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The Sound and the Fury: A Screenplay Adaptation

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The Sound and the Fury:
A Screenplay Adaptation

Senior Project submitted to
The Division of Languages and Literature
of Bard College

by
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Annandale-on-Hudson, New York
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Dedication and Acknowledgments

This project is dedicated to my father, who instilled in me the love of writing and film, and to my mother and stepmother, who read every draft of the screenplay or introduction, no matter how unenjoyable the process. I would also like to thank my whole family, whose diversity and unconventionality has helped me appreciate the idiosyncrasies of family dynamics.

I would also like to acknowledge three professors whose help and encouragement have made this project possible. First I want to thank my adviser, Joseph Luzzi, who agreed to let me write an adaptation. His faith in my project gave me security and hope during a time when I was unsure of the outcome. Secondly, I would like to thank my pseudo-adviser, Marie Regan, whose mentorship I could not do without. Her teaching challenged me in ways that are invaluable to my writing – not only screenwriting, but also my prose. No matter how confused or uncomfortable I felt, she helped me persevere through countless writer's blocks with her kind words of encouragement. And last of all, I would like to thank Nancy Leonard, who helped me believe I could write at all.

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Introduction

William Faulkner's *The Sound and The Fury* is the arguably the most cinematic of all his novels. Its four different narrative voices that straddle past and present, objectivity and subjectivity, apply the visual techniques of a film in the linguistic context of literature. However, it is at times jarring and difficult to determine truth, space or time with visual language, divorced of the visual aid. When the collision of time and space is subtracted from Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, what remains is a story, not quite plot-oriented, of dramatic irresolution. The tension in Faulkner's novel resides in the juxtaposition of time, space, present tense, memory and variety of narrative voices.

Faulkner's cinematic techniques serve to tell a visual story that appeals more to senses and emotions rather than to intellect. The novel is viscerally rich and forces the reader to use sensory memory and imagination to see, hear and even smell the scene. While the novel demands mental flexibility and imagination, the fundamental requirement is sensory attention. In this sense, the novel is already a type of screenplay: a story written out on a page whose culmination as a film is meant to give the viewer a visual and aural experience.

The process of adapting a literary work to the stage or screen requires difficult choices; literature is not confined by time or production constraints, and the author of a book is free to roam wherever his pen may take him. If the dramatic structure is relatively weak in a novel, it may not affect the story, but if a play or screenplay attempts the same approach the structural weakness is soon evident. It is easier to continue reading a novel without much of a story, as long as it is written well, than it is to watch a film without much of a story that is only *filmed* well. This is because a novel is able to convey more

meaning through language and freedom of length, than a film can convey through an image under time constraints. This is precisely why *The Sound and the Fury* could, in theory, be a comprehensive and successful film. Since the language Faulkner uses is inherently sensory, translating the story to an image would be like killing two birds with one stone, the best of both worlds. The poetic visuals of memory and the juxtaposition of time and space can not only be conveyed, but also made clearer, while the essence still remains in tact.

While one may imbed their perspective in an original piece of work, an adaptor translates that perspective into another medium, while inevitably adding another layer of perspective. A novel holds a different meaning for each individual person, and a film adaptation of a novel is certainly not an all-encompassing, perfect translation of its content. In 1959 Martin Ritt directed an adaptation of *The Sound and the Fury*, written by Harriet Frank Jr. and Irving Ravetch. Their adaptation is a reorganizing of their perspectives of Faulkner's story – their attempt to take the novel's essence and translate it into their artistic medium. My adaptation is what I understand to be the essence of the story, and to the best of my ability, what I believe Faulkner was trying to convey.

It is also important to note the possible difference of circumstances of adaptation. Sometimes an artist may create something that doesn't necessarily convey his personal sense of reality. Art can be created to cater to a specific audience, and the creator could be completely removed from the product itself. For example, an adaptation such as Ritt's, created for commercial entertainment and revamped to please an audience, abides by different codes than a college student's adaptation.

In his essay, *Tomorrow: The Genesis of a Screenplay*, Horton Foote points out why the process of creating an original work is different from adapting in terms of the reality called upon. He believes that when an artist works on something of his own, the unconscious is at work, whereas with adaptations, the work is purely conscious. An adapter must consciously approach an unconscious process (Foote 149). In fact, in the unpublished introduction Faulkner wrote for the immaterialized 1933 limited edition of *The Sound and the Fury*, he wrote: "I had no plan at all in mind when I began the book. I wasn't even writing a book." He then continues to connect the process of writing the novel to his unconscious: "I wasn't consciously writing anything to be printed" (Cohen and Fowler 270).

It was after he finished writing the first/Benji's section of the novel that Faulkner's writing became a kind of adaptation in itself. The work then became conscious because he tried to adapt Benji's section into a more coherent narrative told in three sections that could be published. While adapting *The Sound and the Fury*, I felt that I was using both approaches: consciously trying to transfer the essence of the original while unconsciously attempting to sort out my own relationship with the novel.

In his book *Faulkner and Film*, Kawin suggests that Faulkner's Hollywood career is not what established Faulkner's place in film history, but rather his novels created independently from Hollywood. His screenplays are not recognizably his because of his experimental use of time and space or his visual techniques, but because they flesh out the subject matter of his fiction (Kawin 145). However his role as a contributor to film is eminent in the influence he had on artists such as Howard Hawks, Orson Welles, Agnes

Varda, Alain Resnais, Marguerite Duras and Jean-Luc Godard; all of which are filmmakers who adapted his techniques instead of his fiction.

Resnais' *Hiroshima Mon Amour* and Ritt's *The Sound and the Fury* were both released in 1959. Kawin points out that Resnais' film "has more in common with Faulkner's novel than does [Ritt's film]" (Kawin 144). Kawin believes most films that set out to adapt Faulkner fail to do so because they reject his techniques. This is why Kawin prefers Faulkner's influential techniques applied to film rather than his stories stripped of their chaotic montage of time and space, which helps progress and enrich film because the viewer can learn "from Faulkner's aesthetic, independent of his stories, and go on to explore and perhaps expand the range of verbal and visual signification in film" (Kawin 153).

The first two narratives of the novel (Benjy and Quentin) are the most difficult to understand because of the juxtaposition of time and space, while the last two narratives (Jason and a third-person narrator) are the most fluid and comprehensible. The time/space juxtaposition occurs less as the novel continues, and by the end there are only present accounts of the story with no flashbacks; the novel starts off with confusing, jumbled narratives and then slowly becomes clearer. However, the first two sections are the most objective since they are shown through visual flashbacks, told with almost no emotional input, while the last two narratives are subjective and anecdotal.

Benjy Compson, the mentally disabled, youngest Compson son, objectively states his surroundings in terms of his senses. He is unaware of his emotions; he only understands the world in terms of sensory experiences. His dominant sense is the visual, yet we are only granted the description of this sense through the transcriber/Faulkner's

language. In a certain way, Benjy's section is in itself an adaptation because Benjy does not have the ability to transcribe his own narrative with language; therefore his consciousness is translated into language by the adaptor.

Benjy's mind has only one tense (Kawin 120). He jumps back and forth between the present and his memories, but he lives his thoughts so completely that they are indistinguishable. Therefore, the visual/film version of Benjy's narrative would be more fluid and comprehensible and the progression of the cuts would be clear. When Benjy plays in the creek with his caretaker in his adult life, his narrative jumps without warning to a memory of him playing in the same creek with his siblings in his youth. A similar sentence, place or smell sends Benjy into another moment that he lives fully, as if it were the present. However, the transfer of his objective descriptions to visual images may not be as fruitful, since the little emotion he does convey in his narrative would be lost without voice-over. For example, throughout the narrative he repeatedly states "Caddy smells like trees." This could not be perfectly shown in a film, though perhaps implied.

In my adaptation, whenever Benjy and Caddy are together they are outdoors and Caddy typically stands in front of a tree, seen through Benjy's point of view. I also attempt to keep the juxtaposition/montage of time and space from Benjy's section through flashbacks, most occur within the first act of the script and fewer as the story progresses. When Benjy abruptly switches from the present to a memory, we have to wait for clues (people, places, names etc.) until we realize the tense has changed. It works the same way in film: it is only through visual context that a scene is understood as past, present or future. Faulkner developed a narrative mode that cannot be called anything but cinematic, since it uses the mind's eye and the physical eye, all part of instantaneous cuts.

Another visual technique Faulkner applies is stream of consciousness. It is a literary style that is most like the imagery used in film since thoughts can be interpreted as a continuous visual narrative that plays uninterrupted in the mind. The way Benjy's narrative is structured is through the transcribing of his rich panorama of images playing out in his mind; transcribed by the author because he lacks the ability to apply words to his experiences.

Quentin's section is also very cinematic, since his memories, thoughts and sensory perceptions oscillate in and out of each other. Stream of consciousness shows us his frantic assimilation between his life in Cambridge and his memories and thoughts of Caddy. He smells her, sees her and thinks about her as he internally processes his present life. For example, when Quentin reads Caddy's wedding invitation he reads the words on the letter, but Caddy interrupts his thoughts through his senses:

Roses. Roses. Mr and Mrs Jason Richmond Compson
announce the marriage of. Roses. Not virgins like
dogwood, milkweed. I said I have committed incest, Father
I said. Roses. (Faulkner 77)

The repetition of the word "roses" symbolizes the smell Quentin associates with Caddy. While he reads the letter, he is physically affected and his narrative is interrupted by his sensory memory. Reading Caddy's wedding invitation reminds him of a smell/object he associates with her, and then reminds him of a conversation he had with his father about Caddy's virginity and incest. Quentin is more consciously aware of emotions and senses and how they relate to what occurs to him in the exterior world. Unlike Benjy, Quentin's narrative is more subjective because he relates emotionally what happens in the exterior

world to his past: his emotions link his present to his memories, as opposed to Benjy, whose senses provide the link. In my adaptation, Benjy's flashbacks are caused by sensory cues while Quentin's flashback occurs through an emotional connection during his stream of consciousness.

The last half of my adaptation gives more space to Jason and the narrative of the Compson family as a character itself. The structure only includes one flashback and keeps with novel's progression of clarity. The tension lies in the parallel between the crumbling of the south and how the Compson family fails to persevere. Even though every member of the family consciously wants to help save the family as a whole, they each unconsciously suffocate each other in the process. This is evident in Mrs. Compson's desire to further the family's social reputation and in turn hurting the members of her family, Mr. Compson's desire to guide his children down the right path while he is incapable of providing any help on an emotional level, Quentin's desire to keep the family's honor while placing all importance on Caddy's virginity, Jason's desire to advance himself and the family and in turn becomes a bitter and controlling man. Benjy and Caddy are the only characters that have no evil intentions, yet somehow acquire most of the burden and punishment.

After reading it countless times, *The Sound and the Fury* continues to frustrate and fascinate me, not only because of the rich family dynamic, but also because of the portrayal of women, mainly Caddy. Caddy's character is drawn up through the narratives of her three brothers. She does not have much dialogue, she does not have her own narrative, and she is absent for most of the novel. In silencing Caddy, Faulkner only lets the reader see her through the lens of the men in her life. In her book, *Faulkner and*

Southern Womanhood, Diane Roberts interprets this censoring as “no room for female desire...no space for Caddy’s subjectivity, her version of her story” (Roberts 111). Caddy never gets the chance to explain her side of the story, because Faulkner idealizes her and wishes to keep her silent.

However, Caddy’s presence is the driving force of the story and her actions propel the fate of her entire family. Caddy’s absent presence controls three different male narratives: each of the Compson brothers wants to control Caddy, who desires freedom. When Caddy is damned and excommunicated by her family, it is not the result of her being evil, but because of her attempt to claim her sexuality. Caddy is surrounded by people who want to control her – and if they can’t control her they want to destroy her; but her conflict is that they are all people she loves.

Similarly, Benjy is also made a non-entity by his family. When he tries to be “affectionate” with a girl he mistakes for Caddy, they assume he tried to rape her and they castrate him. This suggests that, in the Old South, a verbally handicapped person was on the same level as a woman. Both are subjected to the demands of others and both are silenced in some way – Caddy by not having her own narrative, and Benjy by not having the capacity to speak. The title of the novel comes from Shakespeare’s play *Macbeth*, where in scene five of the fifth act, Macbeth states:

Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player

That struts and frets his hour upon the stage

And then is heard no more: it is a tale

Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,

Signifying nothing.

Benjy is described as an idiot in the novel – his moans and his inability to communicate definitely causes “sound and fury” for him and the rest of the family. However, Caddy and Benjy, the two silenced characters in the novel, have the loudest narratives; they relate most of the truth and power of the story itself.

Moreover, Caddy’s turbulent sexuality disturbs her brothers and creates situations that cause their destructions, while suggesting an inherent duality within her: her presence and absence, her seduction and her maternal nurturing. Benjy depends on Caddy for maternal love, Quentin idealizes her and wants to protect her and Jason sees Caddy as something that can be used for material gain. When they project their desires on her and she does not comply, they self-destruct.

Caddy acts as a symbol for one of the main social revolutions of the Old South: the fall of the Southern Belle as directly correlated with the rise of female sexuality. Roberts believes that Caddy’s loss of virginity can be seen as her expulsion from the Garden of Eden. In *The Sound and the Fury*, moral strength translated into sexual chastity is something that is “nostalgically compared to the sexual permissiveness” of the present (Roberts 105). Faulkner’s depiction of Caddy is a loaded historical figure; she marks the transition in upper-class southern chastity to the dangerous territory where the female body is more powerful than ever.

Quentin’s relationship with Caddy is particularly illuminating in terms of what is expected of women. In the appendix Faulkner wrote for *The Sound and the Fury* in , he states that Caddy loved Quentin, even though he was incapable of love and she accepted the fact that “he must value above all not her but the virginity of which she was custodian and on which she placed no value” (Faulkner 710). Quentin gives Caddy’s virginity a

value that exceeds her worth as a person; it symbolizes the family's honor and reflects the ideals of the old south. When he finds out Caddy is no longer a virgin, Quentin feels the values of the external world crumbling, therefore causing him to breakdown and surrender to the death of romantic ideals. Caddy can no longer be trafficked, used to improve the family's honor in society through marriage.

Mrs. Compson's paradoxical character is also worth examining. Roberts explains that Mrs. Compson, a victim of the trafficking of women, "ironically responds to [Caddy's] now-valueless state most viciously" (Roberts 112) by claiming that Caddy is biologically polluted. Mrs. Compson's response to Caddy's impurity could be her jealousy of Caddy's freedom. Mrs. Compson is a cold and unloving woman who carried out all of the expected duties of a woman and always obeyed society's rules. When her daughter completely ignores that which society holds in high esteem, Mrs. Compson is embittered and indignant. Caddy's worth in society is void since she is no longer a virgin – she cannot be traded to a husband in exchange for social or economic power for the whole family. Mrs. Compson, having been trafficked by her Bascomb family to the higher, aristocratic Compsons, rejects Caddy because she refuses to be used the same way.

Roberts makes the connection between Mrs. Compson's sexuality and Caddy's through their relationship with beds (Roberts 196). As a hypochondriac, Mrs. Compson rules her household from her bed. Through Mrs. Compson's appropriation of her bed, it is seen as a place of sickly domination. As a trafficked woman, marriage is not based on love, but on social or financial gain. Moreover, sex is not based on love, but solely on procreation – to produce an heir for the man who "bought" her. Since Mrs. Compson has

desexualized beds, Caddy seems to meet her boyfriends everywhere except in a bed – she always meets them somewhere outdoors.

The role of women in *The Sound and the Fury* is made even more present by the fact that Faulkner admitted that the story began with an image of a doomed little girl, one whose sexuality would be the cause of her own family's downfall. The scene he thought of that propelled the novel is when the Compson children are playing in the creek and Caddy's underwear is muddied. Caddy muddies her drawers, the symbol of her soiled purity, which causes Quentin to slap her. She later breaks a rule by climbing up a tree to look in on their grandmother's funeral. Through this one simple image, Faulkner proves his ability to capture the essence of an entire novel in a single picture. Indeed this scene holds every theme in the book: sex, death, control and rebellion. In his unpublished introduction, he reinforces the power of the image and claims that the characters he created and their relationships were "absolutely right and absolutely beautiful...[they] postulated themselves in a picture [so explicable] that it could be acted by lay figures and caught without dialogue by a camera" (Cohen and Fowler 269).

To Faulkner, Caddy's image was perfectly malleable to visually, and metaphorically, represent three aspects of the mother figure. Quentin "loved her...as a lover would," Jason "loved her with the same hatred of jealous and outraged pride of a father" and Benjy who "loved her with the complete mindlessness of a child" (Cohen and Fowler 270). Their need for Caddy is the one connecting force between the brothers that renders them fundamentally alike. Caddy functions as a stabilizing force for the novel, and for Faulkner himself as a writer.

While writing his unpublished introduction, Faulkner had an epiphany. Five years after he wrote the novel, he discovered the physical characteristic he believed all good novels possessed. This being “the action, the desires of the people all came to one single head, like that instant when a pot boils, in an anecdote so simple as to be possible or actual, or at least credible, the experience of everyone who ever breathed” (Cohen and Fowler 273). Faulkner acknowledges that the simplicity that makes a story *good*, what makes a story relatable and *human*, is its ability to “not be the same picture to all who read it...those who left the book with the same picture would not be moved the same way” (Cohen and Fowler 273).

The role of one doomed little girl in the lives of her three brothers and the destruction of the family is simple and relatable. Caddy represents everything female-oriented that Faulkner repressed or harbored in his subconscious: the death of his daughter, his turbulent marriage with his second wife and her subsequent suicide, his regret that he never had a sister, the fall of the southern woman, the social remodeling of the old south and the correlated liberation of feminine sexuality. His own human experience is imbedded in Caddy.

Throughout the novel the rise of feminine sexuality is also correlated with the tragic sense of loss. The sense of loss is greatly felt by the intrusion of reality upon the Compson siblings' childhood. Caddy's sexual liberation and maturity initiates that intrusion for Benjy and Quentin and the results of her sexuality affect Jason's ambitions. Aside from Dilsey, Caddy is the only warm, loving, vibrant person in the novel. Caddy provides the female love and tenderness for her brothers that their mother, Mrs. Compson, was incapable of giving. Caddy has compassion for her brothers, and her

dilemma is that she must sacrifice her own freedom and female sexuality if she is to keep her brothers happy; but she is too passionate and full of life to do so. Her ability to love and accept her sexuality is twisted into something corrupt by her family. The guilt her family makes her feel drives her to frantically attempt to save her family from the disgrace her actions have caused them (her marriage to Herbert and abandon of Miss Quentin).

The novel can be interpreted as a social commentary, the deterioration of family and the American south, as a metaphysical novel concerned with time and space or a feminist commentary on the voice of women. All of these, however, touch upon a basic theme: the tragic sense of loss. The three sections create a thematic progression by presenting the three stages of development: the child's mind (Benjy), the adolescent mind (Quentin) and the adult mind (Jason). This progression suggests that with development, there is a deterioration of emotional response.

Faulkner uses the past to reveal the vapidness of the present. An example of this is Quentin's character: his idealized notions of chivalry, honor and dignity within the social structure of the "Old South" are romantic and adolescent. Quentin evokes a feeling about the past that makes the present seem empty, but the past Faulkner uses to set off the present in the novel is not a romanticizing of a historical past, but the immediate past of the Compson children's childhood. By juxtaposing the childhood past of the Compson siblings with their present, the theme of deterioration and loss is established and it becomes a story about the degeneration of a family and society.

During Quentin's narrative, he and Mr. Compson turn to the topic of virginity. While Quentin is preoccupied with his idealistic view of femininity and Caddy's fall

from it, Mr. Compson states that virginity is an irrelevant concept. He states, “It means less to women, Father said. He said it was men invented virginity, not women” (Faulkner 78). Mr. Compson says this in order to break down Quentin’s fixation on virginity. This idea that men invented something that society covets and women must abide by is a parallel to the fact that, much like a patriarchal society, Faulkner’s novel is only seen through the eyes of men, while the women are mostly silent.

Caddy’s absence and the downfall of the southern belle affect Benjy and Quentin in the same way. Through Caddy’s excommunication from the family because of her sexuality, Benjy and Quentin lose love and stability. Jason, on the other hand, only loses a job at the bank. Jason is the only one of the Compsons who functions in adulthood because the vision of life he brings out of his childhood fits with the reality of the world. The emotional connections that would have provided Jason with sufficient stability are distorted during his childhood by Mrs. Compson’s inadequacy as a mother. She sets Jason apart from the family out of her own sense of inferiority and makes it impossible for him to establish an affectionate relationship with the other children.

