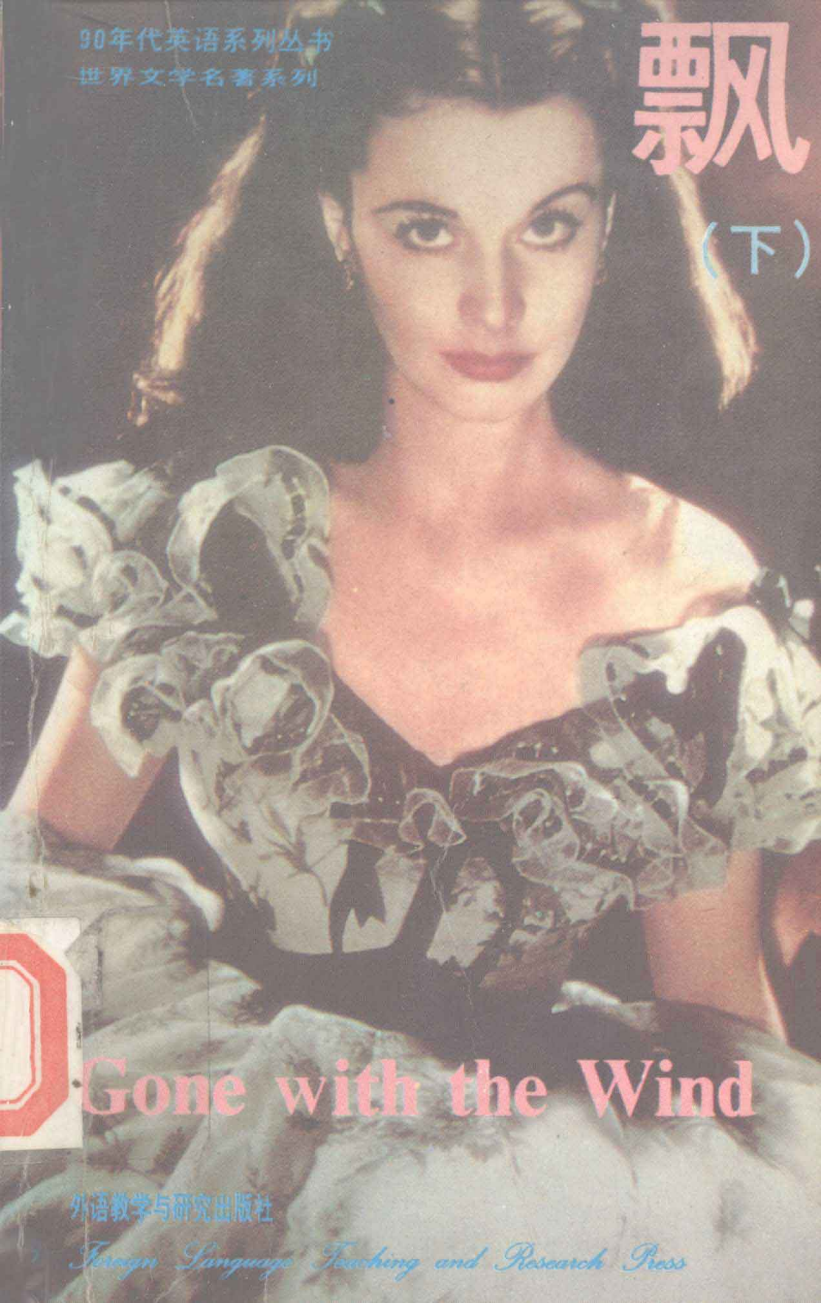


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Gone with the Wind

外语教学与研究出版社

Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press



Margaret Mitchell

GONE WITH THE WIND

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名著系列

注释 何其莘

外语教学与研究出版社

the horse. As they drove off, Scarlett had the impulse to spit at them. She did spit. She knew it was a common, childish gesture but it made her feel better. She wished she had done it while they could see her.

Those damned nigger-lovers daring to come here and taunt her about her poverty! That hound never intended offering her a price for Tara. He just used that as an excuse to come and flaunt himself and Emmie in her face. The dirty Scallawags, the lousy, trashy poor whites, boasting they would live at Tara!

