

Spring 1998

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Jeff D. Nola

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**The Struggle to Endure and Prevail in *The Sound
and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying***

**Jeff Nola
Honors Thesis
Spring 1998
Adviser: Dr. James Babin**

Chapter 1

Introduction

In his Nobel prize address, Faulkner claims that man can prevail over his circumstances. Nevertheless, Quentin in *The Sound and the Fury* and Darl in *As I Lay Dying* fail to endure and prevail over their circumstances. Because they both are intelligent, sensitive, and idealistic, their failure to prevail or even to endure is tragic and invokes pity and sympathy in the reader. I began my study with the question, why do Quentin and Darl not prevail or endure? My next questions were, what does Faulkner believe is necessary for man to endure and prevail, and what does he mean by the terms "endure" and "prevail?"

In his Nobel Prize address, Faulkner answers these questions. He claims that it is wrong to say that man will endure just because he survives the worst calamities. He instead claims that man is immortal because he has a soul. He claims, "He is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance" (1232).

Quentin and Darl have the capacity to endure and prevail. They both possess intense feelings and emotions. They are sensitive men who feel intensely the pain caused by their awareness. They are extremely intelligent, and they contemplate the meaning of existence and their

participation in the order of the events in their lives. Yet this contemplation causes them both terrible pain. They both desperately desire love, and their mothers do not love them. They deliberate on the course of actions they take and pursue what they believe to be the best. Their contemplation causes them distress, and this distress proves they have a soul.

Their failure to show compassion is what causes Quentin and Darl not to endure and prevail over their circumstances. They are so absorbed in themselves that they cannot show compassion to anyone. Quentin does not show pity for anyone in his family, not even for Caddy. Instead he only pities himself and focuses mainly on his problems. He cannot sacrifice his desire to be with Caddy for what is best for her. He wants Caddy to stay with him, and he refuses to place her needs ahead of his. He fails to recognize the love that Caddy gives him because he is so absorbed in self-pity. He cannot love Caddy because he is only concerned about his own problems. If he could show compassion for Caddy, he would understand her actions and understand how much she loves him. He would show his love for her and perhaps discover the capacity to endure the pain he feels.

Darl, like Quentin, is so concerned with his own problems that he refuses to understand the struggles the other members of his family undertake. He mocks Jewel and Dewey Dell throughout the novel because they do not respond

to Addie's death in the way he thinks they should. He believes that his pain is greater than the pain the others experience, and he does not offer them compassion. If he would allow himself to experience and express compassion for Dewey Dell and Jewel, he would understand their distress and realize that he is not the only one who feels pain. Yet he is too self-absorbed to love someone else.

Quentin's and Darl's failure to endure is tragic because the reader sympathizes intensely with these characters. In his Nobel Prize address, Faulkner claims that when a writer does not write about the universal truths of the heart:

He writes not of love but of lust, of
defeats in which nobody loses anything
of value, of victories without hope and,
worst of all, without pity or compassion.
His griefs grieve on no universal bones,
leaving no scars. He will write not of
the heart but of the glands.

(1232)

Quentin's and Darl's griefs grieve on the bones of the reader. When Darl loses his sanity and Quentin loses his battle with time, their defeats wrench the heart. That such persons are defeated is a loss to us all. We feel compassion for Quentin and Darl because we understand the difficulty of their struggles and we want them to prevail. They struggle with time and the circumstances they are born into, and they fail to receive the love they need and desire. That we are outraged and dejected by their defeats

shows us our own capacity for compassion. We recognize that Quentin's and Darl's struggles concern all human beings, and we see their defeats as defeats for humanity.

The pity and compassion that Darl and Quentin invoke in us reveals the power of art. In his Nobel prize address, Faulkner claims that the writer helps "man endure by lifting his heart, by reminding him of the courage and honor and hope and pride and compassion and pity and sacrifice which have been the glory of his past" (1232). He goes on to say that writers' voices can be "the pillars to help him [man] endure and prevail" (1232). Through Quentin and Darl's tragedy, we can learn how to endure and prevail.

Faulkner also demonstrates in these two characters the human heart in conflict with itself. In his Nobel prize address, he says, "the young man or woman writing today has forgotten the problems of the human heart in conflict with itself which alone can make good writing because only that is worth writing about, worth the agony and the sweat" (1231). The main conflict of the human heart is between fear and love. Both Quentin and Darl desperately desire love and at the same time they fear love. Even while they desire love, they are afraid to yield to their feelings. They are afraid of being overwhelmed by their feelings and crushed by outside forces.

Faulkner provides an alternative to Darl's and Quentin's way of dealing with the struggles of life through

Cash in *As I Lay Dying* and through Caddy in *The Sound and the Fury*. Cash, unlike Darl, does not show outwardly the pain his mother's death has caused him. Instead, he does what is necessary in the situation. He does not have time to absorb himself in self-pity because he is too busy preparing Addie's coffin and planning her burial. When Darl goes insane at the end of the novel, he is the only Bundren who shows compassion for Darl. He looks into Darl's motives for destroying Gillespie's barn, and he offers Darl consolation.

Caddy shows compassion for her family, and she places their needs ahead of her own. She sacrifices herself for the good of others, and they take everything from her. When she recognizes that her sexual maturation causes Quentin and Benjy pain, she tries to stop the process. Benjy cries when she wears perfume, and she washes it off of herself to comfort him. For Benjy, the perfume represents Caddy's growth into womanhood. When she realizes that her loss of her virginity pains Quentin, she tries to console him by making Dalton Ames leave town. Caddy also offers her life to Quentin, though she cannot kill herself; she loves life too much to take her own. Unlike Quentin, she recognizes the irrevocability of time and accepts life as it is presented to her.

