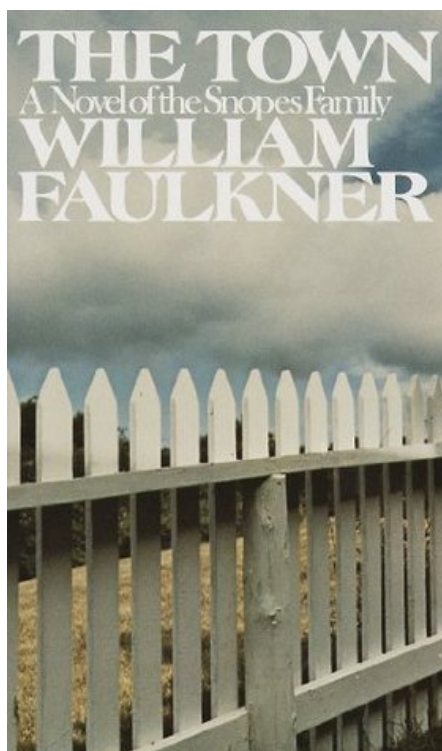




The Town

William Faulkner

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The Town

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This is the second volume of Faulkner's trilogy about the Snopes family, his symbol for the grasping, destructive element in the post-bellum South. Like its predecessor *The Hamlet* and its successor *The Mansion*, *The Town* is completely self-contained, but it gains resonance from being read with the other two. The story of Flem Snopes' ruthless struggle to take over the town of Jefferson, Mississippi, the book is rich in typically Faulknerian episodes of humor and of profundity.

The Town Details

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Author : William Faulkner

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From Reader Review The Town for online ebook

Brandon says

The communal crisis of *The Town's* plot is reflected in the nature of its three narrator's: the attorney Gavin Stevens, his pre-adolescent nephew Charles Mallison and entrepreneur V.K. Ratliff.

If anyone ever had any doubts about how much Faulkner intended the town to serve as a character in his work, they might find an answer in the Charles Mallison's opening to *The Town*,: "when I say 'we' and 'we thought' what I mean is Jefferson and what Jefferson thought (3)." Just as Faulkner finds the town is complicit in the crime at the center of his short story "Rose for Emily," the three narrators will vary on Jefferson's culpability in the sins of the Snopes, particularly Flem and his wife Eula Varner.

Without spoiling the plot, *The Town* tells of Flem's attempt to keep rising from his son-of-a-sharecropper origins and Stevens & Ratliff's attempt to keep him from doing so. Along the way, Stevens is smitten by Eula. Stevens' evolution as a character alone is worth the read; the revelations about Eula & Flem are even more astonishing, especially for anyone familiar with *The Town's* precursor, *The Hamlet*.

One question I have for other readers is what does Faulkner's preponderance of the phrase "All right" signify? The phrase seems to appear more often than it does in his other novels, and it seems that the phrase is usually ironic since so little is "all right."

The other question I have is about "women" who are not interested in romance (322). Joyce Carol Oates once described Faulkner as a "misogynist," but he seems to me more misanthropic about people as a group and downright affectionate in his regard for individual characters. Eula's take on people is filled with intentional dramatic irony as she tells Stevens about the town gossiping about her affair with a banker: "people are really kind, you know. All the people in Yoknapawtawpha County that might have made sure Mamma knew us for her own good" (329). To say Faulkner disliked women more than men is to ignore the collective view of people beyond gender with which people are characterized in this novel. Stevens later says clergy was "Sent by a damned lot of damned old women of both sexes, including none" (343). Here the dislike goes beyond gender, becoming perhaps a definitive statement on lost humanity.

But Faulkner is not a pessimist. Stevens marvels at Eula's "capacity for love," especially where her daughter Linda Snopes is concerned. Far from being an indictment of a gang mentality, the novel raises perhaps the most significant of all life questions: Does a child believe his/her parents possess the passion or capacity to create a child like him/her (305)? Eula resolves her key crisis with a cold consideration of the romance her community holds for the role of a woman. How ironic it is that in Southern culture, they really don't like a real reb' like Eula except under a certain circumstance.