This brings into question the role of the mother figure. While Mrs. Compson is the biological mother of the Compson children, Dilsey and Caddy herself act more like mothers to the three brothers. Dilsey provides structure and understanding while Caddy provides affection and stability. Both Dilsey and Caddy think differently of the role of women than does Mrs. Compson. While Mrs. Compson was trafficked into her marriage and had children because it was what society expected of her, both Dilsey and Caddy had children out of love, without regard for social expectations. Neither Dilsey nor Caddy actively had the intent to determine their child’s place in a family or the world, like Mrs.

Compson did with Jason. This suggests that the social trade of women does not beget content women, much less capable mothers.

The story of the Compson family is relatable, honest and simple. To paraphrase Faulkner's Nobel Prize acceptance speech, "the human heart in conflict with itself is the only thing worth writing about, worth the agony and the sweat. The old verities and truths of the heart, the universal truths – love and honor and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice." *The Sound and the Fury* is about these conflicts and values put into context with a changing social environment, a pivotal moment in the south's history, women's history and the history of the United States in general. The novel ends with the mysterious "New York, New York October 1928" a few empty lines after the last sentence. New York was not the place where the story took place, and October 1928 is four or five months after the latest day of the narrative. This suggests that this story is eternal and could happen any time, any place; it is a story of eternal humanity and I hope that in my adaptation I have done it some justice.

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THE SOUND AND THE FURY
an adapted screenplay by
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BLACK SCREEN

We hear crickets CHIRP and leaves RUSTLING.

EXT. PASTURE - MORNING

BENJY, 16, walks up a grassy hill, his gaze on the ground. He wears faded overalls, a stained white shirt and he is barefoot. His unkempt blond, curly hair surrounds his pale face.

We hear a loud WHACK.

GOLFER'S VOICE (O.S.)

(yells)

Four.

As Benjy walks over the hill, the bright sun shines in his eyes. Squinting, he stops and stands with his hand covering most of his face from the sun. A RED RIBBON is tied around his wrist.

He stares at a large colonial MANSION, the epitome of a romanticized southern estate.

A GOLF BALL lands a few feet away from his feet. He looks down at the golf ball, then looks away and stares at--

An expansive golf course with a few flags protruding from the ground.

GOLFER'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(yells)

Caddie.

Benjy squeezes his eyes shut and MOANS. He rubs his face with his hands.

BLACK SCREEN

Crickets CHIRP. Frogs CROAK. Water TRICKLES in a creek. We hear CHILDREN'S VOICES.

CHILD'S VOICE (O.S.)

Caddy.

Leaves RUSTLE.

EXT. PASTURE - NIGHT

BENJY, 4, stares upwards, his big brown eyes are enchanted by something. His curly blond hair frames his face.

CHILD'S VOICE (O.S.)

Caddy.

BENJY'S POV--

The moon illuminates a large LIVE OAK TREE covered in spanish moss. The branches and the moss sway in the short gusts of wind.

CADDY, 7, ENTERS BENJY'S POV, a beautiful little girl in a white dress, smiling, one of her front teeth missing. Her big green eyes peer down at Benjy. Her long brown hair is a wild mess.

CADDY
Benjy, give Caddy a hug.

She reaches out her hands and we see Benjy's small hands extend toward her. Caddy leans in and hugs Benjy. Behind Caddy, her hair fluttering in the wind, we see--

The large LIVE OAK TREE.

CHILD'S VOICE (O.S.)
Caddy.

Caddy steps back and turns.

CADDY
(yells)
What?

Benjy reaches for Caddy as she pulls away from him.

We see BENJY'S FACE--

He looks distressed. He turns and follows Caddy's attention and we see--

A pudgy little boy, JASON, 5, further downstream in the creek. His brown hair gets in the way of his blue eyes. He walks in circles and lightly splashes the water. He is solemn, his hands in his pockets.

JASON
Come look.

Caddy ignores him and splashes further in the creek. He continues walking back and forth in the water by himself.

We hear someone WHISTLE a quiet song.

QUENTIN, 8, watches Caddy from the creek's bank. He sits on a rock, formally dressed, his hands folded on his lap. His short brown hair neatly frames his wan face and green eyes.

Caddy picks up a handful of mud and rolls it into a ball. She walks over to Quentin.

CADDY

Here.

Her muddy hand reaches for his clean hand. He reluctantly puts his hand out and Caddy slaps the mud on his palm.

CADDY (CONT'D)

Mud pie.

Quentin forces a smile. Caddy hops in the creek and walks to the other side.

Benjy still sits on the bank. He wears overalls and sucks on his right hand. Even at his young age, it is apparent that he is mentally handicapped. His physical movements are discordant and abrupt.

VERSH, 8, a skinny Black boy, approaches the creek and sits down next to Benjy. He is the WHISTLER. He wears pants rolled up to his knees, puts his feet in the water. He picks blades of grass and tosses them aside.

Caddy leans over Benjy and kisses his head.

BENJY'S POV--

Caddy smiles down at him, touching his face.

CADDY (CONT'D)

Say Caddy, Benjy.

Benjy smiles and reaches up to hold her hair.

Caddy walks back into the creek and squats down. Her dress dips in the water. She retrieves another handful of mud. Versh looks at Caddy's wet dress.

VERSH

Your momma gonna give you a whippin'
for getting your dress wet.

Caddy rubs the mud between her hands, not phased.

CADDY

She's not gonna do any such thing.

Quentin walks to the other side of the stream and sits down on the bank next to Benjy. Caddy picks up more mud and rubs it in her hands.

Quentin stands and slowly walks into the water until it reaches his ankles.

Caddy lets the mud slide off her hands and plop into the creek. She rinses her hands and wipes them on her dress.

VERSH

You know she whip you when you get
your dress wet.

He keeps whistling.

Caddy stands up and looks down at her wet dress, clinging to
her skinny frame.

CADDY

I'll take it off. Then it'll dry.

QUENTIN

You won't.

CADDY

I will.

Quentin takes a few steps deeper into the water.

QUENTIN

You better not.

Caddy walks over to Versh and turns her back to him. She
crosses her arms.

CADDY

Unbutton it, Versh.

Quentin crosses the creek.

QUENTIN

Don't you do it, Versh. Caddy you
keep your dress on or I'll whip ya
myself.

Versh looks back and forth between Caddy and Quentin.

CADDY

You unbutton it, Versh. Or I'll
tell Dilsey what you did yesterday.

Versh sighs. He stands up and unbuttons Caddy's dress.
Caddy takes her dress off and throws it on the bank. She is
now only in her bodice and drawers.

Quentin walks over to Caddy and SLAPS her. She doesn't
flinch. She stares at Quentin.

QUENTIN

Do you want to get us all into
trouble?

She stares at him, her wet under garments cling to her skin.

CADDY

I want to-

She splashes water on Quentin. His shirt is drenched.

CADDY (CONT'D)

Help you.

Caddy laughs. Quentin jumps in the creek and starts splashing Caddy. They laugh and squeal.

In the background Jason watches the Children playing. Jason walks upstream, approaches them and gets splashed on.

JASON

I'm gonna tell mammy on you all.

Caddy and Quentin stop. They look at Jason, then look at each other and smile. They splash Jason. Jason runs behind a bush.

JASON (CONT'D)

Quit or I'll tell mammy on you!

Quentin runs out of the creek and follows Jason.

QUENTIN

No you won't.

Benjy gets splashed on. He whimpers. Versh picks up Benjy and walks away from the creek. Jason runs around a tree in the pasture. Quentin stops and gives up. He walks back to the creek.

Caddy gets out of the water and runs up to Benjy. She wipes his face and kisses his cheek. Benjy smiles.

She turns and searches the pasture.

CADDY

(yelling)

If you don't tell, you can come back,
Jason!

Jason peeks from around the tree. He walks back to the creek.

Jason sits down on the bank next to Benjy and Versh.

Benjy starts whimpering. Caddy walks over to Benjy, sits down next to him and hugs him. Her wet hair sticks to his small face. She gets up and walks into the creek.

Caddy sits in the water and when she stands up, her drawers are muddy.

Benjy starts to cry. Quentin and Jason stare at Caddy's muddy underwear.

CADDY (CONT'D)

Hush Benjy.

At the sound of Caddy's voice, the brothers all look away.

JASON

I saw tadpoles down over there.

Caddy picks up a hand full of mud. She rubs it between her palms.

Quentin lies down on the grass.

QUENTIN

Liar.

Jason glares at Quentin.

CADDY

That's what you always say, and there
have never been any tadpoles anywhere
in here.

DILSEY, 20s, the Children's nanny and Versh's mother, appears at the top of the hill behind the creek. She is a round woman and wears an apron over her faded blue dress.

DILSEY

(yelling)

Come to supper!

Versh stands. Caddy turns.

CADDY

(yelling)

It's not supper time yet!

DILSEY

(yelling)

Oh yes its! Bring them on, Versh.

Caddy picks up her dress. In the background Dilsey walks away, down the other side of the hill and disappears.

Caddy pulls her dress on over her head and walks over to Versh. He turns her around and buttons it for her.

VERSH

They won't know you got wet. It
don't show on you. Less Jason tells.

Jason looks up at Versh. Caddy smooths out her dress and pats down her hair.

CADDY
Are you going to tell, Jason?

Jason looks at Caddy. Caddy crosses her arms and raises her eyebrows, testing him. Jason looks down at the ground.

Quentin stands up, picks up Benjy and gives him to Versh.

QUENTIN
He won't tell. Will you, Jason.

CADDY
I bet he does tell.

Caddy stares at Jason. Versh keeps WHISTLING.

QUENTIN
You won't tell, Jason. Remember
that bow and arrow I made you?

Jason stands up and starts walking up the hill.

JASON
It's broke now.

CADDY
Let him tell. I don't give a cuss.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE - NIGHT

The five Children walk over the hill. The sound of the creek is only slightly heard.

We see the same white southern colonial MANSION. All the windows in the house glow with yellow light and illuminate the wrap-around porch. The land is expansive and the closest neighbor is miles away. The land is green and lush with trees.

There are carriages parked on the road leading up to the house with horses harnessed to them.

VERSH
They got company tonight.

Jason shoves his hands in his pockets.

JASON
I'm hungry.

Caddy runs toward a large pear tree next to the side of the house. The tree is so close to the house that its branches

scrape against the walls and windows. The children follow her.

QUENTIN
Then go inside.

Jason sighs. He follows them.

JASON
We should mind Dilsey.

They all ignore him.

Caddy tries to climb up the tree. She claws at the bark, to no avail. Versh walks over to her.

VERSH
You better get away from there. Mr.
Jason said if you break another branch
he whip you.

Caddy jumps up and down trying to reach the lowest branch.

CADDY
Help me up, Versh.

Versh shakes his head and sets Benjy down on the grass. He helps Caddy up the tree.

VERSH
Alright. You the one going to get
whipped. I ain't.

As Caddy climbs up the tree, Quentin, Jason and Benjy look up at her and see--

Her MUDDY UNDERWEAR.

Drops of muddy water DRIP from her clothes on their faces. Jason rubs his face with his sleeve.

Benjy starts to cry as Caddy disappears down the branch, into the leaves. The tree branches RUSTLE.

JASON
I'm gonna tell.

Versh picks up Benjy and he stops crying. Quentin and Jason still look up at Caddy.

VERSH
What do you see?

CADDY
Hush.

Caddy drags her body down the branch until she reaches the end. She sits up, her feet dangle in front of the boys' faces below. She moves a higher branch out of the way. She squints and SEES --

A blurry image through the window. Some PEOPLE sit in chairs, others stand, around a large open casket in the center of the room. In it lies a DEAD WOMAN's body.

Caddy frowns.

DILSEY (O.S.)
 Whyn't you all go inside and sit
 down for supper?

The voice startles Caddy, and the branches shake. A few leaves flutter to the ground. The boys look around.

Dilsey comes around the corner of the house.

DILSEY (CONT'D)
 Where's Caddy?

Quentin and Versh look up at the tree. Jason walks over to Dilsey.

JASON
 I told her not to climb up that tree.
 I'm gonna tell.

Caddy looks down from the tree at Jason.

CADDY
(whispering)
 Weasel.

Dilsey frowns. She walks over to the tree and looks up at Caddy in the branches.

DILSEY
 You, Satan. Come down from there.

Dilsey shakes a branch and Caddy starts climbing down. Dilsey smacks Versh on his head.

DILSEY (CONT'D)
 Ain't you got any better sense than
 to let them come around here?

Versh winces and rubs his head with one hand.

Dilsey reaches up into the tree and pulls Caddy down.

VERSH
(*whispering*)
What'd you see?

Caddy smooths out her dress. Quentin pulls a leaf out of her hair.

CADDY
They're not doing anything in there.
Just sitting in chairs and looking.

Dilsey shoves them all in the direction of the house.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE PORCH - NIGHT

MR. COMPSON, 40, exits from the kitchen. His thick hair is brushed back. He wears all black. The sleeves of his shirt are rolled up to his elbows. He struggles to steady his hand and light a match. He tosses the burnt matches over the porch.

The Children and Dilsey approach the porch.

Jason runs up to his father.

JASON
Papa.

Mr. Compson finally lights a match. Jason runs up to him and shakes his arm, which puts out the match. Mr. Compson glares at Jason.

JASON (CONT'D)
Caddy and Quentin threw water on us
all 'n Caddy climbed the tree.

Caddy stops and stares at Jason. Her hands tighten into fists. Quentin waits for their father's reaction.

Mr. Compson tosses the burnt match over the porch. He puts the pipe in his pocket and takes out a silver flask. He takes a swig and looks back toward the kitchen.

MR. COMPSON
You all eat supper in the kitchen
tonight. Quietly.

The children all walk into the kitchen through the swinging screen door. Mr. Compson stops Jason.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)
Don't be a tattletale Jason, it's
not gentlemanly.

JASON

But they-

Mr. Compson walks past Jason into the kitchen, ignoring him.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

An old southern kitchen. A cast iron stove stands in the corner, a large ice box on the ground next to it. A sink protrudes from the wall with pipes under it. In the corner next to the back door are a set of stairs that go up to the second floor.

Mr. Compson walks through the kitchen and exits into the dining room. Jason enters the kitchen, head down. He sits at the table.

All the Children sit at the table in the kitchen and Dilsey brings them plates of food.

Quentin looks through out the window and sees--

GUESTS exiting the house down the front porch. Mr. Compson stands next to MRS. COMPSON, 30, who wears a long black dress and fans herself with a camphor-soaked towel. Her hair is pulled back tightly in a bun. Mr. Compson shakes hands with the Guests and Mrs. Compson kisses them on the cheek. A few of the Guests get in their respective buggies and drive off.

Quentin turns around and whispers to the Children, pointing at the window. Quentin picks up Benjy.

QUENTIN

They're going.

The Children all go to the window and press their faces against it. Quentin brings Benjy close to the window so he can see.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE PORCH - NIGHT

The Children's faces are pressed against the window. Mr. and Mrs. Compson shake and kiss the remaining Guests goodbye.

MRS. COMPSON

(to the Guests)

Thank you for coming.

An OLD MAN hugs Mrs. Compson.

OLD MAN

I'm sorry for your loss.

Mr. and Mrs. Compson nod.

MR. COMPSON

Thank you.

The Old Man and the rest of the Guests walk down the front steps and get in their respective buggies.

The Children watch through the window as the buggies drive away.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

They all turn back around and take their seats again. Quentin puts Benjy back in his highchair.

They all stare at each other.

JASON

What were those people doing here,
Dilsey?

Dilsey ties a napkin around Benjy's neck.

DILSEY

You'll know in the Lord's own time.

JASON

When's the Lord's own time?

Dilsey sits down and starts feeding Benjy. Quentin shakes his head.

QUENTIN

It's Sunday, don't you know anything?

DILSEY

Hush.

Caddy turns and looks at Dilsey.

CADDY

Dilsey, can I sleep with Benjy
tonight?

Dilsey wipes Benjy's mouth with her apron.

DILSEY

If you can keep quiet this time.

Caddy nods and smiles, she pets Benjy's hair. Benjy watches her.

CADDY

I can.

EXT. ROAD - AFTERNOON

Benjy holds onto an iron fence and looks through the bars, smiling.

BENJY'S POV--

Caddy and Quentin walk together down the dry dirt road toward the fence. Further behind them walks Jason, alone, watching them. They all carry book bags over their shoulders.

CADDY

I can.

QUENTIN

You're a lady Caddy, ladies don't beat men.

Caddy kicks a pebble on the dirt road.

Quentin shakes his head.

Jason cups his hands around his mouth and shouts-

JASON

Wait for me.

Caddy and Quentin ignore him.

QUENTIN

I don't care if you can as long as you don't.

Caddy looks at Quentin. Jason jogs a few steps then stops.

CADDY

I'll beat whoever I want. It's a free country, isn't it?

Jason runs up to them and finally reaches them.

JASON

Wanna know what I got for my spelling score?

Caddy and Quentin start to walk a little faster, trying to leave Jason behind.

QUENTIN

You always cheat.

Jason furrows his brow.

JASON

Do not.

CADDY

Even when you cheat you still never
do so good.

Caddy laughs and pokes Jason in his side. Jason slaps her hand away.

JASON

I don't cheat.

Caddy and Quentin keep walking. Jason walks, behind them again.

Versh walks up behind Benjy, they both stand watching from behind the fence.

JASON (CONT'D)

I don't cheat.

Quentin and Caddy ignore him.

Caddy looks up and sees Benjy, Versh standing next to him. She smiles.

CADDY

Hello Benjy. Did you come to meet
Caddy?

Quentin unlatches it, lets Caddy walk through the gate ahead of him.

Benjy and Versh walk toward them. Caddy runs up to Benjy, her book satchel swinging behind her, and hugs him.

Jason walks through the gate. He stops when he sees all the Children together. He watches them. The Children all walk together toward the house. Jason slowly follows behind them.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE - AFTERNOON

The Children all enter the house. Benjy holds Caddy's hand and pulls her to the staircase. Quentin and Versh follow behind.

Jason enters the house, unnoticed.

Benjy picks something up from the first step of the staircase. It's a stack of paper dolls. He hands a paper doll in a dress with long brown hair to Caddy.

CADDY

Thank you Benjy.

She hugs him. Benjy nuzzles his face in her neck and smiles.

Jason watches them in the background.

Benjy hands a paper doll with pants and blond hair to Quentin, who laughs. Benjy claps.

Jason stomps over to them and snatches the paper dolls from Caddy and Quentin.

CADDY (CONT'D)

Jason-

QUENTIN

Hey-

He tears them up and throws them on the ground, pushes past them and runs up the stairs.

The Children all stare after Jason, in shock.

INT. JASON'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

Jason runs into his room and slams the door behind him. He throws his schoolbag on the floor and sits on his bed. He looks down at his shaking hands. His eyes water.

We hear a KNOCK on his door.

JASON

Go away.

The door slowly opens. Versh looks in and stares at Jason. He shakes his head.

JASON (CONT'D)

Get out.

Versh opens the door a little more and lets Benjy through. Benjy slowly and cautiously walks toward Jason.

JASON (CONT'D)

I said get out.

Benjy reaches one of his hands toward Jason. Jason looks at his hand and sees Benjy is carrying a small PAPER DOLL with pants and short brown hair. Jason looks at the Paper Doll. Then looks at Benjy, who stares at him, offering him the Paper Doll. Jason takes it. Benjy runs out of the room and Versh closes the door behind him.

Jason sits on his bed, looking at the Paper Doll in his hands.

CUT TO BLACK.

We hear DEBUSSY playing, then light LAUGHTER.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE LIBRARY - EVENING

Mrs. Compson, buoyant and laughing, pours tea in a small tea cup. She is surrounded by ELEGANT LADIES, a few work on their embroidery, others sip from tea cups.

A YOUNG LADY stands and walks toward the phonograph and shuffles through a short stack of records.

YOUNG LADY

I think ragtime is interesting- the sound is free and lively and it's becoming popular up north.

An ELDERLY WOMAN, sitting in an armchair, sets her embroidery down in her lap.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Oh stop that nonsense, you'll embarrass yourself.

They all laugh. Mrs. Compson nods, picks up a plate of macaroons.

MRS. COMPSON

(to the Young Lady)

You're too young to know the fine line between freedom and foolishness.

Mrs. Compson hands around the plate of macaroons.

YOUNG LADY

(to the Elderly Woman)

And you, my dear Aunt, are too old to hear music at all.

They all laugh. The Elderly Woman grunts, the Young Lady walks toward her and kisses her cheek.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE HALLWAY - EVENING

Caddy and Quentin sit at the top of the stairs, listening to Mrs. Compson and her guests. Caddy is barefoot and her hair is a mess. Jason, Versh and Benjy sit on the floor next to them, leaning against the banister on the other side. Quentin leans in toward Caddy.

QUENTIN

Can you hear anything they're saying?

Caddy shrugs.

MR. COMPSON (O.S.)

