The Elliptical Nature of Sanctuary

How but in custom and in ceremony
Are innocence and beauty born?
—Yeats, "A Prayer for my Daughter"

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Although the story of *Sanctuary* revolves around the sensationalistic episode in which Popeye rapes Temple Drake with a corn cob, this central incident itself never fully appears in the novel. Neither in the "basely conceived" [1] first version of *Sanctuary* nor in the often more explicit revision does the assault come clear to the reader. Faulkner has not simply confined the moment to the wings, as he might have if the question were one of decorum. Temple and the narrator all but describe this "most horrific" [2] event, yet their narratives repeatedly elide the central action of the story. The reader's sense of the pivotal moment accumulates from immense foreboding and mesmeric recapitulation, but the action 'itself' appears indistinctly in Temple's minimal narration: "Something is happening to me!" [3] In that scene, vague diction, vacancies in syntax, breakages in thought and utterance, and violations of place, time, and character conspire to blur the presentation of the novel's crucial event. The elliptical nature of the episode is not eccentric, however, but paradigmatic; like a template, the figure of ellipsis pervades the rhetorical, psychological, narrative, and thematic structures of *Sanctuary*.

Using Faulkner's treatment of Temple's assault as an eventual point of reference, I want to investigate how ellipsis demarcates the central concerns of the novel's double plot. The story that dominates the familiar 1931 version of *Sanctuary* recounts Temple Drake's extended passage from innocence to corruption; but the narrative cannot represent the exact moment that boundary is crossed, just as it cannot distinguish the instant Temple Drake's virginity is lost. Temple's forcible loss of childhood reverberates against the frame of Horace Benbow's 'discovery' of evil—the novel's other plot, in which Horace resists the realization that the brutality of nature may be inseparable from "law, justice, civilization." [4] *Sanctuary* distributes its meditation on lost innocence

[1] Frederick L. Gwynn and Joseph Blotner, eds., *Faulkner in the University* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1959), p. 90.

[2] *Ibid.* Compare the preface to the Modern Library Edition of *Sanctuary* (New York: Random House, 1931), which has a similar judgment of the first version.

[3] William Faulkner, *Sanctuary* (New York: Cape and Smith, 1931; New York: Random House, Vintage paperback edition, 1958), p. 99.

[4] *Sanctuary: The Original Text*, ed. Noel Polk (New York: Random House, 1981), p. 75. *Cf. Sanctuary* (1931), p. 127. I shall develop my view of the two versions of *Sanctuary* in the course of my essay; here I note only that I draw freely on both the original and published versions, cited parenthetically as SO (*Sanctuary: The Original Text*), and SR (*Sanctuary*, the revised version). The two are compared in Gerald Langford's *Faulkner's Revision of 'Sanctuary'* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972). Polk's edition provides an uninterrupted text.

between Temple Drake's apparent passage into physical corruption and Horace Benbow's apparent passage into moral and psychological corruption. Both stories seek to mark off sanctuarial spaces, zones free from the contaminant of carnal and mental knowledge that constitutes the fall in Faulkner's fiction. But the effort to establish dividing lines—whether between virginity and 'impurity,' innocence and corruption, nature and culture, or savagery and society—collapses into the illegibilities of ellipsis. Wherever the novel seems to draw lines of distinction or control, the consequence is a blurring or interpenetration that takes the general form of ellipsis.

The confusions surrounding Temple's predicament are part of the story of ellipsis in *Sanctuary*, but the conditions for Temple's story are set by the dynamics of Horace's struggle with "the logical pattern to evil" (SO, 218; SR, 214). Horace's engagement with Temple's plight is assured by the regressive turn his mind makes when he abandons his wife Belle at the outset of the book. By forsaking his marriage, Horace reactivates desires that the institutions of culture are designed to deaden; in so doing he verges on confronting the radical interpenetration of chaos and order, nature and the law, instinct and custom, innocence and evil. These are the oppositions that organize Temple's story as well, and that lead Horace to it. Horace is more prominent in the original version of *Sanctuary*, in which his polymorphous desire is the principal subject. But even in the revised version, in which he is reduced to the framework for Temple's story, Horace's excision rends the text in such a way that his desire determines the book's configurations. Both versions of *Sanctuary* are organized by Horace's crisis, and I propose to consider the novel as a single text encompassing two formulations.[5] I shall return to the question of Faulkner's effects in the two versions of *Sanctuary*, but for the moment I want to examine the features of Horace's situation, the grounding of the novel in what Belle calls Horace's "complex." Once we have considered the ways in which ellipsis indicates the nature of this complex, we may see that Temple's story is an elaborate transmogrification of Horace's story, and that the two plots of the story, like the two versions of the novel, are more intimately related than earlier criticism has granted.

Horace's Complex

From the fiction that precedes *Sanctuary* in Faulkner's career, we know Horace Benbow to be one of those early protagonists transfixed by the prohibitions of incestuous desire.[6] But beyond his younger avatars like Quentin Compson or

[5] In a paper at the International Faulkner Colloque ("The Space Between *Sanctuary*," Paris, April, 1982), Prof. Polk suggested that the two versions might be treated as an extended single text.

Since both versions of *Sanctuary* use ellipsis, I have bracketed all ellipses introduced to indicate portions of the novel's text deleted from my quotation of passages. All other ellipses are reproduced as printed.

Approaching the elliptical character of Faulkner's fiction from another standpoint, Gail L. Mortimer, in "Significant Absences: Faulkner's Rhetoric of Loss" [NOVEL 14 (1981): 232–50], proposes that absence evokes transience brought under aesthetic control by being made palpable.

[6] In *The Play of Faulkner's Language* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), I have considered Horace's plight in *Flags in the Dust*.

Jewel Bundren, Horace seems capable of interpreting his desire in a wider than personal context. Early in the original version of *Sanctuary*, Belle Mitchell Benbow taunts her husband for his inordinate devotion to his sister Narcissa: " 'Don't talk to me about love [. . .]; you're in love with your sister. What do the books call it? What sort of complex?' " (SO, 16). This is the "complex" that Horace had hoped to put behind him by marrying Belle. *Flags in the Dust* traces Horace's renunciation of nostalgia for the innocent (yet pre-incestuous) intimacies of childhood with Narcissa, and concludes with his hope that they both have expurgated their regressive yearnings by marrying others. Much of this material was cut in the revision of *Flags* into *Sartoris* (1929); and when Faulkner composed *Sanctuary*, he felt free to revive most of the Benbow story. The way Belle introduces Horace's complex connects, with signal clarity, the question of incest and the figure of ellipsis. For Belle suggests that it is left to other books (among them Freud's, as we shall see) to call Horace's complex incest; *Sanctuary* steadfastly avoids naming it. The evasion is crucial because to name Horace's desire as incest would be to raise the spectre of impurity and brutality within the sanctuary of civilization. *Sanctuary* resumes Horace's story at the moment he begins to see that cultural institutions like marriage fail to annul natural instincts. Abandoning his marriage revises desires that would have to be called incestuous were they to be named. Horace fathoms that his specific attractions to his sister or stepdaughter threaten his personal bearings, but he also surmises that these longings symbolize an embedded threat to all civilized behavior, and that they endanger the very boundary between nature and civilization.