Then sudden terror struck her and her rage melted. God's night-gown! They will come and live here! There was nothing she could do to keep them from buying Tara, nothing to keep them from levying on every mirror and table and bed, on Ellen's shining mahogany and rosewood, and every bit of it precious to her, scarred though it was by the Yankee raiders. And the Robillard silver too. 'I won't let them do it,' thought Scarlett vehemently. 'No, not if I've got to burn the place down! Emmie Slattery will never set her foot on a single bit of flooring Mother ever walked on!'

She closed the door and leaned against it and she was very frightened. More frightened even than she had been that day when Sherman's army was in the house. That day the worst she could fear was that Tara would be burned over her head. But this was worse—these low common creatures living in this house, bragging to their low common friends how they had turned the proud O'Haras out. Perhaps they'd even bring negroes here to dine and sleep. Will had told her Jonas made a great to-do about being equal with the negroes, ate with them, visited in their houses, rode them around with him in his carriage, put his arms around their shoulders.

When she thought of the possibility of this final insult to Tara, her heart pounded so hard she could scarcely breathe. She was trying to get her mind on her problem, trying to figure some way out, but each time she collected her thoughts, fresh gusts of rage and fear shook her. There must be some way out, there must be someone somewhere who had money she could borrow. Money couldn't just dry up and blow away. Somebody had to have money. Then the laughing words of Ashley came back to her:

'Only one person, Rhett Butler . . . who has money.'

Rhett Butler. She walked quickly into the parlour and shut the door behind her. The dim gloom of drawn blinds and winter

twilight closed about her. No one would think of hunting for her here and she wanted time to think, undisturbed. The idea which had just occurred to her was so simple she wondered why she had not thought of it before.

'I'll get the money from Rhett. I'll sell him the diamond ear-bobs. Or I'll borrow the money from him and let him keep the ear-bobs till I can pay him back.'

For a moment, relief was so great she felt weak. She would pay the taxes and laugh in Jonas Wilkerson's face. But close on this happy thought came relentless knowledge.

'It's not only for this year that I'll need tax money. There's next year and all the years of my life. If I pay up this time, they'll raise the taxes higher next time till they drive me out. If I make a good cotton crop, they'll tax it till I'll get nothing for it or maybe confiscate it outright and say it's Confederate cotton. The Yankees and the scoundrels teamed up with them have got me where they want me. All my life, as long as I live, I'll be afraid they'll get me somehow. All my life I'll be scared and scrambling for money and working myself to death, only to see my work go for nothing and my cotton stolen. . . . Just borrowing three hundred dollars for the taxes will be only a stopgap. What I want is to get out of this fix, for good—so I can go to sleep at night without worrying over what's going to happen to me to-morrow, and next month, and next year.'

Her mind ticked on steadily. Coldly and logically an idea grew in her brain. She thought of Rhett, a flash of white teeth against swarthy skin, sardonic black eyes caressing her. She recalled the hot night in Atlanta, close to the end of the siege, when he sat on Aunt Pitty's porch half hidden in the summer darkness, and she felt again the heat of his hand upon her arm as he said: 'I want you more than I have ever wanted any woman—and I've waited longer for you than I've ever waited for any woman.'

'I'll marry him,' she thought coolly. 'And then I'll never have to bother about money again.'

Oh, blessed thought, sweeter than hope of Heaven, never to worry about money again, to know that Tara was safe, that the family was fed and clothed, that she would never again have to bruise herself against stone walls!

She felt very old. The afternoon's events had drained her of all feeling: first the startling news about the taxes, then Ashley and, last, her murderous rage at Jonas Wilkerson. No, there was no

emotion left in her. If all her capacity to feel had not been utterly exhausted, something in her would have protested against the plan taking form in her mind, for she hated Rhett as she hated no other person in all the world. But she could not feel. She could only think and her thoughts were very practical.

'I said some terrible things to him that night when he deserted us on the road, but I can make him forget them,' she thought contemptuously, still sure of her power to charm. 'Butter won't melt in my mouth when I'm around him. I'll make him think I always loved him and was just upset and frightened that night. Oh, men are so conceited they'll believe anything that flatters them. . . . I must never let him dream what straits we're in, not till I've got him. Oh, he mustn't know! If he even suspected how poor we are, he'd know it was his money I wanted and not himself. After all, there's no way he could know, for even Aunt Pitty doesn't know the worst. And after I've married him, he'll have to help us. He can't let his wife's people starve.'