An Badagadze says

Have you ever thought about being a writer? What would you write about, who would you write for? W. Faulkner wanted to be a poet, than short story teller and after not succeeding in neither of these (he himself thought so), he became a writer of novels, of big and complicated ones, of "Sound and the Fury", "Light in August", "Absalom, Absalom", etc. These are his best works in my opinion, were reader can feel all the emotions, his love and anger towards his characters, towards society who made him angry because of all the racism, all the sillines - because of which his people thought name of the family was more important than family itself.

"The Town" is one of the latest works of W.F. and is a mix of his styles. It reminded me of "The Reivers" - especially those parts told by Chick Mallison, and "Sartoris" - where we get known to the city of Jefferson, it's first car and bank and then we see further development of the Yoknapatawpha county in "The Town". Finally we get acquainted to the Flem Snopes and his family better. We see Eula Snopes, spoiled child who didn't even want to walk because of laziness, becoming a "normal" woman and a mother. We are told the story by our old friend from "The Mansion" - V.K. Ratliff - and finally get his story as well, pretty surprising one. We meet Linda Snopes - really different female in whole Faulkner world, good girl with a bright future prospects, unlike any other women and her Patron - Gavin Stevens, quite interesting character, lawyer with very high moral ethics.

"The Town" is a bridge between the start and the finish of Snopes trilogy and describes climax of Flem's success.

My favourite parts in the story are short stories of other Snopes' - Byron with his children and Wall Street Panic Snopes (Wally) with his wife.

Finally my impression about the book wasn't as great as I had about the first part of the trilogy, mainly because of the style and many parts being repeated for those readers who haven't read The Mansion. This makes the story standalone, but a bit too much of reminders. Let's see what "The House" brings - how will Faulkner deal with Flem and his death.

Dan Pecchenino says

Probably Faulkner's most under appreciated novel. Highly experimental, yet not acknowledged as such.

Perry says

Superb, this, the second in the Snopes trilogy, is an improvement from and much more accessible than The Hamlet, the trilogy's first, and than all Faulkner other than The Unvanquished, which is a series of shorts, and Light in August.

I was most certainly surprised, saddened and ultimately edified upon learning of the fate of a critical and highly symbolic character, bound to doom by the growing commercialization of the American South in the first few decades of the 20th Century.

Bernard Norcott-mahany says

Though this book lacks the scope of "The Hamlet" which has an almost mythic quality about it, I like that this book features the story told by three characters, two who are intimately connected with the action (V.K. Ratliff and Stevens) and one (Chick Mallison, Gavin Stevens' nephew, who is removed from the action -- in fact the first chapter which is narrated by Chick takes place before he is born, so his "version" of the events is entirely dependent on what Ratliff and his uncle Gavin told him. It may be that we have the same event told by different people, with different intonations -- Stevens, the Harvard and Heidelberg educated lawyer, is much more cerebral than his nephew, who will also go to Harvard, and than Ratliff, a merchant. We also have the story of the Snopes told by those who don't like them very well, but view their presence in Jefferson as a pollution or infestation.

Jeff says

Some ghosts, or real people, are going to kill me...but Faulkner is BETTER than Shakespeare...no one gets more in one page (which is what makes him so difficult)...and no one writes purer human beings...no one puts it on paper with more unbridled energy...some of his sentences, about one every three pages, just make you want to give up and crawl back into the womb...

This one is the second in a trilogy, call it The Snopes Empire Strikes Back, about the dark and soulless and anarchic lengths to which Flem Snopes will go to consume a town of people that are wonderfully hypocritical in their God-fearing-ness...

We also get again one of the great characters I've ever read, a man as much himself as Hamlet, so fallibly infallible that we should all have one in our towns--VK Ratliff...

Mat says

A masterpiece.

Everyone puts *The Hamlet* on a pedestal and although i enjoyed it, personally speaking *The Town* is Faulkner at his utter and inimitable best.

First, all the Snopes characters in the trilogy are so singular and unforgettable that you can tell Faulkner was writing for eternity when he composed this trilogy. First we have the devious, intelligent, empire-building Flem Snopes who proceeds to slowly take over the town of Jefferson here bit by bit. Think about that title - *The Town* - so simple but perfect. Not only does it represent the ever-increasing size and sweep of Flem's ascending empire since *The Hamlet* but it also represents the citizens of Jefferson, their jealousy (as far as I can see) for his rapid rise and success and their condemnation of various moral outrages that occur in this story, some which can be laid at Flem's door, others not. Then we have I. O. Snopes who often has money problems (I like the wry joke by Faulkner there - "I owe (Snopes)") and is involved in some fishy business whether it is sending his half-breed Indian children to Jefferson or trying to sell off mules. Then we have Montgomery Ward Snopes and his pornographic picture shop. And my personal favourite Wallstreet Panic Snopes, who is a young and up-and-coming whippersnapper running successful downtown grocery stores and possibly the only threat to Flem's small-town empire.

