

英汉对照



世界名著

(美) 玛格丽特·米切尔 著

# 飘



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## CHAPTER XXI

AFTER sending up Melanie' s breakfast tray, Scarlett dispatched Prissy for Mrs. Meade and sat down with Wade to eat her own breakfast. But for once she had no appetite. Between her nervous apprehension over the thought that Melanie' s time was approaching and her unconscious straining to hear the sound of the cannon, she could hardly eat. Her heart acted very queerly, beating regularly for several minutes and then thumping so loudly and swiftly it almost made her sick at her stomach. The heavy hominy stuck in her throat like glue and never before had the mixture of parched com and ground-up yams that passed for coffee been so repulsive. Without sugar or cream it was bitter as gall, for the sorghum used for ' long sweetening' did little to improve the taste. After one swallow she pushed her cup away. If for no other reason she hated the Yankees because they kept her from having real coffee with sugar and thick cream in it.

Wade was quieter than usual and did not set up his every-morning complaint against the hominy that he so disliked. He ate silently the spoonfuls she pushed into his mouth and washed them down with noisily gulped water. His soft brown eyes followed her every movement, large, round as dollars, a childish bewilderment in them as though her own scarce-hidden fears had been communicated to him. When he had finished she sent him off to the back yard to play and watched him toddle across the straggling grass to his playhouse with great relief.

She arose and stood irresolutely at the foot of the stairs. She should go up and sit with Melanie and distract her mind from her coming ordeal but she did not feel equal to it. Of all days in the world, Melanie had to pick this day to have the baby! And of all days to talk about dying!

She sat down on the bottom step of the stairs and tried to compose herself, wondering again how yesterday' s battle had gone, wondering how today' s fighting was going. How strange to have a big battle going on just a few miles away and to know nothing of it! How strange the quiet of this deserted end of town in contrast with the day of the fighting at Peachtree Creek! Aunt Pitty' s house was one of the last on the north side of Atlanta and with the fighting somewhere to the far south, there were no reinforcements going by at double-quick, no ambulances and staggering lines of walking wounded coming back. She wondered if such scenes were being enacted on the south side of town and thanked God she was not there. If only everyone except the Meades and the Merriethers had not refuged from this north end of Peachtree! It made her feel so forsaken and alone. She wished fervently that Uncle Peter were with her so he could go down to headquartere and learn the news. If it wasn' t for Melanie she' d go to town this very minute and learn for herself, but she couldn' t leave until Mrs. Meade arrived. Mrs.

## 第二十一章

给梅拉妮送去早餐后，斯卡利特支使普里西去叫米德太太，自己坐下来和韦德一块儿吃早饭。可是第一次没有胃口。她一面担心梅拉妮临产，神经莫名其妙地紧张，一面又下意识地听着炮声，几乎吃不下什么。她的心脏跳得很奇怪，有规律地跳几分钟，然后便猛烈而迅速地狂跳，使得胃都隐隐作痛。一口玉米粥咽下去，便会像一块胶似的堵在喉咙，而那种代替咖啡的烤玉米和田芋粉的混合饮料也从没像今天这么难喝过。既没有糖，也没有奶酪，吃在嘴里苦得像胆汁，尽管放了所谓“长效糖剂”的高粱饴糖也好不到哪儿去。她咽了一口便把杯子推到一边。即使不为别的原因，她也痛恨北佬，因为他们使得她再也喝不上加糖加奶酪的真正咖啡了。

韦德比平常更加安静，没有像往常每天早晨那样吵着不吃他不喜欢的玉米粥。斯卡利特一勺勺喂着他，他默不作声地吃着，和着开水无声地咽下去。他那温顺的棕色眼睛一刻不停地追着她，又大又圆，像银币一样，眼中带着孩子气的困惑，仿佛她自己内心的恐惧传染给了他似的。他吃完饭后，斯卡利特让他去后院玩，目送他蹒跚着穿过凌乱的草地朝他的游戏室走去，心中感到一阵宽慰。