His wife. Mrs. Rhett Butler. Something of repulsion, buried deep beneath her cold thinking, stirred faintly and then was stilled. She remembered the embarrassing and disgusting events of her brief honeymoon with Charles, his fumbling hands, his awkwardness, his incomprehensible emotions—and Wade Hampton.

'I won't think about it now. I'll bother about it after I've married him. . . .'

After she had married him. Memory rang a bell. A chill went down her spine. She remembered again that night on Aunt Pitty's porch, remembered how she asked him if he was proposing to her, remembered how hatefully he had laughed and said: 'My dear, I'm not a marrying man.'

Suppose he was still not a marrying man. Suppose, despite all her charms and wiles, he refused to marry her. Suppose—oh, terrible thought!—suppose he had completely forgotten about her and was chasing after some other woman.

'I want you more than I have ever wanted any woman. . . .'

Scarlett's nails dug into her palms as she clenched her fists. 'If he's forgotten me, I'll make him remember me. I'll make him want me again.'

And, if he would not marry her but still wanted her, there was a way to get the money. After all, he had once asked her to be his mistress.

In the dim greyness of the parlour she fought a quick decisive battle with the three most binding ties of her soul—the memory of Ellen, the teachings of her religion and her love for Ashley. She knew that what she had in her mind must be hideous to her mother even in that warm far-off Heaven where she surely was. She knew that fornication was a mortal sin. And she knew that, loving Ashley as she did, her plan was doubly prostitution.

But all these things went down before the merciless coldness of her mind and the goad of desperation. Ellen was dead and perhaps death gave an understanding of all things. Religion forbade fornication on pain of hell fire, but if the Church thought she was going to leave one stone unturned in saving Tara and saving the family *from starving—well, let the Church bother about that. She wouldn't. At least, not now. And Ashley—Ashley didn't want her. Yes, he did want her. The memory of his warm mouth on hers told her that. But he would never take her away with him. Strange that going away with Ashley did not seem like a sin, but with Rhett—

In the dull twilight of the winter afternoon she came to the end of the long road which had begun the night Atlanta fell. She had set her feet upon that road a spoiled, selfish and untried girl, full of youth, warm of emotion, easily bewildered by life. Now, at the end of the road, there was nothing left of that girl. Hunger and hard labour, fear and constant strain, the terrors of war and the terrors of Reconstruction had taken away all warmth and youth and softness. About the core of her being, a shell of hardness had formed and, little by little, layer by layer, the shell had thickened during the endless months.

But until this very day, two hopes had been left to sustain her. She had hoped that, the war being over, life would gradually resume its old face. She had hoped that Ashley's return would bring back some meaning into life. Now both hopes were gone. The sight of Jonas Wilkerson in the front walk of Tara had made her realize that for her, for the whole South, the war would never end. The bitterest fighting, the most brutal retaliations, were just beginning. And Ashley was imprisoned forever by words which were stronger than any jail.

Peace had failed her and Ashley had failed her, both in the same day, and it was as if the last crevice in the shell had been sealed, the final layer hardened. She had become what Grandma Fontaine had

counselled against, a woman who had seen the worst and so had nothing else to fear. Not life nor Mother nor loss of love nor public opinion. Only hunger and her nightmare dream of hunger could make her afraid.

A curious sense of lightness, of freedom, pervaded her now that she had finally hardened her heart against all that bound her to the old days and the old Scarlett. She had made her decision and, thank God, she wasn't afraid. She had nothing to lose and her mind was made up.

If she could only coax Rhett into marrying her, all would be perfect. But if she couldn't—well, she'd get the money just the same. For a brief moment she wondered with impersonal curiosity what would be expected of a mistress. Would Rhett insist on keeping her in Atlanta as people said he kept the Watling woman? If he made her stay in Atlanta, he'd have to pay well—pay enough to balance what her absence from Tara would be worth. Scarlett was very ignorant of the hidden side of men's lives and had no way of knowing just what the arrangement might involve. And she wondered if she would have a baby. That would be distinctly terrible.

'I won't think of that now. I'll think of it later,' and she pushed the unwelcome idea into the back of her mind lest it shake her resolution. She'd tell the family to-night she was going to Atlanta to try to borrow money, to try to mortgage the farm if necessary. That would be all they needed to know until such an evil day when they might find out differently.