Evesdropping?

They all jump and turn to see Mr. Compson standing behind them. He bends over and picks Caddy up in his arms and starts to carry her downstairs. The Children follow behind.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE LIBRARY - EVENING

Mr. Compson enters the library, Caddy in his arms. He sets her down on the floor and nudges her.

MRS. COMPSON
Candace, come here sugar.

Caddy walks toward her mother. Mrs. Compson takes her small hands and looks at her hair, then at her dirty, bare feet.

Caddy smiles, showing gaps among her teeth, where new teeth are starting to grow.

Mrs. Compson nudges her.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)
Go get ready for supper, Candace.

Caddy turns and leaves. One of the Elegant Ladies, Mrs. Wilkins, watches Caddy leave. She leans toward Mrs. Compson.

MRS. WILKINS
Look at those green eyes.
*(Turns to Mrs.
Compson, smiling)*
She looks just like you.

Mrs. Compson stares at Caddy.

MRS. COMPSON
I doubt it. She's more Compson, her
and Quentin both are. Jason has
more of my Bascomb.

Mrs. Wilkins shrugs.

MRS. WILKINS
They're all adorable. You must be
very proud.

Mrs. Compson watches Caddy exit the room, then continues working on her embroidery.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE DINING ROOM - EVENING

Mr. Compson sits at the head of the dining room table and sips his drink. The table is set for dinner; the place settings of silver and decorated porcelain are neatly organized. On the table there is a platter of rice and meat.

Next to the table is a large window that looks out onto the porch. Through the window we see--

Mrs. Compson chat with Mrs. Wilkins.

Dilsey enters the dining room with a tray of biscuits. She sets the tray down in the center of the table next to the platter of food.

MR. COMPSON

Thank you, Dilsey.

Dilsey nods and exits the room.

Mr. Compson leans toward the window and taps on the glass. Mrs. Compson and Mrs. Wilkins turn to look at him. Mrs. Compson nods, kisses Mrs. Wilkins on the cheek and waves. Mrs. Wilkins descends the front steps. Mrs. Compson enters the house. We hear the front door close. She enters the dining room. She stops and looks at the table and counts the place settings.

MRS. COMPSON

Dilsey.

Mr. Compson sips his drink. Mrs. Compson picks up a plate at the end of the table and walks to the kitchen, opens the door. Dilsey approaches her. Mrs. Compson hands her the plate.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

I've told you many times, Benjamin
eats in the kitchen. He's too messy.

Dilsey nods and takes the plate from her. Mrs. Compson closes the kitchen door. She enters the dining room and sits down next to Mr. Compson. She picks up her plate and inspects it. She takes her sleeve and polishes the silver.

Mr. Compson sips his drink and stares at his wife. The Children enter the dining room.

Jason sits next to his mother. Mrs. Compson smiles at him.

Caddy sits next to her father and Quentin sits next to Caddy.

Dilsey enters the dining room and begins serving food onto the Children's plates.

Mr. Compson stands and walks toward a liquor cabinet in the corner of the room. He refills his drink.

Dilsey finishes serving the food, picks up the platter and walks back into the kitchen. Mr. Compson sits down. They all eat.

Through the swinging door we see Benjy standing in the kitchen, watching his family. He moans. The Children look up and see him.

QUENTIN

Benjy-

MRS. COMPSON

I've told you a thousand times,
nicknames are vulgar. Benjamin.

Mrs. Compson shakes her head. She looks at Quentin and Caddy, eating quietly. Caddy's hair is messy and one of her sleeves is torn, Quentin holds his fork in a fist.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Were you two raised by wolves?

We hear Benjy moan from the kitchen. Caddy and Quentin look toward the kitchen.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

I'm speaking to you.

Caddy and Quentin look up. Mrs. Compson turns to Mr. Compson.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Look at your children. They have no
respect for me.

Mr. Compson ignores her. Caddy and Quentin continue eating, quietly. Benjy moans again.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Jason, shut the door.

Jason looks up at his mother, then looks at Caddy and Quentin, both staring back at him. He looks down at his plate. He slowly gets up, walks to the doorway and closes the sliding doors.

He walks back to the table and sits down. Mrs. Compson smiles at Jason. Jason looks at Caddy and Quentin. They both avoid eyes contact with him. Jason looks down at his plate and continues eating.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE - NIGHT

We hear crickets CHIRPING.

The moon illuminates the expansive pasture outside the Compson house. There are rolling hills in the distance, trees everywhere, green grass covers the ground. The lights that glow from their windows are the only lights for miles, besides the moon.

Dilsey walks out onto the porch and closes the shutters over the windows, closing up the yellow glow. She looks out at the pasture and squints. She sees--

Quentin laying on the grass with his arms behind his head, looking at the sky. Benjy sits on his stomach, he holds a flower in one hand.

She cups her hands over her mouth.

DILSEY
(yells)
Ya'll come inside now.

Benjy looks over to Dilsey, and rolls off Quentin's stomach and crawls. Quentin stands up and follows him.

QUENTIN
Caddy.

They lean over the edge of a hill and see--

Caddy rolling on her side down the grassy hill. She reaches the bottom, gets up and laughs. She runs up the hill, lays down on her side again.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)
Come on, we gotta go back.

Caddy looks up at Quentin and smiles. She rolls down the hill and giggles. She reaches the bottom. She gets up, dizzy. She sways and holds out her arms, shakes her head.

CADDY
Come on. Try it.

Quentin stares at the grass and dirt stains on Caddy's knees.

QUENTIN
You can't do anythin' without gettin'
all dirty.

She walks up the hill and trips, she laughs. She looks down at her knees and rubs the dirt off.

CADDY
If you ever did anythin' at all you'd
get dirty too.

She walks up the hill. Quentin picks up Benjy and they walk toward the house. Caddy takes Quentin's hand.

CUT TO BLACK

We hear crickets CHIRP. Distant LAUGHTER.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Caddy, now 17, runs through bushes and trees, giggling. Her long brown hair falls over her shoulders and her blouse is half unbuttoned. A YOUNG MAN, 18, follows her.

YOUNG MAN

(whispers)

Caddy.

He wears an undershirt and as he runs he takes his shoes off, tripping over and throwing them to the side. We don't see his face.

In the background we see a horse and buggy. He runs up to her and they kiss.

CUT TO BLACK

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Caddy and the Young Man lie down next to each other in a clearing in the woods.

Caddy sits up and leans against a tree, her blouse unbuttoned. She brushes through her hair with her fingers and HUMS a sad song. She ties her hair up in a bun with a RED RIBBON.

The Young Man, sweaty and shirtless, lies next to her.

She looks at her watch, stands up and buttons her blouse.

CADDY

Come on.

She nudges the Young Man with her foot.

YOUNG MAN

Stay.

Caddy shakes her head.

CADDY

I have to go home.

He grabs her foot and bites it. She laughs and loses her balance, leans on a tree.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE PORCH - NIGHT

We hear frogs CROAK and crickets CHIRP.

Jason, now 15, whittles a very detailed frog out of a small branch. He is broad shouldered and strong. He has a hint of facial hair. His pants are covered in wood shavings.

INT. QUENTIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Quentin, now 18, sits in a chair by a window. He is handsome and tall, still as wan and anemic as in his youth. He reads a book and smokes a cigarette.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE PORCH - NIGHT

Jason expertly whittles the frog's eyes with precision. He blows shavings off the carving.

We hear the clopping of hooves.

Jason looks up and sees--

The buggy pull to the side of the road before reaching the Compson's fence. Caddy jumps out of the buggy.

Jason sets his whittling down and watches her.

INT. QUENTIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Quentin looks up from his book and sees--

Caddy walk toward the house. She turns and waves to the Young Man as the buggy leaves up the road. Caddy runs down the road toward the house.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE PORCH - NIGHT

Jason watches Caddy walk around the house and enter through the back door.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE HALLWAY - NIGHT

The back door opens. Caddy peeks inside. She looks around. The coast is clear. She opens the door and it CREAKS. She closes her eyes and grimaces. She pushes the door open slowly. She tiptoes inside and quietly closes the door behind her. She walks toward the stairs.

MR. COMPSON (O.S.)

That is the only choice we have.

Caddy stops. She looks around.

MRS. COMPSON (O.S.)

But Jason, can't we be more discreet?
What will people say?

Caddy peeks around the corner. Through the doorway we see--

Mr. and Mrs. Compson, now 50 and 40, in the dining room. He looks older, the wrinkles of the past ten years show on his face. His hair is now gray. Mrs. Compson sits next to him,

fanning herself with a camphor-soaked towel. Mr. Compson stands up, a drink in his hand.

Caddy turns back around and hides behind the wall. Through the doorway we see them in the dining room behind her.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

It will seem we are in need of charity, selling half our land to send a boy off to school. And what about Jason?

Mr. Compson rolls his eyes and downs half of his whiskey. He walks to the liquor cabinet and pours more in his glass.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

I always knew you disdained him. He carries more of my Bascomb than your Compson. Are we so low that we don't deserve an education? Is that it?

Mr. Compson holds up the empty bottle of whiskey. He shakes it and frowns. He sighs and drinks from his glass.

MR. COMPSON

Yes, you Bascombs are invaluable to my own sense of racial superiority.

Caddy quietly tiptoes up the stairs.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Caddy opens the door to her room. Jason walks up behind her.

JASON

Where've you been?

CADDY

Leave me alone, Jason.

Caddy walks into her room and Jason follows her and shuts the door.

INT. CADDY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Caddy sits on her bed and takes off her shoes. Jason walks up to her and grabs her wrist. Caddy yanks her wrist from his grasp.

Caddy stands up and walks over to look at herself in the mirror, wipes the makeup off her face.

Jason walks up behind her. He crosses his arms.

JASON

I know what you do when you go out late.

Caddy looks away.

QUENTIN (O.S.)

Jason.

Jason and Caddy turn and see Quentin standing in the doorway. Quentin glares at Jason. Quentin opens the door wide. Jason looks at Caddy, walks out.

Quentin shuts the door behind him. Caddy looks at Quentin. He leans against the door and stares at her. She looks away. She walks toward the window and gazes out. He walks toward her and sits on her bed.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)

It's not right.

Caddy turns, walks toward him and sits on the bed next to him.

CADDY

I can take care of myself.

As Quentin looks at her he notices a leaf tangled in her hair. He pulls it out and looks at the leaf.

EXT. ROAD - AFTERNOON

Mr. Compson sits in a buggy harnessed to two horses, we hear their hooves CLOPPING on the ground. He holds a whip and the reins in his gloved hands. The buggy jolts from side to side from the potholes on the dirt road. Next to him sits Mrs. Compson, fanning herself. In the back sit Jason and Quentin.

MRS. COMPSON

I heard from Mrs. Wilkins that Betty is marrying Mr. Handley's boy. Have you ever heard of such a pair.

Mrs. Compson looks at her husband. He lightly whips the horse. She turns around in her seat to look at her sons. Jason shrugs, Quentin looks off into the distance. She turns back around and continues fanning herself.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

She should at least have the decency to marry someone born below Mason and Dixon.

She fixes her hair. She looks at her husband and nudges him. He glances at her, then looks away. He turns down a dirt road and approaches the small TOWN OF JEFFERSON.

EXT. TOWN STREETS - AFTERNOON

Fall leaves decorate the trees. The town is small and quaint, the streets lined with supply shops and horses with buggies. The Compson's buggy approaches a small CAFE.

Mr. Compson tightens the reins on the horse and pulls over to the side of the road. Mrs. Compson picks up her parasol and purse, gathering her dress.

MRS. COMPSON

Well, you all have fun and don't
bother to send for me before supper.

As the horses come to a stop she kisses Mr. Compson on the cheek. He grins and nods. Mrs. Compson steps off and walks toward the cafe, where Mrs. Wilkins and another LADY sit at an outdoor table drinking iced tea. They see Mrs. Compson approach and they wave. Mrs. Compson waves back.

The three men all watch her. Quentin climbs over the front bench of the buggy and sits next to his father.

Mr. Compson hands the reins to Quentin. Mr. Compson reaches into his coat pocket and pulls out a small flask, takes a sip. Jason looks away from them, toward the landscape.

MR. COMPSON

I have good news for you, Quentin.

Jason turns to look at them. Mr. Compson puts the flask back in his pocket and takes the reins. Quentin looks at his father.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)

You're going to Harvard.

Quentin raises his eyebrows.

Mr. Compson clears his throat.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)

I sold some of the pasture today. I
estimate that should bequeath
sufficient funds.

Jason stares at Quentin. Quentin's gaze falls, too embarrassed to look back at him.

Jason looks at his father.

JASON

What do I get?

Mr. Compson stares ahead.

MR. COMPSON

We need you here. You'll get a job
in town and really make something of
yourself.

Quentin looks at Jason. Then back at his father.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)

We need you here, Jason.

Jason shifts in his seat and looks away.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE PORCH - AFTERNOON

Crickets CHIRP. Frogs CROAK.

The Compson house is slightly more dilapidated than it used to be. The paint is chipped, the front steps are beginning to rot, ivy crawls up the side of the house.

Caddy sits on the steps making a daisy chain. Her hair is tied up with the red ribbon. Benjy, now 14, his handicap more obvious with age, picks daisies and brings them to her. She finishes the daisy chain.

Caddy reaches out to Benjy. He sees her and walks over to her. She puts the daisy chain on his head. He touches it and takes it off. He pulls on her red ribbon and takes it off her hair. She smiles, take the ribbon and ties it on his wrist. Benjy waves his wrist around, staring at the red ribbon. Caddy looks at Benjy and laughs.

She stops and rubs her stomach. She closes her eyes. Benjy watches her.

Caddy covers her mouth. Benjy tugs on Caddy's sleeve. She stands up, leans over the railing and vomits.

Benjy, shocked, stares at her. He moans and reaches out to her. Caddy runs in the house. Benjy sits on the ground, confused. He looks next to him and sees--

A small FROG SKELETON in the grass.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Caddy runs into the kitchen. Dilsey cuts up vegetables on the table. She stops and watches Caddy. Caddy leans over the sink and vomits again. Dilsey rests her hands on her hips.

DILSEY

That's fine of you, go ahead, make a
mess in my kitchen.

Caddy stops vomiting. She wipes her mouth.

She stops. She leans over the sink and heaves. Dilsey
observes Caddy.

Dilsey takes a cloth from the table. She walks over to Caddy,
wets the cloth carefully under the sink, avoiding getting in
Caddy's way. She dabs Caddy's forehead with the wet cloth.
Caddy heaves.

Dilsey feels Caddy's cheek with the back of her hand. She
stops and looks at Caddy's stomach, then at her face.

Dilsey stares at Caddy. Caddy looks away.

CADDY

I must've eaten something bad.

Dilsey nods, staring at her.

DILSEY

I don't know from what, you haven't
had much of an appetite lately.

Caddy closes her eyes.

Dilsey watches Caddy.

DILSEY (CONT'D)

Come with me, I got to buy some eggs.

EXT. ROAD - AFTERNOON

Dilsey and Caddy silently walk down a dirt road. They reach
a small farm stand at the side of the road in front of a
large, yellow colonial house. We hear chickens CLUCKING.
Caddy and Dilsey walk toward the farm stand. Caddy holds a
small basket.

DILSEY

Hand me my coin purse.

Caddy observes the lush southern landscape. Her mind is
somewhere else.

Dilsey sees Caddy is not listening. Dilsey reaches into the
basket and picks up her coin purse. Dilsey takes Caddy's
arm and they walk toward the farm stand. Behind the stand
is a small shed under a large tree and chicken coop right
next to it, CHICKENS peck at the ground and walk around.

A black FARM GIRL, 25, sits on a stool by the stand. She wears a hat and an apron.

FARM GIRL

How many?

DILSEY

Dozen.

The Farm Girl gets up and walks to the shed.

Dilsey looks at Caddy up and down. Caddy stares at Dilsey.

CADDY

Dilsey?

DILSEY

Hm?

Caddy looks away.

CADDY

Did it hurt having a baby?

Dilsey's eyes narrow and she inspects Caddy. She looks back at Roskus, then at the Farm Girl. Dilsey sighs. She puts her arm around Caddy. Caddy's lips tremble, she looks at the ground.

The Farm Girl holds a bunch of eggs up in her apron. She approaches Dilsey, who takes the eggs out of the Farm Girl's apron and puts them in the basket Caddy holds. Dilsey places the last egg in the basket, a drop of water falls on the egg. Dilsey looks up and sees tears on Caddy's face.

CUT TO BLACK

We hear CHATTER, LAUGHTER and JAZZ MUSIC.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE LIBRARY - EVENING

Mrs. Compson is entertaining female guests, the same ELEGANT LADIES, now older. A few sit on chairs, facing each other in a circle, working on embroidery. Others stand by the new record player. To the side of the record player is a table with a tea pot, cups and a tray of macaroons.

Mrs. Compson sits in a chair and chats with the two ladies that sit next to her.

MRS. WILKINS

But really, Caroline, you must get Jason to take you to Paris.

Mrs. Compson nods and smiles.

ELEGANT LADY

The food is delicious and I could
just get lost all day in those
boutiques.

Mrs. Compson laughs politely.

MRS. COMPSON

I would love nothing more than to
escape for a while.

She sighs.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

This old house has been like a tomb
lately, it's only lively when you
ladies come around.

Mrs. Wiklins and the Elegant Lady laugh and continue their
embroidery. Mrs. Compson looks around the room, watching
all her guests enjoying themselves. She smiles.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE KITCHEN - EVENING

Caddy sits at the table, picking off chipping paint. Dilsey
takes out the eggs from the basket and organizes them on an
egg holder. The jazz music plays in the distance, and they
listen to the conversations going on in the library.

MRS. COMPSON (O.S.)

Speaking of Paris, have you tried
the macaroons? It's a new french
recipe the town bakery is trying
out.

The front door SLAMS.

We hear a few of the ladies gasp and murmur.

Caddy and Dilsey look at each other, then walk to the doorway
and see--

Jason running up the stairs.

Mrs. Compson appears in the doorway between the library and
the hallway. She sees Jason running up the stairs. She
turns to look into the library.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Don't worry ladies, it's only Jason.

She looks at Caddy and Dilsey as she closes the sliding doors
of the library.

Caddy and Dilsey watch Jason reach the top of the stairs, go to his room then SLAM his door.

Dilsey shakes her head. Caddy goes to the window and sees--

Quentin and Mr. Compson carrying a large wooden traveling trunk up the front steps. They set it down on the porch, then they both sit on the steps.

Caddy exits the kitchen.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE PORCH - EVENING

Caddy exits the house and stands on the porch. She looks out across the pasture and sees--

Mr. Compson and Quentin walking through the land.

She sits on the front steps and watches them.

EXT. PASTURE - EVENING

Mr. Compson and Quentin walk together. Mr. Compson looks around the land, Quentin walks with his head down, his hands in his pockets. Mr. Compson takes his flask out from his coat pocket.

MR. COMPSON
Your mother is thrilled.

He takes a swig and puts the flask back in his pocket.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)
And a Compson never disappoints a lady.

Quentin doesn't respond. He looks up and stares at the vast pasture, full of trees and green land. They walk along the fence. Quentin runs his hand along the iron fence.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)
The man I sold the land to is going to turn it in to a golf course. It's a growing business. Maybe we'll get some neighbors, too.

He sighs and looks at Quentin.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)
I want you to have oportunities, and Harvard will provide them. I know you won't let us down.

Quentin nods. Mr. Compson puts his hand on Quentin's shoulder.

They approach the house and see Caddy sitting on the front steps. Mr. Compson walks up the steps toward Caddy. He pets her head and enters the house, shutting the door behind him. Quentin walks up the steps and sits next to Caddy. She leans her head against his shoulder.

QUENTIN

I'm going away.

Quentin looks at Caddy. She nods.

CADDY

I know.

They both sit and stare at the pasture.

INT. JASON'S ROOM - EVENING

Jason leans against the wall, looking out his window. His eyes are red and watery. He sees--

Caddy and Quentin sitting next to each other on the steps of the porch.

Jason's hands are in fists.

CUT TO BLACK

We hear CRICKETS CHIRPING, TRICKLING WATER and someone HAMMERING.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE - MORNING

ROSKUS, 40, Dilsey's husband, hammers a nail into a loose board on the side of the house. He is tall and serious, with beads of sweat on his forehead. One strand of ivy climbs up the wall.

Roskus holds a nail in his mouth. He finishes hammering, take the nail from his mouth and starts hammering the other side of the board. When he finishes he looks at the ivy.

He tears the strand of ivy off the house. He steps back to look at his work, stops when he hears a CRUNCH under his foot. He looks at the ground and sees--

Two small FROG SKELETONS, one broken from having stepped on it, the other intact.