她站起身，犹豫不决地站在楼梯脚。她应该上楼去陪梅拉妮，将她的注意力从即将到来的苦难上转移开，可是她没有这种从容的心绪。一年三百六十五天，梅拉妮为什么偏偏挑今天来生孩子！偏偏挑今天来谈论死亡！

她坐在最底一层台阶上，竭力使自己镇静，重新想起昨天的战况进展如何，今天又打得怎么样了。多奇怪呀，战火就在离自己几英里的地方，可你却对它一无所知！多奇怪呀，这被遗弃的城郊与桃树溪大战那几日相比是多么安静！贝蒂姑妈的房子是亚特兰大最北部的几幢住宅之一，遥远的南边某个地方在打仗，这儿没有加速前进的救援兵，没有救护车，没有松松垮垮的伤兵队伍从前线开回来。她也许城市南端也有这种情形，便庆幸自己不在那儿。要是除了米德家和梅里韦瑟家以外，其余人家也留下来别去逃难该有多好！她感到那么孤单而凄凉。她真希望彼得大叔跟自己在一起，那他就可以去司令部打探消息。要不是因为梅拉妮，她眼下就要跑去亲自打听消息，可是她不能离开，直到米德太太来了才行。米德太太，她为什么还不来？普里西又上哪儿去了？

Meade. Why didn't she come on? And where was Prissy?

She rose and went out on to the front porch and looked for them impatiently, but the Meade house was around a shady bend in the street and she could see no one. After a long while Prissy came into view, alone, idling along as though she had the whole day before her, switching her skirts from side to side and looking over her shoulder to observe the effect.

'You're as slow as molasses in January,' snapped Scarlett as Prissy opened the gate. 'What did Mrs. Meade say? How soon will she be over here?'

'She wam't dar,' said Prissy.

'Where is she? When will she be home?'

'Well'm,' answered Prissy, dragging out her words pleasurably to give more weight to her message. 'Dey Cookie say Miss Meade done got wud early dis mawnin' dat young Mist' Phil done been shot an' Miss Meade she tuck de cah'ige an' Ole Talbot an' Betsy an' dey done gone ter fotch him home Cookie say he bad hurt an' Miss Meade ain' gwine ter be studyin'bout' comin' up hyah.'

Scarlett stared at her and had an impulse to shake her. Negroes were always so proud of being the bearers of evil tidings.

'Well, don't stand there like a ninny. Go down to Mrs. Merriwether's and ask her to come up or send her mammy. Now, hurry.'

'Dey ain' dar, Miss Soarlett. Ah drapped in ter pass time of de day wid Mammy on mah way home. Dey's done goffe. House all locked up. Spec dey's at de horsepittle.'

'So that's where you were so long! Whenever I send you somewhere you go where I tell you and don't stop to "pass any time" with anybody. Go—'

She stopped and racked her brain. Who was left in town among their friends who would be helpful? There was Mrs. Elsing. Of course, Mrs. Elsing didn't like her at all these days but she had always been fond of Melanie.

'Go to Mrs. Elsing's, and explain everything very carefully and tell her to please come up here. And, Prissy, listen to me. Miss Melly's baby is due and she may need you any minute now. Now you hurry fight straight back.'

'Yas'm,' said Prissy and, turning, sauntered down the walk at snail's gait.

'Hurry, you slow-poke!'

'Yas'm.'

Prissy quickened her gait infinitesimally and Scarlett went back into the house. She hesitated again before going upstairs to Melanie. She would have to explain to her just why Mrs. Meade couldn't come and the knowledge that Phil Meade was badly wounded might upset her. Well, she'd tell a lie about it.