With the thought of action, her head went up and her shoulders went back. This affair was not going to be easy, she knew. Formerly, it had been Rhett who asked for her favours and she who held the power. Now she was the beggar and a beggar in no position to dictate terms.*

'But I won't go to him like a beggar. I'll go like a queen granting favours. He'll never know.'

She walked to the long pier-glass and looked at herself, her head held high. And she saw framed in the cracking gilt moulding a stranger. It was as if she were really herself for the first time in a year. She had glanced in the mirror every morning to see that her face was clean and her hair tidy but she had always been too pressed by other things to really see herself. But this stranger! Surely this thin hollow-cheeked woman couldn't be Scarlett O'Hara! Scarlett O'Hara had a pretty, coquettish, high-spirited face. This face at

which she stared was not pretty at all and had none of the charm she remembered so well. It was white and strained and the black brows above slanting green eyes swooped up startlingly against the white skin like frightened bird's wings. There was a hard and hunted look about this face.

'I'm not pretty enough to get him!' she thought, and desperation came back to her. 'I'm thin—oh, I'm terribly thin!'

She patted her cheeks, felt frantically at her collar-bones, feeling them stand out through her basque. And her breasts were so small, almost as small as Melanie's. She'd have to put ruffles in her bosom to make them look larger and she had always had contempt for girls who resorted to such subterfuges. Ruffles! That brought up another thought. Her clothes. She looked down at her dress, spreading its mended folds wide between her hands. Rhett liked women who were well dressed, fashionably dressed. She remembered with longing the flounced green dress she had worn when she first came out of mourning, the dress she wore with the green plumed bonnet he had brought her, and she recalled the approving compliments he had paid her. She remembered, too, with hate sharpened by envy the red plaid dress, the red-topped boots with tassels and the pancake hat of Emmie Slattery. They were gaudy but they were new and fashionable and certainly they caught the eye. And, oh, how she wanted to catch the eye! Especially the eye of Rhett Butler! If he should see her in her old clothes, he'd know everything was wrong at Tara. And he must not know.

What a fool she had been to think she could go to Atlanta and have him for the asking, she with her scrawny neck and hungry cat eyes and raggedy dress! If she hadn't been able to pry a proposal from him at the height of her beauty, when she had her prettiest clothes, how could she expect to get one now when she was ugly and dressed tackily? If Miss Pitty's story was true, he must have more money than anyone in Atlanta and probably had his pick of all the pretty ladies, good and bad. 'Well,' she thought grimly, 'I've got something that most pretty ladies haven't got—and that's a mind that's made up. And if I had just one nice dress——'

There wasn't a nice dress in Tara or a dress which hadn't been turned twice and mended.

'That's that,' she thought, disconsolately looking down at the floor. She saw Ellen's moss-green velvet carpet, now worn and scuffed and torn and spotted from the numberless men who had slept

upon it, and the sight depressed her more, for it made her realize that Tara was just as ragged as she. The whole darkening room depressed her and, going to the window, she raised the sash, unlatched the shutters and let the last light of the wintry sunset into the room. She closed the window and leaned her head against the velvet curtains and looked out across the bleak pasture toward the dark cedars of the burying-ground.

The moss-green velvet curtains felt prickly and soft beneath her cheek and she rubbed her face against them gratefully, like a cat. And then suddenly she looked at them.

A minute later, she was dragging a heavy marble-topped table across the floor, its rusty castors screeching in protest. She rolled the table under the window, gathered up her skirts, climbed on it and tiptoed to reach the heavy curtain-pole. It was almost out of her reach and she jerked at it so impatiently the nails came out of the wood, and the curtains, pole and all, fell to the floor with a clatter.

As if by magic, the door of the parlour opened and the wide black face of Mammy appeared, ardent curiosity and deepest suspicion evident in every wrinkle. She looked disapprovingly at Scarlett, poised on the table top, her skirts above her knees, ready to leap to the floor. There was a look of excitement and triumph on her face which brought sudden distrust to Mammy.

'Whut you up to wid Miss Ellen's po'teers?' she demanded.

'What are you up to listening outside doors?' asked Scarlett, leaping nimbly to the floor and gathering up a length of the heavy dusty velvet.

