. And I reckon she
55 would make a few changes, no matter how He was running it. And I reckon they would be for man's good. Leastways, we would have to like them. Leastways, we might as well
60 go on and make like we did.

Para mí que ella tiene sazón. Para mí que si hay un hombre o una mujer en que Él pueda descansar y confiar, no puede ser nadie más que Cora. Y para mí que ella haría unos cuantos cambios sin importarle cómo había dispuesto Él las cosas. Y para mí que redundarían en bien de los hombres. Al menos, nos tendrían que gustar. Al menos podríamos comportarnos así y hacer como si nos gustaran.

17

D A R L (6)

DARL

a stump: the remains of a tree trunk

65 THE lantern sits on a **stump**. Rusted, grease-fouled, bits cracked chimney smeared on one side with a soaring smudge of soot, it sheds a feeble and sultry glare upon the
70 **trestles** and the boards and the adjacent earth. Upon the dark ground the **chips** look like random smears of soft pale paint on a black canvas. The boards look like long smooth
75 tatters torn from the flat darkness and turned backside out.

EL farol está encima de un **tocón**. Oxidado, sucio de grasa, con el tubo roto y manchado de barro, y uno de los lados tiznado de hollín, arroja una luz débil y cálida sobre los **caballetes** y las tablas y la tierra adyacente. Encima del oscuro suelo las **virutas** parecen borrones de color pálido suave pintados al azar en un lienzo negro. Las tablas parecen largos y pulidos andrajos desgarrados de la chata oscuridad y puestos al revés.

Darl (6)

This section consists of Darl's unspoken and unverballed thoughts as he reconstructs in great detail the scene which takes place after the Tulls have returned with Vardaman to the farm. At the end of the section, he returns to the present and wonders about the status of the words 'is' and 'was' in relation to people.

Cash labours about the trestles,

Cash se afana junto a los caballetes,

clatter *estrépito n.* a rattling noise (often produced by rapid movement); "the shutters clattered against the house"; "the clatter of iron wheels on cobblestones"
 v. clatter hacer ruido estrepitoso, clack, brattle make a rattling sound; "clattering dishes"
 1 : to make a rattling sound <the dishes clattered on the shelf> 2 : to talk noisily or rapidly 3 : to move or go with a clatter <clattered down the stairs> pound, thump

dislodge [stone, obstruction] sacar, extraer [party, ruler] desbancar = cause to fall) hacer caer to remove from or leave a lodging place, hiding place, or previously fixed position

impalpable: incapable of being touched or felt

ruffle

— *v.* arrugar, agitar, rizar, despeinar encrespar, erizar, descomponer, perturbar, ofender, alisar
 1 tr. disturb the smoothness or tranquility of.
 2 tr. upset the calmness of (a person).
 3 tr. gather (lace etc.) into a ruffle.
 4 tr. (often foll. by up) (of a bird) erect (its feathers) in anger, display, etc.
 5 intr. undergo ruffling.
 6 intr. lose smoothness or calmness.
 — *n.* arruga, volante fruncido, rizo
 1 an ornamental gathered or goffered frill of lace etc. worn at the opening of a garment esp. round the wrist, breast, or neck. ruffled skirt=falda de volantes;(o pechera o manga de volantes)
 2 perturbation, bustle.
 3 a rippling effect on water.
 4 the ruff of a bird etc. (see ruff 1 2).
 5 Mil. a vibrating drum-beat.

quick with young: pregnant

buckshot: the pellets used in a gun

vicious 1 bad-tempered, spiteful (a vicious dog; vicious remarks). 2 violent, severe (a vicious attack). 3 of the nature of or addicted to vice. 4 (of language or reasoning etc.) faulty or unsound.
 Malicioso, horroroso, feroz, despiadado
vicious feroz, salvaje, fiero, despiadado, sanguiinario, virulento, atroz, malicioso, malintencionado, nefasto, fatal, abominable, depravado

pistonning: (neologism) going back and forwards like a piston

scrawny bony, lean, scraggy (1 thin and bony, descarnado adj. 2 Enjuto, flaco y descolorido 3 being lean and long)

moving back and forth, lifting and placing the planks with long **clattering** reverberations in the dead air as though he were lifting and dropping them at the bottom of an invisible well, the sounds ceasing without departing, as if any movement might **dislodge** them from the immediate air in reverberant repetition. He saw again, his elbow flashing slowly, a thin thread of fire running along the edge of the saw, lost and recovered at the top and bottom of each stroke in unbroken elongation, so that the saw appears to be six feet long, into and out of pa's shabby and aimless silhouette. "Give me that Plank," Cash says. "No; the other one." He puts the saw down and comes and picks up the plank he wants, sweeping pea away with the long swinging gleam of the balanced board.

The air smells like sulphur. Upon the **impalpable** plane of it their shadows form as upon a wall, as though like sound they had not gone very far away in falling but had merely congealed for a moment, immediate and musing. Cash works on, half turned into the **feble light**, one thigh and one pole-thin arm braced, his face sloped into the light with a **rapt**, dynamic immobility above his tireless elbow. Below the sky sheet-lightning slumbers lightly; against it the trees, motionless, are **ruffed out** to the last twig, swollen, increased as though **quick with young**.

It begins to rain. The first harsh, sparse, swift drops rush through the leaves and across the ground in a long sigh, as though of relief from intolerable suspense. They are big as **buckshot**, warm as though fired from a gun; they sweep across the lantern in a **vicious** hissing. Pa lifts his face, slackmouthed, the wet black rim of snuff plastered close along the base of his gums; from behind his slackfaced astonishment he muses as though from beyond time, upon the ultimate outrage. Cash looks once at the sky, then at the lantern. The saw has not faltered, the running gleam of its **pistonning** edge unbroken. "Get something to cover the lantern," he says.

Pa goes to the house. The rain rushes suddenly down, without thunder, without warning of any sort; he is swept on to the porch upon the edge of it and in an instant Cash is wet to the skin. Yet the motion of the saw has not faltered, as though it and the arm functioned in a tranquil conviction that rain was an illusion of the mind. Then he puts down the saw and goes and crouches above the lantern, shielding it with his body, his back shaped lean and **scrawny** by his wet shirt as though he had been **abruptly** turned wrong-side out, shirt and all.

va y viene, levanta y coloca las tablas que producen largas reverberaciones **restallantes** en el aire muerto igual que si estuviera levantándolas y luego dejándolas caer al fondo de un pozo invisible, donde cesan los sonidos sin desaparecer del todo, como si algún movimiento los **desalojara** del aire inmediato con reverberaciones repetidas. Vuelve a serrar, su codo relampaguea lentamente, una fina hebra de fuego recorre los dientes de la sierra, se pierde y se recupera en cada uno de los extremos con cada golpe en continua prolongación, de modo que la sierra parece que mide dos metros de largo, al entrar y salir de la silueta miserable e inútil de padre.

—Deme esa tabla —dice Cash—. No; la otra.

Deja la sierra y va y coge la tabla que quiere, borrando a padre con el alargado resplandor oscilante de la tabla equilibrada.

El aire huele como a azufre. Encima de su **impalpable** superficie las sombras se disponen como encima de una pared, como si, al igual que los sonidos, no fueran a caer muy lejos, sino que meramente se cuajaran durante un momento, inmediato y contemplativo. Cash trabaja medio vuelto hacia la **débil luz**, un muslo y un brazo delgado como un palo en tensión, la cara hundida en la luz con **arrobada** y dinámica inmovilidad encima de su codo infatigable. Bajo el cielo los relámpagos se adormecen levemente; contra éste los árboles, inmóviles, **agitan** hasta su última rama, hinchados, desarrollados como una **súbita juventud**

Se pone a llover. Las primeras gotas, desaparecidas, dispersas, repentinas, recorren rápidamente las hojas y caer al suelo con un largo suspiro, como liberadas de una incertidumbre insoportable. Son como grandes **perdigones**, calientes igual que si las hubiera disparado una escopeta; se deslizan por el farol con un siseo **maligno**. Padre levanta la cara, boquiabierto, el cerco negro y húmedo del rapé emplastado a lo largo de la base de sus encías; desde detrás de su boca abierta por el asombro suelta palabras entrecortadas, como si llegaran desde más allá del tiempo, acerca de esta afrenta definitiva. Cash mira al cielo, luego al farol. La sierra no ha callado, el resplandor **móvil** de sus dientes no se ha roto.

—Traiga algo para tapar el farol —dice.

Padre va a casa. La lluvia aumenta de repente, sin truenos, sin aviso de ningún tipo; la lluvia lo barre contra el borde del porche, y en un instante Cash queda calado hasta los huesos. Con todo, no ha cesado el movimiento de la sierra, como si ésta y el brazo funcionasen con la tranquila convicción de que la lluvia era una ilusión mental. Luego deja la sierra y va y se agacha encima del farol, potegiéndolo con el cuerpo; su espalda aparece flaca y **esquelética** bajo la camisa empapada como si se le hubiese vuelto **bruscamente** del revés, con camisa y todo. [103]

COMMENTARY: Instead of allowing the reader to see these events directly, Faulkner chooses to present them through the eyes of the absent Darl. This serves a dual purpose; it further strengthens our idea of how obsessed Darl is with his home and his mother and it gives the reader a description of the events in the words of the best observer in the book. Absent though he is, Darl's imaginings are as meticulous as his actual observations. In Darl's reconstruction, the scene takes on surrealistic undertones, grotesque shadows throwing things out of proportion, the image lit by the lurid (fantasmagórica) light of the lightning and the rain sweeping the figures along in a way which anticipates the scene in the river. Of all the characters in the book, only Darl could credibly be given the unverballed response to the events which brings out all the macabre and surreal elements in them.

The last paragraph contains Darl's personal attempt to resolve the problem of his own existence, a problem brought to mind not only by the impending death of his mother but also by his own situation. Settling down to sleep in a strange place, Darl wonders about the difference between the sleeping state and the state of not-being, that is, death. "And when you are filled for sleep . . . And then I must be . . .", these lines contain an odd, apparently unintelligible reflection on the meaning of existence. They hinge on the words 'is' and 'was' and on the confirmation of the existence of anything or anyone by some agency beyond that thing or person. Thus the wagon sitting outside in the rain 'is' in Darl's terminology because the falling rain takes on the shape of the wagon. When he sets out to go to sleep, he abandons his 'shape', ceases to have his existence confirmed by any outside agency. In the end, Darl uses a variation of the 'I think therefore I am' notion to confirm his own existence, 'I must be, or I could not empty myself for sleep'. This meditation on the nature of existence takes place at an unspoken but not an unverballed level, for the terms are simple although the ideas are complex. When we come to Addie's section, we see that Darl's doubts about his own existence have a great deal to do with the tension between words and deeds, between terms and ideas. This sections gives us an early indication of the nature of his problem and also, in passing, reveals the lonely inner depths of his character.

Pa returns. He is wearing Jewel's raincoat and carrying Dewey Dell's. Squatting over the lantern, Cash reaches back and picks up four sticks and drives them into the earth and takes Dewey Dell's raincoat from pa and spreads it over the sticks, forming a roof above the lantern. Pa watches him. "I don't know what you'll do," he says. "Darl taken his coat with him."

"Get wet," Cash says. He takes up the saw again; again it moves up and down, in and out of that **unhurried imperviousness** as a piston moves in the oil; soaked, scrawny, tireless, with the lean light body of a boy or an old man. Pa watches him, blinking, his face streaming; again he looks up at the sky with that expression of dumb and brooding outrage and yet of vindication, as though he had expected no less; now and then he stirs, moves, gaunt and streaming, picking up a board or a tool and then laying it down. Vernon Tull is there now, and Cash is wearing Mrs. Tull's raincoat and he and Vernon are hunting the saw. After a while they find it in pa's hand.

"Why don't you go on in the house, out of the rain?" Cash says. Pa looks at him, his face streaming slowly. It is as though upon a face carved by a savage **caricaturist** a monstrous **burlesque** of all **bereavement** flowed. "You go on in," Cash says. "Me and Vernon can finish it."

Pa looks at them. The sleeves of Jewel's coat are too short for him. Upon his face the rain stream, slow as cold glycerine. "I don't begrudge her the wetting," he says. He mover again and falls to shifting the planks, picking them up, laying them down again carefully, as though they are glass. He goes to the lantern and pulls at the **propped** raincoat until he knocks it down and Cash comes and fixes it back.

"You go on to the house," Cash says. He leads pa to the house and returns with the raincoat and folds it and places it beneath the shelter where the lantern sits. Vernon has not stopped. He looks up, still sawing.

"You ought to done that at first," he says. "You knowed it was fixing to rain."

"It's his fever," Cash says. He looks at the board.

"Ay," Vernon says. "He'd a come, anyway."

Cash squints at the board. On the long flank of it the rain crashes steadily, myriad, **fluctuant**. "I'm going to **bevel** it," he says.

"It'll take more time," Vernon says. Cash sets the plank on edge; a moment longer Vernon watches him,

Padre vuelve. Se ha puesto el impermeable de Jewel y trae el de Dewey Dell. Protegiendo el farol, Cash se echa hacia atrás y coge cuatro palos y los clava en el suelo y le quita a padre el impermeable de Dewey Dell y lo despliega encima de los palos, formando un techo sobre el farol. Padre le mira.

—No sé lo que vas a hacer —dice—. Darl se la llevado su impermeable.

—Empaparme —dice Cash. Vuelve a coger la sierra; vuelve a moverla arriba y abajo, dentro y fuera de esa **impenetrabilidad inalterable** como un pistón se mueve en el aceite; empapado, esquelético, infatigable, tiene el cuerpo flaco y ligero de un muchacho o un anciano. Padre le mira, pestañea, le chorrea la cara; vuelve a levantar la vista al cielo con esa expresión de idiota y de ultraje y, con todo, de vindicación, como si no esperase menos; de vez en cuando se agita, se mueve, demacrado y chorreando, para coger una tabla o una herramienta que luego deja caer. Vernon Tull ahora está allí, y Cash se ha puesto el impermeable de Mrs. Tull y él Vernon buscan la sierra. Al cabo de un rato la encuentran en la mano de padre.

—¿Por qué no se mete en casa al abrigo de la lluvia? —dice Cash. Padre le mira, su cara chorrea lentamente. Es como si sobre una cara tallada por un **caricaturista** brutal fluyera una **burla** monstruosa de la **aflicción**.

—Métase dentro —dice Cash—. Yo y Vernon la podemos terminar.

Padre les mira. Las mangas del impermeable de Jewel le quedan demasiado cortas. Sobre la cara le chorrea la lluvia, lenta como glicerina fría.

—No voy a regatearle la mojadura —dice. Vuelve a moverse y se agacha a remover los tableros, los levanta y luego los deja de nuevo cuidadosamente como si fueran de cristal. Va hasta el farol y estira el _____ impermeable hasta que lo tira y Cash va y lo vuelve a poner como estaba.

—Entre en casa —dice Cash. Lleva a padre a casa y vuelve con el impermeable y lo dobla y lo coloca debajo de la protección donde está el [104] farol. Vernon no ha parado. Levanta la vista, sin dejar de serrar.

—Deberías haberlo hecho al principio —dice—. Sabía que iba a llover.

—Tiene fiebre —dice Cash, y mira la tabla.

—Sí —dice Vernon—. De todos modos hubiera venido.

Cash enfila la tabla con la vista. En su largo costado la lluvia choca firme, espesa, **agitada**.

—La voy a contar a **bisel** —dice.

—Eso te llevará más tiempo —dice Vernon. Cash coloca la tabla de canto, Vernon le mira durante un momento,

impervious 1 a : not allowing entrance or passage : **IMPENETRABLE** <a coat *impervious* to rain> b : not capable of being damaged or harmed <a carpet *impervious* to rough treatment> 2 : not responsive to an argument etc. ; not capable of being affected or disturbed <*impervious* to criticism>= impermeable, impenetrable, insensible
impervious *adj.* (usu. foll. by *to*) 1 not responsive to an argument etc. 2 not affording passage to a fluid.

caricaturist: one who makes grotesque representations of people or things by exaggerating certain features of them

burlesque: imitation for the purpose of deriding or amusing

bereave deprive of a relation, friend, etc., esp. by death. Luto, duelo, desgracia, aflicción

fluctuant: falling and rising irregularly

bevel: make sloping
bisel. Corte oblicuo en el borde o en la extremidad de una lámina o plancha, como en el filo de una herramienta, en el contorno de un cristal labrado, etc.

then he hands him the plane.

luego le da el cepillo.

Vernon holds the board **steady** while Cash bevels the edge of it with the tedious and minute care of a jeweller. Mrs. Tull comes to the edge of the porch and calls Vernon. "How near are you done?" she says.

Vernon sostiene la tabla **con fuerza** mientras Cash bisela el canto con el cuidado aburrido y minucioso de un joyero. Mrs. Tull sale al borde del porche y llama a Vernon. —¿Os falta mucho? —dice.

Vernon does not look up. "Not long. Some, yet."

Vernon no levanta la vista. —No mucho. Pero todavía un poco.

She watches Cash stooping at the plank, the **turgid** savage gleam of the lantern slicking on the raincoat as he moves. "You go down and get some planks off the barn and finish it and come in out of the rain," she says. "You'll both catch your death." Vernon does not move. "Vernon," she says.

Ella contempla a Cash encorvado sobre la tabla; el **túrgido** y brutal resplandor del farol hace brillar el impermeable cada vez que se mueve.

—Anda, baja y trae unos tableros del granero y termina y entra a ponerte a cubierto de la lluvia —dice ella—. O vais a quedar tiesos —Vernon no se mueve—. Vernon —dice ella.

"We won't be long," he says. "We'll be done after a spell." Mrs. Tull watches them a while. Then she re-enters the house.

—No tardaremos mucho —dice él—. Lo terminaremos en un santiamén.

Mrs. Tull le mira durante un rato. Luego vuelve a entrar en la casa.

"If we get in a tight, we could take come of them planks," Vernon says. "I'll help you put them back."

—Si nos vemos en un aprieto, podemos coger alguno de esos tableros —dice Vernon—. Yo te ayudaría a reponerlos.

Cash ceases the plane and squints along the plank, wiping it with his palm. "Give me the next one," he says.

Cash deja de cepillar y enfila la tabla con la vista, secándola con la palma de la mano. —Deme el siguiente —dice.

Some time toward dawn the rain ceases. But it is not yet day when Cash drives the last nail and stands stiffly up and looks down at the finished coffin, the others watching him. In the lanternlight his face is calm, musing; slowly he strokes his hands on his raincoated thighs in a gesture deliberate, final and composed. Then the four of them —Cash and pa and Vernon and Peabody—raise the coffin to their shoulders and turn toward the house. It is light, yet they move slowly; empty; yet they carry it carefully; lifeless, yet they move with hushed precautionary words to one another, speaking of it as though, complete, it now slumbered lightly alive, waiting to come awake. On the dark floor their feet **clump awkwardly**, as though for a long time they have not walked on floors.

Casi al amanecer deja de llover. Pero todavía no es de día cuando Cash clava el último clavo y se estira entumecido y baja la vista hacia el ataúd ya terminado, mientras los otros le observan. A la luz del farol tiene la cara tranquila, pensativa; se restriega lentamente las manos en el impermeable, a la altura de las caderas, con un gesto decidido, final y sereno. Luego los cuatro —Cash y padre y Vernon y Peabody— cogen el ataúd a hombros y se dirigen a casa. No pesa mucho, pero se mueven despacio; está vacío, pero lo llevan con cuidado; carece de vida, pero se mueven diciéndose unos a otros palabras de advertencia, hablando de él como si, ya terminado, ahora estuviera medio dormido a la espera del despertar. Sobre el oscuro suelo sus pies **andan pesados** como si llevaran mucho tiempo sin andar sobre suelos **de madera**.

They set it down by the bed. Peabody says quietly: "Let's eat a snack. It's almost daylight. Where's Cash?"

Lo dejan junto a la cama. Peabody dice en voz baja: —Vamos a comer algo. Ya casi es de día. ¿Dónde está Cash?

He has returned to the trestles, stooped again in the lantern's feeble glare as he gathers up his tools and wipes them on a cloth carefully and puts them into the box with its leather sling to go over the shoulder. Then he takes up box, lantern and raincoat and returns to the house, mounting the steps into faint silhouette against the **paling** east.

Éste ha vuelto a los caballetes; inclinado nuevamente al débil resplandor del farol, recoge sus herramientas y las seca cuidadosamente con un trapo y las guarda en la caja que tiene una correa para colgársela del hombro. Luego, coge caja, farol e impermeable y vuelve a casa, subiendo los escalones con su tenue silueta destacándose sobre el **pálido** este.

In a strange room you must empty yourself for sleep. And before you are emptied for sleep, what are you. And when you are emptied for sleep, you

En un cuarto extraño, para dormir, tienes que vaciarte. Y antes de vaciarte para dormir, ¿qué eres? Y cuando te vacías para dormir, no

turgid hinchado, abultado, túrgido, turgente, campanudo, ampuloso, rimbombante, cargado (aire)

are not. And when you are filled with sleep, you never were. I don't know what I am. I don't know if I am or not. Jewel knows he is, because he does not know that he does not know whether he is or not. He cannot empty himself for sleep because he is not what he is and he is what he is not. Beyond the unlit wall I can hear the rain shaping the wagon that is ours, the load that is no longer theirs that felled and sawed it nor yet theirs that bought it and which is not ours either, lie on our wagon though it does, since only the wind and the rain shape it only to Jewel and me, that are not asleep. And since sleep is is-not and rain and wind are *was*, it is not. Yet the wagon *is*, because when the wagon is *was*, Addie Bundren will not be. And Jewel *is*, so Addie Bundren must be. And then I must be, or I could not empty myself for sleep in a strange room. And so if I am not emptied yet, I am *is*.

How often have I lain beneath rain on a strange roof, thinking of home.

18
CASH (1)

I MADE it on the bevel.

1. There is more surface for the nails to grip.

2. There is twice the gripping-surface to each seam.

3. The water will have to **seep into** it on a slant. Water moves easiest up and down or straight across.

4. In a house people are upright two-thirds of the time. So the seams and joints are made up-and-down. Because the stress is up-and-down.

5. In a bed where people lie down all the time, the joints and seams are made sideways, because the stress is sideways.

6. Except.

7. A body is not square like a cross-tie.

8. Animal magnetism.

9. The animal magnetism of a dead body makes the stress come slanting, so the seams and joints of a coffin are made on the bevel.

10. You can see by an old grave that the earth sinks down on the bevel.

11. While in a natural hole it sinks by the centre, the stress being up-and-down.

12. So I made it on the bevel.

13. It makes a neater job.

eres. Y cuando estás lleno de sueño, nunca fuiste. No sé lo que soy. No sé si soy yo o no lo soy. Jewel sabe que es, porque no sabe que él no sabe si es o no. No puede vaciarse para dormir porque no es lo que es y es lo que no es. Más allá de la pared oscura oigo la lluvia dar forma a la carreta que es nuestra, a la carga que ya no es de los que la cortaron y serraron ni siquiera de los que la compraron y que tampoco es nuestra, aunque yace en nuestra carreta, puesto que sólo el viento y la lluvia le dan forma y sólo para Jewel y para mí, que no estamos dormidos. Y como el sueño es no ser y la lluvia y el viento son *fue*, la carreta no es. Sin embargo, la carreta *es*, porque cuando la carreta es *fue*, Addie Bundren no será. Y Jewel *es*, conque Addie Bundren tiene que ser. Y entonces yo tengo que ser, o no podría vaciarme a mí mismo para dormir en un cuarto extraño. Y así si yo todavía no estoy vacío, es que *soy*.

Cuántas veces he estado acostado a cubierto de la lluvia bajo un techo extraño, pensando en el hogar.

CASH

Lo he hecho en bisel.

1. Hay más superficie para que agarren los clavos.

2. Hay el doble de superficie de agarre para cada junta.

3. Él agua tendría que **colarse** oblicuamente. Él agua se desliza más fácilmente de arriba abajo u horizontalmente.

4. Dentro de una casa la gente está de pie dos terceras partes del tiempo. De modo que las juntas y uniones están hechas de arriba abajo. Porque la presión viene de arriba abajo.

5. En una casa donde la gente está tumbada todo el tiempo, las juntas y uniones se hacen de lado, porque la presión viene de lado.

6. Excepto.

7. Un cuerpo no es cuadrado como una traviesa.

8. El magnetismo animal.

9. El magnetismo animal de un cuerpo muerto hace que la presión venga de lado, de modo que las juntas y uniones de un ataúd tienen que hacerse en bisel.

10. Se ve que en una tumba vieja la tierra se hunde en bisel.

11. Mientras que en un agujero normal se hunde por e centro, la presión es de arriba abajo.

12. De modo que lo he hecho en bisel.

13. Es un trabajo mejor hecho.

Cash (1)

This brief section takes the form of a list, reflecting Cash's unspoken thoughts about the coffin and about the shape of things.

COMMENTARY: The appearance of this section gives the impression that Cash is a very organised, practical and rather limited thinker. Closer inspection reveals, however, that there is a tension between the numbers in the list and what is put alongside the numbers. For example, we find '6. Except.' This suggests that Cash tries to think in an organised, numerical way, but that his thoughts often run contrary to the imposed organisation. He thinks in terms of his first love, carpentry, but within this framework he is not without imagination or fancy.

seep ooze out; percolate slowly, flow, rezuma.
US a place where petroleum etc. oozes slowly out of the ground. filtrarse, rezumar, escaparse, penetrar, aflorar, brotar, manar

19
VARDAMAN (3)

MY mother is a fish.

5

20
TULL (3)

10 IT was ten o'clock when I got back, with Peabody's team hitched on to the back of the wagon. They had already dragged the buckboard back from where Quick found it upside
15 down straddle of the ditch about a mile from the spring. It was pulled out of the road at the spring, and about a dozen wagons was already there. It was Quick found it. He said the river was up and
20 still rising. He said it had already covered the highest water-mark on the bridge-piling he had ever seen. "That bridge won't stand a whole lot of water," I said. "Has
25 somebody told Anse about it?"

"I told him," Quick said. "He says he reckons them boys has heard and unloaded and are on the way back by
30 now. He says they can load up and get across."

"He better go on and bury her at New Hope," Armstid said. "That bridge
35 is old. I wouldn't **monkey** with it."

"His mind is set on taking her to Jefferson," Quick said.

40 "Then he better get at it soon as he can," Armstid said.

Anse meets us at the door. He has
45 shaved, but not good. There is a long cut on his jaw, and he is wearing his Sunday pants and a white shirt with the neckband buttoned. It is drawn smooth over his hump, making it
50 look bigger than ever, like a white shirt will, and his face is different too. He looks folks in the eye now, dignified, his face tragic and composed, shaking us by the hand
55 as we walk up on to the porch and scrape our shoes, a little stiff in our Sunday clothes, our Sunday clothes **rustling**, not looking full at him as he meets us.

60

"The Lord giveth," we say.

"The Lord giveth."

65 That boy is not there. Peabody told about how he come into the kitchen, hollering, **swarming** and **clawing** at Cora when he found her cooking that fish, and how Dewey Dell taken him down to the barn.
70 "My team all right?" Peabody says.

"All right," I tell him. "I give them a bait this morning. Your buggy
75 seems all right too. It ain't hurt."

"And no fault of somebody's," he says. "I'd give a nickel to know

19
VARDAMAN

Mi madre es un pez.

20
TULL

ERAN las diez cuando volví, con el tiro de Peabody atado a la parte de atrás de la carreta. Ya habían sacado la calesa de donde la encontré Quick, volcada, hundida en la cuneta, a unos kilómetros del manantial. La arrastraron fuera del camino junto al manantial, y ya había como una docena de carretas allí. Fue Quick el que la encontré. Dijo que el río iba crecido y seguía creciendo. Dijo que ya había subido por encima de la señal más alta del pilar del puente, algo que nunca se había visto.

—Ese puente no va a resistir tal cantidad de agua —dijo yo—. ¿Le ha contado alguien a Anse lo que pasa?

—Se lo conté yo —dijo Quick—. Dice que cree que los chicos ya lo habrán oído y que habrán descargado y que deben de estar de camino. Dice que pueden cargar y cruzar.

—Mejor sería que fuera y la enterrara en New Hope —dijo Armstid—. Ese puente es viejo. Yo no **jugaría** con él.

—Está decidido a llevarla a Jefferson —dijo Quick.

—Entonces será mejor que se ponga en marcha lo más pronto que pueda —dijo Armstid.

Anse nos recibe a la puerta. Se ha afeitado, pero no bien. Hay un gran corte en su mandíbula y lleva los pantalones de los domingos y una camisa blanca con la tira del cuello abrochada. Está suavemente tirante sobre su joroba, haciendo que ésta parezca mayor que nunca, por lo blanco de la camisa; y su cara también está distinta. Ahora mira a la gente a los ojos, digno, con cara trágica y serena, y nos estrecha la mano según vamos llegando al porche y nos restregamos los zapatos, un tanto envarados con nuestra ropa de los domingos, una ropa de los domingos **que cruje**, sin mirarle directamente cuando nos acercamos a él.

—El Señor nos lo dio —decimos.

—El Señor nos lo dio.

El chico no anda por ahí. Peabody nos contó que entró en la
cocina gritando, **muy nervioso**, y que **arañó** a Cora cuando vio que guisaba ese pez, y que Dewey Dell se lo llevó al granero.

—¿Está bien mi tiro? —dice Peabody.

—Está bien —le contestó—. Les di de comer esta mañana. Y su calesa también parece que está bien. No ha sufrido daño.

—No será porque alguien no lo haya pretendido —dice él—. Daría dinero por

Vardaman (3)

This section consists of one line, showing that Vardaman has finally consolidated the idea of his mother and the idea of the dead fish and made them into one.

Tull (3)

In this section, Tull recalls the funeral service for Addie Bundren conducted by the minister, Whitfield.

COMMENTARY: Here, as elsewhere, Faulkner gives the reader a sense of time hanging heavily on the hands of people who are sitting waiting for something to happen. The men feel awkward in their best clothes and their conversation shows that they all think and react in much the same way as Tull. When the service starts, they move as one towards the front steps but not into the house. There is a sense of community evoked by this section but the Bundrens are not really a part of that community.

monkey 1 tr. mimic or mock. 2 intr. (often foll. by *with*) tamper or play mischievous tricks. 3 intr. (foll. by *around, about*) fool around.

rustling: crackling, susurrante, rumoroso, making a sound as dry leaves blown in the wind, susurrar, crujiir

swarm 2 v. intr. (foll. by *up*) & tr. climb (a rope or tree etc.), esp. in a rush, by clasping or clinging with the hands and knees etc.

claw 1 a pointed horny nail on an animal's or bird's foot. **b** a foot armed with claws. 2 the pincers of a shellfish. 3 a device for grappling, holding, etc.

where that boy was when that team broke away.”

“If it’s broke anywhere, I’ll fix it,”
5 I say.

The women folks go on into the house. We can hear them, talking and fanning. The fans go wish, wish,
10 wish and them talking, the talking sounding kind of like bees murmuring in a waterbucket. The men stop on the porch, talking some, not looking at one another.

15 “Howdy, Vernon,” they say.
“Howdy, Tull.”

20 “Looks like more rain.”

“It does for a fact.”

“Yes, sir. It will rain some more.”

25 “It come up quick.”

“And going away slow. It don’t fail.”

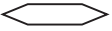
I go around to the back. Cash is
30 filling up the holes he bored in the top of it. He is trimming out plugs for them, one at a time, the wood wet and hard to work. He could cut up a tin can and hide the holes and nobody
35 wouldn’t know the difference. Wouldn’t mind, anyway. I have seen him spend a hour trimming out a wedge like it was glass he was working, when he could have reached around and
40 picked up a dozen sticks and drove them into the joint and made it do.

When we finished I go back to the front. The men have gone a little
45 piece from the house, sitting on the ends of the boards and on the saw-horses where we made it last night, some sitting and some squatting. Whitfield ain’t come yet.

50 They look up at me, their eyes asking.

55 “It’s about,” I say. “He’s ready to nail.”

While they are getting up Anse comes to the door and looks at us and we return to the porch. We
60 scrape our shoes again, careful, waiting for one another to go in first, **milling** a little at the door. Anse stands inside the door, dignified, composed. He waves us in and
65 leads the way into the room.

They had laid her in it reversed. Cash made it clock-shape, like this  with every joint and seam bevelled and scrubbed with the plane, tight as a drum and neat as a sewing basket, and they had laid her in it head to foot so it wouldn’t crush her dress. It was her wedding dress
75 and it had a flare-out bottom, and they had laid her head to foot in it so the dress could spread out, and they had made her a veil out of a mosquito bar

saber dónde estaba ese chico cuando se escapó el tiro.

—Si se ha roto algo, yo se lo arreglaré —digo.

Las mujeres entran en la casa. Las oímos hablar y abanicarse. Los abanicos hacen fis, fis, fis, y ellas hablan y su charla suena a algo así como el murmullo de las abejas dentro de un cubo de agua. Los hombres, parados en el porche, hablan sin mirarse unos a otros.

—¿Qué tal, Vernon? —dicen—. ¿Qué tal, Tull?

—Parece que va a volver a llover.

—Es seguro.

—Sí, señor. Va a volver a llover.

—Y pronto.

—Y tardará en parar. Nunca falla.

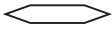
Voy a la parte de atrás de la casa. Cash está tapando los agujeros que el chico hizo en la tapa. Está cortando tacos para meterlos, uno a uno, la madera mojada y difícil de trabajar. Podría cortar una hojalata y tapar los agujeros y nadie notaría la diferencia. O a nadie le importaría, en todo caso. Le he visto pasarse una hora cortando una cuña como si estuviese trabajando con cristal, cuando podría darse la vuelta y coger una docena de palos y meterlos en la grieta, y harían el mismo papel.

Cuando terminamos volví a la parte delantera. Los hombres se habían alejado un poco de la casa, sentándose en los extremos de los tableros y en los caballetes donde hicimos la caja la noche pasada, unos sentados y otros en cuclillas. Whitfield todavía no ha llegado.

Levantan la vista hacia mí, interrogándome con la mirada.

—Ya casi está —digo yo. Está listo para clavarla.

Mientras se ponen de pie, Anse sale a la puerta y nos mira y volvemos al porche. Otra vez nos restregamos los zapatos cuidadosamente, esperando que sea otro el que entre el primero mientras nos **apiñamos** a la puerta. Anse sigue en el umbral, digno, sereno. Con la mano hace señas de que entremos y nos precede hasta el cuarto.

La habían metido en la caja al revés. Cash la ha hecho en forma de reloj de pared, así  con todas sus juntas y uniones en bisel y bien cepilladas, estanca como un tambor y pulcra como un costurero, y la han acostado dentro, con la cabeza a los pies para que el vestido no se arrugue. Era su vestido de novia y tenía mucho vuelo en la falda y la habían acostado con la cabeza a los pies de la caja para poder extender el vestido, y habían hecho un velo con un trozo de mosquitero para

mill *intransitive verb* 1 : to hit out with the fists 2 : to move in a circle or in an eddying mass; move in an aimless manner, esp. in a confused mass; also : **WANDER** 3 : to undergo milling
verb transitive verb 1 : to subject to an operation or process in a mill; as a : to grind into flour, meal, or powder b : to shape or dress by means of a rotary cutter c : to mix and condition (as rubber) by passing between rotating rolls 2 : to give a raised rim or a ridged or corrugated edge to (a coin) 3 : to cut grooves in the metal surface of (as a knob)
mill around arremolinarse
mill grind with a mill; «mill grain»
mill move about in a confused manner; moverse por todas partes

auger *n.* 1 a tool resembling a large corkscrew, for boring holes in wood. 2 a similar larger tool for boring holes in the ground.

- so the **auger*** holes in her face wouldn't show.
- When we are going out, Whitfield comes. He is wet and muddy to the waist, coming in. "The Lord comfort this house," he says. "I was late because the bridge has gone. I went down to the old ford and swum my horse over, the Lord protecting me. His grace be upon this house."
- We go back to the trestles and plank-ends and sit or squat.
- "I knowed it would go," Armstid says.
- "It's been there a long time, that ere bridge," Quick says.
- "The Lord has kept it there, you mean," Uncle Billy says. "I don't know ere a man that's touched hammer to it in twenty-five years."
- "How long has it been there, Uncle Billy?" Quick says.
- "It was built in . . . let me see . . . It was in the year 1888," Uncle Billy says. "I mind it because the first man to cross it was Peabody coming to my house when Jody was born."
- "If I'd a crossed it every time your wife littered since, it'd a been wore out long before this, Billy," Peabody says.
- We laugh, suddenly loud, then suddenly quiet again. We look a little aside at one another.
- "Lots of folks has crossed it that won't cross no more bridges," Houston says.
- "It's a fact," Littlejohn says. "It's so."
- "One more ain't, no ways," Armstid says. "It'd taken them two-three days to got her to town in the wagon. They'd be gone a week, getting her to Jefferson and back."
- "What's Anse so itching to take her to Jefferson for, anyway?" Houston says.
- "He promised her," I say. "She wanted it. She come from there. Her mind was set on it."
- "And Anse is set on it, too," Quick says.
- "Ay," Uncle Billy says. "It's like a man that's let everything slide all his life to get set on something that will make the most trouble for everybody he knows."
- "Well, it'll take the Lord to get her over that river now," Peabody says. "Anse can't do it."
- "And I reckon He will," Quick
- que no se le vieran los agujeros del **taladro** en la cara.
- Cuando salimos, llega Whitfield. Está empapado y lleno de barro hasta la cintura.
- Que el Señor consuele a los de esta casa —dice al entrar—. Llego tarde porque el puente ha desaparecido. Bajé hasta el viejo vado y crucé nadando a caballo. El Señor me protegió. Que su gracia descienda sobre esta casa.
- Volvemos a los caballetes y los tablonos y nos sentamos o nos ponemos en cuclillas.
- Sabía que se lo llevaría el río —dice Armstid.
- Ya estaba durando demasiado, ese puente —dice Quick.
- Querrás decir que el Señor lo conservaba —dice el tío Billy—. No sé de nadie que le haya hecho la menor reparación en veinticinco años.
- ¿Y cuánto llevaba allí, tío Billy? —dice Quick.
- Lo construyeron... vamos a ver... Fue el año 1888 [110] —dice el tío Billy—. Me acuerdo porque el primer hombre que lo cruzó fue Peabody que venía a mi casa cuando nació Jody.
- Si lo hubiera cruzado todas las veces que parió tu mujer desde entonces, se habría venido abajo mucho antes, Billy —dice Peabody.
- Nos reímos, primero muy alto; luego de repente bajito. Nos miramos unos a otros de reojo.
- Muchas personas de las que lo cruzaron ya no cruzarán más puentes —dice Houston.
- Cierto —dice Littlejohn—. Así es.
- Y sin duda, hay una más que no lo cruzará —dice Armstid—. Les costará de dos a tres días llevarla al pueblo en la carreta. Y toda una semana llevarla a Jefferson y volver.
- ¿Por qué insiste tanto Anse en llevarla a Jefferson? —dice Houston.
- Se lo prometió —digo yo—. Era lo que quería ella. Procedía de allí. Estaba empeñada en ello.
- Y Anse está empeñado también —dice Quick.
- Sí —dice el tío Billy—. Es como si un hombre que nunca en toda su vida se ha preocupado de nada, se empeñara en hacer algo que sólo trae problemas a todos los que le conocen.
- Bueno, ahora a ver si el Señor les ayuda a cruzar ese río —dice Peabody—. Anse solo no va a poder.
- Para mí que Dios querrá —dice

says. "He's took care of Anse a long time, now."

Quick—. Lleva tiempo protegiendo a Anse.

"It's a fact," Littlejohn says.

—Cierto —dice Littlejohn.

5

"Too long to quit now," Armstid says.

—Demasiado para abandonarle ahora —dice Armstid.

10

"I reckon He's like everybody else around here," Uncle Billy says. "He's done it so long now He can't quit."

—Para mí que el Señor es igual que todos los de por aquí —dice el tío Billy—. Lleva tanto ayudándole que ahora no lo puede abandonar.

15

Cash comes out. He has put on a clean shirt; his hair, wet, is combed smooth down on his brow, smooth and black as if he had painted it on to his head. He squats **stiffly** among us, we watching him.

Cash sale. Se ha puesto una camisa limpia; su pelo, mojado, está peinado suavemente sobre su frente, suave y negro como si se lo hubiese pintado en la cabeza. Se acuclilla **tenso** entre nosotros que le miramos.

20

"You feeling this weather, ain't you?" Armstid says.

—¿No te molesta con este tiempo? —dice Armstid.

25

Cash says nothing.

Cash no dice nada.

"A broke bone always feels it," Littlejohn says. "A fellow with a broke bone can tell it a-coming."

—Un hueso roto siempre lo nota —dice Littlejohn—. Alguien con un hueso roto puede decir el tiempo que va a hacer.

30

"Lucky Cash, got off with just a broke leg," Armstid says. "He might have hurt himself bedrid. How far'd you fall, Cash?"

—Por suerte Cash sólo se rompió una pierna —dice Armstid—. Podría haberse quedado inútil. ¿Te caíste de muy alto, Cash?

35

"Twenty-eight foot, four and a half inches, about," Cash says. I move over beside him.

—Desde unos nueve metros y cincuenta y cinco centímetros, más o menos —dice Cash. Me acerco a él.

40

"A fellow can sho slip quick on wet planks," Quick says.

—Cualquiera puede resbalar en un tablón mojado —dice Quick.

"It's too bad," I say. "But you couldn't a holp it!"

—Es una pena —digo yo—. Pero no lo pudiste evitar.

45

"It's them durn women," he says. "I made it to balance with her. I made it to her measure and weight."

—Es por esas condenadas mujeres —dice él—. Lo hice para quedar en paz con ella. Lo hice a su peso y medida.

50

If it takes wet boards for folks to fall, it's fixing to be lots of falling before this spell is done.

Si basta con un tablero mojado para que la gente caiga, seguro que van a caerse muchos antes de que cambie el tiempo.

"You couldn't have holp it," I say.

—No lo pudiste evitar —digo yo.

55

I don't mind the folks falling. It's the cotton and corn I mind.

No me importa que se caiga la gente. Lo que me importa es el algodón y el maíz.

Neither does Peabody mind the folks falling. How 'bout it, Doc?

Tampoco a Peabody le importa que la gente se caiga. ¿Qué me dice a eso, doctor?

60

It's a fact. Washed clean outen the ground it will be. Seems like something is always happening to it.

Cierto. El campo quedará totalmente arrasado. Parece como si siempre le pasara algo.

65

'Course it does. That's why it's worth anything. If nothing didn't happen and everybody mude a big crop, do you reckon it would be worth the raising?

Claro que parece. Por eso vale lo que vale. Si no pasara nada y todos tuvieran una gran cosecha, ¿para usted que merecería la pena cultivar la tierra?

70

Well, I be durn if I like to see my work washed outen the ground, work I

Bueno, que me condene si a mí me gusta ver mi trabajo arrasado por la riada, un trabajo que tantos sudores me ha

swat over.

costado.

75

It's a fact. A fellow wouldn't mind seeing it washed up if he could just turn on the rain himself.

Cierto. A nadie le importaría verlo anegado si pudiera él controlar la lluvia.

swat — *v.tr.* 1 crush (a fly etc.) with a sharp blow. 2 hit hard and abruptly. — *n.* a swatting blow.

Who is that man can do that?
Where is the color of his eyes?

¿Qué hombre puede hacer eso? ¿De
qué color tiene los ojos?

5 Ay. *The Lord made it to grow. It's His
to wash up if He sees it fitten so.*

Sí. *El Señor hace que crea. Y Él inun-
da los campos cuando le parece.*

“You couldn't have holp it,” I say.

—No pudiste evitarlo —digo yo.

10 “It's them durn women,” he says.

—Es por esas condenadas mujeres —dice él.

In the house the women begin to
sing. We hear the first line
commence, beginning to swell as
15 they take hold, and we rise and move
toward the door, taking off our hats
and throwing our chews away. We
do not go in. We stop at the steps,
clumped, holding our hats between
20 our lax hands in front or behind,
standing with one foot advanced and
our heads lowered, looking aside,
down at our hats in our hands and at
the earth or now and then at the sky
25 and at one another's grave,
composed face.

En la casa las mujeres empiezan a can-
tar. Oímos el comienzo de la primera lí-
nea y se ponen a cantar más alto según
se animan, y nos levantamos y nos diri-
gimos a la puerta, quitándonos los som-
breros y escupiendo nuestro tabaco de
mascar. No entramos. Nos detenemos
X los escalones, **vacilando**, con los som-
breros en nuestras indecisa manos, pues-
tas delante o detrás, parados con un pie
adelantado y la cabeza gacha, mirando
de reojo, bien a los sombreros de nues-
tras manos o al suelo o de vez en cuando
al cielo y a las caras de los demás, gra-
ves, tranquilas.

The song ends; the voices quaver
away with a rich and dying fall.
30 Whitfield begins. His voice is bigger
than him. It's like they are not the
same. It's like he is one, and his voice
is one, swimming on two horses side
by side across the ford and coming
35 into the house, the mud-splashed one
and the one that never even got wet,
triumphant and sad. Somebody in the
house begins to cry. It sounds like her
eyes and her voice were turned back
40 inside her, listening; we move,
shifting to the other leg, meeting one
another's eye and making like they
hadn't touched.

Termina el cántico; las voces tiem-
blan en un final poderoso y moribun-
do. Empieza Whitfield. Su voz es más
grande que él. Es como si no fuese
suya. Es como si él y su voz fueran co-
sas diferentes que cruzaran el vado
uno a lado de la otra, en caballos dis-
tintos, y llegaran a la casa, uno cubier-
to de barro y la otra ni tan siquiera
mojada triunfante y triste. En la casa
alguien empieza a llorar. Suena como
si sus ojos y su voz se le hubieran
metido en el cuerpo, escuchando; nos
movemos, apoyándonos en la otra
pierna, cruzando nuestras miradas y
haciendo como si no nos viéramos.

45 Whitfield stops at last. The women
sing again. In the thick air it's like
their voices come out of the air,
flowing together and on in the sad,
comforting tunes. When they cease
50 it's like they hadn't gone away. It's
like they had just disappeared into the
air and when we moved we would
lose them again out of the air around
us, sad and comforting. Then they
55 finish and we put on our hats, our
movements stiff, like we hadn't never
wore hats before.

Por fin Whitfield se calla. Las muje-
res vuelven a cantar. En la espesa atmós-
fera es como si sus voces salieran de aire,
fluyendo juntas y siguieran en tristes cán-
ticos de consuelo. Cuando cesan es como
si no hubieran desaparecido. Es como si
acabasen de desaparecer en el aire y
cuando nos moviésemos pudiéramos vol-
ver a oírlas en el aire que nos rodea, tris-
tes y reconfortantes. Han terminado y nos
ponemos el sombrero con movimientos
tensos, como si anteriormente nunca hu-
biéramos llevado sombrero.

On the way home Cora is still singing.
60 “I am bounding toward my God and
my reward,” she sings, sitting on the
wagon, the shawl around her shoulders
and the umbrella open over her, though
it is not raining.

Camino de casa, Cora todavía canta.
—Voy hacia mi Dios y espero Su
recompensa —canta sentada en la
carreta, con el chal sobre los hom-
bros y el paraguas abierto aunque
no llueve.

65 “She has hern,” I say. “Wherever
she went, she has her reward in being
free of Anse Bundren.” *She laid there
three days in that box, waiting for
70 Darl and Jewel to come clean back
home and get a new wheel and go
back to where the wagon was in the
ditch. Take my team, Anse, I said.*

—Ella se ha ganado la suya —digo
yo—. Está donde esté, se ha ganado su
recompensa al verse libre de Anse
Bundren. *Tres días tumbada en esa caja,
esperando a que Darl y Jewel vuelvan
por fin a casa y traigan una rueda nueva
y vuelvan a la cuneta donde estaba la ca-
rreta. Llévate mi tiro, Anse, dije yo.*

75 *We'll wait for **ourn**, he said.
She'll want it so. She was ever a
particular woman.*

*Esperaremos el **nuestro**, dijo él. Ella
así lo hubiera querido. Siempre fue una
mujer **especial**.*

clump 1 (foll. by of) a cluster of plants, esp. trees
or shrubs. 2 an agglutinated mass of blood-
cells etc. 3 a thick extra sole on a boot or
shoe.
1a *intr.* form a clump. b *tr.* heap or plant
together. 2 *intr.* (also **clomp**) walk with heavy
tread. 3 *tr. colloq.* hit.

On the third day they got back and they loaded her into the wagon and started and it already too late. You'll have to go all the way round by 5 Samson's bridge. It'll take you a day to get there. Then you'll be forty miles from Jefferson. Take my team, Anse.

We'll wait for *ourn*. She'll 10 want it so.

It was about a mile from the house we saw him, sitting on the edge of the **slough**. It hadn't had a fish in it never that I knowed. He looked 15 around at us, his eyes round and calm, his face dirty, the pole across his knees. Cora was still singing.

"This ain't no good day to fish," I said. "You come on home with us and me and you'll go down to the river first thing in the morning and catch some fish."

"It's one in here," he said. "Dewey Dell seen it.

"You come on with us. The river's the best place."

"It's in here," he said. "Dewey Dell seen it."

"I'm bounding toward my God and 35 my reward," Cora sung.

21
DARL (7)

"IT'S not your horse that's dead, Jewel," I say. He sits erect on the seat, leaning a little forward, **wooden-backed**. The 45 brim of his hat has soaked free of the crown in two places, drooping across his wooden face so that, head lowered, he looks through it like through the visor of a helmet, looking long across the valley to where the barn leans against the bluff, shaping the invisible horse. "See then?" I say. High 50 above the house, against the quick thick sky, they hang in narrowing circles. From here they are no more than specks, implacable, patient, **portentous**. "But it's not your horse 60 that's dead."

"Goddamn you," he says. "Goddamn you."

I cannot love my mother because I have no mother. Jewel's mother is a horse.

Motionless, the tall buzzards hang 70 in **soaring** circles, the clouds giving them an illusion of retrograde.

Motionless, **wooden-backed**, wooden-faced, he shapes the horse in 75 a rigid stoop like a hawk, hook-winged. They are waiting for us, ready for the moving of it, waiting for him. He enters the still and waits

Al tercer día volvieron y la cargaron en la carreta y se pusieron en marcha [113] y ya era demasiado tarde. Tendréis que dar un rodeo por el puente de junto a casa de Samson. Os llevará un día llegar hasta allí. Luego serán setenta kilómetros harta Jefferson. Coge mi tiro, Anse.

Esperaremos el *nuestro*. Ella así lo hubiera querido.

A un par de kilómetros más o menos de nuestra casa le vimos, sentado a la orilla de la **charca**. Nunca hubo ni un pez en ella, que yo sepa. Nos miró con ojos redondos y tranquilos, la cara sucia, la caña entre las rodillas. Cora todavía cantaba.

—No es un buen día para pescar — dije yo—. Vente a casa con nosotros, y yo y tú bajaremos al río a primera hora de la mañana y pescaremos algún pez.

—Hay uno aquí —dijo él—. Lo vio Dewey Dell.

—Ven con nosotros. El río es el sitio mejor.

—Hay uno qui dentro —dijo—. Lo vio Dewey Dell.

—Voy hacia mi Dios y espero su recompensa —cantaba Cora.

21
DARL

—No es tu caballo el que se ha muerto, Jewel —digo.

Va erguido en el asiento, echado un poco hacia delante, con la **espalda envarada**. El ala de su sombrero está empapada y se ha soltado de la copa por dos sitios, colgándole delante de su cara de palo de modo que, agachada la cabeza, mira a través de ella como por el visor de un casco al mirar el valle hasta donde el granero se apoya contra los riscos, evocando al invisible caballo.

—¿Los ves? —digo.

En lo alto de la casa, contra el cielo cambiante y espeso, se ciernen en círculos cada vez más estrechos. Desde aquí no son más que motas, implacables, pacientes, **amenazadoras**.

—Pero si no es tu caballo el que se ha muerto.

—Maldito seas —dice él—. Maldito seas.

No puedo querer a mi madre porque no tengo madre. La madre de Jewel es un caballo.

Inmóviles, los enormes buitres se ciernen en círculos **que se elevan**; las nubes les prestan una ilusión de retroceso.

Inmóvil, con la **espalda encorvada**, con cara de palo, él evoca al caballo, en un rígido arco como un halcón, con alas en forma de gancho. Nos esperan a nosotros, listos para moverlo; le esperan a él. Entra en el establo y espe-

Darl (7)

This section contains Darl's spoken words and unspoken thoughts as he and Jewel approach the house. The most significant line of this section, which ends with Darl cursing Jewel, is his remark 'I cannot love my mother because I have no mother. Jewel's mother is a horse'.

COMMENTARY: The remark 'Jewel's mother is a horse' might seem to indicate that Darl is suffering from a confusion of ideas similar to the one which led Vardaman to say 'my mother is a fish', but when the remark is taken in the context of the preceding words, 'I cannot love my mother because I have no mother', it becomes apparent that Darl is using the word 'mother' to refer to an object which allows the individual to focus complex feelings of love. Jewel has his horse as a substitute for Addie. Darl, as we later discover, has never had the love of Addie herself and, now that she is dead, lacks even her physical being as an object of love.

slough: n 1 cenagal 2 n abismo (tristeza) 3 (skin)

vt mudar la piel *slough off* v mudar

slough n. 1 any outer covering that can be shed or cast off (such as the cast-off skin of a snake) 2 a stagnant swamp (especially as part of a bayou) 3 a hollow filled with mud 4 gangrene, sphacelus necrotic tissue; a mortified or gangrenous part or mass

v. 1 shed, molt, exuviate, moult, cast off hair, skin, horn, or feathers; «out dog sheds every Spring»

slouch 1. andar o sentarse encorvado 2. nombre con los hombros caídos, encorvado, **she's no slouch**, no es manca

slouch hat a hat with a wide flexible brim.

portentous adj. 1 grandiloquent, overblown, pompous, pontifical, **portentous** puffed up with vanity; «a grandiloquent and boastful manner»; «overblown oratory»; «a pompous speech»; «pseudo-scientific gobbledygook and pontifical hoey»- Newsweek 2 fateful, foreboding(a), **portentous** of ominous significance 3 **portentous**, prodigious of momentous or ominous significance; «such a portentous... monster raised all my curiosity»- Herman Melville; «a prodigious vision»

portentous : boding evil, threatening, siniestro, de mal agüero, ominoso,

portentoso maravilloso, prodigioso

soaring encumbrándose, remontándose, creciente

until it kicks at him so that he can slip past and mount on to the trough and pause, peering out across the intervening stall-tops toward the empty path, before he reaches into the loft.

“Goddamn him. Goddamn him.”

10

22
CASH (2)

“IT won’t balance. If you want it to ^{carry transport} **tote** and ride on a balance, we will have——”

“Pick up. Goddamn you, pick up.”

“Im telling you it won’t tote and it won’t ride on a balance unless——”

20

“Pick up! Pick up, goddamn your thick-nosed soul to hell, pick up!”

It won’t balance. If they want it to tote and ride on a balance, they will have——

25

23
DARL (8)

30

HE stoops among us above it, two of the eight hands. In his face the blood goes in waves. In between them his flesh is greenish looking, about that smooth, thick, pale green of **cow’s cud**; his face suffocated, furious, his lip lifted upon his teeth. “Pick up!” he says. “Pick up, goddamn your thick-nosed soul!”

cow’s cud: the material chewed by a cow

40

He heaves, lifting one whole side so suddenly that we all spring into the lift to catch and balance it before he hurls it completely over. For an instant it resists, as though **volitional**, as though within it her pole-thin body clings furiously, even though dead, to a sort of modesty, as she would have tried to conceal a soiled garment that she could not prevent her body soiling. Then it breaks free, rising suddenly as though the **emaciation** of her body had added buoyancy to the planks or as though, seeing that the garment was about to be torn from her, she rushes suddenly after it in a passionate reversal that flouts its own desire and need. Jewel’s face goes completely green and I can hear teeth in his breath.

volitional: having a will of its own

emaciation: wasting away

We carry it down the hall, our feet harsh and clumsy on the floor, moving with shuffling steps, and through the door.

65

“Steady it a minute, now,” pa says, letting go. He turns back to shut and lock the door, but Jewel will not wait.

70

“Come on,” he says in that suffocating voice. “Come on.”

We lower it carefully down the steps. We move, balancing it as though it were something infinitely precious, our faces averted, breathing through our teeth to keep our nostrils

75

ra a que le tire una coza para poder colarse por detrás y subir al pesebre y espera, mirando por encima de los demás pesebres hacia el sendero desierto, antes de subir al pajar.

—Maldito sea. Maldito sea.

CASH

—NO se mantendrá el equilibrio. Si queréis **cargarlo** y mantener el equilibrio, tendremos que...

—Agarra. Maldita sea, agarra.

—Os digo que no lo podréis cargar y mantener el equilibrio si no...

—¡Agarra! ¡Agarra, maldito condenado, agarra!

No se mantendrá en equilibrio. Si quieren cargarla y mantener el equilibrio tendrán que

DARL

SE inclina entre nosotros encima de la caja, dos de las ocho manos. La sangre le sube a la cara en oleadas. En los intervalos su carne tiene aspecto verdoso, como ese verde, pálido y uniforme del bocado que **rumia una vaca**; su cara sofocada, furiosa, con el labio levantado sobre dientes.

—¡Agarra! —dice—. ¡Agarra, maldito condenado!

Tira hacia arriba, alzando uno de los lados tan repentinamente que todos los demás saltamos para levantarla y equilibrarla antes de que la vuelque del todo. Durante un instante la caja se resiste, como si tuviera **voluntad**, como si dentro de ella su cuerpo delgado como un palo mantuviera con furia, incluso muerta, una especie de pudor; como si tratara de ocultar un vestido sucio que no había podido evitar que le manchara el cuerpo. Luego se alza libre, subiendo repentinamente como si la **extenuación** de su cuerpo hubiese añadido ligereza a las tablas o como si, al ver que estaban a punto de arrancarle el vestido, ella se precipitara repentinamente detrás de la caja en un vuelco apasionado que menospreciase su propio deseo y necesidad. La cara de Jewel se pone completamente verde y oigo el roce de su respiración en los dientes.

Sacamos la caja por el zaguán, pisando firme y torpemente el suelo, y arrastramos los pies al cruzar la puerta.

—Esperad un minuto —dice padre, soltando. Se vuelve para cerrar la puerta y echar la llave, pero Jewel no quiere esperar.

—Vámonos —dice con esa voz ahogada—. Vámonos.

La bajamos cuidadosamente por los escalones. Avanzamos, balanceándola como si se tratara de algo infinitamente precioso, apartando la cara, respirando por la boca para mantener la

Cash (2)

This very short section contains only Cash’s frustrated thoughts and words as the family try to load the coffin on the wagon in a way which makes it liable to overbalance. No one listens to him.

Darl (8)

This section consists of Darl’s observations of the same scene as the one which was dealt with in Cash (2). Darl’s observations are much more detailed than those of Cash.

COMMENTARY: As usual, Darl is much concerned with Jewel’s reactions and here, amongst his fanciful and unverbaised ideas that the coffin seems to be impelled by the modesty of Addie who is inside it, the reader is given a vision of Jewel acting with a violence which covers his very deep emotions, ‘the furious tide of Jewel’s despair’.

closed. We go down the path, toward the slope.

“We better wait,” Cash says. “I tell you it ain’t balanced now. We’ll need another hand on that hill.”

turn loose: (Am. English) let go

hobble 1 *intr.* a walk lamely; limp. b proceed haltingly in action or speech (*hobbled lamely to his conclusion*). 2 *tr.* a tie together the legs of (a horse etc.) to prevent it from straying. b tie (a horse’s etc. legs). 3 *tr.* cause (a person etc.) to limp.
1 an uneven or infirm gait. 2 a rope, clog, etc. used for hobbling a horse etc.
Renquear,

“Then **turn loose**,” Jewel says. He will not stop. Cash begins to fall behind, **hobbling** to keep up, breathing harshly; then he is distanced and Jewel carries the entire front end alone, so that, tilting as the path begins to slant, it begins to rush away from me and slip down the air like a sled upon invisible snow, smoothly evacuating atmosphere in which the sense of it is still shaped.

“Wait, Jewel,” I say. But he will not wait. He is almost running now and Cash is left behind. It seems to me that the end which I now carry alone has no weight, as though it coasts like a rushing straw upon the furious tide of Jewel’s despair. I am not even touching it when, turning, he lets it overshoot him, swinging, and stops it and **sloughs** it into the wagon-bed in the same motion and looks back at me, his face **suffused** with fury and despair.

sloughs: casts (it) off

suffuse 1 (of colour, moisture, etc.) spread from within to colour or moisten (a *blush suffused her cheeks*). 2 cover with colour etc. Impregnar, saturar, bañar, inundar, empañar
suffuse 1 (of colour, moisture, etc.) spread from within to colour or moisten (a *blush suffused her cheeks*). 2 cover with colour etc.
suffuse [*light*] **bañar** [*colour, flush*] **teñir** [*delight, relief*] **inundar** suffused with light
bañado de luz

“Goddamn you. Goddamn you.”

24

VARDAMAN (4)

40 WE are going to town. Dewey Dell says it won’t be sold because it belongs to Santa Claus and he has taken it back with him until next Christmas. Then it will be behind the 45 glass again, shining with waiting.

Pa and Cash are coming down the hill, but Jewel is going to the barn. “Jewel,” pa says. Jewel does not stop. 50 “Where you going?” pa says. But Jewel does not stop. “You leave that horse here,” pa says. Jewel stops and looks at pa. Jewel’s eyes look like marbles. “You leave that horse here,” 55 pa says. “We’ll all go in the wagon with ma, like she wanted.”

But my mother is a fish. Vernon seen it. He was there.

60 “Jewel’s mother is a horse,” Darl said.

“Then mine can be a fish, can’t it, 65 Darl?” I said.

Jewel is my brother.

“Then mine will have to be a horse, 70 too,” I said.

“Why?” Darl said. “If pa is your pa, why does your ma have to be a horse just because Jewel’s is?”

75 “Why does it?” I said. “Why does it, Darl?”

nariz cerrada. Bajamos el sendero hacia la ladera.

—Será mejor que esperemos —dice Cash—. Te digo que así no se equilibra. Necesitaremos otra mano en ese cerro.

—Entonces **suéltala** —dice Jewel.