Chapter 2

Quentin Compson's Rejection of Time

Faulkner exhibits in *The Sound and the Fury* the conflicts in the human heart through Quentin Compson. His heart's conflict is between his desire to love and receive love and his fear to love and receive love. For Quentin to love, he must yield to powerful forces inside himself. By yielding to these forces, he would give up his inherited ideas about virtue and honor and his fight against time. Ideas exist out of time, so while the process of time leads to decay, transformation, and death of all physical matter, Quentin's ideas can remain unchanged forever. Yet his sexual desires manifest in him the process of time. For him to give in to these desires would be to acquiesce to time.

Quentin fails to love or even to accept the love he is offered because he is so concerned with himself that he cannot show pity or compassion for or even much awareness of anyone else. His problems are very complex. He inherits ideas of Southern honor and pride from his father and his grandfather, and he tries to make reality conform to these ideas. He is afraid that he will fail and have to accept a base, meaningless world. He measures his ability to sustain his ideas on Caddy's growth. Quentin does not want Caddy to mature sexually because sexual maturation is a manifestation of the process of time. When Caddy begins

to mature sexually, he fears that he will lose her and have to acknowledge the futility of his efforts to stop time. His fear prevents him from loving Caddy and from accepting the love that she offers him. He refuses to sacrifice for Caddy while she offers her own life for him. His fear also prevents him from feeling compassion for her. Her pain is caused by her yielding to love, and he does not want to feel her pain.

When Quentin loses Caddy, he realizes that he cannot make reality conform to his ideals. He tried to keep Caddy from sexually maturing so that he and she could maintain the relationship with each other that they had when they were children. Since he cannot transform his ideas into reality, he directs his battle against time itself. Frederick Hoffman points out that a main concern in Faulkner's novels is the "struggle to put a stop to time and to prevent it from defiling an ideal" (29). When Quentin fails to stop the process of time, he takes his own life. He prefers to die than to live in a world without value, meaning, or hope. His hate and fear of the fleshly corruption and consequent meaninglessness of life causes him to kill himself.

The conflict in Quentin's heart is revealed in the scene in which Gerald gives him a ride. The scene occurs during the day of his suicide. He has already decided to kill himself, has made the specific plans, written letters to his friends and family, and is now acting out the plan.

During this scene, he recalls when Caddy lost her virginity, when she married Herbert, and the pain he feels because of his own virginity. His thoughts reflect what is most important to him, and they help reveal the essence of his conflict. When he gives his reasons for taking his own life, he shows that he also knows that his reasons could be ludicrous.

At the beginning of the scene, Quentin expresses some doubt in the purpose of his suicide. He laughs uncontrollably and says, "I couldn't stop it and then I knew that if I tried too hard to stop it I'd be crying and I thought about how I'd thought about I could not be a virgin, with so many of them walking along in the shadows... but if it was that simple to do it wouldn't be anything and if it wasn't anything, what was I" (147). He thinks that if it is so easy for men to lose their virginity, then he must have something wrong with him because he has not lost his. But he also understands that his suicide could be meaningless: losing one's virginity could be simply a meaningless act that is the product of natural instincts. He has imagined sex as a powerfully significant action filled with moral and spiritual consequences. If it is nothing more than a natural, physical act, then his whole life has been centered on a false idea; his pain and struggles have been for nothing. Furthermore, he realizes that if sex is a meaningless act, then his suicide is a terrible mistake and even a joke.

In contrast to himself, Quentin believes that Herbert is a man of experience and physically powerful. Herbert is so strong, Quentin thinks, that "with one hand he could lift her to his shoulder and run with her...running the beast with two backs"(148). Quentin thereby connects Herbert's power to Herbert's marriage to Caddy. The "double-backed beast" represents the bestial nature of sex. Quentin realizes that he has lost Caddy to time and the physical corruption of her once virginal purity when she marries Herbert. He thinks, "they two blurred within the other forever more" (148). Now their childhood and intimate innocent relation between them is lost forever.

Quentin then recalls the time when Caddy lost her virginity. While Mrs. Bland talks about Gerald's grandfather's julep recipe, Quentin remembers when he told Caddy that they had committed incest. He refuses to accept that Caddy had sexual relations with Dalton Ames because this would mean that Caddy yielded to her sexual desires. Instead, he tells Caddy that they committed a horrible crime that cannot be hidden from the public. In response to his accusation, she offers him compassion. She says "Poor Quentin youve never done that have you" (148). She thinks that he is distressed because he is a virgin and because he has never experienced the love that she experienced with Dalton. Quentin, however, rejects her compassion and insists that they committed incest. He wants to keep her for himself, and he is afraid that he

will lose her now that she is no longer a virgin. "Quentin wants only to say that he committed incest. His sole desire is to isolate himself and Caddy somehow from the rest of the world as they were isolated during childhood" (Volpe 113). Quentin tells Caddy, "I'll tell Father...then well have to go away amid the pointing and the horror and the clean flame" (149). He is willing to face public humiliation and damnation to hell if it means that he and Caddy can stay together.

Quentin's father understands his pain and tries to console him. He says that Quentin is feeling so much pain because he puts too much value in Caddy's virginity. He tells Quentin: "Women are never virgins. Purity is a negative state and therefore contrary to nature. It's nature is hurting you and not Caddy" (116). His father understands that Quentin is trying to control the powerful feelings in his body. He also understands the pain Quentin experiences when he sees his ideal fail to withstand the effects of time. Nature is hurting Quentin because these feelings are a product of his animal nature. Virginity, Mr. Compson says, is just a word. Yet Quentin is not comforted by his father's counsel.

