

10元丛书

英文经典名著

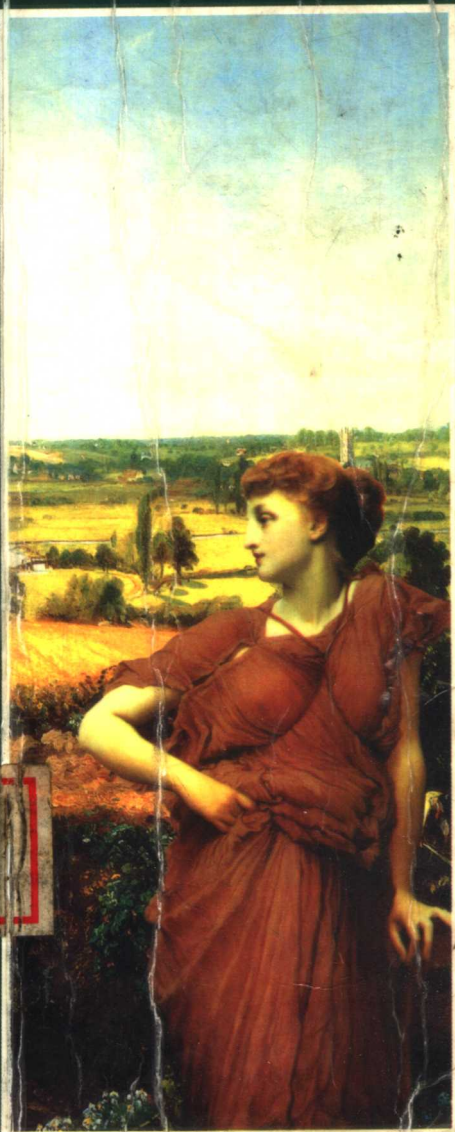
飘

(上)

Margaret Mitchell

Gone with the Wind

中国对外经济贸易出版社



10 元丛书第二辑 英文经典名著丛书(八)

丛书主编 范希春 马德高



图书在版编目(CIP)数据

飘. 上 / (美) 米切尔 (Margaret Mitchell) 著. —北京: 中国对外经济贸易出版社, 2000. 12

(10元丛书; 第2/范希春, 马德高主编)

ISBN 7-80004-859-4

I. 飘... II. 米... III. 英语-语言读物, 小说

IV. H319.4: I

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2000)第 82970 号

10元丛书第二辑 英文经典名著丛书(IV)

丛书主编 范希春 马德高

--Gone with the Wind

飘(上)

(美) Margaret Mitchell 著

中国对外经济贸易出版社出版

(北京安定门外大街东后巷28号)

邮政编码: 100710

新华书店发行

临沂市沂蒙印刷厂印刷

787×1092毫米 32开本

印张: 124.625 字数: 4307千字

2000年12月第1版

2000年12月第1次印刷

ISBN 7-80004-859-4

H·148

全套定价: 100.00元

前 言

玛格丽特·米切尔(Margaret Mitchell 1900—1949), 1900年出生于美国佐治亚州首府亚特兰大市,曾先后就读于华盛顿女子学校和马萨诸塞州的史密斯学院。1922年,米切尔到亚特兰大日报社做记者,开始接触有关南北战争的材料。1926年,米切尔因脚踝受伤而辞去记者工作,在丈夫的鼓励下,她开始创作以南北战争为题材的小说,这就是本书《飘》(*Gone with the Wind*)。这部小说是米切尔历经10个寒暑的呕心沥血之作,1936年,小说一出版即引起轰动。第一年便销出二百多万册。1937年,小说获普里策奖和美国出版商协会奖。到作者因车祸去世的1949年,《飘》已被译成18种语言,在40多个国家出版发行,销量达八百多万册。一直到今天,这部小说仍然畅销不衰,受到全世界各国读者的欢迎。

《飘》这部小说塑造了美丽坚强,敢于面对现实,敢于与命运抗争的女性形象——斯佳丽。并通过斯佳丽的爱情遭遇,反映了美国南北战争(1861—1865)时期的社会生活。

美丽、聪明又有些任性好强的姑娘斯佳丽是当地小伙子们都倾慕的对象,只有温文尔雅的阿希礼对她无动于衷,而令斯佳丽倾心的却恰恰是阿希礼。但阿希礼却与表妹梅兰妮订婚了,斯佳丽试图说服阿希礼与她一起私奔,却被参加烧烤宴会的瑞特·巴特勒听去了他们之间的对话,由此,瑞特十分欣赏斯佳丽的勇气。接着,南北战争爆发了,斯佳丽怀着报复阿希礼的复杂的心态与梅兰妮的哥哥查尔斯结了婚,婚礼比阿希礼与梅兰妮的婚礼早了一天!