She entered Melanie's mom and saw that the breakfast tray was untouched. Melanie

她站起来，走出屋子来到前廊上，焦急地等着她们，可是米德家的房子在街上一个隐蔽的拐角处，她一个人影也没见到。过了很长时间，普里西出现了，一个人，慢慢悠悠仿佛她有一整天时间可以消磨似的，提着裙摆左右晃着，还回头观察自己的影子有多美。

“你就像正月的糖浆一样粘糊，”普里西推开大门时斯卡利特呵斥道。“米德太太怎么说的？她还有多久才会过来？”

“她不在家，”普里西说。

“她去哪儿了？什么时候会回来？”

“是这样的，小姐，”普里西答道，故意拖长音调来强调她带来的消息的重要性。“她家厨娘说米德小姐一大早就接到信儿说小斐尔少爷受伤了，米德小姐乘坐她家的马车和老塔尔伯特、贝塔西一块儿去接少爷回家。厨娘还说少爷伤得很重，米德小姐大概不会到我们这儿来了。”

斯卡利特瞪着她，真想上前操她一把。黑奴们总是以传播坏消息为荣。

“好了，别像个傻子似地站在那儿。去梅里韦瑟太太家，请她过来或者让她派她家的奶妈来。现在，快点儿去。”

“她们也不在家，斯卡利特小姐。刚才我回来时碰见她家奶妈，还聊了一会儿天。她们都出去了。门锁着。我猜她们是去医院了。”

“怪不得你用了这么长时间！我让你去哪儿你就直奔哪儿，别再停下来和谁‘聊天’了。去——”

她停下来搜肠刮肚地思索。朋友中还有谁留在城里，可以帮上忙？对，艾尔辛太太。当然，这些天艾尔辛太太一点儿也不喜欢她，可是她一直喜欢梅拉妮呢。

“去艾尔辛太太家，详细地解释事情的原委，请她到这儿来。而且，普里西，听我说。梅利小姐的孩子就要降生了，现在她随时都可能需要你。你立刻就出发，快去快回。”

“是，小姐，”普里西说着转过身，慢腾腾地像蜗牛似地朝车道上走去。

“快点儿，你这个懒骨头！”

“是，小姐。”

普里西总算加快了步子，斯卡利特回到屋里来。在上楼去看梅拉妮之前她又犹豫了。她必须向她解释米德太太不能来的原因，而斐尔·米德受重伤的消息肯定会让她伤心。算了，她就撒个谎吧。

她走进梅拉妮房间，看见早餐一动未动。梅拉妮侧身躺着，脸色苍白。



lay on her side, her face white.

'Mrs. Meade's over at the hospital,' said Scarlett 'But Mrs. Elsing is coming. Do you feel bad?'

'Not very,' lied Melanie. 'Scarlett, how long did it take Wade to get bom?'

'Less than no time,' answered Scarlett with a cheerfulness she was far from feeling. 'I was out in the yard and I didn't hardly have time to get into the house. Mammy said it was scandalous—just like one of the darkies.'

'I hope I'll be like one of the darkies too,' said Melanie, mustering a smile which suddenly disappeared as pain contorted her face.

Scarlett looked down at Melanie's tiny hips with none too sanguine hopes but said reassuringly: 'Oh, it's not really so bad.'

'Oh, I know it isn't. I'm afraid I'm a little coward. Is—is Mrs. Elsing coming right away?'

'Yes, right away,' said Scarlett. 'I'll go down and get some fresh water and sponge you off. It's so hot today.'

She took as long a time as possible in getting the water, running to the front door every two minutes to see if Prissy were coming. There was no sign of Prissy so she went back upstairs, sponged Melanie's perspiring body and combed out her long dark hair.

When an hour had passed she heard scuffling negro feet coming down the street, and looking out of the window, saw Prissy returning slowly, switching herself as before and tossing her head with as many airy affectations as if she had a large and interested audience.

'Some day, I'm going to take a strap to that little wench,' thought Scarlett savagely, hurrying down the stairs to meet her.

'Miss Elsing ober at de horsepittle. Dey Cookie 'lows a whole lot of wounded sojers come in on de early train. Cookie fixin' soup ter tek ober dar. She say —'

'Never mind what she said,' interrupted Scarlett, her heart sinking. 'Put on a clean apron because I want you to go over to the hospital. I'm going to give you a note to Dr. Meade, and if he isn't there, give it to Dr. Jones or any of the other doctors. And if you don't hurry back this time, I'll skin you alive.'

'Yas'm.'