Faulkner renders Horace's incest complex through a technique of stylistic ellipsis that radiates into the symbolic and structural registers of *Sanctuary*. The surface of the novel (in both versions) is pitted with broken sentences and unspoken words. Such disturbances point to a wider deployment of the figure of ellipsis as silence, repression, and narrative elision. These extended senses of ellipsis characterize Horace's efforts both to unleash and survive the desires that his desertion of marriage sets off. In Horace's complex, the figure of ellipsis discharges several impulses: it indicates the impossibility of representing natural relations that precede language; it disguises and displaces forbidden desires; and it exposes the placelessness of the boundaries thought to discriminate and protect culture from nature.

The elliptical strategies of *Sanctuary* create the deliberate indistinctness of Horace's terrible desire. After defecting from marriage, Horace returns to the now empty house of his childhood. Horace is driven toward a blankness, a nothingness, that depicts his desire: "Isom backed and turned into the narrow street and then into the cedar drive, the lights lifting and boring ahead into the unpruned tunnel as though into the most profound blackness of the sea" (SO, 13). However we might describe Horace's complex, it is surely not a narrow incestuous attachment to mother or sister. Unlike Quentin Compson, Horace scarcely thinks of his parents or his sister Narcissa. Vaguely, he longs to recover a natural, prelapsarian sanctuary before the prohibitions and alienations of

maturity; and so he dreams "that he was a boy again and waked himself crying in a paroxysm of homesickness" (SO, 60). This homesickness refers only elliptically to Horace's craving for his mother since to name the relation now would be to call it incestuous. Horace does periodically blurt out his longing for some idea of purity that Narcissa represents, especially in the original text, but the crucial difference between Horace, who survives the eruptions of incestuous desire, and Quentin, who loses himself to them, is that Horace manages to suppress and displace urges that can be neither eradicated nor articulated. One effect of ellipsis, then, is that it blots and defers, in a double, entwined motion. Whenever Horace verges on declaring his passion, so exposing the subversive ground of his desire, the text simply goes blank. Correspondingly, Horace is drawn to women who stand in for the primary unconfrontable objects of his desire, and who postpone confrontation through the sliding of metonymy. Horace's infatuation with Ruby Lamar exemplifies these workings of ellipsis. To Horace Ruby represents a regression to natural relations: she is to him a puzzling combination of mistress and mother, a substitution for mother as mistress. Suspended in ambivalence, Horace declares his attraction to Ruby elliptically, "saying all this in a rushing whisper, like when there is something that must be said and there isn't time . . . " (SO, 56).

Horace's attraction to his stepdaughter constitutes a major displacement of his complex, and its dynamics are repeated in the even more elaborate use Horace makes of Temple's story. Throughout *Sanctuary* Little Belle's "firm young flesh" (SO, 15) beckons to Horace, yet she is protected from him by prohibitions that have the effect of the incest taboo without its letter. In marrying Belle, Horace comes to occupy the place of father to Little Belle. Her daughterly relation to her stepfather guards against the alluring voice that speaks to Horace in a "murmur of the wild and waxing grape" (SO, 14), so that finally he is constrained by a transmuted incest prohibition: "I couldn't have felt any more foreign to her flesh if I had begot it myself" (SR, 13). Little Belle reminds him, " 'You're not my father. You're just——just——' " (SO, 14). Lévi-Strauss explains this extended force of the incest prohibition by arguing that the taboo is fundamentally a rule not of consanguinity but of exogamy, and that the codes for such relations may have varying forms. Hence, "incest proper, and its metaphorical form as the violation of a minor (by someone 'old enough to be her father', as the expression goes)" is one of the "most powerful inducements to horror and collective vengeance." [7] Little Belle invariably conflates promise and prohibition; as the violation of a minor metaphorically substitutes for "incest proper," so the stepdaughter is one in a series of metonymic substitutions for the mother or sister. The critical movement on Horace's part is an elision of incest proper by a silent displacement of it. In his attraction to Little Belle, Horace poses a representation of a desire that wants to lose the name of incest, to go unnamed.

Horace resorts to silence to establish his relation with Little Belle. When he telephones his stepdaughter after Temple's trial, he cannot find the words to

[7] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, trans. James Harle Bell, John Richard von Sturmer, and Rodney Needham (Boston: Beacon Hill Press, 1969; rev. ed.), p. 10.

prolong their connection:

"Good night. Are you having a good time?"
"Yes. Yes. I'll write tomorrow. Didn't Mamma get my letter today?"
"I dont know. I just—"
"Maybe I forgot to mail it. I wont forget tomorrow, though. I'll write tomorrow. Was that all you wanted?"
"Yes. Just wanted to tell you . . ."
He put the receiver back, he heard the wire die. (SR, 293)

At this juncture Horace's ellipsis *is* the message since it is the only conceivable representation of a desire to be left nameless.

Both figurative and literal ellipses constitute Little Belle's presence in Horace's desire. The narrator repeatedly identifies the source of her allure as her elusiveness: she is "the sweet veiled enigma" (SO, 146). Horace's unconfrontable desire leaves him looking down at her photograph "with a sort of still horror and despair, at a face more *blurred* than sweet, at eyes more *secret* than soft" (SO, 146; SR, 163, emphasis added). Horace's relation to her virginal sexuality remains a blank; when the sounds of Little Belle's lovemaking invade the house, "he would go to bed, to lie in the darkness while the scents from the garden came up from below upon the soft, dark, blowing air, not thinking of anything at all" (SO, 59). The rhetoric of ellipsis circumscribes Horace's desire before the shrine of Little Belle's photograph: "He stood for a while before it, looking at the soft, sweet, vague face, thinking quietly how even at forty-three a man . . . . . ." (SO, 59). The story of Temple's 'initiation' finds Horace vulnerable because he recoils from Little Belle's own defection to sexuality: " 'It's when I think of Little Belle; think that at any moment . . . . . .' Against the book on the table the photograph sat under the lamp. Along the four edges of it was the narrow imprint of the missing frame" (SO, 143). Horace leaves his thought in ellipsis, and through that silence crosses a contradicted emotion: his fear of the ravishment he longs to perform. Horace's lacunae are responsible first for imperiling, then for upholding the fragile order of culture against the ravages of unexpurgated nature. Having taken Little Belle's photograph out of its frame, Horace contrives to make the imprint of the missing frame appear once more. This image reflects the chimerical status of boundaries throughout *Sanctuary*.

The state Horace seeks has no place within the forms of culture. Viewed from the standpoint of civilization, nature before prohibition is a chaos of instincts, not innocence. It is this reversibility of realms, an obscuring of boundaries and thresholds, that paralyzes Horace. He associates the young faces of Little Belle's (and Temple Drake's) classmates with a kind of innocence, yet their purity is indistinguishable from their contamination by carnal knowledge: they wear "that identical cool, innocent, unabashed expression which he knew well in their eyes, above the savage identical paint upon their mouths; like music moving, like honey poured in sunlight, pagan and evanescent and serene thinly evocative of all lost days and outpaced delights" (SO, 153; SR, 167). Their faces conflate the

innocence and savagery of nature, and even commingle as one the effects of nature and culture.