No se quiere parar. Cash empieza a X quedarse atrás; **se esfuerza** por seguirnos y respira con dificultad; luego se distancia y Jewel aguanta toda la parte delantera él solo, de modo que, inclinándose a medida que el sendero empieza a bajar, la caja empieza a escaparse y se desliza por el aire como un trineo sobre nieve invisible, retirándose suavemente de la atmósfera en la que todavía se nota la huella de su forma.

—Espera, Jewel —digo.

Pero él no quiere esperar, Casi ha echado a correr y Cash se queda detrás. Me parece que la parte que ahora aguantó yo solo no tiene peso, como si la caja navegara igual que una paja lanzada a la furiosa marea de la desesperación de Jewel. Ni siquiera la toco cuando, doblándose, deja que pase por encima de él, oscilando, y la para y la **deja caer** dentro de la carreta con el mismo movimiento, y se vuelve a mirarme con la cara **arrebata** de furia y desesperación.

—Maldito seas. Maldito seas.

VARDAMAN

VAMOS a la ciudad. Dewey Dell dice que no lo quieren vender porque pertenece a Santa Claus que se lo ha quedado hasta las Navidades que vienen. Entonces volverá a estar detrás del cristal, brillando y esperando.

Padre y Cash van cerro abajo, pero Jewel se dirige al granero.

Jewel —dice padre. _____ Pero Jewel no se para—. Deja ese caballo aquí —dice padre. Jewel se para y mira a padre. Los ojos de Jewel parecen canicas—. Deja ese caballo aquí —dice padre—. Iremos todos en la carreta con madre, como ella quería.

Pero mi madre es un pez. Vernon lo vio. Estaba allí.

—La madre de Jewel es un caballo —dijo Darl.

—Entonces la mía puede ser un pez, ¿verdad Darl? —dije yo.

Jewel es hermano mío.

—Entonces la mía también tiene que ser un caballo —dije yo.

—¿Por qué? —dijo Darl—. Si padre es tu padre, ¿por qué tu madre va a tener que ser un caballo sólo porque lo sea la de Jewel?

—¿Por qué lo es? —dije yo—. ¿Por qué lo es, Darl?

Vardaman (4)

This section consists of Vardaman’s unspoken thoughts and his spoken words as the family prepare to leave for town.

COMMENTARY: Darl’s remark that ‘Jewel’s mother is a horse’ leads Vardaman to question Darl. ‘Then mine will have to be a horse, too’, reasoning that he and Jewel must have the same mother because they are brothers. Exploring the matter further, Vardaman elicits from Darl the remark that he, Darl, does not have a mother. Although Vardaman appears to agree to this and to the proposition that Darl himself does not exist, he contradicts this with ‘But you are,’ and gets the response, ‘I know it.’ Darl said. ‘That’s why I am not is. Are is too many for one woman to foal.’ Although neither brother can fully understand what the other is saying, the reader, who has been ‘inside’ both their minds, can appreciate the roots of Vardaman’s confusion between his mother and a fish and sees here that Darl suffers from the being excluded from his mother’s affections. In this section, he attributes this withholding of affection to the fact that Addie had too many children to love. The role played by Addie in

- Darl is my brother. Darl es hermano mío.
- “Then what is your ma, Darl?” I said. —Entonces, ¿qué es tu madre, Darl? —dije yo.
- 5 “I haven’t got ere one,” Darl said. —No tengo ninguna —dijo Darl—. “Because if I had one, it is *was*. And Porque si la he tenido, *fue*. Y si if it is *was*, it can’t be *is*. Can it?” *fue*, no puede ser *es*. ¿O puede?
- 10 “No,” I said. —No —dije yo.
- “Then I am not,” Darl said. —Entonces yo no soy es —dijo “Am I?” Darl—, ¿verdad?
- 15 “No,” I said. —No —dije yo.
- I am. Darl is my brother. Yo sí soy. Darl es hermano mío.
- “But you *are*, Darl,” I said. —Pero nosotros *somos*, Darl —dije yo.
- 20 “I know it,” Darl said. “That’s why —Ya lo sé —dijo Darl—. Por eso no I am not *is*. *Are* is too many for one soy *es*. *Somos* es demasiados para woman to foal.” parirlos una sola mujer.
- 25 Cash is carrying his tool-box. Pa looks at him. Cash lleva su caja de herra- “I’ll stop at Tull’s on the way mientas. Padre le mira. back,” Cash says. “Get on that —Cuando volvamos me detendré en barn roof.” casa de Tull —dice Cash—. Me ocuparé del techo de ese granero.
- 30 “It ain’t respectful,” pa says. “It’s —Eso no es nada respetuoso —dice a deliberate flouting of her and of padre—. Es un insulto deliberado a ella me.” y a mí.
- 35 “Do you want him to come all —¿Quieres que vuelva hasta aquí y the way back here and carry them que luego lleve a pie las herramientas up to Tull’s afoot?” Darl says. hasta casa de Tull? —dice Darl. Pa looks at Darl, his mouth chewing. Padre mira a Darl, mascando tabaco. Pa shaves every day now because Ahora padre se afeita todos los días por- 40 my mother is a fish. que mi madre es un pez.
- “It ain’t right,” pa says. —Eso no está bien —dice padre.
- Dewey Dell has the package in her Dewey Dell tiene el envoltorio en la 45 hand. She has the basket with our mano. También tiene la cesta con nues- dinner too. tra comida.
- “What’s that?” pa says. —¿Qué es eso? —dice padre.
- 50 “Mrs. Tull’s cakes,” Dewey Dell —Los bollos de Mrs. Tull —dice says, getting into the wagon. “I’m Dewey Dell, subiendo a la carreta—. Se taking them to town for her.” los llevo a la ciudad.
- “It ain’t right,” pa says. “It’s a 55 flouting of the dead.” —Eso no está bien —dice padre—. Es insultar a la muerta.
- It’ll be there. It’ll be there come Estará allí. Estará allí hasta que lle- Christmas, she says, shining on the gue Navidad, dice ella, brillando en la track. She says he won’t sell it to no vía. Dice que no se lo venderán a ningún 60 town boys. chico de la ciudad.

25
DARL (9)

DARL

- 65 HE goes on toward the barn, VA hacia el granero, entra con la entering the lot, **wooden-backed**. **espalda envarada**.
- Dewey Dell carries the basket on Dewey Dell lleva la cesta en un bra- one arm, in the other hand something zo, en la otra mano algo cuadrado en- 70 wrapped square in a newspaper. Her vuelto en papel de periódico. Tiene la face is calm and sullen, her eyes cara tranquila y sombría, los ojos pen- brooding and alert; within them I can sativos y al acecho; dentro de ellos veo see Peabody’s back like two round la espalda de Peabody como dos gui- santes redondos en dos dedos: pue- 75 Peabody’s back two of those worms de que en la espalda de Peabody haya dos de esos gusanos que, subrepticia y constantemente, se abren camino through you and out the other side and dentro de uno y salen por el otro lado you waking suddenly from sleep or

Darl (9)

In this section, we find Darl’s unspoken and unverbalsed thoughts as he observes the same scene as in *Vardaman* (4).

COMMENTARY: Darl is, as usual, concerned with Jewel’s actions, but in this section he focuses on Dewey Dell. His unverbalsed thoughts as Dewey Dell climbs into the wagon stress

from waking, with on your face an expression sudden, intent, and concerned. She sets the basket into the wagon and climbs in, her leg
5 coming long from beneath her tightening dress: that lever which moves the world; one of that caliper which measures the length and breadth of life. She sits on the seat
10 beside Vardaman and sets the parcel on her lap.

Then he enters the barn. He has not looked back.

15 "It ain't right," pa says. "It's little enough for him to do for her."

"Go on," Cash says. "Leave him
20 stay if he wants. He'll be all right here. Maybe he'll go up to Tull's and stay."

"He'll catch us," I say. "He'll cut
25 across and meet us at Tull's lane."

"He would have rid that horse, too," pa says, "if I hadn't a stopped him. A durn spotted critter wilder than a cattymount. A deliberate
30 flouting of her and of me."

The wagon moves; the mules' ears begin to bob. Behind us, above the house, motionless in tall and soaring
35 circles, they diminish and disappear.

26

ANSE (2)

40 I TOLD him not to bring that horse out of respect for his dead ma, because it wouldn't look right, him prancing along on a durn circus animal and her wanting us all to be in
45 the wagon with her that sprung from her flesh and blood, but we hadn't no more than passed Tull's lane when Darl begun to laugh. Setting back there on the plank seat with Cash,
50 with his dead ma lying in her coffin at his feet, laughing. How many times I told him it's doing such things as that that makes folks talk about him, I don't know. I says I got some regard
55 for what folks says about my flesh and blood even if you haven't, even if I have raised such a durn **passel** of boys, and when you **fixes it so** folks can say such about you, it's a
60 reflection on your ma, I says, not me: I am a man and I can stand it; it's on your womenfolks, your ma and sister that you should care for, and I turned and looked back at him setting there,
65 laughing.

"I don't expect you to have no respect for me," I says. "But with your own ma not cold in her coffin yet."

70 "Yonder," Cash says, jerking his head toward the lane. The horse is still a right smart piece away, coming up at a good pace, but
75 I don't have to be told who it is. I just looked back at Darl, setting there laughing.

y tú te despiertas de pronto del sueño o la vigilia con una expresión repentina, resuelta e inquieta, en la cara. Coloca la cesta en la carreta y salta dentro: la pierna le aparece por debajo del vestido ajustado como una palanca que mueve el mundo; uno de esos compases que miden la vida a lo largo y a lo ancho. Ocupa el asiento de al lado de Vardaman y se coloca el paquete en el regazo.

Luego él entra en el granero. No se ha vuelto a mirar.

—Eso no está bien —dice padre—. No le hubiera costado demasiado hacerlo por ella.

—Venga —dice Cash—. Déjale quedarse si quiere. Estará bien aquí. Puede que vaya a casa de Tull y se quede allí.

—Nos alcanzará —digo yo—. Cogerá el atajo y se nos unirá en la senda de Tull.

—Se hubiera venido montado en ese caballo —dice padre—, si no se lo hubiese impedido. Un maldito **pinto**, más salvaje que un gato montés. Un insulto deliberado contra ella y contra mí.

La carreta arranca; las orejas de las mulas empiezan a moverse. Detrás de nosotros, por encima de la casa, inmóviles en grandes círculos que se elevan, disminuyen y desaparecen.

ANSE

LE dije que no trajera ese caballo por respeto a su difunta madre, pues no parecería nada bien que anduviera haciendo corvetas por ahí montado en ese maldito animal de circo cuando ella quería que todos estuviéramos en la carreta con ella, que los trajó al mundo; pero no habíamos hecho más que llegar a la senda de Tull cuando Darl empezó a reírse. Ahí está, sentado en el banco al lado de Cash, con su difunta madre tumbada en el ataúd a sus pies, riéndose. Ya ni sé cuántas veces le he dicho que esas cosas son las que hacen que la gente hable de él. Digo: Me importa lo que dice la gente de los que llevan mi sangre aunque eso a ti no te importe, aunque sea yo el que haya criado a ese condenado **grupo** de chicos, y cuando **haces cosas** por las que la gente habla de ti, eso recae en tu madre, digo, no en mí: yo soy un hombre y lo puedo soportar; es en las mujeres de la casa, en tu madre y tu hermana, en quien deberías pensar; y me vuelco a mirarle y ahí está, riéndose.

—No espero que me tengas respeto —digo—. Pero con tu madre, que todavía no está fría, en el ataúd...

—Allá abajo —dice Cash, señalando con la cabeza hacia la senda.

El caballo todavía es una cosa que se mueve a lo lejos y sube a buen paso, pero nadie me tiene que decir quién es. Sólo vuelvo a mirar a Darl, sentado ahí, riéndose.

her sexuality, 'her leg . . . that lever which moves the world; one of that caliper which measures the length and breadth of life'. Obviously Darl, who is much concerned with the nature of existence, is fascinated by the source of life which, now that Addie is dead, lies at the juncture of Dewey Dell's legs. He attributes to women a role which is absolutely central in dictating the dimensions of existence, and this once again indicates that he believes his problems stem from his mother, the source of his life who denied him the affection he needed in order to take on a solid shape.

Anse (2)

This section contains Anse's spoken words and unspoken thoughts as the wagon sets off up the lane from the farm.

COMMENTARY: Anse's responses are, as usual, muted. Although he is concerned that the family will present an odd or offensive spectacle to the rest of the community, he does nothing to prevent this happening.

It appears that Darl is prone to fits of uncontrolled and inexplicable laughter, for Anse says, 'how many times I told him it's doing such things as that makes folks talk about him', but as ever, Anse can exercise no authority over his family and contents himself with selfcongratulation for his own efforts, 'I done my best'.

passel: (Am. col.) a crowd, a parcel

fixes it so: (Am. col.) arranges it so that

“I done my best,” I says. “I tried to do as she would wish it. The Lord will pardon me and excuse the conduct of them He sent me.” And Darl setting on the plank seat right above her where she was laying, laughing.

—Hice lo que pude —digo yo—. Traté de hacer lo que a ella le hubiera gustado. El Señor me perdonará y disculpará la conducta de los que Él me dio.

Y Darl, sentado en el banco, justo encima de donde ella está tumbada, ríe.

27

10 DARL (10)

DARL

HE comes up the lane fast, yet we are three hundred yards beyond the mouth of it when he turns into the road, the mud flying beneath the flickering drive of the hooves. Then he slows a little, light and erect in the saddle, the horse mincing through the mud.

SUBE deprisa por el sendero pero nosotros estamos a más de trescientos metros del comienzo de la carretera cuando él la enfila, con el barro revoloteando bajo los **enérgicos** golpes de los cascos. Luego afloja el paso, ágil y erguido en la silla, mientras el caballo **chapotea** en el barro.

Tull is in his lot. He looks at us, lifts his hand. We go on, the wagon creaking, the mud whispering on the wheels. Vernon still stands there. He watches Jewel as he passes, the horse moving with a light, high-kneed driving gait, three hundred yards back. We go on, with a motion so soporific, so dreamlike as to be uninferant of progress, as though time and not space were decreasing between us and it.

Tull está en el corral. Nos mira, levanta la mano. Seguimos, la carreta rechina, el barro susurra en las ruedas. Vernon sigue allí de pie. Mira a Jewel cuando éste pasa, y al caballo que camina con trote ligero, unos trescientos metros detrás de nosotros. Seguimos con un movimiento tan soporífero, tan como en un sueño que no parece marcar nuestro progreso, como si el tiempo y no el espacio disminuyera entre nosotros y él.

It turns off at right angles, the wheel-marks of last Sunday healed away now: a smooth, red scoriation curving away into the pines; a white signboard with faded lettering: New Hope Church. 3 mi. It wheels up like a motionless hand lifted above the profound desolation of the ocean; beyond it the red road lies like a spoke of which Addie Bundren is the rim. It wheels past, empty, unscarred, the white signboard turns away its fading and tranquil assertion. Cash looks up the road quietly, his head turning as we pass it like an owl's head, his face composed. Pa looks straight ahead, humped. Dewey Dell looks at the road too, then she looks back at me, her eyes watchful and repudiant, not like that question which was in those of Cash, for a **smouldering** while. The signboard passes; the unscarred road wheels on. Then Dewey Dell turns her head. The wagon creaks on.

La carreta toma las curvas en ángulo recto; las marcas de las ruedas del domingo pasado ya se han borrado: son una lisa escoriación roja que se pierde haciendo curvas entre los pinos; un cartel blanco con letras descoloridas: Iglesia de New Hope, 4 kilómetros. Señala como una mano inmóvil alzada sobre la profunda desolación del océano; más allá, el rojo camino se extiende como un radio cuya llanta fuera Addie Bundren. Vacío, sin huellas, pasa de largo, el blanco cartel queda atrás con su descolorida y tranquila afirmación. Cash mira el camino tranquilamente y vuelve la cabeza cuando lo rebasamos como si fuera la de una lechuza, con el rostro sereno. Padre mira al frente, encorvado. Dewey Dell también mira el camino, luego vuelve a mirarme con ojos escrutadores y de rechazo, sin aquella interrogación que había en los de Cash, durante un **intenso** momento. El cartel queda atrás; el camino sin huellas sigue uniforme. Luego Dewey Dell vuelve la cabeza. La carreta sigue rechinando.

Cash spits over the wheel. “In a couple of days now it’ll be smelling,” he says.

Cash escupe por encima de la rueda. —Dentro de un par de días empezará a oler —dice.

“You might tell Jewel that,” I say.

—Deberías decírselo a Jewel —digo yo.

He is motionless now, sitting the horse at the junction, upright, watching us, no less still than the signboard that lifts its fading capitulation opposite him.

Ahora está inmóvil, montado en el caballo, en el cruce, tieso, mirándonos, no menos quieto que el cartel que levanta sus descoloridas letras frente a él.

“It ain’t balanced right for no long ride,” Cash says.

—No está bien equilibrada para un viaje largo —dice Cash.

“Tell him that, too,” I say. The wagon creaks on.

—Dile eso también —digo yo. La carreta sigue rechinando.

A mile farther along he passes us,

Un par de kilómetros después nos ade-

flicker 1 brillar con luz mortecina, quiver, waver. **Vacilar, oscilar, titilar, centellear, flamear.** 1 (of light) shine unsteadily or fitfully. 2 (of a flame) burn unsteadily, alternately flaring and dying down. 3 **a** (of a flag, a reptile's tongue, an eyelid, etc.) move or wave to and fro; quiver; vibrate. **b** (of the wind) blow lightly and unsteadily. 4 (of hope etc.) increase and decrease unsteadily and intermittently.

hacer remilgos o gestos afectados en exceso

Darl (10)

As the wagon moves away from the farm, Darl reflects at an unspoken and an unverballed level on the events happening around him. He sees Jewel mounted on his horse, Tull waving as they pass, the sign board to New Hope, Dewey Dell gazing straight ahead of her and, once again, Jewel racing past, **spattering** [salpicando] the coffin with mud.

COMMENTARY: We know from *Anse* (2), that during the events recorded above Darl is laughing. Yet he himself makes no mention of the fact, nor does he show any sign of amusement in his unspoken and unverballed thoughts. This would appear to indicate that he is unaware of his own laughter, just as at the end of the novel one part of him feels quite separate from the Darl who is laughing hysterically.

For Darl, time itself takes on an odd quality during this journey, ‘we go on, . . . as though time and not space were decreasing between us and it (the road)’. As the road is the major element in his current environment, it is on the road that he focuses most of his attention, noting its smoothness after the rain, and seeing it as ‘a spoke of which Addie Bundren is the rim’, an image which suggests that Addie contains and controls the road. Eventually, Darl begins to talk as if it is the road and not the wagon which is moving, ‘it wheels past . . . the unscarred road wheels on’. This is not a symptom of his deranged senses but simply an accurate record of what apparently happens when a road is seen from a moving vehicle.

smouldering incandescente, latente, en ascuas, abrasadora, encandecido.

smoulder 1 burn slowly with smoke but without a flame; slowly burn internally or invisibly; burn withing. 2 (of emotions etc.) exist in a suppressed or concealed state. 3 (of a person) show silent or suppressed anger, hatred, etc.

the horse, arch-necked, reined back to a swift single-foot. He sits lightly, poised, upright, wooden-faced in the saddle, the broken hat raked at a
5 swaggering angle. He passes us swiftly, without looking at us, the horse driving, its hooves hissing in the mud. A gout of mud, back-flung, plops on to the box. Cash leans
10 forward and takes a tool from his box and removes it carefully. When the road crosses Whiteleaf, the willows leaning near enough, he breaks off a branch and scours at the stain with
15 the wet leaves.

28
ANSE (3)

20 IT'S a hard country on man; it's hard. Eight miles of the sweat of his body washed up outen the Lord's earth, where the Lord Himself told him to put it. Nowhere in this sinful
25 world can a honest, hard-working man profit. It takes them that runs the stores in the towns, doing no sweating, living off of them that sweats. It ain't the hard-working man,
30 the farmer. Sometimes I wonder why we keep at it. It's because there is a reward for us above, where they can't take their motors and such. Every man will be equal there and it will be taken
35 from them that have and give to them that have not by the Lord.

But it's a long wait, seems like. It's bad that a fellow must earn the reward
40 of his right-doing by flouting hisself and his dead. We drove all the rest of the day and got to Samson's at dust-dark and then that bridge was gone, too. They hadn't never seen the
45 river so high, and it's not done raining yet. There was old men that hadn't never seen nor heard of it being so in the memory of man. I am the chosen of the Lord, for who He loveth, so
50 doeth He chastiseth. But I be durn if He don't take some curious ways to show it, seems like.

But now I can get them teeth. That
55 will be a comfort. It will.

29
SAMSON (1)

60 IT was just before sundown. We were sitting on the porch when the wagon came up the road with the five of them in it and the other one on the horse behind. One of them raised his
65 hand, but they was going on past the store without stopping.

"Who's that?" MacCallum says: I can't think of his name: Rafe's twin;
70 that one it was.

"It's Bundren, from down beyond New Hope," Quick says. "There's one of them Snopes horses Jewel's riding."

75 "I didn't know there was ere a one of them horses left," MacCallum says. "I thought you folks down there

lanta; el caballo, con el cuello en arco, va frenado para que mantenga un paso ligero. Jewel va sentado en la silla, ágil, derecho, tieso, con cara de palo, y el sombrero roto inclinado en un ángulo desafiante. Nos adelanta rápido, sin mirarnos, el caballo tirando, sus cascos silbando en el barro. Una salpicadura de barro sale despedida y cae a plomo sobre la caja. Cash se echa hacia delante y saca una herramienta de su caja y quita el barro cuidadosamente. Cuando el camino cruza Whiteleaf, los sauces lo bastante cerca, arranca una rama y limpia la mancha con las hojas húmedas.

ANSE

Es una comarca dura para el hombre, es dura. Trece kilómetros del sudor de su cuerpo barrido de la tierra del Señor, donde el propio Señor le dijo que lo dejase caer**9. Un hombre honrado y trabajador no puede sacar nada de provecho en este mundo pecador. Lo sacan esos que tienen las tiendas de la ciudad, que no sudan, que viven de los que sudan. No el que trabaja de firme, el campesino. A veces me pregunto por qué seguimos en ello. Es porque para nosotros hay una recompensa en lo alto, donde ellos no pueden llevar sus autos y lo demás. Allí todos los hombres serán iguales y el Señor les quitará a los que tienen y se lo dará a los que no tienen**10. [122]

Pero es una larga espera, o eso parece. No está bien que uno tenga que ganarse la recompensa de su bien obrar despreciándose a sí mismo y a sus muertos. Viajamos lo que quedaba de día y llegamos a casa de Samson al oscurecer y entonces ese puente también se lo habían llevado las aguas. Nunca habían visto el río tan crecido y eso que todavía no ha dejado de llover. Los más viejos del lugar nunca han visto ni oído hablar, en lo que recuerdan, de algo semejante. Soy un elegido del Señor, pues Este corrige a aquel a quien ama**11.

X _____

Pero ahora tendré los dientes. Será un gran alivio. Lo será.

SAMSON

Fue justo antes de ponerse el sol. Estábamos sentados en el porche cuando la carreta llegó aquí arriba con cinco dentro y el otro a caballo detrás. Uno de ellos alzó la mano, pero dejaron atrás la tienda sin detenerse.

—¿Quién es ése? —dice MacCallum. No me acuerdo de su nombre: es el gemelo de Rafe; eso seguro**12—.

—Es Bundren, el de más allá de New Hope —dijo Quick—. El caballo que monta Jewel es uno de los de Snopes.

—No sabía que todavía quedarán caballos de esos —dice MacCallum—. Creía que los de allá abajo por fin

Anse (3)

This section is an unspoken lament by Anse in which he blames the world for his misfortunes, thinks of the salvation which awaits him in heaven for **enduring** his troubles and of the set of false teeth which will offer him more immediate comfort.

enduring duradero, definitivo, perdurable, subsistente, imperecedero, lasting, resistente
endure v. 1 tr. undergo (a difficulty, hardship, etc.); Aguantar 2 tr. a tolerate, soportar (a person) (*cannot endure him*). b (esp. with neg., foll. by to + infin.) bear. 3 intr. remain in existence; last, perdurar 4 tr. submit to.

COMMENTARY: Anse is clearly convinced that he is hard-working. He is tempted to **upbraid** [reproach] God for his hard lot, but decides instead that all his suffering must mean that he is precious to God, 'I am the chosen of the Lord, for who He loveth, so doeth He chastiseth'. These archaic expressions show how the language of religion and the ideas it propounds serve to reconcile the impoverished and unthinking Anse to his lot in life. They form a species of comforting litany, so that even the fact that the bridge he hoped to cross has been washed away can be accepted as significant.

Samson (1)

This long section allows the reader to see the Bundren family through the eyes of Samson, with whom they spend the first night of their journey.

COMMENTARY: Samson's membership of a different group from that of the Bundrens is stressed at the outset of this section, when we see him sitting amongst a group of men whom he knows well. All of them are watching with curiosity the approach of the Bundren wagon. The similarities between the two

finally contrived to give them all away."

"Try and get that one," Quick says.
5 The wagon went on.

"I bet old man Lon never gave it to him," I says.

10 "No," Quick says. "He bought it from pappy." The wagon went on. "They must not a heard about the bridge," he says.

15 "What're they doing up here, anyway?" MacCallum says.

"Taking a holiday since he got his wife buried, I reckon,"
20 Quick says. "Heading for town, I reckon, with Tull's bridge gone too. I wonder if they ain't heard about the bridge."

25 "They'll have to fly, then," I says. "I don't reckon there's ere a bridge between here and Mouth of Ishatawa."

30 They had something in the wagon. But Quick had been to the funeral three days ago and we naturally never thought anything about it except that they were heading away
35 from home mighty late and that they hadn't heard about the bridge. "You better holler at them," MacCallum says. Dum it, the name is right on the tip of my tongue. So Quick
40 **hollered** and they stopped and he went to the wagon and told them.

He come back with them. "They're going to Jefferson," he says. "The
45 bridge at Tull's is gone, too." Like we didn't know it, and his face looked funny, around the nostrils, but they just sat there, Bundren and the girl and the chap on the seat, and Cash
50 and the second one, the one folks talks about, on a plank across the tail-gate, and the other one on that spotted horse. But I reckon they was used to it by then because when I said to Cash
55 that they'd have to pass by New Hope again and what they'd better do, he just says,

"I reckon we can get there."
60

I ain't much for **meddling**. Let every man run his own business to suit himself, I say. But after I talked to Rachel about them not having a
65 **regular man to fix her** and it being July and all, I went back down to the barn and tried to talle to Bundren about it.

"I givc her my promise," he says.
70 "Her mind was set on it."

I notice how it takes a lazy man, a man that hates moving, to get set on moving once he does get started off,
75 the same as he was set on staying still, like it ain't the moving he hates so much as the starting and the stopping. And like he would be kind

habíais decidido desprenderos de ellos.

—Trata de hacerte con ése —dice Quick. La carreta seguía.

—Para mí que no se lo ha dado el viejo Lon —digo. [123]

—No —dice Quick—. Se lo compró a mi padre —la carreta seguía—. No deben de saber lo del puente —dice.

—De todos modos, ¿qué hacen por aquí? —dice MacCallum.

—Para mí que tomándose un descanso después de enterrar a su mujer —dice Quick—. Para mí que van al pueblo, y el puente de Tull también se lo llevó la riada. Me extraña que no hayan oído lo del puente.

—Entonces tendrán que cruzar volando —digo yo—. Para mí que no hay otro puente entre aquí y Mouth of Ishatawa.

Llevaban algo en la carreta. Pero Quick había estado en el funeral hacía tres días y naturalmente no pensábamos en nada más que en que habían salido tarde de casa y no se habían enterado de lo del puente.

—Será mejor darles una voz —dice MacCallum. Maldita sea, tengo el nombre en la punta de la lengua. De modo que Quick los **llamó** y ellos se pararon y luego él fue hasta la carreta y se lo contó.

Volvió con ellos.

—Van a Jefferson —dice—. El puente de Tull también se lo llevó la riada.

Como si nosotros no lo supiéramos. En su cara, junto a las ventanas de la nariz, había algo raro, pero ahí seguían sentados, Bundren y la chica y el pequeño en el banco, y Cash y el segundo, ése del que habla la gente, en una tabla de la parte de atrás, y el otro montando ese caballo pinto. Para mí que ya lo sabían, porque cuando le dije a Cash que tendrían que volver a New Hope para cruzar y que era lo mejor que podían hacer, sólo dice:

—Para mí que podremos llegar.

No me gusta andar **entrometiéndose**. Que cada uno se ocupe de sus cosas digo yo siempre. Pero después de haber hablado con Rachel de que no habían tenido **a nadie que se la preparase**, y encima estamos en julio, volví a bajar al granero y traté de hablar con Bundren de eso.

—Se lo prometí —dice él—. Sólo pensaba en eso.

Me doy cuenta de que hace falta un hombre perezoso, un hombre que odie moverse, para seguir adelante una vez que se pone en marcha; y la misma persona que siempre quiere estarse quieta, parece que odia más ponerse en marcha y pararse que seguir en movimiento. Y es como si se sintiera

groups, the Bundrens on their wagon and the men on the steps of the country store, are used to underline the fact that the country has an identity which is stamped on its inhabitants. Both groups share a curiosity about events in their little world and both are slow to act.

From Samson's point of view, the Bundrens present a blackly comic spectacle, spending the night squatting round Addie's coffin in the barn, attracting a crowd of buzzards with the smell of death which they carry with them, led by the lazy yet determined Anse and embarked on a ludicrous enterprise.

holler: (Am. col.) shout

a regular man to fix her: a professional undertaker to prepare Addie's corpse

of proud of whatever come up to make the moving or the setting still look hard. He **set** there on the wagon, hunched up, blinking,
5 listening to us tell about how quick the bridge went and how high the water was, and I be durn if he didn't act like he was proud of it, like he had made the river rise himself.

10 "You say it's higher than you ever see it before?" he says. "God's will be done," he says. "I reckon it won't go down much by morning, neither," he says.

15 "You better stay here to-night," I says, "and get a early start for New Hope to-morrow morning." I was just sorry for them **bone-gaunted** mules. I told Rachel, I says, "Well, would you have had me turn them away at dark, eight miles from home? What else could I do," I says. "It won't be but one night, and they'll keep it in the barn, and they'll sholy get started by daylight." and so I says, "You stay here to-night and early to-morrow you can go back to New Hope. I got
30 tools enough, and the boys can go on right after supper and have it dug and ready if they want," and then I found that girl watching me. If her eyes had a been pistols, I wouldn't
35 be talking now. **I be dog** if they didn't blaze at me. And so when I went down to the barn I come on them, her talking so she never noticed when I come up.

40 "You promised her," she says. "She wouldn't go until you promised. She thought she could depend on you. If you don't do it, it will be a curse
45 on you."

"Can't no man say I don't aim to keep my word," Bundren says. "My heart is open to ere a man."

50 "I don't care what your heart is," she says. She was whispering, kind of, talking fast. "You promised her. You've got to. You——" Then she
55 leen me and quit, standing there. If they'd been pistols, I wouldn't be talking now. So when I talked to him about it, he says,

60 "I give her my promise. Her mind is set on it."

65 "But seems to me she'd rather have her ma buried close by, so she could——"

"It's Addie I give the promise to," he says. "Her mind is set on it."

70 So I told them to drive it into the barn because it was threatening rain again, and that supper was about ready. Only they didn't want to come in.

75 "I thank you," Bundren says. "We wouldn't discommode you. We got a little something in the basket. **We can make out.**"

orgullosa o algo así de que parezca difícil ponerse en marcha o estarse quieto. Ahí está en la carreta, jorobado, pestañeando, oyéndonos contarle lo deprisa que se hundió el puente y lo grande que era la riada, y que me condene si no se comporta como si estuviera orgullosa de eso, como si él mismo hubiera hecho crecer el río.

—Dice que antes nunca había visto una tan grande? —dice—. Que sea lo que Dios quiera —dice—. Para mí que tampoco disminuirá mucho por la mañana.

—Sería mejor que se quedasen aquí esta noche —digo yo—, y salieran a primera hora de la mañana para New Hope —sólo lo sentía por las **esqueléticas** mulas. Se lo conté a Rachel, le digo—: Bueno, ¿te habría parecido bien que les hubiera hecho volver de noche y estando a diez kilómetros de su casa? ¿Qué otra cosa podían hacer? —digo—. Sólo va a ser una noche y la meterán en el granero, y se pondrán en marcha en cuanto amanezca. —Total, que les digo—: Quéden-se aquí esta noche y mañana temprano podrán volver a New Hope. Tengo suficientes herramientas y los chicos pueden empezar después de la cena y cavar y terminar pronto —y entonces veo que la chica me está mirando. Si sus ojos hubieran sido pistolas, ahora no lo estaría contando. **Que me maten** si no me comparaba con la mirada. De modo que cuando bajé al granero y me acerqué a ellos, ella estaba hablando y no se fijó en que yo había entrado.

—Usted se lo prometió —le dice ella—. No quiso irse hasta que se lo prometió. Pensaba que podría confiar en usted. Si no lo hace, su maldición caerá sobre usted.

—No hay hombre capaz de decir que no mantengo mi palabra —dice Bundren—. Tengo el corazón abierto a cualquiera.

—No me importa cómo está su corazón —dice ella. Susurraba, o algo así, hablando muy deprisa—. Se lo prometió. Tiene que hacerlo. Usted... —luego me vio allí parado y se calló. Si sus ojos hubieran sido pistolas ahora no lo contaría. Conque cuando le hablé de eso, dice: [125]

—Se lo prometí. Estaba empeñada en ello.

—Pero a mí me parece que ella preferiría tener a su madre enterrada cerca, por tanto podríamos...

—Es a Addie a quien se lo prometí —dice él—. Estaba empeñada en ello.

Conque les dije que la metieran en el granero, porque otra vez amenazaba lluvia y la cena casi estaba lista. Lo que pasa es que no querían entrar en la casa.

—Se lo agradezco —dice Bundren—. Pero no queremos incomodarles. Tenemos algunas cosas en la cesta. **Nos las podemos arreglar.**

bone-gaunted: (neologism) thin to the point where the bones show through the skin

I be dog: (Am. col.) I swear that

“Well,” I says, “since you are so particular about your womenfolks, I am too. And when folks stops
5 with us at meal-time and won’t come to the table, my wife takes it as a insult.”

So the girl went on to the kitchen
10 to help Rachel. And then Jewel - come to me.

“Sho,” I says. “Help yourself
15 outen the loft. Feed him when you bait the mules.”

“I rather pay you for him,”
he says.

20 “What for?” I says. “I wouldn’t begrudge no man a **bait** for his horse.”

“I rather pay you,” he says; I
thought he said extra.

25 “Extra for what?” I says. “Won’t he eat hay and corn?”

“Extra feed,” he says. “I feed him
30 a little extra and I don’t want him **beholden** to no man.”

“You can’t buy no feed from me,
boy,” I says. “And if he can eat that
35 loft clean, I’ll help you load the barn on to the wagon in the morning.”

“He ain’t never been beholden to
no man,” he says. “I rather pay you
40 for it.”

And if I had my rathers, you
wouldn’t be here a-tall, I
wanted to say. But I just says,
45 “Then it’s high time he commenced. You can’t buy no feed from me.”

When Rachel put supper on, her
and the girl went and fixed some beds.
50 But wouldn’t any of them come in. “She’s been dead long enough to get over that sort of foolishness,” I says. Because I got just as much respect for the dead as ere a man, but you’ve got
55 to respect the dead themselves, and a woman that’s been dead in a box four days, the best way to respect her is to get her into the ground as quick as you can. But they wouldn’t do it.

60 “It wouldn’t be right,” Bundren says. “Course, if the boys wants to go to bed, I reckon I can set up with her. I don’t begrudge her it.”

65 So when I went back down there they were squatting on the ground around the wagon, all of them. “Let that chap come to the house and get some sleep, anyway,” I says. “And you better come too,” I says to the girl. I wasn’t aiming to interfere with them. And I **sholy** hadn’t done
nothing to her that I knowed.

75 “He’s **done already** asleep,” Bundren says. They had done put him to bed in the trough in a empty stall.

—Muy bien —digo yo—, si ustedes son tan especiales con las mujeres de su casa, yo también lo soy con la mía. Y cuando alguien llega a la hora de comer y no quiere sentarse a nuestra mesa, mi mujer lo considera un insulto.

De modo que la chica fue a la cocina a ayudar a Rachel. Y luego Jewel se me acerca.

—De acuerdo —digo yo—. Cógelo tú mismo del pajar. Dale de comer cuando les hayas dado el pienso a las mulas.

—Prefiero pagarle lo del caballo —dice él.

—¿Y por qué? —digo yo—. A nadie le escatimo el **pienso** de un caballo.

—Prefiero pagarle —dice él; pensé que hablaba de algo especial.

—¿Por algo especial? —digo yo—. ¿Es que no come heno y maíz?

—Come mucho —dice él—. Le doy de comer mucho y no quiero que tenga que **agradecérselo** a nadie.

—Yo no te voy a vender comida, chico —digo yo—. Y si come tanto que puede vaciar el pajar, por la mañana te ayudaré a cargar el granero entero en la carreta.

—Nunca le ha tenido que agradecer nada a nadie —dice él—. Prefiero pagar.

Si yo siguiera mis preferencias, no estarías aquí ni un minuto, me apeteció decir. Pero sólo digo:

—Entonces llegó la hora de que empiece. No te voy a vender comida.

Cuando Rachel terminó de servir la cena, ella y la chica fueron a preparar unas camas. Pero ninguno de ellos quería entrar.

—Lleva muerta lo suficiente para dejarse de tonterías —digo. Porque los muertos me imponen respeto como al que más, pero también hay que ser respetuoso con los muertos, y a una mujer que lleva muerta cuatro días dentro de una caja, el mejor modo de respetarla es darle tierra lo más pronto posible. Pero ellos no querían.

—No estaría bien —dice Bundren—. Claro que si los chicos quieren acostarse, da igual, puedo quedarme yo solo con ella. No le regatearé eso.

Conque cuando volví abajo estaban en cuclillas en el suelo alrededor del carro, todos ellos.

—Por lo menos dejen que ese chico entre en casa y duerma un poco —digo yo—. Y tú, mejor entras también —le digo a la chica. No trataba de meterme en sus asuntos. Y que yo **supiera** nunca le había hecho nada a ella.

—**Ya se ha** dormido —dice Bundren. Le habían acostado en uno de los pesebres vacíos de la cuadra.

a bait: a bale of hay

sholy: (Am. col.) surely

- “Well, you come on, then,” I says to her. But still she never said nothing. They just squatted there. You couldn’t hardly see them. “How about you boys?” I. says. “You got a full day to-morrow.” After a while Cash says,
- Muy bien, entonces entra tú —le digo a la chica. Pero ella seguía sin decir nada. Se limitaban a estar allí en cuclillas. Casi ni se los podía ver—. ¿Y vosotros, chicos? —digo—. Mañana tendréis un día difícil —al cabo de un rato, Cash dice:
- “I thank you. We can make out.”
- Gracias. Nos las arreglaremos.
- “We wouldn’t be beholden,” Bundren says. “I thank you kindly.”
- No quisiéramos tener que agradecer nada —dice Bundren—. Se lo agradezco de verdad.
- So I left them squatting there. I reckon after four days they was used to it. But Rachel wasn’t.
- Conque los dejé allí en cuclillas. Para mí que después de cuatro días se habían acostumbrado. Pero Rachel se negó.
- “It’s a outrage,” she says. “A outrage.”
- Es un insulto —dice—. Un insulto.
- “What could he ‘a’ done?” I says. “He give her his promised word.”
- ¿Y qué podría hacer él? —digo yo—. Se lo ha prometido.
- “Who’s talking about him?” she says. “Who cares about him?” she says, crying. “I just wish that you and him and all the men in the world that torture us alive and flout us dead, dragging us up and down the country——”
- ¿Y quién habla de él? —dice ella—. ¿A quién le preocupa él? —dice ella, llorando—. Sólo quiero que tú y él y todos los hombres de este mundo que nos atormentáis vivas y nos insultáis muertas, arrastrándonos por el campo arriba y abajo...
- “Now, now,” I says. “You’re upset.”
- Oye, oye —le digo—. Te has enfadado. [127]
- “Don’t you touch me!” she says. “Don’t you touch me!”
- ¡No me toques! —dice ella—. ¡No me toques!
- A man can’t tell nothing about them. I lived with the same one fifteen years and I be durn if I can. And I imagined a lot of things coming up between us, but I be durn if I ever thought it would be a body four days dead and that a woman. But they make life hard on them not taking it as it comes up, like a man does.
- Un hombre nunca puede decir qué van a hacer. Llevo viviendo con la misma quince años y que me condene si lo sé. Y si imaginé un montón de cosas que nos pueden separar, que me condene si pensé alguna vez en que pudiera hacerlo un cuerpo que lleva cuatro días muerto, y encima el de una mujer. Pero se hacen difícil la vida al no tomarla como viene, que es lo que hacen los hombres.
- So I laid there, hearing it commence to rain, thinking about them down there, squatting around the wagon and the rain on the roof, and thinking about Rachel crying there until after a while it was like I could still hear her crying even after she was asleep, and smelling it even when I knowed I couldn’t. I couldn’t decide even then whether I could or not, or if it wasn’t just knowing it was what it was.
- Conque me tumbé allí, oyendo cómo empezaba a llover, pensando en los que estaban allá abajo, en cuclillas alrededor de la carreta. Y oía la lluvia en el tejado y pensaba en Rachel que lloró tanto rato que era como si la siguiese oyendo después de dormirse; y olía aquello aunque sabía que era imposible. Entonces ni siquiera hubiera podido decidir si era posible o no, o si sólo era que sabía lo que era.
- So next morning I never went down there. I heard them hitching up and then when I knowed they must be about ready to take out, I went out the front and went down the road toward the bridge until I heard the wagon come out of the lot and go back toward New Hope. And then when I come back to the house, Rachel jumped on me because I wasn’t there to make them come in to breakfast. You cant tell about them. Just about when you decide they mean one thing, I be durn if you not only haven’t got to change your mind, like as not you got to take a raw-hiding for thinking
- Conque a la mañana siguiente no bajé hasta allí. Les oí enganchar y después, cuando me di cuenta de que estaban preparados para irse, salí de la casa y seguí camino abajo hacia el puente hasta que oí salir del corral la carreta de vuelta a New Hope. Y luego, cuando volví a casa, Rachel se me echó encima porque no estaba en casa para hacerles entrar a desayunar. Con ellas nunca se sabe. Justo cuando decides que piensan una cosa, que me condene si no tienes que cambiar de idea, y aguantar que te despellejen vivo sólo por pensar que se referían a lo que tú

they meant it.

But it was still like I could smell it. And so I decided then that it wasn't
5 smelling it, but it was just knowing it was there, like you will get fooled now and then. But when I went to the barn I knew different. When I walked into the hallway I saw something. It
10 kind of hunkered up when I come in and I thought at first it was one of them got left, then I saw what it was. It was a buzzard. It looked around and saw me and went on down the hall,
15 spraddle-legged, with its wings kind of hunkered out, watching me first over one shoulder and then over the other, like a old bald-headed man. When it got outdoors it begun to fly.
20 It had to fly a long time before it ever got up into the air, with it thick and heavy and full of rain like it was.

If they was bent on going to
25 Jefferson, I reckon they could have gone around up by Mount Vernon, like MacCallum did. He'll get home about day after to-morrow, horse-back. Then they'd be just eighteen miles from
30 town. But maybe this bridge being gone too has learned him the Lord's sense and judgment.

That MacCallum. He's been
35 trading with me off and on for twelve years. I have known him from a boy up; know his name as well as I do my own. But be durn if I can say it.

40

30

DEWEY DELL (3)

THE signboard comes in sight. It is looking out at the road now,
45 because it can wait. New Hope. 3 mi. it will say. New Hope. 3 mi. New Hope. 3 mi. And then the road will begin, curving away into the trees, empty with waiting, saying New
50 Hope three miles.

I heard that my mother is dead. I wish I had time to let her die. I wish I had time to wish I had. It is
55 because in the wild and outraged earth too soon too soon too soon. It's not that I wouldn't and will not it's that it is too soon too soon too soon.

60

Now it begins to say it. New Hope three miles. New Hope three miles. *That's what they mean by the womb of time: the agony and the despair of spreading bones, the hard girdle in which lie the outraged entrails of events.* Cash's head turns slowly as we approach, his pale, empty, sad,
70 composed and questioning face following the red and empty curve; beside the back wheel Jewel sits the horse, gazing straight ahead.

75 The land runs out of Darl's eyes; they swim to pin-points. They begin at my feet and rise along my body to my face, and then my dress is

pensabas.

Pero todavía era como si lo estuviera oliendo. Y por eso decidí entonces mismo que no lo olía, sino que sólo sabía que había estado allí, pues de vez en cuando uno se engaña. Pero cuando entré en el granero pensé otra cosa. Cuando me encontraba en el zaguán vi algo. Algo que estaba en cucullillas cuando entré, y al principio pensé que era uno de ellos; luego vi lo que era. Era un buitre. Miró alrededor y me vio y se dirigió al zaguán, con las patas separadas, las alas como arrastrando, mirándome primero por encima de un hombro y luego por encima del otro, como un viejo calvo. Cuando llegé fuera se echó a volar. Tuvo que remontarse bastante tiempo antes de remontarse en el aire, de lo espeso y pesado y lleno de lluvia que estaba.

Si se dirigen a Jefferson, para mí que podían haber rodeado Mount Vernon, como hizo MacCallum. Puede estar en casa pasado mañana, a caballo. Y ellos estaban a veintisiete kilómetros de la ciudad. Pero puede que ese puente que también se llevó la riada lo tome como un aviso que le manda el Señor.

Ese MacCallum. Lleva tratando conmigo a intervalos desde hace doce años. Lo conozco desde niño; sé cómo se llama tan bien como yo mismo. Pero que me condene si soy capaz de recordar su nombre.

DEWEY DELL

EL cartel ya está a la vista. Ahora se asoma al camino, porque puede esperar. New Hope, 5 kms, dirá. New Hope, 5 kms. New Hope, 5 kms. Y luego empezará el camino que serpentea entre los árboles, vacío con la espera, y que dice New Hope cinco kilómetros.

Oí que mi madre ha muerto. Quisiera haber tenido tiempo para dejarla morir. Quisiera haber tenido tiempo para querer tenerlo. Es porque en la tierra salvaje y ultrajada demasiado pronto, demasiado pronto, demasiado pronto. Y no es que yo no quisiera o no querré, es que es demasiado pronto, demasiado pronto, demasiado pronto.

Ahora lo empieza a decir. New Hope cinco kilómetros. New Hope cinco kilómetros. *Esto es lo que quieren decir cuando se refieren al vientre del tiempo: la agonía y la desesperación de los huesos distendidos, la rígida faja donde yacen las ultrajadas entrañas de los acontecimientos.* La cabeza de Cash se vuelve lentamente según nos acercamos, su cara pálida, vacía, triste e interrogante sigue la roja curva vacía; junto a una de las ruedas de atrás, Jewel va montado a caballo, mirando al frente.

La tierra surge de los ojos de Darl que se mueven hasta clavarse en algún punto. Comienzan por mis pies y suben por el cuerpo hasta la cara, y luego me que-

Dewey Dell (3)

This section records Dewey Dell's unspoken and unverballed thoughts as the wagon leaves the Tull farm and heads back along the road it travelled the previous day. The girl sits in a sort of reverie, recalling dreams and pondering on the difference between dream and reality.

COMMENTARY: Here, as in *Dewey Dell* (2), we see that the girl is so engrossed in her own situation that everything else seems beyond the reach of her feelings. In the lines 'I heard that my mother . . . too soon' she tries to work out why she cannot make her mother's death a reality and realises that it is because of her own situation. The timing of her mother's death is 'too soon' before she has had time to work out her own, all-absorbing problem. It is significant that Dewey Dell should think again of the 'wild and outraged earth', something which to her parallels her womb, a place of growth. For Addie, the earth is a place of death and not of life.

In the third paragraph an italicised passage repeats the notion that the earth is a place of life and death. 'That's what they mean by the womb of time; the agony and despair of spreading

gone: I sit naked on the seat above the unhurrying mules, above the travail. *Suppose I tell him to turn. He will do what I say.*
 5 *Don't you know he will do what I say?* [Once I waked with a black void rushing under me. I could not see.] I saw Vardaman rise and go to the window and strike the knife
 10 into the fish, the blood gushing, hissing like steam but I could not see. *He'll do as I say. He always does. I can persuade him to anything. You know I can. Suppose I say turn here.* That was when I died that time. *Suppose I do. We'll go to New Hope. We won't have to go to town.* I rose and took the knife from the streaming fish still
 20 hissing and I killed Darl.

When I used to sleep with Vardaman I had a nightmare once I thought I was awake but I couldn't see and couldn't feel I couldn't feel the bed under me and I couldn't think what I was I couldn't think of my name I couldn't even think I am a girl I couldn't even think I nor
 30 *even think I want to wake up nor remember what was opposite to awake so I could do that I knew that something was passing but I couldn't even think of time then all*
 35 *of a sudden I knew that something was it was wind blowing over me it was like the wind came and blew me back from where it was I was not blowing the room and Vardaman*
 40 *asleep and all of them back under me again and going on like a piece of cool silk dragging across my naked legs.*

45 It blows cool out of the pines, a sad steady sound. New Hope. Was 3 mi. Was 3 mi. I believe in God I believe in God.

50 "Why didn't we go to New Hope, pa?" Vardaman says. "Mr. Samson said we was, but we done passed the road."

55 Darl says, "Look, Jewel." But he is not looking at me. He is looking at the sky. The buzzard is as still as if he were nailed to it.

60 We turn into Tull's lane. We pass the barn and go on, the wheels whispering in the mud, passing the green rows of cotton
 65 in the wild earth, and Vernon little across the field behind the plough. He lifts his hand as we pass and stands there looking after us for a long while.

70 "Look, Jewel," Darl says. Jewel sits on his horse like they were both made out of wood, looking straight ahead.

75 I believe in God, God. God, I believe in God.

do sin vestido: estoy sentada desnuda en el banco, encima de las mulas cansinas, encima de todas las fatigas. *Supón que le digo que se dé la vuelta. Hará lo que yo le diga. ¿No sabes que hará lo que le diga [129] yo?* Una vez me desperté con un oscuro vacío que se hundía a mis pies. No podía ver. Vi a Vardaman levantarse e ir a la ventana y hundir el cuchillo en el pez que chorreaba sangre que siseaba como el vapor aunque yo no podía ver. *Hará lo que yo le diga. Siempre lo hace. Puedo convencerle de lo que sea. Sé que puedo. Supón que le digo: Vuélvete aquí.* Eso fue aquella vez en que morí. *Supón que lo hago. Iríamos a New Hope. No tendríamos que ir a la ciudad.* Me levanté y saqué y saqué el cuchillo del chorreante pez que todavía siseaba y maté a Darl.

Cuando acostumbraba a dormir con Vardaman una vez tuve una pesadilla y creí que estaba despierta, pero no podía ver ni notar ni notar la cama debajo de mí y no podía pensar qué era yo no podía pensar en cómo me llamo ni siquiera podía pensar que soy una chica ni tampoco podía tan siquiera pensar, ni tampoco podía pensar que quería despertar ni tampoco recordar qué era lo opuesto a despertar de modo que pudiese hacerlo yo sabía que algo se deslizaba, pero ni siquiera podía pensar en el tiempo y entonces de repente me di cuenta de que había algo que era como viento que soplabla sobre mí y era como si el viento viniera y me impulsara hacia atrás desde donde estaba y yo no soplabla el cuarto y Vardaman dormía y todos debajo de mí otra vez como un trozo de seda fría que se arrastraba entre mis piernas desnudas

De los pinos sale un sopro fresco, un triste y constante sonido. New Hope. Estaba a 5 kms. Estaba a 5 kms. Creo en Dios, creo en Dios.

—¿Por qué no fuimos a New Hope, padre? —dice Vardaman—. Mr. Samson dijo que iríamos, pero ya nos hemos pasado el camino.

Darl dice:
 —Mira, Jewel.
 Pero él no me estaba mirando a mí. Miraba al cielo. El buitre está inmóvil como si lo hubieran clavado en él.

Doblamos hacia el sendero de Tull. Pasamos delante del granero y seguimos, las ruedas susurrando en el barro, pasamos por delante de los verdes surcos del algodón en la tierra salvaje, y de Vernon, que se hace pequeño al otro lado del campo, detrás del arado. Levanta la mano cuando pasamos y se queda allí mirándonos largo rato.

—Mira, Jewel —dice Darl. [130]
 Jewel va montado en su caballo como si los dos fueran de madera, mirando al frente.

Creo en Dios, Dios. Dios, creo en Dios.

bones, the hard girdle in which lie the outraged entrails of events'. At an unverballed level, Dewey Dell is sensing the difference between the 'bones', which endure, and the 'entrails', which decay.

As usual, the musing character moves between the depths of inner thoughts and the actuality around them. Dewey Dell returns from the contemplation of 'the womb of time' to look at her brothers, focusing on Darl and seeing that he has the ability, metaphorically, to strip her bare, 'I sit naked . . . above the travail'. Worried by this exposure, she recalls a dream in which she killed Darl. This memory leads on to the memory of another dream in which she did not know what she was, 'I couldn't think of my name I couldn't even think I am a girl I couldn't even think I . . .'. Her sense of reality was restored by feeling the wind blowing on her legs, a confirmation by an outside agency which recalls Darl's idea that the wagon's existence is confirmed by the rain.

31
TULL (4)

AFTER they passed I taken the
5 mule out and up the trace chains and
followed. They were setting in the
wagon at the end of the levee. Anse
was setting there, looking at the
bridge where it was swagged down
10 into the river with just the two ends
in sight. He was looking at it like he
had believed all the time that folks
had been lying to him about it being
gone, but like he was hoping all the
15 time it really was. Kind of pleased
astonishment he looked, setting on the
wagon in his Sunday pants, mumbling
his mouth. Looking like a uncurried
horse dressed up: I don't know.

20 The boy was watching the bridge
where it was midsunk and logs and
such drifted up over it and it swagging
and shivering like the whole thing
25 would go any minute, big-eyed he
was watching it, like he was to a
circus. And the gal, too. When I come
up she looked around at me, her eyes
kind of blaring up and going hard like
30 I had made to touch her Then she
looked at Anse again and then back
at the water again.

It was **nigh [near]** up to the levee
35 on both sides, the earth hid except for
the tongue of it we was on going out
to the bridge and then down into the
water, and except for knowing how
the road and the bridge used to look,
40 a fellow couldn't tell where was the
river and where the land. It was just
a tangle of yellow and the levee not
less wider than a knife-back kind of,
with us setting in the wagon and on
45 the horse and the mule.

Darl was looking at me, and then
Cash turned and looked at me with
that look in his eyes like when he was
50 figuring on whether the planks would
fit her that night, like he was
measuring them inside of him and not
asking you to say what you thought
and not even letting on he was
55 listening if you did say it, but listening
all right. Jewel hadn't moved. He sat
there on the horse, leaning a little
forward, with that same look on his
face when him and Darl passed the
60 house yesterday, coming back to get
her.

"If it was just up, we could drive
across," Anse says. "We could drive
65 right on across it."

Sometimes a log would get
shoved over the jam and float on,
rolling and turning, and we could
70 watch it go on to where the ford used
to be. It would slow up and whirl
crossways and hang out of water for
a minute, and you could tell by that
that the ford used to be there.

75 "But that don't show
nothing," I say. "It could be a
bar of quicksand built up there."

TULL

DESPUÉS de que pasaran saqué la
mula y le enrollé las cadenas del tiro
y los seguí. Estaban instalados e n
la carreta, al final del malecón. Anse
estaba allí mirando al puente por
donde se lo había llevado el río con
sólo dos pilares a la vista. Lo miraba
como si todo el tiempo hubiera creído
que la gente le mentía sobre que se lo
había llevado la riada y siempre hu-
biera esperado que siguiera allí. Pare-
cía como agradablemente sorprendido,
allí, sentado en la carreta con sus pan-
talones de los domingos, murmurando
algo. Era como un caballo sin cepillar vestido
con sus mejores galas, o algo por el estilo.

El chico miraba el puente por don-
de estaba medio hundido y a los tron-
cos y demás cosas amontonadas enci-
ma que se agitaban y temblaban como
si en cualquier momento todo fuera a
desaparecer con los ojos muy abiertos
igual que si estuviera en el circo. Y la
chica lo mismo. Cuando llegué me
miró con ojos brillantes y duros como
si la hubiera intentado tocar. Luego
volvió a mirar a Anse y luego volvió a
mirar al agua.

Esta casi cubría el malecón en los
dos lados, la tierra estaba cubierta por
el agua excepto en la lengua por la que
nos dirigíamos al puente y luego se
hundía, y a no ser porque sabíamos
dónde solían estar el camino y el puen-
te, nadie podría decir dónde estaba el
río y dónde la tierra. Era una mezo-
lanza amarilla y la lengua de tierra no
más ancha que el revés de un cuchillo
con todos nosotros instalados en la ca-
rreta y en el caballo y la mula.

Darl me miraba, y luego Cash se
volvió a mirarme con aquella expre-
sión en los ojos que era como cuan-
do aquella noche pensaba si las ta-
blas se acoplarían a ella, igual que
si las midiera interiormente y no te
preguntase lo que pensabas y ni si-
quiera se dignase a escuchar si le
dabas tu opinión, aunque de hecho es-
cuchase. Jewel no se había movido. Es-
taba allí, montado a caballo, echado un
poco hacia delante, con la misma expre-
sión en la cara de cuando él y Darl pasa-
ron ayer por delante de casa camino de
recogerla.

—Si se hubiera mantenido podríamos
cruzar —dice Anse—. Podríamos cruzar
en un momento.

A veces la corriente empujaba un tron-
co que saltaba el atasco y seguía flotan-
do, girando y revolviéndose, y podíamos
verlo seguir hacia donde solía estar el vado.
Allí parecía detenerse y dar vueltas
atravesado y asomaba fuera del agua du-
rante un momento, y por eso se podía
asegurar que el vado solía estar allí.

—Pero eso no demuestra nada —digo
yo—. Podría ser un banco de arenas movedi-
zas que se ha formado allí.

Tull (4)

This section consists of Tull's
unspoken thoughts and his
spoken words as he sees the
Bundrens pass his farm going
towards the river. He follows
them on his mule.

COMMENTARY: In this
section, Tull is made to feel the
collective hostility of the Bundren
family. Each member looks at him
in turn, Dewey Dell 'like I had
made to touch her', Darl 'like he
had got inside you, someway' and
Cash 'with that look in his eyes
like when he was figuring out
whether the planks would fit her
that night.' Only Anse pays no
particular attention to Tull, gazing
instead at the river with a kind of
'pleased astonishment'. The
violence of the river is echoed by
the violent **undercurrents** now
evident in the family itself.

undercurrent 1 subdued
emotional quality underlying an
utterance: implicit meaning,
sobrentendido, tendencia
oculta 2 a current below the
surface of a fluid, corriente
submarina, contracorriente
1 contracorriente 2 fig (de
descontento, etc) trasfondo.
3 (en el mar) corriente subma-
rina

We watch the log. Then the gal is looking at me again.

“Mr. Whitfield crossed it,” she says.

5

“He was a horse-back,” I say. “And three days ago. It’s riz five foot since.”

10 “If the bridge was just up,” Anse says.

The log bobs up and goes on again. There is a lot of trash and foam, and 15 you can hear the water.

“But it’s down,” Anse says.

Cash says, “A careful 20 fellow could walk across yonder on the planks and logs.”

tote: (Am. English) carry

25 “But you couldn’t **tote** nothing,” I say. “Likely time you set foot on that mess, it’ll all go, too. What you think, Darl?”

He is looking at me. He don’t say 30 nothing; just looks at me with them queer eyes of hisn that makes folks talk. I always say it ain’t never been what he done so much or said or anything so much as how he looks at 35 you. It’s like he had got into the inside of you, someway. Like somehow you was looking at yourself and your doings outen his eyes. Then I can feel that gal watching me like I had made to 40 touch her. She says something to Anse. “. . . Mr. Whitfield . . .” she says.

“I give her my promised word in the presence of the Lord,” Anse says. 45 “I reckon it ain’t no need to worry.”

the jam: the obstructing clump of logs

But still he does not start the mules. We set there above the water. Another log bobs up over **the jam** and 50 goes on; we watch it check up and swing slow for a minute where the ford used to be. Then it goes on.

“It might start falling to-night,” I 55 say. “You could lay over one more day.”

Then Jewel turns sideways on the horse. He has not moved until 60 then, and he turns and looks at me. His face is kind of green, then it would go red and then green again. “Get to hell on back to your damn ploughing,” he says. “Who the hell 65 asked you to follow us here?”

“I never meant no harm,” I say.

70 “Shut up, Jewel,” Cash says. Jewel looks back at the water, his face **gritted**, going red and green and then red. “Well,” Cash says after a while, “what you want to do?”

grit — *n.* 1 particles of stone or sand, esp. as causing discomfort, clogging machinery, etc. 2 coarse sandstone. 3 *colloq.* pluck, endurance; strength of character. — *v.* (**gritted**, **gritting**) 1 *tr.* spread grit on (icy roads etc.); 2 *tr.* clench (the teeth); 3 *intr.* make or move with a grating sound.

grit 1 arena gravilla 2 coraje, agallas 3 clench the teeth, apretar los dientes, rechinar los dientes, decir apretando los dientes.

75 Anse don’t say nothing. He sets humped up, mumbling his mouth. “If it was just up, we could drive across it,” he says.

Observábamos el tronco. Luego la chica se puso a mirarme otra vez.

—Mr. Whitfield lo cruzó —dice.

—Iba a caballo —digo yo—. Y fue hace tres días. Desde entonces ha subido metro y medio.

—Si el puente siguiera en pie... —dice Anse.

El tronco reaparece y sigue adelante. Hay muchos desechos y espuma, y se pueden ir al agua.

—Pero se ha hundido —dice Anse.

Cash dice: —Con mucho cuidado a lo mejor se podría cruzar por encima de los tablones y los troncos.

—Pero no se podría **llevar** ninguna carga —digo yo—. Probablemente si pones el pie en ese revoltijo se hundiría también. ¿Qué opinas, Darl?

Me está mirando. No dice nada; se limita a mirarme con esos ojos suyos tan raros que tanto dan que hablar. Siempre digo que eso no es tanto por lo que haga o diga o algo así, como por el modo en que te mira. Es como si te llegara hasta muy adentro, en cierto modo. Algo así como si uno se estuviera mirando a sí mismo y lo hace y lo viera en sus ojos. Entonces noto que la chica me mira como si hubiera intentado tocarla. Le dice algo a Anse:

—... Mr. Whitfield... —dice.[132]

—Le di mi palabra ante Dios —dice Anse—. Para mí que no hay de qué preocuparse.

