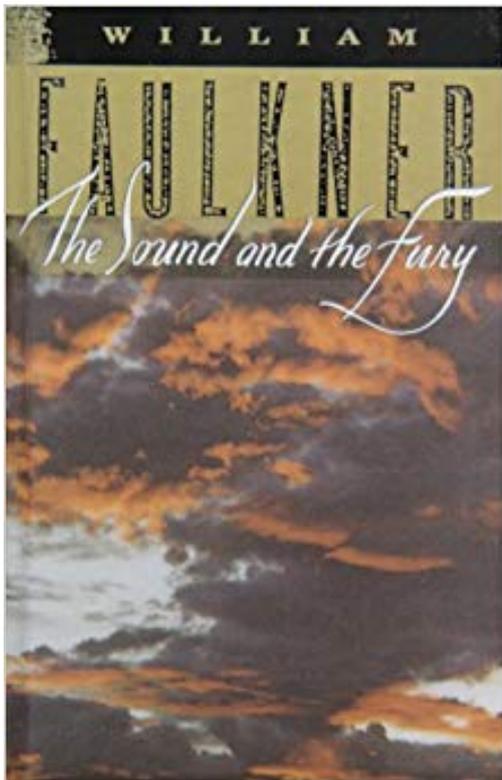


## The Sound and the Fury: The Corrected Text *by* William Faulkner



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“I give you the mausoleum of all hope and desire. . . . I give it to you not that you may remember time, but that you might forget it now and then for a moment and not spend all of 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.” —from *The Sound and the Fury* *The Sound and the Fury* is the tragedy of the Compson family, featuring some of the most memorable characters in literature: beautiful, rebellious Caddy; the manchild Benjy; haunted, neurotic Quentin; Jason, the brutal cynic; and Dilsey, their black servant. Their lives fragmented and harrowed by history and legacy, the character’s voices and actions mesh to create what is arguably Faulkner’s masterpiece and — one of the greatest novels of the twentieth century.



Reviews of the [The Sound and the Fury: The Corrected Text](#)

## **by William Faulkner**

### **Mash**

So after making it through this book, I am now ready to tackle Ulysses. It took the first chapter and a half for everything to fall into place for me. The most difficult part of reading this book, was the back and forth in time, place and voice, throughout the narrative. Although I have read other books using a "stream of consciousness" kind of writing, I was just not getting what was happening for the first part of the book. The author does provide clues and once I slowed down and let things sit, I finally got it, italics and all.

The language is challenging, as Faulkner wrote in dialect and I found myself hearing the dialogue in my head. Once I let go of plot and setting, and allowed myself to be immersed in the characters, I started to enjoy reading this book. This is certainly not a beach novel or a page turner, but rather a dismal sort of dirge for a grand old Southern family in decline, as illustrated by four days, in the lives of two generations. I would recommend this book for anyone that is looking for an experience that is worth the effort it takes to read a piece of American literature, that does not quite fit into any genre.

### **Doukasa**

If you were raised in the South, you may get chills reveling in Faulkner's evocative words "the twilight-colored smell of honeysuckle." You know exactly what this means, how wonderful it is to the senses and the almost-haunting, hazy memories it stirs in you of people long in your past or passed on. This novel was the most difficult I've read, but the most rewarding once I did the work required to know how to read it, and understood its structure and meanings.

I never thought I could read it; I tried 30 years ago, 19 years ago, 10 years after that, before I finally finished it a couple of years ago. When I picked it up, I concluded quickly that Faulkner must be a sadist to write anything like the first 10 pages. I read it twice and I was no better off the second time as I was the first go-round. I had absolutely no clue what the heck was going on, the sentences were disjunctive, the thoughts scrambled, the characters were dropping in then disappearing, it seemed to change time frames without any recognizable order so I had no sense of time and, ultimately, I had forgotten why it was, exactly, that I had bought the damned thing in the first place!

Oh yeah, I told myself. You want to read Mr. Mint Juleps from that Rowan Oak plantation home up in Oxford. You believe that by doing that you are proving maybe once and for all time that you too can escape the past of this State in which you were raised and of these ghosts that you find despicable, this hate you had no part of, these white sheets, fulgent from the flames above them but burned by the evil beneath, these ignorant men who were passed down hatred as heirlooms to hand down to their sons and their daughters. You think if you can make it through this man's novels it will show that you are more intelligent than what people from afar believe you to be, that you are not like the rednecks you see every day but burst from within to bound over, that you are not like your mother's father who you worshiped, a business man and deacon in the town's largest Southern Baptist church, who you remember using the N word once as you sat beside him at 7 as he was driving from downtown Natchez (the home of my forefathers), a town on the mighty Mississippi River filled with beautiful antebellum plantation homes and scattered with remnants of slavery and a segregated past before you were born, the town in which your mother is now buried 10 feet from her father. And your mother, God bless her, along with your father, raised you not to hate, nor to judge, and for that you believe you have been blessed.

After she was buried, you finally got the gumption to make it all the way through this knotty novel by that iconic author from the northern corner of your home state of Mississippi. It took a paperback, an electronic companion guide and an audible version to make it through and understand that you needed to read this book, that it was crucial as one more molting of the skin of your past, one more

step away from the sins of the fathers, one further step away from that past for my children and hopefully their children.

I did it.

### **Flash\_back**

This was not by any stretch of imagination an easy book to read. The stream of consciousness style, the way that Faulkner gives voice to each character in their own unique narrative, the themes of bitterness, racism, depression, family, morality and overall decline and the often heart-breaking perspectives from each member of the Compson family makes for a book that is gut-wrenching and sometimes awful. But... very few writers have the ability to bring life into their words the way that Faulkner does. This is not a third person account of a family gone to ruin - it is a riveting, raw recounting told from all angles. It may leave you feeling tight in the chest, but it will stay on your mind for a very long time after you finish the last page.

### **Veleanor**

Read as a student assignment the book would be, and often is, a torment for most students. It is quite simply a difficult read: chronology modulates with only the vaguest hint, the read is not a "story", at least not in the conventional sense. The reader 'absorbs' the story-line through inference and innuendo and occasionally extrapolation. The characters are veiled, shadowy and obscure. "Caddy smells like trees": the 'thoughts' of the mentally diminished Benjy - ring throughout the read, subtly 'whispering' part of the plot.

There are two turning points: 1st the one that the reader passes when she or he decides to continue the read despite the instinct to quit, and the 2nd (for me about halfway through the book) when there is the realization of the utter brilliance of the author for his bold method and subtle presentation and his intricate linking of the characters.

It is about good and selfish, and honest and deceitful, and tradition and loyalty in Faulkner's South back in the 1920's. And if that is a very odd description of a "plot" - and it is - it is because traditional plot and story-line are very unorthodox in this brilliant novel. And don't expect Faulkner to 'hand it to' you in the closing pages - pay attention on every page... and expect to have to reread.

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