Ellipsis is a kind of silence, then, that evokes a world before the prohibitions erected by language. It also functions to transform incestuous desire into substitutionary displacements. Another purpose of ellipsis in *Sanctuary* is to indicate a cancellation of the marks of civilization. Horace denotes unrepresentable desire in vacancies that refer to the renunciation or undoing of representable desires; he pleads with Narcissa, for example, not to marry:

> *"What sort of life have you led for twenty-six years, that you can lie there with the supreme and placid stupidity of a cow being milked, when two nights from now——" he ceased. She watched him while the final word completed itself behind her eyes and faded. "Narcy," he said, "dont do it, Narcy. We both wont. I'll— Listen: we both wont. You haven't gone too far that you cant, and when I think what we . . . . . with this house and all it — — — Dont you see we cant? It's not anything to give up; you dont know, but I do. Good God, when I think . . . . . ."* (SO, 17–18)

Here Horace's elliptical language seeks to represent innocence as not–corruption. The return to an unrepresentable condition, to virginity before corruption, nature before culture, proceeds as an undoing or reversal. The potency of ellipsis at these points arises from its capacity to contain Horace's most profound desires and fears. The blankness undoes culture and makes nature almost palpable again, yet it also exposes the boundary between nature and culture as the nothing of language, the fragile barrier of the frail word.

Through the regressive career that deserting Belle initiates, and that his elliptical nostalgia propels, Horace faces the confusion of realms whose separation has formerly ordered his life. The desires released by his flight from marriage subvert personal and cultural order by eradicating the line between nature and the law, innocence and corruption. In the rupture opened by his elliptical representation of forbidden urges and irrecoverable times, Horace confronts the interiority—rather than the anteriority—of nature to culture. Horace early encounters an image of what this regression might mean. When he returns to his patrilineal house, the abode of Judge Will Benbow, Horace is struck by nature's undoing of domestic order; the sexual imagery that describes the assault on the family house is hardly accidental: the "uncut grass that year after year had gone rankly and lustily to seed;" "the cedars needed pruning too, their dark tips a jagged mass like a black wave breaking on against the house itself in a fixed whelming surge;" "the gutters choked with molded vegetation [. . .] sagging beneath the accumulated weight and in two places broken, staining the bricks with dark streaks" (SO, 61). Such ruin is what Horace's course inaugurates, though finally it is avoided.

It is this radical interiority of nature to culture that constitutes Horace's deepest and most severe contact with the pattern of evil. In the register of his personal longing for his childhood, this interiority means that innocence is no

more than a spectre raised within experience. We notice that Horace recovers the past strictly as that which is no longer. He repeatedly fingers relics of a time whose incorruptibility is known only in corruption: "[. . .] in a prolonged orgasm of sentimental loneliness, he seemed to hurdle time and surprise his sister and himself in a thousand forgotten pictures out of the serene fury of their childhood as though it had been no longer ago than yesterday, evoked sometimes by no more than a bracelet of rotting rope, a scarce-distinguishable knot healed into a limb and become one with the living wood" (SO, 61–62). Yet the recovery originates in an image of adulthood and loss ("orgasm of sentimental loneliness"), appears thickly qualified ("seemed," "as though"), manifests itself in further images of ruination ("rotting rope," "knot healed"), and remains firmly past for all the nearing ("no longer ago than yesterday"). As Horace opens the long shut up Benbow mansion, he notices that from the nails pried out of the windows "depended a small rusty stain, like a dried tear or a drop of blood" (SO, 62). The stain is the sign of Horace's unconscious mourning for forgotten scenes—the tears of loss, the blood of menstruation and defloration shed irreversibly.

Making boundaries passable again—figured in this last image of Horace's reopening the windows—characterizes one of the central impulses of *Sanctuary*. The weight of Horace's experiences in the novel compels him to confront the interpenetrability of innocence and corruption, of nature and culture. The boundary between these zones, which has no proper place of its own, turns out to be detectable (or conceivable at least) only as a crossing—as if by passing back and forth over the demarcation one may register what would elude any effort to settle on it, to delineate it. Horace realizes that he has married his wife because her already married state permits him to cross and recross the line of virginity. It is as if Horace has wanted to insinuate himself into another's marriage so as to evade the traumatic loss and taking of virginity. Eventually he realizes that "When you marry your own wife, you start off from scratch . . . maybe scratching. When you marry somebody else's wife, you start off maybe ten years behind, from somebody else's scratch and scratching" (SR, 16). Horace remembers that his Belle is called "little Mother" by her husband Harry, that she is a woman who knows "nothing about virginity" since she has "neither ever found it nor lost it" (SO, 17), and that she "had taught him to believe that he was merely temporarily using Harry Mitchell's body, contriving somehow to dampen the rosy ardor of surreptitiousness with a quality turgid, conjugal and outworn" (SO, 38). In retrospect, Horace realizes that he has tried to fake his passage from innocence to sanctioned 'corruption', from incestuous desire to marriage, across a boundary that surprisingly has no place. Somehow the institutions of civilization and the forces of nature provide inadequate sanctuary from each other, the wife insufficient protection from the power of the sister: "He tried to think of his sister, of Belle. But they seemed interchangeable now: two tiny, not distinguishable figurines seen backward through a telescope" (SO, 27).

Yet Horace refuses to "admit" "that there is a logical pattern to evil" lest he "die" of the knowledge (SO, 218; SR, 214). If nature and culture are finally

indistinguishable, then Horace's "law, justice, civilization" attempt to protect culture's borders from the evil and brutality that are already within, as part of its very structure. Hurled by the story's events through regions of desire and terror hardly recognizable to him, Horace learns how completely his civilized life is composed of the "faint repressed gesture" (SO, 266), how the civilized life might indeed "die" from the knowledge of its incorrigibly natural root. The brutalities of Temple's assault and the injustices of Lee's conviction and lynching will exhume Horace's only half-buried suspicions about the savagery of civilization, doubts he has already had to suppress as he overthrows the sanctity of his marriage and falls toward forbidden desires. Horace will not confront the terrifying consequences of his thrust into the specious foundation of what he protests is "a civilised age":

> *a civilised age, Horace thought, tramping back and forth while the sweet, soft, secret face came and went beneath the cylindrical blur of highlight which the lamp cast upon the glossy surface of the portrait. We are civilised, no matter how hard we try not to be.* (SO, 144)

Horace realizes that the mechanisms of repression and sublimation for the individual and of social institutions for the community are informed by the very violence and savagery that they are designed to exorcise. Horace is in a position to acknowledge these recognitions, but when he looks up at the Jefferson jail and notices a murderer's hand on the bar, "he turn[s] his head quickly away."