Pero sigue sin hacer andar a las mulas. Estamos allí, al borde del agua. Otro tronco asoma sobre el **atasco** y sigue; lo vemos detenerse y oscilar lentamente durante un minuto donde solía estar el vado. Luego se aleja.

—Puede que empiece a bajar esta noche —digo yo—. Podrían quedarse un día más.

Entonces Jewel se vuelve encima del caballo. No se ha movido hasta entonces; se vuelve y me mira. Tiene la cara como verde, luego se le pone roja y luego verde otra vez.

—Váyase al infierno y siga arando —dice—. ¿Quién demonios le pidió que nos siguiera hasta aquí?

—No quería molestar —digo yo.

—Cállate, Jewel —dice Cash. Jewel vuelve a mirar el agua, su cara es una **mueca** y se pone roja y verde y luego roja—. Bueno —dice Cash al cabo de un rato—, ¿qué quiere que hagamos?

Anse no dice nada. Sigue sentado, encorvado, murmurando entre dientes.

—Si solo se hubiera mantenido podríamos cruzarlo —dice.

“Come on,” Jewel says, moving the horse.

—Venga, vamos —dice Jewel, haciendo andar al caballo.

5 “Wait,” Cash says. He looks at the bridge. We look at him, except Anse and the gal. They are looking at the water. “Dewey Dell and Vardaman and pa better walk across on the
10 bridge,” Cash says.

—Espera —dice Cash. Mira el puente. Todos le miramos menos Anse y la chica que están mirando el agua—. Dewey Dell y Vardaman y padre será mejor que pasen por el puente —dice Cash.

“Vernon can help them,” Jewel says. “And we can hitch his mule ahead of **ourn**.”

—Vernon les puede ayudar —dice Jewel—. Y nosotros podemos engargar su mula delante de las nuestras.

15 “You ain’t going to take my mule into that water,” I say.

—No vais a meter mi mula en esa corriente —digo yo.

Jewel looks at me. His eyes
20 look like pieces of a broken plate. “I’ll pay for your damn mule. I’ll buy it from you right now.”

Jewel me mira. Sus ojos parecen trozos de un plato roto.
—Le pagaré su condenada mula. Se la compro ahora mismo.

“My mule ain’t going into that
25 water,” I say.

—A mi mula no la meteréis en esa corriente —digo yo.

“Jewel’s going to use his horse,”
Darl says. “Why won’t you risk your
mule, Vernon?”

Jewel va a meter su caballo —dice Darl—. ¿Por qué no quiere arriesgar su mula, Vernon? [133]

30 “Shut up, Darl,” Cash says. “You and Jewel both.”

—Cállate, Darl —dice Cash—. Tú y Jewel, callaos los dos.

“My mule ain’t going into that
35 water,” I say.

—Mi mula no se meterá en esa corriente —digo yo.

glare A 1. mirada feroz o llena de odio 2. luz deslumbrante, resplandor. B verbo intransitivo 1 mirar enfurecido [at, a] staring angrily and fiercely, (fulminándole con la mirada) 3. deslumbrar 1. To stare fixedly and angrily. See synonyms at **gaze**. 2. To shine intensely and blindingly: *A hot sun glared down on the desert*. 3. To be conspicuous; stand out obtrusively: *The headline glared from the page*. To express by staring angrily: *He glared his disapproval*.

suffuse 1 (of colour, moisture, etc.) spread from within to colour or moisten (*a blush suffused her cheeks*). 2 cover with colour etc. Impregnar, saturar, bañar, inundar.

32

DARL (11)

HE sits the horse, **glaring** at Vernon, his lean face **suffused** up to and beyond the pale rigidity of his eyes. The summer when he was fifteen, he
45 took a spell of sleeping. One morning when I went to feed the mules the cows were still in the tie-up and then I heard pa go back to the house and call him. When we came on back
50 to the house for breakfast he passed us, carrying the milk buckets, stumbling along like he was drunk, and he was milking when we put the mules in and went on to the field
55 without him. We had been there an hour and still he never showed up. When Dewey Dell came with our lunch, pa sent her back to find Jewel. They found him in the tie-up, sitting
60 on the stool, asleep.

After that, every morning pa would go in and wake him. He would go to sleep at the suppertable
65 and soon as supper was finished he would go to bed, and when I came in to bed he would be lying there like a dead man. Yet still pa would have to wake him in the morning.
70 He would get up, but he wouldn’t hardly have half sense: he would stand for pa’s jawing and complaining without a word and take the milk buckets and go to the
75 barn, and once I found him asleep at the cow, the bucket in place and half-full and his hands up to the wrists in the milk and his head

DARL

MONTA su caballo, **mirando** a Vernon, con su flaco rostro **empañado** por la pálida rigidez de sus ojos. El verano en que tenía quince años, le dio un ataque de sueño. Una mañana cuando yo iba a dar de comer a las mulas, las vacas todavía estaban amarradas y entonces oí a padre que volvía a casa y le llamaba. Cuando volvimos a casa para desayunar pasó junto a nosotros llevando los cubos para la leche y tambaleándose como si estuviera borracho, y estaba ordeñando cuando arreglamos las mulas y salimos al campo sin él. Llevábamos una hora allí y seguía sin aparecer. Cuando Dewey Dell vino con el almuerzo, padre la mandó a buscar a Jewel. Lo encontraron en el establo, sentado en el taburete, dormido.

Después de eso, padre tenía que ir todas las mañanas a despertarle. Se dormía en la mesa durante la cena y, en cuanto terminábamos de cenar, se metía en la cama, y cuando me acostaba yo, allí me lo encontraba tumbado como un muerto. Sin embargo, padre también tenía que despertarle por la mañana. Se levantaba, pero casi no se enteraba de lo que estaba pasando: se quedaba allí quieto sin decir ni palabra mientras padre le reñía y se quejaba, y luego cogía los cubos de la leche e iba al establo, y una vez me lo encontré dormido junto a la vaca con el cubo en su sitio y a medio llenar y las manos metidas en la leche hasta las muñecas y la cabeza apoyada

Darl (11)

As the family sit gazing at the swollen river, Darl is thinking of Jewel. He remembers, at an unspoken and unverballed level, the time when Jewel used to disappear mysteriously at night and return exhausted.

COMMENTARY: This section begins with Darl thinking, as usual, of Jewel. The reason for such thoughts is not simply his obsession with his brother but the fact that, in Tull (4), Darl was part of the family in its hostility against Tull. Here he recalls another moment at which the family were united, a time when Jewel began to behave in a mysterious fashion. ‘That was the first time ma . . . has happened to him’, these lines create an image of the whole family acting as a unit to protect their mother from the knowledge that her favourite son is behaving oddly. The image implies that the family are bound to one another by their concern for Addie. Now that Addie is no longer alive, they sit helplessly by the side of the river, each finding it difficult to feel his or her own identity, yet all acting with a kind of tacit strength against the outside world.

At the end of the section, we discover that Darl himself had had a personal flash of insight as a

against the cow's flank.

After that Dewey Dell had to do the milking. He still got
5 up when pa waked him, going about what we told him to do in that dazed way. It was like he was trying hard to do them; that he was as puzzled as
10 anyone else.

"Are you sick?" ma said. "Don't you feel all right?"

15 "Yes," Jewel said. "I feel all right."

"He's just lazy, trying me," pa said, and Jewel standing
20 there, asleep on his feet like as not. "Ain't you?" he said, waking Jewel up again to answer.

25 "No," Jewel said.

"You take off and stay in the house to-day," ma said.

30 "With that whole bottom piece to be busted out?" pa said. "If you ain't sick, what's the matter with you?"

"Nothing," Jewel said. "I'm all
35 right."

"All right?" pa said. "You're asleep on your feet this minute."

40 "No," Jewel said. "I'm all right."

"I want him to stay at home to-day," ma said.

45 "I'll need him," pa said. "It's tight enough, with all of us to do it."

50 "You'll just have to do the best you can with Cash and Darl," ma said. "I want him to stay in to-day."

But he wouldn't do it. "I'm
55 all right," he said, going on. But he wasn't all right. Anybody could see it. He was losing flesh, and I have seen him go to sleep chopping; watched the hoe going slower and
60 slower up and down, with less and less of an arc, until it stopped and he leaning on it motionless in the hot shimmer of the sun.

65 Ma wanted to get the doctor, but pa didn't want to spend the money without it was needful, and Jewel did seem all right except for his thinness and his way of dropping off to sleep
70 at any moment. He ate hearty enough, except for his way of going to sleep in his plate, with a piece of bread half-way to his mouth and his jaws still chewing. But he swore he was
75 all right.

It was ma that got Dewey Dell to do his milking, paid her

en el costado de la vaca.

Después de eso tenía que ordeñar Dewey Dell. El seguía levantándose cuando lo despertaba padre y se iba a hacer lo que le decíamos como en un trance. Era como si estuviera intentando hacer las cosas lo mejor posible. Como si se sintiera tan confundido como todos los demás. [134]

—¿Estás malo? —le decía madre—. ¿No te encuentras bien?

—Sí —decía Jewel—, me encuentro perfectamente.

—Sólo es un perezoso que trata de molestarte —decía padre, y Jewel se quedaba de pie allí, incluso a veces dormido—. ¿No tengo razón? —decía padre, despertando a Jewel otra vez para que le contestase.

—No —decía Jewel.

—Hoy quédate en casa sin hacer nada —decía madre.

—¿Con todo ese terreno que hay que arar? —decía padre—. Si no estás malo, ¿qué te pasa?

—Nada —decía Jewel—. Estoy perfectamente.

—¿Perfectamente? —decía padre—. Si acabas de quedarte dormido de pie.

—No —decía Jewel—. Me encuentro perfectamente.

—Quiero que se quede en casa hoy —decía madre.

—Le voy a necesitar —decía Padre—. Vamos ya bastante apurados, incluso contando con todos nosotros.

—Arréglatelas como puedas con Cash y Darl —decía madre—. Hoy quiero que se quede.

Pero él no quería quedarse.

—Estoy perfectamente —dijo al salir.

Pero no estaba bien. Cualquiera lo podía ver. Perdía peso y le había visto dormirse mientras cavaba; yo veía que el azadón subía y bajaba cada vez más despacio y que el arco que describía se hacía más y más pequeño, hasta que se paró y se quedó quieto, y él apoyado en el mango, bajo el ardiente brillo del sol.

Madre quería llamar al médico, pero padre no quería gastar el dinero si no había necesidad, y Jewel parecía bien del todo a no ser por su delgadez y porque se quedaba dormido en cualquier momento. Comía con bastante apetito, pero a veces se quedaba dormido encima del plato con un trozo de pan a medio camino de la boca y sin dejar de masticar. Pero juraba que se encontraba bien.

Madre tuvo que mandar a Dewey Dell que ordeñara en lugar de él, y de

result of Jewel's action. He had found his mother beside Jewel's sleeping body, crying quietly. It was at this moment that Darl realised that Jewel was not Anse's son, that he is the product of deceit, 'I knew that as plain on that day as I knew about Dewey Dell on that day'.

somehow, and the other jobs around the house that Jewel had been doing before supper she found some way for Dewey Dell and Vardaman to do them. And doing them herself when pa wasn't there. She would fix him special things to eat and hide them for him. And that may have been when I first found it out, that Addie Bundren should be hiding anything she did, who had tried to teach us that deceit was such that, in a world where it was, nothing else could be very bad or very important, not even poverty. And at times when I went in to go to bed she would be sitting in the dark by Jewel where he was asleep. And I knew that she was hating herself for that deceit and hating Jewel because she had to love him so that she had to act the deceit.

One night she was taken sick and when I went to the barn to put the team in and drive to Tull's, I couldn't find the lantern. I remembered noticing it on the nail the night before, but it wasn't there now at midnight. So I hitched in the dark and went on and came back with Mrs. Tull just after daylight. And there the lantern was, hanging on the nail where I remembered it and couldn't find it before. And then one morning while Dewey Dell was milking just before sun-up, Jewel came into the barn from the back, through the hole in the back wall, with the lantern in his hand.

I told Cash, and Cash and I looked at one another.

"Rutting," Cash said.

"Yes," I said. "But why the lantern? And every night, too. No wonder he's losing flesh. Are you going to say anything to him?"

"Won't do any good," Cash said.

"What he's doing now won't do any good, either."

"I know. But he'll have to learn that himself. Give him time to realize that it'll save, that there'll be just as much more to-morrow, and he'll be all right. I wouldn't tell anybody, I reckon."

"No," I said. "I told Dewey Dell not to. Not ma, anyway."

"No. Not ma."

After that I thought it was right comical: he acting so bewildered and willing and dead for sleep and gaunt as a bean-pole, and thinking he was so smart with it. And I wondered who the girl was. I thought of all I knew that it might be, but I couldn't say for sure.

"Taint any girl," Cash said. "It's a married woman somewhere. Ain't

algún modo se lo pagaba, y las demás faenas de la casa que Jewel hacía hasta ahora antes de la hora de cenar, encontró modo de que las hicieran Dewey Dell y [135] Vardaman. O las hacía ella misma cuando padre no estaba delante. Le preparaba cosas de comer especiales a escondidas de los otros. Y puede que haya sido entonces cuando descubrí que Addie Bundren, que siempre nos había enseñado que el engaño era lo peor de este mundo, incluida la pobreza, nos ocultaba algo. Y a veces cuando entraba para irme a dormir, me la encontraba sentada a oscuras junto al sitio donde dormía, Jewel. Y comprendí que se odiaba a sí misma por tener que engañarnos, y que odiaba a Jewel porque le quería tanto que tenía que engañarnos.

Una noche se puso mala y cuando fui al establo a preparar el tiro para ir a casa de Tull, no conseguí encontrar el farol. Recordaba haberlo visto colgado del clavo la noche anterior, pero ahora, a medianoche, no estaba allí. Conque enganché a oscuras y salí y volví con Mr. Tull justo después de amanecer. Y allí estaba el farol, colgando del clavo donde yo lo recordaba y antes no había conseguido encontrarlo. Y luego, una mañana, mientras Dewey ordeñaba justo antes de salir el sol, Jewel entró en el establo por la parte de atrás, a través de un agujero de la pared, con el farol en la mano.

Se lo conté a Cash, y Cash y yo nos miramos.

—Está como en celo —dijo Cash.

—Sí —dije yo—. Pero, ¿por qué el farol? Y encima todas las noches. No me extraña que adelgace. ¿Vas a decirle algo?

—No serviría de nada —dijo Cash.

—Tampoco sirve de nada lo que está haciendo ahora.

—Ya lo sé. Pero tiene que aprenderlo por sí mismo. Dale tiempo para que se dé cuenta de que eso no se va a agotar, de que mañana lo podría hacer igual, y se le pasará. Para mí que será mejor no contárselo a nadie.

—No —dije yo—. Le dije a Dewey Dell que no lo contara. Por lo menos, no a madre.

—No. A madre no.

Después de eso pensé que resultaba hasta cómico: se comportaba como tan perplejo y ansioso y estaba tan muerto de sueño y tan flaco como una vara en un campo de judías; y creía que nos engañaba... Y yo me preguntaba [136] quién podría ser la chica. Pensé en todas las que conocía, pero no estaba seguro de que fuera ninguna.

—No es ninguna chica —dijo Cash—. Es una mujer casada de por

any young girl got that much daring and staying power. That's what I don't like about it."

5 "Why?" I said. "She'll be safer for him than a girl would. More judgment."

He looked at me, his eyes
10 fumbling, the words fumbling at what he was trying to say. "It ain't always the safe things in this world that a fellow . . ."

15 "You mean, the safe things are not always the best things?"

"Ay; best," he said, fumbling again. "It ain't the best things, the things that
20 are good for him . . . A young boy. A fellow kind of hates to see . . . wallowing in somebody else's mire . . ." That's what he was trying to say. When something is new and hard and
25 bright, there ought to be something a little better for it than just being safe, since the safe things are just the things that folks have been doing so long they have worn the edges off and
30 there's nothing to the doing of them that leaves a man to say, That was not done before and it cannot be done again.

35 So we didn't tell, not even when after a while he'd appear suddenly in the field beside us and go to work, without having had time to get home and make out he had been in bed all
40 night. He would tell ma that he hadn't been hungry at breakfast or that he had eaten a piece of bread while he was hitching up the team. But Cash and I knew that he hadn't
45 been home at all on those nights and he had come up out of the woods when we got to the field. But we didn't tell. Summer was almost over then; we knew that when the nights
50 began to get cool, she would be done if he wasn't.

But when fall came and the nights began to get longer, the only
55 difference was that he would always be in bed for pa to wake him, getting him up at last in that first state of semi-idiocy like when it first started, worse than when he
60 had stayed out all night.

"She's sure a stayer," I told Cash. "I oled to admire her, but I downright respect her now."

65 "It ain't a woman," he said.

"You know," I said. But he was watching me. "What is it, then?"

70 "That's what I aim to find out," he said.

"You can trail him through the
75 woods all night if you want to," I said. "I'm not."

"I ain't trailing him," he said.

aquí cerca. Ninguna chica joven es tan atrevida ni resistente tanto. Eso es lo que no me gusta de todo esto.

—¿Por qué? —dije yo—. Para él es más seguro que una chica. Siempre será más discreta.

Me miró con ojos titubeantes y titubeaba con las palabras ante lo que intentaba decir.

—En este mundo las cosas seguras no siempre...

—¿Quieres decir que las cosas seguras no son siempre las mejores?

—Sí, no siempre —dijo volviendo a titubear—. No son las cosas mejores las que son buenas para él... Un chico joven. A cualquiera le molestaría ver que... revolcándose en el lodazal de otro...

Uso es lo que trataba de decir. Cuando algo es nuevo y difícil y brillante, es mejor que haya algo más que seguridad, pues las cosas seguras sólo son cosas que la gente lleva haciendo tanto tiempo que tienen los bordes gastados y no hay nada en ellas que permita decir a un hombre: eso nunca se había hecho antes y no se puede volver a hacer.

Conque no lo contamos, ni siquiera cuando al cabo de un tiempo de repente aparecía en el campo, a nuestro lado, y se ponía a trabajar, sin haber tenido tiempo de volver a casa y simular que se había pasado toda la noche acostado. Le contaría a madre que no tenía ganas de desayunar o que había tomado un trozo de pan mientras estaba unciendo el tiro. Pero Cash y yo sabíamos que no había pasado en casa todas esas noches y que venía directamente del bosque cuando salíamos al campo. Pero nos lo callamos. Por entonces casi se había terminado el verano; sabíamos que cuando las noches empezaran a ser frías, ella terminaría con el asunto aunque él no quisiera.

Pero cuando llegó el otoño y las noches empezaron a hacerse más largas, la única diferencia fue que siempre estaba en la cama cuando padre iba a despertarlo y le obligaba a levantarse en ese estado de semiidiotez en que se [137] levantaba antes, peor todavía que cuando había pasado toda la noche fuera.

—Esa tiene aguante —le dije a Cash—. Antes la admiraba, pero ahora le tengo respeto.

—No es una mujer —dijo él.

—Lo sabes —dijo yo. Pero me estaba mirando—. ¿Entonces qué es?

—Eso es lo que voy a averiguar —dijo él.

—Puedes seguirle toda la noche por el bosque si quieres —dije yo—. Yo no lo voy a hacer.

—No le estoy siguiendo —dijo él.

“What do you call it, then?”

—¿Entonces cómo llamas a lo que haces? —dije yo.

5 “I ain’t trailing him,” he said. “I don’t mean it that way.”

—No le estoy siguiendo —dijo él—. No es eso lo que quiero decir.

And so a few nights later I heard Jewel get up and climb out the window, and then I heard Cash get up and follow him. The next morning when I went to the barn, Cash was already there, the mules fed, and he was helping Dewey Dell milk. And when I saw him I knew that he knew what it was. Now and then I would catch him watching Jewel with a queer look, like having found out where Jewel went and what he was doing had given him something to really think about at last. But it was not a worried look; it was the kind of look I would see on him when I would find him doing some of Jewel’s work around the house, work that pa still thought Jewel was doing and that ma thought Dewey Dell was doing. So I said nothing to him, believing that when he got done digesting it in his mind, he would tell me. But he never did.

Total, que unas cuantas noches después oí que Jewel se levantaba y salía por la ventana, y luego oí que Cash se levantaba y le seguía. A la mañana siguiente cuando fui al granero, Cash ya estaba allí, las mulas habían comido, y estaba ayudando a Dewey Dell a ordeñar. Y en cuanto le vi me di cuenta de que sabía lo que pasaba. De vez en cuando le sorprendía mirando a Jewel con una mirada rara, como si haber descubierto adónde iba Jewel y lo que hacía le proporcionara al fin algo en lo que pensar. Pero no era una mirada de preocupación; era el tipo de mirada que le veía poner cuando le encontraba haciendo algunas de las tareas de casa que debía hacer Jewel, unas tareas que padre todavía creía que hacía Jewel y que madre creía que hacía Dewey Dell. Conque no le dije nada, creyendo que cuando lo hubiese digerido interiormente, me lo contaría. Pero no me lo contó.

One morning—it was November then, five months since it started—Jewel was not in bed and he didn’t join us in the field. That was the first time ma learned anything about what had been going on. She sent Vardaman down to find where Jewel was, and after a while she came down too. It was as though, so long as the deceit ran along quiet and monotonous, all of us let ourselves be deceived, abetting it unawares or maybe through cowardice, since all people are cowards and naturally prefer any kind of treachery because it has a **bland** outside. But now it was like we had all and by a kind of telepathic agreement of admitted fear-flung the whole thing back like covers on the bed and we all sitting bolt upright in our nakedness, staring at one another and saying “Now is the truth. He hasn’t come home. Something has happened to him. We let something happen to him.”

Una mañana —era en noviembre, cinco meses después de que aquello empezara— Jewel no estaba en la cama ni vino a unirse con nosotros en el campo. Fue la primera vez que madre se enteró de algo de lo que había pasado. Mandó a Vardaman que bajase a ver dónde estaba Jewel, y al cabo de un rato bajó ella también. Era como si mientras el engaño sucedía en silencio y monótonamente, todos nosotros hubiéramos aceptado ser engañados, favoreciéndolo con nuestra inconsciencia o puede que cobardía, pues [138] toda la gente es cobarde y prefiere de un modo natural cometer una traición, **X** ya que ésta tiene un aspecto **cómodo**. Pero ahora era como si todos nosotros — y por una especie de acuerdo telepático de miedo admitido— hubiéramos quitado el velo que ocultaba lo que pasaba como el que levanta una cama y todos estuviéramos allí sentados en nuestra desnudez mirándonos unos a otros y diciendo: «Ahora se va a saber todo. No ha vuelto a casa. Le ha pasado algo. Hemos permitido que le pasara algo.»

Then we saw him. He came up along the ditch and then turned straight across the field, riding the horse. Its mane and tail were going, as though in motion they were carrying out the splotchy pattern of its coat: he looked like he was riding on a big pinwheel, barebacked, with a rope bridle, and no hat on his head. It was a descendant of those Texas ponies Flem Snopes brought here twentyfive years ago and auctioned off for two dollars a head and nobody but old Lon Quick ever caught his and still owned some of the blood because he could never give it away.

Entonces le vimos. Venía surco arriba y luego torció a la derecha, campo a través, montado a caballo. Las crines y la cola flotaban como si al moverse desplegaran su piel manchada: parecía que Jewel cabalgara en un gran remolino, a pelo, con un cordel por brida y sin sombrero en la cabeza. El caballo descendía de aquellos potros tejanos que trajó aquí Flem Snopes**13 hace veinticinco años y que subastó a dos dólares la cabeza y que nadie excepto el viejo Lon Quick, pudo coger, y todavía tenía alguno de esa casta porque nunca pudo deshacerse de ellos.

75 He galloped up and stopped, his heels in the horse’s ribs and it dancing and **swirling** like the

Galopó hasta arriba y se detuvo con los talones apretando las costillas del caballo que bailaba y hacía **corvetas**

bland 1 amable, suave, afable 2 aburrido, cansino 3 templado (clima), suave 4 insípido, insulso
bland 1 a mild, not irritating, templado, b tasteless, unstimulating, insípido. 2 gentle in manner; suave, amable, afable.

shape of its mane and tail and the
splotches of its coat had nothing
whatever to do with the
flesh-and-bone horse inside them,
5 and he sat there, looking at us.

“Where did you get that horse?”
pa said.

10 “Bought it,” Jewel said. “From Mr.
Quick.”

“Bought it?” pa said. “With
what? Did you buy that thing
15 on my word?”

“It was my money,” Jewel said. “I
earned it. You won’t need to worry
about it.”

20 “Jewel,” ma said; “Jewel.”

“It’s all right,” Cash said. “He
earned the money. He cleaned up
25 that forty acres of new ground Quick
laid out last spring. He did it
single-handed, working at night by
lantern. I saw him. So I don’t reckon
that horse cost anybody anything
30 except Jewel. I don’t reckon we
need worry.”

“Jewel,” ma said. “Jewel——”
Then she said: “You come right to the
35 house and go to bed.”

“Not yet,” Jewel said. “I ain’t got
time. I got to get me a saddle and
bridle. Mr. Quick says he——”

40 “Jewel,” ma said, looking at
him. “I’ll give—I’ll give—give—
” Then she began to cry. She cried
hard, not hiding her face, standing
45 there in her faded wrapper, looking
at him and him on the horse, looking
down at her, his face growing cold
and a little sick looking until he
looked away quick and Cash came
50 and touched her.

“You go on to the house,”
Cash said. “This here ground is
too wet for you. You go on, now.”
55 She put her hands to her face then and
after a while she went on, stumbling
a little on the ploughmarks. But pretty
soon she straightened up and went on.
She didn’t look back. When she
60 reached the ditch she stopped and
called Vardaman. He was looking at
the horse, kind of dancing up and
down by it.

65 “Let me ride, Jewel,” he said. “Let
me ride, Jewel.”

Jewel looked at him, then he
looked away again, holding the horse
70 reined back. Pa watched him,
mumbling his lip.

“So you bought a horse,” he said.
“You went behind my back and
75 bought a horse. You never consulted
me; you know how tight it is for us to
make by, yet you bought a horse for
me to feed. Taken the work from your

como si sus crines y su cola y las man-
chas de su piel no tuvieran nada que ver
con el caballo de carne y hueso que ha-
bía dentro. Se quedó allí, montado en el
caballo, mirándonos.

—¿De dónde has sacado ese caballo?
—dijo padre.

—Lo compré —dijo Jewel—. A Mr.
Quick.

—¿Lo compraste? —dijo padre—.
¿Con qué dinero? ¿No lo habrás compra-
do a cuenta mía?

—Con mi dinero —dijo
Jewel—. Lo gané yo. No tiene de
qué preocuparse.

—Jewel —dijo madre—. Jewel.

—No pasa nada —dijo Cash—. Se
ganó el dinero. Le ha limpiado a Quick
las cuarenta fanegas de nueva tierra que
roturó la primavera pasada. Lo hizo él
solo, trabajando de noche con el farol.
Yo le vi hacerlo. Conque para mí que ese
caballo no le ha costado nada a nadie
excepto a Jewel. Para mí que no hay de
qué preocuparse.

Jewel —dijo madre—. Jewel... —lue-
go dijo—. Vete a casa inmediatamente y
acuéstate.

—Todavía no —dijo Jewel—. No ten-
go tiempo. Tengo que ganar para la silla
y las riendas. Mr. Quick dice que...

—Jewel —dijo madre, mirán-
dole—. Yo te daré... Yo te daré...
—luego se echó a llorar.

Lloraba con fuerza, sin ocultar la
cara, allí de pie en su desteñido chal
mirándole y él a caballo mirándola a
ella con una cara que se le iba pon-
niendo fría y como enferma, hasta
que apartó la vista y Cash se acercó
a madre y la tocó.

—Vaya a casa —dijo Cash—. Esta tie-
rra de aquí es demasiado húmeda para
usted. Váyase ya.

Ella se llevó las manos a la cara
y al cabo de un rato se fue tropezando
un poco en los surcos. Pero
enseguida se irguió y siguió adelan-
te. No miró atrás. Cuando llegó a
la zanja se detuvo y llamó a
Vardaman, que estaba mirando al
caballo y parecía bailar arriba y
abajo a su alrededor.

—Déjame montar, Jewel —decía—.
Jewel, déjame montar.

Jewel le miró, luego apartó
la vista, manteniendo sujeto al
caballo. Padre le observaba,
murmurando entredientes.

—Conque compraste un caballo —
dijo—. Te has comprado un caballo a mis
espaldas. No me preguntaste nada; sabes
lo duro que nos resulta ganarnos la vida
y sin embargo compras un caballo para
que lo tenga que alimentar yo. A costa

flesh and blood and bought a horse with it.”

Jewel looked at pa, his eyes paler 5 than ever.

“He won’t never eat a mouthful of yours,” he said. “Not a mouthful. I’ll kill him first. Don’t you never think 10 it. Don’t you never.”

“Let me ride, Jewel,” Vardaman said. “Let me ride, Jewel.” He sounded like a cricket in the grass, a 15 little one. “Let me ride, Jewel.”

That night I found ma sitting beside the bed where he was sleeping, in the dark. She cried 20 hard, maybe because she had to cry so quiet; maybe because she felt the same way about tears she did about deceit, hating herself for doing it, hating him because she had to. And then I knew that I 25 knew. I knew that as plain on that day as I knew about Dewey Dell on that day.

30

33

TULL (5)

SO they finally got Anse to say what he wanted to do, and him and 35 the gal and the boy got out of the wagon. But even when we were on the bridge Anse kept on looking back, like he thought maybe, once he was outen the wagon, the whole thing 40 would kind of blow up and he would find himself back yonder in the field again and her laying up there in the house, waiting to die and it to do all over again.

45

“You ought to let them taken your mule,” he says, and the bridge shaking and swaying under us, going down into the moiling water like it 50 went clean through to the other side of the earth, and the other and coming up outen the water like it wasn’t the same bridge a-tall and that them that would walk up outen the water on that side must come from the bottom of 55 the earth. But it was still whole; you could tell that by the way when this end **swagged**, it didn’t look like the other and swagged at all just like the other trees and the bank yonder mere swinging back and forth slow like on a big clock. And them logs scraping and bumping at the sunk part and 65 tilting end-up and shooting clean outen the water and tumbling on toward the ford and the waiting, **slick**, whirling, and foamy.

70 “What good . would that ‘a’ done?” I says. “If your team can’t find the ford and haul it across, what good would three mules or even ten mules do?”

75

“I ain’t asking it of you,” he says. “I can always do for me and mine. I ain’t asking you to risk your

de tu carne y de tu sangre te lo has comprado.

Jewel miró a padre con unos ojos más pálidos que nunca.

—No comerá ni un bocado de lo que sea suyo —le dijo—. Ni un bocado. Antes lo mataré. No piense en eso. Nunca lo haga. [140]

—Déjame montar, Jewel —decía Vardaman—. Déjame montar —parecía un grillo en la hierba, uno pequeño—. Déjame montar, Jewel.

Esa noche encontré a madre sentada junto a la cama en que dormía Jewel, a oscuras. Lloraba con fuerza, puede que porque tenía que llorar tan en silencio; puede que porque sentía lo mismo sobre las lágrimas de lo que había sentido sobre el engaño, y se odiaba a sí misma por engañar, lo odiaba a él porque la habría inducido a ello. Y entonces supe que lo sabía. Aquel día lo supe con tanta claridad como supe lo de Dewey Dell aquel otro día.

TULL

CONQUE por fin consiguieron que Anse dijera lo que quería hacer y él y la chica y el pequeño se bajaron de la carreta. Pero incluso cuando estábamos en el puente, Anse seguía mirando hacia atrás, como pensando que a lo mejor, ahora que se había bajado de la carreta, todo el problema había desaparecido y él se encontraba otra vez allá lejos, en el campo, y ella allí acostada esperando la muerte, como si todo volviera a empezar.

—Debería de haberles dejado la mula —me dice, y el puente temblaba y se tambaleaba bajo nosotros, hundiéndose en las turbias aguas como si se dirigiese directamente al otro extremo de la tierra, y el extremo opuesto elevándose por encima de las aguas como si no fuera el mismo puente en absoluto y los que quisieran cruzarlo vinieran desde el fondo de la tierra. Pero todavía estaba entero: se podría decir por el modo en que este extremo **temblaba**, que el otro extremo parecía no **temblar** en absoluto; como si los árboles y la orilla del otro lado fueran como el péndulo que oscilaba lentamente de un lado a otro en un enorme reloj de pared. Y los troncos se arremolinaban y golpeaban contra la parte hundida y asomaban la punta y salían disparados del agua y seguían hacia el vado que esperaba con remolinos y espuma, **resbaladizo**.

—¿De qué iba a servir? —digo yo—. Si su tiro no consigue encontrar el vado para cruzar, ¿de qué servirían tres mulas, o incluso diez?

—No se lo estoy pidiendo —dice él—. Siempre me las arreglo con mis cosas y las de los míos. No le pido que arriesgue

Tull (5)

This section contains Tull’s unspoken thoughts and spoken words as the Bundren family sit contemplating the river and finally make an attempt to cross it.

COMMENTARY: Anse is seen in this section in his usual, indecisive pose, ‘even when we were on the bridge Anse kept looking back’, but the observations made by Tull are particularly pertinent when they relate to the river itself and to the family’s motives for wanting to cross it. The river he describes ‘like slush ice. Only it kind of lived’, expressing the amazement of a man not used to changes in his environment and reflecting his sense of the whole situation as being one of impending doom, ‘the waiting and the threat’.

After he has crossed the river, Tull looks back and sees everything in a different perspective, underlining the baptismal elements of the scene, ‘t looked back at my mule it was like he was one of these here spy-glasses . . .’ and the Red Sea undertones are picked up when he talks of ‘milk’. Moses crossed the Red Sea to reach the land of milk and honey. The Bundrens cross the swollen Ishatawa to reach the land of toy trains, false teeth and abortions.

At the end of the section, Tull has a species of revelation, when he sees that the reason for crossing the river is not solely to bury Addie, ‘Just going to town. Bent on it. They would risk the fire and the earth and the water and all just to eat a sack of bananas’. If Faulkner is casting

swagged: suspended in a loop between two points

slick 1 a (of a person or action) skilful or efficient; dextrous (gave a slick performance). b superficially or pretentiously smooth and dextrous. c glib. 2 a sleek, smooth. b slippery.

1 a smooth patch of oil etc., esp. on the sea. 2 *Motor Racing* a smooth tyre. 3 *US* a glossy magazine. 4 *US sl.* a slick person.

1 make sleek or smart. 2 (usu. foll. by *down*) flatten (one’s hair etc.).

mule. It ain't your dead; I am not blaming you."

laid over: (col.) waited

slush-ice: half-frozen water

spewing up: (literally) vomiting; rushing up

"They ought to went back and **laid over** until to-morrow," I says. The water was cold. It was thick, like **slush-ice**. Only it kind of lived. One part of you knowed it was just water, the same thing that had been **running under this same bridge** for a long time, yet when them logs would come **spewing up** outen it, you were not surprised, like they was a part of water, of the waiting and the threat.

It was like when we was across, up out of the water again and the hard earth under us, that I was surprised. It was like we hadn't expected the bridge to end on the other bank, on something tame like the hard earth again that we had tromped on before this time and knowed well. Like it couldn't be me here, because I'd have had better sense than to done what I just done. And when I looked back and saw the other bank and saw my mule standing there where I used to be and knew that I'd have to get back therer some way, I knew it couldn't be, because I just couldn't think of anything that could make me cross that bridge ever even once. Yet here I was, and the fellow that could make himself cross it twice, couldn't be me, not even if Cora told him to.

It was that boy. I said "Here; you better take a holt of my hand," and he waited and held to me. I be durn if it wasn't like he come back and got me; like he was saying They won't nothing hurt you. Like he was saying about a fine place he knowed where Christmas come twice with Thanksgiving and lasts on through the winter and the spring and the summer, and if I just stayed with him I'd be all right too.

spy-glasses: telescopes

When I looked back at my mule it was like he was one of these here **spy-glasses** and I could look at him standing there and see all the broad land and my house sweated outen it like it was the more the sweat, the broader the land; the more the sweat, the tighter the house because it would take a tight house for Cora, to hold Cora like a jar of milk in the spring: you've got to have a tight jar or you'll need a powerful spring, so if you have a big spring, why then you have the incentive to have tight, well-made jars, because it is your milk, sour or not, because you would rather have milk that will sour than to have milk that won't, because you are a man.

And him holding to my hand, his hand that hot and **confident**, so that I was like to say: Look-a-here. Can't you see that mule yonder? He never had no business over here, so he never come, not being nothing but a mule. Because a fellow can see ever now

su mula. No se trata de su difunto. No se lo reprocho.

—Debieran dar marcha atrás y **esperar** hasta mañana —digo yo.

El agua estaba fría. Estaba espesa, como **nieve que se funde**. Pero parecía como Viva. Una parte de uno sabía que sólo era agua, lo mismo que llevaba corriendo largo tiempo bajo este mismo puente, y sin embargo cuando los troncos salían **despedidos** de ella, uno no se sorprendía de que fuera así, como si formaran parte del agua, de lo que esperaba amenazante.

La misma sorpresa tuve cuando, cruzando el puente, de nuevo fuera del agua, noté tierra firme debajo. Era como si no hubiera esperado que el puente terminase en la otra orilla, en algo tranquilo como la tierra firme que habíamos pisado antes que ésta y conocíamos bien. Como si no debiera haber podido ser yo mismo, porque debí haber sido más sensato y no haber hecho lo que acababa de hacer. Y cuando volví la vista y vi la otra orilla y vi a mi mula allí de pie donde normalmente estaba yo y comprendí que tenía que encontrar algún modo de volver, comprendí que aquello no podía ser, porque no conseguía que se me ocurriese nada que me hiciera volver a cruzar el puente ni siquiera una vez más. Y por mucho que me encontrara aquí, yo no era el tipo que lo iba a cruzar dos veces, ni siquiera aunque me lo pidiera Cora.

Fue ese chico. Le dije:

—Ven aquí; mejor me agarras de la mano —y él esperó y se cogió a mí. Y que me condene si no era como si él volviera atrás y me llevara; era igual que si me dijera: No le van a hacer daño. Igual que si estuviera hablando de un sitio muy agradable que él conocía donde la Navidad llegaba dos veces y lo mismo la fiesta de Acción de Gracias que duraba todo el invierno y la primavera y el verano, y donde si me quedaba con él todo saldría bien. [142]

Cuando me volví a mirar a la mula era como si fuese con uno de esos **catalejos** y la pudiese ver allí quieta y veía todas las tierras y mi casa que tanto sudor me habían costado y era como si a más sudor, más grandes se hicieran las tierras; como si a más sudor, más sólida fuera la casa, porque había que tener una casa sólida para Cora, para que Cora estuviese en ella como una jarra de leche en primavera: uno necesita tener una jarra sólida o necesitará un gran manantial, porque se necesitan jarras sólidas, bien hechas, porque es tu leche, cuajada o no, porque uno prefiere tener leche que cuaje antes que tener leche que no lo haga, porque uno es hombre.

Y él cogido de mi mano con su mano caliente y **confiada**, de modo que me sentía tentado a decir: Mira. ¿No ves a la mula al otro lado? No tiene nada que hacer aquí, por lo que nunca vendrá, pues no es más que una mula.

Porque un tipo puede ver de vez

the Bundrens in a mock-biblical role, then Tull must surely be seen as one of the prophets, for here he foresees that fire will play a part in the saga and that earth will be at the end of it.

confident es 'trusting', 'showing assurance', seguridad o aplomo en sí mismo. «confidence» está basada en razones y pruebas de la experiencia pasada. Confía en sí mismo o está seguro y ufano de sí mismo dada su experiencia pasada. Tener la certeza o confianza. Satisfecho, alegre, contento, ufano.

and then that children have more sense than him. But he don't like to admit it to them until they have beards. After they have a beard, they
 5 are too busy because they don't know if they'll ever quite make it back to where they were in sense before they was haired, so you don't mind admitting then to folks that are
 10 worrying about the same thing that ain't worth the worry that you are yourself.

Then we was over and we stood
 15 there, looking at Cash turning the wagon around. We watched them drive back down the road to where the trail turned off into the bottom. After a while the wagon
 20 was out of sight.

"We better get on down to the ford and git ready to help," I said.

25 "I give her my word," Anse says. "It is sacred on me. I know you **begrudge** it, but she will bless you in heaven."

30 "Well, they got to finish **circumventing** the land before they can dare the water," I said. "Come on."

35 "It's the turning back," he said. "It ain't no luck in turning back."

He was standing there, humped, mournful, looking at the empty
 40 road beyond the swagging and swaying bridge. And that gal, too, with the lunch-basket on one arm and that package under the other. Just going to town. Bent on it.
 45 They would risk the fire and the earth and the water and all just to eat a sack of bananas. "You ought to laid over a day," I said. "It would 'a' fell some by morning.
 50 It mought not 'a' rained to-night. And it can't get no higher."

"I give my promise," he says. "She is counting on it."

55

34
 DARL (12)

BEFORE us the thick dark current
 60 runs. It talks up to us in a murmur become ceaseless and myriad, the yellow surface dimpled monstrously into fading swirls travelling along the surface for an instant, silent,
 65 impermanent and profoundly significant, as though just beneath the surface something huge and alive waked for a moment of lazy alertness out of and into light slumber again.

70 It clucks and murmurs ^{in the middle of} **among** the spokes and about the mules' knees, yellow, skummed with flotsman and with thick soiled gouts of foam as
 75 though it had sweat, lathering, like a driven horse. Through the undergrowth it goes with a plaintive sound, a musing sound; in it the

en cuando que los niños son más sensatos que él. Pero al tipo no le gusta admitirlo hasta que les sale la barba. Después de que les sale la barba están demasiado ocupados porque no saben volver a la época en que tenían sentido común antes de que les saliera la barba y entonces a uno no le importa aceptar que la gente se preocupe de la mismas cosas de las que no merece la pena que se preocupe ni uno mismo.

Luego habíamos cruzado y nos quedamos allí quietos, mirando a Cash que hacía dar la vuelta a la carreta. Les vimos cómo retrocedían camino abajo hasta donde el sendero se desviaba hacia el cauce. Al cabo de un rato la carreta se había perdido de vista.

—Será mejor que bajemos al vado y estemos preparados para ayudarles —dije yo.

—Le di mi palabra —dice Anse—. Para mí eso es algo sagrado. Sé que usted **no lo valora**, pero ella le bendecirá desde el cielo.

—Bueno, creo que tendrán que terminar de **rodear** la tierra antes de que se arriesguen a meterse en el agua —dije yo—. Vamos.

—Es el retroceder —dije yo—. No da buena suerte retroceder. [143]

Estaba allí de pie, encorvado, mohíno, mirando el desierto camino de más allá del puente que se balanceaba y estremecía. Y esa chica, también, con la cesta del almuerzo colgada del brazo y el paquete debajo del otro. Como si fuera a la ciudad. Decidida a ello. Se enfrentarían al fuego y a la tierra y al agua y a lo que sea con tal de comer una bolsa de plátanos.

—Deberían esperar un día —dije yo—. La riada disminuirá algo por la mañana. Puede que esta noche no llueva. Ya no puede crecer más.

—Se lo prometí —dice él—. Ella confía en mi palabra.

DARL

ANTE nosotros corre la oscura corriente espesa. Nos habla con un murmullo que se hace incesante y múltiple; la amarilla superficie monstruosamente abultada en remolinos que se desvanecen y la recorren durante un instante, silenciosos, efímeros y profundamente significativos, como si justo debajo de esa superficie algo enorme y vivo se despertara durante un momento de vigilia perezosa y volviera a caer en un ligero adormecimiento.

Cloquea y murmura **entre** los radios de las ruedas y alrededor de las patas de las mulas, amarilla, salpicada de restos flotantes y con espesas y sucias gotas de espuma como si sudara, igual que cubre la espuma a un caballo. Corre entre la maleza con un sonido de queja, un sonido meditabundo; sobre ella se

Darl (12)

This section consists of Darl's unspoken and unverballed thoughts as he sits in the wagon beside Cash. When they reach the river Cash is reluctant to cross because the coffin is unbalanced by Addie's reversed body. But he will not let Jewel take over. The wagon is swept off the ford, with Cash clinging to the coffin and telling Darl to jump clear.

COMMENTARY: For Darl, as for Tull, the swollen river is a living thing and a portent; it is 'profoundly significant, as though just below the surface something

saplings half-grown trees

unwinded cane and **saplings** lean as before a little gale, swaying without reflections as though suspended on invisible wires from the branches overhead. Above the ceaseless surface they stand—trees, cane, vines—rootless, severed from the earth, spectral above a scene of immense yet circumscribed desolation filled with the voice of the waste and mournful water.

Cash and I sit in the wagon; Jewel sits the horse at the off rear-wheel. The horse is trembling, its eye rolling wild and baby-blue in its long pink face, its breathing stertorous like groaning. He sits erect, **poised**, looking quietly and steadily and quickly this way and that, his face calm, a little pale, alert. Cash's face is also gravely composed; he and I look at one another with long probing looks, looks that plunge unimpeded through one another's eyes and into the ultimate secret place where for an instant Cash and Darl crouch flagrant and unabashed in all the old terror and the old foreboding, alert and secret and without shame. When we speak our voices are quiet, **detached**.

"I reckon we're still in the road, all right."

"Tull taken and cut them two big whiteoaks. I heard tell how at high water in the old days they used to line up the ford by them trees."

"I reckon he did that two years ago when he was logging down here. I reckon he rever thought that anybody would ever use this ford again."

"I reckon not. Yes, it must have been then. He cut a sight of timber outen here then. Payed off that mortgage with it, I hear tell."

"Yes. Yes, I reckon so. I reckon Vernon could have done that."

"That's a fact. Most folks that logs in this here country, they need a durn good farm to support the sawmill. Or maybe a store. But I reckon Vernon could."

"I reckon so. He's a sight."

"Ay. Vernon is. Yes, it must still be here. He rever would have got that timber out of here if he hadn't cleaned out that old road. I reckon we are still on it." He looks about quietly, at the position of the trees, leaning this way and that, looking back along the floorless road shaped vaguely high in air by the position of the **lopped** and felled trees, as if the road too had been soaked free of earth and floated upward, to leave in its spectral tracing a monument to a still more profound desolation

inclinan las sueltas cañas y **renuevos** como ante un vendaval, doblándose sin volverse hacia atrás como si estuvieran sujetas por unos cables invisibles a las ramas de arriba. Aparecen sobre la incesante superficie —árboles, cañas, tallos— desarraigados, arrancados de la tierra, espectrales sobre una escena de inmensa, aunque limitada, desolación llena de la voz del agua devastadora y siniestra. [144]

Cash y yo vamos sentados en la carreta; Jewel va a caballo junto a la rueda trasera derecha. El caballo tiembla y su ojo, azul claro, gira fiero en su larga cabeza rosada, respirando en estertores, como si gimiera. Jewel va erguido, compuesto, mirando tranquilamente y con energía y viveza aquí y allá, con el rostro en calma, un tanto pálido, alerta. La cara de Cash también tiene una expresión grave; él y yo nos miramos uno al otro con largas miradas inquisitivas, miradas que se hunden sin disimulo en los ojos del otro y llegan al interior del último lugar secreto donde durante un instante Cash y Darl se acurrucan abiertamente, sin avergonzarse por todos los viejos terrores y los viejos presentimientos, alertas y secretos y sin pudor. Cuando hablamos, nuestras voces son tranquilas, **desarraigadas**.

—Para mí que todavía seguimos en el camino.

—Tull cogió y cortó los dos grandes robles. He oído contar por ahí que en las crecidas, antiguamente, aquellos árboles servían para señalar el vado.

—Para mí que los cortó hace dos años cuando andaba talando por aquí abajo. Para mí que nunca creyó que nadie volvería a usar este vado.

—Para mí que no. Sí, debe de haber sido entonces. Cortó bastante madera de por aquí entonces. Terminó de pagar la hipoteca con ella, he oído contar.

—Sí. Sí, para mí que así es. Para mí que Vernon fue capaz de hacer eso.

—Así es. La mayoría de la gente que tala árboles en esta comarca necesita una granja bien buena para mantener el aserradero. O puede que un almacén. Pero para mí que pudo ser Vernon**14. [145]

—Para mí que sí. Es capaz de eso y de más.

—Claro que lo es. Sí, por aquí debe de estar todavía: Vernon nunca habría podido sacar esa madera sin limpiar ese camino viejo. Para mí que todavía seguimos en él.

Mira a su alrededor pausadamente, se fija en la situación de los árboles, doblándose a un lado y a otro, volviéndose a mirar el camino vagamente señalado por la situación de los árboles **cortados** y caídos, como si el camino también hubiera sido arrancado de la tierra y flotase hacia arriba para dejar con su huella espectral un monumento a una desolación todavía más profunda que ésta encima de

huge and alive waked for a moment of lazy alertness'. Darl reflects on the scene calmly, watching unconcernedly as Jewel fights the current and the dead mules roll round in the water with their legs 'stiffly extended'. Even when he himself gets into the water, he remains precise and **unruffled [imperturbable]**, seeing the water as 'hills' and feeling no **compunction** about abandoning Addie's corpse.

The section exposes one new aspect of family interrelationships. Darl and Cash appear to be close in a way not hinted at before. This closeness may be simply the result of the alteration in their joint world brought about by the death of Addie. It appears again at the end of the book, when Cash seems to understand more than anyone else what is wrong with Darl.

compunction 1the pricking of the conscience. Reparo, repudio, 2a slight regret; a scruple (without compunction); have no compunction in (refusing him). Remordimiento **compunción** 1. f. Sentimiento o dolor de haber cometido un pecado. 2. Sentimiento que causa el dolor ajeno.

poised 1(= self-possessed) sereno; ecuaníme 2 **to be poised** (*figurative*) (= ready, all set) estar listo
poise 1 a : **BALANCE**; *especially*: to hold or carry in equilibrium <carried a water jar poised on her head> b : to hold supported or suspended without motion in a steady position <poised her fork and gave her guest a knowing look — Louis Bromfield> 2 : to hold or carry (the head) in a particular way 3 : to put into readiness : **BRACE** *intransitive senses* 1 : to become drawn up into readiness 2 : **HOVER**

lop 1 *tr.* a (often foll. by *off, away*) cut or remove (a part or parts) from a whole, esp. branches from a tree. b remove branches from (a tree). 2 *tr.* (often foll. by *off, away*) remove (items) as superfluous. 3 *intr.* (foll. by *at*) make lopping strokes on (a tree etc.).

—*n.* parts lopped off, esp. branches and twigs of trees. **lop** 2 1 *intr.* & *tr.* hang limply. 2 *intr.* (foll. by *about*) slouch, dawdle; hang about. 3 *intr.* move with short bounds. 4 *tr.* (of an animal) let (the ears) hang.

than this above which we now sit, talking quietly of old security and old trivial things. Jewel looks at him, then at me, then his face
5 turns in in that quiet, constant, questing about the scene, the horse trembling quietly and steadily between his knees.

10 “He could go on ahead slow and sort of feel it out,” I say.

“Yes,” Cash says, not looking at me. His face is in profile as he looks forward
15 where Jewel has moved on ahead.

“He can’t miss the river,” I say. “He couldn’t miss seeing it fifty yards ahead.”
20

Cash does not look at me, his face in profile. “If I’d just suspicioned it, I could ‘a’ come down last week and taken a sight on it.”
25

“The bridge was up then,” I say. He does not look at me. “Whitfield crossed it a-horse-back.”

30 Jewel looks at us again, his expression sober and alert and **subdued**. His voice is quiet. X
“What you want me to do?”

35 “I ought to come down last week and taken a sight on it,” Cash says.

“We couldn’t have known,” I say. “There wasn’t any way for us to
40 know.”

“I’ll ride on ahead,” Jewel says. “You can follow where I am.” He lifts the horse. It shrinks,
45 bowed; he leans to it, speaking to it, lifting it forward almost bodily, it setting its feet down with gingerly splashings, trembling, breathing harshly.
50 He speaks to it, murmurs to it. “Go on,” he says. “I ain’t going to get nothing hurt you. Go on, now.”

“Jewel,” Cash says. Jewel does not
55 look back. He lifts the horse on.

“He can swim,” I say. “If he’ll just give the horse time, anyhow . . .” When he was born, he had a bad
60 time of it. Ma would sit in the lamplight, holding him on a pillow on her lap. We would wake and find her so. There would be no sound from them.

65 “That pillow was longer than him,” Cash says. He is leaning a little forward. “I ought to come down last week and sighted. I
70 ought to done it.”

“That’s right,” I say. “Neither his feet nor his head would reach the end of it. You couldn’t
75 have known,” I say.

“I ought to done it,” he says. He lifts the reins. The mules move, into

la que ahora vamos, hablando tranquilamente de la vieja seguridad y de viejas cosas triviales. Jewel le mira a él, luego a mí, luego su cara se concentra en la escena con esa silenciosa interrogación constante, mientras su caballo tiembla tranquila y constantemente entre sus rodillas.

—Podría adelantarse despacio para tantearlo —digo yo.

—Sí —dice Cash, sin mirarme. Su rostro está de perfil cuando mira hacia delante, adonde Jewel avanza.

—No puede dejar de ver el río —dije yo—. No podrá dejar de verlo cuarenta metros por delante de él.

Cash no me mira, su cara sigue de perfil. —Si lo hubiera sospechado, podría haber bajado hasta aquí la semana pasada a echar una ojeada.

—Entonces todavía estaba el puente —digo yo. No me mira—. Whitfield lo cruzó a caballo.

Jewel nos vuelve a mirar con expresión grave y alerta **subdued** dominada, controlada
y **mortificada**. Su voz es tranquila. —¿Qué queréis que haga?

—Debí haber bajado la semana pasada a echar una ojeada —dice Cash.

—Entonces no lo sabíamos —digo yo—. No había modo de que lo supiéramos. [146]

—Me adelantaré con el caballo —dice Jewel—. Podéis seguirme por donde vaya yo. Tensa las riendas del caballo. Este recula, bajando la cabeza; Jewel se inclina sobre él, le habla, le empuja hacia delante con casi todo el cuerpo y el caballo hunde sus cascos con cautelosos chapoteos, temblando, respirante con fuerza. Jewel le habla, le murmura.

—Vamos —dice—. **No voy a dejar** que te hagas daño. Vamos.

Jewel —dice Cash. Jewel no vuelve la vista. Sigue hostigando al caballo.

—Puede nadar —digo yo—. Si diese ocasión al caballo...

Cuando nació, Jewel pasó una mala temporada. Madre tenía que sentarse a la luz de una lámpara, manteniéndole en el regazo encima de una almohada. Al despertarnos la encontrábamos así. No hacían ningún ruido.

—Aquella almohada era más larga que él —dice Cash. Está un poco echado hacia delante—. Debí bajar la semana pasada a echar una ojeada. Debiera haberlo hecho.

—Tienes razón —digo yo—. Ni con los pies ni con la cabeza llegaba a los extremos de la almohada. No podías haberlo sabido —dijo.

—Pero debí haberlo hecho —dice. Tira de las riendas. Las mulas avanzan

subdue 1 conquer, subjugate, or tame (an enemy, nature, one's emotions, etc.).
2 (as **subdued** *adj.*) softened; lacking in intensity; toned down (*subdued* *light*; in a *subdued* *mood*).
(*emoción*: templado, suave; *voice*: bajo; *colour*: apagado, suave; *light*: tenue; *lighting*: disminuido; *person* -*docile*: manso, sumiso, -*depressed*: deprimido.

the traces; the wheels murmur alive in the water. He looks back and down at Addie. "It ain't on a balance," he says.

5

At last the trees open; against the open river Jewel sits the horse, half turned, its belly deep now. Across the river we can see Vernon and pa and Vardaman and Dewey Dell. Vernon is waving at us, waving us further downstream.

15

"We are too high up," Cash says. Vernon is shouting too, but we cannot make out what he says for the noise of the water. It runs steady and deep now, unbroken, without sense of motion until a log comes along, turning slowly. "Watch it," Cash says. We watch it and see it falter and hang for a moment, the current building up behind it in a thick wave, 25 submerging it for an instant before it shoots up and tumbles on.

"There it is," I say.

30

"Ay," Cash says. "It's there." We look at Vernon again. He is now flapping his arms up and down. We move on downstream, slowly and carefully, watching Vernon. He drops his hands. 35 "This is the place," Cash says.

"Well, goddamn it, lets get across, then," Jewel says. He moves the horse on.

40

"You wait," Cash says. Jewel stops again.

45

"Well, by God——" he says. Cash looks at the water, then he looks back at Addie. "It ain't on a balance," he says.

50

"Then go on back to the goddamn bridge and walk across," Jewel says. "You and Darl both. Let me on that wagon."

55

Cash does not pay him any attention. "It ain't on a balance," he says. "Yes, sir. We got to watch it."

60

"Watch it, hell," Jewel says. "You get out of that wagon and let me have it. By God, if you're afraid to drive it over . . ." His eyes are pale as two bleached chips in his face. Cash is looking at him.

65

"We'll get it over," he says. "I tell you what you do. You ride on back and walk across the bridge and come down the other bank and meet us with the rope. Vernon'll take your horse home with him and keep it till we get back."

"You go to hell," Jewel says.

75

"You take the rope and come down the bank and be ready with it," Cash says. "Three can't do no more than two can—— one to drive and one to

entre los arneses; las ruedas murmuran vivas en el agua. Se vuelve y baja la vista hasta Addie—. No está equilibrado —dice.

Al fin se aclaran los árboles; Jewel se enfrenta a la corriente a caballo medio vuelto, el agua ya a la altura del vientre del animal. Al otro lado del río distinguimos a Vernon y a padre y a Vardaman y a Dewey Dell. Vernon nos hace señas, nos hace señas de que vayamos un poco más corriente abajo.

—Vamos demasiado arriba —dice Cash. Vernon también grita, pero no conseguimos saber lo que dice a causa del ruido del agua que ahora corre intensa y profunda, incesante, sin dar la sensación de que se mueva hasta que un tronco llega y gira lentamente—. Vigílalo —dice Cash. Lo miramos y vemos que vacila y queda en alto durante un [147] momento. La corriente se alza por detrás de él en una ola espesa, hundiéndolo durante un instante antes de arrastrarlo y llevárselo.

—Allí está —digo yo.

—Sí —dice Cash—. Allí está —miramos a Vernon otra vez. Ahora sube y baja los brazos. Seguimos corriente abajo lenta y cuidadosamente, mirando a Vernon que deja caer los brazos—. Este es el sitio —dice Cash.

—Bueno, maldita sea, vamos a cruzar, entonces —dice Jewel. Hace avanzar al caballo.

—Tú espera —dice Cash. Jewel se vuelve a parar.

—Pero, por Dios... —dice. Cash mira el agua, luego se vuelve a mirar a Addie. —No está equilibrado —dice.

—Entonces volved a ese condenado puente y cruzadlo a pie —dice Jewel—. Los dos, tú y Darl. Dejadme a mí esa carreta.

Cash no le presta la menor atención. —No está equilibrado —dice—. No, señor. Debemos tener mucho cuidado.

—Tenlo tú, si quieres —dice Jewel—. Bajaos de esa carreta y dejadme a mí. Por Dios, que si tenéis miedo de cruzar con ella... —en su cara sus ojos son tan pálidos como dos virutas descoloridas. Cash le está mirando.

—Nosotros lo cruzaremos —dice—. Te diré lo que tienes que hacer. Vuelve atrás con el caballo y cruza el puente y bájate en la otra orilla y reñete con nosotros con la soga. Vernon se llevará tu caballo a casa y lo cuidará hasta que volvamos.

—Vete al infierno —dice Jewel.

—Coge la soga y baja a la orilla y tenla preparada —dice Cash—. Tres no pueden más que dos, uno conduciendo y el otro su-

steady it.”

jetándolo.

“Goddamn you,” Jewel says.

—Que el diablo te lleve —dice Jewel.

5 “Let Jewel take the end of the rope and cross upstream of us and brace it,” I say. “Will you do that, Jewel?”

—Que Jewel coja un extremo de la sogá y cruce aguas arriba y la ate —digo yo—. ¿Vas a hacerlo, Jewel?

Jewel watches me, hard. He looks quick at Cash, then back at me, his eyes alert and hard. “I don’t give a damn. Just so we do something. Setting here, not lifting a goddamn hand . . .”

Jewel me mira con dureza. Mira rápidamente a Cash, luego se vuelve hacia mí, con ojos alerta y duros.

—No me importa nada. Mientras hagamos algo. No tiene [148] sentido seguir aquí sin mover ni un maldito dedo...

15 “Let’s do that, Cash,” I say.

—Vamos a hacer eso, Cash —digo yo.

“I reckon we’ll have to,” Cash says.

—Para mí que lo tendremos que hacer —dice Cash.

20 The river itself is not a hundred yards across, and pa and Vernon and Vardaman and Dewey Dell are the only things in sight not of that single
25 monotony of desolation leaning with that terrific quality a little from right to left, as though we had reached the place where the motion of the wasted world accelerates just before the final
30 precipice. Yet they appear dwarfed. It is as though the space between us were time: an irrevocable quality. It is as though time, no longer running straight before us in a diminishing
35 line, now runs parallel between us like a looping string, the distant being the doubling accretion of the thread and not the interval between. The mules stand, their forequarters
40 already sloped a little, their rumps high. They too are breathing now with a deep groaning sound; looking back once, their gaze sweeps across us with in their eyes a wild, sad,
45 profound and despairing quality as though they had already seen in the thick water the shape of the disaster which they could not speak and we could not see.

El propio río no tiene ni cien metros de anchura, y padre y Vernon y Vardaman y Dewey Dell son las únicas cosas a la vista que no pertenecen a esa monotonía desolada que se extiende de manera aterradora a derecha e izquierda, como si hubiéramos alcanzado un lugar donde el movimiento del desolado mundo se acelerara antes de hundirse en el precipicio final. Sin embargo aparecen como empequeñecidos. Es como si el espacio que hay entre nosotros fuera tiempo: una cualidad irrevocable. Es como si el tiempo ya no corriera derecho por delante de nosotros en una línea menguante, sino que ahora corre paralelo a nosotros como una cuerda que nos envuelve, duplicando la distancia que nos separa. Las mulas están quietas con las patas delanteras un poco hundidas y las grupas en alto. Además, ahora jadean con ronco y profundo sonido; miran hacia atrás una vez, y su mirada nos roza con unos ojos en los que hay algo salvaje, triste, profundo y desesperado como si ya hubiesen visto en el agua espesa la imagen de desastre del que no pueden hablar y nosotros no podemos ver.