'Dat ain' needer hyah nor dar,' countered Mammy, girding herself for combat. 'You ain' got no bizness wid Miss Ellen's po'teers, juckin' de poles plum outer de wood, an' drappin' dem on de flo' in de dust. Miss Ellen set gret sto' by dem po'teers an' Ah ain' 'tendin' ter have you muss dem up dat way.'

Scarlett turned green eyes on Mammy, eyes which were feverishly gay, eyes which looked like the bad little girl of the good old days Mammy sighed about.

'Scoot up to the attic and get my box of dress patterns, Mammy,' she cried, giving her a slight shove. 'I'm going to have a new dress.'

Mammy was torn between indignation at the very idea of her two hundred pounds scooting anywhere, much less to the attic, and the dawning of a horrid suspicion. Quickly she snatched the curtain

lengths from Scarlett, holding them against her monumental, sagging breasts as if they were holy relics.

'Not outer Miss Ellen's po'teers is you gwine have a new dress, ef dat's whut you figgerin' on. Not w'ile Ah got brea'f in mah body.'

For a moment the expression Mammy was wont to describe to herself as 'bullheaded' flitted over her young mistress' face and then it passed into a smile, so difficult for Mammy to resist. But it did not fool the old woman. She knew Miss Scarlett was employing that smile merely to get around her and in this matter she was determined not to be gotten around.

'Mammy, don't be mean. I'm going to Atlanta to borrow some money and I've got to have a new dress.'

'You doan need no new dress. Ain' no other ladies got new dresses. Dey weahs dey ole ones an' dey weahs dem proudly. Ain' no reason why Miss Ellen's chile kain weah rags ef she wants ter, an' eve'ybody respec' her lak she wo' silk.'

The bullheaded expression began to creep back. Lordy, 'twus right funny how de older Miss Scarlett git de mo' she look lak Mist' Gerald and de less lak Miss Ellen!

'Now, Mammy, you know Aunt Pitty wrote us that Miss Fanny Elsing is getting married this Saturday, and of course I'll go to the wedding. And I'll need a new dress to wear.'

'De dress you got on'll be jes' as nice as Miss Fanny's weddin' dress. Miss Pitty done wrote dat de Elsings mighty po'.'

'But I've got to have a new dress! Mammy, you don't know how we need money. The taxes——'

'Yas'm, Ah knows all 'bout de taxes but——'

'You do?'

'Well'm, Gawd give me ears, din' He, an' ter hear wid? Specially w'en Mist' Will doan never tek trouble ter close de do'.'

Was there nothing Mammy did not overhear? Scarlett wondered how that ponderous body which shook the floors could move with such savage stealth when its owner wished to eavesdrop.

'Well, if you heard all that, I suppose you heard Jonas Wilkerson and that Emmie——'

'Yas'm,' said Mammy with smouldering eyes.

'Well, don't be a mule, Mammy. Don't you see I've got to go to Atlanta and get money for the taxes? I've got to get some money. I've got to do it!' She hammered one small fist into the other. 'Name of God, Mammy, they'll turn us all out into the road and

then where'll we go? Are you going to argue with me about a little matter of Mother's curtains when that trash Emmie Slattery who killed Mother is fixing to move into this house and sleep in the bed Mother slept in?

Mammy shifted from one foot to another like a restive elephant. She had a dim feeling that she was being got around.

'No'm, Ah ain' wantin' ter see trash in Miss Ellen's house or us all in de road but——' She fixed Scarlett with a suddenly accusing eye. 'Who is you fixin' ter git money frum dat you needs a new dress?'

'That,' said Scarlett, taken aback, 'is my own business.'

Mammy looked at her piercingly, just as she had done when Scarlett was small and had tried unsuccessfully to palm off plausible excuses for misdeeds. She seemed to be reading her mind and Scarlett dropped her eyes unwillingly, the first feeling of guilt at her intended conduct creeping over her.

'So you needs a spang new pretty dress ter borry money wid. Dat doan lissen jes' right ter me. An' you ain' sayin' whar de money ter come frum.'

'I'm not saying anything,' said Scarlett indignantly. 'It's my own business. Are you going to give me that curtain and help me make the dress?'

'Yas'm,' said Mammy softly, capitulating with a suddenness which aroused all the suspicion in Scarlett's mind. 'Ah gwine he'p you mek it an' Ah specs we mout git a petticoat outer de satin linin' of de po'teers an' trim a p'ar pantalets wid de lace cuttins.'