> *It was as though from that tiny clot of knuckles he was about to reconstruct an edifice upon which he would not dare to look, like an archaeologist who, from meagre sifting of vertebrae, reconstructs a shape out of the nightmares of his own childhood, and he looked quickly away [. . . .]* (SO, 141–42)

Horace's repression is a final deployment of ellipsis, a form of the figure that answers its other uses. Gazing with a lawyer's eye at the hand of the imprisoned murderer, Horace contemplates erecting a conceptual edifice to account for natural evil, for the achievement of civilization, and for the carriages and miscarriages of justice. Yet Horace halts himself when he realizes that the shape of communal evil is the shape of the individual's monstrous imagination writ large—an edifice out of a childhood nightmare. At these moments the force of Faulkner's original formulation of *Sanctuary* may be felt. In rewriting the novel, he did not reverse, but suppressed, his first conception. The pattern of evil that Horace confronts in himself is the same pattern that Temple's story plays out when Faulkner's revision raises to prominence her half of the original plot. What preoccupies *Sanctuary* on all fronts is the status of culture's demarcation within nature. Temple Drake pits her innocence of sexuality against the brutality of instinct; Horace tests the institution of marriage against the atavism of incestuous desire; and on each front, as protagonist and advocate, Horace pledges

everything he believes in—"the law, justice, civilization"—against anarchy revenge, nature. Horace is always on the verge of acknowledging the violability of all sanctuarial space. Faulkner understands that the prohibition against incest —which may be seen as both the literal and emblematic boundary between nature and culture, evil and good, chaos and lawfulness—couples the realms it seeks to divide. The taboos that ought to provide refuge in fact promise endangerment. Faulkner displays the prohibition against incest as the breaching of innocence by knowledge, as the broaching of nature by culture.

The two forms of *Sanctuary* emphasize different but complementary aspects of the same problem. In the first version, predominated by Horace, the incest complex is the site at which the individual senses the survival of natural instincts; in the second version, institutions of civilization like law and marriage display their foundations in brutality. The two versions fit together much as Freud believes neuroses and civilization interlock: "the neuroses are social structures; they endeavour to achieve by private means what is effected in society by collective effort." [8] Moreover, the incest taboo is pivotal in that the "beginnings of religion, morals, society and art converge in the Oedipus complex." [9] Horace's "complex," which works to maintain the prohibition against incest even as he desires to subvert it, is a synecdoche for the operation of cultural institutions, which likewise bind together the prohibition and threat of natural instincts. Derrida extends this view by stressing the placelessness of the incest prohibition, which divides nature and culture:

> *This* birth of society *is therefore not a passage, it is a point, a pure, fictive and unstable, ungraspable limit. One crosses it in attaining it. . . . before the prohibition, it is not incest: forbidden, it cannot become incest except through the recognition of the prohibition. We are always short of or beyond . . . the origin of society. . . .*[10]

Thus language, essential to culture as the instrument that enforces the taboo, "is neither prohibition nor transgression, it couples the two endlessly." [11] We are in a position to see that it is not only Horace's "complex" that accounts for the lacunae of *Sanctuary* but also the novel's consideration of an unrepresentable moment of passage. The pressure that keeps out of the book the depiction of Temple's assault—her actual passage from virginity to violation, incorruption to corruption, childhood to adulthood, sanctuary to exile—may be traced to Horace, as he eludes both his own and society's complicity in Temple's fate. For these reasons, earlier depreciations of the original *Sanctuary* as being too narrowly concentrated on "Horace's sexual and emotional problems," [12] in Noel

[8] Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo* (New York, 1950; W.W. Norton, paperback edition of The Standard Edition), trans. James Strachey, p. 73.

[9] Freud, p. 156.

[10] Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatari Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974; 1976), p. 267.

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] Polk, an Afterword to *Sanctuary: The Original Text*, p. 304. Polk, of course, points convincingly to other virtues of the earlier version.

Polk's words, do not take into account the framework of Horace's crisis. The second version of *Sanctuary* expands fundamental questions of cultural organization that less visibly inform the original version as well.

The Story of Temple Drake

Horace mounts a disguised encounter with himself in the central narrative. Even though he had earlier turned his face away from the edifice he is about to reconstruct from "the nightmares of his own childhood," he eventually secures his place in Temple's story. Returning to Jefferson after visiting Temple in the Memphis brothel, Horace is struck at how he might not have gone anywhere in space or time, as if Temple's story emerges from his unconscious in an instant rather than in her recitation in Memphis: "it might be the same morning and he had merely crossed the square, about-faced and was returning; all between a dream filled with all the nightmare shapes it had taken him forty-three years to invent" (SO, 219; SR, 214–15).[13] The condensation and displacement of dreamwork translate Horace's story into Temple's and Popeye's. Such mechanisms allow the dreamer to emerge unharmed, and indeed Horace will survive this nightmare. Horace's implacable reconstruction of Temple's story suggests how furtively he has made the story his own; in a pregnant phrase describing his preparation of Goodwin's case, Horace is said to begin "to construct the scene [. . .] going over and over the imaginary scene" (SO, 265). That Temple is Horace's scapegoat for his own dalliance with sexuality is clear from his inexplicable rage toward her even before she perjures herself and defeats his case: Horace thinks he "would sub-poena Temple; he thought in a paroxysm of raging pleasure of flinging her into the court-room, of stripping her [. . . .] Stripping her, background, environment, all" (SO, 255).

In wanting to strip and humiliate Temple, Horace verges on not simply recalling but repeating her assault. Such a repetition suits him since Temple's story is

[13] See William Rossky, "The Pattern of Nightmare in *Sanctuary;* or, Miss Reba's Dogs," *Modern Fiction Studies,* 15 (1969–70): 503–15.

Perhaps the powerfully nightmarish cast of Horace's involvement with Temple Drake's story derives from Faulkner's strikingly similar circumstances at the time he was writing *Sanctuary.* Judith Wittenberg speculates that the sexually ambivalent Horace reflects Faulkner as a reluctant, fearful bridegroom (*Faulkner: The Transfiguration of Biography* [Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1979], pp. 89–102). Like Horace, Faulkner was about to marry another man's ex-wife and to adopt a step-son and step-daughter. He waited two months after Estelle's divorce to marry her, a period in which he finished the original version of *Sanctuary.* Whatever of his own actual desires, fears, and guilt Faulkner may have invested in Horace, it is clear that the governing impulse of his writing is rather toward their concealment than their disclosure. See also Joseph Blotner, *Faulkner: A Biography* [New York: Random House, 1974], pp. 739 and 777.

The fear of sexual fulfillment is a constant of Horace's character. In *Flags in the Dust* he reproves himself for his abortive attempt to find pure sexual satisfaction with Joan, Belle's experienced but unmarried sister. He thinks of his affair as "obscene," and, in an image that predicts his use of Temple to represent (or inscribe) his story, poses a graphic simile for sexual 'defilement':

> *Yes, obscene: a deliberate breaking of the rhythm of things for no reason; to both Belle and himself an insult; to Narcissa, in her home where her serenity lingered grave and constant and steadfast as a diffused and sourceless light, it was an adolescent scribbling on the walls of a temple.*
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> (*Flags in the Dust,* ed. Douglas Day [New York: Random House, 1973], p. 406)

Isolating an esthetic dimension to Faulkner's reflection in Horace, George Toles, in "The Space Between: A Study of Faulkner's *Sanctuary*" [*Texas Studies in Literature and Language,* 22 (1980): 22-46], argues that Popeye's and Horace's voyeurism reflects Faulkner's fear that his artistry is capable only of an exterior, rigidifying presentation of character and experience.