'And ask any of the gentlemen for news of the fighting. If they don't know, go by the depot and ask the engineers who brought the wounded in. Ask if they are fighting at Jonesboro or near there.'

'Gawdlmighty, Miss Scrett!' and sudden fright was in Prissy's black face. 'De Yankees sin' at Tara, is dey?'

'I don't know. I'm telling you to ask for news.'

“米德太太正在医院忙活，”斯卡利特说。“不过艾尔辛太太一会儿就来了。你觉得不舒服吗？”

“不是太严重，”梅拉妮说谎道。“斯卡利特，你生韦德时用了多长时间？”

“不到一会儿工夫，”斯卡利特故意装作兴致勃勃地回答。“当时我在院子里，几乎没时间回到屋里去。妈咪说那样很不体面——就像个黑人。”

“我希望自己也像个黑人似的，”梅拉妮说着，勉强挤出一丝笑，却突然凝固了，疼痛使她的脸扭曲了。

斯卡利特低头看着她那狭窄的臂部，明知她的希望不可能实现，却安慰道：“嗨，也没什么大不了的。”

“哎，我知道没什么大不了的。可我恐怕自己是个小懦夫。那——那艾尔辛太太就要来了吗？”

“是的，就要来了，”斯卡利特说道。“我下楼去端点儿清水，用海绵给你擦擦。今天太热了。”

她尽量拖延打水的时间，隔两分钟就跑到前大门看昔里西是否回来。没有昔里西的影子，她只好回到楼上，用海绵擦洗梅拉妮汗涔涔的身体，又拿梳子理顺她那又黑又长的头发。

一个小时过去了，她听见街上传来黑奴的脚步声，从窗户看出去，果然是普里西慢悠悠地回来了，像刚才那样扭扭捏捏，摇头晃脑，装腔作势，仿佛有一大批观众正津津有味地欣赏着她似的。

“总有一天，我要扇这个小妖精一巴掌，”斯卡利特咬牙切齿地想道，一面急忙下楼迎上前去。

“艾尔辛小姐去医院了。她家厨娘说今天早上新到了——火车伤兵。厨娘正在熬汤，要给医院送去。她还说——”

“别管她还说了什么，”斯卡利特心一沉，打断了她的话。“换一条干净的围裙，我要你到医院去。我写张条子你送给米德大夫，要是他不在，就给琼斯大夫或别的哪个大夫。这次你要是不快去快回，我就活剥了你的皮。”

“是，小姐。”

“还有，随便向哪位绅士打探打探战况消息。要是他们不知道，就去车站问运伤员进来的工程队。问他们是否打到琼斯博罗或附近的什么地方了。”

“老天爷，斯卡利特小姐！”昔里西黝黑的脸上突然罩上一层恐惧。“北佬打到塔拉了，是吗？”

“我不知道。我正要你去打探消息呢。”

'Gawdlmighty, Miss Scarlett! Whut'll dey do ter Maw?'

Prissy began to bawl suddenly, loudly, the sound adding to Scarlett's own uneasiness.

'Stop bawling! Miss Melanie will hear you. Now go change your apron, quick.'

Spurred to speed, Prissy hurried toward the back of the house while Scarlett scratched a hasty note on the margin of Gerald's last letter to her—the only bit of paper in the house. As she folded it, so that her note was uppermost, she caught Gerald's words, '*Your mother—typhoid—under no condition—to come home* ——' She almost sobbed. If it wasn't for Melanie, she'd start home, right this minute, if she had to walk every step of the way.

Prissy went off at a trot, the letter gripped in her hand, and Scarlett went back upstairs, trying to think of some plausible lie to explain Mrs. Elsing's failure to appear. But Melanie asked no questions. She lay upon her back, her face tranquil and sweet, and the sight of her quieted Scarlett for a while.

She sat down and tried to talk of inconsequential things, but the thoughts of Tara and a possible defeat by the Yankees prodded cruelly. She thought of Ellen dying and of the Yankees coming into Atlanta, burning everything, killing everybody. Through it all, the dull far-off thundering persisted, rolling into her ears in waves of fear. Finally, she could not talk at all and only stared out of the window at the hot still street and the dusty leaves hanging motionless on the trees. Melanie was silent too, but at intervals her quiet face was wrenched with pain.