She handed the velvet curtain back to Scarlett and a sly smile spread over her face.

'Miss Melly gwine ter 'Lanta wid you, Miss Scarlett?'

'No,' said Scarlett sharply, beginning to realize what was coming. 'I'm going by myself.'

'Dat's whut you thinks,' said Mammy firmly, 'but Ah is gwine wid you an' dat new dress. Yas, Ma'm, eve'y step of de way.'

For an instant Scarlett envisaged her trip to Atlanta and her conversation with Rhett with Mammy glowering chaperonage like a large black Cerberus in the background. She smiled again and put a hand on Mammy's arm.

'Mammy darling, you're sweet to want to go with me and help me, but how on earth would the folks here get on without you? You know you just about run Tara.'

'Huh!' said Mammy. 'Doan do no good ter sweet talk me, Miss Scarlett. Ah been knowin' you sence Ah put de fust pa'r of diapers on you. Ah's said Ah's gwine ter 'Lanta wid you an' gwine Ah is. Miss Ellen be tuhnnin' in her grabe at you gwine up dar by yo'seff wid dat town full up wid Yankees an' free niggers an' sech like.'

'But I'll be at Aunt Pittypat's,' Scarlett offered frantically.

'Miss Pittypat a fine woman an' she think she see eve'ything but she doan,' said Mammy, and turning with the majestic air of having closed the interview, she went into the hall. The boards trembled as she called:

'Prissy, chile! Fly up de stairs an' fotch Miss Scarlett's pattun box frum de attic an' try an' fine de scissors widout takin' all night 'bout it.'

'This is a fine mess,' thought Scarlett dejectedly. 'I'd as soon have a bloodhound after me.'

After supper had been cleared away, Scarlett and Mammy spread patterns on the dining-room table while Suellen and Carreen busily ripped satin linings from curtains and Melanie brushed the velvet with a clean hairbrush to remove the dust. Gerald, Will and Ashley sat about the room smoking, smiling at the feminine tumult. A feeling of pleasurable excitement which seemed to emanate from Scarlett was on them all, an excitement they could not understand. There was colour in Scarlett's face and a bright hard glitter in her eyes and she laughed a good deal. Her laughter pleased them all for it had been months since they had heard her really laugh. Especially did it please Gerald. His eyes were less vague than usual as they followed her swishing figure about the room and he patted her approvingly whenever she was within reach. The girls were as excited as if preparing for a ball and they ripped and cut and basted as if making a ball dress of their own.

Scarlett was going to Atlanta to borrow money or to mortgage Tara if necessary. But what was a mortgage, after all? Scarlett said they could easily pay it off out of next year's cotton and have money left over, and she said it with such finality they did not think to question. And when they asked who was going to lend the money she said, 'Layovers catch meddlers,' so archly they all laughed and teased her about her millionaire friend.

'It must be Captain Rhett Butler,' said Melanie slyly, and they

exploded with mirth at this absurdity, knowing how Scarlett hated him and never failed to refer to him as 'that skunk, Rhett Butler'.

But Scarlett did not laugh at this and Ashley, who had laughed, stopped abruptly as he saw Mammy shoot a quick, guarded glance at Scarlett.

Suellen, moved to generosity by the party spirit of the occasion, produced her Irish-lace collar, somewhat worn but still pretty, and Carreen insisted that Scarlett wear her slippers to Atlanta, for they were in better condition than any others at Tara. Melanie begged Mammy to leave her enough velvet scraps to re-cover the frame of her battered bonnet and brought shouts of laughter when she said the old rooster was going to part with his gorgeous bronze and green-black tail feathers unless he took to the swamp immediately.

Scarlett, watching the flying fingers, heard the laughter and looked at them all with concealed bitterness and contempt.

