

英汉对照



世界名著

(美) 玛格丽特·米切尔 著

飘



上

Mingzhu

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CHAPTER I

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 hone 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,

第一章

斯卡利特·奥哈拉并不漂亮，但是男人们一旦被她的神情吸引住就很难意识到这一点，就像塔尔顿孪生兄弟一样。她脸上鲜明地融合了她母亲那沿海地区法国贵族后裔的优雅和她父亲那种皮肤红润的爱兰人的粗野。但那是一张十分迷人的脸，尖尖的下巴，方方的牙床。她的眼睛是纯粹的绿色，没有一点儿褐色杂质，眼眶的黑睫毛在眼角处微微上翘。在眼睛上面，浓黑的眉毛向上延伸，在她木兰花一样洁白的皮肤上划出两条令人吃惊的斜线——那样的皮肤是南方妇女非常引以为傲并用帽子、面纱、手套加以特别保护的，以抵抗佐治亚州的灼热阳光。

1861的4月一个明媚的下午，她和斯图兰特、布伦特坐在她父亲的塔拉庄园凉爽的走廊里，构成了一幅绝妙的图画。她那带花边的绿色新裙子，裙摆展开成波浪形，与她脚上所穿的绿色平跟鞋正好相配，那是她父亲最近从亚特兰大为她买来的。裙子紧紧箍住十七英寸的腰，这是方圆几个郡溜最细的腰围，紧身的马甲衬托出她十六岁已发育成熟的胸脯。除过所有这些显示仪态万方的伸开的裙子、整齐地盘成一个髻的头发以及交叠在膝盖上的白皙安静的小手，她真正的自我很难被掩盖住。绿色的眼睛在故作天真的脸上显得生动、野性、充满活力，与她的端庄态度形成鲜明对比。她的礼貌是在母亲的教诲和妈咪严厉的管束下被迫形成的；而她的眼睛是自己的。

在她两边，这对孪生兄弟懒散地靠在椅子上，眯眼看着从明亮的高窗射进的阳光，当他们谈笑时，他们那穿着及膝长靴的肌肉结实的腿潇洒地互相交叉着。十九岁，六尺二寸的身高，长长的骨骼和结实的肌肉，被太阳晒黑的脸和深红色的头发，眼神温和而傲慢，身体被包裹在相同的蓝上衣和芥菜色裤子里，这使他们看起来活像两株难分彼此的蜜桃。

在室外，夕阳斜照着院落，给那在嫩绿的背景下开满簇簇白花的山茱萸树蒙上一层明亮的光辉。双胞胎兄弟的马在马车道上拴着，这两只庞大的动物像主人一样有着红色的毛发；一群精瘦、不安，专猎鼠的猎狗围绕着马腿吠叫，无论斯图兰特和布伦特走到哪儿，它们都跟着。不远处，躺着一条黑色花纹的随车狗，仿佛贵族似的，耐心地等待两个男孩回家吃晚饭。

在狗、马和兄弟俩之间有一种亲属似的关系，深于他们长久的伙伴交情。他们都很健康，年青，无忧无虑，优雅得体，士气高涨，两个男孩也像他们骑的马一样精

sleek, graceful, highspirited, 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 bom 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 deganee 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

力充沛而满脸凶相,但是,温和的脾性属于那些懂得如何驾驭它们的人。

虽然诞生于舒适的种植园生活,生下来就被从头到脚服侍着,走廊里这三个人的脸既不懒散也不柔弱。他们有着终生在户外度过且很少用书本上枯燥的东西来伤脑筋的乡村人的强壮和机敏。佐治亚州北部克莱顿郡的生活还是新鲜的,根据奥古斯塔、萨凡纳和查尔斯顿的标准,是有点儿粗野。比较保守和传统的南方人很看不起佐治亚州人,但是在这儿,在佐治亚北部,缺乏良好的学校教育并不值得羞愧,一个男子只要在几件重要的事情上比较精通就足够了。像种植出优质棉花,骑术高明,射击准确,舞姿优美,陪伴女士殷勤潇洒,喝酒时仍能保持绅士风度,这些都是重要的事情。

孪生兄弟在上述名方面出类拔萃,这是著名的,就像他们对书本里的知识总是一窍不通一样。他们家比郡里其它人家有更多的钱,更多的马,更多的奴隶,但是兄弟俩的语法知识甚至比不上他们贫困的邻居们。