男人们都上了前线,不久,查尔斯死了,斯佳丽应梅兰妮和其姑妈之邀,去了亚特兰大。在那儿,她又遇到了瑞特·巴特勒。两人共同出入于社交场合,受到了公众的非议——因为斯佳丽此时是个寡妇。只有梅兰妮为斯佳丽辩护。可是,斯佳丽一直恋着梅

兰妮的丈夫阿希礼！

1863年圣诞节，阿希礼从前线回来休假，这时，南方败局已定，痛苦和绝望几乎压垮了阿希礼，归队前，阿希礼将梅兰妮拜托给了斯佳丽。

1864年7月，战争已扩展到了亚特兰大，糟糕的是梅兰妮怀孕了，而阿希礼又被北军俘虏了。因为答应过阿希礼要照顾梅兰妮，斯佳丽望着逃生的人群只能留在亚特兰大和梅兰妮在一起。9月，南军撤离亚特兰大，梅兰妮分娩，斯佳丽在瑞特的帮助下，从战火中用一辆马车将梅兰妮和孩子救了出来，一起逃回了斯佳丽的老家塔拉庄园。

但是，塔拉已一片荒芜，母亲已去世，父亲也成了痴呆，两个妹妹卧病在床。生活的重担一下子压在了19岁的斯佳丽肩上。抢掠的北方佬、饥饿，使得斯佳丽陷入了噩梦：她常常梦见自己被巨魔追逐，周围全是大雾，她在迷雾中逃命，却找不到生路……这个梦常常在以后的日子里折磨她。

1865年4月，南军投降了，战争结束。9月，阿希礼回来了，但是庄园的境况并不好——因为支付不起高额的附加税，庄园将要失去。斯佳丽到亚特兰大求助于瑞特，瑞特因涉嫌侵吞国库钱款而被捕，为了得到钱保住塔拉，斯佳丽和妹妹的情人肯尼迪结了婚。从此，斯佳丽开始在亚特兰大经营锯木厂。当时，亚特兰大的社会治安状况非常不好，人们都劝斯佳丽白天不要去城外，但斯佳丽几乎天天去锯木厂，只有瑞特时常陪地照应她。不久，斯佳丽傍晚回家途中被两个坏人抢劫，幸遇她家过去的一个黑奴相救才脱险，当天夜里，斯佳丽的丈夫肯尼迪、阿希礼等参加了三K党的行动，不幸中了北军的伏击，瑞特设计救了他们，但肯尼迪却在交火中丧生。斯佳丽又一次成了寡妇。

不久，斯佳丽又和一直爱着她的瑞特·巴特勒结婚，成了巴特勒太太，斯佳丽彻底摆脱了噩梦的袭扰。后来，斯佳丽生下了女儿邦尼，瑞特视若掌上明珠，对邦尼凡事有求必应。为了女儿的将来，瑞特彻底改变了自己，捐助慈善事业，对街坊彬彬有礼……但是斯佳丽却提出了分居。

原来，斯佳丽一直恋爱着阿希礼，并且在阿希礼生日的那天

下午，两人独处时回忆起往事，情不自禁地相拥抱，结果被人看见，传得满城风雨。为了邦尼的声誉，巴特勒拉着斯佳丽参加了阿希礼的生日晚会。但回家后，抑制不住愤怒的巴特勒即强奸了她。第二天，巴特勒便带着邦尼离开了亚特兰大。

三个月后，巴特勒带着女儿邦尼回来了，斯佳丽正要告诉巴特勒自己怀孕的消息时，巴特勒却对她冷嘲热讽，结果斯佳丽失足滚下楼梯，摔伤并流产。不久，女儿邦尼也因骑马跨栏被摔死了。巴特勒伤心到了极点，终日烂醉如泥，斯佳丽也离开了家。

后来，梅兰妮怀孕有了生命危险，斯佳丽和巴特勒都赶到了梅兰妮家，临终前，梅兰妮要求斯佳丽替她照顾儿子和丈夫阿希礼。斯佳丽望着惊恐无助的阿希礼，才意识到这些年来自己爱得是自己想象中的阿希礼；而真正爱她，她应该爱的是巴特勒！但是对斯佳丽已彻底失望的瑞特·巴特勒已黯然离去……斯佳丽只好决定：

我先不去想它，明天再说。明天，我将回到塔拉。我一定想办法使他回来。毕竟，明天是新的一天。

(I will think of it all tomorrow, at Tara. I can stand it then. Tomorrow, I will think of some way to get him back. After all, tomorrow is another day.)