Quentin then reveals how time has manifested itself through him in his desire to love. He tells Caddy, "it was me when you thought I was in the house where that damn honeysuckle trying not to think the swing the cedars the secret surges the breathing locked drinking the wild breath

the yes Yes Yes yes"(149). This statement reveals how Quentin believes they have committed incest. During Caddy's sexual experiences, Quentin has felt the same desires as she. He wanted to receive the love and physical pleasure that she gave to her boyfriends. In this sense, he was with Caddy during her sexual experiences and therefore had committed incest with her. This passage also reveals the process of time working through Caddy and working through him. His allusion to the swing recalls the first time Caddy kissed a boy and the honey suckle recalls when she lost her virginity. Thus, he reflects on how her sexuality manifests itself through time.

Quentin then recalls Caddy sitting in the river in order to catch a cold. She believes that if she catches a cold, she will not become pregnant. This scene occurs immediately after she has lost her virginity to Dalton Ames. Quentin realizes that if she loves Dalton, she has yielded to her feelings and thereby changed. He asks her if she loves Dalton. She takes Quentin's hand and puts it on her breast. She then says that she does not love Dalton, though her heart is pounding. Caddy understands that her love for Dalton is too intense to be expressed in words, and that she is not in control of her feelings: "When she [Caddy] meets Dalton...she loses her mastery over herself" (Baum 191). Caddy has yielded to her feelings and to the experience, and she can only represent the experience by showing Quentin how she feels. When she

places Quentin's hand on her heart, she is attempting to show him how powerfully the experience has affected her.

Quentin does not want to believe that she loves Dalton; instead, he wants to believe that Dalton raped her. He tells Caddy that Dalton raped her. He says that he will kill Dalton and then he and Caddy can run away together. He tells Caddy "you hate him dont you dont you" (151). She responds to Quentin's question by holding his hand against her chest. He asks her again and she moves his hand to her throat, where "her heart was hammering there" (151). She replies "poor Quentin...yes I hate him I would die for him Ive already died for him" (151). She dies for Dalton by allowing her rational self to yield to her heart. By yielding to the feelings in her heart, a part of her dies so that she can love Dalton. She allows the defensive and protective parts of herself to die so that she can give herself freely to Dalton. At the same time, she hates Dalton because of the pain that their relationship causes Quentin.

While Quentin fails to show compassion for Caddy, Dalton Ames is compassionate toward her and toward Quentin. When he first meets Dalton at the bridge, Quentin tells Dalton he must leave town. Dalton's first concern is Caddy's welfare. He tells Quentin in response to his threat, "save this for a while I want to know if shes all right have they been bothering her up there" (159). When Quentin keeps threatening him, Dalton tries to console

Quentin. He tells Quentin "listen no good taking it so hard its not your fault kid it would have been some other fellow" (160). In response to Dalton's comment, Quentin tries to punch him. Dalton holds Quentin and tries to calm him. Quentin passes out and when he regains consciousness, Dalton claims to have punched Quentin. Dalton lies so that Quentin will not be ashamed for passing out.

Throughout the scene at the creek, Caddy places Quentin's suffering ahead of her own. She shows her love and compassion for Quentin by saying "poor Quentin...youve never done that have you" (151). Quentin begins to cry and she tries to console him. To accept her compassion, however, he would have to accept the irrevocability of the situation. Instead, he wants to change the situation. He offers to kill himself and her so that they can stay together through death. She gives him permission to cut her throat and thereby sacrifices her life for him. But Caddy loves life too much to kill herself.

When Caddy leaves to meet Dalton, Quentin tries to make her stay with him. He is afraid that she will run away with Dalton, and he tells her that he will kill her if she does not be quiet. In his pain and fury, he insults and threatens her. When he saddles Prince so that he can meet Dalton, Caddy asks him where he is going and he responds, "none of your business whore" (159).

Quentin's earlier thought of castrating himself reveals his desire to stop time. Through castration,

Quentin hopes to erase his sexual desire. Sexual desire arises as a person matures physically, and Quentin seeks to end the process of time that is working in him. He thinks, however, "It's not not having them. It's never to have had them then I could say O That That's Chinese I dont know Chinese" (116). He rejects the idea of castrating himself because he realizes that castration would not eliminate the sexual desires he has already had and the changes they have wrought in his awareness.

For Quentin, Caddy sacrifices her desire to be with Dalton. When she finds Quentin on the bridge, she tells Quentin "I told him to never speak again" (163). She decides to find Dalton and tell him to leave town. She tells Quentin, "yes I can tell him I can makes him believe anytime I can make him" (163). She decides to tell Dalton that she does not love him. Quentin asks her again if she loves Dalton. When he asks this question, he sees in her change of expression that she loves Dalton: "she looked at me then everything emptied out of her eyes and they looked like the eyes in statues blank and unseeing and serene" (163). Her yielding to her feelings transforms her and silences her. She then puts Quentin's hand against her throat and tells him to say Dalton's name. When Quentin says "Dalton Ames," he feels the blood surge in Caddy's throat. She makes him say Dalton's name again and Quentin claims "her blood surged steadily beating and beating against my hand" (164). She loves Dalton so intensely that

his name is a source of life for her.

Quentin reflects on the river scene while riding in the car with Gerald and his friends. He becomes aware again of the present when he feels blood running down his face. He has just remembered the blood surging in Caddy's throat. Thus, the present scene and his past experiences are connected through the blood imagery. Caddy's blood surges in her powerful love of Dalton. Quentin's blood flows from his nose because, without even knowing it, he has fought Gerald.