正是由于这个特殊原因,斯图兰特和布伦特才能在这个四月的下午闲坐在塔拉的走廊上。他们刚刚被佐治亚大学开除,这是两年来把他们踢出校门的第四所大学;他们的哥哥,汤姆和博奕德,也同他们一起回了家,因为他们拒绝呆在一个不欢迎孪生兄弟的学校。斯图兰特和布伦特把他们最后的开除当作一个玩笑,而斯卡利特,自从一年前离开费耶特维尔女子学院以来再也不愿打开书看一眼,因此,也觉得这件事像他们被开除一样有趣。

“我知道你俩一点也不在乎被开除,汤姆也是一样,”她说,“而博奕德呢?他喜欢接受教育,都是你俩把他从弗吉尼亚大学,拉巴马大学和南卡罗利拿大学拉了出来,现在又是佐治亚大学。以这样的速度,他永远也不能完成学业。”

“噢,他可以在费耶特维尔帕马利法官的事务所修读完法学教程,”布伦特毫不在乎地回答。“何况,那并不重要。反正我们必须在学期结束之前回家。”

“为什么?”

“因为战争,傻瓜!战争马上就要爆发了,难道你认为我们有谁能在战乱中还呆在大学读书?”

“你知道根本不会有什么战争,”斯卡利特生气地说。“那只是说说而已。阿希礼·威尔克斯和他父亲上星期才告诉爸爸说我们驻华盛顿的特派员就要与林肯先生就奴隶制问题达成——一项——项——友好协议。而且,那些北佬非常害怕我们打仗。根本不会有战争,我已经听厌了这些话。”

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 the 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 a grand 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

“根本不会有战争！”兄弟俩愤怒地叫嚷道，仿佛被人欺骗了似的。

“为什么，亲爱的，战争当然会爆发，”斯图兰特说，“北方佬也许害怕我们，但是自从前天博勒加德将军用大炮将他们轰出了萨姆特要塞以后，他们就必须迎战或者在全世界面前丢人现眼。说到南部邦联——”

斯卡利特撅着嘴，一副极不耐烦的表情。

“假若你再说一次‘战争’，我就回到屋里并且关上门。在我的生命里，我讨厌‘战争’这个字眼胜过其它任何词，但‘脱离联盟’除外。爸爸从早到晚谈论战争，所有来拜访他的绅士也都在高声嚷嚷萨姆特要塞、州权以及阿贝·林肯，我简直厌烦得想要尖叫！而且那也是所有的男孩子所热衷的话题，战争和军队！今年春天的任何宴会都不会有乐趣，因为男人们除了战争说不出别的。我非常高兴佐治亚州直到圣诞节过后才独立，否则它将影响到圣诞宴席。你们再说‘战争’，我就进屋去。”

她说这话是认真的，因为她从来不能长期忍受谈论一个她不擅长的话题。但是她说话时微笑着，故意加深她的酒窝儿，并将她的黑睫毛象蝴蝶翅膀一样忽闪忽闪。就像她所预料的那样，兄弟俩服了，他们立即为触怒她而道歉。他们并不因为她对战争缺乏兴趣而小瞧她。事实上，他们越发看重她，战争是男人的事，与女人无关，他们把她的态度当成是她富于女性气质的证据。

使他们抛开战争这个乏味的话题后，她兴致盎然地回到原来的题目上。

“对于你们再次被开除，你们的母亲有什么看法？”

兄弟俩回想起三个月前他们被迫从弗吉尼亚大学返回家时母亲的态度，就露出了难为情的神色。

“好了，”斯图兰特说，“她还没机会说些什么呢。今天早上她起床前我们和汤姆就早早离开了家。我们到这儿来的时候，汤姆去了芳汀家。”

“难道昨天晚上你们回家时她什么也没说吗？”

“我们昨晚运气真好。我们到家时，妈妈上个月在肯塔基买的马刚刚运到，家里一片混乱。这个庞然大物——它是一匹高头大马，斯卡利特；你必须告诉你父亲立刻去看它——在到这儿来的路上它已经啃掉了马夫一块肉，而且还两个妈妈派去琼斯博罗接火车的黑奴踩伤了。就在我们到家之前，它差点儿踢倒马厩，几乎把妈妈的老马草莓踢死，我们到家时，妈妈正在马厩里用一袋糖哄这四匹马，居然把

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 hacks 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 twenty-one, 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 Scarlea. '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 sud-den frothing of pink peach blossoms and dogwood dappling with white stars the dark river swamp and far-off