'They haven't an idea what is really happening to me or to themselves or to the South. They still think, in spite of everything, that nothing really dreadful can happen to any of them because they are who they are, O'Haras, Wilkeses, Hamiltons. Even the darkies feel that way. Oh, they're all fools! They'll never realize! They'll go right on thinking and living as they always have, and nothing will change them. Melly can dress in rags and pink cotton and even help me murder a man but it doesn't change her. She's still the shy well-bred Mrs. Wilkes, the perfect lady! And Ashley can see death and war and be wounded and lie in jail and come home to less than nothing and still be the same gentleman he was when he had all Twelve Oaks behind him. Will is different. He knows how things really are but then Will never had anything much to lose. And as for Suellen and Carreen—they think all this is just a temporary matter. They don't change to meet changed conditions because they think it'll all be over soon. They think God is going to work a miracle especially for their benefit. But He won't. The only miracle that's going to be worked around here is the one I'm going to work on Rhett Butler. . . . They won't change. Maybe they can't change. I'm the only one who's changed—and I wouldn't have changed if I could have helped it.'

Mammy finally turned the men out of the dining-room and closed the door, so the fitting could begin. Pork helped Gerald upstairs to bed and Ashley and Will were left alone in the lamplight in the front hall. They were silent for a while and Will chewed his tobacco

like a placid ruminant animal. But his mild face was far from placid.

'This goin' to Atlanta,' he said at last in a slow voice, 'I don't like it. Not one bit.'

Ashley looked at Will quickly and then looked away, saying nothing but wondering if Will had the same awful suspicion which was haunting him. But that was impossible. Will didn't know what had taken place in the orchard that afternoon and how it had driven Scarlett to desperation. Will couldn't have noticed Mammy's face when Rhett Butler's name was mentioned and, besides, Will didn't know about Rhett's money or his foul reputation. At least, Ashley did not think he could know these things, but since coming back to Tara he had realized that Will, like Mammy, seemed to know things without being told, to sense them before they happened. There was something ominous in the air, exactly what Ashley did not know, but he was powerless to save Scarlett from it. She had not met his eyes once that evening and the hard bright gaiety with which she had treated him was frightening. The suspicions which tore at him were too terrible to be put into words. He did not have the right to insult her by asking her if they were true. He clenched his fists. He had no rights at all where she was concerned; this afternoon he had forfeited them all, forever. He could not help her. No one could help her. But when he thought of Mammy and the look of grim determination she wore as she cut into the velvet curtains, he was cheered a little. Mammy would take care of Scarlett whether Scarlett wished it or not.

'I have caused all this,' he thought despairingly. 'I have driven her to this.'

He remembered the way she had squared her shoulders when she turned away from him that afternoon, remembered the stubborn lift of her head. His heart went out to her, torn with his own helplessness, wrenched with admiration. He knew she had no such word in her vocabulary as gallantry, knew she would have stared blankly if he had told her she was the most gallant soul he had ever known. He knew she would not understand how many truly fine things he ascribed to her when he thought of her as gallant. He knew that she took life as it came, opposed her tough-fibred mind to whatever obstacles there might be, fought on with a determination that would not recognize defeat, and kept on fighting even when she saw defeat was inevitable.

But, for four years, he had seen others who had refused to recognize defeat, men who rode gaily into sure disaster because they were gallant. And they had been defeated, just the same.

He thought as he stared at Will in the shadowy hall that he had never known such gallantry as the gallantry of Scarlett O'Hara going forth to conquer the world in her mother's velvet curtains and the tail feathers of a rooster.

CHAPTER XXXIII

A COLD wind was blowing stiffly and the scudding clouds overhead were the deep grey of slate when Scarlett and Mammy stepped from the train at Atlanta the next afternoon. The depot had not been rebuilt since the burning of the city and they alighted amid cinders and mud a few yards above the blackened ruins which marked the site. Habit strong upon her, Scarlett looked about for Uncle Peter and Pitty's carriage, for she had always been met by them when returning from Tara to Atlanta during the war years. Then she caught herself with a sniff at her own absent-mindedness. Naturally, Peter wasn't there for she had given Aunt Pitty no warning of her coming and, moreover, she remembered that one of the old lady's letters had dealt tearfully with the death of the old nag Peter had "quired" in Macon to bring her back to Atlanta after the surrender.

She looked about the rutted and cut-up space around the depot for the equipage of some old friend or acquaintance who might drive them to Aunt Pitty's house but she recognized no one, black or white. Probably none of her old friends owned carriages now, if what Pitty had written them was true. Times were so hard it was difficult to feed and lodge humans, much less animals. Most of Pitty's friends, like herself, were afoot these days.