He slowly kneels down, winces in pain and holds his back. He picks one up and looks at it. He turns around and looks at--

The white barn, bedraggled and old from lack of use, and further down the hill, the creek.

INT. CADDY'S ROOM - MORNING

Caddy looks at herself in a full-length mirror.

She takes a tube of lipstick from a side table and applies it to her lips. She sets down the lipstick and picks up a bottle of perfume, sprays some on her neck. She sets it down, then looks at herself. She turns to the side and stares.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING

Dilsey closes a box of eggs with one hand, and holds two eggs in the other. She places the box on one of the shelves in the kitchen. She cracks the eggs in a bowl and whisks them into the mixture.

Versh, now 18, eats pancakes. The same baby face as in his youth, but taller. His feet are up on the chair next to him.

Benjy sits next to him, chewing, a napkin tied around his neck and an empty plate in front of him. In one hand he holds a flower, Caddy's red ribbon tied around his wrist.

Dilsey pours pancake mix on a skillet.

Roskus enters the kitchen. He moves slow and winces in pain.

DILSEY
Rheumatism actin' up?

Roskus nods. Dilsey walks over to the table and pulls out a chair for him. Roskus sits, looks at Versh, nods. Versh stands and rubs his father's shoulders. Dilsey pours Roskus a cup of water and hands it to Roskus.

Benjy watches the family.

Roskus smiles at Benjy. He delicately pulls something out from his pocket. He motions for Versh and Benjy to look. He sets it on the table. It's a FROG'S SKELETON. Benjy looks at the skeleton and laughs. Roskus and Versh smile.

ROSKUS
Found a bunch of 'em down by the
creek. I don't know why but they
all gettin' out of the water to die.

He winces in pain and slowly rubs his knees.

VERSH
Ain't no luck on this place.

Benjy picks up the small skeleton and holds it in his hand. Then sets it back down on the table.

Dilsey flips the pancakes.

Caddy walks down the stairs into the kitchen. She sees Benjy and she smiles. Benjy waves his hands at Caddy. Caddy walks over and hugs him. Benjy moans.

CADDY
What is it Benjy?

Benjy turns away from Caddy. He pushes her away and whimpers. He scratches his nose. Caddy watches him.

Dilsey turns around.

DILSEY
You leave him alone Versh.

Versh raises his eyebrows.

VERSH
I only been sittin' here.

Dilsey shakes her head.

DILSEY
He don't just start up for nothin'.

Caddy pets Benjy's hair.

CADDY
What'd Caddy do?

Versh watches Benjy scratch his nose. Versh sniffs the air.

VERSH
You know he don't like it when you
wear perfume.

Caddy looks at Versh. She blushes. Versh stands up and holds his hand out to Benjy.

VERSH (CONT'D)
Come on, Benjy. Let's take a walk.

Benjy whimpers, takes Versh's hand. Versh leads him out the door.

Caddy watches them. She takes a towel from the table, wets it in the sink and scrubs her neck and her wrists. She smells her wrists, then drapes the towel over a chair. She sits down and stares at the frog skeleton.

Dilsey continues flipping pancakes. She puts some pancakes on a plate and sets it down in front of Caddy. Caddy pushes the plate away from her.

Dilsey looks at Caddy, then at the plate of pancakes. She stares at Caddy. Dilsey picks up the plate and sets it down in front of Roskus.

Roskus takes Dilsey's hand and pats it lightly. They smile at each other. Roskus eats the pancakes.

EXT. TOWN STREETS - AFTERNOON

Dilsey and Benjy stand out front of a store with a sign that reads: SWEET SHOPPE.

Dilsey doesn't wear her usual apron, and a purple hat covers her head. Benjy doesn't wear his usual pair of overalls, but wears slacks and a button down shirt.

Dilsey fixes Benjy's collar and then his hair. He watches all the PASSERSBY.

Caddy exits the candy store and gives Benjy a lollipop. He takes it and smiles. Caddy ruffles his hair and unwraps the lollipop. Benjy puts it in his mouth. A tall man in a green suit, HERBERT, 28, approaches them from the background. His posture is very erect and he smiles.

HERBERT

Candace Compson?

Caddy turns and sees Herbert. She smiles. He holds out his hand.

HERBERT (CONT'D)

Herbert. We met last year at the fair.

Caddy nods, takes his hand, he kisses it.

CADDY

Right, the stranger from Indiana.

Herbert laughs and nods. He looks at Dilsey and Benjy.

HERBERT

Hello.

Dilsey smiles and nods. Herbert holds out his hand to Benjy. Benjy stares at his hand and holds on to Caddy's arm, he looks away.

CADDY

(whispers)

It's ok Benjy.

Benjy looks at Herbert. Herbert nods and reaches in his pocket. He pulls out a matchbook.

HERBERT
(to Benjy)
Look here.

He strikes a match.

HERBERT (CONT'D)
(to Caddy)
Benjy, is it?

Caddy nods.

Herbert takes the match, the small flame crawls up the wood. Benjy watches the fire. Herbert lifts the match up and puts it in his mouth. He opens his mouth and takes the extinguished match out. Benjy smiles. Herbert smiles. Benjy laughs and takes the match from Herbert.

Caddy smiles.

Dilsey sees Caddy smiling, staring at Herbert. Dilsey clears her throat.

DILSEY
Come on, Roskus is waiting for us.

Dilsey takes Benjy's hand, they turn and walk down the street. Caddy and Herbert smile at each other. Caddy is about to turn and leave, but Herbert takes her arm.

HERBERT
I'm no the stranger from Indiana
anymore. I live here now.

Caddy nods. He lets go of her arm.

HERBERT (CONT'D)
Would you like to go to the theater
or something like that sometime?
With me?

Caddy looks away.

HERBERT (CONT'D)
Benjy can come be your chaperone, if
you'd like.

She looks at him and smiles. In the background Dilsey and Benjy continue walking. Dilsey turns over her shoulder and calls out.

DILSEY
Caddy.

Caddy turns and walks toward Dilsey and Benjy. Herbert watches her. Caddy turns around and sees him watching her. She blushes, turns around and takes Benjy's arm.

CUT TO BLACK

We hear the sound of light RAIN and CRICKETS.

EXT. PASTURE - NIGHT

Quentin and Caddy sit close to each other on the bank of the creek. It rains. They both stare at the rain dropping into the creek. They sit still. Their wet clothes stick to their bodies. Caddy's wet hair falls over her shoulders and sticks to her cheeks. Caddy closes her eyes.

Quentin turns to look at her.

Caddy moves closer to the creek, puts her feet in the water.

QUENTIN

Don't you know whose it is?

She doesn't respond. Quentin looks away. Quentin shakes his head. He rubs his face.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)

I'll say it was me, and I'll tell
father and then we'll go away.

Caddy shakes her head.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)

Did you love him Caddy?

Caddy slides off the bank and into the water. She lies down in the water. She looks up to the sky.

Quentin moves closer to the water, puts his feet in.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)

Do you love him?

Caddy looks at Quentin. She sits up. She takes his hand and puts it on her neck.

CADDY

If I think of him, you can feel my
blood run.

Caddy holds his hand on her neck. He takes it away.

He looks at her.

Caddy lays back down in the creek. She closes her eyes.
Her hair flows over his feet.

CADDY (CONT'D)
You've never done that have you?

Quentin picks her hair up from off his feet and places it on her shoulder.

CADDY (CONT'D)
What I have, what I did.

Quentin looks away. Caddy reaches over and grabs his hand. Caddy sits up and hugs Quentin. Quentin hugs her back. He takes a knife from his pocket. He nudges Caddy away and opens the knife.

QUENTIN
It won't take but a second. Then I
can do mine.

Quentin drops the blade into the creek.

Caddy stands up, walks out of the creek and starts up the hill. Quentin stands up and follows her. He catches up with her. He stands in front of her and holds her wrists.

CADDY
Let me go.

Quentin lets go of her hands. Quentin nudges her toward the house.

CADDY (CONT'D)
I'll have to marry someone.

QUENTIN
Go inside.

CADDY
I can't have a baby and not be
married, Quentin.

Quentin nods.

QUENTIN
Go inside.

Quentin nudges her toward the house. She walks to the house, up the back steps and into the kitchen. Quentin watches her.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE LIBRARY - NIGHT

Mr. Compson sits in an armchair and reads a book. He holds a glass of whiskey in one hand. He reaches over and puffs on his pipe.

Quentin enters through the main door. Mr. Compson looks up from his reading. He watches Quentin, and sees that his clothes are wet.

MR. COMPSON

First Caddy, now you?

Quentin looks down at his wet clothes, and the puddle he's made on the floor.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Looks like we're all drowning in something.

He raises his glass and takes a sip. Quentin turns to look at his father.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Lucky the Compsons are good swimmers.

Quentin walks into the library.

Quentin stands before the fire. Quentin rubs his hands together. Mr. Compson sips his drink. He stares at the fire.

QUENTIN

Father, I have committed incest.

Mr. Compson looks at Quentin. He puts his book down on his lap. He holds the pipe to his mouth and puffs.

Quentin turns around to look at his calm father.

Mr. Compson sets down his pipe and stands up. He walks over to his son, his drink in his hand.

MR. COMPSON

Do you realize what you're saying?

He walks away toward his armchair and sits down.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)

She's not worth that much despair.

Quentin leans against the fireplace. Mr. Compson looks at his son.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)
I think you'd better go on up to
Cambridge right away, take some time
off before school.

He picks up his pipe and lights it.

Quentin stares at the fire.

CUT TO BLACK

EXT. ROAD - EVENING

A small, green Ford Model T car travels down a gravel road, swerving and sputtering. It drives through a field spotted with TREE STUMPS.

The car winds around a corner and turns onto a dirt road. In the background, a few WORKING MEN CHOP DOWN a large tree with axes.

The car approaches the Compson house. The Compson pasture, once filled with large green trees, now only contains a few trees around the house. The car abruptly stops outside the front door.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE PORCH - EVENING

Jason and Mr. Compson sit on the front porch. They wear coats and smoke their pipes. Mrs. Compson walks out of the house and sees the car. She gasps and covers her mouth.

Caddy gets out of the driver's seat and waves. She wears a loose, flowing dress.

Herbert steps out of the car, carrying a LEATHER CASE under his arm. He wears a green suit and a gold chain dangles from his pocket to his vest. He holds a BOUQUET of Lobelias.

Mr. Compson stands and nods. Jason looks at the car.

Caddy walks toward the house and up the steps. She hugs Mr. Compson. She kisses Jason and Mrs. Compson on the cheek.

JASON
Where'd you find that piece of
equipment?

Herbert walks up the steps and shakes hands with Mr. Compson and Jason and kisses Mrs. Compson on the cheek.

CADDY
Isn't it a beauty? Herbert brought
it down for me.

Mrs. Compson swoons and holds onto Mr. Compson's arm. Jason steps down the porch and walks around the car, observing it.

HERBERT

The new Ford, all the rage, green
like her eyes.

Herbert smiles and taps Caddy's nose. Caddy smiles. They walk up the steps.

MRS. COMPSON

But Candace, your eyes are blue.

Mrs. Compson fans herself and stares at Caddy. Caddy stares at her mother, shakes her head. Mrs. Compson peers into Caddy's eyes and squints.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

I could have sworn--

Jason walks back from observing the car.

Mrs. Compson nervously giggles and fans herself. Herbert abruptly says--

HERBERT

We had to keep honking to get the
country folks out of the way, poor
things never seen an auto.

He hands the bouquet to Mrs. Compson. She takes the bouquet and smells the flowers. Mrs. Compson sneezes and coughs.

MRS. COMPSON

You see? You taking my little girl
away is already affecting my health.

Mrs. Compson dabs at her nose with her handkerchief.

HERBERT

Unless I do what I am tempted to and
take you instead.

Herbert winks at Mrs. Compson and laughs. Herbert takes Mrs. Compson's hand, she blushes. She takes Mr. Compson's arm.

MR. COMPSON

Supper will be ready soon.

JASON

(*snidely*)

We must be quiet though, Quentin is
reading.

Mr. Compson leads the family back into the house. Herbert takes Caddy's hand.

HERBERT

No one gives a damn anymore whether you like Flaubert better than Henry James. The only education anyone needs now is how to make a fast buck.

Mr. Compson raises his eyebrows.

MR. COMPSON

I suppose you could sell your soul.

Herbert laughs.

HERBERT

I'd a sold it long ago if it were worth anything.

Mr. Compson grimaces. They all enter the house.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE DINING ROOM - EVENING

Mr. Compson enters the library and walks toward the liquor cabinet. Herbert enters the room and sets the leather case down in a corner of the room. Caddy, Mrs. Compson and Jason enter the room behind him.

MR. COMPSON

What do you drink, Herbert?

Mr. Compson pours himself a drink. In the background, Herbert shakes his head.

HERBERT

Nothing, thank you, sir. Impaired physical and mental faculties are not something I enjoy.

Mr. Compson stares at the wall in front of him, then continues making his drink. He turns and sits at the head of the table, Mrs. Compson sits down next to him.

HERBERT (CONT'D)

(points at the flowers)

Let me take care of those.

Herbert takes the flowers from her. Mrs. Compson smiles. Jason sits next to Mr. Compson, and Caddy next to Mrs. Compson.

Dilsey brings in a platter of food and sets it on the table.

Herbert turns and looks at Dilsey.

HERBERT (CONT'D)
You must be Dilsey.

He hands the bouquet of flowers to her.

HERBERT (CONT'D)
Could you put these in a vase for
Mrs. Compson? Do you like Lobelias,
Dilsey?

Herbert turns to look at the family, seated around the dining table. Dilsey takes the bouquet and stares at Herbert up and down. Herbert smiles.

MR. COMPSON
Dilsey, call for Quentin, please.

Dilsey nods, staring at Herbert. Mr. Compson turns to look at Herbert and smiles.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)
(to Herbert)
So, Herbert, besides being sober and
illiterate, what is it you do,
exactly?

Caddy and Mrs. Compson stare at Mr. Compson, he shrugs.

MRS. COMPSON
Don't mind him, Herbert.
(to Mr. Compson)
Just because you're drinking yourself
into the ground doesn't mean everyone
else should as well.

Caddy gives Herbert an embarrassed look. Herbert laughs politely and points at the Lobelias.

HERBERT
These actually came from one of the
investments I'm working on. A small
flower shop back home in Indiana.

Dilsey slowly backs out of the room.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE HALLWAY - EVENING

Dilsey slowly walks up the stairway, still holding the bouquet and shaking her head. She sniffs the flowers and grimaces. We can still hear the conversation from the dining room.

HERBERT (O.S.)
I'm an entrepreneur of sorts. I'm
currently investing in a sweet shop
as well.

Dilsey reaches the top of the stairs. She walks down the upstairs hallway, holding on to the balcony railing.

HERBERT (O.S.) (CONT'D)

The man who owns it wants to
popularize a french pastry called an
ice cream cornet-

INT. QUENTIN'S ROOM - EVENING

The typical books of a college student are scattered on a desk, papers strewn everywhere with notes jotted down. Cigarette smoke lingers in the air. Ink leaks from a fountain pen and forms a black puddle on a stack of papers. We can still hear the muffled, drowned-out conversation-

HERBERT (O.S.)

A little waffle-like cone you put
ice cream in, and when the ice creams
done with, you eat the cone.

We see Quentin sitting on the floor next to his bed, black ink stains his hands, smoking a cigarette. He stares blankly at the floor, listening.

MRS. COMPSON (O.S.)

Oh, how nice.

We hear a KNOCK. Quentin looks up. The door opens and Dilsey enters. He looks up at her. She shuts the door and leans against it.

DILSEY

They callin' for you.

Quentin nods. He puts out his cigarette.

QUENTIN

What's he like?

Dilsey smirks. She tosses the Lobelias on Quentin's desk.

DILSEY

Go see for yourself.

Dilsey walks out of the room. Quentin stands, walks toward his desk, picks up the Lobelias and drops them in his wastebasket as he exits his room.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE DINING ROOM - EVENING

Quentin walks into the dining room. He sees Caddy. Caddy doesn't look at him. Herbert stands at the front of the room. He turns around and sees Quentin.

JASON

Finally, the scholar arrives.

Quentin gives Jason a look. Herbert holds his hand out to Quentin.

HERBERT

You must be Quentin.

Herbert points at Quentin and looks at the rest of the family.

HERBERT (CONT'D)

I call him Quentin at once you see,
I've been hearing so much about him
from Candace.

They shake hands. Quentin sits down in the empty chair next to Jason. Mrs. Compson passes around a plate of CANDIED YAMS.

Herbert lifts his finger in the air.

HERBERT (CONT'D)

Speaking of hearing.

He walks over to the corner of the room, picks up the leather case and puts it on the table.

HERBERT (CONT'D)

This is another deal I've been
investing in.

He unlatches the case and opens it, revealing a wall-mount TELEPHONE with a separate earpiece and mouthpiece. He takes out the telephone and shows it to the family.

HERBERT (CONT'D)

It's the new home telephone.

Mr. Compson stares at the telephone.

MR. COMPSON

What, in god's name, do we want with
that?

Herbert laughs. Mrs. Compson smiles. Herbert puts the telephone back in the case and sets it on the floor.

MRS. COMPSON

I think it's lovely. Thank you,
Herbert.

Herbert winks and smiles. Mrs. Compson giggles. Herbert sits down next to Caddy. The CANDIED YAMS reach Caddy and she serves a large amount on her plate.

Herbert closely watches the amount of food she serves herself. He leans toward her.

HERBERT

(whispers)

Slow down or I'll have to roll you
out of here.

Herbert looks at Quentin and nods. Quentin forces a smile. They all start picking at their plates.

MR. COMPSON

We have no use for it, but thank
you, I suppose.

HERBERT

Well, out here it may not even work.
You need poles and wires for that
kind of thing and I haven't seen
anything but trees.

Herbert takes the candied yams from Caddy and serves himself. Mr. Compson watches Herbert. He sips his drink.

HERBERT (CONT'D)

Where's ol' Benjy?

Mrs. Compson clears her throat. She reaches for the pitcher in front of her.

MRS. COMPSON

More lemonade?

Herbert nods, picks up his glass, Mrs. Compson fills it. Caddy smiles and looks at Herbert. She turns and looks at Quentin, staring at Herbert, but not smiling.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE LIBRARY - NIGHT

Quentin looks through the shelves filled with books, he takes a book out. In the background, Mr. Compson sits in his armchair with a drink in hand. He smokes his pipe. Jason sits next to him and reads a book, also smoking a pipe.

Herbert approaches Quentin. He pats his shoulder.

HERBERT

I've promised your mother to give
Jason a job at the bank I work at,
but I'd like to give you a hand too.

Quentin smiles and puts the book back. He continues looking through the books. Herbert leans against the book shelves.

HERBERT (CONT'D)

Jason is well off here, but there's no future in a hole like this for a young fellow like you.

QUENTIN

Thanks. You'd better stick to Jason though, he'd suit you better than I would.

Quentin keeps looking through the books. Herbert smiles.

HERBERT

I liked you as soon as I saw you, I says he must be a damned good fellow whoever he is, or Candace wouldn't be so keen on him.

Quentin stops looking through the books. He turns to look at Herbert. Herbert takes out a small box of cigars from his coat pocket. He takes two out, puts one in his mouth and offers the other to Quentin. Quentin takes the cigar. Herbert lights Quentin's, then his own.

HERBERT (CONT'D)

Let's you and I get together on a plan of business I got, old sons of Harvard-

He nods. They both puff on their cigars.

HERBERT (CONT'D)

Best place for a young fellow in the world. I'm going to send my own sons there.

Quentin puts his cigar down on the corner of the book shelf. He continues looking through the books.

Herbert points at Quentin's cigar on the bookshelf.

HERBERT (CONT'D)

What would your mother say if she found a blister on her book shelf.

He ignores Herbert and continues looking through the books.

HERBERT (CONT'D)

Listen, when a young man's in school, all is well, but when he gets out into the world he's got to hit the ground running, in terms of business-

Quentin ignores Herbert, takes his cigar from the book shelf and puffs. Quentin exhales smoke and puts the cigar back

down on the shelf. Quentin pulls out a book and opens it. He flips through it. Herbert puffs on his cigar. He comes closer to Quentin and lowers his voice.

HERBERT (CONT'D)
Listen, don't be a damned fool. I
want to tell you about a little
business over in town-

Quentin flips through the book.

QUENTIN
Keep your damn money.

Caddy walks in and grabs Herbert's arm. Herbert stops and looks at her. He smiles and puts his arm around her.

Herbert puffs on his cigar, looks at Quentin and points at Caddy.

HERBERT
(to Quentin)
Can't stay away from the old man can
she.

He winks at Quentin and smiles. Caddy looks at Quentin.

CADDY
Go out a minute Herbert, I want to
talk to Quentin.