She said, after each pain: 'It wasn't very bad, really,' and Scarlett knew she was lying. She would have preferred a loud scream to silent endurance. She knew she should feel sorry for Melanie, but somehow she could not muster a spark of sympathy. Her mind was too torn with her own anguish. Once she looked sharply at the pain-twisted face and wondered why it should be that she, of all people in the world, should be here with Melanie at this particular time—she who had nothing in common with her, who hated her, who would gladly have seen her dead. Well, maybe she'd have her wish, and before the day was over too. A cold superstitious fear swept her at this thought. It was bad luck to wish that someone were dead, almost as bad luck as to curse someone. Curses came home to roost, Mammy said. She hastily prayed that Melanie wouldn't die and broke into feverish small talk, hardly aware of what she said. At last, Melanie put a hot hand on her wrist.

'Don't bother about talking, dear. I know how worried you are. I'm so sorry I'm so much trouble.'

Scarlett relapsed into silence but she could not sit still. What would she do if neither the doctor nor Prissy got there in time? She walked to the window and looked down

“老天爷，斯卡利特小姐！他们会怎样对待我妈妈呀？”

普里西突然大声嚷起来，这声音越发增加了斯卡利特的不安。

“别嚷了！梅拉妮小姐会听见的。现在去换围裙，快点儿。”

普里西被迫加快了步伐，急忙朝后边的屋子奔去，斯卡利特在杰拉尔德写给她的最后一封信的空白处匆匆写了几句话——家里只剩下这一小片纸了。她正要把信叠起来，好使她的便条露在最上边，突然看见杰拉尔德的字迹，“你母亲——伤寒——无论如何——回家——”她差点儿流出眼泪。要不是为了梅拉妮，她立即就动身回家，立马就走，即使得步行全程。

普里西小跑着走了，手里攥着便条，斯卡利特回到楼上，竭力想找个可信的理由解释艾尔辛太太为什么不能来。可是梅拉妮什么也没问。她平躺着，面容平静而温柔，看到这情形斯卡利特也暂时安了心。

她坐下来努力想说些无关紧要的事，可是对塔拉的牵挂以及北佬可能得逞的念头无情地折磨着她。她想到艾伦奄奄一息，北佬冲进亚特兰大，焚烧一切，杀光所有的人。自始至终，远处沉闷的雷声一刻也没停歇，冲击着她的耳膜，引起她一阵又一阵恐惧。后来，她一句话也说不出来了，只是瞪着窗外炎热而寂静的街道。梅拉妮也一声不吭，不过时不时她那平静的面孔就会疼得痉挛。

每次疼痛过后，她都说：“还不是很严重，真的，”斯卡利特知道她在撒谎。她宁愿她大声尖叫也不愿她默默承受。她知道应该为梅拉妮难过，可无论如何也挤不出一丝同情。她自己的苦痛已揉碎了她的心。有一次她狠狠盯着那张扭曲的脸，不明白世界一亡那么多人，为什么偏偏她留在这儿，在这个特殊的时刻陪着梅拉妮——她和她没有任何相通之处，她痛恨她，她巴不得看着她死。也许，她的愿望就要实现了，等不到明天就实现了。一想到这儿，她不由打了个迷信的寒噤。希望别人死是不吉利的，跟诅咒别人一样不吉利。妈咪常说，诅咒常会应验到诅咒者自己身上去。她赶紧祈祷梅拉妮不要死，并且马上跟她亲热地说起话来，几乎不明白自己都在说些什么。最后，梅拉妮用一只滚烫的手搂住了她的腰。

“别再费心找话说了，亲爱的。我知道你有多担心。我给你带来这么多麻烦，真是过意不去。”

斯卡利特这才沉默下来，可是没法静静地坐着。要是医生和普里西都不能及时赶来，她该怎么办？她走到窗前朝下面的街道上望去，又走回来重新坐下。接着

the street and came back and sat down again. Then she rose and looked out of the window on the other side of the room.