——女人总是幻想爱情，她们爱的也仅仅是爱情本身，而不是别的什么，无论她是柔弱的，还是坚强的，斯佳丽也不例外！

范希春

2000年7月18日

于中国社会科学院研究生院

CONTENTS

Part I

Chapter 1	1
Chapter 2	15
Chapter 3	28
Chapter 4	45
Chapter 5	54
Chapter 6	68
Chapter 7	95

Part I

Chapter 8	103
Chapter 9	117
Chapter 10	144
Chapter 11	154
Chapter 12	159
Chapter 13	173
Chapter 14	185
Chapter 15	194
Chapter 16	204

Part I

Chapter 17	212
Chapter 18	228
Chapter 19	240
Chapter 20	251
Chapter 21	258
Chapter 22	269
Chapter 23	274
Chapter 24	289
Chapter 25	311
Chapter 26	321
Chapter 27	338
Chapter 28	347
Chapter 29	360
Chapter 30	370

Part I

Chapter 1

Scarlett O'Hara was not beautiful, but men seldom realized it when caught by her charm as the Tarleton twins were. In her face were too sharply blended the delicate features of her mother, a Coast aristocrat of French descent, and the heavy ones of her florid Irish father. But it was an arresting face, pointed of chin, square of jaw. Her eyes were pale green without a touch of hazel, starred with bristly black lashes and slightly tilted at the ends. Above them, her thick black brows slanted upward, cutting a startling oblique line in her magnolia-white skin—that skin so prized by Southern women and so carefully guarded with bonnets, veils and mittens against hot Georgia suns.

Seated with Stuart and Brent Tarleton in the cool shade of the porch of Tara, her father's plantation, that bright April afternoon of 1861, she made a pretty picture. Her new green flowered-muslin dress spread its twelve yards of billowing material over her hoops and exactly matched the flat-heeled green morocco slippers her father had recently brought her from Atlanta. The dress set off to perfection the seventeen-inch waist, the smallest in three counties, and the tightly fitting basque showed breasts well matured for her sixteen years. But for all the modesty of her spreading skirts, the demureness of hair netted smoothly into a chignon and the quietness of small white hands folded in her lap, her true self was poorly concealed. The green eyes in the carefully sweet face were turbulent, wilful, lusty with life, distinctly at variance with her decorous demeanour. Her manners had been imposed upon her by her mother's gentle admonitions and the sterner discipline of her mammy; her eyes were her own.

On either side of her, the twins lounged easily in their chairs, squinting at the sunlight through tall mint-garnished glasses as they laughed and talked, their long legs, booted to the knee and thick with saddle muscles, crossed negligently. Nineteen years old, six feet two inches tall, long of bone and hard of muscle, with sunburned faces and deep auburn hair, their eyes merry and arrogant, their bodies clothed in identical blue coats and mustard-coloured breeches, they were as much alike as two bolls of cotton.

Outside, the late afternoon sun slanted down in the yard, throwing into gleaming brightness the dogwood trees that were solid masses of white blossoms against the background of new green. The twins' horses were hitched in the driveway, big animals, red as their masters' hair; and around the horses' legs quarrelled the pack of lean, nervous possum hounds that accompanied Stuart and Brent wherever they went. A little aloof, as became an aristocrat, lay a black-spotted carriage dog, muzzle on paws, patiently waiting for the boys to go home to supper.

Between the hounds and the horses and the twins there was a kinship deeper than that of their constant companionship. They were all healthy,

thoughtless young animals, sleek, graceful, high-spirited, the boys as mettlesome as the horses they rode, mettlesome and dangerous but, withal, sweet-tempered to those who knew how to handle them.

Although born to the ease of plantation life, waited on hand and foot since infancy, the faces of the three on the porch were neither slack nor soft. They had the vigour and alertness of country people who have spent all their lives in the open and troubled their heads very little with dull things in books. Life in the north Georgia county of Clayton was still new and, according to the standards of Augusta, Savannah and Charleston, a little crude. The more sedate and older sections of the South looked down their noses at the up-country Georgians, but here in north Georgia, a lack of the niceties of classical education carried no shame, provided a man was smart in the things that mattered. And raising good cotton, riding well, shooting straight, dancing lightly, squiring the ladies with elegance and carrying one's liquor like a gentleman were the things that mattered.