Then you have the other great characters in this book - Mr. de Spain, son of Major de Spain an unforgettable character in the hunting stories of *Go Down, Moses*. I remember being shocked when I read *Sanctuary*, when I finally found out how the corncob pipe had been used and I'll never be able to think the same about it again. How could you? Same with the corsage in this story - the unsavoury 'gift' that de Spain presents to Gavin Stevens, without giving more away. Gavin Stevens and V.K. Ratklif have to be my personal favourites though - Stevens is a lawyer with strong values and someone intent on stopping the Snopes if anyone at all is going to but someone who always gets caught up in the whirlwind of beautiful women, just like in other books. A sucker for anything that wiggles in skirts basically. Ratklif, on the other hand, is the model citizen, albeit a slightly uneducated one at that, but who seems to have the town's interests at heart. Both he and Stevens are two of the main narrators of this story along with Charles Mallison, Stevens' nephew who narrate parts of the story from the child's viewpoint, much like Vardaman does in *As I Lay Dying*. Maggie, Steven's twin sister is the backbone of rectitude which holds both of them together and she is one of the strongest women in Faulkner's canon I feel.

Finally, we have of course the unforgettable, sexy and voluptuous Eula Varner (who becomes Mrs. Flem

Snopes) a veritable Jezebel if there ever was one and the eye candy crush of Jefferson. I could never figure out if Stevens was more in love with Eula or with her equally beautiful daughter Linda...or both, if it is possible to be in love with two people at the same time.

Other things I learned from Faulkner from reading this trilogy.

1. You don't need to always spell things out for the reader to understand what happens. Often Faulkner will drop subtle hints along the way until finally it clicks that 'oh someone just got murdered' or 'knocked up' or whatever.
2. The power of rumour in his books is amazing - through narrators and the lack of alter-narratives (or rumours to the contrary), the reader finds oneself having no choice but to believe the rumour circulated within the narrative because there is no other way to situate the characters. This is something that blew me away in Faulkner's work and largely reflects the effect second-hand narratives can have on us in real life.
3. Writing does not have to be smooth, just like life. I like how Faulkner lets out a belt/string of adjectives (Kerouac does this too in what he calls a 'scatalogical pile-up of words') which does full justice to the spectrum of the writer's vocabulary stockpile at any given moment and it is far more powerful than cleanly revised stripped-down edited prose.

Going to take a short break from Faulkner for a while and come back in a few weeks and read the finale to this great trilogy. This book is my all-time favourite of his because a) the story is so gripping I couldn't put it down and b) the prose is immaculate. Damn this man had a lot of talent.

Thanks to Rikkyo University Library for having a copy of this in stock which I could borrow.

Robert says

William Faulkner's *The Town* picks up the Snopes family and the depredations it imposes upon the town of Jefferson and Yoknapatawpha County with a focus on Flem Snopes and his rise from crude, calculating interloper to president of the bank formerly controlled by men surnamed Sartoris and de Spain. Apparently Faulkner thought he was writing a funny book--and it is a funny book in some measure--before developing the tragic element of a woman (Eula) Flem lost to adultery and a daughter (Linda) who wasn't his. Indeed, Eula Varner Snopes (1889-1927) conveys Faulkner's customary darkness convincingly and her daughter, Linda, expresses well Faulkner's conviction that one must escape the past yet one can never escape the past.

Among most critics, *The Town* is an unpopular book, and it is easy to see why. The chapters are narrated by a series of participants in varying and not always complementary tones and registers (think of *As I Lay Dying* as an example of greater success using this technique) and there are moments when Faulkner's ceaseless tendency to describe things backwards and inside out grow wearisome. Beyond that, Flem Snopes isn't one of the voices employed, so he doesn't roar at you like Jason Compson in *The Sound and the Fury*...much to *The Town*'s detriment, depriving it of a central character's internal passions and contradictions.