already a repetition of his own. One connection of their stories is Temple's metonymic substitution for Little Belle. Horace calls Temple one of his stepdaughter's best friends (SR, 171), and either might be described in the following words: "the short hair was straight and smooth, neither light nor dark; the eyes darker than light and with a shining quality beneath soft and secret lids; a prim smooth mouth innocently travestied by the painted bow of the period" (SO, 143). Horace cannot think of Temple's danger without returning to Little Belle's: " 'Of course she's all right,' he said. 'She's down there at school now. Probably just gotten over being thoroughly scared, damn her. Damn her. [. . .] 'Of course she's all right,' he said 'Things like that dont happen.' [. . .] 'It's when I think of Little Belle; think that at any moment . . . . . .' " (SO, 142–43)

In what ways does Temple's story enact Horace's desire and guilt? As Tommy leads Gowan and Temple toward the Frenchman's Place after their automobile collides with a fallen tree, he shows enormous curiosity about Temple's body. Wondering about the degree of intimacy between the coed and her escort, Tommy crudely gawks at Temple's "belly and loins," then asks jokingly, " 'He aint laid no crop by yit, has he?' " (SR, 40). From this point Tommy regularly refers to Temple in Gowan's presence as "yo wife;" it is as if he inadvertently mimics the authority of a simple word to make a woman into a wife. Tommy's view of their situation signals the symbolic terrain that the Frenchman's Place occupies in the novel—a domain in which the established customs, laws, and distinctions of society grow illegible and violable. In a phrase that extends Tommy's trope, the narrator observes of the mansion's grounds that "nowhere was any sign of husbandry" (SR, 40). The precise pun on "husbandry" conflates the two contexts for the domesticating institutions of culture—marriage and agriculture—and suggests that Horace's earlier impression of the Frenchman's Place would be scarcely different from Temple's. The passage that fully describes Temple's approach makes the scene a grotesque exaggeration of the Benbow homestead:

> *It was set in a ruined lawn, surrounded by abandoned grounds and fallen outbuildings. But nowhere was any sign of husbandry—plow or tool; in no direction was a planted field in sight—only a gaunt weather-stained ruin in a sombre grove through which the breeze drew with a sad, mumurous sound. Temple stopped.* (SO, 91; SR, 40)

Temple encounters a nightmarish disfiguration of a family at the Frenchman's Place. Her efforts to understand the law of this new place depend on her unwitting confidence that the prohibition against incest is the rule of order and safety. She notices that the disquieting clamor of camaraderie, menace, and rivalry among Lee, Tommy, Van, and Gowan reminds her somehow of her own four brothers. As the outlaws argue drunkenly, Van offers to settle things with Gowan: " 'Outside, brother,' " he repeatedly suggests. Presiding over this monstrous household is a parodic patriarch, Pap, who seems to be Goodwin's

father. Tommy points out that the old man is "blind and deef both" (SO, 94), and Temple unconsciously associates him with her own remote and powerless father, Judge Drake. As she thinks of "her father sitting on the porch at home, his feet on the rail, watching a negro mow the lawn" (SO, 99), Pap stumbles past her, frightening Temple into praying for the protection of her father's authority under the law: " 'My father's a judge; my father's a judge' " (SO, 99). The combination of protection and threat represented by the father climaxes in the dance floor scene when, mad with desire, she loses her head to her "Daddy:"

> *"Give it to me," she whispered. "Daddy. Daddy." She leaned her thigh against his shoulder, caressing his arm with her flank. "Give it to me, daddy," she whispered. Suddenly her hand began to steal down his body in a swift, covert movement; then it snapped away in a movement of revulsion. "I forgot," she whispered; "I didn't mean . . . I didn't . . ."* (SO, 231; SR, 229)

"Pop"-eye functions as the impotent father in Temple's (and Horace's) nightmare about incestuous danger. And just as the paternal force that prohibits incest (Judge Benbow, Judge Drake, the law) also nightmarishly threatens it, so the brothers are contained by the condition of their desire. Temple invokes her brothers as an argument for her safety (" 'Two are lawyers and one's a newspaperman. The other's still in school. At Yale. My father's a judge.' " [SO, 100]). She recounts their cautionary threats to her beaux and their devotion to her purity. Yet Temple says, though she may not realize all it means, that she is safe with the monstrous clan at the Frenchman's Place *because* of their competing desire: " 'There are so many of them' she said in a wailing tone, watching the cigarette crush slowly in her fingers. 'But maybe, with so many of them . . . . . .' " (SO, 101). The threat by several prevents its fulfillment by one: " 'Durn them fellers,' " Tommy complains (SO, 137). The superimposition of Temple's accidental foster family upon her own enables us to see that the prohibition of incest couples prevention and promise endlessly, that the incestuous urge survives, indeed is embedded, in the cultural institutions of marriage and family. Temple explains as much about her safety among her family of judges and lawyers as among the family of outlaws.

Horace clearly is implicated in this homologous situation. He is affiliated with Temple's story through the literal plot, of course: beyond the coincidence of their visits to the Frenchman's Place, Horace and Gowan Stevens share their courtship of Narcissa and their involvement with substitutes for her. But Temple's story devastates Horace in part because it represents his own incestuous desire and the fragility of the prohibition that protects culture from nature. Horace is in a position to feel how ambiguously civilization's taboos are upheld. At the novel's conclusion, for example, after Temple has committed her perjury, she is reclaimed by her father and brothers. But her apparent reluctance and her family's resolve bristle with sexual imagery—"her body arching slowly," the "younger men standing stiffly erect near the exit" (SO, 179). The reaffirmation

of the prohibition is nothing more than a reactivation of the desire it forbids:

> *Half way down the aisle the girl stopped again, slender in her smart open coat, her blank face rigid, then she moved on, her hand in the old man's. They returned down the aisle, the old man erect beside her, looking to neither side, paced by that slow whisper of collars. Again the girl stopped. She began to cringe back, her body arching slowly, her arm tautening in the old man's grasp. He bent toward her, speaking; she moved again, in that shrinking and rapt abasement. Four younger men were standing stiffly erect near the exit. They stood like soldiers, staring straight ahead until the old man and the girl reached them. Then they moved and surrounded the other two, and in a close body, the girl hidden among them, they moved toward the door. Here they stopped again; the girl could be seen shrunk against the wall just inside the door, her body arched again. She appeared to be clinging there, then the five bodies hid her again and again in a close body the group passed through the door and disappeared.* (SO, 279–80; SR, 282)

This dreamy reverse wedding means to undo a ravishment that has been broached originally by its own avengers.

Faulkner's elliptical presentation of Temple's assault participates in the same structure of suppression and illegibility that governs the personal and cultural manifestations of the incest taboo. The arc of *Sanctuary*'s narrative seems to describe Temple's passage from childhood to adulthood, innocence to corruption. Though the novel takes up and traces a variety of alterations, some of which we have already discussed, Temple's brutal deflowering is the sensational pivot of Faulkner's potboiler. Temple, who earlier feigned "innocent ways" (SR, 37) and unthinkingly "played at" (SR, 58) carnal relations, collides violently with formerly unknown regions of adult sexual behavior. For all its murderous violence, Popeye's rape of Temple also instigates in her an insatiable appetite for the sexual surrogate, Red, who succeeds Popeye's corn cob. This apparent birth of sexual passion issues into Temple's romantic faithfulness to Red. Temple's earlier shrinkage from the sexual act is transfigured into a dark travesty of marriage and constitutes the figure of passage around which the novel is organized. The blood that stains Temple's garments and body and that marks the corn cob is the trace of the passage; it stands as the irrefutable evidence that "something" has indeed happened. But as we begin to pursue the related passages in *Sanctuary*, we may notice once again that the actual moments of crossing thresholds seem incapable of representation. In accordance with the pattern of Horace's desire and memory and of the unrepresentable boundary between nature and culture, Temple's story suggests that the prelapsarian condition preceding her transformation, deflowerment, and corruption cannot be imaged except as already lost. Not only does the novel's imagery conflate the states of pre- and post-transformation, but its narrative structures regularly pre-enact and post-enact the sequences of change that otherwise remain invisible. This aspect of narrative structure corresponds to Temple's own rehearsal of her experience, which concentrates, Horace notices, on "the night which she had spent in com-

parative inviolation" while she "eludes" Horace's attempts to "get her on ahead to the crime itself" (SR, 208).