The scenes are also connected through Quentin's fights with Dalton and with Gerald. Quentin hit Gerald when Gerald claimed that women are only good for sexual intercourse. Shreve says Gerald was talking about "how tough women have it, without anything else they can do except lie on their backs" (167). He tells Quentin that Quentin then "jumped up all of a sudden and said, 'Did you ever have a sister? Did you?' and when he said No, you hit him" (166). Likewise, he hits Dalton when Dalton degrades women.

This scene reveals Quentin's failure to accept Caddy's love and compassion because he will not accept himself and his own temporal, fleshly condition. Instead, he seeks a form of love that Caddy cannot give him. He does not want her to change or to love anyone else. He then loves an idea of Caddy, and not Caddy herself. He loves a Caddy who is innocent, pure, and loves only him. He does not accept

Caddy for who she is: a young, maturing woman who needs physical, sexual love. Yet even if Caddy did conform to his abstract idea of her, it seems that he still would be incapable of loving her because he would be afraid that she would fall from his idea. He is so afraid of losing what he has that he cannot accept what is offered to him.

When Quentin loses Caddy and realizes that he fails to change reality, he directs his battle against time itself. Quentin fights the profane process of time through which everything decays and dies. He finds that when ideas are acted out in time, they always fail to achieve perfection. For example, he fails to protect Caddy, and he fails to prevent himself from maturing sexually. He believes that if he stops time, he can make the world conform to his ideas. Also, if he stops time, then Caddy can be his. He wants her to be the same person she was as a child. If time did not work through her, then she could remain unchanged.

Throughout the novel, Quentin tries to stop the mechanical time-keeping devices. On the day of his suicide, he breaks the watch that his father gave him, but he cannot stop the hand from moving. This is a symbol of his failure to stop the profane process of time. The watch is only a tool for measuring time; it is not time itself, but only an abstraction of time. Quentin mistakes the abstraction for something real, just as he does with his "ideal" vision of himself and Caddy as children. His

father understands that a watch only measures time. He tells Quentin that the "constant speculation regarding the position of mechanical hands on an arbitrary dial... is a symptom of mind-function. Excrement" (77). His father understands that it is pointless to focus one's life on a watch because it means nothing.

His father also understands the futility of trying to stop the process of time. When Mr. Compson gives Quentin the watch, he says "I give it to you not that you may remember time, but that you may forget it now and then for a moment and not spend all your breath trying to conquer it. Because no battle is ever won he said. They are not even fought. The field only reveals to man his own folly and despair, and victory is an illusion of philosophers and fools" (76). Mr. Compson sees the watch as a reminder that time can only be measured, and cannot be stopped. He understands that time is a natural process that man cannot affect. If man tries to affect time, he will learn his mistake and he will learn that he is in despair. He is in despair because he is subject to the effects of time. Any sense of victory is only an illusion because man cannot affect time. He cannot make his ideal vision prevail. Thus even when it seems that man affects time, it is actually only the working of the indiscriminate process of time.

Quentin's father believes that there is nothing transcendent to the world. He believes that there is no higher power or authority who governs the world. Thus,

there is no basis of justice or hope. He tells Quentin that there is no purpose to life, but that everything is an accident. Man does not serve a purpose in some higher plan. He says that man "is conceived by accident and [his] every breath is a fresh cast with dice already loaded against him" (177). He also tells Quentin that he will not commit suicide because "no man does that under the first fury of despair or remorse or bereavement he does it only when he has realized that even the despair or remorse or bereavement is not particularly important to the dark diceman" (178). In other words, Mr. Compson believes Quentin will not take his own life until he realizes that nothing matters because everyone faces the same fate: death.

Quentin still believes in honor and virtue and that they are worth fighting for, though the battle will be futile. His father tells Quentin that he will not kill himself until he realizes that nothing is worth fighting for. His father tells him, "you cannot bear to think that someday it will no longer hurt you like this now... you will not do that until you come to see that even she was not quite worth despair" (177-178). Quentin, however, refuses to live in a world where his ideas are not worth fighting for. The fact that he thinks about Caddy during most of the day he commits suicide shows that he still cares about Caddy and considers her, or at least his vision of her, as worth fighting for. Indeed, he fights for her

and his vision when he attacks Gerald.

Quentin is so afraid he will lose his vision and his hope that he ends his life before he does so. When he realizes that his efforts to stop time are futile, he fears that with time he will come to think like his father. Jackson J. Benson writes, "Quentin commits suicide so as to preserve this emotional intensity, not allowing it to be dissipated by time so that his father's detachment will at last become his own through the process of aging" (227). As Benson points out, Quentin refuses to believe like his father and therefore ends his life before time destroys his hope in the meaning of life.

Quentin does not believe in his father's nihilistic view of the world. Although Quentin understands that his efforts to change reality are futile, he believes that there is a higher power who governs the world. This belief is manifest in his belief in damnation and salvation. He fears that Caddy will be damned to hell because of her sin. Furthermore, the fact that he believes there is sin shows that he believes there is a moral structure to the world. Throughout his section, he contemplates his possible salvation. On the day of his suicide, he surveys the bridge that he plans to jump from and says "maybe when He says Rise the eyes will come floating up too, out of the deep quiet and the sleep, to look on glory" (116). Thus, Quentin kills himself before he is in complete despair.

Quentin's suicide is tragic because he is such a

sensitive and intelligent character. Like Darl in *As I Lay Dying*, he intensely feels the pain of life. Yet also like Darl, he fails to show compassion for his family. Edmund L. Volpe claims that "human compassion is what modern man has lost and must recover to achieve regeneration" (97). Like Darl, to endure, Quentin must balance his sensitivity with compassion.