Even so, there are many fine moments of clear-headed analysis by the lawyer Gavin Stevens (central to *Intruder in the Dust*), who successively falls in love with Eula and then, many years later, Linda, and cannot let himself have either, understanding the doom they carry within them. Eula makes him a wonderful "Let's do it, then" offer in a memorable scene early in the book that flat-out overwhelms him. Linda knows what he's feeling for her, later on, but he can't bring himself to prey upon her, a teenager to his graying maturity of thirty something, approaching forty.

The sweep of the story essentially is this: Jefferson is succumbing to Snopesism, which is vulgar but hard-working commercialism that lacks any connection to ante-bellum South, including decorum, education, and

decency. That's not to say Faulkner presents the traditional South in a good light, but its demise at the hands of a Flem Snopes is an indignity (which Faulkner obviously intended to deal with satirically when he thought The Town was going to be a funny book.)

There is enough here to remind one of Faulkner's writing when his powers were greater to justify reading The Town. But if The Town is the first Faulkner novel you've ever read, you likely won't finish it or pick up another, which would be a great pity.

Teresa says

I like this second novel of The Snopes trilogy (it can certainly be read as a stand-alone) much more than the first one, The Hamlet, though it's partly a retelling of the first (the first 1/3 is mostly flashbacks though by different voices, a Faulknerian trait, for sure) but of course more of it is a continuation, told from three viewpoints, to be taken as a sampling of the community. Within the narration of these three, there is much humor to be found, at least in the first 3/4 of the book, and perhaps that was what was missing for me in The Hamlet, which I know is supposed to have its own humor, but for me it was ponderous and laborious.

Sarcasm and ludicrousness sprinkled here and there produced chuckles of recognition, but somewhere in the middle is a set-piece (also published as the short story 'Mule in the Yard') so hilarious that I gave a retelling of it to my husband. It starts with a mule trespassing on the *handkerchief-sized yard* of Mrs. Hait, and I immediately thought of Betsey Trotwood and the donkeys on her own *patch of green* in David Copperfield (Mrs. Hait even has her own Janet, by the name of old Het), but with Faulkner the premise is run amok, with fog, a cow, chickens and ... well, I wouldn't want to spoil it for you. The ending of the piece is dark, but perfect. As County Attorney Gavin Stevens says after the incident when Flem Snopes asks how much he owes him: ... *started to say One dollar ... or your knife or your pencil or just anything so that when I wake up tomorrow I'll know I didn't dream this.*

I suppose I could've given this one more star, except that it's not of the best of Faulkner. For example, though I realize her story is filtered through one of the narrators, when Eula spoke at the end it was exactly as if Stevens was speaking and it took me way out of the story.

The ending of the novel, a great set-piece on its own, almost feels tacked-on and is different in tone than the rest of the novel, which I don't think is a problem for the theme, but in a way it seemed forced and might have fit better with the first novel.

K.M. Weiland says

This is a much more complex story than we find in its prequel The Hamlet. Told in three first-person POVs, it offers a rounded presentation of perspectives on the slow degeneration of the small Southern town. The child narrator, Charles Mallison, is an especial joy. The humor isn't as wild as in The Hamlet, but the subtlety and its organic growth from the characters only strengthens the story.

Martin says

I wasn't expecting to like this better than "The Hamlet" but I thoroughly enjoyed it and found it quite

moving at the end. I thought the use of narrators to be skillful, and I did not mind V.K. Ratliff or Gavin Stevens the way I normally do. I thought Chick Mallison was a great narrator, speaking as both himself as a child and as an adult looking back on his childhood perceptions. I loved the stories about Montgomery Ward Snopes and Wall Street Panic Snopes and the different ways they do business. Maybe I liked Gavin Stevens better this time because I could see him in the context of his interactions with his family, and I probably like him better now that I understand more about his romantic bachelorhood. I was happy that Flem played a smaller role in this novel, even though the action revolves around him. I loved the comparison between the canteen economies of ice cream vs. women. I loved the history of automobiles coming to Jefferson and how de Spain became mayor. I loved the story of Ratliff's name and how it was revealed by Eula. I found Eula fascinating but comical in "The Hamlet," a woman whose beauty was a "natural phenomenon like a cyclone or a tidewave." In "The Town" I found her to be one of the most heartbreaking female characters in all of Faulkner, a woman whose life is at a dead end after her fate is traded too many times among the men closest to her. I began to imagine a movie adaptation made at the time of the novel's publication, perhaps starring Marilyn Monroe who could have poured her own personal woes into the role. The scenes between Gavin and Eula, and later Gavin and Linda caught me off guard; I became wholly invested in their relationships and terribly concerned about everyone's outcome. And throughout the novel I got to revisit many of the characters from previous novels and stories like Willy Christian, old and young Bayard, Byron Snopes. Overall, I felt the novel was successful because it was about the whole town rather than just the Snopes saga.