Herbert chuckles.

HERBERT
Let's all have a gabfest and get
acquainted, I was just telling Quentin-

CADDY
Go on, Herbert, go out a while.

Herbert stares at Caddy, then nods. He pinches Caddy's side, she jumps and slaps his hand away. Quentin stares at Herbert. Caddy looks at Quentin, embarrassed.

HERBERT
Ta-ta, see you in the funny papers.

Caddy watches Herbert walk away. Her expression relaxes. She nods toward Quentin's lit cigar on the shelf.

CADDY
You'd better take that off.

Herbert walks toward Jason and chats with him in the background.

Quentin puts the book away, picks up his cigar and puffs.
Caddy and Quentin look at each other.

CADDY (CONT'D)

Well.

QUENTIN

Well.

They look at each other. Quentin looks at Caddy's belly. Caddy crosses her arms in front of her stomach. Quentin looks at her. She looks away, uncomfortable. Quentin watches her.

We see Herbert say something and hear Jason and Mrs. Compson laugh in the background. Mr. Compson, just stares at him.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. CADDY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Caddy lies awake in bed. She bites her lip. She turns over and re-adjusts her pillow. She sighs. She stands and walks toward a full length mirror in the corner of the room.

She takes off her nightgown. She stands in her underwear. She looks at herself in the mirror, turns to the side. Her belly is only slightly swollen, but what is unnoticeable to others is frighteningly obvious to her.

She runs her hand over her stomach. She stands up straight and sucks in her stomach. She exhales. She puts her nightgown back on.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE HALLWAY - NIGHT

A door creaks open. Caddy peeks out into the hallway. All the lights are off. She quietly tiptoes out of her room and down the hallway. She passes by three closed doors and reaches a fourth. She takes a deep breath. She silently turns the door knob and opens the door. She enters the room.

INT. GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

Caddy shuts the door behind her. Herbert is asleep in bed. She walks toward him, still tiptoeing. She gets in bed with him. He stirs. She whispers in his ear.

CADDY

Herbert.

He turns over. She kisses his cheek. He opens his eyes. He looks at her and smiles. Herbert sits up in bed and rubs his eyes. Caddy abruptly kisses him. Caddy gets under the

covers and they lie down. Caddy starts to take off Herbert's shirt. He grabs her hands. He looks at her.

HERBERT
What are you doing?

Caddy smiles and keeps kissing him. He pulls her off and looks at her.

HERBERT (CONT'D)
Darling, I'm exhausted.

He rolls over and gives his back to her. Caddy sits up and stares at the ceiling.

CUT TO BLACK

We hear Benjy CRYING and the sound of HAMMERING.

EXT. PASTURE - DAY

A MAN hammers a large wooden sign into the ground that reads:
COMING ATTRACTION: BULE'S GOLF CLUB.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE - DAY

Benjy moans, his expression is confused and pained.

BENJY'S POV--

Four WORK MEN, 20s-40s, erect a large iron gate and fencing a few feet away from the porch. They sweat and mumble orders to each other while struggling with their work.

Benjy stands in the pasture watching the men erect the new fence. The Compson's land is HALF the size it used to be: the gate that used to border their property by the road is now much closer to the house.

Benjy's face is wet with tears, a strand of saliva hangs from his mouth. He sits down on the grass. His eyes squeeze shut and his hands are held tight in a fist on his lap. His overalls are tattered, one strap is unbuckled and dangles behind him.

Benjy moans loudly.

The Work Men look up and stare at Benjy. One of them shakes his head and whistles. Another one slaps him on the back of his head and hushes him. They continue working.

Versh walks up behind Benjy and tries to calm him down. Versh takes his hand and gives him a flower.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

Dilsey and Quentin hug. Through the window behind them we see the Work Men lifting the new fence, and Versh and Benjy on the porch.

Quentin wears a new suit. Dilsey looks at him, pats down his hair. She hands him a folded napkin. Quentin unfolds the napkin and reveals three biscuits. He smiles at Dilsey.

Mr. Compson walks into the doorway behind them.

MR. COMPSON

We should be on our way. Your
mother's not feeling too well, she's
in bed. But she says she'll write
to you.

Quentin turns and nods. Dilsey smiles and watches them exit the house.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE - DAY

Roskus loads a buggy with Quentin's traveling trunk. He chews on a twig. He closes the back and walks around. He pets the horse harnessed to the buggy.

Mr. Compson and Quentin walk down the rotting front steps of the Compson house toward the buggy. Mr. Compson has one hand on Quentin's shoulder and the other hand puts his flask into his coat pocket.

Mr. Compson takes out a gold pocket watch from his inner coat. He hands it to Quentin. Quentin takes the watch.

MR. COMPSON

I give you the mausoleum of all hope
and desire.

Quentin looks at the watch.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Your grandfather gave it to me, and
when he did he said-

He clears his throat.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)

I give it to you not that you may
remember time, but that you may forget
it now and then and not spend all
your breath trying to conquer it.
It reveals to man his own folly and
despair, and victory over it is an
illusion of philosophers and fools.

Quentin looks at the watch. He turns it over and opens it. The hands tick.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)
Or it went something like that.

Mr. Compson looks away and frowns.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)
Well, nevertheless, have a safe trip.

Mr. Compson nods. He holds out his hand, they shake. Quentin looks back at the Compson house. It's old Southern glory is decaying with the chipped paint and wood rot. He looks at his father.

QUENTIN
I forgot something.

He runs up the steps of the house.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

Quentin runs up the stairs approaches a door and knocks. We hear BATH WATER RUNNING. No response.

QUENTIN
Caddy.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE BATHROOM - DAY

Caddy sits on the floor of the bathroom, fully clothed, her eyes closed. Water runs in the bathtub behind her. She looks up. More KNOCKING.

INT. JASON'S ROOM - DAY

Jason sits on his bed whittling a branch. We hear Quentin KNOCKING.

QUENTIN (O.S.)
Caddy, I'm leaving now.

Jason stops whittling. He stares straight ahead of him.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

Quentin leans against the door. He waits a moment longer, then turns around and descends the stairs.

INT. JASON'S ROOM - DAY

We hear Quentin's fading footsteps. Jason continues whittling.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE BATHROOM - DAY

Caddy hasn't budged. She folds her legs and rests her head on her knees. She breathes slowly. She feels the bath water, then takes off her shoes and socks.

INT. JASON'S ROOM - DAY

Jason stands and walks toward his window. He looks out and sees--

Quentin exit the house. He stops in front of Benjy and Versh, who sit on the porch. Versh stands up. Quentin and Versh shake hands and hug. Quentin leans over Benjy and kisses his forehead. Benjy hugs Quentin.

Mr. Compson sits in the buggy, he moves over. Quentin gets in and sits next to him.

The Working Men hammer in another part of the iron fence.

Benjy stands up and taps on the buggy. He follows it down the road. Versh walks behind him.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE - DAY

Quentin leans out of the buggy and waves to Benjy. Benjy stares, walks behind the buggy. He moans and frowns. Quentin turns and sits facing forward. Benjy stops walking when he reaches the fence. Versh walks toward Benjy in the background. Benjy watches the buggy drive away.

The Working Men mind their business and continue erecting the fence. Behind Benjy, the Compson house looks smaller without the sprawling pasture in front of it, suffocated by the nearing fence. An entire side of the house is covered in vines.

As the buggy drives further into the distance, Benjy stares at the STUMPS of the cut trees beyond the fence, in what is now the golf course. He stares back and forth, overwhelmed by all the missing trees. The sold land now looks naked without the trees. Benjy closes his eyes. He rubs his face and moans. He looks up, frustrated, and stares at the land.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. COMPSON HOUSE MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

The bedroom is dark and tomb-like. The curtains are all closed and only one small lamp illuminates the room.

Mrs. Compson lays in bed with a towel over her eyes, her hands rest on her stomach, folded over each other, and her

legs are laid out in front of her, looking like she rests in her coffin.

Mr. Compson sits in a chair in the corner of the room, dressed in pajamas, folding his pants. He stands and sets the pants down on the chair.

Mrs. Compson's bedside table is crowded with medicine bottles, while Mr. Compson's bedside table only holds his pipe and flask.

Mr. Compson gets in bed. He picks up his flask and unscrews the top. Mrs. Compson lays still.

MR. COMPSON
Feeling ill again?

He sips from his flask and screws the cap back on.

MRS. COMPSON
I'm not so ill that I must kill myself
with whiskey.

He rolls his eyes.

MR. COMPSON
You'll have the doctor and priest in
to see me next.

He reaches over and takes off the towel from Mrs. Compson's eyes. She snatches the towel back without even opening her eyes.

MRS. COMPSON
I'm in no mood for your jokes. I
have to attend a banquet tomorrow
and if they see I'm exhausted what
will they say?

He leans over and kisses her forehead.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)
Leave me alone, Jason.

He stares at her. He shakes his head and sighs. He covers himself with the blanket and turns off the lamp.

CUT TO BLACK

We hear a church bell CHIME.

EXT. HARVARD DORM - MORNING

Snow on the ground and on the roofs of the dorms. Harvard STUDENTS walk in the quad clad in winter wear. Ivy clings to the brick walls. The church bell dies out.

We hear a watch TICKING.

INT. QUENTIN'S HARVARD DORM ROOM - MORNING

A SMALL GOLD POCKET WATCH sits on a bedside table. The window curtains flutter, letting in morning light.

Quentin lies in a small dorm room bed. His eyes open. He turns to face the gold watch. He stares at --

The SECOND HAND as it makes its way around the clock, LOUDLY ticking off the seconds.

Quentin closes his eyes. The door opens, startling him.

VOICE (O.S.)
Mail came today.

Quentin opens his eyes. His roommate SHREVE, 18, stands in the doorway, coat in hand. Short and chubby, Shreve's rosy cheeks hold up his glasses more than his nose does. He tosses an envelope on the foot of Quentin's bed.

Shreve puts on his coat and adjusts his collar, looks at his watch.

SHREVE
(stares at his watch)
Bell in two minutes.
(puts watch in coat pocket)
Cutting class again?

Quentin sits up and rubs his eyes.

QUENTIN
I didn't know it was that late.

SHREVE
You'd better slip your pants on and run.

He nods and leaves the room, shutting the door behind him. Quentin stares at the letter.

He hesitates, picks up the envelope and opens it. He takes out a light purple card that reads: MR. AND MRS. JASON COMPSON

CORDIALLY INVITE YOU TO THE MARRIAGE BETWEEN MR. HERBERT
HEAD AND MS. CANDACE COMPSON.

The TICKING of Quentin's watch starts up again.

He stares at the letter, then closes his eyes.

MR. COMPSON (O.S.)
Men invented virginity.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE LIBRARY - NIGHT

A vase of PINK ROSES stands on the fireplace mantel. The
flickering orange and yellow glow of fire illuminates the
room.

The TICKING gets louder.

Mr. Compson sits in his armchair, smoking his pipe, drink in
hand.

MR. COMPSON
In the south, boys and men are ashamed
of being a virgin, they lie about
it.

He puffs on his pipe, exhales smoke and looks up to see--

Quentin staring at the roses above the fire, his clothes
dripping wet.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)
It means less to women.

The fire casts quick shadows of light around Quentin's face.
He stares, mesmerized at the flowers.

QUENTIN
But to believe it doesn't matter-

Mr. Compson looks at his drink and shakes it lightly, making
the ice cubes CLINK around against the glass.

MR. COMPSON
That's what's so sad about anything.

We hear the FLUTTERING of wings and a bird SQUAK.

INT. QUENTIN'S HARVARD DORM ROOM - MORNING

Quentin opens his eyes, turns to look at the window.

A sparrow lands on the windowsill. It cocks its head and
looks at Quentin. It looks around the dorm room. Its throat
pumps in unison with the TICKING. Quentin watches it.

A church bell CHIMES and reverberates through the quad. The sparrow abruptly flicks its wings out and flies away.

Quentin gets out of bed and moves the curtains aside to reveal --

The college campus. STUDENTS bustle about the quad, some run, some walk leisurely.

Quentin turns to look at his watch.

Quentin closes his eyes and rubs his face. The TICKING grows louder. With each movement of the hand the SOUND gets LOUDER until they SOUND LIKE GUNFIRE.

Quentin picks up his pocket watch and taps the crystal face against the corner of the bedside table. The glass shatters and he catches the pieces in his hand.

The hands of the broken watch still tick.

Quentin looks at the glass in his hand. Blood trickles down his thumb. He puts the pieces of glass into an ashtray on his bureau. He twists the small gold hands off the watch and puts them in the ashtray.

The dials behind the watch mechanically CLICK.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A FRAMED PICTURE of Caddy and Herbert on their wedding day sits on the mantel above a large fireplace. Caddy wears her wedding gown and Herbert wears a tux, neither of them is smiling.

The room is elegantly decorated, filled with wilting, week-old flowers and cards.

Herbert sits up in bed reading. He puts down his book, picks up his watch from his bedside table. He looks up.

HERBERT

Candace?

INT. CLOSET - NIGHT

Caddy sits in her underwear on an ottoman in front of a vanity stand. She is surrounded by trunks overflowing with clothes. On the vanity are jewelry boxes and makeup. Herbert's tux hangs on the wall behind her next to a full length mirror.

She holds her face in between her knees and rubs the back of her neck. She vomits into a small wastebasket in between

her knees. She lifts her head, her eyes are closed. She exhales. She rubs her stomach. She opens her eyes.

CADDY

Coming.

She stands slowly, leaning against the wall. Her belly is more obvious now. Caddy pulls her nightgown on over her head and exits the closet into the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Caddy and Herbert are in bed, kissing. Herbert takes off his shirt. He kisses Caddy on her neck.

Caddy grimaces. She breathes deeply. She gags.

Herbert takes off Caddy's nightgown. He smiles at Caddy. Caddy weakly smiles back. They kiss.

Caddy suddenly pushes Herbert off her and jumps out of bed. She runs toward a vase of wilting flowers, dumps the flowers on the floor and vomits into the vase.

Herbert sits up in bed, confused. He stands up and walks over to Caddy.

HERBERT

Candace?

She leans over the vase, heaving. When she bends over, her bump is emphasized. As Herbert walks over, he notices the bump. He stops and watches her. Caddy rubs her belly.

Caddy coughs. Herbert stares at her belly. He walks toward her and grabs her arm.

Caddy looks up. She wipes her mouth. She sees Herbert staring at her belly. She looks down at her belly. She looks up, Herbert stares at her. He reaches toward her stomach. She pulls away from him. She runs over to the bed and puts her nightgown on. Herbert stares at her, confused, and sees the fear in her expression. He realizes.

HERBERT (CONT'D)

Are you-

Caddy shakes her head, fear in her eyes.

CADDY

It's yours.

He closes his eyes, breathes deeply, shakes his head.

HERBERT
That's not possible.

Caddy shakes all over and tries to stand up.

CADDY
I swear it.

HERBERT
Don't lie to me.

Caddy covers her face with her hands.

HERBERT (CONT'D)
Whose is it?

Caddy's eyes tear up. She runs her fingers through her hair. She closes her eyes. Herbert grabs a fistful of her long brown hair and forces her to look at him.

HERBERT (CONT'D)
How long have you known?

Caddy sobs, she squeezes her eyes shut. She reaches to touch his face.

CADDY
Please.

Herbert lets go of her hair and slaps her hands away from him.

HERBERT
Is this why you wanted to marry me?

Caddy shakes her head and cries.

CADDY
I love you.

Herbert laughs. Caddy stares at Herbert, scared.

HERBERT
I was willing to let your idiot
brother live with us, and to take
care of both of you.

Herbert rubs his face. He stares at Caddy, then looks up at the ceiling.

HERBERT (CONT'D)
And you were going to let me think
that this bastard was my own son my
whole life?

Caddy shakes her head and cries. Herbert walks toward Caddy and slaps her across the face. She cries out. He grabs her hair and brings her to her feet. She slaps his face and cries. He lets go of her and she runs out of the room.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Caddy exits the house. Everything is dark and quiet, the moon only illuminates her white nightgown and her figure running through a field.

She reaches a cluster of trees before a thick forest, stops and looks back at the house. She breathes heavily, tries to catch her breath.

She sits down next to a large oak tree and holds her belly with her hands. She brings her legs up close to her chest and leans her head against her knees. She cries.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. COMPSON HOUSE HALLWAY - MORNING

Jason walks down the stairs, in a brand new suit, his hair combed back. He looks very put together. Mrs. Compson stands at the bottom of the staircase.

MRS. COMPSON

My handsome boy, you look just like
my father.

Jason nods. He reaches the bottom of the steps. Mrs. Compson kisses Jason's cheek and smiles at him. Jason hugs his mother.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

You are my pride and joy, Jason.
You will be the best banker Jefferson
has ever seen.

Jason fusses with his suit.

JASON

I don't think Quentin's suit fits me
too well.

Mr. Compson steps into the hallway from the library. He looks at Jason and smiles.

MR. COMPSON

Fiddlesticks. You look better in it
than he did.

Mr. Compson nods. He extends his hand toward Jason and they shake. The phone rings in the library. Mr. Compson pats

Mrs. Compson on the shoulder. Mr. Compson exits the hallway and walks into the library. He picks up the phone in the background.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)
(into telephone)
Compson.

MRS. COMPSON
Here Jason.

Mrs. Compson reaches into her dress pocket and takes out a roll of bills. She takes his hand and puts it in his palm and closes his hand.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)
I saved this for you. You take
Herbert out to lunch today and thank
him for helping you. You needn't
say it's your mother's money.

Jason smiles.

Mr. Compson sets the receiver down on the shelf.

MR. COMPSON
Jason, it's for you.

Jason looks up and nods. He walks into the library.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE LIBRARY - MORNING

Jason picks up the receiver. Mr. Compson steps back and looks at Jason.

JASON
(into telephone)
This is Jason.

Jason frowns.

JASON (CONT'D)
Oh. Well alright, Herbert, should I
come in this time tomorrow then?

Jason stares blankly. He frowns.

JASON (CONT'D)
But, you said I-

Jason rubs his forehead.

JASON (CONT'D)
I don't understand.

Jason's eyes widen. He grinds his teeth.

JASON (CONT'D)

Listen here, you stupid son of a-

Mr. Compson walks toward Jason and puts his hand on Jason's shoulder. Jason slaps his hand away. Mrs. Compson walks into the room.

MRS. COMPSON

Jason?

Jason hits the wall with his fist. He slams the receiver down on the hook. He turns to look at Mr. and Mrs. Compson. His face turns red.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Jason what on earth-?

Jason tries to calm himself down.

JASON

My sister-

Jason takes in a deep breath.

JASON (CONT'D)

Is a damned whore.

He pushes past his parents, exits the house and slams the door behind him.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE - MORNING

Jason walks down the front steps and to the iron fence. He looks out at--

The new GOLF COURSE across the road. White flags protrude from the green hills spotted with pits of sand.

He regains composure and leans against the fence.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. BAKERY - MORNING

Mrs. Wilkins chats with an ELEGANT LADY in the doorway of the bakery. They both wear nice outfits and hold baskets with loaves of bread. Mrs. Wilkins holds a fan and the Elegant Lady holds a parasole.

MRS. WILKINS

To be honest, I'm not at all surprised. They let her run around loose like a dog.

Young Man who was in the shack with Caddy kneels on the floor and arranges loaves of bread on a rack under the store counter. He wears the usual working garb, sweat-stained shirt, rolled-up sleeves, an apron and a red vest. He listens to their conversation.

ELEGANT LADY

Children love structure and they
need it, that's what I always said.

The Young Man stops for a beat. He picks up another loaf of bread and puts it on the shelf with the others.

MRS. WILKINS

Such a shame the Compson's only
daughter turned out to be damaged
goods.

ELEGANT LADY

A real shame.

Mrs. Wilkins pets the Elegant Lady's hand and hushes her.

MRS. WILKINS

Here she comes.

The two women smile as Mrs. Compson appears at the doorway of the bakery. She carries a basket and a handkerchief in her other hand. She smiles at the women and looks at the bread in their baskets.

MRS. COMPSON

You only bought rolls and biscuits?
How dull. I always get macaroons
here, they're delicious.

The two women look at each other and then smile at Mrs. Compson.

MRS. WILKINS

Caroline, I think we'll be going
now.

The Elegant Lady nods. Mrs. Compson's smile fades.

ELEGANT LADY

We each have things to tend to.

Mrs. Compson nods.

MRS. COMPSON

Well will we meet tomorrow for our
embroidery club?

The two women walk away. They nod and wave to Mrs. Compson.

MRS. WILKINS
Of course. Nice to see you.

Mrs. Compson watches them walk briskly away from her. She regains composure and enters the bakery.

The Young Man sees her and stands. She approaches the him and sets her basket on the counter.