In these accomplishments the twins excelled, and they were equally outstanding in their notorious inability to learn anything contained between the covers of books. Their family had more money, more horses, more slaves than anyone else in the County, but the boys had less grammar than most of their poor Cracker neighbours.

It was for this precise reason that Stuart and Brent were idling on the porch of Tara this April afternoon. They had just been expelled from the University of Georgia, the fourth university that had thrown them out in two years; and their older brothers, Tom and Boyd, had come home with them, because they refused to remain at an institution where the twins were not welcome. Stuart and Brent considered their latest expulsion a fine joke, and Scarlett, who had not willingly opened a book since leaving the Fayetteville Female Academy the year before, thought it just as amusing as they did.

"I know you two don't care about being expelled, or Tom either," she said. "But what about Boyd? He's kind of set on getting an education, and you two have pulled him out of the University of Virginia and Alabama and South Carolina and now Georgia. He'll never get finished at this rate."

"Oh, he can read law in Judge Parmalee's office over in Fayetteville," answered Brent carelessly. "Besides, it don't matter much. We'd have had to come home before the term was out anyway."

"Why?"

"The war, goose! The war's going to start any day, and you don't suppose any of us would stay in college with a war going on, do you?"

"You know there isn't going to be any war," said Scarlett, bored. "It's all just talk. Why, Ashley Wilkes and his father told Pa just last week that our commissioners in Washington would come to to an amicable agreement with Mr. Lincoln about the Confederacy. And anyway, the Yankees are too scared of us to fight. There won't be any war, and I'm tired of hearing about it."

"Not going to be any war!" cried the twins indignantly, as though they had been defrauded.

"Why, honey, of course there's going to be a war," said Stuart. "The Yankees may be scared of us, but after the way General Beauregard shelled them out of Fort Sumter day before yesterday, they'll have to fight or stand branded as cowards before the whole world. Why, the Confederacy —"

Scarlett made a mouth of bored impatience.

"If you say 'war' just once more, I'll go in the house and shut the door. I've never gotten so tired of any one word in my life as 'war', unless it's 'secession'. Pa talks war morning, noon and night, and all the gentlemen who come to see him shout about Fort Sumter and States' Rights and Abe Lincoln till I get so bored I could scream! And that's all the boys talk about, too, that and their old Troop. There hasn't been any fun at any party this spring because the boys can't talk about anything else. I'm mighty glad Georgia waited till after Christmas before it seceded or it would have ruined the Christmas parties, too. If you say 'war' again, I'll go in the house."

She meant what she said, for she could never long endure any conversation of which she was not the chief subject. But she smiled when she spoke, consciously deepening her dimple and fluttering her bristly black lashes as swiftly as butterflies' wings. The boys were enchanted, as she had intended them to be, and they hastened to apologize for boring her. They thought none the less of her for her lack of interest. Indeed, they thought more. War was men's business, not ladies', and they took her attitude as evidence of her femininity.

Having manoeuvred them away from the boring subject of war, she went back with interest to their immediate situation.

"What did your mother say about you two being expelled again?"

The boys looked uncomfortable, recalling their mother's conduct three months ago when they had come home, by request, from the University of Virginia.

"Well," said Stuart, "she hasn't had a chance to say anything yet. Tom and us left home early this morning before she got up, and Tom's laying out over at the Fontaines' while we came over here."

"Didn't she say anything when you got home last night?"

"We were in luck last night. Just before we got home that new stallion Ma got in Kentucky last month was brought in, and the place was in a stew. The big brute—he's agrand horse, Scarlett; you must tell your pa to come over and see him right away—he'd already bitten a hunk out of his groom on the way down here and he'd trampled two of Ma's darkies who met the train at Jonesboro. And just before we got home, he'd about kicked the stable down and half-killed Strawberry, Ma's old stallion. When we got home, Ma was out in the stable with a sackful of sugar smoothing him down and doing it mighty well, too. The darkies were hanging from the rafters, pop-eyed, they were so scared, but Ma was talking to the horse like he was folks and he was eating out of her hand. There ain't nobody like Ma with a horse. And when she saw us she said: 'In Heaven's name, what are you four doing home again? You're worse than the plagues of Egypt!' And then the horse began snorting and rearing and she said: 'Get out of here! Can't you see he's

nervous, the big darling? I'll tend to you four in the morning!' So we went to bed, and this morning we got away before she could catch us and left Boyd to handle her."