An hour went by and then another. Noon came and the sun was high and hot and not a breath of air stirred the dusty leaves. Melanie's pains were harder now. Her long hair was drenched in sweat and her gown stuck in wet spots to her body. Scarlett sponged her face in silence but fear was gnawing at her. God in Heaven, suppose the baby came before the doctor arrived! What would she do? She knew less than nothing of midwifery. This was exactly the emergency she had been dreading for weeks. She had been counting on Prissy to handle the situation if no doctor should be available. Prissy knew all about midwifery. She'd said so time and again. But where was Prissy? Why didn't she come? Why didn't the doctor come? She went to the window and looked again. She listened hard and suddenly she wondered if it were only her imagination or if the sound of cannon in the distance had died away. If it were farther away it would mean that the fighting was nearer Jonesboro and that would mean——

At last she saw Prissy coming down the street at a quick trot and she leaned out of the window. Prissy, looking up, saw her and her mouth opened to yell. Seeing the panic written on the little black face and fearing she might alarm Melanie by crying out evil tidings, Scarlett hastily put her finger to her lips and left the window.

'I'll get some cooler water,' she said, looking down into Melanie's dark, deep-circled eyes and trying to smile. Then she hastily left the room, closing the door carefully behind her.

Prissy was sitting on the bottom step in the hall, panting.

'Dey's fightin' at Jonesboro, Miss Scarlett! Dey say our gemprums is gittin' beat. Oh, Gawd, Miss Scarlett! Whut'll happen ter Maw an' Poke? Oh, Gawd, Miss Scarlett! Whut'll happen ter us ellen de Yankees gits hyah? Oh, Gawd——'

Scarlett clapped a hand over the blubbery mouth.

'For God's sake, hush!'

Yes, what would happen to them if the Yankees came—what would happen to Tara? She pushed the thought firmly back into her mind and grappled with the more pressing emergency. If she thought of these things, she'd begin to scream and bawl like Prissy.

'Where's Dr. Meade? When's he coming?'

'Ah ain' nebber seed him, Miss Searlett.'

'What!'

'No'm, he ain' at de horsepittle. Miss Merriwether an' Miss Elsing ain' dar needer. A man he told me de doctah down by de car-shed wid the wounded sojers jes' come in frum Jonesboro, but Miss Searlett, Ah wuz sceered ter go down dar ter de shed—dey's folkses dyin' down dar. Ah's sceered of daid folkses——'

又站起来到房间另一头的窗前向外眺望。

一个小时过去了，又一个小时过去了。已经中午了，太阳高挂着，热得不得了，没有一丝风吹动尘封的树叶。现在梅拉妮的疼痛加剧了。她的长发被汗水浸透了，睡衣湿湿地贴在身上。斯卡利特静静地用海绵为她擦着脸，可是恐惧噬咬着她。上帝啊，要是医生还没来，婴儿就降生了可怎么办！她该怎么做？她对接生一窍不通。这正是几个星期以来她一直害怕的事情。她本来指望要是找不来医生的话，就由普里西来对付。普里西对接生有一套。她说过不止一次。可是普里西到哪儿去了？她为什么还不回来？医生为什么还不来？她再次来到窗前眺望。她又凝神听了听，突然怀疑是自己产生了幻觉，还是远处的炮声真的远去了。要是炮声真的远去了，那就意味着战火离琼斯博罗更近了，还意味着——

最后她终于看见普里西快跑着从街那头过来，她从窗户上伸出头去。普里西抬头看见了她，张口便要喊起来。她那小黑脸上分明写着惊慌和恐惧，她要是说出什么坏消息来一定会吓着梅拉妮，斯卡利特急忙将食指竖在唇上，离开窗户。