MRS. COMPSON
A dozen rolls, please.

The Young Man looks at Mrs. Compson.

YOUNG MAN
No macaroons?

Mrs. Compson stares at the Employee. He nods and kneels under the counter, collecting rolls in his apron. Mrs. Compson stares at her empty basket.

CUT TO BLACK

We hear a church bell CHIME.

INT. HARVARD DORM ROOM - DAY

Quentin, wearing his Harvard emblemed blazer, enters his dorm room. His roommate Shreve sits in an armchair, laughing, and their oafish friend GOWAN, 19, leans against a wall.

GOWAN
I never took her out again, of course,
she was pug-ugly.

Shreve laughs. Gowan lights a cigarette, offers one to Shreve and Quentin. Shreve takes one, Quentin ignores the offer. Quentin takes off his jacket and tosses it over a chair. Gowan shrugs.

GOWAN (CONT'D)
And it ain't like she's lonely for
me either. By now I think nearly
every fella' in town has had a go
with her.

Quentin looks away and shakes his head. Gowan laughs, looks at Shreve while pointing at Quentin.

GOWAN (CONT'D)
I'm sure even Quentin could get her
in a corner.

Quentin stares at Gowan. Shreve looks back and forth at Gowan and Quentin, sensing tension. He puts out his cigarette.

SHREVE

Anyone hungry?

Gowan puffs on his cigarette and holds up his hand.

GOWAN

Wait a sec, I haven't told you about pug-ugly's friend yet. Boy, one look at her gams and-

Quentin looks at Gowan.

QUENTIN

Cut it out, Gowan.

Gowan shoots Quentin a look, then turns to Shreve.

GOWAN

What's his problem?

Shreve shrugs and shakes his head. Gowan puffs on his cigarette then puts it out on his heel. He leans against the wall. Gowan looks Quentin up and down.

GOWAN (CONT'D)

You like one of these girls? I can't get you one of 'em.

Quentin walks toward Gowan.

QUENTIN

Shut up.

Gowan stares at Quentin.

GOWAN

Why you gettin' steamed up for over a couple of whores?

Quentin steps toward Gowan and PUNCHES him in the nose, Gowan lands on the floor. Shreve gets up, kneels down and looks at Gowan's bloody mouth. Gowan coughs, and spits out blood onto the floor. He glares at Quentin.

SHREVE

(yelling at Quentin)

What'd'ya do that for?

Quentin takes his Harvard jacket, exits the dorm and slams the door behind him.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREETS - DAY

Quentin walks down a sidewalk, wearing a coat and hat. Cars pass him, and people walk up and down the streets.

He passes an alley where a line of women's underwear hangs to dry from a balcony. Quentin notices the underwear and looks away.

We hear the sound of RUNNING WATER.

He walks across an old brick bridge over the Cambridge banks of the CHARLES RIVER. Quentin stops. He watches the water slowly flow down the river.

He walks to the edge of the bridge. He leans over the edge and sees his shadow cast over the water. He watches the water flow under the bridge, forming ripples on his shadow. Cars drive over the bridge and HONK. He ignores everything around him and watches the water flow under the bridge.

The town noises fade away and we only hear the TICKING and the RUNNING WATER.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREETS - DAY

Quentin approaches a shop with a variety of clocks hanging in the display window, all marking different times. He opens the door and enters.

INT. CLOCK SHOP - DAY

All the clocks TICK simultaneously creating a cacophony of discordant beats, some tick with a thud, others tick quickly and softly.

A bell RINGS as Quentin enters the shop. The CLERK, 60, in an apron, enters the shop from the back room. He wears a glass eye and he is balding.

The Clerk nods at Quentin, who walks toward the counter. Quentin reaches into his pocket and takes out his broken watch.

He sets it on the counter in front of the Clerk.

The Clerk picks up the watch and observes it, cocking his head to the side and using his good eye.

QUENTIN
I broke my watch.

The Clerk looks over his glasses at Quentin. He raises his eyebrows.

CLERK

I should say you did. Must have stepped on it.

The Clerk continues observing the watch, fiddling with the small dials. He looks up and sees the Harvard emblem sewn on Quentin's blazer.

CLERK (CONT'D)

Harvard boy, huh?

Quentin looks at the Clerk, then down at his jacket. He looks at the Clerk and shakes his head.

QUENTIN

This is my brother's jacket.

The Clerk nods, continues studying the watch.

Quentin looks at all the clocks hanging on the four walls. The TICKING grows louder. Quentin's eyes dart back and forth between clocks. The TICKING becomes so discordant and loud it sounds like POUNDING WHITE NOISE.

CLERK

You can leave it here, it'll be ready in a few weeks.

Quentin turns to look at the Clerk. The TICKING fades out. Quentin nods.

QUENTIN

It's alright, I'll get it fixed when I go back home.

The Clerk nods. Quentin takes the watch, smiles and exits the shop.

We hear the sound of RUNNING WATER.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREETS - DAY

Quentin walks on the side of the road. He approaches the old brick bridge. Cars drive by, PEOPLE walk past him. He walks to the edge of the bridge, leans over and looks down into the water. He looks at his shadow, it's in a different place than before.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. CADDY'S ROOM - EVENING

Caddy, very pregnant, sits on her bed. She wears a long skirt and an undershirt lifted over her bare stomach. Benjy holds his head against her large belly, waiting. Caddy feels

her belly and pets Benjy's head. Benjy looks at Caddy and smiles.

CADDY
Did you feel it, Benjy?

Benjy puts his head back on her belly.

We see Caddy's stomach move- her baby kicked. Benjy recoils after feeling the kick and moans. He looks at Caddy's belly, confused. Benjy stands up and walks away from Caddy. Caddy reaches her arms out to him.

CADDY (CONT'D)
Benjy. It's ok.

Benjy shakes his head and walks to the corner of the room. He moans louder. Caddy becomes slightly frantic.

CADDY (CONT'D)
Don't cry. It's ok, Benjy.

Benjy doesn't budge. He sees Caddy's frustration and starts to cry. Caddy moves toward the edge of the bed and slowly puts her legs on the floor. She stands up and walks toward Benjy, reaching toward him. Benjy shakes his head. Caddy stops. She holds her stomach. She looks at Benjy.

CADDY (CONT'D)
Dilsey.

She leans against the wall.

CADDY (CONT'D)
(screams)
Dilsey.

CUT TO BLACK

Caddy SCREAMS.

INT. CADDY'S ROOM - EVENING

Caddy's hair sticks to her sweaty forehead. She lays on her bed. Dilsey holds her hand, holds a cloth and dabs her forehead. A MIDWIFE, 50, kneels on the floor holding Caddy's ankles.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

All is peaceful and quiet. Birds CHIRP, water TRICKLES. The Charles river is surrounded by brick buildings, roads and trees. A LUMP surfaces in the water and floats with the lazy current.

INT. CADDY'S ROOM - EVENING

Caddy BREATHES and CRIES. Dilsey kneels on the floor next to Caddy and grabs her other hand. Dilsey stares at Caddy.

DILSEY
Breathe, breathe.

Caddy nods, tries to breathe. She screams again. The Midwife looks at Caddy.

MIDWIFE
Get another cloth.

Dilsey stands and rushes toward the bureau, on which is a pile of towels and cloths.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

The sound of BIRDS and WATER. The LUMP floats down the river, we see it's a BODY.

INT. CADDY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Caddy sits up in bed, her eyes closed, breathing slowly. Dilsey holds a wet cloth to her forehead and holds her hand.

The Midwife walks toward Caddy, smiling, holding a bundled BABY. She leans over and hands Caddy the Baby. Caddy holds the Baby, starts to cry. Dilsey smiles, until she realizes Caddy's cry is not a cry of joy, but of sadness.

EXT. RIVER - EVENING

The BODY slowly floats, face-down in the water.

UNDERWATER we see--

The body belongs to QUENTIN, pale, swollen, lifeless, his bright green eyes, open and empty.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. COMPSON HOUSE LIBRARY - NIGHT

Mr. Compson stands in front of the WALL-MOUNTED TELEPHONE Herbert gave them. He holds the receiver in his hand and rubs his eyes. He stares at the telephone, then at the receiver. He stands straight and clears his throat. He hangs up the receiver. He walks over to a lamp, switches off the light. He exits the library.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE HALLWAY - NIGHT

He closes the sliding doors to the library. Then goes to the dining room. He closes the sliding doors to the dining room. He walks to the kitchen, peers in. It's empty. He exits the house, walks out onto the porch.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE PORCH - NIGHT

Mr. Compson closes the front door behind him. He sits on a rocking chair. He leans back, takes out his flask from his coat pocket, takes a sip. Dilsey walks past the window behind Mr. Compson and sees him sitting on the porch. She opens the front door and stands in the doorway.

DILSEY
Caddy's alright.

Mr. Compson nods.

MR. COMPSON
Thank you, Dilsey.

Dilsey observes him. Dilsey is about to say something, but is cut off by Mr. Compson.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)
I just received a telephone call.

Dilsey nods.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)
About Quentin.

Dilsey nods.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)
You may want to wait to tell Caddy
since she's in a fragile state.

Dilsey waits, listens.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)
He drowned today.

Dilsey covers her mouth. She closes her eyes. She nods. Mr. Compson clears his throat. He wipes away a tear from his cheek.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)
Suicide.

Dilsey nods and watches Mr. Compson.

INT. CADDY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Caddy sits down on her bed, with a blank stare. Dilsey sits next to her. Caddy's eyes tear up. Dilsey hugs her, Caddy cries and hugs her back. Dilsey holds Caddy, pets her hair, a tear falls down her cheek.

Dilsey hushes Caddy. Caddy sobs, burries her face in Dilsey's shoulder. She kisses the top of Caddy's head. Caddy squeezes her eyes shut and breathes.

DILSEY

He left this muddy world just like
Moses came in, pure and sweet in a
river.

Dilsey takes her apron and dries Caddy's face. Caddy lays down on Dilsey's lap. Dilsey wipes her own face with her apron, and continues petting Caddy's hair.

Mrs. Compson walks into the doorway of the room, her face red and wet from crying. She stares at Caddy.

Dilsey looks up and sees Mrs. Compson. She looks away.

MRS. COMPSON

Candace.

Caddy looks up, sees her mother's severe expression.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Get out.

Caddy stares at Mrs. Compson. Dilsey hugs Caddy closer. Mrs. Compson stares down at Caddy.

DILSEY

Miss Caroline-

Mrs. Compson doesn't turn to look Dilsey in the face, but holds her stare on Caddy.

DILSEY (CONT'D)

Think of the baby.

She looks at Dilsey.

MRS. COMPSON

I am. A life on the streets with a
tramp for a mother is no way to bring
an innocent creature into the world.
The child can stay.

Mrs. Compson turns to leave. She stops.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

I want you gone by tomorrow morning.

Mrs. Compson exits the room.

Caddy is in shock. She stares at the empty doorway with an empty look. Dilsey hugs Caddy and lightly rocks her back and forth.

CADDY

She's right. I'm poison to this family, and I'd be poison to my child.

Caddy leans against Dilsey's shoulder, eyes open in a blank stare. Tears run down Dilsey's cheeks, she looks up at the ceiling.

DILSEY

I seen the beginning and now I see the end.

Dilsey pets Caddy's hair. Caddy closes her eyes.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. COMPSON HOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

Dilsey holds the whimpering Baby, MISS QUENTIN, wrapped in a blanket. Dilsey rocks the Baby back and forth in her arms. She lightly hums a sad lullaby song. Dilsey looks at the Baby and shakes her head.

Dilsey looks out the window and sees--

Caddy walking down the front steps of the house. She dabs her face with a handkerchief. She walks toward her green Model T car and gets in the driver's seat.

INT. CAR - DAY

Caddy rests her head against the wheel and cries. She breathes heavily and calms herself. She lifts her head up and starts the engine. She looks out the car window, sees--

Dilsey staring at her through the kitchen window, holding the baby in her arms.

Caddy looks away and drives down the road.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

Dilsey watches Caddy drive off. The Baby cries. Dilsey rocks her back and forth in her arms and hushes her. She continues humming the sad song.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE LIBRARY - NIGHT

Mr. Compson sits in his armchair, drinking out of a flask. Quentin's TRUNK sits in front of him, with a small gold plaque on the front that reads: QUENTIN COMPSON. He stares at it as he drinks. His shirt collar is unbuttoned and his sleeves are rolled up.

Mrs. Compson cries in a chair in the corner.

MRS. COMPSON

What have I done to have been given
children like these, Benjamin was
punishment enough-

Mr. Compson leans back against the chair, kicks off his shoes and closes his eyes. Mrs. Compson holds her face in her hands. Mr. Compson stands and walks over to the window. Mrs. Compson looks up.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

I never dreamed that my own flesh
and blood-

Mr. Compson sighs and sips from his flask. He takes off his socks. Mrs. Compson glares at him. She stands and walks toward him. She smirks.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

She drags your name in the dirt and
you-

Mr. Compson closes his eyes.

MR. COMPSON

You're feeling ill. You should rest.

She walks back to her armchair and drops into it. He caps his flask and lets it drop to the floor. He stands up, picks up Quentin's TRUNK and exits the library.

Mrs. Compson watches him.

MRS. COMPSON

Jason.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE ATTIC - NIGHT

There are boxes stacked up around, old furniture and trunks. Jason pushes a cradle across the dusty, dark room. Dilsey moves a box out of the cradle's way.

DILSEY

Who else will raise her if not me?
Ain't I raised every one of y'all?

She stops when she sees something in the box--

An old picture, wrinkled and yellowed with age, of the Compson Children, all very young, innocent and smiling.

Dilsey observes the picture, smiles.

JASON

And a damn fine job you made of it,
now shut up and help me push.

Dilsey rolls her eyes at Jason. She takes the picture and shoves it in her pocket. She stands up and helps him push the cradle out the door.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dilsey and Jason bring the cradle down a few steps into the hallway of the second floor. They carry the cradle through the hallway, into Caddy's old room.

We hear STOMPING.

MR. COMPSON (O.S.)

And where else do you expect her to
go?

Mr. Compson stomps up the stairs, struggling with Quentin's Trunk. Mrs. Compson trails behind him.

MRS. COMPSON

I don't--

They reach the second floor and see--

Jason and Dilsey moving the cradle into Caddy's old room.

Mrs. Compson stops and GASPS.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

In there? To be contaminated by
that atmosphere?

Mr. Compson carries Quentin's Trunk, kicks open Quentin's bedroom door and leaves the Trunk on the floor. He shuts the door behind him.

Jason And Dilsey carry the cradle into Caddy's room.

INT. CADDY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Mr. Compson enters Caddy's room and shakes the cradle, checking its stability.

MR. COMPSON
Don't be silly.
(to Jason)
Go get the child.

Jason leaves. Mrs. Compson leans in the doorway of Caddy's room.

MRS. COMPSON
Poor little innocent baby will never
know the suffering it's caused.

Mrs. Compson fans herself with her camphor handkerchief. Mr. Compson exits the room, brushing past his wife without looking at her. Dilsey goes to exit the room, but Mrs. Compson stops her.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)
Dilsey, I forbid you to ever speak
that name in the child's hearing.

Dilsey stares at Mrs. Compson.

DILSEY
You upset and sick. You get in bed
and I'll fix you something so you
can sleep.

Mrs. Compson grabs Dilsey's arm.

MRS. COMPSON
I would thank god if she could grow
up never to know she had a mother.

Dilsey stares at Mrs. Compson. Dilsey nods and nudges her out of the doorway.

DILSEY
Come on, you get in bed.

Mrs. Compson moves out of the doorway and Dilsey steers her to her room down the hall. Through the doorway we see--

Jason walk up the stairs, holding the Baby. We hear Mrs. Compson and Dilsey's muffled conversation. Jason enters Caddy's room and sets the Baby down in the cradle. Jason stares down at it.

JASON
Damn thing cost me my job.

The Baby sleeps peacefully. Jason watches it. He reaches into the crib and touches the Baby's head.

CUT TO BLACK

We hear a WHACK.

GOLFER'S VOICE (O.S.)
(yelling)
 Four.

EXT. PASTURE - AFTERNOON

A golf ball lands in the grass next to a large foot. A hand reaches over and picks up the ball.

GOLFER'S VOICE (O.S.)
(yelling)
 Caddie.

We see Benjy, 16, holding on to the golf ball, back to where the story started. He stands on the grassy hill, squinting into the sun, trying to cover his face with his arm. Tied to his wrist is Caddy's red ribbon, faded and frayed. He looks older and very gaunt.

He looks at the golf ball. He lets it fall to the ground.

Benjy looks up, the sun in his face. He squints and sees GOLFERS in the distance. He walks further down the pasture.

Benjy looks around. Behind him we see Versh, 20, kneeling down, searching through the grass. He mutters to himself.

GOLFER'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(yelling)
 Caddie.

Benjy moans, starts to cry. Versh looks up at Benjy. He rolls his eyes. Benjy sits down and cries louder. Versh stands up and dusts himself off. He walks over to Benjy.

VERSH
 Ain't you goin' to help me find that
 quarter?

Benjy calms down.

VERSH (CONT'D)
 Come on, we looked here.

Versh tugs on Benjy's sleeve. Benjy stops crying and stands up. Versh grabs his arm and starts walking. Benjy follows. They walk down the pasture toward the creek.

EXT. CREEK - AFTERNOON

A young Black GIRL, 10, sits on the bank washing clothes in the water.

They reach the water. Benjy sits down on the bank. Versh rolls up the pants of his overalls and walks in the water.

VERSH

You seen any quarters down here?

The Girl looks up, shakes her head, then looks back down and keeps washing clothes.

VERSH (CONT'D)

I lost it somewhere. It fell through
this here hole.

Versh digs his hand into his pocket and pokes two fingers through the hole in his pants. Benjy sits behind him, playing with a flower.

The Girl rinses a shirt and rubs it against a tin washboard. Versh walks around in the creek and squats to look through the water.

GIRL

Where'd you get a quarter?

Versh looks through the water.

VERSH

Got it at the getting place.

Versh sighs and walks out of the water and rolls down his pants. The Girl looks up and stares at Benjy, who sucks on his hand.

GIRL

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

Versh shrugs.

GOLFER (O.S.)

(yelling)

Caddie.

Benjy starts moaning. Versh taps Benjy and tugs on his shirt.

VERSH

Come on Benjy.

Benjy stands and moans.

EXT. PASTURE - AFTERNOON

Versh and Benjy walk up the hill toward the Compson house. Versh picks up a flower and gives it to Benjy. Benjy keeps moaning.

VERSH

You a grown man, now. They'll send
you to Jackson if you don't quit
bellerin'.

Versh tugs on Benjy's hand and they reach the house. Versh walks up the steps to the kitchen. He tugs on Benjy's arm.

We hear LAUGHING in the distance.

Benjy stops moaning. He turns around. We see--

Two SCHOOLGIRLS giggling and walking down the road in front of the fence, their schoolbags hang from their shoulders. One of the Schoolgirls has long brown hair and wears a red bow in her hair.

Benjy watches them.

Benjy pulls his hand away from Versh.

Versh sees the Schoolgirls.

VERSH (CONT'D)

You, Benjy. Come back here.

Benjy runs up to the fence and follows behind the Schoolgirls, watching them. He holds onto the bars of the fence and presses his face up against it. He watches them skip and giggle.

Versh runs up behind him.

Benjy moans. He walks toward gate, watching the Schoolgirls.

The Schoolgirls hear Benjy moaning, they turn and see him trying to open the gate. They start walking faster.

Versh grabs onto Benjy's sleeve, following behind him.

Benjy tries to unlatch the gate. Versh tries to pull Benjy away. Benjy opens the gate. Versh jumps on Benjy's back and tries to stop him from exiting, but Benjy is much bigger than him.

Benjy tosses Versh on the ground and runs out onto the road. Versh jumps up and runs after Benjy.

EXT. ROAD - AFTERNOON

Benjy runs after the little Schoolgirls. They see him, scream and start running.

Benjy catches up to them and picks up the little girl with the brown hair and red ribbon, she kicks and struggles,

screaming. The other Schoolgirl runs away, leaving her friend behind.

In the background we see Versh and Jason run up behind them. Jason's face is red and sweaty.

VERS
(screaming)
Benjy.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. QUENTIN'S ROOM - EVENING

Mr. Compson stands in the doorway of Quentin's room, staring at the untouched Trunk.

He looks at everything as Quentin left it when he was last there. The piles of paper on his desk have dry ink stains all over them. An ashtray of cigarette butts is on the floor. Mr. Compson rubs his face and sighs.

Jason walks up behind him.

JASON
Benjy calmed down. He's in his room now.

Mr. Compson nods. He turns around to look at Jason.

MR. COMPSON
Did you leave the gate unlatched when you came in?

Jason looks up and scoffs. He shakes his head.