"Do you suppose she'll hit Boyd?" Scarlett, like the rest of the County, could never get used to the way small Mrs. Tarleton bullied her grown sons and laid her riding-crop on their backs if the occasion seemed to warrant it.

Beatrice Tarleton was a busy woman, having on her hands not only a large cotton plantation, a hundred negroes and eight children, but the largest horse-breeding farm in the state as well. She was hot-tempered and easily plagued by the frequent scrapes of her four sons, and while no one was permitted to whip a horse or a slave, she felt that a lick now and then didn't do the boys any harm.

"Of course she won't hit Boyd. She never did beat Boyd much because he's the oldest and besides he's the runt of the litter," said Stuart, proud of his six feet two. "That's why we left him at home to explain things to her. God'mighty, Ma ought to stop licking us! We're nineteen and Tom's twentyone, and she acts like we're six years old."

"Will your mother ride the new horse to the Wilkes barbecue to-morrow?"

"She wants to, but Pa says he's too dangerous. And, anyway, the girls won't let her. They said they were going to have her go to one party at least like a lady, riding in the carriage."

"I hope it doesn't rain to-morrow," said Scarlett. "It's rained nearly every day for a week. There's nothing worse than a barbecue turned into an indoor picnic."

"Oh, it'll be clear to-morrow and hot as June," said Stuart. "Look at that sunset. I never saw one redder. You can always tell weather by sunsets."

They looked out across the endless acres of Gerald O'Hara's newly ploughed cotton fields toward the red horizon. Now that the sun was setting in a welter of crimson behind the hills across the Flint River, the warmth of the April day was ebbing into a faint but balmy chill.

Spring had come early that year, with warm quick rains and sudden frothing of pink peach blossoms and dogwood dappling with white stars the dark river swamp and far-off hills. Already the ploughing was nearly finished, and the bloody glory of the sunset coloured the fresh-cut furrows of red Georgia clay to even redder hues. The moist hungry earth, waiting upturned for the cotton seeds, showed pinkish on the sandy tops of furrows, vermilion and scarlet and maroon where shadows lay along the sides of the trenches. The whitewashed brick plantation house seemed an island set in a wild red sea, a sea of spiralling, curving, crescent billows petrified suddenly at the moment when the pink-tipped waves were breaking into surf. For here were no long, straight furrows, such as could be seen in the yellow clay fields of the flat middle Georgia country or in the lush black earth of the coastal plantations. The rolling foothill country of north Georgia was ploughed in a million curves to keep the rich earth from washing down into the river bottoms.

It was a savagely red land, blood-coloured after rains, brick-dust in

droughts, the best cotton land in the world. It was a pleasant land of white houses, peaceful ploughed fields and sluggish yellow rivers, but a land of contrasts, of brightest sun-glare and densest shade. The plantation clearings and miles of cotton fields smiled up to a warm sun, placid, complacent. At their edges rose the virgin forests, dark and cool even in the hottest noons, mysterious, a little sinister, the sighing pines seeming to wait with an age-old patience, to threaten with soft sighs: "Be careful! Be careful! We had you once. We can take you back again."

To the ears of the three on the porch came the sounds of hooves, the jingling of harness chains and the shrill careless laughter of negro voices, as the field hands and mules came in from the fields. From within the house floated the soft voice of Scarlett's mother. Ellen O'Hara, as she called to the little black girl who carried her basket of keys. The high-pitched childish voice answered "Yas'm," and there were sounds of footsteps going out the back way toward the smokehouse where Ellen would ration out the food to the home-coming hands. There was the click of china and the rattle of silver as Pork, the valet-butler of Tara, laid the table for supper.

At these last sounds, the twins realized it was time they were starting home. But they were loath to face their mother and they lingered on the porch of Tara, momentarily expecting Scarlett to give them an invitation to supper.

"Look, Scarlett. About tomorrow," said Brent. "Just because we've been away and didn't know about the barbecue and the ball, that's no reason why we shouldn't get plenty of dances to-morrow night. You haven't promised them all, have you?"

"Well, I have! How did I know you all would be home? I couldn't risk being a wallflower just waiting on you two."

"You a wallflower!" The boys laughed uproariously.

"Look, honey. You've got to give me the first waltz and Stu the last one and you've got to eat supper with us. We'll sit on the stair landing like we did at the last ball and get Mammy Jincy to come tell our fortunes again."