Chapter 3

Darl and the Pains of Awareness

In *As I Lay Dying*, Darl's problems arise from his intense self-awareness. Although he is aware of the beauty of life, he focuses on the pain. He wishes that he could give up his awareness so that he could relinquish his pain. He meditates throughout his sections on identity and death, but he fails to reach a definitive characterization of these two mysteries. He feels isolated from his family because he lacks a loving mother.

Like Quentin in *The Sound and the Fury*, Darl's heart is in conflict with itself. The main conflict of his heart is his desire to love and his fear of loving. Because he is so afraid, he cannot open himself to the possibility of love. Although Darl shows compassion for Addie through his attempts to bury her coffin, he does not show compassion for Jewel or Dewey Dell. He is so concerned with his own grief and pain that he does not apprehend and try to understand theirs.

Darl believes that he must suffer his pain alone. Before Addie dies, he thinks, "It takes two people to make you, and one people to die. That's how the world is going to end" (39). Darl understands that he is ultimately alone in the world. He claims "How often have I lain beneath rain on a strange roof, thinking of home" (80). Like the Byronic hero, Darl believes that his intelligence and

awareness isolate him from others and cause him to be alone. This isolation enables him to observe his family and to learn their secrets. For example, he understands Dewey Dell's true motive for going to Jefferson. Also, he knows when Dewey Dell is pregnant, and he knows that Jewel is not Anse's child.

Darl possesses a poetic imagination that enables him to freeze events in time. Throughout the novel, he freezes events so that he can analyze them. He describes events poetically by emphasizing certain details that connect different events into a desired pattern through which he expresses his feelings. For example, he states constantly that Jewel's mother is a horse. He does not mean this statement literally, but as a symbol for what Jewel truly loves and cares for above everything else. He describes Jewel and the horse as being spiritually connected. Edmond L. Volpe claims that Darl perceives that "Jewel, secure in his love for his mother and her love for him, has created a relationship with his horse that duplicates his relationship with Addie" (137). Darl's preoccupation with Jewel's relationship to his horse shows his desire to receive Addie's love. To reinforce the image, Darl describes Jewel throwing Addie's coffin from the fire as Jewel riding a horse: "Jewel is riding upon it, clinging to it, until it crashes down and flings him forward and clear" (222). Jewel, however, truly loves Addie Bundren. This is best revealed when he allows Anse to sell his horse for a

new team.

Darl's poetic description of crossing the river reveals his ability to see beauty. At the beginning of the scene he says:

Before us the thick dark current runs.
It talks up to us in a murmur become
ceaseless and myriad, the yellow surface
dimpled monstrosly into fading swirls
travelling along the surface for an instant,
silent, 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 slumber again.
(141)

The beauty of the scene is preserved in his description because the scene is stopped in time. Yet the beauty fades once he sets the scene in motion. As soon as Cash sets the team in the water, the current takes them and capsizes the wagon. Darl understands that beauty fades when placed in time. Unlike Quentin, however, he acknowledges the irrevocability of time. He claims, "It is as though the space between us were time: an irrevocable quality" (146).

Darl knows that the family will not prevail over the horror of their journey. He says, "we had reached the place where the motion of the wasted world accelerates just before the final precipice" (146). The final outcome is destruction and death. Although he is aware of the impending tragedy, he continues because for him the alternative is either to lose awareness of their doom,

which is impossible, or to kill himself.

In the passage in which he describes placing the cast on Cash, Darl expresses his wish to live unconsciously. He states, "If you could just ravel out into time. That would be nice if you could just ravel out into time"(208). He sees the cast as a symbol for the different things that encase living flesh. His awareness of his participation in events and his sense of the meaning of the events imprison him in the mundane and remind him of his pain. He understands that Addie's body is literally raveling out into time; however, she cannot fully ravel out until she is buried. Her body is still controlled by men. Although she no longer suffers the pains of life, she is still subject to the actions of men. Yet since she has commanded Anse to bury her in Jefferson, her will seems to be active, though it leads to the dismantling of her body. Although she is dead, she seems to have more control over the family than those who are alive. Darl does not want to "unravel" in this way, but simply to live without consciousness.

For Darl the coffin is a physical manifestation of the process of time. He smells and sees the body's dilapidation and understands that this is the final end of all existence. The coffin forces him to recognize the physical finality of death, and he cannot free his mind from concentrating on death. Throughout the novel he attempts to bury the coffin expediently in order to end the Bundrens' and Addie's humiliation, and to relieve his mind

of its awareness of death.

Darl meditates on death and contemplates his identity. Since he does not know what he is, he does not understand what dies. He thinks, "In a strange room you must empty yourself for sleep. And before you are emptied for sleep, what are you. And when you are filled with sleep, you never were. I dont know what I am. I dont 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" (80). Darl thinks that Jewel knows who he is because he does not have the same awareness of himself as Darl has of himself. Darl believes that Jewel does not have a reflective awareness of himself, so Jewel is more of a machine than a human being.

Like Caddy in *The Sound and the Fury*, Jewel's experiences are so intense that he cannot express his feelings in words. He yields to the powerful feelings of his heart and acts according to these feelings. His love for Addie is so intense that he cannot articulate a response to Darl's questions; he can only reply by grunting and cursing.

Unlike Jewel, Darl can describe his feelings in words. He often describes his experiences of joy caused by the simple pleasures of life. Early in the novel he 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" (10-11). He then says that when he was older, "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" (11). This simple peace has been displaced by the pains of conscious existence. He is aware of the temporality of all experiences, including experiences of beauty. Also, he is so concerned with death and the ugliness of life that he cannot enjoy the present and the beautiful aspects of life. He can no longer achieve peace because he cannot reconcile the joy and the pain of life.