“我去换凉些的水来，”她一边说一边低头看着梅拉妮那眼圈深陷的黑眼睛，勉强笑了笑。然后急忙走出房间，小心翼翼地关上身后的门。

普里西坐在大厅的最底一层台阶上喘气。

“他们打到琼斯博罗了，斯卡利特小姐！他们说咱们的军队就要被打败了。噢，天哪，斯卡利特小姐！我妈妈和波克会发生什么事呀？噢，天哪，斯卡利特小姐！要是北佬打到这儿来，我们该怎么办呢？噢，天哪——”

斯卡利特赶紧捂住她的嘴。

“看在上帝的份上，快闭嘴！”

是的，要是北佬来了她们该怎么办——塔拉该怎么办？她坚决把这个念头抛到脑后，着力解决眼下更为迫切的问题。要是再想这些事情，她就要像普里西一样尖叫哭嚎了。

“米德大夫呢？他什么时候来？”

“噢，我没找到他，斯卡利特小姐。”

“什么！”

“是的小姐，他不在医院。梅里韦瑟小姐和艾尔辛小姐也不在医院。有人告诉我医生在车棚里，在看刚刚从琼斯博罗退下来的伤兵，可是斯卡利特小姐，我不敢到车棚去——那里都是些快死的人。我一向怕见死人——”

‘What about the other doctors?’

‘Miss Scarlett, fo’ Gawd, Ah couldn’ sceercely git one of dem ter read yo’ note. Dey wukin’ in de horsepittle lak dey all done gone crazy. One doctah he say ter me, “Dam yo’ hide! Doan you come roun’ hyah bad derin’ me’ bout babies w’en we got a mess of men dyin’ hyah. Git some woman ter he’p you.” An’ den Ah went aroun’ an’ about an’ ask fer news lek you done tole me an’ dey all say “fightin’ at Jonesboro’ an’ Ah——’

‘You say Dr. Meade’s at the depot?’

‘Yas’ m. He——’

‘Now, listen sharp to me. I’m going to get Dr. Meade and I want you to sit by Miss Melanie and do anything she says. And if you so much as breathe to her where the fighting is, I’ ll sell you South as sure as gun’ s iron. And don’ t you tell her that the other doctors wouldn’ t come either. Do you hear?’

‘Yss’ m.’

‘Wipe your eyes and get a fresh pitcher of water and go on up. Sponge her off. Tell her I’ve gone for Dr. Meade.’

‘Is her time nigh, Miss Sc. arlett?’

‘I don’ t know. I’ m afraid it is but I don’ t know. You should know. Go on up.’

Scarlett caught up her wide straw bonnet from the console table and jammed it on her head. She looked in the mirror and automatically pushed up loose strands of hair but she did not see her own reflection. Cold little ripples of fear that started in the pit of her stomach were radiating outward until the fingers that touched her cheeks were cold, though the rest of her body streamed perspiration. She hurried out of the house and into the heat of the sun. It was blindingly, glaringly hot and as she hurried down Peachtree Street her temples began to throb from the heat. From far down the street she could hear the rise and fall and roar of many voices. By the time she caught sight of the Leyden house, she was beginning to pant, for her stays were tightly laced, but she did not slow her gait. The roar of noise grew louder.

From the Leyden house down to Five Points, the street seethed with activity, the activity of an anthill just destroyed. Negroes were running up and down the street, panic in their faces; and on porches, white children sat crying untended. The street was crowded with army wagons and ambulances filled with wounded and carriages piled high with valises and pieces of furniture. Men on horseback dashed out of side streets pell-mell down Peachtree toward Hood’s headquarters. In front of the Bonnell house, old Amos stood holding the head of the carriage horse and he greeted Scarlett with rolling eyes.

‘Aan’ t you gone yit, Miss Scarlett? We is goin’ now. Ole Miss paekin’ her bag.’