"I don't like Mammy Jincy's fortunes. You know she said I was going to marry a gentleman with jet-black hair and a long black moustache, and I don't like black-haired gentle-men."

"You like 'em red-headed, don't you, honey?" grinned Brent. "Now, come on, promise us all the waltzes and the supper."

"If you'll promise, we'll tell you a secret," said Stuart.

"What?" cried Scarlett, alert as a child at the word.

"Is it what we heard yesterday in Atlanta, Stu? If it is, you know we promised not to tell."

"Well, Miss Pitty told us."

"Miss Who?"

"You know, Ashley Wilkes's cousin who lives in Atlanta, Miss Pittypat Hamilton—Charles and Melanie Hamilton's aunt."

"I do, and a sillier old lady I never met in all my life."

"Well, when we were in Atlanta yesterday, waiting for the home train, her carriage went by the depot and she stopped and talked to us, and she told

us there was going to be an engagement announced to-morrow night at the Wilkes ball."

"Oh, I know about that," said Scarlett in disappointment. "That silly nephew of hers, Charlie Hamilton, and Honey Wilkes. Everybody's known for years that they'd get married some time, even if he did seem kind of lukewarm about it."

"Do you think he's silly?" questioned Brent. "Last Christmas you sure let him buzz round you plenty."

"I couldn't help him buzzing," Scarlett shrugged negligently. "I think he's an awful sissy."

"Besides, it isn't his engagement that's going to be announced," said Stuart triumphantly. "It's Ashley's to Charlie's sister, Miss Melanie!"

Scarlett's face did not change but her lips went white—like a person who has received a stunning blow without warning and who, in the first moments of shock, does not realize what has happened. So still was her face as she stared at Stuart that he, never ~~analytic~~, took it for granted that she was merely surprised and very interested.

"Miss Pitty told us they hadn't intended announcing it till next year, because Miss Melly hasn't been very well; but with all the war talk going around, everybody in both families thought it would be better to get married real soon. So it's to be announced to-morrow night at the supper intermission. Now, Scarlett, we've told you the secret, so you've got to promise to eat supper with us."

"Of course I will," Scarlett said automatically.

"And all the waltzes?"

"All."

"You're sweet! I'll bet the other boys will be hopping mad."

"Let 'em be mad," Brent. "We two can handle 'em. Look, Scarlett. Sit with us at the barbecue in the morning."

"What?"

Stuart repeated his request.

"Of course."

The twins looked at each other jubilantly but with some surprise. Although they considered themselves Scarlett's favoured suitors, they had never before gained tokens of this favour so easily. Usually she made them beg and plead, while she put them off, refusing to give a Yes or No answer, laughing if they sulked, growing cool if they became angry. And here she had practically promised them the whole of to-mor-row—seats by her at the barbecue, all the waltzes (and they'd see to it that the dances were all waltzes!) and the supper intermission. That was worth getting expelled from the university.

Filled with new enthusiasm by their success, they lingered on, talking about the barbecue and the ball and Ashley Wilkes and Melanie Hamilton, interrupting each other, making jokes and laughing at them, hinting broadly for invitations to supper. Some time had passed before they realized that Scarlett was having very little to say. The atmosphere had somehow changed.

Just how, the twins did not know, but the fine glow had gone out of the afternoon. Scarlett seemed to be paying little attention to what they said, although she made the correct answers. Sensing something they could not understand, baffled and annoyed by it, the twins struggled along for a while, and then rose reluctantly, looking at their watches.

The sun was low across the new-ploughed fields and the tall woods across the river were looming blackly in silhouette. Chimney swallows were darting swiftly across the yard, and chickens, ducks and turkeys were waddling and strutting and straggling in from the fields.

Stuart bellowed: "Jeems!" And after an interval a tall black boy of their own age ran breathlessly around the house and out toward the tethered horses. Jeems was their body-servant and, like the dogs, accompanied them everywhere. He had been their childhood playmate and had been given to the twins for their own on their tenth birthday. At the sight of him, the Tarleton hounds rose up out of the red dust and stood waiting expectantly for their masters. The boys bowed, shook hands and told Scarlett they'd be over at the Wilkeses' early in the morning, waiting for her. Then they were off down the walk at a rush, mounted their horses and, followed by Jeems, went down the avenue of cedars at a gallop, waving their hats and yelling back to her.