Greg says

"And it don't take no especial coward to not want to walk into that store and up to old man Will Varner and tell him his daughter aint reformed even yet, that she's been sleeping around again for 18 years now, with a feller she ain't married to, and that her husband aint got guts enough to know what do do about it," writes Faulkner of the central plot of this work. One could argue that lots of characters in "The Town" (and other Faulkner works) need reforming, but they won't, they never will. After all, we're in Faulkner's Southern Goth world, and its a hurtful place and usually gives us painful reads. Think it's gone? Think again: that's why we still read Faulkner.

Brian Willis says

Absolutely stunning and one of my favorite of Faulkner's works. Though it is the middle of a trilogy, this book expands and complicates and darkens the story originated in The Hamlet as the best middle chapters of any trilogies do. It is also one of the more accessible reads of Faulkner's.

It contains only three narrators: Chick Mallison (a boy who contains the bulk of the narrative and whose internal monologue complicates itself over time in the book until it reaches maturity by the end), Gavin Stevens (one of Faulkner's most profoundly moving and deep creations, a mind as sharp and touching as Quentin Compson in The Sound and The Fury) and V. K. Ratliff (the quintessential Southern man it appears to Faulkner, not book wise but street wise in a way that Gavin never will be).

Gavin is the heart of the book and I won't spoil why here. Ultimately, he is the essence of Southern courtly gentility, a perfect foil for the avarice, selfishness, guile, and corruption of Flem Snopes, Faulkner's best antagonistic creation. The meat of the book is clearly Faulkner's examination of the corruption of Southern ideals by the modernization of the business model, oligarchy, favoritism, corruption, and exclusion. Gavin, Ratliff, and even Chick by the end oppose it gallantly. Exceptionally strong novel by an exceptionally strong writer, and that is saying something.

Still says

Faulkner wrote many novels and many short stories. Almost all are acclaimed. I haven't read but one of those novels- The Reivers.

That was up until my wife persuaded me to read "The Snopes Family Trilogy" comprised of the novels, The Hamlet, The Town, and The Mansion.

Of those three titles, I've so far read only the first two entries.

This morning I finished The Town. I am still reeling.

This novel has three distinct narrators: young Charles ("Chick") Mallison, his uncle Gavin ("Lawyer") Stevens, and the unforgettable V. K. Ratliff.

Each character relates or furthers the others' accounts of the events that transpire. It is a tale of wonder, mystery, and outrage. It is by turns quite hilarious, mysterious, suspenseful, infuriating, and stunningly poignant.

I can't imagine Faulkner having written any lines that could be more powerful or more poignant or simply beautiful than the passages found in this novel.

It is a heartbreaker.

Not that its characters are doomed or forsaken, just that it is beyond my capacity to believe that William Faulkner could have ever written anything approaching the brilliance that struts across these pages.

I completely loved this novel.

Highest possible recommendation.

Alan says

This, the second novel in what I would call the Snopes trilogy, and the one featuring the amusing Ratliff, the traveling salesman of sewing-machines. First was The Hamlet, and last may be the greatest of his novels in its moral displacement of this reader. I have taught The Mansion a couple times.

Ratliff the canny though ungrammatical talker offers teaching insights we can use with media in 2017. He can't tell the lawyer Gavin Stevens what he knows, "Because he wouldn't believe me. This here is the kind of thing a man has to know his—himself." Ratliff corrects himself before Mallison, Jr. who's been to Harvard (though he begins the book as a kid of five). "Because what somebody else tells you, you jest half believe, unless it was something you already wanted to believe...In that case, you don't even listen to it, because you had done already agreed, and so all it does is make you think what a sensible feller it was that told you"(258). Pretty good analysis of Fox News, or alternatively, the NYT if only it didn't get the facts right so much.