50 Cash turns back into the wagon. He lays his hands flat on Addie, rocking her a little. His face is calm, down-sloped, calculant,
55 concerned. He lifts his box of tools and wedges it forward under the seat; together we shove Addie forward, wedging her between the tools and the wagon-bed. Then he
60 looks at me.

Cash vuelve al interior de la carreta. Descansa las palmas de la mano encima de Addie, meciéndola un poco. Tiene el rostro en calma, pero alargado, calculador, preocupado. Alza la caja de las herramientas y la encaja debajo del asiento; juntos empujamos a Addie hacia delante, encajándola entre las herramientas y el fondo de la carreta. Luego me mira.

“No,” I say. “I reckon I’ll stay. Might take both of us.”

—No —digo yo—. Me quedaré. Puede que hagamos falta los dos.

65 From the tool-box he takes his coiled rope and carries the end twice around the seat stanchion and passes
X the end to me without tying it. The other end he gays out to Jewel, who
70 takes a turn about his saddle-horn.

De la caja de herramientas saca un rollo de cuerda y pasa uno de los extremos dos veces en torno al _____ pescante y me lo da sin atarlo. El otro extremo se lo entrega a Jewel, que lo da una vuelta en el pomo de la silla de montar.

He must force the horse down into the current. It moves, high-kneed, arch-necked, boring
X and chafing. Jewel sits lightly forward, his knees lifted a little; again his swift alert calm gaze sweeps upon us and on. He lowers the horse

Tiene que obligar al caballo a que se meta en la corriente. El caballo avanza excitado, _____ braceando de mala gana _____ . Jewel lo monta, ligeramente hacia delante, con las rodillas [149] un poco alzadas: su mirada inquieta, alerta y tranquila vuelve a caer sobre nosotros, y pasa de largo. Hunde al caba-

bore: push, make one's way

chafe 1 *tr. & intr.* make or become sore or damaged by rubbing. 2 *tr.* rub (esp. the skin to restore warmth or sensation). 3 *tr. & intr.* make or become annoyed; fret (*was chafed by the delay*). 1 *a* an act of chafing. *b* a sore resulting from this. 2 a state of annoyance.

1. **rozar, raer** (=raspar una superficie quitando pelos, sustancias adheridas, pintura, etc., con instrumento áspero o cortante)

2. **calentar frotando**

3. **desgastar, irritarse, impacientarse**

transitive senses

1: IRRITATE, VEX

2: to warm by rubbing especially with the hands

3 *a*: to rub so as to wear away: ABRASE <the boat *chafed* its sides against the dock> *b*: to make sore by or as if by rubbing

intransitive senses

1: to feel irritation or discontent: FRET <*chafes* at his restrictive desk job>

2: to rub and thereby cause wear or irritation

into the stream, speaking to it in a soothing murmur. The horse slips, goes under to the saddle, surges to its feet again, the current building up
5 against Jewel's thighs.

"Watch yourself," Cash says.

"I'm on it now," Jewel says. "You
10 can come ahead now."

Cash takes the reins and lowers the team carefully and skilfully into the stream.

15

*I felt the current take us and I knew we were on the ford by that reason. Since it was only, by means of that slipping contact that we could tell that we were
20 in motion at all. What had once been a flat surface was now a succession of troughs and hillocks lifting and falling about us, shoving at us, teasing at us with light
25 lazy touches in the vain instants of solidity underfoot. Cash looked back at me, and then I knew that we were gone. But I did not realise the
30 reason for the rope until I saw the log. It surged up out of the water and stood for an instant upright upon that surging and heaving desolation like Christ. Get out and let the current take
35 you down to the bend, Cash said. You can make it all right. No, I said, I'd get just as wet that way as this.*

The log appears suddenly between
40 two hills, as if it had rocketed suddenly from the bottom of the river. Upon the end of it a long gout of foam hangs like the beard of an old man or a goat. When Cash speaks
45 to me I know that he has been watching it all the time, watching it and watching Jewel ten feet ahead of us. "Let the rope go," he says. With his other hand he reaches down and reeves the two turns from the stanchion.
50 "Ride on, Jewel," he says; "see if you can pull us ahead of the log."

Jewel shouts at the horse; again he
55 appears to lift it bodily between his knees. He is just above the top of the ford and the horse has a purchase of some sort for it surges forward, shining wetly half out of water,
60 crashing on in a succession of lunges. It moves unbelievably fast; by that token Jewel realizes at last that the rope is free, for I can see him sawing back on the reins, his head turned, as
65 the log rears in a long **sluggish** funge between us, bearing down upon the team. They see it too; for a moment they also shine black out of water. Then the downstream one vanishes,
70 dragging the other with him; the wagon sheers crosswise, poised on the crest of the ford as the log strikes it, tilting it up and on. Cash is half turned, the reins running taut from his
75 hand and disappearing into the water, the other hand reached back upon Addie, holding her jammed over against the high side of the wagon.

llo en la corriente, hablándole con un murmullo tranquilizador. El caballo resbala, se hunde hasta la silla, vuelve a pisar firme mientras la corriente sube hacia los muslos de Jewel...

—Ten cuidado —Dice Cash.

—Ya estoy —dice Jewel—. Ahora podéis avanzar.

Cash coge las riendas y obliga al tiro a que baje a la corriente, con cuidado y habilidad.

*Sentí que la corriente nos atrapa-
ba y por ese motivo me di cuenta de que
estábamos en el vado, pues sólo por ese
contacto resbaladizo podíamos decir que
nos movíamos de verdad. Lo que una vez
había sido una superficie lisa, ahora era
una sucesión de altos y bajos que subían
y bajaban a nuestro alrededor, que nos
empujaban, que nos fastidiaban con su
leve contacto perezoso en los escasos
instantes en que bajo nuestros pies no-
tábamos algo sólido. Cash se volvió a
mirarme y entonces comprendí que está-
bamos perdidos. Pero no me di cuenta
de la necesidad de la cuerda hasta que
vi el tronco. Surgió del agua y se mantu-
vo derecho durante un instante sobre
aquella agitada y jadeante desolación,
como un Cristo. Salta fuera y deja que
la corriente te lleve hasta el recodo, dijo
Cash. Te será fácil. No, dije yo me mojaré
lo mismo de un modo que de otro*

El tronco aparece de repente entre dos ribazos, como si de repente lo impulsaran desde el fondo del río. De su extremo cuelga una gran gota de espuma como la barba de un viejo o de un macho cabrío. Cuando Cash me habla me doy cuenta de que lleva observándolo todo el tiempo, observándolo y mirando a Jewel que va tres metros por delante de nosotros.

—Suelta la soga —le dice. Con la otra mano la coge y le da dos vueltas alrededor del pescante—. Sigue adelante, Jewel —dice—; a ver si consigues arrastrarnos antes de que llegue el tronco.

Jewel le grita al caballo; parece que otra vez lo levanta a pulso con las rodillas. Está casi en lo más alto del vado y el caballo ha encontrado algún apoyo porque salta hacia delante brillando mojado medio fuera del agua en una sucesión de acometidas. Se mueve increíblemente rápido; debido a eso Jewel se da cuenta de que al fin se ha soltado la cuerda, pues puedo ver cómo tira de las riendas, con la cabeza vuelta, mientras el tronco se coloca con una **perezosa** embestida entre nosotros, cayendo luego sobre el tiro. Las mulas también lo ven; durante un momento también ellas brillan negras fuera del agua. Luego la que está en la parte de abajo de la corriente desaparece, arrastrando a la otra con ella; la carreta se pone de través, recostada en el vado mientras la golpea el tronco que la hace tambalearse. Cash se ha vuelto a medias, las riendas se le escapan de la mano y desaparecen en el agua; echa la otra mano hacia atrás y agarra a Addie manteniéndola apretada contra el fondo de la carreta.

surge 1 [of sea] oleaje m; oleada [of people, sympathy] oleada 2 a power surge (electricity) una subida de tensión 3 [water of sea] swell, levantarse; hincharse, encrespase, agitarse 4 [people, crowd] to surge in/out entrar/salir en tropel 5 the blood surged to her cheeks se le subió la sangre a las mejillas.

surgir 1. intr. **Brotar** el agua hacia arriba, surgir. 2. Dar fondo la nave. 3. fig. Alzarse, manifestarse, brotar, aparecer.

surge 1 : to rise and fall actively : TOSS <a ship surging in heavy seas> 2 : to rise and move in waves or billows : SWELL 3 : to slip around a windlass, capstan, or bits — used especially of a rope 4 : to rise suddenly to an excessive or abnormal value <the stock market surged to a record high> 5 : to move with a surge or in surges <felt the blood surging into his face — Harry Hervey

“Jump clear,” he says quietly. “Stay away from the team and don’t try to fight it. It’ll swing you into the bend all right.”

5

“You come too,” I say. Vernon and Vardaman are running along the bank, pa and Dewey Dell stand watching us, Dewey Dell with the basket and the package in her arms. Jewel is trying to fight the horse back. The head of one mule appears, its eyes wide; it looks back at us for an instant, making a sound almost human. The head vanishes again.

“Back, Jewel,” Cash shouts. “Back, Jewel.” For another instant I see him leaning to the tilting wagon, his arm braced back against Addie and his tools; I see the bearded head of the rearing log strike up again, and beyond it Jewel holding the horse upreared, its head wrenched around, hammering its head with his fist. I jump from the wagon on the downstream side. Between two hills I see the mules once more. They roll up out of the water in succession, turning completely over, their legs stiffly extended as when they had lost contact with the earth.

35

35 VARDAMAN (5)

CASH tried but she fell off and Darl jumped going under he went under and Cash hollering to catch her and I hollering running and hollering and Dewey Dell hollering at me Vardaman you vardaman you vardaman and Vernon passed me because he was seeing her come up and she jumped into the water again and Darl hadn’t caught her yet

He came up to see and I hollering catch her Darl catch her and he didn’t come back because she was too heavy he had to go on catching at her and I hollering catch her darl catch her darl because in the water she could go faster than a man and Darl had to grabble for her so I knew he could catch her because he is the best grabbler even with the mules in the way again they dived up rolling their feet stiff rolling down again and their backs up now and Darl had to again because in the water she could go faster than a man or a woman and I passed Vernon and he wouldn’t get in the water and help Darl he would grabble for her with Darl he knew but he wouldn’t help

The mules dived up again diving their legs stiff their stiff legs rolling slow and then Darl again and I hollering catch her darl catch her head her into the bank darl and Vernon wouldn’t help and then Darl dodged past the mules where he could he had her under the water coming in to the bank coming in slow because in the water she fought to stay under the water but Darl is strong and he was

—Salta —dice con tranquilidad—. Apártate del tiro y no trates de luchar contra la corriente. Te llevaré hasta el recodo.

—Ven tú también —digo yo.

Vernon y Vardaman corren por la orilla, padre y Dewey Dell nos miran sin moverse; Dewey Dell con la cesta y el paquete en las manos. Jewel hace esfuerzos para que el caballo recule. Aparece la cabeza de una mula con los ojos muy abiertos; nos mira durante un instante, emitiendo un sonido casi humano. La cabeza vuelve a desaparecer.

—Atrás, Jewel —grita Cash—. Atrás, Jewel.

Durante otro instante le veo inclinado junto al carro volcado con el brazo sujetando a Addie y a sus herramientas; veo la cabeza barbuda del tronco que se empina y golpea de nuevo, y más allá a Jewel que sujeta a su caballo encabritado y con la cabeza torcida a la que golpea con el puño. Salto de la carreta por el lado en que se aleja la corriente. Entre dos ribazos veo una vez más a las mulas. Dan vueltas fuera del agua una después de otra, girando sobre sí mismas, con las patas tiesas como si hubieran perdido contacto con la tierra.

VARDAMAN

Cash hizo lo que pudo, pero ella cayó fuera y Darl saltó al caer y se hundió y Cash gritaba que la cogiera y yo gritaba y corría y gritaba y Dewey Dell me gritaba Vardaman ven vardaman ven vardaman y Vernon me adelantó porque la estaba viendo asomar y cómo se volvía a hundir y Darl todavía no la había agarrado

Sacó la cabeza para mirar y yo le gritaba cógela Darl cógela y él no podía porque como ella pesaba demasiado él tenía que hundirse para cogerla y yo le gritaba cógela darl cógela darl porque en el agua ella podía ir más deprisa que un hombre y Darl tenía que ir a tientas buscándola y yo sabía que la cogería porque él es muy bueno en eso de andar a tientas incluso con las mulas estorbando allí hundidas otra vez se hundieron dando vueltas con las patas tiesas y seguían dando vueltas y ahora asomaban el lomo y Darl tenía que hundirse de nuevo porque en el agua ella podía ir más deprisa que un hombre o una mujer y adelanté a Vernon que no se quería meter en el agua a ayudar a Darl a cogerla y aunque sabía no le quería ayudar

Las mulas se sumergieron otra vez sumergiendo sus patas tiesas y sus patas tiesas daban vueltas despacio y entonces Darl apareció otra vez y yo le gritaba cógela darl cógela por la cabeza a la orilla darl y Vernon no quería ayudar y entonces Darl esquivó las mulas y llegó adonde la podía coger y la metió debajo del agua ella intentaba quedar debajo del agua, pero Darl es fuerte y se acercaba des-

Vardaman (5)

This section contains Vardaman’s unspoken and unverbilised thoughts as he watches his mother’s coffin slip into the river. A complete contrast to Darl’s unconcerned observation of the scene, Vardaman’s vision is frantic with worry for he has not as yet grasped the fact that his mother is dead. When Darl emerges without the coffin, Vardaman’s frenzy redoubles for he thinks, on the basis of the conversation in *Vardaman* (4), that Darl knows Addie is a fish and should therefore appreciate that she will try to escape into the water.

coming in slow and so I knew he had
her because he came slow and I ran
down into the water to help and I
couldn't stop hollering because Darl
5 was strong and steady holding her
under the water even if she did fight
he would not let her go he was seeing
me and he would hold her and it was
all right now it was all right now it
10 was all right

*Then he comes up out of the
water. He comes a long way up
slow before his hands do but he's
15 got to have her got to so I can bear
it. Then his hands come up and all
of him above the water. I can't stop.
I have not got time to try. I will try
to when I can but his hands came
20 empty out of the water emptying the
water emptying away*

"Where is ma, Darl?" I said.
"You never got her. You knew she
25 is a fish but you let her get away.
You never got her. Darl. Darl. Darl."
I began to run along the bank,
watching the mules dive up slow
again and then down again.

30

36
TULL (6)

WHEN I told Cora how Darl
35 jumped out of the wagon and left
Cash sitting there trying to save it and
the wagon turning over, and Jewel
that was almost to the bank
fighting that horse back where it
40 had more sense than to go, she says
"And you're one of the folks that says
Darl is the queer one, the one that
ain't bright, and him the only one of
them that had sense enough to get off
45 that wagon. I notice Anse was too
smart to been on it a-tall."

"He couldn't 'a' done no good, if he'd
been there," I said. "They was going
50 about it right and they would have made
it if it hadn't a-been for that log."

"Log, fiddlesticks," Cora said. "It
was the hand of God."
55

"Then how can you say it was
foolish?" I said. "Nobody can't guard
against the hand of God. It would be
sacrilege to try to."
60

"Then why dare it?" Cora says.
"Tell me that."

"Anse didn't," I said. "That's just
65 what you faulted him for."

"His place was there," Cora said.
"If he had been a man, he would
'a' been there instead of making his
70 sons do what he dursn't."

"I don't know what you want,
then," I said. "One breath you say
they was daring the hand of God to
try it, and the next breath you jump on
75 Anse because he wasn't with them."
Then she begun to sing again, working
at the wash-tub, with that singing look

pacio y me di cuenta de que la traía
porque venía tan despacio y corrí al
agua a ayudar y no podía dejar de
gritar porque Darl era fuerte y la aga-
rraba firme por debajo del agua y
aunque ella tratara de escapar él no
la dejaría y me estaba viendo y la
tenía agarrada y por fin lo había con-
seguido por fin lo había conseguido
lo había conseguido

*Luego él asomaba fuera del agua.
Saca despacio gran parte del cuerpo
antes de que le aparean las manos, pero
tiene que tenerla la tiene que tener para que
yo pueda soportarlo. Luego salen sus ma-
nos y todo él del agua. No me puedo pa-
rar. No tengo tiempo para intentarlo. Lo
intentaré en cuanto pueda, pero sus ma-
nos salen vacías del agua deraguándose
desaguándose.*

—¿Dónde está madre, Darl? —dije
yo—. No conseguiste cogerla. Sabías que
es un pez, pero la has dejado escapar. No
conseguiste cogerla. Darl. Darl. Darl.

Eché a correr por la orilla viendo
a las mulas asomarse muy despacio
y luego hundirse de nuevo.

TULL

CUANDO le conté a Cora cómo saltó
Darl de la carreta y dejó a Cash allí den-
tro tratando de salvarla y que la carreta
volcó, y que Jewel que casi estaba ya en
la orilla intentaba que el caballo volvie-
ra adonde el animal con muy buen senti-
do no quería ir, ella me dice:

—Y tú eres de los que dicen que
Darl es un tipo raro, que no tiene lu-
ces, cuando él fue el único de todos
ellos lo bastante sensato como para sal-
tar de esa carreta. Ya veo que Anse es
demasiado listo para subirse a ella.

—No habría servido de nada que hu-
biera estado allí dentro —dije yo—. Lo
estaban haciendo muy bien y lo habrían
conseguido de no ser por aquel tronco.

—El tronco, ¡tonterías! —dijo Cora—.
Fue la mano de Dios.

—¿Entonces cómo eres capaz de de-
cir que era una locura? —dije yo—. Na-
die puede librarse de la mano de Dios.
Sería sacrilegio intentarlo.

—¿Entonces por qué la desafían? —
dice Cora—. Venga, contesta.

—Anse no la desafió —dije yo—. Y
precisamente es lo que le echas en cara.

—Su sitio estaba allí —dijo Cora—.
Si fuera un hombre de verdad, habría es-
tado allí en vez de dejar que sus hijos
hicieran lo que él no se atrevía a hacer.

—No entiendo qué es lo que quie-
res —dije yo—. Tan pronto dices
que intentar eso era desafiar la mano
de Dios, como reprochas a Anse el
no haber estado con ellos. [153]

Luego ella empezó a cantar otra vez,
a fregar [en] el barreño, con una expre-

Tull (6)

In this section, Tull recalls the incident after it has happened and he has told Cora about it and, at the same time, goes over the event in his own mind. He realises that Darl leapt from the wagon to save himself and he is troubled when Cora, who usually puts things into an acceptable perspective, seems to be inconsistent in her view of this incident, saying that Darl showed sense in abandoning the wagon yet insisting that Anse ought to have been on it. Even in retrospect, the scene strikes Tull as one of utter confusion, with wagon, horse, mules, Cash, Darl and Jewel all thrashing about in the water with the coffin and Vardaman being chased up and down the bank by Dewey Dell. Jewel eventually emerged from the confusion, holding the wagon with the rope, and Cash appeared grasping the saddle of Jewel's horse, half-drowned and unconscious.

COMMENTARY: When Tull looks back on the incident at the ford, he sees it in terms of something which was meant to happen. The log which caused the death of the mules he says was 'like it had been sent there to do a job and done it and went on'. When things calm down, Tull sees a dead animal float past, its body distended by foul gases. Although he does not make the connection, it strikes the reader that Addie, who is also floating down the stream, must be in a similar state.

in her face like she had done give up folks and all their foolishness and had done went on ahead of them, marching up the sky, singing.

5

The wagon hung for a long time while the current built up under it, shoving it off the ford, and Cash leaning more and more, trying to keep the coffin braced so it wouldn't slip down and finish tilting the wagon over. Soon as the wagon got tilted good, to where the current could finish it, the log went on. It headed around the wagon and went on good as a swimming man could have done. It was like it had been sent there to do a job and done it and went on.

When the mules finally kicked loose, it looked for a minute like maybe Cash would get the wagon back. It looked like him and the wagon wasn't moving at all, and just Jewel fighting that horse back to the wagon. Then that boy passed me, running and hollering at Darl and the gal trying to catch him, and then I see the mules come rolling slow up out of the water, their legs spraddled stiff like they had **balked** upside down, and roll on into the water again.

balked: refused to move

Then the wagon tilted over and then it and Jewel and the horse was all mixed up together. Cash went outen sight, still holding the coffin braced, and then I couldn't tell anything for the horse lunging and splashing. I thought that Cash had give up then and was swimming for it and I was yelling at Jewel to come on back and then all of a sudden him and the horse went under too and I thought they was all going. I knew that the horse had got dragged off the ford too, and with that wild drowning horse and that wagon and that loose box; it was going to be pretty bad, and there I was, standing knee deep in the water, yelling at Anse behind me: "See what you done now? See what you done now?"

The horse come up again. It was headed for the bank now, throwing its head up, and then I saw one of them holding to the saddle on the downstream side, so I started running along the bank, trying to catch sight of Cash because he couldn't swim, yelling at Jewel where Cash was like a durn fool, bad as that boy that was on down the bank still hollering at Darl.

So I went down into the water so I could still keep some kind of a grip in the mud, when I saw Jewel. He was middle deep, so I knew he was on the ford, anyway, leaning hard upstream, and then I see the rope, and then I see the water building up where he was holding the wagon **snubbed** just below the ford.

snubbed: caught

sión cantarina en la cara como si hubiera renunciado a la gente y a todas sus tonterías y se hubiese adelantado a todos y se dirigiera cantando a los cielos.

La carretera estuvo en alto durante largo rato mientras la corriente se elevaba por debajo de ella, arrastrándola fuera del vado, y Cash inclinándose más y más trataba de mantener sujeto el ataúd de modo que no resbalara hacia abajo y terminara por volcar la carreta. En cuanto la carreta se venció por completo y quedó a merced de la corriente, el tronco siguió su camino. Cabeceó alrededor de la carreta y siguió como podría haber hecho un buen nadador. Fue como si lo hubieran mandado allí a hacer un trabajo y después de terminarlo siguiera su camino.

Cuando las mulas se soltaron por fin a fuerza de coces, durante un momento pareció que Cash conseguiría hacerse con la carreta. Parecía que ni él ni la carreta se movían nada, y que Jewel era el único que se esforzaba por llevar al caballo de vuelta a la carreta. Entonces el pequeño me adelantó, corriendo y gritándole a Darl mientras la chica trataba de agarrarlo, y entonces veo que las mulas dan vueltas muy despacio por el agua con las patas tiesas como si se hubieran **encabritado** cabeza abajo y tropezaran con algo para caer otra vez al agua.

Entonces la carreta volcó del todo y luego ésta y Jewel y el caballo se enredaron todos juntos. Cash se perdió de vista con el ataúd todavía sujeto, y luego no podría decir nada más que el caballo embestía y chapoteaba. Creí que Cash ya se había rendido y se había echado al agua y le grité a Jewel que volviera y entonces de repente él y el caballo también se hundieron y pensé que se iban a ahogar. Comprendí que el caballo también había sido arrastrado fuera del vado, y con ese caballo medio salvaje ahogándose y esa carreta y esa caja suelta, la cosa no iba nada bien y allí estaba yo, metido en el agua hasta las rodillas, gritándole a Anse que estaba detrás de mí:

—¿Ve lo que ha conseguido? ¿Ve lo que ha conseguido?

El caballo volvió a aparecer. Se dirigía a la orilla sacando mucho la cabeza y entonces vi a uno de ellos sujeto a la [154] silla de montar a favor de la corriente, conque eché a correr por la orilla tratando de distinguir a Cash que no sabía nadar y gritándole a Jewel que dónde estaba Cash, como un loco tan loco como el pequeño que seguía orilla abajo llamando a gritos a Darl.

Conque me metí en el agua de modo que pudiera seguir haciendo pie en el lodo, cuando distinguí a Jewel. Estaba medio hundido, conque me di cuenta de que estaba en el vado inclinado contracorriente, y luego veo la sogá y luego veo que el agua se levanta justo donde él estaba sujetando la carreta, que **se detuvo bruscamente por debajo del vado.**

snub rebuff, repulse, ignore, repel
snub v. 1 rebuff or humiliate with sharp words or a marked lack of cordiality. 2 check the movement of (a boat, horse, etc.) esp. by a rope wound round a post etc.

snub 1. To ignore or behave coldly toward; slight. 2. To dismiss, turn down, or frustrate the expectations of. 3. *Nautical* a. To check the movement of (a rope or cable running out) by turning it quickly about a post or cleat. b. To secure (a vessel, for example) in this manner. 4. To stub out (a cigarette, for example).

snub nose a short turned-up nose. nariz respingona, roma, chata, unusually short

snub nose a short turned-up nose = respingona.

snub-nosed having a snub nose. nariz puntiaguda
snub-nosed de nariz respingona (turned-up).
Respingona es aquella cuya punta tira hacia arriba.

Chata es la la nariz poco prominente y como aplastada. Flat nose = Nariz chata.

scramble *n.* 1 scamper, scurry *rushing about hastily in an undignified way* 2 scuffle, make one's way to, pasar con esfuerzo, como se pueda *an unceremonious and disorganized struggle* 3 *scramble to one's feet* ponerse de pie con esfuerzo, como se pueda, con dificultad. 4 *tr. Revolver* mix together indiscriminately. *b* jumble or muddle. *v.* 1 make unintelligible; "scramble the message so that nobody can understand it" 2 beat, stir vigorously; "beat the egg whites"; "beat the cream" 3 jumble, throw together *bring into random order* 4 *to move hurriedly arreglarse a toda prisa*; "The friend scrambled after them" 5 clamber, shin, shiny, skin, struggle, sputter *climb awkwardly, as if by scrambling*

scramble *l v. tr.* 1 mezclar 2 *Tele (mensaje) codificar*

ll v. intr. 1 ir gateando *to scramble across a field, cruzar un campo gateando; to scramble up a tree, trepar a un árbol* 2 pelearse [for, por], andar a la rebatía [for, por]; *fans were scrambling for the concert tickets, los fans se tiraban de los pelos por una entrada para el concierto* 3 *Dep* hacer motocross

lll n. 1 subida o escalada difícil 2 confusión, rebatía 3 *Dep* carrera de motocross

prod *1 tr.* poke with the finger or a pointed object. 2 *tr.* stimulate to action. 3 *intr.* (foll. by *ed*) make a prodding motion. 1 a poke or thrust. 2 a stimulus to action. 3 a pointed instrument.

shoat: (Am. English) young hog

orbita cuenca del ojo
ridge cresta, arruga

So it was Cash holding to the horse when it come splashing and **scrambling up** the bank, moaning and groaning like a natural man. 5 When I come to it it was just kicking Cash loose from his holt on the saddle. His face turned up a second when he was sliding back into the water. It was grey, with his eyes 10 closed and a long **swipe** of mud across his face. Then he let go and turned over in the water. He looked just like an old bundle of clothes kind of washing up and down 15 against the bank. He looked like he was laying there in the water on his face, rocking up and down a little, looking at something on the bottom.

20 We could watch the rope cutting down into the water, and we could feel the weight of the wagon kind of blump and lunge lazy like, like it just as soon as not, and that rope cutting 25 down into the water hard as a iron bar. We could hear the water hissing on it like it was red hot. Like it was a straight iron bar stock into the bottom and us holding the end of it, 30 and the wagon lazing up and down, kind of pushing and **prodding** at us like it had come around and got behind us, lazy like, like it just as soon as not when it made up its 35 mind. There was a **shoat** come by, blowed up like a balloon: one of them spotted shoats of Lon Quick's. It bumped against the rope like it was a iron bar and bumped off and 40 went on, and us watching that rope slanting down into the water. We watched it.

37

45 DABL (13)

CASH lies on his back on the earth, his head raised on a rolled garment. His eyes are closed, his 50 face is grey, his hair plastered in a smooth smear across his forehead X _____ contra la frente como si se lo hubieran pintado de un brochazo. Su rostro aparece un poco hundido alrededor de las huesudas **orbitas** de los ojos, de la nariz, de las encías, como si el remojón hubiera ablandado la carne que mantenía tirante la piel; los dientes, incrustados en unas pálidas encías, están ligeramente entreabiertos como si se hubiera estado riendo por lo bajo. Yace flaco como un palo con la ropa chorreante, con un charquito de vómitos al lado de la cabeza y un hillo que le corre por la barbilla desde la comisura de la boca hasta el charco como si no hubiera apartado la cabeza con suficiente rapidez o con bastante fuerza, hasta que Dewey Dell se agacha y se lo limpia con el borde de la falda.

70 Jewel approaches. He has the plane. "Vernon just found the square," he says. He looks down at Cash, dripping too. "Ain't he talked none yet?"

75 "He had his saw and hammer and chalk-line and rule," I say. "I know that."

De modo que era Cash el que se agarraba al caballo cuando éste llegó chapoteando y **trepó** a la orilla; gemía y gruñía como un hombre de verdad. Cuando llegué junto a él estaba soltando coces para librarse de Cash que se agarraba al pomo de la silla. Le vi la cara durante un segundo mientras volvía a hundirse en el agua. Estaba grisácea, con los ojos cerrados y cruzada por una larga **línea** de barro. Luego se dejó ir y volvió a hundirse en el agua. Parecía igual que un viejo fardo de ropa empujando por la corriente subiendo y bajando contra la orilla. Parecía como si estuviera tumbado allí, de cara, en el agua, meciéndose un poco arriba y abajo, y mirara algo del fondo.

Podíamos ver la sogá hundida en el agua, y sentir el peso de la carreta en los tirones, puede que un tanto perezosos, que daba, mientras la sogá se hundía en el agua tiesa como una barra de hierro. Oíamos sisear el agua en contacto con ella como si estuviera al rojo vivo. Como si fuera una barra de hierro clavada en el fondo y nosotros agarrásemos uno de sus extremos, y la carreta subía y bajaba perezosamente, y tiraba de nosotros o nos **empujaba** como si hubiera dado la vuelta poniéndose a nuestras espaldas, siempre perezosamente, como si no terminara de decidir lo que hacer. Pasó un **lechón** flotando en nuestro lado, hinchado como un globo: era uno de los lechones con pintas de Lon Quick. Tropezó con la sogá que era como una barra de hierro y salió rebotado y se alejó, y nosotros mirábamos aquella sogá que se hundía oblicua en el agua. La mirábamos con atención. [155]

DABL

Darl (13)

Here Darl records the conversations which take place as the family try to recover Cash's carpentry tools from the river.

COMMENTARY: This section is fairly straightforward, save that what Darl records has been selected by him and highlights the typical poses of those around him. It ends with a poetic, unverballed image of Jewel and Vernon working in the river and contrasting, in their sleekness, with the rotund femininity of Dewey Dell. The image is contained in the lines 'Jewel and Vernon are in the river . . . valleys of the earth'. This is at once eloquent of the archetypal differences between men and women, the one hard and lean, the other soft and round, and of Darl's role in the family. He is always on the edge of things, never at their centre. Yet he is not a

Jewel lays the square down. Pa watches him. "They can't be far away," pa says. 5 "It all went together. Was there ere a such misfortunate man."

Jewel does not look at pa. "You better call Vardaman back 10 here," he says. He looks at Cash. Then he turns and goes away. "Get him to talk soon as he can," he says, "so he can tell us what else there was."

15 We return to the river. The wagon is hauled clear, the wheels chocked (carefully: we all helped; it is as though upon the shabby, familiar, inert shape of the wagon there 20 lingered somehow, latent yet still immediate, that violence which had slain the mules that drew it not an hour since) above the edge of the flood. In the wagon bed it lies 25 profoundly, the long pale planks hushed a little with wetting yet still yellow, like gold seen through water, save for two long muddy smears. We pass it and go on to the bank.

30 One end of the rope is made fast to a tree. At the edge of the stream, knee-deep, Vardaman stands, bent forward a little, watching Vernon 35 with rapt absorption. He has stopped yelling and he is wet to the armpits. Vernon is at the other end of the rope, shoulder-deep in the river, looking back at Vardaman. 40 "Further back than that," he says. "You git back by the tree and hold the rope for me, so it can't slip."

Vardaman backs along the rope, 45 to the tree, moving blindly, watching Vernon. When we come up he looks at us once, his eyes round and a little dazed. Then he looks at Vernon again in that 50 posture of rapt alertness.

"I got the hammer too," Vernon says. "Looks like we ought to 55 done already got that chalk-line. It ought to floated."

"Floated clean away," Jewel says. "We won't get it. We ought 60 to find the saw, though."

"I reckon so," Vernon says. He looks at the water. "That chalk-line, 65 too. What else did he have?"

"He ain't talked yet," Jewel says, 70 entering the water. He looks back at me. "You go back and get him roused up to talk," he says.

"Pa's there," I say. I follow Jewel into the water, along the rope. It feels alive in my hand, bellied faintly in a prolonged 75 and resonant arc. Vernon is watching me.

"You better go," he says. "You better be there."

Jewel deja la escuadra en el suelo. Padre le observa.

—No pueden estar lejos —dice padre—. Todas iban juntas. Cuidado que ha tenido mala suerte.

Jewel no mira a padre. [156] —Será mejor que le diga a Vardaman que venga aquí —dice. Mira a Cash. Luego da media vuelta y se marcha—. Que hable en cuanto pueda —dice—, así nos podrá decir qué otras cosas traía.

Volvemos al río. Tiramos de la carreta y calzamos las ruedas (con mucho cuidado: todos ayudamos; es como si dentro de la miserable, familiar, inerte estructura de la carreta aún persistiera, latente aunque todavía activa, aquella violencia que había matado a las mulas que no hace ni una hora que tiraban de ella) al borde de la crecida. En el fondo de la carreta sigue la caja, con sus pálidas tablas apagadas un poco por la humedad, aunque todavía amarillas, como oro visto a través del agua, salvo en dos grandes manchas de barro. La pasamos y seguimos hasta la orilla.

Uno de los extremos de la soga se ata a un árbol. Al borde de la corriente, con el agua hasta las rodillas. Vardaman está de pie, un poco inclinado hacia delante, mirando a Vernon como absorto. Ha dejado de gritar y está empapado hasta los sobacos. Vernon está al otro extremo de la soga, hundido en el río hasta los hombros, mirando a su vez a Vardaman.

—Vete un poco más allá —dice—. Sigue hasta el árbol y sujétame la soga para que no se escurra.

Vardaman recula a lo largo de la soga hasta el árbol; se mueve a ciegas y observa a Vernon. Cuando llegamos nos mira una vez con unos ojos redondos y un poco aturridos. Luego vuelve a mirar a Vernon en la misma postura de absorta atención.

—Tengo también el martillo —dice Vernon—. Para mí que ya deberíamos haber encontrado la cuerda de marcar. Tendría que andar flotando por ahí.

—Seguro que flotó y se la llevó la corriente —dice Jewel—. No daremos con ella. Aunque deberíamos encontrar la sierra.

—Para mí que sí la encontraremos —dice Vernon. Mira al agua—. Y también la cuerda de marcar. ¿Qué otras cosas tenía?

—Todavía no habla —dice Jewel, metiéndose en el agua. Me mira otra vez—. Vuelve, y a ver si consigues que hable —dice.

—Padre está allí —digo yo. Sigo a Jewel dentro del agua, cogiéndome a la soga. La noto como viva en la mano, ligeramente combada en un arco prolongado y vibrante. Vernon me está mirando.

—Mejor será que te vayas —dice—. Será mejor que estés allí.

detached observer, for there is an element of longing both in his observation of Jewel and Vernon and of his sister. Her breasts, 'the hills and valleys of the earth', draw him in a way which is only adequately explained when we get to Addie's section. While he may talk of Dewey Dell's breasts as 'ludicrousities' and of Jewel's care as 'ludicrous', the other terms in which Darl's un verbalised image is couched suggest that he is attracted towards the very things he describes as ludicrous.

“Let’s see what else we can get before it washes on down,” I say.

5

We hold to the rope, the current curling and dimpling about our shoulders. But beneath that false blandness the true force of it leans against us lazily. I had not thought that water in July could be so cold. It is like hands moulding and **prodding** at the very bones. Vernon is still looking back toward the bank.

“Reckon it’ll hold us all?” he says. We too look back, following the rigid bar of the rope as it rises from the water to the tree and Vardaman crouched a little beside it, watching us. “Wish my mule wouldn’t strike out for home,” Vernon says.

25

“Come on,” Jewel says. “Let’s get outen here.”

We submerge in turn, holding to the rope, being clutched by one another while the cold wall of the water sucks the slanting mud backward and upstream from beneath our feet and we are suspended so, groping along the cold bottom. Even the mud there is not still. It has a chill, scouring quality, as though the earth under us were in motion too. We touch and fumble at one another’s extended arms, letting ourselves go cautiously against the rope; or, erect in turn, watch the water suck and boil where one of the other two gropes beneath the surface. Pa has come down to the shore, watching us.

Vernon comes up, streaming, his face sloped down into his pursed blowing mouth. His mouth is bluish, like a circle of weathered rubber. He has the rule.

“He’ll be glad of that,” I say. “It’s right new. He bought it just last month out of the catalogue.”

“If we just knowed for sho what else,” Vernon says, looking over his shoulder and then turning to face where Jewel, had disappeared. “Didn’t he go down ‘fore me?” Vernon says.

“I don’t know,” I say. “I think so. Yes. Yes, he did.”

We watch the thick curling surface, streaming away from us in slow **whorls**.

“Give him a pull on the rope,” Vernon says.

“He’s on your end of it,” I say.

“Ain’t nobody on my end of it,” he says.

—Vamos a ver si podemos sacar algo más antes de que se lo lleve la corriente —digo yo.

Nos agarramos a la soga mientras la corriente forma ondas y hoyuelos alrededor de nuestros hombros. Pero bajo esa falsa blandura la auténtica fuerza de la corriente tira perezosamente de nosotros. Nunca había imaginado que en julio el agua pudiera estar tan fría. Es como si unas manos nos rodeasen y **se clavasen** hasta el mismo hueso. Vernon todavía mira hacia la orilla.

—¿Nos aguantará a todos? —dice. También volvemos la vista siguiendo la rígida barra que forma la soga cuando ésta sale del agua hasta alcanzar el árbol, y Vardaman, un poco acurrucado a su lado, nos observa—. A ver si a mi mula no le da por marcharse a casa —dice Vernon.

—Vamos —dice Jewel— salgamos de aquí.

Nos sumergimos por turnos, agarrándonos a la soga, sujetándonos unos a otros mientras la fría pared de agua sorbe el barro que va en declive bajo nuestros pies, a contracorriente, de modo que estamos suspendidos al sondear el gélido fondo. Ni siquiera el fango de ahí abajo se está quieto. Tiene un algo de escalofriante y huidizo como si la tierra de debajo de nosotros también estuviera en movimiento. Nos tocamos y manoteamos unos a otros los brazos extendidos, al dejarnos ir con precaución a lo largo de la soga; o, poniéndonos de pie por turnos, vemos que el agua chupa y hace burbujas allí donde uno de los otros dos busca a tientas debajo de la superficie. Padre ha bajado hasta la orilla y nos mira.

Vernon se endereza, chorreante, con la cara hundida hacia la fruncida boca que resopla. Tiene la boca azulada, como un aro de goma mucho tiempo a la intemperie. Ha encontrado la regla. [158]

—Esto le alegrará —digo yo—. Porque es nueva. La compré el mes pasado por correo.

—Si supiéramos con seguridad qué otras cosas traía... —dice Vernon, mirando por encima del hombro y luego volviendo la cara hacia donde ha desaparecido Jewel—. ¿No se había sumergido antes que yo? —Dice Vernon.

—No lo sé —le digo—. Creo que sí. Sí. Sí, se sumergió antes.

Observamos la superficie densamente ondulada que se aleja de nosotros formando lentas **volutas**.

—Dale un tirón a la soga —dice Vernon.

—Está en la punta de tu lado —digo yo.

—En la punta de mi lado no hay nadie —dice él.

prod 1 *tr.* poke with the finger or a pointed object. 2 *tr.* stimulate to action. 3 *intr.* (coll. by *af*) make a prodding motion. 1 a poke or thrust. 2 a stimulus to action. 3 a pointed instrument.

whorl *n.* 1 a ring of leaves or other organs round a stem of a plant. 2 one turn of a spiral, esp. on a shell. 3 a complete circle in a fingerprint. 4 *archaic* a small wheel on a spindle steadying its motion.

corolla a whorl [verticilo, spiral, espira] of leaves. Aureola.

espira Cada una de las vueltas de una espiral.

voluta adorno en figura de espiral o caracol

“Pull it in,” I say. But he has already done that, holding the end above the water; and then we see Jewel. He is ten yards away; he comes up, blowing, and looks at us, tossing his long hair back with a jerk of his head, then he looks toward the bank; we can see him filling his lungs.

“Jewel,” Vernon says, not loud, but his voice going full and clear along the water, peremptory yet tactful. “It’ll be back here. Better come back.”

Jewel dives again. We stand there, leaning back against the current, watching the water where he disappeared, holding the dead rope between us like two men holding the nozzle of a fire-hose, waiting for the water. Suddenly Dewey Dell is behind us in the water. “You make him come back,” she says. “Jewel!” she says. He comes up again, tossing his hair back from his eyes. He is swimming now, toward the bank, the current sweeping him downstream quartering. “You, Jewel!” Dewey Dell says. We stand holding the rope and see him gain the bank and climb out. As he rises from the water, he stoops and picks up something. He comes back along the bank. He has found the chalk-line. He comes opposite us and stands there, looking about as if he were seeking something. Pa goes on down the bank. He is going back to look at the mules again where their round bodies float and rub quietly together in the slack water within the bend.

“What did you do with the hammer, Vernon?” Jewel says.

“I give it to him,” Vernon says, jerking his head at Vardaman. Vardaman is looking after pa. Then he looks at Jewel. “With the square.” Vernon is watching Jewel. He moves toward the bank, passing Dewey Dell and me.

“You get on out of here,” I say. She says nothing, looking at Jewel and Vernon.

“Where’s the hammer?” Jewel says. Vardaman scuttles up the bank and fetches it.

“It’s heavier than the saw,” Vernon says. Jewel is tying the end of the chalk-line about the hammer shaft.

“Hammer’s got the most wood in it,” Jewel says. He and Vernon face one another, watching Jewel’s hands.

“And flatter, too,” Vernon says. “It’d float three to one, almost. Try the plane.”

Jewel looks at Vernon. Vernon is

—Dale un tirón —digo.

Pero ya lo ha dado y sostiene el extremo de la sogá por encima del agua; y entonces vemos a Jewel. Está a unos diez metros de distancia se levanta, resoplado, y nos mira mientras se sacude el largo pelo negro con un brusco movimiento de cabeza; luego mira hacia la orilla; le vemos llenarse de aire los pulmones.

—Jewel —dice Vernon, no muy alto, pero su voz resbala rotunda y clara por encima del agua, perentoria aunque comedida—. Debe de estar por aquí. Será mejor que vuelvas.

Jewel se sumerge otra vez. Nos quedamos allí haciendo fuerza con la espalda contra la corriente; contemplamos el agua por donde ha desaparecido y sujetamos la lacia sogá entre nosotros como dos hombres que tuvieran una manguera de incendios y esperasen el agua. De pronto Dewey Dell está en el agua detrás de nosotros.

—Hacedle volver —dice—. ¡Jewel! —dice Jewel saca la cabeza de nuevo quitándose el pelo de los ojos. Ahora empieza a nadar, hacia la orilla; la corriente lo arrastra en diagonal—. ¡Oye, Jewel! —dice Dewey Dell.

Seguimos agarrando la sogá y le vemos ganar la orilla y trepar por ella. Al salir del agua se agacha y coge algo. Se nos acerca a lo largo de la orilla. Ha encontrado la cuerda de marcar. Se detiene frente a nosotros y se queda allí mirando alrededor como si buscara algo. Padre va orilla abajo [159]. Quiere volver a mirar a las mulas cuyos cuerpos redondos flotan y chocan blandamente uno contra otro en el agua tranquila del remanso.

—¿Qué hiciste con el martillo, Vernon? —dice Jewel.

—Se lo di a él —dice Vernon, señalando con la cabeza a Vardaman. Vardaman sigue con la vista a padre. Luego mira a Jewel—. Junto con la escuadra —Vernon está mirando a Jewel. Se dirige hacia la orilla, pasando al lado de Dewey Dell y de mí.

—Sal de ahí ya —le digo a Dewey Dell que no dice nada y mira a Jewel y a Vernon.

—¿Dónde está el martillo? —dice Jewel. Vardaman corre orilla arriba a por él _____.

—Pesa más que la sierra —dice Vernon. Jewel está atando el extremo de la cuerda de marcar al mango del martillo.

—Es que el martillo tiene más madera —dice Jewel. El y Vernon están frente a frente, observando las manos de Jewel.

—Y es más plano, además —dice Vernon—. Debe flotar casi tres veces mejor. Prueba con el cepillo.

Jewel mira a Vernon. Vernon también

- tall, too; long and lean, eye to eye they stand in their close wet clothes. Lon Quick could look even at a cloudy sky and
5 tell the time to ten minutes. Big Lon I mean, not little Lon.
- “Why don’t you get out of the water?” I say.
- 10 “It won’t float like a saw,” Jewel says.
- “It’ll float nigher to a saw than a
15 hammer will,” Vernon says.
- “Bet you,” Jewel says.
- “I won’t bet,” Vernon says.
- 20 They stand there, watching Jewel’s still hands.
- “Hell,” Jewel says. “Get the plane,
25 then.”
- So they get the plane and tie it to the chalk-line and enter the water again. Pa comes back along the bank.
30 He stops for a while and looks at us, hunched, mournful, like a **failing steer** or an old tall bird.
- Vernon and Jewel return,
35 leaning against the current. “Get out of the way,” Jewel says to Dewey Dell. “Get out of the water.”
- She crowds against me a little so they can pass, Jewel holding the plane high as though it were perishable, the blue string trailing back over his shoulder. They pass us and stop; they fall to arguing quietly about just
45 where the wagon went over.
- “Darl ought to know,” Vernon says. They look at me.
- 50 “I don’t know,” I says. “I wasn’t there that long.”
- “Hell,” Jewel says. They move on, gingerly, leaning against the
55 current, reading the ford with their feet.
- “Have you got a holt of the rope?” Vernon says. Jewel does not
60 answer. He glances back at the shore, calculatant, then at the water. He flings the plane outward, letting the string run through his fingers, his fingers turning blue where it
65 runs over them. When the line stops, he hands it back to Vernon.
- “Better let me go this time,” Vernon says. Again Jewel does not answer; we watch him duck beneath
70 the surface.
- “Jewel,” Dewey Dell whimpers.
- “It ain’t so deep there,” Vernon says.
75 He does not look back. He is watching the water where Jewel went under.
- When Jewel comes up he has the saw.
- es alto; altos y delgados los dos quedan frente a frente allí quietos con su ropa empapada. Lon Quick podía mirar incluso a un cielo cubierto y decir la hora sin equivocarse ni en diez minutos. Quiero decir, Big Long, no Little Lon**16.
- ¿Por qué no salís del agua? — digo yo.
- No flotan tan bien como una sierra —dice Jewel.
- Flotará más como la sierra que el martillo —dice Vernon.
- Te apuesto lo que quieras —dice Jewel.
- No me gusta apostar —dice Vernon.
- Siguen allí, mirando las manos quietas de Jewel.
- Al diablo —dice Jewel—. Coge el cepillo.
- Conque cogen el cepillo y lo atan a la cuerda de marcar [160] y se meten nuevamente en el agua. Padre vuelve por la orilla. Se para un rato y nos mira, encogido, fúnebre, como **un buey apaleado** o un viejo y largo pajarraco.
- Vernon y Jewel vuelven, luchando contra la corriente.
- Quítate de en medio —le dice Jewel a Dewey Dell—. Sal del agua.
- Ella se aprieta un poco contra mí para que puedan pasar. Jewel lleva en alto el cepillo como si fuera muy frágil mientras la cuerda azul**17 le cae sobre el hombro. Nos adelantan; se detienen a discutir tranquilamente sobre dónde había volcado la carreta.
- Darl debe de saberlo —dice Vernon. Me miran.
- No lo sé —digo—. No estuve allí suficiente tiempo.
- Al diablo —Dice Jewel.
- Se mueven cautelosamente recostados contra la corriente, tanteando el vado con los pies.
- ¿Tienes la sogá bien cogida? —dice Vernon. Jewel no responde. Mira hacia la orilla calculador, luego al agua. Lanza el cepillo hacia delante dejando que la cuerda se le deslice entre los dedos, unos dedos que se ponen azules donde les roza la cuerda. Cuando se queda quieta, se la pasa a Vernon—. Mejor me dejás a mi esta vez —dice Vernon. Jewel sigue sin responder; vemos cómo se hunde bajo la superficie.
- Jewel —se queja Dewey Dell.
- No está tan hondo —dice Vernon. No se vuelve. Observa el agua por donde se hundió Jewel.
- Cuando Jewel aparece tiene la sierra.

When we pass the wagon pa is standing beside it, scrubbing at the two mud smears with a handful of leaves. Against the jungle Jewel's horse looks like a patchwork quilt hung on a line.

Cash has not moved. We stand above him, holding the plane, the saw, the hammer, the square, the rule, the chalk-line, while Dewey Dell squats and lifts Cash's head. "Cash," she says; "Cash."

He opens his eyes, staring profoundly up at our inverted faces.

"If ever was such a misfortunate man," pa says.

"Look, Cash," we say, holding the tools up so he can see; "what else did you have?"

He tries to speak, rolling his head, shutting his eyes.

"Cash," we say; "Cash."

It is to vomit he is turning his head. Dewey Dell wipes his mouth on the wet hem of her dress; then he can speak.

"It's his saw-set," Jewel says. "The new one he bought when he bought the rule." He moves, turning away. Vernon looks up after him, still squatting. Then he rises and follows Jewel down to the water.

"If ever was such a misfortunate man," pa says. He looms tall above us as we squat; he looks like a figure carved clumsily from tough wood by a drunken caricaturist. "It's a trial," he says.

"But I don't begrudge her it." No man can say I begrudge her it." Dewey Dell has laid Cash's head back on the folded coat, twisting his head a little to avoid the vomit. Beside him his tools lie. "A fellow might call it lucky it was the same leg he broke when he fell off that church," pa says. "But I don't begrudge her it."

Jewel and Vernon are in the river again. From here they do not appear to violate the surface at all; it is as though it had severed them both at a single blow, the two torsos moving with infinitesimal and ludicrous care upon the surface. It looks peaceful, like machinery does after you have watched it and listened to it for a long time. As though the clotting which is you had dissolved into the myriad original motion, and seeing and hearing in themselves blind and deaf; fury in itself quiet with stagnation. Squatting, Dewey Dell's wet dress shapes for the dead eyes of three blind men those mammalian ludicrousities which are the horizons and the valleys of the earth.

Cuando pasamos junto a la carreta padre está de pie junto a la caja, quitando las dos manchas de barro con un puñado de hojas. Contra la maleza el caballo de Jewel parece un edredón a cuadros colgando de una cuerda.

Cash no se ha movido. Nos ponemos a su alrededor enseñándole el cepillo, la sierra, el martillo, la escuadra, la regla, la cuerda de marcar, mientras Dewey Dell se agacha y le levanta la cabeza.

—Cash —le dice—. Cash.

Cash abre los ojos mirando fijamente a nuestras caras al revés.

—No hay hombre con tan mala suerte —dice padre.

—Mira, Cash —decimos, levantando las herramientas para que las pueda ver—, ¿qué otras más tenías?

Cash intenta hablar, volviendo la cabeza; luego entorna los ojos.

—Cash —le decimos—. Cash.

Volvía la cabeza para vomitar. Dewey Dell le seca la boca con el dobladillo mojado de su falda; luego ya puede hablar.

—Es el triscador*(8) de la sierra —dice Jewel—. El nuevo que compré cuando compré la regla —se aparta. Vernon, aún en cuclillas, levanta la vista hacia él. Luego se levanta y sigue a Jewel al agua.

—No hay hombre con tan mala suerte —dice padre. Su figura se eleva sobre nosotros, que estamos en cuclillas; parece una estatua tallada chapuceramente en madera muy dura por un caricaturista borracho—. Es una prueba —dice—. Pero yo no se lo escatimo. No hay quien pueda decir que le escatimo algo —Dewey Dell ha dejado caer la cabeza de Cash en la chaqueta plegada, doblándose la un poco para que vomite. Junto a él descansan sus herramientas—. Cualquiera podría decir que es buena suerte que se haya roto la misma pierna que se rompió cuando cayó de aquella iglesia —dice padre—. Pero a ella no le escatimo nada.

Jewel y Vernon están otra vez en el río. Desde aquí no parece que rompan la superficie; es como si ésta los hubiera cortado de un solo tajo y los dos torsos se movieran con un cuidado infinitesimal y ridículo por encima de la superficie. La riada parece apacible, igual que una maquinaria después de llevar mirándola y oyéndola mucho tiempo. Como si el coágulo que es uno se hubiera disuelto en la pluralidad del movimiento original, y fuéramos ciegos y sordos al vernos y oírnos a nosotros mismos; una furia tranquila en sí misma por la parálisis. En cuclillas, el vestido empapado de Dewey Dell da forma ante los ojos muertos de tres hombres ciegos a esas ridiculeces mamarias que son los horizontes y los valles de la tierra.

38
CASH (3)

5 IT wasn't on a balance. I told them that if they wanted it to tote and ride on a balance, they would have to —

10 39
CORA (3)

ONE day we were talking. She had never been pure religious, 15 not even after that summer at the camp meeting when Brother Whitfield wrestled with her spirit, singled her out and strove with the vanity in her mortal heart, and I said to her many a time, "God gave you children to comfort your hard human lot and for a token of His own suffering and love, for in love you conceived and bore them." I said that because she took God's love and her duty to Him too much as a matter of course, and such conduct is not pleasing to Him. I said, "He gave us the gift to raise our voices in His undying praise" because I said there 20 is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner than over a hundred that never sinned. And she said "My daily life is an acknowledgment and expiation of my sin" and I said "Who are you, to say what is sin and what is not sin? It is the Lord's part to judge; ours to praise His mercy and His holy name in the hearing of our fellow mortals" 40 because He alone can see into the heart, and just because a woman's life is right in the sight of man, she can't know if there is no sin in her heart without she opens her heart to the Lord and receives His grace. I said, "Just because you have been a faithful wife is no sign that there is no sin in your heart, and just because your life is hard is no sign 50 that the Lord's grace is absolving you." And she said, "I know my own sin. I know that I deserve my punishment. I do not begrudge it." And I said, "It is out of your vanity that you would judge sin and salvation in the Lord's place. It is our mortal lot to suffer and to raise our voices in praise of Him who judges the 60 sin and offers the salvation through our trials and tribulations time out of mind amen. Not even after Brother Whitfield, a godly man if ever one breathed God's breath, prayed for you and strove as never a man could except him," I said.

Because it is not us that can judge 70 our sins or know what is sin in the Lord's eyes. She has had a hard life, but so does every woman. But you'd think from the way she talked that she knew more about sin and salvation 75 than the Lord God Himself, than them who have strove and laboured with the sin in this human world. When the only sin she ever committed was

CASH

No está bien equilibrada. Les dije que si querían cargarla y transportarla de modo que mantuviese el equilibrio tendrían que

CORA

UN día hablando. Ella nunca había sido auténticamente religiosa, ni siquiera después de la reunión al aire libre**19 de aquel verano cuando el reverendo Whitfield luchó a brazo partido con su espíritu, la escogió personalmente y combatió la vanidad de su corazón mortal, y yo le dije más de una vez:

—Dios te ha dado hijos que te consuelen de tanta miseria y como prueba de sus propios sufrimientos y amor, pues en amor los concebiste y los diste luz — le dije eso porque ella tomaba el amor de Dios y sus deberes para con Él como algo natural y tal proceder no es de Su agrado. Le dije—: Él nos ha dado el don de poder elevar nuestras voces para cantar su gloria impercedera —porque le decía, hay más júbilo en los cielos por un pecador arrepentido que por cien justos. Y ella decía: [163]

—Mi vida diaria es el reconocimiento y la expiación de mi pecado —y yo le dije:

—¿Quién eres tú para decidir lo que es pecado y lo que no es pecado? Al Señor le toca juzgar; a nosotros nos basta con alabar su misericordia y su santo nombre para que lo oigan los demás mortales —porque sólo El puede ver dentro de los corazones y aunque la vida de una mujer resulte recta a los ojos de los hombres, ella no podrá saber si su corazón está limpio de pecado hasta que lo abra ante el Señor y reciba su gracia. Y le dije—: El que hayas sido una esposa fiel no es señal de que tengas el corazón limpio de pecado, y el que tu vida haya sido dura no es señal de que la gracia del Señor te absuelva de tus pecados —y ella dijo:

—Yo conozco perfectamente mis propios pecados. Sé que merezco un castigo. Y no trato de disminuirlo —y yo dije:

—Es tu vanidad la que te lleva a juzgar el pecado y la salvación en lugar del Señor. Nuestro destino mortal es sufrir y elevar nuestras voces en alabanza de Aquél que enjuicia el pecado y ofrece la salvación por medio de nuestras tribulaciones y aflicciones desde tiempo inmemorial amén. No es cosa tuya, ni siquiera después de que el reverendo Whitfield, un hombre piadoso inspirado por Dios, rezara por ti y se esforzara como ningún otro hombre, que no fuera él, hubiera hecho —dije yo.

Porque no somos nosotros los que podemos juzgar nuestros pecados o saber lo que a los ojos del Señor es pecado. Ha tenido una vida dura, pero eso les pasa a todas las mujeres. Pero a juzgar por cómo hablaba, uno pensaría que sabía más del pecado y de la salvación que el propio Dios Nuestro Señor y que los que se esfuerzan y luchan por combatir el pecado en este mundo. Cuando el único

Cash (3)

This section consists of two sentences, one unfinished. This clearly indicates that the semi-conscious Cash is preoccupied with the fate of the coffin, a fate which he predicted because the women put Addie into her coffin the wrong way round in order to show off the wide hem of her dress.

Cora (3)

This section contains Cora's recollections of a conversation with Addie which had taken place some unspecified time in the past. For the first time in the book, we hear Addie's voice indirectly through the memory of Cora. It is a voice which speaks of a full recognition of sin and an awareness that the hard life with Anse is the punishment for sin. Eventually, Cora realises that Addie has made Jewel into her God, looking to him for salvation.

COMMENTARY: Here Cora is seen in her usual pose of a religious woman. She sees it as a part of her Christian duty to bring Addie to her senses, which for Cora means seeing things as she herself does. The section is full of ironies which can only be appreciated when we have read *Addie* (1), for then we realise that the special attention which Whitfield gave to Addie went beyond the spiritual and into the physical fathering of Jewel. Cora, of course, has no understanding of this nor of the special feeling Addie shows for Jewel.

Addie's belief in Jewel is absolute and prophetic, 'He is my cross and he will be my salvation. He will save me from the water and from the fire. Even though I have laid down my life, he will save me'. This is a traditional invocation of God, yet Addie uses the words to invoke Jewel and by so doing appals Cora with her blasphemy: 'I realised that out of the vanity of her heart she had spoken sacrilege'. Cora's only recourse is to pray for the lost soul of Addie Bundren: 'I prayed for that poor blind woman as I had never prayed for me and mine'. Ironically, she cannot hope to know the depths and the nature of Addie's sinfulness, nor its inspiration.

being partial to Jewel that never loved her and was its own punishment, in preference to Darl that was touched by God Himself and considered queer by us mortals and that did love her. I said, "There is your sin. And your punishment too. Jewel is your punishment. But where is your salvation? And life is short enough," I said, "to win eternal grace in. And God is a jealous God. It is His to judge and to mete; not yours."

"I know," she said. "I——" Then she stopped, and I said,

"Know what?"

"Nothing," she said. "He is my cross and he will be my salvation. He will save me from the water and from the fire. Even though I have laid down my life, he will save me."

"How do you know, without you open your heart to Him and lift your voice in His praise?" I said. Then I realized that she did not mean God. I realized that out of the vanity of her heart she had spoken sacrilege. And I went down on my knees right there. I begged her to kneel and open her heart and cast from it the devil of vanity and cast herself upon the mercy of the Lord. But she wouldnt. She just sat there, lost in her vanity and her pride, that had closed her heart to God and set that selfish mortal boy in His place. Kneeling there I prayed for her. I prayed for that poor blind woman as I had never prayed for me and mine.

40

ADDIE (1)

IN the afternoon when school was out and the last one had left with his little dirty snuffling nose, instead of going home I would go down the hill to the spring where I could be quiet and hate them. It would be quiet there then, with the water bubbling up and away and the sun slanting quiet in the trees and the quiet smelling of damp and rotting leaves and new earth; especially in the early spring, for it was worst then.

I could just remember how my father used to say that the reason for living was to get ready to stay dead a long time. And when I would have to look at them day after day, each with his and her secret and selfish thought, and blood strange to each other blood and strange to mine, and think that this seemed to be the only way I could get ready to stay dead, I would hate my father for having ever planted me. I would look forward to the times when they faulted, so I could whip them. When the switch fell I could feel it upon my flesh; when it welted and ridged it was my blood that ran, and I would think with each blow of the switch: Now you are aware of me! Now I am something in your secret

pecado que cometió fue ser parcial con Jewel, que nunca la quiso, y eso fue su castigo, prefiriéndolo a Darl que era un bendito de Dios y al que nosotros mortales considerábamos raro, y que la quería. Yo dije:

—Ese es tu pecado. Y también tu castigo. Jewel es tu castigo. Pero, ¿dónde está tu salvación? La vida es muy corta —dije yo—, para ganar la gracia eterna en ella. Y [164] Dios es un Dios celoso. A Él le toca juzgar y dispensar premios y castigos; no a ti.

—Lo sé —dijo ella—. Yo... —luego se interrumpió y yo dije:

—¿Sabes, qué?

—Nada —dijo ella—. Él es mi cruz y será mi salvación. Me salvará de las aguas y del fuego. Incluso cuando haya soltado mi último suspiro, me salvará.

—¿Qué sabes tú, si no has abierto el corazón al Señor ni alzado la voz para alabarle? —dije yo.