When they had rounded the curve of the dusty road that hid them from Tara, Brent drew his horse to a stop under a clump of dogwood. Stuart halted, too, and the darky boy pulled up a few paces behind them. The horses, feeling slack reins, stretched down their necks to crop the tender spring grass, and the patient hounds lay down again in the soft red dust and looked up longingly at the chimney swallows circling in the gathering dusk. Brent's wide ingenuous face was puzzled and mildly indignant.

"Look," he said. "Don't it look to you like she would of asked us to stay for supper?"

"I thought she would," said Stuart. "I kept waiting for her to do it, but she didn't. What do you make of it?"

"I don't make anything of it. But it just looks to me like she might of. After all, it's our first day home and she hasn't seen us in quite a spell. And we had lots more things to tell her."

"It looked to me like she was mighty glad to see us when we came."

"I thought so, too."

"And then, about a half-hour ago, she got kind of quiet, like she had a headache."

"I noticed that but I didn't pay it any mind then. What do you suppose ailed her?"

"I dunno. Do you suppose we said something that made her mad?"

They both thought for a minute.

"I can't think of anything. Besides, when Scarlett gets mad, everybody knows it. She don't hold herself in like some girls do."

"Yes, that's what I like about her. She don't go around being cold and hateful when she's mad—she tells you about it. But it was something we did or said that made her shut up talking and look sort of sick. I could swear she

was glad to see us when we came and was aiming to ask us to supper."

"You don't suppose it's because we got expelled?"

"Hell, no! Don't be a fool. She laughed like everything when we told her about it. And besides Scarlett don't set any more store by book learning than we do."

Brent turned in the saddle and called to the negro groom.

"Jeems!"

"Suh?"

"You heard what we were talking to Miss Scarlett about?"

"Nawsuh, Mist' Brent! Huccome you think Ah be spyin' on w'ite folks?"

"Spying, my God! You darkies know everything that goes on. Why, you liar, I saw you with my own eyes sidle round the corner of the perch and squat in the cape jessamine bush by the wall. Now, did you hear us say anything that might have made Miss Scarlett mad—or hurt her feelings?"

Thus appealed to, Jeems gave up further pretence of not having overheard the conversation and furrowed his black brow.

"Nawsuh, Ah din' notice y'all say anything ter mek her mad. Look ter me lak she sho glad ter see you an' she had missed you, an' she cheep along happy as a bird, tell 'bout de tittle y'all got ter talkin' 'bout Mist' Ashley an' Miss Melly Hamilton gittin' mah' ted. Den she quiet down lak a bird w' en de hawk fly ober."

The twins looked at each other and nodded, but without comprehension.

"Jeems is right. But I don't see why," said Stuart. "My Lord! Ashley don't mean anything to her, 'cept a friend. She's not crazy about him. It's us she's crazy about."

Brent nodded an agreement.

"But do you suppose," he said, "that maybe Ashley hadn't told her he was going to announce it to-morrow night and she was mad at him for not telling her, an old friend, before he told everybody else? Girls set a big store on knowing such things first."

"Well, maybe. But what if he hadn't told her it was tomorrow? It was supposed to be a secret and a surprise, and a man's got a right to keep his own engagement quiet, hasn't he? We wouldn't have known it if Miss Melly's aunt hadn't let it out. But Scarlett must have known he was going to marry Miss Melly some time. Why, we've known it for years. The Wilkes and Hamiltons always marry their own cousins. Everybody knew he'd probably marry her some day, just like Honey Wilkes is going to marry Miss Melly's brother, Charles."

"Well, I give it up. But I'm sorry she didn't ask us to supper. I swear I don't want to go home and listen to Ma take on about us being expelled. It isn't as if this was the first time."

"Maybe Boyd will have smoothed her down by now. You know what a slick talker that little varmint is. You know he always can smooth her down."

"Yes, he can do it, but it takes Boyd time. He has to talk around in circles till Ma gets so confused that she gives up and tells him to save his voice

for his law practice. But he ain't had time to get good started yet. Why, I'll bet you Ma is still so excited about the new horse that she'll never even realize we're home again till she sits down to supper to-night and sees Boyd. And before supper is over she'll be going strong and breathing fire. And it'll be ten o'clock before Boyd gets a chance to tell her that it wouldn't have been honourable for any of us to stay in college after the way the Chancellor talked to you and me. And it'll be midnight before he gets her turned around to where she's so mad at the Chancellor she'll be asking Boyd why he didn't shoot him. No, we can't go home till after midnight."