“那其他的医生呢？”

“斯卡利特小姐，天哪，他们连您的条子都不肯看。他们在医院里忙得快要发疯了。有个医生对我说：‘滚开，别在这儿打扰我们，谈什么生孩子的事儿，我们这儿好多人都快死了。去找个女人给你帮忙吧。’后来我又照您的吩咐去打听消息，他们都说‘在琼斯博罗打’，我就——”

“你说米德大夫在车站？”

“是的，小姐。他——”

“现在，好好听我说。我要去找米德大夫，我要你坐在梅拉妮小姐身边，她要你做什么都做什么。你要是敢向她透一点儿风，说战事打到哪儿了，我就把你卖到南方去。你也不要告诉她其他医生不肯来。听见没有？”

“是，小姐。”

“擦干眼泪，端一盆净水上楼去。用海绵为她擦拭。跟她说我去找米德大夫了。”

“她就要生了吗，斯卡利特小姐？”

“我不知道。恐怕是的，可我不知道。你应该知道的。上楼去。”

斯卡利特从搁板上拿起她的宽边草帽，扣在头上。她在镜子前照了照，机械地把乱发拢好，可她并没有看清她自己的影子。一股恐惧的寒流从心底发出向外渗透，直至掠头发的手指也变得冰冷，虽然身体的其他部位仍然热气腾腾的。她匆匆走出屋子来到炎热的太阳底下。天出奇地热，在桃树街上急行了一会儿，她的太阳穴便胀得要炸开似的。从远处的街道上传来忽高忽低嘈杂的人声。到她看见莱顿家的房子时，已开始气喘吁吁，因为她的胸衣系得太紧了，但她并没有放慢脚步。喧闹声更清晰了。

从莱顿家到五角场的街道上，一片熙熙攘攘，像刚刚捅开的蚂蚁穴似的。黑奴们在街上来回奔走，脸上惊慌失措；走廊上，白人孩子坐在那儿哭，没人管。街上挤满了运载伤兵的军队马车和救护车，还有许多堆着高高的行李和家具的私家马车。骑马的男人从两边小街上蹿出来沿桃树街朝胡德的司令部奔去。在邦内尔家门前，老阿莫斯站在那儿抓住驾车的马的头，他眨巴着眼睛朝斯卡利特打招呼。

“您还没走呀，斯卡利特小姐？我们现在就要走了。老小姐正在收拾行李。”



‘Going? Where?’

‘Gawd knows, Miss. Somewheres. De Yankees is comin’!’

She hurried on, not even saying gcxxt-bye. The Yankees were coming! At Wesley Chapel, she paused to catch her breath and wait for her hammeting heart to subside. If she did not quiet herself she would certainly faint. As she stood clutching a lamppost for support, she saw an officer on horseback come charging up the street from Five Points and, on an impulse, she ran out into the street and waved at him.

‘Oh, stop! Please, stop!’

He reined in so suddenly the honrse went back on its haunches, pawing the air. There were harsh lines of fatigue and urgency in his face but his tattered gray hat was off with a sweep.

‘Madam?’

‘Tell me, is it true? Are the Yankees coming?’

‘I’ m afraid so.’

‘Do you know so?’

‘Yes, Ma’ m. I know so. A dispatch came in to headquarters half an hour ago from the fighting at Jonesboro.’

‘At Jonesboro? Are you sure?’

‘I’ m sure. There’ s no use telling pretty lies, Madam. The message was from General Hardee and it said: “I have lost the battle and am in full retreat.”’

‘Oh, my God!’

The dark face of the tired man looked down without emotion. He gathered the reins again and put on his hat.

‘Oh, sir, please, just a minute. What shall we do?’

‘Madam, I can’ t say. The army is evacuating Atlanta soon.’

‘Going off and leaving us to the Yankees?’

‘I’ m afraid so.’

The spurred horse went off as though on springs and Scarlett was left standing in the middle of the street with the red dust thick upon her ankles.

The Yankees were coming. The army was leaving. The Yankees were coming. What should she do? Where should she run? No, she couldn’ t run. There was Melanie back there in the bed expecting that baby. Oh, why did women have babies? If it wasn’ t for Melanie she could take Wade and prissy and hide in the woods where the Yankees could never find them. But she couldn’ t take Mdanie to the woods. No, not now. Oh, if she’ d only had the baby sooner, yesterday even, perhaps they could get an ambulance and take her away and hide her somewhere. But now—she must find Dr. Meade and make him come home with her. Perhaps he could hurry the baby.