Entonces me di cuenta de que no se refería a Dios. Me di cuenta de que con la vanidad de su corazón había dicho un sacrilegio. Y caí de rodillas allí mismo. Y le supliqué que se arrodillara y abriese el corazón y que arrojara de él al demonio de la vanidad y se entregara a la misericordia del Señor. Pero no quiso. Se quedó allí sentada, perdida en la vanidad y el orgullo que habían cerrado su corazón a Dios para albergar a ese muchacho tan egoísta en su lugar. Allí arrodillada recé por ella. Recé por aquella pobre ciega como nunca había rezado por mí ni por los míos.

ADDIE

POR la tarde cuando terminaba la escuela y se había marchado el último niño sorbiéndose los mocos, en vez de irme a casa iba colina abajo hasta el manantial donde podía odiarles con tranquilidad. Entonces allí se estaba en silencio y el agua brotaba y se marchaba tranquilamente y el sol se colaba oblicuo tranquilamente por entre los árboles y olía tranquilamente a hojas húmedas y medio podridas y a tierra nueva; en especial a principios de primavera, que era cuando era peor.

Entonces sólo recordaba que mi padre decía que el sentido de la vida era prepararse para estar muerto mucho tiempo. Y cuando tenía que verles día tras día, cada uno con sus secretos y sus egoísmos personales, y una sangre extraña en cada uno y extraña a la mía y pensaba que éste [165] parecía ser el único modo de estar preparada para morir, odiaba a mi padre por haberme engendrado. Siempre andaba buscando ocasión de encontrarles en falta para así pegarles. Cuando la vara caía la sentía en mi carne; cuando les levantaba verdugones y ronchas en la piel era mi sangre la que corría, y a cada palo pensaba: ¡Ahora sabéis quién soy yo! Ahora soy algo en vuestras vidas se-

Addie (1)

This section, which consists of the memories of Addie Bundren, clarifies much that has gone before. The time at which it is narrated is not clear, save that it is after the day on which Cora prayed for her.

COMMENTARY: The character which is revealed in this section is a complex one, yet the complexity is not unexpected for we have already seen traces of it in Addie's children. Her own inheritance from her father was a negative one, the idea that the whole reason for living was to prepare to die. As her memories of her feelings about the children she taught in school show, she had adopted this maxim and it had distorted her attitudes to life and other living things, 'I would hate my father for ever having planted me' she says, and she extends this hatred to all children planted by other fathers, '... each with his and her secret and selfish ... for ever and ever'. The paragraph

and selfish life, who have marked your blood with my own for ever and ever.

5 And so I took Anse. I saw him pass the school-house three or four times before I learned that he was driving four miles out of his way to do it. I noticed then how he was beginning
10 to hump—a tall man and young—so that he looked already like à tall bird hunched in the cold weather, on the wagon-seat. He would pass the school-house, the wagon creaking
15 slow, his head turning slow to watch the door of the school-house as the wagon passed, until he went on around the curve and out of sight. One day I went to the door and stood there
20 when he passed. When he saw me he looked quickly away and did not look back again.

In the early spring it was worst. Sometimes I thought that I could not
25 bear it, lying in bed at night, with the wild geese going north and their honking coming faint and high and wild out of the wild darkness, and during the day it would seem as
30 though I couldn't wait for the last one to go so I could go down to the spring. And so when I looked up that day and saw Anse standing there in his
35 Sunday clothes, turning his hat round and round in his hands, I said

"If you've got any womenfolks, why in the world don't they make you
40 get your hair cut?"

"I ain't got none," he said. Then he said suddenly, driving his eyes at me like two hounds in a strange yard:
45 "That's what I come to see you about."

"And make you hold your shoulders up," I said. "You haven't
50 got any? But you've got a house. They tell me you've got a house and a good farm. And you live there alone, doing for yourself, do you?" He just looked at me, turning the hat in his
55 hands. "A new house," I said. "Are you going to get married?"

And he said again, holding his eyes to mine "That's what I come to see
60 you about."

Later he told me, "I ain't got no people. So that won't be no worry to you. I don't reckon
65 you can say the same."

"No. I have people. In Jefferson."

His face fell a little. "Well, I got a little property. I'm forehanded; I got a good
70 honest name. I know how town folks are, but maybe when they talk to me . . ."

75 "They might listen," I said. "But they'll be hard to talk to." He was watching my face. "They're in the

cretas y egoístas, yo que he señalado vuestra sangre con la mía para siempre.

Y así acepté a Anse. Le vi pasar por delante de la escuela tres o cuatro veces antes de enterarme de que tenía que dar un rodeo de unos seis kilómetros para ir por allí. Entonces me fijé en que estaba empezando a encorvarse —un hombre alto y joven— conque ya parecía un pajarraco encogido por el frío en el asiento de la carreta. Pasaba por delante de la escuela, la carreta chirriaba lentamente, él volvía lentamente la cabeza para mirar la puerta de la escuela mientras pasaba la carreta, hasta que doblaba el recodo y se perdía de vista. Un día salí a la puerta y me quedé allí mientras pasaba. Cuando me vio apartó rápidamente la vista y no volvió a mirar.

A principios de primavera era peor. A veces pensaba que no podría soportarlo, acostada de noche en la casa, y los patos salvajes rumbo al norte y sus graznidos que llegaban desde lo alto débiles y salvajes en la salvaje oscuridad, y durante el día parecía como si no fuera a poder esperar a que se fuera el último niño para poder bajar al manantial. Y así cuando levanté la vista aquel día y vi a Anse allí de pie con el traje de los domingos, dando vueltas al sombrero entre las manos, dije:

—Si hay mujeres en su casa ¿por qué diablos no le mandan a que se corte el pelo?

—No las hay —dijo él. Luego, de repente, dijo, fijando sus ojos en mí como dos perros en corral ajeno—: Por eso he venido a verla.

—¿Y no le dicen que ande derecho? —dije yo—. ¿No las hay? Pero usted tiene una casa. Me contaron que tiene una casa y una granja que no están nada mal. Así que vive allí solo, haciéndoselo todo, ¿no es así? —él se limitaba a [166] mirarme, dando vueltas al sombrero entre las manos—. Una casa nueva —dije yo—. ¿Se va a casar?

Y él volvió a decir, sin apartar sus ojos de los míos:

—Por eso he venido a verla.

Más adelante, me dijo:

—No tengo a nadie. Así que no se debe preocupar por eso. Para mí que usted no puede decir lo mismo.

—No. Tengo parientes. En Jefferson.

El rostro se le ensombreció un poco. —Bueno, tengo un poco de terreno. Soy ahorrador; se me considera un hombre honrado. Sé cómo es la gente de la ciudad, pero puede que cuando hablen conmigo...

—A lo mejor le escuchan —dije yo—. Pero será difícil hablar con ellos —me miraba a la cara—. Están en el

contained in these lines is significant in four distinct ways:

1. It shows Addie as a woman with a strange, if understandable, sadistic streak who needs to make her mark on the world by physical violence.

2. It shows that this need to break through to the 'secret and selfish' existence of other people is something which she has passed on to her children in the form of an uncertainty about their own and other people's existences.

3. It is easy to see how a woman such as the one portrayed here would have a great influence on the nature and character of her children. There is no mention of her having physically punished Vardaman, Dewey Dell or Darl, but perhaps the absence of such punishment indicates that she refused to help them to make contact with her and so to develop a sense of their own existence.

4. The paragraph goes some way towards explaining the title Faulkner has chosen for his book. Here, living is equated with the preparation for death, so 'as I lay dying' may be taken to mean 'as I lived'. In one way the whole book is a record of what Addie Bundren did during her life, or preparation for death, a record written in the characters of her children and in the nature of her husband.

It becomes plain from this section that Addie felt within her the stirrings of sexual desire, which she calls 'the wild blood'. The brief respite from these after her marriage to Anse is ended when she becomes pregnant, 'when I knew that had Cash I knew that living was terrible'. What Anse calls 'love' she comes to see as an empty word. Yet the sexual longing remains and leads to the conception of Darl, 'Then I believed I would kill Anse. It was as though he had tricked me, hidden within a word like a paper screen and struck me in in the back through it'. However, Addie realises that Anse himself has been tricked, driven on by a delirium which bears no relation to words, 'I had been tricked by words older than Anse or love . . . and . . . my revenge would be that he would never know that I was taking my revenge. And when Darl was born I asked Anse to promise to take me back to Jefferson when I died'. Addie's revenge is that she will use Anse to prepare herself for a death spent alone, in a grave quite separate from his. But the revenge misfires and, as we see in other sections of the book, the family fulfil the promise to Addie almost incidentally.

Addie is responsible for Anse's negativity, an aspect of his character stressed by all those who know him. It may be traced back to the fact that, after the birth of Darl, his wife decided to treat him as if he were dead, 'I would be I; I would let him be the shape and echo of his word'. She herself continues to grow and to explore the meaning of experience as opposed to the world of empty words, thinking that she had discovered the real reason for li-

cemetery.’.

“But your living kin,” he said.
“They’ll be different.”

5

“Will they?” I said. “I don’t know.
I never had any other kind.”

So I took Anse. And when I knew
10 that I had Cash, I knew that living
was terrible and that this was the
answer to it. That was when I
learned that words are no good; that
words don’t ever fit even what they
15 are trying to say at. When he was
born I knew that motherhood was
invented by someone who had to
have a word for it because the ones
that had the children didn’t care
20 whether there was a word for it or
not. I knew that fear was invented
by someone that had never had the
fear; pride, who never had the pride.
I knew that it had been, not that they
25 had dirty noses, but that we had had
to use one another by words like
spiders dangling by their mouths
from a beam, swinging and twisting
and never touching, and that only
30 through the blows of the switch
could my blood and their blood flow
as one stream. I knew that it had
been, not that my aloneness had to
be violated over and over each day,
35 but that it had never been violated
until Cash came. Not even by Anse
in the nights.

He had a word, too. Love, he
40 called it. But I had been used to
words for a long time. I knew that
that word was like the others: just a
shape to fill a lack; that when the
right time came, you wouldn’t need
45 a word for that any more than for
pride or fear. Cash did not need to
say it to me nor I to him, and I would
say, Let Anse use it, if he wants to.
So that it was Anse or love; love or
50 Anse: it didn’t matter.

I would think that even while I lay
with him in the dark and Cash asleep
in the cradle within the swing of my
55 hand. I would think that if he were to
wake and cry, I would suckle him,
too. Anse or love: it didn’t matter. My
aloneness had been violated and then
made whole again by the violation:
60 time, Anse, love, what you will,
outside the circle.

Then I found that I had Darl. At
first I would not believe it. Then I
65 believed that I would kill Anse. It
was as though he had tricked me,
hidden within a word like within a
paper screen and struck me in the
back through it. But then I realized
70 that I had been tricked by words
older than Anse or love, and that
the same word had tricked Anse
too, and that my revenge would be
that he would never know I was
75 taking revenge. And when Darl
was born I asked Anse to promise
to take me back to Jefferson when
I died, because I knew that father

cementerio.

—Pues los que estén vivos —dijo él—
serán diferentes.

—¿Cree usted? —dije yo—. No lo sé.
Nunca los tuve de otra clase.

Conque acepté a Anse. Y cuando me
enteré de que iba a tener a Cash, com-
prendí que la vida era terrible y que esto
es lo que nos trae. Fue cuando aprendí
que las palabras no sirven para nada; que
las palabras no se corresponden ni siquie-
ra con lo que tratan de decir. Cuando na-
ció comprendí que maternidad había sido
inventado por alguien que tenía que tener
una palabra con que llamarlo, por-
que a los que tienen hijos no les interesa
si existe una palabra para llamar eso o
no. Comprendí que el miedo fue inven-
tado por alguien que nunca había senti-
do el miedo; y el orgullo, por quien nunca
había tenido orgullo. Comprendí que
había sido eso, no que tuvieran las nari-
ces sucias, sino que nos habíamos tenido
que usar unos a otros por medio de las
palabras como arañas que se cuelgan por
la boca de una viga, se balancean y re-
tuercen sin tocarse nunca, y que sólo por
medio de la vara mi sangre podría mez-
clarse con la suya en una sola corriente.
Comprendí que había sido eso, no que
mi soledad hubiese tenido que ser viola-
da una y otra vez cada día, sino que nunca
había sido violada hasta que llegó
Cash. Ni siquiera de noche por Anse.

También él tenía una palabra. Amor, lo
llamaba. Pero [167] yo llevaba mucho tiempo
acostumbrada a las palabras. Sabía que
esa palabra era como las demás: sólo una
forma de llenar una carencia; que cuando
llegase el momento preciso uno no necesi-
taría una palabra para llamarlo, como no
la necesitaba para el miedo o el orgullo.
Cash no necesitaba decírmela ni yo a él, y
yo decía: Que la use Anse si quiere. Con-
que era lo mismo Anse o amor que amor
o Anse: no importaba.

Solía pensar en eso mientras yacía
junto a él en la oscuridad y Cash dor-
mía en la cuna al alcance de mi mano.
Solía pensar también que si se des-
pertaba y lloraba, le daría de mamar.
Anse o amor: no importaba. Habían
violado mi soledad y luego la propia
violación había venido a restablecer-
la: tiempo, Anse, amor, lo que se
quiera, fuera del círculo.

Entonces me enteré de que iba a tener
a Darl. Al principio no lo quería creer.
Luego creí que iba a matar a Anse. Era
como si me hubiera engañado, como si
se hubiera escondido detrás de una pala-
bra igual que detrás de un biombo de
papel para darme un golpe por la espal-
da a través de él. Pero luego comprendí
que había sido engañada por palabras más
viejas que Anse o amor, y que la misma
palabra también había engañado a Anse,
y que mi venganza consistiría en que él
nunca se enteraría de que me estaba ven-
gando. Y cuando Darl nació le pedí a
Anse que prometiese que cuando murie-
ra me llevaría de vuelta a Jefferson, por-

ving was to be found in the sexual
drive, ‘the reason was the duty
to the alive, to the terrible blood,
the red bitter blood boiling
through the land’. These feelings
lead Addie into a delirium to explore
the real experience of, as
opposed to the word, ‘sin’, ‘I
would think of sin as I would
think of the clothes we both wore
in the world’s face, . . . the sin
the more utter and terrible lince
he was the instrument ordained
of God who created sin, to
sanctify that sin He had created’.

Although this wild delirium for a
man of the cloth might seem like
a kind of depravity, Addie’s
choice of Whitfield as a lover
possesses a species of perverted
logic. Only once she has explored
the meaning of sin can she know
the meaning of the opposite,
virtue, and live in peace with
herself, knowing that what she
does is ‘real’. So she takes
Whitfield. After these excesses,
she is ready to accept ‘fidelity’
and ‘virtue’ as valid concepts,
‘and so I have cleaned my house
. . . the wild blood boiled away
and the sound of it ceased’. Their
validity depends, of course, on the
satisfaction of sexual delirium, and
this Addie has got through
Whitfield and through the birth of
Jewel.

As Addie’s section reveals,
what she did as she ‘lay dying’
was eccentric but valid. She got
away from the meaningless words
of religion and found for herself
the truth in actual experience, so
that she and Cora talk on quite
different levels, Cora preaching
acceptance and enacting it against
a meaningless litany of high-
sounding phrases, Addie
travelling a long, hard road until
she finally reaches an acceptance
of life and of death based on
experience. But the road she has
travelled through her life, like the
road she finally takes to her grave,
is strewn with victims of her
selfishness. The family reach
Jefferson in a sorry state, Jewel
deprived of his horse, Darl of his
senses, Dewey Dell of her
abortion and Cash of his leg. But
even before they have set out on
the actual journey, all of them
have in some way been sacrificed
on the altar of Addie’s search for
truth. Darl suffers most, for his
mother felt at her worst after his
birth, passing on to him a sense
of the separation between word
and deed which finally leads him
to the asylum for the insane in
Jackson.

We see, after reading this
section, that the actual journey to
Jefferson, carrying the great
burden of her decaying corpse,
closely and ironically parallels the
lives which the members of the
family have led up to this point,
which were dominated and
shaped by the force of Addie
Bundren. She was concerned only
with preparing herself for death,
regardless of the toll such
preparations might take on those
around her. She is not, of course,
entirely to blame. She herself
received a warped inheritance
from her own father, the notion
of life as a preparation for death,
but she does nothing to make the
inheritance she passes on to her
own children any better than the

had been right, even when he couldn't have known he was right any more than I could have known I was wrong.

5 "Nonsense," Anse said; "you and me ain't nigh done chapping yet, with just two."

10 He did not know that he was dead, then. Sometimes I would lie by him in the dark, hearing the land that was now of my blood and flesh, and I would think: Anse. Why Anse. Why
15 are you Anse. I would think about his name until after a while I could see the word as a shape, a vessel, and I would match him liquefy and flow into it like cold molasses flowing out
20 of the darkness into the vessel, until the jar stood full and motionless: a significant shape profoundly without life like an empty door frame; and then I would find that I had forgotten
25 the name of the jar. I would think: The shape of my body where I used to be a virgin is in the shape of a and I couldn't think *Anse*, couldn't remember *Anse*. It was not that I
30 could think of myself as no longer unvirgin, because I was three now. And when I would think *Cash* and *Darl* that way until their names would die and solidify into a shape and then
35 fade away, I would say, All right. It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter what they call them.

And so when Cora Tull would tell
40 me I was not a true mother, I would think how words go straight up in a thin line, quick and harmless, and how terribly doing goes along the earth, **clinging to** it, so that after a
45 while the two lines are too far apart for the same person to straddle from one to the other; and that sin and love and fear are just sounds that people who never sinned nor loved nor
50 feared have for what they never had and cannot have until they forget the words. Like Cora, who could never even cook.

55 She would tell me what I owed to my children and to Anse and to God. I gave Anse the children. I did not ask for them. I did not even ask him for what he could have given me:
60 not-Anse. That was my duty to him, to not ask that, and that duty I fulfilled. I would be I; I would let him be the shape and echo of his word. That was more than he asked, because
65 he could not have asked for that and been Anse, using himself so with a word.

And then he died. He did not know
70 he was dead. I would lie by him in the dark, hearing the dark land talking of God's love and His beauty and His sin; hearing the dark voicelessness in which the words are the deeds, and
75 the other words that are not deeds, that are just the gaps in peoples' lacks, coming down like the cries of the geese out of the wild darkness in the

que supe que mi padre había tenido razón, aunque no hubiera podido saber que la tenía igual que yo no podía saber que estaba equivocada.

—¡Qué tontería! —dijo Anse—. Tú y yo todavía no lo vamos a dejar, con sólo dos.

No sabía que entonces él ya estaba muerto. A veces yacía en la oscuridad junto a él, oyendo la tierra que ahora era de mi sangre y de mi carne, y pensaba: Anse. ¿Por qué Anse? ¿Por qué eres tú Anse? Y pensaba en su nombre hasta que al cabo de un rato veía que la palabra tenía forma, era una vasija, y veía que él se licuaba y se iba vistiendo dentro como melaza fría fluyendo de la oscuridad en la vasija, hasta que la jarra quedaba llena e inmóvil: una forma [168] significativa, profundamente inerte como un dintel vacío— y entonces me daba cuenta de que había olvidado el nombre de la jarra. Y pensaba: La forma de mi cuerpo cuando era virgen tiene la forma de un y no podía pensar *Anse*, ni recordar *Anse*. No era que pudiese pensar en mí misma como no virgen ya, porque ahora yo era tres. Y cuando pensaba *Cash* y *Darl* de esa misma manera, hasta que sus nombres morirían y se solidificaban en una forma y luego se desvanecían, yo decía: Muy bien. No importa. No importa cómo los llamen.

Así que cuando Cora Tull me decía que yo no era una auténtica madre, pensaba en cómo las palabras suben derechas en una fina línea rápida e inofensiva, y de qué modo terrible los hechos se quedan a ras del suelo, **pegados a** él de modo que al cabo de un rato las dos líneas están tan separadas que una persona no las puede pisar a la vez; y que pecado y amor y miedo sólo son sonidos que las personas que nunca pecaron ni amaron ni tuvieron miedo usan para eso que nunca sintieron y no pueden sentir hasta que se olviden de las palabras. Como Cora que ni siquiera sabía cocinar.

Solía decirme lo que yo les debía a mis hijos y a Anse y a Dios. Le di los hijos a Anse. Yo no los pedí. Ni siquiera le pedí lo que podía haberme dado: no-Anse. Ese era mi deber hacia él, no pedirle eso y ese deber lo cumplí. Yo era yo misma; a él le dejaba ser la forma y el eco de sus palabras. Era más de lo que me pedía, porque no podía pedirlo y ser Anse, sirviéndose de sí mismo por medio de una palabra.

Y entonces murió. Y él no sabía que estaba muerto. Yacía junto a él en la oscuridad y oía a la tierra oscura hablar del amor de Dios y de su belleza y su pecado; escuchaba el oscuro silencio en que las palabras son los hechos, y las demás palabras que no son hechos, que sólo son los huecos de las carencias de la gente, que bajaban como los graznidos de los patos desde la salvaje oscuridad en las

one she herself received.

The section is the revealing centre of the book. The fact that it is placed more than halfway through the novel is not accidental, for Addie Bundren continues to exert an influence even after she is dead, so she has a right to speak after physical death.

old terrible nights, fumbling at the deeds like orphans to whom are pointed out in a crowd two faces and told, That is your father, your mother.

5

I believed that I had found it. I believed that the reason was the duty to the alive, to the terrible blood, the red bitter flood boiling through the dad. I would think of sin as I would think of the clothes we both wore in the world's face, of die circumspection necessary because he was he and I was I; the sin the more utter and terrible since he was the instrument ordained by God who created the sin, to sanctify that sin He had created. While I waited for him in the woods, waiting for him before he saw me, I would think of him as dressed in sin. I would think of him as thinking of me as dressed also in sin, he the more beautiful since the garment which he had exchanged for sin was sanctified. I would think of the sin as garments which we would remove in order to shape and coerce the terrible blood to the forlorn echo of the dead word high in the air. Then I would lay with Anse again—I did not lie to him: I just refused just as I refused my breast to Cash and Darl after their time was up—hearing the dark land talking the voiceless speech.

35

I hid nothing. I tried to deceive no one. I would not have cared. I merely took the precautions that he thought necessary for his sake, not for my safety, but just as I wore clothes in the world's face. And I would think then when Cora talked to me, of how the high dead words in time seemed to lose even the significant of their dead sound.

Then it was over. Over in the sense that he was gone and I knew that, see him again though I would, I would never again see him coming swift and secret to me in the woods dressed in sin like a **gallant** garment already blowing aside with the speed of his secret coming.

But for me it was not over. I mean, over in the sense of beginning and ending, because to me there was no beginning nor ending to anything then. I even held Anse refraining still, not that I was holding him recessional, but as though nothing else had ever been. My children were of me alone, of the wild blood boiling along the earth, of me and of all that lived; of none and of all. Then I found that I had Jewel. When I waked to remember to discover it, he was two months gone.

70

My father said that the reason for living is getting ready to stay dead. I knew at last what he meant and that he could not have known what he meant himself, because a man cannot know anything about cleaning up the house afterward. And so I have cleaned my house. With Jewel—I lay by the lamp,

75

terribles noches de antaño, tanteando los hechos como huérfanos a los que se les señalasen dos rostros en una multitud y les dijese: Ese es tu padre, tu madre.

Creí que lo había descubierto. Creí que el sentido era el deber de los vivos, para con la terrible sangre, la amarga sangre roja que corre hirviendo por la tierra. Pensaba en el pecado como pensaba en la ropa que los dos llevábamos a la vista del mundo, en la compostura necesaria dado que él era él y, yo era yo; el pecado tanto más grave y horrible por cuanto él era el instrumento dispuesto por Dios que creó el pecado, para santificar ese pecado que El había creado. Mientras le esperaba en el bosque, mientras le esperaba antes de que me viera, me lo imaginaba vestido de pecado. Pensaba que él también me imaginaría a mí vestida de pecado, aunque él el más hermoso porque la vestidura que había cambiado por la de pecado estaba santificada. Imaginaba el pecado como las prendas que nos quitábamos con objeto de conformar y forzar la terrible sangre al desamparado eco de esa palabra muerta que cuelga en el aire. Luego me volvía a acostar con Anse —no le mentía; sólo me negaba a él, igual que les negaba el pecho a Cash y a Darl en cuanto crecieron—y oía a la oscura tierra pronunciar su mudo discurso.

No ocultaba nada. No trataba de engañar a nadie. No me hubiera preocupado. Simplemente tomaba las precauciones que él consideraba necesarias para sí mismo, no por mi seguridad, pero del mismo modo que me vestía a la vista del mundo. Y entonces, cuando Cora me hablaba, pensaba que las altisonantes palabras muertas con el tiempo parecían perder hasta el mismo significado de su sonido muerto.

Luego todo se acabó. Se acabó en el sentido de que él se fue y de que yo me di cuenta de que, aunque lo volviera a ver, nunca le volvería a ver acercándose veloz y secreto hacia mí por entre los árboles vestido de pecado como si llevara un **garboso** ropaje que se entreabría con la velocidad de su secreta aproximación.

Pero para mí no se había acabado. Quiero decir, acabar en el sentido de lo que empieza y termina, porque para mí por entonces nada empezaba ni terminaba. Incluso seguí rechazando a Anse, no como si le rechazara por primera vez, sino como si siempre le hubiera rechazado. Mis hijos [170] eran sólo míos, de la sangre salvaje que hierve por la tierra; sólo míos y de todo lo que vive: de nadie y de todo. Luego me enteré de que iba a tener a Jewel. Cuando desperté para acordarme de descubrirlo, hacía dos meses que él se había ido.

Mi padre decía que la finalidad de la vida es prepararse para estar muerto. Por fin entendí lo que quería decir y que él no podía haber sabido lo que quería decir, porque un hombre no puede saber lo que significa limpiar la casa después. Y así yo le limpiado mi casa. Con Jewel —estaba acostada junto a la lámpara,

gallant *adj.* 1 brave, chivalrous. 2 **a** (of a ship, horse, etc.) grand, fine, stately. **b** archaic finely dressed. 3 **a** markedly attentive to women. **b** concerned with sexual love; amatory. — *n.* 1 a ladies' man; a lover or paramour. 2 archaic a man of fashion; a fine gentleman. — *v.* 1 *tr.* flirt with. 2 *tr.* escort; act as a cavalier to (a lady). 3 *intr.* a play the gallant. **b** (foll. by *with*) flirt.

gallant 1 valiente, gallardo 2 cortés, galante. *El vocablo sugiere cortés en ambas lenguas, pero en cada una añade matices nuevos: gallant parece recalcar la idea de valentía, como valiente, gallardo, espléndido mientras que galante da más peso a connotaciones de cortesía y elegancia en castellano; en inglés los flirteos se convierten en favores sexuales hasta el punto de ser un eufemismo por prostitución.*

garboso 1. *adj.* Airoso, gallardo y bien dispuesto. 2. *fig.* Magnánimo, dadivoso.

holding up my own head, watching him cap and suture it before he breathed—the wild blood boiled away and the sound of it ceased. Then there
5 was only the milk, warm and calm, and I lying calm in the slow silence, getting ready to clean my house.

I gave Anse Dewey Dell to
10 negative Jewel. Then I gave him Vardaman to replace the child I had robbed him of. And now he has three children that are his and not mine. And then I could get ready to die.

15 One day I was talking to Cora. She prayed for me because she believed I was blind to sin, wanting me to kneel and pray too,
20 because people to whom sin is just a matter of words, to them salvation is just words too.

41

25 WHITFIELD (1)

WHEN they told me she was dying, all that night I wrestled with Satan, and I emerged victorious. I
30 woke to the enormity of my sin; I saw the true light at last, and I fell on my knees and confessed to God. And asked his guidance and received it. “Rise,” He said; “repair to that home
35 in which you have put a living lie, ^{in the middle of} among those people with whom you have outraged My Word; confess your sin aloud. It is for them, for that deceived husband, to forgive you: not I”

40 So I went. I heard that Tull’s bridge was gone; I said “Thanks, O Lord, O Mighty Ruler of all”; for by those dangers and difficulties which I should have to surmount I
45 saw that He had not abandoned me; that my reception again into His holy peace and love would be the sweeter for it. “Just let me not perish before I have begged the forgiveness of the
50 man whom I betrayed,” I prayed; “let me not be too late; let not the tale of mine and her transgression come from her lips instead of mine. She had sworn then that she would rever
55 tell it, but eternity is a fearsome thing to face: have I not wrestled thigh to thigh with Satan myself? let me not have also the sin of her broken vow upon my soul. Let not the waters of
60 Thy mighty wrath **encompass** me until I have cleansed my soul in the presence of them whom I injured.”

It was His hand that bore me
65 safely above the flood, that fended from me the dangers of the waters. My horse was frightened, and my own heart failed me as the logs and the uprooted trees bore down upon
70 my littleness. But not my soul time after time I saw them averted at destruction’s final instant, and I lifted my voice above the noise of the flood: “Praise to thee, O Mighty
75 Lord and King. By this token shall I cleanse my soul and gain again into the fold of Thy undying love.”

sujetándomela cabeza, mirándole cortar- lo y suturarla hasta que se puso a respi- rar— la salvaje sangre se amansó y cesó su sonido. Luego ya no hubo más que la leche, caliente y tranquila, y yo yacien- do en calma en el lento silencio dispues- ta a limpiar mi casa.

Le di a Anse Dewey Dell para anular lo de Jewel. Luego le di Vardaman para reemplazar al hijo que le había robado. Y ahora tiene tres hijos que son suyos y no míos. Y entonces pude prepararme para morir.

Un día estaba hablando con Cora. Rezó por mí porque creía que yo era cie- ga para el pecado y quiso que me arrodil- lara y también rezase, porque las perso- nas para las que el pecado es sólo una cuestión de palabras, la salvación tam- bién es sólo palabras.

WHITFIELD

CUANDO me dijeron que se esta- ba muriendo, toda la noche luché con- tra Satanás y salí victorioso. Desper- té a la enormidad de mi pecado; al fin vi la auténtica luz y caí de rodillas y me confesé a Dios y le pedí su conse- jo y lo recibí. «Levántate» —me dijo—, «acude a esa casa en la que has introducido una mentira viva, a esa gente **entre** la que has ultrajado Mi Verbo; confiesa tu pecado en voz alta. Es a ellos, a ese marido engañado, a quienes les toca perdonarte: no a Mí». Conque fui. Oí que el puente de Tull se lo habían llevado las aguas; dije: «¡Gra- cias Dios mío, Supremo Hacedor de todo!»; pues en estas pruebas y dificul- tades que debía superar vi que no me había abandonado; que mi readmisión en su santa paz y en su santo amor resulta- ría así todavía más dulce. «Sólo te pido que no me dejes morir antes de haber suplicado el perdón del hombre al que traicioné» —supliqué—; «no permitas que se me haga tarde; y no permitas que el relato de la falta que cometimos ella y yo salga de sus labios y no de los míos. Ella me juró entonces que nunca lo con- taría, pero la eternidad es una cosa terri- ble de afrontar: ¿no he luchado, yo mis- mo a brazo partido con Satanás? No per- mitas que también el pecado de su perjurio caiga sobre mi conciencia. No permitas que las aguas de tu Divina Ira me **rodeen** hasta que haya lavado mi alma en presen- cia de aquellos a los que injurié».

Fue su mano la que me sacó sano y salvo de la riada, la que fue apartando de mí los peligros de las aguas. Mi caballo estaba aterrado, y mi propio cora- zón desfallecía cuando los troncos y los árboles arrancados amenazaban mi in- significancia. Pero no desfalleció mi alma; una y otra vez los veía desviarse en el instante de la destrucción final, y elevaba mi voz por encima del ruido de la riada: «¡Gloria a Ti, Señor Todopo- deroso! Con esta prueba limpiaré mi alma y volveré a entrar en el redil de tu amor imperecedero.»

Whitfield (1)

This section contains Whitfield’s unspoken thoughts as he travels to the Bundren farm on the night of Addie’s death.

COMMENTARY: It is no accident that Addie’s section, which is concerned with the honest desire to explore actuality, should be sandwiched between sections narrated by characters who tend to dwell on words to the exclusion of deeds. Whitfield sets out for the Bundrens’ farm in a spirit of nobility and confession but ends up by acting with a cowardice to which he reconciles himself through the use of empty words, ‘God’s grace upon this house’. He thus confirms Addie’s idea that words and deeds are separate and stands revealed as an inadequate man, far less courageous than she but perhaps a little more practical and aware of human frailty.

encompass v.tr. 1 surround or form a circle about, esp. to protect or attack. 2 contain.

I knew then that forgiveness was mine. The flood, the danger, behind, and as I rode on across the firm earth again and the scene of my
5 Gethsemane drew closer and closer, I framed the words which I should use. I would enter the house; I would stop her before she had spoken; I would say to her husband: "Anse, I
10 have sinned. Do with me as you will."

It was already as though it were done. My soul felt freer, quieter than it had in years;
15 already I seemed to dwell in abiding peace again as I rode on. To either side I saw His hand; in my heart I could hear His voice: "Courage. I am with thee."
20

Then I reached Tull's house. His youngest girl came out and called to me as I was passing. She told me that she was already dead.
25

I have sinned, O Lord. Thou knowest the extent of my remorse and the will of my spirit. But He is merciful; He will accept the will for the deed, Who knew that when I
30 framed the words of my confession it was to Anse I spoke them, even though he was not there. It was He in His infinite wisdom that restrained the tale
35 from her dying lips as she lay surrounded by those who loved and trusted her; mine the travail by water which I sustained by the strength of His hand. Praise to Thee in Thy bounteous
40 and omnipotent love; O praise.

I entered the house of **bereavement**, the lowly dwelling where another erring mortal lay while her soul faced the
45 awful and irrevocable judgment, peace to her ashes.

"God's grace upon this house," I said.
50

42
DARL (14)

ON the horse he rode up to
55 *Armstid's and came back on the horse*, leading Armstid's team. We bitched up and laid Cash on top of Addie. When we laid him down he vomited again, but he got his head
60 over the wagon bed in time.

"He taken a lick in the stomach too," Vernon said.

65 "The horse may have kicked him in the stomach too," I said. "Did he kick you in the stomach., Cash?"

He tried to say something. Dewey Dell wiped his mouth again.
70

"What's he say?" Vernon said.

"What is it, Cash?"
75 Dewey Dell said. She leaned down. "His tools," she said. Vernon got them and put them into the wagon. Dewey Dell lifted Cash's

Entonces comprendí que obtendría el perdón. La riada, el peligro, superados, y mientras cabalgaba otra vez en tierra firme y la escena de mi Getsemaní se acercaba más y más, me puse a hilvanar las palabras que debía usar. Entraría en la casa; interrumpiría las palabras de ella antes de que empezase a hablar; le diría a su marido: «Anse, he pecado. Haz conmigo lo que quieras.»

Era como si ya lo hubiera hecho. Mi alma se sentía más libre, más tranquila de lo que se había sentido desde hacía años; ya me parecía morar en una paz permanente una vez más a medida que cabalgaba. Por todas partes veía Su mano; en mi corazón oía decir a Su voz: «Valor. Estoy a tu lado.» [172]

Luego llegué a casa de Tull. Su hija menor salió y me llamó cuando pasaba. Me dijo que ya se había muerto.

He pecado, Señor. Bien sabes lo profundo de mi remordimiento y la decisión de mi alma. Pero Él es misericordioso; Él aceptará mi intención en lugar del acto; Él sabe que cuando hilvané las palabras de mi confesión era a Anse a quien se las decía, aunque no estuviese presente. Fue El en su infinita sabiduría quien impidió que de sus labios moribundos saliera la historia mientras yacía rodeada de los que la amaban y confiaban en ella; a mí me correspondía cruzar aquellas aguas que afrontaba gracias a la fuerza de su mano. Gloria a Ti en Tu magnánimo y omnipotente amor; gloria.

Entré en la casa de la **congoja**, la humilde morada donde yacía otra pobre descarriada mientras su alma encaraba el juicio terrible e irrevocable. Descanse en paz.

—La paz de Dios sea con vosotros — dije.

DARL

Se fue a caballo a casa de Armstid y volvió *a caballo*, conduciendo el tiro de Armstid. Las enganchamos y tumbamos a Cash encima de Addie. Cuando lo tumbamos volvió a vomitar, pero sacó la cabeza por encima de la caja de la carreta a tiempo.

—También se ha golpeado en el estómago —dijo Vernon.

—A lo mejor el caballo también le ha pegado una coz en el estómago —dije yo—. ¿Te ha dado una coz en el estómago, Cash?

Intentó decir algo. Dewey Dell le volvió a limpiar la boca.

—¿Qué ha dicho? —dijo Vernon.

—¿Qué te pasa, Cash? —dijo Dewey Dell. Se inclinó sobre él—. Sus herramientas —dijo.

Vernon las cogió y las metió en la carreta. Dewey Dell levantó la cabeza de

Darl (14)

This section consists of Darl's unspoken and unverballed thoughts as the family collect themselves and leave the river to spend the night in Armstid's barn. While observing all that is going on round him, Darl is peculiarly obsessed with Jewel's actions at this point, an obsession which is marked in the text by the appearance of italic print whenever Darl is thinking of Jewel.

COMMENTARY: Jewel has just rescued his mother's corpse from the river, an action which seems to bring to Darl's mind the special relationship between Addie and Jewel and so focuses his attention on Jewel. After the family are settled in the Armstid's house, Darl has an unverballed

bereavement deprive of a relation, friend, etc., esp. by death. Luto, duelo, desgracia, aflicción

head so he could see. We drove on, Dewey Dell and I sitting beside Cash to steady him *and he riding on ahead on the horse*. Vernon stood watching us for a while. Then he turned and went back toward the bridge. He walked gingerly, beginning to flap the wet sleeves of his shirt as though he had just got wet.

10 *He was sitting the horse before the gate*. Armstid was waiting at the gate. We stopped *and he got down* and we lifted Cash down and carried him into 15 the house, where Mrs. Armstid had the bed ready. We left her and Dewey Dell undressing him.

We followed pa out to the wagon. 20 He went back and got into the wagon and drove on, we following on foot, into the lot. The wetting had helped, because Armstid said, "You welcome to the 25 house. You can put it there." *He followed, leading the horse, and stood beside the wagon, the reins in his hand*.

30 "I thank you," pa said. "We'll use in the shed yonder. I know. it's a imposition on you."

"You're welcome to the house," 35 Armstid said. *He had that wooden look on his face again; that bold, surly, high-coloured rigid look like his face and eyes were two colours of wood, 40 the wrong one pale and the wrong one dark. His shirt was beginning to dry, but it still clung close upon him when he moved*.

45 "She would appreciate it," pa said.

We took the team out and rolled 50 the wagon back under the shed. One side of the shed was open.

"It won't rain under," Armstid said. "But if you'd rather . . ."

55 Back of the barn was some rusted sheets of tin roofing. We took two of them and propped them against the open side.

60 "You're welcome to the house," Armstid said.

"I thank you," pa said. "I'd take it 65 right kind if you'd give them a little snack."

"Sho," Armstid said. "Lula'll have supper ready soon as 70 she gets Cash comfortable." *He had gone back to the horse and he was taking the saddle off, his damp shirt lapping flat to him when he moved*.

75 Pa wouldn't come in the house.

"Come in and eat," Armstid said.

Cash para que las vieras. Después echamos [173] a andar, Dewey Dell y yo sentados al lado de Cash para sostenerle y él *marchaba delante a caballo*. Vernon se quedó un rato mirándonos. Luego dio media vuelta y volvió en dirección al puente. Andaba con cuidado, agitando las mangas mojadas de su camisa como si se las acabase de mojar.

Estaba a caballo delante de la cerca. Armstid esperaba a la puerta. Nos detuvimos y él *desmontó* y bajamos a Cash de la carreta y lo llevamos dentro de la casa, donde Mrs. Armstid ya había preparado una cama. Dejamos que ella y Dewey Dell lo desnudaran.

Salimos y seguimos a padre hasta la carreta. Volvió a montar en la carreta y la metió en el corral mientras nosotros le seguíamos a pie. La mojadura nos ayudaba, porque Armstid dijo:

—Bienvenidos a esta casa. Podéis dejar la carreta ahí.

Él siguió detrás, llevando al caballo de la brida y se quedó junto a la carreta, con las bridas en la mano.

—Te lo agradezco —dijo padre—. Nos arreglaremos con el cobertizo de allá bajo. Sé que abusamos de ti.

—Estáis en vuestra casa —dijo Armstid. *Tenía de nuevo aquella mirada de madera en la cara; aquella mirada retadora, hosca, subida de color y rígida como si su cara y sus ojos fueran dos maderas de distinto color, pero con lo claro y lo oscuro al revés. Se le estaba empujando a secar la camisa, pero todavía se le pegaba el cuerpo cuando se movía*.

—Ella te lo hubiera agradecido —dijo padre.

Desenganchamos las mulas y empujamos la carreta debajo del cobertizo. Uno de los lados estaba abierto.

—Ahí debajo no se mojará —dijo Armstid—. Pero si preferís...

Detrás del granero había unas cuantas chapas de cinc oxidadas. Cogimos dos de ellas y tapamos el lado abierto.

—Estáis en vuestra casa —dijo Armstid.

—Muchas gracias —dijo padre—. Te agradecería mucho si les dieras algo de comer.

—Claro —dijo Armstid—. Lula preparará la cena en cuanto termine de acomodar a Cash. [174]

Había vuelto al caballo y lo estaba desensillando; su camisa mojada se le pegaba al cuerpo cuando se movía.

Padre no quería entrar en la casa.

—Entra a comer algo —dijo

image of his brother, who is seeing to his horse in the barn. The image is much like the one in *Darl* (2), with the emphasis on the agility of Jewel, the gaudiness of the horse and the 'obscene ferocity' with which Jewel addresses his animal. Such repetitions of imagery strengthen the impression Faulkner is building up of his characters.

surly bad-tempered and unfriendly; churlish, mean, hosco, arisco, huraño.

"It's nigh ready."

"I wouldn't crave nothing," pa said. "I thank you."

5

"You come in and dry and eat," Armstid said. "It'll be all right here."

10

"It's for her," pa said. "It's for her sake I am taking the food. I got no team, no nothing. But she will be grateful to ere a one of you."

15

"Sho," Armstid said. "You folks come in and dry."

20

But after Armstid gave pa a drink, he felt better, and when, we went in to see about Cash he *hadn't come in with us. When I looked back he was leading the horse into the barn he was already talking about getting another team, and by supper time he had good as bought it. He is down there in the barn, sliding fluidly past the gaudy lunging swirl, into the stall with it. He climbs on to the manger and drags the hay down and leaves the stall and seeks and finds the **curry-comb**. Then he returns and slips quickly past the single crashing thump and up against the horse, where it cannot over-reach. He applies the **curry-comb**, holding himself within the horse's striking radius with the agility of an acrobat, cursing the horse in a whisper of obscene caress. Its head flashes back, tooth-cropped; its eyes roll in the dark like marbles on a gaudy velvet cloth as he strikes it upon the face with the back of the **curry-comb**.*

curry-comb: a comb designed for grooming horses

43

45

ARMSTID (1)

BUT time I give him another sup of whisky and supper was about ready, he had done already bought a team from somebody, on a credit.

50

Picking and choosing he were by then, saying how he didn't like this **span** and wouldn't put his money in nothing so-and-so owned, not even a **hen coop**.

60

"You might try Snopes," I said. "He's got three-four span. Maybe one of them would suit you."

65

Then he begun to mumble his mouth, looking at me like it was me that owned the only **span of mules** in the country and wouldn't sell them to him, when I knew that like as not it would be my team that would ever get them out of the lot at all. Only I don't know what they would do with them, if they had a team. Littlejohn had told me that the **levee** through Haley bottom had done gone for two miles and that the only way to get to Jefferson would be to go around by Mottson. But that was Anse's business.

75

span of mules: a pair of mules

levee: raised bank of a river

a close man: a difficult man, a hard bargainer

"He's a close man to trade with," he says, mumbling his mouth. But

Armstid—. Está casi listo.

—No pido nada —dijo padre—. Te lo agradezco.

—Entra a secarte y a comer algo —dijo Armstid—. Eso estará perfectamente aquí.

—Lo haré por ella —dijo padre—. Tomaré un bocado en memoria suya. No tengo ni mulas, ni nada. Pero ella os lo agradecerá a todos vosotros.

—Claro, claro —dijo Armstid—. Venga, entrad todos a secaros.

Pero después de que Armstid le diera un trago, padre se sintió mejor, y cuando entramos a ver cómo seguía Cash *él no vino con nosotros. Cuando volví la cabe conducía el caballo al establo ya estaba hablando de conseguir otro tiro y al sentarnos a la mesa a cenar ya daba la cosa por hecha. Está allá abajo en el establo, desliándose con fluidez al otro lado del agresivo torbellino brillante, metiéndose en el pesebre con él. Trepa al pajar y baja con heno y sale del pesebre y busca y encuentra una almohaza. Luego vuelve y esquivo la única pero tremenda cox del caballo y se pone a su lado, allí donde no le puede alcanzar. Empuña la almohaza, manteniéndose dentro del radio de acción del caballo con la agilidad de un acróbata, mientras lo maldice entre dientes en un obscuro murmullo de cariño. El caballo vuelve la cabeza, enseñando los dientes; los ojos le giran en la oscuridad como canicas sobre un trozo de terciopelo brillante cuando él le pega en la cara con el revés de la almohaza.*

ARMSTID

PERO cuando le doy otro trago de whisky y la cena estaba casi lista, ya daba por hecha la compra de un tiro de mulas, a crédito. Por entonces ya andaba seleccionando y escogiendo, diciendo por qué no le gustaba esta o **aquella pareja** y que no se gastaría dinero en nada que hubiera sido de éste o aquél, ni siquiera una **jaula** para pollos. [175]

—Podrías probar con Snopes —dije yo—. Tiene tres o cuatro parejas. Puede que alguna te convenga.

Luego empezó a murmurar entre dientes, mirándome como si yo fuera el dueño de la única **pareja de mulas** de la comarca y no se la quisiera vender, cuando yo sabía que, de una manera o de otra, sería mi tiro el único con el que iban a salir de aquel corral. Lo único es que no me imaginaba qué iban a hacer con el tiro, si es que lo conseguían. Littlejohn me había contado que la riada se había llevado más de tres kilómetros del **terraplén** que encausa el Haley y que el único modo de llegar a Jefferson sería dando un rodeo por Mottson**20. Pero eso era cosa de Anse.

—Es difícil hacer tratos con él, porque es que no suelta prenda —dice

Armstid (1)

This is a record of the conversations which take place among the Bundrens after they have lost their mules. Jewel has gone to fetch a doctor for Cash but returns with an amateur horse-doctor instead. The leg is set and next morning Anse borrows Jewel's horse to visit the Snopes and buy a team. In his absence, the sun comes up and the buzzards start to collect around the farm, attracted by the smell of Addie's corpse. Anse returns, saying he has got a team. He has taken the money which Cash saved up to buy a radio and has traded Jewel's horse as well for the mules. Jewel is furious, leaves on his horse and, next morning, someone from the Snopes' farm appears with a team of mules, saying that the horse has been delivered during the night. Armstid is left to wonder at the way in which Anse gets people to do things for him.

COMMENTARY: The main purpose of this section is to fill in the details of how the family get a new team of mules, although it

a sup: a drink of whisky

when I give him another sup after supper, he cheered up some. He was aiming to go back to the barn and set up with her. Maybe he thought that if he just stayed down there ready to take out, Santa Claus would maybe bring him a span of mules. "But I reckon I can talk him around," he says. "A man'll always help a fellow in a tight, if he's got ere a drop of Christian blood in him."

"Of course you're welcome to the use of mine," I said, me knowing how much he believed that was the reason.

"I thank you," he said. "She'll want to go in oun," and him knowing how much I believed that was the reason.

After supper Jewel rode over to the Bend to get Peabody. I heard he was to be there to-day at Varner's. Jewel come back about midnight. Peabody had gone down below Inverness somewhere, but Uncle Billy come back with him, with his satchel of horse-physic. Like he says, a man ain't so different from a horse or a mule, come long come short, except a mule or a horse has got a little more sense. "What you been into now, boy?" he says, looking at Cash. "Get me a mattress and a chair and a glass of whisky," he says.

He made Cash drink the whisky, then he run Anse out of the room. "Lucky it was the same leg he broke last summer," Anse says, mournful, mumbling and blinking. "That's something."

We folded the mattress across Cash's legs and set the chair on the mattress and me and Jewel set on the chair and the gal held the lamp and Uncle Billy taken a chew of tobacco and went to work. Cash fought pretty hard for a while, until he fainted. Then he laid still, with big balls of sweat standing on his face like they had started to roll down and then stopped to wait for him.

When he waked up, Uncle Billy had done packed up and left. He kept on trying to say something until the gal leaned down and wiped his mouth. "It's his tools," she said.

"I brought them in," Darl said. "I got them."

He tried to talk again; she leaned down. "He wants to see them," she said. So Darl brought them in where he could see them. They shoved them under the side of the bed, where he could reach his hand and touch them when he felt better. Next morning Anse taken that horse and rode over to the Bend to see Snopes. Him and Jewel stood in the lot talking a while, then Anse got on the horse and rode off. I reckon that was the first time

masculando. Pero cuando le doy otro trago después de cenar, se animó un poco más. Tenía la intención de volver al granero a velarla. Puede que pensara que si se quedaba allí abajo hasta la hora de irse, Santa Claus le proporcionaría un par de mulas—. Pero para mí que le convenceré —dijo—. Nadie le niega ayuda a un vecino en apuros, si es que le queda una gota de sangre de cristiano.

—Podéis usar las mías, naturalmente —dije yo, sabiendo que él creía que era por eso.

—Te lo agradezco —dijo él—. Pero ella preferiría ir con las nuestras —y él sabiendo que yo creía que era por eso.

Después de cenar Jewel cabalgó hasta el Bend²¹, a buscar a Peabody. Yo había oído que hoy estaría allí, en casa de Varner. Jewel volvió a medianoche. Peabody se había ido a algún sitio más abajo del Inverness²², pero el tío Billy [176] venía con él, con su maletín de veterinario. Como él dice, en definitiva un hombre no es tan diferente de un caballo o una mula, salvo en que una mula o un caballo tienen algo más de sentido común.

—¿En qué lío te has metido ahora, muchacho? —dice, mirando a Cash—. Traedme un colchón y una silla y un vaso de whisky —dice.

Mandó a Cash que se bebiera el whisky, luego echó a Anse del cuarto.

—Por suerte fue la misma pierna que se rompió el verano pasado —dice Anse sombríamente, entre dientes y parpadeando—. Ya es algo.

Doblamos el colchón por encima de las piernas de Cash y pusimos la silla encima del colchón y yo y Jewel nos sentamos en la silla y la chica sostenía el farol y el tío Billy se metió tabaco de mascar en la boca y se puso a la tarea. Cash se resistió con fuerza durante un rato, hasta que se desmayó. Luego se quedó quieto, con grandes gotas de sudor que se habían detenido en su cara como si hubieran empezado a rodar y se hubieran interrumpido para esperarle.

Cuando se rehízo, el tío Billy ya había recogido sus cosas y se había ido. Siguió tratando de decir algo hasta que la chica se inclinó sobre él y le secó la boca.

—Son sus herramientas —dijo ella.

—Ya las he traído —dijo Darl—. Las tengo yo.

Intentó hablar de nuevo; la chica se agachó.

—Quiere verlas —dijo.

Conque Darl las trajo para que las pudiera ver. Las [177] metieron bajo la cama, donde llegara con la mano y pudiera tocarlas cuando se sintiera mejor. A la mañana siguiente Anse cogió aquel caballo y se fue al Bend a ver a Snopes. Jewel y él estuvieron hablando un rato en el corral, luego Anse montó a caballo y se marchó. Para mí que era la primera vez que Jewel dejaba que otro

incidentally gives the reader confirmation of his opinion of the impact the various members of the family make on those who see them.

Jewel ever let anybody ride that horse, and until Anse come back he hung around in that swole-up way, watching the road like he was half a
5 mind to take out after Anse and get the horse back.

Along toward reine o'clock it begun to get hot. That was when I see
10 the first buzzard. Because of the wetting, I reckon. Anyway it wasn't until well into the day that I see them. Lucky the breeze was setting away from the house, so it wasn't until well
15 into the morning. But soon as I see them it was like I could smell it in the field a mile away from just watching them, and them circling and circling for everybody in the county
20 to see what was in my barn.

I was still a good half a mile from the house when I heard that boy yelling. I thought maybe he might
25 have fell into the well or something, so I whipped up and come into the lot on the **lope**.

There must have been a dozen of
30 them setting along the ridge-pole of the barn, and that boy was chasing another one around the lot like it was a turkey and it just lifting enough to dodge him and go flopping back to
35 the roof of the shed again where he had found it setting on the coffin. It had got hot then, right, and the breeze had dropped or changad or something, so I went and found Jewel,
40 but Lula come out.

"You got to do something," sha said. "It's a outrage."

45 "That's what I aim to do," I said.

"It's a outrage," sha said. "He should
be lawed for treating her so."

50 "He's getting her into the ground the rest he can," I said. So I found Jewel and asked him if he didn't want to take one of the mules and go over to the Bend and
55 see about Anse. He didn't say nothing. He just looked at me with his jaws going bone-white and them bone-white ayes of hisn, then he went and begun to call Darl.

60 "What you fixing to do?" I said.

He didn't answer. Darl come out. "Come on," Jewel said.

65 "What you aim to do?" Darl said.

"Going to move the wagon," Jewel said over his shoulder.

70 "Don't be a fool," I said. "I never meant nothing. You couldn't help it." And Darl hung back too, but nothing wouldn't suit Jewel.

75 "Shut your goddamn mouth," he says.

"It's got to be somewhere," Darl

aparte de él montara el caballo, y hasta que Anse volvió anduvo dando vueltas por todas partes, vigilando el camino como si estuviera a punto de salir corriendo detrás de Anse para recuperar el caballo.

Hacia las nueve empezó a apretar el calor. Entonces fue cuando vi al primer buitre. Para mí que fue por la mojadura. De todos modos no los vi hasta bien entrado el día. Por suerte la brisa soplaba desde el lado de la casa, conque no aparecieron hasta bien entrada la mañana. Pero en cuanto los vi fue como si pudieran olerlo en el campo a más de un kilómetro de distancia sólo con verlos, y que se pusieran a trazar círculos allá arriba para que todos los del condado vieran lo que había en mi granero.

Todavía debía de estar a casi un kilómetro de la casa cuando oí gritar al chico. Creí que a lo mejor se había caído al pozo o algo así, conque arreeé y entré en el patio al **galope**.

Había por lo menos una docena de ellos posados en la viga del granero y aquel chico perseguía a otro por el corral como si fuera un pavo y el pajarraco se elevó lo suficiente para esquivarlo y subir otra vez al tejado del cobertizo donde el chico lo había encontrado posado en el ataúd. Entonces ya apretaba el calor y la brisa había caído o cambiado o algo, conque fui a buscar a Jewel, pero Lula salió.

—Tienes que hacer algo —dijo—. Esto es una vergüenza.

—Es lo que pensaba hacer —dije yo.

—Es una vergüenza —dijo ella—. Deberían de **denunciarle** por tratarla así.

—Intenta enterrarla lo mejor que puede —dije yo.

Conque encontré a Jewel y le pregunté si no quería coger una de las mulas y acercarse al Bend a ver si daba con [178] Anse. No dijo nada. Se limitó a mirarme con aquellas mandíbulas que eran blancas donde se le marcaban los huesos y aquellos ojos tan claros como las mandíbulas, y fue y se puso a llamar a Darl.

—¿Qué piensas hacer? —dije yo.

No me contestó. Salió Darl.

—Ven —dijo Jewel.

—¿Qué vas a hacer? —dijo Darl.

—Voy a sacar la carreta —dijo Jewel por encima del hombro.

—No hagas tonterías —dije yo—. No quería decir eso. No lo puedes evitar.

Y Darl dudaba también, pero Jewel seguía decidido a hacer lo que había dicho.

—Cierra esa maldita boca —dice él.

—Tiene que estar en algún sitio —dijo

lope (esp. of animals) run with a long bounding stride.

be lawed: (Am. col.) brought to court, arrested

said. "We'll take out soon as pa gets back."

"You won't help me?" Jewel says, 5 them white eyes of hisn kind of blaring and his face shaking like he had a **auger**.

auger: an ague, a fever

"No," Darl said. "I won't. Wait till 10 pa gets back."

So I stood in the door and watched him push and haul at that wagon. It was on a downhill, and once I thought 15 he was fixing to beat out the back end of the shed. Then the dinner-bell rung. I called him, but he didn't look around. "Come on to dinner," I said. "Tell that boy." But he didn't 20 answer, so I went on to dinner. The gal went down to get that boy, but she come back without him. About half through dinner we heard him yelling again, running 25 that buzzard out.

"It's a outrage," Lula said; "a outrage."

30 "He's doing the best he can," I said. "A fellow don't trade with Snopes in thirty minutes. They'll set in the shade all afternoon **to dicker**."

to dicker: (Am. col.) to talk business, to bargain

35 "Do?" she says. "Do? He's done too much, already."

And I reckon he had. Trouble is, his quitting was just about to start 40 our doing. He couldn't buy no team from nobody, let alone Snopes, withouten he had something to mortgage he didn't know would mortgage yet. And so when I went 45 back to the field I looked at my mules and same as told them good-bye for a spell. And when I come back that evening and the sun shining all day on that shed, I wasn't 50 so sho I would regret it.

He come riding up just as I went out to the porch, where they all was. He looked kind of funny: kind 55 of more **hang-dog** than common, and kind of proud too. Like he had done something he thought was cute but wasn't so sho now how other folks would take it.

hang-dog: (Am. col.) sheepish, ashamed, alma en pena

60 "I got a team," he said.

"You bought a team from Snopes?" I said.

65 "I reckon Snopes ain't the only man in this country that can drive a trade," he said.

70 "Sho," I said. He was looking at Jewel, with that funny look, but Jewel had done got down from the porch and was going toward the horse. To see what Anse had done to it, I reckon.

75 "Jewel," Anse says. Jewel looked back. "Come here," Anse says. Jewel come back a little and stopped

Darl—. Nos iremos en cuanto vuelva padre.

—¿No me vas a ayudar? —dice Jewel, con esos ojos claros suyos que parecen echar chispas y la cara temblándole como si tuviera malaria.

—No —dijo Darl—. No quiero. Espera hasta que vuelva padre.

Conque me quedé a la puerta viendo cómo empujaba y tiraba de la carreta. El terreno iba cuesta abajo y durante un momento pensé que iba a derribar la parte de atrás del cobertizo. Entonces sonó la campana para comer. Le llamé, pero no volvió la vista.

—Ven a comer —le dije—. Y avisa al chico —pero no contestó, de modo que me fui a comer. La chica salió a llamar al chico, pero regresó sin él. Estábamos a medio comer cuando volvimos a oírle gritar mientras corría para espantar al buitre.

—Es una vergüenza —dijo Lula—, una vergüenza.

—Hace todo lo que puede —dije yo—. Nadie cierra un trato con Snopes en media hora. Se pasará toda la tarde **regateando** a la sombra.

—¿Hace? —dice Lula—. ¿Hace? Ya ha hecho demasiadas cosas.

Y para mí que las había hecho. El problema es que [179] como deje de hacer cosas tendremos que empezar a hacerlas nosotros. No podría comprar un tiro a nadie, y menos a Snopes, sin algo que hipotecar que no sabía todavía que fuera hipotecable. Conque cuando volví al campo miré a mis mulas como diciéndoles adiós por una temporada. Pero cuando volví aquella tarde, con el sol que se había pasado el día entero brillando sobre el cobertizo, no estaba nada seguro de que fuera a lamentarlo.

Llegó en el caballo justo cuando yo salía al porche, donde estaban todos. Tenía una pinta ridícula: parecía más un perro **apaleado** que nunca, y se le veía como orgulloso a la vez. Lo mismo que si hubiera hecho algo que consideraba que era muy ingenioso aunque no estaba seguro de cómo lo tomarían los demás.

—Conseguí un tiro —dijo.

—¿Se lo compraste a Snopes? —dije yo.

—Para mí que Snopes no es el único hombre de esta comarca que sabe hacer negocios —dijo él.

—Claro, claro —dije yo.

Miraba a Jewel, con aquella pinta ridícula, pero Jewel había bajado del porche y se dirigía hacia el caballo. Para ver si Anse le había hecho algo, supongo.

Jewel —dice Anse. Jewel volvió la cabeza—. Ven aquí —dice Anse. Jewel se puso a andar hacia su padre y volvió a

again.

“What you want?” he said.

5 “So you got a team from Snopes,”
I said. “He’ll send them over to-night,
I reckon? You’ll want a early start
to-morrow, long as you’ll have to go
by Mottson.”

10 Then he quit looking like he had
been for a while. He got that
badgered [acosado] look like he used
to have, mumbling his mouth.

15 “I do the best I can,” he said.
“Fore God, if there were ere a man
in the living world suffered the trials
and floutings I have suffered.”

20 “A fellow that just beat Snopes in
a trade ought to feel pretty good,” I
said. “What did you give him, Anse?”

25 He didn’t look at me. “I give a
chattel mortgage on my cultivator X
and seeder,” he said.

30 “But they ain’t worth forty dollars.
How far do you aim to get with a
forty-dollar team?”

They were all watching him now,
quiet and steady. Jewel was stopped,
35 half-way back, waiting to go on to the
horse. “I give other things,” Anse
said. He begun to mumble his mouth
again, standing there like he was
waiting for somebody to hit him and
40 him with his mind already made up
not to do nothing about it.

“What other things?” Darl said.

45 “Hell,” I said. “You take my team.
You can bring them back. I’ll get
along some way.”

“So that’s what you were doing in
50 Cash’s clothes last night,” Darl said.
He said it just like he was reading it
outen the paper. Like he never give a
durn himself one way or the other.
Jewel had come back now, standing
55 there, looking at Anse with them
marble eyes of hisn. “Cash aimed to
buy that **talking machine** from Suratt
with that money,” Darl said.

talking machine: (col.) radio

60 Anse stood there, mumbling his
mouth. Jewel watched him. He ain’t
never blinked yet.

65 “But that’s just eight dollars
more,” Darl said, in that voice like
he was just listening and never give
a durn himself. “That still won’t
buy a team.”

70 Anse looked at Jewel quick,
kind of sliding his eyes that
way, then he looked down again.
“God knows, if there were ere a
man,” he says. Still they didn’t
75 say nothing. They just watched
him, waiting, and him sliding his
eyes toward their feet and up
their legs but no higher. “And the

detenerse.

—¿Qué quieres? —dijo.

—Así que le sacaste el tiro a Snopes,
¿eh? —dije yo—. Mandará las mulas esta
noche, supongo. Mañana tendréis que
madrugar, pues tenéis que dar un rodeo
por Mottson.