Temple's purity is nothing more than comparative in *Sanctuary*. The town boys like Doc circulate their rumors and souvenirs of Temple's encouragements; both Gowan and Horace come across Temple's name scrawled on a lavatory wall in Oxford; and Gowan at least insinuates that greater liberties have been taken with Temple's innocence than she admits: " 'You're pretty good, aren't you? Think you can play around all week with any badger-trimmed hick that owns a ford, and fool me on Saturday, dont you?' " (SO, 88). Temple also once taunts Popeye in a puzzling way for his impotence and use of the corn cob: " 'You couldn't fool me but once, could you? No wonder I bled and bluh—' " (SR, 224). Must we wonder if Temple blames the instrument and not a first penetration for her wound? My intention here has nothing to do with the question of Temple's responsibility for her assault, posed so unfeelingly and monotonously by some Faulkner critics. My point is that the doubtfulness of Temple's incorruption contributes to the novel's meditation on the placelessness of the line between innocence and evil, on the uncertain significance of the unruptured hymen, on the virginity that can be known only through its loss.

The closing moments of Temple's 'innocence' are accordingly filled with anticipations and even pre-presentations of the crime itself. Her very body is an emblem of the indistinctness of thresholds. The novel invariably describes her as suspended between states, "no longer quite a child, not yet quite a woman" (SR, 86–87). And as she attempts to ward off the menace surrounding her at the Frenchman's Place, Temple implicates herself in the construction of an imaginary scene that enacts what she wants to avoid. After the horrors of the gang's leering insinuations, Temple begins to undress. She suggests, hyperbolically, that she has already suffered a woman's ultimate indignity: " 'Now I can stand anything: [. . .] I can stand just anything.' From the top of one stocking she removed a watch on a broken black ribbon" (SO, 117; SR, 87). Temple's mourning for a lost time and her mature resignation are almost comically premature; her rhetoric races ahead of the event, making it seem as if she has already reacted to what has yet to take place. Accordingly, Temple's narration of her assault focuses on her memory of hallucinating her own death: " 'I could see myself in the coffin. I looked sweet—you know: all in white. I had on a veil like a bride, and I was crying because I was dead or looked sweet or something. No: it was because they had put shucks in the coffin' " (SO, 216; SR, 212). Temple weaves the night of comparative inviolation before her rape—which is lacerated by the crackling of the corn shucks in her mattress—with the assault in the corn crib the next day; her dream pictures virginity's murder as the condition for its defense. It is not surprising that Horace, who, like an older Quentin Compson, equates sex and death, should retrieve from a Memphis whorehouse Temple's image of the bride in a coffin.

Temple's initiation also demonstrates that the state of virginity, incorruption, can be known only in its loss. Nature is a construct of culture, as we may grant, in that the boundary crossed constitutes realms that do not exist before their division. Temple endures this paradox nightmarishly as she tries to fantasize

a solution to her female violability: " 'Then I thought about being a man, and as soon as I thought it, it happened. It made a kind of plopping sound, like blowing a little rubber tube wrong-side outward. It felt cold, like the inside of your mouth when you hold it open. I could feel it, and I lay right still to keep from laughing about how surprised he was going to be' " (SO, 217; SR, 213). Temple's hallucination of reversed gender further implicates her in her assault; to defend herself she must imagine wielding her violator's weapon: the vagina-like "rubber tube" turned "wrong-side outward" becomes the penis; the protruding masculine organ yet feels like a cavity ("the inside of your mouth when you hold it open"). Lost without boundaries, Temple helplessly seeks to stop Popeye by defying him to begin: " 'But I kept on saying Coward! Coward! Touch me, coward!' " (SR, 212). The moment of course suggests Temple's simple ambivalence about sex and her justified terror in the face of savagery (and both emotions reflect Horace's views of his own practical virginity). But the scene also captures the impossibility of conceiving of virginity outside its loss.

Temple's rape itself constitutes the central ellipsis of *Sanctuary*. A meticulous program of dread leads us through Temple's awful certainty that " 'Something is going to happen to me' [. . . .] 'Something is happening to me!' [. . . .] 'I told you it was!' " and we are led away from the event as Temple and Popeye leave the Frenchman's Place, Temple "feeling her blood seeping slowly inside her loins" (SR, 133). But the threshold is missing. One sign that the narrative cannot disclose the instant of Temple's loss of virginity, the step from innocence to corruption, is the action's namelessness. Temple invariably refers to the "something" that happens, just as she earlier wants Ruby's assurance that " 'Things like that dont happen' " (SR, 54), a phrase also put in Horace's mouth (SO, 142). Of course, to say it would be to make it more real, and Temple naturally shies away from doing that. Yet the novel also suggests that it cannot speak the unspeakable; one cannot say exactly what takes place when Popeye violates Temple. The assault is a kind of deflowerment, but Temple seems less a virgin than a "demi-vierge." [14] And the facts of Popeye's impotence and attack also confuse and protract the moment of passage. Popeye's corn cob is itself only a representation of the despoiling phallus, at once a belated substitution for the phallus that Temple has already imagined, and a prefiguration of Red, who some time later will consummate Temple's deferred deflowerment.

Temple's distance from the episode even as it transpires also blurs the rape scene. The instant of the assault in the barn's corn crib transports her to another place, and she imagines that she is directing her protest not at Popeye but at Pap. Temple was "saying it to the old man with the yellow clots for eyes . . . , voiding the words like hot silent bubbles into the bright silence about them until he turned his head and the two phlegm-clots above her where she lay tossing and thrashing on the rough, sunny boards" (SO, 140; SR, 99). Earlier she has pictured her own absent father resting on a porch. The displacement leading to the fusion of the two figures signals Temple's intuition that fathers not only

[14] Albert J. Guerard, *The Triumph of the Novel: Dickens, Dostoevsky, Faulkner* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 125. This acute phrase appears in Guerard's extensive reading of sexual imagery in *Sanctuary*.

stonily countenance their daughters' defilement, but even participate through delegation. Again the conflation of the enforcement and endangerment of the incest prohibition flickers—this time through the image of Pap's face leaning over the thrashing Temple. Pap is at once menace and protector; his enfeeblement embodies Temple's understanding of a father's eventual refusal to defend what exists only in its loss. This scene is and is not what it appears, and we may understand Temple's "voiding the words" of her description of it as a properly double-edged performance. For she utters, releases, expresses her account (in one sense of "void") as she also cancels it out (in the other sense). Thus when Temple recounts her story for Horace, she does reproduce its essential quality by concentrating on the night of "comparative inviolation" and eluding the crime "itself," whose status remains strictly placeless.

