

Faulkner, "That Evening Sun"
Wesley Advocates

25 March 2018

Who tells this story? How old and knowledgeable is the narrator? How does this point of view affect our understanding of what happens in the plot? How does this point of view influence our attitude toward characters and events?

What do we learn about Jefferson in the first two paragraphs? Describe the town and its landscape. What does the narrator admire about the laundrywomen?

Identify the protagonist. The antagonist. Describe the role of the Compson family in the central action. The roles of Dilsey and other blacks living amongst the Compsons.

Who constitutes the Compson household? Describe the various children and servants and their roles in the household.

Who uses the term *nigger*? And what does the word mean when used by that speaker?

How old are these three Compson children? What do we learn about them from their speech and behavior? From their interactions with Nancy? From their remarks to one another? How do they manage family politics? Who seems most like Father? Most like Mother? How do *we* know what *they* fail to understand? Describe their attitudes toward their servants.

Describe the scene involving Nancy and Mr. Stovall. How does this scene create sympathy for Nancy? What happens to Nancy while in jail? How does that create sympathy for Nancy? What other scenes or events or speeches lead us to sympathize with Nancy?

How does Faulkner contrast Nancy and Caroline Compson (Mother)? How does he contrast Jesus and Jason Compson (Father)? To what ends?

Why does Father sympathize with Nancy—and how far does his help reach? What does that reveal about him? What does Mother think about Nancy? Why? What does that reveal about her?

In the first version published in *American Mercury*, Faulkner used the name *Jubal* instead of *Jesus*. Why is the name change significant? What important symbol identifies Jesus? What sign does he leave for Nancy—and what does it reveal to her and to us?

What is Nancy's "crime" or "sin"? And which is it? According to whom?

Who is Mr. Lovelady? Why is he important to Nancy? What is ironic about his name? Indeed, what is significant about each of the names in this story?

What does the narrator admire about the black women who take in laundry, who cook, who look after white families?

Describe the journey from the Compson house to Nancy's cabin. How does Nancy behave—and why? Why does Nancy want the children to pop corn? Why does WF include the broken popper?

How does the narrator reveal Nancy's terror? Cite two or three instances. How does Faulkner contrast Nancy's terror with the children's lark?

Where is Jesus? What happens to Nancy? How do the Compsons respond ultimately to Nancy's fear and need?