Entonces Anse dejó de tener el as-
pecto que tenía. Recuperó el de perro
apaleado que solía tener, y
murmuraba entre dientes.

—Hice todo lo que pude —dijo—.
Pongo a Dios por testigo de que ningún
hombre ha pasado por las pruebas y tribu-
laciones que he tenido que aguantar yo.

—Un tipo que se impone a Snopes en
un trato tiene motivos para sentirse bien
—dije yo—. ¿Cuánto le pagaste, Anse?

No me miró.
—He dado en _____ prenda la cul-
tivadora y la sembradora —dijo.

—Pero no valen ni cuarenta dólares.
¿Adónde piensas llegar con un tiro de
cuarenta dólares?

Ahora todos le miraban, callados y
fijos en él. Jewel se había detenido a
mitad de camino hacia el caballo.

—Le di otras cosas —dijo Anse.
Se puso a murmurar otra vez entre
dientes, quedándose allí parado
como si esperara que alguien le
fuera a pagar y se hubiera hecho a
la idea de aguantarse.

—¿Qué otras cosas? —dijo Darl.

—Demonios —dije yo—. Llevaos mis
mulas. Ya me las devolveréis. Me las
arreglaré.

—Por eso estaba hurgando usted en
la ropa de Cash la noche pasada —dijo
Darl. Dijo esto como si lo estuviera le-
yendo en un periódico. Como si no le
importara en absoluto aquella cuestión.
Jewel se había acercado y estaba allí quie-
to mirando a Anse con aquellos ojos suyos
como canicas—. Cash pensaba comprarse ese
gramófono que hay en la tienda de
Suratt*(23) con ese dinero —dijo Darl.

Anse se quedó allí quieto, murmurando.
Jewel le observaba. Todavía no ha-
bía ni parpadeado.

—Pero eso sólo son ocho dólares más
—dijo Darl, con aquella voz de quien se
limita a escuchar como si la cosa no fue-
ra con él—. Ni siquiera con eso podrá
comprar un par de mulas.

Anse miró a Jewel, furtivo, como des-
lizando los ojos en aquella dirección, y
enseguida volvió a bajar la vista al suelo.

—Dios sabe que si hay un hombre
que... —dice él. Ellos todavía no habían
dicho nada. Se limitaban a mirarle, espe-
rando, y él dejaba resbalar la mirada hasta
los pies de sus hijos y la subía hasta la
altura de sus rodillas, pero no más arri-

horse," he says.

"What horse?" Jewel said. Anse just stood there. I be durn, if a man
 5 **get the upper hand** control can't **keep the upper hand** of his sons, he ought to run them away from home, no matter how big they are. And if he can't do that, I be durn if he oughtn't to leave
 10 himself. I be durn if I wouldn't. "You mean, you tried to swap my horse?" Jewel says.

Anse stands there, **dangle-armed**.
 15 **dangle-armed:** (neologism) with arms hanging loosely by his sides "For fifteen years I ain't had a tooth in my head," he says. "God knows it. He knows in fifteen years I ain't **et** the victuals He aimed for man to eat to keep his strength up,
 20 and me saving a nickel here and a nickel there so my family wouldn't suffer it, to buy them teeth so I could eat God's appointed food. I give that money. I thought that
 25 if I could do without eating, my sons could do without riding. God knows I did."

Jewel stands with his hands on his
 30 hips, looking at Anse. Then he looks away. He looked out across the field, his face still as a rock, like it was somebody else talking about somebody else's horse and him not
 35 even listening. Then he spit, slow, and said "Hell" and he turned and went on to the gate and unhitched the horse and got on it. It was moving when he come into the saddle and by the time
 40 he was on it they was tearing down the road like the Law might have been behind them. They went out of sight that way, the two of them looking like some kind of a spotted cyclone.

45 "Well," I says. "You take my team," I said. But he wouldn't do it. And they wouldn't even stay, and that boy chasing them
 50 buzzards all day in the hot son until he was nigh as crazy as the rest of them. "Leave Cash here, anyway," I said. But they wouldn't do that. They made a pallet for him
 55 with quilts on top of the coffin and laid him on it and set his tools by him, and we put my team in and hauled the wagon about a mile down the road.

60 "If we'll bother you here," Anse says, "just say so."

"Sho," I said. "It'll be fine here.
 65 Safe, too. Now let's go back and eat supper."

"I thank you," Anse said. "We got a little something in the basket. We
 70 can make out."

"Where'd you get it?" I said.

"We brought it from home."

75 "But it'll be stale now," I said. "Come and get some hot victuals."

ba—. Y el caballo —dice.

—¿Qué caballo? —dijo Jewel. Anse seguía allí quieto. Qué diablos, si un hombre no es capaz de **meter en cintura** a sus hijos, debería echarles de casa, sin importar lo mayores que sean. Y si no es capaz de hacer eso, que me condene si no debería de largarse él mismo. Qué diablos, eso es lo que yo haría—. ¿Quiere decir que intentó usted hacer un cambalache con mi caballo? —dice Jewel.

Anse seguía allí, con los **brazos caídos**.
 —Hace quince años que no tengo ni un diente en la boca —dice—. Dios bien lo sabe. Sabe que llevo quince años sin **comer** los alimentos que Él destinó para que comiera el hombre para conservar sus fuerzas, y que he ahorrado centavo a centavo para comprarme una dentadura sin que mi familia sufriera por eso y poder así comer la comida que Dios provee. Bueno, pues le he dado ese dinero. Pensé que si yo podía pasarme sin comer, mis hijos podían pasarse sin montar a caballo. Dios sabe que eso es lo que pensé.

Jewel estaba allí con los brazos en jarras, mirando a Anse. Luego apartó la vista. Miró hacia el campo, su cara inmóvil como una roca, igual que si alguien estuviera hablando del caballo de otra persona y él ni se molestara en escucharle. Luego escupió, muy despacio, y dijo:
 —Al diablo —y dio media vuelta y se dirigió a la cerca y desató al caballo y lo montó. El caballo ya se movía cuando se subió a la silla y para cuando estuvo sentado ya volaban camino abajo como si los persiguiera la justicia. Enseguida se perdieron de vista, en aquella dirección, como una especie de ciclón de mezclados colores.

—Bueno —digo—. Llevaos mis mulas —dije. Pero él no quería llevarse las. Y los demás no querían quedarse, y aquel chico persiguiendo a los buitres el día entero bajo aquel sol de justicia hasta que se volvió casi tan loco como todos los demás—. Por lo menos, dejad a Cash aquí —dije yo. Pero tampoco querían. Con unas colchas le improvisaron un jergón encima del ataúd y le echaron en él y le [182] pusieron las herramientas al lado, y enganchamos mis mulas y arrastramos la carreta durante un par de kilómetros camino abajo.

—Si te molestamos aquí —dice Anse—, sólo tienes que decirlo.

—Nada de eso —dije yo—. Aquí estará bien. Y también segura. Ahora venid a casa a cenar.

—Te lo agradezco —dijo Anse—. Tenemos algunas cosas en la cesta. Nos las arreglaremos.

—¿Dónde las habéis conseguido? —dije yo.

—Las hemos traído de casa.

—Pero ahora estarán pasadas —dije yo—. Venid a tomar algo caliente.

But they wouldn't come. "I reckon we can make out," Anse said. So I went home and et and taken a basket back to them and tried again to make them come back to the house.

"I thank you," he said. "I reckon we can make out." So I left them there, squatting around a little fine, waiting; God knows what for.

I come on home. I kept thinking about them there, and about that fellow tearing away on that horse. And that would be the last they would see of him. And I be durn if I could blame him. Not for wanting to not give up his horse, but for getting shut of such a durn fool as Anse.

Or that's what I thought then. Because be durn if there ain't something about a durn fellow like Anse that seems to make a man have to help him, even when he knows he'll be wanting to kick himself next minute. Because about a hour after breakfast next morning Eustace Grimm that works Snopes' place come up with a span of mules, hunting Anse.

"I thought him and Anse never traded," I said.

"Sho," Eustace said. "All they liked was the horse. Like I said to Mr. Snopes, he was letting this team go for fifty dollars, because if his uncle Flem had a just kept them Texas horses when he owned them, Anse wouldn't a never "

"The horse?" I said. "Anse's boy taken that horse and cleared out last night, probably halfway to Texas by now, and Anse——"

"I didn't know who brung it," Eustace said. "I never see them. I just found the horse in the barn this morning when I went to feed, and I told Mr. Snopes and he said to bring the team on over here."

Well, that'll be the last they'll ever see of him now, sho enough. Come Christmas time they'll maybe get a postal card from him in Texas, I reckon. And if it hadn't a been Jewel, I reckon it'd a been me; I owe him that much, myself. I be durn if Anse don't **conjure a man**, some way. I be durn if he ain't a sight.

conjure a man: (Am. col.) bewitch

44

VARDAMAN (6)

NOW there are seven of them, in little tall black circles.

"Look, Darl," I say; "see?"

He looks up. We watch them in little tall black circles of not-moving.

75

"Yesterday there were just four," I say.

There were more than four on the barn.

Pero no quisieron.

—Nos las arreglaremos —dijo Anse.

Conque me fui a casa a cenar y luego volví con una cesta con algo de comida y otra vez traté de que vinieran a casa.

—Te lo agradezco —dijo Anse—. Pero nos las arreglaremos.

Conque allí los dejé, en cuclillas alrededor de una hoguera, esperando; Dios sabe qué.

Volví a casa. No dejaba de pensar en ellos allí, y en el que salió disparado a caballo. Y en que sería la última vez que le volverían a ver. Y que me condene si le echo la culpa. Y no me refiero a que se negara a dar su caballo, sino a que se deshiciera de ese maldito idiota de Anse.

Bueno, eso pensé entonces. Porque que me condene si no hay algo en esos tipos tan idiotas como Anse que parece obligar a que se les ayude, aunque al siguiente minuto uno se tire de los pelos por haberlo hecho. Porque a la mañana siguiente, como cosa de una hora después de desayunar apareció Eustace Grimm, que trabaja para Snopes, con una pareja de mulas, en busca de Anse.

—Cref que él y Anse nunca iban a llegar a un acuerdo —dije yo.

—Así es —dijo Eustace—. Lo único que a los dos les importaba de verdad era el caballo. Como le dije a Mr. Snopes, le iba a ceder este tiro por cincuenta dólares, porque si [183] su tío Flem no hubiera soldado a esos caballos de Texas cuando eran suyos, Anse jamás hubiera conseguido...

—¿El caballo? —dije yo—. El chico de Anse lo cogió y se largó con él ayer por la noche, a estas horas probablemente esté a medio camino de Texas, y Anse...

—No sé quién lo habrá llevado —dijo Eustace—. No he visto a nadie. Sólo me encontré a ese caballo en la cuadra esta mañana cuando fui a darles el pienso, y se lo dije a Mr. Stopes y él me dijo que trajera el tiro aquí.

Bueno, ahora sí que no le vuelven a echar la vista encima a ése, seguro. En Navidades puede que reciban una postal suya desde Texas. Y si no hubiese sido Jewel, para mí que me hubiese tocado a mí; se lo debo. Que me condene si Anse no **hechiza a los hombres** de algún modo. Que me condene si no es todo un cuadro.

VARDAMAN

A HORA hay siete haciendo circulitos negros arriba.

—Mira, Darl —digo—; ¿lo ves?

Levanta la vista. Los vemos hacer circulitos negros inmóviles arriba.

—Ayer sólo había cuatro —digo.

En el granero había más de cuatro.

Vardaman (6)

Vardaman remains almost oblivious to all the tensions which surround the buying of the mules. As we see in this section, which consists of his unspoken and spoken thoughts, his sole concern is with the buzzards. Armstid in *Armstid* (1) saw Vardaman trying to frighten the birds away, and

light on: alight on, land on

I don't bother nones (Am. col.) I am not troubled

- “Do you know what I would do if he tries to **light on** the wagon again?” I say. —¿Sabes lo que voy a hacer si trata de posarse otra vez en la carreta? —digo.
- 5 “What would you do?” Darl says. —¿Qué vas a hacer? —dice Darl.
- “I wouldn't let him **light on** her,” I say. “I wouldn't let him **light on** Cash, either.” —No dejaré que se pose encima de madre —digo—. Tampoco dejaré que se pose encima de Cash.
- 10 Cash is sick. He is sick on the box. But my mother is a fish. Cash está enfermo. Está enfermo encima de la caja. Pero mi madre es un pez.
- “We got to get some medicine in Mottson,” pa says. “I reckon we'll just have to.” —Tendremos que comprar alguna medicina en Mottson —dice padre—. Para mí que no nos queda otro remedio.
- “How do you feel, Cash?” Darl says. —¿Cómo te encuentras, Cash? —dice Darl.
- 20 “**It don't bother none**,” Cash says. —No me molesta en absoluto —dice Cash.
- “Do you want it propped a little higher?” Darl says. —¿Quieres que te la levante un poco? —dice Darl.
- 25 Cash has a broken leg. He has had two broken legs. He lies on the box with a quilt rolled under his head and a piece of wood under his knee. Cash tiene una pierna rota. Ya se ha roto dos piernas. [184] Está echado encima de la caja con una colcha enrollada debajo de la cabeza y un trozo de madera debajo de la rodilla.
- “I reckon we ought to left him at Armstid's,” pa says. —Para mí que deberíamos haberle dejado en casa de Armstid —dice padre.
- 35 I haven't got a broken leg and pa hasn't and Darl hasn't and “It's just the bumps,” Cash says. “It kind of grinds together a little on a bump. I don't bother none.” Jewel has gone away. *He and his horse went away one supper time.* Yo nunca me he roto una pierna y padre tampoco y Darl tampoco y —Sólo es el traqueteo —dice Cash—. Es como si se rozara una parte con otra a cada sacudida. No me molesta en absoluto. —Jewel se ha largado. Él y su caballo se largaron una noche a la hora de cenar
- “It's because she wouldn't have us beholden,” pa says. “Fore God, I do the best that ere a man.” *Is it because Jewel's mother is a horse, Darl? I said.* —Sólo fue porque ella nunca quiso que le tuviéramos que deber nada a nadie —dice padre—. Dios es testigo, hago lo que pueda hacer el que más. —¿Es porque la madre de Jewel es un caballo, Darl? —dije yo.
- 50 “Maybe I can draw the ropes a little tighter,” Darl says. *That's why Jewel and I were both in the shed and she was in the wagon because the horse lives in the barn and I had to keep on running the buzzard away from* —Puede que consiga apretar un poco más las cuerdas —dice Darl. *Por eso Jewel y yo estábamos en el cobertizo y ella estaba en la carreta, porque el caballo vive en la cuadra y yo tenía que estar corriendo todo el tiempo para espantar al buitro*
- “If you just would,” Cash says. And Dewey Dell hasn't got a broken leg and I haven't. Cash is my brother. —Si te parece... —dice Cash. Y Dewey Dell no se ha roto una pierna, y yo tampoco. Cash era hermano mío.
- We stop. When Darl loosens the rope Cash begins to sweat again. His teeth look out. Nos paramos. Cuando Darl afloja la cuerda Cash empieza a sudar otra vez. Enseña los dientes.
- 65 “Hurt?” Darl says. —¿Duele? —dice Darl.
- “I reckon you better put it back,” Cash says. —Para mí que mejor la vuelves a poner —dice Cash.
- 70 Darl puts the rope back, pulling hard. Cash's teeth look out. Darl ata otra vez la cuerda, apretando con fuerza. Cash enseña los dientes.
- “Hurt?” Darl says. —¿Duele? —dice Darl.
- 75 “It don't bother none,” Cash says. —No me molesta en absoluto —dice Cash.
- “Do you want pa to drive —¿Quieres que padre lleve la carreta

here we glimpse Vardaman's thoughts as he does it.

COMMENTARY: What Vardaman overhears in this section confirms the impression we have of the other characters; Anse is still protesting that he will not be indebted to anyone, Darl is prepared to accept Vardaman's assertions that his mother is a fish and Cash is very ill but stoical. There are a few lines and one long passage in this section printed in italics. These represent the deepest levels of Vardaman's thoughts, the unverballed recognition that Jewel has gone, the acceptance that Jewel's mother is a horse and, in a long passage, an expression of his conviction that his mother, being a fish, escaped when the coffin was in the water.

slower?" Darl says.

más despacio? —dice Darl.

"No," Cash says. "Ain't no time to hang back. It don't
5 bother none."

—No —dice Cash—. No tenemos tiempo que perder. No me molesta en absoluto.

"We'll have to get some medicine at Mottson," pa says. "I reckon we'll have to."

—Tendremos que comprar alguna medicina en Mottson —dice padre—. Para mí que no nos queda otro remedio.

10 "Tell him to go on," Cash says. We go on. Dewey Dell leans back and wipes Cash's face. Cash is my brother. *But Jewel's mother is a horse.*
15 *My mother is a fish. Darl says that when we come to the water again I might see her and Dewey Dell said, She's in the box; how could she have got out? She got out through the holes*
20 *I bored, into the water I said, and when we come to the water again I am going to see her. My mother is not in the box. My mother does not smell like that. My mother is a fish.*

—Dile que siga —dice Cash. Seguimos. Dewey Dell se vuelve y le seca la cara a Cash. Cash es hermano mío. *Pero la madre de Jewel es un caballo. Mi madre es un pez. Darl dice que cuando volvamos al agua a lo mejor la puedo ver, y Dewey Dell dijo: Está metida en la caja; ¿cómo iba a poder salir? Salió por los agujeros que hice yo y está en el agua, dije, y cuando volvamos al agua la voy a ver. Mi madre no está dentro de la caja. Mi madre no huele así. Mi madre es un pez.*

25 "Those cakes will be in fine shape by the time we get to Jefferson," Darl says.

—Anda que esos bollos van a estar buenos para cuando lleguemos a Jefferson —dice Darl.

30 Dewey Dell does not look around.

Dewey Dell no levanta la vista.

"You better try to sell them in Mottson," Darl says.

—Será mejor que intentes venderlos en Mottson —dice Darl.

35 "When will we get to Mottson, Darl?" I say.

—¿Cuándo llegaremos a Mottson, Darl? —digo yo.

"To-morrow," Darl says. "If this team don't rack to pieces. Snopes
40 must have fed them on sawdust."

—Mañana —dice Darl—. Si estas mulas no revientan en pedazos. Snopes debe de haberles dado serrín de comer.

"Why did he feed them on sawdust, Darl?" I say.

—¿Por qué les daba serrín de comer, Darl? —digo yo.

45 "Look," Darl says. "See?"

—Mira —dice Darl—. ¿Ves?

Now there are nine of them, tall in little tall black circles.

Ahora hay nueve, haciendo circulitos negros arriba.

50 When we come to the foot of the hill pa stops and Darl and Dewey Dell and I get out. Cash can't walk because he has a broken leg. "Come up, mules," pa says. The mules walk
55 hard; the wagon creaks. Darl and Dewey Dell and I walk behind the wagon, up the hill. When we come to the top of the hill pa stops and we get back into the wagon.

Cuando llegemos al pie de la loma padre se para y Darl y Dewey Dell y yo nos bajamos. Cash no puede andar porque tiene una pierna rota.

—¡Arre, mula! —dice padre. Las mulas avanzan con dificultad; la carreta cruje. Darl y Dewey Dell y yo vamos andando detrás de la carreta, loma arriba. Cuando llegamos a la cima de la loma padre se para y volvemos a subir a la carreta.

60 Now there are ten of them, tall in little tall black circles on the sky.

Ahora hay diez, haciendo circulitos negros arriba en lo alto.

45

65 MOSELEY (1)

MOSELEY

HAPPENED to look up, and saw her outside the window, looking in. Not close to the glass,
70 and not looking at anything in particular; just standing there with her head turned this way and her eyes full on me and kind of blank too, like she was waiting for a
75 sign. When I looked up again she was moving toward the door.

SE me ocurrió levantar la vista y la vi al otro lado del escaparate, mirando hacia dentro. No demasiado cerca del cristal, y sin mirar nada en especial; sólo estaba allí parada con la cabeza vuelta hacia aquí y los ojos clavados en mí y como sin expresión, como si estuviera esperando una señal. Cuando volví a levantar la vista se dirigía hacia la puerta.

Moseley (1)

Here we find the unspoken thoughts of a complete outsider who sees the Bundrens for the first time. Unlike the men on the porch in *Samson* (1), Moseley belongs to the town not the country and so looks on the family with even less comprehension.

She kind of **bumbled** at the screen

Titubeó o algo así a la puerta durante

bumble move clumsily, trastabillar
trastabillar 1. intr. Dar trapiés o tropezones.
2. intr. Tambalearse, vacilar, titubear. 3. intr. Tartalelear, tartamudear, trabarse la lengua.

door a minute, like they do, and came in. She had on a stiff-brimmed straw hat setting on the top of her head and she was carrying a package wrapped in newspaper: I thought that she had a quarter or a dollar at the most, and that after she stood around awhile she would maybe buy a cheap comb or a bottle of nigger toilet water, so I never disturbed her for a minute or so except to notice that she was pretty in a kind of sullen, awkward way, and that she looked a sight better in her gingham dress and her own **complexion** than she would after she bought whatever she would finally decide on. Or tell that she wanted. I knew that she had already decided before she came in. But you have to let them take their time. So I went on with what I was doing, **figuring** to let Albert wait on her when he **caught up** at the fountain, when he came back to me.

“That woman,” he said. “You better see what she wants.”

“What does she want?” I said.

“I don’t know. I can’t get anything out of her. You better wait on her.”

So I went around the counter. I saw that she was barefooted, standing with her feet flat and easy on the floor, like she was used to it. She was looking at me, hard, holding the package; I saw she had about as black a pair of eyes as ever I saw, and she was a stranger. I never remembered seeing her in Mottson before. “What can I do for you?” I said.

Still she didn’t say anything. She stared at me without winking. Then she looked back at the folks at the fountain. Then she looked past me, toward the back of the store.

“Do you want to look at some toilet things?” I said. “Or is it medicine you want?”

“That’s it,” she said. She looked quick back at the fountain again. So I thought maybe her ma or somebody had sent her in for some of this female **dope** and she was ashamed to ask for it. I knew she couldn’t have a **complexion** like hers and use it herself, let alone not being much more than old enough to barely know what it was for. It’s a shame, the way they poison themselves with it. But a man’s got to stock it or go out of business in this country.

“Oh,” I said. “What do you use? We have——” She looked at me again, almost like she had said hush, and looked toward the back of the store again.

“I’d **liefer** go back there,” she said.

“All right,” I said. You have to humour them. You save time by it. I followed her to the back. She put her

un momento, como les pasa a todos, y entró. Llevaba un sombrero de [186] paja con el ala muy tiesa, encajado en la coronilla y un paquete envuelto en papel de periódico: supuse que tendría veinticinco centavos o un dólar como mucho, y que después de pensárselo mucho a lo mejor compraba un peine de los baratos o un frasco de colonia de la que usan los negros, de modo que durante un minuto o así la dejé en paz, aunque me fijé en que era guapa de un modo hosco y desgarrado, y que resultaba mejor con aquel vestido de percal y su **cutis** natural de lo que resultaría con lo que al fin se decidiera a comprar. O a decir lo que quería. Yo sabía que ya lo tenía decidido antes de entrar. Pero hay que dejarlas que se tomen su tiempo. Conque seguí con lo que estaba haciendo, **pensando** en dejar que la atendiera Albert cuando se acercara al mostrador de los **grifos**** (24), cuando Albert se me acercó.

—Esa mujer —dijo—. Será mejor que vea usted lo que quiere.

—¿Y qué quiere? —dije yo.

—No lo sé. No consigo sacarle nada. Será mejor que la atienda usted.

De modo que salí del mostrador. Vi que iba descalza y que estaba cómoda así, como si estuviera acostumbra da a ir descalza. Me miraba, intensamente, agarrando el paquete; me fijé en que tenía un par de ojos negros como nunca jamás había visto, y que era forastera. No recordaba haberla visto por Mottson antes.

—¿En qué puedo servirla? —dije.

Seguía sin decir nada. Me miraba sin pestañear. Luego miró a los que estaban en el mostrador. Luego miró al fondo de la tienda.

—¿Desea algún artículo de tocador? —dije—. ¿O quiere usted algún medicamento?

—Eso es —dijo ella, y enseguida volvió a mirar a los del [187] mostrador. Conque pensé que a lo mejor su madre u otra persona la había mandado entrar a por uno de esos **medicamentos** para mujeres y le daba vengüenza pedirlo. Sabía que no podía tener un **cutis** como el que tenía y usarlo ella; aparte de que no era lo bastante mayor para saber para qué se toman. Es una vergüenza cómo se envenenan con esas cosas. Pero en esta comarca uno tiene que tenerlas o renunciar a hacer negocio.

—Veamos —dije—. ¿Cuál usa usted? Tenemos... —Me volvió a mirar, casi como si hubiera dicho que me callara, y volvió a mirar hacia el fondo de la tienda.

—**Preferiría** que fuéramos allí —dijo.

—Muy bien —dije yo. Hay que seguirles la corriente. Se pierde menos tiempo. La acompañé al fondo. Puso la mano en el pica-

complexion *n.* 1 the natural colour, texture, and appearance, of the skin, esp. of the face. 2 an aspect; a character (*puts a different complexion on the matter*).

complexión 1. f. constitución, naturaleza y relación de los sistemas orgánicos de cada individuo. Temperamento, contextura física y moral.

figuring: (Am. English) reasoning, judging

caught up: finished working

the fountain: (Am. English) soda-fountain, a type of drink dispenser

dope: (col.) medicine, specifically laudanum used to stop menstruation

liefer: (Am. col.) would rather

COMMENTARY: This section puts the Bundrens in another new perspective for the reader. We see them through the eyes of the townspeople and from this point of view they appear both grotesquely comic and a little tragic in their simplicity. Dewey Dell in particular appears in sharp focus, ‘bumbling’ at the door of the shop, her eyes blank and her voice incapable of expressing her wants.

The story of the Bundren wagon, as told to Moseley by his assistant Albert, contains the implicit contrast between the ways of the town and the country. Anse had remained oblivious to the horrified reactions of the townspeople, being concerned only with telling them his story of how the stinking corpse had travelled to Mottstown.

hand on the gate. "There's nothing back there but the prescription case," I said. "What do you want?" She stopped and looked at me. It was like she had taken some kind of a lid off her face, her eyes. It was her eyes: kind of dumb and hopeful and sullenly willing to be disappointed all at the same time. But she was in trouble of some sort; I could see that. "What's your trouble?" I said. "Tell me what it is you want. I'm pretty busy." I wasn't meaning to hurry her, but a man just hasn't got the time they have out there.

"It's the female trouble," she said.

"Oh," I said. "Is that all?" I thought maybe she was younger than she looked, and her first one had scared her, or maybe one had been a little abnormal as it will in young women. "Where's your 'ma?" I said. "Haven't you got one?"

"She's out yonder in the wagon," she said.

"Why not talk to her about it before you take any medicine," I said. "Any woman would have told you about it." She looked at me, and I looked at her again and said, "How old are you?"

"Seventeen," she said.

"Oh," I said. "I thought maybe you were . . ." She was watching me. But then, in the eyes all of them look like they had no age and knew everything in the world, anyhow. "Are you too regular, or not regular enough?"

She quit looking at me but she didn't move. "Yes," she said. "I reckon so. Yes."

"Well, which?" I said. "Don't you know?" It's a crime and a shame; but after all, they'll buy it from somebody. She stood there, not looking at me. "You want something to stop it?" I said. "Is that it?"

"No," she said. "That's it. It's already stopped."

"Well, what——" Her face was lowered a little, still, like they do in all their dealings with a man so he don't ever know just where the lightning will strike next. "You are not married, are you?" I said.

"No."

"Oh," I said. "And how long has it been since it stopped? about five months maybe?"

"It ain't been but two," she said.

"Well, I haven't got anything in my store you want to buy," I said, "unless it's a **nipple**. And I'd advise you to buy that and go back home and tell your pa, if you have one, and let him make somebody buy you a wedding

porte de la puerta de atrás—. Ahí detrás sólo está la rebotica —dije yo—. ¿Qué desea?

—Se detuvo y me miró. Era como si se hubiera quitado un velo o algo así de la cara, de los ojos. Especialmente de los ojos: unos ojos de tonta, esperanzados y malhumoradamente dispuestos a sentirse decepcionados, todo al tiempo. Pero tenía algún problema; lo notaba—. ¿Qué le ocurre? —dije—. Dígame lo que quiere. Estoy muy ocupado —no intentaba meterle prisa, pero uno no tiene tanto tiempo que perder como la gente del campo.

—Es el mal de las mujeres —dijo.

—Ah —dije yo—. ¿Sólo es eso? —pensé que a lo mejor era más joven de lo que parecía y se había asustado con la primera, o puede que tuviera una regla algo anormal como les pasa a las jóvenes—. ¿Dónde está su madre? —dije—. ¿O no la tiene usted?

—Está allí, en la carreta —dijo.

¿Por qué no habla con ella antes de tomar ninguna medicina? —le dije—. Cualquiera mujer le puede hablar de eso —me miró, y la volví a mirar y dije—: ¿Cuántos años tiene?

—Diecisiete.

—Ah —dije yo—. Creí que tendría unos... —me miraba. Pero en los ojos todas ellas parecen como si no tuvieran edad y supieran todo lo que hay que saber en el mundo—: ¿Es usted regular o no? [188]

Dejó de mirarme, pero no se movió. —Sí —dijo—. Me parece que sí. Sí.

—¿En qué quedamos? —dije yo—. ¿O es que no lo sabe? —Es un crimen y una vergüenza; pero después de todo, alguien se las tiene que vender. Estaba allí quieta, sin mirarme—. ¿Quieres algo para interrumpirlo? —dije—. ¿Es eso?

—No —dijo ella—. Eso es. Ya se me ha interrumpido.

—Bueno, pero qué... —había bajado un poco la cara y seguía quieta como hacen siempre que tratan con un hombre, de modo que éste nunca sepa dónde van a descargar el siguiente rayo—. ¿No está usted casada, verdad? —dije.

—No.

—Ah —dije yo—. ¿Y desde cuándo no lo tiene? ¿A lo mejor desde hace cinco meses, no?

—Nada más que dos —dijo ella.

—Bueno, en mi tienda no tengo nada de lo que quiere comprar —dije—, a no ser que quiera un **chupete**. Y le aconsejo que compre uno y vuelva a casa y se lo diga a su padre, si es que lo tiene, y que haga que alguien le saque una licencia

a **nipple**: an artificial teat for a baby's bottle

licence. Was that all you wanted.?"

de matrimonio. ¿Desea algo más?

But she just stood there, not looking at me.

Pero ella seguía allí quieta, sin mirarme.

5

"I got the money to pay you," she said.

—Tengo dinero para pagarle —dijo.

"Is it your own, or did he act enough of a man to give you the money?"

—¿Es suyo o fue él lo bastante hombre como para dárselo?

10

"He give it to me. Ten dollars. He said that would be enough."

—Me lo dio él. Diez dólares. Dijo que sería bastante.

"A thousand dollars wouldn't be enough in my store and ten cents wouldn't be enough," I said. "You take my advice and go home and tell you pa or your brothers if you have any or the first man you come to in the road."

—En esta tienda no bastaría ni con mil dólares ni con diez centavos —dije yo—. Siga mi consejo y vuelva a casa y cuénteselo a su padre o a sus hermanos, si los tiene, o al primer hombre que se tropiece por el camino.

But she didn't move. "Lafe said I could get it at the **drug-store**. He said to tell you me and him wouldn't never tell nobody you sold it to us."

Pero no se movió.

—Lafe me dijo que en la **botica** me lo darían. Me dijo que le dijera que ni yo ni él le contaremos a nadie que nos lo vendió usted.

drug-store: (Am. English) a combination of chemist's shop and cafe

"And I just wish your precious Lafe had come for it himself; that's what I wish. I don't know: I'd have had a little respect for him then. And you can go back and tell him I said so-if he ain't half-way to Texas by now, which I don't doubt. Me, a respectable druggist, that's kept store and raised a family and been a church-member for fifty-six years in this town. I'm a good mind to tell your folks myself, if I can just find who they are."

—Y a mí me gustaría que hubiera sido su encantador Lafe el que hubiera venido a comprarlo; eso es lo que me gustaría. No sé: entonces a lo mejor sentía algo de respeto por él. Conque vaya y cuénteles lo que le dije... a no ser que [189] ya esté a medio camino de Texas, lo que no me extrañaría. Venirme a mí, un respetable boticario que tiene una familia y es feligrés de la parroquia de este pueblo desde hace cincuenta y seis años... Me están entrando ganas de ir a contárselo a sus padres, si consigo enterarme de quienes son.

She looked at me now, her eyes and Pace kind of blank again like when I first saw her through the window. "I didn't know," she said. "He told me I could get something at the **drug-store**. He said they might not want to sell it to me, but if I had ten dollars and told them I wouldn't never tell nobody . . ."

Ahora me miraba, sus ojos y cara otra vez sin expresión como cuando la vi por primera vez por el escaparate.

—Yo no sabía —dijo ella—. Él me dijo que en la **botica** me darían algo. Me dijo que a lo mejor no me lo querían vender, pero con los diez dólares y diciendo que no se lo contaría a nadie...

"He never said this drug-store," I said. "If he did or mentioned my name, I defy him to prove it. I defy him to repeat it or I'll prosecute him to the full extent of the law, and you can tell him so."

—No se refería a esta botica —dije yo—. Si lo hizo o mencionó mi nombre, le desafío a que lo demuestre. Le desafío a que se atreva a repetirlo o a atenerse a todas las responsabilidades legales, puede usted decírselo.

"But maybe another drug-store would," she said.

—Pero a lo mejor en otra botica quieren —dijo ella.

"Then I don't want to know it. Me, that's——" Then I looked at her. But it's a hard life they have; sometimes a man . . . if there can ever be any excuse for sin, which it can't be. And then, life wasn't made to be easy on folks: they wouldn't ever have any reason to be good and die. "Look here," I said. "You get that notion out of your head. The Lord gave you what you have, even if He did use the devil to do it; you let Him take it away from you if it's His will to do so. You go on back to Lafe and you and him take that ten dollars and get married with it."

—En tal caso no quiero saberlo. Eso es... —entonces la miré. Pero es dura la vida que llevan; a veces un hombre... si hubiera alguna excusa para el pecado, que no la hay. Y además la vida no está hecha para que les resulte fácil: no tienen ningún motivo para ser buenos y esperar la muerte—. Mire —le dije—. Quítese esa idea de la cabeza. El Señor le ha dado lo que tiene, aunque se haya servido del demonio para ello; deje que sea Él quien la libre de eso, si es Su voluntad que así sea. Conque vuelva usted con Lafe, y usted y él cogen esos diez dólares y se casan con ellos.

“Lafe said I could get something at the drugstore,” she said.

—Lafe dijo que en la botica me darían algo —dijo.

“Then go and get it,” I said. “You won’t get it here.”

—Entonces vaya y que se lo den —dije yo—. Aquí no lo va a conseguir.

She went out, carrying the package, her feet making a little hissing on the floor. She bumped again at the door and went out. I could see her through the glass going on down the street.

Salió, llevando el paquete, arrastrando levemente los pies por el suelo. Volvió a titubear junto a la puerta y salió. Por el escaparate vi que iba calle abajo.

It was Albert told me about the rest of it. He said the wagon was stopped in front of Grummet’s hardware store, with the Jadies all scattering up and down the street with handkerchief to their poses, and a trocad of hard-nosed men and boys standing around the wagon, listening to the marshal arguing with the man. He was a kind of tall, gaunted man sitting on the wagon, saying it was a public street and he reckoned he had as much right there as anybody, and the marshal telling him he would have to move on; folks couldn’t stand it. It had been dead eight days, Albert said. They came from some place out in Yoknapatawpha county, trying to get to Jefferson with it. It must have been like a piece of rotten cheese coming into an ant-hill, in that ramshackle wagon that Albert said folks were scared would fall all to pieces before they could get it out of town, with that home-made box and another fellow with a broken leg lying on a quilt on top of it, and the father and a little boy sitting on the seat and the marshal trying to make them get out of town.

Fue Albert el que me contó el resto de la historia. Me dijo que la carreta había parado delante de la ferretería de Grummet, y que las señoras salieron huyendo por la calle con los pañuelos en las narices, y que un grupo de hombres y muchachos de olfato menos delicado se quedaron alrededor de la carreta, escuchando al comisario discutir con el hombre. Era uno de esos hombres altos y flacos que estaba sentado en la carreta y decía que aquello era la vía pública y que él tenía tanto derecho como cualquiera a estar allí, y el comisario le decía que tenía que irse; la gente no lo podía aguantar. Debía de llevar ocho días muerta, me dijo Albert. Venían de algún sitio del condado de Yoknapatawpha, y pretendían llegar a Jefferson con aquello. Era algo así como un trozo de queso podrido caído en un hormiguero y metido en aquella carreta tan destartada que Albert me dijo que la gente tenía miedo de que se hiciera pedazos antes de salir del pueblo, con aquella caja de fabricación casera y otro tipo con una pierna rota tumbado en una manta encima de ella, y el padre y un niño sentados en el pescante y el comisario tratando de que se fueran del pueblo.

“It’s a public street,” the man says. “I reckon we can stop to buy something same as airy other man. We got the money to pay for hit, and hit ain’t airy law that says a man can’t spend his money where he wants.”

—Esto es la vía pública —dice el hombre—. Para mí que podemos parar a comprar unas cosas como cualquier otra persona. Tenemos dinero para pagar, y no hay ninguna ley que diga que un hombre no pueda gastarse su dinero donde quiera.

They had stopped to buy some cement. The other son was in Grummet’s, trying to make Grummet break a sack and let him have ten cents’ worth, and finally Grummet broke the sack to get him out. They wanted the cement to fix the fellow’s broken leg, someway.

Habían parado a comprar cemento. El otro hijo estaba en la tienda de Grummet tratando de convencerle para que abriera un saco y le vendiera diez centavos y por fin Grummet abrió el saco para quitárselo de encima. Querían el cemento para arreglarle la pierna rota al otro.

“Why, you’ll kill him,” the marshal said. “You’ll cause him to lose his leg. You take him on to a doctor, and you get this thing buried soon as you can. Don’t you know you’re liable to jail for endangering the public health?”

—Le van a matar —dijo el comisario—. Conseguirán que se quede sin pierna. Llévelo a un médico, y entierren eso lo más pronto que puedan. ¿No sabe que pueden ir a la cárcel por atender contra la salud pública?

“We’re doing the best we can,” the father said. Then he told a long tale about how they had to wait for the wagon to come back and how the bridge was washed away and how they went eight miles to another bridge and it was gone too so they came back and swum the ford and the mules got drowned and how they got another team and found that the road was

—Hacemos todo lo que podemos —dijo el padre.

Luego contó una larga historia de que habían tenido que esperar a que volviera la carreta y de que al puente se lo había llevado la riada y que habían tenido que hacer doce kilómetros de más hasta otro puente y que a éste también se lo había llevado el agua de modo que dieron la vuelta y cruzaron el vado y se les ahogaron las mulas y tuvieron que conseguir

airy: (Am. col.) any

liable responsible;

to be ~ FOR sth ser responsable de algo (likely): I’m ~ to forget es probable que me olvide; the earlier model was ~ to overheat el modelo anterior tenía tendencia a recalentarse

liable 1 responsable

to be liable for, ser responsable de to hold sb liable, responsabilizar a alguien (for, de)

2 (cosa) hotels are liable to 16% VAT, los hoteles están sujetos al 16% del IVA

3 propenso, -a [to, a]

4 probable: it’s liable to rain, es probable que llueva

Compound Forms:

be liable ser responsable

be liable for ser responsable de

make jointly liable obligar solidariamente

- washed out and they had to come clean around by Mottson, and then the one with the cement came back atad told him to shut up.
- 5 "We'll be gone in a minute," he told the marshal.
- "We never aimed to bother nobody," the father said.
- "You take that fellow to a doctor," the marshal told the one with the cement.
- 15 "I reckon he's all right," he said.
- "It ain't that we're hard-hearted," the marshal said. "But I reckon you can tell yourself how it is."
- 20 "Sho," the other said. "We'll take out soon as Dewey Dell comes back. She went to deliver a package."
- 25 So they stood there with the folks backed off with handkerchiefs to their faces, until in a minute the girl came up with that newspaper package.
- 30 "Come on," the one with the cement said, "we've lost too much time." So they got in the wagon and went on. And when I went to supper it still seemed like I could smell it. And the next day I met the marshal and I began to sniff and said,
- 40 "Smell anything?"
- "I reckon they're in Jefferson by now," he said.
- "Or in jail. Well, thank the Lord it's not our jail."
- 45 "That's a fact," he said.
- otro tiro y que encontraron que el camino estaba inundado y tuvieron que dar otro rodeo por Mottson, y entonces el del cemento volvió y le dijo que se callara.
- Nos iremos dentro de un momento —dijo al comisario.
- No queríamos molestar a nadie —dijo el padre.
- Lleven a ese individuo a un médico —le dijo el comisario al del cemento.
- Está perfectamente —dijo éste.
- No es que tengamos mal corazón —dijo el comisario—. Pero tiene que hacerse cargo de la situación.
- Claro que sí —dijo el otro—. Nos iremos en cuanto vuelva Dewey Dell. Fue a entregar un paquete.
- De modo que se quedaron allí con la gente un poco apartada con los pañuelos en las narices, hasta que al rato apareció la chica con el paquete envuelto en papel de periódico.
- Vámonos —dijo el del cemento—, hemos perdido mucho tiempo.
- Conque subieron a la carreta y se fueron. Y cuando cenaba todavía me parecía que olía aquello. Y al día siguiente me encontré con el comisario y olí y le dije:
- ¿No hueles a algo?
- Para mí que ya deben de estar en Jefferson —dijo.
- O en la cárcel. Bueno, gracias a Dios no están en la de aquí.
- Eso es seguro —dijo él.

46

DARL (15)

DARL

- 50 "HERE'S a place," pa says. He pulla the team up and sits looking at the house. "We could get some water over yonder."
- "All right," I say. "You'll have to borrow a bucket from them, Dewey Dell."
- 60 "God knows," pa says. "I wouldn't be beholden, God knows."
- "If you see a good-sized can, you might bring it," I say. Dewey Dell gets down from the wagon, carrying the package. "You had more trouble than you expected, selling those cakes in Mottson," I say. How do our lives ravel out into the no-wind, no-sound, the weary gestures wearily recapitulant: echoes of old compulsions with no-hand on no-strings: in sunset we fall into furious attitudes, dead gestures of dolls. Cash broke his leg and now the sawdust is running out. He is bleeding to death is Cash.
- ESTE es buen sitio —dice padre. De-tiene a las mulas y se queda sentado mirando a la casa—. Podemos conseguir agua allí.
- Muy bien —digo yo—. Tendrás que pedirles un cubo prestado, Dewey Dell.
- Bien lo sabe Dios —dice padre—. No me gusta deber favores, Dios bien lo sabe.
- Si ves una lata de buen tamaño, podrías traerla —digo yo. Dewey Dell se baja de la carreta, llevando el paquete—. Has tenido más problemas de los que esperabas para vender esos bollos en Mottson —digo. Cómo se deshilachan nuestras vidas camino de allí donde no hay viento ni sonido, los cansados gestos que se repiten cansinamente: ecos de viejos acordes de instrumentos sin cuerdas tocados sin manos: al ponerse el sol adoptamos furiosas actitudes, gestos muertos de marionetas. Cash se ha roto la pierna y ahora el serrín sale. Se está desangrando, Cash se desangra.

Darl (15)

This section consists of Darl's unspoken and unverbalsed thoughts, as well as the words he overhears and speaks, as the family stop outside Mottstown to make up the cement for Cash's leg. Just as they finish working on the leg, Jewel reappears, having been absent since taking his horse to the Snopes'.

COMMENTARY: Here the effect of the journey on Darl is explored. In *Moseley (1)*, the unnamed Bundren who apologised to the townspeople must have been Darl, who is the only Bundren who seems to feel the awfulness of the situation. Here, at an unverbalsed level, he longs for extinction, 'If you could just ravel out roto time. That

- "I wouldn't be beholden," pa says.
"God knows."
- "Then make some water yourself,"
5 I say. "Wecan use Cash's hat."
- When Dewey Dell comes back the
man comes with her. Then he stops
and she comes on and he stands there
10 and after a while he goes back to the
house and stands on the porch,
watching us.
- "We better not try to lift him down,"
15 pa says. "We can fix it here."
- "Do you want to be lifted down,
Cash?" I say.
- 20 "Won't we get to Jefferson
to-morrow?" he says. He is watching
us, his eyes interrogatory, intent, and
sad. "I can last it out."
- 25 "It'll be easier on you," pa says.
"It'll keep it from rubbing together."
- "I can last it," Cash says. "We'll
lose time stopping."
30
- "We done bought the cement,
now," pa says.
- "I could last it," Cash says.
35 "It ain't but one more day. It
don't bother to speak of." He
looks at us, his eyes wide in
his thin grey face, questioning.
"It sets up so," he says.
40
- "We done bought it now," pa says.
- I mix the cement in the can,
stirring the slow water into the
45 pale-green thick coils. I bring
the can to the wagon where Cash
can see. He lies on his back, his
thin profile in silhouette, ascetic
and profound against the sky.
50 "Does that look about right?" I say.
- "You don't want too much water,
or it won't work right," he says.
- 55 "Is this too much?"
- "Maybe if you could get a little
sand," he says. "It ain't but one more
day," he says. "It don't bother me
60 none."
- Vardaman goes back down the
road to where we crossed the branch
and returns with sand. He pours it
65 slowly into the thick coiling in the
can. I go to the wagon again.
- "Does that look all right?"
- 70 "Yes," Cash says. "I could have
lasted. It don't bother me none."
- We loosen the splints and pour the
cement over his leg, slow.
75
- "Watch out for it," Cash says.
"Don't get none on it if you can help."
- No me gusta deber favores —dice
padre—. Dios bien lo sabe.
- Entonces haga agua usted mismo—digo
yo—. Podemos usar el sombrero de Cash.
- Cuando vuelve Dewey Dell el
hombre viene con ella. Luego él se
para y ella se acerca y él se queda
allí y al cabo de un rato vuelve a
la casa y se detiene en el porche,
observándonos.
- Será mejor que no intentemos bajarle
—dice padre—. Podemos hacerlo aquí.
- ¿Quieres que te bajemos, Cash? —
digo yo.
- ¿No llegaremos a Jefferson ma-
ñana? —dice él. Nos mira con sus
ojos interrogantes, intensos y tris-
tes—. Puedo aguantar.
- Te sentará bien —dice padre—.
Evitará que se rocen.
- Puedo aguantar —dice Cash—.
Perderemos tiempo parándonos.
- Ya hemos comprado el cemento —
dice padre.
- Puedo aguantar —dice Cash—.
No queda más que un día. No merece
la pena ni que hablemos de ello —nos
mira, con sus ojos abiertos de par en par en
su delgada cara gris, interrogante—.
Se arreglará solo.
- Ya lo hemos comprado —dice padre.
- Mezclo el cemento en la lata, re-
moviendo lentamente el agua que for-
ma espesas espirales verde claro. Lle-
vo la lata a la carreta donde la pueda
ver Cash. Está tumbado de espaldas
y su delgado perfil forma una silueta
ascética y profunda contra el cielo.
—¿Te parece que está bien? —digo.
- No añadas demasiada agua o no fra-
guará bien —dice él. [193]
- ¿Esta es demasiada?
- Puede que convenga añadir un
poco de arena —dice—. No queda más
que un día —dice—. No me molesta en
absoluto.
- Vardaman vuelve camino abajo
hasta donde cruzamos el arroyo y re-
gresamos con arena. La echa lentamen-
te en la espesa mezcla de la lata.
Voy otra vez a la carreta.
- ¿Te parece que está bien?
- Sí —dice Cash—. Podía haber
aguantado. No me molesta en absoluto.
- Soltamos las tablillas y le echamos
lentamente el cemento sobre la pierna.
- Tened cuidado —dice Cash—, de
que no caiga nada en la caja, si podéis.

would be nice'. He also, in the lines 'How do our lives . . . death is Cash', sees the family as being engaged in a meaningless ritual which is related to the general meaninglessness of life. The emphasis in the image is on repetition and on the lack of direction in human affairs. Men are seen as puppets attached to 'no-hand on no-strings'. It is as if Darl had suddenly realised that what he observes around him has no reality but is a species of foolish play enacted by replicas of men.

Until this moment, he has been concerned with the gap between words and experience, his inheritance from Addie. Now he sees experience itself as being without any reason or substance, possibly in reaction against experience which has become too grotesque for him to cope with. He therefore negates everything, no-wind, no-sound, and imagines that men move without knowing why, 'echoes of old compulsions'. It is a vision of the world which is not merely negative but which tries to deny that the world has any substance at all. Such a belief frees Darl to act without reference to any idea of reality.

- “Yes,” I say. Dewey Dell tears a piece of paper from the package and wipes the cement from the top of it as it drips from Cash’s leg.
- 5 “How does that feel?”
- “It feels fine,” he says. “It’s cold. It feels fine.”
- 10 “If it’ll just help you,” pa says. “I asks your forgiveness. I never forseen it no more than you.”
- 15 “It feels fine,” Cash says.
- If you could just ravel out into time. That would be nice. It would be nice if you could just ravel out
- 20 into time.
- We replace the splints, the cords, drawing them tight, the cement in thick pale green slow surges among the cords, Cash watching us quietly with that profound questioning look.
- 25 “That’ll steady it,” I say.
- 30 “Ay,” Cash says. “I’m obliged.”
- Then we all turn on the wagon and watch him. He is coming up the road behind us,
- 35 wooden-backed, wooden-faced, moving only from his hips down. He comes up without a word, with his pale rigid eyes in his high sullen face, and gets into the wagon.
- 40 “Here’s a hill,” pa says. “I reckon you’ll have to get out and walk.”

—Sí —digo yo. Dewey Dell arranca un trozo de papel del paquete y seca el cemento de la tapa cuando gotea de la pierna de Cash.

—¿Cómo te sienta?

—Me sienta bien —dice—. Está frío. Me sienta bien.

—Con tal de que te alivie —dice padre—. Tengo que pedirte perdón. Nunca lo hubiera previsto, como tú tampoco.

—Me sienta bien —dice Cash.

Si uno pudiera deshilacharse en el tiempo... Sería tan agradable. Sería tan agradable si uno pudiera deshilacharse en el tiempo.

Volvemos a poner las tablillas, apretando fuerte las cuerdas. El cemento surge en espesos grumos verde pálido entre las cuerdas. Cash nos observa en silencio con esa profunda mirada interrogante.

—Así quedará fijo —digo yo.

—Claro —dice Cash—. Os lo agradezco.

Entonces todos nos damos media vuelta en la carreta y le observamos. Viene camino arriba detrás de nosotros, con su espalda envarada, su cara de palo, moviéndose únicamente de cintura para abajo. Se acerca sin decir ni una palabra, con sus rígidos ojos claros en su larga cara sombría, y se sube a la carreta.

—Otra cuesta —dice padre—. Para mí que tendréis que bajaros y subir andando. [194]

47
VARDAMAN (7)

VARDAMAN

DARL and Jewel and Dewey Dell and I are walking up the hill behind the wagon. Jewel came back. He came up the road and got into the wagon. He was walking. Jewel hasn’t got a horse any more. Jewel is my brother. Cash is my brother. Cash has a broken leg. We fixed Cash’s leg so it doesn’t hurt. Cash is my brother. Jewel is my brother tool but he hasn’t got a broken leg.

DARL y Jewel y Dewey Dell y yo vamos andando cuesta arriba, detrás de la carreta. Jewel volvió. Vino camino arriba y se subió a la carreta. Vino andando. Jewel ya no tiene caballo. Jewel es mi hermano. Cash es mi hermano. Cash se ha roto una pierna. Arreglamos la pierna de Cash para que no le doliese. Cash es mi hermano. Jewel también es mi hermano, pero no tiene una pierna rota.

60 Now there are five of them, tall in little tall black circles.

Ahora hay cinco, haciendo circulitos negros arriba.

“Where do they stay at night, Darl?” I say. “When we stop at night in the barn, where do they stay?”

—¿Dónde pasan la noche, Darl? —digo yo—. Cuando nos paramos de noche en el granero, ¿dónde se meten?

The hill goes off into the sky. Then the sun comes up from behind the hill and the mules and the wagon and pa walk on the sun. You cannot watch them, walking slow on the sun. In Jefferson it is red on the track behind the glass. The track goes shining round and round. Dewey Dell says so.

La cuesta se pierde en el cielo. Entonces el sol sale detrás de la cuesta y las mulas y la carreta y padre pisan el sol. No se los puede mirar cuando van pisando lentamente el sol. En Jefferson hay un tren rojo detrás del cristal. Las vías brillan y dan vueltas y vueltas. Eso dice Dewey Dell.

75 To-night I am going to see where they stay while we are in the barn.

Esta noche voy a ver dónde se meten mientras estamos en el granero.

Vardaman (7)

In this section Vardaman lists, at an unspoken level, all the things which have meaning for him. His thoughts are short and consist simply of factual observations of his brothers’ actions, the buzzards, the wagon, and of a brief image of the train which he hopes to get in Jefferson.

COMMENTARY: Vardaman’s tendency to list things and to state relationships, ‘Cash is my brother, Jewel is my brother’, reflects the workings of his mind. As a small child, it is necessary for him to try to put things in some sort of order, to repeat things to give himself a sense of security.

“JEWEL,” I say, “whose son are
5 You?”

The breeze was setting up from the
barn, so we put her anden the apple
tree, where the moonlight can **dapple**
10 the apple tree upon the long
slumbering flanks within which now
and then she talks in little trickling
bursts of secret and murmurous
bubbling. I took Vardaman to listen.
15 When we came up the cat leaped down
from it and **flicked** away with silver
claw and silver eye into the shadow.

“Your mother was a horse, but who
20 was your father, Jewel?”

“You goddamn lying son of a
bitch.”

25 “Don’t call me that,” I say.

“You goddamn lying son of a
bitch.”

30 “Don’t you call me that, Jewel.”
In the tall moonlight his eyes look like
spots of white papen pasted on a high
small football.

35 After supper Cash
began to sweat a little.
“It’s getting a little hot,” he said.
“It was the sun shining on it all
day, I reckon.”

40 “You want some water poured
on it?” we say. “Maybe that will
ease it some.”

45 “I’d be obliged,” Cash said. “It
was the sun shining on it, I reckon.
I ought to thought and kept it
covered.”

50 “We ought to thought,” we
said. “You couldn’t have
suspicioned.”

“I never noticed it getting hot,”
55 Cash said. “I ought to minded it.”

So we poured the water
over it. His leg and foot
below the cement looked
60 like they had been boiled.
“Does that feel better?” we said.

“I’m obliged,” Cash said. “It
feels fine.”

65 Dewey Dell wipes his face with the
hem of her dress.

“See if you can get come sleep,”
70 we say.

“Sho,” Cash says. “I’m right
obliged. It feels fine now.”

75 Jewel, I say, Who was your father,
Jewel?

Goddamn you. Goddamn you.

—JEWEL —digo—, ¿de quién eres
hijo?

La brisa soplaba de la parte del gra-
nero, de modo que la pusimos debajo del
manzano, donde la luna pueda **salpicar** el
manzano sobre los largos costados me-
dio dormidos entre los cuales de vez en
cuando ella cuenta secretos en leves es-
tallidos irregulares y murmullos
burbujeantes. Llevé a Vardaman a que los
escuchara. Cuando llegamos el gato saltó
desde la caja y **escapó** con garras de
plata y ojos de plata hacia la sombra.

—Tu madre era un caballo, pero
¿quién era tu padre, Jewel? [195]

—Eres un maldito hijo de puta men-
tiroso.

—No me llares eso —digo yo.

—Eres un maldito hijo de puta men-
tiroso.

—No me llares eso, Jewel —ala ele-
vada luz de la luna sus ojos parecen tro-
zos de papel blanco pegados a un peque-
ño balón de fútbol en lo alto.

Después de cenar Cash em-
pezó a sudar un poco.

—Empiezo a notar algo de calor —
dijo—. Para mí que porque estuvo al
sol todo el día.

—¿Quieres que le echemos un poco
de agua? —decimos—. A lo mejor te
alivia.

—Os lo agradecería —dijo Cash—.
Para mí que es porque le ha dado el sol.
Debiera haber pensado en ello y llevarla
tapada.

—Nosotros debiéramos haber pensa-
do en eso —dijimos—. A ti no se te iba a
ocurrir.

—No noté que se me iba calentando —
dijo Cash—. Debería habérselo ocurrido.

De modo que le echamos agua en-
cima. El pie y la pierna que asoma-
ban debajo del cemento parecían
como si se los hubieran cocido.

—¿Te sientes mejor? —dijimos.

—Os lo agradezco —dijo Cash—. Me
sienta bien.

Dewey Dell le seca la cara con el bor-
de del vestido.

—A ver si consigues dormir algo —
decimos.

—Claro —dice Cash—. Os estoy muy
agradecido. Ahora me encuentro bien.

Jewel, digo yo, ¿quién era tu padre,
Jewel?

Vete a la mierda. Vete a la mierda.

Darl (16)

This section contains a mixture
of factual observations about the
condition of Cash’s foot and
questions directed at Jewel,
designed to upset him. When Darl
asks ‘who was your father, Jewel’,
he is goading his brother and
attempting to make Jewel face the
fact that he is different from the
rest of the family. The section also
contains the information that
Addie’s corpse is now so decayed
that it is exhaling foul gases. Darl
takes Vardaman to listen to the
noise of the gases being released,
encouraging him to imagine that
it is the noise of his mother
talking, ‘now and then she talks
in little trickling bursts of secret
and murmurous bubble’.

dapple 1 to mark or become marked with spots
or patches of a different colour; mottle
2 mottled or spotted markings **Motear**
3 a dappled horse, etc 1. Dícese del caballo
o yegua que tiene manchas, ordinariamente
redondas, más oscuras que el color general
de su pelo.
4 marked with dapples or spots.

flick 1 a light, sharp, quickly retracted blow
with a whip etc. b the sudden release of a
bent finger or thumb, esp. to propel a small
object. 2 a sudden movement or jerk. 3 a
quick turn of the wrist in playing games, esp.
in throwing or striking a ball. 4 a slight, sharp
sound. 5 *Brit. colloq.* a a cinema film. b (in
pl.; prec. by *the*) the cinema.
1 tr. (often foll. by *away, off*) strike or move with
a flick (*flicked the ash off his cigar, flicked
away the dust*). 2 tr. give a flick with (a whip,
towel, etc.). 3 intr. make a flicking movement
or sound.

Dar un golpecito (interruptor), rozar (látigo), pa-
sar rápidamente (páginas), arrojar (colilla,
humo), sacar (lengua), apagar (luz)

SHE was under the apple tree and
5 Darl and I go across the moon and
the cat jumps down and runs and we
can hear her inside the wood.

“Hear?” Darl says. “Put your
10 ear close.”

I put my ear close and I can hear
her. Only I can't tell what she is
saying.

15 “What is she saying, Darl?” I say.
“Who is she talking to?”

“She's talking to God,” Darl
20 says. “She is calling on Him to
help her.”

“What does she want Him to do?”
I say.

25 “She wants Him to hide her away
from the sight of man,” Darl says.

“Why does she want to hide her
30 away from the sight of man, Darl?”

“So she can lay down her life,”
Darl says.

35 “Why does she want to lay down
her life, Darl?”

“Listen,” Darl says. We hear her.
We hear her turn over on her side.
40 “Listen,” Darl says.

“She's turned over” I say. “She's
looking at me through the wood.”

45 “Yes,” Darl says.

“How can she see through the
wood, Darl?”

50 “Come,” Darl says. “We must let
her be quiet. Come.”

“She can't see out there, because
the holes are in the top,” I say. “How
55 can she see, Darl?”

“Let's go see about Cash,” Darl
says.

60 *And I saw something Dewey Dell
told me not to tell nobody.*

Cash is sick in his leg. We fixed
his leg this afternoon, but he is sick
65 in it again, lying on the bed. We
pour water on his leg and then he
feels fine.

“I feel fine,” Cash says. “I'm
70 obliged to you.”

“Try to get some sleep,” we say.

“I feel fine,” Cash says. “I'm
75 obliged to you.”

*And I saw something Dewey Dell
told me not to tell nobody. It is not*

ELLA estaba bajo el manzano y
Darl y yo cruzamos la luna y el gato
salta al suelo y corre y la podemos
oír dentro de la madera.

—¿Oyes? —dice Darl—. Pega la
oreja.

Pego la oreja y la oigo. Lo que pasa
es que no puedo entender lo que está di-
ciendo.

—¿Qué está haciendo, Darl? —digo
yo—. ¿A quién le está hablando?

—Está hablando con Dios —dice
Darl—. Le está llamando para que la
ayude.

—¿Y para qué quiere que la ayude?
—digo yo.

—Quiere que la aparte de la mirada
de los hombres —dice Darl.

—¿Y por qué quiere que la aparte de
la mirada de los hombres, Darl?

—Así podrá entregar la vida —dice
Darl.

—¿Y por qué quiere entregar la vida,
Darl?

—Escucha —dice Darl. La oímos. La
oímos darse la vuelta sobre el costado—.
Escucha —dice Darl.

—Se ha dado la vuelta —digo yo—.
Me está mirando a través de la madera.

—Sí —dice Darl.

—¿Y cómo puede ver a través de la
madera, Darl?

—Vámonos —dice Darl—. Debemos
dejar que esté tranquila. Vámonos.

—No puede ver lo de aquí fuera por-
que los agujeros están arriba —digo yo—.
¿Cómo puede ver, Darl?

—Vamos a ver cómo está Cash —dice
Darl.

*Y vi una cosa que Dewey Dell me dijo
que no se la contase a nadie.*

Cash tiene la pierna mal. Esta tarde
se la entablillamos, pero vuelve a tener-
la mal, ahí tumbado en la cama. Le echa-
mos agua en la pierna y entonces se siente
bien.

—Me siento bien —dice Cash—. Os
lo agradezco.

—Procura dormir un poco —le decimos.

—Me siento bien —dice Cash—. Os
lo agradezco.