Darl is isolated from the family because he believes that he does not have a loving mother. He desperately wishes that Addie had nurtured and loved him, but he understands that she loved only Jewel: "ma always whipped him and petted him more... That's why she named him Jewel" (18). When Jewel becomes sick from overworking himself, Darl says, "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" (130-131). When Addie learns that Jewel has been working at night to buy a horse, Darl watches her cry at Jewel's bedside. His preoccupation with Addie's love of Jewel shows that he longs for his mother's love that he never received.

Darl resents Jewel for receiving Addie's love, and he

cruelly teases Jewel throughout the novel by asking him to name his father. When Addie dies, Darl tells Jewel twice, "it's not your horse that's dead" (94). He then thinks, "I cannot love my mother because I have no mother. Jewel's mother is a horse" (95). The encasement of Cash's leg causes Darl so much anguish that in the monologue following the scene, Darl releases his pain by harassing Jewel. Because Jewel does not express his pain in the way that Darl thinks he should, Darl thinks that Jewel is not pained by Addie's death. He himself is so pained that he does not try to understand Jewel's reaction to Addie's death. He does not want to offer Jewel compassion because he does not want to feel any more pain. Instead, he absorbs himself in cruel self-pity. He begins the monologue, "Jewel, whose son are you...Your mother was a horse, but who was your father, Jewel?" (212). Darl then attends to Cash and tries to comfort him. He ends the scene by harassing Jewel: "Who was your father?" (213).

In his resentment for not having a loving mother, Darl observes the family coldly. Along with teasing Jewel about the identity of his father, he teases Dewey Dell for being pregnant. Darl believes that Dewey Dell, like Jewel, is not pained by Addie's death. He does not offer her any comfort or compassion, or try to understand her anguish or the complexity of her problems. In his fourth monologue, he alternates between reminding Jewel of Addie's impending death and Dewey Dell of her pregnancy. He first tells

Jewel, "Do you know she is going to die?" (39). He then tells Dewey Dell, "You want her to die so you can get to town" (40). She asks Darl if he is going to tell Anse and if he is going to kill her boyfriend. Darl refuses to answer, and instead reminds her that she is pregnant: "You cannot believe it is true because you cannot believe that Dewey Dell, Dewey Dell Bundren, could have such bad luck" (40). He ends the section by telling Jewel, "do you know that Addie Bundren is going to die? Addie Bundren is going to die?" (40).

Although Darl taunts Jewel and Dewey Dell and offers them no compassion, he expresses his love for his family by attempting to save it. Throughout the novel, Darl reconciles the family so that they can proceed on their journey. In the river-crossing scene, he settles the dispute between Cash and Jewel. Although Darl agrees with Cash's plan for Jewel to meet them on the other bank with the rope, Darl realizes that Jewel will not leave Addie in the care of him and Cash. Therefore, he suggests that Jewel ride ahead of the wagon with the end of the rope to brace the wagon. Darl does not command Jewel, but asks him: "Will you do that, Jewel?" (146). Darl satisfies Jewel's need to participate in the events, and he advances the journey.

Later, Darl quells the confrontation between Jewel and the man with the knife. Darl makes the man put up his knife, and he makes Jewel apologize. He not only saves

Jewel's life, but also his pride:

"Hush," I say. "Tell him you didn't mean it."
"I didn't mean it," Jewel says.
"He better not," the man says. "Calling me a____"
"Do you think he's afraid to call you that?"
I say. The man looks at me.
"I never said that," he said.
"Dont think it, neither," Jewel says.
"Shut up," I say. "Come on. Drive on, pa."

(231)

Just before they bury the coffin, Darl is the only Bundren who shows compassion for Cash. When Cash breaks his leg, Darl pleads with Anse to take Cash to a doctor. He asks Anse twice, and then he pleads with Cash: "Armstid and Gillespie both told you to send word ahead. Don't you want to go to Peabody's now, Cash?" (235). When he realizes that they will have to bury the coffin first, he forces Anse to buy a spade. When Darl tells Anse that he will go to the hardware store to buy a spade, Anse complains that it will cost money. Darl responds angrily, "Do you begrudge her it?" (235). He is angry with Anse because Anse has shown no compassion for Cash.

Darl last attempts to save the family by burning Gillespie's barn. He sees this as a way both to relieve the family of the burden of carrying the coffin and to relieve his own pain caused from his awareness of death. Alan D. Perlis claims that "In an attempt to arrest the travesty of the Bundren's journey to Jefferson and to dispose of Addie's putrefying corpse, he burns down

Gillespie's barn" (105). Yet Darl fails to dispose of the coffin and so to relieve his pain. After Jewel saves the coffin, Darl weeps over it under an apple tree. Darl cries because he realizes the futility of all his actions to save the family and relieve his anguish. When they are approaching Jefferson, Darl sees the vultures flying above the coffin as symbolic of the Bundrens: "they hang in narrowing circles, like the smoke, with no inference of motion, progress or retrograde" (227). He sees the family as being frozen in time, incapable of progress or change. The image also shows Darl's awareness of Anse and Dewey Dell's selfish motives for going to Jefferson. Like the vultures, Anse and Dewey Dell feed off Addie's body. Anse anticipates burying her so that he can buy a new set of teeth. Dewey Dell hopes to find a doctor in Jefferson who can abort her baby. Cash and Jewel, however, truly seem to love Addie, and they act unselfishly throughout the journey.