If the account of the rape itself dislocates and hides the event, the descriptions of Temple's preceding inviolation, on the other hand, are informed already by figures of violent penetration. It is as if Temple's rape has already been described by the time we miss its literal appearance. For example, Tommy's and Popeye's first violation of Temple comes during the night, when Ruby notices that "Tommy entered, following Popeye. Tommy crept into the room, also soundless; she would have been no more aware of his entrance than of Popeye's, if it hadn't been for his eyes. They glowed, breast-high, with a profound interrogation. . . ." Then, "without seeing or hearing him, she knew that he had crept again from the room, following Popeye" (SR, 78). The rhythm of entrance and exit is repeated with greater explicitness as Popeye makes his way into the loft above Temple in the barn: "Popeye climbed into the rack and drew himself silently into the loft, his tight coat strained into thin ridges across his narrow shoulders and back" (SR, 95). At that moment, Temple has been enduring prefigurations of her violation. Frightened by a rat in the loft, she suddenly finds herself face to face with it: "For an instant they stared eye to eye, then its eyes glowed suddenly like two tiny electric bulbs and it leaped at her head just as she sprang backward [. . .]" (SO, 120; SR, 90). But there is no escape, and again she faces "the rat's eyes glowing and fading as though worked by lungs. Then it stood erect, its back to the corner, it forepaws curled against its chest, and began to squeak at her in tiny plaintive gasps" (SO, 120; SR, 91). This pop-eyed rat stands erect only to collapse into plaintive impotence; the outcome suggests Temple's desperate, doomed wish to be spared. Even Popeye's murder of Tommy becomes a sexual act as Temple witnesses it. Having watched the shooting, Temple "sat there, her legs straight before her, her hands limp and palm-up on her lap, looking at Popeye's tight back and the ridges of his coat across the shoulders as he leaned out the door, the pistol behind him, against his flank, wisping thinly along his leg. He turned and looked at her. He waggled the pistol slightly and put it back in his coat, then he walked toward her" (SR, 99).[15] We are not surprised, then (and perhaps we do not notice), that the assault is never described. The language of *Sanctuary* pre-enacts the violation of Temple, making her deflowering a passage that can be presented only as already accomplished. The passage is both intimated and unrepresented; "it was

[15] Faulkner makes the imagery more sexually explicit in revision. *Cf.* SO, 140.

as though sound and silence had become inverted" (SO, 140; SR, 99).

Horace places himself in Temple's story by playing out his ambivalence in both chief roles. On the one hand, he encounters his own recoil from intercourse in Temple's hyperbolically violent rite of passage. The metonymic link is Little Belle, another imminent victim of violation; after hearing Temple's account of her ordeal, Horace contemplates Little Belle's photograph again until he is overcome by a double fantasy—his own and his step-daughter's deflowerings. As he plunges into the bathroom to be sick, his revulsion mirrors that of one of Temple's classmates at school, who, when a friend describes the act of intercourse, "turned and ran out of the room. She locked herself in the bath and they could hear her being sick" (SR, 147–48). Feeling his agony through Temple's, Horace inhabits her experience in order to suffer his fear of violation, to measure the mirage of virginity, and to glimpse the interpenetration of nature and culture. It is precisely the elliptical status of these questions in Horace's mind that leads him to shape his story around Temple's, whose crisis occupies and offers a blank space, and whose presence at the Frenchman's Place is first acknowledged by Horace in yet another rhetorical ellipsis. Ruby confesses that there was someone else besides Tommy, Lee, and herself on the day of the murder:

> *"There was a woman there," she said. "A young girl."*
> *"A——" Horace said. "Oh," he said. "Yes. You'd better tell me about it."*
> (SO, 79)

On the other hand, Horace situates himself equally in Popeye's savagery, impotence, voyeurism, and punishment. Like a beast in a fairy tale or nightmare, Popeye represents dark urges forbidden by society. He is the "black" man, sheathed in black suits, black hair slicked with pomade, the one who fills the Frenchman's Place with "black and nameless threat" (SO, 9), a "black presence lying upon the house like the shadow of something no larger than a match falling monstrous and portentous upon something else otherwise familiar and everyday and twenty times its size" (SO, 9; SR, 116).[16] Popeye's blackness is the mark of his brutal disregard of prohibition; his behavior threatens the foundation of cultural order. His 'theft' violates the family's property rights to its daughters; his voyeurism exposes the private, socialized fulfillment of passion to the openness of natural coupling; his brutalization of a 'child' flouts de facto incest taboos; his murder of Tommy points to fratricide as the condition for sibling incest; and his blackness evokes the stain of the hymeneal blood he lets. (Horace thinks that Popeye "smells like that black stuff that ran out of Bovary's mouth and down upon her bridal veil when they raised her head" [SO, 25; SR, 7]). Popeye is already the corn cob. Raping Temple constitutes metaphoric miscegenation, an act that Lévi-Strauss cites as the other source of the two "most powerful inducements to horror and collective vengeance." It is a polymorphous emblem of Horace's incestuous desire.

[16] Lawrence Kubie, in "William Faulkner's *Sanctuary*" (*Saturday Review of Literature*, 11 [October 20, 1934], pp. 218, 224–26, as rptd. in *Faulkner: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Robert Penn Warren [Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1966], 137–46), is so struck by the imagery of blackness that he says that Popeye "is suspected of having some Negro blood" (p. 141).

Popeye magnifies Horace's fear that the deadening of his marriage and the quickening of subversive desire epitomize the constant, fatal menace to law, justice, civilization. The animal imagery associated with Popeye accents his barbarism. Transported by pawing Temple or by watching her and Red copulate "nekkid as two snakes," Popeye hangs over the bed "making a high whinnying sound like a horse" (SO, 183; SR, 155; *cf.* SR, 251). And Horace refers several times to Popeye as "that gorilla" (SO, 72). Horace would like to think that Popeye is simply an incompletely purged vestige of natural brutality, an aberration that justice will obliterate with authority. Yet what makes Popeye so disquieting a force in *Sanctuary* is that he is equally associated with all that is most artificial and least natural in culture.

Another more familiar strand of imagery links Popeye to the underside of urbanization and modernism invading the South from Memphis, Chicago, and the North. Playing up his connections to gangsterdom, Popeye drives a fancy roadster, talks in thugese (" 'Make your whore lay off of me, Jack' " [SR, 48]), looks like he has been stamped from "black tin," and walks stiffly, "like a modernistic lampstand" (SR, 6). Popeye straddles nature and culture, graphically manifesting the illegibility of the line between. That nature is interior to culture, not simply prior to it, is what Horace senses in Popeye's story. As Tommy stands guard outside the stall door, seeking to protect Temple within, Popeye surprises him by climbing into the loft and descending into the stall. From behind him Tommy hears Popeye order him to open the door: " 'I didn't know you was in hyer,' " Tommy replies (SO, 139; SR, 98). It is Popeye's nature already to be inside when he is thought to be outside.