*Y vi una cosa que Dewey Dell me
dijo que no se la contare a nadie. Y no*

Vardaman (8)

This section records Vardaman's conversation with Darl as they stand beside Addie's coffin. Darl tells Vardaman that Addie is asking God to help her 'lay down her life', a remark which the child does not understand. He thinks instead of something that he does know, a secret shared with Dewey Dell, then he sees Cash and lies down beside Dewey Dell to go to sleep.

about pa and it is not about Cash and it is not about Jewel and it is not about Dewey Dell and it is not about me.

es sobre padre ni es sobre Cash ni es sobre Jewel ni es sobre Dewey Dell ni es sobre mí

5 Dewey Dell and I are going to sleep on the pallet. It is on the back porch, where we can see the barn, and the moon shines on half of the pallet and we will lie half in the white
10 and half in the black, with the moonlight on our legs. And then I am going to see where they stay at night while we are in the barn. We are not in the barn to-night but I can
15 see the barn and so I am going to find where they stay at night.

Dewey Dell y yo vamos a dormir en el jergón. Está en el porche de atrás, desde donde podemos ver el granero, y la luna da sobre medio jergón y estaremos acostados la mitad en lo blanco y la otra mitad en lo negro con la luz de la luna en las piernas. Y luego voy a ver dónde se posan por la noche mientras estamos en el granero. Esta noche no [197] estamos dentro del granero, pero puedo ver el granero de modo que voy a averiguar dónde se posan por la noche.

We lie on the pallet, with our legs in the moon.

Nos acostamos en el jergón, con las piernas en la luna.

20 "Look," I say, "my legs look black. Your legs look black, too."

—Mira —digo—, mis piernas parecen negras. Las tuyas parecen negras también.

"Go to sleep," Dewey Dell says.

—Duérmete —dice Dewey Dell.

25 Jefferson is a far piece.

Jefferson queda lejos.

"Dewey Dell."

—Dewey Dell.

["What?"]

—Qué.

30 "If it's not Christmas now, how will it be there?"

—¿Si ahora no es Navidad, cómo puede estar allí?

It goes round and round on the shining track. Then the track goes
35 shining round and round.

Da vueltas y vueltas sobre as brillantes vías. Luego las vías brillan dando vueltas y vueltas.

"Will what be there?"

—¿Está allí el qué?

"That train. In the window."

—Aquel tren. En el escaparate.

40 "You go to sleep. You can see to-morrow if it's there."

—Duérmete. Mañana podrás ver si está.

Maybe Santa Claus won't know
45 they are town boys.

A lo mejor Santa Claus no sabe que son chicos de ciudad.

"Dewey Dell."

—Dewey Dell.

50 "You go to sleep. He ain't going to let none of them town boys have it."

—Duérmete. No va a ser para ninguno de los chicos de ciudad.

It was behind the window, red on the track, and the track shining round and round. It made my heart
55 hurt. And then it was pa and Jewel and Darl and Mr. Gillespie's boy. Mr. Gillespie's boy's legs come down under his nightshirt. When he goes into the moon, his legs fuzz.
60 They go on around the house toward' the apple tree.

Estaba en el escaparate, rojo en las vías; en las vías brillantes que dan vueltas y vueltas. Aquello hacía que me doliese el corazón. Y entonces salen padre y Jewel y Darl y el chico de Mr. Gillespie. Las piernas del chico de Mr. Gillespie le asoman por debajo del camisón. Cuando se mete donde da la luna, esas piernas tienen pelo. Rodean la casa hacia el manzano.

"What are they going to do, Dewey Dell?"

—¿Qué van a hacer, Dewey Dell?

65 They went around the house toward the apple tree.

Han rodeado la casa en dirección al manzano.

"I can smell her," I say. "Can you smell her, too?"

—La huelo —dije yo—. ¿Las hueles tú también?

70 "Hush," Dewey Dell says. "The wind's changed. Go to sleep."

—Cállate —dice Dewey Dell— Ha cambiado el viento. Duérmete.

And so I am going to know where
75 they stay at night soon. They come around the house, going across the yard in the moon, carrying her on their shoulders. They carry her down

Conque pronto voy a saber dónde se posan por la noche. Rodean la casa y atraviesan el patio a la luz de la luna, llevándola a hombros. La bajan al llegar al granero, mien-

to the barn, the moon shining flat and quiet on her. Then they come back and go into the house again. While they were in the moon, Mr. Gillespie's boy's legs fuzzed. And then I waited and I said Dewey Dell? and then I waited and then I went to find where they stay at night and I saw something that Dewey Dell told me not to tell nobody.

50
DARL (17)

15 AGAINST the dark doorway he seems to materialize out of darkness, lean as a racehorse in his underclothes in the beginning of the glare. He leaps to the ground with
20 on his face an expression of furious **unbelief**. He has seen me without even turning his head or his eyes in which the glare swims like two small torches. "Come on," he says, leaping
25 down the slope toward the barn.

For an instant longer he runs silver in the moonlight, then he springs out like a flat figure cut cleanly from tin
30 against an **abrupt** and soundless explosion as the whole loft of the barn takes fine at once, as though it had been stuffed with **powder**. The front, the conical façade with the square
35 orifice of doorway broken only by the square squat shape of the coffin on the **saw-horses** like a cubistic bug, comes into relief. Behind me pa and Gillespie and Mack and Dewey Dell and
40 Vardaman emerge from the house.

He pauses at the coffin, stooping, looking at me, his face furious. Overhead the flames sound like
45 thunder; across us rushes a cool draught; there is no heat in it at all yet, and a handful of chaff lifts suddenly and sucks swiftly along the stalls where a horse is screaming.
50 "Quick," I say; "the horses."

He glares a moment longer at me, then at the roof overhead, then he leaps toward the stall where the
55 horse screams. It plunges and kicks, the sound of the crashing blows sucking up into the sound of the flames. They sound like an interminable train crossing an endless **trestle**. Gillespie and Mack
60 pass me, in knee-length nightshirts, shouting, their voices thin and high and meaningless and at the same time profoundly wild and
65 sad: ". . . cow . . . stall . . ." Gillespie's nightshirt rushes ahead of him on the draft, ballooning about his hairy thighs.

70 The stall door has swung shut. Jewel thrusts it back with his buttocks and he appears, his back arched, the muscles ridged through
75 his garments as he drags the horse out by its head. In the glare its eyes roll with soft, fleet, wild **opaline** fire; its muscles bunch and run as it

tras la luna brilla lisa y callada sobre ella. Luego vuelven y entran en la casa otra vez. Mientras los iluminaba la luna, las piernas del chico de Mr. Gillespie tenían pelo. Y luego esperé y dije: ¿Dewey Dell? —y luego esperé y luego fui a averiguar dónde se posan de noche y vi una cosa que Dewey Dell me dijo que no se la contase a nadie.

DARL

CONTRA el fondo oscuro de la entrada parece como si él se materializara a partir de la oscuridad, esbelto como un pura sangre, en ropa interior, al comienzo de la claridad. Salta hasta el suelo con una expresión en la cara de furiosa incredulidad. Me ha visto sin siquiera volver la cabeza ni los ojos en los que la claridad enciende como dos pequeñas luces.

—Ven —dice, saltando por la pendiente que baja hacia el granero.

Durante un instante corre plateado a la luz de la luna, luego salta como una figura plana recortada en hojalata sobre una **violenta** y silenciosa explosión: es como si todo el desván del granero se hubiera puesto a arder de repente igual que si hubiera estado lleno de **pólvora**. La parte delantera, la fachada cónica con el orificio cuadrado de la entrada sólo rota por la achatada forma del ataúd encima de los **caballetes** como un escarabajo cubista, adquiere relieve. Por detrás de mí, padre y Gillespie y Mack y Dewey Dell y Vardaman salen de la casa.

Se detiene junto al ataúd, se inclina, y me mira con expresión furiosa. Por encima de nuestras cabezas las llamas suenan como truenos; nos alcanza una bocanada de aire frío: todavía no se ha calentado, y un manojo de paja se eleva de repente y es absorbido rápidamente hacia la cuadra donde relincha asustado un caballo.

—Deprisa —digo—; los caballos.

Me mira durante un momento más, luego alza la vista hacia el techo, luego da un salto hacia la cuadra donde relincha el caballo. Este corcovea y cocea, y el sonido de sus cascos sube chupado hacia arriba mezclándose con el sonido de las llamas. Unas llamas que suenan como un tren interminable cruzando un **punte** sin fin. Gillespie y Mack me adelantan con sus camiones hasta las rodillas, gritando sus voces débiles y agudas y sin sentido y al mismo tiempo profundamente salvajes y tristes:

—... la vaca... la cuadra...

A Gillespie se le vuela el camisón con la corriente, por delante de él, hinchándose como un globo alrededor de sus peludos muslos.

La puerta de la cuadra se ha cerrado de golpe. Jewel la empuja con las nalgas y aparece con la espalda arqueada, los músculos tensos debajo de su camisa, mientras arrastra al caballo fuera cogiéndolo por la cabeza. En el resplandor los ojos del animal giran con un fuego suave, repentino, salvaje, **opalino**; sus mús-

Darl (17)

This section contains Darl's unspoken and unverballed thoughts as he watches Jewel trying to rescue the animals and Addie's coffin from the barn which he, Darl, has set alight.

COMMENTARY: This section is a natural progression from *Darl* (15), when Darl freed himself from any belief that what was going on around him was real. His motives for setting the barn on fire are not clear. Either he wanted to rid the family of the burden of Addie or he wanted to hurt Jewel, who is so deeply involved with Addie. His observations are a series of images verbalised by Faulkner on behalf of the character. Jewel is at the centre of these images, 'lean as a racehorse', frantically racing about saving all Gillespie's animals and then going back into the barn to get Addie. When Gillespie tries to stop him, Darl sees them as 'two figures in a Greek frieze, isolated out of all reality by the red glare' and when Jewel emerges from the barn with the coffin Darl's image is of Jewel 'enclosed in a thin mibum of fire'.

Darl's vision of the events lends them a touch of savage unreality which is in keeping with his personal lack of belief in reality. His vision is, as ever, precise, and he is keenly aware of the contrast between the mathematical elements of the scene and the formlessness of the smoke and fire. His image of the barn itself, like a description of a surrealist painting, is in the lines 'For an instant he . . .' to 'into high relief'.

Only Darl, the sensitive observer, could have drawn out all the surrealist undertones of the scene. Serious though it is for the Gillespies who own the barn and for Jewel, Darl is free to appreciate the humour of the events. Gillespie, stark naked and dragging a mule which is wearing his nightshirt, and Jewel, riding a coffin, are both potentially funny for the reader and for Darl.

The fire in the barn enables Jewel, who looms throughout the scene as a figure of superhuman strength, to fulfil Addie's prophesy that he would save her from 'the fire and the water'. Because the tone of the novel is a mixture of the comedy and the

unbelief: disbelief

abrupt adj. 1 sudden and unexpected; hasty (*his abrupt departure*). **Repentino, brusco, cortante.** 2 (of speech, manner, etc.) uneven; lacking continuity; curt. **Lacónico, áspero.** 3 steep, precipitous. 4 Bot. truncated. 5 Geol. (*of strata*) suddenly appearing at the surface.

abrupto 1. adj. Escarpado, que tiene gran pendiente; dícese también del terreno quebrado, de difícil acceso. 2. Áspero, violento, rudo, destemplado. Declaración ABRUPTA. Carácter ABRUPTO

brusco 1. adj. Áspero, desapacible. 2. Rápido, repentino, pronto. 3. m. Planta perenne de la familia de las liliáceas, como de medio metro de altura, con tallos ramosos, flexibles y estriados cubiertos de cladodios ovalados, retorcidos en el eje, y de punta aguda; flores verdosas que nacen en el centro de los cladodios, y bayas del color y tamaño de una guinda pequeña.

powder: gunpowder, explosives

saw-horses: wooden frames with four legs used to support logs during sawing

a trestle: a wooden bridge made of wooden planking

opaline: like an opal, shining

flings its head about, lifting Jewel clear of the ground. He drags it on, slowly, terrifically; again he gives me across his shoulder a single glare furious and **brief**. Even when they are clear of the barn the horse continues to fight and lash backward toward the doorway until Gillespie passes me, stark naked, his nightshirt wrapped about the mule's head, and beats the maddened horse on out of the door.

Jewel returns, running; again he looks down at the coffin. But he comes on. "Where's cow?" he cries, passing me. I follow him. In the stall Mack is struggling with the other mule. When its head turns into the glare I can see the wild rolling of its eye too, but it makes no sound. It just stands there, watching Mack over its shoulder, swinging its hindquarters toward him whenever he approaches. He looks back at us, his eyes and mouth three round holes in his face on which the freckles look like English peas on a plate. His voice is thin, high, far away.

"I can't do nothing"
It is as though the round had been swept from his lips and up and away, speaking back to us from an immense distance of exhaustion. Jewel sudes past us; the mule whirls and lashes out, but he has already gained its head. I lean to Mack's ear

"Nightshitt. Around his head."

Mack stares at me. Then he rips the nightshirt off and flings it over the mule's head, and it becomes docile at once. Jewel is yelling at him: "Cow? Cow?"

"Back," Mack cries. "Last stall."

The cow watches us as we enter. She is backed into the corner, head lowered, still chewing though rapidly. But she makes no move. Jewel has paused, looking up, and suddenly we watch the entire floor to the loft dissolve. It just turns to fire; a faint litter of sparks runs down. He glances about. Back arder the trough is a threelegged milking-stool. He catches it up and swings it into the planking of the rear wall. He splinters a plank, then another, a third; we tear the fragments away. While we are stooping at the opening something charges into us from behind. It is the cow; with a single whistling breath she rushes between us and through the gap and into the outer glare, her tail erect and rigid as a broom nailed upright to the end of her spine.

Jewel turns back into the barn. "Here," I say; "Jewel!" I grasp at him; he strikes my hand down. "You fool," I say, "don't you see

culos se agarrotan y se mueven cuando agita la cabeza, levantando a Jewel materialmente del suelo. Este tira de él, lentamente, tremendamente; vuelve a lanzarme por encima del hombro una mirada furiosa y **breve**. Aunque ya han salido del granero el caballo continúa resistiéndose y trata de recular hacia la puerta hasta que Gillespie me adelanta, totalmente desnudo, su camisón envolviendo la cabeza de la mula y aparta a palos al enloquecido caballo de la puerta.

Jewel vuelve corriendo; mirad el ataúd otra vez, pero sigue.

—¿Dónde está la vaca? —grita, al pasar junto a mí.

Le sigo. En la cuadra Mack forcejea con la otra mula. Cuando la cabeza de ésta se ilumina veo que sus ojos giran frenéticos también, pero no hace ningún ruido. Se limita a estar allí quieta, mirando a Mack por encima del lomo, y volviendo los cuartos traseros hacia él siempre que se le acerca. Mack se vuelve a mirarnos y en su cara salpicada de pecas que parecen un puñado de guisantes en un plato, los ojos y la boca son tres agujeros redondos. Su voz es fina, aguda, lejana.

—No puedo hacer nada...

Es como si las palabras le hubieran sido arrancadas de los labios y dispersadas por el aire, y llegaran a nosotros desde una inmensa distancia de agotamiento. Jewel se desliza junto a nosotros; la mula da vueltas y suelta coces, pero él ha conseguido cogerla por la cabeza. Me inclino hacia Mack y le grito al oído:

—El camisón. Pónselo alrededor de la cabeza.

Mack me mira. Luego se arranca el camisón y se lo echa a la mula por encima de la cabeza, con lo que ésta se amansa inmediatamente. Jewel le está gritando:

—¿Y la vaca? ¿Y la vaca?

—Al fondo —grita Mack—. En el último pesebre.

La vaca nos mira cuando entramos. Está metida contra el rincón, con la cabeza baja, todavía comiendo, aunque deprisa. Pero no se mueve. Jewel se detiene, levanta la vista, y de repente vemos todo el suelo del desván que se disuelve. Simplemente se vuelve fuego; empieza a caer una fina lluvia de chispas. Jewel mira a su alrededor. Al fondo, debajo de la artesa, hay una banqueta de ordeñar de tres patas. La agarra y golpea con ella las tablas de la pared del fondo. Arranca una tabla, luego otra, luego una tercera; nosotros vamos quitando los fragmentos. Mientras estamos inclinados hacia la abertura algo se nos echa encima por detrás. Es la vaca; con un simple aliento silbante pasa corriendo entre nosotros y atraviesa la brecha hacia la claridad de fuera; tiene la cola recta y rígida como una escoba clavada al final del espinazo.

Jewel vuelve a entrar en el granero.

—Oye —digo—. ¡Jewel! —e intento agarrarle, pero él me aparta la mano de un golpe—. Estás loco —le digo—,

tragedy, it is possible that here, as in *Whitfield* (1), Faulkner is making a **wry** and ironic comment on the nature of prophecy.

wry *adj.*: 1 distorted or turned to one side. 2 (of a face or smile etc.) contorted in disgust (abhorrence), disappointment, or mockery. 3 (of humour) dry and mocking.

Torcido, pervertido, raro, irónico, forzado, agría, amarga (of a face or smile etc.) contorted in disgust, disappointment, or mockery. 3 (of humour) dry and mocking. Astuto, sagaz, ladino, taimado, de reojo [1. fr. Mirar disimuladamente dirigiendo la vista por encima del hombro, o hacia un lado y sin volver la cabeza. 2. fig. Mirar con prevención hostil o enfado]

brief 1 (de duración) breve, momentáneo a *brief rest*, un breve descanso 2 (de tamaño) conciso, lacónico, muy corto, *in brief*, en resumen
1 (noticia) informe, sumario, resumen 2 *Jur* escrito 3 *briefs pl.* (de hombre) calzoncillos (de mujer) bragas
1 (dar información) informar, despachar 2 *Mil Jur* informar a

you can't make it back yonder?"
The hall-way looks like a search-
light turned into rain. "Come on,"
I say, "around this way."

5

When we are through the
gap he begins to runs.
"Jewel," I say, running. He darts
around the corner. When I reach it
10 he has almost reached the next one,
running against the glare like that
figure cut from tin. Pa and Gillespie
and Mack are some distance away,
watching the barn, pink against the
15 darkness where for the time the
moonlight has been vanquished.
"Catch him!" I cry; "stop him!"

When I reach the front, he is
20 struggling with Gillespie; the one
lean in underclothes, the other stark
naked. They are like two figures in
a Greek frieze, isolated out of all
reality by the red glare. Before I
25 can reach them he has struck
Gillespie to the ground and turned
and run back into the barn.

a **Greek frieze**: a horizontal band of
sculptured figures, specifically on
a Greek temple or vase

The sound of it has become quite
30 peaceful now, like the sound of the
river did. We watch through the
dissolving **proscenium** of the
doorway as Jewel runs crouching to
the far end of the coffin and stoops
35 to it. For an instant he looks up and
out at us through the rain of burning
hay like a **portière** of flaming beads,
and I can see his mouth shape as he
calls my name.

proscenium: square archway

portiere: (*French*) a curtain hung
over a doorway

40 "Jewel!" Dewey Dell cries;
"Jewel!" It seems to me that I
now hear the accumulation of her
voice through the last five min-
utes, and I hear her scuffling and
45 struggling as pa and Mack hold
her, screaming, "Jewel! Jewel!"
But he is no longer looking at us. We see
his shoulders strain as he up-ends the
50 coffin and slides it single-handed from
the saw-horses. It looms unbeliev-
ably tall, hiding him: I would not have
believed that Addie Bundren would
have needed that much room to lie
55 comfortable in; for another instant it
stands upright while the sparks rain
on it in scattering bursts as though
they engendered other sparks from the
contact. Then it topples forward,
60 gaining momentum, revealing
Jewel and the sparks raining on him
too in engendering gusts, so that
he appears to be enclosed in a thin
nimbus of fire. Without stopping it
65 over-ends and rears again, pauses,
then crashes slowly forward and
through the curtain. This time
Jewel is riding upon it, **clinging to**
it, until it crashes down and
70 flings him forward and clear and
Mack leaps forward into a thin
smell of scorching meat and slaps
at the widening crimsonedged
holes that bloom like flowers in
75 his undershirt.

nimbus: cloud or halo

¿no ves que no conseguirás llegar ahí
atrás? —la puerta parece como un re-
flector iluminando la lluvia—. Ven —
le digo—, por aquí.

Cuando salimos por el boquete echa
a correr.

Jewel —le digo, corriendo también.
Dobla la esquina. Cuando llego a ella él
casi ha alcanzado la otra, corriendo so-
bre el resplandor como aquella figura
recortada de hojalata. Padre y Gillespie
y Mack están un poco más lejos mirando
el granero, enrojecidos sobre la oscuri-
dad donde por el momento la luz de la
luna ha sido vencida—. ¡Cojedle! —gri-
to—; ¡detenedle! [201]

Cuando llego a la parte delantera, está
forcejeando con Gillespie; uno delgado
y en ropa interior, el otro completamente
desnudo. Son como dos figuras de un **fri-
so griego**, aisladas de toda realidad por
el rojo resplandor. Antes de que pueda
alcanzarles, Jewel ha tirado al suelo a
Gillespie, ha dado media vuelta y ha en-
trado corriendo en el granero otra vez.

El sonido de éste ahora se ha calma-
do, como hizo antes el del río. A través
del **proscenio** de la puerta que se disuel-
ve vemos cómo corre Jewel encorvado
hasta el extremo más alejado del ataúd y
se inclina sobre él. Durante un instante
levanta la vista hacia nosotros por entre
la lluvia de pajas encendidas que cae ante
él como una **cortina** de cuentas
llameantes, y veo por la forma de su boca
que está diciendo mi nombre.

—¡Jewel! —grita Dewey Dell—
¡Jewel! —y me parece que ahora oigo
la voz que ella ha estado acumulando
durante los últimos cinco min-
utos, y oigo cómo jadea y se debate
cuando padre y Mack la agarran, y
la oigo gritar—: ¡Jewel! ¡Jewel!

Pero éste ya no nos mira. Vemos que
sus hombros se tensan cuando empina
el ataúd y lo hace resbalar con una sola
mano sobre los caballetes. Se eleva in-
creíblemente alto, y le oculta: no ha-
bría creído que Addie Bundren necesi-
tase tanto sitio para sentirse cómoda;
durante otro instante la caja está levan-
tada mientras las chispas llueven sobre
ella salpicando como si engendraran
otras chispas con el contacto. Luego,
cogiendo impulso, cae hacia delan-
te, permitiendo ver a Jewel y a las
chispas que llueven sobre él en-
gendrando otras nuevas, de modo
que parece rodeado por un delgado
halo de fuego. Sin detenerse, se in-
clina y se eleva otra vez, se detiene
y luego, atraviesa la cortina de fue-
go. Esta vez Jewel está a horcaja-
das sobre la caja, **agarrándola**, has-
ta que de un tirón la saca mientras él
sale despedido y Mack se precipita
hacia Jewel al notar un cierto olor a
carne chamuscada y a manotazos apa-
ga los encendidos agujeros carmesí
cada vez mayores que parecen flores
que brotan en su camiseta. [202]

WHEN I went to find where they
5 stay at night, I saw something.
They said, "Where is Darl?
Where did Darl go?"

They carried her back under the
10 apple tree.

The barn was still red, but it wasn't
a barn now. It was sunk down, and
the red went swirling up. The barn
15 went swirling up in little red pieces,
against the sky and the stars so that
the stars moved backward.

And then Cash was still awake. He
20 turned his head from side to side, with
sweat on his face.

"Do you want some more water on
it, Cash?" Dewey Dell said.

Cash's leg and foot turned black.
We held the lamp and looked at
Cash's foot and leg where it was
black.

"Your foot looks like a nigger's
foot, Cash," I said.

"I reckon we'll have to bust it
35 off," pa said.

tarnation: (Am. col.) damnation

"What in the tarnation you put it
on there for?" Mr. Gillespie said.

"I thought it would steady it some,"
pa said. "I just aimed to help hin."

They got the flat iron and the
hammer. Dewey Dell held the lamp.
45 They had to hit it hard. And then Cash
went to sleep.

"He's asleep now," I said. "It can't
hurt him while he's asleep."

It just cracked. It wouldn't come
off.

the hide: (col.) the skin

"It'll take the hide, too," Mr.
55 Gillespie said. "Why in the
tarnation you put it on there?
Didn't none of you think to
grease his leg first?"

"I just aimed to help him," pa said.
"It was Darl put it on."

"Where is Darl?" they said.

"Didn't none of you have more
sense than that?" Mr. Gillespie said.
"I'd 'a' thought he would, anyway."

Jewel was lying on his face. His
70 back was red. Dewey Dell put the
medicine on it. The medicine was made
out of butter and soot, to draw out the
fire. Then his back was black.

"Does it hurt, Jewel?" I said.
"Your back looks like a nigger's,
Jewel," I said. Cash's foot and leg
looked like a nigger's. Then they

Cuando fui a ver dónde se posan por
la noche, vi una cosa.

—¿Dónde está Darl? —decían—.
¿Adónde ha ido Darl?

La volvieron a llevar bajo el
manzano.

El granero todavía estaba rojo pero ya
no era un granero. Se había hundido y el
rojo subía en remolinos. El granero su-
bía en remolinos de trocitos rojos sobre
el cielo y las estrellas de modo que las
estrellas retrocedían.

Y entonces Cash seguía despierto.
Volvió la cabeza a uno y otro lado con
sudor en la cara.

—¿Quieres que te eche un poco de agua
encima, Cash? —le dijo Dewey Dell.

La pierna y el pie de Cash se pusieron
negros. Levantamos el farol y miramos
el pie y la pierna de Cash por donde es-
taban negros.

—Tu pie parece el de un negro, Cash
—dije yo.

—Para mí que se lo tendremos que
quitar —dijo padre.

—¿Por qué demonios le han pue-
sto eso? —dijo Mr. Gillespie.

—Creí que se la sujetaría —dijo pa-
dre—. Sólo pretendía ayudarle.

Trajeron un escoplo y un martillo.
Dewey Dell sostenía el farol. Tuvieron
que pegar con fuerza. Y luego Cash se
durmió.

—Se ha dormido —dije yo—. Mien-
tras duerma no le dolerá.

Aquello sólo se agrietaba. Pero no se
soltaba.

—Vamos a llevarnos la piel también
—dijo Mr. Gillespie—. ¿Por qué demo-
nios le han puesto eso? ¿Es que a ningun-
o se le ocurrió ponerle un poco de gra-
sa en la pierna primero?

—Sólo pretendía ayudarle —dijo pa-
dre—. Fue Darl quien se lo puso.

—¿Dónde está Darl? —dijeron. [203]

—¿Es que ninguno tiene el menor sen-
tido común? —dijo Mr. Gillespie—. Creí
que él, por lo menos, sí lo tendría.

Jewel estaba tumbado boca abajo. Tenía
la espalda roja. Dewey Dell le puso medici-
na. La medicina estaba hecha de mantequi-
lla y hollín, para quitarle las quemaduras.
Luego ya tenía la espalda negra.

—¿Te duele, Jewel? —dije yo—. Tienes
una espalda que parece la de un negro, Jewel
—dije. El pie y la pierna de Cash parecen
los de un negro. Entonces lo rompieron. La

Vardaman (9)

In this section, Vardaman ob-
serves what happens after the fire.
Vardaman finds Darl standing
beside Addie's coffin, crying. He
tries to comfort him, saying Addie
has been saved by Jewel, so Darl
need not cry.

COMMENTARY: Through
Vardaman's unsophisticated eyes,
the reader is given a vivid
impression of the suffering of
various members of the family.
Cash's foot is black, presumably
gangrenous, and Jewel's back is
also black after Dewey Dell puts
the ointment of soot on it. These
are the obvious and outward signs
of the decay which is infecting not
only Addie but also her family.
When Vardaman finds Darl
crying there is no explanation for
his tears. Vardaman assumes that
he is upset about Addie's near-
destruction but it is equally
possible that Darl is upset by the
failure of his scheme to get rid of
his mother's burdensome corpse.

Although Vardaman records
experience very directly, without
any of the profound and poetic
images which haunt Darl, his
section is not without a certain
beauty. He is attracted by the red
of the barn, and remembers it as
'swirling, making the stars run
backwards without falling'. Such
beauty, he says, 'made my head
hurt like the train did'. This, in
simple, childish language, is an
expression of an aesthetic
response, being deeply touched
by beauty. Vardaman also notices
that the little patches of moonlight
which remain still on the coffin
move up and down on Darl; in
other words, Darl is shaking with
grief and so causing the
moonlight to appear to move on
his body. In this and other sections
of Vardaman's Faulkner shows
that a direct and untutored
response to the world is not
necessarily a response devoid of
wonder or a sense of beauty.

broke it off. Cash's leg bled.

"You go on back and lay down," Dewey Dell said. "You ought to be
5 asleep."

"Where is Darl?" they said.

He is out there under the apple
10 tree with her, lying on her. He is there so the cat won't come back. I said, "Are you going to keep the cat away, Darl?"

15 The moonlight **dappled** on him too. Can her it was still, but on Darl it dappled up and down.

20 "You needn't to cry," I said. "Jewel got her out. You needn't to cry, Darl."

The barn is still red. It used to be redder than this. Then it went swirling, making the stars run
25 backward without falling. It hurt my heart like the train did.

30 *When I went to find where thy stay at night, I saw something that Dewey Dell says I mustn't never tell nobody.*

52

DARL (18)

35 WE have been passing the signs for some time now: the drug-stores, the clothing stores, the **patent medicine** and the garages and cafés, and the mile-boards diminishing, becoming
40 more **starkly re-accruent**: 3 mi. 2 mi. From the crest of a hill, as we get into the wagon again, we can see the smoke low and flat, seemingly unmoving in the **unwinded** afternoon.

45 "Is that it, Darl?" Vardaman says. "Is that Jefferson?" He too has lost flesh; like ours, his face has an expression strained, dreamy, and
50 **gaunt**.

"Yes," I say. He lifts his head and looks at the sky. High against it they hang in narrowing
55 circles, like the smoke, with an outward semblance of form and purpose, but with no **inference** of motion, progress or retrograde. We mount the wagon again where Cash lies on the box, the **jagged shards** of cement cracked about his leg. The shabby mules droop rattling and clanking down the hill.

65 "We'll have to take him to the doctor," pa says. "I reckon it ain't no way around it." The back of Jewel's shirt, where it touches him,
70 stains slow and black with grease. Life was created in the valleys. It blew up on to the hills on the old terrors, the old lusts, the old despairs. That's why you must walk
75 up the hills so you can ride down.

Dewey Dell sits on the seat, the newspaper package on her lap. When

pierna de Cash empezó a sangrar.

—Vete atrás y acuéstate —me dijo Dewey Dell— Deberías estar durmiendo.

—¿Dónde está Darl? —dijeron.

Está ahí fuera, debajo del manzano, con ella, tumbado encima de ella. Está allí para que el gato no se vuelva a subir. Dije:

—¿Vas a quedarte ahí para espantar al gato, Darl?

La luz de luna también le **salpicaba** a él. Sobre ella caía tranquila, pero sobre Darl formaba motas que subían y bajaban.

—No tienes que llorar —dije—. Jewel la sacó afuera. No tienes que llorar, Darl.

El granero todavía está rojo. Antes estaba más rojo. Luego fue subiendo en torbellinos haciendo que las estrellas retrocedieran sin llegar a caer. Me duele el corazón como cuando el tren.

30 *Cuando fui a ver dónde reposan por la noche, vi una cosa que Dewey Dell me dice que no debo contar a nadie* [204]

DARL

LLEVAMOS ya algún tiempo dejando atrás los anuncios: de las boticas, de las tiendas de ropa, de **medicinas patentadas** (25) y de los garajes y cafés, y los indicadores, en cantidad decreciente, cada vez más escuetamente **reiterativos**: 5 km, 3 km. Al coronar una cuesta nos subimos de nuevo a la carreta y vemos el humo bajo y plano que parece inmóvil en la tarde **sin viento**.

—¿Es eso, Darl? —dice Vardaman— ¿Es eso Jefferson? —él también ha adelgazado; como las nuestras, su cara tiene una expresión de fatiga, de irrealidad, de **desvaimiento**.

—Sí —digo.

Levanta la cabeza y mira al cielo. Arriba, sobre él, se ciernen en círculos poco amplios, como el humo, con una apariencia externa de forma e intención, aunque sin ninguna **implicación** de movimiento, avance o retroceso. Volvemos a subirnos a la carreta donde Cash sigue tumbado encima de la caja con **agudas esquirlas** de cemento pegadas todavía a su pierna. Las escuálidas mulas se dejan caer rechinando y gopeteando colina abajo.

—Tendremos que llevarle al médico —dice padre—. Para mí que no habrá otro remedio —la camisa de Jewel se va llenando de manchas negras de grasa en los puntos donde le toca la espalda. La vida fue creada en los valles. Subió violentamente a las colinas empujada por los viejos terrores, las viejas lascivias, las viejas desesperaciones. Por eso hay que subir las colinas a pie para poder bajarlas montados.

Dewey Dell sigue en el asiento con el paquete envuelto [205] en periódicos en

dapple 1 tr. mark with spots or rounded patches of colour or shade. 2 intr. become marked in this way.
1 a dappled effect. 2 a dappled animal, esp. a horse.

dappled moteado

patent medicine: medicine available without consulting a doctor

re-accruent: (neologism) recurrent
stark 1 desolate, bare (a stark landscape). 2 sharply evident (in stark contrast). 3 downright, sheer (stark madness). 4 completely naked.
completely, wholly (stark mad, stark naked).

unwinded: (neologism) windless

inference: suggestion

jagged adj. 1 with an unevenly cut or torn edge. 2 deeply indented; with sharp points. Lacerated irregularly. Dentado, mellado, rasgado, rasgado, irregular,

shards: broken pieces

Darl (18)

This section contains Darl's unspoken and unverballed thoughts, together with the words he speaks and overhears as the family finally enter the outskirts of Jefferson. As the wagon descends towards the town it has to pass through the negro quarter. Jewel is enraged by the comments on the smell from the town and tries to attack an innocent white by-stander. Darl prevents the fight, gets Jewel to apologise but saves his honour for him. They then go on into the town, where people turn appalled at the smell. After a brief stop, they mount the wagon again and, with Jewel balanced on the wheel, they set off again.

COMMENTARY: Darl emerges from this section as someone with an unexpected ability to act when it is necessary. He acted when he tried to burn the barn, here he acts to prevent Jewel from knifing a man. Yet his customary pose is that of the uninvolved observer who has difficulty maintaining a sense of his own reality. This apparent contradiction in Darl's nature can be traced back to Addie's state of mind at the time of his conception and birth, the disparity between words and deeds which has become a part of Darl, enabling him to act decisively but making him lost and unsure when he enters the realms of abstract thoughts.
His thoughts, as they approach

anticipant: expectant

we reach the foot of the hill where the road flattens between close walls of trees, she begins to look about quietly from one side of the road to the other. At last she says,

“I got to stop.”

Pa looks at her, his shabby profile that of **anticipant** and disgruntled annoyance. He does not check the team. “What for?”

“I got to go to the bushes,” Dewey Dell says.

Pa does not check the team. “Can’t you wait till we get to town? It ain’t over a mile now.”

“Stop,” Dewey Dell says. “I got to go to the bushes.”

Pa stops in the middle of the road and we watch Dewey Dell descend, carrying the package. She does not look back.

“Why not leave your cakes here?” I say. “We’ll watch them.”

She descends steadily, not looking at us.

“How would she know where to go to if she waited till we get to town?” Vardaman says. “Where would you go to do it in town, Dewey Dell?”

She lifts the pack-age down and turns and disappears among the trees and undergrowth.

“Don’t be no longer than you can help,” pa says. “We ain’t got no time to waste.” She does not answer. After a while we cannot hear her even.

“We ought to done like Armstid and Gillespie said and sent word to town and had it dug and ready,” he said.

“Why didn’t you?” I say. “You could have telephoned.”

“What for?” Jewel says. “Who the hell can’t dig a hole in the ground?”

A car comes over the hill. It begins to sound the horn, slowing. It runs along the roadside in low gear, the outside wheels in the ditch, and passes us and goes on. Vardaman watches it until it is out of sight.

“How far is it now, Darl?” he says.

“Not far,” I say.

“We ought to done it,” pa says. “I just never wanted to be beholden to none except her flesh and blood.”

“Who the hell can’t dig a damn hole in the ground?” Jewel says.

“It ain’t respectful, talking that

el regazo. Cuando llegamos al final de la colina, allí donde el camino se hace llano entre dos cercanas paredes de árboles, se pone a mirar tranquilamente a uno y otro lado del camino. Por fin, dice:

—Tengo que parar.

Padre la mira y su mísero perfil expresa un enfado **anticipado**. No detiene a las mulas.

—¿Para qué?

—Tengo que ir a un matorral —dice Dewey Dell.

Padre sigue sin detener las mulas.

—¿No puedes esperar hasta que lleguemos a la ciudad? Ya sólo quedan menos de dos kilómetros.

—Pare —dice Dewey Dell—. Tengo que ir a un matorral.

Padre se detiene en medio del camino y miramos cómo Dewey Dell empieza a bajar, llevando el paquete. No vuelve la cabeza.

—¿Por qué no dejas los bollos aquí? —digo yo—. Los vigilaremos nosotros.

Se baja decidida, sin mirarnos.

—¿Cómo iba a saber adónde ir si esperamos hasta llegar a la ciudad? —dice Vardaman—. ¿A que no sabrías adónde ir en la ciudad, Dewey Dell?

Baja el paquete y da media vuelta y desaparece entre los árboles y la maleza.

—Procura tardar lo menos posible —dice padre—. No podemos perder más tiempo —ella no contesta. Al cabo de un momento ni siquiera la oímos—. Deberíamos haber hecho lo que nos dijeron Armstid y Gillespie y avisar a los de la ciudad para que tuvieran preparada la fosa —dice.

—¿Por qué no lo hizo? —digo yo—. Podría haber llamado por teléfono.

—¿Y para qué? —dice Jewel—. ¿Es que no podemos cavar un agujero en el suelo?

Aparece un coche en lo alto de la cuesta. Se pone a tocar la bocina disminuyendo la marcha. Viene camino abajo en primera, metiendo las dos ruedas de fuera en la cuneta, y nos adelanta y se aleja. Vardaman le sigue con la mirada hasta que se pierde de vista. [206]

—¿Y ahora cuánto nos queda, Darl? —dice.

—Ya queda poco —digo yo.

—Deberíamos haberlo hecho —dice padre—. Pero nunca me gustó tener que deberle nada a nadie que no sea familia suya.

—¿Es que no podemos cavar un mal-dito agujero en el suelo? —dice Jewel.

—No hay que ser tan poco respetuo-

the town, follow the same pattern as his thoughts throughout the book. He sees the buzzards as an emblem of the apparently unending and senseless journey, ‘with an outward semblance of form and purpose, but with no inference of motion, progress or retrograde’. As the wagon goes over the hills towards the town, Darl thinks that ‘Life was created in the valleys. It blew up on to the hills on the old terrors, the old lusts, the old despairs’. This image relates back to Darl’s vision of the valley between Dewey Dell’s legs as the centre of all creation. The family’s descent into the town is a species of pilgrimage back to the beginnings of its own creation, the place where Anse and Addie met. But his reflections are not simply related to the family. They extend to all mankind, whose life was created out of terror, lust and despair, the kinds of unworthy motives which recall the lack of direction of ‘no-hand on no-strings’.

way about her grave,” pa says. “You all dont know what it is. You never pure loved her, none of you.” Jewel does not answer. He sits a
5 little stiffly erect, his body arched away from his shirt. His highcoloured jaw **juts**.

prominente, sobresale

Dewey Dell returns. We watch her
10 emerge from the bushes, carrying the package, and climb into the wagon. She now wears her Sunday dress, her beads, her shoes and stockings.

15 “I thought I told you to leave them clothes to home,” pa says. She does not answer, she does not look at us. She sits the package in the wagon and gets in. The wagon moves on.

20 “How many more hills now, Darl?” Vardaman says.

“Just one,” I say. “The next one
25 goes right up into town.”

This hill is red sand, bordered on either hand by negro cabins; against the sky ahead the massed telephone
30 lines run, and the clock on the courthouse lifts among the trees. In the sand the wheels whisper, as though the very earth would hush our entry. We descend as the hill
35 commences to rise.

We follow the wagon, the whispering wheels, passing the cabins where faces come suddenly to the
40 doors, white-eyed. We hear sudden voices, ejaculant. Jewel has been looking from side to side; now his head turns forward and I can see his ears taking on a still deeper tone of
45 furious red. Three negroes walk beside the road ahead of us; ten feet ahead of them a white man walks. When we pass the negroes their heads turn suddenly with that
50 expression of shock and instinctive outrage. “Great God,” one says; “what they got in that wagon?”

Jewel whirls. “Son of a bitches,”
55 he says. As he does so he is **abreast** of the white man, who has paused. It is as though Jewel had gone blind for the moment, for it is the white man toward whom he whirls.

60 “Darl!” Cash says from the wagon. I grasp at Jewel. The white man has fallen back a pace, his face still slack-jawed; then his jaw tightens, claps to. Jewel leans above him, his jaw muscles gone white.

“What did you say?” he says.

70 “Here,” I say. “He don’t mean anything, mister. Jewel,” I say. When I touch him he swings at the man. I grasp his arm; we struggle. Jewel has never looked at me. He is trying to
75 free his arm. When I see the man again he has an open knife in his hand.

“Hold up, mister” I say; “I’ve got

so y hablar así de su tumba —dice padre—. Ninguno sabéis lo que es eso. No la habéis querido de verdad, ninguno de vosotros—. Jewel no contesta. Está sentado un poco tieso, con el cuerpo evitando el contacto con la camisa. Y la mandíbula de vivos colores **muy levantada**.

Dewey Dell vuelve. La observamos surgir de los arbustos, siempre con el paquete, y subir a la carreta. Ahora lleva puesto el vestido de los domingos, su collar, zapatos y medias.

—Cref haberte dicho que dejaras todos esos trapos en casa —dice padre. Ella no contesta, no nos mira. Pone el paquete en la carreta y se instala. La carreta se pone en marcha.

—¿Cuántas cuestras quedan, Darl? —dice Vardaman.

—Sólo una —digo yo—. La siguiente termina en la ciudad.

Esta colina es de arena roja, bordeada de cabañas de negros; contra el cielo, enfrente, corren los cables del teléfono, y el reloj del juzgado se eleva entre los árboles. Las ruedas susurran en la arena, como si la tierra misma quisiera ensordecer nuestra llegada. Nos bajamos donde empieza la cuesta.

Seguimos a la carreta, a las ruedas que susurran, pasando por delante de las cabañas, en cuyas puertas de repente aparecen caras de ojos blancos. Se oyen súbitas voces, exclamativas. Jewel ha estado mirando de un lado a otro; ahora dirige la cabeza al frente y veo que sus orejas adquieren un tono más intenso de un rojo furioso. Tres negros andan al lado del camino, delante de nosotros; cuatro metros delante de ellos camina un blanco. Cuando adelantamos a los negros vuelven bruscamente la cabeza con una expresión de sorpresa y repulsión instintiva. [207]

—Dios mío —dice uno—, ¿qué llevarán en esa carreta?

Jewel se revuelve.

—Hijos de puta —dice. Cuando lo dice está **a la altura** del blanco, que se ha parado. Es como si Jewel se hubiera quedado ciego durante un momento, pues, se dirige al hombre blanco _____.

—¿Darl! —dice Cash desde la carreta. Yo agarro a Jewel. El blanco ha dado un paso atrás boquiabierto; luego se le tensa la mandíbula y cierra la boca de golpe. Jewel se dobla hacia él: los músculos de la mandíbula se le han puesto blancos.

—¿Qué has dicho? —dice.

—Oiga —digo yo—. No ha querido molestarle, señor. Jewel —digo. Cuando le toco se lanza contra el hombre. Le agarro del brazo; forcejamos. Jewel ni me mira. Intenta soltarse el brazo. Cuando miro al hombre de nuevo, tiene una navaja abierta en la mano.

—Espere, señor —digo yo—. Ya le

abreast *adv.* 1 side by side and facing the same way. 2 **a** (often foll. by *with*) up to date, **b** (foll. by *of*) well-informed (*abreast of all the changes*). A la par, en frente de, en fondo, juntas, a la altura de.

him. Jewel," I say.	tengo sujeto. Jewel —digo.
"Thinks because he's a goddam town fellow," Jewel says, panting, wrenching at me. "Son of a bitch," he says.	—Cree ese jodido que porque vive en la ciudad... —dice Jewel, jadeando, tratando de soltarse—. Hijo de puta —dice.
The man moves. He begins to edge around me, watching Jewel, the knife low against his flank. "Can't no man call me that," he says. Pa has got down, and Dewey Dell is holding Jewel, pushing at him. I release him and face the man.	El hombre avanza. Se pone a dar vueltas a mi alrededor, vigilando a Jewel con la navaja caída junto a su flanco. —No hay hombre que me llame eso —dice. Padre se ha bajado y Dewey Dell agarra a Jewel, tirando de él. Le suelto y me encaro con el hombre.
"Wait," I say. "He don't mean nothing. He's sick; got burned in a fire last night, and he ain't himself."	—Espere —le digo—. No le quería molestar. Está enfermo; se quemó en un incendio la noche pasada y no sabe lo que dice.
"Fire or no fire," the man says, "can't no man call me that."	—Con incendio o sin incendio —dice el hombre—, no hay hombre que me llame eso.
"He thought you said something to him," I say.	—Pensó que usted le había dicho algo —digo yo.
"I never said nothing to him. I never see him before."	—No le he dicho nada. Es la primera vez que lo veo.
"'Fore God," pa says; "'fore God."	—Por el amor de Dios —dice padre—. Por el amor de Dios.
"I know," I say. "He never meant anything, He'll take it back."	—Estoy seguro —digo yo—, de que no quería molestarle. Retiráralo dicho. [208]
"Let him take it back, then."	—Entonces que lo retire.
"Put up your knife, and he will."	—Guárdese esa navaja y lo retirará.
The man looks at me. He looks at Jewel. Jewel is quiet now.	El hombre me mira. Mira a Jewel. Jewel ahora está callado.
"Put up your knife," I say.	—Guárdese la navaja —digo yo.
The man shuts the knife.	El hombre cierra la navaja.
"'Fore God," pa says. "'Fore God."	—Por el amor de Dios —dice padre—. Por el amor de Dios.
"Tell him you didn't mean anything, Jewel," I say.	—Dile que no le querías molestar, Jewel —digo yo.
"I thought he said something," Jewel says. "Just because he's——"	—Cref que había dicho algo —dice Jewel—. Sólo porque viva...
"Hush," I say. "Tell him you didn't mean it."	—Cállate —le digo—. Dile que no le querías molestar.
"I didn't mean it," Jewel says.	—No quería molestarle —dice Jewel.
"He better not," the man says. "Calling me a——"	—Mejor para él —dice el hombre—. Llamarme...
"Do you think he's afraid to call you that?" I say.	—¿Cree que le da miedo llamárselo? —digo yo.
The man looks at me. "I never said that," he said.	El hombre me mira. —Yo no he dicho eso —dice.
"Don't think it, neither," Jewel says.	—Pues tampoco lo piense —dice Jewel.
"Shut up," I say. "Come on. Drive on, pa."	—Cállate —digo yo—. Ven aquí. En marcha, padre.
The wagon moves. The man stands watching us. Jewel does not look back. "Jewel would 'a' whipped him,"	La carreta reanuda la marcha. El hombre se queda mirándonos. Jewel no vuelve la vista. Jewel le hubiera zurrado —dice

Vardaman says.

We approach the crest, where the street runs, where cars go back and forth; the mules haul the wagon up and on to the crest and the street. Pa stops them. The street runs on ahead, where the square opens and the monument stands before the court-house. We mount again while the heads turn with that expression which we know; save Jewel. He does not get on, even though the wagon has started again. "Get in, Jewel," I say. "Come on. Let's get away from here." But he does not get in. Instead he sets his foot on the turning hub of the rear wheel, one hand grasping the stanchion, and with the hub turning smoothly under his sole he lifts the other foot and squats there, staring straight ahead, motionless, lean, wooden-backed, as though carved squatting out of the lean wood.

25

53
CASH (4)

IT wasn't nothing else to do. It was either send him to Jackson, or have Gillespie sue us, because he knowed some way that Darl set fine to it. I don't know how he knowed, but he did. Vardaman see him do it, but he swore he never told nobody but Dewey Dell and that she told him not to tell nobody. But Gillespie knowed it. But he would 'a' suspicioned it sooner or later. He could have done it that night just watching the way Darl acted.

And so pa said, "I reckon there ain't nothing else to do," and Jewel said,

"You want to fix him now?"

50 "Fix him?" pa said.

"Catch him and tie him up," Jewel said. "God it, do you want to wait until he sets fire to the goddam team and wagon?"

But there wasn't no use in that. "There ain't no use in that," I said. "We can wait till she is underground." A fellow that's going to spend the rest of his life locked up, he ought to be let to have what pleasure he can have before he goes.

65 "I reckon he ought to be there," pa says. "God knows, it's a trial on me. Seems like it ain't no end to bad luck when once it starts."

70 Sometimes I ain't so sho who's got ere a right to say when a man is crazy and when he ain't. Sometimes I think it ain't none of us pure crazy and ain't none of us pure sane until the balance of us talks him that-a-way. It's like it ain't so much what a fellow does, but it's the way the majority of folks is looking at him when he does it.

Vardaman.

Nos acercamos a lo alto de la cuesta, donde empieza la calle, por la que van y vienen los coches; las mulas tiran de la carreta y llegan a lo alto de la cuesta y a la calle. Padre las detiene. La calle corre recta hasta donde se abre la plaza y un monumento se alza ante el juzgado. Volvemos a subirnos mientras las cabezas se vuelven hacia nosotros con esa expresión que ya conocemos. Menos Jewel; no sube ni cuando la carreta se pone de nuevo en marcha.

—Sube, Jewel —digo yo—. Venga. Vámonos de una vez de aquí.

Pero no se sube. En vez de eso apoya el pie en el cubo de la rueda de atrás y se agarra a un lateral con una mano, y con el cubo girando suavemente debajo de su suela levanta el otro pie y se queda allí en cuclillas, mirando al frente, inmóvil, delgado, con la espalda envarada, igual que una figura tallada, en cuclillas, en la misma madera de la carreta.

CASH

No podemos hacer otra cosa. O lo mandamos a Jackson**26 o Gillespie nos demandará por daños y perjuicios porque se ha enterado de algún modo de que fue Darl quien le prendió fuego. Vardaman le vio hacerlo, pero jura que no se lo contó a nadie más que a Dewey Dell y que ella le dijo que no se lo contara a nadie. Pero Gillespie se enteró. Antes o después lo habría sospechado. Incluso aquella noche con sólo fijarse en cómo se comportaba Darl.

Conque padre dijo:

—Para mí que no podemos hacer otra cosa.

Y Jewel dijo:

—¿Quiere prepararlo ahora?

—¿Prepararlo? —dijo padre.

—Cogerlo y atarlo —dijo Jewel—. Maldita sea, ¿es que va a esperar a que les prenda fuego a las malditas mulas y a la carreta?

Pero eso no tenía sentido.

—Eso no tiene sentido —dije—. Podemos esperar hasta que la enterremos. Un tipo que se va a pasar el resto de su vida encerrado debería tener derecho a disfrutar de algo antes de que lo encierren.

—Para mí que debiera estar allí —dice padre—. Bien sabe Dios lo que me duele. Parece como si la mala suerte, una vez que empieza, no fuera a tener fin.

A veces no entiendo que nadie tenga derecho a decir cuándo un hombre está loco o no lo está. A veces pienso que ninguno de nosotros está loco del todo y que ninguno está cuerdo del todo hasta que la gente se decide a situarnos en uno o el otro lado. Es como si no contara lo que uno hace, sino lo que la mayoría opina de lo que hace.

Cash (4)

This section, giving us our first sustained glimpse into the mind of Cash, consists of his unspoken thoughts and the words he speaks and overhears as the family bury Addie and see Darl taken away to the asylum for the insane in Jackson. We discover that Vardaman's 'secret' was that he saw Darl start the fire in the barn. Somehow, Gillespie has found out about it and, unless Darl is certified insane, Anse will be sued. Jewel wants Darl taken away before Addie is buried, but Cash insists that he must be allowed to stay until afterwards.

After the burial, Cash realises with surprise that Dewey Dell is one of the most vicious in the attack on Darl. He now sees that she was probably responsible for telling Gillespie about Darl's part in the fire. Under attack, Darl turns to Cash for advice and when told it would be best if he went to the asylum, he accepts it but begins to laugh.

COMMENTARY: Cash's section gives the reader a new and surprising insight into family relationships. As Jewel has had only one section, we have not realised that he returns Darl's dislike with some intensity. Dewey Dell's dislike of Darl has already manifested itself but never with such ferocity as here. Cash's own personality proves to have unsuspected depths. He has obviously thought deeply about the differences between sanity

Because Jewel is too hard on him. Of course it was Jewel's horse was traded to get her that nigh to town, and in a sense it was the value of his horse Darl tried to burn up. But I thought more than once before we crossed the river and after, how it would be God's blessing if He did take her outen our hands and **get shut of her** in some **clean way**, and it seemed to me that when Jewel worked so to get her outen the river, he was going against God in a way, and then when Darl seen that it looked like one of us would have to do something, I can almost believe he done right in a way. But I don't reckon nothing excuses setting fire to a man's barn and endangering his stock and destroying his property. That's how I reckon a man is crazy. That's how he can't see eye to eye with other folks. And I reckon they ain't nothing else to do with him but what the most folks says is right.

But it's a shame, in a way. Folks seems to get away from the olden right teaching that says to drive the nails down and trim the edges well always like it was for your own use and comfort you were making it. It's like some folks has the smooth, pretty boards to build a court-house with and others don't have no more than rough **lumber** fitten to build a chicken coop. But it's better to build a tight chicken coop than a **shoddy** court-house, and when they both build shoddy or build well, neither because it's one or tother is going to make a man feel the better nor the worse.

So we went up the street, toward the square, and he said, "We better take Cash to the doctor first. We can leave him there and come back for him." That's it. It's because me and him was born close together, and it nigh ten years before Jewel and Dewey Dell and Vardaman begun to come along. I feel **kin** to them, all right, but I don't know. And me being the oldest, and thinking already the very thing that he done: I don't know.

Pa was looking at me, then at him, mumbling his mouth.

"Go on," I said. "We'll get it done first."

"She would want us all there," pa says.

"Let's take Cash to the doctor first," Darl said. "She'll wait. She's already waited nine days."

"You all don't know," pa says. "The somebody you was young with and you **grewed old** in her and she grewed old in you, seeing the old coming on and it was the one somebody you could hear say it don't

Porque Jewel es demasiado duro con él. Claro que fue el caballo de Jewel el que se cambió para traerla tan cerca de la ciudad, y en cierto sentido fue el valor del caballo lo que trató de quemar Darl. Pero pensé más de una vez, antes y después de cruzar el río, qué bendición de Dios hubiera sido si nos la hubiera arrancado de las manos y **se la hubiera llevado** de un **modo discreto**, y me pareció que cuando Jewel se esforzó tanto por sacarla del río, estaba obrando en contra de los designios de Dios, y que luego, cuando a Darl le pareció que uno de nosotros debería hacer algo, casi me hizo creer que en cierto sentido obró correctamente. Pero para mí que nada excusa el prenderle fuego al granero de nadie y poner en peligro a su ganado y destruir sus propiedades. Para mí que así es cómo se ve si un hombre está loco. Por eso es por lo que es distinto de los demás. Y para mí que no se puede hacer otra cosa con él que lo que la mayoría diga que es lo correcto.

Pero en un sentido es una vergüenza. La gente parece cada vez más alejada de aquel viejo principio que dice que hay que clavar los clavos y lijar los cantos bien siempre, como si lo que estás haciendo fuera para tu propio uso y comodidad. Es como si algunas personas tuvieran tablas bien cepilladas para construir un juzgado, mientras otras sólo tienen **truncos sin desbatar** más propios para construir un gallinero. Pero es mejor construir un gallinero sólido que un juzgado **destartalado**, y cuando los dos se han construido mal o se han construido bien, no es el tipo de construcción lo que le hace a uno sentirse bien o mal.

Conque seguimos calle arriba, hacia la plaza, y él dijo:

—Será mejor que llevemos a Cash al médico antes. Podemos dejarle allí y volver a recogerle luego.

Eso es. Es porque yo y él nos llevamos poco tiempo, y pasaron casi diez años antes de que empezaran a llegar Jewel y Dewey Dell y Vardaman. Me siento **próximo** a todos, desde luego, pero no sé. Y yo, al ser el mayor, no dejo de pensar en lo que ha hecho, y no sé.

Padre me está mirando, luego le mira a él, murmurando.

—Siga —dije yo—. Acabemos con esto primero.

—Ella nos querría a todos allí —dice padre.

—Llevemos a Cash al médico antes —dijo Darl—. Ella puede esperar. Ya lleva nueve días esperando.

—No sabéis nada —dice padre—. La persona con la que uno ha pasado la juventud y se ha **hecho viejo**, la persona que ha envejecido con uno y viendo venir la vejez le ha dicho a uno que no importa, y uno

and insanity and he reciprocates Darl's feelings for him. In the end, Darl is betrayed by all the family except Cash, and is betrayed for very poor reasons; Anse's love of money, Jewel's dislike, Dewey Dell's secret and even Vardaman's innocent spying all contribute to his incarceration.

Darl's insane laughter only confirms that he is mad to everyone except the thoughtful Cash. For him, the laughter acts as a further impetus for consideration of the nature of sanity, 'I ain't so sho' . . . same astonishment'. He is, when we consider what we know of the other characters, quite right to question the nature of sanity.

This scene, in which the betrayed Darl who has done no real harm to anyone and who has been deprived of all motherly love, turns to Cash and says, 'I thought you would have told me', is tragic and not comic. Darl's statement has echoes of Caesar's 'Et tu, Brute?' and the betrayal is of the same magnitude, given that the family has been through so much together and is such an isolated group. As Cash observes, Darl's 'insanity', if it is insanity, is of a kind to which no-one could take exception. Jewel shouts 'Kill him. Kill the son of a bitch', Dewey Dell jumps on him 'like a wild cat' and the whole thing is, as Cash says, 'a shoddy job'.

The one other aspect of this section which is worth noting is the time at which it is narrated. Cash says that they stop 'in front of Mrs Bundren's house' to borrow the spade. This suggests that Cash's section consists of thoughts which take place after Addie has been buried and after Darl has been taken away, when Anse appears with 'the second Mrs Bundren', the owner of the spade and the gramophone.

lumber 1 *v. intr.* (usu. foll. by *along, past, by, etc.*) move in a slow clumsy noisy way. *Moverse pesadamente, avanzar con ruido sordo*

lumber 2 *n.* 1 disused articles of furniture etc. inconveniently taking up space. *Trastos viejos 2 useless or cumbersome objects.* 3 *US* partly prepared timber. *Madera, maderamen*

1 *tr. a* (usu. foll. by *with*) leave (a person etc.) with something unwanted or unpleasant (*always lumbering me with the cleaning*). **b** (as **lumbered adj.**) in an unwanted or inconvenient situation (*afraid of being lumbered*). 2 *tr.* (usu. foll. by *together*) heap or group together carelessly. *Amontonar* 3 *tr.* (usu. foll. by *up*) obstruct. *Obstruir* 4 *intr.* cut and prepare forest timber for transport. *Aserrar, cortar madera,*

lumber-jacket a jacket, usu. of warm checked material, of the kind worn by lumberjacks. *chaqueta de leñador*

lumber-room a room where disused or cumbrous things are kept.

shoddy 1 trashy; shabby; poorly made. 2 counterfeit.

1 **a** an inferior cloth made partly from the **shredded** fibre of old woollen cloth. **b** such fibre. 2 any thing of shoddy quality.

shred 1 a scrap, fragment, or strip of esp. cloth, paper, etc. 2 the least amount, remnant (*not a shred of evidence*).

tear or cut into shreds. *hacer trizas o tiras* **tear to shreds** completely refute (an argument etc.).

- matter and know it was the truth outen the hard world and all a man's grief and trials. You all don't know."
- 5 "We got the digging to do, too," I said.
- "Armstid and Gillespie both told you to send word ahead," Darl said.
- 10 "Don't you want to go to Peabody's now, Cash?"
- "Go on," I said. "It feels right easy now. It's best to get things 15 done in the right place."
- "If it was just dug," pa says. "We forgot our spade, too."
- 20 "Yes," Darl said. "I'll go to the hardware store. We'll have to buy one."
- "It'll cost money," pa says.
- 25 "Do you begrudge her it?" Darl says.
- "Go on and get a spade," Jewel said. "Here, give me the money."
- 30 But pa didn't stop. "I reckon we can get a spade," he said. "I reckon there are Christians here." So Darl set still and we went 35 on, with Jewel squatting on the tail Bate, watching the back of Darl's head. He looked like one of these bulldogs, one of these dogs that don't bark none, squatting against the rope, watching the 40 thing he was waiting to jump at.
- He set that way all the time we was in front of Mrs. Bundren's house, hearing the music, watching the back 45 of Darl's head with them hard white eyes of hisn.
- The music was playing in the house. It was one of them 50 graphophones. It was natural as a musicband.
- "Do you want to go to Peabody's?" Darl said. "They can wait here and 55 tell pa, and I'll drive you to Peabody's and come back for them."
- "No," I said. It was better to get her underground, now we was this 60 close, just waiting until pa borrowed the shovel. He drove along the street until we could hear the music.
- "Maybe they got one here," he 65 said. He pulled up at Mrs. Bundren's. It was like he knowed. Sometimes I think that if a working man could see work as far ahead as a lazy man can see 70 laziness. So he stopped there like he knowed, before that little new house, where the music was. We waited there, hearing it. I believe I could have dickered Suratt 75 down to five dollars on that one of his. It's a comfortable thing, music is. "Maybe they got one here," pa says.
- se da cuenta de que esa es la verdad en este mundo cruel lleno de sufrimientos y dolor. No sabéis nada.
- Además tenemos que cavar la fosa... —dije yo.
- Armstid y Gillespie te dijeron que mandarás recado —dijo Darl—. ¿No quieres que te llevemos a ver a Peabody ahora, Cash?
- Sigamos —dije yo—. Ahora me encuentro bastante bien. Es mejor hacer cada cosa a su debido tiempo.
- Si ya estuviera hecho el hoyo... —dice padre—. Además hemos olvidado nuestra pala.
- Sí —dice Darl—. Iré a la ferretería. Tenemos que comprar una.
- Costará dinero —dice padre.
- ¿Va a escatimarle eso? —dice Darl.
- Venga, vamos por la pala —dijo Jewel—. A ver. Deme el dinero.
- Pero padre no detuvo la carreta. —Para mí que nos prestarán una pala —dijo—. Para mí que aquí todavía quedan cristianos.
- Conque Darl siguió sentado y continuamos, con Jewel en cuclillas en la parte trasera de la carreta mirando la nuca de Darl. Parecía uno de esos bulldogs, uno de esos perros que nunca ladran, encogido y vigilando la presa sobre la que esperan saltar.
- Se quedó así todo el rato que estuvimos delante de casa de Mrs. Bundren, oyendo la música, contemplando la nuca de Darl con esos ojos blancos y duros suyos.
- Sonaba música dentro de la casa. Era uno de esos gramófonos. Sonaba tan natural como una banda de música.
- ¿Quieres que te llevemos a que te vea Peabody? —dijo Darl—. Pueden esperar aquí y decírselo a padre, y yo te llevo a casa de Peabody y vuelvo a por ellos.
- No —dije yo. Era mejor enterarla, ahora que estábamos tan cerca y esperábamos que le prestaran la pala a padre. Había seguido la calle hasta donde sonaba la música.
- A lo mejor tienen una pala aquí —dijo. Detuvo la carreta delante de casa de Mrs. Bundren. Era como si lo supiera. A veces pienso que si un trabajador será capaz de ver el trabajo de lejos igual que un perezoso es capaz de ver la pereza. Conque paró allí como si supiera lo que hacía, delante de aquella casita donde sonaba música. Esperamos allí oyéndola. Creo que regateando le hubiera podido sacar a Surratt el suyo por menos de cinco dólares. La música es una cosa que consuela—. A lo mejor tienen una —dice padre.