Cash is the only Bundren who defends Darl and shows him compassion. Jewel wants to send Darl away before they bury Addie, but Cash tells him and Anse that they should wait until the coffin is buried. Cash says to himself that "A fellow that's going to spend the rest of his life locked up ... ought to be let to have what pleasure he can have before he goes" (233). Cash understands why Darl set fire to the barn, though he does not believe it is right to destroy a man's property. Also, he shares Darl's belief

that it would be better to bury the coffin as soon as possible, rather than to carry out Addie's request to be buried in Jefferson. Alan D. Perlis claims, "We most look to Cash for the sanest, most compassionate perceptions in the novel" (108). For example, Cash thinks:

Of course it was Jewel's horse was traded to get her that nigh to town, and in sense it was the value of the 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 dont reckon nothing excuses setting fire to a man's barn and endangering his stock and destroying his property.

(233)

Cash reveals in this passage a more complete awareness of the events than he has heretofore expressed. He looks beyond his family's perception of Darl and sees somewhat into his motives. Cash understands that although Darl partly acted out of contempt for Jewel, he ultimately acted out of love for the Bundrens. When Darl is taken away to Jackson, Cash gives an insight into Darl's sanity. He believes that one's degree of sanity depends on the perspective of the observer: "It's like it aint so much what a fellow does, but it's the way the majority of folks is looking at him when he does it" (233). Darl, however,

fails throughout the novel to give his family this degree of compassion. In his treatment of Jewel and Dewey Dell, he does not try to understand their actions. Instead, he judges their actions from his limited perspective of contempt and pain. He cannot see beyond his pain and anguish, and thereby cannot understand their actions.

Darl becomes crazy when he realizes that his efforts to save the family only alienate him from the family. He feels betrayed by the family because he has acted out of love for them. Although he does not try to understand Jewel's and Dewey Dell's pain, he loves the family and wants to protect them. Also, he feels betrayed by Cash. He tells Cash, "I thought you'd a told me" (238). While he begins to explain himself, he bursts into uncontrollable laughter. When he stops laughing, he asks Cash if he thinks that he should go to Jackson. Cash tries to console him by saying, "It'll be better for you. Down there it'll be quiet, with none of the bothering and such. It'll be better for you, Darl" (238). Darl, however, does not accept Cash's consolation. Darl finds Cash's suggestion absurd because Cash claims that he will find peace and quiet while being surrounded by insane people. Yet Darl also understands that the mental hospital might be easier for him to handle than living with his family.

Darl's insanity becomes evident in his last monologue. He finishes his meditation on identity by denying the existence of any essential self. He speaks of himself in

the third person because he no longer thinks of himself as having an independent self. Even now he expresses his love for his family and his desire to be a part of the family. He says, "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'" (254).

Darl cannot cope with the horrors of life. His intense awareness causes him such pain that he cannot see beyond it. Although he sacrifices for the family and tries to save them, he does not identify himself with them. By the end of the novel, the ugliness and horror of life have become too great for him to handle. Unlike Cash, he cannot balance the beautiful and ugly aspects of life. He becomes crazy when he sees that the ugliness and terror of life overpower the beauty of life. Edmund L. Volpe claims that "'Insanity' for Darl is inevitable: he sees too much. He cannot become blindly absorbed in the immediate, minor problems and pleasures and routines which fill the consciousness of most people, because he always sees their meaninglessness and futility" (139). Volpe suggests that Darl is too sensitive to endure. Yet Faulkner suggests that though sensitive people experience pain intensely, they also experience joy intensely. To endure, the sensitive must show compassion to others so that their own pain does not overwhelm them.

Darl's loss is so tragic because the reader

understands the difficulty of his struggle. He is placed in almost unendurable circumstances. The reader wants him to endure and prevail because the reader identifies with him. Darl embodies the conflict of the human heart between fear and love.

Chapter 4

Juxtaposing Quentin and Darl

Neither Quentin nor Darl is loved by his mother. Both are acutely self-conscious and experience intensely. The essential concerns of each, however, are different. Quentin is born into a declining aristocratic family, and his problems arise from the beliefs he inherits from his grandfather and father. Darl, on the other hand, is born into a rural lower class family unconcerned with inherited ideas. His problems arise from his awareness of the irrevocability of time. Through Quentin and Darl, Faulkner examines different concerns of the heart as experienced by intelligent men who live in two different social situations. In this chapter, I will place the two characters side by side in order to clarify the differences between the two.

Because their mothers have not loved them, both Quentin and Darl feel that they do not have a mother. After Addie dies, Darl says, "I cannot love my mother because I have no mother" (95). He desperately wants Addie's love and he resents Jewel because Jewel does have it. He describes the scene in which Addie offers to buy Jewel a saddle and a bridle for his horse. Addie tells Jewel "I'll give-I'll give-give-" (135). Addie only sacrifices for Jewel and Darl wishes that she would sacrifice for him.

Quentin, like Darl, does not receive love from his mother. After Caddy loses her virginity, he narrates a dialogue between Mr. and Mrs. Compson in which Mrs. Compson says that she only loves Jason. Mrs. Compson claims, "I'll take Jason and go where nobody knows us so he'll have a chance to grow up and forget all this the others dont love me they never loved anything with that streak of Compson selfishness and false pride Jason was the only one my heart went out to without dread" (102). Mrs. Compson only offers compassion to Jason. She is not concerned for Caddy, but only for the scandal Caddy's behavior will bring on the family. She does not offer Caddy, Quentin, or Benjy affection or compassion. Because Mrs. Compson does not love or offer compassion to Quentin, Quentin feels that he has never had a mother: "if I'd just had a mother so I could say Mother Mother" (172).

Only Cash seems to love Darl and offer him compassion. He tries to understand Darl's motives, and he tries to console him when Darl is detained by the men from the mental hospital. He tells Darl, "It'll be better for you...Down there it'll be quiet, with none of us bothering and such. It'll be better for you, Darl" (238). Darl, however, fails to accept Cash's compassion.