它驯得服服帖帖。黑奴们躲得远远的，睁大眼睛，都吓坏了，但是妈妈同那匹马谈着话好像它是家里人一样，它舔着妈妈的手掌。没有人会像妈妈那样会和马儿相处。当她看见我们时她说：‘上帝啊！你们四个还呆在家里干什么？你们简直比埃及的瘟神更糟糕！’这时马开始喷鼻息蹬后腿，于是她说：‘出去！难道你们看不出宝贝马受惊了吗？我明天早上再收拾你们四个。’于是我们就上床睡觉了，今天早上我们在她抓住之前就逃走了，留下博奕德去对付她。”

“你们猜她会不会打博奕德一顿？”斯卡利特象那里的其他人一样，永远不习惯矮小的塔尔顿太太惩罚已成年的儿子的方式，如果情形允许，她甚至可以用马鞭抽他们的脊背。

比特丽丝·塔尔顿是个忙碌的女人，她不仅拥有一个大棉花种植园，一百个黑奴，八个孩子，而且还拥有全州最大的养马场。她脾气火爆，动辄就因为这四个爱惹事生非的儿子而烦恼不堪。虽然不允许任何人抽打奴隶和马，但她认为时不时的鞭打儿子们并不会造成伤害。

“她当然不会打博奕德。她永远不会狠揍博奕德，因为他是老大，另外他个子矮小，”斯图兰特说，很为自己6.2英尺的身高骄傲。“这就是我们为什么把他留家里向她解释的原因。上帝啊，妈妈真该停止打骂我们了！我们十九岁了，汤姆已经二十一了，她好像还把我们看作六岁的孩子。”

“明天你母亲会不会骑着新马去威尔克斯家参加野宴？”

“她是这么想的，但爸爸说那匹马太危险。而且，女孩子们无论如何不会让她那么做的。她们说她们将让她以贵妇人的样子至少参加一次宴会，坐在马车上。”

“我希望明天不会下雨，”斯卡利特说。“一星期来几乎每天都在下雨。最糟的事情莫过于将一次烤肉野宴改为室内聚餐。”

“噢，明天肯定天气晴朗，热得就象六月份一样，”斯图兰特说。“看看夕阳，我从来没见过比它更红的。你们可以根据夕阳判断天气。”

他们的视野穿过杰拉尔德·奥哈拉家新翻耕过的一望无际的棉花田，投向火红的天际。这时，太阳象一团火似的在弗林特河对岸的山后翻腾下降，四月白昼的温暖渐渐被一阵清爽的凉意代替。

那年春天来得很早，几场温暖的春雨之后，骤然间，一簇簇粉红的桃花开满枝头，白色的山茶萼星星点点，散落在暗淡的河流和远方的群山中。春耕已接近尾声

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 neons, mysterious, a little sinister, the sougning 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 cars 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 carded 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 start-ing home But they were loath to face their mother and they fingered 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 tomorrow 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'

声，夕阳血红的霞光把佐治亚州新开垦的红土渲染得更红了。湿润饥饿的土地，等待着棉花种子，一道道犁沟的沙土顶端泛起浅红色，沿着深沟两旁，阴影投射出猩红、橙红和茶褐三种色彩。粉成白色的农场砖屋好像位于红色海洋中的小岛，这是一个波涛起伏的海洋，在粉红的波峰裂为碎浪的那一瞬突然凝固。这儿没有长长的、直直的犁沟，就象在佐治亚州中部平原地带能够见到的黄色土地或在沿海地区种植园常见的肥沃黑土地那样。佐治亚州北部逶迤的丘陵地带被犁耕成无数条曲线，目的是为了防止富饶的泥土被冲入河床。

这是一片原始的红土地，雨后呈血红色，干旱时呈砖屑一样的颜色，是世界上最好的棉花产地。这是一片令人心旷神怡的土地，有白色的房子，平整的耕地和缓缓流动的黄色的河流，但这也是一片反差极大的土地，有明亮的阳光和幽暗的阴影。清理过的种植场和连绵的棉花田，对着温暖的太阳微笑，平和而满足。在田地四周生长着原始森林，即使在这酷热的晌午仍然幽暗而阴凉，神秘得带点不祥之兆，沙沙作响的松林好像已耐心地等待了数百年，用温软的声音威胁道“当心！当心！我们曾经拥有你。我们可以再次将你夺回来。”