Then, on our US Prez, “a feller that jest wants money for the sake of money, there’s a few things right at the last that he wont do, will stop at. But a feller that come—came up from where he did...if there was to be any meaning in his life...there ain’t nothing he won’t do to get it...Respectability” (258). Nothing, not even eliminating Law and the FBI.

The novel has lots of humor and Ratliff’s irony in it, though mostly I’m quoting serious insights directly said. One major theme is how criminals get control of banks—here, the worst of the worst, Flem Snopes, who robs his whole family of their lands and wealth, eventually heading the bank where he does not risk his own money.

Gavin Stevens, the lawyer, summarizes this:

“He didn’t merely know that banks could be looted (his cousin Byron which he had witnessed himself), he believed, it was a tenet of his very being, that they were constantly looted; that the normal condition of a bank was a steady and decorous embezzlement, its solvency an impregnable illusion like the reputation of a woman whom everybody knows has none....Because that—the looting of them— was the reason for banks, the only reason why anybody would go to the trouble and expense of organizing one and keeping it running” (265).

The bank thief moves to Texas where he rears four kids from an Indian woman, maybe from Mexico; at any rate, they’re sent back to Mexico. The kids end up self-sufficient and very aggressive (with a knife), impossible to care for. The novel ends with their being lured into town and shipped back to Texas on the train with tags on them, “Byron Snopes, El Paso, Texas.” Ratliff brings a box of oranges and apples and candybars, approaches to offer them; he says to Chick Mallison, “Come on; you ain’t quite growed so they may not snap at you”(371).

Daniel Polansky says

Right. So, I’m going to just review both of these together, since I read them one after the other and my thoughts apply to both. Faulkner’s prose is, for my soon-to-be-rapidly-depreciating-US-dollar, about as good as you’re going to find. It’s like jumping into cold water, painful at first, and then innervating – the compulsive sentences rolling downward, the bits that are deliberately left unsaid, the clever obfuscations, the profane jokes. And his plotting is fiendishly clever, something which you one very rarely finds oneself saying about ‘literary’ writers. In his big reveals, in his nested secrets and sudden murders, there is a whiff of the genre ghetto to Faulkner (no surprise he wrote the screenplay for Big Sleep, even if he kind of fucked the pooch on the ending). And both of these qualities are on display in these two, the second and third books in the Snopes Trilogy, which details the life of one Flem Snopes, an amoral backwoods savage with a genius for a sharp trading and a desire to attain respectability.

I devoured these, laughed loudly at them in bars, kept yelling at acquaintances about it. And yet...well, obviously, when one is reading one of the great writers of the age, as indeed I believe Faulkner to be, one is not just asking ‘is this a good book’, because of course it’s a good book, even the shit Faulkner tossed out just for money (The Reivers, I’m looking at you) are really good. What one is asking is, ‘is this one of the works which cements the authors place in the canon’, and the answer to this trilogy is, no, not quite, not to my mind. The main characters in the book – Lawyer Stevens, Eula and Linda, and of course Flem himself – never quite come together. Various smaller bits, about the rest of the Snopes clan and pitiful folk they abuse, are far stronger, but the motivations for the major characters felt, ultimately, either vague or kind of unconvincing.

Which is to say, I suppose, that if you haven’t read Faulkner, read Faulkner but maybe don’t start here, and if you’ve already read Absalom, Absalom, etc. then you could do a lot worse than counting on with the Snopes trilogy.

Elizabeth (Alaska) says

The first book in the trilogy is on Bloom's Western Canon, but not this and the third in the series. I think Mr. Bloom has said there were books left out and some that he might not have put on there had he taken more time to think about it. I'm thinking he might have just put this trilogy on there and still have had just the one entry.

V.K. Ratliff continues to be a narrator in this, as do two new characters: young Charles Mallison, whose first entries remind us he wasn't born yet when the events happened, and Gavin Stevens, twin brother to Charles Mallison's mother and therefore "Uncle Gavin", and who is also the city attorney and is called "Lawyer" by Ratliff. We do learn something about the characters of these three, but Flem Snopes is really the central character; what he does and why. This continues the brilliant character study begun in *The Hamlet*, and which I expect will continue in *The Mansion*.