Likewise, only Caddy loves Quentin. Although Caddy loves him without reservation or condition, he refuses her love because of his fear of loving and his fear of change. Like Benjy, he does not want Caddy to change, nor does he

want to change. He wants their life and their love to be that of children, not of adults. He does not want to share Caddy or their world with anyone.

Both Quentin and Darl struggle with time. Quentin tries to stop the physical process of time that leads to transformation, decay, and death. He refuses to accept the irrevocability of time. Instead, he seeks to stop time because as time works through his life, he begins to see the disjunction between his ideals and reality. He also begins to realize that his father's nihilistic vision could be true. His father tells him that nothing in the world is significant or has any value. He says that he is not yet worried that Quentin will kill himself. He says, "you will not do that until you come to believe that even she [Caddy] was not quite worth despair" (178). Quentin refuses to live in a world where Caddy is not worth his pain. He is so afraid that time will bring him to believe like his father that he prefers to die.

Darl, however, accepts the irrevocability of time. He understands that the natural process of time is change, death, and decay. He sees the decay of Addie's body as a manifestation of the effects of time. The Bundren's journey to bury Addie causes him to reflect on death and his contemplation only brings him pain. He is so pained by his meditations on death that he tries to destroy or bury the coffin in the most expedient ways.

Darl's obsession with death causes him to contemplate

his identity. Since he does not know what dies, he does not know who he is. He questions if there is a difference between life and death. He says "I dont know what I am. I dont know if I am or not" (80). He does not know if there is an inherent self that is impervious to the effects of time. If one cannot affect one's present, then one is already dead in a sense. If there is no essential independent self, then death is no different from life. Darl thinks that death simply may be the final event the process of time, devoid of any significance.

The different ways in which Quentin and Darl respond to their sisters' loss of virginity reveal their different concerns. Quentin is obsessed with Caddy's loss of her virginity because it proves that he cannot save his ideals from the effects of time. He is also concerned with the morality of her act. When she loses her virginity, he assumes the role of a "Southern Gentleman" and tries to defend Caddy's honor. Darl, on the other hand, is not concerned with Dewey Dell's pregnancy. He is not concerned about the morality of her act or even the difficulty of her situation. Whereas Quentin wants to cancel out Caddy's loss of virginity, Darl accepts Dewey Dell's loss of her virginity as irrevocable.

Quentin believes his virginity is a sign that he has not participated in the ugliness and filth of the world. His father tells him that virginity is like death, "only a state in which the others are left" (78). Yet Quentin

believes that losing one's virginity signifies one's growth into the fleshly desires and disillusionment of adulthood. He asks his father, "Why couldn't it have been me and not her who is unvirgin" (78). Addie's death and Caddy's loss of virginity make Darl and Quentin, respectively, obsessed with their identity, but Darl focuses on his morality and Quentin on the implications of his physical maturation and his virginity.

Quentin's father tries to console him. He offers Quentin compassion, but he cannot offer him hope. He tells Quentin that virginity is nothing more than a word. Furthermore, he says it is futile to attempt to change reality because "nothing is worth the changing of it." He tries to console Quentin by telling him that the pain will diminish with time: "you cannot bear to think that someday it will no longer hurt you like this" (177). Yet Quentin rejects his consolation and kills himself before he comes to accept his father's beliefs.

Unlike Quentin, Darl does not receive compassion from his father. Anse Bundren is selfish and cruel. He does not try to understand Darl's actions or his pain. Instead, he commits his son to a mental hospital. He is not concerned for Darl or sad about his detainment.

Darl and Quentin also share the burden of being subject to painful circumstances that are beyond their control. Because they are intelligent and sensitive, they find their family situations almost unbearable. Darl

believes that Anse is ruining the family, and he resents Jewel and Cash for accepting Anse's torments. Darl understands that Anse is not concerned about the family but only about himself. Anse insists on burying Addie in Jefferson only for his own selfish reasons. Quentin, likewise, finds his family situation unbearable. He wishes that his family retained the position and honor it had before the Civil War. He still believes in the values of the "Old" South, such as honor and protecting women, though he has no power to implement these values.

In Darl and Quentin, Faulkner shows the human heart in conflict with itself. Darl's conflict is between his desire to love and his fear of death. He is so pained by the ugliness and finality of death, manifest in Addie's decaying body, that he cannot enjoy the beautiful aspects of life. He cannot reconcile the beauty of life with the ugliness of death. In contrast, Quentin fears death less than he fears succumbing to the process of time. He does not want to exist in time because he believes that if he continues to exist in time, he will lose hope. He also is afraid to love because he would have to yield to the overwhelming feelings of his heart. He does not want to yield to these forces because he would be opening himself to the condition of change and loss. To give into his feelings would be to succumb to time.

The beautiful aspects of life cause Darl and Quentin pain. They are so sensitive that nothing can comfort them.

Darl cannot enjoy the simple pleasures that he enjoyed when he was young, such as the pure taste of water. He also cannot appreciate Cash's compassion. Quentin, on the other hand, is so sensitive that Caddy's love causes him pain.

In my study I have tried to show the confusion and intense anguish Darl and Quentin experience in their circumstances. Although their problems are seemingly so overwhelming that they appear incapable of saving themselves, Faulkner claims, nevertheless, that they can endure and prevail over their circumstances. In his discussions at the University of Virginia, Faulkner says "what I was talking about in all the books ...[was] that man will prevail, will endure because he is capable of compassion and honor and pride and endurance" (19). The way Quentin and Darl could have endured and prevailed was by finding the courage and patience to show compassion, sacrifice, and love.

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