JASON
Of course not. Don't you know I've got better sense than to do that? Do you think I wanted anything like this to happen?

Jason stops pacing and looks at his father. Mr. Compson walks over to the side table and fixes himself a drink.

JASON (CONT'D)
If they accuse him of attempted rape, I reckon they'll want us to send him to Jackson now, if Mr. Burgess don't shoot him first.

He looks at Jason. Mr. Compson shakes his head and sighs. He holds his icy drink to his forehead and closes his eyes.

JASON (CONT'D)

You know the only thing we can do so
the town don't run us out is either
send him to Jackson or castrate him-

Mr. Compson raises his hand.

MR. COMPSON

Please, Jason.

Jason watches his father. Mr. Compson nods and looks at
Jason.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)

I know. Just, please be quiet.

He shuts Quentin's door.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)

I'm not sending my own son away to
one of those places. He's not crazy.

Jason looks at his father.

MR. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Call the doctor tomorrow and set up
the appointment.

Jason nods. Mr. Compson walks away.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE PORCH - NIGHT

Mr. Compson exits the house and walks down the front steps.
He leans on the porch banister, which creaks under his weight.
We hear the wood from the banister CRACK and splinter. Mr.
Compson kicks the banister. He downs the rest of his drink
and tosses the glass into the bushes next to the porch.

EXT. PASTURE - NIGHT

Mr. Compson walks across the pasture toward the fence. He
trips, but he regains his balance and keeps walking. He
almost reaches the gate, but stumbles and falls to the ground,
face first.

He lifts his head up, breathing heavily. In the grass in
front of him lays the lock from the gate. He picks it up
and holds it. He looks out at the field he sold, the golf
course in front of their house--

A few red flags stick out from the ground and further ahead
we see a sand trap.

Mr. Compson rolls over and lies on his back. He catches his breath. He tosses the lock aside, clutches his left arm in pain. He breathes heavily, suffering, pain surging.

CUT TO BLACK

We hear the CLOPPING of hooves.

EXT. ROAD - AFTERNOON

A succession of buggies drive down the dirt road.

A buggy drives past, PEOPLE dressed in black sit inside.

In the second buggy, driven by Roskus, we see a casket loaded in the back, decorated with a wreath of flowers.

The third buggy drives past, driven by Versh. In it we see Benjy and Mrs. Compson, dressed in black, sitting in the carriage. Dilsey sits next to Mrs. Compson and carries Miss

Quentin, now about a year old, in her lap. Mrs. Compson sobs and leans on Benjy's shoulder, who moans.

Following the buggies is a black Abbott-Detroit Model 34 car driven by Jason, solemn, alone, also dressed in black.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - AFTERNOON

We see Jason staring down at--

Two TOMBSTONES, next to each other, surrounded by flowers. They read: QUENTIN COMPSON 1891-1910 and JASON RICHMOND LYCURGUS COMPSON III 1846-1912.

Jason turns and sees--

Mrs. Compson and Benjy get into their buggy, parked next to his car. Mrs. Compson still sobs. They sit down. Benjy holds onto a flower with both hands and stares at his mother, then at Jason and the tombstones. The buggy jolts forward as Versh whips the horse.

Jason turns around and looks at the two graves again. He pulls on his gloves, adjusts his hat, looks up and sees--

Someone standing behind a tree a few feet away.

Jason frowns. He walks toward the tree, then around it and sees it's Caddy.

She lifts up her black veil. She has dark rings under her eyes and looks much older than her years.

CADDY
Hello, Jason.

Caddy holds out her hand. Jason stares at her hand. He looks away.

JASON
Thought you had more sense than to
come back here.

CADDY
You did?

Jason crosses his arms.

CADDY (CONT'D)
I'm sorry about the bank, Jason.

JASON
You needn't have come back, there's
nothing left.

She looks toward the two graves.

CADDY
I just happened to see it in the
paper. On the back page.

Jason nods and looks away.

JASON
We don't even speak your name at the
house, you know that?

Caddy nods.

JASON (CONT'D)
Your little girl ain't supposed to
know your name.

CADDY
Jason-

Caddy looks at Jason and reaches for his hand, but he recoils slightly and looks away. Caddy looks at the ground.

CADDY (CONT'D)
If you fix it so that I can see her
I'll give you fifty dollars.

Jason scoffs.

JASON
You haven't got fifty dollars.

CADDY

Will you? Just for a minute.

Caddy searches under her cloak and then pulls her hand out. She shows him a fifty dollar bill.

JASON

What have you been doing to get that?

Caddy avoids making eye contact with him.

CADDY

I'll give you a hundred. Will you?

Jason looks away. He sighs.

JASON

You do what I say. Just a minute.
And you get on the first train out
of here tomorrow.

Caddy nods and looks at Jason.

CADDY

Yes. Just like you say, just so I
see her a minute. Then I'll go right
on my way back to Memphis.

JASON

Give me the money.

CADDY

I'll give it to you afterward.

JASON

Don't you trust me?

Caddy looks away and fidgets. She looks at the money in her hand. She looks at the ground.

CADDY

I'll give it to you afterward.

Jason nods and turns to leave. Caddy grabs his arm.

CADDY (CONT'D)

Wait.

Jason turns around. Caddy holds out two fifty dollar bills. Jason looks around the graveyard, takes them. Caddy doesn't let go of the bills.

CADDY (CONT'D)

You promise?

Jason tugs on the money.

JASON

Let go.

Caddy grabs Jason's arm with her free hand.

CADDY

I wouldn't ask you if there was
another way.

Caddy lets go of the money. Jason folds it and puts it inside his coat pocket.

JASON

I'll drive into town in about an
hour. You can see her then.

Jason turns and walks away. He walks toward his car, Caddy watches him walk away.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE - EVENING

Jason enters the house. He shuts the door behind him. We hear Benjy moaning in the distance and Mrs. Compson sobbing loudly. Jason sighs, walks upstairs.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE HALLWAY - EVENING

Jason walks up the stairs to the second floor. Jason stops in the doorway of his mother's room and peers in--

The room is dark and austere. The curtains are closed, all of Mr. Compson's belongings are untouched, his flask and his pipe sit on his bedside table. His side of the bed is made. On the other side sits Mrs. Compson, bent over, shaking and crying.

Jason is about to walk away when she looks up and sees him.

MRS. COMPSON

He left us nothing.

Jason stops, turns and looks on at her from the doorway.

She sits up, her face looks red and raw from crying.

Jason takes in the information.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Everyone has let me down.

Mrs. Compson stands and walks over to Mr. Compson's bedside table, picks up his flask. She opens it, sniffs it. She stares at the flask.

She laughs sadly and sips the flask. She wipes her mouth and drops the flask on the bed.

Jason watches her.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)
We should think about sending Benjamin
to the Jackson Asylum. They can
care for him better. It's one less
mouth to feed.

Jason nods, then looks away.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE KITCHEN - EVENING

Jason enters the kitchen to find Versh and Benjy sitting at the table. Miss Quentin sits in a highchair, sucking on a spoon. Benjy clutches onto the same flowers from the funeral with both hands. He drools a little.

Jason walks in and looks at Versh.

JASON
Where's Dilsey?

Versh shrugs. Jason nods. He walks over to Miss Quentin and unstraps her from the highchair. He picks her up and walks toward the kitchen door.

VERSH
Where you takin' her, Mr. Jason?

Jason ignores Versh and exits the kitchen.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE - EVENING

Jason walks down the front steps of the house toward his parked car.

JASON
(yelling)
Roskus.

Jason looks around. He opens the passenger's door and sets Miss Quentin down on the seat.

JASON (CONT'D)
You stay put.

Miss Quentin, just a year old, sucks on her hand and sits obliviously in the seat. Jason closes the door.

He looks around.

Jason jogs around the house and sees Roskus and Dilsey sitting on a neat pile of chopped wood. Dilsey dries a tear, Roskus has an arm around her.

JASON (CONT'D)

Roskus.

Roskus looks up, pats Dilsey and walks toward Jason. Jason walks toward the car. He opens the driver's door and gets in. He starts the car.

Roskus leans into the window, he sees Miss Quentin on the seat.

ROSKUS

Where you takin' that babe?

JASON

Nevermind that. Get in and hold her.

Roskus nods.

Roskus opens the door, picks up Miss Quentin and holds her on his lap. She starts to cry.

JASON (CONT'D)

Shut her up.

Roskus bounces her on his knees, which only makes her cry more. Jason puts the car into gear and the car jolts forward. They drive up the road.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Jason's car speeds down the dirt road, kicking up clouds of dust.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Jason makes a right onto a road and they arrive at the small town. They drive down a few blocks. Street lights flank the road on both sides. Up ahead, we see a figure leaning against a street lamp post.

Jason observes the figure, and as they approach it, the figure turns around and we see it's Caddy.

JASON

Lift the child up to the window.

Roskus looks at Jason, and sees him staring up ahead. Roskus follows his gaze and sees Caddy. Roskus's eyes widen. He gasps.

ROSKUS

Ain't that-

Jason floors the pedal.

JASON

Do it.

Roskus picks up Miss Quentin and lifts her up to the window.

EXT. TOWN STREETS - NIGHT

Caddy sees Jason driving the car. As they approach her, Jason only speeds up. Caddy breathes hard.

CADDY

Jason.

Caddy holds her hand out. She shakes her head.

CADDY (CONT'D)

(yelling)

Jason, stop.

Jason speeds up and drives past her. Caddy sees--

Roskus holding Miss Quentin up to the window.

Caddy runs into the street, trying to catch up with the car, waving her arms. Jason's car drives on and makes a turn away from the town.

Caddy stops running. She breathes hard and sobs. She walks to the sidewalk and sits down on the curb. She holds her head in her hands.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Jason continues speeding down the road. He turns around a corner, and drives onto a gravel road, leaving the town behind.

Roskus stares at Jason, slowly lowering Miss Quentin from the window, sets her down on his lap. He glares at him and shakes his head.

ROSKUS

You's a cold man, Jason.

Jason turns to look at Roskus. Roskus holds his stare for a beat, then looks away.

Jason looks at Miss Quentin, who sits, unaware, in Roskus' lap.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. FARM SUPPLY STORE - MORNING

Jason closes the door behind him. He takes off his hat and gloves.

The gruff store owner, EARL, 50, stands behind the counter. He has a long gray beard, his hair slicked back and chews on a toothpick. He glares at Jason.

Jason takes off his jacket, looks up and sees Earl.

EARL

Late again.

He walks over to the coat rack behind Earl and hangs up his hat and jacket.

JASON

You know what you can do about it.

Jason goes straight to the back of the store.

INT. FARM SUPPLY STORE BACK ROOM - MORNING

Jason enters the back room, there are two desks, a stack of empty crates and a table with a stack of mail in the corner. Jason sits at one of the desks and shuffles through the stack of mail. He stops on one envelope that reads: JEFFERSON BANK.

He opens the envelope and looks over the first few lines that read: LATE FEE NOTICE. Jason drops the letter down on his desk and rubs his temples.

The back door suddenly opens and Caddy walks in. She quickly shuts the door behind her.

Jason looks up, startled. Caddy glares at Jason

CADDY

Liar.

Caddy approaches Jason, twisting her gloves in her hands. Jason stands up.

JASON

Are you crazy? What do you mean coming in here like this?

Caddy walks right up to Jason's face.

CADDY

You're a dirty liar.

Jason glares at Caddy.

JASON

You're the one that lied, you were
supposed to be on the first train
out of here.

He takes her hand and leads her to the back door. She
struggles to get loose.

CADDY

Let me go.

Jason opens the door, revealing the alley behind the store.
Caddy shuts the door and stands in front of it.

JASON

If I see or hear you're still in
town after number seventeen runs,
I'll tell mother you were in town.
Then hold your breath until you see
your bastard child again.

She stares at him.

CADDY

Listen, Jason. If you and mother
will let me have her back, I'll give
you a thousand dollars.

Jason laughs.

JASON

Now I know you're lying. You haven't
got a thousand dollars.

Caddy nods and grabs Jason's arms.

CADDY

Yes I have. I will have it, I can
get it.

JASON

And I know how, you'll get it the
same way you got her.

Caddy lets go of his arms and stares at him, her eyes tear
up. She walks away from him. Jason crosses his arms. Caddy
looks at Jason.

CADDY

Oh I'm crazy, I can't take her. I
can barely take care of myself.

Caddy sighs. She walks toward Jason.

CADDY (CONT'D)
I know she'll be better off with
you.

She stares at Jason and touches his hand.

CADDY (CONT'D)
Just promise to take care of her,
she's kin to you. Please, Jason.
You know mama won't speak to me, she
thinks I ruined us, else I'd ask her
first.

Jason observes Caddy. She looks desperate.

CADDY (CONT'D)
I'll send money if she ever needs
anything, see that she has things
like other girls.

Jason looks away.

CADDY (CONT'D)
I know you need money. Let me help.
I can help you and my baby.

Jason looks at Caddy.

JASON
I don't need your help.

Caddy stares at him.

CADDY
Say what you want, Jason. I want
her to have things like other girls.
I want to help you.

Jason nods. He opens the door and motions for her to leave.

JASON
You need to leave town.

Caddy nods.

CADDY
I will.

JASON
Number seventeen.

Caddy exists and watches Jason as he shuts the door. He
turns around and leans against the door. He rubs his eyes
and stands still.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE LIBRARY - DAY

Mrs. Compson sits in an armchair. She wears a long dark green dress with a black shawl, her hair pulled up in an intricate bun. She looks more elegant than usual, but her face is swollen and sad.

On the table next to her sits a tray of biscuits, a tea pot and tea cups. She looks at her watch and sighs.

MRS. COMPSON

Dilsey.

She straightens her shawl and smoothes out her dress.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Dilsey.

Dilsey pokes her head out from the kitchen.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Where's Benjy?

DILSEY

He out by the stream, Versh'll keep
him busy.

Mrs. Compson nods.

Dilsey goes back into the kitchen.

Mrs. Compson looks at her watch again. She sighs.

Mrs. Compson looks around the library. It looks very organized and clean. Mrs. Compson stands and straightens out the pillows on the chairs, fixes odds and ends, making sure everything looks perfect, even though it already does.

She looks at her watch.

The phone RINGS. Mrs. Compson runs toward it and picks up the receiver.

MRS. COMPSON

Yes?

She listens.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Oh. What a shame.

She listens.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Alright. Yes next week then. Feel better.

She hangs up. She bites her lip and crosses her arms. She fans herself, goes to open a window. Through it she sees--

A fancy, black Cadillac LaSalle sputtering down the road.

Mrs. Compson smiles.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

Dilsey, they're arriving. Go help her out of the car.

Mrs. Compson returns to her armchair, sits and straightens out her dress and shawl. Dilsey exits the kitchen, then through the front door. Through the open window we see--

Dilsey walking down the front steps, she waves at the car.

Mrs. Compson works on her embroidery. Without moving her head, she slowly peers out the window. She sees--

Mrs. Wilkins pokes her head out the back seat window. She hands Dilsey a basket and says something. Dilsey takes the basket, nods and smiles. Mrs. Wilkins pulls her head back in the car and waves. The Cadillac turns around and drives back up the road and disappears.

Mrs. Compson watches the car drive away. Her lip trembles. Dilsey walks in the library. Mrs. Compson pretends to work on her embroidery.

DILSEY

Miss Wilkins say she could only bring by this basket because she forgot about a dentist appointment. She say she come next week.

Dilsey lifts up the basket. She sets it down next to the biscuits. She looks at the tea pot, feels its side.

DILSEY (CONT'D)

Let me take this and heat it up again.

Mrs. Compson nods.

Dilsey takes the tea pot and leaves the library.

Mrs. Compson drops her embroidery in her lap and watches the Cadillac drive away.

CUT TO BLACK

We hear crickets CHIRP and leaves RUSTLE.

CHILD'S VOICE (O.S.)

Caddy.

EXT. PASTURE - NIGHT

We see the LARGE LIVE OAK TREE in front of the Compson house. The branches move slowly in the breeze and the spanish moss the grows on the trunk sways.

Benjy sits on the porch of the Compson house. He looks back and forth between the fence, the tree and the remaining stumps of the cut trees outside the fence.

Benjy closes his eyes.

BENJY'S POV--

The large LIVE OAK outside the Compson house sways. The Spanish Moss blows in the gust of wind. One of the branches starts to shake. Suddenly, a small LEG dangles down the branch, the rest of the body is hidden by the leaves. Then the rest of the body appears, sitting on the branch. It's seven-year-old CADDY, wearing the same white, wet, muddied dress.

CHILD'S VOICE (O.S.)

Caddy.

Caddy looks down from the tree and smiles.

CADDY

Benjy.

VERSH (O.S.)

Benjy.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE PORCH - NIGHT

Benjy sits on the front steps of the porch. He stares at the large Live Oak, Caddy is gone. Benjy groans and winces. He rubs his face. Versh appears behind him, taps his shoulder.

VERSH

Benjy.

Benjy turns around and sees Versh. Versh sits down next to him. Benjy rubs Caddy's faded and frayed red ribbon tied around his wrist. Benjy tugs at the ribbon. Versh holds Benjy's arm. Benjy moans.

VERSH (CONT'D)

Benjy, hush. It's alright.

Benjy tugs at the ribbon. Versh reaches into his pocket and takes out a lollipop. He hands it to Benjy. Benjy shakes his head and squeezes his eyes shut, tugging at the ribbon. Versh unwraps the lollipop and puts it in Benjy's hand.

VERSH (CONT'D)

Look Benjy, sweets.

Benjy, frustrated, throws the lollipop on the ground. He holds his head in his hands. Versh pats his back. Versh stands up, picks up the lollipop from the ground. He takes Benjy's arm and tries to pull him up.

VERSH (CONT'D)

Let's go inside Benjy.

Benjy stands.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Caddy watches Benjy and Versh from a distance, behind a tree.

CADDY

(whispering)

Benjy.

Benjy turns around. He looks around the pasture, but Versh tugs his arm. They go inside the house.

Caddy observes the Compson house--

It is visibly deteriorating. Ivy has started to cover most of the house, and the parts that aren't covered show chipping paint and loose boards. The front steps rot on one side and the windows are dirty.

She walks closer to the house, tiptoeing down the road, trying to cover herself behind trees and bushes.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE - NIGHT

She walks to the outside of the kitchen and peers in through the window. She sees--

Versh sitting down at the table. Benjy sits as Dilsey ties a napkin around his neck. Miss Quentin sits in a highchair, watching Dilsey.

Caddy smiles. She watches Miss Quentin. Her smile fades and her eyes tear up. She looks at Benjy and sees--

He's STARING right at her.

She stares at him and smiles. She waves.

Benjy abruptly stands up and moans. Dilsey looks up, but Caddy drops down under the window before she can be seen by anyone else. She bites her lip. She walks toward the front porch, staying low under the windows.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Benjy stands up and walks toward the window.

DILSEY
What's gotten into you?

Benjy peers out the window, pounds on it.

DILSEY (CONT'D)
(yelling)
Benjy.

Benjy yells. Versh stands up and tries to calm him down.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE - NIGHT

Caddy takes an envelope from her coat pocket. She picks up a small rock from the ground. She puts the envelope on the porch and the rock on top of it. We hear Benjy moan louder. Caddy looks around and quickly runs down the road, away from the house.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Benjy pounds on the window and yells.

VERSH
Benjy.

Versh stands up and tries to pull him away from the window. Benjy sees--

Caddy running down the road. She disappears as she turns onto the main road.

Benjy pounds the window harder, screaming. Miss Quentin starts to cry.

DILSEY
(yelling)
Jason.

He frantically breathes hard, struggling to get Versh off him. Benjy pushes Versh away and slams him into the wall behind him. Benjy runs out of the house.

Jason runs into the kitchen, sees Versh on the floor, blood smeared on his arm. Miss Quentin screeches. Dilsey picks her up and tries to calm her down.

JASON
What the hell is going on?

DILSEY
He ran out.

Jason turns around and runs out the house.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE - NIGHT

Benjy runs down the road, screaming. Jason runs after him. Jason catches up and grabs his arm. Benjy yanks his arm free and keeps running. Jason tackles Benjy and they drop to the ground.

Dilsey and Versh run towards them.

DILSEY
(yelling)
Quit.

Benjy turns around and PUNCHES Jason right in the eye, making him roll over. Benjy tries to get up. Jason shakes his head, reaches over and grabs Benjy's ankle, bring him down again. Jason PUNCHES Benjy in the face. Benjy SCREAMS.

DILSEY (CONT'D)
(yelling)
Jason.

Jason punches Benjy over and over again. Versh runs over to Jason and tries to pull him off of Benjy.

DILSEY (CONT'D)
(yelling)
Jason.

Jason pushes Versh off of him and slams him on the ground.