Again, Faulkner's prose in this is not stream of consciousness, per se, but there is often more than one thought in any sentence and many of the sentences become small scenes.

Because we had all seen Mrs. Snopes by now, what few times we did see her which was usually behind the counter in the restaurant in another greasy apron, frying the hamburgers and eggs and ham and the tough pieces of steak on the grease-encrusted kerosene griddle, or maybe once a week on the Square, always alone; not, as far as we knew, going anywhere: just moving, walking in that aura of decorum and modesty and solitariness ten times more immodest and a hundred times more disturbing than one of the bathing suits young women would begin to wear about 1920 or so, as if in the second just before you looked, her garments had managed in one last frantic pell-mell scurry to overtake and cover her. Though only for a moment because in the next one, if only you followed long enough, they would wilt and fail from that mere plain and simple striding which would shred them away like the wheel of a constellation through a wisp and cling of trivial scud.

Should the reader not have read *The Hamlet*, one can only imagine why such a creature would be the wife of the abhorrent Flem Snopes. This thought is integral to *The Town* because the small town of Jefferson, Yoknapatawpha County, Mississippi (I can neither spell nor pronounce the name of this county) really is no place for a woman who can walk in such a way and feel perfectly comfortable doing so.

I look forward to reading the third and final installment. In fact, I may have decided with this to become a Faulkner completionist. A full, robust, five stars here.

Michael David says

I hate William Faulkner.

I hate the fact that I can't even give this book a five because I would have to give *The Sound and the Fury* and *Absalom, Absalom!* six or sevens. I hate the fact that he could both write with the utmost complexity and utmost simplicity. I hate the fact that to me, he's so good that I can place five of his books on my personal top 10 without flinching.

I hate how even years removed from reading his other novels that I can remember who Bayard Sartoris was,

who Lucas Beauchamp was, who Thomas Sutpen, who Horace Benbow was, because all of them are colorful characters.

Among them, however, I admire Gavin Stevens the best, and he is one of the central characters in this novel.

Stevens is, in a word, the conscience of Yoknapatawpha. He is the force of good, and certain parallels in our lives - that he treasures good over women, and that he has remained a bachelor even though intelligent and kind, resonates within me.

He believes in the 'uxorious and rigid respectability which remains strong and undecadent only so long as it still produces an incorrigible unreconstructible with the temerity to assail and affront and deny.' He believes in the virtue and the chastity of women and he seeks to protect those. He was even asked by a character, his brother-in-law, mockingly as to where his white horse and lance was. But he tries to still be a decent person even though he is undeniably human: he even falls in love with the femme fatale Eula Snopes.

Damn Faulkner. Damn his genius.

I hate him.

I hate him so much. I hate how I can't write as well as him as yet.

I hate him for being so damn good.

William Guarrant says

The Town is the second book in the "Snopes trilogy." It begins where *The Hamlet* ends and tells the story of the rise of Flem Snopes in Jefferson. It isn't nearly as grotesque as *The Hamlet*, perhaps because it is set in town, rather than in the Frenchman's Bend hamlet, perhaps because it is narrated principally by Chick Mallison and Gavin Stevens, or perhaps simply because Faulkner has mellowed in the 26 years which separated the books.

This was a return visit for me, and Mr. Faulkner never disappoints.

Kristiina says

Lukupiiripakkopulla, osa 2. Alussa kertaus edellisen osan tapahtumista parhaaseen sarjatyylisiin. Silti olin jo pudonnut kärryiltä sivulla 25 enkä päässyt takaisin kyytiin. Lauseet tässä kirjassa lyhyempiä, mutta pronominiin käytössä (ja ehkä muutamassa muussakin asiassa) yhä ongelmia. Beat-runous ja Nostradamus ovat selkokieltä tämän rinnalla. Harvinaisen vapaasti irti reaali maailmasta leijaileva naiskuva.

"Oletko koskaan luonut silmäystä tyttöön? Sinä olet inhimillinen vaikka oletkin nainen." Niin, muistin monia kertoja jolloin isä oli syntynyt liian aikaisin, ennen kuin tytöille vihellettiin ihastuksesta.