My argument proposes a radical intimacy between Horace and Popeye defined by a dynamic of projection and self-evasion.[17] Horace first encounters Popeye as an image in "shattered reflection" across a spring. From that point their mirrorings multiply. Horace jokes about Popeye's being scared of his own shadow: " 'I'd be scared of it too,' Horace said, 'if it was my shadow' " (SO, 28; SR, 20). But Popeye *is* the shadow of Horace's desire and guilt cast across Temple. Even Popeye's instrument of torture evokes Horace. One is not surprised to learn that Horace smokes a corn-cob pipe, the pipe he carries "filled but unlighted [. . .] in his hand" when he discovers Temple's name pencilled on the lavatory wall ("He read it quietly, his head bent, slowly fingering the unlighted pipe" [SO, 153]). This is the pipe with which he arms himself (along with the book of poems and Little Belle's photograph) at the outset of his adventure, and that he also forgets (and retrieves) before his journey to Oxford. Popeye's attack with the corn cob, then, implicates Horace's desire and its suppression. The rape scene's imagery couples the consummation of sexual desire with punishment for it. We recall that on the floor of the barn stall where the rape occurs are "a few scattered corn-cobs gnawed bone-clean" (SR, 91). The image displays the mutilator mutilated. The taboo against incest couples the prohibition and the presentation of the threat endlessly; Popeye transfixes Horace because he represents the savagery within himself and within civilization.

[17] Olga Vickery notices important resemblances between Horace and Popeye (*The Novels of William Faulkner* [Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959], p. 110).

According to the law of his nature, Horace elides himself from Popeye's story after he broaches self-confrontation. As both dreamer and delegate of lawful order, Horace requires Popeye's execution. Horace's trajectory through Temple's and Popeye's story carries him safely out of the zones of coincidence and correspondence. Temple flees to Paris with her father in a caricature of recovered innocence while Horace returns to his marriage; Popeye and Goodwin are brutalized by miscarriages of justice while lawyer Benbow must silently endorse the institutionalized savagery of the law, justice, and civilization.

The closing sequence of *Sanctuary* besets Horace once more with his inability to find sanctuary from brutality. The conclusion of the novel displays a last facet of the interiority to culture of violence in that both Goodwin's and Popeye's deaths identify violence as the cornerstone of justice. Lee Goodwin is guilty of neither Tommy's murder nor Temple's rape, yet Temple names him as their perpetrator in her notorious perjury. The certain execution to which Temple's lie will lead is prevented only by the townsmen's awful lynching of Goodwin. Though he is innocent of the crime for which he dies, Goodwin is circumstantially a criminal in that he flouts the law by selling bootleg liquor and flaunts his "companionate" marriage to Ruby. Goodwin's relation to the law is at once exterior and interior by the time he seeks his defense within it. He is punished by the townsmen not simply because of his perceived guilt, but because he is thought to have committed a crime his punishers want to perform themselves. One lyncher explains to an onlooker that Temple " 'was some baby. Jeez. I wouldn't have used no cob' " (SR, 287). Goodwin's execution re-enacts the crime imaginatively as well as literally: the townsmen menacingly explain to Horace " 'what we did to him. What he did to her. Only we never used a cob. We made him wish we had used a cob' " (SR, 289). Violence and lust are the natural impulses that inhabit the enforcement of cultural order. René Girard has interpreted this situation by arguing that violence is intrinsic to social organization.[18] According to Girard, justice is served in primitive societies only when the victim is chosen arbitrarily. Punishment does not fall on the guilty one lest his family retaliate against the accuser and instigate an unlimited exchange of retribution. Instead, a sacrificial victim is designated upon whom the communal need for peace *and* its lust for bloodshed may be consummated. The victim's isolation ensures the social fabric. Our own modern code of legal justice depends on this foundation of violent sacrifice, although modern civilizations have constructed rationalized explanations of guilt and punishment. Temple's false accusation has seemed puzzling to most readers of *Sanctuary*, but perhaps Faulkner wants to suggest that her perjury enacts the disguised arbitrariness of justice. The complicity of nature and culture upholds the law that would distinguish them.

Popeye's arrest and execution for a crime he did not commit echoes the brutality of justice epitomized in Temple's perjury. Other softening touches—such as the sketch of Popeye's pathetic childhood, the circumstance of his

[18] René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977).

annual visit to his mother, or his frightful, touching acceptance of a meaningless end to a meaningless life—work to weaken the certitude of justice, to question the precision of civilized revenge. No criminal ever deserved to suffer more surely than Popeye, and yet *Sanctuary* brilliantly manages to turn us around momentarily to Popeye's side—not to propose some vapid environmental explanation of his monstrosity, but to reflect at us the inescapable wantonness of culture's cruelty, from the mire of venereal disease and deformity (society is contagion), through the bestiality of the family, to the final futility of the state and church.

Horace's elliptical path into and out of the core story constitutes a tracing of his presence. He approaches self-indictment but avoids it. Though the lynchers threaten to throw him into the fire too, Horace manages to drift away from its "voice of fury like in a dream, roaring silently out of a peaceful void" (SR, 289). Such voids have guarded Horace throughout. I want to examine an especially tight knotting of the text's ellipses to conclude my reading of how Horace maneuvers voids to construct a narrative about Temple and Popeye. Turning to Little Belle's photograph on one occasion, he encounters the gaze of "invitation and voluptuous promise" (SO, 216). A moment more and he is vomiting, repelled by the discovery that the laws of civilization do not simply oppose natural instincts but are composed of them. Fumbling for the light, Horace realizes that "he had not time to find it and he gave over and plunged forward and struck the the lavatory and leaned upon his braced arms while the shucks set up a terrific uproar beneath her thighs" (SO, 220; SR, 216). The silent shift in pronouns constitutes another form of ellipsis, a lacuna in which the boundaries of violator and violated, spectator and spectacle, male and female, corruptor and corrupted, disappear. Horace is overcome by the fantasy of his own and his step-daughter's deflowerment. The unspecified "her" refers at once to Temple, Little Belle, Narcissa, and Horace himself, who envisions his own loss of virginity as an assault, a kidnapping from innocence. This rupture in the text's fabric secrets Horace. It is the place at which the strands of the plot tangle, the intersection of Horace as pop-eyed voyeur, impotent father, ravishing lover, ravished virgin. Horace would elide himself from the plot as undetectably as Pap, one of his shades, who "didn't look like any of the others; he was just there, then he was gone, leaving no gap, no hole in the pattern" (SO, 54). But even Horace's own elliptical maneuvers, laboring in concert with the suppressions of Faulkner's revision, cannot obliterate him entirely. The novel remains more like Red's corpse, which, when it tumbles from the bier, loses the painted wax plug that fills Popeye's bullet hole. Like all of the cavities in the novel, this one has been filled with a substitute, a trace of some irrecoverable intactness. The rent in the fabric of the novel constitutes Horace's presence in *Sanctuary* and remains incompletely (re)woven; the text's elliptical texture indicates the unrepresentability of the passage from nature to culture, from mating to the family, from lawlessness to social organization. Even Miss Reba finds the novel's paradigmatic figure when she attempts to explain Popeye's presumed (but false) emergence from unnatural solitude to the customs of social and sexual relations: " 'What I say, a young fellow cant no more live without a girl than . . .' " (SR, 139).