走廊上三个人的耳朵中传来马蹄声，缰辔上的叮铃声和黑奴刺耳的毫无顾忌的笑声。这说明在田里作活的人们和骡子返回了。从房子里传出了斯卡利特的母亲，艾伦·奥哈拉温柔的声音，她在呼唤挎着她的钥匙篮的黑人小姑娘。一个童稚的声音高声回答：“是，太太。”脚步声从后面的过道走向厨房，艾伦将在那儿给干活归来的黑人分发食物。瓷器的撞击声和银器的叮哨声是塔拉的膳食总管波克安置餐桌发出的。听到这些声音，兄弟俩意识到该回家了，但是他们害怕面对母亲，于是就赖在塔拉的走廊上，殷切期待斯卡利特会邀请他们共进晚餐。

“看吧，斯卡利特。到了明天，”布伦特说。“仅仅因为我们走开或者不知道烤肉宴这回事，我们没有理由不在明天晚上尽情狂舞。你还没有答应他们吧，对不对？”

“是的，我答应了！我怎么能知道你们会在家？我当然不能为了等你们二位而冒险作壁花。”

“你作壁花！”兄弟俩放声大笑。

“亲爱的。你必须跟我跳第一曲华尔兹，跟斯图跳最后一曲，而且你必须和我

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 gentlemen.'

'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, Sm? If it is, you know we promised not to tell.'

'Well, Miss Pitty told us.'

'Miss Who?'

'You know, Ashley Wilkes' 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 Searlett in disappointment. 'That silly nephew of hers, Charlie Hamilton, and Honey wilkes. Every-body'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 per-son 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 tomorrow night at the supper intermission. Now, Scarlett, we've told you the secret, so you've got to promise to eat supper with us.'

们共进晚餐。我们将象上一次那样坐在楼梯平台上，让金西妈咪再给我们算一次命。”

“我不喜欢金西妈咪算命。你们知道她说我将会嫁给一个长着黑头发，黑长胡子的绅士，但是我不喜欢黑头发的男人。”

“你喜欢我们这样的红头发，对吗，亲爱的？”布伦特咧嘴笑道。“现在，先答应与我们共享所有的华尔兹和晚饭吧。”

“如果你答应了，我们将告诉你一个秘密，”斯图兰特道。

“什么秘密？”斯卡利特叫道，对这句话象孩子一样反应敏锐。

“斯图，不是我们昨天在亚特兰大听到的吗？你知道，我们答应过不说出去的。”

“是的，是贝蒂小姐告诉我们的。”

“谁？”

“你知道，就是阿希礼·威尔克斯家住在亚特兰大的表亲，贝蒂帕特·哈密尔顿小姐——查尔斯·哈密尔顿和梅拉妮·哈密尔顿的姑妈。”

“是的，我认识她，她是我今生所遇到的最愚蠢的老妇人。”

“昨天我们在亚特兰大等待回家的火车时，她的马车刚好经过车站，她停下来和我们打招呼，她告诉我们，明天晚上在威尔克斯家的舞会上将宣布一个订婚启事。”

“噢，我知道，”斯卡利特失望地说：“她那个愚蠢的侄子，查尔斯·哈密尔顿和霍妮·威尔克斯。几年来每个人都相信他们早晚会结婚，尽管他好像对此事并不热心。”

“你认为他傻吗？”布伦特问“去年圣诞节，你的确让他围着你团团转。”

“他要纠缠我，我也没办法，”斯卡利特毫不在意她耸耸肩，“我认为他这人过于娘娘腔。”

“但是，将被宣布的并不是他的订婚，”斯图兰特得意地说。“而是阿希礼和查尔斯的妹妹，梅拉妮小姐！”

斯卡利特的脸还未变而嘴唇却变得苍白——就像一个人没有任何准备就受到一个沉痛打击，或者说，像一个在受到震惊的最初几秒内，并不明白发生了什么的人。她盯着斯图兰特，脸上的表情凝固了，而他呢，不加分析，想当然地认为她是太吃惊，感到太有趣了才这样的。

“贝蒂小姐还说，她们本不打算在明年以前宣布这个决定，因为梅利小姐身体一向不太好，但是，到处都在谈论战争，两家人都觉得最好尽快结婚。因此，它将于明天晚上晚餐休息时间被宣布。现在，斯卡利特，我们已经告诉了你这个秘密，所以你必须答应与我们共进晚餐。”

‘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,’ said 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 tomorrow—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 blue 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