There were a few wagons loading at the freight cars and several mud-splashed buggies with rough-looking strangers at the reins, but only two carriages. One was a closed carriage, the other open and occupied by a well-dressed woman and a Yankee officer. Scarlett drew in her breath sharply at the sight of the uniform. Although Pitty had written that Atlanta was garrisoned and

the streets full of soldiers, the first sight of the bluecoat startled and frightened her. It was hard to remember that the war was over and that this man would not pursue her, rob her and insult her.

The comparative emptiness around the train took her mind back to that morning in 1862 when she had come to Atlanta as a young widow, swathed in crêpe and wild with boredom. She recalled how crowded this space had been with wagons and carriages and ambulances and how noisy with drivers swearing and yelling and people calling greetings to friends. She sighed for the light-hearted excitement of the war days and sighed again at the thought of walking all the way to Aunt Pitty's house. But she was hopeful that once on Peachtree Street, she might meet someone she knew who would give them a ride.

As she stood looking about her a saddle-coloured negro of middle age drove the closed carriage toward her and, leaning from the box, questioned: 'Cah'ige, lady? Two bits fer any whar in 'Lanta.'

Mammy threw him an annihilating glance.

'A hired hack!' she mumbled. 'Nigger, does you know who we is?'

Mammy was a country negro but she had not always been a country negro and she knew that no chaste woman ever rode in a hired conveyance—especially a closed carriage—without the escort of some male member of her family. Even the presence of a negro maid would not satisfy the conventions. She gave Scarlett a glare as she saw her look longingly at the hack.

'Come 'way frum dar, Miss Scarlett! A hired hack an' a free issue nigger! Well, dat's a good combination.'

'Ah ain' no free issue nigger,' declared the driver with heat. 'Ah b'longs ter Ole Miss Talbot an' disyere her cah'ige an' Ah drives it ter mek money fer us.'

'Whut Miss Talbot is dat?'

'Miss Suzannah Talbot of Milledgeville. Us done move up hyah affer Ole Marse wuz kilt.'

'Does you know her, Miss Scarlett?'

'No,' said Scarlett, regretfully. 'I know so few Milledgeville folks.'

'Den us'll walk,' said Mammy sternly. 'Drive on, nigger.'

She picked up the carpet-bag which held Scarlett's new velvet frock and bonnet and nightgown and tucked the neat bandana bundle that contained her own belongings under her arm and

shepherded Scarlett across the wet expanse of cinders. Scarlett did not argue the matter, much as she preferred to ride, for she wished no disagreement with Mammy. Ever since yesterday afternoon when Mammy had caught her with the velvet curtains, there had been an alert suspicious look in her eyes which Scarlett did not like. It was going to be difficult to escape from her chaperonage and she did not intend to rouse Mammy's fighting blood before it was absolutely necessary.

As they walked along the narrow sidewalk toward Peachtree, Scarlett was dismayed and sorrowful, for Atlanta looked so devastated and different from what she remembered. They passed beside what had been the Atlanta Hotel where Rhett and Uncle Henry had lived and of that elegant hostelry there remained only a shell, a part of the blackened walls. The warehouses which had bordered the train tracks for a quarter of a mile and held tons of military supplies had not been rebuilt and their rectangular foundations looked dreary under the dark sky. Without the wall of buildings on either side and with the car-shed gone, the railroad tracks seemed bare and exposed. Somewhere amid these ruins, undistinguishable from the others, lay what remained of her own warehouse on the property Charles had left her. Uncle Henry had paid last year's taxes on it for her. She'd have to repay that money some time. That was something else to worry about.

As they turned the corner into Peachtree Street and she looked toward Five Points, she cried out with shock. Despite all Frank had told her about the town burning to the ground, she had never really visualized complete destruction. In her mind the town she loved so well still stood full of close-packed buildings and fine houses. But this Peachtree Street she was looking upon was so denuded of landmarks it was as unfamiliar as if she had never seen it before. This muddy street down which she had driven a thousand times during the war, along which she had fled with ducked head and fear-quicken legs when shells burst over her during the siege, this street she had last seen in the heat and hurry and anguish of the day of the retreat, was so strange-looking she felt like crying.

Though many new buildings had sprung up in the year since Sherman marched out of the burning town and the Confederates returned, there were still wide vacant lots around Five Points where heaps of smudged broken bricks lay amid a jumble of rubbish, dead weeds and broomsedge. There were the remains of a few buildings