The twins looked at each other glumly. They were completely fearless of wild horses, shooting affrays and the indignation of their neighbours, but they had a wholesome fear of their red-haired mother's outspoken remarks and the ridingcrop that she did not scruple to lay across their breeches.

"Well, look," said Brent. "Let's go over to the Wilkes. Ashley and the girls'll be glad to have us for supper."

Stuart looked a little discomfited.

"No, don't let's go there. They'll be in a stew getting ready for the barbecue to-morrow, and besides—"

"Oh, I forgot about that," said Brent hastily. "No, don't let's go there."

They clucked to their horses and rode along in silence for a while, a flush of embarrassment on Stuart's brown cheeks. Until the previous summer, Stuart had courted India Wilkes with the approbation of both families and the entire County. The County felt that perhaps the cool and contained India Wilkes would have a quieting effect on him. They fervently hoped so, at any rate. And Stuart might have made the match, but Brent had not been satisfied. Brent liked India but he thought her mighty plain and tame, and he simply could not fall in love with her himself to keep Stuart company. That was the first time the twins' interests had ever diverged, and Brent was resentful of his brother's attentions to a girl who seemed to him not at all remarkable.

Then, last summer at a political speaking in a grove of oak trees at Jonesboro, they both suddenly became aware of Scarlett O'Hara. They had known her for years, and, since their childhood, she had been a favourite playmate, for she could ride horses and climb trees almost as well as they. But now to their amazement she had become a grown-up young lady and quite the most charming one in all the world.

They noticed for the first time how her green eyes danced, how deep her dimples were when she laughed, how tiny her hands and feet and what a small waist she had. Their clever remarks sent her into merry peals of laughter and, inspired by the thought that she considered them a remarkable pair, they fairly outdid themselves.

It was a memorable day in the life of the twins. There-after, when they talked it over, they always wondered just why they had failed to notice Scarlett's charms before. They never arrived at the correct answer, which was that Scarlett on that day had decided to make them notice. She was

constitutionally unable to endure any man being in love with any woman not herself, and the sight of India Wilkes and Stuart at the speaking had been too much for her predatory nature. Not content with Stuart alone, she had set her cap for Brent as well, and with a thoroughness that overwhelmed the two of them.

Now they were both in love with her, and India Wilkes and Letty Munroe, from Lovejoy, whom Brent had been halfheartedly courting, were far in the back of their minds. Just what the loser would do, should Scarlett accept either one of them, the twins did not ask. They would cross that bridge when they came to it. For the present they were quite satisfied to be in accord again about one girl, for they had no jealousies between them. It was a situation which interested the neighbours and annoyed their mother, who had no liking for Scarlett.

"It will serve you right if that sly piece does accept one of you," she said. "Or maybe she'll accept both of you, and then you'll have to move to Utah, if the Mormons'll have you—which I doubt. . . . All that bothers me is that some one of these days you're both going to get lickered up and jealous of each other about that two-faced, little green-eyed baggage, and you'll shoot each other. But that might not be a bad idea either."

Since the day of the speaking, Stuart had been uncomfortable in India's presence. Not that India ever reproached him or even indicated by look or gesture that she was aware of his abruptly changed allegiance. She was too much of a lady. But Stuart felt guilty and ill at ease with her. He knew he had made India love him and he knew that she still loved him and, deep in his heart, he had the feeling that he had not played the gentleman. He still liked her tremendously and respected her for her cool good breeding, her book learning and all the sterling qualities she possessed. But, damn it, she was just so pallid and uninteresting and always the same, beside Scarlett's bright and changeable charm. You always knew where you stood with India and you never had the slightest notion with Scarlett. That was enough to drive a man to distraction, but it had its charm.

"Well, let's go over to Cade Calvert's and have supper. Scarlett said Cathleen was home from Charleston. Maybe she'll have some news about Fort Sumter that we haven't heard."

"Not Cathleen. I'll lay you two to one she didn't even know the fort was out there in the harbour, much less that it was full of Yankees until we shelled them out. All she'll know about is the balls she went to and the beaux she collected."

"Well, it's fun to hear her gabble. And it'll be somewhere to hide out till Ma has gone to bed."

"Well, hell! I like Cathleen and she is fun and I'd like to hear about Caro Rhett and the rest of the Charleston folks; but I'm damned if I can stand sitting through another meal with that Yankee stepmother of hers."

"Don't be too hard on her, Stuart. She means well."

"I'm not being hard on her. I feel sorry for her, but I don't like people I've got to feel sorry for. And she fusses around so much, trying to do the