- “You want Jewel to go,” Darl says,
“or do you reckon I better?”
- 5 “I reckon I better,” pa says.
He got down and went up the
path and around the house to
the back. The music stopped,
then it started again.
- 10 “He’ll get it, too,” Darl said.
- “Ay,” I said. It was just like
he knowed, like he could see
15 through the walls and into the
next ten minutes.
- Only it was more than ten minutes.
The music stopped and never
20 commenced again for a good spell,
where her and pa was talking at the
back. We waited in the wagon.
- “You let me take you back to
25 Peabody’s,” Darl said.
- “No,” I said. “We’ll get her
underground.”
- 30 “If he ever gets back,” Jewel said.
He began to cuss. He started to get
down from the wagon. “I’m going,”
he said.
- 35 Then we saw pa coming back. He
had two spades, coming around the
house. He laid them in the wagon and
got in and we went on. The music
never started again. Pa was looking
40 back at the house. He kind of lifted
his hand a little and I saw the shade
pulled back a little at the window and
her face in it.
- 45 But the curiousest thing was
Dewey Dell. It surprised me. I see
all the while how folks could say he
was queer, but that was the very
reason couldn’t nobody hold it
50 personal. It was like he was outside
of it too, same as you, and getting
mad as it would be kind of like
getting mad at a mudpuddle that
splashed you when you stepped in it.
55 And then I always kind of had a idea
that him and Dewey Dell kind of
knowed things betwixt them. If I’d
‘a’ said it was ere a one of us she
liked better than ere a other, I’d ‘a’
60 said it was Darl. But when we got it
filled and covered and drove out the
gate and turned into the lane where
them fellows was waiting, when they
come out and come on him and he
65 jerked back, it was Dewey Dell that
was on him before even Jewel could
get at him. And then I believed I
knowed how Gillespie knowed about
how his barn taken fire.
- 70 She hadn’t said a word, hadn’t
even looked at him, but when them
fellows told him what they wanted
and that they had come to get him and
75 he throwed back, she jumped on him
like a wild cat so that one of the
fellows had to quit and hold her and
her scratching and clawing at him like
- ¿Quiere que vaya Jewel o prefiere
que sea yo? —dice Darl.
- Será mejor que vaya yo mismo —
dice padre.
Se apeó y subió por el sendero y, rodean-
do la casa, se dirigió a la parte de atrás. La
música paró, luego empezó otra vez.
- Seguro que lo conseguirá —dijo Darl.
- Claro —dije yo. Era como si ya lo
supiera, como si pudiera ver a través de
las paredes y saber lo que iba a pasar
dentro de diez minutos.
- Sólo que fueron más de diez minutos.
La música paró de nuevo y no volvió a
sonar durante un buen rato, mientras,
padre y ella hablaban en la parte de atrás.
Nosotros esperábamos en la carreta.
- Déjame que te lleve a que te vea
Peabody —dijo Darl.
- No —dije yo—. La enterraremos
antes.
- Si es que vuelve —dijo Jewel. Ha-
bía empezado a soltar maldiciones. Se
dispuso a bajar de la carreta—. Voy allá
—dijo.
- Entonces vimos que padre volvía.
Venía rodeando la casa y traía dos
palas. Las dejó en la carrete, subió
a ella y seguimos. La música no vol-
vió a empezar. Padre volvió la ca-
beza hacia la casa. Levantó la mano
tímidamente y vi que corrían el vi-
sillo un poco y la cara de la mujer
en la ventana.
- Pero lo más curioso fue Dewey Dell.
Aquello me sorprendió. Comprendo que
toda la gente dijera que él era un tipo
raro, y que a la vez nadie tomara como
cuestión personal lo que hacía, por eso
mismo. Era también como si estuviera
ausente de todo, lo mismo que tú, de
modo que enfadarse con él hubiera sido
un poco como enfadarse con un charco
que al pisarlo te salpicara. Y además
siempre me ha dado un poco la impre-
sión de que él y Dewey Dell sabían co-
municarse sin palabras. Si tuviera que
decir cuál de nosotros era el preferido de
Dewey Dell, diría que Darl. Pero cuando
la terminamos de llenar y la cubrimos y
nos dirigimos a la puerta de la cerca y
llegamos al sendero donde nos espera-
ban aquellos individuos, y se adelanta-
ron y se le acercaron y él dio un salto
atrás, fue Dewey Dell la que le agarró
incluso antes de que Jewel pudiera echar-
le mano. Y entonces creí saber cómo se
había enterado Gillespie de quién había
prendido fuego a su granero.
- Ella no dijo nada, ni siquiera lo
miró, pero cuando aquellos tipos le di-
jeron lo que querían y que habían ve-
nido a por él y él retrocedió, se echó
sobre él como una gata salvaje de modo
que uno de los tipos tuvo que dejarle a
él y sujetarla para que no le arañase y
le tirase zarpazos como una gata salva-

a wild cat, while the other one and padre and Jewel threwed Darl down and held him lying on his back, looking up at me.

5

"I thought you would have told me," he said. "I never thought you wouldn't have."

10 "Darl," I said. But he fought again, him and Jewel and the fellow, and the other one holding Dewey Dell and Vardaman yelling and Jewel saying,

15

"Kill him. Kill the son of a bitch."

It was bad so. It was bad. A fellow can't get away from a shoddy job. He can't do it. I tried to tell him, but he just said, "I thought you'd 'a' told me. It's not that I," he said, then he began to laugh. The other fellow pulled Jewel off of him and he sat there on the ground, laughing.

25

I tried to tell him. If I could have just moved, even set up. But I tried to tell him and he quit laughing, looking up at me.

30

"Do you want me to go?" he said.

"It'll be better for you," I said. "Down there it'll be quiet, with none of the bothering and such. It'll be better for you, Darl," I said.

35

"Better," he said. He began to laugh again. "Better," he said. He couldn't hardly say it for laughing. He sat on the ground and us watching him, laughing and laughing. It was bad. It was bad so. I be darn if I could see anything to laugh at. Because there just ain't nothing justifies the deliberate destruction of what a man has built with his own sweat and stored the fruit of his sweat into.

45

But I ain't so sho that ere a man has the right to say what is crazy and what ain't. It's like there was a fellow in every man that's done a-past the sane and the insane doings of that man with the same horror and the same astonishment.

50

Et tu Brute?: (*Latin*) Julius Caesar's remark to his friend Brutus ("And you, Brutus?") who was one of the conspirators who assassinated him in 44Bc

60

54

PEABODY (2)

I SAID,

"I reckon a man in a tight might let Bill Varner patch him up like a damn mule, but I be damned if the man that'd let Anse Bundren treat him with raw cement ain't got more spare legs than I have."

65

70

"They just aimed to ease hit some," he said.

75 "Aimed, hell," I said. "What in hell did Armstid mean by even letting them put you on that wagon again?"

je, mientras el otro y padre y Jewel derribaban a Darl y le mantenían sujeto de espaldas al suelo, desde donde me miraba.

—Creí que me avisarías —dijo él—. Nunca pensé que no me avisarías.

—Darl —le dije. Pero él forcejeaba de nuevo, con padre y con Jewel y con aquel tipo, y el otro sujetaba a Dewey Dell, y Vardaman gritaba y Jewel decía:

—Matadle. Matad a ese hijo de puta.

Fue muy desagradable. Fue desagradable. Uno no puede escapar de una chupaza. El tampoco. Traté de explicárselo, pero sólo dijo:

—Creí que me avisarías. No es que yo... —dijo, luego se echó a reír. El otro tipo apartó a Jewel y él se quedó sentado en el suelo, riéndose.

Traté de explicárselo. Si al menos me hubiera podido [214] mover, o incorporarme un poco. Pero traté de explicárselo y él dejó de reír, mirándome.

30

—¿Quieres que vaya con ellos? —dijo.

—Será mejor para ti —dije yo—. Allí estarás tranquilo, sin preocupaciones ni nada. Será mejor para ti, Darl —dije yo.

—Mejor —dijo. Se echó a reír otra vez—. Mejor —dijo.

Casi no podía hablar de lo que se reía. Estaba sentado en el suelo y todos le mirábamos y él reía y reía. Fue desagradable. Fue muy desagradable. Que me condene si entiendo por qué tanta risa. Porque no hay nada que justifique la destrucción deliberada de lo que un hombre ha construido con el sudor de su frente y donde almacena el fruto de ese sudor.

Pero tampoco entiendo bien que nadie tenga derecho a decir quién está loco y quién no. Es como si en cada hombre hubiera una personalidad que está más allá de la cordura y la locura, que contempla las acciones cuerdas o locas de ese hombre con el mismo horror y el mismo asombro.

PEABODY

DIJE:

—Supongo que cualquiera en un apuro dejaría que Bill Varner le recompusiera como a una maldita mula, pero que me maten si el que permite que Anse Bundren le cure con cemento no es porque tiene más piernas de repuesto de las que tengo yo.

—Sólo querían aliviármela un poco —dijo él.

—Querían, un cuerno —dije yo—. ¿En qué demonios pensaba Armstid para ni siquiera permitir que te volvieran a subir a la carreta?

Peabody (2)

This section consists Of the words Peabody speaks to Cash when he is eventually brought to him for treatment and of his unspoken thoughts about Anse.

COMMENTARY: Peabody appears to have changed his mind about Anse. Formerly he regarded him as an unlucky man but here,

“Hit was gittin’ right noticeable,” he said. “We never had time to wait.” I just looked at him. “Hit never
5 bothered me none,” he said.

“Don’t you lie there and try to tell me you rode six days on a wagon without springs, with a broken leg and
10 it never bothered you.”

“I never bothered me much,” he said.

“You mean, it never bothered Anse
15 much,” I said. “No more than it bothered him to throw that poor devil down in the public street and handcuff him like a damn murderer. Don’t tell me. And don’t tell me it ain’t going
20 to bother you to lose sixty-odd square inches of skin to get that concrete off. And don’t tell me it ain’t going to bother you to have to limp around on one short leg for the balance of your
25 life—if you walk at all again. Concrete,” I said. “God Amighty, why didn’t Anse carry you to the nearest sawmill and stick your leg in the saw? That would have cured it.
30 Then you all could have stock his head into the saw and cured a whole family. . . . Where is Anse, anyway? What’s he up to now?”

35 “He’s takin’ back them spades he borrowed,” he said.

“That’s right,” I said. “Of course he’d have to borrow a
40 spade to bury his wife with. Unless he could borrow a hole in the ground. Too bad you all didn’t put him in it too . . . Does that hurt?”

45 “Not to speak of,” he said, and the sweat big as marbles running down his face and his face about the colour of blotting-paper.

50 “Course not,” I said. “About next summer you can hobble around fine on this leg. Then it won’t bother you, not to speak of . . . If you had anything you could call luck, you might say it
55 was lucky this is the same leg you broke before,” I said.

“Hit’s what paw says,” he said.

60

55
MacGOWAN (1)

IT happened I am back of the prescription case, pouring up some
65 chocolate sauce, when Jody comes back and says, “Say, Skeet, there’s a woman up front that wants to see the doctor and when I said What doctor you want to see, she said she want
70 to see the doctor that works here and when I said There ain’t any doctor works here, she just stood there, looking back this way.”

75 “What kind of a woman is it?” I says. “Tell her to go upstairs to Alford’s office.”

—Se estaba empezando a notar —dijo—. No teníamos tiempo que perder —yo me limité a mirarle—. No me molestaba nada —dijo.

—No mientas tratando de convencerme de que has [215] pasado seis días*27 en una carreta sin ballestas con una pierna rota y que no te ha molestado nada.

—Nunca me molestó mucho —dijo él.

—Querrás decir que a Anse nunca le molestó mucho —dije yo—. No más de lo que le molestó cuando tiró a ese pobre diablo en mitad de la calle para que lo esposaran como si fuera un maldito asesino. No me digas. Y no me digas que no te va a molestar que te arranquen casi medio metro cuadrado de piel para quitar el cemento. Y tampoco me digas que no te molesta tener que andar cojeando el resto de tu vida con una pierna más corta... si es que puedes volver a andar. Cemento —dije—. Dios todopoderoso, ¿por qué no te llevó Anse al aserradero más cercano para que te cortaran la pierna? Eso la hubiera curado. Luego podías haber conseguido que le metieran la cabeza en la sierra a él y así se hubiera curado toda la familia... Y a todo esto, ¿qué es de Anse? ¿Qué anda haciendo ahora?

—Ha ido a devolver las palas que nos prestaron —dijo.

—Eso es —dije yo—. Por supuesto, que tendría que pedir una pala prestada para enterrar a su mujer. A menos que pudiese conseguir que le prestasen un agujero en el suelo. Es una pena que no le metierais también a él... ¿Te duele así?

—No demasiado —dijo él, y grandes gotas de sudor como canicas le corrían por la cara y la cara tenía el color del papel secante.

—Claro que no —dije—. Para el verano podrás brincar perfectamente sobre esta pierna. Entonces ya no te molestará, no demasiado... Si tuvieses algo que pudieses llamar suerte, podrías decir que fue una suerte que ésta haya sido la misma pierna que te rompiste antes —dije.

—Es lo que dice padre —dijo él. [216]

MACGOWAN

POR casualidad estaba yo atrás, en la rebotica, bañando de chocolate una grageas, cuando entra Jody y dice:

—Oye, Skeet, ahí delante hay una mujer que quiere ver al médico y cuando le dije que a qué médico quería ver, me dijo que quería ver al médico que trabaja aquí y cuando le dije que aquí no trabaja ningún médico, se queda allí de pie, mirando hacia aquí.

—¿Qué tipo de mujer es? —digo yo—. Dile que suba a la consulta de Alford.

in spite of his use of ironic overstatement, he genuinely seems to regard him as someone who is criminally negligent about the welfare of his own family.

MacGowan (1)

This section is narrated by the chemist’s assistant in Jefferson to whom Dewey Dell goes for help after the burial of her mother and the removal of Darl. MacGowan is less kind than Moseley was in Mottstown. He tricks Dewey Dell into taking some useless and possibly poisonous medicine and also seduces her, insisting that he is a doctor and that this is part of the treatment.

"Country woman," he says.

—Una campesina —dice él.

"Send her to the court-house," I says. "Tell her all the doctors have gone to Memphis to a Barbers' Convention."

—Mándala al palacio de justicia a freír espárragos —digo yo—. Dile que todos los médicos se han ido a Memphis a una convención de barberos.

"All right," he says, going away. "She looks pretty good for a country girl," he says.

—De acuerdo —dice él, saliendo—. Está bastante bien para ser una campesina —dice.

"Wait," I says. He waited and I went and peeped through the crack. X But I couldn't tell nothing except she had a good leg against the light. "Is she young, you say?" I says.

—Espera —le digo. Esperé y yo eché una ojeada por la rendija. Pero no conseguí ver nada excepto que tenía unas bonitas piernas vistas allí a contraluz —. ¿Y dices que es joven? —digo.

hot mamma: (Am. col.) sexually attractive woman

"She looks like a pretty hot mamma for a country girl," he says.

—Está bastante buena, para ser una campesina —dice él.

"Take this," I says, giving him the chocolate. I took off my apron and went up there. She looked pretty good. One of them black-eyed ones that look like she'd as soon put a knife in you as not if you two-timed her. She looked pretty good. There wasn't nobody else in the store; it was dinner-time.

—Toma —le digo, dándole el chocolate. Me quité el mandil y salí. Era bastante guapa. Una de esas morenas de ojos negros que parecen capaces de darte una puñalada si las engañas. Era bastante guapa. No había nadie más en la tienda; era la hora de comer.

"What can I do for you?" I says.

—¿En qué puedo servirla? —digo yo.

"Are you the doctor?" she says.

—¿Es usted el médico? —dice ella.

"Sure," I says. She quit looking at me and was kind of looking around.

—Claro —digo yo. Ella deja de mirarme y se pone como a mirar a su alrededor.

"Can we go back yonder?" she says.

—¿Podemos pasar ahí dentro? —dice.

It was just a quarter-past twelve, but I went and told Jody to kind of watch out and whistle if the old man come in sight, because he never got back before one.

Sólo eran las doce y cuarto, pero entré y le dije a Jody que vigilase y me silbara si veía al viejo, aunque nunca volvía antes de la una.

fire your stern out of here: (Am. col.) sack you

"You better lay off of that," Jody says. "He'll fire your stern out of here so quick you can't wink."

—Será mejor que no te metas en líos —dice Jody—. Te echará antes de que te enteres.

"He don't never get back before one," I says. "You can see him go into the post-office. You keep your eye peeled, now, and give me a whistle."

—Nunca vuelve antes de la una —digo yo—. Podrás verle entrar en correos. Estate atento y silba en cuanto se acerque.

your eye peeled: (col.) watch carefully

"What you going to do?" he says.

—¿Qué piensas hacer? —dice él.

"You keep your eye out. I'll tell you later"

—Tú a vigilar. Ya te lo contaré luego.

"Ain't you going to give me no seconds on it?" he says.

—¿No me vas a dejar a mí después? —dice.

"What the hell do you think this is?" I says; "a stud-farm? You watch out for him. I'm going into conference."

—¿Qué demonios te has creído que es esto? —digo yo—, ¿un potrero de sementales? Tú a vigilar, que yo voy a entrevistarme con ella.

So I go on to the back. I stopped at the glass and smoothed my hair, then I went behind the prescription case, where she was waiting. She is looking at the medicine cabinet, then she looks at me.

Conque voy al fondo. Me detengo delante del espejo, y me arreglo el pelo, luego entro en la rebotica, donde está esperando. Mira el estante de las medicinas, luego me mira a mí.

"Now, madam," I says; "what is your trouble?"

—Bien, señora —digo yo—, ¿cuál es su problema?

"It's the female trouble," she says, watching

—Las molestias femeninas —dice,

COMMENTARY: MacGowan's manipulation of the innocent Dewey Dell might have struck the reader as rather callous were it not for the fact that Dewey Dell herself has been guilty of even greater and more callous manipulation of Darl's life. Darl has been put away for the rest of his life; she simply suffers what she has already accepted from Lefe.

me. "I got the money," she says.

mirándome—. Tengo el dinero —dice.

"Ah," I says. "Have you got female troubles or do you want female troubles? If so, you come to the right doctor." Them country people. Half the time they don't know what they want, and the balance of the time they can't tell it to you. The clock said
20 twenty past twelve.

—Ah —digo yo—. ¿Tiene usted molestias o las quiere tener? Porque si es así ha encontrado al médico adecuado. —Estos campesinos. La mitad de las veces no saben lo que quieren _____ El reloj marcaba las doce y veinte.

"No," she says.

—No —dice.

"No which?" I says.

—¿No qué? —digo.

15 "I ain't had it," she says. "That's it." She looked at me. "I got the money," she says.

—Que no las tengo —dice—. Eso es lo que pasa —me miró—. Tengo el dinero —dice.

20 So I knew what she was talking about.

Conque comprendí de qué me estaba hablando.

"Oh," I says. "You got something in your belly you wish you didn't have." She looks at me. "You wish you had a little more or a little less, huh?"

—Oh —digo—. Tiene usted en la barriga algo que no le apetece tener —me mira—. ¿Quisiera usted tener un poco más o un poco menos, no?

"I got the money," she says. "He said I could git something at the drug-store for hit."

—Tengo el dinero —dice—. El me dijo que en la botica me darían algo para eso.

"Who said so?" I says.

—¿Quién se lo dijo? —digo.

35 "He did," she says, looking at me.

—Él —dice ella, mirándome.

"You don't want to call no narres," I says. "The one that **put the acorn in your belly**? He the one that told you?" She don't say nothing. "You ain't married, are you?" I says. I never saw no ring. But like as not, they ain't heard yet out there that they use rings.

put the acorn in your belly: (Am. col.) a vulgar term meaning made you pregnant

—¿No quiere mencionar los nombres, eh? —digo yo—. El **que le hizo la barriga**. ¿Fue él quien se lo dijo? —ella no dice nada—. ¿No están casados, verdad? —digo, porque no veo que lleve alianza. Pero a saber si estos campesinos usan alianzas o no.

45 "I got the money," she says. She showed it to me, tied up in her handkerchief: a ten spot.

—Tengo el dinero —dice. Me lo enseñó, atado a un pañuelo: uno de diez.

"I'll swear you have," I says. "He give it to you?"

—Estoy seguro de que lo tiene —digo—. ¿Se lo dio él?

50 "Yes," she says.

—Sí —dice ella.

"Which one?" I says. She looks at me. "Which one of them give it to you?"

—¿Cuál de ellos? —digo. Me mira—. ¿Cuál de ellos se lo dio?

55 "It ain't but one," she says. She looks at me.

—Sólo hay uno —dice. Me mira.

60 "Go on," I says. She don't say nothing. The trouble about the cellar is, it ain't but one way out and that's back up the inside stairs. The clock says twenty-five to one. "A pretty girl like you," I says.

—Adelante —digo. Ella no dice nada. Lo malo del sótano es que sólo tiene una salida y da a la escalera interior. En el reloj ya es la una menos veinticinco—. Una chica tan guapa como usted —digo.

65 She looks at me. She begins to tie the money back up in the handkerchief. "Excuse me a minute," I says. I go around the prescription case. "Did you hear about that fellow sprained his ear?" I says. "After that he couldn't even hear a belch."

Me mira. Se pone a atar de nuevo el dinero en el pañuelo.

—Perdone un momento —digo. Salgo de la rebotica—. ¿Has oído hablar del tipo que se hizo un esguince en la oreja? —digo—. Después ya no podía oír ni un eructo.

75 "You better get her out from back there before the old man comes," Jody says.

—Será mejor que la saques de ahí antes de que venga el viejo —dice Jody.

"If you'll stay up there in front

—Eres tú el que debe estar ahí delan-

where he pays you to stay, he won't catch nobody but me;" I says.

He goes on, slow, toward the front. 5 "What you doing to her, Skeet?" he says.

"I can't tell you," I says. "It wouldn't be ethical. You go on up 10 there and watch."

"Say, Skeet," he says.

"Ah, go on," I says. "I ain't doing 15 nothing but filling a prescription."

"He may not do nothing about that woman back there, but if he finds you 20 **monkeying** with that prescription case, he'll kick your stern clean down them **cellar** stairs."

"My stern has been kicked by bigger bastards than 25 him," I says. "Go back and watch out for him, now."

So I come back. The clock said fifteen to one. She is tying 30 the money in the handkerchief. "You ain't the doctor," she says.

"Sure I am," I says. She watches me. "Is it because I look too young, or am I too **handsome**?" I says. "We used to have a bunch of old water-jointed doctors here," I says; "Jefferson used to be a kind of Old Doctors' Home for them. But 40 business started falling off and folks stayed so well until one day they found out that the women wouldn't never get sick at all. So they run all the old doctors out and got us young 45 good-looking ones that the women would like and then the women begun to get sick again and so business picked up. They're doing that all over the country. Hadn't you heard about 50 it? Maybe it's because you ain't never needed a doctor."

"I need one now," she says.

55 "And you come to the right one," I says. "I already told you that."

"Have you got something for it?" she says. "I got the money."

60 "Well," I says, "of course a doctor has to learn all sorts of things while he's learning to roll calomel; he can't help himself. But I don't 65 know about your trouble."

"He told me I could get something. He told me I could get it at the drug-store."

70 "Did he tell you the name of it?" I says. "You better go back and ask him."

75 She quit looking at me, kind of turning the handkerchief in her hands. "I got to do something," she says.

te, que para eso te paga. Y si cogen a alguien será a mí —digo.

Sale despacio, hacia la parte delantera. —¿Qué piensas hacer con ella, Skeet? —dice.

—No te lo puedo decir —digo yo—. No sería ético. Tú sal y vigila.

—Oye, Skeet —dice.

—Vete de una vez —digo—. Sólo voy a preparar una receta.

—Puede que no diga nada por la mujer de ahí dentro, pero si te encuentra **enredando** con las medicinas, seguro que te echa **escaleras abajo** de una patada en el trasero.

—Tengo el trasero acostumbrado a recibir patadas de hijos de mala madre más grandes que él —digo—. Vete y vigila a ver si viene.

Conque volví. En el reloj ya era la una menos cuarto. La chica ataba el dinero en el pañuelo. —Usted no es el médico —dice.

—Claro que lo soy —digo. Me mira—. ¿Es que le parezco demasiado joven, o soy demasiado **guapo**? —digo—. Antes aquí teníamos un puñado de viejos médicos achacosos —digo—. Jefferson era una especie de asilo para médicos viejos. Pero el negocio empezó a ir tan mal y la gente a encontrarse tan bien que un día comprendieron que las mujeres nunca se volverían a poner malas. De modo que echaron a todos los médicos viejos y trajeron a unos cuantos guapos y jóvenes como yo que les gustáramos a las mujeres y entonces las mujeres volvieron a ponerse malas otra vez y el negocio aumentó. Están haciendo lo mismo en toda la comarca. ¿No ha oído hablar de ello? A lo mejor es porque nunca ha necesitado un médico.

—Ahora lo necesito —dice.

—Y ha acudido usted al adecuado —digo yo—. Ya se lo he dicho.

—¿Tiene usted algo para eso? —dice—. Tengo el dinero.

—Bueno —digo—, naturalmente un médico tiene que aprender todo tipo de cosas mientras aprende a preparar calomelanos**28; no le queda otro remedio. Pero en relación con su problema, no sé, no sé.

—El me dijo que conseguiría algo. Me dijo que lo conseguiría en la botica.

—¿Le dijo el nombre? —digo yo—. Será mejor que vuelva a preguntárselo.

Dejó de mirarme y retorció el pañuelo en las manos.

—Tengo que hacer algo —dice.

monkeying: (col.) interfering with

handsome

1 (of a person) good-looking. Hermoso, bello, bien parecido

2 (of a building etc.) imposing, attractive.

3 a generous, liberal (a *handsome present*; *handsome treatment*). b (of a price, fortune, etc., as assets gained) considerable. (victory) fácil

gentil

1. adj. Idólatra o pagano. Gentile (En)

2. Briosos, galán, **gracioso**. GENTIL mozo; GENTIL donaire.

3. notable. GENTIL desvergüenza; GENTIL disparate.

4. Amable, cortés. Kind, pleasant, charming, obliging, comely

gentle dulce tierno, dócil, suave, cortés, ligero, cuidadoso, pausado moderado

gracious : amable cortés, gentil, benevolente, indulgente [lenient]

gracioso : funny, witty, amusing, charming

graceful : lleno de gracia, con mucho garbo, elegante, digno

“How bad do you want to do something?” I says. She looks at me. “Of course, a doctor learns all sorts of things folks don’t think he knows. But he ain’t supposed to tell all he knows. It’s against the law.”

Up front Jody says, “Skeet.”

“Excuse me a minute,” I says. I went up front. “Do you see him?” I says.

“Ain’t you done yet?” he says. “Maybe you better come up here and watch and let me do that consulting.”

“Maybe you’ll lay a egg,” I says. I come back. She is looking at me. “Of course you realize that I could be put in the penitentiary for doing what you want,” I says. “I would lose my licence and then I’d have to go to work. You realize that?”

“I ain’t got but ten dollars,” she says. “I could bring the rest next month, maybe.”

“Pooh,” I says, “ten dollars? You see, I can’t put no price on my knowledge and skill. Certainly not for no little **paltry sawbuck**.”

She looks at me. She don’t even blink. “What you want, then?”

The clock said four to one. So I decided I better get her out. “You guess three times and then I’ll show you,” I says.

She don’t even blink her eyes. “I got to do something,” she says. She looks behind her and around, then she looks toward the front. “Gimme the medicine first,” she says.

“You mean, you’re ready to right now?” I says. “Here?”

“Gimme the medicine first,” she says.

So I took a graduated glass and kind of turned my back to her and picked out a bottle that looked all right, because a man that would keep poison setting around in a unlabelled bottle ought to be in jail, anyway. It smelled like turpentine. I poured come into the glass and give it to her. She smelled it, looking at me across the glass.

“Hit smells like turpentine,” she says.

“Sure,” I says. “That’s just the beginning of the treatment. You come back at ten o’clock to-night and I’ll give you the rest of it and perform the operation.”

“Operation?” she says.

“It won’t hurt you. You’ve had the same operation before. Ever hear about the **hair of the dog**?”

—¿Hasta qué punto quiere hacer algo? —digo. Me mira—. Claro está que un médico aprende muchas cosas que la gente no se imagina que sabe. Pero no puede decir todo lo que sabe. Va contra la ley.

Desde delante Jody dice:

—Skeet.

—Perdóneme un momento —digo. Fui a la parte de delante—. ¿Lo has visto? —digo.

—¿No has terminado todavía? —dice él—. Quizá sea mejor que salgas tú aquí a vigilar y me dejes pasar esa consulta a mí.

—Y a lo mejor hasta pones un huevo —digo. Vuelvo. La chica me mira—. Supongo que se da cuenta de que podrían meterne en la cárcel por hacer lo que usted quien —digo—. Me quitarían el título y tendría que ponerme a trabajar. ¿Se da cuenta de eso?

—Sólo tengo diez dólares —dice—. A lo mejor el me que viene le puedo traer lo que falte.

—Pero bueno... —digo—, ¿diez dólares? No puedo va lorar en tan poco mis conocimientos y aptitudes. Sin duda no en diez **dólares miserables**.

Me mira. Ni siquiera pestañea.

—¿Entonces qué es lo que quiere?

En el reloj es la una menos cuatro minutos. Conque de cidí no andarme con más rodeos.

—Diga tres cosas y le diré si ha acertado —digo.

Ni siquiera pestañea.

—Tengo que hacer algo —dice. Mira a sus espaldas y su alrededor, luego hacia delante—. Deme la medicina an tes —dice.

—¿Quiere decir que ya está preparada? —digo—. ¿Aquí?

—Deme la medicina antes —dice.

Así que cogí una probeta graduada y dándole la espalda cogí un frasco que me pareció adecuado, pues, si alguie mete veneno en un frasco sin etiquetar merece estar en la cárcel. Olía como a trementina. Eché un poco en la probeta y se la di. Lo olió, mirándome a través del cristal.

—Huele como a trementina —dice.

—Claro —digo—. Es el comienzo del tratamiento. Vuelva a las diez en punto de esta noche y le daré lo que falta y realizaré la operación.

—¿Operación? —dice.

—No le dolerá. Es la misma que ya le hicieron antes ¿No ha oído hablar de que un **clavo hay que sacarlo con otro clavo**?

sawbuck: (Am. col.) small amount of money

the hair of the dog: (col.) here, more sex to undo the effects of the original act; usually, another drink to cure a headache caused

originally by drinking too much.

- She looks at me. "Will it work?" she says.
- 5 "Sure it'll work. If you come back and get it."
- So she drunk whatever it was without batting a eye, and went out. I went up front.
- "Didn't you get it?" Jody says.
- "Get what?" I says.
- 15 "Ah, come on," he says. "I ain't going to try to beat your time."
- "Oh, her," I says. "She just wanted a little medicine. She's got a bad case of dysentery and she's a little ashamed about mentioning it with a stranger there."
- 25 It was my night, anyway, so I helped the old bastard check up and I got his hat on him and got him out of the store by eight-thirty. I went as far as the corner with him and watched him until he passed under two street lamps and went on out of sight. Then I came back to the store and waited until nine-thirty and turned out the front lights and locked the door and left just one light burning at the back, and I went back and put some talcum powder into six capsules and kind of cleared up the cellar and then I was all ready.
- 40 She come in just at ten, before the clock had done striking. I let her in and she come in, walking fast. I looked out the door, but there wasn't nobody but a boy in overalls sitting on the curb. "You want something?" I says. He never said nothing, just looking at me. I locked the door and turned off the light and went on back. She was waiting. She didn't look at me now.
- "Where is it?" she said.
- 55 I gave her the box of capsules. She held the box in her hand, looking at the capsules.
- "Are you sure it'll work?" she says.
- "Sure," I says. "When you take the rest of the treatment."
- 65 "Where do I take it?" she says.
- "Down in the cellar," I says.
- Me mira.
—¿Funcionará? —dice.
- Claro que funcionará. Si viene a terminar el trata miento.
- Conque bebió lo que fuera aquello sin pestañear y se marchó. Yo salí a la parte de delante.
- ¿Lo conseguiste? —dice Jody.
- ¿Conseguir qué? —digo yo.
- Vamos, hombre —dice—. No te voy a hacer la competencia.
- Ah, ella —digo—. Sólo quería un medicamento. Tiene una fuerte disentería y le daba un poco de vergüenza decirlo con un desconocido delante.
- Aquella noche me tocaba guardia, de todas formas, así que ayudé al viejo hijo de su madre a recoger y le alargué el sombrero y salí con él de la botica a las ocho y media. Lo acompañé hasta la esquina y me quedé mirándolo hasta que pasó debajo de dos farolas de la calle y se perdió de vista. Luego volví a la botica y esperé hasta las nueve y media y apagué las luces de delante y cerré la puerta con llave y sólo dejé encendida una luz en la parte de atrás. Luego fui a la rebotica y puse algo de talco en seis cápsulas y ordené un poco el sótano y entonces me sentí preparado.
- Llegó casi a las diez, justo antes de que el reloj diera la hora. Le abrí la puerta y entró, andando muy deprisa. Eché un vistazo afuera, pero sólo había un chico vestido con un mono sentado en el bordillo de la acera.
- ¿Quieres algo? —le digo. El no dijo nada, sólo me miró. Cerré la puerta con llave y apagué la luz y fui al fondo. Me estaba esperando. Ahora no me miró.
- ¿Dónde está? —dijo.
- Le di la caja con las cápsulas. La cogió y se quedó mirándolas.
- ¿Está seguro de que funcionará? —dice.
- Claro que sí —digo—. Cuando siga el resto del tratamiento.
- ¿Dónde lo tengo que seguir? —dice ella.
- Abajo, en el sótano —digo yo. [222]

56

70 VARDAMAN (10)

VARDAMAN

NOW it is wider and lighter , but the stores are dark because they have all gone home. The stores are dark, but the lights pass on the windows when we pass. The lights are in the trees around the court-house. They

75

AHORA hay más espacio y más luz, pero las tiendas están a oscuras porque todos se han ido a sus casas. Las tiendas están a oscuras, pero las luces se reflejan en los escaparates cuando pasamos por delante de ellos. Las luces están en los árboles de alrededor del juzgado.

Vardaman (10)

This section consists of Vardaman's unspoken and un verbalised thoughts as he waits outside the drug-store whilst

roost in the trees, but the court-house is dark. The clock on it looks four ways, because it is not dark. The moon is not dark too. Not very dark. *Darl he went to Jackson is my brother Darl is my brother* Only it was over that way, shining on the track.

10 "Let's go that way, Dewey Dell," I say.

"What for?" Dewey Dell says. The track went shining around the window, it red on the track. But she said he would not sell it to the town boys. "But it will be there Christmas," Dewey Dell says. "You'll have to wait till then, when he brings it back."

20 *Darl went to Jackson. Lots of people didn't go to Jackson. Darl is my brother. My brother is going to Jackson*

25 While we walk the lights go around, roosting in the trees. On all sides it is the same. They go around the court-house and then you cannot see them. But you can see them in the black windows beyond. They have all gone home to bed except me and Dewey Dell.

35 *Going on the train to Jackson. My brother*

There is a light in the store, far back. In the window are two big glasses of soda-water, red and green. Two men could not drink them. Two mules could not. Two cows could not. *Darl*

45 A man comes to the door. He looks at Dewey Dell.

"You wait out here," Dewey Dell says.

50 "Why can't I come in?" I say. "I want to come in, too."

"You wait out here," she says.

55 "All right," I say.

Dewey Dell goes in.

60 *Darl is my brother. Darl went crazy*

The walk is harder than sitting on the ground. He is in the open door. He looks at me. "You want something?" he says. His head is slick. Jewel's head is slick sometimes. Cash's head is not slick. *Darl he went to Jackson my Brother Darl* In the street he ate a banana. *Wouldn't you rather have bananas? Dewey Dell said. You wait till Christmas. It'll be there then. Then you can see it. So we are going to have come bananas. We are going to have a bag full, me and Dewey Dell.* He locks the door. Dewey Dell is inside. Then the light winks out.

Cuelgan de los árboles, pero el juzgado está a oscuras. El reloj de encima se ve por los cuatro lados, porque no está a oscuras. La luna tampoco está a oscuras. No muy a oscuras. *Darl el que se fue a Jackson es hermano mío Darl es hermano mío* Estaba por allí, brillando en la vía[.]

—Vamos por allí, Dewey Dell —digo.

—¿Para qué? —dice Dewey Dell. La vía rodeaba reluciente el escaparate, con él rojo sobre la vía. Pero ella me ha dicho que no se lo venderán a los chicos de la ciudad—. Pero en Navidad todavía estará ahí —dice Dewey Dell—. Tendrás que esperar hasta entonces, cuando lo vuelva a traer.

Darl se fue a, Jackson. Hay mucha gente que nunca ha ido a Jackson. Darl es hermano mío. Mi hermano va a ir a Jackson.

Mientras andamos las luces colgadas de los árboles giran. Por todas partes es lo mismo. Dan la vuelta por detrás del juzgado y no se las puede ver. Pero se las puede ver en las ventanas negras de más allá. Todo el mundo se ha ido a sus casas, a acostarse, excepto Dewey Dell y yo.

Va en el tren a Jackson. Mi hermano

En la botica hay una luz, muy al fondo. En el escaparate hay dos grandes frascos de agua de soda, uno rojo y otro verde. Dos hombres no se los podrían beber. Dos mulas tampoco. Dos vacas tampoco podrían. *Darl*

Sale un hombre a la puerta. Mira a Dewey Dell.

—Espérame aquí —dice Dewey Dell.

—¿Por qué no puedo entrar? —digo—. Quiero entrar también.

—Espérame aquí —dice ella.

—Bueno —le digo. [223]

Dewey Dell entra.

Darl es hermano mío. Darl se ha vuelto loco

La acera está más dura que el suelo. Él está en la puerta abierta. Me mira.

—¿Quieres algo? —dice. Tiene la cabeza repeinada. A veces la cabeza de Jewel está repeinada. La cabeza de Cash nunca está repeinada. *Darl él ha ido a Jackson mi hermano Darl* En la calle se comió un plátano. *¿No preferirías unos plátanos? dijo Dewey Dell[.]* Espera hasta Navidad. *Todavía seguirá allí. Entonces lo podrás ver. De modo que nos conformaremos con unos plátanos. Tendremos una bolsa llena, yo y Dewey Dell.* Cierra la puerta con llave. Dewey Dell está dentro. Luego la luz se apaga.

Dewey Dell is having sexual intercourse with MacGowan. When Dewey Dell returns, Vardaman still fails to understand.

COMMENTARY: Vardaman's delight in all the new sights of the town, the lights which appear to 'roost' in the trees like hens, the four-sided clock and the pavement, is modified by his thoughts of Darl. These thoughts appear in italics, suggesting that they exist at the deeper level of his consciousness, and Vardaman clearly finds it difficult to understand what it means when he is told 'Darl went crazy'. Vardaman cannot distinguish between 'going to Jackson' and 'going crazy' and it is possible that his innocent mind has hit upon an unrecognised truth. It is only when Darl is taken off by the attendants that he openly 'goes crazy'. The two things may well be related in this way, the trip being the cause of the madness.

The section also creates the impression of a lost child, sitting in a town which is alien to him, waiting for a sister who is engaged in an enterprise he does not understand and seeing a cow coming into the empty square, a familiar object in unfamiliar surroundings which only makes the loneliness all the more acute, 'I hear the cow a long time, clopping on the street. She goes across the square, her head down clopping. She lows.'

He went to Jackson. He went crazy and went to Jackson both. Lots of people didn't go crazy. Pa and Cash and Jewel and Dewey Dell and me didn't go crazy. We never did go crazy. We didn't go to Jackson either. Darl

Se fue a Jackson. Se volvió loco y se fue a Jackson. Mucha gente no se vuelve loco. Padre y Cash y Dewey Dell y yo no nos hemos vuelto locos. Nunca nos volvimos locos. Tampoco fuimos a Jackson. Darl

I hear the cow a long time, clapping on the street. Then she comes into the square. She goes across the square, her head down clapping. She lows. There was nothing in the square before she lowed, but it wasn't empty. Now it is empty after she lowed. She goes on, clapping. She lows. *My brother is Darl. He went to Jackson on the train. He didn't go on the train to go crazy. He went crazy in our wagon. Darl* She had been in there a long time. And the cow is gone too. A long time. She has been in there longer than the cow was. But not as long as empty. *Darl is my brother. My brother Darl*

Oigo a una vaca mucho rato, clap clap en la calle. Luego entra en la plaza. Atraviesa la plaza con la cabeza baja clap[.] Muge. No había nada en la plaza antes de que mugiera, pero no estaba vacía. Ahora, después de que mugiera está vacía. Sigue, clap. Muge. *Mi hermano es Darl. Se fue a Jackson en tren. No se fue en tren para volverse loco. Se volvió loco en nuestra carreta. Darl* Ya lleva ahí desde hace rato. Y la vaca también se ha ido. Hace rato. Lleva ahí más tiempo de lo que estuvo la vaca. Pero no más que cuando estaba vacía. *Darl es hermano mío. Mi hermano Darl*

Dewey Dell comes out. She looks at me.

Dewey Dell sale. Me mira.

"Let's go around that way now," I say.

—Vamos por allí ahora —digo yo. Me mira.

She looks at me. "It ain't going to work," she says. "That son of a bitch."

—No va a funcionar —dice—. El muy hijoputa.

"What ain't going to work, Dewey Dell?"

—¿Qué no va a funcionar, Dewey Dell?

"I just know it won't," she says. She is not looking at anything. "I just know it."

—Estoy segura de que no —dice. No mira a ninguna parte—. Estoy segura.

"Let's go that way," I say.

—Vamos por allí —digo.

"We got to go back to the hotel. It's late. We got to slip back in."

—Tenemos que volver al hotel. Es tarde. Entraremos a escondidas.

"Can't we go by and see, anyway?"

—De todos modos podríamos pasar por allí y mirarlo.

"Hadn't you rather have bananas? Hadn't you rather?"

—¿No prefieres los plátanos? ¿No los prefieres? [224]

"All right." *My brother he went crazy and he went to Jackson too. Jackson is further away than crazy*

—Bueno. *Mi hermano él se volvió loco y se fue a Jackson. Jackson está más allá que loco*

"It won't work," Dewey Dell says. "I just know it won't."

—No va a funcionar —dice Dewey Dell— Estoy segura de que no.

"What won't work?" I say. *He had to get on the train to go to Jackson. I have not been on the train, but Darl has been on the train. Darl. Darl is my brother. Darl. Darl*

—¿Qué no va a funcionar? —digo. *Tuvo que subir al tren para ir a Jackson. Yo nunca he subido en tren, pero Darl sí. Darl. Darl es hermano mío. Darl. Darl*

57[56]

65 DARL (19)

DARL

DARL has gone to Jackson. They put him on the train, laughing, down the long car laughing, the heads turning like the heads of owls when he passed. "What are you laughing at?" I said.

DARL se ha ido a Jackson. Lo metieron en el tren y reía y estaba en el largo vagón riendo y las cabezas se volvían cuando pasaba igual que cabezas de búhos.

—¿De qué te ríes? —dije.

"Yes yes yes yes yes."

—Sí sí sí sí sí.

75 Two meas put him on the train. They wore mis-matched coats, bulging behind over their right hip pockets. Their necks were shaved to

Dos hombres lo metieron en el tren. Sus chaquetas, que no conjuntaban, se les abultaban a la altura del bolsillo derecho trasero. Tenían el cogote afeitado, como

Darl (19)

This section contains Darl's unhinged thoughts. He appears to believe that he has split into two quite separate people, the one laughing and the other questioning the laughter.

a hairline, as though the recent and simultaneous barbers had had a chalk-line like Cash's. "Is it the pistols you're laughing at?" I said. "Why do you laugh?" I said. "Is it because you bate the sound of laughing?"

They pulled two seats together so Darl could sit by the window to laugh. One of them sat beside him, the other sat on the seat facing him, riding backward. One of them had to ride backward because the state's money had a face to each backside and a backside to each face, and they are riding on the state's money which is incest. A nickel has a woman on one side and a buffalo on the other; two faces and no back. I don't know what that is. Darl had a little spy-glass he got in France at the war. In it it had a woman and a pig with two backs and no face. I know what that is. "Is that why you are laughing, Darl?"

"Yes yes yes yes yes yes."

The wagon stands on the square, hitched, the mules motionless, the reins wrapped about the seat-spring, the back of the wagon toward the court-house. It looks no different from a hundred other wagons there; Jewel standing beside it and looking up the street like any other man in town that day, yet there is something different, distinctive. There is about it that unmistakable air of definite and imminent departure that trains have perhaps due to the fact that Dewey Dell and Vardaman on the seat and Cash on a pallet in the wagon bed are eating bananas from a paper bag. "Is that why you are laughing, Darl?"

Darl is our brother, our brother Darl. Our brother Darl in a cage in Jackson where, his grimed hands lying light in the quiet interstices, looking out he foams.

"Yes Yes yes yes yes yes yes yes."

58

DEWEY DELL (4)

WHEN he saw the money I said, "It's not my money, it doesn't belong to me."

"Whose is it, then?"

"It's Cora Tull's money. It's Mrs. Tull's. I sold the cakes for it."

"Ten dollars for two cakes?"

"Don't you touch it. It's not mine."

"You never had them cakes. It's a lie. It was them Sunday clothes you had in that package."

"Don't you touch it! If you take it you are a thief."

"My own daughter accuses me of being a thief. My own daughter."

si los peluqueros, recientes y simultáneos, hubieran usado una cuerda de marcar como la de Cash**29.

—¿Te ríes de las pistolas? —dije—. ¿Por qué te ríes? —dije—. ¿Es porque odias el sonido de la risa?

Juntaron dos asientos de modo que Darl pudiese sentarse a reír junto a la ventana. Uno de ellos se sentó a su lado, el otro se sentó en el asiento de enfrente, de espaldas a la marcha. Uno de ellos tenía que ir de espaldas a la marcha porque el dinero del estado tiene una cara por cada cruz y una cruz por cada cara y ellos viajan a costa del dinero del estado, lo cual es incesto. Una moneda de 5 centavos tiene una mujer por un lado y un búfalo por el otro; dos caras y ninguna espalda. No sé qué es eso. Darl tenía un catalejo pequeño que compró en Francia durante la guerra. En él había una mujer y un cerdo con dos espaldas y ninguna cara. Eso sé lo que es. [225]

—¿Te estás riendo por eso, Darl?

—Sí sí sí sí sí sí.

La carreta está en la plaza, enganchada, las mulas inmóviles, las riendas enrolladas alrededor del pescante, la trasería de la carreta en dirección al juzgado. No parece distinta de las otras cien carretas que hay allí; Jewel está a su lado contemplando la calle como cualquier otro en la ciudad aquel día, y, sin embargo, hay algo diferente, distintivo. Tiene algo de ese aire inconfundible que tienen los trenes de marcha definitiva e inminente, puede que debido a que Dewey Dell y Vardaman, sentados en el pescante y Cash sobre un jergón en la caja de la carreta, están comiendo plátanos que sacan de una bolsa de papel. —¿Es por eso por lo que te ríes, Darl?

Darl es nuestro hermano, nuestro hermano Darl. Nuestro hermano Darl en una celda de Jackson donde, sus mugrientas manos reposando ligeras en los intersticios, silenciosos, mirando afuera, espumarajea.

—Sí sí sí sí sí sí sí sí.

DEWEY DELL

CUANDO vio el dinero le dije: "No es mío, no me pertenece."

—Entonces, ¿de quién es?

—Es dinero de Cora Tull. Es de Mrs. Tull. Le vendí los bollos.

—¿Diez dólares por dos bollos?

—No lo toque. No es mío.

—Nunca has tenido esos bollos. Es mentira. Lo que tenías en el paquete era el traje de los domingos.

—¡No lo toque! Si lo coge es usted un ladrón.

—Mi propia hija llamándome ladrón. Mi propia hija.

**29

COMMENTARY: As the reader has been aware of the potential division in Darl's personality, this final split when he is betrayed by his family is not surprising. The deed, the laughing, becomes quite separate from the word, that is, the inner thoughts. Those inner thoughts all contain some sort of duality; there are two attendants who pull two seats together, which reminds Darl of two-sided coins and the spy-glasses with two backs and no face. The section ends with Darl imagining the family talking of 'our brother Darl' and Darl himself trapped in a cage with his two 'grimed hands' lying in the spaces between the bars, foaming at the mouth as in the popular vision of madness.

Dewey Dell (4)

This section contains a conversation between Dewey Dell and her father. Anse, using moral blackmail and force, takes Dewey Dell's ten dollars from her, saying that it is only a loan.

“Pa. Pa.”

—Padre. Padre.

“I have fed you and sheltered you.
5 I give you love and care, yet my own
daughter, the daughter of my dead
wife, calls me a thief over her
mother’s grave.”

—Te he criado y te he dado un hogar.
Te he dado mi cariño y mi atención, y mi
propia hija, la hija de mi difunta esposa,
me llama ladrón delante de la tumba de
su madre. [226]

10 “It’s not mine, I tell you. If it was,
God knows you could have it.”

—No es mío, se lo aseguro. Si lo fuera,
bien sabe Dios que podría usted cogerlo.

“Where did you get ten dollars?”

—¿De dónde has sacado diez dólares?

15 “Pa. Pa.”

—Padre. Padre.

“You won’t tell me. Did
you come by it so shameful
you dare not?”

—No me lo quieres decir. ¿Ha sido
de un modo tan vergonzoso que no te
atreves a decirlo?

20 “It’s not mine, I tell you. Can’t you
understand it’s not mine?”

—No es mío, se lo aseguro. ¿No pue-
de entender que no es mío?

“It’s not like I wouldn’t pay it
25 back. But she calls her own father a
thief.”

—No es que no te los fuera a de-
volver. Pero llamar ladrón a su propio
padre...

“I can’t, I tell you. I tell you it’s
not my money. God knows you
30 could have it.”

—No puedo, se lo aseguro. Le asegu-
ro que este dinero no es mío. Bien sabe
Dios que si lo fuera...

“I wouldn’t take it. My own born
daughter that has et my food for
seventeen years, begrudges me the
35 loan of ten dollars.”

—No lo querría coger. Que mi propia
hija a la que llevo diecisiete años alimen-
tando me niegue un préstamo de diez
dólares**30.

“It’s not mine. I can’t.”

—No es mío, no puedo.

“Whose is it, then?”

—Entonces, ¿de quién es?

40 “It was give to me. To buy something
with.” “To buy what with?”

—Me lo dieron. Para comprar una cosa.
—¿Para comprar qué?

“Pa. Pa.”

—Padre. Padre.

blooden: (col.) tied by bonds of
blood

45 “It’s just a loan. God knows, I
bate for my **blooden** children to
reproach me. But I give them what
was mine without stint. Cheerful I
50 give them, without stint. And now
they deny me. Addie. It was lucky
for you you died, Addie.”

—Sólo es un préstamo. Bien sabe
Dios lo que me duele **que los hijos de
mis entrañas** me lo reprochen. Pero yo
les he dado todo lo mío sin límites. Con
alegría se lo he dado, sin límites. Y aho-
ra ellos me lo niegan. Addie. Tuviste
suerte de morirte, Addie.

“Pa. Pa.”

—Padre. Padre.

55 “God knows it is.”

—Bien lo sabe Dios.

He took the money and went out.

Cogió el dinero y se marchó. [227]

60 59 [58]
CASH (5)

CASH

65 So when we stopped there to
borrow the shovels we heard
the graphophone playing in the
house, and so when we got done
with the shovels pa says, “I
reckon I better take them back.”

CONQUE cuando nos paramos
allí para que nos prestaran las pa-
las, oímos el gramófono que so-
naba en la casa, y cuando termi-
namos con las palas padre dice:
—Creo que debo devolverlas.

70 So we went back to the house.
“We better take Cash on to
Peabody’s,” Jewel said.

Así que volvimos a la casa.
—Será mejor que llevemos a Cash a
que lo vea Peabody —dijo Jewel.

75 “It won’t take but a minute,” pa
said. He got down from the wagon.
The music was not playing now.

—No me llevará ni un minuto —
dijo padre. Se bajó de la carreta. Aho-
ra la música no sonaba.

“Let Vardaman do it,” Jewel said.

—Deje que las devuelva Vardaman —dijo

Cash (5)

This section rounds off the story, beginning with the moment when the wagon stops while Anse goes to return the borrowed spade and ending when the family have returned home, complete with a new Mrs Bundren.

COMMENTARY: The novel has been a mixture of comic and tragic events. This final scene is almost wholly comic, with Anse behaving in a furtive manner and

“He can do it in half the time you can. Or here, you let me——”

“I reckon I better do it,” pa says. “Long as it was me that borrowed them.”

So we set in the wagon, but the music wasn't playing now. I reckon it's a good thing we ain't got ere a one of them. I reckon I wouldn't never get no work done a-tall for listening to it. I don't know if a little music ain't about the nicest thing a fellow can have. Seems like when he comes in tired of a night, it ain't nothing could rest him like having a little music played and him resting. I have seen them that shuts up like a hand-grip, with a handle and all, so a fellow can carry it with him wherever he wants.

“What you reckon he's doing?” Jewel says. “I could a toted them shovels back and forth ten times by now.”

“Let him take his time,” I said. “He ain't as **spry** as you, remember.”

“Why didn't he let me take them back, then? We got to get your leg fixed up so we can start home to-morrow.”

“We got plenty of time,” I said. “I wonder what them machines costs on the instalment.”

“Instalment of what?” Jewel said. “What you got to buy it with?”

“A fellow can't tell,” I said. “I could 'a' bought that one from Suratt for five dollars, I believe.”

And so pa come back and we went to Peabody's. While we was there pa said he was going to the barber-shop and get a shave. And so that night he said he had some business to tend to, kind of looking away from us while he said it, with his hair combed wet and slick and smelling sweet with perfume, but I said leave him be; I wouldn't mind hearing a little more of that music myself.

And so next morning he was gone again, then he come back and told us get hitched up and ready to take out and he would meet us and when they was gone he said,

“I don't reckon you got no more money.”

“Peabody just give me enough to pay the hotel with,” I said. “We don't need nothing else, do we?”

“No,” pa said; “no. We don't need nothing.” He stood there, not looking at me.

“If it is something we got to have, I reckon maybe Peabody,” I said.

Jewel—. Puede hacerlo en la mitad de tiempo que usted. O si no, déjeme a mí.

—Para mí que es mejor que lo haga yo —dice padre—. Soy el que se las ha pedido prestadas.

Conque nos quedamos en la carretera, pero la música ahora no sonaba. Para mí que es mejor que no tengamos uno de esos aparatos. Para mí que no trabajaría bastante porque me pasaría el tiempo oyéndolo. No sé si un poco de música no es lo más agradable que se puede tener. Me parece que cuando uno vuelve cansado por la noche, nada puede descansar más que tener un poco de música sonando. He visto unos que se cierran como maletas, con asa y todo, de modo que se pueden llevar adonde uno quiera.

—¿Qué crees que estará haciendo? —dice Jewel—. Yo ya podría haber traído y llevado las palas por lo menos diez veces.

—Déjale que se tome su tiempo —dije yo—. No es tan **activo** como tú, recuérdalo.

—Entonces, ¿por qué no me dejé que fuera a devolverlas yo? Tenemos que llevarte a que te curen la pierna para poder volver a casa mañana.

—Tenemos tiempo de sobra —dije yo—. Me pregunto cuánto costarán esos aparatos a plazos.

—¿Qué plazos? —dijo Jewel—. ¿Con qué los vas a pagar? [228]

—Cualquiera sabe —dije yo—. Podría haberle comprado aquel a Suratt por cinco dólares, me parece.

Y entonces vuelve padre y fuimos a casa de Peabody. Mientras estábamos allí padre dijo que iba a la barbería a que le afeitaran. Y aquella noche dijo que tenía unos asuntos que atender, y no nos miraba de frente mientras decía esto, con el pelo muy bien peinado y mojado y oliendo a perfume, pero yo dije que le dejaran hacer lo que quisiera; a mí tampoco me importaría oír un poco más de aquella música.

Conque a la mañana siguiente otra vez se fue, luego vuelve y nos dijo que engancháramos y nos preparásemos para irnos y que él ya se reuniría con nosotros y cuando los otros se fueron me dijo:

—Supongo que ya no te quedará más dinero.

—Peabody me dio sólo lo justo para pagar el hotel —dije yo—. No necesitamos nada más, ¿no?

—No —dijo padre—; no. No necesitamos nada —se quedó allí sin mirarme.

—Si es para algo que necesitamos, para mí que a lo mejor Peabody... —dije.

the book ending on an ironical note. Having carried one Mrs Bundren to Jefferson, the family take back another Mrs Bundren. All the children are impressed by the change which takes place in their father, a change possibly due to the absence of Addie who denied Anse's existence, 'it (the new teeth) made him look a foot taller kind of holding his head up, hangdog and proud too'. The only touch of sadness is Cash's thoughts of Darl whenever they listen to the new record-player, 'every time a new record would come from the mail order . . . I would think what a shame Darl couldn't be to enjoy it too'. Cash, however, reconciles himself to Darl's absence with the words, 'But it is better so for him. This world is not his world; this life his life'. If Darl does not belong in the little world of the Bundrens, then he does not belong anywhere. As Cash's section shows, the rest of the family managed to accommodate themselves to Addie's absence. Only Darl remains permanently alienated and it is at this point that the reader recalls Addie's words when she was pregnant with Darl, 'my revenge would be that he would never know I was taking my revenge'. The revenge seems to misfire, for Anse does not suffer, but Darl the inspiration of that revenge is also its prime victim.

“No,” he said; “it ain’t nothing else. You all wait for me at the corner.”

—No —dijo él—, no necesitamos nada más. Esperadme todos en la esquina.

5 So Jewel got the team and come for me and they fixed me a pallet in the wagon and we drove across the square to the corner where pa said, and we were waiting there in the wagon, with
10 Dewey Dell and Vardaman eating bananas, when we see them coming up the street. Pa was coming along with that kind of daresome and handdog look all at once like when he
15 has been up to something he knows ma ain’t going to like, carrying a grip in his hand, and Jewel says,

Conque Jewel cogió las mulas y vino a por mí y me prepararon un jergón en la carretera y atravesamos la plaza hasta la esquina donde dijo padre, y estábamos esperando allí en la carreta, mientras Dewey Dell y Vardaman comían plátanos, cuando les vemos venir calle arriba. Padre traía esa expresión suya orgullosa y de perro apaleado a la vez de cuando hacía algo que sabía que a madre no le iba a gustar, y llevaba un maletín en la mano, y Jewel dice:

“Who’s that?”

—¿Quién es ése?

20 Then we see it wasn’t the grip that made him look different; it was his face, and Jewel says, “He got them teeth.”

Entonces vemos que no era el maletín lo que le hacía parecer diferente, era algo de su cara, y Jewel dice: —Se ha puesto la dentadura.

25 It was a fact. It made him look a foot taller, kind of holding his head up, handdog and proud too, and then we see her behind him, carrying the
30 other grip—a kind of duck-shaped woman all dressed up, with them kind of hard-looking pop eyes like she was daring ere a man to say nothing. And there we set watching them, with
35 Dewey Dell’s and Vardaman’s mouth half open and half-*et* bananas in their hands and her coming around from behind pa, looking at us like she dared ere a man. And then I see that the grip
40 she was carrying was one of them little graphophones. It was for a fact, all shut up as pretty as a picture, and every time a new record would come from the mail order and us setting in
45 the house in the winter, listening to it, I would think what a shame Darl couldn’t be to enjoy it too. But it is better so for him. This world is not his world; this life his life.

Y era eso. Parecía unos treinta centímetros más alto a fuerza de estirar la cabeza, con aquella expresión suya orgullosa, y de perro apaleado y entonces la vemos a ella detrás de él llevando otro maletín: una de esas mujeres con [229] forma de pato, toda peripuesta, con unos ojos saltones de mirada dura que parecían desafiar a quien se atreviese a decirle algo. Y allí nos quedamos mirándolos, con Dewey Dell y Vardaman boquiabiertos y con unos plátanos a medio comer en la mano, mientras ella se acercaba detrás de padre, mirándonos con aire desafiante. Y entonces veo que el maletín que traía ella era uno de esos gramófonos pequeños. No había duda, cerrado y todo era tan bonito como un cuadro, y cada vez que nos llegara un disco nuevo por correo y nos reuniéramos en casa a oírlo en invierno, pensaría que era una pena que Darl no lo disfrutara también. Pero para él es mejor así. Este mundo no es su mundo; esta vida su vida.

50 “It’s Cash and Jewel and Vardaman and Dewey Dell,” pa says, kind of handdog and proud too, with his teeth and all, even
55 if he wouldn’t look at us. “Meet Mrs. Bundren,” he says.

—Estos son Cash y Jewel y Vardaman y Dewey Dell —dice padre, con su aire de perro apaleado, pero también lleno de orgullo, con su dentadura y todo, aunque no se atreviera a mirarnos—. Os presento a Mrs. Bundren —dice. [230]

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