DILSEY (CONT'D)
(yelling)
You, Jason.

Jason stops. Blood trickles from his nose. Jason looks at Versh, breathing hard, looking up at him. Jason turns and looks at Dilsey, scared and out of breath. He turns to look at Benjy--

Benjy chokes on his own blood, on the floor, crying. Blood rolls out of his mouth and down his nose. His eyes squeezed shut.

Jason stands. He spits blood from his mouth and wipes his face.

JASON

Dilsey. Pack Benjy's things tonight.

Dilsey looks at Jason. She peers at him.

JASON (CONT'D)

Tell Roskus to take him to the Jackson
asylum tomorrow morning.

Jason turns and walks to the house.

Dilsey kneels over Benjy and pets his hair.

DILSEY

Hush, Benjy. It's alright.

She takes her apron and wipes the blood off his face. Versh
gets up and crawls over to Benjy. Benjy cries and chokes
again. He tries to sit up. Dilsey holds him down.

DILSEY (CONT'D)

Hush, Benjy.

He looks at Benjy's wounded face, then looks up at his mother.
Dilsey looks at Benjy and shakes her head. A tear rolls
down her face.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE PORCH - NIGHT

Jason walks up the steps. He is about to walk through the
open door when he notices Caddy's ENVELOPE with the rock on
it. He bends over and picks the envelope up. He opens it
and takes out a letter. He opens the letter, reads it, and
pulls out a check for 200 DOLLARS. He stares at the check.

He looks out at Benjy, Dilsey and Versh. He looks at the
envelope. He shakes his head and walks inside.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mrs. Compson sits up in bed, with a towel over her eyes.
Her bedside table is crowded with bottles of medicine and a
thermometer. She reaches over to her bedside table, and
without looking picks a bottle up and drinks from it. She
sets the bottle back down. We hear a KNOCK. The door slowly
opens, and Jason walks in, cleaning the blood off his face
with a towel.

She takes the cloth off her eyes and sees Jason. Jason walks
over to his mother.

He takes out the letter and check from Caddy hands it to his
mother.

MRS. COMPSON
What was that racket?

JASON
Benjy gave me trouble.

Mrs. Compson stares at Jason.

MRS. COMPSON
Send him to Jackson.

Jason shakes his head. He waves her off. She sighs. She picks up another bottle of medicine and drinks from it. Jason watches her.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)
He'll be better off there anyway.
They can care for him, Jason. Better
than we can.

Jason nods.

JASON
I'll set it up tonight.

He sits on the bed. He shows her Caddy's envelope, takes out the letter and the check.

JASON (CONT'D)
She's leaving tonight. She left
this on the porch.

Mrs. Compson stares at the letter and the check. She puts the cloth back over her eyes.

MRS. COMPSON
Burn it.

He takes the cloth off her eyes.

JASON
(lifts up the check)
Two hundred dollars. She says she'll
send one every month.

She looks at the check. She looks away and closes her eyes. Jason shakes his head.

JASON (CONT'D)
We need the money.

MRS. COMPSON
Burn it. I won't take a fallen
woman's filthy lucre.

JASON

If you won't take it then I will.

MRS. COMPSON

I'll be gone soon, I know I'm just a burden to you. We all are.

She coughs.

JASON

You've been saying that so long I'm beginning to believe you.

He stares at his mother. Jason folds the check inside the letter. He puts it inside his coat pocket. He puts the cloth over his mother's eyes and stands.

JASON (CONT'D)

We have to raise a child. We all have to make sacrifices now.

Mrs. Compson re-adjusts herself in the bed and assumes her coffin-like position.

MRS. COMPSON

Shut the door behind you.

Jason stares at her. He exits the room and shuts the door.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. FARM SUPPLY STORE - MORNING

Jason stands behind the counter and talks with a CUSTOMER, 40.

JASON

You'd better take that one. How do you fellas expect to get ahead, trying to work with cheap equipment?

The Customer looks at Jason.

CUSTOMER

If this one ain't any good why you got it on sale?

JASON

I didn't say the seventy-five cent one wasn't any good, it's just not as good as the dollar fifty one.

The Customer looks at the harness. He lifts one up and inspects it.

CUSTOMER

How do you know this one ain't as good, you ever use any one of them?

JASON

I know because they don't ask a dollar fifty for it.

The Customer looks at Jason. He puts them both on the counter.

The Customer slowly pushes forward the dollar fifty harness, and peers at Jason. He takes out the money and puts it on the counter.

JASON (CONT'D)

Good choice.

Jason takes the money, the Customer takes the harness and exits.

In the background we see Earl standing in the doorway, watching Jason.

Jason counts the money, takes out the dollar, puts it in the cash register and puts the fifty cents in HIS OWN POCKET. Jason rubs his temples and winces.

Earl walks in from the back room, carrying a stack of mail.

EARL

That harness cost a dollar, last time I checked.

Jason waves Earl off.

JASON

You sell everything for less than it's worth anyway.

Earl shakes his head. He approaches Jason, hands him an envelope.

EARL

Another letter from the bank.

Jason looks at the envelope, rubs his forehead. Earl watches Jason.

EARL (CONT'D)

Jason, if you need an advance on your paycheck-

Jason shakes his head. Looks away.

EARL (CONT'D)
I'd be glad to help if you're havin'
problems. I know it ain't easy being
the one in charge.

Jason looks at Earl.

JASON
It's under control.

Earl nods. Jason nods, shuffles through a stack of paperwork on the counter.

EXT. JEFFERSON BANK - AFTERNOON

Jason walks up the steps to the small town bank.

INT. JEFFERSON BANK - AFTERNOON

Jason enters the bank. He gets in line for a teller. A TELLER beckons him. Jason walks up to the Teller's window and puts Caddy's check through the space at the bottom of the window.

JASON
I'd like to cash this, please.

The Teller nods and counts out two hundred dollars in cash.

JASON (CONT'D)
I don't want a receipt.

The Teller nods and pushes the money through the space. Jason takes the money and exits. He folds it and puts it in his pocket.

EXT. JEFFERSON BANK - AFTERNOON

Jason exits the bank, walks down the steps and takes out his wallet, puts the money and stops when he sees--

The small, wrinkled PAPER DOLL that Benjy made for him years ago.

Jason takes out the Paper Doll. He looks at it. The Paper Doll looks like Jason. The Paper Doll has a wonky smile drawn on its face. Jason smiles. He smooths it out. Jason stares at the Paper Doll, his smile fades.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE PORCH - AFTERNOON

Crickets CHIRP.

Dilsey sits on the steps of the house, Miss Quentin on her lap and feeds her with a bottle. Dilsey HUMS a mournful lullaby. Her expression is sad and she looks tired.

Jason drives up in his car. Dilsey watches him.

JASON

Did Roskus take Benjy already?

Dilsey nods.

JASON (CONT'D)

Is he puttin' him on the train?

Dilsey sighs and nods.

JASON (CONT'D)

How long ago.

Dilsey shrugs.

DILSEY

He should be on it soon.

Jason nods. He gets back in his car and drives off. Dilsey, confused, watches him drive down the road.

INT. CAR - AFTERNOON

Jason speeds down the road, leaving dust clouds behind him.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - AFTERNOON

Jason pulls up to the train station. A TRAIN WHISTLE BLOWS. He sees Roskus getting back in the Compson's buggy. He parks his car, gets out and runs. Roskus sees him, and watches him run toward the train.

Jason runs up to the train.

The ENGINEER sees Jason running toward the train and peers out the small window from the engine car.

ENGINEER

(yelling)

You can't get on without a ticket.

Jason doesn't stop running.

JASON

(yelling)

I don't want to get on. Someone has to get off.

Jason jumps up on the platform and into the train.

INT. TRAIN - AFTERNOON

Jason runs down the aisles. He looks at all the PASSENGERS, searching. He goes into the next cart. Runs down the aisle. He sees--

Benjy, sitting next to an ASYLUM WORKER, 30. Benjy wears a suit, his hair is combed back, a suitcase on his lap. He looks like any normal adult. He looks confused and sad, his face is bruised and red from the fight. Benjy sees Jason and smiles.

JASON
Come on, Benjy.

He stands up, his suitcase falls to the ground. The Asylum Worker grabs Benjy's arm.

JASON (CONT'D)
(to the Asylum Worker)
Let go of him.

The Asylum Worker looks at Jason, then at Benjy.

ASYLUM WORKER
What d'you think you're doin'?

Benjy stands up and walks toward Jason.

JASON
I'm his brother.

Benjy hugs him. Jason pats Benjy, pulls away and picks up his suitcase. Jason looks at the Asylum Worker.

JASON (CONT'D)
I'm sorry for wasting your time.

ASYLUM WORKER
Now wait just a second.

Jason pulls out his wallet, hand the Asylum Worker a bill. The Asylum Worker takes the money, confused, stares at it then looks up and watches Jason take Benjy's arm as they walk off the train and step off the platform.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE PORCH - EVENING

Jason's car pulls up in front of the house. Jason stares at the dilapidated Compson house, dirty and falling apart.

Dilsey exits the Compson house, arms folded.

Jason turns and looks at Benjy, who smiles back at him. Jason gets out, holding Benjy's suitcase. Benjy gets out.

JASON
Go inside, Benjy.

Jason points toward the house and hands Benjy his suitcase. Benjy walks up the front steps of the house. Dilsey hugs Benjy. She takes his suitcase and Benjy goes inside.

Jason walks up the front steps, kicks at a loose board. He rolls up his sleeves.

Dilsey stares at Jason and smiles. Jason looks at the house.

JASON (CONT'D)
(to Dilsey)
Tell Roskus to get some white paint.

Dilsey smiles.

JASON (CONT'D)
And a hammer and nails.

Dilsey goes inside. Jason rips off some vines crawling up the wall.

MRS. COMPSON (O.S.)
Jason.

Jason looks up, tosses the vines off the porch. Jason continues ripping vines off the wall. Mrs. Compson exits the house and stares at him.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)
What on earth are you doing?

Jason does not turn to look at his mother. He calmly rips the vines off and tosses them off the porch.

JASON
Benjy stays with us.

Mrs. Compson folds her arms.

MRS. COMPSON
You're only increasing your burden.

Jason rips more vines off the wall.

JASON
I have to feed every damn mouth in
this house, what's one more?

She holds onto her dress and twists the fabric in her hands.

MRS. COMPSON

Jason, think of our name, our duty
to keep up our reputation.

Frustrated, she holds onto his arm. Jason recoils from her grasp and rips more vines from the wall. He throws them down on the ground. She stands in front of him, in between him and the wall of vines. He tries to move her out of his way but she grabs onto him. He continues ripping the vines off the wall behind her.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)

You should think of us, of you and
me now. We are the only ones left
and we can still save the last bit
of dignity we have.

He is now frantically and angrily ripping vines from the wall.

JASON

Benjy stays, Quentin stays, and god
knows you'll outlive every one of
us.

He stops, looks at her.

JASON (CONT'D)

So please, mother, be quiet. I'm
trying to fix up this hovel and you
are in my way.

Mrs. Compson stares at Jason.

JASON (CONT'D)

Go lay down and rest, it's hot outside
and you must feel ill.

Mrs. Compson stares at Jason. She slowly walks back into the house. Jason watches her, then picks up the vines on the floor and tosses them off the side of the porch. He sits down on a rocking chair and stares out at the pasture.

CUT TO BLACK

We hear the RUMBLE of a car engine and breaks SQUEAK.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - MORNING

Dawn breaks, barely illuminating the land. Not a person in sight. A car pulls up outside of the Jefferson train station.

The backseat door opens and two small and dainty feet step out, in a pair of nice brown leather shoes and frilly white socks. The car door closes and the feet walk away from the car.

INT. TRAIN STATION - MORNING

The train station is empty, only a few PEOPLE sit on a bench, holding tickets, reading the newspaper.

The same feet enter the train station and walk on the wooden floor. We see the feet belong to a GIRL, 16, wearing a blue coat and a white dress, short blond hair and a small suitcase.

The Girl approaches the ticket booth. She sets down her suitcase, reaches into her pocket and takes out an envelope. From the envelope she retrieves a handful of dollar bills. She puts the money on the counter and slides it toward the SALESPERSON.

We see the Girl's face and she is the spitting image of Caddy, except for the difference in hair color and her freckles.

GIRL

One ticket for the five thirty train
to Memphis, please.

The Salesperson nods, takes the money, counts it and hands her a ticket. He stares at her.

SALESPERSON

Ain't you a little young to be
traveling by yourself?

The Girl takes the ticket, puts it in the envelope with the rest of her money and pockets the envelope.

GIRL

I got relatives meetin' me there.

The Salesperson nods, smiles. The Girl smiles back.

SALESPERSON

Boarding in a few minutes.

The Girl nods and walks away.

We hear RUNNING WATER.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE BATHROOM - MORNING

Jason shaves, looking in the mirror, his cheeks and chin covered in shaving cream. He is now in his mid 40s, looking much older and mature, now with a moustache.

He carefully draws the razor down his chin, then down his cheek. He knicks himself and he twitches, mutters to himself. Bright red blood trickles onto the rest of the foamy white shaving cream on his cheek. He rinses the razor off in the

sink, the white shaving cream and the red blood mix in the water before going down the drain.

INT. JASON'S ROOM - MORNING

Jason enters his bedroom, drying his face off. A piece of tissue blotted with blood sticks to the cut on his cheek. He tosses the towel on his bureau.

The top half of a suit is neatly laid out on his bed, he already wears the pants. He picks up a shirt, puts it on and buttons it. He adjusts the collar, picks up the tie and throws it around his neck. As he ties his tie, he walks over to his window and pulls open the curtain. He tightens his tie and puts on his coat. He walks over to his bureau and opens the top drawer.

In the top drawer are a few of his belongings, including a small tin red box with a lock on it. He takes out his watch and puts it on. He picks up a set of keys and puts them in his coat pocket. He picks up his wallet, opens it and counts the money inside. He stops when he sees--

The lock on the tin red box has been picked.

He drops his wallet in the drawer and picks up the box. He takes off the lock, opens the box. It's empty.

Jason stares at the empty box.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING

Dilsey, now in her 60s, looking older, but moving with the same agility and grace as she used to, flips pancakes over the stove. Benjy sits at the table, eating pancakes, awkwardly holding a fork in his fist but eating with his hand. Through the window we see--

Versh, now in his late 40s, his sleeves rolled up, feeding a mule by the shed.

We hear loud STOMPING. Jason bursts into the kitchen. He walks over to Dilsey and grabs her arm.

JASON

(yelling)

Who was in my room last night?

Dilsey, startled, stares at Jason, her spatula in hand. She yanks back her arm.

DILSEY

Good lord, what in the name of--

Jason points at the ceiling.

JASON
Somebody's robbed me.

Benjy starts moaning, looking back and forth between Jason and Dilsey. Dilsey shrugs. She walks over to Benjy and puts her arm around him, pets his head and hushes him.

DILSEY
I haven't seen anyone go in there.

Dilsey turns and flips a pancake.

Jason looks around the kitchen. He looks outside and sees Versh with the mule.

Dilsey sees Jason looking at Versh. She shakes her head.

DILSEY (CONT'D)
You, Jason-

Jason takes her shoulders and shakes her.

JASON
(yelling)
Who went into my room?

MRS. COMPSON (O.S.)
Jason?

Jason lets go of Dilsey, turns around and sees Mrs. Compson stading in the doorway of the kitchen. She is is her late 60s now, looking shriveled, tired and pale. She leans in the doorway, looking stern and confused.

MRS. COMPSON (CONT'D)
What is this? You know I'm not-

JASON
(yelling)
I've been robbed. In my own house.

Mrs. Compson stares at him.

MRS. COMPSON
What on earth do you mean?

Jason rubs his forehead and laughs.

DILSEY
You, Miss Caroline and Miss Quentin
are the only ones that ever go
upstairs.

Jason stops and looks at Dilsey.

JASON

Where is she?

Dilsey shrugs and flips a pancake. Benjy moans, drops his fork on the table.

DILSEY

She ain't come down yet, on Sunday
morning, she in bed like she usually
is-

Jason runs out of the kitchen, shoving his mother aside.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE HALLWAY - MORNING

Jason runs up the stairs and down the hallway, stops in front of a door and bursts in. He stops when he sees--

The bed is empty, no one is in the room and the window is wide open. The curtains flutter in the wind and branches from the tree outside scrape against the window pane.

Jason frantically looks behind furniture, in the closet and under the bed. Nothing. He stops when he sees a pamphlet on the bureau.

He picks it up and sees it's a train schedule. He opens the top drawer in the bureau. Empty. He opens another drawer, also empty. He pulls out another drawer, only a few things have been left behind.

Furious, he runs out of the room.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE HALLWAY - MORNING

Jason runs down the stairs. Mrs. Compson and Dilsey stare at him. When Jason reaches the bottom of the steps Dilsey goes back into the kitchen. He walks past his mother and opens the front door.

MRS. COMPSON

Jason where are you going?

Jason stops and turns to look at his mother. He slams the door and stares at her.

JASON

(yelling)

I've been robbed by the very child I
could have thrown to the streets,
but instead supported for fifteen
years.

Jason, his face red with anger, stares at his mother, who slowly steps away from him. He holds his hands, in fists, up to her face.

JASON (CONT'D)
I've worked my hands to the bone to
keep this family together, under a
roof and fed, and for what?

Mrs. Compson watches him, scared.

JASON (CONT'D)
So that the bastard child of my harlot
sister could rob me of everything.
So I'll tell you where I'm going, I
don't give a damn about anyone
anymore, I just want my money.

Jason opens the door and exits the house. He gets in his car, turns on the engine and speeds down the road, dust clouds forming behind him.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Jason's car pulls up in the train station parking lot with a SCREECH. He exits the car and runs into the train station.

INT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

He looks around the train station, realizes it's empty. He runs up to the ticket booth, the Salesperson stares at him.

JASON
Did a blond girl come in here to buy
a ticket?

The Salesperson peers at Jason.

JASON (CONT'D)
Freckles on the nose? Green eyes?

The Salesperson nods. Jason nods back.

JASON (CONT'D)
Where did she buy a ticket for?

The Salesperson thinks for a beat.

SALESPERSON
Either Nashville or Memphis, not
sure.

Jason rubs his forehead and grinds his teeth.

JASON
Do you remember which one?

The Salesperson shrugs.

SALESPERSON
What's the difference? They both in
Tennessee.

Jason takes a deep breath.

JASON
Was it Memphis?

The Salesperson shrugs.

SALESPERSON
I don't recall. She on the train
anyhow, why does it matter now?

Jason sighs.

JASON
Because that's where her damn mother
is.

The Salesperson stares at Jason, confused. Jason sighs and
stares at the train tracks outside the door.

SALESPERSON
You want to buy a ticket? The next
train to Memphis is in three hours.

Jason stares at the tracks. He looks at the ground and
breathes deeply. He looks up at the Salesperson, who watches
him.

Jason shakes his head.

JASON
No.

The Salesperson nods. Jason walks away.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Jason walks out of the station, approaches his car and gets
in. He sits, hands on the wheel, staring straight ahead.
He sits silent and motionless.

He takes his keys and starts the engine.

INT. COMPSON HOUSE LIBRARY - DAY

Jason enters the Compson house, closes the door behind him and walks to the library. He enters the room, stares at his father's liquor cabinet.

He approaches the liquor cabinet, opens it and looks at all of the paraphernalia: an assortment of glasses, bottles of liquor, empty ice buckets etc. He takes out a glass and a bottle of whiskey.

He pours himself a drink and stares at the brown liquor. He downs the whole thing in one gulp. He winces, clears his throat and pours himself another one, downs that one as well.

EXT. COMPSON HOUSE PORCH - DAY

Jason exits onto the porch, holding a new drink, a cigarette in his mouth. He walks down the front steps and leans on the rail, exhaling smoke. He takes a sip from his drink. He looks at the golf course across the house, empty. He looks at the pasture in front of the house, the fence and then looks down the hill. He takes a drag from his cigarette and peers down the hill. He sees--

Benjy sitting by the creek, watching the water and the trees around him. He is motionless and calm.

Jason finishes his drink. He takes a last puff from his cigarette and tosses it on the ground. He steps on the cigarette, slowly twisting it into the ground with his shoe until it blends in with the dirt.

CUT TO BLACK

Brenna:

A few minimal cuts and a change of order at the end.

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Jason walks away.

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in. He sits, hands on the wheel, staring straight ahead,
silent and motionless.

He starts the engine.

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Jason parks his car, exits, a lit cigarette in his mouth. He leans on the rail on the front porch, exhaling smoke. He looks at the golf course across the house, empty. He looks at the pasture in front of the house, the fence and then looks down the hill. He takes a drag from his cigarette and peers down the hill. He sees--

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CUT TO BLACK